

Degrees: the key to social mobility? The role of credential inflation in reinforcing inequality through employment

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Abstract: *The London Effect has seen increased equalisation of educational qualifications across income and ethnic groups, causing London to be perceived as an extremely socially mobile city. However, evidence shows that equalisation of education has not translated into real social mobility. We hypothesize that credential inflation exists in London. Therefore education is insufficient in ensuring social mobility through employment, proposing a multitude of alternative factors which reinforce inequality in employability. By conducting semi-structured interviews with Londoners and social organisations within two London Boroughs, and through quantitative analysis of the London job market and the qualifications of its workforce, our study confirms our initial hypothesis. To analyse our data, we have coded the interviews according to broad themes, and used inter-coder reliability to affirm the validity of our analysis. We find that saturation of higher education and heightened job competition cause qualifications to be worth less when finding a job. This in turn causes social capital due to family background and soft skills to become more important in the job market, causing household inequality during one's educational years during to become more noteworthy in determining an individual's employability when entering the workforce.*

Key words: *Education, Social mobility, Job market, Inequality, Credential inflation*

Acknowledgements:

We would like to thank the organisers of LSE GROUPS, our supervisor, Dr. Downing, especially, for his patient guidance, as well as other supervisors whose resource sessions were invaluable in the conception of this paper. Secondly, we want to thank our two long-gone teammates, Cheryl and Nadia - we will remember them. We would also like to thank our interviewees and the organisations we have interviewed. Finally, we are extremely grateful to Chris (from the 5th floor) of the TLC department for his patience in providing resources and assistance.

1. Introduction

A core function of education is to leverage one's potential to gain social mobility through better employment opportunities. Although London students' educational performance is shown to have significantly improved over the years - known as the "London Effect" - social mobility in adulthood within London is difficult to achieve in the contemporary job market. Existing literature identifies the effects of credential inflation as well as the importance of skills and cultural capital. However, they fail to reconcile these two phenomena and show how inequality is reinforced across generations. Through conducting semi-structured interviews with Londoners and social organisations within two London Boroughs, we have found that due to credential inflation and job competition in London, there is an increased emphasis on a person's soft skills and family upbringing in the definition of employability today. Through testing inter-coder reliability we have also ascertained that our analysis of data collected is consistent and reliable.

Ultimately, this paper aims to explore how household inequality affects one's chances at social mobility in insidious ways beyond more apparent educational qualifications. We aim to investigate whether a more holistic and experiential learning for young people that would better prepare them for the job market, in order to bridge the gap between young people of different family background.

2. Literature Review

One normally thinks of education as a central driver of social mobility. It is a core tool in breaking the poverty cycle, where higher educational qualifications allows one to achieve better-paid jobs with greater opportunities. Official statistics further highlight wage differentials across education levels in the UK – degree-holders earn around 85% more than those with just GCSEs. Educational performance in London schools has consistently been higher across all income groups (Cook, 2013), as compared to schools in other regions of the UK (Burgess, 2014), with reporters and academics alike christening it as ‘the London Effect’. Traditionally poor areas such as Tower Hamlets, Hackney, Lewisham have been highlighted as ‘hotspots’ of equitable distribution of educational attainment by official reports, ranking 4, 6, and 13 nationally. However, despite the increased educational achievements, this effect has not been translated into higher levels of real social mobility for Londoners, 8 of the 32 London boroughs are within the 10th percentile of adulthood social mobility¹, with 27% Londoners in poverty compared to 20% nationally².

Existing literature highlights the ineffectiveness of education alone in increasing social mobility in society. Bernstein (2007) argues that education fails to improve the quality or number of jobs therefore skilled workers may end up underemployed if policies rely excessively on education to resolve poverty. This affects social mobility as many new graduates are taking low-income jobs or working part-time instead of finding permanent jobs (Mishel & Rothstein, 2014), indicating that perhaps education’s ability in creating social mobility has greatly diminished (Johnes, 2016).

¹ Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission’s Social Mobility Index Report for 2016

² After Housing Costs, London Poverty Profile

One way of explaining this could be the phenomenon of credential inflation. Increases in educated workers without corresponding increases in jobs would instead cause credential inflation where qualifications are worth less, and jobs require exponentially higher qualifications (Bruenig, 2015; Kariya, 2011). Official figures show the percentage of degree-holders has increased at a faster rate (from 12% in 1993 to 25% in 2010) than the increase in the percentage of high skill jobs in the UK (from 22% in 1993 to 28% in 2010). This is mirrored in Japan where the credential threshold of full-time jobs increased after an expansion of higher education, causing degrees from low-rank universities to devalue (Kariya, 2011).

In the context of credential inflation, soft-skills or family upbringing hence become more salient in employability (Woods, 2011). Soft skills are largely defined as personality traits, interpersonal skills, goals and preferences that are not captured in academic qualifications (Heckman & Kautz, 2012). Vastly different educational experiences across schools despite standardised qualifications affects the opportunities students for soft skills development in compulsory education. Seldon (2015) how private schools put more emphasis on developing attributes such as “creativity, teamwork, empathy, grit, resilience and honesty”. Private schools are however increasingly the privilege of rich households - between 1992 to 2008, independent schools’ fees rose 83% while household earnings rose only 30% (Stanford, 2012), suggesting that household inequality ultimately leads inequality in job prospects. This rich-poor divide is further evidenced by how rich students are more likely to go to older, more established universities, obtaining different experiences despite similar qualifications (Johnston & Reeves, 2016).

Furthermore, inequalities in cultural capital cause inequalities in job prospects through different upbringing of children in different households. Cultural capital can be defined as dispositions, habits and cultural goods that are transmitted across generations (Bourdieu 1986). These create inequalities in children's occupational attainment, a cycle that continues through family-based intergenerational social reproduction (Tzanakis, 2011). Disparities also manifest as different practices in obtaining relevant work experience or participating in extra-curricular activities, hence leading to a divergence in skills (Gordon, 2013).

Linking back to one's parents and family background, the opportunities for employment can be vastly affected by one's personal connections. Bourdieu (1986) argues that the volume and quality of one's social capital can be measured through one's relationships with other people. These relationships can hence be called upon to increase employment opportunities available. Job seekers from more well-to-do families are more likely to be well-connected through relatives or friends and can hence exploit this social capital to their advantage.

As the current literature on the job market in London has largely been quantitative, which tends to inaccurately capture lived experience (Bernard, 1988), our research aims to identify the concerns of Londoners in their own words, and through our interpretation identify the relationship between inequality, job market competition and credential inflation which are evident in everyday lives but cannot be captured in quantitative analysis.

3. Methodology

3.1 Semi-structured interviews

To identify the challenges that job market participants face, we conducted a total of 14 semi-structured interviews with the general public on the streets of Camden and Tower Hamlets.

While identifying job competition as centre to our research, we were keen on giving our interviewees the freedom to express their opinions on what they personally found important. Hence it was felt that semi-structured interviews were most appropriate for our research (Bernard, 1988). The guiding questions for the interviews were devised to obtain a broad understanding of the obstacles that a job searcher would encounter in the contemporary job market.

A possible limitation is the small sample size which was unavoidable given our time constraint. However, given the time constraint, we attempted to reduce the level of bias through careful selection of interviewing locations. Camden and Tower Hamlets were chosen to reflect their disparity in wealth despite close geographical proximity. Hence we hoped of gathering a representative spread of data which is more reflective of the vast wealth disparities in London.

Furthermore, we conducted interviews with two social organisations – Step Forward and Camden Spear Trust. Step Forward is actively involved in counselling and personal development for youths in London while Camden Spear Trust is a charitable organization that aims to help young unemployed people in the community. By

approaching these organisations, we hoped to gain an understanding of the broad trends of youth problems that could impact their chances in the job market.

A bias of this approach is that the targeted beneficiaries of these organisations are of a specific subsection of the labour force - troubled and unemployed youths. Hence, their job market experience may not be representative of the entire population.

However, given the broad-based approach and large number of beneficiaries these organisations assist, their insights into how the job market or youth problems have changed over time have been especially helpful.

3.2 Research Ethics

In terms of complying with standard research ethics, the identities of the participants remained anonymous. Each volunteer was given a consent form where they were free to exercise their rights to withdraw the participation from the study at any time. We also made the appropriate preparations such as safety and risk evaluations to ensure we were conducting our research in a safe manner.

3.3 Inter-coder reliability

After transcribing and coding our interviews, we identified 4 major themes, namely (1) '*Credential Inflation*', (2) '*Job Market Competition*', (3) '*Soft Skills*' and (4) '*Family Upbringing and Connections*'.

To test the reliability of our results, we conducted an inter-coder reliability test. It aims to measure the extent to which different coders tend to identify the same themes to each object, and reach the same conclusion (Tinsley & Weiss, 2000; Lombard, Snyder-Duch & Bracken, 2002). Inter-coder reliability tests are crucial in validating subjectively-coded data and hence is meant to bolster the reliability of our interview results in identifying certain themes.

Each member of our team coded the interviews independently, and data was tabulated according to the themes each member identified as being mentioned in each interview. As there were more than two independent judges, Fleiss' kappa was used to assess inter-coder reliability. *Z-tests* were then conducted to determine the reliability of the Kappa's coefficient.

4. Data Analysis

4.1 Credential inflation

The phenomenon of credential inflation has been well-documented, especially in the UK.

Our Credential Inflation Index (*CII*), with appropriate figures in the appendix, shows that when measuring the level of higher level qualifications and higher level jobs, qualifications are increasing at a rate higher than jobs in the UK. This effect is especially amplified in London. This is supported by our interviewees, who find that the need for higher education has noticeably increased over the years.

“[In 1984] ... you didn’t need to be so educated as you do now: you need education for everything.”

Our interviewees acknowledged that *“most or majority of people looking in London all hold a degree so you have to have other things to make yourself stand out.”* and that qualifications are *“a good stepping stone but once you get into what you really want to do it’s not the primary factor.”* Education therefore has become less significant in job market competition:

“It used to be - 10 years back - it used to be on qualification levels. There are so many graduates who are qualified and cannot find their work nowadays.”

The increase in qualifications without a corresponding increase in jobs causes degrees to be worth less as credential thresholds of similar jobs increase over the years.

(Bruenig, 2015; Kariya, 2011). Hence, credential inflation has meant the qualification threshold of traditionally lower-skilled jobs has expanded, meaning that candidates “*need so many qualifications to do mundane jobs which years ago never required qualifications*”, which have knock-on effects on other sectors or industries.

“Part of my job here is to look at job applications and I see that so many people have similar degrees and like sometimes Masters, and they’re applying for jobs that does not require those qualifications.”

Hence, our findings confirm our initial assumption that credential inflation has occurred in London and the UK, both in statistics and in the experience of job market participants. This therefore forms the foundation and context of our analysis of other factors in the job market today.

4.2 Job market competition

Job market competition is also a significant factor in the job market experience today, and has been identified by nine of our fourteen interviewees to be among their top concerns in the job market today.

A possible explanation of increased competition is ‘intra-national’ immigration. There is a perception of greater opportunities in London as indicated by six of the fourteen interviewees who therefore came to or stayed London to find jobs. This is potentially a major pull factor that attracts workers from other parts of the UK to come to London, increasing the London labour supply. Another explanation is increased international immigration which also increases the labour supply. This is supported by an interviewee in the construction sector:

“The market is different now to what it was twenty years ago ‘cause of all these Eastern Europeans coming here- quite a lot of them.”

Within a job market that one interviewee described as “stagnant”, this increase of workers in both low and high-skilled jobs has led to many of our interviewees to comment that there are more people hoping to working in each of their industry than there are industrial jobs, for instance:

“There’s a lot more librarians than library jobs”.

“There are more programmers than there are jobs”

This gives us an insight into the health of the London job market which most concluded is extremely competitive and aggressive. We argue that it is this competitiveness that compounds the phenomenon of credential inflation as job seekers look for other factors to make themselves stand out amongst the crowd, which links to the importance of soft skills.

4.3 Soft skills

We argue that an increase in credential inflation links to the increase in emphasis on a person's soft skills which are seen as a competitive edge in a job market.

A recurring theme throughout the interviews is the need for job searchers- fresh graduates as well as experienced workers- to have ample proficiency in spoken and written English and a level of self-esteem and confidence that will be reflected through their interactions with customers, for instance the presentation of ideas, and colleagues.

“If you’re a people person, you’ll get along with people...the more people you know, the more doors will open.”

Of the soft skills deemed important, teamwork is largely perceived as crucial in the workplace today (Hutton, 2014). This was supported by our interviewees, of which 3 indicated that teamwork was a fundamental skill.

These skills are possible to be acquired through academic study but these skills are often developed through external activities such as participation in sports or societies while in school (Massoni, 2011) , or through acquiring work experience, most commonly through internships (Hering, 2010). Therefore, the amount and types of external activities are becoming an indicator to an employer of a candidate's quality. This was reiterated by our interviewees, with one interviewee stating that in the computing firm where he works, between candidates with similar degrees, the differencing factor would be "*length of work experience....what they did during their vacations*" as it is seen as an indication of whether someone can "*use their initiative*" and "*how active the [candidate] is*". This is a visible change that has prompted agencies such as the Spear Trust to adapt their schemes to help their beneficiaries to access apprenticeships as they observe that "*for entry level roles, [employers] look at more soft skills*". Additionally it is widely viewed by younger job seekers that not having an internship or work placement is a serious disadvantage. An interviewee who recently graduated stated that:

"The fact that I wasn't able to do any unpaid internship or unpaid jobs to progress my CV...that has been a big obstacle compared to the other candidates".

The soft skills that the current job market now demands are often not ones that are acquired in the classroom. They are fostered through either being afforded opportunities to gain these skills or through gaining experiences through chance. Thus, these findings from our interviewees help strongly suggest that education itself is not enough in boosting employability.

4.4 Family upbringing and connections

In general, cultural capital refers to non-financial social assets beyond economic means. Bourdieu (1986) approaches cultural capital in family through the lens of educational attainment, finding that there is significant intergenerational reproduction of educational qualifications, hence causing perpetuation of inequality.

We also see evidence that positive role models and reinforcement can help a child to develop a well-rounded personality, which many participants noted is a very important aspect and a “*good stepping stone*” to get employment, linking back again to the increasingly desirable soft skills. Therefore not having a positive environment can have negative effects on the child’s employability in adulthood. This was reiterated by Step Forward who observed that:

“...young people that we work with [who] come from disadvantaged families...experiences a lot of different issues alongside normal issues that others face growing up. ”

This is particularly concerning as those from a disadvantaged family are often those who are more in need of social mobility. Interestingly, the importance of one’s cultural capital in determining one’s chances at employment has also exhibited itself in superficial attributes, such as one’s accent, with one participant saying that she changed her “working-class” accent to fit in with those in her industry.

We also find that differences in upbringing can also manifest itself in terms of social capital, which can give someone a boost in their employment chances, and exposure to certain social circles. This is evidenced by one participant stating that:

“I think that it’s just that you have family within any field of employment [then] nepotism is very widespread.”

This is further exemplified when a participant observed that: *“A lot of my friends whose parents worked in London had that advantage of getting jobs through them...”*

The findings about family factoring into future employability suggest that it is an aspect that can impact one’s career path no matter how hard one tries to neutralise it through education. The interviewee data here suggests that, outside of education, it is crucial to find a way to mitigate the impact of family issues in order to help boost people’s chances in the labour market.

5. Inter-coder Reliability

5.1 Credential inflation

Table 1. Inter-coder reliability analysis, Fleiss' Kappa, Z-test for 'Credential Inflation'

	Yes	No	Pa	Stats	
1	1	4	0.6	p_bar	0.857142857
2	0	5	1	pE	0.55877551
3	0	5	1		
4	1	4	0.6	k	0.676225717
5	3	2	0.4		
6	5	0	1		
7	3	2	0.4		
8	5	0	1		
9	0	5	1		
10	0	5	1	$s.e.$	0.169030851
11	0	5	1	z	4.000605293
12	0	5	1		
13	5	0	1	$p-value$	6.31807E-05
14	0	5	1		
Total	23	47			
q	0.328571429	0.671428571			

The kappa coefficient for 'Credential Inflation' of 0.676225717 hence confirms that there is strong overall agreement among the coders' identification of credential inflation in each individual interview. Furthermore, the p-value of the Z-test of 6.31807E-05 shows that the kappa coefficient is strongly significant and hence indicates an overall consensus among coders on 'Credential Inflation'. This confirms that our analysis has reliably identified credential inflation as salient among our interviewees' responses.

5.2 Job market competition

Table 2. Inter-coder reliability analysis, Fleiss' Kappa, Z-test for 'Job market competition'

	Yes	No	Pa	Stats	
1	5	0	1	p_bar	0.885714286
2	5	0	1	pE	0.58
3	2	3	0.4		
4	5	0	1	k	0.727891156
5	0	5	1		
6	5	0	1		
7	3	2	0.4		
8	5	0	1		
9	0	5	1		
10	5	0	1	$s.e.$	0.169030851
11	5	0	1	z	4.306262155
12	4	1	0.6		
13	5	0	1	$p-value$	1.66036E-05
14	0	5	1		
Total	49	21			
q	0.7	0.3			

The kappa coefficient for 'Job market competition' of 0.727891156 hence confirms that there is strong overall agreement among the coders' identification of credential inflation in each individual interview. Furthermore, the p-value of the Z-test of 1.66036E-05 shows that the kappa coefficient is strongly significant and hence indicates overall consensus among coders on 'Job market competition'. This confirms that our analysis has reliably identified job market competition as salient among our interviewees' responses.

5.3 Soft skills

Table 3. Inter-coder reliability analysis, Fleiss' Kappa, Z-test for 'Soft Skills'

	Yes	No	Pa	Stats	
1	5	0	1	p_bar	0.885714286
2	5	0	1	pE	0.501632653
3	4	1	0.6		
4	0	5	1	k	0.770679771
5	0	5	1		
6	5	0	1		
7	0	5	1		
8	5	0	1		
9	0	5	1		
10	4	1	0.6	$s.e.$	0.169030851
11	0	5	1	z	4.559403011
12	4	1	0.6		
13	1	4	0.6	$p-value$	5.12992E-06
14	0	5	1		
Total	33	37			
q	0.471428571	0.528571429			

The kappa coefficient for 'Soft Skills' of 0.770679771 hence confirms that there is very strong overall agreement among the coders' identification of 'Soft Skills' in each individual interview. Furthermore, the p-value of the Z-test of 5.12992E-06 shows that the kappa coefficient is strongly significant and hence indicates overall consensus among coders on 'Soft Skills'. This confirms that our analysis has reliably identified soft skills as salient among our interviewees' responses.

5.4 Family upbringing and connections

Table 4. Inter-coder reliability analysis, Fleiss' Kappa, Z-test for 'Family upbringing and connections'

	Yes	No	Pa	Stats	
1	5	0	1	p_bar	0.885714286
2	5	0	1	pE	0.501632653
3	4	1	0.6		
4	0	5	1	k	0.770679771
5	0	5	1		
6	5	0	1		
7	0	5	1		
8	5	0	1		
9	0	5	1		
10	4	1	0.6	$s.e.$	0.169030851
11	0	5	1	z	4.559403011
12	4	1	0.6		
13	1	4	0.6	$p-value$	5.12992E-06
14	0	5	1		
Total	33	37			
q	0.471428571	0.528571429			

The kappa coefficient for 'Family upbringing and connections' of 0.770679771 hence confirms that there is very strong overall agreement among the coders' identification of credential inflation in each individual interview. Furthermore, the p-value of the Z-test of 5.12992E-06 shows that the kappa coefficient is strongly significant and hence indicates overall consensus among coders on 'Family upbringing and connections' This confirms that our analysis has reliably identified family upbringing and connections as salient among our interviewees' responses.

6. Conclusion

While other scholarly works often look specifically at the educational background of people in the job market, our study aims to explain some of the other phenomena that impact employability in the modern, evolving London market. Our analysis has provided an argument of the significance of credential inflation in London, with drastic rise in level of competition that put applicants through rigorous application processes. This causes family background and upbringing, connections, soft skills to become more salient in employability. Inter-coder reliability testing has revealed a strong reliability in the way in which we coded our qualitative data. In other words, the conclusions we have arrived through the method of coding are sufficiently validated.

However, the outcome of our analysis has its own limitations. Due to time constraints, we were only able to garner a small sample size which might not necessarily be a fair representation of the whole London job market as we interviewed people from a small number of industries. While we controlled for education in our study, another aspect that could be controlled for is the sector of work. Further research could include looking at factors of social mobility and employability of members in the same type of job market.

In terms of recommendation, we propose a reform in all state school education with a renewed focus on development of soft skills through holistic and experiential learning which will greater prepare students for the future labour market.

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Appendix A: Guiding Questions for Interviews

Demographic

1. Which year did you get your first job?
2. Are you currently in employment? (If yes) What is your current occupation?
3. Do you have anyone in your immediate family who went into higher education?

Did you grow up in London?

Yes	No
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you agree with the idea that growing up in London gives one more opportunities for social mobility? 2. Did your family background/upbringing have an influence on your choice of career or not? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Helping or hindering? 3. To what extent has your education experience in London helped or hindered you in your job search? 4. What activities did you do outside of academics during your time in school? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Did any of these provide skills that led you to your current occupation? 5. What kind of obstacles have you faced in your career progression? 6. What factors apart from qualifications do you think were important to you getting/not getting employment? 7. How has the job search process changed from when you first started working? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. (If not) Why did you get a job in London? When did you get your first job in London? 9. In what ways were your job search in London different from back home? 10. Was there any major obstacle that you faced in your career progression? 11. What factors apart from qualifications do you think were important to you getting/getting not getting employment? 12. Did you find any notable differences between yourself and people educated in London? 13. How has the London job market/job search changed since you first arrived?

Appendix B: Interview Transcripts

#1 June 2nd Camden

A: Obstacle:

P: Good question, actually, talking about LSE, I've worked here for years and done a lot of different jobs, your, more of the same are the same grade, it's quite hard to move to another grade, mentoring experience gave me some sort of aspect to move to another grade. In the job, support and development and encouragement, a little bit, but it's quite hierarchical for the jobs in LSE, so you can't get automatically promoted even you are good with your job, you have to apply, to get into a vacancy.

A: Factors influence employability:

P: Well, my age now, would be a great factor. I think a lot of experience, skills rather than

Occupation, and I did do a postgraduate diploma about twelve years ago, though that was more of vocational. Ummm, my age, obviously, and my degree is not current, I didn't do undergraduate degree, I just did a postgraduate diploma. Maybe my lack of interest in IT, hahahah, no, I mean I got IT skills, but I'm not well up on everything to do with IT. Powerpoint, Excel, etc. go against me.

#2 June 2nd Camden, Holborn

A: So, our first question is... Well, are you currently in employment?

P: Yes [Laugh]

A: What year did you get your first job?

P: Part time or full time?

A: Full time.

P: At 15.... 2015, so last year.

A: What is your current occupation?

P: Admin receptionist.

A: Do you have anyone in your immediate family who went into higher education?

P: No. No.

B: Um, why did you get a job in London?

P: I went to university here and just established my life here when I was in university so (I) couldn't imagine moving home plus there's a lot more, a lot more jobs here than where I grew up yeah

A: In what ways were your job searches in London different from back home?

P: Back home... It seems more personal? So a lot of my jobs came from word of mouth while in London it's almost all done on computer, online, sending out loads and loads of job applications and often not hearing back? Well, when I was applying at home—it was, like, a small town... smaller businesses so they gave you more of a personalised response, like they'd often phone you and tell you your application has been successful. As in London, it's really impersonal, the recruitment process, and it can be pretty (inaudible). [Laugh]

A: Was there any major obstacles you faced in your career progression?

P: Um, just competition that all I'd say. And the fact that I wasn't able to do any unpaid internships or unpaid work to progress my CV. So I think that that has been a big obstacle compared to the other candidates...

A: Do you think that it is just in London or?

P: Gradually everywhere but definitely particularly in places like that.....

A: What other factors apart from qualifications do you think were important for you getting/not getting employment?

P: Mm, well, like I said, experience. [Laugh] Personally what I think, things such as life experience should be-- different part-time jobs that aren't necessarily, um, related to the career that you want should still be important- doesn't mean they are but even things such as bar work and basic customer service- those kind of things all added up together should be valuable in your career search but it doesn't mean they always are.

B: So, you mentioned part time jobs? Um, did you find it that it's harder to get a part time job in London?

P: Actually, my part time at uni was with the LSE- they employed me and I think it's quite easy to get a part time job in an academic setting? So working with the university, working for the student union, in the library, that kind of thing... But I know from my friends that it was extremely difficult for hold down jobs in, like, the private sector because they don't understand your workload, the hours you can do a job and managers get frustrated with you as a student? So I know from my friends that that's been different but thankfully I've always worked with the university so they knew like the student expectations.

B: So did you find any noticeable differences between yourself and people who lived in London all their lives?

P: [Pause] No... I came from a city but I knew that—you mean, when I was looking from a job? Or at uni?

B: Looking for a job. Like, the opportunities that you can get. Maybe like connections?

P: Yeah... I've never thought about that before. Actually that's a great question [Laugh] but it could be true, yeah. A lot of my friends whose parents worked in London had that advantage of getting jobs through them etc. while my parents have like small standard jobs in my hometown... so, yeah... I've never thought about that and also just knowledge of the city as well. Getting around by transport, that kind of a thing could come in really handy when you're looking for jobs here.

B: How has the London job market or job search changed since when you first arrived?

P: I've only been looking in London for about a year, really. I would just say, like, increased competition and that's because of the fact that most or a majority of people looking in London all hold a degree so you have to have other things to make yourself stand out. And unfortunately some of those sorts of things aren't open to everyone such as unpaid internships, connections that kind of thing. And I can only see that changing more and more.

B: So, you foresee it being more and more important for students for other things other than--?

P: Definitely. Cos... I actually do the jobs—Part of my job here is to look at job applications and I see that so many people have similar degrees and like sometimes Masters, and they're applying for jobs that does not require those qualifications. So the competition is really high so you *have* to find things on your CV to make you different, rather than just academic qualifications

#3 June 3rd Camden

A: when did you get your first job in London? Part time or full time?

P: When I left Drama School

A: So you came here to study drama?

P: Yes

A: Do you still remember when you get your first job?

P: Um, I think I got my first theatre job when I was 21, after I finished drama school and I went on tour with the school's educational theatrical tour and toured around the provinces, mainly middle England

A: In what ways was your job search in London different from back then when you first got a job?

P: I think if you're someone in the arts or entertainment industry, it's pretty hard from the very start. At that time there were magazines, stage magazines that advertise jobs, but really it's word of mouth. You just have to live and expect that you're going to be making sacrifices if you want to be working in the arts in this country.

A: No matter where you work?

P: No matter where you work because each job is very short term.

A: Do you recognize that it's more competitive to work as an art worker here in London?

P: I think now it's a particularly bleak time because the arts council has vastly reduced its support of a number of organizations that help the arts to flourish. So I would say because money's tight, things have gotten more difficult. Also programs like television, film they're using people that haven't actually been to drama school. A lot of programs are people on the streets so that's taking jobs away from people who train to do the job. It's rather like the equivalent of someone doing a plumbing job in their home themselves rather than training to be a plumber. Sometimes it might be alright. Often it's not. It's substandard work.

A: So was there any major obstacles that you faced in your career aspirations?

P: Too many people wanting jobs and not enough jobs. Also as an artist you don't get paid very well. So you often have to do also any kind of job like black market work, cleaning to try and support yourself until you get at least some kind of reputation.

A: In that specific area do you think your family background or do you think family background or connections could help you get the job, besides your own talents?

P: Definitely, definitely. I think that it just that you have family within any field of employment, nepotism is very widespread. Even if you go to the right school and or you have the right accent, which is one of the reasons when I came to London why I changed my accent. I knew if I sound like I sound now, which is parka, that the people who have the most money and the power would be more pleasantly inclined thinking I'm perhaps one of them.

A: So accents is one of the factors of getting involved in that group?

P: Yes. Accents, the clothes you wear, the school you went to is also key.

A: You mean secondary school?

P: If you went for example to a public school it counts for more if you went to say a secondary modern.

A: Did you find any noticeable difference between those who grow up in London and those who are not as artists?

P: I think the art world is unusual in that people from all kinds of backgrounds. I think it's not so much location, I'd say class has a bigger... I'm going to elaborate on that point. I think working class people often used to, when they leave home, when they come to... well these days working class people wouldn't be able to afford to go to university for example but I would say working class people know very early on in their lives they have to work and that they have to make money and that they have to support their family. This is my background. When I came to London I was astonished that how many people who were in their twenties still receiving money from their families rather than sending money back to their families. Middle class

people often their parents, their mother didn't work, only their father worked. So I think that often middle class people are very soft. They're very wet. They're not very motivated to make money. They haven't been brought up to think they have got to make money, they've got to support their family. They're brought up to think 'oh well, I'm going to get money from my family. My family will look after me. I've got a trust fund where my parents die I'm going to have loads of money.

A: You mean middle class here in London?

P: Middle class anywhere. The class system is it is key to people's development.

A: Have you heard of the London effect? It means that kids with worse family background educated in London score better than kids in middle class and higher class?

P: Now the middle class is quite rightly getting a canning because now it's very hip to be in working class. People often try fake that they're working class because they think it's cool.

A: you think that it not matter if you whether you are in London facing competitive job market? It's a matter of what class you were born?

P: I think it's class because it's the same in every city in England. The class system absolutely dominates the work market, social market, every single aspect of our lives, in England is dominated by the class system?

A: Did you remember when you get your part-time job?

P: I started work when I was thirteen and I worked in a cake shop. It was before school, I'd be there at 7, go to school, after school 4 to 6 and Saturdays.

A: how did you land your first job in London?

P: I went to drama school. You have to learn job by job. Now I gave up acting, I'm a poet Laureate. I'm the LGBT poet Laureate. The inaugural poet Laureate. Making a living out of writing poetry is also not easy. You just have to get enough gigs and the reputation to make people stop wanting to you writing prose.

A: So you learn a bit of script writing in drama school?

P: I've done all sort of things connected with the industry. Script writing, reviewing...

A: Thanks for your time.

P: You're welcome. Thanks you.

#4 June 3rd Camden

A: So you're working in London?

P: Yes.

A: Did you grow up in London?

P: Sort of, in Watford?

A: Did you find education in London helpful for you compared to those not educated here, in terms of connection?

P: Um maybe, because you are closer to the eventual job market. So you're a bit more aware of what going on, I don't know. I didn't grow up anywhere else.

P: Did you find that in London gave you more opportunities to move up the social ladder?

P: Maybe, arguably there more opportunity for downfall as well. Maybe there are undesirable things as well.

A: what do you mean?

P: In the city, in Watford there were large areas had social issues it can be easy to sucked up in that.

A: When did you land your first job here?

P: couple years ago.
A: When you first graduated?
P: Actually I worked outside of London before.
A: Did your family background or upbringing impact for your job search?
P: Yeah, potentially.
A: In terms of how you connect to people?
P: Maybe, it's difficult to say.
A: It's helping not hindering?
P: Yeah, I wouldn't say it's hindering.
A: what activity did you do outside of academics when you went to school?
P: Played hockey.
A: Did the teamwork spirit developed there helped you in the job market?
P: Not really. It's a totally different thing. When you get into an office environment, it's very political. It's nothing like playing hockey with your mates.
A: What are you working now?
P: I'm an accountant.
A: What kind of obstacles have you faced in your career aspirations?
P: Gosh...I suppose there are difficult things in any professions, what's maybe been an issue in the last 2008-2009 with the graduate job market and progression in actual job...the state of the job market has been relatively stagnant over the years. It affects everyone.
A: What factors apart from qualifications impact you moving up the ladder?
P: Gosh I think your motivation and level of happiness of doing the job. If you do things for the money you won't do very well.
A: Thanks for your time.

#5 June 3rd Camden, Holborn

A: Do you agree with the idea that growing up in London provides you more opportunities.
P: Not really, no.
A: So you think it's equal.
P: Yeah.
A: So do you think your family background or upbringing have any impact? Helping or hindering?
P: Private education and learn English properly, educated you'd probably have a better chance.
A: You went to a private school?
P: yeah
A: You went to university?
P: No I worked in an oil rig business about 8 years later?
A: When did you get your first job?
P: 1977, something like that.
A: Do you remember what activities you did outside of academics when you were in school?
P: Sports, sailing.
A: do you find you're extra-curricular activities in any sense in the job you have.
P: Teamwork, resilience.
A: what kind of obstacles have you faced in your career progression?
P: None really...not really.
A: What factors besides qualifications matter?

P: Attitude, and determination and willingness.

A: How do you think the job market has changed?

P: Lot more service industries.

A: Thanks for your time.

#6 June 3rd Camden, Holborn

A: Did you grow up in London

P: No

A: Are you currently working?

P: No, not currently working. I'm sort of sick .

A: What kind of work you do?

P: Computing

A: Sort of programming?

P: Yeah, writing code.

A: Did you go to university to study?

P: I did engineering at university-- an employment scheme, and then I got a job in computing.

A: Do you mind-- Which university did you go to?

P: Leeds.

A: University of Leeds? It's a bit of a city area.

P: Yeah, a big city.

A: Why did you get a job in here London?

P: I lived in Nottingham and born in Nottingham, and my girlfriend moved to London at the time and I came as well to get job in London

A: When did you first get your job?

P: My first job would be 1995.

A: 1995? Oh, I was born 1996

P: Oh, approximately.

A: How did you find programming, like, job market change over the years?

P: Well, I started-- didn't really work with personal computers, everyone sort of work with main frames so that's changed. But now everyone have sort of personal computers. That was my first job in Nottingham, but everyone now sort of have client server. There's more computer language now, i mean, computer language.

A: What language you have to do back then?

P: I started basically doing cobal? Last job, still doing cobal, expensive to rewrite the whole system. Also doing things like python and C++

A: Major obstacles you faced in you job?

P: What do you mean?

A: I mean, career progression and stuff.

P: Well I suppose programming... If you don't want to be a manager-- Not everyone wants to be manager. some just enjoy coding and developing the technical competency.

A: For those who wants to be manager or higher position, what do you reckon are the obstacles they face?

P: . If you want more money, then one way is to become a manager.

A: Besides qualification, other factors influence your employability ?

P: I would say-- there's not much else other than technical- is what you need.

A: Do you need teamwork for it?

P: Yeah. Unless you're difficult person, I think you will do okay.

A: So like when there's a project, the jobs are divided up? Is that based on skills or the manager decides?

P: Um, yeah, maybe maybe, depends on how big the team is. Sometimes more nowadays teams come together for a project, once it's over the team disappears. And a new one is formed.

A: Did you find any observable difference who born and raised in London compared to those who came here later?

P: Hard to answer, probably people who've come from outside London would probably try harder. Probably. It's advantage to live in London compared to other cities, I mean, there's so much going on. So I mean it helped me to move to London for my career because there's so many more opportunities in London.

A: Would you say that those from London tend to be more creative and innovative because there's so many arts and museums when they're doing programming?

P: Not necessarily. I don't think it's influences your creativity. Probably people live outside have a different pace of life. Londoners are pretty busy. You could say, I don't know, that they have more time to be creative.

A: I see what you mean. How has the job market changed over the years?

P: I think there's more competition now. Well I think there's more jobs...more people want to do programming now. I think there was a time when there was quite a high demand for jobs for programmers- I think now there're more programmers than there are jobs.

A: I know you're not in HR. If two people from Imperial college with computer sciences degree... what factors..?

P: Work experience-- Length of work experience. We will always look at what they did during their vacations- like what work experience did they get? Show whether they can use their initiative... look at interests and activities to see how active the person is. If they're coming straight from university those would be what we look for.

#7 June 3rd Camden, Holborn

I: When did you get your first job?

P: Uh.... 1998

I: 1998. Um, why did you choose to work here in London?

P: Because really this is where the job is.

I: So, in what ways was your job search different back in 1998 when you first came here from now?

P: Oh, different? I...I came here as a secondment? Secondment? Do you know what I mean by that? Sort of loaned from one company to another. Then I became permanent. (Inaudible)

I: Oh, so a different location?

P: No, no. You're *lent* from one company to another... Then the second company that I went to gave me a permanent job so I moved centrally—but it was arranged but there wasn't an interview- it was arranged.

I: Ah, so arranged from firm to firm—

P: Exactly.

I: I see. So it's within the same industry? Was there any major obstacle you faced through your career progression? Was there any glass ceiling you feel--?

P: Um, I think that—I'm in a construction industry (inaudible) I have timeout for children but not much time. I came back in at an, actually, higher level.

I: Children leave?

P: Yeah, I've got two children. When I came back in I actually came back higher than when I left—I've not really experienced, um—it's probably down to me not really wanting to go for board level. I think we might be waiting a lil' bit...

I: Waiting a little bit till there's a vacancy?

P: Yeah, well, actually....so I think really it's not an issue.

I: It's not an issue, ok. What other barriers did you face?

P: No, no-- only of my own making. Yeah, I don't have any obstacles. Yeah, I'm quite happy.

I: So, it's all down to yourself? Ok, what factors apart from qualifications, do you think, affects your employability?

P: Um.

I: Are you more on the managerial side in the construction...?

P: Yes.... But I have a job at the (inaudible) I look after clients specifically under specific projects and I have to do what people under me do as well as managing them. What was the question? Factors? Um I think you have to have a very savvy business sense because it's about making money. Which is not something you learn really— So, in terms of qualifications, it's not—You're recording this, aren't you?

I: Yeah.

P: Um, other than having a good customer sense, y'know?

I: Can I ask if your degree is related to the job? Business?

P: I'm a qualified architect, yes. So, I work in construction.

I: Did you notice any difference between those born in London and those come from other countries or other part of the UK?

P: [Shakes head]

I: No difference? Ok, thank you for your time and enjoy your lunch.

#8 June 3rd Camden

I: So, the year you were born?

P: 1966

I: Did you grow up in London?

P: No (inaudible)...In Cambridge.

I: So, um, why did you find a job in London?

P: Basically, this is where all the work is. I've been used to the last five years travelling into London so I still do it. How long am I gonna last though? I don't know. Probably another five years then I will probably give up.

I: Did you get your first full-time job here?

P: In London, yeah?

I: Yeah.

P: In 1984...

I: 1994?

P: No, 1984.

I: 1984. Um, what was the job market back then compared to now?

P: Easy. A lot, yeah. You could—there was— in 1984, we've just gone partly through a recession, not as bad as the one we've just gone through but... well, it was plentiful. You could basically go into one job- if you don't like it, start another job next week, not like right now. And you didn't need to be so educated as you do now: you need education for everything.

I: Yeah, back then there was no requirement for qualifications?

P: No, no, there was but not to the degree where you need so many qualifications to do mundane jobs which years ago never required qualifications, no.

I: So, back then when you find jobs, is it more like you write some poster and you go to person?

P: ... Yes, I mean it was, eh. I applied for a job that was advertised in the local Evening Standards (inaudible) which is why I did.... I just happened to be in London- if I was outside London, I suppose I will still living on (??). Most of the work that I do is mainly in London.

I: So, you said you kinda of planning to move out of London?

P: Yes, once my mortgage is paid off in five year, I think I'm gonna sell up and move.

I: Is it for retirement purpose or you don't like to work--?

P: Uh, semi-retirement. I won't retire completely but so like just work two, three days a week, doing something completely different.

I: Completely different.

P: Whether it's packing shelves in Tesco or working in some charity or doing- doing something completely different to what I do now... On a regular basis or-

I: So you kinda got tired of your current job?

P: Yeah. Uh, a position where you get out of bed and you do what you wanna do 'cause you wanna do it and enjoy. Not 'cause you've got bills to pay.

I: Yeah, for sure. Other interests and passions.

P: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Y'know, your working life is one thing but you're long while they're (dead?) so you should be doing something you enjoy- if you no longer enjoy it, you should stop it and do something else. There's more important things in life than money.

I: Yeah. What do you think is an obstacle for you to pursue your personal career, aspiration during your career progression? (Inaudible) The barriers.

P: Well, since I was young and (inaudible), the barriers are not really there. I mean, obviously the market is different now to what it was 20 years ago 'cause of all of these Eastern Europeans coming here- quite a lot of them.

I: You mean the supply-?

P: Yeah, the supply obviously- the supply is a lot more.

I: Quite a lot of Romanian right?

P: Polish are quite a lot. Um, well, obviously they don't all have the same skill set as we have- especially in my trade, y'know, it is quite new. The only problem with that is the money is not (inaudible). In the past, when you apply for jobs, you more or else get them- but now, when you apply for jobs, you need to be a little more realistic. A lot of these Eastern Europeans, they don't have- they're not lazy but they don't have mortgages... they're coming on their own so they don't need as much money to live on so therefore they can work for a lot less.

I: Yeah, that's interesting cause of Brexit and the referendum. ..

P: So, I mean, with the referendum, to me, yes, I would vote yes- I wouldn't vote no. I mean, um, there's no point in voting no- to me, it's a selfish point of view if you vote no-- You know, I'm alright generally but what about all the others? I think, uh, you know, we're lucky to be in this country and y'know, if you're born into a country like this- it's luck. If you're born into a country which is- poverty is up and coming, instinct in life is to better yourself. If you could've moved somewhere to better yourself for your family, you'd do it, you know? If I was born Romanian, I'd do the same thing, which is to better yourself.

I: So you sympathise?

P: Yeah, yeah, of course. I would vote yes.

I: In what ways did your job search in London differ from back home?

P: The job search? What do you mean by that?

I: Yeah, getting job here in London. Compare your home town.

P: Well, it's supply and demand, isn't it? The kind of work I do in London is on every street corner basically, y'know, there's always construction going up- there's always plenty to do. If you stuck to where you live—I could get work where I live but you know it depends (?)—you might get a job of 3 weeks, 4 weeks, then it'd be finished and you'll be looking somewhere else. While in London, you could finish one job and even if you don't like that job, you could move on to another job. So, there is still plenty- if you've got the skill set then there's still plenty- there's still plenty of—there's much more work in London than there was 30 years ago.

I: You mean in the construction...?

P: Yeah, in the construction side of it. Yeah, but, I mean, obviously everyone's got given skills- computing or banking, their argument might be completely different—It's not something I know much about.

I: So you basically said the supply of construction workers in London- because of the immigrants from the euro- increased quite a lot but still there is a lot of demand

P: There is a lot of demand but I think as well—20 years ago, a lot of English people that are working in London got fed up with it, you know? And they packed it up and moved and so just worked local or—they got fed up with the travelling and coming into London. I think now you've got all the immigrants which have now moved into London and they're doing a lot of the jobs that English people wouldn't want to be doing anyway. You know, I mean, the high end stuff, the high end finishings is mainly still English people. You know, the labouring side of it, you know, the things where you get your hands really dirty, that is where, that is where the immigrants are going. They're doing the lower—you know, for construction they do the lower stuff, digging, all the labouring, all the humping, and all the lugging in... When it comes to the skills, it's still the English people who take over. Once they get to a certain level, the English people then come in and take over. There are some good- there are some skilled European but most of them are not- they're more labour-intensive than England.

I: Do you think, like, race is one of the barriers for your progression even if you have a certain skill set at that job?

P: Racism?

I: Even in construction, like if you want to be a manager, would it be harder even if some migrants from the Euro who has the skill set to do the job?

P: You know, I don't think it would be the case- I think, eh, in fact, a lot of Eastern Europeans do run jobs- they do run quite a lot of jobs. If you've got the skill levels, then the opportunities are fairly equal, yeah, fairly equal. Yeah, I don't think it's discrimination- I mean, back 20 or 30 years ago, there was discrimination when work was plentiful. Back then there was a lot of discrimination- it's not like that anymore. I mean, I used to work for my uncle, I mean, my uncle would never- he wouldn't employ a black person.

I: Your uncle?

P: Yeah, 'cause he was born—he started his work in the 50s and he just had that mentality... he would only employ English people- he wouldn't employ black people. You see? Again, there is that racist element which is now dying out- you got to put yourself in his position. He used to live in Bethnal Green and he was married and he had two young children in council accommodation.... He had a one bedroom flat. He wanted a bigger house and they basically-if you want a bigger house you have to move to Hollo or Welwyn Garden City- all the up and coming areas in the 60s, you know, the new towns- you had to move out of London where he was born and raised.

But he used to say that ... (inaudible)... coming off the aeroplanes and all the two or three bedroom houses once they were getting- they were given to all the West Indies and the foreigners and now he's having to move out. So that is where his mentality comes from.

[Discussion about puppy]

P: Yeah, so he wouldn't employ Black people. But the company I work for now, we have black guys working, Eastern Europeans, Polish, we have Romanians, you know, times have changed. The world is changing.

I: Besides qualifications, do you think the sector you're working in requires any other skills? Does it still require qualifications, even now?

P: Yes it does require qualifications, you still have to do apprenticeships, you still have to go to college and do a three-year apprenticeship.

I: Three years?

P: Yeah, three years for the basics and then you're still a boy. YOU're still a boy until you sorta like until you start to get work and work your way up to a proper job

I: I wonder if the (availability of) apprenticeship programme is directly linked to a vacancy in the firm.

P: Well no really, we take on a lot of skilled people who go from one company to another, if the money's better or the job's better, we don't take on many apprentices. If I'm, honest the youngsters these days don't wanna get their hands dirty.

I: Are there quite a lot of Londoners working in construction?

P: Yeah there are, but I would say there are more foreign people than there are Londoners. Sometimes you can go to one of these building sites, and I would say the English people is outnumbered by foreign people by at least 10 to 1, at least. Like if you go into the canteen, and you look, there's no English people there, it's all foreigners! There are more foreigners - obviously they work for lower wage. When you work for big companies, it's one of the things, when they go find contracts or source for jobs, they know that they're levelled, and they are looking at profits, so they pay a lower wage, they're not going to pay top wages, you're going to get someone who is going to work for 30-40 percent less than an English person and they will do it.

I: Around your friends or colleagues, do you feel like Londoners have more connections in London that they can get better contracts or better pay?

P: Yeah, definitely better connections, in the building industry. If you know someone whose work is coming to an end, then you know where to go for the next job where it's starting up so you get to know most of the people on the job. So you don't actually have to look into a paper. In London you don't actually have to look into paper to look for jobs.

I: Do you feel then that Londoners do better than people from other counties in England?

P: I would say yes, but I would say there is more of a North and South divide in London. Over in the South they don't have the same opportunities, they say they don't have the same opportunities. The standard of living is a lot lower, so you don't need to earn the same amount of money. I do believe that if you want to work, there is always work. Even when things are booming you'll always have 1.8 million English people on the dough (?) with disabilities and impairments. In this country you will always have 1.8 million people who don't work and they can't work. They can't just walk outside and walk around the cold - there's no work. I spend 5 hours a day going to work. If you want to work, that's what you have to do. The job - It's not like in the 70s, work is no longer just at your doorstep, if you live in London, if you choose to

live in London, which I never wanted to do, I did it for one year, I lived in Nottingham, I hated it, I wanted to move back. I liked living out, I love working in London, but I like going over elsewhere and travelling in for work.

I: You mentioned you wanted to change your job, can you envision some of the challenges you might face in the job market now?

P: I would say the job market is getting harder.

I: What factors do you think....

P: It used to be - 10 years back - it used to be on qualification levels. There are so many graduates who are qualified and cannot find their work nowadays, employers are looking more for experience rather than qualifications. People used to worry 20 years ago once you got like were 55 or 60 you couldn't find any work but there is change nowadays and companies are now looking for level of skill.

I: Which means back then in your 30s you were afraid you won't find a job when you were in your 50s.

P: Well there is that, but I won't be that worried about the money side. I don't have to get out of bed to go out for work, if I don't want to.

I: So, you think experience is more important than qualifications?

P: Yeah, I think over the years, experience counts for a lot. I think - well if you were working for a big company - I think when you get old, sort of 55, they worry you're gonna be all old, you're not gonna turn up for work and they're going to have to pay you when you have time off sick, and I think a lot of them think about the reliability factor, and you're not going to be as reliable because you're getting older. I think that that is changing a little bit. I think generally, in my company - we are a company of 25 people - it's generally all the guys that are under the age of 25 that always seem to have time off sick. And all the people my age always seem to go to work! They always seem to be off work, having a cold or something. They use any excuse not to come to work, but I have to be really ill not to come to work. So yeah, so I think it's a reliability thing as well. And of course, they expect - if they're paying you quite a lot of money to come and do your job - when they say all these youngsters, sort of 25, 30, on your doorstep, they'll go "Ooh, are you qualified?" We have them quite a lot, especially, like, the women. I don't think they've sent the wrong person to me, I don't think the person knows very much, it's just that they are very young, you get a lot of that, which is completely wrong.

I: You mean back then, 20 or 30 years ago there were no such perceptions?

P: No, not really, I think it's a level playing field, I don't think there is that much difference. It depends on someone's level of influence (?) really. You know, there's a lot of qualified people your age and there's a lot of qualified people my age, and there's a lot of youngsters that are better than the older people, it goes up and down doesn't it? You know, you're a very young brain with quick thinking and older people don't - you know, as you get older, it's just the nature of things. You make decisions you probably wouldn't have done in your 20s, it's not all with us, it's a team effort.

I: In a nutshell, what do you think the job market changed when you first got the job here in London?

P: It's changed a lot, but I think skill levels have remained the same, you still need the basic skill levels to get a job.

I: Are you applying for jobs online or going in person?

P: I don't apply for jobs online, no. In fact I get quite a few of my jobs online, I do, I do get quite a lot of work online but I don't actually advertise online, no. I've got 70 contacts over the past many years - I've got so many contacts - it's easy. Whatever profession you do, you work your way up and you get to know more and more people

and more and more doors will open, it's just a natural thing in life. The older you get, the more you get established, the more doors are open. When you start off you find that most of the doors are closed and the ones that are open, you gotta take what you can get and keep them open. I think, overall, you know, there are many bright youngsters that are thinking it's all unfair and they're never gonna get a job, and all the old people have got the jobs and stuff like that. I don't - I think if you really wanted work, you'll find it, and you have to take it. On the money side of things, when you're young, I think you have to ignore the money side of things. When I first started working, my superior - when I started my apprenticeship - after my first year, I asked him for a raise, and he just said 'no'. He said "I'm doing you a favour, helping you learn your trade, you're inconveniencing me, not the other way around." He said "If you can earn more money than me, I will come work for you." It's like he didn't ask for money, you learn your trade first, and when you're worthy, he'll pay you. You climb the ladder, when we feel it's appropriate.

I: So it was a paid apprenticeship?

P: Yeah but the money was rubbish. But right now, all the apprentices we have now, they have all their fares paid for. When I did my apprenticeship, I still had to pay my fares. When I got my pay on Friday, once I paid for my housekeeping, there was nothing left, it was all gone. But that's what you did, you don't get loads of money, you didn't ask - but kids nowadays all they wanna ask is what they're getting. They're worried about how much money they get at the end of the week, and it's only a Monday, and I say "Hang on a minute, you don't know nothing yet!" Anyway, I must... I have to go back to work, nice chattin' with you.

I: Thank you so much!....

#9 June 3rd Camden, Holborn

A: Now you need to match the employers and employees, there are some frictions, how do you smooth it out?

P: Companies are very - in social media or in bank commerce - like specific skills. You need to have experience in advertising or social media or both sort of things because it is very segmented. Information technology is very segmented these days - there are no general skills.

A: So, you are specialised in certain industries when you help people find jobs?

P: Yes

A: You are helping to find people find full-time jobs instead of internships?

P: Yes. Full-time, full-time.

A: What is the difference between a full-time job and an internship?

P: Well, an internship might last 6 to 8 weeks.

A: But the requirements are kind of the same?

P: The internships don't really matter. I mean, if someone, let's say got a qualification in history or psychology and they're not really sure with what they want

to do with their lives or what they want to work in, like advertising or I don't know, journalism or something, an internship is for them to find out. It's exploratory for the intern and a bit of free work for the employer.

#10 June 6th Camden

A: did you grow up in London?

P: No

A: Okay, um what made you want to get a job here in London

P: The city seems...good

A: What do you mean good?

P: Like full of opportunities.

A: do you remember when you got first job here in London?

P: Yep.

A: What year?

P: 2005.

A: In what ways do you feel that your job search here in London was different back home?

P: I've only worked in London?

A: What sort of obstacles do you feel like you faced in your career aspirations?

P: Not much. No. Not much difficulty.

A: What sort of factors apart from your qualifications was important to you getting employed or not getting employed?

P: I think it's getting you into the door...It's not your qualifications or your education would do you...It's a good stepping stone but once you get into what you really want to do it's not the primary factor.

A: So what do you think is a primary factor?

P: uh, I think it's down to your personality, characteristics.

A: Did you find any noticeable difference between yourself and people educated in London in terms of job opportunities?

P: No.

A: Were you able to notice any differences between the market, the job market from since you first arrived to now?

P: Yeah it's become more competitive...many more people have come..uh but...yeah opportunities are more than when I came.

A: Did anyone in your family go to higher education?

P: No.

A: Did you family background or upbringing in anyway impact your current path.

P: No, not really.

A: Alright that's it...thank you

#11 June 6th Tower Hamlets

A: did you grow up here in London?

P: No.

A: What motivated you to come to london and get a job here?

P: uh, travel time. I lived in a place called windsor and it's quite difficult to get to London

A: Oh, so the commute...so you got a good job here and it's easier to be in London?

P: Yeah

A: Did you ever try and look for a job back home, where you're from?

P: Yes, yeah but they're not so many jobs there.

A: So in what ways was your job search different there than it was here? So, I take it was harder there.

P: Yeah, much harder.

A: What sort of obstacles did you feel you faced in your career aspirations?

P: Uh, the recession...lots of councils cutting library staffs. There's a lot more librarians than library jobs.

A: Taking that into account, besides the basic qualifications, what do you think is important in getting employed?

P: Um, I would say some competent keeping your skills up to date. Some training, that sort of thing.

A: do you think your family background or how you were brought up impacted your job path in anyway?

P: Um, probably, because it's sort of a more academic vocation.

A: Like your family was more academic?

P: Yes.

A: Do you think there's any difference that you've been able to notice about people who are educated here in London versus somewhere else in terms of getting a job here?

P: Manners, a big things. Schools were I come from are quite disciplined, quite traditional.

A: When you first arrived in London did you notice anything different about the market since when you first came here as opposed to now?

P: um, I came in 2006 that was just before the crash. So it's been a lot worse and but it's getting better

A: So you said your family was academic based, so they went to higher education?

P: Yeah

A: do you remember what year you got your first full time job.

P: I would say July 2001.

A: did you take any extra-curricular activities when you were in uni?

P: Mostly Politics, I was in the student union.

A: Did that bring any transferable skills into your occupation?

P: Public speaking, um confidence levels

A: Anything else about university experience?

P: I went to Arborist West, which is in the middle of wales...tend to be more community...tend to get on with people better than going to a university near home.

B: Yeah, that was very good

#12 June 8th Tower Hamlets

A: So you grow up here in London?

P: Yeah we grew up in london

A: So do you agree with the idea that growing up London gives you more opportunity?

P: Any city gives you more opportunity honestly, more city

A: What about London especially?

P: especially London, mainly London airports and its why its the capital.

A: Did you get your first job here in London?

P: Yes I did

A: um, did your family background or upbringing have any influence on choice of career?

P: It certainly does, followed my dad's footsteps into my trade, yep.

A: So it's kind of helping you in that?

P: Yeah, when you grow up around something it tends to rub off on you

A: So to what extent does your education experience in London helped or hinder you?

P: um, yeah you've got some good schools in London but you have to choose to knuckle down and study. It's mainly individual really, if they want to learn or if they don't want to learn. If you got the opportunity to learn in London yeah.

A: Do you enjoy your educational experience here?

P: Uh, I wasn't one of the knuckle down types so no I just wanted to get out and work.

A: Um, what activities did you do outside of school you think that helped you in your career?

P: Uh, boxing with discipline. Semi-pro...back in the day

A: do you think that these activities widen your skills with job?

P: I think any disciplined hobby would help you in any walk of life. It gives you a bit of respect, a bit of dedication in what you're doing.

A: So, what kind of obstacles did you face so far in your career aspiration?

P: Umm, obstacles...I think you make your own obstacles. If you're a people person, you'll get along with people...the more people you know the more doors will open.

A: What factors apart from qualifications do you think important to you in getting job?

P: Briefly, basic knowledge of English, spelling.

A: Have you thought of changing industries?

P: a few times yes.

A: what obstacle in you face in that transition period?

P: if you're doing a job where your manually working, it takes awhile to knuckle down

A: How has the job searched since you've been here?

A: you used to have job center back in the day where jobs are in bulk...now unless you're glued up on computers, you got no chance.

#13 June 8th Tower Hamlets

A: Did you grow up [in London]

P: No.

A: Where did you grow up?

P: In devon?

A: What brought you here in London?

P: because I had a girlfriend at the time who came to London to be a nurse...so I used to come out and visit her here and got a job here and stayed here.

A: When did you get your first job here.

P: 1987.

A: What's the nature of that job?

P: Police station.

A: So you are police?

P: Yeah.

A: Office worker now?

P: Now, yeah.

A: So in what ways was the job search changed in your particular occupation?

P: Um, doesn't really change... You stay for 30 years.

A: Even for the recruitment process?

P: The recruitment process is a London wide process. They run as and when they need more officers. We've had spending cuts so we've been recruiting less and less...the recruitment now is very slow.

A: Do they allocate quotas based on different qualifications?

P: well you have different schemes...director, inspectors, supervisor, graduate entry. So they have different levels. Like a couple of years ago they decided to only to recruit people who live in London. Most police officers live outside of London...then you have to have a degree, that became a criteria...when I joined you didn't have to have a degree...we need more people of ethnic minorities...they identify a shortage somewhere like maybe they haven't gotten enough female officers

A: So was there any obstacles you face in your career progression?

P: um, not really. It's very competitive. It's more competitive now because of inner competition and now it's also outside...If they bringing people outside, it's more difficult for me to get promoted.

A: What factors besides education affects your chances of getting a job?

P: To join the police now you have to do an exam, pass it and then join the police...you've got to be absolutely clean [no criminal record] to join the police.

A: Do you find any noticeable differences between those brought up in London and those who are not?

P: um, not really...I mean people living and working in London is a rare breed because living in London is now expensive.

A: Would you say for police if they grow up here in London they have more connections.

P: Yeah, they know more about culturally...You couldn't be working in area with Orthodox jews, Chinatown...afro-caribbeans.

A: For the new recruits, do you require them to have more soft skills like teamwork, leadership?

P: They've got have common sense. They've got to be able to interact with people...have good social skills...you could go into situations domestic with a man and wife fighting...you've got have problem solving skills.

A: What activities you did in school that helped you in your position?

P: If you take up positions in school like prefect...your given responsibilities. In my world now I'm an accountant.

A: Thanks for your time...good luck.

#14 June 8th Tower Hamlets

A: Which year did you get your first job?

P: 2006

A: Do you have anyone in your immediate family who went to higher education?

P: Uh, no.

A: Um, did you grow up in London?

P: Yep.

A: Do you agree that growing up in London gives you more opportunities for social mobility?

P: It helps growing up in London, you speak the language.

STEP FORWARD June 8th

A. When was personal development started and what was the need identified?

P. It might be more helpful if I just talk to you about what we do rather than answering your question directly. I think the personal development work going for a number of years since 1988, started counselling services initially and growing from

there in terms of personal development, all the work is always linked to personal development building self-esteem and confidence. On counselling we're looking at sort of therapeutic approach and personal development doesn't have boundaries tackling a lot of different issues, building confidence, self-esteem looking at different areas particular skill areas that would like to build on like communications, family relationships, peer relationships and all those different things.

A. Is there a particular set of beneficiaries that tend towards the personal development program?

P. We work with a range of young people here. We work with 11 years old up to 25 years old here at Step Forward. Through that you've got young people going across different transition points. You've got primary school, secondary school, you also have young people leaving school, starting college university and looking for job market. We work with young people going across all of those transition. Its very difficult for young people for different reasons at different part of that journey for them so it can be very difficult. Personal development depending on what area different people across different ages. We have a holiday program for young people. A group with work with lesbian, gay, bisexual, those who are questioning their sexuality. We support them through group work through our personal development work. There tends to be changes 11 to 25. That group at the moment a bit older. Sort of 16 17 plus. Sometimes we get younger people We recently done a girls group called inspire tends to be 16 plus, looking at building resilience, healthy relationships, sort of communication building confidence and goal setting. Imagine a lot of the programs are added according to needs.

A. Has there been changes on the program or addition to the programs to adapt to changing needs over time?

P. It grows. We always been working with young LGBT, provide them additional support workshops money skills workshop depending on the need, been doing a lot of work with young people with sexual violence and sexual abuse, around confidence, goal setting relationship, resilience those sort of things, therapeutic with young people as well. What we always do is that have core things, then look at what is needed along the way and see what we able to do in terms of our resource as well.

A. Addition to responding need of beneficiaries, in response to society workforce, young society get to work after leaving school.?

We don't tend to work with young people not in education. Even though there's a lot of change out there. Everything are much more competitive. There are going to secondary school, getting into colleges, and then leave to get a job. That can be difficult because it's very competitive out there. We worked with one young people did volunteer with us, through additional support and links we made for her, she was able to really grow in confidence, get internships and things like that. Not something that we specifically say we do. However just through the work that we do across personal development ad hoc volunteering therapeutic, young people best position to have confidence they need to get themselves out there and do things. We not specifically working on certain skills in a way that all other organisations are geared

towards . We are of education more than training. It's more indirectly that happen to us, because of the young people that we work with. This borough one of the most deprived boroughs in the UK. So it's very diverse as well at one of the most deprived boroughs. The kinda young people that we work with comes from disadvantaged families they are experiences a lot of different issues alongside of those normal issues that others face growing up.

I: Um, ok, you mentioned a lot of the people you help come from quite disadvantaged backgrounds where they have their own problems additional to the problems most people do face when they come out of school. Do you think their background affects them in a way that it's not just education that they might need help with, things like other skills, maybe confidence?

P: I think, um, every young person is different and it can be more difficult, I think, when you have—come from a background where, you know, things are more difficult for you, or you've not got good role models, things that other people take for granted—just your nutrition...all of those sorts of things can, can play a part. We all know that you need to eat well to be able to go through every day; we all know you need good role models to be able to have healthy relationships—those sort of things definitely can be quite difficult but you know, that said, I think just the pressures out there for young people today, even if you come from a family that's not necessarily disadvantaged in those same ways I think you've still— as you said—young persons have a lot of pressures and we find that with young people that are coming to us now that, um, a lot of young people do just suffer from anxiety and depression and they might not come from absolutely disadvantaged families but, you know, for young people that is one of the top thing that young people come to us for. You know, anxiety, depression, those peer-relationships- if you're not able to... if you're anxious or depressed, you're not going to be able to do all the other things that you could do, you need to be out to do and have the confidence, you know... if you can't even get out of bed, if you can't even study properly cause you're so anxious about things or depressed, you know, all those sorts of things, so that is affecting young people and how they're able to operate and put them in the best possible position to be able to make the most of the opportunities that come their way.

I: You mentioned the girl who did volunteering with you and then she developed confidence to do other things... do you think there's a need for young people to have outside experiences apart from academic stuff? To just supplement their, I don't know, CV or some extra skills—they can say that “Oh, I'm good at this”?

P: Yeah, personally, I definitely think so. I think, you know, what we offer here at Step Forward is about providing opportunities or different skills or different things for people to do or, you know, look after their mental health and their well-being. But, you know, I think it is very important because I think schools set you up in a certain way, with certain skills, um, and I think ... there is another set of skills that you get through work experience or through volunteering or through those sort of opportunities that what you would, I guess, call “Employability skills”. You know, the communication, the time keeping, the negotiation, the planning, all of those different things that you don't get a chance to develop, in a sense, in the same way at school. There are things that you do do through education to help with those things, but I think other opportunities definitely allow you a chance to grow those skills/

I: Do you think those skills are more and more important to nurture in young people when they—before they leave school and maybe after?

B: Maybe over the years has that emphasis shifted?

P: Yeah, yeah, personally, I think it is. I think that why I guess there are things like Duke of Edinburgh Awards and those sorts of things in schools because it's about developing those different sets of skills and things like that for young people, um, but definitely I think this is something that should be part of, you know, the opportunities that they do at school.

I: So you feel that more schools should incorporate these kinds of extra activities...

P: Well, I mean schools do. I mean I'm not a teacher and I haven't experienced the education in this country first hand but I think, you know, schools do have other things that they do in their curriculum, you know. I think they do try to, to nurture those needs within the schools. Um, you know, I think, we—what I found, personally, is that sometimes when we have worked in other places in the past with young people who are just out of college or whatever... some are very good because of whatever skills they've done or extracurricular stuff that they've done; others, there's a certain something that's missing like initiative around [pause] things, employability skills that you would maybe expect some young people to have...they've not had those opportunities to develop. It becomes very apparent quite quickly that they need to develop those quite quickly.

B: And then moving away from the whole employability thing. Is there a particular void in what the government, state is doing, for example support for mental health or relationship support, that organisations like Step Forward have to, like, fill in the gap?

P: Um, I think—I don't know if you've seen in the moment there's a big... there's a lot of stuff on the media about mental health for young people so I think it's a lot more on the agenda. So now you might hear a lot more about counselling in primary schools and having that option available for young people. So that's something that is becoming more and more on the agenda. I think also there's the, um, what is one of the child and adolescent mental health services can—they can be quite (inaudible)... they have certain thresholds that they will only work with young people that meet a certain threshold or their family situation is in a certain way, but not all young people meet that thresholds and also can be only for young people- so when they hit 18, 19 where do they go. What we find is that services here at Step Forward, because we work with eleven to twenty five year old, um, because we don't have to meet certain thresholds so you can come to us if you're just feeling a little bit of worry about your exams, before things get really big, you know, you can come to us and get that support. And also our support is for as long as they need it, as long as we feel we can help them as well. 'Cause a lot of places out there, at universities and stuff they will offer you counselling if you're a student with them but they will only offer for maybe twelve sessions or something like that. It's quite common. So for Step forward we will offer it for as long as we feel we can support you- it's not that you get to your twelfth session and we say: "Well, we now have to look into placing you somewhere else". So, you know, it is really hard for young people to, um, to put themselves in a position where they're able to, you know, move from education into employment, when they have a lot of other pressures and things going on [16:43]

A: Um, ok, you mentioned a lot of the people you help come from quite disadvantaged backgrounds where they have their own problems additional to the problems most people do face when they come out of school. Do you think their background affects them in a way that it's not just education that they might need help with, things like other skills, maybe confidence?

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B: This increase in demand, has it - do you feel it's like due to a certain reason? Has there been a particular kind of like a problem that seems to be causing this?

P: I mean no, I wouldn't know and we haven't researched it enough to pin it down on one specific thing, I think that there's a lot of different things, I think, you know, environmental factors, externally I think they impact but I think there's a growing awareness of mental health out there so maybe young people are more willing to say that they've got a problem and that they want some help. I think our services have become more known out there over the years as well. So I think there's a number of different factors, I couldn't just say that there is one thing. I think there's a lot of things that have happened such that our services have increased.

A: Comparing the youths of today, and maybe 10 years ago or 20 years ago, are they facing the same pressures? Or is it just more obvious, like they're more willing to show it?

P: Yeah... I mean I don't know, because I wasn't really working in this - necessarily this environment 10 years ago, but I think, you know, if you think about what society

was like 10 years ago, and even if you think about the whole social media thing - what was around in social media 10 years ago, it's very different to what's around now. We work with a lot of young people now that in primary school - in secondary school, very *early* years of secondary school too are experiencing cyber-bullying and, you know, all those sorts of things. And that puts a lot of pressure on a young person. So I think, you know, that's one example of 10 years ago that wasn't a problem and now that sort of thing is an issue. I think there's lots of stuff now, not necessarily they're more prevalent, I think it's just become more in everyone's awareness - we do a lot of work around child sexual exploitation, so that's again something we have to be very aware of that can affect young people, so we have to be very aware of those sorts of things as well. So yeah, it was different back then, but then they had pressures that young people today don't have, but I think certainly if you just think about social media - 10 years ago, now - that's very different.

B: Then, what about, do you have, like, a volunteering programme, that's aimed for, maybe, more socially conscious youths to maybe come and contribute to the work you do?

P: Yeah... we don't really have one as such. We have volunteering that's open, so we have volunteer counsellors and a number of different things and they have to have gone through certain things, got certain qualifications to volunteer with us. What we do have for young people, at the moment, that is part of what we do, through some other work we have to do, is called the Young Assessors Programme. So it's part of the 'You're Welcome' scheme that we operate in the borough. So it's making sure that health services, pharmacies, GPs, sexual health clinics are young-people-friendly. And part of that is that young people go into these places and mystery shop them to show that they are young-people-friendly. So part of that programme we have to coordinate with the borough, is training up young people to be young assessors. So at the moment we are just looking at that as a volunteering opportunity for young people - so we train them up to be young assessors, they go and do those things that helps the programme. At the same time, it's about what other skills those young people can get with us, so obviously, by doing that they can get what it's called an AQA accreditation, they can also get sort of work experience, in a sense, they're learn different skills, like planning, and learning about the health sector if they're particularly interested in working in the health sector. And just helping, like you said, develop some of those skills that they might want to put on their CVs and things like that. So that's a relatively new sort of programme with us and it started because we do the 'You're Welcome' programme in the borough and the young assessors we need as part of that and now we're looking at expanding that out a bit more to look at young people volunteering to do that, but what else they want to get out of that opportunity.

B: Is there a particular kind of young person who would volunteer for this kind of programme?

P: For that programme, no, we just see if they're 16-20 years old. It's up to them, really, what they want to get out of that. I mean, we're probably more likely to, you know, to market it towards young people who are interested in the health sector, you know, wanna gain some skills on their CV, are maybe interested in the community, interested in making sure it is young-people-friendly, or giving back to the community in some way, those sorts of things, yeah.

B: Do you feel that the youth of today are more community conscious than the years before?

P: I couldn't really say, I wouldn't want to say, in comparison to you know... I wouldn't want to really say. I think there's more awareness of lots of other things, but yeah I couldn't say.

A: Is there pressure on them to take part in things?

P: Is there pressure?

A: Yeah to take part in outside activities, because when...when I was in high school, there wasn't this pressure but once you come out of high school, you realise, I should have done something, that sort of feeling, is there a pressure there?

B: Like maybe when your beneficiaries go across these, like, transition points that you've mentioned earlier, were there some things that they realised, like, were out there that they had to do but they just didn't know about it?

P: Not that we're really hearing about them. I do think that, you know, at the moment, a lot of the pressure is on education and exams, so you know, that's what we do here, we do hear that they can't do anything because they're doing exams, or they're doing mock exams, or they're doing ... you know... so everything is kind of put on hold, because it's all about those exams, and practising and preparing for those exams. So I think... that's quite a lot of pressure.

B: Do you feel like there's a lack of family support, in that area, such that maybe your organisation has to step into to help them support them during these kind of difficult times? Like when they're going through a lot of stress?

P: I don't think it's necessarily a lack of family support - for some people it might be, but I don't think it's a generic stereotyping lack of family support. I think it's just, I think for some young people, they're going through whatever pressures they are going through, they want someone to be able to talk to. And they might have good family, or they might not. They might have good friend, or they might not. They might have a good teacher, or a good role model or whatever. So they might have these people in their lives, but what they do want is they want someone that is not linked to them in those ways. They want someone that you know is going to be confidential, that is someone not linked to their life, that they can talk to, that's gonna be professional, and not judge them that will be able to listen to them and support them. You know, and I think, it's sometimes because they don't have that support anywhere else? Sometimes they do, but sometimes they need someone who's not linked to them in that way.

A: Ok...

B: Is there anything else?

P: Ok, was that alright?

B: Yeah, that was very good

SPEAR TRUST June 9th

A: How does it change in terms what it takes to be employed?

P: Okay, I think that we work with a certain type of kind of...we got a certain population that we work with. Um so it's young people between 16-24 and we pick them from disadvantaged backgrounds. So I think the key thing for them is to know the expectations of the work place. Um, so we tell them things like heading into work five minutes early, being on time, dressing appropriately, to communicate proactively with your team members and be able to resolve conflict. So it's a lot of the mentality into getting into work

A: what does spear do specifically to help build soft skills?

P: um, so we start with a six week program called spear foundation and so we work with a trainees everyday from 2-5. So we look at a wide range of things. We do things such as with CVs, cover letters, job applications. We look at interview technique. We have ten work-ready indicators things like professional appearance, conflict resolution, and teamwork, response to authority, feedback, taking responsibility for your actions, managing your emotions. Over the six weeks we have these indicators to help our trainees develop in these areas... As I mentioned we look a lot at mentalities...like entitlement mentalities and come against that.

A: How do you think Spear has changed over the years to adapt to the changing job market?

P: We adapt our curriculum a lot, looking at what our target population needs and what employers...we also work a lot with employers. We have an employer team...we partner with John moss and Marc spector and go train their managers, to help with their retention of staff. Along with that we ask them 'what are you looking for?' and that how we came up with the indicators to make sure our trainees are work ready and employers are going to want to employ them. We do a lot of work with apprenticeships as well, apprenticeships have become a lot more important as well. In the last ten years, so we looked at how people access those [apprenticeships]...because that's a really good way to develop work experience and also get any qualifications as well.

A: Do you think that there's any difference in terms of advantage have when they grow up in London in terms of doing better in their career progression as compared to someone who grew up outside of London?

P: Um, that's an interesting one. I think it's hard to say if they do have an advantage because a lot of them are disadvantaged. I grew up in Ireland...there are more jobs here, so there's an advantage here.

A: Do you think employers place greater emphasis on soft skills rather than technical skills in the past few years?

P: Yeah that's a good question. For entry level roles, they look at more soft skills.

A: That's all the questions we need to ask. Thank you so much, it has been helpful.

Appendix C: Credential Inflation Index

This paper also aims to measure the level of credential inflation, which results from higher competition among more highly qualified workers as educational attainment has increased over the years without a corresponding increase in jobs requiring these qualifications. For these purposes, we have created the Credential Inflation Index (*CII*), which is defined as such:

$$CII = \frac{\text{"Higher Qualifications"}}{\text{"Higher Jobs"}}$$

“*Higher Qualifications*” will be defined as the percentage of the London or UK workforce with National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) of level 4 and above. These will include workers with higher education qualifications from tertiary institutions, or those with higher apprenticeship experience³.

“*Higher Jobs*” will be defined as the percentage of the London or UK workforce who fit into the following occupation types, as defined by the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Hierarchy: (1) Managers, Directors and Senior officials; (2) Professional occupations; (3) Associate Professional and Technical occupations; (4) Administrative and Secretarial occupations⁴. These occupation types were chosen as a proxy measure for the number of jobs that require higher qualifications as opposed to more menial and manual jobs of other categories.

By comparing the relative proportions of workers of higher qualifications and jobs requiring higher qualifications, we aim to measure the level of competition and hence control for any absolute change in workforce numbers. The index will then be used to compare the credential inflation in London and the UK in general from 2004 to 2015.

³ The figures for qualifications for 2004 – 2015 will be taken from “Qualifications of Working Age Population (NVQ), Borough” as compiled by the Office for National Statistics.

⁴ The figures will be taken from “Employment Rates by Occupation Type and Gender, Borough” as compiled by the Office for National Statistics.

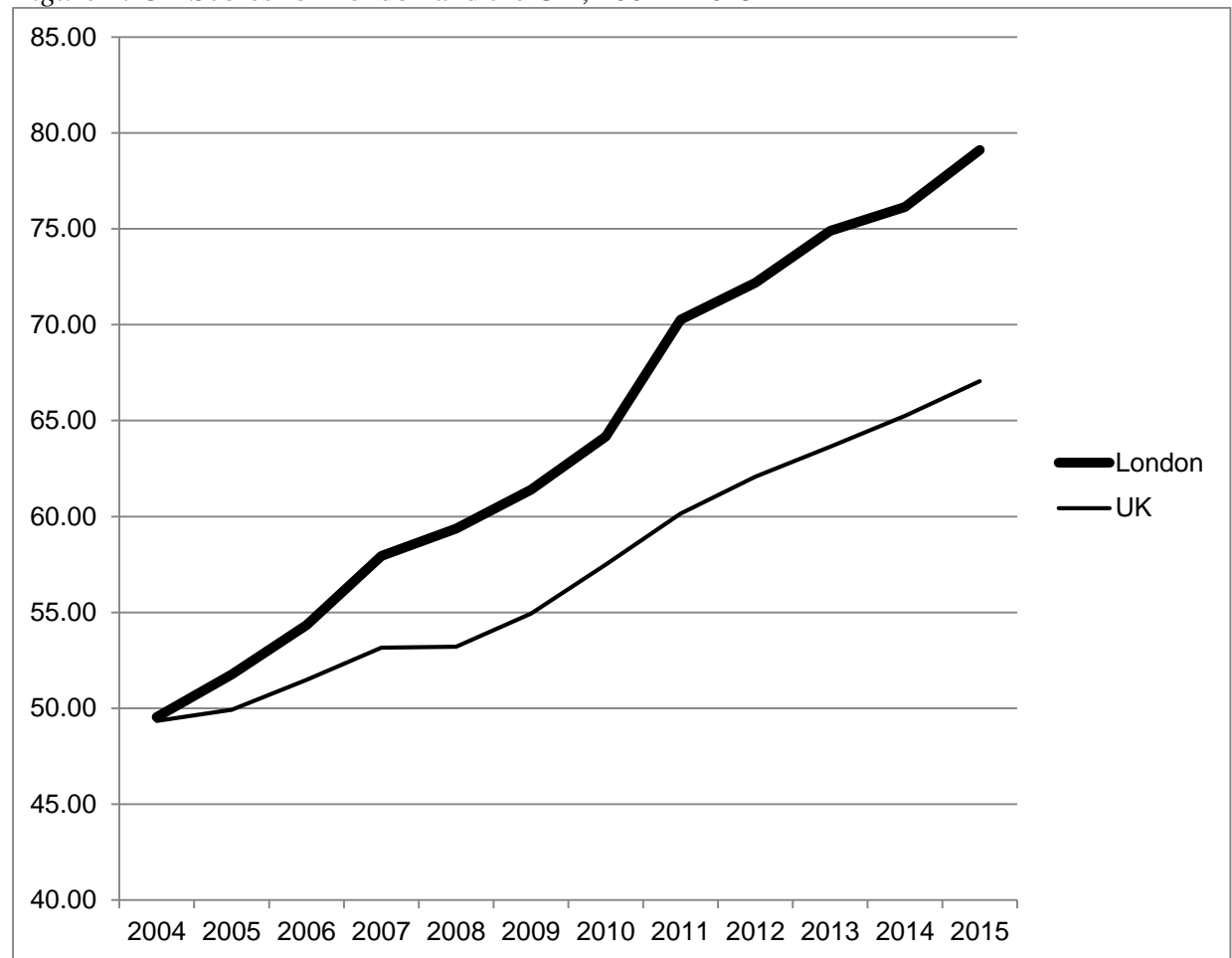
Table 5. Higher Jobs, Total Jobs, Higher Jobs as a percentage of total jobs in London and the United Kingdom.

Year	<i>Higher Jobs</i>		Total Jobs		<i>Higher Jobs as %</i>	
	London	UK	London	UK	London	UK
2004	2,240,600	14,850,700	3,479,400	28,183,100	64.40	52.69
2005	2,287,800	15,138,400	3,514,600	28,518,900	65.09	53.08
2006	2,301,200	15,339,400	3,573,400	28,823,200	64.40	53.22
2007	2,340,000	15,609,200	3,654,700	29,120,500	64.03	53.60
2008	2,389,900	15,680,700	3,743,700	29,273,800	63.84	53.57
2009	2,401,300	15,594,500	3,751,900	28,847,600	64.00	54.06
2010	2,422,000	15,622,300	3,771,800	28,883,100	64.21	54.09
2011	2,485,600	15,737,600	3,855,500	29,034,700	64.47	54.20
2012	2,565,400	16,030,900	3,940,200	29,272,000	65.11	54.77
2013	2,612,000	16,268,700	4,041,900	29,665,000	64.62	54.84
2014	2,705,300	16,607,400	4,195,200	30,269,600	64.49	54.86
2015	2,720,800	17,016,300	4,313,500	30,922,200	63.08	55.03

Table 6. NVQ4+ as % of workforce, CII scores in London and the United Kingdom

Year	NVQ4+ as %		CII Scores	
	London	UK	London	UK
2004	31.9	26	49.54	49.34
2005	33.7	26.5	51.77	49.92
2006	35.0	27.4	54.35	51.49
2007	37.1	28.5	57.94	53.17
2008	37.9	28.5	59.37	53.21
2009	39.3	29.7	61.40	54.94
2010	41.2	31.1	64.16	57.50
2011	45.3	32.6	70.27	60.14
2012	47.0	34	72.19	62.08
2013	48.4	34.9	74.90	63.64
2014	49.1	35.8	76.14	65.25
2015	49.9	36.9	79.11	67.06

Figure 1. CII Scores for London and the UK, 2004 – 2015



This graph shows an increase in credential inflation across the UK and especially in London.

Appendix D: Inter-coder Reliability Datasets

‘1’: Identification of theme

‘0’: No identification of theme

Credential Inflation

	Neethi	Andrew	Hanqing	Neil	Darren	Yes	No
1	1	0	0	0	0	1	4
2	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
3	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
4	0	1	0	0	0	1	4
5	1	1	1	0	0	3	2
6	1	1	1	1	1	5	0
7	1	1	1	0	0	3	2
8	1	1	1	1	1	5	0
9	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
10	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
11	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
12	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
13	1	1	1	1	1	5	0
14	0	0	0	0	0	0	5

Job Market

	Neethi	Andrew	Hanqing	Neil	Darren	Yes	No
1	1	1	1	1	1	5	0
2	1	1	1	1	1	5	0
3	1	0	1	0	0	2	3
4	1	1	1	1	1	5	0
5	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
6	1	1	1	1	1	5	0
7	1	0	1	1	0	3	2
8	1	1	1	1	1	5	0
9	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
10	1	1	1	1	1	5	0
11	1	1	1	1	1	5	0
12	1	0	1	1	1	4	1
13	1	1	1	1	1	5	0
14	0	0	0	0		0	5

Soft Skills

	Neethi	Andrew	Hanqing	Neil	Darren	Yes	No
1	1	1	1	1	1	5	0
2	1	1	1	1	1	5	0
3	1	1	0	1	1	4	1
4	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
5	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
6	1	1	1	1	1	5	0
7	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
8	1	1	1	1	1	5	0
9	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
10	1	1	0	1	1	4	1
11	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
12	1	1	0	1	1	4	1
13	0	0	0	1	0	1	4
14	0	0	0	0		0	5

Family Upbringing and Connections

	Neethi	Andrew	Hanqing	Neil	Darren	Yes	No
1	1	1	0	1	0	3	2
2	1	0	1	1	0	3	2
3	1	1	1	1	1	5	0
4	1	1	1	1	1	5	0
5	1	1	1	1	1	5	0
6	1	1	1	1	1	5	0
7	1	1	1	1	1	5	0
8	1	1	1	1	1	5	0
9	0	0	0	1	0	1	4
10	1	1	1	1	1	5	0
11	1	1	1	1	1	5	0
12	1	1	1	1	1	5	0
13	1	1	1	0	1	4	1
14	0	0	0	0	0	0	5