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Acas Workplace Training evaluation 2020

BMG Research

Acas Research Paper

Acas Workplace Training Evaluation 2020

September 2020

BMG Research

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Contents

1. Executive Summary

BMG Research was commissioned to undertake an evaluation of Acas Workplace Training delivered between October 2018 and December 2019. The evaluation set out to:

- Examine the topic and nature of Workplace Training, the reasons why organisations commissioned the training and why they chose Acas;
- Explore and examine organisations' experiences of Workplace Training, including who attended and why, the tailoring of the training, and their satisfaction with the trainer;
- Determine if the Workplace Training met the training objectives and the expectations of commissioners;
- Establish if organisations have experienced any medium to long term impacts of undertaking Workplace Training;
- Explore satisfaction with Workplace Training, including Its perceived value for money; if it met their needs and provided the training outcomes they set out to provide and if they would recommend it and/or use it again;
- Explore whether commissioners felt Workplace Training was the most appropriate Acas intervention for their organisation, or whether another service would have been more appropriate
- Identify any areas where improvement in the Workplace Training product and delivery process is required;
- Track changes in key impact measures in order to assess service improvement since 2013.

The 2019 evaluation employed a quantitative research approach. Two modes of data collection were employed:

- 349 computer aided telephone interviews (CATI) with commissioners of Workplace Training across the UK, achieving a 59% response rate on the contacted[1] sample, which represents a 28% response rate based on all available records (all unique training commissioners).
- 36 computer aided web-based interviews (CAWI) with commissioners of Workplace Training across the UK, achieving a 5% response rate on those emailed with a link to the online survey.

Telephone and online surveys were completed with/by training commissioners who had commissioned one or more Workplace Training event(s) from Acas, delivered between October 2018 and December 2019 (three to fifteen months before fieldwork), although no commissioner completed a survey related to more than one training event. All sample was provided by Acas from their Events and Management Recording System (EARS).

CATI fieldwork took place between Thursday, 16th January 2020 and Monday, 16th March 2020. CAWI fieldwork took place between Friday, 6th March 2020 and Wednesday, 18th March 2020.

1.1 Respondent profile

HR/personnel staff account for around half of all training commissioners (51%) but these staff represent a smaller proportion of all commissioners than in 2013 (61%), suggesting that there is a more diverse range of roles represented in 2019. Business/strategy roles account for 11% of respondents and learning and development or training roles each account for around half of this proportion (6% and 4% respectively), with other more general management, administrative of finance roles accounting for the remaining 28% of commissioners.

There is a similar profile of organisations by size and industry sector in 2019 compared to 2013, while a higher proportion operate within the private sector now than in 2013 (51%, compared to 45%). Organisations operating in the not-for-profit/voluntary sector account for a lower proportion of all training commissioners now than in 2013 (18%, compared to 27%).

There is little change compared with 2013 in respect of trade union representation across organisations (42% have trade union representatives; 15% full-time trade union officials; compared to 43% and 16% respectively in 2013), but fewer organisations this year have non-union staff representatives within their organisation (39%, compared to 50%).

Fewer respondents than in 2013 have used other Acas services in addition to Workplace Training in the last 12 months (79%, compared to 87%). It suggests the possibility that market penetration of Workplace Training has widened to include more organisations that do not use Acas in other areas, or it may suggest that organisations that had previously used Workplace Training alongside other Acas services have stopped using those services. We do not have the evidence from this survey to conclusively support either of these hypotheses.

Training commissioners surveyed represent each of the three main areas of training more evenly than in 2013. They are still most likely to have commissioned training in HR and People Management (38%, compared to 52% in 2013), but there has been an increase in take up of training with regard to Employment Relations (33%, compared to 24% in 2013) and Fair Treatment at Work (29%, compared to 24% in 2013).

1.2 Workplace Training objectives and choosing Acas

73 per cent of respondents report commissioning the training to help with an organisational problem or improve in an area. 68 per cent of respondents said this was the main reason for the training. 51 per cent of respondents mentioned that the training was part of a wider initiative/programme of change in the organisation, while nine per cent of respondents gave supporting implementation of/adherence to company policies as a reason. Slightly lower proportions cited following 'good practice' (7%) and/or to inform and help develop policies (6%).

The three most important objectives were improving staff knowledge (98% considering this very/fairly important); improving employment relations (96%); and improving the organisation's performance (92%). Significantly fewer respondents attached importance to improving adherence to policies or procedures in 2019 than in 2013 (88%, compared to 93% in 2013).

As in 2013, improving staff knowledge was the most important objective (31%).

There is an upward trend in the importance attached to training objectives that are linked to tangible, measurable outcomes, such as organisational performance (72% rating this as very/fairly important in 2008; 87% in 2013; 92% in 2019); the level of staff turnover (35% in 2008; 51% in 2013; 72% in 2019) and the level of staff absenteeism (34% in 2008; 51% in 2013; 59% in 2019). However, the achievement of these objectives tends to involve a range of factors; not just the training, and as such meeting them is increasingly outside of Acas' control.

Having had a good experience of Acas in the past was the most frequently cited reason for choosing Acas as a training provider (42%); closely followed by Acas' reputation as a training provider (38%). Around one in four respondents chose Acas because of its expertise in employment relations and HR (23%).

1.3 Workplace Training preparation and delivery

All training commissioners should have had a conversation with an Acas representative about their training needs before training commences but one in five do not recall doing so.

Eighty per cent of respondents recall a diagnostic process led by Acas, while 11% didn't recall any sort of diagnostic process, and the remaining 9% were not sure.

The most frequently mentioned steps in the diagnostic process were identifying the specific training elements required (73%) and reviewing Acas' existing ready-made courses (59%).

The steps taken in the diagnostic process were considered to have significantly contributed to the appropriate training programme being created by Acas by the majority of respondents who recall there being such a process (65%). The survey evidences a correlation between high levels of satisfaction with the training and the extent to which respondents recall any of the diagnostic steps taking place. It underlines the importance of ensuring that customers are engaged and satisfied with the diagnostic process and, if necessary, for Acas advisors to pro-actively encourage customers to undertake the process, promoting the benefits of doing so, if they show little interest in following the steps.

There was a high degree of management involvement in the decision to undertake Workplace Training (85%) and within more than a quarter of organisations, management also got involved in the diagnostic process (28%). Involvement from other types of staff (where present in the organisation) is at a low level:

- trade union staff - 17% in the decision; 7% in the diagnostic/design process;
- other staff representatives - 23% in the decision; 11% in the diagnostic/design process;
- other, non-management, staff – 22% in the decision; 12% in the diagnostic/design process.

The involvement of other staff representatives in particular is a key factor in satisfaction with the training.

In terms of who attended the training, this reflects involvement in the decision-making and training design stages. Management staff attended the training commissioned by the majority of organisations (85%), particularly in respect of training related to Fair Treatment at Work (92%), while trade union officials/representatives attended in three in ten organisations (29% and 30% respectively of organisations that have each of these staff), and non-union staff representatives attended in 62% of organisations with these staff. Trade union and non-union staff representatives were particularly likely to have attended training regarding HR and People Management.

Training attendance was compulsory within 54% of organisations but was more likely to be optional in organisations with more than 250 employees (54%, compared to 34% of smaller organisations). This may reflect the impracticality of arranging training for all staff in large organisations.

When asked if an Acas adviser got back in touch to see how things were going following the training, 62% recalled that an adviser did so. Higher levels of recall of follow up contact amongst those that have used other Acas services (66%, compared to 49% of those that have not used other services) suggests that having an existing relationship with Acas may have some bearing on the propensity to have received follow up contact.

Having received follow up contact from an Acas adviser is also linked to fully achieving training objectives (67%, compared to 58% where objectives had been only partially achieved) and levels of satisfaction with the training overall (72% of those very satisfied with the training overall report receiving some follow up contact, compared to 40% of those fairly and 43% of those not satisfied.

The majority of those that received follow up contact that provided a response (90%) found it useful, including 53% that found it very useful. This increased to 94% of those very satisfied with the training (with 59% of these respondents finding it very useful).

Of those that did not recall any follow up with their Acas adviser, 43% felt it would have been useful.   This increased to 63% of those who felt their objectives had only partially been achieved by the training and to 53% of those who were fairly satisfied with the training overall.

The extent to which follow up training is linked to fully achieving training objectives and ultimately with a higher level of satisfaction with the training is clear.

1.4 Impact of Workplace Training

Focusing on the impact of the training at different levels and in different ways across organisations:

Participant level impact

At least four in five respondents rated the Workplace Training as having had a positive impact on participants in any of a number of ways. Respondents were particularly positive about Workplace Training's contribution to making participants more aware of their responsibilities and improving their ability to deal effectively with the training topic (both 98% very/slightly positive).

The training was rated most positive with regard to improving participants' adherence to their organisation's policies (63% rated the impact very positive).

Respondents who reported that their organisation's objectives had been fully achieved were more positive than those who reported partly achieved objectives about the impact on participants. This includes:

- **Participants' awareness of their responsibilities** – 84% of those reporting that objectives had been *fully achieved* rated the impact as very positive, compared with 61% of those reporting *partly achieved* objectives;
- **Participants' awareness of their rights** – 66%, compared with 43%;
- **Participants' adherence to their organisation's policies** – 72%, compared with 51%;
- **Participants' ability to deal effectively with this topic** – 75%, compared with 54%;
- **Participants' ability to work with each other and their colleagues** – 61%, compared with 47%;
- **The ability of managers and staff to work together more generally in the organisation** – 52%, compared with 41%.

Impact on organisational efficiencies

Where changes in organisational metrics since the training were reported (productivity being the most common and the most positive) the majority of respondents attributed at least some of that change to the impact of the Acas Workplace Training they undertook. The training is more strongly linked to positive than negative outcomes, particularly in respect of productivity, a reduction in the number of work days lost due to absence and the loss of staff through dismissal or through voluntary resignation.

- **The number of staff that resigned** – 8% reported an increase, 68% all or in part due to training; 9% a decrease since the training, 88% all or in part due to training;

- **The number of work days lost due to absence** – 5% reported an increase, 64% all or in part due to training; 23% a decrease since the training, 89% all or in part due to training;
- **The number of employee grievances** – 1% reported an increase, 68% all or in part due to training; 18% a decrease since the training, 93% all or in part due to training;
- **The number of employment tribunal claims** – 3% reported an increase, 56% all or in part due to training; 7% a decrease since the training, 87% all or in part due to training;
- **The number of employment tribunal hearings** – 2% reported an increase, 40% all or in part due to training; 4% a decrease since the training, 80% all or in part due to training;
- **Productivity** – 5% reported an increase, 94% all or in part due to training; 2% a decrease since the training, 67% all or in part due to training;
- **The number of employer-led disciplinaries** – 17% reported an increase, 86% all or in part due to training; 22% a decrease since the training, 92% all or in part due to training;
- **The number of dismissals** – 9% reported an increase, 81% all or in part due to training; 13% a decrease since the training; 95% all or in part due to training.

Organisational practice level impact – changes to policies and procedures

Sixty-five percent of respondents reported that a policy or practice had been introduced, reviewed or revised by their organisation as a result of the training. This is a significantly lower proportion than in 2013 (78%). The proportion of respondents reporting that their organisations plan to do so is slightly higher than in 2013 (33%, compared to 29%), which suggests there is a slightly longer 'lag' between the training and action in this area this year.

Wider organisational impact

As well as examining the impact of the evaluation on specific metrics relating to organisational efficiencies, respondents were asked about wider impacts within the organisation. These are more subjective benefits that include potential positive changes to levels of trust between management and employees, employee representatives and trade union representatives; dealings with employment relations; staff morale; the fair treatment of employees; the ability to manage change in staff or HR and to prevent industrial action; and the overall ability of the organisation to deal effectively with the topic covered in the Workplace Training.

Respondents are generally positive about the wider impact of the Workplace Training within their organisation. This is most evident with regard to **the organisation's ability to deal effectively with the topic covered** (92% considering the impact to have been very/slightly positive), but also relating to **dealing with employment relations in a timely** (76%) and/or **effective** (82%) way. The majority of respondents reported that **their organisation's perception**

of fair treatment of employees has also improved as a result of the training and, compared with 2013, this has increased slightly in 2019 (from 77% to 81%).

Factors affecting the impact of the training

Fully achieving the objectives of the training is the most significant predictor of the training having a positive impact within the organisation, followed by having had contact with an Acas representative following the training.

Other variables that are relatively important in terms of predicting a positive impact of the training within an organisation include identifying something that was particularly good about the training, and not having experienced something that could lead to a major complaint or problem. This effectively says that a positive impact is likely to be associated with satisfaction with the training.

1.5 Overall views of Workplace Training

There is a very high level of satisfaction with Workplace Training, with 98% of those providing a response rating it as satisfactory, including 70% that have been very satisfied with it. This compares with 96% and 76% respectively in 2013.

Satisfaction is closely associated with fully achieving the objectives of the training, as well as identifying something that is particularly good about it. Involvement in determining what training is required and input into the design of the training by staff representatives is positively associated with a satisfactory experience, while follow up contact after the training has finished is also associated with increased likelihood of commissioners being satisfied.

Fifty-nine per cent of respondents considered their organisation's objectives to have been completely achieved, while most of the remainder (39%) report partly achieved objectives.

Achieving objectives depends very much on the nature of the objectives. Where objectives relate to improving the organisation's performance in certain areas, aspects other than the training influence the outcome. Those stating improving adherence to policies and procedures as an objective were most likely to report completely achieving their objective with the training (71%). The proportion of respondents reporting that their objectives were achieved is also high amongst those who set out to promote equality/diversity through the training (69%) and those that set out to improve staff knowledge (62%). These objectives are more directly attributed to the training alone than improving employee health/well-being and reducing absenteeism. It may be easier for respondents to relate the training outcomes directly to adherence to policies and procedures, including equality/diversity issues and improving staff knowledge than to more indirect business performance metrics.

Thirty-three per cent of respondents reported an aspect of the training that particularly pleased them. A slightly higher proportion (37%) reported there having been a few small things that pleased them. This included that the trainer

was good (35% of respondents that were pleased with aspects), and that the trainer was the most frequently recalled positive aspect of the training is logical, in that the person delivering the training would be the over-riding factor in driving positive assessments of the training. Twenty-eight per cent of respondents that were pleased with aspects of the training mentioned that there was good coverage of the topic/subject matter. Hardly anyone reported problems.

Reflecting high levels of satisfaction, nearly all respondents would recommend Acas Workplace Training on the topic they selected (96%).

Ninety per cent of respondents also consider Acas Workplace Training to be good value, which includes 60% that consider it very good value for money.

Following on from this, 95% of respondents would be likely to use Acas training again, which includes 78% that would be very likely to use it again.

1.6 Conclusions

Since 2013 there has been significant growth in the number of commissioning organisations, with many commissioning multiple training events. The original sample file included 3,681 records. Once duplicate commissioners were removed, 1,350 records remained to be used in the fieldwork. This compares with 943 records provided in 2013, of which 706 remained following de-duplication.

The profile of commissioning organisations now contains a higher proportion of those that have not used other Acas services and this may be indicative of Acas' training being used by a wider employer population. Furthermore, there is a broader range of job functions represented by training commissioners now than in 2013, and HR does not predominate to the extent that it did. It suggests that Acas is dealing with an increasing number of client contacts who do not hold a specialist HR or training role within their organisations. These clients may need more support in terms of determining their organisation's training needs, designing bespoke training packages and also in building on the training that has been delivered once it has been completed.

As previous good experience of Acas services is a particularly important reason for choosing Acas as a training provider, maintaining a high quality of service is highly important and attention to this is an essential marketing tool for Acas training programmes.

Currently, levels of satisfaction with the training delivered are very high and this is also reflected in a very high propensity to recommend Acas to others. A high level of satisfaction is strongly associated with the achievement of objectives, particularly where those objectives are related to adherence to policies and procedures but it is likely to be the case that training is only one of the tools employed by organisations in order to achieve organisational objectives relating to performance. For example, the training is unlikely to be the only activity relied on to contribute towards improving organisational performance, or staff absenteeism and general well-being. If organisations receive more guidance on

setting training objectives that are more directly attributed to the training but are more explicitly viewed as inputting into the wider organisational objectives driving the training, this may have a positive impact on levels of satisfaction.

Furthermore, some negative trends within organisations are also associated with Workplace Training at least in the short term, a case of things having to get worse before they get better. For instance, where training has led to more action by managers with regard to discipline and has led to more dismissals or grievance procedures, or where changes resulting from the training have negatively impacted on staff morale. It is important to manage client expectations in these areas.

Since the achievement of objectives is so important to satisfaction with the training, the initial diagnostic process is really important in determining what the objectives are, or confirming that the client's objectives are understood and accounted for. This then needs to be closely reflected in the training that is delivered. This extends to both the content of the training, and also in how it is delivered and the extent to which case studies and practical examples are employed. The importance of engaging with the diagnostic process to ensure highly satisfactory and worthwhile training should be impressed upon both customers and trainers alike.

There is great deal of overlap between staff that are involved in the diagnostic and design process and those that attend the training. When the people specifying the training need and designing the programme are also participating in it, they can clearly see for themselves if the training is actually meeting the specification.

Positive assessments of trainer competence and performance are highlighted by respondents that have been pleased with the training. Thus, promoting these positive assessments by engaging with participants in whatever way will be the most effective for that group is key to achieving a 'highly satisfied' rating. Improving staff knowledge is the 'bottom line' in terms of the aim of most training events and success in this respect is largely dependent on how the training is delivered.

Following up with organisations to ensure that the training has been well received and that it has had a positive impact is also positively associated with satisfaction. It also appears to be strongly associated with achieving objectives. It underlines the extent to which the process of an organisation getting what they want from the training may not stop at the end of the course but extends to what happens in the immediate aftermath of the training. It is also the easiest and most cost-effective way to build on relationships with organisations and progress to providing further training events.

To summarise in respect of the propensity to have been very satisfied with the training, the following factors are key:

- Full achievement of training objectives;

- Having identified something particularly good about the training i.e. something that pleased them;
- Including other staff representatives from the organisations in the diagnostic/design process, i.e. particularly relating to the principle of buy-in to the training from those attending the training;
- Perceptions of the training as very good value for money; and
- Receiving follow up contact after the training completion from a member of Acas' staff.

1.7 Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to assist Acas in achieving the underlying aim of continuing to provide a very high-quality service to commissioning organisations, thus ensuring that organisations continue to choose Acas to deliver their training and further drive customer recommendation to increase market penetration.

- While there is already a standard process at the outset of an enquiry to determine training needs and objectives, and design an appropriate training programme, it is not always followed. It is important that it is routinely and consistently followed.
- Ensure that the design process encompasses not only the content for the training, but also the preferred style of training delivery and the extent to which participants will want case studies and practical examples incorporated within the training.
- Agree, with training commissioners, an interim point during the training at which to review progress towards the training objectives, and how well the training is being received by participants.
- Focus on the individual needs and priorities of organisations in the diagnostic and design process, and pay particular attention to these during training delivery, to increase the likelihood that training commissioners will identify elements of the training that have been particularly good. This should ultimately increase their satisfaction with the training and positively reinforce their decision to have used Acas Workplace Training for their organisation.
- There is not always follow up with training commissioners post-training and this should be routinely and consistently undertaken to ensure that the Workplace Training has been well received and has had a positive impact within the organisation. It would also maintain a dialogue with commissioners regarding further training requirements.

2. Introduction

This report presents the findings from research carried out by BMG Research in early 2020 on behalf of the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas) to evaluate Its Workplace Training service, based on training commissioned between October 2018 and December 2019.

2.1 Background

Within Acas's educational and advisory function, Workplace Training occupies an important mid-range position between Acas's Open Access Training (delivered on Acas premises to anyone willing to pay course fees) and intensive, highly bespoke consultancy-based development or trouble-shooting projects undertaken with small numbers of members of organisations.

Key features of Workplace Training are:

- It takes place on employer premises.
- It is sufficiently fee-generating to cover costs of delivery.
- It is commissioned from Acas by the employer, and the commissioner functions as Acas' primary point of contact.
- It is a 'bespoke' in the sense that existing ACAS training modules are adapted to the particular circumstances of the organisations which commission the training.

The last evaluation of Workplace Training, undertaken in 2013, showed that participation generated a very high degree of satisfaction amongst customers and that participation resulted in some action in terms of the review or revision of existing employment practices or the introduction of new practices in eight of ten cases.

In 2013, virtually all commissioners noticed positive changes in the attitudes or behaviours of individual delegates taking part in the training. Nine out of ten organisations saw expenditure on Workplace Training as good value for money and substantial minorities identified long-term benefits of participation such as improved productivity or a reduction in staff grievances.

Some years later it is clearly valuable to re-visit Workplace Training from an evaluative perspective, particularly as the number of Workplace Training events, and the number of commissioners, has risen substantially in the period since 2013.

While this rise in participation suggests that the programme continues to be successful (on the assumption that any major weaknesses would have decreased not increased participation) the programme may still have scope for improvement - for example, in increasing 'bespoke-ness' (the degree to which it is tailored to commissioners' need), in securing greater employee input into commissioning, in delivering follow-up calls more consistently, and so on.

As in 2013, this evaluation sets out to:

- Examine the topic and nature of Workplace Training courses, the reasons why organisations commissioned the training and why they chose Acas.
- Explore and examine organisations' experiences of Workplace Training including who attended and why, the tailoring of the training and their satisfaction with the trainer.
- Determine if the Workplace Training met the training objectives and the expectations of commissioners.
- Establish if organisations have experienced any medium to long term impacts as a result of undertaking Workplace Training.
- Explore satisfaction with Workplace Training, including Its perceived value for money.
- Establish the degree to which the training met the organisation needs and provided the training outcomes they intended.
- Establish if commissioners would recommend it and/or use it again.
- Identify any areas where improvement in the Workplace Training product and delivery process is required.

The evaluation has sought to build on findings from the 2013 Workplace Training survey (in particular) by:

- Tracking changes in key impact measures in order to assess service improvement since 2013, but doing so independently of the effects of changes in the profile of the Workplace Training population and/or of survey samples
- Considering contextual change in the population of organisations engaged in Workplace Training and undertaking in-depth analysis of sub-group positions.

2.2   Methodology

The 2019 evaluation employed an entirely quantitative research approach. Two modes of data collection were employed:

- 349 computer aided telephone interviews (CATI) with commissioners of Workplace Training across the UK, achieving a 59% response rate on the contacted[2] sample, representing 28% of all unique training commissioners.
- 36 computer aided web-based interviews (CAWI) with commissioners of Workplace Training across the UK, achieving a 5% response rate on those emailed with a link to the online survey[3].

Telephone and online surveys were completed with/by training commissioners who had commissioned one or more Workplace Training event(s) from Acas delivered between October 2018 and December 2019 (three to fifteen months before fieldwork). All sample was provided by Acas from their Events and Management Recording system (EARS).

CATI fieldwork took place between Thursday, 16th January 2020 and Monday, 16th March 2020.CAWI fieldwork took place between Friday, 6th March 2020 and Wednesday, 18th March 2020.

2.3 Comparability between 2008, 2013 and 2019 survey results

There are some challenges to comparing 2019 survey results with those of 2008 and 2013.

Firstly, as a result of the expansion of the numbers of employers taking part in Workplace Training, the profiles of employer populations across the three surveys, 2008, 2013 and 2019 (of all employers participating in Workplace Training in respective 12-month periods) may differ in ways which affect key survey measures (such as satisfaction and impact).

Secondly, that further variation may occur such that, even if the participation profiles are similar, the profiles of the achieved samples differ, with similar effects. Key differences between the 2013 and 2019 samples include:

- Fewer HR and personnel staff amongst respondents: 51% cf. 61%;
- More private sector organisations represented by respondents: 51% cf. 45%;
- Fewer not-for-profit/voluntary organisations: 18% cf. 27%;
- Fewer organisations with non-union representatives within their workforces: 39% cf. 50%;
- Fewer training commissioners that have also used other Acas services: 79% cf. 87%.

There is also a shift away from HR and People Management in respect of the Workplace Training events respondents were questioned about[4] in 2019 (38%, compared to 52% in 2013); with respondents more likely to be questioned about Employment Relations courses (33%, compared to 24% in 2013) and courses covering Fair Treatment at Work (29%, compared to 24%).

In addition, in 2019 the response rate as a proportion of all training commissioners was lower than in 2013 (28%, compared to 57% in 2013). The lower response rate was in spite of systematic repeated attempts to contact training commissioners over the extended fieldwork period, and the offer of an online survey option for those that had not responded positively to the opportunity to take part in the telephone survey.

Therefore, taking into account these year on year differences, it is possible that apparent changes (negative or positive) in key performance indicators for Workforce Training are simply artefacts of population or sample differences rather than real ones (such that they would have changed even if the population or sample characteristics had not).

It should be noted that the 2008 and 2013 surveys did not weight their achieved samples back to their respective populations of Workplace Training participants and, to ensure consistency with these past surveys, the 2019 survey data is also not weighted. Furthermore, to weight data one must have a reliable and consistent measure of the population for the data to be weighted to. The de-duplication process undermined this measure to some extent, but also there were

a number of different variables that could have been used for weighting purposes, including organisation characteristics (size, sector, type of organisation), and training topic. The process may have been too 'subjective' considering these issues. The over-riding concern however, was comparability with previous surveys.

3. Respondent Profile

This section summarises the profile of respondents who completed the survey and describes the organisations that they work for and the Workplace Training courses they commissioned.

- HR/personnel staff account for around half of all training commissioners (51%) but these staff represent a smaller proportion of all commissioners than in 2013 (61%), suggesting that there is a more diverse range of roles represented in 2019.
- There is a similar profile of organisations by size and industry sector in 2019 compared to 2013, while a higher proportion operate within the private sector now than in 2013 (51%, compared to 45%). Organisations operating in the not-for-profit/voluntary sector account for a lower proportion of all training commissioners now than in 2013 (18%, compared to 27%).
- There is little change compared with 2013 in respect of trade union representation across organisations (42% have trade union representatives; 15% full-time trade union officials; compared to 43% and 16% respectively in 2013), but fewer organisations this year have non-union staff representatives within their organisation (39%, compared to 50%).
- Fewer respondents than in 2013 have used other Acas services in addition to Workplace Training in the last 12 months (79%, compared to 87%). It suggests that market penetration of Workplace Training has widened to include more organisations that do not use Acas in other areas.
- Training commissioners surveyed represent each of the three main areas of training more evenly than in 2013. They are still most likely to have commissioned training in HR and People Management (38%), but there has been an increase in take up of training with regard to Employment Relations (33%) and Fair Treatment at Work (29%). These figures were 52%, 24% and 24% respectively in 2013.

3.1 Job title

The target respondent within organisations for the survey was the training commissioner i.e. the person who booked the training with Acas. The job roles that respondents work within are predominantly within HR/personnel, with 25% of respondents that are HR/personnel managers, increasing to 31% of respondents in the private sector, and 10% as HR/personnel assistants (10%). Eight per cent are HR/personnel directors, and the same proportion are HR/personnel business partners. Overall, HR/personnel roles account for 51% respondents, a significantly lower proportion than in 2013 (61%).

Eleven per cent of respondents are in business/strategy roles, increasing to 18% within public sector organisations.

Only a minority of respondents work in learning and development (6%) or training (4%), both lower proportions than in 2013 (11% and 6% respectively).

A comparison of the profile of job roles held by respondents between 2013 and 2019 suggests that commissioning of training is in the hands of more general than specialist HR/personnel, training roles this year.

Figure 1 summarises the job titles of respondents that participated in the survey. The list is diverse and distributed across the full range of organisation functions, including administration, operations and finance.

Figure 1: Job title of respondents
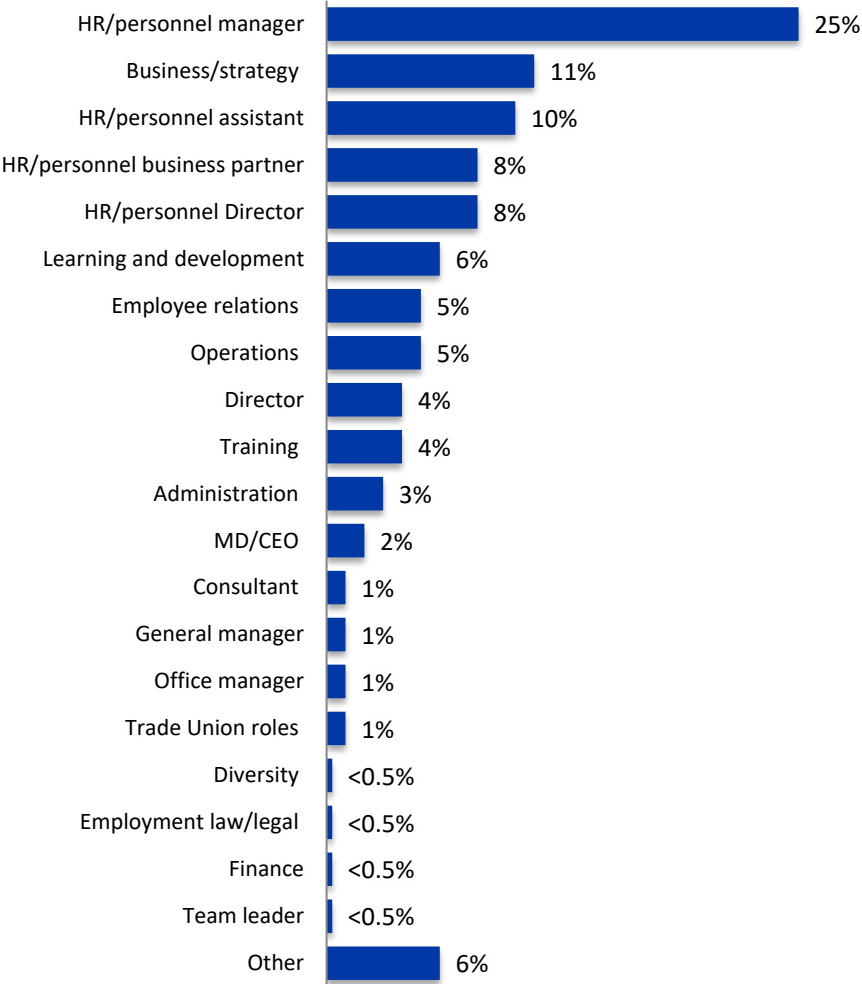
Q49 What is your job title/position? Base: 385 (all respondents)

3.2 Profile of businesses

Region

As in previous surveys (2008 and 2013) the region of each organisation was defined by the Acas Area Office which provided their Workplace Training. The breakdown is presented in the figure below. It represents the achieved final sample rather than the regional profile of Workplace Training users.

London, the South East and Bristol are the three offices most commonly represented by respondents (12% in each case), while the Acas National/Advisory and International and Newcastle accounts for the fewest (1% and 4% respectively).

Figure 2: Workplace Training Delivery by Region
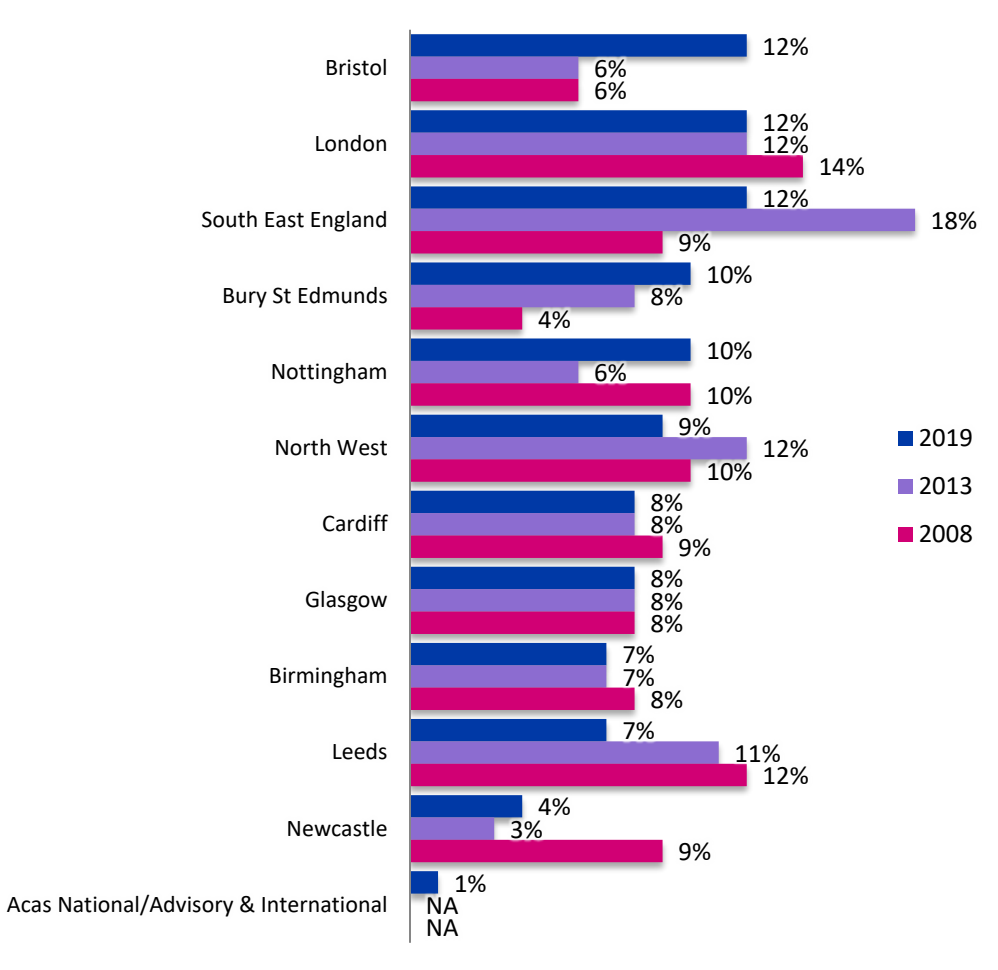
Sample information Base: 2019 = 385; 2013 = 404; 2008 = 418 (all respondents)

Industry

As in 2013, respondents were asked which industry their business operates in. This year, the Standard Industrial Classification 2007 (SIC 2007) was used to define the industry sectors represented by respondents[5]. One in seven respondents represent organisations operating within the public administration and defence sector (15%).

Public administration and defence organisations account for 47% of organisations in the public sector. Education organisations account for a further 25% of public sector organisation (14% of all organisations), while organisations providing human health and social work activities account for 9% of public sector organisations. Human health and social work activities account for 33% of third sector organisations. Overall, this sector accounts for 13% of all organisations in the sample.

Manufacturing businesses are represented by 14% of respondents; more than a quarter of those in the private sector (27%). Wholesale and retail/motor vehicle repair businesses account for one in eight private sector organisations (12%), but just 6% overall.

Industry sectors represented by respondents in 2019, and compared with the 2013 profile, are summarised in the figure below.

Figure 3: Industry

Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing — 2019: 2%, 2013: 0%
Mining and Quarrying — 2019: <0.5%, 2013: 0%
Manufacturing — 2019: 14%, 2013: 13%
Electricity, Gas, Steam and Air Conditioning Supply — 2019: 1%, 2013: 2%
Water supply/sewerage/waste management — 2019: 2%, 2013: 2%
Construction — 2019: 4%, 2013: 2%
Wholesale/Retail/Repair of motor vehicles — 2019: 6%, 2013: 2%
Transport and storage — 2019: 4%, 2013: 4%
Accommodation and food service activities — 2019: 3%, 2013: 6%
Information and communication — 2019: 3%, 2013: 4%
Financial and insurance activities — 2019: 2%, 2013: 4%
Real estate activities — 2019: 4%, 2013: 3%
Professional, scientific and technical activities — 2019: 5%, 2013: 3%
Administrative and support service activities — 2019: 2%, 2013: 3%
Public administration and defence — 2019: 15%, 2013: 7%
Education — 2019: 14%, 2013: 9%
Human health and social work activities — 2019: 13%, 2013: 14%
Arts, entertainment and recreation — 2019: 2%, 2013: 3%
Other service activities — 2019: 3%, 2013: 29%
Activities of extraterritorial organisations and bodies — 2019: 0%, 2013: 1%
Unsure/Other — 2019: 3%, 2013: 1%

Legend: 2019, 2013

Q55 What is the main business activity at this site? Base: 2019 = 385; 2013 = 404 (all respondents)

Organisation size

Based on respondents' estimates regarding the number of staff working in their organisation in Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales), 42% of all organisations represented by respondents employ fewer than 250 employees (compared with 43% in 2013). Twenty-two per cent of organisations are SMEs, that is, organisations with fewer than 250 employees operating in the private sector and not in public or voluntary, third sectors (20% in 2013). Fifty-seven per cent of all organisations represented by respondents employ 250 or more staff across England, Scotland and Wales. Twenty-seven per cent of all organisations represented by respondents operate within the private sector and employ 250 or more staff in Great Britain.

Figure 4: Organisation size
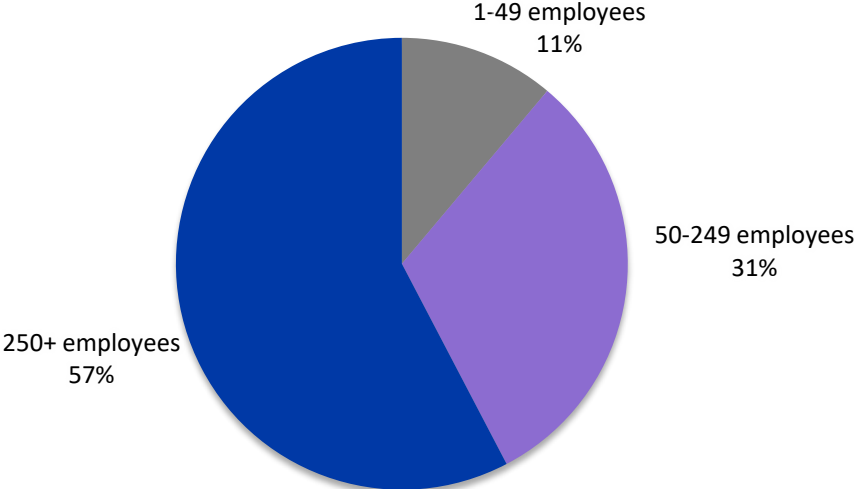
Q50 Approximately how many staff are employed in your organisation across England, Scotland and Wales? I.e. please do not include any based in Northern Ireland. Base: 385 (all respondents)

Sector

Respondents were asked which sector their organisation operates in. Fifty-one per cent of all respondents work within the private sector, which is a higher proportion than in 2013 (45%). Public sector respondents account for a slightly higher proportion than in 2013 (30%, compared to 27%), while fewer respondents now than in 2013 work for not-for-profit/voluntary sector organisations (18%, compared to 27%).

Figure 5: Sector
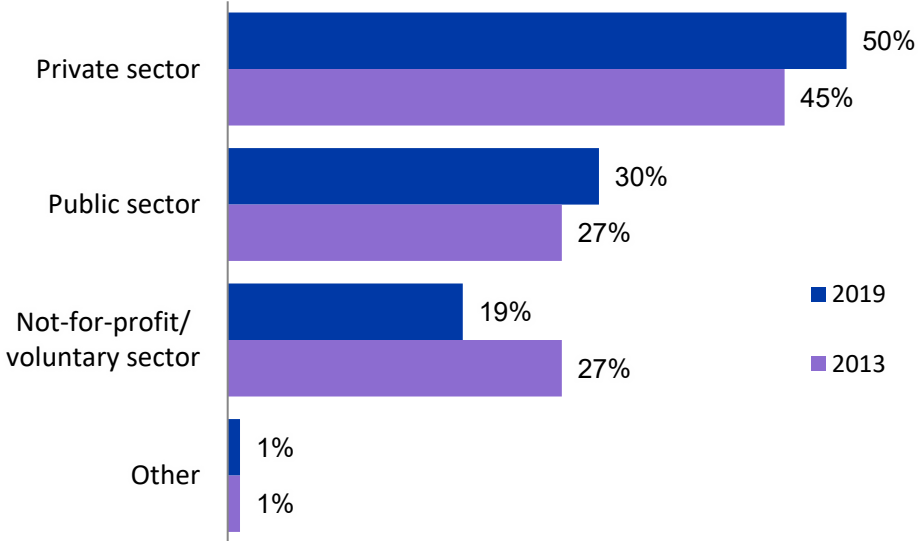
Q54 Do you work in the…   Base: 2019 = 385; 2013 = 404 (all respondents)

3.3 Trade union representatives

Respondents were asked if their organisation has trade union representatives, non-union staff representatives, and trade union full time officials in their organisation.

Forty-two per cent of respondents reported trade union representatives within their organisations. This is a similar proportion to that reported in 2013 (43%). A lower proportion (39%) reported non-union staff representatives within their organisation (50% in 2013), while a minority reported full-time trade union officials within their organisation (15%, compared to 16% in 2013).

Figure 6: Representatives within organisations
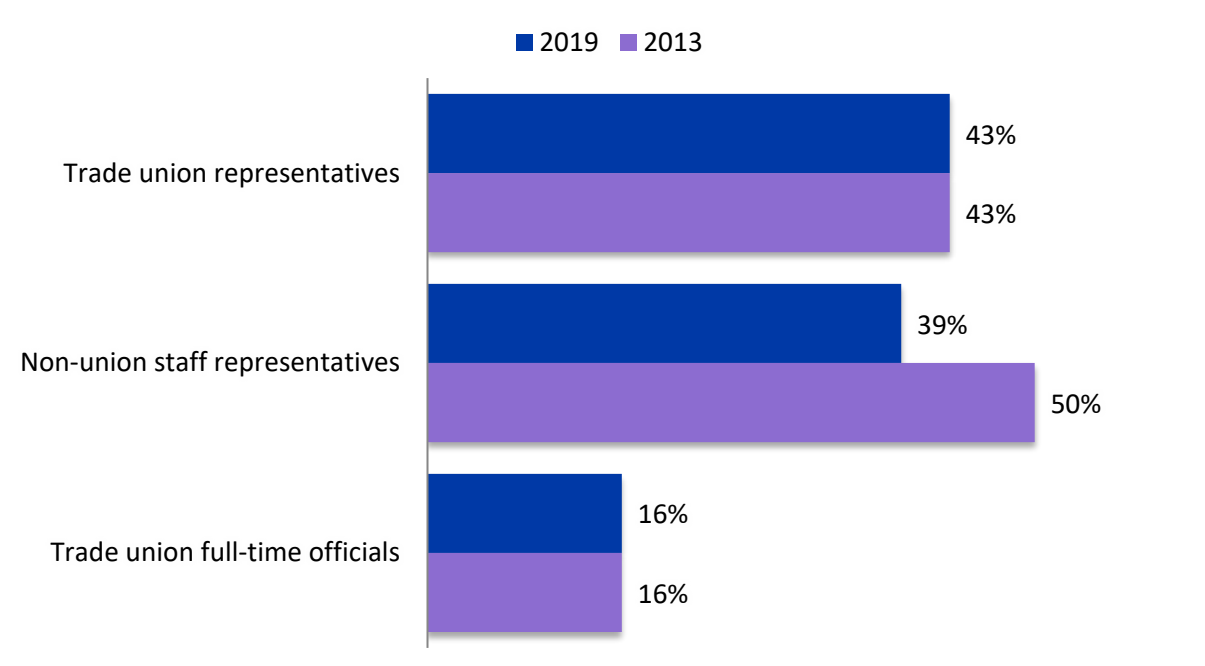
Q14 Do you have any of the following in your organisation …   Base: 2019 = 385; 2013 = 404 (all respondents). Multiple responses were allowed and consequently the figures for each category will not sum to 100%

Large organisations (250+ employees) and those in the public sector are significantly more likely than average to have trade union representatives within their organisation (57% and 80% respectively). By sector, trade union representatives are most likely to be present within public services (61%) and manufacturing (51%) organisations.

Sixteen per cent of organisations have trade union full-time officials (as in 2013). All of these are organisations that have trade union representatives. Again, this proportion is significantly higher within large (24%), public sector (34%), and public services (24%) organisations.

Thirty-nine per cent of organisations have non-union staff representatives (50% in 2013) and this too is more likely within large, and public sector organisations (51% of 250+ employers; 47% of public sector organisations). This highlights the

extent to which smaller organisations, and those in the private sector in particular, are less likely to have formal staff representation in place. Fifty-eight per cent of private sector organisations do not have any formal staff representation, compared with 41% of third sector and 14% of public sector organisations.

Within small organisations (10-49 employees) 75% do not have any employee representatives, trade union or otherwise, and the proportion of those without is also higher than average within medium-sized organisations (60% of those with 50-249 employees).

Respondents that commissioned training in Employment Relations subject area are significantly less likely than average to report having trade union or non-union staff representatives (46% have, compared with a sample average of 59%). Those that commissioned training in HR and People Management are *more* likely than average to have these representatives within their organisation (67% have any), particularly non-union staff representatives (48%). Respondents that have commissioned training in the area of Fair Treatment at Work are closer to the average, with 64% having any of these roles within their organisation, including 48% that have trade union representatives.

3.4   Previous use of Acas

Seventy-nine per cent of respondents reported having used other Acas services in addition to Workplace Training in the last 12 months. This is a lower proportion than in 2013 (87%).

The Acas service most commonly used was the website for information and guidance on employment rights (62%). This too was less frequently used by those commissioning Workplace Training than in 2013 (81%). Thirty-four per cent of respondents had used the telephone helpline for advice on a work-related query or issues, which compares with 46% in 2013. Thirty-nine per cent have used other training sessions, conferences and workshops, while 27% have used online training or e-learning.

With usage of other Acas services at lower levels than in 2013, and other (non-WPT) training services increasing in significance amongst the services that have been used, it hints at a subtle change in the customer base for Workplace Training Impact. Core advice and mediation services are less of a driver, with Acas having more of a general training provider role and perhaps having less of an invested customer base with regard to Workplace Training. It suggests that more of those using Acas Workplace Training are coming to Acas just for the training and are less likely to have a prior relationship with Acas.

Figure 7: Previous use of Acas; services used in addition to Workplace Training

Service	%
Website information and guidance on employment rights and rules	62%
Training sessions, conferences and workshops	39%
Telephone helpline for advice on a work-related query or issue	34%
Online training or e-learning	27%
Helping to resolve complaints / disputes that could lead or have led to an Employment Tribunal	20%
Other on-site tailored training (other than the Workplace Training discussed already)	19%
Using mediation to resolve workplace issues or relationship breakdowns	13%
Helping to resolve industrial / collective disputes between employers and trade unions	9%
Workplace Project to help management and employees to work more effectively together	9%
Information and advice via Facebook, Twitter and Linked In.	5%
Other	1%
None	19%
Don't know	2%

Q46 Which other Acas services have you used in the last 12 months? Prompted, multiple response Base: 385 (all respondents)

3.5 Profile of Training

Timing of training

Training that has been commissioned in the latest six-month-period is slightly over-represented amongst respondents. This will reflect the fact that these training commissioners were both easier to get hold of to take part in the evaluation (those from longer ago being more likely to have moved on to other job roles and other organisations), and more likely to have greater levels of recall of the training.

For the purposes of analysis in this report, the timing of training is grouped into three aggregates as follows: October-December 2018 (11% of all respondents); January-June 2019 (41%); and July to December 2019 (48%).

The sample profile with regard to when the training was commissioned, compared with the database profile in this request (based on one incidence of training per organisation), is compared in the figure below:

Figure 8: Timing of Workplace Training
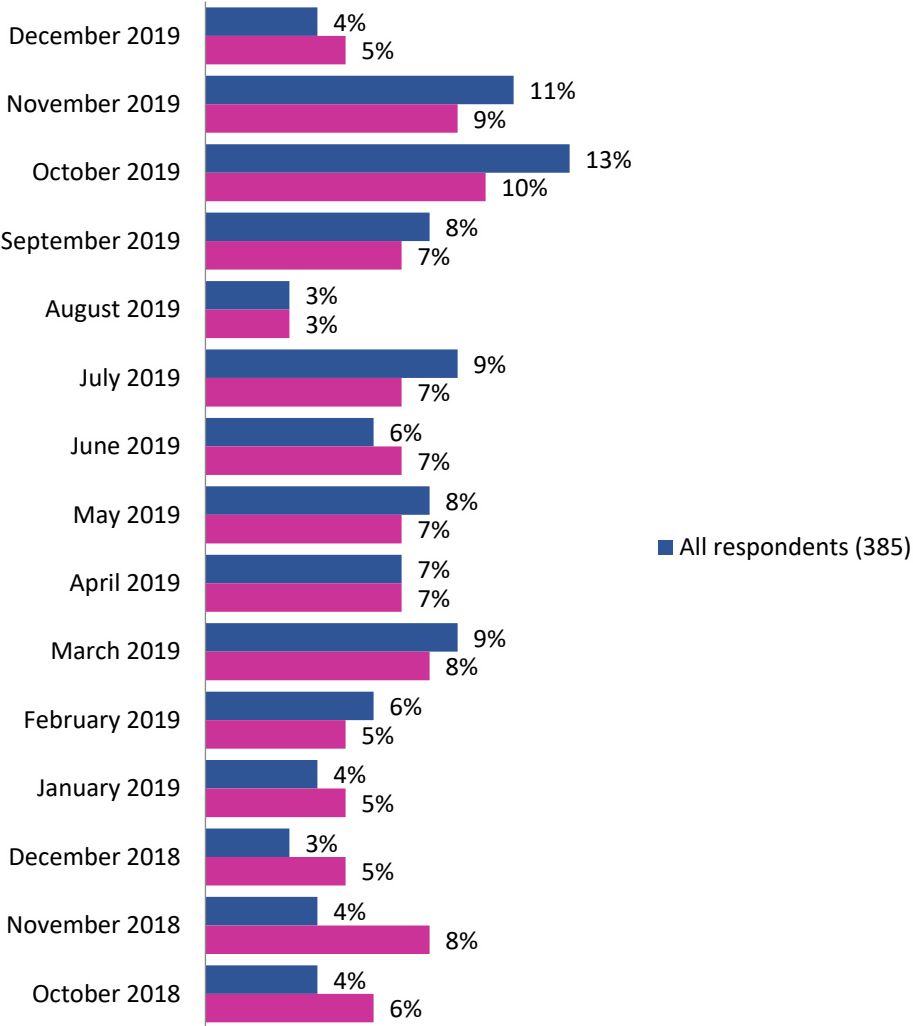
Sample information and confirmation via Q2 According to Acas' records, Acas ran a course on [TOPIC] in your organisation that finished around [MONTH, YEAR]. Is this correct? Bases in parentheses (all respondents)

Training Topic

Following the schema of the 2013, evaluation Training Topics have been grouped into three broad Areas to facilitate analysis: HR and People Management; Employment Relations; and Fair Treatment at Work. Compared with 2013, fewer respondents have commissioned training in the area of HR and People Management (38%, compared to 52%); while the proportions that have commissioned training in Employment Relations and Fair Treatment at Work have increased (from 24% to 33% and from 24% to 29% respectively).

Figure 9: Topic and subject of Workplace Training

Topic area	2019		2013 %	Topic Subject	2019		2013 %
	n	%			n	%	
HR and People Management	145	38	52	Line Management Skills (previously Supervision/First Line Management)	91	24	9
				Mental Health/stress (previously Stress Management)	28	7	2
				Performance Management	19	5	5
				Attendance/Absence Management	9	2	3
				Recruitment and Contracts of Employment (combined - previously Recruiting, Contracting and Employment People)	9	2	3
				TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment)	2	1	1
				Change Management	1	*	0
Employment Relations	127	33	24	Information and Consultation	37	10	17
				Employment Law	8	2	4
				Redundancy	4	1	2
Fair Treatment at Work	112	29	24	Discipline and Grievance	84	8	0
				Conflict/Mediation/Relationship Issues	29	8	8
				Bullying and Harassment	28	7	6
				Equality and Diversity and Inclusion (previously Equality and Diversity)	21	5	9
				Sexual Orientation Discrimination	2	1	0

Sample information and confirmation via Q3 Please can you clarify what the main area of training was? Base: 2019 = 385; 2013 = 404 (all respondents)

4. Workplace Training Objectives and Choosing Acas

Survey respondents were asked why they commissioned the training, what the main objectives of the training were, and why they chose Acas to deliver the training. This section of the report explores this in detail.

- As in 2013, the most frequently stated reason for commissioning the training was to help with an organisational problem or improve in an area (73%, compared to 67% in 2013). This was stated as the main reason by 68%.
- The three objectives in commissioning the training considered most important were improving staff knowledge (96%), improving employment relations (96%) and improving the organisation's performance (92%). Significantly fewer respondents attached importance to improving adherence to policies or procedures in 2019 than in 2013 (88%, compared to 93% in 2013).
- As in 2013, the most important objective was considered to be improving staff knowledge (31% in both 2013 and 2019).
- Having had a good experience of Acas in the past was the most frequently cited reason for choosing Acas as a training provider (42%); closely followed by Acas' reputation as a training provider (38%).

4.1 Reasons for commissioning training

Respondents were asked why their organisation had commissioned the training and the majority (spontaneously) cited the reason as to help with an organisational problem or improve in an area (such as, for example, employment tribunals) (73%). This reason was cited more frequently than in 2008 (67%) and 2013 (59%). It is a particularly significant reason given by those commissioning training in Employment Relations (81%).

Fifty-one per cent of respondents mentioned that the training was part of a wider initiative/programme of change in the organisation, and this was slightly more likely to be the case for those commissioning training in the area of HR and People Management.

Nine per cent of respondents gave supporting implementation of/adherence to company policies as a reason, while slightly lower proportions than this cited to be seen as following 'good practice' (7%) and/or to inform and help develop policies (6%)[6].

Figure 10: Reasons for commissioning training
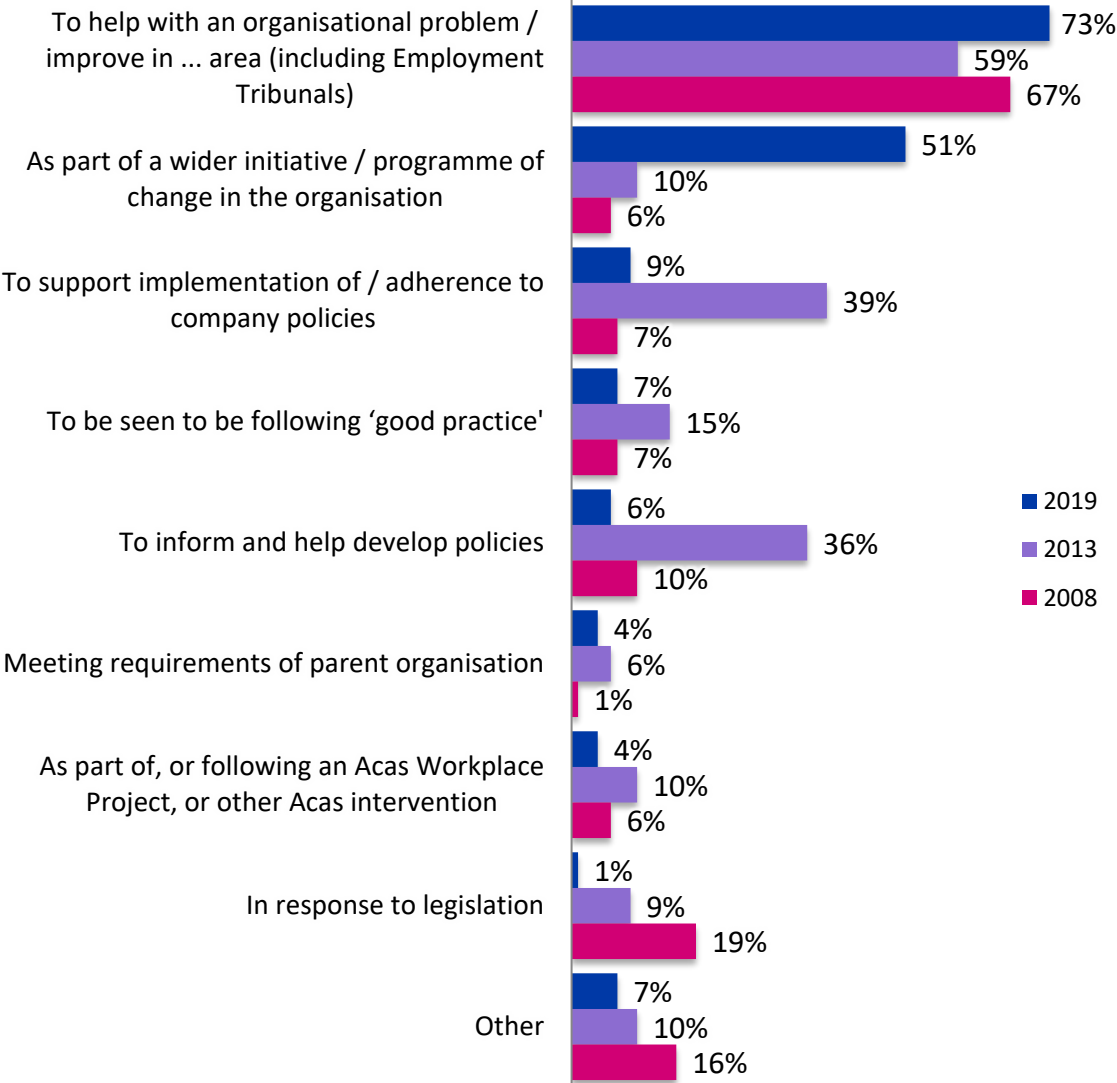
Q6 For what reasons did your organisation decide to commission training on [TOPIC]?
Base: 2019 = 385; 2013 = 404; 2008 = 418 (all respondents)

From the spontaneous responses given, respondents were asked to identify the main reason for the training. To help with an organisational problem or improve in an area predominated in this respect (68%). Other reasons were selected by fewer than one in ten respondents.

Figure 11: Main reason for commissioning training

Reason	Percentage
To help with an organisational problem / improve in TOPIC area (including Employment Tribunals)	68%
As part of a wider initiative / programme of change in the organisation	8%
To support implementation of / adherence to company policies	6%
To be seen to be following 'good practice'	4%
Meeting requirements of parent organisation	3%
To inform and help develop policies	2%
In response to legislation	<0.5%
Other	8%
Don't know	<0.5%
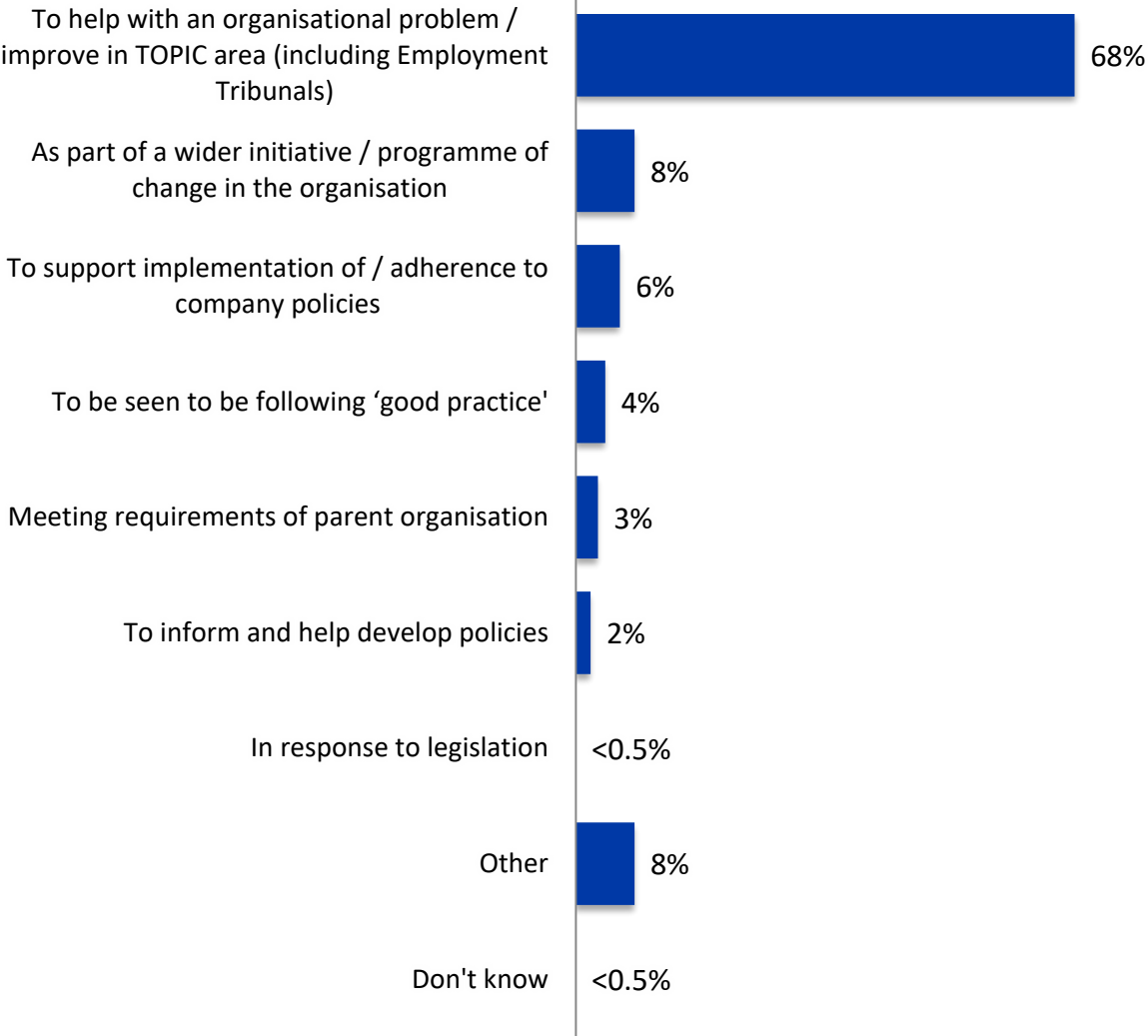
Q7 And which of those do you think was the main reason for the training? Base: 385 (all respondents)

Respondents that have commissioned training in Employment Relations are significantly more likely than average to have done so mainly to help with an organisational problem or to improve in a topic area (77%), while those that have commissioned training in HR and People Management are particularly likely to have done so mainly as a part of a wider initiative/programme of change in the organisation (12%). While still only a small minority of respondents, those commissioning training in Fair Treatment at Work are more likely than average to have done so mainly to be seen as following 'good practice' (7%). This is also more likely than average to have been the main reason within small organisations i.e. those with between 10 and 49 employees (11%).

4.2 Training objectives

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of eight potential objectives of their training course, which included organisational improvements and metrics.

The vast majority of respondents deemed improving staff knowledge (96% rated it as very/fairly important); improving employment relations (96%); improving the organisation's performance (92%); improving adherence to policies or procedures (88%); and promoting equality and diversity (86%) as important. Fewer, but still the majority of respondents, rated improving employee health or well-being (77%); reducing staff turnover (72%) and reducing absenteeism (59%) as important.

Compared with 2008 and 2013, improving the organisation's performance has increased in importance (up 5% compared with 2013 and up 20% compared with 2008), as has promoting equality or diversity (up 7% since 2013 and up 14% since 2008); and reducing staff turnover (up 21% since 2013 and up 37% since 2008). Improving adherence to policies or procedures has declined in importance (down 5% compared with 2013 and down by just 1% compared with 2008).

Figure 12: Importance of training objectives
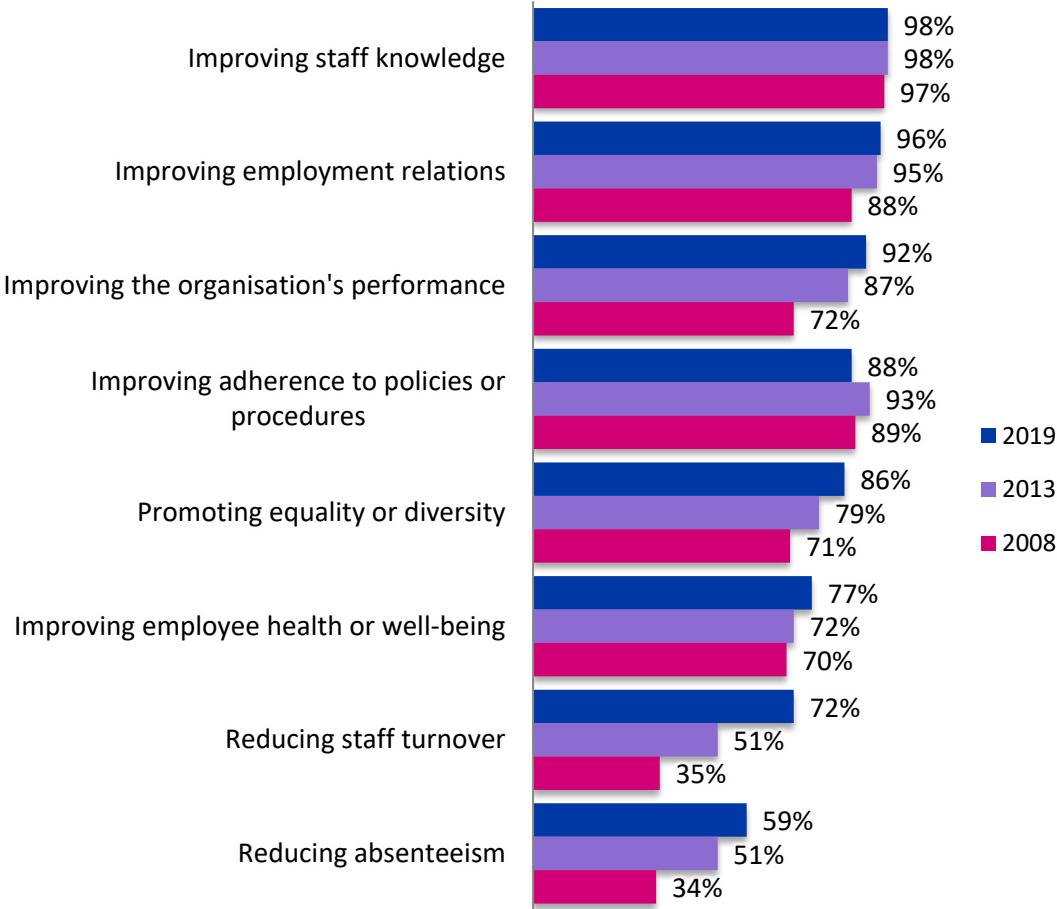
Q10 Thinking about the specific objectives of the training, how important were the following? Base: 2019 = 385; 2013 = 404; 2008 = 418 (all respondents)

The trend that was identified in 2013 with regard to the increasing importance of training objectives linked to tangible, measurable outcomes, such as organisational performance and the level of staff turnover and absenteeism, has continued. Promoting equality or diversity has also increased in importance.

Respondents were asked to select the most important objective from those they rated as important. As in 2013, improving staff knowledge was most frequently selected (31%), followed by improving employment relations (20%).

Despite being considered an important training objective by most respondents, very few consider improving the organisation's performance and promoting equality or diversity as the *most* important. While it appears that reducing staff turnover and absenteeism are increasingly important objectives for training commissioners – reducing staff turnover is considered important by 72% of respondents, compared with 51% in 2013, and reducing absenteeism is considered important by 59% of respondents, compared with 51% in 2013 - only 1%-2% of respondents consider these the most important.

Figure 13: Importance of training objectives

Objective	2019		2013	
	Very/fairly important (%)	Most important (%)	Very/fairly important (%)	Most important (%)
Improving staff knowledge	98	31	98	31
Improving employment relations	96	20	95	24
Improving adherence to policies or procedures	88	16	**93**	**24**
Improving employee health or well-being	77	**14**	72	4
Improving the organisation's performance	**92**	9	87	10
Promoting equality or diversity	**86**	7	79	6
Reducing absenteeism	**59**	2	51	1
Reducing staff turnover	**72**	1	51	0
Bases (excluding don't know)	383-385	382	388-403	398

Q10 Thinking about the specific objectives of the training, how important were the following? Q12**.** Of the objectives you said were important in the last question, which **one** you would see as being the most important objective of the training? Base: all respondents providing a valid response – i.e. excluding don't knows
Figures in bold are statistically significantly higher compared with the comparison year to a 95% level of confidence

Examining the importance of individual objectives by topic area, respondents that have commissioned training in the area of Fair Treatment at Work are significantly more likely than average[7] to consider improving adherence to policies or procedures as very important (76%, compared to a sample average of 65%).

Among those commissioning training in HR and People Management, improving employee health or well-being (65% rating it as very important, compared to a sample average of 51%) and improving employee relations (83%, compared to 76%) are significantly more likely than average[5] to be considered important.

For those that have commissioned training in Employment Relations, improving the organisation's performance (70%, compared to 62%) and reducing staff turnover (56%, compared to 43%) are significantly more likely than average[5] to be considered very important.

In terms of the *most* important for commissioners, those that commissioned training on topics relating to Fair Treatment at Work were most likely to cite improving staff knowledge as most important (38%), with improving adherence to policies or procedures second most frequently cited (23%).

Those that commissioned training related to HR and People Management were equally likely to cite improving employee health or well-being; improving employment relations and improving staff knowledge as the most important (26% in each case).

Those that commissioned training in the area of Employment Relations were most likely to cite improving staff knowledge (29%), but significantly more likely than average[5] to cite improving the organisation's performance as the most important (19%, compared to 9%).

4.3   Choosing Acas

Respondents were asked why they had chosen Acas as the provider for Workplace Training and their unprompted responses were noted.

The most frequently cited reason for choosing Acas as their training provider was a good experience of Acas in the past (42%), followed closely by Acas having a good reputation as a training provider (38%); the latter being significantly more likely than average to be cited by respondents within third sector organisations (49%).

Twenty-three per cent of respondents chose Acas because of their general expertise in employment relations and HR and 21% chose Acas because of its expertise in the training topic.

Other reasons for choosing Acas were mentioned: these included personal recommendation (7% of respondents), value for money (6%), the independence that Acas has from management and trade unions (4%) and the independence it has from Government (3%).

Commissioners' reasons for choosing Acas as their training provider in 2019 broadly reflect those given in 2008 and 2013, although Acas' expertise in employment relations or HR is more frequently stated this year.

Figure 14: Why respondents chose Acas as their training provider

	2019	2013	2008
Good experience of Acas in past	42%	47%	51%
Good reputation as a training provider	38%	56%	33%
Expertise - General expertise in employment relations or HR	23%	20%	19%
Expertise in this topic	21%	40%	26%
Personal recommendation of Acas	7%	7%	4%
Offered value for money	6%	18%	10%
Independence - advice was independent of management & Trade Union	4%	7%	11%
Independence - advice (e.g. on legislation) was independent of Government	3%	4%	6%
Acas approached us	2%	2%	1%
Government sponsored	1%	1%	1%
Did not know who else to use	1%	0%	0%
Not involved in decision	1%	0%	0%
Other	3%	0%	0%
Don't know	1%	0%	3%

Q13 Why did you choose Acas as your training provider? Base: 2019 = 385; 2013 = 404; 2008 = 418 (all respondents) Multiple responses allowed; unprompted

Respondents with experience of other Acas services were significantly more likely than average to have chosen Acas because of the good experience they have had using Acas in the past (45%), while those with little to no previous experience of Acas services were more likely than average to go by a personal recommendation (19%).

Selected comments from respondents include:

On 'good experience in the past'

"Having previously attended ACAS courses and regularly using the website and on-line e-learning modules we were confident in course content and believed this would be the best way to deliver the training required for our managers."

"We have used ACAS in the past for in-house training. Feedback has always been excellent, well delivered and received by the delegates attending."

"Myself and my boss had attended different seminars and ACAS was there presenting; enjoyed their style of training, spoke to [NAME] and invited her along to do a session with us."

"Very good, very professional used them many times before, you know it's right if it's with ACAS."

"Trusted, expert advice. Excellent working relationship and previous experience of delivering training for the organisation."

"[NAME] is a great trainer which is why we chose ACAS."

On 'good reputation as a training provider'

"Credibility as trusted independent trainers."

"Because we felt ACAS could be trusted to provide gold standard training at a reasonable cost."

"ACAS is recognised as providing good training and are well known."

"Reputationally professional and impartial."

On 'expertise'

"For professional expertise and guidance in running an employee forum and how to work well in collaboration with senior management in all areas that affect staff conditions and wellbeing."

"Credible operator in the eyes of the delegates, professional, comprehensive knowledge."

"Their standing in the employment arena. Strong employment practice with delivery."

"ACAS is up to date with all new legislation."

On other reasons for choosing Acas to provide the training

"Very flexible and make content fit the organisation."

"Citizen's advice would refer employees to ACAS anyway."

"I used to deliver similar type workshop, needed someone to do similar session I done, I saw ACAS as I always get emails and they offered the training that looks similar to what I delivery, so I sourced it."

"Quicker and cheaper than competitors."

"Google search and ACAS seemed the provider of choice."

5. Workplace Training Preparation and Delivery

This section of the report focuses on the design of the Acas Workplace Training to organisations' specific requirements, and the delivery of the training against those requirements. The diagnostic and design process that enables the training to be tailored to organisations' needs is an important feature of Acas Workplace Training and distinguishes it from other generic training that Acas offers online and at Acas premises. All instances of Workplace Training should have had a diagnostic process involving Acas and the commissioning organisation.

- Four in five respondents recall there having been a diagnostic process led by the Acas trainer (80%). One in nine (11%) didn't recall any sort of diagnostic process, while the remainder (9%) were unsure.
- The most frequently mentioned steps included identifying the specific training elements required (73%) and reviewing Acas' existing ready-made courses (59%).
- The diagnostic process was considered to have significantly contributed to an appropriate training programme being created by Acas by the majority of respondents who recall there being one (65%). The survey evidences a link between high levels of satisfaction with the training and the extent to which respondents recall any of the diagnostic steps taking place.
- There was a high degree of management involvement in the decision to undertake Workplace Training (85%) and, within more than a quarter of organisations, management also contributed to the diagnostic process (28%).
- Involvement from trade union and other staff representatives is at a low level (where these staff are present in the organisation) - trade union staff, 17% in the decision; 7% in the diagnostic/design process; other staff representatives, 23% in the decision; 11% in the diagnostic/design process.
- Across all organisations, very few report involvement from other, non-management, non-representative, staff in the decision (22%), and diagnostic/design process (12%).
- Attendance at the training reflects involvement in the decision-making and training design stages. Management staff attended the training commissioned by a large majority of organisations (85%), particularly in respect of training related to Fair Treatment at Work (92%), while trade union officials/representatives attended in 30% and 29% respectively of organisations that have these staff, and non-union staff representatives attended in 62% of organisations. Trade union and non-union staff representatives were particularly likely to have attended training regarding HR and People Management.
- Training attendance was compulsory within 54% of organisations but was more likely to be optional in organisations with more than 250 employees (54%, compared to 34% of smaller organisations).

5.1 Training diagnosis and design

Diagnostic process

Training commissioners should have had a conversation with an Acas representative to discuss what form of Acas intervention would best meet their needs and those of their organisation. This is the diagnostic process.

Respondents were asked to recall the steps that the Acas trainer took during the diagnostic process to establish what training or alternative service was required. Eighty per cent of respondents recalled undertaking any part of a diagnostic process, with 11% of all respondents reporting that there has not been a diagnostic process for them as they recognise it.

The most frequently mentioned step taken within the diagnostic process (respondents were provided with options to choose from) was the identification of the specific training elements required (73%), while the second most frequently mentioned step was a review of Acas' existing ready-made courses (59%). It makes sense that the initial steps in determining the shape of training were mainly around what it should cover and using the ready-made courses available as a starting point would be an effective strategy.

Thirty-six per cent of respondents in each case reported that the Acas trainer suggested that they consult with other management, while the same proportions reviewed previous training undertaken by the organisation and/or discussed alternative Acas services and products, such as a Workplace Project. Thirty per cent reported that the Acas trainer suggested they consult with prospective learners, while just 14%, reported that it was recommended that they consult with trade unions or employee representatives. This latter step was, of course, linked to the presence of these representatives within the organisation.

Figure 15: Steps taken by the Acas trainer to diagnose training needs

Step	Percentage
Identified the specific training elements you required	73%
Reviewed Acas' existing ready-made courses	59%
Suggested that you consult with other management	36%
Reviewed previous training undertaken by organisation	36%
Discussed alternative Acas services and products, such as a Workplace Project	36%
Suggested that you consult with prospective learners	30%
Suggested that you consult with trade unions or employee representatives	14%
Other	1%
Did not have a diagnostic process	11%
Don't know	9%

Q15 During the diagnostic process, what steps did the Acas trainer take to establish what training or alternative service was required? Base: 385 (all respondents) Multiple responses allowed; prompted

Those that recalled a diagnostic process were asked the extent to which it contributed to an appropriate training programme being created by Acas for their organisation. Sixty-five per cent of respondents considered that it contributed a great deal to the appropriate training programme being created by Acas for their organisation. Twenty-one per cent considered it partly contributed to an appropriate training programme. Those for whom the diagnostic process was not constructive to the design of the training programme are very much in the minority; 7% considered it having made little contribution and 4% no contribution at all.

Figure 16: Extent to which the diagnostic process contributed to an appropriate training programme being created for their organisations
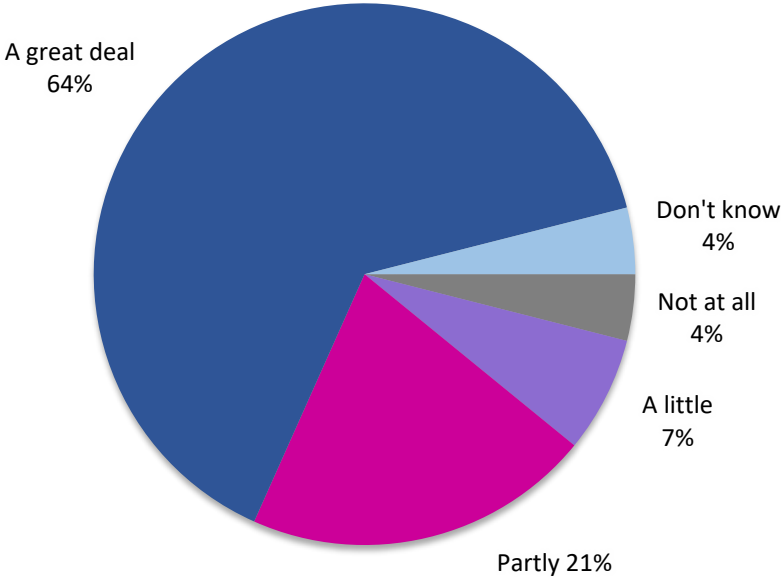
Q16 Still thinking about this diagnostic process, to what extent did it contribute to an appropriate training programme being created by Acas for your organisation? Base: 341 (where recall a diagnostic process)

There is a clear correlation between achievement of the training objectives and the extent to which the diagnostic process has contributed to the creation of an appropriate training programme. In other words, where the diagnostic process significantly contributed to training programme design, training objectives were more likely to be achieved, or partly achieved. Of those respondents achieving their objectives, 69% reported that the diagnostic process contributed a great deal to an appropriate training programme being created, compared to 60% of those reporting partly achieved objectives and just 25% of those whose objectives were not achieved (1 of just 4 respondents).

Examining the experience of respondents that have been very satisfied with the training, as opposed to just fairly satisfied, there is evidence that those recalling a range of steps being taken during the diagnostic process were more likely to report a satisfactory experience and that a more thorough diagnostic process is associated with a higher level of satisfaction with the training.

Underlining this link between a high level of satisfaction and the contribution of the diagnostic process to determining an appropriate training programme, 73% of very satisfied respondents considered that the diagnostic process contributed a great deal, compared with 57% of fairly satisfied respondents.

Figure 17: Steps taken by the Acas trainer to diagnose training needs, by level of satisfaction with the training
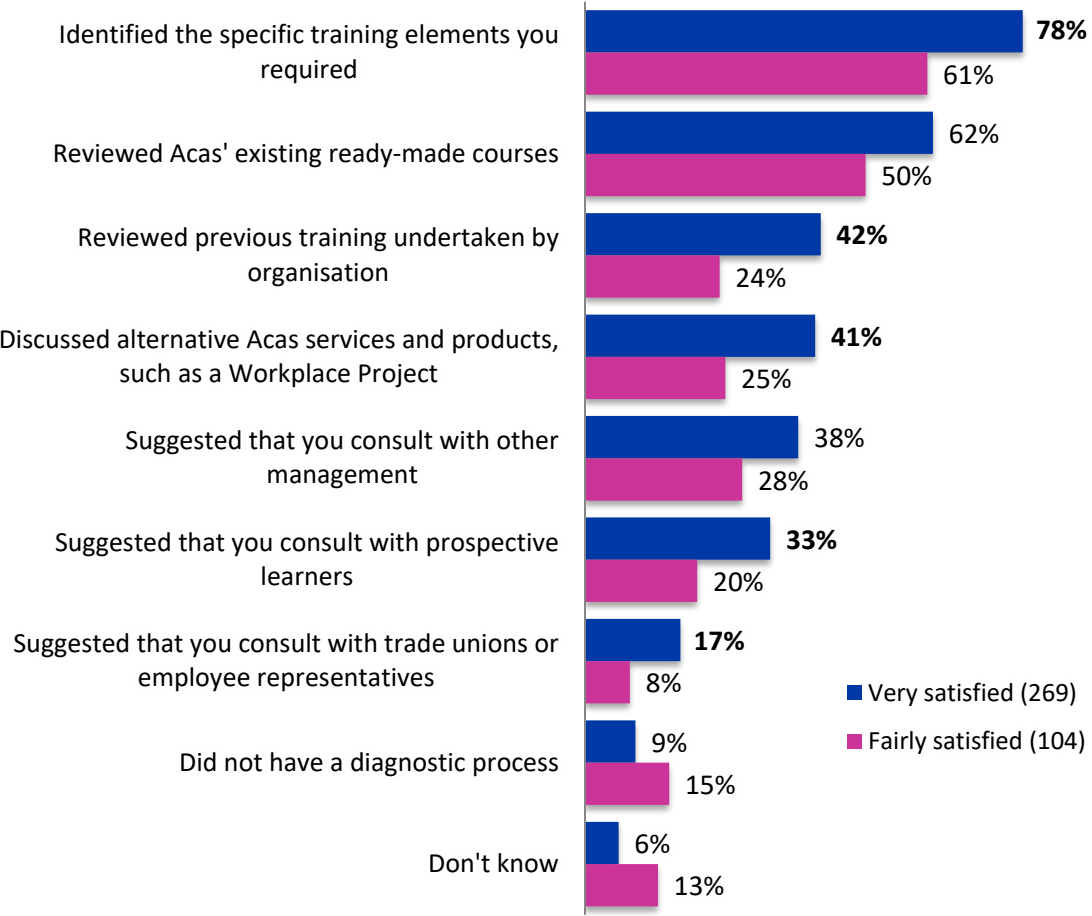
Q15 During the diagnostic process, what steps did the Acas trainer take to establish what training or alternative service was required? Bases in parentheses (all respondents) Multiple responses allowed; prompted *'Not satisfied' respondents are not shown as the base is very small (just 9 respondents)*

When asked why they attributed the steps taken in the diagnostic process to the appropriate training programme being created for their organisation, respondents were most likely to say that, as a result of the diagnostic process, Acas was able to tailor the course to their needs (27%) and/or that Acas understood what they wanted (26%). Fewer respondents mentioned that the process helped them to clarify or understand their needs, goals and objectives (14%). Some respondents said that they had already known what they wanted (20%) and/or that they had used a ready-made/pre-existing course (11%). Most respondents who had reported the diagnostic process to have been of limited use gave this response, but also many of those who had found the process to have contributed to an appropriate training programme being devised. It is not always the case that a bespoke training programme is required.

Selected comments from respondents include:

On 'Acas tailoring the course to suit'

"When you start to design the solution you need to consider what you are trying to achieve, so discussing that with ACAS trainer covered all of the objectives."

"They made it specific to our organisation and what our employees needed. They tailored it to our needs."

"We were open and got good guidance to help tailor the course."

"It helped to focus our thinking and identify exactly what gaps we had in knowledge and understanding."

"Helped to shape a meaningful, relevant learning offer to address our specific needs."

On Acas arriving at an 'understanding of what they wanted'

"Well because we had clear objectives of what we wanted from the training, talking through with the ACAS trainer, we were able to have that dialogue to make sure our requirements were met."

"Because it made me think what my end objective needed to be. Going through the process really clarified it for me."

"The discussion was about what we needed and we got that and the feedback was positive."

"Lady I spoke to was 1. very knowledgeable and 2. she wanted to understand how the organisation wanted to tailor their training. She wanted to understand about the culture of the organisation, very impressed."

"The thing that struck me was he came to site a couple of times and he really took time to learn the specific needs of the trainees."

On 'already knowing what they wanted' and 'clarifying their training needs'

"I'd seen it advertised; seen what I wanted, spoke to someone and got it."

"I was very clear what I wanted so I had done most of the work and preparation myself."

"I had an idea of what we wanted anyway and in the end we ended up going for one of the normal courses rather than bespoke."

"We knew what we wanted from the training. The diagnostics process just confirmed this."

On the benefit of the diagnostic process in general

"Only because my original specification was tweaked quite a bit due to other courses that they ran. Really beneficial to have that dialogue."

"Some training organisations that I have used are lazy enough to give you off the shelf. ACAS have always worked with me to find out what the objectives are and then work backwards to find out what the specific requirements are."

Comments from respondents also highlight some shortcomings in the diagnostic process. The views - expressed by a small minority and generally from the perspective of what they felt had been missed from the subsequent training - that more time and attention should have been paid to tweaking the course content through that consultation, but also that the points shared with the trainer were not always applied.

"There were elements of the course that I wanted to link back to the 'core business issue' and addressing it, however the ACAS trainer was reluctant to deviate from pre-planned agenda."

"We explained specifically that we wanted time set aside to do case studies but on the actual day there was only time to do one."

"So I felt that I did most of the diagnostic work myself with very little input from ACAS."

"I already knew what I wanted, I spoke to the person through the process and highlighted what I wanted and then that was not delivered."

Staff involved in the process

Respondents were asked about the staff that were involved in both the decision to undertake the Workplace Training and the subsequent diagnostic and design processes.

- Eighty-five per cent of respondents reported that their organisation involved **management** in the decision to undertake Workplace Training, while 28% reported that management were involved in both the decision to undertake the training and the diagnostic process.
- In terms of **other, non-management, staff**, just 22% of organisations reported their involvement in the decision to undertake the process, with just 12% involved in both the decision and the diagnostic/design process.

Where trade union and other staff representatives are present within organisations, their involvement in the decision and design process is not widespread:

- Seventeen per cent of respondents representing organisations that have **trade union representatives** reported their involvement with the decision process, and just 7% reported trade union staff involvement with both the decision and the diagnostic/design process.
- Twenty-three per cent of respondents representing organisations with **other staff representatives** reported involvement from these staff in the decision process and 11% reported involvement with the decision and the diagnostic/design process.

While not directly comparable because of changes to the way the survey asked about staff involvement in the process, these findings are similar to those reported in 2013, when 82% of management staff and 18% of trade union and other staff representatives were reported as having been involved in the diagnostic and design process.

Figure 17: Who was involved in deciding, diagnosing and designing the training
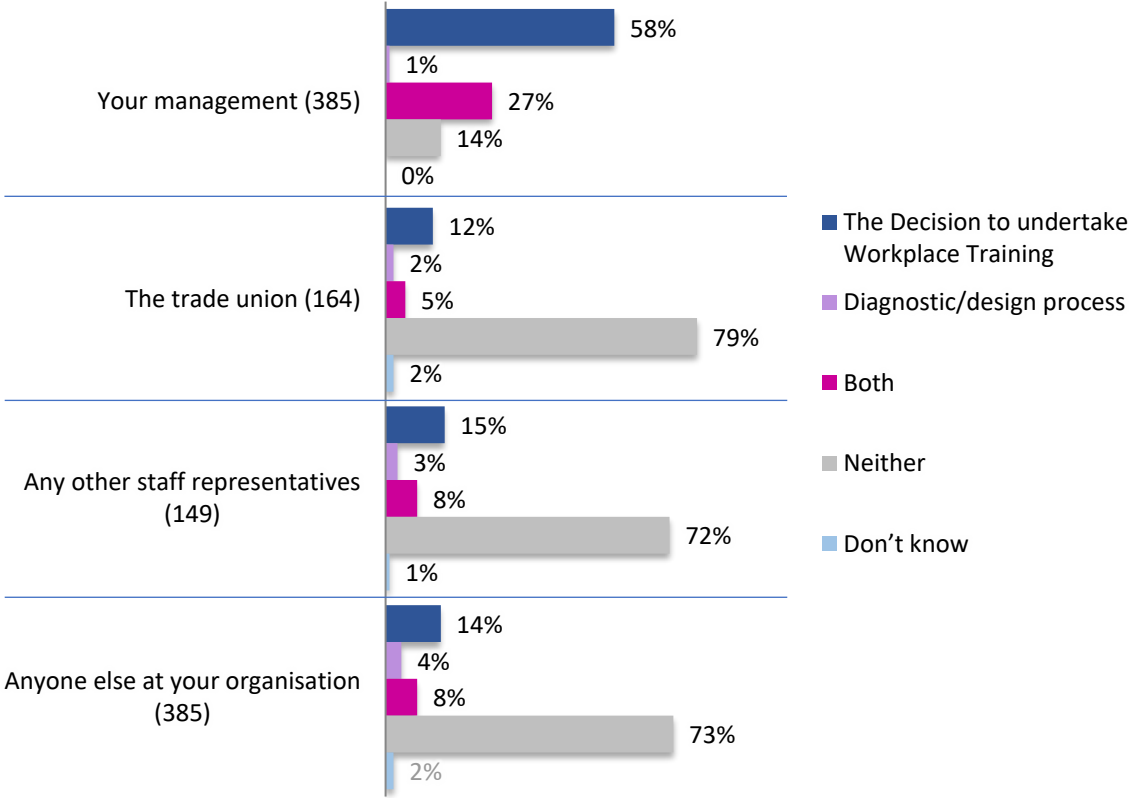
Q18 Were any of the following groups of people within your organisation involved in the original decision to undertake Workplace Training and/or the subsequent diagnostic/design process? Bases in parentheses (where have staff in these roles)

5.2   Training attendance

All respondents were asked about which categories of staff from their organisation attended the training. Their responses are summarised in the figure below. The figures are based on where those categories of staff are present within the organisation.

Figure 18: Training attendance by training topic area
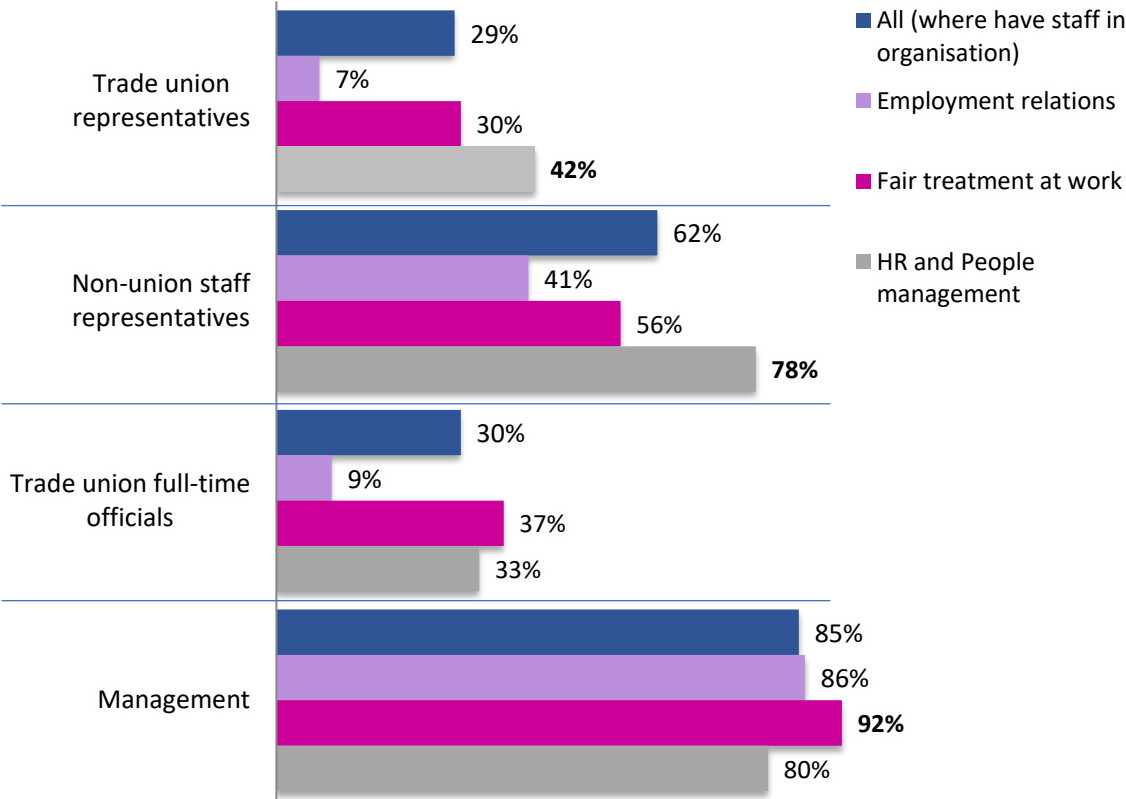
Q21 Was the training attended by any of the following? Bases vary (where have staff in these roles)
Figures in bold are statistically significantly higher than the average, minus the sub-group tested, to a 95% confidence level

Management staff are present within all organisations and the majority of respondents (85%) reported their attendance at the training, particularly with regard to training in the area of Fair Treatment at Work (92%).

Where trade union representatives/officials are present within organisations, around three in ten of these organisations reported that they were represented at the training (representatives, 29%; officials, 30%), increasing to 42% of organisations with trade union representatives reporting their attendance at HR and People Management courses. However, attendance of trade union staff was much less common with regard to training in the area of Employment Relations (representatives, 7%; officials, 9%).

Where there are non-union staff representatives within organisations, 62% of respondents reported their attendance at the training, and they were particularly likely to have attended training with regard to HR and People Management (78%).

Respondents were asked if the training was compulsory for staff to attend or not. Within 54% of organisations training was compulsory for staff to attend, which is a slightly lower proportion than in 2013 (57%). There is a slight swing towards optional attendance in 2019 (46% in 2019, compared to 42% in 2013).

As in 2013, large organisations (250+ employees) were significantly more likely than average to report training as *optional* (54%, compared with 34% of those with fewer than 250 employees), while the proportion for which training was *compulsory* is significantly higher than average within medium-sized businesses (68%, compared with 46% of large businesses).

The differences by organisation size are somewhat reflective of the differences by organisation type, with public sector organisations, which are significantly more likely to employ 250+ employees, more likely to report training as optional than private sector organisations or those in the third sector (56%, compared to 49% and 38% respectively). A significantly higher than average proportion of private sector organisations (62%) report training as compulsory for all staff.

5.3   Follow up contact with an Acas adviser

When asked if an Acas adviser got back in touch to see how things were going following the training, 62% recalled that an adviser did so. This proportion is highest within private sector organisations than amongst public or third sector organisations (66%, compared to 62% and 52% respectively). The proportion is significantly higher amongst respondents reporting that they have had contact with Acas with regard to other services (66%, compared to 49% of those that have not used other services), suggesting that having an existing relationship with Acas may have some bearing on the propensity to have received follow up contact, or to be able to recall having received such a follow-up.

It is also worthy of note that respondents reporting that their training objectives had been fully achieved are significantly more likely than those whose objectives had only been partially achieved, if at all, to recall some follow up contact with the Acas adviser (67%, compared to 58% where objectives had been only partially achieved). Follow up contact is also linked to satisfaction with 72% of those very satisfied with the training overall reporting receiving some follow up contact, compared to around two in five of those fairly (40%) or not (43%) satisfied. This may suggest that follow up contact actively contributes to a positive training experience, or it may suggest that Acas advisers are less likely to pursue an ongoing relationship with those who have not had such a good training experience.

A further 2% of respondents said they had contacted the Acas adviser rather than been contacted.

The majority of those that received follow up contact that provided a response (90%) found it useful, including 53% that found it very useful. This increased to 94% of those very satisfied with the training (with 59% of these respondents finding it very useful).

Of those that did not recall any follow up with their Acas adviser, 43% felt it would have been useful.   This increased to 63% of those who felt their objectives had only partially been achieved by the training and to 53% of those who were fairly satisfied, compared to 36% of those who were very satisfied with the training overall.

6. Impact of Workplace Training

This section of the report examines the views of respondents with regard to the impact of Acas Workplace Training on their organisation. It explores what has happened within organisations since the training and the extent to which respondents attribute any positive and negative trends in business performance and other key metrics to the training that has been undertaken. As in previous evaluations, respondents were asked about the impact of the Workplace Training at a participant level, at an organisational practice level, and at an organisational efficiency level. Overall, wider impacts on key organisational metrics are identified and discussed.

Participant-level impact

The evaluation explored the impact the training has had on participants in terms of their awareness of their responsibility and rights; their adherence to the organisation's policies; their ability to deal effectively with the topic on which the training has been provided; their ability to work with each other; and the impact on working relations between management and other staff.

- At least four in five respondents considered that the Workplace Training had had a positive impact on participants in each of these specified areas. Respondents were particularly positive about Workplace Training's contribution to making participants more aware of their responsibilities and improving their ability to deal effectively with the training topic (both 98% very/slightly positive).
- The training was rated most positive with regard to improving participants' adherence to their organisation's policies (63% rated the impact very positive).

Respondents reporting that their organisation's objectives in commissioning the training had been fully achieved were more positive about the impact on participants than those who reported partly achieved objectives. This includes:

- **Participants' awareness of their responsibilities** – 84% of those reporting that they had achieved their objectives rated the impact as very positive, compared with 61% of those reporting partly achieved objectives;
- **Participants' awareness of their rights** – 66%, compared with 43%;
- **Participants' adherence to their organisation's policies** – 72%, compared with 51%;
- **Participants' ability to deal effectively with this topic** – 75%, compared with 54%;
- **Participants' ability to work with each other and their colleagues** – 61%, compared with 47%;
- **The ability of managers and staff to work together more generally in the organisation** – 52%, compared with 41%.

Impact on organisational efficiencies

The evaluation also examined the impact of the Workplace Training on a range of workforce and employee relations metrics, including the number of staff resignations and dismissals; working days lost due to absence; the numbers of employee grievances, disciplinaries and tribunal claims and hearings; and productivity overall.

Where changes in organisational metrics since the training were reported (productivity being the most common and the most positive) the majority of respondents attributed at least some of that change to the impact of the Acas Workplace Training they undertook. The training is more strongly linked to positive than negative trends, particularly in respect of productivity, a reduction in the number of work days lost due to absence, and the loss of staff through dismissal or through voluntary resignation.

- **The number of staff that resigned** – 8% reported an increase, 68% all or in part due to training; 9% a decrease since the training, 88% all or in part due to training;
- **The number of work days lost due to absence** – 5% reported an increase, 64% all or in part due to training; 23% a decrease since the training, 89% all or in part due to training;
- **The number of employee grievances** – 1% reported an increase, 68% all or in part due to training; 18% a decrease since the training, 93% all or in part due to training;
- **The number of employment tribunal claims** – 3% reported an increase, 56% all or in part due to training; 7% a decrease since the training, 87% all or in part due to training;
- **The number of employment tribunal hearings** – 2% reported an increase, 40% all or in part due to training; 4% a decrease since the training, 80% all or in part due to training;
- **Productivity** – 5% reported an increase, 94% all or in part due to training; 2% a decrease since the training, 67% all or in part due to training;
- **The number of employer-led disciplinaries** – 17% reported an increase, 86% all or in part due to training; 22% a decrease since the training, 92% all or in part due to training;
- **The number of dismissals** – 9% reported an increase, 81% all or in part due to training; 13% a decrease since the training; 95% all or in part due to training.

Organisational practice-level impact – changes to policies and procedures

Sixty-five per cent of respondents reported that a policy or practice had been introduced, reviewed or revised by their organisation as a result of the training. This is a lower proportion than in 2013 (78%). The proportion of respondents reporting that their organisations plan to do so is slightly higher than in 2013 (33%, compared to 29%), which suggests a slightly longer 'lag' between the training and action in this area this year.

Wider organisational impact

As well as examining the impact of the evaluation on specific metrics relating to organisational efficiencies, respondents were asked about wider impacts within the organisation. These are more subjective benefits that include potential positive changes to levels of trust between management and employees, employee representatives and trade union representatives; dealings with employment relations; staff morale; the fair treatment of employees; the ability to manage change in staff or HR and to prevent industrial action; and the overall ability of the organisation to deal effectively with the topic covered in the Workplace Training.

Respondents were generally positive about the wider impact of the Workplace Training within their organisation. This is most evident with regard to the organisation's ability to deal effectively with the topic covered (92% reporting a very/slightly positive impact), but also relating to dealing with employment relations in a timely (76%) and/or effective way (82%). The majority of respondents report that their organisation's perception of the fair treatment of employees has also improved as a result of the training, and, compared with 2013, this has increased further in 2019 (from 77% in 2013 to 81% in 2019).

Factors affecting the impact of the training

Fully achieving the objectives of the training is the most significant predictor of the training having a positive impact within the organisation, followed by having had contact with an Acas representative following the training.

Other variables that are relatively important in terms of predicting a positive impact of the training within an organisation include:

- Identifying something that was particularly good about the training
- Not having experienced something that could lead to a major complaint or problem; effectively saying that a positive impact is likely to be associated with satisfaction with the training.

6.1 Participant-level impact

Respondents were asked about the impact of the Workplace Training on participants. The evaluation explored the impact the training has had on participants in terms of their awareness of their responsibility and rights; their adherence to the organisation's policies; their ability to deal effectively with the topic on which the training has been provided; their ability to work with each other; and the impact on working relations between management and other staff.

As in 2013, respondents were very positive about the impact of the training in this respect. They were particularly positive about impact on participants' awareness of their responsibilities: 98% reported the impact of the training on this as positive (as in 2013); 74% reporting it has having been very positive; and on participants' ability to deal effectively with the training topic, again, 98% reported a positive impact (96% in 2013), including 66% that considered it very positive.

In terms of Workplace Training having had a very positive impact on participants, the highest proportion reported a *very* positive impact on participants' adherence to their organisation's policies (63%).

The ability of managers and staff to work together more generally within the organisation 'scored' lowest, but still highly, in terms of any degree of positive impact, with 81% of respondents reporting the training having had a positive impact in this respect; 47% reporting a very positive impact.

Where comparisons with previous surveys are available, the 2019 figures are on a par with these suggesting consistency in this respect over the years.

Figure 19: Participant level: Positive impacts
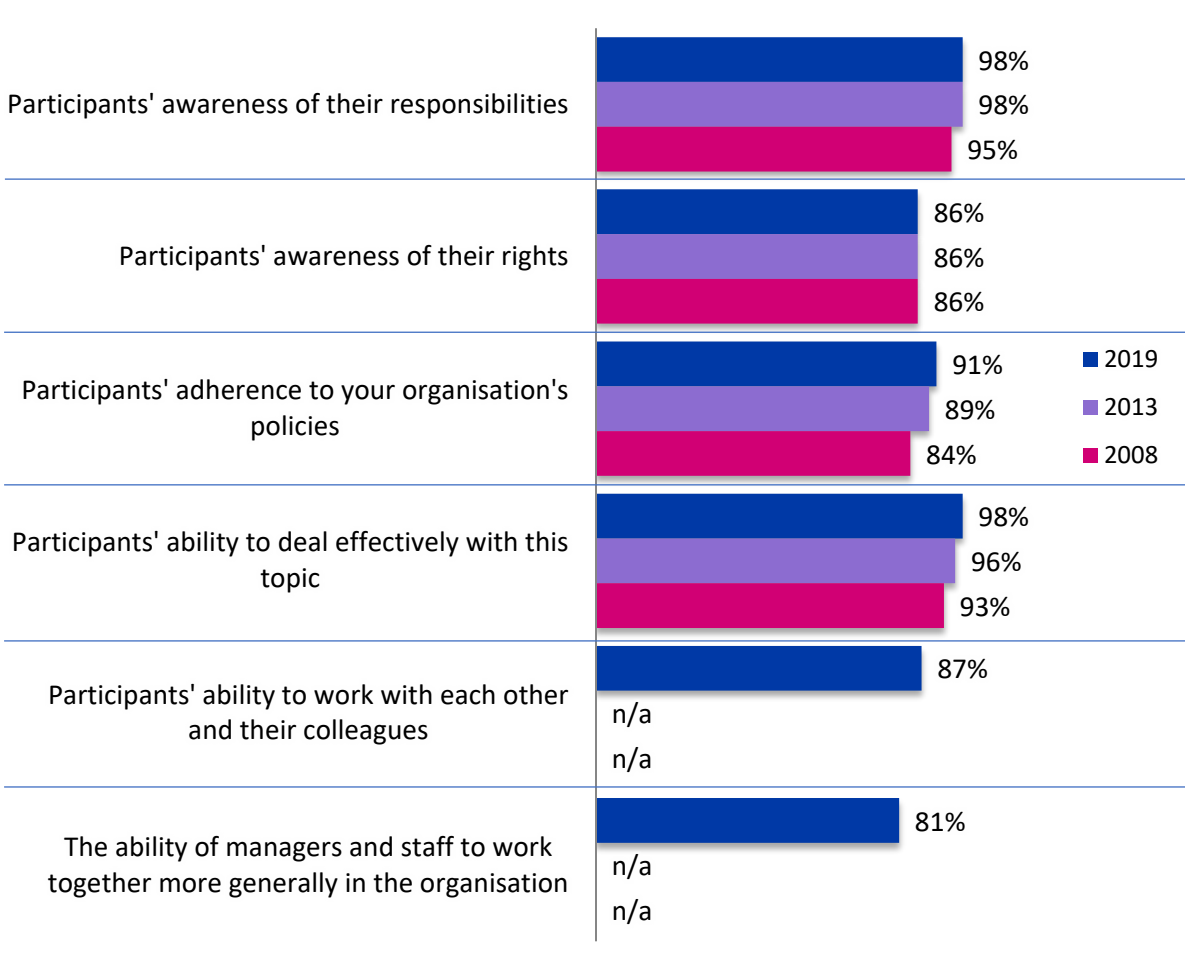
Q29 Now I'd like to turn to the impact you think the training has had **on participants**. In your view, would you say the impact the training had on ... was very positive, slightly positive, slightly negative, very negative, or that there was no impact? Bases vary all respondents providing a response – excluding don't knows)

Positive impacts in all areas were reported by the vast majority of respondents who reported that their objectives for the training were at least partly achieved. Those reporting that they had fully achieved their objectives were significantly

more likely than average to consider the training had had a very positive impact in any area; while those reporting partly achieved objectives tended more towards reporting that the training had had a slightly positive impact than average, although were still more likely to report a very positive than slightly positive impact (see Figure 20).

Figure 20: Participant level: <u>Very</u> positive impacts, by whether objectives were achieved

■ Achieved objectives ■ Partly achieved

Participants' awareness of their responsibilities	**84%** / 61%
Participants' awareness of their rights	**66%** / 43%
Participants' adherence to your organisation's policies	**72%** / 51%
Participants' ability to deal effectively with this topic	**75%** / 54%
Participants' ability to work with each other and their colleague	**61%** / 47%
The ability of managers and staff to work together more generally in the organisation	**52%** / 41%

Q29 Now I'd like to turn to the impact you think the training has had on participants. In your view, would you say the impact the training had on ... was very positive, slightly positive, slightly negative, very negative, or that there was no impact? Bases vary (all respondents providing a valid response – excluding don't knows)
Note: 'Not achieved' not shown due to very small sample base
Figures in bold are statistically significantly higher than the average, minus the sub-group tested, to a 95% confidence level

With perceptions of the impact of the training being so positive, focusing on those reporting very positive impacts provides more insight into where the training has been more successful. By general course topic, those commissioning training on Fair Treatment at Work are particularly likely to report a very positive impact on participants' awareness of their responsibilities (78%); their adherence to the organisation's policies (76%); and their ability to deal effectively with the topic covered (73%); while those commissioning training on HR and People Management are slightly more likely than average to report a very positive impact

on the ability of management and staff to work together more generally in the organisation (52%, compared with 47% of all respondents).

Figure 21: Participant level: Very positive impacts, by topic area

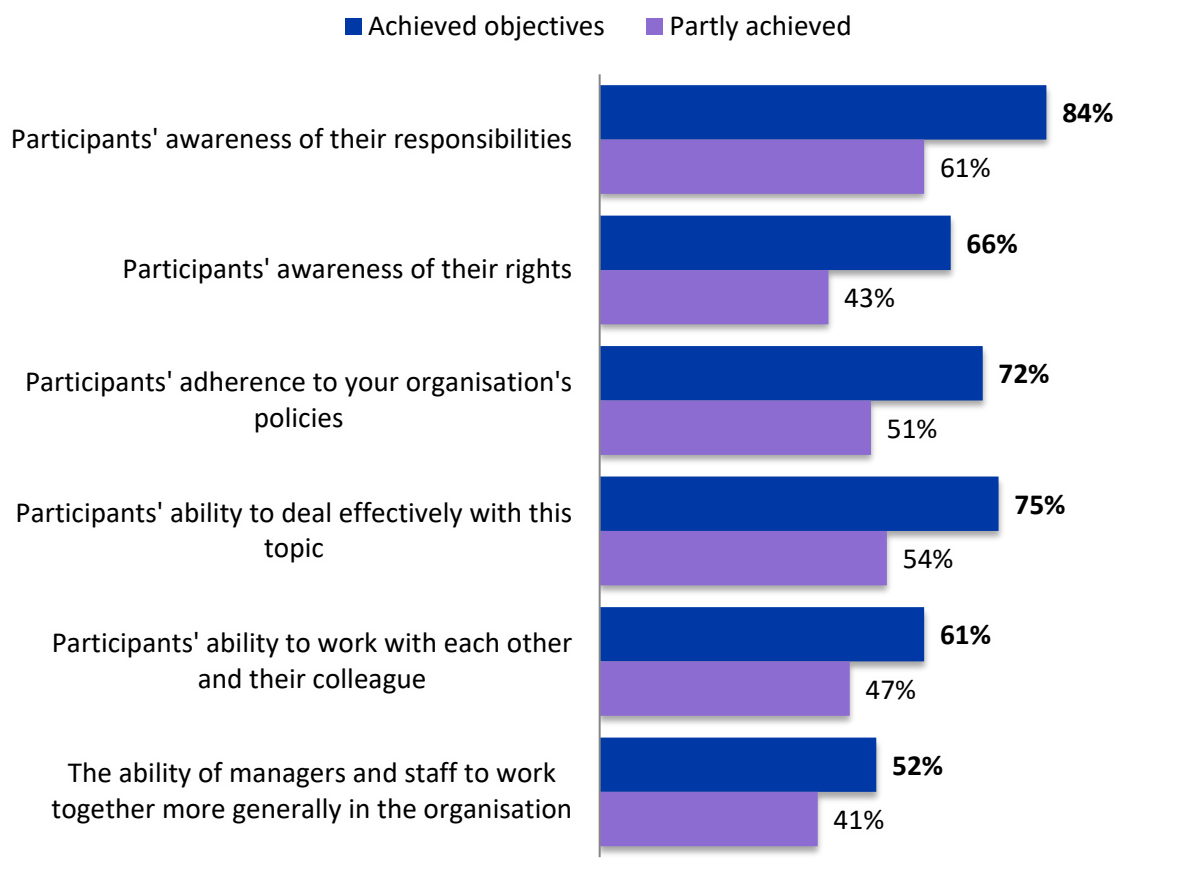|	Overall (% very positive impact)	Employment Relations (% very positive impact)	Fair Treatment at Work (% very positive impact)	HR and People Management (% very positive impact)
Participants' awareness of their responsibilities	74	68	78	75
Participants' awareness of their rights	56	47	63	60
Participants' adherence to your organisation's policies	63	57	**76**	57
Participants' ability to deal effectively with [TOPIC]	66	56	73	70
Participants' ability to work with each other and their colleagues	55	49	55	59
The ability of managers and staff to work together more generally in the organisation	47	45	44	52
Bases	363-379	122-124	105-108	134-142

Q29 Now I'd like to turn to the impact you think the training has had on participants. In your view, would you say the impact the training had on ... was very positive, slightly positive, slightly negative, very negative, or that there was no impact? Base: All respondents providing a valid response – excluding don't knows
Figures in bold are statistically significantly higher than the average, minus the sub-group tested, to a 95% confidence level

Respondents working in the public sector are less likely than average to report a positive impact in some areas. This can be seen with regard to: Participants' awareness of their rights (79% very/slightly positive impact cf. 90% of private and third sector organisations); and the ability of managers and staff to work together more generally in the organisation (69% cf. 85% of private sector and 86% of third sector organisations).

This may reflect the extent to which these qualities may be already better represented in these organisations, as, within the public sector, hierarchical

structures tend to be more standardised and clearly defined and there is less scope for improvement in these areas.

The very few respondents reporting a negative impact in any of these respects were asked for further details. Some attributed it to how the training was delivered - sometimes not clearly enough for participants to take points on board, or training missing the mark in terms of its relevance to the organisation. The respondent who made the following comment reported that a number of steps had been taken during the diagnostic/design process, including suggestions from the trainer that they consult with management and prospective learners; they reviewed existing courses and identified the specific elements they required, but this, they said only partly contributed to the creation of an appropriate training programme. Their comment highlighted the training delivery as being the weakness in the process.

> *"I think the problem was the way the trainer delivered the training, was very knowledgeable about the course but we felt that the trainer kept vanishing down a rabbit hole and our staff came out more confused than when they went in. The examples used were not appropriate for our type of workplace."*

There was also the feeling that it was the participants themselves that did not make the most of the training, not learning from it.

> *"The half that you wanted to take everything on board did not take anything on board and kept doing what they shouldn't."*

6.2 Impact on organisational efficiencies

The evaluation also examined the impact of the Workplace Training on a range of workforce and employee relations metrics. All respondents were asked whether there had been changes to eight key metrics relating to organisational efficiencies in the period of time since the training (six were measured in 2013), including: The number of staff resignations and dismissals; working days lost due to absence; the numbers of employee grievances, disciplinaries and tribunal claims and hearings; and productivity overall.

The majority of respondents reported no change in most of the key metrics within their organisation. However, positive change is indicated in a number of areas:

Change is most likely to have been reported with regard to productivity (41% of those providing a response reported an increase; 2% reported a decrease).

The fact that the number of employer-led disciplinaries is more likely to have decreased than increased is also a positive trend (22% reported a decrease; 17%, an increase).

Other positive trends are evident with regard to a reported decrease in the number of work days lost due to absence (23%), and in the number of employee grievances (18%). In both these cases a higher proportion of respondents in 2019 than in 2013 reported a positive change (15% and 13% respectively reporting a decrease in 2013).

Figure 22: Changes in organisational efficiencies levels since the Acas Workplace Training
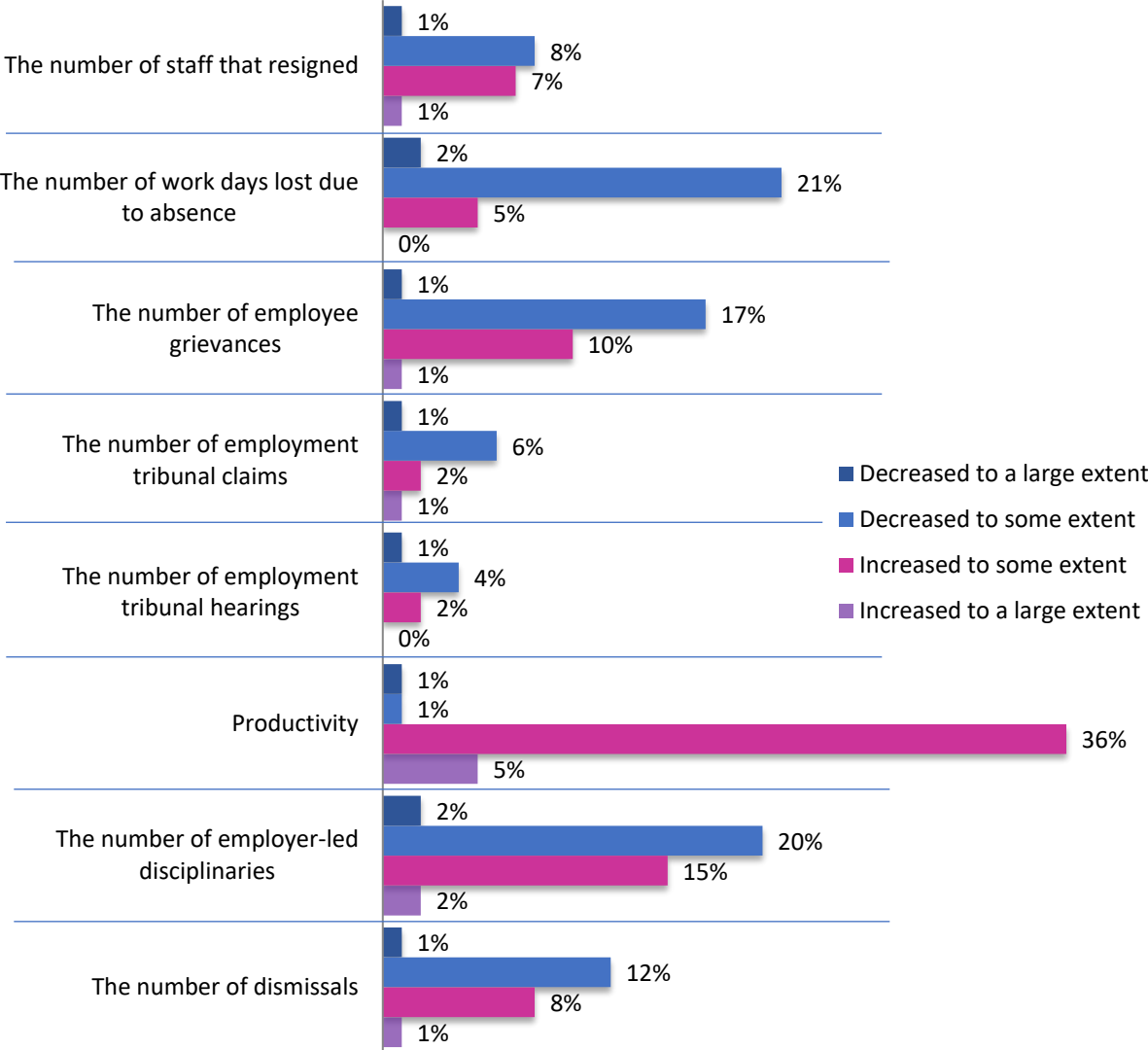
Q27 to assess the impact of the Acas training on your organisation, we would be grateful if you could tell us whether the following have increased, decreased or stayed the same in the period since you completed the training? Bases vary: 264-304 (all respondents providing a valid response)

By general topic area of the training, a significantly higher proportion of respondents than average having undertaken training in the area of Fair Treatment at Work reported a decrease in the **number of employment tribunal claims** (14%). They were also more likely than average to report a decrease in the **number of employment tribunal hearings** (11%).

However, respondents commissioning Fair Treatment at Work courses were also significantly more likely than average to report an increase in the **number of employer-led disciplinaries** (24%), although this is balanced by a similar proportion of these respondents reporting a decrease in this area (26%).

By organisation type, there is more movement, mainly tending towards the positive, within private sector organisations than public and third sector organisations with regard to the **number of staff that resigned** (12% reporting a decrease; 10% an increase) and **number of employer-led disciplinaries** (27% reporting a decrease; 18% an increase).

Respondents that reported any of these changes were asked to estimate the extent to which the changes had been the result of the Acas Workplace Training undertaken. Among those reporting change in any key metric, the majority attributed some of it to the Acas training.

Respondents are most likely to give credit to the training for (mainly positive) changes in **productivity** (74% to some extent; 18% to a large extent; 1% completely). They are least likely to attribute change to the training with regard to the **number of employment tribunal hearings** (65% to some extent; 5% to a large extent; none completely).

The table below focuses on the extent to which respondents credit the training with contributing to an increase or decrease in the **number of staff who have resigned** or **been dismissed**. There is a particularly high level of association between an increase in dismissals and a decrease in resignations and the training that has been received (81% attributing some causation with regard the former and 88% to the latter).

Figure 23: Extent to which the Acas Workplace Training has contributed to an increase or decrease in the number of staff that have resigned and the number of dismissals

	Bases	Not at all (%)	To some extent (%)	To a large extent (%)	Completely (%)	Don't know (%)	All or in part due to training (%)
Increases:							
Number of staff that have resigned	22	32	59	9	0	0	68
Number of dismissals	27	19	56	22	4	0	81
Decreases:							
Number of staff that have resigned	26	12	81	4	4	0	88
Number of dismissals	38	5	87	8	0	0	95

Q28 To what extent was this change due to changes made in your organisation as a result of the Acas training? Bases: where report change and provided a valid response – excluding don't knows

In terms of general (i.e. lost working days) and specific productivity, the training is strongly linked to positive trends i.e. decreases in the number of work days lost due to absence (89% attributing this to the training to at least some extent) and increases in productivity (94%).

Figure 24: Extent to which the Acas Workplace Training has contributed to an increase or decrease in the number of work days lost due to absence and productivity

	Bases	Not at all (%)	To some extent (%)	To a large extent (%)	Completely (%)	Don't know (%)	All or in part due to training (%)	
							2019	2013
Increases:								
Number of work days lost due to absence	14*	36	50	14	0	0	64	-
Productivity	115	6	75	18	1	0	94	83
Decreases:								
Number of work days lost due to absence	61	11	79	10	0	0	89	65
Productivity	6*	33	50	17	0	0	67	-

Q28 To what extent was this change due to changes made in your organisation as a result of the Acas training? Bases: Where report change and provided a valid response – excluding don't knows   *caution: very low sample bases

Focusing on key metrics with regard to grievances directed towards and received from employees as well as tribunal incidents, the majority of respondents reporting change in these areas consider that the training has contributed to a decrease in each. This is how one would expect it to be if the training was having a positive impact within the organisation.

However, there is a particularly high level of association between an increase in the number of employer-led disciplinaries and the training (86% attribute this to the training to at least some extent). This may be an example of increased activity in disciplining staff as a result of what has been covered in training. It may be a temporary effect and an example of a situation getting worse before it gets better.

Figure 25: Extent to which the Acas Workplace Training has contributed to an increase or decrease in the number of employee grievances, the number of employer-led disciplinaries, the number of tribunal claims and the number of tribunal hearings

	Bases	Not at all (%)	To some extent (%)	To a large extent (%)	Completely (%)	Don't know (%)	All or in part due to training (NET %)	
							2019	2013
Increases:								
Number of employee grievances	34	32	59	9	0	0	68	-
Number of employer-led disciplinaries	49	14	59	22	4	0	86	-
Number of tribunal claims	9*	44	44	11	0	0	56	-
Number of tribunal hearings	5*	60	40	0	0	0	40	-
Decreases:								
Number of employee grievances	55	7	76	16	0	0	93	76
Number of employer-led disciplinaries	64	6	83	8	2	2	92	-
Number of tribunal claims	23	13	70	17	0	0	87	-
Number of tribunal hearings	15*	20	73	7	0	0	80	-

Q28 To what extent was this change due to changes made in your organisation as a result of the Acas training? Bases: where report change and provided a valid response – excluding don't knows   *caution: very low sample bases

6.3 Organisational practice-level impact – changes to policies and procedures

All respondents were asked whether their organisation had revised or reviewed policies or practices relating to the Acas Workplace Training they had commissioned, and had introduced (or planned to introduce) any new policies or practices as a result of the training.

Sixty-five per cent of all respondents had introduced, reviewed or revised one or more policy or practice as a result of the training. This is a lower proportion than in 2013 (78%).

In 2019, as a result of the training, 50% of the respondents had revised one or more area of practice relating to the issues addressed in the training, which is a slightly lower proportion than in 2013 and/or reviewed one or more policy or practice (49%), also a slightly lower proportion than in 2013 (54%).

While 25% had introduced one or more new policy as a result of the training (the same proportion as in 2013), 33% planned to do so (29% in 2013), suggesting that the impact of the training with regard to policies and procedures is ongoing for one in three organisations.

Figure 26: Organisational practice level actions in relation to the training

Legend: ■ 2019 ■ 2013

Action	2019	2013
Introduced one or more new policy	25%	25%
Reviewed one or more policy or practice	49%	54%
Revised one or more policy or practice	43%	51%
Planned to introduce one or more new policy or practice	33%	29%
Revised any area of practice relating to the issues addressed in the training	50%	56%
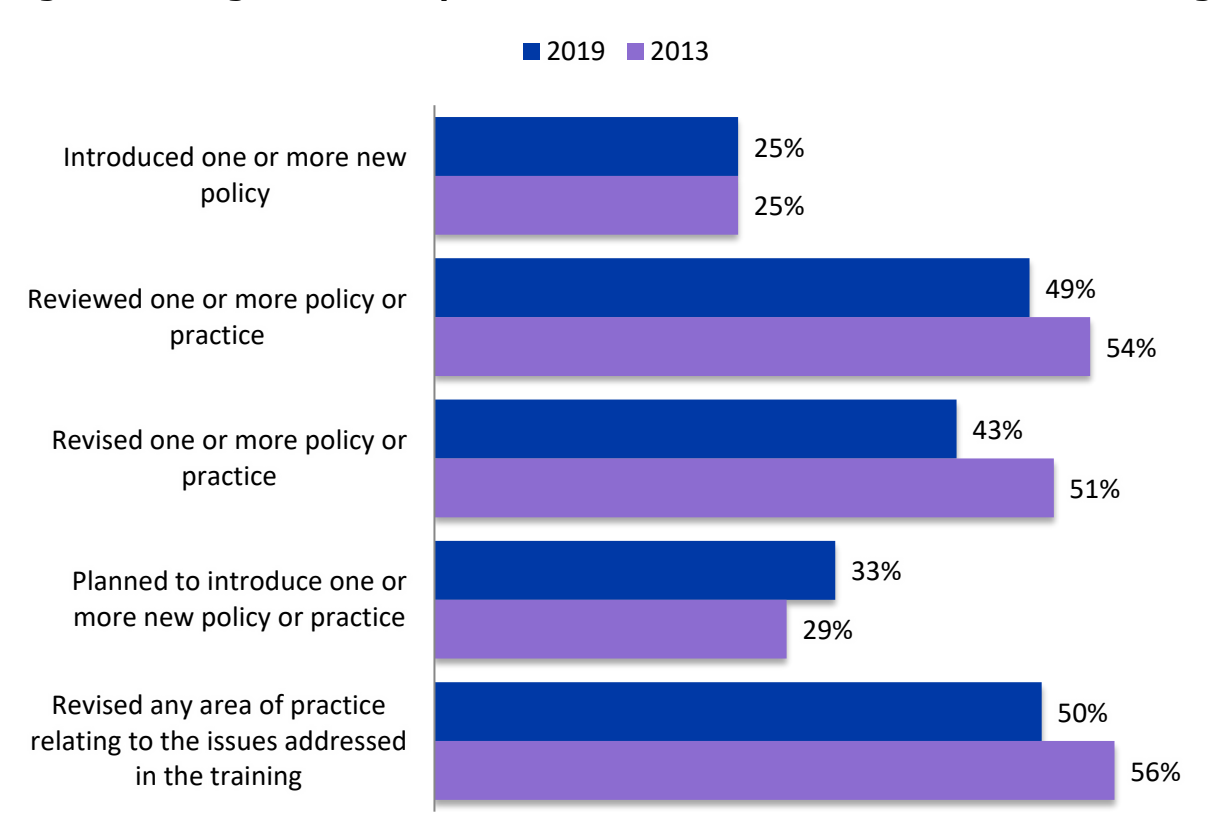
Q33 As a result of the training, have you or anyone working with you? Base: 2019 = 385; 2013 = 404 (all respondents)

A review of actions by organisation type highlights a slightly lower than average likelihood of the training having an impact with regard to policies and practices within public sector organisations (59%) (see Figure 27), and generally more impact within third sector organisations (71%). This is particularly evident with regard to future plans (34% within the public sector; 41% within the third sector).

Figure 27: Organisational practice level actions in relation to the training

	Overall (% yes)	Private sector (% yes)	Public sector (% yes)	Third sector (% yes)
Introduced one or more new policy	25	28	16	31
Reviewed one or more policy or practice	49	49	46	57
Revised one or more policy or practice	43	43	37	53
Planned to introduce one or more new policy or practice	33	34	27	41
Revised any area of practice relating to the issues addressed in the training	50	49	47	56
Any action	65	68	59	71
Any revisions	62	63	58	68
No action	35	32	41	29
Bases	385	191	116	75

Q33 As a result of the training, have you or anyone working with you? Bases: all respondents

Logic dictates that the length of time since the training has been commissioned will increase the propensity to have already taken action following the training. There has been more time to do so. However, this is not clearly evidenced in the findings. Those that commissioned training in the first 6 months of 2019 are most likely to have taken any action (73%), but there is little difference between those that commissioned training between October and December 2018 (58%) and July and December 2019 (61%). Twenty-six per cent of those that commissioned the

training as long ago as between October and December 2018 still plan to introduce one or more new policy or practice as a result.

Organisations that undertook training in the area of HR and People Management are significantly more likely than average to have introduced one or more new policy (32%) and to have plans to do so (39%).

Respondents that reported that the training was part of a wider programme of change within their organisation were more likely than average to report action on policies or practices (70%), in particular in reviewing (54%), revising (50%) and/or introducing (31%) one or more policy or practice.

6.4   Wider organisational impact

Respondents were asked about the wider impacts of the Workplace Training on their organisation. This covered levels of trust, employment relations issues, staff morale and the fair treatment of employees within the organisation, as well as the ability to manage workforce change, prevent industrial action and to deal effectively with the topic on which the training was commissioned.

Positive impact from the training is most apparent with regard to the organisation's overall ability to deal effectively with the topic (92% very/slightly positive) and this is statistically similar to the 2013 findings when there had been a significant improvement on 2008 in this area (93% in 2013; 78% in 2008). It suggests that these improvements have been sustained.

Also there has been a particularly positive impact within organisations on dealing with employment relations issues in an effective way (82% very/slightly positive) and on the fair treatment of employees (81%). There has been slight improvement in both these areas since 2013 (79% and 77% respectively in 2013).

Figure 28: Wider level organisational impact

Legend: 2019 ■ 2013 ■ 2008

Category	2019	2013	2008
Levels of trust between senior management and employee representatives	61%	58%	38%
Levels of trust between management and employees	62%	58%	43%
Levels of trust between management and trade union representatives	36%	58%	38%
Dealing with employment relations issues in a timely way	76%	79%	69%
Dealing with employment relations issues in an effective way	82%	75%	65%
Staff morale	59%	58%	36%
The fair treatment of employees	81%	77%	43%
The ability to manage change in staff or HR	65%	66%	40%
The ability to prevent industrial action	44%	48%	26%
The organisations' overall ability to deal effectively with this topic	92%	93%	78%

Q31 Thinking now about the wider impact of the training on the organisation:
In your view, would you say the impact the training had on ... was very positive, slightly positive, slightly negative, very negative, or that there was no impact? Base: 2019 = 385; 2013 = 404; 2008 = 418 (all respondents)

By the general topic of training commissioned, respondents that commissioned training relating to HR and People Management were significantly more likely than average to report a very positive impact of the training on the levels of trust between senior management and employee representatives (36% very positive, compared to a sample average of 28%) and between management and employees (33%, compared to 27%).

Respondents that had commissioned training in the area of Fair Treatment at Work were particularly likely to have reported a very positive impact on dealing with employment relations issues in an effective way (56%, compared to a sample average of 48%).

Less conclusive but worthy of note, respondents that had commissioned training in the area of Employment Relations were significantly more likely than average to report a slightly positive impact on the ability to manage change in staff or HR within the organisation (42%, compared to 34%), and overall a slightly higher proportion of these respondents than average reported a positive impact (69% very/slightly, compared to 65%).

By the main objectives for commissioning the training:

- Respondents that cited improving employment relations as their main objective were significantly more likely than average to report a positive impact on the levels of trust between senior management and employee representatives (83% very/slightly).
- Respondents citing improving adherence to policies/procedures as their main objective were significantly more likely than average to report that the training has had a very positive impact on dealing with employment relations issues in a timely (62%) and effective (70%) way. These respondents were also significantly more likely than average to report a very positive impact on the ability to manage change in the staff or HR (54%) and to prevent industrial action (38%) and to report a very positive impact on staff morale (35%).

Organisation type has some bearing on the extent to which the training is perceived to have had an impact in respect of workforce relations and staff morale.

Respondents within the public sector are more likely to report that the training has had no impact on levels of trust between senior management and employee representatives (47% cf. 29% of private sector and 12% third sector organisations); between management and employees (44% cf. 26% of private sector and 27% of third sector organisations); and on staff morale (41% cf. 29% of private sector and 32% of third sector organisations).

The absence of impact may reflect the extent to which there is less perceived need or room for the training to have an impact on these areas within these organisations. It may reflect the culture within public sector organisations compared with private and third/voluntary sector organisations.

The few respondents that reported a negative impact in any respect were asked why they felt this to be the case. There was some feeling that there was too much information to process.

"Got a lot of information and did not understand the implications and this clouded their view sometimes."

Management failings are also given as a reason; as well as the addition of a new layer of management (in one case) which has not had a favourable response from employees.

"Transitioning to a new layer of management has had an impact on morale."

One respondent reported that half the staff that attended the training did not take on board the learning from the training.

"I think that the ones that should have paid attention did not. The others are annoyed that they didn't listen."

Changes within organisations have negatively impacted on staff morale and this is acknowledged to be something apart from the impact of the training.

"I think there have been a lot of changes within the group, redundancies etc. We have had a new CEO and a new chief of director within 18 months and the change is affecting everyone. Bit of a negative atmosphere."

One respondents mentioned, as a negative impact that the training had led to more action by managers with regard to discipline.

"Managers were no longer afraid to deal with discipline issues. Training gave them the tools to be able to deal with poor behaviour."

6.5   Factors affecting the impact of the training

A statistical process of logistic regression was applied to the data in order to determine the key factors affecting the extent to which the Workplace Training has a positive impact within the organisation in which it was undertaken. Logistic Regression is a mathematical model used in statistics to estimate the probability of an event occurring based on previous data. Logistic Regression works with binary data, where either the event happens (1) or the event does not happen (0). So, given some feature x it tries to find out whether some event y happens or not.

The variables relating to the impact that the training has had on participants, organisational metrics and wider organisational values and practices were modelled against other variables, mainly relating to the objectives of the training, whether those objectives were achieved, satisfaction with the training and whether there had been any consultation with Acas before and after the training, as well as key organisational characteristics, mainly industry sector.

The key finding from this analysis is that fully achieving the objectives of the training – whatever those objectives happened to be – is a significant predictor of the training having a positive impact within the organisation.

Sector (or organisation type as it is also referred to) is the second most important predictor in terms of the training having a positive impact within the organisation. The survey findings suggest that the training has less impact in some areas within public sector/services organisations. This includes on levels of trust between

management, employees and representatives, and also on participants' awareness of their rights, staff morale and the ability of the organisations to prevent industrial action. This may reflect the existing cultures within these organisations, and that there is more scope for the training to have an impact in organisations where hierarchal structures are more variable and less clearly defined.

The analysis suggests that the context of the measures and culture already in place within the organisation, as well as what the organisation sets out to achieve from the training, strongly influences the extent to which the training is likely to have a positive impact. There is little evidence of public sector organisations having different objectives to private and third sector organisations, so it is more a matter of whether the objectives are achieved rather than the achievement of specific objectives overall.

Sector, as a factor influencing the extent to which the training has a positive impact, is not something that Acas can address, except in terms of adjusting the approach to training design and delivery to focus on the different needs and objectives of organisations in order to optimise the benefit of the training.

The next most important predictor of the impact of training is that of having had contact with an Acas representative following the training. This will reflect the importance of taking the learnings from the training forward within the organisations and is something that is likely to heighten the longer-term impact of the training.

Other variables that are relatively important in terms of predicting a positive impact of the training within an organisation include the commissioner identifying something that was particularly good about the training, and not having experienced something that could lead to a major complaint or problem. This has a logical but indirect link to satisfaction levels and the association may well go in both directions: satisfaction reflects positive impacts, but positive impacts increase the probability of a satisfactory experience.

The factors that are identified as having a strong association with positive impact are as one would expect, but identifying them in this analysis underlines their importance in the process of ensuring high quality, appropriate and good value training.

Figure 29: Factors contributing towards Workplace Training having a positive impact within the organisation – relative importance of each

Factor	Percentage
Fully achieved training objectives	26%
Industry sector	24%
Had follow up contact from Acas staff	15%
Attended by management staff	7%
Identified something that was particularly good about the training	7%
Did not identify a major complaint or problem	6%
Considered improving adherence to policies or procedures as a very important objective	5%
Considered reducing staff turnover as a very important objective	4%
Considered improving employee health or well-being as a very important objective	4%
Considered improving employment relations as a very important objective	3%

7. Overall Views of Workplace Training

This section explores the views of training commissioners with regard to the Workplace Training received. It focuses on levels of satisfaction, achievement of objectives, willingness to recommend and value for money.

- There is a very high level of satisfaction with Workplace Training, with 98% of those providing a response rating it as satisfactory, including 70% that have been very satisfied with it.
- Satisfaction is closely associated with fully achieving the objectives of the training, as well as identifying something that is particularly good about it. Involvement in determining what training is required and input into its design by staff representatives increases the likelihood of a satisfactory experience, while follow up contact after the training has finished will also increase the likelihood of commissioners being very satisfied.
- Fifty-nine per cent of respondents considered their organisation's objectives to have been completely achieved, while most of the remainder (39%) report partly achieved objectives.
- Achieving objectives depends very much on what those objectives were and where objectives were around improving the organisation's performance in certain areas, there was clearly more involved than just the training. The greatest evidence of success is with regard to improving adherence to policies and procedures, which is related more directly to the training course content than some other areas.
- Thirty-three per cent of respondents reported something about the training that particularly pleased them, and a higher proportion (37%) reported there having been a few small things that particularly pleased them. Hardly anyone reported problems (4% reported a few minor problems or issues; 2% reported a major complaint or problem).
- The trainer was the most frequently recalled positive aspect of the training. It is logical that the person delivering the training would be the over-riding factor in driving positive assessments of the training. Good coverage of the topic/subject matter is also significant in this respect.
- Most respondents would recommend Acas Workplace Training on the topic they selected (96%).
- Most also consider Acas Workplace Training to be good value (90%, including 60% that considered it very good value for money).
- Following on from this, most respondents would be likely to use Acas training again (95%, including 78% that would be very likely to use it again).

7.1 Overall satisfaction

The vast majority of respondents (98% of those providing a valid response i.e. excluding don't knows) were satisfied with the training their organisation has received from Acas. This includes 70% that were very satisfied. This compares with 96% and 76% respectively in 2013. Thus, since 2013 there has been a slight decline in the proportion that have been very satisfied, but a slight increase in satisfaction overall.

Figure 30: Overall satisfaction
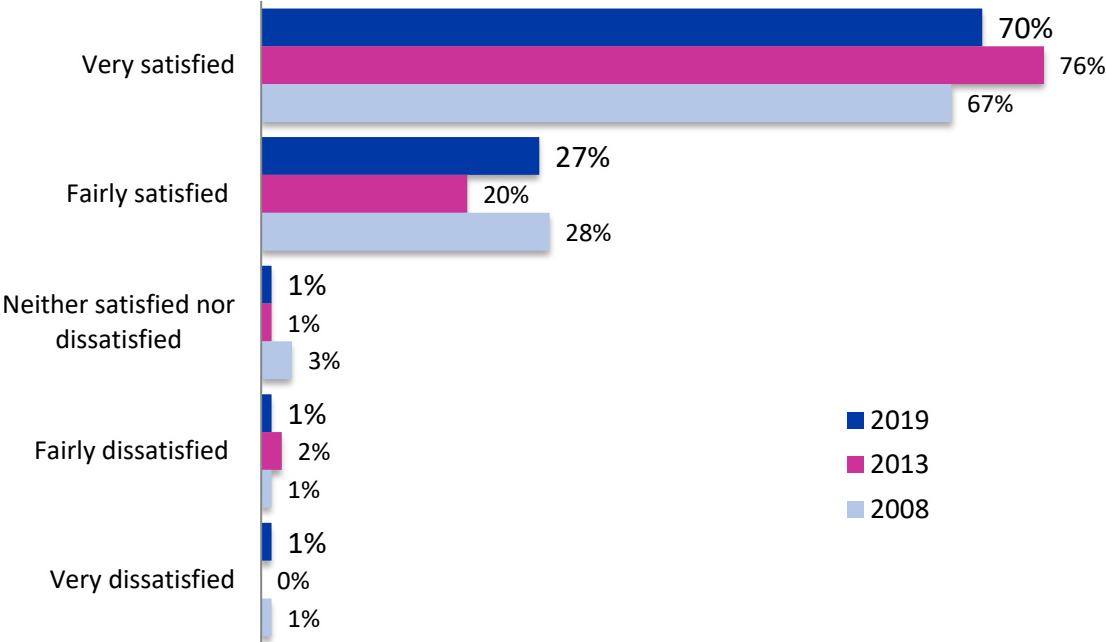
Q37 Taking everything into account, now that some time has passed since you received the training from Acas, would you say you were...? Base: 2019 = 382; 2013 = 402; 2008 = 411 (all respondents providing a valid response – excluding don't knows)

It is highly unlikely Acas could ever completely eliminate dissatisfaction among respondents. Even among respondents representing organisations with 250 or more employees, where the proportion that have been satisfied is close to 100%, one respondent was dissatisfied and there will always be one or two that have had an experience that is below their expectations. However, the challenge going forward should be focused on increasing the proportion of training commissioners that are very satisfied.

A review by training topic highlights a significant decline in the proportion that have been *very* satisfied among those that have commissioned Fair Treatment at Work between 2013 and 2019.

Figure 31: Overall satisfaction by topic

	Overall (%)			Topic Area								
				Employment Relations (%)			Fair Treatment at Work (%)			HR and People Management (%)		
	2008	2013	2019	2008	2013	2019	2008	2013	2019	2008	2013	2019
Very satisfied	67	76	70	59	67	68	64	83	68	73	77	74
Fairly satisfied	28	20	27	34	27	28	32	15	31	22	20	24
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	2	0	1	5	1	1	3	0	0	2	0	1
Fairly dissatisfied	1	1	1	1	4	2	1	1	0	2	0	1
Very dissatisfied	4	2	1	0	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	1
Satisfied (summary)	95	96	98	93	94	96	96	98	99	95	97	98
Dissatisfied (summary)	5	3	2	1	5	3	2	2	1	4	2	1
Bases	411	402	382	105	97	126	114	95	111	192	210	144

Q37 Taking everything into account, now that some time has passed since you received the training from Acas, would you say you were...? Bases: All respondents providing a valid response – excluding don't knows

Factors affecting overall satisfaction with the training

Respondents that are significantly more likely than average to have been *very* satisfied with the training include:

- Respondents that report that their training objectives were fully achieved (83% very satisfied);
- Respondents that reported something particularly good about the training i.e. something that pleased them (86%);
- Respondents within organisations that included other staff representatives in the diagnostic/design process (83%);
- Those rating the training as very good value for money (81%); and
- Those that received follow up contact after the training completion from a member of Acas' staff (81%).

Logistic regression analysis[8] was applied to the data in order to determine the key factors impacting on the propensity to rate the Workplace Training as very satisfactory.

The dependent variable – an overall rating of very satisfied – was modelled against a broad range of variables.

As expected, the most significant variable as a predictor of satisfaction is the identification of something particularly good about the training – something that pleased them. This is in effect something that has 'delighted' the commissioner. It is a clear and tangible benefit of the training that the commissioner can point to

as a sort of proof of the value of undertaking the training and that they made the right decision in choosing Acas to deliver it.

Where a respondent has identified something particularly good about the training, they are six times more likely to be very satisfied with the training overall.

Fully achieving the objectives of the training – whatever those objectives happened to be – is also a significant predictor of satisfaction – with those reporting that their objectives have been fully achieved nearly five times more likely than those that do not, to rate the training as very satisfactory. The same is true of those reporting staff representatives (other than trade union representatives) having been involved in diagnosing and designing the training.

Rating the training as very good value for money was also confirmed as an important indicator, with a very strong association with a high level of satisfaction. Equally important is that respondents recall some follow up from Acas staff after the training has been undertaken. In both cases respondents are four times more likely than those that do not rate the training as very good value for money or do not recall follow up from Acas staff to say they are very satisfied with the training.

Other variables that are relatively important in terms of predicting a high level of satisfaction, based on the logistic regression analysis, include:

- Attaching a high level of importance to improving employee health or well-being;
- Having had a good experience previously with Acas;
- And reporting having undertaken a diagnostic process at the outset in conjunction with Acas.

In each case, respondents are three times more likely than their counterparts who do not fulfil the criteria to be very satisfied with the training. This analysis is summarised in the table below.

Figure 32: Logistic regression – satisfaction with Workplace Training[9]

Variables	Odds ratios	Significance[10]
Identified something particularly good that pleased them	6.092	P<.01
Objectives were fully achieved	4.882	P<.0001
Other staff representatives were involved in diagnosing/designing the training	4.777	P<.1
Rated as very good value for money	4.333	P<.01
Had follow up contact from Acas	4.333	P<.0001
Improving employee health or well-being is a very important objective	3.167	P<.01
Have had a good experience of Acas in past	3.075	P<.05
Recall a diagnostic process	2.735	P<.05
Have had no minor problems or issues	2.123	P<.05
Have not had a major complaint or problem	1.320	P<.2

When the relative importance of each variable is calculated, having fully achieved the training objectives is way ahead of other variables in contributing towards a high level of satisfaction with the training, while follow up contact is highlighted as a practice of particular importance.

Following up on the training may have the effect of 'compounding' a satisfactory experience; rounding the training off for organisations, and adding more value to the whole customer service experience.

Figure 33: Factors impacting on the propensity to be very satisfied – relative importance of each

Fully achieved the objectives of training	34%
Recall follow up contact from Acas staff	18%
Training was very good value for money	11%
Improving employee health or well-being is considered very important	10%
Have had a good experience of Acas in past	7%
Recall a diagnostic process	5%
Have not identified any minor problems or issues	5%
Any other staff representatives involved in the diagnostic/design process	4%
Identified something particularly good that pleased you	4%
Have not identified a major complaint or problem	3%

7.2 Achievement of objectives

Respondents were asked if the main objective of the training had been achieved. Fifty-nine per cent considered their organisation's objectives to have been completely achieved, while a further thirty-nine per cent considered objectives to have been partly achieved. Just 1% of all respondents were negative in this respect and a further 1% were not sure.

Although positive overall, the proportion that completely achieved their objectives from the training is significantly lower than in 2013 (70% then). There is a move towards more partial achievement of objectives in 2019 (39% is significantly higher than the 29% reported in 2013).

The findings suggest that completely achieving objectives depends very much on what organisations set out to achieve. Those citing their objective in undertaking the training as improving organisation performance were more likely than those citing other objectives to report partly, rather than completely, achieved objectives (60% and 37% respectively). Clearly, training alone is unlikely to lead to improved performance across an organisation.

There is greatest evidence of success in the training for those aiming to improve adherence to policies and procedures (71% completely; 29% partially).

Figure 34: Achievement of main objective, by main objective

■ Partly achieved ■ Completely achieved

Objective	Partly achieved	Completely achieved
Total (385)	39%	59%
Improving adherence to policies/procedures (62)	29%	71%
Improving employee health/well being (54)	44%	52%
Reducing absenteeism (8)	50%	50%
Improving employment relations (76)	42%	58%
Improving organisation performance (35)	60%	37%
Promoting equality/diversity (26)	19%	69%
Improving staff knowledge (118)	37%	62%
Reducing staff turnover (3)	33%	67%

Q38 You said that the main objective in doing the training was ….. Overall, would you say the main objective of the training was? Bases in parentheses (all respondents)

7.3   Positive experiences of the training

Respondents were asked if they had experienced things that particularly pleased them throughout the training process and delivery, and whether they had experienced any problems or disappointments.

Thirty-three per cent of respondents reported something that had particularly pleased them, while a higher proportion (37%) reported that there had been a few small things that had pleased them.

Only a very small minority of respondents experienced minor problems or issues (4%) and even fewer had a major complaint or problem (2%).

Nineteen per cent reported neither, with 5% were unsure.

Figure 35: Positive things about the training

Category	Percentage
Trainer was good	35%
Good coverage of the topic/subject matter	28%
Encourages good communication/interaction between participants	15%
Good feedback from staff/participants (Inc. they enjoyed it)	15%
Good case studies/examples	10%
Improved participant confidence in doing parts of their job related to course	10%
Good structure/delivery of the course	8%
Everything was good/good session overall	6%
Good /interesting activities (role play/quizzes/mazes)	3%
Other	1%
No comment	1%
Don't know	6%
Not answered	1%

Q35 Thinking about what pleased you, can you please tell us what happened? Base: 268 (where pleased) Multiple response; unprompted

Selected comments from respondents are as follows.

On 'trainer was good'

"The trainer was extremely engaging and knowledgeable. He made the session enjoyable and informative."

"Trainer delivered the training in various ways with role play; helped with difficult conversations; very engaged, positive feedback took staff out of their comfort zone; highlighted staff who struggled with role play."

"The whole approach that the presenter took on the subject, very positive very engaging."

And on how the trainer's approach and style can make a significant difference

"We felt the first trainer was better than the 2nd. The first trainer was more energetic and pacier, kept people engaged. The 2nd trainer made the day drag in and it was hard work."

On 'good coverage of the topic/subject matter'

"Laid out very clearly for fair process with law."

"The way the training was put together was interactive so a lot of case studies. Lots of little things that brought the training to life. The way the trainer had taken time to get to know us so that she could give examples of our business. We are a small business so we do not have a lot of the problems that big businesses have."

On 'good communication/interaction between participants'

"Atmosphere was excellent and kept everybody engaged."

"The way that the training was interactive brought things to life which was good."

"The workshop ethos was brilliant it got everyone talking to everyone. It was not like a classroom it was more of a chat."

On 'good feedback from participants'

"The trainer was extremely engaging and knowledgeable. He made the session enjoyable and informative."

"The general feedback was really good. They enjoyed the training and felt that they could use it. They thought that the trainer knew his stuff."

On 'good case studies/examples'

"Case study examples were really good and followed lines of enquiry from that - good learning experience for participants."

"The case study exercise was useful and engaging."

On 'improved participant confidence in doing their jobs'

"Staff received informative training and felt more confidence in their positions at the end of the training."

"A lot of the managers have started to deal with issues themselves rather than passing them over to HR to deal with. It has given them more confidence."

On other positive feedback

"Gave staff more confidence in trying to help individuals in conflict resolve *the issues better."*

"The trainer's ability to put employment law into context and make it accessible for non-experts. Trainers ability to work with the organisation."

"The trainer spent extra time at the end of the session and reviewed everything they learnt so far and helped plan for department."

"The people that attended the training were inspired and we changed the frequency of the meetings and the way that they are run. It revived it. There were a couple of things that changed. They came back with lots of ideas."

7.4   Willingness to recommend

As in 2013, the vast majority of respondents reported that they would recommend Acas Workplace Training on the topic they selected to other organisations (96%, compared to 95%). Only 2% of respondents said they would not recommend the training, while a further 2% were not sure.

Reluctance, and uncertainty as to whether, to recommend is more evident within large organisations (those with 250 or more employees). While willingness to recommend tends to reflect a high level of satisfaction, sometimes, the lack of willingness to recommend can reflect a reluctance to take responsibility for influencing other people's choices. A third of respondents that said they would not recommend the training[11] were dissatisfied with it; of the remainder most were fairly satisfied and a minority were very satisfied.

7.5   Value for money

When asked to rate Workplace Training received from Acas on the basis of value for money, 90% of respondents considered it good value, including 60% that considered it very good value for money.

There has been a gradual but consistent upward trend in the extent to which respondents consider the training very good value for money from 2008 onward (54% in 2008; 56% in 2013 and 60% in 2019).

Figure 36: Perceptions of value for money
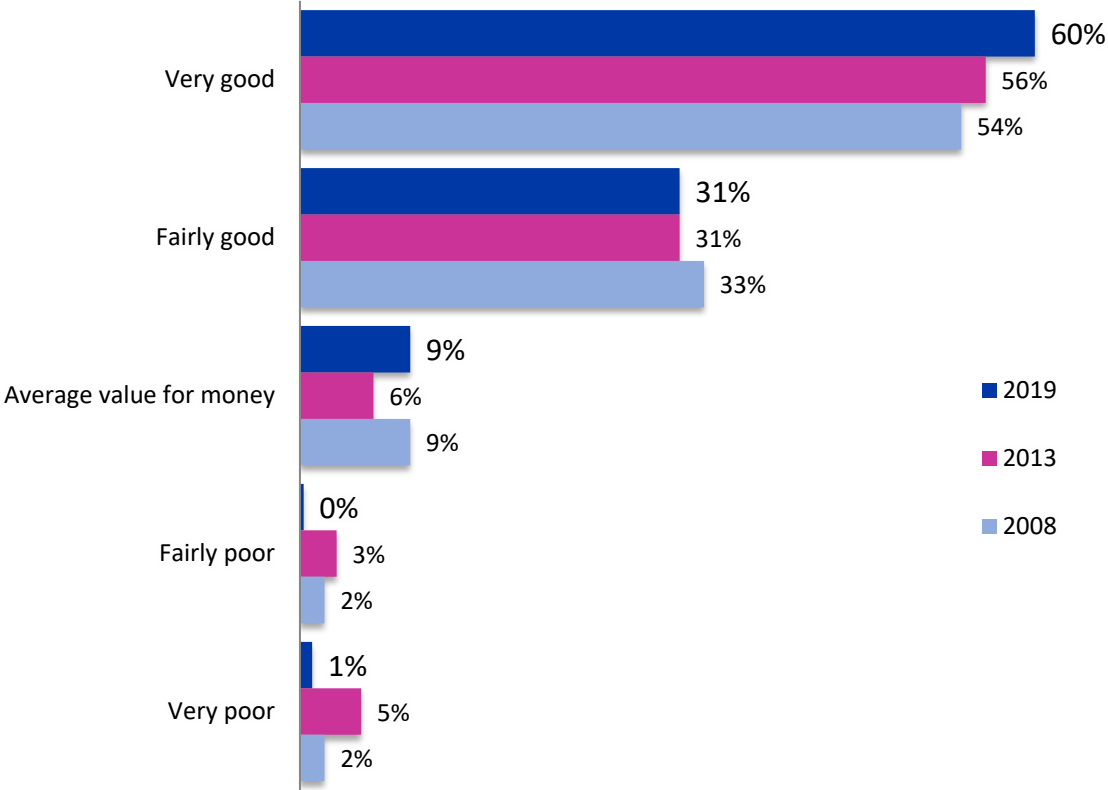
Q40 How would you rate the value for money of the training? Would you say it was...? Base: 2019 = 376; 2013 = 397; 2008 = 389 (all respondents providing a valid response – excluding don't knows)

While respondents that have commissioned training in the area of Fair Treatment at Work are more likely than others to consider the training to be value for money overall (94%), they are less likely than those that have commissioned training in other areas to rate it highly in this regard (55%). This is summarised in the figure below.

Figure 37: Perceptions of value for money, by topic of training

	Overall (%)	Employment Relations (%)	Fair Treatment at Work (%)	HR and People Management (%)
Very good value for money	60	60	55	62
Fairly good value for money	31	28	**39**	27
Average value for money	9	10	6	9
Fairly poor value for money	<0.5	0	0	1
Very poor value for money	1	1	1	1
2019 Good (summary)	**90**	**89**	**94**	**89**
2013 Good (summary)	87	77	87	92
2019 Poor (summary)	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**
2013 Poor (summary)	7	15	9	3
2019 Bases	376	124	109	142
2013 Bases	397	94	94	209

Q40 How would you rate the value for money of the training? Would you say it was...?
Bases: all respondents providing a valid response – excluding don't knows

Respondents within private sector organisations are particularly happy with the training in this respect, and significantly more likely than those in public or third sector organisations to consider the training as very good value for money (68%, compared to 54% in the public sector and 47% in the third sector).

There is a clear link between considering the training to be good value for money, achieving training objectives and overall satisfaction with the training.

Extent to which the training has been considered very good value for money:

- Achieved objectives, 69%; Partly achieved, 47%; Not at all, 25%
- Very satisfied, 69%; Fairly satisfied, 40%; Neither/nor, 50%; Dissatisfied, 14%

7.6   Future use

Respondents were asked about the likelihood of their commissioning training from Acas in the future. Ninety-five per cent of respondents would be likely to use Acas training again, increasing to 98% of those that have been very satisfied with the training. Seventy-eight per cent of respondents (78%) would be *very* likely to use it again, rising to 87% of those that have been very satisfied. Compared with previous evaluations this proportion has increased significantly (68% in 2008; 71% in 2013).

Figure 38: Likelihood of using Acas training again
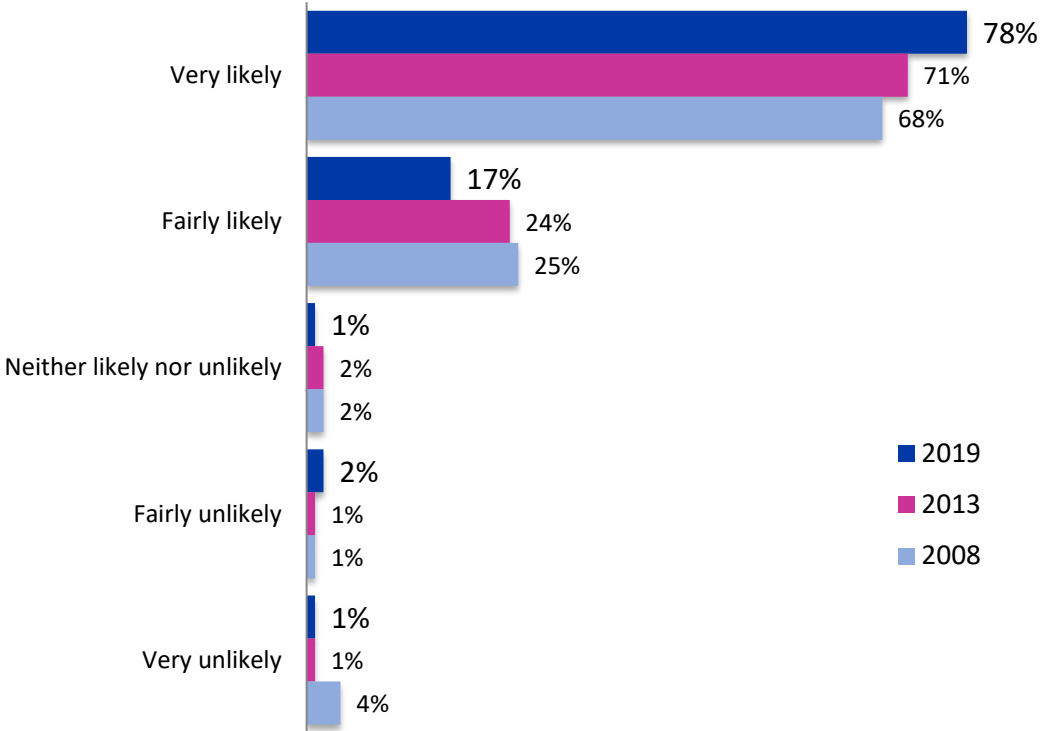
Q43 If in the future you need more training on **[TOPIC]**, or another area of employment relations, how likely would you be to use Acas training again? Would you be... Base: 2019 = 383; 2013 = 391; 2008 = 414 (all respondents providing a valid response – excluding don't knows)

There are no significant differences by the general topic of training, but it is interesting to note small differences between the proportions that are very or fairly likely to use the training again. There is a more positive view amongst those that have commissioned training on Fair Treatment at Work.

Figure 39: Likelihood of using Acas training again by topic area

	Overall (%)	Employment Relations (%)	Fair Treatment at Work (%)	HR and People Management (%)
Very likely	78	76	81	77
Fairly likely	17	20	14	18
Neither likely nor unlikely	1	2	0	1
Fairly likely	2	1	4	1
Very unlikely	1	2	0	2
2019 Likely (summary)	96	95	96	94
2013 Likely (summary)	96	92	99	96
2019 Unlikely (summary)	3	2	4	3
2013 Unlikely (summary	2	3	1	2
2019 Bases	383	127	111	144
2013 Bases	391	93	93	205

Q43 If in the future you need more training on **[TOPIC]**, or another area of employment relations, how likely would you be to use Acas training again? Would you be... Bases: all respondents providing a valid response – excluding don't knows

Respondents reporting that their objectives had been completely achieved were significantly more likely than others to say they would be very likely to use Acas training again (86%, compared with 68% of those having partly achieved their objectives and 25% of those that did not achieve their objectives at all).

8. Technical Appendix

8.1 Detailed methodology

The evaluation employed an entirely quantitative research approach, and did not replicate the qualitative, case-study, element of the 2013 evaluation. Two modes of data collection were employed:

- 349 computer aided telephone interviews (CATI) with commissioners of Workplace Training across the UK, achieving a 59% response rate on the contacted[12] sample.
- 36 computer aided web-based interviews (CAWI) with commissioners of Workplace Training across the UK, achieving a 5% response rate on those emailed with a link to the online survey.

Telephone and online surveys were completed with/by training commissioners who had commissioned one or more Workplace Training event(s) from Acas delivered between October 2018 and December 2019 (three to fifteen months before fieldwork). All sample was provided by Acas from its management information system (EARS).

- CATI fieldwork took place between Thursday, 16th January 2020 and Monday, 16th March 2020.
- CAWI fieldwork took place between Friday, 6th March 2020 and Wednesday, 18th March 2020.

The CAWI approach was introduced towards the end of the CATI fieldwork period in order to boost the number of completed interviews. The opportunity to complete the survey online was offered as an alternative to a telephone interview for training commissioners who were not available for telephone interviewing when called, but also not refusing to take part (logged as 'call backs' by interviewers) and to those who could not be reached by telephone (also logged as 'call backs' but also as 'no replies' and including those for whom the telephone number provided on the database was 'unobtainable' or a 'wrong number').

The two approaches employed the same questionnaire, although some adjustments had to be made for the questionnaire to work for self-completion online. These adjustments are highlighted in the questionnaire attached to this report.

8.2 Sampling

The sample frame used for this evaluation was gathered from Acas' management information system (EARS). When training commissioners at each of the organisations booked their Workplace Training event, their contact details were entered into EARS, as the 'Lead Customer Manager' for that organisation.

In line with the 2008 and 2013 evaluations, Acas securely provided a sample containing the contact details for all training commissioners at organisations that

had receive one or more Workplace Training event(s) between 1 and 15 months prior to the original fieldwork dates scheduled for January 2020.

A number of organisations were represented in the sample multiple times where they had commissioned more than one Workplace Training event from Acas. Where this was the case the sampling strategy outlined below was deployed. This replicated the sampling strategy deployed in 2013. The topic variable relates to the topic of the Workplace Training as commissioned by each organisation, and the contact variable relates to the training commissioner within each organisation.

Where one training commissioner in an organisation commissioned multiple Workplace Training courses on the same topic, this was deemed to be an overall training programme. Where this was the case, the most recent course was selected to be part of the sample to help maximise the chance of the training commissioner recalling the training.

Where organisations had commissioned multiple courses via different training commissioners, or across multiple topics, one course per organisation was randomly selected to be part of the sample. This ensured that each organisation was only included in the sample once, and minimised any potential burden to respondents or organisations.

Table 1: Sampling Strategy

Topic Variable (within organisation)	Contact Variable (within organisation)	Sampling Approach	Action Taken
Identical	Identical	Most recent contact	BMG to select most recent contact These contacts will then be asked about all training courses in the overall training programme in line with the 2008 approach
Identical	Different	Randomly selected	BMG to randomly select
Different	Identical	Randomly selected	BMG to randomly select
Different	Different	Randomly selected	BMG to randomly select Each organisation will only be contacted once to minimise respondent burden

The original sample file included 3,681 records. Once the sampling strategy had been followed and duplicates removed, 1,350 records remained to be used in the fieldwork.

This compares with 943 records provided in 2013, of which 706 remained following the steps taken to remove duplicates.

The counts of records submitted for the 2019 survey before and after duplicates were removed by month and year of Workplace Training delivery is summarised in the table that follows:

Table 2: Summary of sample before and after de-duplication

Year	Month	Provided	Removals	Available
2018	October	259	173	86
2018	November	293	190	103
2018	December	149	85	64
2019	January	216	145	71
2019	February	269	195	74
2019	March	307	194	113
2019	April	227	136	91
2019	May	268	172	96
2019	June	238	146	92
2019	July	297	201	96
2019	August	148	103	45
2019	September	303	202	101
2019	October	352	215	137
2019	November	244	128	116
2019	December	111	46	65
	Total	**3681**	**2331**	**1350**

Reasons for removal were as follows:

Table 3: Reasons for removal of sample

Reason	n
Duplicate contact/telephone number but different organisation	17
Duplicate organisation	93
Multiple contacts within organisation	179
Duplicate email address	6
Multiple topics within organisations	1981
Invalid/no number	55
Total	2331

The main fieldwork period ran for eight weeks from Thursday, 16th January 2020 to Wednesday, 18th March 2020 (CATI and CAWI). In total 383 completed interviews were achieved.

The table that follows shows the final sample disposition, and also provides comparisons back to the 2008 and 2013 evaluations. As can be observed, the final response rate received, based on all available records is lower than in previous years (28%, compared with 57% in 2008 and 2013). Based on where a final call outcome was achieved, the response rate is 59% for the 2019 survey.

In an effort to maximise the number of interviews achieved from the sample, respondents were called a maximum of 15 times, compared to the maximum call thresholds of eight in 2008 and ten in 2013[13]. The call attempts were made over the eight-week fieldwork period, which was of two weeks longer duration than in 2008 and 2013. They were made at intervals of 2-3 days and made at different times of the day. Some call-backs were made on the basis of a specified time and date but still did not result in a completed interview when this 'soft' appointment was met.

Table 4: Final Sample Disposition

Result	Reason no interview	2008		2013		2019	
		n	sample	n	sample	n	sample
Completed		418	57%	404	57%	383	28%
Refusal	Company policy (in 2019 including gatekeeper refusal)	4	1%	6	1%	65	5%
	Already interviewed by Acas	3	*%	0	0%	0	0%
	No time	12	2%	0	0%	4	*%
	No reason given (in 2013 coded as refusal by respondent)	1	0%	23	3%	129	10%
	Repeatedly unavailable (up to eight times in 2008, 10 times in 2013 and 15 times in 2019)	81	11%	159	23%	584	43%
Ineligible	Duplicate organisation	48	7%	4	1%	0	0%

Result	Reason no interview	2008		2013		2019	
		n	sample	n	sample	n	sample
	Third party organising training for other organisations	5	1%	9	1%	26	2%
Not contacted	Dead telephone number, or fax number	30	4%	11	2%	101	7%
	Could not establish telephone contact (live telephone line, but no answer or only an answer phone or a gatekeeper who could offer no assistance)	82	11%	22	3%	54	4%
	No one able to discuss training (target respondents had left the organisation or had moved within the organisation and were not contactable)	42	6%	68	10%	4	*%
	Reason unclear	8	1%	0	0%	0	0%
	Total	734	100%	706	100%	1350	100%

*denotes less than 0.5%

8.3 Advance communications

In line with 2008 and 2013 evaluations, to raise awareness of the research and to enlist support for participation, training commissioners were given advance notice of the survey. Whilst in 2008 and 2013 this was via post i.e. a hard copy of a letter was sent out, in 2020 training commissioners were sent an email.

The switch to email was made in order to take advantage of the availability of email addresses provided on the database and to facilitate response from prospective respondents. Within the email, a link was provided to enable recipients to book an appointment for a telephone interview online and/or to nominate another person within their organisation to participate. Training commissioners were also given the option to 'opt out' of the survey by contacting BMG direct by email.

In total 96 people booked an appointment via the advance notice email link.

8.4 Fieldwork pilot

The 2013 questionnaire was used as the basis for developing the 2019 questionnaire but there were significant changes made. A pilot phase of interviewing was undertaken to determine the average interview length and how the interview flowed for respondents. This pilot lasted 4 days and involved 15 telephone interviews. The average interview length after 15 interviews was 21 minutes. Following this, the questionnaire was reviewed and some questions removed to bring the average interview length down below 20 minutes. All 15 pilot telephone interviews were included in the final quantitative analysis.

9. Appendix: Statistical Analysis Methodology

The following is a detailed explanation of the statistical analysis that has been undertaken and reported in the main report.

Ordinary linear regression analysis and binary logistic regression analysis were used to determine the main 'drivers' of overall satisfaction and a derived variable called 'Impact Score'. Ordinary linear regression was used to determine the 'drivers' of the 'Impact Score', while logistic regression was used to determine the key 'drivers' of binary satisfaction (Very Satisfied Vs NOT Very Satisfied). *Please note, the word 'drivers' is in quotation marks because regression analysis can only measure associations, not causation.*

9.1   Regression Data Preparation

Prior to performing regression analysis, possible 'drivers' (independent variables) were re-coded and simplified so that they could be used in regression analysis. Categorical variables were re-coded to ensure that there were a minimum number in each category (more than 20), and the majority of the variables were recoded into binary variables (for example, on a scale of 1 to 5, positive ratings and negative ratings were grouped to create two distinct variables). The level of association between the dependent variables (Overall satisfaction/Impact) and the 'drivers' (Independent variables) were assessed for all possible 'drivers'. Only variables where the association was significant at 10% significance level were considered in the regression analysis.

A *stepwise* procedure and a *backward elimination* procedure were both used to determine which variables to include. *Stepwise* procedures select independent variables in steps – in descending order of the strongest association. A *backwards elimination* procedure starts with all independent variables and removes the least significant at each stage.

Regression models involve the calculation of a statistic called R-Squared which indicates the amount of variability in the dependent variable (Impact Score) that can be explained by the regression model. The R-squared value also calculates the relative importance of each of the independent variables contained within the model.

9.2   Impact Regression

A derived variable called 'Impact Score' was used to measure the level of impact the training had within the organisation. Three individual impact scores were calculated: a score to summarise Q27 and Q28; a score to summarise Q29 and a score to summarise Q31. The final 'Impact Score' was calculated by taking the mean for the standardised scores. The scores were standardised to have a mean of zero and a standard deviation of 1, so that the three scores have the same weight when calculating the average.

Score 1: Positive Change

Question Q27A to E was re-coded: Q27(Decreased to a large extent) = 2; Q27(Decreased to some extent) =1; Q27(Increased to some extent = -1); Q27(Increased to a large extent) =- 2; Q27(stayed the same)=0 and Q27(Don't know)=0.

Question Q27F was re-coded: Q27 (Decreased to a large extent) = -2; Q27(Decreased to some extent) =-1; Q27(Increased to some extent =1); Q27(Increased to a large extent) = 2; Q27(stayed the same) =0 and Q27(Don't know) =0

Question Q28 to F was re-coded: Q28(Not at all) = 0; Q28(To some extent) =1; Q28(To a large extent) = 2; Q28(Completely) = 3; Q28(Don't know) = 1 and Q28(Not asked) = 0.

There resulting values were multiplied and the average was taken to produce a score.

Score 2: Individual Impact

Question Q29A to F was re-coded: Q29 (Very Positive) = 2; Q29(Slightly Positive) =1; Q29(No impact) = 0; Q29(Slightly Negative) = -1; Q28(Very Negative) = -2 and Q29(Don't know) = 0.

The average was taken to produce an overall score.

Score 3: Wider Impact

Question Q31A to J was re-coded: Q31 (Very Positive) = 2; Q31(Slightly Positive) =1; Q31(No impact) = 0; Q31(Slightly Negative) = -1; Q31(Very Negative) = -2 and Q31(Don't know) = 0.

Only variables that made a significant impact on the predictive power of the regression model were included. A *stepwise* procedure and a *backward elimination* procedure were both used to determine which variables to include. *Stepwise* procedures select independent variables in steps – variables can also be removed (deselected) at individual steps. At the initial stage, the variable with the strongest association is entered first (smallest p-value), and the model is calculated using only this variable. In the second step, the variable, from the pool of variables not currently in the model, that would have the most significant impact on the predictive power of the model is selected (smallest p-value). This process is repeated until there are no more variables that would significantly improve the model. Also, at steps three and above variables can be removed if they no longer have a significant impact. A *backwards elimination* procedure starts with all variables and removes the least significant independent variable at each stage.

When regression models are built, a statistic called R-Squared is calculated. This the amount of variability in the dependent variable (Impact Score) that can be explained by the regression model. The final model only has an R-squared value

of 25%. Therefore, there is a large amount of variability that we are unable to account for.

From the R-Squared value, we can calculate the relative importance of each of the independent variables contained within the model. The relative importance can be calculated using the change in the R-squared value when a specific variable is removed.

Readers should be aware that the resulting p-values should only be used as a guide. The residuals are not normally distributed.

9.3   Predictor Importance

TYPE 3

For example, let us suppose we had a regression model with an R-squared value of 50% and three independent variables: A, B and C. Let us also suppose that 'A' was removed from the model and the R-squared value was re-calculated, resulting in a value of 45%. The change in the R-squared value would be 5%. If 'A' is then re-entered into the model we can calculate the change in the R-squared values for 'B' and 'C'. Let us suppose that the change in the R-squared value is 20% and 15 % respectively. The resulting values can then be re-scaled so that they sum to 100%, to create a relative importance index (A=11%, B=56% and C=33%).

LMR

Let us also suppose that 'A' was entered into the regression model first and the resulting R-squared value was 35%. Now, lets us suppose that 'B' and 'C' were added to the model sequentially resulting in R-squared values of 45% and 50% respectively. The resulting values can then be re-scaled so that they sum to 100%, to create a relative importance index (A=70%, B=20% and C=10%). There is, however, a problem with this approach: the change in the R-squared values are dependent on the order in which they are entered into the model. To overcome this problem the relative importance in calculated for each permutation and the average importance is calculated.

9.4   Overall Satisfaction Regression

Logistic regression analysis was used to determine the key 'drivers' of overall satisfaction. As mentioned earlier, overall satisfaction has been recoded into a binary variable which identifies those who are 'Very Satisfied' with the training. Logistic regression analysis is used to predict the likelihood (odds) of an event occurring. In this instance, it is the odds of being 'Very Satisfied'. The regression analysis output can be used to determine the relative importance to the 'drivers' and the expected change in the odds (odds ratio), if a specific 'driver' is increased by 1 unit, holding all other 'drivers' constant.

The logistic regression procedure does not produce an R-squared value. However, it does produce pseudo R-Squared values. Pseudo R-squared values are calculated

using a statistic called -2ll, which the logistic regression procedure attempts to minimise when producing the model. The final model only has a pseudo R-squared value of 37% (Nagelkerke R Square), which is acceptable. Lower values of -2ll indicate that the model has stronger predictive power. Type 3 relative importance scores are calculated using the change in the -2ll value.

What are the odds and odds ratio?

The odds ratio evaluates whether the odds of an event occurring (being 'Very Satisfied') differs for two different groups. To calculate the odds ratio, we must first calculate the odds of an event occurring for the two groups. The odds of an event occurring is very similar to a probability (not the same). The odds of an event occurring is the probability of an event occurring divided by the probability of an event not occurring. If the odds of an event occurring is greater than 1, an event is more likely to occur than not; if the odds of an event occurring is less than 1, the event is less likely to occur than not occur and an odds value of 1 would indicate an event is just as likely to occur as not occur. Once the odds of an event occurring has been calculated, for both groups, the odds ratio can then be calculated by dividing the two values.

Example:

Suppose that we had 2 bags containing balls, called bag 'A' and bag 'B': bay 'A' contains 1 white ball and 9 black balls and bag 'B' contains 9 white balls and 1 black ball. We could calculate the odds of selecting a white ball from each of the two bags using the following formulas:

$$\text{Odd(white|Bag A)} = \frac{\text{Number of white balls}}{\text{Number of black balls}} = \frac{1}{9} = 0.111$$

$$\text{Odd(white|Bag B)} = \frac{\text{Number of white balls}}{\text{Number of black balls}} = \frac{9}{1} = 9$$

You are 9 times more likely to select a white ball from bag 'B' compared to not selecting a white ball from bag 'A'. The odds ratio can be calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{Odd Ratio} = \frac{\text{Odd(white|Bag A)}}{\text{Odd(white|Bag B)}} = \frac{0.111}{9} = 0.0123$$

Or

$$\text{Odd Ratio} = \frac{\text{Odd(white|Bag B)}}{\text{Odd(white|Bag A)}} = \frac{9}{0.111} = 81$$

From the odds ratio you can see that odds of selecting a white ball from bag 'B' are 81 times greater than selecting a white ball from bag 'A'. If we know the odds of selecting a white ball from bag 'B' (9) we can multiply the by the odds ratio (0.0123) which gives us the odds of selecting a white ball from bag 'A' (0.111). This can be converted into a probability using the formula below:

$$\text{Probability} = \frac{\text{Odd(white|A)}}{\text{Odd(white|Bag A)} + 1} = 10\%$$

10. Appendix: Research Materials

10.1 CATI Questionnaire

Acas Workplace Training Evaluation

Good morning/afternoon/ evening my name is _____ and I'm calling on behalf of Acas (the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service) from BMG Research an independent research company. Could I please speak to _____?

IF INDIVIDUAL NO LONGER AT COMPANY / NOT AVAILABLE: We need to speak to the person responsible for training in the organisation. Could you tell me who this is? Would you be able to put me through to them or their department?

WHEN THROUGH TO THE RIGHT PERSON
Hello, my name is _____ from BMG Research, an independent research company. We're doing some research on behalf of Acas to explore employer views of Acas' workplace training. We would like to discuss why it was commissioned and what the impact of the training was.

You should have received an email recently regarding this survey. To do the survey, we need to speak to the person responsible for training in the organisation. Can I confirm that this is you?

IF NO: ESTABLISH WHO IS APPROPRIATE CONTACT, AND ASK TO BE PUT THROUGH (REPEAT INTRODUCTION)

IF YES: The interview will be confidential - no-one outside the research team will be made aware of any information you give – and the information will be reported anonymously. The survey should take approximately 15 minutes. Are you able to do the interview now?

If not available at current time: May I arrange a time to call you back? IF REFUSE TO TAKE PART: May I ask why not?

You can find out more about our surveys in our Privacy Notice. INTERVIEWER ESTABLISH IF WEBSITE ADDRESS WANTED OVER PHONE OR VIA EMAIL (www.bmgresearch.co.uk/privacy)

RECORD EMAIL SENT YES/NO

IF FURTHER INFORMATION REQUESTED:
- Send email verifying the research
- (If preferred) contact details are:
- Emma Osborne, BMG Research 0121 333 6006, emma.osborne@bmgresearch.co.uk
- Colin Ferguson, Research Officer, ACAS, 020 7210 3674, cferguson@acas.org.uk

This research study is being carried out in accordance with the Market Research Society guidelines and I can assure you that all your responses will remain totally anonymous and will not be attributed to you personally, or to your organisation.

IF WILLING TO PARTICIPATE CONTINUE WITH MAIN SURVEY

Topic
Topic
INSERT FROM SAMPLE

1	Attendance management
2	Bullying and harassment
3	Change management
4	CIWM
5	Conflict/mediation/relationship issues (non CIWM)
6	Contracts of employment
7	Discipline and grievance
8	Employment law update
9	Equality, diversity and inclusion
10	Flexible working, hours and holidays
11	Information and consultation
12	Line management skills
13	Mental health/stress
14	Negotiation and collective bargaining
15	Parental rights
16	Pay
17	Sexual Orientation Discrimination
18	Performance management
19	Recruitment
20	Redundancy
21	TUPE
22	Other

Month
Month
INSERT FROM SAMPLE

1	January
2	February
3	March
4	April
5	May
6	June
7	July
8	August
9	September
10	October
11	November
12	December

Year
Year
INSERT FROM SAMPLE

1	2018
2	2019

Programme
Programme
INSERT FROM SAMPLE

1	Yes – part of an overall programme
2	No – not part of an overall programme

ASK ALL
Q1 Can you confirm firstly that you are not a third party, organising training on behalf of another organisation?
DO NOT READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

1	CORRECT – NOT A THIRD PARTY	**CONTINUE**
2	INCORRECT - THIRD PARTY, DID NOT UNDERTAKE TRAINING	**THANK AND CLOSE**
3	Don't know	**THANK AND CLOSE**

ASK ALL
Q2 According to Acas' records, Acas ran a course on **[TOPIC]** in your organisation that finished around **[MONTH, YEAR].** Is this correct?
DO NOT READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

1	Yes	**SKIP TO Q5**
2	No – date incorrect	**SKIP TO Q4**
3	No – topic incorrect	**SKIP TO Q3**
4	No – both incorrect	**CONTINUE**
5	Don't know	**SEEK REFERRAL**

IF Q2=3,4 (TOPIC INCORRECT)
Q3 Please can you clarify what the main area of training was?
READ OUT. SINGLE CODE

1	Attendance management
2	Bullying and harassment
3	Change management
4	CIWM
5	Conflict/mediation/relationship issues (non CIWM)
6	Contracts of employment
7	Discipline and grievance
8	Employment law update
9	Equality, diversity and inclusion
10	Flexible working, hours and holidays
11	Information and consultation
12	Line management skills
13	Mental health/stress
14	Negotiation and collective bargaining
15	Parental rights
16	Pay
17	Sexual Orientation Discrimination
18	Performance management
19	Recruitment
20	Redundancy
21	TUPE
22	Other - SPECIFY

IF Q2=2, 4 (DATE INCORRECT)

Q4 Please can you clarify when this training course took place?

(If Programme=1 (Yes, part of an overall programme)) – Prompt: please think about the most recent training event held on this topic

MONTH……../ YEAR………..

<NOTE TO DP – If earlier than September 2018, please thank and close>

IF PROGRAMME=1 (PART OF AN OVERALL PROGRAMME)

Q5 According to the information provided by Acas, you commissioned more than one course on [TOPIC].

Please can you confirm if this is the case?

SINGLE CODE. READ OUT.

1	Yes – commissioned more than one course on this topic	**CONTINUE (Programme =1)**
2	No – only commissioned one course on this topic	**CONTINUE (Programme =2)**
3	Don't know	**CONTINUE (Programme =2)**

WPT TRAINING OBJECTIVES AND CHOOSING ACAS

IF ASKING ABOUT ONE COURSE (Programme=2 – not part of an overall programme OR Q5=2,3): We will begin by focussing on this particular training course, and then towards the end of the interview, we will ask you a few questions about training in general.

IF ASKING ABOUT OVERALL PROGRAMME (Q5=1): Please answer the following questions thinking about all of the courses that you commissioned from Acas on this topic. Towards the end of the interview, we will ask you a few questions about training in general.

Now, thinking about the Acas Workplace training your organisation commissioned…

ASK ALL.

Q6 For what reasons did your organisation decide to commission training on [TOPIC]?
Probe - What other reasons were there? REPEAT UNTIL 'NO OTHER REASON'; CODE/RECORD ALL ANSWERS.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO SELECT GIVEN REASONS (CODES) BASED ON WHAT THE RESPONDENT SAYS. YOU MUST PROBE FOR MORE THAN ONE REASON

1	In response to legislation
2	Meeting requirements of parent organisation
3	To inform and help develop policies
4	To support implementation of / adherence to company policies
5	To help with an organisational problem / improve in TOPIC area (including Employment Tribunals)
6	As part of a wider initiative / programme of change in the organisation
7	To be seen to be following 'good practice'
8	As part of, or following an Acas Workplace Project, or other Acas intervention
95	Other - SPECIFY
97	Don't know

ASK IF MORE THAN ONE REASON SPECIFIED AT Q6
(IF ONLY ONE REASON SELECTED AT Q6, PLEASE PRE-POPULATE)

Q7 And which of those do you think was the main reason for the training?

<DP, please show all reasons selected at Q6>
READ OUT CODES SELECTED IN Q6. SINGLE CODE.
IF NECESSARY: Acas Workplace Projects are designed to make organisations more effective by addressing particular aspects of workplace relations identified by the employer. Their purpose is to improve employment relations within workplaces by involving employers and employee representatives in joint problem solving and joint working.

1	In response to legislation
2	Meeting requirements of parent organisation
3	To inform and help develop policies
4	To support implementation of / adherence to company policies
5	To help with an organisational problem / improve in TOPIC area (including Employment Tribunals)
6	As part of a wider initiative / programme of change in the organisation
7	To be seen to be following 'good practice'
8	As part of, or following an Acas Workplace Project, or other Acas intervention
9	Other - SPECIFY
10	DNRO: Don't know

ASK IF Q6=6 <u>NOT</u> SELECTED

Q8 Was the training part of a wider initiative or programme of change in your organisation?

PROMPT IF NECESSARY: Did you commission the training to fit in with a broader organisational programme that also focused on or related to [TOPIC]?
DO NOT READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

1	Yes
2	No
3	Don't know

ASK IF Q6=8 <u>NOT</u> SELECTED

Q9 Was the training part of a wider Acas Workplace Project, or other Acas intervention?

PROMPT IF NECESSARY: Was the training undertaken as part of, or following, a wider Acas workplace project that your organisation undertook?

IF NECESSARY: Acas Workplace Projects are designed to make organisations more effective by addressing particular aspects of workplace relations identified by the employer. Their purpose is to improve employment relations within workplaces by involving employers and employee representatives in joint problem solving and joint working.
DO NOT READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

1	Yes
2	No
3	Don't know

Q10 Thinking about the specific objectives of the training, how important were the following?

How important or unimportant was ... was it **very important, fairly important, not very important, or not at all important?**
READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

A	Improving adherence to policies or procedures	**1-4*, DK**
B	Improving employee health or well-being	**1-4*, DK**
C	Reducing absenteeism	**1-4*, DK**
D	Improving employment relations	**1-4*, DK**
E	Improving the organisation's performance	**1-4*, DK**
F	Promoting equality or diversity	**1-4*, DK**
G	Improving staff knowledge	**1-4*, DK**
H	Reducing staff turnover	**1-4*, DK**

* Very important (1), Fairly important (2). Not very important (3), Not at all important (4), Don't know (5)

ASK IF Q10_A-H=3,4,5. (i.e. codes 1 and 2 were not selected at Q10, so no objective marked as very/fairly important.)
Q11 What was the most important objective of the training?

[open response]	
95	Other – SPECIFY
97	Don't know

ASK IF MORE THAN ONE OBJECTIVE SELECTED AS IMPORTANT AT Q10 (Q10_A-H=1,2)

Q12. Of the objectives you said were important in the last question, which **one** you would see as being the most important objective of the training?

<DP, please show all reasons selected as very/fairly important (WHERE Q10_A-H=1,2)>

READ OUT. CODE 1 ONLY.

1	Improving adherence to policies or procedures
2	Improving employee health or well-being
3	Reducing absenteeism
4	Improving employment relations
5	Improving the organisation's performance
6	Promoting equality or diversity
7	Improving staff knowledge
8	Reducing staff turnover
9	DNRO:Don't know

ASK ALL	
Q13 Why did you choose Acas as your training provider? PROMPT to clarify independence and expertise: Do you mean **independence** from management and the trade union; or from the Government (e.g. advice on legislation); or both? - Do you mean general **expertise** in employment relations or HR; or specific expertise in [TOPIC]? PROMPT - What other reasons were there? REPEAT UNTIL 'NO OTHER REASON'; CODE/RECORD ALL ANSWERS. **CODE ALL THAT APPLY. DO NOT READ OUT.**	
1	Independence - advice was independent of management & Trade Union
2	Independence - advice (e.g. on legislation) was independent of Government
3	Government sponsored
4	Expertise - General expertise in employment relations or HR
5	Expertise in [TOPIC]
6	Offered value for money
7	Good experience of Acas in past – if so, which service (SPECIFY - Acas to re-code)
8	Personal recommendation of Acas
9	Good reputation as a training provider
10	Did not know who else to use
11	Acas approached us
12	Not involved in decision
95	Other - SPECIFY
97	DNRO: Don't know

WPT PREPARATION AND DELIVERY

The next few questions focus on how your organisation prepared for the workplace training, and the delivery of the event.

ASK ALL		
Q14 Do you have any of the following in your organisation? **READ OUT. SINGLE CODE EACH OPTION.**		
A	Trade union representatives	Yes (1), No (2), Don't know (3)
B	Non-union staff representatives	Yes (1), No (2), Don't know (3)
C	Trade union full-time officials	Yes (1), No (2), Don't know (3)

Prior to training commencing you should have had a conversation with an Acas representative to discuss what form of Acas intervention would best meet your needs and those of your organisation. This is known as the diagnostic process.

ASK ALL	
Q15 During the diagnostic process, what steps did the Acas trainer take to establish what training or alternative service was required? **READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY**	
1	Suggested that you consult with prospective learners
2	Suggested that you consult with other management
3	Suggested that you consult with trade unions or employee representatives
4	Reviewed Acas' existing ready-made courses
5	Identified the specific training elements you required
6	Reviewed previous training undertaken by organisation
7	Discussed alternative Acas services and products, such as a Workplace Project
8	What else, if anything?
9	DNRO: Did not have a diagnostic process
10	DNRO: Don't know

ASK ALL EXCEPT Q15/9	
Q16 Still thinking about this diagnostic process, to what extent did it contribute to an appropriate training programme being created by Acas for your organisation? **PROBE. SINGLE CODE.**	
1	Not at all
2	A little
3	Partly
4	A great deal
5	Don't know

ASK IF Q16_1, 2, 3, 4	
Q17 Why do you say that?	
95	Other – SPECIFY
97	Don't know
ASK ALL	
Q18 Were any of the following groups of people within your organisation involved in the original decision to undertake Workplace Training and/or the subsequent diagnostic/design process? **<DP, do not show code 2 (Trade Union) if Q14_A=2 OR 3 (don't have Trade Union representatives, or don't know)>** **<DP, do not show code 3 (other staff representatives) if Q14_B=2 OR 3 (don't have other staff representatives, or don't know)>** **READ OUT. SINGLE CODE EACH OPTION.**		

A	Your management	The Decision to undertake Workplace Training (1) Diagnostic/design process (2) Both (3) Neither (4) DNRO:Don't know (5)
B	The trade union	The Decision to undertake Workplace Training (1) Diagnostic/design process (2) Both (3) Neither (4) DNRO:Don't know (5)
C	Any other staff representatives	The Decision to undertake Workplace Training (1) Diagnostic/design process (2) Both (3) Neither (4) DNRO:Don't know (5)
D	Anyone else at your organisation	The Decision to undertake Workplace Training (1) Diagnostic/design process (2) Both (3) Neither (4) DNRO:Don't know (5)

ASK IF Q18_D=2, 3 (OTHERS INVOLVED IN DIAGNOSTIC/DESIGN PROCESS)	
Q19 Who else was involved? **DO NOT READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.**	
1	Diversity champion
2	Occupational health professional
3	Health and safety officer
4	Other - SPECIFY

Q20 deleted

Q21 Was the training attended by any of the following?

<DP, ONLY ASK Q21_A IF Q14=1>
<DP, ONLY ASK Q21_B IF Q14=1>
<DP, ONLY ASK Q21_C IF Q14=1>
<DP, ASK ALL Q21_D>

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE EACH OPTION.

A	Trade union representatives	Yes (1), No (2), Don't know (3)
B	Non-union staff representatives	Yes (1), No (2), Don't know (3)
C	Trade union full-time officials	Yes (1), No (2), Don't know (3)
D	Management	Yes (1), No (2), Don't know (3)

Q22 In general, was the training compulsory or optional for staff to attend?

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

1	Compulsory
2	Optional
3	Don't know

Q23 After the training finished, did the Acas adviser get back in touch to see how things were going?

PROBE. SINGLE CODE.

1	Yes
2	No, but you contacted them
3	No (no contact)
4	Can't recall

Q24 How useful would you say this follow up contact with the Acas adviser was?

PROBE AND SINGLE CODE.

1	Not at all useful
2	Not very useful
3	Neither useful nor not useful
4	Fairly useful
5	Very useful
6	Don't know

Q25 Do you think it would have been useful or not useful if the Acas adviser had contacted you to check how things were going after the training finished?

SINGLE CODE.

1	Useful
2	Not useful
3	Don't know
4	Not applicable

IMPACT OF WPT

ASK ALL NEW	
Q26A Have learnings from the training been shared with staff who did not attend the event? **SINGLE CODE**	
1	Yes
2	No
3	DNRO:Don't know

ASK ALL WHERE LEARNINGS SHARED (Q26A/1)	
Q26 In which of the following ways have learnings from the training been shared with staff who did not attend the event? **READ OUT. MULTICODE.**	
1	Intranet
2	Booklets
3	Employee handbooks
4	Further in-house training
5	Other - SPECIFY
6	None of the above - Learnings not shared with other staff
7	Don't know

ASK ALL		
Q27 to assess the impact of the Acas training on your organisation, we would be grateful if you could tell us whether the following have **increased, decreased or stayed the same in the period since you completed the training?** **< Note to DP - Ask Q27 and then Q28 for each question in tandem [not Q27 (A to F) and then Q28 (A to F)].>** **READ OUT. SINGLE CODE EACH OPTION.**		
A	The number of staff that resigned	1-5, DK*
B	The number of work days lost due to absence	1-5, DK*
G	The number of employer-led disciplinaries	1-5, DK*
H	The number of dismissals	1-5, DK*
C	The number of employee grievances	1-5, DK*
D	The number of employment tribunal claims	1-5, DK*
E	The number of employment tribunal hearings	1-5, DK*
F	Productivity	1-5, DK*

* Decreased to a large extent (1), Decreased to some extent (2), Increased to some extent (3), Increased to a large extent (4) Stayed the same (5) (DON'T READ OUT), Don't know (6)

IF Q27 A-F = 1,2,3,4 (IF ANY OPTIONS HAVE INCREASED OR DECREASED TO SOME OR A LARGE EXTENT)		

Q28 FOR EACH POINT IN Q27, *IF INCREASE OR DECREASE:* To what extent was this change due to changes made in your organisation as a result of the Acas training?

< Note to DP - Ask Q27 and then Q28 for each question in tandem [not Q27 (A to F) and then Q28 (A to F)].>

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE EACH OPTION.

A	The number of staff that resigned	1-4, DK*
B	The number of work days lost due to absence	1-4, DK*
G	The number of employer-led disciplinaries	1-4, DK*
H	The number of dismissals	1-4, DK*
C	The number of employee grievances	1-4, DK*
D	The number of employment tribunal claims	1-4, DK*
E	The number of employment tribunal hearings	1-4, DK*
F	Productivity	1-4, DK*

* Not at all (1), To some extent (2), To a large extent (3), Completely (4), Don't know (5)

ASK ALL		

Q29 Now I'd like to turn to the impact you think the training has had **on participants**.
In your view, would you say the impact the training had on ... was very positive, slightly positive, slightly negative, very negative, or that there was no impact?

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE EACH OPTION.

A	Participants' awareness of their responsibilities	1-5, DK*
B	Participants' awareness of their rights	1-5, DK*
C	Participants' adherence to your organisation's policies	1-5, DK*
D	Participants' ability to deal effectively with **[TOPIC]**	1-5, DK*
E	Participants' ability to work with each other and their colleagues	1-5, DK*
F	The ability of managers and staff to work together more generally in the organisation	1-5, DK*

* Very positive impact (1), Slightly positive impact (2), Slightly negative impact (3), Very negative impact (4), No impact (5), Don't know (6)

IF Q29_A-F = 3,4 (IF NEGATIVE IMPACT)		

Q30 Why was that? / Why do you say there was a (very) negative impact?

<DP, please ask once for each negative response provided at Q29. Ask Q29 and then Q30 (where relevant) for each question in tandem [not Q29 (A-F) and then Q30 (A-F)].>

WRITE IN VERBATIM

95	Other – SPECIFY
97	Don't know

Q31 Thinking now about the **wider impact of the training on the organisation**:
In your view, would you say the impact the training had on ... was very positive, slightly positive, slightly negative, very negative, or that there was no impact?

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE EACH OPTION.

A	Levels of trust between senior management and employee representatives	1-5, DK*
B	Levels of trust between management and employees	1-5, DK*
C	Levels of trust between management and trade union representatives	1-5, DK*
D	Dealing with employment relations issues in a timely way	1-5, DK*
E	Dealing with employment relations issues in an effective way	1-5, DK*
F	Staff morale	1-5, DK*
G	The fair treatment of employees	1-5, DK*
H	The ability to manage change in staff or HR	1-5, DK*
I	The ability to prevent industrial action	1-5, DK*
J	The organisations' overall ability to deal effectively with [TOPIC]	1-5, DK*

* Very positive impact (1), Slightly positive impact (2), Slightly negative impact (3), Very negative impact (4), No impact (5), Don't know (6)

Q32 Why was that? / Why do you say there was a (very) negative impact?

<DP, please ask once for each negative response provided at Q31. Ask Q31 and then Q32 (where relevant) for each question in tandem [not Q31 (A-J) and then Q32 (A-J)].>

WRITE IN VERBATIM

95	Other – SPECIFY
97	Don't know

Q33 As a result of the training, have you or anyone working with you...
READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

A	Introduced one or more new policy	Yes (1), No (2), Don't know (3)
B	Reviewed one or more policy or practice	Yes (1), No (2), Don't know (3)
C	Revised one or more policy or practice	Yes (1), No (2), Don't know (3)
D	Planned to introduce one or more new policy or practice	Yes (1), No (2), Don't know (3)
E	Revised any area of practice relating to the issues addressed in the training	Yes (1), No (2), Don't know (3)

Q33B In which of the following areas, if any, have you [Q33_C=1, Q33_E=1: revised, [Q33_B=1: reviewed] [Q33_A=1: introduced] [Q33_D=1: planned to introduce) these policies, practices and procedures?.
READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

1	Absence or attendance management
2	Bullying and harassment
3	Contracts and written statements
4	Discipline and grievance
5	Equality or diversity
6	Information and consultation
7	Recruitment and selection
8	Redundancy handling
9	Working parents
10	Other – SPECIFY
11	Don't know

OVERALL VIEWS ON WPT

Now thinking about your overall views of the training...

ASK ALL	
Q34 Thinking about the Acas Workplace training, did you experience any of the following? **READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.**	
1	Something particularly good that pleased you
2	A few small things that pleased you
3	A few minor problems or issues
4	A major complaint or problem
5	None of these **<SINGLE CODE>**
6	Don't know

IF Q34 = 1, 2 (PLEASED)	
Q35 Thinking about what pleased you, can you please tell us what happened? CODE FRAME TO BE INSERTED **WRITE IN VERBATIM**	
95	Other – SPECIFY
97	Don't know

IF Q34 = 3, 4 (PROBLEMS/COMPLAINTS)	
Q36 Thinking about the problems and issues you experienced, can you please tell us what happened? CODE FRAME TO BE INSERTED **WRITE IN VERBATIM**	
95	Other – SPECIFY
97	Don't know

ASK ALL	
Q37 Taking everything into account, now that some time has passed since you received the training from Acas, would you say you were... **READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.**	
1	Very dissatisfied
2	Fairly dissatisfied
3	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
4	Fairly satisfied
5	Very satisfied
6	Don't know

ASK ALL	
Q38 You said that the main objective in doing the training was **[INSERT OBJECTIVE FROM Q7].** Overall, would you say the main objective of the training was: **READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.**	
1	Not at all achieved
2	Partly achieved
3	Completely achieved
4	Don't know

ASK ALL	
Q39 Would you recommend Acas training on [TOPIC] to other organisations? **READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.**	
1	Yes
2	No
3	Don't know

Q40 How would you rate the value for money of the training? Would you say it was...
READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.
1	Very good value for money
2	Fairly good value for money
3	Average value for money
4	Fairly poor value for money
5	Very poor value for money
6	Don't know

Q41 and Q42 deleted

I'd now like to ask you a few questions about future usage of Acas' workplace training...

ASK ALL
Q43 If in the future you need more training on **[TOPIC]**, or another area of employment relations, how likely would you be to use Acas training again? Would you be...
READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.
1	Very unlikely
2	Fairly unlikely
3	Neither likely nor unlikely
4	Fairly likely
5	Very likely
6	Don't know

Q44 deleted
Q45 deleted

DEMOGRAPHICS

We would now like to ask you a few background questions on the services you use, your role and organisation to help us understand your answers.

ASK ALL
Q46 Which other Acas services have you used in the last 12 months?
READ OUT. MULTICODE.
1	Telephone helpline for advice on a work-related query or issue
2	Helping to resolve industrial / collective disputes between employers and trade unions
3	Helping to resolve complaints / disputes that could lead or have led to an Employment Tribunal
4	Using mediation to resolve workplace issues or relationship breakdowns
5	Workplace Project to help management and employees to work more effectively together
6	Website information and guidance on employment rights and rules
7	Training sessions, conferences and workshops
8	Other on-site tailored training (other than the Workplace Training discussed already)
9	Online training or e-learning
10	Information and advice via Facebook, Twitter and Linked In.
11	Other (please specify)
12	Don't know
13	None

Q47 and Q48 deleted

Now moving on to your role and your organisation...

ASK ALL.	
Q49 What is your job title/position? **DO NOT READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.**	
1	Administration – e.g. admin manager
2	Business/strategy – e.g. head of sales
3	Consultant – e.g. internal consultants
4	Director
5	Diversity – e.g. equality and diversity manager
6	Employee relations – e.g. ER manager
7	Employment law/legal – e.g. company lawyer
8	Finance – e.g. finance manger/ head of finance
9	General manager
10	HR/personnel assistant
11	HR/personnel business partner
12	HR/personnel Director
13	HR/personnel manager
14	Learning and development
15	MD/CEO – e.g. Managing Director or Chief Executive Officer
16	Office manager
17	Operations – e.g. operations manager
18	Owner
19	Partner
20	Supervisor
21	Team leader
22	Trade Union roles (e.g. Learning and Development officer)
23	Training – e.g. training/practice manager
95	Other (SPECIFY)
97	DNRO:Don't know

ASK ALL.	
Q50 Approximately how many staff are employed in your organisation across England, Scotland and Wales? I.e. please do not include any based in Northern Ireland **READ OUT IF NEEDED. SINGLE CODE**	
1	0 to 1
2	2 to 9
3	10 to 49
4	50 to 99
5	100 to 249
6	250 to 499
7	500 to 999
8	1,000 to 4,999
9	5,000 or more
10	Don't know

ASK ALL.	
Q51 How many sites or workplaces does your organisation have across England, Scotland and Wales? IF NECESSARY: please do not include any located in Northern Ireland	
	<ENTER NUMBER>
97	Don't know

IF Q51>1	
Q52 Was the training on [TOPIC] attended by staff from a specific site or workplace; from two or more specific sites; or from across your organisation? **SINGLE CODE.**	
1	From one workplace or site
2	From two/more specific sites
3	From across the whole organisation
4	DNRO:Don't know

IF Q52=1 OR 2	
Q53 Approximately how many staff are employed in total **at these sites?** [PROMPT IF NECESSARY:] In total, about how many people are employed at the site / sites that the training delegates came from? **READ OUT IF NEEDED. SINGLE CODE**	
1	0 to 1
2	2 to 9
3	10 to 49
4	50 to 99
5	100 to 249
6	250 to 499
7	500 to 999
8	1,000 to 4,999
9	5,000 or more
10	Don't know

Thinking now about the structure of your organisation…

ASK ALL	
Q54. Do you work in the… **READ OUT. SINGLE CODE**	
1	Public sector
2	Private sector
3	Not-for-profit/ voluntary sector
4	Other (please specify)
5	Don't know

ASK ALL
Q55 What is the main business activity at this site? PROBE AS NECESSARY AND WRITE IN • What is the main product or service of the business? • What exactly is made or done at this site? • What material or machinery does this involve using? • What would you type into a search engine to find an organisation like yours? OFFICE CODE SIC 2 DIGIT

Q56 and Q57 deleted

ASK ALL
Q58 Thank you very much, that is the end of the survey. We would like to speak to some organisations further to explore the impact of workplace training in more detail. Would you be happy to help us with this? There would be an incentive. It would involve sharing your contact details and your responses with an independent research company who would use this information solely for the purpose of finding out more about the impact of the training. You may be contacted in the next few weeks if you agree. **SINGLE CODE.**

1	Yes
2	No

10.2 CAWI (online) invitation

Acas Workplace Training Evaluation

You may recall that we, BMG, an independent research organisation, have been in touch with you previously to ask for your help with an important survey about the Workplace Training that your organisation commissioned from Acas. We would very much appreciate your assistance in this research. We have been commissioned by Acas to carry out the survey on their behalf.

This survey is helping us understand whether the service meets customers' needs and the impacts it has on their workplaces.
We understand that it can be difficult to make time for a telephone interview so we've made it possible now to undertake the survey online. We would very much appreciate it if you could spare the time to complete the survey online via the link provided below.

[SURVEY LINK]

The answers you give will be held in the strictest confidence by BMG. Acas will only receive anonymised data from us and it will not be possible to identify any individual person or organisation from the results. This is an Acas survey and you can read their privacy notice here: http://www.acas.org.uk/privacy. BMG's privacy notice can be read here: www.bmgresearch.co.uk/privacy. By clicking on the survey link you agree to participate in the survey

The survey is being undertaken up to the 6th March (it's been extended) and if you'd rather take part by telephone there's still time to **book your telephone interview slot by going to the link provided below.**

[APPOINTMENT LINK]

Acas' records list you as the person at your organisation best placed to discuss the reasons why your organisation commissioned the training as well as the impact it has had on your organisation, but if that is incorrect you can nominate an alternative contact at your organisation, And provide their details, via the via the link provided above. Alternatively, you can contact Emma Osborne, Associate Director at BMG Research on 0121 333 6006 or by email at emma.osborne@bmgresearch.co.uk.

If you would like any more information about the survey, or would prefer not to participate, please contact Emma using the details above.

Thank you for agreeing to participate.

Just to confirm, your responses will be treated in the strictest confidence. BMG Research abides by the Market Research Society Code of Conduct at all times.

You can find out more information about our surveys and what we do with the information we collect in our Privacy Notice which is here www.bmgresearch.co.uk/privacy

Click here to begin the survey XXX

10.3 CAWI (online) - Reminder

Acas Workplace Training Evaluation

We are getting in touch one last time to request your assistance with the important survey we are conducting on behalf of Acas.

The survey is about the Workplace Training that your organisation commissioned from Acas. Acas want very much to understand if the training met your needs and how it has impacted on your workplace.

We would greatly appreciate it if you could spare around 15 minutes to complete this survey online via the link provided below.

[SURVEY LINK]

The survey is closing on Friday, 13th March. We hope that you will be able to help us.

The answers you give will be held in the strictest confidence by BMG. Acas will only receive anonymised data from us and it will not be possible to identify any individual person or organisation from the results. This is an Acas survey and you can read their privacy notice here: http://www.acas.org.uk/privacy. BMG's privacy notice can be read here: www.bmgresearch.co.uk/privacy. By clicking on the survey link you agree to participate in the survey.

If you would like any more information about the survey, or would prefer not to participate, please contact Emma Osborne, Associate Director at BMG Research on 0121 333 6006 or by email at emma.osborne@bmgresearch.co.uk.

Thank you for agreeing to participate.

Just to confirm, your responses will be treated in the strictest confidence. BMG Research abides by the Market Research Society Code of Conduct at all times.

You can find out more information about our surveys and what we do with the information we collect in our Privacy Notice which is here www.bmgresearch.co.uk/privacy

Click here to begin the survey XXX

11. Endnotes

[1] Where a call outcome was achieved which included: completed; appointments that were not met by prospective respondents or that were outside of the designated fieldwork period; and refusals

[2] Where a call outcome was achieved which included: completed; appointments that were not met by prospective respondents or that were outside of the designated fieldwork period; and refusals

[3] It should be noted that this was a top up sample and sent to contacts who had already proven to be hard to reach by telephone

[4] Although many respondents represent organisations that have commissioned multiple Workplace Training events from Acas, they were asked to focus on one in particular.

[5] Previously this information was taken from Acas management information, collected in line with the UK Standard Industrial Classification of Economic Activities 2003 – SIC 2003). In addition to this change to the format of the survey in this respect, this information, now given by respondents, is reported in line with the UK Standard Industrial Classification of Economic Activities 2007.

[6] The considerable differences between 2008 and 2013, and the extent to which 2019 percentages are in line with those in 2008, strongly suggests that in 2013 respondents were prompted with possible responses, so comparisons between 2008 and 2013 and 2013 and 2019 should be treated with caution.

[7] Significance testing is against the total (average) minus the sub-group tested

[8] Logistic regression is a mathematical model used in statistics to estimate (or guess) the probability of an event occurring based on previous data. Logistic regression works with binary data, where either the event happens (1) or the event does not happen (0). So given some feature x it tries to find out whether some event y happens or not. P*lease note, regression analysis can only measure associations, not causation.*

[9] The model only includes variables with a significant impact on satisfaction. Detail of other variables tested for their relationship with satisfaction is available in the Appendix

[10] Significant = p<= 0.0074; insignificant = p> 0.0074

[11] This is based on just six respondents

[12] Where a call outcome was achieved which included: completed; appointments that were not met by prospective respondents or that were outside of the designated fieldwork period; and refusals

[13] The increase in the number of call attempts compared with previously was significant and may have resulted in an increase in the number of complaints. The number of complaints received was not significant however, and we do not know how many complaints were received in 2008 and 2013.