Department for Work and Pensions

Research Report No 419

DWP Employers Survey

Nick Coleman, Ken Seeds and Gareth Edwards

A report of research carried out by the BMRB Social Research on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions

Corporate Document Services

Contents

List of tables

List of figures

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank the Skills Analysis Team at the Department for Work and Pensions for their help with the project, in particular Jacqui Hansbro, Shifaana Thowfeequ and Laura Payne. We are also grateful to all of the individuals who agreed to be interviewed in the survey.

Summary

Introduction

People with no qualifications have low employment rates when compared with the working age population as a whole, despite the fact that the majority of Jobcentre Plus vacancies do not state the need for qualifications. Evidence suggests that around a third of all jobs require no qualifications at all.[1]

British Market Research Bureau (BMRB) was commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to conduct a quantitative survey to identify the practices and preferences of employers in filling low-skilled vacancies, specifically: the methods used in recruiting for low-skilled jobs; and the key characteristics that employers look for when recruiting. In total, 3,682 interviews were carried out by telephone, with a response rate of 66 per cent. This report presents findings from the survey.

The survey covers a specific group of employers: those who have recruited (or tried to recruit) for low-skilled vacancies in the past 12 months. This group constitutes 30 per cent of the employer population as a whole (that is, 30 per cent of all employers in Great Britain had recruited, or tried to recruit, low-skilled candidates in the last year). Employers in this group tended to be larger than employers generally (13 per cent had 50 or more staff at the workplace, compared with three per cent of workplaces overall); this is to be expected given that it was restricted to those who had carried out recruitment activity recently.

---

[1]   'Employer Perspectives on the Recruitment, Retention and Advancement of Low-pay, Low-status Employees' *Institute for Employment Studies (2003)*.

Vacancy details

While many employers had just a small number of vacancies in the previous 12 months (just one-fifth had five or more vacancies, and a third only had one), this is a reflection of the size of employers (around half had fewer than ten employees). Larger workplaces often had 20 or more vacancies in the previous 12 months; this means that low-skilled vacancies are often clustered in a limited number of large employers.

Shop/sales work and administrative work were the job types that employers were most likely to have vacancies for. Certain job types were more common among those recruiting in large numbers, meaning that they accounted for a large proportion of **vacancies**, even if they were required by a relatively small proportion of employers. These included drivers/transport workers and catering staff.

A third of employers said that non-formal qualifications or certificates were required for at least some of the low-skilled jobs they have recruited for; this was most likely to be a driving licence.

Recruitment

Employers were most likely to use local papers to recruit staff for low-skilled jobs, followed by word-of-mouth and Jobcentre Plus. In total, two-fifths of workplaces said they had used Jobcentre Plus in the last year. Many employers used a combination of methods, although they were less likely to use word-of-mouth in combination with other methods (including Jobcentre Plus).

Three-quarters of workplaces carried out formal interviews to select low-skilled staff. Employers often used a combination of recruitment methods (formal and informal). In general, larger workplaces were more likely to use formal methods (e.g. assessment days), whereas smaller workplaces were more likely to use informal interviews.

Skills

The skill most looked for by employers and the one they considered the most important was interpersonal/teamwork skills, followed closely by job-specific experience. Many employers looked for a combination of skills, most often interpersonal/teamwork skills in combination with others. In general, the survey emphasised the importance of soft skills for many low-skilled jobs.

Two-thirds of employers said they used an interview to decide whether an applicant had the required skills for the job, and performance at interview was also the most frequently mentioned defining factor which employers used to determine a candidate's suitability for a particular role.

Reflecting the findings relating to recruitment, larger workplaces were more likely to use specific 'formal' methods to assess whether job applicants had the necessary skills, whereas small workplaces were more likely to use 'informal' assessment methods to determine whether candidates had suitable skills.

Two-thirds of employers considered previous work experience to be important and, of these, three-fifths said it needed to be relevant to the skills required for a vacancy.

Over-qualified applicants

One-half of workplaces had not had any over-qualified candidates apply to their organisation in the last 12 months. There was a correlation between the size of the workplace and the proportion of workplaces which had had any over-qualified applicants apply in the last year: the larger the workplace the more likely it was to have received applications from over-qualified candidates.

Over-qualified applicants were not seen as a problem by employers, with only three per cent saying that they would be less likely to recruit someone who had formal qualifications for a job that did not require any (than someone who did not). Indeed, one in three employers said that they would actually be more likely to recruit such an applicant and three-fifths said it would not make any difference.

Training

One half of workplaces said that they had funded or arranged any off-the-job training or development for employees in low-skilled jobs in the past 12 months. Medium-sized workplaces (50-249 staff) were most likely to provide off-the-job training.

Just over half of employers said that they had arranged any on-the-job or informal training in the past year. The prevalence of on-the-job training increases with workplace size, although this levels out once workplace size reaches 50.

1   Introduction

1.1   Background

People with no qualifications have low employment rates when compared with the working age population as a whole, despite the fact that the majority of Jobcentre Plus vacancies do not state the need for qualifications. Evidence suggests that around a third of all jobs require no qualifications at all.[2]

Recruitment methods for low-skilled jobs may have some bearing on this trend. These jobs are more likely than others to be filled using relatively cheap, quick and informal recruitment methods, without particularly objective selection procedures, or induction arrangements. Work by Bunt (2005) found that one in four companies that tried to recruit staff externally had used word-of-mouth. This was the third most frequently used method, behind newspapers (47 per cent) and advertising in Jobcentre Plus (43 per cent). It has been argued that when vacancies are communicated informally, there is a strong possibility that the vacancy will reach similar people to those already in employment, as employees communicate the vacancy through their networks of friends, family and contacts. Therefore, long-term unemployed people can be disadvantaged when employers recruit in this way as they may have fewer contacts in employment or growth sectors.[3]

Furthermore, in assessing a person's ability to take up a low-skilled job, evidence suggests that employers value certain personal traits such as reliability, motivation, health/fitness, honesty, integrity, 'good attitude' and keenness, most highly. In addition, 'basic skills are far more widely and positively ranked than specific technical or vocational skills'.[4] Given the relatively low employment rates of people

---

[2]   'Employer Perspectives on the Recruitment, Retention and Advancement of Low-pay, Low-status Employees' *Institute for Employment Studies (2003)*.

[3]   'What employers look for when recruiting the unemployed and inactive: skills, characteristics and qualifications' *Institute for Employment Studies (2005)*.

[4]   'Employer Perspectives on the Recruitment, Retention and Advancement of Low-pay, Low-status Employees' *Institute for Employment Studies (2005)*.

with no qualifications, it is possible that those with qualifications are generally more able to demonstrate these personal characteristics during the recruitment process – for example, because they have spent more time in a formal learning environment, even though their qualifications may not be required for the job that they are applying for.

1.2   Research objectives

In February 2006, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) commissioned British Market Research Bureau (BMRB) to conduct a quantitative survey to identify the practices and preferences of employers in filling low-skilled vacancies, specifically:

- the methods used in recruiting for low-skilled jobs;

- the key characteristics that employers look for when recruiting.

This information is intended to help Jobcentre Plus provide advice and support to its customers, in meeting employers' demands. This report presents findings from the survey.

1.3   Research methodology

1.3.1   Sample

The sample was drawn from the Dun and Bradstreet business database. It covered all workplaces that employed one or more employees. As such, it included very small employers (often excluded in employer surveys). The total sample size (3,682 interviews were conducted) and sample design allow analysis by size band, industry sector and Government region. Full details on sample design and selection are included in Appendix B.

1.3.2   Employers included in this survey

The survey covers a specific group of employers: those who **have recruited (or tried to recruit) for low-skilled vacancies** in the past 12 months. This group constitutes **30 per cent of the employer population as a whole** (that is, 30 per cent of all employers in Great Britain have recruited, or tried to recruit, low-skilled candidates in the last year). This is because:

- 57 per cent of employers had carried out no recruitment activity in the previous 12 months;

- a further 11 per cent had only recruited for jobs that required qualifications;

- a further two per cent had not recruited directly (i.e. they had used an agency for all recruitment) or **only** recruited for temporary jobs; these were ineligible for the survey.

Looking at the characteristics of this group of employers:

- Employers in this group tended to be larger than employers generally: 13 per cent of these workplaces had 50 or more employees, compared with three per cent of workplaces overall; this is to be expected given that it was restricted to those who had carried out recruitment activity recently. However, as shown in Table 1.1, a substantial proportion (47 per cent) had fewer than ten employees at the workplace.

Table 1.1   Number of employees at workplace

Categories	Column percentages
Fewer than 5	19
5-9	28
10-49	40
50-249	10
250+	3

Base: All (3,682)

- In 43 per cent of cases, the workplace was part of a larger (multi-site) organisation. Overall, around one in five workplaces (22 per cent) had 250 or more staff in the organisation as a whole, while 11 per cent had 50-249 staff in the organisation; the remaining 67 per cent had fewer than 50 staff in the organisation.

- Tables A.1 and A.2 in Appendix A show the profile of these employers by **sector** and **region**. As with the general employer population, employers in the survey were most likely to be in the wholesale/retail sector (22 per cent). Compared with employers generally, the group covered by the survey were more likely to be in the following sectors: hotels and restaurants, health and social work, and other community and social activities. They were less likely to be in the business services sector. The regional profile is very similar to that of employers generally.

1.3.3   Questionnaire

The questionnaire can be found in Appendix C. The questionnaire was developed by BMRB Social Research in consultation with the DWP.

The questionnaire was divided into general sections as follows:

- screener questions to establish employer eligibility;

- details about organisation;

- details about vacancies that do not require formal qualifications;

- recruitment;

- skills;

- training.

1.3.4 Piloting

A pilot was conducted to test the questionnaire, along with the contact procedure. In total, interviews were achieved with 78 employers. Interviewers were briefed by the research team prior to the pilot fieldwork. Researchers listened to some of the interviews to experience first hand how the questionnaire was working. Some minor amendments were made to the questionnaire post pilot, but on the whole it was found to work well.

1.3.5 Interviewer briefings

All interviewers were briefed personally by the BMRB research team. They were given detailed information on the background to the survey, the sample, introducing the survey, response rates and the questionnaire. This ensured that they had a thorough understanding of the survey. Full written instructions were also provided for all interviewers.

1.3.6 Fieldwork

All interviews were conducted by fully trained and supervised interviewers, working in accordance with the Market Research Society's Code of Conduct. Data was collected using Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI). The pilot interviews took place from 29 March to 7 April 2006. Main fieldwork took place from the 2 May to 4 September 2006.

In total, 3,682 interviews were carried out, with a response rate of 66 per cent. Response rate details are included in Appendix D.

1.3.7 Quality control measures

For all telephone surveys, BMRB's standard quality control procedures are those stipulated by Interviewer Quality Control Scheme (IQCS). As an IQCS member company, our quality control standards meet or exceed those required and our records are available for annual inspection. Our quality control procedures are summarised as follows:

• each interviewer is monitored at least every fourth shift;

• at least seven per cent of interviews are monitored;

• monitoring records are completed for each interviewer; these are discussed with the interviewer and signed;

• no interviews are carried out without a supervisor present;

• an interviewer performance review is held each month;

• all interviewers are personally briefed on each project.

1.3.8 Analysis and weighting

Once interviews had been conducted, data was collated and open-ended responses were coded. All code frames were approved before use. Tabulations of the data and an SPSS dataset were produced and checked.

Weighting has been applied to the data to compensate for the disproportionate sampling that was carried out (as described in Appendix B).

1.3.9 Structure of the report

The report has been divided into a number of discrete sections:

• section two covers details about vacancies that do not require formal qualifications;

• section three examines recruitment practices and procedures;

• section four covers the skills that employers look for;

• section five looks at over-qualified applicants;

• section six covers training for low-skilled roles.

1.3.10 Interpretation of findings

When interpreting the survey findings, it should be borne in mind that the survey is based on a sample only, rather than the total population, of employers who have recruited, or tried to recruit, in the last year for low-skilled vacancies. This means that all findings are subject to sampling tolerances. In the report, differences are reported only when they are statistically significant at the 95 per cent confidence level.

1.3.11 Explanatory notes

The main part of the report includes tables showing findings analysed by customer group.

The percentages in the report tables do not always add up to exactly 100 for each column. In some instances this is because multiple responses are possible. In all other cases, where the column total may be 99 per cent or 101 per cent, this is simply due to rounding of individual percentages to the nearest whole number.

1.3.12 Table symbols

*   Less than 0.5 per cent

0   No observations

–   Category not available

..   Data not available

2   Vacancy details

This chapter looks at the number of vacancies employers have had for low-skilled jobs in the past year; the types of job they have recruited for, and requirements for non-formal qualifications or certificates.

Summary

- The number of vacancies for low-skilled jobs in the past year varied from just one (among smaller employers) to 50 or more (among large employers).

- Shop/sales work and administrative work were the job types that employers were most likely to have vacancies for.

- A third of employers said that non-formal qualifications or certificates were required for at least some of the low-skilled jobs they have recruited for; this is most likely to be a driving licence.

2.1   Number of vacancies in past 12 months

To be eligible for the survey, all workplaces must have recruited for a low-skilled vacancy in the previous 12 months. Table 2.1 shows the **number** of these (low-skilled) vacancies that workplaces have had over that time.

While many employers have had just a small number of vacancies (and a third have only had one), this is reflection of the size of employers. The analysis by workplace size in Table 2.1 shows that:

- among medium-sized workplaces (50-249 staff), 37 per cent had ten or more vacancies in the past 12 months;

- among large workplaces (250 or more staff), 37 per cent had 50 or more vacancies.

This means that **low-skilled vacancies are often clustered in a limited number of large employers**. A third of the employers recruiting for 50 or more vacancies were in the wholesale/retail sector.

Overall, this confirms the diverse recruitment needs of employers, with some small employers having just one vacancy per year, while many larger employers require a considerable number of candidates.

Table 2.1   Number of low-skilled vacancies recruited (or tried to recruit) for in the past 12 months, by workplace size

Categories	Less than 10	10-19	20-49	50-249	250+	Total
	Column percentages					
	Number of employees at workplace					
Number of vacancies						
One	51	24	15	7	4	33
2-4	42	60	52	35	8	47
5-9	5	10	21	20	7	10
10-20	1	4	10	27	37	7
21-49	*	1	2	4	7	1
50+	*	1	*	6	37	2

Base: All (3,682)

2.2   Recruitment of different age groups

Employers who had actually recruited staff in the past 12 months were asked how many were aged under 25 and over 50. Answers are shown in Table 2.2.

Analysis by sector shows that employers in construction and hotels/restaurants were more likely than average to recruit people under 25, and were less likely to recruit people aged over 50. By contrast, those in education and health/social care were less likely to recruit people aged under 25, and the latter were also more likely to recruit people aged over 50.

There was generally very little variation in the skills sought by employers or whether training was provided, according to the age of staff they recruited. Specific differences are described in Section 4.1 (skills) and Section 6.1 (training).

Table 2.2   Proportion of staff recruited in particular age groups

	Column percentages	
Categories	Under 25	Over 50
None	41	79
Up to 25%	3	5
25-49%	7	5
50-74%	15	6
75-99%	4	*
All	27	5
Don't know	4	*

Base: All workplaces who had actually recruited staff in the last 12 months and knew the number recruited (3,344)

2.3   Types of work

Figure 2.1 shows the types of job that employers had recruited for in the previous 12 months. This shows that **employers were most likely to recruit for shop work and administrative jobs**.

Figure 2.1   Types of job that vacancies were for

Also mentioned: labourers (5%), factory/plant/machine workers (4%), secretarial (4%), warehouse workers (3%), hairdresser/beautician (3%), customer care/call centre (2%), caretaking (1%), other (11%)

Base: All (3,682).

Certain job types were more common among **those recruiting in large numbers**, meaning that they accounted for a large proportion of **vacancies**, even if they were required by a relatively small proportion of employers. Details are shown in Table A.3 in Appendix A. Specifically:

• workplaces recruiting 20 or more staff in the last year were most likely to recruit administrative staff (26 per cent), drivers/transport workers (25 per cent) and catering staff (16 per cent);

• warehouse workers accounted for a relatively large proportion of these recruiting 50 or more staff in the last year (13 per cent);

• bar/waiter/waitress work was required by 20 per cent of those with five or more vacancies in the past year, although this was less common among those with 50 or more vacancies.

The above findings are related to **workplace size** (as larger workplaces tend to recruit for more vacancies). Larger workplaces were particularly likely to recruit administrative staff (40 per cent of the workplaces with 250 or more staff recruited for administrative jobs), while drivers also tended to be recruited by these larger workplaces (17 per cent). Medium-sized workplaces (50-249 staff) were more likely than average to recruit cleaning staff (15 per cent) and health/caring assistants (17 per cent).

Analysis by **sector** is included in the summary of job types in Chapter 7. The only regional difference was that administrative work was more prevalent in London than elsewhere (33 per cent compared with 21 per cent overall).

2.4   Hours and conditions

Both full-time and part-time work were available for most of the types of work for which employers had vacancies. This is an important point in the light of the recent Harker report, which recommended that 'the level of information about the nature of jobs needs to improve'[5]. Driving work and skilled trades were most likely to be full-time, while bar/restaurant work and cleaning were more likely to be part-time than full-time.

Employers said that **most of the vacancies they had were for permanent jobs**, and this was particularly likely to be the case for skilled trades and driving work. Bar/waiter/waitress work was least likely to be permanent. However, the survey excluded workplaces that had **only** recruited for temporary jobs, so it is not surprising that most of the jobs were permanent.

Full details on these issues are included in Table A.4 in Appendix A.

---

[5]   Delivering on Child Poverty: what would it take, a report for the DWP by Lisa Harker, November 2006.

2.5   Requirements for non-formal qualifications

While the survey focused on jobs that do not require formal qualifications, non-formal qualifications or certificates are sometimes required by applicants. As shown in Table 2.3, **35 per cent of employers said that a qualification or certificate of some kind was required** for at least some of the low-skilled vacancies they had. This was most likely to be a driving licence[6].

Even when the analysis **excludes** employers who recruit drivers or transport workers:

- 30 per cent still said they needed non-formal qualifications or certificates for some of their non-skilled jobs, with 23 per cent specifying a driving licence;

- employers in the construction and business services sectors were most likely to want a driving licence for non-skilled vacancies.

Previous research has shown the importance of a driving licence in the employability of jobseekers, and these findings confirm that it is important for many 'unskilled' jobs.

Table 2.3   Requirements for non-formal qualifications or certificate

Multiple responses

Categories	Column percentages
Qualification/certificate required for any relevant job	35
– driving licence	29
– job-specific qualification	3
– basic food hygiene certificate	3
– health and safety certificate	2
– fork-lift driving licence	2
– other	3

Base: All (3,682)

---

[6]   A list of the qualifications classified as 'formal' in the survey are included at the end of the questionnaire in Appendix C.

3 Recruitment

This chapter examines employers' recruitment methods, including use of Jobcentre Plus. It also looks at selection methods and which people or departments make selection decisions.

Summary

- Employers are most likely to use local papers to recruit staff for low-skilled jobs.

- Jobcentre Plus and word-of-mouth are the next most frequently used methods. In total, 38 per cent of workplaces said they had used Jobcentre Plus in the past 12 months.

- Three-quarters of workplaces carried out formal interviews to select low-skilled staff. It is common for employers to use a combination of methods (formal and informal).

3.1 Methods of recruitment used for low-skilled job vacancies

Table 3.1 shows the methods used to recruit for low-skilled vacancies in the past 12 months (this was asked without prompting). This shows that **workplaces were most likely to use local papers**, followed by word-of-mouth and Jobcentre Plus. Table 3.1 also shows the method used **the most** by workplaces: the same ranking of methods applies.

Many employers used a combination of methods, although they were **less likely to use word-of-mouth in combination with other methods** (including Jobcentre Plus). This also applies to large workplaces (250 or more staff), although they were generally even more likely than other employers to use a combination of methods.

As noted in previous research, those without contacts in the workplace are unlikely to hear about job opportunities recruited through word-of-mouth, and this can result in benefit claimants being disadvantaged by this method[7]. Jobcentre Plus may therefore need to consider targeting the types of employers who currently rely on word-of-mouth (these are specified below). In this context, it is encouraging that those currently using word-of-mouth but not Jobcentre Plus are as likely as other employers to consider using Jobcentre Plus in the future (see Section 3.1.2).

Even if those using word-of-mouth are beyond the reach of Jobcentre Plus, there is still a body of employers (e.g. around half of large workplaces with 250 or more staff) who currently use neither Jobcentre Plus nor word-of-mouth for recruitment.

Table 3.1   Recruitment methods and which most used (unprompted responses)

Multiple responses

| | Column percentages | |
	All methods used	Method used the most
Categories		
Local papers	47	34
Word of mouth/personal recommendation	31	22
Jobcentre Plus	31	20
Notice boards/shop windows	19	12
Recruitment agencies	10	6
Internet/web-based	8	3
Own website	5	2
Trade/specialist press	3	1
Internal advertising	2	*
Receive speculative applications	2	*
Through local schools or colleges	1	*
National press	1	*
Don't know	1	3

Base: All (3,682)

Respondents were also asked directly whether they had used Jobcentre Plus in the previous 12 months in order to recruit staff for low-skilled vacancies. This increased the proportion shown in Table 3.1 to **38 per cent**. Figure 3.1 breaks this down by **workplace size**; this shows that among large workplaces (with 250 or more staff) the use of Jobcentre Plus is markedly higher. This also means that employers recruiting in large numbers were more likely than average to use Jobcentre Plus (65 per cent of those with 20 or more low-skilled vacancies in the last year).

---

[7]   Hogarth, T., Wislon, R., *Skills Shortages, Vacancies and Local Unemployment*, Institute for Employment Research, based on a series of reports for DfES.

Figure 3.1   Use of Jobcentre Plus, by workplace size

Number of employees

Fewer than 10	35%
10 to 19	39%
20 to 49	43%
50 to 249	43%
250+	70%
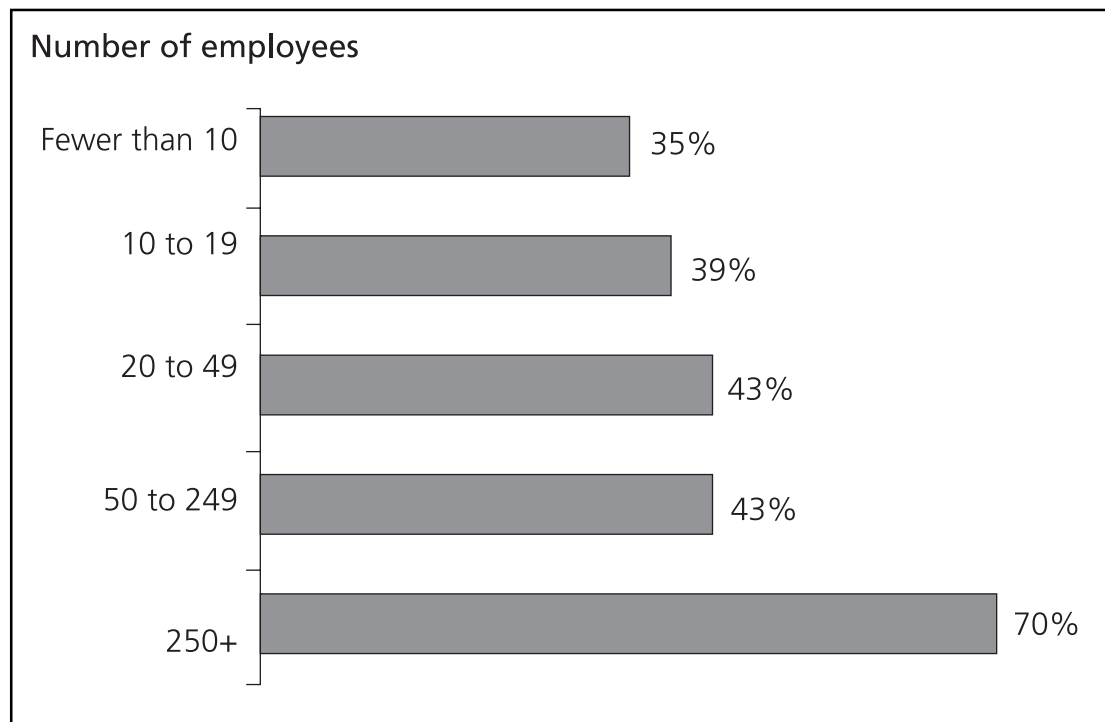
Looking at use of other methods by **workplace size**:

- Workplaces with 50 or more staff and (related to this) those recruiting in larger numbers were particularly likely to use local papers.

- Small employers with fewer than ten staff were least likely to use local papers, but were more likely than average to use noticeboards or shop windows and word-of-mouth.

- Nevertheless, word-of-mouth was also used by larger employers (for example, it was used by a quarter of those with 250 or more staff, and was the method used **the most** by ten per cent of these large employers).

- Recruitment agencies and the internet were used more often by large employers. In fact these were the methods used **the most** by 17 per cent and ten per cent of large employers respectively (large being defined as having 250 or more staff).

Analysis by size band is shown in Table A.5 in Appendix A.

Table 3.2 shows use of Jobcentre Plus by **sector** (restricted to sectors with 100 respondents or more). Employers in transport/storage/communication, manufacturing and health/social care were significantly more likely than average to have used Jobcentre Plus.

Table 3.2   Use of Jobcentre Plus by sector

	%
Construction	35
Education	23
Wholesale/retail	37
Health/social care	44
Hotels/restaurants	41
Other community, social and personal service	38
Transport/storage/communication	54
Manufacturing	48
Business services	32

Base: All (3,682)

Other variations by **sector** were as follows:

- the health/social care (74 per cent), business services (68 per cent), education (58 per cent) and manufacturing sectors (54 per cent) were more likely than average to use local papers;

- word-of-mouth was most prevalent in the construction (42 per cent), hotel/restaurant (41 per cent) and transport/storage/communication sectors (40 per cent);

- those in the wholesale/retail sector were most likely to use noticeboards or shop windows (37 per cent); this was also higher than average among hotels and restaurants (30 per cent).

There were also **regional** differences apparent for use of Jobcentre Plus: workplaces in the North (56 per cent), Scotland (54 per cent) and Wales (54 per cent) were most likely to have used Jobcentre Plus. Those in London (22 per cent), South East and East Anglia (31 per cent) were the least likely to have done so.

3.1.1   Most successful recruitment methods

If employers had used more than one recruitment method, they were asked for the most successful method for attracting applicants to particular types of job; where only one method was used, this was by definition the most successful method.

The most successful methods corresponded to those used the most: local papers (33 per cent), word-of-mouth (24 per cent) and Jobcentre Plus (14 per cent). Analysis by **job type** is shown in Table A.6 in Appendix A. This shows that:

- local papers were seen as by far the most successful method for administrative workers and health/caring assistants;

- local papers also ranked highest, but at a similar level to Jobcentre Plus and word-of-mouth, for driving and cleaning jobs;

- word-of-mouth was seen as most successful for bar/waiter/waitress work and catering jobs;

- for skilled trades, local papers and word of mouth were seen as the most successful methods;

- for shop workers, noticeboards/shop windows ranked highest.

3.1.2   The role of Jobcentre Plus

When asked what Jobcentre Plus could do to help ensure applicants are adequately equipped for low-skilled jobs, many respondents (43 per cent) could not make a suggestion. Those that did were most likely to say that Jobcentre Plus should send applicants that have the necessary experience for the vacancy. This underlines the importance of effective job matching, and may stem from frustrations among employers who were unable to fill vacancies due to a lack of applicants with the necessary skills[8].

Further details are shown in Table 3.3. Findings were consistent across different sub-groups.

Table 3.3   What Jobcentre Plus can do to ensure applicants are equipped

	Multiple responses
Categories (answers given by more than two per cent of respondents)	**Column percentages Total**
Send applicants that have necessary experience for the vacancy	46
Send applicants that want the job	25
Sufficient interview preparation	12
Understand job being recruited for/provide applicants with necessary information	9
Improve literacy skills of applicants	5
Show applicants how to create a good CV	4
Ensure punctuality (i.e. respondent turns up to interview on time)	4

Base: All who gave a suggestion (2,099)

Respondents that had not used Jobcentre Plus were asked **whether they would consider using Jobcentre Plus** to recruit for low-skilled vacancies. **A third (35 per cent)** said that they would, while a further 23 per cent said 'possibly' or 'it depends'. Levels of interest were consistent across size bands; in fact the smallest employers

---

[8]   According to the Learning and Skills Council's National Employers Skills Survey 2003, one-fifth of all employers reported that vacancies could not be filled due to a lack of applicants with the necessary skills.

(with fewer than five employees) were more likely to say they would consider using Jobcentre Plus (42 per cent).

Findings were also consistent irrespective of other methods used, ie those who currently used word-of-mouth were as likely to say they would consider using Jobcentre Pus as employers that used other methods. As noted above, this suggests that it may be possible to target some employers who currently use word-of-mouth, and therefore are likely to be beyond the reach of many jobseekers.

3.2   How candidates make contact to express interest in vacancies

Employers were asked how they were contacted by candidates expressing an interest in low-skilled vacancies. As shown in Figure 3.2, **telephone was the most common method**.

Figure 3.2   How candidates contact employer to express interest in job vacancy

Base: All (3,682).
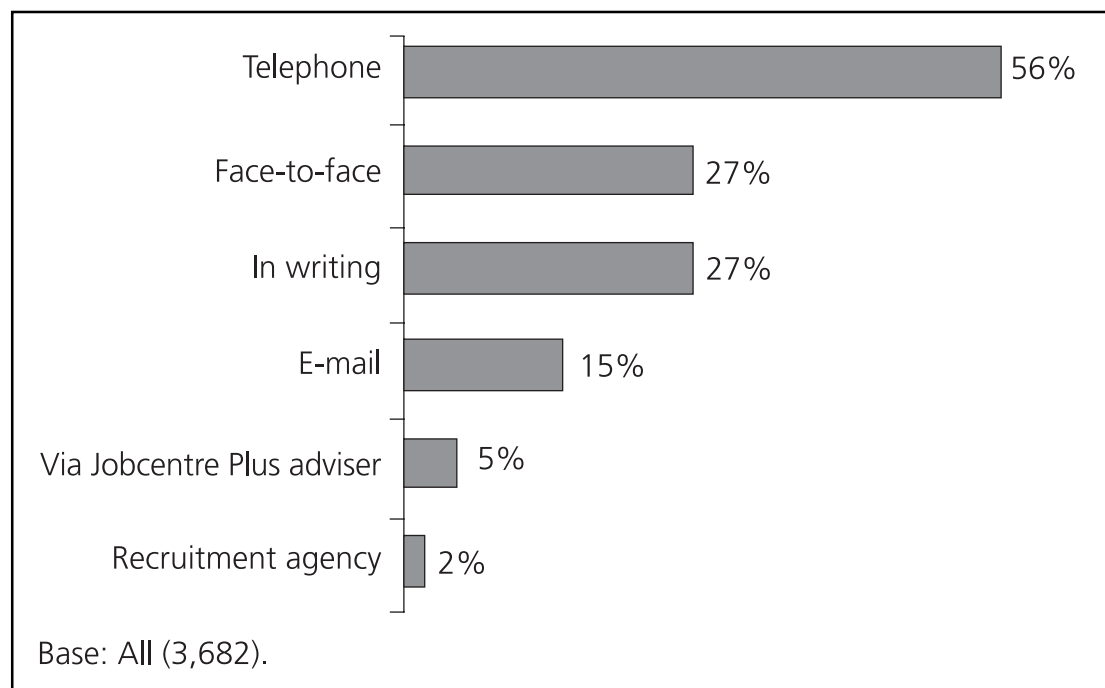
Looking at sub-group differences we see that:

- larger workplaces were most likely to say that candidates contacted them by telephone (66 per cent of those with 250 or more staff). Larger workplaces were also more likely than average to receive contact by e-mail (40 per cent of those with 250 or more staff);

- smaller workplaces were more likely than average to say that candidates made face-to-face contact (26 per cent of those with fewer than ten staff);

- telephone contact was highest in the education (75 per cent), health (71 per cent), community, and social/personnel service sectors (68 per cent);

- face-to-face contact was higher than average in the hotel and restaurant (54 per cent) or wholesale and retail sectors (48 per cent);

- the sectors most likely to be contacted through a Jobcentre Plus Adviser were manufacturing (13 per cent) and construction (11 per cent).

Table A.7 in Appendix A shows further details by workplace size.

3.3   Selection methods

Figure 3.3 shows the methods used to select applicants for low-skilled jobs in the past 12 months. While **the formal interview was the most widely used method**, employers often used a combination of methods, most commonly a formal interview in combination with other 'formal' methods (e.g. tests or assessments). However, some employers said they used a combination of formal methods and informal interviews; for example, a third used both formal and informal interviews[9].

Figure 3.3   Methods used to select applicants for these jobs

Base: All (3,682).

---
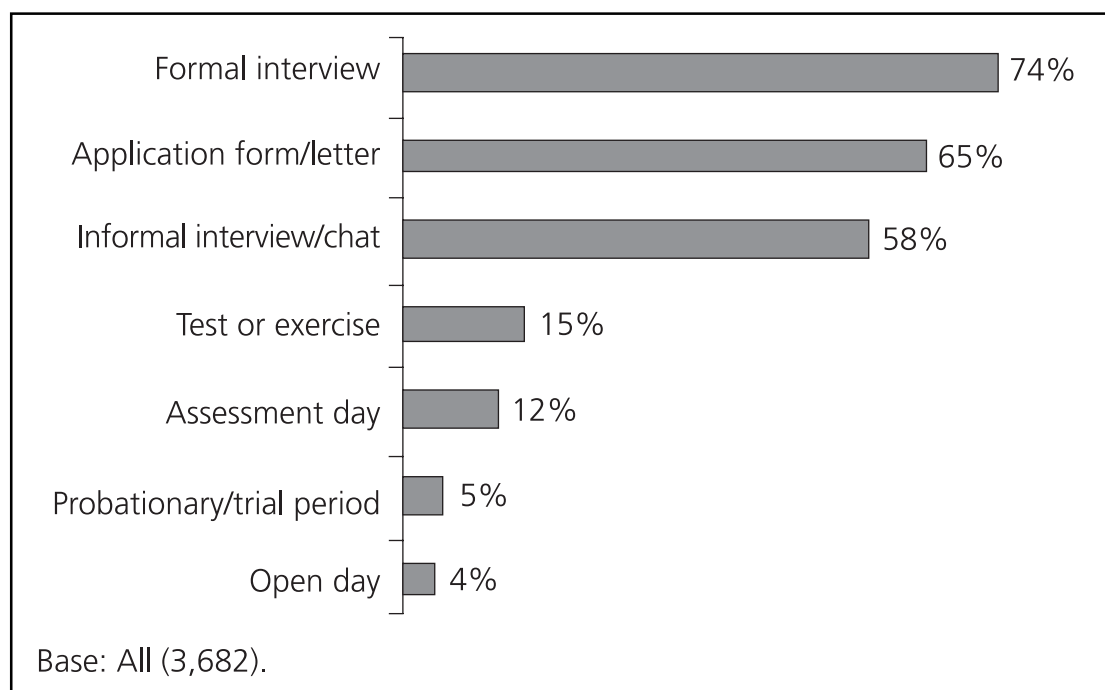
[9]   Note that the question asked about the methods used for the recruitment of any low-skilled jobs. Respondents who mentioned a combination of methods may have used one for one type of vacancy and a different one for another; they did not necessarily use multiple methods for the same vacancy. However, this does indicate that employers often use more than one method in their recruitment generally.

In general, **larger workplaces** were more likely to use formal methods, with use of tests/exercises and assessment days rising markedly among those with 250 or more staff. As these employers recruit in large numbers, this means that a **substantial proportion of individual vacancies will require some form of test or formal assessment**. Smaller employers were more likely than average to use informal interviews. Table A.8 shows analysis by size band.

In terms of **sector**:

- formal interviews and application forms were most prevalent in the education, manufacturing and health/social care sectors;

- workplaces in the construction, wholesale/retail and hotel/restaurant sectors were less likely than average to use these formal methods;

- those in the transport/storage/communication sector were most likely to use tests or exercises (21 per cent); most often this was a driving test.

It is worth noting that employers that have used Jobcentre Plus tend to be larger than average, and this means that they were more likely to use the various formal selection methods.

3.3.1 Formal interviews

Employers that used formal interviews mostly conducted these in person, although eight per cent said that at least some of their formal interviews were conducted by telephone. Use of the telephone for formal interviews was highest among large employers (19 per cent of workplaces with more than 250 employees) and, related to this, those recruiting in large numbers (15 per cent of those that had recruited ten or more new employees in the past year). It was highest in the business services sector (16 per cent).

3.3.2 Informal interviews

Respondents who had used informal interviews were asked if they were conducted face-to-face, by telephone or both; findings are shown in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4 How informal interviews conducted

	Column percentages
Categories	Total
Face-to-face only	71
Telephone only	3
Both	26

Base: All who use informal interviews in recruitment for low-skilled vacancies (2,029)

Larger employers were more likely to conduct informal interviews both face-to-face and by telephone, while smaller employers tended to do them face-to-face only.

The education sector was most likely to use face-to-face interviewing only, while a combination of face-to-face and telephone interviewing was most common in the health/social care, business services and other community, social and personal service sectors.

3.3.3   Tests/exercises used

Respondents that used tests or exercises to recruit for these vacancies were then asked for the type(s) of test/exercise that they used. Answers are shown in Figure 3.4.

Figure 3.4   Tests or exercises used to select applicants

Base: All jobs that use tests or exercises (695).
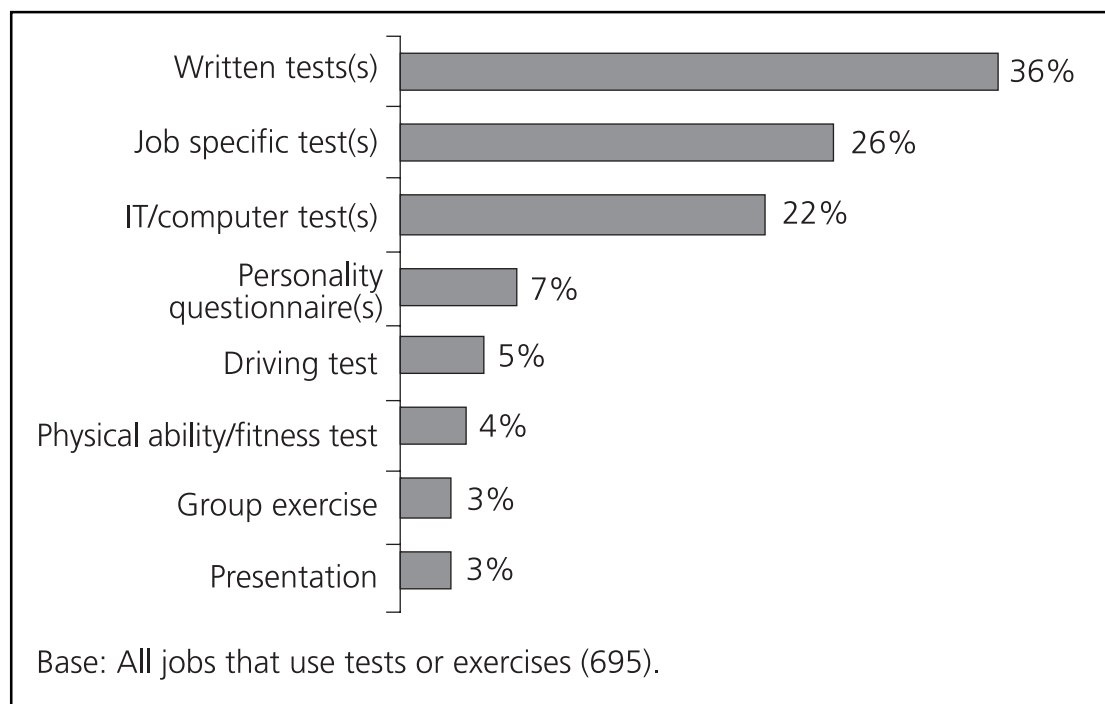
Due to small base numbers, the following sub-group differences should be treated with a degree of caution:

- workplaces with fewer than ten staff were more likely than average to use job specific tests but less likely to use IT/computer tests;

- those with 20-49 employees were more likely to mention written tests and personality questionnaires, but less likely to mention job specific tests.

3.4 Who decides whether candidate should be offered the job?

Respondents were asked for the main person or department that decides on whether a candidate should be offered a job. Responses are shown in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5   Main person or department that decides on whether candidate should be offered job

Categories	Column percentages
General management	38
Owner	28
Individual manager for the vacancy	18
Other director	5
Human resources	3
Panel/joint decision	3
Managing director	3
Other answer	3

Base: All (3,682)

- Decisions were most likely to be made by the owner in small workplaces (fewer than ten employees); by general management in workplaces with 20-49 staff; by individual managers in medium (50-249 staff) and large (250+ staff) workplaces. Human resources were mainly responsible only in large workplaces (250+ staff).

- By sector, owners were most likely to decide in hotels and restaurants; general management in the health/social care and wholesale/retail sectors; and individual managers in the transport and manufacturing sectors. Respondents in the education sector were more likely than average to say that a (non-managing) director and/or a panel/joint decision were used.

4 Skills

This chapter looks at the skills and attributes sought by employers when recruiting for low-skilled vacancies; how employers determine whether applicants have the prerequisite skills for a job; and the importance of previous work experience and periods of economic inactivity.

Summary

- The skill most looked for by employers and the one they considered the most important was interpersonal/teamwork skills.

- Two-thirds of employers said they used an interview to decide whether an applicant had the required skills for the job, and performance at interview was also the most frequently mentioned defining factor which employers used to determine a candidate's suitability for a particular role.

- Two-thirds of employers considered previous work experience to be important and of these, three-fifths said it needed to be relevant to the skills required for a vacancy.

4.1 Skills and attributes sought by low-skilled employers

All employers were asked what skills and attributes they look for when recruiting for low-skilled vacancies. Table 4.1 shows the key skills mentioned by at least ten per cent of employers. **The most frequently mentioned skill by employers was interpersonal/teamwork** (38 per cent), followed closely by job-specific experience (35 per cent).

Table 4.1 Skills and attributes looked for

Multiple responses

Categories	Column percentages
Interpersonal/teamwork skills	38
Job-specific experience	35
Motivation	27
Self-presentation	27
Communication skills	21
People skills	20
Basic skills	19

Base: All (3,682)

The skills sought by employers varied according to job type:

• Employers recruiting for administrative roles were more likely than average to be looking for basic and communication skills, but less likely to require motivational and self-presentation skills.

• Interpersonal and self-presentation skills were more likely to be sought for bar/waiter/waitress work, whilst experience and motivation were less likely to needed for this type of work.

• For health vacancies, employers were much more likely than average to seek interpersonal skills, but less likely to require self-presentation and basic skills.

• Employers recruiting drivers were more likely to look for job-specific experience, but less likely to seek all other key skills.

• For cleaning vacancies, employers were less likely than average to be looking for any of the skills except motivation.

• Communication and basic skills were much less likely to be sought for catering vacancies.

Table A.9 in Appendix A provides detailed figures for key skills sought by the main job types.

The skills sought by employers did not generally vary according to the age profile of staff recruited. However, workplaces that had recruited staff aged under 25 were more likely than average to value self-presentation (this applied to 34 per cent of those who filled 75 per cent or more of their vacancies with people aged under 25), while job-specific experience was less relevant where **all** of the staff recruited were under 25 (22 per cent).

4.1.1 Most important skill

Employers who said that they look for more than one skill or attribute were subsequently asked which one they considered the most important when recruiting for low-skilled vacancies. Table 4.2 shows the results. If an employer mentioned only one skill, this skill was considered the most important.

As might be expected, the skills or attributes which employers considered the most important largely reflected the skills which they had most frequently mentioned. One-fifth said that interpersonal/teamwork was the most important skill they looked for, while one in six said job-specific experience.

The findings stress the importance of soft skills to employers. As well as interpersonal/teamwork skills, a further 18 per cent gave either communication or people skills as the single most important attribute required.

The importance of soft skills is confirmed by other research. For example, a report by Atkinson and Williams noted that employers valued personal traits such as reliability, motivation and honesty in low paid work[10], while Winterbotham *et al.* found that employers were less demanding of technical skills, considering them trainable if candidates exhibit employability and soft skills[11]. This is particularly important, as the transition to a service-based economy is likely to increase the importance of soft skills further in the future[12].

Table 4.2   Most important skill or attribute

Categories	Column percentages
Interpersonal/teamwork skills	19
Job-specific experience	16
Motivation	12
Communication skills	9
People skills	9
Self-presentation	7
Basic skills	5
Other/don't know	23

Base: All (3,682)

[10]   Atkinson, J. and Williams, M. (2003), *Employer Perspectives on the Recruitment, Retention and Advancement of Low-Pay, Low-Status Employees*, Government Chief Social Researcher's Office.

[11]   Winterbotham, M., Adams, L. and Kuechel, A. (2001), *Evaluation of the Work Based Learning for Adults Programme since April 2001:Qualitative interviews with ES Staff, providers and Employers*, DWP.

[12]   Moynagh, M. and Worsley, R. (2005), *Working in the 21st century,* ESRC, Future of Work Programme and the Tomorrow's Project.

Interpersonal/teamwork skills were the most important skill required for shop workers, administrative, bar/waiter/waitress work and health/caring vacancies. However, for driving, cleaning, skilled trades and catering roles, job-specific experience was considered the most important skill by employers. Table A.10 in Appendix A provides complete figures for the most important skills by the main job types.

4.1.2   Combinations of skills sought

The responses of those employers who said that they looked for more than one skill were further examined to see if any particular combinations of skills were apparent for the different job types. As might be expected, for nearly all the job types a combination of interpersonal/teamwork skills with another skill was the combination which emerged most often:

- for health/caring vacancies, the most common combination was interpersonal/ teamwork with people skills (mentioned by 31 per cent of employers who sought more than one skill for health roles), followed by interpersonal and motivation (30 per cent);

- drivers – interpersonal and experience were the most common combination (26 per cent), followed by interpersonal and self-presentation (25 per cent);

- shop workers – interpersonal and self-presentation skills (23 per cent);

- administration – interpersonal and basic skills (21 per cent);

- bar/waiter/waitress work – interpersonal and self-presentation (21 per cent).

These findings underline the relative importance of interpersonal/teamwork skills. As well as being the skill most commonly mentioned by employers and the most important, it was also the one which employers were most likely to mention in combination with another skill for most of the different job types.

4.1.3   Flexibility

Eight per cent of employers said that they require low-skilled applicants to be flexible. These employers were asked in what ways they required such applicants to be flexible. Employers' responses were taken down verbatim by interviewers and then grouped together into particular categories. Table 4.3 shows the flexibility requirements mentioned by at least ten per cent of employers. Because of the small number of respondents who sought flexibility (323), it is not possible to examine the findings by the different job types or other sub-groups.

Table 4.3   Ways in which employers require applicants to be flexible

Multiple responses

Categories	Column percentages
Varied/flexible hours	35
Ability to multi-task/do different tasks	27
Available at short notice to cover others' shifts	24
Extra hours/overtime	11
Night/shift work	10

Base: All employers who require applicants to be flexible (280)

4.2   How employers decide whether applicant has required skills

All employers were asked how they decide whether an applicant has the required skills and attributes for low-skilled jobs. Responses were unprompted and employers could mention more than one method. Figure 4.1 shows the findings.

Two-thirds of employers said that they used an **interview to decide whether applicants had the skills required for the job**. This method of assessment was mentioned far more than any other method. Previous research has highlighted the importance of the interview in selecting candidates, in particular to assess soft skills such as communication skills which (as noted above) are particularly valued by employers[13].

Employers recruiting for health/caring and administrative vacancies were particularly likely to mention using interviews (77 per cent and 76 per cent respectively); employers recruiting for catering and bar work vacancies were the least likely to say this (55 per cent and 53 per cent respectively).

The findings varied according to **workplace size**:

• Reflecting the findings relating to recruitment, larger workplaces were more likely than small ones to use specific 'formal' methods to assess whether job applicants had the necessary skills. However, interviews still ranked highest among small workplaces, emphasising the importance placed on interviews by all employers.

---

[13] Hogarth, T., Wilson, R. (2003), *Skills Shortages, Vacancies and Unemployment*, Institute for Employment Research, based on a series of reports for DfES.

- Small workplaces were more likely than larger ones to use 'informal' assessment methods to determine whether candidates had suitable skills, for example a trial period (longer than one work shift).

Figure 4.1   Methods used by employer to determine whether applicant has required skills

Interview 67%
Previous work experience 26%
Trial period 22%
Overall personality of applicant 19%
Strength of CV 19%
Strength of references 18%
Performance in assessment/test 12%

Base: All (3,682).
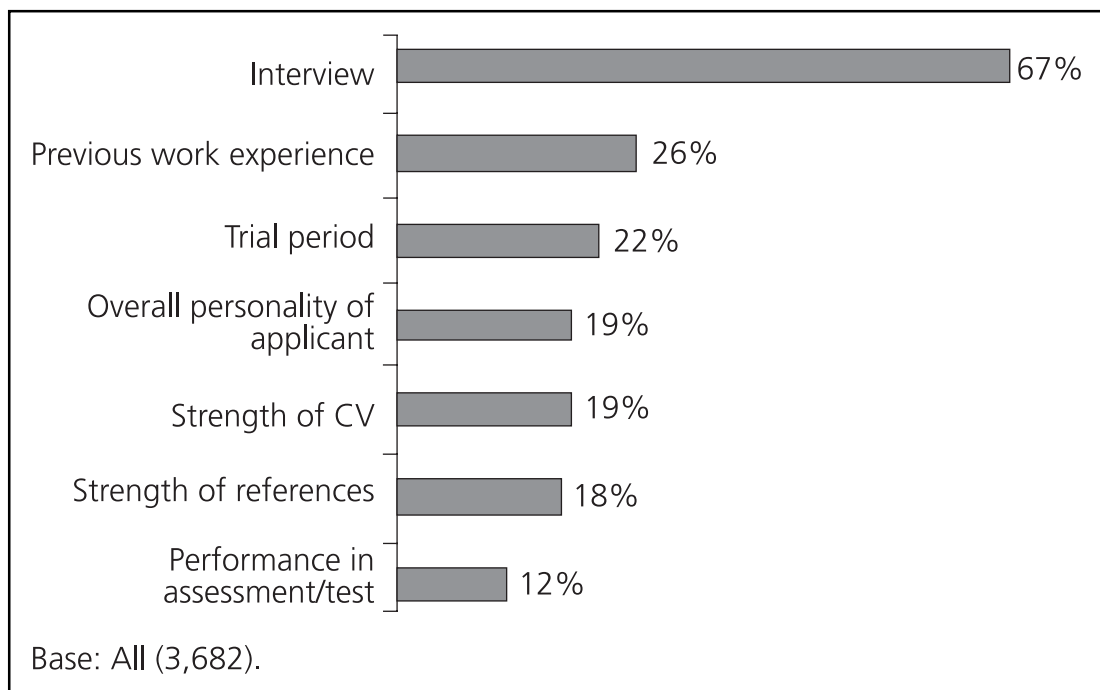
Table A.11 in Appendix A provides detailed figures for how employers decide whether an applicant has the requisite skills for the job by workplace size.

There were also some differences apparent in the assessment methods used by employers to determine skill suitability by **sector**:

- The business services sector was the most likely to use interviews for skills measurement (86 per cent); employers in the manufacturing and constructions sectors were less likely to mention interviews for this purpose (60 per cent and 53 per cent respectively).

- Employers in the hotel/restaurant and construction sectors were the most likely to use trial periods (32 per cent and 31 per cent respectively); only one in nine (11 per cent) employers in the business services sector used trial periods.

Looking specifically at **previous work experience**:

- Workplace size and sector generally had little effect on whether employers used an applicant's previous work experience to decide if they had the skills required for the job.

- When looking at the number of staff employers had tried to recruit, it was found that those who had tried to recruit **more than 20 low-skilled employees** in the past year were more likely than those who had tried to recruit fewer than 20 to look at previous work experience (44 per cent versus 24 per cent).

4.3   Defining factor for employers when recruiting

All employers were asked 'above all else, what makes you decide that an applicant is the best person for the job that you are recruiting for?' Employers' responses were taken down verbatim by interviewers and then grouped together into particular categories. Table 4.4 includes those factors mentioned by at least ten per cent of employers.

One quarter said that **the major factor influencing their decision was the performance at interview**. Given that this was the factor most frequently mentioned by employers, this finding further reinforces the importance that employers attach to the use of interviews when recruiting low-skilled applicants. As with the question looking at how employers decided whether an applicant had the required skills, employers recruiting for administrative vacancies were particularly likely to say performance at interview was key (30 per cent); those recruiting for skilled trades vacancies were the least likely to say this (15 per cent).

One-fifth of employers gave 'general personality' as a defining factor, whilst one in seven said 'first impressions/instinct' was key for them. These results confirm that how applicants first present themselves to prospective employers – be that at a formal interview or more generally in how their personality comes across – is instrumental in influencing their chances of employment.

In addition, one in seven employers cited 'having the necessary skills for the job' as being influential in their decision on whether to offer a job. The verbatim responses given by employers reveal that the 'necessary skills' either reflected those mentioned at earlier skills questions (for example, people skills, communication skills and so on) or were generic (that is, no specific skill was mentioned). However, specific skills or (non-formal) qualifications are important for many jobs (as described in Section 2.5 and in Section 4.4). The lower priority given to specific skills at this question may reflect that respondents are describing how they would choose between two or more **eligible** candidates (ie assuming that they would have the sufficient skills or experience to have been short-listed).

Table 4.4   Defining factor

	Multiple responses
Categories	**Column percentages**
Performance at interview	25
General personality	21
Have the necessary skills for the job	15
Previous work experience	14
First impressions/instinct	14
Ability to fit into a team	13
Attitude (self-motivated/self-confident)	12

Base: All (3,682)

Analysis of these findings by the key sub-groups shows that:

• Larger workplaces were again more likely than smaller ones to emphasise the importance of the interview. Larger workplaces were also more likely than smaller ones to say that having the necessary skills for the job was a defining recruitment factor. By contrast, small workplaces were more likely than average to mention first impressions or instinct. Table A.12 in Appendix A shows the detailed findings by workplace size.

• Employers in the health sector were most likely to say that an applicant's performance at interview was a defining factor (34 per cent); those in the construction and hotel sectors were the least likely to say so (18 per cent and 16 per cent respectively).

• Public sector employers were the most likely to mention having prerequisite skills (21 per cent health, 20 per cent education); this factor was least likely to be cited by employers in the hotel/restaurant sector (six per cent).

• Looking at the different job types for which employers were recruiting, having the necessary skills was most likely to be a defining factor for driving vacancies (22 per cent); it was least likely to be so for bar/waiter/waitress work (five per cent).

4.4   Importance, relevance and length of previous work experience

Table 4.5 shows the importance placed by employers on previous work experience. Overall, around two-thirds of employers said previous work experience was important, with a quarter believing it to be **very** important.

Table 4.5   Importance of previous work experience

Categories	Column percentages
Very important	26
Fairly important	41
Not very important	22
Not at all important	10
Important (very/fairly combined)	67
Not important (not very/not at all combined)	32
Don't know	2

Base: All (3,682)

Table A.13 in Appendix A shows the detailed findings for the importance of previous work experience by **job type**. These broadly reflect earlier findings on skills and attributes sought by employers, with employers:

- recruiting for driving, administrative, skilled trade and catering vacancies most likely to say that previous work experience was important;

- who were recruiting for bar/waiter/waitress, shop work and cleaning vacancies the least likely to say that work experience was important.

Employers who said that it was important for low-skilled applicants to have previous experience were subsequently asked whether the experience needed to be relevant to the skills and attributes required for the job. Overall, around three-fifths (61 per cent) of these employers said that **previous work experience did need to be relevant to the skills and attributes required for the job** (as opposed to general work experience).

- Employers recruiting for vacancies in skilled trades and catering were the most likely to say that previous work experience should be relevant to the role, whilst those recruiting for shop worker roles were the least likely to say this. Table A.14 in Appendix A presents the findings for the relevance of previous work experience by job type.

Employers who said that it was important for low-skilled applicants to have previous experience were also asked what **length of work experience** they looked for when recruiting. Although a third could not specify a length of time (possibly reflecting the recent Age Discrimination legislation which works against work experience being expressed in terms of time), the remainder were divided equally between those who looked for up to one year's previous work experience and those who wanted a year or more.

- Work experience of one year or more was most important for those employers recruiting for vacancies in the skilled trades, whilst it was less important for those recruiting for bar/waiter/waitress work and cleaning vacancies. Table A.15 in Appendix A displays the results for the length of previous work experience by job type.

4.5   Importance of economic inactivity

The importance of economic inactivity for recruitment decisions was explored by asking all employers 'if somebody had been out of work – including those who have been out of work because of ill-health, caring responsibilities or to have children – would you still consider recruiting them?' Almost three-quarters (74 per cent) of employers said 'yes – definitely' and a further sixth (16 per cent) said 'yes – possibly'; seven per cent said 'it depends' and only two per cent said 'no'.

Respondents most likely to say that they would definitely consider recruiting someone that has been out of work were:

• larger workplaces;

• those in the education and health sectors; employers in the construction sector were least likely to say this.

Employers that had used Jobcentre Plus were similar to others, indicating both that these employers appear to be no more amenable to employing people who had been out of work than other employers (presumably their use of Jobcentre Plus is based more on the access it provides to available candidates); but equally that employers that do not currently use Jobcentre Plus do not admit to any discrimination in this respect.

All employers were also asked **how long somebody would have to have been out of work** before they would consider **not** recruiting them. Very few employers gave a response to this question (52 per cent said it was not applicable and 31 per cent said they did not know). However, of those employers who did state a length of time, almost one-fifth (19 per cent) said up to a year, close to one half (45 per cent) said between one and five years, and 37 per cent said five or more years.

Other research suggests that employers can have a negative perception of long-term unemployment, even considering long-term unemployment as synonymous with being unemployable[14]. This indicates that the respondents in this survey who say they would consider these applicants may **consider** them, but may not always offer them a job in practice.

---

[14] Moss, N., Arrowsmith, J., *A review of what works for clients aged over 50,* DWP.

5 Over-qualified applicants

This chapter looks at the issue of over-qualified applicants: the proportion applying to organisations over the last year; whether the possession of formal qualifications for low-skilled jobs affects employers' recruitment decisions; and the advantages and disadvantages of over-qualified applicants as perceived by employers.

Summary

- One-half of workplaces had not had any over-qualified candidates apply to their organisation in the last 12 months.

- Over-qualified applicants were not seen as a problem by employers, with only three per cent saying that they would be less likely to recruit someone who had formal qualifications for a job that did not require any (than someone who did not). Indeed, one in three employers said that they would actually be more likely to recruit such an applicant and three-fifths said it would not make any difference.

5.1 Proportion of over-qualified applicants

All employers were asked approximately what proportion of applicants who had applied to their organisations in the last year was over-qualified[15]. Figure 5.1 displays the findings. **One half of organisations had not had any over-qualified candidates** apply for a position in the last year.

---

[15] The interview defined over-qualified applicants as being those 'who have formal qualifications and who apply for positions that do not require formal qualifications'.

Figure 5.1   Proportion of over-qualified applicants applied to organisation in last 12 months

Base: All (3,682).
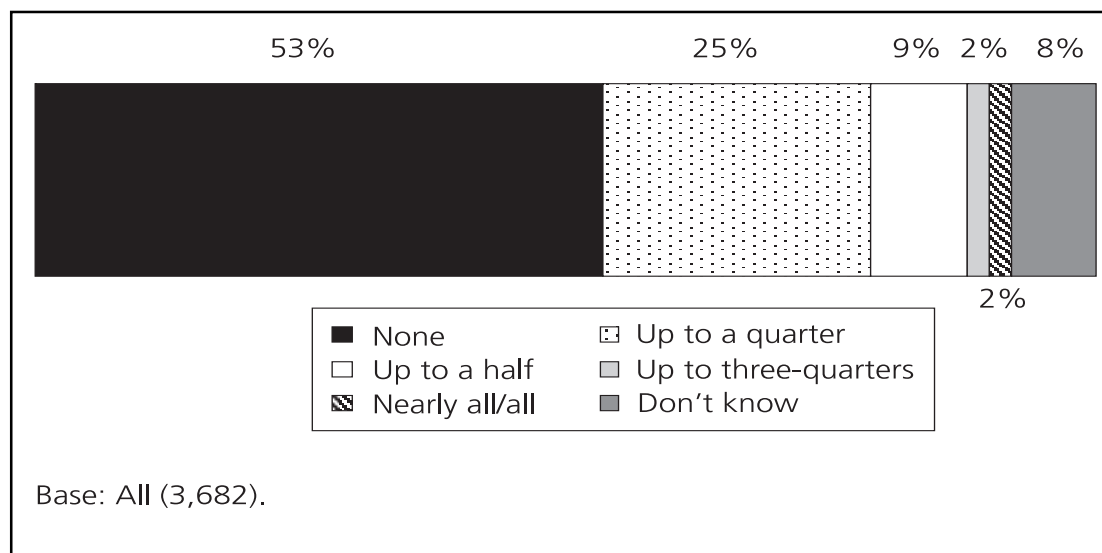
Analysis of the findings by **workplace size and sector** reveals that:

• There was a correlation between the size of the workplace and the proportion of workplaces which had had any over-qualified applicants apply in the last year: the larger the workplace the more likely it was to have received applications from over-qualified candidates. Table A.16 in Appendix A provides detailed figures for the proportion of over-qualified applicants by workplace size.

• Employers in the construction sector were the least likely to have received applications from over-qualified candidates in the last 12 months (73 per cent with no over-qualified applications).

5.2   Whether possession of formal qualifications affects recruitment decisions for low-skilled vacancies

All employers were also asked how their recruitment decision would be affected if an applicant did have formal qualifications for a post that did not require formal qualifications (compared with an applicant who did not possess formal qualifications). Figure 5.2 shows the results. **One in three employers said that they would be more likely to recruit such a candidate**. The proportion of over-qualified applications received by an organisation over the last year did not noticeably affect an employer's decision on whether they would be more or less likely to recruit an over-qualified applicant.

Previous research has found that qualifications can be used by employers as indicators of skills, so that while they may not be **required** for the job, they may see them as providing evidence of ability to do the job[16].

Figure 5.2   Whether possession of formal qualifications affects recruitment decision

5%

31%

3%

62%

More likely to recruit
Less likely to recruit
Make no difference
Don't know

Base: All (3,682).
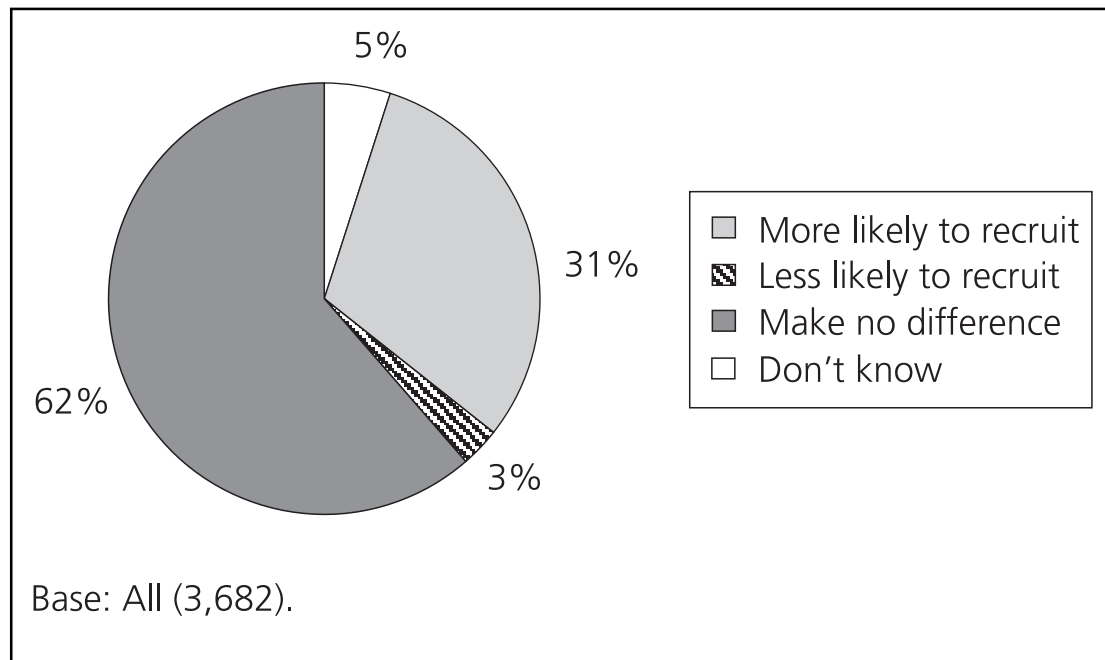
Looking at the key sub-groups:

- Workplaces with 10 to 24 employees were most inclined to say that they would be more likely to recruit applicants who were over-qualified. Table A.17 in Appendix A gives the detailed findings for whether possession of formal qualifications affects recruitment decision by workplace size.

- Employers in the health sector were the most likely to state that they would be more likely to recruit an over-qualified applicant for a low-skilled vacancy (38 per cent); employers in the transport sector were the least likely to say this (23 per cent) – this is likely to be because, as already noted, transport employers are more concerned about applicants having non-formal qualifications, in particular a driving licence (see Section 2.5).

---

[16] Gasteen, A., Houston, J. (2005), *Scottish Employers' Attitudes towards Qualifications and Skills*, Scottish Qualification Authority Research and Information Bulletin Number 10, SQA.

5.3 Advantages and disadvantages of recruiting over-qualified applicants

Employers who said that they had had received an application from an over-qualified candidate in the last year were asked what they thought were the **advantages** of recruiting such staff. Around half did not know, so Table 5.1 presents the findings based on those employers who did express an opinion. The most frequently given answer was that these applicants were able to learn more quickly.

The figures were too small to allow for detailed analysis by the key sub-groups, although an apparent trend is that the larger the workplace employer, the more likely they were to say that over-qualified applicants can be put forward for more senior roles when these arise.

Table 5.1 Advantages of recruiting over-qualified applicants[17]

	Multiple responses
Categories	**Column percentages**
They are able to learn more quickly	29
They have more experience/knowledge	20
They can be put forward for more senior roles when these arise	17
They require less supervision	15
They are more innovative	12
General contribution to the company	11
They show more common sense	11

Base: All employers with any over-qualified candidates applying to their organisation in the last year and who expressed an opinion (781)

Employers who said that they had had any over-qualified candidates apply to their organisation in the last year where also asked what they thought were the **disadvantages** of recruiting such staff. Table 5.2 provides the results.

Despite only three per cent of employers saying that they would be less likely to recruit an over-qualified applicant, employers were more forthcoming in suggesting the disadvantages of recruiting such staff (82 per cent gave at least one disadvantage compared with 47 cent who suggested at least one advantage). However, survey respondents sometimes find it easier to give negative answers than positive ones.

---

[17] Only those advantages which were mentioned by at least ten per cent of employers expressing an opinion have been included in this table.

The most frequent answer was that over-qualified applicants do not stay in the job long, and this disadvantage was reinforced by other answers: that such applicants get bored/frustrated quickly and that these applicants think they the job is beneath them.

Analysis of the key-sub-groups reveals that:

• medium-sized workplaces (50-249 staff) were most likely to say that over-qualified applicants do not stay in the job long (49 per cent);

• employers in the education sector were most likely to say that over-qualified applicants do not remain in the job for long (44 per cent).

Table 5.2   Disadvantages of recruiting over-qualified applicants

	Multiple responses
Categories	**Column percentages**
They do not stay in the job long	37
They get bored/frustrated quickly	26
They think that they are above the job/the job is beneath them	12
They expect higher pay	11
They are less motivated	8
They are over-confident	7
It is difficult to provide them with challenges	3
Don't know/no answer	18

Base: All employers with any over-qualified candidates applying to their organisation in the last year (1,515)

6   Training

This section examines the training (both off-the-job and on-the-job) provided by employers to low-skilled workers in the past 12 months.

Summary

- Around half of employers provided off-the job training. Of these, a third said that at least some of the training was required before someone could start the job.

- Just over half said they provided on-the-job training.

6.1   Off-the-job training

One half of workplaces said that they had funded or arranged any off-the-job training or development[18] **for employees in low-skill jobs in the past 12 months**. The Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA) (2003) report found that, although skills development was often required in jobs in lower occupational groups, employers were least likely to provide formal training for those in elementary occupations, as well as sales and customer staff[19].

Table 6.1 shows the findings analysed by **workplace size**. Medium-sized workplaces (50-249 staff) were most likely to provide off-the-job training. The lower figure among large employers also applies when looking at organisation size, as well as workplace size, indicating that large employers were less likely to provide off-the-job training than medium-sized employers.

---

[18]   This was defined as 'training away from the individual's immediate work position, whether on your premises or elsewhere'.

[19]   SSDA (2004), Skills for Business Survey 2003 – Survey of Employers, Research Report No 4.

The health (78 per cent), education (75 per cent) and community/social service (60 per cent) **sectors** were all more likely to provide off-the-job training. Related to this, those who only recruited staff aged 50 or over to fill their vacancies were more likely than average to provide off-the-job training (these sectors were most likely to recruit staff aged 50 or over). Those in the wholesale/retail (35 per cent), manufacturing (40 per cent) and transport sectors (42 per cent) were less likely to provide off-the-job training.

Looking at variations based on the type of vacancies recruited for; those recruiting health workers were most likely to provide off-the-job training (86 per cent), followed by recruiters of administrative and skilled trade workers (both 59 per cent). Those recruiting shop workers were least likely to offer this type of training (39 per cent). Table A.18 in Appendix A provides detailed figures of those providing off-the-job training by job type.

Table 6.1   Whether funded or arranged any off-the-job training/ development for low-skilled workers

	Column percentages					
Categories	**Total**	**Fewer than 10**	**10-19**	**20-49**	**50-249**	**250 or more**
Yes	52	41	57	64	74	58
No	47	59	42	35	23	34
Don't know	1	1	1	1	3	7
Base: All	*3,682*	*1,306*	*727*	*629*	*572*	*429*

6.1.1   How selected for off-the-job training

Employers (providing off-the-job training) were asked how low-skilled workers were selected for this training: 54 per cent said they were selected automatically, 31 per cent said they were selected by their manager, 12 per cent by self-selection/staff request, and eight per cent by both the individual and the manager agreeing together.

• Those in the business services and health sectors were more likely to say that selection was automatic (61 per cent and 64 per cent respectively), while those in the hotels/restaurants and education sectors were less likely to say this (35 per cent and 47 per cent respectively); hotels and restaurants were more likely to say selection was by management.

• Self-selection/staff request was more common than average in the education sector (18 per cent).

• Those that recruited health workers were by far the most likely to say that selection was automatic (69 per cent), while recruiters of bar workers and cleaners were less likely to say this (38 and 44 per cent respectively).

• Selection by manager was most evident amongst recruiters of bar workers and skilled tradesmen (42 per cent and 37 per cent respectively), but was least likely amongst those that recruited health workers.

Table A.19 in Appendix A provides detailed figures of how employees are selected for off-the-job training by job type.

6.2   On-the-job training

As shown in Table 6.2, **just over half of employers said that they had arranged any on-the-job or informal training**[20] **in the past year**. The table also shows that the prevalence of on-the-job training increases with workplace size, although this levels out once **workplace size** reaches 50.

The education and health sectors were most likely to offer on-the-job training (82 per cent and 71 per cent respectively), while the wholesale/retail (49 per cent), hotels/restaurants (49 per cent) and transport sectors (43 per cent) were less likely to do so.

Partially supporting the above, those that recruited health workers were most likely to provide on-the-job training (78 per cent), while recruiters of drivers and bar workers were less likely to provide this (48 per cent and 52 per cent respectively). Table A.20 in Appendix A provides detailed figures of those providing on-the-job training by job type.

Table 6.2   Whether arranged any on-the-job or informal training for low-skilled workers

	Column percentages					
Categories	Total	Fewer than 10	10-19	20-49	50-249	250 or more
Yes	57	47	58	68	75	73
No	41	52	40	30	22	18
Don't know	2	1	2	2	3	7
Base: All	*3,682*	*1,306*	*727*	*629*	*572*	*429*

---

[20]   This was defined as 'activities that would be recognised as training by unqualified workers, and not the sort of learning experience that could take place all the time'.

6.3 Whether any training necessary before staff start doing job

Over a third (37 per cent) of employers that provided off-the-job training said that at least some of this had been necessary before staff could start doing their job.

Looking at sub-group differences:

• Large workplaces (with 250 or more staff) were most likely than average to say this. Full details are shown in Table A.21.

• Those in the manufacturing sector were more likely than average say that the training was necessary before starting work (53 per cent), while those in the education sector were less likely to say this (20 per cent).

• Those recruiting for skilled trades in the past 12 were more likely to say that the training was necessary before starting work (49 per cent), while those recruiting administrative and catering staff were less likely to say this (30 per cent and 28 per cent respectively. Table A.22 in Appendix A provides detailed figures on whether training is necessary before starting the job by type of vacancy.

7   Conclusions

This section provides some conclusions from the research, focusing on key points that can help Jobcentre Plus advisers.

7.1   Recruitment methods

While over a third of workplaces in the survey had used Jobcentre Plus in the previous 12 months, it is obviously important to maximise the number of employers that do use Jobcentre Plus for recruitment. Of particular relevance are employers that rely on word-of-mouth as a recruitment method, as they are less likely to use other methods (e.g. local papers, shop windows) that jobseekers may have access to. Those using word-of-mouth:

* tend to be smaller, although some larger employers use this method as well;

* are more likely to be in the construction, hotel/restaurant and transport/storage/communication sectors;

* find this method successful for bar/waiter/waitress work and catering work.

These types of jobs may therefore be less accessible to jobseekers.

It is also clear from the survey that employers make frequent use of local papers for recruitment. Ensuring that jobseekers have access to local papers (e.g. by making sure these are available in Jobcentre Plus offices) will allow them to be aware of a larger number – and wider range – of vacancies.

7.2   Skills

Over a quarter of employers said that at least some of the low-skilled jobs they had recruited for required a driving licence, and this was not limited to driving jobs. This raises two issues:

* it is important that it is clear where vacancies require a driving licence and that applicants have one before applying;

- it re-inforces the importance of a driving licence to jobseekers (previous research has also shown this, both in terms of employability and access to work locations). Some funding or incentives for taking driving lessons may be appropriate.

The survey also highlighted the importance of soft skills for many jobs. This raises the following issues:

- jobseekers should be made aware of the need to make a positive impression, and to show communication skills, at the interview and other initial contacts with the employer;

- this suggests that advice and training in preparing for, and performing well at, interviews is as important as assistance with making job applications/writing CVs;

- where possible, it will be useful to be aware of the selection methods used by the employer. The survey indicates that many employers use a combination of methods, and that large employers often use tests or assessment days as a means of selection.

The main suggestion that employers made to Jobcentre Plus was that it should ensure that applicants had the necessary experience for the job. This emphasises that the job matching process needs to be as precise as possible.

Employers also made it known that they did not see the recruitment of over-qualified applicants as a problem; only a tiny proportion said that they would be less likely to recruit an over-qualified candidate. This suggests that Jobcentre Plus should not be reticent about putting forward applicants for low-skilled vacancies who they perceive to be over-qualified, as most employers are unlikely to turn away such candidates.

7.3   Job type summary

The survey found variations between the different types of low-skilled job. The Table 7.1 summarises the key aspects of the main job types, specifically the:

- types of job involved (in terms of type of employers, whether generally full/part-time work);

- most successful recruitment methods for these job types, as reported by employers;

- skills/attributes employers look for when recruiting for these types of vacancy.

Table 7.1   Summary of key aspects of the main job types

	Type of work: employer (sector/ size), hours etc	Most successful recruitment methods	What employers look for
Shop workers	Both full and part-time work	Word-of-mouth, noticeboards/shop windows	Interpersonal/teamwork skills, self-presentation
Admin.	Larger workplaces in business, health/ social care, other community/social/ personal service; full and part-time work	Local papers	Range including interpersonal/teamwork skills, experience, communication skills, basic skills
Bar/waiter/waitress	Mostly part-time, and a relatively high proportion of non-permanent work	Word-of-mouth	Interpersonal/teamwork skills, self-presentation
Health/caring assistant	Both full-time and part-time work	Local papers	Interpersonal/teamwork skills with combination of other soft skills
Drivers/transport	Large workplaces in wholesale/retail, as well as transport/ communication. Mainly full-time, permanent jobs	Local papers, word-of-mouth, Jobcentre Plus	Experience
Cleaning	Most commonly hotels/restaurants, medium and large workplaces. Mostly part-time work but generally permanent contracts	Local papers, word-of-mouth, Jobcentre Plus	Experience, motivation
Skilled trades	Construction, other community/social/ personal service; mostly full-time, permanent jobs	Local papers, word-of-mouth	Experience
Catering	Both full-time and part-time work	Word-of-mouth, local papers, Jobcentre Plus	Experience

Appendix A
Additional tables

Table A.1   **Sector profile of workplace employers covered in the survey, compared with profile of all workplace employers**

| | Column percentages | |
Categories	Survey group	All workplaces
A – Agriculture, hunting and forestry	1	6
B – Fishing	*	*
C – Mining and quarrying	*	*
D – Manufacturing	6	10
E – Electricity, gas and water supply	*	*
F – Construction	5	8
G – Wholesale and retail trade	22	25
H – Hotels and restaurants	12	7
I – Transport, storage and communication	5	4
J – Financial intermediation	3	4
K – Real estate, renting and business activities ('business')	10	20
L – Public administration and defence, compulsory social security	1	1
M – Education	4	3
N – Health and social work	9	5
O – Other community, social activities	16	9
P – Private households with employed persons	*	*
Q – Extra-territorial organisations and bodies	*	*

Base: All workplaces in the survey (3,682); All workplaces with employees in GB (656,270)

Table A.2   Regional profile of workplace employers covered in the survey, compared with profile of all workplace employers

	Column percentages	
Categories	**Survey group**	**All workplaces**
North	4	4
North West	11	10
London	12	15
South East	21	20
South West	11	10
East Midlands	8	7
West Midlands	9	9
East Anglia	4	4
Yorkshire & Humberside	8	8
Scotland	8	8
Wales	5	5

Base: All workplaces in the survey (3,682); All workplaces with employees in GB (656,270)

Table A.3   Job types recruited for, by number of vacancies in the past 12 months

Multiple responses

	Column percentages				
Categories	**Total**	**1**	**2-4**	**5-20**	**21+**
Shop workers/sales	22	23	22	20	26
Administrative	21	19	23	18	26
Bar work/waiter/ress	10	5	10	22	12
Health/caring assistants	9	6	11	11	5
Drivers/transport	8	6	7	8	25
Cleaning	6	4	6	13	5
Skilled trades	6	7	6	5	10
Catering	6	2	6	10	16

Base: All (3,682)

Table A.4   Full-time and permanent work, by job type

	Column percentages							
Categories	**Shop worker**	**Admin**	**Bar work**	**Health**	**Drivers**	**Cleaning**	**Skilled trades**	**Catering**
Full-time	52	68	46	69	67	84	31	95
Part-time	63	47	86	60	62	34	79	13
All permanent	85	83	76	86	85	90	86	93
Some permanent	8	11	11	8	9	6	5	4
None permanent[1]	6	6	12	7	6	3	9	4
Base: All	*459*	*710*	*638*	*186*	*329*	*240*	*328*	*115*

[1] The survey excluded workplaces that **only** recruited for temporary vacancies. However, as shown in the table, in some cases employers had no permanent vacancies in specific job types.

Table A.5   Recruitment methods by workplace size

						Multiple responses
	Column percentages					
Categories	**Total**	**Fewer than 10**	**10-19**	**20-49**	**50-249**	**250 or more**
Local papers	47	35	52	56	69	68
Word of mouth/personal recommendation	31	34	30	30	26	24
Jobcentre Plus	31	28	31	36	33	34
Notice boards/shop windows	19	24	14	12	11	18
Recruitment agencies	10	7	10	11	18	25
Internet/web-based	8	4	7	9	19	25
Own website	5	4	3	5	8	24
Trade/specialist press	3	2	2	5	4	7
Internal advertising	2	2	3	1	5	5
Receive speculative applications	2	2	2	1	2	0
Through local schools or colleges	1	2	2	1	1	1
National press	1	*	1	1	*	*
Don't know	1	1	1	2	*	4
Base: All	*3,682*	*1,306*	*727*	*629*	*572*	*429*

Table A.6   Most successful recruitment methods by job type

Multiple responses

								Column percentages
Categories	**Total**	**Shop worker**	**Admin**	**Bar work**	**Health**	**Drivers**	**Cleaning**	**Skilled trades**	**Catering**
Local papers	33	20	47	18	51	29	29	34	20
Word-of-mouth	24	24	13	34	14	25	23	34	29
Jobcentre Plus	14	10	11	16	16	23	20	12	18
Notice boards	11	27	3	18	4	7	10	4	13
Recruitment agencies	6	2	11	1	4	3	1	1	2
Internet	2	2	3	2	3	1	1	1	4
Trade press	1	1					2	1	1
Own website	1	1	2		1	2		3	1
Base: All	*3,682*	*459*	*710*	*638*	*186*	*240*	*328*	*115*	*329*

Table A.7   How candidates normally contact to express interest in vacancies

Multiple responses

					Column percentages
Categories	**Total**	**Fewer than 10**	**10-19**	**20-49**	**50-249**	**250 or more**
Telephone	56	54	57	58	60	66
Face-to-face	27	36	24	21	12	7
In writing	27	22	30	32	35	27
E-mail	15	11	14	16	25	40
Via Jobcentre Plus Adviser	5	6	4	5	2	3
Recruitment agency	2	2	3	4	3	6
Internet	1	1	1	0	2	8
Other	2	2	3	1	3	4
Base: All	*3,682*	*1,306*	*727*	*629*	*572*	*429*

Table A.8   Selection methods used to select candidates, by workplace size

Multiple responses

		Column percentages				
Categories	**Total**	**Fewer than 10**	**10-19**	**20-49**	**50-249**	**250 or more**
Formal interview	74	66	77	81	89	97
Application form/letter	65	55	68	73	82	89
Informal interview/chat	58	64	60	53	40	30
Test or exercise	15	12	14	15	21	45
Assessment day	12	12	11	13	13	28
Probationary/trial period	5	6	6	5	5	*
Open day	4	4	3	4	5	21
Base: All	*3,682*	*1,306*	*727*	*629*	*572*	*429*

Table A.9   Skills and attributes looked for by job type

Multiple responses

		Column percentages						
Categories	**Total**	**Shop worker**	**Admin**	**Bar work**	**Health**	**Drivers**	**Cleaning**	**Skilled trades**	**Catering**
Interpersonal/ teamwork	38	38	35	46	63	28	14	38	33
Experience	35	28	33	18	35	51	29	41	42
Motivation	27	26	17	19	34	11	32	31	24
Self-presentation	27	35	19	47	18	23	14	18	27
Communication skills	21	19	29	20	25	9	7	9	7
People	20	25	14	27	33	10	8	9	17
Basic	19	19	34	15	9	4	3	12	8
Base: All	*3,682*	*459*	*710*	*638*	*186*	*240*	*328*	*115*	*329*

Table A.10   Most important skill or attribute by job type

Multiple responses

Column percentages

Categories	Total	Shop worker	Admin	Bar work	Health	Drivers	Cleaning	Skilled trades	Catering
Interpersonal/ teamwork	19	21	18	21	26	12	7	17	13
Experience	16	9	15	6	12	16	18	30	28
Motivation	12	9	8	9	7	6	13	12	10
Communication skills	9	9	13	7	10	2	2	1	2
People	9	12	4	12	10	3	2	4	7
Self-presentation	7	10	3	15	2	7	3	1	7
Basic	5	3	13	3	*	2	1	6	4
Other/don't know	23	27	26	28	33	52	54	29	29
Base: All	*3,682*	*459*	*710*	*638*	*186*	*240*	*328*	*115*	*329*

Table A.11   Methods used by employer to determine whether applicant has required skills by workplace size

Multiple responses

Column percentages

Categories	Total	Fewer than 10	10-19	20-49	50-249	250 or more
Performance at interview	67	64	69	70	74	71
Previous work experience	26	25	25	21	26	29
Trial period	22	24	24	22	17	10
Strength of CV	19	17	18	24	22	31
Overall personality of applicant	19	21	20	17	14	10
Strength of references	18	15	19	22	23	20
Performance in assessment/test	12	11	10	14	18	28
Performance at trial work-shift	11	13	11	9	8	4
Base: All	*3,682*	*1,306*	*727*	*629*	*572*	*429*

N.B. Only those methods which were mentioned by at least ten per cent of employers have been included in this table.

Table A.12   Defining factor by workplace size

Multiple responses

		Column percentages				
Categories	**Total**	**Fewer than 10**	**10-19**	**20-49**	**50-249**	**250 or more**
Performance at interview	25	23	26	25	31	44
General personality	21	24	21	18	18	4
Have the necessary skills for the job	15	13	12	16	25	37
Previous work experience	14	13	12	14	21	16
First impressions/instinct	14	16	13	13	9	1
Ability to fit into a team	13	11	16	14	13	8
Attitude (self-motivated/ self-confident)	12	11	14	14	11	5
Base: All	*3,682*	*1,306*	*727*	*629*	*572*	*429*

N.B. Only those factors which were mentioned by at least ten per cent of employers have been included in this table.

Table A.13   Importance of previous work experience by job type

				Column percentages					
Categories	**Total**	**Shop worker**	**Admin**	**Bar work**	**Health**	**Drivers**	**Cleaning**	**Skilled trades**	**Catering**
Very important	26	15	32	13	20	27	9	44	39
Fairly important	41	45	47	36	49	53	46	27	29
Not very important	22	27	13	32	16	14	29	13	19
Not at all important	10	11	6	18	14	5	13	14	11
Important	67	60	79	49	68	80	55	72	68
Not important	32	38	20	51	31	19	41	28	30
Don't know	2	2	1	1	1	1	3	1	2
Base: All	*3,682*	*459*	*710*	*638*	*186*	*240*	*328*	*115*	*329*

Table A.14   Relevance of previous work experience by job type

Categories	Total	Shop worker	Admin	Bar work	Health	Drivers	Cleaning	Skilled trades	Catering
				Column percentages					
Yes	61	46	66	59	71	60	61	87	80
No	37	53	32	40	27	39	38	13	17
Don't know	3	1	2	1	1	1	1	–	3
Base: All who said previous experience was important	*2,356*	*256*	*572*	*304*	*129*	*183*	*174*	*79*	*210*

Table A.15   Length of previous work experience looked for by job type

Categories	Total	Shop worker	Admin	Bar work	Health	Drivers	Cleaning	Skilled trades	Catering
				Column percentages					
Less than one year	28	37	22	48	26	19	40	15	30
One year or more	36	26	42	17	33	36	23	55	36
Don't know	36	37	36	35	41	45	37	30	34
Base: All who said previous experience was important	*2,356*	*256*	*572*	*304*	*129*	*183*	*174*	*79*	*210*

Table A.16   Proportion of over-qualified applicants applied to organisation in last 12 months by workplace size

Categories	Total	Fewer than 10	10-19	20-49	50-249	250 or more
			Column percentages			
None	53	59	56	48	39	18
Up to a quarter	25	18	26	29	40	55
Up to a half	9	11	8	10	8	4
Up to three-quarters	2	1	3	4	3	-
Nearly all/all	2	3	2	2	1	3
Don't know	8	7	6	8	10	23
Base: All	*3,682*	*1,306*	*727*	*629*	*572*	*429*

Table A.17 **Whether possession of formal qualifications affects recruitment decision by work place size**

		Column percentages				
Categories	**Total**	**Fewer than 10**	**10-19**	**20-49**	**50-249**	**250 or more**
More likely to recruit him/her	31	28	39	30	32	24
Make no difference	62	64	55	64	61	66
Less likely to recruit him/her	3	4	3	2	3	-
Don't know	5	4	4	5	5	11
Base: All	*3,682*	*1,306*	*727*	*629*	*572*	*429*

Table A.18 **Whether funded or arranged any off-the-job training or development, by job type**

		Column percentages						
Categories	**Total**	**Shop worker**	**Admin**	**Bar work**	**Health**	**Drivers**	**Cleaning**	**Skilled trades**	**Catering**
Yes	52	39	59	51	86	50	50	59	53
No	47	61	40	49	14	49	48	51	45
Don't know	1	*	2	1	*	2	2	1	2
Base: All	*3,682*	*459*	*710*	*638*	*186*	*240*	*328*	*115*	*329*

Table A.19   How employees are selected for off-the-job training, by job type

Multiple responses

Column percentages

Categories	Total	Shop worker	Admin	Bar work	Health	Drivers	Cleaning	Skilled trades	Catering
Automatic	54	59	47	38	69	50	44	51	48
Selection by manager	31	29	36	42	19	30	31	37	34
Self-selection or staff request	12	11	15	15	13	13	17	11	9
By individual and manager together	8	7	9	4	6	5	11	5	10
By personnel department	2	1	3	1	1	*	1	4	*
Don't know	2	3	2	1	1	4	2	1	*
Other	2	2	2	4	1	1	5	4	3
Base: All employers who arranged off-the-job training in last year	*2,117*	*206*	*473*	*301*	*154*	*133*	*186*	*76*	*183*

Table A.20   Whether funded or arranged any on-the-job training, by job type

Column percentages

Categories	Total	Shop worker	Admin	Bar work	Health	Drivers	Cleaning	Skilled trades	Catering
Yes	57	53	61	52	78	48	55	61	61
No	41	45	37	46	16	50	43	35	37
Don't know	2	2	2	2	6	2	2	4	2
Base: All	*3,682*	*459*	*710*	*638*	*186*	*240*	*328*	*115*	*329*

Table A.21 **Whether any of the off-the-job training has been necessary before staff could start job, by size of workplace**

		Column percentages				
Categories	Total	Fewer than 10	10-19	20-49	50-249	250 or more
Yes	37	35	32	42	35	52
No	62	65	67	57	65	46
Don't know	*	-	*	*	1	1
Base: All employers that provided off-the-job training in last 12 months	*2,117*	*549*	*429*	*411*	*412*	*307*

Table A.22 **Whether any off-the-job training has been necessary before staff could start job, by job type**

					Column percentages				
Categories	Total	Shop worker	Admin	Bar work	Health	Drivers	Cleaning	Skilled trades	Catering
Yes	37	38	30	36	41	38	37	49	28
No	62	61	69	64	58	61	63	51	72
Don't know	*	1	*	1	1	1	*	0	*
Base: All employers who arranged off-the-job training in last 12 months	*2,117*	*206*	*473*	*301*	*154*	*133*	*186*	*76*	*183*

Appendix B
Sample design

It was decided that a two-stage approach to sampling and fieldwork would be adopted for this survey given the initial uncertainty over the eligibility rate. This allowed assumptions to be reviewed after the first stage.

Stage 1

The target number of interviews for the first stage was 500, assuming an eligibility rate of 30 per cent. The sample was stratified by size band and region.

All cases were selected from employer sites in Great Britain at the workplace level with one or more employees, excluding proprietorships.

The following cases were excluded from the selection procedure:

• those without telephone numbers;

• those from the Northern Ireland and the Channel Islands D&B 'Standard Region' areas;

• cases selected for the pilot survey.

The following sampling procedure was then adopted:

• Selection took place within 84 cells, which combined region and size band.

• Within each sampling cell, cases were ranked by the actual number of employees; the following number of cases were then be selected, using '1 in n' selection:

Table B.1   Stage 1 sampling procedure

	No. of employees at site							
Region	**1**	**2-4**	**5-9**	**10-24**	**25-49**	**50-249**	**>=250**	**Total**
North	37	273	195	143	70	66	60	844
North West (excluding Greater Manchester)	23	157	118	85	43	39	37	501
South East (outside M25)	61	368	278	189	95	86	73	1,150
South West	49	346	221	139	67	58	51	932
East Midlands	37	270	199	141	74	66	57	844
West Midlands	36	265	204	147	75	65	51	843
East Anglia	42	282	209	138	69	63	60	863
Yorkshire & Humberside	36	266	194	142	72	69	58	837
South East (inside M25)	59	336	269	186	92	85	87	1,114
Scotland	41	267	204	144	69	72	51	849
Wales	42	331	209	142	65	60	56	905
Greater Manchester	14	89	74	58	31	28	25	318
Total	477	3,251	2,372	1,653	822	758	667	10,000

This process yielded 10,000 cases, more than was required for stage 1 of the survey. A '1 in 2' selection was therefore applied, producing a stage 1 sample of 5,000 cases (with the remaining 5,000 cases held as a stage 1 reserve sample).[21]

Stage 2

Once the first stage had been completed, assumptions were revised for the second stage to reach the remaining target number of interviews (3,000). Fieldwork figures from the first stage were used to confirm the design of the sample for stage 2.

The target number of interviews for the first stage was 500, assuming an eligibility rate of 30 per cent. The sample was again stratified by size band and region.

All cases were again selected from employer sites in Great Britain at the workplace level with one or more employees, excluding proprietorships.

---

[21] The final issued sample for stage 1 was 4,951 cases as a small number of duplicates were removed.

The following cases were excluded from the selection procedure:

- those without telephone numbers;

- those from the Northern Ireland and the Channel Islands D&B 'Standard Region' areas;

- cases selected for stage 1.

The following sampling procedure was then adopted:

- Selection took place within 84 cells, which combined region and size band.

- Within each sampling cell, cases were ranked by the actual number of employees; the following number of cases were then be selected, using '1 in n' selection:

Table B.2   Stage 2 sampling procedure

| Region | No. of employees at site | | | | | | | |
	1	2-4	5-9	10-24	25-49	50-249	>=250	Total
North	90	696	281	347	145	162	168	1,889
North West (excluding Greater Manchester)	51	372	159	193	86	91	99	1,051
South East (outside M25)	202	1,212	546	585	257	269	254	3,325
South West	107	797	265	273	111	109	115	1,778
East Midlands	72	560	223	278	129	133	132	1,528
West Midlands	119	924	429	491	224	218	189	2,594
East Anglia	107	752	319	340	148	158	176	1,999
Yorkshire & Humberside	104	822	348	416	186	207	194	2,276
South East (inside M25)	241	1,366	677	722	316	332	386	4,039
Scotland	122	808	365	418	171	216	163	2,264
Wales	124	1,044	368	400	155	166	180	2,437
Greater Manchester	32	204	99	136	64	67	67	668
Total	1,372	9,556	4,080	4,598	1,992	2,128	2,122	25,848

This process yielded 25,848 cases, more than was required for stage 2 of the survey. A '1 in n' selection was therefore applied, producing a final stage 2 issued sample of 14,990 cases. The stage 2 sample was issued in three separate batches to help manage the fieldwork processes effectively.

Weighting

A weight was applied to reflect differential response amongst the key employer demographics. The derived weight used interlocking cells for sector, region and size.

Appendix C
Questionnaire

SCREENER QUESTIONS

ASK ALL

S1) In the last 12 months, have any new <LOOP STATEMENT> started working at this site? [QSCR1]

- Permanent staff

- Staff on temporary contracts

IF NECESSARY: Do not include transfers from other parts of the organisation; employees returning from maternity leave or career breaks, or school-age weekend staff

Yes 1
No 2
Don't know 3

IF DON'T KNOW AT BOTH STATEMENTS AT S1 [IF 3 TWICE AT QSCR1]
S2) Have **any** new staff from outside your organisation started working at this site, in the last 12 months? [QSCR2]

Yes 1
No 2
Don't know 3

IF NOT YES AT S1 OR S2 [IF NOT 1 OR 1 AT QSCR2 OR QSCR3]

S3) Have you **tried** to recruit staff in the last 12 months, or are you **in the process of** recruiting? [QSCR3]
ADD IF NECESSARY: Again, this includes any permanent or temporary staff.

Yes 1
No – THANK YOU AND GOODBYE 2
Don't know – CHECK IF ANOTHER RESPONDENT OR THANK YOU AND GOODBYE 3

IF YES AT S1, S2 OR S3 [IF 1 AT QSCR1 OR QSCR2 OR QSCR3]

S4) Thinking of the vacancies that you have recruited for, or tried to recruit for, in the last 12 months, did you require applicants for these jobs to have formal qualifications? [QSCR4]
REFER TO LIST OF QUALIFICATIONS

Yes, required for all of these vacancies 1
Some did, some did not 2
No, none required formal qualifications 3
Don't know 4

IF YES, ALL OR DK AT S4 [IF 1 OR 4 AT QSCR4]

S5) So can I check, have you recruited for, or tried to recruit for, any vacancy where you did **not** require applicants to have formal qualifications, in the last 12 months? [QSCR5]
REFER TO LIST OF QUALIFICATIONS

Yes 1
No – THANK YOU AND GOODBYE 2
Don't know – THANK YOU AND GOODBYE 3

IF RECRUIT JOBS WITHOUT QUALIFICATIONS AT S4 OR S5 [IF 2 OR 3 AT QSCR4 OR 1 AT QSCR5]

S6) Thinking about the vacancies where you did not require formal qualifications, were any of them temporary contract/s recruited through a private recruitment agency? [QSCR6]

IF YES, PROBE FOR WHETHER THIS WAS ALL OR SOME OF THE JOBS

Yes, all temporary contracts through a private recruitment agency – THANK YOU AND GOODBYE 1
Some were temporary contracts though a private recruitment agency 2
No, none 3
Don't know – THANK YOU AND GOODBYE 4

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND

ASK ALL

I'd like to start by just asking a few details about your organisation. Can I just check that your organisation is <WORKPLACE AND ADDRESS FROM SAMPLE>? [QCHECK]

1… 8: CHECK NAME ADDRESS IS CORRECT; IF NOT AMEND WHERE NECESSARY

NOW DISPLAY (AMENDED) WORKPLACE NAME AND ADDRESS AT TOP OF SCREEN THROUGHOUT

Q1. Including yourself, how many full-time <u>and</u> part-time employees do you have on the payroll at your **workplace** (that is, <workplace name and address from qcheck>)? We are interested in all those on the payroll but not self-employed or outside contractors/agency staff. [QNOSITE]
PROBE FOR BEST ESTIMATE.

1 – 999,999 1
Don't know 2

IF DK AT Q1 [IF 2 AT QNOSITE]
Q2. Do you know if this would be between 1 and 4 people … 20,000 or more people? [QBDSITE]

Between 1 and 4 people 1
Between 5 and 9 people 2
Between 10 and 19 people 3
Between 20 and 49 people 4
Between 50 and 249 people 5
Between 250 and 499 people 6
Between 500 and 999 people 7
Between 1000 and 19,999 people 8
20,000 people and over 9
Don't know 10

ASK ALL
Q3. Is this the only site of the organisation or are there others in the UK? [Q1SITE]

Only site 1
Others 2
Don't know 3

IF OTHERS AT Q3 [IF 2 AT Q1SITE]

Q4.   And thinking about the organisation as a whole, approximately how many people work for the organisation across all sites in the UK? We are interested in all those on the payroll, both full-time and part-time staff, but not self-employed or outside contractors/agency staff? [QNOORG]

1 – 2,000,000 1
Don't know 2

IF DK AT Q4 [IF 2 AT QNOORG]

Q5.   Do you know if this would be under 1,000 people…? [QBDORG]

Under 1,000 people 1
1,000 – 19,999 people 2
20,000 or more people 3
Don't know 4

<IF OTHERS AT Q3 [IF 2 AT Q1SITE]: Thinking again now just about the site where you work…>

ASK ALL

Q6.   What is the main business activity at this establishment? [QSIC]
PROBE AS NECESSARY. ONLY READ OUT PROBES THAT ARE RELEVANT TO THE RESPONDENT'S ESTABLISHMENT:

What is the main product or service of this establishment?
What exactly is made or done at this establishment?
What material or machinery does that involve using?

OPEN-ENDED 1
Don't know 2

Q7.   Which of the following most closely describes your job title? [QJOBT]
READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY.

Owner 1
General manager 5
Managing director 2
Other manager 7
Personnel/human resources manager 6
Other (SPECIFY) 9
Don't know 10

SECTION 2: DETAILS ABOUT VACANCIES THAT DO NOT REQUIRE QUALIFICATIONS

I'd now like to ask a bit more about the vacancies you have recruited for, or tried to recruit, in the last 12 months, where you did not require applicants to have formal qualifications. <IF SOME WERE TEMPORARY CONTRACTS THROUGH AGENCY AT S6 [IF 2 AT S6] ADD: Please exclude the temporary contracts recruited through a recruitment agency.>

ASK ALL

Q8. How many of these vacancies have you recruited for, **or tried to recruit,** in the last 12 months? [QNOVAC]

1 – 9,999 1
Don't know 2

IF DK AT Q8 [IF 2 AT QNOVAC]

Q9. Do you know if this would be only one vacancy, between two and four vacancies, or five or more vacancies? [QBDVAC]

One 1
Two to four 2
Five or more 3
Don't know 4

ASK ALL

Q10. And how many staff have you **actually recruited** for these vacancies? [QNOREC]
ADD IF NECESSARY: That is, excluding vacancies where you have tried to recruit or are in the process of recruiting but have not actually recruited anyone.

0 – 9,999 1
Don't know 2

IF DK AT Q10 [IF 2 AT QNOREC]

Q11. Do you know if this would be only one member of staff, between two and four, or five or more? [QBDREC]

One 1
Two to four 2
Five or more 3
None 4
Don't know 5

IF ONE OR MORE AT Q10 OR NOT NONE OR DK AT Q11 [IF > 0 AT QNOREC OR NOT 4 OR 5 AT QBDREC]

Q12. And do you know roughly how many of these staff are aged …READ OUT? [QSTAGE]

Please only include those staff recruited in the last 12 months who did not require formal qualifications for the job.

IF UNSURE, PROBE FOR ESTIMATE. ANSWER CAN BE GIVEN AS NUMBER OR PERCENTAGE

- Under 25

- Over 50

ENTER NUMBER (0 – 9,999) 1
OR ENTER PERCENTAGE (0 – 100) 2
Don't know 3

ASK ALL

Q13. Although you don't require FORMAL qualifications for this/these vacancies(s), does it/do they **require** applicants to have ANY qualifications or certificates, or a driving license? [QDRVLIC]

Yes 1
No 2
Don't know 3

IF YES AT Q13 [IF 1 AT QDRVLIC]

Q14. Which ones? [QDRVLI2]
CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

Driving license 1
Fork-lift truck driving license 2
Security industry license 3
Health and safety certificate 4
Basic food hygiene certificate 5
Other (SPECIFY) 6
Don't know 7

ASK ALL

Q15. What type(s) of job was this vacancy/were these vacancies for? [QVACTYP]
PROMPT TO PRE-CODES. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

Bar work/waiter/waitress 1
Catering 2
Administrative 3
Shop worker or trader, sales assistant 4
Factory, plant or machine workers 5
Drivers or transport workers 6
Cleaning 7
Skilled trades 8
Secretarial 9
Labourers 10
Warehouse worker 11
Health or caring assistants 12
Customer care or call centre 13
Sports or leisure assistants 14
Hairdresser/beautician 15
Caretaker 16
Security 17
Other staff (SPECIFY) 18
Don't know 19

IF MORE THAN THREE RESPONSES AT Q15 [IF > 3 RESPONSES AT QVACTYP]

Q16. Which three of these types of job do you have the most employees in?
[QVACTY2]
IF DON'T KNOW, PROBE FOR MAIN OR ANY THREE

READ OUT ANSWERS FROM Q15 [QVACTYP]

CODE THREE 1
Don't know 2

ASK Q17 AND Q18 FOR EACH JOB TYPE MENTIONED AT QVACTYPE OR, IF > 3 AT
QVACTYPE, QVACTY2

ASK ALL

Q17. Were <EACH JOB TYPE MENTIONED AT QVACTYPE OR, IF > 3 AT QVACTYPE,
QVACTY2> vacancies for full-time or part-time positions? [QFTOPT]
CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

Full-time 1
Part-time 2
Don't know 3

Q18. And were <EACH JOB TYPE MENTIONED AT QVACTYPE OR, IF > 3 AT QVACTYPE, QVACTY2> vacancies for permanent jobs? [QPERM]

Yes, all permanent 1
Some permanent 2
None permanent 3
Don't know 4

SECTION 3: RECRUITMENT

Turning now to recruitment.

So, thinking still about the vacancy/vacancies you have recruited for, or tried to recruit, in the last 12 months, where you did not require applicants to have formal qualifications. <IF SOME WERE TEMPORARY CONTRACTS THROUGH AGENCY AT S6 [IF 2 AT S6] ADD: Please exclude the temporary contracts recruited through a recruitment agency.>

ASK ALL

Q19. In what ways have you tried to recruit for these vacancies in the last 12 months?
PROBE: What other methods have you used? [QMETHR]
DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

Jobcentre Plus (or Employer Direct, Jobcentre, Internet Job Bank) 1
Local papers 2
Word of mouth/personal recommendation 3
Notice boards/shop windows (facing street) 4
Trade/Specialist press 5
Recruitment agencies (including head hunters) 6
Internet/Web-based recruitment 7
Your own website 8
Other (SPECIFY) 9
Don't know 10

IF MORE THAN ONE RESPONSE AT Q19 [IF > 1 RESPONSE AT QMETHR]

Q20. Which of these have you **used** the most to recruit for these vacancies in the last 12 months? [QMETHR2]

READ OUT ANSWERS FROM Q19 [QMETHR]

CODE NO MORE THAN THREE 1
Don't know 2

ASK Q21 FOR EACH JOB TYPE MENTIONED AT QVACTYPE OR, IF > 3 AT QVACTYPE, QVACTY2

IF MORE THAN ONE RESPONSE AT Q19 [IF > 1 RESPONSE AT QMETHR]

Q21. And which of these is usually the **most successful** in attracting <EACH JOB TYPE MENTIONED AT QVACTYPE OR, IF > 3 AT QVACTYPE, QVACTY2> applicants? [QMETHR3]

CODE ONE RESPONSE ONLY 1
Don't know 2
None 3

ASK ALL

Q22. How do candidates normally contact you to express an interest in these vacancies? [QAPPLY]
DO NOT PROMPT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Telephone 1
In writing 2
Face-to-face 3
E-mail 4
Via Jobcentre Plus adviser 7
Other (SPECIFY) 5
Not applicable 6
Don't know 7

Q23. Which of these methods do you use to select applicants for these jobs? [QSELECT]
READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

Application form/letter 1
Formal interview 2
Informal interview/chat 3
Assessment day 4
Open day 5
Test or exercise 6
DO NOT READ OUT: Probationary/trial period 7
Other (SPECIFY) 8
Not applicable 9
Don't know 10

IF FORMAL INTERVIEW AT Q23 [IF 2 AT QSELECT]
Q24. Do you conduct any of these formal interviews by telephone? [QFORMAL]

Yes 1
No 2
Don't know 3

IF INFORMAL INTERVIEW/CHAT AT Q23 [IF 3 AT QSELECT]
Q25. Are informal interviews or chats done face-to-face, by telephone, or both? [QINFORM]
CODE ONE ONLY

Face-to-face only 1
Telephone only 2
Both 3
Don't know 4

IF TEST OR EXERCISE AT Q23 [IF 6 AT QSELECT]

Q26. What types of test or exercise do you use? [QTEST]
DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

Written test(s), e.g. verbal/numerical 1
Presentation(s) 2
Group exercise(s) 3
IT/computer test(s) 4
Personality questionnaire(s) 5
Physical ability/fitness test 6
Other (SPECIFY) 7
Don't know 8

ASK ALL

Q27. Thinking of the jobs specifically where you do not require applicants to have formal qualifications, who is the main person or department that decides on whether a candidate should be offered a job? [QDECIDE]
DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY.

HR 1
General management 2
Individual manger for the vacancy 3
Owner 4
Other (SPECIFY) 5
Don't know 6

IF NOT JOBCENTRE PLUS AT Q19 [IF NOT 10 AT QMETHR]

Q28. In the last 12 months have you used Jobcentre Plus to recruit, or try to recruit, for any of these vacancies? [QJCPLUS]
ADD IF NECESSARY: Again, these are the vacancies you have recruited for, or tried to recruit, in the last 12 months, where you did not require applicants to have formal qualifications <IF SOME WERE TEMPORARY CONTRACTS THROUGH AGENCY AT S6 [IF 2 AT S6] ADD: Please exclude the temporary contracts recruited through a recruitment agency.>

Yes 1
No 2
Don't know 3

IF NO OR DK AT Q28 [IF 2 AT QJCPLUS]

Q29. Would you consider using Jobcentre Plus to recruit for these types of vacancy? [QUSEJCP]

Yes 1
No 2
Possibly/it depends 3
Don't know 4

ASK ALL
Q30. (IF JOBCENTRE PLUS AT QMETHR: You said earlier you had used Jobcentre Plus to recruit for vacancies in the last 12 months.) What do you think Jobcentre Plus can do to help ensure applicants are adequately equipped for these types of job? [QHLPJCP]
DO NOT READ OUT. PROBE FULLY. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

Show applicants how to dress for interviews 1
Improve literacy skills of applicants 2
Instruct applicants how to conduct themselves at interviews 3
Send applicants that have necessary experience for the vacancy 4
Show applicants how to create a good CV 5
Improve numeracy skills of applicants 6
Send applicants that want the job 7
Ensure punctuality (i.e. that the applicant turns up on time 8
Other (SPECIFY) 9
Don't know 10

SECTION 4: SKILLS

ASK Q32 AND Q33 FOR EACH JOB TYPE MENTIONED AT QVACTYPE OR, IF > 3 AT QVACTYPE, QVACTY2

ASK ALL

Q31. What skills and attributes do you look for when recruiting <EACH JOB TYPE MENTIONED AT QVACTYPE OR, IF > 3 AT QVACTYPE, QVACTY2> vacancies? [QSKI]
ADD IF NECESSARY: Again, these are the vacancies you have recruited for, or tried to recruit, in the last 12 months, where you did not require applicants to have formal qualifications <IF SOME WERE TEMPORARY CONTRACTS THROUGH AGENCY AT S6 [IF 2 AT S6] ADD: Please exclude the temporary contracts recruited through a recruitment agency.>

DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

MOTIVATION (enthusiastic; willing to work/learn; proactive) 1
FLEXIBILITY (willing to work at short notice/longer hours) 2
INTERPERSONAL AND TEAM WORK SKILLS (working with others; courtesy; approachability – customer handling) 3
SELF-PRESENTATION (appearance; behaviour; confidence; non-verbal body language – e.g. positive gestures/mannerisms) 4
BASIC SKILLS (literacy and numeracy) 5
JOB SPECIFIC EXPERIENCE (relevant work history and experience) 6
PEOPLE SKILLS 7
COMMUNICATION SKILLS 8
Other (SPECIFY) 9
Don't know 8

IF MORE THAN ONE RESPONSE AT Q31 [IF > 1 RESPONSE AT QSKI]

Q32. And of the things you've mentioned, which do you consider to be the most important when recruiting for <EACH JOB TYPE MENTIONED AT QVACTYPE OR, IF > 3 AT QVACTYPE, QVACTY2> vacancies? [QSK2]

LIST RESPONSES FROM Q32

CODE ONE RESPONSE ONLY 1
Don't know 2

IF FLEXIBILITY AT Q31 [IF 2 AT QSKI]

Q33. In what ways do you want people in these jobs to be flexible? [QFLE]
PROBE: What else?

OPEN ENDED
Don't know

ASK ALL

Q34. How do you decide whether an applicant has the required skills and attributes for these jobs? [QREQCRT]
PROBE FULLY. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

Performance at interview 1
Strength of CV 2
Previous work experience 3
Performance in assessment/test 4
Strength of references from previous employers 5
Performance at trial work-shift 6
Trial period (longer than one work-shift) 7
Overall personality of applicant 8
Other (SPECIFY)9
Not applicable 10
Don't know 11

ASK Q35 AND Q36 FOR EACH JOB TYPE MENTIONED AT QVACTYPE OR, IF > 3 AT QVACTYPE, QVACTY2

Q35. How important is previous work experience for <EACH JOB TYPE MENTIONED AT QVACTYPE OR, IF > 3 AT QVACTYPE, QVACTY2> vacancies? [QWKEXP] READ OUT

Very important 1
Fairly important 2
Not very important 3
Not at all important 4
Don't know 5

IF VERY/FAIRLY IMPORTANT [IF 1 OR 2 AT QWKEXP]

Q36. Does the work experience have to be relevant to the skills and attributes needed for <EACH JOB TYPE MENTIONED AT QVACTYPE/QVACTY> vacancies? [QEXTYP]

Yes 1
No 2
Don't know 3

Q37. And what length of work experience do you look for when recruiting for these vacancies? [QEXLEN]
PROMPT TO PRECODES

Less than three MONTHS 1
Three up to Six MONTHS 2
Six up to twelve MONTHS 3
One up to two years 4
Two up to three years 5
Three up to four years 6
Four up to five years 7
Five years or more 8
Don't know 9

ASK ALL
Q38. If somebody had been out of work – including those who have been out of work because of ill-health, caring responsibilities or to have children – would you still consider recruiting them?
IF YES: Is that definitely or possibly? [QOUTWOR]

Yes, definitely 1
Yes, possibly 2
No 3
It depends 4
Don't know 5

Q39. How long would somebody have to have been out of work before you would consider NOT recruiting them? [QHOWLON]
DO NOT PROMPT TO PRECODES

Less than three MONTHS 1
Three up to Six MONTHS 2
Six up to twelve MONTHS 3
One up to two years 4
Two up to three years 5
Three up to four years 6
Four up to five years 7
Five years or more 8
Not applicable 9
Don't know 10

Q40. You said that you do not require formal qualifications for these vacancies. If an applicant did have formal qualifications how would that affect your decision to recruit them, compared with an applicant without formal qualifications? Would it… READ OUT [QRELFQ]

Make you more likely to recruit him/her? 1
Make you less likely to recruit him/her? 2
Make no difference? 3
Don't know 4

Q41. Approximately what proportion of applicants who have applied to your organisation in the last 12 months would you say were over-qualified? By over-qualified I mean applicants who have formal qualifications and who apply for positions that do not require formal qualifications. [QOVQUAL]
READ OUT

None 1
Up to a quarter 2
Up to a half 3
Up to three-quarters 4
Nearly all/all 5
Don't know 6

IF ANY AT Q41 [IF 2 OR 3 OR 4 OR 5 AT QOVQUAL]
Q42. What would you say are the advantages of recruiting staff who are over-qualified? [QOVQUA3]
DO NOT READ OUT. PROBE FULLY. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

They require less supervision 1
They are more innovative 2
They mix better with other staff 3
They can be put forward for more senior roles when these arise 4
They are able to learn more quickly 5
They show more common sense 6
Other (SPECIFY) 7
Don't know 8

Q43. And what would you say are the disadvantages of recruiting staff who are over-qualified? [QOVQUA4]
DO NOT READ OUT. PROBE FULLY. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

They are less motivated 1
They do not stay in the job for long 2
They think that they are above the job/the job is beneath them 3
They are over-confident 4
They get bored/frustrated quickly 5
They expect higher pay 6
It is difficult to provide them with challenges 7
Other (SPECIFY) 8
Don't know 9

ASK ALL
Q44. Above all else, what makes you decide that an applicant is the best person for the job that you are recruiting for? [QABOVEL]
PROBE: What else…?
ADD IF NECESSARY: This only refers to your decision when recruiting for jobs that do not require applicants to have formal qualifications.

OPEN ENDED
Don't know

SECTION 5: TRAINING

Looking now at training…

ASK ALL

Q45. Over the past 12 months have you funded or arranged any off-the-job training or development for employees in these jobs? By off-the-job training I mean training away from the individual's immediate work position, whether on your premises or elsewhere? [QTRG]

ADD IF NECESSARY: Again, these are the vacancies you have recruited for, or tried to recruit, in the last 12 months, where you did not require applicants to have formal qualifications <IF SOME WERE TEMPORARY CONTRACTS THROUGH AGENCY AT S6 [IF 2 AT S6] ADD: Please exclude the temporary contracts recruited through a recruitment agency.>

Yes 1
No 2
Don't know 3

IF YES AT Q45 [IF 1 AT QTRG]

Q46. And how are employees usually selected for this off-the-job training? [QTRG2]
DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

Automatic – e.g. provided to all in certain jobs 1
Selection by manager 2
Self-selection or staff request 3
By individual and manager together 4
By personnel department 5
Other (SPECIFY) 6

ASK ALL

Q47. Have you funded or arranged any on-the-job or informal training for employees in these jobs over the last 12 months? By this, I mean activities that would be recognised as training by unqualified workers, and not the sort of learning experience that could take place all the time. [QTRG3]

Yes 1
No 2
Don't know 3

IF YES AT Q45 [IF 1 AT QTRG]

Q48. Has any of this training been necessary BEFORE staff could start doing the job? [QTRG4]

Yes 1
No 2
Don't know 3

LIST OF QUALIFICATIONS FOR SCREENING QUESTIONS:

The following are included as formal qualifications

Higher Education qualifications

- A degree acquired in the UK (such as a foundation degree, a BSc, a BA, MA or a PhD)

- graduate membership of a professional qualification or a PGCE (Post Graduate Certificate of Education)

- Diploma in Higher Education

- Other Higher Education qualifications below degree level

National Certificates or Diplomas

- HNC/HND (Higher National Certificate/Higher National Diploma)

- ONC/OND (Ordinary National Certificate/Ordinary National Diploma)

Vocational qualifications

- BTEC

- RSA or OCR

- City and Guilds

- NVQ: National (or Scottish) Vocational Qualification

- GNVQ/GSVQ

A levels or AS-levels/vocational AS-levels

GCSEs

Access to HE

Key Skills

Basic Skills (literacy and numeracy) including ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages)

Modern Apprenticeships

The following are NOT included as formal qualifications

Driving license

Fork-lift truck license

Health and safety certificate

Basic food hygiene certificate

Appendix D
Response rates

Table D.1   Response rates

	N	Total issued sample %	Out of scope %	Screening %	Eligibility %	Valid sample %
Total sample selected	18,857	100				
Total sample issued	18,309	97				
Invalid sample data	2,658		15			
Invalid telephone number	1,069		6			
Company details incorrect	287		2			
Business closed down	260		1			
25+ unsuccessful calls	1,042		6			
In scope of screening	15,651		85			
Not screened	4,639			30		
– Personal refusal	2,031			13		
– Proxy refusal	223			1		
– Unable to identify appropriate respondent	52			0		
– Unavailable during fieldwork	355			2		
– Abandoned interview	308			2		
– Non-contact	1,670			11		
Screened	11,012			**70**	100	
Eligibility						
Ineligible	7,100				64	
– No recruitment	5,355				49	
– No unqualified recruitment	1,417				13	
– All temp contracts through agency	328				3	
Eligible	3,912				**36**	100
Valid sample						
Refusal	92					2
Abandoned interview	138					4
Interview	3,682					**94**
Response rate						66

References

Atkinson, J. and Williams, M., Employer Perspectives on the Recruitment, Retention and Advancement of Low-pay, Low-status Employees, Strategy Unit Occasional Paper Series 2, Institute of Employment Studies, 2003.

Gasteen, A. and Houston, J., Scottish Employers' Attitudes towards Qualifications and Skills, Scottish Qualification Authority Research and Information Bulletin Number 10, SQA, 2005.

Harker, L., Delivering on Child Poverty: what would it take? DWP Report CM6951, 2006.

Hogarth, T. and Wilson, R., Skills Shortages, Vacancies and Local Unemployment: A Synthesis of the Exploring Local Areas, Skills and Unemployment Analyses, Report to Department for Education and Skills, Sheffield, 2003.

Moss, N. and Arrowsmith, J., A review of what works for clients aged over 50, DWP, 2001.

Moynagh, M. and Worsley, R., Working in the 21st century, ESRC, Future of Work Programme and the Tomorrow's Project, 2005.

Newton, B., Hurstfield, J., Miller, L., Page, R. and Akroyd, K., What Employers Look for When Recruiting the Unemployed and Inactive: Characteristics, Skills and Qualifications, DWP Research Report DWPRR 295, 2005.

Winterbotham, M., Adams, L. and Kuechel, A., Evaluation of the Work Based Learning for Adults Programme since April 2001: Qualitative interviews with ES Staff, providers and Employers, DWP, 2001.

Skills for Business Survey 2003 – Survey of Employers, Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA), Research Report No 4, 2004.