RESEARCH

Intermediate Impacts of Advice and Guidance

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department for
education and skills
creating opportunity, releasing potential, achieving excellence

Research Report RR638

Research Report
No 638

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ISBN 1 84478 481 9

The Institute for Employment Studies

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Acknowledgements

This research was funded by the Department for Education and Science and we are particularly grateful to Phillip Lacey, Millar MacDonald and Jenny Wallis within the department for their support, and to the broader steering group for their advice given throughout the course of the project.

The development of the research approach and instruments has also involved a number of researchers including Wendy Hirsh, Malcolm Maguire, Tony Watts, Charles Jackson, Iain Plewis and Karl Ashworth, so we would also like to thank these individuals for their continued input to, and interest in, the work. Kevin Pickering also provided valuable advice at the analysis stage.

The survey was conducted by MORI, involving Gideon Skinner, Bobby Duffy, Jayne Taylor and Anne-Merete Tonsager at various stages in what was a lengthy sampling process. The success of the work has also depended on staff within ***learndirect***, particularly Gareth Dent, within Jobcentre Plus, particularly Rob Barnes, and on numerous individuals working within different Information and Advice and Guidance Partnerships (now re-branded as Nextsteps providers) in drawing together the names and contact details of individuals eligible for inclusion in the study.

IES staff have helped with the intellectual content and production of this report, including Jim Hillage, James Walker-Hebborn and Polly Green.

Finally, it is necessary to thank the thousands of individuals who gave up their time to participate in the survey, and particularly those brave enough to allow us to re-contact them if future waves take place.

Contents

Executive Summary

The results presented here are those of a telephone survey of over 4,000 Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) recipients. The aim of the research was to test whether the provision of IAG makes a difference to the work and learning outcomes of individuals, ideally by tracking them over time (although this initial research proved more difficult and time consuming than originally envisaged, so funding is not yet secured for successive waves). The first survey was, therefore, intended as a baseline. Survey respondents were individuals aged 20 years or older, who were qualified to no more than level 2 or equivalent. The study compared recipients of Advice and Guidance with a control group of individuals receiving Information only. These two groups were matched on a number of characteristics using a technique known as 'propensity score matching' in order to control for any differences between them. The survey focused on obtaining information about individuals' background, work and learning situation, and histories to include in the matching. This is so that differences between the outcomes of two groups can be attributed with more confidence to the effect of the Advice and Guidance intervention.

Key findings

- The survey was successful in identifying a group of Advice/Guidance (A/G) recipients and a control group of those receiving Information (I) only, whose characteristics were broadly similar. Any slight differences were removed using propensity score matching. This is important in attributing any differences in the outcomes of the two groups to the impact of the A/G intervention.
- The distinction between the two groups was validated by their different patterns of service use, with A/G users having had more contact with a larger number of providers on average, having sought help with their careers or planning their future in greater proportions than I-only recipients who were more likely to be seeking help with learning.
- The A/G users were more positive than the I-only group about their current/previous work and learning achievements and their current labour market position. This may reflect some form of impact of the higher-level intervention they have received, but without a true baseline measure the fact that the

A/G group are simply more positive about everything cannot be discounted.

- There are clear differences in the work and learning outcomes and in changes to the levels of confidence, motivation and opportunity awareness between the two groups. In all cases, the A/G group are significantly more likely to report having undergone changes since their intervention as a result of the help they have received. This study, therefore, provides evidence that the intermediate outcomes of Advice/Guidance recipients are greater than individuals receiving Information only.

Details of the research

The sample of respondents was randomly drawn with the help of three suppliers of IAG services: ***learndirect***, Jobcentre Plus and 24 Information, Advice and Guidance Partnerships (since re-branded as Nextsteps providers). These providers drew the contact details from their records of individuals using IAG services between October 2003 and March 2004. Individuals were interviewed by telephone for an average of 30 minutes. The achieved sample of 4,361 interviews includes 2,979 individuals referred by ***learndirect***, 986 by IAG Partnerships and 396 by Jobcentre Plus.

Individuals were split into two groups for analysis, dependent on the nature of the help they had received. Those receiving just Information (the I-only group), and individuals who felt that they had received more than this (the A/G group). These groups were matched on a range of characteristics, including their work and learning histories, using propensity score matching. The technique was used in order to reduce any differences between the two groups. For it to be successful, all major influences on outcomes (other than A/G) should be included in the matching. The focus of the survey was, therefore, collecting as much detailed information for the purposes of matching as possible.

Respondent details

- Just over 60 per cent of the sample were female and a similar proportion were aged 35 years or younger.
- Around 20 per cent were minority ethnic respondents, and 15 per cent either had a health problem or disability and just over half had dependent children.
- 17% of the sample were single parents and just over 40 per cent were not active in the labour market.
- Half the sample held a level 1 qualification, a quarter held level 2 qualifications and the same proportion held level 0 or no qualifications.

Following matching, the profiles of the I-only and the A/G groups were very similar on all these factors.

Learning and work histories

The majority (almost 60 per cent) of both groups are recent learners (*ie* in the last three years), and a quarter of both the I-only and the A/G groups were in learning at the time of the survey, the majority engaged in study related to a qualification. One-tenth of respondents in both groups had been in learning throughout the three years prior to the survey and 15 per cent of both I-only and A/G recipients are new learners (*ie* they are currently learning, but have no other learning experiences in the last three years).

The main difference between the groups is that A/G recipients were more likely to be engaged in learning leading to a qualification lower than the one they already hold. This is likely to reflect the fact that a higher proportion of this group are seeking IAG support to help with job/career changes or in planning their future. The likelihood is that many of these will, therefore, be re-training, which may require them to study a course at a lower level than their existing qualifications.

Half of both groups were in paid work, with another five per cent self-employed. Around 30 per cent of both the I-only and the A/G group had been working throughout the past five years, but the remainder had experienced at least one period of unemployment in that time. The average period of current unemployment for those not in work was just over 30 months. The largest proportion of individuals currently inactive (as opposed to actively seeking work) are full-time home-based carers.

The A/G group had slightly lower annual incomes than the I-only group, with a median of £7,280 a year, compared to £7,800. The mean for both groups was just over £9,000. Around 80 per cent of both groups lived in households where at least one form of means-tested state benefit was being claimed.

Use of IAG services

Two-thirds of the I-only group and slightly more of the A/G group had used more than one source of IAG support. The main contact methods were face-to-face meetings and telephone contact. A range of providers had been utilised and the most common (aside from ***learndirect***, the sampling methodology ensured that this was the most common) were advisers from schools/colleges/other education centres (38 per cent of the I-only group and 43 per cent of A/G group). Family members and friends were also a common source of advice.

The I-only group were more concerned with finding out about training and learning opportunities than the A/G group who were more likely to be planning changes to their career. A/G recipients were also significantly more likely to feel that the service delivered on these expectations or to feel that where it hadn't they had actually got something else out of the contact instead. The levels of satisfaction amongst the A/G group were also higher in relation to all aspects of the service.

Attitudes to work and learning

In order to accurately reflect changes in attitudes it is important to have a true baseline measure. This should ideally be collected prior to the IAG intervention. In practical terms, however, this is difficult if not impossible. By the time of this baseline survey, up to one year could have elapsed since their last contact with IAG services. It is likely, therefore, that some changes to attitudes had already occurred. There is no way to determine whether differences between the A/G group and I-only group already existed prior to the receipt of IAG support, or whether they have emerged as a result of the different levels of support received. Acknowledging this limitation, however, it is interesting to compare the attitudes of the two groups in relation to work and learning.

The A/G group emerge as more positive about both their work and their learning situations. They have higher levels of satisfaction with their current job (those in work) and with their achievements in current and/or past work (all those with some work history). Individuals in the A/G and the I-only groups who were unemployed but seeking work were those least satisfied with their achievements.

There were fewer differences between the two groups in relation to their attitudes towards various aspects of learning, although where there were significant differences (present in relation to three out of nine statements), the A/G group were more positive. In addition, when asked to rate their overall satisfaction with current/previous learning/training, the A/G group were again more satisfied.

Intermediate outcomes

Individuals were asked to state what changes had occurred in their lives as a result of the IAG intervention/s they had received. Individuals in receipt of A/G were more likely than those in receipt of I-only to have made changes in relation to a whole range of attitudinal, learning and work outcomes.

A range of outcomes related to confidence and motivational levels were examined. In all cases the A/G group were more likely to consider that they had made gains in these areas, and the majority of these differences were statistically significant. The assumption

is that, given time, changes to motivation and other soft outcomes will manifest themselves at a later stage in relation to changes to academic or work performance. If this cohort is re-contacted, therefore, this assumption should be tested.

The differences between the A/G and I-only groups held for people of all ages, with the exception of career planning and job search behaviours where there was no differential impact of A/G over I for older respondents. Asian respondents were also less likely to feel they had made progress on these measures, less so than any other ethnic group, but for other minority ethnic groups the picture was more complex and depended on the measure in question.

Also, individuals were asked about any changes to their work or learning situation that had already happened. There were seven work/learning outcomes which applied to more than one-third of A/G recipients and to a statistically significantly smaller proportion of the I-only group:

- 45% of the A/G group had improved their existing skills or learnt new skills, compared to 35 per cent of the I-only group.
- 36% of the A/G group had enrolled on a course compared to 30 per cent of the I-only group.
- 35% of the A/G group were now working towards a qualification, compared to 29 per cent of the I-only group.
- 35% of the A/G group had learnt how to write a CV/ application letter or complete an application form, compared to 23 per cent of the I-only group.
- 34% of the A/G group had started looking for a job, compared to 26 per cent of the I-only group.
- 35% of the A/G group had taken part in a training course, compared to 25 per cent of the I-only group.
- 33% of the A/G group had started applying for jobs, compared to 23 per cent of the I-only group.

Some of the differences between the two group, however, did not hold for older adults (*ie* those over 50 years of age), suggesting that the beneficial impact of A/G over I holds for less outcomes for this group. If future research with this cohort goes ahead, it would be useful to re-examine these differences.

Conclusions

The research has so far been successful in identifying a sample of individuals in receipt of differing levels of IAG intervention. The control and treatment groups have also been successfully matched on a range of characteristics, allowing the differences in outcomes between the two groups to be more confidently attributed to the nature of the intervention they have received.

The attitudinal differences between the groups could reflect the positive impact of A/G over I-only, but might also suggest that the A/G group is just more positive about their situation overall. This should be monitored if future waves are commissioned as it has implications for the interpretation of results.

The majority of respondents had used more than one service provider. The A/G group had the most complex pattern of service use and had received more sessions with advisers. They were also more positive about the services they received and what they felt they had got out of the experience. From a customer satisfaction perspective, therefore, A/G users are receiving a service which is qualitatively different.

There are also very clear patterns in the data which show greater gains across all outcomes for the A/G group. They are more likely to feel they have improved their work and/or learning situation, and/or their levels of confidence, motivation and opportunity awareness. At this intermediate stage, therefore, the provision of A/G does result in more positive outcomes than offering I-only.

1. Introduction and Background

This report provides evidence from a large-scale survey-based evaluation of the impact of publicly funded Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) services on adults over the age of 20, whose highest qualification is, or is lower than, a level 2 NVQ equivalent. The research hopes, given funding for successive waves is secured, to identify changes to the baseline position of service users in relation to their work and learning situation and to highlight the extent to which the provision of IAG services have influenced these changes. The results have, therefore, been compared for different groups of service users, namely those in receipt of just Information, and those who received more in-depth Advice and/or Guidance.

This evaluation draws on a range of existing work, not least the first major research study to utilise a similar methodology in evaluating the longer-term outcomes of IAG service users (Killeen and White, 2000). It comes at a time when international and national policy makers are increasingly looking for evidence of the effectiveness, and the relative value, of funding careers guidance services for adults. However, providing quantifiable evidence of the impact of these services is not without difficulties, not least because of the fact that IAG 'often forms part of a longer-term process, and involves inter-relationships (and in some cases inter-dependencies) with a variety of other activities'[1]. The baseline phase of this research aimed to collect as much information as possible about participating individuals to allow the subsequent analysis of their outcomes to control for as many of these complex factors as possible.

Before presenting the full results of this research, this chapter sets out some of the background to the study, its detailed research aims and provides a full overview of the methodology used.

[1] Maguire M, (2004) 'Measuring the Impact of Career Guidance', *International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance*, Vol. 4, Nos 2-3, Pages 179-192

1.1 Research background

1.1.1 The need for this research

The effectiveness and impact of guidance has been the subject of a great deal of research over many years. As guidance provision becomes ever more central to the services available to adults seeking work/learning and/or changes to their situation, large-scale longitudinal research is required to expand the body of evidence on the efficacy of the guidance itself. However, the model for evaluating career guidance adequately is complex. Policy makers have increasingly recognised the need to invest in systematic research in relation to guidance, particularly in recent years[1], but such research is time consuming and expensive.

Recent reviews of the evidence have suggested the need for the assessment of the long-term impact of IAG on individual outcomes, as this is where the available evidence is felt to be most lacking[2]. The OECD review of Career Policy[3] stated that:

> *'Obtaining clear answers about impacts under these (complex) circumstances requires large-scale research with complex experimental designs and statistical controls.'*

This research was commissioned in an attempt to add to the evidence through the use of a robust control method and the tracking of IAG recipients over time, if funding becomes available for future waves of the survey.

1.1.2 Existing evidence

Despite gaps in the evidence base, however, there is a great deal of research concerned with the impact of IAG services. In summary, 'the available evidence on the benefits of career guidance is not comprehensive, but what exists is largely positive'[4]. Some of the evidence is concerned only with the impact on young people and is, therefore, only of limited relevance to this study. However, there is evidence for adult users, and it is mainly focused on learning behaviours and outcomes as well as

[1] For example, Killeen J, White M (2000), *The Impact of Careers Guidance on Adult Employed People,* Department for Education and Employment, Research Report RR26

[2] For example, Hughes D, Bosley S, Bowes L, Bysshe S (2002), *The Economic Benefits of Guidance,* for DfES, Centre for Guidance Studies, University of Derby

[3] OECD (2003), *Career Guidance: New Ways Forward*, Chapter 2 in Education Policy Analysis, OECD

[4] Watts AG, Sultana R G (2004), 'Career Guidance Policies in 37 Countries: Contrasts and Common Themes', *International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance,* 4(2-3), pp.105-122

motivational and attitudinal shifts. There is also some, but more limited, evidence on the impact on employment.

Learning

There is relatively strong evidence that IAG increases learning participation, certainly for adults in employment[1] when matched with a control group of non-IAG users. This study will be able to test this result for a broader group of service users, but there is already some research available from cross-sectional studies. One example is the recent research funded by the Learning and Skills Council[2] which showed that the majority of users of IAG who entered learning felt that the advice they had received was important in making this decision. There is also evidence that IAG users are more likely to achieve a qualification from their study than non-users[3], and that this trend is particularly marked for lower-qualified users[4]. However, the evidence on progression within learning is more limited and is hampered by the difficulties inherent in disentangling results from cross sectional studies on whether the intervention itself or other characteristics of individuals are responsible.

Motivations and attitudes

There are a range of studies where the receipt of guidance has been found to have a positive effect on motivation. The assumption is that these changes will manifest themselves at a later stage in changes to academic or work performance. However, many of these studies report on initiatives where the Advice or Guidance element was only one of a number on offer, providing only limited evidence for the impact of Guidance *per se*[5]. The difficulty is in disentangling the impact of the Guidance from aspects of the services on offer. A recent tracking study of recipients of ***learndirect*** advice line services failed to detect positive changes in attitudes over time[6], although there were difficulties in establishing a true baseline attitude measure. However, there is certainly the perception that IAG can have a

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[1] Killeen and White (2000) op cit

[2] Milburn, Trinnaman, LeCourt (2003), *Adult Information and Advice Services – A Survey*, for the Learning and Skills Council, Coventry

[3] Killeen and White (2000) op cit, as well as a range of studies from the US, explored more fully in Hughes *et al.* (2002) op cit

[4] Tyers C, Aston J, Barkworth R, Willison R, Taylor J (2003), *Evaluation of Adult Guidance Pilots*, DfES Research Report 491

[5] See Maguire (2004) op cit, for interpretation of Hughes *et al.* (2002) op cit

[6] Tyers C, Sinclair A (2004), *Tracking Learning Outcomes: Evaluation of the Impact of Ufl,* Department for Education and Skills, Research Report RR569

positive impact on individuals' motivation, self-confidence and attitudes towards work and learning. This study may help to clarify this, although capturing baseline attitudes remains a problem.

Employment

There is less evidence still in relation to employment outcomes. However, evidence from the US, and now increasingly from the UK[1] (such as from the assessment of Restart interviewees) does show that IAG can help to improve the likelihood of unemployed users returning to work or return them more quickly. Job movement has also been found to be more likely amongst recipients of IAG[2] than non-users, although there is little robust evidence on earning gains or progression within work. That which does exist from cross-sectional studies[3] offers no comparative picture or assessment of the extent to which employment gains or changes would have occurred in the absence of guidance.

1.2 Detailed research aims

Broadly, the aim of this research is to test whether the provision of IAG makes a difference in terms of increasing the likelihood that adults will engage in learning or training, gain, update or improve their qualifications or progress into/within work. Additionally, the research is focused on individuals with current qualifications at, or less than, level 2 NVQ equivalent. The findings of the study are aimed to help inform policy decisions on the overall investment in IAG, and the balance of investment between the three elements. It also aims to answer policy questions on this key group of lower-qualified adults.

If the research is expanded to include future waves, and if further data becomes available from repeated contact with this sample, it would be possible to provide more detailed answers to a range of research questions. However, the three main research questions for the current (potentially baseline) phase are:

- What is the precise definition of the population to which the results apply and will apply?
- Have there been any changes to work, learning, confidence and opportunity awareness outcomes at this intermediate stage?
- Can any observed changes be attributed to the intervention itself?

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[1] Hughes *et al.* (2002) op cit

[2] Killeen and White (2000) op cit

[3] Tyers C *et al.* (2003) op cit, where 17 per cent of unemployed guidance recipients had found work after a period of at least six months without work

1.3 Methodological issues

The primary objective of the research is to assess the effectiveness of IAG services on outcomes for individuals. To establish a causal connection between the IAG intervention and an outcome, some kind of control group of non-users (or lower level users) is needed to demonstrate the counterfactual position (*ie* to demonstrate what would have happened to individuals if they had not used the IAG services).

1.3.1 Defining the control group for this study

For this study, the decision was taken to include all recipients of IAG, rather than attempt to focus on just those receiving higher levels of input. Those receiving just Information would serve as the control group, the treatment group to consist of individuals receiving higher levels of input (*ie* Advice and/or Guidance). This decision was taken in an attempt to control as much as possible for endogenous factors (such as levels of motivation to change, propensity to seek help), by concentrating the study on those seeking and receiving at least Information, rather than looking at the general population in totality (*ie* by not including those who were not seeking any help at all).

The decision to combine users of Advice and Guidance into one group was taken as a result of policy interest in this group as a whole. The provision of Information on careers and learning is considered a necessary minimum obligation, whereas the provision of, and costs associated with, providing more in-depth support required further investigation. The division between Advice and Guidance is also a difficult one to make, and whether such a distinction is a helpful one remains under debate. Because of the complexities of recording information on IAG provision, studies of this nature are dependent on respondent recall to determine which interventions individuals have received. For service users, making the distinction between whether they have received Advice or Guidance could be considered very difficult. Combining the two categories, therefore, is also an attempt to reduce respondent error by reliance on over-detailed categorisation of their recall of events. Determining the relative advantages of offering a service based on at least Advice, but also Guidance, without distinguishing between the two, was therefore defined as the most appropriate focus for this research.

For the purposes of this research, therefore, individuals receiving Advice and/or Guidance, referred to as A/G in the report, are considered to be the 'treatment' group (*ie* they have received the intervention that we are interested in testing), and the recipients of Information only, referred to as I-only, act as the 'control' group for these (*ie* we are comparing the effects of receiving A/G with those of receiving a lower level of intervention). However, an issue for the research is that little or no information was available

prior to the survey on which individuals had received what level of intervention. Whilst illustrative data is available on the levels of use of I and A/G across providers, this data was not linked, at the time of the survey, in the management information to individual-level data on personal characteristics and contact information (used to draw the sample for the survey). As a result, the survey had to determine the level of intervention for each individual in some other way, and after the fact, relying on respondent recall.

In earlier stages of the study, an eligibility testing phase was carried out. This tested various ways of individuals recalling the level of intervention they had received, but a simple question asking respondents to distinguish between whether they would best describe what they had received in one of the three categories (*ie* I or A or G), was found to work best. Throughout this report, therefore, this is the measure that has been used to determine the group to which individuals are allocated. This method of allocating individuals is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4 alongside more detailed analysis of how individuals recalled the interventions they had received.

1.3.2 Ways of establishing the counterfactual

To achieve a 'true' control group an experimental design would need to be used. People would be randomly assigned to an experimental or control group, and IAG given to people in the experimental group but withheld from those in the control group. The control group provides the counterfactual data on what happens in the absence of the treatment. The difference in the outcome scores would then represent the impact of the IAG. For example, in the USA, it is mandatory for welfare-to-work programmes (including training programmes) to be evaluated using experimental methods. Typically, people are assigned randomly either to an experimental group, where extra services are provided (or attendance is made compulsory), or to a control group, in which people continue to have access only to those services that are already available. Consequently, the difference in outcome scores reflects the added value of the additional services to the experimental group (or compulsion on attending those services).

However, in this case, an experimental design was unacceptable and impractical. Indeed, there are a number of ethical considerations, particularly the justification for denying control group members services that are believed to be beneficial. An alternative method using 'matched' controls was therefore used in this research.

The use of a matched control group

In using a control group, it is advisable to match them to the 'treatment' sample on observable characteristics, *eg* gender, age,

activity status/history, educational attainment *etc.* However, non-users are likely to be different from users in a number of ways, for example, in motivation levels, or in their attitudes towards work and learning. The crucial factor about these differences in characteristics between users and non-users is that they themselves may explain any differences in outcomes between the two groups. In other words, even if there was no IAG impact, the experimental group might be expected to outperform the control group because they are, say, better educated with greater work experience, or simply have higher motivation levels to progress. Even if IAG were to have an impact, it might not raise the outcomes of the user group sufficiently to show an effect in comparison to the non-user group.

One way around the potential bias of a non-user control group is to use propensity score matching (PSM; Rosenbaum and Ruben, 1983; 1985)[1]. This technique has been used recently in the evaluation of the impact of the Education Maintenance Allowance (Ashworth *et al.*, 2001; 2002)[2] and the New Deal for the Long-term Unemployed (Lissenburg, 2001)[3]. The essence of the technique is to find a person in the control group who is as similar as possible to one in the experimental group and to pair off these matched-individuals. This is done for all people in the experimental group. The degree of similarity is measured by the propensity score. This propensity score is derived from a regression of the probability of a person being in the pilot or control group conditional upon the characteristics of that individual. If all the characteristics that influence the outcomes are included in the model, PSM provides matched groups that are equivalent to the random allocation of people to experimental and control groups.

1.4 Detailed methodology

The research to date falls into four main phases, each of which is discussed in turn:

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[1] Rosenbaum P R, Rubin D B (1983), 'The central role of the propensity score in observational studies for causal effects', *Biometrika*, 70, 41-55. Rosenbaum P R, Rubin D B (1985), 'Constructing a control group using multivariate matched sampling methods that incorporate the propensity score', *The American Statistician*, 39, 33-38

[2] Ashworth K, Hardman J, Hartfree Y, Maguire S, Middleton S, Smith, D, Dearden L, Emmerson C, Frayne C, Meghir C (2002), *Education Maintenance Allowance: The First Two Years A Quantitative Evaluation.* Department for Education and Skills, Research Report 352 CRSP 2393; Ashworth K, Hardman J, Woon-Chia Liu, Maguire S, Middleton S, Dearden L, Emmerson C, Frayne C, Goodman A, Ichimura H, Meghir C, (2001), *Education Maintenance Allowance: The First Year. A quantitative evaluation,* DfEE RR 257.s

[3] Lissenburg S (2001), 'ND25+ Pilots: Quantitative Evaluation Using Stage 2 Survey', Employment Services Research Report No. 81

- A development phase which determined the precise scope of the study and the detailed methodology
- Development of the questionnaire
- A piloting phase used to test out both the methodology and research instruments
- The baseline survey itself
- Analysis of the baseline data.

1.4.1 Development phase

In a study of this nature, there is always the risk that resources expended could fail to produce any definitive conclusions. The first phase of the study (in early 2003), therefore, involved an intensive development phase to review and revise the proposed approach to best ensure that the evaluation would assess the long-term impact of IAG services, as well as to define precisely how to define the control group for the research. The development phase consisted of a critical literature review of existing research, drawing both methodological and evaluative lessons for the research and a panel assessment of the proposed method by leading researchers in the field (see Acknowledgements for details of those inputting to the research).

The outcomes of the development phase were to define the study population in terms of which service users would be involved, the providers it would be appropriate to involve in order to access this population, and how the control group would be defined.

Three main providers were selected for inclusion in the study:

learndirect, which is the main provider of I users, but also provides most of the A/G users. This sample was drawn from one single source. The intention was to use clients who have received I-only as a control sample. There was no *a priori* indicator in the sample of whether people have received I, A or G.

Jobcentre Plus provides more detailed guidance, and all clients receive at least A, so the intention was that Jobcentre Plus would not make up any of the control sample. This sample was also drawn from one single source.

LSC/IAG Partnerships covered the whole range of I,A and G and included a wide variety of partnerships and providers. This sample was collected from selected LSC/IAG Partnerships, and the intention was that clients would form parts of the control and treatment groups. Since the survey, these providers have undergone a re-branding following a reform of the sector and a national tendering exercise. They are now known as Nextsteps providers.

1.4.2 Questionnaire design

A key assumption underlying PSM is that the variables available for matching explain (in a statistical sense) all influences on outcomes. In practice, this is interpreted as all **major** influences on outcomes. Therefore, at the baseline phase, it was important to collect as much detailed information as possible about individuals' work and learning histories. The interviews, therefore, collected a range of information on personal characteristics, learning and work history, current work and learning situation, experiences of IAG, and a range of attitudinal variables relating to their satisfaction with both the intervention/s received and their current labour market or learning situation.

The questionnaire was designed by the Institute for Employment Studies (IES), with input from MORI, the DfES, Wendy Hirsh and Malcolm Maguire. It was programmed into CATI format. As usual with computerised interviewing, several logic and consistency checks were included to minimise keying errors and implausible answers.

The questionnaire included screening questions on age and qualification level, as some of the samples did not include this information.

Specifically, the research collected information on:

- current qualification levels, work situation and work history
- current and recent involvement with learning and training activities
- type of, and satisfaction with, IAG intervention
- general attitudes towards learning/training
- satisfaction with own work and learning/training achievements
- plans for the future in terms of career mobility and intention to pursue learning/training opportunities
- perceived positive effects of IAG intervention.

1.4.3 Eligibility testing and piloting

A pilot study was carried out (following the development phase in 2003), which included three main elements:

Testing the sampling process. It was unknown how difficult it would be to collect the samples that were needed from the different sources and what type of information each source held about their clients. For the LSC/IAG Partnerships (now Nextsteps providers), it was also unclear which level of information was held, *ie* whether clients' information and contact details were held at Partnership level or with individual providers.

To ascertain this, ***learndirect*** and Jobcentre Plus each provided a sample from which 500 clients were drawn from each. Four LSC/IAG Partnerships (now Nextsteps providers) also gave a list of all their providers as well as information on both the providers and individual clients (if this information was available).

The piloting of the sampling process showed that it took some time for providers to prepare and supply the samples, and also that there was a wide variation in terms of the types of information held by the different sources (for example, some did not include demographic details like age or qualification level, and some did not include contact details like telephone numbers or addresses). The pilot also revealed that not all LSC/IAG Partnerships (now Nextsteps providers) held information about their clients at Partnership level, which meant that the individual providers had to be contacted and asked to provide the samples which were subsequently collated.

Eligibility testing. The purpose of the eligibility testing was to determine the penetration of I, A and G amongst the samples drawn from the sources described above. This was necessary to decide the number of interviews needed from each sample source to make up the 'treatment' and 'control' groups. The Jobcentre Plus sample was excluded from the eligibility testing as it was thought that their clients would have received at least Advice, and would, therefore, all fall into the 'treatment' group.

The eligibility testing was conducted with the ***learndirect*** and LSC/IAG Partnership (now Nextsteps providers) samples received during the sampling pilot. It consisted of a short questionnaire attempting to ascertain the nature of IAG intervention individuals had received. As in the main stage study, the population was restricted to those aged 20 years and above and with qualifications to NVQ level 2 and below. As not all the samples received from the LSC/IAG Partnerships (now known as Nextsteps providers) included this information, their clients were first screened on age and qualification level.

In total, 243 telephone interviews were carried out with ***learndirect*** clients and 160 telephone interviews carried out with clients of LSC/IAG Partnerships. In terms of the quality of the samples, the testing showed that four per cent of the ***learndirect*** sample was ineligible to take part, whereas, the corresponding figure for the LSC/IAG Partnership (now re-branded as Nextsteps providers) samples was 21 per cent (most of these were screened out because of too high a qualification level or claiming not to have received any I, A or G from any sources). This reflects the differing ways that these providers hold information on their clients.

The eligibility questionnaire asked the respondents to state the nature of the intervention received. Respondents were asked,

from a detailed list, to say which of a range of advisor interventions they had received and also to determine, overall, whether they would consider the intervention to be I, A or G. The eligibility testing revealed that using a very detailed question yielded results that were very similar to those obtained from using a simple question, but with the added problem of respondents not being entirely clear about what they were being asked. The baseline survey, therefore, used the simplified question.

Questionnaire piloting. A face-to-face pilot of the full baseline questionnaire, with the ***learndirect*** sample (those who agreed to be re-contacted from the eligibility testing) and the Jobcentre Plus sample. In total, 21 interviews were carried out, 11 with the ***learndirect*** sample and ten with the Jobcentre Plus sample.

It became clear that original plans to conduct the survey using a face-to-face methodology would not be possible. The information held by providers differed at the level of contact details, and whilst some did not hold address details, in the majority of cases telephone numbers were held. The decision was taken that, rather than use a mixed methodology with both telephone and face-to-face interviews, all interviews would be conducted by telephone.

This meant that individuals without telephone numbers were excluded from the study (with the obvious implication that the poorest households were potentially affected). However, by using this methodology it was possible to increase dramatically the geographical spread of the survey, therefore increasing representation of other groups. This trade off was considered acceptable alongside the practical considerations involved.

1.4.4 Baseline survey

For the main-stage study, a random sample of LSC/IAG Partnerships (now re-branded as Nextsteps providers) in receipt of ESF co-financing were drawn. The decision to focus on these providers was taken to ensure that individuals referred into the project, potentially had access to both Advice and Guidance. Guidance services do not constitute part of the LSC core contract, and were, therefore, only offered through ESF co-financing at the time of the survey. Within this group, however, IAG Partnerships were chosen to be representative by region, cluster group[1] and number of clients. Using this method, 24 Partnerships were selected, with probability proportionate to size (where size was the yearly target of Advice and Enhanced sessions to be delivered). Details of the partnerships involved in the research are presented in Appendix 2. The survey population consists of adults

[1] A measure used by the LSC to group partnerships (as they were called at the time of the survey) together based on a number of shared characteristics.

in England who have received I, A or G and is restricted by age (all aged 20 or above), qualification level (all qualified to NVQ level 2 or below) and contact date with the source provider (from Autumn 2003 to Spring 2004).

The 24 selected Partnerships (now Nextsteps providers), ***learndirect*** and Jobcentre Plus were then asked to provide details of all their clients who met the criteria (in terms of age, qualification level and contact date). A detailed specification was provided by MORI, along with a covering letter from the DfES and LSC, and data protection contracts when requested. The sample was constructed to allow comparisons between the experiences and attitudes of those who have received a more intensive type of intervention, *ie* A/G (the 'treatment' group) with those who had received I-only (the 'control' group).

As predicted by the piloting of the methodology, it took some time to collate a sample, and the IAG Partnerships (now Nextsteps providers) took longer than other providers to supply contact details and other information, because of the way that data is held. This meant that there was a longer than hoped for delay between the intervention period and conducting the survey interviews. However, there was a significant reduction in the time taken to collect data from the partnerships between the pilot and the actual sample collection, which should be recognised. There were also problems with the quality of contact details available from Jobcentre Plus, which is likely to reflect the nature of their client base. Unfortunately, this meant that the number of interviews conducted with individuals from this source fell slightly behind research targets.

A total of 4,361 interviews were conducted with individuals with these characteristics, and the survey was, on average, 30 minutes long and conducted by telephone (by MORI). The interviewing took place between 28 July and 30 September 2004. The full breakdown of respondents by their source provider are presented in Appendix 2, along with the regional breakdown of respondents and details of response rates. The adjusted total response rate for all three sources combined is 42 per cent. Amongst the participating sample, the proportion who agreed to be re-contacted by the research in potential future waves is 78 per cent.

1.4.5 Analysis of baseline data

A number of different matching techniques are available, which match cases along the propensity score in different ways. In this study we opted to use an approach known as Kernel matching, as

it is less 'data hungry' than some other techniques (*ie* it makes use of more cases for the matching)[1].

Variables used in matching

The success of the matching procedure naturally depends on the range of variables which are available for comparing the control and treatment groups. Because the regression technique is essentially a prediction of whether someone has received Advice and Guidance or not, and because the data on participants in this study was collected after the session had taken place, only variables which could not have been altered by the Advice and Guidance sessions were used. Clearly some characteristics cannot be affected by Advice and Guidance at all (*eg* gender, age and ethnicity) or at this early stage.

The analysis, therefore, concentrated on individual characteristics and work and learning histories spanning over the last three, or in some cases, five years[2]. It also considered labour market status at the time of the survey[3]. By the same measure, attitudinal measures, which could have easily be affected by the receipt of Advice and Guidance were not included (differing slightly from some other studies). For further details on the variables entered into the PSM procedure, and the results, please refer to Appendix 1.

The A/G and I groups have broadly similar demographics, nonetheless, there are many other features which may determine whether a person takes up Advice and Guidance, such as learning history, prior work experience *etc.* Further comparisons across the two groups show that whilst there was no significant difference in terms of length of employment (number of months in employment in last five years), there was a significant difference in terms of when they were last unemployed. Those receiving A/G were more likely to have been unemployed in the last year (32 per cent compared to 26 per cent for those receiving I-only). Also, whilst there was no significant difference in whether the person had been engaged in any learning in the last three years,

[1] This technique matches all treated cases with a weighted average of all controls with weights that are inversely proportional to the distance between the propensity scores of treated and controls.

[2] Highest level of qualification at the time of the survey was not included in the equation for two reasons, firstly the qualification level had been broadly controlled for at the sampling stage, and secondly, because of the elapsed time between receipt of intervention and survey, this could have already been affected by receipt of A/G.

[3] This variable could arguably have been affected by the intervention so the decision was taken to include this as it is likely to be a major contributor to outcomes. By including it, it is likely that the impact of A/G could be underestimated, and this was felt to be preferable to a potential overestimation from not including the variable in matching.

those who had received A/G were more likely to have participated in formal learning leading to a qualification (six per cent compared to four per cent amongst those who received I only) in that time.

The first step in determining whether the matching has been successful is to compare the comparison and treated sample pre- and post-matching (see Table 1.1). After matching, there were no significant differences between the groups on a range of background variables (*eg* gender, educational level, current economic activity), with the groups becoming more similar in overall profile as a result of the matching procedure. It is worth noting that even though highest qualification level was not included in the matching procedure, the matched groups now show no significant differences in relation to this, suggesting that this is accounted for by other variables such as age, gender *etc.*

One further point to note is the overall results for this study, where 52 per cent of respondents that categorised themselves as having received Advice or Guidance, match precisely those for another recent study (work for the Guidance Council[1]) which asked the same question.

1.4.6 Future waves of research

For a survey of this nature, with funding for further waves sought, ensuring that there are sufficient individuals in the sample to follow up at future points is essential. To that end, it is worth considering the 'opt-in' rate for any potential future waves. In total, 77 per cent of the sample consented to be involved in further surveys. This rate is lower than for Killeen and White's study which had an overall rate of 12 per cent opt-out at the initial phase, compared to 23 per cent here. However, the sample for the current study involves a broader range of respondents, both in and out of the labour market, and concentrates on lower qualified respondents. It might, therefore, be expected that the opt-in rate would be slightly lower. In order to maximise the numbers available for any future waves it will be necessary to maintain contact with the sample between waves to allow respondents to notify the research team of any change of address. Additional attrition rates are to be expected in any future waves, but this was factored into the decision on the original sample size. In any future waves, however, the breakdown of the sample is likely to change and it will be necessary to re-match the control and treatment groups.

[1] Taylor J, Byrom A and Vsickova D (2005) Demand for, and Perceptions of, Information, Advice and Guidance: A research study conducted for the Guidance Council, The Guidance Council

Table 1.1: Respondent profile

Characteristic		Pre-matching		Post-matching	
		I group %	A/G group %	I group %	A/G group %
Sex	Male	37	39	38	39
	Female	63	61	62	61
Age	20 to 25	23	29	27	29
	26 to 35	30	31	32	31
	36 to 50	36	32	33	32
	Over 50	10	8	8	8
Ethnic group	White	82	80	80	80
	Mixed/Chinese/Other	3	4	4	4
	Asian	5	6	6	6
	Black	8	9	8	9
	Not specified	1	1	1	1
Highest qualification level	0	26	26	25	26
	1	50	46	50	46
	2	24	28	25	28
	3 or higher	1	1	1	1
Health problem or disability	Yes	15	15	15	15
	No	85	85	85	85
Have parental responsibilities	Yes, single parent	16	17	17	17
	Yes, share caring responsibilities with partner	36	34	34	34
	No	48	49	49	49
Dependants under 5	Yes	24	27	26	27
	No or missing	76	73	74	73
Dependants under 18	Yes	37	37	36	37
	No or missing	63	63	64	63
Caring responsibilities	Yes (lone carer)	3	4	4	4
	Yes (share responsibilities)	6	5	5	5
	No	91	91	91	91
Current labour market status	Active	60	56	57	56
	Semi-active (*ie* available for work)	20	25	24	25
	Inactive	20	19	19	19
Learning history (last three yrs)	Continuous learner	9	11	10	11
	Current learner	13	14	15	14
	Some prior learning	35	33	34	33
	No learning	43	41	41	41
Base (N)		*2,088*	*2,273*	*2,273*	*2,273*

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

2. Education Level and Study

This phase of the research (with funding sought for future waves) has focused on collecting a range of detailed information on individuals' educational histories. The rationale for this is that people demonstrate differing patterns of learning, and that whilst IAG provision may encourage them to enter learning, and this is an outcome in its own right, the evidence for IAG changing learning behaviours is more powerful when placed in the context of an individual's prior learning experiences. In short, has the receipt of IAG, and in particular A/G helped individuals to break cycles of non-learning or learning without progression? This chapter sets out the baseline measures against which future, longer-term, outcomes can be benchmarked if funding is found for further waves of the research. In particular, any future research waves will consider the extent to which individuals progress with their learning post-IAG, as well as deal with issues of participation.

2.1 Qualification levels

Although the aim of the survey was to focus on individuals with a level 2 or equivalent qualification or lower, it was difficult to determine this in advance of the interview as provider records did not always either have the information, or have detailed information, in a format needed for this research. It was, therefore, necessary to conduct a screening exercise at the beginning of the telephone interview to determine this.

However, accurately defining the level of an individual's qualification can be extremely complex, particularly if they hold overseas qualifications or a qualification that does not neatly fall into a particular NVQ band. Therefore, for some respondents, it was not possible to accurately attribute the level of their highest qualification to an NVQ equivalent during the interview itself, and their responses had to be coded at the point of analysis. The result of this is that there are a very few individuals with qualifications at level 3 who are included in the sample. The decision was taken not to remove these individuals from the analysis as the very small proportion present was not felt large enough to affect results.

For other respondents, the detail recorded on their qualification during the interview was too vague to allow it to be accurately coded to an NVQ level (*eg* IT qualification). Some respondents were also unable to accurately recall this information. In these cases, a significant minority, data on highest qualification is missing.

The overall profile of participants varies little between the two groups (Table 2.1), and any differences are not statistically significant. For both groups, therefore, around a quarter of respondents have no qualifications or qualifications at level 0, a similar proportion have qualifications at level 2, with the bulk of those for whom qualification levels are known holding an NVQ level 1 or equivalent.

The date when individuals gained their highest qualification is also of interest (and is discussed later in this chapter in more detail), particularly whether their highest qualification could have been gained since receipt of the I or A/G intervention. As the intervention period was extended (around six months) and the survey took place some time later, the decision was taken to use the middle of the intervention period as a cut off for new qualifications, rather than the end. This would, effectively, overestimate and underestimate recent achievement in equal measure. Therefore, any qualifications gained in 2004 are considered in Table 2.1 to be 'new'.

Very few people had actually gained a qualification in this time period, therefore, the level of highest qualification at the time of the survey is an accurate baseline measure for around 97 per cent of respondents. Conversely, for around three per cent, subsequent progress measures will underestimate their educational achievements since the original IAG intervention.

Table 2.1: Highest qualification details

Details of highest qualification		I group %	A/G group %
Qualification level (NVQ equivalence)	level 0	25	26
	level 1	50	46
	level 2	25	28
	level 3	1	1
	Unknown/ no NVQ equivalence	10	8
	Base (N)	*2,248*	*2,249*
Whether gained in 2004	Yes	3	4
	No	97	96
	Base (N)	*2,088*	*2,273*

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

2.2 Learning histories

For the purposes of this baseline report, the learning histories of both the I-only and the A/G groups should be very similar if future progress is to be compared and the effect of the intervention determined in relation to future behaviours. In fact, the learning histories of the two groups are almost identical (according to the measures shown in Table 2.2).

For both, 59 per cent of respondents had engaged in some form of learning in the past three years, or were currently in learning. This figure is slightly higher than a recent survey of ***learndirect*** users where the non-participation rate, in the three years prior to their first ***learndirect*** call, was 52 per cent. It is, however, lower than the participation rate suggested by NALS (69 per cent in 2002)[1] in the three years prior to that survey. This discrepancy could be because of differences in the profiles of the samples, as the qualification profile in both the ***learndirect*** and NALS was much

Table 2.2: Details of learning history (2001 to 2004)

Aspect of learning history		I group %	A/G group %
Any learning in last 3 years?	Yes	59	59
	No	41	41
	Base (N)	*2,266*	*2,264*
Pattern of learning in last 3 years (both formal and informal)	Continuous learner	10	11
	Prior learning, but not current	34	33
	Current learning but no previous	15	14
	No learning	41	41
	Base (N)	*2,261*	*2,257*
Pattern of learning in last 3 years (formal only)	Continuous learner	4	4
	Prior learning, but not current	14	15
	Current learning but no previous	16	17
	No learning	65	64
	Base (N)	*2,260*	*2,255*
Pattern of learning in last 3 years (informal only)	Continuous learner	2	2
	Prior learning, but not current	27	27
	Current learning but no previous	4	3
	No learning	68	68
	Base (N)	*2,265*	*2,262*

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

[1] Tyers C, Sinclair A (2003), *Tracking Learning Outcomes: Evaluation of the Impact of UfI,* Department for Education and Skills, Research Report RR569

broader than discussed here. However, when compared with the ***learndirect*** survey results this might suggest that a number of people have entered learning in the time since their I or A/G intervention, and demonstrates the difficulties in dealing with a delay between the intervention and the survey in this type of research. However, treating this as a baseline measure (on the basis that funding for future waves of research will be available) does not appear to introduce any bias in terms of a differential impact of A/G over I. As with most of the measures examined in this report, considering movement over a longer time period would be more revealing in terms of the participation patterns of respondents.

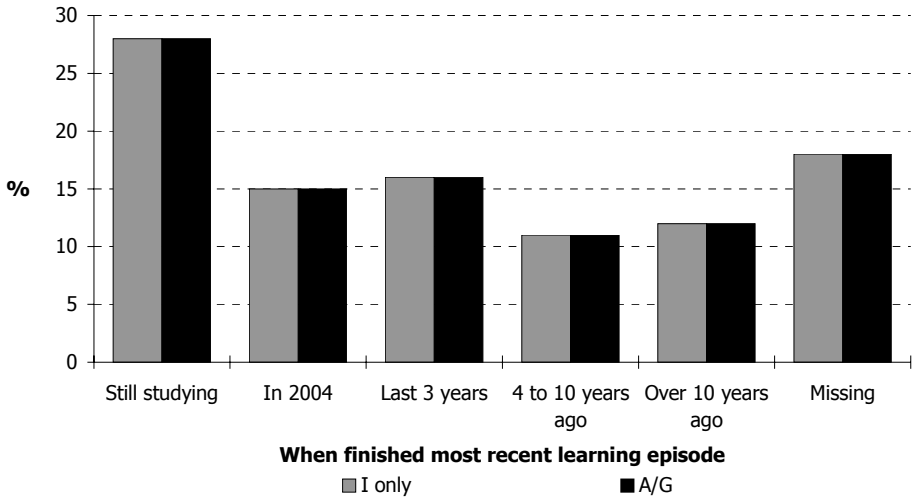
Additional details were also collected on learning patterns over the three-year period prior to the baseline survey. The extent to which individuals had been in learning continuously or more sporadically was tested, as was the extent to which this learning involved formal or informal methods[1]. Again, the profiles of the I-only recipients and A/G users are very similar across all these factors (Table 2.2) with no significant differences between the two groups. Around ten per cent of respondents had been engaged in some form of learning throughout the last three years. One-third had taken part in some learning, but had stopped by the time of the survey, whilst 15 per cent were new learners (learning at the time of the survey, but with no other learning in the preceding three years). These new learners were much more likely to be engaged in formal learning, as only three per cent of the A/G group and four per cent of I group were new learners engaged in informal instruction.

Going back further in time, respondents were asked to give the date when their last period of learning finished. There were a large number of individuals who couldn't recall this information (18 per cent of both groups), but the majority were able to give a precise date. As shown by Figure 2.1, the profiles of the two groups are almost identical. Of those who had not engaged in some form of learning in the last three years, 11 per cent of both groups had done some form of learning in the last four to ten years, but a further 12 per cent had engaged in no learning for ten years or more. The longest period for which anyone had not learnt went back to 1952.

In any future waves (if funding is found), therefore, it will be interesting to see not only the impact of IAG receipt on learning patterns overall, but also to determine what changes, if any, Advice and Guidance has made to the learning patterns of those more engaged with learning compared to the more entrenched 'non-learners'.

[1] For the purposes of this report, formal learning is that leading to a qualification or where a taught or instructed course is followed, and informal learning is all other types.

Figure 2.1: Year when last engaged in some form of study



Source: IES/MORI, 2004

2.2.1 Employer involvement

Another important consideration is the extent to which individuals have experienced some form of support or encouragement from their employer in relation to their learning. Employers can be a useful source of both financial support for learning, and careers information and advice, and it is interesting to see what, if any, involvement employers have had in the learning histories of both the groups. If there were significant differences, this would need to be taken account of in subsequent analysis of outcomes.

In this case, however, there are no significant differences between the two groups, although a slightly higher proportion of the I-only group had received employer funded training in the last three years (30 per cent compared to 25 per cent of the A/G group, Table 2.3). Employer funded training was also the most common form of learning for both groups. For those currently working, and who had engaged in recent learning, over 40 per cent of both groups had some form of employer involvement in their decision to take up learning. Again, there were no significant differences between the groups, and interestingly, there was no effect of employer size, so employees of small or medium-sized employers were just as likely to have had some employer involvement as those working for larger organisations.

Whilst there were no significant differences between the two groups on the factors outlined in Table 2.3, there were two within-group differences. The first of these should be treated with caution due to the small numbers involved, but suggests that White employees were more likely to have experienced some form of employer involvement, and this pattern held across both the I-only and the A/G recipient groups. A further difference, but one which held solely for those in receipt of I-only, was that employer involvement increased with age.

Table 2.3: How prior learning is funded and extent of employer involvement

Prior learning (last 3 yrs)		I group %	A/G group %
How training funded	Employer/future employer	30	25
	Pay themselves	24	24
	No fees required	20	22
	Training for work/Youth employment training/LSC	10	10
	Local/national government (unspecified)	7	7
	New Deal/DSS (now DWP)	9	11
	Student grant	2	2
	Other	6	6
	Base (N)	*717*	*720*
Whether employer involved in decision to take up learning	Yes	42	44
	No	58	56
	Base (N)	*370*	*368*

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

2.3 Current participation in learning

There are a substantial proportion of individuals in both samples who are currently engaged in some form of learning. In this section, the learning of these individuals is examined in more detail. In any future waves of this research (providing funding can be found) it would be interesting to examine the extent to which these learning experiences were successful (*eg* whether individuals got what they expected/wanted from them and whether they completed them). In this report (constituting what may be a baseline wave), however, it is important to note any differences in the patterns of current participation between the two groups, and also to determine the extent to which individuals are engaged in study for qualifications.

Amongst the whole sample, around one in five of both groups are currently studying for a qualification (Table 2.4). The groups are, statistically, studying for each of the qualification levels outlined in Table 2.4 in equal proportions, although slightly more of the A/G group are currently studying for a level 1 qualification, and consequently slightly less, a level 2. In any future waves, it would be interesting to see if these differences do become statistically significant, or whether they actually disappear.

Age is a significant factor within both the I-only and the A/G group on the level of current learning, and learning at level 3 or higher tails off with age. The profile of younger learners in both groups is, therefore, that they are learning at a higher level than their older peers.

Table 2.4: Details of current formal learning

Details of current learning		I group %	A/G group %
Whether currently studying for qualification	Yes	18	22
	No	81	78
	Don't know/unclear	2	2
	Base (N)	*2,117*	*2,273*
NVQ level of learning	Level 1	24	31
	Level 2	45	39
	Level 3 or higher	31	30
	Base (N)	*348*	*369*
Current level of learning	Higher than existing qualification	66	64
	Equal to existing qualification	30	25
	Lower than existing qualification	5	11
	Base (N)	*308*	*336*

Note: Multiple response question therefore does not sum to 100. Only those currently working as employee and in current learning were asked this question.

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

The main difference **between** the two groups relates to whether they are taking a higher qualification than they already hold. The I-only group are more likely to be learning at a higher level (*ie* progressing with their learning), than the A/G group at this stage. In considering future participation, therefore, it will be important to determine, if funding is found for future waves, whether A/G usage can actually reverse this result. When examining any further progression, this initial baseline should be considered.

There are many reasons why individuals might want to take a lower level qualification, particularly if they are making changes to their work or career direction. The fact that individuals seeking out more in-depth advice and Guidance, in particular, are not 'progressing' on this measure is not necessarily in any way 'negative'. Recent work for the Guidance Council[1] found, for example, that the most common reason why individuals seek out IAG is because they want to develop new skills, followed by because of a need to update existing skills. In both of these cases, the likelihood is that individuals would need to take a qualification which is lower than, or equal to, their existing qualifications.

Outside of learning, attached to qualifications, is a wide range of courses or other forms of learning that individuals are engaged in and seven per cent of both I-only and the A/G groups were active

[1] Taylor J, Byrom A, Vsickova D (2005), *Demand for, and Perceptions of, Information, Advice and Guidance: A research study conducted for the Guidance Council*, The Guidance Council

Table 2.5: Details of current informal learning

Details of current learning		I group %	A/G group %
Whether engaged in other learning	Yes	7	7
	No	93	93
	Base (N)	*2,273*	*2,273*
Type of learning*	Taught courses to help develop job skills	33	34
	Any learning/working by yourself from learning materials or on-line	30	31
	Courses/instruction/tuition in driving, playing music, art/craft, sport or practical skills	14	20
	Evening classes	8	16
	Base (N)	*182*	*194*

* multiple response, so each individual could have indicated more than one response, hence, does not sum to 100

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

learners at the time of the survey in something other than a taught course leading to a qualification (Table 2.5).

2.3.1 Employer involvement

Perhaps even more interesting than prior employer involvement is the extent to which current learners, who are also working, have an active employer interest in their learning. As for prior learning activities, the issue of employer contributions to the cost of training and their involvement in the decision to start learning were examined. Individuals were also asked to state whether they had been required to change their work hours, or take time off in order to continue their learning. This potentially gives an indication of how supportive employers are.

There are interesting differences between how individuals have funded prior learning, and how their current learning is funded (compare Tables 2.3 and 2.6). Current learners are more likely to be covering course costs themselves, and overall employer involvement in the decision to start learning is also lower. However, around one-third (slightly more for the A/G group) of employees did involve their employer in the decision to start learning. Only one-fifth of learners have changed their work hours or had time off as a result of study, although this could be a reflection of the amount of time individuals are studying (see next section). There were no significant differences between the groups on any of these measures.

Table 2.6: How current learning is funded and extent of employer involvement

Current learning		I group %	A/G group %
How training funded	Pay themselves	35	32
	No fees required	21	23
	Employer/future employer	16	16
	Local/national government (unspecified)	8	8
	Training for work/Youth employment training/LSC	7	7
	New Deal/DSS (now DWP)	7	8
	Student grant	3	1
	Other	5	4
	Base (N)	*592*	*585*
Whether employer involved in decision to take up learning	Yes	32	37
	No	69	63
	*Base (N)**	*336*	*295*
Whether have taken time off work or changed hrs to engage in learning	Yes	22	20
	No	78	80
	Base (N)	*352*	*317*

* only those currently working as employee and in current learning were asked this question

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

2.3.2 Hours spent in learning

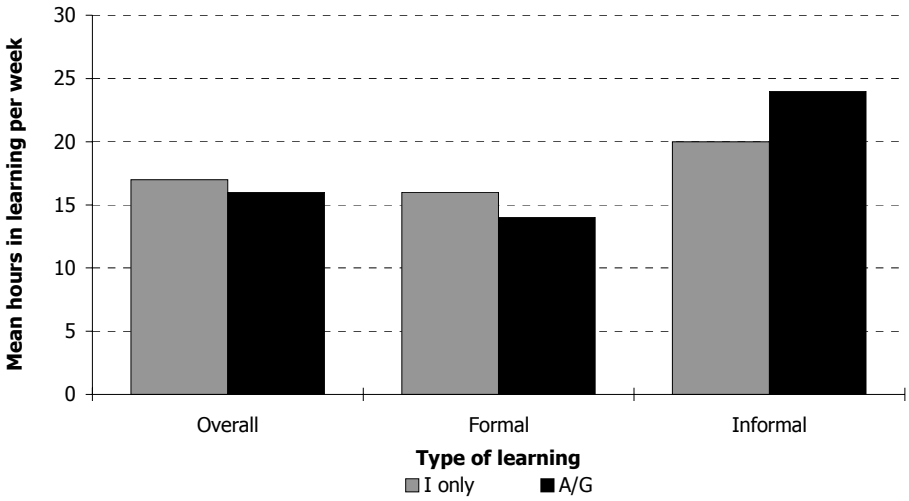
Overall, the mean time spent in learning activities per week was 17 hours for the I-only group and 16 hours for the A/G group. However, this average differed according to the type of learning individuals were engaged in. Interestingly, those engaged in informal learning spent more time in study, particularly the A/G group, with an average of 24 hours a week (Figure 2.2). One potential reason for the differing patterns of participation is that individuals without work commitments are able to spend more time studying, and they may be the ones engaged in informal study. However, analysis showed that the proportions of those in and out of work studying formally and informally were very similar and could, therefore, not account for this result.

2.4 Summary

The most important thing to note from this chapter is that the learning histories of both the I-only and the A/G recipients are almost identical, and that there were no significant differences in any of the measures relating to prior learning. Thus, if differences between the two groups do begin to emerge in any future

commissioned survey waves they can be more confidently attributed to the nature of the intervention.

Figure 2.2: Mean hours spent in learning for learners engaged in different learning types



Note: The figure is based on the average number of hours spent in learning for each type of learner/learning and the base numbers for each group varies.

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

Similar proportions hold levels 0, 1 and 2 at NVQ, and very few have gained these qualifications in the last year. However, the majority are either current or recent learners, and around 15 per cent of both groups have recently engaged with learning activities (*ie* they are currently learning, but with no other learning experiences in the last three years). Current learners are much more likely to be engaged in qualification related learning than other forms of less formal learning, and one-in-five were taking a qualification at the time of the survey.

There are two results from this chapter which may seem counterintuitive. The first of these is the fact that those in informal learning are the ones with the longest learning week (*ie* they spend the longest time in study). However, there are no differences between the I-only and the A/G recipients on this measure, although the I-only recipients had a slightly longer working week in total. The second is that I-only recipients were more likely to be taking a course at a higher level than the A/G group. However, the evidence would suggest that those seeking A/G are likely to be planning a more significant change to their lives. The likelihood that they would need to retrain to achieve this is high, and could require them to study at a lower level than their existing qualifications, but in a different area.

3. Employment and Unemployment Record

In economic terms, the participation and success of individuals in the labour market is of great importance both to them and society more generally. In addition, there are social issues relating to the greater benefits to individuals' families as well as themselves, of not only taking part in learning, but also in converting this and their broader experiences into entering, remaining in and succeeding within the labour market. In order to identify how well the provision of IAG helps individuals to attain these outcomes, it is first necessary to fully understand their employment and unemployment patterns prior to the IAG intervention in some detail. If there are significant differences in these profiles some account must be taken of this in the analysis of outcomes in any later research waves. In this chapter, therefore, prior experiences and baseline levels of participation in the labour market are presented, along with some evidence of earnings data to act as a baseline for any future waves that may be commissioned.

3.1 Current work situation

It will be important to monitor how the profiles of participation in the labour market change for both control and A/G groups over time if possible, given funding is achieved for future waves. Due to the elapsed time since the intervention and the survey, the baseline measure presented here may not be a true baseline (*ie* they may have already changed their main activity), so a variety of other factors are considered. However, examining the main activity of respondents at the time of the survey is a useful way of comparing the two groups.

The baseline levels of labour market participation by the I and A/G groups are broadly similar, and there were no significant differences between the two (Table 3.1). For both groups, just over half were in full- or part-time employment or working on a self-employed basis, and a further 23 per cent actively seeking work whilst unemployed. The remainder were either looking after the family/home (11 per cent for both groups) or outside the labour market for some other reasons (*eg* retirement or ill-health). Amongst those working for an employer, over 40 per cent of both the I-only and the A/G group worked for either a small or medium-sized enterprise, and the profiles did not significantly differ between the two groups (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Details of current activity and employer (where relevant)

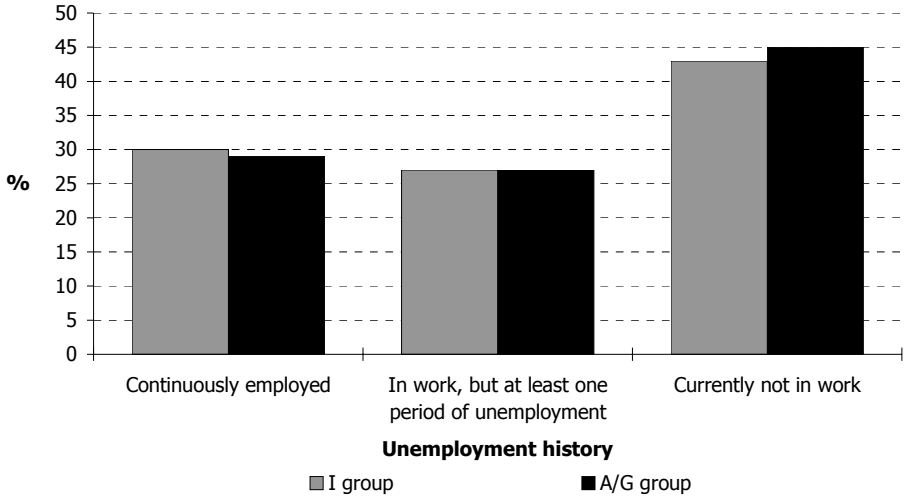
Current activity and employment		I group %	A/G group %
Main current activity	Full-time employee (30 hrs or more)	32	34
	Part-time employee (less than 30 hrs)	20	18
	Self-employed full-time	5	4
	Unemployed and available for work	23	23
	Looking after family/home	11	11
	Incapable of work due to long-term illness, injury or disability	5	5
	Doing voluntary work	1	1
	In full-time education	1	1
	Retired from paid work	1	1
	On a government or LSC programme	-	1
	Not known/unspecified	1	1
	Base (N)	*2,270*	*2,271*
Size of employer	1 to 24 employees	24	23
	25 to 249 employees	21	19
	250 or more employees	55	59
	Base (N)	*985*	*974*

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

3.2 Work and unemployment history

Further detail is available for both those in work, and those currently not working, on their recent unemployment history. Respondents who are currently working fall into two further groups (Figure 3.1), those without a recent experience of

Figure 3.1: Unemployment history (last five years)



Source: IES/MORI, 2004, Base is all respondents (4,316)

Table 3.2: Details of recent unemployment

Unemployment history		I group %	A/G group %
No. of periods of unemployment	0	30	29
	1	32	33
	2	11	10
	3 to 5	11	11
	6 or more	3	2
	Unspecified/missing	14	14
	Base (N)	*2,272*	*2,273*
Time since last unemployed (those currently working)	Less than 6 months	37	33
	Between 6 and 11 months	20	22
	1 year to 23 months	13	16
	2 years to 35 months	10	11
	3 years to 47 months	8	8
	4 years or more	13	10
	Mean time (months)	*19*	*18*
	Base (N)	*592*	*597*

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

unemployment (around 30 per cent of both I-only and A/G recipients had worked solidly throughout the last five years) and those who have had at least one period of unemployment (27 per cent of both groups). Individuals are most likely, where they have been unemployed, to have had only one period of unemployment (Table 3.2), although a large minority of both the I-only and the A/G group (whose profiles are almost identical) have had multiple periods of unemployment. The mean time elapsed since the last period of unemployment is also very similar for both groups, at just less than two years. The A/G group appear to have more recent unemployment experiences, but any differences in profile between them and the I-only group are not statistically significant.

Further consideration of the experiences of individuals currently not in work is also necessary. The results have been broken down separately between those currently unemployed, and those who are currently inactive (Table 3.3) to highlight differences in the experiences of these individuals.

Overall, unemployed individuals in both the I-only and A/G groups have been out of work for less time than the inactive group. There are no significant differences between the two groups of unemployed in terms of the length of their current period of unemployment, despite the seemingly longer average period out of work for the A/G group (34 months compared to 31 months). There were, however, significant differences between the profiles of inactivity for the I-only recipients and the A/G groups,

Table 3.3: Details of current period of not working

Length of current period out of work		I group %	A/G group %
Unemployed respondents	Less than 6 months	29	26
	Between 6 and 11 months	18	17
	1 year to 23 months	18	22
	2 years to 35 months	10	8
	3 years to 47 months	6	7
	4 years to 59 months	6	7
	5 years or more	14	14
	Mean time out of work (months)	*31*	*34*
	Base (N)	*494*	*495*
Inactive respondents	Less than 6 months	9	18
	Between 6 and 11 months	8	9
	1 year to 23 months	15	10
	2 years to 35 months	20	13
	3 years to 47 months	11	11
	4 years to 59 months	17	15
	5 years or more	21	25
	Mean time out of work (months)	*50*	*51*
	Base (N)	*223*	*256*

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

which are masked by the mean period of inactivity (around 50 months for both). The A/G group are more polarised, and a larger proportion are both recently inactive (*ie* they have been so for less than six months) and inactive for a long period (*ie* inactive for five years or more).

It would appear from these results, therefore, that overall, the two groups are fairly similar in terms of their current experiences of being out of work, but that they have slightly different profiles of inactivity as oppose to unemployment.

3.3 Income

As a large proportion of respondents were out of work at the time of the survey, questions were chosen to collect information on income rather than earnings. Individuals were, therefore, asked to disclose items such as income from benefits as well as wages. Income data can be hard to collect accurately, both because it is data that many people do not want to disclose, and also because for some it can be difficult to estimate precise levels of income, depending on their circumstances and the source of this income which could be variable across weeks/months/years. Rigorous

cleaning of income data is, therefore, an important part of the process of analysis and has been conducted here.

In this case, after cleaning, usable income data was available from 69 per cent of all cases. Data on household income was also collected in the survey, but was found to be unreliable — often stated as lower than personal income — and it was decided not to analyse this question. One possible reason for this discrepancy is that the concept of household income (*ie* personal income **plus** other income from any other family members) was not adequately explained or understood. In this section, therefore, only personal income is examined.

There are two issues relating to income that are of interest to this research. The first of these is the level of income individuals receive, and the second is the extent to which individuals rely on benefits to make up their income. In any future waves of the research it would be possible to test the extent to which there is movement on these measures, but at this stage it is only important to compare the baseline levels of the two groups. Comparing the means for the I and the A/G groups, the two seem very similar (Table 3.4), however, the A/G group earns slightly less on average. As with all income data, the mean value and the median offer different interpretations, and in this case as there are differing maximum values for the two groups, it may be more appropriate to use the median value. The median suggests that the discrepancy is larger than suggested by the mean, with a difference of over £500 a year between the groups, again I recipients have the higher baseline income.

The source of this income is also of interest. However, this was collected for sources of household as opposed to individual income. The way that this information was collected means that the amount of personal income and the source of that income may not be comparable, as individuals may be quoting sources of income that do not apply directly to them. However, this data does provide some indication of benefits dependency.

The majority of households in both groups rely on earnings (Table 3.5), which is what we might expect given their employment profiles. Also, there is a significant minority of respondents who receive child benefit payments, again, what would be expected given the number of parents in the sample. Aside from these income sources, the most common ones are Income Support, Working Families' Tax Credit and Jobseeker's Allowance,

Table 3.4: Details of yearly personal income

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Median
I group	1,535	1,000	60,000	9,344	7,800
A/G group	1,603	1,008	70,000	9,142	7,280

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

Table 3.5: Details of income sources*

	I group %	A/G group %
Earnings	72	69
Child Benefit	23	25
Income Support	15	15
Working Families' Tax Credit	13	13
Jobseeker's Allowance	8	12
Incapacity Benefit	4	5
State or private pension	3	2
Housing Benefit	4	6
Council Tax Benefit	4	5
Disability Living Allowance	4	5
Other benefits/allowances from the government	2	3
Child/spouse maintenance from former partner	1	1
Invalid Care Allowance	1	1
Other	1	1
Don't know/refused	5	4
Base (N)	*2,054*	*2,241*
In receipt of benefits**	80	78
Receiving no benefits	16	19
Insufficient information	5	3
Base (N)	*2,273*	*2,273*

* this is a multiple response question so the total of all percentages will not add up to 100

** this does not include Childcare Allowance and pensions but does include JSA

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

although a range of other benefits acted as incomes for both groups. There were few major differences between the samples, although a lower proportion of the A/G group households had earnings, and slightly more received Jobseeker's Allowance.

Further analysis reveals significant differences in the proportion of those in receipt of some form of state benefit (excluding state retirement pension and child benefit which are not means tested or evidence of low earnings), between the two groups (Table 3.5). A lower proportion of A/G users were in receipt of benefits at the time of the survey. This result, in itself, does not reveal the extent to which movement has already occurred away from benefits, following the IAG intervention. However, it does serve as a useful baseline for any future waves that may be commissioned.

3.4 Summary

Overall, the employment and unemployment profiles of the I-only and the A/G recipients are very similar, as are their earnings. This is useful to note in itself, but would be more important in positioning future movement (given that further research waves can be funded) on work-related variables, as any future changes cannot be attributed to differences between the two groups which are present prior to the intervention.

In more detail, both groups had:

- just over half of respondents in work or self-employment
- 23 per cent activity seeking work
- the greatest proportion of those currently inactive were caring for the family/home, suggesting that there are potential women returners amongst the sample
- a mean time since the last period of unemployment, for those in work of just over a year and half.

The length of time that individuals had currently been unemployed or inactive were also fairly similar across the two groups. The one significant difference was that the profile of inactive respondents differed between the I-only and the A/G group, with the A/G group more polarised between very short and very long periods of inactivity when compared to the I-only group.

The income profiles of both groups were similar, although both the mean (around £9,300 for the I group and £9,100 for the A/G group) and median estimates of average income (£7,800 for the I-only group around £7,200 for the A/G group), indicate that the A/G recipients have lower incomes. There was also a significantly higher dependency on benefits amongst the A/G group.

4. Information, Advice and Guidance Received

All respondents have used some form of formal guidance service in the year before the telephone interview for this research, as they were referred into the study by one of three state funded providers (see Chapter 1 for further details). However, prior to the survey, no (or very little) information was available on how individuals had used these services, or for what reasons. This data on the type of, and particularly level of, IAG provision utilised is a critical part of this study

Throughout the report, respondents have been assigned to either the control (the I-only group) group based on their receipt of just Information services, or the treatment (A/G group) group due to their access to more in-depth support. These distinctions were based on respondent recall of the nature of **all** IAG services they had received. Many individuals had used multiple sources of IAG, and the provider referring individuals into the research was often only one of a number of potential sources of I or A/G used in the time period of interest.

In this chapter, further data on the guidance services used by individuals is presented. This allows a more detailed baseline measure of involvement with IAG services to be developed, but also acts as a useful check of the way in which individuals have been assigned to either treatment or control. In this chapter, and in contrast to the preceding chapters, for our assumptions to be validated, there should be **differences**, not similarities between respondents categorised into the two groups.

In interpreting the results of this chapter it should be noted that respondents were being asked to recall interventions that could have happened up to one year prior to the survey, and which may have been only brief. There are, therefore, likely to be some discrepancies between the actual experiences of individuals and their recall of them. Nevertheless, in this study a range of fairly detailed information has been collected from users on what they received from IAG providers and what they thought of it, in order to develop as accurate a baseline level of use as possible.

4.1 Advice sources used

It is important to understand the ways in which individuals used IAG services and other sources of support so a pattern of usage can be developed over time and compared for different groups. Throughout this section, respondents were asked to comment on all the sources they had used, rather than concentrate on the service provision by the organisation from which their contact details were drawn.

The first thing to note is that the patterns of service usage differed significantly between the control and treatment groups (Table 4.1) due mainly to the extent to which they had used ***learndirect*** (72 per cent of the I group recalled using this source, compared to 65 per cent of A/G recipients) and careers services (19 per cent of the I group, compared to 28 per cent of A/G group). This reflects the sampling methodology (see Chapter 1), but also provides some validation of the distinction between 'treatment' and 'control'.

The service providers from which individuals' contact details were drawn differ substantially in the type of service they provide. In very broad terms, from the nature of their 'typical' level of provision, the expected intervention received would increase in intensity from ***learndirect*** through to IAG Partnerships (now re-branded as Nextsteps providers) and finally onto Jobcentre Plus, although I, A and G are available through all three. Therefore, it is interesting to compare the responses of individuals to the key question of whether they received I or A/G by their 'source' provider. However, in many cases, these providers were not the only support accessed. Despite this, the expected pattern of increasing A/G use is present amongst the three groups, as 47

Table 4.1: Type of advisor contacted

Advice source used*	I group %	A/G group %
Adviser at a school/college/other education centre	38	43
Adviser at a careers service or Connexions	19	28
Social worker, probation service or other professional	5	7
Employer	16	19
New Deal/JSA advisor/Jobcentre/Jobclub/ Benefits office	33	40
learndirect helpline	72	65
Community/religious/voluntary organisation	6	8
Family member/friend	38	39
Professional bodies/trade union/work representative	7	8
Other	2	1
Base (N)	*2,273*	*2,273*

* multiple response hence do not sum to 100

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

Table 4.2: Breakdown of I and A/G groups by provider

Provider source	*learndirect* %	IAGP %	Jobcentre Plus %	Total N
I group	53	39	32	2,066
A/G group	47	61	68	2,220
Total (N)	2,931	971	384	4,286

Note: Using this measure of control and treatment groups means that 74 individuals are excluded from analysis as they were unable to recall the nature of the intervention they had received.

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

per cent of respondents referred by ***learndirect*** had received A/G compared to 61 per cent of IAG Partnership (IAGP; now known as Nextsteps providers) referrals and 68 per cent of Jobcentre Plus users (Table 4.2).

A third measure of how individuals used IAG services is the range of providers they used (Table 4.3). Again, we might expect differences between the two groups on this measure if the original distinction between them (*ie* I versus A/G) is to hold. The groups are in fact significantly different in terms of how many different sources they have received support from, and individuals in the A/G group are more likely to have accessed a greater number of different sources.

This provides further potential validation of the distinction between 'control' and 'treatment' for this study as it could be argued either that more active guidance seekers would be those most likely to visit multiple sources of support, or that advisers without the expertise/resource to provide a more in-depth service might refer individuals onto other sources where this was available, increasing the number of sources they used. The converse could also be argued, however, *ie* that if individuals don't get what they want from source number one, they will go on to access more sources to compensate. Levels of satisfaction with the service received should therefore also be considered, and this is done in Section 4.3 later in this chapter.

Table 4.3: Number of different advice sources used

Advice sources used*	I group %	A/G group %
1	33	29
2	29	27
3	20	20
4	11	13
5	5	7
6 or more	2	5
Base (N)	*2,270*	*2,270*

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

4.2 Number of sessions involved

Having described where individuals accessed IAG, it is also worth considering what type of IAG they received. Data is available on the way the support was delivered, and the number of sessions individuals received. It is important to note that interventions from all sources are included in this analysis. Face-to-face contact and telephone contact were by far the most common, so these are the focus of this section. Only four per cent of the I-only group and six per cent of A/G group had received support through written contact, and even fewer via email (less than two per cent in each case). These latter figures may seem low when compared to the results of a survey undertaken by the LSC[1], which revealed that 13 per cent of users of the then IAG Partnerships received services by email, and 33 per cent received help through the mail. They are likely, however, to reflect the different approaches of the providers involved in the survey, particularly the large number of respondents using ***learndirect.***

The first point of interest is how many contacts individuals had with advisers overall, whatever the delivery method. It is important to note that, through some respondents' inability to recall how many sessions they had received, there is a significant minority (but more in the I-only group, as might be expected if the intensity of their intervention was lower), that did not specify having received any sessions in any medium, largely because they could not even make a best guess at how many they had received. These individuals are categorised as having zero contacts (Table 4.4). This is despite the fact that all individuals were able to recollect using at least one source of IAG, even if that was only family and friends (see Table 4.4). Individuals who could recall relying solely on family and friends for support are also categorised as having had no formal sessions for this analysis.

Bearing in mind these difficulties with the data, however, there are some interesting trends. There were significant differences between the groups on the total number of recalled sessions from all advice sources, and the A/G group were more likely to have had a higher number of contacts than the I-only group (Table 4.4). The A/G group were also more likely than the I-only group to have received more face-to-face meetings and more telephone sessions. These trends hold across all three 'source' providers.

[1] Milburn, Truman, LaCourt (2004), *The Impact of Adult Information and Advice – A Survey*, for the Learning and Skills Council

Table 4.4: Extent of different types of support session

Type of formal contact	Number of contacts	I group %	A/G group %
All contact*	0	34	22
	1	21	19
	2	16	15
	3-5	16	20
	6-10	7	11
	11 or more	7	12
	Base (N)	*2,237*	*2,225*
Face-to-face meetings*	0	56	37
	1	17	19
	2	10	14
	3-5	9	15
	6-10	4	6
	11 or more	4	8
	Base (N)	*2,239*	*2,226*
Telephone sessions*	0	69	67
	1	11	8
	2	9	9
	3-5	7	10
	6-10	2	3
	11 or more	1	3
	Base (N)	*2,273*	*2,273*

* significant difference

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

4.3 Why was help sought and were needs met?

In addition to the nature of IAG inputs, the survey also gathered information on why individuals sought support (Table 4.5), and again the analysis included interventions from all sources utilised. For both groups, the most common reason for seeking help was to find out about learning opportunities (44 per cent of I users and 40 per cent of A/G users). The second most common reason for seeking help for the A/G group was to find out about career/job opportunities, followed by finding out about training. Recent work by the Guidance Council[1] asked a very similar question to service users, although the categories used in the two studies are not the same, making exact comparison difficult. In the Guidance Council work most individuals focused on some form of skill

[1] Taylor J, Byrom A, Vsickova D (2005), *Demand for, and Perceptions of, Information, Advice and Guidance: A research study conducted for the Guidance Council*, The Guidance Council

Table 4.5: Reasons for seeking help

Reason for seeking help	I group %	A/G group %
Find out about learning opportunities*	44	41
Find out about career/job opportunities*	30	36
Find out about training opportunities*	31	28
Advice on what to do next	8	8
Help planning future after personal changes*	2	3
Help planning future after work changes	2	2
Base (N)	*2,273*	*2,273*

* variables have significant difference between I and A/G group on proportion seeking help for that reason

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

development. The most common reasons for seeking IAG quoted by these respondents were to learn new skills, get some qualifications or update current skills, so the results from the two studies do seem to be broadly comparable.

Beyond these overall figures, however, there are a number of differences between the two groups, despite small numbers in some cases. The A/G group were significantly more likely to have sought help with:

- finding out about career/job opportunities
- planning their future after personal changes.

The I group, however, were significantly more likely to have wanted help with:

- finding out about training opportunities
- finding out about learning opportunities.

The general trend, therefore, is that where the reason for seeking help related to learning or training, individuals seem more likely to have gained this from sources of Information. Career decisions, in contrast, seem more likely to have been supported by the provision of A/G.

More important potentially, however, than why individuals sought help from IAG providers in the first place, is the extent to which the services they received actually delivered to their expectations, offering them what they wanted. Respondents were asked to detail whether they had in fact received the help they sought, and if not whether they had received something different. This latter measure was included as the guidance process often requires advisers to offer some direction to individuals which may be outside their initial expectations but which is a positive experience nevertheless.

Table 4.6: Reasons for seeking support, and what received

	I only			A/G		
	% with reason for seeking	Whether got it	Whether those who didn't get it got something else instead	% with reason for seeking	Whether got it	Whether those who didn't get it got something else instead
		Yes			Yes	
*Find out about career/job opportunities**	*30*	58	8	*36*	72	10
Find out about training opportunities x*	*31*	62	8	*28*	71	15
*Find out about learning opportunities**	*44*	68	9	*41*	77	13
Advice on what to do next*	*8*	60	10	*8*	76	15
*Help planning future after personal changes**	*2*	27	4	*3*	74	21
Help planning future after work changes*	*2*	42	0	*2*	71	33
Base (N)	*2,273*	*a*	*b*	*2,273*	*a*	*b*

Note: Variables written in italics have significant difference between I and A/G group on proportion seeking help for that reason.

* significant difference between I and A/G group on proportion who got the help they sought

x significant difference between I and A/G group on proportion getting other help if they do not receive the help they sought

a Base is number seeking particular type of help

b Base is number seeking particular type of help who did not feel that they had received it

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

It is already clear that the reasons for seeking advice differ between the two groups (Table 4.4), however, the evidence also suggests that, despite these differences, those who had received A/G were significantly more likely to believe that the service had delivered to these expectations (Table 4.6). This was true for individuals seeking every type of assistance. In addition, amongst those respondents claiming that they had **not** received what they had initially sought, the group who had received A/G were more likely to have received some other form of support.

4.4 Satisfaction with help received

One final measure of the IAG process is whether individuals are satisfied with the service they received, and again these figures are a composite reflection of their satisfaction with all sources used. Individuals were asked to rate, using a five point scale (where one equals very dissatisfied and five equals very satisfied),

how satisfied they were with a number of service elements, as well as the overall service they received[1].

The overall satisfaction levels of the two groups were both relatively high, although the A/G group gave more positive ratings (differences which were statistically significant) on all aspects of the service (Table 4.7).

The results for the A/G group were very similar to the overall levels of satisfaction found amongst service users by recent work by the Guidance Council[2] (86 per cent of tracking study participants were either very or fairly satisfied compared to 89 per cent of the Guidance Council sample), and from work for the LSC[1] (which showed that 82 per cent of service users were at least quite satisfied with the service they had received), although the satisfaction levels of the I-only group were somewhat lower (72 per cent were either very or fairly satisfied).

Individuals were also asked to comment on various aspects of the service they had received. Again, there were differences in the

Table 4.7: Satisfaction with IAG received

Aspect of service	I group (mean score)*	A/G group (mean score)*
Overall help received***	3.8	4.3
Ease of getting appointment***	4.1	4.4
Ease of speaking to someone on phone***	4.3	4.5
Extent to which help met their needs***	3.6	4.1
Way in which they were dealt with (*ie* whether welcoming/friendly)***	4.4	4.7
Extent to which help was useful in planning next steps***	3.5	4.1
*Base (N)***	*2,273*	*2,273*

* scores were out of 5, where 5 = very satisfied and 1 = very dissatisfied

** please note that there were a number of missing values on these variables because of 'Don't knows' and 'Not applicables'

*** significant difference between I and A/G group

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

[1] The satisfaction ratings are not broken down by individual provider as individuals could have used a number of sources and were only asked to give an overall rating to all the support they recalled receiving.

[2] Taylor J, Byrom A, Vsickova D (2005), *Demand for, and Perceptions of, Information, Advice and Guidance: A research study conducted for the Guidance Council*, The Guidance Council

satisfaction levels of the two groups, and in all cases A/G recipients were more positive (Table 4.6). However, it should be noted that some of these factors will be directly related to the type of provider used, rather than the intervention *per se*.

4.5 Summary

All respondents were referred from one of three providers, but in addition to having contact with that provider many also had contact with other sources of support. The distinction between users of I-only and A/G services is based on respondent recall of all the support they have received. If the distinction between control and treatment group is to be valid, the ways in which they used sources of IAG should differ. Throughout the chapter, there were significant differences between the two groups, and these differences provide support for the way in which the two groups have been defined.

There were differences between the two groups in the types of provider they had used (*eg* the I group were more likely to have used ***learndirect***), and the number of different sources used (A/G recipients had used more sources on average). Face-to-face contact with advisers was the most common for both groups, but A/G users had, on average, received more sessions than the I-only group. The reasons for seeking help also differed, with A/G recipients more likely to be seeking support with work or personal changes, whilst I-only users were more likely to seek help with training or learning opportunities. The A/G group were also more satisfied with the service that they had received, and were more likely to have received the support they were looking for, or if not to have received help with something else.

Overall, therefore, individuals categorising themselves as having received A and/or G, compared to those stating that they had received I only, are more frequent users of multiple sources of IAG support and are more likely to get what they want from the services they have received.

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[1] Milburn, Truman, LaCourt (2004), *The Impact of Adult Information and Advice – A Survey*, for the Learning and Skills Council

5. Attitudes to Work and Learning

Measuring progress in work and learning over time needs to take account of an individual's position within the labour market, and level of qualification, but this alone is not enough. It is also necessary to consider the softer outcomes which reflect how individuals actually feel about their situation, as it may not always be appropriate to expect the receipt of IAG to result in 'progress' on the harder measures, due to the complexity of career paths that individuals may need to take to reach their final goals. Softer outcomes also need to be monitored. This chapter presents individual attitudes towards, and levels of satisfaction with, various aspects of work and learning. Future changes to these levels for both groups would be a useful focus for any future research waves, if commissioned.

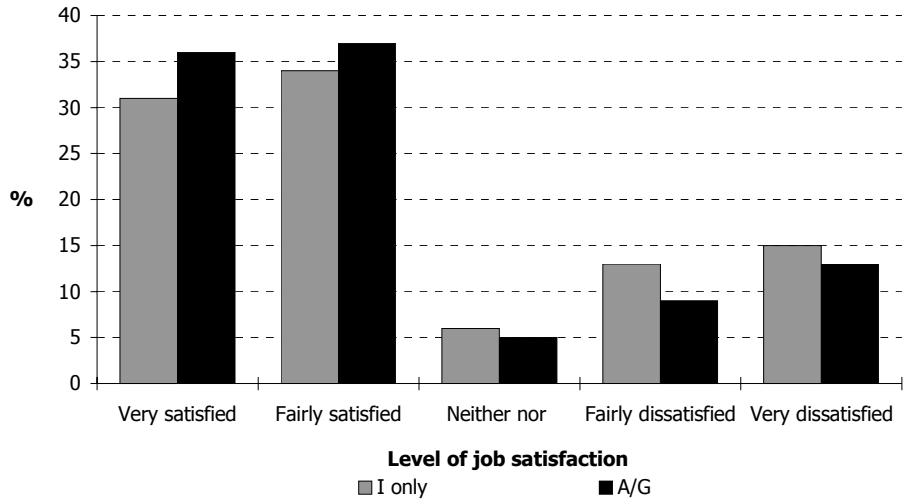
5.1 Job satisfaction

Respondents' satisfaction with their current job was measured, where relevant, according to a five point scale where one equals very dissatisfied and five equals very satisfied. As the sample for this tracking study involved individuals who are not currently working, it was also necessary to develop a broader measure of satisfaction, so individuals with some work history were asked to rate (using the same scale) how satisfied they were currently with what they had achieved so far in either current or previous jobs.

Overall, and for both the A/G and I group, individuals were broadly positive about their experiences (Figures 5.1 and 5.2), with around 70 per cent of respondents stating that they are either very or fairly satisfied with their position on each question. This pattern is what would be expected from a range of other workforce research (where a positively skewed dispersion around a central mode is normally evident), but differs substantially from the lower levels of satisfaction amongst adult employed people seeking guidance found in comparative research[1].

[1] Killeen J, White M (2000*), The Impact of Careers Guidance on Adult Employed People,* Department for Education and Employment, Research Report RR26

Figure 5.1: Levels of job satisfaction (those in work only)



Source: IES/MORI, 2004 (Base: 1,257 I-only and 1,232 A/G)

Figure 5.2: Level of satisfaction with current/prior work achievements (those with some work history)

Source: IES/MORI, 2004 (Base: 2,151 I-only and 2,141 A/G)

Notably, the A/G group are significantly more satisfied on both measures (Table 5.1). There are difficulties, however, in drawing conclusions at this baseline stage about any differences in attitudes between the two groups. As some time had elapsed between the time of the intervention and the time of the survey, the main issue is that the attitudes presented here are not true baseline data, *ie* there is no way of knowing how the groups would have responded to these questions **before** they received IAG. Attributing differences in levels of satisfaction to IAG services is, therefore, not really possible, as the attitudinal data presented here does not illustrate changes in respondents' situations pre- and post-intervention, but only satisfaction following the intervention rather than prior to it.

Table 5.1: Satisfaction with current and/or prior jobs

	Mean satisfaction score**	
Level of satisfaction with work situation	**I group**	**A/G group**
Satisfaction with current job (those in work only)*	3.5	3.7
Base (N)	*1,257*	*1,231*
Satisfaction with achievements in current/past work (those with some work history only)*	3.5	3.6
Base (N)	*2,151*	*2,141*

* significant difference between I group and A/G group

** scores were out of 5, where 5 = very satisfied and 1 = very dissatisfied

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

In any future waves that may be commissioned at a later date, changes to attitudes could be tracked, providing more interesting data (but data about which is still difficult to make causal attributions), but reporting on this wave can only be descriptive. It may also be necessary to weight the data in any future waves (if commissioned) so that these differences evident in this first survey are removed in any future analysis.

Individuals' current labour market activity was a strong indicator of their levels of satisfaction with their labour market achievements within both the I-only group and the A/G group (Table 5.2). The most notable difference was between those seeking work (*ie* those classified as 'semi-active' in this study), and the other groups, with individuals both active and inactive giving higher satisfaction ratings. Comparisons between the I-only and A/G group also reveal that the biggest difference is between individuals active in the labour market, those in the A/G group have a significantly higher satisfaction score than those in the I-only group. It is interesting, therefore, to note from this that the inactive group are not significantly less satisfied than those currently working. As would be expected, however, individuals, who are not working now but who are actively seeking job opportunities are less satisfied with their achievements to date than either of the other two groups.

Table 5.2: Satisfaction with current/prior jobs – by labour market situation

	Mean satisfaction score*	
Labour market situation**	**I group**	**A/G group**
Active	3.5	3.8
Semi-active	3.2	3.4
Inactive	3.4	3.5
Base (N)	*2,151*	*2,141*

Note: scores were out of 5, where 5 = very satisfied and 1 = very dissatisfied

* significant difference between I group and A/G group

** significant difference within each group on labour market situation

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

Table 5.3: Satisfaction with current job – those in work only

	Mean satisfaction score*	
Aspect of job	**I group**	**A/G group**
Being able to use skills and abilities**	4.0	4.2
Job security**	3.9	4.0
The flexibility of hours worked**	3.9	4.0
The number of hours worked**	3.9	4.0
The variety of work**	3.6	3.9
How interesting the work is**	3.6	3.8
The total pay, including any overtime or bonuses**	3.2	3.4
Opportunities for career development**	3.1	3.4
Base (N)	*1,257*	*1,231*

* scores were out of 5, where 5 = very satisfied and 1 = very dissatisfied

** significant difference between I group and A/G group

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

Having obtained an overall measure of satisfaction from those in work, further detail was obtained on levels of satisfaction with various aspects of this job (Table 5.3). On all these measures, the balance was for more individuals to be satisfied than dissatisfied, but for both groups, the extent to which they were able to use their skills and abilities was the aspect on which satisfaction levels were highest (the mean for the A/G group was 4.2 and the I group 4.0 out of a possible score of 5). Across all the factors measured, individuals having received A/G were more satisfied than individuals in receipt of I-only.

5.2 Attitudes towards learning

In addition to indicators of satisfaction with work, and in order to have some measure of satisfaction from all respondents, even in the absence of a recent work history, individuals were asked to rate how satisfied they felt with their previous/current learning (Table 5.4). For both the A/G and I group, overall satisfaction with current/previous learning is positively skewed, with around 70 per cent rating themselves as fairly or very satisfied. However, those who had received A/G were significantly more likely to be satisfied with their learning experiences than those who had received I only.

Respondents were also asked to describe their attitudes to learning, stating the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a range of statements on a scale of one to five (where one equals disagree and five equals strongly agree). The negative statements in the original survey have been reversed so that all the statements are positively worded. As such, in all cases a **high score denotes a positive attitude.**

Table 5.4: Satisfaction with current/previous learning

Question	Level of satisfaction	I group %	A/G group %
Satisfaction with current/ previous learning/training (all)*	Very satisfied	21	28
	Fairly satisfied	46	47
	Neither/nor	8	7
	Fairly dissatisfied	14	10
	Very dissatisfied	9	7
	Don't know	2	2
	Base (N)	*2,272*	*2,273*

* significant difference between I and A/G group

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

Attitudes to learning (Table 5.5) were again positive. In particular, there was support for statements about the enjoyment to be gained from learning and the importance of learning in getting a good job. In contrast, the statements with the most negative responses related to the extent to which employers take account of learning, or that information about the range of courses available is easy to find.

Comparing the I and A/G groups, we see that their responses are broadly similar. However, those who had received A/G were significantly more likely than the I-only group to agree that learning about new things is enjoyable, that you are more likely to get a better job if you have done some learning, and crucially, that information about the range of courses available is easy to find.

Table 5.5: Attitudes towards learning (all)

	Mean attitudinal score*	
Attitudinal statement	**I group**	**A/G group**
Learning about new things is enjoyable**	4.4	4.5
You're more likely to get a better job if you have done some learning**	4.4	4.5
I'm interested in doing more learning	4.4	4.4
Learning is for people like me	4.3	4.3
You need qualifications to get anywhere these days	3.8	3.8
I have the confidence to learn new skills	3.8	3.8
I see paying for my own learning as an investment	3.8	3.8
Information about the range of courses available is easy to find**	3.4	3.7
Employers usually take notice of the learning you've done	2.9	2.8
Base (N)	*2,273*	*2,273*

* where score is out of 5, with Strongly disagree = 1 and Strongly agree = 5

** significant difference between I group and A/G group

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

5.3 Plans for the future

In any tracking study, monitoring change over time is the main aim, if a number of research waves can be funded. At this baseline stage, to provide early indicators of change, individuals were asked about whether they planned to make any changes to their career and learning in the future (Table 5.6). Around one-third or more of respondents were planning to make each of a range of work-related changes (40 per cent planned to change their employer, 32 per cent planned to do the same work at a higher level, and 37 per cent planned to change the type of work they do). It would be interesting to see in any future research waves how many go on to make these changes.

Table 5.6: Future plans for work and learning

Aspect of work/learning		I group %	A/G group %
Plans over next 12 months (asked of all employees)*	Leave current employer	27	25
	Become self-employed	6	8
	Stay with current employer	56	62
	Other	3	2
	Don't know	6	4
	Base (N)	*1,155*	*1,140*
Do you plan to: (asked of all in work)*	Change type of work	39	35
	Do same work at higher level	29	34
	Do same work at same level	28	29
	Other	1	1
	Don't know	3	2
	Base (N)	*1,255*	*1,231*
Planning to study in the future (asked of all)*	Yes, full-time	14	16
	Yes, part-time	63	58
	No	13	15
	Other	1	1
	Don't know	10	10
	Base (N)	*2,272*	*2,273*
Likelihood of making a change	Very likely	42	43
	Fairly likely	37	37
	Not very likely	12	11
	Not at all likely	6	6
	Don't know	3	3
	Base (N)	*1,964*	*1,941*

* significant difference between I group and A/G group

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

Comparing the I and A/G groups we can see that those who had received A/G were significantly more likely to plan to stay with their current employer and do the same work at a higher level than those who had received I only. It is possible that this is because those who received A/G were more motivated to change their situation and had, therefore, done so earlier than those in the I group, although because of the nature of the data the reasons for this result are not clear. There were also significant differences in plans for future learning. Whilst the A/G group was more likely to take up full-time learning, they were less likely to plan to take up part-time learning in the future.

Those who had said that they would make a change (either in terms of their job or learning) were then asked to rate the likelihood of making a change. There were no differences between the I and A/G groups in this respect.

5.4 Perceived capacity to make a change

Making plans for the future, however, is only one aspect of change. The extent to which individuals actually feel able to change their situation is another important factor in how likely they are to make changes in the future.

Respondents were, therefore, asked to rate:

- how easy they find it to plan their career or learning
- how well informed they feel about the opportunities out there for them
- how confident they feel about making the move into the job/learning they want.

Ratings were made on a four point scale, where a high score is more positive (*ie* easier, more informed, more confident) and the results are presented in Table 5.7. Overall, the scores were more positive than negative for both groups, although planning a future career was the aspect that received the lowest marks.

Comparing the I and A/G groups, we can see that those who received A/G found planning their future steps easier and felt more informed and confident about making the next moves. This was true both in terms of their future career and future learning. The difference between the two groups was significant on all of these variables.

Table 5.7: Perceived capacity to change job or learning*

Aspect of future planning	Mean attitude score** I group	A/G group
Career (all)		
Overall, how easy do you find it to plan your future career***	2.1	2.2
How well informed do you feel about the job opportunities available to you***	2.5	2.7
How confident do you feel about getting into the kind of job that you want***	2.8	2.9
Base (N)	*2,273*	*2,273*
Learning (all)		
Overall, how easy do you find it to plan your future learning needs***	2.4	2.5
How well informed do you feel about the learning opportunities available to you***	2.6	2.9
How confident do you feel about getting into the kind of learning opportunities that you want***	2.8	3.0
Base (N)	*2,273*	*2,273*

* please note that there was a high number of 'do not know' responses to each question

** where score is out of 4, 1 = not at all and 4 = very

*** significant difference between I group and A/G group

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

5.5 Any steps taken

This section begins to look at the actions individuals have taken since their I or A/G intervention. All those who stated that they were planning to make changes to their job or learning were asked whether they had made any steps forwards with these plans. A number of respondents had already made some progress (Table 5.8). Nearly half (48 per cent) had either started or enrolled on a course since the intervention, and just over one-fifth (22 per cent) had applied for a training course. Six per cent stated that they had applied for a job.

Table 5.8: Actual steps taken with plans

	I group %	A/G group %
Have started/enrolled on a course	48	48
Applied for training/learning course(s)	22	23
Got information on training/learning courses	14	13
Applied for a job	7	6
Got information on jobs/careers	5	6
Other	11	12
Haven't taken any action yet	2	2
Base (N)	*1,965*	*1,941*

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

There were no significant differences between the I and A/G groups, however, it may be too early for individuals to have progressed very far with their plans, so future research waves will need to re-examine these data over time.

5.6 Summary

In the absence of true baseline data, it is difficult to determine the contribution of A/G interventions to the differences in attitudes presented in this chapter. However, it is clear that, on the whole, where differences do exist, the A/G group tend to be more positive about their current situation, learning in general and about making changes to their situation in the future, although they are no more likely to have progressed with their plans for the future at this stage.

The positive attitudes of the A/G group, as compared to the I-only group need to be interpreted with caution for one further reason. It is possible that there are some factors, as yet unmeasurable, that make the A/G group generally more positive in their responses and outlook. This may therefore be true of all responses to the survey, rather than just their responses in this section. If future research waves are commissioned, it will be important for this to be revisited.

6. Work and Learning Outcomes

The ultimate aim of this research is to track the longer-term outcomes of IAG recipients, given that funding can be found for successive waves. However, at this stage, and as there was up to a year between the receipt of I or A/G and the time of the survey, there was some scope for individuals to have already made changes to their work and learning situation (*ie* to have experienced some intermediate outcomes). Individuals were asked to talk about any changes that had occurred since the intervention **as a result of the help they had received**. They were also asked the extent to which they felt that the I or A/G was instrumental in their making the change. Individuals were asked to think of the total contribution of the I or A/G they had received over the last year, which included inputs from multiple providers for many. These are necessarily subjective measures, but it is still valid to compare the responses of the two groups.

6.1 Differences between I and A/G groups

Individuals were asked to state which, if any, of a range of different possible outcomes, basically changes to their work or learning situation, they had experienced. The results are presented in Table 6.1, which shows both the proportion of each groups with each of the outcomes (the figures in *italics*), and also the proportion of those taking that action who felt that it would not have happened without the I or A/G intervention (the figures in **bold**).

The main points to draw from this table are that the A/G group have taken actions on all the possible outcomes in greater proportions than the I-only group. These differences are significant in all cases.

It is also clear that, in relation to all of the outcomes, more of the A/G group think that they would not have taken such action without experiencing the intervention.

Table 6.1: Employment and training outcomes

	I group				A/G group			
		Whether would have done anyway*				Whether would have done anyway*		
Outcome	**% with outcome**	**Definitely/ probably not**	**Definitely/ probably**	**Don't know**	**% with outcome**	**Definitely/ probably not**	**Definitely/ probably**	**Don't know**
*Improved existing skills/learnt new skills***	*35*	**27**	71	2	*45*	**32**	67	1
Enrolled on a course	*30*	**24**	75	0	*36*	**28**	71	1
Working towards a qualification	*29*	**26**	74	1	*35*	**32**	67	2
*Learnt how to write a CV/ letters/fill out forms***	*23*	**30**	69	1	*35*	**36**	63	1
Started looking for a job	*26*	**16**	83	1	*34*	**16**	83	1
*Took part in training course***	*25*	**29**	69	1	*34*	**35**	64	1
Started applying for jobs	*23*	**12**	87	1	*33*	**13**	86	1
Improved reading/writing skills	*18*	**29**	69	2	*27*	**31**	67	2
Improvement in English speech	*15*	**23**	75	2	*25*	**28**	69	3
Changed to a different type of work	*16*	**27**	72	2	*22*	**32**	67	2
*Obtained a qualification***	*15*	**28**	71	2	*21*	**35**	64	1
Got a job	*13*	**15**	84	0	*20*	**21**	77	2
Offered more job interviews	*9*	**33**	63	5	*18*	**39**	58	3
Had a performance related pay rise	*5*	**29**	67	4	*8*	**29**	69	2
Achieved a promotion at work	*4*	**22**	74	5	*7*	**28**	66	6
Set up own business	*3*	**21**	72	7	*4*	**24**	75	1
Base (N)	*2,273*				*2,273*			

Note: Variables written in italics have significant difference between I and A/G group on proportion who have made a change which they attribute to the intervention.

* these percentages refer to proportion of those with this outcome

** significant difference between I and A/G group on extent to which would have definitely not made the change without the intervention

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

However, there is less evidence of difference between the two groups here as there were significant differences in relation to only four actions:

- taking part in a training course
- obtaining a qualification
- improving existing skills/learning new skills and learning
- how to write a CV/write cover letters/fill out forms.

Therefore, individuals in receipt of A/G were more likely to feel that the intervention had helped them to take action that they would not have done anyway in relation to learning activities and/or activities that may lead to job changes, rather than actual job changes themselves.

6.2 Further differences

In addition to the overall comparisons made in Section 6.1, the same outcomes were examined across the different demographic groups to determine whether some groups of individuals were more likely to have made changes than others. The headlines from this analysis are presented here. The analysis in this section, mainly because of the numbers involved, examines only whether individuals are more likely to have taken an action, and not whether they attribute this action to the IAG they have received.

Gender

The effect of Advice and Guidance held for both men and women across all variables, except setting up their own business. Neither men nor women were more likely to set up their own business if they had received A/G compared to I only.

Age

In the majority of cases, the differences in outcomes for those in the I group and those in the A/G group were significant across all age groups. Those cases where the effect of age was apparent are as follows:

- Those aged 20 to 25 were not significantly more likely to be working towards a qualification if they were in the A/G group than in the I group, which may be because of the high proportion of this age group already in qualification-based training. They were also no more likely to set up their own business.
- The effects of A/G on getting a job or gaining a performance-related pay rise were not significant for those aged 26 to 35,

which may indicate that this age group is already advantaged in terms of gaining these outcomes.

- Those aged 36 to 50 were not significantly more likely to obtain a qualification if they were in the A/G group than if they were in the I group, or to set up their own business.
- The outcomes for older adults were not significantly different between the I and A/G group on most of the outcomes, suggesting that Advice and Guidance has less impact on the work and learning outcomes of these clients[1]. This result is likely to relate to the fact that this group is less likely to be engaged with both the labour market and with learning generally, or that they find it more difficult to make changes for whatever reason. However, there was a significant impact of A/G on behaviours related to work and learning, including applying for jobs, getting a job, taking part in a training course and learning how to write a CV/fill out application forms.

Ethnicity

The data was analysed across four broad ethnic groups (because of small numbers) — White, mixed/other (including a small number of Chinese), Asian and Black. The data suggests that, at least at this initial stage, the impact of Advice and Guidance is greater for White clients than it is for those from minority ethnic groups. It should be noted, however, that the small number of respondents from some minority groups meant that it was not possible to look for significant differences across some variables. In particular, the number of mixed/Chinese/other was too small to analyse by 'getting a job', 'achieving a promotion at work', 'achieving a performance-related pay rise' or 'offered more job interviews'. The number of Asian respondents was too small to analyse by 'achieving a promotion at work', 'achieving a performance-related pay rise' or 'offered more job interviews'. All non-White groups were too small to analyse by 'set up my own business'.

The following section describes the effects of ethnic group in detail:

- Black respondents who had received A/G were no more likely to have made any of the changes related to careers than those who had received I. These included looking for a job, applying for a job, getting a job, changing to a different type of work, achieving a promotion at work, achieving a performance-related pay rise and being offered more job interviews.

[1] Please note that the numbers were too small to analyse for this group on 'achieving a promotion', 'getting a performance-related pay rise', 'setting up own business' or 'being offered more job interviews'.

- Asian respondents who had received A/G were no more likely to have got a job than those who had received I-only.
- In relation to training outcomes, both Black and Asian respondents who had received A/G were no more likely to have taken part in a training course or improved existing skills/learnt new skills than those who had received I-only.
- Black and mixed/other respondents who had received A/G were no more likely to think that they had improved their reading and writing skills as a result of the intervention than those who had received I-only.
- Mixed/other respondents who had received A/G were no more likely to feel that they had improved their English language skills or learnt how to write a CV/cover letter than those who had received I-only.
- None of the non-White groups were significantly more likely to have enrolled on a training course, to be working towards a qualification or to have obtained a qualification if they had received A/G than if they had received I-only.

Learning history

Those who did not have any learning experience over the last three years were no more likely to say that they had changed to a different type of work or set up their own business as a result of A/G than those who had received I-only.

6.3 Summary

The headline results from this chapter are that individuals in receipt of Advice and Guidance are more likely than those in receipt of just I to have made changes to their life as a result of the intervention. This is true for all of the possible changes examined in the survey. However, at the time of the first survey some of these differences were relatively small, despite being statistically significant. There was less evidence of differences between the groups for those who had made a change in terms of whether they felt that they would have done this without having received the intervention. However, where there were differences, again, the A/G recipients were the ones most likely to feel that they would not have made the change without the intervention.

These results hold across most of the different demographic groups, but there are some groups who appear to be less likely to have made changes, although there are differences in the patterns of change for these groups according to different aspects of work and learning, as might be expected. Broadly speaking, however, the oldest workers are less likely to have made changes, as are some ethnic groups and individuals who have no recent learning history. It remains to be seen in further analysis how these factors

interact with one another, or whether they hold over time. It will also be important to monitor the extent to which the degree of difference between the two groups grows over time.

7. Changes to Confidence and Motivation

As well as learning and work outcomes, there are a whole set of other possible changes individuals may have felt have happened to them or their lives. Chapter 6 focused on the outcomes that are perhaps furthest down the impact 'chain', *ie* 'hard' outcomes. In this chapter, changes which may be instrumental in attaining these hard outcomes are considered. It could be argued that for some individuals the type of change discussed next has to happen before they are ready to make more significant moves. Therefore, these outcomes, for some, are potentially more likely to occur sooner after receipt of an IAG intervention than the outcomes discussed earlier.

For ease of description, throughout the rest of this chapter when it is stated that an outcome has been achieved, this means that an outcome which is **attributed to the help received** has been achieved.

7.1 Differences between I and A/G groups

Table 7.1 presents the results of analysis of softer outcomes relating to confidence, motivation and opportunity awareness, arranged with the most common for the A/G group appearing at the top of the table. The most common outcome for both groups was that they were more aware of learning/training opportunities following their IAG intervention. Overall, the same patterns exist as for the harder outcomes (see Chapter 6), in that the A/G group are significantly more likely to feel that they have experienced each of the outcomes as a result of the intervention. However, whilst there are greater proportions in the A/G group having experienced each of the changes, the way in which the different changes rank (*ie* in order of most common to least common in Table 7.1) is almost identical for both groups.

In most cases, the A/G group were also more likely to state that they would not have made the changes without the intervention. The differences were significant on four variables, therefore A/G recipients were more likely to feel that without this intervention they would not have gained:

- confidence in ability to get a job
- confidence when attending job interviews

- new friends/meeting people in a similar situation
- confidence generally about themselves and what they can achieve.

Table 7.1: Employment and training outcomes

	I group				A/G group			
		Whether would have done anyway*				Whether would have done anyway*		
	% with outcome	Definitely/ probably not	Definitely/ probably	Don't know	% with outcome	Definitely/ probably not	Definitely/ probably	Don't know
More aware of training/learning opportunities	*54*	**41**	58	2	*70*	**41**	58	1
Feel motivated to do some training/ take a course	*54*	**38**	61	1	*66*	**41**	59	1
More confident about ability to do learning/training	*53*	**29**	70	1	*66*	**31**	68	1
Know where to look for suitable courses	*51*	**28**	71	2	*63*	**29**	70	1
*Feel more confident generally***	*46*	**27**	72	1	*61*	**35**	64	1
More aware of job options available	*41*	**35**	64	1	*55*	**38**	60	1
Clearer about what they want from career	*41*	**28**	71	2	*54*	**33**	66	1
Know where to look for suitable jobs	*39*	**28**	71	1	*54*	**30**	69	1
*More confident in ability to get a job***	*39*	**28**	70	1	*52*	**34**	64	2
Feel motivated to look for work	*38*	**20**	79	1	*52*	**22**	76	1
*Made new friends in similar situation***	*32*	**34**	65	2	*46*	**40**	59	1
*More confident when attending job interviews***	*29*	**24**	75	1	*41*	**33**	65	2
More confident about doing voluntary work	*30*	**31**	68	1	*41*	**34**	64	2
Widened geographical search area	*19*	**30**	67	3	*30*	**34**	65	1
Base (N)	*2,273*				*2,273*			

Note: Variables written in italics have significant difference between I and A/G group on proportion who have made a change which they attribute to the intervention.

* these percentages refer to proportion of those with this outcome

** significant difference between I and A/G group on extent to which would have definitely not made the change without the intervention

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

7.2 Further differences

These further outcomes were examined across different demographic groups to see whether the intervention was having more impact on some groups than on others. Please note again that whilst this section describes the difference in outcomes achieved, participants were asked only to discuss outcomes that they had experienced which were due to the intervention (either I or A/G only).

The significant differences between the I and A/G groups held across gender and learning history on all the softer outcomes. This is a particularly interesting result in relation to learning history. There were a number of changes, particularly in relation to career and learning, which non-learners appeared no more likely to make having received A/G as oppose to just I, (see Chapter 6). However, this same group did experience changes to their confidence and motivation levels. It is reasonable to expect, therefore, that having made positive steps on the softer outcomes, 'harder' outcomes may now follow. This is a hypothesis that can be tested in the next stage of analysis.

Age

Nearly all of the outcomes were significantly different between the I and A/G groups across all four age groups. However, the analyses revealed the following age effects:

- Older adults in the A/G group were not significantly more likely to feel clearer about what they want to do with their career or to have widened their job search to new geographical areas if they had received A/G rather than I only.
- Older adults receiving A/G were also no more likely to feel that they know where to look for suitable training courses, or to feel motivated to do training as a result of the intervention than those who had received I only.

Ethnicity

The analysis clearly shows that the Advice and Guidance had much less of an impact in terms of these softer outcomes on Asian respondents than on any other ethnic group. The only place where there appeared to be an impact was on confidence in ability to do some learning, awareness of the training options available and motivation to learn. Asian respondents who had received A/G were, however, more likely to feel that they had made new friends/met people in a similar situation to themselves than those who had received I only. There was also less impact on some of the other non-White groups, as follows:

- Mixed/other respondents did not feel more confident in their ability to get a job if they had received A/G compared to if they had received I-only. They were also no more likely to feel confident when attending job interviews or in themselves and what they can achieve.
- Black respondents were no more likely to feel that they know where to look for suitable jobs if they had received A/G than if they had received I-only.
- Black and mixed/other respondents were no more likely to feel that they had made new friends in the same situation as themselves if they had received A/G than if they had received I-only.
- None of the non-White groups felt any more confident about doing some voluntary/community work or felt that they knew where to look for suitable training courses if they had received A/G than if they had received I-only.

Labour market activity

Most of the outcomes were significantly different between the I and A/G groups across all three groups: working, unemployed and inactive. However, one effect of labour market activity was found, which was that inactive respondents were no more likely to feel confident about doing some voluntary/community work if they had received A/G than if they had received I-only. It is possible that more of this group, which includes retired respondents, is already involved in this activity.

7.3 Summary

The overall results for softer outcomes mirror those of learning and work outcomes, *ie* A/G recipients are more likely to have experienced positive changes than individuals receiving I only. This is true for all the different aspects of confidence, motivation and opportunity awareness investigated in the questionnaire. This holds across a range of demographic variables including gender and learning history, regardless of the particular change in question. However, it would be useful to monitor the size of these differences over time (given that funding for further waves of research can be found), as some appear relatively small (despite being significant in statistical terms).

Again, however, there are some groups where this difference no longer holds, and who, therefore, do not experience the positive impact of A/G to the same degree. In particular, Asian service users seem less likely to report on a range of changes made. For other ethnic groups, however, the picture was much more complex and depended on the nature of the change in question. Older individuals using A/G were more likely to report a range of confidence and motivational changes than those in receipt of I-

only, but this affect did not hold across all factors, and career planning and job search behaviours in particular did not appear to have changed.

8. Conclusions and Issues for any Future Waves

8.1 Defining the population

The bulk of this report is concerned with describing the similarities and differences between the two groups of interest, namely those receiving I only, and those receiving A/G. Broadly speaking, for this research to be successful at the baseline phase, the two samples should be similar on a range of variables reflecting experiences prior to the I or A/G intervention. This result was obtained, and in this respect, the sampling phase of the research can said to be successful. The use of the PSM procedure ensured that the few differences that did exist are controlled for in the analysis. Overall, therefore, we can say with confidence that comparisons between the two groups in this report (potentially the baseline phase if further waves are commissioned) are valid, as the major (measurable) potential influences on outcomes appear to be very similar for both.

8.2 Attitudinal differences

There were some differences between the groups, however, on variables where it is less clear whether we would expect to see differences at this stage. Primarily in the attitudes towards learning and in the levels of satisfaction with learning and work. There was a clear trend in this data that, where differences existed between the control and treatment groups, the attitudes of the treatment group were more positive.

The difficulty in interpreting this result is that the delivery of Advice and/or Guidance, could already have had a positive impact on attitudes well before the baseline survey was conducted, and following the intervention. However, it may also be possible that those receiving A/G interviewed for this survey are just a more positive group in general. The implications of the latter are that the level of their response to other questions may also, therefore, be more positive, not as a result of the intervention they have received, but because of who they are.

This problem illustrates the need for longitudinal research, as only by going back to the sample again can these different

interpretations be tested. It also raises the possibility that the analysis of any future waves may need to control for these attitudinal variations. However, the possibility that these differences in attitudes, when all other aspects are controlled for (through the matching), are in themselves a positive outcome should not be discounted. This will be a theme that future research waves, if commissioned, need to return to.

8.3 Use of IAG provision

There are, as we would hope, many differences in the way that the control and treatment groups have used IAG service providers and in the ways they have used them. Multiple use of sources and of different types of service delivery are, however, apparent for both. The users of Advice and/or Guidance, had the most complex patterns of service use, and tended, in general, to have used more sources and had more sessions with advisers. One potential finding for policy makers is that individuals receiving in-depth provision were more positive about the services they received, and about what they actually got out of the experience. Therefore, from a purely customer satisfaction perspective, Advice and Guidance services do appear to offer something quantifiably different and additional to Information services alone. The extent to which these differences transfer to harder economic outcomes, however, is of course the main focus of later waves of this research, if commissioned. Another issue for any future research would be to determine whether the size of these differences is sufficient to justify the additional funding required to provide such services.

8.4 Intermediate outcomes

There is some evidence available at this stage on work and learning outcomes, and certainly this data appears to show greater gains amongst the treatment group. There are very clear patterns to show that A/G recipients are more likely to feel that they have made changes to their work and/or learning situation in greater numbers than those receiving I only. The provision of the higher-level interventions is also more likely to allow individuals to make changes that they would not have been able to do without such a service. The same patterns hold for gains in confidence, motivation and opportunity awareness. Another important finding is, therefore, that Advice and/or Guidance does appear to result in more positive intermediate outcomes than Information only, using subjective assessments of impact. Again, future waves need to test whether this pattern holds and whether further evidence can be complied which refutes or supports respondent perceptions as a measure.

Some of the main differences between the groups can be summarised as:

- 20% of A/G users compared to 13 per cent of I-only recipients had got a job.
- 21% of A/G users compared to 15 per cent of I-only recipients had gained a qualification.
- 27% of A/G users compared to 18 per cent of I-only recipients had improved their reading/writing skills.
- 45% of A/G users compared to 35 per cent of I-only recipients had improved their existing skills or gained new skills.
- 55% per cent of A/G users compared to 41 per cent of I-only recipients were now more aware of the job options available to them.
- 66% per cent of A/G users compared to 53 per cent of I-only recipients felt more confident about their ability to do learning/training.
- 70% of A/G users compared to 54 per cent of I-only recipients were now more aware of training/learning opportunities.

8.5 Defining the intervention

There is a general issue within the field of careers guidance, both professional and methodological, about making distinctions between different levels of support provided. There are obviously economic implications of training professionals adequately to deliver higher level inputs, requiring more sophisticated skills, and of the longer exposure periods that such advisers may require with clients to offer such services. The current policy climate, therefore, requires different levels of service intervention to be disentangled and evaluated almost as separate units of delivery. Exactly how to classify the different levels remains a topic of some debate, as does whether such a distinction actually offers a valid way of differentiating between provision.

The issue for research such as this tracking study, however, is more basic and is that, whatever definition is used to establish differences between Information, Advice and Guidance, the precise nature of such distinctions is normally beyond the understanding of the lay person or service user. The reason why this is important is that the research has to rely on the judgements of users to determine the level of input they have received. In this study, as with others, the nature of this distinction was made as simple as possible, but there remains the possibility of poor recall and/or understanding of what they received. By combining the categories of Advice and Guidance into one, however, the issue was simplified further for analysis purposes in this research, and this distinction seems to be relatively simple for individuals to grasp as the self-defined groups do differ significantly in the way they have used IAG services.

The fact is that some errors in classification could have been made and it is unknown how this may affect the results of this and other research. This issue is one that cannot be resolved without more developed recording systems both within and across providers. Ideally, there should also be some way of linking provider records, as clients are often users of multiple service providers, so their guidance 'histories' are likely to develop over time and across provision. Of course, the development of such a system represents a major challenge, not least in terms of data protection. Until such a time, however, research into IAG will always have problems identifying precisely the nature of the intervention individuals have received and this does have implications for attempting to measure the differential impact of levels of IAG provision.

Appendix 1: Technical Details of Matching Procedure

Results of the propensity score matching procedure

Table A1.1: Variables used in the matching analysis

Variable Label	Description
Active	Currently active in the labour market
Semacti	Currently semi-active in the labour market
Notacti	Currently not active in the labour market
Lmhist2	Unemployed now
Lmhist3	Working now, period unemployment past 5 years
Lmhist4	Working now, no period unemployment past 5 years
Tenure	Number of months in employment in past 5 years (continuous)
Lastune1	Been unemployed in past year
Lastune2	Last unemployed between 1 and 5 years ago
Lastune3	Never unemployed
Lastune4	Never worked
Q69_1new	Done full-time study leading to qualification in past 3 years
Q69_2new	Done part-time study leading to qualification in past 3 years
Q69_3new	Done taught course to help get a job in past 3 years
Q69_4new	Done course in driving/music/art/craft/sport in past 3 years
Q69_5new	Evening class (that does not lead to a qualification)
Q69_6new	Done self-directed learning from materials provided by employer or training provider in past 3 years
Gender	Gender
Ethnic1	White
Ethnic2	Mixed/other/Chinese
Ethnic3	Asian
Ethnic4	Black
Parent1	Single parent
Parent2	Shares parenting responsibilities
Parent3	Not responsible for dependent children
Chil5	Number of children under 5 (continuous)

Table A1.1: continued

Variable Label	Description
Chil18	Number of children between 5 and 18 (continuous)
Carer1	Single carer
Carer2	Shares caring responsibilities
Carer3	No caring responsibilities
Disab1	Has a disability
Disab2*	Does not have a disability
Nq1	Age (continuous)
Datelr_a	Still learning
Datelr_b	Most recent learning 1 year ago
Datelr_c	Most recent learning 2 years ago
Datelr_d	Most recent learning 3-4 years ago
Datelr_e	Most recent learning 5-10 years ago
Datelr_f	Most recent learning 11-20 years ago
Datelr_g	Most recent learning over 20 years ago
Form01	Whether done any formal learning in past 3 years
Inform01	Whether done any informal learning in past 3 years

* Some extra dummy variables were created to allow a category for 'missing data'.

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

Unless otherwise stated, all variables are coded as dummy variables (1 = yes, 0 = no). Given that there was some missing data on all variables, and that psmatch will not include cases with any missing values on the predictors, the reference variable for all the categorical variables above (*eg* labour market history, ethnicity *etc.*) is 'missing'.

Table A1.2: Probit model of participation in Advice and Guidance – kernel method

contreaf	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P>|z|	[95% Conf.	Interval]
active	.2217687	.7484605	0.30	0.767	-1.245187	1.688724
semacti	.1528964	.234526	0.65	0.514	-.3067661	.6125589
notacti	.0532092	.2352894	0.23	0.821	-.4079495	.514368
lmhist2*	.4309432	.5400265	0.80	0.425	-.6274893	1.489376
lmhist3	.1947375	.5037255	0.39	0.699	-.7925462	1.182021
lmhist4	.2221125	.5058596	0.44	0.661	-.7693541	1.213579
tenure	.0006253	.0012445	0.50	0.615	-.0018139	.0030646
Lastune1	.1436721	.1313617	1.09	0.274	-.1137922	.4011363
Lastune2	-.0587038	.1312736	-0.45	0.655	-.3159953	.1985877
lastune3	-.0300732	.1372763	-0.22	0.827	-.2991298	.2389833
lastune4	.60657	.5499018	1.10	0.270	-.4712178	1.684358
q69_1new	.3877768	.1883177	2.06	0.039	.0186809	.7568727

Table A1.2: continued

contreaf	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P>|z|	[95% Conf.	Interval]
q69_2new	.2503821	.2064002	1.21	0.225	-.1541548	.6549191
q69_3new	.1689979	.0852726	1.98	0.047	.0018668	.3361291
q69_4new	.0159579	.0875641	0.18	0.855	-.1556646	.1875805
q69_5new	.0107066	.1012535	0.11	0.916	-.1877466	.2091598
q69_6new	.107468	.0909401	1.18	0.237	-.0707713	.2857074
gender	.0405105	.0429687	0.94	0.346	-.0437067	.1247277
ethnic1	-.0276341	.1827286	-0.15	0.880	-.3857757	.3305074
ethnic2	.080523	.2053105	0.39	0.695	-.3218783	.4829242
ethnic3	-.0493765	.1994139	-0.25	0.804	-.4402205	.3414675
ethnic4	-.0590607	.1939134	-0.30	0.761	-.439124	.3210026
parent1	.8603002	.4588047	1.88	0.061	-.0389405	1.759541
parent2	.780692	.4577146	1.71	0.088	-.116412	1.677796
parent3	.8711678	.4552398	1.91	0.056	-.0210858	1.763421
chil5	.0527759	.0402217	1.31	0.189	-.0260571	.131609
chil18	.0360882	.0242516	1.49	0.137	-.0114441	.0836205
carer1	-.2555283	.4653844	-0.55	0.583	-1.167665	.6566084
carer2	-.4685603	.4631137	-1.01	0.312	-1.376246	.4391257
carer3	-.379546	.4557577	-0.83	0.405	-1.272815	.5137228
disab1	-.4926688	.3590995	-1.37	0.170	-1.196491	.2111534
disab2	-.4653468	.3574078	-1.30	0.193	-1.165853	.2351595
nq1	-.0056668	.0020001	-2.83	0.005	-.009587	-.0017466
datelr_a	.1888119	.0586145	3.22	0.001	.0739296	.3036942
datelr_b	.1595672	.0704613	2.26	0.024	.0214656	.2976688
datelr_c	.0091579	.082871	0.11	0.912	-.1532662	.1715821
datelr_d	.0622584	.0792501	0.79	0.432	-.0930689	.2175857
datelr_e	.0793883	.0691204	1.15	0.251	-.0560853	.2148618
datelr_f	.1208852	.0931427	1.30	0.194	-.0616711	.3034415
datelr_g	-.0356435	.1178078	-0.30	0.762	-.2665425	.1952555
form01	.2833921	.2151976	1.32	0.188	-.1383874	.7051716
inform01	.1557408	.0971295	1.60	0.109	-.0346295	.346111
_cons	-1.264163	.8140177	-1.55	0.120	-2.859608	.3312829

Note: Number of observations = 4,361; Chi-square (42 degrees of freedom) = 94.95 (p<0.000); Log likelihood = -2971.4144

* please note that lmhist1 was dropped from the analysis due to collinearity

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

We can see from above that the only variables significantly predicting participation in A/G as opposed to receiving I only are:

- whether taken part in any full-time learning leading to a qualification in the past three years
- age
- whether still in learning
- whether done any learning in the last year.

Appendix 2: Sampling and Response Details

This appendix addresses the technical aspects of the research project. The research consisted of an initial pilot study to assess the feasibility of the project as well as the main stage survey.

IAG Partnerships[1] involved in the research

The following 18 IAG Partnerships provided samples which included a sufficiently large number of usable telephone numbers to be included in the survey:

- Berkshire IAG Partnership
- Coventry and Warwick IAG Partnership
- Derbyshire IAG Partnership
- Essex IAG Partnership
- Humberside IAG Partnership
- Kent and Medway IAG Partnership
- London South IAG Partnership
- London West IAG Partnership
- Milton Keynes IAG Partnership
- Norfolk IAG Partnership
- Nottinghamshire IAG Partnership
- South Yorkshire IAG Partnership
- Staffordshire IAG Partnership
- Sussex IAG Partnership
- The Black Country IAG Partnership
- Tyne and Wear IAG Partnership
- West of England IAG Partnership
- West Yorkshire IAG Partnership.

[1] Now known as Nextsteps providers

Fieldwork and response rates

The interviewing was conducted by telephone, by MORI Telephone Surveys (MTS), using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI). The telephone interviews took place between 28 July and 30 September 2004. In total, 4,361 IAG recipients were interviewed, including 2,980 from ***learndirect***, 395 from Jobcentre Plus and 986 from LSC/IAG Partnerships(IAGP).

The overall valid response rate was 42.1 per cent. The following table reports the total number of leads issued, the number of interviews achieved, the number of refusals and ineligible respondents, as well as the calculated adjusted response rate for each type of sample provider (***learndirect***, Jobcentre Plus and LSC/IAG Partnerships).

Table A2.1: Detailed response rates by source provider

	learndirect		Jobcentre Plus		LSC/IAG Partnership		TOTAL	
	N	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**
Total sample drawn	**12,786**	**100**	**1,910**	**100**	**5,585**	**100**	**20,281**	**100**
Eligible sample:								
Completed interviews	2,980	23.3	395	20.7	986	17.7	4,361	21.5
Respondent refusal	2,913	22.8	373	19.5	1,182	21.2	4,468	22.0
Other refusal	177	1.4	22	1.2	71	1.3	270	1.3
Still active/reached max. number of calls	708	5.5	210	11.0	339	6.1	1,257	6.2
Ineligible sample:								
Ineligible for this project	177	1.4	50	2.6	120	2.1	347	1.7
Screened out	1,534	12.0	161	8.4	814	14.6	2,509	12.4
Moved	410	3.2	87	4.6	225	4.0	722	3.6
Not available during fieldwork	125	1.0	9	0.5	48	0.9	182	0.9
Other reasons for ineligibility	298	2.3	54	2.8	217	3.9	569	2.8
Incorrect telephone number	1,650	12.9	180	9.4	767	13.7	2,597	12.8
Number out of service	1,187	9.3	175	9.2	418	7.5	1,780	8.8
Still active/reached max. number of calls	627	4.9	194	10.2	398	7.1	1,219	6.0
TOTAL VALID SAMPLE	***6,778***	***53.0***	***1,000***	***52.4***	***2,578***	***46.2***	***10,356***	***51.1***
Completed interviews	**2,980**	***23.3***	***395***	***20.7***	***986***	***17.7***	***4,361***	***21.5***
Refusal/still active/max number of calls reached	3,798	29.7	605	31.7	1,592	28.5	5,995	29.6
ADJUSTED RESPONSE RATE		**44.0**		**39.5**		**38.2**		**42.1**

Note: In total, 2,476 leads were still being called at the end of the survey. Many of these leads had been called well over ten times, but without a final outcome. Because it is not possible to be definite over whether or not they would have been a valid sample (*eg* the named person may not live there anymore, or they may have been screened out at the beginning of the questionnaire), these numbers have been allocated as valid/invalid in the same proportion as the rest of the sample, *ie* 51 per cent:49 per cent overall.

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

As the table shows, there were relatively high proportions of bad/incorrect numbers and people who had to be screened out (usually because they were too highly qualified).

Table A2.2: Breakdown of I and A/G groups by provider

Provider source	*learndirect* %	IAGP %	Jobcentre Plus %	Total N
I group	53	39	32	2,066
A/G group	47	61	68	2,220
Total (N)	2,931	971	384	4,286

Note: Using this measure of control and treatment groups means that 74 individuals are excluded from analysis as they were unable to recall the nature of the intervention they had received.

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

Table A2.3: Geographical region of provider supplying details

Region	I group %	A/G group %
East Midlands	9	9
Eastern region	9	9
London	18	17
North East	5	5
North West	11	10
South East	19	18
South West	8	8
West Midlands	12	11
Yorkshire and Humberside	11	14
Total (N)	2,067	2,220

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

Statistical reliability

The respondents to the questionnaire are only samples of the total 'population', so we cannot be certain that the figures obtained are exactly those we would have if everybody had been interviewed (the 'true' values). We can, however, predict the variation between the sample results and the 'true' values from a knowledge of the size of the samples on which the results are based and the number of times that a particular answer is given. The confidence with which we can make this prediction is usually chosen to be 95 per cent — that is, the chances are 95 in 100 that the 'true' value will fall within a specified range.

Table A2.4 illustrates the predicted ranges for different sample sizes and percentages results at the '95 per cent confidence interval', based on a random sample.

Table A2.4: Approximate sampling tolerances applicable to percentages at or near these levels

Sample size	10% or 90% ±	30 or 70% ±	50% ±
100	6	9	10
200	4	6	7
500	3	4	4
1,000	2	3	3
2,000	1	2	2
3,000	1	2	2
4,000	1	1	2
4,361	1	1	2

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

For example, with a sample size of 4,361 interviews, where 30 per cent give a particular answer, the chances are 95 in 100 that the 'true' value (which would have been obtained if the whole population had been interviewed) will fall within the range ±1 percentage point from the sample results.

When results are compared between separate groups within a sample, or between different surveys, different results may be obtained. The difference may be 'real', or it may occur by chance (because not everyone in the population has been interviewed). To test if the difference is a real one, *ie* if it is 'statistically significant', we have to know the size of the samples, the percentage giving a certain answer and the degree of confidence chosen. If we assume '95 per cent confidence interval', the differences between the two sample results may be greater than the values given in Table A2.5.

Table A2.5: Differences required for significance at or near these levels

Sample Size	10% or 90% ±	30 or 70% ±	50% ±
50 and 50	12	18	20
100 and 100	8	13	14
200 and 100	7	11	12
200 and 200	6	9	10
500 and 500	4	6	6
1,000 and 1,000	3	4	4
2,000 and 2,000	2	3	3
2,979 and 394 (between ***learndirect*** and Jobcentre Plus)	3	5	5
2,979 and 986 (between ***learndirect*** and LSC/IAG Partnerships)	2	3	4
394 and 986 (between Jobcentre Plus and LSC/IAG Partnerships)	4	5	6

Source: IES/MORI, 2004

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Produced by the Department for Education and Skills

SBN 1 84478 481 9
Ref No: RR638
www.dfes.go.uk/research