**Skills for the Future Service Groups briefing**

**About the survey**

UNISON’s Skills for the Future Survey, based on the responses of more than 38,700 members, represents one of the largest skills surveys in Europe and provides a detailed picture of members’ skills and their associated aspirations and concerns.

The objectives of the study were:

* to survey members on what current learning and training they undertake
* to establish the level of support members receive to do their current jobs
* to establish the skills needs of public services employees in the future

The survey generated more than 38,700 responses between November 2018 and February 2019. This equates to a response rate of approximately 3%. The large sample size generates accurate results that we can be confident truly reflect the wider UNISON membership.

The findings of this report must also act as a wakeup call for government and employers. We need to invest in lifelong learning if we want to sustain high quality public services for all. Employers must take responsibility for investing in and developing their workforce, preparing them for the challenges and changes ahead, and they must do this in partnership with a well-resourced further and higher education sector.

We must ensure that as jobs for life become a thing of the past and as we work later into our lives, an ‘all ages all stages’ careers service is there for those both in and out of work. Because all our public service workers should have access

to the education and training they need – not just to get the job done, but to excel in all areas of their lives.

The below outlines the general findings from UNISON’s Skills for the Future survey covering all public service worker respondents.

**Key findings from the survey**

* More than four-fifths (82%) of respondents claim that ‘learning is important to my self-esteem’ and they were ‘ready to learn new skills to remain employable in the future’
* Skills deficiencies were most reported in respect of ‘computer and digital skills’ (14%) and ‘management or supervisory skills’ (18%)
* Those with no or low qualifications were more than twice as likely as those with the highest qualifications to report a deficiency in ‘computer and digital skills’ and ‘management and supervisory skills’ and were more than five times as likely to report deficiencies in literacy and numeracy
* A lack of skills and/or confidence in literacy or numeracy had stopped just under a fifth (17%) of respondents from applying for promotion
* People with a disability were most likely to feel that a lack of training had a negative effect on their employment prospects

**Participation**

* The vast majority of UNISON members are recent learners with four-in five (79%) participating in some form of learning during the last 12 months
* Training occurred most commonly for work or career (70%) rather than private or personal reasons
* While ‘attending training away from your workstation’ was the most common method of accessing training (66%), more than half recent learners had accessed an ‘online training course’
* The vast majority who were learning for their current job felt that the provision was adequate in keeping them up to date with the skills they required in their job

**Barriers to Learning**

* More than half (52%) of those who had not undertaken any work-related training over the last 12 months thought that it would have been useful
* Employer-related factors such as ‘employer was not willing to provide additional training, even though I wanted it’ were more frequently reported as barriers to learning than personal factors such as difficulty ‘finding time for training’
* Very few respondents (2%) did not train because they ‘did not want any training’: there were usually another reason
* Almost half (48%) of those who were not learning for their current job didn’t think this had harmed their employment prospects, although one-third (31%) did feel their employment prospects would suffer through their lack of training

**Workplace Challenges**

* The majority (84%) of respondents had observed at least one form of workplace change during the last 3 years
* 45% had seen reductions in the number of people doing the same work as them and 22% reported redundancies within their workplace
* Around one-third (34%) of members felt that it was ‘very likely’ or ‘somewhat likely’ that their position would be made redundant in the next three years
* Almost three-fifths (57%) felt that ‘technological automation is putting
* public sector jobs at risk’

**Findings for: Utilities**

In this section we look at what our respondents working in utilities have said about education, training and skills in relation to their roles.

**Participation and Attitudes to Learning**

When asked to compare what utilities workers were doing three years ago in regards to their role, they believe the level of skill used in their job has:

* Increased 57%
* Decreased 13%
* Stayed the same 28%
* Was not working three years ago 1%
* Don’t know 1%

Over the past 12 months, utilities workers have accessed training in the following ways:

* Attended training away from your normal workstation 60%
* Received on the job training 53%
* Taught yourself from a book/ manual/ video/ computer/DVD/ internet 40%
* Taught yourself by trying different approaches or trial and error 31%
* Accessed an online course 53%
* Taken a class at a college or adult education centre 13%
* Other 9%

Utilities workers have provided a range of reasons for accessing, and the impact of, job-related learning:

* I asked for it 28%
* My employer suggested it 45%
* It has helped me enjoy my job more 25%
* It has helped me improve the way I work 53%
* It is essential to my professional registration 23%
* On-going CPD 43%
* It made me look for a better job 4%
* I was given a better job in my organisation because of the training 4%
* I received a pay increase as a result of the training 4%
* I feel that my job is more secure because of the training 13%
* Any impact 59%
* None of the above 11%

Of those who trained for work or career purposes in the last 12 months, utilities workers undertook their training as follows:

* In your own time 9%
* In your employers time 71%
* During own and employers time 20%

For utilities workers, training was far more commonly undertaken wholly in employers’ time (71%) and was considerably less likely to result in a qualification (28%) compared to other public service sectors.

**Barriers to learning**

The main factors for utilities worker respondents not taking part in training or education over the last year were:

* Employer not willing to provide training 34%
* Training not currently offered 31%
* Limited opportunities and not enough space 24%
* Limited time due to work commitments 28%

In Utilities, 41% of workers reported that learning may have helped them in work, 20% lower than those working in social care (60%), however, reporting of the benefits of learning also tended to be higher in this sector.

CPD was less common for utilities workers (43%) partly because the sector has a fairly low proportion of learners training as an essential part of their professional registration. Additionally, utilities had a low percentage of learning taking training because they had asked for it.

**Workplace Challenges**

More than two-thirds (68%) of utilities workers believed that technological change putting public service jobs at risk, higher than average for the rest of public service sectors.

Reasons why utilities workers felt their position could be made redundant:

* Technology will reduce the need for people doing my kind of work 23%
* Changes within the business or organisation 88%
* Changes in my personal capacity 3%
* Changes in the broader economy 16%
* Other 3%

Below outlines the satisfaction levels of utilities workers in their current roles:

* Very satisfied 11%
* Satisfied 43%
* Neutral 24%
* Dissatisfied 15%
* Very dissatisfied 7%

**Workplace changes**

Redundancies in particular were most frequently reported in utilities (39%) along with reports of more than one in ten (11%) roles being outsourced which was more than three times more than most other public service sectors.

The below organisational changes had occurred in utilities workplaces over the past three years:

* Changes in the way work was organised 74%
* New computer or automated equipment 52%
* Other new equipment was introduced 33%
* Reduction in the number of people doing the same work 51%
* Redundancies 39%
* Job was outsourced 11%
* None of the above 11%

**Future Learning Needs**

In relation to future learning needs, utilities workers showed high levels of interest in developing their computer and digital skills (74%) and complex analytical skills.

Within computer and digital skills the most common area was in relation to software and systems which were often organisation-specific although Microsoft applications were also mentioned. Other interest areas were digital media, computer-assisted design and networking.

Broad types of skills utilities workers want to develop in the future:

* Literacy, reading or writing skills 20%
* Numeracy, maths skills 24%
* Computer, digital skills 74%
* Complex analytical skills 44%
* Supervisory or management skills 47%
* Physical or manual skills 11%
* Confidence or assertiveness 43%
* Job specific, specialist, technical or practical skills 24%
* Would not be useful to develop ANY skills 5%
* Other 1%

**Quotes from Members in Utilities**

*“Political uncertainty in the energy sector, perpetuated by both Conservative and Labour parties has resulted in all energy supply jobs being made at risk. The Tory price cap (as well as other factors) has led to unsustainable profit margins (my firm is projected to make a loss from 21/22) and the Labour 'half-renationalisation' will result in a two-tier employment structure in energy supply.”*

**Findings for: Schools**

In this section we look at what our respondents working in schools have said about education, training and skills in relation to their roles.

**Participation and Attitudes to Learning**

When asked to compare what school workers were doing three years ago in regards to their role, they believe the level of skill used in their job has:

* Increased 59%
* Decreased 11%
* Stayed the same 28%
* Was not working three years ago 1%
* Don’t know 1%

Over the past 12 months, school workers have accessed training in the following ways:

* Attended training away from your normal workstation 57%
* Received on the job training 56%
* Taught yourself from a book/ manual/ video/ computer/DVD/ internet 35%
* Taught yourself by trying different approaches or trial and error 27%
* Accessed an online course 46%
* Taken a class at a college or adult education centre 14%
* Other 8%

School workers have provides a range of reasons for accessing, and the impact of, job-related learning:

* I asked for it 28%
* My employer suggested it 42%
* It has helped me enjoy my job more 19%
* It has helped me improve the way I work 48%
* It is essential to my professional registration 25%
* On-going CPD 59%
* It made me look for a better job 3%
* I was given a better job in my organisation because of the training 3%
* I received a pay increase as a result of the training 2%
* I feel that my job is more secure because of the training 9%
* Any impact 54%
* None of the above 6%

Of those who trained for work or career purposes in the last 12 months, school workers undertook their training as follows:

* In your own time 19%
* In your employers time 41%
* During own and employers time 39%

By sector, work-related learning was most likely to result in a qualification among respondents working in schools (38%). Additionally, members working in Schools (59%) were most likely to be currently working at a higher level than in the past and members working in other sectors of the public services.

Relatively higher percentage of learners working in other areas reported that their learning was inadequate, by contrast only 9% of learners working in schools felt the same way.

**Barriers to learning**

The main factors for school worker respondents not taking part in training or education over the last year were:

* Employer not willing to provide training 32%
* Training not currently offered 34%
* Limited opportunities and not enough space 24%

There were fairly large differences in whose time training was undertaken by sector - with a significant minority of members in schools (19%) undertaking their training solely in their own time.

**Workplace Challenges**

In our open ended questions about redundancies, school workers (along with other workers in sectors directly funded by government) were most likely to raise concerns that redundancies were a concern due to Central Government cuts. The threat of technology reducing the need for people doing the same kind of work as them was least felt by school workers across all public services at just 2%.

Reasons why school workers felt their position could be made redundant:

* Technology will reduce the need for people doing my kind of work 2%
* Changes within the business or organisation 64%
* Changes in my personal capacity 4%
* Changes in the broader economy 30%
* Don’t know 2%
* Other 3%

Job satisfaction levels for school workers were higher than average in relation to other public service roles:

* Very satisfied 15%
* Satisfied 44%
* Neutral 23%
* Dissatisfied 13%
* Very dissatisfied 5%

**Workplace changes**

While the majority of respondents in all sectors have witnessed organisational change over the last three years, changes were less commonly reported by members working in schools, however 78% of school workers still reported change in their workplaces.

The below organisational changes had occurred in workplaces over the past three years.

* Changes in the way work was organised 57%
* New computer or automated equipment 31%
* Other new equipment was introduced 19%
* Reduction in the number of people doing the same work 40%
* Redundancies 22%
* Job was outsourced 2%
* None of the above 22%

**Future Learning Needs**

Compared to other sectors, there were relatively high levels of interesting in improving literacy, reading and writing (21%) and numeracy, maths (27%) skills from school workers.

School workers identified that computer and digital skills (69%) were also a stand out skills gap in the sector. Unsurprisingly, online learning was lowest among school workers with just 46% having participated in some form of online learning over the past 12 months.

Those least likely to identify a need to develop their skills in future were: aged 50 and over (43%); unqualified or with qualifications below Level 2 (43%); working part-time (49%); living in the Northern region (49%); working in transport (49%) and schools (51%).

Across schools, further and higher education workers expressed an interest in learning specific skills related to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, teaching skills and curriculum knowledge, accessing formal teacher training or acquiring teaching qualifications, behavior management and careers guidance counseling.

Broad types of skills school workers want to develop in the future:

* Literacy, reading or writing skills 21%
* Numeracy, maths skills 27%
* Computer, digital skills 69%
* Complex analytical skills 14%
* Supervisory or management skills 35%
* Physical or manual skills 7%
* Confidence or assertiveness 36%
* Job specific, specialist, technical or practical skills 26%
* Would not be useful to develop ANY skills 5%
* Other 2%

**Quotes from Members in Schools**

*“Reduction in TA workforce caused by reduced school budgets (in real terms) set by the government.”*

*“We are always being told that the school governors don't think TA's are needed and they will be cutting the amount of TA's in the school.”*

*“I work in a local authority run school. More schools have been built nearby and the school I work for received a negative Ofsted report. Numbers of children enrolling have dropped. The numbers have dropped from 450 down to 299 within the last year (since the Ofsted report).”*

**Findings for: Environment**

In this section we look at what our respondents working in the environment have said about education, training and skills in relation to their roles.

**Participation and Attitudes to Learning**

When asked to compare what environment workers were doing three years ago in regards to their role, they believe the level of skill used in their job has:

* Increased 54%
* Decreased 11%
* Stayed the same 34%
* Was not working three years ago 1%
* Don’t know 1%

Over the past 12 months, environment workers have accessed training in the following ways:

* Attended training away from your normal workstation 74%
* Received on the job training 44%
* Taught yourself from a book/ manual/ video/ computer/DVD/ internet 49%
* Taught yourself by trying different approaches or trial and error 30%
* Accessed an online course 56%
* Taken a class at a college or adult education centre 14%
* Other 12%

Environment workers have provided a range of reasons for accessing, and the impact of, job-related learning:

* I asked for it 45%
* My employer suggested it 40%
* It has helped me enjoy my job more 23%
* It has helped me improve the way I work 54%
* It is essential to my professional registration 24%
* On-going CPD 47%
* It made me look for a better job 6%
* I was given a better job in my organisation because of the training 3%
* I received a pay increase as a result of the training 2%
* I feel that my job is more secure because of the training 8%
* Any impact 60%
* None of the above 8%

Of those who trained for work or career purposes in the last 12 months, environment workers undertook their training as follows:

* In your own time 7%
* In your employers time 74%
* During own and employers time 19%

For environment workers, training was far more commonly undertaken wholly in employers’ time (74%) and was more likely to result in a qualification (35%) compared to other public service sectors. However, participation in CPD activities across the environment sector was lower that other areas of public services (47%).

Members working in the environment (22%) were least likely to have undertaken any learning over the last 12 months and were also least likely to have trained for work or their career.

**Barriers to learning**

The main factors for environment worker respondents not taking part in training or education over the last year were:

* Employer not willing to provide training 36%
* Training not currently offered 32%
* Limited opportunities and not enough space 25%

However, those environment workers who did participate in learning reported higher benefits from the learning activities that the average public service worker.

**Workplace Challenges**

Along with social care workers, environment workers (4%) were the lowest group of workers to feel that their position was at risk of redundancy due to technology reducing the need for people doing similar work.

Reasons why environment workers felt their position could be made redundant:

* Technology will reduce the need for people doing my kind of work 4%
* Changes within the business or organisation 78%
* Changes in my personal capacity 9%
* Changes in the broader economy 31%
* Don’t know 1%
* Other 9%

Below outlines the satisfaction levels of environment workers in their current roles.

* Very satisfied 14%
* Satisfied 44%
* Neutral 22%
* Dissatisfied 12%
* Very dissatisfied 7%

**Workplace changes**

While not necessarily a consequence of redundancy, more than half of all members working in the environment (54%) reported that the number of people doing the same sort of work as them had declined over the last 3 years. This may have occurred due to ‘natural wastage’ but potentially could be a source increased workload (and stress) for remaining workers.

The below organisational changes had occurred in environment workers workplaces over the past three years:

* Changes in the way work was organised 66%
* New computer or automated equipment 45%
* Other new equipment was introduced 27%
* Reduction in the number of people doing the same work 54%
* Redundancies 29%
* Job was outsourced 3%
* None of the above 13%

**Future Learning Needs**

Workers in the environment sector displayed high levels of wanting to develop supervisory and management skills compared with other public service workers.

Specific management skills sought across all public service workers included most commonly project management but also commissioning, procurement and contract, senior level management and leadership, human resources and CIPD, and skills relating to specific functional management roles.

Broad types of skills utilities workers want to develop in the future:

* Literacy, reading or writing skills 17%
* Numeracy, maths skills 22%
* Computer, digital skills 67%
* Complex analytical skills 28%
* Supervisory or management skills 53%
* Physical or manual skills 13%
* Confidence or assertiveness 42%
* Job specific, specialist, technical or practical skills 39%
* Would not be useful to develop ANY skills 2%
* Other 3%

**Findings for: Health Care**

In this section we look at what our respondents working in Health Care have said about education, training and skills in relation to their roles.

**Participation and Attitudes to Learning**

When asked to compare what health care workers were doing three years ago in regards to their role, they believe the level of skill used in their job has:

* Increased 58%
* Decreased 13%
* Stayed the same 27%
* Was not working three years ago 1%
* Don’t know 1%

Over the past 12 months, health care workers have accessed training in the following ways:

* Attended training away from your normal workstation 64%
* Received on the job training 56%
* Taught yourself from a book/ manual/ video/ computer/DVD/ internet 41%
* Taught yourself by trying different approaches or trial and error 23%
* Accessed an online course 56%
* Taken a class at a college or adult education centre 17%
* Other 10%

Health care workers have provides a range of reasons for accessing, and the impact of, job-related learning:

* I asked for it 33%
* My employer suggested it 31%
* It has helped me enjoy my job more 24%
* It has helped me improve the way I work 50%
* It is essential to my professional registration 38%
* On-going CPD 64%
* It made me look for a better job 7%
* I was given a better job in my organisation because of the training 3%
* I received a pay increase as a result of the training 4%
* I feel that my job is more secure because of the training 10%
* Any impact 57%
* None of the above 4%

Of those who trained for work or career purposes in the last 12 months, health care workers undertook their training as follows:

* In your own time 16%
* In your employers time 46%
* During own and employers time 38%

Unsurprisingly, professional registration was a particularly strong motivation for learning within health care (38%), with participation on work related training particularly high compared with other public service sectors. Participation in CPD was also common in this sector.

**Barriers to learning**

The main factors for health care respondents not taking part in training or education over the last year were:

* Employer not willing to provide training 31%
* Training not currently offered 27%
* Limited opportunities and not enough space 24%
* Training for a specific grade only 21%
* Limited time due to work commitments 27%

**Workplace Challenges**

Health care workers felt most secure in their work although even though one-in-five (20%) felt at risk of redundancy still.

Reasons why health care workers felt their position could be made redundant:

* Technology will reduce the need for people doing my kind of work 12%
* Changes within the business or organisation 77%
* Changes in my personal capacity 7%
* Changes in the broader economy 14%
* Don’t know 4%
* Other 6%

1 in 10 (12%) health care workers concerned that ‘technology will reduce the need for people doing my kind of work’ which was higher than most other public service sectors.

Around half of all public service respondents (55%) were either ‘very satisfied’ or ‘satisfied’ with their job with health care workers around average at 54%.

Job satisfaction levels for health care workers:

* Very satisfied 14%
* Satisfied 20%
* Neutral 24%
* Dissatisfied 15%
* Very dissatisfied 6%

**Workplace changes**

Health care workers were some of the least likely public service workers to report change in their workplace, however 82% still reported at least one form of workplace change such as ‘work organisation’ or the introduction of ‘computer or automated equipment’.

The below organisational changes had occurred in health care workplaces over the past three years:

* Changes in the way work was organised 62%
* New computer or automated equipment 44%
* Other new equipment was introduced 32%
* Reduction in the number of people doing the same work 39%
* Redundancies 7%
* Job was outsourced 3%
* None of the above 18%

**Future Learning Needs**

Respondents working in health care listed a range of sector specific subjects they wished to learn more about. Specific skills sought most commonly mentioned related to specific and/or specialist clinical skills, general nursing, mental health, health and safety, emergency care, physical therapies and dementia.

Broad types of skills health care workers want to develop in the future:

* Literacy, reading or writing skills 19%
* Numeracy, maths skills 22%
* Computer, digital skills 63%
* Complex analytical skills 25%
* Supervisory or management skills 47%
* Physical or manual skills 13%
* Confidence or assertiveness 41%
* Job specific, specialist, technical or practical skills 33%
* Would not be useful to develop ANY skills 5%
* Other 2%

**Quotes from Members in Health Care**

*I work with in a hospital but not in a clinical role so I feel there is always a risk that my job may not be seen as essential.”*

*“Lack of funds within the NHS - I work in corporate area where it is easier to dispose of staff as a cost saving. It's not a strategic decision its all about balancing the books for that year so that the NHS bonus is paid for achieving yearly control total.”*

*“As I work for the NHS we are under CONSTANT threat of redundancy due to an increasing lack of proper financing. Consequently the Trust I work for, in common with all others, is always looking for ways to save money and back office functions are an easy target!”*

**Findings for: Social Care**

In this section we look at what our respondents working in Social Care have said about education, training and skills in relation to their roles.

**Participation and Attitudes to Learning**

When asked to compare what social care workers were doing three years ago in regards to their role, they believe the level of skill used in their job has:

* Increased 58%
* Decreased 15%
* Stayed the same 25%
* Was not working three years ago 1%
* Don’t know 1%

Over the past 12 months, social care workers have accessed training in the following ways:

* Attended training away from your normal workstation 74%
* Received on the job training 53%
* Taught yourself from a book/ manual/ video/ computer/DVD/ internet 38%
* Taught yourself by trying different approaches or trial and error 24%
* Accessed an online course 61%
* Taken a class at a college or adult education centre 14%
* Other 9%

Social care workers have provides a range of reasons for accessing, and the impact of, job-related learning:

* I asked for it 35%
* My employer suggested it 44%
* It has helped me enjoy my job more 22%
* It has helped me improve the way I work 53%
* It is essential to my professional registration 39%
* On-going CPD 65%
* It made me look for a better job 5%
* I was given a better job in my organisation because of the training 2%
* I received a pay increase as a result of the training 3%
* I feel that my job is more secure because of the training 9%
* Any impact 59%
* None of the above 4%

Of those who trained for work or career purposes in the last 12 months, social care workers undertook their training as follows:

* In your own time 13%
* In your employers time 51%
* During own and employers time 36%

Over half (52%) of all survey respondents who had not undertaken any work-related training over the last 12 months thought that it would have been useful. Members working in social care were among those most likely to report that learning would have been useful to them.

Of all the public service sectors, participation in learning for work or a career specifically was highest in social care, additionally social care workers were most likely to learn online (61%) compared to other public service workers and take part in off the job training.

Work-related learning was most likely to result in a qualification among respondents working in schools (38%) and social care (35%). However, unsurprisingly, professional registration was a particularly strong motivation for learning within social care (39%) and health care (38%). CPD is also common in these sectors.

Participation in work related training was fairly uniform across sectors of public services but with particularly high levels in social care (and to a lesser extent health care). There were fairly large differences, however, in whose time the training was undertaken by sector, with a significant minority of members in social care, undertaking their training solely in their own time.

Members working in social care were among those most likely to report, retrospectively, that learning may have helped them in work (60%) and also claimed that training had improved their job performance.

**Barriers to learning**

The main factors for social care respondents not taking part in training or education over the last year were:

* Employer not willing to provide training 28%
* Training not currently offered 24%
* Limited opportunities and not enough space 24%
* Limited time due to work commitments 28%

The survey revealed several examples of members working in social care who aspired to work, for example as nurses or social workers, but were held back because they did not have a degree. Some expressed frustration that the entry requirements for such roles had risen since they joined the workforce, making further progression within their chosen profession impossible.

**Workplace Challenges**

Around one third (35%) of social care workers taking part in the survey thought their position was at risk of redundancy - lower than the average public service worker. Reasons why social care workers felt their position could be made redundant:

* Technology will reduce the need for people doing my kind of work 4%
* Changes within the business or organisation 79%
* Changes in my personal capacity 4%
* Changes in the broader economy 24%
* Don’t know 2%
* Other 6%

Workers in social care were the least likely to be satisfied with their job, with only half (51%) stating they were satisfied or very satisfied with their current role.

Job satisfaction levels for social care workers:

* Very satisfied 12%
* Satisfied 39%
* Neutral 25%
* Dissatisfied 16%
* Very dissatisfied 7%
* Don’t know 1%

**Workplace changes**

While the majority of respondents in all sectors have witnessed organisational change over the last three years, changes were less commonly reported by members working social care (83%).

The below organisational changes had occurred in workplaces over the past three years:

* Changes in the way work was organised 68%
* New computer or automated equipment 46%
* Other new equipment was introduced 22%
* Reduction in the number of people doing the same work 42%
* Redundancies 20%
* Job was outsourced 4%
* None of the above 17%

**Future Learning Needs**

Respondents working in social care listed a range of sector specific subjects they wished to learn more about. Specific skills sought most commonly mentioned in related to social work, working with adults with additional needs or autism, sign language and safeguarding. Many respondents mentioned social care in more general terms.

Workers in social care felt that they needed to develop to remain employable and recognised that they wanted to keep up to date with industry-specific working practices.

Broad types of skills social care workers want to develop in the future:

* Literacy, reading or writing skills 16%
* Numeracy, maths skills 19%
* Computer, digital skills 63%
* Complex analytical skills 24%
* Supervisory or management skills 47%
* Physical or manual skills 8%
* Confidence or assertiveness 40%
* Job specific, specialist, technical or practical skills 29%
* Would not be useful to develop ANY skills 4%
* Other 2%

**Quotes from Members in Social Care**

*“I work with children with Autism and understanding is increasing all the time. We used to go to all the big NAS conferences to keep updated but there is so little money now for training I can only access training the council put on.”*

*“As a children's occupational therapist, I am seeing more children and young people with diagnoses related to autism. There are huge gaps in mainstream therapies and provision for a lot of these children and young people. If I had additional specialist training, I would be better equipped to assess and assist.”*

*“I was employed before formal; qualifications were necessary in my job. I now need to get qualified.”*

*“So many jobs within local authority require Degree's. But look at the job and a lot really do not require it. Yet the opportunity for administration staff to obtain a degree whilst in employment is unheard of. But people who hold degrees get more and more opportunity. Really is discrimination.”*

*“I want to retrain as a social worker but I cannot afford the fees.”*

**Findings for: Local Government**

In this section we look at what our respondents working in Local Government have said about education, training and skills in relation to their roles.

**Participation and Attitudes to Learning**

When asked to compare what local government workers were doing three years ago in regards to their role, they believe the level of skill used in their job has:

* Increased 57%
* Decreased 11%
* Stayed the same 29%
* Was not working three years ago 1%

Over the past 12 months, local government workers have accessed training in the following ways:

* Attended training away from your normal workstation 70%
* Received on the job training 43%
* Taught yourself from a book/ manual/ video/ computer/DVD/ internet 44%
* Taught yourself by trying different approaches or trial and error 32%
* Accessed an online course 46%
* Taken a class at a college or adult education centre 15%
* Other 11%

Local government workers have provides a range of reasons for accessing, and the impact of, job-related learning:

* I asked for it 41%
* My employer suggested it 42%
* It has helped me enjoy my job more 19%
* It has helped me improve the way I work 49%
* It is essential to my professional registration 20%
* On-going CPD 55%
* It made me look for a better job 5%
* I was given a better job in my organisation because of the training 2%
* I received a pay increase as a result of the training 2%
* I feel that my job is more secure because of the training 8%
* Any impact 55%
* None of the above 7%

Of those who trained for work or career purposes in the last 12 months, local government workers undertook their training as follows:

* In your own time 6%
* In your employers time 69%
* During own and employers time 25%

Training for local government was far more commonly undertaken wholly in employers time (69%), with 6% undertaking training in their own time and 25% during a mix of their own and employers time. Additionally, when taking training through work, it was considerably less likely to result in a qualification (25%).

Over a third (33%) of non-learners in local government were likely to feel that their employment prospects had been diminished by lack of training. Also, 23% of local government workers had not undertaken any learning over the past 12 months, and generally were less likely to have trained for their work or career

 Local government workers were largely pessimistic about the future of work with 61% of them ‘worried’ about the future and 42% don’t believe they have the skills needed for the rest of their career.

Positivity, of those members in local government who had accessed UNISON’s Member Learning Programme, 80% rated the provision as ‘good’ or ‘excellent’.

**Barriers to learning**

The main factors for local government respondents not taking part in training or education over the last year were:

* Employer not willing to provide training 33%
* Training not currently offered 29%
* Limited opportunities and not enough space 28%
* Limited time due to work commitments 25%

53% of local government workers said that participating in training or education would have been useful for them to keep up to date with the skills required for their current job.

**Workplace Challenges**

Half (50%) of local government workers taking part in the survey thought their position was at risk of redundancy - higher than the average public service worker. Reasons why local government workers felt their position could be made redundant:

* Technology will reduce the need for people doing my kind of work 10%
* Changes within the business or organisation 80%
* Changes in my personal capacity 3%
* Changes in the broader economy 23%
* Don’t know 1%
* Other 8%

Job satisfaction levels for public service workers:

* Very satisfied 12%
* Satisfied 45%
* Neutral 24%
* Dissatisfied 14%
* Very dissatisfied 6%

**Workplace changes**

Our survey showed that 89% of local government workers reported at least one form of workplace change over the past three years, with 38% of those mentioning ‘redundancies’ as the change they’d witnessed.

While not necessarily a consequence of redundancy, more than half of all members working in local government (56%) reported that the number of people doing the same sort of work as them had declined over the last 3 years.

The below organisational changes had occurred in workplaces over the past three years:

* Changes in the way work was organised 71%
* New computer or automated equipment 49%
* Other new equipment was introduced 26%
* Reduction in the number of people doing the same work 56%
* Redundancies 38%
* Job was outsourced 3%
* None of the above 11%

Perhaps unsurprisingly respondents who had observed redundancies within their own workplace over the last three years were more pessimistic about their future employment prospects than those who had not. This is also reflected in the relatively high levels of pessimism expressed by respondents working in sectors that were most likely to be associated with recent redundancies: half (50%) of local government workers taking part in the survey thought their position was at risk of redundancy.

Positively, 57% of local government workers are ready to completely retrain in order to remain employable in the future.

**Future Learning Needs**

Local government workers were specifically interested in learning more about housing and homelessness and town planning in relation to specific workplace skills. There were 11% of local government workers who identified a gap in their computer and digital skills - lower than the average for public service workers and they were more likely to specify job-specific skills in relation to their future learning needs.

Broad types of skills local government workers want to develop in the future:

* Literacy, reading or writing skills 13%
* Numeracy, maths skills 15%
* Computer, digital skills 67%
* Complex analytical skills 34%
* Supervisory or management skills 50%
* Physical or manual skills 45%
* Confidence or assertiveness 40%
* Job specific, specialist, technical or practical skills 33%
* Would not be useful to develop ANY skills 4%
* Other 2%

**Quotes from Members in Local Government**

*“Council has not enough money from Central Government to pay for non-statutory posts like mine.”*

*“I am a Librarian - seen as an easy target for spending cuts and portrayed constantly as irrelevant in the modern world.”*

*“Government asking Council budgets to be slashed therefore Council measures to implement savings. Restructures in the organisation are forcing early leavers or redundancies in services. Libraries, where I work, are under pressure.”*

*“I am over 50; long serving in local government and that makes me feel vulnerable. The work culture suggests a preference for younger people.”*

**Findings for: Transport**

In this section we look at what our respondents working in transport have said about education, training and skills in relation to their roles.

**Participation and Attitudes to Learning**

When asked to compare what transport workers were doing three years ago in regards to their role, they believe the level of skill used in their job has:

* Increased 47%
* Decreased 16%
* Stayed the same 34%
* Was not working three years ago 1%
* Don’t know 1%

Over the past 12 months, transport workers have accessed training in the following ways:

* Attended training away from your normal workstation 58%
* Received on the job training 43%
* Taught yourself from a book/ manual/ video/ computer/DVD/ internet 37%
* Taught yourself by trying different approaches or trial and error 25%
* Accessed an online course 47%
* Taken a class at a college or adult education centre 14%
* Other 9%
* Don’t know 1%

Transport workers have provided a range of reasons for accessing, and the impact of, job-related learning:

* I asked for it 28%
* My employer suggested it 44%
* It has helped me enjoy my job more 24%
* It has helped me improve the way I work 53%
* It is essential to my professional registration 25%
* On-going CPD 46%
* It made me look for a better job 7%
* I was given a better job in my organisation because of the training 0%
* I received a pay increase as a result of the training 1%
* I feel that my job is more secure because of the training 11%
* Any impact 60%
* None of the above 7%

Of those who trained for work or career purposes in the last 12 months, transport workers undertook their training as follows:

* In your own time 16%
* In your employers time 65%
* During own and employers time 19%

Members working transport were most likely across all public service groups to be working at the same level they were 3 year ago (47%). Additionally transport workers were one of the groups least likely to have participated in learning with 27% having not participated in any learning over the last 12 months and also one of the groups least likely to train for their work or career.

Those working in transport were some of the least likely to report retrospectively that learning may have helped them in work (41%). Positively, those working in transport who did undertake learning activities reported highly of its benefits.

There were fairly large differences across public service sectors in whose time the training was undertaken by sector, with a significant minority of members in transport undertaking their training solely in their own time.

**Barriers to learning**

The main factors for transport worker respondents not taking part in training or education over the last year were:

* Employer not willing to provide training 41%
* Training not currently offered 33%
* Limited opportunities and not enough space 24%

‘Employer not willing to provide training’ for transport workers was the highest (41%) across all public service sectors. Additionally only 41% of transport workers reported that learning may have helped them in work.

Attitudes to who is responsible for learning (and therefore who should bear the costs in terms of time and money) did not vary substantially by respondent characteristic except for those working in transport (36%) who were more likely than respondents in any other category to disagree with the statement, believing that employers should shoulder the responsibility.

Online learning was lowest among transport workers (47%) and those in schools (46%).

**Workplace Challenges**

CPD is fairly common across all the sectors with the exception of utilities (43%), transport (46%) and environment (47%). These three sectors also had fairly low proportions of learners training as essential part of their professional registration, and transport and utilities had a low percentage of learners training because they had asked for it.

Technological change was particularly perceived as a risk to public service jobs generally and respondents personally, in the utilities sector (23%) and to a slightly lesser extent transport sector (17%). Respondents in these sectors were also less likely than those in other sectors to report that the skill requirements of their work had increased over the last 3 years.

Reasons why transport workers felt their position could be made redundant:

* Technology will reduce the need for people doing my kind of work 17%
* Changes within the business or organisation 83%
* Changes in my personal capacity 5%
* Changes in the broader economy 11%
* Don’t know 1%
* Other 6%

Below outlines the satisfaction levels of transport workers in their current roles:

* Very satisfied 11%
* Satisfied 42%
* Neutral 25%
* Dissatisfied 16%
* Very dissatisfied 5%
* Don’t know 1%

**Workplace changes**

The below organisational changes had occurred in transport workers workplaces over the past three years:

* Changes in the way work was organised 65%
* New computer or automated equipment 44%
* Other new equipment was introduced 29%
* Reduction in the number of people doing the same work 45%
* Redundancies 35%
* Job was outsourced 4%
* None of the above 16%

**Future Learning Needs**

Workers in the transport sector were some of those least likely to identify a need to develop their skills for the future (49%).

Broad types of skills utilities workers want to develop in the future:

* Literacy, reading or writing skills 16%
* Numeracy, maths skills 17%
* Computer, digital skills 68%
* Complex analytical skills 29%
* Supervisory or management skills 47%
* Physical or manual skills 10%
* Confidence or assertiveness 35%
* Job specific, specialist, technical or practical skills 32%
* Would not be useful to develop ANY skills 6%
* Other 3%

**Findings for: Further and Higher Education**

In this section we look at what our respondents working in Further and Higher Education have said about education, training and skills in relation to their roles.

**Participation and Attitudes to Learning**

When asked to compare what further and higher education workers were doing three years ago in regards to their role, they believe the level of skill used in their job has:

* Increased 56%
* Decreased 15%
* Stayed the same 29%
* Was not working three years ago 1%
* Don’t know 1%

Over the past 12 months, further and higher education workers have accessed training in the following ways:

* Attended training away from your normal workstation 67%
* Received on the job training 45%
* Taught yourself from a book/ manual/ video/ computer/DVD/ internet 50%
* Taught yourself by trying different approaches or trial and error 38%
* Accessed an online course 57%
* Taken a class at a college or adult education centre 21%
* Other 10%

Further and higher education workers have provides a range of reasons for accessing, and the impact of, job-related learning:

* I asked for it 42%
* My employer suggested it 39%
* It has helped me enjoy my job more 19%
* It has helped me improve the way I work 52%
* It is essential to my professional registration 16%
* On-going CPD 64%
* It made me look for a better job 6%
* I was given a better job in my organisation because of the training 2%
* I received a pay increase as a result of the training 2%
* I feel that my job is more secure because of the training 10%
* Any impact 57%
* None of the above 5%

Of those who trained for work or career purposes in the last 12 months, further and higher education workers undertook their training as follows:

* In your own time 11%
* In your employers time 61%
* During own and employers time 28%

Overall, one in eight (13%) respondents indicated that they had accessed at least one of the UNISON member learning opportunities listed in the questionnaire. Take-up tended to be lowest among those aged under 40, part-time workers and those working in further and higher education.

Work-related learning was most likely to result in a qualification among those respondents working in further and higher education (33%), additionally the reporting of benefits also tended to be high in further and higher education.

**Barriers to learning**

The main factors for further and higher education respondents not taking part in training or education over the last year were:

* Employer not willing to provide training 33%
* Training not currently offered 25%
* Limited opportunities and not enough space 24%
* Limited time due to work commitments 32%

Work commitments as a barrier to learning were most frequently mentioned by those working in further and higher education (32%) along with personal commitments (17%).

Around a third (34%) of non-learners in further and higher education felt their employment prospects had been diminished by lack of training.

**Workplace Challenges**

Redundancies were most frequently reported by members working in further and higher education (42%) across all public service groups. Unsurprisingly, relatively high levels of pessimism were expressed by respondents working in sectors that were most likely to be associated with recent redundancies with 44% of further and higher education workers thinking their role was at risk of redundancy.

Reasons why further and higher education workers felt their position could be made redundant:

* Technology will reduce the need for people doing my kind of work 10%
* Changes within the business or organisation 84%
* Changes in my personal capacity 5%
* Changes in the broader economy 24%
* Don’t know 1%
* Other 5%

Job satisfaction levels for workers in further and higher education were average in relation to public service roles:

* Very satisfied 11%
* Satisfied 44%
* Neutral 23%
* Dissatisfied 15%
* Very dissatisfied 6%

**Workplace changes**

The percentage claiming digital technological change was putting public service jobs at risk was fairly uniform across most personal and employment characteristics but with one or two exceptions. One of the most notable of which was that two-thirds (61%) of respondents working in further and higher education felt this was an issue compared to half (51%) of those working in police and justice.

The below organisational changes had occurred in workplaces over the past three years:

* Changes in the way work was organised 69%
* New computer or automated equipment 41%
* Other new equipment was introduced 24%
* Reduction in the number of people doing the same work 46%
* Redundancies 42%
* Job was outsourced 2%
* None of the above 13%

**Future Learning Needs**

There were high levels of interest in developing computer and digital skills across all public service workers but particularly strong interest among respondents working in further and higher education (71%) and among older workers. 11% of members working in further and higher education identified that their computer and digital skills were lower than what was needed for their current role, which was lower that the majority of other public service sectors.

Additionally, workers had relatively high levels of interesting in improving their confidence and assertiveness skills in further and higher education.

Across schools, further and higher education workers expressed an interest in learning specific skills related to students with special educational needs and/or disabilities, teaching skills and curriculum knowledge, accessing formal teacher training or acquiring teaching qualifications, behavior management and careers guidance counseling.

Broad types of skills further and higher education workers want to develop in the future:

* Literacy, reading or writing skills 13%
* Numeracy, maths skills 20%
* Computer, digital skills 71%
* Complex analytical skills 36%
* Supervisory or management skills 51%
* Physical or manual skills 5%
* Confidence or assertiveness 43%
* Job specific, specialist, technical or practical skills 31%
* Would not be useful to develop ANY skills 4%
* Other 2%

**Quotes from Members in further and Higher Education**

*“The college does not value the work that I do, it does not support it in any significant way. Overall it tends to be somewhat myopic in its management of resources and neglects many fundamental needs.”*

*“Brexit is likely to be bad for higher education, it's possible that things will get so bad that there will be a lot of compulsory redundancies. I don't think I would be high on the list of people to go, but I am not completely optimistic.”*

*“Campus is closing due to competition in the area and the decline in the numbers of people applying to do nurse training (due to the introduction of fees and removal of the bursary).”*

**Findings for: Police and Justice**

In this section we look at what our respondents working in police and justice have said about education, training and skills in relation to their roles.

**Participation and Attitudes to Learning**

When asked to compare what police and justice workers were doing three years ago in regard to their role, they believe the level of skill used in their job has:

* Increased 57%
* Decreased 13%
* Stayed the same 28%
* Was not working three years ago 1%
* Don’t know 1%

Over the past 12 months, police and justice workers have accessed training in the following ways:

* Attended training away from your normal workstation 69%
* Received on the job training 54%
* Taught yourself from a book/ manual/ video/ computer/DVD/ internet 47%
* Taught yourself by trying different approaches or trial and error 28%
* Accessed an online course 58%
* Taken a class at a college or adult education centre 12%
* Other 9%

Police and justice workers have provided a range of reasons for accessing, and the impact of, job-related learning:

* I asked for it 28%
* My employer suggested it 40%
* It has helped me enjoy my job more 16%
* It has helped me improve the way I work 47%
* It is essential to my professional registration 26%
* On-going CPD 62%
* It made me look for a better job 3%
* I was given a better job in my organisation because of the training 2%
* I received a pay increase as a result of the training 3%
* I feel that my job is more secure because of the training 7%
* Any impact 50%
* None of the above 9%

Of those who trained for work or career purposes in the last 12 months, police and justice workers undertook their training as follows:

* In your own time 5%
* In your employers’ time 69%
* During own and employers time 25%

For police and justice workers, training was far more commonly undertaken wholly in employers’ time and was considerably less likely to result in a qualification (21%) compared to other public service sectors.

**Barriers to learning**

The main factors for police and justice worker respondents not taking part in training or education over the last year were:

* Employer not willing to provide training 33%
* Training not currently offered 36%
* Limited opportunities and not enough space 28%

Police and justice workers significantly reported (79%) employer-related factors such as ‘employer was not willing to provide additional training, even though I wanted it’ as barriers to their learning.

23% of police and justice workers had not participated in any learning over the past 12 months and were also one of the public service groups least likely to have participated in training for their work or career.

**Workplace Challenges**

Only half (51%) of police and justice workers believed automation was putting their public service jobs at risk, lower than the majority of most public service workers.

Reasons why police and justice workers felt their position could be made redundant:

* Technology will reduce the need for people doing my kind of work 10%
* Changes within the business or organisation 86%
* Changes in my personal capacity 2%
* Changes in the broader economy 21%
* Don’t know 1%
* Other 3%

Members working in police and justice tended to be the most satisfied (61%) with their current job across all public service workers:

* Very satisfied 14%
* Satisfied 47%
* Neutral 22%
* Dissatisfied 12%
* Very dissatisfied 5%

**Workplace changes**

While the majority of respondents in all sectors have witnessed organisational change over the last three years, changes were more commonly reported by police and justice workers, with 90% reporting at least one form of workplace change.

The below organisational changes had occurred in police and justice workplaces over the past three years:

* Changes in the way work was organised 72%
* New computer or automated equipment 58%
* Other new equipment was introduced 37%
* Reduction in the number of people doing the same work 55%
* Redundancies 24%
* Job was outsourced 2%
* None of the above 10%

**Future Learning Needs**

In relation to future learning needs, police and justice workers showed high levels of interest in developing their computer and digital skills.

Workers in policing sought skills mainly in relation to special or general aspects of their role but also in terms of investigative and forensic skills. Although not just covering those working in justice services, those working in legislation, law and regulations sought skills related to information governance and security, changes to welfare benefits, housing, employment, finance, health and safety and the environment.

Broad types of skills police and justice workers want to develop in the future:

* Literacy, reading or writing skills 15%
* Numeracy, maths skills 17%
* Computer, digital skills 71%
* Complex analytical skills 34%
* Supervisory or management skills 47%
* Physical or manual skills 6%
* Confidence or assertiveness 40%
* Job specific, specialist, technical or practical skills 29%
* Would not be useful to develop ANY skills 5%
* Other 1%