

Age in Focus

This report is focusing on employment, unemployment and qualification opportunities with relation to the age of residents and workers in Waltham Forest

1. Summary

- Waltham Forest has a young population, with an above UK average 20-39 age ranges and a below UK average 45-84 age ranges
- The unemployment rate is higher for the younger population (9% for male 17 year olds and 9.1% for male 19 year olds compared to 4% 40-45 year old males)
- There are predictable patterns in economic activity and inactivity by age, with more young (16-24) and older (60+) residents being economically inactive, often due to full-time study or retirement
- Other patterns include the number of self-employed people increases with age; the number of people looking after a family is mainly between the ages of 20-59; the number of people economically inactive due to sickness and disability increases with age
- The majority of industries have a low proportion of youngsters working in them. The exceptions are wholesale, retail and repair (probably mainly the retail sector), which employ 46.8% of the working 16-17 age range and 38.1% of the working 18-19 year olds. The hotel and restaurant sector also employs above average young people (10% of the 16-19 age range)
- There is higher than average numbers of 25-29 year olds employed in both financial intermediation and real estate, renting and business activities (9.5% and 20.4% respectively)
- There is a need to establish whether these age differences within sectors have occurred through choice, or whether there are barriers to inclusion as a result of age, perhaps lack of experience, qualification or training.
- As would be expected the number of managers, professional and technical occupations are lower in the younger age ranges, and increase after 24
- Other patterns include skilled trades remain constant after 24; it is the young (16-19) and old (60+) who are mainly involved in elementary occupations, there are larger numbers of 16-24 age range involved in personal, customer and sales occupations
- The 6-15 hours per week category is the most popular with 16-19 year olds, this is in keeping with a weekend or evening part-time job around study. The numbers employed 16-30 hours per week in contrast increases with age, implying part-time work as a career around perhaps caring responsibilities
- 'No qualification' attainment increases with age, to a high for the 70-74 age group of 73.4%
- The age range with the highest qualifications (level 4/5) are the 20-39 age ranges
- Care needs to be taken when comparing education attainment by age due to the restriction of age on gaining the higher qualifications

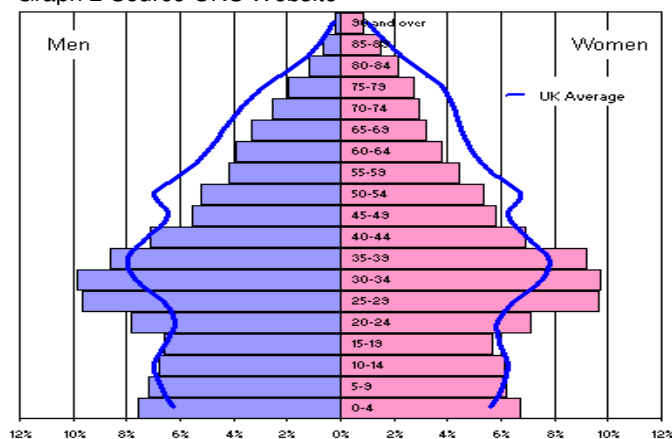
2. Population

2.1 As table 1 and graph 1 highlights there is an above UK average 20-39 age-range and a below UK average 45-84 age range in Waltham Forest. This highlights that the population of Waltham Forest has an above UK average population of younger potentially economically active people.

Table 3 Waltham Forest population by gender
Source ONS crown copyright 2001 Census

Age Range	Total	Males	Females
0 – 4	15541	8038	7503
5-9	14603	7649	6954
10-14	14017	7177	6840
15 – 19	13358	7018	6340
20 – 24	16294	8289	8005
25 – 29	21040	10254	10786
30 – 34	21358	10454	10904
35 – 39	19471	9175	10296
40 – 44	15334	7576	7758
45 – 49	12395	5884	6511
50 – 54	11530	5537	5993
55 – 59	9470	4469	5001
60 – 64	8404	4188	4216
65 – 69	7103	3528	3575
70 – 74	5991	2733	3258
75 – 79	5182	2104	3078
80 – 84	3673	1246	2427
85 – 89	2376	688	1688
90 and over	1201	238	963
Totals	218341	106245	112096
Percentage of Waltham Forest Population		48.7%	51.3%

Graph 2 Source ONS Website



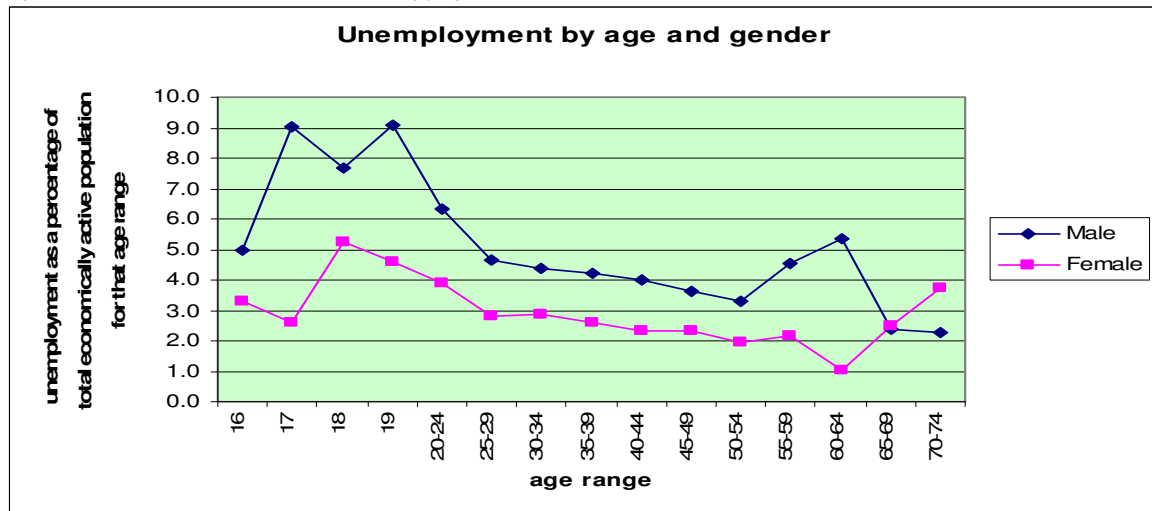
3. Unemployment

3.1 The unemployment rate for men is higher than the female rate across all age ranges, apart from the 65-74 age range¹. Unemployment is higher for the younger population, especially the 17-24 age range and then decreases at similar rates for both sexes. There is a slight increase in unemployment for both sexes in the 30-34 age range and this could be due to temporary unemployment when workers change career or jobs. The other increase in unemployment is in the male population 55-64 and in females 65-74. Further analysis will be needed to understand why unemployment occurs after retirement age. Figures from the GLA January 2003-December 2003 survey illustrates that it is the younger generations, and men, who are the highest proportion of Jobseeker Allowance claimants, with men from 16-24 accounting for 9% and women 16-19 8.4% of claims in 2003².

¹ for further detailed analysis of employment by gender contact Sam Weiss for the Gender in Focus report 2004.

² for GLA table please refer to the August Economic Profile report by contacting Sam Weiss Ext 6379

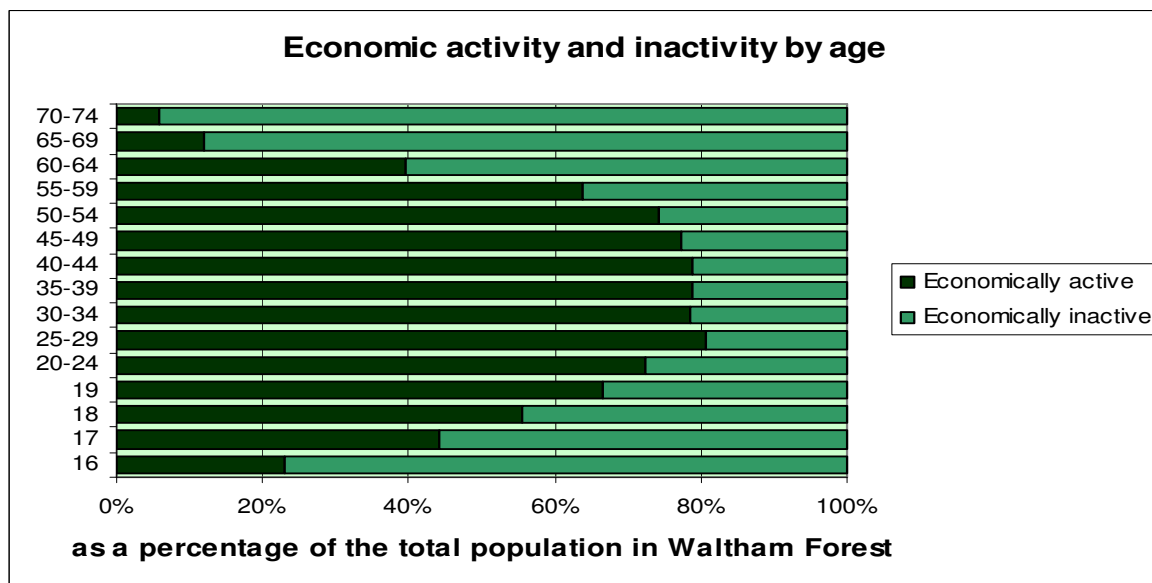
Graph 2 Source ONS crown copyright Census 2001



4. Employment

4.1 As graph 3 highlights there is a significant pattern of activity by age, with economic activity increasing from a low of 0.4% at 16 to a high plateau after 24 (around 9%). Economic inactivity increases again gradually after 29 and dramatically at retirement age, around 60. However to understand economic activity and inactivity by age more fully closer analysis is needed.

Graph 3 Source ONS crown copyright Census 2001



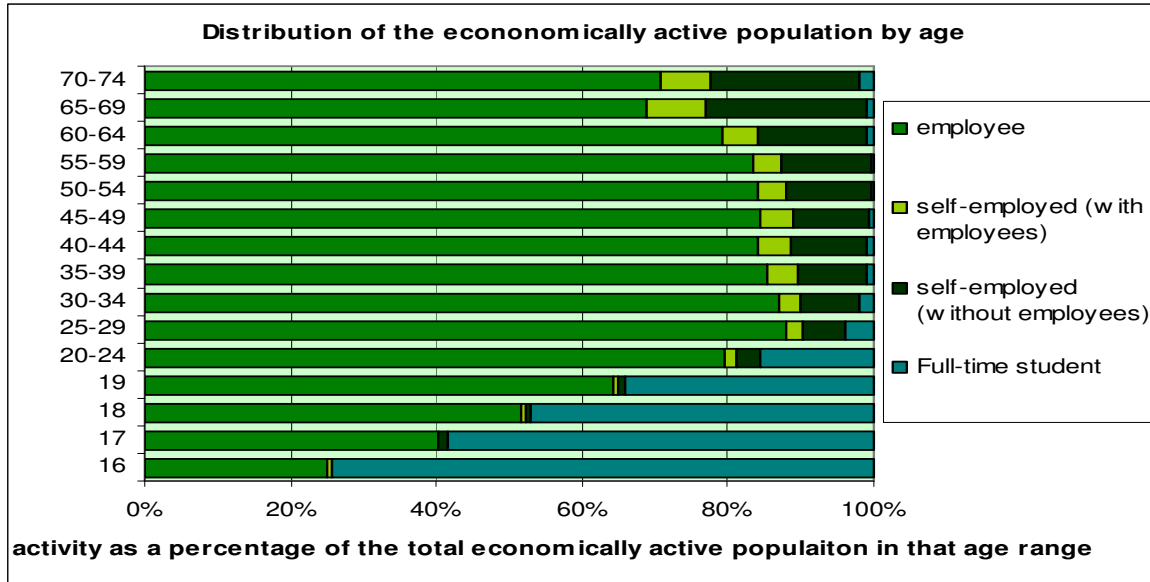
4.2 As graph 4 illustrates employment as an employee (as apposed to self-employed) increases with age up until 29. Then there is a general leveling off, and a gradual decline as age progresses and then a sharp decline at retirement age (65). There are a few anomalies in the employee section of economic activity, namely the slight decline after 34 in employee activity, and the slight increase in employee activity in the 70-74 age bracket. These anomalies can be explained by the fact that these figures are a percentage of the total economically active population in that age group, therefore with the decline in other activities (such as students) or the increase in other activities (such as self-employment) employee percentage rates will be affected accordingly.

4.3 The gradual decrease of employees as age increases can be explained by the increase in self-employed businesses with age; therefore taking people out of the employee

category. It is understandable that the number of self-employed businesses increase with age, because of the need for experience, knowledge and capital to make such a venture viable. The number of self-employed businesses with employees increases with age, again this reflects the growing confidence and need for extra workers that comes with age, of not just the owner but of the business as well.

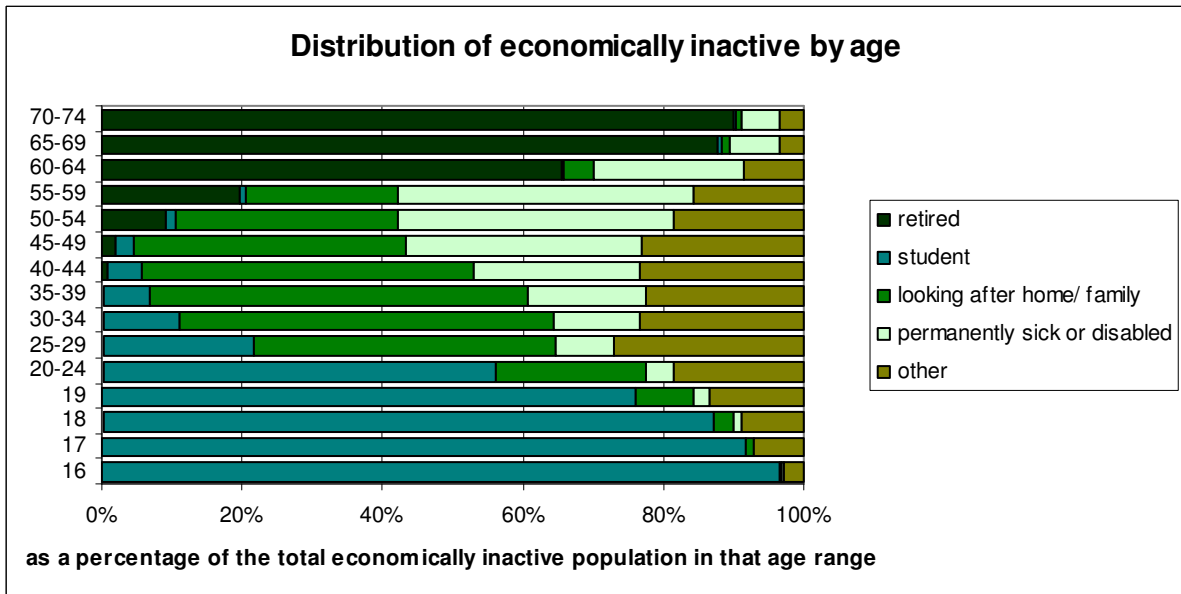
4.4 It is also predictable that the highest number of students should be in the 16-24 age range, and that there should be a dramatic decline after 24, which is normally the end of formal education after University.

Graph 4 Source ONS crown copyright Census 2001



4.5 As graph 5 highlights the general patterns of economically inactive activities also vary with age. With the largest number of students being of a younger age (16- 24) and the majority of 60+ being retired. Looking after a family is undertaken in the mid-stages of life, which relates to child rearing ages of 25-50. The numbers who are permanently sick/ or disabled increase with age, this would be expected due to increase in age and vulnerability to both diseases and accidents.

Graph 5 Source ONS crown copyright Census 2001



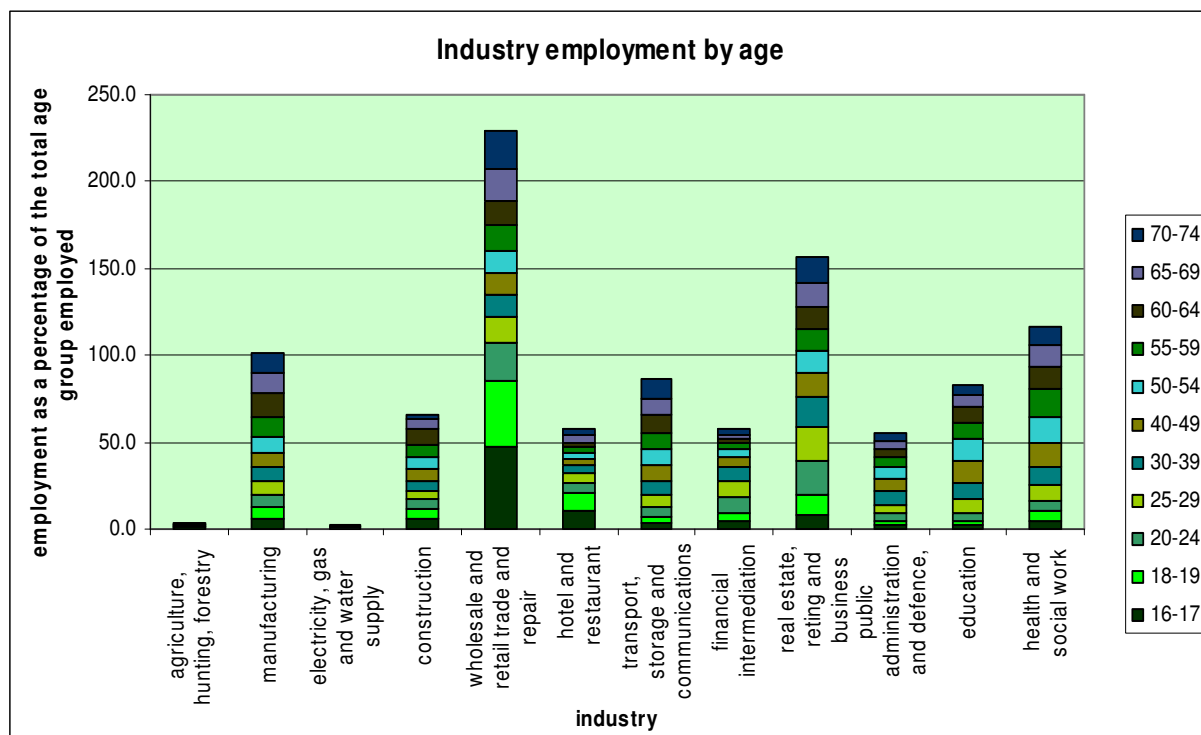
4.6 As highlighted in graph 6 although employment follows fairly similar patterns by age and industry. In general it is the 40-59 age range that has the most number of workers in an industry. The younger age groups and 70-74 age ranges often have the lowest, however there are some figures that stick out and warrant attention.

4.7 There is a higher number of 16-19 year olds employed in the wholesale, retail and repair sector, making up the majority of this age ranges' employment; it can be assumed that the majority of these jobs are in retail, there is also a larger number of 70-74 age range employed in this sector. The hotel and restaurant sector also has a slightly higher proportion of 16-19 year olds, probable jobs could include waiting tables and bar work. In both the hotel and restaurant sector and the retail sector the flexibility of shift work, the availability of these jobs, and the lack of qualification needed makes them good holiday, part-time and weekend jobs (section 7 will look at this in more detail).

4.8 By contrast the transport, storage and communications sector, real estate and health and social work all have much lower levels of employment in the 16-19 age range possibly due to the need for higher qualification, which this age group is not yet old enough to obtain.

4.9 Two other anomalies are the larger employment numbers of the 25-39 age range in both real estate, renting and business services and financial intermediation. The other anomaly is the much lower numbers of 70-74 employed in the construction industry, but this is understandably due to the physical nature of this employment, therefore not possible for workers of an older age.

Graph 6 Source ONS crown copyright Census 2001



5. Occupations

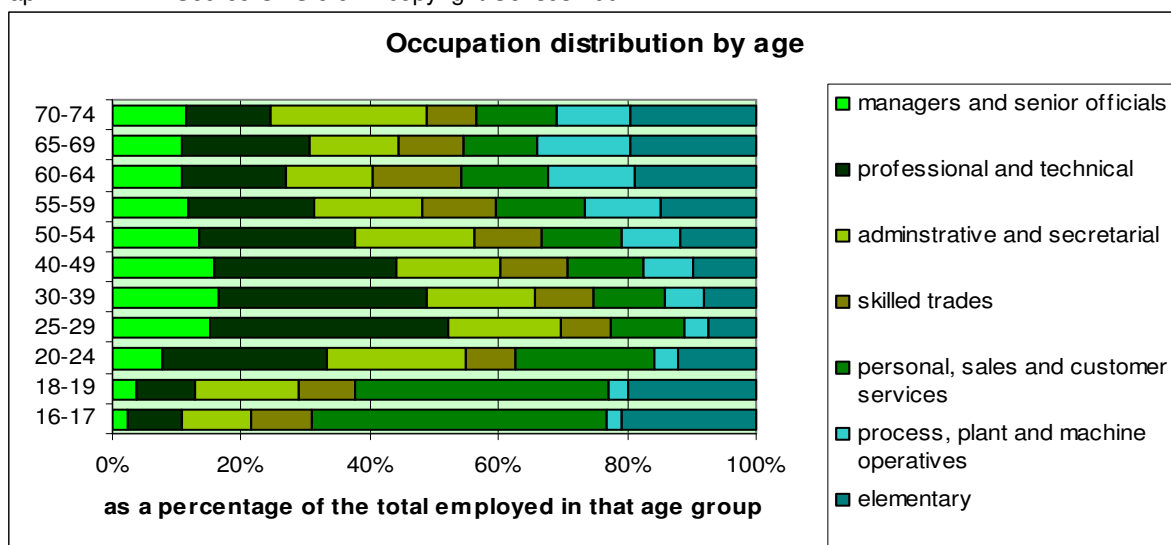
5.1 As Graph 7 below highlights there are differences in occupation distribution by age. As would be expected, due to lack of experience and/or qualifications, the numbers of managers and professional and technical occupations is lowest for the 16-24 year olds (2.4% and 8.4% for 16-17 year olds); but the 25-29 age bracket has the most professionals (37.1%), and the 30-39 year olds have the most managers, at 32%. The 20-24 and 70-74 age range have the largest proportion of workers employed in the administrative and secretarial occupations, possibly due to the non-physical and

flexible hours of these occupations for the elderly (24.3%), and the first rung on a career ladder for the younger workers (21%).

5.2 It is the younger age range (16-24) who are most employed in personal, sales and customer services (45.8%, 39.5% and 21.5% for the 16-17, 18-19 and 20-24 age ranges), and this could represent the large numbers of younger workers in retail and catering (graph 6). Skilled trade is relatively stable across all the age ranges, therefore suggesting once workers have gained skilled qualifications (between 20 and 24) they remain in that occupation until 60+.

5.3 The 16-19 age range, and the 60-74 age range are the ones most occupied in elementary occupations, again representing the ease of employment as no experience or qualifications are needed, plus the flexibility of these jobs for additional income, either to subsidise a pension, or as a holiday, weekend or part-time job for younger workers.

Graph 7 Source ONS crown copyright Census 2001



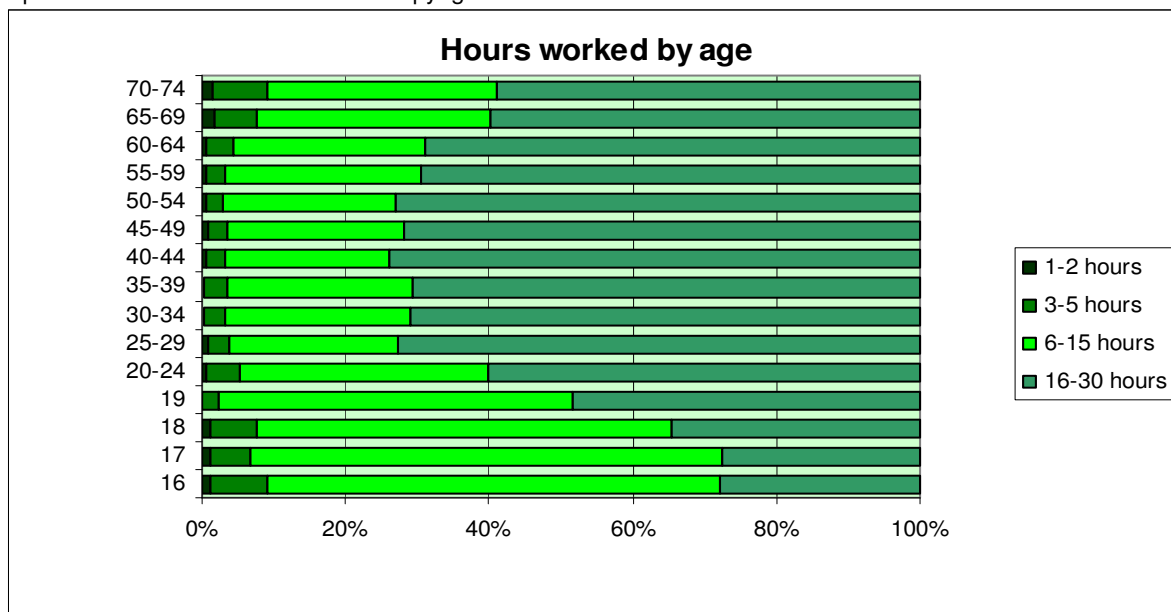
6. Part-time hours worked

6.1 Due to the complexity of part-time and holiday work, especially with the younger age ranges, it is interesting to see how the hours worked is affected by age.

6.2 The rate of people working 1-5 hours per week is very low, probably due to the fact that working 1-5 hours a week will not provide enough money. There are slightly higher numbers working 3-5 hours in the 16 and 70-74 age ranges.

6.3 The two largest groups are those who work 6-15 hours and those who work 16-30 hours. There are higher rates of people working 6-15 hours per week in the 16-19 age range, suggesting a weekend, or evening job, the 6-15 hours a week group declines after 17, perhaps suggesting an increase the hours worked with age, or leaving part-time employment either to go to university or to get a full-time job. At the same time as the 6-15 hours per week group declines the 16-30 hours per week group increases. This suggests workers who are working part-time in a career, as a second wage earner or perhaps caring for the family, therefore explaining the increase to a relatively steady rate around 70% between the ages of 25-54. After 64 the numbers working 16-30 hours a week decline, and the numbers working 6-15 hours a week increase, this could be the older workers reducing their hours from 16-30 hours down to 6-15 hours a week.

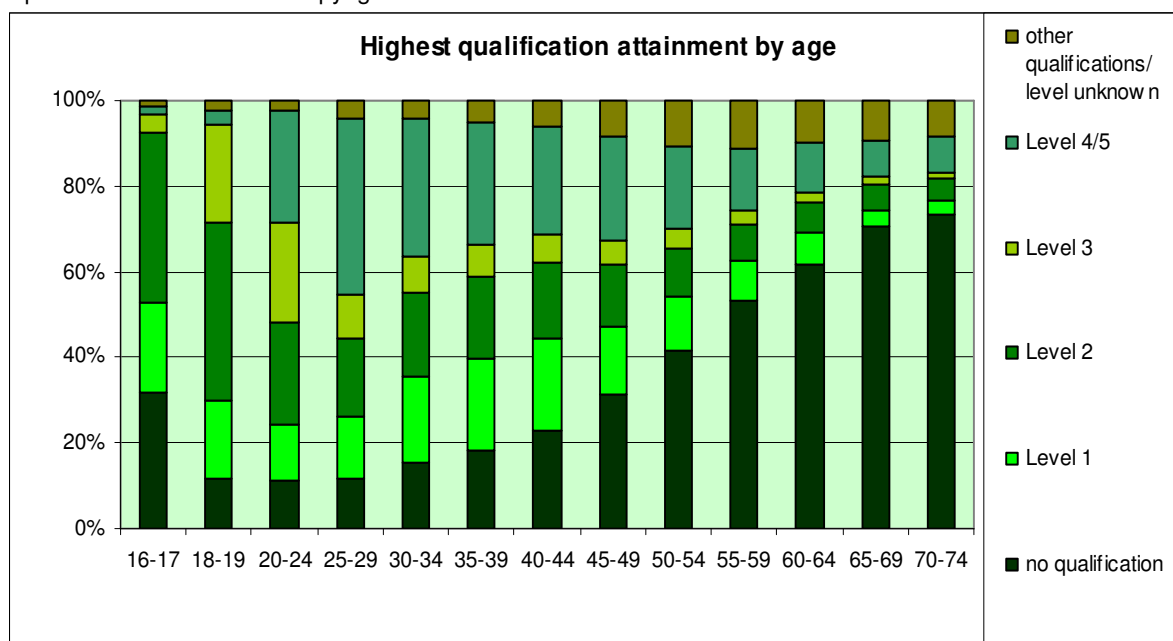
Graph 9 Source ONS crown copyright Census 2001



6. Qualifications

- 6.1 As graph 8 below highlights 'no qualifications' attainment increase as age increases, and that the highest attainment age (level 4/5) is the 25-29 age group. It has to be noted that judging qualification attainment by age does not give a full picture as age can be a limiting factor to higher-level attainment, i.e. level 2 is the highest the 16-17 age range can achieve due to their young age. In the 20-24 age bracket only 75% of that age group can achieve level 4/5 (as most people attain level 4/5 after the age of 21 or above) whereas 100% of the older age groups have had sufficient time to obtain level 4/5 (see box 1 for level definitions). Therefore care needs to be taken when comparing age ranges for qualification attainment.
- 6.2 An important point to note is that the 16-17 age range have a high 'no qualification' rate (31.6%), further research would have to be undertaken to ascertain what the cause of this lack of achievement is. The 18-19 age range has the lowest no qualification rate. No qualification attainment then increases; the increase gets more pronounced as age increase, to a high of 73.4% for the 70-74 age range. This increase could reflect the change in skills and education over the years, from children leaving school at 15 and gaining on the job training and knowledge, but no formal qualifications, to a move of increased university attendance.
- 6.3 the 20-24, 25-29, 30-34 and 35-39 age ranges have the highest numbers achieving level 4/5 (23.1%, 41.2%, 32.5% and 28.4% respectively) perhaps showing a change in attitude towards higher education since the 1970s.
- 6.4 It can be seen that as higher qualifications such as level 4/5 or level 3 increase the numbers achieving lower levels decrease. This does not reflect low achievement however, on the contrary graph 8 shows the highest qualification attained, therefore because more people are achieving level 4/5 this moves them from lower qualification bands into the higher band, as you have to achieve levels 1-3 before being able to attain level 4/5.
- 6.5 The 'other' qualifications attainment increases with age as well, perhaps highlighting how older age ranges obtained different qualifications not listed on the Census form.

Graph 8 Source ONS crown copyright Census 2001



Box 1 Source ONS Census 2001 Crown Copyright

Level 1: 1+ 'O' level passes, 1+ CSE/GCSE any grades, NVQ level 1, Foundation GNVQ
Level 2: 5+ 'O' level passes, 5+ CSEs (grade 1) 5+ GCSEs (grades A-C), School Certificate, 1+'A' levels/ AS levels, NVQ level 2, Intermediate GNVQ
Level 3: 2+ 'A' levels, 4+ AS levels, Higher School certificate, NVQ level 3, Advanced GNVQ
Level 4/5: First degree, Higher degree, NVQ levels 4 and 5, HNC, HND, Qualified Teacher status, Qualified Medical Doctor, Qualified Dentist, Qualified Nurse, Midwife, Health Visitor

8. Additional information

8.1 A survey carried out by solicitors Eversheds in 2004 has found that 48% of respondents over the age of 45 felt they had been sidelined in the working environment because of their age, while 58% of those aged between 16 and 24 felt they had been treated unfairly because of their age or lack of experience; only a fifth of companies banned using age as a criterion when recruiting; and 75% of employees were against a compulsory retirement age.

8.2 Information from Age positive and the DFES support some of the findings of this report:

Statistics from Age positive www.agepositive.gov.uk

- Currently just over 6 million people aged between 50 and state pension age are in employment - an employment rate of 69%
- Since 1997 the employment rate of older people has risen faster than that of the working age population as a whole.
- Older workers are more likely to work part time and/or be self-employed.
- People aged between 50 and State Pension Age have less qualifications (24%) than those aged 25-49 (12%). Older people in general have fewer qualifications than their younger counterparts. They are more than twice as likely to have no formal qualifications.

New Legislation in 2006 (Age Positive)

- This legislation will cover age discrimination in employment and vocational training and will be in place by late 2006.
- Employers, both in the public and private sectors, will have to adopt age positive practices. They generally will no longer be able to recruit, train, promote or retire people on the basis of age.

- For young workers this should open up more opportunities in work particularly as training and promotion opportunities will not be limited to seniority.
- For older workers this should open up new opportunities in competing for jobs, and in staying in work longer.
- It is likely that compulsory retirement ages will be unlawful, except where employers can show they are objectively justified. They will have the opportunity to stay in work longer, as long as they remain able.

DFES commitment www.dfes.gov.uk

- The Government is committed to encouraging more students to continue in education and training, and to raise attainment levels.
- The provision of learner support funding that supports access to and participation in further education is a key element in the Department's strategy to achieve these objectives and will also help in tackling social exclusion and providing equal opportunities.

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