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# The Northern Ireland Skills Monitoring Survey 2005 Sector Skills Councils Summary Report

A report prepared by the Skills Unit, Research and Evaluation Branch,  
Department for Employment and Learning

February 2008





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Based on the results of a survey carried out by Central Survey Unit, NISRA,  
between June to November 2005



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Once again, the support of the administrative team within Research and Evaluation Branch has proved most helpful.

**Skills Unit**  
**February 2008**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Background

This report summarises the key results from the Northern Ireland Skills Monitoring Survey 2005 for the 25 Sector Skills Councils (as defined in **Appendix 1**). The report contains information on vacancies, skill shortages, skill gaps as well as both off-the-job and on-the job training.

The Northern Ireland Skills Monitoring Survey was designed to provide a comprehensive snapshot of the current skill needs of NI employers in the non-agricultural sectors. The Survey largely replicates the NI Skills Monitoring Survey 2002 and therefore we now have some useful comparisons over time.

The survey provides an overview of issues connected with skill shortages, skill gaps and training, from an employer's perspective. Of particular interest are those areas where recruitment difficulties are related to external skill shortages and therefore subject to a 'skills' solution.

The last fifteen years have seen a marked improvement in the NI economy from a previous position of high unemployment and slow GDP and employment growth. These economic changes are reflected in a changed labour market where employers are finding increasing competition for labour but are also able to draw on an increasingly well educated workforce.

## Bullet Point Findings

### Current vacancies

- Overall 11% of employers reported that they had at least one vacancy for which they were trying to recruit people from the external labour market.
- The highest proportion of employers reporting current vacancies were in Skillfast-UK (18%), Cogent (17%), Skills for Care and Development (16%) and Lifelong Learning UK (16%).

### Difficult to fill vacancies

- Overall, 6% of employers reported at least one vacancy that was proving difficult to fill.
- Skillfast-UK had the highest incidence of employers reporting difficult to fill vacancies (12%).

## External skill shortages

- Overall, 34% of difficult to fill vacancies were due to external skill shortages. External skill shortages were defined as those vacancies difficult to fill due to either a lack of skills; a lack of qualifications required or a lack of the work experience that the employer required.
- For sector skill councils for which reliable estimates were available, external skill shortages were more prevalent within e-Skills (84% of difficult to fill vacancies in that sector), SummitSkills (74%), ConstructionSkills (57%) and SEMTA (49%).

## Skill gaps

- Skill gaps exist where there is a gap between an employee's current skill level and what is needed to meet work objectives. In 2005, 9% of employers considered there to be a skill gap in their workforce.
- The existence of skill gaps was most prevalent within Skills for Care and Development (15%), Financial Services (14%), e-Skills UK (14%) and Skills for Health (14%).

## Training

- One third of employers (34%) had organised some off-the-job training for their employees in the previous year.
- Approximately two thirds of employers (67%) in both Skills for Care and Development and Lifelong Learning UK provided off-the-job training compared to only 13% of employers in Skillfast-UK.
- Overall, 60% of employers said that they had provided on-the-job training to their staff in the previous year.
- On-the-job training was most prevalent in Skills for Care and Development and Lifelong Learning UK (both reporting 74%).



## CHAPTER 1 BACKGROUND

### 1.1 A Brief Summary of the NI Economy and Labour Market

Taking 1990 as the base year, the NI economy has been the fastest improving of any regional economy in the UK<sup>1</sup>. This can be seen from the usual measures of economic performance:

**Growth in gross value added (GVA)<sup>2</sup>.** GVA reflects the numbers of people employed and their productivity and is important because it broadly measures changes in the standard of living. Northern Ireland GVA grew some 1 percentage point per annum faster than the UK over the period 1990 – 2003. Over the 13 year period GVA grew by 50% in real terms in NI which exceeds the UK figure of 35%.

**Growth in employment.** In the period March 1990 to March 2005 employee jobs grew by 30% in NI compared to 9% for the UK as a whole. Between March 1996 and March 2005 employee growth was 20%, the strongest employment growth of any region including London. As a consequence the NI employment rate has risen since 1992 by 5 percentage points, from 63% to 68%; the UK rose by 4 pp, from 71% to 75%.

**Change in the numbers and percentage of the unemployed.** In the period Spring 1992 – Spring 2005, numbers unemployed in NI fell by 58%, greater than the UK fall (-50%) and much better than Wales (-47%) and Scotland (-38%).

In summary, the last fifteen years have seen a marked improvement in the NI economy from a previous position of high unemployment and slow GDP and employment growth. These economic changes are reflected in a changed labour market where employers are finding increasing competition for labour but are also able to draw on an increasingly well educated workforce.

### 1.2 Background to the Study

The NI Skills Monitoring Survey was designed to provide a comprehensive snapshot of the current skills needs of NI employers. The 2000 Survey focused on private sector employers and the 2002 Survey was extended to include the public sector. The primary purpose of the NI Skills Monitoring Survey 2005 is to update the findings of the survey conducted in 2002 and therefore we now have some useful comparisons over time.

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<sup>1</sup> For full report see DEL Labour Market Bulletin#19, Chapter 4 ([www.delni.gov.uk](http://www.delni.gov.uk))

<sup>2</sup> The term gross value added (GVA) is used to denote estimates previously known as gross domestic product (GDP).

In 2003, DEL commissioned Economic Research and Evaluation (ERE) to undertake a comparative analysis of the findings from a selection of the Skills Surveys undertaken in each of the five 'home' countries (England, Scotland, Wales, RoI, and NI). Following on from this research, ERE recommended a set of harmonised questions to be included in each of the regional surveys<sup>3</sup>.

This report provides a summary of some of the key findings from the 2005 Skills Monitoring Survey. It provides comparable information for sectors in Northern Ireland covered by Sector Skills Councils (SSCs).

### 1.3 Survey Methodology

Central Survey Unit (CSU) of the NI Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) was commissioned to conduct the survey. The questionnaire was developed as a Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) questionnaire. CSU contacted a random sample of 6,822 businesses selected from the British Telecom Business Database throughout NI. A panel of 70 interviewers were involved in the survey, with all interviews conducted by telephone. A total of 4,126 productive interviews were completed during June to November 2005. This gave a response rate of 70%.

To provide comprehensive coverage of businesses both by sector and company size, the sample for the survey was a disproportionately stratified sample. It was necessary to construct weights to adjust the data to reflect the composition of the Business Database population as a whole. Unless stated otherwise, all base numbers are un-weighted and all percentage estimates are weighted.

As the NI Skills Monitoring Survey is an employer survey, it does not include the self-employed (sole trader) workforce. This has a differential effect upon different sectors, for example, Construction and Agriculture. For this reason, as well as the risk of survey fatigue due to similar surveys being carried out by DARD, Agriculture was excluded from the current survey.

The survey was establishment based, which means that information was collated on an individual basis irrespective of whether the site formed part of a larger organisation. The terms 'employer' and 'business' are used interchangeably throughout this report.

Although the same methodology was used for the NI Skills Monitoring Survey 2005 as in 2002, some of Economic Research and Evaluation's recommendations (from the harmonisation project) were also included in the questionnaire.

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<sup>3</sup> *Towards a Harmonised Skills Monitoring Survey. Feedback Report. Economic Research and Evaluation. February 2005. ([www.delni.gov.uk/harmonisedfeedbackreport](http://www.delni.gov.uk/harmonisedfeedbackreport))*

## OVERVIEW OF RESULTS FOR SECTOR SKILLS COUNCILS

**Table 1** shows a summary of the key results from the NI Skills Monitoring Survey 2005 for each Sector Skills Council.

**Table 1. Summary of Key Results from NI Skills Monitoring Survey 2005<sup>4, 5</sup>**

	Vacancy rate*	Difficult to fill vacancy rate*	Skill shortage vacancy rate*	Difficult to fill vacancies as a % of vacancies	Skill shortage vacancies as a % of vacancies	Skill gap rate*	Proportion of employers providing off-the-job training	Proportion of employers providing on-the-job training
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>All Sectors</b>	2.1	1.1	0.4	52	17	8.9	34	60
Asset Skills	1.9	1.2	0.5	67	28	8.6	43	57
Automotive Skills	1.9	1.3	0.4	68	23	9.3	30	60
Central Government**	1.8	0.8	0.7	47	39	23.7	85	78
Cogent	2.9	1.3	0.3	54	9	12.9	32	70
ConstructionSkills	1.7	1.2	0.7	70	40	6.7	44	53
Creative & Cultural Skills**	3.9	0.6	0.0	15	1	9.4	21	45
Energy & Utility Skills**	0.7	0.3	0.1	47	13	15.5	36	58
e-skills UK	5.0	2.8	2.4	56	47	8.9	46	72
Financial Services Skills Council	2.5	1.5	0.7	59	27	16.2	47	68
GoSkills	2.8	1.6	0.3	56	11	13.8	14	36
Improve	0.6	0.2	0.0	41	2	7.2	29	69
Lantra	4.1	2.6	0.2	64	5	9.2	38	66
Lifelong Learning UK	2.6	0.7	0.1	27	4	8.7	67	74
People 1st	3.7	1.8	0.4	49	10	9.5	21	66
Proskills	1.5	0.9	0.2	60	15	8.2	23	48
SEMTA	1.9	1.0	0.5	51	25	8.2	36	58
Skillfast-UK	3.0	2.2	0.1	73	2	7.6	13	47
Skills for Care & Development	3.3	1.4	0.2	44	7	12.1	67	74
Skills for Health	1.6	0.9	0.2	56	12	6.2	61	68
Skills for Justice**	1.0	0.4	0.2	46	26	4.8	75	100
Skills for Logistics	1.5	0.8	0.3	55	23	4.7	26	59
SkillsActive	2.8	0.7	0.2	25	6	6.5	33	44
Skillset**	2.2	0.8	0.8	39	35	8.3	20	30
Skillsmart Retail	2.1	1.0	0.3	48	12	12.4	27	67
SummitSkills	1.0	0.8	0.6	87	64	14.0	43	44
non-SSC Industries	1.6	0.8	0.3	52	20	6.8	34	57

\* Rate is calculated as a proportion of employment i.e. number of employees in this Survey

\*\* Caution small numbers

<sup>4</sup> See Appendix 2 for definition of terms used throughout the report.

<sup>5</sup> See Appendix 3 for notes on tables.

## CHAPTER 2 CURRENT VACANCIES

All employers were asked if they had any vacancies at the time of interview. These were defined as vacancies for which action was being taken to recruit people from the external labour market.

Overall, 11% of businesses reported that they had current vacancies. Therefore at the time of the survey 9 out of 10 employers **did not** have any current vacancies.

**Table 2** illustrates the proportion of employers reporting current vacancies between different Sector Skills Councils. Of the sectors for which robust estimates<sup>6</sup> could be derived, the lowest proportion of employers reporting current vacancies were in SummitSkills (5%), Improve (5%) and Asset Skills (7%). The highest proportion of employers reporting current vacancies were in Skillfast-UK (18%), Cogent (17%), Skills for Care and Development (16%) and Lifelong Learning UK (16%).

**Table 2. Incidence of Current Vacancies by Sector Skills Council**

	Current Vacancies %	No Current Vacancies %	Base = 100%
Central Government**	37	63	44
Skills for Justice**	35	65	30
Skillfast-UK	18	82	113
Cogent	17	83	149
Skills for Care & Development	16	84	199
Lifelong Learning UK	16	84	158
Financial Services Skills Council	15	85	135
e-Skills UK	15	85	114
Skills for Health	15	85	205
People 1st	14	86	196
SEMTA	14	86	172
Lantra	13	87	101
GoSkills	13	87	127
Energy & Utility Skills**	12	88	95
Proskills	12	88	139
<b>All Sectors</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>4,126</b>
Automotive Skills	11	89	178
Skills for Logistics	10	90	160
Skillset**	10	90	85
non-SSC Industries	10	90	636
SkillsActive	10	90	162
ConstructionSkills	8	92	185
Creative & Cultural Skills**	8	92	94
Skillsmart Retail	8	92	208
Asset Skills	7	93	168
Improve	5	95	145
SummitSkills	5	95	128

\*\* *Caution small numbers*

<sup>6</sup> Robust estimates are calculated where the base cell contains a minimum of 100 cases. Where the base cell is less than 100, the reader is asked to treat the results with caution.

**Table 3** shows the vacancy rate for each SSC. The vacancy rate is the number of vacancies as a proportion of employees<sup>7</sup>. The average vacancy rate is 2.1%. Of these sectors for which robust estimates could be derived, the sectors with the lowest vacancy rate were Improve (0.6%), SummitSkills (1.0%), Skills for Logistics (1.5%) and Proskills (1.5%). The sectors with the highest vacancy rate were e-Skills UK (5.0%), Lantra (4.1%) and People 1st (3.7%).

**Table 3. Vacancy rate by Sector Skills Council**

	Vacancy rate* %
e-Skills UK	5.0
Lantra	4.1
Creative & Cultural Skills**	3.9
People 1st	3.7
Skills for Care & Development	3.3
Skillfast-UK	3.0
Cogent	2.9
GoSkills	2.8
SkillsActive	2.8
Lifelong Learning UK	2.6
Financial Services Skills Council	2.5
Skillset**	2.2
<b>All Sectors</b>	<b>2.1</b>
Skillsmart Retail	2.1
Asset Skills	1.9
Automotive Skills	1.9
SEMTA	1.9
Central Government**	1.8
ConstructionSkills	1.7
Skills for Health	1.6
non-SSC Industries	1.6
Proskills	1.5
Skills for Logistics	1.5
Skills for Justice**	1.0
SummitSkills	1.0
Energy & Utility Skills**	0.7
Improve	0.6

\* Rate is calculated as a proportion of employment i.e. number of employees in this Survey

\*\* Caution small numbers

<sup>7</sup> The number of employees is the total number of employees included in this survey.

## CHAPTER 3 CURRENT RECRUITMENT DIFFICULTIES

In the previous section, we saw that 11% of employers reported that they had at least one vacancy. Many vacancies that arise are either routine replacement of staff losses, the creation of new posts requiring staff with skills new to the business or the expansion of the workforce to meet increased demand. Within these vacancies as a whole, it is inevitable that some vacancies will prove easier for a business to fill than others.

The survey was specifically interested in finding out more about vacancies that employers reported as proving difficult to fill. There was no formal definition of a 'difficult to fill' vacancy – the employer was asked to define this in terms of their business and their current situation.

**Table 4** illustrates the incidence of difficult to fill vacancies for each Sector Skills Council. Overall 6% of employers reported difficult to fill vacancies. The incidence of at least one difficult to fill vacancy varied across the SSCs. Excluding those sectors with small numbers in the survey, the proportion of employers reporting difficult to fill vacancies ranged from 2% in Improve to 12% in Skillfast-UK.

**Table 4. Existence of at least one difficult to fill vacancy by Sector Skills Council**

	Has a difficult to fill vacancy %	No difficult to fill vacancy %	Base = 100%
Skills for Justice**	18	82	30
Skillfast-UK	12	88	113
Cogent	10	90	148
Central Government**	9	91	43
Financial Services Skills Council	9	91	135
SEMTA	9	91	172
Skills for Health	8	92	204
Skills for Care & Development	8	92	199
Lantra	8	92	100
Automotive Skills	7	93	178
ConstructionSkills	6	94	185
Lifelong Learning UK	6	94	156
People 1st	6	94	196
Proskills	6	94	139
Skills for Logistics	6	94	160
<b>All Sectors</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>4,114</b>
e-Skills UK	6	94	114
GoSkills	6	94	126
Energy & Utility Skills**	5	95	95
non-SSC Industries	5	95	635
Skillsmart Retail	5	95	208
SummitSkills	4	96	128
Asset Skills	4	96	167
Skillset**	4	96	85
SkillsActive	3	97	160
Creative & Cultural Skills**	2	98	94
Improve	2	98	144

\*\* *Caution small numbers*

**Table 5** shows the difficult to fill vacancy rate for each SSC. This is the number of vacancies that are difficult to fill as a proportion of employees<sup>8</sup>. Of these sectors for which robust estimates could be derived, the sectors with the highest difficult to fill vacancy rate were e-Skills UK (2.8%), Lantra (2.6%), Skillfast-UK (2.2%) and People 1st (1.8%). The sectors with the lowest difficult to fill vacancy rate were Improve (0.2%), Lifelong Learning UK (0.7%) and SkillsActive (0.7%).

**Table 5. Difficult to fill vacancy rate by Sector Skills Council**

	Difficult to fill vacancy rate* %
e-Skills UK	2.8
Lantra	2.6
Skillfast-UK	2.2
People 1st	1.8
GoSkills	1.6
Financial Services Skills Council	1.5
Skills for Care & Development	1.4
Cogent	1.3
Automotive Skills	1.3
Asset Skills	1.2
ConstructionSkills	1.2
<b>All Sectors</b>	<b>1.1</b>
Skillsmart Retail	1.0
SEMTA	1.0
Proskills	0.9
Skills for Health	0.9
Skillset**	0.8
Central Government**	0.8
SummitSkills	0.8
non-SSC Industries	0.8
Skills for Logistics	0.8
SkillsActive	0.7
Lifelong Learning UK	0.7
Creative & Cultural Skills**	0.6
Skills for Justice**	0.4
Energy & Utility Skills**	0.3
Improve	0.2

\* Rate is calculated as a proportion of employment i.e. number of employees in this Survey

\*\* Caution small numbers

<sup>8</sup> The number of employees is the total number of employees included in this survey.

**Table 6. Proportion of difficult to fill vacancies due to external skill shortages by Sector Skills Council**

	Percentage of employers with difficult to fill vacancies %	Percentage of vacancies that are difficult to fill %	Percentage of difficult to fill vacancies due to external skill shortages %
<b>All Sectors</b>	6	52	34
Asset Skills	4	67	42
Automotive Skills	7	68	33
Central Government**	9	47	87
Cogent	10	54	21
ConstructionSkills	6	70	57
Creative & Cultural Skills**	2	15	7
Energy & Utility Skills**	5	47	27
e-Skills UK	6	56	84
Financial Services Skills Council	9	59	46
GoSkills	6	56	20
Improve	2	41	5
Lantra	8	64	9
Lifelong Learning UK	6	27	16
People 1st	6	49	20
Proskills	6	60	25
SEMTA	9	51	49
Skillfast-UK	12	73	2
Skills for Care & Development	8	44	15
Skills for Health	8	56	22
Skills for Justice**	18	46	60
Skills for Logistics	6	55	41
SkillsActive	3	25	24
Skillset**	4	39	90
Skillsmart Retail	5	48	25
SummitSkills	4	87	74
non-SSC Industries	5	52	39

\*\* *Caution small numbers*

**Table 6** indicates the proportion of vacancies that were reported as being difficult to fill within each Sector Skills Council. Over half (52%) of all vacancies were considered by employers to be difficult to fill. This is also reflected in the SSC analysis as most of the sectors (with the exception of Improve, Lifelong Learning UK, People 1st, Skills for Care and Development, SkillsActive and Skillsmart Retail) considered more than 50% of vacancies to be difficult to fill. Within SummitSkills, 87% of vacancies were difficult to fill. In contrast, 25% of vacancies in SkillsActive were difficult to fill.

Of particular interest is the prevalence of difficult to fill vacancies whereby external skill shortages are a contributing factor. Employers were asked to identify the reasons why the vacancy was difficult to fill. If the respondent referred to any of the following reasons: a lack of skills the company demands; a lack of qualifications the company demands or a lack of work experience the company demands; then the vacancy was defined as difficult to fill due to an external skill shortage.

**Table 6** also shows the proportion of difficult to fill vacancies that are due to external skill shortages within each SSC. Overall for all employers, one third (34%) of difficult to fill vacancies were due to external skill shortages.

External skill shortages affected some SSCs more so than others. For example, in more than half of the difficult to fill vacancies in e-Skills (84%), SummitSkills (74%) and ConstructionSkills (57%), external skill shortages were a contributing factor. The proportion of difficult to fill vacancies due to external skill shortages for SEMTA (49%), Financial Services (46%), Asset Skills (42%) and Skills for Logistics (41%) exceed the average for all sectors (34%).

**Table 7** shows the skill shortage vacancy rate for each Sector Skills Council. This is the number of vacancies due to external skill shortages as a proportion of employees<sup>9</sup>. Of these sectors for which robust estimates could be derived, the sectors with the highest skill shortage vacancy rates were e-Skills UK (2.4%), Construction Skills (0.7%), Financial Services (0.7%) and SummitSkills (0.6%). The sectors with the lowest skill shortage rate were Improve (0.0%), Skillfast-UK (0.1%) and Lifelong Learning UK (0.1%).

**Table 7. Skill shortage vacancy rate by Sector Skills Council**

	Skill shortage vacancy rate* %
e-Skills UK	2.4
Skillset**	0.8
Central Government**	0.7
ConstructionSkills	0.7
Financial Services Skills Council	0.7
SummitSkills	0.6
Asset Skills	0.5
SEMTA	0.5
Automotive Skills	0.4
<b>All Sectors</b>	<b>0.4</b>
People 1st	0.4
Skills for Logistics	0.3
non-SSC Industries	0.3
GoSkills	0.3
Skillsmart Retail	0.3
Cogent	0.3
Skills for Justice**	0.2
Proskills	0.2
Skills for Care & Development	0.2
Lantra	0.2
Skills for Health	0.2
SkillsActive	0.2
Lifelong Learning UK	0.1
Energy & Utility Skills**	0.1
Skillfast-UK	0.1
Creative & Cultural Skills** <sup>1</sup>	0.0
Improve <sup>1</sup>	0.0

<sup>1</sup> A percentage estimate of less than 0.5 is recorded as 0%.

\* Rate is calculated as a proportion of employment i.e. number of employees in this Survey.

\*\* Caution small numbers

<sup>9</sup> The number of employees is the total number of employees included in this survey.

## CHAPTER 4 SKILL GAPS

Skills gaps exist where there is a gap between an employee's current skill level and what is needed to meet work objectives. While many employers recognise the necessity of providing training to new recruits, the issue of further training for demands in the workplace can often be problematic.

The vast majority of employers (91%) said that their staff already possessed the skills needed to help the business meet its objectives (**Table 8**). The remaining 9% of employers indicated that there was some gap between the types of skills that their current employees had, and those that the organisation needed to meet their business objectives, at the time of the interview.

The existence of skill gaps was highest within Skills for Care and Development (15%) compared to Improve (6%) and SkillsActive (6%).

**Table 8. Reported skill gaps among the workforce by Sector Skills Council**

	Existing Skill gaps %	No Skill gaps %	Base = 100%
Skills for Justice**	27	73	30
Central Government**	18	82	44
Skills for Care & Development	15	85	198
Financial Services Skills Council	14	86	134
e-Skills UK	14	86	114
Skills for Health	14	86	205
SEMTA	12	88	171
Energy & Utility Skills**	11	89	95
People 1st	10	90	196
non-SSC Industries	10	90	635
Cogent	10	90	148
Asset Skills	10	90	166
Lifelong Learning UK	10	90	158
<b>All Sectors</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>4,115</b>
Skillfast-UK	9	91	112
Creative & Cultural Skills**	8	92	94
Automotive Skills	8	92	177
Skills for Logistics	8	92	160
ConstructionSkills	8	92	185
Proskills	7	93	138
Skillsmart Retail	7	93	208
Lantra	7	93	101
SummitSkills	7	93	128
GoSkills	7	93	127
SkillsActive	6	94	162
Improve	6	94	144
Skillset**	3	97	85

\*\* Caution small numbers

**Table 9** shows the skill gap rate for each SSC. This is measured as the number of skill gaps as a proportion of employees<sup>10</sup>. Of the sectors for which robust estimates could be derived, the sectors with the highest skill gap rate were Financial Services Skills Council (16.2%), SummitSkills (14.0%) and GoSkills (13.8%). The sectors with the lowest skill gap rate were Skills for Logistics (4.7%), Skills for Health (6.2%) and SkillsActive (6.5%).

**Table 9. Skill gap rate by Sector Skills Council**

	Skill gap rate* %
Central Government**	23.7
Financial Services Skills Council	16.2
Energy & Utility Skills**	15.5
SummitSkills	14.0
GoSkills	13.8
Cogent	12.9
Skillsmart Retail	12.4
Skills for Care & Development	12.1
People 1st	9.5
Creative & Cultural Skills**	9.4
Automotive Skills	9.3
Lantra	9.2
<b>All Sectors</b>	<b>8.9</b>
e-Skills UK	8.9
Lifelong Learning UK	8.7
Asset Skills	8.6
Skillset**	8.3
Proskills	8.2
SEMTA	8.2
Skillfast-UK	7.6
Improve	7.2
non-SSC Industries	6.8
ConstructionSkills	6.7
SkillsActive	6.5
Skills for Health	6.2
Skills for Justice**	4.8
Skills for Logistics	4.7

\* Rate is calculated as a proportion of employment i.e. number of employees in this Survey.

\*\* Caution small numbers

<sup>10</sup> The number of employees is the total number of employees included in this survey.

## CHAPTER 5 TRAINING

Employers were asked a number of questions related to the training that they had provided or arranged for their staff in the previous 12 months. This included both off-the-job and on-the-job training.

**Table 10** shows the proportion of employers who provided or arranged off-the-job training for their employees in the previous 12 months by SSC. Off-the-job training was defined as ‘training that was delivered away from the immediate work position, whether at the business premises or elsewhere’. This type of training included all types of courses, e.g. full or part time; correspondence or distance learning; Health and Safety training, etc, as long as it was funded or arranged by the employer for employees working at the business.

**Table 10** shows that overall 34% of employers had organised training for employees in the previous 12 months. The sectors providing the highest proportion of training were Skills for Care and Development (67%) and Lifelong Learning UK (67%). The sectors providing the lowest proportion of off-the-job training were Skillfast-UK (13%) and GoSkills (14%).

**Table 10. Off-the-job training by Sector Skills Council**

	Off-the-job training %	No off-the-job training %	Base = 100%
Central Government**	85	15	43
Skills for Justice**	75	25	29
Skills for Care & Development	67	33	198
Lifelong Learning UK	67	33	154
Skills for Health	61	39	200
Financial Services Skills Council	47	53	131
e-Skills UK	46	54	112
ConstructionSkills	44	56	184
SummitSkills	43	57	127
Asset Skills	43	57	163
Lantra	38	62	99
SEMTA	36	64	169
Energy & Utility Skills**	36	64	95
<b>All Sectors</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>4,071</b>
non-SSC Industries	34	66	626
SkillsActive	33	67	161
Cogent	32	68	148
Automotive Skills	30	70	176
Improve	29	71	144
Skillsmart Retail	27	73	205
Skills for Logistics	26	74	159
Proskills	23	77	137
People 1st	21	79	196
Creative & Cultural Skills**	21	79	93
Skillset**	20	80	84
GoSkills	14	86	125
Skillfast-UK	13	87	113

\*\* *Caution small numbers*

Respondents were asked if they had provided any on-the-job training to their staff over the last 12 months. On-the-job training was defined as 'training given at the desk or place where the staff usually work'.

Six in ten employers said that they had provided on-the-job training to their staff (60%). For each of the Sector Skills Councils, most employers (i.e. more than half of the employers) provided on-the-job training (**Table 11**). Within the sectors, on-the-job training was most prevalent in Skills for Care and Development (74%) and Lifelong Learning UK (74%). Other sectors in which a large proportion of employers provided on-the-job training to staff included e-Skills UK (72%), Cogent (70%) and Improve (69%).

**Table 11. On-the-job training by Sector Skills Council**

	On-the-job training %	No on-the-job training %	Base = 100%
Skills for Justice**	100	0	30
Central Government**	78	22	43
Skills for Care & Development	74	26	198
Lifelong Learning UK	74	26	152
e-Skills UK	72	28	113
Cogent	70	30	148
Improve	69	31	142
Financial Services Skills Council	68	32	131
Skills for Health	68	32	199
Skillsmart Retail	67	33	206
People 1st	66	34	196
Lantra	66	34	99
Automotive Skills	60	40	176
<b>All Sectors</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>4,062</b>
Skills for Logistics	59	41	159
SEMTA	58	42	169
Energy & Utility Skills**	58	42	95
Asset Skills	57	43	162
non-SSC Industries	57	43	625
ConstructionSkills	53	47	183
Proskills	48	52	137
Skillfast-UK	47	53	113
Creative & Cultural Skills**	45	55	92
SummitSkills	44	56	126
SkillsActive	44	56	159
GoSkills	36	64	125
Skillset**	30	70	84

\*\* Caution small numbers

## FURTHER INFORMATION

The Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA) have defined the Sector Skills Councils by a series of SIC footprints (as outlined in **Appendix 1**).

A full list of SSC contacts is provided below. These contacts will be able to provide more in-depth information and research relating to their sector. More information about Sector Skill Councils can be found on the SSDA's website at [www.ssda.org.uk](http://www.ssda.org.uk).

### Table of Contacts

Sector Skills Councils	Contact	Details
Asset Skills	Adrian Watson	awatson@assetskills.org
Automotive Skills	Martin Hutchinson	martinh@motor.org.uk
Cogent	Barry Neilson	barry.neilson@cogent-ssc.com
ConstructionSkills	Karen Hunter	khunter@citbni.org.uk
Creative & Cultural Skills	Caroline Parkinson	Caroline.parkinson@ccskills.org.uk
Energy and Utility Skills	Ronnie Moore	ronnie.moore@euskills.co.uk
e-Skills UK	Mark Feeney	Mark.feeney@e-skills.com
Financial Services Skills Council	Gill Connelly	gill.connelly@fssc.org.uk
GoSkills	Richard Wheeler	Richard.wheater@goskills.org
Government Skills	Judith Black	Judith.black@dfpni.gov.uk
Improve Ltd	Geoff Lamb	geofflamb@fdtc.co.uk
Lantra	David Seffen	Dave.seffen@lantra.co.uk
Lifelong Learning UK	Brian Henry	brianhenry@lluk.org
People 1st	Roisin McKee	Roisin.mckee@people1st.co.uk
Proskills UK	Paul Coffey	paul.coffey@proskills.co.uk
SEMTA	David Hatton	david.hatton@etcni.org.uk
Skillfast-UK (NI)	Robin Newton	robin_newton@skillfast-uk.org
Skills for Care and Development	Veronica Callaghan	veronica.callaghan@nisocialcarecouncil.org.uk
Skills for Health	Danielle Price	Danielle.price@skillsforhealth.org.uk
Skills for Justice	Judith Thompson	judith.thompson@skillsforjustice.com
Skills for Logistics	Geraldine Quinn	Geraldine.quinn@skillsforlogistics.org
SkillsActive	Siobhan Weir	siobhan.weir@skillsactive.com
Skillset (NI)	Cecilia McAllister	ceciliam@skillset.org
SkillsSmart Retail	Tory Kerley	tory.kerley@skillsmartretail.com
SummitSkills	Bill Cherry	Bill.cherry@summitskills.org.uk
SSDA	Laurence Downey	Laurence.downey@ssda.org.uk

## APPENDIX 1

### Definition of Sector Skills Councils

SSC name	CSU SIC Definition
Asset Skills	70, 74.7
Automotive Skills	50.1-50.4, 71.1
Central Government	75.1, 75.21, 75.22, 75.3
Cogent	11, 23-25 (excluding 24.3, 24.64, 24.7), 50.5
ConstructionSkills	45.1, 45.2, 45.32, 45.34, 45.4, 45.5, 74.2
Creative and Cultural Industries	22.14, 22.31, 36.3, 92.31, 92.32, 92.52
e-Skills UK	22.33, 64.2, 72, 74.86
Energy and Utility Skills	37.1, 40.1, 40.2, 41, 51.54, 51.55, 90
Financial Services Skills Council	65-67
GoSkills	60.21, 60.22, 60.23, 61.1, 61.2, 62.1, 62.2, 63.21, 63.22, 63.23, 80.41
Improve	15, 51.31-51.34, 51.36-51.39
Lantra	29.3, 51.88, 85.2, 92.53
Lifelong Learning UK	80.22, 80.3, 80.42, 92.51
People Ist	55.1, 55.21, 55.23, 55.3-55.5, 63.3, 74.873, 74.874, 92.71
Proskills	10,12-14, 21, 22.2, 24.3, 26.1, 26.26, 26.4, 26.5, 26.61-26.66, 26.7, 26.8, 37.2, 40.3
SEMTA	27.4, 27.5, 28.1-28.3, 28.5-28.7, 29-35 (excluding 29.3)
Skills for Care	85.3
Skills for Health	85.1
Skills for Justice	75.23, 75.24
Skills for Logistics	60.24, 63.1, 63.4, 64.1
SkillsActive	55.22, 92.33, 92.6, 93.04
Skillfast-UK	17-19, 24.7, 51.16, 51.41, 51.42, 52.71, 93.01
Skillsmart	52.1-52.6
Skillset	22.32, 24.64, 74.81, 92.1, 92.2
SummitSkills	45.31, 45.33, 52.72
non-SSC Industries	16, 20, 22.11-22.13, 22.15, 26.21, 26.25, 26.3, 27.1, 27.2, 27.3, 28.4, 36.1, 36.2, 36.4-36.6, 51.11-51.15, 51.17-51.19, 51.2, 51.35, 51.43-51.47, 51.51, 51.52, 51.53, 51.56, 51.57, 51.81-51.87, 51.90, 52.73, 52.74, 60.1, 60.3, 62.3, 71.2-71.4, 73, 74.1, 74.3-74.6, 74.82, 74.85, 74.871, 74.872, 74.879, 75.25, 80.10, 80.21, 91, 92.34, 92.40, 92.72, 93.02, 93.03, 93.05

## Summary Description of Sector Skills Councils

Sector Skills Councils (SSC) are employer-led, independent organisations that cover specific sectors across the UK. SSCs provide employers with a unique forum to express the skills and productivity needs that are pertinent to their sector. The table below gives a brief description of the sector covered by each SSC.

SSC name	Summary Description
Asset Skills	Property, housing, cleaning services and facilities management.
Automotive Skills	The retail motor industry.
Central Government	Civil Servants and Armed forces personnel.
Cogent	Chemicals and pharmaceuticals, nuclear, oil and gas, petroleum and polymers.
Construction Skills	Construction.
Creative and Cultural Industries	Advertising, crafts, cultural heritage, design, music, performing, literary and visual arts.
e-Skills UK	Information technology and telecommunications and the lead for contact centres on behalf of the Skills for Business network.
Energy and Utility Skills	Electricity, gas, waste management and water industries.
Financial Services Skills Council	Bankers, insurance and accountants.
GoSkills	Passenger transport. Aviation, buses, taxis coaches, community transport, driver training and transport planning.
Improve	Food and drink manufacturing and processing industry sea fishing, craft bakery, meat and poultry, dairy and general food and drink.
Lantra	Environmental and land-based industries.
Lifelong Learning UK	Community learning and development, further education, higher education, libraries, archives and information services, work-based learning and development.
People 1st	Hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism industries.
Proskills	Process and manufacturing in the building products, coatings, glass, printing, extractive and mineral processing industries.
SEMTA	Science, engineering and manufacturing technologies.
Skills for Care	Social care, children, early years and young people's workforces in the UK.
Skills for Health	The health sector across the UK.
Skills for Justice	Policing and law enforcement, youth justice, custodial care, community justice, courts service, prosecution service and forensic science.
Skills for Logistics	Freight transport by road, storage and warehousing, activities of other transport agencies, courier services, air freight, rail freight, freight inland sea and coastal water transport.
SkillsActive	Sport and recreation, health and fitness, the outdoors, playwork and the caravan industry.
Skillfast-UK	Fashion and textiles.
Skillsmart	Retail.
Skillset	Broadcast, film, video, interactive media and photo imaging.
SummitSkills	Electro technical, heating, ventilating, air conditioning, refrigeration and plumbing industries.
non-SSC Industries	All other industries.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **Definition of Terms**

#### **Difficult to fill vacancies**

Difficult to fill vacancies are vacancies which an employer considers difficult to fill for any reason. Although there is no formal definition of a difficult to fill vacancy, employers are asked to define this in terms of their business needs and their current situation.

#### **Recruitment Difficulties**

A recruitment difficulty arises where an employer is unable to fill current vacancies from the external labour market. Most recruitment difficulties are not true skill shortages.

#### **Skill Deficiencies**

Skills deficiencies can be described as either skill shortages or skill gaps.

#### **Skills Shortages**

Skills shortage vacancies are defined as difficult to fill vacancies that are attributed by employers to one of the following causes; lack of skills, lack of qualifications, lack of work experience.

#### **Skill Gaps**

A skill gap exists where an employer identifies a gap between an employee's current skill level and what is needed to meet work objectives. Skill gaps refer to individuals already in employment with the responding employer.

#### **Off-the-Job Training**

Off-the-job training refers to any type of training which is delivered away from the immediate work position, whether at the premises or elsewhere. It includes all sorts of courses – full or part time; correspondence or distance learning; Health and Safety training, etc as long as it is funded or arranged by the employer.

#### **On-the-Job Training**

On-the-job training refers to any type of training which is given at the desk or place where the staff usually work. Again on-the-job training is funded or arranged by the employer.

## APPENDIX 3

### Notes on Tables

1. A percentage estimate of less than 0.5 is recorded as 0%.
2. Unless stated otherwise, all base numbers are un-weighted and all percentage estimates weighted.
3. Where the base cell is less than 100, the reader is asked to treat the results with caution.
4. Base numbers may vary slightly as responses of 'don't know' and 'refusal' have been excluded from the analysis.





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