



Skills Funding  
Agency

# Employer Satisfaction Survey 2017: Provider Guidance

February 2017

## Introduction

Building on the success of the '**Provider-led**' phase used in recent years, we (the Skills Funding Agency) will again ask colleges and training organisations to administer the Employer Satisfaction Survey 2017 to their employers in the first instance, followed by an '**SFA-led**' phase, if needed.

Details of the administration of the Employer Satisfaction Survey 2017, which will affect colleges and training organisations taking part follow covering:

(a) **administration of the Employer Satisfaction Survey** during the 'provider-led' phase, and

(b) your role in **updating your Employer list** (if you do not meet the minimum response levels during the 'provider-led' phase). Together with our survey contractor, Ipsos MORI, we will use the Employer List during the 'SFA-led' phase to your employers.

NOTE: If your organisation is taking a proactive phase during the 'Provider-led' phase, you may not need to do this.

## Administering the Employer Satisfaction Survey

Please follow the steps below to invite your employers to take part in the Employer Satisfaction Survey.

**NOTE:** Colleges and training organisations which **meet their minimum response level** during the 'Provider-led' phase will **not be required to update and submit their employer list**.

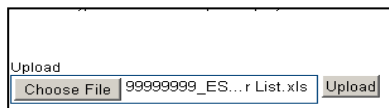
**Step 1:** Plan your strategy for contacting employers. Send a survey invitation to all employers on your list.

**Step 2:** Email your employers customers the survey link: (<http://www.ipsos-mori.com/employersatisfaction>) and provide them with their unique Employer ID

(**Column A on the Employer List**) which they will need to access the online survey.

**Step 3:** If you wish to generate paper-based surveys for all, or some of your employers, please follow the steps below to make use of the mail merge function, (use this function as many times as you wish to generate paper based questionnaires.) **NB. Please note: questionnaires should be generated in batches of no more than 100.**

- a. Save a new version of your Employer List for use with the mail merge tool, you may give this a new name such as: 99999999\_ES\_EmployerList\_Paper.
- b. Indicate 'Yes' in **Column Q (Postal Questionnaire)** to identify those employers for which you wish to print questionnaires. Use the 'Salutation' field (**Column J**) to indicate how you would like the letter to be addressed, such as Mr Smith, or John.
- c. Once you have done this, **upload your Employer List** on the 'Create paper questionnaires' page as follows:



- d. **Please write** the text you wish to add to the core message by putting this into the boxes provided to personalise the letter, and add a signature (you can add an electronic signature, in addition to name and/or job title). An example of the cover letter that will be generated **is provided at the end** of this document.
- e. Press the "Generate" button to create your questionnaires.



- f. Check that the unique Employer ID (**Column A**) for each of your employers is printed on each questionnaire.
- g. Check the wording of the letter. Does it convey what you want it to say? Please ensure you have not duplicated the sign off. We include:

Thank you in advance for your help. Yours sincerely

- h. When you have finished, print off your questionnaires. **NOTE: If you are using older versions of Microsoft Office, then you will need to download Microsoft Word Viewer from the following link:**

<http://www.microsoft.com/en-GB/download/details.aspx?id=4>

**If you are on a network, then you may need administrator rights to download and install this programme, in which case you should contact your IT Support Team.**

- i. As a final check, read your printed questionnaires before distributing them. Please remember that we cannot allocate any responses to you for any questionnaires issued to employers without a **unique Employer ID**. Please also make sure that you use the correct unique Employer ID for each employer so that their responses count towards your score.
- j. Post the questionnaires to your employers. You will need to pay for the postage. Alternatively, you can give them the paper versions of the survey when you visit them.

- k. Employers should return their questionnaire to the Ipsos MORI Freepost address (provided at the end of this document); they do not need to pay postage. You can either print this address onto labels or envelopes for your employers, or simply ask them to write it onto a blank envelope into which the questionnaire can be placed.

**Step 5:** Please monitor your organisation's Daily Response Rate Update, which will appear on the [Provider Extranet](#) throughout the survey period, and encourage your employer customers to respond. We suggest two reminders in the timetable below.

### Survey Timetable

The survey period for the 'Provider-led' phase will start on **27 March 2017** and end on **28 April 2017**. Please send out the survey invitation as soon as possible from **27 March 2017** to give your employers sufficient time to take part. We recommend sending two reminders to non-responding employers during this period, as detailed in the timetable below. To check which employers have responded/not responded, please view your organisation's daily response rate information on the [Provider Extranet](#).

At the end of the 'Provider-led' phase on **28 April 2017**, the Skills Funding Agency working in partnership with our survey contractor Ipsos MORI, will identify colleges and training organisations with insufficient employer responses. These organisations will then be included in the 'SFA-led' phase of the Employer Satisfaction Survey.

It is therefore imperative that if you **have not** met the minimum response level required for the 'Provider-led' survey period or if you have had to remove some employers participating in the survey, for example if they have ceased trading, that you upload your amended Employer List by **no later than 4 May 2017**. Please see 'Updating your Employer List' section below). This information will be needed to

support the Skills Funding Agency/Ipsos MORI in contacting those employers yet to participate with the Employer Satisfaction Survey during the SFA-led phase.

**NOTE:** The 'SFA-led' phase will be prioritised to assist those closest to achieving a valid score first.

Action	Start date	End date
Your organisation sends out survey invites 'Provider-led' phase	27 March 2017	
Your organisation's Daily Response Rate Update available	April 2017	June 2017
Suggested first reminder to employers sent out by your organisation	10 April 2017	10 April 2017
Suggested second reminder to employers sent out by your organisation	24 April 2017	24 April 2017
End of 'Provider-led' survey phase		28 April 2017
'SFA-led' phase	15 May 2017	21 July 2017

## Cover Letter Example

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<Name>  
<Address line 1>  
<Address line 2>  
<Postcode>

Employer ID: a12bc31

Your answers to the survey along with those from other employers will be used by the Skills Funding Agency's contractors, Ipsos MORI and RCU Limited, to calculate an Employer Satisfaction score for each training provider. These scores will be published to help you and other employers make informed decisions about your future choices of training providers. The results of the 2012/13 survey are available for learners and employers to view at <http://fechoices.skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk>

Please complete the attached questionnaire and return it to Ipsos MORI (Freepost address provided at the end of this questionnaire) by 16 May 2014. If you prefer, you can complete the survey online using this link: [www.ipsos-mori.com/employersatisfaction](http://www.ipsos-mori.com/employersatisfaction) and entering your unique reference number a12bc31. It should take no more than five minutes to complete.

Further details about the survey can be found at <http://skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/providers/FE+Choices/Indicators>. If you have other queries about the survey, please email: [employersatisfaction@ipsos-mori.com](mailto:employersatisfaction@ipsos-mori.com) stating your reference number located in the top right corner of this letter.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Yours sincerely,

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Page No.

a12bc31  
Employers' Satisfaction with Training



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**Ipsos MORI Freepost Address**

Freepost RSAE-RCET-ATJY  
Employer Satisfaction Survey  
Ipsos MORI  
Research Services House  
Elmgrove Road  
Harrow  
HA1 2QG



## Updating your Employer List

Please note that only those colleges and training organisations **that do not meet their minimum response level** during the provider-led phase will be **required** to update and submit their employer list.

You should follow the instructions below to review and update your employer list by **4 May 2017**.

### Step One:

- a. **Download** your Employer List from the Employer Satisfaction Survey homepage on the Provider Extranet by selecting the file
  
- b. **Save** the Excel spreadsheet to your own network or PC without changing the file name. NOTE: We will not accept your file if the file name differs from that downloaded.

### Step Two:

**Check your spreadsheet** against the information in the fields listed in Table A below.

NOTE: Where necessary, add in the correct information.

**Table A: List of fields you need to check and update/populate**

Title (column K)	Title of the person receiving the survey questionnaire (Mr/Miss/Mrs/Ms).
First name (column L)	First name of the person receiving the survey questionnaire.

Surname (column M)	Surname of the person receiving the survey questionnaire.
Job Title (column N)	Job title of the person receiving the survey questionnaire.
Telephone number (column S)	Telephone number for the person receiving the questionnaire including area codes.
Email (column T)	Email contact for the person receiving the questionnaire.
Recognised as name (column B)	If your organisation subcontracted the training, please supply us with the name of the subcontractor organisation that delivered the training. If your organisation is known to the employer under a different name, please write in this name. Please note that the name that appears in the 'Recognised as' column in the Employer List you download is the name that will appear in the online survey.

Please do not alter the structure of your files. We cannot accept files that have been structurally altered.

**Identify and exclude ineligible employers.** Follow the instructions in the 'What you need to do' column in Table B below to mark these employers on your Employer List spreadsheet.

**Please do not remove or add any employers to the list.**

**Columns A, C-I, O, P, R and U cannot be edited.**

**Table B: Identifying and excluding ineligible employers**

<b>Reasons for wanting to remove an employer</b>	<b>What you need to do on the Employer List spreadsheet</b>
The employer is no longer trading.	Select 'Ceased trading' from the drop-down menu in column V 'Reason for removing employer.'
The employer is also the college or training provider (that is you are delivering training to your own staff).	Select 'Training own staff' from the drop down menu in column V 'Reason for removing employer.'
Duplicate records for exactly the same workplace. (This must have exactly the same address).	Select 'Duplicate site' from the drop-down menu in column V 'Reason for removing employer'. If there are two identical records, flag one only. If there are three identical records, flag two records only. Make sure you keep one record un-flagged.

**Step Three:**

a. **Validate** your spreadsheet.

The employer spreadsheet contains a validation script to help you check the data is suitable for the survey. It will highlight errors or missing information in the following fields:

- Title and Contact Names
- Job title
- Email address
- Telephone number

Any errors found during the validation will appear in column W on the spreadsheet.

b. **Check** the error showing in column W and correct it.

#### **Step Four:**

**Upload** your employer spreadsheet and provide a contact name for any queries by:

- a. **Selecting the 'Browse' button**; this can be found immediately below your Employer List.

Locate your file and send it to us by clicking on the 'Upload' button. The uploaded file must have the same name as the file you downloaded.

- b. **Providing us with contact details** for the appropriate person to contact in your organisation should we need to contact you about the Employer Satisfaction Survey. To do this, select 'Add/amend my contact details' tab on the [Provider Extranet](#).

#### **Data Protection**

The Data Protection Act covers the use of personal data only and does not apply to organisations or limited companies. Therefore, you are able to share the name and contact details of an individual occupying a given position with an organisation or limited company.

In some cases, the contact information we require may be classed as personal data; for example, the name and address of an individual operating as a sole trader. This personal data will be processed solely for the research purposes permitted to be undertaken by, or on behalf of, the Secretary of State for the Department for Education, acting through the Skills Funding Agency. It will only be kept as long as necessary and then will be securely destroyed.

## **Any questions**

If you have any questions about the Employer Satisfaction survey, please refer to the Frequently Asked Questions below or the [Contact Us](#) page to select a query. If you require further information, follow the instructions on this page and you will be able to submit a query to us directly.

## Questions and Answers

### **Q: Who do I contact if I am having trouble downloading my employer list?**

A: Please refer to the [Contact Us](#) page on the Provider Extranet to select a query. If you require further information, follow the instructions and you will be able to submit a query to Ipsos MORI directly.

### **Q: Why can't I just send you our own employer list?**

A: For the survey, we are dealing with more than 200,000 records and so we need to work in a systematic way, which is why it is essential you use our spreadsheet format.

### **Q: Why can't I change your spreadsheet format?**

A: We need to understand the changes you have made and so it is essential you use our spreadsheet format, so we understand why and where you have made changes.

### **Q: Do I need to supply a contact name for each employer on the list?**

A: Yes, this is essential to ensure your questionnaire reaches the right person. Following the provider-led phase, Ipsos MORI will be conducting follow-up survey work among providers with insufficient employer responses. Therefore, it is important to make sure that the information provided is correct. Without a contact name, the questionnaire is likely to go astray. (Employers respond well to receiving personalised correspondence as it conveys providers are interested in their views. It is proven that non-personalised correspondence generates less response.)

**Q: The contact person we dealt with has left the employer and there is no-one appropriate to comment on the training. What do I need to do?**

A: Please include an alternative contact name and/or Job Title, if possible. We will still invite the employer to take part in the survey.

**Q: We deliver training to a number of sites for the same business but the contact name is the same across all the sites. Can I delete some of the sites so that our contact does not get more than one survey invitation?**

No. Each site may have different experiences and we want employers to have the opportunity to express this.

**Q: My list contains employers whose learners did not complete the training/dropped out early on. Can I remove them?**

A: No. Some questions in the survey will still be relevant to the employer.

**Q: My list contains employers who do not want to be contacted. How do I remove them?**

A: The survey is voluntary so employers do not have to complete it if they do not want to. The survey questionnaire will contain information on how employers can notify Ipsos MORI that they do not want to take part.

**Q: Can I add additional employers to my list?**

A: No. Additional entries are not permissible. The list is compiled from the Individual Learner Records (ILR) 2016 to 2017 of all employers notified by eligible providers to the Skills Funding Agency as having received full or part funded training delivered to them by a college/training organisation funded for Apprenticeship or work placed learning and contracted to receive an Adult Skills Budget between August 2016 and February 2017.

**Q: What does Employer ID refer to on the spreadsheet?**

A: Employer ID is the unique reference number that Ipsos MORI has allocated to each employer, to enable them to track their participation in the survey. This number is also used to provide you with daily update reports during field work.

**Q: Why can't I delete the Employer ID?**

A: The field is protected and cannot be changed. It is important that the unique Employer ID is retained so it can be used as detailed in the question above.

**Q: What is the EDS (Employer Data Service) number?**

A: The number identifies each workplace and is sourced from the 'Employer Identifier' field on the ILR

**Q: How do I update an employer's address?**

A: If the address provided for any of your employers is incorrect, then you should notify the [EDS helpdesk](#). For the purposes of the Employer Satisfaction Survey, Ipsos MORI will not be able to use updated addresses. Instead, you can follow the instructions below to either send the employer the link to the online survey, or generate a paper-based version of the questionnaire to send out to them.

**Q: What do I do if there are employers on my list who fall under the exempt categories in Table B?**

A: As indicated in Table B, you should flag them in column V 'Reason for Employer Removal.' Ipsos MORI will then ensure they are not included in the



survey. We ask that you do not delete them from the list, as we need to have a record of the employers that you wish us to remove.

**Q: Do I include multiple sites of the same organisation?**

A: Yes. It is valid to include multiple sites of the same organisation if you have delivered training to different sites and each site has a separate EDS number.

**Q: Why do you need me to list the name of our subcontractors on the spreadsheet?**

A: It is important you list the name of your subcontractor. We can then indicate to the employer the name of the provider that may have delivered the training. In many cases, this name is more recognisable to the employer and so they are more likely to respond to the questionnaire. Without correct information here, we are unlikely to get a response.

**Q: What do I need to do to correct errors found on my Employer List spreadsheet after I have pressed save?**

A: Please check these errors in column W and then make the appropriate corrections.

**Q: Do I need to worry about spelling the employers' details correctly?**

A: Yes. We will use the exact information you provide. So if you make spelling mistakes these will appear in the mailing to employers.

**Q: Have you included the information I provided last year?**

A: Yes, where possible we have included the information you provided last year in your employer list. Please check that the details are still relevant and that the contact names are in the format required for this year's survey.



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