GLAINTELLIGENCE

Skills Public Consultation Talk London Summary Report

June 2018

This report contains findings from research conducted with Talk London members, as part of the Skills Strategy public consultation. This is separate to research conducted with Londoners who are not part of the Talk London community, which has been covered in other reports.

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1. Methodology

Talk London: Findings in this report reflect the views of Talk London members. Talk London is a community of over 40,000 Londoners who regularly give views on GLA policy, through polling and discussion threads. Talk London members tend to be more engaged in London policy challenges than the general population	
Quantitative polling	**Qualitative discussion threads**
- A survey ran from 24/11/17 to 02/01/18 660 people took the survey - The sample has not been weighted and is therefore not representative of the London population	5 discussion threads on skills ran from 24/11/17 to 02/01/18, on the following subjects: - Career progress (7 comments) - Changing career or sector (6 comments) - Choices after school (10 comments) - How to develop new skills (5 comments) - Advanced Learner Loans (6 comments)

2. Response to policies

Talk London polling results

- Talk Londoners ranked policies according to what they thought would do most to help Londoners develop the skills they need to progress in work:
  - Promote high quality apprenticeships and inclusive employment practices to employers (50%)

- o Raise awareness of the financial support available to Londoners for re-skilling and of the benefits re-skilling can have for career progression (42%)
  - o Expand the range of skills and employment programmes that help the most disadvantaged people (37%)
  - o Develop a careers advice offer to provide information, advance and guidance to Londoners at all stages of their working lives (35%)
  - o Support new Institutes of Technology in London, colleges which particularly focus on digital and technology, life sciences and higher level construction (32%)
  - o Support more Londoners to develop digital skills (24%)
  - o Develop new ways to improve English skills among adults who do not speak English as a first language (22%)
  - o Commission new research to better understand the paths young Londoners take after leaving school, to help determine what skills training is needed (20%)
  - o Undertake a review of post-16 education for Londoners with special educational needs or disabilities, to ensure training meets their needs (17%)

- Talk Londoners ranked policies according to what they thought would do most to raise the quality of the education sector in London:
  - o Work with industry in London to develop and promote high quality apprenticeships (74%)
  - o Bring childcare services together in London to improve access, affordability and quality in the early years for the most disadvantaged families (54%)
  - o Improve the quality of training in digital technology by funding new courses designed by industry (43%)
  - o Help share best practice across London's schools to improve attainment (40%)
  - o Use Mayoral accreditation to promote the best quality further education institutions in London, such as the establishment of the Mayor's Construction Academy Scheme (20%)

- Most Talk Londoners (65%) think that currently some funding for skills in London is controlled by London boroughs and the London government (Greater London Authority), while most is controlled by central Government

- Talk Londoners ranked policies according to what they thought would do most to ensure that funding goes to the right places to upskill Londoners
  - o Negotiate with central government to ensure that existing European funding for adult education and skills in London is replaced (54%)
  - o Invest in infrastructure and facilities for further education (39%)
  - o Link funding for training providers to outcomes, such as the ability of learners to find employment (36%)
  - o Prioritise employability and enterprise skills through the Adult Education Budget (31%)
  - o Prioritise digital skills through the Adult Education Budget (25%)
  - o Prioritise improving adult learning in English and maths through the Adult Education Budget (22%)
  - o Establish new sources of funding for courses in English for adults who do not speak English as a first language (17%)

3. Aspirations for young people

Talk London polling results:

- 22% of the sample (141 people) had a child or a grandchild aged 5-18. This group had the following preferences for what their child or grandchild should do when they leave school or college:
  - Study for a degree at university (58%)
  - Other (12%)
  - No preference (9%)
  - Do an apprenticeship (8%)
  - Enter full time employment (8%)
  - Do vocational training (5%)
  - Don't know (1%)
- Most parents/ grand-parents of 5-18 year olds were either fairly or very confident (80%) that their child or grand-child would be able to pursue their preferred option
- Cost of the course (29%) was the main reason parents or grand-parents weren't more confident that their child or grand-child would be able to pursue their preferred option, followed by their exam results/ grades (12%) and their knowledge/ understanding of options (12%)

Summary of discussion threads

- Participants thought more should be done to promote apprenticeships, and encourage young people to consider it as an alternative to an expensive university degree
- Participants also thought that young people should be given greater exposure to career paths whilst at school/ college
- One participant noted that frequent changes to education policy and curriculum make it difficult for teachers to give students the support they need

4. Workplace progression

Talk London polling results:

- Most Talk Londoners said they found it difficult to change sector or role (57%), whilst a quarter (25%) said they found it easy
- For Talk Londoners who are currently employed, the biggest barrier to changing sector or role was not wanting to take a pay-cut (21%), followed by being comfortable in their current role (16%), not having the right skills (15%) and feeling like it's too late to change the sector they work in (15%)
- Many Talk Londoners said they find it difficult to progress in their current or former workplace (49%), whilst 23% said they thought it was easy
- Lack of roles to progress into (33%) and lack of support from senior or line management (23%) were the main barriers Talk Londoners identified to progressing in their workplace, whilst 11% identified skills or experience as a barrier.

Summary of discussion threads

- One participant noted that as an international student without a visa to work in the UK, it is very difficult to find an employer who is willing to sponsor you
- Another participant related her experience as a highly qualified older woman with a background in marketing and strategy, finding it very difficult to find work, and finding that there is little government support for someone in her position
- Participants felt that the barriers to changing jobs/ sector were the lack of recognition of transferable skills (especially for teachers) and lack of entry level positions/ jobs for people to move into

- One participant felt that offering volunteering as an entry route into a creative profession was being used as a way of gaining free labour, and was creating an unfair advantage for those who could afford to work unpaid.

5. Learning and Development

Talk London polling results:

- When asked about current or previous jobs, Talk Londoners who are currently employed (422) had better experiences than those who are currently unemployed (135)
  - 65% of currently employed say they get at least some opportunities from their current or former employer to progress, compared to 53% of currently unemployed
  - 84% of currently employed say they know at least a bit about learning and training opportunities available to them in their current or former role, compared to 74% of currently unemployed
- Internet searches (46%), employer (19%) and colleagues (19%) the most popular ways to find out about how to develop new skills for the workplace
- Learning as you go (32%) the most popular way to develop skills for the workplace, followed by formal external training (25%) and certified courses provided by an educational establishment (22%)
- Cost (37%) and time (35%) the biggest barriers to taking up training opportunities, followed by not knowing what type of training would help me progress in my career (12%)
- Most Talk Londoners (64%) are not aware of any government support to undertake training. A quarter (25%) of Talk Londoners have heard of government support but don't know much about it.
- Most Talk Londoners (78%) think they would probably not be eligible for government support to undertake training, whilst 13% are not sure, and only 9% think they might be eligible.

Summary of discussion threads

- Participants suggested that offering subsidised or free access to industry software such as Adobe Photoshop, InDesign, Illustrator or Rhino would help Londoners build the skills required to work in London's creative industries
- One participant suggested there needs to be more research into how people learn, and that this understanding should then be reflected in the education system e.g. increasing age at which children start school
- Another participant suggested that there needs to be more support for SMEs to help them understand what skills they need to have a successful business e.g. by building an SME business performance database that any business can access for free and that would tell them what skills they are currently lacking in relative to other comparable businesses
- When asked about Advanced Learner Loans, participants had the following comments:
  - One participant was worried that she would not qualify due to her age

Another participant said she had looked into getting an Advanced Learner Loan but felt that the interest rate was too high and the repayment terms would be out of her control, so instead opted to pay for her course using a 0% credit card and personal savings