

LSIS Practitioner Research Project Scheme 2009-10

Making strides towards Gender Equality in Leadership in the Learning and Skills Sector

**LSN
July 2011 (FINAL)**

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1.0 Introduction and Key Findings

In our national research undertaken a year ago, we identified a range of barriers that women face in their career progression. One important barrier was the lack of opportunities for flexible working for women and others with caring responsibilities.

The aim of this research project was to identify the nature and extent of specific barriers that prevent women and others with caring responsibilities from accessing flexible working arrangements. The methodology and findings are summarised in the following sections.

The key findings are outlined below according to focus areas:

Characteristics of sample

- The total number of responses received was 396, representing primarily female staff. Eleven (2.8%) responses were from male staff and for the purposes of this analysis, their responses have been included in the final sample.¹ The sample provided significant results with a margin of error of +/-5%.²
- Statistical differences were observed in some cases between the responses provided by staff in different job roles, staff of different ethnicity groups, staff of different ages and staff with different working arrangements. Statistically significant differences have been reported throughout the report and the corresponding figures (percentages and numbers) have been presented.
- Senior/middle management roles made up the largest occupation group in the sample (115 respondents, 29%), followed by Administrative/other staff (103 respondents, 26%) and Teachers/Tutors (79 respondents, 20%). A further 16% (62 respondents) were in Principal/Second-tier management roles, while 37 respondents (9%) were in First-line management roles.
- The largest proportion of respondents was aged 45–54, representing 42% of the total sample. The second and third largest cohorts of staff were aged 35–44 (24%) and 55-64 (20%).
- The vast majority of staff within the sample was from a white ethnic background (85%), while 13% of the sample was identified as being of a black and minority ethnic (BME) background.
- The majority of respondents were working in a General further education institutions (82%). A further 10% indicated they were working at a Sixth form college, with 5% at a specialist college (e.g. Agriculture, Arts, etc.).
- A large proportion of responses was received from respondents in organisations based in the East Midlands (23%), West Midlands (21%) and the South East (16%). Regions with the lowest proportion of respondents were the East of England (2%) and North East (2%).

¹ The responses between female and male respondents were checked for variations and the results showed that there were no significant differences observed between the genders.

² The margin of error for the sample is based on a 95% confidence level.

- Overall, three quarters of respondents were employed in full-time positions (76%). In regards to contract type, approximately 88% of respondents are on permanent contracts, representing the most common contract type across the sample.
- Thirty-six per cent of all respondents have had no breaks in their careers. Over 20% indicated that they have had a career break which lasted between 6 and 12 months (21%).

Flexible working requests

- Sixty-five per cent (256 respondents) indicated that they had never requested a change to a more flexible working arrangement, while 35% (140 respondents) indicated that they had.
- Principals/second-tier management staff were less likely to have requested a change to a more flexible working arrangement compared to staff in other positions such as senior/middle management staff and teachers/tutors. Approximately 89% (55 respondents) of principals/second-tier management staff had never requested change compared to 63% (73 respondents) of senior/middle managers and 62%, (49 respondents) of teachers and tutors.
- Across the different job roles, staff in administrative/other positions and to a lesser extent, first-line managers were more likely to have applied for more flexible working arrangements than staff in those job roles already mentioned.
- From the 140 respondents that had requested flexible working arrangements at one point in their career, 77% (109 respondents) indicated that their request had been granted, with the remaining 22% (31 respondents) stating that it had been refused. The main reason cited for refusals was that it would have a detrimental effect on the ability to meet learner demand and/or organisation demand.
- In terms of the process for requesting flexible working arrangements, almost a quarter of responses provided showed that individuals had a less than satisfactory experience of the procedure with 8% indicating they had to chase up for a response, 8% stating they were given no clear explanation and 7% stating their response was slow.
- The most common forms of working on flexible arrangements were part-time working flexitime and compressed working hours.

Personal experiences of flexible working arrangements

- Further analysis on the 109 respondents that had their request granted revealed that 51 respondents (47%) were currently employed on flexible working arrangements. Just over half (53%, 58 respondents) stated they had worked on flexible working arrangements in the past but were not currently working under these arrangements.
- The majority of respondents in the sample that had changed to a more flexible working arrangement did not change in graded position. A total of 90% (46 respondents) currently on flexible working arrangements and 92% (33 respondents) previously on such arrangements indicated that there was or had been no change in their graded position.

Perceived attitudes of colleagues

- Overall, the vast majority of respondents indicated that they witnessed no noticeable changes in the attitudes of their colleagues towards them. In most cases colleagues across different teams and graded positions were found to be more supportive than they were negative.
- Over 88% of staff currently on flexible working arrangements and 97% of staff who have worked on these arrangements in the past stated that they felt there was no change or a positive change in the attitudes of staff in their teams.

Senior and middle management and flexible working

- Overall, the 'risk of communication problems arising within the manager's team' emerged as the key concern likely to influence decisions made by line managers regarding approving requests made by staff in middle and senior management roles (18% of total responses). The 'feasibility of reorganising the work among other staff' (14% of total responses) and the 'possible need for additional resources to maintain service/output' (13% of responses) were also cited as main reasons for line managers not to approve flexible working for staff in management positions.

Organisational policy

- Across all roles, the majority of respondents indicated that offering flexible working arrangements was feasible to some extent or to a large extent. In the case of administrative/other staff, nearly 99% (389) of respondents indicated that it was feasible to some or to a large extent for staff in these roles to be offered flexible working.
- Approximately 37% (145) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the organisation's HR policies and procedures favour flexible working arrangements compared with 27% (105) who disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- Just over a third indicated that there is a lack of consistency in the way requests are managed: 25% (97) and 11% (45) agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.
- Nearly 38% (146) agreed or strongly agreed that the "right to request" procedure was objective in their organisation compared to 25% (55) that disagreed or strongly disagreed with this.
- Opinions over whether flexible workers are penalised when it came to rewards, learning and development, and promotion opportunities were mixed. Over a quarter (105) disagreed with the statement; exactly a third (130) neither agreed nor disagreed, while 24% (96) agreed.

Access to flexible working

- 23% (90 respondents) and 41% (161 respondents) of the sample indicated that they felt there was currently little or no access, or limited access to flexible working for women in middle and senior leadership roles. This was noticeably higher than the 19% (76 respondents) that felt there was sufficient access to support them.
- While 31% (122) of respondents felt that women from a BME background with caring responsibilities had sufficient access to receive the kind of support they needed, 43% (170) indicated they felt they had little or no access or limited access. Over a quarter (101) of respondents indicated that they were not sure on the

level of opportunities available regarding access to flexible working arrangements for BME women with caring responsibilities.

- Nearly half of the sample (49%, 195 respondents) indicated they felt there was limited access to flexible working for women in general with caring responsibilities, with a further 6% (23 respondents) stating they felt there was little or no access.

Overall opinion of the FE sector and flexible working

- 32% (126 respondents) agreed that the FE sector offered a positive working environment which supported flexible working, with an additional 2% (9 respondents) strongly agreeing to it. Just over a third of respondents (36%, 141 respondents) indicated they neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement, taking a neutral position. Approximately a quarter of respondents (25%, 100 respondents) disagreed and felt that the FE sector did not offer a positive working environment.
- Principals/second-tier managers were more likely to agree and indicated that the FE sector does offer a positive working environment for supporting flexible working compared to individuals in other job roles such as senior/middle managers, first-line managers, teachers and tutors and administration staff.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 National survey

Questionnaire design and distribution

The online survey was facilitated by LSN's Statistical Analysis and Survey Unit. Snap Professional survey software was used to programme the online survey and generate a URL link which was dispatched primarily to female staff members at all grades in the learning and skills sector. A copy of the online survey is available at **Appendix A**.

Using LSN's Client Information Management Systems (CIMS) database and records held by the Network of Black Professionals (NBP) for college people, the distribution list for this survey was made up of over 5,000 records.

The survey was piloted and officially launched on the 15 February 2011. The survey was closed on 14 March 2011. In order to maximise the distribution of the survey, participants were asked to forward the survey to between 5 and 10 female colleagues in their institution so a broad range of views could be captured.

While the survey was live, responses were closely monitored to ensure that a sufficient response rate was achieved. A week prior to the closing date of the survey, a final email reminder containing the original link to the survey was sent out in order to obtain an optimum number of responses.

The online survey, designed by the project team with partners, included a combination of tick box, multi-choice, ranking and text box questions. It was piloted with a small number of respondents to ensure the questions were reader-friendly and that they gathered appropriate data to support the project objectives. The questionnaire was structured into three main sections, namely:

- Section 1. Your personal experience of opportunities for flexible working arrangements
- Section 2. Your view of flexible working, your organisation's policy and approach, your perceptions of the sector's attitudes
- Section 3. About you

Data analysis

Data checks were carried out on the responses submitted for quality assurance purposes. Duplicate cases were removed and individual responses were checked to ensure that responses were sufficiently completed. After checking the data for quality assurance purposes, a total of **396** valid responses were collected. The survey data tables are available at **Appendix B**.

The responses were collated and analysed using SPSS and Excel. The majority of questions within the survey were single or multiple choice questions. There was also a number of open ended questions. Open ended questions were grouped into themes to identify key points. Themes have been outlined and summarised throughout the report and are supported with relevant quotes.

The structure of the analysis presented in this report is based on the structure of the original questionnaire. An overview of the results for all questions is provided and further breakdowns were carried out to examine results according to four key factors:

- Ethnicity;
- Age;
- Job title;
- Flexible Working status (never employed on flexible working arrangement(s) vs. Currently/previously employed on flexible working arrangement(s))

Regarding the importance of the last factor, where possible the data was explored to determine any differences in the nature of responses made by staff members currently on a flexible working arrangement (including those that had done so in the past), and those who have never had flexible working arrangements.

Statistical differences were observed in some cases between staff in different roles, staff of different ethnicity groups, staff of different ages and staff with different working arrangements. These have been highlighted throughout the report. Examples of tests used include the one-way ANOVA procedure, Chi-Square tests and The Independent-Samples T Test. The One-Way ANOVA procedure produces a one-way analysis of variance for a quantitative dependent variable by a single factor (independent) variable. Analysis of variance is used to test the hypothesis that several means are equal and is an extension of the two-sample t test. The Chi-Square Test procedure tabulates a variable into categories and tests the hypothesis that the observed frequencies do not differ from their expected values. The Independent-Samples T Test procedure tests the significance of the difference between two sample means by looking at the differences between scores for two groups, and judging the difference between their means relative to the spread or variability of their scores.

In order to generate results based on substantive sample numbers, the variables 'Job role', 'Ethnicity' and 'Age' were re-coded for the purpose of conducting further analysis, as follows:

Table 1: Recoding of variable 'Job role'

Recoded categories	Original categories
Principal/second-tier management	Principal/ Chief Executive
	Second-tier management (e.g. Vice Principal, Director)
Senior/middle management	Other senior management
	Middle manager
First-line management	First line manager
Teacher/tutor	Teacher/Tutor/Trainer/Lecturer
Administrative/other	Administrative/ other non-teaching staff
	Other

Table 2: Recoding of variable 'Ethnicity'

Recoded categories	Original categories
White	White
	Black or black British
Black and minority ethnic (BME)	Asian or Asian British
	Dual heritage
	Chinese
	Other Ethnic Group

Note: Due to the small proportion of respondents who were represented by the BME group, percentages presented for this category must be treated with caution as the overall number of BME respondents was considerably lower than respondents of the white ethnic group.

Table 3: Recoding of variable 'Age'

Recoded categories	Original categories
Under 45	Under 25
	25-34
	35-44
45+	45-54
	55-64
	65+

3.0 Samples

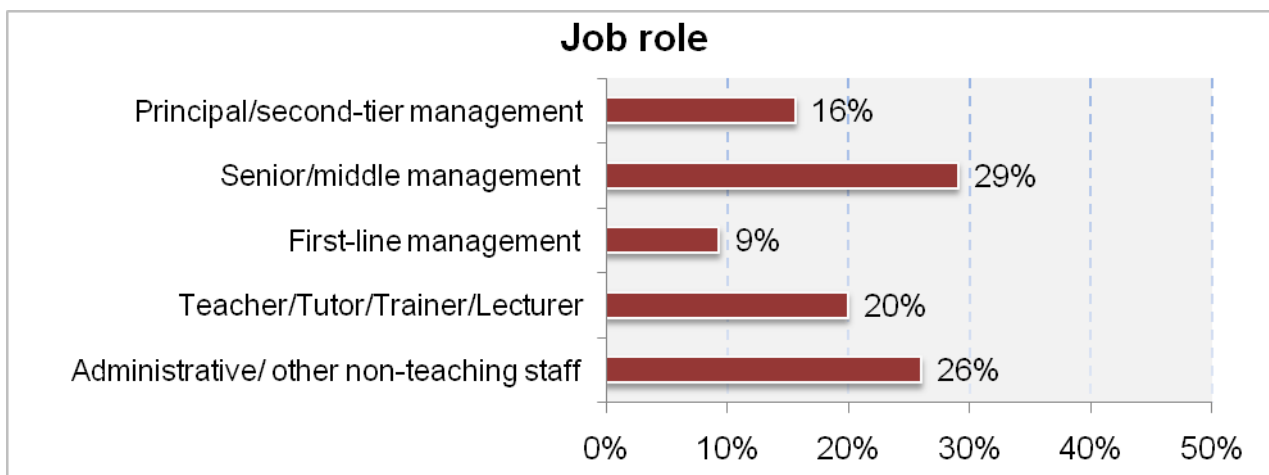
3.1 Survey sample (Findings from the *About You* section)

The total number of responses received was **396**, representing primarily female staff. Eleven (3%) responses were from male staff and for the purposes of this analysis, their responses have been included in the final sample.³ The sample provided significant results with a margin of error of +/- 5%.⁴

The profile of the survey sample is provided below.

Role

Senior/middle management roles made up the largest occupation group in the sample (115 respondents, 29%), followed by Administrative/other staff (103 respondents, 26%) and Teachers/Tutors (79 respondents, 20%). A further 16% (62 respondents) were in Principal/second-tier management roles, while 37 respondents (9%) were in First-line management roles.



Sample size = 396

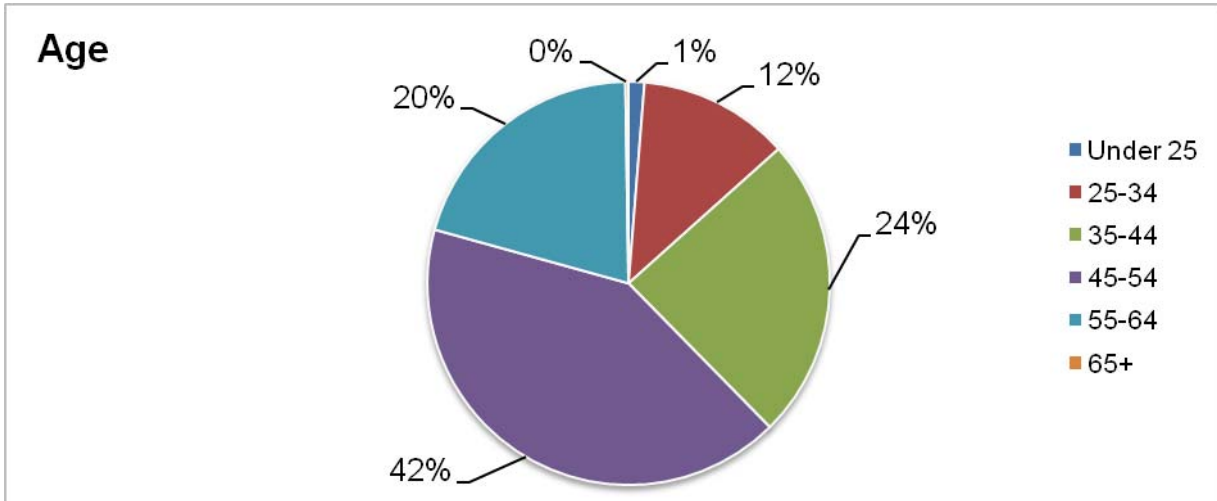
Age

The largest proportion of respondents were aged 45–54, representing 42% of the total sample. The second and third largest cohorts of staff were aged 35–44 (24%) and 55-64 (20%).

Further analysis of age across job roles showed that the entire Principal/Second-tier management population were found to be over the age of 45 (45-65+). In all other job categories, apart from Administrative/ other non teaching staff, a higher proportion of staff was found to be over the age of 45.

³ The responses between female and male respondents were checked for variations and the results showed that there were no significant different observed between the genders.

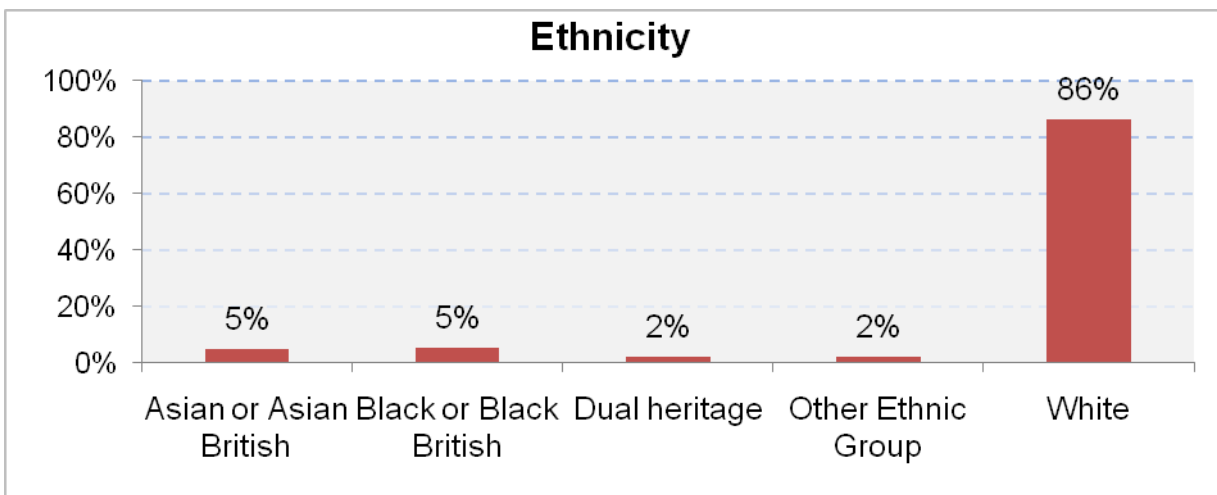
⁴ The margin of error for the sample is based on a 95% confidence level.



Sample size = 396

Ethnic group

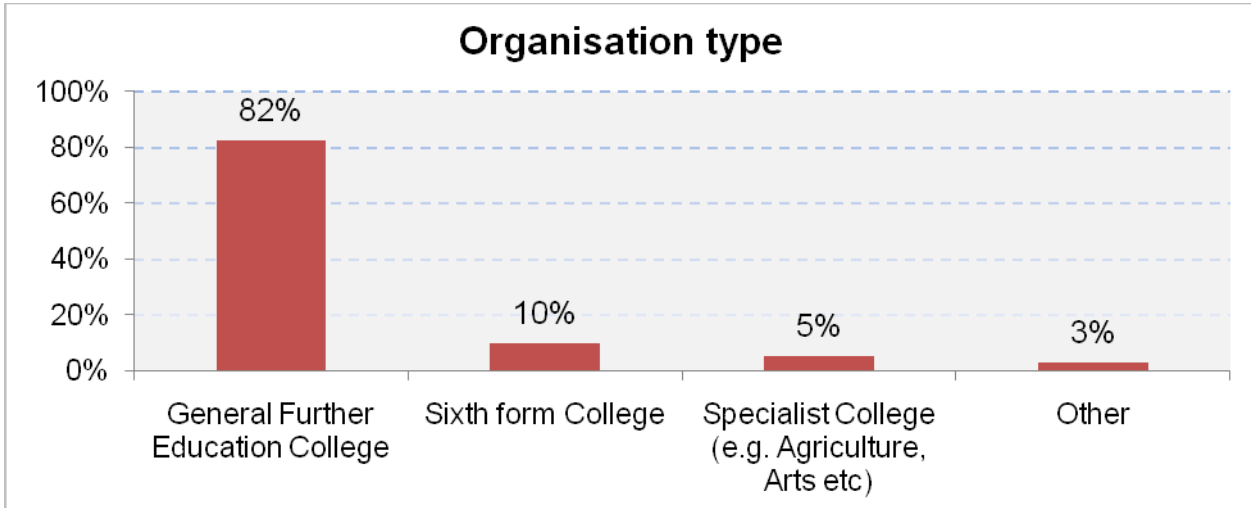
The vast majority of staff within the sample were from a white ethnic background (85%), while 13% of the sample was identified as being of a black and minority ethnic (BME) background. A further breakdown of the BME groups indicated that 5% were black or black British, and 4% were Asian or Asian British. Two per cent of respondents were dual heritage while 1% of respondents declared themselves to be of an 'other' ethnic background. Further information on this was limited to just two responses.



Sample size = 396

Organisation of employment

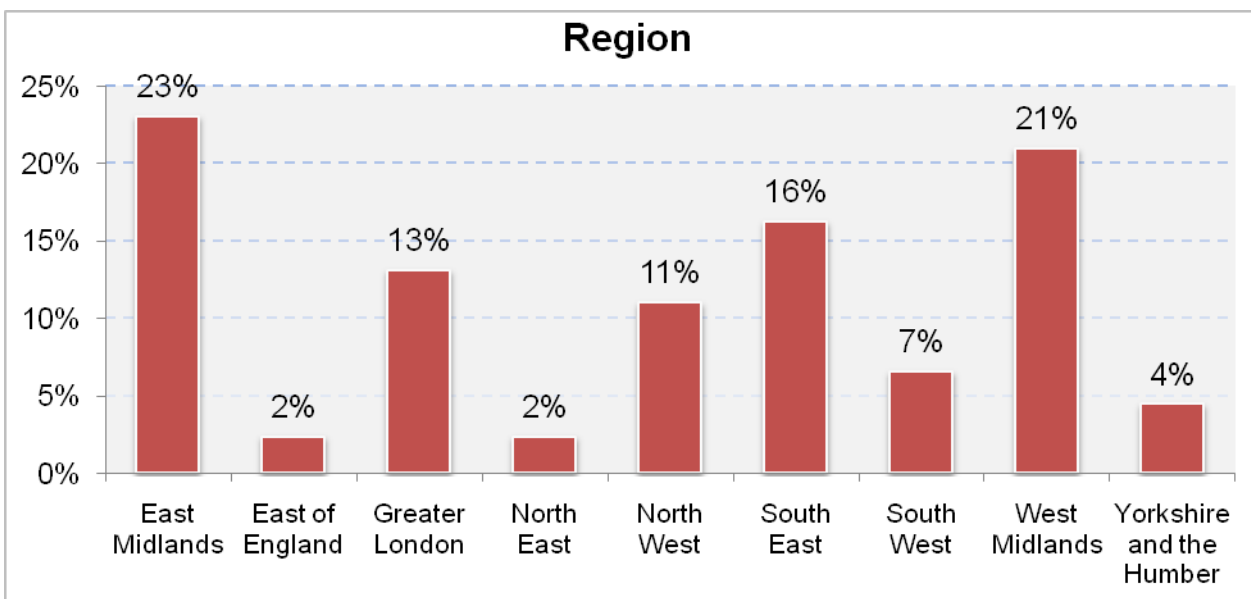
The majority of respondents were working in a General further education institutions (82%). A further 10% indicated they were working at a Sixth form college, with 5% at a specialist college (e.g. Agriculture, Arts, etc.) and 3% at an organisation classed as other.



Sample size = 387

Region

A large proportion of responses were received from respondents in organisations based in the East Midlands (23%), West Midlands (21%) and the South East (16%). Regions with the lowest proportion of respondents were the East of England (2%) and North East (2%).



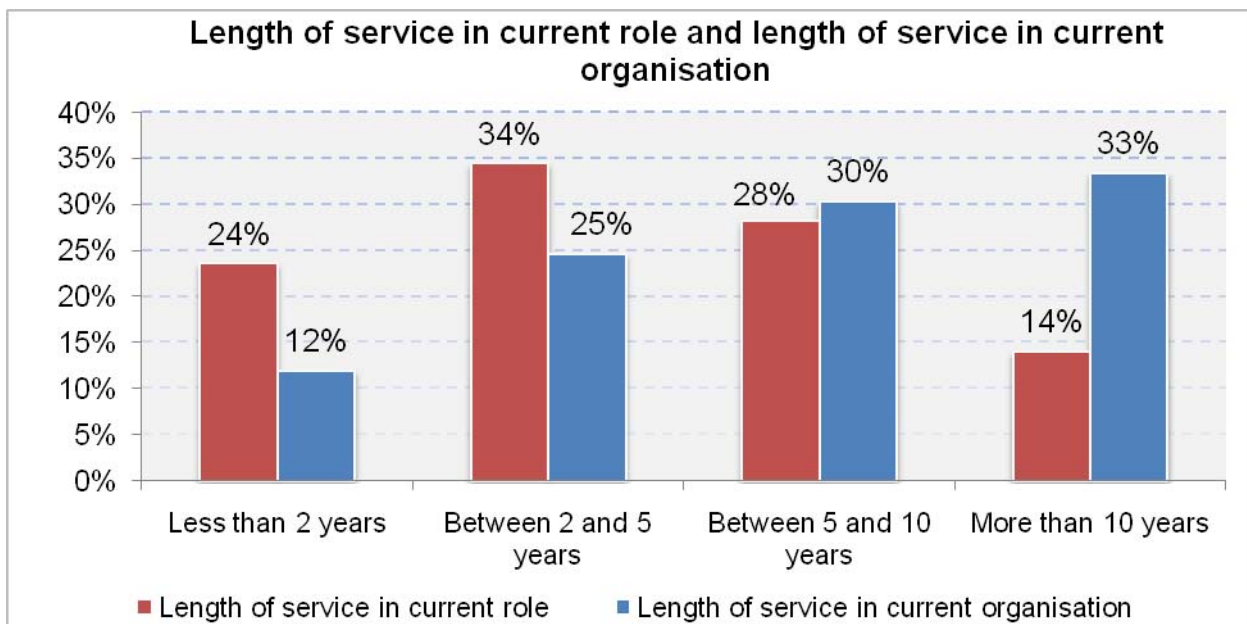
Sample size = 382

Length of time in current role and current organisation

Respondents were asked to indicate how long they had been in their role. Over a third of respondents were found to have been in their current role between 2 and 5 years. The key findings can be summarised as follows:

- Less than 2 years (23%, 91 respondents);
- Between 2 and 5 years (34%, 133 respondents);

- Between 5 and 10 years (28%, 108 respondents);
- More than 10 years (14%, 54 respondents);



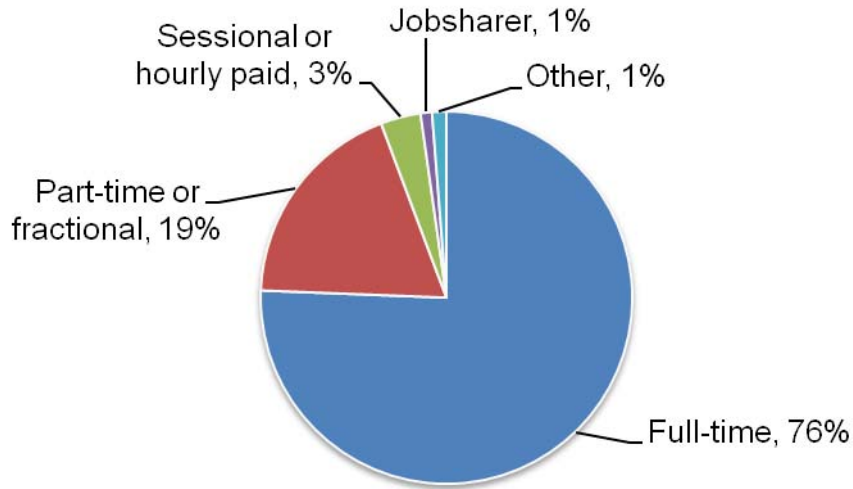
Sample size = 387

Mode of employment and contract type

Overall, the vast majority of respondents are employed in full-time positions (76%). In regards to contract type, approximately 88% of respondents are on permanent contracts, representing the most common contract type across the sample.

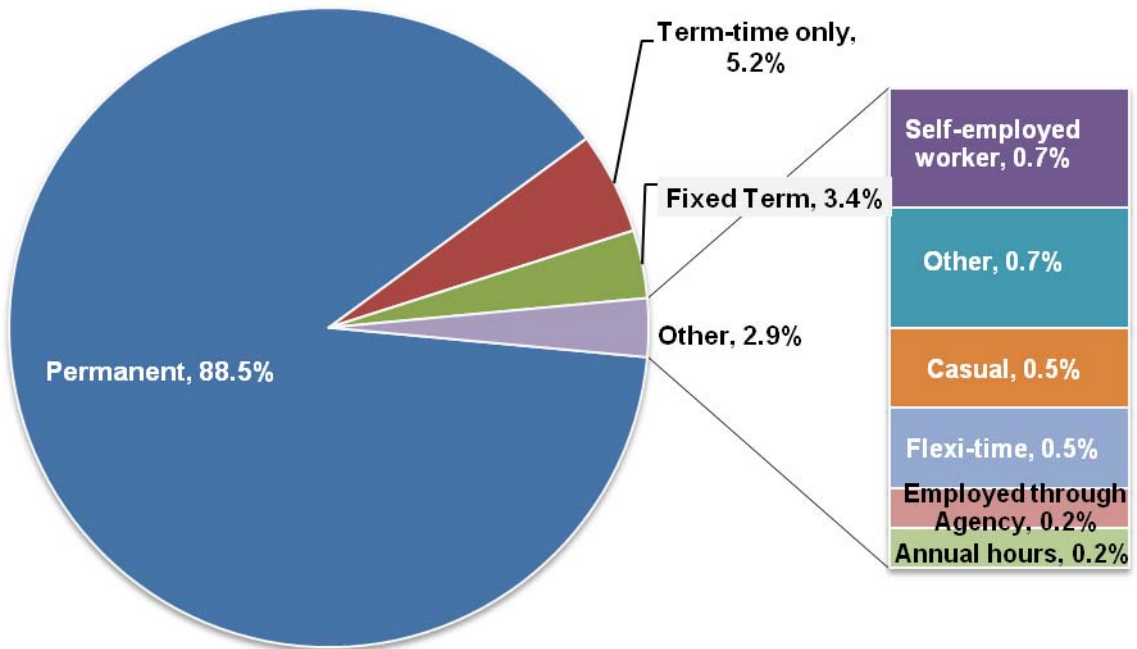
A significant relationship was found between mode of employment and job roles. Further analysis using the recoded job role variable revealed that it was more common for Principal/senior managers, Middle Managers and First-line Managers to be working full-time (95%, 97% and 97% respectively) in comparison with Administrative/other and Teachers/tutors where there was a higher proportion working part-time (63% and 38% respectively).

Current employment status



Note: Question was multi-choice therefore respondents had the option of selecting more than one response. Percentages are based on the total number of responses selected.

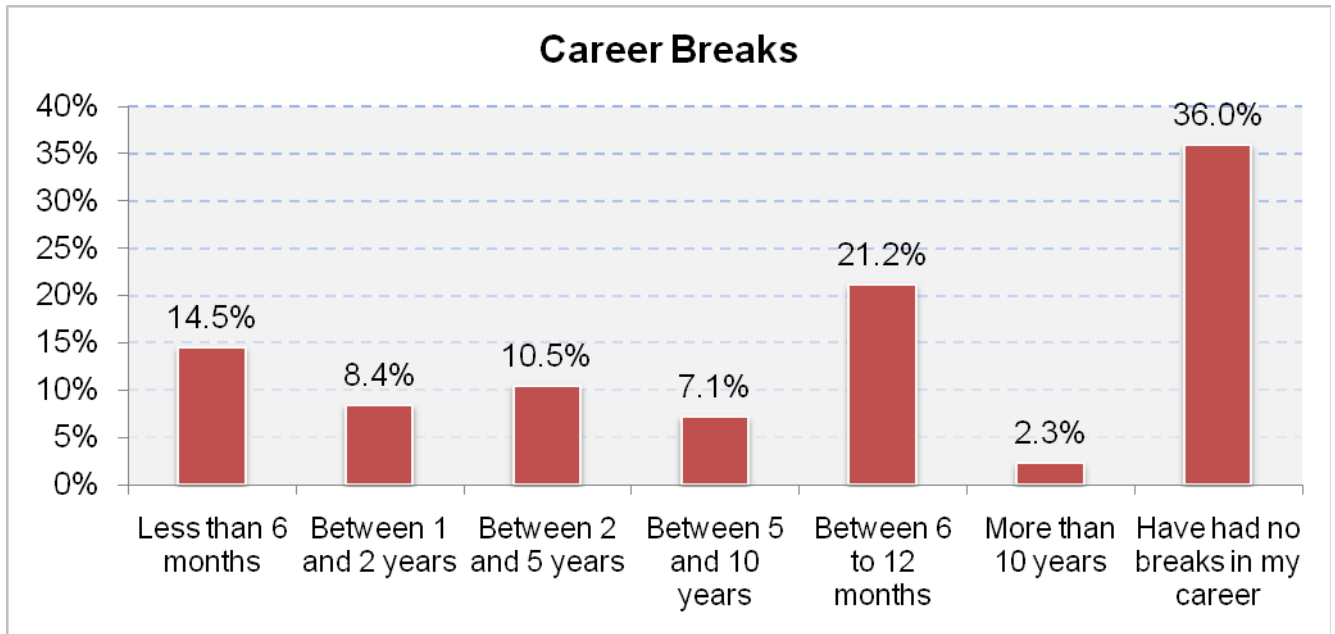
Contract type



Note: Question was multi-choice therefore respondents had the option of selecting more than one response. Percentages are based on the total number of responses selected.

Career breaks

Overall, 36% of the total number of respondents had had no breaks in their career. Over 20% indicated that they had had a career break which lasted between 6 to 12 months (21%).



Sample size = 392

Caring responsibilities

In the sample, 75% of respondents (297) indicated that they currently have or have had in the past, caring responsibilities for a child, children or other person. A quarter (equivalent to 99 respondents) did not have and have never had in the past, caring responsibilities. The majority of respondents who have or have had caring responsibilities usually looked after one or two children/individuals. From the 46% that did, a large proportion indicated that they have carrying responsibilities for 1 child or other person.

The profile of the survey sample is illustrated below.

4.0 Research Findings

The structure of the analysis presented in this report is based on the structure of the original questionnaire. An overview of the results for all questions is provided and further breakdowns were carried out to examine results according to four key demographic factors:

- Ethnicity;
- Age;
- Job roles;
- Flexible Working status: Never employed on flexible working arrangement(s)/ Currently/previously employed on flexible working arrangement(s).

Where notable statistical differences exist between staff in different roles, staff of different ethnicity groups, staff of different ages and staff with different working arrangements, findings have been reported on in additional sections headed 'further analysis'.

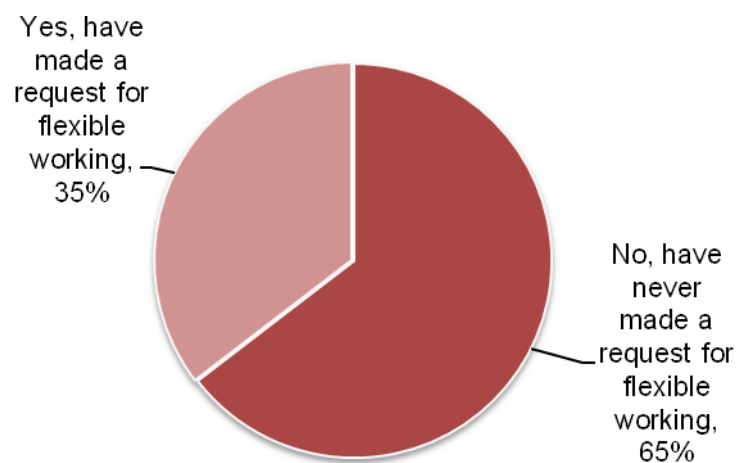
4.1 Views and experiences of flexible working arrangements

Section 1 of the questionnaire asked respondents for their views and experiences of flexible working practices. Respondents were given the opportunity to share whether they had ever requested a flexible working arrangement, and if so, what their experience had been. Respondents were also asked to provide their personal views and experiences of what such a change had meant for their careers.

4.1.1 Requests made for a change to a more flexible working arrangement

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they had ever requested flexible working arrangement(s). 65% (256 respondents) indicated that they had never requested a change to a more flexible working arrangement, while 35.4% (140 respondents) indicated that they had.

Figure 1: Total proportion of staff that have/have not made a request for flexible working



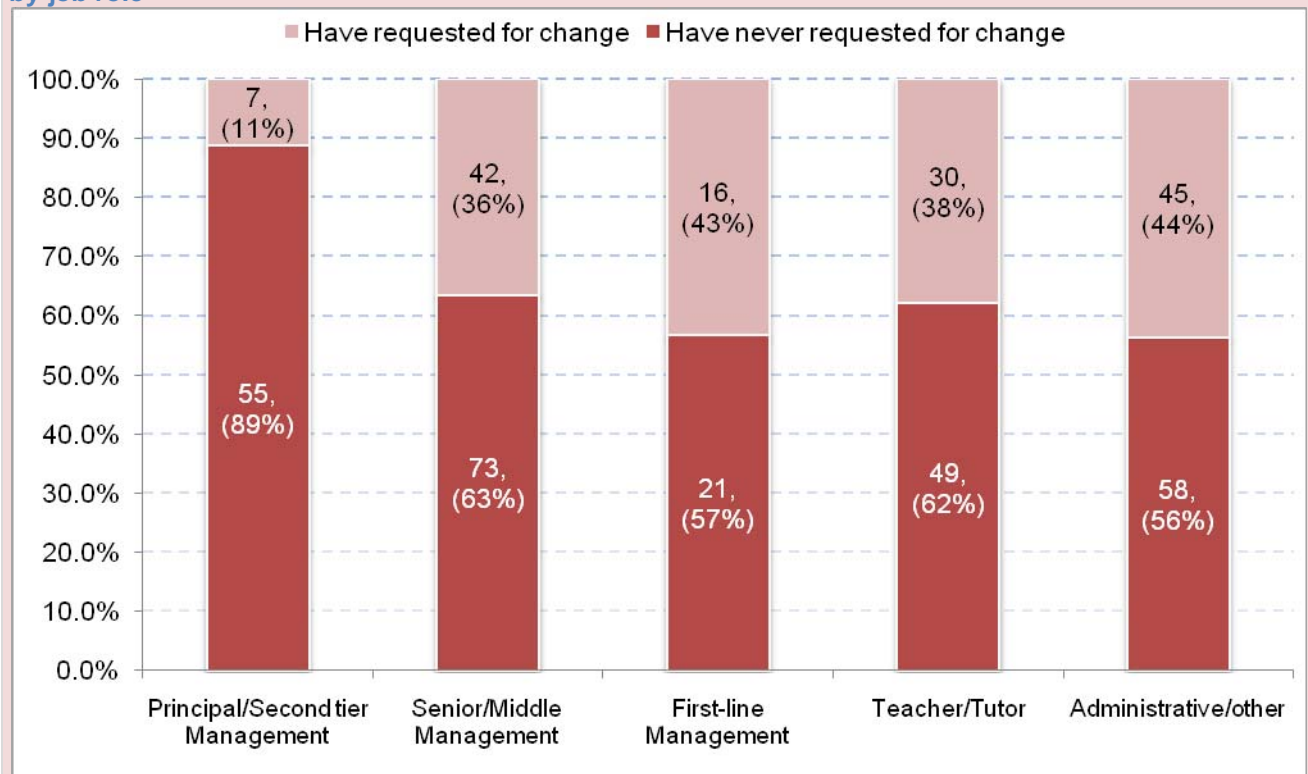
The results above were tested to determine whether there were any significant differences in the responses of individuals according to job role, ethnicity, age and the respondent's flexible working status (i.e. they were currently or had worked on a flexible working arrangement compared to those who had never worked on a flexible working arrangement). Significant differences were observed across respondents of different job roles. The specific differences observed are outlined below.

Further analysis by job roles

A Chi-Square Test was run to test the hypothesis that the observed frequencies did not differ from their expected values. A significant difference (e.g. sig. was less than 0.05) was observed between staff in different job roles and whether respondents' had ever requested a change to a more flexible working arrangement (sig. 0.00).

The vast majority of principals/second-tier management staff in the sample (89%, 55 respondents) had never requested for a change to a more flexible working arrangement and were therefore less likely to have requested flexible working arrangements compared to senior/middle management staff (63%, 73 respondents had never requested for flexible working) and teachers/tutors (62%, 49 respondents had never requested for flexible working). Across the different job roles, staff in administrative/other positions and to a lesser extent, first-line managers were more likely to *have* applied for more flexible working arrangements than staff in those job roles already mentioned (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Total number and proportion of staff that have/have not made a request for flexible working by job role



Note: Further analyses have only been reported on where a significant relationship between variables was observed. No differences were found to exist in the responses provided by staff of different ethnicity groups, staff of different ages and staff with different working status experience therefore they have not been reported below.

4.1.2 Experiences of the response procedure following the request(s)

From the 140 respondents that had requested flexible working arrangements at one point in their career, 77% (109 respondents) indicated that their request had been granted, with the remaining 22% (31 respondents) stating that it hadn't been granted. Those with direct experience of the formal request procedure were given the opportunity to provide further insight into the outcomes of this process. This was a multiple choice question where respondents were asked to select up to seven options. In total, 189 responses were recorded for this particular question. Feedback from three quarters of responses provided (74%) showed that the experience of this process had been somewhat positive, with feedback on the status of their request seemingly being received in a timely and efficient manner (i.e. prompt response, clear and straightforward procedure, and clear explanations). On the other hand, almost a quarter of responses provided showed that individuals had had a less than satisfactory experience of the procedure with 8% indicating they had to chase up for a response, 8% stating they were given no clear explanation and 7% stating their response was slow.

Table 4: Experience of response procedure to request – Numbers and percentages

	No.	%
Prompt response	63	33%
Clear, straightforward procedure	56	30%
Clear explanation of reasons for response	22	12%
Slow response	13	7%
Had to chase up for response	16	8%
No clear explanations offered	15	8%
Other	4	2%
Total	189	100%

Note: Question was multi-choice therefore respondents had the option of selecting more than one response. Percentages are based on the total number of responses selected.

4.1.3 Requests refused

Those that indicated that they had had their request refused (31 respondents) were asked for further insight into the reasons behind their request refusal. This was a multiple choice question where respondents were able to select more than one of the eleven options listed. The following percentages are therefore based on the total number of responses (n=39):

- A large number of respondents indicated that the main reason they had been given for the refusal of their request was that it would have a detrimental effect on the ability to meet learner demand and/or organisation demand (23%).

- Interestingly, 18% of responses showed that in fact no reason had been given for the refusal of a request.
- 20% indicated 'other' reasons and further information about what that entailed is outlined in Table 6. Such responses also provide further insight into the key concerns that may underline a decision to refuse a request. Interestingly, some of the key issues related to staff availability.

Table 5: Reasons for refusal – Numbers and percentages

	No.	%
Detrimental effect on ability to meet learner demand and/or organisation demand	9	23%
Other	8	20%
No reason given	7	18%
Inability to reorganise work among existing staff	6	15%
Detrimental impact on quality	3	8%
Inability to recruit additional staff	2	5%
Detrimental impact on your performance	2	5%
Insufficiency of work during the periods the employee proposes to work	2	5%
Total	39	100%

Note: Question was multi-choice therefore respondents had the option of selecting more than one response. Percentages are based on the total number of responses selected.

Table 6: Reasons for refusal – 'other' literal responses by job title and age

Job title:	Age	If 'Other', please specify in the space provided below
Middle Manager	45-54	It would set a precedence for others which would then cause organisational problems
Middle Manager	45-54	As a manager it was deemed that I had to be available on a daily basis
Administrative/ other non-teaching staff	45-54	I was told that if my request was granted it could make other people ask for different hours.
Teacher/Tutor/Trainer/Lecturer	25-34	Not possible within the structure of our sector
Administrative/ other non-teaching staff	45-54	Manager status and need to be on site core hours even though staff reporting to me work from 07:30 to 23:00

Following the refusal of their request, over half of respondents (55%, 17 respondents), indicated that they accepted the decision and continued with the current arrangements. Eight respondents (26%) indicated that they either decided to seek an appeal or decided to change aspects of their job role.

Impact of refusal

Respondents were asked to describe the impact that the refusal of their request had had on various aspects of their personal and professional life. Overall, the refusal of such requests was seen to impact on all spheres of respondent's lives (see Table 7).

Regarding the impact of the decision on respondents personally, all respondents indicated that the decision had had either some or a significant impact on them. The same was true of the impact on their family; just over half (55%, 17 respondents) indicated that the decision had had a significant impact on their family with an additional 45% (14 respondents) indicating that it had had some impact on their family. Just under half (47%, 14 respondents) indicated that the decision had had a significant impact on their career and 27% (8 respondents) stated it had had some impact on their career.

Table 7: Impact of refusal – Numbers and percentages

	No impact		Some impact		Significant impact		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
You, on a personal level	0	0%	12	39%	19	61%	31	100%
Your family	0	0%	14	45%	17	55%	31	100%
Your career	8	27%	8	27%	14	47%	30	100%
Other	4	50%	0	0%	4	50%	8	100%

4.1.4 Requests accepted

Out of the initial 140 respondents that indicated that they had made a request at some point in their career for more flexible working arrangement(s), a total of 109 respondents (78%) indicated that their request had been accepted. When the 109 respondents were asked to indicate whether they had made a request on more than one occasion, the vast majority indicated they had only made a request on the one occasion (80 respondents, 73%).

4.1.5 Personal experiences of flexible working arrangements

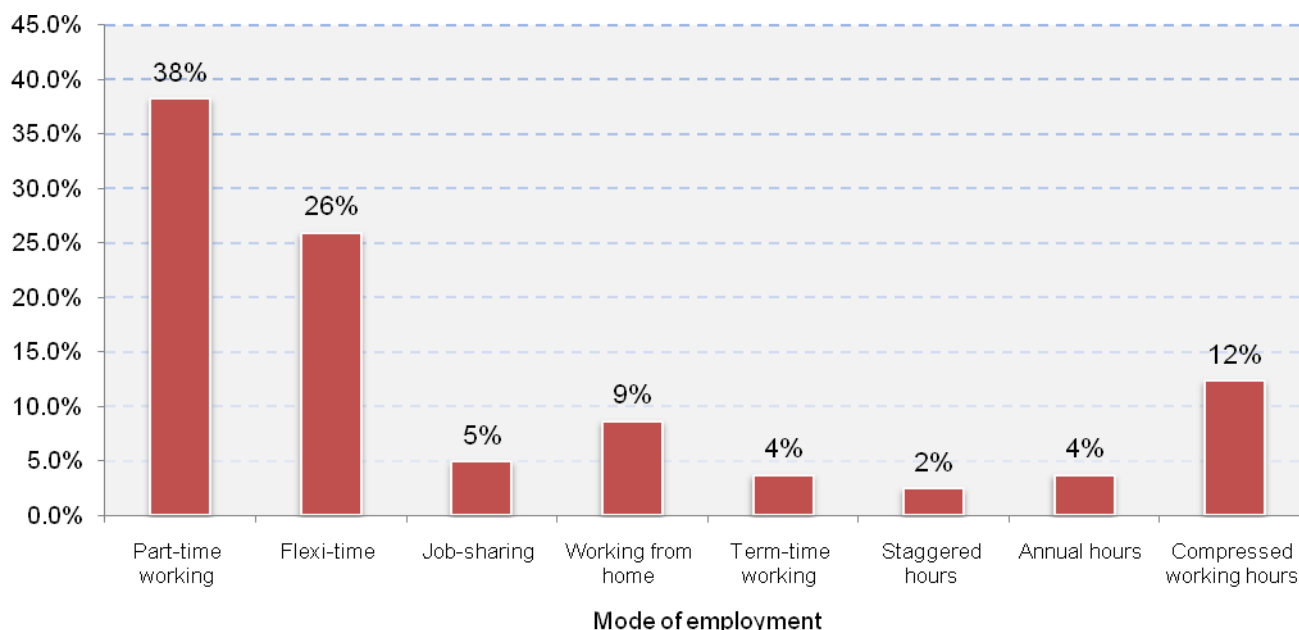
Further analysis on the 109 respondents that had their request granted revealed that 51 respondents (47%) were currently employed on flexible working arrangements. Just over half (53%, 58 respondents) stated they had worked on flexible working arrangements in the past but were not currently working under these arrangements.

Modes of employment

Those that indicated that they are currently on flexible working arrangements were asked for details about their current employment arrangements. This was a multiple choice question where respondents were asked to select from a list (see Figure 3). In total 81 responses were recorded for this particular question. The most common modes of employment included:

- Part-time working; generally considered as being contracted to work for anything less than full-time hours (38%);
- Flexitime; allows employees to choose, within certain set limits, when to begin and end work (26%);
- Compressed working hours; employees work their total agreed hours over fewer working days (12%).

Figure 3: Total proportion of staff currently on flexible working by current employment arrangements



Length of time employed on current arrangement

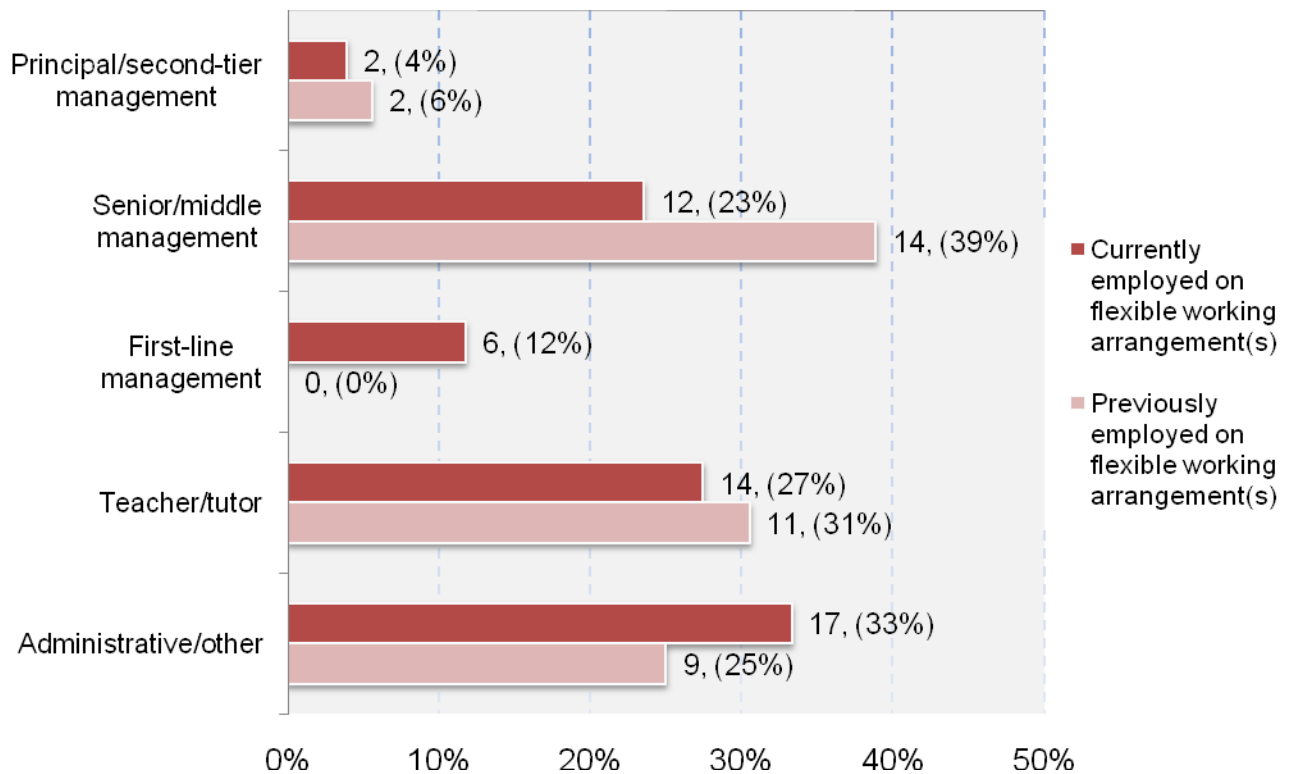
The responses to the question about the length of time that respondents have been employed on their current flexible working arrangements can be summarised as follows:

- Less than 6 months (16%, 8 respondents)
- Between 6 months to 2 years (27%, 14 respondents)
- Between 2 to 5 years (27%, 14 respondents)
- 5 years + (29%, 15 respondents)

Job status during period of flexible working

Figure 4 provides a profile of the survey sample in terms of the job role of respondents when they were (or currently are) working on a flexible arrangement. Overall, the highest proportion of staff working on flexible working arrangements were either teachers/tutors or staff in administrative/other positions. 28% of staff (14 respondents) currently employed on flexible arrangements were teachers or tutors and just over 30% of staff (11 respondents) who had worked on flexible working arrangements in the past were also teachers or tutors.

Figure 4: Total proportion of staff by current/previous flexible working status – Numbers and percentages



Impact of moving to flexible working arrangements

The majority of respondents in the sample, changing to a more flexible working arrangement did not change in graded position. A total of 90% (46 respondents) currently on flexible working arrangements and 92% (33 respondents) previously on such arrangements indicated that there was/had been no change in their position and/or salary.

Over three-quarters of respondents (78%, 40 respondents) currently on such arrangements, compared to 75% of respondents (27 respondents) from the other cohort of staff who had worked on flexible working arrangements in the past indicated that the requested working arrangements were/had been exactly what they'd requested. A further 14% of respondents (7 respondents) currently on such arrangement, and 17% (6 respondents) of those who had been so previously, found that the requested working arrangements were actually more flexible than those originally requested.

4.2 Attitudes and perceptions of colleagues and career progression

Respondents were asked a number of different questions related to measuring the perceived attitudinal changes of their colleagues when they moved to working on flexible working arrangements, as well as a range of other changes related to career progression. The results are summarised in this next section.

4.2.1 Perceived attitudes of colleagues

Respondents previously employed on flexible working arrangements, as well as those currently on such arrangements were asked to rate the extent to which their decision to work more flexibly had resulted in a noticeable change in the attitudes of their colleagues towards them. Respondents were asked to rate the perceived attitudinal changes of their colleagues, in terms of how they differed across:

- Staff in the team they are/were part of
- Staff in the team they manage/d (if applicable)
- Their Line Manager
- Staff in their department
- Other Managers
- Others

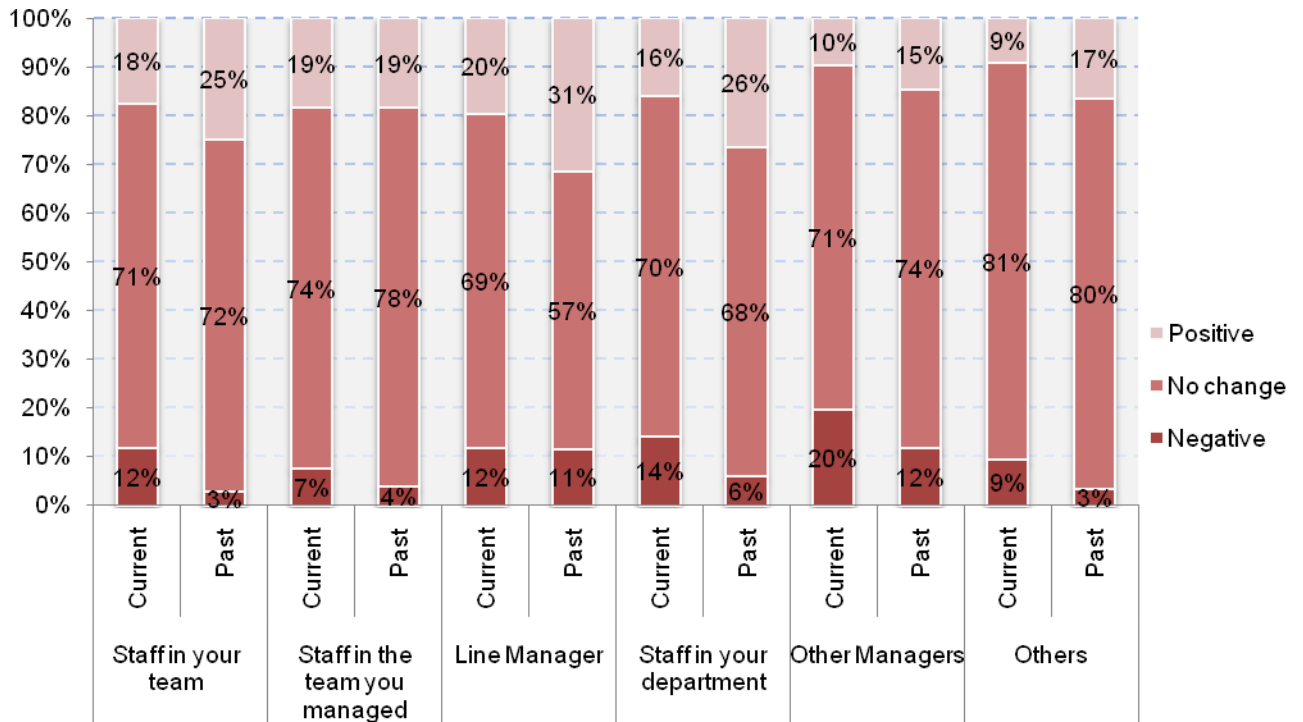
Respondents were asked to select one option per row and rate each from 'Very unfavourable' to 'Very favourable'.

Key trends observed across the sample showed that (see Figure 5):

- Overall the vast majority of respondents indicated that they witnessed no noticeable changes in the attitudes of their colleagues towards them. In most cases colleagues across different teams and graded positions were found to be more supportive than they were negative.
- In terms of negative perspectives, 'Other Managers' were flagged as having the most negative attitude to respondents who are employed (or were employed) on flexible working arrangements. Approximately 20% of respondents currently on flexible working arrangements and 12% of those who had worked on flexible arrangements in the past felt that the attitude of 'Other Managers' had been noticeably negative in light of changes to their working arrangements.
- The lowest incidence of negativity observed across the staff groups was from staff in the teams that respondent's managed; only 7% of respondents currently on flexible working arrangement and 4% of staff who had worked flexibly in the past had witnessed a noticeable negative attitudinal change from this group. Instead, over 88% of staff currently on flexible working arrangements and 97% of staff who have worked on these arrangements in the past stated that they felt there was no change or a positive change in the attitudes of staff in their teams.

- A relatively high proportion of positivity was measured in the attitudes of individual's line managers. 20% of respondents currently on flexible working arrangements and 31% of staff who had worked on flexible working arrangements in the past felt that the attitude of their line manager had been noticeably positive since changing to more flexible working arrangement(s). This was the highest incidence of perceived positivity recorded across the different staff groups in this sample.

Figure 5: Attitudinal changes in colleagues perceived by those staff currently in flexible working arrangements (labelled *Current*) and those that have worked on flexible working arrangements in the past (labelled *Past*) - Percentages



Note: The average sample size percentages are based on for those currently on flexible working arrangements was 51. The average sample size percentages are based on for those who have working on flexible working arrangements was 35.

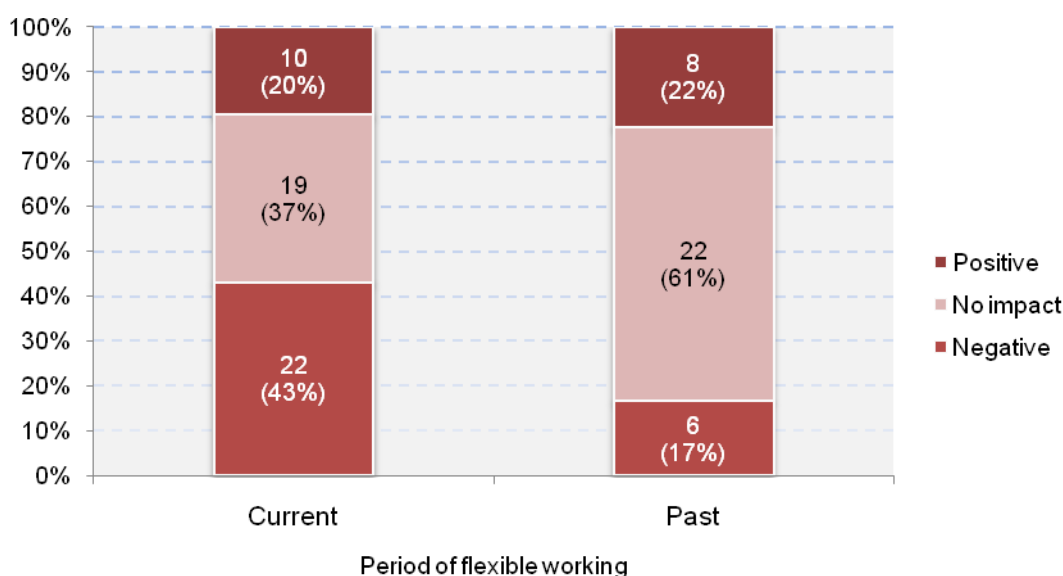
4.2.2 Impact on career progression

Evidence from the survey suggests that a common concern for those considering a change to more flexible working is the negative consequences that it can potentially have on their career. This is the anxiety that flexible working can negatively impact/impede on career progression (i.e. promotion opportunities), due to worries that family friendly policies can disadvantage your career in the long term. The concern is that you are seen as not being committed to the organisation if you take them up.

Respondents were asked to rate the impact that their flexible working arrangement has had on their career progression prospects. The main points were (see Figure 6):

- A larger proportion of those that were previously employed on flexible working arrangements (61%, 22 respondents) indicated that their flexible working arrangement had no impact on their career progression, when compared to their counterparts currently employed on such arrangements (37%, 19 respondents).
- Interestingly, 43% (22 respondents) of staff currently on flexible working arrangements indicated that their career progression had suffered as a result of working on a flexible arrangement. This proportion was notably larger than their counterparts that had been employed on flexible working arrangement(s) in the past (17%, 6 respondents). Due to the small cohort numbers, these results could not be tested for statistical differences.

Figure 6: Impact of flexible working arrangement on career progression by period of flexible employment – Numbers and percentages



Particular quotes provided by respondents as to why they felt working on a flexible arrangement had had a negative impact on their career included the following:

Table 8: Impact of flexible working arrangement on career progression – Literal responses

Job title:	Age:	Please explain your answer:
Teacher/Tutor/ Trainer/ Lecturer	45-54	I think flexible working makes other staff think you are 1) Favoured, even though they don't request flexible working themselves, 2) Less committed to work.
Administrative/ other non- teaching staff	25-34	Perception is that I contribute less though not within the circle who are aware of my circumstances. The limited level of interaction possible due to the arrangements may mean that others external to this information may influence senior management.
Middle Manager	35-44	I think part time posts are sometimes viewed with suspicion by other employers (questions around 'commitment'), so I am concerned

		about my prospects elsewhere compared to if I was full time.
Teacher/Tutor/ Trainer/ Lecturer	35-44	Comments made by staff of differing levels seem to sway in favour of full time staff being seen as more willing, reliable members of the team than those who are part time.
Administrative/ other non- teaching staff	25-34	No progression is apparently possible due to my working hours. Others who have less experience have been promoted over me. I'm not able unless I increase my working hours.

4.3 Feasibility of flexible working and organisational policies

In this section all respondents were asked about their views of flexible working, the policy and approach of their organisation and their perceptions of the attitudes towards flexible working in the sector.

4.3.1 Feasibility of flexible working

All respondents were asked to rate the feasibility of offering women and men in certain positions, with caring responsibilities, some form of flexible working using a scale of 'Not at all' to 'Yes, to a large extent'. Ratings were made according to the different positions outlined below:

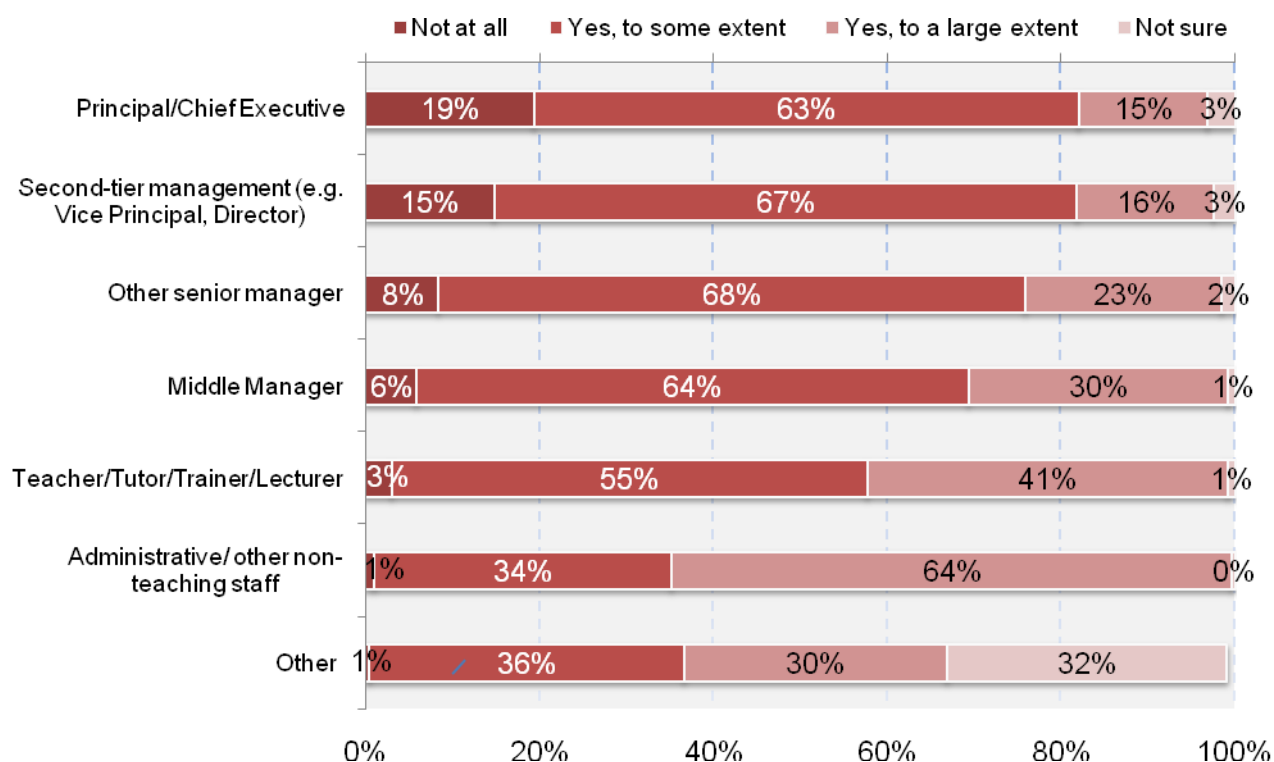
- Principal/Chief Executive
- Second-tier management (e.g. Vice Principal, Director)
- Other senior manager
- Middle Manager
- Teacher/Tutor/Trainer/Lecturer
- Administrative/ other non-teaching staff
- Other

The key findings were (see Figure 7):

- Across all roles, the majority of respondents indicated that offering flexible working arrangements was feasible to some extent or to a large extent. In the case of administrative/other staff, nearly 99% of respondents indicated that it was feasible to some or to a large extent for staff in these roles to be offered flexible working. Nearly two-thirds in fact indicated that it could be feasible to a large extent and this was the highest proportion noted compared to the other job roles.
- A large proportion of respondents (41%) were largely supportive of teachers and tutors being offered some form of flexible working if they have caring responsibilities with a further 52% supporting them to some extent.
- Seemingly, this sentiment did not extend to those in senior management positions. Only 15% of respondents considered the offer of such arrangements to principals/chief executives to be acceptable 'to a large extent'. In the case of second-tier management and other senior management this figure was 16% and 23%, respectively. Across senior management staff a notable proportion of respondents were therefore found to consider the offer of such arrangements to principals/executives (19%), and to a lesser extent second-tier management (15%) as being 'not at all' acceptable.

In regards to the job role, age, and ethnicity of respondents, the data revealed no major differences in opinions between staff. In the case of job roles, no bias was found in terms of how respondents rated the feasibility of offering some form of flexible working to those in their own staff groups.

Figure 7: Feasibility of offering flexible working to individuals with carrying responsibilities by position - Percentages



Note: The average sample size the percentages are based on for each job role category was 394.

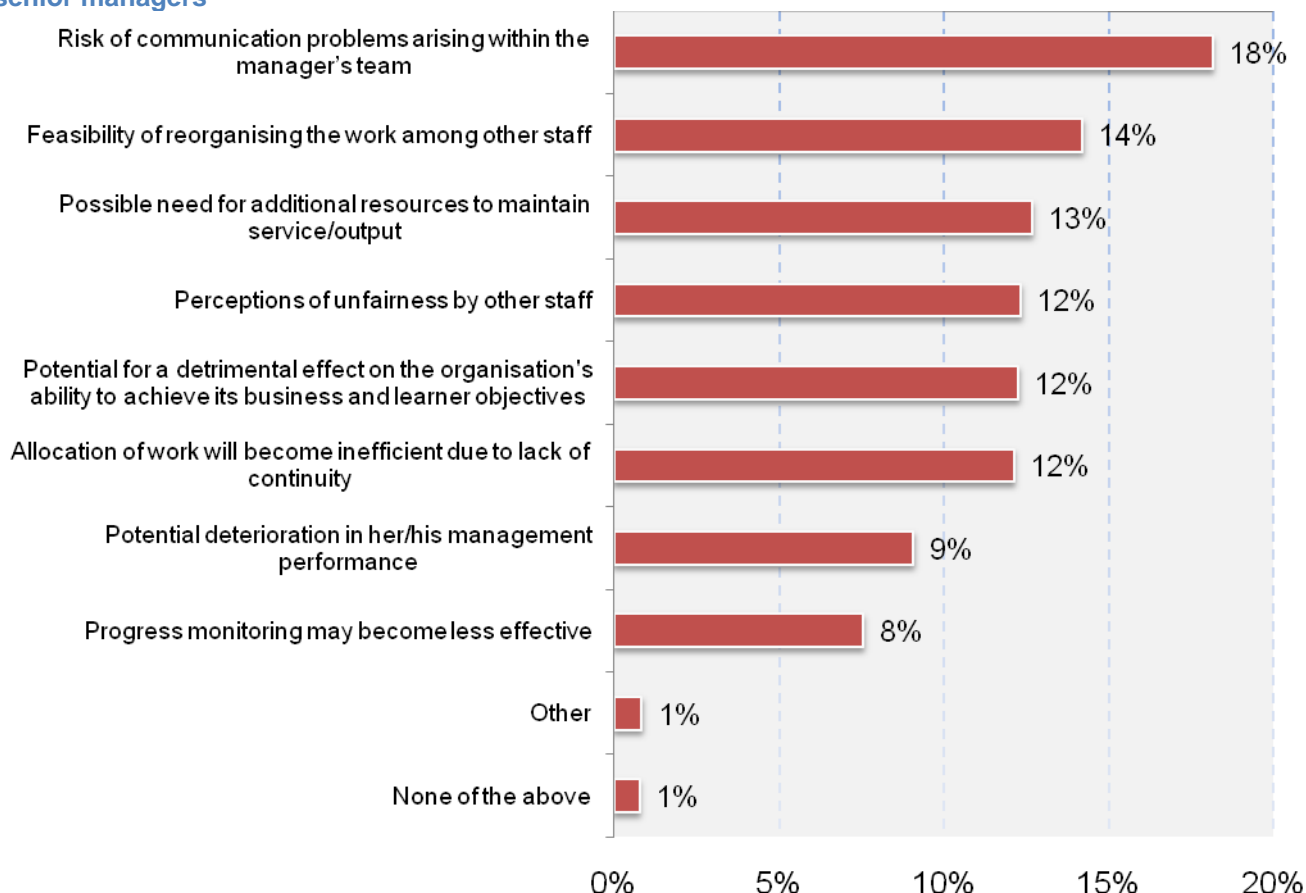
4.3.2 Senior and middle management and flexible working

Another key area explored in the survey related to the kinds of concerns likely to influence decisions made by line managers on requests for flexible working from staff in middle and senior management roles. This was a multiple choice question where respondents were asked to select a number of different options (see Figure 8). The following percentages were therefore based on the total number of responses received which was 1,443.

Overall, the ‘risk of communication problems arising within the manager’s team emerged as the key concern likely to influence decisions made by line managers regarding approving requests made by staff in middle and senior management roles (18% of total responses). This was followed by ‘feasibility of reorganising the work among other staff’ (14% of total responses) and the ‘possible need for additional resources to maintain service/output’ (13% of total responses).

The concept that 'progress monitoring might become less effective' in light of a middle or senior manager changing to a more flexible arrangement ranked lowest amongst respondents in terms of an issue for concern (8% of total responses).

Figure 8: Concerns likely to influence decisions made by line managers on requests from middle & senior managers



Note: Question was multi-choice. Respondents therefore had the option of selecting more than one response. Percentages are based on the total number of responses selected.

4.3.3 Organisational policy

In this section, the survey sought to identify and explore potential organisational barriers that might exist for those with caring responsibilities seeking more flexible working arrangements. As such, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with a number of statements about the policy approach of their organisation from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'.

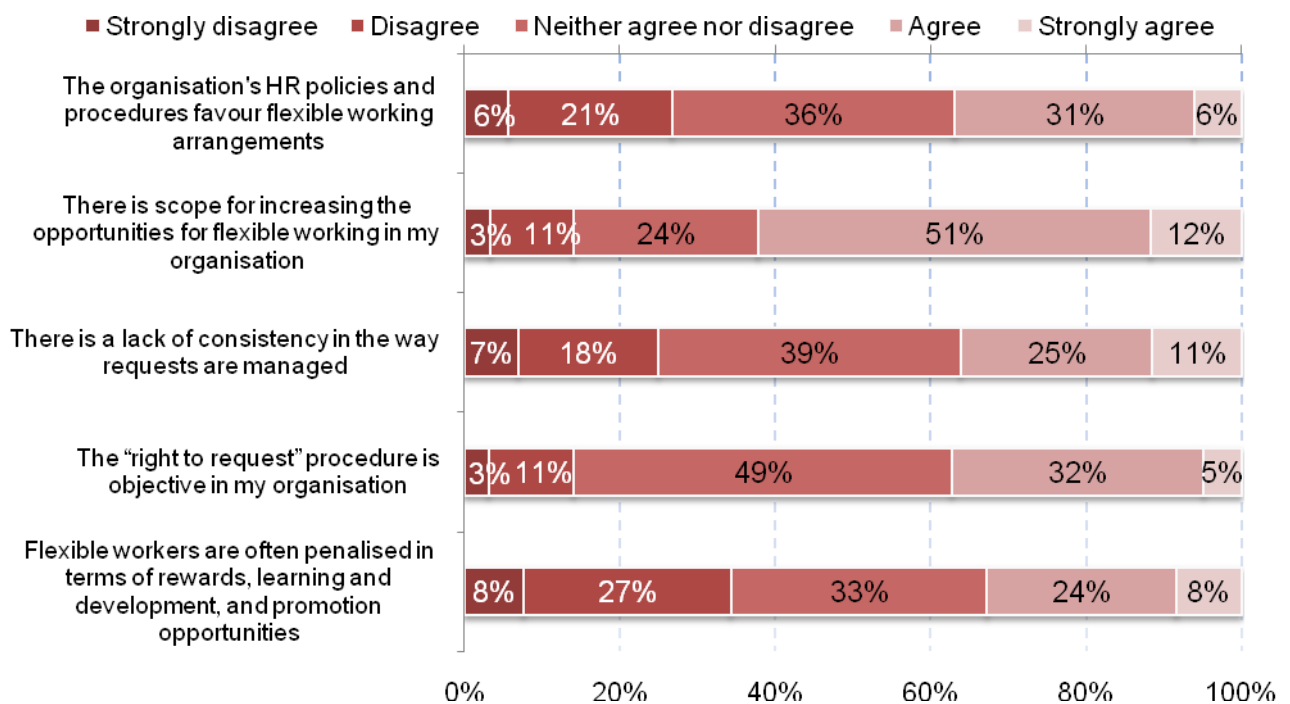
This line of questioning revealed that a large proportion of respondents 'neither agreed nor disagreed' with the majority of statements that they were asked to rate. The main exception to this trend was the nature of responses for the question relating to 'scope for increasing the opportunities for flexible working in each respondent's organisation'. For this question, 50% agreed that there was scope to improve access to such opportunities in their organisation. This result implies that more

must be done at the organisational level to ensure that the basic entitlements of this particular policy are adequately satisfied.

Other key findings from the data can be summarised as follows:

- Approximately 37% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the organisation’s HR policies and procedures favour flexible working arrangements compared with 27% who disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- Just over a third indicated that there is a lack of consistency in the way requests are managed: 25% and 11% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.
- Nearly 38% agreed or strongly agreed that the “right to request” procedure was objective in their organisation compared to 25% that disagreed or strongly disagreed with this.
- Opinions over whether flexible workers are penalised when it came to rewards, learning and development, and promotion opportunities were mixed. Over a quarter disagreed with the statement; exactly a third neither agreed nor disagreed, while 25% were found to agree.

Figure 9: Level of agreement/disagreement with areas of organisational policy and approach



Note: The average sample size the percentages are based on for each statement was 393.

The results above were tested to determine whether there were any significant differences in the responses of individuals according to job role, ethnicity, age and the respondent’s flexible working status (i.e. they were currently or had worked on a flexible working arrangement compared to those

who had never worked on a flexible working arrangement). Significant differences were observed across respondents of different ethnic groups and respondents with a different flexible working status. The specific differences observed are outlined below.

Further analysis by ethnicity

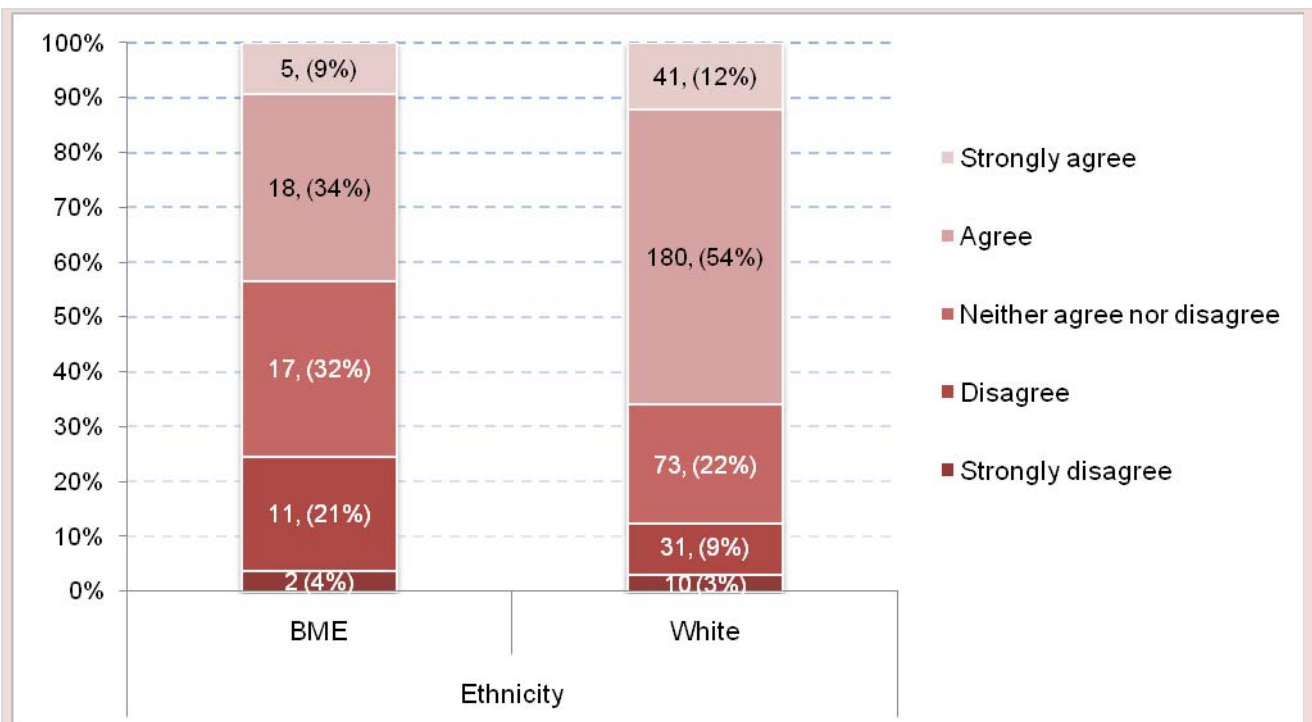
Further analysis on level of agreement for this series of questions revealed a statistically significant difference in the responses of respondents according to ethnicity (i.e. White and BME) in regards to the question on *scope for increasing opportunities for flexible working* (see Figure 10).

A Chi-Square Test was run to test the hypothesis that the observed frequencies did not differ from their expected values. The low significance value (e.g. sig. is less than 0.05) suggests that attitudes about scope for increasing opportunities did vary according to ethnicity (sig. 0.02).

The key difference observed was that a larger proportion of staff from a white ethnic background (54%, 180 respondents) indicated that they agreed that there was scope for increasing opportunities for flexible working in their organisation compared to only 34% (18 respondents) of staff from a BME background. Instead, staff from BME backgrounds were more inclined to disagree with the statement compared to their white counterparts (21% and 11 respondents compared to 9% and 31 respondents).

Note: Due to the small number of respondents who were represented by the BME group, percentages presented for this category must be treated with caution as the overall number of BME respondents was considerably lower than respondents of the white ethnic group.

Figure 10: Level of agreement/disagreement – ‘there is scope for increasing the opportunities for flexible working in my organisation’ by ethnicity – Numbers and percentages

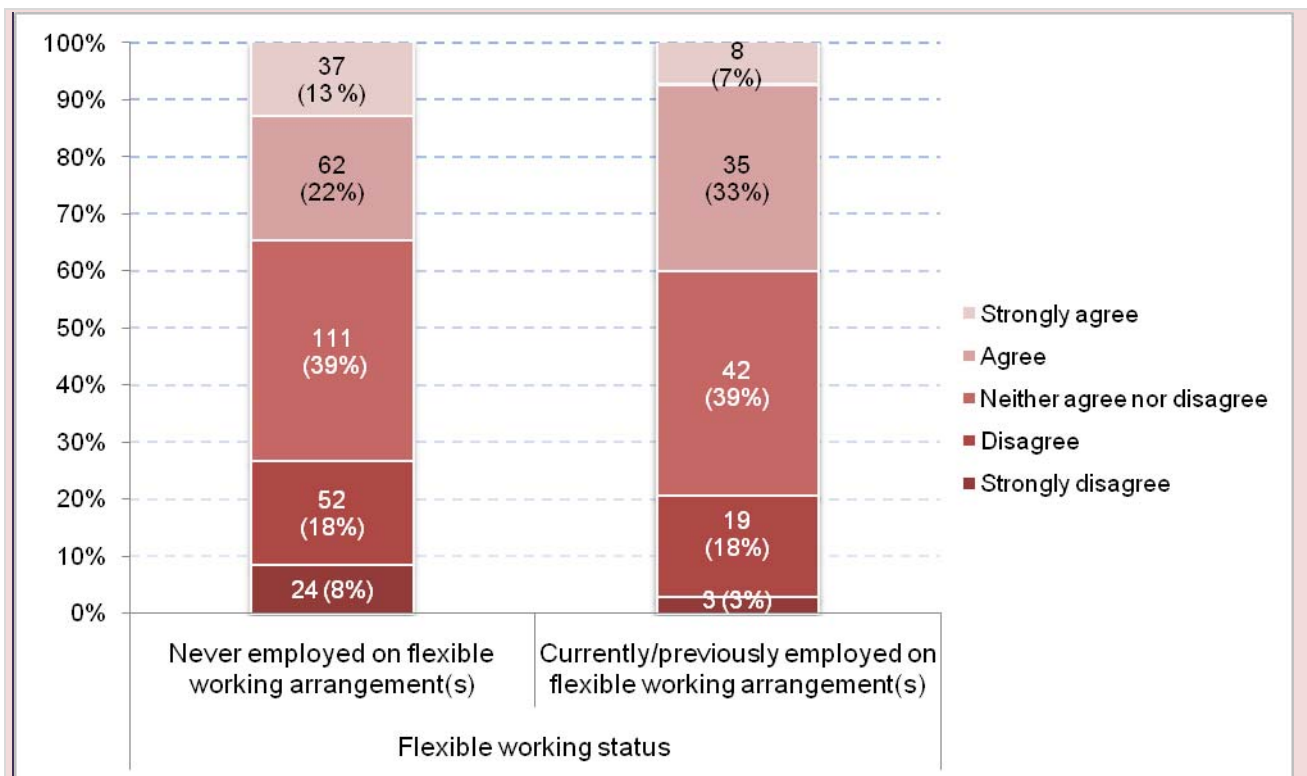


Note: Further analyses have only been reported on where a significant relationship between variables was observed. No differences were found to exist in the responses provided by staff of different job roles and staff of different ages therefore they have not been reported below.

Further analysis by Flexible working status

A Chi-Square Test was run to test the hypothesis that the observed frequencies did not differ from their expected values. A statistically significant difference was noted across staff of different flexible working statuses in relation to the statement *'There is a lack of consistency in the way requests are managed'* (sig. 0.05). For example, 33% (35 respondents) and 7% (8 respondents) of staff who have or are currently working on flexible working arrangements agreed and strongly agreed with this statement compared to 22% (62 respondents) and 13% (37 respondents) of staff who have never been employed on flexible working arrangements. Instead, a higher proportion of staff who have never worked on flexible working arrangements disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement (27% equivalent to 76 respondents) compared to those who were or had worked on flexible arrangements (21% equivalent to 22 respondents)

Figure 11: Level of agreement/disagreement – *'There is a lack of consistency in the way requests are managed'* by Flexible working status



4.4 Access to flexible working

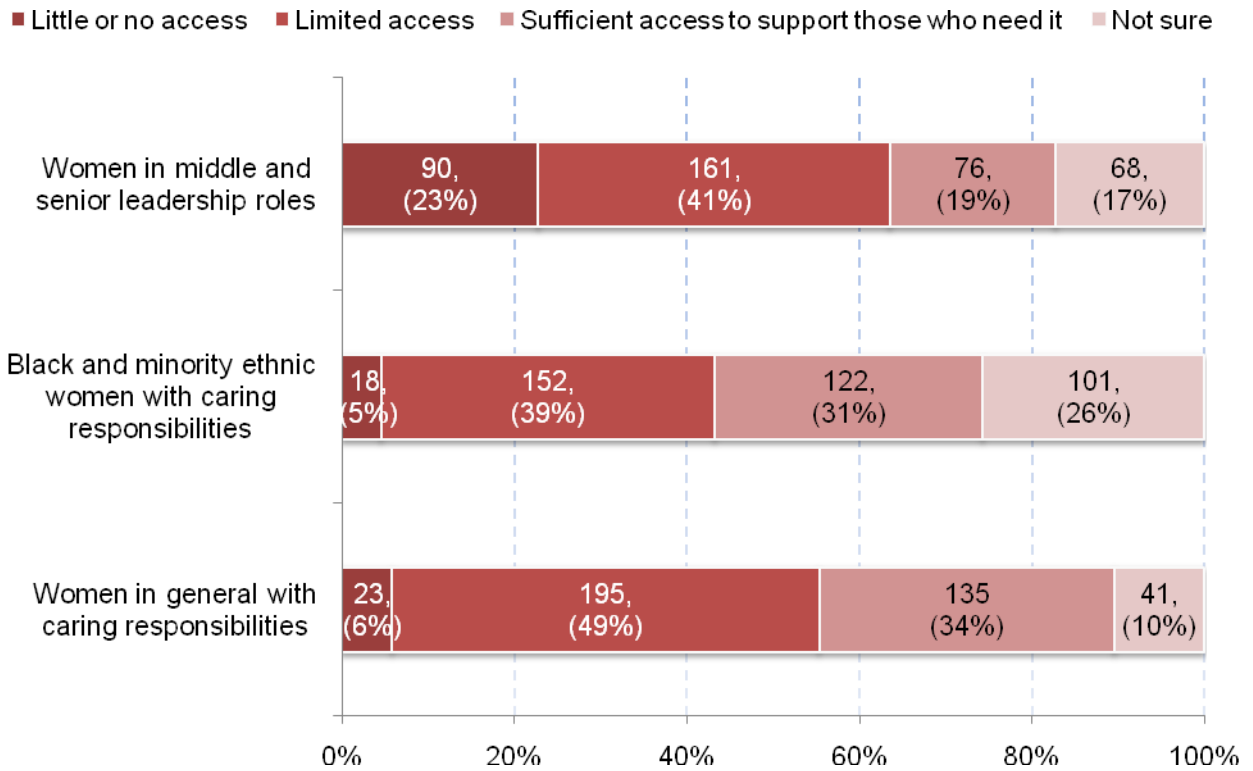
In this section respondents were asked for their opinion on the opportunities to access flexible working currently available to women of different characteristics and backgrounds (e.g. women in general with caring responsibilities, BME women with caring responsibilities and women in middle and senior leadership roles).

In regards to the extent to which women from these backgrounds were seen to have access to flexible working arrangements, the general impression was that regardless of circumstance, women generally tended to have limited access to such arrangements (Figure 12). The key findings from the survey were:

- 23% (90 respondents) and 41% (161 respondents) of the sample indicated that they felt there was currently little or no access, or limited access to flexible working for women in middle and senior leadership roles. This was noticeably higher than the 19% (76 respondents) that felt there was sufficient access to support them.
- While 31% (122) of respondents felt that women from a BME background with caring responsibilities had sufficient access to receive the kind of support they needed, 43% (170) indicated they felt they had little or no access or limited access. Over a quarter (101) of respondents indicated that they were not sure on the level of opportunities available regarding access to flexible working arrangements for BME women with caring responsibilities.

- Nearly half of the sample (49%, 195 respondents) indicated they felt there was limited access to flexible working for women in general with caring responsibilities, with a further 6% (23 respondents) stating they felt there was little or no access.

Figure 12: Across the sector, to what extent do you think there is access to flexible working arrangements for the following groups? - Numbers and percentages



The results above were tested to determine whether there were any significant differences in the responses of individuals according to job role, ethnicity, age and the respondent's flexible working status (i.e. they were currently or had worked on a flexible working arrangement compared to those who had never worked on a flexible working arrangement). Significant differences were observed across respondents of different job roles and ages. The specific differences observed are outlined below.

Further analysis by Job roles

Significant differences in the views of staff in different jobs were observed in relation to the levels of opportunities available to access flexible working for women in senior and middle management positions and BME women with caring responsibilities. Please note there were no differences in observed in the views provided for flexible working available for women in general.

A Chi-Square Test was run to test the hypothesis that the observed frequencies did not differ from their expected values. The low significance value (e.g. sig. is less than 0.05) suggests that attitudes about access did vary between the job roles:

Women in middle and senior leadership roles (sig. 0.02)
BME women with caring responsibilities (sig. 0.02)

The percentages presented in some cases may be based on a very small sample sizes due to the various breakdowns observed therefore caution is advised when interpreting the results.

The key findings from this analysis (see Figure 13) were:

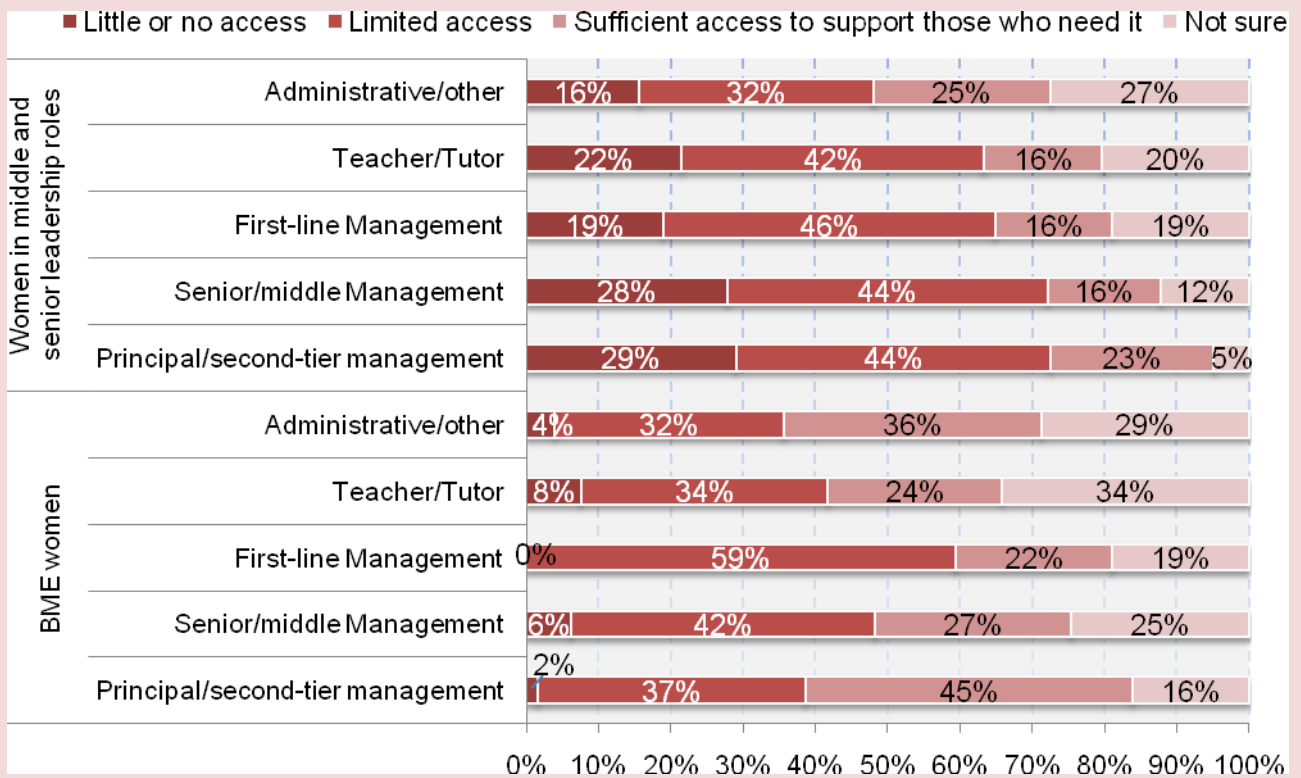
Women in middle and senior leadership roles

- A higher proportion of principal/second-tier management staff (29%, 18 respondents) and senior/middle management staff (28%, 32 respondents) indicated that they felt that women in similar positions to themselves had little or no access to such flexible working arrangements compared to staff in less senior positions. This finding re-iterates previous results already outlined in the report whereby many believe it is difficult to justify the availability of flexible working arrangements for management staff – particularly those that are in senior executive positions.
- Administrative/other staff were more likely to be unsure about the opportunities available to senior and middle management staff to access flexible working than staff in other job roles. More than a quarter of administrative/other staff (28 respondents) indicated they were unsure of the opportunities available, compared to 5% (3 respondents) of principals/second-tier managers and 12% (14 respondents) of senior/middle managers.

BME women with caring responsibilities

- Just under half of principals/second-tier managers (45%, 28 respondents) and over a third of administrative/other staff (36%, 36 respondents) indicated that they considered women from such backgrounds to have sufficient access to flexible working. Proportionately this was higher than those that stated they had sufficient access from senior/middle management groups (27%, 31 respondent), first-line managers (22%, 8 respondents) and teachers and tutors (24%, 19 respondents).
- First-line managers were more inclined to state that they felt there was limited access for BME women with caring responsibilities to access flexible working opportunities (59%, 22 respondents) compared to all other job roles. Administrative/other staff were least likely to state that they felt there was limited access for flexible working for BME women with 32% (32 respondents) selecting this response.
- The proportion of staff that were unsure about the opportunities available for flexible working varied from 16% for principals/second-tier managers to 34% for teachers and tutors.

Figure 13: Across the sector, to what extent do you think there is access to flexible working arrangements for the following groups? by job role – Percentages



Note: The percentages presented in some cases may be based on a very small sample sizes due to the various breakdowns observed therefore caution is advised when interpreting the results.

Further analyses have only been reported on where a significant relationship between variables was observed. No differences were found to exist in the responses provided by staff of different ethnic groups or staff of different flexible working statuses and therefore they have not been reported below.

Further analysis by age

Significant differences in the views of staff of different age groups were observed in relation to the levels of opportunities available to access flexible working for women in general, women in senior and middle management positions and BME women with caring responsibilities.

Significance values were generated and the low significance values (e.g. sig is less than 0.05) suggested that attitudes about access did vary between the age groups – more so when it comes to attitudes about the ability of BME women to access flexible working arrangements where the significance of this relationship was strongest:

- Women in general (sig. 0.04)
- BME women (sig. 0.01)
- Women in middle and senior management positions (sig. 0.04)

Women in general with caring responsibilities

Staff aged 45 and over were more likely to indicate that they felt there was little, none or limited access for flexible working arrangements to women in general than their counterparts aged under 45 years old. Nearly 60% (146 respondents) aged 45 years and over indicated this compared to 49% (72 respondents).

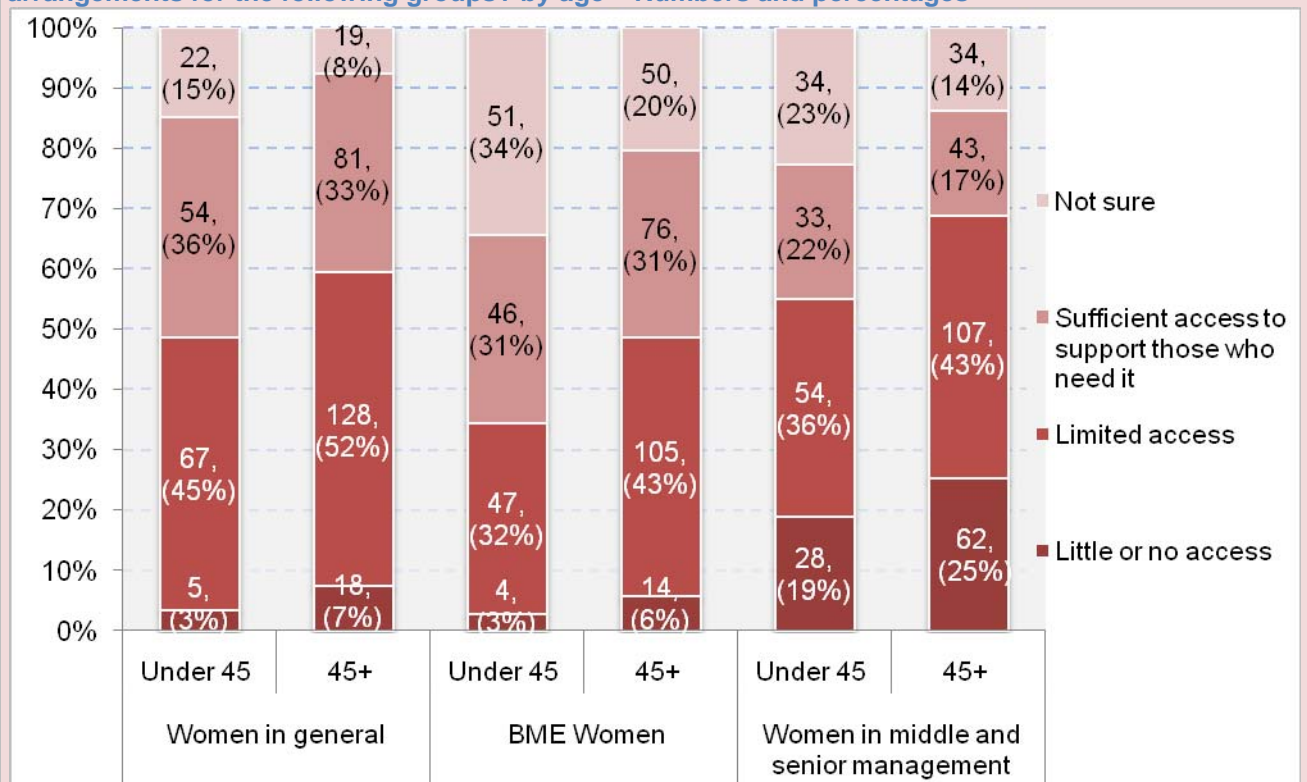
BME women with caring responsibilities

Similarly, staff aged 45 years and over were again more likely to indicate that there was little, none or limited opportunities available for BME women to access flexible working compared to their younger counterparts. Over one third (51 respondents) of staff aged under 45 years old stated that they were unsure whether opportunities were available compared to 20% (50 respondents) of staff aged 45 years old and over.

Women in middle and senior leadership roles

The variation in responses between staff aged under 45 years and those aged over 45 was slightly more prominent when they were asked to respond in relation to opportunities available for women in middle and senior management positions. 43% (107 respondents) of women aged 45 years and over indicated that they felt there was limited access for women in senior positions to access flexible working and a further 25% (62 respondents) indicated they felt there was little or no access. These proportions were noticeably higher than the 36% (54 respondents) and 19% (28 respondents) stated for similar responses by staff aged under 45 years.

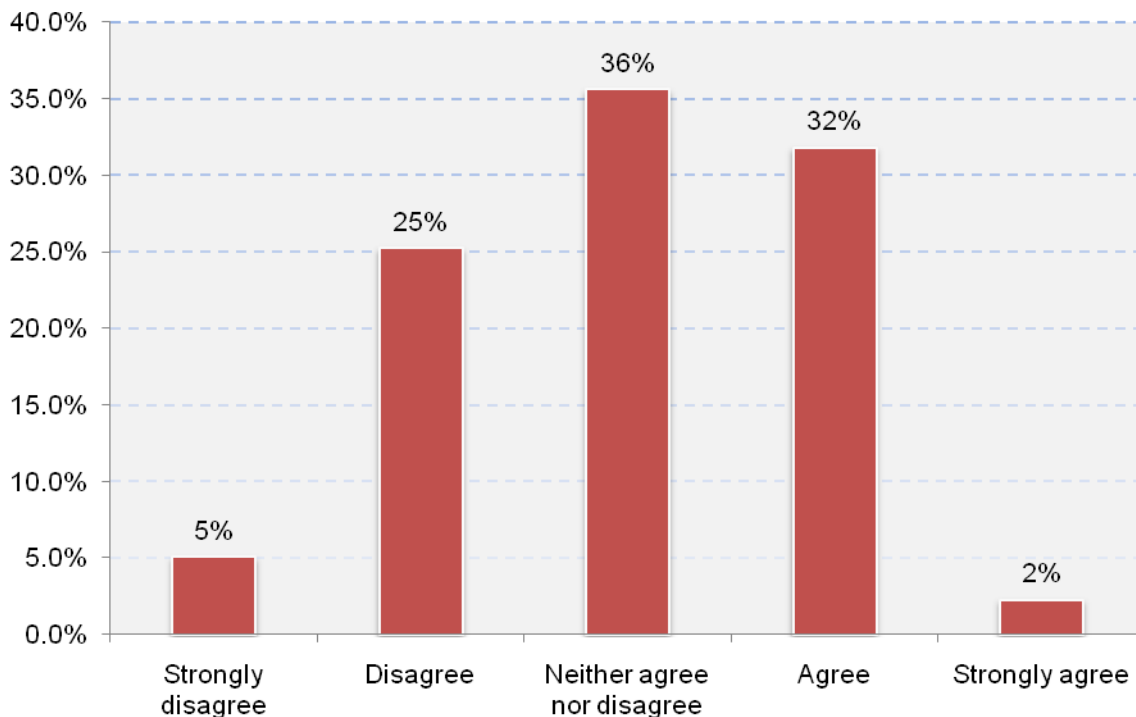
Figure 14: Across the sector, to what extent do you think there is access to flexible working arrangements for the following groups? by age – Numbers and percentages



4.5 Overall opinion of the FE sector and flexible working

Finally, when asked whether the FE sector offered a positive working environment which supported flexible working, 34% (135 respondents) responded positively to this statement. Just over a third of respondents (35.6%, 141 respondents) indicated they neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement, taking a neutral position. 30%, 105 respondents) responded negatively and felt that the FE sector did not offer a positive working environment.

Figure 15: Level of agreement with the following statement - Overall, the FE sector offers a positive working environment which supports flexible working - Percentages



Sample = 396

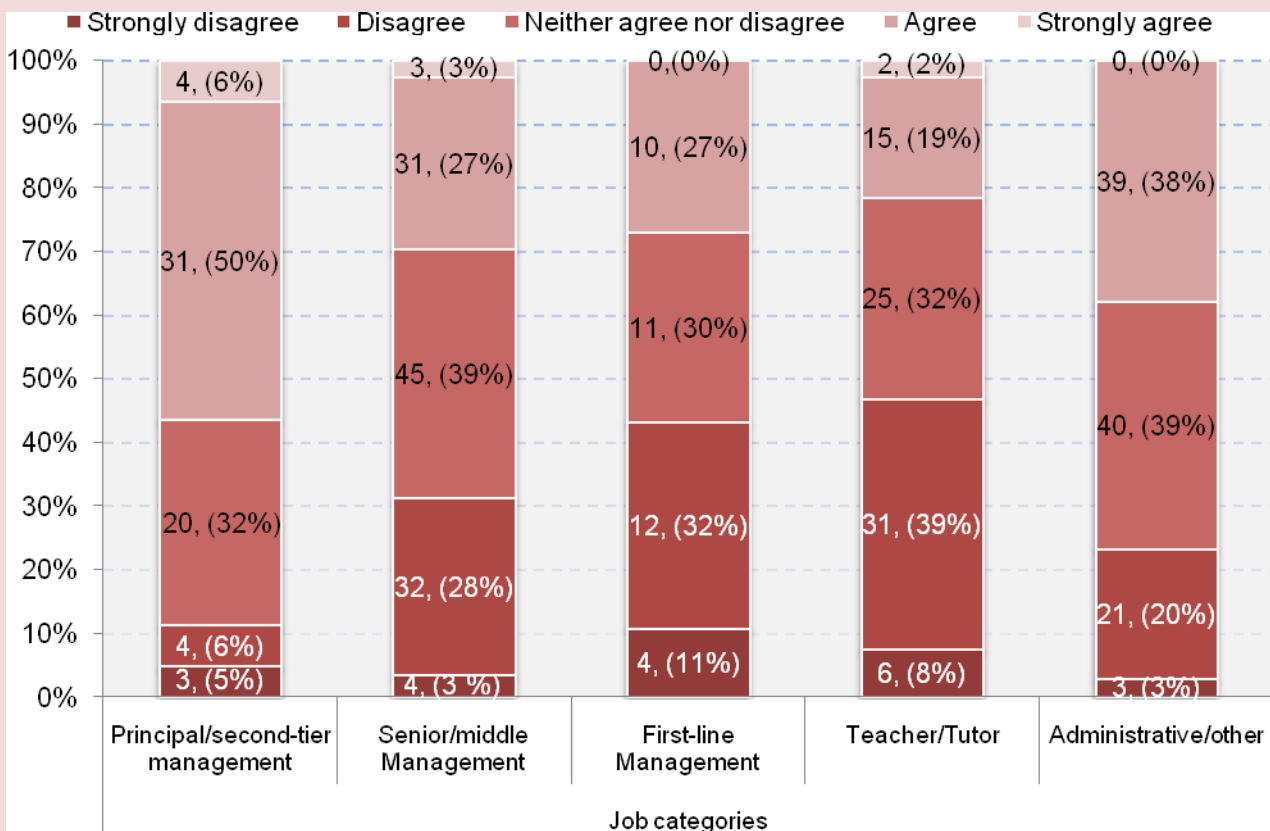
The results above were tested to determine whether there were any significant differences in the responses of individuals according to job role, ethnicity, age and the respondent's flexible working status (i.e. they were currently or had worked on a flexible working arrangement compared to those who had never worked on a flexible working arrangement). Significant differences were observed across respondents of different job roles and those of different flexible working statuses. The specific differences observed are outlined below.

Further analysis by Job roles

Significant differences in the levels of agreement by staff of different job roles were observed in relation to whether they believed the FE sector offered a positive working environment for flexible working. Significance values were generated by running a Chi-square test and the low significance value (e.g. sig was less than 0.05) suggested that attitudes about the FE sector and how positive it was to supporting flexible working did vary by respondents of job roles (sig. 0.00).

Principals/second-tier managers were more likely to agree and indicated that the FE sector does offer a positive working environment for supporting flexible working compared to individuals in other job roles. Half (equivalent to 31 respondents) of Principals/second tier managers agreed to the statement compared to 27% (31) senior/middle managers, 27% (10) first-line managers and 19% (15) teachers and tutors. Under 40% (39 respondents) of administrative/other staff members also agreed to this statements which indicated a larger level of agreement than that indicated by all other role types except that of principals/second tier managers.

Figure 16: Level of agreement with the following statement - Overall, the FE sector offers a positive working environment which supports flexible working, by job role – Numbers and percentages



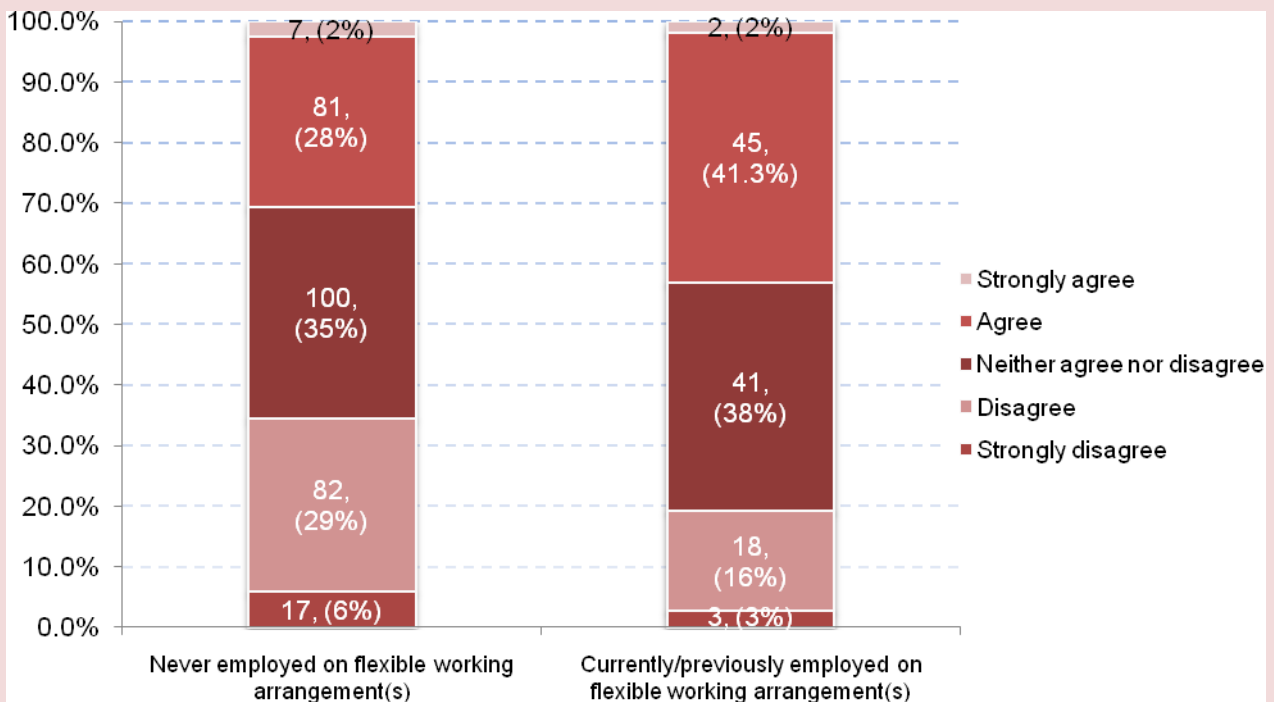
Note: Further analyses have only been reported on where a significant relationship between variables was observed. No differences were found to exist in the responses provided by staff of different ethnic groups or staff of different flexible ages and therefore they have not been reported below.

Further analysis by Job roles and Flexible working status

Significance values were generated to test whether there was a difference in the responses provided by individuals who were either currently working or had worked in the past on flexible working arrangements compared to those who had never worked on such arrangements. The Chi-square test showed a low significance value (e.g. sig was less than 0.05) suggesting that attitudes did vary (sig. 0.03).

Just over 40% (45 respondents) of staff who were currently or previously employed on flexible working arrangements agreed that the FE sector provided a positive working environment which supported flexible arrangements whereas only 28% (81 respondents) of those who had never worked on flexible arrangements agreed to this view. Instead, a higher proportion tended to disagree with the statement (29%, 82 respondents) or strongly disagree with the statement (6%, 17 respondents) compared to those who had or were working on flexible arrangements (16% (18 respondents) disagreed and 3%, 3 respondents strongly disagreed).

Figure 17: Level of agreement with the following statement - Overall, the FE sector offers a positive working environment which supports flexible working, by job role – Numbers and percentages



Below are some practical examples outlining the realities of flexible working. These examples have been provided by respondents, and cover their own experiences, the experiences of others working with a flexible working arrangement in their organisation and/or the sector, and general practice in other sectors (See Table 9):

Table 9: Examples of flexible working – Literal responses by job title and age

Job title:	Age	Examples
Principal/Chief Executive	45-54	Some teachers and support staff have requested reduced hours and reduced days and wherever possible the College has accommodated these. Most staff are term time only workers.
Second-tier management (e.g. Vice Principal, Director)	35-44	We have two middle managers with caring responsibilities who carry out a 1.0 FTE role between them very successfully. Other staff who have caring responsibilities are able to make requests for flexible working, confident in the knowledge that their request will be fairly treated.
Other senior manager	45-54	A Vice Principal starts and ends early on occasions when he needs to collect his children from school. Several women returning to work after maternity leave have been allowed to reduce to part time.
Administrative/ other non-teaching staff	25-34	Staff throughout all levels work flexibly within our College. Whether it's occasional working from home on an adhoc basis or compacted hours, it is generally well accepted
Second-tier management (e.g. Vice Principal, Director)	45-54	Two managers of support services have reduced their hours to 4 days a week to care for young children. A number of support roles in college are either designed to fit with caring responsibilities or have been adapted for individuals with caring responsibilities (including one male single parent)
Middle Manager	25-34	Yes - there are a number of individuals in my team (both men and women) who have a flexible working arrangement to enable them to care for children and/or other dependents.
First line management	35-44	My sister works flexi time for Rolls Royce. They allow her to work her full time hours to suit her requirements (i.e. 2 small boys at school). It also enables her to bank extra hours & then take time off for school events e.g. harvest festival etc.
Teacher/Tutor/Trainer/Lecturer	45-54	Yes a male widower who can work a flexible time to look after his 11 year old daughter
Middle Manager	25-34	Flexi-time is common within the University sector, but seems to be far less so within FE in my experience
Administrative/ other non-teaching staff	25-34	My sister works for a large organisation and has the option to work from home when the children are ill and has been able to change her working hours on two days of the week in order for her to collect the children from school.
Other senior manager	35-44	From my experience the public sector is far more flexible and open to 'flexible working' than the private sector, especially SMEs who don't have the workforce capacity to adjust to flexible working.
Teacher/Tutor/Trainer/Lecturer	55-64	Unite the union has a flexible working arrangement for

		their staff; they can start work up to 2 hours after office opening time and work 2 hrs later.
Administrative/ other non-teaching staff	25-34	British Telecom - offers home working arrangements for some of their project managers. I also know of a training manager who generally works from home (private management development training provider.)
Other senior manager	45-54	I have several staff who have reduced the number of days they do because of caring arrangements (childcare, older husband, Grandma duties). I have agreed that several full time programme coordinators can drop to between 50% and 70% of working time as they head towards retirement. All these arrangements have benefitted the organisation as well as the individual. I would like to introduce time off without pay for lecturing staff who suddenly have to cope with an issue at home (child ill etc.). This would enable us to pay someone else to cover and all parties could be honest and not feel guilty. At the moment it is not possible to do this. The individual normally has to say they 'are sick' to not turn up for a class.
Principal/Chief Executive	55-64	Teacher whose timetable was adjusted to allow her to take children to school and nursery and to collect them in the afternoon. Another teacher had her teaching commitments covered in four days enabling her to care for her elderly mother one day per week. These are both in my own organisation.
Middle Manager	55-64	All staff can apply for flexible working arrangements. These include reduced contractual hours, working from home and job sharing if appropriate. Each request is dealt with on an individual basis in discussion with management and HR.
Second-tier management (e.g. Vice Principal, Director)	35-44	Those with caring requirements whether children or other family members, those looking merely to improve their work life balance, those looking to partially retire, those with medical conditions either permanent arrangements or phased arrangements.
Teacher/Tutor/Trainer/Lecturer	35-44	Everyone in my team has a flexible working arrangement because most travel to work. Everyone in a team of 13 apart from the PA and another colleague work at least one day from home.
First line management	45-54	There are some that work term time only and some a couple of days a week, but these are mainly in the administrative sector.
Second-tier management (e.g. Vice Principal, Director)	45-54	Manager reduced hours to 3 days per week when reaching 60, area still well managed and department benefitting from the expertise retained. Similarly 2 Administrators reduced their working week when reaching 60 and are very productive.
Administrative/ other non-teaching staff	Under 25	I know of administration staff who work job share and/or only work term-time. Working from home is an

		option for more staff in the College holidays.
Middle Manager	35-44	NHS - I know of people working 9 day fortnights Also in Fe term time only contracts, although this wasn't done for caring responsibilities but to reflect previous work requirements where cover wasn't needed in holidays - all change now though!
Administrative/ other non-teaching staff	25-34	Individuals who are support staff or teaching staff tend to be the flexible workers in my organisation. I see less support for flexible working at senior management levels.
Second-tier management (e.g. Vice Principal, Director)	45-54	Most of my own team have caring responsibilities and hours have been agreed accordingly. It does lead to quite a lot of juggling and rearrangement of meetings. It is very common for people returning from maternity leave to change their hours / work pattern and one employee is currently on adoption leave - for the second time. Several people have taken advantage of our sabbatical leave arrangements to care for elderly parents or to pursue study. One has taken a sabbatical to foster.

Appendix A Online survey

Making strides towards Gender Equality in leadership in the Learning and Skills Sector

In our national research undertaken a year ago, we identified a range of barriers that women face in their career progression. One important barrier was the lack of opportunities for flexible working for women and others with caring responsibilities.

Through this survey, we aim to collect your views and experiences of flexible working practices. Findings will have practical applicability for the sector, increasing efficiency and effectiveness in challenging times and making the best use of everybody's talents.

We would therefore be grateful if you could complete this short online survey. It should take no longer than **10 minutes** to complete. The results will be treated with strict confidence and individual responses will not be identifiable. If you are experiencing any technical difficulties regarding the online survey, or require a paper-based version of the questionnaire, please contact the LSN Survey Team at surveysresearch@lsnlearning.org.uk or 0207 492 5168.

The closing date for this survey is **14th March 2011**.

Thank you for your time and contribution to this important project.

**Please click Next to begin the questionnaire
Section 1: Your personal experience of opportunities for
flexible working arrangements**

Firstly, we would like to know whether you have ever requested a flexible learning arrangement, and, if so, what your experience has been.

Flexible working can mean compressed hours (e.g. 3 days' work completed during 2 days' attendance), flexi-time, term-time only working, working from home, job-

sharing, converting to a part time or fractional appointment, or changes to shift patterns or the location of work.

Q1. Have you ever requested a change to a more flexible working arrangement in order to carry out caring/family responsibilities?

- Yes
- No

Q2.

If 'Yes', What was your experience of the response procedure to your request(s)?

(Please select all that apply)

- Prompt response
- Clear, straightforward procedure
- Clear explanation of reasons for response
- Slow response
- Had to chase up for response
- No clear explanations offered
- Other

If 'Other', please specify in the space provided below

Q3.

Was your request granted?

- Yes
- No

Q3.a

Have you made a request on more than one occasion?

- Yes
- No

If 'Yes', please provide details below

Are you currently employed on a flexible working arrangement with your employer?

- Yes
- No

If 'Yes', how long have you been employed on your current arrangement?

(Please select one option only)

- Less than 6 months
- Between 6 months to 2 years
- Between 2 to 5 years
- 5 years +

If 'Yes', please indicate what your current flexible arrangement(s) are:

(Please select all that apply)

- Part-time working** (generally considered as being contracted to work for anything less than full-time hours)
- Flexi-time** (flexi-time allows employees to choose, within certain set limits, when to begin and end work)
- Job-sharing** (typically, two or more employees share responsibility for a job between them)
- Working from home** (workers regularly spend time working from home)
- Term-time working** (an employee on a permanent contract takes paid or unpaid leave during school holidays)
- Staggered hours** (employees in the same workplace have different start, finish and break times)
- Annual hours** (the period within which full-time employees must work is defined over a whole year)
- Compressed working hours** (employees work their total agreed hours over fewer working days)
- Other**

If 'Other', please specify in the space provided below

Did the decision to change to flexible working arrangement(s) mean a change in your graded position in the organisation? (for example, was your position demoted to a lower grading level?)

- Yes, my position was upgraded
- Yes, my position was downgraded
- Moved sideways at same grade
- No change

If this decision resulted in a change in your position and/or grade or salary please provide details of this development in the space below *(optional)*

Are the arrangements more flexible or less flexible than those originally requested?

(Please provide your response in the space below)

- More flexible
- Less flexible
- It was exactly what I asked for

Any additional comments?

(Please specify in the space below)

Section 1: Your personal experience of opportunities for flexible working arrangements

If you no longer have a flexible working arrangement but did so in the past, please answer the following:

When you were employed on a flexible working arrangement(s), were you working within an FE institution?

- Yes
- No

Please indicate what your level in the organisation was during the period when you were employed on a flexible working arrangement(s):

(Please select one option only)

- Principal/Chief Executive
- Second-tier management (e.g. Vice Principal, Director)
- Other senior manager
- Middle Manager
- Teacher/Tutor/Trainer/Lecturer
- Administrative/ other non-teaching staff
- Other

If 'Other', please specify in the space provided below

Was the arrangement more flexible or less flexible than what was originally requested?

(Please provide your response in the space below)

- More flexible
- Less flexible
- It was exactly what I asked for

Section 1: Your personal experience of opportunities for flexible working arrangements

Was there a noticeable change in the attitude of your colleagues, after changing to a flexible working arrangement?

Please rate each of the following with regards to perceived attitudinal changes

(Please select one option per row only)

	Very unfavourable	Unfavourable	No change	Favourable	Very Favourable
Staff in the team you are part of	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff in the team you manage (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Line Manager	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff in your department	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Managers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If 'Other', please specify in the space provided below

What impact do you think your current flexible arrangement has had on your career progression?

Please use the slider to rate its effects from 'Significantly negative' to 'Significantly positive'.

(Please select one option only)

- Significantly negative
- Slightly negative
- No impact
- Slightly positive
- Significantly positive

Please explain your answer:

(Please use the space below to briefly describe the effect that your current flexible arrangement has had on your career progression)

Section 1: Your personal experience of opportunities for flexible working arrangements

Was there a noticeable change in the attitudes of your colleagues, after changing to a flexible working arrangement?

Please rate each of the following with regards to perceived attitudinal changes

(Please select one option per row only)

	Very unfavourable	Unfavourable	No change	Favourable	Very favourable
Staff in the team you were part of	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff in the team you managed <i>(if applicable)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Line Manager	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff in your department	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Managers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If 'Other', please specify in the space provided below

Did the decision to change to flexible working arrangement(s) mean a change in your graded position in the organisation? (for example, were you demoted to a lower grading level/ position?)

- Yes, my position was upgraded
- Yes, my position was downgraded
- Moved sideways at same grade
- No change

If this decision resulted in a change in your position and/or grade or salary please provide details of this development in the space below (optional)

What impact did your period of flexible working have on your career progression?

Please use the slider to rate its effects from 'Significantly negative' to 'Significantly positive'.

(Please select one option only)

- Significantly negative
- Slightly negative
- No impact
- Slightly positive
- Significantly positive

Please explain your answer:

(Please use the space below to briefly describe the effect that your previous flexible arrangement(s) has had on your career progression)

Any additional comments?

(Please specify in the space below)

Section 1: Your personal experience of opportunities for flexible working arrangements

Q3.b

If 'No', what reasons were you given for the refusal?

(Please select all that apply)

- Burden of additional costs to the organisation
- Detrimental effect on ability to meet learner demand and/or organisation demand
- Inability to reorganise work among existing staff
- Inability to recruit additional staff
- Detrimental impact on quality
- Detrimental impact on your performance
- Detrimental impact on others' performance
- Insufficiency of work during the periods the employee proposes to work
- Planned structural changes
- Other

- No reason given

If 'Other', please specify in the space provided below

What action did you take?

(Please select one option only)

- Accepted the decision and continued with current arrangements
- Reapplied at a later date
- Left the organisation
- Other

If 'Other', please specify in the space provided below

Section 1: Your personal experience of opportunities for flexible working arrangements

In relation to the refusal of your request to change to a more flexible working arrangement, what impact do you consider this decision to have had on the following:

(Please select one option per row only)

No impact Some impact Significant impact

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| You, on a personal level | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Your family | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Your career | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If 'Other', please specify in the space provided below

Any other comments?
(Please specify in the space below)

Section 2: Your view of flexible working, your organisation’s policy and approach, your perceptions of the sector’s attitude

In this section, we are asking about your own view of flexible working, the policy and approach of your own organisation and your perceptions of the attitudes towards flexible working in the sector.

Your view of flexible working

Q4. To what extent do you think it is feasible to offer women and men in the following position, with caring responsibilities, some form of flexible working?

Please indicate according to the different positions outlined below.
(Please select one option per row)

	Not at all	Yes, to some extent	Yes, to a large extent	Not sure
Principal/Chief Executive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Second-tier management (e.g. Vice Principal, Director)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other senior manager	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Middle Manager	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher/Tutor/Trainer/Lecturer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Administrative/ other non-teaching staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If 'Other', please specify in the space provided below

Q5. In your view, what are the main concerns likely to influence decisions made by line managers, on requests for flexible working arrangements from staff in middle and senior management roles?

(Please select all that apply)

- Potential deterioration in her/his management performance
- Risk of communication problems arising within the manager's team
- Allocation of work will become inefficient due to lack of continuity
- Progress monitoring may become less effective
- Feasibility of reorganising the work among other staff
- Perceptions of unfairness by other staff
- Possible need for additional resources to maintain service/output
- Potential for a detrimental effect on the organisation's ability to achieve its business and learner objectives
- Other
- None of the above

If 'Other', please specify in the space provided below

Section 2: Your view of flexible working, your organisation’s policy and approach, your perceptions of the sector’s attitude

The policy approach of your organisation

Q6. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:
(Please select one option per row)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
The organisation's HR policies and procedures favour flexible working arrangements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There is scope for increasing the opportunities for flexible working in my organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There is a lack of consistency in the way requests are managed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The “right to request” procedure is objective in my organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Flexible workers are often penalised in terms of rewards, learning and development, and promotion opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Your perceptions of the attitudes towards flexible working opportunities in the sector

Q7. In the sector overall, to what extent do you think there is access to flexible

working arrangements for the following:

(Please select one option per row)

	Little or no access	Limited access	Sufficient access to support those who need it	Not sure
Women in general with caring responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Black and minority ethnic women with caring responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Women in middle and senior leadership roles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q8. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement:

Overall, the FE sector offers a positive working environment which supports flexible working.

(Please select one option only)

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Q9. Can you give examples of individuals who are working within a flexible working arrangement in your or in other organisations?

Please include organisations in OTHER sectors if you know of any - we hope to identify good practice and carry out interviews as appropriate.

Section 3: About you

Q10. Job title:

(Please select one option only)

- Principal/Chief Executive
- Second-tier management (e.g. Vice Principal, Director)
- Other senior manager
- Middle Manager
- First-line Manager
- Teacher/Tutor/Trainer/Lecturer
- Administrative/ other non-teaching staff
- Other

If 'Other', please specify in the space provided below

Q11. Are you...?

- Female
- Male

Q12. What is your age?

- Under 25
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65+

Q13. How would you describe your ethnic background?

- Asian or Asian British
- Black or Black British
- Dual heritage
- White
- Other Ethnic Group

If 'Other', please specify in the space provided below

Q14. What type of organisation do you work at?

- General Further Education College
- Sixth form College
- Specialist College (e.g. Agriculture, Arts etc)
- Other

If 'Other', please specify in the space provided below

Q15. Please indicate the location of your organisation:

- East Midlands
- East of England
- Greater London
- North East
- North West
- South East
- South West
- West Midlands
- Yorkshire and the Humber
- Other

If 'Other', please specify in the space provided below

Q16. How long have you been in your current role?

- Less than 2 years
- Between 2 and 5 years
- Between 5 and 10 years
- More than 10 years

Q17. How long have you been working in your current organisation?

- Less than 2 years
- Between 2 and 5 years
- Between 5 and 10 years
- More than 10 years

Q18. Current employment status:

(Please select all that apply)

- Full-time
- Part-time or fractional
- Sessional or hourly paid
- Jobsharer
- Other

If 'Other', please specify in the space provided below

Q19. What is your contract type?

(Please select all that apply)

- Permanent
- Fixed Term
- Casual
- Employed through an agency
- Annual hours
- Term-time only
- Home-based worker
- Flexi-time
- Self-employed worker
- Other

If 'Other', please specify in the space provided below

responsibility for?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- More than 3

Q22. Have you in the past had caring responsibility for a child, children or other person?

- Yes
- No

If 'Yes', please indicate how many children/people you had a caring responsibility for?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- More than 3

Q23. Would you be willing to participate in any follow-up interviews to discuss your response in more detail?

- Yes
- No

If 'Yes', please specify your name and contact details in the spaces provided

Name: _____
Phone _____
number: _____
Email _____
address: _____

Any other comments?

(Please specify in the space below)

Thank you for taking part the time to participate in this survey.

Please click Submit.

Appendix B Survey – data tables

Section 1. Personal experience of opportunities for flexible working arrangements

Q1. Have you ever requested a change to a more flexible working arrangement in order to carry out caring/family responsibilities?

Table 10: Total count and proportion of respondents

	No.	%
No	256	64.6%
Yes	140	35.4%
Total	396	100.0%

Q2. If 'Yes', What was your experience of the response procedure to your request(s)? (Please select all that apply)

Table 11: Total count and proportion of responses (descending order)

	No.	%
Prompt response	63	33.3%
Clear, straightforward procedure	56	29.6%
Clear explanation of reasons for response	22	11.6%
Had to chase up for response	16	8.5%
No clear explanations offered	15	7.9%
Slow response	13	6.9%
Other	4	2.1%
Total	189	100.0%

Note: This question was multi-choice therefore respondents had the option of selecting more than one option. The total figure therefore represents the count of all responses provided.

Q3. Was your request granted?

Table 12: Total count and proportion of respondents

	No.	%
No	31	22.1%
Yes	109	77.9%
Total	140	100.0%

Q3.a. Have you made a request on more than one occasion?

Table 13: Total count and proportion of respondents

	No.	%
No	80	73.4%
Yes	29	26.6%
Total	109	100.0%

Q3.a2. Are you currently employed on a flexible working arrangement with your employer?

Table 14: Total count and proportion of respondents

	No.	%
No	58	53.2%
Yes	51	46.8%
Total	109	100.0%

Q3.a3. If 'Yes', how long have you been employed on your current arrangement?

Table 15: Total count and proportion of respondents

	No.	%
5 years +	15	29.4%
Between 2 to 5 years	14	27.5%
Between 6 months to 2 years	14	27.5%
Less than 6 months	8	15.7%
Total	51	100.0%

Q3.a4. If 'Yes', please indicate what your current flexible arrangement(s) are: (Please select all that apply)

Table 16: Total count and proportion of responses (descending order)

	No.	%
Part-time working	31	38.3%
Flexi-time	21	25.9%
Compressed working hours	10	12.3%
Working from home	7	8.6%
Job-sharing	4	4.9%
Term-time working	3	3.7%
Annual hours	3	3.7%
Staggered hours	2	2.5%
Total	81	100.0%

Note: This question was multi-choice therefore respondents had the option of selecting more than one option. The total figure therefore represents the count of all responses provided.

Q3.a6. Did the decision to change to flexible working arrangement(s) mean a change in your graded position in the organisation? (For example, was your position demoted to a lower grading level?)

Table 17: Total count and proportion of respondents

	No.	%
Moved sideways at same grade	1	2.0%
No change	46	90.2%
Yes, my position was downgraded	3	5.9%
Yes, my position was upgraded	1	2.0%
Total	51	100.0%

Q3.a8. Are the arrangements more flexible or less flexible than those originally requested?

Table 18: Total count and proportion of respondents

	No.	%
It was exactly what I asked for	40	78.4%
Less flexible	4	7.8%
More flexible	7	13.7%
Total	51	100.0%

If you no longer have a flexible working arrangement but did so in the past, please answer the following:

Q3.a10. When you were employed on a flexible working arrangement(s), were you working within an FE institution?

Table 19: Total count and proportion of respondents

	No.	%
No	22	37.9%
Yes	36	62.1%
Total	58	100.0%

Q3.a11. Please indicate what your level in the organisation was during the period when you were employed on a flexible working arrangement(s):

Table 20: Total count and proportion of respondents

	No.	%
Administrative/ other non-teaching staff	9	25.0%
Middle Manager	11	30.6%
Other senior manager	3	8.3%
Second-tier management (e.g. Vice Principal, Director)	2	5.6%
Teacher/Tutor/Trainer/Lecturer	11	30.6%
Total	36	100.0%

Q3.a13. Was the arrangement more flexible or less flexible than what was originally requested?

Table 21: Total count and proportion of respondents

	No.	%
It was exactly what I asked for	27	75.0%
Less flexible	3	8.3%
More flexible	6	16.7%
Total	36	100.0%

Q3.a14~19. Was there a noticeable change in the attitude of your colleagues, after changing to a flexible working arrangement? Please rate each of the following with regards to your current circumstances and perceived attitudinal changes (please select one option per row)

Table 22: Total count and proportion of respondents

	Very unfavourable		Unfavourable		No change		Favourable		Very favourable	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Staff in the team you were part of	0	0.0%	6	11.8%	36	70.6%	6	11.8%	3	5.9%
Staff in the team you managed (if applicable)	0	0.0%	2	7.4%	20	74.1%	4	14.8%	1	3.7%
Line Manager	1	2.0%	5	9.8%	35	68.6%	5	9.8%	5	9.8%
Staff in your department	0	0.0%	7	14.0%	35	70.0%	6	12.0%	2	4.0%
Other Managers	3	5.9%	7	13.7%	36	70.6%	4	7.8%	1	2.0%
Others	1	2.3%	3	7.0%	35	81.4%	3	7.0%	1	2.3%

Q3.a21. What impact do you think your current flexible arrangement has had on your career progression? Please use the slider to rate its effects from 'Significantly negative' to 'Significantly positive'.

Table 23: Total count and proportion of respondents

	No.	%
No impact	19	37.3%
Significantly negative	3	5.9%
Significantly positive	4	7.8%
Slightly negative	19	37.3%
Slightly positive	6	11.8%
Total	51	100.0%

Q3.a23~28. Was there a noticeable change in the attitudes of your colleagues, after changing to a flexible working arrangement? Please rate each of the following with regards to your past circumstances and perceived attitudinal changes *(Please select one option per row only)*

Table 24: Total count and proportion of respondents

	Very unfavourable		Unfavourable		No change		Favourable		Very favourable	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Staff in the team you were part of	1	2.8%	0	0.0%	26	72.2%	2	5.6%	7	19.4%
Staff in the team you managed (if applicable)	1	3.7%	0	0.0%	21	77.8%	2	7.4%	3	11.1%
Line Manager	1	2.9%	3	8.6%	20	57.1%	5	14.3%	6	17.1%
Staff in your department	1	2.9%	1	2.9%	23	67.6%	4	11.8%	5	14.7%
Other Managers	0	0.0%	4	11.8%	25	73.5%	1	2.9%	4	11.8%
Others	0	0.0%	1	3.3%	24	80.0%	1	3.3%	4	13.3%

3.a30. Did the decision to change to flexible working arrangement(s) mean a change in your graded position in the organisation? (For example, were you demoted to a lower grading level/ position?)

Table 25: Total count and proportion of respondents

	No.	%
Moved sideways at same grade	1	2.8%
No change	33	91.7%
Yes, my position was downgraded	2	5.6%
Total	36	100.0%

Q3.a32. What impact did your period of flexible working have on your career progression? Please use the slider to rate its effects from 'Significantly negative' to 'Significantly positive'. *(Please select one option only)*

Table 26: Total count and proportion of respondents

	No.	%
No impact	22	61.1%
Significantly negative	1	2.8%
Significantly positive	2	5.6%
Slightly negative	5	13.9%
Slightly positive	6	16.7%
Total	36	100.0%

Q3.b. If 'No', what reasons were you given for the refusal? (Please select all that apply)

Table 27: Total count and proportion of responses (descending order)

	No.	%
Detrimental effect on ability to meet learner demand and/or organisation demand	9	23.1%
Other	8	20.5%
No reason given	7	17.9%
Inability to reorganise work among existing staff	6	15.4%
Detrimental impact on quality	3	7.7%
Inability to recruit additional staff	2	5.1%
Detrimental impact on your performance	2	5.1%
Insufficiency of work during the periods the employee proposes to work	2	5.1%
Total	39	100.0%

Note: This question was multi-choice therefore respondents had the option of selecting more than one option. The total figure therefore represents the count of all responses provided.

Q3.b2. What action did you take?

Table 28: Total count and proportion of respondents

	No.	%
Accepted the decision and continued with current arrangements	17	54.8%
Left the organisation	3	9.7%
Other	8	25.8%
Reapplied at a later date	3	9.7%
Total	31	100.0%

Q3.b4~7. In relation to the refusal of your request to change to a more flexible working arrangement, what impact do you consider this decision to have had on the following: (Please select one option per row only)

Table 29: Total count and proportion of respondents

	No impact		Some impact		Significant impact	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
You, on a personal level	0	0.0%	12	38.7%	19	61.3%
Your family	0	0.0%	14	45.2%	17	54.8%
Your career	8	26.7%	8	26.7%	14	46.7%
Other	4	50.0%	0	0.0%	4	50.0%

Section 2: Your view of flexible working, your organisation's policy and approach, your perceptions of the sector's attitude

Your view of flexible working

Q4. To what extent do you think it is feasible to offer women and men in the following position, with caring responsibilities, some form of flexible working? Please indicate according to the different positions outlined below. (Please select one option per row)

Table 30: Total count and proportion of respondents

	Not at all		Yes, to some extent		Yes, to a large extent		Not sure	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Principal/Chief Executive	76	19.4%	245	62.7%	58	14.8%	12	3.1%
Second-tier management (e.g. Vice Principal, Director)	58	14.8%	265	67.1%	62	15.7%	10	2.5%
Other senior manager	33	8.4%	266	67.5%	89	22.6%	6	1.5%
Middle Manager	23	5.9%	251	63.5%	118	29.9%	3	0.8%
Teacher/Tutor/Trainer/Lecturer	12	3.1%	215	54.7%	163	41.5%	3	0.8%
Administrative/ other non-teaching staff	4	1.0%	135	34.3%	254	64.5%	1	0.3%
Other	2	0.5%	55	36.2%	46	30.3%	49	32.2%

Q5. In your view, what are the main concerns likely to influence decisions made by line managers, on requests for flexible working arrangements from staff in middle and senior management roles? (Please select all that apply)

Table 31: Total count and proportion of responses (descending order)

	No.	%
Risk of communication problems arising within the manager's team	262	18.2%
Feasibility of reorganising the work among other staff	205	14.2%
Possible need for additional resources to maintain service/output	183	12.7%
Perceptions of unfairness by other staff	178	12.3%
Potential for a detrimental effect on the organisation's ability to achieve its business and learner objectives	177	12.3%
Allocation of work will become inefficient due to lack of continuity	175	12.1%
Potential deterioration in her/his management performance	131	9.1%
Progress monitoring may become less effective	109	7.6%
Other	12	0.8%
None of the above	11	0.8%
Total	1443	100.0%

Note: This question was multi-choice therefore respondents had the option of selecting more than one option. The total figure therefore represents the count of all responses provided.

The policy approach of your organisation

Q6. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements: *(Please select one option per row)*

Table 32: Total count and proportion of respondents

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		Agree		Strongly agree	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
The organisation's HR policies and procedures favour flexible working arrangements	22	5.6%	83	21.1%	143	36.4%	121	30.8%	24	6.1%
There is scope for increasing the opportunities for flexible working in my organisation	13	3.3%	42	10.7%	93	23.7%	198	50.5%	46	11.7%
There is a lack of consistency in the way requests are managed	27	6.9%	71	18.1%	153	38.9%	97	24.7%	45	11.5%
The "right to request" procedure is objective in my organisation	12	3.1%	43	11.0%	191	48.7%	127	32.4%	19	4.8%
Flexible workers are often penalised in terms of rewards, learning and development, and promotion opportunities	30	7.6%	105	26.6%	130	33.0%	96	24.4%	33	8.4%

Your perceptions of the attitudes towards flexible working opportunities in the sector

Q7. In the sector overall, to what extent do you think there is access to flexible working arrangements for the following: *(Please select one option per row)*

Table 33: Total count and proportion of respondents

	Little or no access		Limited access		Sufficient access to support those who need it		Not sure	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Women in general with caring responsibilities	23	5.8%	195	49.5%	135	34.3%	41	10.4%
Black and minority ethnic women with caring responsibilities	18	4.6%	152	38.7%	122	31.0%	101	25.7%
Women in middle and senior leadership roles	90	22.8%	161	40.8%	76	19.2%	68	17.2%

Q8. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement:

Overall, the FE sector offers a positive working environment which supports flexible working. *(Please select one option only)*

Table 34: Total count and proportion of respondents

	No.	%
Strongly disagree	20	5.1%
Disagree	100	25.3%
Neither agree nor disagree	141	35.6%
Agree	126	31.8%
Strongly agree	9	2.3%
Total	396	100.0%

Section 3: About You

Q10. Job title:

(Please select one option only)

Table 35: Total count and proportion of respondents

	No.	%
Administrative/ other non-teaching staff	94	23.7%
First-line Manager	37	9.3%
Middle Manager	81	20.5%
Other	9	2.3%
Other senior manager	34	8.6%
Principal/Chief Executive	17	4.3%
Second-tier management (e.g. Vice Principal, Director)	45	11.4%
Teacher/Tutor/Trainer/Lecturer	79	19.9%
Total	396	100.0%

Q11. Gender:

Table 36: Total count and proportion of respondents

	No.	%
Female	385	97.2%
Male	11	2.8%
Total	396	100.0%

Q12. Age:

Table 37: Total count and proportion of respondents

	No.	%
Under 25	5	1.3%
25-34	48	12.1%
35-44	96	24.2%
45-54	165	41.7%
55-64	81	20.5%
65+	1	0.3%
Total	396	100.0%

Q13. How would you describe your ethnic background?

Table 38: Total count and proportion of respondents

	No.	%
Asian or Asian British	18	4.6%
Black or Black British	21	5.4%
Dual heritage	8	2.0%
Other Ethnic Group	7	1.8%
White	338	86.2%
Total	392	100.0%
Missing	4	1.0%

Q14. What type of organisation do you work at?

Table 39: Total count and proportion of respondents

	No.	%
General Further Education College	319	82.4%
Sixth form College	37	9.6%
Specialist College (e.g. Agriculture, Arts etc)	20	5.2%
Other	11	2.8%
Total	387	100.0%
Missing	9	2.3%

Q15. Please indicate the location of your organisation:

Table 40: Total count and proportion of respondents

	No.	%
East Midlands	88	23.0%
East of England	9	2.4%
Greater London	50	13.1%
North East	9	2.4%
North West	42	11.0%
South East	62	16.2%
South West	25	6.5%
West Midlands	80	20.9%
Yorkshire and the Humber	17	4.5%
Total	382	100.0%
Missing	14	3.7%

Q16. How long have you been in your current role?

Table 41: Total count and proportion of respondents

	No.	%
Between 2 and 5 years	133	34.4%
Between 5 and 10 years	109	28.2%
Less than 2 years	91	23.5%
More than 10 years	54	14.0%
Total	387	100.0%
Missing	9	2.3%

Q17. How long have you been working in your current organisation?

Table 42: Total count and proportion of respondents

	No.	%
Between 2 and 5 years	95	24.5%
Between 5 and 10 years	117	30.2%
Less than 2 years	46	11.9%
More than 10 years	129	33.3%
Total	387	100.0%
Missing	9	2.3%

Q18. Current employment status:

Table 43: Total count and proportion of responses (descending order)

	No.	%
Full-time	304	75.6%
Part-time or fractional	75	18.7%
Sessional or hourly paid	14	3.5%
Other	5	1.2%
Jobsharer	4	1.0%
Total	402	100.0%

Q19. What is your contract type?

Table 44: Total count and proportion of responses (descending order)

	No.	%
Permanent	360	88.5%
Term-time only	21	5.2%
Fixed Term	14	3.4%
Self-employed worker	3	0.7%
Other	3	0.7%
Casual	2	0.5%
Flexi-time	2	0.5%
Employed through an agency	1	0.2%
Annual hours	1	0.2%
Total	407	100.0%

Q20. Have you experienced any breaks in your career, e.g. for maternity leave or any other reason? If 'Yes', please indicate the approximate length of time your career break(s) has totalled.

Table 45: Total count and proportion of respondents

	No.	%
Less than 6 months	57	14.5%
Between 1 and 2 years	33	8.4%
Between 2 and 5 years	41	10.5%
Between 5 and 10 years	28	7.1%
Between 6 to 12 months	83	21.2%
More than 10 years	9	2.3%
Have had no breaks in my career	141	36.0%
Total	392	100.0%
Missing	4	1.0%

Q21. Do you currently have caring responsibility for a child, children or other person?

Table 46: Total count and proportion of respondents

	No.	%
No	215	54.3%
Yes	181	45.7%
Total	396	100.0%

Q21.a. If 'Yes', please indicate how many children/people you have a care responsibility for?

Table 47: Total count and proportion of respondents

	No.	%
1	85	47.2%
2	75	41.7%
3	19	10.6%
More than 3	1	0.6%
Total	180	100.0%

Q22. Have you in the past had caring responsibility for a child, children or other person?

Table 48: Total count and proportion of respondents

	No.	%
No	163	41.2%
Yes	233	58.8%
Total	396	100.0%

Q22.a. If 'Yes', please indicate how many children/people you had a caring responsibility for?

Table 49: Total count and proportion of respondents

	No.	%
1	57	25.3%
2	121	53.8%
3	34	15.1%
More than 3	13	5.8%
Total	225	100.0%

