

What makes a good modern apprenticeship in social services in Scotland?

Research report

October 2018

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Executive summary

1. The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) is responsible for the management of seven Apprenticeship Frameworks in social services in Scotland. Three of these are Modern Apprenticeship (MA) Frameworks and are the focus of this report. With large numbers of individual undertaking MAs in social services, SSSC is keen to ensure that MA programmes provide a high quality learning experience. To support this aim, SSSC commissioned research to address the question 'What makes a good modern apprenticeship in social services in Scotland?'
2. The research, carried out between October 2017 and February 2018, had three phases: desk research designed to investigate the current 'landscape' of MAs in social services in Scotland; a short series of individual interviews and a focus group which explored key factors affecting apprentices' learning experience; and a survey of apprentices, learning providers and employers designed to test the findings from the previous phases of research.
3. Desk research identified that, although significant information exists about the numbers of apprentices in training and achieving their qualifications, little information exists about how they develop the knowledge, skills and competence for their role. Furthermore, although research across all MA Frameworks suggests high levels of satisfaction among employers and apprentices, there are some areas of dissatisfaction. For employers, these relates most notably to the level of involvement they have in the design of MA programmes. For apprentices, the areas most likely to cause dissatisfaction relate to the support their employer provides for learning, and need for improvements in the training provided. The individual interviews and focus group therefore focused on exploring the factors that make an apprenticeship a successful learning experience.
4. The interviews conducted with training providers (two of whom are employer organisations) and with apprentices identified some key factors affecting success. These included the importance of:
 - a pre-apprenticeship phase of structured learning which gave the apprentices a foundation of knowledge and initial experience on which to base their on-the-job learning
 - the Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) assessor and the employer-appointed workplace mentor whose roles help ensure the apprentices have an appropriate range of learning opportunities during their work to develop the competences required for their role.

5. Both the training providers and the apprentices stressed the pivotal role of the workplace mentor in creating an effective learning environment in the workplace. However, they also highlighted that some workplace mentors have very limited time and support for their role.
6. An online survey aimed to test these findings with apprentices, employers and training providers. A substantial number of responses from apprentices, training providers and employers gave enough information to provide insight into pre-apprenticeship phases. However, only a small number of employers provided information about support for learning during the apprenticeship. As a result, the findings for these aspects reflect only the views of the apprentices and training providers.
7. The findings from the survey supported those from previous research, indicating high levels of satisfaction overall with MAs in social services. The apprentices confirmed that most completed pre-apprenticeship structured learning, although 40% of employers indicated that they did require this. Findings also confirmed that, during the apprenticeship, most learning takes place 'on the job' and that apprentices value observing, listening to and working alongside their colleagues. They also see the role of assessor and mentor as vital to their success.
8. The areas of least satisfaction also mirror those of findings at a national level. Although generally satisfied with their experience overall, apprentices identified the support they receive from their workplace mentor and the time available for learning as the areas of least satisfaction. They also indicated that their colleagues, who support their learning in the workplace, do not always understand what an apprenticeship entails, and that many have limited access to more structured learning. These findings echoed in those from training providers, who indicated that workplace mentors have seldom had training for their role, and may not have the time needed to carry out this role. A number of learning providers indicated that they provide – or are planning to develop – resources to support employers and workplace mentors.
9. Overall, the research suggests a 'good modern apprenticeship in social services':
 - needs effective employer support
 - needs time allocated to learning
 - gives access to a range of learning opportunities
 - is dependent on the quality and depth of support given by the SQA Assessor and the workplace mentor.

10. It is stressed that the findings of this research are not conclusive and cannot be regarded as representative owing to the lack of the employers' voice. However, they do provide indications that chime with cross-sector research.
11. The findings provide information which can help SSSC decide how best to support the quality of apprentices' learning experience in social services. It is recognised that a wide range of resources and experience already exists to support this aim, and any developments should seek to maximise the benefits of the existing resources and expertise. The recommendations are therefore that SSSC should do the following.
 - **Seek ways to support employers to network and share learning:** The research suggests that the employer's engagement is crucial in supporting an effective workplace learning environment and support for employers to network, share learning and champion MAs in social services could help to promote positive learning environments.
 - **Develop national resources for employers, managers and mentors:** A number of training providers provide – or are planning to provide – a range of support and resources for these groups. SSSC may wish to consider how the co-production of national resources could help bring providers and employers together and minimise duplication of effort.
 - **Provide access to a range of learning resources which are already available:** The SSSC may wish to consider how a portal, designed to create a point of access to a range of different learning resources available on different platforms, could help extend access to knowledge-based learning for apprentices.

1. Introduction

1. The SSSC is responsible for the development and management of seven Apprenticeship Frameworks in the social service sector in Scotland. Four are graduate level apprenticeships at SCQF level 9 and 10. Three are MA Frameworks. The MA Frameworks are well-established and account for the highest number of registrations and certifications of apprentices in social services in Scotland. This research project focused on the three MA Frameworks. They are:
 - Social Services (Children and Young People) (SSCYP) at Level 7 on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)
 - Social Services and Healthcare (SSHC6) at SCQF Level 6
 - Social Services and Healthcare (SSHC7) at SCQF Level 7.
2. The MA programmes aim to ensure that all participants develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to deliver high quality social services. With large numbers of participants, the MAs have an important role in ensuring a skilled workforce for the future. As MA numbers increase, the SSSC is keen to ensure that MA programmes focus not merely on the numbers of people completing their apprenticeship but also on the quality of the learning and practical experience which apprentices gain during their apprenticeship.
3. In September 2017, the SSSC commissioned TWIG Associates to conduct research into apprenticeships in social services in Scotland. Recognising the early stages of development of the graduate level apprenticeships, the research focused on the MA Frameworks. The SSSC will use the findings of the research to inform the development of support and guidance for everyone involved in the delivery of MA programmes: employers, training providers and apprentices themselves.

2. Research objectives and methodology

4. The research addressed the question 'What makes a good modern apprenticeship in social services in Scotland?'
It aimed to identify the factors that apprentices, employers and training providers view as important in high-quality learning, and any areas where further support might be needed.
5. The research was conducted in three phases.
 - **Phase 1:** Desk research to gather information about the current landscape of MAs in social services in Scotland, and to identify issues for further research during the primary research phases.
 - **Phase 2:** Qualitative interviews with a small number of apprentices, employers and training providers to identify and explore possible key factors affecting the quality of learning. The findings from this stage were then used to inform the development of phase 3.
 - **Phase 3:** A survey of apprentices, employers and training providers to test the views identified in phase 2 with larger groups of research participants, and to gather further information about the types of support which might be useful.
6. The following sections describe the findings and implications emerging from each phase.

3. Phase 1: Desk research

a) Objectives

7. Drawing on information from a range of national agencies¹, the desk research provided information about the current MA landscape in the social services sector in Scotland. This included identifying:
 - a) what MAs in social services involve
 - b) who the apprentices are, and how their achievement is measured
 - c) who the learning providers are, and how they offer MA programmes
 - d) how the quality of MA programmes is monitored and evaluated
 - e) how employer and apprentice satisfaction with MA programmes is measured.

The key findings relating to these questions are summarised below.

b) Key findings

What do MAs in social services involve?

8. Each MA Framework contains an SVQ plus requirements for core skills. SVQs comprise units of occupational standards and associated assessment strategies. The qualification is designed to assess the individual's competence in the workplace, as measured against the occupational standards. Each MA Framework represents a considerable volume of learning, ranging from 510-580 hours for the MA SSHC6 to 680-930 hours for the MA SSCYP depending on the SVQ units chosen by the individual. As the Assessment Strategies for the SVQs highlight, assessment of the individual's performance '...must take place during the course of their day-to-day work'². Importantly, there is also a requirement that, wherever possible, assessment of knowledge and understanding '... [should] be carried out during performance to ensure integration of theory and practice'³.
9. The significant volume of learning, coupled with assessment carried out entirely in the course of the individual's work (with the exception of information and communications technology (ICT) and numeracy) suggest that the workplace learning environment has an important role in ensuring a good apprenticeship experience. It also suggests that learning providers and employers need to work closely together to

¹ A full list of reference sources consulted during the desk research is included in Appendix 1.

² Assessment Strategy for Scottish Vocational Qualifications in Social Services and Healthcare SVQ 2, 3 and 4 and Social Services (Children and Young People) SVQ 2, 3 and 4 (p.2) (SQA, 2013) Downloaded from http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/20130213Social_Services_HealthcareASv1.pdf

³ Ibid.

ensure that the apprentice has the appropriate opportunities to learn and carry out the tasks required by the SVQ.

Who are the apprentices, and how is their achievement measured?

10. The desk research aimed to establish a profile of apprentices across the MA Frameworks. Statistics sourced from Skills Development Scotland (SDS) show that 2,821 people were registered as modern apprentices social services at the end of 2016/2017. This accounted for 9.6% of all modern apprentices registered in Scotland and made the social service sector the second largest employer of modern apprentices, after the hospitality sector.

11. As table 1 demonstrates, modern apprentices in social services are predominantly female, with the majority of SSCYP apprentices aged between 16 and 19 (80%). The age profile is different for the MA SSHC, with 71% aged 20+.

Table 1: Modern apprentices in training, and achieving in 2016-2017 by age and framework⁴

MA Framework	In Training at end of reporting period			Achievements as % of All Leavers		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
SSCYP 16/17 Q4 (16-19)	1,252	48	1,300	77%	70%	77%
SSCYP 16/17 Q4 (20-24)	235	10	245	72%	56%	71%
SSCYP 16/17 Q4 (25+)	85	6	91	*	*	68%
SSCYP 16/17 All Ages	1,572	64	1,636	76%	63%	76%
SS&HC 16/17 Q4 (16-19)	311	36	347	75%	81%	75%
SS&HC 16/17 Q4 (20-24)	549	77	626	77%	69%	76%
SS&HC 16/17 Q4 (25+)	177	35	212	81%	77%	80%
SS&HC 16/17 Q4 (All Ages)	1,037	148	1,185	77%	73%	76%
SS&HC 16/17 Q4 (L6)	528	72	600	76%	74%	75%
SS&HC 16/17 Q4 (L7)	509	76	585	78%	72%	77%

12. As table 1 highlights, in 2016-2017 76% of social services apprentices left their MA programme having achieved their qualification. This compares with a national average of 78% across all MA Frameworks in Scotland.

13. The profile of apprentices raised a number of issues for this research

⁴ Figures sourced from MA Supplementary Tables 2016-2017 (SDS). Downloaded from <http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/search?keywords=ma%20supplementary%20tables>

project and for potential further research.

- The numbers of apprentices aged 20+ on the MA SSHC suggests that many participants may already be in work, with employers using the MA Framework to up skill their workforce. Importantly, if apprentices are already experienced in their roles when they begin their MA programme, the impact on how they learn during the programme may be affected.
- The majority (76%) of apprentices completed their MA programme successfully but 24% did not. As Modern Apprentices must be employed in the sector, and the figures suggest that employers may be using the MA SSHC to up skill existing staff, unsuccessful apprentices may remain in the sector. Identifying why people leave MA programmes without completing may help employers and learning providers identify how programmes could be improved to ensure higher success rates and prevent possible additional costs of further learning programmes. The difficulty in contacting unsuccessful apprentices put research of this area beyond the parameters of the current research, but this is flagged as potential area for further investigation.
- The issue of gender segregation in MAs is addressed in the Scottish Government's strategy for youth employment⁵. This strategy contains a target for 2021 of reducing the number of MA Frameworks where the gender balance is 75:25 or worse. This target applies to all the Social Services MA Frameworks, and is particularly noticeable in the MA SSCYP where the balance is 96:4. Investigation of how to achieve a better gender balance in apprenticeships is beyond the parameters of this project, but is flagged as a potential area for further study.

Who are the learning providers and how do they offer MA programmes?

14. Information provided by SSSC listed 79 registered providers of MAs in social services in Scotland. This includes 21 employer organisations (employer-providers) and 58 training providers. Of the employer-providers, 14 are local council bodies. Of the training providers, 39 are private providers and the remaining 19 are colleges.
15. The wide range of types of provider suggests that there may be various models of provision. However, the desk research did not uncover if and how MA programmes differ across those providers, and how the quality of the learning experience is assured. Key areas

⁵ Developing the Young Workforce: Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy (The Scottish Government 2015). <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0046/00466386.pdf>
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flagged for investigation during the primary research included:

- Are different models used to deliver programmes? If so, what are they? In particular, it will be important to understand the roles of the different organisations in different models, and how they see their role in supporting the quality of learning, if the proposed guidance is to reach the most appropriate people.
- How do employers see their role in programme delivery? The strong focus in the MAs on learning (and assessment of learning) through day-to-day work means that employers have an important role to play in supporting a quality learning environment. This is the case even if they have no direct formal role in programme delivery. Understanding how employers see their role was identified as a key area for further exploration.

How is the quality of MA programmes monitored and evaluated?

16. A range of national quality assurance frameworks and evaluation mechanisms apply to MAs, including the National Training Programme (NTP) Quality Management Framework and SVQ awarding body quality standards. Both sets of standards require MA providers to gather feedback from learners on their satisfaction with their programme. The NTP also requires providers to include employers in the planning of training delivery. However, both sets of standards focus primarily on the process of MA delivery, and on the success of that process rather than on the quality and outcomes of the learning experience.
17. The issue of measuring the impact of MA programmes on individuals' skills is also highlighted in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) recommendations for the evaluation of MAs in Scotland⁶. Although this policy paper has provided SDS with a framework for long-term evaluation of MAs, it identifies that measuring and quantifying skills development across the population of modern apprentices is difficult.
18. Overall, the existing quality assurance mechanisms that apply to MA programmes focus on the process of MA delivery and on the measurable outcomes of the process in terms of achievement rates and retention in employment. Little attention has been given to the quality of the learning experience, beyond the measurement of overall satisfaction. A key issue for the next stage of the research, therefore, was to identify factors that may affect satisfaction with the learning experience.

⁶ OECD Evaluation Framework for Modern Apprenticeships in Scotland (OECD 2016)
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How is employer and apprentice satisfaction with MA programmes measured?

19. In addition to the feedback gathered by MA Providers, national agencies in Scotland and England undertake satisfaction surveys with employers and apprentices. As part of the desk research, four recent surveys⁷ were reviewed, providing the following findings.

- More than 80% of the employers questioned said they were satisfied with the quality of the training provided to their apprentices. Approximately 40% said that they would like to have greater influence over the design of the programmes being delivered for their staff.
- In the SDS survey of employers, 77% said that they provided formal on-the-job training for apprentices. This is defined in the survey as learning opportunities that are 'activities that staff would recognise as training and not the sort of learning by experience which could take place all the time.'⁸ For the purposes of this report, we refer to these types of activities as 'structured learning'⁹.
- In both employer surveys, the three most important benefits identified in apprenticeships were improved productivity, improved service quality and improved staff morale.
- The high satisfaction rates seen in the employer surveys were echoed in the learner surveys, although satisfaction with the quality of training was lower. The following figure 1, extracted from the SDS learner survey, highlights the areas where apprentices in Scotland were more/less satisfied. While the area most likely to cause dissatisfaction was the support provided by employers, it is important to note that only 11% of respondents noted this dissatisfaction.

⁷ Modern Apprenticeship Employer Survey 2015 (SDS 2015)
Apprenticeships Evaluation 2015 – Employers (Department for Education 2016)
Modern Apprenticeship Intermediate Outcomes (SDS 2016)
Apprenticeships Evaluation 2015 – Learners (Department for Education 2016)
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/562485/Apprenticeships_evaluation_2015_-_Learners.pdf

⁸ MA Employer Survey 2015 (SDS 2016, p20)

⁹ SSSC defines 'structured learning' as learning which 'compliments learning by experience and encompasses a range of approaches in addition to traditional teaching and online approaches. Examples of structured learning opportunities include presentations, guided reading, focused visits to other services, focused discussions.'

Figure 4.2: Satisfaction with specific elements of the MA

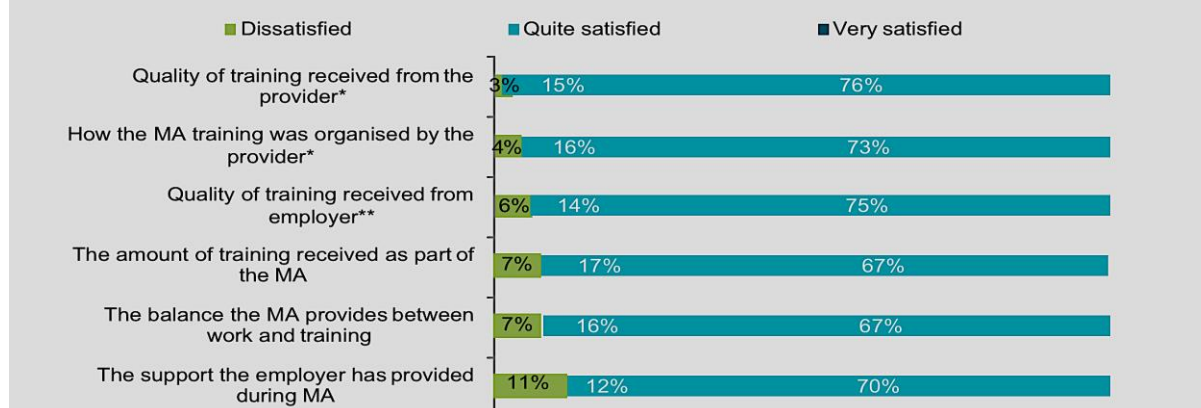


Figure 1: Extracted from Modern Apprenticeship Intermediate Outcomes (SDS 2016) p9

- As highlighted above, it is important to understand why some apprentices do not complete their MA programmes. In the SDS survey, 30% of the respondents were categorised as 'non-completers'. Thirty-nine percent of non-completers left because of dissatisfaction with their programme. The main reasons cited as influencing decisions to leave included:
 - improvements needed to training (eg more training, more time to complete it and more relevant training) (21%)
 - more support needed from their supervisor, line manager or employer (15%)
 - the opportunity to continue the MA elsewhere (13%)
 - more support needed from their training provider (9%).

Extracted from Modern Apprenticeship Intermediate Outcomes (SDS 2016) p9

- The impact of the MA on participants aged 20+ was touched on in the SDS survey. Most respondents in all age groups identified that the MA had a role in helping them to be better able to do their job and more confident in their abilities. However, respondents in the 20-24 and 25+ age groups were less likely to attribute this improvement to the MA, with the 25+ group perceiving the least impact of the MA programme.

20. The results summarised above highlighted some areas for consideration in the next phase of the research. These included a need to explore any areas which have led to least satisfaction and how these might be addressed. This information may help to shape guidance on quality in learning. It also highlighted a need to explore if and how

employers provide opportunities for structured on-the-job learning in the social services sector; given that the majority of employers who responded to the SDS survey said that they provide these types of learning opportunities.

c) Implications for phase 2

21. The desk research highlighted a number of areas to consider in the next stages of the research.

- (How) do providers structure their learning programmes to ensure that Modern Apprentices have enough time and opportunity to develop the required level of competence?
- What different models of delivery are there, and what are the roles of the participating organisations in those different models?
- (How) is on-the-job learning structured to ensure an effective learning environment?
- Why do people leave MA programmes before completing them? (How) is this related to the quality of learning?
- What do modern apprentices value most – and least – about their learning experience?

4. Phase 2: Qualitative interviews

a) Objectives and methodology

22. This phase of the research was designed to uncover and explore the questions listed above. In total, seven individual/pair interviews and one focus group discussion were conducted. They included:

- three interviews conducted with two different training providers
- two interviews with employer-providers
- two interviews with apprentices working in adult care
- one focus group with six apprentices working in child care.

23. Convenience sampling was used to recruit the participants, with the employer-providers and training providers responding to invitations from the SSSC. Two of these organisations then recruited apprentices to participate in the interviews. The interviews were conducted using adapted versions of a semi-structured questionnaire designed to gather details of the participant's role, and to explore how learning was structured. An example of the topic guide used in the interviews is included in appendix 2.

24. Employer organisations that employ apprentices but do not provide MA programmes were invited to participate in this phase of the research. However, no participants came forward. This point will be picked up again in the report on phase 3.

b) Key findings

25. The interviews produced the following key findings to inform phase 3.

- **The importance of the pre-apprenticeship phase**

The desk research did not identify any reference to learning prior to MA programmes, with the assumption that the MA was the starting point for learning. However, interview participants identified that, in their context, most of the structured learning for apprentices in this phase took place prior to their registering as MAs. The majority had completed a learning programme in social care prior to joining their organisations (eg at school or as part of a pre-employment programme). On joining their organisation, the majority had to complete a settling-in period of between three and six months before their MA programme began. During this period, they completed their mandatory training, and 'learned the ropes' in the workplace.

- The training providers and employer-providers identified the importance of this pre-apprenticeship phase in providing knowledge and experience from which the apprentices could draw evidence for starting their SVQ.

- **The focus on naturally occurring learning on the job** All of the interviews confirmed that, during the period of the MA, most of the apprentices' learning takes place on the job and, for the most part, that learning is not pre-planned. Although employers in the SDS Employer survey said that they provided access to structured learning opportunities during the MA programme, the majority of apprentices interviewed did not support this view. Apprentices spoke about 'learning as you go', with colleagues helping or showing them what to do, and felt that this approach allowed them to develop their confidence in their own skills. The two apprentices working in adult care identified that their employer provides access to online learning programmes, and that they had opportunities to attend training offered to all members of staff. However, the majority of apprentices in the focus group said that they had very limited access to structured learning beyond mandatory topics such as manual handling.
- **Discussion between training provider and employer:** The desk research had identified the requirement for MA programmes to be discussed between providers and employers. The training providers and employer-providers interviewed in this phase spoke about the importance of discussing the apprentices' learning needs with their managers, and identifying how those needs might be addressed in the workplace. This discussion between managers and learning provider was seen as an essential component in helping the employer to understand the type of support that the apprentice would need to achieve their qualification.
- **The importance of the SVQ assessor:** The desk research highlighted the lack of information about the actual learning experience within an MA. This was addressed in the interviews and focus group, where the essential role of the SVQ assessor in the learning process was highlighted. All of the training providers and employer-providers interviewed in this phase were experienced SVQ assessors and they emphasised that the role goes beyond the assessment of evidence of competence. The assessor has a vital role as coach and facilitator, helping the apprentice to identify areas for development and how they might gain the range of experience they need to achieve the qualification. All participants identified the regular one-to-one meetings between the assessor and the individual apprentice as the key mechanism within the MA programme for promoting reflection on progress and the identification of learning needs.
- **The importance of the workplace mentor:** In addition to the vital role of the SVQ assessor in the learning experience, the interviews highlighted the importance of the workplace mentor. Employers of MAs are required to identify a workplace mentor for their

apprentice(s). The mentor is usually a line manager, supervisor or other more senior member of staff. Their role is to support the apprentice's learning in the workplace, ensuring that they have appropriate opportunities to develop and evidence the knowledge and skills required for the SVQ.

- The workplace mentor emerged as a key influence on the quality of the learning opportunities available for apprentices. One training provider identified that employers often had difficulty appointing workplace mentors as this was seen as an additional burden on an already-stretched staff. However, the majority of the apprentices who participated in this phase felt that they had benefitted from having a supportive workplace mentor, although there was variation in the extent of contact the apprentices had with their mentors. One employer-provider had recognised the importance of the role and had developed a handbook to ensure that all the mentors and managers in their organisation had information and resources to support their role.
- **Opportunities for feedback:** Quarterly reviews involving a three-way discussion between the apprentice, the mentor or manager and the apprentice are a requirement for all MA programmes. The review is designed to give the opportunity for a discussion about the individual's progress, and any areas of difficulty. All participants described the importance of these reviews, feeling they provided ample opportunity for giving feedback. The training providers and employer-providers also noted that they had additional feedback mechanisms, ranging from online questionnaires to informal, ongoing discussions with assessors and the apprentices themselves.
- **What's most valuable about an MA?** The desk research highlighted high levels of satisfaction with MAs. This was also found in the interviews. Everyone who participated in the interviews and in the focus group was enthusiastic in their support for the MAs. The training providers and employer-providers highlighted the positive impact the MA programmes have on the individuals' confidence and skills, and on their workplace.

'A good apprenticeship means that an apprentice knows how to do the job well. It means employers can be confident in their staff and their skills.' (Senior Manager, Training Provider)

'We are shaping and moulding these individuals to become valued professionals. We have had managers say that sometimes apprentices are doing a better job than experienced staff.' (Senior Learning and Development Manager; Employer-Provider)

The apprentices highlighted the importance of the MA in providing them with a portable qualification, and also with important life skills.

'The most important thing I've got is the confidence to work with people with dementia and my SVQ.' (Modern Apprentice; Adult Care)

'You are working and you are learning every day. You are part of the world and you are getting educated. It's not like at college.' (Modern Apprentice; Childcare Services)

- **What could be improved?** Although all were strong in their support for the MAs, the participants identified some themes in common as areas for improvement or further support.
 - **Time:** Time was a major factor affecting both the apprentices and the training providers/employer-providers. This included time allocated for learning, with a number of the apprentices highlighting that no time was allocated during working hours to their learning. Their completion of the SVQ requirements had to be addressed in their own time. The training providers also highlighted the lack of time allocated to some mentors and/or managers for supporting their apprentices. Again, a lack of protected time meant that an appropriate level of support was not available or was provided as goodwill by the manager/mentor. One provider identified a range of issues that stem from a lack of time dedicated to learning, from how to cover the required knowledge elements to how to ensure that the apprentice has the space to reflect on practice and develop a firm values base.
 - **More training and support:** Although some apprentices had access to additional structured learning, some felt the opportunities for additional learning were too limited. This echoes findings in the learner surveys reviewed in the desk research. The training providers and employer-providers also identified the training and support available for workplace mentors/managers as an area for improvement. One participant highlighted that a newly-launched consultation by the Scottish Apprenticeship Advisory Board (SAAB) was consulting on the possibility of mandatory training for workplace mentors across all apprenticeship programmes. The training providers and employer-providers had already taken action on training: two had already developed resources and support for this group and one was considering how best to develop resources. One suggestion for SSSC was for the development of support materials for mentors/managers at a national level.

- **Money:** A final common theme for improvement focused on money: the rate of pay for apprentices and the funding available for apprenticeships. The apprentice focus group identified low pay as a key issue to address, with some highlighting that they are in an anomalous role: they are being paid as learners but they are unable to gain access to many of the benefits available for students, such as student cards. One of the training providers identified funding cuts and the introduction of the apprenticeship levy as disincentives to employers to engage in MAs. A second identified the limited funding available for adult apprenticeships as a disincentive for the organisation to offer places for those aged 25+. Although issues related to funding lie outwith the parameters of this research it is an area that was raised and may benefit from further consideration by national organisations.

c) Implications for phase 3

26. The findings described above highlighted a number of key issues to be investigated in the survey. These included:

- What learning do apprentices do before they start their apprenticeship?
- How do apprentices learn 'on the job', and what are their learning preferences?
- How do SVQ assessors and workplace mentors support apprentices, and how satisfied are the apprentices with that support?
- What support is provided for the role of workplace mentor, and how satisfied are mentors with that support?
- What do apprentices, employers and training providers see as the most important benefits of MAs – and what suggestions do they have for improvement?

5. Phase 3: Survey of apprentices, training providers and employers

a) Objectives and methodology

27. This final phase of the project aimed to test the views expressed in the interviews with larger numbers of respondents from each of the three groups: apprentices, training providers and employers. It was recognised that the representativeness of any sample would be difficult to establish, given the large numbers of potential respondents and the lack of detailed profiles of the different groups. However, despite difficulties in establishing a representative sample, the project group agreed that data gathered from larger numbers of participants in each group could provide useful indications about the views of the three participant groups.
28. Three versions of a survey questionnaire were produced, one for each group. Each questionnaire combined closed questions with opportunities to provide additional open-text information. Employers who are also registered MA providers were asked to complete the training provider survey. An example copy of the questionnaire is included in appendix 2.
29. The initial sections of the questionnaire gathered information about the MA Frameworks used, the age groups involved, learning completed before the start of the MA programme, and the role of the individual participant in relation to MAs. The latter sections of the questionnaire focused on the individual's role and their perceptions of learning and support within the MA programme.
30. The survey was conducted between 19 January and 8 February 2018 using online survey software, with links being sent via email from SSSC to registered providers and employer organisations. Training providers and employer-providers were asked to circulate the apprenticeship version of the survey to their apprentices.

b) Key findings

Who responded?

31. The number of responses to the three versions of the questionnaire is shown in table 3.

Table 3: Response rates

	Apprentices	Employers	Training providers
Total responses	78	50	22
Completed responses	71	6	20

32. Analysis of the response rates helps to assess the how we can view the data from the survey.

- There is some over-representation of MAs in childcare, with 72% of apprentice responses coming from this area. There is also some over-representation of the 25+ age group. Twenty-five percent of responses came from this older age group, who make up around 10% of the MA population as a whole.
- Although there are 22 responses from training providers, these come from 13 organisations. The organisations are split 60:40 across training providers and employer-providers, allowing some insight into both types of provider.
- Of the 50 employer participants who completed the initial sections of the questionnaire, only six responded to the questions which focus on the role of the individual and the support provided for learning. It should be noted the invitation to participate in the survey requested that the questionnaire be passed to members of staff with direct contact with apprentices. However, given the pattern of response, it may be that the questionnaire did not reach the most appropriate respondent in each organisation.

What learning is done before the MA starts?

33. The interviews suggested that much of the structured learning needed to complete the SVQ takes place before the MA programme begins. A question in the initial section of the apprentice and employer surveys aimed to investigate this further. Charts 1 and 2 below compare their responses.

Chart 1: Apprentices - learning prior to MA (n=73)

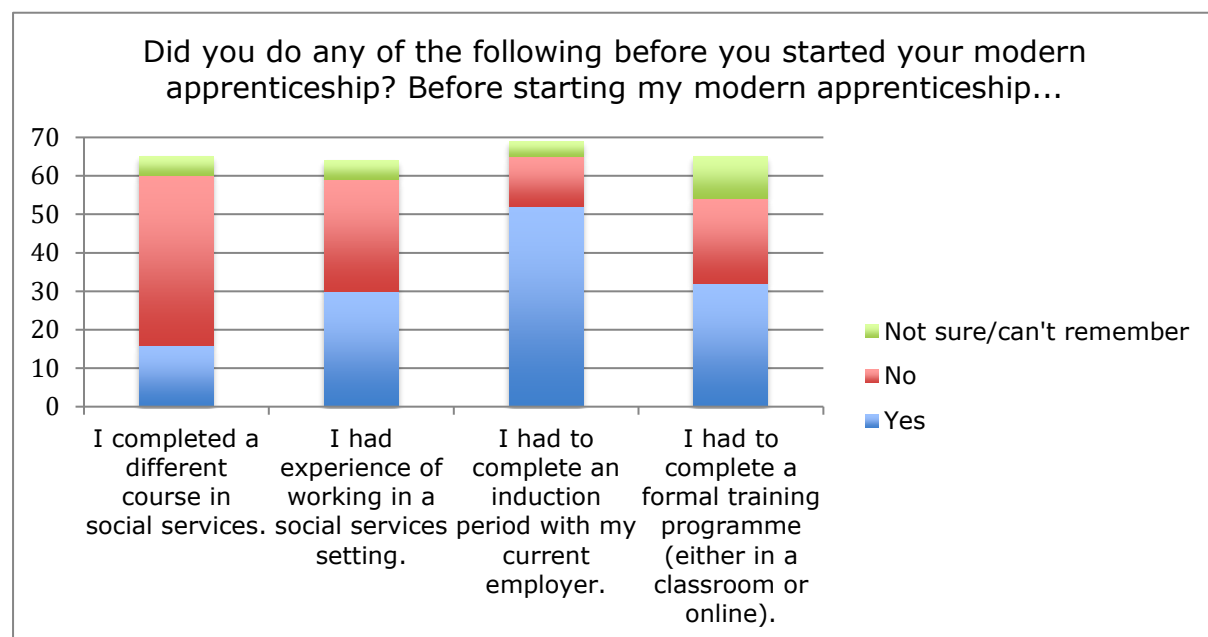
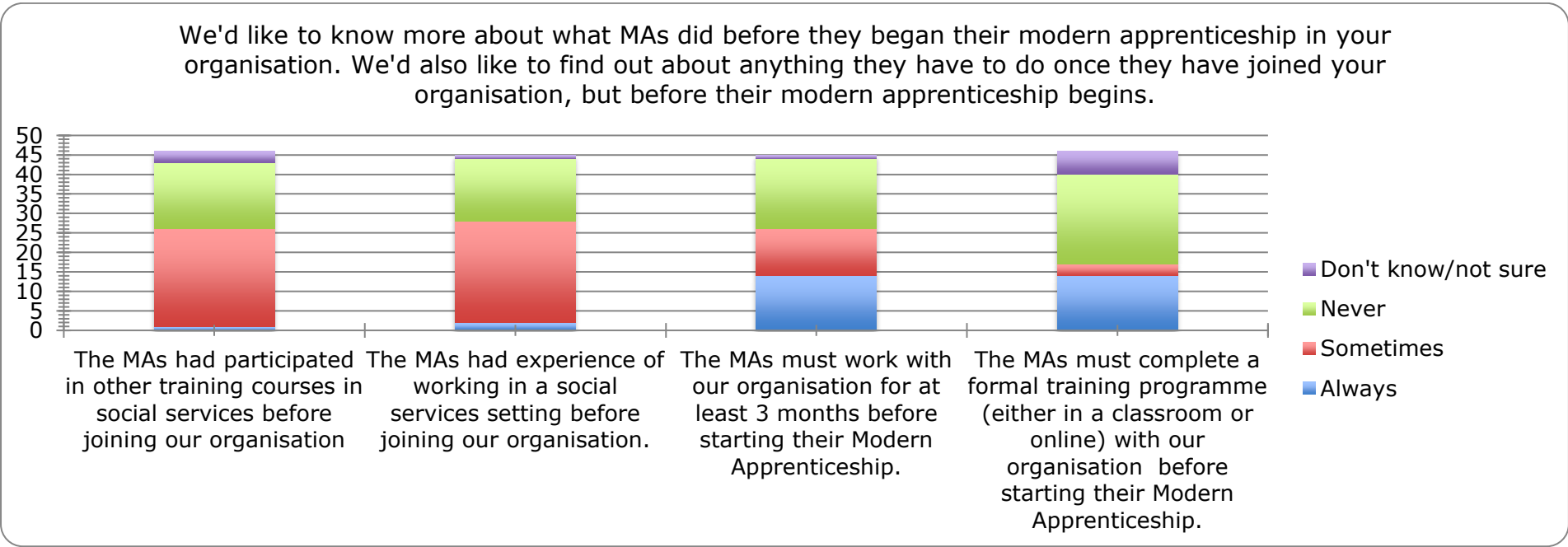


Chart 2: Employers - learning prior to MA (n=48)



34. Comparison of the responses provides some interesting findings.

- More apprentices had prior work experience than formal study in social care before starting their apprenticeship. This may be reflective of the larger numbers of older apprentices in the sample. However, the employers' 'sometimes' and 'never' responses may suggest that this prior learning and/or experience are not prerequisites for their apprentices.
- 75% of apprentices had to complete an induction period prior to starting their MA, and almost 50% had to complete a formal training programme. This appears to support the finding in the interviews that considerable amount of structured learning is completed before the MA programme begins.
- However, perhaps the most important finding from these questions is the number of employers who have answered 'Never' to these questions: 40% never require apprentices to complete an induction period, and 50% never require them to complete any structured learning prior to starting their MA programme. This raises a key question: if the employer has no requirement for the apprentice to complete structured learning or gain experience prior to the start of an MA programme, how does the apprentice gain the knowledge required for their role?

How do apprentices learn on the job and what are their learning preferences?

35. One approach to creating a greater integration of skills-based and knowledge-based learning in apprenticeships is that of the 'cognitive apprenticeship approach', cited in a 2016 study of the development of MAs in Scotland¹⁰. This approach identifies different pedagogical strategies which educators can use to encourage learners to develop a greater understanding of what they are learning in the workplace. An adapted version of these strategies was used to explore the types of pedagogical approaches being used in the workplace, and the apprentices' perceptions of these approaches. The list of approaches included the following:

- observation (ie the apprentice watches someone do the task before doing it themselves)

¹⁰ Dennen, V. P. (2004). Cognitive Apprenticeship in Educational Practice: Research on Scaffolding, Modeling, Mentoring, and Coaching as Instructional Strategies. In Jonassen, D. H. (Ed) Handbook of Research on Educational Communications and Technology (2nd ed.) 813-828. Mahwah, NJ, US: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers. cited in McSorley (2016; p14)

- explanation (ie the task is explained to the apprentice before they do it)
- participation (ie the apprentice carries out the task with a colleague a number of times before they do it themselves)
- problem-solving (ie the apprentice works things out for themselves and works independently)
- reflection (ie the apprentice has time to think about the work they have done in order to identify how they should do it next time)
- research (ie the apprentice looks into different ways of carrying out a task before checking with a colleague or a mentor which is the best for the situation).

36. Apprentices were asked to consider how important the various strategies were to help them learn how to do a task for the first time. More than 80% felt that observation, explanation, participation and reflection were always important for their learning. However, problem solving and research were regarded as being less important, with comments suggesting that problem-solving needed to be supported in the workplace.

37. The learning providers echoed the apprentices' reservations about problem-solving. The providers were asked about the extent to which they encouraged apprentices to use the approaches to learning. Between 95% and 100% of providers strongly encouraged all approaches, with the exception of research (85%) and problem-solving (55%). A number of comments, such as the one below from an employer-provider, highlighted risks associated with apprentices taking a problem-solving approach.

- While we encourage our staff to develop problem-solving capability, we would not expect them to be autonomous or work in a vacuum. Whilst the theory of learning through practice and from mistakes is sound, it could be detrimental to the health, safety and welfare of our service users and staff.

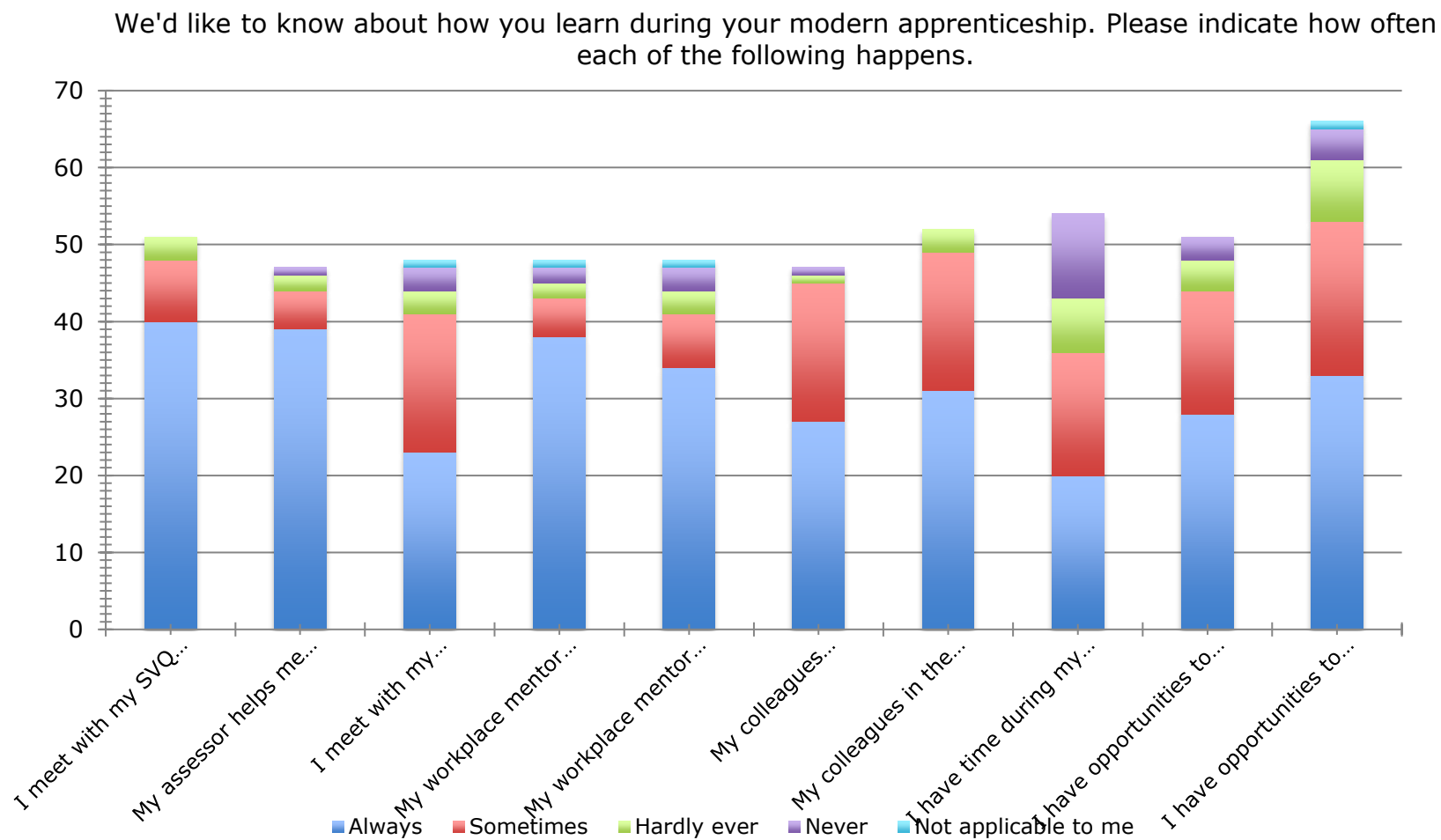
38. Apprentices were also asked about the amount of time given in the workplace to help them learn in the ways described above. The vast majority (80+ %) felt that the right amount of time was given to using the different strategies, with 7%-10% saying that there was too little time. The one area where larger numbers (14%) said there was too little time was 'participation' – ie doing tasks with a more experienced colleague until they could carry out the task independently.

39. Employers were asked which of the approaches they used to help apprentices learn, and the extent to which they used each. Of the six participants who answered the employers' version of this question, two were line managers, two were MA coordinators and two were company owners. Only one participant said that they used the apprentices' preferred approaches a lot, while between four and five stated that this was not applicable in their role.
40. The responses highlight the apprentices' and providers' awareness of the importance of most of these approaches in supporting learning in the workplace. They also demonstrate that the apprentices who responded to the questionnaire feel that, for the most part, enough time is given to them to learn in these ways. However, no information is available to indicate the extent to which managers and mentors in the workplace recognise and use the apprentices' preferred approaches.
41. Phases 1 and 2 of the research also highlighted that some apprentices had limited access to structured learning opportunities on topics related to their work. The survey supported this finding, with around half of the survey participants saying they always had access to a range of learning opportunities. Fewer than half of the training providers and employers who responded said that they always help apprentices to find opportunities for training. These findings suggest that some apprentices may have limited access to structured learning beyond the on-the-job learning discussed above.

How do SVQ assessors and workplace mentors support apprentices, and how satisfied are the apprentices with that support?

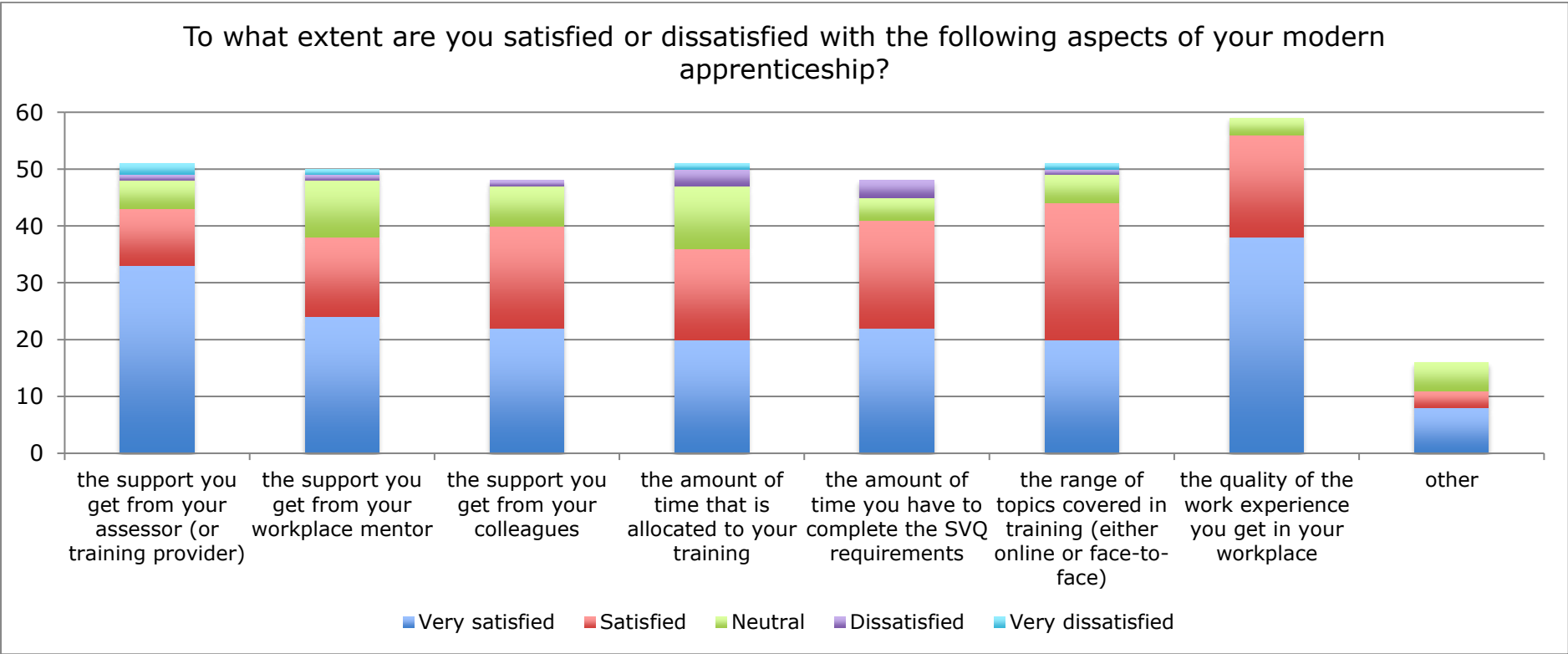
42. All three groups were asked about the support provided for apprentices. The apprentices were also asked about their satisfaction with the support provided. The responses provided by the apprentices are shown in the charts 3 and 4 below.

Chart 3: Support for learning (apprentices) (n=71)



43. The majority of participants indicate that most of the various support elements happen 'always'. More than 70% of participants always meet regularly with their assessor (78%) and state that the assessor always helps them to identify how they can gather evidence for their SVQ (83%). Most are confident that their workplace mentor understands what they need to complete their SVQ (79% 'always') and helps them identify how to learn new skills (71% 'always'). Just under 60% feel their colleagues also understand the apprenticeship and help them develop new skills, and around 50% have opportunities for training. However, the widest spread of responses relate to the workplace mentor and time for learning. Only 48% of participants say that they always meet regularly with their mentor, while 13% meet never or hardly ever. Thirty-seven percent say that they have time during work to complete what's needed for their SVQ, while 20% never have this time during work.

Chart 4: Satisfaction with level of support (apprentices) (n=70)



44. This limited time to complete the SVQ and lack of support from the mentor is apparent in the levels of satisfaction expressed by the participants. As Chart 4 demonstrates, the majority (76%) are either satisfied or very satisfied with these aspects of their MA. However, 20% are neutral about the support they receive from their mentor, while 4% (two respondents) are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. These findings echo those from the SDS Learner Survey, where although satisfaction levels are high, the area most likely to cause dissatisfaction relates to the support provided by the employer during the MA programme.

45. Participants had the opportunity to comment on any areas where they had chosen 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied'. Of the five comments provided, three related to the lack of support the apprentice was receiving from their assessor and/or their workplace mentor. One in particular suggested poor practice in MA provision.

- I feel like during my time in learning no one has been there to support me and learn new skills, therefore guide me, correct me with my mistakes during my qualification. I have been left by myself to continue this with no support within the workplace, no mentor or assessor. I feel like I need more help than offered to help me qualify. Which is what is taking me so long – because of delays.

46. The interviews in phase 2 highlighted the vital role of the SVQ assessor and the workplace mentor in supporting an effective learning environment. The findings from the survey suggest that, although the majority of the apprentices who took part are receiving support 'always' or 'sometimes', a significant proportion are not. They also indicate that it is in areas of support and time that apprentices are likely to feel least satisfied with their learning experience. As the desk research highlighted, although 76% of apprentices complete their MA programme successfully, investigation of the causes of non-completion could provide useful information to support the improvement of quality in apprenticeships.

What support is provided for the role of workplace mentor, and how satisfied are mentors with that support?

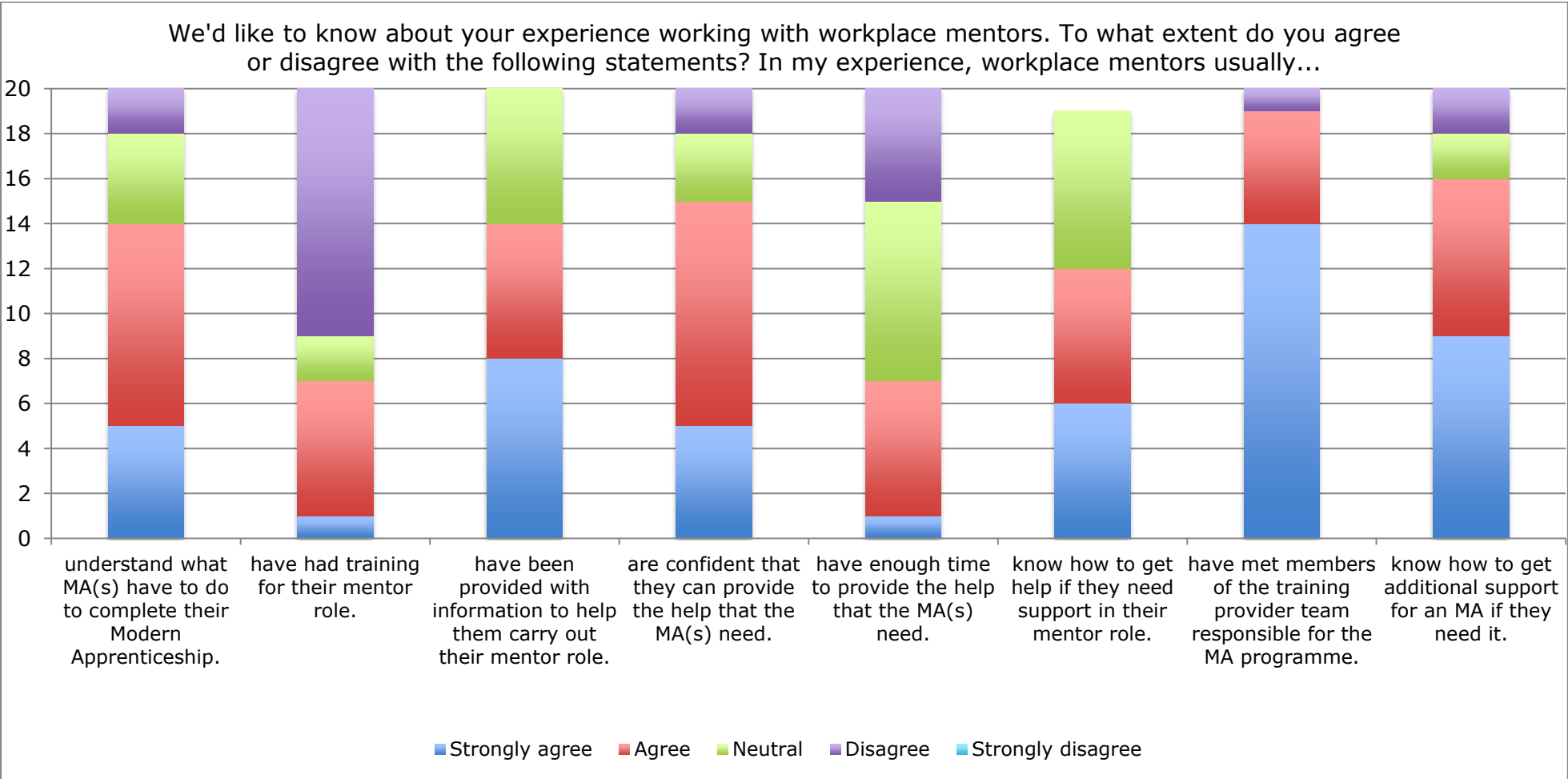
47. The training providers interviewed in phase 2 had spoken about a need to support workplace mentors to understand their role and carry it out effectively. The survey aimed to explore the support available for workplace mentors, and how they viewed that support.

48. None of the six participants who completed the questionnaire is a workplace mentor. However, the questions relating to the individual's perceptions of the support available for their role highlighted some

interesting issues. Five of the six are responsible for meeting with the training provider to discuss MA programmes, and three meet regularly with apprentices to talk about their progress. However, there was limited strong agreement with a number of the statements relating to support. Only two strongly agreed that they had had the training and information they needed to carry out their role in relation to MAs, and two strongly agreed that they know what to do if they have concerns about an apprentice's progress. Although there was no disagreement with these statements, the lack of strong agreement could possibly indicate that some managers responsible for coordinating MAs in the workplace might benefit from additional support.

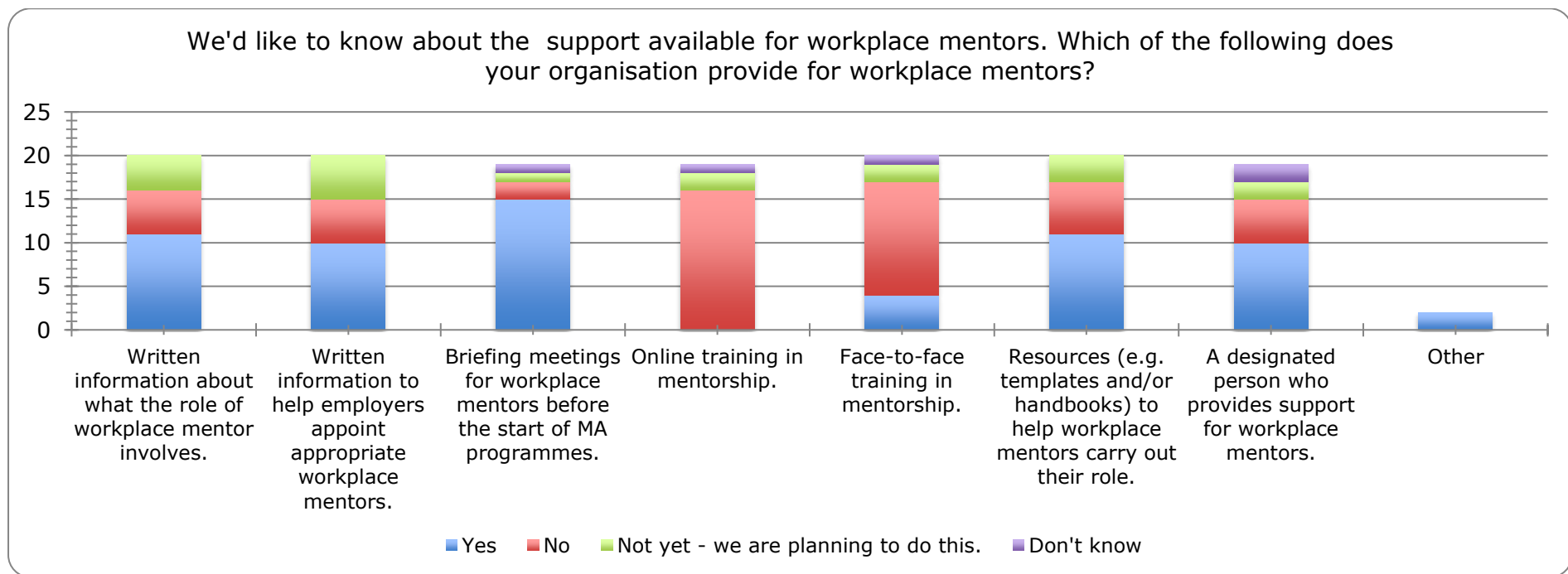
49. Information about support for the workplace mentors came from the training providers and employer-providers. They were asked about their experience of working with workplace mentors, and about the types of support available for them. Their responses are summarised in charts 5 and 6.

Chart 5: Experience of working with workplace mentors (training providers) (n=20)



50. The findings from this question support those from the interviews in phase 2: that workplace mentors often do not have training for their role, and may not have enough time to provide the support that apprentices need. The limited strong agreement with statements such as '[they] understand what apprentices have to do to complete their MA' and '[they] are confident that they can provide the help the apprentice need' suggest that more guidance and support may be needed for workplace mentors.

Chart 6: Training provider support for workplace mentors (n=20)



51. Training providers were asked about the support they provide for workplace mentors and employers. Approximately half said that written information is provided for mentors (11) and employers (10), and 15 provide briefing meetings for the workplace mentors before the start of an MA programme. Eleven said their organisation provide resources such as templates and handbooks to support the mentors in their role. Of the remaining participants, around half said their organisation is planning to provide these materials.

52. No online training was reported, but four participants reported that their organisation provides face-to-face training for workplace mentors. However, a number of participants from the same organisation noted that mentor training had been stopped, as employers were reluctant to release individuals to attend.

53. The issue of mentor preparation is important. The mentor has been identified as crucial in creating an effective workplace learning environment, and lack of mentor support is one of the main causes of dissatisfaction among apprentices. Some training providers have responded to the need for support by creating a variety of resources, whilst others are planning to do so. One area which the SSSC might consider is how to create a unified, standardised set of resources for workplace mentors across the sector.

What do apprentices, employers and training providers see as the most important benefits of MAs and what suggestions do they have for improvement?

54. Each group was asked to identify the main benefits of the MAs. Apprentices were asked to rate a range of benefits, with the top three emerging as:

- it gives me a recognised qualification
- it allows me to work and learn at the same time
- it prepares me for a career in social work.

55. The majority of training providers (70%) and employers (four people) agreed strongly that the MA is good preparation for a career in social services. They also strongly agreed that it is important for apprentices to gain a qualification. However, for these groups, the strongest agreement was given to the statement 'The MA gives the apprentice a realistic experience of what it's like to work in a social services setting'.

56. One area where agreement was less strong was in the relation to the statement 'When they finish their apprenticeship, apprentices have the skills they need for their role.' Although there was no disagreement, the majority of training providers agreed, or were neutral, about this statement.

57. Some of the reasons for this view were outlined in the training providers' suggestions for improvement. Areas included a suggestion to allocate more time to the development of core knowledge, and to ensure that apprentices were treated as learners, with protected time for learning, as opposed to full-time members of staff. Some participants also focused on the qualifications themselves, suggesting that the MA SSCYP at SCQF Level 7 is not appropriate for all, and that the sector might benefit from a Level 6 Framework. A final area for improvement related to the separate certification of ICT and numeracy, with a number of respondents feeling that the level of numeracy required is too high.
58. Seven apprentices also noted possible areas for improvement. The issues of time to learn and access to additional training opportunities were noted as areas where the MA experience might be improved. Three also noted suggestions for programme management, suggesting better coordination between the employer and training provider. One participant noted the need for consideration of the best place for apprentices to complete their coursework. They highlighted that travel to college incurred travel costs, and often workplaces do not have adequate quiet space to allow individuals to work on their SVQ. The apprentices' suggestions focused on the practical details of the programme, and how to optimise learning.

6. Conclusions and recommendations

59. It is important to recognise the limitations of the research undertaken in this project. Issues in sampling, combined with the very limited information gathered from employers, mean that the findings should not be seen as representative of the whole sector. However, the consistent themes identified at each stage of the research suggest that it provides useful indications of what makes a good apprenticeship in social services in Scotland, and where additional support and guidance might be beneficial.

60. All of the findings should be viewed in the context of the overall high levels of satisfaction expressed by the apprentices and training providers. This suggests that MAs are, in general, working well in the social services sector. However, where they are not working well, they can have significant impact on the apprentices' confidence and motivation. The main conclusions to take from the findings are outlined below.

61. **The workplace mentor and SVQ assessor are crucial to a good modern apprenticeship:** With almost all of the learning on an MA programme taking place on the job, the apprentice is dependent on the effective support of both people. In particular, the workplace mentor holds the key to the 'black box' of how learning actually takes place on the job. However, training and support for the role of workplace mentor is limited. **A key recommendation is that SSSC works with relevant partners to consider how best to provide support and guidance for workplace mentors.**

62. **A good MA gives access to a range of learning opportunities:** The research highlighted that, in addition to on-the-job learning, good MA programmes provide access to more structured learning opportunities. Although the learning that occurs naturally during the course of work helps to guide the individual's practice, it is important to consider where the apprentices get the knowledge required to underpin effective practice. This is often through structured learning, either online or face-to-face. Many apprentices have formal training prior to starting their MA programme, but only half of our research participants always have access to further formal training during their programme. Importantly, many of the employers responding to the research say they never provide structured learning prior to the start of the MA programme. A frequent request from apprentices was for access to a wider range of structured learning opportunities so that they could expand their knowledge of issues related to their work. **A key recommendation, therefore, is that ways are sought to ensure that MA programmes for social care include an appropriate range of structured learning opportunities for apprentices.**

63. A good MA needs a supportive learning environment in the workplace: All three phases of the research highlighted the importance of a supportive workplace environment in ensuring that the apprentices' experience was positive and effective. The employer-providers who contributed to the research highlighted how effective support for both apprentice and workplace mentor brings benefits, and the apprentices indicated that protected time for learning in the workplace is an important component of a good apprenticeship. However, both the apprentices and the training providers highlight that many apprentices do not have this time to learn. Some of the research participants highlighted that the MA programme gives apprentices a realistic experience of the busy work of social services. However, a lack of protected time for apprentices and workplace mentors can mean that guidance for workplace learning is sporadic or squeezed and a number of training providers highlighted the challenges which employers may face in freeing staff to fulfill these roles effectively. The issues of protected time and effective support for learning in the workplace, therefore, cannot be addressed without the effective engagement of employers. **A key recommendation is that ways are sought to help employers ensure that their workplace provides the time and support that Modern Apprentices need for learning.**

64. As mentioned above, employer engagement will be essential to any improvements in the quality of learning in MAs in social services. Some suggestions for how this might be encouraged include:

65. Supporting employers to share learning: The employer-providers who contributed to the interviews were clear about the benefits of MAs to their organisations. They were also working on improving the quality of MAs, particularly through support for managers and mentors. Finding ways to maximise the learning and the positive approaches of these organisations could help influence other employers. One suggestion is that employers could be supported to network and share their learning and the championing of MAs in social services.

66. Developing national resources for employers, managers and mentors: A number of training providers and employer-providers have developed - or are planning to develop - resources for employers, managers and mentors. However, these developments take place in isolation, resulting in duplication of effort, and a possible fragmentation in the advice given. By providing a hub for employers and training providers to share resources, the SSSC could support the development of a more national approach to support for employers, managers and mentors.

67. A portal approach to learning resources: One approach to providing wider access to learning includes the creation of portals to resources that already exist. The SSSC may already have such a portal and/or resources. However, apprentices are not always aware of the resources that may be available. The SSSC could consider ways to make existing materials and resources more easily available for employers and apprentices.

68. As has been mentioned, the conclusions and recommendations from this research should be read in the light of the high levels of satisfaction expressed by most of the apprentices. It is clear from many of their comments that the apprentices appreciate the opportunities that the MA offers them and this report closes with some of those comments.

- I think the MA is great in how it works. My training provider is a great place where I learn at workshops, and the help and support I am given is amazing. They have adapted to the way I learn.
- It is very good, the way it is done in my work setting. You get to work and learn at the same time.
- It really helps to have a helpful assessor who encourages you because it can be very daunting at the beginning of the course.
- I think it's an excellent idea. I feel you learn more while being in an apprenticeship.
- I am happy with the experience I am gaining and the ways I am learning.
- I think the programme is amazing how it is. It covers everything you could possibly need to know for working in childcare and as long as you have an assessor that is committed to getting you through the course...you can't go wrong. My assessor has been amazingly supportive...and I'm so grateful for everything.

Appendix 1: Sources consulted for desk research

Author	Date	Title	Publisher	Web link
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	2016	Apprenticeships Evaluation 2015 – Employer Summary Report	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/562482/Apprentice-evaluation-employer-survey-2015_summary.pdf
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	2016	Apprenticeships Evaluation 2015 – Learner Summary Report	Department for Business, Innovation & Skills	https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/562479/Apprentice-evaluation-learner-survey-2015_summary.pdf
IFF Research and Institute for Employment Research at University of Warwick	2016	Apprenticeships Evaluation 2015 – Employers	Department of Education	https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/562486/Apprenticeships_evaluation_2015_-_employers.pdf
IFF Research and Institute for Employment Research at University of Warwick	2016	Apprenticeships Evaluation 2015 – Learners	Department of Education	https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/562485/Apprenticeships_evaluation_2015_-_Learners.pdf
Education Scotland	2017 (ed)	External quality arrangements for the review of Modern Apprenticeship Off-the-Job and On-the-Job training delivered by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) contracted providers	Education Scotland	https://education.gov.scot/Documents/MA-quality-arrangements-120917.pdf
Ofsted	2012	Ensuring Quality in Apprenticeships: A survey of subcontracted provision	Ofsted	https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417468/Ensuring_quality_in_apprenticeships.pdf
IFF Research and Institute for Employment Research at University of Warwick Institute for	2013	Review of Apprenticeships Research	Dept. for Business, Innovation & Skills	https://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/ier/research/review_apprenticeship/ier_apprenticeships_literature_review_final_report_aug2013.pdf

Employment Research				
McSorley, A	2016	Scottish Modern Apprenticeships - A Study of Pedagogical Practice and Identity Development	Masters' Thesis, University of Edinburgh	
Skills Development Scotland	2015	Modern Apprenticeship Employer Survey 2015	Skills Development Scotland	https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/35594/ma_employer_survey_2015_final_sep_15.pdf
Skills Development Scotland	2016	Modern Apprenticeship Intermediate Outcomes	Skills Development Scotland	https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/42085/ma-outcomes-report-2016-final.pdf
Skills for Care and Development	2014	A Modern Apprenticeship in SVQ 3 Social Services and Healthcare (SCQF Level 7)	Scottish Social Services Council	https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/44482/modern-apprenticeship-framework-social-services-and-healthcare-at-scqf-level-7.pdf
Skills for Care and Development	2014	A Modern Apprenticeship in SVQ 2 Social Services and Healthcare (SCQF Level 6)	Scottish Social Services Council	https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/44481/social-services-and-healthcare-l2.pdf
Skills for Care and Development	2014	A Modern Apprenticeship in SVQ 3 Social Services (Children and Young People) SCQF Level 7	Scottish Social Services Council	https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/44483/modern-apprenticeship-framework-social-services-cyp-at-scqf-level-7.pdf
Skills Development Scotland		Modern Apprenticeship Statistics Full Year Report 2015/16	Skills Development Scotland	Modern Apprenticeship Statistics Full Year Report 2015/16
Skills Development Scotland		Equalities Action Plan For Modern Apprenticeships in Scotland – A summary	Skills Development Scotland	http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/41265/2984_sds_equalities_action_plan_summary_v3.pdf

Matej Bajgar and Chiara Criscuolo	2016	OECD Evaluation Framework for Modern Apprenticeships in Scotland	OECD	http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/science-and-technology/oecd-evaluation-framework-for-modern-apprenticeships-in-scotland_59084781-en
Skills Development Scotland	2017	NTP Quality Management Framework Quality Standards and Assessment Guidance	Skills Development Scotland	http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/science-and-technology/oecd-evaluation-framework-for-modern-apprenticeships-in-scotland_59084781-en
Professor Louise Ryan and Magdolna Lorinc	2017	Beyond the Numbers: Incentivising and implementing better apprenticeships	University of Sheffield	https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.724830!/file/apprenticeshipreport.pdf
Scottish Qualifications Authority	2015	Quality Assurance Criteria 2015–18	Scottish Qualifications Authority	http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/All_Quality_Assurance_Criteria_2015_18.pdf
Skills Development Scotland	2016	Modern Apprenticeship Provider Outcome Achievement Rates 2015/2016	Skills Development Scotland	
Skills Development Scotland	2017	Modern Apprenticeship Programme Rules 2017 to 2018	Skills Development Scotland	http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/42833/ma-programme-rules-2017-18.pdf
NHS Employers	2015	What makes a good apprenticeship?	NHS Employers	www.nhsemployers.org/~media/Employers/Publications/What%20makes%20a%20good%20apprenticeship%20-%20March%202015.pdf
NHS Employers	2016	Using Apprenticeships to develop a culture of learning	NHS Employers	http://www.nhsemployers.org/~media/Employers/Publications/Aintree%20Apprenticeship%20Prog%20-%20Case%20Study%20-%20June%202016%20FINAL.pdf
NHS Education for Scotland	2014	Moving Forward with Modern Apprenticeships: A Guide to Establishing MAs in NHSScotland	NHS Education for Scotland	http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/media/2505006/ma_guide_final.pdf

Skills Development Scotland	2016	Regional Skills Assessment – Data Matrix MAs	Skills Development Scotland	http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/what-we-do/partnerships/regional-skills-assessments/
Scottish Qualifications Authority	2013	Assessment Strategy for Scottish Vocational Qualifications in Social Services and Healthcare SVQ 2, 3 and 4 and Social Services (Children and Young People) SVQ 2, 3 and 4	Scottish Qualifications Authority	http://www.sqa.org.uk/files/ccc/20130213Social_Services_HealthcareASv1.pdf
Scottish Qualifications Authority		Guidance for the assessment of Scottish Vocational Qualifications levels 2, 3 and 4 in Social Services and Healthcare and Social Services (Children and Young People) at SCQF levels 6, 7 and 9.	Scottish Qualifications Authority	https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/68650.html
Scottish Government	2015	Developing the Young Workforce: Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy	Scottish Government	http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0046/00466386.pdf

Appendix 2: Interview topic guide (example)

SSSC apprenticeships – Qualitative interviews

1. Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. As you know, the SSSC is interested in finding out more about the learning experience of modern apprentices during their modern apprenticeship. The aim is to identify key factors involved in ensuring a high-quality learning experience. The information you provide will help inform a wider survey of employers, learning providers and apprentices. There are 15 questions. Please complete them as fully as possible. Any information you provide will be held in confidence and any statements you make will be reported anonymously.

2. About you

1. Please provide the following information

Name

Job title

Organisation

3. Your organisation's role in MA programmes

2. Please describe your organisation's role in providing modern apprenticeships for the social service sector.

3. Which MA Frameworks do you use? For each one that you use, please tell us the age group of the modern apprentices who participate in the programmes.

	16-19	20-24	25+	Not sure
MA Social Services (Children and Young People)				
MA Social Services and Healthcare (SVQ2/SCQF Level 6)				
MA Social Services and Healthcare (SVQ3/SCQF Level 7)				

4. For each MA Framework you provide, can you tell us about the area of the sector you provide for?

5. We would like to know a little more about the modern apprentices your organisation supports. We are interested to know if, in general, they are recruited to MA positions or if they are existing members of staff who are taking the MA programme.

	New recruits	Existing staff	Both	Not sure
SS(CYP) 16-19				
SS (CYP) 20-24				
SS (CYP) 25+				
SS and HC 6 16-19				
SS and HC 6 20-24				
SS and HC 6 25+				
SS and HC 7 16-19				
SS and HC 7 20-24				
SS and HC 7 25+				

Comments:

4. How is learning provided in your MA programmes?

6. We are interested to know how your organisation organises the learning programme for MAs. Can you describe where learning takes place, and who is responsible for the learning experience in that area?

7. Workplace learning is a key component of the MA Frameworks. Can you describe how learning in the workplace is organised in your MA programmes? (eg how are optional units chosen? what induction is provided? how is learning in the workplace supported and monitored?) Please provide as much information as possible.

8. Employers and workers in Social Services in Scotland must abide by the SSSC Codes of Practice. Can you describe if and how the Codes of Practice are integrated into your MA programmes? In particular, how are MAs made aware of their responsibilities under the Code of Practice?

9. Can you describe how participants' learning is assessed in your MA programmes? Please give us as much detail as possible about the process, and who is responsible for assessment.

5. Quality in MA programmes

10. We are interested in hearing about any processes in place to monitor the quality of the learning experience from the MAs' perspective. Please describe if and how you monitor MA satisfaction with their learning.

11. We are interested in if/how you monitor satisfaction in the employer's organisation with how apprentices apply their learning in the workplace. This could feedback from managers, supervisors, clients or others. Please tell us about any mechanisms you have for gathering this type of feedback.

6. Your views on modern apprenticeships

12. In your opinion, what are the main strengths/benefits of the MA programmes for the individual apprentice and for the service? If possible please tell us about any evidence you have to support that opinion.

13. In your opinion, what are the main challenges involved in modern apprenticeships? These might be challenges for employers, apprentices and/or providers? For the challenges you identify, how might they be addressed?

14. We are almost at the end of the interview. Is there any more information you feel it is important for us to know?

7. Permission to re-contact

15. Thank you for participating in this interview. We would like to be able to contact you again in relation to this research. Are you happy for us to re-contact you?



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