



Aligning the Polytechnic Provision of CET with SkillsFuture:

*Meeting Learners' and
Employers' Needs*

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Research Bulletin 1:

*Perspectives on effective and accessible CET
provisions and effective CET teachers*



Introduction to project

As occupational roles transform and workplace requirements change, there is a need for all kinds and classes of Singaporean workers to sustain their employability across lengthening working lives. Such is the extent of the learning required for this employability that continuing education and training (CET) for those of working age is becoming a national and personal priority. This requires specific kinds of educational support and interventions.

A key goal for Singapore is to identify how its post-secondary educational institutions (PSEIs), that primarily provide pre-employment education and training (PET), can now contribute to this national agenda through effective CET provisions.

These educational provisions may be different from much of the curriculum, instructional strategies, and expertise used within PET. CET learners will mostly be experienced and competent adults who want to secure advancements in their work, learn more about their occupations, or transfer to new ones. They will often be more occupationally or workplace experienced and have greater access to current occupational and work practices than many PSEI teachers. Also, with demanding work lives and family commitments, adult learners need to engage with CET provisions and their teachers differently than those in PET programmes. Yet, CET provisions are far from new for the PSEIs and their staff. Many have long offered specialist diplomas to working-age Singaporeans.

The SkillsFuture agenda for employability-related CET across the Singaporean workforce suggests that there is a need to know how best to provide CET programmes to meet individual needs and abilities for them to participate and fulfil the kinds of workplace requirements that can sustain their employability.

The bulletin

This bulletin reports the data and initial findings including those on the qualities of (i) an effective and accessible CET provision, and (ii) effective CET teachers.

Key questions

The research questions guiding this project are:

1. What are the learning needs and requirements of adults in Singapore to remain employable across lengthening working lives?
2. What kinds of curriculum models, practices, and pedagogic strategies will best meet the needs of these learners?
3. How can the educational capacities required to meet these needs be developed within and across the PSEIs?
4. How should adult Singaporeans come to engage in the task of securing their employability?

Phases of the project

The project has three phases:

Phase 1

Interviews with and survey completion by CET graduates from programmes offered through the PSEIs and other providers (n = 180)

Interviews with and survey completion by employers (n = 40) familiar with programmes offered through PSEIs.

Phase 2

National survey (n = 1019 as at 17 February 2020) validating, extending, and augmenting Phase 1 findings.

Phase 3

Workshops identifying how PSEIs and adult educators can design and implement curriculum, and the pedagogies that meet working-age Singaporeans' needs and the requirements of their current or future workplaces.

Intended outcomes

Key goals for informing policy and practice in PSEIs within SkillsFuture Singapore's adopted approach about:

- i. what comprises accessible and effective CET provisions for working-age Singaporeans;
- ii. what comprises effective teaching for working-age Singaporeans; and
- iii. how these Singaporeans might come to engage effectively in CET provisions and teaching.

Participants in Phase 1 and 2

The Phase 1 interviewees comprised 180 individuals who had graduated from CET programmes within 4 years from the time of the study, and 40 employers who are familiar with CET programmes. The graduates comprised 63% male (n = 112) and 33% female (n = 64) interviewees, who have a range of educational backgrounds. However, these informants have more years of schooling than the Singapore mean, i.e., 11.2 years. They are employed from across a range of industry sectors, but predominately from education, health, and professional services. The Phase 2 survey respondents (n = 1,019) are more balanced, comprising 55% males and 45% females (males = 470, female = 386; 163 respondents did not indicate their gender). They are more highly qualified than the adult Singaporean population and mainly work as professionals, managers, executives, and technicians (PMET). Of these respondents, 66% reported having engaged in CET programmes, overwhelmingly (85% of them) through public providers (e.g., PSEIs).

Why graduates participated in CET courses

Phase 1 interviewees reported three main purposes or motivations to participate in CET:

Personal – Professional motivations (n = 76) the majority of these 178 graduates report a combination of personal and professional improvements as their key motivation.

Personal motivation (n = 61) interviewees referred to their motivation to learn, out of beliefs about lifelong learning.

Professional motivation (n = 37) some interviewees reported wanting to acquire knowledge related to their occupation or for the purpose of a potential career switch.

Table 1 presents the reasons informants gave in Phases 1 and 2 for engaging in CET. The Phase 2 responses are ranked downwards and the overall responses in Phase 1 are refined by the first most ranked motivation.

Table 1: Reasons for participating in CET

Motivations to engage in CET	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 2 top ranked
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
To increase my knowledge or skills	147 (18)	492 (48.3)	56 (11.8)
To do my job better	59 (7)	464 (45.6)	71 (14.9)
To obtain a certificate	34 (4)	460 (41.8)	39 (8.2)
To improve career prospects	34 (4)	372 (36.5)	34 (7.2)
Keep my job	106 (13)	320 (31.4)	53 (11.2)
Increasing possibility of employment	183 (22)	250 (24.5)	59 (12.4)
I was obliged to engage (job)	58 (7)	225 (22.1)	58 (12.2)
To change a job or profession	53 (6)	209 (20.6)	71 (14.9)
To start my own business	23 (3)	118 (11.6)	23 (4.8)
Government subsidy	121 (15)		11 (2.3)

Overall, most CET graduates report personal and professional reasons, often associated with employability; that is, securing employment, shifting to new employment, or advancing within existing employment.

Phase 2 respondents ranked their purposes similarly:

- i. increase my knowledge or skills on subject that interests me (48.3%);
- ii. do my job better (45.6%);
- iii. obtain a certificate (41.8%);
- iv. improve career prospects (36.5%);
- v. keep my job (31.4%);
- vi. increase my possibilities for getting a job (24.5%);
- vii. was obliged to participate to remain employable (22.1%);
- viii. change job or profession (20.6%); and
- ix. start own business (11.6%)

The reasons provided by respondents on why they invested time and resources in their CET courses were quite consistent across the two phases.

What inhibited CET participation

The Phase 1 interviewees reported factors that inhibit their participation. These are commonly external environmental factors such as work commitments, travel time, family commitments, cost, and access to venues, as indicated in Table 2. It is noteworthy that time associated with work and travel are the most frequently mentioned impediments. For instance, Phase 1 informants advised they spent on average almost 1.5 hours travelling per day to and from work.

Table 2: Factors inhibiting CET participation

Venue	Fees	Family care	Travel time	Job
30	32	43	61	71
(8.8%)	(9.4%)	(12.6%)	(18%)	(20.9%)

Phase 2 respondents ranked their purposes similarly:

- i. increase my knowledge or skills on subject that interests me (48.3%);
- ii. do my job better (45.6%);
- iii. obtain a certificate (41.8%);
- iv. improve career prospects (36.5%);
- v. keep my job (31.4%);
- vi. increase my possibilities for getting a job (24.5%);
- vii. was obliged to participate to remain employable (22.1%);
- viii. change job or profession (20.6%); and
- ix. start own business (11.6%)

The first four most frequent responses refer, firstly, to demands of work (suggesting a need to consider how work and CET can be combined), and three associated with knowledge about, convenience of, and suitability of courses. These are issues that can be addressed by PSEIs. Only 4.5% of respondents stated they did not see any benefit from training and 3.4% reported not needing CET.

Factors supporting completion

The factors sustaining interest and motivations to complete are largely personal or those arising from close associations, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Factors supporting completion

Employer	Friends	Family	Personal interest	Achieve goals
24	44	52	118	134
(4.7%)	(10.5%)	(12.4%)	(28.2%)	(32%)

Achieving purposes for participating

Of Phase 1 interviewees who had graduated from CET programmes within the past 4 years, a total of 35% reported fully achieving their purposes of participating in CET. When added to those who reported partially achieving those purposes, it equates to 87% of these interviewees. Whilst this is a positive finding, it also indicates that there is scope for improving the number of CET graduates who will report fully achieving their goals 4 years after completing their CET programme.

Table 4: Phase 1 – Achievement of purposes

Not at all	Partially not	Neutral	Partially achieved	Fully achieved
6	8	7	81	56
(3.8%)	(5.1%)	(4.4%)	(51.3)	(35.4%)

The Phase 2 survey respondents also indicated whether their work and personal goals had been achieved through CET; 91 % of informants agreed (slightly and strongly) that the CET programmes had been useful for improving their work performance, and 94% agreed (slightly and strongly) that participating in CET programmes had been helpful for their personal growth.



Table 5 : Phase 2 – Achievement of purposes

Motivations to engage in CET	Achieved	Not achieved
	<i>n (%)</i>	<i>n (%)</i>
To increase my knowledge or skills	486 (48.3%)	23 (4.4%)
To do my job better	458 (45.6%)	31 (3.1%)
To obtain a certificate	421 (41.85)	29 (2.9%)
To improve career prospects	366 (36.5%)	83 (8.2%)
To keep my job	317 (31.4%)	50 (4.9%)
To increase my possibilities of getting a job	248 (24.5%)	104 (10.3%)
To change a job or profession	205 (20.6%)	82 (12.2%)
I was obligated to engage (job)	225 (43.6%)	55 (10.6%)
To start my own business	117 (22.9%)	118 (23%)

Putting aside ‘obtaining a certificate’, which can be an inevitable outcome of completing a CET programme, the achievement of purposes for participating were well met. In particular, categories such as ‘increasing knowledge or skills on subjects that interest me’, ‘doing job better’, ‘improving career prospects’, and ‘keeping job’, were above 85% across partially and fully achieved.

CET provisions

Data were secured through participants’ perspectives on how CET programmes might be offered most effectively, attendance requirements, and assessment practices.

Effective delivery of CET course

Phase 1 informants advised that of the available means of providing CET, the combination of face-to-face (i.e., in class) and online was preferred over just face-to-face or just online, as indicated in Table 6.

Table 6 : Phase 1 – Effective CET provision

	Combination	Face-to-face	Online
<i>n (%)</i>	123 (77.8)	30 (19)	3 (1.9)

These informants referred to the importance of having opportunities to engage with the lecturer directly, to ask questions, to seek clarifications and to engage with their occupational and teaching expertise. They also emphasized the importance of engaging with peers to seek support, to clarify doubts, and to draw upon their experiences and understandings while sharing theirs with peers.

Many stated that the online provisions were helpful but needed to be augmented through real-time engagements with the teacher and peers. Many stated that although it was inconvenient and time-consuming to attend face-to-face meetings, these were important opportunities to engage with teachers and peers immediately after content was presented. However, there was a consensus that face-to-face sessions needed to be more than the teacher’s dissemination of knowledge. They needed to include opportunities for learners to engage with one another to discuss and compare responses to the content and its relevance and application to their workplaces and work situations.

Phase 2 respondents who have participated in CET report the combination of face-to-face and online is the most preferred approach, with face-to-face alone as a standalone experience as the next preferred mode of learning (Table 7).

7: Phase 2 – Effective CET provisions

Motivations to engage in CET	<i>n (%)</i>
Combination of face-to-face and online	459 (45.05)
Face-to-face	156 (15.3)
Online	171 (16.8)

Their justifications for rating highly the effectiveness of the combination of face-to-face and online provisions are ranked as follows:

- i. Assists in retention of learning through online and classroom learning (16%);
- ii. Permits continuation of classroom discussions online (14.8%);
- iii. Utilizes course materials online for preparation before class (13.3%);
- iv. Improves communication via offline and online methods (12.1%); and
- v. Caters directly to students’ learning needs in class (11.7%).

As with the Phase 1 interviewees, these respondents emphasized a range of qualities of effective CET provisions.

Both online and face-to-face experiences are effective in specific ways. Online CET was valued for ease of access to a range of content that is best represented through text and images and because it can provide access to additional materials. It was also valued for structuring the programme through its organization and its capacity to revisit or engage proactively with the content. The face-to-face experiences were deemed to be helpful for interactions with teachers, gaining their insights, responses to questions, and feedback.

Engaging with peers was reported as being a very powerful means of supporting learning as it provides opportunities to:

- i. access others’ perceptions, experiences, and interpretations of the material being provided;
- ii. articulate, compare, and contrast what initial learners are experiencing, thereby actively engaging with the content;
- iii. share, compare, and contrast their experiences and secure guidance and support from peers, including testing and monitoring their initial learning; and
- iv. test the worth of content being presented by both teacher and peers, developing capacities for engaging with collaborative learning with others.

In summary, busy working Singaporeans’ work-life learning can be supported in specific ways by both online and face-to-face interactions and engagements. However, it is the effective combination of both platforms that makes educational material readily accessible and provides opportunities to extend the content to learners’ goals and circumstances, and through learning from those of others.

Preferred time for participating in CET

The Phase 2 respondents also indicated their preferred time for participating in CET programmes, and were given open choices to do so. There is no clear pattern, except to say that intensive all-day professional development of training sessions was the least preferred. Table 8 indicates the survey responses when the informants who had and had not participated in CET were able to choose multiple preferences. The most frequently preferred option was Flexible option, when both kinds of respondents were added. Yet, for some working-age adults, particularly those with young children, this option may be impractical.

Table 8: Preferred time for participating in CET

Preferred time for participating in a CET programme	<i>n</i> (%)
Flexible (e.g., online)	479 (47.05)
Evening classes	378 (37.1)
Daytime classes	305 (29.9)
Weekends	233 (22.9)
Intensive (all-day full-time training)	222 (21.8)

Also, for those working in the daytime, classes in the evenings can be problematic, despite the strong support here. As we know, the evening provision of CET suits many, but not all working-age Singaporeans. Hence, a variety of preferred times for offering CET provisions are likely required and there may well be particular preferences within occupational or student cohorts. However, overall, a knowledge of learners' preferences for engagement is important in advertising or promoting participation in CET.

Attendance requirements

Whether attendance at CET programmes should be voluntary or compulsory was much discussed in the Phase 1 interviews. For example,

"I still feel that all this attendance requirement is still good to, to get people really involved in the learning, not really come here to get a certificate and go out" – 620_2603

In Phase 2, respondents were specifically asked about this issue with 60.9% claiming it should be compulsory. The suggested level of compulsory attendance was 80% (for with which 76.3% agreed) and 50% (23.4% agreed) of the course. Most informants suggested it should be compulsory, and at a reasonably high level (80%), for the following reasons:

- i. Supporting and sustaining positive learning environment;
- ii. Instilling discipline;
- iii. Motivation to attend;
- iv. Facilitating good relations with classmates;
- v. Managing work commitments; and
- vi. Managing family commitments.

The first four of these reasons are associated with personal and collective engagement with the education provision and with peers attending. The other two are about management of external factors that might otherwise inhibit participation.

Assessment practices

In both phases, those informants who had experienced them, indicated the effectiveness of assessment practices used in CET. In the Phase 2 survey, the respondents indicated a strong preference for assessment formats that focused on the testing of recently learnt knowledge (i.e., quizzes) and the development of practical skills (Table 9)

Table 9: Effectiveness of assessment practices

	Phase 1		Phase 2	
	Ineffective <i>n</i> (%)	Effective <i>n</i> (%)	Ineffective <i>n</i> (%)	Effective <i>n</i> (%)
Practicals	3 (5.3)	92 (11.6)	14 (1.4)	449 (44.1)
Individual assignments	6 (10.5)	141 (17.8)	25 (2.5)	439 (43.0)
Presentation	6 (10.5)	125 (15.8)	28 (2.8)	434 (42.6)
Short tests/ Quizzes	4(7.0)	110 (13.9)	37 (3.7)	427 (41.9)
Practicums	4(7.0)	60 (7.6)	25 (2.5)	400 (39.2)
Portfolios	4(7.0)	56 (7.1)	45 (9.6)	390 (38.2)
Group assignments	16 (28.1)	100 (12.6)	92 (9.1)	366 (35.9)
Examinations	14 (24.6)	109 (13.7)	94 (9.2)	364 (35.7)

Perhaps the difference across these two groups is that the Phase 1 interviewees were those who had enjoyed success in CET programmes that used those particular forms of assessment. However, what is suggested by this is that assessment processes that are primarily to meet the imperatives of PSEIs (i.e., engaging students in school-like activities) may not be the most appropriate when there is a clear interface between the education provision and applications outside of it.

Qualities of effective CET educators

Participants in both Phases 1 and 2 were asked to indicate what they believed were the effective qualities of CET educators. In Phase 1 interviews, CET teachers and teaching are reported as being valued when they:

- i. provide relevant experiences for learners' needs and purposes (*n* = 138);
- ii. count for and are sensitive to students' readiness (*n* = 109);
- iii. make applicable the concepts (e.g., theories) they are advancing (i.e., teaching) (*n* = 109);
- iv. illustrate what is to be learnt and its purposes (e.g., examples, stories) (*n* = 98);
- v. assist meeting learners' purposes and needs by being flexible and adaptive with approaches to teaching and assessment (*n* = 72);
- vi. engage and utilise learners' experience and agency (*n* = 67);
- vii. engage interactively and reciprocally with learners (*n* = 67); and
- viii. demonstrate competence in the field in which are teaching (*n* = 84).

Central here is the ability to respond to questions and queries and to provide contextual, professional advice (rather than just teaching prepared material). Similar patterns were evident in Phase 2 responses. As indicated in Table 10, the survey respondents who had experienced CET programmes indicated those qualities that constituted effective CET teachers.



Table 10: Qualities of effective CET teachers

Important characteristics of CET teachers	<i>n</i> (%)
Having relevant industry experience to inform learners' needs and purposes	391 (38.4)
Being responsive to learners' needs and abilities	381 (37.4)
Engaging and utilizing learners' experiences and interests	357 (35.0)
Adopting flexible approaches to teaching and assessment that suits the learners' purposes and needs	271 (26.6)
Making concepts (e.g., theories) applicable through learning	248 (24.3)
Using interactive teaching processes (e.g., collaborative learning)	228 (22.4)
Illustrating what is to be learnt and its purposes (e.g., examples of stories)	179 (17.6)
Identifying and implementing effective teaching strategies for the content learnt	162 (15.9)

Firstly, teachers having relevant industry experience was valued, followed by pedagogic qualities associated with being responsive, engaging, and flexible as overall dispositions. Then, there were identified specific qualities of using pedagogic strategies effectively to facilitate conceptual knowledge (i.e., understanding), being interactive, encouraging collaboration, and having the background knowledge and experience of professional practice to be able to make links between what learners are learning in these courses and their potential application in workplace practices.

Finally, it was considered critical the teacher possesses a wide repertoire of teaching strategies to identify and align those most suitable with content that needs to be learnt.

In Phase 2, the respondents were able to indicate up to three of the most important of these characteristics. This included respondents who had participated in CET and those who had not. As indicated in Table 11, there are similar patterns in responses across the student cohorts of respondents.

Table 11: Characteristics of effective CET teachers

Characteristics of effective CET teachers	Did CET <i>n</i> (%)	Did not do CET <i>n</i> (%)
Being responsive to learners' needs and abilities	237 (44.7)	136 (51.1)
Engaging and utilizing learners' experiences and interests	234 (44.2)	110 (41.4)
Making concepts applicable through teaching	163 (30.8)	78 (29.3)
Using interactive teaching processes	145 (27.4)	78 (29.3)
Having relevant industry experiences to inform learners' needs and purposes	257 (48.5)	122 (45.9)
Illustrating what is to be learnt and its purposes	123 (23.2)	48 (18.0)
Identifying and implementing effective teaching strategies for the content learnt	107 (20.2)	53 (19.9)
Adopting flexible approaches to teaching and assessment that meet learners' purposes and needs	174 (32.8)	84 (31.6)

There is a strong emphasis in this listing of characteristics on engaging effectively with learners, understanding and responding to their needs and goals, and adapting the educational experience to meet them. These qualities predominate across both sets of informants. Perhaps a key distinction is that the Phase 1 informants, who had likely just completed their CET programmes, emphasized the importance of the teachers having relevant industry experience as their most frequently reported response. Noteworthy, this was also the quality emphasized by Phase 2 respondents who had not participated in CET.

In all, a combination of relevant industry experience and effective teaching qualities founded in understanding learners' goals and needs was emphasized. Also, their being able to be responsive to students and engaging students in activities and interactions as active participants, is valued.

Qualities of effective CET learners

Ultimately, any educational learning process is founded upon the ways in which individuals come to engage in them and learn through and from them. Hence, beyond the provision of CET is a consideration of how working-age Singaporeans should come to engage with them. In Table 12 are presented the responses in Phase 2 to the request to indicate which of a set of characteristics are most important for being an effective CET learner.

Table 12: CET learner characteristics

CET learner characteristics	<i>n</i> (%)
Able to learn independently	290 (28.5)
Having or showing an interest in learning	249 (24.4)
Having a humble attitude	245 (24.0)
Motivated to learn for their personal development	226 (22.2)
Having strong workplace support	214 (21.0)
Having good time management skills	210 (20.6)
Motivated to learn for their professional development	214 (21.0)
Are resourceful and proactive	199 (19.5)
Perceiving learning as an ongoing process	171 (16.8)
Having strong family support	100 (9.9)
Having positive communication skills	90 (8.8)
Perceiving learning as an ongoing process	171 (16.8)

The characteristics emphasized here are largely personal qualities comprising interest, engagement, and being able to engage with others and progress in intentional ways to learn the required knowledge. Secondary are considerations of having support in the family and the workplace. Likely, many of the first qualities need to be learnt but can be nurtured through effective CET teaching. Providing activities that promote interdependence, that are relevant to learners' learning, and that ensure that they engage with others in respectful ways, are just some of the approaches that can be adopted by adult educators to both accommodate and also develop further these learning characteristics.

Future provisions of CET

The Phase 1 interviewees often referred to their workplaces as being an important site for their ongoing learning. This raised questions about how learning can be supported through workplace provisions, and how educational institutions could reach out in support to promote workplace learning. Phase 2 respondents indicated ways in which their workplaces could support the CET-related learning. As indicated in Table 13, a key priority for both groups of participants (i.e., those who have participated in CET and those who have not) is the availability of opportunities in the workplace to apply what they have learnt from their CET programmes in their work.

Table 13: Workplace actions to support learning

Actions in the workplace to support learning	Did CET <i>n</i> (%)	Did not do CET <i>n</i> (%)
Opportunities for applying what you have learnt in CET	377 (71.1)	181 (68.0)
Opportunities for learning at work (new challenging tasks within current job)	329 (62.1)	154 (57.9)
Opportunities for progressive rotation of job roles	291 (54.9)	146 (54.9)
Mentoring by more experienced colleagues	235 (44.3)	118 (44.4)

The next most preferred workplace action was the provision of opportunities to promote learning through engagement in new tasks, as well as structured experiences such as progressive job rotations and direct mentoring in the workplace. In this way, the provision of learning experiences and then support in the workplace in terms of organizing those experiences and augmenting learning through mentoring offers a way forward.

The respondents also ranked a set of suggestions about ways that CET provisions could support learning in and through work. Their rankings are presented in Table 14.

Table 14: Actions by CET to support work-based learning

Actions by CET providers to support learning through work-based activities	Did CET <i>n</i> (%)	Did not do CET <i>n</i> (%)
Industry experts to deliver lessons	294 (56.6)	122 (46.2)
Work placement/attachment opportunities related to your CET course	284 (54.7)	159 (60.2)
Linking CET assessments to work-based activities	281 (54.1)	126 (47.7)
Work-based educational project	244 (47.0)	112 (42.4)
CET teachers coming into the workplace	125 (24.1)	62 (23.6)

In their preferences, there is a very strong emphasis on integrating and making relevant the CET provision by extending it into the workplace. This includes having industry experts engage with learners through presentation, learners having the opportunity to engage in workplace experiences, and work-based activities being used as the basis for effective and reliable assessment. Added here is a focus on projects based on the workplace, with CET teachers engaging in the workplace being the lowest preferred action.

Again, noteworthy here is the emphasis on the organization of the curriculum, as well as pedagogic and assessment strategies being linked strongly to the work-related activities of CET learners.

In these ways, future provisions of CET are seen to be very much associated with having and integrating workplace experiences as part of the CET programme, its teaching, and its assessment. Further, there are consistent emphases on finding ways to integrate the two sets of experiences (i.e., in the workplace and PSEIs) to achieve effective CET outcomes. This finding is consistent with the government's initiative to integrate and foster a stronger link between the curriculum taught in school and the needs of the workplace and industry through the SkillsFuture Work-Study programmes.

Subsidies

Subsidies in the form of payment is an accepted practice in Singapore to encourage participation in specific kinds of education, and CET is no different. The potency of subsidies is evident in responses to the question about whether people would participate in CET if there were no subsidies. Phase 2 had two specific questions associated with subsidies. The first was about whether they were necessary and the second concerned who or what groups of learners should get priority from the government. As can be seen in Table 15, there is a strong consensus among the respondents that subsidies are likely to be an important factor for individuals' decisions about CET participation. Of those who participated in CET, approximately 60% suggested that they would probably not do so without subsidies. These government subsidies are seen by working-age adults as important incentives for participating in CET programmes, and more so by those who have not participated in CET as compared to those who have.

Table 15: Attraction of subsidies

	Strongly disagree <i>n</i> (%)	Slightly disagree <i>n</i> (%)	Slightly agree <i>n</i> (%)	Strongly agree <i>n</i> (%)
Did CET	47 (9.1)	102 (19.7)	147 (28.3)	166 (32.0)
Did not do CET	12 (4.5)	36 (13.6)	97 (36.7)	91 (34.5)

The survey respondents were then asked to indicate just one group of people who should receive priority for CET subsidies. What can be seen in Table 16 is that the respondents most frequently suggested that there should be no discrimination, and that everybody should get the same amount of subsidy. The second set of priorities were those associated with individuals who were in some way disadvantaged, including those who are not able to afford CET programmes without external help. Having a proactive or directed approach perhaps reflects a deeper concern about which kinds of Singaporeans engagement should be supported to secure the best outcomes.

Table 16: Prioritizing the use of subsidies

Who should be prioritized to receive CET subsidies?	Did CET <i>n</i> (%)	Did not do CET <i>n</i> (%)
No priority, everyone (Singaporeans and PR) gets the same amount	129 (24.9)	66 (25.0)
Unemployed individuals (e.g., retrenched workers, fresh graduates)	76 (14.6)	35 (13.3)
Individuals who are not able to afford CET programmes	70 (13.5)	36 (13.6)
Those desiring to deepen their knowledge and skills in their current jobs	66 (12.7)	46 (17.4)
Those who have demonstrated lifelong learning attitude	62 (11.9)	14 (5.3)
Employed but changing career	24 (4.6)	25 (9.5)
No priority, first-come-first-served basis	19 (3.7)	6 (2.3)
Retirees and senior citizens	10 (1.9)	5 (1.9)

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<https://www.singstat.gov.sg/find-data/search-by-theme/population/education-language-spoken-and-literacy/latest-data>