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Effective Pre-school, Primary and Secondary Education (EPPSE 3 – 16+) Project

Post age 16 destinations

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Background

The Effective Pre-school, Primary and Secondary Education (EPPSE 3-16+) project is a longitudinal study, funded by the Department for Education (DfE), that has tracked the academic progress and social-behavioural development of approximately 3,000 children from their early years (age 3/5) to their early post age 16 destinations. During 17 years the focus has shifted from pre-school (EPPE 1997-2003) to include primary school (EPPE 3-11, 2003 – 2008), early secondary education (EPPSE 3–14, 2008–20012) and finally to the end of compulsory education[1] and post-16 destinations (EPPSE 3–16+, 2011–2014). EPPSE has expanded into a programme of research and details of the many sub-studies (e.g., special educational needs, primary pedagogical strategies, students who 'succeed against the odds') can be found on the EPPSE website. Each phase has been supported by a range of technical papers, research reports, academic papers and research briefs (see www.ioe.ac.uk/eppse).

Aim

The main aim of the EPPSE 3-16+ phase was to investigate the influence of child, family and background characteristics, out of school learning, pre-school, primary school and secondary school experiences on young people's early post-16 pathways.

Methodology and data collection

Six months after leaving school, young people were sent four questionnaires which explored their current circumstances. In all 1,727 young people responded to the survey that best matched their post-16 destination choice. This represented sixty-three per cent of the active EPPSE sample at age 16. An analyses of the returned data revealed that students who returned questionnaires were broadly representative of a national sample of 16 year olds on a number of key demographic characteristics and were slightly more advantaged than students in the EPPSE sample who did not return a questionnaire.

1 N.B. The EPPSE students finished compulsory education at age 16. See Page ix for notes on KS4 and changes to the school leaving age.

The Life After Year 11 (LAY11) questionnaires were:

Questionnaire 1 (Q1) - Students in full-time education (6th Form or College). There were 1503 young people on this route (87% of the sample).

Questionnaire 2 (Q2) - For those working (not studying at all) / working and doing job related training (e.g., Apprenticeships etc.). There were 124 young people on this route (7% of the sample).

Questionnaire 3 (Q3) - For those doing part-time study (not related to their current job) whether working or not. There were 24 young people on this route (1% of the sample).

Questionnaire 4 (Q4) - For those not working, studying or training (NEETs). There were 86 young people in this situation (5% of the sample).

Findings

Family background

The majority of young people (94%) lived with their natural mother but a relatively small proportion lived with their natural father (62%). However, there were marked differences when comparing the students in full-time education with the NEET group. Ninety-five per cent of students in full-time education lived with their natural mother and sixty-four per cent with their natural father. In comparison, seventy-eight per cent of the NEET group lived with natural mother and thirty-eight per cent with their natural father. Less than ten per cent of all young people were ‘carers’, but this represented twenty per cent of the NEET group. They were also more likely than any other group to be teenage parents. It should be borne in mind that numbers in the NEET group were quite small (86 in total).

Advice and plans

According to young people, parents were the most 'go to' and useful group for providing advice on post-16 plans, followed by friends and teachers. Around half of young people sought advice from Connexions advisers or found them helpful.

Nearly two thirds of young people thought it 'very/fairly likely' they would go to University but there were differences across groups with the full-time education group being the most confident and the working group the least confident. Forty per cent of young people said they would be put off going to University 'a lot/completely' due to money worries, whereas this was of no concern for twenty per cent of young people. Young people said they mostly wanted to go to University to study a subject that interested them linked to a qualification for a specific career.

The most important attribute cited by young people when choosing a job was it had to be interesting and provide opportunities for them to use their skills. Just over a third thought getting good money was 'very important' to their job selection. The majority did not think skin colour, ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation would affect them in the workplace, but for a fifth, gender was the most likely aspect of discrimination to affect them in the workplace, with this view being expressed overwhelmingly by females.

Happiness

Young people were asked to describe their overall level of happiness in terms of being very happy/happy/not very happy/very unhappy. Over ninety per cent of the EPPSE sample was happy in general, at home and with those of their own age. However, the NEET group were consistently the least happy in all three circumstances.

Full-time education

Students mostly stayed on in full-time education because they thought that getting better qualifications would improve their job prospects. Whilst many less wealthy students were able to access funds (EMA – the Educational Maintenance Allowance) to support them staying on beyond the compulsory school leaving age, the vast majority reported the scrapping of incentive funds such as the EMA made no difference to their plans for staying on in education. Just over a third of students studying full-time also worked part-time, with the majority doing the equivalent of a 'Saturday' job. Students generally reported that having a part-time job did not impact on their studies.

Part-time study

The majority of young people undertaking part-time study were doing so to improve their job prospects or because the course they wanted to do was only available part-time. A fifth of this group said they didn't get the grades at GCSE that they needed to stay on in full-time education.

Employment

Young people in work mostly left full-time education because they wanted to earn money, with over half wanting to learn a trade. Less than one in ten left because they could not afford to stay in full-time education. Only five per cent of these young people thought they would return to full-time study within a year.

Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

Not being able to find work was the main reason given by young people for their NEET status, with a third having dropped out of school/college. Obtaining poor GCSE results made a quarter of these young people change their Year 11 plans. Despite this less than one in ten thought being NEET was likely to be an enduring status (beyond one year); they wanted to be in work or studying full-time within a year. Almost a third of the NEET group had been employed since leaving school but many had been employed on temporary contracts that came to an end. Other reasons for leaving work were poor earnings and not liking the people they were working with. The NEET group had strong views about school with many finding school boring and/or difficult and disliking teachers. Over a third of the NEET group reported feeling 'worried' and many had poor health, a disability and family problems.

Findings from a focus on students not in education, employment or training (NEET)

NEET status has been reported to be a major predictor of later unemployment, low income, teenage motherhood, depression and poor physical health (DCSF, 2007). Because of this, the NEET young people in the EPPSE study are of particular policy interest. From the questionnaire responses quantitative analyses were conducted to identify some of the characteristics associated with NEET status for the eighty-six young people who returned a Life After Year 11 questionnaire - Q4. Qualitative, semi-structured interviews were then carried out with twenty of these young people. The interviews covered their experiences of taking their GCSEs, what they had been doing since leaving school and their hopes and plans for the future.

The analyses of the interview data showed that NEET young people (here after referred to as NEETs) often had multiple risk factors present from their early years or emerging during compulsory education. Those with physical and mental health problems reported difficulties in accessing professional support services. Their complex backgrounds included being in Local Authority care, having a lack of any plans or aspirations and being in areas that had poor transport links.

As well as personal challenges, they often faced educational and structural challenges to obtaining education, employment or training (EET) status. The most significant educational risk factor was low educational attainment at GCSE, especially in English and maths. They often had difficulties in transitioning from school to Further Education (FE) which resulted in them 'dropping-out' of courses. Several reported that the courses they took did little to improve their employability resulting in a cycle of one short low level course after another.

Other structural challenges included living in areas where they found it difficult to enter the labour market resulting in them being locked in a 'benefits trap'. The prospect of course fees post18 compounded this. This group needed much better information/advice on post-16 options including education/vocational qualifications, apprenticeships and training opportunities. Their difficulties in finding information were compounded by cuts to Connexion services, Jobcentre budgets and the removal of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA).

Despite the challenges faced by this group they did report some positive support. Their family, friends and other networks were important in helping them move to EET status. This group of young people had found opportunities, through their own perseverance and determination, to change their circumstances despite the 'odds being stacked against them'.

Findings on young peoples' career aspirations

As part of the quantitative survey young people on all destination routes were asked questions about their aspirations for employment and plans for the future.

Career aspirations

Career aspirations were generally high, with most young people aspiring to a professional occupation. Less than one in ten chose a semi-skilled or unskilled occupation as their ideal job.

The young people themselves had characteristics associated with more ambitious career aspirations. The more ambitious young people were from non-white UK ethnic heritage backgrounds and had higher GCSE attainment and academic self-concept. Young people from higher socio economic status (SES) families had high career aspirations despite lower attainment and they were less likely to lower their aspirations when asked for a 'realistic' job choice.

Girls were more likely to have professional career aspirations than boys and more likely to choose caring professions such as education, healthcare and social work. Boys were more likely to choose trade and industry related occupations such as building and construction, engineering and the Armed Forces. However, the relationship with gender and aspirations was not straight forward, as lower achieving girls were more likely to choose lower skilled careers than their male counterparts.

Family background had an influence on career aspirations. Young people with more ambitious career aspirations had parents with: greater aspirations for their education, higher qualifications and SES and provided more enrichment activities in the home during KS3.

Not all young people classified as NEET lacked aspirations as two fifths aspired to a professional qualification. However, NEET young people had higher levels of career uncertainty than other young people.

Occupations and attaining aspirations

The majority of young people from semi-skilled/unskilled backgrounds had career aspirations above their family background. Most young people, across social backgrounds, wanted a professional ll occupation (e.g., teaching, creative industries). This meant that relative aspirations, out of their parental SES, were high for many young people. The majority of young people were confident they would attain their ideal job with those from non-white ethnic heritage being more confident.

What predicted post-16 destination routes?

Just as the NEET group were of particular interest, so too were those students who remained in post-16 education. Not all those remaining in education followed the same pathways and this group cannot be seen as homogenous. Having completed compulsory education, students who stayed in school/college beyond Year 11 made choices of particular curriculum subjects or course that would determine their later entry into Higher Education. Having information on post GCSE examination routes, from the 'Life After Year 11' questionnaire, the EPPSE study were able to conduct analyses that explored what individual, background and institutional characteristics predicted which routes those who remained in full-time education beyond 16 would take. Three dichotomous outcomes measures were constructed:

1) Higher academic route: those who took 4 or more AS/A levels (versus all who had returned any of the four LAY11 questionnaires)
2) Lower academic route: those who took 3 or fewer AS/A levels (versus those who are on a higher academic route)
3) Vocational route: those who did not take any AS/A levels, but returned a LAY11 Q1- Full-Time Education questionnaire (versus all the others who were either on higher or lower academic routes).

Approximately two fifths of students reported taking four or more AS/A levels with a similar number taking a vocational route. The remaining took three or fewer AS/A levels. The analyses showed that for individual characteristics, those who showed behavioural problems during their early years were less likely to follow a higher academic route. Of the wide range of family characteristics both mothers' and fathers' (to a lesser extent) highest qualification levels strongly predicted post-16 destinations, especially following a higher academic route. Students from higher income families were also more likely to choose a higher academic route. Students whose parents were in lower socio-economic status (SES) groups were almost four times more likely to follow a lower academic route compared to those from the highest SES families. Learning experiences inside the home were also important with higher levels of 'academic enrichment[2]' in KS3 significantly predicting a higher probability of following a higher academic route. Remarkably having a low early years home learning environment (HLE) predicted a low probability of following a vocational route.

[2] Educational related activities such as reading for pleasure, educational outings etc., see Sammons et al., 2014a

As well as the family, institutional experiences also predicted a higher or lower full-time academic education route. For instance pre-school attendance, duration, effectiveness and quality were all significant predictors of a higher academic route and negatively predicted the probabilities of following a lower academic/vocational route. The results for duration of time in pre-school (over 36 months) were particularly striking in increasing the chances of entering the higher academic route more than fourfold. Quality was also important and students who had attended high quality pre-schools were three times more likely to pursue a higher academic route than students who had not attended pre-school.

Attending a more academically effective primary school was also a significant predictor of taking higher academic/vocational routes. Attending an 'outstanding' secondary school in terms of 'the quality of pupils' learning' (as measured by Ofsted) predicted a higher chance of following a higher academic route. Also being in a secondary school with a more positive 'behavioural climate' and more 'positive relationships' between teachers and students also predicted an increased likelihood of moving on to the higher academic route rather than a vocational route.

GCSE results were also extremely important in determining which full-time education route they followed beyond Year 11. Unsurprisingly, GCSE results in English and maths were significant predictors of post-16 destinations. However, when taking into account GCSE results, other background characteristics such as age (older in year group), ethnicity, number of siblings and KS3 HLE still remained significant predictors of different post-16 education routes. Again controlling for GCSE results, pre-school attendance, duration and quality remained significant predictors of following higher academic routes and the effects were moderately strong.

Conclusions

This report draws together information provided by the EPPSE young people 6 months after leaving compulsory schooling. These young people had embarked on an exciting new stage in their lives having moved out of compulsory education and becoming young adults. Whilst the majority have remained in education, other pathways have emerged and the once homogenous EPPSE sample has split into diverse distinct groups.

Nevertheless taking the group as a whole some important findings emerge. Overall these young people are happy and positive about their situations. They have high aspirations and are looking to improve their future prospects with many planning to attend university. Whilst they remain aware of gender discrimination the majority do not feel they will experience discrimination in their future workplaces. In many cases they turn to their parents for advice on their futures and do not seem to have been deterred from further study by worries over funding (but it is important to note that these young people filled in their surveys before the tripling of student fees in 2011).

This positive picture for the many, however, underlies some disturbing findings when the full sample is divided into sub-groups. There is currently great concern nationally about the 'equity gap' and this has been an enduring interest in the EPPSE research. The present findings show clearly that the odds of different post-16 pathways are strongly shaped by background characteristics and also by pre-school, primary school and secondary school experiences. Most young people aspire to university but the majority of young people (over 50%) nationally do not go to university. In the same way students had high aspirations with the majority aspiring to professional non-manual I and II jobs, but this is more than the numbers of such jobs in the market place. Indeed evidence suggests such jobs are being squeezed out in the hour glass effect. The popularity of jobs in health and education (traditionally public sector and more secure fields of work) may contrast with the opportunities available. The young people in the EPPSE sample will have gone on to experience the severe economic recession from 2007 onwards, higher youth unemployment and public sector cuts from 2010. This context may well affect their later education, employment and life chances.

EPPSE reports, at the end of each phase of education, have monitored the outcomes for different groups of students and Siraj-Blatchford (2010), Siraj-Blatchford et al., (2011) and Siraj-Blatchford & Mayo (2012) have drawn attention to students who 'succeed against the odds'.

What emerges in this report is the particular background characteristics that impact on those young people who leave education and become NEET. They tell a tale of social inequality and cycles that are very difficult to break. However, the young people themselves identify areas in which further support could be given to help them 'narrow the gap'. These point to the need for better career guidance, more targeted 'catch-up' programmes and financial support for returning to education post-18.

Full findings (academic, social-behavioural etc.) from the KS4 phase of the study are to be found in Sammons et al., 2014a, 2014b, 2014c, 2014d and summarised in Sylva et al., 2014).

Note on Key Stage 4 and post compulsory education

This report focuses on the 6 months following the end of Key Stage 4 (KS4) when the young people are around age 16. The following will help to set the context of this report.

In the English system, beyond age 14 (end of KS3), most students continue to study the 'core' subjects of English, maths, science and religious education but have some flexibility over which other subject they continue to study. Most continue with subjects they enjoy or have ability in and discontinue others. The choice of subjects can be influenced by the school's status (e.g. Performing Arts, Technology), the curriculum offered and the English Baccalaureate[3]. Beyond age 14 students enter KS4 which covers Years 10 and 11 (age 14-16). During this time students prepare to take examinations, the majority of which take place during the summer term (April to July) of their final year in secondary education. The majority of students take a number of General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examinations, although some may also take vocational qualifications. Most students prepare for these examinations in a school, but a small minority attend a further education college or work-based learning provider either full-time or part-time. In these environments, some will only take vocational qualifications or programmes.

Since 2013, young people are obliged by law to remain in some form of education or training until the age of 17 and this will rise to the age of 18 by 2015. After age 16, those wishing to remain in full-time education can remain in school or move to a further education college or sixth form college. Here they have a choice of either taking General Certificate of Education Advanced Level (A-Level), normally three or four subjects or a range of vocational qualifications, such as BTECs or a combination of both. If they have not gained a GCSE Grade A*-C in English and maths, they will need to continue to study these subjects post-16 as part of their 16-19 study programmes. Since 2013 all 16-19 students have to have access to work experience post-16. Those student who do not continue in full-time education beyond the age of 16 may enter employment with training, an apprenticeships or traineeship but again they are expected to continue with English and maths if they have not gained a qualification in these subjects at age 16. A minority of students may be unable to study or gain employment and fall into a category of young people referred to as NEET: Not in Education, Employment or Training.

3 Introduced in 2012 the English Baccalaureate (a key performance indicator for schools) covers the following subjects: English, maths, sciences, history or geography and a foreign language.

Structure of the Report

This report has 9 sections:

Section 1: Background to the EPPSE study

Section 2: Research questions, methodology, sample and reporting results at age 16

Section 3: Data collection

Section 4: Background characteristics of students by destination route

Section 5: Descriptive statistics of the sample by destination route

Section 6: Focus on students not in education, employment or training (NEET)

Section 7: Students' career aspirations

Section 8: Predicting different full-time education routes

Section 9: Conclusions

Section 1: Background to the EPPSE study

The Effective Pre-school, Primary and Secondary Education (EPPSE 3-16+) study is a longitudinal study, funded by the Department of Education (DfE), that has tracked the academic progress and social-behavioural development of approximately 3,000 children from their early years (age3/5) to their early post age16 destination.

Earlier phases of the research have been influential in providing research evidence for the development of national policies and practices in early years education and care (Taggart et al., 2008; Siraj-Blatchford et al., 2008). The study has had considerable national (DFE 2011, National Audit Office 2012, Eisenstadt, 2011) and international reach (Australian DoE 2009, Brazil MdE 2006, UNESCO 2008). Early phases of the study include:

4) Pre-school to end of Key Stage 1(age 3-7): Effective Provision of Pre-school Education project (EPPE: 1997-2003) – see Sylva et al., 2004
5) Primary school, Key Stages 2 (age 7-11) Effective Pre-school and Primary Education 3-11 project (EPPE 3-11: 2003-2008) – see Sylva et al., 2008
6) Secondary school, Key Stage 3 (age 11-14) Effective Pre-school, Primary and Secondary Education project (EPPSE 3 -14: 2008-2011) – see Sylva et al, 2012
7) Secondary school, Key Stage 4 and post-16 destinations (age 16+) Effective Pre-school, Primary and Secondary Education project (EPPSE 16+: 2011-2014) – see Sylva at al., 2014.

Each end of phase report cited above is supported by a range of technical papers – see www.ioe.ac.uk/eppse for a full list of publications. Over 17 years the EPPSE study has expanded into a programme of research and details of the many sub-studies (e.g. special educational needs, primary pedagogical strategies, students who 'succeed against the odds') can be found at www.ioe.ac.uk/eppse

1.1: Aims

The aim of this phase of the EPPSE research is to:

- investigate young people's early post-16 pathways;
- explore the characteristics of students on different routes;
- examine what may have influenced their pathway.

The EPPSE 3-16+ research is particularly interested in how early experiences help 'shape' later outcomes, so background characteristics are also considered, such as the lasting effects of pre-school education; the focus of the original Effective Provision of Pre-school Education (1997- 2003) research. However, the extensive datasets, collected over a period of 16 years, have provided opportunities for sophisticated analysis that can show how the different phases of education and family characteristics interact in shaping students' lives, developmental trajectories and educational outcomes in the long term. EPPSE 16+ explores issues relating to the academic (Sammons et al.,2104a), social-behavioural (Sammons et al., 2014c) and dispositional development (Sammons et al., 2014d) as well as the views of young people (Sammons et al., 2014a), using a nationally representative sample of teenagers.

Whilst educational effectiveness research has a long pedigree in the UK (Rutter et al., 1979; Reid et al., 1987; Mortimore et al., 1988; Grey et al., 1990) the emphasis has historically been on the compulsory phases of schooling (primary and secondary). This final phase of the research is unique in following a cohort of students, who have been involved in the EPPSE research throughout their entire school careers, through from pre-school to their post secondary destinations.

The students in the EPPSE study are of particular interest as they joined the study just as New Labour came into power in 1997. Almost all of the students (split across 4 academic cohorts) were educated entirely under a Labour Government. When Tony Blair launched the Labour's education manifesto he said 'our top priority was, is and always will be education, education, education' (Speech: University of Southampton, 23rd May 2001). During his administration the education system saw some radical changes: an increase in the share of national income devoted to education; increases in the number of teachers and classroom assistants; an ambitious building programme for schools and colleges; the introduction of national strategies for literacy (DfES 2001) and numeracy (DfEE 1998); the demise of national tests at age 14; greater choice in the Key Stage 4 curriculum with the possibility for students to take both academic and vocational qualifications; the introduction of *Curriculum 2000* which radically altered the nature of qualifications for 16-19 year olds; the gradual implementation of 14-19 Diplomas between 2008-2010; major changes to the way careers educations information, advice and guidance was delivered and the expansion of specialist school such as academies, free schools, studio schools and university technical colleges. So the EPPSE students have been educated during a period of radical educational reforms. This report details what happened to the EPPSE students in the first six months following Year 11, age 16 when compulsory education at that time in England came to an end[4].

[4] The EPPSE students were the last cohort to finished compulsory education at age 16. See Notes on Key Stage 4 and compulsory education for policy changes in this area.

1.2: Reporting the results at age 16

This report focuses on post-16 destination but the results of EPPSE's academic, social-behavioural, effective and 'other' outcomes analyses at age 16 are contained in a series of technical reports as follows:

1) Academic – Influences on students' academic attainment and progress in Key Stage 4:GCSE results age 14 (Sammons et al., 2014b)
2) Social-behavioural - Influences on students' social-behavioural development in Key Stage 4 results age 16(Sammons et al., 2014c)
3) Dispositions: Dispositions, aspirations and well-being in Key Stage 4: Students' reports in Year 11(Sammons et al., 2014d)
4) Views of school: Students' views of school in Key Stage 4 (Sammons et al., 2014a)
5) Report on students who are not in education, employment and training (NEET) post age 16 (Siraj et al., 2014)

The reports listed 1-4 above explore in detail the net influences of individual child, family, home learning environment (HLE) characteristics as well as pre-school, primary and secondary education on outcomes at age 16. The analyses in these reports also explores the effects of different combinations of experiences (e.g. parental qualifications, high quality pre-school) and how these influence vary for particular groups of students (e.g. males and females, those from disadvantaged families).

The main outcomes used in the analyses for the above reports are:

- academic attainment: a range of GCSE (and equivalent) benchmarks (GCSE A*-C, total number of GCSE, 5 A* to C including English and maths etc.);
- social-behavioural outcomes: self-regulation, pro - and anti-social behaviour and hyperactivity;
- affective behaviours: mental well-being, school enjoyment, disaffected behaviour, resistance to peer influences and academic self- concept;
- views of school: teacher professional focus, positive relationships, monitoring students, formative feedback and academic ethos.

The main findings from the fifth report listed above are included in this report (see Section 6). A sixth report 'The economic benefits of attending pre-school' (Dearden, L., et al. 2014) details an economic analyses including predictive modelling to explore future earnings and other wider societal benefits associated with attending pre-school. All seven (including this report) are brought together and the findings summarised in the final report at age 16+ (Sylva et al., 2014).

Section 2: Research questions, methodology, sample and reporting results at age 16

2.1: Research questions

The overall aim of this part of the EPPSE 3 -16+ study is to investigate the early post-16 destinations of EPPSE students following the end of their compulsory education[5] to:

- identify students on pathways related to further post-16 academic qualifications;
- identify students on vocational, employment or NEET pathways;
- explore the background characteristics and views of students on different pathways;
- identify the predictors of academic post-16 pathways and how is this influenced by background characteristics such as individual and family characteristics;
- describe the aspirations of the EPPSE students and how these differ by background characteristics.

In addition, this report explores the EPPSE participant's views on happiness, employment, access to higher education and barriers they may have encountered.

Given that students who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) are of particular policy interest, this report included the key findings from a separate report (Siraj et al., 2014) which explores, through a case study approach, the lives of a group of NEET young people and what has influenced their current pathway.

This report tells the final chapter of the story of a unique cohort of students: how early experiences influence the move to further educational or employment at age 16 and helps to place earlier EPPSE analyses into the context of school/college based learning and/or employment opportunities.

[5] Throughout this report the term 'post compulsory education/schooling' refers to the six months following compulsory education at the time the EPPSE students were age 16 which is not now the post-compulsory phase – see earlier section on Note on Key Stage 4 and post compulsory education.

2.2: Methodology

The EPPSE study adopts a 'school effectiveness or value added' design to investigate influences on student's progress and development (Sylva et al., 2010, Sammons et al., 2011a; 2011b). Educational effectiveness research is predicated on the availability of administrative datasets and other information concerning children, their circumstances and the institutions in which they are educated. The last fifteen years has seen an expansion in the amount and detail of information which can be accessed by educational researchers when seeking to explain the strength of different influences on children's development. For instance, the availability of information on the National Pupil Database (NPD) and the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI; Noble et al., 2004, 2008) combined with the power of new statistical modelling, has made possible for the first time, new understanding of effective education and the way it interacts with families and neighbourhoods to influence child development. Whilst earlier longitudinal studies have indicated the importance of background characteristics such as the family socio-economic status in determining social mobility and social exclusion (Feinstein 2003, Feinstein et al., 2004) few studies have as detailed information as EPPSE on a large sample of children covering the last two decades of major educational reform.

2.3: Analyses strategy

The EPPSE research questions in this report were addressed using appropriate statistical modelling techniques including descriptive statistics, confirmatory factor analysis and multilevel logistic modelling. Confirmatory factor analyses was used to construct robust measures of home learning environment (HLE) and students' experiences of their secondary schools. In addition, multilevel logistic modelling (a particular type of hierarchical regression analyses - Goldstein, 1995) was used for predicting post-16 destinations. Generally, multilevel modelling is recognised as the most appropriate methodology for the study of student progress and development over time, in educational research, because it provides both more efficient and accurate estimates of the impact of key predictors at the student level (e.g., SES, gender, parent qualifications) and the separation of school influences via the modelling of clustering effects on student outcomes (by including higher levels e.g. the school) in the analyses. Such approaches have already been used in the EPPSE study to allow the identification and separation of different influences on children's attainment, at younger ages, and their progress over time (Sylva et al., 2004, 2008, 2012).

Multilevel modelling also allow different blocks of variables (e.g., from those related to background) to be tested separately and in combination, separating pre-school, primary and secondary school effects on different educational outcomes. In order to identify the effects of secondary schools, it is essential to take into account prior educational experiences. Other studies of secondary schools are limited in this respect. The EPPSE 3-16+ is unique in being able to investigate influences after controlling for prior attainment in pre-school and primary school and therefore, provide more rigorous evidence of secondary school effects on students' future career paths.

Indicators in the multilevel logistic analyses included:

- Students' characteristics: age, gender, birth weight, ethnicity and early behavioural, developmental or health problems
- Family characteristics: parental qualification levels, socio-economic status (SES), salary, home learning environment, neighbourhood and 'place poverty'
- Pre-school experience: attendance, duration (in months), quality and effectiveness of centre attended
- Primary school indicators of academic effectiveness derived from contextual value added analyses (CVA) of National Assessment results from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 (KS1-KS2)
- Secondary school of academic effectiveness derived from contextual value added analyses (CVA) of KS2-KS4 National Assessment results (2006-2009)[6] and quality measures based on Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) judgements (2005-2010).

2.4: The sample

The EPPSE longitudinal study of the influences which shape children's development as they progress through pre-school, primary and secondary school involves an original sample of 3,172 children made up of 2,800 children recruited around the age of 3/4 from 141 pre-schools plus over 300 children with no pre-school experience (the 'home' group) who were recruited to the study at age 5 when they entered school (Sammons et al., 1999). The first children were recruited to the project in early 1997 (see Appendix 1 for the cohort structure of the sample).

[6] This measure is no longer used by the DfE making it difficult to study school effectiveness and to provide fairer 'like with like' comparisons by taking into account student intake differences.

The sample ('n') included in different EPPSE analyses has changed considerably over the last 17 years. This relates to the outcome being studied, the means of collecting data and the response rates to different questionnaires. For instance the academic outcome at age 16 includes approximately 2,740 students in the analyses and uses the National Pupil Database for outcome data (Sammons et al., 2014b). The social-behavioural outcomes (Sammons et al., 2014c) are derived from an analyses of approximately 2,400 students who had Pupil Profiles (88 % of the active sample) returned from teachers in 904 schools. The dispositional outcomes at age 16 are based on the responses to a student questionnaire: 'Life in Year 11' returned by approximately 1,670 students (60% of the active sample) across the full socio-economic spectrum.

Extensive 'tracking' at particular time points mean that some students 'lost' at earlier time points and excluded from some analyses have been included in later matching. The data for the analyses of post-16 destinations is derived from 1,737 (63% of the active sample) responses to a questionnaire, Life After Year 11, sent out 6 months after the EPPSE students completed their compulsory education as detailed below.

2.4.1: Sample attrition

The original EPPE study began in 1997 with over 3,000 children. In 17 years, inevitably, as in all longitudinal studies, there has been some attrition from the sample. A total of 2,812 (age 14, Year 9) students were responding members of the sample at the end of KS3 (representing 89% of the original total).

A total of 2,810 (age 16+) students were responding members of the sample at the end of KS4. Analyses of the demographics of the post-16 sample, on a number of key indicators (ethnicity, poverty at home as measured by eligibility for free school meals, SEN status), suggests that the respondents are broadly representative a national sample of young people and their families.

Table 2.1: Comparison of the Post-16 sample with national figures[7]

Background characteristic	Returned Post-16 questionnaire		England	
	N	%	N	%
White British ethnic heritage	1343	77.3	10,000,330	77.9
Eligible for Free School Meals (Year 11)	237	14.0	298110	13.2
Had Special Educational Needs (Year 11)	290	17.4	2,652,535	20.1

[7] The figures for EPPSE sample exclude missing data. Missing FSM data stood at 4.2% (n=73) for the Post-16 sample who returned questionnaires and 2.6% (n=46) for the proportion of missing SEN data.

In Table 2.1, the EPPSE data broadly matches a national sample of young people although EPPSE has slight more young people eligible for free school meals (FSM) and slightly less students on the SEN register in Year 11. In addition to comparing the EPPSE sample to a national sample of 16 year olds, analyses were conducted to compare those returning a post-16 questionnaire to those who did not (missing data) for the full EPPSE sample (Table 2.2).

Table 2.2: Comparing returned and non returned data on selected characteristics of the sample

Background characteristic	Non returned Post-16 data		Returned Post-16 data		Full original sample	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Male	859	59.9	777	44.7	1636	51.6
Female	576	40.1	960	55.3	1536	48.4
Total	1435	100.0	1737	100.0	3172	100.0
Highest parental SES at entry to the study	**Non returned Post-16 data**		**Returned Post-16 data**		**Full original sample**	
	N	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**
No SES data available	88	6.1	28	1.6	116	3.7
Professional NM I or NM II	349	24.3	708	40.7	1057	33.4
Skilled (NM III or M III)	669	46.6	757	43.6	1426	44.9
Semi-skilled or unskilled	276	19.2	209	12.1	485	15.3
Never worked	53	3.6	35	2.0	88	2.8
Total	1435	100.0	1737	100.0	3172	100.0
Highest parental qualifications at entry to the study	**Non returned Post-16 data**		**Returned Post-16 data**		**Full original sample**	
	N	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**
No data available	87	6.1	36	2.1	123	3.9
No qualifications	299	20.8	192	11.1	491	15.5
vocational	166	11.6	177	10.2	343	10.8
16 academic	504	35.1	625	36.0	1129	35.6
18 academic	138	9.6	197	11.3	335	10.6
degree or equivalent	158	11.0	325	18.7	483	15.2
higher degree	60	4.2	160	9.2	220	6.9
other professional	23	1.6	25	1.4	48	1.5
Total	1435	100.0	1737	100.0	3172	100.0

There were some slight differences between the returned and non-returned questionnaire data for instance slightly more girls returned their questionnaires despite there being slightly fewer girls in the full sample. Similarly those who had parents that had higher qualifications and were in a higher SES group were more likely to return a questionnaire. Taken overall the table suggest that the returned data is broadly similar to the demographics of the full sample and the missing data.

Section 3: Data collection

Six months after the EPPSE student completed their compulsory education they were sent post-16 destination questionnaires.

3.1: Response rates

Obtaining questionnaire responses from teenagers is challenging. The questionnaires were initially sent out in hard copy. Researchers undertook 'follow-up' a month later, but efforts to increase the response rate, unlike previous phases of the research, were made more difficult because of behaviours specifically associated with teenagers: their general disengagement in anything 'official' or outside of their immediate day-to-day culture, their lack of availability and erratic timekeeping. However, persistence and a range of options for completing the questionnaires, including resending hard copy, face-to-face meetings, telephone interviews and an online version, pushed the initial forty per cent response rate up to sixty-three per cent (see Table 3.1). This is an exceptionally high response rate for a survey of this type that asks for sensitive information regarding family circumstances, aspirations and emotions. The response rate is a testament to the team of research assistants led by Anne Hall and Linda Burton who dealt sensitively with students and families, where they encountered them, in distressing circumstances, in need of guidance and suffering bereavement. The response rate to the questionnaire was as follows:

Table 3.1: Response rate - Life After Year 11 questionnaire

Cohort	No. in active sample	No. of returned	% Returned of active sample
1 (2009/10)	189	156	83
2 (2010/11)	1136	586	52
3 (2011/12)	1343	922	69
4 (2012/13)	95	73	77
Total	2763	1737	63

Ensuring high response rates relies on a number of factors including knowing where students are at the time of administration. The EPPSE research has developed, over 17 years, successful systems for maintaining the sample. The project has benefitted from the services of a Tracking Officer; Wesley Welcomme who has communicated with students, families, schools, social workers and local authority personnel to ensure the increasingly mobile sample remained viable. Developing the good relationships which has kept students, families and schools involved in the research over the years, has included regular contacts via proformas, phone, face-to-face, birthday cards, competitions, prizes and newsletters. Keeping in touch with the sample is particularly important in longitudinal studies to avoid bias associated with attrition. The EPPSE 3-16+ sample are nationally representative and this high response rate gives credibility to the analyses and findings.

3.1.1: The 'Life After Year 11' questionnaires

The post-16 destinations of the EPPSE sample are explored through four questionnaires, dependent on the circumstance of the students in the 6 months after finishing secondary school. The Life After Year 11 questionnaires were as follows:

- Questionnaire 1 - Students in full-time education (6th Form or College)
- Questionnaire 2 - For those working (not studying at all) / working and doing job related training (Apprenticeships etc.)
- Questionnaire 3 - For those doing part-time study (not related to their current job) whether working or not
- Questionnaire 4 – For those not working, studying or training (NEET).

Table 3.2: Responses to Life After Year 11 by questionnaire type

Post-16 destination routes	N	%
Q1- Students in full-time education	1503	87
Q2 - Working /working & doing job related qualifications	124	7
Q3 – Doing part-time study not job related –working or not	24	1
Q4 – Not in employment, education or training (NEET)	86	5
Total	1737	100

Table 3.2 shows that the majority of EPPSE students (87%) continued in full-time education. This figure is similar to the national rates (83%) shown in Table 3.3. The number of EPPSE participants who were NEET (5%) almost exactly matches the national figures for 2009 – 2011.

Table 3.3: Participation of 16 year olds in education and training in England

Post-16 destination routes	End of 2009	End of 2010	End of 2011[8]
Full-time education	83.8	84.4	82.6
Work based Learning (WBL)	4.8	3.5	3.6
Overlap between WBL and full-time	0.2	0.2	0.0
Employer funded training (EFT)	1.6	1.6	1.7
Other education and training (OET)	3.2	4.2	5.7
Total education and training	93.2	93.5	93.5
Not in any education or training – in employment	1.3	1.4	1.1
Total not in any education, employment or training (NEET)	5.5	5.1	5.4
Total Not in any Education or Training (NET)	6.8	6.5	6.5
Total Education and WBL5	91.3	91.6	91.5
Population	653,300	658,900	647,300

DfE Statistical First Release National Statistics SFR 12/2012 – 21 Feb 2013 Theme: Children, Education and Skills.

8 These years were chosen as they were closest to the ages of the EPPSE cohorts at post-16.

The purpose of the questionnaires was firstly to establish post-16 destinations and participation rates in further education and training and secondly to explore young people's views on their post-16 circumstances including their future plans and aspirations. All four questionnaires asked for information regarding:

- family circumstances – family composition and carer responsibilities;
- current education pathway (excluded in Questionnaire 4: NEETS);
- career advice – who did you speak to for advice and how helpful were they;
- university attendance – likelihood and reasons for going, reasons and perceived barriers to going;
- future plans – career/work plans/aspirations;
- factors affecting employment;
- factors important in choosing a job;
- levels of happiness.

In addition the four questionnaires were customised with extra questions for the different destination routes as shown in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4: Questions associated with the four routes

Q1 Full-time education	Q2 - For all Working or job related training
• Awareness and take up of the Educational Maintenance Allowance or 16-19 Bursary Evening or weekend working arrangements • Reasons for continuing in full-time education	• Awareness and take up of the Educational Maintenance Allowance or 16-19 Bursary • Why they left full-time education • Future work plans – what they are most likely to be doing in a year's time
Q3 - For all doing part-time study	**Q4 - Not in any Education, Employment or Training (NEET)**
• Work experience • Why study part time	• Reasons for being NEET • Work experience • Have exam results influence status • Future work plans – what they are most likely to be doing in a years' time

Section 4: Background characteristics of students by destination route

Table 4.1 shows key individual, family and neighbourhood characteristics associated with each of the four types of questionnaires returned.

Table 4.1: Characteristics of the sample for each of four Post-16 destination routes

Characteristic	Q1 Full-time education		Q2 Working		Q3 Part-time study		Q4 NEET		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Gender										
Male	657	84.0	70	9.0	16	2.0	39	5.0	782	100
Female	846	88.6	55	5.8	7	0.7	47	4.9	955	100
Total	1503	86.5	125	7.2	23	1.3	86	5.0	1737	100
Ethnicity – heritage										
White European	48	84.2	4	7.0	0	0.0	5	8.8	57	100
Black Caribbean	47	94.0	2	4.0	1	2.0	0	0.0	50	100
Black African	30	96.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	3.2	31	100
Other ethnic minority	25	86.2	0	0.0	1	3.4	3	10.3	29	100
Indian	40	95.2	1	2.4	1	2.4	0	0.0	42	100
Pakistani	68	88.3	5	6.5	0	0.0	4	5.2	77	100
Bangladeshi	18	94.7	0	0.0	1	5.3	0	0.0	19	100
Mixed heritage	82	92.1	2	2.2	0	0.0	5	5.6	89	100
White UK	1145	85.3	111	8.3	19	1.4	68	5.1	1343	100
Total	1503	86.5	125	7.2	23	1.3	86	5.0	1737	100
Number of siblings (data at age 3/5)										
No siblings	316	90.3	19	5.4	2	0.6	13	3.7	350	100
1 sibling	570	87.8	42	6.5	11	1.7	26	4.0	649	100
2 siblings	408	85.5	41	8.6	5	1.0	23	4.8	477	100
3+ siblings	189	81.1	18	7.7	5	2.1	21	9.0	233	100
Missing	20	71.4	5	17.9	0	0.0	3	10.7	28	100
Total	1503	86.5	125	7.2	23	1.3	86	5.0	1737	100
Early Years home learning environment (HLE) index										
<13	104	78.8	16	12.1	2	1.5	10	7.6	132	100
14-19	259	82.7	28	8.9	7	2.2	19	6.1	313	100
20-24	342	88.4	18	4.7	4	1.0	23	5.9	387	100
25-32	514	87.0	48	8.1	7	1.2	22	3.7	591	100
>33	237	91.9	11	4.3	3	1.2	7	2.7	258	100
Total	1456	86.6	121	7.2	23	1.4	81	4.8	1681	100
Type of pre-school attended										
Nursery class	282	85.7	21	6.4	8	2.4	18	5.5	329	100
Playgroup	265	83.1	38	11.9	0	0.0	16	5.0	319	100
Private day nursery	327	93.2	17	4.8	4	1.1	3	0.9	351	100
Local authority day nursery	160	87.4	9	4.9	3	1.6	11	6.0	183	100
Nursery schools	262	82.9	25	7.9	6	1.9	23	7.3	316	100
Integrated centres	85	88.5	5	5.2	0	0.0	6	6.3	96	100
Home	122	85.3	10	7.0	2	1.4	9	6.3	143	100
Total	1503	86.5	125	7.2	23	1.3	86	5.0	1737	100

Mother's qualification level										
None	204	77.6	24	9.1	6	2.3	29	11.0	263	100
Vocational	204	87.2	16	6.8	4	1.7	10	4.3	234	100
16 Academic	531	83.5	63	9.9	8	1.3	34	5.3	636	100
18 Academic	154	93.9	5	3.0	1	0.6	4	2.4	164	100
Degree or higher degree	354	96.2	8	2.2	3	0.8	3	0.8	368	100
Other professional	24	92.3	2	7.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	26	100
Total	1471	87.0	118	7.0	22	1.3	80	4.7	1691	100
Father's qualification level										
None	153	74.3	25	12.1	4	1.9	24	11.7	206	100
Vocational	184	89.3	11	5.3	3	1.5	8	3.9	206	100
16 academic	335	84.2	39	9.8	6	1.5	18	4.5	398	100
18 academic	126	95.5	4	3.0	1	0.8	1	0.8	132	100
Degree or higher degree	369	95.3	10	2.6	3	0.8	5	1.3	387	100
Other professional	14	93.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	6.7	15	100
Absent father	304	82.8	32	8.7	6	1.6	25	6.8	367	100
Total	1485	86.8	121	7.1	23	1.3	82	4.8	1711	100
Family highest SES (data at age 3/5)										
Professional non manual	201	96.2	4	1.9	2	1.0	2	1.0	209	100
Other professional non manual	466	93.4	20	4.0	4	0.8	9	1.8	499	100
Skilled non manual	450	84.0	54	10.1	8	1.5	24	4.5	536	100
Skilled manual	171	77.4	23	10.4	6	2.7	21	9.5	221	100
Semi-skilled	142	78.0	17	9.3	2	1.1	21	11.5	182	100
Unskilled	22	81.5	3	11.1	1	3.7	1	3.7	27	100
Unemployed /not working	29	82.9	1	2.9	0	0.0	5	14.3	35	100
Total	1481	86.7	122	7.1	23	1.3	83	4.9	1709	100
Free School Meals in Year 11										
No Free School Meals	1254	87.3	115	8.0	16	1.1	52	3.6	1437	100
On Free School Meals	192	81.7	10	4.3	3	1.3	30	12.8	235	100
Total	1446	86.5	125	7.5	19	1.1	82	4.9	1672	100
Family earned income at KS1										
No salary	232	80.6	20	6.9	6	2.1	30	10.4	288	100
£ 2,500 – 17,499	227	81.4	30	10.8	6	2.2	16	5.7	279	100
£ 17,500 – 29,999	232	86.2	22	8.2	3	1.1	12	4.5	269	100
£ 30,000 – 37,499	160	87.4	18	9.8	1	0.5	4	2.2	183	100
£ 37,500 – 67,499	315	92.6	15	4.4	2	0.6	8	2.4	340	100
£ 67,500 – 132,000+	138	97.2	2	1.4	2	1.4	0	0.0	142	100
Total	1304	86.9	107	7.1	20	1.3	70	4.7	1501	100
SEN status in Year 11										
No special provision	1224	89.1	99	7.2	7	0.5	43	3.1	1373	100
School action	119	77.3	15	9.7	2	1.3	18	11.7	154	100
School action plus	52	67.5	8	10.4	2	2.6	15	19.5	77	100
Statement of SEN	38	74.5	1	2.0	7	13.7	5	9.8	51	100
Total	1433	86.6	123	7.4	18	1.1	81	4.9	1655	100

Section 5: Descriptive statistics of the sample by destination route

Family composition

- Most young people lived with their natural mother but fewer lived with their natural father. This reduced considerably for NEETs where less than two fifths lived with their natural father
- About 5% of all young people were 'carers', but this represented almost a fifth of the NEET group who were also more likely to be teenage parents.

Advice and plans

- Parents were the most likely and useful group for giving advice on post-16 plans. Around half of students sought advice from Connexions advisers or found them helpful
- Nearly two thirds thought it 'very/fairly likely' they would go to University with those in employment being those least likely to want to go
- Money worries put off two fifths of students from considering University whereas finance was of no concern for a fifth of students. Most wanted to go to University to study a subject that interested them linked to a specific career qualification
- Most young people want interesting jobs that provide opportunities to use their skills with only a third rating 'getting good money' as 'very important' in getting a job. The majority of young people did not think skin colour, ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation would affect them in employment although gender discrimination was still a concern for girls.

Happiness

- The majority of young people were 'happy/very happy': in general, with their peers and at home, however the NEET group were the lease happy in all three circumstances.

Post-16 routes

- Students in full-time (F/T) education stayed on for better qualifications to improve their job prospects. Whilst many students accessed grants to stay on in education, the scrapping of the EMA did not seem to make a difference to post-16 plans. About a third of students in F/T education had a job, with most working the equivalent of a 'Saturday' job. Just over half thought working had no impact on their studies
- Most young people on an employment route left F/T education to earn money, with over half wanting to learn a trade. Less than one in ten left education because of financial concerns
- The majority of young people undertaking part-time study were doing so to improve their job prospects and because the course they wanted was only available part-time. Twenty per cent of this group said they didn't get the grades at GCSE needed to stay on in full-time education
- Most NEETs were so because they were unable to find work, although a third were school/college 'drop-outs'. Obtaining poor GCSE results made a quarter of these young people change the plans they made for their futures whilst in Year 11. Almost a third had been employed but left when their temporary contract stopped, they weren't earning enough or didn't like the people they were working with. Over half the NEETs found school boring or difficult, with just under half expressing a dislike of teachers. Over a third of NEETs reported feeling low and worried and over a fifth had family problems. Just over ten per cent had poor health or a disability.

This section describes the demographics and views of students following each of the four routes. The data reported in this section are the responses to individual questions with no account taken of the background demographics of the students other than their post-16 pathway. Later in this report analyses was undertaken to determine what background characteristics predicts these pathways (see Section 8).

5.1: Common questions[9]

5.1.1: Family composition and carer responsibilities[10]

The questionnaire asked about family composition and who the EPPSE young adult was living with at age 16 (see Appendix 2 for full tables). In summary the results show that the majority of young people (94%) lived with their natural mother but a relatively smaller proportion lived with their natural father (62%).

There were marked differences when comparing the students in full-time education with the young people who were NEET in terms of who they lived with (see Table 5.1). Whilst ninety-five per cent of students who returned Q1 (full-time education) lived with their natural mother and sixty-four per cent lived with their natural father this reduced to seventy-eight per cent with natural mother and thirty-eight per cent with natural father for the NEET group. Although the numbers were small the NEET group were also more likely (compared to Q1 group) to report living with a partner/spouse; nine per cent (compared to 0.5) and have a child twelve per cent (compared to 0.1).

Table 5.1: Summary - Who lives with you?

Who lives with you?	Post-16 destination routes									
	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Natural mother										
Yes	1427	95.0	112	89.6	20	87.0	67	77.9	1626	93.7
No	75	5.0	13	10.4	3	13.0	19	22.1	110	6.3
Total	1502	100	125	100	23	100	86	100	1736	100
Natural father										
Yes	956	63.6	80	64.0	9	39.1	33	38.4	1078	62.1
No	546	36.4	45	36.0	14	60.9	53	61.6	658	37.9
Total	1502	100	125	100	23	100	86	100	1736	100
Own wife/husband/partner										
Yes	7	0.5	3	2.4	0	0.0	8	9.3	18	1.0
No	1495	99.5	122	97.6	23	100	78	90.7	1718	99.0
Total	1502	100	125	100	23	100	86	100	1736	100
Own son/daughter										
Yes	2	0.1	1	0.8	0	0.0	10	11.6	13	0.7
No	1500	99.9	124	99.2	23	100	76	88.4	1723	99.3
Total	1502	100	125	100	23	100	86	100	1736	100

10 N.B. Throughout this section of the report summary findings are given in the text with illustrative tables. Tables containing the full findings are reported in Appendix 2.

5.1.2: Caring responsibilities

Recognising that young people who have caring responsibilities can often be adversely affected by these duties there are a number of organisations who offer help and support e.g. Young Minds, Family Action, Carers UK. Tuffrey (2012) reports from the 2001 census data that some 1.2 per cent of dependent children aged between the ages of 5-17 had caring responsibilities. This translates to 11,094 children caring for between 20-49 hours per week and 9,374 caring for over 50 hours per week. She goes on to say that this may be an underestimate as many parents 'may not wish to identify their children as providing care because of stigma, embarrassment or fear of investigation by social care' (Tuffrey, 2012 p93).

In total only 6 per cent of the EPPSE sample reported having caring responsibilities, with most (41%) looking after siblings and 28 per cent looking after a parent. Whilst numbers were low, overall comparison between the groups showed that the group who were working (Q2) reported the lowest rates of caring responsibilities (2%) and the NEET group reported the highest (21%).

Table 5.1 showed more of the NEETs reporting being a parent and therefore unsurprisingly this is reflected in their response to the question about caring responsibly. The numbers across all groups were small but as Table 5.2 shows fifty per cent of the NEETs who had caring responsibilities were looking after their own child (9 respondents) compared to just four per cent of the Q1 group (3 respondents).

The majority of young people (56.3 %) who have caring responsibilities reported undertaking these duties every day.

Table 5.2: Do you look after (are a carer for) someone?

Do you look after (carer for) someone?	Post-16 destination routes									
	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	75	5.0	2	1.6	1	4.3	18	21.2	96	5.6
No	1416	95.0	120	98.4	22	95.7	67	78.8	1625	94.4
Total	1491	100	122	100	23	100	85	100.	1721	100
Who do you look after/care for?										
Brother/sister										
Yes	35	47.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	22.2	39	41.1
No	39	52.7	2	100	1	100	14	77.8	56	58.9
Total	74	100	2	100	1	100	18	100	95	100
Parent										
Yes	19	25.7	2	100	1	100	5	27.8	27	28.4
No	55	74.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	13	72.2	68	71.6
Total	74	100	2	100	1	100	18	100	95	100
Own child										
Yes	3	4.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	50.0	12	12.6
No	71	95.9	2	100	1	100	9	50.0	83	87.4
Total	74	100	2	100	1	100	18	100	95	100
How often do you perform the carer's role?										
Every day	38	50.7	2	100	0	0.0	14	77.8	54	56.3
Every weekend	6	8.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	6.3
Once or twice a week	31	41.3	0	0.0	1	100	4	22.2	36	37.5
Total	75	100	2	100	1	100	18	100	96	100

5.1.3: Seeking advice

The EPPSE sample were asked who they spoke to for advice on their post-16 plans. Table 5.3 shows that ninety per cent turned to their parents for advice with the second biggest source of advice coming from friends (66%). Within educational settings students were most likely to report consulting their form tutor (65%) followed by Careers Adviser (57%) or another teacher (50%). Lower number reported talking to Connexions with forty-four per cent talking to a Connexions Personal Adviser. Foskett and Helmesley Brown (2001) and White (2007) similarly found that parents were influential in giving advice to students, with the former suggesting that parents act as background advisers but that final decisions are made by the students themselves. Taylor (1992) and Foskett and Hesketh (1997) asserted that careers teachers and advisers play a marginal role, but that classroom teachers were more influential due to the fact that they are with the young people for longer stretches of time.

There was little that separated the four groups except the students who continue in full-time education and those going onto work reported slightly higher rates of consulting parents (91% and 89%) compared to those doing part-time study or NEET (78% and 79%). Compared to the Q1 group, the NEET young people reported slightly higher figures for consulting a school careers adviser (62% compared to 57%) and a Connexions Personal Adviser (54% compared to 42%).

Table 5.3: Who did you talk to, in Year 11, for advice on future plans?

Advice in Year 11	Post-16 destination routes									
	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Parents										
Yes	1348	90.8	110	89.4	18	78.3	67	78.8	1543	90.0
No	136	9.2	13	10.6	5	21.7	18	21.2	172	10.0
Total	1484	100	123	100	23	100	85	100	1715	100
Friends										
Yes	1017	68.5	66	53.7	8	34.8	46	54.1	1137	66.3
No	468	31.5	57	46.3	15	65.2	39	45.9	579	33.7
Total	1485	100	123	100	23	100	85	100	1716	100
Form tutor										
Yes	991	66.9	67	54.5	11	47.8	45	52.9	1114	65.0
No	491	33.1	56	45.5	12	52.2	40	47.1	599	35.0
Total	1482	100	123	100	23	100	85	100	1713	100
Form Career Adviser										
Yes	845	57.0	71	57.7	10	43.5	53	62.4	979	57.2
No	637	43.0	52	42.3	13	56.5	32	37.6	734	42.8
Total	1482	100	123	100	23	100	85	100	1713	100
Any other teacher										
Yes	776	52.4	42	34.1	8	34.8	38	44.7	864	50.4
No	706	47.6	81	65.9	15	65.2	47	55.3	849	49.6
Total	1482	100	123	100	23	100	85	100	1713	100
Connexions Personal Adviser										
Yes	622	41.9	67	54.5	12	52.2	46	54.1	747	43.6
No	862	58.1	56	45.5	11	47.8	39	45.9	968	56.4
Total	1484	100	123	100	23	100	85	100	1715	100

5.1.3.1: Helpfulness of advice

Table 5.4: Were the people you spoke to for advice helpful?

Were they helpful to you?	Post-16 destination routes									
	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Parents										
Helpful	1264	95.0	102	94.4	14	77.8	62	93.9	1442	94.7
Not helpful	67	5.0	6	5.6	4	22.2	4	6.1	81	5.3
Total	1331	100	108	100	18	100	66	100	1523	100
Friends										
Helpful	873	86.7	57	89.1	6	75.0	39	86.7	975	86.7
Not helpful	134	13.3	7	10.9	2	25.0	6	13.3	149	13.3
Total	1007	100	64	100	8	100	45	100	1124	100
Form tutor										
Helpful	792	79.7	50	76.9	6	54.5	35	77.8	883	79.2
Not helpful	202	20.3	15	23.1	5	45.5	10	22.2	232	20.8
Total	994	100	65	100	11	100	45	100	1115	100
Form Career Adviser										
Helpful	632	74.8	49	71.0	7	70.0	44	83.0	732	74.9
Not helpful	213	25.2	20	29.0	3	30.0	9	17.0	245	25.1
Total	845	100	69	100	10	100	53	100	977	100
Any other teacher										
Helpful	690	89.3	35	87.5	7	87.5	29	76.3	761	88.6
Not helpful	83	10.7	5	12.5	1	12.5	9	23.7	98	11.4
Total	773	100	40	100	8	100	38	100	859	100
Connexions Personal Adviser										
Helpful	438	70.8	53	82.8	9	75.0	36	81.8	536	72.5
Not helpful	181	29.2	11	17.2	3	25.0	8	18.2	203	27.5
Total	619	100	64	100	12	100	44	100	739	100

All students in Year 11 who reported talking to someone for advice on future plans reported high levels of 'helpfulness' from those they spoke to (see Table 5.4). Parents, unsurprisingly appeared to offer the highest levels of 'helpfulness' (95%) with career advisers having the lowest levels of reported 'helpfulness' (75 % for school career advisers and 73% for Connexions Personal Advisers). Batterham and Levesley (2011) in an on-line survey of 1,620 young people aged between 15 and 18 also highlighted the importance and usefulness of parents as a source of information and advice, although parents were less confident about providing advice for those on vocational routes and those parents with lower qualification levels were seen by young people as less knowledgeable. In this study, schools careers advisers were considered almost as important a source of advice as parents and marginally more important than teachers or tutors.

5.1.4: Future plans

The questionnaire was designed as a 'snap shot' of young people's circumstances at the time the instrument was administered, but these are not set in stone and as Siraj et al., (2014) reports how these trajectories can alter radically within a year. However, it does give insights into the views and opinions of a nationally representative sample of 16 year olds as they embark on their next phase towards adulthood. The questionnaire probed their views on higher education and work.

5.1.4.1: Going to university

The questionnaire first explored the likelihood of them attending University.

Table 5.5: How likely is that you will go to University?

Likelihood of going to university	Post-16 destination routes									
	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Very	621	41.5	3	2.4	2	8.7	4	4.7	630	36.5
Fairly	435	29.1	11	8.9	4	17.4	8	9.3	458	26.5
Not very	181	12.1	31	25.0	6	26.1	22	25.6	240	13.9
Not at all	137	9.2	69	55.6	8	34.8	39	45.3	253	14.6
Don't know	121	8.1	10	8.1	3	13.0	13	15.1	147	8.5
Total	1495	100	124	100	23	100	86	100	1728	100

Overall the majority of young people (63%) in the EPPSE sample, in the six months following compulsory education, thought it 'very/fairly likely' they would go to University (see Table 5.5). This figure is very similar to the sixty-two per cent of 1,894 young people in Year 11 in a study undertaken by Connor and colleagues (1999). This study also found that more girls (69%) than boys (56%) were 'likely' or 'fairly likely' to go on to higher education. Similar results were obtained from a study undertaken by May (2013) who found that sixty-four per cent of 14-19 thought that they would probably go to university, with the 16-17 year old age group most certain. The EPPSE study found large differences in views across the four post-16 groups. Whilst just over seventy per cent of those in full-time education thought it very/fairly likely they would go to University this reduced to twenty-six per cent for those doing part-time study (Q3), fourteen per cent for the NEETs (Q4) and eleven per cent for those working (Q2). The working group also had the highest levels of 'not at all likely' to go at fifty-six per cent.

5.1.4.2: Financial barriers to higher education

The questionnaire explored further young people motivations for going to University and barriers to applying.

Table 5.6: How much would money worries put you off going to University

Money worries & University	Post-16 destination routes									
	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Completely	161	10.8	31	26.3	5	22.7	24	32.0	221	13.0
A lot	373	25.1	42	35.6	6	27.3	18	24.0	439	25.8
A little	633	42.7	22	18.6	5	22.7	14	18.7	674	39.7
Not at all	317	21.4	23	19.5	6	27.3	19	25.3	365	21.5
Total	1484	100	118	100	22	100	75	100	1699	100

In 2010 universities were allowed to charge students up to £9,000 directly for tuition fees[11]. Following this there were concerns raised (including an organised National Campaign Against Fees and Cuts) that this would present a barrier to University entry for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Just over twenty per cent of the EPPSE sample said they would not be put off going to university 'at all' because of financial worries with almost forty per cent reporting this would put them off 'a little' (see Table 5.6). Only thirteen per cent of the whole sample said they would be completely put off going to university because of money worries. The group most likely to be concerned about money worries were the NEET group, as Table 5.6 shows, thirty-two per cent (24 respondents) were completely put off going to university compared to almost eleven per cent of those in full-time education (161 respondents).

5.1.4.3: Purpose of going to University

University attendance was explored further by asking the EPPSE sample about their reason for wanting to go to university (see Table 5.7).

Overall the majority of the EPPSE sample said they wanted to go to University to study a subject that interested them (84%). Other reasons included to gain a qualification for a specific career (82.8%), increasing earning potential (70.6%), keeping options open (59.1%), and to gain greater security in employment (58.1%).

Also important but to a lesser extent was getting a higher status job (50.9%), for the social life (45.7%) and family expectations (28.15%). Across the groups the reason most cited by: Q1 and Q3 students was 'to study a subject that really interest me (84.2 and 81.8 % respectively), and Q2 and Q4 was 'to gain a qualification for a specific job or career' (84.6 and 77.4 % respectively).

11 Independent Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance: The Browne Review October 2012.

Table 5.7: Why go to university?

Why go to university?	Post-16 destination routes									
	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
To study a subject that really interests me										
Yes	1042	84.2	27	69.2	9	81.8	21	67.7	1099	83.4
No	195	15.8	12	30.8	2	18.2	10	32.3	219	16.6
Total	1237	100	39	100	11	100	31	100	1318	100
To gain a qualification for a specific job or career										
Yes	1027	83.0	33	84.6	7	63.6	24	77.4	1091	82.8
No	210	17.0	6	15.4	4	36.4	7	22.6	227	17.2
Total	1237	100	39	100	11	100	31	100	1318	100
To increase my earning potential										
Yes	892	72.1	21	53.8	7	63.6	11	35.5	931	70.6
No	345	27.9	18	46.2	4	36.4	20	64.5	387	29.4
Total	1237	100	39	100	11	100	31	100	1318	100
To keep my options open										
Yes	740	59.8	22	56.4	6	54.5	11	35.5	779	59.1
No	497	40.2	17	43.6	5	45.5	20	64.5	539	40.9
Total	1237	100	39	100	11	100	31	100	1318	100
To gain greater security in employment										
Yes	732	59.2	18	46.2	5	45.5	11	35.5	766	58.1
No	505	40.8	21	53.8	6	54.5	20	64.5	552	41.9
Total	1237	100	39	100	11	100	31	100	1318	100
To get a higher status job										
Yes	631	51.0	24	61.5	5	45.5	11	35.5	671	50.9
No	606	49.0	15	38.5	6	54.5	20	64.5	647	49.1
Total	1237	100	39	100	11	100	31	100	1318	100
For the social life										
Yes	579	46.8	10	25.6	4	36.4	9	29.0	602	45.7
No	658	53.2	29	74.4	7	63.6	22	71.0	716	54.3
Total	1237	100	39	100	11	100	31	100	1318	100
Family expects me to go										
Yes	362	29.3	3	7.7	1	9.1	5	16.1	371	28.1
No	875	70.7	36	92.3	10	90.9	26	83.9	947	71.9
Total	1237	100	39	100	11	100	31	100	1318	100

5.1.4.4: Choosing a job

The EPPSE young people were asked to rate some attributes in order of importance when choosing a job (see Table 5.8).

Table 5.8: How important are the following in choosing a job?

Choosing a job	Post-16 destination routes									
	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Doing interesting work										
Not at all	11	0.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	3.5	14	0.8
Not very	44	3.0	5	4.1	2	9.5	10	11.8	61	3.6
Quite	527	35.4	46	38.0	7	33.3	42	49.4	622	36.3
Very	906	60.9	70	57.9	12	57.1	30	35.3	1018	59.4
Total	1488	100	121	100	21	100	85	100	1715	100
Using your skills										
Not at all	9	0.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.2	10	0.6
Not very	51	3.4	2	1.6	0	0.0	11	12.9	64	3.7
Quite	605	40.6	41	33.6	12	57.1	31	36.5	689	40.1
Very	825	55.4	79	64.8	9	42.9	42	49.4	955	55.6
Total	1490	100	122	100	21	100	85	100	1718	100
Job security										
Not at all	27	1.8	0	0.0	1	4.8	1	1.2	29	1.7
Not very	142	9.6	8	6.5	1	4.8	14	17.1	165	9.6
Quite	670	45.1	44	35.8	7	33.3	36	43.9	757	44.3
Very	645	43.5	71	57.7	12	57.1	31	37.8	759	44.4
Total	1484	100	123	100	21	100	82	100	1710	100
Getting good money										
Not at all	24	1.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.2	25	1.5
Not very	173	11.6	10	8.2	1	4.8	7	8.5	191	11.2
Quite	772	51.9	61	50.0	11	52.4	41	50.0	885	51.7
Very	519	34.9	51	41.8	9	42.9	33	40.2	612	35.7
Total	1488	100	122	100	21	100	82	100	1713	100
High status										
Not at all	107	7.3	8	6.8	4	19.0	8	9.5	127	7.5
Not very	605	41.2	39	33.3	10	47.6	32	38.1	686	40.6
Quite	556	37.9	38	32.5	4	19.0	26	31.0	624	36.9
Very	200	13.6	32	27.4	3	14.3	18	21.4	253	15.0
Total	1468	100	117	100	21	100	84	100	1690	100
Involves travelling										
Not at all	219	14.8	13	11.0	5	23.8	16	19.8	253	14.9
Not very	700	47.4	51	43.2	8	38.1	49	60.5	808	47.6
Quite	376	25.5	30	25.4	3	14.3	9	11.1	418	24.6
Very	181	12.3	24	20.3	5	23.8	7	8.6	217	12.8
Total	1476	100	118	100	21	100	81	100	1696	100

The EPPSE sample thought the most important attribute in choosing a job was how interesting the job was (59.4% very important) followed by opportunities to use their skills (55.6% very important). The least important consideration was whether it involved travelling with only thirteen per cent reporting this to be very important followed by the status of the job (15.0%). Surprisingly, getting good money was only 'very important' for 35.7 per cent of the sample and only forty-four per cent thought job security was very important.

'Using your skills' was the attribute that had the highest single 'importance' rating across all of the option (see Appendix 2 for full list) with sixty-five per cent of the Q2 young people (those in work 6 months after leaving school) nominating this as being very important. As many of these young people are following a more vocational route it is likely that they are more keenly aware of their 'skills set' as this is often specifically monitored in job which involve NVQ or Apprenticeship assessments.

5.1.4.5: Barriers to employment

The questionnaire probed whether or not the EPPSE young people considered discrimination as a barrier to employment, probing the main areas associated with workplace discrimination (see Table 5.9).

Over 90 per cent of respondents did not think skin colour, ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation would affect their chances of getting a job. They perceived gender to be the most likely aspect of discrimination to affect them in the workplace with almost 20 per cent thinking it would affect them 'maybe/a lot'. This view was held overwhelmingly (70%) by females. There were no marked differences between these views for young people on different post-16 routes.

Table 5.9: Do you think any of the following will affect your chances of getting a job?

Impact on job chances	Post-16 destination routes									
	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Gender										
Not at all	1197	80.9	99	81.1	21	91.3	75	90.4	1392	81.5
Maybe	262	17.7	20	16.4	2	8.7	8	9.6	292	17.1
A lot	21	1.4	3	2.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	24	1.4
Total	1480	100	122	100	23	100	83	100	1708	100
Skin colour										
Not at all	1320	89.6	115	95.0	21	91.3	77	91.7	1533	90.1
Maybe	139	9.4	4	3.3	2	8.7	7	8.3	152	8.9
A lot	15	1.0	2	1.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	17	1.0
Total	1474	100	121	100	23	100	84	100	1702	100
Ethnicity										
Not at all	1324	90.1	114	95.0	19	86.4	77	92.8	1534	90.5
Maybe	134	9.1	3	2.5	3	13.6	6	7.2	146	8.6
A lot	12	0.8	3	2.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	15	0.9
Total	1470	100	120	100	22	100	83	100	1695	100
Religion										
Not at all	1356	92.7	114	94.2	21	91.3	77	92.8	1568	92.8
Maybe	96	6.6	6	5.0	2	8.7	6	7.2	110	6.5
A lot	10	0.7	1	0.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	0.7
Total	1462	100	121	100	23	100	83	100	1689	100
Sexual orientation										
Not at all	1263	95.4	111	94.9	21	95.5	77	93.9	1472	95.3
Maybe	49	3.7	5	4.3	0	0.0	4	4.9	58	3.8
A lot	12	0.9	1	0.9	1	4.5	1	1.2	15	1.0
Total	1324	100	117	100	22	100	82	100	1545	100

5.1.5: Level of happiness

The EPPSE participants were asked about their level of happiness at age 16+ (see Table 5.10).

Table 5.10: Level of happiness post-16 by destination route

Level of happiness	Post-16 destination routes									
	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Generally										
Very happy	503	33.6	44	35.8	6	26.1	15	17.4	568	32.9
Happy	909	60.8	70	56.9	14	60.9	53	61.6	1046	60.6
Not very happy	73	4.9	7	5.7	3	13.0	16	18.6	99	5.7
Very unhappy	10	0.7	2	1.6	0	0.0	2	2.3	14	0.8
Total	1495	100	123	100	23	100	86	100	1727	100
At home										
Very happy	572	38.3	53	43.1	7	30.4	20	23.3	652	37.8
Happy	812	54.4	62	50.4	14	60.9	48	55.8	936	54.3
Not very happy	92	6.2	7	5.7	2	8.7	15	17.4	116	6.7
Very unhappy	16	1.1	1	0.8	0	0.0	3	3.5	20	1.2
Total	1492	100	123	100	23	100	86	100	1724	100
With others my age										
Very happy	728	48.7	65	53.7	8	34.8	27	31.8	828	48.0
Happy	702	46.9	54	44.6	12	52.2	47	55.3	815	47.2
Not very happy	56	3.7	0	0.0	2	8.7	9	10.6	67	3.9
Very unhappy	10	0.7	2	1.7	1	4.3	2	2.4	15	0.9
Total	1496	100	121	100	23	100	85	100	1725	100

The EPPSE sample in the 6 months post compulsory schooling were, in general, overwhelmingly happy/very happy (94%). Just over ninety-five per cent were happy/very happy with other of their age and just over ninety-two per cent were happy/very happy at home.

General happiness – over a third of the full-time education (33%) and the working (36%) group reported being ‘very happy’. This compared to a quarter (26%) of the part-time study group and less than a fifth (17%) of the NEET group.

Happiness at home – the working group reported the highest levels of ‘very happy’ at home (43%) followed by the full-time education group (38%). Less than a third of the part-time study group (30%) were ‘very happy’ at home. Approximately a quarter (23%) of the NEETs reported being ‘very happy’ at home.

Happiness with other teenagers – Approximately half of the working (54%) and the full-time education group (49%) were ‘very happy’ with other teenagers compared to approximately a third of the part-time study group (35%) and the NEET group (32%).

5.2: Customised questions

This section of the report details answers to the customised questions on the four different Life After Year 11 questionnaires[12].

5.2.1: Questionnaire 1 – Student in full-time education

Six months after compulsory schooling, just under 1,500 young people had remained in the education system and were studying full-time at either a school or college.

5.2.1.1: Staying in full-time education

Students were asked to indicate which of the reasons in Table 5.11 were applicable to them in their decision to continue in full-time education. Students were able to tick multiple responses and the table shows percentage responses from a total of 1,497 who answered this question.

Table 5.11: Reasons for staying on in full-time education

Reasons for staying in full-time education	Yes (out of 1497)	%
Getting better qualifications will improve my job prospects	1290	86.2
I wanted qualifications for going on to further or higher education	1191	79.6
There were certain courses or subjects I wanted to do	1183	79.0
I enjoyed school life	872	58.2
The idea of leaving school at 16 never crossed my mind	775	51.8
Under 50%		
I felt too young to leave education	744	49.7
I hadn't decided on my future education or career	628	42.0
I liked teachers in my school/college	599	40.0
It was what my family expected me to do	579	38.7
Under 30%		
I am too young to enter the job or training I'd chosen	377	25.2
I find school/college work easy	358	23.9
Because my friends were staying on	339	22.6
Under 20%		
There were no jobs around that I wanted	285	19.0
There were no Modern Apprenticeships available that I wanted	144	9.6
I was able to claim Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)	113	7.5
I don't want a job	82	5.5
I was too young to claim benefits	72	4.8

[12] Tables containing the full findings are in Appendix 3

Over eighty-five per cent of students stayed on in education because they thought that getting better qualifications would improve their job prospects. Around eighty per cent of students reported wanting to study certain subjects (79%) or wanting to go onto higher/further education (80%). Around forty per cent were undecided about their future careers (42%) or were mindful of family expectations (39%), only around twenty per cent stayed on because of their friends (23%). Less than twenty per cent cited reasons to do with lack of employment opportunities (19%) or apprenticeships (10%). Only eight students cited reasons for staying on which weren't in the proforma list and these included learning difficulties, health and domestic arrangements etc. (see Appendix 3). Baird and colleagues' (2010) national study of 14-19 year olds' perceptions of the 2008 reforms indicated that Year 11s were well aware of the need to stay on in education and training. In this study, when asked about their broad aspirations for the future, fifty-nine per cent of Year 11s gave educational and career-related ones, with the majority seeing staying on in education and getting good grades as the main means of gaining a place in higher education or/and a well-paid, professional job. Half of all Year 11s in this study wanted a professional job.

5.2.1.2: Financial support for staying on in full-time education

The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) was introduced by the Labour Government after the 1997 elections as part of a raft of initiatives to 'close the achievement gap' by enabling students from poorer background to participate in further education. The scheme offered £10 per week for students in households with an income under £25,522 per annum rising to £30 per week for students in household with an income under £20,000. The funds were paid directly to students. Two reviews of the scheme (DfES 2005: IFS 2007) suggested that, following the introduction of the scheme, staying on rates amongst students eligible for the grant increased by 5.9 percentage points. The biggest increase was amongst boys from disadvantaged backgrounds. The scheme was not without its critics and was referred to by Chris Grayling, a Conservative party spokesperson, as 'bribing young people to sign up for courses they may not complete'. (BBC News, 2005).

Over time the EMA evolved into the Learners Support Fund and by 2010 it had become the 16-19 Bursary. By 2010, £180 million was invested in the bursary which, unlike the EMA was given to educational establishments such as schools, colleges and six form colleges to administer, rather than being paid directly to students.

As the EPPSE sample ran over 4 academic cohorts students were able to apply for different grants at different times (see Appendix 1for the cohort grid). The survey contained questions that related to these incentive schemes and as policy shifted the questions in the 'Life After Year 11' questionnaire adjusted accordingly. In order to explore these incentives schemes cohorts are reported separately below.

Cohort 1 - These young people completed their compulsory schooling at the end of the academic year 2008/09 and were the first cohort to be tracked beyond Year 11 to their post-16 destinations. Those remaining in education completed A-levels or equivalent qualifications during 2010/11. Of the 132 students in this cohort who stayed on in full-time education, 59 (45%) reported receiving an EMA.

Cohort 2 - These young people completed their compulsory schooling at the end of the academic year 2009/10. At the time they finished their GCSEs (or equivalents) the EMA had been changed to the Learners Support Fund. Of the 599 students who returned their Life After Year 11 questionnaire, 201 (40%) were receiving the EMA allowance and a further 79 has applied for funding from the Learners Support fund.

Cohort 3 - These young people completed their compulsory schooling at the end of the academic year 2010/11 and 22 (2.9%) were still claiming EMA from a total of 746.

Cohort 4 – These young people completed their compulsory schooling at the end of the academic year 2011/12 and from a total of 55 students, only 2 (3.6%) reported receiving EMA.

Both Cohort 3 and 4 were able to apply for the 16-19 Bursary Fund and a total of 117 (14%) out of 833 students reported receiving support through this fund.

All students in Cohorts 2, 3 and 4 were asked if scrapping the EMA scheme had made a difference to their plans for staying on in education. This was a massive reduction on the proportions receiving help compared with Cohorts 1 & 2 in the EPPSE sample.

Table 5.12: Has the scrapping of the EMA made a difference to your plans to stay on in education?

Has the scrapping of the EMA altered your plans and plans to stay in education?	N Cohorts 2, 3 and 4	%
Much less likely to stay on	35	2.7
Less likely to stay on	96	7.4
No difference to my plans	1172	89.9
Total	1303	100.0

Table 5.12 shows that for the vast majority of students (90%) their plans to stay on in education were unaffected by changes to the EMA grant.

5.2.1.3: Employment whilst studying full-time

The questionnaire probed to what extent some of these full-time students were also undertaking part time work (see Table 5.13).

Table 5.13: Employment whilst studying full-time

Do you have a part-time job	N	%
Yes	528	35.6
No	956	64.4
Total	1484	100

Just over a third of sample (36%) was undertaking some paid employment whilst studying full-time. This contrasts with a much higher rate at the beginning of the 2000s when the majority of young people were undertaking some form of part-time employment in a much more buoyant youth labour market (Hodgson and Spours, 2001).

Table 5.14: Hours worked whilst studying full-time

Hours worked whilst studying full-time	N	%
Less than 8 hours	285	55.2
More than 8 but less than 16 hours	188	36.4
More than 16 but less than 24 hours	39	7.6
More than 24 hours	4	0.8
Total	516	100

Of the 528 students who were undertaking some paid work, 516 provided information on the number hours they were working during a typical week as shown in Table 5.14. Just over half (55%) were working the equivalent of one day a week which is likely to equate to a ‘Saturday’ job. Just over a third (36%) were working between one or two days per week but this may well be split over several days if done as shift work.

Table 5.15: Does work affect studying

Having a part-time job affects my studying	N	%
A lot	14	2.7
Somewhat	41	7.9
A bit	203	38.9
Not at all	264	50.6
Total	522	100

Just over half (51%) of those with jobs weren’t concerned that working had any impact on their studies (see Table 5.15). However, almost 40 per cent thought working had a slight impact on their studies. It is interesting to note that of the 14 students who thought working had a large affect on their studies only 1 worked over 24 hours in an average week. Three had the equivalent of a Saturday job (8 hours) , Eight were working between 1-2 days per week (8+-16 hours) and 1 was working between 16 and 24 hours per week. One student reported that working affected them ‘a lot’ but did not indicate how many hours a week they were working.

5.2.2: Questionnaire 2 – Working/work related training

In total 124 young people indicated they were on this post-16 route.

5.2.2.1: Why you left full-time education

Participants who were working were asked about why they had left full-time education (see Table 5.16).

Table 5.16: Main reasons for leaving full-time education

Main reasons for leaving full-time education?	Yes out of 120	%
Wanted to start earning money	87	72.5
Wanted to get a job/start working	84	70.0
The job is teaching me useful skills	72	60.0
Wanted to do an Apprenticeship/learn a trade	69	57.5
This is the kind of work I want to do in the future	56	46.7
This should help me to move on to something better	56	46.7
Did not like/enjoy school/found school boring	52	43.3
I felt I was old enough to enter the job or training Id chosen	47	39.2
I was old enough to leave school	45	37.5
I always planned to leave school at age 16	35	29.2
I had this job/placement lined up before I left school	30	25.0
Found school difficult	27	22.5
I hadn't decided on my future education or career	27	22.5
Getting better qualifications will not improve my job prospects	16	13.3
I didn't get the grades I needed	16	13.3
There were no courses offered that I wanted to study	13	10.8
I am currently having a break from study	10	8.3
I could not afford to stay in full-time education	10	8.3
College/School drop out	9	7.5
I have family problems	5	4.2
I didn't get on the course I wanted to study	5	4.2
Because my friends have left full-time education	3	2.5
Because my family didn't expect me to continue in education	3	2.5
I have poor health or a disability	3	2.5
Parental influence	2	1.7

N.B. Responses exceed the total number of respondents due to multiple choice options.

Table 5.16 indicates the extent to which any of the reasons above were applicable to this group's decision to leave full-time education. Respondents were able to tick multiple responses and Table 5.16 shows percentage responses from those answering this question. Around seventy per cent wanted to earn money (72.5%) and around a half were interested in learning a trade (57.5%) or in doing the work they wanted to do in the future (46.7%) or that might lead to better employment (46.7%). Less than ten per cent left because they could not afford to say in full-time education (8.3%) or because they couldn't get onto a course they wanted to study (4.2%).

5.2.2.2: What are you most likely to be doing in a year's time?

All of respondents to Questionnaire 2 were in employment. They were asked what they were most likely to be doing in a years' time to explore the stability of their situation beyond the first 6 months after school (see Table 5.17).

Table 5.17: What are you most likely to be doing in a years time?

Most likely to be doing in a year's time?	Yes out of 123	%
Full-time job	40	34.5
Apprenticeship or similar training	30	25.9
Doing what I am doing now	24	20.7
Doing a job and studying	16	13.8
Studying full-time	6	5.2
Total	116	100

The majority of young people who were working 6 months after they left school thought they would still be on an employment route in a year's time (35% in full-time employment, 26% on an apprenticeship, 21% in current employment). Only 5 per cent of these young people thought they would return to full-time study.

5.2.3: Questionnaire 3 – Part-time study (working or not)

It should be noted that only 24 EPPSE participants returned a Questionnaire 3 so the number of respondents to the whole questionnaire is small and to some individual questions the answers should be treated with caution as they represent very small numbers.

5.2.3.1: Why study part-time?

Many of these young people were studying part-time because it provided an opportunity to improve their job prospects (69.6%) and because there were certain courses they wanted to do (56.5%). (see Table 5.18). Around about half reported there were no jobs available that they wanted to do or they wanted to extend their qualifications to go on to further/higher education (52.2%). Just over 20 per cent of young people said they didn't get the GCSE grades they needed to stay on in full-time education (21.7%).

Table 5.18: Why study part-time?

Why are you studying part-time?	Yes out of 23	%
I thought that by getting better qualifications I'd improve my job prospects	16	69.6
There were certain courses or subjects I wanted to do	13	56.5
There were no jobs around that I wanted	12	52.2
I wanted qualifications for going on to further or higher education	12	52.2
I hadn't decided on my future education or career	8	34.8
I enjoyed school life	5	21.7
I was able to claim Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)	5	21.7
I felt too young to leave education	5	21.7
I liked teachers in my school/college	5	21.7
I didn't get the grades I needed to stay on in full-time	5	21.7
Because my friends were studying part-time	5	21.7
It was what my family expected me to do	5	21.7
I found full-time study too difficult	5	21.7
The idea of leaving school at 16 never crossed my mind	3	13.0
I have poor health or a disability	3	13.0
There were no Modern Apprenticeships available that I wanted	3	13.0
I am too young to enter the job or training I'd chosen	2	8.7
I could not afford to stay in full-time education	2	8.7
I didn't get on the full-time course I wanted to study	2	8.7
I find school/college work easy	1	4.3
I have family problems	1	4.3
Independence	1	4.3
Training to be a professional tennis player	1	4.3

N.B. Responses exceed the total number of respondents due to multiple choice options.

5.2.3.2: Main reason for studying part-time

Each of the young people was asked separately to identify the main reason they were studying part-time rather than full-time and their reasons are as shown in Table 5.19.

Table 5.19: Main reason for studying part-time

Main reason for studying part-time?	Yes out of 20	%
Only course available/wanted was part-time	8	34.8
Want/Need to work/volunteer	5	21.7
Found full-time study difficult due to physical/mental health/learning problems	5	21.7
More time to socialise	2	8.7
Lack of qualification/experience	2	8.7

N.B. Total are inconsistent because some respondents gave two rather than one main reason and 3 respondents did not reply to this question.

Although the numbers are small and therefore must be treated with caution, the replies indicated that the majority of students studying part time did so because the course they want to do was only available part-time. Equal numbers, at around a twenty per cent respectively said they wanted/need to work or found full-time study difficult due to their personal circumstances.

5.2.3.3: Working whilst studying

Of the 23 young people who were studying part-time only 6 were working and these were all undertaking part-time work over a range of hours. Three were working as shop assistants (doing 3, 6 and 12 hours per average week); one as a care assistant (doing 12 hours per week); one was child minding (3 hours per week) and was working alongside of a plumber (12 hours per week). These six were asked if their part-time work affected their studying as shown in Table 5.20.

Table 5.20: Does your part-time work affect you studies?

Job	No of hours worked	Did work affect studying
Child minder	3	Not at all
Argos assistant	6	Not at all
Customer assistant	12	A bit
Plumbers assistant	12	Not at all
Jessops assistant	20	A bit
Care assistant	27	Somewhat

5.2.4: Questionnaire 4 – Not in employment, education or training (NEET)

There were eight-six EPPSE members who reported not being in education, employment or training (NEET) 6 months after they left school at age 16. For a more detailed account of the life discourse of 20 of these young people who agreed to be interviewed face-to-face by an EPPSE researchers see Section 6 of this report and Siraj et al., 2014.

5.2.4.1: Reasons for being NEET

Examining the questionnaire responses of the NEET sample of 86 young people, Table 5.21 below indicates their main reasons for being NEET.

Table 5.21: Main reasons for being NEET

What is the main reason for being NEET?	Yes out of 86	%
Can't find work	38	44.2
College drop-out	24	27.9
Job/course pending	22	25.6
Unable to work/study due to physical/mental health problems	10	11.6
Temporarily unemployed	10	11.6
Pregnant/Parent	10	11.6
Lack of qualifications/experience	8	9.3
Family Problems	7	8.1
Young Offender	2	2.3
Taking a break/gap year	2	2.3
Don't know what they want to do	5	0.2

The majority of these young people cited the lack of work (44.2%) as the main reason they were NEET. Just over a quarter of the sample (27.9%) had gone into education following school but had 'dropped out' and about a quarter (25.6%) had a job pending. Around about ten per cent were unable to work due to health problems, were parents or considered themselves as temporarily unemployed (11.6%) or lacked the qualifications to move from NEET status (9.3%).

In a separate question just under a quarter of young people (n20 = 24%) said their GCSE results had made them change the plans they had made whilst in Year 11. This reflects findings from other studies on NEETs which suggest that while this group of young people is heterogeneous, low educational attainment is a major factor in a young person becoming and remaining NEET (Spielhofer et al., 2009).

5.2.4.2: What are you most likely to be doing in a year's time?

The Questionnaire 4 group were asked what they were most likely to be doing in a years' time to explore the stability of their NEET status (see Table 5.22).

Table 5.22: What are you most likely to be doing in a year's time?

What are you most likely to be doing in a year's time?	Yes out of 85	%
Full-time job	29	34.1
Studying full-time	17	20.0
Apprenticeship or similar training	14	16.5
Doing a job and studying	11	12.9
Doing what I am doing now	6	7.1
Unemployed	4	4.7
Looking after the home or someone	2	2.4
Don't know	2	2.4

Just over a third of the NEETs were hoping to be in full-time employment a year after leaving school (34.1%) with around a fifth wanting to either studying full-time (20%) or in an apprenticeship or similar (16.5%). Less than ten percent thought they'd still be NEET (7.1%) or unemployed (4.7%).

5.2.4.3: Work opportunities

Of the 86 NEETS, a group of 30 (36.6%) had undertaken some work since leaving school. They were asked why they had left work and Table 5.23 indicates why they ceased being employed.

Table 5.23: Reasons for NEET young people leaving work

Why did you leave work?	Yes out of 30	%
Temporary work that came to an end	14	46.7
Not enough money	8	26.7
Didn't like the people	6	20.0
Hated it	5	16.7
Hours too long	5	16.7
Got the sack	5	16.7
Preferred to be at home	5	16.7
Boring	4	13.3
Too much travelling	2	6.7
Found it too difficult	2	6.7
Poor health	1	3.3
Fell Pregnant	1	3.3

The majority of these young people left work because they were on temporary contracts that came to an end (46.7%). Over 20 per cent left because their work didn't provide them with enough money (26.7%) or they didn't like their work colleagues (20%). Just over 10 per cent found working boring (13.3%).

5.2.4.4: How NEETs view themselves

In order to provide a more rounded picture of the NEET group they were asked to respond to a number of statements (see Table 5.24). These statements were not asked of the non-NEET group, due to the limits of the survey, so comparisons cannot be made across groups but the responses to these statements nevertheless helps to inform the research about how NEET students view themselves.

Three quarters of young people in the NEET group reported looking for work but being unable to find a job with just under two thirds (60%) saying their families expected them to find work. Youth labour market conditions have been highlighted in other studies of this group of young people as being instrumental in the proportion of young people becoming or remaining NEET (Spielhofer et al., 2009). Over half (51.9%) said they didn't have enough qualifications to do the job or course of study with wanted to do.

Table 5.24: Statements that are like me (NEETS)

Statements like me	Yes	% Yes	No	Total
I've been looking for a job but I haven't found one	63	75.0	21	84
My family expected me to get a job	50	60.2	33	83
I found school boring	48	58.5	34	82
I don't have enough qualifications to do the job/study I want	42	51.9	39	81
I found school difficult	42	50.0	42	84
I always wanted to leave school at 16	38	46.3	44	82
I don't like to be bossed about	36	44.4	45	81
I didn't like most teachers in school	37	44.0	47	84
Most of my friends have left education	34	42.0	47	81
I wanted a break from study after Year 11	34	41.0	49	83
I've been looking for a course but haven't found one	30	37.0	51	81
I feel low and worried	30	37.0	51	81
There are no courses I want to study	29	35.4	53	82
I haven't decided what job or training I want to do	27	32.9	55	82
I am too young to do a job I want to do	24	29.6	57	81
I don't think getting qualifications will improve the job I get	23	27.7	60	83
Travelling to work/college is too difficult	20	24.7	61	81
I have family problems	18	22.0	64	82
I have poor health or a disability	11	13.8	69	80
I'd have less money in work or on a course	11	13.6	70	81
I have a child	11	13.6	70	81
My family expected me to leave education	8	9.9	73	81
I have a drug/drink problem that stops me working/studying	3	3.7	78	81
I am pregnant	2	2.6	76	78

N.B. Total differ as not all young people answered every statement.

The group had strong views about school with over half finding school boring (58.5%), half finding it difficult and just under half expressing a dislike of teachers (44%). This issue has been echoed in a number of studies of young people identified as NEET (e.g. Hayward and Williams, 2011; Finlay et al., 2010; Spielhofer et al., 2009; Steer, 2000). Just under a half of this group (46%) said they always wanted to leave school at 16 and just slightly less (42%) were in a friendship group of young people who had also left full-time education.

Over a third of these young people (37%) reported feeling low and worried and over a fifth (22%) had family problems. Just over ten percent (13.8) had poor health or a disability.

As reported above, over half the group reported not having enough qualifications to do the job or course they want to do. All students were asked specifically if their GCSE results had changed the plans they had before they got their results an almost a quarter (24.1 per cent, n=83) said they had altered their plans following their GCSE results.

Section 6: Focus on students not in education, employment or training (NEET)

Background characteristics

- NEETs often had multiple risk factors present from their early years or emerging during compulsory schooling.

Educational risk factors

- Most significant was low educational attainment at GCSE, especially in English and maths.

Personal risk factors

- Having physical and mental health problems that required quicker access to professional support services

Structural risk factors

- Difficult labour market conditions, lack of training and apprenticeships, being in the benefits trap, transport difficulties and course fees for over 18s.

Characteristics of those still NEET at time of interview

- Poor GCSE grades, in Local Authority care, physical health and mental health problems and a lack of any plans or aspirations. Difficulties in transitioning from school to FE, often 'dropping-out' of courses.

Information and advice on options and pathways post-16

- Needed much better information/advice on post-16 options including education/vocational qualifications, apprenticeships and training.

The variable quality of post-16 courses

- Most courses did little to improve employability resulting in a cycle of one short, low level course after another.

Lack of long term employment and apprenticeship or training opportunities

- Difficulties were compounded by cuts to Connexions services, Jobcentre budgets and the removal of the EMA.

Personal motivation and determination in resolving NEET status

- Employment/training opportunities often found through personal perseverance

rather than the Job Centre or agencies.

Social capital facilitating entry to EET

- Family, friends and other networks were important in helping achieve EET status.

6.1: Introduction

NEET status has been reported to be a major predictor of later unemployment, low income, teenage motherhood, depression and poor physical health (DCSF 2007). The DCSF (2007) report identified certain characteristics of these young people. Those in the NEET category nationally tended to have the following background characteristics:

- a disability and/or learning difficulties (young people with learning difficulties and disabilities are twice as likely to be NEET);
- poor health status;
- more likely to be male (16 year old boys are twice as likely to be NEET as 16 year old girls);
- receiving Free School Meals (FSM);
- low academic outcomes (39% of those with no GCSEs are NEET at 16, compared to 2% of 16 year olds who attained 5 or more A* - C GCSEs);
- low behavioural outcomes.

Having identified these characteristic the DCSF report goes on to explain that the NEET group were not homogenous but could be identified within 4 different classification groups as follows:

- Young people who are doing some activity which is not formally counted as education, employment or training. It will include those in custody and those taking part in personal development opportunities not leading to qualifications. This will also include gap year students and those undertaking voluntary work
- Young people who have an identifiable barrier to participation, as they have a child or are experiencing serious illness or disability.
- Young people for whom we do not know their current activity.
- Others for whom activity is known, but do not fall into any types mentioned above.

In the light of this the EPPSE research extended their focus of study to the NEET group. Initial quantitative analyses were conducted to identify some of the characteristics associated with NEET status for the eighty-six young people who returned a Q4 Life After Year 11 questionnaire. The characteristics displayed in Table 6.1 were found to be associated with the 86 EPPSE NEET young people when tested individually[13].

Table 6.1: Characteristics significantly related to NEET status

Background characteristics	NEETS more likely to
Individual	
Behavioural problems (early years*)	have behavioural problems
SEN status in Year 11	have an SEN
Family	
FSM status in Year 11	be FSM
Mother's age	have younger mums
Parental qualifications	have lower qualified parents
Marital status in the early years	be from single parent families
Family structure in Year 11	be with single/step parents/other arrangement
Mother's employment in the early years	have not working mothers
Father's employment in the early years	have not working fathers
Combined parent employment (early yrs)	have non working mothers & fathers
Family salary	be from lower income families
Family SES in the early years	be from lower SES families
Home Learning Environment (HLE)	
Early years HLE*	have low HLE
KS1 computer use	have low & high HLE
KS1 Parent-child outings	have low HLE
KS1 Creative play	have high HLE
KS2 Educational computing	have low HLE
KS3 academic enrichment	have low HLE
KS3 Parental interest*	have low HLE

* Significant at the p<0.08 level

During the data collection for the Life After Year 11 there was an opportunity to supplement the questionnaire with richer, qualitative information on the lives of this group of young people adopting a more focussed 'case study' approach. The EPPSE study has a long tradition of offering 'mixed-methods' (Sammons et al., 2005, Siraj-Blatchford et al., 2006) where the quantitative data can be limited in its explanatory power as to what shapes certain outcomes.

[13] Other variables tested that were not related to NEET status: Gender, Birth weight, Ethnicity, Health problems in the early years, Developmental problems in the early years, Father's age, KS1 Parent-child interaction, KS2 Parent-child interactive learning process, KS2 Individual child activities, KS2 Computer games, KS3 Computer use, KS3 Learning resources, KS3 Academic supervision.

This section of the report details this in-depth focus. This research on young people who are NEET became a sub-study of the main EPPSE programme that examined some of the factors that might have contributed to NEET status as well as the barriers and facilitators to these young people getting into education, employment or training (EET). This section of the report summarises the findings in a longer report, see Siraj et al., 2014. As the case studies offer a different methodology and data collection these are described in more detail below to differentiate this section from the quantitative analyses reported in other sections of this report.

6.2: Methodology and sample

Qualitative, semi-structured telephone interviews were carried out with a stratified, random sample of 20 of the 86 young people who indicated in their EPPSE 'Life After Year 11' questionnaire they were NEET six months after finishing compulsory schooling. In total these 20 NEETs aged between 18 and 20 were interviewed about their experiences of taking their GCSEs, what they had been doing since leaving school and their hopes and plans for the future.

Prior to the interviews a range of background data were collated on each young person including information from the EPPSE quantitative data files, the 'Life After Year 11' questionnaire, GCSE results, relevant information concerning health, family or behaviour issues and anticipated plans post-16. This information was collated to produce a 'profile' for each participant and this helped to inform the development, structure and customisation of the interview schedule.

The NEET status of 13 of the 20 young people had changed over the period of time between their 'Life After Year 11' questionnaire and the interview taking place; this change in status provided an excellent opportunity to explore some of the issues related to entering and transition from NEET to education, employment or training (EET).

The interviewed sample consists of 12 females and 8 males which closely mirrors the gender split of the EPPSE NEET group but constituted an over-representation of females in comparison to the gender profile of the whole EPPSE cohort. The majority of the NEETs interviewed (85%) came from families with a White UK background, a similar percentage to that found in the wider EPPSE NEET population of 86 (79%) but slightly higher than in the whole EPPSE cohort (72.4%).

Interviews were transcribed and anonymised and imported to NVIVO for coding and analysis. Analysis combined a bottom up and top down approach, bottom up to code and analyse the perceptions of young people as to why they had been NEET, their views of school and undertaking their GCSEs and their plans for the future, and top down using the established literature on NEETs: Spielhofer et al., (2009); Gartshore et al., (2009) and York Consulting (2005), and the theory related to risk and protective factors found in the extant research literature (Siraj & Mayo, 2014).

6.3: Background characteristics of NEETs

The study highlights a number of background characteristics associated with a risk of becoming NEET. Previous research has identified social class as a major factor in NEET status with rates of NEETs increasing as social class declines (Thompson, 2009).

Sixty-five per cent of the interviewed NEETs came from families that during their pre-school years had a socio-economic status (SES) in the lower half of the SES scale (4-7[14]). Only five per cent of interviewed NEETs were from families with professional or non-manual SES groups compared with thirty-three per cent of the whole EPPSE sample.

Table 6.2 provides detailed information on the background characteristics of the NEET young people comparing those interviewed to those returning a Life After Year 11 and the full EPPSE sample.

There was a general trend of low qualifications amongst the parents of NEET young people, only ten per cent of the mothers and fathers of these young people had educational qualifications at 18 Academic or higher compared with approximately a quarter of the EPPSE sample. A higher percentage of interviewed NEETs were in the lowest early years Home Learning Environment (HLE) group (40%) than was the case amongst the full EPPSE sample (30.7%).

Multiple risk factors were often at play in the lives of NEET young people many of which were present from their early years or emerged during the course of compulsory schooling. In many cases these had a hugely detrimental impact upon educational achievement and the pathways and opportunities available to these young people post-16.

[14] Groups 4-7 = Skilled manual, Semi-skilled, Unskilled and Unemployed not working.

Table 6.2: Background characteristics of the young people not in education, employment or training (NEET)

	Interviewed NEETs		NEETs returning a Life After Year 11 questionnaire		Whole EPPSE sample	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Gender						
Male	8	40.0	39	45.3	1646	51.9
Female	12	60.0	47	54.7	1526	48.1
Ethnicity						
White UK	17	85.0	68	79.1	2295	72.4
White European	0	0	5	5.8	122	3.9
Black African	0	0	1	1.2	66	2.1
Black Caribbean	0	0	0	0	116	3.7
Black other	0	0	2	2.3	22	0.7
Pakistani	1	5.0	4	4.7	177	5.6
Indian	0	0	0	0	67	2.1
Bangladeshi	0	0	0	0	40	1.3
Mixed race	2	10.0	1	1.2	192	6.1
Other ethnic minority	0	0	5	5.8	71	2.2
Family socio-economic status (SES) at pre-school – age 3						
1. Professional non-manual	0	0	2	2.3	281	8.9
2. Other professional non-manual	1	5.0	9	10.5	776	24.5
3. Skilled non-manual	6	30.0	24	27.9	974	30.7
4. Skilled-manual	7	35.0	21	24.4	452	14.2
5. Semi-skilled	4	20.0	21	24.4	406	12.8
6. Unskilled	0	0	1	1.2	79	2.5
7. Unemployed not working	1	5.0	5	5.8	88	2.8
Missing	1	5.0	3	3.5	116	3.7
Family socio-economic status (SES) at KS3 – age 14						
1. Professional non-manual	1	5.0	1	1.2	200	6.3
2. Other professional non-manual	5	25.0	12.0	14.0	638	20.1
3. Skilled non-manual	2	10.0	10.0	11.6	258	8.1
4. Skilled-manual	4	20.0	7	8.1	213	6.7
5. Semi-skilled	1	5.0	4	4.7	117	3.7
6. Unskilled	0	0	0	0	28	0.9
7. Unemployed not working	3	15.0	16.0	18.6	211	6.7
Missing	4	20.0	36.0	41.9	1507	47.5
Marital status (at child age 3 yrs)						
Never married, single parent	1	5.0	18	20.9	417	13.1
Never married, living with partner	4	20.0	14	16.3	444	14.0
Married, living with spouse	13	65.0	43	50.0	1849	58.3
Separated/divorced	0	0	7	8.1	327	10.3
Widow/widower	1	5.0	1	1.2	8	0.3
Other	0	0	0	0	21.0	0.7
Missing	1	5.0	3	3.5	106.0	3.3

	Interviewed NEETs		NEETs returning a Life After Year 11 questionnaire		Whole EPPSE sample	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Mothers' highest qualification						
Vocational	1	5.0	10	11.6	442	13.9
16 Academic	9	45.0	34	39.5	1118	35.2
18 Academic	2	10.0	4	4.7	257	8.1
Degree or equiv	0	0	2	2.3	381	12.0
Higher Degree	0	0	1	1.2	131	4.1
None	7	35.0	29	33.7	46	1.5
Missing	1	5.0	6	7.0	647	20.4
Father's highest qualification						
Vocational	3	15.0	8	9.3	346	10.9
16 Academic	4	20.0	18	20.9	676	21.3
18 Academic	0	0	1	1.2	223	7.0
Degree or equiv	1	5.0	3	3.5	378	11.9
Higher Degree	1	5.0	2	2.3	165	5.2
Other professional/misc	0	0	1	1.2	32	1.0
None	7	35.0	24	27.9	484	15.3
Father absent	3	15.0	25	29.1	757	23.9
Missing	1	5.0	4	4.7	111	3.5
Early years home learning environment (HLE) group						
Low HLE	8	40.0	29	33.7	973	30.7
Medium HLE	4	20.0	23	26.7	727	22.9
High HLE	6	30.0	29	33.7	1306	41.8
Missing	2	10.0	5	5.8	166	5.2

6.4: Educational risk factors

There were a number of educational risk factors contributing to young people's NEET status but the most significant was that of low educational attainment at GCSE. Only three of the 20 interviewees (15%) achieved 5 or more GCSEs grades A*-C. This was even lower (2 respondents = 10%) for those gaining 5 GCSEs A*-C including the key subjects of English and maths (see Table 6.3). Poor attainment significantly restricted the options available to these young people post-16 and was a major barrier to trying to get into EET.

Table 6.3: Academic achievement of NEETs

	Interviewed NEETs		NEETs returning a Life After Year 11 questionnaire		Whole EPPSE sample	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Achieved 5 or more GCSEs A*-C						
Yes	3	15.0	11	12.8	1570	49.5
No	17	85.0	69	80.2	1193	37.6
Missing	0	0	6	7	409	12.9
Achieved 5 or more GCSEs A*-C including GCSE and equivalents in English and Maths						
Yes	2	10.0	13	15.1	1555	49.0
No	18	90.0	67	77.9	1208	38.1
Missing	0	0	6	7	409	12.9

Reasons cited by young people for low attainment included their own lack of motivation, poor health (physical and mental) and having Special Educational Needs (SEN).

Students' dispositions at age 16 were explored through quantitative analyses for the whole EPPSE sample (Sammons at al., 2014d). This report investigated students attitudes to school and 5 specific dispositions; General Academic self-concepts, Mental well-being, School enjoyment, Disaffected behaviour and Health.

Having undertaken this analysis the results were compared for the NEET and not NEET groups. A quantitative analyses that compared the NEET group with all those on other post-16 routes showed that the NEETs experience poorer health, enjoyment, behaviour and mental well-being and unsurprisingly had lower academic self concepts (these are statistically significant differences; N.B. given the NEET group is small, statistical significance is more difficult to achieve).

The whole NEETS sample showed marked differences from the full sample and some slight variation when compared to the smaller sample of NEETS who were interviewed:

- General academic self-concept - lower than only the academic routes: interviewed NEETS slightly higher than not interviewed
- Mental well-being - lower than higher academic only: interviewed NEETS and not interviewed very similar
- School enjoyment - lower than only the academic routes: interviewed NEETS and not interviewed very similar
- Disaffected behaviour - higher than only the academic routes: interviewed NEETS slightly higher than not interviewed)
- Perceived health status - lowest perceived good health: interviewed NEETS slightly poorer perceived health than not interviewed.

Table 6.4: Dispositions of NEET and Not-NEET young people in the EPPSE sample

Disposition	Status	N	Mean	Standard. Deviation
General Academic self-concept	Not NEET	1320	101.09	14.86
	NEET	51	92.43	14.89
Disaffected behaviour	Not NEET	1323	99.19	14.83
	NEET	51	107.75	16.79
School enjoyment	Not NEET	1324	100.97	14.70
	NEET	51	93.49	14.58
Mental well-being	Not NEET	1319	99.91	14.86
	NEET	50	94.92	16.70

NEETs also have significantly poorer perceptions about their health status.

Table 6.5: Reported perceptions of health status for full EPPSE sample

Perceived Health in Year 11	Very good		Fairly good		Not very good/ not good at all		Totals	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Q1: Higher academic	335	53.6	265	42.4	25	4.0	625	100
Q1: Lower academic	82	39.6	110	53.1	15	7.2	207	100
Q1: Vocational	158	42.5	174	46.8	40	10.8	372	100
Q2: Working	34	37.4	45	49.5	12	13.2	91	100
Q3: Studying & working	5	35.7	7	50.0	2	14.3	14	100
Q4: NEET	13	25.5	26	51.0	12	23.5	51	100
Total	627	46.1	627	46.1	106	7.8	1360	100

N.B. Whole cohort response was Very good=45.8%, n=756; Fairly good=46.7%, n=771; Not very good/not good at all=7.6%, n=125: total n=1652

The 2011 Wolf Report for the Department for Education (DfE) on vocational education states that English and Maths GCSEs (at grades A*-C) are fundamental to young people's employment and education prospects. Yet national figures showed that fewer than fifty per cent of NEET students have both at the end of Key Stage 4 (age 15/16) and at age 18. The lack of educational qualifications achieved by the EPPSE interviewed NEETs had in their view significantly restricted options available to them post-16 and in several cases were attributed as one of the main reasons for becoming NEET.

Many NEETs believed that their poor educational qualifications, and in particular not having a pass grade in English and maths, was a key reason for the difficulties they experienced in trying to get into further education, training or employment. Several spoke about how poor grades had significantly affected their employability:

> "No one wants to employ me because I don't have maths." (Annie)

> **"How do you feel about what has happened to you since you left school?** *Useless cos I ain't got no qualifications and no shot at work." (Shannon)*

As identified in other research (Furlong & Cartmel, 1997) many attributed their poor grades to their own immaturity during secondary schooling, not working hard enough and having a general lack of motivation. A number of NEETs stated they had not fully appreciated the importance of achieving good grades and the consequences of poor educational attainment on their future pathways and prospects until it was too late:

> "**How did you feel about what you got in your GCSEs?** *Oh I could have done better yeah, I didn't really bother…* **And how was the last year of school for you?** *It was a bit crap to be honest, I turned into a little bugger at school to be honest, I wasn't very good at school at the end.* **Can you think of any reasons why you felt like that?** *I don't know really, when I think back to it I don't really know why I was like that, I just didn't want to go to school, didn't want to do anything really like that"* (Archie)

There was a common theme of regret amongst these young people around not having worked harder at school and getting better grades and with hindsight they could see the impact of their poor qualifications on their pathways. Some felt very strongly that they had the ability to achieve better grades if only they had applied themselves at the time:

> *"basically at school I'd say for about Year 7 and 8 I was fine and Year 9 and 10 I was ok but Year 11 I never went to school at the end, I regret it now but at the time that's how I was, I didn't enjoy it at the end." (Archie)*

> ***"What did you think about the grade you got at GCSE?*** *I thought I could have done a bit better if I'd have stuck in a bit more…***And when you say that you think you could have done better, what makes you feel that way?** *I think if I'd have just stuck in a bit more, did a bit more revising I could have come out with better grades." (Becky)*
> **"What were your GCSE results like?** *They were terrible.* **And how did you feel about that?** *Not very happy to be honest, I mean without trying to sound big headed or anything, I know I'm capable of so much more and its, I regret it to be honest but oh well, can't go back now." (Harry)*

> **"Were you happy with your grades?** *No.* **Why not?** *Because if I'd applied myself more, I only started really caring like February, March of Year 11 and we took GCSEs in June….I think if I'd have applied myself more I would have got better." (Bane)*

This highlights the importance of early identification of these risk factors and the important role of schools in supporting the educational achievement of this group. This might take the form of targeted support for pupils with SEN, those struggling to get GCSE passes in English and maths or the use of more innovative teaching methods for those struggling to engage with education. These students may need more regular advice on their potential as life-long learners and what further opportunities exist to retake GCSEs.

6.5: Personal risk factors

A range of personal risk factors were associated with being NEET including a lack of direction or aspirations after finishing school, health problems, caring responsibilities, difficult family circumstances (being in Local Authority care) or a breakdown in relationships with parents. The influence of physical and particularly mental health problems on NEET status cannot be overstated; the need for quicker access to professional support services was evident in the case of several young people.

Two young people had long term physical health problems and three had long term mental health problems. These physical and mental health conditions started during the final years of compulsory education and resulted in them missing periods of schooling and struggling to keep up with their studies. They reported receiving little or no additional support from schools, teachers or referrals to other professional or third sector sources or help.

These young people struggled to manage their physical and mental health problems and felt these were the main reason they became NEET. Only one of these young people had managed to change their NEET status; Crixus's depression and Asperger's had seriously affected his schooling and led to disappointing 3Cs and 2D grades at GCSE. He attempted to enrol on Further Education (FE) courses but dropped out because of his mental health problems which deteriorated after he was put on medication which did not suit him. Crixus spent over a year being NEET before receiving professional psychiatric support. In his interview he reported that he had recently started studying full-time for a Level 2 BTEC which he was enjoying very much. The effects of mental health problems on both educational attainment and later NEET status was an experience shared by another young person, Shannon:

> *"I dropped out of school at 15 because of my panic attacks and depression and, but I still done my GCSEs and got results for them but since then I haven't done anything because of my panic attacks and depression." (Shannon).*

Marie had been a motivated high achiever at school and gained relatively good grades at GCSE despite becoming ill with a limiting, long term physical condition which affected her attendance. She received no additional support from school during this time and had been rather disappointed with her GCSE grades which were lower than predicted. Marie had aspirations to do 'A' levels and go on to university but became NEET due to her health problems:

> *"I wasn't happy because I didn't get what I knew I could have because for the first year of my GCSEs. I was off a lot and in the second year I had to catch up by myself and I just had to do it all by myself…t*hen I went back to do my A levels and I couldn't do them at all, I was extremely extremely ill so I had to stop then… it's still bad, I'm pretty much housebound for the majority of the time." (Marie)

Malik also struggled with ill health at school that left him unable to engage with education, training or employment. He had not received support outside of his family and was still waiting for some professional help:

> *"I've got a condition that stops me from doing anything…I have a condition which causes me to repeat movements over and over, it's a physical condition…I've had it for the last two years.* **Are you getting any help for it or support?** *Well we're still waiting for an appointment with a specialist" (Malik).*

This highlights the importance of having greater flexibility in post-16 educational options particularly for those with physical/mental health or SEN. For instance it would be hugely beneficial for some students to have the option to take just one or two 'A levels' at a time or being allowed to complete courses over a longer period of time or be provided with additional tuition or work to be undertaken at home. However, this has now become more difficult as funding for those at 18+ who are still studying in a school, college or sixth form college are funded less generously than their 16 and 17 year olds counterparts.

6.6: Structural risk factors

The interviewed NEETs were all keen to engage in some form of education, training or employment but in addition to educational and personal difficulties there were a range of external and structural barriers that contributed to their NEET status. This constrained the level of agency they were able to exert. The tension between structure and agency as described by Bourdieu (1986) was evident in the experiences of the NEET young people. Structural risk factors included the difficult labour market conditions, a lack of training and apprenticeship opportunities, being caught in the benefits trap where young people were better off on welfare support than they would be in EET.

Cathy who had been in Local Authority care said she was better off on benefits than if she was in education or an apprenticeship. She hadn't been able to find full-time employment that paid more than the minimum wage and although she had looked into doing apprenticeship she said that it wouldn't pay her enough to support her family:

> *"I tried to do an apprenticeship but with it being a joint tenancy with my boyfriend it would have affected our benefits, the money we would get through an apprenticeship it wouldn't be enough for what we need, my boyfriend's got two kids as well so we got to, me and me boyfriend are supposed to be looking for full-time jobs cos if one of us gets a part time job we're gonna be financially really badly off so it's worked out that I've got to work at least 40 hours a week minimum pay which is quite a lot so an apprenticeship wouldn't be beneficial to me." (Cathy)*

This was another issue raised in the 2013 IPPR report (Cook, 2013) which highlighted how training of 16 hours or more a week is not permitted for those on Job Seekers Allowance (JSA).

Access and transport especially for those living in rural areas was a structural concern. Living in a rural area limited the employment and training opportunities not only in terms of the jobs that were available within travelling distance on public transport but the employment hours that they could work e.g. getting to/from a job that starts early or finishes late or involves night shifts. Maguire & Thompson (2009) identified this as a key barrier and risk factor for becoming NEET.

Natasha who had been NEET ever since leaving school said that living in a rural location was a key reason why she hadn't tried to get into FE or been able to find employment:

> *"***Have you tried contacting a college to find out what they do and talking to somebody there?** *I could do, I haven't tried. It's just they're so far out though so." (Natasha)*

Other young people also spoke about how the rural locality of where they lived restricted the opportunities available to them:

> **"What do you see as the main difficulties to finding a job?** *I'd say experience and distance." (Harry)*

> *"Where I live the college I was going to was an hour away and the bus was like at half seven so I had to get up quite early and I just couldn't be bothered.* **So do you live in quite a rural area?** *Yeah, in [name of town], it's very rural here. Plus the college I was at it was like awful." (Bane)*

The imposition of course fees for 18s+ was another significant structural barrier. Re-engaging with education later on was problematic because once over 18 education fees had to be paid and most could not afford to do these:

> *"I would have liked to have done computer software work or I would have liked to have studied psychology and become like a, well have gone down that route anyway. I've thought about it over the past year but when I was at the end of my schooling I wasn't really thinking about this back then, I mean I would have done it now, I would have gone to do that at college now but it's just the cost of it now I'm over 18, you have to pay for like your fees and it's really hard to find the money, it's the finances that are the problem." (David)*

> *"I must have been like 18 maybe and I was signing on. Then afterwards I couldn't find a job, I was unemployed for about a year, I couldn't find a job and so I thought you know what I'm gonna go back and study but then I think it was along the lines of I'd have to pay for a course or something but then obviously I couldn't afford to pay and I thought I don't want to get into that." (Sahla)*

The 2013 IPPR report 'No more NEETs' (Cook, 2013) highlighted this as a major structural issue facing NEETs reporting that 'there is currently no provision of financial support for young people aged 18-24 to participate in education or vocational training unlike for those in higher education'. This means that opportunities are restricted to those who have financial support from parents or independent sources of income' (Cook, 2013, pp2). These financial difficulties have further intensified since the removal of the Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA).

6.7: Characteristics of those who were still NEET at time of interview

Seven young people were still NEET when interviewed (see Table 6.6). Two had been NEET since leaving school, a further two had spent a very short period of time in education but due to health problems had left education and had been NEET since that time. The remaining three had mixed pathways of short periods of time in education, training or employment interspersed with periods of inactivity. Several of the risk factors already referred to had contributed to their continuing NEET status, including poor GCSE grades with only one of the seven gaining 5 A-C grades at GCSE, being in Local Authority care, long term physical health problems, long term mental health problems and a lack of any plans or aspirations about what they wanted to do after finishing school.

Table 6.6: NEET young people status at time of interview

Gender	Name	Age	Ethnic heritage	Activity at time of interview
Females	Laila	19	White UK	Full-time employment
	Natasha	18	White UK	NEET
	Annie	18	White UK	Full-time employment
	Shannon	18	White UK	NEET
	Sahla	20	Pakistani	Full-time employment
	Jackie	19	White UK	Full-time employment
	Jasmine	19	Mixed heritage	Full-time education & part-time employment
	Marie	19	White UK	NEET
	Becky	19	White UK	Full-time education & part-time employment
	Cathy	18	White UK	NEET
	Katie	18	White UK	Full-time employment & part-time education
	Bane*	18	White UK	Full-time education & part-time employment
Males	Crixus	20	White UK	Full-time education
	Michael	19	White UK	Full-time employment
	David	20	White UK	NEET
	Archie	19	White UK	Full-time employment
	Malik	19	Mixed heritage	NEET
	Harry	19	White UK	NEET
	Tim	19	White UK	Full-time apprenticeship
	Will	18	White UK	Full-time education

6.8: ‘Dropping out’ and delay in post-16 pathways

There was a high incidence amongst NEETs of not knowing what they wanted to do after leaving school that often persisted for some considerable time. This resulted in non-linear, ‘yo-yo’ transitions, where young people started and stopped in either education or various forms of work. Particularly in relation to education, these often resulted in young people trying out courses with little overall direction or idea of what they might do afterwards. A finding which corresponds with earlier literature on NEETs (see Spielhofer et al., 2009)

David initially went to college after he finished school but dropped out after 6 months and had been NEET ever since apart from a brief period of temporary employment. He said that he struggled with the different style of learning and expectations at college:

> *“I didn’t like the style of learning, cos it was more, I’m more the type of person who needs to learn by being shown and by repeating the process and people haven’t the patience for me cos I find it difficult to process information. I’ve obviously got a lot better with age but no, I didn’t like the style of learning and the tutors weren’t very helpful, it was more like, ‘here’s what you need to do, get on with it.’” (David)*

Other young ‘dropped outs’ felt forced to remain in education after finishing school. There were several reasons given for this; because they weren’t sure what they wanted to do, feeling that their employment prospects were poor, there was a strong expectation from family or teachers that they should carry on in education or because they had received very little or poor quality advice on the options available to them after leaving school:

> *“I was in two minds about whether, cos I wasn’t really told much about the progression that I could have took, I felt really forced into doing A levels, I didn’t really know about the other side, vocational courses, they didn’t really explain everything fully. Teachers at school mainly pushed you down the A level route.” (Becky)*

There were a few cases where young people had ‘dropped out’ because they wanted to do a different course but they had to wait for the start of the next academic year and in the interim period were NEET.

Many NEETs found making the transition from compulsory schooling to further education extremely difficult leading to a high drop-out rate from courses. Nine of the 20 young people had started a post-16 course but had dropped out because they didn’t enjoy it, it wasn’t what they expected or because they struggled to make the transition to further education.

Some young people reported that they had not been ready at age 16 to make key decisions about their future careers. Trying to re-engage with education later on was sometimes problematic for these young people because once they were over 18 they had to pay fees for their education which most could not afford to do. It could be suggested that more needs to be done in the way of preparing young people in the final years at school for making the transition to college and in providing greater financial support for young people over 18 who want to return to education to help them become more employable.

6.9: Importance of information and advice on options and pathways post-16

Many NEETs felt there was a need for much better information and advice on the range of options available, not just in education but also on quality vocational qualifications, apprenticeships and training opportunities and the types of employment that this would qualify them for.

Becky dropped out of her 'A' levels after only a few months and spent almost a year NEET before re-enrolling in education on a different course. She felt forced into taking 'A' levels because there was little information about alternative options:

> **"So when you decided that you didn't want to continue with your A levels did you have any help in deciding what might be the right course for you?** *Not really no, I just did it all by myself yeah.* **Did anyone try to help you or give you any advice?** *My parents did but not really the college or anyone else no, they didn't really do much." (Becky)*

This dearth of information and support around educational options was something that Sahla also experienced:

> *"sometimes I want to go back into education and people have told me about doing Foundation Degrees at university but I've always been very confused, like everyone tells me that like you have to go back to college and you have to have like a C in English and Maths or something and that's what's putting me off, I don't know enough information about it or where to go." (Sahla)*

Structural barriers not only exist in relation to educational options, a number of young people spoke about the difficulties they had in finding employment and how little support was available from professional services:

> *"I only got this job because of my mum, she told me about it. When I wasn't doing anything like education or employment I didn't really have any help or advice about that from anyone." (Laila)*

There was particular dissatisfaction with official services such as the Job Centre. Sahla (NEET for over a year) said about help and support to find work:

> *"the Jobcentre, but to be honest with you they weren't that great, they would just leave you to it." (Sahla)*

There were other negative experiences of trying to find work through the Job Centre:

> *"I've looked [for employment]. It would be nice to have some help to try and get a job…..Jobcentre aren't helping very much." (Natasha)*
> *"I went on Jobseekers, I didn't want to, my mum wanted me to, I didn't feel comfortable doing it but I was like ok, I'll just do it. My advisor she tried to help me but she was always sending me to job interviews and stuff like that like totally outside the area where I live but because I don't drive I would have had to rely on public transport and there was no way where the jobs were based that I could have been able to get to them so she didn't really help as much as I wanted her to." (Jackie)*

Tim encountered little help to find an apprenticeship and that he had received no real careers advice either:

> *"They put us on like a, it was like another place they sent me where I could like try and find a job but they didn't really help us, they just wanted to get us into any sort of work, stuff that I didn't need qualifications to do. I was trying to tell them that like I wanted to do an apprenticeship but they didn't have like an apprenticeship sector, programme. So they just made us apply for like working in shops, cleaning, stuff like that." (Tim)*

Tim spoke more generally about what he saw as the lack of specific services and support for young people aged 18-25 around finding employment, training and apprenticeships. He thought the Connexions in his area had closed and was unaware of anything else in its place for young people:

> *"there isn't anything like that for us no more [Connexions] cos the one in the centre of town closed down and the one at the school, I couldn't like go back into school and use that one cos I'd left.* **So are you saying that there's not much of that support these days for people who have left school?** *Yeah, not that like everyone knows of.* **So was there nowhere else that you knew of that you could go to to find the type of help that Connexions gave you?** *No, there's like nowhere else." (Tim)*

This gap in services for NEET young people was also raised by David. He managed to get a temporary job through an agency after dropping out of his FE course but when this employment ended he hadn't been able to find other work via this agency because he was over 18. At the time of his interview David had been NEET for over a year:

> ***"****The agency I first used was for under 18s so now I'm 20 I can't use them again." (David)*

It was felt that advice should be available to young people much earlier on in their compulsory education, before they have to make their KS4 subject choices so that young people have the information they need to make clearer and more informed choices about their future pathways through education, training and employment.

6.10: The variable quality of post-16 courses

A key issue emerging from these young people was that of the variable and often poor quality of further education courses and qualifications such as entry level vocational skills courses and short 'multi-skills' courses. The generally poor GCSE grades of this group restricted the types of courses and institutions they could get into with many finding they could only access relatively low level courses at what some considered less favourable educational establishments. In most cases these courses did little to improve their employability and resulted in a return to NEET status or a cycle of taking up one short, low level course after another. There is a need for greater quality control of vocational courses and training to ensure that what is offered is of high quality and recognised by employers.

6.11: Lack of long term employment and apprenticeship or training opportunities

The NEET group reported enormous problems in gaining apprenticeships or securing long term employment. Some were critical of services such as Jobcentres however such organisations may face huge difficulties in identifying employment or training for young people, whose lack of qualifications and other personal issues such as health problems make it very hard to place them at a time of high youth unemployment. These difficulties are compounded by a context of significant cuts to Connexions services, Jobcentre budgets and the removal of the EMA. More routes and support into employment or training for those young people who are motivated to work but whose low educational qualifications prevent access to the job market is needed as well as a greater range and availability of non-academic post-16 options for young people.

6.12: Personal motivation and determination in resolving NEET status

A very important protective factor that helped some back into EET was that of young people being proactive and determined despite the difficult circumstances they faced. Examples of this include young people handing out CVs, signing up with job agencies, doing voluntary work to boost chances of employment and spending large amounts of time searching for courses or jobs online. Several NEETs found employment or training opportunities through their own perseverance and ingenuity rather than via the Job Centre or agencies.

6.13: Social capital facilitating entry to EET

Young people's social capital in the form of family, friends and other networks was exceptionally important in helping them out of their inactivity and into EET. Support and encouragement from family and teachers was important in fostering a more positive disposition towards returning to education. Parents paying course fees enabled some young people to return to education and there were examples of families supporting young people financially during extended periods of unemployment or training.

For instance, when Jasmine decided on a course she really wanted to do her parents paid the fees (liable as an over 18 year old). Her parents and friends had also encouraged and supported her when she was thinking about what course to do and in researching what was available:

> ***"****They've been helpful, they helped me find out, work out what I wanted to do and stuff, my friends and my parents. They've helped me to find courses especially when I dropped out of the ones I started****…*** **So you're studying for a Diploma, is that full-time****?*** *Yes, it's full-time. I'm loving it.* ***And how is it funded, who pays for it?*** *Oh, my parents.* **And are you still at home?** *Yeah.* **And do your parents support you quite a lot?** *Yeah they do, they're really supportive"….***How do your parents feel about what you are doing now?** *Yeah they're happy that I've finally found a course that I'm happy with and that I'm sticking with." (Jasmine)*

Social capital in the form of family contacts provided Will with a source of casual employment whilst trying to get into an apprenticeship:

> "*I've never been in full-time employment but friends of my mums and people I know who needed jobs doing I've been doing stuff for them cash in hand over the past year whilst I was trying to get an apprenticeship*." (Will)

A number of NEETS received useful advice on educational options from those known to them which helped to galvanise their thinking and direct them into action whilst many others were able to find employment or access training opportunities through their friends, family members or teachers.

6.14: Implications

Young people who are NEET constitute a heterogeneous group with varied experiences and pathways but this research, as with previous studies before it, has identified a range of common risk factors associated with becoming NEET at both proximal and distal levels. Bronfenbrenner's ecological model (1979) has proven to be a helpful theoretical framework for understanding the complexity of factors at play in the lives of these young people.

This section of the report has identified the background characteristics of this group and has reported, in their own words, some of the challenges they face in their NEET status and the barrier to joining the EET sector.

In spite of this difficult economic context, the problems that NEETs experienced in trying to get into EET highlights a number areas that could be addressed to try and ameliorate some of the problems that they encountered:

- greater flexibility and support in post-16 educational options particularly for those with SEN and physical/mental health difficulties e.g. having the option to take just one or two ‘A levels’ at a time or being allowed to complete courses over a longer period of time;
- greater financial support for young people over 18 who want to return to education;
- more route into employment or training for those motivated to work but whose low educational qualifications prevent access to the job market;
- greater range and availability of non-academic post-16 options;
- greater quality control of vocational courses and training currently available to ensure that what is offered is of high quality and is recognised by employers.

For the full report which provides further detail on this group see Siraj et al., (2014).

Section 7: Students' career aspirations

- Career aspirations were generally high, with most aspiring to professional occupations. Few chose a semi or unskilled occupation as their ideal job. Career uncertainty was higher for the NEETS and those with highly educated parents.
- Across all social background students aspired to professional occupations (e.g., teaching, creative industries).
- The majority of young people were confident they would attain their ideal job with those of non-white ethnic heritage being more confident overall.
- Females were more likely to have professional career aspirations and more likely to choose caring professions such as education, healthcare and social work. Males were more likely to choose Building and Construction, Engineering and the Armed Forces. However, the relationship with gender and aspiration was not straight forward; lower achieving girls were more likely to choose lower skilled careers than their male counterparts.
- Family background influenced career aspirations with these family characteristics being associated with more ambitious students' aspirations: higher parents' aspirations for their children's education, higher parental qualifications, higher SES, and levels of enrichment activities in the home during KS3.
- Nearly half of young people from the top SES had the highest aspirations (professional I) compared to a fifth from the bottom SES.
- Parental aspirations for their children's education were the strongest family predictor of career aspirations at age 16/17. Young people whose parents wanted them to carry on in education post 18 were much more likely to cite a professional career aspirations than those whose parents wanted them to leave school at 16. In addition these young people were much more likely to be on an academic course at age 16/17.
- Characteristics associated with more ambitious career aspirations were: being from a non-white UK ethnic heritage, having higher GCSE attainment and higher academic self-concept. Those from higher SES groups were protected from the potentially detrimental effects of lower attainment on their career aspirations. They are also less likely to lower their aspirations when asked for a 'realistic' job choice.
- Not all NEET lacked high aspirations as two fifths aspired to a professional qualification. NEET young people, however, had higher levels of career uncertainty than other young people.

Young people were asked about their career aspirations, in terms of an ideal job choice and a realistic second choice.

Ideal career aspiration

- **'**What is the job that you would most like to do?'

Realistic career aspiration

- 'If you couldn't get this job, what job realistically, do you think you could get?'

Responses were classified into an occupational SES based on the Registrar general classification (OPCS 1995). The Registrar General's social classification scheme was used as a way of categorising SES for most of the twentieth century and was originally based on a hierarchical grading system, whereby an occupation was judged on its standing within the community. More recently this was modified to reflect levels of occupational skill or competence required. This classification system (Table 7.1) has been used throughout the EPPE/ EPPSE project to classify the occupation of parents when children entered the study (aged 3/5) and again during KS1, KS2 and KS3. Table 1 gives some examples of occupations from each group.

Table 7.1: Registrar General's Social classification (1995)

SES Group	Example occupations
I Professional Non-manual	Surgeon, Lawyer, Architect, Doctor, MP, Accountant, Scientist
II Other professional Non-manual	Teacher, Nurse, Manager, Artist, Graphic designer, Journalist
III Skilled Non-manual	Shop assistant, Secretary, Policeman, Fireman, Administrator
III Skilled Manual	Car mechanic, Plumber, Painter and decorator, Hairdresser
IV Semi-skilled	Carer, Beauty therapist , Bartender, Waitress
V Unskilled	Labourer, cleaner

7.1: Career uncertainty

Approximately one in ten young people who responded to the survey (12%) did not name an ideal job they would like to do (see Table 7.2). When analysed by post-16 destination young people classified as NEET were most likely to be non-respondents. However, the differences found were generally small. Similarly, although non-response was generally higher when asked what realistic job (32% not naming a realistic occupation[15]), NEET young people were also less likely to give a realistic job choice (43%).

15 The reasons for non-response when asked for a realistic job were unclear, although non-respondents were no more confident in their ideal job choice, suggesting that non-response was more likely to reflect career uncertainty. Non-respondents were more likely to be from professional family backgrounds (Professional II =37% compared to 26% semi/unskilled backgrounds), of White UK ethnic heritage (34% non-response vs 26% for others combined) and from higher income families (37% top income vs 25% no salary).

When analysed by background (SES, parental qualifications, gender, ethnicity, family income) non-respondents were slightly more likely to have parents with a degree or higher (Higher degree - 18%; Degree - 15% vs 9% - no qualifications, 10% Vocational) and have parents in the top SES group (Professional I).

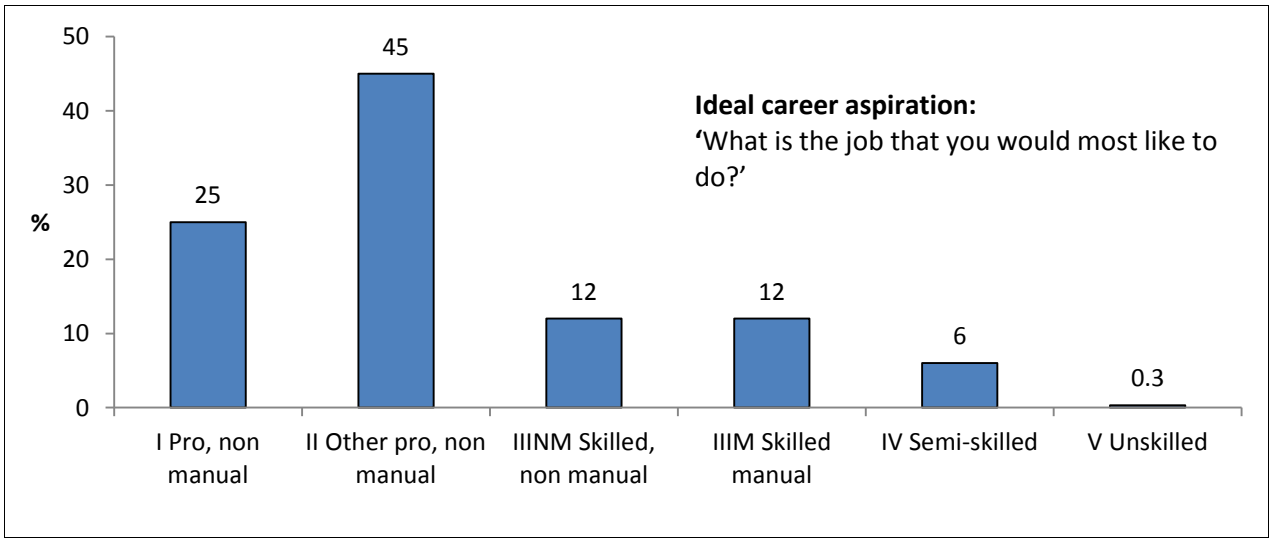
Table 7.2: Non-response by Post-16 route

Post-16 route	Full-time education: Higher academic		Full-time education: Lower academic		Full-time education: Vocational		Working Full-time		Studying part-time		NEET		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Named an ideal job	107	14.9	27	9.8	45	8.8	10	8.0	3	13.0	16	18.6	208	12.0
Named a realistic job	246	34.3	90	32.7	140	27.5	43	34.4	7	30.4	37	43.0	563	32.4

7.2: Distribution of career aspirations

In line with other research (Croll, 2008; Mann et al., 2013; Kintrea et al., 2011) students generally had high aspirations in their choice of occupation (see Figure 7.1). Nearly three quarters (70%) of young people chose a professional occupation (either a professional I or II career) as the job they would most like to do. The most popular occupation level was a 'professional II' career. Just under half of the young people in our sample (45%) chose an ideal job from this SES which included major public sector occupations such as teaching and nursing. Only a small minority (6%) chose semi or unskilled occupations for their ideal job.

Figure 7.1: Distribution of young people's ideal career aspirations at age 16/17



Confidence was generally high, as the majority of young people (85%) felt it was likely (25% very likely, 59% fairly likely) they would go on to achieve a job in line with their career aspiration. However, those choosing higher skilled careers (professional non-manual I /II) felt it was less likely they would achieve them than those choosing lower skilled employment.

The post-16 route young people had chosen also predicted confidence (see Table 7.3). The young people who were most confident in obtaining the job they most wanted to do were the 'Working full-time' group (88% very/fairly likely). This group were, in the 6 months after leaving Year 11, already working so it is likely they have more realism and experience in the job market. In addition, they may have already committed to a job which may or may not be the job of their choice. Those undertaking full-time vocational study were also confident (82% very/fairly likely) of getting the job they most wanted to do in the future. The group least confident in getting the job of their choice was the NEET group (52%).

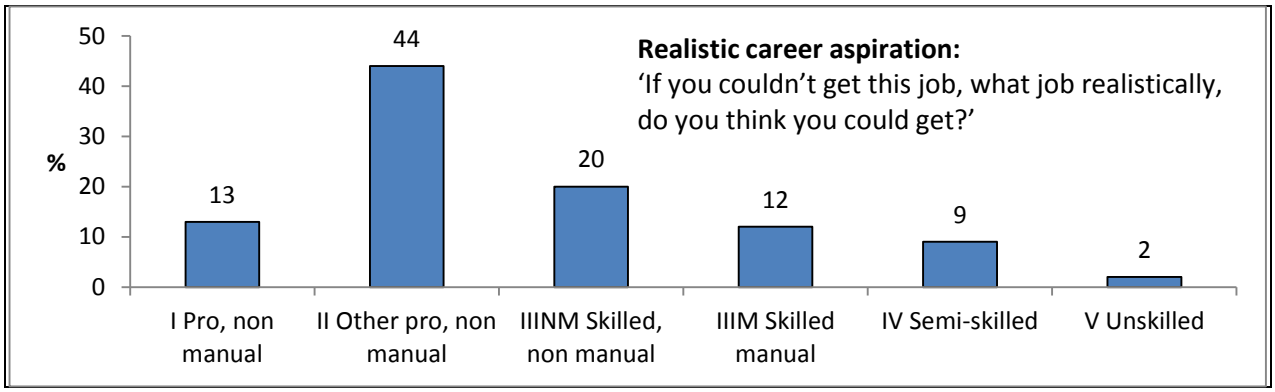
Table 7.3: Career aspirations and Post-16 route

How likely it is that you will do that job?	Post-16 route											
	Full-time education: Higher academic		Full-time education: Lower academic		Full-time education: Vocational		Working Full-time		Studying part-time		NEET	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Very likely	103	16.9	46	18.6	140	30.3	48	41.7	4	20.0	12	17.1
Fairly likely	363	59.6	141	57.1	237	51.3	53	46.1	9	45.0	24	34.3
Not very likely	69	11.3	34	13.8	36	7.8	6	5.2	4	20.0	21	30.0
Not at all likely	21	3.4	4	1.6	3	0.6	4	3.5	0	0.0	4	5.7
Don't know	53	8.7	22	8.9	46	10.0	4	3.5	3	15.0	9	12.9
Total	609	100	247	100	462	100	115	100	20	100	70	100

No differences were found in confidence for students from different SES groups, by gender, or GCSE attainment. Young people of non-white UK heritage, in contrast, were slightly more confident they would achieve their chosen career (90% likely vs 84% for other the White UK group).

Young people were also asked to give an occupation they could attain if they were unsuccessful in their ideal job. Figure 7.2 displays young people's responses to this question (realistic career aspiration). There was a general shift downwards in aspirations, with 57% of young people now chosing a professional occupation.

Figure 7.2: Distribution of young people's realistic career aspirations at age 16/17



When split by Post-16 destination, ideal career aspirations differed quite markedly (see Table 7.4). Almost all of the young people studying for higher academic qualifications (4 or more A/AS levels full-time) aspired to a professional occupation (90%), compared to 80% in the lower academic route (studying for 1-3 A/AS levels) and just over half (53%) of those studying for Vocational qualifications. A third of those already in employment (29%) still aspired to a professional occupation. The NEET group had the largest proportion of young people with semi or unskilled aspirations (16%), but well over a third of this sample also aspired to professional careers (39%).

Table 7.4: Employment aspirations and Post-16 route

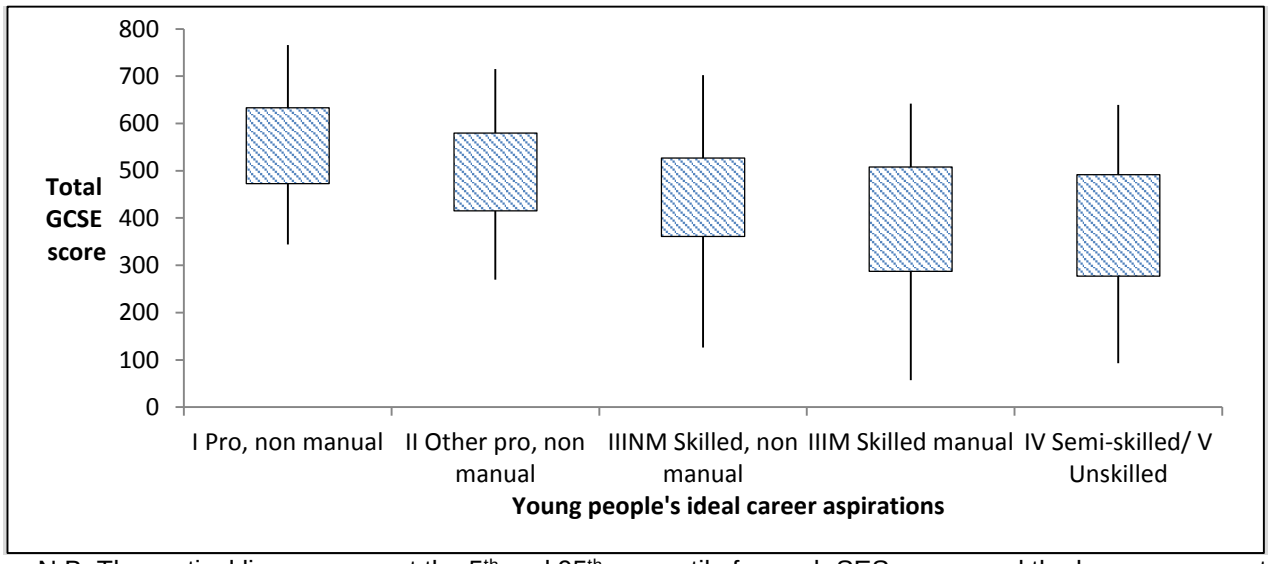
Ideal career aspirations:	Post-16 route											
	Full-time education: Higher academic		Full-time education: Lower academic		Full-time education: Vocational		Working Full-time		Studying part-time		NEET	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Professional NM I	259	42.4	52	21.0	45	9.7	12	10.4	3	15.0	8	11.4
Other professional NM II	292	47.8	146	58.9	199	42.8	21	18.3	6	30.0	19	27.1
Skilled NM III	46	7.5	28	11.3	62	13.3	25	21.7	5	25.0	13	18.6
Skilled M III	10	1.6	10	4.0	103	22.2	42	36.5	5	25.0	19	27.1
Semi-Skilled	4	0.7	12	4.8	55	11.8	11	9.6	1	5.0	11	15.7
Unskilled	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	3.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	611	100	248	100	465	100	115	100	20	100	70	100
% Professional choice	90%		80%		53%		29%		45%		39%	

7.3: What predicts career aspirations?

7.3.1: Educational attainment

There was a significant relationship between career aspirations and GCSE attainment. As can be seen in Figure 7.3, young people with higher attainment at the end of Year 11 were more likely to have higher aspirations. However, as can also be seen, there is a great deal of variation within each group in attainment, and overlap between groups. The range of attainment for young people aspiring to skilled manual and semi/unskilled occupations was particularly large, suggesting that attainment at the end of Year 11 is not the sole driver of career aspirations. The association between GCSE score and career aspiration (positively scaled[16]) was found to be significant but fairly modest ($r=0.35$, $p<0.001$).

Figure 7.3: GCSE attainment and career aspirations



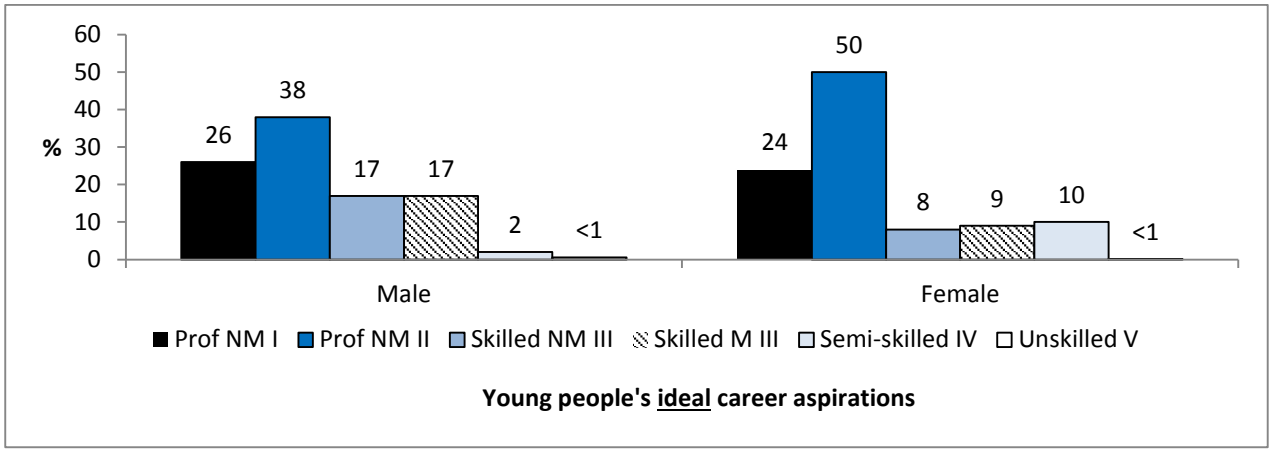
N.B. The vertical lines represent the 5th and 95th percentile for each SES group, and the boxes represent the inter-quartile range (75% of GCSE score lie within this range).

7.3.2: Gender

As found in other research (Schoon et al., 2007), the EPPSE analyses also show that girls had relatively higher aspirations than boys in Year 11 (Sammons et al., 2014d). Figure 7.4 shows young women were significantly more likely to choose a professional occupation than the young men in the EPPSE sample (74% of female choose a professional occupation compared to 64% of males). However a minority of young women are also more likely to choose a semi or unskilled occupation than young men (10% compared to 2% of males).

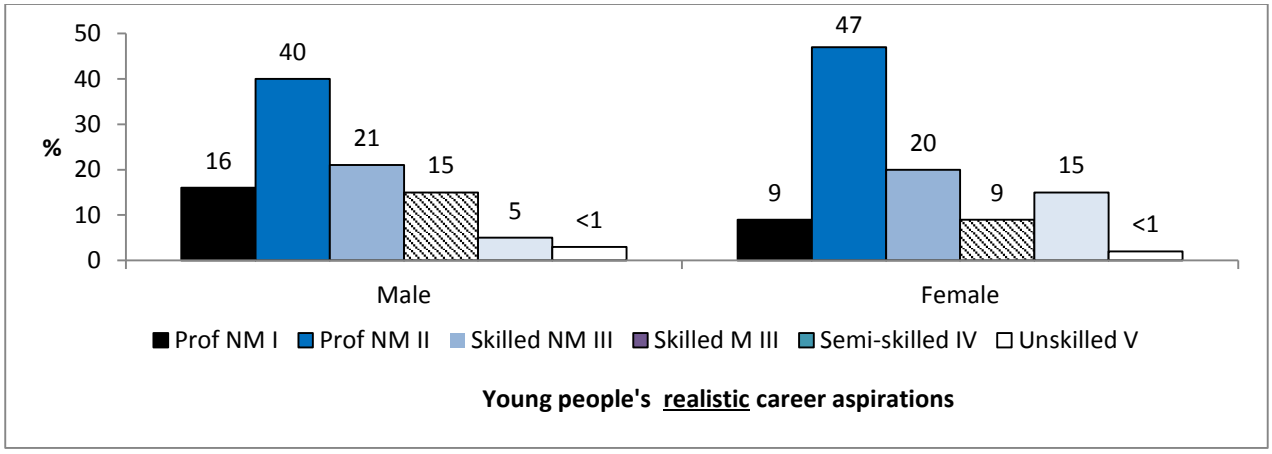
[16] A career aspiration scale was created by coding career aspirations from 1-5: 1=Semi or unskilled; 2=Skilled manual; 3=Skilled Non-manual; 4=Professional Non-manual II: 5=Professional Non-manual I.

Figure 7.4: Distribution of young people's ideal career aspirations Post-16 by gender



The pattern is different for realistic career aspirations. Figure 7.5 shows young women were as likely to choose a professional occupation as young men (56% of males and females), less likely to choose a top professional career (9% vs 16%) and even more likely to choose a semi or unskilled occupation than males (15% compared to 5% of males).

Figure 7.5: Distribution of young people's realistic career aspirations Post-16 by gender



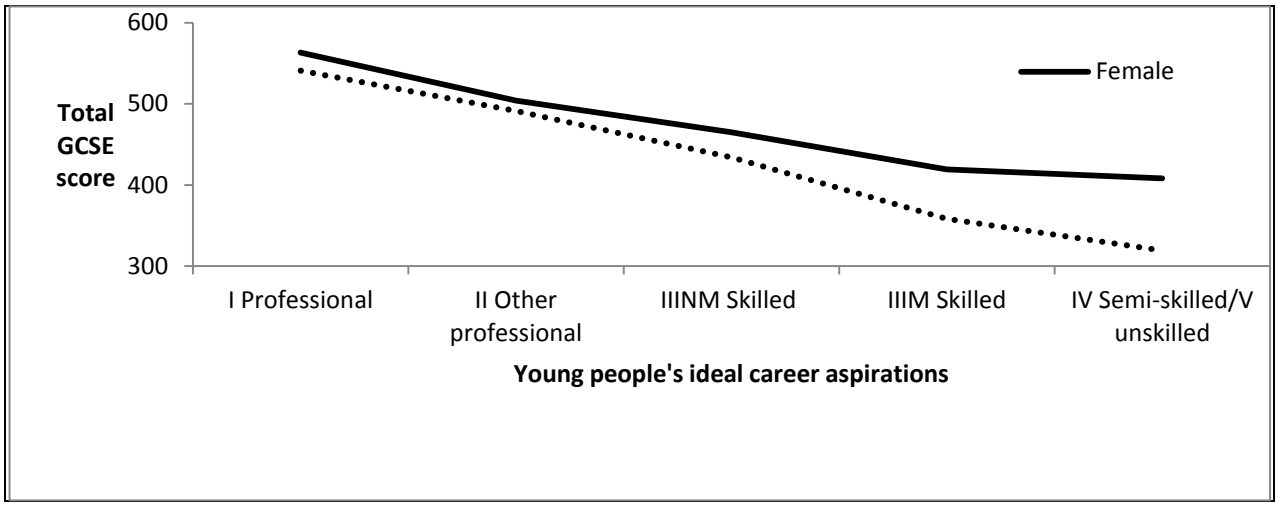
7.3.2.1: Gender and field of work

Choice of 'field of work' also varied by gender and closely mirrored traditional gender stereotypes. The top three chosen by girls were Education and Training (17%), Healthcare (16%) and Social Work/Counselling Services (9%). The top three fields chosen by boys were Building and Construction (10%), Engineering (10%) and Security and the Armed Forces (8%). See Table 7.5for more details.

7.3.2.2: Gender and attainment

The relationship between attainment and career aspiration differs by gender (Figure 7.6). There is little difference in the attainment of male and females choosing higher skilled occupations however, girls choosing lower skilled occupations are more likely to have higher attainment at GCSE than males choosing similar SES jobs. This may well be related to the type of job chosen, as occupations such as childcare are in the lower skilled category and are predominantly chosen by girls.

Figure 7.6: Career aspirations and GCSE attainment by gender



Gender and attainment were also found to interact. Whilst higher achieving girls tended to be more professionally ambitious than boys (although not for the top occupations), the picture was more complex for lower achievers (Figure 7.8). Lower achieving girls were still more professionally ambitious (49% compared to 39% of boys) but were also more likely to choose the least skilled occupations than boys.

Figure 7.7: Distribution of career aspirations for higher achievers (high GCSE attainment) by gender

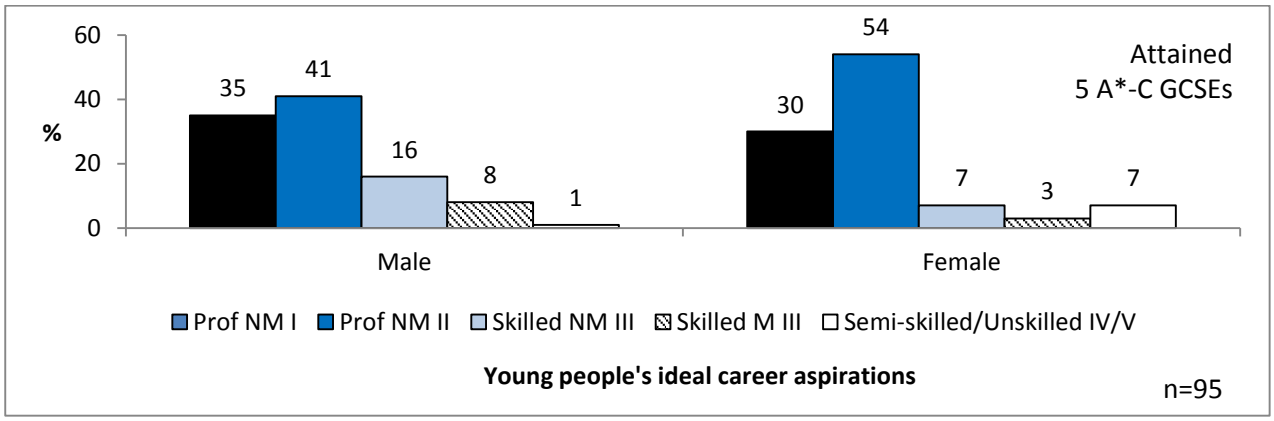


Figure 7.8: Distribution of career aspirations for lower achievers by gender

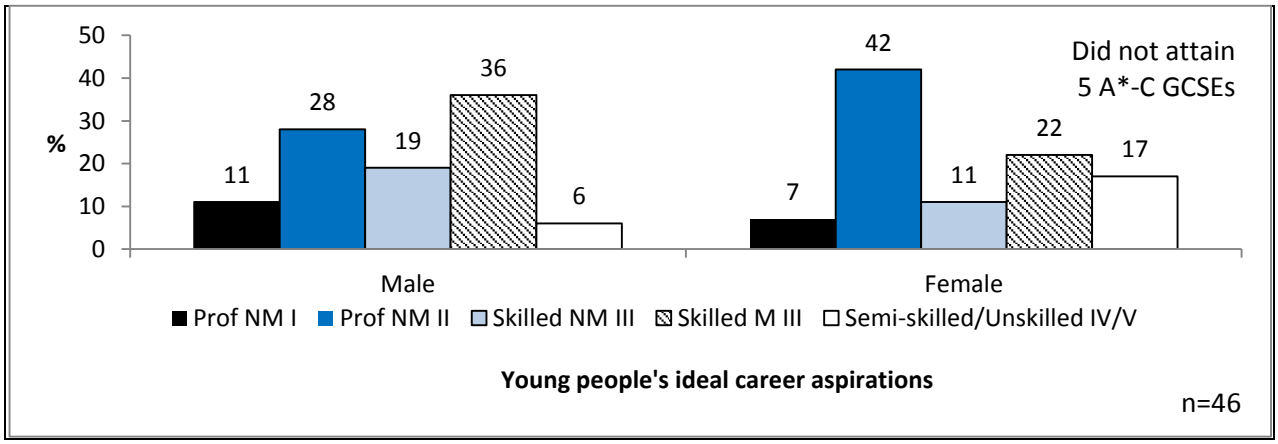


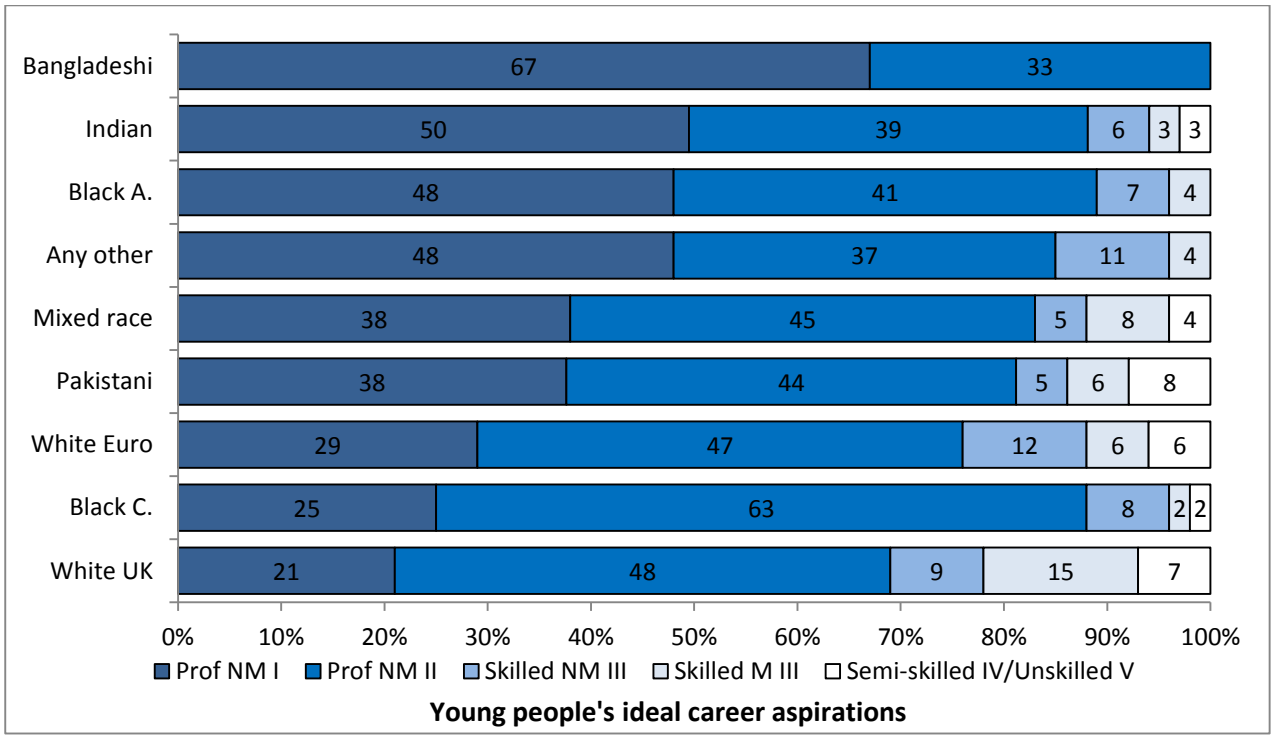
Table 7.5: Choice of field of work by gender

Connexions classification of occupations	Male %	Female %	Total %
Public sector, security and legal			
Healthcare	6.7	15.5	11.5
Education and Training	5.9	16.9	12.0
Legal and Political Services	3.3	5.0	4.2
Social Work and Counselling Services	1.7	9.0	5.7
Security and Armed Forces	8.3	3.7	5.7
Total public sector, security and legal	25.9	50.1	39.1
Creative, new media and environment			
Computers and IT	6.5	0.5	3.2
Design, Arts and Crafts	4.3	5.8	5.1
Environment, Animals and Plants	1.7	4.5	3.3
Languages, Information and Culture	0.3	0.8	0.6
Media, Print and Publishing	4.8	8.4	6.8
Performing Arts	6.2	5.2	5.7
Total creative, new media and environment	23.8	25.2	24.7
Trade and Industry			
Administration, Business and Office Work	3.3	1.9	2.5
Building and Construction	10.4	2.0	5.8
Catering and Hospitality	2.2	1.8	2.0
Engineering	10.1	0.5	4.8
Financial Services	6.2	2.7	4.3
Leisure, Sport and Tourism	6.5	2.6	4.4
Manufacturing and Production	1.0	0.1	0.5
Marketing and Advertising	0.9	1.8	1.4
Personal and Other Services, including Hair and Beauty	0.3	6.5	3.7
Retail Sales and Customer Services	2.3	1.7	2.0
Science, Mathematics and Statistics	5.9	2.1	3.8
Transport and Logistics	0.9	1.2	1.0
Total trade and Industry	50.0	24.9	35.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

7.3.3: Ethnicity

There was some indication that young people of White UK heritage had lower aspirations than other groups. In line with research elsewhere (Strand, 2007a, 2007b) the White UK group had the lowest SES aspirations of any of the ethnic heritage group, although 66% of these students still aspired to a professional occupation (this compares to 82% from non-White UK heritage combined). Figure 7.9 compares the aspirations of the White UK ethnic heritage group with the non-White UK ethnic heritage groups. Young people of non-White UK heritage were more likely to aspire to top professional careers[17].

Figure 7.9: Distribution of young people's ideal career aspirations at age 16/17 by ethnic heritage



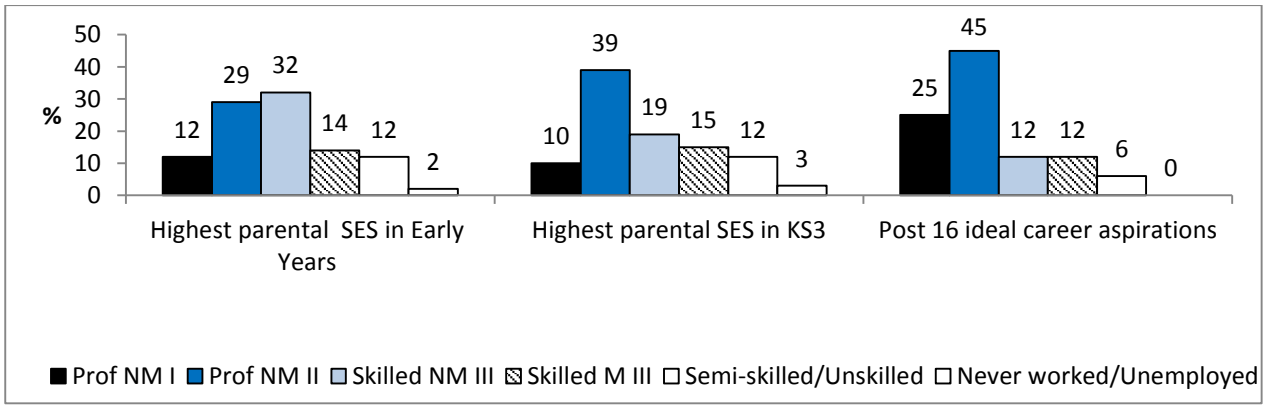
[17] The ethnic heritage groups were also analysed separately, and all except the White European heritage group had higher aspirations than the White UK group. However, due to small numbers in many of the ethnic groups, figures should be treated with caution.

7.4: Parental and family influence on career aspirations

7.4.1: Parental Socio-Economic Status (SES)

The relationship between SES (highest SES of either the mother or father) and career aspirations was investigated[18]. Figure 7.10 shows the distribution for parents SES at two time points (based on their occupation at the time) and for young people's ideal career aspirations at age 16/17. The proportion of the sample that have at least one parent in a professional occupation has increased from when they entered the study to when they were in KS3, as shown in Figure 7.10.

Figure 7.10: Comparison of SES for EPPSE parents and EPPSE young people[19]



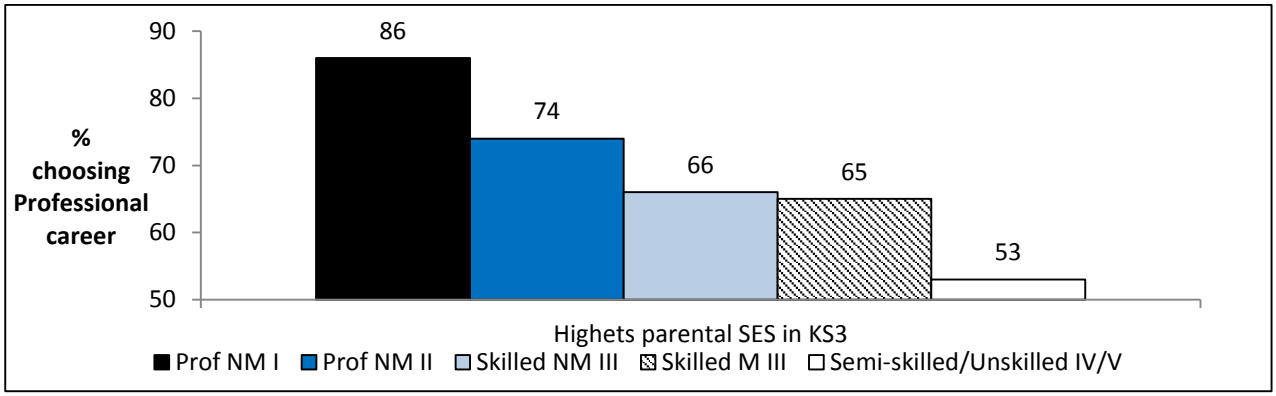
Using the most recent SES classification a clear relationship between parental SES group and students' career aspirations was found (Figure 7.11). Young people from higher SES groups were, on the whole, more likely to aspire to higher skilled careers. The majority (86%) of young people from the highest SES (professional I) aspired to a professional occupations, compared to just over half (53%) from semi-skilled or unskilled family backgrounds.

However, as so many young people across SES backgrounds aspire to professional occupations it is no surprise that there was a fair degree of mismatch between parental SES and aspirational SES. For example, just one third of young people chose an occupation in the same occupational category as their parents (32%). A larger proportion (45%) chose an occupation above their SES and just under a quarter (23%) below.

[18] Due to higher levels of missing data for the KS3 social class measure a combined measure was created best by replacing missing data in KS3 with the next available SES measure (taken in KS2, KS1 or entry to the study.

[19] Only the sample that had career aspirations were represented in the family SES statistics. There was some degree of social mobility in parental social class between the early years and KS3.

Figure 7.11: Proportion of young people aspiring to professional careers by parental SES



The most popular career choice for young people from all SES backgrounds was a professional II non-manual career. For example, forty-one per cent of young people from the lowest SES groups (semi-skilled or unskilled) aspired to professional II careers (see Table 7.6). This compares to forty-five per cent of young people from skilled non-manual backgrounds, forty-six per cent from skilled manual backgrounds and fifty per cent from lower professional backgrounds (professional II).

Parental SES appears to have a bigger influence on higher aspirations (see Table 7.6). For example, forty-three per cent of young people from professional I background aspire to these occupations compare to seventeen per cent from semi-skilled or unskilled backgrounds.

Table 7.6: Relationship between parental SES and young people's ideal career aspirations

Post-16 ideal career aspiration	Highest parental SES (in KS3 or earlier)											
	Professional NM I		Professional NM II		Skilled NM III		Skilled M III		Semi-Skilled/ Unskilled		Unemployed	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Professional NM I	75	43.1	145	24.4	70	24.7	46	20.5	31	17.2	10	21.7
Professional NM II	74	42.5	296	49.7	211	44.9	103	45.9	68	40.6	19	41.3
Skilled NM III	17	9.8	75	12.6	32	8.6	19	6.6	30	12.8	5	10.9
Skilled M III	3	1.7	53	8.9	48	15.1	38	18.3	34	19.3	10	21.7
Semi/ Unskilled	5	2.9	26	4.4	18	6.8	22	8.7	24	10.2	2	4.3
Total	174	100	595	100	289	100	228	100	187	100	46	100
% aspiring to Professional (I and II)	86%		74%		66%		65%		53%		63%	
% aspiring above parental SES	---		24%		66%		74%		87%		---	

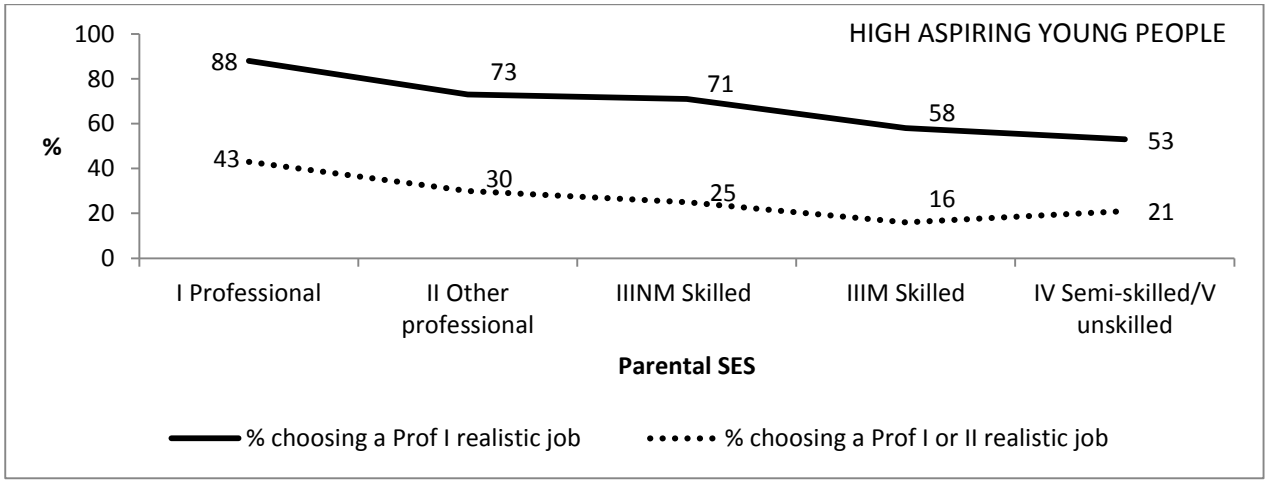
Parental SES also influenced realistic career aspirations (Table 7.7).

Table 7.7: Relationship between parental SES and young people's realistic aspirations

Post-16 realistic career aspiration	Highest parental SES (in KS3 or earlier)											
	Professional NM I		Professional NM II		Skilled NM III		Skilled M III		Semi-Skilled/ Unskilled		Unemployed	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Professional NM I	36	26.3	59	13.8	23	10.3	10	5.4	9	5.8	6	15.4
Professional NM II	80	58.3	201	47.0	96	43.0	70	38.0	48	31.2	19	48.7
Skilled NM III	10	7.3	86	20.1	44	19.7	44	23.9	48	31.2	6	15.4
Skilled M III	5	3.6	43	10.0	30	13.5	28	15.2	20	13.0	6	15.4
Semi-Skilled/Un.	6	4.4	39	9.1	30	11.7	32	17.4	29	18.8	2	5.1
Total	137	100	428	100	223	100	184	100	154	100	39	100
% aspiring to Professional (I and II)	75%		61%		53%		43%		39%		64%	
% aspiring above parental SES	---		14%		53%		67%		79%		---	

Young people from higher SES groups were less likely to lower their professional aspirations when asked for a 'realistic' job choice. In Figure 7.12, high aspiring young people (defined as choosing a professional I or II ideal occupation) from lower SES backgrounds were more likely to lower their aspirations to non-professional occupations than young people from higher SES groups. For example, eighty-eight per cent from the top SES group chose a professional job as their realistic second choice compared to fifty-three per cent from the bottom SES group. Similarly, very high aspiring young people (professional I occupation) from lower SES backgrounds were more likely to lower their aspirations to non-professional I occupations than young people from higher SES groups (e.g. 43% vs 21%).

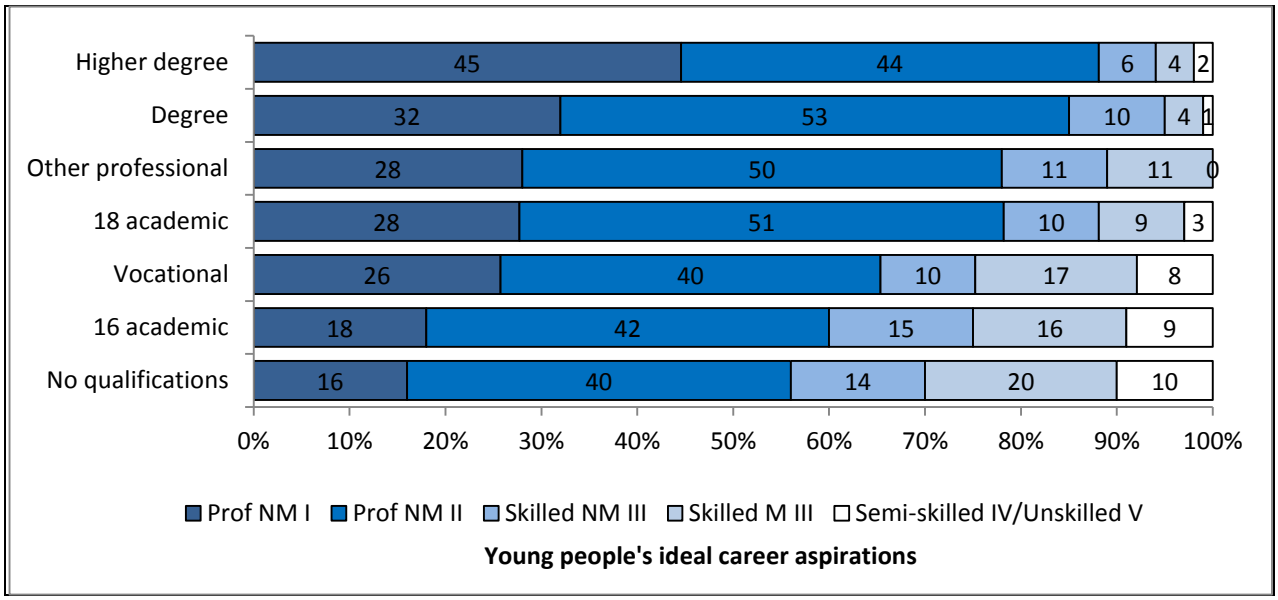
Figure 7.12: Realistic job choice of high aspiring young people from different social backgrounds



7.4.2: Parental educational level

Parental education was also a strong predictor of career aspirations (see Figure 7.13). Young people with higher qualified parents are much more likely to choose more aspirational careers than those with less qualified parents, especially aspirations to top professions. For example, only sixteen per cent of young people with parents who had no qualifications aspired to top occupations (professional I) compared to nearly half (46%) of those who had at least one parent with a higher degree. Again, the proportion of young people choosing professional II careers is similar cross parental qualification groups.

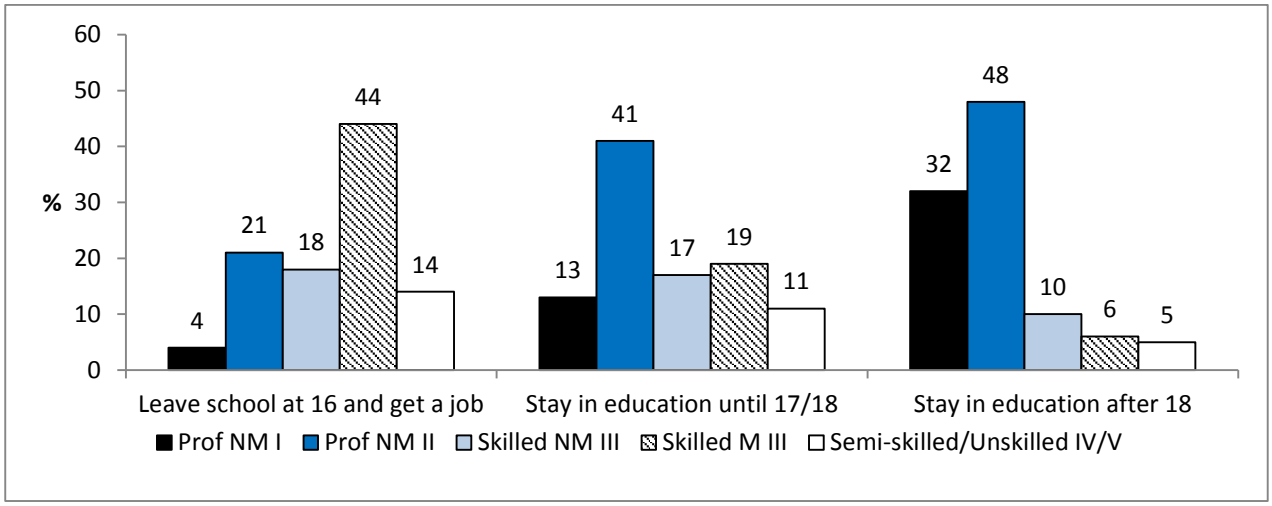
Figure 7.13: Proportion of young people's career aspirations by parental education



7.4.3: Parental educational aspirations for their children

Parent's educational aspirations for their children were collected when the EPPSE young people were in Key Stage 3 (age 14). Aspirations were high with four out of five (79%) parents wanted their children to stay in education post 18 and 75% believed it was important for their children to get a degree. Higher parental educational aspirations were strongly predictive of higher career aspirations (Figure 7.14). Young people whose parents wanted them to carry on in education after age 18 were more likely to choose a professional qualification (80%) than those whose parents wanted them to leave education at 18 (54%) or 16 (25%).

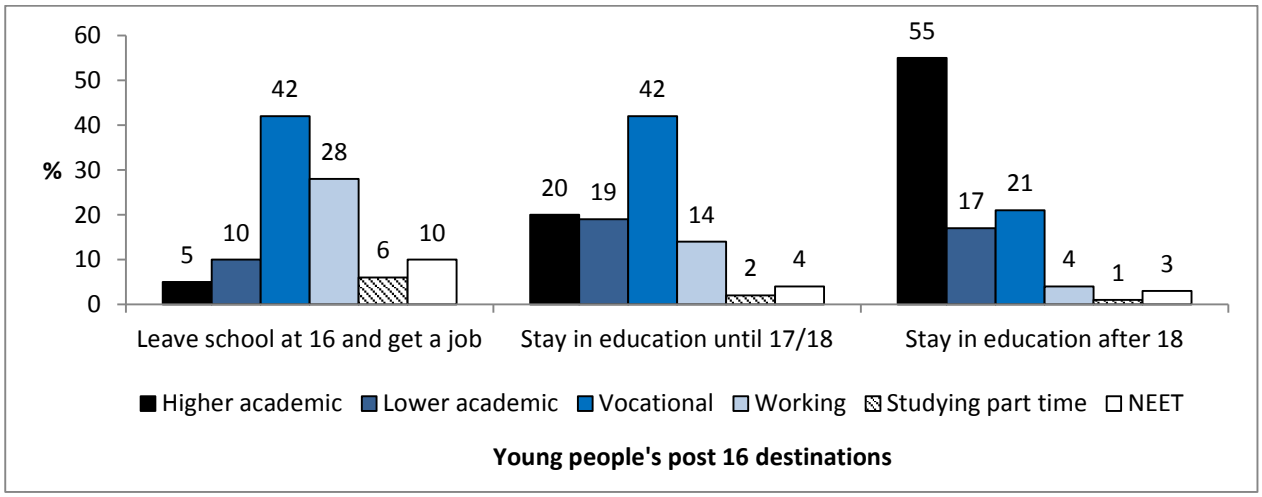
Figure 7.14: Parents aspirations for their children and career aspirations



Parents from higher SES groups and those holding higher qualifications were more likely to have higher educational aspirations for their children. For example, nearly all (93%) parents from the top SES wanted their children to stay in education post 18 and 94% (59% very important, 35% fairly) thought it was important for their child to get a university degree. In contrast, two thirds of semi or unskilled parents wanted their children to stay on in education post 18 (66%) or felt a degree was important (67%; 28% very important, 39% fairly).

The relationship between parental educational aspirations and post-16 destinations is shown in Figure 7.15.

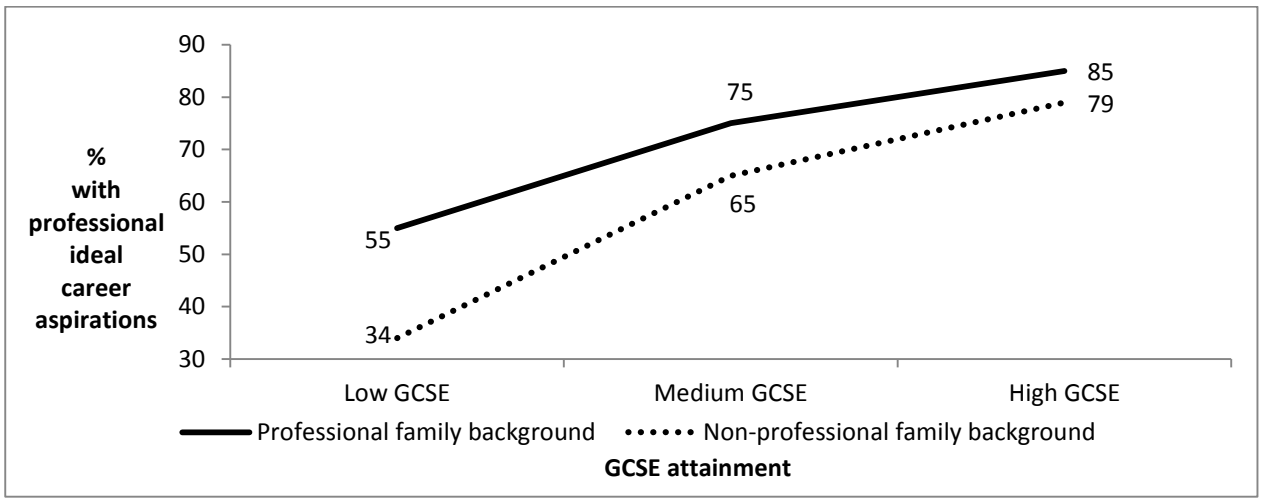
Figure 7.15: Parents' educational aspirations for their children and post-16 route chosen



7.4.4: Mediating effects

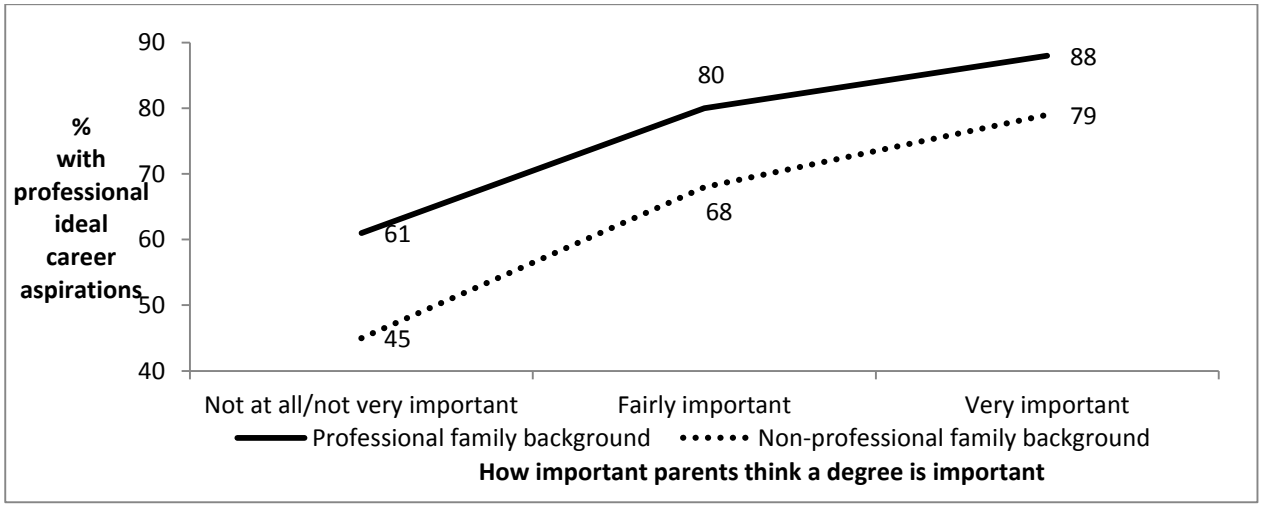
Earlier family background and GCSE attainment were shown to be related to young people's career aspirations (see Figure 7.16). It would appear that low GCSE performance is also mediated by SES. The gap in career aspirations for young people from professional and non-professional backgrounds is much smaller when young people have high GCSE attainment. For example, eighty-five per cent of high achievers from professional backgrounds have high aspirations compared to seventy-nine per cent form non-professional backgrounds (a difference of only 6%). In contrast, fifty-five per cent of low achievers from professional backgrounds have high aspirations compared to thirty-four per cent from non-professional backgrounds (a difference of 21%).

Figure 7.16: Career aspirations by SES and GCSE attainment



Similarly, although higher parental aspirations show a benefit for all young people, the equity gap in aspirations for young people from different social backgrounds is smaller when their parents have higher educational aspirations for them (see Figure 7.17).

Figure 7.17: Professional careers aspirations, background and parental aspirations (importance of a degree)



7.5: The combined influence of individual, family and home learning on career aspirations

The ideal career aspirations of young people were used as an outcome in a multiple linear regression model, investigating the impact of individual, family and home learning variables in combination.

Career aspirations were predicted by a number of different individual, family and home learning characteristics. No one variable was found to influence aspirations significantly more than others when tested in combination. Individual influences found to be predictors of career aspirations were:

- GCSE attainment in Year 11: Higher GCSE attainment was associated with higher career aspirations (ES[20]=0.43);
- General academic self-concept in Year 11; More favourable General academic self-concept was associated with higher career aspirations (ES=0.36);
- Ethnicity: All ethnic minority heritage groups had higher career aspirations than the White UK group. In particular, the Asian (Indian ES=0.55; Bangladeshi ES=1.17; and Pakistani ES=0.51) and African ethnic groups (Black Caribbean ES=0.41and Black African ES=0.61) had some of the highest aspirations.

Family and home learning variables that were found to predict career aspirations in combination were:

- Parental educational aspirations for their children: Young people with parents who wanted them to continue in education longer had higher career aspirations (Leave at 16 ES=-0.44; Leave at 17/18 ES=-0.33, compared to those with parents who wanted them to stay on post 18).
- Parental SES: Young people with higher SES backgrounds had higher career aspirations (e.g. semi/unskilled ES=-0.36 compared to the professional non-manual SES group).
- Parental qualifications: Young people with parents who had higher level qualifications had higher career aspirations (e.g. degree or higher ES=0.34, compared to those with parents who had no qualifications).
- Young people who engaged in higher levels of academic enrichment activities[21] had higher career aspirations (Medium ES=0.16; High ES=0.33, compared to low enrichment activities).

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20 Effect sizes (ES) are a statistical measure of the relative strength of different predictors – see Elliot & Sammons 2004.

21The 'Academic enrichment' measure included three items: Read on your own for pleasure, Go with family on educational visits; Go to the library (not school library).

Table 7.8: Contextualised multiple regression model for Year 11 Career aspiration scale[22]

Career aspirations scale	Coefficient	Significance	Std. Error	Effect size
Total GCSE score	0.001	***	0.000	0.43
Academic self-concept score	0.012	***	0.002	0.36
Ethnicity (compared to White UK)				
White European	0.17		0.17	0.17
Black Caribbean	0.41	*	0.18	0.41
Black African	0.61	*	0.27	0.61
Any other ethnic group	0.64	**	0.24	0.64
Indian	0.55	**	0.20	0.55
Pakistani	0.51	**	0.17	0.51
Bangladeshi	1.17	***	0.31	1.17
Mixed Race	0.32	*	0.15	0.32
Highest parental qualifications (compared to no qualifications)				
Missing	-0.34		0.26	-0.34
Vocational	0.28	**	0.11	0.28
16 Academic	0.01		0.12	0.01
18 Academic	0.28	#	0.14	0.28
Degree or higher degree	0.34	*	0.14	0.34
Other professional	0.20		0.29	0.20
Highest SES (compared professional non-manual)				
Missing	0.22		0.53	0.22
Other professional non-manual	-0.16		0.10	-0.16
Skilled non-manual	-0.22	*	0.12	-0.22
Skilled manual	-0.31	**	0.13	-0.31
Semi-skilled/unskilled	-0.36	**	0.14	-0.36
Unemployed/never worked	-0.49	*	0.23	-0.49
Parental educational aspirations for child (stay on post 18)				
Missing	-0.13		0.11	-0.13
Leave school at 16	-0.44	**	0.17	-0.44
Leave school at 17/18	-0.33	**	0.11	-0.33
Unsure	0.01		0.03	
Key stage 3 HLE: Enrichment (compared to low)				
Missing	0.11		0.13	0.11
High	0.33	**	0.11	0.33
Medium	0.16	#	0.09	0.16
Intercept	3.57	***	0.17	
Residual, Mean square	0.996			
Number of students	1117			
R square	0.266			
Adjusted R square	0.247			
Standard. Error of the Estimate	0.998			
F	13.626	***		

22Tested but NS: No. of siblings, Birth order, family structure (step parent was significant in some models) and FSM (both Y11); Parent thinks degree is important (significant in models without parental aspirations); Family income (KS1/KS2); early years HLE; all other KS3 HLE measures. SEN (Year 11) was tested and became NS when Academic self-concept was added. Mental well-being and term of birth were NS, Gender was only significant once Total GCSE score was added. Neighbourhood was also tested and all NS

7.5.1: Educational influences

There was no evidence of significant differences between different secondary schools in students' career aspirations Hierarchical linear regression models were investigated and significant variation between schools was found before the effects of students' backgrounds were accounted for (null model, ICC=0.068). However, this no longer significant once individual, family and home learning background was taken into account.

The following aspects of secondary school effectiveness and quality were investigated as potential influences on career aspirations;

Contextualised Value Added: Secondary school academic effectiveness scores created by the DfE represent the relative progress of students within the school from the end of KS2 to KS4;

Ofsted quality judgements: Two judgements were tested: The 'Overall effectiveness of the school' and 'How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being'.

Students' views of school: in both Year 9 (Emphasis on learning, Behaviour climate of school, Head teacher qualities, School environment, Valuing students, School/Learning resources, Teacher discipline and care and Teacher support) and Year 11 (Teacher professional focus, Positive relationships, Monitoring students, Formative feedback and Academic ethos).

None of the aspects of secondary school above were found to predict higher or lower ideal career aspirations, once background influences had been accounted for. This is in contrast to findings for GCSE attainment, social behaviour and some dispositions. This again suggests aspirations for occupations are shaped more by out of school factors related to family and may be local neighbourhood opportunities.

Section 8: Predicting full-time education routes

Student characteristics

- Young people with behavioural problems during the early years were less likely to follow a higher academic route.

Family characteristics

- Both mothers' and fathers' highest qualification levels strongly predicted following a higher academic route.
- Students from higher income families were more likely to follow a higher academic route.
- Students whose parents were in lower SES groups were almost four times more likely to follow a lower academic route those from the highest SES families.
- A more stimulating early years HLE predicted low probabilities of following a vocational route.
- High levels of 'academic enrichment' in KS3 predicted higher probability of following a higher academic route.

Pre-school, primary and secondary school

- Pre-school attendance, duration, quality and effectiveness predicted positive probabilities of a higher academic route and negative probabilities of a lower academic/vocational route.
- Primary school academic effectiveness predicted higher academic/vocational routes.
- Students attending an 'outstanding' secondary school (quality of learning) were more likely to follow a higher academic route.
- Positive 'behavioural climate' and 'positive relationships' between teachers and students predicted higher likelihood of following a higher academic route and lower likelihood of following a vocational route.

Secondary school attainment

- GCSE English and maths results were significant predictors of post-16 destinations.
- When taking into account the GCSE results, age, ethnicity, number of siblings and KS3 HLE were significant predictors of different post-16 destinations.
- Pre-school attendance, duration and quality were all predictors of following higher or lower academic routes when GCSE results were controlled.

Just as the NEET group were of particular interest, so too were those students who remained in education post-16. Not all those remaining in education followed the same pathways and this group cannot be seen as homogenous. Having completed compulsory schooling, students beyond Year 11 who stay in school/college make choices of particular curriculum subjects or courses that determine their later entry into Higher Education or employment. Having information on post GCSE examination routes, from the Life After Year 11 questionnaire, the EPPSE study was able to conduct analyses that explored what individual, background and institutional characteristics predicted which routes those who remained in full-time education beyond 16 would take. Based on students' responses on the' Life After Year 11' (Q1- Full-Time Education) questionnaire, three dichotomous outcome measures were constructed:

1) Higher academic route: those who took 4 or more AS/A levels (versus all who had returned any of the four "Life After Year 11" questionnaires)
2) Lower academic route: those who took 3 or fewer AS/A levels (versus those who are on a higher academic route)
3) Vocational route: those who did not take any AS/A levels, but returned a 'Life After Year 11'-Q1- Full-Time Education questionnaire (versus all the others who were either on higher or lower academic routes).

Table 8.1- Table 8.3 present the distributions of these three outcome measures. More than 40% of the students who returned a 'Life After Year 11' questionnaire (n=1737) reported that they were taking four or more AS/A levels. This represents about 26% of the EPPSE sample tracked up to the end of KS4 (n=2744). Almost 28% of students were taking three or fewer AS/A levels and another 40% reported taking a vocational route (representing 19% of the tracked sample).

Table 8.1: EPPSE students taking a higher academic route

Taking a higher academic route	Higher academic route		
	N	% of returned Q1-Q4 (n=1737)	% of tracked sample (n=2744)
Yes	718	41.3	26.2
No	1019	58.7	37.1
Total	1737	100.0	63.3

Table 8.2: EPPSE students taking a lower academic route

Taking a lower academic route	Lower academic route		
	N	% of those taking AS/A levels (n=993)	% of tracked sample (n=2744)
Yes	275	27.7	10.0
No	718	72.3	26.2
Total	993	100.0	36.2

Table 8.3: EPPSE students taking a vocational route

Taking a vocational route	Vocational route		
	N	% of returned Q1 (n=1503)	% of tracked sample (n=2744)
Yes	510	33.9	18.6
No	993	66.1	36.2
Total	1503	100.0	54.8

8.1: The influence of individual and family characteristics as predictors of full-time education routes

Individual measures

The relative strength of the associations between individual level predictors and various post-16 routes are presented in Table 8.4. The results of multilevel logistic modelling are presented in terms of odds ratios[23].

When compared with White UK students and controlling for the influences of other characteristics, students of Bangladeshi, Black African, Pakistani and Indian heritages were more likely to follow a higher academic route (i.e., taking 4 or more A-levels) and less likely to follow a vocational route (**Error! Reference source not found.**). Students hose parents reported early behavioural problems at the entry to the study were less likely to follow a higher academic route (OR=0.61) than students whose parents did not report these problems. Students from larger families with 3 siblings or more were also less likely to be on a higher academic route than students from smaller families (OR=0.45).

8.1.1: Family measures

The following family characteristics had statistically significant net effects as predictors of taking a higher academic route: parents' qualification levels, family SES and family salary.

[23] Odds Ratios represent the odds of achieving certain benchmark performance indicators given certain characteristics relative to the odds of the reference group.

8.1.1.1: Parent's highest qualification level

In the current analyses parents' qualification level, collected at age 3/5 was tested in two ways: 1) as individual measures for mother's and father's qualification levels and 2) as a combined measure of parents' highest qualification level. When tested individually, the mother's highest qualification level was a significant and positive predictor of post-16 destinations. Thus, students whose mothers were more qualified (having a degree or higher degree) were also significantly more likely to follow a higher academic route (OR=3.57) and less likely to be on lower academic (OR=0.28) or vocational (OR=0.41) routes than students whose mothers did not have any qualifications (Table 8.4). Students whose fathers had a degree or higher degree were significantly less likely to follow a vocational route (OR=0.33) than students whose fathers did not have any qualifications.

Analyses using the combined measure (calculated by taking into account the highest qualification level of either parent) showed that students whose parents have a higher degree were almost five times more likely to follow a higher academic route than students whose parents did not have any qualifications (OR=4.86, Table 8.4). The same group of students had the lowest probability of following a vocational route (OR=0.09, Table 8.4).

8.1.1.2: Family SES

In previous analyses, the family SES collected at age 3/5 proved to be the best and most robust SES predictor of later academic attainment. This measure also had the highest response rate. Therefore, the contextualised models based on this predictor are reported in these analyses. It should be noted that this does not mean SES was the strongest predictor as parents' qualifications were stronger.

When compared with the 'professional, non-manual' category (representing the highest possible SES category), lower SES (for example, 'skilled-manual') categories predicted smaller probabilities of taking a higher academic route (OR=0.37), however significantly higher probabilities of taking a lower academic route (OR=3.92). Family SES was not found to be a significant predictor of taking a vocational route for the EPPSE sample.

8.1.1.3: Family salary

Family average salary data (collected when the children were in KS1 and not contemporaneous) showed that students in households with higher incomes (more than £67,500) were much more likely to be on a higher academic route (OR=2.58) and less likely to be on a vocational route (OR=0.33) than students from families with no earned income.

8.1.2: Home learning environment

8.1.2.1: Early years home learning environment (early years HLE)

Measures of the home learning environment were obtained from parents' responses at four time points: at entry to study, KS1, KS2 and KS3. The indicators of the HLE in early years were based on the frequency of specific activities involving the child, as reported by parents when children were recruited to the study during the pre-school period (i.e., teaching the child the alphabet, playing with letters and numbers, library visits, reading to the child, teaching the child songs or nursery rhymes). These measures were combined to form an overall early years HLE index with scores that could vary between 0 (very low early years HLE) and 49 (very high early years HLE) (Melhuish et al., 2008).

The overall index of the early years HLE significantly predicted only the vocational route after controlling for parents' SES, income and educational level. Students in the top early years HLE category were the least likely to follow a vocational route when compared to students in the lowest early years HLE group (OR=0.34).

8.1.2.2: KS1 HLE

As the learning environment at home during the pre-school period was shown to have a strong impact on children's academic attainment during pre-school, parents were again surveyed during KS1 (age 6-7 years) about their interactions with their child at home via a questionnaire. They reported on activities such as the frequency of reading to/with the child, taking the child out on educational visits, computing activities, sport activities, dance, etc. It should be noted that the KS1 HLE measures were collected by questionnaire survey rather than interview and thus the data are not directly comparable to the measure of early years HLE collected via face-to face-interviews.

The individual KS1 HLE measures have been aggregated to form four factors representing different parental activities during KS1 'home computing', 'one-to-one interaction', 'expressive play' and 'enrichment outings' (Sammons et al., 2008a; 2008b)[24]. All four factors were tested in models that controlled for the individual student and family characteristics, but also for early years HLE. The latter remained the stronger predictor even when KS1 HLE measures were included.

Only moderate level of the 'enrichment outings' factor was statistically significant predictor of an increased probability of taking a higher academic route (OR=1.68). The same factor significantly predicted a decreased probability of being on a vocational route (OR=0.61).

24 Based on EFA and CFA to identify latent factors.

8.1.2.3: KS3 HLE

KS3 HLE measures incorporate information sourced not just from the parent, but from the students themselves. This way we take account of the likely increased independence of adolescents from parents at age 14 and the young person's own potential influence exerted over the home learning environment.

Individual items were submitted to factor analysis and five factors were extracted: 'learning support and resources', 'computer use', 'parental interest in school', 'academic enrichment' and 'parental academic supervision'. These factors were tested with respect to their influence on academic attainment at the end of Year 11. The models controlled for early years HLE and the statistically significant KS1 and KS2 HLE specific factors.

Medium and high levels of 'academic enrichment' in KS3 significantly predicted increased probabilities of being on a higher academic route (OR=2.09; 3.73) and smaller probabilities of following a vocational route (OR=0.41; 0.32) (see Table 8.4). High levels of 'academic enrichment' also significantly predicted smaller probabilities of following a lower academic route (OR=0.36).

Medium levels of 'parental interest' in KS3 significantly predicted higher probabilities of following a vocational route when compared with low levels of 'parental interest' (OR=1.59).

Table 8.4: Predicting the probabilities of following different Post-16 destinations

Background characteristics	Higher academic route	Lower academic route	Vocational route
Individual student measures	**OR[25]**	**OR**	**OR**
Ethnicity	7.63(B)	ns	0.21(P,B)
Early behavioural problems	0.61	ns	ns
Number of siblings	0.45	ns	ns
Family measures			
KS1 family salary	2.58	0.40	0.33
Parents' highest SES at age 3/5	0.37	3.92	ns
Parents' highest qualifications level at age 3/5	4.86	0.38	0.09
Mothers' highest qualifications level at age 3/5[26]	3.57	0.28	0.41
Fathers' highest qualifications level at age 3/5[27]	1.96	ns	0.33
HLE measures			
Early years HLE	ns	ns	0.34
KS1 HLE outing (medium)	1.68	ns	0.61
KS3 HLE academic enrichment (high)	3.73	0.36	0.32
KS3 HLE parental interest (medium)	ns	ns	1.59

B=Bangladeshi; P=Pakistani ns=not statistically significant

25 Odds Ratios represent the odds of achieving certain benchmark performance indicators given certain characteristics relative to the odds of the reference group.

26 This measure was tested in different models than the models that included the combined measure.

27 This measure was tested in different models than the models that included the combined measure.

8.1.3: Neighbourhood characteristics

When analysing the broader social context like the neighbourhood environment in which the child lived while in pre-school and primary school, only the percentage of White British citizens in the neighbourhood was a significant predictor of later career paths (see Table 8.5). An increased percentage of White British residents in the neighbourhood predicted significantly smaller probabilities of following a higher academic route (OR=0.99) and higher probabilities to follow a lower academic route (OR=1.03)[28].

Table 8.5: Neighbourhood measures predicting Post-16 destinations

Neighbourhood measures	Higher academic route		Lower academic route		Vocational route	
Fixed effects (continuous)	**OR**	**Sig**	**OR**	**Sig**	**OR**	**Sig**
IMD		ns		ns		ns
IDACI		ns		ns		ns
% White British	0.99	*	1.03	***		ns
Crime		ns		ns		ns
Unemployment		ns		ns		ns

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001 ns=not statistically significant

8.1.4: Influence of pre-school, primary and secondary school

The extent to which measures of students' pre-school, primary and secondary school experiences continued to predict academic routes beyond the end of compulsory education was investigated.

8.1.4.1: Pre-school

In order to examine any possible continued effects of pre-school on students' later destinations, four aspects of the pre-school experiences was considered:

- attendance at a pre-school centre compared with no pre-school
- pre-school duration (in months)
- pre-school quality
- pre-school effectiveness.

Having attended any pre-school centre showed a statistically significant effect on predicting a much higher probability of following a higher academic route (OR=2.79) and much smaller probabilities of taking a lower academic (OR=0.18) or vocational (OR=0.56) routes (see Table 8.6).

28 Meaning that for one-unit increase in % White British, we expect to see 1% decrease in the odds of being on a higher academic route or a 3% increase in the odds of being on a lower academic route.

Table 8.6: Pre-school attendance predicting Post-16 destinations

Fixed effects	Higher academic route		Lower academic route		Vocational route	
	OR	Sig	OR	Sig	OR	Sig
Pre-school (compared with no pre-school)	2.79	**	0.18	***	0.56	*
Number of students	1437		785		1224	
Number of schools	439		311		404	
% Reduction school variance	63.3		-4.6		71.5	

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

The duration of pre-school (in months) showed strong and significant effects on Post-16 destination routes. Students who had attended a pre-school for more than 3 years had the highest probability of following a higher academic route (OR=4.38, see Table 8.7). Moreover, students who had attended between 2 and 3 years were three times more likely to take a higher academic route than students who had not attended a pre-school. Attending a pre-school for longer time also reduced the likelihood of following a lower academic or vocational route by half.

Table 8.7: Pre-school duration predicting Post-16 destinations

Fixed effects	Higher academic route		Lower academic route		Vocational route	
Pre-school duration (compared with no pre-school)	OR	Sig	OR	OR	Sig	OR
0-12 months	2.44	*	0.16	**	0.61	
12-24 months	2.79	**	0.18	**	0.56	
24-36 months	3.04	**	0.17	**	0.49	*
>36 months	4.38	***	0.07	***	0.52	
Number of students	1422		774		1211	
Number of schools	435		306		399	
% Reduction school variance	65.0		-6.6		75.0	

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Pre-school quality was measured with two different scales ECERS-R and ECERS-E (Sylva et al., 1999; 2006). Previous reports had found that the ECERS-E measure, which focuses on the education aspects of pre-school, predicted the most consistent positive effects upon academic attainment at younger ages. In this set of analyses, both ECERS-E and ECERS-R measures were tested. The sample was divided into groups of students whose pre-school experience could be classified as ranging from no quality (i.e., the no pre-school group) through low, medium and high quality, based on individual pre-school centres' ECERS-E/R scores.

Students who had attended high quality (ECERS-E) pre-schools were three times more likely to pursue a higher academic route than students who had not attended pre-school (OR=3.33). The same group of students were significantly less likely to follow a lower academic (OR=0.21) or vocational (OR=0.36) routes (see Table 8.8). The quality gradient effect was not as strong as that revealed for duration. When pre-school quality was measured by ECERS-R a less clear pattern emerged, indicating an overall pre-school effect rather than a quality gradient effect (Table 8.9).

Table 8.8: Pre-school quality (ECERS-E) predicting Post-16 destinations

Fixed effects	**Higher academic route**		**Lower academic route**		**Vocational route**	
Pre-school quality (compared with no pre-school)	**OR**	**Sig**	**OR**	**Sig**	**OR**	**Sig**
Low quality	2.17		0.26	*	0.68	
Medium quality	2.66	**	0.16	***	0.67	
High quality	3.33	**	0.21	**	0.36	**
Number of students		1437		785		1224
Number of schools		439		311		404
% Reduction school variance		63.2		7.4		79.8

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table 8.9: Pre-school quality (ECERS-R) predicting Post-16 destinations

Fixed effects	**Academic route**		**Lower academic route**		**Vocational**	
Pre-school quality (compared with no pre-school)	**OR**	**Sig**	**OR**	**Sig**	**OR**	**Sig**
Low quality	2.67	*	0.23	*	0.52	
Medium quality	2.81	**	0.15	***	0.72	
High quality	2.79	**	0.22	**	0.34	***
Number of students		1437		785		1224
Number of schools		439		311		404
% Reduction school variance		63.3		3.0		93.2

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Measures of pre-school centre effectiveness were calculated separately for ‘pre-reading’ and ‘early number concepts’ for all 141 pre-school centres in the study, representing the residuals from multilevel value added models predicting academic attainment (at the end of pre-school) of students who had attended a pre-school centre, controlling for their prior attainment at entry to the study and background influences (Sammons et al., 2002).

Increased levels of pre-school effectiveness (pre-reading) significantly predicted larger probabilities of following a higher academic route (OR=3.06) and smaller probabilities of following a lower academic route (OR=0.17, Table 8.10). Similarly, pre-school effectiveness measured in terms of early number concepts also significantly predicted larger probabilities of taking a higher academic route, the effect being even stronger, (OR=4.50) and smaller probabilities of taking fewer AS/A levels or taking a vocational route (Table 8.11).

Table 8.10: Pre-school effectiveness (pre-reading) predicting Post-16 destinations

Fixed effects	**Higher academic route**		**Lower academic route**		**Vocational Route**	
Pre-school effectiveness - pre-reading (compared with no pre-school)	**OR**	**Sig**	**OR**	**Sig**	**OR**	**Sig**
Low effectiveness	2.89	**	0.19	**	0.46	*
Medium effectiveness	2.64	**	0.18	**	0.61	
High effectiveness	3.06	**	0.17	**	0.56	
Number of students		1437		785		1224
Number of schools		439		311		404
% Reduction school variance		63.7		-4.7		71.4

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table 8.11: Pre-school effectiveness (early number concepts) predicting Post-16 destinations

Fixed effects	**Higher academic route**		**Lower academic route**		**Vocational Route**	
Pre-school effectiveness - early number concepts (compared with no pre-school)	**OR**	**Sig**	**OR**	**Sig**	**OR**	**Sig**
Low effectiveness	2.55	*	0.21	**	0.60	
Medium effectiveness	2.37	*	0.20	**	0.64	
High effectiveness	4.50	***	0.13	***	0.37	**
Number of students		1437		785		1224
Number of schools		439		311		404
% Reduction school variance		63.5		-2.1		75.8

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

8.1.4.2: Primary school

Earlier in the EPPSE study, measures of the academic effectiveness of the primary school students had attended were derived. Value added effectiveness measures for primary schools were calculated using National Assessment data for all primary schools in England linking KS1 and KS2 results. Separate indicators were calculated for the different core curriculum subjects English, maths and science (Melhuish et al., 2006a; 2006b). These provided residual measures of the academic success of individual primary schools in promoting primary school students' academic progress. Measures related to the primary school EPPSE students attended were incorporated into the EPPSE database. For each EPPSE student, these measures provide indicators of the academic quality of their primary school.

The indicator of overall primary school academic effectiveness predicted EPPSE students' attainment and progress in KS2 and continued to predict academic attainment in secondary school in KS3 and KS4. Primary school academic effectiveness measures were included in the multilevel logistic models that predicted Post-16 destinations.

The primary school academic effectiveness residual indicator calculated for English was a significant predictor of post-16 destinations. Students who had previously attended a highly academic effective primary school were twice as likely to follow a higher academic route as students who had attended a low academically effective primary school (OR=2.15, Table 8.12). The same group of students were much less likely to follow a vocational route (OR=0.36). The measure of primary school academic effectiveness for maths was not a significant predictor. This is interesting as when the students were younger only the maths primary school measure of academic effectiveness predicted attainment and progress. These maths findings are in line with those on academic attainment and progress and on overall GCSE results. The effects of primary schools on attainment are longer lasting, as they seem to give a lasting boost to attainment that in turn shapes post-16 pathways

Table 8.12: Primary school academic effectiveness (English) predicting Post-16 destinations

Fixed effects	**Higher academic route**		**Lower academic route**		**Vocational route**	
Primary school effectiveness – English (compared with low effectiveness)	**OR**	**Sig**	**OR**	**Sig**	**OR**	**Sig**
Missing	1.00			ns	0.84	
Medium effectiveness	1.18				0.70	
High effectiveness	2.15	**			0.36	**
Number of students		1437				1224
Number of schools		439				404
% Reduction school variance		58.2				58.6

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001 ns=not statistically significant

8.1.4.3: Secondary school

Previous analyses showed that the secondary school measures of academic effectiveness and quality significantly predicted academic attainment in KS3 and KS4. It is therefore important to establish whether the same indicators[29] would predict students' destinations after completing compulsory education. Only one measure of secondary school quality was a significant predictor of post-16 destinations.

[29] Details about these indicators can be found in Sammons et al., (2014b).

EPPSE students attending secondary schools classified by Ofsted judgements as 'outstanding' based on the 'quality of pupils' learning and their progress' were twice as likely to follow a higher academic route as students attending an 'inadequate' secondary school (OR=2.25). Students who attended a 'satisfactory' secondary school were more likely to follow a vocational route (OR=1.92, Table 8.13).

Table 8.13: Secondary school quality predicting Post-16 destinations - Ofsted judgement of the quality of pupils' learning

Fixed effects	**Higher academic route**		**Lower academic route**		**Vocational route**	
The quality of pupils' learning (compared with inadequate)	**OR**	**Sig**	**OR**	**Sig**	**OR**	**Sig**
Outstanding	2.25	*		ns	0.51	
Good	0.80				1.56	
Satisfactory	0.76				1.92	*
Missing	0.52				1.73	
Number of students	1437				1224	
Number of schools	439				404	
% Reduction school variance	71.0				86.5	

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001 ns=not statistically significant

8.2: Students' views of school in Year 9 and Year 11

In KS4, students' perceptions of their secondary school reported in Year 9 and Year 11 were significant to be predictors of GCSE results. For the post-16 destinations, only the predictors that were previously found as the strongest were tested and were included in one model. The Year 9 'behaviour climate' factor and the Year 11 'positive relationships' factor both were significant predictors of the likelihood of continuing on a higher academic route (Table 8.14).

Table 8.14: Year 9 and Year 11 views of schools predicting Post-16 destinations (tested together)

Fixed effects (continuous)	**Higher academic route**		**Vocational route**	
Year 9 views of school	**OR**	**Sig**	**OR**	**Sig**
Behaviour climate	2.29	***	.29	***
Positive relationships	1.73	**		ns

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001 ns=not statistically significant

8.3: The influence of GCSE outcomes on post-16 destinations

This section, explores the EPPSE students' post-16 destinations while controlling for their GCSE results. The GCSE results at the end of Year 11 provide the baseline measures for the analyses of students' progression after compulsory education. This shows whether the same group of students are doing relatively better or worse in their later academic choices than would be predicted by their earlier GCSE results.

Results show that GCSE outcomes affect academic choices and opportunities that might be available later. Table 8.15 shows that grades in both GCSE English and maths significantly predicted Post-16 destinations, being positive predictors of higher academic route and negative predictors of lower academic and vocational routes. Hodgson and Spours (2012a; 2013) found similar results when examining the retention and attainment of 16-19 year olds in London.

Table 8.15: GCSE outcomes predicting Post-16 destinations

Fixed effects	Higher academic route		Lower academic route		Vocational Route	
KS4 Prior attainment	**OR**	**Sig**	**OR**	**Sig**	**OR**	**Sig**
GCSE Maths	1.13	***	.92	***	.89	***
GCSE English	1.15	***	.88	***	.88	***
Number of students		1537		893		1335
Number of schools		503		376		471
% Reduction school variance		53.16		11.35		93.39

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

8.4: The influence of different individual student, family and home learning environment characteristics as predictors of students' destinations given their GCSE attainment

When controlling for background characteristics and the GCSE grades in English and maths, older students were more likely to take a vocational route (OR=1.06) than younger students. Black African students were much more likely to follow a higher academic route (OR=8.74), while Pakistani and Indian students were less likely to follow a vocational route when taking into account their prior GCSE results and compared with White UK students. However, students coming from larger families (3 or more siblings) were less likely to follow a higher academic route (OR=0.47) when compared with students who did not have any siblings at entry to study.

Students with more opportunities for academic enrichment activities in the home (medium levels) at age 14 were more likely to follow a higher academic route (OR=1.49) and less likely to follow a vocational route (OR=0.58) than students who rarely engaged in such activities. Students whose parents showed some interest (medium levels) in their school work were more likely to follow a vocational route (OR=1.85) than those whose parents showed low interest.

Neighbourhood and school context had weak effects of similar size. An increased percentage of White British residents in the neighbourhood and the percentage of FSM students at school level predicted significantly higher probabilities to follow a lower academic route (both OR=1.03)[30].

8.5: Pre-school, primary and secondary school as predictors of students' destinations given their GCSE attainment

Again controlling for GCSE results, pre-school attendance and duration remained significant predictors of following higher academic routes and the effects were moderately strong. Measures of primary school academic effectiveness, secondary school academic effectiveness and quality did not have any significant effects on the types of routes students followed after Year 11, when we took into account their GCSE results.

Table 8.16 shows that attending a pre-school significantly and positively predicted student's progression on a higher academic route (OR=2.81) and negatively predicted following a lower academic route (OR=0.20).

Table 8.16: Pre-school attendance predicting Post-16 destinations when controlling for GCSEs

Fixed effects	Higher academic route		Lower academic route		Vocational Route	
	OR	Sig	OR	Sig	OR	Sig
Pre-school (compared with no pre-school)	2.81	*	0.20	**		ns
Number of students	1406		784			
Number of schools	429		310			
% Reduction school variance	51.17		-21.23			

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001 ns=not statistically significant

[30] Meaning that for one-unit increase in % White British, we expect to see a 3% increase in the odds of following a lower academic route.

The amount of time in months spent in pre-school also had a positive effect on students' progression with the highest probabilities being found for more than 3 years in pre-school (Table 8.17). Students who had attended pre-school this long were almost six times more likely to continue on a higher academic route (OR=5.85), but significantly less likely to follow a lower academic route (OR=0.07) than students who had not attended a pre-school at all.

Table 8.17: Pre-school duration predicting Post-16 destinations when controlling for GCSEs

Fixed effects	**Higher academic route**		**Lower academic route**		**Vocational Route**	
Pre-school duration (compared with no pre-school)	**OR**	**Sig**	**OR**	**OR**	**Sig**	**OR**
0-12 months	2.63	*	0.18	**		ns
12-24 months	2.79	*	0.21	**		
24-36 months	3.16	*	0.20	**		
>36 months	5.85	***	0.07	***		
Number of students		1391		773		
Number of schools		425		305		
% Reduction school variance		52.32		-20.61		

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001 ns=not statistically significant

Additionally, students who had attended a high quality pre-school (measured by ECERS-E and ECERS-R) were more likely to progress on a higher academic route (OR=3.37; OR=2.87) and less likely to progress on a lower academic route than the 'home' group (OR=0.23; OR=0.24, see Table 8.18 and Table 8.19).

Table 8.18: Pre-school quality (ECERS-E) predicting Post-16 destinations when controlling for GCSEs

Fixed effects	**Higher academic route**		**Lower academic route**		**Vocational Route**	
Pre-school quality (compared with no pre-school)	**OR**	**Sig**	**OR**	**Sig**	**OR**	**Sig**
Low quality	1.81		0.36			ns
Medium quality	2.79	*	0.18	**		
High quality	3.37	**	0.23	*		
Number of students		1406		784		
Number of schools		429		310		
% Reduction school variance		51.04		-8.21		

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001 ns=not statistically significant

Table 8.19: Pre-school quality (ECERS-R) predicting Post-16 destinations when controlling for GCSEs

Fixed effects	**Academic route**		**Lower academic route**		**Vocational**	
Pre-school quality (compared with no pre-school)	**OR**	**Sig**	**OR**	**Sig**	**OR**	**Sig**
Low quality	2.43		0.31			ns
Medium quality	2.88	*	0.17	**		
High quality	2.87	*	0.24	*		
Number of students	1406		784			
Number of schools	429		310			
% Reduction school variance	51.50		-13.77			

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001 ns=not statistically significant

For measures of pre-school effectiveness there was no clear pattern of gradated influence on students' progression, although all levels of effectiveness were statistically significant. The academic effectiveness of primary and secondary school, as well as the quality of secondary school were not significant predictors of post-16 destinations when taking account of GCSE results.

Section 9: Conclusions

The EPPSE project has studied the ways that different phases of education are related to students' attainment, social behaviour and dispositions over time and how these change. Of course schools are not the only influence on students' development; the students themselves, their families and the communities they live in, all have a part to play in shaping the life course of these young people. EPPSE has studied all of these influences over a period of 15+ years with earlier reports explaining how these many influences add to our understanding of children's developmental trajectories.

The later stages of this research have revealed substantial variations in students' experiences and provide some insights into the complexity of young people's lives. Through statistical analyses predictions can be made regarding how a child will turn out on the basis of extensive knowledge of his/her family, home environment, schools, and neighbourhood. But the statistical predictions do not take into account the unique characteristics of each child, or their personal and very individual life experiences. EPPSE is a mixed methods study combining quantitative and qualitative data and this report contains some unique descriptions, gleaned from a case study approach involving interviews, which help explain why some young people are on a particular trajectory at the end of compulsory schooling. Their stories are captivating and provide much that can add to the debate about how we prepare our children for adulthood.

Looking back over earlier phases of the study (Sylva et al., 2002, 2008, 2012) the relationships between a range of outcomes and children's backgrounds becomes increasingly apparent. By the end of compulsory schooling some of the 'gaps' between groups of students appear more evident. For instance, those continuing in education tend to have more settled home lives with networks that support them and offer sound advice. What was surprising in the findings was how little the majority of young people, reported financial concerns. Money was not a key factor for those staying on in education or in choosing a job, however for those in employment it was more of a driving force. Despite these differences the majority of young people were happy and had high aspirations.

The reports from the NEET young people show more vividly the 'gaps' between the majority of young people and those, who despite being low in number, are of particular concern to society. Their experiences, told in their own words, highlight many areas for policy improvement. This group were in KS3 and KS4 during a time when there was a policy agenda that encouraged a more 'personalised' approach to the curriculum and in proving pastoral support, often through mentoring schemes. Yet despite this, they repeatedly report having little knowledge, advice and support when making career decisions. They were often confused or ignorant of the many options available to them. This was particularly evident when considering entry requirements for different jobs and training routes or more importantly when they came to transition from school to college.

These students have often had poor experiences of school with little regard for teachers. Better support, and perhaps individual ‘transition plans’ could reduce the college drop-out rate which is so highly associated with the NEET group. Once they transition into college they also need more support in selecting a worthwhile course that will stop them ‘yo-yoing’ from one short, low level course to another.

There is currently a great debate regarding the 16 – 19 qualifications framework and pathways into work for those young people outside of an academic route. Increasing the number of apprenticeships available should be a top policy priority for these young people as should the provision of high quality vocational qualifications in a variety of settings.

For the majority of young people the stage between 16 and 18 remains one of further study but they are not a homogenous group. Some are on a higher academic route and others taking more vocational qualifications. Some remain in a ‘school’ environment whilst others go join Further Education (FE) colleges. It should be noted that FE colleges now takes the majority of 16-18 year olds and are usually the form of provision that support many young people who have been ‘selected out’ of the school system. This report identifies some characteristics that predict academic and vocational routes. The individual and family characteristics are unsurprising with children from privileged background being more likely to be on a pathway leading more immediately into higher education. This pattern was repeated for young people who attended a more academically effective primary and secondary schools or ones rated more favourably by Ofsted and were given more time to gain Level 3 outcomes.

Hodgson and Spours (2012b) have argued, it is important to ensure that the 14-19 curriculum is both more inclusive and is based on a progression rather than selection logic so that fewer young people find themselves outside the mainstream or on a trajectory that jeopardises their future life chances. This is particularly important with Raising the Participation Age which *de facto* suggests that England is moving to a universal upper secondary education phase by 2015.

What is surprising, in looking at full-time education routes, is the influence of pre-school attendance, duration, effectiveness and quality, all of which significantly predict a higher academic route and negatively predict following a lower academic/vocational route. The impact of pre-school remained even after GCSE results were taken into consideration.

This report ends where the first phase of the EPPE (1997 – 2003) study began: with the impact of pre-school. The enduring impact at age 16 is a persuasive argument for the long term investment in early years education to ensure that all children have sound foundations on which to construct their trajectories as lifelong learners.

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Appendix 1: EPPSE sample cohort information and assessment points

EPPSE sample cohort information and assessment time points for the academic year (2013/14)

Cohort	DOB	Pre-school	Primary School					Secondary School		Post 16 Compulsory Education (KS5)		H.E.= 1st Year Uni (age 19)	H.E.= 2nd Year Uni (age 20)	H.E.= 3rd Year Uni (age 21)
			KS1			KS2		KS3	KS4					
		Entry to study (age 3+)	Entry to Reception (age 5)	Year 1 (age 6)	Year 2 (age 7)	Year 5 (age10)	Year 6 (age 11)	Year 9 (age 14)	Year 11 GCSE (age 16)	Year 12 A/S = (age 17)	Year 13 A = (age 18)			
1	Sept 92 – Aug 93	Sept 95– Aug 96	Sept 96– Aug 97	Sept 97– Aug 98	Sept 98 – Aug 99	Sept 02 – Aug 03	Sept 03 – Aug 04	Sept 06 – Aug 07	Sept 08 – Aug 09	Sept 09– Aug 10	Sept 10 – Aug 11	**Sept 11 – Aug 12**	Sept 12 – Aug 13	Sept 13 – Aug 14
2	Sept 93 – Aug 94	Sept 96– Aug 97	Sept 97– Aug 98	Sept 98– Aug 99	Sept 99 – Aug 00	Sept 03 – Aug 04	Sept 04 – Aug 05	Sept 07 – Aug 08	Sept 09 – Aug 10	Sept 10 – Aug 11	**Sept 11 – Aug 12**	Sept 12 – Aug 13	Sept 13 – Aug 14	Sept 14 – Aug 15
3	Sept 94 – Aug 95	Sept 97– Aug 98	Sept 98– Aug 99	Sept 99 – Aug 00	Sept 00 – Aug 01	Sept 04 – Aug 05	Sept 05 – Aug 06	Sept 08 – Aug 09	Sept 10 – Aug 11	**Sept 11 – Aug 12**	Sept 12 – Aug 13	Sept 13 – Aug 14	Sept 14 – Aug 15	Sept 15 – Aug 16
4	Sept 95 – Aug 96	Sept 98– Aug 99	Sept 99– Aug 00	Sept 00 – Aug 01	Sept 01 – Aug 02	Sept 05 – Aug 06	Sept 06 – Aug 07	Sept 09 – Aug 10	**Sept 11 – Aug 12**	Sept 12 – Aug 13	Sept 13 – Aug 14	Sept 14 – Aug 15	Sept 15 – Aug 16	Sept 16 – Aug 17

Key Stage (KS) Assessment time points

KS1 National Assessments (Year 2)

KS2 National Assessments (Year 6)

KS3 National Assessments (Year 9)

KS4 GCSEs (Year 11)

Appendix 2: Descriptive tables – common questions

Table A2.1: Who lives with you?

Who lives with you?	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Natural mother										
Yes	1427	95.0	112	89.6	20	87.0	67	77.9	1626	93.7
No	75	5.0	13	10.4	3	13.0	19	22.1	110	6.3
Total	1502	100	125	100	23	100	86	100	1736	100
Natural father										
Yes	956	63.6	80	64.0	9	39.1	33	38.4	1078	62.1
No	546	36.4	45	36.0	14	60.9	53	61.6	658	37.9
Total	1502	100	125	100	23	100	86	100	1736	100
Grandparent										
Yes	58	3.9	5	4.0	1	4.3	4	4.7	68	3.9
No	1444	96.1	120	96.0	22	95.7	82	95.3	1668	96.1
Total	1502	100	125	100	23	100	86	100	1736	100
Step mother										
Yes	21	1.4	1	0.8	2	8.7	2	2.3	26	1.5
No	1481	98.6	124	99.2	21	91.3	84	97.7	1710	98.5
Total	1502	100	125	100	23	100	86	100	1736	100
Aunt or uncle										
Yes	10	0.7	1	0.8	0	0.0	1	1.2	12	0.7
No	1492	99.3	124	99.2	23	100	85	98.8	1724	99.3
Total	1502	100	125	100	23	100	86	100	1736	100
Other mother										
Yes	9	0.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	2.3	11	0.6
No	1493	99.4	125	100	23	100	84	97.7	1725	99.4
Total	1502	100	125	100	23	100	86	100	1736	100
Other father										
Yes	6	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	0.3
No	1496	99.6	125	100	23	100	86	100	1730	99.7
Total	1502	100	125	100	23	100	86	100	1736	100
Lodgers										
Yes	14	0.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.2	15	0.9
No	1487	99.1	125	100	23	100	85	98.8	1720	99.1
Total	1501	100	125	100	23	100	86	100	1735	100
How many Lodgers										
0	1487	99.0	125	100	23	100	85	98.8	1720	99.1
1	12	0.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	12	0.7
2	3	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.2	4	0.2
Total	1502	100	125	100	23	100	86	100	1736	100
Brothers										
Yes	739	49.3	58	46.4	14	60.9	37	43.0	848	48.9
No	761	50.7	67	53.6	9	39.1	49	57.0	886	51.1
Total	1500	100	125	100	23	100	86	100	1734	100

Who lives with you?	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
How many Brothers										
0	761	51.4	67	54.9	9	39.1	49	58.3	886	51.8
1	517	34.9	41	33.6	8	34.8	23	27.4	589	34.4
2	156	10.5	10	8.2	4	17.4	8	9.5	178	10.4
3	32	2.2	3	2.5	1	4.3	2	2.4	38	2.2
4	10	0.7	1	0.8	1	4.3	1	1.2	13	0.8
5	2	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.2	3	0.2
6	2	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.1
7	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
Total	1481	100	122	100	23	100	84	100	1710	100
Sisters										
Yes	668	44.6	54	43.2	12	52.2	29	33.7	763	44.1
No	830	55.4	71	56.8	11	47.8	57	66.3	969	55.9
Total	1498	100	125	100	23	100	86	100	1732	100
How many Sisters										
0	832	55.8	71	58.7	11	47.8	57	67.9	971	56.5
1	485	32.6	33	27.3	9	39.1	18	21.4	545	31.7
2	137	9.2	14	11.6	3	13.0	7	8.3	161	9.4
3	30	2.0	2	1.7	0	0.0	1	1.2	33	1.9
4	4	0.3	1	0.8	0	0.0	1	1.2	6	0.3
5	2	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.1
Total	1490	100	121	100	23	100	84	100	1718	100
Friends										
Yes	2	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.2	3	0.2
No	1500	99.9	125	100	23	100	85	98.8	1733	99.8
Total	1502	100	125	100	23	100	86	100	1736	100
Own wife/husband/partner										
Yes	7	0.5	3	2.4	0	0.0	8	9.3	18	1.0
No	1495	99.5	122	97.6	23	100	78	90.7	1718	99.0
Total	1502	100	125	100	23	100	86	100	1736	100
Own son/daughter										
Yes	2	0.1	1	0.8	0	0.0	10	11.6	13	0.7
No	1500	99.9	124	99.2	23	100	76	88.4	1723	99.3
Total	1502	100	125	100	23	100	86	100	1736	100
Living on my own										
Yes	4	0.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.2	5	0.3
No	1498	99.7	125	100	23	100	85	98.8	1731	99.7
Total	1502	100	125	100	23	100	86	100	1736	100
In Youth offenders care										
No	1502	100	125	100	23	100	86	100	1736	100
Total	1502	100	125	100	23	100	86	100	1736	100

Who lives with you?	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
In Social services cares										
Yes	2	0.1	1	0.8	1	4.3	1	1.2	5	0.3
No	1500	99.9	124	99.2	22	95.7	85	98.8	1731	99.7
Total	1502	100	125	100	23	100	86	100	1736	100
Other										
Yes	27	1.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	3.5	30	1.7
No	1475	98.2	125	100	23	100	83	96.5	1706	98.3
Total	1502	100	125	100	23	100	86	100	1736	100

Table A2.2: Do you look after (are a carer for) someone?

Do you look after (are a carer for) someone?	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	75	5.0	2	1.6	1	4.3	18	21.2	96	5.6
No	1416	95.0	120	98.4	22	95.7	67	78.8	1625	94.4
Total	1491	100	122	100	23	100	85	100	1721	100
Are you looking after										
Parent										
Yes	19	25.7	2	100	1	100	5	27.8	27	28.4
No	55	74.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	13	72.2	68	71.6
Total	74	100	2	100	1	100	18	100	95	100
Brother/sister										
Yes	35	47.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	22.2	39	41.1
No	39	52.7	2	100	1	100	14	77.8	56	58.9
Total	74	100	2	100	1	100	18	100	95	100
Grandparent										
Yes	12	16.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	11.1	14	14.7
No	62	83.8	2	100	1	100	16	88.9	81	85.3
Total	74	100	2	100	1	100	18	100	95	100
Other member of family										
Yes	3	4.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	3.2
No	71	95.9	2	100	1	100	18	100	92	96.8
Total	74	100	2	100	1	100	18	100	95	100
Own child										
Yes	3	4.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	50.0	12	12.6
No	71	95.9	2	100	1	100	9	50.0	83	87.4
Total	74	100	2	100	1	100	18	100	95	100
Any 'other'										
Yes	5	6.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	5.3
No	69	93.2	2	100	1	100	18	100	90	94.7
Total	74	100	2	100	1	100	18	100	95	100
Who else?										
No	1498	99.7	125	100	23	100	86	100	1732	99.7
Best Friend	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
Elderly lady	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
Friend	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
Girlfriend's sister	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
Neighbours child	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
Total	1503	100	125	100	23	100	86	100	1737	100
How often do you have a carer's role?										
Every day	38	50.7	2	100	0	0.0	14	77.8	54	56.3
Every weekend	6	8.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	6.3
Once or twice a week	31	41.3	0	0.0	1	100	4	22.2	36	37.5
Total	75	100	2	100	1	100	18	100	96	100

Table A2.3: Who did you talk to, in Year 11, for advice on future plans

Did you talk to...in Year 11 for advice on future plans	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Form tutor										
Yes	991	66.9	67	54.5	11	47.8	45	52.9	1114	65.0
No	491	33.1	56	45.5	12	52.2	40	47.1	599	35.0
Total	1482	100	123	100	23	100	85	100	1713	100
Form Career Adviser										
Yes	845	57.0	71	57.7	10	43.5	53	62.4	979	57.2
No	637	43.0	52	42.3	13	56.5	32	37.6	734	42.8
Total	1482	100	123	100	23	100	85	100	1713	100
Any other teacher										
Yes	776	52.4	42	34.1	8	34.8	38	44.7	864	50.4
No	706	47.6	81	65.9	15	65.2	47	55.3	849	49.6
Total	1482	100	123	100	23	100	85	100	1713	100
Connexions Personal Adviser										
Yes	622	41.9	67	54.5	12	52.2	46	54.1	747	43.6
No	862	58.1	56	45.5	11	47.8	39	45.9	968	56.4
Total	1484	100	123	100	23	100	85	100	1715	100
Someone else at Connexions										
Yes	246	16.6	33	26.8	5	21.7	19	22.4	303	17.7
No	1236	83.4	90	73.2	18	78.3	66	77.6	1410	82.3
Total	1482	100	123	100	23	100	85	100	1713	100
Parents										
Yes	1348	90.8	110	89.4	18	78.3	67	78.8	1543	90.0
No	136	9.2	13	10.6	5	21.7	18	21.2	172	10.0
Total	1484	100	123	100	23	100	85	100	1715	100
Grandparents										
Yes	410	27.6	49	39.8	5	21.7	21	24.7	485	28.3
No	1074	72.4	74	60.2	18	78.3	64	75.3	1230	71.7
Total	1484	100	123	100	23	100	85	100	1715	100
Brothers or sisters										
Yes	594	40.0	55	44.7	6	26.1	24	28.2	679	39.6
No	891	60.0	68	55.3	17	73.9	61	71.8	1037	60.4
Total	1485	100	123	100	23	100	85	100	1716	100
Other relatives										
Yes	426	28.7	37	30.1	4	17.4	22	25.9	489	28.5
No	1058	71.3	86	69.9	19	82.6	63	74.1	1226	71.5
Total	1484	100	123	100	23	100	85	100	1715	100
Friends										
Yes	1017	68.5	66	53.7	8	34.8	46	54.1	1137	66.3
No	468	31.5	57	46.3	15	65.2	39	45.9	579	33.7
Total	1485	100	123	100	23	100	85	100	1716	100
Boyfriend/Girlfriend										
Yes	319	21.5	35	28.5	3	13.0	25	29.4	382	22.3
No	1165	78.5	88	71.5	20	87.0	60	70.6	1333	77.7
Total	1484	100	123	100	23	100	85	100	1715	100
'Other'										
Yes other teaching staff	2	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.1
No	1501	99.9	125	100	23	100	86	100	1735	99.9
Total	1503	100	125	100	23	100	86	100	1737	100

Table A2.4: Where they helpful?

Were they helpful to you	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Form tutor										
Helpful	792	79.7	50	76.9	6	54.5	35	77.8	883	79.2
Not helpful	202	20.3	15	23.1	5	45.5	10	22.2	232	20.8
Total	994	100	65	100	11	100	45	100	1115	100
Career Adviser										
Helpful	632	74.8	49	71.0	7	70.0	44	83.0	732	74.9
Not helpful	213	25.2	20	29.0	3	30.0	9	17.0	245	25.1
Total	845	100	69	100	10	100	53	100	977	100
Any other teacher										
Helpful	690	89.3	35	87.5	7	87.5	29	76.3	761	88.6
Not helpful	83	10.7	5	12.5	1	12.5	9	23.7	98	11.4
Total	773	100	40	100	8	100	38	100	859	100
School councillor										
Helpful	43	26.5	5	31.3	1	33.3	5	45.5	54	28.1
Not helpful	119	73.5	11	68.8	2	66.7	6	54.5	138	71.9
Total	162	100	16	100	3	100	11	100	192	100
School mentor										
Helpful	120	53.1	17	68.0	2	66.7	10	76.9	149	55.8
Not helpful	106	46.9	8	32.0	1	33.3	3	23.1	118	44.2
Total	226	100	25	100	3	100	13	100	267	100
Connexions Personal Adviser										
Helpful	438	70.8	53	82.8	9	75.0	36	81.8	536	72.5
Not helpful	181	29.2	11	17.2	3	25.0	8	18.2	203	27.5
Total	619	100	64	100	12	100	44	100	739	100
Someone else at Connexions										
Helpful	137	54.6	21	70.0	3	60.0	14	77.8	175	57.6
Not helpful	114	45.4	9	30.0	2	40.0	4	22.2	129	42.4
Total	251	100	30	100	5	100	18	100	304	100
Parents										
Helpful	1264	95.0	102	94.4	14	77.8	62	93.9	1442	94.7
Not helpful	67	5.0	6	5.6	4	22.2	4	6.1	81	5.3
Total	1331	100	108	100	18	100	66	100	1523	100
Grandparents										
Helpful	324	78.8	46	95.8	4	80.0	19	90.5	393	81.0
Not helpful	87	21.2	2	4.2	1	20.0	2	9.5	92	19.0
Total	411	100	48	100	5	100	21	100	485	100
Brothers/Sisters										
Helpful	491	82.9	51	94.4	4	66.7	19	79.2	565	83.6
Not helpful	101	17.1	3	5.6	2	33.3	5	20.8	111	16.4
Total	592	100	54	100	6	100	24	100	676	100
Other relatives										
Helpful	340	80.6	35	94.6	4	100	20	95.2	399	82.4
Not helpful	82	19.4	2	5.4	0	0.0	1	4.8	85	17.6
Total	422	100	37	100	4	100	21	100	484	100

Were they helpful to you	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Friends										
Helpful	873	86.7	57	89.1	6	75.0	39	86.7	975	86.7
Not helpful	134	13.3	7	10.9	2	25.0	6	13.3	149	13.3
Total	1007	100	64	100	8	100	45	100	1124	100
Boyfriend/Girlfriend										
Helpful	234	72.9	28	82.4	1	33.3	22	88.0	285	74.4
Not helpful	87	27.1	6	17.6	2	66.7	3	12.0	98	25.6
Total	321	100	34	100	3	100	25	100	383	100
Other										
Helpful	234	72.9	28	82.4	1	33.3	22	88.0	285	74.4
Not helpful	87	27.1	6	17.6	2	66.7	3	12.0	98	25.6
Total	321	100	34	100	3	100	25	100	383	100

Table A2.5: How important are the following in choosing a job?

How important are the following in choosing a job?	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Doing interesting work										
Not at all	11	0.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	3.5	14	0.8
Not very	44	3.0	5	4.1	2	9.5	10	11.8	61	3.6
Quite	527	35.4	46	38.0	7	33.3	42	49.4	622	36.3
Very	906	60.9	70	57.9	12	57.1	30	35.3	1018	59.4
Total	1488	100	121	100	21	100	85	100	1715	100
Using your skills										
Not at all	9	0.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.2	10	0.6
Not very	51	3.4	2	1.6	0	0.0	11	12.9	64	3.7
Quite	605	40.6	41	33.6	12	57.1	31	36.5	689	40.1
Very	825	55.4	79	64.8	9	42.9	42	49.4	955	55.6
Total	1490	100	122	100	21	100	85	100	1718	100
High status										
Not at all	107	7.3	8	6.8	4	19.0	8	9.5	127	7.5
Not very	605	41.2	39	33.3	10	47.6	32	38.1	686	40.6
Quite	556	37.9	38	32.5	4	19.0	26	31.0	624	36.9
Very	200	13.6	32	27.4	3	14.3	18	21.4	253	15.0
Total	1468	100	117	100	21	100	84	100	1690	100
Getting good money										
Not at all	24	1.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.2	25	1.5
Not very	173	11.6	10	8.2	1	4.8	7	8.5	191	11.2
Quite	772	51.9	61	50.0	11	52.4	41	50.0	885	51.7
Very	519	34.9	51	41.8	9	42.9	33	40.2	612	35.7
Total	1488	100	122	100	21	100	82	100	1713	100
It leads to a better job										
Not at all	27	1.8	0	0.0	1	4.8	2	2.4	30	1.8
Not very	250	16.8	10	8.5	1	4.8	12	14.5	273	16.0
Quite	742	50.0	50	42.7	9	42.9	41	49.4	842	49.4
Very	465	31.3	57	48.7	10	47.6	28	33.7	560	32.8
Total	1484	100	117	100	21	100	83	100	1705	100
Provides more training										
Not at all	42	2.8	0	0.0	1	4.8	3	3.6	46	2.7
Not very	339	22.9	13	10.7	3	14.3	12	14.5	367	21.5
Quite	726	49.0	56	46.3	7	33.3	40	48.2	829	48.6
Very	375	25.3	52	43.0	10	47.6	28	33.7	465	27.2
Total	1482	100	121	100	21	100	83	100	1707	100
Useful to society										
Not at all	48	3.2	2	1.7	1	4.8	1	1.2	52	3.1
Not very	310	20.9	19	16.1	5	23.8	22	26.8	356	20.9
Quite	709	47.9	57	48.3	9	42.9	38	46.3	813	47.8
Very	413	27.9	40	33.9	6	28.6	21	25.6	480	28.2
Total	1480	100	118	100	21	100	82	100	1701	100

How important are the following in choosing a job?	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Is exciting										
Not at all	19	1.3	1	0.8	1	4.8	1	1.2	22	1.3
Not very	110	7.4	12	9.9	3	14.3	16	19.3	141	8.2
Quite	621	41.8	50	41.3	8	38.1	37	44.6	716	41.8
Very	736	49.5	58	47.9	9	42.9	29	34.9	832	48.6
Total	1486	100	121	100	21	100	83	100	1711	100
Involves travelling										
Not at all	219	14.8	13	11.0	5	23.8	16	19.8	253	14.9
Not very	700	47.4	51	43.2	8	38.1	49	60.5	808	47.6
Quite	376	25.5	30	25.4	3	14.3	9	11.1	418	24.6
Very	181	12.3	24	20.3	5	23.8	7	8.6	217	12.8
Total	1476	100	118	100	21	100	81	100	1696	100
Job security										
Not at all	27	1.8	0	0.0	1	4.8	1	1.2	29	1.7
Not very	142	9.6	8	6.5	1	4.8	14	17.1	165	9.6
Quite	670	45.1	44	35.8	7	33.3	36	43.9	757	44.3
Very	645	43.5	71	57.7	12	57.1	31	37.8	759	44.4
Total	1484	100	123	100	21	100	82	100	1710	100

Table A2.6: If you intend to go to University, why are you planning to go?

If you intend to go to University, why are you planning to go there?	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
To study a subject that really interests me										
Yes	1042	84.2	27	69.2	9	81.8	21	67.7	1099	83.4
No	195	15.8	12	30.8	2	18.2	10	32.3	219	16.6
Total	1237	100	39	100	11	100	31	100	1318	100
To gain a qualification for a specific job or career										
Yes	1027	83.0	33	84.6	7	63.6	24	77.4	1091	82.8
No	210	17.0	6	15.4	4	36.4	7	22.6	227	17.2
Total	1237	100	39	100	11	100	31	100	1318	100
To gain greater security in employment										
Yes	732	59.2	18	46.2	5	45.5	11	35.5	766	58.1
No	505	40.8	21	53.8	6	54.5	20	64.5	552	41.9
Total	1237	100	39	100	11	100	31	100	1318	100
To increase my earning potential										
Yes	892	72.1	21	53.8	7	63.6	11	35.5	931	70.6
No	345	27.9	18	46.2	4	36.4	20	64.5	387	29.4
Total	1237	100	39	100	11	100	31	100	1318	100
To get a higher status job										
Yes	631	51.0	24	61.5	5	45.5	11	35.5	671	50.9
No	606	49.0	15	38.5	6	54.5	20	64.5	647	49.1
Total	1237	100	39	100	11	100	31	100	1318	100
To keep my options open										
Yes	740	59.8	22	56.4	6	54.5	11	35.5	779	59.1
No	497	40.2	17	43.6	5	45.5	20	64.5	539	40.9
Total	1237	100	39	100	11	100	31	100	1318	100
For the social life										
Yes	579	46.8	10	25.6	4	36.4	9	29.0	602	45.7
No	658	53.2	29	74.4	7	63.6	22	71.0	716	54.3
Total	1237	100	39	100	11	100	31	100	1318	100
Family expects me to go										
Yes	362	29.3	3	7.7	1	9.1	5	16.1	371	28.1
No	875	70.7	36	92.3	10	90.9	26	83.9	947	71.9
Total	1237	100	39	100	11	100	31	100	1318	100
Life experiences										
Yes	25	2.0	0	0.0	1	9.1	0	0.0	26	1.8
No	1215	98.0	125	100	10	90.9	86	100	1436	98.2
Total	1240	100	125	100	11	100	86	100	1462	100
Societal/family expectations										
Yes	5	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	0.3
No	1235	99.6	125	100	11	100	86	100	1457	99.7
Total	1240	100	125	100	11	100	86	100	1462	100
Sport										
Yes	4	0.3	0	0.0	1	9.1	0	0.0	5	0.3
No	1236	99.7	125	100	10	90.9	86	100	1457	99.7
Total	1240	100	125	100	11	100	86	100	1462	100

Appendix 3: Descriptive tables – customised questions

EPPSE participants in full-time education (6th form or college)

Table 3.1: Other reasons for continuing studying full-time in school or college

What 'other' reason for continuing in full-time education	N	%
Because I needed to go to college otherwise I would have nowhere to live.	1	12.5
Close by and familiar environment	1	12.5
Didn't like school but knew college would be better	1	12.5
Due to injury couldn't do performing arts	1	12.5
Learning difficulty	1	12.5
Meet new people	1	12.5
School advised to go to college	1	12.5
Tax evasion	1	12.5

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