# UNISON East Midlands

## Learning at Work Week 2020 – Member survey

This is third year we have conducted an all-member learning survey across the East Midlands. Questions have remained similar, in order to chart changes, but specific questions regarding online learning have been added to identify how the Covid-19 pandemic has affect learning.

Despite the large take-up of learning throughout 2020 the numbers aware of free courses has decreased to 62% whilst only 18% of members are aware of UNISON Learning Grants.
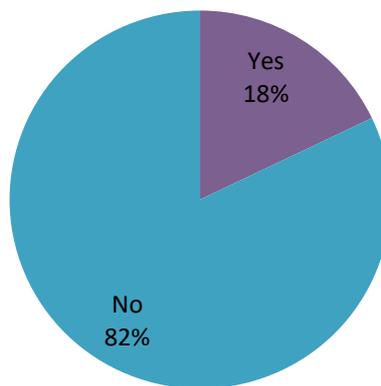
There were 2576 responses.
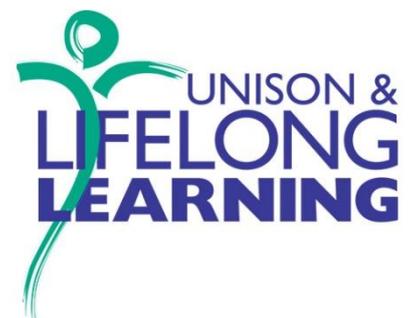
Did you know that UNISON had a programme of free courses for members?
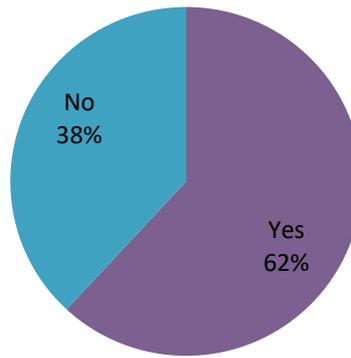
Value	Percent	Count
Yes	61.9%	1,594
No	38.1%	982
	Totals	2,576

Comment – Decrease of 2.5% on 2019

Were you aware that UNISON offered grants for members who are paying for their own courses?

Value	Percent	Count
Yes	17.9%	461
No	82.1%	2,109
	Totals	2,570

Comment – Decrease of 4.5% on 2019

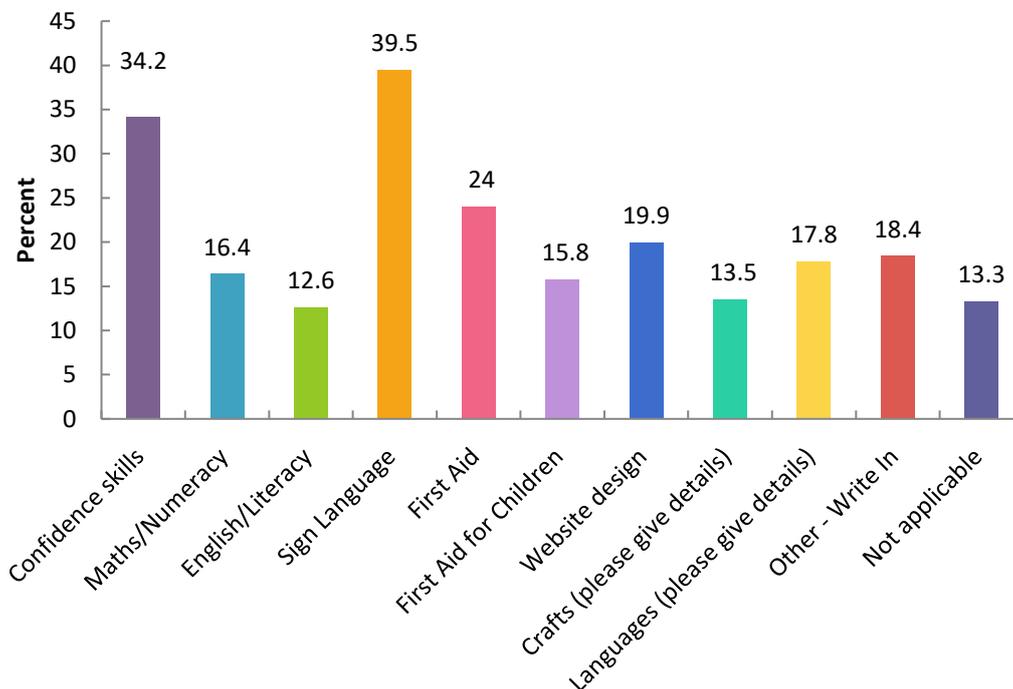**Did you know that UNISON has Union Learning Reps (ULRs) in many workplaces whose role is to support members around learning issues in the workplace?**
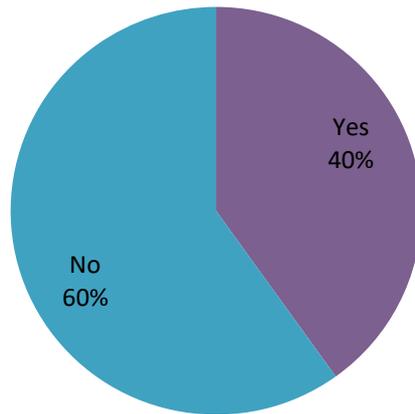
Value	Percent	Count
Yes	40.1%	1,029
No	59.9%	1,539
	Totals	2,568

Comment – Decrease of 3% on 2019

Which of these courses would you be interested in attending for your own personal development? (tick all that apply)

Value	Percent	Count
Confidence skills	34.2%	853
Maths/Numeracy	16.4%	410
English/Literacy	12.6%	315
Sign Language	39.5%	985
First Aid	24.0%	599
First Aid for Children	15.8%	394
Website design	19.9%	496
Crafts (please give details)	13.5%	337
Languages (please give details)	17.8%	445
Other - Write In	18.4%	460
Not applicable	13.3%	332

Comment – Figures are almost exactly the same figures as 2019

Crafts (Details)

47 simply stated 'any' although a large number also added 'to cope with stress/anxiety'. A number noted they would like skills to be able to use with service users whether that is children, vulnerable people, the elderly, or patients.

24 – Art/painting/drawing
15 – papercraft
12 – Jewelry

78 – Textiles (crochet, sewing, knitting, felting etc)
16 – Floristry/wreath making
15 – Pottery/ceramics

Other (details)

22 - Higher Level IT. Includes coding, graphic design and advanced programmes

90 – Basic IT Skills. Includes wide range of responses from 'IT' to 'Excel' to 'Facebook'

47 – Mental Health Awareness/support such as Mindfulness, Resilience etc

36 – Management/Leadership

22 – People skills. Includes counselling, dealing with difficult colleagues and influencing people

13 – Health & Safety

What learning would help you to carry out your job role or progress at work? Tick all that apply
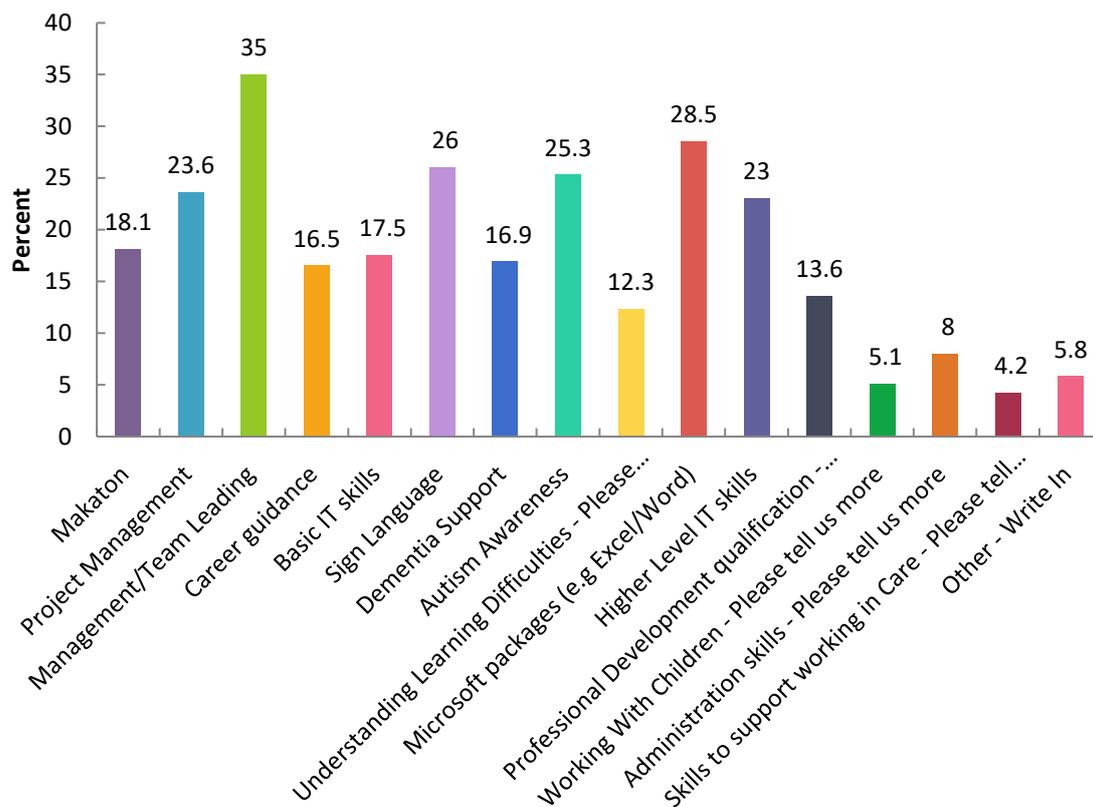
Value	Percent	Count
Makaton	18.1%	401
Project Management	23.6%	525
Management/Team Leading	35.0%	777
Career guidance	16.5%	366
Basic IT skills	17.5%	388
Sign Language	26.0%	577
Dementia Support	16.9%	376
Autism Awareness	25.3%	563
Understanding Learning Difficulties – See below for details	12.3%	273
Microsoft packages (e.g Excel/Word)	28.5%	633
Higher Level IT skills	23.0%	510
Professional Development qualification – See below for details	13.6%	303
Working With Children – See below for details	5.1%	113
Administration skills – See below for details	8.0%	177
Skills to support working in Care – See below for details	4.2%	94
Other – See below for details	5.8%	129

Comment – this question category has been added this year and includes a number of extra training options such as Management/Team Leading, which is the most popular request.

Learning Difficulties – Training needs
We asked for specific details and received a wide variety of responses. Most simply said 'all areas', highlighting a huge appetite to understand the issues facing service users, family members and colleagues. Communication and understanding feature prominently. Some specific requests included; ADHD (9), Autism/Aspergers (9), Behaviours (9), Learning difficulties in Children and Young People for example speech delay and sensory issues (13), and Dyslexia (14)

Sample quotes
- "I work in Police custody and there are issues around detained persons capabilities"
- "there is no mandatory training for teaching staff in SEN ed so I, as an ex nurse /health visitor, find it difficult to work as an LSA with untrained teaching staff."

Professional Qualifications – Training needs
Of the 303 comments there were almost 303 different responses. The responses are varied and reflect all areas UNISON members work in. Social Work, Nursing, Higher Level Teaching Assistant are all noted. A number highlight Access courses in a number of subjects.

Working with Children – Training needs
Across the comments a wide variety of issues were raised with sexualised behavior, safeguarding, anxiety and assertiveness most prominently noted.

**Administration – Training needs**
Many noted the need for general skills which included IT (9 responses), Spreadsheets and databases (7 responses), budgeting, dealing with people, letter writing and note taking (14), and Typing (8)

Working in Care – Training needs
Responses were similarly varied. Ranging from general to more specific requests such as Conflict Resolution and risk assessments

It would be worthwhile to survey sectors and job-roles to get more detailed findings.

Learning is an essential element of Health and Wellbeing. Would you be interested in any of these courses to support you or to gain a better understanding?
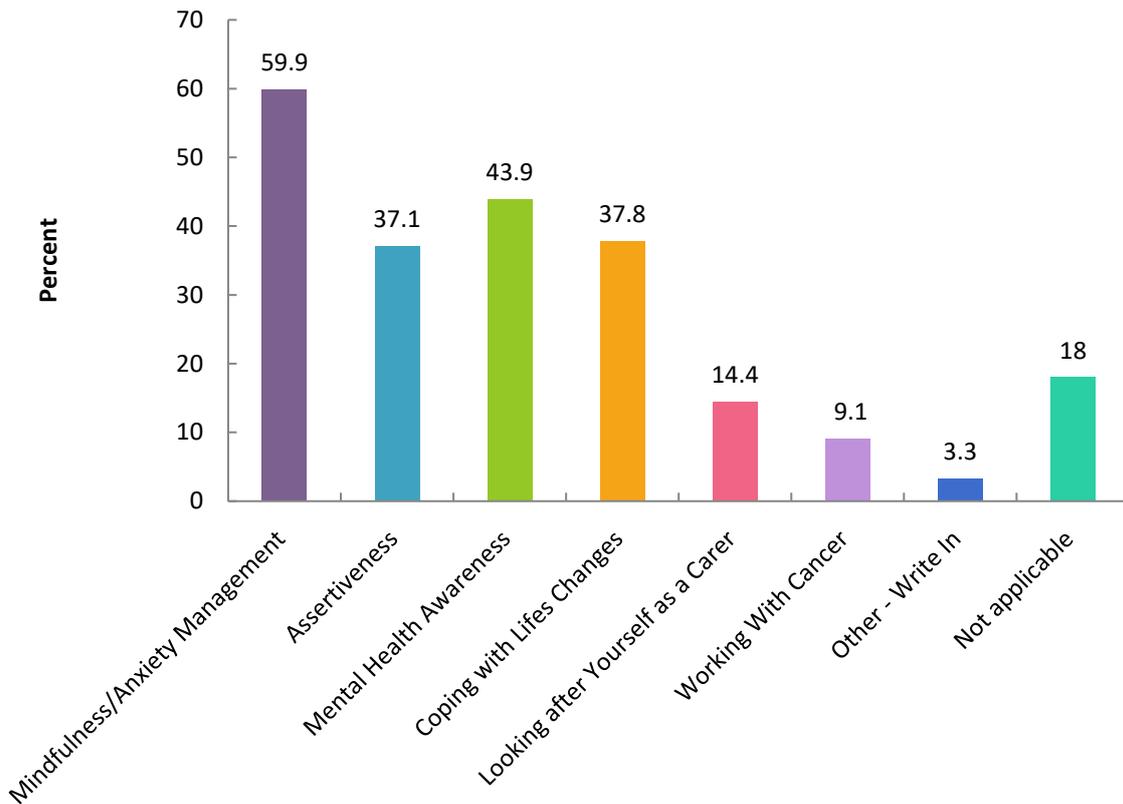
Value	Percent	Count
Mindfulness/Anxiety Management	59.9%	1,386
Assertiveness	37.1%	858
Mental Health Awareness	43.9%	1,016
Coping with Lifes Changes	37.8%	875
Looking after Yourself as a Carer	14.4%	333
Working With Cancer	9.1%	210
Other - Write In	3.3%	76
Not applicable	18.0%	416

Comment – there is an increase in interest in every one of these topics compared to 2019. Working With Cancer was added due to the popularity of this course delivered by Maggie's Cancer Care.

What is your experience of learning online?
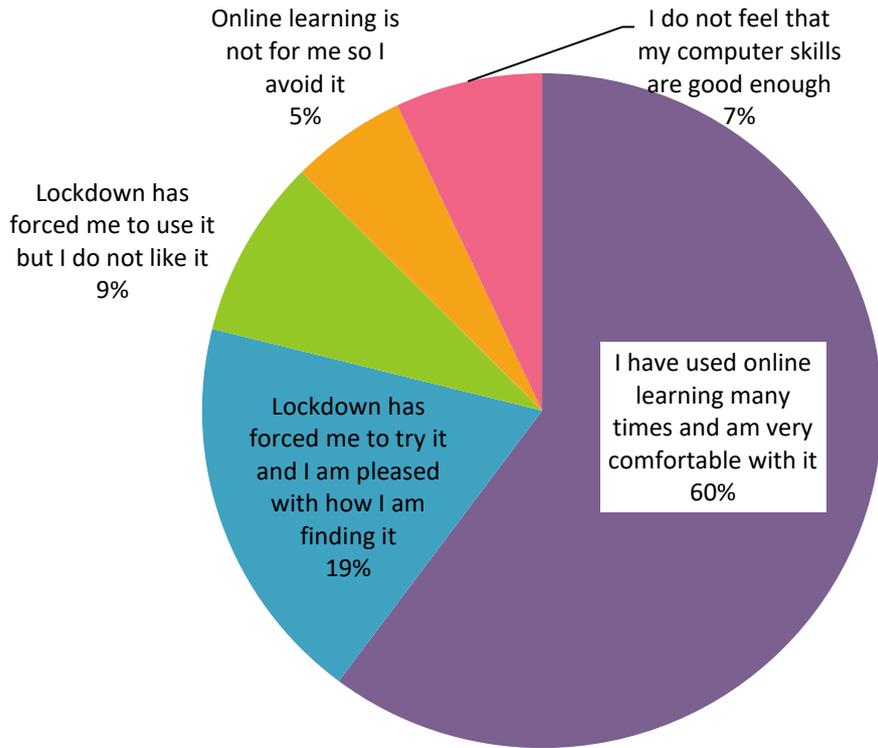
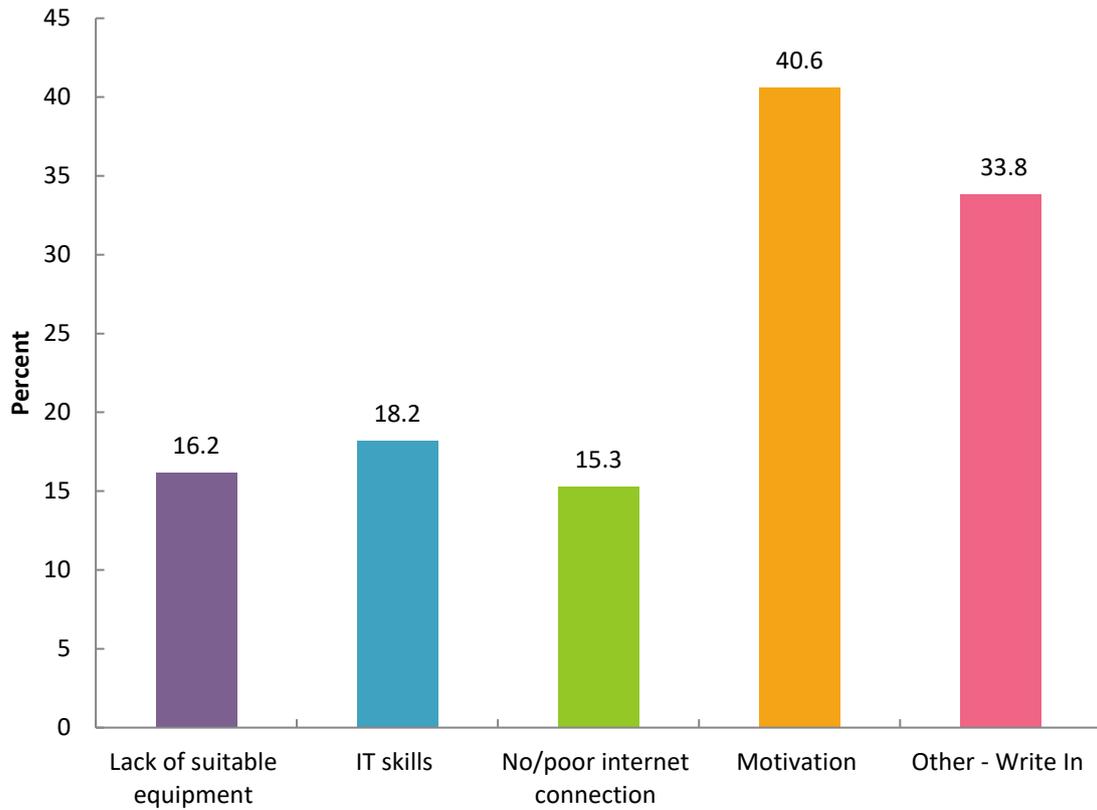| Value	Percent	Count
I have used online learning many times and am very comfortable with it	60.2%	1,400
Lockdown has forced me to try it and I am pleased with how I am finding it	18.7%	435
Lockdown has forced me to use it but I do not like it	8.6%	199
Online learning is not for me so I avoid it	5.5%	128
I do not feel that my computer skills are good enough	7.0%	163
	Totals	2,325

Comment – This question has been added as a result of a huge increase in online learning as a consequence of Covid-19. Whilst the vast majority are either used to online learning or have adapted well 12%, of those responding, are left out. Clearly an online survey will underestimate this number.

Do you have the right equipment you need for online learning?
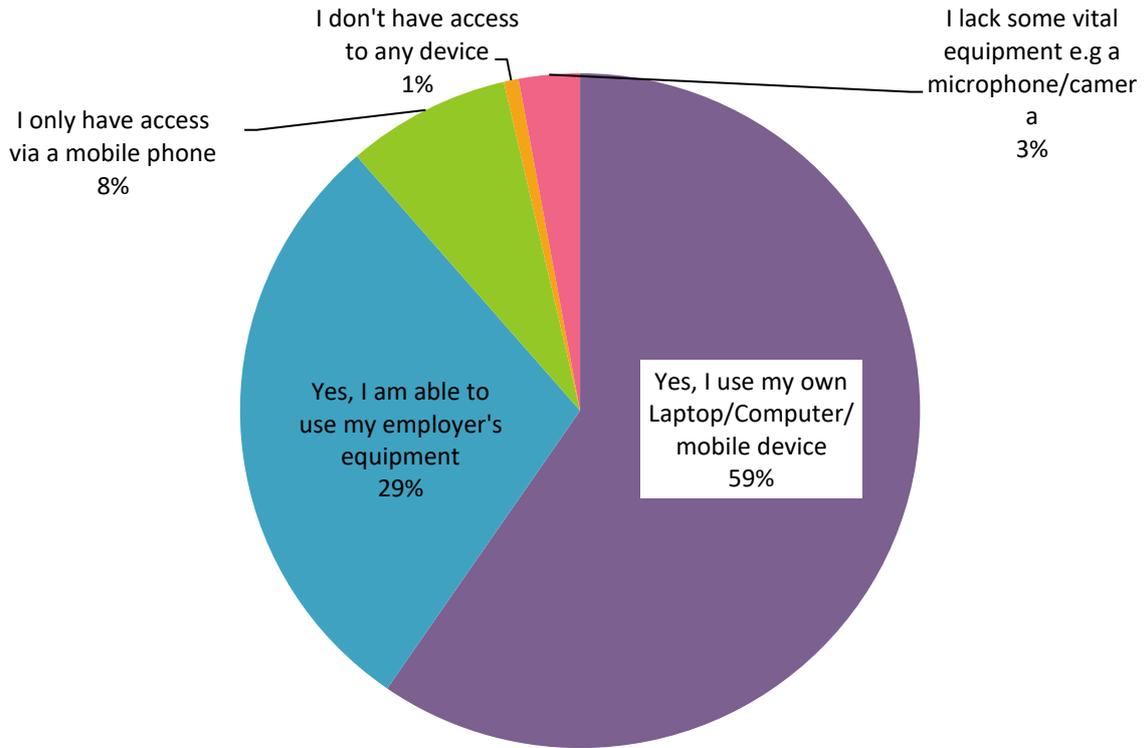
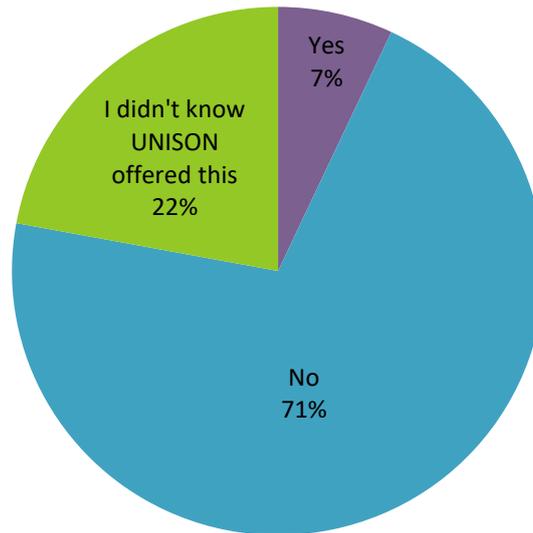| Value	Percent	Count
Yes, I use my own Laptop/Computer/mobile device	59.6%	1,421
Yes, I am able to use my employer's equipment	29.0%	692
I only have access via a mobile phone	7.8%	185
I don't have access to any device	0.7%	17
I lack some vital equipment e.g a microphone/camera	2.9%	68
	Totals	2,383

What are the biggest barriers to you taking part in online learning? Tick all that apply

Value	Percent	Count
Lack of suitable equipment	16.2%	334
IT skills	18.2%	374
No/poor internet connection	15.3%	315
Motivation	40.6%	837
Other - Write In	33.8%	697

Other - The greatest barrier noted is time with 311 responses and included work demands and caring responsibilities. 16 noted disability as a barrier and 22 stated cost. 17 identified IT issues acting as a barrier including old laptop, connectivity, no printer etc. Finally 54 stated that a lack of support from a tutor or that the lack of human contact was a barrier.

Have you undertaken any online UNISON courses?

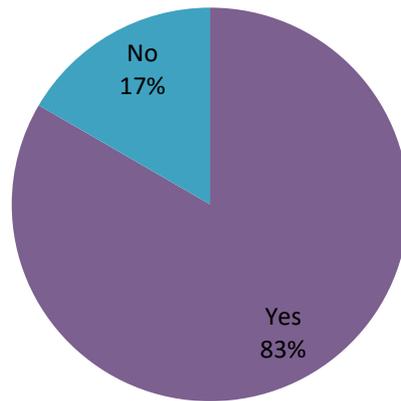| Value	Percent	Count
Yes	7.0%	167
No	70.9%	1,695
I didn't know UNISON offered this	22.1%	528
	Totals	2,390

Comment – 156 members told us which courses they had done. Responses were incredibly varied and included courses run by the region, the TUC, the skills academy and by UNISON National office (LAOS).

- Regional courses (examples) – Basic Excel, Makaton, Functional Skills test, ADHD, Website Design, Careers, and Mindfulness
- Skills Academy Courses (examples) – Drug & Alcohol Awareness Certificate, Adult Safeguarding, Electrical Safety, Admin & PA Diploma, and Operations Management
- LAOS Organised courses (examples) – Dementia Awareness (OU), Cruse Bereavement Care, and Family Tree
- Various others – Nutrition & Health, Customer Service, Team Leader, Infection Control and Counselling Skills (all Leicester College). Various free courses with the Open University

A few provided some feedback:

- Intermediate Excel – "it was great!" and "Very good experience, professionally delivered and impressed that learning has moved on due to covid and continued, great stuff, thank you, have done some excellent learning during lockdown"
- Dealing With Difficult Telephone Calls Training – "Excellent Course"
- "I have completed 2 level 2 courses at Leicester College - they were both online - I found this gave me focus and something for myself during the lockdown"
- Working with Cancer. "It was extremely informative and very helpful".
- Cruse course on bereavement. "Used zoom for first time ever. Tutor from London was excellent, as she guided us through really very emotional and sensitive subjects with professionalism, humour and humility. Helped me feel more confident to use zoom in a personal matter".

Would you be willing to request paid time-off work to attend training if it was relevant to your role or future roles?
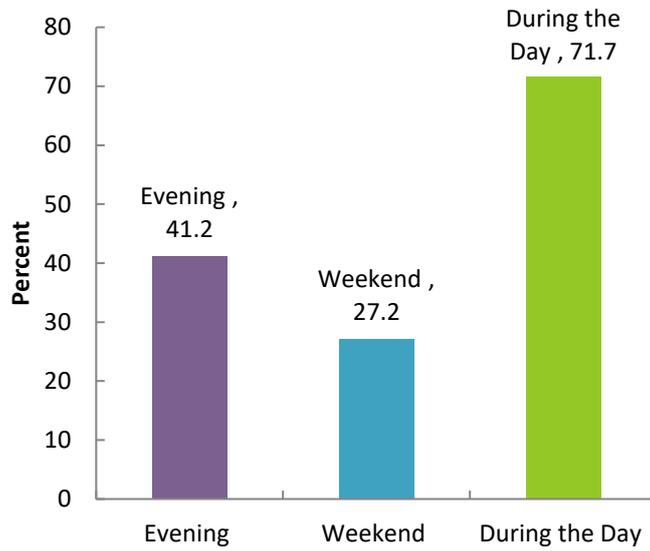

Value	Percent	Count
Yes	83.4%	1,970
No	16.6%	392
	Totals	2,362

If you were unable to get time-off would you be prepared to take annual leave?
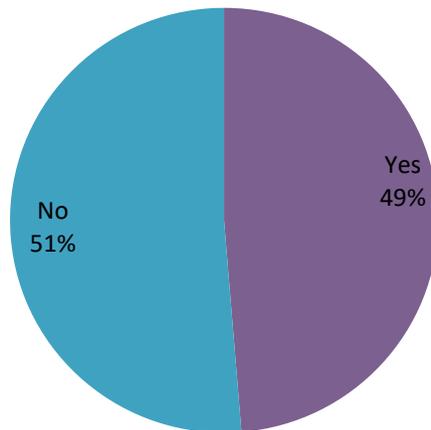
Value	Percent	Count
Yes	48.7%	1,150
No	51.3%	1,210
	Totals	2,360

When would you prefer to attend a course?

Value	Percent	Count
Evening	41.2%	963
Weekend	27.2%	637
During the Day	71.7%	1,676

Are you interested in helping other people to take up learning?
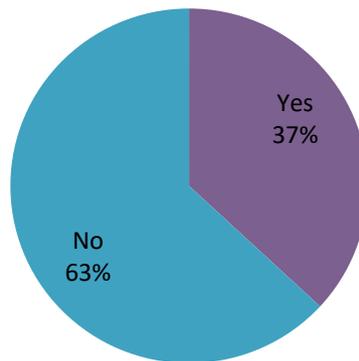
Value	Percent	Count
Yes	36.9%	872
No	63.1%	1,490
	Totals	2,362

Comment – Exactly the same for third year.   314 members have stated that they would consider the ULR role and would be happy to be contacted.