



Schools Learner Voice Survey 2008



Research

Research document No: 046/2009

Date of issue: September 2009

Schools Learner Voice Survey 2008

Audience	National and local bodies in Wales concerned with education, training and skills in Wales.
Overview	The Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS) strategy document, The Learning Country: Vision into Action states that DCELLS will "...consider... how best to monitor the views of students on a regular basis and to publish the results". Following consultation across the provider base, a decision was made to undertake a Learner Voice survey across all areas of DCELLS provision. This report covers the findings of a survey to measure the views of Year 10 and 11 learners and Year 12 and 13 students within schools with sixth forms.
Action required	None – for information.
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Additional copies	Can be obtained by visiting the Welsh Assembly Government website http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/research-and-evaluation/customer-research
Related documents	None

1. Summary

The 2008 Schools Learner Voice Survey was undertaken as part of the DCELLS 2007-2010 Customer Research Programme (CRP). During the inception phase of the programme, many policy leads emphasised the need to take into account the views of learners as part of assessments of school improvement and effectiveness. The aims of this survey were to:

- provide updated learner satisfaction and related measures for students in school sixth forms (Years 12 and 13)
- set a baseline measurement for learner satisfaction and related topics for Year 10 and 11 students, with particular reference to the 14-19 Learning Pathways agenda.

Separate paper self-completion questionnaires were administered to students from Years 10 and 11, and from Years 12 and 13. The broad topic areas covered in both questionnaires were: choice; quality of teaching; learning pathways; satisfaction with teaching and satisfaction with the learning experience. Responses were received from 2,018 students

2. Introduction and methodology

2.1 Background

The Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS) strategy document, *The Learning Country: Vision into Action* states that DCELLS will “...consider... how best to monitor the views of students on a regular basis and to publish the results”.

Following consultation across the provider base, a decision was made to undertake a Learner Voice survey across all areas of DCELLS provision. This report covers the findings of a survey to measure the views of Year 10 and 11 learners and Year 12 and 13 students within schools with sixth forms. A similar report was produced in 2004 by ELWA but this concentrated on Year 12 and 13 students in sixth forms only.

In 2004, what started as a scoping study to explore options for collecting the views of school sixth form students grew into a much larger project and ultimately a survey of 5,717 sixth formers across Wales. The approach used was a self-completion paper questionnaire, and this survey established an indicative baseline for satisfaction amongst Year 12 and Year 13 students in Wales. There has been a desire in the Assembly to acquire updated information on levels of satisfaction in school sixth forms and to set a new baseline for Year 10 and Year 11 students, particularly in relation to views on the choices and options available to them during the 14-19 Learning Pathways¹ period. To this end the aims of the 2008 Schools Learner Voice Survey were to²:

- provide updated satisfaction and related measures for students in school sixth forms (Years 12 and 13)
- set a baseline measurement for satisfaction and related topics for Year 10 and 11 students
 - in particular, to explore views on the choices and options available to them during the 14-19 Learning Pathways period
- maximise student participation by providing easy read versions of paper materials for use by students with learning difficulties

¹http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/policy_strategy_and_planning/learning_pathways/?lang=en

² An additional element of the project was to explore the use of an online approach to data collection in one school to assess how the resulting data compares to that collected on paper so that a correction factor may be estimated. This has been reported to DCELLS separately.

2.2 Methodology

This section summarises the approach taken to the survey. A full technical report is provided in the appendices to this report.

2.2.1 Overview

A paper self completion method was used with two 4-page questionnaires being designed - one for Year 10 and 11 and one for Year 12 and 13. Respondents were offered the opportunity to complete the questionnaire in either English or Welsh (the resulting questionnaires were 8-pages in total length). This approach mirrored that used in 2004.

The Year 12 and 13 questionnaire was broadly based on that used in 2004 to allow comparability of results. Whilst the Year 10 and 11 questionnaire focused on similar issues (notably key measures such as questions about overall satisfaction) it also included questions relating to choices and options during the 14-19 Learning Pathways period.

Both questionnaires were available in an easy read format and schools themselves took the responsibility for deciding whether their students required easy read versions of questionnaires. In practice, very few easy read questionnaires were completed (11 for Year 10 and 11 and 7 for Year 12 and 13).

The questionnaires were piloted to assess their ease of administration and the level of student understanding. Fieldwork ran between 5th March and 23rd April 2008 (with schools closed for Easter holidays between 21st March and 6th April). Selected schools were invited to distribute questionnaires to two tutor groups in each of Year 10 and Year 11 or Year 12 and Year 13 (some schools appear in both samples). Questionnaires were then returned to GfK NOP for scanning and data processing.

A sample (rather than a census) of schools was invited to take part in the survey and this sample was selected in order to meet a number of analysis and practical criteria, namely:

- region – 4 regions defined by LEA (North Wales, South West/Mid Wales, South Wales, South East Wales)
- Welsh medium versus English medium schools
- percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals
- rurality indicator (urban versus rural)
- size of school (number of pupils).

The following universe for the study was agreed with DCELLS:

Year group	Main stream schools	Special schools	Pupil referral units (PRUs)	Independent schools
Year 10	✓	✓	✓	x
Year 11	✓	✓	✓	x
Year 12	✓	✓	x	x
Year 13	✓	✓	x	x

Note: Year 14/age 18 students were not included in the universe. Whilst some PRUs had students aged 16+, the numbers per PRU were too small to be viable for sampling. As DCELLS does not fund or influence the Independent schools sector this part of the schools universe was not included.

Response to the survey was as follows:

- forty-six percent of schools invited to take part in the research agreed to participate in the time available (34 out of 74 invited)
- a total of 2094 questionnaires were collected for Year 10 and 11 and 1782 for Year 12 and 13.

The data was weighted to the population of students provided to GfK NOP. The fact that some schools could not participate meant that some variables needed higher or lower upweights than others. Due to the fact that we were dependent on which schools would or could help in this project, rurality was not always represented as well as it might be for some regions. Therefore the regional analysis has not been highlighted in this report (more detail is provided in the technical appendix).

2.2.2 Profile of the sample

The following paragraphs give a profile of the weighted sample so that inferences in the report have their context.

Personal demographics (gender, BME and disabilities)

After weighting, the total profile of respondents in the survey was as follows (on occasion the figures do not add to 100% due to some 'not stating'):

- the split between males and females for respondents in Year 10 and 11 was 49% versus 47% and 45% versus 51% for respondents in Year 12 and 13. If the percentages are recalculated without the 'not stated' option the sample reflects the national figures for gender (see technical appendix).
- in terms of ethnicity, the ratio of white to BME respondents was 87% compared to 10% in the Year 10 and 11 group and 86% versus 10% in Year 12 and 13. Other variables were linked to ethnicity:

- significantly more BME students in the Year 12 and 13 cohort were in schools where 15% or more students were entitled to free school meals
- the link between ethnicity and free school meal entitlement was not significant in the Year 10 and 11 cohort
- in Year 10 and 11, three schools had a proportion of BME respondents that was 3 percentage points higher than average
- again, in Year 12 and 13 these same three schools had a proportion of BME respondents that was 3 percentage points higher than average
- the proportion of learners with learning disabilities was 7% in Year 10 and 11 and 5% in Year 12 and 13
- in Year 10 and 11 4% stated that they had a long term limiting disability and 2% in the Year 12 and 13 cohort said the same
- at a total level 17% were getting extra support with their work in the classroom in Year 10 and 11 and 9% said the same from Year 12 and 13.

School demographics (school size, class size, free school meals, medium)

At an overall level:

- in the Year 10 and 11 group 51% of students were in schools where 15% or more were entitled to free school meals, 25% in schools where between 10% and 15% were entitled and 24% in schools where less than 10% had the same entitlement
- in Year 12 and 13, 41% of students were in schools where 15% or more were entitled to free school meals, 18% in schools where between 10% and 15% were entitled and 41% in schools where less than 10% had the same entitlement
- in Year 10 and 11 16% of respondents were in Welsh Medium schools and for Year 12 and 13 it was 19%.

3. Year 10 and 11 study

3.1 Introduction

This section reviews the experiences and perceptions of delivery reported by the Year 10 and 11 cohort. The data has been analysed by a series of variables relating to personal demographics, options undertaken, levels of satisfaction and motivation and finally schools demographics (medium of school, size of year group and percentage eligible for free school meals). In terms of the content, the questionnaire for these year groups covered the following aspects of the experience:

- Choice and opportunity: reasons for the selection of subjects/qualifications and if those currently studied are the ones that students most wanted to do.
- Motivation and problems experienced: overall levels of motivation and any problems that have been experienced in Year 10 and 11.
- Satisfaction with teaching: satisfaction with aspects of teaching and also overall satisfaction with their learning experience.
- Measures to explore overall satisfaction with the experience: agreement with a list of statements relating to safety and security, engaging the learner and nurturing the learner and also overall satisfaction with learning in the school (including 'one thing liked best' and 'one thing to change').

3.2 Choice and opportunities

3.2.1 Reasons for selecting subjects/ qualifications

All students were asked their reasons for choosing their current subjects and qualifications. They were offered a list of possible answers and could choose as many or as few as they wished, as well as recording any other answers not already on the list.

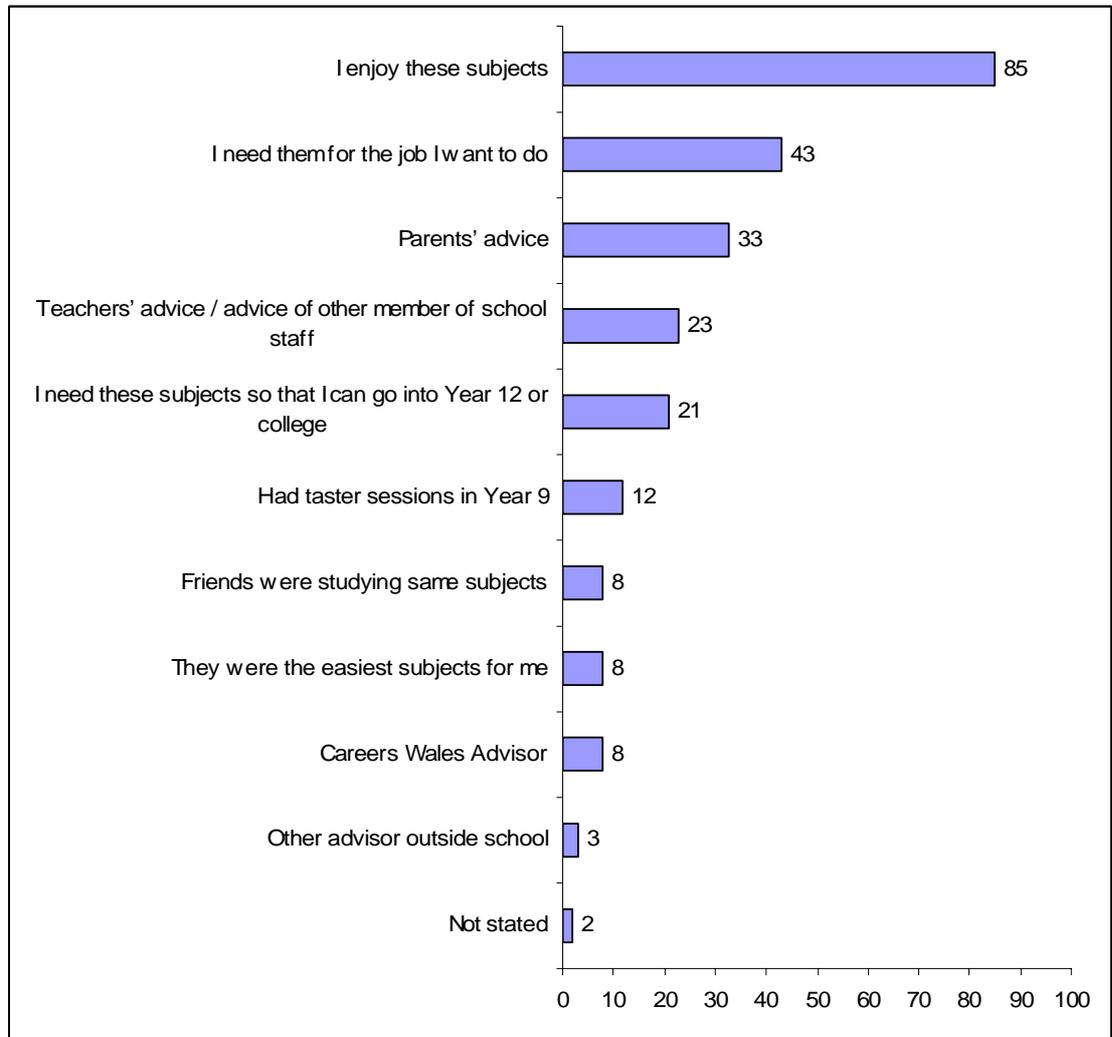
The vast majority of students (85%) responded that they enjoyed the subjects being studied. Just under half (43%) considered that they needed the subjects or qualifications for the job that they want to do while one in five (21%) needed the subjects to progress to Year 12 or college.

A third of students (33%) had chosen their current subjects and qualifications following advice from their parents while a quarter (23%) had chosen them following advice from a teacher or a member of school staff. One in ten students (12%) had had a taster session in Year 9 which had influenced their choice.

Other reasons students gave for having selected their subjects (each mentioned by 8% of students) were that their friends were taking the same subjects, that the

subjects were the easiest for them and that they had received advice from a Careers Wales advisor.

Chart 3.1: Reasons why chose subjects and qualifications (% answering): summary Year 10 and 11



Base: All respondents Year 10 and 11 Unweighted (2094) Weighted (2094). All reasons mentioned by more than 2% are shown in chart.

Further analysis based on students' personal demographics revealed the following differences in reasons for having chosen their subjects and qualifications in Years 10 and 11:

- Females were more likely than males to have chosen their subjects and qualifications because of the following reasons:
 - parents' advice (37% of female students compared with 31% of male students)

- teachers' advice / advice of other member of school staff (26% compared with 20%)
 - they need these subjects to go into Year 12 or into college (24% compared with 18%).
- In contrast, males were more likely to give the reason that they were the easiest subjects (11% compared with 6% of female students).
- Around half of Year 10 students (51%) believed that they needed their chosen subjects and qualifications for the job they wanted to do. The same reason was given by around four in ten students in Year 11 (36%). However, Year 11 students were more likely than Year 10 students to have chosen their subjects and qualifications based on the following reasons:
 - teachers' advice / advice of other member of school (25% compared with 21% of Year 10 students)
 - they need these subjects to go into Year 12 or college (24% compared with 18% of Year 10 students).
- Significantly more students who received extra learning support mentioned that they needed their chosen subjects and qualifications in order to go into Year 12 or college (27% compared with 20% of students who didn't receive extra support).

Table 3.1: Why subjects and qualifications were chosen by gender, year and extra learning support

	Total	Gender		Year		Extra learning support	
		Male	Female	Year 10	Year 11	Yes	No
Base: All respondents Year 10 and 11							
Unweighted	2094	998	1020	1026	997	292	1693
Weighted	2094	1029	989	998	1020	347	1637
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
I enjoy these subjects	85	85	88	86	86	90	86
I need them for the job I want to do	43	42	45	51	36	44	43
Parents' advice	33	31	37	35	32	29	34
Teachers' advice / advice of other member of school staff	23	20	26	21	25	27	22
I need these subjects so that I can go into Year 12 or college	21	18	24	18	24	27	20
Had taster sessions in Year 9	12	11	14	14	12	14	12
Friends were studying same subjects	8	9	8	8	9	9	8
They were the easiest subjects for me	8	11	6	9	8	7	9
Careers Wales Advisor	8	7	9	7	8	5	8
Other advisor outside school	3	3	2	3	2	3	2
Not stated	2	1	*	1	*	*	1

Note: All reasons mentioned by more than 2% are shown in table.

There seems to be a relationship between type of qualification and motivation for selection (see table 1, Appendix B), in particular:

- Qualifications needed for a job they wanted to do was mentioned by lower proportions of students attending GCSE courses (43% compared to at least 54% attending all other course types).
- Advice from the teacher was mentioned by fewer students studying NVQs (19%) and GCSEs (23%). This is compared to between a third and a half of students studying Basic Skills qualifications (46%), Welsh Baccalaureate (36%), Key Skills qualifications (32%), vocational qualifications (32%) or other qualifications (51%) who had chosen subjects and qualifications based on the advice of a teacher or a member of school staff.

Students who exhibited higher levels of motivation and satisfaction with teaching were more likely to give particular reasons for the choosing their subjects than their less motivated or satisfied counterparts, as follows:

- Students who were more satisfied with the quality of teaching overall were more likely to state that they chose their subjects and qualifications because they enjoyed these subjects (89% who were satisfied compared with 67% of students who were not satisfied).
 - These students were also more likely to have taken the advice of a teacher or another member of staff than those students who were not satisfied (25% compared with 14%).
- Students who were very motivated in or extremely satisfied with their studies were more likely to have taken the advice of parents than those who were not motivated or satisfied.
- Similarly, students who were very or fairly motivated in their studies had also chosen subjects because they enjoyed them (92% and 88% respectively, compared with 81% who were not very motivated and 75% who were not at all motivated).
- In addition, nearly six in ten (55%) students who were very motivated chose their subjects and qualifications because they needed them for the job they want to do (compared with 43% of students overall).
- By contrast, only a third of students who were dissatisfied with the quality of teaching (32%) had chosen their subjects and qualifications because they needed them for the job they want to do.

Students with low levels of motivation were more likely to state that they had chosen their subjects because they were the easiest subjects for them (table 2, Appendix B).

When the data was analysed by the variables relating to school demographics, the following differences for reasons given for subject and qualification choice were seen:

- Students at English medium schools were more likely than those at Welsh medium schools to have chosen their subjects and qualifications for the following reasons:
 - they need them for the job they want to do (44% compared with 33% of students at Welsh medium schools)
 - as a result of the advice or influence of Careers Wales Advisor (8% compared with 5%).
- Students at schools where less than 10% of students were eligible for free school meals were more likely to have chosen their subjects and qualifications because they enjoyed them (89% compared with 85% of students overall)

Table 3.2: Why subjects and qualifications were chosen by language medium and % entitlement to free school meals

		Language medium		% entitlement to free school meals		
		Welsh	English	15% plus	10-15%	Less than 10%
Base: All respondents Year 10 and 11	Total					
Unweighted	2094	365	1729	693	614	787
Weighted	2094	334	1760	1059	534	501
	%	%	%	%	%	%
I enjoy these subjects	85	88	85	84	83	89
I need them for the job I want to do	43	33	44	44	42	39
Parents' advice	33	33	33	32	31	38
Teachers' advice / advice of other member of school staff	23	19	24	24	23	20
I need these subjects so that I can go into Year 12 or college	21	18	21	23	19	18
Had taster sessions in Year 9	12	12	12	12	10	16

Friends were studying same subjects	8	9	8	9	4	11
They were the easiest subjects for me	8	10	8	7	9	11
Careers Wales Advisor	8	5	8	7	9	7
Other advisor outside school	3	2	3	3	3	3
Not stated	2	2	1	1	4	1

Note: All reasons mentioned by more than 2% are shown in table.

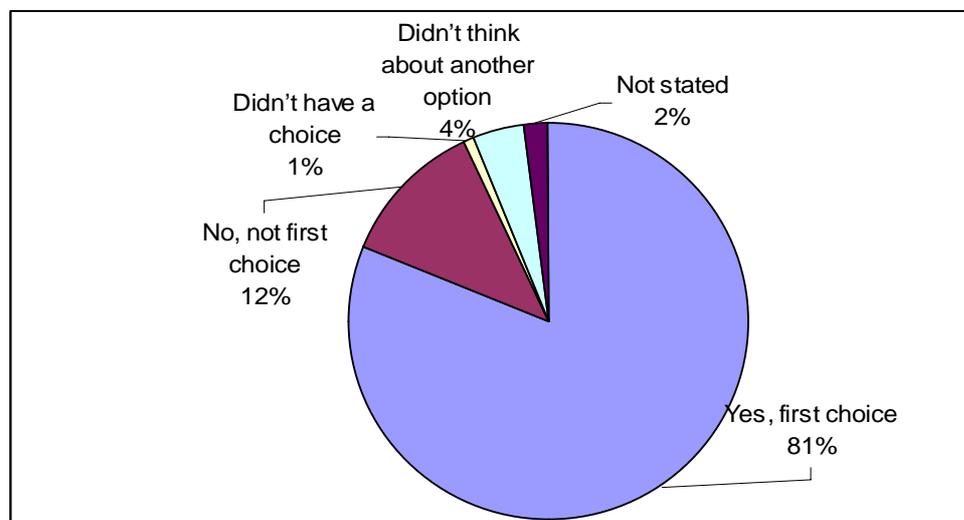
3.2.2 First choice of subject / qualifications

All students were asked whether the subjects and qualifications they were studying were the ones that they most wanted to do and were given the option of selecting one answer from the following:

- yes, first choice
- no, not first choice
- didn't have a choice
- didn't think about another option.

As shown by Chart 3.2, around eight in ten students (81%) were studying their first choice of subjects and qualifications, while 12% stated that they were not studying their first choice. Just 4% hadn't thought about another option, whilst 1% had not been given a choice.

Chart 3.2: Whether subjects and qualifications were first choice: summary Year 10 and 11



Base: All respondents Year 10 and 11 Unweighted (2094) Weighted (2094)

Analysis by sub groups within the data showed no differences in response by gender or learning disability but it did highlight that:

- Students from ethnic minority groups were significantly less likely to be studying their first choice subjects and qualifications than white students (73% compared with 84%).
- Year 11 students were more likely to be studying their first choice of subjects and qualifications than their Year 10 counterparts (86% compared with 80%).

Table 3.3: Whether subjects and qualifications were first choice by year and ethnicity

	Total	Year		Ethnicity	
		Year 10	Year 11	White	Non-white
Base: All respondents Year 10 and 11					
Unweighted	2094	1026	997	1844	175
Weighted	2094	998	1020	1819	201
	%	%	%	%	%
Yes, first choice	81	80	86	84	73
No, not first choice	12	14	10	12	18
Didn't have a choice	1	1	1	1	1
Didn't think about another option	4	5	2	3	8
Not stated	2	1	1	1	1

Access to first choice of course correlates highly with satisfaction and motivation (table 3, Appendix B):

- Almost all (94%) of those who were extremely satisfied with teaching quality overall were studying their first choice compared to 64% of those who were dissatisfied to some degree.
- Almost all (94%) of those who were very motivated were studying their first choice compared with 81% overall.
- One in twenty students who considered they were not at all motivated (5%) felt that they had not been given a choice compared with 1% of students overall.

Whilst there were no significant differences apparent by the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals or whether the school was a Welsh or an English medium school, students attending larger schools were better able to access their first choice subjects and qualifications:

- Students at schools with 401 or more pupils in Years 10 and 11 were more likely to be studying their first choices than those at schools with 400 pupils or less in Year 10 and 11 (85% or more of students gave this answer compared with 80% or less in schools with fewer Year 10 and 11 students).
 - Students in schools with less than 200 pupils within Year 10 and 11 were most likely to note that they were **not** studying their first choices (20% compared with 12% on average).
 - They were also most likely to note that they didn't have a choice (3% compared with 1% overall).

Table 3.4: Whether subjects and qualifications were first choice by year group size

	Total	Number of students in Year 10 and 11				
		Up to 200	201-301	301-400	401-500	501+
Base: All respondents Year 10 and 11						
Unweighted	2094	249	203	798	362	482
Weighted	2094	146	437	614	598	299
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes, first choice	81	75	76	80	85	87
No, not first choice	12	20	13	14	9	10
Didn't have a choice	1	3	1	1	1	*
Didn't think about another option	4	1	9	2	3	2
Not stated	2	1	2	3	2	1

Note: * denotes less than 0.5% but higher than zero.

3.2.3 Reasons for not studying first choice of subjects or qualifications

All students who had responded that they were not currently studying their first choice of subjects or qualifications were asked why this was the case. They were

offered a list of possible answers and could select as many or as few as they wished, as well as record any other answers not already on the list.

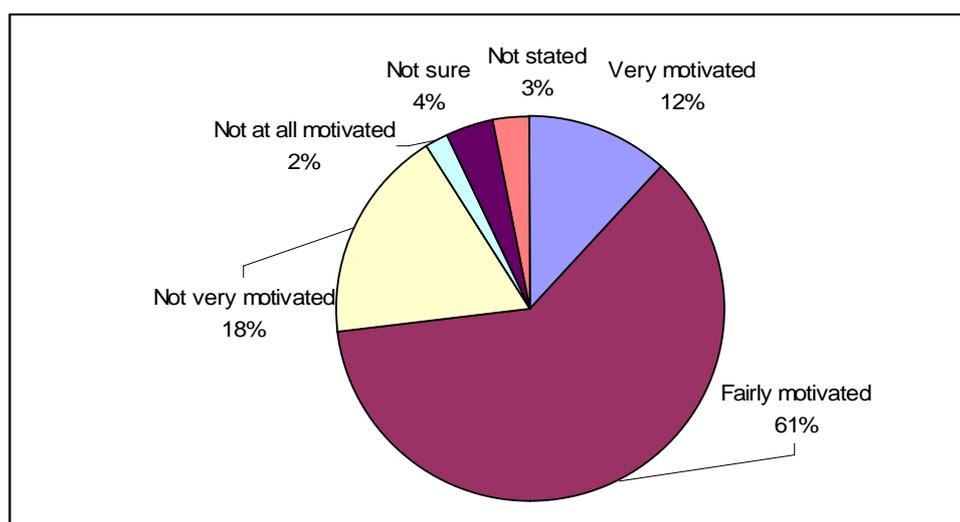
The data indicate an issue with the supply of and demand for places on courses. Nearly a third of students (31%) who were not studying their first choice subjects or qualifications were unable to do so because their school or other local schools did not provide their preferred qualifications or subjects. A similar proportion were unable to follow their first choice because places on their first choice had been filled (30%) or the qualifications or subjects did not fit in with their timetable (also 30%). Around one in six students not studying their first choice subjects or qualifications had been advised not to take their first choice by a teacher (16%); base sizes were too low to show significance but the data suggest that those with lower levels of satisfaction with teaching and the experience overall gave this response compared to those with higher levels of satisfaction.

3.3 Motivation/problems

3.3.1 Overall Levels of Motivation

Motivation amongst students in Years 10 and 11 was high with almost three quarters of students describing themselves as fairly or very motivated in their studies (73%). The majority of these students were fairly motivated (61%) and around one in ten students described themselves as very motivated (12%). Despite this, a small but significant proportion of students said they were not very motivated (20%) but only 2% said they were not at all motivated.

Chart 3.3: Level of motivation: summary Year 10 and 11



Base: All respondents Year 10 and 11 Unweighted (2094) Weighted (2094)

There were no significant differences in levels of motivation by gender, ethnicity or by learning disability. However, students who had a long-term limiting illness or

disability were less likely to be fairly or very motivated in their studies (59%) than those who did not (75%).

With regard to year group, students in Year 11, perhaps with final examinations and the end of their compulsory education only a few months away, were more likely to describe themselves as very motivated than those in Year 10 (14% in Year 11 were very motivated compared with 10% in Year 10). However, a similar proportion of those in Year 10 and Year 11 said that they were fairly motivated (63% of those in Year 10 and 61% of those in Year 11).

Table 3.5: Level of motivation by year and long-term limiting disability

		Year		Long term limiting disability	
		Year 10	Year 11	Yes	No
Base: All respondents Year 10 and	Total				
Unweighted	2094	1026	997	88	1917
Weighted	2094	998	1020	88	1913
	%	%	%	%	%
Very motivated	12	10	14	7	12
Fairly motivated	61	63	61	52	63
Not very motivated	18	18	19	31	18
Not at all motivated	2	2	2	1	2
Not sure	4	5	2	6	3
Not stated	3	2	1	2	2
Very/ fairly motivated	73	73	76	59	75
Not very/ at all motivated	20	20	21	32	20

Note: some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups.

Interestingly, students studying for the Welsh Baccalaureate were more likely to say that they were very motivated in their studies than average (20% compared with 12% on average, as shown in table 4, Appendix B).

Whether a student's first choice of course had been secured and their satisfaction with their learning experience had a significant correlation with their level of motivation (table 5, Appendix B):

- Almost eight in ten (76%) students who were studying their first choice of course said that they were very or fairly motivated in their studies compared with 63% who were not studying their first choice of course.

- Conversely, over a quarter (26%) of those who were not studying their first choice of course described themselves as being ‘not very’ or ‘not at all’ motivated. This compares with less than a fifth (19%) of those who were on their first choice of course.
- Ninety-seven percent of students who were extremely satisfied and 88% of those who were very satisfied with their learning experience said that they were very or fairly motivated compared with around one third (30%) of those who were dissatisfied.

Whilst there were no significant trends by year group size and entitlement to free school meals, students in Welsh medium schools were more likely to say they were very or fairly motivated in their studies (83%) than those in English medium schools (71%).

Table 3.6: Level of motivation by language medium of school

Base: All respondents Year 10 and 11	Total	Language medium	
		Welsh	English
Unweighted	2094	365	1729
Weighted	2094	334	1760
	%	%	%
Very motivated	12	17	11
Fairly motivated	61	66	61
Not very motivated	18	12	19
Not at all motivated	2	1	2
Not sure	4	1	4
Not stated	3	3	3
Very/ fairly motivated	73	83	71
Not very/ at all motivated	20	13	21

3.3.2 Problems experienced

Almost one quarter of students in Years 10 and 11 said they had not experienced any problems since the current school year began (22%). For students who had, there were three main problems which were mentioned. These were:

- keeping up with the standard of work required (mentioned by 29% of all Year 10 and 11 students)

- problems of any kind with a member of staff (28%)
- problems of any kind with other students (27%).

Two other problems mentioned frequently by students were:

- maintaining their personal motivation (22%)
- extra help they had been promised not being provided (10%).

Together these formed the five most frequently mentioned problems amongst students in Year 10 and 11 and will be explored in more detail in the rest of this section.

When looking for differences by gender, female students were more likely than male students to say that they had experienced both problems in their studies and with other students. More specifically they were more likely to mention:

- problems keeping up with the standard of work required (34% of females had experienced this compared with 23% of males)
- problems of any kind with other students (31% of females compared with 23% of males respectively)

In relation to academic year, students in Year 11 were more likely to say they had struggled maintaining their personal motivation (27%) than those in Year 10 (18%). This is slightly contradictory in that in section 3.3.1 significantly more Year 11 students were very motivated in their studies compared to Year 10. This may suggest that whilst motivation levels are high for Year 11, for some it is hard to maintain.

Year 11 students were also nearly twice as likely as students in Year 10 to say that the extra help they had been promised had not been provided (12% of those in Year 11 compared with only 7% of those in Year 10). However, students in Year 10 were more likely to have experienced problems with other students (30% compared with 25% of Year 11 students).

Students with a long term limiting illness or disability were more likely than those without to say that they have experienced all of the five most frequently mentioned problems since the school year began. These were:

- problems of any kind with a member of staff (40% of those with a long term limiting illness had experienced this compared with 28% of those without)
- keeping up with the standard of work required (40% compared with 28% respectively)

- problems of any kind with other students (55% compared with 26%)
- maintaining their personal motivation (40% compared with 22%)
- extra help they were promised not being provided (22% compared with 9%).

A similar trend was also evident for students with a learning disability. Whilst the proportion declaring problems with a member of staff and maintaining their personal motivation did not vary from their peers without learning disabilities, they were significantly more likely to have had issues with keeping up with the standard or work, problems with other students and getting extra help that had been promised. Figures are shown in table 3.7.

Amongst students who were receiving extra learning support, more than one third (37%) said that they had experienced problems with other students. In contrast, one quarter (25%) of those who did not receive extra learning support had experienced this.

There were no statistical differences by ethnic background for this question.

Table 3.7: Problems experienced by gender, year, long-term limiting disability, learning disability and extra learning support

	Total	Gender		Year		Long term limiting disability		Learning disability		Extra learning support	
		Male	Female	Year 10	Year 11	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Base: All respondents Year 10 and 11											
Unweighted	2094	998	1020	1026	997	88	1917	152	1849	292	1693
Weighted	2094	1029	989	989	1020	88	1913	140	1857	347	1637
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Keeping up with the standard of work required	29	23	34	31	27	40	28	41	28	33	27
Problems of any kind with other members of staff	28	29	27	28	29	40	28	34	28	25	29
Problems of any kind with other students	27	23	31	30	25	55	26	41	26	37	25
Maintaining your personal motivation	22	21	25	18	27	40	22	24	23	24	23

Extra help you were promised not being provided	10	10	9	7	12	22	9	20	9	13	9
No problems / no / none	22	22	22	23	21	12	23	11	23	16	23
Not stated	10	11	7	8	10	4	9	9	9	7	9

Note: top five problems are shown in table. Some unweighted base sizes are below 100; caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups.

With regards to qualifications, students studying for an NVQ or another vocational qualification were more likely than average to say that they had at some point in the year found it hard to keep up with the standard of work required (both 39%) compared with students studying GCSEs (29%) (table 6, Appendix B). It was also found that students studying key skills qualifications (37%), basic skills qualifications (41%) and other vocational qualifications (36%) were more likely to say that they had experienced problems with other students than those studying for their GCSEs (27%).

There was a clear correlation between whether a student was studying their first choice of subject and their likelihood to encounter certain problems (table 7, Appendix B). Those who said they were not studying their first choice of course were more likely than those who were to have encountered:

- problems of any kind with a member of staff (37% of those not studying their first choice of course compared with 27% who were)
- problems keeping up with the standard of work required (37% compared with 26% respectively)
- extra help they were promised not being provided (15% compared with 9%).

There was also a clear link between the motivation levels of students and their likelihood of experiencing certain problems. Those who were not very or not at all motivated were more likely to say they had encountered the following difficulties than those who were very motivated:

- problems of any kind with a member of staff (43% of those who were not very motivated and 42% of those who were not at all motivated compared with 14% of those who were very motivated)
- keeping up with the standard of work required (39% and 53% compared with 14% respectively)
- problems of any kind with other students (39% and 48% compared with 27% respectively)

- maintaining their personal motivation (47% and 60% compared with 12% respectively).

A similar pattern was also evident in relation to levels of satisfaction with the learning experience. Students who were fairly or very dissatisfied with their learning experience were significantly more likely to have experienced all five of the most commonly mentioned problems compared with those who were extremely or very satisfied. Figures are shown in table 8, Appendix B.

When looking at demographics by school type, students in English medium schools were more likely to have experienced the following problems:

- problems with members of staff (30% compared with 19% of students in Welsh medium schools)
- keeping up with the standard of work (30% compared with 23% respectively)
- problems with other students (28% compared with 20%)
- problems maintaining their own personal motivation (24% and 12% respectively)

Almost three in ten students (27%) in schools where less than 10% of students were entitled to free school meals said that they had experienced no problems at school during the current school year. Conversely, only two in ten students (20%) in schools where 10% or more of pupils were entitled to free school meals had not experienced any problems. In particular, a smaller proportion of students at schools where less than 10% of pupils were entitled to free school meals had encountered problems with other students (22% compared with 28% of students at schools with more than 10% of pupils entitled to free school meals).

The above findings will be interlinked to some degree. Welsh medium schools were significantly more likely than English medium to have less than 10% of students entitled to free school meals.

Table 3.8: Problems experienced by language medium and % entitlement to free school meals

	Total	Language medium		% pupils entitled to free school meals		
		Welsh	English	15% plus	10% -15%	Less than 10%
Base: All respondents Year 10 and 11						
Unweighted	2094	365	1729	693	614	787
Weighted	2094	334	1760	1059	534	501
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Keeping up with the standard of work required	29	23	30	28	30	28
Problems of any kind with other members of staff	28	19	30	30	28	25
Problems of any kind with other students	27	20	28	28	30	22
Maintaining your personal motivation	22	12	24	23	23	21
Extra help you were promised not being provided	10	7	10	9	13	7
No problems / no / none	22	33	19	21	18	27
Not stated	10	14	10	9	13	11

Note: top five problems are shown in table.

Students in schools with a higher number of Year 10 and 11 students were more likely to say they had found it difficult to maintain their personal motivation (compared to those in schools with fewer Year 10 and 11 students). Almost a quarter (25%) of students in schools with 301 or more pupils in Year 10 and 11 had experienced this compared with only 15% of those in schools with 300 Year 10 and 11 pupils or less.

In terms of students' plans for the end of Year 11, those who planned to go into Year 12 were more likely than average to have not experienced any problems (29% compared with 22% of students on average).

Table 3.9: Problems experienced by year group size

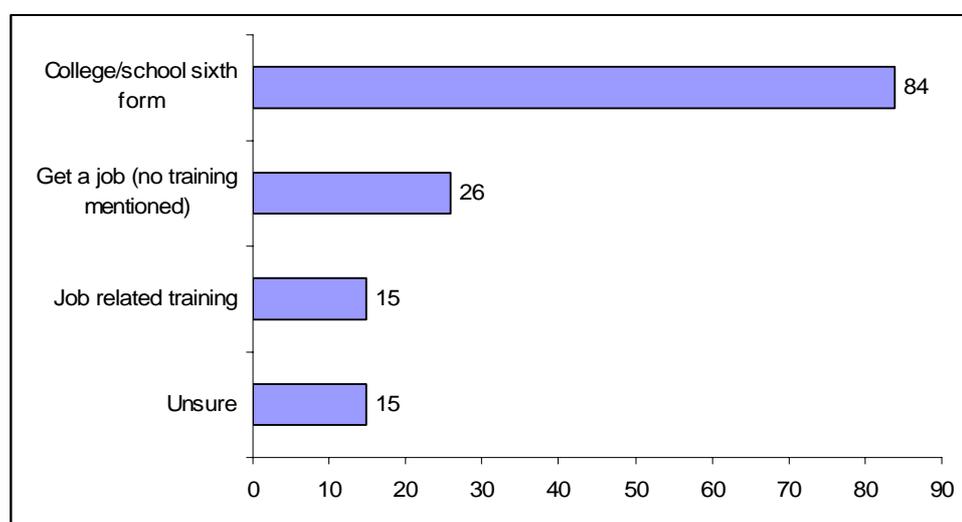
Base: All respondents Year 10 and	Total	Number of students in Year 10 and 11				
		Up to 200	201-300	301-400	401-500	501+
Unweighted	2094	249	203	798	362	482
Weighted	2094	146	437	614	598	299
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Keeping up with the standard of work required	29	28	28	28	32	25
Problems of any kind with other members of staff	28	25	25	29	30	29
Problems of any kind with other students	27	26	19	29	30	26
Maintaining your personal motivation	22	18	14	26	23	27
Extra help you were promised not being provided	10	8	7	11	11	9
No problems / no / none	22	23	23	20	20	24
Not stated	10	12	12	10	9	10

Note: top five problems are shown in table.

3.4 Future intentions

3.4.1 Future intentions

All students were asked what they planned to do at the end of Year 11 and were given a multiple choice of options. Around six in ten (59%) mentioned that they wanted to go to college. The second most popular option, to go into the school sixth form, was mentioned by substantially fewer students (31%). A fifth (22%) mentioned they would seek part time work (often in conjunction with further studies) and around one in ten mentioned a job with a Modern Apprenticeship (13%).

Chart 3.4: Future intentions (% stating): summary Year 10 and 11

Base: All respondents Year 10 and 11 Unweighted (2094) Weighted (2094) Top three intentions shown in the chart. Not stated not shown.

There were a number of significant and interesting differences in the data when analysed according to different variables. For ease of reporting, the paragraphs below use the following categories that have combined the data from different responses to this question. These categories are; sixth form/college, job related training, getting a job and unsure.

In terms of personal demographics the following groups showed more interest in going to sixth form/college as opposed to job related training routes:

- Females were more likely than males to have specified sixth form/college (92% compared with 81%). Males on the other hand were significantly more likely to mention job related training (21% compared with 10%).
- Students in Year 11 were more likely to mention sixth form/college than students in Year 10 (89% compared with 84%). Year 10 students (34%) were more likely to note that they would get a job than Year 11 students (20%). However, Year 10 students were also more likely to be unsure about their plans (22% compared with 10% of Year 11 students).
- Students whose classes were taught on a single site were more likely to mention sixth form/college than those studying some classes off site (86% compared with 69%). In contrast those studying some lessons off site were more likely to mention job related training which may reflect the types of courses being studied (28% compared with 14% who were taught on a single site).
- Those studying GCSEs were also more likely to mention sixth form/college than those undertaking NVQs (85% compared with 73%). Conversely

those studying NVQs were more likely to select job related training (34%) than those studying for their GCSEs (15%). Students undertaking basic skills qualifications were much more likely to be unsure of their plans at the end of year 11 (42% compared with 15% of students overall).

- Students without learning disabilities were more likely to plan to go to sixth form/college than those with learning disabilities (87% compared with 77%), whereas students with learning disabilities were significantly more likely to select the job related training options (24% compared with 15% of those without learning disabilities).

Table 3.10: Future intentions by gender, year and learning disability

	Total	Gender		Year		Learning disability	
		Male	Female	Year 10	Year 11	Yes	No
Base: All respondents Year 10 and 11							
Unweighted	2094	998	1020	1026	997	152	1849
Weighted	2094	1029	989	998	1020	140	1857
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
College/school sixth form	84	81	92	84	89	77	87
Job related training	15	21	10	17	14	24	15
Get a job (no training mentioned)	26	26	29	34	20	32	27
Unsure	15	17	15	22	10	17	16

Note: top three intentions shown in the table. Not stated not shown.

Finally, levels of motivation and satisfaction demonstrated a link to the likelihood to go to college/sixth form (table 9, Appendix B). The vast majority (93%) of those who were very motivated said they intended to go to college/sixth form compared with 75% who were not at all motivated at the time of the survey. In terms of overall satisfaction, 92% of those who were extremely satisfied said that they would go to college/sixth form compared with 78% of those dissatisfied to some degree. This indicates that if their educational experience at this stage is not engaging the learner they will tend to look for options other than staying in education for the future.

- A significantly lower proportion of students in the following school types were intending to get a job at the end of Year 11
 - Schools with under 200 pupils in Years 10/11 (13% compared with 26% of students in schools of all sizes)

- Welsh medium schools (9% compared to the average of 26% across all schools)

Table 3.11: Future intentions by medium, size of school and entitlement to free school meals

	Total	Language medium		% pupils entitled to free school meals			Size of school					
		Welsh	English	15% plus	10% - 15%	Less than 10%	Up to 200	201-300	301-400	401-500	501+	
Base: All respondents Year 10 and 11												
Unweighted	2094	365	1729	693	614	787	249	203	798	362	482	
Weighted	2094	334	1760	1059	534	501	146	437	614	598	299	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
College/school sixth form	84	85	84	83	83	87	88	81	83	85	88	
Job related training	15	9	16	19	14	9	11	11	20	16	9	
Get a job (no training)	26	9	30	33	23	16	13	27	27	30	24	
Unsure	15	14	16	15	14	18	16	14	17	14	16	

Note: top three intentions shown in the table.

3.5 Satisfaction with teaching

3.5.1 Satisfaction with specific aspects of teaching

Students were asked to rate their satisfaction with a range of aspects of teaching. These measures reflected teaching styles, engagement and more practical measures relating to the management of learning such as feedback and the quality of teaching materials. A full list is given below:

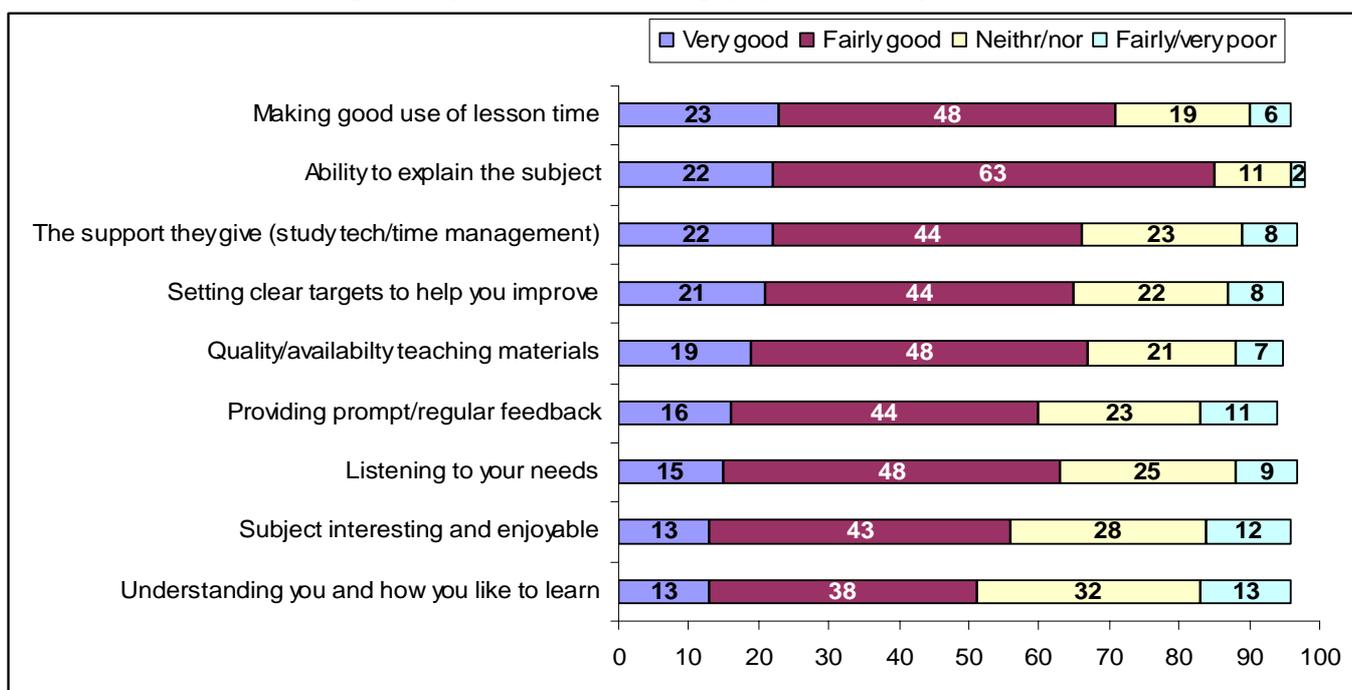
- ability to explain the subject
- listening to your needs
- making good use of lesson time
- providing prompt/regular feedback

- quality/availability of teaching materials
- setting clear targets to help you improve
- making your subject interesting and enjoyable
- the support they give (e.g. improving your study techniques or time management)
- understanding you and how you like to learn.

Respondents were asked to respond using a five point scale which ranged from very good to very poor (with a mid point).

- At least a fifth of students gave a ‘very good’ rating on the following aspects: making good use of lesson time, ability to explain the subject, the support they give and setting clear targets to help you improve.
- The three aspects which were ranked lowest in terms of the ‘top box’ score were: listening to your needs, making the subject interesting and enjoyable and understanding you and how you like to learn (mentioned by 16% of students or less).

Chart 3.5: Rating of aspects of teaching (%): summary Year 10 and 11



Base: All respondents Year 10 and 11 Unweighted (2094) Weighted (2094)

There were some significant differences in the data by variables used for analysis:

- Year 11 students were more likely than Year 10 students to give positive ratings for the following aspects of teaching: understanding you and how you like to learn, the support they give you such as improving your study techniques/time management.
- Students with long term limiting disabilities or illness were less likely to give a combined very good/fairly rating on all aspects, significantly so for understanding you and how you like to learn and providing prompt and regular feedback on progress.
- Students who accessed extra learning support were more likely than those who did not to give positive responses to most of the measures, significantly more so for: making your subject interesting and enjoyable and quality/availability of teaching materials and setting clear targets to help you improve.
- Students at Welsh medium schools were significantly more likely than those at English medium schools to give positive ratings for all aspects of teaching except: making good use of lesson time and quality and availability of teaching materials.

Table 3.12: Ratings for aspects of teaching by year, extra learning support and long-term limiting disability (% very or fairly good)

	Total	Year		Extra learning support		Long-term limiting disability	
		Year 10	Year 11	Yes	No	Yes	No
Base: All respondents Year 10 and 11	2094	1026	997	292	1693	88	1917
Unweighted	2094	998	1020	347	1637	88	1913
Weighted	2094	998	1020	347	1637	88	1913
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Ability to explain the subject	85	84	88	88	86	80	87
Listening to your needs	62	64	63	70	62	56	63
Making your subject interesting and enjoyable	56	56	58	65	56	54	57
Understanding you and how you like to learn	51	49	55	54	51	34	53
The support they give you	66	63	71	69	66	57	67
Making good use of lesson time	72	71	74	73	73	72	73

Quality and availability of teaching materials they use	67	66	69	75	66	60	68
Setting clear targets to help you improve	65	65	68	77	64	61	67
Prompt and regular feedback on progress	60	59	63	67	60	49	62

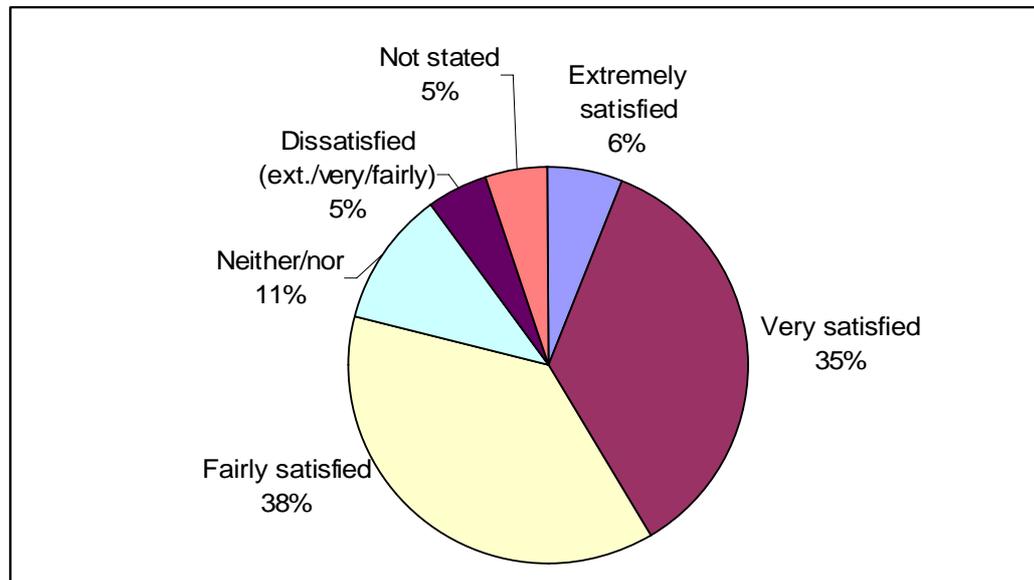
Note: some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups.

Table 3.13: Ratings for aspects of teaching by language medium (% very or fairly good)

		Language medium	
		Welsh	English
Base: All respondents Year 10 and 11	Total		
Unweighted	2094	365	1729
Weighted	2094	334	1760
	%	%	%
Ability to explain the subject	85	89	84
Listening to your needs	62	72	61
Making your subject interesting and enjoyable	57	68	54
Understanding you and how you like to learn	50	63	49
The support they give you	66	74	64
Making good use of lesson time	72	76	71
Quality and availability of teaching materials they use	67	71	66
Setting clear targets to help you improve	65	74	63
Prompt and regular feedback on progress	61	72	58

3.5.2 Overall satisfaction with teaching

All students were asked to rate their overall satisfaction with the quality of teaching in their school. They were offered a seven point scale which ranged from extremely satisfied through to extremely dissatisfied. Over three quarters (78%) were satisfied with teaching to some degree, with one in twenty (5%) rating themselves as being extremely satisfied, just over a third (35%) noting that they were very satisfied and a further 37% saying that they were fairly satisfied. Just 5% gave a rating of dissatisfaction and 11% said that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

Chart 3.6: Overall quality of teaching in school: summary Year 10 and 11

Base: All respondents Year 10 and 11 Unweighted (2094) Weighted (2094)

The data were relatively consistent across many sub groups in terms of overall satisfaction with teaching. The only variations were:

- Students with learning disabilities were less positive than those without them (12% were dissatisfied to some degree compared with 5%).
- Students with long term limiting disabilities or illness were less positive than those without long term limiting disabilities or illness (12% were satisfied to some degree compared with 5%).
- Students in Welsh medium schools were significantly more positive (84% expressing some level of satisfaction compared to 77% in English medium schools)
- Students who were on their first choice of course showed higher levels of satisfaction with teaching (81% expressed some level of satisfaction compared to 72% who were not on their preferred course and 60% of those who felt they had no choice).
- The link between overall satisfaction and motivation was evident within this measure also: 96% of those who were extremely satisfied overall were satisfied to some extent with teaching quality and 90% of those who were very motivated said the same.

The differences in satisfaction overall within sub groups were also reflected in the question relating to specific aspects of teaching. This further confirms that there are issues with the perception of teaching quality amongst the following groups: those

with learning disabilities, those with long term limiting disabilities, students not attending first choice courses and those in English medium schools.

3.5.3 Drivers of Satisfaction with Teaching

Statistical analysis³ was carried out to determine what contribution the different elements of teaching made to driving overall satisfaction with the quality of teaching and how students rated teacher performance on each element. The next chart maps out the statistical analysis by positioning the aspects of teaching according to the student ratings and the contribution each aspect made in driving satisfaction with teaching. This provides four quadrants:

- top left hand box: high contribution but lower satisfaction indicating need for **review**
- top right hand box: high contribution and high satisfaction indicating case for **promotion** of these strengths
- bottom left hand box: lower contribution and lower satisfaction indicating case for **monitoring** these aspects
- bottom right hand box: lower contribution but high satisfaction indicating need to **maintain** performance.

The analysis shows that:

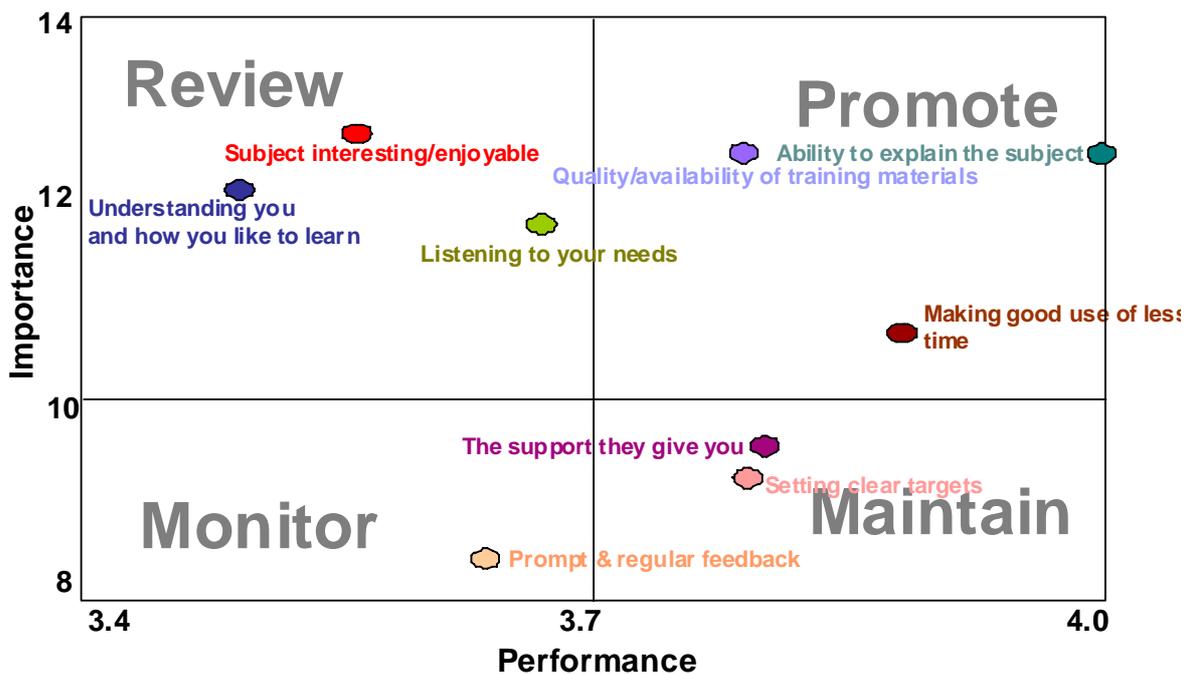
- Many aspects rated highly in terms of performance were also high in importance, these were: ability to explain the subject, making good use of lesson time and quality/availability of teaching materials. They are therefore in the 'promote' quadrant and are already working well in terms of driving high levels of satisfaction.
- Listening to your needs, understanding you and how you like to learn and also making your subject interesting and enjoyable, *relative to all other aspects*, are items for 'review'. If any aspects of teaching should be reviewed the data suggests it is these (if satisfaction with these aspects

³ Ridge Regression - this analysis is often used to work out how much influence different attributes have on some dependent variable such as overall satisfaction. If the attributes we measure are in some way correlated (for example as one improves another one is also likely to improve) then ordinary linear regression analysis can give a misleading and unstable solution. This inter-correlation between independent variables is called 'multi-collinearity'; ridge regression is a special type of regression, which is used to deal with this problem.

can be increased then overall satisfaction with teaching will increase as a result).

- The performance of teachers in terms of providing prompt and regular feedback is lower in comparison to other factors. Currently, however, the importance of this factor is relatively low in terms of driving overall satisfaction with teaching, so this should be monitored over time.
- Whilst the following aspects scored highly in terms of performance, their contribution to overall satisfaction with teaching was lower *relative to all other aspects* and hence satisfaction levels for these factors should be maintained: support they give you, making good use of lesson time and clear targets to help you improve.

Chart 3.7: Drivers of satisfaction with teaching Year 10 and 11



Base; 2094. The axes are set at 10 for importance and 3.7 for performance; these have been generated for reporting purposes and are subjective settings.

3.6 Overall satisfaction with experience at school

3.6.1 Satisfaction with the school environment

The questionnaire presented the students in Year 10 and 11 with a series of statements regarding their school environment and they were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with each (they were offered a five point scale with a neither/nor option). The statements were as follows:

- I am pleased to be in this school
- I feel safe at this school
- I have received helpful advice about what I should study
- I have the opportunity to take part in a range of activities organised by the school
- My property is secure in this school
- Staff treat all pupils fairly and with respect
- The school deals effectively with any bullying
- The school deals effectively with pupils who behave badly
- The school helps me make sensible choices about what I eat and drink
- The school helps me to be ready for further education or to start my working life
- The school listens to and responds to the views of pupils
- There is a responsible adult to whom I can turn if I have a personal problem.

Factor analysis was performed on students' responses to this question; this is a data reduction technique, used to group questions or variables that are similar together. It identifies questions that are rated in a similar way by respondents and reduces them into a smaller number of dimensions called 'factors'. The theory behind factor analysis is that when many measures are rated in a similar way, they can be into a smaller number of underlying factors to simplify analysis.

Factor analysis can be used for a number of reasons, but its main uses are:

- to understand patterns in the data to give structure for reporting (as it has in this case)

- as a precursor to other analysis (such as segmentation)
- to identify repetition amongst variables to help decide which questions can be omitted in future waves if you are developing a tracking survey

The measures in this case were broken down into the following factors (this process is subjective and has been carried out by the marketing sciences team at GfK NOP):

Factor/dimension	Question/variable
Safe haven	I am pleased to be in this school I feel safe at this school
Care/advice outside the classroom	I have received helpful advice about what I should study I have the opportunity to take part in a range of activities organised by the school The school helps me make sensible choices about what I eat and drink The school helps me to be ready for further education or to start my working life There is a responsible adult to whom I can turn if I have a personal problem
Generating trust: respect and protection	Staff treat all pupils fairly and with respect The school listens to and responds to the views of pupils My property is secure in this school
Discipline	The school deals effectively with any bullying The school deals effectively with pupils who behave badly

In terms of the first category, '**safe haven**' analysis showed that these two statements received some of the most positive responses:

- Almost three in ten students agreed strongly that they felt safe at their school and/or that they were generally pleased to be in the school (27% in each case). Compared with responses to all other statements these proportions were relatively high.
- Approximately two fifths tended to agree to each statement (41% and 45% respectively) and relatively few disagreed (9% and 8% respectively).

Within the second category, '**care/advice outside the classroom**':

- A quarter or more of the students strongly agreed that they had opportunities to take part in a range of activities outside the classroom (30%), the school helped them to be 'ready' for work/further learning (28%) and/or there was a responsible adult at hand to turn to (25%).

- Fewer students within this category strongly agreed that they received helpful advice about what to study (16%) and/or that the school encouraged sensible eating (8%). Indeed in relation to the final statement relating to sensible eating 31% actually disagreed with this to some extent.

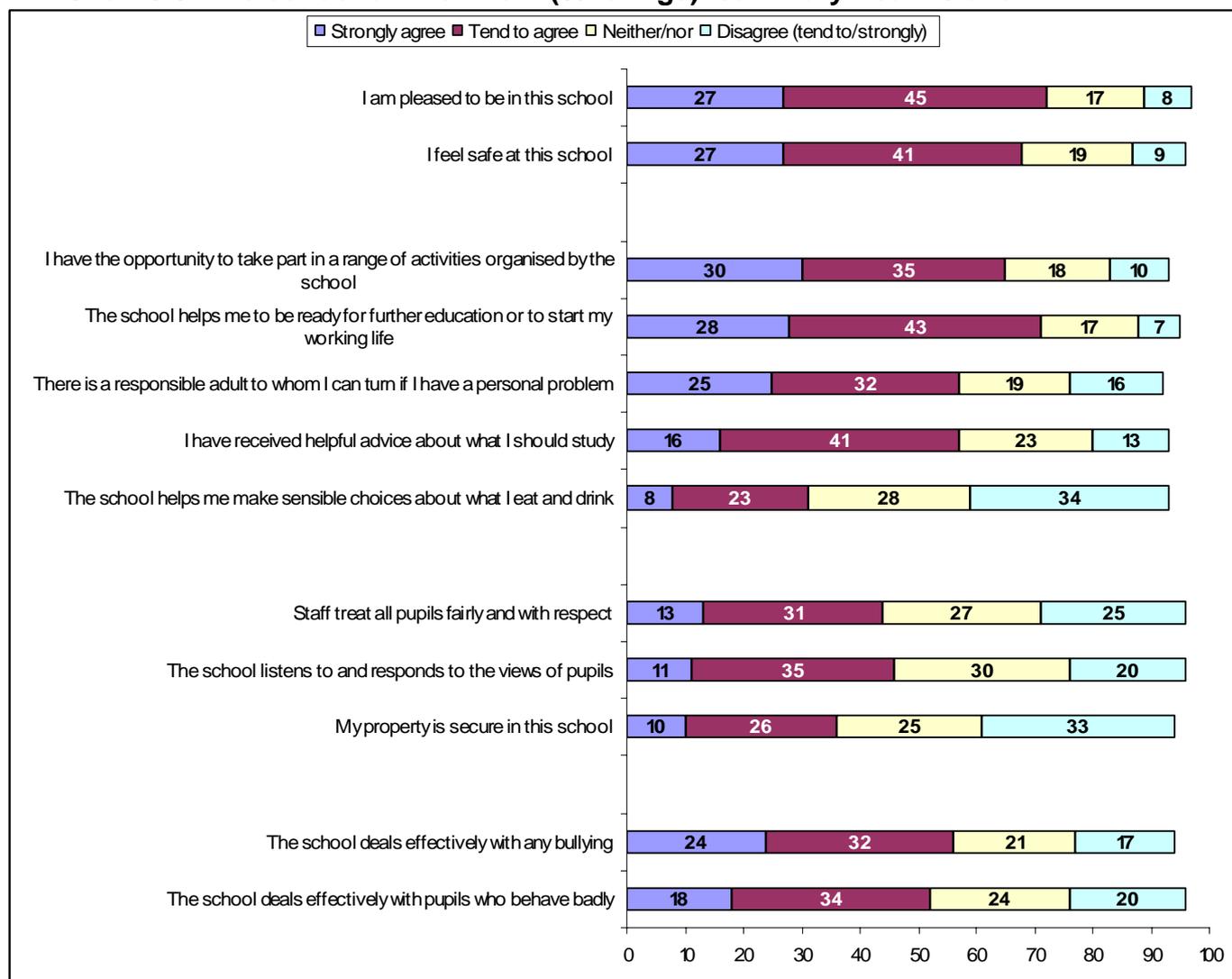
In the third category '**generating trust: respect and protection**', students' responses lend themselves to some review. Statements within this factor were more likely to produce a negative response from students than any other:

- 'Staff treat all pupils fairly and with respect': whilst 45% agreed to some extent, 25% disagreed and another 27% could not give a response either way.
- 'The school listens and responds to the views of pupils': whilst 46% agreed to some extent, 20% disagreed and another 30% could not give a response either way.
- 'My property is secure in this school': whilst 35% agreed to some extent, 33% disagreed and another 25% could not give a response either way. Indeed, this aspect generated the highest level of disagreement across all the measures.

In terms of the fourth category, '**discipline**':

- Twenty-four percent agreed strongly that the school dealt effectively with bullying, 32% tended to agree, 20% disagreed to some extent (21% did not state either way)
- Eighteen percent agreed strongly that bad behaviour was dealt with effectively, 34% tended to agree, 20% disagreed to some extent (24% did not state either way)

Chart 3.8: The school environment (% ratings): summary Year 10 and 11



Base: All respondents Year 10 and 11 Unweighted (2094) Weighted (2094)

Significant differences were observed in responses according to different variables. Chart 3.9 highlights examples where students' responses were significantly more positive for each statement (the tables with figures can be found in the appendix). It highlights that the following sub groups were **often** more positive toward the statements (significantly more positive for at least three of the twelve statements) than their counterparts:

- males (were often more likely to be positive towards the statements than females)
- Year 11 (compared with Year 10 students)
- students who accessed extra learning support (compared with those who did not)

- students with no learning disabilities (compared with those with learning disabilities)
- those in Welsh medium schools (compared with those in English medium schools)
- students in schools with <10% entitlement to free school meals (compared with those in schools where 10% or more are entitled to free school meals).

Chart 3.9: The school environment by personal and school demographics

	Personal demographics (relating to the respondent)	School demographics (relating to the school)
	Group scoring significantly more positively	Group scoring significantly more positively
Safe haven		
I am pleased to be in this school	White students No learning disabilities No long term disabilities*	
I feel safe at this school	Male Year 11 No learning disabilities* No long term disabilities*	Welsh medium < 10% entitlement school meals
Care/advice outside the classroom		
I have received helpful advice about what I should study	With extra learning support	Welsh Medium* +15% entitlement school meals
I have the opportunity to take part in a range of activities organised by the school	Male* No learning disabilities* No long term disabilities	< 10% entitlement school meals
The school helps me make sensible choices about what I eat and drink	Male Year 10	Welsh medium <10% entitlement school meals
The school helps me to be ready for further education or to start my working life	Year 11 No learning disabilities With extra learning support*	Welsh medium
There is a responsible adult to whom I can turn if I have a personal problem	With extra learning support	Welsh medium
Trust: Respect and protection		
Staff treat all pupils fairly and with respect	With extra learning support	Welsh medium
The school listens to and responds to the views of pupils	Male Year 10* With extra learning support	Welsh medium
My property is secure in this school	Male	< 10% entitlement school meals
Discipline		
The school deals effectively with any bullying	Male Year 11* All classes at this school	Welsh medium < 10% entitlement school meals

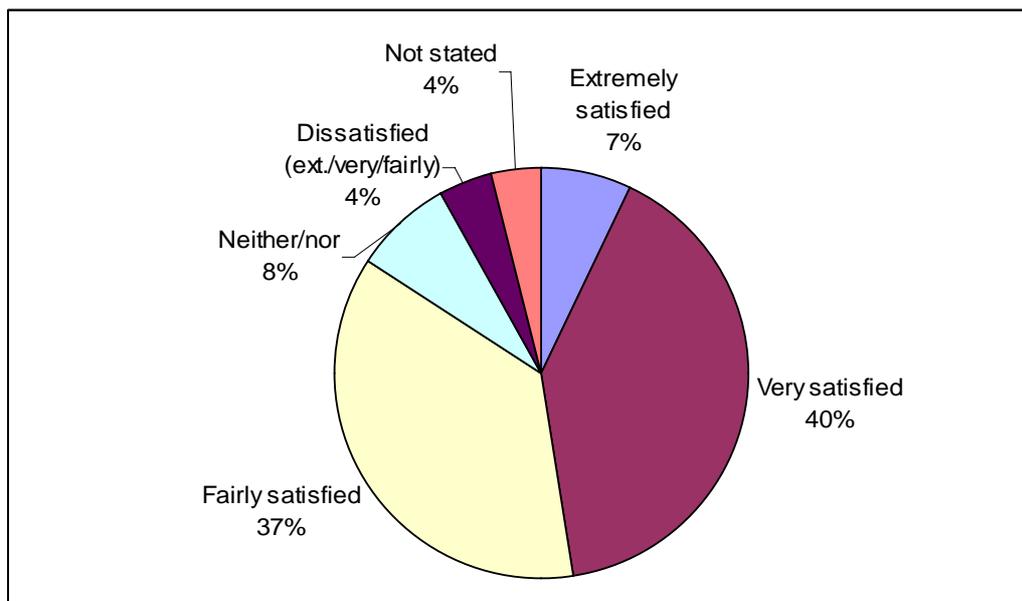
The school deals effectively with pupils who behave badly	With extra learning support*	
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* Although they were not significantly more likely to agree, these groups were significantly less likely to disagree than their counterparts

3.6.2 Overall satisfaction with experience

All students were asked, taking into account all learning at their school, how satisfied they were overall. They were offered a seven point scale including a midpoint. The vast majority of students (84%) were satisfied to some extent with their overall experience. It is important to bear in mind, however, that this is weighted heavily toward them being very or fairly satisfied (41% and 37% respectively) as opposed to being extremely satisfied (7%). Almost one in ten were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (8%) and relatively few were dissatisfied to some degree (4%).

Chart 3.10: Overall satisfaction with the learning experience: summary Year 10 and 11



Base: All respondents Year 10 and 11 Unweighted (2094) Weighted (2094)

In terms of personal demographics, the only variable to be significant in terms of overall satisfaction was long term disability or illness. Students with a long term disability or illness were significantly less likely to be satisfied to some degree than those without (77% compared with 86%).

In terms of the first choice subject and type of course, table 10 in Appendix B shows that:

- Students who were studying their first choice of course were significantly more satisfied to some extent than those who were not or those who

considered that they had no choice (88% compared with 74% and 72% respectively).

- Students studying NVQs were more likely to state some degree of dissatisfaction (9%) than students overall (4%).

Table 11 in Appendix B shows that there is a very strong relationship (which is also evident in the Year 12 and 13 data for 2008) between:

- Levels of motivation and overall satisfaction:
 - Almost all of those who were very motivated were satisfied to some extent with their overall learning experience (96%), whilst a much lower proportion of students who were not at all motivated noted any level of satisfaction (37%).
- Satisfaction with teaching quality and overall satisfaction:
 - Almost all of those who were extremely satisfied with the teaching quality were satisfied to some extent with their learning experience overall (99%). In contrast, just 30% of students who were dissatisfied to some extent with the teaching quality were satisfied to some extent with their experience of learning overall.

Students were asked to write down one thing they liked best about school and one thing they would like to change. These questions were open-ended and all responses have been coded and then collapsed into broader categories (responses were extremely varied). The results were as follows:

- **Thing most liked about school** – quality of learning was the aspect mentioned by most students (36%) followed by being with friends/ their peers (27%). Almost one in ten mentioned their teachers, either in general terms or in specific reference to the support that they give (9% and 7% in each case). In terms of demographic differences:
 - Females were significantly more likely to mention friendships/pupils (33% compared with 23% of males) and males were more likely to mention quality of learning provision (40% compared with 33% of females).
 - Students in Year 11 were more likely than those in Year 10 to mention the teachers in general (12% compared with 8%), and with reference to support (10% compared with 5%). Year 10 students were more likely to mention aspects relating to the quality of learning (42% versus 32%).

- Learners who accessed extra learning support were significantly more likely to spontaneously mention support from teachers (16% compared with 6%) and less likely to mention friendships/ peers (20% compared with 29%) than those who did not.
- **The ‘thing’ students would most like to change about the school** – the most common references were general comments relating to teachers (17%) and quality of learning provision (14%), followed by environment/atmosphere (11%), discipline and canteen/food (9% in each case).

3.7 Year 10 and 11 Summary

Choice and opportunities

The vast majority of students (85%) were found to choose subjects at Year 10 and 11 because they enjoyed studying them. However, they also based their decisions on future aspirations, with 43% needing the subjects or qualifications for the job they want to do and 21% needing the subjects to progress to sixth form or college. Significantly fewer students attending GCSEs said that they had done so on the basis of needing them for the job they wanted to do in the future, compared with students on all other course types. Furthermore, students who were more motivated in their studies were also more likely to have chosen their subjects and qualifications for the job they wanted to do, suggesting that they were perhaps taking a goal-orientated view of their education.

Certainly it was apparent that students entering Years 10 and 11 had sought advice from third parties to inform their subject choices, either from parents (33%), teachers (23%) or a Careers Wales Advisor (8%). The influence of parental engagement is highlighted here with more students seeking advice from parents than any other third party.

Students taking qualifications other than GCSEs and NVQs were more likely to have based their decisions on advice received from their teachers, perhaps because dealing with individual need (e.g basic skills) or the seemingly alternative nature of these qualifications in a school setting.

Around four out of five students (81%) were found to be studying their first choice of subjects and qualifications, while 12% were not. Groups that were less likely to be accessing their first choice subjects and qualifications included:

- Students from ethnic minority groups (73% were studying their first choices compared with 84% of white students).

- Students at schools with 400 pupils or less across Years 10 and 11 (80% or less compared with 85% or more at schools with 401 pupils or more across Year 10 and 11).

Students studying their first choice subjects and qualifications were more likely to display greater levels of satisfaction and motivation. This seems to suggest that meeting students' demands for courses is an important factor in motivating and engaging students in their studies.

Amongst students who were not studying their first choices, there were a number of reasons why this was the case, with nearly a third (31%) saying that their school or local schools did not provide the subjects or qualifications that they wanted. For a similar number of students their first choice subject or qualification was either already full (30%) or they could not fit their first choices into their timetables (also 30%).

Problems experienced

The majority of students said that they were fairly or very motivated in their studies (73%). Most students described themselves as fairly motivated (61%), with around one in ten saying that they were very motivated (12%). Despite this, a significant proportion of students described themselves as being not very motivated (18%), with only 2% saying they were not at all motivated.

Interestingly, despite a recent trend of female students out performing male students in GCSE examinations⁴, females were no more likely to say that they were fairly or very motivated in their studies than males. There was also no difference between those from white or ethnic minority backgrounds. However, those who were very or fairly motivated were more likely:

- to be studying in Welsh medium schools (83% compared with 71% who were not).
- to be satisfied overall with their learning experience (81% compared with 30% who were dissatisfied)
- to be studying their first choice of course (76% compared with 63% of those who were not)
- to have no long-term limiting illness or disability (75% of those who did not said that they were fairly or very motivated compared with 59% of those who did)

⁴ 66.5% of girls in Wales achieved A*-C grades in 2007 compared with 59.3% of boys (Welsh Assembly Government) <http://wales.gov.uk/news/ThirdAssembly/Education/2007/1634810/?lang=en>

Encouragingly, almost one quarter of students said that they had not experienced any problems since starting their current school year (22%). However, amongst those who had, the three most commonly mentioned problems experienced were:

- keeping up with the standard of work required (29% of all students)
- problems of any kind with a member of staff (28%)
- problems of any kind with other students (27%).

Future intentions

Around six in ten of the students in Year 10 and 11 (59%) stated that they wanted to go to college after Year 11 and whilst school sixth forms were the second most commonly mentioned choice, substantially fewer mentioned this option (31%). A fifth mentioned they would seek part time work (often in conjunction with further studies). Just over one in ten mentioned a job with a Modern Apprenticeship (13%).

There were instances where particular sub groups of students were significantly more likely to mention college/school sixth form as opposed to work related training such as Modern Apprenticeships. These were females and students without learning disabilities. More highly motivated and satisfied students were also significantly more likely than those less satisfied and motivated to be thinking about continuing their learning in college/school sixth form beyond Year 11.

Overall satisfaction

Whilst there is room for improvement in so much as the proportions of students rating themselves as extremely satisfied is relatively low, a combined score of 84% satisfied to some extent can be seen as very positive. This figure is weighted heavily toward students being very or fairly satisfied (41% and 37% respectively) as opposed to them being extremely satisfied (7%). Almost one in ten were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (8%). Relatively few students were dissatisfied to some degree (4%).

There were only a few significant differences in the data at this top level by personal and school demographics. Clear messages to emerge for this measure were:

- If the student is attending their course of preference overall satisfaction levels are higher
- The presence of a very strong relationship (which is also evident in the Year 12 and 13 findings) between levels of motivation and overall satisfaction; almost all of those who were very motivated were satisfied to some extent with their overall learning experience (96%).

Students were most likely to spontaneously recognise the quality of the learning they received and also friendships as the 'things' they most liked about the school. The 'things' they would most like to change were general aspects relating to teachers (17%), quality of learning provision (14%), environment/atmosphere (11%), discipline and canteen/food (9% in each case).

4. Year 12 and 13 Study

4.1 Introduction

This section explores the Learner Voice survey results for the Year 12 and 13 cohort. The data has been analysed by a series of variables relating to personal demographics, options undertaken, levels of satisfaction and motivation, as well as school demographics (such as the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, the year group size and whether the school teaches in the medium of Welsh or English). In terms of the content, the questionnaire covered the following aspects of students' learning experience:

- choice and opportunity
- motivation and problems experienced
- satisfaction with teaching
- measures to explore overall satisfaction with the learning experience.

Comparison is made to the 2004 study at the end of each sub section. Whilst these comparisons are useful they should be treated as indicative, since the methods of recruitment employed in the two surveys differed.

4.2 Choice and opportunity

The following section considers the choices and opportunities available to students in Year 12 and 13. In particular, it will explore:

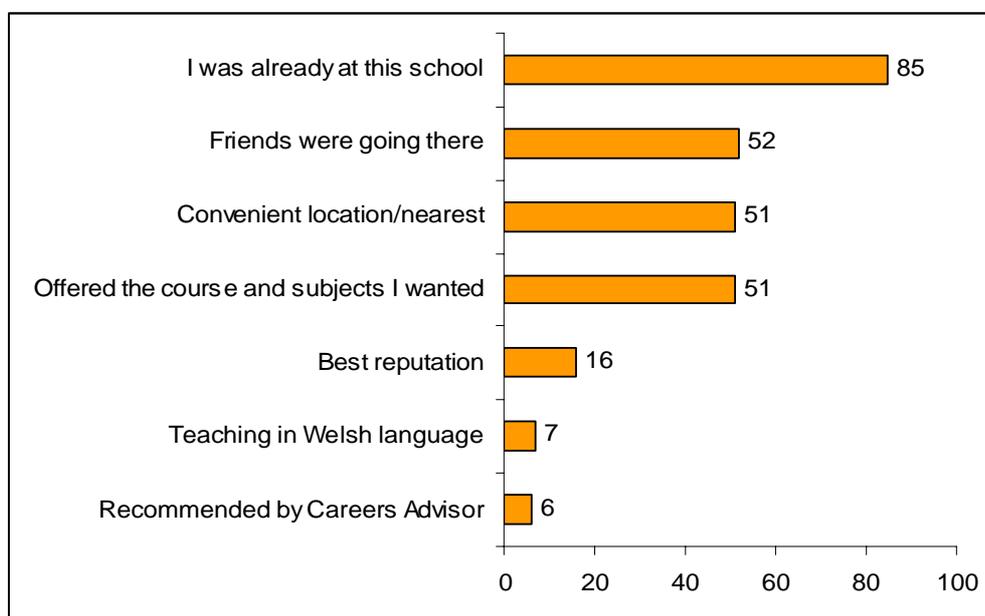
- students' reasons for deciding to attend Years 12 and 13 at their current school
- whether students are attending their first choice of school
- whether students are undertaking their first choice of subjects and qualifications and if not, the reasons why not.

4.2.1 Reasons for attending Year 12 and 13

All students were asked what their main reasons were for attending Year 12 or Year 13 at their school. They were offered a list of possible answers and could choose as many or as few as they wished and could also record any other answers not already on the list.

For the vast majority of students, the main reason given was that they were already attending the school (85%), so attending sixth form seemed to be a natural progression. Other factors such as established friendships, whether options offered met demand and convenience also played a part in the decision making process for many students. Thus, half of students responded that their friends were attending the same school (52%), that the school offered the courses or subjects they wanted to study (51%) or that the school was conveniently located (51%). One in six (17%) gave the reason that the school had the best reputation, while 7% mentioned that the school offered teaching in the Welsh language and 6% that a careers advisor recommended continuing at the school.

Chart 4.1: Reasons for attending Year 12 or Year 13 (% answering): summary Year 12 and 13



Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13 Unweighted (1782) Weighted (1782). All reasons mentioned by more than 2% are shown in chart. Not stated and don't know are not shown.

Responses indicated that females were significantly more likely than males to be 'driven' by Welsh language teaching (9% compared with 5%). Year 12 were more likely than Year 13 to mention convenience (55% of Year 12 students compared with 48% of Year 13 respondents), perhaps a motivator that is forgotten by Year 13. In terms of ethnicity, it is interesting to see that students from ethnic minority groups were significantly less likely than those from white backgrounds to mention most of the above options. The only 'drivers' that were mentioned by similar proportions of white and ethnic minority groups were convenience, reputation and advice from a careers advisor.

Those with learning disabilities were less likely than those without to say that their school:

- offered the course(s) and/or subject(s) I wanted (27% versus 53%)
- offered teaching in Welsh language (1% versus 7%)

Students receiving additional learning support were more likely than those without such support to say that their school:

- had the best reputation (24% versus 16%)
- was recommended by a careers advisor (12% versus 6%)

However, they were less likely than those without additional learning support to say that:

- they were already attending the school (78% versus 87%)
- friends were already attending the school (43% versus 53%)
- the school was convenient (42% versus 53%)

Table 4.1: Reasons for attending Year 12 or Year 13 at school selected by gender, year, ethnicity, learning disability and extra learning support

	Gender			Year		Ethnicity		Learning disability		Extra learning support	
	Total	Male	Female	Year 12	Year 13	White	Non-white	Yes	No	Yes	No
Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13											
Unweighted	17	78	937	1033	700	1564	160	82	1629	144	1569
Weighted	17	80	907	1024	703	1534	178	92	1604	153	1558
I was already attending this school	85	84	87	85	88	88	69	88	86	78	87
Friends were going there	52	53	52	54	50	54	40	58	53	43	53
Offered the course(s) and/or subject(s) I wanted	51	49	54	52	51	54	34	27	53	45	52
Convenient location/ nearest	51	51	54	55	48	52	51	42	53	42	53
Best reputation	16	16	17	15	18	16	18	17	17	24	16
Offered teaching in Welsh language	7	5	9	9	5	8	2	1	7	3	7
Recommended by careers advisor	6	7	6	7	5	6	4	6	6	12	6
Not stated	2	1	*	1	0	*	1	3	*	3	*

Note: All reasons mentioned by more than 2% are shown in table. Don't know not shown. Some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups. In the table * denotes less than 0.5% but higher than zero.

Interestingly, two reasons for attending the school seemed to correlate with students' levels of motivation: satisfaction with quality of teaching and whether they had thought about leaving school (table 12, Appendix B):

- Those who were highly motivated and satisfied were more likely to note that they were originally driven by the fact that the school 'offered the course(s) and/or subject(s) I wanted':
 - Students who were very or fairly motivated (60% and 55% respectively gave this answer compared with 44% of students who were not very motivated and 28% who were not at all motivated).
 - Students who were extremely, very or fairly satisfied with the quality of teaching (53%, 58% and 49% respectively) gave this answer compared with 30% of those who expressed dissatisfaction..
 - Students who had never thought about leaving school (58%) were also more likely to have been driven by the fact that the school 'Offered the course(s) and/or subject(s) I wanted' compared with 41% who had thought about leaving school.
- Those who were highly motivated and satisfied were more likely to have been originally driven by the fact that the school had the 'Best reputation':
 - 27% of students who were very motivated and 18% who were fairly motivated gave this answer compared with 10% of students who were not very motivated and just 5% who were not at all motivated.
 - 33% of students who were extremely satisfied with the quality of teaching and 20% who were very satisfied gave the school's reputation as a reason compared with 16% of students overall.
 - One in five students who had never thought about leaving school (19%) cited the school's reputation as one of their main reasons compared with 11% of those that had considered leaving.

The above seems to indicate that as well as the school offering the right courses, a conscious decision based on the fact that the school offered the course(s) and/or subject(s) that students wanted and a perception of a school having a good reputation at the outset of Year 12 seems to correlate with enduring higher levels of satisfaction and motivation.

When looking at the data based on school demographics, there were a number of reasons that were more or less likely to be given by different groups of students:

- **Friends were going there:**
 - significantly more likely to be given as a reason by students in schools with 100 or more pupils in the year group (52% or more versus 35% of those with fewer than 100 pupils)
 - Significantly less likely to be mentioned by students attending Welsh medium schools (46% compared with 53% in English medium schools).
- **Offered the courses(s) and/or subject(s) I wanted:**
 - More likely to be mentioned by students in schools where fewer than 10% of pupils were receiving free school meals (55% compared with 47% in schools where 15% or more of pupils were receiving free school meals)
- **Convenient location / nearest:**
 - Given as a reason by 55% of students attending schools in which fewer than 10% of pupils were eligible for free school meals compared with nearly half of students (48%) attending schools with more than 15% of pupils eligible for free school meals.
- **Best reputation:**
 - Mentioned by a quarter (24%) of students at schools where less than 10% of students were eligible for free schools meals compared with 11% or less at schools where over 10% of pupils are eligible for free school meals.

Table 4.2: Reasons for attending Year 12 or Year 13 at school selected by language medium

		Language medium	
		Welsh	English
Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13	Total		
Unweighted	1782	367	1415
Weighted	1782	342	1440
	%	%	%

I was already attending this school	85	84	85
Friends were going there	52	46	53
Offered the course(s) and/or subject(s) I wanted	51	55	50
Convenient location/ nearest	51	55	51
Best reputation	16	14	17
Offered teaching in Welsh language	7	34	1
Recommended by careers advisor	6	7	6
Not stated	2	2	2

Note; all reasons mentioned by more than 2% are shown in table. Don't know not shown.

Comparisons with ELWa Sixth Form Survey for Wales 2004

Generally speaking the findings for 2004 were replicated in 2008. The fact that students were already attending the school was still the major motivation for joining the sixth form, with friendship networks, convenience and supply of the courses wanted in a strong but secondary position. The three options which showed relatively small but nevertheless significant differences since 2004 were more students mentioning friends were going there (50% in 2004 and 52% in 2008) and fewer stating that their sixth form had the courses/subjects they wanted (54% in 2004 and 51% in 2008) or that it had the best reputation (21% in 2004 and 16% in 2008).

4.2.2 First choice of school

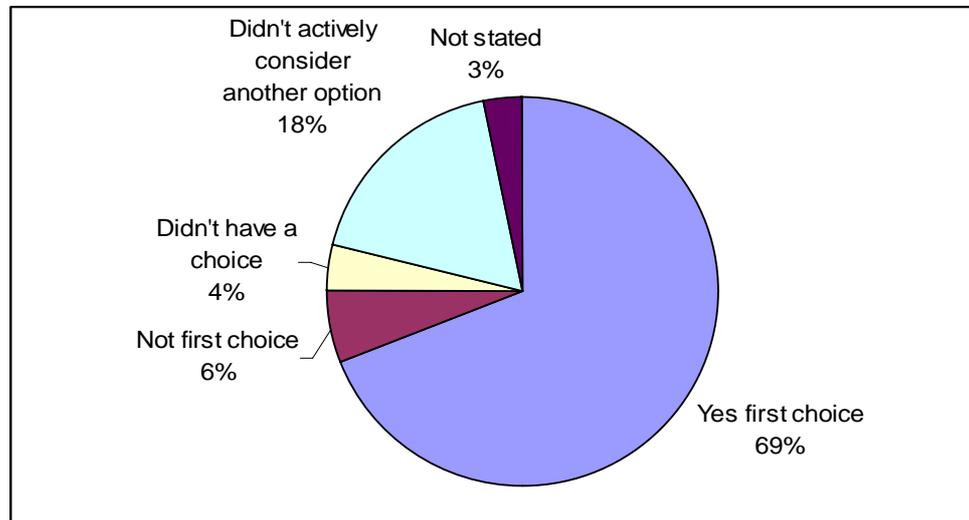
All students were asked whether the school they were attending was their first choice, that is, the place where they most wanted to do their course(s). Students were able to select one of the following answers:

- Yes
- No, not first choice
- Didn't have a choice
- Didn't actively consider another option

Almost seven out of ten students (69%) stated that the school they were attending was their first choice compared with around one in twenty students (6%) who said that their school was not their first choice. Almost a fifth of students (18%) had not considered another option and 4% felt that they hadn't had a choice. It is important to note that almost all of those who said that they did not consider another option

were already attending their school prior to Year 12. This may indicate a lack of a consideration of options and a seemingly 'easy' and natural route for some.

Chart 4.2: Whether school is first choice: summary Year 12 and 13



Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13 Unweighted (1782) Weighted (1782)

Analysing sub groups within the data suggests that differences existed in the ability to access first choices of school based upon students' personal demographics:

- Males were more likely than females to say that they didn't actively consider another option (21% versus 16% respectively), but females were slightly more likely than males to say that they were not studying at their first choice (8% versus 5%).
- Seventy-two percent of white students stated that the school they were attending was their first choice compared with 56% of non-white students (15% of non-white students said they didn't have a choice compared with 3% of white students).
- The data indicates that students with learning disabilities did not actively consider other options at Year 11 and were therefore less inclined to agree that their school was the place they most wanted to be. Four in ten students with a learning disability (42%) were studying at their first choice of school, compared with nearly three-quarters of students without a learning disability (72%). Over one in ten (13%) students with a learning disability considered that they didn't have a choice of school (compared with just 3% of students without a learning disability), while nearly a third (32%) did not actively consider another option (compared with 18% overall).

- Similarly, students receiving extra learning support were more likely to consider that they didn't have a choice when deciding which school to attend than students not receiving extra help (11% compared with 3%).

Table 4.3: Whether school is first choice by gender, ethnicity, learning disability and extra learning support

	Total	Gender		Ethnicity		Learning disability		Extra learning support	
		Male	Female	White	Non-white	Yes	No	Yes	No
Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13									
Unweighted	1782	788	937	1564	160	82	1629	144	1569
Weighted	1782	803	907	1534	178	92	1604	153	1558
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	69	70	72	72	56	42	72	62	72
No, not first choice	6	5	8	6	9	9	6	4	6
Didn't have a choice	4	3	5	3	15	13	3	11	3
Didn't actively consider another option	18	21	16	19	16	32	18	20	18
Not stated	3	2	1	1	3	5	1	4	1

Note: some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups.

We might expect that students who were able to access their first choice of school were more likely to remain motivated, to be satisfied with their learning and be less likely to consider leaving their course than those who are not able to attend their first choice school. This is supported by the following findings (table 13, Appendix B):

- Access to first choice school and consideration of other options correlates with level of motivation in Year 12 and 13:
 - students who considered themselves either very or fairly motivated were more likely to be studying at their first choice school (74% and 78% respectively) than those not very or not at all motivated (60% and 39% respectively).
 - students who were not at all motivated were significantly more likely to feel that they hadn't had a choice of schools (16% compared with 4% of students overall).
 - a quarter of students who were not very motivated had not actively considered another option (25%), compared with around one in six who were very motivated (16%) or fairly motivated (16%).

- Access to first choice school and consideration of other options correlates with satisfaction with teaching in Year 12 and 13:
 - students who were extremely or very satisfied with the quality of teaching were more likely than students overall to be at their first choice of school (81%, 78% and 69% respectively).
 - Furthermore, those students who were **not** extremely or very satisfied were also more likely to have **not** actively considered another option than those who **were** very or extremely satisfied (28% of those who were not extremely or very satisfied compared with 15% of students who were very satisfied and just 8% of students who were extremely satisfied).
 - Students dissatisfied with the quality of teaching overall were more likely than average to feel that they hadn't had a choice of school (13% of those who were dissatisfied compared with 4% overall).
- Access to first choice school and consideration of other options correlates with thoughts about leaving in Year 12 and 13:
 - Students who had thought about leaving school were less likely to be at their first choice of school (60%) compared with 76% who had not thought about leaving school.
 - Those who had thought about leaving were also more likely to have not actively considered another option (22% compared with 16% who had not thought about leaving school).

When the results were analysed according to levels of entitlement to free school meals, 77% of students at schools where less than 10% of pupils were entitled to free school meals considered it to be their first choice of school compared with 64% of schools with 10% or more of pupils entitled to free school meals.

As a final point, students at Welsh medium schools were more likely than those at English medium schools to say they were attending their first choice school (77% versus 68% respectively).

Table 4.4: Whether school is first choice by language medium and % free school meal entitlement

		Language medium		% free school meal entitlement		
		Welsh	English	15% plus	10-15%	Less than 10%
Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13	Total					
Unweighted	1782	367	1415	660	410	712
Weighted	1782	342	1440	729	325	729
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	69	77	68	64	65	77
No, not first choice	6	4	7	8	8	4
Didn't have a choice	4	2	4	6	5	2
Didn't actively consider another option	18	15	19	19	21	15
Not stated	3	3	3	4	1	2

Comparisons with ELWa Sixth Form Survey for Wales 2004

In 2004 72% stated that they got their first choice of school, 7% said that they had no choice, 3% stated that they had no choice and 18% had not considered another option. In 2008 significantly more learners perceived that they had no choice (5% in 2008 compared to 3% in 2004).

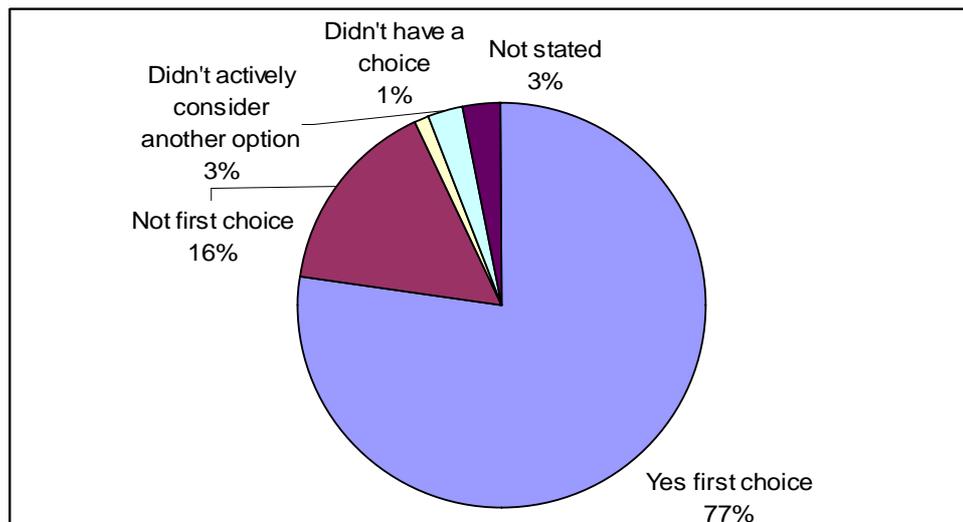
4.2.3 First choice of course

As well as being asked whether they were attending their first choice of school, all Year 12 and 13 students were also asked whether they were studying the subjects and qualifications that they most wanted to do, choosing from the following options:

- Yes, first choice
- No, not first choice
- Didn't have a choice
- Didn't think about another option

Almost four-fifths of students (77%) responded that they were studying the subjects and qualifications that they most wanted to do. However, around one in six students (16%) replied that they were not studying their first choice of subject or qualification. A further 1% felt that they didn't have a choice, while just 3% did not think about other options.

Chart 4.3: Whether subjects and qualifications are first choice: summary Year 12 and 13



Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13 Unweighted (1782) Weighted (1782)

Whilst there were no differences in students' access to their first choice of subjects and qualifications by the presence or absence of a learning disability, certain groups of students were either more or less likely to be able to access their first choices:

- Almost half of all students (45%) who were not at their first choice school were also not studying their first choice subjects and qualifications. This compared with just 13% of students who were at their first choice school.
- Year 13 students were more likely to agree they were undertaking the subjects of their choice compared with those from Year 12 (84% compared with 76%).
- Students from ethnic minority groups were less likely to be studying their first choice subjects and qualifications than white students (73% compared with 80%).
- Whilst females were no more likely than males to have accessed their first choice of school, they were more likely to report that they were *not* studying their first choice subject/qualifications (18% versus 14% of males).

Table 4.5: Whether subjects and qualifications are first choice by gender, year and ethnicity

	Total	Gender		Year		Ethnicity	
		Male	Female	Year 12	Year 13	White	Non-white
Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13							
Unweighted	1782	788	937	1033	700	1564	160
Weighted	1782	803	907	1024	703	1534	178
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes, first choice	78	80	78	76	84	80	73
No, not first choice	16	14	18	18	13	15	21
Didn't have a choice	1	1	1	1	*	1	1
Didn't think about another option	3	4	2	3	3	3	5
Not stated	3	1	1	1	1	1	1

Note: * denotes less than 0.5% but higher than zero.

In a similar fashion to the correlation with access to first choice of school described in section 4.2.2, access to first choice of course/subjects impacts on students' learning experience further down the line (table 14, Appendix B):

- Access to first choice of subjects/qualifications correlates with the level of motivation in Year 12 and 13:
 - Students who considered themselves either very or fairly motivated were also more likely to be studying their first choice of subjects and qualifications (86% and 82% respectively) than those who were not very or not at all motivated (72% and 60% respectively).
- Access to students' first choice of subjects/qualifications correlates with levels of satisfaction with teaching in Year 12 and 13:
 - Students who were extremely or very satisfied with the quality of teaching were also more than average likely to be studying their first choice of course (88% and 86% respectively compared with 78% of students overall).
- Access to students' first choice of subjects/qualifications correlates with thoughts of leaving in Year 12 and 13:
 - Students who had thought about leaving school were less likely to be studying their first choice subjects and qualifications (70%) compared with those who had not thought about leaving school (85%).

- As with first choice of school, students who had thought about leaving school were also more likely not to have thought about other options (5%) than those who had not thought about leaving school (1%).

Encouragingly, there were no significant differences apparent by the variables relating to school demographics, such as the year group size and whether the school was an English or Welsh medium school. The exception to this was in relation to the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals – 80% of students at schools where fewer than 10% of pupils were entitled to free school meals were studying their first choices versus 75% of those where over 15% of pupils were entitled to free school meals.

Comparisons with ELWa Sixth Form Survey for Wales 2004

A small but significant difference was evident in comparison with the 2004 data whereby fewer students in 2008 stated that they had got their first choice of subjects/qualifications (16% compared to 19% in 2004).

4,2,4 Reasons for not studying first choice of subjects or qualifications

All students who responded that they were not currently studying their first choice of subjects or qualifications were asked why this was the case. They were offered a list of possible answers and could choose as many or as few as they wished and also record any other reasons not on the list.

Just over half were not studying their first choice of subjects or qualifications because they could not fit them into their timetables (53%), while a quarter stated that there was no provision of their desired courses at either their school or local schools (26%). Thirteen percent had been advised by their teachers not to follow their first choice, while fewer than one in ten had not wanted to travel to where their first choice was taking place (7%) or their first choice had been full (also 7%).

Analysis by various sub groups within the data shows that:

- Females were more likely than males to give the reason that their school or local schools do not provide the qualifications or subjects that they wanted to pursue (32% compared with 17%).
- In contrast, males were more likely to have been advised by a teacher not to pursue their first choice (20% compared with 8% of females).
- Of those Year 13 students not studying their first choice, for two-thirds (67%) this was because they could not fit them into their timetable. Less

than half of Year 12 students not studying their first choice (47%) gave the same reason.

Table 4.6: Reasons why not studying first choice of subjects and qualifications by gender and year

	Total	Gender		Year	
		Male	Female	Year 12	Year 13
Base: All respondents not studying their first choice of subjects or qualifications Year 12 and 13					
Unweighted	301	116	176	194	97
Weighted	286	111	166	188	88
	%	%	%	%	%
Qualification(s) or subject(s) did not fit into my timetable	53	59	49	47	67
School / local schools do not provide the qualification(s) or	26	17	32	29	20
Advised by teacher not to follow first choice(s)	13	20	8	11	16
Did not want to travel to where course was taking place	7	5	9	8	5
My first choice subject / qualification was already full	7	8	6	8	4
Don't know	1	3	0	2	0
Not stated	1	1	1	1	0

Note: all reasons mentioned by more than 2% are shown in table. Some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups.

There were a number of significant differences between the reasons given by students for not being able to study their first choice of subject or qualification depending on language medium, as follows:

- Meeting demand for subjects/qualifications is more of an issue for some students than others: in relation to 'school / local schools do not provide the qualification(s) or subject(s) I wanted', 43% of students at Welsh medium schools reported this as a reason for not studying their first choice subject or qualification compared with 23% at English medium schools
- 15% of students at English medium schools observed that they were, 'advised by teacher not to follow first choice(s)' in some types of schools compared with 4% at Welsh medium schools

Table 4.7: Reasons why not studying first choice of subjects or qualifications by language medium of school

Base: All respondents not studying their first choice of subjects or qualifications Year 12 and 13	Total	Language medium	
		Welsh	English
Unweighted	301	53	248
Weighted	286	40	246
	%	%	%
Qualification(s) or subject(s) did not fit into my timetable	53	47	54
School / local schools do not provide the qualification(s) or subject(s) I wanted	26	43	23
Advised by teacher not to follow first choice(s)	13	4	15
Did not want to travel to where course was taking place	7	9	7
My first choice subject / qualification was already full	7	7	6
Don't know	1	0	1
Not stated	1	3	*

Note: all reasons mentioned by more than 2% are shown in table. Some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups. In the table * denotes less than 0.5% but higher than zero.

4.2.5 Summary

Students entering Years 12 and 13 will generally have a greater number of choices available to them than at previous stages in their education, in terms of both where they study (for example, school or sixth form college) and which qualifications they pursue.

When asked for their reasons for attending Years 12 and 13 at their current school, the vast majority of students (85%) responded that they were already attending the same school. Natural progression within the same school environment is of course key and maintaining social ties is part of this: where just over half (52%) said that they were attending the school because their friends were going there. Similar proportions chose to attend their sixth form because it offered the course that they wanted (51%) or because of its convenient location (51%).

Interestingly, students who were the most motivated were more likely to have chosen their school because it offered the course or subjects they wanted and

because it held the best reputation. This was the same also for those students who displayed the highest levels of satisfaction with the teaching at their schools.

Sixty-nine percent of pupils reported that they were attending their first choice school, although 18% had not actually considered another option. Of the remainder, 6% of students were not attending their first choice schools and a further 4% felt that they hadn't had a choice when it came to selecting a school.

There were a number of sub groups of students who appeared less likely to be accessing their first choice schools. These included:

- ethnic minority groups (56% compared with 72% of white students)
- students with a learning disability (42% compared with 72% of students without a learning disability).

In general, students who were more motivated, more satisfied and less likely to have considered leaving school were more likely to be studying at their first choice school. Those that did not actively consider other options or had not accessed their first choice were significantly less satisfied and motivated. This trend was repeated with respect to whether students were studying their first choice subjects and qualifications or not. In terms of gaining and maintaining good levels of engagement, this underlines the importance of a) ensuring students consciously engage with the whole concept of choice and opportunity in terms of progression and b) where possible, meeting students' demand for particular courses.

Overall, almost four out of five students (78%) were studying their first choice subjects and qualifications. However, 16% were not studying their first choices. Significantly, nearly half of all students (45%) who were not attending their first choice schools were also not studying their first choice subjects and qualifications (compared with just 13% of students who are at their first choice school). For this group then, it seems that a great deal of compromise had been made.

Half of the students in Years 12 and 13 who were unable to study their first choice subjects and qualifications (53%) said it was because they could not fit them into their timetables. This situation was more pronounced amongst Year 13 students (67%) than their Year 12 counterparts (47%). While a quarter of students unable to study their first choices responded that their school or local schools did not provide the qualifications or subjects they wanted (26%), this was more of a problem for females (32%) than males (17%). Additionally, this was also a more widespread problem within Welsh medium schools (43% compared with 23% in English medium schools).

4.3 Motivation/problems

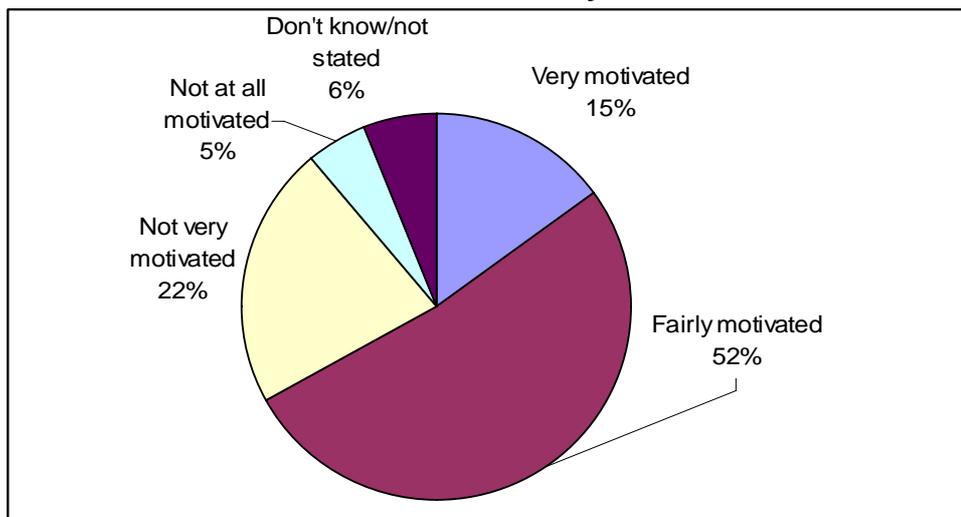
This section examines:

- the level of motivation sixth form students have in relation to their studies
- any problems encountered since starting the current school year
- whether since starting Year 12 students have ever seriously thought about leaving school.

4.3.1 Overall Levels of Motivation

Encouragingly, around two thirds of students said they were fairly, or very motivated in their studies (68%), although the majority of this group were fairly motivated (52%), rather than very motivated (15%). A significant minority, however, said they were not very motivated (22%) and 5% described themselves as not at all motivated.

Chart 4.4: Level of motivation: summary Year 12 and 13



Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13 Unweighted (1782) Weighted (1782)

Despite a recent trend of females outperforming males in A level examinations, there was no evidence that females were more motivated in their studies than males. Sixty-seven percent of males and 71% of females said they were fairly or very motivated in their studies, which was not a statistically significant difference. When the positive scale is collapsed (i.e. combining responses to very/fairly motivated) there is no significant difference between year group but it should be noted that students in Year 13 were more likely to say that they were very motivated than those in Year 12 (20% compared with 13%).

There were clear differences in overall levels of motivation and ethnic background. Those from white ethnic backgrounds were more likely to say they were fairly or very motivated, than those from ethnic minority backgrounds (70% compared with 58% from ethnic minority groups).

Those who did not have a learning disability were more likely to be very or fairly motivated than those who had a learning disability (70% compared with 58%). Encouragingly, however, those students who received extra regular support at school to help with their learning were more likely to be very motivated than those who did not (24% compared with 15% of those who did not receive extra help).

Table 4.8: Level of motivation by year, ethnicity, learning disability and extra learning support

	Total	Year		Ethnicity		Learning disability		Extra learning support	
		12	13	White	Non-white	Yes	No	Yes	No
Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13									
Unweighted	1782	1033	700	1564	160	82	1629	144	1569
Weighted	1782	1024	703	1534	178	92	1604	153	1558
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very motivated	15	13	20	16	13	20	15	24	15
Fairly motivated	52	56	50	55	45	37	54	51	53
Not very motivated	22	23	23	23	27	28	23	16	24
Not at all motivated	5	5	4	4	7	6	5	3	5
Not sure	1	1	1	1	3	5	1	3	1
Not stated	5	3	2	2	6	4	2	5	2
Very/ fairly motivated	68	69	70	70	58	58	70	74	68
Not very/ at all motivated	27	28	27	27	34	34	28	18	29

Note: some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups.

Choice of school and course had a large impact on motivation. Students who were studying at their first choice of school were more likely to be very or fairly motivated (75%) than those who were not (43%), those who didn't have a choice (41%), or those who said they had not actively considered another option (59%). There was also a similar pattern for those studying their first choice of course (table 15, Appendix B).

There was also a strong correlation between levels of motivation and students' satisfaction with their learning experience at sixth form. Ninety-three percent of students who were extremely satisfied and eighty-eight percent of those who were

very satisfied described themselves as being very or fairly motivated compared with 14% of those who were dissatisfied.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, a student's level of motivation can also be linked to their likelihood to consider leaving school. Eighty-two percent of those who had not thought about leaving school said they were very or fairly motivated in their studies. In contrast only 16% of students who had *not* considered leaving school since starting in Year 12, described themselves as not very or not at all motivated. (Table 16, Appendix B).

There were some significant differences in levels of motivation according to school demographics:

- Students in English medium schools were more likely to be not very or not at all motivated (28%) in their studies than those from Welsh medium schools (21%). However, students in Welsh medium schools were no more likely to feel very or fairly motivated than those in English medium schools (72% and 67% respectively).
- Students in schools where fewer than 10% of pupils were entitled to free school meals were more likely to be very or fairly motivated than those where more than 10% of pupils were entitled (73% versus 65% or less).

Table 4.9: Level of motivation by language medium and % entitlement to free school meals

	Total	Language medium		% pupils entitled to free school meals		
		Welsh	English	15+	10% up to 15%	Less than 10%
Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13						
Un-weighted	1782	367	1415	660	410	712
Weighted	1782	342	1440	729	325	729
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very motivated	15	16	15	17	12	15
Fairly motivated	52	57	51	49	49	58
Not very motivated	22	18	24	23	29	19
Not at all motivated	5	3	5	5	5	4
Not sure	1	0	1	2	1	*
Not stated	5	7	4	5	5	4
Very/ fairly motivated	68	72	67	65	60	73

Not very/ at all motivated	27	21	28	28	34	23
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Note: * denotes less than 0.5% but higher than zero.

Comparisons with ELWa Sixth Form Survey for Wales 2004

Significantly fewer respondents in 2008 were fairly/very motivated in their studies than four years previously (68% in 2008 compared to 71% in 2004).

4.3.2 Problems experienced

The largest problem students had encountered since starting their current school year was maintaining their personal motivation, mentioned by nearly half (48%) of all pupils. A third (33%) said they had struggled keeping up with the standard of work required and one fifth (20%) said they had experienced problems with a member of staff. Approximately one in ten students also mentioned that they had problems with other students (11%) and extra help that they had been promised not being provided (9%). Approximately one seventh of students said that they had not experienced any problems in their current school year (15%).

There were very few differences between male and female students in terms of the types of problems they experienced. The only exception to this was that females were slightly more likely than males to say they had experienced problems with other students (14% compared with 9%).

There were some notable differences in relation to academic school year. Those in Year 13 were more likely than those in Year 12 to say they had encountered:

- problems of any kind with a member of staff (24% compared with 17%)
- problems of any kind with other students (14% compared with 9%)
- extra help they were promised not being provided (11% compared with 8%).

In contrast, those in Year 12 were more likely than those in Year 13 to say that they had struggled keeping up with the standard of work required (36% versus 30%). This is perhaps to be expected, as the majority of students in Year 12 would be embarking on a new course and curriculum content.

There was also a clear link between those with a learning disability, and the problem of keeping up with the standard of work required: 46% of students with a learning disability agreed that this had been a problem for them compared with only one third of those without a learning disability (33%). Those with a learning disability were also twice as likely to say that the extra help that they had been promised had not been provided as students without a learning disability (21% compared with 9%). Amongst those who received extra support in the classroom, almost one fifth (18%)

said they had encountered problems with other students. This is in contrast with approximately one tenth (11%) of students who did not receive extra help.

There were no statistically significant differences by ethnic background for any of the problems students had experienced since the start of the school year.

Table 4.10: Problems experienced by gender, year, learning disability and extra learning support

	Total	Gender		Year		Learning disability		Extra learning support	
		Male	Female	12	13	Yes	No	Yes	No
Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13									
Unweighted	1782	788	937	1033	700	82	1629	144	1569
Weighted	1782	803	907	1024	703	92	1604	153	1558
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Maintaining your personal motivation	48	52	48	48	51	49	50	39	51
Keeping up with the standard of work required	33	32	36	36	30	46	33	41	33
Problems of any kind with other members of staff	20	19	21	17	24	30	20	19	20
Problems of any kind with other students	11	9	14	9	14	17	11	18	11
Extra help you were promised not being provided	9	8	11	8	11	21	9	11	9
Travelling to this school	7	8	6	7	6	13	6	8	7
No problems / no / none	15	16	15	16	15	7	16	10	16
Not stated	13	12	10	11	10	6	11	12	11

Note: all reasons mentioned by more than 3% are shown in table. Some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups.

Those who said they were not studying at their first choice school were more likely than those who were to have encountered problems with a member of staff (30% and 17% respectively), to have encountered problems with other students (19% versus 10%) and to say that the extra support they had been promised had not been provided (21% and 7% respectively). Twenty-one percent of students who said they didn't have a choice of school had also experienced problems with extra support not being provided (compared with only 7% who were studying at their first choice of school).

There was also a clear correlation between whether a student was studying their first choice of subject and their likelihood to encounter certain problems (table 18, Appendix B). Those who said they were not studying their first choice of course were more likely than those who were to have experienced:

- problems maintaining their personal motivation (60% of those who were not studying their first choice of course compared with 47% of those who were)
- problems keeping up with the standard of work required (39% compared with 32%)
- problems of any kind with a member of staff (25% compared with 19%).

Students who said they were not at all motivated were more likely to say they had experienced the following difficulties than those who were very or fairly motivated:

- keeping up with the standard of work required of them (59% compared with 18% and 45% respectively)
- problems of any kind with a member of staff (33% compared with 18% and 18% respectively)
- extra help you were promised not being delivered (25% versus 6% and 9% respectively)

Similarly, those who were dissatisfied with their learning experience were more likely to have experienced some problems than those who were satisfied, as follows (table 19, Appendix B)⁵:

- maintaining their personal motivation (78% of those who were dissatisfied had experienced this problem compared with 22% who were extremely satisfied, 37% who were very satisfied and 58% who were fairly satisfied)
- keeping up with the standard of work required (62% compared with 21%, 27% and 37% respectively)
- problems of any kind with a member of staff (43% compared with 10%, 13%, and 23% respectively)
- extra help you were promised not being provided (26% compared with 6%, 5% and 10% respectively).

⁵ Note an unweighted base size of less than 100 for this group means that caution should be exercised when considering these results.

Students in English medium schools were also more likely to have encountered problems maintaining their own personal motivation (52%) than students in Welsh medium schools (34%) and to have encountered problems with other students (12% compared with 7% of those in Welsh medium schools). They were also more likely to cite problems with travelling to school (8% versus 2% respectively).

There was a clear link between year group size and a student's likelihood to have encountered problems maintaining their own personal motivation. At least 53% of students in schools with 151 pupils or more in Year 12 and 13 had found it hard to maintain their personal motivation. In contrast, 40% of students in schools with 101-150 students in Year 12 and 13 and 33% of those in schools with 100 students or less in these year groups had experienced this problem.

Students in schools where 10% or more of pupils or more were entitled to receive free school meals were also more likely to have encountered problems with other students (at least 12%) than those students in schools where entitlement to free school meals was below 10% (only 7% of these students had encountered a problem of this kind).

Table 4.11: Problems experienced by language medium and % entitlement to free school meals

	Total	Language medium		% pupils entitled to free school meals		
		Welsh	English	15% plus	10% up to 15%	Less than 10%
Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13						
Un-weighted	1782	367	1415	660	410	712
Weighted	1782	342	1440	729	325	729
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Maintaining your personal motivation	48	34	52	44	54	51
Keeping up with the standard of work required	33	32	34	35	37	30
Problems of any kind with other members of staff	20	16	20	21	19	19
Problems of any kind with other students	11	7	12	15	12	7
Extra help you were promised not being provided	9	7	10	10	11	7
Travelling to this school	7	2	8	7	6	7

No problems / no / none	15	20	14	15	16	15
Not stated	13	18	12	12	8	15

Note; all reasons mentioned by more than 3% are shown in table.

Table 4.12: Problems experienced by number of students in year group

Base: All respondents Year 12 and	Total	Number of students in Year 12 and 13				
		Up to 100	101-150	151-200	201-250	251+
Unweighted	1782	130	408	484	298	462
Weighted	1782	200	422	417	331	414
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Maintaining your personal motivation	48	33	40	53	55	54
Keeping up with the standard of work required	33	29	29	37	36	34
Problems of any kind with other members of staff	20	17	22	18	21	20
Problems of any kind with other students	11	16	11	12	11	8
Extra help you were promised not being provided	9	8	9	12	9	7
Travelling to this school	7	5	6	5	8	8
No problems / no / none	15	11	18	16	11	17
Not stated	13	21	14	11	10	12

Note: all reasons mentioned by more than 3% are shown in table.

Comparisons with ELWa Sixth Form Survey for Wales 2004

Compared with 2004, significantly fewer respondents in 2008 said that they had experienced no problems at all (20% in 2004 compared to 15% in 2008). Whilst fewer respondents in 2008 than in 2004 cited issues with members of staff (20% compared with 24%) and/or other students (11% compared with 13%), more agreed that they had problems with extra help they were promised not being provided (9% in 2008 compared with 7% in 2004).

4.3.3 Thoughts about leaving school

Although the majority of students (56%) had not thought about leaving school since they started Year 12, one third of students said they had seriously (32%) considered leaving.

Amongst those who had thought about leaving school there were no differences by gender or ethnicity. Students in Year 13 were more likely to respond that they had not considered leaving than Year 12 students (63% compared with 54%) and there was a clear difference between those with and without a learning disability. Over half (56%) of those with a learning disability said they had thought about leaving school compared with around one third of those with no learning disability (31%).

Table 4.13: Thoughts about leaving school by year and learning disability

Base: All respondents Year 12 and	Total	Year		Learning disability	
		Year 12	Year 13	Yes	No
Un-weighted	1782	1033	700	82	1629
Weighted	1782	1024	703	92	1604
	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	32	34	30	56	31
No	56	54	63	28	60
Don't know	9	11	7	16	9
Not stated	3	*	*	0	*

Note: some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups. In the table * denotes less than 0.5% but higher than zero.

With regards to qualifications, those studying for GCSEs and vocational qualifications were more likely to have considered leaving school than those studying for A levels (47% of those studying GCSEs and 56% of those studying vocational qualifications had considered it compared with only 31% of students studying for A levels). (See table 20, Appendix B).

Those who did not get to study at their first choice of school were also more likely to have thought about leaving school (table 21, Appendix B). Three fifths (58%) of those who were not studying at their first choice of school had considered it compared with only 27% of those who were studying at their first choice. A similar pattern was also evident in relation to subject choice. Forty-five percent of those not studying their first choice of subject had thought about leaving school compared with only 29% of those who were studying at their first choice.

As may have been anticipated, there was a clear link between levels of motivation and the likelihood of students to have thought about leaving school (table 22, Appendix B). Four fifths of those who described themselves as being not at all motivated (82%) and a half of those who were not very motivated (50%) had thought about leaving school. In contrast only one quarter (24%) of those who were fairly motivated and approximately one fifth (18%) of those who were very motivated had considered leaving.

An almost identical pattern could be seen in relation to overall satisfaction with the learning experience. Seventy-seven percent of those who were dissatisfied with their learning experience had thought about leaving school compared with only 38% of those who were fairly satisfied, 16% of those who were very satisfied and 13% of those who were extremely satisfied.

Students who were studying at English medium schools were also more likely to say that they had thought about leaving school than those who were at Welsh medium schools (33% compared with 25%).

There was also a clear correlation between the percentage of pupils who had considered leaving school and the proportion of pupils in the school who were entitled to a free school meal. Around a quarter (24%) of those in schools where less than 10% of students were entitled to free school meals said they had considered leaving. In contrast, 34% of students in schools where 10-15% of pupils were entitled to free school meals and 39% of students in schools where more than 15% of pupils were entitled to free meals had considered it.

Table 4.14: Thoughts about leaving school by language medium and % entitlement to free school meals

	Total	Language medium		% pupils entitled to free school meals		
		Welsh	English	15+	10% up to 15%	Less than 10%
Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13						
Un-weighted	1782	367	1415	660	410	712
Weighted	1782	342	1440	729	325	729
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	32	25	33	39	34	24
No	56	62	55	50	54	64
Don't know	9	9	9	9	10	10
Not stated	3	5	2	3	3	3

Comparisons with ELWa Sixth Form Survey for Wales 2004

The percentage of learners thinking of leaving early had not changed significantly in 2008 compared with 2004.

4.3.4 Summary

Encouragingly, the majority of students in Wales described themselves as being fairly motivated (52%), with a further 15% saying they were very motivated. Despite this, a significant minority of students said they were not very or not at all motivated

(27%). Whilst there were no differences by gender, those who were very or fairly motivated were more likely to:

- be from white backgrounds (70% said they were fairly or very motivated compared with 58% of those from ethnic minority backgrounds)
- to have no learning disability (70% compared with 58% of those with a learning disability)
- Studying with their first choice of school (75% compared with 43% who were not)
- Studying their first choice of course (72% compared with 55% who were not)
- Satisfied with their learning experience (76% compared with 14% who were dissatisfied).

Maintaining personal motivation, was the most common problem students had experienced in the current school year, mentioned by almost half of all students in Wales (48%). The second most commonly mentioned problem was keeping up with the standard of work required, mentioned by one third of students, followed by a fifth of students who said that they had experienced problems of any kind with another member of staff.

As would be hoped, the majority of sixth form students had not thought about leaving school (56%). However, one third of all students in Wales had considered this option (32%). Amongst those who had thought about leaving school there were no differences by gender or ethnicity. However, those with a learning disability and those in English medium schools were more likely to have thought about leaving (56% of those with a learning disability said they had thought about leaving school compared with 31% of those with no learning disability and 33% of those in English medium schools had thought about leaving compared with 25% in Welsh medium schools). Those who had not secured their first choice of school (58%) or first choice of subject (45%) were also more likely to have considered it than those who had secured their first choice school or course (27% and 29% respectively).

Throughout this chapter, levels of motivation amongst students have shown themselves to be a key factor in students' success and well-being whilst in the sixth form. Students who said they were not at all motivated in their studies were more likely than those who were very or fairly motivated to say they had experienced problems:

- keeping up with the standard of work required of them (59% compared with 18% and 32% respectively)

- to have experienced problems of any kind with a member of staff (33% compared with 18% and 18% respectively)

Those who were not very motivated were also more likely to have thought about leaving school, than those who were motivated (82% of those who described themselves as being not at all motivated and 50% of those who were not very motivated had thought about leaving school compared with only 24% of those who were fairly motivated and 18% of those who were very motivated). Therefore motivating students is a key factor not only for the success of students, but also for a school's overall success.

4.4 Satisfaction with teaching

4.4.1 Satisfaction with specific aspects of teaching

As with the Year 10 and 11 cohort, Year 12 and 13 students were presented with a range of aspects of teaching and asked to rate each. These measures included teaching styles, engagement and management of learning. They were asked to respond using a five point scale which ranged from very good to very poor (with a mid point).

- Students were most likely to give very good ratings for the ability to explain the subject (33%) and the support they give you (study techniques/time management) (31%).
- Between 25% and 30% of students gave very good ratings for most other measures.
- The two aspects for which students were more reluctant to use the very good rating (less than 25% in each case) were making the subject interesting and enjoyable and understanding you and how you like to learn (23% and 20% respectively).

Consistent with the 2004 survey, Year 12 and 13 students were most inclined to rate teachers as fairly good (37% and upwards on a range of measures) and were more inclined to use the neutral 'neither/nor' rating than on other questions in the survey (an average of 20% across the measures).

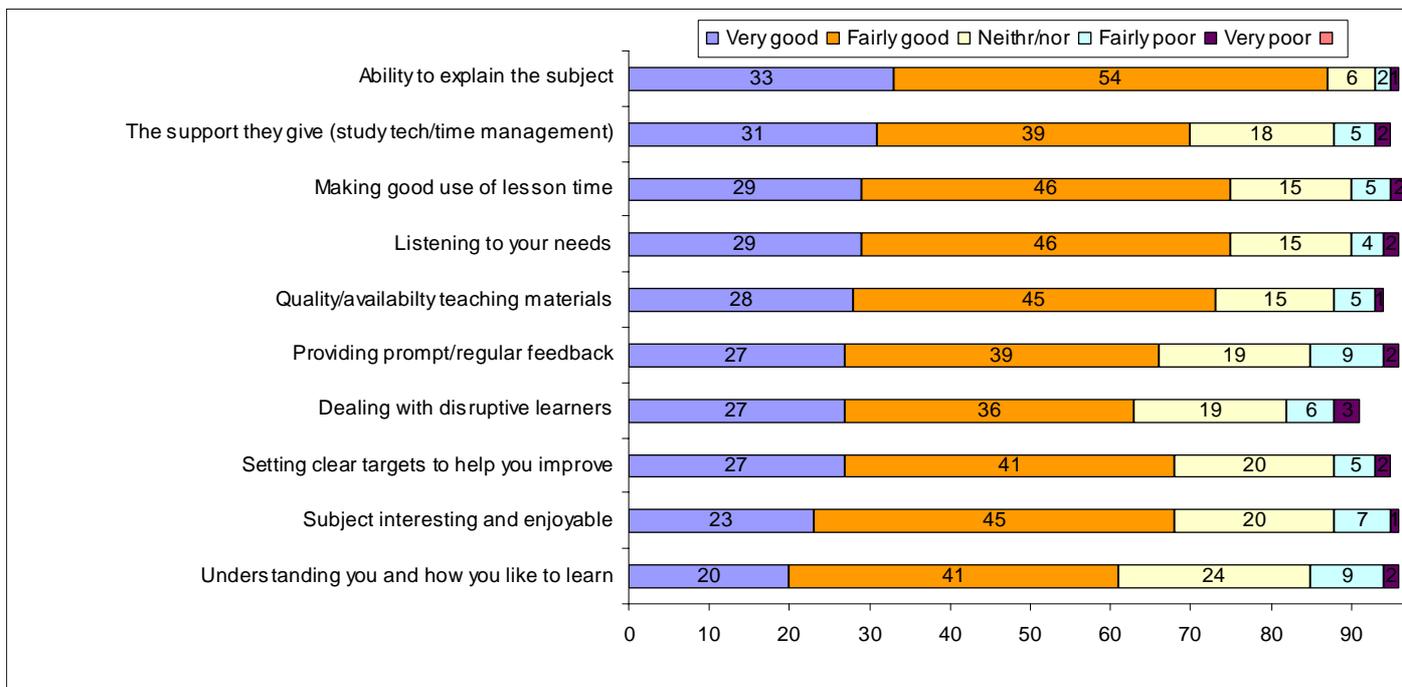
There are some significant differences in students' responses according to personal demographics:

- Ratings were consistently lower amongst students from ethnic minority groups than those from white backgrounds, significantly so for the following: ability to explain the subject, making your subject interesting and

enjoyable, quality and availability of teaching materials they use, and prompt and regular feedback on progress.

- Ratings at an ‘very/fairly good level’ were significantly higher for students who were receiving extra support in class for the following measures: listening to your needs, making your subject interesting and enjoyable, understanding you and how you like to learn and the support they give you.
- Females were significantly more likely than males to rate teachers as very good or fairly good for the following: making your subject interesting and enjoyable and quality and availability of teaching materials they use.
- Males were significantly more likely than females to rate teachers as very or fairly poor for dealing with disruptive learners (11% compared with 7%).

Chart 4.5: Rating of aspects of teaching (%): summary Year 12 and 13



Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13 Unweighted (1782) Weighted (1782). Not stated and don't know not shown.

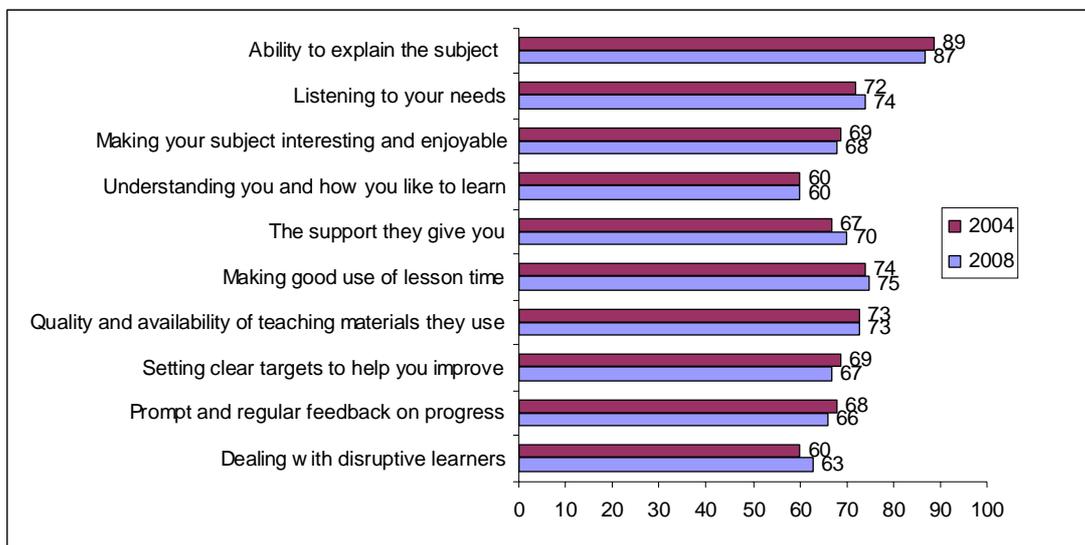
Table 4.15: Rating of aspects of teaching by gender, ethnicity and extra learning support (% very or fairly good)

		Gender		Ethnicity		Extra learning support	
		Male	Female	White	Non-white	Yes	No
Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13	Total						
Unweighted	1782	788	937	1564	160	144	1569
Weighted	1782	803	907	1534	178	153	1558
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Ability to explain the subject	87	87	90	90	76	89	89
Listening to your needs	74	75	77	77	71	86	75
Making your subject interesting and enjoyable	68	65	73	71	58	78	68
Understanding you and how you like to learn	60	61	62	63	55	72	61
The support they give you	70	70	73	72	71	81	71
Making good use of lesson time	75	74	78	77	71	83	76
Quality and availability of teaching materials they use	73	73	78	76	68	73	75
Setting clear targets to help you improve	67	69	70	70	62	76	68
Prompt and regular feedback on progress	66	67	67	69	55	74	67
Dealing with disruptive learners	63	62	67	65	56	69	64

Comparisons with ELWa Sixth Form Survey for Wales 2004

On the combined 'very/fairly good' rating, teachers were rated more positively on the following measures over time; listening to your needs (+2%), the support they give you (+3%) and dealing with disruptive learners (+3%). The following measures showed a significant decline in satisfaction over time: ability to explain the subject, making your subject interesting and enjoyable, setting clear targets and prompt and regular feedback on progress (all had decreased by 2%).

Chart 4.6: Rating of aspects of teaching (% very or fairly good) 2004 and 2008 comparison

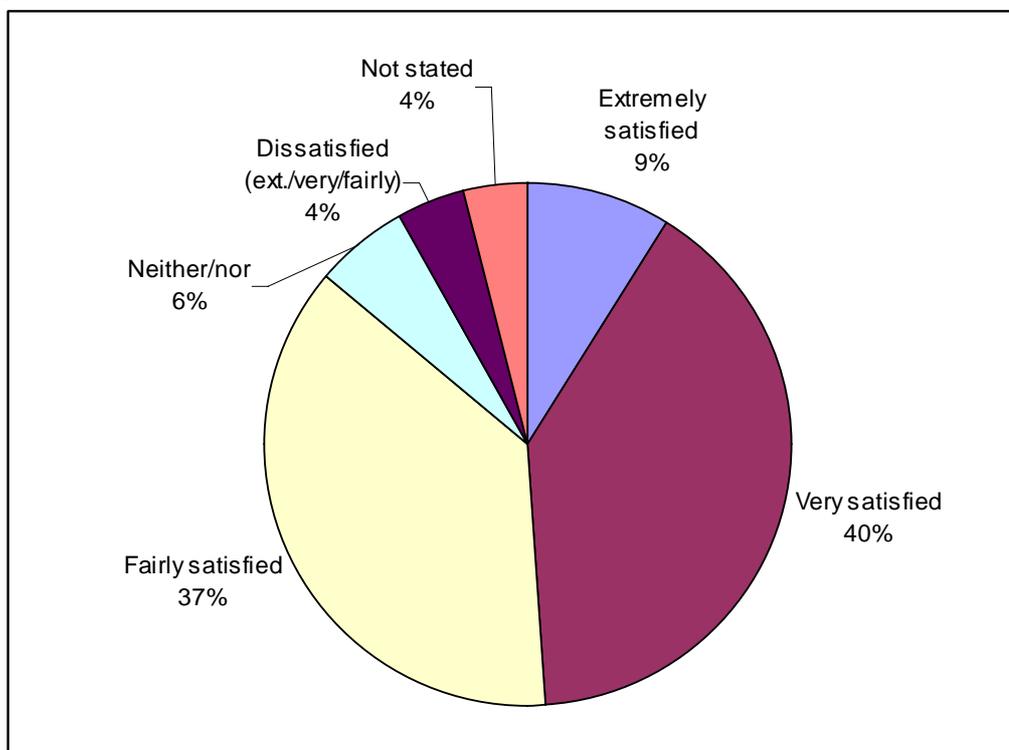


Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13 2004 Unweighted (5781) Weighted (5781) 2004 Unweighted (1782) Weighted (1782)

4.4.2 Overall satisfaction with teaching

All students were asked to rate their overall satisfaction with the quality of teaching in their school. They were offered a seven point scale which ranged from extremely satisfied through to extremely dissatisfied. Almost one in ten (9%) rated themselves as extremely satisfied with the teaching quality and another 40% said that they were very satisfied. With a further 37% saying that they were fairly satisfied, the combined figures mean that 86% of students were satisfied to some degree. Just 4% gave a rating of dissatisfaction and 6% used the mid point (neither satisfied nor dissatisfied).

Chart 4.7: Overall quality of teaching in your sixth form: summary Year 12 and 13



Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13 Unweighted (1782) Weighted (1782)

It is important to note that response across sub groups for this question was relatively 'flat'. We observed no significant differences in students' responses by age, gender, ethnicity or learning difficulty, medium of school. Students who were getting extra learning support were significantly more likely to state they were extremely satisfied compared to those who were not (17% compared to 8%). In terms of school demographics, those in schools with the lowest proportion of students in receipt of free school meals (less than 10%) were significantly more likely to be satisfied to some extent than those with the highest proportion of eligible students (15% or more): the figures were 88% satisfied compared with 84% respectively.

Responses once again support the strong link between overall satisfaction measures, motivation and thoughts about leaving school:

- Satisfaction with the teaching quality was much higher the more motivated the student (95% of those who were highly motivated were satisfied to some extent compared with 79% of those who were not very motivated and 48% of those not motivated at all).

- Satisfaction with the teaching quality was much higher amongst those who had never thought about leaving (94%) compared with those who had thought of leaving (77%).

4.4.3. Drivers of Satisfaction with Teaching

The same statistical analysis⁶ was carried out on Year 12 and 13 data to determine what contribution the different elements of teaching made to driving overall satisfaction with the quality of teaching and how students rated teachers' performance on each element.

The next chart maps the results of the statistical analysis by positioning the aspects of teaching according to students' satisfaction ratings and the contribution each aspect makes in driving overall satisfaction. The results are presented in four quadrants:

- top left hand box: High contribution but lower performance ratings indicating the need for **review**
- top right hand box: High contribution and high performance ratings indicating the case for **promotion** of these strengths
- bottom left hand box :Lower contribution and lower performance ratings indicating the case for **monitoring** these aspects
- bottom right hand box: Lower contribution but high performance ratings indicating the need to **maintain** performance.

The chart shows that all aspects of teaching achieved a mean-score of over 3.5 out of 5, which are high scores. Nonetheless if we arbitrarily take the mid point of those scores and the importance scores we are able to show, relatively speaking, which aspects would warrant attention in order to improve overall satisfaction with teaching..

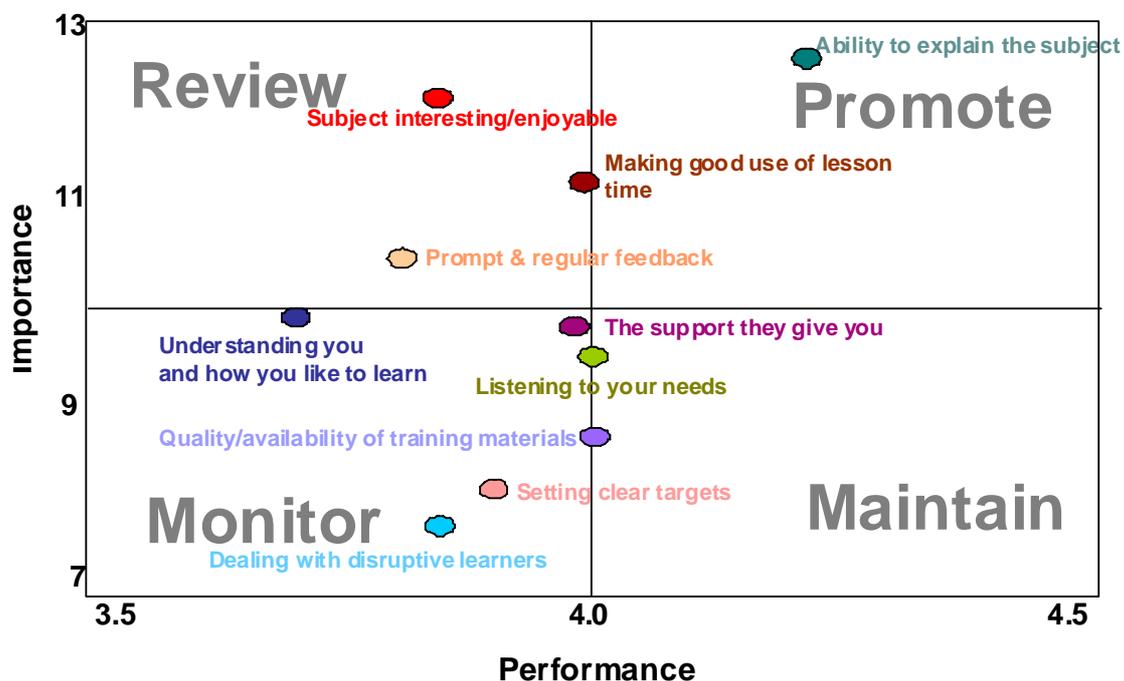
- Ability to explain the subject scores highest in terms of performance and also in importance in driving satisfaction (this means that this aspect is already making a great contribution to overall satisfaction with teaching).

⁶ Ridge Regression - this analysis is often used to work out how much influence different attributes have on some dependent variable such as overall satisfaction. If the attributes we measure are in some way correlated (for example as one improves another one is also likely to improve) then ordinary linear regression analysis can give a misleading and unstable solution. This inter-correlation between independent variables is called 'multi-collinearity', ridge regression is a special type of regression, which is used to deal with this problem.

This sits in the 'promote' quadrant, along with making good use of lesson time (although this is borderline).

- Nothing sits squarely in the 'maintain' quadrant, but borderline factors include: listening to your needs and quality and availability of teaching materials
- In the 'monitor' quadrant (i.e. lower performance ratings but factors which are currently relatively less important in terms of driving satisfaction) are: dealing with disruptive learners, the support they give you, understanding you and how you like to learn and setting clear targets.
- Finally, two factors sit in the 'review' quadrant: prompt and regular feedback and making the subject interesting and enjoyable. Thus, making changes in these areas are most likely to have an impact on overall satisfaction with teaching.

Chart 4.8: Drivers of overall satisfaction with teaching Year 12 and 13



Base: 1782. The axes are set at 10 for importance and 4 for performance; these have been generated for reporting purposes and are subjective settings.

Comparisons with ELWa Sixth Form Survey for Wales 2004

At an overall level, the 2008 data are in line with the 2004 measure and the data have not significantly shifted at all in the last four years.

4.4.4 Summary

In terms of satisfaction with specific aspects of teaching, at least seven in ten students rated teachers as fairly or very good for 'the support they give you', 'quality and availability of teaching materials they use', 'listening to your needs', 'making good use of lesson time' and 'ability to explain the subject'.

At least two thirds of students rated teachers as fairly or very good for 'prompt and regular feedback on progress', 'making your subject interesting and enjoyable' and 'setting clear targets to help you improve'.

Ratings were lowest for 'understanding you and how you like to learn' (60%) and 'dealing with disruptive learners' (63%).

There were some significant differences in the data by personal demographics:

- Ratings were consistently lower amongst students from ethnic minority groups than those from white backgrounds (significantly so for many measures).
- Ratings were significantly higher on many measures for students receiving extra support in class
- Females were significantly more likely than males to rate teachers as very good or quite good for the following: making your subject interesting and enjoyable and quality and availability of teaching materials they use.
- Males were significantly more likely than females to rate teachers as very or quite poor for dealing with disruptive learners (11% compared with 7%).

Almost one in ten (9%) rated themselves as extremely satisfied with overall teaching quality and another 40% said that they were very satisfied. With a further 37% saying that they were fairly satisfied the combined figures mean that 86% were satisfied to some degree with the overall quality of teaching. Scores are consistent

across a majority of sub groups and once again show a strong correlation between satisfaction, motivation and thoughts about leaving.

4.5 Overall satisfaction with experience at school

This section explores overall satisfaction with the learning experience on two levels:

- whether students' experiences since the start of Year 12 have met the expectations they held at the outset; and
- ratings of overall satisfaction with their learning experience when taking into account all learning and experiences in Year 12 and 13.

4.5.1 Expectations before starting Year 12

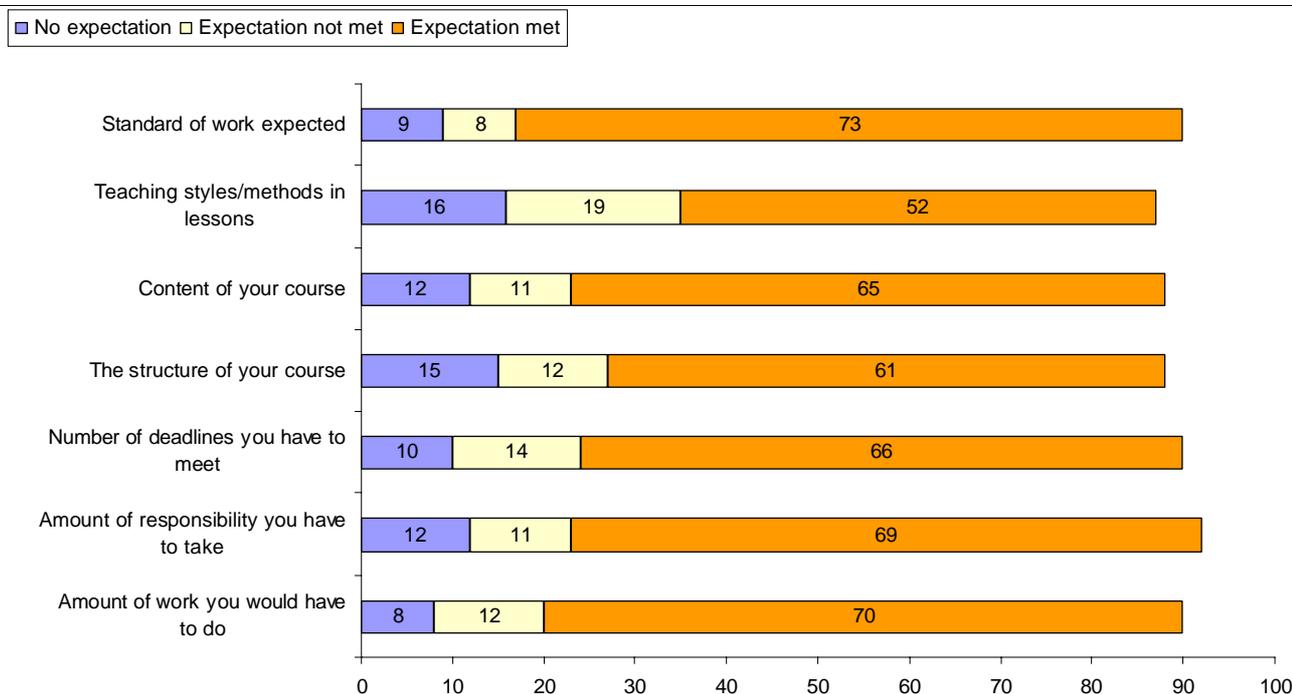
Satisfaction with an experience is affected by the type expectations an individual has prior to the experience. Students were given a number of statements relating to the course and what would be expected of them in Year 12 and 13. The statements can be collapsed into the following two broad areas:

- **course/teaching related:** standard of work expected, teaching styles/methods in lessons, content of your course and the structure of your course; and
- **workload/responsibility related:** number of deadlines you have to meet, amount of responsibility you have to take and amount of work you would have to do.

Chart 4.9 shows that, in general, the majority of students did have expectations relating to various aspects of their course and, in general, the majority of students said that their expectations had been met.

Notably the findings were most positive for the standard of work expected and also the amount of work they would have to do. The proportion of students with no expectations at all for these measures (9% in both cases) was lower in comparison with other measures, and the proportion of those whose expectations had been met was highest (73% and 70% respectively).

Responses were least positive for questions relating to teaching styles and methods used in lessons. The proportion of students with no expectations at all was higher in comparison with other measures (16%) which might indicate a lack of awareness about this aspect for the coming year. Consequently the proportion of those whose expectations had been met was relatively low (52%).

Chart 4.9: Whether expectations had been met (%): summary Year 12 and 13

Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13 Unweighted (1782) Weighted (1782). Not stated and don't know not shown.

When exploring the response relating to expectations before Year 12 a pattern emerges whereby:

- for just over half the measures, females were significantly more likely than males to have agreed that their expectations were met (at least a +5% gap for 4 of the 7 measures). The measures where there were **no** significant differences by gender were: the structure of the course and teaching styles/methods in lessons.
- white students were significantly more likely to state that their expectations had been met compared with students from ethnic minority groups for all measures relating to workload and responsibilities.
- students **without** learning disabilities were significantly more likely than those with them to say their expectations had been met on a number of issues: number of deadlines you have to meet, the standard of work expected, the content of your course and teaching styles/methods in lessons.

Table 4.16: Whether expectations had been met by gender, ethnicity and learning disability (% expectation met)

	Total	Gender		Ethnicity		Learning disability	
		Male	Female	White	Non-white	Yes	No
Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13							
Unweighted	1782	788	937	1564	160	82	1629
Weighted	1782	803	907	1534	178	92	1604
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Course/teaching related</i>							
Standard of work expected	73	72	77	75	68	54	76
Teaching styles/methods in lessons	52	52	54	54	46	38	54
Content of your course	65	63	69	68	49	49	67
The structure of your course	61	61	63	64	46	44	64
<i>Workload/responsibility related</i>							
Number of deadlines you have to meet	66	64	72	69	60	56	69
Amount of responsibility you have to take	69	67	73	71	61	60	71
Amount of work you would have to do	70	68	75	72	63	74	71

Note: some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups.

The type of qualification being studied by students showed little correlation against whether their expectations had been met or not. However, if the student had not been able to realise their first choice of school or qualification/subject they tended to give a more negative response to this question. In the case of not attending their first choice of school, the largest differences (over 20%) were found for the following measures (table 23, Appendix B):

- number of deadlines you would have to meet (those who were attending their first choice of school were at least 20% more likely to state that expectations had been met compared with those whose first choice of course had not been realised)
- amount of work you would have to do (those who were attending their first choice were at least 21% more likely to state that expectations had been met than those who were not).

- content of your course (those who were attending their first choice were at least 21% more likely to state that expectations had been met than those who were not).
- standard of work expected (those who were attending their first choice were at least 23% more likely to state that expectations had been met than those who were not).

This seems to suggest that, if students are known **not** to have gained access to their first choice school or subjects, they may need to have their expectations re-aligned before the start of Year 12.

Students with higher levels of motivation and satisfaction with their overall experience were significantly more likely to feel that their expectations had been met (see table 24, Appendix B). This can be explained, however, to some extent, by the fact that those with higher degrees of satisfaction and motivation were significantly more likely to be at the school of their choice and undertaking the subject/qualification of their choice (see the previous paragraphs). The data indicates that, in many cases, in developing their choice of progression, students who had the opportunity to do what they wanted to do had formulated expectations in this process and that these were indeed met.

In terms of the variables relating to the school itself, year group size and language medium showed no consistent correlation between expectations being met. The data do show, however, that on most aspects, students from schools where fewer than 10% of students were entitled to free school meals were significantly more likely to say that their expectations had been met than those in schools where a higher proportion of students were receiving free school meals.

Comparisons with ELWa Sixth Form Survey for Wales 2004

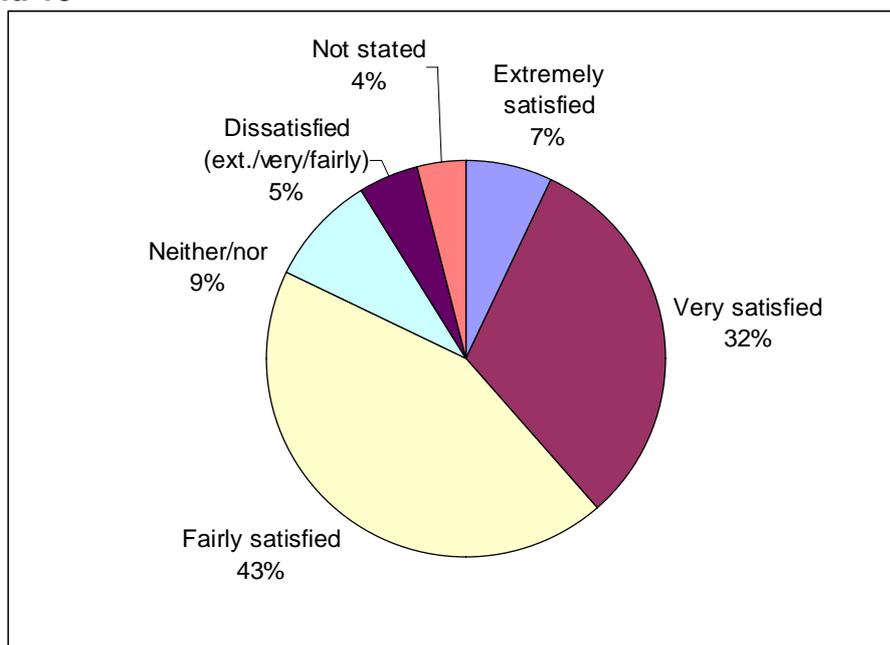
This question was asked in 2004 and 2008 and the data have been compared. Analysis shows mainly positive shifts over time: a significantly higher proportion of respondents in 2008 said that expectations had been met for the following - structure of your course (3% increase) and the amount of responsibility they would have to take (4 % increase). A negative shift was in evidence for just one measure, significantly fewer in 2008 said that expectations had been met for the amount of work they would have to do (4% decrease).

4.5.2 Overall satisfaction

All students were asked, taking into account all aspects of learning in Years 12 and 13, how satisfied they were with their overall learning experience. They were offered a seven point scale to respond. The findings are positive in that a vast majority of students (83%) were satisfied to some extent with their overall experience. It is important to bear in mind, however, that the proportion was balanced heavily

towards the 'fairly satisfied' response option as opposed to the 'extremely satisfied' side of the scale. Around one in twenty (7%) said that they were extremely satisfied and another third (32%) said that they were very satisfied. Just over two fifths said that they were fairly satisfied (44%). Much smaller percentages stated that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (9%) or that they were dissatisfied to some degree (5%).

Chart 4.10: Overall satisfaction with the learning experience: summary Year 12 and 13



Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13 Unweighted (1782) Weighted (1782)

Exploring sub groups within the data reveals that personal demographics did display some correlation with overall satisfaction, but a stronger association (and one which runs throughout this report) was found regarding whether the student was attending their first choice of school or subject/course:

- Gender and ethnicity showed no significant differences in students' responses to the question about overall satisfaction.
- Whilst there was no significant difference between year groups in terms of those who expressed some degree of satisfaction, significantly more students in Year 13 were extremely satisfied than those in Year 12 (11% compared with 5%).
- Significantly fewer students with learning disabilities expressed some level of satisfaction (75%) than students without learning disabilities (86%).
- Satisfaction with initial thoughts about school and course are important drivers (table 25, Appendix B):

- Eighty-eight percent of students who were attending their first choice school reported some degree of satisfaction compared with 74% who were not and 65% who had no choice.
- Eighty-eight percent of students who were attending their first choice subjects/course reported some degree of satisfaction compared with 71% who were not.

Table 4.17: Overall satisfaction with the learning experience by year and learning disability

	Total	Year		Learning disability	
		Year 12	Year 13	Yes	No
Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13					
Unweighted	1782	1033	700	82	1629
Weighted	1782	1024	703	92	1604
	%	%	%	%	%
Extremely satisfied	7	5	11	7	7
Very satisfied	32	32	34	21	33
Fairly satisfied	44	47	43	47	46
Neither/nor	9	10	8	15	9
Dissatisfied (ext/very/fairly)	5	5	4	10	5
Not stated	4	2	*	0	1
<i>% all satisfied</i>	<i>83</i>	<i>84</i>	<i>88</i>	<i>75</i>	<i>86</i>

Note: some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups. In the table * denotes less than 0.5% but higher than zero.

As one might expect, there was a direct relationship between the following (table 26, Appendix B):

- Levels of motivation and overall satisfaction:
 - Almost all of those who were very motivated were satisfied to some extent with their overall learning experience (97%).
 - A much lower proportion of students who were not at all motivated noted any level of satisfaction (24%) with their overall learning experience.
- Satisfaction with teaching quality and overall satisfaction:

- Almost all of those who were ‘extremely satisfied’ with the teaching quality were satisfied to some extent overall (98%).
- Just a fifth of students who were dissatisfied to some extent with teaching quality were satisfied to some extent with their experience overall (19%).
- Thoughts about leaving the course and overall satisfaction:
 - Ninety-three percent of students who had never contemplated leaving were satisfied to some extent with experiences of the course overall compared with 72% of those who had thought of leaving

This appears to indicate that whilst many factors may play a part in terms of driving thoughts about leaving, satisfaction with the experience is key.

In terms of variables relating to the school demographics, the results showed that:

- Welsh medium schools achieved higher ratings than English medium schools (88% of students rated some degree of satisfaction compared with 82%).
- Students in schools where less than 10% of pupils were entitled to free school meals were significantly more likely to state some degree of satisfaction than those in schools with a higher dominance of free school meals (87% compared with 80%).

Table 4.18: Overall satisfaction with the learning experience by language medium and % entitlement to free school meals

	Total	Language medium		% entitlement to free school meals		
		Welsh	English	More than 15%	10-15%	Less than 10%
Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13						
Unweighted	1782	367	1415	660	410	712
Weighted	1782	342	1440	729	325	729
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Extremely satisfied	7	9	7	8	5	7
Very satisfied	32	34	31	31	26	35
Fairly satisfied	44	45	44	41	52	44
Neither/nor	9	4	10	11	10	6

Dissatisfied (ext./very/fairly)	5	2	5	5	5	4
Not stated	4	6	3	4	3	3
<i>% all satisfied</i>	83	89	82	80	82	87

Comparisons with ELWa Sixth Form Survey for Wales 2004

Satisfaction levels were broadly the same compared to 2004. Whilst there was a significant decrease in those who are extremely satisfied (-2%) this was compensated by an increase in those fairly satisfied (+5%) and no movement in the proportion of those who were dissatisfied.

4.5.3 Summary

A list of measures were drawn up relating to what expectations students might have had before the course and the survey asked if expectations had been met:

- **Course/teaching related:** standard of work expected, teaching styles/methods in lessons, content of your course and the structure of your course; and
- **Workload/responsibility related:** number of deadlines you have to meet, amount of responsibility you have to take and amount of work you would have to do.

The majority of students in the survey had expectations relating to these aspects of their course and, in general, the majority of students said that their expectations had been met.

Findings were most positive for 'the standard of work expected' and also 'the amount of work you would have to do'. The proportion of students with no expectations at all for these measures was lower (9% in both cases) in comparison with other measures and the proportion of those whose expectations had been met was highest (73% and 70% respectively).

A pattern emerges in the data whereby, for some measures, the following groups were significantly more likely to say expectations had been met:

- females compared with males
- white students compared with ethnic minority groups
- students without learning disabilities compared to those with

Those who had secured their first choice of school and course were significantly more likely to have had expectations prior to the course that had been met when

compared with those who had not secured their first choice of school or course, or indeed those who had not considered any other options. This may support the case that through conscious deliberation of options and opportunities an awareness of understanding of the course is gained.

Students with higher levels of motivation, and satisfaction with their experience overall were also significantly more likely to have felt that their expectations had been met.

In terms of overall satisfaction with their learning experience, 7% said that they were extremely satisfied and another third (32%) said that they were very satisfied. Almost half said that they were fairly satisfied (44%). This means that a vast majority of students (83%) were satisfied to some extent with their overall experience. Much smaller percentages stated that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (9%) or that they were dissatisfied to some degree (5%). The following groups were significantly more likely to be satisfied with their overall learning experience:

- Students in Year 13 were significantly more likely to be extremely satisfied with their learning experience than those in Year 12 (11% compared with 5%).
- Students without learning difficulties were more likely to be satisfied overall than those with them (86% compared with 75%).
- Those who were attending their first choice of school reported some degree of satisfaction compared with those who were not and those who had no choice of school (88%, 74% and 65% respectively)
- Those who were attending their first choice of subject/qualification reported some degree of satisfaction compared with those who were not (88% versus 71%).
- Once again there was a relationship between levels of motivation, ratings of teaching quality and likelihood to have considered leaving.

In terms of school demographics the results show that:

- Welsh medium schools achieved higher ratings than English medium schools (88% of students rated some degree of satisfaction compared with 82%).
- Students in schools where less than 10% of pupils were entitled to free school meals were significantly more likely to state some degree of satisfaction than those in schools with a higher dominance of free school meals (87% compared with 80%).

5. Conclusions

Participation and achievement in learning have been universally recognised as being fundamental to a nation's economic competitiveness and social cohesion. During the inception phase of the DCELLS 2007-2010 Customer Research Programme, there was widespread acknowledgement among those consulted that the findings of learner satisfaction studies have an important role to play in measuring and improving quality in and on-going engagement with providers.

Satisfaction and motivation

A key finding from the survey was that a substantial majority of respondents (84% of Year 10 and 11 and 83% of Year 12 and 13) expressed some degree of satisfaction with their learning experience. Similar levels of satisfaction are reported for teaching overall for both year 2004 and 2008 for Year 12 and 13. A high degree of satisfaction with the quality of teaching and the overall learning experience since 2004 has been sustained and this is encouraging, in that it points to a firm foundation on which to build a continuing attachment to learning and skill acquisition.

As far as levels of motivation were concerned, the proportion of students in Year 10 and 11 stating that they were motivated was slightly higher than that of their Year 12 and 13 counterparts. While the levels for both cohorts were relatively high (73% and 68% respectively), two factors raised cause for concern. Firstly, it may have been expected that most of those who had carried on into Year 12 and 13 had done so because they were anticipating gaining qualifications which would be essential for their future career or learning plans. However, just under three in ten of this group expressed a lack of motivation, and levels of motivation were below those of Year 10 and 11 students. This suggests that, for a minority, the experience of post Year 11 learning was not sustaining or stimulating their interest to the expected degree.

Secondly, there had a been a small but significant percentage point reduction in the proportion saying that they were fairly or very motivated in comparison to the 2004 survey findings. In the light of the policy drive to increase post-16 staying on rates, with initiatives such as the introduction of the Education Maintenance Allowance, there does not seem to have been a commensurate increase in commitment to learning – certainly as indicated by the responses of a significant minority of the cohort.

This may also indicate that a) some of those staying on post-16 had done so without any clearly thought out, positive reasons for doing so; and/or b) their experience did not match up to their expectations and aspirations. In both cases, the need for informed, accurate and realistic information, advice and guidance is essential in order to prevent the consequences of misguided decisions.

A crucial aspect in meeting expectations is likely to be the level of support offered to students who may initially struggle to come to terms with a new set of demands, both academically, and in the way in which they are required to adapt their style of learning. Ensuring that schools are aware that those who have not been able to access their first choice of course and/or school may require additional support to help manage their studies could also be a priority in this respect. Learning Coaches could play a pivotal role in addressing this need.

Choice of subjects (Year 10 and 11 only)

Enjoyment of the subjects studied was the predominant reason for Year 10 and 11 students choosing their particular subject and course. There was also a positive relationship between undertaking a course they enjoyed and overall satisfaction with their learning experience. This apparent interest in the subject may be regarded as reflecting a positive attitude to learning, which can be the foundation of continuing engagement in learning and qualification attainment. This finding was also supported by the fact that 'quality of learning' was the single most mentioned aspect students liked about school, especially by males (for females 'friendships' was cited most frequently).

The importance of instrumental/career related reasons was also evident. Again, the validity of the advice and guidance given, in ensuring that the student had made an informed choice, is of paramount importance.

The fact that just over one in ten males (11%) had opted for "the easiest subjects" suggests that more may need to be done to make them aware of the possible damaging implications for their future careers by choosing on this basis.

Influences on decision-making

The findings have great relevance for the parental engagement agenda, in highlighting the key role which parents have in providing advice to their children about the choices available to them. Clearly, the better informed parents are about the options available and about the implications of particular choices, the more likely it is that students will make appropriate choices. This is especially important, given the process of embedding the 14-19 Learning Pathways. The *Learning options for 14-19 year olds in Wales* report found that a third of young people and parents in the sample "knew little about the qualifications on offer". Therefore, ensuring that parents are able and willing to access information on options which are provided by schools should remain a key policy aim.

Females were more likely than males (certainly in Year 10 and 11) to state that they had received (and taken notice of) advice from parents and teachers. They were also more likely to have chosen their subjects/qualifications on the basis of needing them for their preferred Year 12 school or college course. This may indicate that providers of advice and guidance (especially Careers Wales) may need to place

greater emphasis on targeting young males, to ensure, as far as possible, that they are aware of the options available to them, and the consequences of their chosen route. Males' greater propensity to choose the easiest subjects (as noted above) should also be borne in mind here.

Careers advice and guidance

The findings provide strong evidence to highlight the ongoing need for informed and impartial advice and guidance for young people when they are reaching decisions about whether to remain in education beyond the age of sixteen, and, crucially, choosing their course options.

One third of Year 12 and 13 students said they had seriously thought about leaving school since they started Year 12 (32%). At this crucial stage in their transition from youth to adulthood, this raises questions about how well-informed and appropriate their choices of post Year 11 options were. For many young people, this 'false start' can have debilitating consequences for their future careers and, in some cases, for their self-confidence and self-esteem. Negative learning experiences can adversely affect their receptiveness to learning – and a continuing attachment to learning, or lifelong learning, is widely recognised as becoming a necessity in a rapidly evolving labour market.

The findings suggest that a minority of students were not well prepared for post Year 11 education. They had experienced difficulty with the style of learning and a high proportion were contemplating leaving education – some were finding it too hard, while others appeared to have found that their experience did not match their expectations.

Meeting student demand for Year 12 and 13

The link between accessing the school and subjects of first choice was clearly established. In general, students who were more motivated, more satisfied and less likely to have considered leaving school or to have had problems were more likely to be studying at their first choice school. Those that did not actively consider other options or had not accessed their first choice were significantly less satisfied and motivated.

Six per cent of Year 12 and 13 students were not attending their first choice of school and 16% were studying subjects which, again, had not been their first choice. This indicates that a substantial minority of students may be more susceptible to diminishing motivation. It is important for sustaining higher levels of participation in post-16 education and qualification attainment that such students are encouraged and supported throughout these years, to avoid drop-out and to assist individuals in fulfilling their potential. The Welsh Assembly Government could consider how additional support through channels such as Learning Coaches could help to

overcome some of the difficulties faced by those who are unable to study at their first choice school or course.

While some respondents were not studying at the school, or in the subject of their first choice, as a result of advice from teachers or careers advisers (and this may be regarded as being a positive thing for the student), others were doing so because of a lack of provision. Clearly, resource constraints dictate that not all students' aspirations can be met. Nonetheless, where it is considered that the student's first choice of subject is reasonable, in terms of their abilities and aspirations, efforts should be made to accommodate those requests. The findings pointed to meeting students' demands for courses being an important factor in motivating and engaging students in their studies.

The majority of students indicated that their expectations had been met, particularly in relation to 'the standard of work expected' and 'the amount of work you would have to do'. However, only slightly over half of the respondents stated that 'teaching styles and methods used in lessons' had met their expectations. This highlights the differences which are encountered for those staying in post-16 education, and the effects on many students should not be underestimated. It is evident that there is an onus, particularly on teachers and careers advisers, to provide students with realistic ideas of how they will be expected to study in Years 12 and 13.

Policy implications

Given that almost three in ten students in Years 12/13 were not very or not at all motivated, greater resources should be directed at ensuring that those choosing to stay on in education beyond the age of 16 are fully aware of a) the different demands which will be made on them, academically; b) the content of the courses undertaken; and c) the opportunities and routes which are available and are most appropriate to them.

Levels of motivation and satisfaction were clearly related to whether the student was studying their first choice of subjects, as was the likelihood of experiencing problems during their current school year. In the light of the evidence of these relationships, particular attention should be given to students who are not able to access their first choice of subject/course.

The findings point to a need for targeted support, in both the decision-making process and once they have embarked on their chosen course, for groups of students whose schools were less likely to provide their first choice subjects and qualifications.

Engaging parents at an early stage in their children's education is vital to ensure that, as far as possible a) they are knowledgeable about the course options available to students, and b) in their role as providers of advice and guidance,

they can offer informed assessments of the appropriateness of those options for their children's future careers.

The role of Careers Wales and of teachers offering advice on choice of course and careers is crucial if the effects on students' career trajectories and self-confidence caused by inappropriate or ill-informed decisions are to be alleviated. Emphasis should be placed on creating awareness, among students and their parents of their expertise, credibility and impartiality. This should be initiated well before crucial decisions in the 14-19 phase are required to be taken.

Appendix A: TECHNICAL APPENDIX

A1 Sampling

A sample (rather than a census) of schools was invited to take part in the survey and the sample was selected in order to meet a number of analysis and practical criteria, namely:

- Region: 4 regions defined by LEA
 - North Wales, South West/Mid Wales, South Wales, South East Wales
- Welsh medium versus English medium schools
- % of free school meals
- Rurality indicator (urban versus rural)
- Size of school (number of pupils)
- The time available for recruitment and data collection

The table below summarises the universe for the study that was agreed with DCELLS. Independent schools were excluded from the survey because they are not funded or influenced by DCELLS. Further, there was no intention of including sufficient numbers to allow a comparison between the experiences of students in independent schools versus those in mainstream schools. In addition, there were doubts about what the independent schools themselves would gain from participating in the study.

Year group	Main stream schools	Special schools	Pupil referral units (PRUs)	Independent schools
Year 10	✓	✓	✓	✗
Year 11	✓	✓	✓	✗
Year 12	✓	✓	✗	✗
Year 13	✓	✓	✗	✗

Note: Year 14/age 18 students were not included in the universe. Whilst some PRUs had students aged 16+, the numbers per PRU were too small to be viable for sampling.

The universe was split into Year 10 and 11 schools and Year 12 and 13 schools (because not all secondary/special schools have a sixth form). Each sample was then stratified by:

- region
- school type

- language (i.e. Welsh medium schools versus English medium schools)
- free school meals
- rurality indicator

Thereafter two samples were drawn with probability proportional to size (number of pupils in year groups). To determine the number of schools to be invited to participate and, following from this, the number of students involved in the survey, we made a number of assumptions:

- that 60% of schools invited to take part in the research would agree to participate in the time available for recruitment (and return questionnaires to GfK NOP within the time period allowed for processing returns)
- that we would achieve a minimum 50% response rate from students per participating school during the data collection window
- that we would aim for a minimum 1400 returned questionnaires for Years 10/11 and 1500 for Years 12/13

On this basis, we sampled 40 schools for the Year 10 and 11 survey and the same for the Year 12 and 13 survey. The sample for special schools and PRUs was drawn separately (on the same basis as above) to ensure that we had at least 2 in each sample, where relevant.

Each recruited school was to be asked to administer the questionnaire to two tutor groups in each of the applicable year groups (i.e. two tutor groups in Years 10 and two in Year 11 or two tutor groups in Year 12 and two in Year 13). We assumed that a tutor group would consist of 30 students on average.

A2 Questionnaire development

The survey was undertaken using a paper self completion method, with one questionnaire designed for Years 10/11 and one designed for Years 12/13. The questionnaires were printed in such a way that the questionnaires could be completed in either English or Welsh and this approach mirrored that used in 2004.

The Year 12 and 13 questionnaire was broadly based on that used in 2004 to allow comparability of results. Notably, more demographic questions were included than in the 2004 survey, namely questions referring to ethnic group, support for learning difficulties and disability status.

There was also the Learning Pathways agenda to take into consideration, particularly in relation to whether collaborative approaches across schools/sites were taking place and the impact of this on levels of satisfaction and motivation. A question pertaining to this issue was included in both Year 10 and 11 and Year 12 and 13 questionnaires.

The questionnaire for Year 10 and 11 students contained some key measures that mapped to the Year 12 and 13 questionnaire, such as overall satisfaction with the

quality of teaching and overall satisfaction with the learning experience. However, the issues facing Years 10/11 are different in nature to those facing sixth form students who are at a second stage of 'choice' in their school education, and a battery of questions that mirrored those used by Estyn were included for this year group as well as a question about their learning/work aspirations at the end of Year 11.

Both questionnaires were designed and refined in consultation with DCELLS and were piloted in two schools.

Piloting the questionnaires

Two mainstream schools (i.e. not special schools or PRUs) were recruited for the pilot exercise: one teaching in English and the other in Welsh, and we will surveyed two tutor groups per school. The schools were recruited by telephone (using a specialist schools recruiter – see section A4) and, once recruited, were emailed a letter from DCELLS explaining the purpose of the pilot exercise and confirming details of their agreement to cooperate (date, number of questionnaires required, etc).

In the English medium school, Years 10 and 12 were surveyed, whilst in the Welsh medium school Years 11 and 13 were covered. In this way we obtained feedback from all four target years and both the English and Welsh language versions of the two questionnaires.

Written guidance was provided for the teachers in each school on how to handle the administration in terms of giving the survey background, requests for clarification, help and so on.

The survey method for the pilot closely matched that for the main survey in that students completed the questionnaires on their own as far as possible and sealed their response within an envelope before handing it back to their teacher, who was responsible for collecting all the envelopes and returning them to GfK NOP for processing.

As an incentive to participation, schools were offered a charted summary of the results for their school after data processing. GfK NOP also paid each pilot school £100 for their school fund as a thank you for the time they spent administering the pilot and providing feedback about the following issues:

- Introducing/explaining the survey to students
- Any questions raised by students about the survey
- Levels of overt refusals
- Any problems encountered by students when completing the questionnaire, e.g. understanding questions, actually filling in the form, asking for clarification, etc

- Any problems associated with the administration of the survey/returning the questionnaires
- Any other suggestions for improving the data collection process

The survey forms themselves were indicators of the extent to which students were able to answer questions, i.e. if there were problems the students wrote comments/corrections on the survey forms and these were taken into account before finalising the questionnaires for the main stage.

After considering the pilot feedback, GfK NOP provided DCELLS with a summary of recommendations for questionnaire changes; these were generally minor changes relating to subject categories, improving the clarity of instructions and improving the format or 'look' of some pages of the self completion document. Once these changes were approved, the questionnaires were amended and printed up for the main stage.

Copies of the final versions of the Year 10 and 11 and Year 12 and 13 questionnaires may be downloaded from the DCELLS website pages.

A3 Easy Read Questionnaires

It was agreed that the survey would be made available to students in an easy read format; this involved a process of simplifying the questionnaire wording and scales. It was agreed that just the Year 10 and 11 questionnaire would be adapted in this way as it was deemed that the questions contained in the Year 12 and 13 questionnaire were too complex for less able students in that age group (i.e. students in Years 12/13 who required an easy read questionnaire had an adapted version of the Year 10 and 11 survey).

The simplification exercise was undertaken by a partner consultancy, Adept based in Bedfordshire. Adept also piloted the questionnaires with their age-matched user groups and advised on any changes before we proceeded to main stage data collection. In this way, we avoided the need for a separate in-school piloting exercise for the easy read format questionnaire, which saved time in a tight timetable.

In terms of determining which students received an easy read version of the questionnaire, this decision rested with the school – they requested a number of easy read questionnaires per year group and administered them at the same time and in the same way as the standard questionnaires. Additional notes were provided to teachers to answer queries that may arise from the administration of the simplified versions of the surveys.

Copies of the final versions of the easy read questionnaires may be downloaded at from the DCELLS website pages.

A4 Recruitment and Data collection

All sampled schools were sent a letter from DCELLS addressed to the head teacher and explaining the purpose of the survey and a broad outline of the task (see section A7). This letter contained a direct phone number for the DCELLS project manager, plus a fax back response form asking for the name of the teacher with whom we should liaise at the school.

Once the letters had been mailed to schools, the services of a specialist schools recruiter were commissioned to follow up the letter with a phone call to encourage participation. Of the 40 schools sampled for each survey, 20 were recruited to the Year 10 and 11 survey and 22 for the Year 12 and 13 survey. There was an overlap between the samples for two surveys of 8 schools.

On contact with the school, the recruiter explained the survey task and ascertained the numbers of students to be involved in the survey, as well as the numbers who would need easy read versions of the questionnaire(s). This information was recorded and a date agreed when the questionnaire would be administered. Survey materials (questionnaires, envelopes, instructions, and reply paid return packaging) were couriered to each school in time for the agreed date for data collection. The notes for teachers were as follows:

1. Questionnaires need to be administered to learners in a suitable classroom session between 5th and the 19th March. The questionnaires should be completed in the classroom session and handed back to the teacher at the end of the session. Questionnaires should not be taken out of the classroom for learners to complete in their own time.
2. Please note: year groups 10/11 have a different questionnaire from year groups 12/13. Please make sure you have the correct version of the questionnaire for each year group.
3. The survey should take no more than **20 minutes** for students to complete. However, students may be allowed more time to complete the questionnaire if the classroom session allows for this.
4. The questionnaire is provided in both English and Welsh. Students may complete the questionnaire in either language.
5. Before administering the survey with the tutor group please read out the information for students given in the next section of this briefing paper.
6. Please give each student a questionnaire and an envelope (these are provided in your pack). As well as the standard questionnaire there is also an easy read version of the questionnaire (if your school has requested this) which contains simplified text and pictures to make the survey accessible to students with a wide range of learning support needs. Please give these to learners in the tutor group who you feel require this version of the

questionnaire. Please explain to learners using these questionnaires that the pictures are included to support the question and answer options.

7. Once they have completed the survey, students should seal their completed questionnaire in the envelope provided before handing it back.
8. Students should try to answer all of the questions in the survey unless the instructions tell them to miss out a question. However, if they cannot answer a question then they can miss it out and move to the next one.
9. If a student asks for help, you may assist by reading out questions, but please don't simplify or interpret survey questions. Instead, please ask students to interpret the question in their own way. If they do not feel that they can answer a question, they should move to the next question.
10. If the student asks for help with a factual question, to which you know the answer, then in this circumstance only it is acceptable to offer help. Factual questions are:

Before giving out questionnaires to students, please read out the following information about the survey.

'This survey is to find out about your choices and experiences in relation to learning and your satisfaction with learning. The research project has been commissioned by the Welsh Assembly, and around 40 schools across Wales will take part.

The questionnaire is provided in both English and Welsh and may be completed in either language. The English version starts on the front page of the questionnaire and the Welsh version starts on the back page of the questionnaire. The questionnaire should take no longer than 20 minutes to complete. Please complete it in black or blue ink. When you have filled out the questionnaire, please seal it in the envelope provided and return it to me.*

The questionnaires will be returned to an independent research agency for processing. All your answers are completely confidential - you will not be identified in the results and the school will not know how you have responded individually.'

Reassurances (only read out as required)

- *The survey is voluntary*
- *No students that take part in the research will be identified and all the information given will be completely confidential*
- *The survey is being run by an independent research company called GfK NOP. GfK NOP abides by the Market Research Society code of conduct.*

[* please be aware that there are two separate versions of the easy read questionnaire, one in Welsh and one in English. So this statement does not apply to those filling in this version of the questionnaire.]

After being collected from students, completed questionnaires were returned directly to GfK NOP for scanning and data processing in reply paid packaging.

A5 Response

Response to the survey was encouraged by the development of a relationship between the schools recruiter and the nominated contact at the school. This person was contacted by telephone to remind them about the cut off date for the receipt of questionnaires.

The following table summarises the returns by year group.

School ID	Year 10 and 11			Year 12 and 13		
	No. of pupils expected to complete*	No. of questionnaires returned	% response	No. of pupils expected to complete*	No. of questionnaires returned	% response
1	150	149	99%	-	-	-
2	120	85	71%	-	-	-
3	135	116	86%	-	-	-
4	147	54	37%	-	-	-
5	24	3	13%	-	-	-
6	168	122	73%	-	-	-
7	180	186	103%	-	-	-
8	150	115	77%	-	-	-
9	150	91	61%	135	63	47%
10	-	-	-	125	83	66%
11	-	-	-	150	79	53%
12	-	-	-	150	117	78%
13	160	125	78%	70	54	77%
14	-	-	-	120	89	74%
15	-	-	-	160	76	48%
16	-	-	-	160	69	43%
18	7	8	114%	-	-	-
19	50	5	10%	-	-	-
20	159	116	73%	-	-	-
21	171	114	67%	-	-	-
22	-	-	-	200	97	49%
23	-	-	-	54	28	52%
24	-	-	-	152	48	32%
25	-	-	-	158	142	90%
26	-	-	-	149	75	50%
27	150	117	78%	140	54	39%
28	195	160	82%	123	84	68%
29	200	175	88%	168	125	74%

30	191	124	65%	175	52	30%
31	165	117	71%	188	102	54%
32	134	120	90%	150	146	97%
33	-	-	-	160	87	54%
34	-	-	-	100	64	64%
35	-	-	-	106	48	45%

* actual number of questionnaires sent was +10% of number of pupils expected to complete

A6 Weighting and analysis

The questionnaires were scanned to capture students' responses and the data were analysed in two groups – Years 10/11 and Years 12/13.

It should be noted that despite over 250 easy read questionnaires being issued to schools, just 11 were returned for Year 10 and 11 students and 7 for Year 12 and 13 students. Whilst we always expected too few easy read questionnaires to allow separate analysis of the results, this was a very much lower response than we anticipated. The numbers were so low that the inclusion of the easy read data would have had no measurable impact on the overall results. Given that the data merge exercise would have been reasonably complex and time consuming, it was decided that these data would be excluded from the analysis.

The profiles of respondents in Years 10/11 and Years 12/13 were compared to the corresponding universe of students to see where differences occurred and how this impacted key questions in the data.

Having assessed the differences, the Year 10 and 11 data were weighted to match the universe profile as far as possible by applying corrective weights for: gender, school year size and rurality within region. The Year 12 and 13 data had corrective weights applied for: type of school (Welsh/English medium), school year size and rurality within region.

As the 2004 survey was a scoping study, rather than a formally sampled exercise, that escalated into a much larger survey than anticipated, no corrective weights were applied to the student data in 2004. Therefore, in order to make direct comparisons between the two surveys, weighting was carried out on the 2004 data so that it matched the profile of universe of students in Years 10/11 and Years 12/13 as per 2008 figures.

A7 Advance letter sent to all schools sampled

A copy of the letter sent to schools inviting them to take part in the survey is shown overleaf

Dear Sir/Madam

LEARNER VOICE SURVEY 2008

The Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS) has commissioned research to understand the learning experiences of students in years 10, 11, 12 and 13 in schools in Wales. Your school has been sampled to take part in this research study.

This research is being conducted for DCELLS by GfK NOP, an independent research company, and the survey will take place before the Easter holiday. It is envisaged that around 3,000 learners from approximately 40 schools in Wales will take part. The questionnaires should take no more than 15-20 minutes to complete, and students will have the choice of completing the survey in English or Welsh.

When the findings have been analysed you will be presented with a graphical overview of the results for the students who take part in your school. If there is sufficiently high response from your school, your results will be presented against the average for Wales as a whole. Reports will be available in autumn 2008.

In the next week or so a recruiter from GfK NOP will be calling your school to check your availability to participate and to explain the research in more detail. You can assist this process by completing the form enclosed with this letter and faxing it back to GfK NOP on the number provided. An overview of the research task and further information about the survey is presented overleaf.

The Learner Voice survey is an important part of the Department's commitment to listening to the views of learners. I do hope that your school is able to participate in this key piece of research. If you have any queries about this research please do not hesitate to contact me, Joanne Starkey, Senior Research Analyst on 01443 663738 (Joanne.Starkey@Wales.GSI.Gov.UK).

J. Starkey

Joanne Starkey

Senior Research Analyst, DCELLS

SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH TASK

1. Each school will be asked to administer paper, self completion questionnaires to four mixed ability tutor groups: two from year 10 and two from year 11 **OR** two from year 12 and two from year 13. The year groups will be agreed when the research team initially makes contact with your school.
2. Students with learning difficulties will have the option to complete an easy read version of the survey. Your school will be asked how many students you anticipate will require the questionnaire in this format at the recruitment stage.
3. Questionnaires will be couriered directly to your school. The survey should be administered to the tutor group in a suitable classroom session between 5th and 19th March 2008.
4. Students will be asked to seal their completed questionnaire in an envelope and to hand this back to their teacher. All questionnaires should be returned directly to GfK NOP in the postage paid packaging supplied by 20th March.
5. Teachers administering the survey will be supplied with instructions for doing so and guidance on how to deal with potential questions from students.
6. GfK NOP Ltd is an independent research company and abides by the Market Research Society Code of Conduct.
7. Questions about the survey should be directed to Joanne Starkey, Senior Research Analyst at DCELLS (01443 663738; Joanne.Starkey@Wales.GSI.Gov.UK) or Samantha Spencer, Research Manager GfK NOP Social Research (0207 890 9054; samantha.spencer@gfk.com)

Data protection and teacher/student privacy

For years 10 and 11, initial consent for student participation will be given by the school, acting in loco parentis. Students themselves have the right to refuse to participate.

Students will **not** be asked personal details such as their name, date of birth or address and their responses will not be linked to their name in any way by the school. Students will be asked questions about their gender, year group, disability status and ethnic group. Schools will not receive a summary of their results if there

is a chance of student identification (e.g. if there is a small year group consisting of 10 or fewer students).

GfK NOP will process all data. DCELLS will not know which schools or students have taken part in the survey.

What will happen to the data?

The data will be reported in two main ways:

- a full report written by GfK NOP and partners; this will be available in Winter 2008.
- as long as a minimum number of questionnaires are returned, all schools that participate will receive a charted summary of the results for their school by years 10/11 or years 12/13. Where response is sufficiently high to make robust comparisons, the school's data will be presented alongside the results for all Year 10 and 11 and Year 12 and 13 students in Wales.

Appendix B: Data tables

Table 1: Why chose subjects and qualifications by qualification studied

		Qualification						
Base: All respondents Year 10 and 11	Total	GCSE	Key skills	NVQ	Basic skills	Vocational	Welsh Bacc	Other
Unweighted	2094	2037	250	118	100	152	114	57
Weighted	2094	2041	281	110	103	141	89	52
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
I enjoy these subjects	85	86	90	80	85	85	90	69
I need them for the job I want to do	43	43	55	64	54	63	55	56
Parents' advice	33	34	39	34	41	36	48	40
Teachers' advice / advice of other member of school staff	23	23	32	19	46	32	36	51
I need these subjects so that I can go into Year 12 or college	21	21	25	22	32	35	19	34
Had taster sessions in Year 9	12	13	14	9	12	13	16	8
Friends were studying same subjects	8	8	11	11	18	18	17	12
They were the easiest subjects for me	8	8	14	19	20	13	14	9
Careers Wales Advisor	8	8	8	14	23	15	13	14
Other advisor outside school	3	3	6	7	9	7	6	5
Not stated	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	1

Note: all reasons mentioned by more than 2% are shown in table. Some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups.

Table 2: Why chose subjects and qualifications by level of motivation and overall satisfaction with teaching

	Total	Level of motivation				Overall satisfaction with teaching				
		Very	Fairly	Not very	Not at all	Extremely satisfied	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither/nor	All dissatisfied
Base: All respondents Year 10 and 11										
Unweighted	2094	257	1259	387	50	117	710	798	236	118
Weighted	2094	247	1287	375	45	119	738	785	235	110
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
I enjoy these subjects	85	92	88	81	75	94	93	85	77	67
I need them for the job I want to do	43	55	42	42	30	47	42	44	48	32
Parents' advice	33	41	32	37	26	39	34	33	34	32
Teachers' advice / advice of other member of school staff	23	30	22	22	11	33	26	22	15	14
I need these subjects so that I can go into Year 12 or college	21	27	20	24	8	19	22	23	18	17
Had taster sessions in Year 9	12	15	13	11	6	11	14	13	6	10
Friends were studying same subjects	8	6	8	11	6	5	10	8	10	5
They were the easiest subjects for me	8	9	7	11	15	8	7	8	11	15
Careers Wales Advisor	8	7	8	7	8	11	10	7	7	2
Other advisor outside school	3	3	2	3	1	5	2	2	3	2
Not stated	2	0	*	*	1	0	0	*	2	1

Note: all reasons mentioned by more than 2% are shown in table. Some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups. In the table * denotes less than 0.5% but higher than zero.

Table 3: Whether subjects and qualifications are first choice by level of motivation and overall satisfaction with teaching

	Total	Level of motivation				Overall satisfaction with teaching				
		Very	Fairly	Not very	Not at all	Extremely satisfied	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither/nor	All dissatisfied
Base: All respondents Year 10 and 11										
Unweighted	2094	257	1259	387	50	117	710	798	236	118
Weighted	2094	247	1287	375	45	119	738	785	235	110
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes, first choice	81	94	83	79	74	94	86	82	76	64
No, not first choice	12	5	12	16	16	6	10	14	15	24
Didn't have a choice	1	1	*	2	5	0	*	1	2	4
Didn't think about another option	4	*	5	2	5	0	4	2	6	8
Not stated	2	0	1	1	0	0	*	1	1	1

Note: some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups. In the table * denotes less than 0.5% but higher than zero.

Table 4: Level of motivation by qualification studied

	Total	Qualification						
		GCSE	Key skills qualification	NVQ	Basic skills qualification	Vocational qualification	Welsh Baccalaureate	Other
Base: All respondents Year 10 and 11								
Unweighted	2094	2037	250	118	100	152	114	57
Weighted	2094	2041	281	110	103	141	89	52
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very motivated	12	12	11	8	8	14	20	8
Fairly motivated	61	62	59	59	60	58	61	67
Not very motivated	18	18	20	21	18	16	21	10
Not at all motivated	2	2	2	2	*	2	1	2
Not sure	4	4	6	4	9	7	1	3
Not stated	3	2	1	5	4	3	4	1
Very / fairly	73	74	71	67	69	72	81	85
Not very / not at all	20	20	22	23	18	18	13	12

Note: some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups. In the table * denotes less than 0.5% but higher than zero.

Table 5: Level of motivation by whether subjects were first choice and overall satisfaction with learning experience

Base: All respondents Year 10 and 11	Total	First choice subjects			Overall satisfaction with experience				
		Yes	No	No choice	Extremely satisfied	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither/nor	All dissatisfied
Unweighted	2094	1715	271	70	156	837	742	183	93
Weighted	2094	1706	257	93	148	849	764	176	84
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very motivated	12	14	5	2	48	14	6	1	8
Fairly motivated	61	62	58	70	49	74	63	40	22
Not very motivated	18	17	24	19	1	10	25	37	39
Not at all motivated	2	2	3	5	0	*	2	8	14
Not sure	4	3	9	5	0	1	4	13	14
Not stated	3	2	2	0	2	1	1	1	3
Very/ fairly motivated	73	76	63	72	97	88	69	41	30
Not very/ at all motivated	20	19	26	23	1	10	27	45	54

Note: some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups. In the table * denotes less than 0.5% but higher than zero.

Table 6: Problems experienced by qualification studied

Base: All respondents Year 10 and 11		Qualification						
		GCSE	Key skills qualification	NVQ	Basic skills qualification	Vocational qualification	Welsh Baccalaureate	Other
Unweighted	2094	2037	250	118	100	152	114	57
Weighted	2094	2041	281	110	103	141	89	52
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Keeping up with the standard of work required	29	29	36	39	31	39	37	21
Problems of any kind with other members of staff	28	28	29	35	31	31	28	19
Problems of any kind with other students	27	27	37	33	41	51	31	36
Maintaining your personal motivation	22	23	22	17	14	26	26	22
Extra help you were promised not being provided	10	10	9	9	11	10	8	13
No problems / no / none	22	22	19	8	12	14	20	20
Not stated	10	9	7	10	13	6	11	8

Note: top five problems are shown in table. Some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups.

Table 7: Problems encountered by whether subjects/qualifications were first choice

Base: All respondents Year 10 and 11	Total	First choice subjects/qualifications		
		Yes	No	No Choice/Didn't
Unweighted	2094	1715	271	70
Weighted	2094	1706	257	93
	%	%	%	%
Keeping up with the standard of work required	29	26	37	51
Problems of any kind with other members of staff	28	27	37	29
Problems of any kind with other students	27	26	33	24
Maintaining your personal motivation	22	22	27	10
Extra help you were promised not being provided	10	9	15	10
No problems / no / none	22	24	14	12
Not stated	10	10	9	7

Note: top five problems are shown in table. Some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups.

Table 8: Problems experienced by level of motivation and overall satisfaction with learning experience

	Total	Level of motivation				Overall satisfaction with experience				
		Very	Fairly	Not very	Not at all	Extremely satisfied	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither/nor	All dissatisfied
Base: All respondents Year 10 and 11										
Unweighted	2094	257	1259	387	50	156	837	742	183	93
Weighted	2094	247	1287	375	45	148	849	764	176	84
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Keeping up with the standard of work required	29	14	27	39	53	17	24	33	38	41
Problems of any kind with other members of staff	28	14	26	43	42	16	20	33	45	58
Problems of any kind with other students	27	27	23	39	48	16	24	29	32	51
Maintaining your personal motivation	22	12	17	47	60	13	18	25	34	48
Extra help you were promised not being provided	10	7	9	12	19	8	6	12	12	20
No problems / no / none	22	33	25	9	11	36	29	17	9	6
Not stated	10	13	9	5	4	11	9	8	11	2

Note: top five problems are shown in table. Some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups.

Table 9: Future intentions by level of motivation and overall satisfaction with learning experience

	Total	Level of motivation				Overall satisfaction with experience				
		Very	Fairly	Not very	Not at all	Extremely satisfied	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither/nor	All dissatisfied
Base: All respondents Year 10 and 11										
Unweighted	2094	257	1259	387	50	156	837	742	183	93
Weighted	2094	247	1287	375	45	148	849	764	176	84
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
College/school sixth form	84	93	86	82	75	92	88	84	82	78
Job related training	15	7	16	17	24	13	11	18	23	19
Get a job (no training mentioned)	26	31	27	24	9	25	30	25	21	32
Unsure	15	9	16	18	18	10	14	19	18	10

Note: top three intentions shown in the table. Not stated and don't know not shown. Please note that some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups.

Table 10: Overall satisfaction with the learning experience by whether subjects/qualifications were first choice and qualification studied

		First choice subjects/ qualifications			Qualification						
		Total	Yes	No	Didn't have choice	GCSE	Key skills qualification	NVQ	Basic skills qualification	Vocational qualification	Welsh Baccalaureate
Base: All respondents Year 10 and 11											
Unweighted	2094	1715	271	70	2037	250	118	100	152	114	
Weighted	2094	1706	257	93	2041	281	110	103	141	89	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Extremely satisfied	8	9	4	1	8	6	9	6	11	9	
Very satisfied	41	44	26	32	41	43	36	53	40	46	
Fairly satisfied	35	34	42	38	36	40	31	27	33	35	
Neither/nor	8	7	16	16	8	7	6	7	6	3	
Dissatisfied (ext./very/fairly)	4	4	8	8	4	3	11	4	6	1	
Not stated	4	2	3	5	3	1	7	3	3	6	
<i>% all satisfied</i>	<i>84</i>	<i>87</i>	<i>73</i>	<i>71</i>	<i>85</i>	<i>89</i>	<i>76</i>	<i>86</i>	<i>85</i>	<i>90</i>	

Note: some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups.

Table 11: Overall satisfaction with the learning experience by level of motivation and overall satisfaction with teaching

	Total	Level of motivation				Overall satisfaction with teaching				
		Very	Fairly	Not very	Not at all	Extremely satisfied	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither/nor	All dissatisfied
Base: All respondents Year 10 and 11										
Unweighted	2094	257	1259	387	50	117	710	798	236	118
Weighted	2094	247	1287	375	45	119	738	785	235	110
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Extremely satisfied	8	29	7	1	0	50	12	1	1	1
Very satisfied	41	50	49	22	3	41	68	34	9	7
Fairly satisfied	35	17	36	49	29	8	17	57	43	19
Neither/nor	8	1	5	17	36	0	2	5	31	30
Dissatisfied (ext./very/fairly)	4	2	2	10	28	0	*	1	13	40
Not stated	4	1	1	2	4	1	2	2	4	4
<i>% all satisfied</i>	<i>84</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>92</i>	<i>71</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>97</i>	<i>92</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>27</i>

Note: some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups. In the table * denotes less than 0.5% but higher than zero.

Table 12: Reasons for attending Year 12 or Year 13 at school selected by level of motivation, overall satisfaction with teaching and thoughts about leaving

	Total	Level of motivation				Overall satisfaction with teaching					Thoughts about leaving	
		Very	Fairly	Not very	Not at all	Extremely satisfied	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither/nor	All dissatisfied	Yes	No
Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13												
Unweighted	1782	256	963	394	86	162	704	674	105	83	577	1000
Weighted	1782	271	934	398	82	158	705	666	110	79	564	1003
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
I was already attending this school	85	85	88	85	82	87	86	88	81	77	86	87
Friends were going there	52	44	55	54	57	43	52	54	59	58	53	51
Offered the course(s) and/or subject(s) I wanted	51	60	55	44	28	53	58	49	38	30	41	58
Convenient location/ nearest	51	46	54	53	56	41	53	54	56	51	47	54
Best reputation	16	27	18	10	5	33	20	12	5	5	11	19
Offered teaching in Welsh language	7	8	9	3	3	7	10	5	1	3	4	9
Recommended by careers advisor	6	7	7	6	1	4	8	6	4	-	7	5
Not stated	2	-	*	*	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	*

Note: all reasons mentioned by more than 2% are shown in table. Don't know not shown. Some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups. In the table * denotes less than 0.5% but higher than zero.

Table 13: Whether school is first choice by level of motivation, overall satisfaction with teaching and thoughts about leaving

	Total	Level of motivation				Overall satisfaction with teaching					Thoughts about leaving		
		Very	Fairly	Not very	Not at all	Extremely satisfied	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither/nor	All dissatisfied	Yes	No	Don't know
Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13													
Unweighted	1782	256	963	394	86	162	704	674	105	83	577		1
Weighted	1782	271	934	398	82	158	705	666	110	79	564	1003	1
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	69	74	78	60	39	81	78	68	37	47	60	76	7
No, not first choice	6	6	3	10	18	6	3	7	16	12	11	4	
Didn't have a choice	4	2	2	5	16	3	2	4	8	13	5	3	
Didn't actively consider another option	18	16	16	25	23	8	15	21	35	28	22	16	2
Not stated	3	2	1	*	4	3	1	1	2	-	2	1	

Note: some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups. In the table * denotes less than 0.5% but higher than zero.

Table 14: Whether subjects and qualifications are first choice by level of motivation, overall satisfaction with teaching and thoughts about leaving

	Total	Level of motivation				Overall satisfaction with teaching					Thoughts about leaving		
		Very	Fairly	Not very	Not at all	Extremely satisfied	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither/nor	All dissatisfied	Yes	No	Don't know
Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13													
Unweighted	1782	256	963	394	86	162	704	674	105	83	577	1000	164
Weighted	1782	271	934	398	82	158	705	666	110	79	564	1003	165
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes, first choice	78	86	82	72	60	88	86	76	61	56	70	85	7
No, not first choice	16	11	14	20	36	9	12	19	29	33	23	12	1
Didn't have a choice	1	1	1	1	-	1	*	1	-	4	1	*	
Didn't think about another option	3	2	2	6	2	2	4	8	5	7	1	4	
Not stated	3	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	

Note: some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups. In the table * denotes less than 0.5% but higher than zero.

Table 15: Level of motivation by whether school and subjects/qualifications were first choice

	Total	First choice school				First choice Subjects/qualifications		
		Yes	No	No Choice	Didn't consider	Yes	No	No Choice/Didn't consider
Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13								
Unweighted	1782	1236	107	57	338	1376	301	62
Weighted	1782	1236	108	70	321	1380	286	66
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very motivated	15	16	15	8	13	17	11	9

Fairly motivated	52	59	28	33	46	56	44	39
Not very motivated	22	19	36	26	31	21	28	41
Not at all motivated	5	3	14	19	6	4	10	3
Not sure	1	*	3	5	*	1	*	7
Not stated	5	3	4	9	4	3	6	1
Very/ fairly motivated	68	75	43	41	59	72	55	48
Not very/ at all motivated	27	22	50	45	37	24	39	44

Note: some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups. In the table * denotes less than 0.5% but higher than zero.

Table 16: Level of motivation by overall satisfaction with learning experience and thoughts about leaving school

	Total	Overall satisfaction with experience					Thought about leaving		
		Extremely satisfied	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither/nor	All dissatisfied	Yes	No	Don't know
Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13									
Unweighted	1782	122	563	798	156	90	577	1000	161
Weighted	1782	125	565	790	153	85	564	1003	165
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very motivated	15	44	19	8	5	5	9	21	8
Fairly motivated	52	47	61	55	25	27	40	61	55
Not very motivated	22	6	15	30	44	38	35	15	29
Not at all motivated	5	*	2	4	18	27	12	1	1
Not sure	1	-	1	1	4	-	2	*	1
Not stated	5	2	3	2	4	2	3	2	6
Very/ fairly motivated	68	92	80	63	31	33	48	82	62
Not very/ at all motivated	27	6	17	34	62	65	47	16	31

Note: some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups. In the table * denotes less than 0.5% but higher than zero.

Table 17: Problems experienced by qualification

	Total	Qualification					
		A level	AS level	GCSE	Welsh Baccalaureate	Vocational qualification	Other
Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13							
Unweighted	1782	1538	846	98	131	52	39
Weighted	1782	1512	819	102	91	48	46
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Maintaining your personal	48	52	51	32	51	37	37
Keeping up with the standard of work required	33	34	39	40	50	46	47
Problems of any kind with other members of staff	20	20	19	18	22	21	30
Problems of any kind with other students	11	11	9	21	13	15	29
Extra help you were promised not being provided	9	10	8	15	11	14	9
Travelling to this school	7	7	8	7	8	5	9
No problems / no / none	15	15	15	10	12	13	10
Not stated	13	10	11	18	6	10	13

Note: all reasons mentioned by more than 3% are shown in table. Some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups.

Table 18: Problems experienced by whether school and subjects/qualifications were first choice

		First choice school				First choice Subjects/qualifications		
		Total	Yes	No	No Choice	Didn't consider	Yes	No
Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13								
Unweighted	1782	1236	107	57	338	1376	301	62
Weighted	1782	1236	108	70	321	1380	286	66
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Maintaining your personal motivation	48	47	58	43	56	47	60	55
Keeping up with the standard of work required	33	33	41	36	32	32	39	52
Problems of any kind with other members of staff	20	17	30	21	26	19	25	22
Problems of any kind with other students	11	10	19	24	11	11	14	8
Extra help you were promised not being provided	9	7	21	21	10	9	12	11
Travelling to this school	7	6	10	14	8	6	8	10
No problems / no / none	15	16	7	14	15	17	9	13
Not stated	13	12	9	7	10	12	8	4

Note; all reasons mentioned by more than 3% are shown in table. Some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups.

Table 19: Problems experienced by level of motivation and overall satisfaction with learning experience

	Total	Level of motivation				Overall satisfaction with experience				
		Very	Fairly	Not very	Not at all	Extremely satisfied	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither/nor	All dissatisfied
Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13										
Unweighted	1782	256	963	394	86	122	563	798	156	90
Weighted	1782	271	934	398	82	125	565	790	153	85
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Maintaining your personal motivation	48	18	45	79	76	22	37	58	61	78
Keeping up with the standard of work required	33	18	32	47	59	21	27	37	43	62
Problems of any kind with other members of staff	20	18	18	21	33	10	13	23	29	43
Problems of any kind with other students	11	14	10	10	19	11	11	11	13	18
Extra help you were promised not being provided	9	6	9	10	25	6	5	10	16	26
Travelling to this school	7	7	6	7	10	5	5	7	10	15
No problems / no / none	15	29	17	6	4	28	23	11	9	1
Not stated	13	21	13	3	3	25	15	8	4	1

Note; all reasons mentioned by more than 3% are shown in table. Some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups.

Table 20: Thoughts about leaving school by qualification

	Total	Qualification					
		A level	As level	GCSE	Welsh Baccalaureate	Vocational qualification	Other
Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13							
Unweighted	1782	1538	846	98	131	52	39
Weighted	1782	1512	819	102	91	48	46
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	32	31	35	47	36	56	28
No	56	59	54	44	50	35	56
Don't know	9	9	10	7	14	7	16
Not stated	3	1	1	2	1	2	-

Note: some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups.

Table 21: Thoughts about leaving school by whether school and subjects/qualifications were first choice

	Total	First choice? School				First choice? Subjects/qualifications		
		Yes	No	No Choice	Didn't consider	Yes	No	No Choice/Didn't consider
Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13								
Unweighted	1782	1236	107	57	338	1376	301	62
Weighted	1782	1236	108	70	321	1380	286	66
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	32	27	58	42	39	29	45	55
No	56	62	35	47	49	61	43	28
Don't know	9	10	7	9	10	9	10	14
Not stated	3	1	1	2	2	1	3	2

Note: some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups.

Table 22: Thoughts about leaving school by level of motivation and overall satisfaction with learning experience

	Total	Level of motivation				Overall satisfaction with experience				
		Very	Fairly	Not very	Not at all	Extremely satisfied	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither/nor	All dissatisfied
Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13										
Unweighted	1782	256	963	394	86	122	563	798	156	90
Weighted	1782	271	934	398	82	125	565	790	153	85
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	32	18	24	50	82	13	16	38	57	77
No	56	77	65	38	15	81	78	49	32	15
Don't know	9	5	10	12	3	4	6	13	11	8
Not stated	3	*	1	*	0	2	*	*	0	0

Note: some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups. In the table * denotes less than 0.5% but higher than zero.

Table 23: Whether expectations had been met by whether school and subjects/qualifications were first choice

		First choice school				First choice Subjects/qualifications		
		Total	Yes	No	No Choice	Didn't consider	Yes	No
Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13								
Unweighted	1782	1236	107	57	338	1376	301	62
Weighted	1782	1236	108	70	321	1380	286	66
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Course/teaching related</i>								
Standard of work expected	73	79	56	63	65	78	61	47
Teaching styles/methods in lessons	52	58	42	31	40	57	37	29
Content of your course	65	71	50	50	59	69	56	47
The structure of your course	61	67	55	34	53	65	52	40
<i>Workload/responsibility related</i>								
Number of deadlines you have to meet	66	71	51	46	67	70	61	47
Amount of responsibility you have to take	69	75	62	42	61	72	64	50
Amount of work you would have to do	70	75	54	52	66	74	59	64

Note: some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups.

Table 24: Whether expectations had been met by level of motivation and overall satisfaction with learning experience

	Total	Level of motivation				Overall satisfaction with experience				
		Very	Fairly	Not very	Not at	Extremely satisfied	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither/nor	All dissatisfied
Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13										
Unweighted	1782	256	963	394	86	122	563	798	156	90
Weighted	1782	271	934	398	82	125	565	790	153	85
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Course/teaching related</i>										
Standard of work expected	73	85	77	67	49	88	84	73	54	47
Teaching styles/methods in lessons	52	62	58	41	31	78	64	49	31	20
Content of your course	65	78	71	54	38	83	76	65	48	28
The structure of your course	61	76	67	50	33	80	74	59	37	25
<i>Workload/responsibility related</i>										
Number of deadlines you have to meet	66	73	70	65	52	76	71	67	61	53
Amount of responsibility you have to take	69	76	75	61	57	79	77	70	54	45
Amount of work you would have to do	70	84	76	63	38	89	78	70	54	44

Note: some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups.

Table 25: Overall satisfaction with the learning experience by whether school and subjects/qualifications were first choice

		First choice? School				First choice? Subjects/qualifications		
		Total	Yes	No	No Choice	Didn't consider	Yes	No
Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13								
Unweighted	1782	1236	107	57	338	1376	301	62
Weighted	1782	1236	108	70	321	1380	286	66
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Extremely satisfied	7	8	3	7	3	8	3	3
Very satisfied	32	37	20	15	21	35	24	21
Fairly satisfied	44	43	52	43	52	45	45	58
Neither/nor	9	7	14	19	13	8	15	8
Dissatisfied (ext./very/fairly)	5	3	12	15	8	3	10	9
Not stated	4	2	1	1	3	2	4	2
<i>% all satisfied</i>	83	88	74	65	76	88	71	81

Note: some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups.

Table 26: Overall satisfaction with the learning experience by level of motivation, overall satisfaction with teaching and thoughts of leaving

	Total	Level of motivation				Overall satisfaction with teaching					Thoughts about leaving	
		Very	Fairly	Not very	Not at all	Extremely satisfied	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither/nor	All dissatisfied	Yes	No
Base: All respondents Year 12 and 13												
Unweighted	1782	256	963	394	86	162	704	674	105	83	577	1000
Weighted	1782	271	934	398	82	158	705	666	110	79	564	1003
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Extremely satisfied	7	25	5	1	0	51	5	1	0	0	3	10
Very satisfied	32	50	39	13	-	37	56	16	1	-	16	44
Fairly satisfied	44	23	47	60	24	10	35	69	37	19	53	39
Neither/nor	9	2	5	14	39	1	2	10	45	21	16	5
Dissatisfied (ext./very/fairly)	5	1	1	11	35	0	1	2	15	59	12	1
Not stated	4	1	2	*	2	2	1	2	2	0	1	1
<i>% all satisfied</i>	83	97	92	74	24	98	96	85	38	19	72	93

Note: some unweighted base sizes are below 100, caution should be used when reading results for these sub groups. In the table * denotes less than 0.5% but higher than zero.