



IFF Research

Research Report Employer Tracking Survey 2012

Prepared for **CITB-ConstructionSkills NI**
By IFF Research

December 2012





IFF Research

Contact details

Mark Winterbotham, Ben Davies, Charlie Taylor and Sam Morris
IFF Research Ltd
Chart House
16 Chart Street
London N1 6DD
Tel +44(0)20 7250 3035

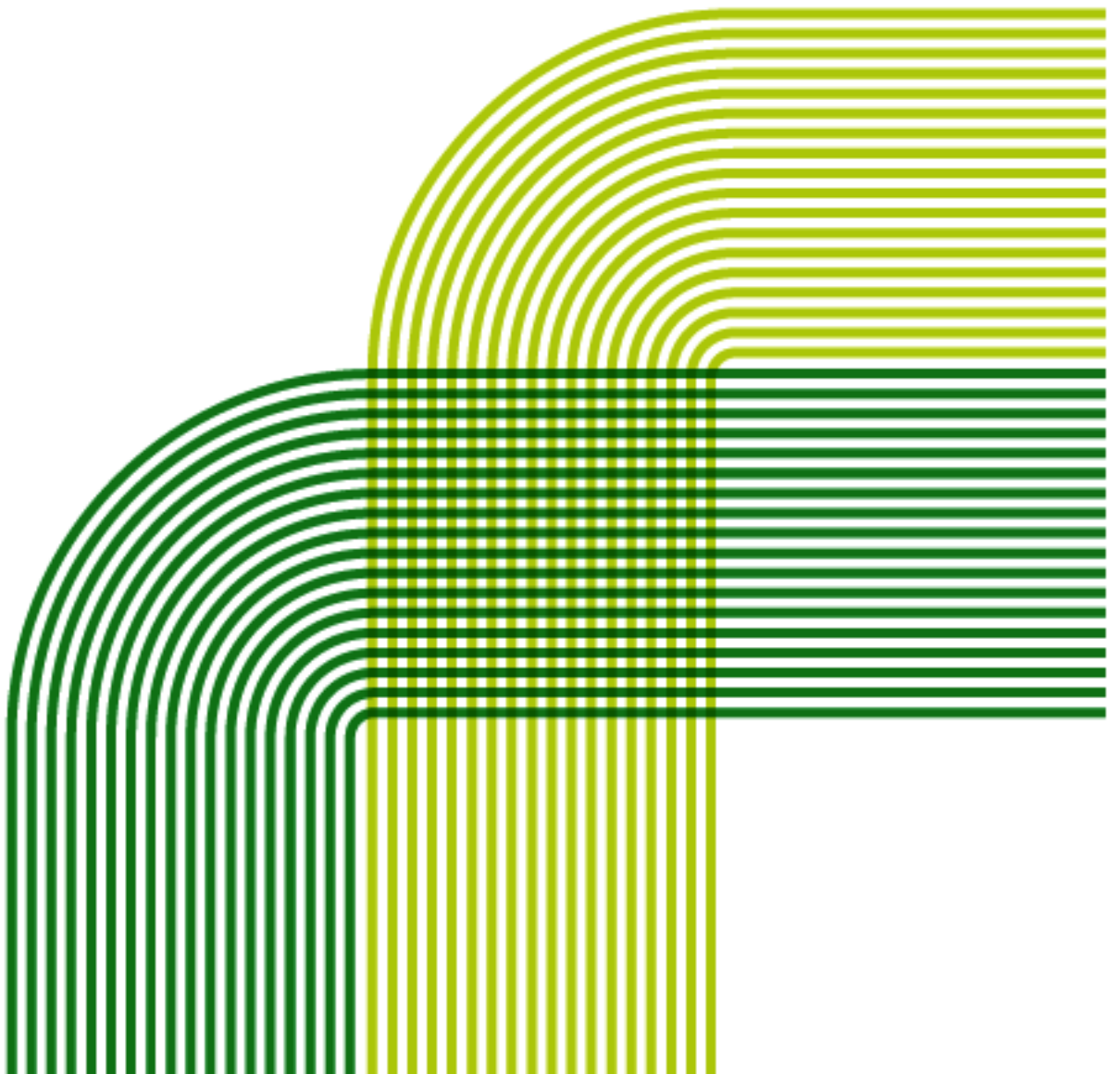


Table of Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Management Summary.....	3
3	Business performance, skills and training issues	8
4	Awareness, use and satisfaction with services	14
5	Communications	23
6	Overall opinions of CITB-ConstructionSkills NI	32
7	Support for the Levy and Grant System	36



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1 Introduction

- 1.1 ConstructionSkills is the Sector Skills Council for the whole construction industry across the UK, and is a partnership between CITB-ConstructionSkills NI, CITB-ConstructionSkills, and the Construction Industry Council (CIC). As a partner in the Sector Skills Council and as an Industrial Training Board, CITB-ConstructionSkills NI's mission is to develop and embed a training culture which will improve the skills and productivity of the Northern Ireland construction industry.
- 1.2 To fulfil this remit, CITB-ConstructionSkills NI provides various services to the construction industry in Northern Ireland and needs to be able to demonstrate that it has the approval and support of the industry.
- 1.3 To this end, IFF Research was commissioned to undertake the 2012 Employer Tracking Survey. The specific objectives of the research were to:
- Measure employer awareness, understanding and satisfaction with the range of products and services offered by CITB-ConstructionSkills NI
 - Assess views of communication received from CITB-ConstructionSkills NI
 - Assess the level of support for the continuation of the Levy-Grant system
 - Gauge perceptions of the value that CITB-ConstructionSkills NI adds to the industry's training culture
 - Understand more about training behaviour and attitudes to training.



Methodology

- 1.4 To ensure maximum comparability, the methodology for the 2012 survey closely replicated that used for the 2006 to 2011 Employer Tracking Surveys, and consisted of 100 telephone interviews with construction sector employers in Northern Ireland.
- 1.5 Quotas were set for company size (0-9, 10-49 and 50 plus staff) and grant status (grant receivers or not over the last 12 months) in order to ensure that the sample reflected the profile of the database of Northern Ireland levy payers, from which the sample was drawn.
- 1.6 The profile of the achieved sample was as follows:
- 0-9 staff: 60 interviews;
 - 10-49 staff: 30 interviews;
 - 50+ staff: 10 interviews;
 - Grant recipient: 58 interviews
 - Non-recipient: 42 interviews.
- 1.7 Fieldwork took place from 16th August to 17th September 2012. All interviewing was conducted from IFF's telephone centre in London. The questionnaire used for the study is appended.
- 1.8 No weighting has been applied to the survey data.
- 1.9 Note that for a survey sample of 100 interviews, the standard error is approximately +/- 9.8% at the 95% confidence level, hence some caution is needed when interpreting the results. In comparing 2012 with 2011 results, each based on 100 interviews, in the worst case scenario from a statistical reliability point of view of a survey result of 50% in 2011, then the survey result in 2012 would need to be +/- 14% to be statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.
- 1.10 In the report comparisons are made with the Northern Ireland Employer Tracking studies conducted in 2010 and 2011, all of which employed similar methodologies. The 2011 study, for example, involved 100 telephone interviews with employers in Northern Ireland conducted in August to September 2011.

2 Management Summary

- 2.1 This report presents the findings of a survey of 100 construction sector employers in Northern Ireland conducted in August and September 2012 and compares results with the 2010 and 2011 Employer Tracking Surveys.

Recent and expected business performance

- 2.2 The context for the research is of continuing economic uncertainty, following a 6% fall in UK GDP in 2008-09, the UK came out of recession in January 2010, only to return to recession in April 2012, and then to emerge from the double-dip recession in October 2012. About half of firms in the survey (49%) had experienced a decrease in turnover in the last two years, compared with a fifth (21%) that had seen sales increase. While negative, this is a considerable improvement on 2011 figures where two-thirds (66%) had seen a reduction in turnover. Just over half of those that had seen a decrease felt the situation had got worse in the last six months (57%), while just under a fifth (18%) felt that they had seen some improvement. Just over a quarter of employers were pessimistic about their sales and turnover for the next 12 months (29%), but a larger proportion were optimistic (35%); it is worth noting that more firms were very pessimistic (13%) than very optimistic (5%).

Skills issues facing the Construction Industry

- 2.3 When asked what the most important skills issues were facing the industry, many employers were unable to suggest anything (43%) perhaps implying skills are not currently seen as a key priority or problem. The downturn and recession was the most frequently mentioned issue for skills development (19%), followed by shortages of skilled labour (10%) and a lack of young people entering the industry (10%).

Skills gaps in their own firm

- 2.4 Overall, 9% of employers reported having some of their workforce that lack the necessary skills to do their job, down from 19% in 2011. Indicative of the continuing impact of the recession and the low level of work is that only one in twelve (8%) employers indicated that they were experiencing any recruitment difficulties at the time of the study.

Training activity

- 2.5 Just over three-fifths of employers had funded or arranged training or development for any staff in the last 12 months (63%). Predictably size is a key determinant of training activity. Among firms with fewer than 10 staff, 50% had funded or arranged any training, compared with 83% among those with 10 or more staff.
- 2.6 Results are higher compared to those found for the Employer Tracking Survey 2012 in Great Britain, where fewer than half of employers (43%) had funded or arranged training in the previous 12 months, but are broadly in line with results from Northern Ireland in 2011 (when 57% had provided any training). While the measure is a fairly blunt one (it does not detail the intensity of the training in terms of the number of days provided or the number of staff to whom it has been given), it does suggest that employers still recognise the benefits of providing training even with the financial pressures of the downturn.
- 2.7 Meeting health and safety requirements, maintaining employee credentials and certifications, and helping employees meet new responsibilities remain, as in 2011 and 2010, the key motivations for providing training.

Awareness, use and satisfaction with CITB-ConstructionSkills NI and its services

- 2.8 Almost four-fifths of employers (78%) were aware that CITB Northern Ireland is now part of the Sector Skills Council for the construction industry called ConstructionSkills. This is a large increase on 2011 (60%), and has increased steadily since 2009 (48%). As in previous years, awareness increases with size of firm, from 72% among those with fewer than 10 staff aware, compared to 87% where 10-49 are employed, and 90% among those with 50 or more staff (a low base of 10 respondents should be noted for the latter).
- 2.9 Most employers aware that CITB Northern Ireland is part of ConstructionSkills feel they have a good (42%) or adequate (38%) understanding of the role of ConstructionSkills, leaving 17% feeling they have a poor knowledge. This is not substantially different to the results found in previous years.
- 2.10 Once prompted, nearly all employers are aware that CITB-ConstructionSkills NI provides grants for training (96%), health and safety information and training (92%), the mobile training unit (88%), and training advice (85%).
- 2.11 Awareness that CITB-ConstructionSkills NI is involved in working with schools to promote construction careers to young people and their influencers, and conducting and providing labour market information and research remain the only two services which, when prompted, fewer than half of employers are aware it provides (37% and 43% respectively).

- 2.12 Overall around two-thirds of employers (68%) had used at least one CITB-ConstructionSkills NI service in the last 12 months, very similar to 2011 (64%) and 2010 (65%).
- 2.13 Over half of employers indicated that they had received grants for training in the last 12 months (54%), while around two-fifths had received health and safety information or training (43%). These have been the two most commonly used services since 2005.
- 2.14 Satisfaction levels with services aimed at employers are generally high, with mean scores for each service usually in the 4.0 to 4.3 range (out of a possible 5), as in 2011, though particularly high for the mobile training unit (4.7). Ratings were a little lower in relation to services aimed at the industry in general (such as promotion work in schools), but still positive, in the 3.4 to 3.8 range.

Communication

- 2.15 As in 2011, nearly all employers had heard or seen information about CITB-ConstructionSkills NI in the last 12 months (98%). Direct mail remains the main channel of communication, mentioned by 87% of employers, in line with the 90% in 2011. The proportion hearing about the organisation via email has risen substantially from 48% in 2011 to 68% in 2012. In addition, there has been an increase in the proportion hearing about CITB-ConstructionSkills NI via the internet (51%), and by text message (16%). In contrast, the proportion hearing about the organisation through the trade press has fallen over time, from 37% in 2010 to 22% in 2012.
- 2.16 Nearly two-thirds of employers had visited the CITB-ConstructionSkills NI website in the last 6 months (60%), up from 49% in 2011. The main reasons for accessing the site were grant scheme information (58%), looking for information on courses and training (28%) or completing a Levy Return (12%).
- 2.17 Satisfaction with elements of the website is generally high, with mean scores ranging from 3.7 (out of a possible 5) for the website being appealing, up to 4.2 for being up to date. The overall rating of the website was 3.9, with 75% satisfied and 10% dissatisfied.
- 2.18 Overall 85% of employers recalled receiving communications in the past 12 months informing them about products and services (similar to the 2011 figure of 89%). Most recipients were satisfied that the information about products and services has a recognisable style and design (85%), gives clear guidance on what to do next (81%), and is clear and easy to understand (79%). Employers are least positive (as in 2011) about the information being relevant and appropriate to their needs (54% rate this good but 22% felt it poor).

- 2.19 When asked what their preferred method is for receiving information and communication from CITB-ConstructionSkills NI, the 2012 survey indicates an important change in that the proportion wanting information via e-mail (58%, which has gradually increased from 24% in 2009) is for the first time higher than those preferring information in the post (49%, down from 64% in 2011).
- 2.20 Most recipients feel they get about the right amount of information (69%), with slightly more respondents feeling they received too much (18%) than too little (11%). Among those not receiving grant those satisfied with the quantity of information fell to just half (51%), with a third (31%) of this group feeling they received too much information.

Employer events

- 2.21 Two-thirds of employers (66%) were aware that CITB-ConstructionSkills NI has been running a series of employer events, similar to the 68% in 2011. Overall 23% of all employers had attended one of these events (equivalent to 35% of those aware of them). Nearly all attendees (91%) felt the events gave them the information they expected or needed. The areas that had been found most useful were the information on health and safety (30% of all attendees), information on grants (26% of attendees), and information about training courses including the mobile training unit (9% of attendees). Just over half (53%) of all employers expected to attend future events.

Overall views of CITB-ConstructionSkills NI

- 2.22 Employers were generally satisfied with how CITB-ConstructionSkills NI serves the industry. As in previous years, employers were most positive about the organisation being easy to deal with (65% satisfied). Satisfaction in 2012 remained similar to 2011, and represent an improvement on levels seen in 2010.
- 2.23 Regarding the overall service CITB-ConstructionSkills NI provides to the industry, three-fifths were satisfied (59%) and 14% dissatisfied; very similar to 2011. The most frequently mentioned reasons for dissatisfaction were resentment of the levy payment (7 respondents), and perceived excessive bureaucracy (3 respondents).
- 2.24 Employers were very positive about their interactions with CITB-ConstructionSkills NI for staff being helpful and polite (81% satisfied), and being fair and accessible (65% satisfied). In *relative* terms satisfaction was lower for being accountable (55% satisfied), and listening to customers and reflecting this in its products and services (59% satisfied) – still on these two measures the balance of opinion is positive.
- 2.25 Overall satisfaction with the service provided to their company is reasonably high: almost three-fifths of employers were satisfied (60%), while 14% were dissatisfied. The mean score (3.8) was unchanged from 2011.

Grants and support for the Levy-Grant system

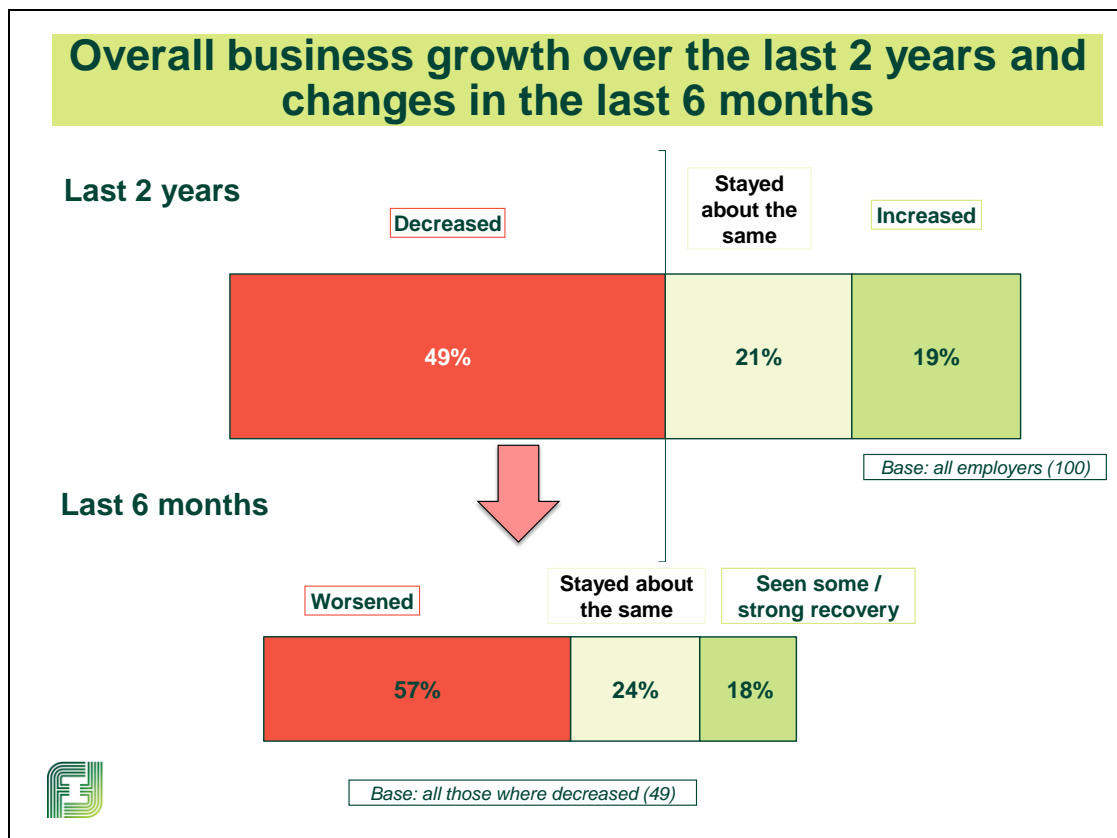
- 2.26 Around three-quarters of employers think the Levy-Grant system is important for maintaining the level and quality of training within the *industry* as a whole (75%, up from 69% in 2011). Fewer (61%) think it plays an important role in maintaining the level and quality of training within their own firm, again higher than in 2011 (54%). Predictably the perceived importance of the Levy-Grant system for their own firm is higher among recipients of grant in the last 12 months (76% regard it as important for maintaining their training levels).
- 2.27 Encouragingly many more think if there was no statutory body providing grants for training then training, progress towards a qualified workforce, availability of skilled labour and recruitment difficulties would get worse rather than improve. Training within the industry was seen as the area that would suffer the most without grants, with just under seven in ten employers feeling the levels of training would reduce (68%). Progress towards a qualified workforce and the availability of skilled labour were also seen as key areas that would suffer without grant (by 49% and 42% respectively).
- 2.28 Just under seven in ten employers believe that the Levy-Grant system should continue (68%), slightly lower (although not significantly so) than the 2011 figure of 71%, and in line with 2010 (69%). The level of support for the Levy-Grant system is higher than the level found across Great Britain as a whole in 2012 (62%). Predictably, grant recipients were far more likely to support continuation (78%) than non-recipients (55%).

3 Business performance, skills and training issues

3.1 This chapter discusses recent business performance, optimism for the coming 12 months, and then skills and training issues, covering the training that firms have undertaken over the last 12 months, as well as the barriers to investing in (more) training, and the skills issues which they believe the industry will face in the next few years. This provides context to understand the market for CITB-ConstructionSkills NI's products and services now and in the near future.

Sales turnover

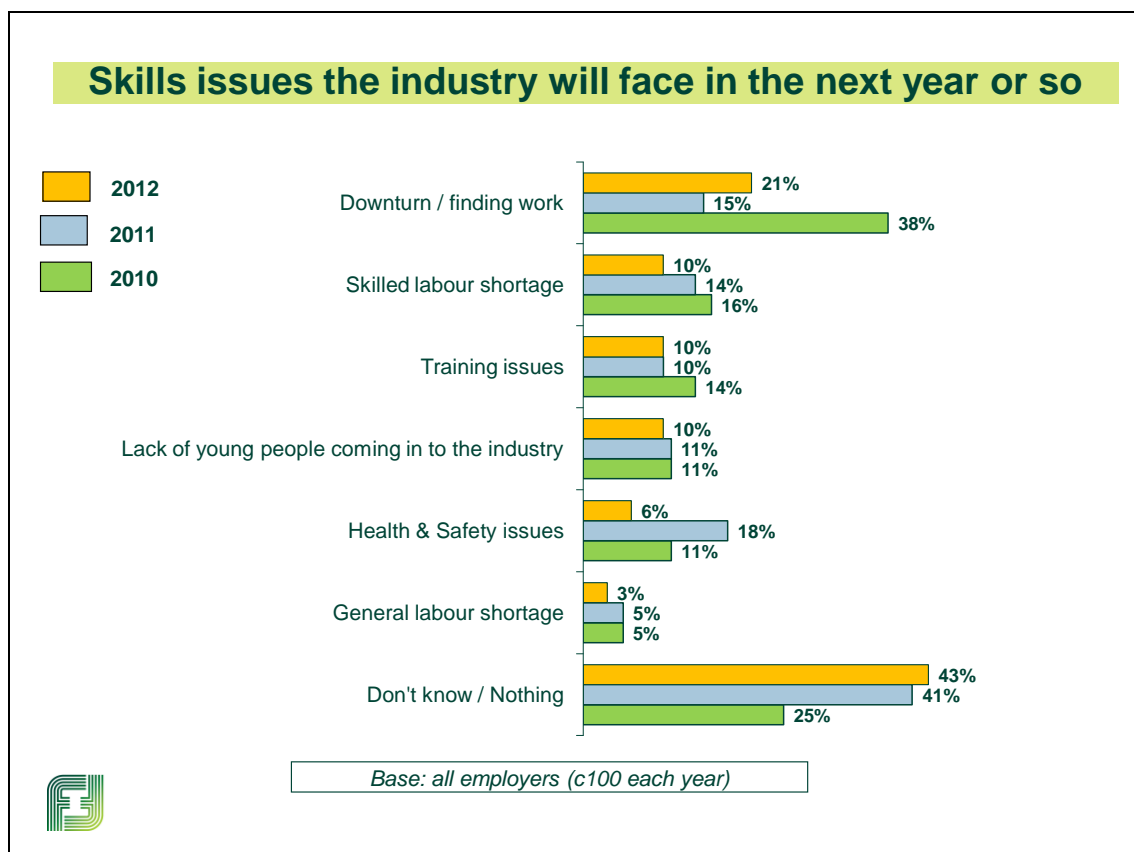
Employers were asked to indicate whether their sales / turnover had increased, decreased or stayed at about the same level during the recession of the last two years. If they had experienced a decrease, they were asked whether they had seen any improvement in the last six months. About half of employers had experienced a decrease in turnover in the last two years (49%), compared with 19% that had seen an increase. Although negative, this is a considerable improvement on last year's figures where two-thirds (66%) saw a decrease in turnover and fewer (14%) saw an increase. Just over half of those who had seen a decrease in turnover in the last 2 years felt the situation had got worse in the last six months (57%) compared with a fifth (18%) seeing some improvement.



- 3.2 Looking to the future, just over a quarter of employers were pessimistic about their sales and turnover for the next 12 months (29%), with 13% very pessimistic. Again although downbeat, this is less so than in 2011. Around a third of employers (35%) are optimistic about sales turnover and profitability for the next 12 months, unchanged from 2011.
- 3.3 Smaller firms appear more pessimistic: 37% of those with less than 10 staff are pessimistic about sales and turnover for the coming 12 months, compared with 17% among those with 10-49 staff and 20% among those with 50+ staff. However, caution should be taken in the interpretation of these figures due to the small base sizes, particularly those for employers with 50+ staff, where only 10 were interviewed in Northern Ireland.
- 3.4 Clearly though the general picture is that it is likely to continue to be a difficult environment to promote CITB-ConstructionSkills NI's products and services.

Skills issues facing the industry

- 3.5 Employers were asked what they considered to be the most important skills issues facing the industry in the next year or so. Results on this spontaneous question are shown on the following chart.



- 3.6 Around two-fifths of employers (43%) either did not know of or did not feel that there were any particular skills issues facing the industry in the next year or so, in line with 2011. In 2012 the most common skills issue that was mentioned was the downturn and recession (21%), followed by shortages of skilled labour (10%) and a lack of young people coming into the industry (10%). Health and Safety issues were mentioned by considerably fewer respondents in 2012 than in 2011. As in both 2010 and 2011, the issue of a skilled labour shortage continues to remain a wider concern than a general labour shortage (10% compared with 3%), suggesting that any shortages continue to relate to the higher skilled roles.
- 3.7 Only 1% of employers spontaneously mentioned low carbon technology or sustainability (or closely related issues) as important skills issues in the industry.

Skills gaps in their own firm

- 3.8 Overall, 9% of employers reported having some of their workforce not fully proficient, down from 19% in 2011.
- 3.9 Indicative of the continuing impact of the recession and the low level of work is that only one in twelve employers (8%) indicated that they were experiencing any recruitment difficulties at the time of the study, broadly in line with 2011 (10%).

Training activity

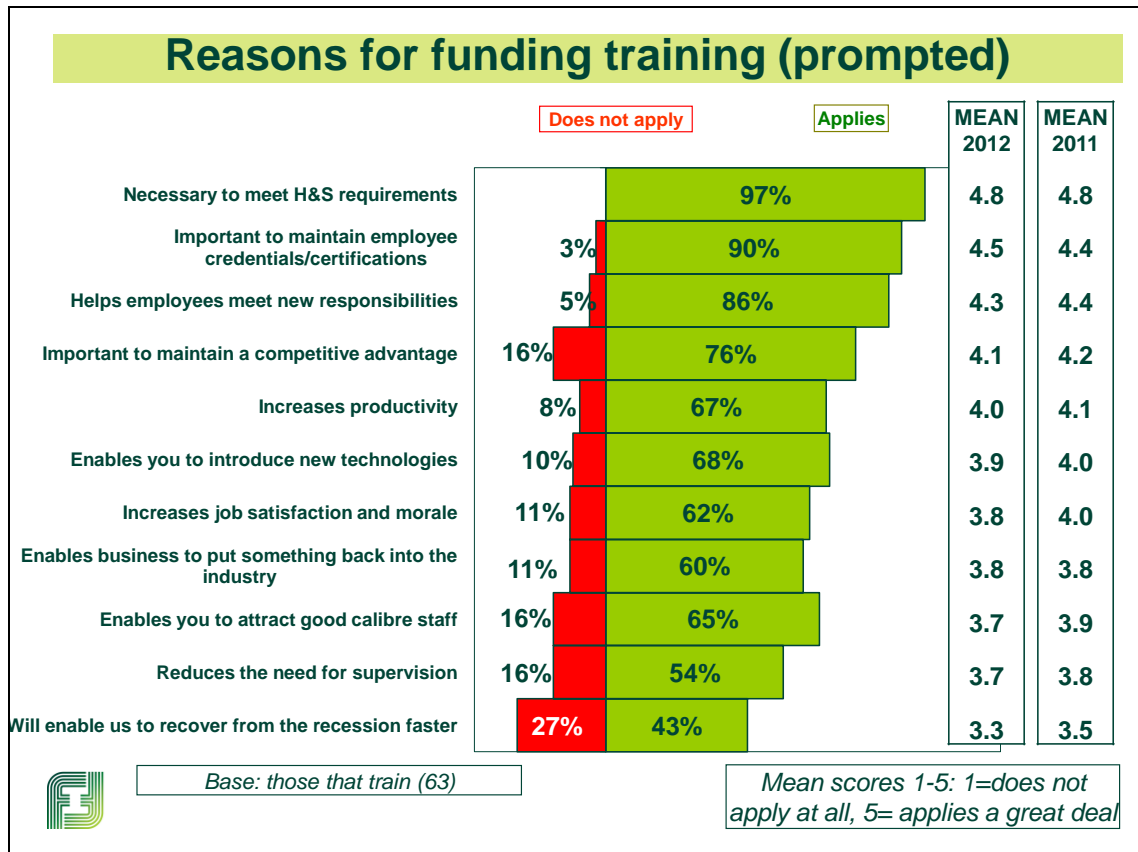
- 3.10 Just over three-fifths of the employers interviewed had funded or arranged training or development for any staff in the last 12 months (63%). Employers were a little more likely to have provided off-the-job training (57% of all employers) than on-the-job / informal training and development (41%) – a third of all employers (35%) had provided both.
- 3.11 Predictably size is a key determinant of training activity. Among firms with fewer than 10 staff, 50% had funded or arranged any training, compared with 83% among those with 10 or more staff.
- 3.12 Results are higher compared to those found for the Employer Tracking Survey 2012 in Great Britain, where approaching half of employers had funded or arranged training in the previous 12 months (43%). The proportion in Northern Ireland who had funded or arranged training in the previous 12 months was also approximately in line with that found in 2011 (when 57% had provided any training). While the measure is a fairly blunt one (it does not detail the intensity of the training in terms of the number of days provided or the number of staff to whom it has been given), it does suggest that employers in Northern Ireland still recognise the benefits of providing training despite the financial pressures caused by the downturn.

3.13 The following table shows for 2012 and 2011 the types of training activity undertaken, with figures based on all employers and then just those that train. Just over half of all employers in 2012 (54%, equivalent to 86% of those providing any training) had put staff through a formal training programme in the last 12 months, a slight increase on 2011. A third of all employers had trained some staff towards a nationally recognised qualification (35%) and / or created or developed a training plan (35%), both in line with the findings in 2011.

Training activity in the last 12 months (prompted)				
	2012		2011	
	All employers	Those that train	All employers	Those that train
<i>Base:</i>	100	63	100	57
	%	%	%	%
Any training	63	100	57	100
Put any of workforce through a training programme	54	86	42	74
Any in the last 12 months to a nationally recognised qualification	35	56	32	56
Created a training plan	35	56	33	58
Taken on an apprentice	18	29	19	33

3.14 Around one in five employers (18%) indicated that they had taken on an Apprentice in the last 12 months, again very close to the figure found in 2011 (19%).

3.15 Meeting health and safety requirements, maintaining employee credentials and certifications, and helping employees meet new responsibilities appear to be the key motivations for providing training, as in 2011 and 2010. Other important motivations are to give the firm a competitive advantage, for improving productivity, to enable the introduction of new technologies and for staff morale. The following chart shows the extent to which firms that train say a number of potential reasons for training apply to them. This is a prompted question. For simplicity those answering don't know or those who were neutral about a statement are not shown.



3.16 Less than half (43%) of those that train think training will help them recover from the recession quicker (compared to more than a quarter that think it will not help). Employers seem slightly less positive about the potential impact of training in this regard in 2012 than 2011: in 2011 more than half of employers that train (54%) felt it would help them recover from the recession faster.

3.17 Just under two-thirds of employers that train (62%) would have liked to have undertaken more training over the last 12 months than they were actually able to arrange.

3.18 The two most common barriers to (more) training are the cost and the disruption to work patterns it causes, each mentioned by more than two-fifths of all employers. This was a similar finding to 2011, although the extent to which they were reported to be a barrier has dropped slightly (particularly for disruption to work patterns), continuing a fall also seen between 2010 and 2011.

3.19 The barriers to providing any / more training are presented in the following table. All respondents were read a list of statements and asked the extent to which each was a barrier to them training at all, or training more than they do, using a scale of 1-5 where 1 is not at all and 5 is a very significant barrier. The proportion answering a 4 or a 5 is shown on the following table with comparative figures from 2011.

Barriers to any / more training (prompted)		
<i>Base: all employers (100 each wave)</i>	2012	2011
	%	%
Financial cost	49	51
Disruption to work patterns	43	50
Concern that acquisition of new skills may lead to higher wage demands	30	35
Concern that may make staff more susceptible to being poached	28	33
Reluctance of staff to take up training opportunities	23	24
Lack of suitable training provision	19	27
Lack of knowledge about what provision is available	17	17

3.20 Clearly the grant is a means to reduce the cost of training for employers, but the results suggest it will also be important for CITB-ConstructionSkills NI to emphasise alternatives to formal off-site courses (online and other self-learning for example) which can serve to minimise disruption to work patterns.

4 Awareness, use and satisfaction with services

4.1 In this chapter we look at awareness, use and satisfaction with CITB-ConstructionSkills NI's services. We also look at awareness that CITB NI is now part of the Sector Skills Council (SSC) for the construction industry, called ConstructionSkills.

Awareness that CITB NI is part of the SSC for Construction

4.2 Approximately four-fifths of employers (78%) were aware that CITB Northern Ireland is now part of the Sector Skills Council for the construction industry called ConstructionSkills. This has increased steadily from 48% in 2009. Despite the high overall level of awareness, it is still the case that there is an increase with size of firm, from 72% among those with fewer than 10 staff, to 87% where 10-49 are employed, to 90% among those with 50 or more staff (a low base of 10 respondents should be noted for the latter).

Awareness and understanding of the role of CITB-ConstructionSkills NI				
<i>Base: all employers (c.100 each year)</i>	2012	2011	2010	2009
	%	%	%	%
Aware that CITB NI is part of ConstructionSkills	78	60	58	48
<i>Among those aware, understanding of CITB-ConstructionSkills NI's role is...</i>				
Good	42	47	36	48
Adequate	38	35	44	31
Poor	17	17	19	15
Don't know / not sure	3	2	2	6

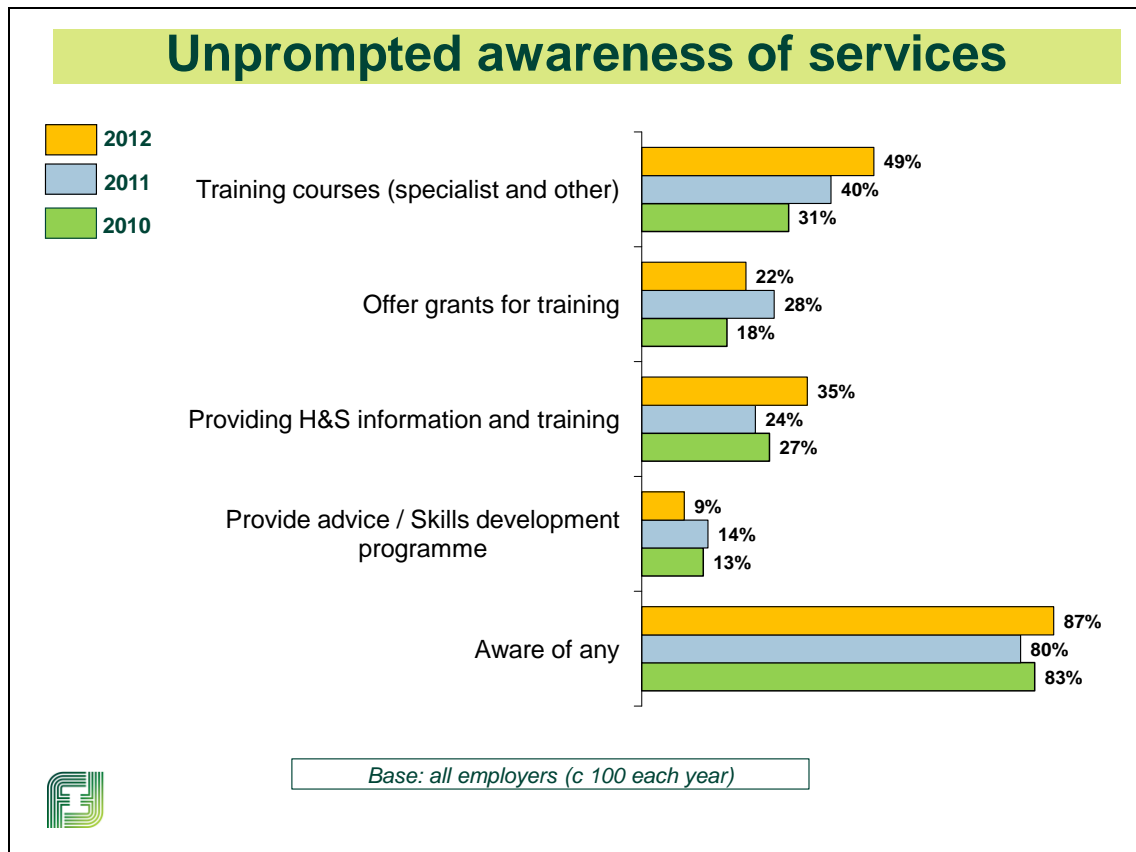
4.3 Most employers aware that CITB NI is part of ConstructionSkills feel they have a good (42%) or adequate (38%) understanding of the role of ConstructionSkills, leaving 17% feeling they have a poor knowledge; this is not substantially different to the results found in previous years.

4.4 Those aware that CITB NI is part of ConstructionSkills (78 respondents) were asked as a spontaneous question what they understood the principal roles of ConstructionSkills as a Sector Skills Council to be. The most common responses were running training courses (27%), reducing skills gaps and shortages (10%),

providing advice on training and skills (6%), and providing grants for training (6%). Two-fifths of respondents were unsure (42%).

Awareness of CITB-ConstructionSkills NI's services

4.5 Employers were asked which services they were aware of that CITB-ConstructionSkills NI provides. Results on this spontaneous question are presented in the following chart, which lists the four most common services mentioned by employers in 2012, with comparative figures from 2010 and 2011.



4.6 The services employers most associate with CITB-ConstructionSkills NI on an unprompted basis are the provision of training courses, health and safety information and training, and training grants.

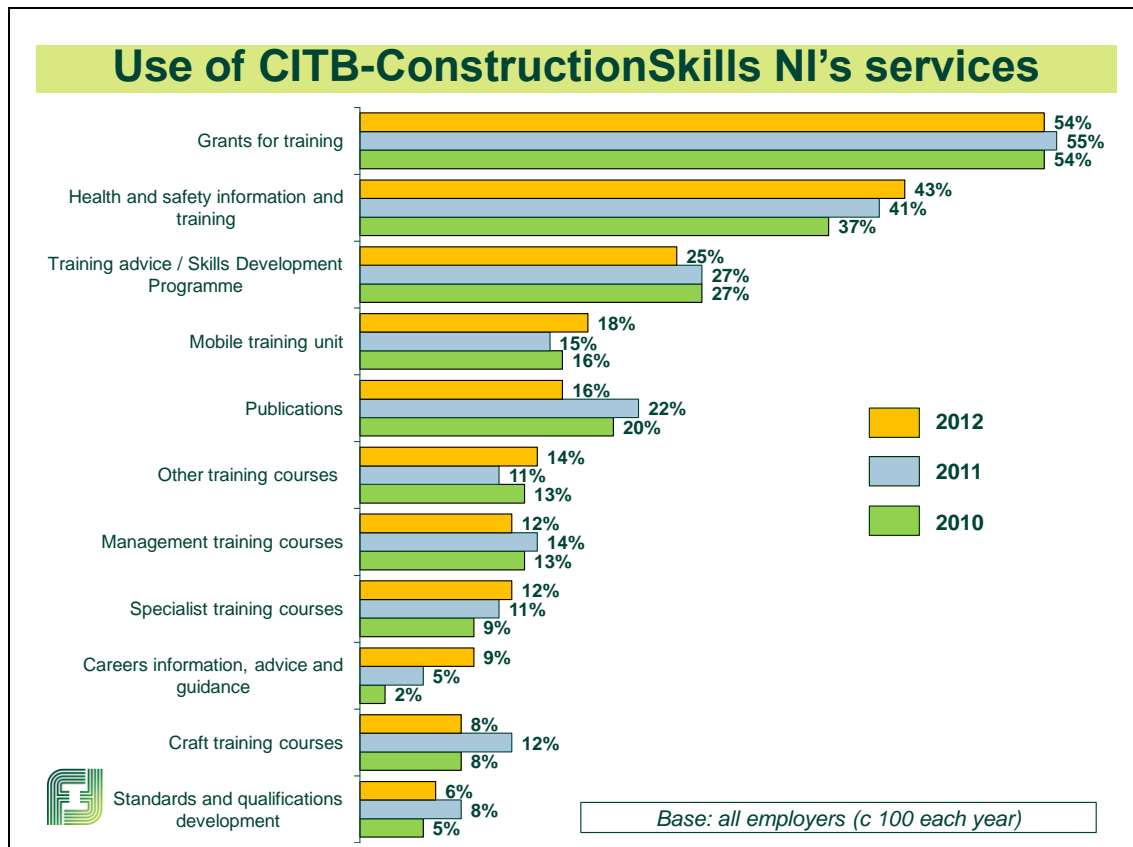
4.7 Once prompted, nearly all employers are aware that CITB-ConstructionSkills NI provides grants for training (96%), and health and safety information and training (92%). Awareness that the organisation provides a mobile training unit and training advice is also high (88% and 85%). The following table shows the proportion aware of each service when prompted, the figures highlighted in green represent large increases on 2011, whilst figures highlighted in red indicate large decreases in awareness compared with 2011.

Prompted awareness of services (prompted)				
	2012	2011	2010	2009
<i>Base: all employers (c. 100 each year)</i>	%	%	%	%
Grants for training	96	98	97	98
H&S information and training	92	94	96	94
Mobile training unit	88	87	94	93
Training advice	85	90	94	81
Management training courses	80	81	89	87
Specialist training courses	72	64	67	70
Provision of publications	71	80	78	75
Craft training courses	69	60	68	82
Other training courses	69	57	67	72
Improving the image of construction	65	69	57	63
Promoting and supporting IIP achievements	63	55	52	54
Skills competitions (e.g. SkillBuild)	63	n/a	n/a	n/a
Standards and qualifications development	61	64	57	60
Promoting industry registration schemes	60	57	59	62
Careers information and advice	60	51	61	63
Ensuring adequate FE & HE construction provision	55	54	52	61
Conducting research and providing Labour Market Information (LMI)	43	39	37	43
Working with schools	37	38	35	45

- 4.8 Awareness that CITB-ConstructionSkills NI is involved in working with schools to promote construction careers to young people and their influencers, and conducting and providing labour market information and research remain the only two services which, when prompted, fewer than half of employers are aware it provides (37% and 43% respectively).
- 4.9 Awareness of publications has dropped a little since 2011, but awareness of many types of training courses has increased a little. Awareness of CITB-ConstructionSkills NI's involvement in skills competitions such as SkillBuild was assessed for the first time in 2012, with 63% of respondents stating that they were aware of this.
- 4.10 In line with findings from previous waves, overall results indicate that CITB-ConstructionSkills NI is primarily associated with the provision of training courses, grants and advice for training, and less with such aspects as promoting the image of the industry, careers advice, support of liP, and standards and qualification development.
- 4.11 In 2012, employers were also asked about their awareness of "Qualifying the Existing Workforce", a CITB-ConstructionSkills NI programme providing fully funded NVQ assessments for experienced but unqualified workers. In total, 52% of employers were aware of this programme, rising to 80% among employers with 50+ staff.

Use of CITB-ConstructionSkills NI services

4.12 Employers were asked which of CITB-ConstructionSkills NI’s services they had used in the last 12 months. Overall around two thirds of employers (68%) had used at least one service, no significant change on 2011 (64%) or 2010 (65%). The results for the services used are presented in the following chart, which also shows 2011 and 2010 comparisons.

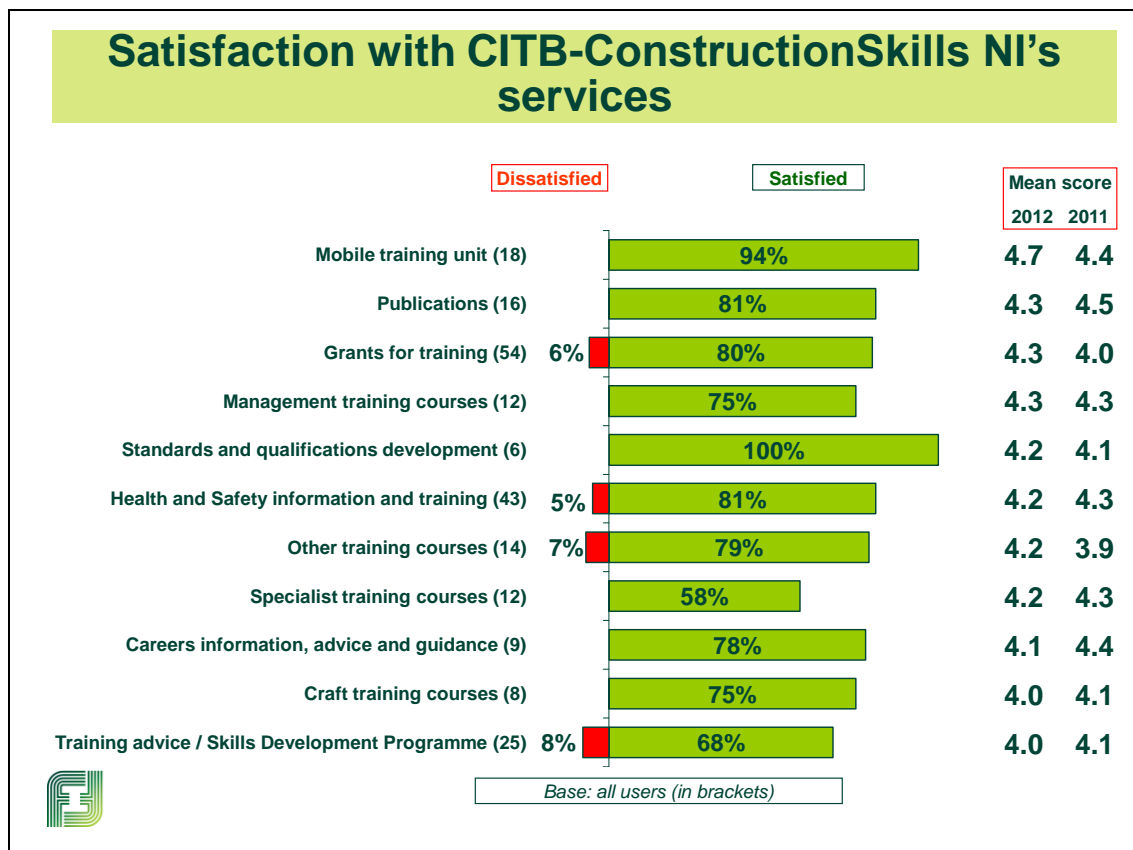


4.13 Over half of employers indicated that they had received grants for training in the last 12 months (54%) while around two-fifths had received health and safety information or training (43%). These have been the two most common services used each since 2005.

4.14 Medium and large companies were more likely to have used almost every service. For example, while 38% of businesses with fewer than 10 staff had used CITB-ConstructionSkills NI’s health and safety information and training, 50% of companies with 10 or more staff had done so. Similarly 8% of those with fewer than 10 staff had received specialist training, rising to 18% of those with 10 or more staff.

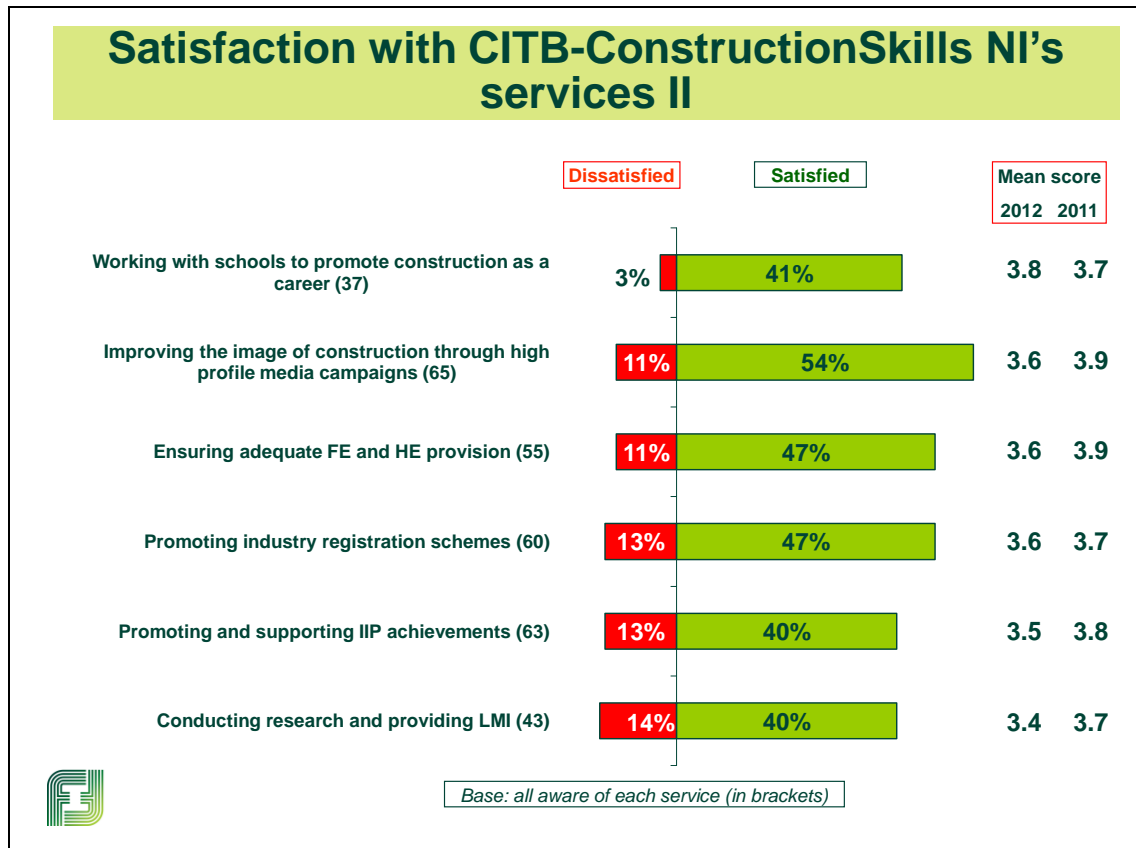
Satisfaction with CITB-ConstructionSkills NI services

4.15 Users were asked how satisfied they were with each service on a scale of 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied). Results are shown on the following chart, in descending mean score order, showing the proportion satisfied, and dissatisfied (for simplicity those neither satisfied nor dissatisfied are not shown). Mean scores are also shown for 2012 and 2011. Relatively low base sizes in some instances should be noted (base sizes are shown in brackets) – care should also be taken when comparing 2011 and 2012 results for many services due to low base sizes, shown on the chart.



4.16 Satisfaction levels are generally high, with mean scores ranging from 4.0 to 4.7 (out of a possible 5). Satisfaction was particularly high for the mobile training unit (mean score of 4.7). Levels of satisfaction have remained similar for all services, although it is notable (given the larger base size) that satisfaction with training grants has risen slightly since 2011, from a mean of 4.0 to 4.3.

4.17 Employers aware of services aimed at the industry in general (such as CITB-ConstructionSkills NI's work with schools, and its aiming to ensure adequate FE and HE provision) rather than services aimed at individual employers were also asked to say how satisfied they were with CITB-ConstructionSkills NI's work in these areas. Results are summarised on the following chart.



4.18 For each of these activities far more were satisfied than dissatisfied, and mean scores ranged from 3.4 (out of a possible 5) for conducting research and providing labour market information, to 3.8 for working with schools to promote construction as a career. Results are generally lower than in 2011 (often by 0.2 to 0.3 on the 1-5 mean satisfaction scale).

4.19 Employers were asked to rate the importance of the various services. This was either users of each service, or for the more general industry-wide services those aware that CITB-ConstructionSkills NI had this role. Results are summarised on the following table. Very low base sizes in some instances should be noted (base sizes are shown in brackets) – care should also be taken when comparing 2011 and 2012 results for many services due to low base sizes, shown on the chart.

Importance of CITB-ConstructionSkills NI's services (Mean scores: 1 not at all important, 5 very important)			
<i>Base: all employers using each service (all aware of each service where *)</i>	<i>Base sizes (2012, 2011)</i>	2012	2011
Grants for training	(54, 55)	4.5	4.4
Standards and qualifications development	(6, 8)	4.5	4.6
H&S information and training	(43, 41)	4.4	4.6
Provision of publications	(16, 22)	4.3	4.0
Management training courses	(12, 14)	4.2	4.2
Mobile training unit	(18, 15)	4.2	4.4
Specialist training courses	(12, 11)	4.1	4.3
Craft training courses	(8, 12)	4.1	4.2
Training advice / SDP	(25, 27)	4.0	3.8
Other training courses	(14, 11)	4.0	3.8
Improving the image of construction through media campaigns (*)	(65, 69)	3.9	3.8
Careers information, advice and guidance	(9, 5)	3.4	4.0
Ensuring adequate FE & HE construction provision (*)	(55, 54)	3.4	3.6
Working with schools to promote construction as a career (*)	(37, 38)	3.4	3.4
Promoting industry registration schemes (*)	(60, 57)	3.3	3.3
Promoting and supporting IIP achievements (*)	(63, 55)	3.2	3.2
Conducting research and providing LMI (*)	(43, 39)	3.2	3.2

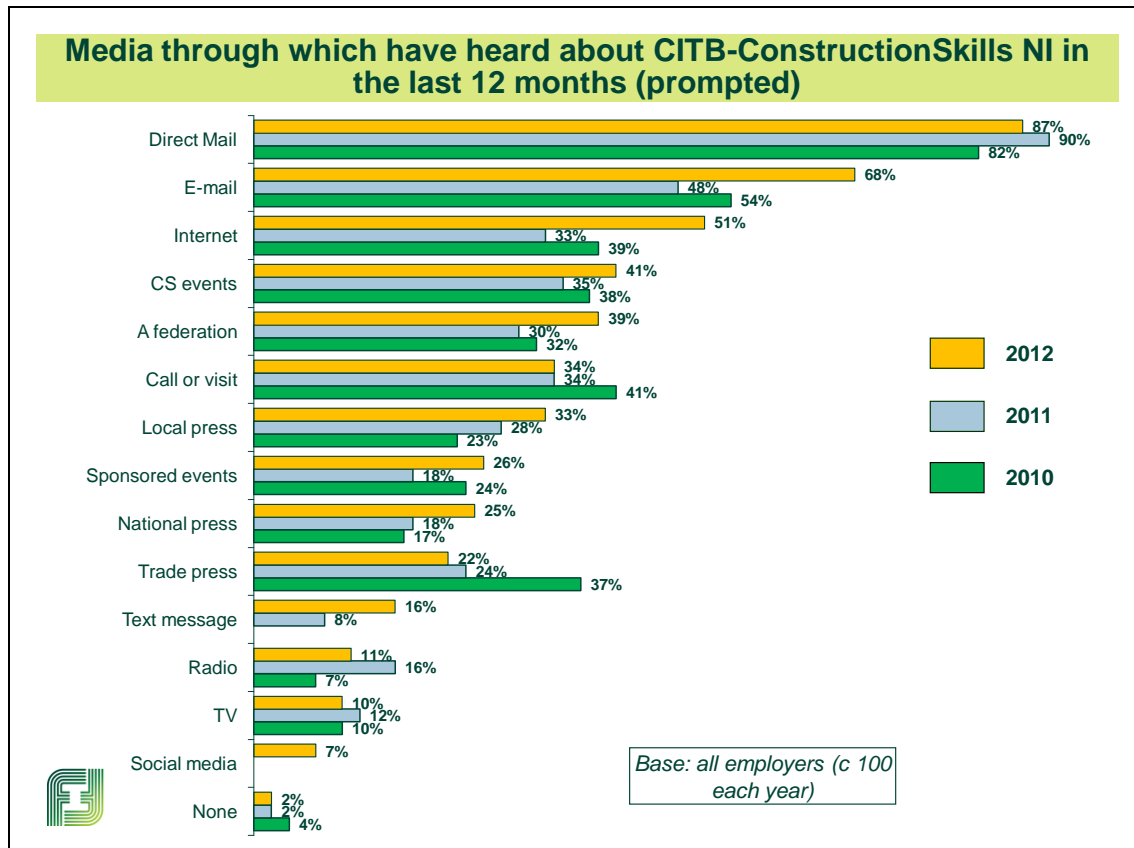
4.20 Results show that:

- Grants, health and safety information and training and publications were rated the most important services by users of each. Mean scores for these services varied from 4.3 – 4.5, on a 1-5 scale, where 5 would equate to all users regarding the service as very important. Standards and qualifications development also scored highly, but this result was based on a very small sample size.
- As in previous years, those services used by individual employers are rated more important than the more generic, industry-wide services. Mean ratings for most of these generic services ranged from 3.2 to 3.4, with improving the image of construction through media campaigns standing out as being considered more important, with a mean score of 3.9.
- As in 2011, it is also the case that over a quarter (27%) of those aware of CITB-ConstructionSkills NI's role in working with schools to promote construction as a career, and in promoting industry registration schemes, think this an unimportant activity. In addition, 32% consider promoting and supporting liP achievements to be unimportant, 30% and 27% respectively think the same about promotion of industry registration schemes and conducting research and providing labour market intelligence (LMI).
- Results are generally similar to 2011, though there is an indication of increased importance attached to CITB-ConstructionSkills NI publications (4.3 from 4.0). The importance attached to careers information, advice and guidance has fallen, but this result was based upon a very small sample size in each year.

4.21 When asked which they considered the single most important service that CITB-ConstructionSkills NI provides, by far the two most likely areas to be mentioned by employers were grants for training (25%) and health and safety training (20%).

5 Communications

5.1 Employers were asked whether or not they had heard of CITB-ConstructionSkills NI via a range of different media over the last 12 months. The results on this prompted question are presented below, with comparisons to 2010 and 2011.

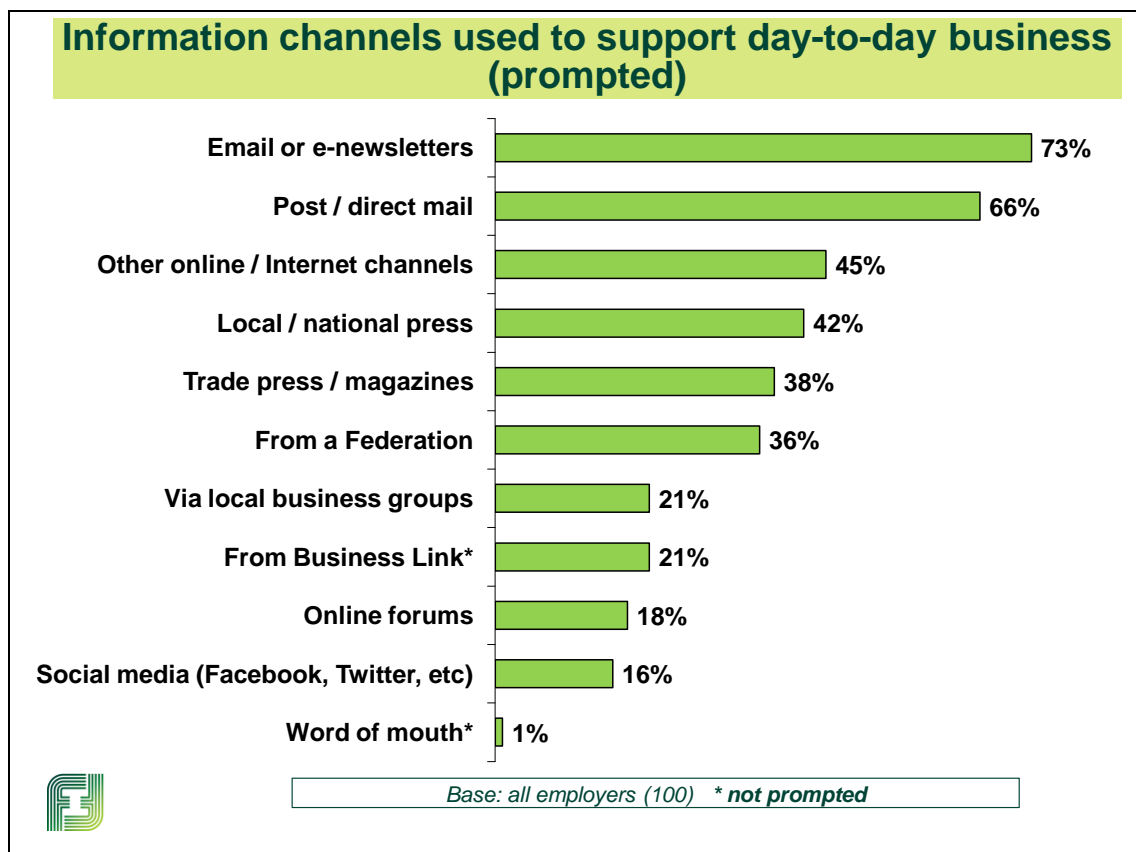


5.2 Nearly all respondents had heard about CITB-ConstructionSkills NI through at least one of these 'media' (98%).

5.3 The main channel through which employers hear about CITB-ConstructionSkills NI continues to be direct mail, mentioned by 87% (approximately in line with the 90% in 2011 and 82% in 2010). However, the proportion of employers who heard about CITB-ConstructionSkills NI through email has risen quite substantially from 48% in 2011 to more than two thirds (68%) in 2012. There has also been a substantial increase in mentions of the internet, with half of employers hearing about CITB-ConstructionSkills NI through this medium in 2012, up from just a third in 2011. An increased proportion (16% in 2012, compared to 8% in 2011) had heard about the organisation via text message, reinforcing the message that online and electronic media is becoming more important, as some traditional routes such as the trade press (at 22% in 2012, compared to 37% in 2010) decline in importance.

5.4 However, contact through social media, specifically measured for the first time in 2012, still remains relatively marginal at just 7% of employers.

- 5.5 There were some differences by size of firm. Firms with 10 or more employees were more likely than average to have heard about CITB-ConstructionSkills NI through most methods other than direct mail, phone calls and the national, regional or local press. For example, they were more likely to hear of CITB-ConstructionSkills NI through electronic media such as the internet (65%) or e-mail (75%), or through federations (50%).
- 5.6 To understand the communication channels being used by employers, respondents were prompted with a list of information channels they may have used to support their day-to-day business activities (i.e. marketing to clients, getting information about potential new contracts, looking for information, advice or guidance about business issues, and keeping up to date with developments in the industry). The most common channel used was email (73%), followed by post (66%), and other online / internet channels (45%). The full list of information channels used are summarised in the following chart.



- 5.7 Employers who used online sources to support their day-to-day business (email, other online, online forums, or social media) were most likely to access this information via a desktop computer (79%): just over two-fifths (42%) used a laptop and one in five used a smartphone (22%, equivalent to 17% of all employers). These figures are little changed since 2011, although the proportion using desktop computers has fallen slightly (from 86%). However, usage of tablet PCs was assessed for the first time in the 2012 survey, revealing that 12% of those using online services use this type of device to access them.

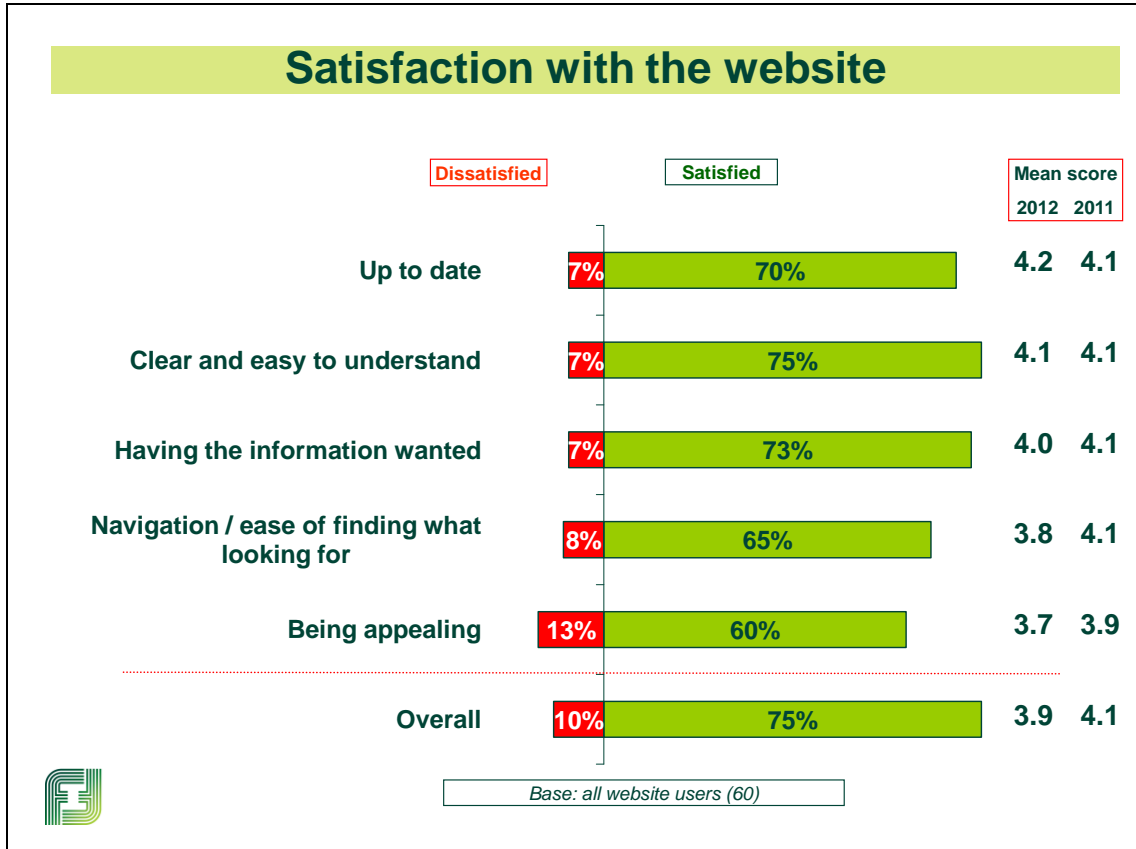
5.8 Online sources also proved popular for accessing information on recruitment, training, improving productivity, or reducing carbon. Nearly half of all employers (45%) spontaneously mentioned online or internet channels to look for this information, and nearly a third (30%) used emails or e-newsletters. Other less commonly used sources included post or direct mail (11%), local or national press (3%), CITB-ConstructionSkills NI (1%), Federations (1%) and the trade press (1%). Post or direct mail was more popular among micro employers with 0-9 employees (13% compared to 8%), while e-mail showed the reverse pattern (23% compared to 40%).

CITB-ConstructionSkills NI website

5.9 We have seen that the proportion of employers hearing about CITB-ConstructionSkills NI through e-mail and the internet is increasing and that online sources are popular information channels for business support. A number of questions asked specifically about the use of CITB-ConstructionSkills NI's website. Results show:

- Three fifths of employers had visited the CITB-ConstructionSkills NI website in the last 6 months (60%), up from 49% in 2011.
- Users appear to access the site quite frequently: nearly all those who used the website had accessed the site in the last two to three months (55% of all employers), and about a quarter (22% of all employers) had accessed it in the week prior to the interview.
- The most common way employers found the site was by using a search engine such as Google (63%, equivalent to 38% of all employers), though about a quarter of employers who had visited the site have it marked as a favourite (23%, or 14% of all employers).
- The main reason for accessing the site was for grant scheme information (58%, equivalent to 35% of all employers), though another quite common reason was for information on courses and training (28%, or 17% of all employers). Some respondents (12%, or 7% of all employers) said they used the site to complete their Levy Return.

5.10 Satisfaction with specific aspects of the website, and overall, is shown in the following chart. Satisfaction for all aspects of the website remained high in 2012 and mean scores of between 3.7 and 4.2 (out of a maximum score of 5) were given for each aspect. The website was rated most highly for having up-to-date content (a mean of 4.2), and least for being appealing (average rating of 3.7). Ratings are lower than in 2011 for it being appealing, the ease of finding what they want and overall (each 0.2-0.3 lower on the 1-5 scale).

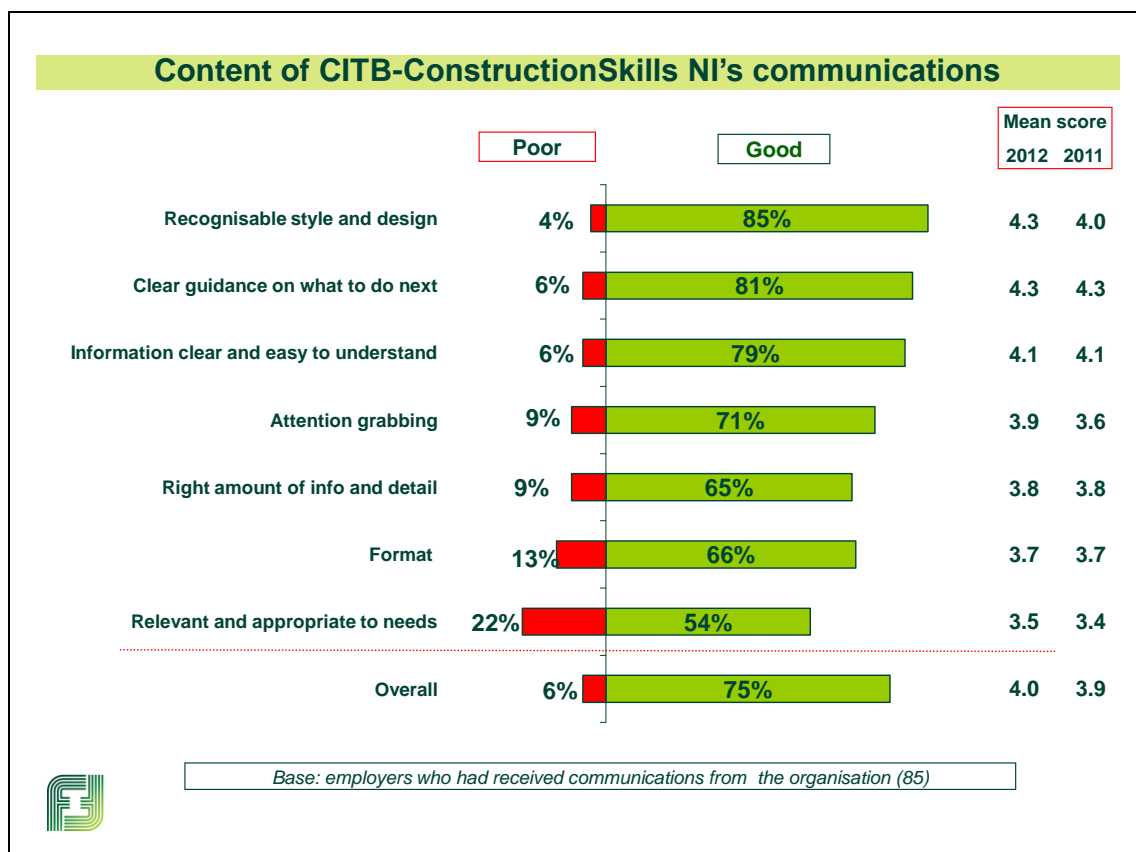


Communications on products and services

5.11 Approaching nine in ten employers (85%) recalled receiving communications from CITB-ConstructionSkills NI in the past 12 months informing them about their products and services (similar to the 2011 figure of 89%).

5.12 Most recipients were satisfied that the information about products and services has a recognisable style and design (85%), gives clear guidance on what to do next (81%), is clear and easy to understand (79%), is attention grabbing (71%), has a good format (66%), and gives the right amount of information and detail (65%). Employers were a little less positive about the information being relevant and appropriate to their needs (54% rated this good but 22% felt it poor). Generally though results are positive and overall 75% think communication on products and services good compared with 6% thinking this poor (the mean is 4.0, similar to the 3.9 mean for 2011).

5.13 Results are summarised on the following chart, which shows the proportion rating each aspect as good (a 4 or 5 rating) and poor (a 1 or 2) with the mean scores for 2012 and 2011. In nearly all cases the mean scores for 2012 are closely in line with those found in 2011.



- 5.14 When asked what their preferred method is for receiving information and communication from CITB-ConstructionSkills NI, the 2012 survey indicates an important change, in that the proportion wanting information via e-mail is for the first time higher than those preferring to receive information in the post (49%, down from 64% in 2011).
- 5.15 The proportion mentioning e-mail (58%) is no higher than 2011 (60%); looking back to 2009 only about a quarter sought email contact (24%) hence there has been a gradual upward trend. These findings are summarised in the following table; the figures in brackets show the results from 2011.

Preferred method for receiving information or communications from CITB-ConstructionSkills NI				
	Overall	< 10 staff	10-49	50+
<i>Base: received communication in the last 12 months</i>	85 (89)	49 (52)	28 (31)	8 (6)
<i>Multiple answers allowed</i>	%	%	%	%
Mail	49 (64)	55 (67)	46 (65)	25 (33)
E-mail	58 (60)	53 (58)	54 (58)	100 (83)
Face-to-face or phone	1 (5)	- (8)	4 (3)	- (-)
Text message	2 (n/a)	4 (n/a)	- (n/a)	- (n/a)

- 5.16 Results show that small employers with fewer than 10 staff are slightly more likely to prefer hard copy (55%) than e-mail (53%). The larger the company the more they are likely to prefer e-mail. Most recipients of information from CITB-ConstructionSkills NI feel they get about the right amount of information (69%), similar to the finding from 2011 (71%); however, about 11% felt they received too little information, and 18% too much.
- 5.17 Employers felt that information arrives at about the right time of year for it to be useful (79%), again similar to 2011 (82%). A small number felt that some communications arrived too late (6%); those mentioned varied from Grant application material (mentioned by two respondents) to leaflets about imminent training courses.
- 5.18 Clearly part of the aim of communication on products and services is to encourage employers to contact CITB-ConstructionSkills NI for more information. The proportion prompted to get in contact as a result of the communication on products

and services (47%) was very similar to 2011 (45%), maintaining its position well above the levels found in 2008 and 2007 (41% and 36% respectively). Where employers had got in contact for more information, nine in ten (88%) found the information useful, again in line with the situation in 2011 (90%).

Contact with the Training Operations Support Team

- 5.19 Two-fifths of employers (40%) said they had contacted the Training Operations Support Team in the past 12 months, almost identical to 2011 (39%), but lower than in 2008 (47%). Grant receivers were considerably more likely to have contacted the Training Operations Support Team (66% compared with 5% among those marked on the sample as non-grant recipients). Contact was most often in regard to grants (48%), though training courses were mentioned almost as often (43%).
- 5.20 Contact was nearly always by phone (85% of those making contact), though as in 2011 and 2010 a small proportion used e-mail contact (13% vs. 15% in 2011).
- 5.21 Employers were very positive about the response received from contacting the team: the great majority found them extremely helpful (85%, up from 64% in 2011), with a further 8% finding them very helpful. Only one employer interviewed who contacted the Training Operations Support team rated the contact as unhelpful. The overall mean score was 4.8 (slightly up from 4.6 in 2011, and considerably up from 4.2 in 2010).
- 5.22 Reflecting the high satisfaction with the helpfulness of the Training Operations Support team, a clear majority (75%) of employers who had contacted the team were either unable to think of an improvement or felt that no improvements were needed. The only specific improvement mentioned by more than one respondent was to improve communications by making them more responsive and clear.

Grant Scheme Information from CITB-ConstructionSkills NI

- 5.23 Four-fifths of employers (80%) recalled receiving information about the CITB-ConstructionSkills NI Grants Scheme in the last 12 months, lower than the proportion in 2011 (87%), but still above 2010 levels (73%). Only a minority of these employers (28%) had been encouraged to contact CITB-ConstructionSkills NI for further details: a reduction compared to the figure in 2011 (38%). The most common reasons for not pursuing more information on grants were that they already knew how to claim grant (38%) or that they were not interested in undertaking any training (40%); both factors which relate to the employer's circumstances rather than the content of the grant information.

- 5.24 Of the employers who had not claimed grant in the last 12 months the main thing that would encourage them to make a claim was if they had a need to train (38%); around a quarter did not know what would encourage them (26%).
- 5.25 Overall 20% of all employers had claimed a grant in the last 12 months as a result of following up Grant Scheme information that they received, a slight reduction from the 25% in 2011, but in line with 2010 (21%).
- 5.26 The vast majority of those that had not received Grant Scheme information in the last 12 months were aware that as a registered employer they could claim money to support the cost of training through the CITB-ConstructionSkills NI Grants Scheme (80%).

Employer events

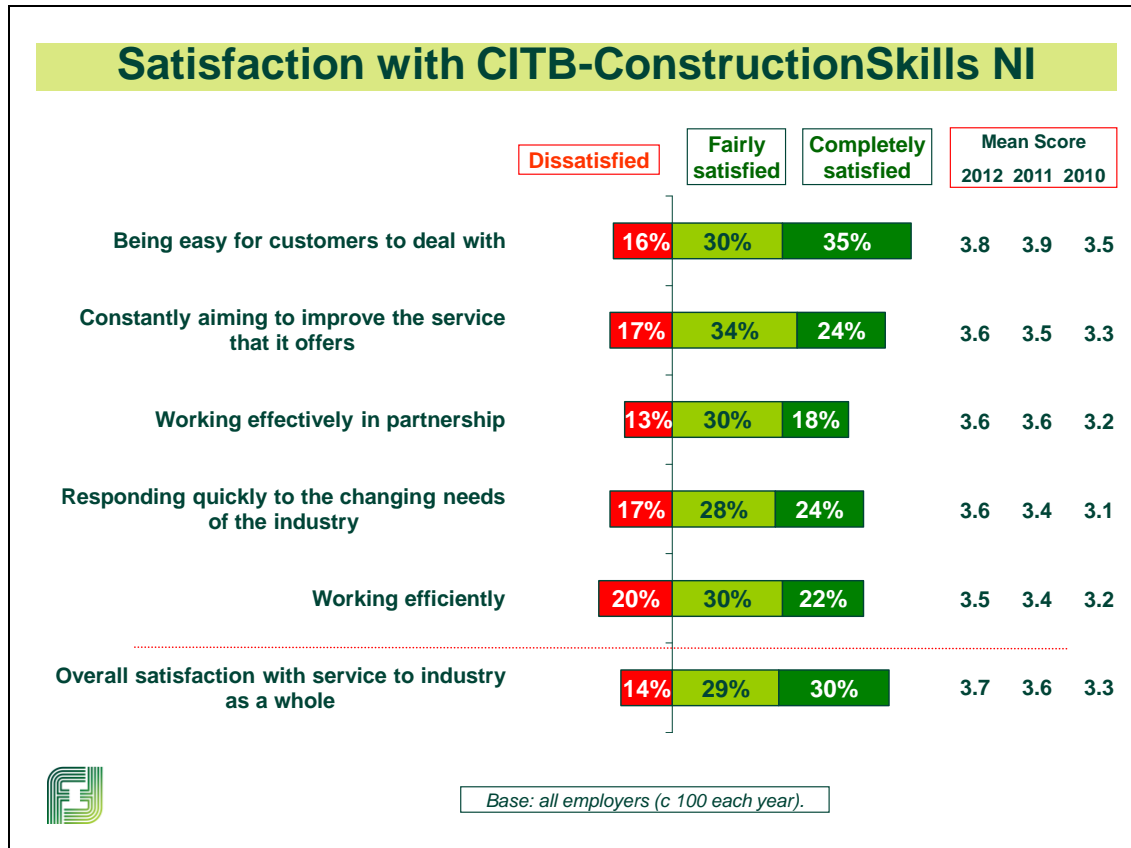
- 5.27 Two-thirds of employers (66%) were aware that CITB-ConstructionSkills NI run a series of employer events, similar to the 68% in 2011. Awareness was highest among companies with over 50 staff (90%), and higher than the average amongst companies with 10-49 staff (77%). Overall 23% of all employers had attended one of these events, similar to the 2011 level (21%). Small employers with between 10 and 49 staff and medium / large firms with over 50 staff were the most likely to have attended (30% among both); in comparison 18% of micro firms interviewed had attended these events.
- 5.28 Among attendees, most had first heard about the event through the post (48% of all attendees), or via email (35%). One respondent had heard about the events by text, and one respondent had heard about the events over the phone.
- 5.29 Nearly all attendees (91%) felt the events gave them the information they expected or needed.
- 5.30 When all employers were asked what sort of things they would like to be covered in such events many were unsure (30%) or said they would not attend such events (12%), but the main suggestions were for advice on various training issues (13%), information and advice about grants (12%), information about Health and Safety (5%), and information about the levy (4%).
- 5.31 Of those who did attend the events, the areas that had been found most useful were the information on health and safety (30%), information on grants (26%), and information about training courses including the mobile training unit (9%). Other areas, each mentioned by one respondent, were information on the levy, information on online services, training advice, and meeting the management team.
- 5.32 Most employers that attended the events had not requested further contact from any organisations represented at the event (48%), though 30% (7 of the 23

attendees) had requested further contact from Health and Safety Works NI; and for each of CITB-ConstructionSkills NI, HMRC, and the Labour Relations Agency one attendee had requested further contact.

5.33 Just over half of all employers (53%) expected to attend future events.

6 Overall opinions of CITB-ConstructionSkills NI

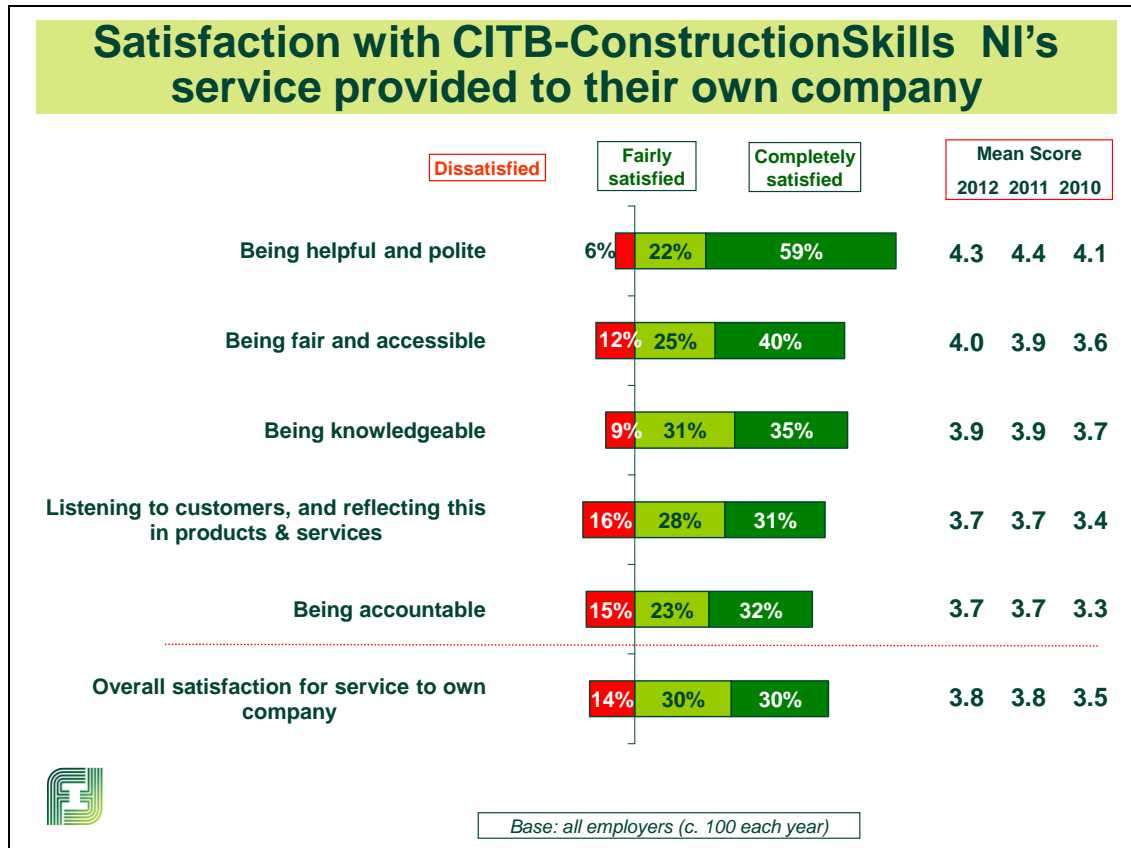
6.1 This section looks at overall views of CITB-ConstructionSkills NI’s performance. The first chart looks at views of the service it provides to the industry as a whole. For simplicity those answering with a rating of 3 (neither satisfied nor dissatisfied) or don’t know have not been shown on the chart. The final row shows overall satisfaction with the service provided to the industry as a whole.



6.2 For all measures assessed many more customers were satisfied than dissatisfied. As in previous years, employers were most positive about CITB-ConstructionSkills NI being easy to deal with: two-thirds were satisfied (65%) on this measure and the mean score was 3.8.

6.3 On all measures satisfaction was similar to the level found in 2011 and the mean satisfaction with the overall service CITB-ConstructionSkills NI provides to the industry has increased slightly from 3.6 in 2011 to 3.7 in 2012 in a 1-5 scale, with three-fifths satisfied (59%).

- 6.4 Reasons for dissatisfaction centred on resentment at the levy (7 respondents), an overly bureaucratic system (3 respondents), the training offered not being seen as relevant to the industry (2 respondents), being biased to larger companies (2 respondents), and services being too expensive (2 respondents). Insufficient grant or difficulties in getting the grant was mentioned by one respondent.
- 6.5 Employers were next asked to rate their satisfaction with their own interactions with CITB-ConstructionSkills NI. The final row shows overall satisfaction with the service provided to their own company.



- 6.6 Employers were very positive about their interactions with CITB-ConstructionSkills NI for staff being helpful and polite (81% satisfied), and for being fair and accessible (65% satisfied). In *relative* terms satisfaction was lower for being accountable (55% satisfied), and listening to customers and reflecting this in their products and services (59% satisfied) – still on these two measures the balance of opinion is positive.
- 6.7 Satisfaction on all these measures is very similar to 2011 (mean scores are either unchanged or increased / decreased by 0.1 point). Overall satisfaction with the service provided to their company is reasonably high: three-fifths of employers were satisfied (60%, including three in ten very satisfied), while 14% were dissatisfied and the mean rating was 3.8 out of a possible 5. Of the 14 respondents dissatisfied, the levy was a common cause, for example it being seen as a tax, or companies not getting as much back as they pay (5 respondents). Other reasons

included services / the organisation not being felt to be relevant (2 respondents), being biased to larger companies (2 respondents), poor communication (1 respondent), and grant too difficult to get or too small (1 respondent).

Recommending CITB-ConstructionSkills NI to others

6.8 Employers were also asked about whether they would recommend CITB-ConstructionSkills NI to others, and whether they had actually made such a recommendation in the past 12 months. Results on the first of these measures are shown on the following table. We also show the net promotion score (the proportion that would recommend or speak highly of CITB-ConstructionSkills NI minus those that would be critical or actively recommend against usage).

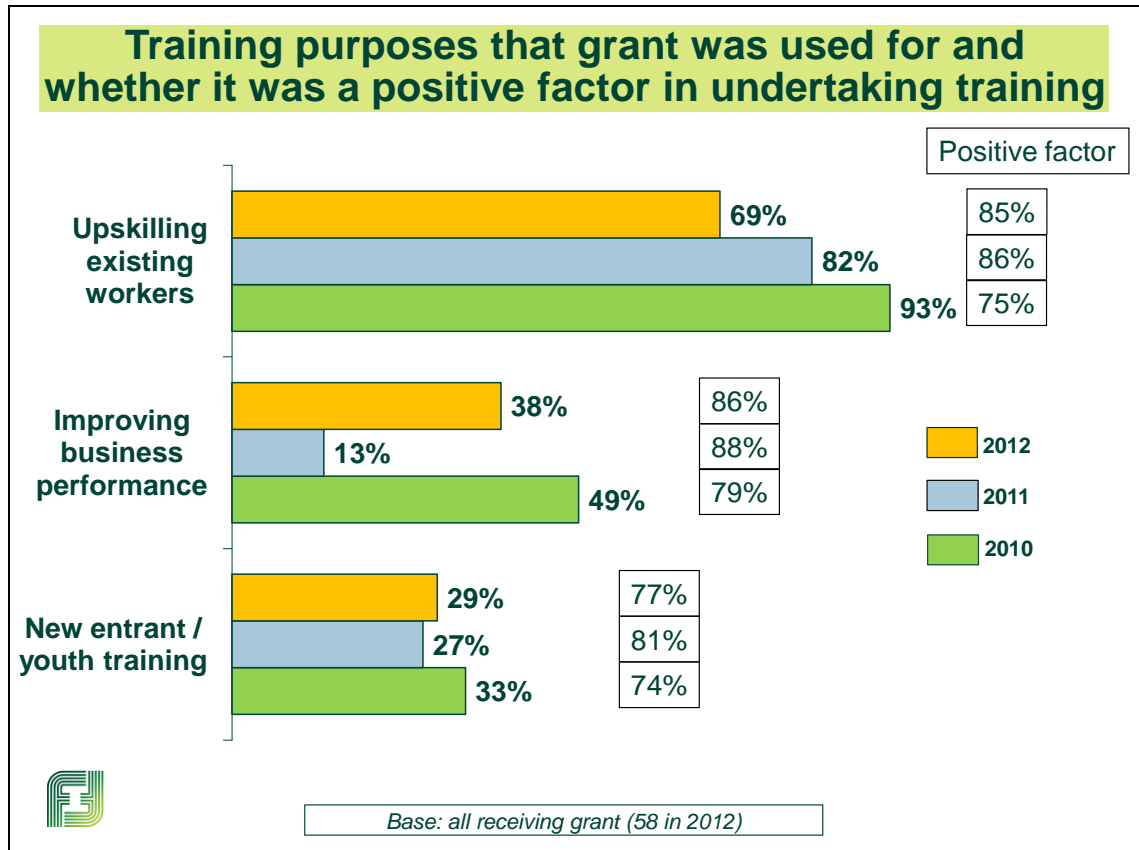
Whether would recommend CITB-ConstructionSkills NI (prompted)						
	Total 2012	< 10	10-49	50+	Total 2011	Total 2010
<i>Base: all</i>	100	60	30	10	100	101
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Would proactively recommend others use and contact CITB-ConstructionSkills NI	35	32	40	40	37	20
Would speak highly of them if asked	30	30	30	30	27	28
Would be neutral	21	20	20	30	23	28
Would be critical if asked	5	8	-	-	8	14
Would proactively recommend others against use and contact	5	5	7	-	5	8
Net promotion	+55%	+49%	+63%	+70%	+51%	+26%

6.9 Many more employers would recommend or speak highly of CITB-ConstructionSkills NI (65%) than would be critical or would recommend others not to use them (10%), producing a net promotion score of +55 percentage points. This is a slight increase compared with 2011 (when it stood at +51 percentage points), and a considerable increase compared with 2010 (+ 26 percentage points).

- 6.10 Predictably grant recipients were more likely to recommend the organisation than non-recipients (78% vs. 48% respectively). As can be seen in the previous table, the larger the employer the more likely they are to be willing to recommend the organisation.
- 6.11 In total 22% had actually recommended CITB-ConstructionSkills NI to someone in the last 12 months (29% of grant recipients but just 12% of non-recipients) - this is a slight drop from 2011 when 27% had actually recommended CITB-ConstructionSkills NI.

7 Support for the Levy and Grant System

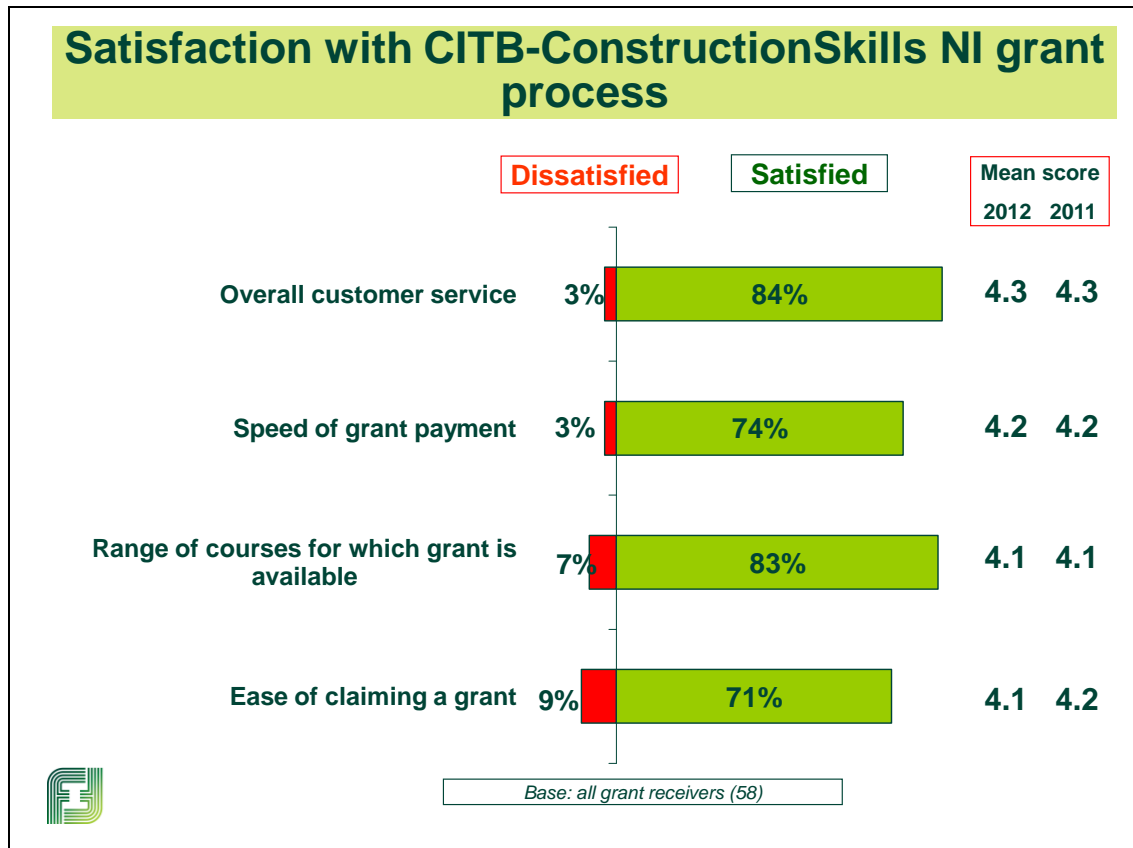
- 7.1 Fifty eight respondents had received grant from CITB-ConstructionSkills NI in the last 12 months. The following chart shows what they had used or claimed grant for, and compares this with results in 2010 and 2011. The figure in each box shows the proportion saying the grant had been a positive factor in undertaking the training (i.e. who did not feel that they would have done the training anyway).



- 7.2 As in 2010 and 2011, grant in 2012 was most often used for up skilling existing workers (69% of grant recipients had used it for this purpose), though this figure has fallen considerably since 2011 and 2010. Just under two-fifths had used grant for improving business performance (38%), this is a significant increase from the figure in 2011 (13%) and more in line with 2010 (49%). Three in ten (29%) had used grant for new entrant or youth training (similar to the figures in 2011 and 2010).
- 7.3 The availability of grant was a positive factor in enabling employers to undertake up skilling of existing workers and improving business performance for 85% and 86% respectively, whilst around three quarters found the availability of grant a positive factor for new entrant or youth training (76%). These results are very similar to 2010.

Satisfaction with the Grant process

7.4 Grant receivers were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with a number of aspects of the grant process as shown in the following chart. Satisfaction was rated on a scale of 1 to 5 - for simplicity those answering with a rating of 3 (neither satisfied nor dissatisfied) or don't know have not been shown.



7.5 Generally the level of satisfaction with the grant process was high with mean scores on various aspects of the grant process ranging from 4.1 to 4.3 out of a possible 5. Overall customer service had the highest rating with 84% satisfied and only 3% dissatisfied. The range of courses for which grant is available and the ease of claiming a grant received the lowest mean scores (each with 4.1), but the large majority were still satisfied with both aspects (83% and 71% respectively).

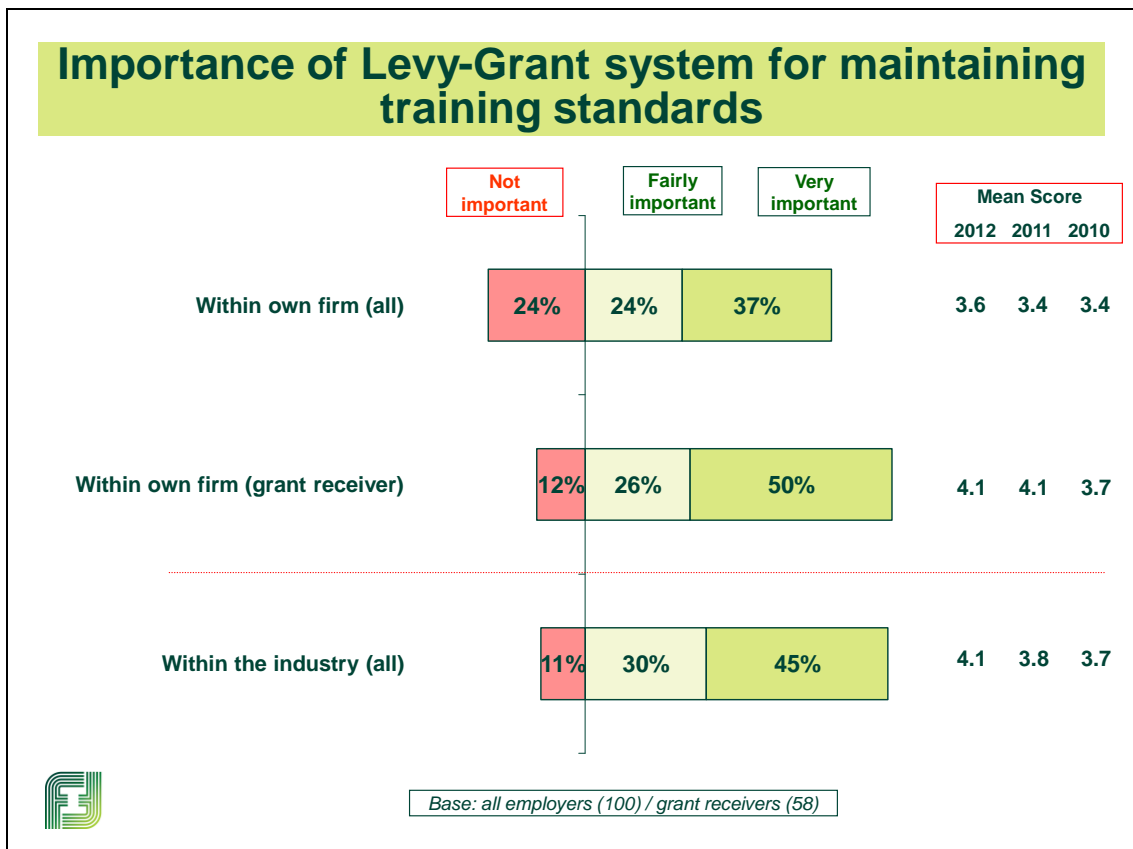
7.6 Four-fifths of grant recipients (equivalent to 47% of all employers) had used online grant services – this was most usually for making online grant applications or to obtain grant scheme information. Most were satisfied with the online grant service (85% satisfied compared with only 4% dissatisfied, a mean score of 4.4). Of those using the online grant applications two in five (41%, equivalent to 18% of all employers) had claimed the additional 2.5%. Where the 2.5% had not been claimed this was because they had not been aware it was available.

7.7 All employers were asked to suggest possible improvements to the current grants scheme – this a spontaneous rather than a prompted question. Three-fifths (59%) were unable to think of any improvement or felt that it was fine as it was. The most

common suggestions were for higher levels of grant aid (9%), a simplified application procedure (7%), and for grants to cover more courses (6%).

Importance of the Levy-Grant System

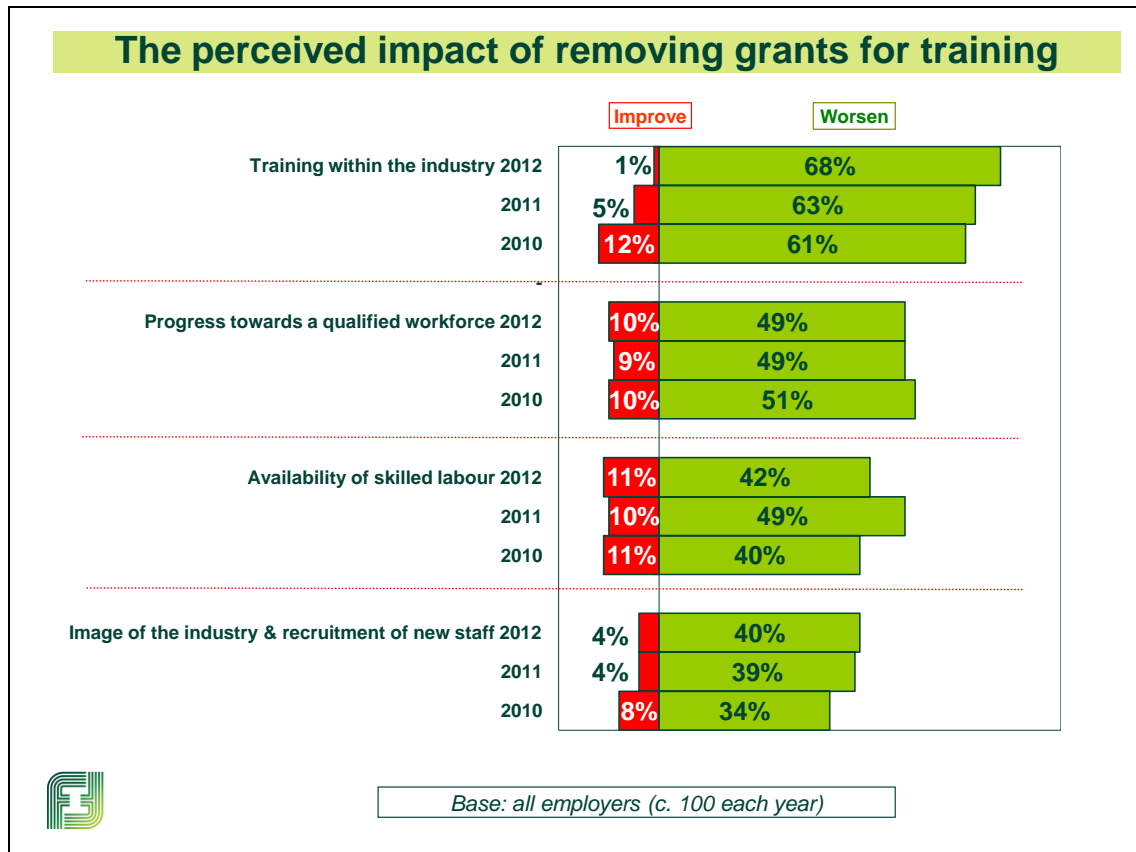
7.8 All employers were asked to rate the importance of the Levy-Grant system in maintaining the level and quality of training within their own firm and then within the sector as a whole. Respondents were asked to give their answer on a scale from 1 – 5 where 1 was not at all important and 5 very important. Results are summarised on the following chart, which for simplicity excludes those giving a neither important nor unimportant rating of 3. Mean score comparisons with 2010 and 2011 are also shown.



7.9 Three in four employers think the Levy-Grant system is important for maintaining the level and quality of training within the *industry* as a whole (75%), slightly higher than the proportion in 2011 (69%). Fewer (61%) think it plays an important role in maintaining the level and quality of training within their own firm (again higher than the level in 2011 - 54%). Predictably the perceived importance of the levy-grant system for their own firm is higher among recipients of grant in the last 12 months (76% regard it as important). Overall, results show increased importance placed on grant in 2012 for monitoring training standards, both for the firm and for the industry as a whole.

7.10 The following chart shows the perceived effect that employers believe having no statutory training body such as CITB-ConstructionSkills NI to provide grants for

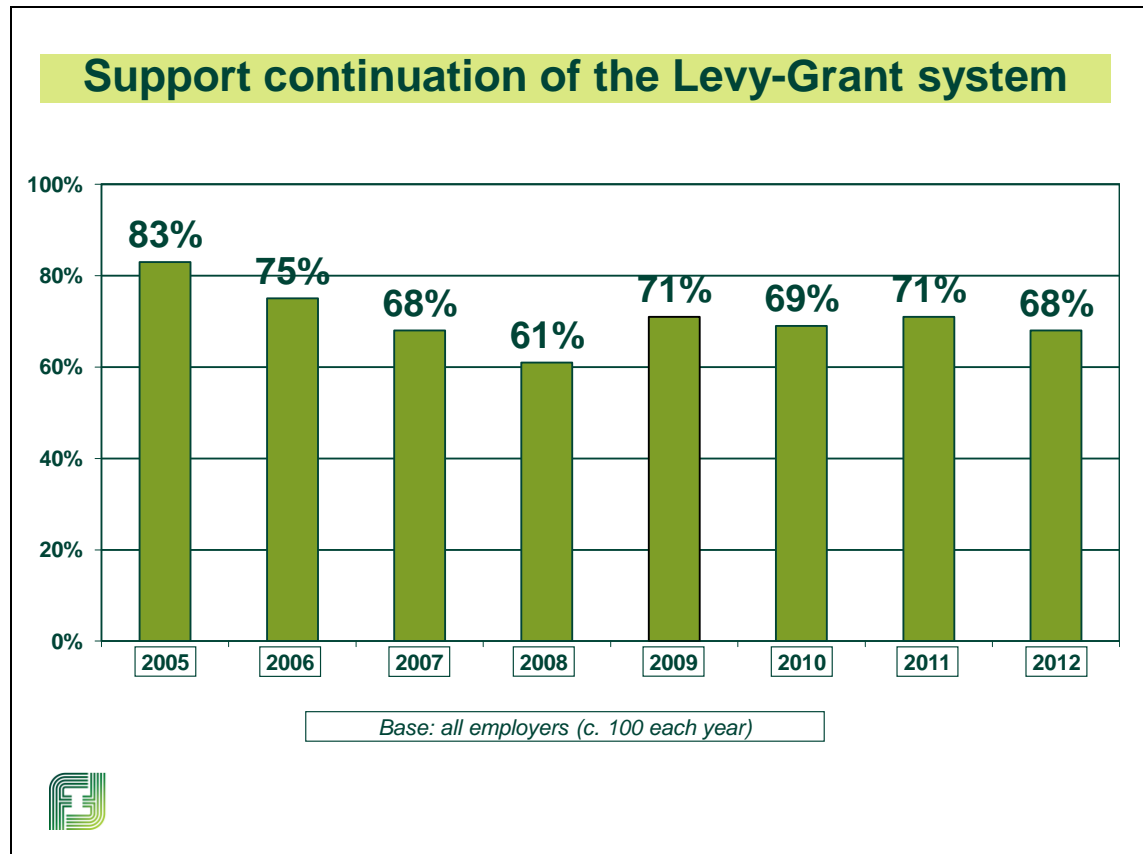
training would have on the industry. Respondents were read four areas (shown within the chart) and asked if having no grant provision would worsen or improve the situation across the industry, or have no effect. For simplicity, just those saying they think it would worsen or improve are shown. 2011 and 2010 comparisons are also shown.



7.11 Encouragingly many more think if there was no statutory body providing grants for training then training levels, progress towards a qualified workforce, availability of skilled labour and recruitment difficulties would get worse rather than improve. Training within the industry was seen as the area that would suffer the most without grants, with just under seven in ten employers feeling the levels of training would reduce (68%). Results are fairly similar to 2011, though slightly more in 2012 think training would suffer without a statutory body providing grant.

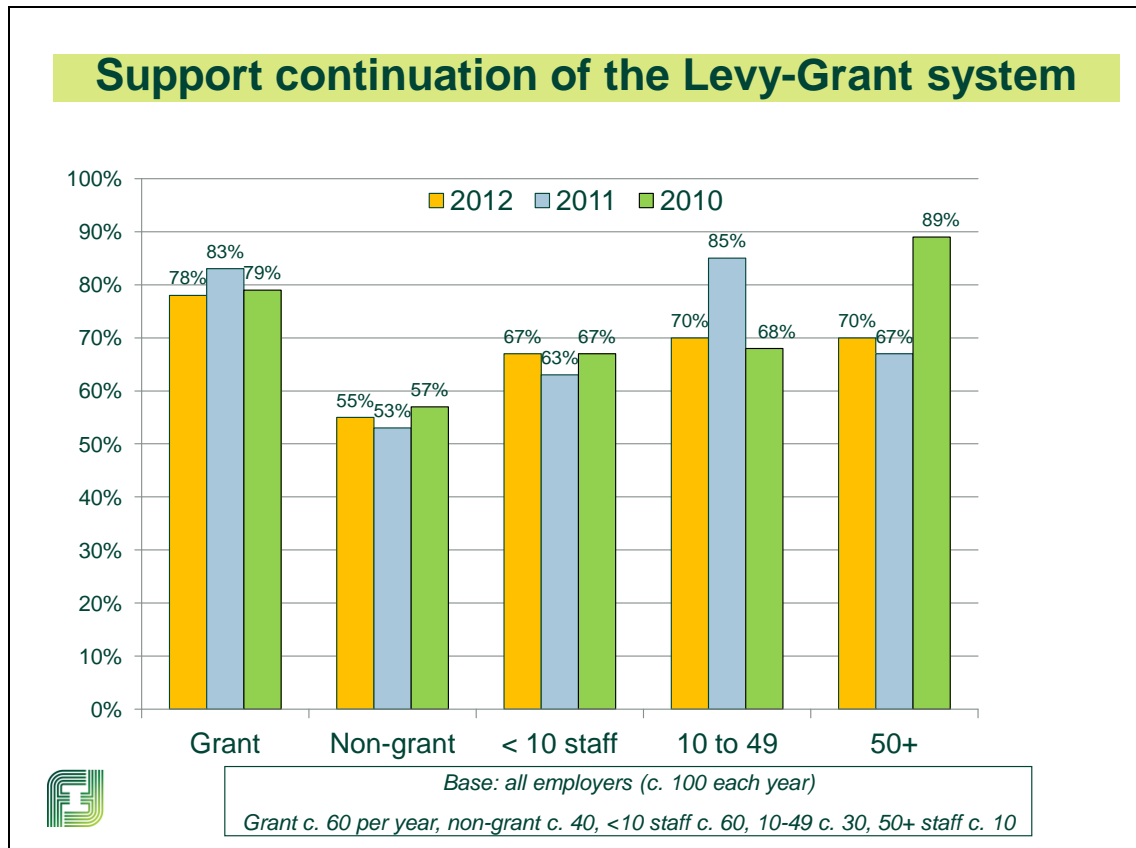
Views on whether the Levy-Grant system should continue

7.12 All respondents were asked whether they supported the continuation of the Levy-Grant system. Results are presented below for the period 2005 to 2012.



7.13 Just over two thirds (68%) that the Levy-Grant system should continue, not significantly different to recent years (69% - 71% in the 2009-2011 period). This level of support remains below that seen in 2005 and 2006. The level of support for the Levy-Grant system in 2012 is higher than the level found across Great Britain as a whole (62%).

7.14 As one would expect, and in line with previous years, those who had received a grant in the last 12 months were more supportive than those who had not (78% vs. 55%). Support varied little by size of employer but was slightly higher among those with 10-49 employees or over 50 employees (both with 70% support) than micro employers (67% support).



7.15 In total 25 respondents said they did not support the continuation of the Levy-Grant system. The reasons tended to focus on:

- It being seen as an unnecessary expense, a tax or they do not feel they get value for money (12 respondents - 48% of those not in favour of continuation)
- It bringing no real benefit to their company (13 respondents - 52%)
- Better to train in-house or on-site (3 respondents)
- Too much paperwork (2 respondents)

The system favouring larger companies, not providing the training that is needed, and that it shouldn't be compulsory (all mentioned by 1 respondent each).

APPENDIX:
THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Screening / quota information

A) TAKE REGION FROM SAMPLE:

Northern Ireland	1
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B) TAKE SIZE FROM SAMPLE:

		Quota	
0-9 (micro)	1	60	CHECK QUOTAS
10-49 (small)	2	30	
50+ (medium / large)	3	10	

REASSURANCES TO BE USED AS REQUIRED:

- **Please be reassured that everything will be strictly confidential. Everything reported back to CITB-ConstructionSkills NI will be completely anonymised**
- **Contact at CITB-ConstructionSkills NI: Karen Hunter on 028 9082 4233**
- **Contact at ConstructionSkills: Adam Evans on 01485 577226**
- **Contact at IFF Research: Charlie Taylor on 020 7250 3035**
- **Results will help CITB-ConstructionSkills NI understand how well their services meet the needs of the industry.**

ASK ALL

S1. **May I speak to** [IF NO NAMED SAMPLE: the most senior person there who has responsibility for human resources and training issues] [IF NAMED SAMPLE: <CONTACT NAME>]

Yes – transferred	1	CHECK S2
Yes – correct respondent speaking	2	
Definite appointment	3	MAKE DEFINITE APPOINTMENT / SOFT CALL BACK
Soft appointment	4	
Refusal	5	THANK AND CLOSE
Refusal – company policy	6	
Not available in deadline	7	
Company no longer exists / closed	9	
[IF NAMED CONTACT] No-one of that name works here / Person no longer works here	8	RE-ASK S1 about senior person there who has responsibility for human resources and training issues

WHEN TALKING TO APPROPRIATE PERSON

S2 **Good morning/afternoon. My name is, calling from IFF Research, an independent Market Research Company, on behalf of CITB-ConstructionSkills NI. CITB-ConstructionSkills NI was formerly known as CITB and is a partner in ConstructionSkills, the Sector Skills Council for the UK construction industry. We are conducting a short survey about skills issues in the construction industry and the standard of service provided by CITB-ConstructionSkills NI? This survey aims to help them meet the skill needs of businesses like yours, and your co-operation will ensure that the views expressed are representative of all employers in your industry.**

The interview should take about 15 minutes to complete depending on your responses.

Can I just check are you the best person or one of the most appropriate people in the company to talk to about issues relating to any dealings you may have with CITB-ConstructionSkills NI, and about the services they provide.

Yes	1	ASK S3
No	2	ASK FOR NAME AND CONTACT DETAILS OF THIS PERSON, THEN RE-INTRODUCE S1
Don't know / depends on the questions	3	ASK S3

ASK ALL

S3 **Can I just check, have you claimed a grant for training from CITB-ConstructionSkills NI over the past 12 months?**

Yes	1	QUOTA = 55	= GRANT RECEIVER
No	2	QUOTA = 45	= NON-GRANT RECEIVER
Don't know	3		

1. **UNDERSTANDING OF THE ROLE OF CITB-CONSTRUCTIONSKILLS NI**

ALL RESPONDENTS

Q1 Thinking quite generally to start with, what do you think are the important skills issues the construction industry will face in the next year or so?
DO NOT PROMPT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

SKILLED LABOUR SHORTAGE / SKILLS SHORTAGE	1
GENERAL LABOUR SHORTAGE	2
POOR CALIBRE OF TRAINEES	3
TRAINING ISSUES	4
HEALTH & SAFETY ISSUES	5
IMPLEMENTING/UPDATING NEW TECHNOLOGY	6
LACK OF YOUNG PEOPLE COMING INTO INDUSTRY	7
NO PARTICULAR SKILLS ISSUES	8
RECESSION / DOWNTURN (E.G. THE INDUSTRY CUTTING BACK ON TRAINING BECAUSE OF THE RECESSION)	9
LOW CARBON / SUSTAINABILITY	10
OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____	95
DON'T KNOW	97

Q1x Are you currently experiencing any recruitment issues?

Yes.....1
 No.....2
 Don't know.....X

Q1y How many of your workforce across the UK lack the skills necessary to do their job?

Code if answering as....	Then enter...
Number1	_____number
Percentage2	_____%
Don't know.....X	

Q1a Are you aware that CITB Northern Ireland is part of the Sector Skills Council for the construction industry, called ConstructionSkills?

Yes	1	ASK Q1b
No	2	ASK Qi2
Don't know / not sure	X	

IF YES

Q1b Would you describe your understanding about the role of ConstructionSkills as good, adequate or poor?

Good	1
Adequate	2
Poor	3
Don't know / not sure	X

Q1c: And what do you take to be the principal roles of ConstructionSkills as a Sector Skills Council? PROBE: What else?

[CODING – Codeframe appended to end of questionnaire]

AWARENESS AND USE OF SERVICES

ASK ALL

- qi2 What types of services generally speaking do you think CITB-ConstructionSkills NI provides? PROBE: What else do you think they provide? **DO NOT PROMPT BUT IF MENTION TRAINING ASK WHICH SPECIFIC TYPE OF TRAINING OR COURSE DO THEY THINK THEY PROVIDE.**

RECORD VERBATIM

NOTE: CODE RESPONSES TO LIST ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE

ASK ALL

- qi3 Are you aware that CITB-ConstructionSkills NI provides the following services? READ OUT LIST AT Qi3 ON GRID [SET UP EACH AS A YES / NO / DON'T KNOW QUESTION]

**FOR EACH SERVICE CODE 1-11, 18, 22 MENTIONED AT Qi3, ASK Qi4
IF AWARE OF ANY 12-17 OR 19 ASK Qi5
(IF NEITHER SKIP TO q2)**

- qi4 And have you used CITB-ConstructionSkills NI for <INSERT EACH YES AT Qi3> over the last 12 months?

ASK Qi5 FOR EACH (CODE 1-11, 18, 22 USED AT Qi4) OR (CODES 12-17 OR 19 HEARD OF AT Qi2 OR 3) [OTHERS GOTO q2]

- qi5 How satisfied were you with CITB-ConstructionSkills NI for <INSERT EACH USED AT Qi4>. Please rate it on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is very poor and 5 is very good. REPEAT FOR EACH USED AT Qi4

ASK Qi6 FOR EACH CODE 1-11, 18, 22 USED AT Qi4 OR CODES 12-17 OR 19 HEARD OF AT Qi2 or 3 (OTHERS GO TO q2)

- Qi6 I'd like to know how important you feel the CITB-ConstructionSkills NI services that you have used over the last 12 months are to your business. Please use a scale of 1 - 5 where 1 is completely unimportant and 5 is very important. So how important to your business is...<READ OUT EACH USED FROM SCREENER>?

ASK Qi7 IF AT Q1 EITHER

- A) MORE THAN ONE = 5, OR
- B) MORE THAN ONE = 4 AND NONE = 5, OR
- C) MORE THAN ONE = 3 AND NONE = 4 OR 5

- Qi7 Which of [IF A) INSERT EACH RATED A 5 AT Q1][IF B) INSERT EACH RATED A 4 AT Q1][C) EACH RATED a 3] do you feel is the most important service for your organisation?

EMPLOYER TRACKING SURVEY 2012

	qi2 AWARE SPONT.	qi3 AWARE PROMP.	qi4 USED	qi5 RATING SAT.	Qi6 RATING Importance.
	CODE ALL	CODE ALL	CODE ALL	WRITE IN SCORE (1-5)	WRITE IN SCORE (1-5)
HEALTH & SAFETY INFORMATION AND TRAINING		1	1		
CRAFT TRAINING COURSES		3	3		
MANAGEMENT TRAINING COURSES		4	4		
SPECIALIST TRAINING COURSES		5	5		
MOBILE TRAINING UNIT		6	6		
OTHER TRAINING COURSES		8	8		
STANDARDS AND QUALIFICATIONS DEVELOPMENT		9	9		
GRANTS FOR TRAINING		10	10		
TRAINING ADVICE IN THE FORM OF EMPLOYER SEMINARS		11	11		
WORKING WITH SCHOOLS TO PROMOTE CONSTRUCTION CAREERS TO YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR INFLUENCERS **		12	12		
PROMOTING INDUSTRY REGISTRATION SCHEMES **		13	13		
PROMOTING AND SUPPORTING INVESTORS IN PEOPLE ACHIEVEMENTS **		14	14		
CONDUCTING RESEARCH AND PROVIDING LABOUR MARKET INTELLIGENCE**		15	15		
ENSURING ADEQUATE FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION PROVISION FOR CONSTRUCTION **		17	17		
CAREERS INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE		18	18		
IMPROVING THE IMAGE OF CONSTRUCTION THROUGH HIGH PROFILE CAMPAIGN ACTIVITY **		19	19		
PROVISION OF PUBLICATIONS		22	22		
SKILLS COMPETITIONS (E.G. SKILLBUILD)					
(DO NOT READ OUT) NONE		96	96		
(DO NOT READ OUT) DON'T KNOW		97	97		
(DO NOT READ OUT) REFUSED		98	98		

1. COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

ALL RESPONDENTS

Q2 Now turning to marketing and communications, have you heard about CITB-ConstructionSkills NI through any of the following during the last 12 months? **READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY**

	A FEDERATION	1
TRADE PRESS (PLEASE SPECIFY WHICH ONE E.G. NORTHERN BUILDER, , KEYSTONE, CONSTRUCTION IRELAND)		2
	NATIONAL PRESS	3
	LOCAL PRESS	4
	TV	5
	RADIO	6
	THE INTERNET	7
	DIRECT MAIL (POST)	8
	E-MAIL	9
	TELEPHONE CALL FROM CITB-CONSTRUCTIONSKILLS NI	10
	EVENTS / SEMINARS DELIVERED BY CITB-CONSTRUCTIONSKILLS NI	11
	EVENTS SPONSORED BY CITB-CONSTRUCTIONSKILLS NI	12
<hr/>		
	TEXT MESSAGE	13
<hr/>		
	SOCIAL MEDIA (FACEBOOK)	14
<hr/>		
	IN ANY OTHER WAY? IF YES SPECIFY _____	95
<hr/>		
	(DO NOT READ OUT) NONE	96
	(DO NOT READ OUT) DON'T KNOW	97

(Q4a-Q4c from GB survey)

ALL RESPONDENTS

Q4A Which of the following information channels do you use to support your day-to-day business activities, by which I mean such things as marketing to clients, getting information about potential new contracts, looking for information, advice or guidance about business issues, and keeping up to date with developments in the industry? **READ OUT AND CODE ALL THAT APPLY.**

Post or direct mail	1
Trade press / magazines	2
Local or national press	3
Social media channels such as Facebook, Twitter, etc	4
Online forums	5
Email or e-newsletters	6
Other online or Internet channels	7
A Federation	8
Local business groups	9
NIbusinessinfo.co.uk	10
Other channels (SPECIFY)	11
(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't know / not sure / None	X

IF ANY ONLINE SOURCES USED (Q4A=4-7), OTHERS ASK Q4C
Q4B How do you typically access the online sources that you mentioned?
 PROMPT IF NECESSARY. MULTI-CODE OK.

Desktop computer	1
Laptop	2
Smartphone, e.g. Blackberry or iPhone	3
Tablet	4
Other (SPECIFY)	5

ASK ALL
Q4C How do you prefer to receive, or where would you look for information on issues such as recruitment, training, improving productivity or reducing carbon?
 CATI TO DISPLAY RESPONSES GIVEN AT Q4A, PLUS "OTHER", "NOT INTERESTED IN INFORMATION ON THESE ISSUES" AND "DON'T KNOW".
 PROMPT IF NECESSARY. MULTI-CODE OK.

Post / direct mail	1
Trade press / magazines	2
Local / national press	3
Social media channels such as Facebook, Twitter, etc	4
Online forums	5
Email or e-newsletters	6
Other online / Internet channels	7
From a Federation	8
Via local business groups	9
From NIbusinessinfo.co.uk	10
Other sources/channels (SPECIFY)	11
Not interested in receiving information on these issues	12
Don't know	X

WEBSITE

ASK ALL
W1 Have you gone on to CITB-ConstructionSkills NI's website citbsni.org.uk in the last 6 months?

Yes	1	Go to W2
No	2	Go to Q3
Not sure	3	

IF YES (W1=1)
W2 When did you last go on it? PROMPT IF NECESSARY

In the last 7 days	1
In the last fortnight	2
In the last month	3
In the last 2-3 months	4
4-6 months ago	5
More than 6 months ago	6
DO NOT READ OUT Other (SPECIFY)	7
Can't remember	X

W3 How do you locate the CITB-ConstructionSkills NI website? DO NOT READ OUT [MULTICODE OK].

Search engine (Google etc)	1
Have it as a 'Favourite' on the computer	2
E-mail sign off / footer of e-mails	4
Address on advert	5
Address on Direct Mail	6
Address on Levy Grant communications	7
Address in press/news article	8
CITB-ConstructionSkills NI staff gave address e.g. at seminar	9
Link from another website	10
Guessed the address	11
College/Training Provider gave address	12
From a colleague	13
Other (SPECIFY)	0
Can't remember	X

W4 What have you looked at on the website? DO NOT READ OUT [MULTICODE OK].

About Us	1
Grants Scheme info	2
Completing Levy Return	3
Sector Skills Agreement	4
Research and Development	5
Courses / Training Directory	6
Careers	7
Apprenticeships	8
Events	9
Publications	10
News	11
Links	12
Access to Information	13
Vacancies	14
Standards	15
Case Studies	16
Make a booking	17
Sustainable Construction	18
Qualifying the Existing Workforce	19
Don't Know / Can't remember	X
Other (SPECIFY)	0

W5 On a scale of 1-5 where 1 is very poor and 5 is very good, how would you rate the website in terms of...

	1 Very poor	2	3	4	5 Very good	Don't know
IT HAVING THE INFORMATION YOU WANT IT TO HAVE	1	2	3	4	5	X
HOW CLEAR AND EASY TO UNDERSTAND IS THE INFORMATION ON THE WEBSITE	1	2	3	4	5	X
HOW EASY IT IS TO NAVIGATE AROUND THE WEBSITE AND FIND WHAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR	1	2	3	4	5	X
HOW APPEALING THE WEBSITE IS	1	2	3	4	5	X
HOW UP TO DATE THE CONTENT IS	1	2	3	4	5	X
AND OVERALL HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE WEBSITE, WHERE 1 IS VERY POOR AND 5 IS VERY GOOD.	1	2	3	4	5	X

W6 IF APPEALING RATED 1-2 AT THE PREVIOUS QUESTION (W5_4=1 OR 2)
When you say the website is poor or very poor what exactly do you mean? DO NOT READ OUT. PROBE: What else? CODE ALL MENTIONED

Difficult to navigate / poor layout	1
Unexciting / old fashioned	2
Overcomplicated / too much information	3
It's a work tool and just serves a function (i.e. don't look for pleasure)	4
Don't know	5
Other (PLEASE SPECIFY)	6

W7 IF ANY RATED A 1-2 AT THE W5 GRID EXCEPT IF ONLY 1-2 ON 'APPEAL' (If ANY W5 = 1 OR 2, EXCEPT ONLY W5_4= 1 OR 2)
What improvements, if any, would you like to see to the website? PROBE FULLY
DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL MENTIONED

Simplify / Clearer information, details	1
Easier navigation	2
More user friendly	3
Improved search function	4
Split information by trades / sectors	5
Nothing	6
Don't know	7
Other (PLEASE SPECIFY)	8

Communications received from CITB-ConstructionSkills NI

Q3 ASK ALL
Have you received communications from CITB-ConstructionSkills NI in the past 12 months telling you about their products and services?

Yes	1	Go to Q4
No	2	ASK Q12
Not sure	X	

Q4 IF YES (Q3=1)
I'd like to know what you think about the correspondence that you have received from CITB-ConstructionSkills NI in the last 12 months. For each factor, please rate it using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is very poor and 5 is very good.

	1 Very poor	2	3	4	5 Very good	Don't know
IT HAVING A STYLE AND DESIGN THAT YOU IMMEDIATELY RECOGNISE	1	2	3	4	5	X
IT GRABBING YOUR ATTENTION	1	2	3	4	5	X
THE INFORMATION WITHIN THE COMMUNICATIONS BEING CLEAR AND EASY TO UNDERSTAND	1	2	3	4	5	X
IT BEING RELEVANT AND APPROPRIATE TO YOUR COMPANY'S NEEDS	1	2	3	4	5	X
PROVIDING THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF INFORMATION AND DETAIL	1	2	3	4	5	X
THE FORMAT OF THE INFORMATION BEING RIGHT FOR YOU	1	2	3	4	5	X
HOW CLEAR THE GUIDANCE IS ON HOW TO GET IN CONTACT WITH CITB-CONSTRUCTIONSKILLS NI AND WHAT TO DO NEXT	1	2	3	4	5	X
AND OVERALL HOW WOULD YOU RATE CITB-CONSTRUCTIONSKILLS NI COMMUNICATIONS ON PRODUCTS AND SERVICES	1	2	3	4	5	X

Q5 Do you feel that you get about the right amount of information on CITB-ConstructionSkills NI products and services, too much or too little?
[THIS IS Q9 GB PLUS UNDERLININGS]

About right	1
Too much	2
Too little	3
Can't remember	X

Q6 Generally, did the communications that you received arrive at the right time of the year for you, or did they arrive too early in the year for you to act on, or did they generally arrive too late in the year to be useful?
[Was Q9 last year]

Too early	1
About right	2
Too late	3
Can't remember	X

IF COMMUNICATIONS ARRIVED TOO LATE (Q6=3)

Q6b Which specific communications were received too late to be useful?

Don't know.....X

Q7 What is your preferred method of receiving Information or Communications from CITB-ConstructionSkills NI? DO NOT READ OUT. ALLOW MULTICODE

Mail	1
Email	2
Website	3
Fax	4
Phone	5
Face-to-face (one-to-one, e.g. company visit)	6
Face-to-face (one-to-many, e.g. employer seminars / events)	13
Radio	7
Trade Press Ads	8
Local Press Ads	9
Text	14
Social media	15
Other (please specify)	10
None – don't want promotional literature	11
No preference	12
Don't know	X

IF EMAIL IS PREFERRED METHOD (Q7=2)

Q7a Would you be happy for us to pass on your email address to CITB-ConstructionSkills NI so that they can send you information or communications on their products and services?

Yes	1	Enter email address, read back to confirm, then continue to Q8
No	2	Continue to Q8

Q8 Did any of the communication you received about CITB-ConstructionSkills NI's products and services prompt you to contact CITB-ConstructionSkills NI for more information?

Yes	1	Go to Q9
No	2	ASK Q12
Can't remember	X	

IF YES

Q9 Having contacted CITB-ConstructionSkills NI for more information, how would you rate the information that you received? *Please use a scale of 1 – 5 where 1 is not at all useful and 5 is extremely useful).*

Not at all useful	1
	2
	3
	4
Extremely useful	5
Don't know	X

Q10 Question Deleted

Q11 Question Deleted

Contacting CITB-ConstructionSkills NI's TOS Team

ASK ALL

Q12 Excluding any face-to-face contact that you might have had, have you contacted CITB-ConstructionSkills NI's Training Operations Support Team in the past 12 months for any reason, for example for help or information about a product or service?

[NOTE TO INTERVIEWER Training Operations Support deal with all general enquiries (first point of contact – like a helpdesk) and process grant claims]

Yes	1	Go to Q13
No	2	Go to Q15
Not sure	X	

IF YES

Q13 Could you tell me what your most recent query/contact was about?

Q14 And was this most recent contact by... READ OUT? (SINGLE CODE)

Phone	1
Post	2
Fax	3
Email	4
Text	8
Other method (PLEASE SPECIFY)	6
DO NOT READ OUT Can't remember	7

Q14a How helpful was the response you got? Please use a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is not at all helpful and 5 is extremely helpful.

Not at all helpful	1	ASK Q14b
	2	
	3	
	4	ASK Q14c
Extremely helpful	5	
Don't know	X	

If coded 1-2 ask:

Q14b Why do you say that?

If Q12=1 ASK:

Q14c How do you think the service provided by CITB-ConstructionSkills NI's Training Operations Support Team could be improved?

EMPLOYER CAMPAIGNS – GETTING EMPLOYERS TO TRAIN

ASK ALL

Q15 Did you receive information about the CITB-ConstructionSkills NI Grants Scheme from CITB-ConstructionSkills NI in the last 12 months aimed at yourself as an employer?

Yes	1	Go to Q16
No	2	Go to Q18
Can't remember	X	

IF YES

Q16 Did the information about the CITB-ConstructionSkills NI Grants Scheme and how you can claim a grant encourage you to contact CITB-ConstructionSkills NI for more information?

Yes	1	Go to Q17
No	2	ASK Q20
Can't remember	X	

IF YES AT Q16

Q17 Did you claim a CITB-ConstructionSkills NI Grant for any training undertaken as a result?

Yes	1	ASK Q20b
No	2	Go to Q19
Can't remember	X	

ASK IF NO / CAN'T REMEMBER AT Q15

Q18 Are you aware that as a registered in-scope employer you are able to claim money to support the cost of training through the CITB-ConstructionSkills NI Grants Scheme?

Yes	1	CHECK Q20a
No	2	
Not sure	3	

IF NO / CAN'T REMEMBER AT Q17

Q19 Are there any specific reasons why you did not subsequently claim a CITB-ConstructionSkills NI Grant for any training undertaken? **DO NOT READ OUT**

Didn't understand the information	1	CHECK Q20A
Didn't think we were eligible	2	
Not appropriate for me	4	
Too confusing/complicated	5	
Too time consuming	6	
Currently in the process	7	
Didn't undertake any training	8	
Trained through main contractor	9	
Started training but never finished it	10	
Other (please specify)_____	95	
None	96	
Don't know	97	

IF NO / DON'T KNOW AT Q16 ASK:

Q20 Why did the CITB-ConstructionSkills NI Grants Scheme information not prompt you to contact CITB-ConstructionSkills NI for more information on money available to support training activity?

--	--

ASK ALL EXCEPT Q17=1 OR S3=1

Q20a What would encourage you to make a claim? **DO NOT READ OUT**

If grants were available for a wider range of training activities (SPECIFY What training?)	1
If grants for training were higher	2
If it involved less paperwork	3
If making a grant claim was easier	4
If I could get help making a claim	5
Other (please specify)_____	0
Don't know	X

ASK ALL

Q21 Thinking now of CITB-ConstructionSkills NI and the overall service it provides for **the industry as a whole**, please indicate, using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is completely dissatisfied, and 5 is completely satisfied, how satisfied you are with its performance on the following criteria. How satisfied are you with CITB-ConstructionSkills NI for.....

	1 Completely dissatisfied	2	3	4	5 Completely satisfied	Don't know	Not applicable
Constantly aiming to improve the service that it offers	1	2	3	4	5	X	V
Responding quickly to the changing needs of the industry	1	2	3	4	5	X	V
working effectively in partnership with other organisations such as federations, trade associations, funding bodies, education	1	2	3	4	5	X	V
working efficiently for employers in the industry	1	2	3	4	5	X	V
Being easy for customers to deal with	1	2	3	4	5	X	V

Q22 And using the same scale, how satisfied are you with CITB-ConstructionSkills NI and the overall service it provides for the **INDUSTRY AS A WHOLE**, please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is completely dissatisfied, and 5 is completely satisfied? **PROMPT IF NECESSARY**

Completely dissatisfied	1	ASK Q23
	2	
	3	ASK Q24
	4	
Completely satisfied	5	
Not sure / don't know	X	

IF DISSATISFIED (Q22 = 1 OR 2)

Q23 Why are you dissatisfied with the overall service it provides for the **INDUSTRY AS A WHOLE**?

No/Nothing.....X

ASK ALL

Q24 Thinking now about your company's interactions with CITB-ConstructionSkills NI, how satisfied are you with its performance on the following criteria, please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is completely dissatisfied and 5 is completely satisfied...

	1 Completely dissatisfied	2	3	4	5 Completely satisfied	Don't know	Not applicable
BEING ACCOUNTABLE – DELIVERING ON WHAT THEY SAY	1	2	3	4	5	X	V
BEING KNOWLEDGABLE, AND PROVIDING EXPERTISE AND INFORMATION ON WHICH YOU CAN RELY	1	2	3	4	5	X	V
BEING HELPFUL AND POLITE	1	2	3	4	5	X	V
BEING FAIR AND ACCESSIBLE IN MEETING THE NEEDS OF A WIDE RANGE OF CUSTOMERS	1	2	3	4	5	X	V
LISTENING TO CUSTOMERS AND REFLECTING THIS IN THEIR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES	1	2	3	4	5	X	V

Q25 And using the same scale, how satisfied have you been overall with the service CITB-ConstructionSkills NI has provided your company in the last 12 months?

Completely dissatisfied	1	ASK NEXT QUESTION
	2	
	3	ASK Q27
	4	
Completely satisfied	5	
Not sure / don't know	X	
Not applicable – no services provided	V	

IF DISSATISFIED (Q25 = 1 OR 2)

Q26 Why are you dissatisfied with the service it has provided for your company over the last 12 months?

DO NOT READ OUT. MULTICODE OKAY PROBE: Why else?

No/Nothing.....X

Poor communication / difficult to get hold of	1
They take a levy but don't provide relevant service	2
Grant is too small or too hard to get	3
Their service is irrelevant to our industry	4
Service is biased to big companies	5
Don't know	6
Other (PLEASE SPECIFY)	7

Q27 ASK ALL
 On the basis of the experience that you have had of dealing with CITB-ConstructionSkills NI, which of the following statements best applies to your likelihood to recommend CITB-ConstructionSkills NI to others...? READ OUT AND CODE ONE ONLY

I would proactively advise others against contacting and using CITB-ConstructionSkills NI	1
I would be critical of them if someone asked my opinion	2
I would be neutral about them if someone asked my opinion	3
I would definitely speak highly of them if someone asked my opinion	4
I would proactively recommend that others contact and use CITB-ConstructionSkills NI	5
(DO NOT READ OUT) None of the above	V
(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't know	X

Q28 IF Q27 = 1 - 3 ALL OTHER GO TO Q29
 Are there any specific reasons why you say that? DO NOT READ OUT. PROBE: Why else?. MULTICODE OK

Grant they provide is too small	1
Grant scheme is too time consuming to claim	2
Too much bureaucracy / paperwork	3
Pay levy but get nothing back	4
Poor communication / don't get back to me	5
Don't know	6
Other (PLEASE SPECIFY)	7

Q29 ASK ALL
 And, in the last 12 months have you actually recommended CITB-ConstructionSkills NI to someone?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	X

Q29a ASK ALL
 How could CITB-ConstructionSkills NI improve their service and or their relationship with you?

They couldn't / fine as is.....V
Don't know.....X

EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

E1 Are you aware that CITB-ConstructionSkills NI is running a series of employer events aimed at informing employers about its services including levy, grants, and training instead of providing one-to-one visits?

Yes	1	Go to E2a
No	2	GO TO E4
Don't know	X	

ASK THOSE WHO ARE AWARE (E1=1)

E2a Through which method of communication did you first hear about the event?

DO NOT READ OUT. PROMPT IF NECESSARY. ONLY ONE ANSWER ALLOWED

Post	1
Website	2
Telephone	3
E-mail	4
Advert	5
Text	6
Other (PLEASE SPECIFY)	7

Go to E2b

ASK THOSE WHO ARE AWARE (E1=1)

E2b Have you attended any of the events?

Yes	1	Go to E3A
No	2	GO TO E4
Don't know	X	

ASK THOSE WHO HAVE ATTENDED EVENTS (E2b=1)

E3A Did the events provide you with the information you expected or required?

Yes	1	Go to Go to E6
No	2	GO TO E4
Don't know	X	

ALL THOSE NOT AWARE OF EVENTS, OR DID NOT ATTEND EVENTS, OR DID ATTEND AND DID NOT GET INFORMATION REQUIRED (E1 = 2 or DK OR E2B = 2 or DK OR E3A = 2 or DK)

E4 What topics would you like to see covered at these events?
DO NOT READ OUT. MULTI CODE OK

Levy	1
Grants	2
Online services	3
Training advice	4
Information about training courses including the Mobile Training Unit	5
Health and Safety	6
Meet Management Team	7
Other training initiatives	8
Information from other relevant organisations	9
PQQ training	10
Short business support information training	11
Other (Specify)	0
Not interested in these sorts of events	V
Don't Know	X

ASK THOSE WHO HAVE ATTENDED EVENTS EXCEPT THOSE NOT INTERESTED (E2b=1 & NOT E4=V)

E6 What did you find useful about the event?
DO NOT READ OUT. MULTIPLE CODE OKAY

Information on Grants	1
Information on Levy	2
Information on online services	3
Training advice	4
Information about training courses including MTU	5
Information on Health & safety	6
Information about Publications	7
Meeting the management team	8
Other training / funding initiative	9
Nothing found useful	10
Other (please specify)	11
Don't Know	12

GO TO E7

ASK THOSE WHO HAVE ATTENDED EVENTS AND DID GET THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF INFORMATION (E2b=1 & E3A=1)

E7 What other topics would you like to see covered?

None- no other topics required
Don't know.....X

Go to E8

ASK THOSE WHO HAVE ATTENDED EVENTS (E2b=1)

E8 Which organisations represented at the event did you request further contact from?

DO NOT READ OUT. PROMPT IF NECESSARY. MULTICODE ALLOWED

CITB-ConstructionSkills NI	1
Health & Safety Works NI (HSWNI)	2
HMRC	3
Equality Commission	4
Labour Relations Agency	5
Department for employment & learning	6
Did not request further contact	7
Other (Please Specify)	8

GO TO E9

ASK ALL EXCEPT CODE V AT E4

E9 What time would best suit your company for these events?

PROMPT IF NECESSARY

Morning	1
Afternoon	2
Early Evening	3
Other (please specify)	4
Don't know	X

ASK ALL EXCEPT CODE V AT E4

E10 Do you expect to attend a future event?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

ASK ALL EXCEPT CODE V AT E4 OR E10=2

E4a How often would you be likely to attend these events?

PROMPT IF NECESSARY, SINGLE CODE

(DO NOT PROMPT) Every quarter or more often	1
Every 6 months	2
Once a year	3
Less often than once a year	4
(DO NOT PROMPT) Can't say / depends on that they are on / where they are held etc	5
Other (SPECIFY)	0
Don't Know	X

LEVY & GRANT SUPPORT

SAY TO ALL: To share the costs of training sufficient people for the industry, CITB-ConstructionSkills NI charges a statutory levy on all registered in-scope employers over the levy threshold of £80,000. This enables CITB-ConstructionSkills NI to return grant to all registered in-scope employers who train and to provide a range of other services.

Every year, CITB-ConstructionSkills NI needs to show the government that the industry supports the levy grant system. The results of this survey may be used to inform the government of employer views on this matter, so please answer as accurately as possible.

ASK ALL

Q29x First, can I just check have you used CITB-ConstructionSkills NI's online levy return facility?

Yes	1	Go to Q29y
No	2	CHECK <u>Q29z</u>
Don't know	X	

IF YES

E29y On a scale of 1-5 where 1 is completely dissatisfied and 5 is completely satisfied, how satisfied have you been with this service?

1 – completely dissatisfied	1
	2
	3
	4
5 – completely satisfied	5
Don't know	X

ASK ALL

Q29Z ARE YOU AWARE OF THE FOLLOWING LEVY PAYMENT METHODS? READ OUT

	Yes	No	Don't know
PAYING IN TWO EQUAL INSTALLMENTS IN OCTOBER AND FEBRUARY AT NO EXTRA COST	1	2	X
PAYING BY DIRECT DEBIT OVER 10 MONTHS (BETWEEN OCTOBER AND JULY) AT NO EXTRA COST	1	2	X

Q30 GRANT RECEIVERS ONLY (S3=1 OR Q17 = 1) [OTHERS ASK Q32]
 You said earlier that you had received grant for training from CITB-ConstructionSkills NI over the past 12 months. What types of training did you use the grant for? **READ OUT AND CODE ALL THAT APPLY.** [SET UP EACH AS YES / NO / DON'T KNOW]

Q31 FOR EACH TYPE OF TRAINING GRANT CODES 1-9 USED AT Q30 ASK:
 Was the availability of a grant for <ASK SEPARATELY FOR EACH YES AT Q30> a positive factor in enabling you to undertake this training? **REPEAT FOR EACH YES AT Q30**

	Q30 TYPES OF TRAINING	Q31 GRANT POSITIVE FACTOR		
		YES	NO	DK
NEW ENTRANT	1	1	2	3
UPSKILLING EXISTING WORKFORCE	2	1	2	3
IMPROVING BUSINESS PERFORMANCE	3	1	2	3
OTHER 1 ST MENTION (PLEASE SPECIFY)	4	1	2	3
OTHER 2 ND MENTION (PLEASE SPECIFY)	5	1	2	3
OTHER 3 RD MENTION (PLEASE SPECIFY)	6	1	2	3
NONE	96			
DON'T KNOW	97			

Q31A GRANT RECEIVERS ONLY (S3=1 OR Q17 = 1)
 Have you used CITB-ConstructionSkills NI's Online Grant Services for...? **READ OUT**

Grant scheme information	1
Online Grant applications	2 Go to Q31AA
BACS payments	3
DO NOT READ OUT: None of the above	V
DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know if used Online Grant Services	X

Q31AA Did you claim the additional 2.5% available for online grants claims?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	X

IF DID NOT CLAIM ADDITIONAL 2.5% (Q31AA=2)
Q31AB Why not?

Don't know.....X

GRANT RECEIVERS ONLY (S3=1 OR Q17 = 1)

Q31B I'd now like to ask about your views of the grant process [ADD AS APPLICABLE FROM Q31a: and the Grant Departments / CITB-ConstructionSkills NI's Online Grant Services]. So, on a scale of 1 - 5 where 1 is completely dissatisfied and 5 is completely satisfied, how satisfied have you been with...?

	1 Completely dissatisfied	2	3	4	5 Completel y satisfied	Don't know
a) Ease of claiming a grant	1	2	3	4	5	X
b) The speed of Grant payments	1	2	3	4	5	X
c) The range of courses for which Grants are available?	1	2	3	4	5	X
IF USED CITB-CONSTRUCTIONSKILLS NI ONLINE GRANT SERVICES (Q31a/1-3): d) The Online Grant Services ?	1	2	3	4	5	X
ASK ALL GRANT RECEIVERS (S3=1 OR Q17=1) e) Thinking of the overall customer service you have received in relation to the grant process, how satisfied have you been?	1	2	3	4	5	X

Q32 ASK ALL
What improvement if any would you like to see made to the current grants scheme? DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

SIMPLIFY APPLICATION PROCESS	1
ALTER PROOF OF ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE	2
STANDARDISE APPLICATION PROCESS	3
GRANTS TO COVER MORE COURSES	4
GRANTS TO COVER WAGES / TRAVEL EXPENSES	5
MORE GRANTS INFORMATION AND AWARENESS	6
HIGHER LEVEL OF GRANT AID	7
OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	95
DON'T KNOW	97

ASK ALL

Q32b How important do you feel the levy and grant system is in maintaining the level and quality of training within your own firm? Please answer on a scale from 1 – 5 where 1 is not at all important and 5 is very important.

Q32c And how important do you feel the levy and grant system is in maintaining the level and quality of training across the construction industry as a whole?

	1 Not at all important	2	3	4	5 Very important	Don't know
Q32B) WITHIN YOUR OWN FIRM	1	2	3	4	5	X
Q32C) ACROSS THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY AS A WHOLE	1	2	3	4	5	X

ASK ALL

Q33 If there were no statutory training body such as CITB-ConstructionSkills NI, what impact would having no system for providing grants for training, have on the industry as a whole in terms of.....READ OUT ASPECT ASKING : Would..... <ASPECT>improve, worsen or remain the same? REPEAT FOR EACH ASPECT

	IMPROVE	WORSEN	SAME	D/K
TRAINING WITHIN THE INDUSTRY	1	2	3	4
IMAGE AND RECRUITMENT OF NEW STAFF	1	2	3	4
PROGRESS TOWARDS A QUALIFIED WORKFORCE	1	2	3	4
AVAILABILITY OF SKILLED LABOUR	1	2	3	4

ASK ALL

Q34 Do you think that the statutory levy-grant system should continue? CODE ONE ONLY

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

IF NO AT Q34 (Q34=2)

Q34A Why do you think that the statutory Levy Grant System should not continue?

DO NOT READ OUT. MULTIPLE ANSWERS OK

It's an unnecessary expense/additional tax	1
It has no real benefit for us	2
It favours larger companies	3
It's better to train in-house/on-site	4
The system is inconsistent	5
They don't provide the training/staff that our industry needs	6
Don't know	7
Other (PLEASE SPECIFY)	8

TRAINING

ASK ALL

S5A Can I just check, how many direct employees work for your company in the UK? PROBE FOR BEST ESTIMATE – Don't know not allowed

1 (respondent only – i.e. just yourself)	1
Exact number (SPECIFY)	2

IF 1 AT S5A

S5B And do you have anyone working for your company across the UK on a labour-only sub-contract basis? This might include those who are self-employed or who have been taken on via an agency.

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

ASK ALL

S6 I am now going to ask you some questions about staff training and development. Over the past 12 months have you funded or arranged any off-the-job training or development for employees in your company. By off-the-job training we mean training away from the individual's immediate work position, whether on your premises or elsewhere?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

S7 And in the last 12 months have you funded or arranged any on-the-job or informal training and development, by which we mean activities that would be recognised as training by the staff, and not the sort of learning by experience which could take place all the time.

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

IF S6 OR S7 = 1 (TRAINED) - OTHERS ASK B15

S8 In the past 12 months have you done any of the following... READ OUT

Taken on an apprentice	1
Achieved Investors in People status	2
Created a Training Plan	3
Put any of your workforce through a training programme	4
Any other training which you think you should receive a grant for	5
None of the above	6

C3 *ASK ALL PROVIDING TRAINING (S6/1 or S7/1) – OTHERS ASK B15*
 You said earlier that you had funded or arranged training in the last 12 months. Has any of this training over the past 12 months been towards a nationally recognised qualification?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

C4 *IF PROVIDE TRAINING LEADING TO NATIONALLY RECOGNISED QUALIFICATION (C3/1)*
 Approximately what proportion of the training you have funded or arranged has been towards a nationally recognised qualification ... PROMPT WITH BANDINGS IF NECESSARY AND CODE ONE ONLY

Less than 10%	1
Between 10% and 25%	2
Between 25% and 50%	3
More than half but less than all of it	4
All training	5
DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know	6

C5 *ASK ALL WHO HAVE UNDERTAKEN TRAINING IN LAST YEAR (S6/1 or S7/1)*
 Thinking about the reasons for your business funding and arranging training, to what extent do you feel the following statements apply to your business? Please use a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is not at all and 5 is applies a great deal. READ OUT EACH STATEMENT (ROTATE). CODE ONE FOR EACH ROW

	Not at all				A great deal	Don't know
Training is important to maintain employee credentials/certifications [IF S5B/2, CODE SHOULD READ: Training is important to maintain company credentials/certifications]	1	2	3	4	5	6
Training helps employees to meet new responsibilities [IF S5B/2, CODE SHOULD READ: Training helps the company meet new responsibilities]	1	2	3	4	5	6
Training is necessary to meet health and safety requirements	1	2	3	4	5	6
Training reduces the need for supervision	1	2	3	4	5	6
Training increases productivity	1	2	3	4	5	6
Training increases employee job satisfaction and general morale and motivation amongst employees [IF S5B/2, CODE SHOULD READ: Training increases job satisfaction and general morale and motivation]	1	2	3	4	5	6
Training enables you to introduce new technologies in terms of both equipment and processes	1	2	3	4	5	6
Training enables your business to attract staff of a good calibre	1	2	3	4	5	6
Training is important in maintaining a competitive advantage	1	2	3	4	5	6
Training will enable your business to recover from the recession faster	1	2	3	4	5	6
Training enables your business to put something back into the industry	1	2	3	4	5	6

C6 ASK ALL THOSE WHO HAVE TRAINED IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS (S6/1 or S7/1)
 If you could have done, would you have provided MORE training [UNLESS S5B/2: for your staff] than you were able to over the last 12 months?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

C6a. How likely are you to fund or arrange any training for staff over the coming 12 months, either on-the-job or off-the-job...READ OUT?

Definitely or very likely	1
Fairly likely	2
Not very likely	3
Not at all likely or definitely won't	4
(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't know	X

ASK ALL

B15 I'm going to read out a number of potential barriers to investing in training. To what extent do you feel each is a barrier to your business investing (IF S6 OR S7=1 ADD 'further') in training. Please use a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is not at all and 5 is a very significant barrier to investing in training. READ OUT EACH STATEMENT (ROTATE) CODE ONE FOR EACH ROW

	Not at all				A very significant barrier	Don't know
ASK ONLY IF DON'T TRAIN (neither S6 nor S7=1)	1	2	3	4	5	6
I. We prefer to recruit only experienced, skilled workers						
ASK ALL	1	2	3	4	5	6
A. The financial cost of training						
B. The disruption to your work patterns that is caused by people being away from work for training [IF S5B/2, CODE SHOULD READ: The disruption to your work patterns that is caused by being away from work for training]	1	2	3	4	5	6
C. Lack of knowledge about the range of provision that is available	1	2	3	4	5	6
D. Reluctance of staff to take up training opportunities [IF S5B/2, CODE SHOULD READ: Reluctance to take up training opportunities]	1	2	3	4	5	6
E. Lack of suitable training provision	1	2	3	4	5	6
F. The concern that if you invest in training for staff then they become more susceptible to 'poaching' from your competitors	1	2	3	4	5	6
G. The concern that the acquisition of new skills through training tends to make employees demand higher wages	1	2	3	4	5	6
H. The establishment has never really provided training for employees before [IF S5B/2, CODE SHOULD READ: The establishment has never really provided training before]	1	2	3	4	5	6

B16 Are you aware of the CITB-ConstructionSkills NI initiative called 'Qualifying the Existing Workforce' which provides fully funded NVQ assessments for experienced but unqualified workers?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

If no, advise that further information can be obtained at www.citbcnsni.org.uk.

And finally, I would like to ask you some questions about trends within your industry and your business in general.

ASK ALL
D1NW Overall, in which of the following ways has your business's sales turnover changed during the last two years or so? READ OUT AND CODE ONE ONLY

Sales turnover has increased	1	ASK D3NW
Turnover has decreased	2	ASK D2NW
Turnover stayed about the same	3	ASK D3NW
Turnover has fluctuated too greatly to comment	4	
[DO NOT READ OUT] Not been in business long enough	5	
[DO NOT READ OUT] Don't know/refused	X	

WHERE TURNOVER HAS GONE DOWN (D1 = 2), OTHERS GO TO D3
D2NW Which of the following best describes your sales turnover over the last 6 months? READ OUT AND CODE ONE ONLY

We've seen strong recovery	1
We've seen some recovery	2
We've seen no change	3
The situation has got worse	4
[DO NOT READ OUT] Don't know/refused	X

ASK ALL
D3NW How optimistic are you about your sales turnover and profitability for the next 12 months? READ OUT AND CODE ONE ONLY

Very optimistic	1
Reasonably optimistic	2
Neither optimistic or pessimistic; things will be ok but no more	3
Fairly pessimistic	4
Very pessimistic	5
[DO NOT READ OUT] Don't know/refused	X

RC1 Finally, ConstructionSkills are interested in building up a panel of employers that will enable them to build up a picture of the industry over time. On this basis will it be possible to call you again in the future to discuss topical construction issues?

Yes	1
No	2

THANK AND CLOSE SCREEN

‘Finally, can I finally just take your name and job title (IF RC1=1) and email address.

Name _____

Job title _____

Email address _____

That’s all the questions. Thank you very much for your time today. Please be reassured that all your answers are completely confidential.

I declare that this survey has been carried out under IFF instructions and within the rules of the MRS Code of Conduct.	
Interviewer signature:	Date:
Finish time:	Interview Length mins