

ESOL AT MANCHESTER ADULT EDUCATION SERVICE (MAES): EXPERIENCES OF ENTRY 3 AND LEVEL 1 LEARNERS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A survey was carried out among 340 learners of English enrolled in Entry 3 and Level 1 ESOL courses offered by Manchester Adult Education Services (MAES) at seven different venues across Manchester. Most respondents were between the ages of 25-44 and the majority were women. They originated in 57 countries and speak 53 different languages. The largest groups originate from Pakistan and the Middle East or North Africa, and are speakers of Urdu and Arabic respectively. Most have been living in the UK for five years or less.

Respondents tend to be well educated, especially in the younger age group, with sixteen years of education or more. Most report that they had some command of English before arriving in the UK. Many took more than six months after arriving in the UK before joining an ESOL class, often due to lack of knowledge about classes and in some cases due to family commitments or restrictions on eligibility (such as immigration status).

The majority currently attend a class at a venue located a mile or less from their home and find their classes suitable, yet many are also looking for additional classes; one in six are on waiting lists for additional classes, and of those almost half have been waiting for more than one year. The number of respondents pursuing national or international English language qualifications (such as GCSE and IELTS) is very low, reflecting the fact that IELTS qualifications are not funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), and that MAES learners only move on to GCSE-level qualifications later in their learning journey. Learners also report feeling insecure using English in the professional environment, whilst finding courses, and finding appropriate opportunities to use English outside of courses, are cited as the principal barriers to improving proficiency in English. Learners report that using English outside the classroom boosts their confidence, but for many such opportunities to do so appear to be limited to occasional casual interactions rather than the sustained and regular interactions that would enable long-term language improvement.

Many respondents who were employed before coming to the UK are now out of work. Of those who had worked in professional roles before coming to the UK, two in five are now unemployed. English language proficiency is by far the most

commonly perceived barrier to employment and labour market progression.

All respondents feel that their level of English has improved over the past year, and the majority feel that their reliance on interpreters has decreased as a result. However, nine in ten respondents agreed that it was important to have interpreting services in the city. This demonstrates the transitional function of interpreting for the individual, yet the perpetual need for interpreting at the community level. A majority of respondents reported using an interpreter in the past year. Of those, more than four fifths reported that friends and family also acted as an interpreter for them. This suggests that people rely on both professional and casual interpreters, especially in the health care sector, where the need for interpreting is generally higher, and where one can assume a division of roles between clinical consultations and more general enquiries.

The survey findings and accompanying interviews, observations, and focus group sessions suggest that it would be beneficial to integrate further employability skills into the ESOL curriculum across a variety of different courses, provide more follow-on courses in professional English and more information on additional English language qualifications (such as IELTS) and opportunities to obtain them, and more simulation of communication in the work environment.

The high proportion of learners with professional backgrounds would benefit from more guidance on professional pathways, including mentoring opportunities in professional settings. Many of those interviewed expressed an interest in carrying out internships or other work experience placements in work settings in order to improve their level of professional English; to that end, the possibility of setting up partnerships with local businesses might be explored.

A more integrated framework of partnerships seems essential in order to coordinate the variety of courses and enrichment sessions that are on offer across various sectors, and to share good practice. A Digital Hub to collect and share data on language needs, levels of language skills and professional experience, and types of courses on offer could help manage waiting lists by pointing

learners to various provisions across the city and manage availability with demand more effectively.

The findings suggest that ESOL support reduces dependency on professional interpreting provisions. Nonetheless, it is also clear that this is a gradual process, and that interpreting provisions act as a key element in building confidence in public services, motivating rather than discouraging individuals to improve their English language skills.

For that reason, we believe that careful planning of ESOL and public sector interpreting and translation provisions must go hand in hand. The city would benefit from an integrated city language strategy to help plan and deliver provisions for interpreting and translation, ESOL, informal (conversation-based) support for learning English, and specific pathways to support language proficiency in the work setting.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background: Aims and scope

The link between learning English and social integration has been a theme in public discourse for some years now. An example is the interim report of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Social Integration, which stated that, ‘all immigrants should be expected to have either learned English before coming to the UK or be enrolled in compulsory ESOL classes upon arrival’ (APPGSI, 2017a: 5), a position reiterated in the final report, which states that, ‘no one should be able to live in our country for a considerable length of time without speaking English’ (APPGSI, 2017b: 66). This stance is also reflected in both the influential Casey (2016) report, which associates lack of English with barriers to labour market progression and integration, and the recent government Green Paper on integrated communities, which again links a lack of fluency in English with social isolation and economic disadvantage (HM Government, 2018).

At the same time, funding for ESOL provision has declined dramatically in recent years, despite demand rising considerably. A recent House of Commons briefing paper suggests that funding declined by around 60% in real terms between 2009/10 and 2015/16, with available places falling from 180,000 to 100,000 per annum in the same period (Foster & Bolton, 2017: 3). In Manchester, The Manchester College, one of the largest providers of ESOL in the city, has faced 30% funding cuts to its overall budget, but ESOL remains a priority area. The college reported that despite increasing the number of ESOL places during the same period by 100%, it still had more than 2,000 people on its waiting list (Manchester City Council, 2016b). The Manchester Adult ESOL Strategy sets a target to grow ESOL provision by 25% in the city in order to meet demand (Manchester City Council, 2016a). Yet the implications of Brexit for ESOL funding remain unclear and there is concern that provisions could be damaged if support from the European Social Fund is discontinued (see Abercrombie, 2017).

The present report is set in the context of discussions about the need to enhance ESOL provisions by drawing on available networking opportunities that bring together contributions from a variety of sectors and institutions, and to that end, the need to learn more about the experiences and aspirations of ESOL learners in various outlets across the city. The report is one of the outcomes of a partnership between the Multilingual Manchester (MLM) research unit at the University of Manchester and Manchester City Council’s Manchester Adult Education Service (MAES). The partnership encompasses a series of activities, among them contributions by MLM student volunteers to the delivery of Talk English sessions, and student placements that have produced a report on the needs of learners with a professional background and their prospects and aspirations for integration into the work force.

We focus in this report on Entry 3 and Level 1 learners at a number of MAES adult learning centres and community venues, with the following aims:

- To assess Entry 3 and Level 1 learners' perceptions of the accessibility and impact of ESOL provisions;
- To establish learners' backgrounds, and to investigate potential barriers to access;
- To identify the extent of learners' current need for translation and interpreting and the type of provisions that are being accessed;
- To explore the contribution of MAES ESOL provisions to workforce integration.

The survey also offers us an opportunity to reflect on the partnership and to assess MLM's integrated approach to analysing language diversity while supporting key stakeholders' strategic engagement with language needs in the city. This is achieved by

- testing a research approach that is anchored in community engagement and building relations with stakeholders;
- implementing a model of research co-production with students, whose enquiry is informed by their own engagement with non-academic stakeholders through placements and volunteering activities;
- piloting a research perspective on ESOL that is part of a holistic approach to language diversity in global cities and which takes into consideration Public Service Interpreting and Translating (PSIT) as a critical point of contrast with English language provisions;
- drawing on insights to inform a city language strategy in which language support provisions and ESOL are considered to be part of the same strategic package rather than competing policy components.

The scope of the study is limited to Entry 3 and Level 1 learners. At these levels, respondents are deemed to have sufficient English language proficiency to understand and respond to the questions independently (though additional support was made available through research assistance to groups during the interviews). The scope of the study is also limited to the capture of learner experience and does not extend to a review of pedagogical methods in the delivery of the curriculum.

1.2 Multilingual Manchester: Structure and remit

Multilingual Manchester (MLM) is a research unit based in the School of Arts, Languages and Cultures at the University of Manchester, which aims to promote awareness of language diversity in the city-region and beyond. MLM supports local institutions and communities in responding to language needs, fostering cultural and language heritage, and harnessing language skills. Its teaching, research and public engagement strands are interconnected and guided by current issues articulated by practitioners. Students play a central role in exploring and responding to these issues, through community-based research projects

as part of coursework and placements, and through practical support offered as volunteers. The MLM volunteering scheme attracts approximately 200 students per year, from different academic disciplines. Student volunteers work with host institutions – largely public and third sector organisations – and gain insight into delivery of services in a multilingual city, as well as learning more about the experiences of Manchester's diverse communities. Activities include supporting Greater Manchester Police in re-drafting letters used to communicate with victims of crime, working with interpreters to collect patient experience testimonies from non-English speakers at Central Manchester Hospitals, delivering language taster sessions to primary school pupils, running English conversation sessions at local community centres, and contributing to the design and delivery of interactive exhibitions and public event on the city's language diversity.

Since 2015, over 150 MLM student volunteers have been involved in supporting English language provisions in Manchester (see <http://mlm.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/english-language-provisions-in-manchester/>). The MLM team, together with colleagues in Social Sciences at the University of Manchester, initially set up a weekly conversation session at The Chrysalis Centre in Moss Side, in response to discussions with staff at the Centre who indicated that some users struggled to find opportunities to practise their English outside of ESOL courses. The student-led conversation sessions run on a drop-in basis and give participants a chance to practise speaking English in a relaxed, informal environment. They are designed to supplement, rather than substitute, formal English language instruction. Through engaging in conversations on a wide range of topics, student volunteers have the opportunity to learn more about the experiences of participants, many of whom are refugees and asylum seekers. 2016-17 saw a surge in interest in this activity among students, who often stated that they were motivated by political events to find a practical way to support new arrivals. The activity expanded and volunteers delivered a second weekly conversation session at The Robert Darbishire GP Practice in Rusholme, as well as supporting the Talk English programme, facilitated by Manchester City Council, and social enterprise Heart and Parcel at specialised cookery and ESOL sessions. In 2017-18, students delivered a weekly conversation session with the Women's Voices group at the Pakistani Community Centre in Longsight, and continued to support learners at Talk English and The Chrysalis Centre. In addition to their practical purpose, the conversation sessions also provided an observation setting through which MLM researchers could, over an extended period of time, find out more about participants' wider experience of accessing English language provisions.

The creation of a pathway into the Talk English initiative for student volunteers, including a training programme offered to this group by Talk English staff, is one of a number of ways in which Multilingual Manchester and Manchester City Council collaborate around issues of policy, planning and provisions. MLM placement students have had the opportunity to work closely with the City Council's Equalities team, writing sections of the 2018 Communities of Interest Report, and with Manchester Adult Education Service (MAES), gathering information and producing a report on the professional backgrounds of ESOL learners. In 2015 and in 2017, MLM collaborated with the Neighbourhoods team and local councillors to coordinate Levenshulme Language Day, a family-friendly event to celebrate language diversity, and has now partnered with staff from Libraries to plan city-wide events around International Mother Language Day 2019. LinguaSnapp, a mobile app launched by MLM to document the city's linguistic landscape, features on the City Council's Statistics and Intelligence webpage, under the theme of Population. The MLM team is also currently working with the City Council to develop a Language Strategy for Manchester.

MLM is funded in part by an internal University of Manchester investment under the Creative Manchester programme run by the School of Arts, Language and Cultures. It is also the recipient of a number of external research grants, the largest of which is currently an award from the Arts and Humanities Research Council under the Open Word Research Initiative, where MLM delivers the Multilingual Communities activity strand as part of the research consortium on 'Cross-Language Dynamics: Re-Shaping community'.

1.3 Reflections on method

The report has been compiled by non-specialists in ESOL, and aims to introduce a new perspective on ESOL as part of a holistic approach to describing language diversity in the city-region. This includes positioning the impact of ESOL in the context of the interplay of provisions for accessing services in other languages (Public Service Interpreting and Translating), as well as opportunities for work and social integration that are offered in other languages through the city's multilingual social fabric. Addressing the policy perspective, we set out to challenge notions that are frequently encountered at the national level of policy discourse which juxtapose learning English with provisions for interpreting and translation and with provisions to foster and harness minority community languages. Instead we take the view that these should be components of an integrated language strategy that views multilingualism as a social and cultural asset, and languages as skills.

The city is in the process of developing and indeed implementing its own narrative on languages, which differs in some key points from that which prevails at national level: Manchester policy documents tend not to approach ESOL as a way of strengthening a national unity narrative that is bent on fending off immigration. Instead, ESOL is embedded into a narrative that celebrates equality and diversity, and which seeks to release communities, including 'emerging communities', from dependency and offer support for what is being referred to as 'resilience' – the social capital and skills that enable active participation. This apparent tension between national government and city narratives is exemplified by the contrast between the government Green Paper from March 2018, and Manchester City Council's ESOL strategy from 2017: The former, the government paper, conveys the message that immigrants of certain backgrounds fail to learn English and as a result are unable to integrate, and places the responsibility for helping them learn English with communities. It resorts to judgemental statements by referring to 'too many people who don't speak English' and stating that 'everyone living in England should be able to speak and understand English so they can integrate into life in this country', and singles out the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities and Muslims in general as having a particularly high proportion of people who cannot speak English (HM Government, 2018: 35). The Manchester City Council report, by contrast, states that the purpose of an ESOL strategy is to 'enable residents to contribute to and benefit from sustained prosperity and a good quality of life' and emphasises the need to learn more about the motivations of residents in Manchester who want to improve their English (Manchester City Council, 2017:1). While the goals are similar, and the statements are intended to set out a pathway to support English learning, and to justify new measures in terms of their overall benefit to society, they differ in tone, with the government paper resorting to a narrative of Othering while the city views its population as a unified collective, approaching the improvement of English language skills as a personal choice rather than a dictate that sets out to measure individuals' eligibility for Belonging.

Embracing the city's approach to learning English as individuals' pathway toward improving their own quality of life, we believe that our expertise in studying language diversity can make an innovative contribution to policy drafting on ESOL by taking the holistic perspective into account, in that way helping policy makers to embed ESOL into their strategic considerations of how the challenges and opportunities of language diversity to the city. This contribution draws on MLM's unique research model where students are engaged as actors in municipal and voluntary sector activities and thereby become part of a local practice community that supports ESOL, and where we simultaneously draw on a wide range of activity strands including our involvement in supporting community-run initiatives such as supplementary schools, which offer a form of 'resilience', and in designing digital tools to assess language needs. In this setting, we engage in a reciprocal process and a distinct form of participatory ethnography that makes use of a range of sequential as well as unique or discrete observation opportunities, where even single events are taken to be representative of activity routines that together make up the 'ecology' of local ESOL practices. This lends a broader perspective to our analysis and helps us to contextualise the focus point of the actual survey to which this report is dedicated.

The report is being compiled at a moment in time when public discussion around immigration and its implications is intense in the aftermath of the EU referendum, while at the city-region level preparations

are underway to take on a greater share of the responsibility for integration and community cohesion in general, and the delivery of skills including ESOL provision more specifically, through the process of devolution of powers to the Greater Manchester Mayoral authority.

2. SETTING

2.1 Manchester's language diversity

More than half of Manchester's residents are thought to be multilingual, in that they make use of more than one language in their daily lives on a regular basis. In the 2011 Census, 16.6% of households, representing around 80,000 residents, declared a 'main language other than English'. However, it is widely believed that this figure underestimates the number of multilingual households (Matras & Robertson, 2015). For one, there was lack of clarity as to whether the term 'main language' represents personal preference, proficiency, or frequency of use. In addition, respondents who would attribute the same or similar importance to English as they do to another language did not have the opportunity to indicate this on the census. That, together with the realisation that the number of multilingual households has increased since 2011, puts the likely proportion of households that use languages other than or in addition to English at anywhere between 30-40%, or roughly 150,000-200,000 of the city's residents. This figure does not include the many residents who have acquired foreign language skills primarily through formal studies or periods of residence abroad.

Recent annual School Census data show that around 40% of school pupils are identified as having a 'first language' other than English. Again, it is believed that this figure under-reports multilingualism, as it does not necessarily take into account children who speak English at home with one parent and another language with another parent. The realistic figure of pupils with a multilingual background is thought to be upwards of 50%.

Statistical sources on the number of languages spoken in the city also vary. Published data from the 2011 Census named around 70 individual 'main languages' that were reported by respondents, and grouped additional languages by region of origin, though the complete list of responses provided to us by the Office for National Statistics contains a total of 286 languages for the city of Manchester (367 for Greater Manchester), of which only 169 (230 for Greater Manchester) were listed by 5 respondents or more. The annual School Census for Manchester tends to report upwards of 150 different languages as pupils' 'first languages'. Interpreter requests in the health care sector show regular demand for around 120 languages. When pulling together the various statistics and taking account of the fact that many languages remain under-reported, and that the terminology used to capture languages can vary, we can estimate that around 200 languages are regularly spoken in Manchester. Of those, over 50 are represented in the city's public space on signs of local businesses and cultural and religious institutions, adverts and noticeboards, landmarks, parks, health and safety notices, and on websites that are managed by Manchester residents and local commercial and cultural organisations.

Languages other than English with large numbers of speakers in Manchester include Urdu, Chinese, Arabic, Polish, Panjabi, Bengali, Somali, Persian, and Kurdish. French and Portuguese are widespread among communities of both African and European origins. Greater Manchester has the country's highest speaker concentrations outside of London for a number of languages including Yiddish, Somali, Kurdish, and Romani. There are long established speaker communities of languages from different parts of the world, including African languages such as Yoruba, Shona, Akan, Nigerian Pidgin English, Hausa, Swahili and Tigrinya, Caribbean languages such as Jamaican Patwa, eastern European languages such as Slovak, Czech, Lithuanian, Latvian, Ukrainian, Romanian and Hungarian, western European languages including German, Spanish and Greek, West Asian languages including Turkish, Armenian, Dari and Pashto, South Asian languages such as Gujarati, Telugu, Malayalam and Tamil and regional languages such as Sylheti

and Pahari, and East Asian languages including Korean, Vietnamese, Malay and Thai. Various languages are used by Manchester residents for liturgical purposes and religious study, among them Classical Arabic, Sanskrit, Biblical Hebrew, Biblical Greek, Armenian and Panjabi. Around 160 Manchester residents (800 for Greater Manchester) declared British Sign language (BSL) to be their 'main language' on the 2011 Census. City wards with high language diversity, where over 20% of residents declare a 'main language' other than English, include Ardwick, Cheetham, City Centre, Crumpsall, Gorton South, Harpurhey, Hulme, Longsight, Moss Side, Rusholme, and Whalley Range, each showing at least 50 different languages and often many more.

In the 2011 Census, around 10% of households declared that they had no member who had English as their 'main language'. The proportion was over 20% in Ardwick, Cheetham, City Centre, and Longsight, over 15% in Crumpsall, Hulme, Moss Side, and Rusholme, and over 10% in Fallowfield, Gorton South, Levenshulme and Whalley Range. Altogether 3.4% or around 17,000 of residents declared that they had low or very low proficiency in English, with high percentages (over 5%) in Cheetham, Crumpsall, Gorton South, Longsight, Moss Side, Rusholme, and Whalley Range.

Public services in the city generally maintain provisions for interpreting and translations. The city council's translation and interpreting service M4-Translations has 11 contracted staff and around 200 freelance vendors, who respond annually to over 12,000 requests for interpreting and translation in more than 70 different languages. Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust (MFT) maintains an in-house translation and interpreting department with around 10 full-time and additional 10 part-time staff who are supported by external contractors; together they respond to around 50,000 annual face-to-face and telephone requests for interpreting in around 100 different languages. Other hospitals, and the city's emergency services, rely on a number of local contractors for interpreting and translation who often draw on the language skills of local residents. Manchester's GP surgeries register upwards of 15,000 interpreting requests annually. Languages with a high demand for interpreting services are generally those that are most widespread in the city, including Urdu, Panjabi, Arabic, Polish, Bengali, Persian, Kurdish, Cantonese, and Somali, as well as Romanian.

For information on languages spoken in Manchester, ward language profiles, and language data see the Multilingual Manchester Data Tool: www.manchester.ac.uk/mlmdatatool

2.2 Local and regional ESOL provisions

ESOL provision in Manchester and across the North-West region is offered by a wide range of providers. This ranges from long-standing courses provided by local Adult Education services and FE colleges and funded via the Adult Education or Community Learning budgets of the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), to courses run by Voluntary Community Organisations (VCOs), which are often match funded by the European Social Fund (ESF). Volunteer-led English conversation groups typically aim to supplement formal ESOL classes, rather than act as a replacement for them, but not all are coordinated by VCOs. The Talk English project in Manchester, for example, operates under the auspices of MAES and was funded by the Department for Communities and Local Government from January 2014 and (extended to) March 2019 as one of six initial projects selected through a two-stage competitive bidding process set up under the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Government. In broader terms, available provision varies widely in terms of content, delivery and outcomes, from courses leading to a range of nationally recognised qualifications, to drop-in English conversation session open to learners at a variety of levels.

In a recent mapping exercise, 139 ESOL providers were identified in the North-West region, with 51 ESFA-funded organisations, and 67 community organisations providing a range of ESOL activities (Mackey, 2017: 10). However, several points are of note here: firstly, because of the way VCO provision is funded (either via fundraising, or ESF or similar grants), projects which include ESOL provision are often time-limited, making them extremely difficult to accurately map (see also, Manchester City Council, 2018).

The website developed on the basis of the MAES mapping exercise shows where courses are located and can be updated by providers, thereby capturing (at least some) changes in provisions. Nevertheless the lack of a co-ordinating body means it is hard to gauge exactly how many people are benefiting from VCO-run courses.

Secondly, ESOL provision varies widely and exists on a continuum between ‘formal’, often ESFA-funded, courses, led by well-qualified teachers and offering both progression and recognised qualifications, to conversation clubs which do not formally teach English or lead to accredited qualifications. Relatedly, Mackey (2017: 16) notes that, based on her survey of providers, most community-based ESOL provision is not accredited. It is not uncommon for community-based provisions to rely on the support of long-standing providers; for example, Talk English is led by MAES, which provides training and mentoring to volunteers, whilst Migrant Support (MS), a local charity which provides two ESOL classes a week, benefits from teaching input provided by PGCE-students specialising in ESOL from the University of Bolton.

A final category concerns institution- and workplace-led provisions; an example of institution-led provision would be the ‘ESOL Hub’ offered by the Jobcentre Plus in Rusholme. Gathering information on the extent and nature of such provisions is – at this time of writing – very difficult due to their highly localised nature. However, Multilingual Manchester’s recent invited participation in discussions for a pilot short course in one Jobcentre Plus location in Manchester in 2017 provides some insight into the operational challenges facing the institution and its service users in relation to English language support (digital literacy being one example).

Job Centres can mandate job seekers to attend ESOL for Work (EfW) provisions, whether through formal courses, or sessions offered by VCOs. The Manchester ESOL strategy (2017), for example, mentions the large number of referrals to MAES and The Manchester College through Jobcentre Plus. The ethnographic data gathered as part of this project reveals regular referrals to VCOs by local Job Centres in Manchester, which generate additional bureaucratic burdens for the organisations concerned; at least one VCO (see the section below) reports being asked by the Job Centre to confirm attendance by individuals, but receives no additional funding to administer this process. Moreover, requirements to attend whatever provisions are available can also lead to a situation - as reported in our data - where individuals end up repeating the same course on multiple occasions due to the lack of opportunity to access higher level provisions.

Known provision in the city breaks down as follows:

Table 1: ESOL provision in Manchester, 2017/18 academic year (Source: Manchester City Council, 2018)

PROVIDER	FUNDER	COURSES	ENROLMENTS	VENUES
MAES – ESOL	ESFA	72	1440	10
MAES – Talk English	MHCLG	47	875	38
MAES – Family Learning	ESFA	24	360	20
The Manchester College	ESFA	58	1350	4

Workers' Educational Association (WEA)	ESFA	7	84	5
Wai Yin	Varies	10	150	3
Other CVOs	Varies (often based on ESF-dependent grants)	Not known	Not known	Not known
TOTAL		218	4259	

Access to provision is often subject to eligibility restrictions imposed by funding agencies, meaning not all learners can access all provision. Government-funded adult ESOL, for example, is funded via the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) through the Adult Education Budget (AEB) (Foster & Bolton, 2017); responsibility for the AEB will be devolved in the Greater Manchester region from 2019 as one of the eight Mayoral Combined Authorities.

Courses funded by the ESFA are subject to strict eligibility criteria, which it sets out in the *Adult education budget: funding and performance management rules (2017-18)*. This includes provision for example for individuals with certain types of immigration status and their families, and asylum seekers. Many courses are also subject to additional eligibility criteria in order to attend courses for free; for example those accessing MAES-run English for Work courses need to be actively seeking work, receiving some sort of employment benefit, or in low-paid work (earning less than £15,000 p.a.). Though those who do not meet these criteria can still access such courses, they would have to pay fees.

Although no government funding is made available for workplace ESOL, employer demand for provision in Manchester is growing, as acknowledged by MAES (Manchester ESOL Strategy, 2017). It reports that 'packages have been put together for employers both at their request and proactively (supported by the MCC Work and Skills team)' but, as of July 2018, commitment to funding remains a challenge. The 2017 report by APPG on Social Integration, *Integration not Demonisation*, recommends financial incentives be offered to employers for the provision of in-work ESOL programmes, which may help to facilitate provision in the future.

Aside from financial considerations, access to courses in Manchester is often hampered by the lack of a single point of coordination, leading learners to seek guidance from multiple centres and register for multiple courses. MAES has identified this issue as a key priority in the Manchester ESOL Strategy (2017) and plans to be working with Multilingual Manchester to create an ESOL gateway in the form of a Digital Hub to manage waiting lists.

2.3 Examples of Voluntary Community Organisation (VCO) provisions in Manchester

Problems in accessing courses mean that recourse to VCO provision is frequent. Multilingual Manchester's research and volunteering initiatives provide qualitative insight into the nature and range of provisions

offered by VCOs, a selection of which is provided below. The information shows how provisions differ in terms of content, organisation and social purpose, and highlights the role played by VCOs in the local ecology of Manchester's ESOL provision.

Migrant Support, Oldham Street, Manchester emerged on the basis of a peer research project run by Oxfam from 2009, becoming a charity in 2016. The organisation has offered some form of ESOL provision since its inception and currently offers ESOL/conversation session at two levels – beginner and advanced – which do not directly map on to standard ESOL levels. The classes have slowly evolved to become more like formal ESOL classes in the past year and now have classes taught by trainee teachers (PGCE) specialising in ESOL from the University of Bolton. Some learners attend due to being unable to access formal provision, with courses being oversubscribed being cited as the main reason.

Funding comes from the Language, Employability and Integration Hub (LEI Hub) scheme, which is partially supported by the EU European Social Fund (ESF). The organisation can only claim funding for those who meet the stringent LEI criteria; however the sessions are open to all. It rarely has waiting lists. A higher proportion of learners come from the asylum system than on MAES courses. Information about the courses are largely disseminated through social networks, although some advertising is done via social media when a new course is about to start. Some attendees are mandated to attend by the local Job Centres.

Beginner classes are delivered around topics common to ESOL curricula of transport, housing, healthcare and so forth, whilst the more advanced classes are based on British history. Both often include creative exercises, drawing, sewing and various other creative tasks through the input of one of the core staff, an artist and activist, though unqualified in TESOL.

Permission to observe classes was granted by the organisation in 2017 with the aim of understanding who sought access to provisions and why. The advanced class, for example, attracted regular attendance by very educated individuals some of whom had a very high level of proficiency in English. It transpires that some attendees (e.g. Anglophone Africans) come for support in speaking what they label 'proper' English and gain exposure to regional accents, showing that the provision caters for a broad range of learners' (self-identified) need.

The welcoming atmosphere and highly interactive sessions observed highlight the important social role played by the organisation in developing confidence and trust among attendees, from older Pakistani women who have been in the country many years, to young men in the asylum system struggling with social isolation and regular moves due to dispersal policies.

The Chrysalis Family Centre, Moss Side, Manchester has hosted various non-accredited ESOL courses in recent years, including a drop-in English conversation class run by Multilingual Manchester volunteers offered once a week to groups that often have very different levels of proficiency in English. For some attendees with almost no English proficiency, participation is problematic, which can impact on motivation to attend. Other challenges to regular attendance concern gender mixing, and even topics selected for discussion that may trigger emotional crises (e.g. 'home' and 'family'). Local knowledge offered by one of the centre's staff members offered other reasons for patchy attendance:

"She says that many people – more than we actually imagine - are smuggled into the UK and their smugglers don't want them to leave their work place. They work in car-washes, hairdressing saloons, shops, and often sleep in the same place where they work".

Reflecting on the affective importance of this type of provision, one MLM volunteer writes:

"It's clear that the conversation sessions are also therapeutic in eliciting emotional bonds between people who share similar experiences of migration. For people who experience loneliness and grief, they offer a space where they can be listened to".

The English conversation classes offered by Multilingual Manchester volunteers at the Pakistani Community Centre, Longsight, Manchester are for women only, from a wide range of migrant backgrounds. The learners who attend each week vary considerably in terms of level and the volunteers leading the sessions report finding it a challenge to ensure appropriate differentiation in the class. This qualitative data on the experiences of untrained volunteers is highly insightful in terms of the potential risks to progression if this type of provision is privileged over others. The following quote from a volunteer is illustrative:

“The unpredictability of these classes (not knowing who might show up, students and volunteers, and the English level of the students you’ll have to engage with) can be daunting for those who are instead used to teach in more predictable settings (like in same-level English classrooms)”.

The VCO offer described above provides only a snapshot of what is available in Manchester, and, while indicative of volunteer-led conversation groups, this range of VCO providers is not unique to the city. Moreover, the interplay between formal and informal provisions found in Manchester is mirrored in most urban centres around the UK. However, in view of the increased emphasis being placed on community-based provisions highlighted in the Integrated Communities Strategy green paper in March 2018 (HM Government, 2018), these insights have good potential to shape discussion on the form these provisions will take and some of the risks involved in terms of outcomes.

The Multilingual Manchester volunteer-led sessions highlight the challenges and pressures facing untrained individuals trying to cope with what can be challenging learning environments (due to unpredictability of group size, levels of proficiency, problems of emotional instability etc). Managed approaches such as those offered through the Talk English and the Heart and Parcel (ESOL and cooking) schemes provide important points of reference in relation to models of volunteer management. Community-based learning as described in the green paper goes beyond ESOL provisions to wider skills and learning opportunities, whether these be of a technical nature (e.g. IT training) or social (confidence and resilience building); our data suggest that Manchester VCO provisions already tap into this broader range of offering. Nevertheless, the actual impact on individual progress needs to be evaluated and due consideration given to the role of the qualified expert in the wider ecology of provision.

2.4 Manchester City Council ESOL provisions

Manchester Adult Education Service (MAES) is the part of Manchester City Council tasked with providing adult education courses in the city; these range from Adult Health and Social Care to beginner computer courses. It is part of the Directorate for Growth and Neighbourhoods, with links to Education and Skills team (within the Children and Families Directorate). It specialises in ‘first step’ adult education courses (some leading to qualifications), and community learning for adults aged 19+. Most courses are delivered in one of eight adult learning centres, but there are also sessions in more than 100 community venues across the city (Manchester City Council 2017). In 2016/17, MAES received a grant of over £7.5 million in Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) funding through the Adult Education and Community Learning budgets (Manchester City Council 2017), and a further £948,848 from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to run the Talk English programme (see above).

ESOL provision at MAES is led by an Adult Education Manager, with support from three Curriculum Managers, seven Team Leaders, and 39 ESOL tutors. MAES is one of the two main providers of ESOL in Manchester (the other being The Manchester College). It provides ESOL to 2,675 unique learners per year in 143 classes (nearly two-thirds of the city’s capacity) – 875 through Talk English, and over 1,400 through Everyday English and English for Work courses (Manchester City Council, 2018). Courses are offered at 5 levels, from pre-Entry level, suitable for those with no English at all, to Level 1 (equivalent to NQF level 1, or a GCSE qualification at grades D-G).

In late 2016, MAES released the Manchester Adult ESOL Strategy (Manchester City Council, 2016a). The Strategy set out the ways in which MAES (and, thus, Manchester City Council) would meet the goals of the over-arching Our Manchester Strategy (Manchester City Council, 2016c) and the Manchester Work and Skills Strategy (Manchester City Council, 2015), particularly with regard to, 'unlocking the potential of our communities' (Manchester City Council, 2018). In the ESOL strategy, MAES commit to an ambitious action plan, alongside meeting the challenge to grow ESOL provision in the city by 25% from 2015 levels. The listed action plan is as follows:

Identifying additional funding to increase the volume of provision/influence Greater Manchester investment;
 Exploring more cost effective ways of meeting the level of demand;
 Working more closely with employers to increase the amount of work-based ESOL;
 Developing a single 'ESOL Gateway'; clearer signposting and referral processes;
 Improving progression pathways between providers;
 Improve data collection and analysis on ESOL demand;
 Identifying and responding to gaps in provision
 (Manchester City Council, 2016a: 3).

Overall, the vision of the ESOL strategy is that, 'by 2020, there will be sufficient, well coordinated ESOL learning provision so that Manchester residents with their vast array of first languages and cultures will be enabled to secure employment, progress in employment and feel fully integrated into life in Manchester and the UK, contributing to greater community cohesion in our city' (Manchester City Council, 2016a: 3). MAES provides nearly two-thirds of the known ESOL provision in the city (in terms of both the number of classes and enrolments). It provides classes from pre-Entry to Level 1; these can be understood as follows:

Table 2: ESOL levels and equivalents:

ESOL LEVEL	SKILLS EXPECTED OF LEARNERS	EQUIVALENCE
Pre-Entry	None	N/A
Entry 1	Ask and answer questions about personal information; Give and follow basic instructions and directions; Read and understand short texts with repeated language patterns on familiar topics; Read and obtain information from common signs and symbols; Complete a form giving basic personal details; Write a short note	Literacy skills of a native speaker age 7; Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR) A1
Entry 2	Ask and answer questions about daily routine, study and/or work; Give a short account of something that happened in the past, spoken and in writing; Ask for things in familiar situations (out shopping, at the train station, at the library); Talk about likes and dislikes in familiar contexts;	Literacy skills of a native speaker age 9; CEFR A2

	Read and understand short, straightforward texts on familiar topics; Write and informal description of a person or place; Spell common words and use capital letters and basic punctuation	
Entry 3	Compare people and places; Tell simple stories using time makers and past tenses in speech and writing; Give personal information in a formal context; Read and understand short, straightforward texts on familiar topics and read and obtain information from everyday sources; Write and informal letter about a planned future activity; Separate writing into paragraphs	Literacy level of a native speaker, age 11; CEFR B1
Level 1	Describe a process using time markers and the imperative; Make formal requests for factual information, descriptions and comparisons; Give advice and suggest possible solutions for common everyday problems; Read and understand straightforward texts of varying lengths on a variety of topics accurately and independently; Write a record of extended personal data for official purposes (e.g. personal statement for a job); Write a formal report making comparisons between, e.g., countries, lifestyles or jobs; Write an informal letter setting out a problem and asking for advice	GCSE grades D-G or 1-3; NVQ Level 1; CEFR B2

Based on information from Council of Europe (2001), Manchester City Council (2016a), Ofqual (n.d.).

MAES provides English language teaching to 2,675 of Manchester's 4,259 identified unique ESOL learners; 1,440 through English for Work (EfW) and Everyday English (EE) classes, 875 through Talk English provision, and 360 via Family Learning courses. Talk English and Family Learning provision is targeted towards the lowest of the ESOL levels available, with learners moving onto to EfW or EE courses as they progress. EfW courses are restricted to those who are actively seeking work. EfW courses, of which there are 24, offer 9 hours of contact time per week, spread over 4 sessions, whilst EE classes include 4.5 hours of contact time, over two classes, per week. There are approximately double the number of EE classes available at 53. Sessions are provided at 10 centres across Manchester, with main sites in the north (Abraham Moss Adult Learning Centre, Crumpsall) and south (Greenheys Adult Learning Centre, Moss Side) of the city.

Despite the fact that MAES only opens its registration and waiting lists at certain times of the year, it offers assessments regularly throughout the year at Welcome to ESOL sessions and learners can join a class if spaces are available or go on the waiting list. There are, however, still a significant number of learners on waiting lists; across Manchester this has been estimated at over 1,000 people (Manchester City Council, 2018). Whilst such under-supply has been acknowledged in recent national reports (APPSGI, 2017b;

Casey, 2016; HM Government, 2018), this has not yet been translated into concrete plans for increased funding for ESOL provision. Whilst the establishment and success of the Talk English scheme has led to the development of an additional funding stream, such funding is not guaranteed to continue indefinitely. So, although Talk English may help to take some of the burden off other providers in the short-term, particularly with regard to pre-entry level courses, ESOL in Manchester still operates in a very challenging funding environment, with falling funding and rising demand (Foster & Bolton, 2017; Manchester City Council, 2016b; NATECLA, 2016).

In 2016/17, Manchester City Council's Adult Education Services (MAES) received a grant of £948,848 from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to run the Talk English programme – a volunteer-led, community-based programme that looks to support learning English for those with no, or very little prior ability in the language (approximately equivalent to pre-Entry ESOL). That programme has been the subject of a recent evaluation study carried out by the Ministry (MHCLG, 2018). The study covers a randomised control trial of 527 people. The so-called 'treatment group' of 249 were given access to Talk English classes in Manchester over an 11-week period in 2016, while the remainder, the 'control group' were not given access until after the trial. English language proficiency tests were taken by participants at the beginning and end of the study, as was a survey on social attitudes. Participants were only accepted if they spoke Bengali, Punjabi, Somali, Arabic or Urdu.

Unsurprisingly, the treatment group outperformed the control group in regard to mean improvements across the range of English language proficiency tests, particularly in terms of speaking and listening. They also saw higher increases in a few 'social integration' scores derived from the survey – particularly with regard to 'social mixing' and 'using English outside the classroom', and to a lesser extent with regard to 'participation in wider society'. There was no difference between treatment and control groups in terms of 'attitudes to community integration', 'sense of independence', or 'sense of belonging', with the report noting these were high to begin with. This leads the authors to state that, 'findings suggest that the provision of Community-based English language support can promote social integration' (MHCLG, 2018: 10).

However, all participants scored at a rather high level on most of the measures, especially attitudes to community integration, sense of independence and sense of belonging. The lack of social integration amongst participants which the authors had apparently anticipated does not seem to have been there as a point of departure. With regard to social integration, in particular, it is not quite clear what conclusions can be drawn from an 11-week study, whether differences would appear in this short period of time, and if they did, then whether any changes would be sustainable once learners had finished their course.

At the same time we recognise (not least based on our own experience and the various limitations of externally funded research projects) that longitudinal studies, which would be the best way to address questions of integration (both social integration and labour force integration), are difficult to carry out. The approach we take here therefore sets out to compensate for the difficulties of carrying out longitudinal observations by relying on self-reported changes in participants' level of proficiency in English, their motivation and opportunities to improve their English and to access the labour market. We try to balance off the limitations of a quantitative survey that relies on respondents' self-assessment by combining a questionnaire survey with life history interviews with individuals, and with focus group sessions (see below).

3. SURVEY STRUCTURE AND RATIONALE

As part of the Multilingual Communities strand of the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) funded Open World Research Initiative (OWRI), researchers at MLM had set about investigating English language provision in Manchester, particularly in light of recent pronouncements and reports by national politicians stressing the importance of speaking English in the UK (see, e.g. APPGSI, 2017b; Casey, 2016; HM Government, 2018), alongside a decade of cuts in funding for adult ESOL (Foster & Bolton, 2017;

NATECLA, 2016). As part of that research, we carried out a questionnaire-based survey among learners in the top two levels of MAES ESOL provision (Entry 3 and Level 1), in April and May 2018, enquiring about their experiences of English language provision in Manchester. At the time of the survey, a total of 1,440 learners were enrolled in ESOL classes offered by MAES, of whom 629 attended Entry 3 and Level 1 classes. Our survey covered a total of 340 respondents, constituting roughly 54% of those enrolled in Entry 3 and Level 1, and roughly 24% of all learners enrolled in MAES classes during the academic year 2017/18. Surveys were conducted at all seven venues MAES currently use to host Entry 3 and Level 1 ESOL classes: Abraham Moss Adult Learning Centre, Crumpsall; Forum Learning, Wythenshawe; Greenheys Adult Learning Centre, Moss Side; Ida Kinsey House, Ardwick; Longsight Library; Sacred Heart Sure Start Centre, Gorton, and the Withington Centre.

The questionnaire-based survey was accompanied by interviews with service providers, ESOL tutors, ESOL learners, and others accessing English language provision in Manchester, as well as periods of observations and participatory observations in a variety of ESOL courses during 2017. In addition, three University of Manchester students undertook a work placement with MAES, investigating the experiences of highly skilled and highly qualified ESOL learners in the city.

The questionnaire (Appendix A) went through a number of revisions as we consulted with ESOL teachers and learners in order to ensure the survey was as comprehensible as possible to respondents who were still learning English. It is divided into five sections, each exploring a different aspect of the attitudes and experiences of learners to ESOL and PSIT (Public Service Interpreting and Translation). The first section, entitled 'General Information' covers demographic details, such as gender, age, languages spoken, and length of formative education. These details allow us to see the broad demographic outlines of who is accessing ESOL in Manchester, and to use this information to explore whether differences in experiences and perceptions are related to any demographic variables. These pieces of information also allow us, in principle, to compare our results to existing datasets, such as the UK Census. It is worth noting, however, that this survey differs from most standard UK datasets in allowing for respondents to choose multiple spoken languages, rather than being restricted to a single 'first' or 'main' language. Second, we use years of education, rather than highest level of qualification (as commonly found in UK datasets, including the Census) because comparison between international educational qualifications is not straightforward, and some respondents may not have received an education that would fit neatly into the framework used in the UK. Indeed, some may have received very little formal education at all.

The second section asks respondents to tell us about how they have accessed English language provision in the city. Difficulty in accessing English language courses has been highlighted as a key barrier to people moving to the UK improving their English. Whilst budget cuts and resultant long waiting lists have been recognised as a potential problem in terms of getting on to an ESOL course (see above), there are a number of other potential issues that could make it more or less easy to attend an ESOL class, from working shifts to difficulty in getting to a centre on public transport.

In the third section we explore the impact of ESOL on English language proficiency: Does taking an ESOL class lead to improvements in English language ability? What other resources are learners using to help them improve, and how effective are they? Are there any barriers to learning English, even whilst enrolled on an ESOL course? We also ask learners to tell us where and with whom they use their burgeoning English language skills, and whether this has helped them improve their confidence in using the language outside their classes.

The fourth section is specifically concerned with the labour market experiences of respondents. We ask about the work people are doing at the time of the survey, and how this compares to their experiences and education prior to moving to the UK. This allows us to gauge both the type of work ESOL learners are doing in the UK, but also how much skill and work experience they are bringing with them. In this connection, we ask about barriers to getting a better job (or, indeed, any job). We explore whether ESOL learners feel restricted by their English language skills, and what other elements at play, such as difficulty in getting qualifications recognised, or a lack of work experience in the UK.

Finally, we turn to look at experiences with the PSIT sector in Manchester. The use of PSIT services and access to ESOL are sometimes presented as being in direct correlation; that is, as people learn English their reliance on PSIT declines. This section is concerned with finding out how those accessing ESOL provision actually use PSIT resources in the city, whether their use declines as their English language abilities improve, and whether respondents feel it is important to have professional PSIT in the city, rather than relying on informal translation and interpreting by family and friends. We also try to uncover how often people utilise family and friends as interpreters or translators and where this happens.

Learners completed the questionnaires during class time. In order to support respondents, at least two MLM researchers were present at each session; these would begin with a researcher explaining who they were, what the purpose of the research was, and how any information gathered would be used. It was also made clear that no one was obliged to fill in the survey, and respondents could skip any question they did not wish to answer. Respondents were encouraged to ask the researchers or their teacher for clarification on any points they were uncertain about (see Appendix B).

We found that respondents were generally keen to seek clarification, but that the survey was generally easily understood. The main points of clarification were in regards to whether question 7 ('How old were you when you started school?') referred to their formative education, or going to ESOL classes; occasional confusion about whether question 9 referred to their English language abilities now, or prior to arriving in the UK, and whether they had to answer supplementary questions – for example, those answering 'no' to question 17a, asking whether they needed to complete question 17b.

Questions 9 and 10 ask respondents to select which tasks they could manage on their own in English, before they came to the UK and now. The questions were formulated in terms of linguistic tasks for two main reasons: Firstly, we wished to avoid the subjective measurement of English language proficiency used in the UK Census, which asks those who have not listed English (or Welsh in Wales) as their main language 'How well can you speak English?' Respondents can then choose to tick one of four boxes: 'very well', 'well', 'not well', or 'not at all'. By providing more concrete linguistic tasks, we felt we would be able to gauge respondents' spoken proficiency more objectively. However, these are still self-assessments and are generally only concerned with spoken language proficiency. Secondly, we developed the statements in questions 9 and 10 to closely match the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). However, the guidance given in the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001) needed to be adapted to fit our approach to linguistic tasks. By matching the tasks to CEFR levels, the research can potentially be compared with other data in a way that the UK census data cannot: In descending order, the first four tasks listed match with CEFR level A1 (approximately equivalent to ESOL Entry Level 1), A2 (equivalent to ESOL Entry Level 2), B1 (ESOL Entry Level 3) and B2 (ESOL Level 1). The final two tasks fall outside this measurement scheme and are specifically concerned with gauging how learners view their own competence in English for work purposes.

The survey targets those accessing MAES ESOL classes at Entry Level 3 and Level 1, and therefore should not be seen as a representation of MAES ESOL learners as a whole. The decision was made to survey only the top two levels of MAES ESOL provision as we did not feel it was reasonable to ask those at a lower level to complete the survey in English and we did not have the resources to supply the questionnaire in the 65 preferred languages of MAES ESOL learners.

The survey represents a sample of ESOL learners accessing MAES services at the highest tiers of available provision, and aspects of their experience are likely to differ from those earlier at lower levels. The sample also includes a higher proportion of female respondents than is found in MAES ESOL provision overall (81.4% against 66.8%). The sample reflects overall numbers of learners in that the majority are aged between 25 and 45, and as far as we understand based on the information made available to us, it also reflects the general breakdown by background including country and home language, the latter being generally subject to fluctuation in accordance with the geo-political situation and global migration trends.

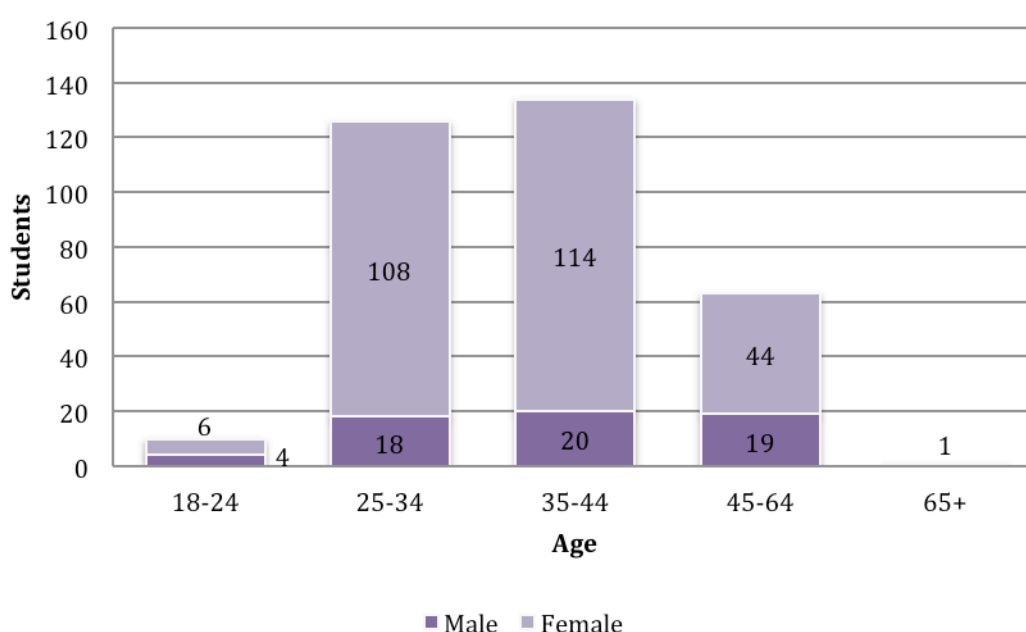
4. SURVEY FINDINGS

4.1. General information

Questions 1-2: Gender and Age

More than four-fifths of respondents were women (81.4%), and the majority (77.8%) of learners were aged between 25 and 44.

Figure 1: Age and gender of respondents (N = 334)



MAES E3/L1 level ESOL classes have an even higher proportion of female learners (81.4%) than the entire MAES ESOL cohort (66.8%). It is also higher than the proportion of females in the 2011 Census who report they could either not speak English well or at all (60.5%). It is also notable that both younger (18-24) and older (45-64, 65+) men and women are under-represented in the classes surveyed. Younger cohorts may be under-represented because of a preference to study with people of their own age at The Manchester College, whilst older cohorts may view the classes as offering less reward for their effort as they come to the end of their working lives, whilst we can expect poorer health and mobility to impact on the turnout of the oldest potential learners (65+). It is, therefore, the under-representation of men that is most striking here; a preference for work over study may be one explanatory factor, but this requires further investigation.

Question 3: Languages spoken by respondents

Respondents spoke 46 different languages at home, with nearly a quarter (24%) speaking more than one language in the domestic setting. The most common languages were Arabic (spoken by 23.4% of respondents), Urdu (21%), while some respondents (13.8%) also indicated English as one of the languages spoken in the home.

Table 3: Most common home languages (N = 333; Multiple responses permitted)

ALL HOME LANGUAGES	FREQUENCY	PERCENT (OF RESPONDENTS)
Arabic	78	23.4%
Urdu	70	21.0%
English	46	13.8%
Polish	27	8.1%
Farsi/Persian	25	7.5%
Kurdish	23	6.9%
Bengali	19	5.7%
Panjabi	18	5.4%
Italian	16	4.8%
Spanish	12	3.6%

More than four-fifths (82%) of respondents reported speaking at least one language other than their 'home' language(s); most commonly this was English, listed by two-thirds (75.7%) of respondents as a language they were comfortable speaking with friends, family or people at work.

Table 4: Most Common 'Other' languages (N = 272, multiple responses permitted)

ALL OTHER LANGUAGES	FREQUENCY	PERCENT (OF RESPONDENTS)
English	206	75.7%
Urdu	15	5.5%
Arabic	9	3.3%
French	9	3.3%
Russian	9	3.3%
Italian	8	2.9%
Panjabi	8	2.9%
Spanish	7	2.6%

Overall, respondents spoke an average of 2.2 languages each, with 53 different languages spoken. Table 4 list the languages that reported most frequently.

Table 5: All languages spoken by respondents (N = 333; multiple responses permitted)

LANGUAGE	FREQUENCY	PROPORTION (OF RESPONDENTS)
English	252	75.7%
Arabic	87	26.1%
Urdu	85	25.5%
Polish	30	9.0%
Farsi/Persian	28	8.4%
Panjabi	26	7.8%
Italian	24	7.2%
Kurdish	24	7.2%
Bengali	20	6.0%
Spanish	19	5.7%
French	17	5.1%
Portuguese	12	3.6%
Russian	12	3.6%

Question 4: Country of Birth

Pakistan is by far the most common country of birth of respondents, accounting for more than one in five (21.4%). Poland (7.7%), Bangladesh (5.9%), Iran (5.6%) and Syria (5.3%) each make up more than one in twenty nationals in the classes surveyed (see table 5). Overall, the respondents originated in 57 different countries; 186 were born in Asia, particularly South Asia (97) and the Middle East (74). 74 originated in Europe, most (61) were EU nationals, and the majority (43) of these were from the ten countries that acceded to the European Union after 2004. Of the 66 African respondents, 30 were from North Africa, 21 from the east of the continent (including Sudan), and 14 from the west. Only 9 respondents were from the Americas, with all but one from Latin America.

Table 6: Most Common Countries of Origin (all venues, all levels; N = 337)

COUNTRY OF BIRTH	NUMBER	PERCENT
Pakistan	72	21.4%
Poland	26	7.7%
Bangladesh	20	5.9%
Iran	19	5.6%
Syria	18	5.3%
Kurdistan	14	4.2%
Libya	14	4.2%
Afghanistan	11	3.3%
Iraq	11	3.3%
Morocco	10	3.0%

Table 7: Country of Origin of Respondents by Venue (selected results):

Abraham Moss	Forum Learning	Greenheys	Ida Kinsey House	Longsight Library	Sacred Heart	Withington Centre
Pakistan 33 (29.7%)	Poland 7 (18.4%)	Pakistan 8 (9.9%)	Pakistan 4 (36.4%)	Pakistan 10 (29.4%)	Pakistan 11 (39.3%)	Italy 4 (11.8%)
Poland 13 (11.7%)	Iran, Pakistan 4 (10.5%)	Bangladesh, Syria 7 (8.6%)	Bangladesh 3 (27.3%)	Bangladesh 5 (14.7%)	Bangladesh 4 (14.3%)	Brazil 3 (8.8%)
Nigeria 7 (6.3%)	Hungary 3 (7.9%)	Iran, Kurdistan, Morocco 6 (7.4%)		Iran, Syria 3 (8.8%)	Kurdistan 3 (10.7%)	
Syria, Iraq 6 (5.4%)						

Question 5: Length of time in the UK

Most respondents (59.8%) had been in the UK for five years or less; around one fifth (19.8%) have been living in the UK for more than 10 years. Only 9.4% of respondents reported that they arrived in the UK within the past year, indicating that they have been able to access ESOL provisions within a year or less of arriving. For the most part, apparently, it takes learners longer to access provisions. This may be attributed in part to a prioritisation of other tasks early after arrival— getting jobs, finding a house, getting children into schools etc. – or a lack of knowledge about how and where to access ESOL (see, e.g. responses to Question 20). In addition, depending on prior knowledge of English, many students will need to complete a year or more of ESOL at lower levels before getting to the levels we surveyed here.

Some learners are still accessing ESOL a decade or more after arrival. Again, there are a number of explanations for this. Learners do not always access ESOL in a simple linear manner – arrive in the UK, attend ESOL, get a job. People's ability and desire to access ESOL is a product of an interplay with other commitments and interests outside the classroom. For some, having young children, the need to support family or friends, or working long hours, may mean they are less able to access ESOL. Others may access ESOL for a while, then spend some time away from the classroom. This may be more likely to happen where people have a lower initial level of English, and therefore many more years of ESOL to complete. Among respondents who stated that they have been in the UK for more than a decade, 29.4% stated in response to Question 9 that they lacked a basic level of English on arrival. This compares with only 17.3% among the cohort of those who arrived within the past five years.

Question 6: Residence and travel

Leaners don't tend to venture far for their ESOL courses – overall, respondents travel an average of 1.32 miles, with over half (57%) travelling less than a mile.

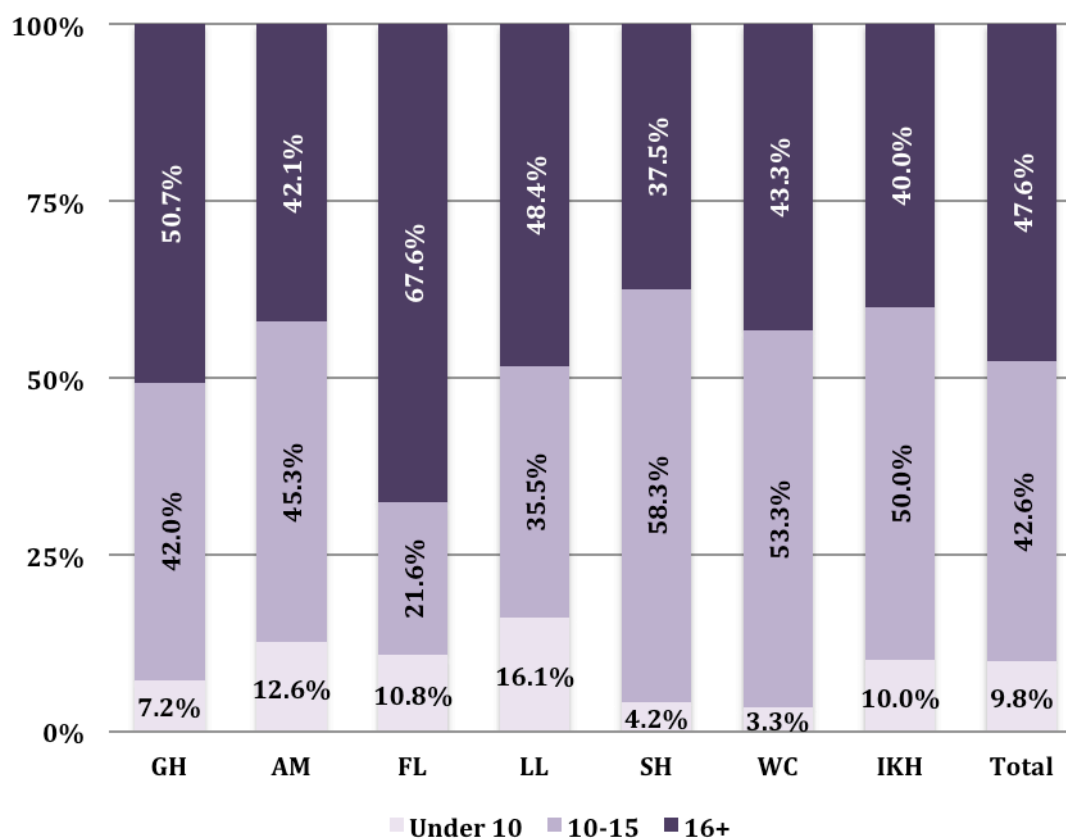
Table 8: Travel to ESOL class by venue

Venue	N	Average distance travelled (as the crow flies, miles)	Journeys under 1 mile (%)	Significant wards of residence	Respondents resident outside Manchester City Council area (%)
Greenheys	78	1.25	62.3%	MOSS (42%)	8%
Abraham Moss	104	1.25	56.3%	CRUM (33%), CHTM (21%)	17%
Forum Learning	34	2.01	50%	SHAR (24%), NOR (18%), WPK (15%)	29%
Longsight Library	32	1.14	70%	LONG (38%)	13%
Sacred Heart	27	1.06	57%	LONG (37%), GORN (19%)	11%
Withington Centre	33	1.17	55%	DIDE (18%), OLDM (15%)	12%
Ida Kinsey House	11	1.13	56%	ARD (27.3%)	0%
TOTAL	319	1.32	57%		13.5%

Forum Learning in Wythenshawe represents has most dispersed leaners, with each travelling an average of 2.01 miles to their class, and only half travelling less than a mile. At the other end of the spectrum, 70% of learners attending sessions at Longsight Library travel less than a mile, with an average journey of 1.14 miles. Some centres seem to draw a larger than expected proportion of their learners from certain wards.

Question 8: Time in Education

Nearly half (47.6%) of all respondents have completed more than 16 years in education, which can reasonably be considered to be equivalent to degree or post-18 training or qualifications. Over two-thirds (67.6%) of those attending the sessions at the Forum have spent this amount of time in education. Fewer than 1 in 10 (9.8%) of respondents have completed less than 10 years of education – the equivalent of leaving school prior to taking GCSEs. This figure is highest for the sessions at Longsight Library, where just fewer than 1 in 8 (16.1%) of learners left education before their 10th year.

Figure 2: Time in Education by Venue (N = 296)

Across the centres, women are slightly more likely to have left school early (10.2% compared with 8.3%), and slightly less likely to have completed post-18 studies (47.8% compared with 52.1%). However, these figures are not statistically significant.

Younger age groups are more likely to have completed more years in education than their older peers, with over half (52.7%) of the 25-34 age group completing 16 or more years in education, compared to just over one third (34.5%) of those aged 45 or older. Similarly, the proportion of those completing less than 10 years in education halves from 16.4% for those over 45, to 8.2% in the 25-34 age group. These figures may be reflective of changing demographics of migrants to Manchester, or may indicate that those with lower levels of initial education take longer to progress through ESOL pathways, only getting to the higher levels later in their life.

Table 9: Years in Education by Age (% of Respondents; N = 292)

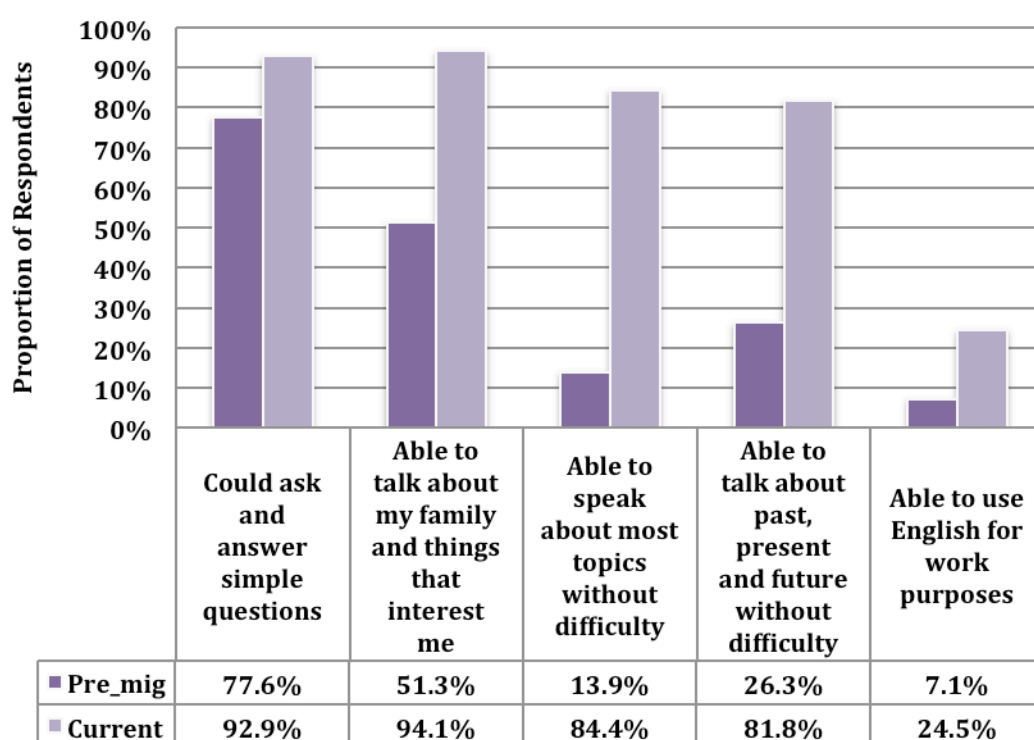
	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-64	Total
Under 10	0.0%	8.2%	9.0%	16.4%	9.9%
10-15	80.0%	39.1%	41.8%	49.1%	42.8%
16+	20.0%	52.7%	49.2%	34.5%	47.3%
N	5	110	122	55	292

4.2 Access to English language provision

Question 10: English language proficiency

Unsurprisingly, the spoken English language proficiency of respondents has risen substantially relative to their pre-migration levels, according to their own self-assessment. However, it is also striking that, amongst this cohort, more than three-quarters (77.6%) could already ask and answer simple questions in English prior to moving to the UK, whilst more than half felt they would be able to talk about their family and things that interested them in English prior to arrival. This suggests a large proportion of those in the highest ESOL levels may not have moved through the whole ESOL system, but have entered at higher levels. This raises a supplementary question as to whether those arriving with the lowest levels of English are progressing to higher-level classes.

Figure 3: Proficiency in English, pre-migration and at time of survey (N = 336)

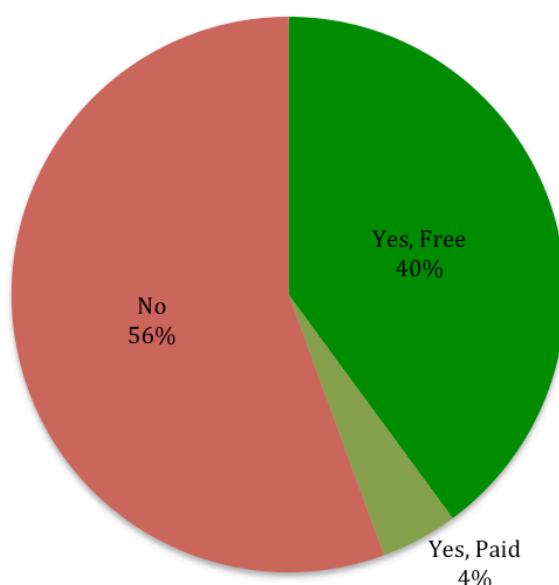


Whilst most respondents now feel comfortable carrying out all the linguistic tasks listed, they are far less confident with regard to their ability to use English for work purposes, with less than a quarter (24.5%) selecting this option, a rise of just 17.4% on pre-migration levels, well-below the gain seen for the other advanced linguistic tasks. Men (37.1%) tended to be more confident in their ability than women (20.8%), but this was not a statistically significant difference. Those in Level 1 classes (29.6%) were more confident than their peers in Entry 3 (20.8%), whilst those who were economically inactive (respondents and those looking after their home and family) (18.8%) were somewhat less confident than those who were either looking for work (30.9%) or currently employed (26%). Length of time in the UK made no significant differences until respondents had been resident for sixteen or more years (36.8%). However, it must be noted that all these groups are reporting an overall lack of confidence in their ability to use English for work purposes. Given that publicly funded ESOL provision is often rationalised in terms of increasing labour-market participation, this is perhaps a set of results that needs closer scrutiny.

Question 11: Access to English language provision in first 6 months post arrival in UK

More than half (56%) of current respondents didn't attend an English language class in the first six months after arriving in the UK. Of those that did, the vast majority took free classes (40%), with just a handful (4%) taking paid classes.

Figure 4: Proportion of respondents who took English language classes in the first six months after arriving in the UK (N = 331)



For those who did not attend an English language class in that initial half-year period, the most cited reason for not attending was a lack of knowledge about classes (41.2%), followed by a need to look after their home and family (31.9%). Just under a quarter of respondents (23.6%) didn't attend classes because they were not eligible for free classes, whilst 17% were at work when classes took place.

Table 10: Reasons for not attending an English language class in first six months after arriving in the UK (N = 182 (multiple responses permitted))

	Frequency	Percent of responses	Percent of all respondents
No right to attend free classes	43	15.4%	23.6%
Couldn't pay	41	14.7%	22.5%
Didn't know about classes	75	26.9%	41.2%
Difficult to get to	22	7.9%	12.1%
Needed to look after family	58	20.8%	31.9%
At work	31	11.1%	17.0%
Didn't want English classes	5	1.8%	2.7%
Mixed gender classes	2	0.7%	1.1%
Other	2	0.7%	1.1%
Total	279	100.0%	153.3%

The majority of the additional comments were concerned with the long waiting lists for ESOL courses (17), so even if respondents had gone on a waiting list soon after arriving, they may well be waiting more than six months for a place. Other comments concerned the timing of classes, especially in regards to shift work patterns (5), and the difficulty of traveling to venues (2).

Questions 12-13: Looking for courses

More than 4 in 5 respondents (81%) have looked for an English language course in Manchester in the past year. By far the most common source of assistance in looking for information about courses was through social networks – 94 reported receiving assistance from their wider social networks (friends and colleagues), while a further 59 had received help from their immediate family. Local service providers were also commonly used to garner information: 26 had received guidance from the Job Centre, with a further 16 hearing about courses via libraries. 32 had first heard about courses via other service providers, particularly Sure Start (10) and Adult Education centres (10).

Questions 14-17: Accessing courses

Just over 1 in 5 respondents (20.6%) indicated they had been attending English conversation classes in addition to their formal ESOL studies. Meanwhile, a small number reported also studying other formal English language courses, with 4 reporting studying for GCSEs (1.3%), and a further 6 studying for their IELTS exams (1.9%). It was made clear in a number of conversations while carrying out the questionnaire research that learners are extremely keen on accessing English conversation classes but are often uncertain where they are held and whether they can attend. They often stress the need to talk to ‘real’ local people, other than fellow learners, feeling that one aspect that needs practice is holding everyday conversations with people with regional accents and using local terms.

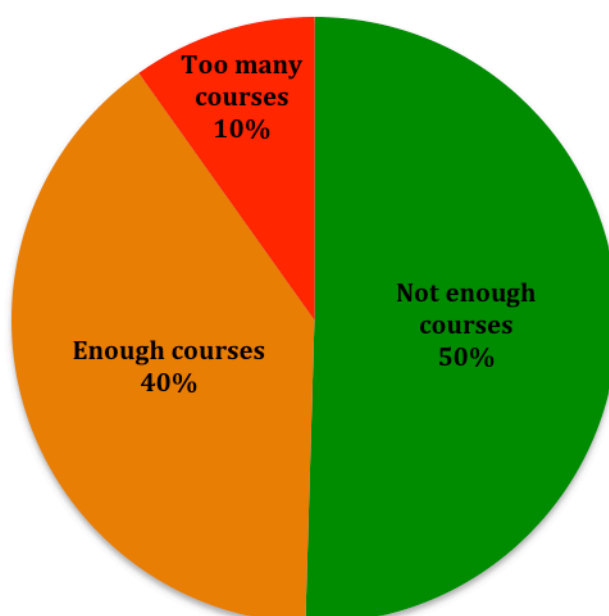
Question 15: The suitability of times and locations of courses

Though the vast majority (90.8%) of respondents reported that the time and location of their current class was suitable, nearly 1 in 5 (19.7%) made clear that this was either not currently, or had not previously, been the case. The most common barrier to attending a course was that people were looking after their family at the time of course, a factor that affected more than half of those unsatisfied with class time or location (52.2%). Further issues were concerned with poor public transport (17.9%), irregular shift work (16.4%) or regular work shifts (11.9%). Other factors (22, 32.8%) noted by respondents were mainly to do with the distance they needed to travel to courses, or the cost of public transport in Manchester (12). Waiting lists were again a concern for some (4).

Question 16: Supply of free courses in Manchester

More than half of respondents (50.5%) felt there are not enough free English language courses in Manchester, with just under 1 in 10 (9.8%) feeling there were too many courses.

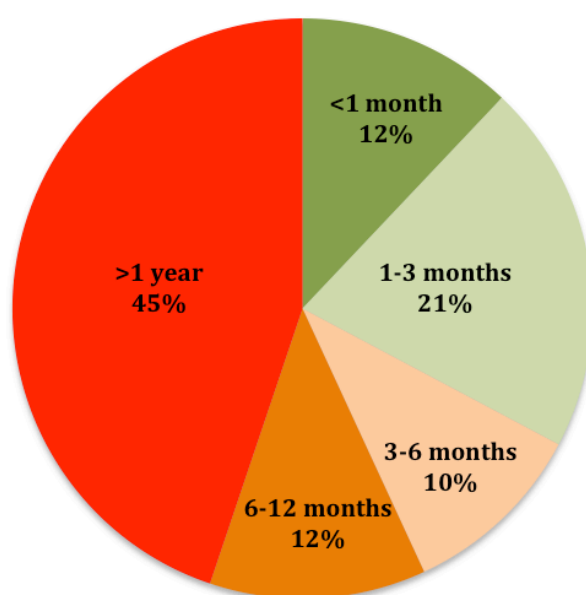
Figure 5: Do you think there are enough free English courses in Manchester?



This question received 60 additional written responses. The most pressing issue was the length of waiting lists, with 25 respondents noting this as a problem, with many reporting waits over a year before they could get on a course. Other common responses were a feeling that non-English speakers need easier access to language education (8), and a need for more courses for those working during the week, with many stressing the need for more evening and weekend courses (7).

Question 17: Waiting lists

While just under 1 in 6 respondents (16.4%) are currently on waiting lists, it was clear from answers to other questions, and discussions with respondents in class, that waiting lists are a significant concern for ESOL learners. Obviously, the fact that these questionnaires were completed by those already in classes will significantly depress the number of people currently on waiting lists. Of those on waiting lists, approaching half (44.8%) had been waiting for more than a year, and over half waiting more than six months (57%). Indeed, it is the length of time people spend on waiting lists that seems a major concern to many respondents, with some feeling they had been forgotten about. If we consider spending a significant amount of time on waiting lists as a risk factor in respondents 'opting out' of the system and losing motivation to engage, it is clear that lengthy waits on these lists is something that needs addressing as soon as possible.

Figure 6: Length of time on waiting lists for ESOL courses in Manchester

4.3 Use of English

Questions 18-20: Improving English language proficiency

Nearly all respondents (99.1%) felt their English had improved in the past year, with most (59.1%) feeling it had improved a lot. ESOL classes were the biggest driver behind this improvement, with 89.1% of respondents finding them helpful. Speaking with other people, such as bus drivers and shop keepers (77.1%), and using language resources, including the internet, films and TV (75.3%), were found helpful by more than 3 in 4 respondents.

Table 11: Factors in supporting English language improvements (N = 318)

RESOURCE	HELPED	NOT HELPED	NOT USED
ESOL courses	89.1%	1.5%	9.4%
Other formal language courses (e.g. GCSEs, IELTS)	4.7%	1.5%	93.8%
Conversation classes	47.4%	1.2%	51.4%
Speaking with people at work	45.3%	0.9%	53.8%
Speaking with family and friends	63.2%	5.3%	31.5%
Speaking with other people I meet (e.g. bus drivers, shop keepers)	77.1%	2.4%	20.5%
Language resources (e.g. CDs, films and TV, the internet)	75.3%	1.2%	23.5%

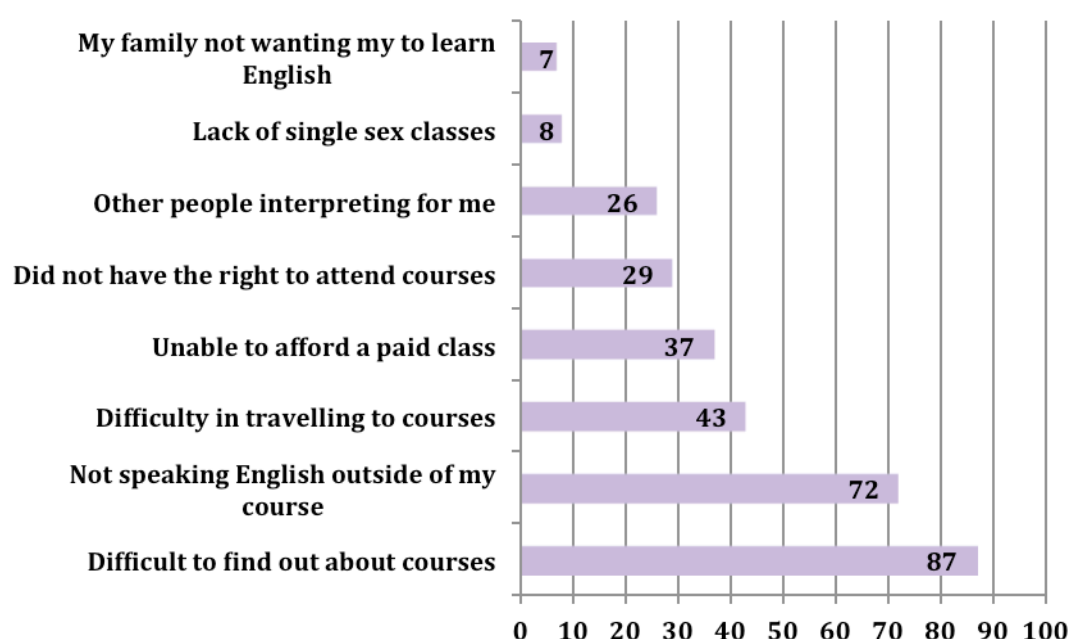
Given the relatively limited time available for most ESOL provision in the city – 4.5 hours per week for those on Everyday English courses – conversation classes would appear to have a useful role to play in giving learners a space in which to practise their English. Therefore, it might be productive to encourage

learners onto these courses, given that fewer than half are currently taking part in them. It is also clear that a significant minority of respondents are not regularly using their English language skills outside the classroom, with more than 1 in 5 not speaking English in everyday encounters (20.5%). While this is slightly more common amongst women (22.1%) than men (16.1%), it doesn't appear a significant enough difference to assign to gendered differences in social interactions. In terms of differences by home language, three language groups show notably lower than average levels of everyday interactions: speakers of Bengali (31.6%), Spanish (30%), and Polish (29.6%). The distribution questions generalisations made recently about particular ethnic and religious groups (cf. HM Government, 2018). A substantial minority (23.5%) are not taking advantage of electronic resources, such as the internet, films and TV, in order to improve their English.

Question 20: Barriers to learning English

The most significant barriers to learning English reported by respondents were finding out about courses (26.2% of respondents), and the lack of opportunities to speak English outside their courses (21.7%). Additionally, more than 1 in 10 respondents listed the distance to course locations (13%) and the cost of courses if they were unable to get onto a free course (11.1%).

Figure 7: Barriers to learning English (N = 333)

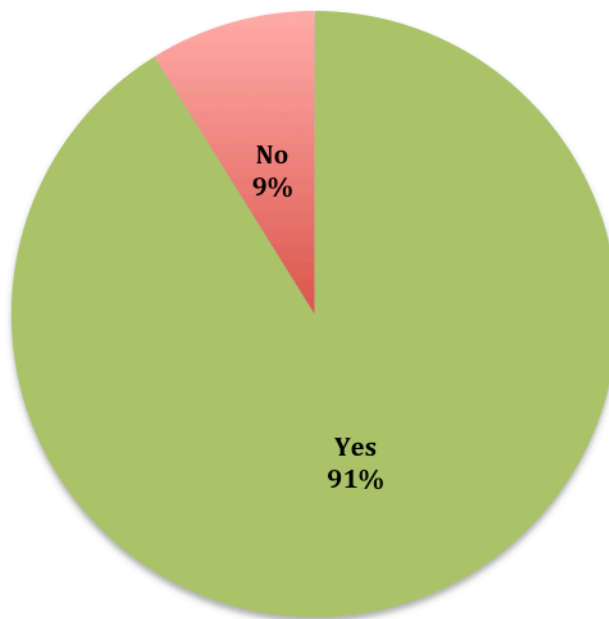


Among the additional comments given, respondents again stressed the difficulty of finding opportunities to practice their English outside of the classroom (9 responses), along with the difficulty of actually getting onto a course, including long waiting lists (8). The distance to, or location of, courses (5) also attracted multiple comments, as did the difficulty of finding the time to attend courses while working and looking families (4). Though men (25.8%) are slightly more likely than women (20.4%) to report not speaking English outside of their course as a barrier to learning English, this difference is of weak statistical significance. However, it is interesting that men are reporting their struggles more than women, as this cuts against some narratives about socially isolated women and socially active men.

Question 21: Speaking English outside the classroom

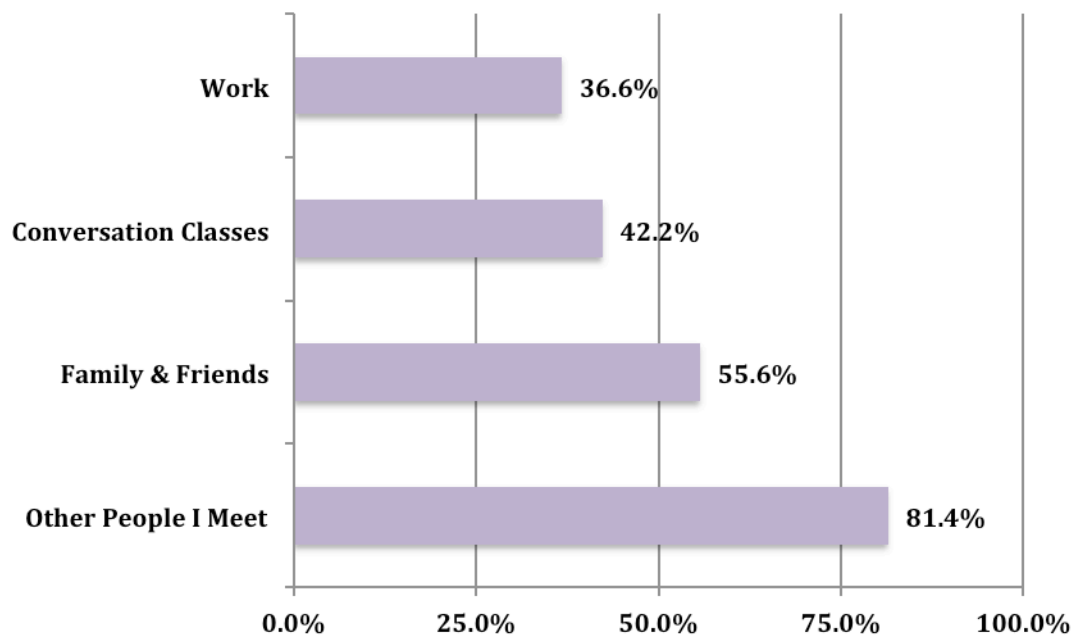
The vast majority of respondents (91.2%) report speaking English outside the classroom every week. However, while the quality of these interactions is not recorded, it would appear clear from responses to other questions that a substantial minority of learners are struggling to find good quality opportunities to practice their English outside the classroom.

Figure 8: Do you speak English with people outside your English class every week? (N = 339)



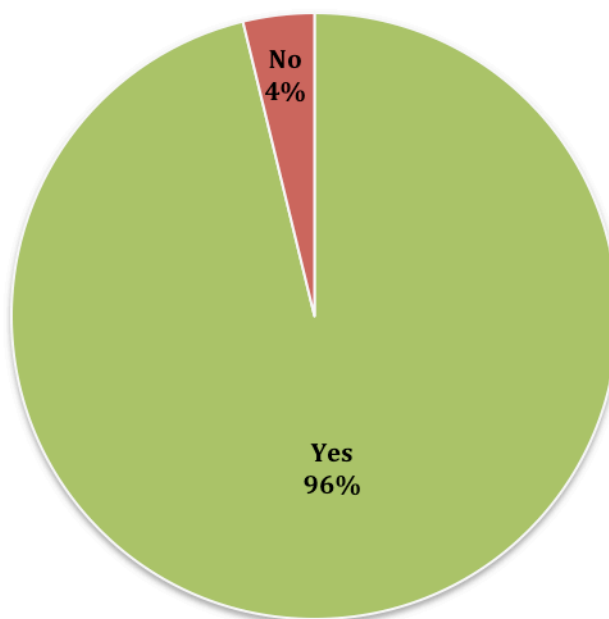
While more than 4 in 5 respondents (81.4%) report speaking English with ‘other people I meet’, such as bus drivers, shopkeepers and doctors, beyond this the numbers using English fall quickly away. Over half of respondents (55.6%) use English weekly with family and friends, but just over 2 in 5 people (42.2%) take advantage of conversation classes, and around 1 in 3 (36.6%) use English at work. However, this latter figure rises to 86.1% among those who are currently in work (self-employed or employed). These results suggest that English usage outside the classroom is largely focused on occasional casual interactions, rather than the sustained and regular interactions that would enable long-term language improvement and maintenance.

Figure 9: Where respondents regularly use English outside the classroom (N = 322)



However, whilst many of these interactions may have been casual, almost all respondents (96.2%) found speaking English outside the classroom boosted their confidence in using the language, illustrating how important it is to encourage regular use of English beyond the classroom.

Figure 10: Has regularly speaking English outside the classroom boosted your confidence in using the language? (N = 312)



Additional comments were mainly concerned with giving praise to, or pointing out venues where, support in learning English was available (9). Other comments mentioned the need for more practice (3), the

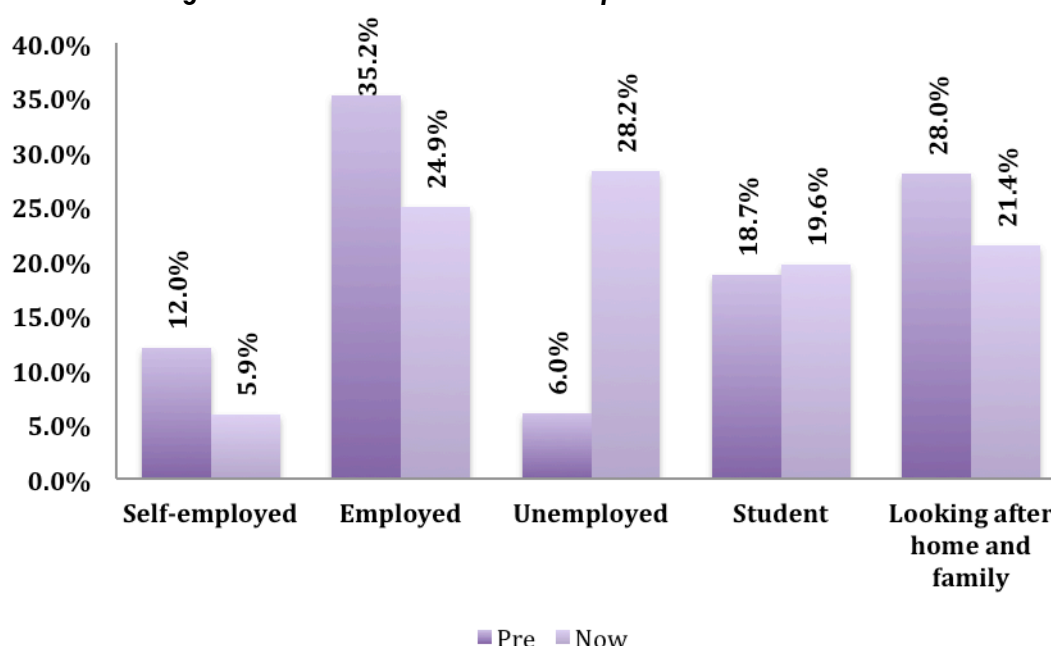
importance of talking with local speakers (2), or the difficulty in finding the time (1) or confidence (1) to speak English.

4.4 Experiences at work

Questions 22-23: Labour market status

The labour market involvement of respondents has decreased post-migration, with working population declining from 47.2% to 30.8%, and a large increase in the unemployment rate (28.2% now, as compared to 6% pre-migration). These figures suggest that there are current barriers to work for many respondents.

Figure 11: Pre and Post migration labour market status of respondents:



Of those who were working (employed or self-employed) before moving to the UK, just under one quarter (24.4%) are now inactive in the labour market, whilst less than half (46.2%) are still working. Amongst the small number (20) who were unemployed before their move, just a quarter have moved into work. For those who were not active in the labour market (learners and those looking after home and family), most (59.7%) remain inactive, with just under 1 in 6 (16.2%) moving into work.

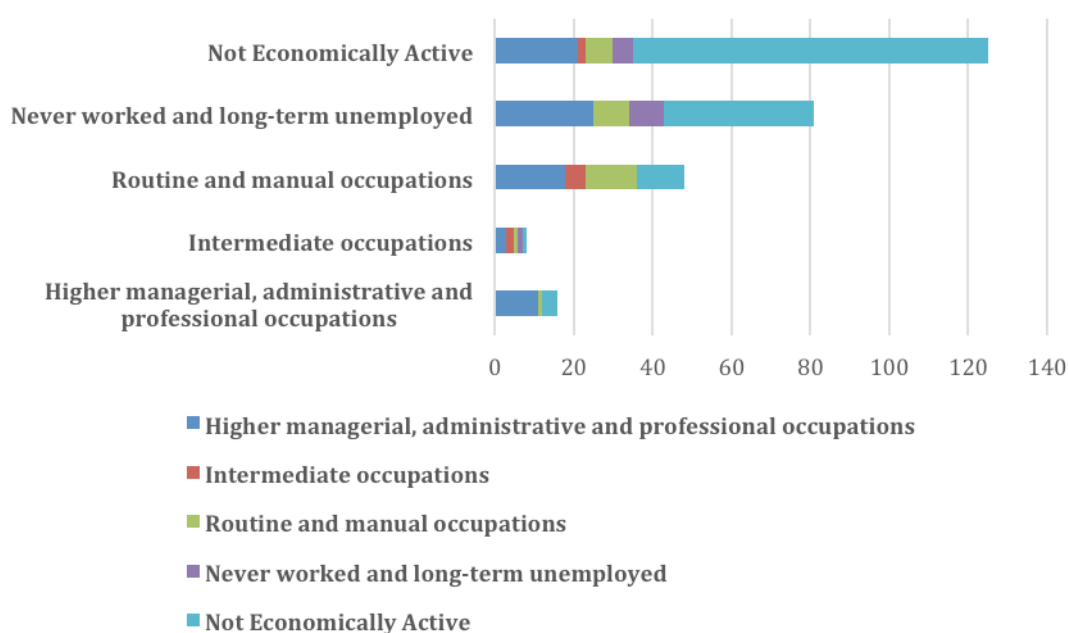
Table 12: Pre- and Post-migration labour market activity: (N = 340)

	Working	Unemployed	Inactive	TOTAL	N
Working	46.2%	29.5%	24.4%	100.0%	156
Unemployed	20.0%	50.0%	30.0%	100.0%	20
Inactive	16.2%	24.0%	59.7%	100.0%	154

While movement between categories is to be expected here, the overall flow is away from employment and into unemployment. This suggests either a lack of language skills (or other labour market barriers faced by migrants) are dampening the ability of learners to get jobs. Another possibility is that those not working are more likely to engage in ESOL classes than their employed or self-employed peers.

Some 78 respondents (28.1% of all respondents; 58.6% of those who were economically active) reported that they had worked in professional, or associate professional, roles immediately prior to moving to the UK. 29 had worked in the education sector, 7 in health and social care, and 6 had worked in accountancy or finance. 4 each had been senior managers or company owners, scientists or engineers, or creative professionals. Those who had previously worked in professional roles were more likely to be found in Level 1 classes, where they made up two fifths (40.5%) of learners, than in Entry 3 classes, wherein one in five (18.5%) learners had previously been professionals. However, more than two in five (43.9%) respondents who had formally worked in professional roles were now unemployed, with a further quarter (26.9%) no longer economically active. Of those employed, four in five (80.7%) were now working at a lower level than previously.

Figure 12: Pre-Migration and current labour market position (3-level NS-SEC) (N = 227)

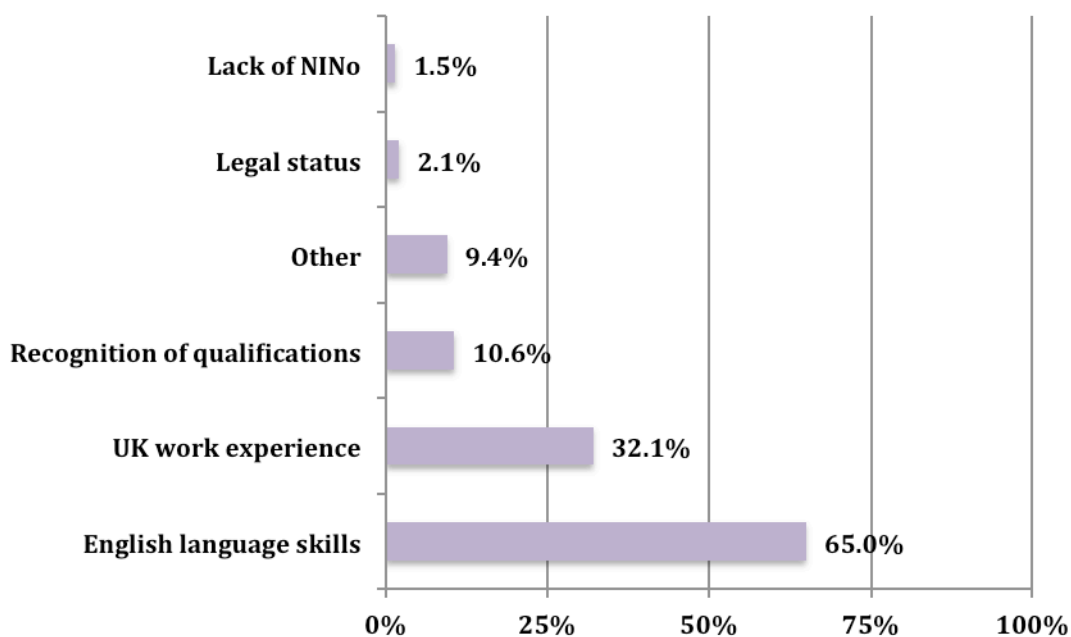


A high proportion of respondents reported working in highly skilled roles prior to moving to the UK. Of these, the largest number were found in the education sector (33), of whom most were professionals, e.g. teachers or lecturers (29), with the remainder working as associate professionals, e.g. teaching assistants. Thirteen respondents had prior work experience in the health and social care sector, with seven working in professional roles (e.g. doctors or nurses), and the remainder in associate professional positions (e.g. nursing assistants). Accountancy and finance (6), engineering and science (4) and creative professions (4) were also represented, whilst four respondents had worked as employers or senior managers prior to moving.

Question 25: Barriers to labour market progression

By far the most commonly perceived barrier to labour market progression is English language proficiency, which was selected by almost two-thirds of respondents (65%). This is far from surprising among ESOL learners, but it is a useful reminder that even among learners at higher ESOL levels, English language proficiency remains a potent barrier to labour market progression. However, this isn't the only barrier respondents sensed they faced: nearly one-third of respondents (32.1%) felt that a lack of work experience in the UK was holding them back, while slightly more than 1 in 10 (10.6%) perceived that the non-recognition of their qualifications by employers was blocking their progress in the world of work.

Figure 13: Perceived barriers to labour market progression (N = 340)



Only 32 respondents indicated other barriers on the initial question. 54 provided additional comments. Chief amongst these was the need to look after family (12), particularly young children and the perception that this meant they were unable to work. Close behind were those providing further background to the impact of their lack of English language skills in finding a (better) job (11). A need for additional qualifications (8) was also a common theme. Other comments covered poor health, a lack of knowledge about how to find a job, a lack of work experience, or low self-confidence (3).

4.5 Experiences of communicating through an interpreter

Questions 26-28: Use of interpreters:

A small majority (56%) had used an interpreter in the past year, with a similar proportion (54.6%) reporting that friends and family had acted as an interpreter for them. There is a high level of

correspondence between answers to these questions, with more than four-fifths (80.8%) of those reporting that they had used an interpreter in the past year also describing family and friends acting as interpreters for them. This suggests that the use of professional and casual interpreters is not a zero-sum game; rather people appear to be using them in combination.

This is borne out by a comparison between the use of family and friends as interpreters and professional interpreters by venue, though the difference is small. What is striking, however, is the extent of the hybrid use of professional and informal interpreters: at all venues at least half of respondents were using both professional and informal interpreters and this rose to nearly three-quarters (73.8%) of respondents in the Hospital setting (though it is likely that there is a division among different interaction forms within the hospital setting, such as casual requests for assistance as opposed to clinical interpreting).

The responses raise further questions of relevance to service planning, namely whether the use of interpreters at GP surgeries is divided between friends/family for making appointments and professionals for the actual appointment, and whether professional and casual provisions are being used across a particular cluster of interventions in hospital encounters for the same medical issue, or different provisions are used for single visits about different health issues.

Table 13: Use of professional and casual interpreters by setting

SETTING	FRIENDS & FAMILY	PROFESSIONAL INTERPRETER	BOTH	BOTH (%)
GP	127	129	90	70.9%
Hospital	126	116	93	73.8%
Lawyer	36	34	24	66.7%
Police	10	12	6	50.0%
Job Centre	44	40	26	59.1%
Council	44	36	27	61.4%
School	49	44	29	59.2%

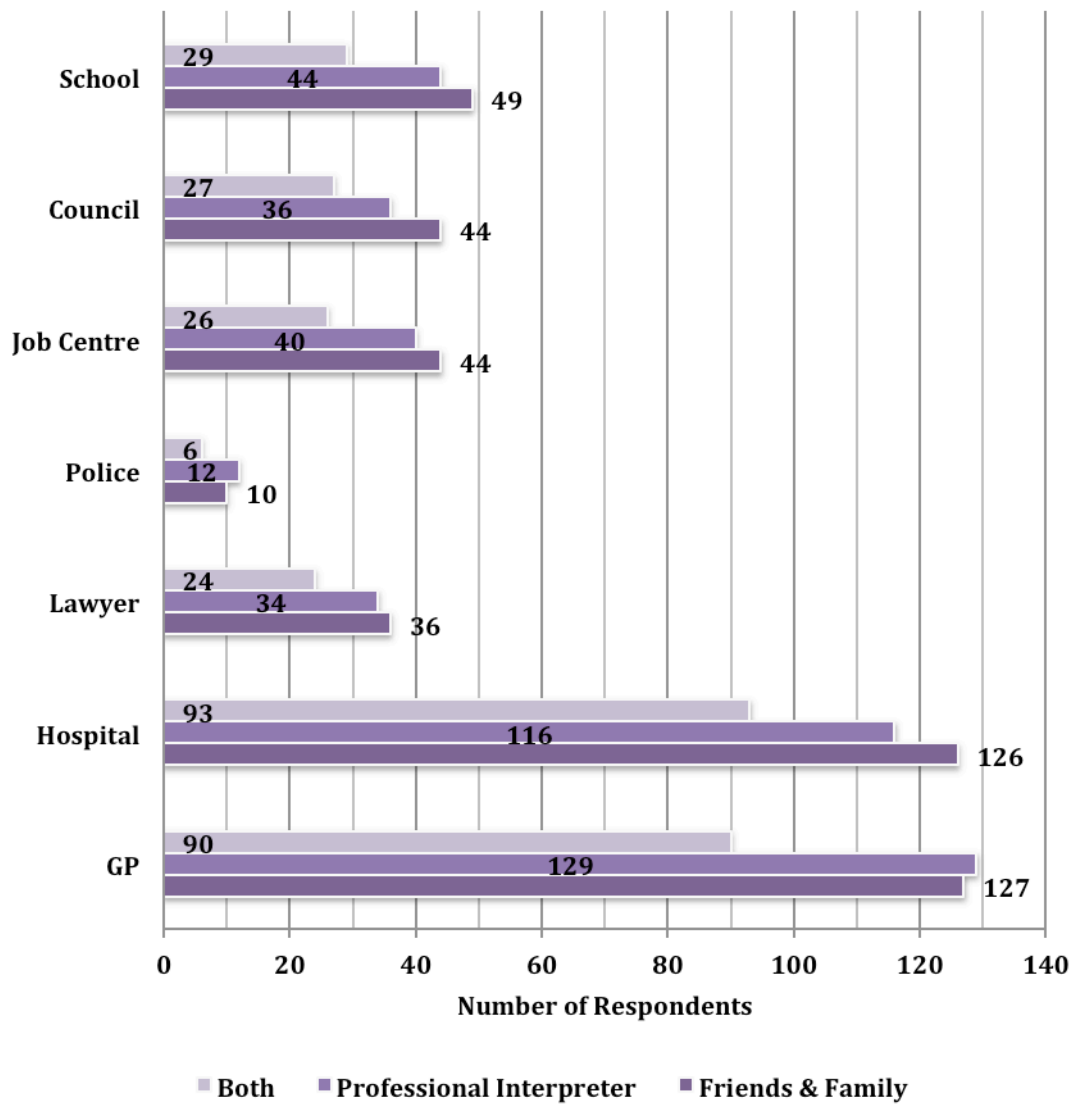
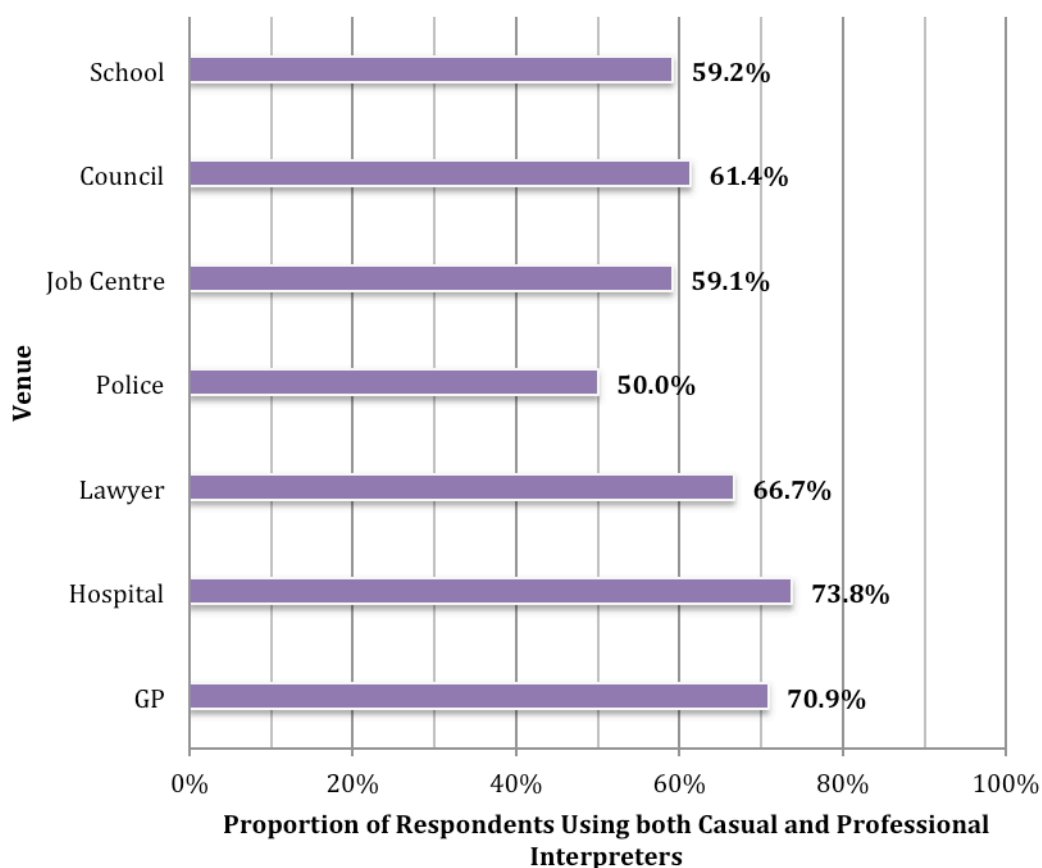
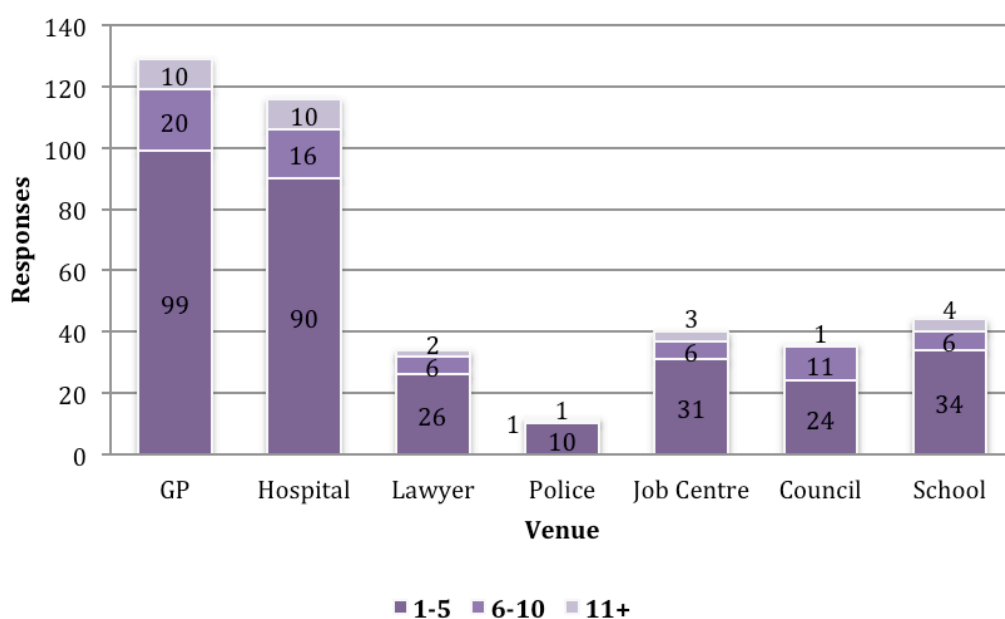
Figure 14: Use of casual and professional interpreters by setting

Figure 15: Proportion of respondents using both professional and casual interpreters by setting

Most (76.4%) of those who had used professional interpreters reported using them five times or less in each setting over the past year. This was consistent across all settings, with the exception of council services, for which respondents reported a slightly increased use, with one-third (33.3%) of users reporting that they had used a professional interpreter six times or more during the previous twelve months.

Figure 16: Use of professional interpreters by setting

The number of interpreter-mediated encounters with lawyers is reported as low among the sample. It is difficult to ascertain what sort of encounters are associated with the term 'lawyer', although among this group it may reasonably be assumed that immigration lawyers feature prominently in individual social experience. Given that the respondents will have a clear immigration status determination, the lower number of encounters reported in this case is understandable.

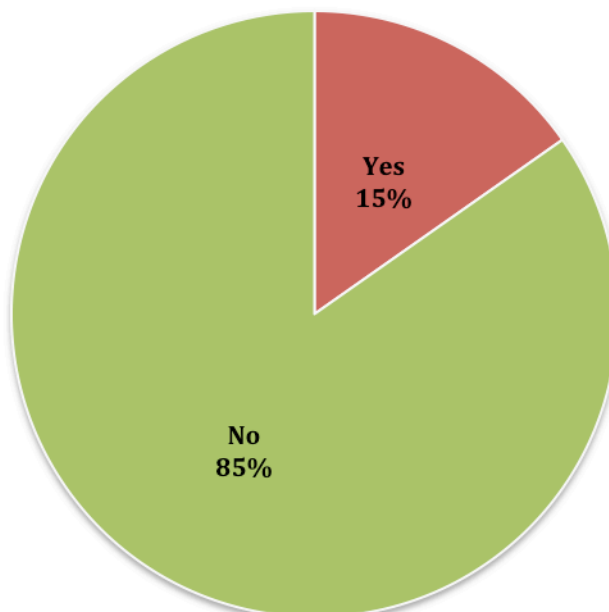
Although the numbers are small, the reported access to professional interpreting at the Job Centre is of interest as it raises questions about consistency of interpreter provisions across these services. Evidence from interviews reveals that very few have been given professional interpreting support in these settings, suggesting that practice varies across the sector.

Question 29: Denial of access to interpreters

More than 1 in 7 (15.3%) of respondents felt that they had been refused an interpreter when they needed one in the past year. While this is a relatively low percentage, it is still noteworthy. However, it is important to note that, judging by the additional comments, some (7) respondents read this question to mean if they had ever turned down an interpreter. It is therefore probable that this figure is slightly inflated.

Common settings in which respondents listed being denied access to an interpreter were hospitals (12), and GP surgeries (7), settings where complex and technical language is most likely to be used. Some of the service denials emerge as a result of ad hoc evaluations of English proficiency carried out by the service provider. Whether this is done simply to expedite the appointment and/or is based on the healthcare practitioner's preference for direct over interpreter-mediated communication is open to question. Some individuals are flattered that proficiency is recognised, but express concerns over fully understanding information about their own health, leading to some anxieties at being denied interpreter mediation. There is the additional issue – which is mentioned in at least two responses to this questionnaire and in interview data – of professional interpreters not turning up for appointments, which may also be construed as a 'denial of interpreting service'.

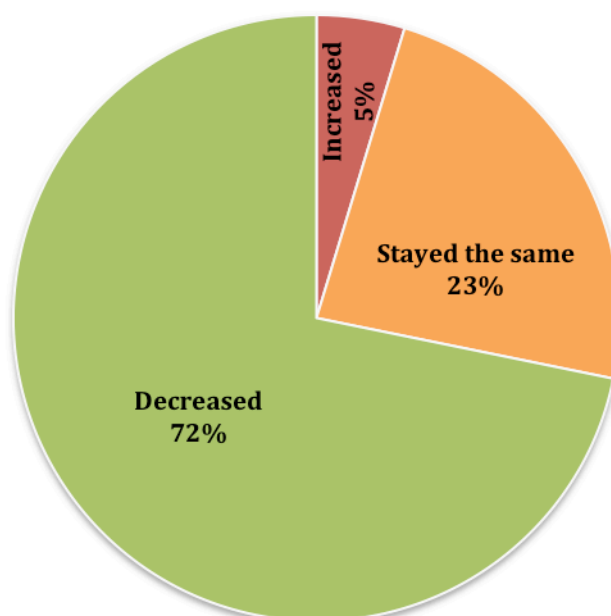
Figure 17: Proportion of respondents who had been denied access to an interpreter (N = 295)



Question 30: Change in reliance on interpreters

Nearly three-quarters (72%) of respondents feel their reliance on interpreters has decreased in the past year. Leading reasons for this include greater confidence in using English (12), increased knowledge of English (10), and practice (6). Amongst those who felt their need for an interpreter hadn't decreased, increased health needs were the most common reason (5), with continued assistance from family members following close behind (4). A small number (2) still felt their English was not sufficient to express their needs.

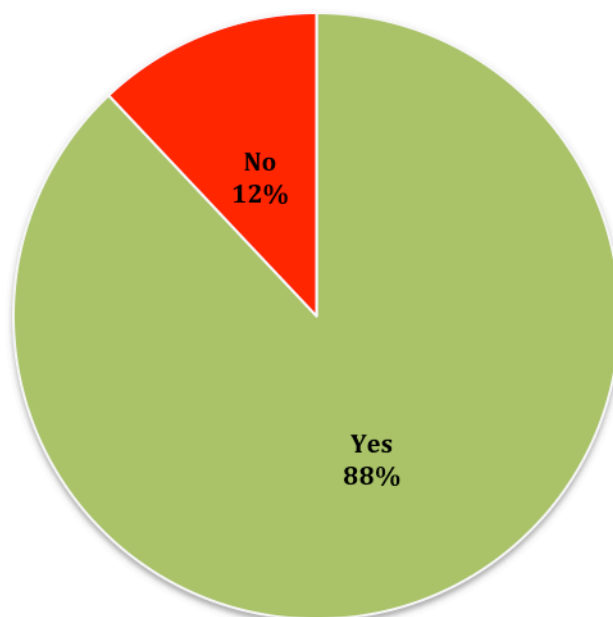
Figure 18: Change in reliance on interpreters in past year (N = 234)



Question 31: Need for a professional interpreting service in Manchester

Support for professional interpreting services in Manchester was very strong amongst respondents, with nearly nine in ten (88%) agreeing that it was important to have such services in the city. One in four respondents (85) added additional comments to the question. Most of those answering 'yes' stressed the importance of having access to interpreters in the early stages post-migration and retaining on-going support in settings like hospitals, GPs, lawyers and the police, where complex and technical language is used. Healthcare settings are the most frequently flagged in the responses. Amongst those who answered in the negative, the need to learn English rather than relying on interpreters was mentioned, even suggesting that the availability of interpreters encouraged reliance and discouraged the learning of English. Others stressed the expense of providing interpreter support in a city with so many different languages, with a few questioning the quality and usefulness of professional interpreting services, a theme that arose in some of the interview data in the project (often as a result of poor perceptions of quality of interpreting during Home Office status determination interviews). A handful also answered in terms of their own need, suggesting that others may still need the service. A small number mentioned that interpreters were useful due to problems in understanding local English accents (1), being on a waiting list for ESOL classes (2) and insufficient progress in English (2).

Figure 19: Do you think it is important to have professional interpreting services in the city of Manchester? (N = 340)



5. EXPERIENCES OF ESOL LEARNING ON MAES COURSES: INTERVIEW DATA

5.1 Background

Our project data includes interviews with individuals who completed the questionnaire and indicated a willingness to participate in a follow-up interview with a research assistant. The qualitative interview data provides additional insight into issues impacting on individuals' access to MAES courses and related issues of career aspiration, planning and barriers to self-improvement. For the purpose of illustration we have chosen to comment on a selection of themes, drawing on statements from a number of interviewees (all names are pseudonyms):

Aminah: Female, aged 35-44, from Pakistan, 14 years in education. Speaks Urdu. Had worked as a volunteer teacher in Pakistan, and studied journalism and political science. Married with children.

Andreea: Female, aged 25-34, from Moldova. Speaks Romanian and Russian. Holds a Romanian passport due to grandparents' nationality. Has 16+ years in education. Followed husband to UK. He works in construction. They have two children.

Batoor: Male, aged 45-64, from Afghanistan. Speaks Pashtu, Dari, Arabic, Urdu and Russian. University-educated refugee. Had been involved in the construction industry post-2001 war. Married with children.

Eszter: Female, 45-64, from Hungary. Speaks Hungarian. 16+ years in education, has a doctorate in Law. Now works in nursery.

Mariana: Female, aged 35-44, from Spain. 16+ years in education. Speaks Spanish. Holds an MBA and a MA in food safety.

Nasreen: Female, aged 35-44, from Pakistan (Punjab). Speaks Urdu / Panjabi. 16+ years in education. BA in education. Had been a teacher in Pakistan. Married with children.

Szymon: Male, aged 25-34, from Poland. Speaks Polish. 16+ years in education. Worked as a locksmith and physiotherapist in Poland. Now works as a forklift driver.

5.2 Barriers to accessing and attending ESOL

Mariana notes some of the difficulties in going to ESOL classes whilst working long hours, while Nasreen notes family pressures – including the lack of childcare at ESOL courses – and the lack of information about courses and the length of waiting lists. Aminah raises the issue of limited local provision at her level and the fact that some learners are put off from travelling to other centres to attend courses at the desired level.

“I have been offered good things that are free, on the other hand [...] I have to work and then, after work, I have to come here [ESOL centre], after 12 hours, it's crazy! It's too much. I arrived sweating and tired. I start work at 5 in the morning until 5 in the evening, and then come here at 6. I know it's temporary, but I need to work. I do this for consecutive days, then 3 days off.” (Mariana)

“3 years ago, when I came here my youngest son was 6 months old and last year he started reception full time, so I could learn.” (Nasreen).

“I didn't get admission in entry 3 because I had no information about the way to get a place. They put me on a waiting list and I waited all 2016. Last year I got admission in entry 3 and now I've completed my entry 3 course and my teacher encourages me to work hard.” (Nasreen)

5.3 Barriers to finding work

Many interviewees focused on the barriers to getting a job. Andreea discussed difficulty in juggling work and childcare, and the need to gain English language qualifications before being able to train for professional posts. Batoor owned and managed a construction company in Afghanistan. He talked about what he needs to do to re-establish himself in the same field in the UK, as well as the age barriers and the difficulty in transferring qualifications and getting the necessary experience in the UK, and the relatively low amount of ESOL class time he receives. He also discusses the lack of support available to those seeking higher-level posts.

Mariana discussed getting a National Insurance number and opening a bank account – both necessary to getting most jobs in the UK. She also describes concerns about working in less than ideal conditions – many migrants find themselves working in 3D jobs (that is, ‘dirty, difficult or dangerous’ jobs) – and learning the unspoken norms of getting work in the UK (volunteering/internships; direct unsolicited applications etc.).

Nasreen explored family pressures to giving up work in Pakistan, working around family and, perhaps, differing ideas about the importance of work versus family.

Eszter, Andreea and Szymon all highlight having to undertake work at a level well below professional qualifications gained in their country of origin. However, some of the career aspirations are very language-based, which necessarily implies a high level of proficiency. For example, Eszter had a PhD qualification in law (Hungary) and hoped to work in this field in the UK; she felt very limited by working in a nursery. She sought to move forward by finding office work. Szymon reveals professional aspirations to be a social worker (requiring a high level of linguistic competence); he had not trained in social work in his country of origin (Poland) and had done a range of low-skilled jobs in Poland and the UK to get by (including masseur and fork lift driver). Andreea aspires to undertake a nursing qualification.

“...[B]ecause I’m an engineer, I think it will be difficult [to get a similar job], because the degree which I have, I think I need a certificate certified by the UK government. I think it will take time, so I think instead of certifying my degree and certificates from the UK government, I think it’s better to set up my own business. It will be better for me.” (Batoor)

“[Is there anything else stopping you from getting a better job?] ...I feel my English not as improve when I work with British people or English people, because I need confidence in English, therefore I tried to improve my English. And also, I think two days in a week , 1 hour or 2, is not enough for me; I have time and I want to study full-time my English and improve as soon as possible. I have free time, so I want to improve my English in this free time. If there is a college courses 5 days in a week more than four hours I would be happy.” (Batoor)

“I tried to volunteer for the National Trust and they said no. I didn’t ask why because I was very angry. It was by email. My boyfriend suggested to become a volunteer because it would be good on my CV, and voluntary work is appreciated here. So I wrote to a person in Dunham Massey, close to Altrincham. I think it was because my English wasn’t fine. But I thought if I’m working for you for free and you reject me? I don’t know. In Spain, if you tell somebody I’m going to be a volunteer, they will say, ‘OK, you start now!’ (Mariana)

“If I do a job, I prefer 9 to 15, in school hours, so I will be home before they arrive, because my children are my first priority; this is their learning age. If I ignore them will be destroyed because they are at a very dangerous age (13 and 14 years) and they need me more. I want to stay with my family because they are used to this.” (Nasreen)

5.4 Confidence

Confidence is an issue that frequently arose in comments on the survey as well as in the interviews.

Andreea discussed some lack of knowledge about workplace English, but also the usefulness of a course she attended which seeks to cover some of these issues. Batoor briefly discussed his lack of confidence in English and whether this will impact on his ability to carry out the kind of work he was doing previously. Mariana highlighted her growing confidence in using English and willingness to ask for help. Together the

quotes help to illustrate how learning English is not simply a classroom exercise; rather, learning how to use English in different situations, and growing the confidence to be able to do this, are also vital and take time and experience:

"...[M]y class is called English for work, so mostly its oriented to finding a job, to improving our skills – communication, IT skills, customer service skill – because we don't know what kind of job. A lot of stuff, like how to apply, how to make a cover letter and CV, it's very useful. It's the first step to get a job. They teach us how to be confident, how to behave during the interview. Also, I attended here a course called Personal Development. It was very short but very useful. It was 6 weeks. He taught us how to deal with problems, how to be confident, how to look for jobs, how to communicate with people, how to not be shy, how to get out of our shell." (Andreea)

"I feel quite confident, and I was like this all the time. It really helped that he [Personal Development course tutor] told us not to think about problems all the time, because problems can be small, but we imagine them to be big. So we just need to go and sort them, that's all. I think after this course [...], I felt more confident, and it helped me improve my English. It helped me speak by phone, which is the most difficult part in learning English, and speaking and communication. Because when you're talking, you can ask, but by phone it's very difficult. Now I'm not afraid to answer when somebody calls me from the bank. So I use these skills all the time." (Andreea)

"Yesterday my teacher said there's some course for work, they said they will contact me and the course will be in the library, for English classes for work. I told him I will attend this course and I'm happy to start. I'm worried about my confidence because maybe my English will not be enough to speak with the people to carry on my work activities." (Batoor)

"At the beginning I didn't want to speak because they would ask me where I was from and I don't want to talk with people. I was very shy. If I need to go to the doctor, I go. If I need to go to the market, I go. Now I live here I can't avoid doing things. If I need to say, 'please repeat', I don't mind. I want to concentrate on English for work. For writing, if I have a computer in time, I feel confident, but I always have to ask for a second opinion." (Mariana)

5.5 Using English outside the classroom

Andreea discussed the differences between herself and her husband in using English. It's sometimes assumed that men are less likely to attend ESOL classes because they are learning the language at work. Here, that's clearly not the case.

Batoor gives an interesting account of the everyday use of Urdu (not his native language, but one he is fluent in) in his neighbourhood, and whether this is a barrier to improving his English. He also discussed using English in healthcare settings. Nasreen discussed using English in voluntary roles, the use of Urdu in her household, and her lack of use of English on an everyday basis.

"I have a lot of opportunity [to practise English] in school, also when I was with my driving instructor, also when we started looking for a house. I have to talk to mortgage advisors in banks, with estate agents, so every day English is right there!" (Andreea)

"Actually in Longsight, I just improve my Urdu, because their community is full of Pakistani and Indian people and I think Urdu is the first language in Longsight. If I was in another part of Manchester where native people are living I think it would be better for me to improve my language and accent of the British people. Actually, I worked with the US Army in Afghanistan and the accent of British and US is completely different, so I think it's better to live in the area where British people live, it would be better for me and my family." (Batoor)

"My teacher encourages me to work hard. He asked me to do a volunteer job to improve my speaking and listening [...] I want to volunteer to improve my speaking and listening so I can work, in the future, in the education sector, because I like reading and learning. I would like to teach at primary level. English speaking and listening is the problem; when someone speaks very quickly I can't understand. My children speak Urdu in the house – I asked them to speak English, but they are used to speaking Urdu in the house." (Nasreen)

5.6 Future plans and qualifications

Many interviewees were keen to pursue further qualifications, often with a particular job or career in mind. Aminah mentioned a desire to combine ESOL classes with other classes (e.g. maths), but time constraints due to family commitments have meant choosing between ESOL and other options on offer at the venue. Andreea discussed the need to study to get a better life, and the importance of support from her husband to achieve this, whilst hinting at a relative lack of routes 'up' offered by MAES beyond ESOL. Batoor discussed both his need to improve his English to get the degree he needs for his career, and the perceived need to have an UK qualification to get on. Mariana and Nasreen both have ambitions to study further in order to 'get on' in the UK labour market:

"Maybe [I will go to university in the UK]. I feel there is a lot of opportunity to study. Especially for people who want to do this. And I have big support from my husband because he works so hard in the construction industry, he earns good money, but he says if we want to get a better life here we have to study. We have to work not just like in a factory or warehouse, just to get a job and that's all; we have to develop". (Andreea)

"My teacher advised me to try an interpreting course because it will help me with my English and will be interesting helping other people, and maybe [getting] a job. I will think about it [...] I'm definitely planning to study." (Andreea)

"The reason I've not applied for a Master's degree in engineering is the English language. If I improve my English language, I would like to have a course of higher Master's degree of engineering, or civil engineering, or design. I would like to do that here. I think the course is maybe one or two years."
(Batoor)

5.7 Motivation to learn English

There were some interesting comments on why people are motivated to learn English. Taken together they do point to this cohort (at least those we interviewed) being a particularly motivated group. Andreea discussed not only the practical necessity of learning English, but also its role as a global language. Batoor also stresses both the practical benefits of learning English and its global significance. Nasreen too emphasises both practical and ideological commitments to learning English. Interestingly, all of the above subtly associate English with what might be described as educated cosmopolitanism. Nasreen, in particular, notes this, whilst also shows the lengths and costs parents will go to ensure their children can benefit from education and the English language:

"Some people study because they need to speak it properly. Obviously you have to speak English here. But for me, I really love this language from when I was child. I used to watch American movies when I was a child. Songs... A big part of my vocabulary was from the movies and songs, so of course it's the practical things that we have to know for communication, to get a job. How can you live here if you don't know the language? We have to know English, we have to study." (Andreea)

"[I want to learn English] because I want to work here, for communication with people, and living in the UK, And living in the UK, language is important to everybody who's living in the UK. And, in the world, English is the first language for the people; you can find somebody to communicate with them and solve your problems." (Batoor)

5.8 Use of public service interpreting

Andreea talked about the difficulty in navigating the healthcare system without PSIT support, whilst Nasreen discussed using PSIT versus using family and friends to interpret:

"No, just all the time by phone; Doctors using phone. I had to go to the doctors with the kids, especially the first months were difficult, maybe the weather changed. Every three months, they were sick. I had to go to the hospital. Before that I wrote all the questions in my book. Sometimes I couldn't understand but it was OK." (Andreea)

“Yes [I use interpreters]. When I went to the doctor, and to the City Council, I needed an interpreter, because I had some problems; it was easy to get a translator. 3 months ago, I had an appointment with the dentist at [the Hospital], and they arranged a translator, and [I] never had problems getting a translator. I didn't use a family friend to translate, but now my oldest son is in Year 8 and my middle son is in year 5, and they speak good English [so], if they are free we have no translator, because our son comes with us [...] If it's during school time that we have to go anywhere, [and] it's important, we need a translator.” (Nasreen)

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Nearly half of the cohort of respondents report having been in education for more than 16 years, and nearly three quarters had exposure to basic English learning prior to arrival; at present we are unsure to what extent this is representative of learners nationally, but it reveals the huge potential of those currently enrolled in ESOL classes in Manchester to contribute to the city in professional roles if they are provided with adequate support to overcome remaining language barriers. This supports the need (already recognised in MAES reports; see Manchester City Council 2018) to boost English provisions for professional purposes, as distinct from English for Work strand, which focuses on lower level job-seeking skills and knowledge.

Both the survey and interviews suggest that progression in English is often impacted by a lack of confidence, particularly in relation to using English in the workplace. There is also a risk of decreasing motivation as a result of lack of access to courses or to suitable courses. This highlights a need for conversation classes to reflect higher learner need, and to cater more systematically for those with higher levels of proficiency and professional aspirations; this is possibly being overlooked in current provision, where planning is linked primarily to classroom content. Creative approaches to ESOL through initiatives like Talk English and Heart and Parcel, where learners engage in activities in different settings, can usefully be accompanied by initiatives that support professional progression in the workplace, such as internships or work placements.

Voluntary sector provision is an excellent supplement to mainstream ESOL, but it is important that the two approaches are coordinated so that voluntary sector activities can add value through enrichment rather than substitute what remains an essential service. Our own experience of supporting voluntary sector provisions through the Multilingual Manchester student volunteer scheme allows us to gain insights into the need to carefully study community based learning in order to effectively manage learning outcomes in highly differentiated groups of (often) vulnerable learners, with different learning motivations and skills, as well as the need to upskill teachers (both formally qualified and non-qualified) in working with vulnerable learners.

The location of MAES ESOL classes attracts a population of local residents of diverse backgrounds. Although individuals' choice of venue is in part dependent on commuting options, among other factors, this coming together of local learners from diverse backgrounds has the potential to act as an important contributor to strengthening community relations, especially among recent arrivals. We have found that a notable minority of users continue to access ESOL ten years or more after arriving in the UK. This shows the importance of offering lifelong ESOL provisions. On the other hand, the lack of older learners in our sample raises questions about social isolation and the extent of social participation within certain groups. More research is needed on the nature of barriers facing older migrants in accessing provisions. Here, community-specific examples of good practice, such as the Chinese Health Information Centre and Way Yin Society may be invited to offer advice on attracting older learners.

We have found evidence of decreased reliance on public service interpreting and translation provisions, but also evidence of some continuing need for interpreting especially in healthcare sector. This points to a need to view both forms of language support as interconnected in the social trajectory of individuals, and thus also to a need to consider both types of provision as complementary and to link them as part of an integrated vision and overarching strategy. The reasons for reliance on friends and family as interpreters require close examination in order to establish whether they involve issues of trust, or are due to lack of awareness of professional provisions, or lack of promotion of professional provisions by service providers. Overall there is a need to investigate public service interpreting as a complementary language-learning tool, which strengthen the development of skills and knowledge in ways that support better participation in social, professional and institutional life, and the building of resilience.

There is clearly insufficient ESOL provision in the city, a point made in previous studies and acknowledged in various city council reports; in our data this is apparent in the limited opportunities that respondents report to access supplementary provisions, as well as in report on long waiting times and lack of sufficient information on provisions. There is thus an urgent need to enhance provisions, but also to introduce more effective coordination among providers, and to disseminate information on provisions more effectively to those that need them. Consideration should be given to the creation of a formal network of initiatives of various kinds, and those operating across sectors, including prospective partnerships with businesses willing to offer skilled individuals work placement opportunities to boost their confidence in the use of English in the work place setting. Such a network might be served by a Digital Hub that would allow providers to share information on provisions and to manage waiting lists, and prospective users to access such information more easily.

The city already has an ESOL strategy in place, and upcoming changes to the way in which skills development is funded in Greater Manchester may open up new opportunities that will be beneficial to the delivery of that strategy. We believe that the city should continue to re-assess and plan its provisions, and that it would be of benefit to take a more general strategic approach to language needs and language skills, one that adopts an integrated approach to ESOL, interpreting and translation, and the fostering and harnessing of language skills more generally, be it through the study of foreign languages or the cultivation of skills in home and community languages, as supporting individuals' participation and resilience and contributing to the city's social cohesion and prosperity.

GLOSSARY AND ACRONYMS:

APPGSI:	All-Party Parliamentary Group on Social Integration – All-Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs) are informal cross-party groups in the UK Parliament system; they have no official status within Parliament (as opposed to Select Committees), but can be highly influential.
CEFR:	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages – a guideline used to describe the achievements of learners of European languages, administered by the Council of Europe.
CoE:	Council of Europe – an Europe-wide organisation, with 47 member-states, created in the aftermath of World War 2. It led to the creation of the European Convention on Human Rights. Currently styles itself as the continent's leading human right organisation. It is not part of the structure of the European Union, though all EU member states are also part of the CoE.
CVS:	Community and Voluntary Sector – a collective term for CVOs.
EE:	Everyday English – a type of ESOL course offered by MAES, open to those in, or not actively seeking, work.
EfW:	English for Work – a type of ESOL course offered by MAES, open only to those actively seeking work and in receipt of certain work-related benefits.
ESF:	European Social Fund – an European Union administered fund supporting the creation of more and better jobs, and a socially inclusive society; co-funds many ESOL schemes in the UK.
ESFA:	Education and Skills Funding Agency – An executive agency sponsored by the UK Department for Education, responsible for funding education for children, young people and adults; adult education in the UK was formerly funded by the Skills Funding Agency (SFA).
ESOL:	English for Speakers of Other Languages – an umbrella term for the provision of English language learning for those who already speak languages other than English. Here, it is treated as distinct from EFL – English as a Foreign Language; learning English in a country whose main language is not English, or in an English-speaking country when not a long-term resident – and EAL – English as an Additional Language; the term used for pre-19 ESOL learning in the UK school system.
Green Paper:	A consultation document produced by the UK government setting out policy proposals at a formative stage. Not to be confused with White Papers, which set out formal statements of policy and propose legislative changes.
MAES:	Manchester Adult Education Service – the part of Manchester City Council with responsibility for delivering post-19 education and skills provision in Manchester; the largest provider of ESOL in the city.
MCC:	Manchester City Council – the statutory local government body in Manchester; one of ten local governments in Greater Manchester.
MHCLG:	Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government – The UK government ministry concerned with, amongst other things, community cohesion; sponsors of the Integrated Communities Green Paper; formerly the Department of Communities and Local Government, or DCLG.
NATECLA:	National Association of Teachers of English and Community Languages to Adults – the national forum and professional body for ESOL teachers; published the influential report, Towards an ESOL strategy for England.
VCO:	Voluntary and Community Organisation – a non-profit making organisation, outside the statutory sector, which relies, at least partially, on volunteers. Includes, but is not limited to, charities.

APPENDIX A: THE QUESTIONNAIRE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROVISION IN MANCHESTER

Unique ID:

--	--	--	--	--

Fieldworkers:

Venue:

Course Provider:

Course Level:

Questionnaire

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Are you Male or Female?

Male

☐

Female

☐

2. How old are you?

18-24

☐

25-34

☐

35-44

☐

45-64

☐

65+

☐

3a. What language(s) do you use most often when talking with your family?

3b. What other language(s) are you comfortable speaking with friends, family or people at work?

4. What country were you born in?

5. How long have you been in the UK?

6. What is your postcode (for example, M8 3XX or OL13 6YY)?

7. How old were you when you started school?

8. How old were you when you left education or training (including University or College)?

Questions continue on the next page



B. ACCESS TO ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROVISION

9. Before you came to the UK, which of these could you do on your own? Tick all that apply.

I was able to ask and answer simple questions in English, for example asking for directions and help ☐

I was able to talk to friends and other people in English about my family and things that interest me..... ☐

I was able to speak in English on most topics without difficulty ☐

I was able to talk about my past experiences, future plans, and my work and activities without much effort..... ☐

I was able to use English for work purposes confidently, for example, professional writing, business communication, delivering presentations and dealing with customers..... ☐

10. Which of the following can you do on your own now? Tick all that apply

I can ask and answer simple questions in English, for example asking for directions and help..... ☐

I can talk to friends and other people in English about my family and things that interest me ☐

I can speak English at the bank, post office, or job centre..... ☐

I can talk about my past experiences, future plans, and my current work and activities ☐

I can use English for work purposes confidently, for example, professional writing, business communication, delivering presentations and dealing with customers..... ☐

11a. In the first six months after your arrival in the UK, did you go to English language classes?

Yes, I took a free class..... ☐

Yes, I paid for classes..... ☐

No..... ☐

11b. If 'no', why? Tick all that apply

- I didn't have the right to attend free classes..... ☐
- I couldn't pay for classes..... ☐
- I didn't know about any classes..... ☐
- The classes were difficult to travel to..... ☐
- I needed to look after my family..... ☐
- I was at work..... ☐
- I didn't want to be in a class with men/women..... ☐
- I didn't want English classes..... ☐

Any other comments:

12. Have you looked for an English language course in Manchester in the past year?

- Yes..... ☐
-
- No..... ☐
-

13. Who has helped you find an English language class in Manchester in the past year?

Questions continue on the next page



14. In the past year, what types of English classes have you attended? Tick all that apply

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| English conversation..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ESOL, pre-entry levels..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ESOL, Entry levels 1-3..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ESOL, Levels 1+..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| GCSE..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A-Level..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| IELTS..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |

15a. When you found a class, was the time and location suitable?

- | | |
|----------|--------------------------|
| Yes..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | |
| No..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | |

15b. If you did not find the time and location suitable, why was this? Tick all that apply

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| I work shifts and couldn't always
attend..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I worked at that time of
day..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I needed to look after my family at that time of
day..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I couldn't get there on public
transport..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other (please note
below)..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Other (please state)

16. Do you think there are enough free English courses in Manchester?

- There are not enough courses..... ☐
- There are enough courses..... ☐
- There are too many courses..... ☐

Comments:

17a. Are you currently on a waiting list for an English class?

- Yes..... ☐
- No..... ☐

17b. If 'yes', how long have you been on the waiting list?

- Less than 1 month..... ☐
- 1 – 3 months..... ☐
- 3 – 6 months..... ☐
- 6 – 12 months..... ☐
- More than 1 year..... ☐

Comments:

C. ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

18. In the past year, do you think your English has:

Improved a lot?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improved a little bit?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not improved at all?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>

19. In the past year, which of these have helped you improve your English? Tick all that apply

	Helped	Not helped	Not used
ESOL courses.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other formal language courses (GCSEs, A-levels, IELTS).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conversation classes.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Speaking with people at work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Speaking with family and friends.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Speaking with other people I've met (for example, bus drivers, shop keepers).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Language resources (for example, CDs, films and TV, the internet)..... ...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

20. Which of these have made learning English more difficult?

I found it difficult to find out about courses..... ☐

I did not have the right to go to courses..... ☐

I was not able to afford a course..... ☐

The course was too far away..... ☐

I did not speak English outside my course..... ☐

I could not find a course only for women/men..... ☐

Other people interpreting for me..... ☐

My family not wanting me to learn English..... ☐

Comments:

21a. Do you speak English with people outside your English class every week?

Yes..... ☐

No..... ☐

21b. If 'yes', where? Tick all that apply

At work..... ☐

With my friends and family..... ☐

Conversation classes..... ☐

Other people I meet (for example, bus driver, shop keeper,
doctor)..... ☐

21c. If 'yes', has this helped your confidence in speaking English?

Yes ☐

No..... ☐

Comments:

C. EXPERIENCES AT WORK

22. Before coming to the UK, what did you spend most of your time doing?

I worked for myself (write job
below)..... ☐

I worked for a company or someone else (write job below).... ☐

I was looking for a
job..... ☐

I was a student (write course
below)..... ☐

I was looking after my home or
family..... ☐

Last job or course, if relevant (for example: Mechanic – fixing cars, or University student studying Law)

23. What are you doing now?

I work for myself (write job
below)..... ☐

I work for a company or someone else (write job below).....

☐

I am looking for a

☐

job.....

I am a student (write course

☐

below).....

I am looking after my home or

☐

family.....

Current job or course, if relevant (for example: “Mechanic – repairing cars”, or “University student studying Law”)

24. If you have spent a lot of time working or studying in another job, industry or course, please write below:

25. Are there things that have stopped you from getting a better job? Tick all that apply

A lack of work experience in the

☐

UK.....

Employers not recognising my

☐

qualifications.....

My legal status (e.g. being a refugee or asylum

☐

seeker).....

I don't have a National Insurance number

☐

yet.....

☐

My English is not good

enough.....

Other (please state

☐

below).....

Other:

Comments:

D. EXPERIENCES OF COMMUNICATING THROUGH AN INTERPRETER

26. In the past year, have you needed an interpreter?

Yes..... ☐

No..... ☐

27a. In the past year, have friends and family acted as an interpreter for you?

Yes..... ☐

No..... ☐

27b. If yes, where have friends and family interpreted for you? Please tick all that apply

At the doctors' (GP)..... ☐

At the
hospital..... ☐

With a
lawyer..... ☐

With the
police..... ☐

At the job
centre..... ☐

At the
council..... ☐

At
school..... ☐

28. In the past year, how many times have you communicated through a professional interpreter?

	1-5	6-10	11+
At the doctor's.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At the hospital.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
With a lawyer.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
With the police..... ...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At the job centre.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At the council.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At school.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

.....

29a. Have you been refused an interpreter when you felt you needed one?

Yes..... ☐

No..... ☐

29b. If so, when and where?

30a. In the past year, has your need for an interpreter:

Increased..... ☐

Stayed about the same..... ☐

Decreased..... ☐

30b. Why?

31a. Do you think it is important to have professional interpreting services in the city of Manchester?

Yes..... ☐

No..... ☐

31b. Why do you think this?

APPENDIX B – SCRIPT FOR INTRODUCING THE RESEARCH TO PARTICIPANTS:

Good Morning everyone, my name is [name] and this is [name], we're from the University of Manchester and we've come to visit you today to ask you to fill in this questionnaire about your experiences of learning English in Manchester, as well as the skills and qualifications you got at home, and your experiences of using interpreters and translators.

You might be wondering why we are doing this research, so here's a brief explanation: You may well have heard British politicians talking a lot about how everyone who comes to the UK should speak English. However, at the same time, funding for courses like this that teach people English has been falling dramatically. We are, therefore, interested in hearing your experiences of learning English and using translators and interpreters in Manchester, so we can see how services work in the city and where they could be improved. We can then use this information to show the government and other important people what we could do to make learning English better for everyone.

We'll be using a questionnaire in the class. Does everyone know what a questionnaire is? [Discuss if necessary. Most classes have filled them in before]

The questionnaire is anonymous. Who can tell me what anonymous means? [Brief discussion and clarification]. So, it means we won't show anyone your answers or use any information that might identify you.

If you don't want to answer any of the questions, you do not have to. If you are unsure what any of the questions mean, don't hesitate to ask me or [colleague's name]. There are no silly questions here, and it's not an exam, so always feel free to ask.

Finally, there is an additional slip on the front of the questionnaire. Only fill this in if you are happy to talk to us in more depth about your experiences of living, working and learning English in the UK. We'll be contacting those people in about a month to arrange times to sit down and have a chat.

[Hand out questionnaires.]

[Give people a couple of minutes to settle down and do the easy questions at the start and then start circulating, asking if anyone needs any help etc. as some people need a prompt before they start asking questions. Once one person starts asking questions, others will become more comfortable doing so.]

APPENDIX C – GUIDANCE NOTES FOR RESEARCH ASSISTANTS:

BASIC INFORMATION:

Unique ID: This should already be filled in. If it is not, contact Huw Vasey for advice.

Fieldworkers: This should include the initials of all researchers present

Venue: The venue where the course is held.

Course Provider: If you are uncertain, ask the teacher. In this round of classes, this will always be Manchester Adult Education Service (MAES)

Course Level: Again, if you are uncertain, ask the teacher, but this should be either Entry 3 or Level 1 in this round of classes.

A: GENERAL INFORMATION

Sex: If a participant does not identify as Male or Female, they can leave this section blank.

Age: If a participant is uncertain about their age, give their best guess.

a) Family Language: If the respondent uses multiple languages in the home, they should put down the language they feel most 'at home' using, rather than the one they use most frequently. This could be described as the language they feel they can express themselves most clearly in, dream or think in.

b) Other Languages: 'Comfortable' here suggests relative ease in holding a simple two-way conversation, equivalent to the second option in Q9: "I can talk to friends and other people in [language] about my family and things that interest me"

4. Country of Birth: Where a respondent was born in one country but grew up elsewhere, they can include this info in brackets, ideally as (g: [country], [age]-[age]). Multiple entries up to the age of 16 are acceptable.

5. Length of time in UK: Respondents who have lived in the UK, moved away and then returned should include the total length of time present. Multiple periods of stay can be expressed in brackets as ([year]-[year])

6. Postcode: This has been changed to a full postcode as partial postcodes do not allow for us to localize responses to wards (which is what we will use in the final analysis). If a respondent is unsure of their postcode, they can write their local area (if known). This information will not be shared with anyone outside the project and will only be made public at a ward level.

7. Age started school: School refers to any sort of pre-16 formal schooling. For those who never received a formal education prior to age 16, 'N/A' should be recorded.

8. Left education: This refers to the age they finished continuous formal education. For those with disrupted schooling, please give an indication of the level they eventually reached, not just the age they completed their education.

B. ACCESS TO ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROVISION

9 & 10. Pre- and post-migration language skills: Respondents should tick ALL relevant boxes. The first four responses are based on the Common European Framework of Reference for learning foreign languages (CEFR). Response 1 is equivalent to level A1-2, 2 = B1, 3 = B2, 4 = C1+. You can familiarize yourself with the relevant section of the CEFR here: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/table-3-cefr-3.3-common-reference-levels-qualitative-aspects-of-spoken-language-use>

Respondents at Entry 3 and Level 1 should correspond to approximately levels B1 and B2 according to DfES measurements

The fifth response is specific to workplace English and is not 'better' than the previous response. Therefore, a respondent can tick 1,2,3 & 5 etc....

The intent with this question is to give some measure of improvement in English over the course of their time in the UK. We can then compare this to demographic data – sex, age, prior education level etc.- to see if there are differences in English language improvement post-migration and to start to explore (through interviews etc.) what those might mean for UK ESOL provision.

11 a, b. Accessing free provision in first 6 months in UK:

Note this question is about the first 6 months in the UK only. Note the distinction between free and paid for classes.

“I didn’t have the right to attend free classes” – ‘Right’ here is used as a synonym for eligibility, so having ‘no access to public funds’, asylum seeker status means this box should be ticked.

These questions are intended to gauge the proportion of new arrivals who get early access to English language provision, and the extent of barriers to access. There is some evidence that motivation to learn a new language declines quickly after arrival and that access to English language provision is very difficult for many new arrivals during the same period.

12 & 13. Accessing language courses in Manchester:

In Q13, ‘who has helped you’ can refer to both individuals and organisations

This question is intended to help us get a better idea of who is signposting access to ESOL courses in Manchester. Is it social networks or formal referrals? We know a lack of knowledge is a barrier to accessing courses, so this information may be important in improving this.

14. English classes attended:

Note the timeframe is in the past 12 months.

ESOL, GCSEs, A-Levels and IELTS are formal courses leading to qualifications. Any other courses are likely to be informal conversation classes, including Talk English, Migrant Support’s LEIH and our sessions at Chrysalis and Women’s Voices.

There is little information about whether people are relying solely on access to over-subscribed formal courses in Manchester, or whether people are accessing a range of provisions, including non-formal courses in the same time-frame.

15 a, b. Time and location of courses:

Suitable here means that they were able to attend without significant disruption to their day (including travel, work and childcare).

Answer 1 refers to irregular shift patterns making regular attendance difficult, whilst Answer 2 refers to situation where work commitments meant they could never make the class.

It has been reported that numerous barriers to access exist for ESOL learners, but this is often difficult to quantify. This question is intended to measure the extent of such barriers and to uncover the most prevalent.

16. Are there enough free courses in Manchester.

This refers to free English language courses in Manchester only

Evidence shows there is more demand for ESOL courses than can be supplied with available funds, but how do learners experience this?

17 a, b. Waiting lists:

Respondents may be on multiple waiting lists for courses. If this is the case, please respond with the maximum period they have been on a waiting list.

Respondents can list where they are on a waiting list in the comments section.

Manchester has some substantial waiting lists for ESOL courses. This question intends to get to the experiences of learners, to gauge how long waits may be, and to see how many people are on multiple waiting lists.

C: ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY:

18 & 19. Improvement in English

18) Note, this question refers to the past year:

19) 'Not used' refers to resources respondents have not accessed.

Answer 6: 'Speaking with other people...' refers to any public interaction outside of the home or workplace.

Answer 7: 'Language resources...', refers to both formal language learning resources and accessing resources not designed for language learners, such as English language radio, TV, YouTube etc.

This is an attempt to gauge what helps respondents learn English. Is it just formal courses, or are there other elements that might be encouraged and/or supported?

20. What made learning English more difficult?

Answer 2: 'right' again refers to formal eligibility to attend. Common reasons might include 'no recourse to public funds' status (inc. Asylum Seeker status), EU citizens who have not been resident for a sufficient time, spouses and dependents of workers on certain visas.

These answers are not exhaustive and respondents are welcome to add other reasons in the comments section if they are not already included. They are also welcome to add more detail to their answers in this section.

There is substantial evidence that learning a language is about more than just attending courses, and that a number of barriers exist. This question looks to begin to gauge the relative importance of various barriers for our respondents.

21 a, b, c. English outside the classroom

Note the timescale is every week

Conversation classes includes informal English language provision, such as Talk English etc. Other people I meet includes two-way conversations in English on the internet, social media etc.

There has been much stress in the media and at Westminster about 'integration' and the willingness of migrants to interact with host populations. However, there is also a lot of evidence that recent migrants often don't get to have much contact with 'outsiders' and to practice their English. How extensive is this problem and how does it interact with English language learning?

D: EXPERIENCES AT WORK

22 & 23. Pre- and post-migration labour market activity:

22) Many people's pre-migration experiences will not fit neatly into normal UK labour market categories. If this is the case, try and match their most recent experience in 'normal' labour market conditions. If they worked full-time as a Doctor before a conflict started, but had been doing odd jobs in their cousin's shop after being forced to leave home, then they should answer as a Doctor working full-time.

Encourage respondents who were students to include what they were studying.

23) If students are working or studying other courses alongside their ESOL course, encourage them to include these.

It's important to find out how different types of migration impact on people's labour market position. There is evidence that migrants who begin their post-migration labour market journey in lower level jobs struggle to return to their pre-migration position, regardless of their skills and qualifications. However, too often we look at whether people are in employment, not how well their job role may match their skills and experience.

24. Work in other areas:

We are interested in skills and experiences, beyond those included in Qs 22 and 23, that may be relevant in the UK. These do not have to be matched by formal qualifications. Encourage respondents to include length of experience if possible.

Respondents may well be multi-skilled and have many useful experiences.

25. Barriers to labour market progression:

Respondents are encouraged to add their own categories in the comments section, e.g. if they feel they are discriminated against because of their language, skin colour or ethnicity etc.

Previous research has noted a number of barriers to labour market progression for migrants to the UK. Are any prevalent in Manchester and how are they spread across our survey population?

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