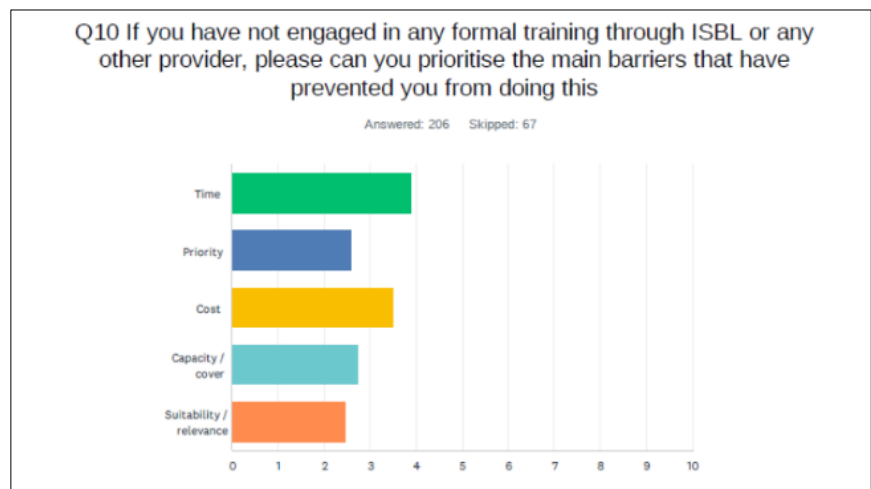


ISBL Training Survey Report 2023

ISBL carried out an annual training survey in 2023 in conjunction with the Department for Education (DfE) and received responses from 272 members and non-members across the school business profession. 55 per cent of respondents work within a trust, 40 per cent work in a maintained primary or secondary school and the remainder work in special or alternative provision schools.

Concerningly, of the 272 surveyed, over half (57 per cent) identified that they undertake less than three days of CPD per year, with 10 per cent undertaking none. So why are school business professionals (SBPs) not undertaking adequate amounts of CPD annually, especially when 65 per cent of respondents feel that their training needs are well met or very well met?

As shown, the main barriers identified were time, cost and capacity/cover.



If schools and trusts want to retain and develop staff, more needs to be done to overcome these barriers. The recent Hays (2023) salary and recruitment trends report¹ identified that more than half of employees still say their employer does not discuss their career progression plans with them, either on a termly or annual basis (see page 27 of the Hays report for more information). This needs to change, and SBPs need to be able to take advantage of professional development opportunities.

While just over half (53 per cent) think needs are ‘well’ met, only 13 per cent answered ‘very well’ and 35 per cent not well or not well at all. Therefore, what can be done to help meet the needs of the 35 per cent and improve the offer for the 53 per cent? Additionally, what would SBPs like to see in the future to meet their developmental needs?

70 per cent of respondents attended the DfE free webinars this year, and although many found these beneficial, 76 per cent would like to see a blended mixture of local training workshops in person as well as webinars in the future. Of significant interest were the methods and areas of training that SBPs would like to see more of in the future:



As shown, the majority of respondents would like more formally accredited training (80 per cent agreeing that receiving certification was important or very important) and short live modular webinars in particular.



In terms of areas of focus, this was evenly spread across the various discipline areas; however, HR, Finance, leadership and Estate Management were identified as areas of particular importance.

Following on from this, an overwhelming 90 per cent of respondents identified that they would be interested in an e-learning platform developed for SBPs to access pre-recorded modular training content that is differentiated and tailored to practice and practitioner level (94 per cent agreeing that this differentiation was important or very important).

Respondents were also overwhelmingly in favour of having the opportunity to engage in an online community with other learners and expert peers (76 per cent) as part of their training needs.

¹Hays plc. (2023). Salary and Recruitment Trends 2023. www.hays.co.uk/salary-guide/education