



Peterborough
SKILLS VISION

Peterborough Skills Survey



Opportunity Peterborough

A report by Opportunity Peterborough

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Peterborough Skills Survey

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1. Introduction

Improving skills levels is a key priority for Peterborough. Peterborough lags behind national indicators across the education spectrum and more concerning, increasing number of local companies report it difficult to find skilled labour locally. As a result work has been taking place to develop a skills approach that is driven from the bottom up, able to respond to the needs of employers, individuals, communities and support a productive, dynamic economy.

Through Opportunity Peterborough the City undertook its first 'Skills Survey' in May 2010. From responses received from around 100 companies it became very clear that the business community wanted a new local approach to skills. What has subsequently become apparent is the need for improved employer engagement that:

- Informs mainstream providers, which in turn ensures support reflects the local economy
- Shapes provision to ensure employment and skills activity meets local employer needs and provides relevant training to enable individuals to obtain work and improve their skills and help improve the economic performance of the city.
- Provides better intelligence to improve information advice and guidance and progression
- Helps stakeholders address localised issues in a targeted manner such as the NEET community and long term unemployed, both of which are entrenched Peterborough issues.

As a result, a Skills Summit was held in November 2010 which sought to gain further information from employers and the Peterborough Skills Vision was launched to drive the new approach. The Skills Vision seeks to build a broader, deeper relationship with our business community to ensure that we understand their individual and collective needs. By achieving this level of communication we are able to engage our training providers and educational institutions (HE, FE and Schools) in a conversation that will shape provision and ensure that skills and qualifications delivered in future are relevant to, and necessary, for local businesses to thrive and support local communities in accessing employment opportunities. The Skills Vision has been launched with a great deal of interest and enthusiasm from our business community and there are now nearly 300 businesses signed up. Equally the provider community have also seen the Skills Vision as an opportunity to drive standards upwards and as a result we feel as though Peterborough is on the cusp of change. This project will assist in creating positive, lasting change in the local skills arena.

A key part of this conversation with local business is the annual Peterborough Skills Survey and this report provides feedback on the outcomes from the 2011 survey.

2. Methodology

The invitation to take part in the online skills survey was sent out to Skills Vision members, Opportunity Peterborough Bondholders and Peterborough Chamber of Commerce members. Press releases on the survey were also placed in the Peterborough Evening Telegraph. Telephone follow up calls were made to Skills Vision members prior to the closing date of 16 September 2011. The closing date was to allow for results to be announced at the Skills Summit on 5 October 2011.

3. Findings and Conclusions

This year's survey has given us much interesting feedback to work on. There are some very positive outcomes as well as some which will require us to work hard to improve but there is no doubt that the information we have is invaluable for us to take forward the work under Peterborough Skills Vision as well as the newly launched brokerage service, The Peterborough Skills Service (PSS). The PSS is shown to be timely and will provide a response to many of the concerns raised by business regarding the 'work readiness' of our City's young people.

Despite the current economic climate, less than 1% of businesses said they would be reducing their investment in training and 45% actually said there would be an increase in investment. This is great news for skills development in the City.

The news of an increase in investment in training is good news also for our providers of training. However, 35 businesses reported needing to go outside the City for training that met their requirements. Some of this is training that is very specific to an individual business but some is also fairly generic so we will be talking to our providers about these areas to see whether new provision can be made available to meet the needs.

A significant number of vacancies in the City are still proving hard to fill. Some of these were reported in very specific roles such as 'Hot Tub Engineer' and 'Vibrancy Director'. The greatest numbers of these hard to fill jobs though are in management and finance roles with sales and marketing roles and then engineering in the next biggest categories. We will share this information with our schools, colleges and careers advisor network.

A number of questions in the survey related specifically to young people. Employability skills were the most important to businesses in terms of being in need of improvement. It is necessary to understand more about what is behind this term and what businesses really mean by it so the question will be debated at the 2011 Skills Summit. If we are to develop employability skills in our young people, our schools will want and need to work with business. In the survey, nearly 80% of businesses said they would be willing to play a greater role in supporting schools. This is fantastic news for the new Peterborough Skills Service which will provide the impartial brokerage for a range of activities and we will be looking at how this impacts on the skills of our future school/college leavers.

When asked about careers advice for young people, only 7% thought the current provision enabled them to make informed decisions about their future options. Many employers did not feel they had enough experience to answer this question but nearly 50% said careers advice is not of good enough quality. We will be working with the City Council, Peterborough Youth Council and business to give our young people the information they need.

Apprenticeships provide an important alternative route to skills development and the survey gave us positive news in that a fifth of those surveyed already have an apprentice and plan to take on more. An additional 28% of companies have never had an apprentice but plan to take one or more on during the next 12 months. With the changes to University fees there are likely to be more of our young people than ever looking for an apprenticeship opportunity.

Questions regarding Higher Education provision in the City revealed that again, employability skills for Graduates were top of the list for improvement from the employers' perspective. Employers also reported that work based learning and accredited short courses would be most useful to them for existing employees' development.

Respondents to the survey also gave information on the degrees which are of most relevance to their organisations. Management and business, marketing and finance came out top of these. Higher Education in these areas is already available in the City through Universities@Peterborough and University Centre Peterborough and it is therefore important that information on the offer is communicated effectively to the business community.

4. Detailed Survey Results

This part of the report gives the outcomes in detail to the different sections of the survey. Responses to the survey were gained from 149 Peterborough businesses. The breakdown in size and sector of the businesses represented is shown in Diagrams 1 and 2 below.

Diagram 1: How many employees are there at your workplace in the Greater Peterborough area?

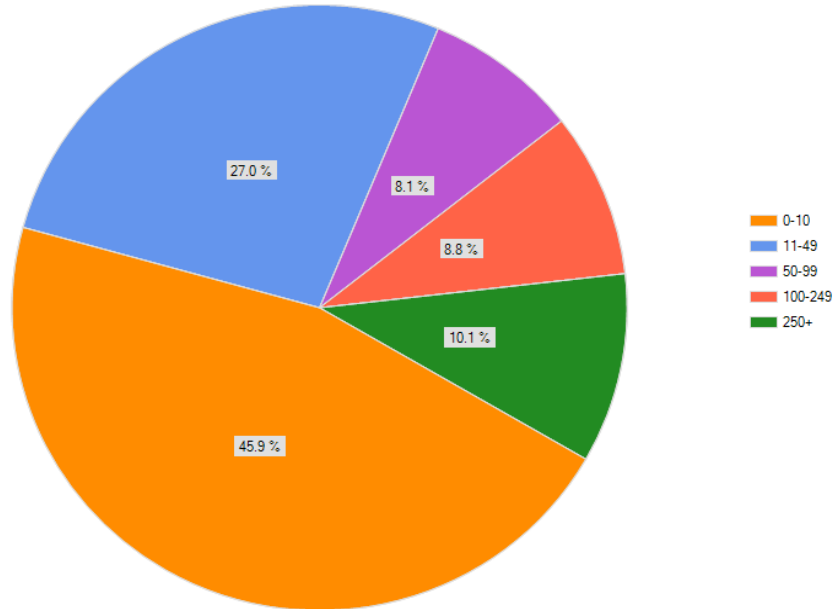
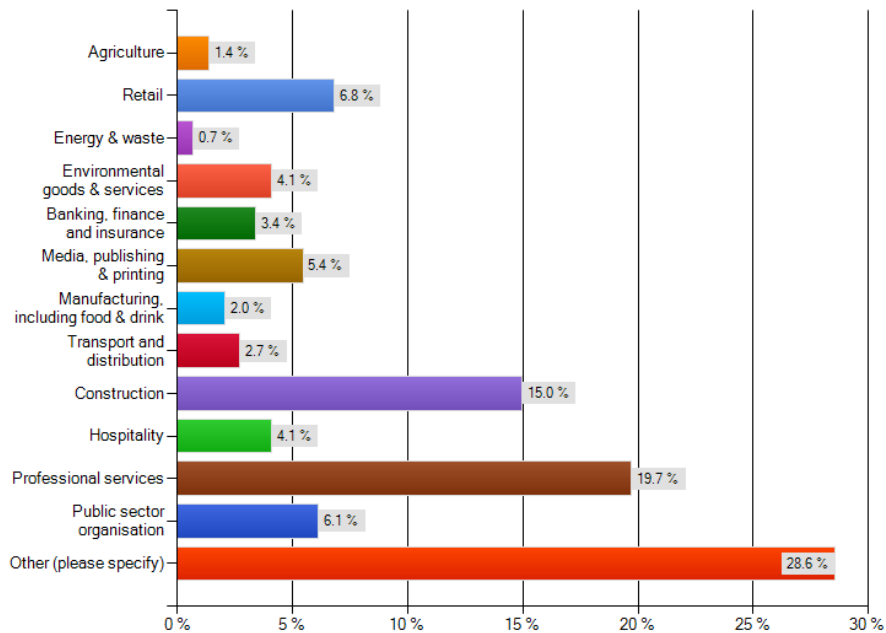


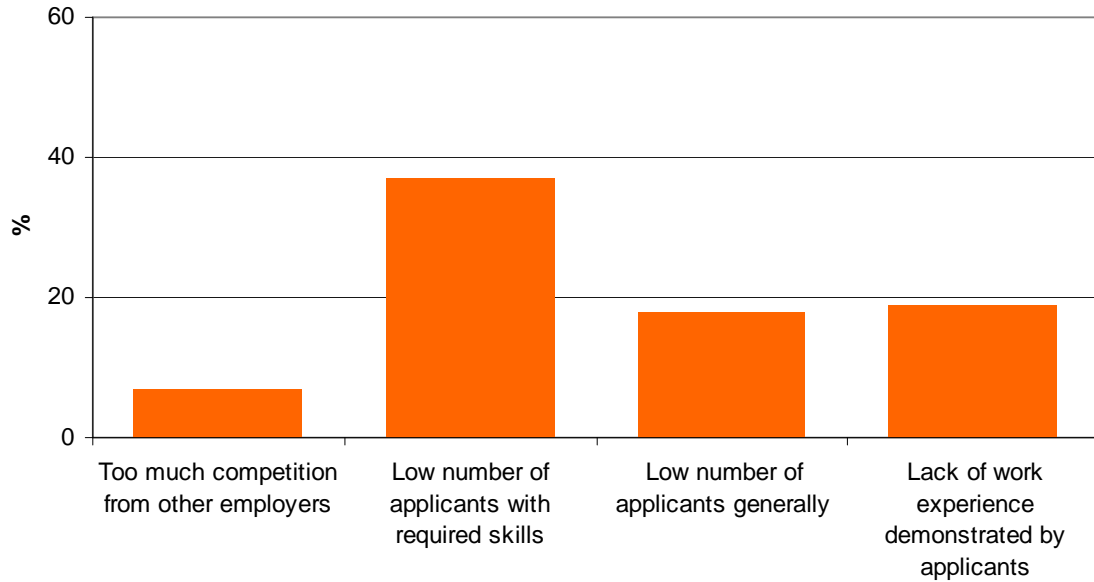
Diagram 2: In which sector does your organisation primarily operate?



The survey asked what proportion of a business's workforce is under 21. 90% of businesses have less than 25% of their workforce who are under 21.

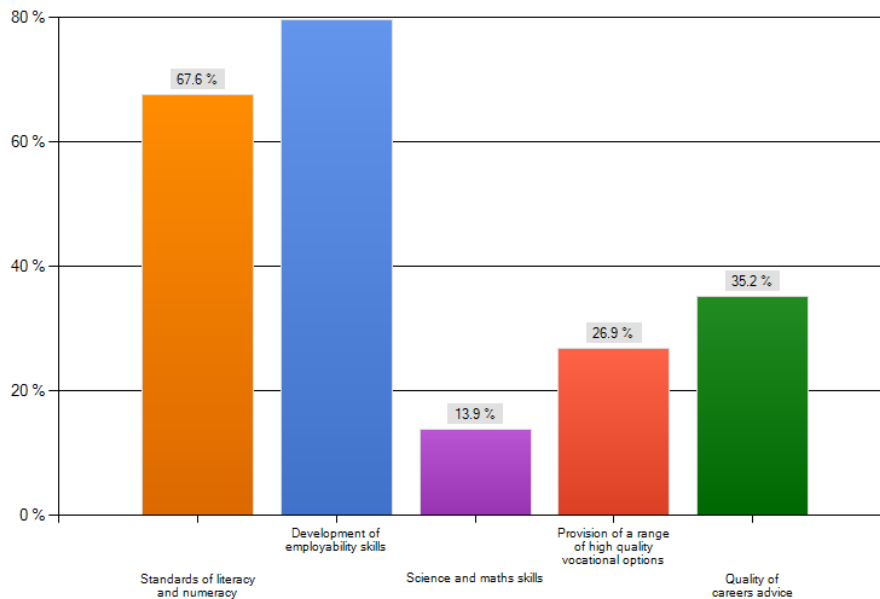
Business was asked if any of their vacancies were proving hard to fill. Only 92 businesses responded to this question and from these businesses, there were 62 vacancies proving difficult to fill. Diagram 3 below shows what the businesses see as causes of their hard to fill vacancies. Appendix A shows which type of vacancies were described as hard to fill.

Diagram 3: What are the main causes of these hard to reach vacancies?



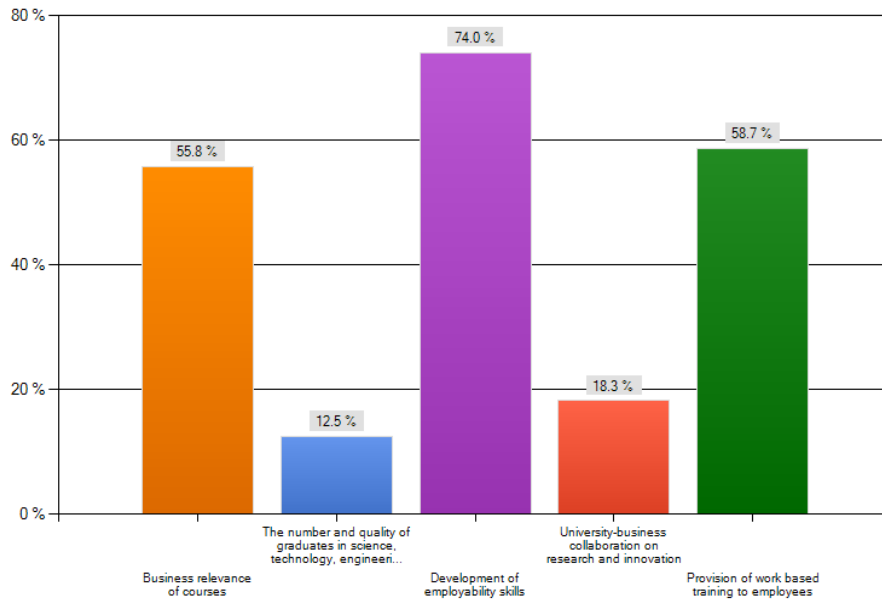
The next group of questions asked what skills were in most need of improvement in the City. The first of these dealt with skills for 14-19 year olds. 80% of employers felt that development of employability skills is most important with standards of literacy and numeracy coming a close second with 68% saying this needed improvement. Diagram 4 shows the full results.

Diagram 4: Which of the following key areas of Peterborough's skills provision for 14-19 YEAR OLDS, do you feel need to be improved the most?



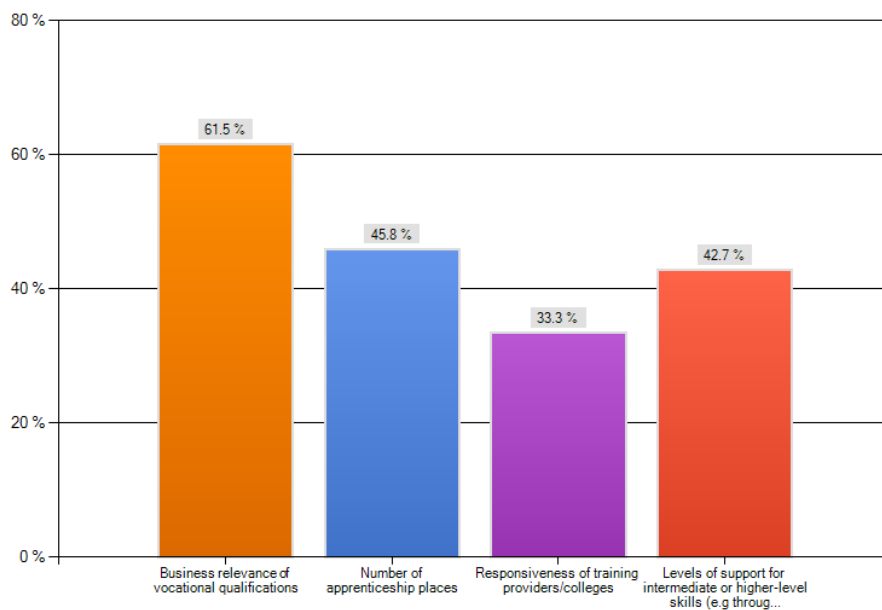
The same question was asked relating to Higher Education and what needed improving most. Again, top came employability skills for graduates with 74% of employers selecting this option. Diagram 5 shows the other results with business relevance of courses and provision of work based learning coming next in importance.

Diagram 5: Which of the following key areas of the city's skills provision for HIGHER EDUCATION, do you feel need to be improved the most?



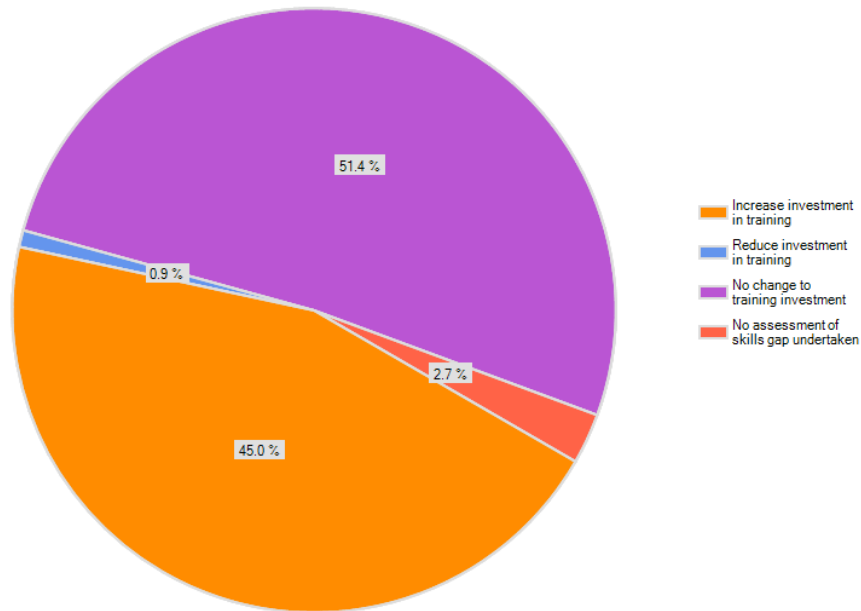
The final question in this section related to Workforce skills and here employers felt that the business relevance of vocational qualifications was most in need of improvement with 61% choosing this option. Diagram 6 shows these results.

Diagram 6: Which of the following key areas of the city's skills provision in WORKFORCE SKILLS, do you feel need to be improved the most?



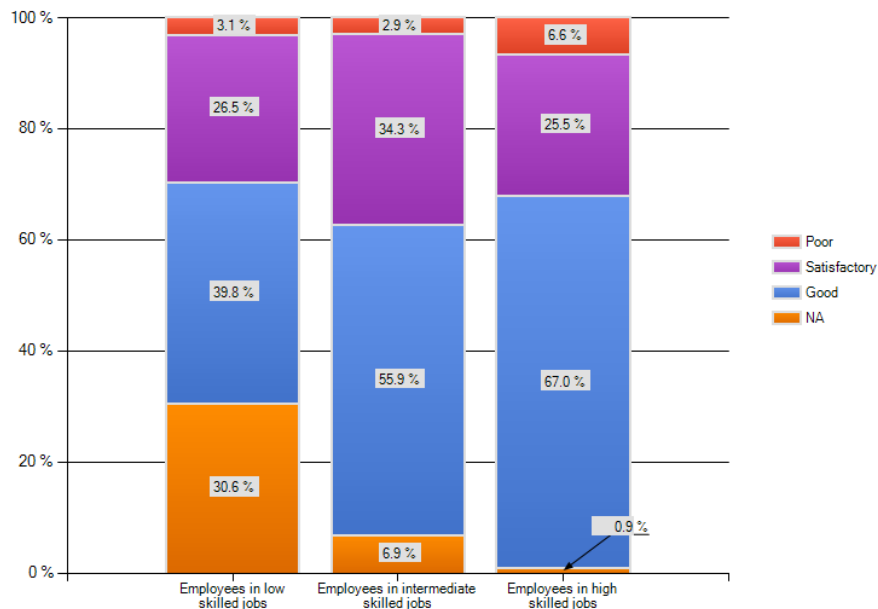
The next question related to a company's intentions for training and development for the next year. Less than 1% of companies said there would be a reduction with 45% saying there would be an increase. Diagram 7 demonstrates these results.

Diagram 7: What are your intentions for the training and development of your staff over the next year?



The survey asked employers to rate their employees' skill levels across low, intermediate and highly skilled jobs. Diagram 8 shows the results for this with less than 7% reporting poor skills in any type of job. Appendix B shows the list of specific skills which businesses felt are poor within their organisations.

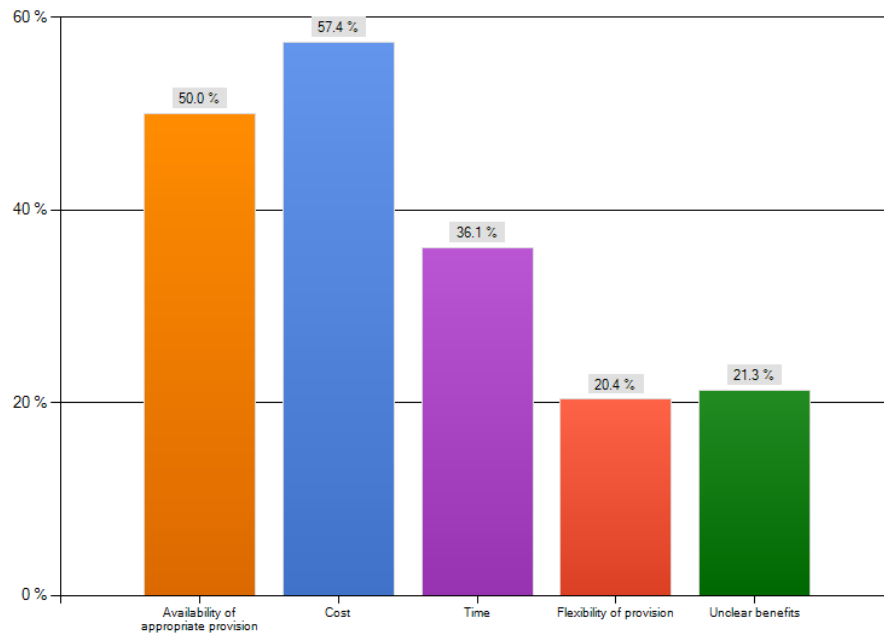
Diagram 8: Please indicate how you rate present employee skill levels for your current and future needs in your organisation (please select one for each row)



Asked about literacy, numeracy and IT skills in their business, 37 companies reported literacy problems, 24 numeracy and 51 IT skills issues.

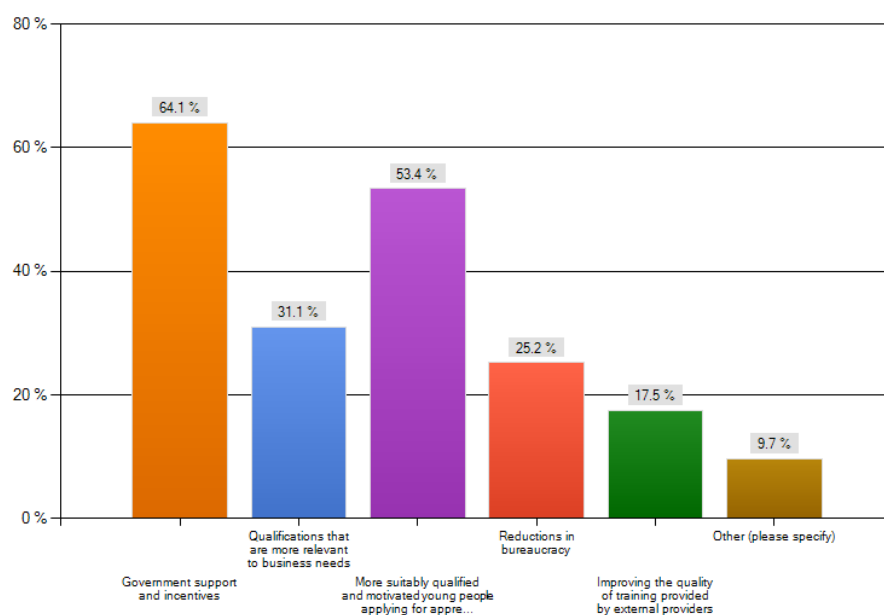
Businesses responded to a question on where they source their training provision with 73% saying that they provide in-house training and 31% saying that they go outside the city to source training. 30% use the local colleges and university and 57% using private providers. However, when looking at the list of training identified as having to be sourced outside the city it is in the main very niche or company specific. See Appendix C for this list. Diagram 9 shows what would prevent a business from providing training for employees.

Diagram 9: What would prevent you from providing training for your employees?



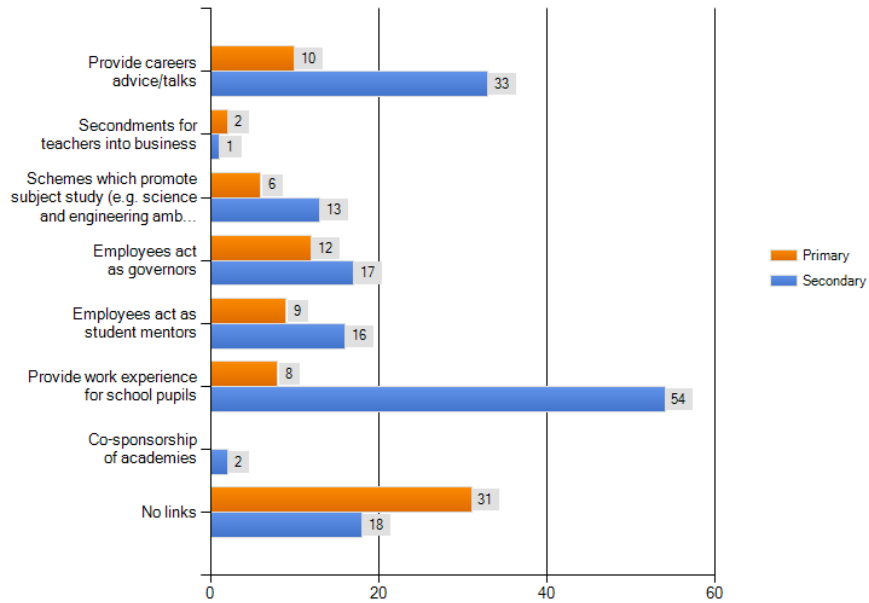
Some questions were asked about apprenticeships. Only 108 employers responded to this question but of these 36 already have apprentices with 22 planning to recruit more. 30 more of these employers have not recruited an apprentice in the past but plan to in the next year. Diagram 10 shows what would encourage a business to get more involved in apprenticeships.

Diagram 10: Which of the following would encourage your organisation to get more involved in apprenticeships?



The next questions were around young people in school. Diagram 11 shows what activities businesses currently take part in with our schools, the largest percentage being in providing work experience.

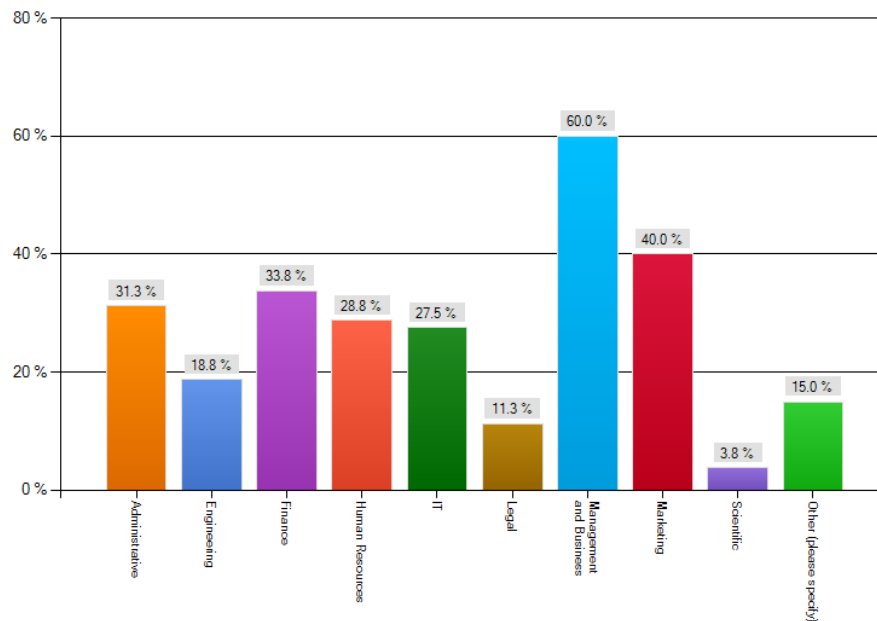
Diagram 11: What is the nature of your work with schools (please tick all that apply)



When asked about the quality of careers advice young people receive, only 7% of respondents thought young people receive good enough advice to help them make informed decisions about future career and learning options. 49% said they do not and the remaining respondents did not have experience of this. When asked if they would be willing to play a greater role in supporting schools, 78% of businesses gave a positive response.

The next section of the report related to Higher Education in the City. The first question was asking businesses what percentage of the jobs in their organisation required a degree. 88 businesses responded to this questions and of these, 23% of jobs required a degree. Diagram 12 shows which degrees are most relevant to the City’s business with Management & Business, Marketing and finance coming out as the top three. When asked about the type of training delivered by Higher Education for businesses, work based learning and accredited short courses came top. Appendix D lists the preferred topics.

Diagram 12: Which degrees are most relevant to your organisation?



The survey asked about specialist IT staff employed. 67% of respondents do not have specialist staff. 75% of businesses said they had no requirement for additional support in any of the IT systems they operate.

The final question asked businesses to list any language training their organisation needs. The results of this question are listed in Appendix E.

All the questions in the Skills Survey are shown in Appendix F.

Appendix A

Hard to Fill Vacancies

Occupational Group	Hard to fill vacancies	Total
Business Management & Finance	Admin (generally)	1
	Finance - technical funding skills	1
	Revenue Manager	1
	Property Management Administration Support	2
	Trainee Accountant	2
	Contracts Manager	2
	Insurance personal	2
	Quality Assurance	3
	Business Development manager	1
	Vibrancy Director	1
	trainees and managers	1
	Team Lead (first line supervision)	6
	Curriculum Team Manager	1
Commercial Vehicle Sales Manager	1	
Production management	1	
Business Management & Finance Total		26
Marketing or Sales	Digital marketing executive	1
	Junior Marketing Analyst	1
	Marketing	1
	Sales and Marketing Coordinator 1 vacancy	1
	sales consultants	10
	Sales Person	1
	Telesales part-time	1
Marketing or Sales Total		16
Engineering	Engineering Vacancies	1
	Hot tub Engineer and installer	1
	Technical / Engineering	1
	Building Services Engineers (Electrical and Mechanical)	2
	Engineering/Facilities	1
Engineering Total		6
Business Development	International Mobility Consultant	1
	Regional Development Expert	1
Business Development Total		2
Hospitality	Catering (generally)	1
	Chefs	1
	Facilities - reception staff	1
	Second Chef	1
Hospitality Total		4
Transport	COACH TOUR DRIVER 2 VACANCIES	1
	Commercial Vehicle Technicians	1
Transport Total		2
Agriculture	Agriculture	1
	FARM SHOP	1
Agriculture Total		2

Occupational Group	Hard to fill vacancies	Total
Care	Foster Carers	1
Care Total		1
Hair & Beauty	Senior Stylist	2
	Beauty Therapist	1
Hair & Beauty Total		3
Legal	Trainee Legal Secretary / Operations Administrator	1
	Legal Secretary	1
Legal Total		2
Media Publishing Printing	Artwork coordinator	1
	AutoCAD Technicians	1
Media Publishing Printing Total		2
Various	hard to find people with good work ethic	1
Various Total		1
Education	ESOL Tutors	1
Education Total		1
Professional Services	Senior Quantity Surveyor	1
Professional Services Total		1
Retail	Multi-skilled tradesman	2
Retail Total		2
Technical	All Technical vacancies	1
Technical Total		1
Planning	Health and safety consultant	2
Planning Total		2
Grand Total		74

Appendix B

Which specific skills do you feel are poor within your organisation?

- Basic Catering Knowledge
- Bringing positive attitude to work and leaving their problem at home
- Business "sense"/ awareness
- Candidates who are multi skilled in maintenance work
- Coaching / Giving and receiving feedback
- Communication
- Communication Skills and Confidentiality
- Copywriting
- Core structure needs reviewing
- Cross skills
- Customer Service Sales
- Customer service skills and management skills
- English language - written English
- Finance and development negotiation
- General vocational skills
- Hot tub engineering
- IT
- Management
- Management and systems training
- Motivational Skills
- Need more customer focus skills
- Numeracy and customer relations
- Operational Efficiency Skills
- Performance management
- Planning for Growth Skills
- Productivity
- Sales and PR
- Selling skills
- Skills being continually developed to keep up with technology
- Team work

Appendix C

What training is sourced from outside the city?

- Accountancy training groups
- Business Link, NAVCA, NCVO
- Cambridge regional College
- CIPD for consultants - nothing relevant available in the city
- Eastern area Agricultural training group
- Eastern Region of Royal Institute of British Architects
- Generally Franchise Based
- Health & Safety
- Legal courses associated with governing body
- Management Training was in London and was at the right time before employing new person. Other Peterborough course was on too late.
- NVQ 2 Road passenger Transport
- NVQs, e learning, some leadership activities
- On-line Medical Terminology courses
- Part of a National group so training is arranged Nationally
- Peterborough social services and always local companies for NVQ courses
- Product training in Toronto
- Professional accountancy training
- Regional Business Link courses + dive equipment servicing
- sales, internet skills, software
- Scaffolding Certification
- Specialist CPD courses & Business Link via our London headquarters
- Specialist industry related skills
- Specialist IT training
- Specialist sector providers
- Specific skills training applicable to the company's operations
- Supplied by large any suppliers as part of our good relationship
- Technical legal training
- Technical training particularly low carbon engineering
- Training for ICAEW / ACCA accountancy qualification
- We are a Swedish bank - training is provided in Sweden and regional head office in Birmingham or online
- We're a college offering vocational teaching and hence source training far and wide to meet needs

Appendix D

What type of Higher Education training would be most useful to your organisation?

- Accountancy
- Construction
- Construction related
- Day-release for City & Guilds
- Energy
- Finance
- Health and safety related
- IT related
- Lettings
- Marketing
- Project and voluntary sector specific
- Property management and property law
- Sales
- Teaching
- Training related
- We are FSA authorised and guided by their requirements

Appendix E

What are the language training needs of your organisation (including English as ESOL)?

- Danish
- Due to diverse community in Peterborough – language training in the main languages would be useful to provide better service and reduce reliance on interpretation services
- English
- ESOL
- ESOL may be helpful as we work with unaccompanied minors
- French
- GCSE
- German
- None other from Basic English
- Polish
- Swedish

Appendix F

Copy of Survey questions

1. Please state your company name
2. How many employees are there at your workplace in the Greater Peterborough area? (Please include all workers paid directly from your organisation's payroll excluding proprietors, partners and directors if they do not receive a salary)
3. In which sector does your organisation primarily operate?
4. What proportion of your workforce is under 21?
5. Are any of your vacancies proving hard to fill? If so, which occupations are they in and how many vacancies do you have?
6. For the occupations named in question 5, what are the main causes of these hard to fill vacancies in your organisation?
7. Which of the following key areas of Peterborough's skills provision for 14-19 year olds do you feel need to be improved the most? (Please tick up to three)
8. Which of the following key areas of the city's skills provision for Higher Education do you feel need to be improved the most? (Please tick up to three)
9. Which of the following key areas of the city's skills provision in Workforce skills do you feel need to be improved the most? (Please tick up to three)
10. What are your intentions for the training and development of your staff over the next year?
11. Please indicate how you rate present employee skill levels for your current and future needs in your organisation (please select one for each row)
12. Please detail any specific skills which you feel are poor within your organisation
13. Where do you source your training requirements?
14. Do you have basic literacy, numeracy or IT skills problems in your current workforce?
15. What would prevent you from providing training for your employees?
16. Are you currently participating in apprenticeship training schemes? (If yes, please provide current number of apprentices)
17. Which of the following would encourage your organisation to get more involved in apprenticeships?
18. What is the nature of your work with schools (please tick all that apply)
19. Do you believe the quality of careers advice young people receive is good enough to help them make informed decisions about future career/learning options?

20. Would your organisation be willing to play a greater role in supporting schools?
 21. In your organisation, approximately what percentage of jobs require a degree?
 22. Which degrees are most relevant to your organisation?
 23. Which of the following Higher Education training would be most useful to your organisation?
 24. If you employ specialist IT staff, in which roles are they?
 25. Please indicate if you would like more support in any of the IT systems you operate.
 26. Please list here any language training that your organisation needs (including English as ESOL)
 27. Peterborough has launched a Skills Vision to enhance our local workforce. If your business hasn't already signed up, would you like more information on this innovative, free programme?
 28. If you've indicated anywhere in this survey that you'd like more information or would like to be contacted about skills development in Peterborough, then please leave your details here.
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If you would like any more information or have any questions about the Skills Survey, Skills Vision, or this report, please contact:

Sue Addison via skills@opportunitypeterborough.co.uk