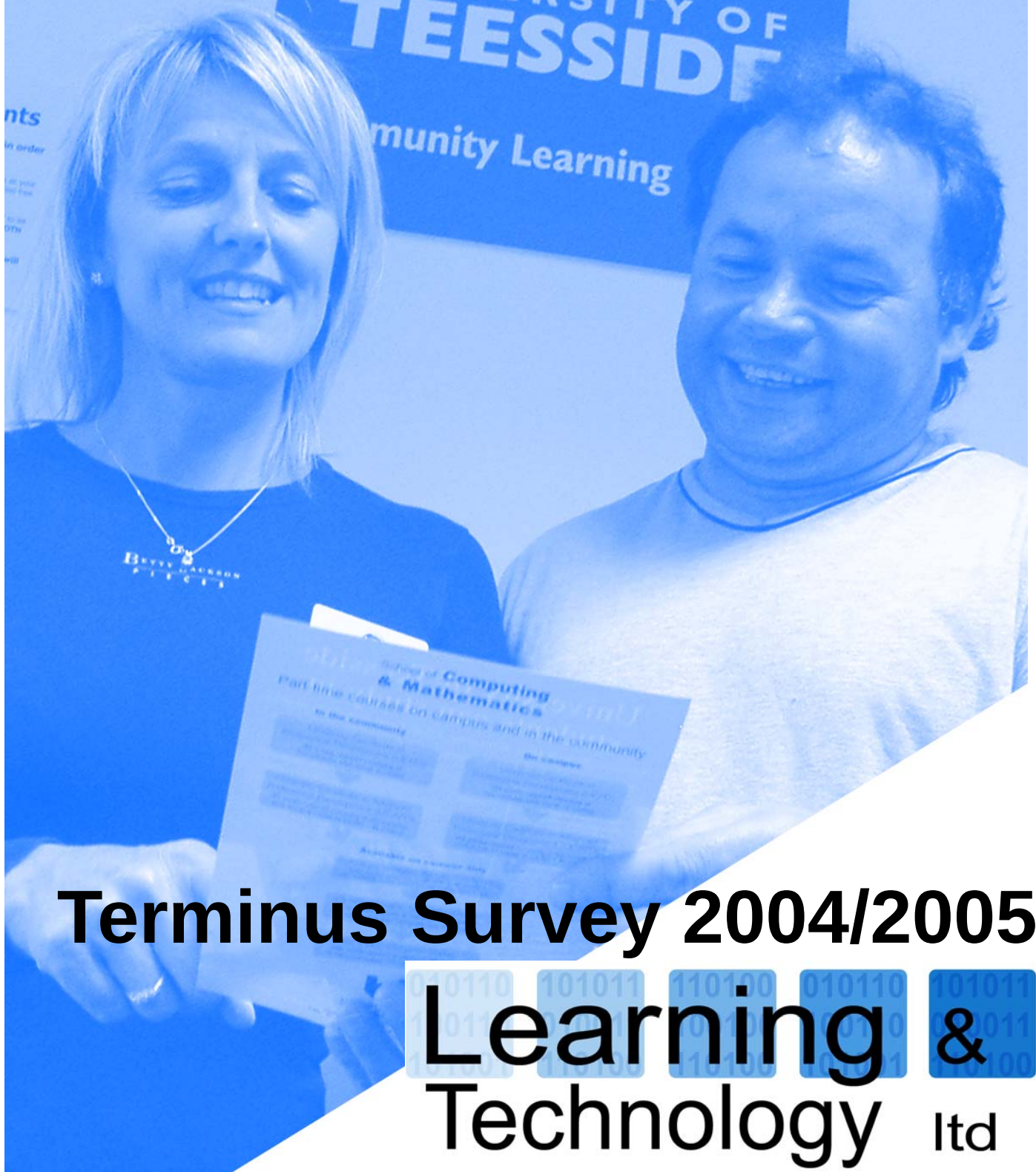


Adults Are Messy Learners ...



Terminus Survey 2004/2005

Learning & Technology Ltd

Contents

Foreword	2
Summary: The Student Experience	3
Introduction	4
Demographic Profile	5
Age Profile	6
Employment Profile	7
Where Do The Students Come From?	8
Health Profile	9
About UCPD Modules	11
About The Centre	13
About The University Course Notes	16
About Your Time in the Centre	19
About Your Learning at Terminus	21
Miscellaneous	24
The Questionnaire	27
Conclusion	30

Foreword

The title for this report was inspired by Tony Blair who, to mark the beginning of Adult Learners Week 2005, stated that *“Adults are untidy as learners.”* He went on to say

“.....they start from different places, have different experiences to draw on, and learn in different ways. Some clear the decks for a period of single-minded study. Others squeeze time in after midnight, or early in the morning. Some learn in classes; others through contributions to voluntary organisations. Some learn at work; some whilst unemployed.”

Hence strengthening the case for more diverse and flexible learning.

“The key messages – that learning is good for your health, your self-esteem and your employability, whatever your age, stage or previous education – are backed by solid evidence. There is plenty of passion for learning once it is unlocked, and one person’s confidence spills over onto others.”

Summary: The Student Experience

The following report contains tables detailing the students responses to the questionnaire by number, and by percentage. Some comments are included which highlight the extremes of view. The general view of the students, taken from the statistical evidence, and their comments, is presented below, organised by category.

The Programme: About UCPD Modules

Students value the flexibility of the courses. They find our delivery method to be an informal way of learning, but having deadlines helps them stay focused. They like having workbooks to keep for future reference, but feel that some extra input from tutors would be beneficial in some modules, e.g. **Digital Imaging** and **Spreadsheets**. Having open access to a tutor is very re-assuring, although there can be a long wait to access support during busy times at the centre. Some tutors are more skilful than others at handling a busy training room. Some students believed that the gap between cohorts is too long.

The Content: About University Course Notes

Although students are generally satisfied with the course notes, they observed that there is an overall lack of quality control. There are mistakes in the notes; some screen shots are out of date, or illegible, and some modules fail to explain new concepts with sufficient clarity. The amount of time needed to complete the work contained in one week's workbook varies significantly from module to module. Most students feel that two hours a week isn't enough time to work through each workbook. In some modules the assessment is not confined to the material covered in the preceding work. It is felt that although Essential IT is intended for complete beginners, that it remains daunting for some, without more intensive tutor support.

The Environment: About the Centre

The students find the facilities at Terminus to be of a very high standard. The friendly, and relaxed atmosphere makes it a good place to study. The staff are welcoming, and supportive, and students appreciate being able to talk to them about their work. The opening hours allow flexible learning, and having access to good quality refreshments is a bonus.

Although many students work from home, some use the Centre to relax, and meet friends when not doing UCPD.

The Motivation: About Your Learning at Terminus

Many students are studying to 'keep their brains active', to make better use of their own computers, or assist them in their voluntary work, or hobbies. Some want to keep up with their children, and some to build their confidence. It has helped some students who have health problems, and others look on their learning as a chance to socialise with other students. About half of the students are interested in the qualification as an end in its own right, and most are proud to gain their UCPDs. Most enjoy using a learning process which is away from the classroom, and over which they have a large measure of control.

The students have many suggestions for new modules. Advanced versions of the courses already on offer, multimedia, animation, and computer maintenance were popular suggestions. Whatever the suggestion the overwhelming sentiment expressed was for the courses to be delivered at Terminus.

Introduction

In April 2002, Terminus 2 became the first of Learning & Technology Ltd's purpose-built venues for the delivery of lifelong learning opportunities to the people of the Borough of Redcar & Cleveland. Since then we have delivered over **3500** UCPD and UCAPD modules for the School of Computing of the University of Teesside, and over **1800** courses through Learndirect.

It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the work of Terminus 2, the Terminus Project, and Learning & Technology Ltd. A readily understandable shorthand is to refer to all as "Terminus". The current situation is that the Terminus Project, established in July 1998, and funded variously by **One North East**, **ESF**, **New Opportunities Fund**, the **Learning & Skills Council**, and by its own commercial efforts, concluded on September 2004. From that date, no further public funding has been given, or requested. Terminus 2 is now a 'self-sufficient' venue, governed by the **Terminus Learning Community** steering group. Learning & Technology Ltd. hires its facilities to deliver UCPD/UCAPD courses for the University of Teesside. Note: other agencies, such as **Prior Pursglove College**, also hire the facilities to deliver their courses.

In September 2004 Learning & Technology Ltd entered into an arrangement with **Loftus Development Trust** to assist in the delivery of Learning & Technology's UCPD targets at their centre in Loftus. A service level agreement was made between the two organisations to formalise the arrangement. The centre at Loftus met the targets set by Learning & Technology Ltd. during the academic year 2004-2005, and we are now in negotiation to secure a continuation of delivery into the academic year 2005-2006.

Negotiations are also in progress with **Preston Primary School** in Eaglescliffe who wish to assist us in the delivery of our UCPD targets for 2005-2006.

This method of expansion is more convenient than previously proposed methods, as it minimises potential additional workload on the University whenever a new centre is opened. From the point of view of the University, there is only one agency to deal with, no matter how many venues we open. All organisational, logistical, financial etc matters are channelled through one point, which is Learning & Technology Ltd.

It is important for all to understand that the new delivery points identified and brought on line are new Learning & Technology Ltd. centres delivering UCPD/UCAPD, and **not** new University centres.

Having delivered large numbers of UCPD modules for the University during the last 6 years, and having not undertaken a large scale survey since 2001, we decided it was time to instigate an annual survey. We intend to regularly monitor student reaction to all aspects of the training we deliver at Terminus 2, and in particular UCPD. In order to establish a benchmark, it was important to do this in the Autumn of 2004, ahead of the radical changes to the courses which will be taking place in Autumn 2005. The huge response we received has given us a collection of very valuable reference data.

Demographic Profile

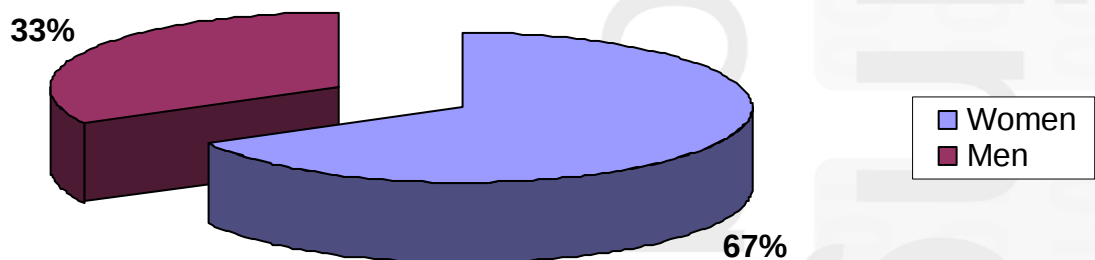
September Intake (Including Loftus Outreach)

The survey was completed during the first semester of the academic year (2004-2005) which traditionally sees the largest of the three intakes of the year. In this instance we had enrolled **354** students on **377** modules. The students studying at our Loftus outreach (**30**) were not included in the survey, but are included in this demographic profile.

The questionnaire was given out towards the end of the programme, and collected in over the course of two weeks. **226** questionnaires were given out and **146** were returned, a remarkable **64.6%** return. Only **53** of the students handing their questionnaire back in took advantage of the inducement offered - 50p off the next purchase of a cup of tea or coffee in Coffee@ Terminus.

Of the **354** students enrolled, **127** were new recruits to the UCPD programme, and **22** had progressed to the UCAPD programme.

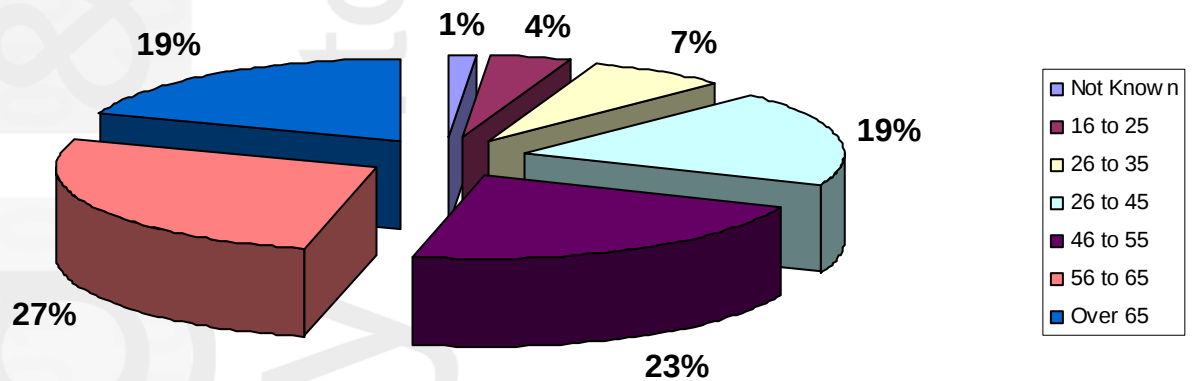
Gender Profile



In the four years that we have kept records of student profiles, this statistic has never varied. Even in the days when our total enrolment was less than 100, we always have twice as many women as men taking part in the courses.

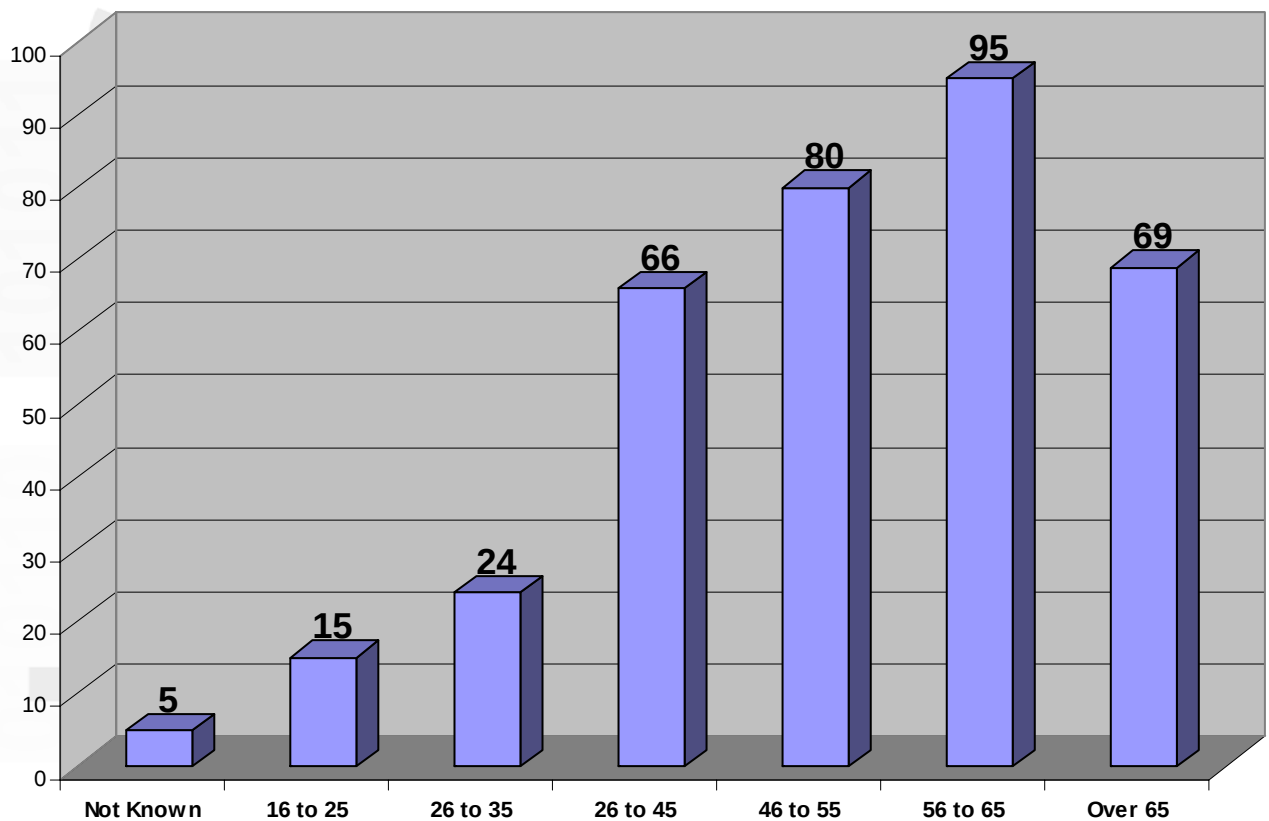
It is also noticeable that at Awards ceremonies, only **33%** of all of those entitled to attend will accept their invitations, but only **10%** of the men entitled to attend will do so.

Age Profile

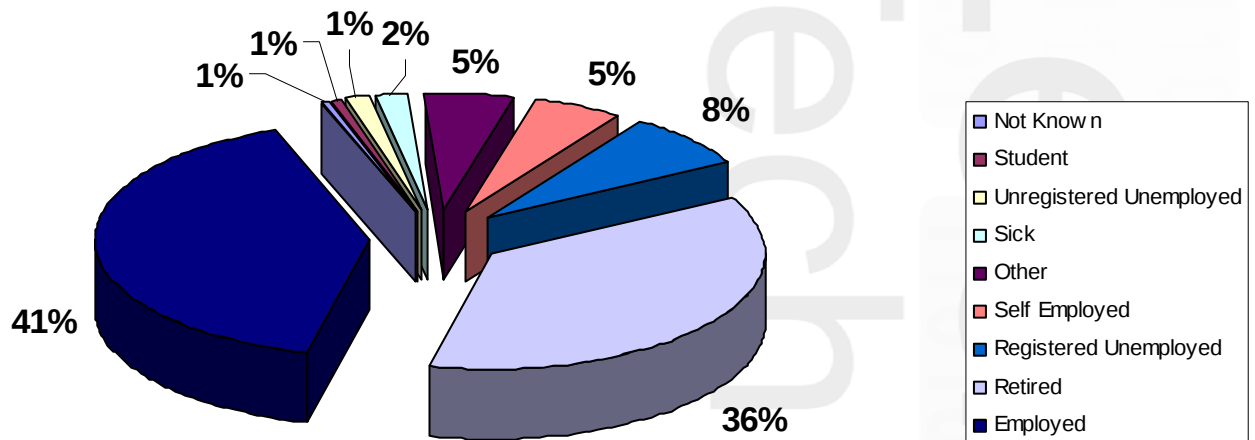


- The **Average** age of students in the period is **54.6** (peaked at **60** in 2003)
- The **median** age of the group is **56**
- The **mode** age is **63**
- The age category that most students fall into is **56 to 65**.

Age Profile

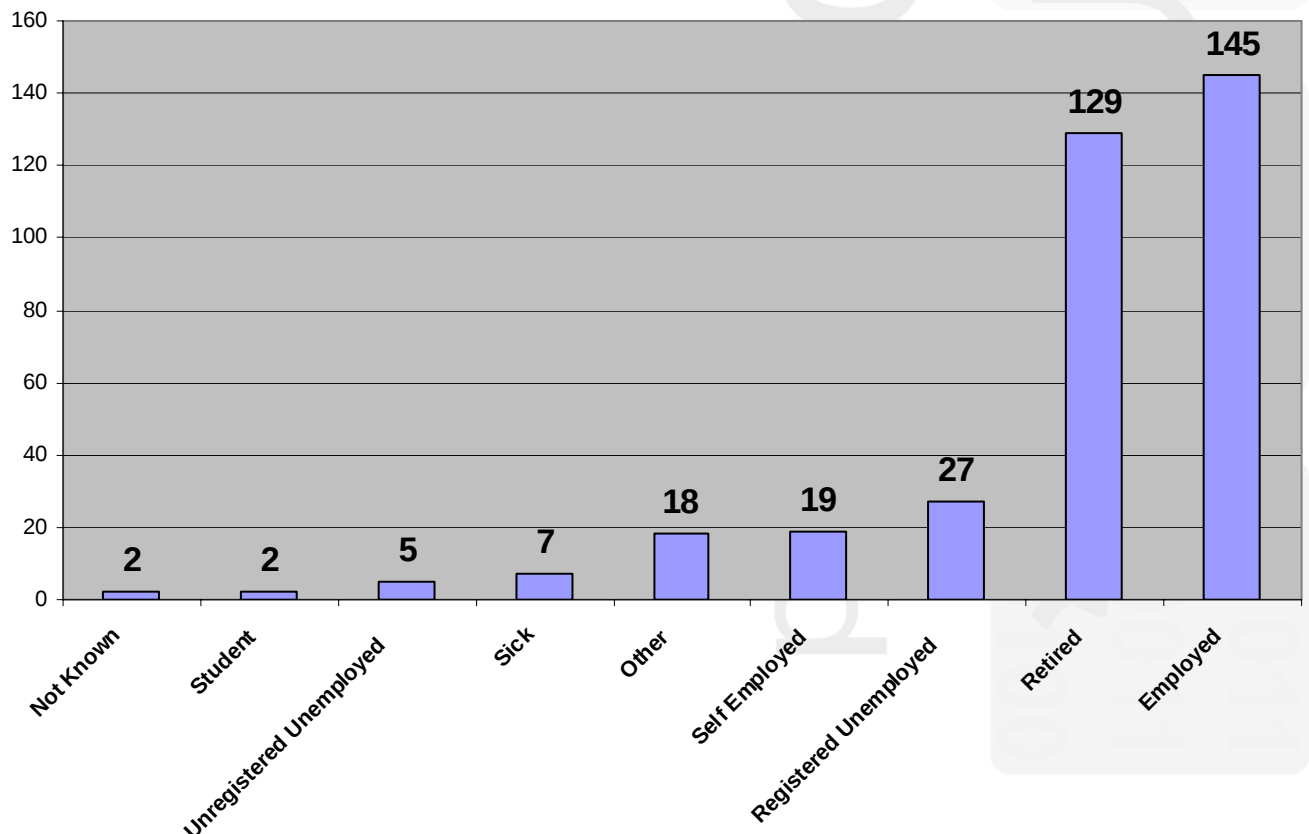


Employment Status Profile

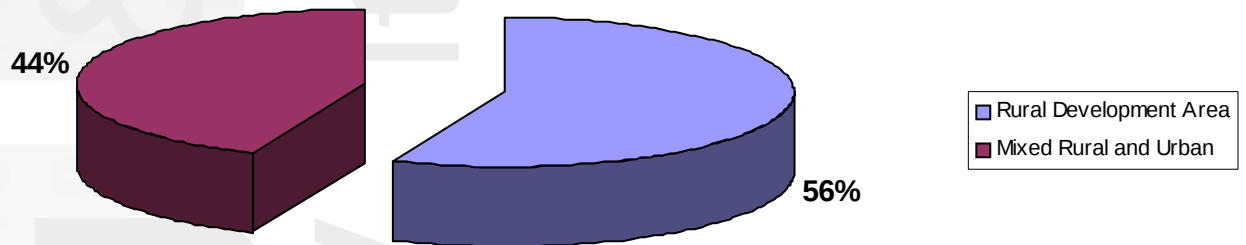


It has been perceived over the years that most of our students are retired from employment. These are the first set of figures I have produced which indicate an interesting shift. **46%** of our students are now, either employed, or self-employed, with only **36%** falling into the retired category. Note: there is no distinction in the employed category between full-time and part-time work.

Only **14%** of our students are unemployed. The largest category of these is 'Other' which the choice of 'housewives', 'mothers', and 'women returners', i.e. women who are unregistered unemployed.



Where do the Students come from?

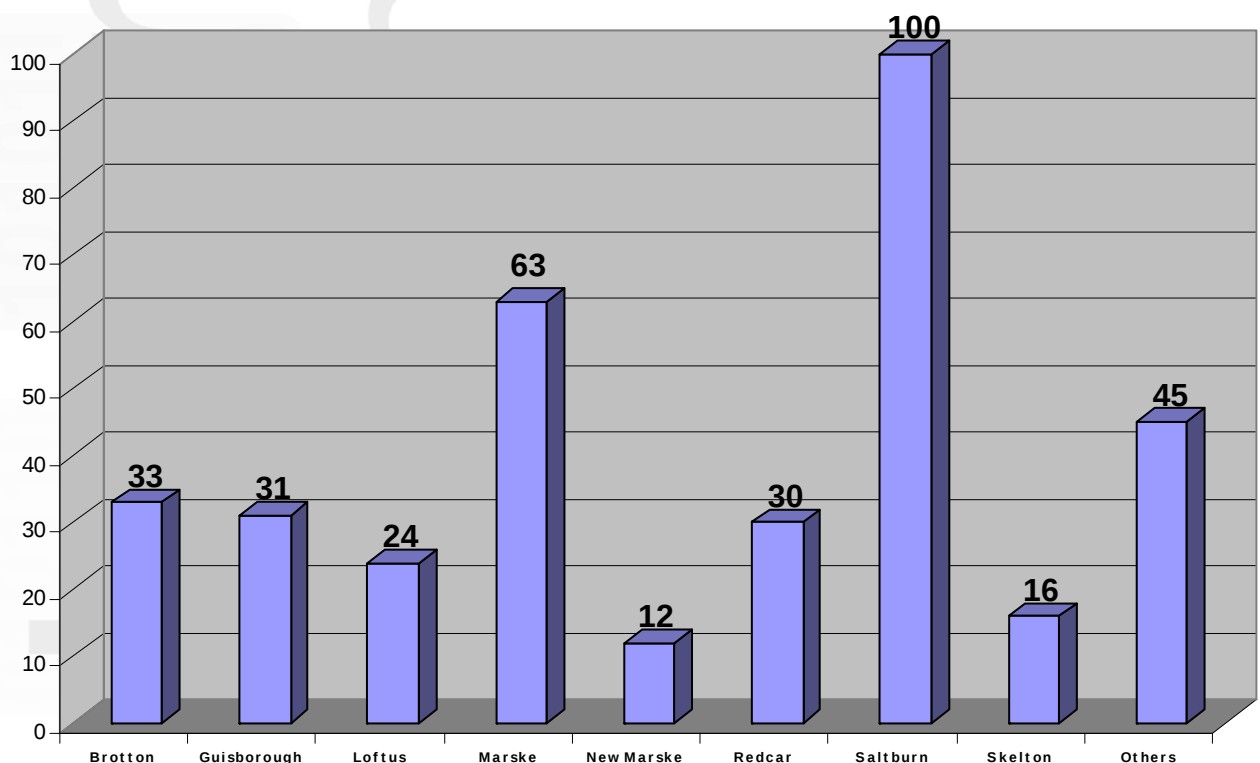


Terminus was initially conceived to serve the rural community of East Cleveland. It was supported for a number of years by **One North East** as part of their Rural Development Programme. This funder was primarily interested in us recruiting from within the Rural Development Area. However, a subsequent funder (*New Opportunities Fund*) allowed us to set our own target areas. Consequently, we record for both.

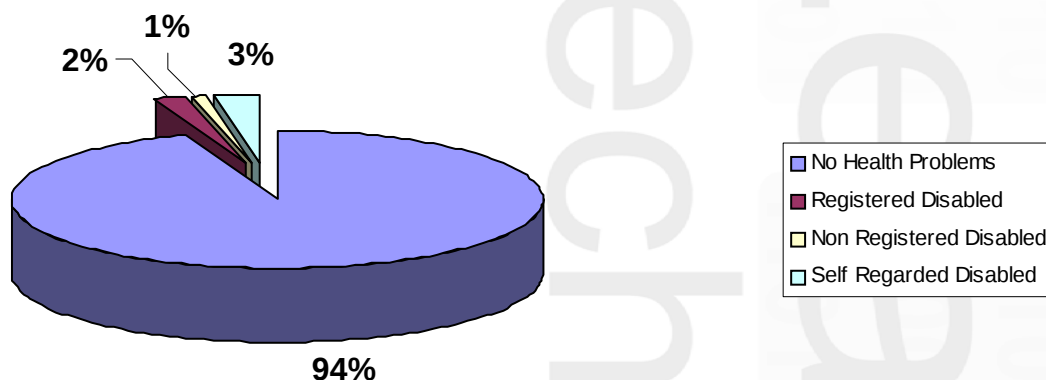
The pie chart above shows the proportion of students who live in the RDA. This amounts to **200** individuals (**56.5%**). Our expanded target area, which is the RDA plus Guisborough, Marske and New Marske, accounts for **305** of our students or **86%**.

Students attending our two centres live in **27** separate communities throughout Redcar & Cleveland, the Tees Valley, North Yorkshire, and beyond...

Where Do They Come From?



Health Profile



Facilities available at Terminus 2 to assist with access to disabled students include: a ramp for wheelchair access; 2 large screen monitors; 1 adjustable workstation; a purpose-built disabled toilet; various adaptive keyboards etc. These facilities, and the spaciousness of the centre has lead to a significant increase in students with mobility problems being able to access our services.

Hidden in the 94% of students who are not registered disabled are a growing number of people with dyslexia, dyspraxia, diabetes, mental health problems and age-related 'disabilities' such as partial deafness, and poor sight. These students apparently do not regard themselves as disabled.



Where do they come from revisited...

Barnard Castle Boosbeck Brotton Carlin How Easington Guisborough Hutton Village
 Ingleby Barwick Kirkleatham Lancaster Lingdale Liverton Mines Loftus Marske
 Middlesbrough New Marske New Skelton Normanby North Skelton Nunthorpe Redcar
 Saltburn Skelton Skelton Green Staithes Stokesley Whitby

Survey

2004 - 2005



1. About UCPD Modules

This multiple question is designed to test which characteristics of the UCPD module/programme are important to the student, and to what degree. It is a 'leading question' in that the characteristics listed were chosen by us, however the form invited comments from the students regarding unlisted features that they thought important.

Essentially there were three grades of answer offered, moving up from '*irrelevant*' at one end to '*very important*' at the other. Ambivalence was indicated by the '*not that important*' option, and '*no comment*' was available. The results are presented in descending order based on the '*Very Important*' response.

Most respondents chose to make a comment.

About UCPD Modules	No Comment		Irrelevant		Not That Important		Very Important	
Tutor Support is available	2	1%	0	0%	6	4%	138	95%
Location of Centre	2	1%	3	2%	8	5%	133	91%
Flexibility (Study at Centre or at Home)	3	2%	0	0%	15	10%	128	88%
Its Part-Time	1	1%	2	1%	16	11%	127	87%
Work-book based	6	4%	1	1%	16	11%	123	84%
Cost (FREE)	11	8%	12	8%	27	18%	96	66%
On-Line Support is available	4	3%	10	7%	56	38%	76	52%
Leads to a Qualification	4	3%	21	14%	47	32%	74	51%
Duration	10	7%	4	3%	61	42%	71	49%

Of the nine characteristics tested, the most important factor indicated was the *availability of tutor support*, closely followed by the *location of the centre*. The least important feature identified was the module *duration*, followed by *leads to a qualification* and *on-line support available*. Approximately **84%** regarded the **cost** as significant.

At **14%** the fact that the module leads to a qualification is the most irrelevant factor, and at **99%** the provision of tutor support is the most desirable feature to some degree (i.e. *Not that important* and *Very important responses* combined).



Student Comments - About UCPD Modules

- Satisfactory.
- Modules are very interesting and easy because we can work at our own speed.
- I find the work-books useful for future reference.
- Tutor support system could perhaps be improved by specific briefing sessions for specific work books. Understand the problem with fragmented nature of study topics.
- Very good courses and facilities.
- Flexibility is what is giving me the chance to do the course.
- You can work at your own pace.
- Opened my eyes to the usefulness of a computer.
- It's great.
- Very good all around.
- No complaints regarding UCPD modules.
- I think working towards a qualification is motivating me. But as retired, not necessary.
- It is a very flexible course which is ideal for busy people. You are not tied to certain days/times so you can nearly always fit it into your week.
- More tutor support would be helpful. Time wasted waiting for same.
- Provides a good grounding.
- As an IT beginner, UCPD modules have proved excellent.
- Some info in the work books are incorrect or for different operating systems... confusing!
- Great for me personally due to location and able to work at home.
- A ½ hour of tutor demonstrating a week would be very useful in Digital Imaging.
- Found a dead-line to work to beneficial. Also welcomed support from a tutor.
- I enjoy every visit.
- A nominal charge might prevent drop outs.
- I have found the courses excellent but some courses might be better with some lecture/class input.
- Course content very good.
- The support from the centre (T2) is very important as not all have the latest software or computer.
- There were a couple of mistakes in the modules!
- Excellent course

2. About The Centre

This multiple question is designed to test which characteristics of the venue, Terminus 2, are important to the student, and to what degree. It is a 'leading question' in that the characteristics listed were chosen by us, however the form invited comments from the students regarding unlisted features that they thought important.

Essentially there were three grades of answer offered, moving up from 'Not so Good' at one end to 'Good' at the other. Ambivalence was indicated by the 'OK' option, and 'no comment' was available. The results are presented in descending order based on the 'Very Important' response.

Most respondents chose to make a comment.

About the Centre	No Comment		Not So Good		OK		Good	
Customer Service	5	3%	0	0%	11	8%	130	89%
Refreshments	6	4%	0	0%	11	8%	129	88%
Standard of Advice given by Centre Staff	9	6%	1	1%	8	5%	128	88%
Comfort - Lighting	6	4%	2	1%	20	14%	118	81%
Comfort - Chairs	6	4%	0	0%	26	18%	114	78%
Comfort - Workstations	4	3%	1	1%	34	23%	107	73%
Temperature	4	3%	6	4%	37	25%	99	68%
Noise Level	5	3%	7	5%	42	29%	92	63%

Of the eight characteristics tested, the most agreeable factor indicated was the standard of *customer service*, closely followed by the (*quality of the*) *refreshments*, and jointly by the *Standard of advice given by Centre Staff*. The least positive response related to *Noise Level*. There were high approval scores across the board.

At **8%** and **7%** respectively, the noise level and Temperature in the Centre were the most disapproved of characteristics, all approval ratings (*Ok* and *Good* combined) fell in between **92%** at **97%**, a remarkable response!



Student Comments - About the Centre

- A very pleasant place to study.
- It can be too warm in the small room.
- Satisfactory.
- Well run, excellent staff.
- Lovely atmosphere.
- Hot snacks would be appreciated.
- The centre is nice, clean and airy. Staff very helpful and friendly. Not too keen on having small infants in crying or running about.
- Staff always happy to help and guide and smartly turned out.
- Too hot, distance from seat to screen I find a real problem regarding viewing of the screen.
- Nice relaxed atmosphere and the staff are very helpful and pleasant.
- *Work from home*
- Excellent conditions, excellent staff.
- Rather warm.
- *Most of my work is done at home*
- I thoroughly enjoy coming here.
- Very good.
- Staff are very helpful and encourage progress.
- Centre can be very warm.
- A pleasant well run centre.
- Tutors very helpful.
- Sometimes people who know each other ask each other for advice or sit and discuss their work and they don't do it quietly making it hard to concentrate.
- A+
- Noise level due to people – notices required.
- Standard of service does vary from staff member to staff member.
- No problems so far.
- Everything excellent.
- Temperature – always a bit too warm.
- Sometimes you have to wait a long time with your hand up to get seen/help.
- T2 staff are always excellent and always welcoming.
- No complaints at all about Terminus 2. A good atmosphere and staff very helpful.
- Excellent centre.
- The centre is just what I wanted to get me going otherwise I wouldn't have done anything.
- Staff are excellent, helpful and polite.

- It's very friendly and I enjoy studying here.
- Every service in the centre is excellent.
- Centre atmosphere is friendly and conducive to learning. Centre staff are very helpful.
- Better when Terminus staff had a more active role in advising.
- Good.
- I consider the centre to be excellent in all aspects.
- Staff are helpful.
- If there had been an excellent box I would have ticked it.
- Chairs too close – back to back when centre is full and busy.
- It is a great help if the staff are familiar with the various course content to assist refreshing/between course study.
- The centre staff are always helpful, customer service is excellent.
- Too hot
- The centre is excellent, clean and a good friendly service.
- No complaints.
- Excellent customer service from refreshment department.
- I am enjoying learning about computer skills.
- Staff are very friendly and helpful always.
- Wonderful place.
- The centre is of a very high standard as is the staff and all of the help given by everyone.



3. About the University Course Notes

This multiple question is designed to test which qualities of the course notes (*workbooks*) provided by the University are supporting the students, and which are hindering. It is a 'leading question' in that the characteristics listed were chosen by us, however the form invited comments from the students regarding unlisted features that they thought important.

Essentially there were three grades of answer offered, moving from 'Not so Good' at one end to 'Good' at the other. Ambivalence was indicated by the 'OK' option, and 'no comment' was available.

Most respondents chose to make a comment.

About University Course Notes	No Comment		Not So Good		OK		Good	
Consistency (<i>From week to week</i>)	5	3%	1	1%	43	29%	97	66%
Quality (<i>Production and Appearance</i>)	10	7%	2	1%	42	29%	92	63%
Style (<i>Easy To Read</i>)	11	8%	8	5%	38	26%	89	61%
Amount (<i>Not too little/Not too much for the time allowed</i>)	10	7%	13	9%	56	38%	67	46%
Clarity (<i>Good Explanations</i>)	12	8%	21	14%	56	38%	57	39%

Of the five characteristics tested, the highest approval levels were in respect of the *Consistency* of the weekly notes, and the *Quality (Production and Appearance)*. The least positive response related to *Clarity (Good Explanations)*. There were relatively high approval scores across the board.

At **33%** and **23%** respectively, the *Clarity (Good Explanations)*, and *Amount* were the most disapproved of characteristics, all approval ratings (*Ok* and *Good* combined) fell in between **77%** and **96%**, a good response!



Student Comments - About the University Course Notes

- Some courses more difficult than others.
- Most lesson books needed proof-reading, also confirmation of correct answers after question and tutorials.
- Some weeks could have done more.
- Some parts of subject not covered in course notes.
- Sometimes it feels like too much work and not enough time, but not all the time.
- Often presumptions are made which causes confusion.
- Found lessons (weekly) very confusing and hard to follow but assessment easy.
- Screen illustrations are sometimes illegible.
- PowerPoint could have been explained a little clearer.
- Best so far - Digital Imaging (Part 1)
- My experience is of a waiting list of 4/5 for a simple problem that has stopped me. Tutors appear to become involved in long/rambling student questions. Suggest more discipline?
- Best course so far – Digital Imaging 1.
- I find the clarity sometimes not easy.
- As long as you can read, OK.
- They are written as if we are all computer literate not beginners. More explanation required for what happens.
- Sometimes not quite obvious when reading what is wanted unfortunately.
- Most modules ok but spreadsheets 2 needed much more time and more explanation in books.
- Some aspects needed more clarity and reasons why it is done.
- Good.
- Very well presented.
- Some books seem easier to follow than others.
- Some modules have mistakes.
- The notes explain tasks clearly. I would find it easier for later reference if the module outline was written on an A4 page.
- Lucid and understandable.
- Good
- Some information not correct, not applicable to PC's at Terminus.
- Most course amount of work good. Spreadsheets 2 proved too much to learn in the time.
- There have been occasions when clarity could have been improved.
- Would like a bit longer on some modules.
- I usually need more time than is allowed.
- Each lesson, I need a lot more time at the centre before I complete the work.
- There are inconsistencies with respect to programs. i.e.: Web Authoring based on Front Page 2002 – has references to Front Page 2000.

- Some units could do with revision of previous courses. i.e.: Tables in Web Authoring.
- Hard to do Windows 2000 on computer with XP.
- Some modules could be explained better.
- Sometimes stages are omitted from notes.
- 2 hours a week not enough.
- I have found it difficult to complete some sections in the allotted time.
- This is dependant on the users own facilities, if any, as well as absorption capability and speed.
- Depends on the subject.
- Some of the search instructions could not be carried out presumably due to off-site restrictions.
- Simple editing would help students and save tutor time.
- Some of the examples could be made clearer.
- Gaps between courses too big.



4. About your time in the Centre

This question is designed to identify the most popular activities/uses that the students put the Centre to. The question gives a selection of possible activities and invites the student to enter a number representing the approximate number of hours per week that they spend on each of the activities. Consequently, there are many 'No Comments', which in this case represents the number of students not doing that activity at all. The number of students working exclusively from home was 17.

About Your Time In the Centre
Approximately how many hours per week do you spend
<i>Doing UCPD work</i>
<i>Doing Learndirect</i>
<i>Using the Computers for other Purposes</i>
<i>Socialising</i>
<i>Eating/Drinking</i>
<i>Relaxing</i>
<i>Other</i>

Hours	Students	No Comment	Ave. Hrs. Per Student
381.5	129	10	3.0
7	3	138	2.3
70.6	19	129	3.7
41.5	25	117	1.7
95	54	86	1.8
39	12	127	3.3
1.5	1	139	1.5

- **Doing UCPD Work:** 129 Students (88% of the respondents) come into the Centre to do their UCPD work each week. On average spending **3 hours** each week;
- **Doing Learndirect:** Only 3 (2% of the respondents) students reported doing Learndirect courses, and spent an average of **2.3 hours** a week at this activity;
- **Other Purposes:** Email checks, web browsing, printing and other activities were undertaken by 19 students (13% of the respondents), averaging **3.7 hours** each per week;
- **Socialising:** 25 students (17% of the respondents) spent an average of **1.7 hours** per week socialising in the coffee shop facility;
- **Eating/Drinking:** 54 students (37% of the respondents) admitted to spending **1.8 hours** per week using the coffee shop facilities for refreshment purposes.
- **Relaxing:** 12 students (8% of the respondents) spent an average of **3.3 hours** per week relaxing;
- And 1 student spent **1.5 hours** a week doing something else!

Everybody (including the 17 who worked from home) used the facilities at the centre in some capacity each week.

Student Comments - About Your Time In The Centre

- *I usually work @ home*
- *I have done all the course at home*
- *Work @ home*
- Have tea while doing UCPD work
- Good centre, well run.
- Very good that you can sit and chat and have a break whenever. Nice relaxing atmosphere – except when infants are in.
- *Work from home*
- I like it as it is a good mixture of ages.
- Enjoy relaxing at Terminus 2.
- Pop in when necessary.
- Very good.
- Need at least 5 years!
- Overall I enjoy my time in the centre. Everyone very friendly.
- Comfortable surroundings.
- *Do my work at home*
- I think more than 2 hours use of computers should be available per week if needed.
- I use the allotted hours
- Enjoy coming here.
- This varies - some weeks I come more and some less.
- This was backed up by work on my home computer (approximately 8 hours per week).
- *I mostly work from home*
- At 76 it helps to keep the brain ticking over. (Didn't have Elements 2 or Internet at home).
- Work at home - 12 to 14 hours per week for Spreadsheets (Part 2) - too long.
- A very user friendly centre – great coffee.
- The centre is very friendly.
- Terminus is excellent, the café style with encouraging staff – I would not have done any UCPD without Carole's initial suggestion.
- *I do all my work at home*
- Enjoying the course.
- The centre is very welcoming and friendly.
- Very nice environment.
- Additional to course attendance it is usually a combination of socialising, eating/drinking and relaxing.
- Due to my shift pattern at work I prefer to work at home doing UCPD

5. About your Learning at Terminus

This question is designed to identify the most popular reasons that students enrol on UCPD modules in the first place. The question gives a selection of the most likely possible reasons, and invites the student to indicate one or more reason (whichever apply). Consequently, the total number of reasons logged exceeds the total number of students. Only 5 'No Comments' were noted.

About Your Learning at Terminus	Reasons
<i>For Recreation</i>	104
<i>Good for your CV/ Job Prospects</i>	50
<i>Boosting Skills for your Current Job/Business</i>	46
<i>Getting a Qualification in something you already know</i>	32
<i>Using it as a FREE taster for University Study</i>	28
No Comment	5

- **For Recreation:** 104 Students (71% of the respondents) come into the Centre to do their UCPD work each week as a non-vocational activity. Either for their own amusement or for other non-academic reasons (see comments for further details);
- **CV/Job Prospects:** 50 Students (34% of the respondents) see UCPD as a useful tool in the pursuit of employment, as a means to enhance their chances of promotion, or;
- **Boosting Skills:** merely as a means of updating their skills to cope with a job they already have (46 students - 32% of the respondents);
- **Getting a Qualification:** Some students (32 - 22% of the respondents) already had the skills required of the course but had never validated them with a formal qualification. UCPD met that need;
- **Free taster:** 28 students (19% of the respondents) saw this as a painless assist in deciding whether to attempt a more long-term educational relationship with the University.;

Note: Some students had more than one reason for doing UCPD with us.

Student Comments – About Your Learning At Terminus

Why have you come to Terminus to learn?

- To keep the brain active.
- It's local and gives students access to tutors, although lack of tutor attendance between 4pm and 6pm was disappointing.
- Keeps my mind active by learning I.T. skills.
- Every course I've done I've enjoyed.
- I'm not so intimidated by computers now.
- I now have another interest.
- I have been impressed with the courses as a whole only the last two have not been up to the usual standard.
- I feel more competent using a computer for my own benefit.
- It has helped a lot.
- To help me make better use of my own computer.
- I had many in-house computer training programmes - none of which produced a qualification.
- To increase knowledge – computers.
- Learning, useful and keeps brain churning!!
- I am retired, but learning at Terminus keeps brain working.
- I want to feel part of the 21st century. Computer skills are proving useful.
- Retired - job prospects irrelevant.
- Personal development.
- To get ahead before my children start.
- Looking forward to carrying on for a degree.
- It's a great local resource.
- Trying to keep brain active.
- I am hoping to learn more on the animation/illustration side.
- Digital Imaging has been a big help with my digital photography.
- To gain a qualification in something - had little knowledge.
- It's good to relax and chat with other students.
- Although retired, I do use many computer skills for my voluntary work e.g: school governorship.
- To make better use of my home computer.
- Doing these courses has made my retirement interesting and have helped me to communicate and create.
- Trying to keep up with daughter.
- Morale booster.
- Studying helps to keep brain active in 60+.
- Stops me losing my grey cells.

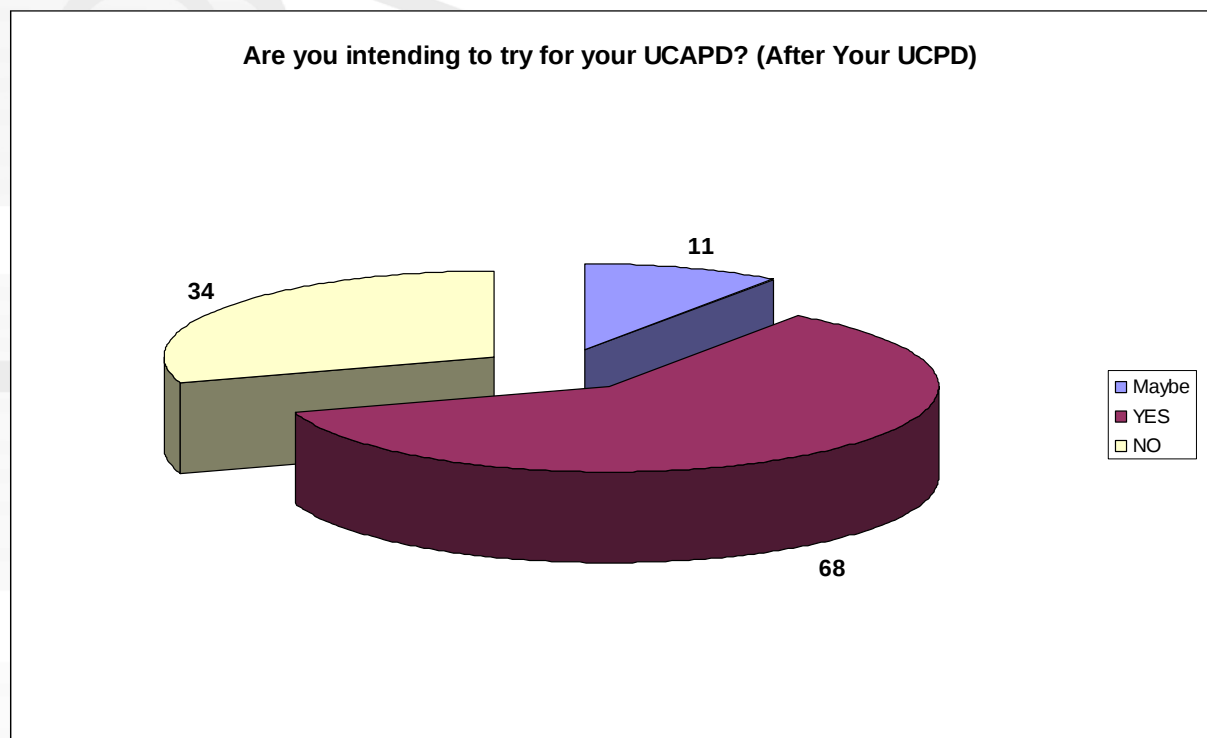
- Main reason to boost basic skills.
- Basically to become slightly computer literate.
- Thinking about doing University study after UCAPD.
- Improve confidence in getting out and about.
- Having bought a computer, I want to use it effectively.
- Also for school fundraising.



6. Miscellaneous

This final questions were designed to identify the ambitions of current UCPD students, their interest in progression, their willingness to take part in non-standard delivery methods, and their ideas for new product. Those who chose not to answer any of these questions are not shown. The 'no comment' is a positive statement not merely a default. For example: 113 of the students had no suggestions to make for new modules to be included in the programme, 29 did have some ideas and 4 didn't answer the question.

The students were invited at this stage in the questionnaire to make any comments about the above questions, or anything else that they wanted to comment on.



	Maybe	YES	NO	NC
Are you intending to try for your UCAPD? (After Your UCPD)	11	68	34	31
Did you do a Fast-Track UCPD Earlier This Year?	0	15	99	32
Do you have any ideas for New Modules?	2	29	51	62

Subject 6 – Any other comments

- I sometimes feel frustrated waiting for help but the tutors do their best. I found present assessment difficult as I was unable to do any at home.
- I found this course and assignment very hard as beginner who hadn't learnt to turn on machine to be expected to do slide shows in 6 weeks – ridiculous.
- *Module suggestion:* home finances, CD cataloguing, etc. (practical spreadsheet/databases);
- I would like to see a range of level 2 courses which could also be done from Terminus and a bigger range of level 1's to allow students to go on to achieve a certificate of higher education. Many people do not have the time or flexibility to attend day or evening course at the university when in full time employment. Other modules could be: visual basic 1&2, introduction to digital music.
- More publicity needed for this excellent educational outlet.
- *Module suggestion:* A class based course related to internet applications would be useful with emphasis on topics identified by the class.
- An excellent community learning program. I'm pleased to be part of it. It has been a very important life line to me.
- The paper work to log in to the university is very ambiguous. Again assuming that we are all computer literate.
- There seem to be some modules which were on, but have now disappeared. Would like to see them back.
- I am at the end of the UCAPD - what can I do next?
- Was under misapprehension that course was camera orientated. (My fault!)
- *Module suggestion:* A course on digital cameras would be welcome.
- *Module suggestion:* Ideas for new modules: system management & architecture, crash avoidance, system download, installation, network, multimedia, viruses, worms, Trojans etc.
- Handing in my work was a problem as I work and cannot get in at the times specified!
- *Module suggestion:* Computer maintenance would be ideal for module.
- The assessment is taking longer than I envisaged. Formatting and presentation taking most of the time. I seem to be spending at least 2 hours a day (on own computer) to get it done. (This is during 1st week, but the end is in sight.)
- Sometimes it is difficult to get the tutors attention, or you may have to wait a while waiting to ask them for help while they attend to someone. If there was a number system to flag the tutors' attention when they have finished helping a student, you could get on with something else knowing they will come to you when it's your turn. Something like the tickets used at deli counters in supermarkets or number boards to put on your computer or flags.
- Refresher courses for each module. More instruction, transferring disk to disk. i.e. Powerarchiver. Why no help from centre staff – as used to happen?
- *Module suggestion:* Introduction to Programming
- *Module suggestion:* Use of Outlook on intranet, and Powerpoint advanced
- *Module suggestion:* specific Powerpoint one is all I can think of.
- This first session has been clearly explained and very instructive. It provided a stepping stone for further study.
- *Module suggestion:* I'd like some modules in animation.
- *Module suggestion:* Digital Photography or any further courses on Photoshop
- Need more support from tutors

- *Module suggestion:* Introduction to animation? More art based modules?
- Most Microsoft Office applications have been completed except PowerPoint, this was touched on in the Intro to IT but not followed up.
- *Module suggestion:* Is it possible to do a family history module showing how to find information.
- The atmosphere in the whole of the building is friendly and conducive to learning with enjoyment.
- *Module suggestion:* One or two modules on video editing would be popular as many households now have camcorders. A module on solving problems associated with computer operating systems would reduce much anxiety among most users.
- *Module suggestion:* A course on setting up and maintaining and solving problems in everyday computer use would be useful as personally I can now use the computer but cannot solve problems i.e.: internet connection breaking down.
- Don't know if going on any further; find I do not have a PC Brain!!! But will miss coming here as It has been challenging (and stressful).
- *Module suggestion:* Suggest downloading programs, more day to day usage of computer i.e.: copy disc, re-boot - errors - firewall install, what to look for – start up. Buying computers and accessories.
- *Module suggestion:* Accounts course, book-keeping
- I don't think any of the courses would be that easy for someone who knows nothing about computers. I am sure a much more basic course with more tutor support would be helpful for absolute beginners.
- *Module suggestion:* It would be interesting to see a part 2 for word-processing and desktop publishing.
- *Module suggestion:* Advanced Web Authoring, Advanced Word. Certain instructions for tasks on Blackboard could not be followed, e.g. The Internet lesson 6 tutorial feedback quiz not available.
- *Module suggestion:* Digital Photography to follow Digital Imaging 2.
- Would it be possible to create a "fault finding / correction" module. Currently my 'outlook express' programme does not work and I have been 'bounced' between the computer and supplier, the internet server and Microsoft.
- Would have liked to have fast – tracked but cannot remember being offered the opportunity.
- After reading the assessment for digital imaging 1, I do not think that the course work books have prepared you adequately compared with other modules I have undertaken.
- Animation – being able to do simple animations would help with other modules such as when we do web pages.

The Questionnaire

NAME:

This field is optional

There will be some major changes in the way the University delivers the UCPD course next academic year. We would like to be able to influence these changes to meet your needs. Please help us to do this by completing this Survey/Feedback form and leaving it in the UCPD post box.

If you hand your completed form to Carole you can claim 50p OFF your next single purchase from the Coffee Shop.

Could you rate the following please:

1	About UCPD Modules	Irrelevant	Not that Important	Very Important	No comment
	Cost (Currently FREE)	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Duration	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Location of Centre	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Flexibility (Study at Centre or at Home)	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Leads to a Qualification	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Its Part-Time	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Tutor Support is available	☐	☐	☐	☐
	On-Line Support is available	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Work-book based	☐	☐	☐	☐

COMMENTS

2	About the Centre	Not so good	OK	Good	No comment
	Temperature	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Noise Level	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Comfort - Chairs	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Comfort - Workstations	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Comfort - Lighting	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Refreshments	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Customer Service	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Standard of Advice given by Centre Staff	☐	☐	☐	☐

COMMENTS

3	Have You Tried A Learndirect Course Yet?	Not so good	OK	Good	No comment
	How did you rate the experience?	☐	☐	☐	☐

4	About University Course Notes	Not so good	OK	Good	No comment
	Consistency (<i>From week to week</i>)	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Quality (<i>Production and Appearance</i>)	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Amount (<i>Not too little/Not too much for the time allowed</i>)	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Clarity (<i>Good Explanations</i>)	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Style (<i>Easy To Read</i>)	☐	☐	☐	☐

COMMENTS

5 About Your Time In the Centre

Approximately how many hours per week do you spend

Hours

- Doing UCPD work*
- Doing Learndirect*
- Using the Computers for other Purposes*
- Socialising*
- Eating/Drinking*
- Relaxing*
- Other*

COMMENTS

6 About Your Learning at Terminus

Why have you come to Terminus to learn?

Reasons

- For Recreation*
- Good for your CV/ Job Prospects*
- Boosting Skills for your Current Job/Business*
- Getting a Qualification in something you already know*
- Using it as a FREE taster for University Study*

**Tick As Many
Boxes As Are
Relevant**

COMMENTS

7 Are you intending to try for your UCAPD? (*After Your UCPD*)

YES/NO

8 Did you do a Fast-Track UCPD Earlier This Year?

9 Do you have any ideas for New Modules?

ANY OTHER COMMENTS: (Use Separate Sheet If Necessary)

THANK YOU VERY MUCH! NOW PLEASE HAND IN TO CAROLE TO CLAIM DISCOUNT.

Conclusion: Addressing Student Needs

Excellent approval ratings - could do better!

Although the student's comments were very encouraging, we need to address some of the problems they are facing. Encouraging completion of the UCPD programme, and subsequent enrolment on to a course of study for UCAPD, is a primary business goal of Learning & Technology Ltd.

Some highlighted areas where improvements can be made include:

- the course notes (*It is crucial that the course material is developed specifically for the 'target audience' in terms of content, format, tone, and general quality. We can only trust that the new notes currently being written will raise the standard on quality of content, pacing, presentation, clarity, appropriateness of language, and relevance*);
- the tutors (*It may be that some tutors have little or no empathy with the students, who they seem to treat as they do on-site students. On-site students are usually continuing their education from college, and have different needs. The majority of community-based students are returning to formal education after a gap of **many** years, some with bad experiences of school, and as a consequence are trying to overcome a range of problems, as well as attempting to learn a new subject. They receive little or no specific help to bring them back into the world of education. In fact some tutors hold the view that students should not receive extra help as a matter of principle...*);
- administrative procedures (*Enrolment timing, number of sessions, length of sessions, complexity of forms, distribution of passwords, lack of 'freshers' experience, no NUS reps in attendance, also distribution of results*);
- the rewards (*The awards ceremony is separated from the completion of the final module by as much as **19** months!, there is little celebration (no official photographs, PR etc), arrangements are made at the last minute leaving no time for students to be encouraged to attend*).

We must: encourage students to become more independent in their learning; give them confidence in their study skills; and help our distance learners overcome any feelings of isolation they may have. Ideally this should be done in partnership with the University.

A greater range of flexible assistance, which might utilise the Internet, or might be independent of it, should be provided. For some inexperienced students the seemingly complicated process of attempting to access the Internet to gain support (*and the attendant anxiety caused*) make it an unfriendly option. Newsletters, and student mentoring should be considered alongside Blackboard. Attempts to use Blackboard as the sole source of critical information seems ill-conceived.

There are many other aspects of delivery that bear further examination if we are to succeed in supporting our students through to their awards, but for now, if we can start to address some of the above issues we will go a long way towards improving an already excellent provision.



UCPD Awards 2004



