**Collated regional responses**

**Overall findings**

Experience of learning, training and development

The response rate for UNISON’s online [survey](https://learning.unison.org.uk/2022/06/16/a-bright-future-with-the-unison-college/) conducted in April 2022 was exceptionally good with 18329 members filling it in. Nearly all members participating in the survey had taken part in some training, learning or development since leaving full-time education (**93%**), with two-thirds (**67%**) doing so within in the last three years (**20%** were undertaking learning and training at the time of the survey).

The most common type of recent learning undertaken by members was for work or career purposes (**89%**). This includes mandatory training as well as wider career development. The most recent training had usually been organised by their employer (**66%**) and delivered at least partly during the employer’s time (**42%** solely, **32%** a mix of the employer’s and in their own time). It had commonly been delivered at work, or ‘on the job’ (**43%**) though **30%** had undertaken online self-directed learning and **22%** an online course led by a tutor or facilitator.

However, there is also evidence of members playing an active role in seeking learning opportunities – **18%** of members indicated that the recent learning had been for personal reasons, **26%** trained solely in their own time and **33%** organised the most recent training themselves, and **7%** had most recently attended UNISON-organised training.

Awareness and experience of UNISON’s learning offer

Half of all members who responded to the survey (50%) are not aware of UNISON’s learning offer, and a further **28%** indicated that they do not know much about it. Awareness is particularly low amongst those under 40 (**37%** aware compared with **47%** of those aged 50 plus). There was also often an assumption among those who knew about UNISON’s learning that it was aimed at activists.

Members are positive about potentially learning through UNISON once the current offer is outlined. Some see particular value in UNISON as an advisor, potentially signposting to other provision if that is more appropriate.

Although only a relatively small proportion (**7%**) of members said that their most recent training was organised through UNISON, a fifth (**21%**) of members had ever taken part in training or learning through UNISON. This was most commonly activist training (**56%**). The training was seen as relevant and well delivered and rated excellent or good by **86%** of participants.

Demand for learning

Most members (**85%**) are interested in learning and training in the next three years. This is fairly consistent across all sectors with at least three-quarters (**77%**) of members in each sector saying they are fairly, very or extremely interested. Interest in future learning increases by qualification level and income. It is also higher amongst those who have already participated in learning, training or development since leaving full-time education and those who are UNISON activists.

Interest in learning is also higher among younger members. The majority of those under 40 are extremely interested in learning in the near future (**52%**) compared to just over a quarter (**27%**) of those over 50. This indicates younger members will be more likely to take up a UNISON learning offer, whilst older members may require more targeted marketing / messaging to encourage take up.

Amongst those who are interested there is a need for / interest in Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) to help members find and access the right learning provision for them.

Personal development and interest are some of the key drivers of demand amongst those interested in future learning: the top two key reasons for being interested in future learning are to learn something new (**51%**) or for personal development, enjoyment or well-being (**50%**). The next most common key reason was improving their ability to do their job (**39%**). These results suggest marketing and communication of UNISON learning should focus at least as much on personal development and fulfilment as on job-related aspects (though often personal development and interest overlaps with wanting to learn to develop work-related skills).

Three-fifths (**60%**) indicated that achieving qualifications was at least partly behind their interest in learning, though they are a key reason for only a quarter (**26%**). Around two-fifths (**42%**) of members with interest in future learning were able to identify interest in qualifications at a specific level – generally one level higher than their existing qualification (for example, Level 3 qualifications such as A Levels for those who already hold qualifications at Level 2). The types of learning members are most commonly interested in over the next three years are learning for work eg, CPD (**71%**) and / or for their general personal development (**76%**).

Younger members under 40 are more likely than older members to be interested in learning for work (**82%**), job specific skills (**81%**) and general personal development (**81%**). They are also more likely to be interested in developing softer skills in confidence and assertiveness (**64%**), and supervisory or management skills (**71%**). Two-thirds of members are interested in acquiring any digital skills within the next three years (**68%**), which is consistent across all age groups except for those aged 16-26 being less likely to be interested in developing their digital skills (**53%**). Computer and internet skills are particularly of interest to those aged 50 or above (**54%**), though still a quarter (**25%**) of those aged 16 to 26 are also interested in developing these. Female members are also particularly likely to be interested in developing confidence and assertiveness (**52%** compared to **43%** of men).

Most commonly, members who are interested in learning would prefer it to be delivered through a mix of online and in person methods (**45%**). Only around a quarter preferred to access learning online-only (split evenly between those preferring self-directed online learning and those preferring tutor-led online learning). In the focus group participants often felt they have experienced a lot of self-directed online work-related training during COVID and wanted a return to more, face-to-face training.

Across all members (including those not interested in learning), almost half (**48%**) would access online learning via their own laptop at home, **40%** via a work laptop at home and **37%** via a PC or laptop at work. A fifth (**18%**) would use a tablet and a slightly lower proportion (**15%**) a phone. Many have multiple options so their choice may depend on content and timings, but some may only have access via phone.

Barriers to accessing learning

The main challenge members who have undertaken learning and training encountered was balancing the time needed for training with work and / or personal commitments. This was especially common for those aged 27 to 39.

When considering future learning opportunities similar barriers are anticipated – relatively high proportions of members expected barriers to include a lack of time due to work (**56%**) or personal commitments (**37%**, rising to **51%** of those aged 27 to 39). Support from employers is commonly identified as a way to help overcome the barriers faced (by **43%**), as is increased flexibility for accessing learning (**38%**).

Cost is also a potential issue for a third of members (**33%**). Younger workers (who overall are more interested in learning) are particularly likely to be concerned about affordability. Almost half (**46%**) of those facing barriers or challenges to learning indicated that financial support with fees would help them overcome these barriers.

There is evidence that Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) would be valued: **18%** of members in the online survey describe there being too many options as a challenge or barrier to taking part in learning and training, and **11%** say the same about not knowing how to find out about learning opportunities. Many members (**43%** of those who feel there are barriers) think help finding the right course would overcome this. Members also identify barriers around IT access and digital skills and would like help overcoming these.

Views on UNISON College

Most members are highly interested and supportive of the idea of learning and training with UNISON: three-quarters are either interested (**35%**) or may be interested (**41%**). The relatively high proportion in the second of these categories indicates that UNISON will need to promote and clarify what the offer is, especially given low awareness of UNISON’s current learning offer. When introduced to the idea of UNISON College, members were overwhelmingly positive. This suggests that the key to the success of UNISON College will be making sure that as many members as possible are made aware of the College, what it offers and how they can access learning and training through the College.

Some members have reservations about or limited interest in training delivered by UNISON College / UNISON. This tends to be because of a lack of awareness of UNISON’s current training offer or because they are satisfied with the training they are receiving from their employer, rather than any ‘active’ negative views. Focus group participants who had said they were not interested in learning through UNISON, do however see the value in IAG provided by UNISON due to it being independent from their employer, and this sentiment was also expressed in the online survey where most (81%) members say they ‘would’ or ‘might’ go to UNISON for information on training and development opportunities.

Top priorities were around learning for personal development (**49%**, tying in with this being one of the top reasons for interest in future learning in general, as reported above), for work (**45%**) and leisure, hobbies and well-being (**40%**).

Providing information on the website would meet the preference for most members who might take up UNISON’s IAG to help them navigate finding the appropriate learning offer for them. However, providing IAG via telephone and in-person with reps would also be welcomed by many, especially groups who may be more hesitant about taking up IAG (eg, older members) and / or are sometimes disadvantaged in employment (eg, Black or disabled members).

**Findings for Eastern region**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Total participants from Eastern region | 1314 |

Experience of learning and training

**94%** of participants from the Eastern region said they were currently or had previously undertaken learning, training or development. **35%** said they had done so in the last 12 months, with **22%** undertaking learning, training or development at the time they completed the survey. A further **22%** indicated this took place more than 3 years ago.

Of the **94%** who had taken part in this learning, training or development, the vast majority had done so for their work/career (**89%**), with **68%** of this learning taking place whilst at work, either ‘on the job’ (**43%**), or away from the workstation (**25%**). A further **32%** said their most recent experience of learning had been online and self-directed.

Most of this learning, training or development took place in in their employer’s time (**42%**), or a mix of both (**32%**), with participants using their own time in **26%** of responses. This was arranged by the employer for **67%** of responses, followed by **33%** who had arranged it themselves.

Whilst many participants indicated that they did not have a problem taking part in this learning, training or development (**60%**), common problems with participation included work responsibilities (**23%**), and other unspecified responsibilities (**16%**).

Demand for learning and training

**87%** of participants from the region said they were at least fairly interested in taking part in learning, training or development over the next three years. The key motivating factors for this were to learn something new (**92%**), for personal development/enjoyment/well-being (**91%**) and to improve how they do their job (**83%**). Although improving their current role provided motivation to learn, there was notably less interest in pursuing a change of career with **59%** of participants saying this was not a reason which motivated them to learn.

Interest in gaining a qualification appears low, and most of those looking to gain qualifications were interested in levels 4 and above (**26%**). The most common response was that participants either didn’t know or weren’t sure (**29%**), followed closely by **28%** who indicated that they had no interest in gaining a qualification.

Participants were most interested in accessing training via a mix of online self-directed training, online course led by a tutor, and/or in person training (**47%**). This was followed by just under **1 in 5** who had an outright preference for in person training. Most indicated they would like to access online learning, training or development from home, either on their own laptop or via one provided by their workplace (**94%**).

Barriers to learning and training

The most common challenge/barrier to taking part in learning, training or development was work commitments making it hard to find the time (**59%**), followed by personal commitments (**42%**), and the belief it would be unaffordable (**33%**).

Participants suggested the following would be ways of overcoming these barriers:

* Help with finding the right course (**45%**)
* Financial Support (**45%**)
* Support from my employer eg paid time off to study (**44%**)
* More flexible ways to access training (**40%**)
* Courses with flexible deadlines (**38%**).

Views on UNISON College and the current learning offer

**40%** of participants from the region had some awareness of UNISON’s current learning offer, **27%** of whom had heard of it but didn’t know much about it. **1 in 5** participants had taken part in training through UNISON, **89%** of whom were positive about their experience.

Members from the region responded positively to the notion of accessing learning or training through UNISON College, with **70%** indicating that they would at least consider it. A further **11%** responded that they did not know.

When asked if whether they would go to UNISON for advice on training and development opportunities **80%** responded that they would at least consider doing so. The preferred means of accessing this information were via the UNISON website (**63%**) or over email (**48%**).

There was a mixed response to the question asking who they would feel most confident in providing them with training for personal and career development opportunities. The most popular response favoured colleges or universities (**29%**), but a further **24%** responded ‘don’t know’.

Those who indicated they would at least potentially be interested in accessing learning or training through UNISON College said the following types of learning / training / development appealed most:

* General personal development: **51%**
* Learning for work (eg continuing professional development): **48%**
* Leisure / hobbies / well-being: **44%**
* Job specific specialist, technical or specialist: **43%**.

**Findings for East Midlands**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Total participants from East Midlands | 1326 |

Experience of learning and training

**94%** of participants in the East Midlands region said they had taken part in some learning, training or development. Around **37%** had undertaken this learning within the 12 months prior to taking part in the survey, whilst a further **20%** said they were currently undertaking learning, training or development.

In most cases their most recent instance of learning, training or development was for their work / career (**87%**). **65%** of the responses indicated that this took place within the workplace, with **45%** responding that this was ‘on the job’ training at their desk, and a further **20%** stating that it took place at work and away from their workspace. Approximately **one third** of respondents stated their most recent learning experience had been online self-directed learning.

Most of this learning, training or development took place in in their employer’s time (**41%**), or a mix of both (**32%**), with participants using their own time in **28%** of responses. More than half of this was arranged by their employer (**63%**) and **35%** was arranged by the participant.

Whilst many indicated that they did not have any problem with taking part (**63%**), the most common hindrances included finding time because of work responsibilities (**21%**), and other non-specified responsibilities (**15%**).

Demand for learning and training

**87%** of participants from the region said they were at least fairly interested in taking part in learning, training or development over the next three years. The key motivating factors for this were for personal development/enjoyment/well-being (**93%**), to learn something new (**92%**), and to improve how they do their job (**82%**). Although improving in their current role provided motivation to learn, there was notably less interest in pursuing a change of career with **57%** of participants saying this was not a reason which motivated them to learn.

When asked what types of training they were interested in, participants expressed a preference for general development (**77%**) and learning for work **(68%).** The most common response to being asked if they were interested in gaining a qualification in the next three years at any of the levels specified (EL 1 to L6 and above) was that they did not know **(29%);** of those interested (**43%**), **26%** were interested in gaining qualifications at levels 4 or above.

There was no clear preference regarding a means of accessing training. Participants expressed the most interest in accessing training via a mix of online self-directed training, online course led by a tutor, and/or in person training (**41%**). This was followed by just under **1 in 5** who had an outright preference for in person training. Most indicated they would like to access online learning, training or development from home, either on their own laptop or via one provided by their workplace (**94%**).

Barriers to learning and training

The most common challenge/barrier to taking part in learning, training or development was work commitments making it hard to find the time (**56%**), followed by personal commitments (**37%**), and the belief it would be unaffordable (**35%**).

Participants mainly chose the following would be ways of overcoming these barriers:

* Financial Support (**49%**)
* Help with finding the right course (**43%**)
* Support from my employer eg paid time off to study (**40%**)
* More flexible ways to access training (**40%**)
* Courses with flexible deadlines (**37%**).

Views on UNISON College and the current learning offer

**67%** of participants from the region had some awareness of UNISON’s current learning offer, **34%** of whom had heard of it but didn’t know much about it. This was one of the highest totals for awareness across regions and nations. **1 in 5** participants had taken part in training through UNISON, **87%** of whom were positive about their experience.

Members from the region responded positively to the notion of accessing learning or training through UNISON College, with **79%** indicating that they would at least consider it. A further **12%** responded that they did not know.

When asked whether they would go to UNISON for advice on training and development opportunities **83%** responded that they would at least consider doing so. The preferred means of accessing this information were via the UNISON website (**58%**) or over email (**49%**).

There was a mixed response to the question asking who they would feel most confident in providing them with training for personal and career development opportunities. Colleges or universities (**28%**) were the most favoured, but a further **26%** responded ‘don’t know’.

Those who indicated they would at least potentially be interested in accessing learning or training through UNISON College said the following types of learning / training / development appealed most:

* General personal development: **51%**
* Leisure / hobbies / well-being: **45%**
* Learning for work (eg continuing professional development): **44%**
* Job specific specialist, technical or specialist: **38%**.

**Findings for Cymru/Wales**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Total Participants from Cymru/Wales | 991 |

Experience of learning and training

**95%** of participants from Cymru/Wales said they have taken part in learning, training or development, with **33%** having done so in the 12 months prior to taking part in the survey. Most of this (**89%**) was for their work / career, and **65%** took place whilst at work, either on the job (**43%**) or away from the normal workstation (**22%**). **39%** of this took place in the employer’s time, **25%** was in the participants own time and approximately **37%** was a mix of both. Following the trend of work-orientated learning, **67%** of this learning, training or development was organised by the employer.

Whilst many (**59%**) experienced no difficulties in taking part in their most recent experience of learning, training or development, of those who had encountered barriers **24%** said it was hard to find time because of work responsibilities.

Demand for learning and training

**81%** of participants responded that they were at least fairly interested in taking part in learning, training or development in the near future (up to 3 years).

The most common motivations for taking part were:

* To learn something new (**91%**)
* Personal development / enjoyment / wellbeing (**89%**)
* To improve how I do my job (**85%**).

Participants responded that they were not motivated by the prospect of changing career (**60%**) and changing job (**56%**).

When asked what types of training they were interested in, participants expressed a preference for general development (**71%**) and learning for work (**73%**). The most common response to being asked if they were interested in gaining a qualification in the next three years at any of the levels specified (EL 1 to L6 and above) was that they did not know (**31%**). Of those who were interested in gaining a qualification, most were interested in Level 4 or above (**30%**). There was also no clear preference shown regarding favoured settings for learning; **44%** said they preferred a mix of online self-directed learning, tutor led online courses and face-to-face training. **18%** preferred face-to-face training outright.

**94%** of participants said that if they were planning to take part in online learning, training or development that they would prefer to do from home, with **47%** preferring to use their own laptop, and a further **47%** preferring to use their work laptop whilst at home.

Barriers to learning and training

Work commitments making it hard to find the time were the most common barrier to take part in learning, training or development (**54%**), followed by personal commitments (**37%**) and the belief it would be unaffordable (**32%**).

The most common response to the question of what would help them overcome these barriers was financial support with course fees (**49%**). **42%** indicated that support finding the right course for them would help, followed by support from their employer, including paid time off (**42%**) and more flexible training times (**38%**).

Views on UNISON College and the current learning offer

**44%** said they were aware of the current UNISON learning offer; **28%** of whom had heard of it but did not know much about it. **20%** said they had taken part in learning offered by UNISON, with **88%** giving this training a positive rating.

**76%** expressed that they may be interested in accessing learning or training through UNISON College, and an additional **13%** said that they didn’t know if they would or not. Participants were more interested in the prospect of going to UNISON for information and advice on training and development opportunities, with **80%** indicating this was a service they would consider using. The preferred means of accessing this information were via the UNISON website (**60%**) and through emailing UNISON Learning (**47%**).

There was no clear preference in response to the question of who participants would feel most confident in providing them with training for personal and career development opportunities. **28%** opted for a college or university, **21%** chose training organised or delivered through UNISON, but a sizeable **28%** said they did not know.

Participants responded that they would be most interested in the following types of learning / training / development through UNISON College:

* General personal development (**50%**)
* Learning for work (eg CPD) (**47%**)
* Job specific specialist or technical (**41%**)
* Leisure / hobbies / well-being (**38%**)**.**

**Findings for Greater London**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Total participants from Greater London | 1021 |

Experience of learning and training

**93%** of participants from the region said they were currently or had previously undertaken learning, training or development. **33%** said they had done so in the last 12 months, with **17%** undertaking learning, training or development at the time they completed the survey. A further **25%** indicated this took place more than 3 years ago.

Of those who had taken part in this learning, training or development, the vast majority had done so for their work/career (**88%**), with **63%** of this learning taking place whilst at work, either ‘on the job’ (**41%**), or away from the workstation (**22%**). A further **31%** said their most recent experience of learning had been online and self-directed.

Most of this learning, training or development took place in their employer’s time (**42%**), or a mix of both (**33%**), with participants using their own time in **25%** of responses. This was arranged by the employer for **63%** of responses, followed by **35%** who had arranged it themselves.

Whilst many participants indicated that they did not have a problem taking part in this learning, training or development (**59%**), common problems with participation included work responsibilities (**25%**), and other unspecified responsibilities (**13%**).

Demand for learning and training

**90%** of participants from the region said they were at least fairly interested in taking part in learning, training or development over the next three years. The key motivating factors for this were to learn something new (**94%**), for personal development/enjoyment/well-being (**92%**) and to improve how they do their job (**83%**). Although improving their current role provided motivation to learn, there was notably less interest in pursuing a change of career with **55%** of participants saying this was not a reason which motivated them to learn.

When asked what types of training they were interested in, participants expressed a preference for general personal development (**79%**) and learning for work **(74%)**. Interest in gaining a qualification appears low, and most of those looking to gain qualifications were interested in levels 4 and above (**29%**). The most common response was that participants either didn’t know or weren’t sure (**31%**), followed by **27%** who indicated that they had no interest in gaining a qualification.

Participants were most interested in accessing training via a mix of online self-directed training, online course led by a tutor, and/or in person training (**43%**). This was followed by **23%** who had an outright preference for in person training. Most indicated they would like to access online learning, training or development from home, either on their own laptop or via one provided by their workplace (**95%**).

Barriers to learning and training

The most common challenge/barrier to taking part in learning, training or development was work commitments making it hard to find the time (**58%**), followed by personal commitments (**35%**), and the belief it would be unaffordable (**34%**).

Participants suggested the following would be ways of overcoming these barriers:

* Help with finding the right course (**47%**)
* Financial Support (**51%**)
* Support from my employer eg paid time off to study (**47%**)
* More flexible ways to access training (**41%**)
* Courses with flexible deadlines (**39%**).

Views on UNISON College and the current learning offer

**38%** of participants from the region had some awareness of UNISON’s current learning offer, **24%** of whom had heard of it but didn’t know much about it. **22%** of participants had taken part in training through UNISON, **84%** of whom were positive about their experience.

Members from the region responded positively to the notion of accessing learning or training through UNISON College, with **83%** indicating that they would at least consider it. When asked whether they would go to UNISON for advice on training and development opportunities **85%** responded that they would at least consider doing so. The preferred means of accessing this information were via the UNISON website (**58%**) or over email (**49%**). A further **28%** that they would like to phone the UNISON helpline, 6% more than the national total and higher than any other region/nation.

There was no clear preference indicated in response to the question of who they would feel most confident in providing them with training for personal and career development opportunities. The most popular response favoured colleges or universities (**29%**), a further **26%** favoured training organised or delivered by UNISON and a further **24%** responded ‘don’t know’.

Those who indicated they would at least potentially be interested in accessing learning or training through UNISON College said the following types of learning / training / development appealed most:

* General personal development: **48%**
* Learning for work (eg continuing professional development): **44%**
* Preparing for retirement: **38%**
* Job specific specialist, technical or specialist: **37%**.

**Findings for Northern region**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Total participants from Northern region | 1351 |

Experience of learning and training

**95%** of participants from the Northern region said they have taken part in learning, training or development, with **31%** having done so in the 12 months prior to taking part in the survey. Most of this (**92%**) was for their work / career, and **76%** took place whilst at work, either on the job (**48%**) or away from the normal workstation (**25%**). In spite of the setting just **42%** of this took place in the employer’s time, **26%** was in the participants own time and **32%** was a mix of both. This suggests that as much as half of the learning to take place at work was not happening on employer’s time, although the regional statistic for learning, training or development happening on employer time is **6%** higher than the national average. Following the trend of work-orientated learning, **70%** of this learning, training or development was organised by the employer.

Whilst most (**59%**) experienced no difficulties in taking part in their most recent instance of learning, training or development, of those who had encountered barriers **25%** said it was hard to find time because of work responsibilities.

Demand for learning and training

**81%** of participants responded that they were at least fairly interested in taking part in learning, training or development in the near future (up to 3 years).

The most common motivations for taking part were:

* To learn something new (**90%**)
* Personal development / enjoyment / wellbeing (**89%**)
* To improve how I do my job (**83%**).

Participants were the least motivated by the prospect of changing career (**62%**) and changing job (**56%**).

When asked what types of training they were interested in, participants expressed a preference for general development (**75%**) and learning for work (**70%**). The most common response to being asked if they were interested in gaining a qualification in the next three years at any of the levels specified (EL 1 to L6 and above) was that they did not know (**31%**). There was also no clear preference shown regarding favoured settings for learning; **43%** said they preferred a mix of online self-directed learning, tutor led online courses and face-to-face training. **22%** preferred face-to-face training outright.

**76%** of participants said that if they were planning to take part in online learning, training or development that they would use a laptop provided by their employer, with **40%** opting to do so from work, and a further **36%** preferring to use their work laptop whilst at home.

Barriers to learning and training

Work commitments making it hard to find the time were the most common barrier to take part in learning, training or development (**55%**), followed by personal commitments (**38%**) and the belief it would be unaffordable (**30%**).

The most common response to the question of what would help them overcome these barriers was financial support with course fees (**45%**). **42%** indicated that support finding the right course for them would help, followed by support from their employer, including paid time off (**38%**) and more flexible training times (**37%**).

Views on UNISON College and the current learning offer

**43%** said they were aware of the current UNISON learning offer; **27%** of whom had heard of it but did not know much about it. **21%** said they had taken part in learning offered by UNISON, with **87%** giving this training a positive response.

**73%** expressed that they may be interested in accessing learning or training through UNISON College, and an additional **12%** said that they didn’t know if they would or not. Participants were more interested in the prospect of going to UNISON for information and advice on training and development opportunities, with **80%** indicating this was a service they would consider using. The preferred means of accessing this information were via the UNISON website (**54%**) and through emailing UNISON Learning (**47%**).

There was no clear preference in response to the question of who participants would feel most confident in providing them with training for personal and career development opportunities. **28%** opted for a college or university, **23%** chose training organised or delivered through UNISON, but a sizeable **26%** said they did not know.

Participants responded that they would be most interested in the following types of learning / training / development through UNISON College:

* General personal development (**48%**)
* Learning for work (eg CPD) (**44%**)
* Leisure / hobbies / well-being (**39%**)
* Job specific specialist or technical (**39%**).

**Findings for Northern Ireland**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Total participants from Northern Ireland | 613 |

Experience of learning and training

**89%** of participants from Northern Ireland said they have taken part in learning, training or development, with **29%** having done so in the 12 months prior to taking part in the survey. Most of this (**89%**) was for their work / career, and **61%** took place whilst at work, either on the job (**41%**) or away from the normal workstation (**20%**). **33%** took place in the employer’s time, which was **9%** below the national average. **31%** was in the participants own time and **36%** was a mix of both. Following the trend of work-orientated learning, **62%** of this learning, training or development was organised by the employer whilst **34%** had arranged it themselves.

Whilst many (**60%**) experienced no difficulties in taking part in their most recent instance of learning, training or development, of those who had encountered barriers **18%** said it was hard to find time because of work responsibilities.

Demand for learning and training

**87%** of participants responded that they were at least fairly interested in taking part in learning, training or development in the near future (up to 3 years).

The most common motivations for taking part were:

* To learn something new (**93%**)
* Personal development / enjoyment / wellbeing (**92%**)
* To improve how I do my job (**85%**).

Participants most frequently responded that they were not motivated by the prospect of changing career (**61%**) or changing job (**53%**).

When asked what types of training they were interested in, participants expressed a preference for general development (**78%**) and learning for work (**70%**). There was a mixed response to being asked if they were interested in gaining a qualification in the next three years at any of the levels specified (EL 1 to L6 and above). Many weren’t interested (**28%**) or did not know (**24%**). Most of those interested in gaining a qualification were interested in levels 4 or above (**30%**). There was also no clear preference shown regarding favoured settings for learning; **40%** said they preferred a mix of online self-directed learning, tutor led online courses and face-to-face training. **26%** preferred face-to-face training outright.

**72%** of participants said that if they were to take part in online learning, training, or development that they would like to do so from home via their own laptop (**49%**) or one provided by their employer (**23%**).

Barriers to learning and training

Work commitments making it hard to find the time were the most common barrier to take part in learning, training or development (**49%**), followed by personal commitments (**33%**) and the belief it would be unaffordable (**30%**).

The most common response to the question of what would help them overcome these barriers was financial support with course fees (**47%**). **43%** indicated that support finding the right course for them would help, followed by support from their employer, including paid time off (**38%**) and more flexible training times (**31%**).

Views on UNISON College and the current learning offer

**68%** said they were aware of the current UNISON learning offer, **23%** higher than the national average; **34%** said that they had heard of it but did not know much about it. **36%** said they had taken part in learning offered by UNISON, **15%** above the national average, with **91%** indicating that it was a positive experience. This positive response to the training was also higher than the national average (by **5**%).

**78%** expressed that they may be interested in accessing learning or training through UNISON College, and an additional **10%** said that they didn’t know if they would or not. Participants were slightly more interested in the prospect of going to UNISON for information and advice on training and development opportunities, with **84%** indicating this was a service they would consider using. The preferred means of accessing this information were via the UNISON website (**41%**) and through emailing UNISON Learning (**45%**).

There was no clear preference in response to the question of who participants would feel most confident in providing them with training for personal and career development opportunities. **24%** opted for a college or university, **29%** chose training organised or delivered through UNISON, but a sizeable **19%** said they did not know.

Participants responded that they would be most interested in the following types of learning / training / development through UNISON College:

* General personal development (**43%**)
* Learning for work (eg CPD) (**39%**)
* Supervisory or management skills (**37%**)
* Job specific specialist or technical (**34%**).

Experience of learning and training

95% of participants from Cymru/Wales said they have taken part in learning, training or development, with **33%** having done so in the 12 months prior to taking part in the survey. Most of this (**89%**) was for their work / career, and **65%** took place whilst at work, either on the job (**43%**) or away from the normal workstation (**22%**). **39%** of this took place in the employer’s time, **25%** was in the participants own time and approximately **37%** was a mix of both. Following the trend of work-orientated learning, **67%** of this learning, training or development was organised by the employer.

Whilst many (**59%**) experienced no difficulties in taking part in their most recent experience of learning, training or development, of those who had encountered barriers **24%** said it was hard to find time because of work responsibilities.

Demand for learning and training

**81%** of participants responded that they were at least fairly interested in taking part in learning, training or development in the near future (up to 3 years).

The most common motivations for taking part were:

* To learn something new (**91%**)
* Personal development / enjoyment / wellbeing (**89%**)
* To improve how I do my job (**85%**).

Participants responded that they were not motivated by the prospect of changing career (**60%**) and changing job (**56%**).

When asked what types of training they were interested in, participants expressed a preference for general development (**71%**) and learning for work (**73%**). The most common response to being asked if they were interested in gaining a qualification in the next three years at any of the levels specified (EL 1 to L6 and above) was that they did not know (**31%**). Of those who were interested in gaining a qualification, most were interested in Level 4 or above (**30%**). There was also no clear preference shown regarding favoured settings for learning; **44%** said they preferred a mix of online self-directed learning, tutor led online courses and face-to-face training. **18%** preferred face-to-face training outright.

**94%** of participants said that if they were planning to take part in online learning, training or development that they would prefer to do from home, with **47%** preferring to use their own laptop, and a further **47%** preferring to use their work laptop whilst at home.

Barriers to learning and training

Work commitments making it hard to find the time were the most common barrier to take part in learning, training or development (**54%**), followed by personal commitments (**37%**) and the belief it would be unaffordable (**32%**).

The most common response to the question of what would help them overcome these barriers was financial support with course fees (**49%**). **42%** indicated that support finding the right course for them would help, followed by support from their employer, including paid time off (**42%**) and more flexible training times (**38%**).

Views on UNISON College and the current learning offer

**44%** said they were aware of the current UNISON learning offer; **28%** of whom had heard of it but did not know much about it. **20%** said they had taken part in learning offered by UNISON, with **88%** giving this training a positive rating.

**76%** expressed that they may be interested in accessing learning or training through UNISON College, and an additional **13%** said that they didn’t know if they would or not. Participants were more interested in the prospect of going to UNISON for information and advice on training and development opportunities, with **80%** indicating this was a service they would consider using. The preferred means of accessing this information were via the UNISON website (**60%**) and through emailing UNISON Learning (**47%**).

There was no clear preference in response to the question of who participants would feel most confident in providing them with training for personal and career development opportunities. **28%** opted for a college or university, **21%** chose training organised or delivered through UNISON, but a sizeable **28%** said they did not know.

Participants responded that they would be most interested in the following types of learning / training / development through UNISON College:

* General personal development (**50%**)
* Learning for work (eg CPD) (**47%**)
* Job specific specialist or technical (**41%**)
* Leisure / hobbies / well-being (**38%**).

**Findings for North West region**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Total participants from North West region | 2313 |

Experience of learning and training

**94%** of participants from the North West region said they had taken part in learning, training or development, with the highest quantity taking place in the 12 months prior to their taking the survey (**33%**) and a further **24%** taking place more than 3 years prior.

**92%** of this learning, training or development was for their work / career, slightly above the national average of **89%** and **3%** higher than the closest other region. Most of this took place at work (**73%**) either ‘on the job’ (**48%**), or away from the normal workstation (**25%**).

Although a high number of participants said the training took place whilst in work, **41%** said this was on the employer’s time, with a further **31%** indicating it was a mix of the employer’s time and their own time. The training was arranged by the employer for **66%** of instances and arranged by the participant themselves for **33%** of responses.

**61%** said they did not have problems taking part; of those who did, **23%** responded that it was hard to find time because of work commitments, and **14%** said other responsibilities made it hard for them to find the time.

Demand for learning and training

**84%** of participants responded that they were at least fairly interested in taking part in learning, training or development in the near future (next three years). The most popular motivations for learning were:

* For personal development / engagement / well-being (**91%**)
* To learn something new (**90%**)
* To improve how I do my job (**81%**)

The responses which were most frequently provided as not being motivation for taking part in learning, training or development were changing career (**61%**) and changing job (**55%**).

The types of training which were most popular were:

* Learning for general personal development (**77%**)
* Learning for work (**70%**)
* Leisure / hobbies / well-being (**67%**).

Where participants showed an interest in gaining a qualification in the next 3 years (**41%**), most were interested in levels 4 or above (**27%**). **29%** said they didn’t know or weren’t sure.

**43%** said they would prefer a mix of ways to access training, covering online self-directed learning, online tutor facilitated learning and face to face. **22%** said they preferred outright face to face training. Most indicated they would prefer accessing online learning from their home (**84%**), either on their own laptop (**48%**) or via a laptop provided by their employer (**36%**).

Barriers to learning and training

The most common challenge/barrier to taking part in learning, training or development was work commitments making it hard to find the time (**53%**), followed by personal commitments (**34%**), and the belief it would be unaffordable (**33%**).

 Participants suggested the following would be ways of overcoming these barriers:

* Financial Support (**47%**)
* Help with finding the right course (**46%**)
* Support from my employer eg paid time off to study (**42%**)
* More flexible ways to access training (**39%**)
* Courses with flexible deadlines (**34%**).

Views on UNISON College and the current learning offer

**38%** of participants from the region had some awareness of UNISON’s current learning offer, **25%** of whom had heard of it but didn’t know much about it. **18%** had taken part in training through UNISON, **84%** of whom were positive about their experience.

 Members from the region responded positively to the notion of accessing learning or training through UNISON College, with **76%** indicating that they would at least consider it. A further **12%** responded that they did not know.

When asked if whether they would go to UNISON for advice on training and development opportunities **80%** responded that they would at least consider doing so. The preferred means of accessing this information were via the UNISON website (**59%**) or over email (**46%**).

There was a mixed response to the question asking who they would feel most confident in providing them with training for personal and career development opportunities. The most popular response favoured colleges or universities (**28%**), and a further **23%** responded ‘don’t know’.

 Those who indicated they would at least potentially be interested in accessing learning or training through UNISON College said the following types of learning / training / development appealed most:

General personal development: **48%**

* Learning for work (eg continuing professional development): **43%**
* Leisure / hobbies / well-being: **41%**
* Job specific specialist, technical or specialist: **39%**.

**Findings for South East region**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Total participants from South East region | 2076 |

Experience of learning and training

**93%** of participants from the region said they have taken part in learning, training or development, with **35%** having done so in the 12 months prior to taking part in the survey. Most of this (**88%**) was for their work / career, and **69%** took place whilst at work, either on the job (**44%**) or away from the normal workstation (**25%**). Despite the setting just **43%** of this took place in the employer's time, **26%** was in the participants own time and **31%** was a mix of both. Following the trend of work-orientated learning, **64%** of this learning, training or development was organised by the employer. **36%** had arranged it themselves, higher than any other region or nation.

Whilst many (**59%**) experienced no difficulties in taking part in their most recent instance of learning, training or development, of those who had encountered barriers **24%** said it was hard to find time because of work responsibilities.

Demand for learning and training

**88%** of participants responded that they were at least fairly interested in taking part in learning, training or development in the near future (up to 3 years).

The most common motivations for taking part were:

* To learn something new (93%)
* Personal development / enjoyment / wellbeing (**92%**)
* To improve how I do my job (**84%**).

Participants did not appear motivated by the prospect of changing career (59%) or changing job (**55%**).

When asked what types of training they were interested in, participants expressed a preference for general development (**80%**) and learning for work (**73%**). The most common response to being asked if they were interested in gaining a qualification in the next three years at any of the levels specified (EL 1 to L6 and above) was that they did not know (**29%**). There was also no clear preference shown regarding favoured settings for learning; **48%** said they preferred a mix of online self-directed learning, tutor led online courses and face-to-face training. **19%** preferred face-to-face training outright.

**91%** of participants said that if they were to take part in online learning, training, or development that they would like to do so from home via their own laptop (**51%**) or one provided by their employer (**40%**).

Barriers to learning and training

Work commitments making it hard to find the time were the most common barrier to take part in learning, training or development (**59%**), followed by personal commitments (**37%**) and the belief it would be unaffordable (**35%**).

The most common response to the question of what would help them overcome these barriers was financial support with course fees (**49%**). **46%** indicated that support finding the right course for them would help, followed by support from their employer, including paid time off (**46%**) and more flexible training times (**41%**).

Views on UNISON College and the current learning offer

**37%** said they were aware of the current UNISON learning offer, **8%** below the national average; **25%** said that they had heard of it but did not know much about it. **18%** said they had taken part in learning offered by UNISON, with **82%** indicating that it was a positive experience.

**80%** expressed that they may be interested in accessing learning or training through UNISON College, and an additional **12%** said that they didn’t know if they would or not. Participants were slightly more interested in the prospect of going to UNISON for information and advice on training and development opportunities, with **83%** indicating this was a service they would consider using. The preferred means of accessing this information were via the UNISON website (**63%**) and through emailing UNISON Learning (**45%**).

There was no clear preference in response to the question of who participants would feel most confident in providing them with training for personal and career development opportunities. **28%** opted for a college or university, **23%** chose training organised or delivered through UNISON, but a sizeable **24%** said they did not know.

Participants responded that they would be most interested in the following types of learning / training / development through UNISON College:

* General personal development (**52%**)
* Learning for work (eg CPD) (**47%**)
* Leisure / hobbies / well-being (**43%**)
* Job specific specialist or technical (**42%**).

**Findings for South West region**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Total participants from South West region | 1316 |

Experience of learning and training

**95%** of participants in the region said they had taken part in some learning, training or development. Around **35%** had undertaken this learning within the 12 months prior to taking part in the survey, whilst a further **20%** said they were currently undertaking learning, training or development.

In most cases their most recent instance of learning, training or development was for their work / career (**89%**). **67%** of the responses indicated that this took place within the workplace, with **41%** responding that this was ‘on the job’ training at their desk, and a further **26%** stating that it took place at work and away from their workspace. **31%** of respondents stated their most recent learning experience had been online self-directed learning.

Most of this learning, training or development took place in in their employer’s time (**45%**), or a mix of both (**30%**), with participants using their own time in **25%** of responses. More than half of this was arranged by their employer (**65%**) and **33%** was arranged by the participant.

Whilst many indicated that they did not have any problem with taking part (**61%**), the most common hindrances included finding time because of work responsibilities (**24%**), and other non-specified responsibilities (**17%1**).

Demand for Learning and Training

**85%** of participants from the region said they were at least fairly interested in taking part in learning, training or development over the next three years. The key motivating factors for this were to something new (**93%**), for personal development / enjoyment / well-being (**92%**), to learn and to improve how they do their job (**85%**). Although improving in their current role provided motivation to learn, there was notably less interest in pursuing a change of career with **62%** of participants saying this was not a reason which motivated them to learn.

Interest in gaining a qualification appears low, and most of those looking to gain qualifications were interested in levels 4 and above (**26%**). The most common response was that participants either didn’t know or weren’t sure (**30%**) or they had no interest in gaining a qualification (**30%**).

There was no clear preference regarding a preferred way of accessing training. Participants expressed the most interest in accessing training via a mix of online self-directed training, online course led by a tutor, and/or in person training (**43%**). This was followed by just under **1 in 5** who had an outright preference for in person training. Most indicated they would like to access online learning, training or development from home, either on their own laptop or via one provided by their workplace (**96%**).

Barriers to learning and training

The most common challenge/barrier to taking part in learning, training or development was work commitments making it hard to find the time (**61%**), followed by personal commitments (**41%**), and the belief it would be unaffordable (**33%**).

Participants mainly chose the following would be ways of overcoming these barriers:

* Financial Support (**47%**)
* Support from my employer eg paid time off to study (**47%**)
* Help with finding the right course (**41%**)
* More flexible ways to access training (**40%**)
* Courses with flexible deadlines (**37%**).

Views on UNISON College and the current learning offer

**44%** of participants from the region had some awareness of UNISON’s current learning offer, **29%** of whom had heard of it but didn’t know much about it. This was one of the highest totals for awareness across regions and nations. **21%** had taken part in training through UNISON, **87%** of whom were positive about their experience.

Members from the region responded positively to the notion of accessing learning or training through UNISON College, with **78%** indicating that they would at least consider it. A further **13%** responded that they did not know.

When asked whether they would go to UNISON for advice on training and development opportunities **81%** responded that they would at least consider doing so. The preferred means of accessing this information were via the UNISON website (**67%**) or over email (**47%**).

There was a mixed response to the question asking who they would feel most confident in providing them with training for personal and career development opportunities. Colleges or universities (**28%**) were the most favoured, but a further **27%** responded ‘don’t know’.

Those who indicated they would at least potentially be interested in accessing learning or training through UNISON College said the following types of learning / training / development appealed most:

* General personal development: **47%**
* Leisure / hobbies / well-being: **47%**
* Job specific specialist, technical or specialist: **42%**
* Learning for work (eg continuing professional development): **40%.**

**Findings for West Midlands**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Total participants from West Midlands | 1352 |

Experience of learning and training

**94%** of participants from the region said they have taken part in learning, training or development, with **30%** having done so in the 12 months prior to taking part in the survey. Most of this (**88%**) was for their work / career, and **67%** took place whilst at work, either on the job (**44%**) or away from the normal workstation (**23%**). In spite of the setting just **42%** of this took place in the employer’s time, **26%** was in the participants own time and **32%** was a mix of both. This suggests that as much as half of the learning to take place at work was not happening on employer’s time, although the regional statistic for learning, training or development happening on employer time is **6%** higher than the national average. Following the trend of work-orientated learning, **65%** of this learning, training or development was organised by the employer.

Whilst most (**62%**) experienced no difficulties in taking part in their most recent instance of learning, training or development, of those who had encountered barriers **22%** said it was hard to find time because of work responsibilities.

Demand for learning and training

**86%** of participants responded that they were at least fairly interested in taking part in learning, training or development in the near future (up to 3 years).

The most common motivations for taking part were:

* Personal development / enjoyment / wellbeing (**91%**)
* To learn something new (**90%**)
* To improve how I do my job (**82%**).

Participants were the least motivated by the prospect of changing career (**56%**) and changing job (**54%**).

When asked what types of training they were interested in, participants expressed a preference for general development (**78%**) and learning for work (**71%**). The most common response to being asked if they were interested in gaining a qualification in the next three years at any of the levels specified (EL 1 to L6 and above) was that they did not know (**30%**). Most of those interested in gaining a qualification were interested in levels 4 and above (**27%**). There was also no clear preference shown regarding favoured settings for learning; **45%** said they preferred a mix of online self-directed learning, tutor led online courses and face-to-face training. **18%** preferred face-to-face training outright.

**89%** of participants said that if they were planning to take part in online learning, training or development that they would prefer to do so from home, with **41%** opting to do so from a laptop provided by their employer, and a further **48%** preferring to use their own device.

Barriers to learning and training

Work commitments making it hard to find the time were the most common barrier to take part in learning, training or development (**57%**), followed by personal commitments (**37%**) and the belief it would be unaffordable (**37%**).

The most common response to the question of what would help them overcome these barriers was financial support with course fees (**51%**). **46%** indicated that support finding the right course for them would help, followed by support from their employer, including paid time off (**43%**) and more flexible training times (**41%**).

Views on UNISON College and the current learning offer

**52%** said they were aware of the current UNISON learning offer; **34%** of whom had heard of it but did not know much about it. **21%** said they had taken part in learning offered by UNISON, with **87%** giving this training a positive response.

**79%** expressed that they may be interested in accessing learning or training through UNISON College, and an additional **12%** said that they didn’t know if they would or not. Participants were more interested in the prospect of going to UNISON for information and advice on training and development opportunities, with **83%** indicating this was a service they would consider using. The preferred means of accessing this information were via the UNISON website (**57%**) and through emailing UNISON Learning (**48%**).

There was no clear preference in response to the question of who participants would feel most confident in providing them with training for personal and career development opportunities, although three responses were equally popular. **26%** opted for a college or university, **26%** chose training organised or delivered through UNISON, but a sizeable **26%** said they did not know.

Participants responded that they would be most interested in the following types of learning / training / development through UNISON College:

* General personal development (**48%**)
* Learning for work (eg CPD) (**43%**)
* Leisure / hobbies / well-being (**40%**)
* Job specific specialist or technical (**37%**).

**Findings for Yorkshire and Humberside**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Total participants from Yorkshire and Humberside | 1929 |

Experience of learning and training

**95%** of participants from the region said they were currently or had previously undertaken learning, training or development. **34%** said they had done so in the last 12 months, with **18%** undertaking learning, training or development at the time they completed the survey. A further **27%** indicated this took place more than 3 years ago.

Of those who had taken part in this learning, training or development, the vast majority had done so for their work/career (**89%**), with **64%** of this learning taking place whilst at work, either ‘on the job’ (**42%**), or away from the workstation (**22%**). A further **30%** said their most recent experience of learning had been online and self-directed.

Much of this learning, training or development took place in their employer’s time (**44%**), or a mix of both (**31%**), with participants using their own time in **25%** of responses. This was arranged by the employer for **66%** of responses, followed by **33%** who had arranged it themselves.

Whilst many participants indicated that they did not have a problem taking part in this learning, training or development (**63%**), common problems with participation included work responsibilities (**22%**), and other unspecified responsibilities (**14%**).

Demand for learning and training

**83%** of participants from the region said they were at least fairly interested in taking part in learning, training or development over the next three years. The key motivating factors for this were to learn something new (**91%**), for personal development/enjoyment/well-being (**90%**) and to improve how they do their job (**86%**). Although improving their current role provided motivation to learn, there was notably less interest in pursuing a change of career with **63%** of participants saying this was not a reason which motivated them to learn. Similarly, **58%** responded that changing job was not a motivation, one of the highest ‘no’ responses for this topic. The types of learning which most interested participants were general personal development (**74%**), learning for work (**70%**), and leisure / hobbies / well-being (**64%**).

Interest in gaining a qualification appears low, and most of those looking to gain qualifications were interested in levels 4 and above (**24%**). The most common response was from the **31%** who indicated that they had no interest in gaining a qualification, although this almost matched by those who either didn’t know or weren’t sure (**30%**).

Participants were most interested in accessing training via a mix of online self-directed training, online course led by a tutor, and/or in person training (**44%**). This was followed by **21%** who had an outright preference for in person training. Most indicated they would like to access online learning, training or development from home, either on their own laptop or via one provided by their workplace (**89%**).

Barriers to learning and training

The most common challenge/barrier to taking part in learning, training or development was work commitments making it hard to find the time (**56%**), followed by personal commitments (**40%**), and the belief it would be unaffordable (**32%**).

Participants suggested the following would be ways of overcoming these barriers:

* Help with finding the right course (**40%**)
* Financial Support (**44%**)
* Support from my employer eg paid time off to study (**42%**)
* More flexible ways to access training (**37%**)
* Courses with flexible deadlines (**34%**).

Views on UNISON College and the current learning offer

**52%** of participants from the region had some awareness of UNISON’s current learning offer, **31%** of whom had heard of it but didn’t know much about it. **22%** of participants had taken part in training through UNISON, **85%** of whom were positive about their experience.

Members from the region responded positively to the notion of accessing learning or training through UNISON College, with **74%** indicating that they would at least consider it. When asked whether they would go to UNISON for advice on training and development opportunities **78%** responded that they would at least consider doing so. The preferred means of accessing this information were via the UNISON website (**61%**) or over email (**45%**).

There was no clear preference indicated in response to the question of who they would feel most confident in providing them with training for personal and career development opportunities. The most popular response favoured colleges or universities (**29%**), a further **21%** favoured training organised or delivered by UNISON and a further **26%** responded ‘don’t know’.

Those who indicated they would at least potentially be interested in accessing learning or training through UNISON College said the following types of learning / training / development appealed most:

* General personal development: **48%**
* Learning for work (eg continuing professional development): **43%**
* Leisure / hobbies / wellbeing: **39%**
* Job specific specialist, technical or specialist: **38%**.

**Recommendations for UNISON**

Target audiences

UNISON needs to raise the profile of and promote its learning offer better. Presenting evidence of experience and success would increase UNISON’s visibility as a major provider of training and learning among members, employers and partners.

Younger, more highly qualified and higher earners are the most interested in future learning, as are those who have undertaken learning since leaving full-time education and those who are activists. These are the most likely to readily take up a UNISON College offer.

In comparison, UNISON will need to work harder to build interest in learning amongst those members who traditionally undertake less learning and who are less likely to express interest in learning and training, particularly older, lower qualified and lower income groups. In the focus groups there appeared to be a high level of latent demand and interest among these members once the idea of UNISON College is explained. Specific campaigns or programmes addressing their barriers may be needed, as well as high-quality information, advice and guidance to help them identify suitable training opportunities. Using previous learners and activists, such as union learning reps (ULRs), as advocates could be useful

Making the learning offer as accessible as possible will be important to ensure demand from those who may face barriers in their jobs and careers (eg those with a disability or those from an ethnic minority background) translates into take-up, as these groups are more likely to feel that support in overcoming barriers to accessing training will help them to participate in training in the future.

Learning and training topics

A major question for the College is what kind of learning to provide. Results suggest that interest is at least as high for learning for general personal development, leisure and well-being as it is for work-/career-related training. The majority of members are interested in training for general personal development, leisure and well-being, while just under half are interested in learning for work through UNISON College.

For work-related training, given the breadth of occupations of members, UNISON may be best placed providing training delivering transferrable skills which can be applied in all workplaces, such as confidence and assertiveness skills, conflict resolution, having difficult conversations, or supervisory and management skills.

Computer and digital skills offers are of particular interest to older members, many of whom lack confidence in this area, and feel this holds them back in their job.

Marketing the impact of having qualifications (eg on progression or earnings) alongside other benefits will broaden their appeal, since obtaining a qualification is often not a motivator in itself. Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) around suitability of qualification levels may be useful.

Delivery mode

Offering flexibility in delivery is important for UNISON members, many of whom are interested in online learning or a mix of online and tutor-led learning. Members are interested in being able to select a style that suits their learning needs and personal circumstances.

In person training is likely to increase the appeal to older members (who often see this as delivering higher quality, more impactful training), but it should not be assumed that all younger people are happy to access learning online.

UNISON will need to consider that some members may not have access to devices which will provide a good quality online experience (i.e., they may only have mobile access).

Barriers to accessing learning

Previous challenges faced in accessing training were most commonly about finding time given their work and personal responsibilities. UNISON needs to provide flexible ways of accessing learning and strengthen partnerships and learning agreements with employers to ensure time off for learning is provided.

Working with employers around how to ensure members can train alongside their work commitments would be useful – as well as helping members to draw up training requests and negotiating with the employer.

Lack of knowledge about training opportunities is a barrier for many members, and provision of free IAG for all members will help address this. High-quality, professional information and advice on training from UNISON was often welcomed because people would be able to discuss issues that they might not be able to with their employer (for example if the training was to help them change career or move job).

Cost will need to be considered to maximise appeal, especially for younger members. Many would like direct financial support to help with any fees for training.

**More information:**

Read all the survey reports in UNISON <https://learning.unison.org.uk/college-survey>

Or contact [learningandorganisingservices@unison.co.uk](mailto:learningandorganisingservices@unison.co.uk)