Medr

Y Comisiwn Addysg Drydyddol ac Ymchwil
Commission for Tertiary Education and Research

Learner Voice Survey Pilot: Headline Report

Produced by IFF Research

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Introduction

1.1. As the funder and regulator of tertiary education in Wales, part of Medr's role is to ensure that education and training providers offer high quality courses and effectively support learners.

1.2. To support this work, IFF Research were commissioned to conduct the Learner Voice Survey (LVS). Once rolled out, this survey will give learners undertaking further education, apprenticeships and adult community learning courses the chance to have their say on their learning experiences. The aim is to support the continuous improvement efforts of individual education and training providers, as well as Estyn in its inspectorate role, while also providing evidence to enable Medr to fulfil its regulatory responsibilities.

1.3. This pilot provided an opportunity to test the survey questionnaire, operational delivery of the survey and the research outputs with education and training providers. Full information on the outcomes and learnings of the pilot is provided in a separate Technical Report. This report presents headline findings based on the results of the pilot survey.

Methodology

1.4. The pilot fieldwork was conducted between 16 April and 27 May 2026.

1.5. The pilot was designed as a 'dress rehearsal' for the full survey implementation, to allow all materials and processes to be tested in advance of the wider rollout in 2026/27. In particular, the pilot aimed to test the operational delivery of the survey; assess whether the survey works effectively for different learner groups and provider types; test data linkage and weighting processes; and evaluate and refine reporting outputs.

1.6. The pilot survey sample comprised eight providers who volunteered to support the pilot; four of these were FE colleges, two were apprenticeship providers and two were adult community learning providers.

1.7. The survey was shared with learners via the participating providers. Providers received a briefing webinar, provider pack and supporting promotional materials to help maximise responses from their learners.

1.8. As shown in Table 1 below, a total of 4,459 standard surveys were completed across eight providers, while a further 338 learners completed the easy Read version of the survey. The easy Read survey is an alternative version designed to be more accessible, using simple language, clear formatting, and supportive images or symbols to help learners with reading and additional learning needs. All versions of the questionnaire could be completed online or using a paper version. Overall, there were 31 standard survey completions by paper and 111 easy Read completions via this mode.

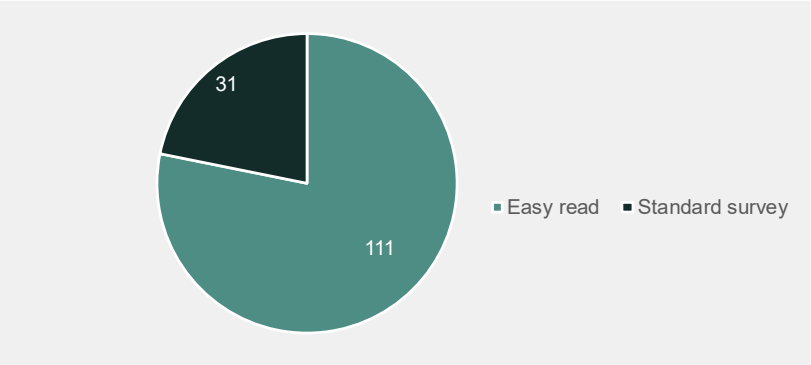
1.9. 394 paper surveys were issued and 142 were completed and returned (a 36% response rate).

1.10. Overall, 52 surveys were completed in the Welsh language.

Table 1. Number of surveys completed by type

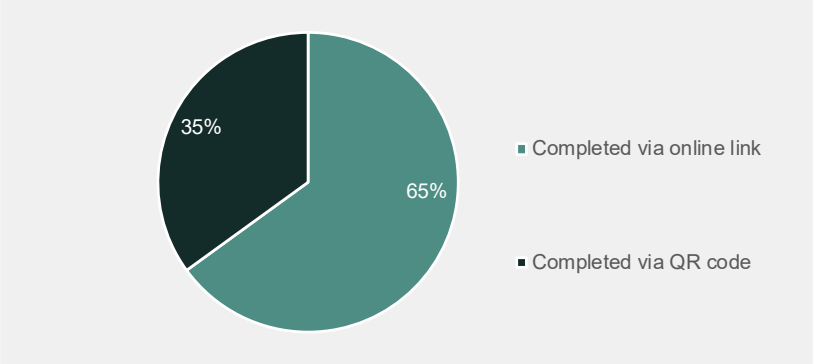
Total Surveys Completed		**4,797**
Type of Survey	Standard Survey	4,459
	Easy Read Survey	338
Language of Survey	Welsh	52
	English	4,745
Mode of Survey	Online	4,655
	Paper	142

Figure 1. Paper survey completions by type



1.11. For those completing online, the survey could be accessed either through an open-link (within each provider) or a QR code. All but one provider shared the survey with learners by email including the survey link. Two providers did not use QR codes. Most learners (65%) completed the survey online using the standard survey link. Over a third (35%) completed it by QR code (usually displayed in class).

Figure 2 Online completions by source of access



1.12. Learners completing the survey were asked to submit their learner ID, assigned by the provider. The aim was to 'live match' during the survey to Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR) data. Successful live matching meant learners did not need to answer demographic questions and could be asked questions about specific courses. Overall, 90% of learners who used a QR code matched to the LLWR and 81% who used the survey link.

Interpreting these findings

1.13. These are pilot findings and based on a limited sample of learners in eight providers. They are not representative at national level and due to low response rates and other data considerations (discussed in the technical report), there are also some limitations in coverage within providers. Results should therefore be interpreted with caution.

1.14. As these findings are taken from a pilot, they are based on questions that were being tested and will be refined for the mainstage survey. For example, it is anticipated that questions about language preferences will be refined due to a high number of ‘Don’t know’ responses, which reflected a need for greater clarity.

1.15. Standard survey results and easy read results are looked at in turn, within each section.

Survey findings

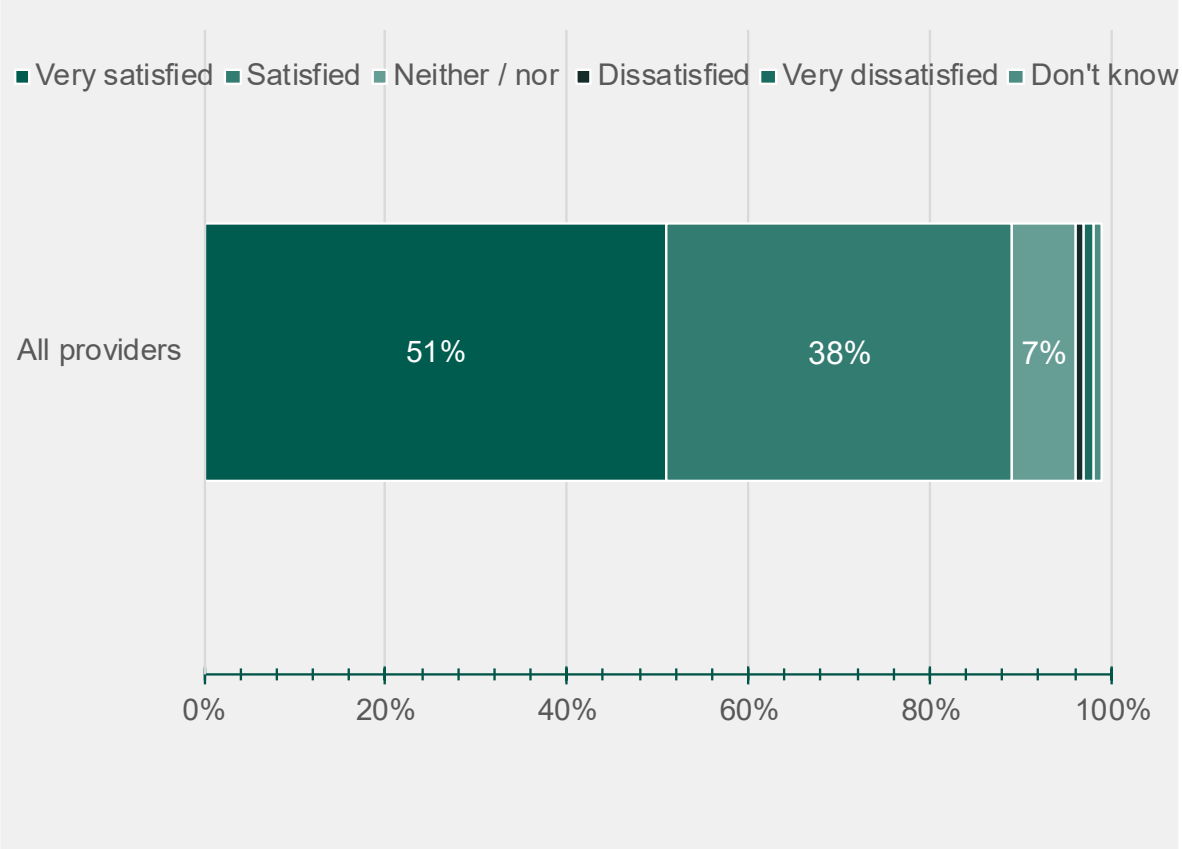
Summary

1.16. Learner satisfaction was very high with learners highlighting teaching quality, learning support, and their learning environment as key strengths. Most learners felt informed, supported, safe, respected, and positive about their progress and future skills development. Some learners cited course structure and communication as areas for improvement, while guidance also appeared slightly weaker than other aspects of the learner experience.

Overall satisfaction

1.17. As shown in Figure 3. Overall satisfaction, satisfaction with providers was extremely high. Nine in ten respondents (89%) were satisfied overall (51% very satisfied, 38% satisfied). Only 2% were dissatisfied.

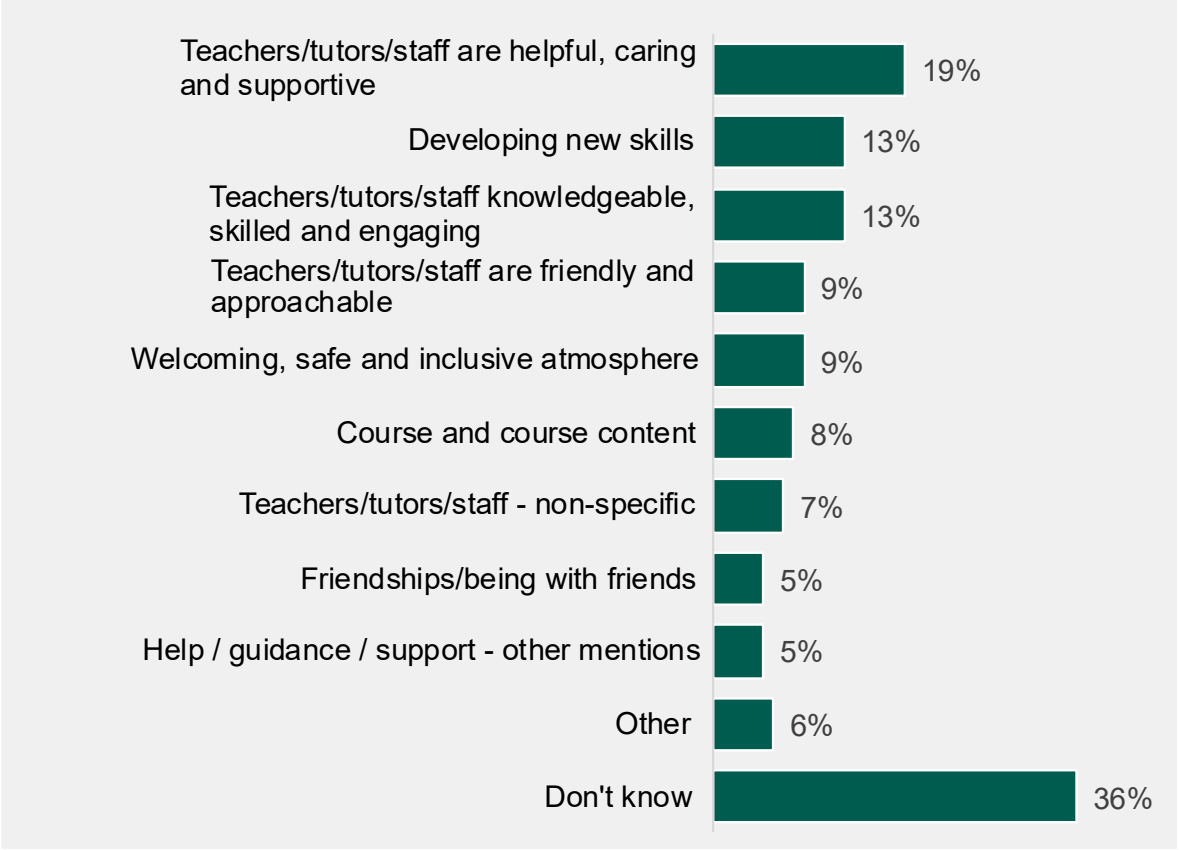
Figure 3. Overall satisfaction



J1. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your provider?
Base: All learners: 4,459
Please note due to rounding percentages may not sum to 100%

1.18. When learners were asked what they liked best about their provider, staff were the notable strength. A fifth (19%) mentioned supportive, caring staff, 13% highlighted knowledgeable and engaging staff, and 9% cited friendly and approachable staff. Other positives mentioned by learners, as shown in Figure 4., were being able to develop new skills (13%) and welcoming environments (9%).

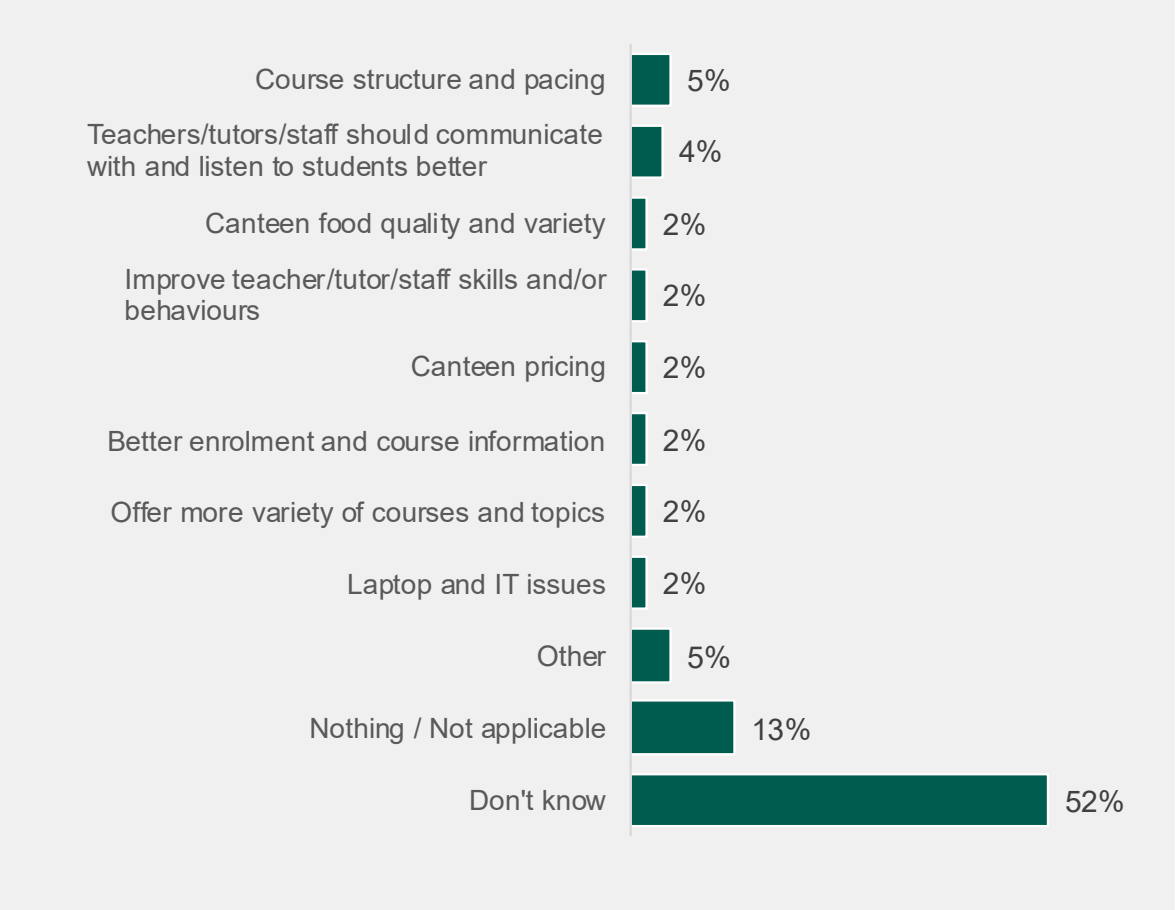
Figure 4. What learners like best about their provider



J2. What do you like best about your provider?
Base: All learners: 4,459. Please note this was a free-text response question and the chart above shows the most common
themes from respondents. Responses 4% or lower not charted

1.19. In terms of things that learners would like to improve about their provider, the main improvement themes were course structure and pacing (5%) and better communication/listening from staff (4%). Most learners either had no suggested improvements (13%) or were unsure (52%) as shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5. What learners would improve about their provider



J3. What, if anything, would you improve about your provider?
Base: All learners: 4,459.
Please note this was a free-text response question and the chart above shows the most common themes from respondents.
Responses 1% or lower not charted

Easy read survey results

1.20. Among those completing the easy read survey, 93% said they were happy with the place where they learn.

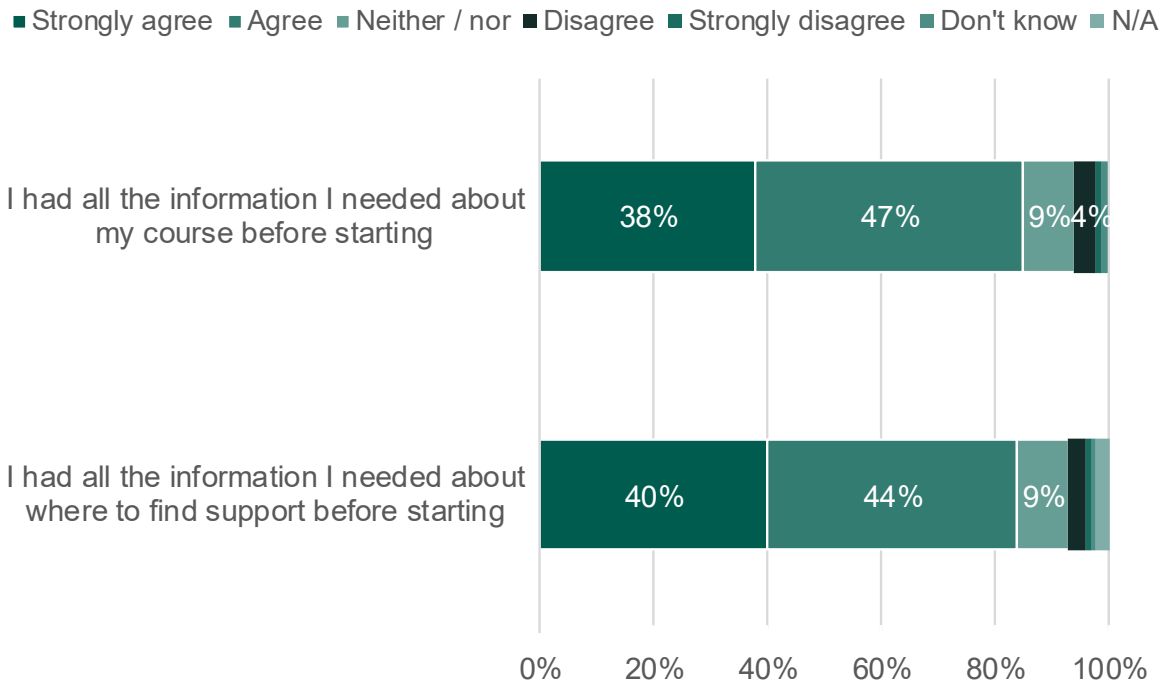
1.21. Learners most commonly mentioned teachers being helpful and caring (18%), friendships and being with friends (16%) and a welcoming, safe environment (15%) as the things they liked best about where they learn.

1.22. When asked what would make the place where they learn better, most learners said they were either unsure (44%) or that nothing could be improved (22%). The most common improvements mentioned were changes to course structure and pacing (5%), canteen pricing (4%), and canteen food quality and variety (3%).

Experience before starting

1.23. Learners felt that providers were generally effective at onboarding and pre-course communication, with learners feeling well prepared before beginning their course. A large majority of those completing the standard survey (84%) agreed they had all of the information they needed about where to find support. A similar proportion (86%) agreed that they had enough information about their course, as shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Learners' access to information before starting



A1_X. Thinking about your current learning to what extent do you agree or disagree…?
Base: All learners: 4,459
Please note due to rounding percentages may not sum to 100%

1.24. Easy read survey results were similar, with 88% reporting they had all the information they needed before starting their course and 84% saying that they got information about how to find support from their provider.

Support for learning, learning resources & environment

1.25. Learners generally felt supported and that learning environments were conducive to learning. A large majority (90%) rated their provider either very good or fairly good at making sure the places in which they learn are suitable for their needs. A similar proportion (88%) thought there was either very good or good signposting to learning support and four-fifths (82%) thought the management of behaviour was very good or good.

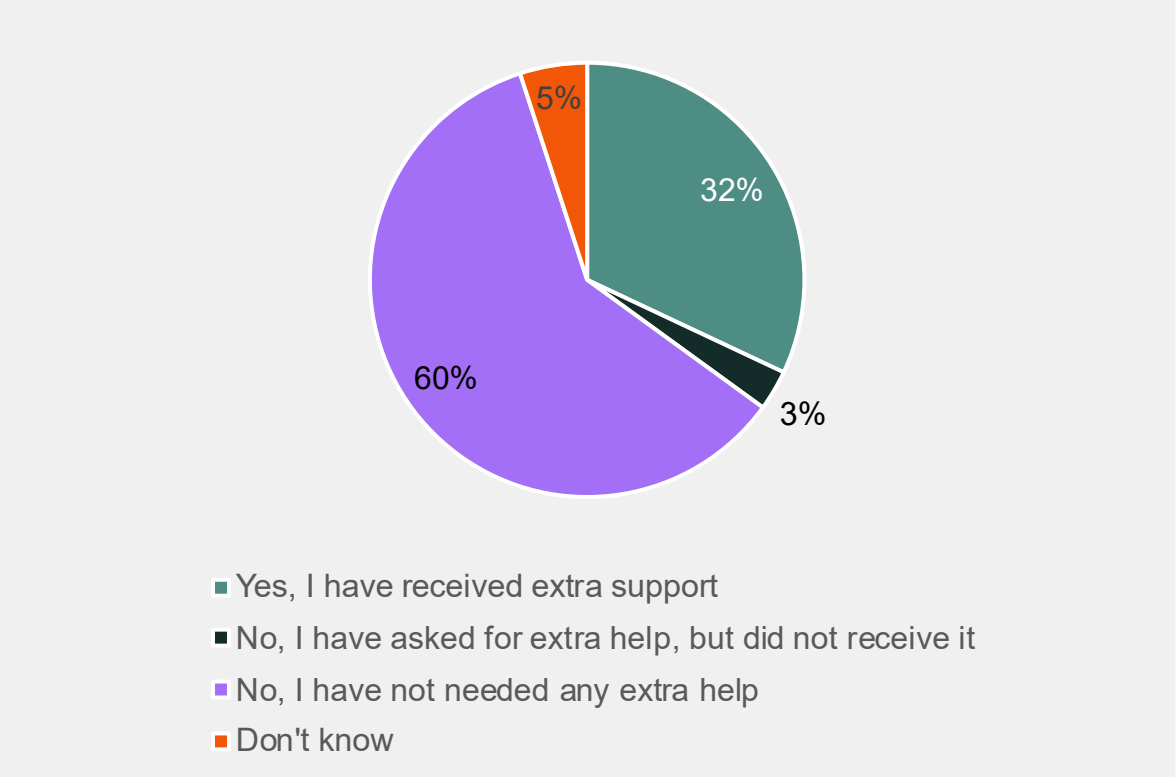
Figure 7. Learners' perceptions of providers' support



B1_X. How would you rate your provider for…
Base: All learners for first and second statement: 4,459
Base: FE learners for third statement: 3,461
Please note due to rounding percentages may not sum to 100%

1.26. Learners were asked if they had received any extra help to support with their learning (for example, changes to assessment deadlines, help with writing or maths, or additional learning equipment). Most (60%) had not needed extra support, around a third (32%) had done so and 3% had asked for support but not received it, as shown in Figure 8.

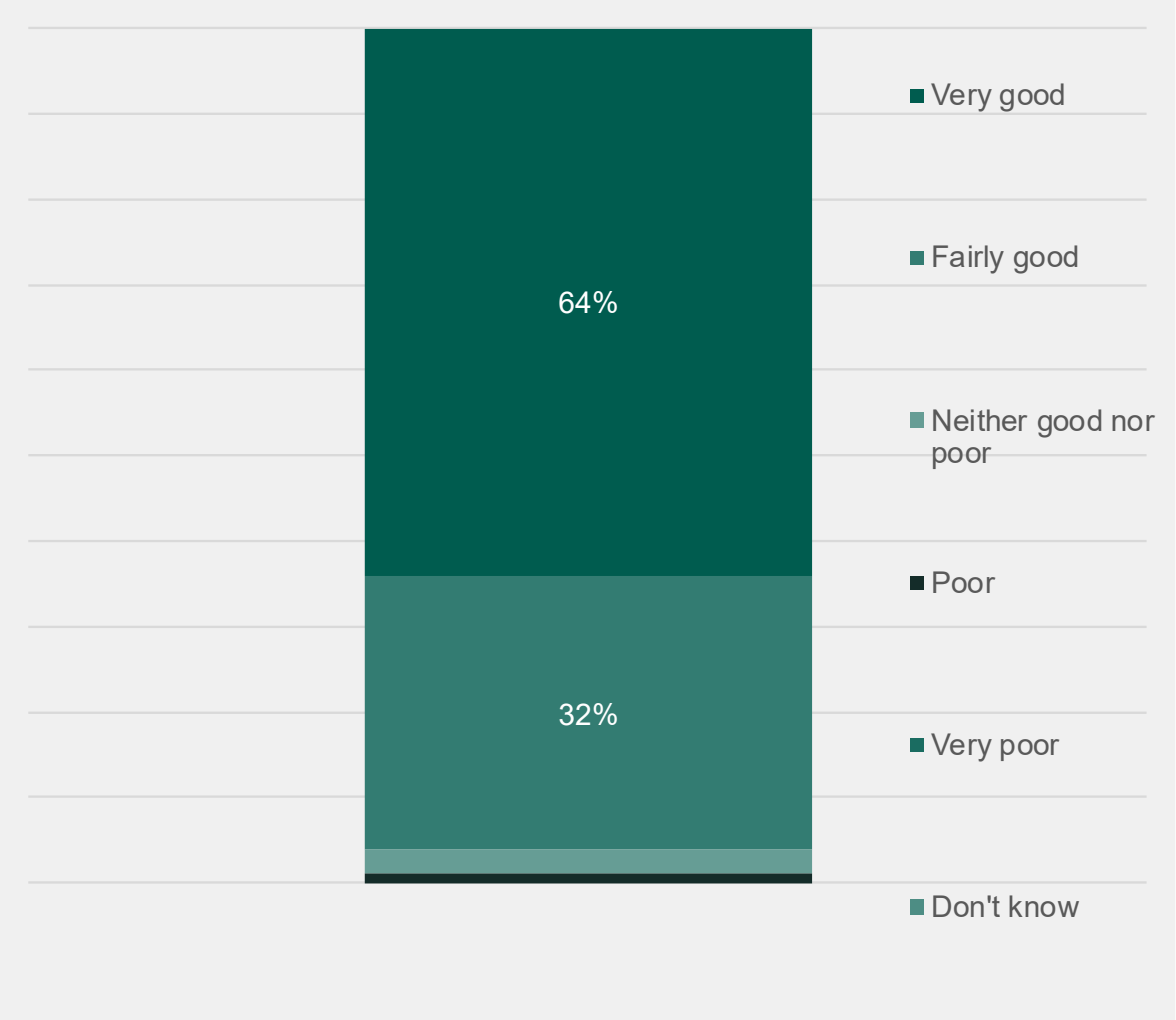
Figure 8. Learners receiving support



B2. Have you received any extra help to support you with your learning /apprenticeship?
Base: All learners: 4,459

1.27. Learners who received support rated it very highly. Figure 9. How learners rated support they received, below shows that 96% rated it at least fairly good including 64% who rated it very good.

Figure 9. How learners rated support they received



B3. Overall, how would you rate this extra help or support you have received?
Base: All learners who received extra help: 1,476

Easy read survey results

1.28. A large majority of learners completing the easy read survey were positive about the prompted examples of support, with around nine in ten or more reporting that their provider made sure they knew where to go for extra support, the places where they learned were suitable for their needs, and that people on their courses behaved (94%, 93% and 88% respectively).

1.29. Three quarters (75%) learners said they had received extra help and a fifth (21%) had not. Almost all (95%) of those who received support said it was good and right for them.

Teaching, learning and assessment

1.30. Where relevant learners were 'live matched' to course data in the survey via their learner ID (see Technical Report for further information), they were asked a series of questions about teachers or tutors (shown in Figure 10) for up to four of their courses. The course loop was only for full-time FE learners, studying multiple main qualifications such as A levels. Those doing vocational learning with only one main qualification would only be asked one set of questions on their course.

1.31. Those that only had one main course were asked the questions generally about their teachers or tutors. This means that respondents who were 'live matched' and studying multiple main qualifications contributed up to four responses to the data for this question set, while those who were not contributed only one.

1.32. Results are therefore based on all course experiences (among those that answered), rather than a unit of learners. Overall, results show high levels of satisfaction with teachers and tutors; for all but one measure (delivering the course in a way that keeps you interested – 85%) at least nine in ten (90%) course experiences were rated either very or fairly good, as shown in Figure 10.

Figure 10. Learners' ratings of teaching and assessment



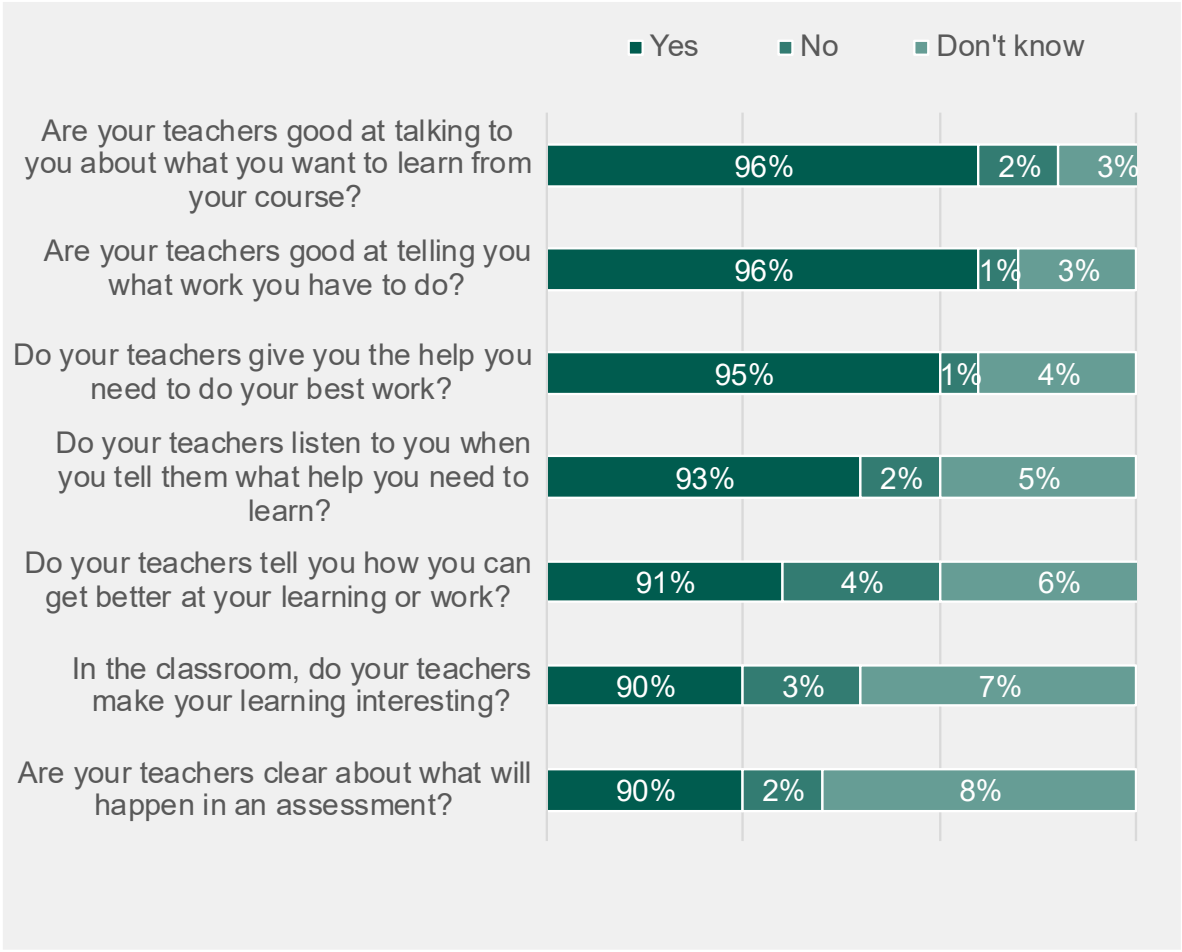
C1_X. How would you rate your teachers and tutors at…
Base: All course learners: 5,402. These questions were asked of each course, therefore some individual respondents have multiple answers.
3rd statement asked of FE and ACL learners: 5,047

Easy read survey results

1.33. Learners answering the easy read survey were asked similar questions regarding the quality of tutors and teachers. Learners were asked to answer whether these specific teaching quality practices occurred, and to think about their teachers or tutors in general, rather than a specific course.

1.34. Nine in ten or more learners said each of the listed teaching practices had occurred, as shown in Figure 11 below.

Figure 11 Easy read learners' ratings of teaching and assessment

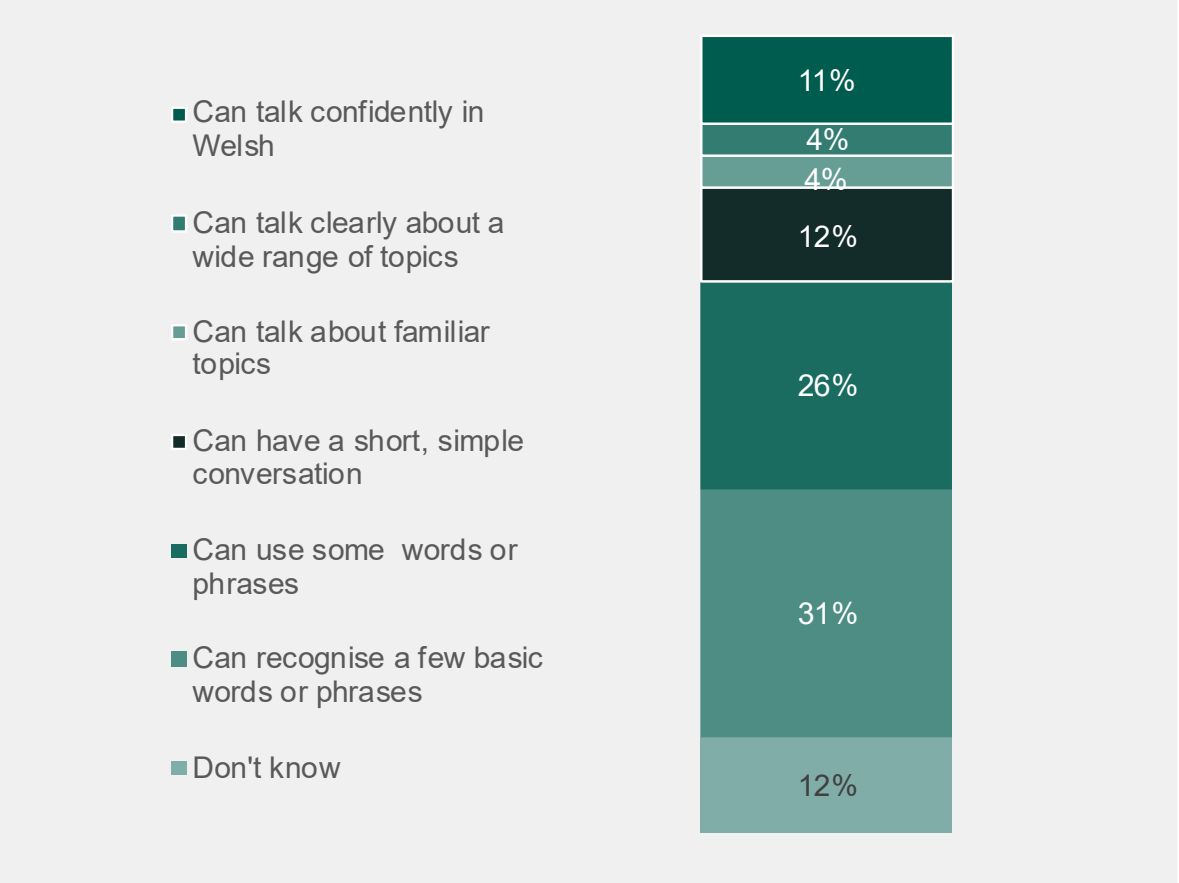


C1_X. Do/are your teachers…
Base: All easy read course learners: 338
6th statement asked of easy read FE and ACL learners: 292

Medium of Welsh

1.35. Most learners reported that they had limited Welsh language ability and only around one in seven (15%) described themselves as able to speak Welsh confidently (11%) or across a wide range of topics (4%). A full breakdown of learners' self-reported Welsh language ability is shown below in Figure 12.

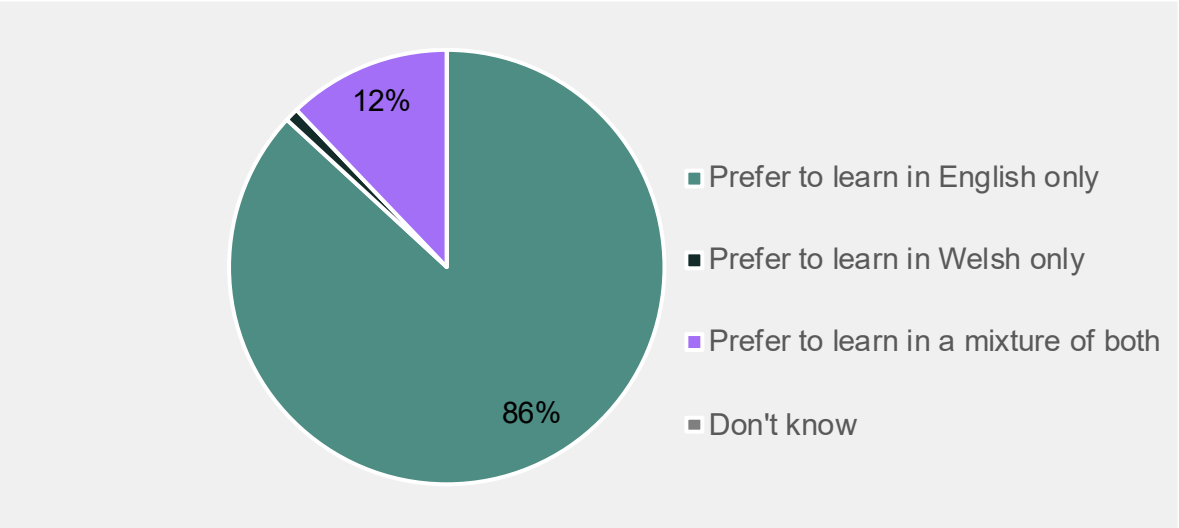
Figure 12. Learners' Welsh language ability



D1. How would you describe your Welsh language ability?
Base: learners: 4,459

1.36. When asked which language they would prefer to learn in, most learners (86%) said English only. One per cent wanted to learn solely in Welsh and 12% preferred a mix.

Figure 13. Learners' language preference



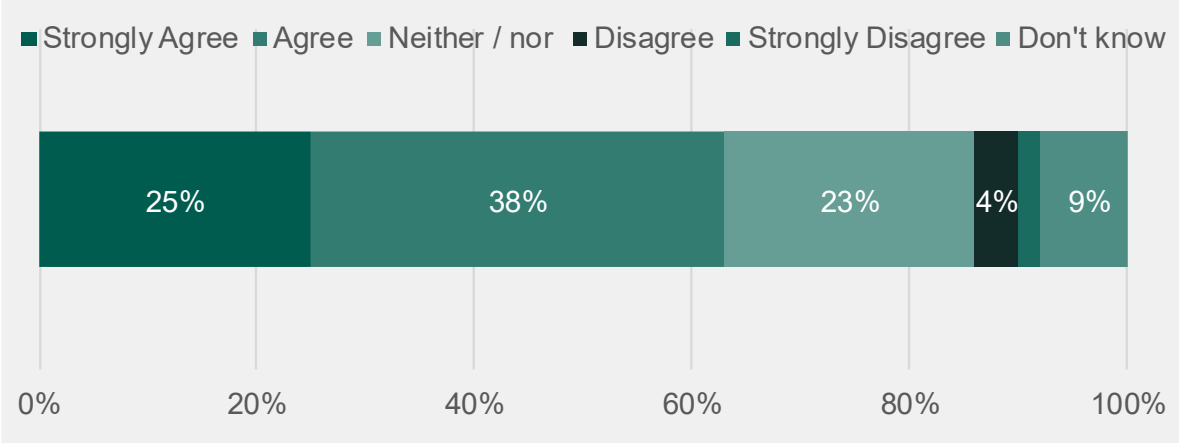
D2. What language did you want to do your learning in?
Base: learners: 4,459

1.37. Of those who wanted to learn in English only, 93% were doing so; of those who wanted to learn in Welsh only, 53% were doing so; and of those who wanted to learn in a mixture, 54% were doing so.

1.38. Of learners that wanted to do any learning in Welsh, 76% had the chance to do all or part of their learning in Welsh.

1.39. Most learners (63%) agreed that providers promoted the use of the Welsh language. (25% strongly agreed).

Figure 14. Learners' perceptions on providers' promotion of the Welsh language



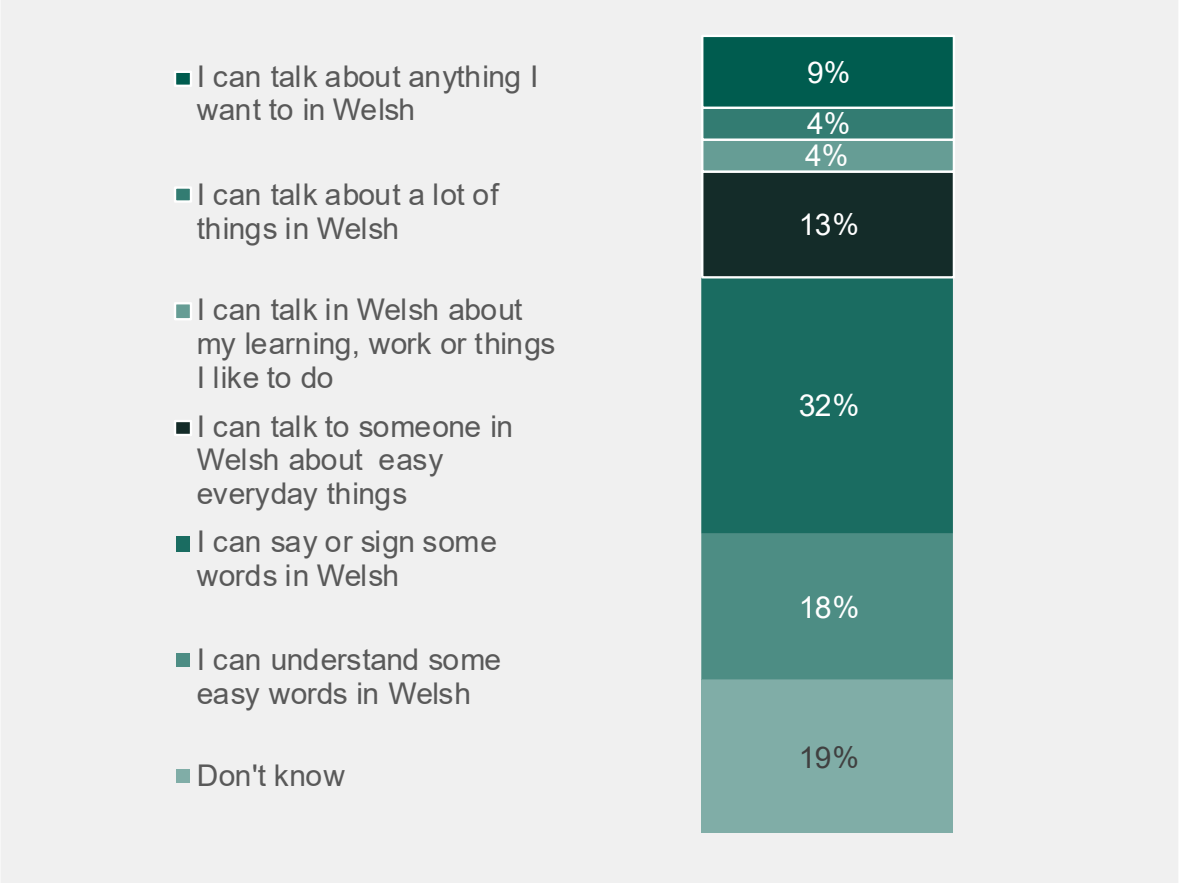
D5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that your provider promotes the use of the Welsh language?
Base: All learners: 4,459
Please note due to rounding percentages may not sum to 100%

1.40. In addition, just under half of learners (45%) reported they knew where to go to develop Welsh language skills.

Easy read survey results

1.41. Among learners answering the easy read survey, 18% could only understand some easy words in Welsh, 32% could say or sign some words in Welsh, 13% could talk about easy everyday things in Welsh, 4% could talk about their learning, 4% could talk about a lot of things in Welsh, and 9% could talk about anything they wanted in Welsh, as shown in Figure *15* below.

Figure 15 Easy read respondents' Welsh language ability (highest level indicated)



D1. How would you describe your Welsh language ability? Note: Question was multicode – highest ability indicated is shown on chart.
Base: All easy read learners: 338

1.42. In terms of language preferences for their learning, most learners said they wanted to do their learning in English only (84%); around one in seven (14%) wanted to study in a combination of Welsh and English and one per cent wanted to study in Welsh only.

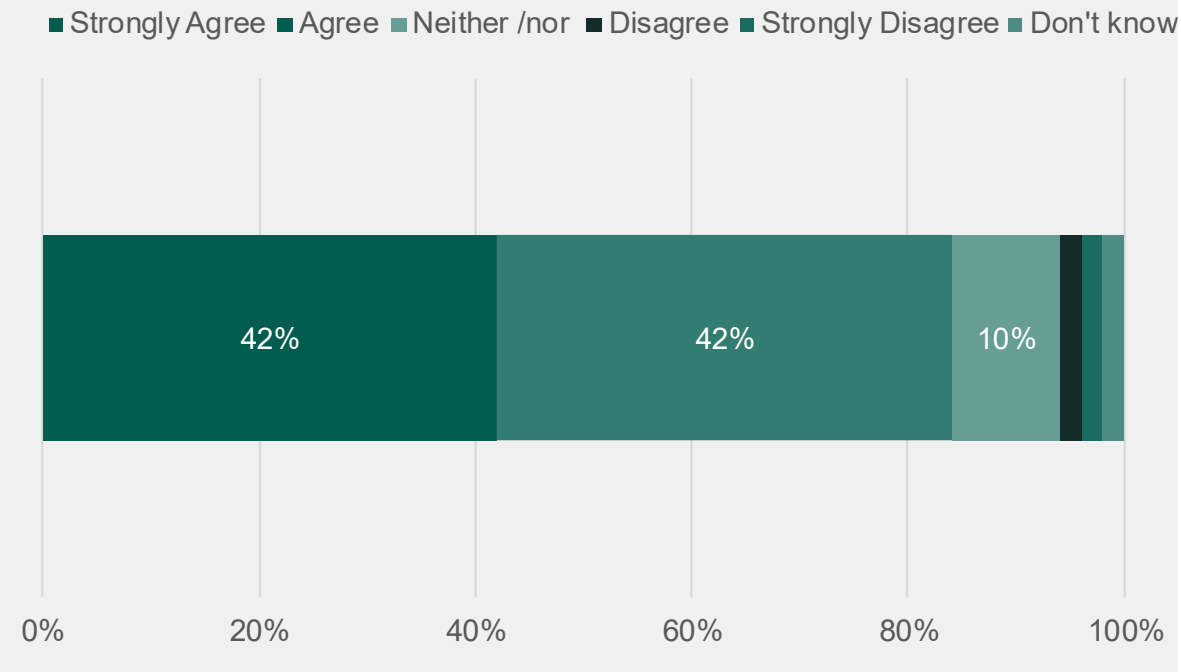
1.43. More than nine in ten (93%) of learners who wanted to learn in English were doing so, and a similar proportion (61%) who wanted to learn in at least some Welsh were doing so.

1.44. Two-thirds (66%) of learners who completed the easy read survey thought that their provider helped people to learn Welsh if they wanted to and 58% knew who to ask if they wanted to improve their Welsh.

Organisation and Management

1.45. Most learners felt their training was well organised. Four-fifths (84%) agreed their provider did this well, including 42% who strongly agreed, as shown in Figure 16.

Figure 16. Learners' perception on whether their learning is well organised



E1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that your provider organises your learning / training well?
Base: All learners: 4,459

Easy read survey results

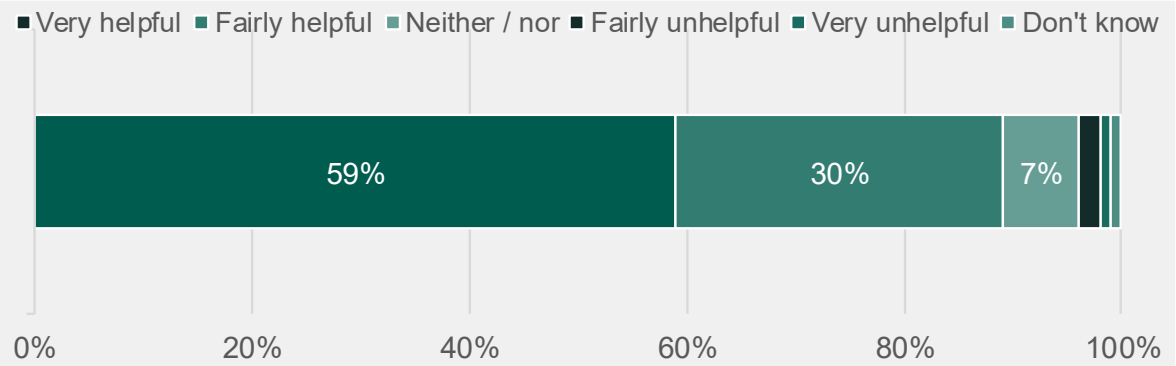
1.46. To assess whether providers had organised courses well, learners answering the easy read survey were prompted with some examples of how providers might demonstrate good organisation and management of learning and asked if their provider had done these types of things. The examples included telling learners about any changes that might happen, making sure learners had the things they needed to do their learning, ensuring learners had enough time to do their work and starting and finishing lessons on time. Overall, nearly nine in ten (89%) said their provider had done these types of practices.

Wellbeing and Mental Health

1.47. Most learners (83%) said they would know where to go for guidance or support with their wellbeing and mental health if they needed it. A quarter (25%) of learners had actually received support for their wellbeing and mental health, while 2% had asked for support but had not yet received it.

1.48. Of those who had received support for their mental health, three-fifths (59%) found it very helpful and a further 30% found it fairly helpful. A small minority (3%) found it to be unhelpful.

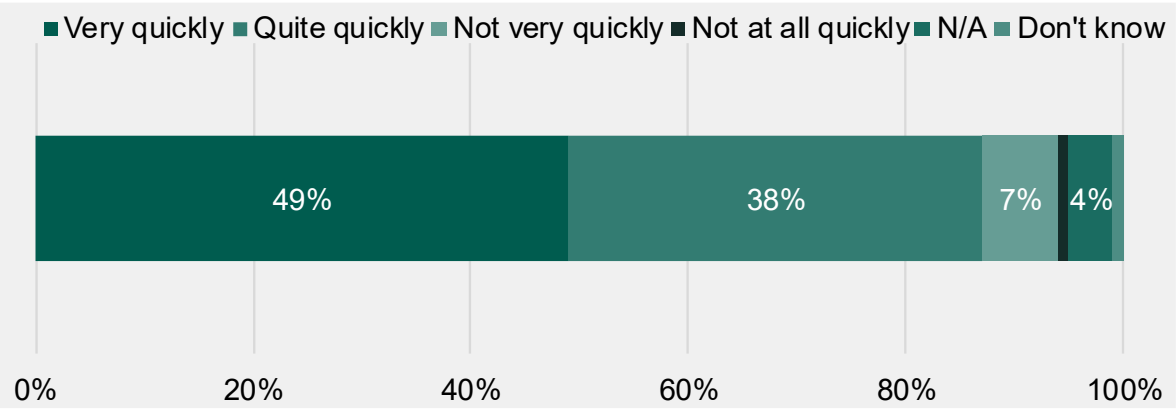
Figure 17. How helpful learners found Mental Health support



F3. How helpful was the guidance or support you received?
Base: All learners who received guidance or support: 1,357

1.49. Almost half (49%) of learners who received support for wellbeing and mental health said they received this support very quickly and a further 38% said they received it quite quickly. Only 8% felt they did not receive support quickly.

Figure 18. How quickly learners received Mental Health support



F4. How quickly did you receive the support after asking for it?
Base: All learners who received guidance or support:1,357

Easy read survey results

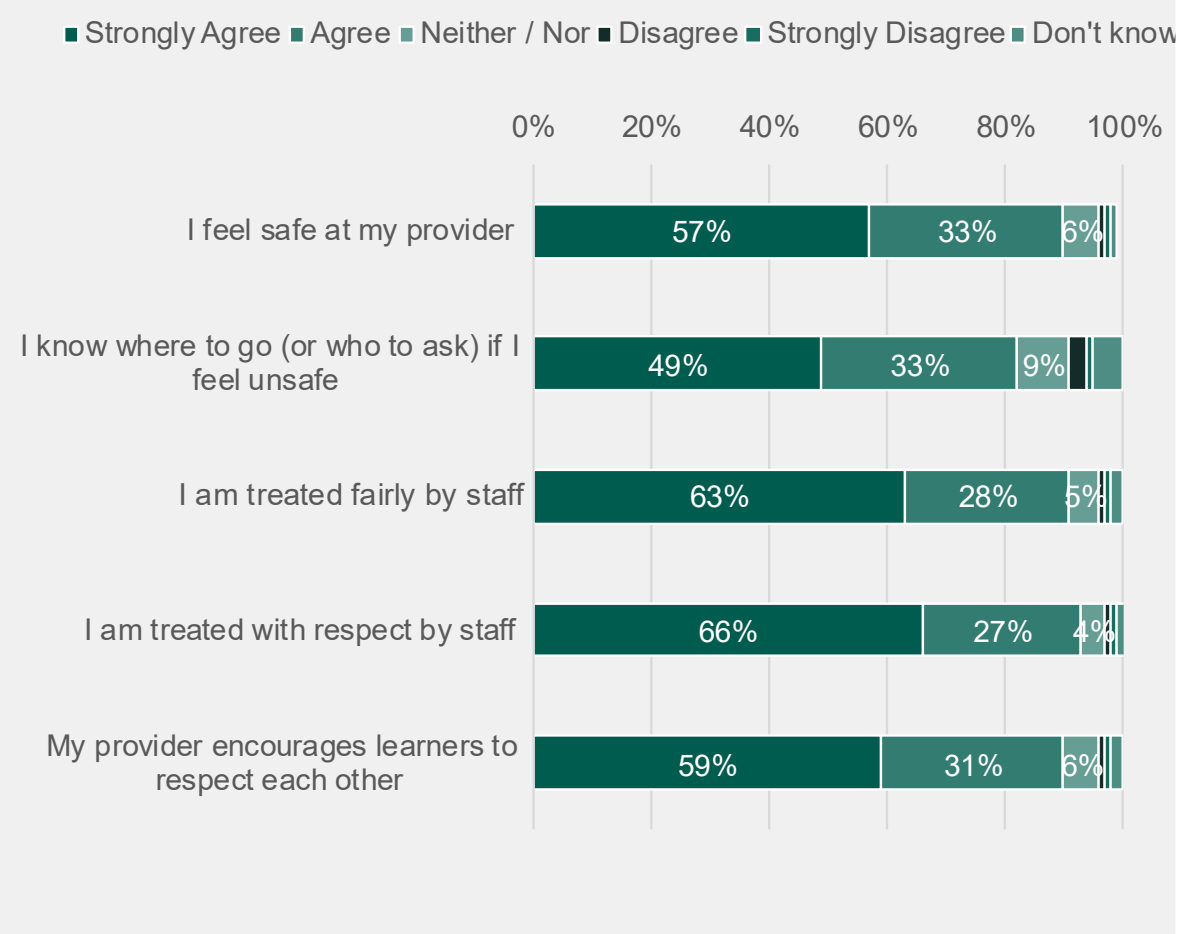
1.50. A large majority of learners who completed the easy read survey (92%) said they knew who to ask for help with their wellbeing or mental health. Half (50%) had received help and, of these, 72% found it helpful, 18% said it was okay and 2% said it was not very helpful (8% were unsure).

1.51. In terms of the timeliness of help received, two-thirds (66%) said they had received help very quickly, 16% said they had to wait a little bit and 2% said the help was received not very quickly (15% were unsure).

Safety and Respect

1.52. Learners reported very high levels of agreement that they felt safe, were treated fairly, and treated with respect. Figure 19. shows that, for each statement, most learners strongly agreed, and at least four-fifths agreed overall. However, almost one in ten learners (9%) either disagreed that they knew where to go (or who to ask) if they felt unsafe, or reported that they did not know.

Figure 19. Learners' perceptions of safety and respect



G1_X. To what extent do you agree or disagree…
Base for statements 'I am treated fairly by staff', and 'I am treated with respect by staff': All learners: 4,459
Base for statements 'I feel safe at my provider', 'I know where to go (or who to ask) if I feel unsafe', and 'My provider encourages learners to respect each other': (All ACL and FE learners: 4,104)

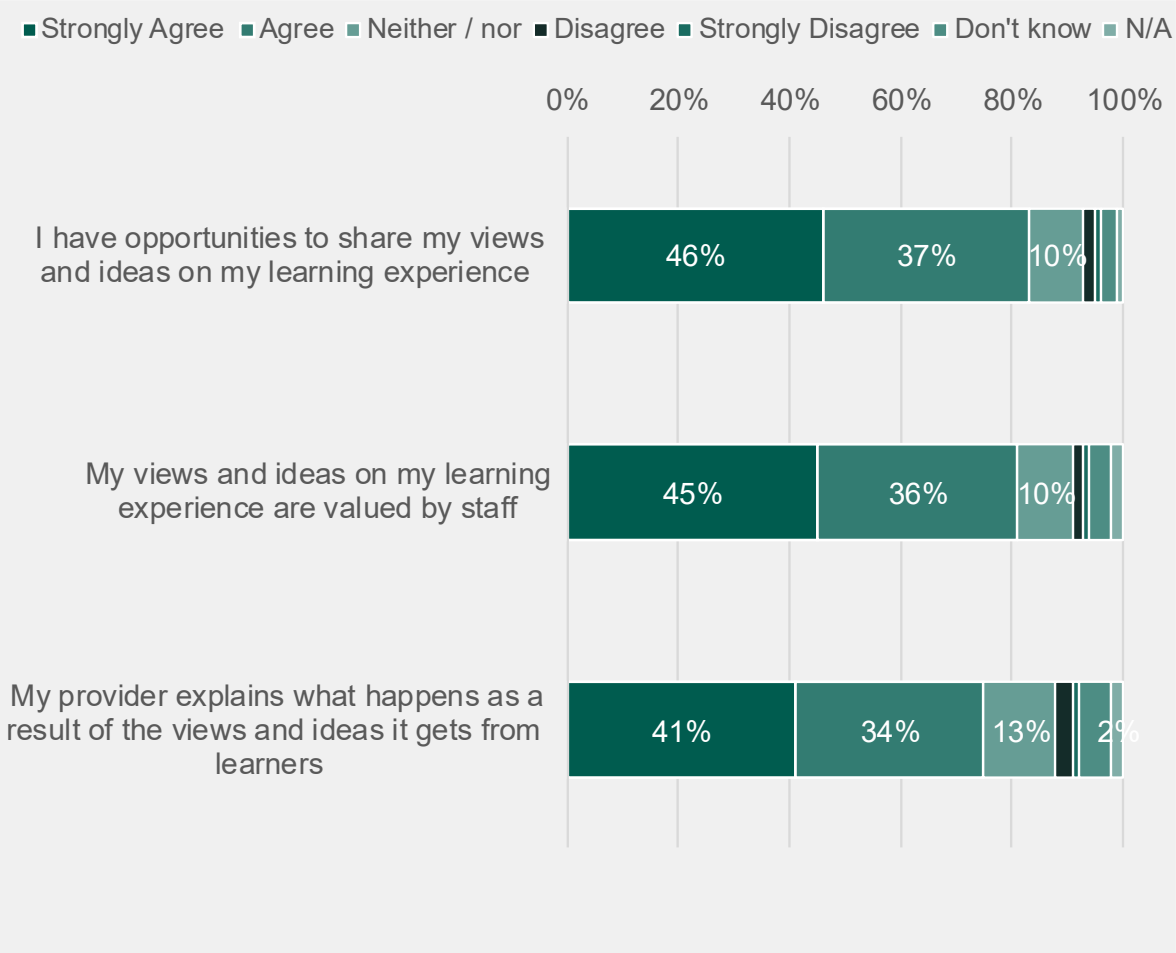
Easy read survey results

1.53. Those completing the easy read survey were asked about similar aspects of safety and respect. A large majority (94%) said they felt safe, 93% said they knew where to go if they didn't feel safe, 92% felt that staff treated them fairly and 94% said the place they learn told people it was important to respect each other.

Learner voice

1.54. In general, learners reported that they felt heard, although the feedback loop (their provider explaining actions taken in response to learner feedback) was slightly weaker than the opportunity to provide feedback. As shown in Figure 20. below, 83% of learners agreed they had the opportunity to share their feedback (46% strongly agreed) and 81% agreed these opinions were valued by staff (45% strongly agreed). Though still a strong majority, a lower proportion agreed that their provider explains what happens as a result of the views and ideas it gets from learners (75% agreed, including 41% who strongly agreed).

Figure 20. Sharing views and experiences

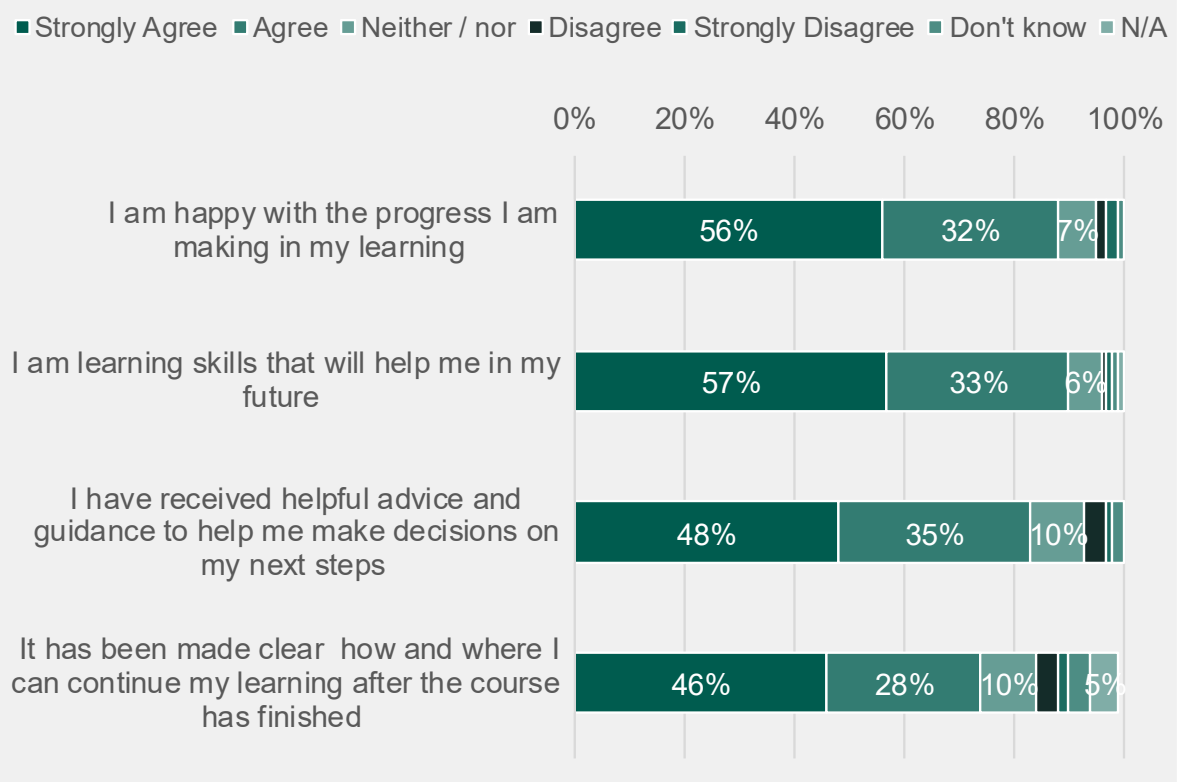


H1_X. To what extent do you agree or disagree…
Base: All learners: 4,459
Please note due to rounding percentages may not sum to 100%

1.55. Learners were very positive about their progress and skills development, but guidance on next steps and continuing learning appear to be areas that could be improved (while still being generally positive).

1.56. Nine in ten (90%) agreed they were learning useful future skills and 88% agreed they were making good progress with their learning. While still a positive response, a slightly lower proportion of 83% agreed that they had received helpful guidance about next steps (note, this question was only asked of further education learners and apprentices). Among learners on adult community learning courses, around three-quarters (74%) agreed it was clear how to continue learning after their course.

Figure 21. Learners' progress and next steps



I1_X. To what extent do you agree or disagree…
Base: First and second statement: All learners: 4,459
Third statement: All FE and APP learners: 3,816
Fourth statement: All ACL learners: 643
Please note due to rounding percentages may not sum to 100%

Easy read survey results

1.57. The majority (86%) of learners completing the easy read survey said they had the chance to share ideas with their provider and what they thought about their learning experiences. A similar proportion (85%) felt that their thoughts and ideas were important to their provider. Around three-quarters of learners (73%) said their provider told them what they had done after listening to this feedback.

1.58. In terms of progression and next steps, 93% of learners who completed the easy read survey were happy with how well they were doing with their learning; the same proportion (93%) also felt they were learning skills that would help them in the

future. Large majorities of these learners also felt their provider had given them support to help decide what to do after their learning and told them how to keep learning after their course had finished (91% and 89% respectively).

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