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Ethnicity, education and the transition to the construction labour market: developing an equality framework using a capability approach

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**Ethnicity, education and the transition
to the construction labour market:
developing an equality framework using a capability approach**

ALETHA M. HOLBOROUGH

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements of the University of Westminster
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to explain why and how the construction industry remains such a 'white male dominated' industry and those from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) background are so severely underrepresented. The research focuses on the 'school-to-work' transition process, examining electrical trainees' experiences in their previous schooling, college and apprenticeships to understand how inequality permeates the process.

This study looked at two groups of electrical trainees - apprentices and non-apprentices - in London, between January 2011 and July 2013, to understand why some succeeded in securing an apprenticeship while others did not. The research took an ethnographic approach and subsequently a range of data collection methods were used, which included a film, observation of events associated with the construction industry, a short questionnaire completed by 321 trainees, and in-depth interviews with 37 of these trainees. Interviews were also conducted with 40 organisations within the construction and electrical contracting industries. A mixed method approach, with a thematic analysis, was used to examine the vast amount of data collected for the research. The analysis of the data focused on the voices of the electrical trainees centring on three stages: 'in school', 'in college' and 'in work-based learning'. This approach provided rich data of the experiences of the electrical trainees in the transition process, in addition to setting the research context in its natural setting. The findings presented help to compensate for the paucity of research focused on the lived experiences of those going through the transition from school to the construction industry. Furthermore, the data collected provide a better understanding of how large-scale construction projects, such as the 2012 Olympic site, could further address diversity targets, dependent upon processes followed.

The findings identify the multiple barriers faced by BAMEs during the 'school-to-work' transition process. The main research finding is that whilst ethnicity is an important factor in the transition process, other factors, identifiable at each of the

three stages of the transition, also play a role. At the first stage of the transition process, which examined the school setting, the research found that inequality occurred as a result of differences in educational outcome, in the form of GCSEs, which had an impact on the next stage of the transition process. At college, there were differences in the electrical courses that the trainees embarked on, a result not only of the GCSE qualification obtained at school, but also of the different recruitment practices of the colleges and the contractors. At the work-based learning stage, those from a BAME background were more likely to have A-Levels, when embarking upon an apprenticeship, implying that they were more qualified in terms of academic qualifications than their white counterparts. The research also found that apprentices were treated differently, irrespective of ethnic background, whether because of being a woman, having ginger hair or coming from a different area. This shows that inequality is not just a result of an individual's ethnic background, but also of a multitude of different factors.

An important original contribution is the conceptual framework of the thesis, based upon the Amartya Sen capability approach (Sen, 2009) and used to explore different dimensions of inequality. The capability approach has not previously been used to explore simultaneously a staged process over time, the 'school-to-work' transition, and to study the construction industry. Sen's capability approach provides the framework to examine areas that are not normally discussed in the school-to-work transition literature. The study found that the environment external to the college had an impact on the trainees in terms of their ability to move freely from place to place, so restricting possible education and employment opportunities. The research has yielded an equality framework and also identifies the two main transition routes for electrical trainees suggesting possible intervention points. These can be used in future academic research and as practical tools in the construction industry to inform policy approaches to enhance diversity in both vocational education and training, and employment.

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List of accompanying material

Item	Researcher involvement
DVD: Builders and the Games Director: Margaret Dickinson Interviewee: Aletha Holborough Expert: Professor Linda Clarke	The researcher was involved in the filming of the material between 2009 and 2011.

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And finally, I dedicate this thesis to my mum, whom I love so much!

Aletha M. Holborough

London, February 2015

Declaration of Authorship

I, Aletha M. Holborough, declare that all the material contained in this thesis is my own work.

Signed: 

Name: Aletha M. Holborough

Dated: 27 February 2015

Other academic output

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Glossary of Acronyms

AM2	Achievement Measurement 2
BAME	Black Asian and Minority Ethnic
BEST	Training Managing Agent
BIS	Department for Business Innovation and Skills
CABE	Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment
CIPD	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
CITB	Construction Industry Training Board
DCLG	Department for Community and Local Government
DfE	Department for Education
EAL	Excellence, Achievement & Learning Limited
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GLA	Greater London Authority
JIB	Joint Industry Board
JTL	Training Management Agent A not for profit charity offering advanced apprenticeships in electrical, engineering maintenance, and now mechanical engineering services.
LDA	London Delivery Authority
LETF	Local Employment and Training Framework
NET	National Electrotechnical Training
NVivo	Software tool to analyse unstructured qualitative data
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
ODA	Olympic Delivery Authority
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
ONS	Office of National Statistics
SPSS	IBM SPSS Statistics
UKCES	UK Commission for Employment and Skills
VET	Vocational Education and Training
WBL	Work Based Learning

Part One: Introducing the research

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction and background to the research

The Olympics will accelerate the regeneration of East London, providing thousands of jobs and business opportunities, and a legacy of some 9,000 new homes, state-of-the-art sports facilities and the biggest park London has seen since Victorian times.

Sir Robin Wales, Mayor of Newham (Source: Muir, 2004)

Researcher: *Were you recruited specifically to work on the Olympic site?*

Liam: *Now I look back at it, I would say 'Yes'. I think when they was pricing for the work, they said they'd take on local labourers, they took two out of 200 who applied, that's myself and [...].*

(male, Black, age 24, electrical apprentice, worked on the 2012 Olympic site, for two years from 2009-2011)

The above narratives represent two perspectives on the 2012 Olympic site. The first quote is from the Mayor of Newham, Robin Wales. Robin Wales was on the London 2012 Board which was involved in the bid for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games for London (Newham Council, 2014). Key to the bid, in 2005, was the focus on the regeneration of the East End of London and the creation of jobs (Barclay *et al.*, 2005; House of Commons, 2007). This was the first Olympics to focus on the regeneration of an area, in this case the London boroughs of Newham, Barking and Dagenham¹, Greenwich, Hackney, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest, which made up the six Olympic host boroughs. The 2012 Olympic site was situated in the East End of London in and around these boroughs, which suffered from economic and social deprivation. Of the 33 London Boroughs, Newham and Tower Hamlets have

¹ Barking and Dagenham officially become the sixth Olympic borough on 1 April 2011 (London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (LBBD), 2014).

the highest rate of economic inactivity or, in other words, of those who are not in employment or are unemployed (GLA 2012). In 2011-13 the London boroughs with the highest unemployment levels were Barking and Dagenham, at 10%, followed by Newham (9.6%) and Tower Hamlets (9.2%), whilst the overall London average was 6.9% (London's Poverty Profile, 2014). According to the London Borough of Waltham Forest (LBWF) web-site (2014), Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest are among the top six boroughs described as 'deprived'. Wright *et al.*, (2012), comparing health and social indicators in the Olympic boroughs with the other London boroughs, found that the six Olympic boroughs: have a young age profile, with more than a quarter of the population under the age of 20; Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) represent over half the population; and teenagers are less likely to be in education, employment or training. In addition, the proportion of students achieving five GCSEs in Hackney, Newham, and Barking and Dagenham is lower than the London average.

These issues are important and of concern because the Olympic boroughs, situated in an area that is economically disadvantaged, clearly needed a boost to address persistent inequalities and to achieve equal outcomes in terms of employment and job opportunities. The area has a young age profile and these young people need every opportunity to move into the labour market, though the chances of doing so are questionable.

The 2012 Olympics was the biggest construction site in Europe (London 2012, 2010a). However, the construction industry in England is not without its problems. It is one of the largest sectors of the UK economy, contributing almost £90 billion to the UK economy (or 6.7%) in value added, and making up 10% of total UK employment (BIS, 2013b). Furthermore, it is an industry that lacks ethnic diversity (de Graft-Johnson *et al.*, 2009; Steele and Todd, 2005). The construction workforce is white and male dominated; the BAME population is highly underrepresented in terms of the numbers employed and can suffer from discrimination (CABE, 2005; Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), 2009). Labour Force Survey statistics on employment by sector in the UK according to ethnic group show that

the construction sector employs 96% whites and 4% BAMEs (Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), 2014). The sector has the second lowest representation of ethnic minorities in comparison to all employment sectors. The only other sector with a smaller proportion of BAMEs is Agriculture, with 1% from a BAME background and 99% from a white background. The sector with the highest proportion of BAMEs was 'accommodation and food service activities', with 16% from a BAME background and 88% from a white background (Collingwood, 2014). The statistics reveal great variation in labour market participation for different ethnic groups.

The question this raises is how far the construction of the Olympic site could create jobs for a deprived area and assist those transitioning to the world of work at the same time as addressing the apparently unfair treatment and low representation of BAMEs in the sector. The Olympics was seen as a vehicle with the capacity to create change through regenerative practices in many fields, a major one being the construction industry.

The second quote above is from Liam, an electrical apprentice, who worked on the 2012 Olympic site. He is from the group that the Olympics sought to target in terms of employment and training opportunities, an individual from a BAME background, living in one of the six Olympic boroughs and thus a 'local' person. The first quote is from a political standpoint, describing who should benefit from the Olympic site, whilst the second is from an individual perspective, from Liam, who did secure employment in the construction industry as a result of the Olympic site. From a political perspective, Liam securing employment on the Olympic site can be seen as a successful outcome. However, the journey experienced by Liam to secure employment represents the voice of the individual and sets the base on which this research builds.

Liam is one of the 37 electrical trainees interviewed as part of this research. However, he is of interest because, from a questionnaire census of 321 electrical trainees attending further education colleges within the Olympic vicinity that

formed part of this research, Liam was the *only* one who satisfied the criteria of working on the Olympic site, living in one of the host boroughs and coming from a BAME background. For Liam securing an apprenticeship was the outcome he wanted, irrespective of whether he worked on the Olympics. However, focusing on the outcome, which was working on the Olympic site as an electrical apprentice, tells us nothing about his experiences in trying to secure employment in the construction industry or in securing and embarking upon his apprenticeship. This research therefore centres on the ability of some individuals to secure an electrical apprenticeship as compared to those who did not.

The voices of 37 electrical trainees tell their story of trying to access the construction labour market via an apprenticeship. Two groups, BAME and white trainees, are the focus of the research. Differences in the trainees' experience in their previous schooling, in college and in securing and embarking upon an apprenticeship, constituting the transition process from school-to-work, are the three main areas examined. There are different labour market outcomes for BAMEs and whites, as BAMEs are twice as likely to be unemployed as their white counterparts (Runnymede, 2014). However, the unemployment rate differs among ethnic groups. For example, for the 16-24 age group, the figures are: White (19%), Black (44%), Asian (34%), and Other ethnic group (30%) (Dar, 2014). This suggests there are differences in experiences between BAMEs and whites in securing employment, in addition to differences between ethnic groups. Furthermore, there is limited research on the experience of those who try and transition from education to the construction industry, especially those from a BAME background. The thesis thus revolves around four themes - ethnicity, 'school-to-work', education and employment, which are discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.

1.2 The problem to be researched

The problem to be researched is whether, or not, the experiences of BAME electrical trainees during the school-to-work-transition (STWT) process is different from the white majority. The school-to-work transition brings together issues

around schooling, employment and training and is considered part of a single process (Ryan, 2000).

In the context of this research, the BAME group refers to non-white ethnic groups, as described by the first four categories noted in Table 1.1 below, and the white group refers to the last group in the Table. The term BAME commonly refers to the population which came to Britain from the New Commonwealth and Pakistan (Nwankwo and Lindridge, 1998; Phillips, 1998). Those from a BAME and white background form all ethnic groups as categorised and defined by the 2011 census (2012).

Table 1.1 The ethnic groups according to the 2011 census

	Main Ethnic Group	Sub-Ethnic Groups
1.	Mixed	White and Black Caribbean White and Asian White and Black African Other Mixed
2.	Asian or Asian British	Indian Pakistani Bangladeshi Chinese Other Asian
3.	Black or Black British	African Caribbean Other Black
4.	Chinese or other	Arab Any other ethnic group
5.	White	Irish Gypsy or Irish traveller Other white

(Source: Office of National Statistics (2012))

Ethnic minorities are sometimes seen as a homogeneous group and differences within the groups are not always recognised. For example, Sriskandarajah *et al.* (2007, p. 34) point out that 'Black African' fails to capture the differences between those born in countries such as Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Kenya and Somalia' and Parekh (2001) that 'Indian' does not distinguish between the large Punjabi and Gurajarit communities. Although it is argued that ethnicity is a label, and it is left to each individual to identify and select what ethnic group he or she affiliates with, these ethnic labels are in general use in society and thus the research draws upon the 2011 census ethnic categories.

To investigate the research problem, the thesis uses the Amartya Sen's capability approach, which he developed as an equality framework. Sen (2009) argues that previous approaches to examining justice, and he makes reference to John Rawls, are inadequate as they have an overpowering concentration on institutions where behaviour is assumed to be compliant. Sen (2009) further argues that when looking at justice there is a need to focus on the well-being of individuals, referring to what an individual is 'able to do and be', as justice is connected with how people's lives go rather than how lives should be. It is for this reason that the current study focuses on the electrical trainees in the transition process to give them a voice about what is important to them.

Sen (2009) argues that in the development of the framework particular attention should be paid to the context being researched, as crucially, this has implications on what elements of the framework should be used, how it will be used and more importantly what information is necessary to create the framework. Although he provides the main concepts and terms associated with the capability approach, it is left to the researcher, to make certain decisions to operationalise the framework. An area that is essential in the creation of the framework is the concept of public reasoning. Once again, he leaves it to the researcher to decide how this should be addressed. Public reasoning is important when looking at justice, as any claim to justice would be undermined if it could not stand up to public scrutiny (Sen, 2009). To encapsulate the concept of public scrutiny, the voices of the electrical trainees

form the main basis in the creation of the framework. The reason for doing so is to provide the trainees with a voice that may not normally be heard and to allow the trainees to identify what is important to them during the transition process to becoming an electrician.

At this point of the research it is necessary to mention that the capability approach can be seen as a set of ideas that are systematically linked. Although the concept of public reasoning is discussed in Chapter 4 it is perhaps useful to provide some clarity, at this point, as to how it will be used for this study. The thesis not only involves the narratives of the electrical trainees but also the organisations involved in the construction industry, construction training and the electrical trade. It should be noted that the narratives from these interviews are discussed throughout the chapters, rather than in any one specific analysis chapter, as this provides context to what is being discussed at that particular time but also provides for public debate, which aids the concept of reasoning. Sen's capability approach has been used in many contexts but it has not yet been used to explore simultaneously a staged process over time, the school-to-work transition, and to study the construction industry. This is an opportunity to make an original contribution to knowledge of the school-to-work transition process. More widely, the thesis will inform current debates on equality, education and the construction industry.

1.3 Aims and objectives

The overall aim of the thesis, using the capability approach, is to focus on the school-to-work transition (STWT) process, examining the experiences of electrical trainees in their schooling, at college and in apprenticeships, to identify and understand possible inequality in the process.

The specific objectives of the research are:

1. To understand the lived experience of individuals going through the school-to-work transition process;
2. To develop an analytical framework to investigate the transition of electrical trainees moving from an educational environment to working within the electrical industry;
3. To compare and contrast the experiences of electrical trainees, and to identify any inequality in the transition process, focusing on:
 - a. Two trainee groups: apprentices and non-apprentices; and
 - b. Two ethnic groups: the BAME group and the white group; and
4. To identify how large-scale construction projects, like the 2012 Olympic site, can assist the transition pathway for those wishing to work in the construction industry, with a focus on the electrical trade.

1.4 Research questions

The main question that the research will answer is:

How, and to what extent, do any inequalities in the experiences between, and within, the BAME group and the white group differ during the school-to-work transition (STWT) process?

To answer the main question a set of sub-questions will be answered which are:

1. What are the lived experiences of electrical trainees going through the school-to-work transition process?
2. What are the forms of inequality, if any, during the STWT and how can any differences, in the process or the outcome, be explained, for the:
 - a. Two trainee groups: apprentices and non-apprentices; and
 - b. Two ethnic groups: the BAME group and the white group;
3. What elements are required to create an equality framework for the STWT of electrical trainees

4. How can large-scale construction projects, like the 2012 Olympics, aid the transition routes to become an electrician?

1.5 Thesis structure

This section presents an overview of the thesis structure, which, is based upon five parts and consists of 11 chapters. Much of the empirical work is presented in Chapters 6-10, but throughout the thesis quotations from the 37 electrical trainees are presented to compensate for the paucity of research focused on the lived experiences of those going through the transition from school to the construction industry. This structure provides a platform to capture the voices of trainees and to follow them through their journey in the aspiration to attain an outcome of becoming an electrician, and to see whether the experience of BAMEs differs from that of their white counterparts.

Part One: Introduction

Part One provides an introduction to the thesis.

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter, provides an introduction and background to the research, outlining the research problem. This chapter also provides the research aims, objectives and the research questions. A definition is provided to explain who is included in the BAME group.

Part Two: Setting the scene

Part Two sets the scene for the research.

Chapter 2: The Research Context

Chapter 2 locates the research within wider debates by introducing the four themes: the 'school-to-work' transition, education, apprenticeships and the construction industry. Justification is given for the focus on training and the construction industry and the research context set out to provide a geographical, social and demographic picture of the East End of London, the site of the 2012 Olympics.

Part Three: Research Design

Part Three of the thesis presents the research design that will be adopted to answer the research problem.

Chapter 3: The Conceptual Framework

Chapter 3 discusses the conceptual framework applied, the Amartya Sen capability approach, and the value of this approach to understanding the transition of electrical trainees to the construction labour market. Sen, a philosopher, developed the capability approach as a framework to examine inequality. This chapter introduces the main concepts of the capability approach: well-being, agency, capabilities, functionings and conversion factors. Sen (2005) argues that an 'agent' brings about change and 'well-being' is what a person is 'able to be and do' and that well-being should be seen in the context of capability and functionings; capability is the opportunity or the ability to achieve and functionings is the actual achievement. However, Sen (2009) further states that capabilities can be affected by conversion factors, which are seen as influences that affect opportunities and achievements. The framework allows comparisons to be made between the electrical trainees, apprentices and non-apprentices, and, in addition, between the different ethnic groups in terms of what they individually value. Although Sen (2009) provides the basis of the framework, it is left to the researcher to develop the framework for the specific research context, as discussed in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Methodological considerations

Chapter 4 begins by laying out the conceptual dimensions and considering how the research will develop the capability framework. The capability approach has been adopted in order to address the research questions developed to achieve the aims and objectives of the research. Debates about creating a capability list are discussed. The importance of the capability list is that it represents what a person values. Nussbaum (2001) has, for instance, provided a list of capabilities an example is life, bodily health and bodily integrity. Although, the development of the capability list is a central part of the framework, Sen has been criticised for not providing such a list (Nussbaum, 2001). Sen's (2005) defence is that any list of capabilities is dependent upon the context; having a list would mean that it is absolute, without the flexibility to add to it.

Thus, the chapter initially outlines an abstract list and then a hypothetical capability list for the transition of electrical trainees to the construction labour market. The creation of the capability list is one element in the development of the capability approach and the methodology to create the list follows the suggestion of Robeyns (2003), that the list should take the form of a two-stage process: creating a hypothetical list; and then, subsequently, a practical list. This approach ensures that the list is appropriate to the context and is open to public debate by taking into account the views of those in the transition process, namely, the electrical trainees. The abstract list as noted in the literature is reviewed. The hypothetical list uses published data and organisational interviews. The hypothetical capability list created shapes the research design and the empirical analysis of the data as set out in Chapter 5. The practical lists, following the methodology suggested by Robeyns (2003), are then drawn up in Chapters 7-9.

Chapter 5: Research methods and data collection

Chapter 5 is about the collection of empirical data, based on both quantitative and qualitative methods. Adopting a 'mixed methods' approach is the most appropriate way to answer the research questions. The empirical data collected consist of: a census sample of 321 electrical trainees studying for an electrical qualification; in-

depth, semi-structured, face-to-face interviews with 37 electrical trainees, including both apprentices and non-apprentices, from BAME and white groups; one focus group with two electrical apprentices and two managers who worked on the Olympic site; filming on the 2012 Olympic site over a period of two years; and observation of events, for example, the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) Diversity and Construction awards and Hackney College Apprenticeship Showcase. Chapter 5 also discusses the researcher's position in the research and ethical considerations that needed to be addressed as part of the data collection process.

Part Four: Changes over the transition process

Part Four contains the analysis chapters and examines the electrical trainees in the transition process.

Chapter 6: Introducing the electrical trainees

Chapter 6 introduces the analysis chapters and sets the scene for the main findings by presenting the social and economic environment context of the electrical trainees. These are important in examining the transition process as these factors may impact on the choices of individuals. The chapter describes how Sen's capability approach will be used to examine the main findings from the empirical research, based upon the electrical trainees' experience at three points of the transition process - in their previous schooling, college and apprenticeships - to understand how inequality may permeate the process. The following chapters, 7-9, present, discuss and evaluate the data collected and the outcome of each is the production of a capability list for each of these three stages.

Chapter 7: The transition process: The school experience

The focus of Chapter 7 is the trainees' school experience and it is argued that inequality between the ethnic groups starts at school. In the interviews the trainees reflected upon their experiences in this environment and those from both BAME

and white groups spoke about being supported at school. The white trainees, in comparison to the BAME trainees, discussed more about being supported in the subjects being studied during year 11, the time when students are preparing for their GCSE exams. This is important as schools measure success in terms of GCSE outcomes. At the end of compulsory schooling, the main difference between the BAME and the white group, was that those from the white group were more likely to have secured five GCSEs at A*- C. The outcome of this chapter is the creation of a practical capability list reflecting the voices of the electrical trainees.

Chapter 8: The transition process: The college experience

Chapter 8 centres on the second point of the transition process, the college experience, for both apprentices and non-apprentices. It is argued that the educational outcome in the form of GCSEs at A* - C obtained at the end of schooling impacts on the next point of the transition process, that is the college experience. The differences between BAMEs and whites continue at college, and the BAME group are more likely to have embarked on an electrical course, while those from the white group are more likely to have obtained an electrical apprenticeship. A capability list is created, but it is noted that the list has changed in comparison to those created in Chapters 4 and 7.

Chapter 9: The transition process: The work-based learning experience

This chapter focuses on the last point of the transition process and mainly discusses the experience of the apprentices, those who have successfully secured an electrical apprenticeship. It is argued that those from a BAME background are more likely to have A-levels when securing an apprenticeship in comparison to someone from a white background. Chapter 9 creates a capability list, and it is noted that the list has changed from the ones created in Chapters 7 and 8.

Chapter 10: The overall transition process of electrical trainees:

Discussion and conclusions

Chapter 10 provides a conclusion to Chapters 5-9 and examines the capability list at each point of the transition process, outlining what has changed in the list and why

it has changed. The main findings are discussed and consideration given to how inequality occurs during the transition process for the electrical trainees. The chapter outlines the different experiences of the apprentices and non-apprentices, in addition, to the differences between the BAME group and the white group. Chapter 10 presents a diagram depicting two alternative routes in the transition process of the electrical trainees: one for the non-apprentices, who did not have an employer, and another for those who have secured an apprenticeship. Although both apprentices and non-apprentices were at college, the electrical trainee applied for their course directly with the college, whilst apprentices applied to the electrical contractor to secure an electrical apprenticeship, and the contractor subsequently placed them in a college. This highlights differences in recruitment practices for the college and the electrical contractors. The chapter identifies the main barriers faced by the electrical trainees during the transition process and provides recommendations as to how these barriers can be addressed.

The chapter provides a conclusion to this part of the thesis and presents a capabilities framework to be used for the transition of electrical trainees into the construction labour market. The framework includes the capability list and the factors influencing the transition process for electrical trainees.

Part Five: Conclusions

This is the final part and provides an overall conclusion to the thesis.

Chapter 11: Conclusions

Chapter 11 concludes the research and answers the research questions. The adequacy of the capability framework in answering the research questions is also discussed. The chapter outlines the contribution of the research, highlighting its originality in developing an equality framework for electrical trainees. Although the capability approach has been used in other settings, it has not been used to

examine the construction industry. In addition, although other research may have produced a capability list, it has been found in this research, examining a staged process, that the list changes over the stages in the individual's life. The limitations of the methodology are outlined. Policy implications and areas for further research are noted. The thesis concludes by offering some final remarks.

1.6 Conclusions

The chapter began by introducing the research. It discussed the background to the research, noting the main research themes addressed, namely, 'school-to-work' transition, education, employment and ethnicity. It set out the research aims, objectives and the research questions. The research is important for several reasons: first, it uses the voices of the 37 electrical trainees that are in the transition process; secondly, it seeks to understand any inequality between the two groups, BAMEs and whites, in the transition process; thirdly, it touches upon the 2012 Olympics, which promised to offer employment and training to a deprived area, the East End of London, which frames the research context; and, finally, this thesis is of importance because, in the words of Thane (2010), much has been done in the area of inequality in the United Kingdom, but inequality still exists and, more importantly, why has more not been done?

Part Two: Setting the scene

2. The research context

2.1 Introduction

This is Part Two of the thesis, setting the scene and framing the context for the research. The purpose of Part One was to set out the research problem. Part Two examines the literature to provide a link with the research problem and previous findings and methods. It draws out the four main themes of the research: ethnicity, the 'school-to-work (STWT)' transition, education, and employment. The chapter is set out as a narrative, with the four themes permeating throughout.

The first section discusses the construction industry, chosen because it is the largest employment sector (Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS), 2013b), with a workforce that is predominately white male and one of the sectors in the UK with the lowest representation of ethnic minorities. The focus is on the electrical trade, which has a vocational education and training (VET) system that takes four years to complete and culminates in a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 3. This research discusses the two main routes for VET to develop an electrical capacity, referred to as apprenticeships and non-apprenticeships.

The second section discusses the 'school-to-work' transition, the process to be investigated, in this case the transition from education to working in an electrical capacity. Although an important process, there is limited research on the STWT and ethnicity, with the implication, that there is limited knowledge about the experiences of different ethnic groups. The third section is the specific research context, discussing the geographical and demographical characteristics of the East End of London, the location of the research, including the 2012 Olympic site, and

the employment and training targets promised as part of the Olympic bid. The fourth section provides a conclusion to this chapter and Part Two of the thesis. In addition to the published literature, the chapter also draws on some of the data collected from the 40 semi-structured interviews conducted as part of the research with organisations involved with the construction industry and the electrical trade. These interviews provide more detail about the industry and the practical ways in which it operates.

2.2 The construction industry, apprenticeships and the electrical trade

The labour market context to be explored is the construction industry, which was chosen for three reasons. First, the industry is one of the largest in the UK economy, contributing almost £90 billion to the UK economy (or 6.7%) in value added, and making up 10% of total UK employment (Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS), 2013b). Second, at the time of the data collection, the Olympic site was the biggest construction project in Europe. Third, according to the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) (2009), the proportion of BAME students embarked on a construction related course in England is 7%. In contrast, the employment figure for the BAME group in the construction industry in England is 5%, with a very small number of females (Dainty *et al.*, 2007). The purpose of the research is to examine the transition process, using the construction industry as the context. It is not the purpose to examine the structure of the industry in terms of sub-contracting, casual and 'bogus' self-employment, the reliance on an itinerant workforce, skill shortage, and ageing workforce, all of which are found in it (Clarke, 2006; Clarke and Gribling, 2008; Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS), 2013a; Harvey and Behling, 2008).

Organisations associated with the construction industry include Government Offices, contractors, unions, private organisations and educational establishments, among others. These different organisations add to the complexity of the industry in terms of competing priorities, with implications for how then policy and practices

are carried out, as do the different stakeholders involved, each with its own strategic direction. Another problem with the industry, noted by Chan and Moehler (2008), is that it has a myriad of different organisations involved in VET and development, not always acting in a 'joined up' fashion.

Construction covers all stages of the creation of the built environment from design, planning and building structures, and also includes the repair and maintenance of buildings (Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS), 2013b). Table 2.1 shows the composition of the UK sector.

Table 2.1 Composition of the UK construction sector

Businesses Within The Construction Sector		Gross Value Added (GVA)	Number of Jobs
234,000 contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction of buildings e.g. commercial, residential • Civil engineering e.g. roads, tunnels, bridges, utilities • Specialised construction activities e.g. electrical and plumbing installation, demolition and site preparation, plastering, painting, roofing etc. 	£63 billion	2,030,000
30,000 services; professional and supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architectural and quantity surveying activities • Wholesale of wood, construction and materials • Wholesale of hardware, plumbing and heating equipment • Renting and leasing of construction equipment etc. 	£14 billion	580,000
18,000 product manufacturers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manufacture of construction products and materials, for example, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bricks, tiles, cement, concrete products and plaster - Metal structures, doors and windows of metal, carpentry and joinery etc. - Wiring devices, electric lighting equipment etc. 	£13 billion	310,000

Source: (Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS), 2013b)

The industry employs 2.9 million people (Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS), 2013b) and includes a wide variety of occupations, from professionals to non-professionals and skilled to non-skilled occupations. Some may require a degree, such as, architects or surveyors, while many do not. Table 2.2 shows the occupations and the proportion of the construction workforce employed in each (HM Government, 2014).

Table 2.2 The professions in the construction industry

Occupation	Percentage Of People Employed In The Construction Industry
Bricklayers, Masons, Roofers, Tilers	3%
Painters And Decorators	3%
Civil, Mechanical And Electrical Engineers	5%
Plasterers, Glaziers And Other Trades	5%
Plumbers And Heating And Ventilating Engineers	5%
Architects, Town Planners, Surveyors	6%
Carpenters And Joiners	7%
Plant And Machine Operatives And Drivers	7%
Metal, Electrical And Mechanical Trades	10%
Executive And Managerial	11%
Other Occupations	37%

Source: (HM Government, 2014)

The labour market participation of the BAME group in the UK is 10%, though the BAME workforce in construction in the UK is only 5% (Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), 2014), as shown in Table 2.3. Thus, the labour market participation of the BAME group in the construction industry is much lower than in the ethnic UK workforce as whole. Furthermore, the ethnic population in the construction sector is one of the lowest compared to all other employment sectors. The only sector

with a lower representation of ethnic minorities is ‘Agriculture, forestry and fishing’, with a 1% representation from the BAME group.

Table 2.3 Ethnicity and labour market participation in the UK

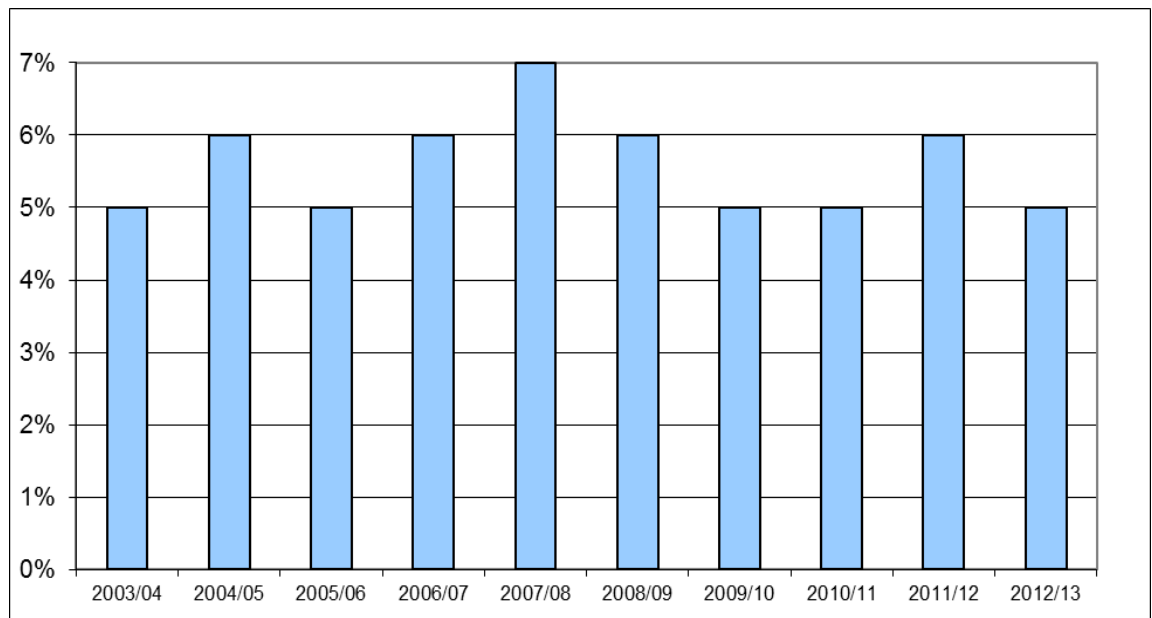
Ethnic group as proportion of sector employment (Labour Force Survey analysis by DWP)	White population	Ethnic minority population
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	99%	1%
Construction	95%	5%
Mining and quarrying	94%	6%
Manufacturing	93%	7%
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning	93%	7%
Arts, entertainment and recreation	93%	7%
Real estate activities	92%	8%
Public administration and defence	92%	8%
Education	92%	8%
Other service activities	91%	9%
Professional, scientific and technical	90%	10%
Administrative and support service	89%	11%
Wholesale and retail trade	88%	12%
Financial and insurance activities	88%	12%
Transportation and storage	86%	14%
Information and communication	86%	14%
Human health and social work activities	86%	14%
Accommodation and food service activities	84%	16%
Activities of extraterritorial organisations	77%	23%
All	89%	10%

Source: (Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), 2014)

According to the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) (2013), out of 1,072 first year construction trainees in Britain, the BAME group as a proportion of all first year trainees was just over 5% in 2012, as shown in Table 2.4. The proportion of

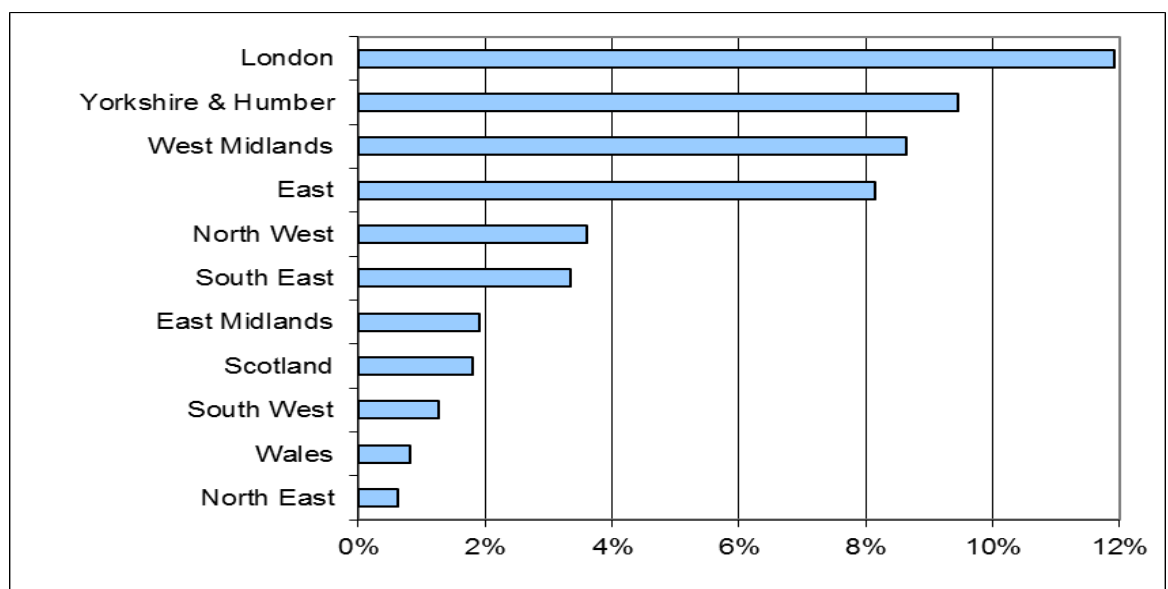
first year trainees varies according to geographical region. For example, London has the highest proportion of first year trainees from the BAME group, 12% in 2012, as shown in Table 2.5.

Table 2.4 Ethnic minority first-year trainees as a proportion of all first-year trainees 2003-2012 (Great Britain)



Source: (Construction Industry Training Board (CITB), 2013)

Table 2.5 Ethnic minority first-year trainees as a proportion of all first-year trainees by geographical area/region 2012/2013 (Great Britain)



Source: (Construction Industry Training Board (CITB), 2013)

Whilst the construction industry includes a number of different skilled, manual trades, this research focuses on the electrical trade. Electricians work on industrial and commercial buildings and also in domestic settings, for example, residential properties. They install and maintain different systems wherever electricity is used.

The electrical trade was chosen for three reasons. First, the electrical apprenticeship framework follows a clearly defined route to become an electrician (Brawley, 2012). Secondly, it is a traditional trade, with training lasting four years and culminating in the National Vocational Qualification, Level Three (Summitskills, 2011). Thirdly, the qualification has a defined value in terms of what is required to access the labour market. VET for other traditional trades, such as painting and decorating, may be shorter in length and may not follow such a defined framework. Two terms are commonly used to describe particular credentials in the electrical trade, 'Part P domestic' and '17th Edition'. The Joint Industry Board (JIB)² takes the position that these are not electrical qualifications as such, the purpose of Part P for a company being to comply with building regulations and not for individually qualified electricians to work in the industry and the '17th edition' being seen as a 'bolt on' for those electricians who are already qualified (Brawley, 2012). This research does not focus on either of these credentials for the electrical industry.

There are two main VET routes for the electrical trade, one for those who are embarked upon the apprenticeship framework and the other for those who are not, the former being referred to here as an apprentice and the others as non-apprentices. Electrical trainees in turn encompass both groups, being all individuals who are training to work in an electrical capacity.

Under the apprenticeship VET route, an individual is prepared for a specific trade. College-based VET interacts with work-based apprenticeship. An apprenticeship is thereby a model of learning involving an employer, following a prescribed framework, and providing the apprentice with the skills, competences and

² "The JIB is an impartial organisation that sets the standards for employment, welfare, grading and apprentice training in the electrical contracting industry. Our work is targeted at improving the industry, its status and productivity (Joint Industry Board (JIB), 2012)".

knowledge to become a skilled worker (Clarke and Winch, 2004; Steedman, 2005). There are four compulsory elements of an apprenticeship framework: a qualification, a technical certificate, functional skills or GCSEs, and a module in Employment Rights and Responsibilities (Unionlearn, 2014a). According to Summitskills (2011), the qualification framework for an electrician consists of the elements shown in Table 2.6.

Table 2.6 Electrical apprenticeship qualification framework

	Element	Purpose
1.	Key skills or functional skills	These skills refer to the level of Maths and English.
2.	Technical certificate	This certificate demonstrates the knowledge gained by the individual. The certificate is awarded by the examination body, who may be differ, for example, awarding bodies may be City and Guilds or EAL, who are the examination awarding body.
3.	Worked based qualification such as a National Vocational Qualification	This qualification demonstrates the practical element of the qualification. The work of electricians covers commercial, industrial and domestic installations (Electrical Qualifications, 2011).
4.	Achievement Measurement 2 (AM2):	The AM2 is a practical based assessment, whereby candidates undertake a series of tasks where they are tested in a timed environment (NET 2011).

Source: Summitskills (2011)

An important aspect of the electrical apprenticeship qualification framework is the ability to fulfil the requirements of a work-based learning element, for which an employer is required. Despite the concept of apprenticeships being a transition route to work, there are problems with its definition. In 2012/2013, almost 870,000 people were registered on an apprenticeship (Skills for Justice, 2013), with for example the food retailer Morrisons accounting for one in ten (BBC News, 2013b) making it the largest provider of apprenticeships (Morrisons, 2013). As employees

at Morrisons are already in employment with the company, no new apprenticeships are being created as employees are simply being converted to apprentices. This vague understanding of what an apprentice is does not ultimately contribute to the transition from school-to-work and is a problem when the term apprenticeship is being discussed; the meaning of the craft trade notion of apprenticeship is substantially different. When the term apprenticeship is used in this research it refers to the framework as outlined in Table 2.6 above.

The Sector Skills Council Summitskills produces sector-wide frameworks for apprenticeships, the electrical framework being one (Summitskills, 2011). According to Steedman (2010), in England there are 190 apprentice occupations and 85 sector frameworks, though the top 10 sectors account for 70% of all apprentice starts and construction is the second most frequently chosen framework. Apprenticeship starts refer to apprentices starting the apprentice framework, which does not necessarily mean that the individual will complete the framework or gain the qualification. Table 2.7 shows the apprenticeship starts for the electrotechnical trade, the framework undertaken by those who wish to become an electrician, from 2009/2010 to 2013/2014.

Table 2.7 Apprenticeships starts for the electrotechnical trade

Apprenticeship Framework	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014
Electrotechnical	4,660	5,540	4,980	5,080	4,610

Source: (GOV.UK, 2014d)

The GOV.UK web site provides an abundance of statistical data on apprenticeships but does not provide detailed figures for those from ethnic groups within each framework, such as for example the electrotechnical framework. It does, however, provide ethnicity figures for all apprenticeships, demonstrating that data are collected on ethnicity, albeit not published on the web site. The researcher, in

January 2015, has therefore made a Freedom of Information Act request to The Department of Business and Skills in order to obtain data on ethnicity and the electrotechnical framework, though to date no response has yet been received. Not having overall data for the electrotechnical framework makes it difficult to know how many apprentices are from BAME and white groups.

Despite these misgivings concerning the lack of statistical data on apprenticeships and ethnicity, Table 2.8 shows the apprenticeship starts for the years 2002/2003 and 2007/2008, provided by the Black Training and Enterprise Group (BTEG) (2009). For the electrical trade, figures for the BAME group have reduced from 5.3% in 2002/2003 to 2.6% in 2007/2008. However, a criticism of these figures is that they include those who are studying for an electrical qualification but do not have an employer in place. Therefore, a difficulty arises when trying to establish the difference between those who have an employer and those who do not, meaning, apprentices and non-apprentices. Furthermore, it is unclear why there is a reduction for the BAME group in 2007/2008 despite the overall number of electrotechnical apprenticeship starts having increased from 881 in 2002/2003 to 4,864 in 2007/2008.

Table 2.8 Apprenticeship starts for 2002/3 and 2007/8

Apprenticeship Framework	Total starts Foundation ³ Modern Apprenticeships Aug 2002 – Jul 2003	BME ⁴ starts (%)	Female Starts (%)	Total starts Apprenticeships and Advanced Apprenticeships Aug 2007 – Jan 2008	BME starts (%)	Female Starts (%)
Electrotechnical	881	5.3	1.0	4,864	2.6	1.3

Source: (Black Training and Enterprise Group (BTEG), 2008)

³ 'Foundation Modern Apprenticeships' and 'Advanced Apprenticeships' are different levels of apprenticeships.

⁴ BME stands for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic

The Black Training and Enterprise Group (BTEG) (2010) argue that it is unclear whether these low figures for the BAME group are a result of a reduction in applications or lower success rates. The Group recommends that better data around apprenticeships are required to enable the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS), set up by the Government to coordinate apprenticeships in England, to identify the priorities that need to be addressed in terms of equality and diversity issues. Ofsted (2008) has also complained about the lack of robust apprenticeship figures, particularly that what is available includes those who are not following a predefined framework. The problem with apprenticeship figures has also been noted by the Edge Foundation (2009) who state that, although there has been an improvement, there are still discrepancies:

One database understates Vocational Qualification achievements because a large number of certifications are not fed into it, while another contains vastly inflated Vocational Qualification figures because they include basic, generic and general qualifications that fall well outside our definition of 'vocational'.

The discrepancies in apprenticeship figures relate back to the different bodies collecting the data in addition to what is included in the data, namely, figures for apprentices or non-apprentices. This leads to problems in knowing how many of the BAME group are in apprenticeships and how many are not. For this reason this thesis makes it clear that an apprenticeship is not the only route to work in an electrical capacity and why the term non-apprentice is used throughout, as this is the second main route to train as an electrician.

There are differences between apprentices and non-apprentices at a number of levels. First, the non-apprentice does not have an employer, with the implication that it is difficult to complete the full electrical framework, specifically, the NVQ Level 3 of the framework and the AM2. This means that non-apprentices may be studying at lower levels, for example, Level 1, which is not useful to work as an electrician. Second, non-apprentices have less working capacity, as they are not qualified according to the framework. Third, there are different funding

arrangements as an employer who takes on an apprentice can access funding. Previously this was only available if the apprentice was aged 24 and under. However, according to the National Audit Office (NAO) (2012) funding restrictions have been removed, thus funding is now also available for adult apprenticeships, who are classed as those aged 25 and over. Mirza-Davies (2014) states that the funding grants available to employers are as follows:

- 100% of the training costs if the apprentice is aged 16-18;
- 50% of the training costs if the apprentice is aged 19-23; and
- Up to 50% of the training costs if the apprentice is aged 24 and over.

The grant is provided to cover course costs (GOV.UK, 2014a). For those aged 23 and under, the contribution made towards the cost of the course is quite specific. Furthermore, the funding grant for the two younger age groups is also much higher than that for anyone aged 24 and over. This highlights two problems: first, an employer may be more inclined to take on a younger apprentice because they can access a higher grant; and, second, although a contribution towards cost will be made for the older age group, there is no definite information provided as to how the contribution is calculated. Despite the monetary benefits to cover course costs, the employer still has the other additional costs associated with being an employer and employing someone.

Much of the research examining ethnicity in the construction industry refers to the underrepresentation of the BAME group (de Graft-Johnson *et al.*, 2009; Missa and Ahmed, 2011; Stevens, 2002). This has been the subject of discussion for many years. However, the ethos should be about having an equal and just society and not just about addressing the underrepresentation of the BAME group, about treating everyone equally and allowing everyone to have access, or indeed equal access, to the same choices and options in education and employment, irrespective of ethnic background.

2.3 Ethnicity and the construction industry

During the research, stereotypical views of the reasons for underrepresentation of the BAME group in the industry were put forward by many interviewees, including electrical trainees and organisations, when asked:

Why do you believe there are low numbers of ethnic minorities and women in construction?

The respondents were more overt about the reasons for the low numbers of women working in construction. For example, one apprentice stated that he was 'sexist', another that 'women are not as strong as men', and another that 'this is not the sort of work for them'. However, the interviewees were more covert in their responses concerning the low number of the BAME group in the industry, as were also the contractors and those involved in the industry. This makes it difficult to understand what part ethnicity may play in the underrepresentation of the BAME group in the industry. Furthermore, one interviewee, working for an organisation involved in the electrical trade, explicitly stated that the reason for the low numbers of the BAME group in the industry is as a result of discrimination. This comment is consistent with research showing that the construction industry discriminates against the BAME group (see Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE), 2005). Nevertheless, it is unclear when and how discrimination occurs, for example, when an individual is in the industry or before even trying to gain access. Research focusing on the underrepresentation of the BAME group tends not to focus on looking at the situation over a period of time, but rather to look only at one point in time. Therefore, when examining why there may be different outcomes for the various ethnic groups in the construction industry, it is argued that a different approach needs to be adopted to look at the situation.

Ahmed *et al.* (2008) examined the underrepresentation of the BAME group in construction, including barriers to entry to the industry. Their research focused on increasing the participation of ethnic minorities in the labour market and

specifically the construction industry. Through a combination of interviews and questionnaire, they surveyed a group of postgraduate students and individuals working in construction and found that, even when an individual from the BAME group had a higher degree than an individual from the white group, they still had problems in accessing the industry due to issues associated with visas and language. A criticism of this report is that the postgraduate students were not employed in the construction industry so that their contribution to the focus group was based upon perceived barriers and enablers. The responses from those working in the industry were based upon quantitative data from a questionnaire, which, although useful, do not provide an explanation for the answers to the questions. However, the study by Ahmed *et al.* (2008, p. 83) does highlight an important gap in the research when examining ethnicity and the construction industry which is:

Current research into issues surrounding ethnicity, from academia to employment is scarce.

This is an important factor because the literature focusing on the low numbers of those from the BAME group within the construction industry tends to be based upon those who are already in the industry or, alternatively, on the employer's perceptions. This current research is based on the electrical trade, where the problems with getting a visa or non-recognition of qualifications obtained overseas would not apply because the electrical trainees forming part of this study are more likely to be moving to a further education college course rather than doing a higher education degree.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) (2009) also examined the underrepresentation of ethnic minorities in construction, focusing on barriers to entry and retention in the industry. The report highlighted the number of ethnic minority students on courses without an employer and suggested that tracking students on industry-related courses could provide information about what happens in the transition process. However, it was noted that colleges do not track

what happens to former students once they have left the college, so that this is not a possibility using existing data sources.

A further report focusing on racial discrimination and racial equality in the construction industry in Britain is that of Caplan *et al.* (2009), who also looked at recruitment, retention and progression. One of the key findings from this research is that ethnic minorities are not fully aware of the opportunities in construction. In addition, even once in the industry they experience problems progressing up the career ladder. Furthermore, they found a lack of equal opportunity policies and differences in the educational and training experiences of the BAME compared to the white group.

All three reports, Ahmed *et al.* (2008), EHRC (2009) and Caplan *et al.* (2009) looked at the construction industry, and are, therefore, of interest to this current study. However, all have limitations, as noted, and are focused on particular points in time, for example, 'while in education' or 'working in the construction industry'. None of the studies focused on individuals in the electrical trade, considered any influences between education and the industry or explored personal factors that may affect the individual. They all focused on institutions and how they treat individuals.

Williams *et al.* (2013) examined apprenticeships and the decisions made by young people in terms of their career choices. Their report looked at underrepresentation in terms of gender and ethnicity in apprenticeships and presented secondary data on policy. In addition, qualitative data were collected through interviews with apprentices, 12 in total, plus 12 written submissions. The authors concluded that the transition from school to an apprenticeship is less clear than the route from school to a college course but did not provide any information on the transition route of the apprentices interviewed or on any factors affecting the transition. In addition, although apprentices were interviewed as part of the study, it is unclear which were from a manual trade, for example, electricians.

However, there is of particular interest in providing data on the electrotechnical framework, as data from Individualised Learner Record (ILR) on apprenticeship starts according to different subject areas and ethnicity were analysed. The ILR is used by educational establishments to collect data on learners and the learning undertaken (Skills Funding Agency 2014). Williams *et al.* (2013) found that 10.1% of those starting an apprenticeship in 2011/2012 were from an ethnic minority background, though the figure for the BAME group on the electrotechnical framework was considerably lower at 3.7%. With regard to gender, the electrotechnical framework was vastly male dominated with only a negligible representation of women. The ages for those embarked on the electrotechnical framework also varied: almost 60% of the apprenticeship starts were under the age of 18, over 30% were between the ages of 18-24 and the remainder were aged 25 and above.

Table 2.9, taken from the report by Williams *et al.* (2013), shows apprenticeship success rates, calculated as the number of learners who meet all of the requirements of their apprenticeship framework divided by the total number of learners who have left training plus those who have successfully completed their training during the academic year, by ethnicity. The table represents all apprenticeships and not just those under the electrotechnical apprenticeship framework.

Although qualitative research seeking the views of apprentices in a skilled trade is limited, it has been conducted by Brockmann (2012), who examined two contrasting apprenticeship programmes, retail and motor vehicle maintenance. She conducted a multi-method ethnographic study with sixteen apprentices, comparing those in England and Germany. Importantly, her study focused on the school-to-work transition, centring on apprentices in college and the work place, and looking at the young peoples' construction of identity over time. In doing so, Brockmann (2012) was able to study the interplay of structure and agency, which she found to be missing in the transition literature. Furthermore, her findings

showed that those in an apprenticeship are not ‘non-academic’, in contrast to the common stereotypical view of those in the VET system.

Table 2.9 Apprenticeship success rates by ethnicity

Ethnic group	2008/09 (%)	2009/10 (%)	2010/11 (%)
Asian or Asian British	69.4	72.4	76.3
Black or black British	66.8	70.6	71.1
Mixed	67.1	70.9	71.9
White	71.1	74.0	76.6
Chinese or Other ethnic group	69.4	72.0	74.6

Source: Williams *et al.* (2013)/ Statistical First Release 2013

The research undertaken by Brockmann (2012) did not focus on ethnicity, though, as emphasised by Fuller and Davey (2010), research on the experiences of apprentices focusing on ethnic groups is needed. They suggest that the lack of research is because it is an area that is limited in the literature. Furthermore, Helland and Støren (2006) observe that studies explaining differences in the experiences of ethnic minorities in relation to VET are scarce. As mentioned in the previous section, an apprenticeship is not the only route to work in an electrical capacity. The other route refers to individuals who are at college studying for an electrical qualification. There is a lack of comparative studies of apprentices and non-apprentices, especially focusing on ethnicity, and focussing on the transition process is a valuable way to investigate inequality and to determine the reasons for the differences in employment outcome. The benefits of looking at the transition process is that it allows examination of the process over time, rather than a point in

time. It is for this reason that the current research investigates the school-to-work transition of electrical trainees.

2.4 The 'school-to-work' transition process

The definition of the school-to-work transition (STWT) process is, however, contested (Brannen and Nilsen, 2002; Iannelli and Soro-Bonmatí, 2001; Phillips et al., 2002). The term normally refers to the period between leaving compulsory schooling and securing stable employment (Bradley and Nguyen, 2004a; OECD, 1996; Phillips et al., 2002). For this research, the working definition of STWT is the process from school education to qualifying as an electrician. The school-to-work transition is a fairly new concept and brings together issues around schooling, employment and VET and is considered part of a single process (Ryan, 2000). The points between school and employment, may include VET, work experience, unemployment, labour market programmes, casual work and fixed-term employment (Ryan, 2001). It can also include any combination of these. In reviewing the transition literature some key aspects of the process emerge, though, it is argued, some factors that may affect the transition process are not always discussed. To address a coordinated approach is to examine and discuss the literature as a whole in three distinct areas, as noted below:

1. the literature on transition specifically relating to ethnicity;
2. the literature on transition, from a general perspective; and
3. factors that are not discussed in the transition literature but may affect education and employment outcomes.

2.4.1. *Ethnicity and the study of transition*

Raffe (2000b) argues that the transition from education to work is a critical phase when inequalities may be challenged or reinforced, and there should be an interest in the variation of transitions and transition outcomes according to gender, social class, disability and ethnicity or nationality. Despite the importance of the transition

process, there is only limited research relating to ethnic minorities. Two studies that examine ethnicity and the school-to-work transition are Leslie and Drinkwater (1999) and Rice (2000). The Leslie and Drinkwater findings show that British born ethnic minorities are making higher investments in education. However, Rice (2000) argues that the reason why ethnic minorities participate in higher education is because they are aware that they may face discrimination in the workplace. Both studies focused on choices at the age 16 and both used UK data sets. Later research focusing on ethnicity and the transition process also centres on educational outcome as an important factor (Bradley and Nguyen, 2004b; Bradley and Taylor, 2004). Furthermore, the Hills *et al.* (2010) research suggests that ethnic minorities do not fare as well in the labour market as their white counterparts even when there is the same educational outcome. This suggests that, even when the BAME group and the white group achieve the same academic educational outcome, they do not achieve the same rate of return on education.

A report by Ofsted (2013) states there are concerns about white pupils from low income families as they tend to perform poorly in GCSE results. Strand (2008, p. 46) points out that the achievement of white British pupils is polarised by social class more than any other ethnic group. Research by both Cassen and Kingdon (2007) and Demie (2014) found that children from a white background who receive free school meals perform poorly in achieving five GCSE at A*-C, with 32% achieving a GCSE outcome compared with 65% for the white group who are not receiving free school meals. The authors note that free school meals are the standard measure of deprivation. Though the white group who receive free school meals may not achieve five GCSE at A*-C, this group is well represented in the construction industry and, thus, may not have problems in accessing the electrical trade. Keddie (2013) further argues that white working class boys are overlooked in terms of receiving policy attention and extra resources to support their educational outcome. However, Modood (2006) argues that socio-economic class is a strong factor in social position though it does not always work in the same way for the BAME group as for the white group. Sergeant (2009) likens the vulnerability of white working class boys and black boys as young people in the same category of

disadvantage, as both of these groups have similar low educational GCSE achievements. However, although there may be a similar educational outcome in terms of GCSEs achieved by white working class boys and black boys, each group does not have the same experience at school. Black Caribbean pupils are three times more likely to be excluded from school than white pupils (Weekes-Bernard, 2010). Education is thus a key factor affecting the transition process for different ethnic groups, resulting in different educational outcomes.

2.4.2. General discussion about transition

Much of the transition literature has discussed transition and career advice. Balaram and Crowley (2012) state that career advice can assist with a smoother transition, whilst Hodgson and Spours (2012) argue that, although career guidance affects the transition process, advice is not always impartial as schools undertake a protective approach in trying to attract pupils to their respective schools. Despite the importance of career advice, it has also been criticised when discussing ethnicity. Beck *et al.* (2006) sought the views of young people in terms of their educational and labour market opportunities. They found young people from a BAME background were more reliant on this official form of communication rather than relying on family and friends for information about labour market knowledge. Aymer and Okitikpi (2002) conducted research examining the views of young black men between the ages of 15-19. They found that young people had a perception that Connexions, an organisation providing information advice and guidance to young people (Department for Education (DfE), 2014), pushed them into stereotypical employment routes. This concern of stereotypical advice received from the career service was also noted in the research by Bagguley and Hussain (2007) on Asian women at University, which found career advice was limiting when discussing routes after higher education. Such research is of interest, as it provides insight into the career advice received by individuals and questions whether this service provides appropriate advice to young people.

Since 2012 the responsibility for providing career advice, previously the responsibility of Connexions, has been devolved to schools. The Department for Education (DfE) (2014) states that every school 'must' provide career guidance to every pupil aged between 8-13 years old. However, research undertaken by Ofsted found that schools are failing children in the career advice provided (Department for Education (DfE), 2014). Career advice may be important, especially when young people make important decisions about employment and education choices when leaving school, but the advice may not always be impartial and is sometimes 'patchy'.

Another area that is widely discussed in the transition literature relates to individuals who are 'not in employment, education or training' (NEET). Dolphin (2014) argues that there will always be people who are NEET, unemployed or between jobs but the sign of an improved transition process will be a large reduction in numbers from the present level. The NEET figures do differ according to ethnic group. For example, according to Mirza-Davies (2013), the lowest NEET figure is for the Indian group at 8%. The author further points out that the average rate for all groups is 14% but many groups have a higher figure: white (15%), Mixed (18%), Pakistani (18%), Bangladeshi (17%), and Black Caribbean at 21%, which is the highest among all groups. Those who are NEET have been the focus of attention by the Government policy, and specific policies have been produced to support this group (DCSF 2009; Furlong *et al.*, 1997). However, Furlong (2006) argues that categorising people as NEET instead of recognising that their inactivity in education or employment may be associated with an unsuccessful transition is not useful. For example, inactivity may be due to pregnancy, a young person who is a carer, or someone who is temporarily sick or disabled. Not understanding why a young person is not active in employment or training has implications. First, it does not identify the problems an individual is facing that may inhibit him or her from moving into employment or training. Second, a policy may be targeted at a specific group, who may not warrant policy attention and *vice-versa*.

The literature on transition sometimes refers to different groups in the process and these groups are placed into different categories. The NEET are regarded as the 'poor transitions' and are described as those at the bottom (MacDonald, 2011). Roberts (2010) discusses the 'missing middle', which he describes as those who are neither NEET, nor following a government pathway. Hodgson and Spours (2012) discuss the 'overlooked middle', who they refer to as people that are middle and low attainers. Hodgson and Spours (2013) describe the overlooked middle as those who are unlikely to gain 5 A*–C GCSE grades at age 16, and all 16–19 year olds not participating in full-time Level 3 programmes or an Advanced Apprenticeship. These authors argue that the transition process should not focus on any particular group as there are other groups in the transition process that also warrant policy attention. Furthermore, greater collaboration and integration is needed to ensure that the transition process has better employment outcomes.

MacDonald (2011) argues that a problem with looking at research focussing on young people is the inability to grasp the relationship between individual agency and social structural constraint. The issue of structure and agency is also noted by Walther (2006). Research, both quantitative and qualitative, looking at agency and structure in the transition process, is that of Furlong *et al.* (2003), who claim that personal agency in addition to resources is important for the transition process. They refer to resources such as education, training, knowledge and support, arguing that there should be a partnership between external agencies and individuals and that this is where career advice is important. However, as noted above, the views of those from the BAME group concerning the career service are not always positive. Runnymede (2012) suggest that to combat pupils from achieving a lower mark due to their ethnicity, blind marking should be introduced into schools so the identities of pupils are unknown.

Although it is noted that structure and agency are important in the transition process, some studies do not focus on both. Quintini (2012) argues that labour market institutions and educational settings both influence the transition process, which results in different outcomes for school leavers. He states that, in order to

improve transition outcomes, there is a need to understand specific features of the transition process, including the time needed to find a first job after completing education, the smoothness of the process, whether it involves repeated spells of unemployment and inactivity, and the extent to which easy school to work transitions determine future labour market success. Research that has looked at transition and agency includes Pinguart *et al.* (2003) who found that self-efficacy is important. MacDonald *et al.* (2005) looked at transition and focused on socially excluded people, noting that class and place affect transition. All in all this research illustrates that organisations, individual and social factors can affect the transition process.

2.4.3. Influences affecting education and employment and not included in the transition literature

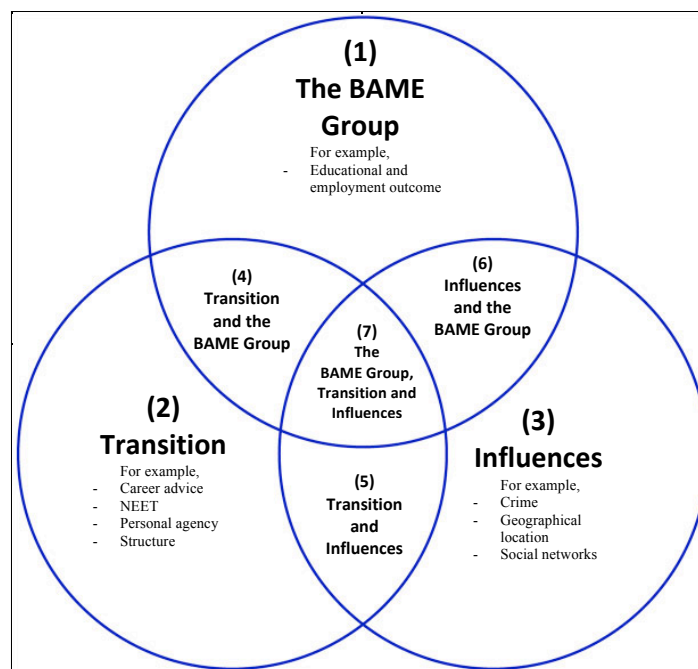
MacDonald (2011) argues that transition falls under youth studies but should also incorporate literature on youth culture. These two areas are seen as separate, but should be more integrated because changes in youth culture can impact on the transition process. He further claims that factors that may affect young people, such as those who have 'criminal careers', tend to be discussed in the literature on criminality rather than in the transition literature. The point that Macdonald argues is that the transition process does not always include elements that may affect young people and the transition process.

There are studies that examine factors that may affect employment and training outcomes, which are not discussed in the transition literature. For example, several studies look at geographical location in terms of where people live as this can influence employment outcome (Lalani *et al.*, 2014). Alternatively, living in deprived areas adds to the risk of being unemployed (Clark and Drinkwater, 2002; Urban, 2009). Beck *et al.* (2006) argue that social networks affect labour market opportunities. Sissons and Jones (2012) point out that 'soft skills' are important to access and maintain employment, whilst Noguera (2003) argues that environmental and cultural forces influence the way in which young people perceive the world though it is unclear how these influence life choices.

2.4.1 The missing picture

The cumulative picture of the literature that examines the transition process is highlighted in the Venn diagram in Figure 2.1. The three main areas in the diagram create seven different relationships. Whilst there is literature that discusses the interrelationship or connection between the three main groups and the three sub-groups, it is argued that there is a paucity of literature referring to the relationships, shown in area (7), where the three elements are together at the most crucial point of the transition process.

Figure 2.1 Venn diagram illustrating the interplay between three areas in the literature, namely, the BAME group, transition and influences



The sentiments of Liam, the apprentice from a BAME background who was introduced in Chapter 1 lie at the centre of the diagram, which highlights the lack of research to inform policy. This can itself be a barrier impeding the transition process of the individual. The individual voices of the electrical trainees provide a narrative on the barriers and enablers to the group, the path and the route. It is

argued that economic, social and environmental factors can influence the transition process. Some of these influences are not encapsulated in the transition literature and may have a significant impact on the process. It is therefore important to broaden the knowledge around the transition process to incorporate all factors that may affect or influence it.

This section of the thesis has discussed a range of factors that affect the transition process. The transition process identifies points in time where changes occur. Research on the experience of the BAME group in the transition process is limited and may furthermore, fail to consider the specific economic, environmental and social factors that influence the employment chances of individuals.

2.5 The specific research context

The previous section noted that there are many factors that can affect the transition process, such as geographical location and socio-economic status. Therefore, this section provides a geographical and demographic context of the East End of London, including the 2012 Olympic site, located in the East End of London.

2.5.1 The East End of London

Figure 2.2 provides a map of London illustrating the 33 London Boroughs. London is very diverse with a BAME population of 40% (Office of National Statistics (ONS), 2012). However, among the boroughs, there are differences in the BAME population. The number of different ethnic minorities has increased from the 2001 census, according to the 2011 census (Office of National Statistics (ONS), 2012). In 2001 the ethnic population accounted for 14% of the population in England and Wales, in 2011 the figure was 20% (Jivraj, 2012).

Figure 2.2 Map of London showing the London boroughs

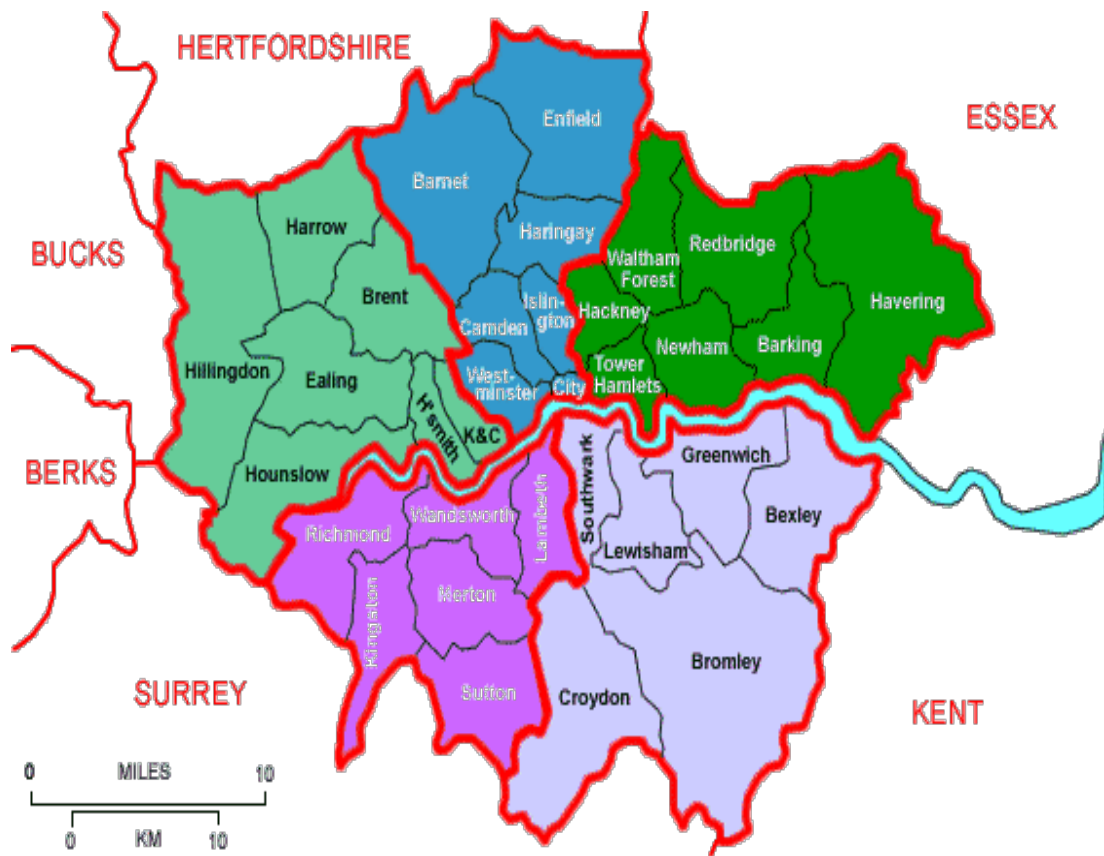


Table 2.10 provides information about ethnicity for England based upon the most recent census. The largest ethnic group in England and Wales is the Asian group, with a figure of 6.0%. However, this figure increases to 13.0% when looking at London. Despite the increase in the ethnic population, there is variation among the ethnic groups dependent upon the area. The Table also provides specific detail about ethnicity for the six Olympic boroughs, showing that the boroughs of Newham and Tower Hamlets have an ethnic population of over 50%.

Table 2.10 2011 census ethnicity: England, London and the Olympic boroughs

Place	White British %	Mixed %	Asian or Asian British %	Black or Black British %	Chinese %	Other %
ENGLAND AND WALES	83	2	6	3	1	5
LONDON	60	4	13	10	2	12
Barking and Dagenham	68	3	11	10	2	7
Greenwich	66	3	8	11	2	9
Hackney	51	4	11	18	2	13
Newham	38	4	30	17	2	9
Tower Hamlets	48	3	31	6	2	11
Waltham Forest	53	4	16	14	2	10

Source: <http://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2011/may/18/ethnic-population-england-wales> / ONS
 Note: the figures have been rounded.

Aldridge *et al.* (2013) confirm that the East End of London is deprived and poverty is more concentrated in this part of London than in other areas. They state that in the London Olympic Boroughs, Tower Hamlets has the highest child poverty rate in the country at 42%. They measure poverty by looking at five indices: child poverty, unemployment, low pay by residence, premature mortality and GCSE attainment. Runnymede (2014) argues that, when comparing overcrowding in houses, overcrowding in houses is higher for the BAME than the white group. The East End of London also has its challenges in terms of employment:

*The issue is important: more than a quarter of the population of the boroughs is under 20. Three-quarters of five to 16-year-olds are from black or ethnic minority backgrounds and the proportion living in poverty ranges from a third in Greenwich and Waltham Forest to more than half in Tower Hamlets. The London average is just under 30% (Wright *et al.*, 2012).*

Table 2.11 provides descriptive data about the six Olympic boroughs compared to London, including the finding that for all these boroughs except Waltham Forest, the NEET figures are higher than the overall figures for London.

Table 2.11 How each indicator for each Olympic borough compares, statistically, to the London average.

Indicator Name	London	Barking and Dagenham	Greenwich	Hackney	Newham	Tower Hamlets	Waltham Forest
Children living in poverty, %	29.70	37.00	33.00	39.70	38.20	50.90	32.60
First time entrants to the Youth Justice System, rate per 100,000	1,270.00	1,210.00	1,400.00	1,430.00	2,020.00	1,420.00	1,460.00
GCSE achieved (Five A*-C including English and maths), %	61.00	56.60	53.60	56.50	55.00	60.40	53.70
Not in education employment of training, %	5.00	6.90	6.20	6.20	6.40	5.30	4.20

Source: (Wright *et al.*, 2012)

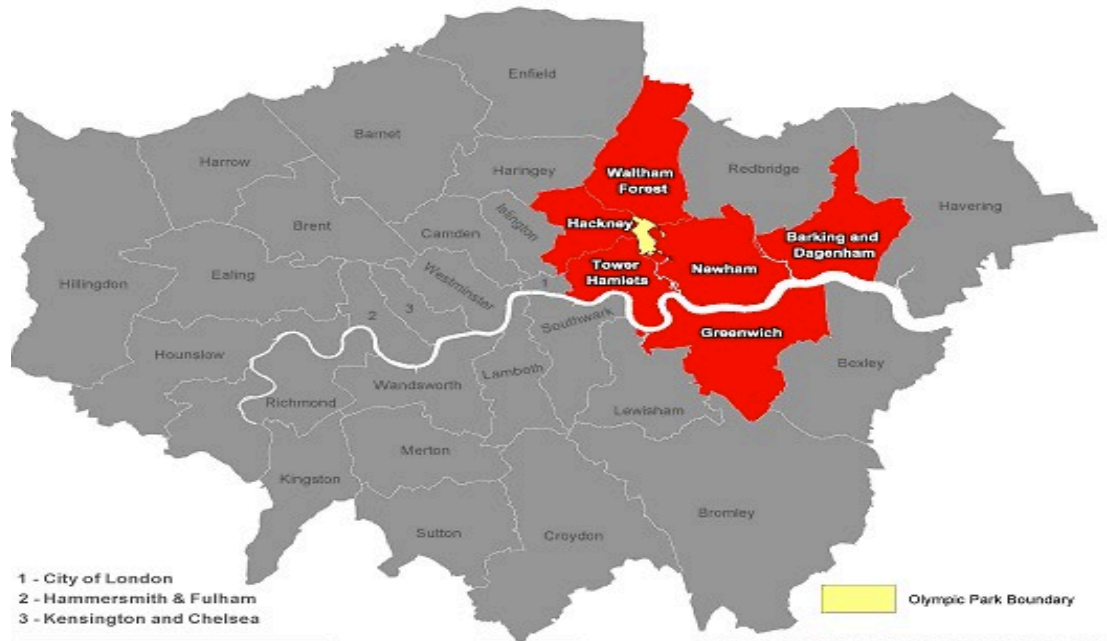
All six boroughs have children living in poverty, a higher incidence than the rest of London of first time entrants to the youth Justice system, and lower GCSE results than the London average. Children living in these boroughs are ultimately the ones who will try to move into employment. However, living in poverty can affect an individual's employment outcome (Harker, 2006).

2.5.2 The London 2012 Olympic site

This section provides contextual information about why a 'mega event' like the Olympics was seen as a catalyst to regenerate the area, in terms of economic

growth (Andranovich *et al.*, 2001). In addition, it outlines some of the promises that were made as part of the Olympic bid.

Figure 2.3 A map highlighting the six 2012 Olympic boroughs



Source: The Growth Boroughs (2015)

Figure 2.4 The Olympic Park in 2012 – after the completion of the build



Source: CS London (2012)

Figure 2.3 shows the location of the London 2012 Olympic site, highlighted in red, situated in the East End of London whilst Figure 2.4 shows the 2012 Olympic park after the construction of the site.

The labour market focus for the study is the 2012 Olympic site. It was chosen for several reasons. First, as previously mentioned, it was one of the largest construction projects in Europe, offering the potential of recruiting from a large number of individuals from the BAME group (London 2012, 2010a). Second, the site is located in the centre of the most deprived part of East London. Third, the Olympics made promises in terms of training and employment, which were unprecedented in the construction industry. Furthermore, no previous Olympics set such targets focusing on the inclusion of groups not well represented in the industry (CS London, 2012).

In terms of employment and training, this fell to the responsibility of the Olympics Development Authority (ODA), established to ensure that the necessary planning and preparation for the Games could take place (Legislation.gov.uk, 2011; London 2012, 2011b). Among others, the ODA's responsibility was to ensure that the infrastructure required to host the Games would be built and, in addition, to secure employment on the site and to offer training.

To deliver the promises of the Olympic bid a Local and Employment Training Framework (LEFT) was created to ensure that there was sustainability around employment and training. The framework was a Section 106⁵ plan agreement with the Olympic host boroughs. The framework was produced by the London Development Agency (LDA), which stressed that it was a 'local' framework

⁵ Section 106 (S.106) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 allows a local planning authority to enter into a legally binding agreement or planning obligation with a landowner, or persons who intend to develop that land, in association with the granting of planning permission. These planning obligations are intended to deliver or address matters that are necessary to make a development acceptable in planning terms (Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS), 2013b; Department for Community and Local Government (DCLG), 2012, p. 3) The S.106 is to make sure the impacts of new developments on an area are properly considered. The agreements mean the LPA can secure money through Planning Obligations from developers to provide benefits for the area, such as; employment and training programmes, new or improved open spaces, transport improvements, improvements for schools and leisure/community facilities. (Tower Hamlets Council, 2012, p. 3).

specifically aimed at the communities in close proximity to the Olympic site to secure employment. The LDA contribution was £9.6m to the framework (London Development Agency (LDA), 2008). Although the LDA stated that local people were to benefit from the training and employment opportunities, it is unclear what 'local' meant. During the study the researcher interviewed the ODA Equality and Diversity Manager. The interview was part of filming that took place on the Olympic site during the build. The film titled 'Builders and the Games', which is about construction workers and the building of the Stratford Olympic Park between 2007-2012, produced by Dickinson (2012) is in Appendix 1. The interview with the ODA Manager was notable as she was asked what 'local' meant in terms of employment and training opportunities: whether it referred to those already living in the area or those who moved into the area to secure employment. This was a poignant question because there were doubts about whether 'local' people were actually getting employment opportunities on the Olympic site. This is because at one point it was discovered that on the site a third of the workers came from abroad (Camber and Fernandez, 2009) and only 828 workers or 13.2% of the 6,277 workforce, lived locally (Beard, 2010). The respondent did not provide a specific definition as to what the term 'local' meant or whether there were strategies in place to identify whether or not individuals were moving into the 'local' area to secure employment.

To assist with employment and training, targets were set to promote sustainable employment and place at least 2,250 people into trainee programmes, apprenticeships and work placements (London 2012, 2010b). Specifically targets were set for under-represented groups to work on the Olympic site to ensure that the workforce consisted of: 15% of ethnic minorities, 11% of women and 3% of disabled (ODA, 2010a). Martins *et al.* (2011) state that the targets were met and in some cases exceeded. The ODA did publish regular data on employment and skills providing detailed statistics about the number of those working on the Olympic Park (London 2012, 2010b, 2011a). These publications highlight how well the Olympics was doing in providing employment and employment opportunities. However, there were questions raised in terms of who was benefiting from the build.

In the early days of the build UCATT (Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians) criticised the ODA for setting apprenticeship targets too low (O'Sullivan, 2011). The ODA stated that they had 350 apprentices who had experienced working on site (Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA), 2010b, 2011). This target was exceeded and in June 2011 it was reported that the figure had risen to 457 apprentices. However, apprentices were not always recruited specifically to work on the site but were already employed with the contractor (Minnaert, 2013). That apprentices were not being recruited to work specifically on the site was also evident from an interview with the HR Manager of an electrical contractor. She stated that apprentices were predominantly already employed by her company and were rotated on and off the Olympic site. This was because they had to attend college and the contractor wanted to give as many as their apprentices as possible the experience of working on such a prestigious project. The Labour Manager of another electrical contractor explained how he loaned his apprentices to other electrical contractors who had secured a contract on the site. The purpose was to aid the contractor in 'hitting' the diversity targets imposed by the ODA. This helps to account for how figures were being counted and who was accessing employment opportunities.

Other research raised concerns about employment and training on the site. Bux-Ryan *et al.* (2010) examined the employment experience of the host boroughs, focusing on the Asian community and questioning how far the Olympics could address unemployment in the area. They found that residents complained about the lack of Olympic jobs and opportunities and were confused about where to access information although there were agencies in place to assist with employment and training.

Minnaert (2013) looked at employment and skills opportunities. She conducted interviews with organisations involved in the Olympics, including contractors and the ODA, among others, between May 2011 and April 2012. They outlined the recruitment practices for the Olympic site, revealing the missed training and work

opportunities. Druker and White (2013, pp. 578-579), who looked at employment and employment relations on the Olympic site found that:

Initiatives to encourage direct employment might seem to offer new opportunities for improvement on the employment of local labour or on equality and diversity issues, but this was not necessarily or automatically the case on London 2012.

The research by Minnaert (2013) and Druker and White (2013) did not focus specifically on the employment targets for underrepresented groups. Nonetheless, the employment and training targets set by the ODA are of interest because they could potentially have created the possibility to change the construction workforce from being so white-male dominated.

Among research looking at the 'post' Olympic Games, focusing on employment, were those of Grant Thornton UK LLP (2013) and Calvo (2014). The Grant Thornton UK LLP (2013) study included a qualitative survey of 1,320 residents in the six host boroughs. In response to a question about the perception of access to jobs, 45% of respondents thought that the 2012 Games increased the number of jobs, although the respondents had not necessarily worked on the site.

Now that the build is over, other recent work written about the Olympic build has not provided an evaluation of employment and training. Calvo (2014) examined the procurement process on the Olympics and the missed business opportunities for organisations from an ethnic minority background. Another report focusing on the post- Games situation is that of the UK Government and Mayor of London (2013) who had promoted the creation of more job and opportunities as the legacy of the Olympics. Although some of these studies are qualitative, they did not explore in detail the workers who were on site or sought to access the site during the build.

The Olympics is seen as a mega event. As a mega event it was unprecedented in the targets set and the commitment to increase the number of under-represented

groups in employment. On the one hand, there have been reports that the site met its employment and training targets and, on the other hand, there are reports that the job and training opportunities failed to materialise to the extent promised. There still are the missing voices of those who did work on the Olympic site or those who were studying for a construction qualification at the time of the build. It is for this reason that the voices of the 37 electrical trainees that form part of this research are so important, not only to understand their transition process but also to examine the rich data gathered from the qualitative interviews. It gives the trainees a voice rather than focusing on the voices of institutions.

2.6 Summary and conclusions

This thesis centres on the transition process of electrical trainees, an area that is not widely researched. The paucity of research on electrical trainees limits any perspective of their transition journey. The thesis investigates this group, to identify the paths and routes within the journey. To achieve this, the following areas have been examined in this section and it is argued that the literature in these areas is sparse:

1. the transition process focusing on ethnicity (the group);
2. the transition from education to the construction labour market (the path); and
3. the transition comparing apprentices and non-apprentices (the route).

Part Two of this thesis has discussed the research setting, so important to understanding the construction industry, the context of this research. The chapter has discussed the school-to-work transition process and in doing so highlighted the limited research on ethnicity and transition. Furthermore, research on the transition process does not always focus on factors that may affect the individual. Upon reviewing the school-to-work transition literature, it has highlighted the paucity of research on a specific area, the BAME group, influences and the transition process.

The chapter has revealed that comparative studies of apprentices and non-apprentices are scarce, especially with regard to ethnicity. The geographical setting of the research is the East End of London. Both the economics and demographics of the area were discussed. Due to the employment and training targets made by the Olympics, they were of interest. No doubt people did benefit because the project was built and built on time. But in terms of those who benefitted, in terms of employment and training, were they from the local area or were they already employed with the contractor? Due to the low number of apprentices reported who were recruited specifically to work on the Olympic site, it was necessary for this research to interview also trainees who did not work on this project.

Part Three: Research Design

In discussing the school-to-work transition (STWT) for electrical trainees, Part Two of the thesis focussed on four themes: ethnicity, STWT, education and employment. Part Three consists of three chapters, Chapters 3 to 5, which consider and discuss the research approach and the practical problem of investigating 'whether, or not, the experiences of BAME electrical trainees during the 'school-to-work-transition' (STWT) process differs from the white majority'.

Chapter 3 explores the conceptual framework to be used for the study. The framework is Amartya Sen's capability approach (Sen, 1999), which is based upon equality. Although this framework has been used in many contexts, it has not previously been used to examine the transition process of electrical trainees. Chapter 3 also explains the various terms and concepts that the framework uses.

Chapter 4 discusses the application of the framework to the STWT of electrical trainees. Although Sen has provided an equality framework, it is the responsibility of the researcher to develop it to fit the context being researched.

Chapter 5 goes on to discuss the research methods and data collection process used for this thesis. A conclusion is provided at the end of each chapter rather than providing a separate conclusion at the end of Part Three.

Throughout Part Three, reference is made to the interviews conducted with the organisations that form part of this research and the electrical trainees themselves. This is important for two reasons: first, to provide the specific context to the problem being researched, which Sen (2005) states is necessary for using the framework, and second, to ensure that the framework is subject to public reasoning, as this can provide a better understanding of the role and the

significance of the elements of the framework (Sen, 2009).

3. The conceptual framework: concepts and terms

3.1 Introduction

Researcher: *So, you are here now. When you look back on life from when you left school, or being at school, if you had to tell me what helped you and hindered you to get from there to here, which is the transition process I'm calling it, what helped or hindered it?'*

Liam: *What hindered it ... first, I wish someone took the time out to speak to me, show me and help me go down ... found what was good in me or my interests and my likes and navigated me, helped me to do that, like showed me what I may need, what courses that I should ... when you get into year 9, I was picking subjects which I liked, but maybe I should have picked subjects which may have helped me in my career choice. At school, I think speaking to a person individually at school is a big one I would say, to know your student. At home, I think my mum should have set up boundaries for me to take control to say 'this is what I expect from you, these are your restrictions. To know the importance of my education and me, as a person, 'cos you look at society, you've got people who are a menace to society, you don't want your child to be caught up in the riots⁶ and say 'oh, that's my child on TV,' but if you don't set up any boundaries, it's like 'where's your child?' (male, Black, age 24, apprentice, contractor sample).*

'So, you are here now' refers to the summer of 2012, when the interview with Liam took place. Liam's comments in the interview give the impression that the school failed to provide someone who understood Liam, found out his interests or guided him through his career options. Liam also spoke about his parents' responsibility to instil boundaries. This is not to say Liam did not have an understanding of boundaries, but he reflects that his mother or father did not instil such boundaries in him.

Liam's school-to-work-transition (STWT) is in a good state; he has managed to secure an electrical apprenticeship. Nevertheless, his transition to the construction labour market is not secured. Completing an apprenticeship means that an

⁶ During the data collection process the London 2011 summer riots occurred over four days between 6th to 10th August 2011

individual is on a fixed contract for the term of the apprenticeship (Mirza-Davies, 2014). The implication of such an arrangement is that there is no guarantee that the employer will keep Liam on after the apprenticeship is complete, albeit one would hope that an employer would want to retain the apprentice after he has invested in the individual throughout their apprenticeship. During the interview Liam mentioned that, once he has completed his electrical framework, he intends to work for another two years and then undertake the Achievement Measurement (AM2), which is a practical assessment to demonstrate one's competence in the electrical trade (ETT Training Works, 2013; Joint Industry Board (JIB), 2012; National Electrotechnical Training (NET), 2013; Summitskills, 2011). He will then be classed as an approved electrician, which also has the benefit of a pay increase.

Liam's narrative is the thread running through this study, along with the voices of the other apprentices and non-apprentices. Both groups of trainees include individuals from the BAME group and the white group. To examine the transition process, and in comparing and contrasting the groups and the trainee types, a framework is necessary to answer the research question. A framework provides the basic structure to instigate, identify and explain facts and relationships in the framework (Fellows and Liu, 2008). In addition, it provides a systematic and robust approach to the research when making a decision about research methods and data collection.

Chapter 2 recognised that both structure and agency have a part to play in the transition process, but these important concepts do not readily inform discussion within STWT. In discussing all the factors that may affect the transition process, the chapter finds no coherent link. This is likely to be due to the lack of a framework that incorporates the voices of those within the transition process. This study uses social theorist Amartya Sen's capability framework to examine the transition process of electrical trainees. In this sense, the research utilises an equality framework, adapting it to the context and setting in order to consider the influences and narratives of organisations within the process of electrical trainees transitioning to the construction labour market. The capability approach moves

away from targets, which may be associated with some theories of equality (Phillips, 2004), and instead has the ability to focus on processes (Hart, 2009). Crucially, a framework that examines the journey within a process has the capacity to identify inequality in a practical way.

Chapter aims

The chapter aims to provide an overview of the capability approach and, in so doing, outlines the key terms used to understand the concepts associated with the framework. Furthermore, the ability of the capability approach to assess the STWT is evaluated and a conclusion is provided at the end of the chapter.

The capability approach, having been developed by a philosopher, uses specific terminology that may, in some cases, appear in conflict with the general day-to-day use of language. Information collected as part of this study is, therefore, used for two reasons: to provide context to the study, using examples from the interviews to explain the concepts and terms associated with the capability approach and through the interviews to aid discussion concerning 'public reasoning'. Public reasoning is an important aspect of the capability approach because, as Sen (2009, p. xiii) argues:

'Democracy has to be judged not just by the institutions that formally exist, but by the extent to which different voices from diverse sections of people can actually be heard'

Furthermore, Sen (2009) advocates that any claim to justice would be undermined if it could not stand up to public scrutiny. This is the main reason why the thesis seeks the views of those involved in the transition process, to hear their experiences.

3.2 What is the capability approach? An overview of the framework

In 1988, for his contributions to welfare economics, Amartya Sen received the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences. Welfare economics looks at the well-

being of individuals, or a group, examining the advantage(s) one has in life. Sen's contribution to welfare economics is his account of how human well-being should be approached; this is in the basis of the capability approach.

The capability approach is a framework used to examine equality and assess well-being. It is an alternative way of looking at equality, or an individual's advantage. The capability approach should not be confused when the word 'capabilities' as discussed in the context of the construction industry. For example, Mohyin *et al.* (2012), when considering commitment within the industry, commented that the 'capabilities' of the employees are important. In that research, capabilities referred to using employees as the main resource to deliver services in the construction industry.

Although Sen (2009) wrote his book, 'The Idea of Justice', in memory of John Rawls, whose work was around justice, Sen has criticised Rawls and previous approaches to well-being for being solely based upon resources. Sen (2009, p. 231) further states:

'a person's advantage in terms of opportunities is judged to be lower than that of another if she has less capability - less real opportunity - to achieve those things that she has reason to value'

One of the benefits of using the capability approach is that it examines equality based upon the advantage or capability of an individual. The core normative assumption of the capability approach is that an individual should be able to do and be whatever they want to be. Thus, the capability approach looks at what individuals are able to do (meaning are capable of). Sen (2009, p. 232) states that 'the things we value most are particularly important for us to be able to achieve'. Furthermore, Sen (2009) argues that the idea of freedom also respects our being free to determine what we want, what we value and ultimately what we decide to choose.

Sen (2009) argues that the capability approach focuses on human life and not on

detached objects of convenience, for example, resources, pointing out (p. 233) that:

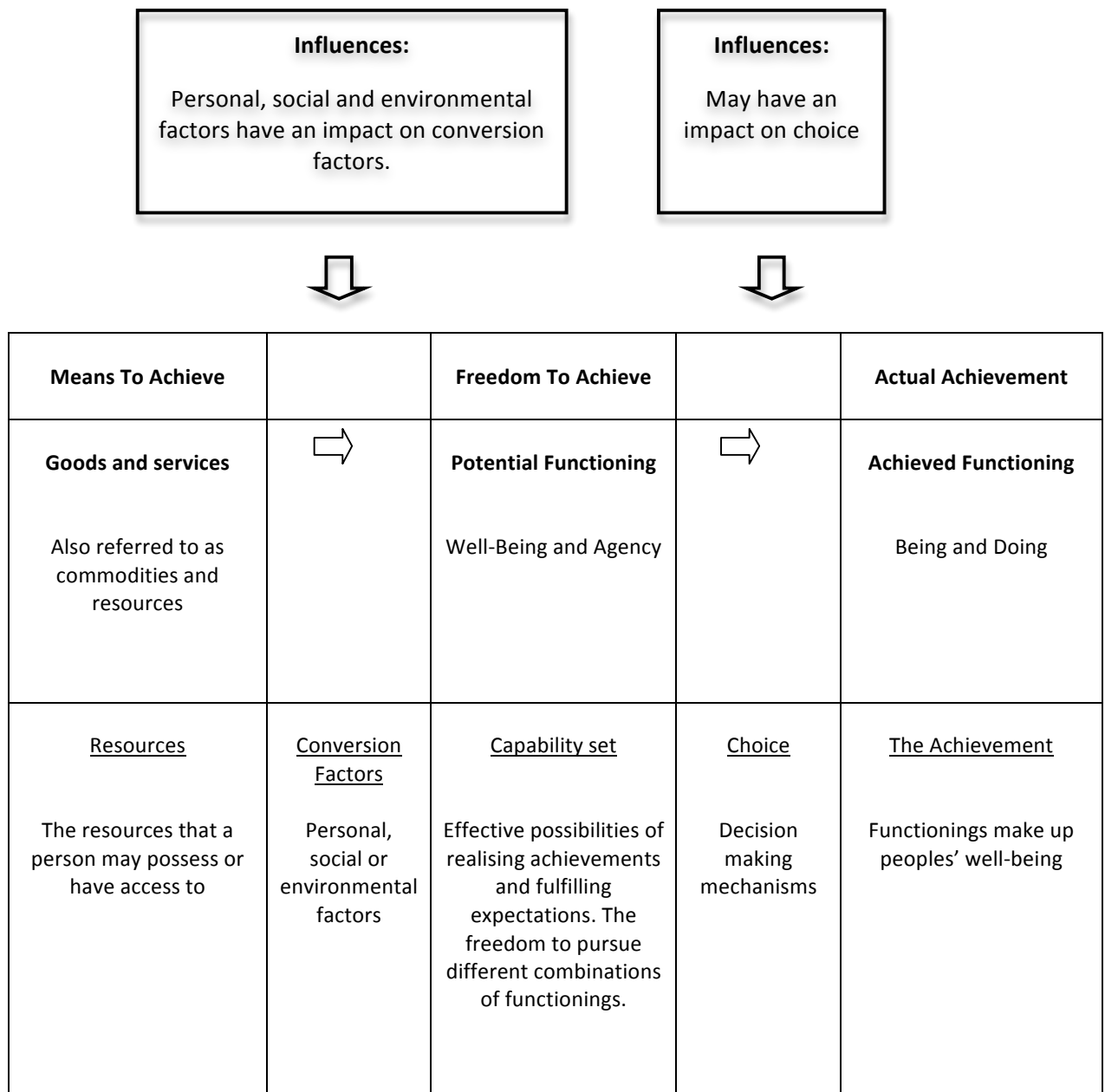
The capability that we are concerned with is our ability to achieve various combinations of functionings that we can compare and judge against each other in terms of what we have reason to value.

Sen (2009) states that it is important to understand that the capability approach is concerned with the ability to achieve 'combinations' of valued functionings, rather than talking about individual capabilities. This is of interest because some researchers using the capability approach focus on only one capability. For example, Powell (2012) used the capability approach to examine the role of Vocational Education and Training (VET) in poverty alleviation and produced only one capability: the capability to aspire. However, according to Sen, the focus should be on overall capabilities. Therefore, for this study it is necessary to understand all capabilities that the electrical trainees may value. Doing so allows for the possibility of a comparative study of ethnicity and trainee type.

3.3 Understanding the key terms used in the capability approach

The capability approach makes reference to many key terms such as, among others, freedom, capability and functioning. These terms are depicted in Figure 3.1. The concept of the capability approach not only focuses on what a person ends up doing, but also on what he is able to do (Sen, 2009, p. 235). The figure was adapted from, on the one hand, Sen (2005) who examined the relationship between human rights and human capabilities and, on the other, Robeyns (2005) who has written extensively on the capability approach. The figure also highlights influences that may affect capabilities and functionings, such as social and environmental issues, in addition to choice. Another variable of the capability approach is how individuals can turn commodities into functionings based upon individual characteristics.

Figure 3.1 The capability approach: diagram adapted from Sen (2005) and Robeyns (2005)



Note: An individual capability is sometimes discussed as the ability to achieve the corresponding individual functionings. However, the capability set is the ability to achieve combinations of valued functioning (Sen, 2009, p. 233)

The variables identified in the Figure 3.1 are part of the capability approach, which can impact on freedom and subsequently equality. The main keys terms of Sen (2009) framework, are:

1. *Well-being*: the concept of well-being is seen in the context of the capability approach;
2. *Agency*: encompasses all of the goals that a person has reason to adopt and includes the goals in the advancement of his or her well-being;
3. *Freedom*: refers to the extent to which an individual is free to choose a particular level of functionings;
4. *Capability*: the opportunity to achieve valuable combinations of human functionings (opportunity freedom);
5. *Functioning*: the notion of functioning is based on what an individual is able to do and be (achieved outcomes);
6. *Resources, goods and commodities*: these are the things that an individual has access to;
7. *Conversion factors*: the link between resources, capability and functioning is the notion of conversion factors, which can impact on an individual's opportunities and achievements;
8. *Opportunity aspect and process aspect of freedom*: Sen (2009) argues that freedom can be affected by the opportunity aspect of freedom and the process aspect of freedom. The opportunity aspect of freedom is when individuals are forced to do something that they would not normally choose to do, whereas, the process aspect of freedom is when individuals are being forced to do something, whether or not they would have freely chosen that action;
9. *Choices*: Choices have an impact on whether or not an individual may take up an opportunity;
10. *Adaptive preferences*: people may adapt themselves depending upon the circumstances, which may have an impact on opportunities and choices; and
11. *Influences*: factors that may have an impact on choices that an individual may make.

The following section explains the concepts in more detail, outlining their importance, and how each element is connected with the others. In addition, examples of the application of the capability approach are provided. The examples provided in this section are based upon published literature, in addition to the

information collected from the organisational interviews.

3.3.1 Freedom, agency and well-being

Freedom, in the context of the capability approach, refers to the extent that a person is free to choose (Sen, 1987b). This is not to be confused with what a person decides to choose (Sen, 2005). Agency and well-being both have a role to play in freedom. Sen (1999, p. 19) discusses the meaning of **an agent**, whom he describes as:

Someone who acts and brings about change, and whose achievements can be judged in terms of her own values and objectives, whether or not we assess them in terms of some external criteria as well.

However, agency, or the lack of agency, can limit the possibility of the things we value in life (Walker, 2006). Sen (2005) discusses the difference between well-being and agency because he argues that both are important aspects when looking at equality: both take into consideration what a person values. However, agency encapsulates well-being and, thus, agency and well-being have something in common.

3.3.2 Capability, functioning and resources

Sen (2005) explains the concept of **capability** as the opportunity or the ability to achieve, that is, what a person is able to do or be. The advantage of seeing opportunity in terms of capability allows examination of whether individuals value a particular thing, or if they possess the necessary resources required to pursue what they want. Furthermore, Sen (2009) argues that opportunities should be 'real' opportunities. In this sense, it is a travesty when opportunities lead to nothing. For example, when examining the retail qualification for apprenticeships, Roberts (2012b) found that National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) Level 2 were not recognised by employers. Cullen (2012), exploring the qualifications for electricians, spoke to electrical organisations that raised concerns about NVQ Level 2

qualifications. He found that NVQ Level 2 leaves little chance of the individual finding work in the electrical trade, as the industry does not recognise this qualification. Interviews with electrical contractors, collected as part of this study, support Cullen's work. Colleges offer electrical courses comprised of pre-entry level, Level 1, level 2 and Level 3. The concern is that, if a Level 2 qualification is the minimum recognised standard, what does this say about the qualifications below Level 2 in terms of being real opportunities for those students. A manager representing the electrical trade provides a serious condemnation:

I would really be interested to know if, when somebody signs up on such a course, it's made crystal clear to them by the college what the outcome of that course is going to be. I would like some honest answers to that because that class full of people is all about the college and money and nothing to do with the industry.

(Manager, Electrical Organisation, male, white)

Furthermore, the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2002, p. 32) states, when looking at education using a capability perspective, 'policies are judged to be successful if they have enhanced people's capabilities'. The point here is, if electrical trainees are studying courses that are not recognised in the industry, it is questionable whether this can be considered as a real opportunity if the trainee wishes to become an electrician.

Another example of opportunities offered that may be questionable is in the context of the construction industry and the training on the Olympic site. Following the announcement in 2005 that London will host the Olympics, a programme was introduced in July of that year for the Olympic host boroughs to train individuals to work in construction (Clarke, 2005). In one Olympic borough, the authority decided to build a £7 million construction college, which opened in January 2011 with the promise to provide skilled employment to the Olympics (Waltham Forest Labour Group, 2010). Opening the college with just over a year to train a cohort before the commencement of the Olympic Games in 2012 was very ambitious. The researcher interviewed the key accounts manager and he gave the reason for the delay in

opening as due to inter organisational affairs.

Although capability is a core concept of the capability approach, so too is functioning. Sen (2009) draws a distinction between the concept of capability and **functioning**. A functioning is an achievement whereas a capability is the ability to achieve (Sen, 2005; Sen and Hawthorn, 1988). For example, functionings are things such as working, resting, being literate, being healthy, being part of a community, being able to travel and being confident (Oosterlaken, 2009). Examples illustrating the difference between capability and functioning include the difference between an opportunity to achieve and the actual achievement, the capability for mobility and actually moving around, the capability to be literate compared to actually reading, or the capability to be well-educated and being well educated (Walker, 2006, p. 165). To simplify the distinction, the functioning is the outcome and capability is the potential to achieve. However, all functionings together create the capability, meaning, 'real or substantive freedom to be and do what you want' (Robeyns, 2003, p. 63; Sen, 2009).

The notion of **resources**, also referred to as commodities or goods and services, illustrated in Figure 3.1, can impact on creating opportunities. Although Sen (2009) discusses, on the one hand, how one needs to be aware of the resources an individual has access to, on the other hand he argues against only looking at resources when assessing equality. He further explains that resources can be (p. 253):

in the form of owning, or having use of or objects of convenience that a person may possess.

Thus, the meaning of resources can also be associated with things more far reaching in terms of what an individual may have access to, for example, an individual's family. Robeyns' definition of resources is narrower than that of Sen's. She states that resources are the things that people have (Robeyns, 2005). However, both authors agree on the importance of resources, as they can impact

on how an individual can turn an opportunity into a functioning. Furthermore, goods and services have characteristics, which are of interest to people. For example, a bike enables the functioning of mobility, thus being able to move around more freely (Robeyns, 2005). Nonetheless, it is not enough when examining equality to look at resources alone, as people may have the same resources but have a different well-being. For example, if a disabled person had the same resources as an able bodied person, it does not automatically transpire that both will be able to perform the same activity (Robeyns, 2005; Sen, 2009). In the STWT literature, resources such as family, networking and knowledge can influence the process of making the transition to employment (Bradley and Nguyen, 2004a; Woolcock and Narayan, 2000). However, thought needs to be given to how resources can be turned into capabilities and subsequently achievements. The capability framework can be seen as quite intricate, as it has the ability to focus on different dimensions.

3.3.3 Conversion Factors

An important component of the capability approach is the concept of **conversion factors**. Sen (2009, p. 255) points out that there are various types of contingencies that have to be considered as part of the capability framework, as they impact on the conversion of resources into the kinds of lives that people wish to lead. The author lists four contingencies, namely:

1. *Personal heterogeneities*: such as physical conditions, including age, gender, disability and proneness to illness;
2. *Diversities in the physical environment*: including climatic circumstances such as temperature ranges or flooding, pollution, and public facilities;
3. *Variation in social climate*: for example, public healthcare, educational arrangements and the prevalence or absence of crime or violence; and
4. *Differences in relational perspectives*: including, established behaviours in a community, for example, to be able to appear in public without shame.

Robeyns (2005) discusses three types of conversion factors, which she refers to as:

1. *Personal factors*: such as metabolism, physical condition, sex, reading skills and intelligence;
2. *Social factors*: such as, public policies, social norms, discriminatory practices, gender roles, societal hierarchies and power relations; and
3. *Environmental factors*: such as, climate and geographical location.

The main difference in the examples provided by Sen, compared to those by Robeyns, is that Robeyns' list does not include 'differences in relational perspectives', though she fails to give the reason for omitting this from her list. Nevertheless, research using the capability approach, in a practical setting and discussing conversion factors, tends to refer to the definition provided by Robeyns (see Tao, 2013; Wilson-Strydom, 2012).

The example of a conversion factor given by Robeyns (2000) makes reference to a bike. She states that the bike can be seen as a personal conversion factor, but that the bike is of no use to someone who is disabled and unable to use it. Consequently, this will affect the functioning of mobility. Robeyns uses the bike to illustrate the difference between social and environmental factors. For instance, Robeyns (2000) states that, if two individuals both have a bike, both are able bodied and both have the same conversion factors, the bike is the commodity and it can lead to different outcomes, which in the capability approach are referred to as different levels of functionings, to transport based upon the social environment. The different outcomes could be manifest if, for example, one environment invested in its public infrastructure, supporting and encouraging the use of cycling, whilst the other did not. She further states that this would be different from an environment where there is poor public infrastructure, poverty or crime. In this scenario the bike (the same commodity for both individuals) leads to different levels of functionings of being able to ride safely, thus the freedom or opportunity to ride is different based upon the characteristic, the society.

Turning to this study, examples of a conversion factor were noted when the researcher visited the colleges offering electrical courses. The lecturers were

themselves ex-electricians and thus versed in the electrical trade and the electrical industry. During these visits, discussion centred upon the electrical framework, specifically the Achievement Measurement 2 (AM2)⁷. However, it was noted that the lecturers did not always have knowledge of the AM2. This apparent lack of knowledge will impact on the electrical trainees' achievements in terms of completing the electrical framework as subscribed by the Joint Industry Board (JIB)⁸. This in turn will hinder the trainee in being able to access the construction industry as an electrician. Furthermore, this supports Sen (2009) view where he emphasizes that the freedom a child may have in the present can impact on the freedom they will have in the future.

3.3.4 Choice

Another important element of the capability approach is the concept of **choice**, which is particularly important when examining inequality. Sen (2009, p. 237) draws a distinction between '*doing something*' and '*being free to do that thing*'. He also states that 'the actual ability of people to choose to live different kinds of lives within their reach' is of importance. Sen cites genital mutilation⁹ as an example of where a person has no choice, i.e. whether they have the procedure or not. It should, however, be about the freedom to be able to choose and the freedom to reject something (Watts and Bridges, 2006). Sen (1992) provides an example of the importance of choice when using a capability approach. He states that eating, starving, and fasting would all be considered functionings; however, the functioning of fasting differs significantly from that of starving. Unlike starving, fasting involves a choice and the individual chooses to starve despite the presence of other options.

However, choice can be restricted by certain factors. Robeyns (2000) gives the example of two girls who both have the same intellectual capacities, one being

⁷ The AM2 is a practical based assessment, taken after completion of the electrical framework, whereby candidates undertake a series of tasks where they are tested in a timed environment (NET 2011).

⁸ The Joint Industry Board (JIB) framework is the recognised framework for electricians is outlined by JIB (Brawley, 2012) and was discussed in Chapter 2.

⁹ Female Genital Mutilation comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons (Foundation for Women's Health Research and Development (Forward) UK, 2015).

born to a family who believe in studying but the other not. In this instance, the social environment, family and class, influence the preference for studying. In Robeyns (2001) later work she argues that choice can be constrained by gender. Although the capability approach has been used in gender studies (Addabbo *et al.*, 2008; Robeyns, 2003; Sen, 1987a; Unterhalter, 2003), there has been limited focus on how choice is constrained by ethnicity. This is despite the BAME group being more likely to be discriminated against by employers (Dale *et al.*, 2002; Heath and Cheung, 2006; Noon and Hoque, 2001). Thus, understanding the concept of choice is important when using the capability approach, whether that choice is influenced by the individual or is affected by factors, such as, family, organisations or ethnicity. Moreover, it is useful to evaluate the part that choice plays in the transition process. These considerations are discussed throughout Chapters 6-10.

3.3.5 The opportunity aspect and process aspect of freedom

Sen discusses the '**opportunity aspect**' and the '**process aspect**' of freedom. Both are valuable when examining freedom for two different reasons. Sen (2005) explains that with the opportunity aspect of freedom you would be doing something that you do not want to do and which you do not have a choice in doing. Your opportunity is curtailed. For example, if you are not able to access medical treatment because your local hospital does not have the beds to accommodate you, you will be forced to attend another hospital. You may not want to go to another hospital, but you have no choice if you want to seek treatment. In comparison, with the process aspect of freedom, you would be doing something that you do not want to do and you do not have the power to decide for yourself what you do. For example, being sentenced without a proper trial is a violation of the process. The difference between the process and opportunity aspect of freedom is one of choice: whether or not you have a choice of freedom. The process aspect of freedom is concerned with the ability to achieve irrespective of the process, while, the process aspect of freedom attaches importance to the process of choice.

Subramanian *et al.* (2013, p. 295) illustrate the difference between opportunity and process aspects of freedom by discussing the working environment. With this example, the employer seeks to make changes to the work schedule. There are two options available, either impose the change on the workers or, in discussion with the employees and as part of a broader range of options, the workforce could choose the changes to the work schedule. The latter would be the best possible option, giving the employees a feeling of having some choice in the matter. The authors state that, while the outcome may be the same, the process in question is very different. From Sen's capability perspective, if the change in work schedule is imposed, it affects both the opportunity aspect and the process aspect of freedom. The opportunity aspect is affected because there was no choice as to whether or not to accept the change in work schedule. The process aspect of freedom is affected because there was no choice as the change in work schedule was imposed. If the employer had a discussion with the employee about the change, and the employee was free to decide whether or not to accept it, then the opportunity aspect of freedom would not be affected. The above example illustrates that different approaches may have different outcomes. In this sense due diligence should be given to processes.

Sen (2009, p. 232) discusses the notion of '**comprehensive outcome**' and '**culmination outcome**'. The concept of capability is linked to the opportunity aspect of freedom, which is seeing opportunity in the form of 'comprehensive outcome'. Comprehensive outcome takes into account the way the person reaches the 'culmination' situation, for instance, whether that person reached the outcome through his or her own choice or whether it was through the dictation of others. In contrast, 'culmination outcome' refers to where a person actually ends up.

The interviews with key respondents provide an example. The researcher attended the Olympic site on a number of occasions. Employees went through strict security checks to access the site, such as security gates and checks similar to those encountered at airports, including the scanning of personal bags through x-ray

machines and the use of biometric¹⁰ techniques. As part of the security measures, a manager stated that there is a requirement for any prospective employee wishing to work on the site to provide a Criminal Record Bureau¹¹ check:

Anyone wishing to work on the Olympics needs a Criminal Record Bureau check and has to show 5 years of employment history.

(Manager, Job Centre Plus¹², white, female)

As a result, the opportunity to work on the Olympic site exists insofar as the applicant can provide a CRB check demonstrating that he or she does not have a criminal record and can demonstrate that they have previously been in employment. An interview with an electrical contractor reveals a difference in the process. The contractor states that his electrical apprentices had to sign a declaration saying that the individual had not been arrested in the past five years. The contractor further went on to say that he signed off the 'statements' on a Friday and the electrical apprentice was working on the site the following Monday:

What I found interesting, especially about CRB checks and difficulty getting on site, the amount of people that turned up with their paperwork on the day, signed off and no criminal record bureau checks, but just a statement from them that they were able to work with no problems.

(Electrical Contractor, male, white)

Both organisations, Jobcentre Plus and the electrical contractor, were involved in the recruitment of those wishing to work on the Olympic site. Jobcentre Plus took the decision to provide time intensive CRBs, while the electrical contractors completed declarations to achieve the same outcome of getting people to work on the Olympic site. The different organisational processes created different outcomes for individuals. For example, the process adopted by the Jobcentre Plus may have a

¹⁰ Biometric technology provides identification processes, such as, among others, iris recognition, fingerprinting and document verification (Findbiometrics, 2015).

¹¹ The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) replaced the Criminal Record Bureau. An employer may ask for a DBS check and a criminal record check, for certain roles. The checks are based on whether or not an individual has had criminal activity (GOV.UK, 2015)

¹² Job Centre Plus is an organisation, among other things, which supports unemployed individuals back into education and employment (House of Commons, 2014).

different outcome for the BAME group because, as a Police Officer interviewed commented:

Ethnic minorities are more likely to be criminalised, which impacts on any employment prospects.
(Superintendent, Olympic Policing Co-ordination Team, male, BAME)

The BAME group is significantly over-represented in the prison system, with over 25 per cent of the overall prison population from a BAME background (Sveinsson, 2012). However, the BAME group are more likely to be sentenced to prison for the same crime in comparison to the white group (Institute of Race Relations, 2013). In this context, the provision of a CRB provides more information than a declaration and gives the potential employer additional information on which to reject individuals. This raises two considerations for this study. First, processes can produce negative bias against one group in comparison to another. Second, this example illustrates that the difference in process may have different outcomes although organisational objectives may be the same. In comparison, Sen states that differences in processes may have the same outcome. The point here is the importance of being aware of not only the process, but also the purpose of the process, to understand whether it achieves the intended outcome.

3.3.6 Adaptive preferences and influences

Although choice is important as part of the capability approach, Sen also discusses the concept of **adaptive preferences**. This is not shown in the capability approach framework diagram, in Figure 3.1. However, Sen (1999, p. 105) describes adaptive preferences as:

Our desires and pleasure-taking abilities adjust to circumstances; especially to make life bearable in adverse situations. The utility calculus can be deeply unfair to those who are persistently deprived.... The deprived people tend to come to terms with their deprivation because of the sheer necessity of survival; and they may, as a result, lack the courage to demand

any radical change, and may even adjust their desires and expectations to what they unambitiously see as feasible.

Despite the concept of adaptive preferences, there is no consensus on how it should be understood with respect to the practicalities of undertaking research. One piece of research that tries to explore adaptive preferences is that of Burchardt (2003). Her research looked at income and satisfaction over a period of time. She asks 'is it the case that people become accustomed to the situation they find themselves in and subsequently set their aspirations, from their expectations, and assess their well-being relative to that situation?' The point of adaptive preferences is that people adapt their choices dependent upon what they think is possible (Lessmann, 2012; Walker, 2006; Watts, 2009). The question then arises whether individuals from different ethnic groups limit themselves in the choices that they make because of their own understanding and past experiences.

Sen (2009, p. 244) stresses that the capability approach is concerned with the life that people have reason to value. However, social **influences** have a part to play in the framework: what people value and what influences operate on what people value. These influences impact on how people choose, think, or act. In the STWT there are many influences that are attributed to many factors, for example structural (Callanan and Morrell, 2013) financial support or lack of it (Quintini *et al.*, 2007), chance events associated with demographics and personality (Hirschi, 2010), qualifications, gender, ethnicity and motherhood (Quintini and Manfredi, 2009) and parents' background (Crawford *et al.*, 2011; Duckworth and Schoon, 2012). These factors can affect the transition process and can be sorted into two main groups: structural and individual factors. Although there may be much work on structural factors, when examining the transition process at an individual level, specifically relating to the BAME group, there is limited information available.

3.4 The strength and limitations of the capability approach

The capability approach has been used in many areas. For example, E-development

(Zheng, 2007), policy (Deakin and Koukiadaki, 2007) and gender auditing (Addabbo *et al.*, 2008). For an extensive review of the use of the capability approach, see Lessmann (2012). Research that has used the approach, and which aligns itself to some extent to this study, is the work of Wilson-Strydom (2014). She examined the transition of students to university in South Africa. The author produced a list of capabilities, which included practical reason and knowledge and imagination. Hollywood *et al.* (2010) focused on the transition towards employment. Both of these studies centred on the transition process, albeit in a different context. However, both have limitations. The capability list above focused on one point in time, and, only Wilson-Strydom, provided a comprehensive list. There is limited research using the capability approach to study change over a period of time.

Sen's capability approach has been used in quantitative and qualitative studies. However, the framework lends itself to a qualitative approach to incorporate as many factors that may affect the choices and influences individuals in the transition process. This allows a focus on the views of individuals and may assist to identify inequality in terms of opportunity and means.

A qualitative approach also assists in addressing complexities on collecting data on the BAME group, such as ethnic minority groups not falling into neat categories (Noon and Hoque, 2001), the dilemma associated with the mixed ethnic groups blurring the boundaries (Nwankwo and Lindridge, 1998) and the BAME group who reject ethnic labelling (Safran, 2008). Thus, speaking to the electrical trainees allows an understanding of the challenges and barriers faced by the BAME group in the transition process.

The strength of the capability approach is that it allows for the formation of an analysis specific to the research context. Furthermore, the approach creates the space to ask evaluative questions within a predefined framework. Although Sen provides the concepts, terms and explanations of the framework, it is the researcher's responsibility to address the complexities. In this sense, decisions have to be made in relation to how relevant capabilities should be identified, how to

evaluate the framework and how the conversion factors should be applied to the research (Dang, 2014). The capability approach describes intricacies, which must consider the infrastructure and activities of organisational actors. There are different stages in the transition process, with different actors, who have different objectives. This makes the development of the framework an extremely complex exercise.

Another limitation of the framework is how individuals and organisations use the information. Sen (2009, p. 232) states that ‘the capability approach points to an informational focus in judging and comparing overall individual advantages, and does not propose any specific formula how that information may be used’. Therefore, not only does the researcher have to develop the framework but also, added to this, there is a lack of clarity in terms of what information to use and how it will be used. Research using the capability approach does not always tackle these issues or provide justification as to why certain elements of the framework are used (Powell, 2012).

Language is another limitation of the capability approach. Research accepts that terminology associated with the capability approach is at times unclear (Smith and Seward, 2009). An example of this is where Sen (2005) makes reference to capabilities, describing them in two ways: as basic capabilities and substantive capabilities. This makes it somewhat challenging to grasp the points of discussion. Robeyns (2000) in her analysis of the capability approach provides clarification as to why the terms capabilities and basic capabilities are used. However, the inconsistent use of terms surrounding the capability approach makes for a lack of clarity about what is actually being discussed in the literature. The issue with the capability approach is that the framework has been developed over years, so information and ideas are not always contained in one concise document. This makes for misinterpretation. Furthermore, the capability approach is grounded in developing countries and the examples provided by Sen are, in some instances, quite extreme as his work is based around extreme deprivation. This can present limitations in understanding the capability approach and how it is ultimately used in

practice and research.

3.5 The researcher's position

Although the decision was made to use the capability approach, a researcher still needs to be aware of the philosophical viewpoint shaping other aspects of the research and ultimately affecting the way the research is approached. This section therefore discusses the philosophy of the research, making reference to the development of the epistemological and ontological position of the researcher.

Epistemology and ontology

Epistemology is a branch of philosophy that discusses what we know, how knowledge is acquired and how do we know what we know (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2002). Ontology is to do with assumptions concerning how the world is made up, is based upon 'what is,' and sits alongside epistemology (Crotty, 1998).

There are various branches of philosophy, each taking a different view on how knowledge is gained. Two traditional views are positivism and social constructivism (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2002). The former holds that the only knowledge is scientific knowledge and that, as the world exists it should not be influenced by the thoughts and views of the researcher. In contrast, the latter, social constructivism, sometimes referred to as interpretivism, takes the view that reality is socially constructed. Individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work. This relies on the views of the participant, in the situation being studied, and the focus is on where people live because historical and cultural settings impact on the viewpoint of the research participant (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2002).

When discussing epistemology, Creswell (2009) refers to two other views, advocacy/participatory and pragmatist. Advocacy/participatory takes the view that research inquiry needs to be intertwined with politics and a political agenda, that specific issues need to be addressed, for example oppression, inequality and discrimination, and that positivists do not go far enough to help marginalised people. Pragmatists, on the other hand, do not commit to any one philosophical

view. According to Creswell (2009, p. 10) pragmatists assessing situations should take a practical approach, which arises from actions, situations and consequences. This view contrasts with that of positivism, and of realism, which that reality exists independent of researchers (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2002).

In terms of the choice of epistemological approach, as a researcher, I saw my role as investigating the research problem and then reporting on the findings, but the research approach adopted was borne out of the conceptual framework. This is because Sen (2009) argues that the capability approach is based upon giving those being researched a voice. Taking this into account and with the knowledge that the research is examining the transition process for different ethnic groups, the philosophical assumptions upon which my research is based upon are a mixture of interpretivist and advocacy/participatory. An interpretivist approach is taken towards understanding the transition process, and ultimately in doing so, to examining the experience of those in the process. An advocacy/participatory approach helps, first, to highlight any injustices in the transition process, second, to understand any policy or practices that may influence the process, and third to recommend/discuss policy changes and any actions that may be necessary to alleviate any inequality.

The research focuses on ethnicity and the researcher recognises that there are challenges when researching individuals from a BAME background. The word, ethnic minorities, is socially constructed; if it were not for society then the term would not exist. Furthermore, the term has changed over time. It was not until the 1991 census that a question was asked about an individual's ethnicity, which relies upon individuals ticking a box which they believe best describes their ethnic background (Sillitoe and White, 1992). However, ethnic categories changed in the 2001 census and again in the 2011 census, so making it difficult to draw adequate comparisons with different ethnic groups, over time.

There are problems in using ethnic labels to describe groups. Some individuals may reject ethnic labelling in defining themselves, whether on grounds of public policy

or for practical reasons, such as accessing a school (Safran, 2008). Furthermore, there are difficulties to assign individuals from mixed ethnic backgrounds to a single ethnic groups, thus blurring boundaries (Nwankwo and Lindridge, 1998) and impacting on data collection on ethnicity. The problem of collecting data on ethnicity is complex but these categories are relied upon to make decisions about ethnic groups, for example, when monitoring services at national and local levels (Her Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO), 2003). However, Finney and Simpson (2009) point out that data on ethnicity, whilst questionable, can reveal the state of society in relation to ethnic minorities.

Furthermore, the literature is confusing when looking at ethnicity and there is a lack of clarity about what is being discussed and how it works. Labels can change with the context, and over time, making it difficult to understand the scale of any problem and to draw comparisons between and within groups. The term is also dependent upon who is being defined and who is the definer and makes the assumption that people fit neatly into categories. It is for this reason that my position, as a researcher, is a mixture of advocacy/participatory and social constructivism.

Another consideration concerns problems connected with statistical data, which this research cannot solely rely upon. For example, this section outlined some of the problems with collecting data on ethnicity, while Chapter 3 clearly note the problems with statistical information in relation to electrical apprenticeships. Thus, having a pluralistic rather than a one-sided approach to research methods allows for the adoption of a multifaceted area of concern. Therefore, the data collection relies on mixed methods, both quantitative and qualitative, to accommodate the limited information on trainees in the transition process. Although Bishop (2015) argues that there are philosophical challenges when undertaking a mixed method approach, due to opposing epistemologies, the researcher shares the view of Frost *et al.* (2010). They consider that exploring alternative approaches to data collection and analysis provides not only a different perspective of the accounts of the

experience of the participants, but can also provide a different understanding of how meaning is reached.

3.6 Summary and conclusions

The aim of this chapter has been to argue that the capability approach is a viable framework to examine inequality in the school-to-work transition process. The chapter has outlined the capability approach, a framework designed by Amartya Sen, to examine social arrangements. Sen's capability approach appears most appropriate for this research because it suggests an in-depth analysis of processes in the learning environment, in addition to examining barriers in the transition process that may affect the outcome of working in the construction industry as an electrician. The capability approach allows the space to ask questions and form some sort of analysis specific to the context that is to be researched.

In order to understand factors that may affect the STWT process, the best approach is to seek the views of the individuals actually affected by the situation. The strength of the capability approach is the ability to examine the capability of both the BAME and white group. The chapter has also highlighted the need to understand any organisational process that can affect the outcome for the trainees. The research philosophy was discussed and the rationale for adopting a mixed method approach to the research, in order to allow varying views, was considered.

Although Sen has provided the framework, it is not fixed and is dependent upon the context. Therefore, it is up to the researcher to develop the framework for his/her purpose and, in doing so, there are certain variables that have to be selected and some thought must be given to how the capability approach will become operational. This is discussed further in Chapter 4.

4. Methodological considerations for operating the capability approach

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter argued that the capability approach is a strong basis to examine the school-to-work transition process. This chapter examines how the capability approach will be used to study the transition process of electrical trainees. Over the years, there has been a growing interest in the use of the capability approach but the framework is not without its operational problems. This chapter discusses these operational challenges and starts the initial process of developing a capability framework from education to the construction labour market of electrical trainees.

Chapter aims

The chapter is divided into four sections. The first begins by laying out the operational issues for developing the capability approach for the STWT context. The second develops a theoretical capability list for the school-to-work transition of electrical trainees. The third discusses how the capability approach will be used for the study and the fourth provides a conclusion.

The chapter answers the following question:

How will the capability approach be created so it can be used in the School-to-Work Transition (STWT)?

4.2 Operational issues for developing the capability approach

Despite the increase of empirical research using the capability approach, a consideration that needs to be addressed is how the framework should be developed for specific research. Any adoption of the capability approach will amount to nothing if studies fail to wrestle with its conceptual difficulties (Comin *et al.*, 2008). Thus, this section seeks to address some of the operational issues. Sen (2005) has suggested how the framework should be developed, which requires

certain factors to be discussed as part of its operationalisation. He states there are four areas that require consideration when using the framework. These are:

1. Selecting a list of capabilities;
2. Ensuring the capability list is dependent upon the context and subject to public reasoning;
3. Exploring how the capability list will be weighted; and
4. Selecting different combinations of functionings.

Turning to the first point, the importance of a capability list is necessary to understand what an individual values in the context that is being researched (Sen, 2005). Sen (2005) has not provided a list to be used with his framework and has been criticised for not doing so. However, the Sen defence on this matter is that the list should be dependent upon the context, as this will allow transparency. In contrast, Nussbaum (2001) has provided a list of capabilities under ten separate headings as shown in Table 4.1.

The Nussbaum list was created to address human development and she states that her list has been developed over time and will undergo further modification. For both authors, Sen and Nussbaum, what is noted is that even if a list is created, it is not necessarily fixed. The Nussbaum list would not be appropriate for the examination of the STWT process due to the different context between her work and this study. However, this does not preclude elements of her list, or any other capability list that has been created for another context, being reviewed, to determine whether any capabilities can be used to develop a list for this study.

Table 4.1 Nussbaum list of central human capabilities

Capability	Definition
Life	Being able to live to the end of a human life of normal length; not dying prematurely, or before one's life is so reduced as to be not worth living.
Bodily Health	Being able to have good health, including reproductive health; to be adequately nourished; to have adequate shelter.
Bodily Integrity	Being able to move freely from place to place; to be secure against violent assault, including sexual assault and domestic violence; having opportunities for sexual satisfaction and for choice in matters of reproduction.
Senses, Imagination, and Thought	Being able to use the senses, to imagine, think, and reason – and to do these things in a 'truly human' way, a way informed and cultivated by an adequate education, including, but by no means limited to, literacy and basic mathematical and scientific training. Being able to use imagination and thought in connection with experiencing and producing works and events of one's own choice, religious, literary, musical, and so forth. Being able to use one's mind in ways protected by guarantees of freedom of expression with respect to both political and artistic speech, and freedom of religious exercise. Being able to have pleasurable experiences and to avoid non-beneficial pain.
Emotions	Being able to have attachments to things and people outside ourselves; to love those who love and care for us, to grieve at their absence; in general, to love, to grieve, to experience longing, gratitude, and justified anger. Not having one's emotional development blighted by fear and anxiety. (Supporting this capability means supporting forms of human association that can be shown to be crucial in their development.)
Practical Reason	Being able to form a conception of the good and to engage in critical reflection about the planning of one's life. (This entails protection for the liberty of conscience and religious observance.)
Affiliation	<p>A. Being able to live with and toward others, to recognize and show concern for other human beings, to engage in various forms of social interaction; to be able to imagine the situation of another. (Protecting this capability means protecting institutions that constitute and nourish such forms of affiliation, and also protecting the freedom of assembly and political speech.)</p> <p>B. Having the social bases of self-respect and non-humiliation; being able to be treated as a dignified being whose worth is equal to that of others. This entails provisions of non-discrimination on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, caste, religion, and national origin.</p>
Other Species	Being able to live with concern for and in relation to animals, plants, and the world of nature.
Play	Being able to laugh, to play, and to enjoy recreational activities.
Control Over One's Environment	<p>A. Political. Being able to participate effectively in political choices that govern one's life; having the right of political participation, protections of free speech and association.</p> <p>B. Material. Being able to hold property (both land and movable goods), and having property rights on an equal basis with others; having the right to seek employment on an equal basis with others; having the freedom from unwarranted search and seizure. In work, being able to work as a human being, exercising practical reason, and entering into meaningful relationships of mutual recognition with other workers.</p>

The second operational issue that Sen (2005) discusses is that the capability approach should be based upon the context and be subject to public reasoning. In terms of the capability approach being based upon the context, this is one of the strengths of using the capability approach for the STWT. The capability approach allows the possibility of developing a framework, and making changes to it, which focus on the STWT, once it is developed. The context of this research is examining the transition of the BAME group and comparing and contrasting that with the white group. On that basis, the capability list developed for the STWT should focus on what both of these groups value in the transition process.

Sen (2005) also argues that the list should be subject to public reasoning as this provides some form of scrutiny and transparency for any list that is developed. However, there is a lack of clarity on behalf of the author as to how the public reasoning process should occur. Involving the public in the development of the list may draw different thoughts, for example, if a particular group believes that the list is not representative of their situation, or if a group is not directly affected by the context being researched. This raises the concern that, if the list is subject to public reasoning, it may become too individualistic, as people may have differing views, or individuals in any discussion may provide limited information. For example, the BAME group in comparison with the white group has different experiences in relation to employment (Ahmed *et al.*, 2008). Therefore, the risk is that certain ethnic groups may have more of a vested interest than other groups as to what should be included on the list. To counteract this concern, all items that are potentially to be included in the list should be added, but the possibility of grouping items together to make any list more manageable should be explored.

On the point of ensuring that the list should be subject to public reasoning, Robeyns (2003) has added to this debate and argues that, when devising a capability list, it should be defensible and the method to draw up the list should be justifiable. Walker and Unterhalter (2007), examining the implication of the capability approach for gender equality, in education, in South African schools, provided a justification for their capability list, which was based on four factors. These were

the need to consider education policy, grounding the list in the experiences of South African girls, engaging with other lists and, lastly, debating the list by publication. However, the list is theoretical, which the authors have duly noted, so this brings into question how much of the list is defensible and operational. Thus, there is no evidence as to whether, or not, their proposed list is appropriate for the context and would serve the purpose of their research.

Di Tommaso (2007) created a capability list for Indian children, which he tested by engaging with academics who were versed in the capability approach. The strength of his approach is that it was developed for the context and he provided justification for the methodology he followed to create the list. However, a concern is that he proposes that the list has to involve academics in its development. The problem with this approach is that academics may not be the only source that can bring authenticity to the list. If the list is based upon individuals, they should have a voice in terms of what affects them in the context being researched. This approach opens the list to debate by those involved in the transition process. Furthermore, for this thesis the views of organisations involved in the construction industry, construction training and the electrical trade should also be considered as their policies and practices may affect the capability list developed.

The third consideration that Sen (2005) highlights when developing the framework is that of weighting. The idea of weighting the capability list is to give priority to one capability compared to another. Although Sen (2005) discusses weighting, he does not specify how this should be done. Some authors using the capability approach do not always refer to the issue of weighting. For example, Zheng (2007) in his work provides a conceptual analysis of e-development using the capability approach but there is no mention as to how capabilities will be weighted. Walker and Unterhalter (2007), in their research examining inequality in education, decided not to include weighting, albeit their analysis is theoretical and not empirical. The work of Walker (2006) provided a list of eight capabilities that could be used to examine gender equity in education. The author explicitly states that she has made no attempt at weighting the various capabilities. These studies illustrate

that when using the capability approach, the concept of weighting is not always implemented in the development of the framework. However, on the point of weighting, Nussbaum (2001) argues that the capability list is important for everyone and relevant to social justice and, therefore, a society that rejects an item on the list of capabilities to support another is failing justice. Taking the Nussbaum view into consideration, who has the right to decide whether one capability is more important than another? The individuals who are involved in the STWT have an understanding as to what is important to them so, on that basis, the information collected for this study is of great importance, especially as the capability approach has not been previously used in this context. Therefore, for this reason, it is proposed that no weighting should occur.

The fourth and final consideration in the development of the framework is selecting different combinations of functionings. Sen (2005) argues that, in addition to having a list of capabilities, one also needs to be aware of a list of alternative functionings. Alternative functionings would be the things that an individual would like to enjoy. It is unclear what any alternatives would be for the electrical trainees in the transition from education to employment opportunities, so this study does not seek to address alternative functionings.

4.3 Developing the capability framework for the school-to-work transition of electrical trainee

This section discusses the development of the capability list for the STWT of electrical trainees. The development of the list is one of the most significant components of the capability approach. Two authors, Robeyns (2003) and Alkire (2007), who have researched the capability approach, have put forth a methodology on the selection of a list of capabilities. The benefit of having a methodology for creating a list of capabilities is not only that it provides information as to how the list is created, but also provides transparency and the ability to defend the list should the need arise.

Robeyns (2003) has put forth a methodology for creating a capability set.

1. *The criterion of explicit formulation*; the list should be explicit
2. *The criterion of methodological justification*; the method that has generated the list should be clarified and defended
3. *The criterion of sensitivity to the research context*
4. *The criterion of different levels of generality*; a theoretical list and a practical list
5. *The criterion of exhaustion and non-reduction of the capability list*: the capabilities in the list should include all elements

Both authors have produced a five-step approach and both agree that the list should be created by the involvement of other people. However, what is of contention are the practicalities of how one would involve these individuals. Robeyns (2003) believes that the list should be brainstormed, while Alkire (2007) states that the list should be based upon empirical data. However, neither author mentions actually involving the individuals being researched as a possibility of gaining their input into any list being created.

To examine the STWT and to ensure that the characteristic of ethnicity is considered, the following methodology to devise the capability list is proposed:

1. Examine the literature associated with the STWT, focusing on the influences that affect the transition process including any issues that specifically affect the BAME group (see Chapter 2);
2. Examine the literature that explores issues affecting the BAME group in education and the labour market (see Chapter 2);
3. Abstract list: Review other capability lists for example, Nussbaum (2001) who examined human development, Walker and Unterhalter (2007) who examined inequality in education and Robeyns (2003) who examined gender inequality. Although the context of these lists is different to this study there may be elements on their list that overlap with the STWT (see Table 4.2);
4. Create a hypothetical capability list, drawing upon:

- a. published data; specifically, information from the literature and reviewing other capability lists, and
 - b. the data collected from the organisational interviews that formed part of this study.
5. Practical list: Collect qualitative data - capturing the actual voices of the electrical trainees in the STWT process, for both the BAME group and the white group, in addition to organisations, who may influence the transition process. The data collected will be based upon the three stages of the transition process, which are; 'in school', 'in college' and 'in work-based learning' (see Chapters 7-9).

The practical capability lists will be compared to the theoretical list, which allows comparison between all lists to establish whether capabilities are enhanced or diminished for the groups being researched as part of this study.

The defence for this methodology is based upon transparency and ensuring that any list created is representative of the electrical trainees. Sen (2005) points out that any capability list should not be derived from theory. The above suggests that theory should be considered and should be used as a starting point to examine the issues in relation to this context.

One of the reasons for using qualitative data is to alleviate any problems with using secondary data. Secondary data has advantages in terms of making use of large-scale random sample surveys that are statistically representative of the whole population and allow the ability to compare trends over time. However, Lessmann (2012) highlights the problem with secondary data in that it is collected in a different context. Unt (2007) states that this type of data is not always compatible with what is being researched. Although, secondary data can provide insight into factors affecting the transition process, this study will use data which is collected for the specific context and research problem. Furthermore, using primary data rather than secondary data allows one to address which dimensions are relevant for the capability approach (Lessmann, 2012). The data collected for this study captures the voices of the individuals in the transition process and the personal accounts that they produce are used to create a capability list. This is especially

important, as the literature pertaining to the experiences of the BAME group in the transition process is limited.

Turning to the development of a theoretical capability list for the STWT of electrical trainees, Table 4.2 provides details of capability lists that were created by various authors. The Nussbaum list, in the first column on the table, is a general list. Two other general lists are the ones created by The Equalities Review (2007) and Holder *et al.* (2011), both of which have similar capabilities. The former was created for adults, and the latter for children aged between 0-17. Both of these lists are of interest as they were created by organisations whose work involves the area of equality.

The remaining lists were created for a specific purpose and what is of interest is that the capabilities noted are different. Not one of these lists was produced for the school-to-work transition process but they are still of interest. For example, the context of lists created by Walker (2006) and Biggeri *et al.* (2006) can both be seen as some aspect of the transition process, namely, children and education. However, they do not specifically relate to the group, the route, or the path, examined in this study (see Chapter 2), and which are identified below:

1. the transition process focusing on ethnicity (the group);
2. the transition from education to the construction labour market (the path); and
3. the transition comparing apprentices and non-apprentices (the route).

Table 4.2 Capability lists that have been created in different research contexts

	Capability Lists							
Author(s)	Nussbaum (2001)	Klasen (2000)	Biggeri <i>et al.</i> (2006)	Di Tommaso (2007)	Vizard (2010)	Robeyns (2003)	Walker (2006)	Holder <i>et al.</i> (2011) and The Equalities Review (2007)
Research Context	General	Poverty	Children	Indian Children	Equality	Gender Inequality	Gender Equality In Education	Equality
1.	Life	Education	Life and Physical Health	Life	Life	Life and Physical Health	Autonomy	Life
2.	Bodily Health	Income	Love and Care	Bodily Health	Health	Mental Well-Being	Knowledge	Health
3.	Bodily Integrity	Wealth	Mental Well-Being	Bodily Integrity	Physical Security	Bodily Integrity and Safety	Social Relations	Physical Security
4.	Senses	Housing	Bodily Integrity and Safety	Senses Imagination and Thought	Standard Of Living	Social Relations	Respect and Recognition	Legal Security
5.	Imagination and Thought	Water	Social Relations	Leisure Activities, Play	Education And Learning	Political Empowerment	Aspiration	Education and Learning
6.	Emotions	Sanitation	Participation	Emotions	Productive and Valued Activities	Education and Knowledge	Voice	Standard of Living
7.	Practical Reasons	Energy	Education	Social Interaction	Individual, Family and Social Life	Domestic Work and Nonmarket Care	Bodily Integrity and Bodily Health	Productive and Valued Activities
8.	Affiliation	Employment	Freedom From Economic and Non-Economic Exploitation		Identity and Self Respect	Paid Work and Other Projects	Emotional Integrity and Emotions	Individual, Family and Social Life
9.	Other Species	Transport	Shelter and Environment		Participation, Influence and Voice	Shelter And Environment		Identity, Expression and Self Respect
10.		Financial Services	Leisure Activities			Mobility		Participation, Influence and Voice
11.		Nutrition	Respect			Leisure Activities		
12.		Health Care	Religion			Time-Autonomy		
13.		Safety	Time Autonomy			Respect		
14.		Perceived Well Being	Mobility			Religion		

The hypothetical capability list constructed for the school-to-work transition process is outlined below. This list takes into account issues associated with the group, the path and the route and has been created using the data from the literature and information from the organisation interviews. For each of the seven capabilities that are selected, a short discussion of why it has been included is provided.

1. *The capability to have formal education:* The capability of education is included in the list of Klasen (2000) and Biggeri *et al.* (2006). However, it is not included in the Nussbaum (2001) general list. Education was stated as an important factor when, during the interviews with key respondents, the electrical contractors discussed the recruitment process they adopted for apprentices. The electrical contractors affirmed that:

We then give them a Key Skills test, which is basically to try and give us an overview that those who haven't yet passed their exams are capable of getting the grades they say they're going to be able to get.

(HR Manager, Electrical Contractor, located outside London, white, female)

Three GCSEs, grade C's in English, maths and science.

(Employment Manager, Electrical contractor, London, white, male).

The first contractor discussed the Key Skills test, which is based upon Maths and English, because some prospective electrical trainees may apply to the contractor prior to achieving their GCSE results. Although electrical contractors noted the importance of GCSEs, one college mentioned that the entry criteria set for individuals who wished to apply for an electrical course at their institution, was lower than that of the GCSE requirement:

It doesn't matter if you're slightly low in the kind of intelligence department, as long as the effort and the determination is there.

(Employer Responsive Manager, London College, male, BAME)

The difference in the recruitment entry criteria for colleges, compared to electrical contractors, was noted by another college who stated that:

What we would tend to do, and what employers who are taking apprentices on into electrical jobs, they would tend to be a bit more robust with the entry criteria, so employers would definitely be looking for A - C's in GCSE's'*
(Head of Faculty for Technology, London College, male, white)

Although formal education, in the form of GCSEs, was noted as a criterion used by contractors and colleges in their recruitment process, the interviews with the contractors pointed out that apprentices, once employed, are assessed, among other things, against punctuality, attendance and attitude. Thus, GCSE qualifications may be a criterion set by colleges and contractors but there are some variations in the recruitment process. Furthermore, once the electrical trainee is employed as an apprentice, the focus of the assessment, among others, takes into consideration 'soft' skills, such as communication.

2. *The capability to be able to move from place to place:* This reflects the capability of physical security noted by (Holder *et al.*, 2011). Personal security is important because it considers important aspects of the geographical environment. An example, of such changes, is the problem of knife crime and its impact for young people (Sharp *et al.*, 2006), an increase in gang¹³ culture (The Centre for Social Justice, 2009), the creation of post code wars (BBC Inside Out, 2007; BBC News, 2007) and gangs being cited as participating in the London 2011 summer riots (Smith, 2011), all of which contribute to how young people determine how to move freely from place to place. The problem of gangs, post codes and knife crime is not associated with any race but geographic location (Davies and Doward, 2007). The situation of not being able to move freely from place to place limits young people's access to, such things as opportunities, facilities and education (Kintrea *et al.*, 2008). There have been reports where young people have lost their lives as a result of being in the 'wrong place at the wrong time' (ITV News, 2013, 2014). While

¹³ Although there is not a consensus as to the meaning of the term gang, one definition is: 'a relatively durable, predominantly street-based group of young people who (1) see themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group, (2) engage in a range of criminal activity and violence, (3) identify with or lay claim over territory, (4) have some form of identifying structural feature, and (5) are in conflict with other, similar, gangs' (The Centre for Social Justice, 2009, p. 3).

ethnic background is not expressed as a factor, young, black ethnic minorities are particularly affected by this problem. In 1988, the Metropolitan Police created Operation Trident, effectively a special unit to deal with black-on-black crime, although in 2013 the organisation brief changed and its focus is no longer on black crime (BBC News, 2013a).

Turning to the interviews conducted with the organisations, a manager of a construction college located in one of the Olympic boroughs explained the effect of crime on their organisation. The college is situated next to a council housing estate which is deprived. The manager stated that the issue of gang culture was an area he had not previously encountered and it impacted on the way the college interacted with their trainees. The manager further explained that, as an educational institution, they had to work closely with different community projects, for example, the local police and the local council, to gain an understanding of what young people are exposed to when living in certain areas:

We got two people on the course that come from one side of the borough and are scared stiff to come to this side of the borough because they are in that region and someone in this postcode. That actually had been provided taxi's to bring them to site. It's been paid by for someone like Jobcentre Plus¹⁴. Are paying for them to come to site by taxi, the staff has been briefed, a they need to make sure that they are kept ok and are safe. They don't leave the site until the taxi returns again. Those two individuals are really concerned about their safety.

(Manager, Construction College, East London, male, white).

The manager was quite open in terms of explaining the challenges faced by the college and some of the other colleges also expressed their concerns in this area. The interviews highlighted that there are environmental influences that affect young people in their educational and employment outcomes. However, it is noted, these influences are less discussed in the literature on transition.

¹⁴ Jobcentre Plus is an organisation that deals with individuals that are unemployed and tries to support them back into education or employment.

3. *The capability to be healthy:* The construction industry is notorious for health and safety issues and it has a high number of fatalities in comparison to other employment sectors (Health and Safety Executive (HSE), 2014). Specifically, electrical fitters have been involved in a higher number of fatal accidents in comparison to other occupations (BOMEL Limited, 2010). In addition, to enter the electrical trade, if an individual is colour blind it will exclude them from working as an electrician, for health and safety reasons. The interviews with electrical contractors highlighted that safety was a concern. This was an area discussed by the HR Manager of an electrical contractor, undertaking interviews with prospective apprentices. She always asked the interviewees about the issue of 'trips and spills' and 'Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)', as both are an important element of the construction industry and the electrical trade. The former is associated with health and safety hazards within the construction training and the latter is clothing worn on site by individuals.

4. *The capability to have social relations:* The capability of social relations was noted on the capability list created by Biggeri *et al.* (2006, p. 65). In their study, this capability referred to being able to enjoy social networks and being able to receive and give social support. For this study, social relations relates to the meaning provided by Biggeri *et al.* (2006). However, in addition, it also refers to social networks, in the form of family and friends, who are able to provide access when trying to enter the labour market. In accessing the construction industry, nepotism and social networks are or can be important (Ahmed *et al.*, 2007). However, the BAME group social network is limited compared to the white majority (Ahmed *et al.*, 2008; Dainty *et al.*, 2004).

5. *The capability to be knowledgeable, to understand and to reason:* This capability is important because the lack of knowledge impacts on choices and decisions that an individual may make. It has been reported that career advice is lacking when being provided with information on the construction industry (see Chapter 2). Although educational establishments should be encouraging individuals to take up a career in construction (Carter, 2006), this may not occur. An interview

with an Employment and Skills Manager involved in the recruitment of electrical apprentices, stated that young people need to have knowledge of the construction industry as a possible career choice. However, he found that schools were either lacking in providing this information, or if they did provide it, the information was passed to the children too late. He further explained that children at school, need to be aware of career choices prior to the selection of their GCSE subjects.

During an interview conducted with the HR Manager of an electrical contractor, the researcher observed the importance that was placed on prospective apprentices of having knowledge about the role of an electrician and the electrical trade.

Furthermore, an important element was that any prospective trainee needed to have some understanding about the construction industry, health and safety, and general working conditions, because on occasions apprentices need to work away from home, which often means they are picked up at 6.00 am by their employer to travel to site.

6. *The capability of being treated fairly and being respected:* Chapter 2 commented on how the construction industry can be discriminatory. However, during the interviews, the contractors showed that they were diverse in their recruitment practices. From an organisational perspective, managing diversity recognises employees and clients as individuals. The social justice argument to managing diversity is that everyone should have equal access to employment, pay, training and development, whilst the business argument is treating people fairly, so that they have the same opportunities (CIPD, 2014). Furthermore, CIPD (2014) states that the business case to managing diversity can assist in being more competitive in the business world, as it can open up new market opportunities or improve market share. However, the possibility of being treated fairly in an interview with an organisation was questionable. For example, a manager making decisions about training and employment opportunities took a subjective approach when recruiting electrical apprentices:

I know in the first 20 minutes if someone is able to be an apprentice.

(Employment and Skills Manager, male, white)

This comment highlights several key points. First, the recruitment practice is subjective and is dependent upon the individuals involved in the recruitment exercise. Second, both, electrical contractors and colleges stipulate that GCSEs are important to access their respective institutions, but this comment demonstrates that it might not be the case.

7. *The capability of being supported:* The capability of being supported was not listed in Table 4.3. However, the need for young people to be supported is important as some learning providers operate in a fragmented manner (Lanning, 2012). During the interviews with contractors, one stated that he changed the colleges that his apprentices were attending because he felt that his trainees were not being adequately supported to assist them in completing their qualifications. Turning to the Olympic site, the ODA ran an initiative to support women to access the construction industry. This was undertaken in terms of providing training and employment opportunities, which were in the form of the Women in Construction (WiC) project (Wright, 2014). The researcher interviewed the Project Manager who stated:

Anyone who gets a contract for the Olympics has to sign up to taking on local people, addressing gender inequality and taking on people with disabilities.

(Project Manager, white, female).

She explained that companies are happy to sign the contracts to secure work on the Olympic site, but her role was to assist these companies in meeting the employment and training targets that were set by the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA). During the interviews, it was stated that this project received financial support to assist in increasing the number of women in construction. Similar to targets being set to increase the number of women working in construction, targets were set to increase the number from the BAME group. However, there was no

similar project, for the BAME group and no financial support to increase the number from the BAME group. This was confirmed by those interviewed from the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) and the WiC project. Such a project could have assisted increasing access by the BAME group. Wright (2014), in her evaluation of the WiC project, states that it was successful in providing work placements and opportunities to women and, furthermore, the project continued even after the 2012 Olympics.

Table 4.3 The capability list created for the school-to-work transition of electrical trainees

	The Hypothetical Capability List	Definition
1.	Being able to have formal education	Freedom to have access and complete formal education. Freedom to gain an understanding of soft skills. Freedom to complete an approved and recognised electrical qualification.
2.	Being able to move from place to place	Freedom to be safe and be able to move between different locations without fear. Freedom to learn in a secure, safe and non-intimidating environment.
3.	Being healthy	Freedom to be able to pass a colour-blind test. Freedom to be able to operate equipment in the construction industry. Freedom to be safe when working in the construction industry.
4.	Being able to have social relations	Freedom to have social relations. Having a family member working within the construction industry.
5.	Being able to have knowledge	Freedom to have ownership, understanding and acquisition of knowledge.
6.	Being treated fairly, being respected and having dignity	Freedom to be treated fairly by educational institutions, employers and within the working environment.
7.	Being supported by institutions	Freedom to have the support of institutions to complete educational activities. Freedom to have access to employment and training initiatives.

By way of summary, the hypothetical capability list for electrical trainees is shown in Table 4.3. It lists each of the capabilities and provides a brief definition of its meaning. This list is based on a mixture of information from the respondents in relevant organisations and from the literature reviewed in Chapter 2.

4.4 How the capability approach will be used for this research

The data collected as part of this study were used to understand whether, or not, there are differences in the transition process of the two main groups, namely, the BAME group and the white group. Using the list allows the central research question to be reformulated more specifically as:

1. Do the BAME group and the white group have the same opportunities in the transition process, and if not, where do any differences occur?
2. Are the BAME group's and the white group's capability the same and if not, at what point do they become different?

Using the capability approach to examine inequality in the transition process allows the possibility to focus on what affects, positively or negatively, individuals in the process. Therefore, consideration has to be given as to how the capability framework will be used for this study.

In determining how the capability will be used, an important factor to understand is that the transition process occurs over a period of time. Therefore, an analysis that focuses at any one point in the process is not sufficient to identify where any inequality may occur during the process. Thus, the capability approach will be used to examine the electrical trainees at three periods during the STWT, which are:

1. in their previous schooling;
2. in college; and
3. in work-based learning.

Although the concept behind the capability approach is about freedom, Sen (2005) argues that freedom should be about genuine choice. Adopting the capability approach to explore the STWT, it is recognised that the freedom of the electrical trainees may be influenced by:

1. The actual opportunity to achieve functionings necessary for a successful STWT;
2. Influences of institutions and family;
3. The ability to change commodities (resources) into capabilities (opportunities); and
4. The factors that may impact on choices to secure achieved functionings.

Furthermore, although the capability approach focuses on the individual, the study also looks at the institutions that may affect the transition process, for example, unions, colleges and other institutions involved in the electrical trade. The reason for collecting data from these organisations is to understand whether they limit, or enhance, the capabilities of the trainees.

In using the capability approach another consideration is how the framework will be evaluated. Sen (2005) argues that there should be some sort of evaluation in relation to the capability approach. There are discussions whether the capability approach should be based upon capabilities or functionings, that is, the ability to achieve or the achievement. Brandolini and D'Alessio (1998) point out that 'achieved functionings' is based upon whether or not a person chooses a particular achievement, whilst evaluating capabilities is thus a hypothetical situation and, for this reason, they adopt evaluating in the functioning space. Other authors have also made the decision to evaluate in the functioning space (Chakraborty, 1996; Saith, 2001). However, evaluation based upon functionings only provides information on what the individual achieved and does not provide information on opportunities that may, or may not, have been available. Although evaluation in the functioning space is quite common, for this study to gain an understanding of inequality, there

is a need to explore opportunities. Therefore, the evaluation will be based in this area but also recognising that there is a need to understand the functionings of the individuals.

Furthermore, Alkire (2008) highlights that evaluation of the capability approach can focus on three different areas; prospective, evaluative and descriptive. The author describes evaluative evaluation as being based upon comparison with how individual capabilities have expanded or contracted, rather than why and how they have expanded. In contrast, prospective evaluation looks at causality, probability and assumptions. The author discusses the first two options, prospective and evaluative, but provides no information about the third, descriptive.

Table 4.4 The groups to be compared as part of the evaluation of the transition process

	APPRENTICE AND NON-APPRENTICE	
THE BAME GROUP AND THE WHITE GROUP	The BAME group and Apprentice	The BAME group and Non-Apprentice
	The White group and Apprentice	The White group and Non-Apprentice

This study asks ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions in order to identify which actions are likely to generate a greater expansion of capabilities because description is not a form of evaluation. In addition, it examines the similarity and differences of the individuals in the transition process to understand why and how any differences may occur. Thus, the study adopts both types of evaluation, prospective and evaluative. However, the research also seeks to understand at what point in the transition process does inequality may and does occur. This is an area that is not addressed in the Alkire’s description of the different types of evaluation.

The evaluation for this study will take the form of comparing ethnic groups and trainee types, as identified in Table 4.4. These four groups will be compared at the three points of the transition process, as noted above.

4.5 Conclusions

Chapter 3 argues that the capability approach is a good basis to examine the school-to-work transition. However, although Sen's capability approach has been developed over 20 years, thought and discussion has to be given to developing the framework. Sen is a philosopher and using the capability approach is something that a researcher has to tackle in the development of the framework. Time and thought is needed to develop the framework for the context being researched and to ensure that it can be used in a practical setting. This chapter has developed a theoretical capability list by using the information gained from the interviews with organisations involved in the construction industry and construction training, coupled with information from the literature. An important element of the development of the framework is to compare and contrast the list created in this chapter with the practical lists created in Chapters 6-10. The next chapter discusses the data collection methods.

5 Method and data collection

5.1 Introduction

As the research is focused on and electrical trainees in the transition process, a multi-method approach was chosen in order to pay particular attention to the trainees. In addition, the structural and policy arrangements of the organisations involved in construction training and the construction industry are also an aspect of the study. The methods adopted deployed both quantitative and qualitative techniques. The qualitative methods used varied and in some situations data were collected in their naturally occurring settings (Ritchie and Lewis, 2013). For example, the data gathered included observation of events and, in addition, filming that occurred on construction sites and within organisations involved in construction training. These two approaches had the added benefit of providing access when interviews were conducted with key respondents.

Table 5.1 provides a summary of the data collection methods undertaken, the purpose for each method chosen and, additionally, how each relates to the development of the capability approach.

The chapter as a whole discusses the data collection methods and the data collected and is divided into eight sections. The first concerns the two-stage process involved in collecting the quantitative and qualitative data relevant to the electrical trainees. The second presents the interviews with key respondents in organisations. The third describes the focus group that took place with electrical trainees and contractors. The fourth gives a brief overview of the filming in which the researcher was involved. The fifth addresses the observation of events around construction training. The sixth outlines issues raised regarding access to research participants. The seventh assesses researcher reflexivity and bias, and the eighth and final section provides a conclusion to the chapter.

Table 5.1 Data collection methods, their purpose and how each method relates to the development of the capability approach framework

Research methods	Quantity	Purpose of the research method	Capability approach element
Context			
Film about the construction industry and construction training (see 5.5)	<i>n=1</i>	Access and context	Factors and influences that may affect the capability list
Interviews with organisations (see 5.3)	<i>n=40</i>	Policy, organisation arrangements and context	Resources Factors and influences that may affect the capability list
Focus group (see 5.4)	<i>n=1</i>	Policy, development of the research instrument Access and context	Agency Resources Factors and influences that may affect the capability list
Observation of events (see 5.6)	<i>n=x</i>	Access and context	Factors and influences that may affect the capability list
Creation of the Capability List and Public Reasoning			
Questionnaire of electrical trainees (see 5.2)	<i>n=321</i>	A census of electrical trainees Information about the training, the college environment and working in the construction industry Statistical information and also acted as the sampling frame for the electrical trainee interviews	Agency Resources
Interviews with electrical trainees (see 5.2)	<i>n=37</i>	Information from those in the transition process	Agency The development of a practical capability list Resources that the trainees have access to Influences that may affect the transition process Factors that may affect choice

5.2 Context

This section outlines the methods used to investigate the research context.

5.2.1 Filming on the 2012 Olympic site, other construction sites and colleges: 'Builders and the Games'

The researcher was involved with an independent film company called Marker, which made a film on the 2012 Olympic site, dealing with construction, training and employment. The film, entitled 'Builders and the Games' Dickinson (2012), is contained in the Appendix 1. The researcher was involved in the film from 2009 until the end of the filming, which occurred in 2012. The film revolved around the researcher who was part of the film and conducted interviews with the participants (Appendix 2 provides a list of the filming that was undertaken). The finished film was just under one hour in duration; however, the material that formed part of the filming process was over 20 hours. Being involved with the film and working with 'Marker' was beneficial on a number of levels, including:

1. being exposed to the construction industry;
2. access to the Olympic site;
3. capturing field notes; and
4. piloting some questions as part of the research.

The film adopted an ethnographic approach. Tutt *et al.* (2013) describe ethnography as a better way of understanding peoples' experiences and the way they work. Undertaking an ethnographic approach to data collection can include methods such as participant observation and interviews (Reeves *et al.*, 2008). In using ethnography, Pink *et al.* (2012) argue that this approach is not widely used to study the construction industry but can be a methodological approach that allows individuals to be examined in their natural setting. Thus the film was essential to embellish the various data collection methods used for the study.

The film was an integral aspect of the research both as contextualisation and a route to understanding the experiences of the trainees. Turning to the first point, the film provided contextualisation by getting to learn about the context through the eyes of others. Furthermore, the use of the film assisted in seeing as an observer the things that the actor does not see (Löwstedt, 2014). In addition, the film investigated individuals and explored the activities and wider complexities of the construction industry and how it operates and was not just limited to employment and training. In doing this, the film provided knowledge and insight about the industry and those involved and how different players are involved in the recruitment and training of electrical trainees. As O'reilly (2012) argues, thought needs to be given to the gatekeepers enabling access to research participants. The film was pivotal because the filming was the first data collection method, undertaken at the start of the research, and was fundamental in informing the researcher about the key players who would subsequently be interviewed.

Turning to the second point, the film provided information about the experiences of the electrical trainees. In October 2011, the researcher was involved in filming the WorldSkills competition, which took place at the Excel Centre in London. The competition is held every two years, is the largest vocational education and skills excellence event in the world, and one which reflects a global industry (Worldskills, 2015). Despite this international event taking place in East London, a year before the Olympic build, colleges, including one which was a feeder college for the Olympic site, were not represented. The filming of the event highlighted the lack of involvement of electrical trainees from East London in such a prestigious event for apprentices despite the commitment of the colleges and contractors to their training. In contrast, filming at the colleges in the vicinity showed that electrical trainees are well represented. Some of the information, especially the pictures of the electrical trainees in the classroom setting, have been provided through courtesy of the film producer (Dickinson, 2012). These pictures are discussed in Chapter 9. Therefore, the film succeeded in connecting applied research with the practicalities of real life.

5.2.2 Organisational interviews

Interviews were conducted with organisations involved in building the 2012 Olympics, namely, those associated with the construction industry, with construction training and within the electrical industry. A set of questions was designed, as shown in the Appendix 3, based on Sen's capability approach and focusing on factors and influences affecting electrical trainees in a training or work capacity. The inclusion of the organisational interviews also provided an institutional and policy context. The interviews were conducted between January 2011 and June 2012.

The Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) was responsible for the infrastructure required to host the Games (London 2012, 2011b). The secretive nature of the site, the lack of written information about who was involved in the building process, coupled with the plethora of organisations involved in construction training (Chan and Moehler, 2008), caused problems identifying relevant stakeholders to be interviewed. Interviews therefore took the form of snowball sampling by asking participants at the end of interviews whether they could suggest other individuals and/or organisations that might participate in the research (Fellows and Liu, 2008). Forty interviews were conducted with key stakeholders, these being generally tape-recorded with brief handwritten notes also taken. All the organisations interviewed are shown in Appendix 4.

5.2.3 Focus Group

Focus groups can be useful as an initial stage of the data collection process to raise and begin to explore relevant issues which will then be taken forward through in-depth interviews (Ritchie and Lewis, 2013, pp. 60-61). One focus group took place on the Olympic site in May 2011. The group consisted of two electrical contractors and two electrical apprentices. The electrical apprentices worked on the Olympic site. The purpose of the focus group was to gain information to be used to shape the subsequent interview questions, in addition, to piloting some of the questions.

5.2.4 Observation of events related to construction trainees and the construction industry

The researcher had the opportunity to attend a number of events associated with the Olympic site, the construction industry and construction training. A list of events attended with dates is included in Appendix 5. The researcher took notes of those who were involved in these events, specifically focusing on ethnic groups and participants. Although the information was not directly used within this study, it allowed access to those in the construction industry who were then approached for interviews. The information from these events also provided context on how these organisations are reaching out to construction trainees. Furthermore, the researcher was able to view at first hand the discussions that occur in a construction setting.

5.3 Creation of the capability list and public reasoning

This section discusses the data collection methods that will be used in the creation of the capability list and the specific approach used to address the concept of public reasoning.

5.3.1 Electrical trainees

Chapter 1 outlined the reasons why the 2012 Olympic site was chosen and why, at the conception of the study, the focus was solely on the East End of London and the site. However, during the research, it transpired that, due to the nature of the construction industry, with its transient workforce, not all electrical trainees working on the Olympic site would be based solely in London. Furthermore, access to the Olympic site was difficult due to security measures. In addition, not all the colleges located in the Olympic boroughs offered electrical courses. This meant that the electrical trainees who formed a major part of this study were recruited from:

1. The Olympic site, as apprentices who might or might not live in London.

2. Colleges located in the East End of London that offered electrical qualifications, with electrical trainees who might be apprentices or non-apprentices.
3. A college not located in the East End of London but acting as a feeder college for the Olympic site in terms of providing electrical apprentices.

Collection of the data on the electrical trainees involved a two-step process: first, a census of electrical trainees located in three colleges; second, in depth interviews with a sample of the electrical trainees, with the census of electrical trainees acting as the sampling frame.

5.3.2 Step one: Census of electrical trainees

A survey was conducted of electrical trainees, who were recruited in two particular ways. First, three colleges were contacted, two in Olympic host boroughs and the third a feeder college for the 2012 Olympic site. These colleges were provided with details of the research and asked if they would participate in the research. Second, the recruitment of the trainees who worked for contractors on the 2012 Olympic took the approach of contacting eleven electrical contractors working on the site, of whom four agreed to take part in the research.

Data collection procedure

The data collection from those electrical trainees in the college environment took place at the colleges. The researcher attended the electrical classes in all three colleges and administered the questionnaire (see Appendix 6), face-to-face with the electrical trainees, who consisted of apprentices and non-apprentices. The paper questionnaire was administered in the first 15-20 minutes of class. A brief introduction was provided about the researcher and the purpose of the research. Students were told to leave blank any questions that did not apply to them. Alternatively, they could return blank questionnaires if they chose not to participate. When the students returned the completed questionnaire, the researcher quickly reviewed the document to identify any unanswered questions, in order to improve the quality of the responses. Students were thanked for their time

and also asked to provide their contact details should they wish to be interviewed. This was a time-intensive approach because the researcher attended each college on different days of the week, at different times, to attend all the classes that offered electrical courses. This in effect was a census of all the electrical trainees in the three colleges.

Data collection from the contractor sample was made in conjunction with the contractors. The contractor sample consisted entirely of apprentices. Two contractors taking part in the research contacted their electrical apprentices directly to inform them of the research and invited them to complete the questionnaire. One contractor received a 100% response rate from the apprentices, while the other had a return rate of 80%. In order to improve the response rate the researcher liaised closely with the contractor through follow up phone calls and emails, chasing for the completion of the questionnaire when necessary. The third contractor provided a list of its apprentices for the researcher to make contact with directly. This approach yielded a response rate of 20%. The fourth contractor, who had initially agreed to take part in the research, yielded no results despite chasing. This illustrated that the researcher working in partnership with the contractors produced a better outcome in terms of response rate, in comparison to contacting the participants directly.

Participation

Participants were informed that completion of the questionnaire was voluntary and confidential and that they could withdraw from the study should they wish to do so. This information was told verbally to the participants at the colleges and was also documented on the actual questionnaire. The questionnaire was conducted between September 2011 and June 2012. The combined sample contains 321 participants, representing the number of trainees who completed the self-administered survey, of whom 313 are males and 8 females.

Measures

A qualifying question was asked at the beginning of the questionnaire to ensure that respondents met the criteria for inclusion in the sample. The question was whether the trainee was studying or had previously studied to be an electrician. There were four main distinct parts to the questionnaire. The first captured demographic information about the participant in terms of age, ethnicity, gender and residence. The second captured information about the participant's school education and the electrical course being studied. The third explored whether the trainee was employed in the construction industry, details of employers, and types of project on which he/she had worked. The fourth explored factors and influences that affected gaining access to the construction labour market. The reason for dividing into these four distinct areas was to capture information about each stage of the transition process.

Statistical package used

The statistical package used to analyse the questionnaire was IBM SPSS statistics version 20. Although, there may be other statistical software packages on the market, SPSS was the package of choice because it is supported by the University of Westminster in terms of availability and the offer of basic training, including, provision of support material.

Data preparation

The data from the questionnaires were initially entered manually into an Excel spreadsheet. Each questionnaire was given a unique identification number that corresponded with the record in Excel. The data were cleaned for any discrepancy, which was done by using the pivot table option in Excel. Creating pivot tables allowed the researcher to summarise elements of the data and identify any errors. If a discrepancy was identified, the researcher reverted back to the hard copy questionnaire and made any necessary amendments to the data in Excel. Once this process was completed, the data were then imported into SPSS. The use of SPSS requires the data to be coded, numerically. A codebook was created to allow

consistency of the variables being input into the software, in addition to the variable names and values.

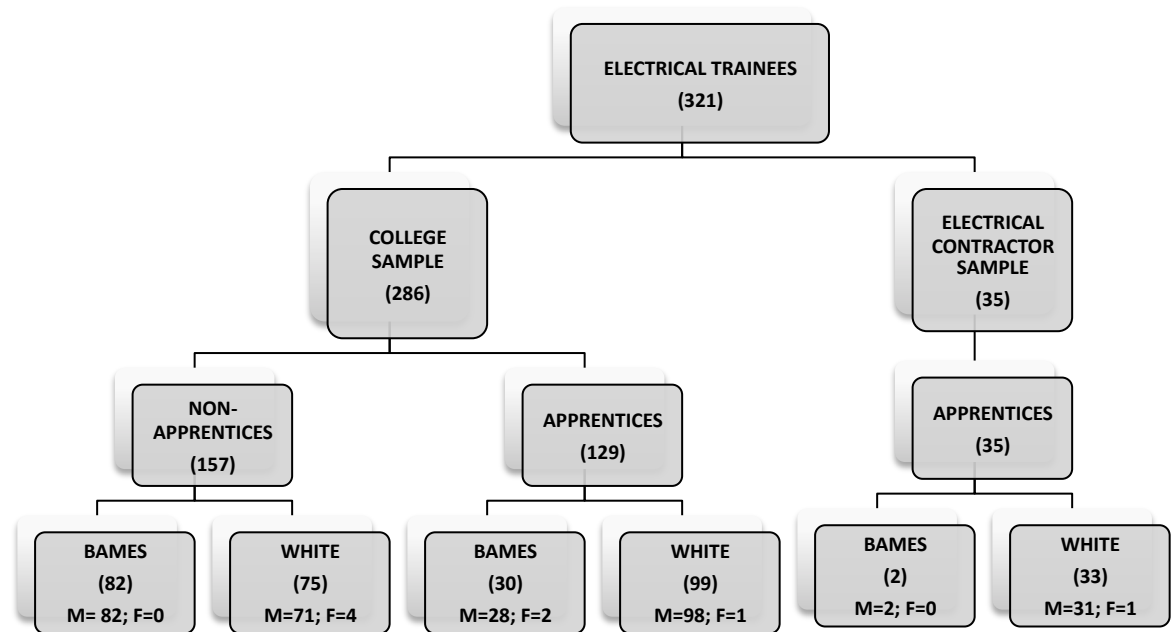
Once the data were in SPSS, any missing data was coded as '00'. This meant that any record coded as '00' would be included in the sample, but that particular record would be excluded from any analysis involving use of the variable containing the missing data (Pallant, 2010). The researcher undertook exploratory data analysis in SPSS. This process allowed the data to be cleaned, once again, by undertaking descriptive analysis. This approach allowed for any discrepancies to be explored and corrected. In addition, descriptive analysis provided some information about the sample. The data in SPSS were checked to ensure that they would not violate any statistical test that was to be undertaken. For example, for a chi square test there needs to be at least five records, in a category.

The combined sample comprises 114 (33.5%) trainees from the BAME group and 207 from the white group (64.5%), giving a total of 321 respondents. Taken as a whole, all ethnic groups comprised 51 Asian or Asian British, 44 Black or black British, 15 Mixed, 5 other ethnic groups and 206 white.

Figure 5.1 provides details of the census sample in terms of trainee type, numbers and ethnic groups, which equated to 321 in total.

Figure 5.1 Details of the two samples: the college sample and the contractor sample.

Notes: M=Male; F=Female



The data from the questionnaire was used to provide some analysis about the sample, which are further discussed in this section.

Ethnicity

The ethnic groups in the questionnaire mirror the categories from the 2001 census. The categories are based on the five main ethnic groups, and fifteen sub-groups. The electrical trainees ticked one of the fifteen ethnicity boxes on the questionnaire, thus self-identifying themselves.

Table 5.2 shows that there is a difference in the proportion of white trainees in the apprentice and non-apprentice group. The white group composes under half of the non-apprentice group in the college sample, at 47.8%. In contrast, the white trainees are highly represented in the college and contractor apprentice groups, at

76% and 94.3% respectively. The high percentage of white apprentices in the contractor sample, made up of firms on the Olympic site, is consistent with the proportion of white operatives actually working in the construction industry. In the college sample, the proportion of Asians in the non-apprentice group is 35% and in the apprentice sample 16%, a figure which is high in comparison to the other ethnic groups. In contrast, there are no Asian apprentices in the contractor sample.

Table 5.2 Distribution of the sample according to ethnicity and the contractor and college sample

Trainee Types	Ethnic Groups	Number of Trainees	Percentage
College Sample: Non-Apprentices	ASIAN OR ASIAN BRITISH	35	22.3%
	BLACK OR BLACK BRITISH	35	22.3%
	MIXED	7	4.5%
	OTHER ETHNIC GROUPS	5	3.2%
	WHITE	75	47.8%
	TOTAL	157	100%
College Sample: Apprentices	ASIAN OR ASIAN BRITISH	16	12.4%
	BLACK OR BLACK BRITISH	8	6.2%
	MIXED	7	5.4%
	OTHER ETHNIC GROUPS	0	0%
	WHITE	98	76%
	TOTAL	129	100%
Contractor Sample: Apprentices	ASIAN OR ASIAN BRITISH	0	0%
	BLACK OR BLACK BRITISH	1	2.9%
	MIXED	1	2.9%
	OTHER ETHNIC GROUPS	0	0%
	WHITE	33	94.3%
	TOTAL	35	100.0%

Gender

The sample comprises a high proportion of males, at 97.5%, as shown in Table 5.3, a figure which is consistent with their presence in the construction industry.

Women represent 2.5% of the sample, equating to eight trainees - seven in the college and one in the contractor sample. In terms of ethnicity, the women in the college sample comprise four white female non-apprentices, one white female apprentice and two BAME (1 Black and 1 Mixed) female apprentices; the contractor

sample consists of one female apprentice, who is white.

Table 5.3 Descriptive of the sample according to gender

Trainee Types	Male		Female	
	Number Of Trainees	Percentage	Number Of Trainees	Percentage
College Sample: Non-Apprentices	153	47.7	4	1.2
College Sample: Apprentices	126	39.3	3	0.9
Contractor Sample: Apprentices	34	10.6	1	0.3
Total	313	97.5	8	2.5

Age

Table 5.4 shows the age range for the college non-apprentice sample, between 16 and 60 years, with a mean of 29.98 and standard deviation of 10.602. Using the standard deviation, the measure of the spread of numbers for each variable, allows for a "standard" way of knowing what is normal, and what is extra large or extra small (Pallant, 2010). The age range for the college apprentice sample is between 17 and 46 years with a mean of 22.86 and standard deviation 5.285. The age range for the contractor sample is between 19 and 31 years, with a mean of 22.63 and standard deviation of 3.406. Thus, the trainees in the college non-apprentice sample are older; they deviate much more from the mean in comparison to both the college apprentice sample and the contractor sample. For the contractor sample, the standard deviation is smaller in size in comparison to both of the college samples.

In statistical terms, 'normality' is used to describe the distribution of scores. The normality for the age variable is skewed. The skewness values for all three samples are positive. The curve is skewed to the left with a long tail to the right. This indicates that the age range is clustered to the left, meaning that there a few trainees who are high in age so lengthening the right tail. The kurtosis is a positive

value which means that the curve is too peaked, while a negative value is where the peak is too flat (DeCarlo, 1997). The values for the college and contractor apprentice sample are both positive with a value of 6.630 and 0.769 respectively. This means the ages within these groups are clustered in the middle. The college non-apprentice sample is a negative value at -0.430, meaning that the curve is flat and, subsequently, the age for the non-apprentice sample is flatter in comparison to that of the apprentice sample.

Table 5.4 Distribution of the sample according to age

Descriptive Statistics: AGE									
Trainee Types	Number Of Trainees	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard (Std) Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
College: Non-Apprentice	153	16	60	29.98	10.602	0.687	0.196	-0.430	0.390
College: Apprentice	128	17	46	22.86	5.285	2.403	0.214	6.630	0.425
Contractor: Apprentice	35	19	31	22.63	3.406	1.355	0.398	0.769	0.778

Home geographic location of the trainees

Descriptive analysis was conducted to establish the geographic areas where the trainees lived. Table 5.5 shows whether the trainees lived in London or outside. The majority of BAMEs are located in London. The majority of the white apprentice trainees live outside London, numbering 21 in comparison to 12 who live in London. The college sample is consistent with what is to be expected, as the three colleges sampled were located in London.

Table 5.5 Distribution of the sample according to the trainees' home geographical location

Trainee Types	Ethnicity	London		Outside London	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
College Sample: Non-Apprentices	ASIAN OR ASIAN BRITISH	35	22.3%	0	0%
	BLACK OR BLACK BRITISH	34	21.7%	1	0.6%
	MIXED	7	4.5%	0	0.0%
	OTHER ETHNIC GROUPS	5	3.2%	0	0.0%
	WHITE	71	45.2%	4	2.5%
	TOTAL	152	96.8%	5	3.2%
College Sample: Apprentices	ASIAN OR ASIAN BRITISH	16	12.4%	0	0.0%
	BLACK OR BLACK BRITISH	7	6.2%	1	0.8%
	MIXED	6	4.7%	1	0.8%
	OTHER ETHNIC GROUPS	0	0%	0	0%
	WHITE	81	62.8%	17	13.2%
	TOTAL	110	85.3%	19	14.7%
Contractor Sample: Apprentices	ASIAN OR ASIAN BRITISH	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	BLACK OR BLACK BRITISH	1	2.9%	0	0.0%
	MIXED	1	2.9%	0	0.0%
	OTHER ETHNIC GROUPS	0	0%	0	0.0%
	WHITE	12	34.3%	21	60.0%
	TOTAL	14	40.0%	21	60.0%

Colleges attended by the trainees

All three colleges forming part of the data collection process were located in London. Descriptive analysis was undertaken to determine the colleges at which participants in the contractor sample were studying. As shown in Table 5.6, the majority of the trainees in the sample of 33 are studying for their electrical qualifications in a college located outside London, while 12 were studying in London.

Table 5.6 Distribution of the sample according to the college that the trainees attended

Trainee Types	Ethnicity	London		Outside London	
		Number of Trainees	Percentage	Number of Trainees	Percentage
College Sample: Non-Apprentices	ASIAN OR ASIAN BRITISH	35	22.3%	0	0.0%
	BLACK OR BLACK BRITISH	35	22.3%	0	0.0%
	MIXED	7	4.5%	0	0.0%
	OTHER ETHNIC GROUPS	5	3.2%	0	3.2%
	WHITE	75	45.2%	0	0.0%
	TOTAL	157	100.0%	0	0.0%
College Sample: Apprentices	ASIAN OR ASIAN BRITISH	16	0.0%	0	0.0%
	BLACK OR BLACK BRITISH	8	0.0%	0	0.0%
	MIXED	7	0.0%	0	0.0%
	OTHER ETHNIC GROUPS	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	WHITE	98	76.0%	0	0.0%
	TOTAL	129	100.0%	0	0.0%
Contractor Sample: Apprentices	ASIAN OR ASIAN BRITISH	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	BLACK OR BLACK BRITISH	1	2.9%	0	0.0%
	MIXED	1	2.9%	0	0.0%
	OTHER ETHNIC GROUPS	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	WHITE	11	32.4%	21	61.8%
	TOTAL	14	38.2%	21	61.8%

Work-based learning

Additional statistical analysis in the form of a chi-square test calculator was undertaken for the sample to investigate which ethnic group was more likely to secure an apprenticeship. Thus, the relationship explored is whether ethnicity impacts on securing an apprenticeship. A chi-square test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the BAME and white electrical trainees in terms of securing an apprenticeship. The results are shown in Table 5.7. Only 28.1% of BAME trainees secured an apprenticeship, whereas 63.8% of the white trainees were able to do so. The relationship is significant ($\chi^2(1) = 37.491, p < .001$). Ethnicity had a medium effect on securing an apprenticeship ($V = .342$). For $df(2)$: $V = 0.10$ is a small effect, $V = 0.30$ is a medium effect and $V = 0.50$ is a large effect. Out of the four main BAME groups, the mixed group was more likely to

secure an apprenticeship followed by the Asian, then the Black group and then the other ethnic group.

Table 5.7 Summary of chi-square for relationship between apprenticeship and ethnicity

Ethnic Groups		Apprentice		
		Yes	No	Total
BAME	Count	32	82	114
	Expected Count	58.2	55.8	114
	% within Ethnicity	28.1%	71.9%	100%
WHITE	Count	132	75	207
	Expected Count	105.8	101.2	207
	% within Ethnicity	63.8%	36.2%	100%
TOTAL	Count	164	157	321
	Expected Count	164	157	321
	% within Ethnicity	51.1%	48.9%	100%

Descriptive analysis was undertaken to determine the number of apprentices working on the 2012 Olympic site. In total twenty-nine apprentices worked on the project, seven from the college sample and twenty-two from the contractor sample. Of this figure, two were from the BAME group, both in the contractor sample.

A chi-square test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the college apprentices and contractor apprentices in terms of securing employment on the 2012 Olympic site. The results are shown in Table 5.8. The relationship is significant ($\chi^2(1) = 62.382, p < .000$). The college sample had a large effect on working on the 2012 Olympic site ($V = .617$). For $df(1)$: $V = 0.10$ is a small effect, $V = 0.30$ is a medium effect and $V = 0.50$ is a large effect. Thus apprentices working on the Olympic site were more likely to be in the contractor sample. This is consistent with the direct sampling of electrical firms who worked on project. There were a greater number of apprentices in the college sample in comparison to the

contractor sample and all three colleges that took part in the research were either located in the host borough or were a feeder college for the Olympics. Therefore, there was a potentially high number of apprentices in the college sample who could have worked on the Olympic site. However, this did not occur.

Table 5.8 Summary of chi-square for relationship between college and contractor apprentice and working on the 2012 Olympic site

Trainee Type		Worked On The 2012 Olympic Site		
		Yes	No	Total
College Apprentice	Count	7	122	129
	Expected Count	22.8	106.2	129.0
	% within	5.4%	94.6%	100%
Contractor Apprentice	Count	22	13	35
	Expected Count	6.2	28.8	35
	% within	62.9%	37.1%	100%
Total	Count	29	135	164
	Expected Count	29	135	164
	% within Ethnicity	17.7%	82.3%	100%

At the time of the 2012 Olympic bid, the promise was to provide employment for local people who resided in the Olympic host boroughs. A chi-square test was conducted to determine whether there was a relationship with apprentices living in the host boroughs and working on the 2012 Olympic site. The results are shown in Table 5.9. The relationship was not significant ($\chi^2(1) = 0.30, p > 0.862$). For those working on the 2012 Olympic site, there was no relationship in terms of whether the apprentice lived in one of the host boroughs. From the sample of five apprentices, or 8.5% of the total, who worked on the Olympic site and also lived in one of the six Olympic boroughs, one was BAME and the other four were white. All five were in the contractor sample.

Table 5.9 Summary of chi-square for relationship between host borough and working on the 2012 Olympic site

		Apprentices Who Worked On The 2012 Olympic Site			
			Yes	No	Total
Olympic Host Boroughs	YES	Count	5	54	59
		Expected Count	5.3	53.7	59
		% within Host Borough	8.5%	91.5%	100%
	NO	Count	24	237	261
		Expected Count	23.7	237.3	261
		% within Host Borough	9.2%	90.8%	100%
TOTAL		Count	29	291	320
		Expected Count	29	291	320
		% within Host Borough	9.1%	90.9%	100%

The tenure of apprentices working on the 2012 Olympic site

Descriptive statistics was undertaken to identify the time apprentices worked on the 2012 Olympic site. An electrical apprenticeship is for the duration of three to four years. The main Olympic build started in 2008 and extended for three years. As shown in Table 5.10, the tenure of trainees on the Olympic site on average was under one year, with just two apprentices working on the site for over two years. The short time working on the Olympic site means that trainees would need to be able access other sites to complete their training.

Table 5.10 Descriptive summary of the tenure of apprentices who worked on the 2012 Olympic site

Ethnic Groups	Less Than One Month	2-6 Months	7-12 Months	1-2 Years	2-4 Years	Total
BAME	0	0	0	2	0	2
WHITE	3	7	8	6	1	25
TOTAL	3	7	8	8	1	27

Additional statistical analysis from the questionnaire sample is included in the three main analysis chapters, Chapters 7, 8 and 9.

5.3.3 Step two: Electrical trainee interviews

The second step of the data collection process of the electrical trainees was to undertake in depth interviews. In terms of interviewing, thought had to be given to how sampling would be undertaken. The sampling frame consists of those trainees who had completed the questionnaire census in the first stage of the data collection process of electrical trainees. As the purpose of the sample is to select a group that can answer the research question(s), the question raised is what criteria to use to select trainees?

The technique used for the qualitative approach was ethnography. An ethnographic approach allows the researcher to collect data on the economic and social context of the ethnic community and provides an in-depth analysis of ethnic groups (Hennink *et al.*, 2011). A three-stage design process was undertaken to incorporate an ethnographic component in this research (Hennink *et al.*, 2011), which included:

1. designing the research instrument;
2. recruiting the participants; and
3. collecting the data.

The first element, designing the research instrument, was based upon Sen's capability approach. The focus was on gathering data from the electrical trainees regarding their experience in school, in college and in apprenticeships. A copy of the interview questions can be found in Appendix 7.

The second element of the ethnographic approach took the form of recruiting the electrical trainee participants, raising the consideration of sample size, concerning which there appears to be no agreement. For example, Mason (2010) examined 560 PhD theses that used qualitative approaches and found the average sample size was 31. Taylor (2008), who conducted research on apprentices, interviewed only five young people. Roberts (2012a), examining the experience of sales and the retail sector, interviewed 24 men between the ages of 18-24. This illustrates that there is

no agreement as to the number of interviews that should be undertaken. However, as research is time and resource limited, a consideration was how to be 'time-efficient' and still meet the objectives of the specific study. It was decided that the sample size should be between 25 to 35 interviews, a number sufficient to ensure that those participants selected addressed a number and relevant spread of variables (Ritchie and Lewis, 2013).

The interview selection criteria were based upon a number of variables to ensure a balanced demographic sample. Research participants were selected purposively to represent the specific criteria set (Ritchie and Lewis, 2013). The variables were:

- trainee type: apprentice and non-apprentice;
- ethnicity;
- gender;
- home geographical location; and
- whether or not the electrical trainee worked on the 2012 Olympic site

The selection based on the above criteria allowed for different individuals to be interviewed in order to provide a complex picture of the context being researched (Creswell and Clark, 2007).

The third element of the ethnographic approach of this study was collecting the data. To do so, the researcher liaised with the colleges and the contractors to organise the interviews, providing a list of names of those to be interviewed. In the event that an individual was not available for the interview, or for those trainees who chose not to be interviewed, an alternative name was then put forward. The participants who chose to be interviewed were informed that the interviews were voluntary and any information provided was confidential. Participants were also informed that no individual or organisation would be identified by the information they provided.

Those being interviewed were verbally informed about the purpose of the research and the approximate duration of the interview. In addition, 'Participation information Sheets' and 'Consent Forms' were provided to the trainees, as shown in the Appendix 8. These forms also outlined details of the research. Participants were asked to read and sign the document. All the interviews were semi-structured and conducted face-to-face. The benefits of this were being able to pick up on areas where the trainees paused or laughed, with follow up questions being asked in such situations in order to delve into the background behind the response. Adopting a face-to-face approach reassured the respondents about the process, and any questions they had could be addressed (Ritchie and Lewis, 2013). All interviews were tape-recorded and all trainees agreed to this. This allowed the researcher to focus on the questions being asked and the responses received. However, the researcher made brief notes of the interview in the event that the recorder was not functioning, as happened on one occasion.

Data collection procedure

Interviews were conducted between December 2011 and July 2012. The purpose of the interviews was to obtain information from the trainees about their experiences in the transition process, which had not been obtained as part of the quantitative analysis.

The college interviews were conducted at the colleges and the contractor interviews were conducted either at the colleges or at the trainee's place of work, for example, at the construction site where they were working. The interviews were between 40 minutes to 1 hour and 15 minutes in duration. Ultimately, the interviewees are divided into two sub-groups, apprentices and non-apprentices.

Participants: the interview sample

There were 37 interviews. The ethnic groups within the sample are shown in Table 5.11.

Table 5.11 Ethnicity of the sample

Ethnic Groups	Number Of Interviews	Percentage
ASIAN OR ASIAN BRITISH	5	13.5%
BLACK OR BLACK BRITISH	9	24.3%
MIXED	3	8.1%
OTHER ETHNIC GROUPS	1	2.7%
WHITE	9	51.4%
TOTAL	37	100%

The process of analysis

In order to answer the research question, and because the research is based upon making a comparison between apprentices and non-apprentices in addition to focusing on ethnic groups, the electrical trainee sample is divided into three sub-samples. The three sub-samples consist of:

1. non-apprentices located in the three colleges;
2. apprentices in the three colleges but not working on the 2012 Olympic site; and
3. apprentices working for electrical contractors on the 2012 Olympic site.

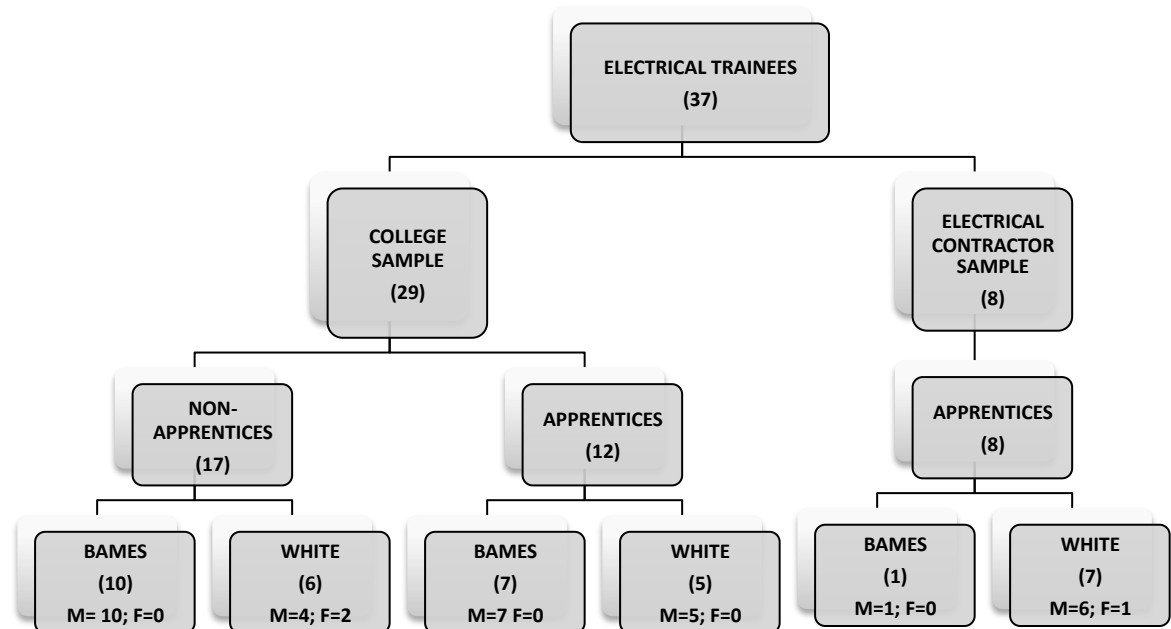
The differences between the three sub-samples are that the non-apprentices completing an electrical technical certificate do not have an employer and as such are not apprentices. The two apprentice samples are similar in that they both have employers, so allowing them to complete the electrical skills framework. The difference between the two apprentice groups is that the contractor sample works for one of the largest construction projects in 2012, namely the Olympic site, while the others did not. Apprentices in the college sample worked for a variety of organisations, including both public and private sectors, which varied in size based on the number of employees.

Figure 5.2 depicts the number and ethnicity of the electrical trainees in both the

contractor and college samples.

Figure 5.2 The trainee sample: according to number of trainees, ethnicity and the sample type

Notes: M=Male; F=Female



To provide an understanding of the electrical trainee sample, it is divided into three sub samples, which consist of:

1. Sample of non-apprentices: located in three colleges in London. As a non-apprentice, these trainees are completing an electrical certificate but do not have an employer.
2. Sample of apprentices: located in the same three London colleges as the non-apprentices but working in an electrical capacity for various organisations, such as housing associations or private electrical companies.
3. Sample of apprentices: working for three electrical contractors on the 2012 Olympic site. This cohort predominately did not attend the three London colleges sampled.

For the data analysis, a comparison is drawn between the trainee types and ethnicity as follows:

1. Three different points: 'in school', 'in college' and 'in apprenticeships';
2. Between trainee type: apprentices and non-apprentices; and
3. Comparing and contrasting the white group and the BAME group - at the different points and between the different trainee types.

Software package used

NVivo 10 was the qualitative software package of choice and was used to organise and code the interviews. This package is commonly used within the qualitative research arena and allows the text from the interviews to be managed, to make notes, comments and then document initial thoughts from the analysis. Although NVivo is a useful tool to manage coding, the researcher, ultimately, has to make the decision in terms of the coding structure. The researcher undertook a total of 77 interviews, trainee and organisational. The use of software as opposed to manual methods of data management, was invaluable to manage such a large amount of data and to allow the data to be retrieved relatively quickly (Weitzman, 2000). The coding structure came under four areas: school, college, work based learning, and information and the trainee and his/her family background and social context. The coding adopted was based upon the themes from the conceptual framework. In addition, the task of coding was an iterative process; on occasions coded themes had to be recoded to either sub-divide text or combine text to a new code.

The purpose of coding and recoding the interviews into themes and sub-themes was to ensure that sub-themes were manageable. On one hand, this was an arduous and time-consuming process, but, on the other hand, an invaluable exercise as it allowed the researcher to re-read the interviews, allowing greater familiarity with the content. This was an important analytical process to assist with finding patterns and relationships with the data. Once the data were coded, it was possible to run queries associated with the themes and characteristics of the group, so facilitating the process of making comparisons between and within trainee types according to ethnicity.

Characteristics of the interview sample

Table 5.12 provides details of the sample, comparing trainee type – apprentices and non-apprentices - in addition to ethnicity. The number of trainees interviewed was 17 from the non-apprentice sample and 20 from the apprentice sample. There were a total of 35 males and 3 females.

Table 5.12 Distribution of the sample according to ethnicity and the whether the trainee is an apprentice or non-apprentice

Trainee Types	Ethnicity	Frequency	Percentage
Non-Apprentices	ASIAN OR ASIAN BRITISH	2	11.8%
	BLACK OR BLACK BRITISH	6	35.3%
	MIXED	1	5.9%
	OTHER ETHNIC GROUPS	1	5.9%
	WHITE	7	41.2%
	TOTAL	17	100%
Apprentices	ASIAN OR ASIAN BRITISH	3	15.0%
	BLACK OR BLACK BRITISH	3	15.0%
	MIXED	2	10.0%
	OTHER ETHNIC GROUPS	0	0.0%
	WHITE	12	60.0%
	TOTAL	20	100%

Gender

Table 5.13 shows the gender of the sample in relation to trainee type. Three women were interviewed, two from the non-apprentice sample and one from the apprentice sample.

Table 5.13 Distribution of the sample according to gender

Gender	Non-Apprentices		Apprentices	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
MALE	15	88.2%	19	95.0%
FEMALE	2	11.8%	1	5.0%
TOTAL	17	100%	20	100%

Age

Table 5.14 gives details of trainees' age, calculated from the date of birth provided by individuals. Participants were categorised into three age groups, based on the different funding received by employers when taking on apprentices, which is dependent upon age (see Chapter 2).

Table 5.14 Distribution of the sample according to three age categories

Trainee Types	16-18	19-24	25 And Over	Total
Non-Apprentices	5	6	6	17
Apprentices	1	17	2	20
Total	6	23	8	37

It is noted that there are mature individuals included in the sample. Sen (2009, p. 155) discusses this situation in terms of position relevance and illusion:

The need to transcend the limitations of our positional perspectives is important in moral and political philosophy, and in jurisprudence. Liberation from positional sequestering may not always be easy but it is a challenge that ethical, political and legal thinking has to take on board.

Here Sen discusses there is a need to go beyond what one may expect and this can be done by changing one's position in how something is viewed. This study found that there were older trainees studying for an electrical qualification, some of whom had entered the UK education system for the first time and some who have re-entered it. In that sense, the presence of the older group cannot be dismissed as a distorting influence, quite the contrary, they must be included.

5.4 Other considerations

5.4.1 Access to research participants and ethical issues

As part of the research design, the research relationship in terms of accessing research participants and ethical issues have to be addressed (Ritchie and Lewis,

2013). As noted above, access, especially on the 2012 Olympic site, was difficult. Being part of the film was of great assistance when requesting interviews for this study. For participants in the construction industry, two key respondents were of particular use in providing points of contact. This, coupled with using a 'snowballing' approach to access participants, allowed a range of organisations to be interviewed.

As the study was concerned with young people, an ethics application was submitted and in August 2010 part-approval to conduct interviews, up to the point of entering colleges, was granted (Appendix 9). Full approval was later granted in October 2011 (Appendix 10).

Confidentiality and anonymity issues were addressed in this study. Confidentiality, refers to the data collected and anonymity refers to persons and organisations (Fellows and Liu, 2008). These two elements were important to ensure that data were readily provided by respondents.

5.4.2 Reflexivity and bias

Reflexivity is important to strive towards objectivity in qualitative research (Ritchie and Lewis, 2013, p. 20). In conducting ethnographic research on a construction site, Löwstedt (2014) argues that being self-reflective should include how the researcher is affecting what is being researched. However, at the outset of the research, I was initially concerned with how I would be viewed undertaking research around inequality, with a focus on ethnicity, especially as I am from an ethnic background. To address this situation, an investigative approach was adopted, one whereby questions were constantly asked, predominately due to lack of previous exposure to the construction industry and, consequently, needing to understand the constructs of the various organisations.

The researcher saw herself as the individual examining the context being researched and then reporting the findings. However, taking an ethnographic approach immerses the researcher into the context, so that it is easier to

encapsulate the lives of the individuals, allowing situations and relationships to be seen from different perspectives. Although this is a strength, a weakness of the approach is to be aware of any bias. A researcher should be able to approach the study in an unbiased and flexible manner (Rowley, 2002). To reduce the effect of bias, data from various sources can be collected to provide multiple instances in the research (Miles and Huberman, 1984). In practice, acting in an unbiased fashion may prove to be difficult, but it is important that any bias is recognised. Our worldview is shaped by what is around us and by our own experience. In researching ethnicity, reflexivity is an important subject of discussion by researchers. On the one hand, Maylor (2009) as a black researcher, noted that some ethnic groups, specifically those from a white background, may not recognise that bias in the form of racism occurs. On the other hand, Egharevba (2001), as a black researcher, noted that a shared experience of racism between the researcher and the researched allows a positive experience in a shared commonality.

Despite, uneasiness in terms of the reception of what was being researched, at times in this study the approach to collecting data was shown to be beneficial. On one occasion, for instance, an interview respondent stated:

David: If you was a woman from a different background I would not of told you this stuff.
(male, white, age 17, apprentice, college sample)

David explained that, if the researcher had been from a white background, then he would not have been so open in his interview and he felt that he had the trust of the researcher. The researcher lives in the East End of London and is from a BAME background and shared commonality in terms of ethnic background with some of the key respondents but not with others. However, she found that generally reference was not made to her ethnicity but was also aware that this is not normally an area that is discussed openly in day-to-day settings.

5.5 Conclusions

This chapter has outlined the method and data collection that was undertaken as part of this study. The study took a multi-level approach, which resulted in a considerable amount of data being collected about:

1. The individuals in the transition process;
2. Influences that may affect the transition process; and
3. The context of the research setting.

The data collected is analysed and discussed in Chapters 6-10, culminating in the development of the capability approach for electrical trainees.

Part Four: Changes over the transition process

This is Part Four of the thesis, which presents and analyses the core finding using Sen's capability approach. It provides detailed views of the electrical trainees and consists of five chapters, Chapters 6-10. Chapter 6 provides an introduction to this part of the thesis but also introduces the 37 electrical trainees. As the study adopts an ethnographic approach (Ritchie and Lewis, 2013), the social context of the trainees is subsequently examined. The trainees' family backgrounds are explored for two reasons: to provide context and to examine whether the backgrounds of the trainees differs for any of the ethnic groups. A summary is provided at the end of the chapter, which also explains how the capability approach will be used to examine the data whose collection is outlined in Chapter 5.

Chapters 7-9 analyse the data at three stages of the transition process, namely, 'in school', 'in college' and 'in work-based learning'. These three chapters follow a similar structure. An introduction is provided and the practical capability list is created, using the voices of the electrical trainees. In so doing, it provides a chance for the capability lists to be debated, which Sen (2009) argues is important for the purposes of public reasoning. Each chapter also discusses the factors that affect the trainees' capability sets, meaning, the ability to achieve various combinations of functionings (Sen, 2009), and ends by following one particular trainee's transition to the construction labour market, providing in-depth and rich data on his specific transition. As the example, Liam has been chosen, since data from the original 321 trainees' census show that he is the only one, despite the Olympic Delivery Authority's efforts to target local labour and those from ethnic minority groups in terms of providing employment training and employment opportunities on the 2012 Olympic site, who fully satisfies the following criteria:

1. he is from a BAME background;
2. he lives within one of the six Olympic boroughs; and
3. he works on the 2012 Olympic site.

Chapter 10 discusses the overall findings of the transition process of the electrical trainees. The chapter compares and contrasts the capability list created for each of the three stages of the transition, more specifically, how it changes, why it changes and for which group it changes. This chapter provides an evaluation of the two trainee types, namely apprentice and non-apprentice, and the two main ethnic groups, namely, BAME and white. Additionally, it presents a detailed overview of the differences in the transition process, highlighting where inequality in the process occurs and how it impacts on the transition process. Some policy recommendations on how this inequality can be addressed are suggested. Finally, the outcome of the chapter is to provide a specific equality framework for electrical trainees in their transition to the construction labour market, one of the objectives identified in Chapter 1.

6. Introducing the trainees

6.1 Introduction

Liam: *I'd say ethnic minorities ... I think in all areas of work, from the word go, I think you have to lose that sense of 'I've got to try so much harder, there's people looking at me, at the colour of my skin' because you'll give off that vibe, even when you may go to a boardroom and then you're going 'I'm black, so they may such and such,' but they may not be thinking that. So, you go there with a mind-set and then 'no.' I say like I come here, this is who I am, so you go with your qualifications, your skills, you can do the job so like in anything it's just like wearing a jacket, like I can't change it, so I'm not gonna make it hinder me.....Yeah, you can change your jacket, but the colour of your skin, you can't let that stop you'.*
(male, Black, age 24, apprentice, contractor sample).

Liam is a young man from East London who has overcome many barriers in his personal, domestic, school and college life. Liam sets out his perception that ethnic minorities possess an entrenched view that can affect this group achieving. The narrative informs that ethnic minorities are under psychological pressure to work hard and possess a paranoid perspective that people (not disclosed) have them and their performance under constant scrutiny. In Liam's understanding, this mind-set or psychological nuance accompanies those from ethnic minorities throughout their lives in the same way the metaphor of a 'jacket' accompanies an individual to the boardroom. The point Liam makes is that the weight of this internalised point of view restricts growth by giving 'off' a negative vibe and thus hinders progress. Liam provides a simple solution, which is to be positive and that the achievement of qualifications cannot be misinterpreted and one must stand on those merits. The colour of your skin is a permanent 'jacket' that cannot be changed but the psychological nuances are not part of the 'jacket' construct and should not stop you.

At this stage of Liam's reflective account, he is able to identify an issue, contextualise the impact of the issue on his transition process, analyse and then make a choice of how to embed this learning into a life strategy. In essence, Liam

has learned to develop and apply choices, which have helped him to overcome personal, educational and employment barriers.

Sen (2005) argues that to understand inequality you need to know the social environment of individuals. Walker and Unterhalter (2007) argue that choices are deeply shaped by the structure of the opportunities available to individuals and, for those from a disadvantaged group, they have to accept their status within the hierarchy as being what it is, even when it involves a denial of opportunities. Furthermore, Watts (2009) states that when looking at opportunity it is important to look at an individual's background as this may have an impact on the choices that he or she may make. Much of the research noted above is based on the capability approach and shares the view that it is important to be aware of an individual's background when using the capability approach. It is known from the literature that certain factors, such as, qualifications (Crawford *et al.*, 2011), lack of support (Lanning, 2012), lack of basic skills (Simpson and Cieslik, 2007), and social networks (MacDonald, 2008) can affect the transition process and all have been well documented. How these factors affect the transition and how the experience in the transition differs for certain groups must now be considered.

There may be factors that have an impact on an individual's ability to work. There are individuals who have the capability to work and choose not so to do. At one end of the spectrum, there may be individuals who do not have the capability to work because of factors that affect them doing so. It is important to differentiate between those who are able to work and those who are not able to work because of some factor or other and effectively to question how much one's ability to work is affected by the characteristics of an individual, for example, ethnicity, environment, or availability of resources. The literature on transition does not discuss these areas to any great extent. Using Sen's framework, this chapter seeks to understand, within the context of electrical trainees, how certain variables entwine with the lives of young people in the transition process.

In terms of social issues, there are certain groups that experience more disadvantage than others. According to Oroyemi *et al.* (2009), families that are more at risk of disadvantage include lone parents, social housing tenants, families from Black, Asian and other ethnic groups, families with younger mothers, and those with three or more children. They further state that individuals may experience multiple disadvantage should they fall within more than one of these categories.

Chapter aims

The aim of this chapter is to present the electrical trainees who form part of this study. In addition, the socio-economic status and social environment of the trainees are examined to understand the context more fully and whether there are differences between the two ethnic groups, BAME and white. The final section provides a conclusion to the chapter.

This chapter seeks to answer the following question:

‘Which socio-economic characteristics have the greatest impact across the BAME and the white groups?’

6.2 Characteristics of the electrical trainees

This section introduces the 37 electrical trainees interviewed. Table 6.1 provides details of each. It should be noted that, when the study refers to specific quotes from the key respondents’ interviews, the information noted in the ‘label’ column, is used to identify them.

Table 6.1 The electrical trainees

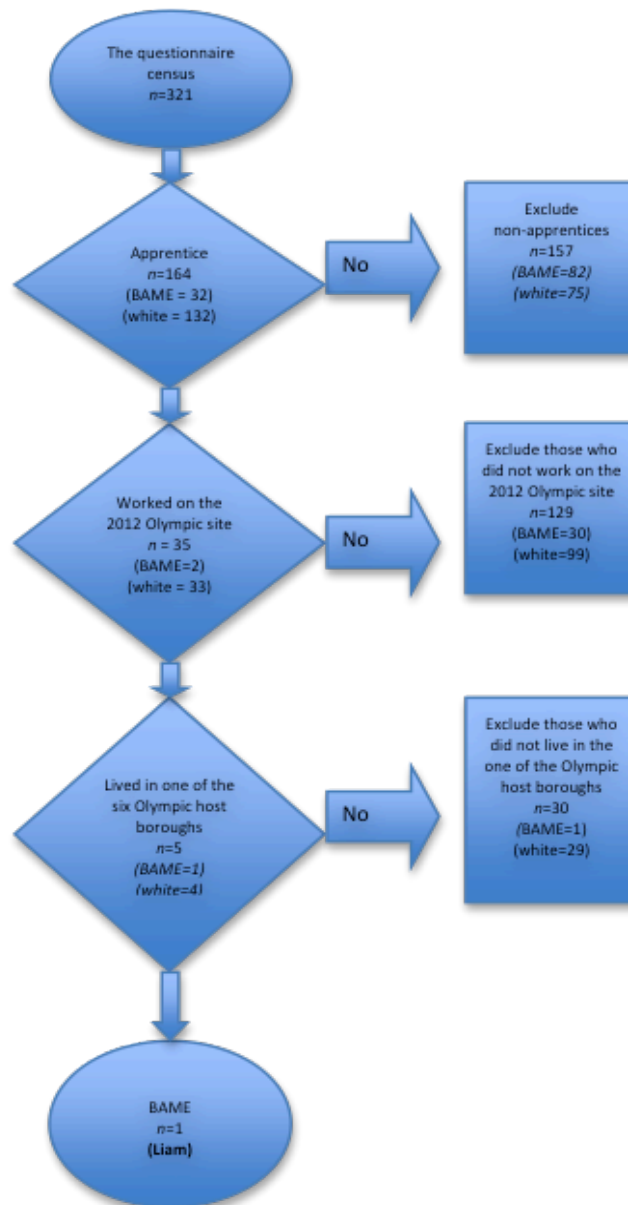
Electrical Trainee	Label	Employment status	Home Geographic Location	Host Borough	Worked on the Olympic Site
Carl	(male, Asian, age 17, non-apprentice)	Employed	London	No	No
Carter	(male, Asian, age 16, non-apprentice)	Unemployed	London	No	No
Cyril	(male, Black, age 55, non-apprentice)	Unemployed	London	No	No
David	(male, Black, age 27, non-apprentice)	Employed	London	No	No
Frank	(male, Black, age 30, non-apprentice)	Employed	London	No	No
George	(male, Asian, age 17, non-apprentice)	Unemployed	London	No	No
Luke	(male, Asian, age 38, non-apprentice)	Employed	London	Yes	No
Matthew	(male, Asian, age 19, non-apprentice)	Unemployed	London	Yes	No
Miles	(male, Asian, age 22, non-apprentice)	Unemployed	London	No	No
Tristan	(male, Black, age 25, non-apprentice)	Unemployed	London	Yes	No
William	(male, Mixed, age 39, non-apprentice)	Employed	London	No	No
Nathan	(male, Mixed, age 21, non-apprentice)	Employed	London	No	No
Cole	(male, white, age 22, non-apprentice)	Employed	London	No	No
Max	(male, white, age 18, non-apprentice)	Unemployed	London	Yes	No
Susan	(male, white, age 20, non-apprentice)	Employed	London	Yes	No
Benjamin	(male, white, age 17, non-apprentice)	Unemployed	London	Yes	No
Faith	(female, white, age 46, non-apprentice)	Self-Employed	London	No	No
Roger	(male, Black, age 18, apprentice, college sample)	Apprentice	East of England	No	No
Aiden	(male, Black, age 20, apprentice, college sample)	Apprentice	London	Yes	No
Alexander	(male, Mixed, age 23, apprentice, college sample)	Apprentice	London	No	No
Liam	(male, Black, age 24, apprentice, contractor sample)	Apprentice	London	Yes	Yes
Ryan	(male, Mixed, age 20, apprentice, college sample)	Apprentice	London	No	No
Harry	(male, Asian, age 27, apprentice, college sample)	Apprentice	London	No	No
Logan	(male, Asian, age 19, apprentice, college sample)	Apprentice	London	No	No
Jayden	(male, Asian, age 22, apprentice, college sample)	Apprentice	North West England	No	No
Charlie	(male, white, age 20, apprentice, contractor sample)	Apprentice	East Midlands	No	Yes
Jonathan	(male, white, age 20, apprentice, college sample)	Apprentice	East Midlands	No	No
David	(male, white, age 17, apprentice, college sample)	Apprentice	East of England	No	No
Blake	(male, white, age 18, apprentice, college sample)	Apprentice	London	No	No
Carson	(male, white, age 19, apprentice, college sample)	Apprentice	London	No	No
Hunter	(male, white, age 19, apprentice, contractor sample)	Apprentice	London	No	Yes
Julian	(male, white, age 21, apprentice, contractor sample)	Apprentice	London	No	Yes
Lucy	(female, white, age 19, apprentice, contractor sample)	Apprentice	London	No	Yes
Parker	(male, white, age 20, apprentice, college sample)	Apprentice	London	No	No
Sean	(male, white, age 20, apprentice, contractor sample)	Apprentice	London	Yes	Yes
Nolan	(male, white, age 21, apprentice, contractor sample)	Apprentice	London	Yes	Yes
Jason	(male, white, age 19, apprentice, contractor sample)	Apprentice	West Midlands	No	Yes

The table identifies those who are apprentices and non-apprentices; in total there are 20 apprentices and 17 non-apprentices. The apprentices were studying while working in the electrical trade, which is the nature of the apprenticeship framework of the vocational education and training system. Of the 17 non-apprentices, despite

being students studying for an electrical qualification, eight were in part-time employment, one was self-employed and the remaining eight were not involved in any part-time work. The majority of the trainees lived in London (30 trainees) and the remainder came from outside London (7 trainees). This geographical location of the trainees is to be expected as the study took place in London. Of the 37 electrical trainees, ten lived in one of the six Olympic hosts boroughs and eight worked on the 2012 Olympic site.

Although this chapter introduces all the trainees, the voice of Liam has already permeated this study. The 2012 Olympic site was meant to assist those from a BAME background to find employment (London 2012, 2010b). Although, Liam was fortunate to work on this prestigious project, as shown in Figure 6.1, other trainees were not afforded this opportunity, for different reasons. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 9, where the work-based learning experience is considered.

Figure 6.1 A flowchart depicting the reason why Liam was chosen to be highlighted throughout the study



6.3 Family background of the trainees

There are many factors that can be an indicator of an individual's social economic status. Dorsett and Lucchino (2013) examined the progress of individuals five years after leaving school, to understand the risk factors that may affect the transition process. They found that, among other things, low educational attainment and family background were factors that affected the transition to work. Educational attainment will be discussed in Chapter 7: The School Experience. However, this section discusses a range of selected socio-economic characteristics of the trainees and their parents, such as parents' occupation, family household and the process of 'growing up', to understand if there are any differences between the BAME group and the white group.

The labour market participation of the trainees' parents was explored. According to Dorsett and Lucchino (2013), family background, such as parental qualifications, and parental and sibling labour market status, have an impact on the transition process. However, the labour market participation of the BAME group varies depending on the individual's ethnic background. For example, in England, Black African, Black Caribbean, Pakistani and Bangladeshi men experience lower employment than the white majority and Pakistani and the employment of Bangladeshi women is extremely low in comparison to that of white women (Clark and Drinkwater 2007; Nazroo and Kapadia, 2013). The BAME group are also more concentrated in routine and semi-routine work and receive lower hourly pay (Carmichael and Woods, 2000; Heath and Cheung, 2006; Nazroo and Kapadia, 2013). Furthermore, Rothon (2007) argues that socio-economic status of the parents can be a predictor for understanding the outcome of their children, in terms of their educational achievements and labour market outcomes.

Detailed information on the trainees' parents' occupational class can be found in Appendix 11. During the interviews, trainees were asked the occupation of their parents. This information was used to categorise the occupations according to the

Standard Occupational Classification (SOC)¹⁵. Within this context, occupations are classified in terms of their skill level and skill content. Although the SOC is used to classify occupations, Alpin *et al.* (1998) suggest that socio-economic class should be categorised by those jobs that require a degree and those that do not. However, a job that may require a degree does not necessarily mean that the individual has one and *vice-versa*, so this suggestion of classification is not adopted.

The findings indicate that the mothers are predominately clustered at the bottom of the SOC 2010 table. In both the apprentice and non-apprentice groups, a higher number of the mothers from the BAME group were unemployed, seven in total. For both the BAME group and the white group, the fathers' occupations were predominately clustered in two areas, 'associate professional and technical occupations' (8 trainees) and 'skilled trades occupations' (13 trainees), with the latter – into which the electrical trade also falls - the most common. However, not all fathers who fell into this 'skilled trades occupations' were electricians; two were unemployed, one the father of a white trainee and one of a black trainee. Some trainees stated that they grew up with their stepfather, or, in some instances, in two different households, often when their parents were separated. This had coding implications, for example, whether to use the occupational code for the father or the stepfather. The researcher made the decision to use the code of the father with whom the child grew up. Examining the SOC class for the fathers of both the BAME group and the white group did not highlight any major differences.

Two trainees did not provide any information on their parent's occupations. The question arose as to what to do regarding missing data. In some instances the decision may be made to exclude records where data are missing (Pallant, 2010). For this study, the decision was made to include all the records in the analysis. The reason for missing data could be attributed to a number of reasons, for example, the trainees not knowing the job role of the parents or the trainees not living with their parents.

¹⁵ The socio-economic class is based upon the eight categories as noted in the Office of National Statistics (Office of National Statistics (ONS), 2015).

The trainees were asked to provide details about their siblings. According to Dorsett and Lucchino (2013), sibling labour market status has an impact on the transition process. Appendix 11 provides details of the number of siblings for the trainees. For both the BAME and the white group, the non-apprentice sample is more likely to have siblings than the apprentice sample. The majority of the trainees' siblings were still in the educational system rather than the job market. Those in the job market were in jobs that tended not to be in a high socio-economic group, perhaps due to the siblings often being younger and subsequently having spent less time in the labour market. Thus, these findings do not support the work of Dorsett and Lucchino (2013) that older sibling labour market status may act as a role model, as the siblings were of similar ages to the trainees.

During the interviews the trainees were asked about those in their household when growing up. Although they in the main grew up within a one or two parent household, as shown in the Appendix 10, there were variations as to who was included in that household. One trainee grew up with grandparents and another with a foster parent. Some did not grow up with their biological father. However, if the trainee grew up within a one-parent household, it tended to be with the mother.

Nine of the trainees grew up in a one-parent household, and this was split almost evenly between the BAME group and the white group. Trainees were predominately happy to talk about their family lives but were less forthcoming in some instances when the relationship between the father and the trainee was discussed. For example, one trainee refused to talk about his father:

Carl: *I don't wanna talk about him.*
(male, white, age 17, non-apprentice)

For another trainee, although her father was in her life, up to a certain age, he was not always around:

Lucy: *He left, he come back, he come back a second time and he nicked money off my mum and then went back to her again (female, white, age 19, apprentice, contractor sample).*

An apprentice explained that, even though he did not grow up with a father figure, in the household, he did not see this as a barrier for him to achieve:

Ryan: *I live in a single parent home, my mum's not been working for the last 5 or 6 years, so you could say that I'm under-privileged, but I think I've done ok for myself really. I can't really use it as an excuse in my mind. (male, Mixed, age 20, apprentice, college sample).*

The case of absent fathers was also not exclusive to gender. A female apprentice explains that she did not grow up with her father:

Lucy: *No, he's never been there, he moved to Dorset. He's had three more kids with her, with this woman that he met on holiday err ... I only see him really, 'cos I've always wanted a brother or sister, so I see the kids ... (female, white, age 19, apprentice, contractor sample).*

Among the trainees, there was variance in the family unit, and the findings showed that there were absent fathers, irrespective of ethnic background or trainee type.

The housing tenure of the trainees was explored. The majority lived at home, but some were living independently of their parents. For example, two of the non-apprentices, Harry and Luke, were married with no children; two trainees, Liam and William, were married with children; three trainees, Frank, Jonathan and Susan, lived on their own; while trainee, David, lived with his partner and son. The most striking observation was that these trainees were all from a BAME background, except Jonathan and Susan, and all were non-apprentices, except Liam and Jonathan. Thus, those in the transition process may have responsibilities, in addition, to looking after themselves. Furthermore, a trainee, Susan, explained that living on her own was difficult:

Susan: *At the moment, I live on my own.*

(female, white, age 20, non-apprentice)

Researcher: *How come?*

Susan: *Long story.*

Researcher: *OK, can you give it to me in a nutshell?*

Susan: *I'm struggling.*

This interview illustrates that even being from a stable background can have its challenges. Susan's mother was a teaching assistant and her father an energy manager. The family lived outside London and the respondent grew up in Kent but now finds herself living alone, in East London, with an almost non-existent family support network. She explained that dealing with the issues of living independently was a detraction from her electrical studies, as she had to focus on many pressing things, such as, living somewhere that was safe.

In addition to examining the parent's socio-economic background, the interviews explored the family's background. Specific attention was paid to whether trainees or their families were born in the UK or overseas. The reason for exploring this in the interviews is because Sen (2009) in his work regards resources as an important aspect of the capability approach, which should not be limited to individuals but can also be drawn upon through an individual's family. The findings from the interviews highlighted that the majority of the trainees were born in the UK, although five were born abroad, all from a BAME background. In terms of where trainees' parents were born, the BAME group were more likely than the white to have parents born outside the United Kingdom (UK), as either first or second-generation migrants to the UK. The reason for the families relocating to the UK was because of their parents' wished to have a better standard of living and better opportunities:

Harry: *I think 'cos my granddad probably wanted a better life for them and he had the opportunity to come here so that's why he brought the kids.*

(male, Asian, age 27, apprentice, college sample)

The implication of the trainee's family members being born overseas was also

discussed during the interviews. The majority of the trainees' households spoke English. However, the findings showed that in four households, those of George, William, Matthew and Carter, another language in addition to English was used:

Carter: *I speak English with my parents, but with grandparents, I speak Gujerati.*

(male, Asian, age 16, non-apprentice)

Matthew: *Turkish.*

(male, Asian, age 19, non-apprentice)

Another trainee, George, explained that due to his poor English he could not enter the electrical qualification at National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 1, but was placed on a pre-Level 1 course. Furthermore, this trainee stated that he found language a barrier for him when trying to communicate with his peers and the lecturers in the classroom. A household where English is not the first language creates problems for parents in supporting their children at school. A report found that language barriers not only stop parents assisting their child at school but are also a barrier for them being informed about the education system and navigating through the process (Page *et al.*, 2007). The literature on transition does mention language but only when discussing how the lack of basic skills has an impact on the transition process (Lifelong Learning, 2000; Simpson and Cieslik, 2007). From the current study, it is apparent that language has been a limiting factor for some trainees, in terms of speaking English fluently.

Trainees spoke about language in another situation. For example, Ryan, who spoke 'very well' - some might think 'quite posh' compared with many of the other trainees - mentioned that although he may speak 'slang' with his friends, he is very much aware of the need to speak 'properly' at interviews:

Ryan: *I never really used to speak the way I do now, so to speak; I used to just speak slang and blah, blah, blah all the time.*

(male, Mixed, age 20, apprentice, college sample)

Ryan explained that at school he used to engage with his English teacher and this was the reason why he learnt how to speak 'properly'. According to Coldwell (2013), speaking correctly is about power and when people speak 'slang' it is not the spoken word of power. The contractors also made reference to how trainees spoke during their interviews, noting that in some instances they did not know how to present and engage in the interview process. The recruitment process that contractors undertook for apprenticeships is discussed further in Chapter 8 on the work-based learning experience.

6.4 The environs of the trainees

Chapter 2 provided statistical data about the deprived nature of the East End of London. However, as part of the data collection process the researcher was exposed to very different environments, the college, the electrical contractors, construction sites and, in addition, the trainees' environs. It was important to gain an understanding of the different environs to fully understand the context of the research. However, each actor spoke differently about his or her respective environment. One thing that was common in the trainee interviews was the topic of crime and gangs, in terms of being a victim of crime, being involved in crime, knowing someone who is affected by crime, or seeing criminal activity in the area where they lived. Cole mentioned that he does not like the area where he lives because of crime, not feeling safe and being a victim of crime:

Cole: *I don't know how to put it into words. I don't like where I live, never have. As soon as I become an electrician, I'll look into going somewhere else, whether it's out of London or another country, I'm not too sure yet..... I don't like the neighbourhood, I don't like having to look over my shoulder every time I walk down the road or go to the street. I mostly drive everywhere now.....I've been mugged a few times at knifepoint..... Yes. I find I have to look behind me at all times when I'm walking down the street.*
(male, white, age 22, non-apprentice)

On the other hand, some trainees talked about knowing someone who was affected by crime. Nathan talked about his friend being a victim of crime and discussed the topic very openly as if it was a common occurrence:

Nathan: *Yeah, they're getting stabbed constantly. The amount of friends I know that have been stabbed more than once and they've survived. It's like thanks that they haven't died but, y'know, other people, they're all dying. It's madness.*
(male, Mixed, age 21, non-apprentice)

Crime was discussed in relation to the area where the trainees lived. Furthermore, there appeared to be an intense discussion about crime in relation to housing estates, where it is easier to be drawn into crime:

Nolan: *'Yeah, I lived on an estate, lived on a real estate, and I went to school on the estate but, if you stay away from it, it's so easy to get involved in it actually, like walking past people doing drugs and stuff and I was like 12 and if they'd have been like 'Oh, Nolan, come here, do this,' I'm gonna be like 'aah'. But it was quite normal, I was always told not to talk to strangers and obviously I think that's one of the main things, I used to just walk past them. I used to see people's car windows smashed and cars keyed, like scratched ... it weren't great, but what can you do?*
(male, Mixed, age 21, non-apprentice).

A trainee made a distinction between those who lived on a housing estate and those visiting such an estate in terms of any trouble that may be experienced:

Frank: *My estate was alright. We got on with everyone, most of the kids were constantly getting nicked, as most kids do, yeah, I mean, it was alright. When you know everyone, and you live on the estate, everyone's sweet. There was a lot of trouble brought onto the estate where everyone fights and this area codes and all that rubbish.*
(male, Black, age 30, non-apprentice).

This trainee describes quite explicitly what life is like living on an estate, including a group from another estate bringing trouble to his estate. Trainees also spoke about

crime being influenced by postcodes, whereby those living in one particular postcode travel to another postcode, where they do not reside, inevitably causing trouble for an individual. This trouble, is not limited to the estates. Trainees also spoke about experiencing crime in the streets, which was quite common for many of the trainees. Another trainee explained how he was involved in crime and, in effect, how it was seen as a way of survival:

David: *Even when I was out 'ere, selling drugs and robberies and all of this, I always wanted to do better, but there was times where I was living on my own, I was broke literally broke, can't eat nothing, so obviously you're gonna do what you have to do.*

(male, Black, age 27, non-apprentice)

There was a common theme that living on a housing estate, compared with not living on an estate, brought different challenges in terms of being exposed to crime and safety and subsequently opportunities. Charlie grew up on an estate and he explained how this could limit opportunities for young people:

Charlie: *Looking at everyone around me and seeing what they don't have and then thinking that's normal and then it's ... like let's say you live in this area and the guy up the road has a BMW, it's about 7 years old, you think it's the absolute bee's knees, the best thing ... he's got a BMW you know what I mean ... 'What does he do?' and let's say he's not done a whole lot, something illegal, you'd say, yeah, one day I wan that, failing to realise if you go down that main road at the bottom of the road there's about every other car driving past is a BMW with a person in it, brand new, and you step out of that and then you fail to realise that everyone driving past is in brand new cars, so you're in this little world and then you step out and then you realise what is something to strive towards and what isn't.*

(male, white, age 20, apprentice, contractor sample).

Charlie spoke about the limitations of the environment. From an individual perspective he described living in a bubble because of the issue of postcodes, which meant you tend to congregate in the area where you live rather than moving freely from one area to another. He also explained how this way of living makes you

believe that the only thing in life is what is around you. Furthermore, it creates the problem of not being aware of possibilities that one may be able to access.

These interviews also illustrate that both the BAME and the white groups were exposed to crime. Of interest is that one trainee explained that crime has nothing to do with one's ethnic background but is a poverty issue:

Frank:*Well, to be honest, it's a poverty issue. If you grow up in an area, no matter your colour, 'cos I know people that are white, black and Asian in it and it's a problem for all of them, wherever they go.*
(male, Black, age 30, non-apprentice).

What is important is whether or not crime is a barrier to employment. Trainees were asked in the interviews whether they had a criminal record. Some spoke about crime, which was not necessarily of a serious nature. Only one trainee, who was a white apprentice, spoke about a more serious offence, though this has not stopped him from gaining employment. Another apprentice said that, although he had a criminal record, he did not believe this had affected his chances of gaining employment. However, in reality, it may do, as apparent from another trainee who deliberately only selects certain jobs to apply for:

Frank: *I haven't really gone for anywhere that it is ... what you could say has hindered me because I just don't apply for certain jobs, like I couldn't work at Heathrow, certain places, I don't know if I couldn't, but I just wouldn't apply, I'd just rather use my efforts in somewhere where I know I've got more of a chance.*
(male, Black, age 30, non-apprentice)

Although, the trainees spoke about crime, the researcher observed during the fieldwork process how close crime is to the doorstep of one college in East London. While visiting this college, a shrine was seen outside a fast food restaurant, as shown in Figure 6.2. It was a homage to a girl, aged 19, who was fatally shot in a drive by shooting.

The restaurant and the shrine were a few metres away from the college entrance. However, when the subject of the shooting and problems associated with crime and gangs was broached in an interview with a member of the college staff, the response was:

I don't think there's been any serious issues around gang related problems.

(Staff member of college, located in East London, male, white).

This particular interviewee may not think there is a serious crime issue. However, the shooting next to the college and the narratives from the electrical trainees clearly describe the actual environment in which some organisations operate. More surprisingly, discussions with the trainees highlighted that these occurrences are treated in a 'matter of fact' fashion.

Figure 6.2 Stabbing outside Hackney college - Hackney College 2010: Agnes Sina- Inakoku, 16, died in April 2010 from gunshot wounds to the neck



More importantly, organisations and the older trainees were oblivious of the

environment to which the young trainees were exposed. As was noted in Chapter 2, the problem with gangs and young people involved in gangs and crime is not discussed in the transition literature. The findings from the interviews support published work of The Centre for Social Justice (2009), which examined the negative effect of the environment faced by young people. Furthermore, The Centre for Social Justice (2009), recognises the importance of addressing this issue and understanding the problem in terms of engaging with young people and raising aspirations. MacDonald (2011) argues that researching youth transitions is important as, if a new social trend emerges, any changes will be noticeable and can be identified at the youth phase when an individual makes the transition from school to adult life. This section demonstrates that there is a social trend that has not yet been encapsulated into the minds of policy makers examining the transition process. This is not a new trend but one which is not normally discussed in the transition literature. This trend is further discussed in Chapter 7, 8 and 9.

6.5 Conclusions

The aim of this chapter has been to explore individual trainee's social status and environs. Examination of selected socio-economic characteristics of the trainees shows patterns of advantage and disadvantage, with those from the BAME group more disadvantaged than the white group. Mothers of BAME group trainee mothers are more likely to be unemployed; those from the BAME group are more likely to have been born overseas and are more likely to speak another language at home; BAME group family members are also more likely than the white group to have been born overseas. If family members are born outside the UK, they may be unaware of the resources, choices and decision-making necessary to navigate through education and employment and may not have the ability to access the source of knowledge necessary for providing opportunities in terms of schools or employment.

Furthermore, the interviews highlighted how the environment can limit a person's opportunities and life choices. For the trainees the environs had an impact on their

inability to move around freely in an area, supporting The Centre for Social Justice (2009) concerning the impact of crime, gangs and the environment that young people are exposed to. The negative aspects of the environs may not be recognised by educational organisations, though they require knowledge and understanding of what may affect the young person in achieving educational outcomes.

This chapter has argued that, although there are differences between apprentices and non-apprentices, the strongest characteristic, one that has the biggest disadvantage for trainees, is ethnicity. Therefore, subsequent chapters will focus on ethnicity to determine its impact at each of the three stages - 'in school', 'in college' and 'in work-based learning' – of the transition process. In doing so, a practical capability list is created, at each stage, which are then compared and contrasted in Chapter 10, a chapter which examines the factors that affect the transition process, highlights what part ethnicity plays and three stages, 'in school', 'in college' and 'in work-based learning' culminates in developing the capability framework for electrical trainees to transition to the construction labour market.

7. The transition process - The school experience

7.1 Introduction

Liam: *'I went to school in Hackney. To be honest, now I look back at it, I wish I'd made the most of the opportunity like what school was about. But for me, at the time, it was more about hanging round with friends, trying to crack jokes and who can make the most people laugh, not really concentrating at school, only the subjects which I'd enjoyed which was Art, Drama and especially PE. So, it's like every so often, I'm outside the classroom ... that was my school life basically right up to my GCSEs and it sort of reflected on my grades'.*
(male, Black, age 24, apprentice, contractor sample)

In describing his school experience, Liam pointed out his main focus at school being less about learning and more about spending time with his friends. He talks about being outside of the classroom because, on many occasions, he was suspended from school. Liam implied that he had a need to develop his *'identity'* and that need took priority over his learning. However, school should be a place to learn, but the ability to learn at school may be dependent upon the interaction between the individual, the school or the teachers. Furthermore, instilling confidence in students to make decisions requires an environment that supports the individual and instils self-belief that one can achieve. This is the concept of the capability approach, namely that an individual should be able to be what they want and do what they want.

Despite the importance of education, there are inequalities in the education system that have been highlighted in various reports (Raffo, 2013; Swann Report, 1985). Inequality in education is said to occur because there are conflicting interests at play between those in charge of the system and those who are using the system (Apple, 2004; Denessen *et al.*, 2005; Machin and Vignoles, 2006). Gillborn (1997) suggests the reason for school inequality is a result of school policy, for instance, when schools are allowed to select some, or all, of their entire school intake. Gillborn (2006) asserts that schools should look at their processes, rather than making outputs appear more positive by focusing on numbers. Education is also

seen as a form of 'currency', particularly when considering an individual's abilities (Breen and Buchmann, 2002). On this basis, education is meant to decrease social inequality, being a means to access the labour market (Breen *et al.*, 2009).

Iannelli (2002) discusses the social inequalities in educational attainment. She explains that these inequalities are difficult to eliminate and in turn may have consequences on the reproduction of inequalities between generations.

Furthermore, Micklewright (2000) poses the question of 'What is, or should be, meant by 'education' when discussing inequality and the transition process?' The author points out that education outcomes neglect the quality of education obtained and of learning actually achieved. Although education is meant to have the capacity to solve many problems, for example, social inequality and allowing individuals to access the labour market, education is still measured in terms of an outcome. For instance, the outcome set by the Government dictates that school children should achieve 5 GCSEs A*-C. However, an outcome-based system does not necessarily reflect the ability of the individual, nor does such a system consider those students who do not achieve this target. Furthermore, once the school's targets are met, there appears to be little incentive to help pupils that may require additional support.

More importantly, there is evidence highlighting that there are differences in educational outcomes. Wilson *et al.* (2009) argue that during compulsory schooling there are different progression rates dependent upon the ethnic groups. For example, during the period of secondary schooling, when considering the achievement of 5 GCSEs at A*-C, students from a BAME background are either catching up with white students, or overtaking them. However, the authors further state that at the end of compulsory schooling students from the BAME group achieve considerably lower scores for their GCSE exam in comparison to those from the white group. There has also been research into the failings of the white working class boys group. It is argued that this group is not performing well in education (Demie and Lewis, 2010; Gillborn, 2010; Keddie, 2013; Strand and Winston, 2008). Despite the concerns regarding the white group not performing well, they are far

from being underrepresented in the labour market and are well represented in the construction industry. The above research highlights that there are differences between ethnic groups when focusing on their outcomes at the end of compulsory schooling. However, it provides little information about the experience, the process of the learning or any factors that may affect the outcome.

Although the capability approach has been used in a variety of settings, there has been specific research conducted in the area of education, most notably Vermeulen (2013) and Walker and Unterhalter (2007). However, not all research that centres on education provide a capability list, as to what it means to be educated. For example, Biggeri *et al.* (2006) looked at the capabilities of children. The research allowed children to select the capabilities that were important to them in childhood and adolescence. Research conducted by Burchardt and Vizard (2009, 2011) highlighted that education is important to an individual's well-being. Although the above researchers note 'education' as being fundamental, there is no information, specific detail or clarity as to what is meant by the phrase to be 'educated'.

This chapter uses the capability approach to examine the school experience of the electrical trainees. The information contained in this chapter is predominately based upon the voices of the 37 trainees, but also on the questionnaire census of 321 trainees.

Chapter aims

This chapter examines the first stage of the transition process: the school experience. It argues that school is a 'sifting' process and some children are able to navigate through it and some are not. Subsequently, some are left behind. From this group, some of these are able to catch up with the majority, but some are not. This chapter also argues that in order to be educated there must be a set of social processes. Sen (1999a) defined development as a social process, being based on 'expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy' and having the 'freedom to achieve a valuable livelihood'. However, not every individual has the freedom to

achieve. Some individuals, such as those from the BAME group, have fewer capabilities in comparison to the white group because of the inequality in the education system.

The aim of the chapter is to examine the school experience of the trainees and, based on this analysis, draw up a list of capabilities that are prerequisites for being educated in the school environment. It will seek to understand the factors that may affect educational capabilities and provide an assessment of Liam's school experience using a capability approach. The chapter concludes with a summary.

Throughout the chapter, the following questions will be addressed:

- What capabilities are necessary at this stage of the transition process;
- What are the factors that affect the trainees' capability set; and
- Do the capability sets of the BAME group and the white group differ?

7.2 The practical capability list

This section creates a practical capability list for this stage of the transition process: 'the school experience'. The importance of creating a capability list is two-fold. First, a capability list is necessary for the development of the capability framework. Second, the development of the capability list undertakes a two-stage process, as suggested by Robeyns (2003). Initially, a hypothetical draft capability list was created in Chapter 5. In addition to extensive interviews, this used published material with actors involved in the electrical trade, electrical training and the construction industry. The second stage in the creation of a practical capability list will be based on the narratives of the electrical trainees. It was important to adopt such an approach according to Sen (2009) the capability list should be subject to public reasoning. The author further stated that public reason is necessary when examining justice, as reasoning in some form moves away from 'observation of a tragedy' to the 'diagnosis of injustice'. For this study, it is essential to use the voices of different actors. More importantly, using the narratives of electrical trainees in

the transition process has the ability to contribute to the diagnostic of any inequality, generating debate in relation to inequality and moving towards the creation of solutions. This is the essence of public reasoning.

7.2.1 To engage in formal education

Despite GCSEs being the measurement of an outcome based system, the Department for Education (DfE) (2013) states that GCSE results vary among ethnic groups. The authors state that children from a Chinese background are the highest achievers in terms of the number of GCSEs achieved, whilst pupils from a Black background are the lowest achieving group. More specifically, the lowest achievers are the Black Caribbean group, notwithstanding that the traveller/gypsy group falls below this group and pupils from an Asian background perform above the national average. The authors mention that the GCSEs results for the different ethnic groups also vary depending upon whether or not the child comes from a disadvantaged background.

Table 7.1 Summary of the questionnaire census: Five GCSEs obtained at A*-C

Trainee Types	Ethnic Groups	Did not achieve five GCSE at A*-C	Did achieve five GCSE at A*-C
		Percentage	Percentage
Non-Apprentices	BAME	60.8	49.2
	WHITE	39.2	50.8
	TOTAL	100	100
Apprentices	BAME	21.4	19.1
	WHITE	78.6	80.9
	TOTAL	100	100

Table 7.1 provides details of the questionnaire census, comparing both ethnic groups and trainee types. These findings illustrate that the white trainees are more likely than the BAME group to achieve five GCSE at A*-C. The findings also show

that the apprentice group are more likely to have five GCSEs A*-C in comparison to the non-apprentices group.

Table 7.2 Summary of the interview sample: Five GCSEs obtained at A*-C

Trainee Types	Ethnic Groups	Did not achieve A*-C	Did achieve A*-C
		Number	Number
Non-Apprentices	BAME	10	4
	WHITE	1	2
	TOTAL	11	6
Apprentices	BAME	0	8
	WHITE	0	12
	TOTAL	0	20

Note: as the interview sample consists of 37 electrical trainees Table 7.2 uses a numeric number rather than percentages

Turning to the interview sample, there are 37 electrical trainees, 20 apprentices and 17 non-apprentices. 22 are from a BAME background and 15 from a white background.

As shown in Table 7.2, of the 22 trainees from a BAME background, 12 achieved five GCSEs at A*-C and 10 did not. Of the 15 trainees from a white background, 14 achieved five GCSEs at A*-C and 1 did not. These findings illustrate that those from a white background were more likely to achieve five GCSEs A*-C in comparison to those from a BAME background.

Turning to the trainee type, all of the 20 apprentices received 5 GCSEs at A*-C, however less than half of the trainees in the non-apprentice sample had reached this level. Of the 17 non-apprentices, 6 achieved 5 GCSEs A*-C and 11 did not. These findings illustrate that apprentices were more likely to have 5 GCSEs A*-C in comparison to the non-apprentices.

Of the 9 individuals in the BAME group, when looking at those who achieved five GCSEs at level A*-C, one was a non-apprentice and eight were apprentices. In

comparison, out of the 17 individuals, as a whole of the interview sample, five were non-apprentices and twelve were apprentices.

The findings shows that, in both the questionnaire census and the interview sample, the number of GCSEs achieved varied among ethnic groups and trainee types. Although the table provides statistical data about who achieved 5 GCSE A*-C, it does not provide insight into what may have helped or hindered the individuals in achieving these qualifications. This was explored during the interviews. Two trainees never achieved any GCSEs, as they left school prior to the end of compulsory schooling, one at age 13 and the other at age 15. This was Faith and Tristan. Faith is a white female and Tristan is a male from a BAME background. The trainees explained they left school early because one felt that school had let them down and the other had persistent family problems, which affected his schooling. The reason for the low GCSEs is also considered further in this section. Some trainees in the interview sample spoke about knuckling down just before the end of their compulsory education to try and achieve some qualifications. Other trainees spoke about predicted grades, but subsequently achieved better grades when they received their exam results and others talked about the support they received at school in order to achieve their GCSE qualifications. One trainee obtained 11 GCSEs and thought this was the standard achievement. This was because some of his friends achieved 16 GCSEs at level A*-C:

Researcher: *How many GCSEs did you achieve?*

Logan: *I can't remember ... 11?.....I think that's standard, isn't it?.....Oh. I found out some friend's even get 16 GCSEs', I'm not sure how they do it.*

(male, Asian, age 19, apprentice, non-contractor sample)

Logan was not the only trainee that achieved more than the standard five GCSEs A*-C. However, focusing on an outcome based system does not highlight school exam performance, which is highly statistically related to the school attended, school size, whether the family is on income support, school admission policy and pupil teacher ratio (Bradley and Taylor, 2004, p. 343).

However, there are two levels of GCSE qualifications. Phillips (2011) argues that having a two-tier GCSE qualification system, a higher level and a foundation level, causes ethnic inequality in education. The higher level means that an individual can achieve GCSEs at grades A*-C, whilst foundation level means an individual can only achieve GCSE grades at C-E in that same subject. Gillborn (2008) states that the different levels, for the same subjects, leads to institutional racism, especially as a higher number of black students are entered for the lower test. Furthermore, the author argues that a crucial drawback of the GCSE foundation level is that the highest grade that can be achieved is seen as a failure by educationalists and employers.

7.2.2 The ability to be able to reflect and to be able to make decisions

The main tenet of Sen's (2009) work on the capability approach is that an individual should be able to be what they want to be. However, a question arises if someone does not value a particular thing, not because they do not want to, but because they do not realise they should. In this context, one may ask why Liam did not place a higher value on education, rather than spending time with his friends and disrupting the classroom. The answer could be that, at that point in his life, he did not realise he should prioritise education over social development. On reflection, having considered his present position, Liam implied that he was responsible for missing academic opportunities that would have better assisted his transition, for example, achieving GCSE maths, English and science. However, he confessed that he capitalised on opportunities in lessons such as art, drama and physical education.

Researcher: *With your GCSEs, how many did you get when you left school?'*

Liam: *'A-C's, it was 2 or 3 in the subjects, which I enjoyed, and the rest like Maths and English was D's and E's, some of them I didn't even turn up for'.*

(male, Black, age 24, apprentice, contractor sample

Considering Liam's school experience, it can be argued that he did not fail in school; he achieved the relevant qualifications for the lessons he enjoyed, and dismissed the lessons he did not enjoy. Whilst he did not achieve the requisite number of GCSEs (five) to properly assist his STWT, according to the industry standards, he does achieve sufficient success in the lessons in which he chose to succeed. This is evidence that Liam does have the ability to succeed in matters to which he puts his mind to. When presented with this evidence, this study can ask the question 'what is the quality of education' in terms of supporting young people to achieve in subjects where they show no apparent interest, for example, in crucial lessons such as maths, English and science. Other trainees' school experiences did not duplicate Liam's. Understanding the value of education was something that was lacking with some trainees but not with others. A trainee reported:

Carson: *I think ... I enjoy it, 'cos I mean school, I couldn't wait to get into the world of work. As much as, y'know, everyone hates it, I sort of hated it as well, 'cos I wake up some mornings at 6 o'clock and go 'oh, go back to bed,' but like I've enjoyed earning money, getting to know some of the people. It's nice to sort of, y'know, you can see you're going somewhere now, whereas at school, you sort of didn't, even though I was one of the few kids who actually understood the importance.*

(male, white, age 19, apprentice, college sample)

Carson mentioned that at school he understood the importance of education and enjoyed the experience. In addition, he attained eight GCSEs. He had a definite passion, upon leaving compulsory education, to move straight into work. In further discussion it was evident that his school experience also differed from Liam's.

Researcher: *What was your experience at school. What was it like? What were your likes and dislikes?*

Carson: *Likes - hanging out with my friends, holidays. Dislikes - school. No, I actually really enjoyed it. Most people I know, you ask them what their favourite subjects were, it'd be stuff like PE n'drama. I used to like maths and English. I was a bit backwards, but I liked maths, 'cos, again, it was all to do with thinking, problem solving and it kept it interesting and maths comes into everything. Without maths, you wouldn't have*

music, you wouldn't have drama, you wouldn't have anything, so maths is like the core of everything, which is what I really liked about it. In English, it was more the correct side of it. I got quite an imagination, so I used to write stories, I used to write stories since I can remember really. I saw one of 'em a little while ago and I was like 'oh bloody hell ... what was I like?' I sort of saw it from when I was about six and I thought it was massively long and it was about this long. (laughter). (male, white, age 19, apprentice, college sample)

Crucial to the discussion above is the remark that, although Carson states he was not academically bright, he achieved a high standard of qualifications, which he further mentioned in his interview was a result of being supported at school. When considering the value of education the trainees reflected on their school and realised that they could have done better in terms of qualifications obtained. Less attention was focused on being prepared for the next stage of the transition process. For example, Sissons and Jones (2012), argue that soft skills are a necessity for employment. When the trainees reflected on their time at school, there was limited discussion about whether the trainees had decision-making ability in terms of whether to go to college or attend sixth form, whether the trainees knew what was required to move into a particular profession and what the pre-requisites were, if any. An apprentice asserted that, although he had the ability to achieve at school, he just did not try hard enough. This was a common theme among many of the trainees:

Charlie: *It's a part of Nottingham but, yeah, I didn't really like school. I got into a lot of trouble. I got excluded three times, never really did any work. I was always smart though, I just never did the coursework. A lot of schoolwork was coursework based they'd say 'right 60% of your mark is coursework' and I'd be like 'right, ok.'I'd go away and say I'd do this at home but never did any of it, I just wanted to go out with my mates and have fun really so didn't do any coursework. I got to finish it and I got a D in pretty much everything. I got a D in every single subject. It was good because I mean ... well, not good but I was averaging E's and F's so when I did my exams and when I did my exam brought them back to D's. It was quite annoying though 'cos I did good in my coursework what could I have got soyeah.*

(male, white, age 20, apprentice, contractor sample)

Liam achieved in the areas that he chose to achieve in. Carson achieved in the areas that were of interest to him. Charlie did not achieve, as he did not have a focus on an area in which he could achieve, although he did actually possess the ability to achieve. In this sense, his choices were limited, as he did not know what he wanted to achieve.

Another trainee's comment was consistent with the theme that trying harder at school would have resulted in being more productive in terms of the qualifications received:

Carl: *I thought I could've done better in my GCSEs.*
(male, black, age 17, non-apprentice)

Being able to reflect, or being able to make decisions are capabilities that tend not to be noted on capability lists. For example, in the works of Anand and Van Hees (2006) their capability list included happiness, sense of achievement, health, intellectual stimulation, social relations, environments and personal projects. Their research focused on English voters using a quantitative survey. Survey participants were asked questions, which involved making decisions but this was not listed as a capability. The Equalities Review (2007), when examining inequality in the United Kingdom, listed 'to participate in decision making, having a voice and influence' as capabilities. Under this area they have provided a number of examples to support this capability, including being able to participate in organisations and the community. For this study, being able to reflect was a requisite learning mechanism as was making decisions when faced with choices. Nevertheless, it was evident that the trainees had made choices, such as whether or not to focus on their studies, albeit the choices they did make were not always the best decisions for their STWT outcome.

7.2.3 The ability to participate in classes and to have voice

A number of trainees explained that they were either excluded or suspended, had 'bunked' school or a combination of the above. It is necessary here to clarify what is meant by these terms. Head teachers can exclude a child from school for misbehaving. The term being excluded may refer to being expelled or being suspended. Being expelled is when the child is permanently excluded, whereas being suspended is for a fixed period (GOV.UK, 2014c). Being excluded, permanently or for a fixed period, is when the teacher removes the child from school. By way of contrast, 'bunking' lessons is when the child deliberately makes a decision not to attend school (The Guardian, 2008). Liam bunked lessons, but was also suspended from school on a regular basis, not because he may have been 'naughty' but because he was labelled as such:

Liam: You get labelled ... from primary school, not being naughty, but I was a boisterous boy and people was telling you 'you're naughty' this n'that, it sticks on you. You say 'well, maybe I am like that' and you live up to that, d'yknow what I mean?

(male, Black, age 24, apprentice, contractor sample)

A trainee explained that he hated school and thus bunked lessons, but he also talked about how he was treated at school:

Charlie: They sort of had this little class, it wasn't a class, it used to be a toilet and they turned it into a room and it had about three desks in there. The kids that were trouble would just put in this room and the teachers would give them a little bit of work from the class, what they would be doing, and say 'make sure they finish that by the end of the day' ... you've stuck me in a toilet ...

(male, white, age 20, apprentice, contractor-sample)

Another student made reference about the teacher not allowing her in class.

Lucy: My maths teacher, he hated me right, he hated me, he could never control the class and he hated me and emm ... I used to have me book and he used to put on the front predicted grade

and he put a massive E on my book, so talk about knock ya' right, so I thought 'alright then', so every time I went to his lesson, before I even stepped in the door, he went 'get out of class,' so I was never allowed in the class....

(female, age 19, white, apprentice, contractor sample)

Even for Liam, he talked about being told by the teachers to 'get out' of class:

Liam: *Now, looking back at it, it was just like 'get out, get out'. 'It just seems like I got suspended at least twice in every single year, right up to Year 11 and it comes with that identity.*

(male, Black, apprentice, contractor sample, age 24)

The identity that Liam refers to is being labelled as naughty. So, because he was labelled as such, he acted in that way. The comments from the trainees provide insight into the factors that may have an impact on students in the school environment.

School children may be seen as challenging and, as such, receive an informal sanction by teachers. This sanction could take the form of denying access to facilities or resources conducive to learning or the placing of young people outside of the classroom, all of which are a denial of learning resources.

These interviews confirm that the trainees possessed the capacity to learn, but the school environment was not necessarily conducive for them to do so. Having said this, Carson was excluded but achieved the required number of GCSEs to assist in his STWT. Further, Lucy was excluded from the class and achieved six GCSEs, one of which was maths.

The study also captured reflective data from those that were suspended from school. These were Liam (black, male), Charlie, Max, Parker and Julian (all white, males). Those that achieved the relevant 5 GCSEs at A*-C after suspension were Max, Parker and Julian. Liam and Charlie did not achieve 5 GCSEs at A*-C at school but, by examining the interviews in detail, it is possible to assess the difference in their treatment. Charlie explained that he hated the school environment due to his

mistreatment, whilst Parker can reflect on being suspended from school twice. Liam explained that he was suspended '*at least twice in every single year, right up to Year 11*'. Charlie did not report this degree of trauma.

For the BAME group, being able to participate in class is of concern because they are more likely to be suspended and/or excluded from school. Furthermore, there are differences among ethnic groups when it comes to being excluded (Department for Education (DfE), 2012). For example, Black Caribbean school children are three times more likely to be excluded from school in comparison to the white group (Department for Education and Skills (DfES), 2007). Moreover, children who were excluded from school found it to be a traumatic experience (Pomeroy, 2000) and this has implications on being able to achieve, study and learn skills that may be required in later life (Frankham *et al.*, 2007). The findings from this current study were consistent with the earlier research.

In addition, exclusions or suspensions remove the ability to participate in class, making it difficult to have a sustainable voice. Walker (2006) in her research examining girls in Africa, found that a lack of a voice could have implications on education, for example, being able to debate and participate in the classroom. The author explains that voice can also impact on other capabilities, such as the capability to aspire. This demonstrates that capabilities can influence one another. This study supports this view in that being able to have a voice can also have implications on being able to participate in class.

7.2.4 The ability to be treated fairly and to be treated with respect

A middle-aged trainee stated that he experienced discrimination when he was at school. This was Cyril, a black, male, non-apprentice. Cyril attended school over 30 years ago, a time when many from BAME backgrounds relocated to the United Kingdom to work. Faith, a middle-aged white, female non-apprentice, talked about how she was treated differently at school and thought she deserved better than the school system provided for her. When asked about discrimination the trainee's

response was:

Susan: *Define discrimination*
(female, white, age 21, non-apprentice)

Having to explain what is meant by discrimination occurred on a few occasions.

There was a need to define the term to ensure that the trainees understood what was being asked. A male trainee explained that he never noticed whether or not he experienced discrimination:

Frank: *Yeah, do you know what, boarding school, I never really felt it, so I don't really know. Maybe I wasn't looking for it, maybe I didn't see it, I don't know but I didn't really see it, no, I didn't really see it in boarding school, to be honest.*
(male, Black, age 30, non-apprentice)

Frank attended boarding school and feels that he was not discriminated against, but in contrast some were:

Liam *I'd put my hand up and it's like sort of not like saying you don't treat me the same as somebody else, I won't say it's because of the colour of my skin, but maybe the label which is stuck on me so ... I think from a teacher's perspective, some teachers did act more favourably than others so, yeah, it did happen in school sometimes. Some people are like ... hold on a minute, this person did exactly what I did two weeks ago and they're still in the classroom but, with me, I'm already outside the door. Ok, fair enough, it's me.*
(male, Black, age 24, apprentice, contractor sample)

From the interviews some trainees were treated differently in comparison to others. Furthermore, problems and issues experienced at school were not exclusive to any one ethnic group. The capability of 'being treated fairly' is noted on The Equalities Review (2007) capability list and was identified as an important capability because of the inequality gaps between different groups in terms of education and opportunities. However, for the trainees interviewed who thought they were treated differently to others, sometimes it was difficult for them to state specifically

whether or not they experienced discrimination. This could be because such practices are either disguised, of a covert nature, or some children are accepting of it in their situation.

7.2.5 The ability to have social interaction

The trainees were asked to identify what they enjoyed at school. The interaction with friends was a common topic that was mentioned. A trainee recollected:

Max: *A lot of friends, y'know, we were having fun. When you're young, you have fun.*
(male, white, age 18, non-apprentice).

Another trainee mentioned that he deliberately stayed away from certain individuals in his peer group so as not to get in with the 'wrong crowd':

Ryan: *.....but I kind of stayed clear of it, just randomly. I dunno, I always kind of had a sense of morals and I knew right from wrong, so if a lot of my mates were gonna do something that I knew was troublesome, I'd be kind of like 'yeah, I'm avoiding this' and go home or whatever. I just wouldn't get into trouble, I'd rather not.*
(male, Mixed, age 20, apprentice, non-contractor sample)

In the main, the trainees spoke about school in terms of what they liked, being predominately their friends. Young people in school are exposed to many influences, one being from their peer group. Social interaction is a capability noted on several lists. Di Tommaso (2007) explains this is an important capability for children because it is a necessity to be able to interact with other children and be part of a group. In addition, the author also argues that the corresponding functioning to this capability is reliant on other capabilities, such as the functioning of social relationships impacting on other opportunities. The author explicitly states that those capabilities will be the capability of playing, having emotions and of thought. Biggeri et al. (2006) includes the capability for 'social relations', but makes no mention of other capabilities being reliant on this. Referring back to the interviews, all trainees spoke about social interaction with family, friends and

teachers. For some, this interaction was important in receiving support during school.

7.2.6 The ability to be in a safe environment at school

Among specific problems experienced at school, bullying was the most common. Nonetheless, trainees mentioned other problems, including gambling, being in the wrong group of friends and the dislike of teachers. Bullying was a topic that arose from both those who were bullied and those who were the bullies. The problem of being bullied can have an effect on an individual's well-being. For one trainee, even though he was not bullied, he disliked the teachers' approach to dealing with bullying:

Jayden: *Dislikes? I'm trying to think of any dislikes ... I thought maybe bullying could have been dealt with better at my school, teachers kind of avoided it. There were some things I saw going on ... like you tell the teachers n'stuff, but they never wanted to do anything about it.*
(male, Asian, age 22, apprentice, non-contractor sample)

Another trainee explained how he was being treated differently, due to being bullied at school and how it made him feel:

Carl: *'I felt hurt n'stuff, 'cos I couldn't really talk to anyone or they'd think I'm snitching, so I had to keep it to myself, but there was one teacher who said anytime I wanted to, just go to him, so I used to go to him quite a bit. I missed a couple of lessons where I was working, 'cos he used to cheer me up and stuff, it was all good'.*
(male, black, age 17, non-apprentice)

Carl was discriminated against by his peers due to a physical characteristic. Carl further revealed a culture of 'snitching' at school, being a potential impediment. In Carl's mind, informing on others would have received a level of disapproval from his peers and would have resulted in a more difficult time at school in terms of being bullied. Being treated differently may not only be based on an individual's physical attributes, such as wearing glasses or having ginger hair, but can also be based on

one's family, class or cultural background. An apprentice explained that he did not like school because he was seen as being different to the other kids:

Charlie: *Didn't really ... it was sort of ... when I first got there it was more like upper class kids kind of thing and didn't really get on. They'd always look at me and say 'oh yeah, chav¹⁶' or whatever and things like that.....Just someone who speaks really common and someone who acts common and doesn't socially engage like all the others and things like that really. So an address is different to you, live on a council estate, things like that.....I didn't really like school. I got into a lot of trouble.*

(male, white, age 20, apprentice, contractor sample)

Bullying is something that should not be tolerated, nevertheless the findings show that within the school environment it was a commonplace occurrence and not the exception. The bullying took the form of different guises, but was not dealt with in an open manner. More importantly, not adequately addressing the topic of bullying could have a negative effect on individuals, and in some instances can be fatal for the person being bullied (Harrison, 2013).

In contrast, for one trainee, being at school was a safe environment, as it was an escape from his home environment. This is because he was a carer for his mother and being at school allowed him to be a child:

Parker: *I didn't actually dislike school, I actually liked school because it was a bit of freedom from my house, 'cos I was a young carer sofor my mum, so when I had gone to school, it was a little bit of a break where I could actually be kid for a little while and then when I had to go home, I had to pick up the responsibility again of looking after my mum.*

(male, white, age 20, apprentice, non-contractor sample)

Although being safe is a capability noted on several capability lists (Biggeri *et al.*, 2006; Klasen, 2000), the context of these studies is based upon deprived countries. The context of this current study is very different, but, as with the other studies

¹⁶ A term of abuse to describe those who are seen as white and poor (Tyler, 2008).

mentioned, it still recognises that being safe is a capability that is important.

7.2.7 The ability to have aspirations

A trainee explained that school provides an opportunity to gain confidence:

Carter: *School was just a place to learn and get your confidence and get the right qualifications that you need if you wanna be an electrician, if you wanna be an electrical person.*
(male, Asian, age 16, non-apprentice)

Having aspirations is a capability on some capability lists. Walker (2006) included aspirations on her capability list. The importance of aspirations was noted in the works of Archer et al. (2013) who examined the aspirations of primary and secondary school children and found that this was an area of importance when making decisions regarding their future plans. Strand and Winston (2008) examined aspirations among school children and found that aspirations differed among ethnic groups. For example, Black African, Asian Other and Pakistani groups had higher educational aspiration in comparison to the white and black Caribbean group. These findings were consistent with the work of Archer and Yamashita (2003) who noted that white working-class boys did not do well in school because of the lack of aspirations. The findings from their interviews demonstrated that aspirations were important. However, the findings from this current study did not demonstrate that aspirations differed for any ethnic group, as all trainees were at college embarking upon an electrical qualification. This is discussed in Chapter 8: the college experience.

7.2.8 The ability to have knowledge

The career advice received at school was inconsistent and sporadic. Some trainees received advice at school and some did not. Career advice is normally provided during year 10 at school, when the student is between the ages of 14 and 15 years old. One trainee, explained:

Harry: *Yeah, it was ok. Not the best, but it was ok I guess. In terms of career advising and stuff like that, we didn't have much of that. We had it in year 10 or 11, we had one workshop, that's about it.*
(male, Asian, age 27, apprentice, non-contractor sample)

A few trainees sought career advice with Connexions. Connexion provides information advice and guidance to young people between the ages of 13 and 19. The findings showed that receipt of career advice concerning the construction industry was lacking. Moreover, the timing of career advice appears to be a concern. During the interviews with the electrical contractors, they stated they would start their recruitment process for electrical apprenticeships in the month of March, with the view of taking someone on in the September of that year. During the interviews with the electrical trainees, it was clear that they were not aware of this fact. The lack of career advice, or the timing of any advice received, have an impact on school children missing out on valuable information as to the requirement and the process necessary to enter the industry.

Furthermore, trainees stated that schools provided little information about what is required to secure an apprenticeship. None of the trainees mentioned that any careers advice received provided information on finding a job, securing a training scheme, preparing them for the next stage of the transition process or the steps in securing an electrical apprenticeship. A non-apprentice explained:

Max: *Umm, they're like ... the teachers, they didn't really concentrate on apprenticeships or the construction really, they just get you trained for A Levels really and like they expect you to go and move onto that much, they never give you much advice about like these kind of courses.*
(male, white, age 18, non-apprentice)

Only one trainee stated that he was provided with information about an apprenticeship and he was not given much hope in trying to find one:

Ryan *Yeah, they said 'it's impossible, everyone's looking for them' and they gave me one for construction and becoming a*

carpenter and I was like great.
(male, Mixed, age 20, apprentice, non-contractor sample)

For a few of the trainees the career advice received was more focussed on going to university:

Hunter: *They said I should have gone to university.*
(male, white, age 19, apprentice, contractor sample)

Knowledge is noted as a capability, albeit the meanings as to what this capability actually indicates differ. For example, Finnis (1980) talks about knowledge and the need to appreciate beauty. Walker (2006) points out that in order to be educated, it is important to be knowledgeable. It is clear from the interviews that knowledge was important to provide some understanding into the choices and options that may be available, most notably whether those choices and options are right for the individual. Hunter, among others, clearly stated that the information provided to him concentrated on going to University. However, when it came to being provided with career advice about the construction industry, this was scarce. These findings are consistent with research that states that the lack of career advice about construction is a barrier to individuals knowing about the industry (Construction Industry Training Board (CITB), 2013).

The trainees also spoke about completing work experience for the duration of two weeks while at school. Work experience can be seen as gaining knowledge and insight about the work environment. One trainee wanted to be a pilot and ended up completing his work experience in a travel agency. However, some trainees undertook work experience within the electrical field. This work experience was secured through family members, such as a grandfather, father or family friend. There was less information as to why some trainees were not afforded the possibility of undertaking such work experience at school. However, one trainee explained the criteria within his school as to whether or not an individual completed work experience:

Roger: *In school, in year 10 I think, ... when we picked our options, certain courses get to do work experience. I know it's strange, so lots of courses in school, obviously, are options that we chose, in our subjects, we didn't even get to do work experience, we had to do ... y'know, just either not do it or just try and do it ourselves, the school didn't do it for us.*
(male, Black, age 18, apprentice, non-contractor sample)

Another trainee explained how he was able to secure work experience with an electrical company:

Hunter: *I did it for [.....] Electricians in [.....] just a small company, nothing like this, only domestic. My granddad knew the guy who ran it, so he spoke to him and then I spoke to him and he said I could do it for a week. It was quite easy really.*
(male, age 19, white, apprentice, contractor sample)

Knowledge has been identified as an important capability. One way to have knowledge is to undertake work experience and sample the working environment. The interviews highlighted that children at school were seldom provided with work experience in the construction industry. Although this research is focusing on one trade, electricians, there are many occupations within this industry. Thus, it may be argued that, not only are young people of school age not being provided with information, but for those who have family members in construction it is easier for them to seek employment in the construction industry. What is evident is, even at the work experience stage, there are similarities with those who secured work experience in the construction sector with the assistance of family members: those trainees tended to be white. This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 8, the college experience.

Work experience can be a bridge between work and education and provides school children with an opportunity to get an insight into work. Moreover, this study noted two key points, first, the work experience was conducted at a point when students had already selected their GCSE subjects, say around the age of 14 and second, the majority of trainees did not undertake any work experience. This is despite a report by Economic Solutions (2014) stating that children of school age were able to

experience working on a construction site as part of their work experience. This experience gives students the opportunity to realise whether or not construction would be a career choice. However, schools may not offer this option because recommendations have now been made that work experience should be withdrawn for children under the age of 16 and given to children between the ages of 16-18 (Viva Business Networking, 2011; Wolf, 2011).

7.2.9 Summary: The practical capability list: the school experience

This section provides a summary of the capability list, shown in Table 7.3, which was created using the narratives of the electrical trainees.

Table 7.3 The capability list created at this stage of the transition process: to secure qualifications

	The Hypothetical Capability List	The Practical Capability List: The School Experience
	The capability.....	The capability.....
1.	Being able to have formal education	The ability to engage in formal education
2.	Being able to move from place to place	The ability to reflect and to be respected
3.	Being healthy	To be treated fairly
4.	Being able to have social relations	The ability to make decisions
5.	Being able to have knowledge	The ability to participate in class
6.	Being treated fairly, being respected and having dignity	The ability to have a voice
7.	Being supported by institutions	The ability to socialise
8.		The ability to move from place to place
9.		To have aspirations
10.		To have knowledge

7.3 Factors that may affect the capability set at this stage of the transition process

Sen (2009) argues that in the development of the capability approach one needs to be aware of certain factors, for example, choices, influences and conversion factors that may affect the capability list. The interview findings showed that one of the main factors that had an effect on the trainees' capability sets was that of the teachers.

7.3.1 The class environment

The interviews revealed the interplay between students and teachers. In addition, to supporting them through the school years, teachers within the school environment take on the role of teaching and nurturing the students. Students are there to be taught. There is an asymmetry of the power relationships of the two parties. Teachers hold the power in terms of making decisions, which may impact negatively or positively on students. Trainees were concerned about the quality of the teaching received. Some trainees stated that they thought the teachers could have been more caring. A non-apprentice explained his thoughts towards the teachers:

Nathan: *Some teachers were really good, like extremely good, and then some of them were like just didn't really give a shit.*
(male, Mixed, age 21, non-apprentice)

Both Lucy and Carl support Nathan's statement. In Lucy's case she hated school due to her maths teacher's inability to control the class. However, Carl's experience differs, where his teacher took on a caring role with a focus of encouraging Carl to confide in him, which he valued. This highlights the disparity in teaching quality.

A point raised by another trainee was that he had to try and motivate himself because he thought the teachers were less caring:

Nolan: *Some teachers ... there was more sort of, I wouldn't say bad teachers, but less caring teachers. There were teachers*

that cared, so it was really hard to find something you wanted to do and really hard to motivate yourself because they didn't show that much appreciation, didn't really show that they cared. It was alright, but I just had to get on with it 'cos it's school, everyone has to go to school. I wouldn't say I liked school, but it's just something you've gotta do, innit, do y'know what I mean, you have to do it and you've got to knuckle down, you've got to study.
(male, age 17, white, apprentice, contractor sample)

In contrast to this view, another trainee thought that teachers needed make classes interesting to engage with students. Liam believed that the way teachers approached a topic made a difference to the learning environment:

Liam: *Some subjects I didn't really like. I think a teacher can make the subject, can like make it interesting, it's the way they go about it, y'know, how can I ... say you've got a topic, how can I get this into a young individual when we have some sort of ... what's the word ... bring it into context so they can relate to, and sometimes it's just like they put on a video ... boring, boring. It's just not appealing to you, but sometimes you get maybe a different topic, something to do with sports, and as soon as you hear sports, your head turns straightaway ... 'that's something I'm interested in and now feed me basically' and it's like some teachers did feed you with knowledge like the way they went about it ... 'oh, wow' even some science lessons where you put the battery here and then you're doing this and then you see a light bulb bolt and it's 'wow' and then like you do it again and I think that's what kids are like, but sometimes you get lessons where it's like 'ok, get your text books out' and it feels like a drag so, yeah, some lessons ... that's what I disliked about some of the things and some of the lessons were really good, so that's my likes and dislikes.*
(male, Black, age 24, apprentice, non-contractor sample)

7.3.2 'Not leaving any child behind'

The findings illustrate the difference in the interaction with trainees when they spoke about their teachers. Some trainees discussed the support provided by their teachers that was at times instrumental in getting through their studies. However, this was not the case for all the trainees. Liam tells us his experience:

Liam: *When I was in his lesson, I thought do y'know what, yeah, I don't mind doing your work 'cos I actually like you because maybe you saw something in me that some other teachers don't see, so I drew a closeness, a bond between me and that teacher, so if he saw me outside a lesson, he'd most probably stop me and say 'get your head down, you don't need to do that, go and study, just go give it 5 minutes' such and such but the rest of the teachers didn't have time for me. Maybe up to year 10, just like didn't have time for me. You sort of hear these things going from year 7 right up to year 11, so you've got like ten teachers just casting you aside and maybe you get that one teacher that believes in you.*
(male, Black, age 24, apprentice, non-contractor sample)

Another trainee talked about the teacher's treatment towards students. He felt that if teachers perceived you as being good, this had an impact on how you were treated in school and, more importantly, whether the teachers were supportive:

Jayden: *The thing about my school is, if you're bright, they've got time for you. If you're not, they haven't got time for you. So, I was quite fortunate, like if they think you're talented, you've got potential, they will push you and push you and give you separate classes and they'll give you extra help and guidance and stuff and they'll have after school schemes for you, but if you're not that bright, it's like they don't care.*
(male, Asian, age 22, apprentice, non-apprentice sample)

Jayden spoke about his experience at school in terms of getting support in achieving his qualifications. Some trainees were not so fortunate and it was evident that the support provided by the teachers varied considerably.

7.3.3 The ability to control the class

The findings highlighted two aspects of the classroom that caused concern during the interviews, namely the teacher's interaction in the classroom and that of other students. A trainee made reference to the school environment because he wanted to learn but was not able to, because of the disruption caused by other children in the class:

George: *Some of the students don't concentrate on the lesson, it was disturbing.....Well, it doesn't affect me, I just know them, but it wastes time though.....Where like they disturb other people, the teachers like pay attention with them more.*
(male, Asian, age 17, non-apprentice)

Other trainees also shared this view:

Jayden: *Dislikes ... I suppose ... classrooms were often very un-orderly. Students were just able to just mess about. There was no sort of authority within the classroom.*
(male, Asian, age 22, apprentice, non-contractor sample)

The importance of controlling the class is that it provides an environment that is conducive to learning when the teacher is seen as a resource, in terms of passing knowledge onto the children. However, if that resource is compromised, this limits the opportunities of children who should benefit from being taught. In addition, the learning was impacted as the findings from the trainees implied that the subjective views of the teachers towards the students might be unwarranted.

7.4 Liam's story: his school experience

The earlier chapters noted why Liam, among the other trainees, was selected as the focus of interest for this study. This section focuses on Liam's school experience using the capability approach. Liam explained in his interview that his teachers labelled him 'as naughty' and he subsequently took on that 'persona'. Liam recalls that his experience at school resulted in much of his time of being outside of the classroom:

I'm outside the classroom ... that was my school life basically right up to my GCSEs and it sort of reflected on my grades.

Liam also was very open about the way he was treated at school and explained that he constantly heard negative words, however, he would have preferred if teachers took the time and sat down with him:

.....for me personally, that could have been with my grades, or my teachers at the time, they say sit me down and say y'know what, let me actually try and build a relationship with this student and actually get him through it and, at the end of the day, like that person's got self-belief, that person that believed in you that think 'oh well, actually I can do it' and then when that person's gone, what they've done has stuck with you, so you can go to university and study ... my tutor said 'I can do it' back then and I actually done it, so it's like overcoming trials.

Liam stated that every time he was outside the classroom he felt he was missing out and he just wanted to get back in the classroom. He did not attribute being treated differently as a result of his ethnic background but because he was labelled and subsequently he then lived up to that label. Both his mother and father worked. His mother was a dinner lady and his father an electrician. His mother and father separated when he was young and he feels that he did not receive guidance from his parents. He explained that he wished that his parents were stricter with him. He spoke about morals, this was an important aspect for him, but he clearly states there was a lack of boundaries. At the time of the interview he reflected on life and realised the importance of making the most of the opportunity that education at school offered, which he mentioned he did not. However, at school he preferred to spend more time with his friends than focus on studying. There were many influences, such as, friends and gambling. Liam realised that these influences were more often negative in nature. Positive experiences were less. He was good at cricket and his Religious Education (RE) teacher used to praise him. Liam did have the opportunity to undertake work experience. This was with his uncle, who was an electrician, so at this point Liam had some idea that he would like to work in the electrical trade.

Sen (1999b) discusses the notion of conversion factors, however, the findings demonstrate that in order to convert resources into opportunities, it is necessary, in the first instance, to have access to the resources. Liam does not talk about receiving support at school, although many of the other trainees spoke about the importance of such support in achieving educational outcomes. Such support would

have been an additional resource, as in the case of his RE teacher, thus allowing him to enjoy the benefits of further capabilities in comparison to what he actually was able to achieve at the end of school. Teacher's interventions at school can have implication for children of school age. This was an area highlighted by Walker and Unterhalter (2007) where they noted that children's capabilities may be affected by teachers. However, for Liam, this was the case. The findings illustrate how teachers can be seen as a resource, in terms of the student gaining knowledge, and the possibility of opportunities. Nonetheless, teachers can be an influence whether the school child is able to achieve. It was most noticeable that Liam did not achieve his five GCSEs at A*-C. This could be attributed to three variables, first, himself, because he did not place great value on the benefits of education, second, he implied that the teachers failed him because of the negative words they constantly used to speak to him, third, his parents by not setting boundaries and, more importantly, 'not checking' on his activities inside and outside school.

7.5 Conclusions

By way of summary this chapter sought to answer the following questions:

1. What capabilities are necessary at this stage of the transition process?
2. What are the factors that affect the trainees' capability set?
3. Do the capability sets of the BAME group and the white group differ?

The chapter provided a capability list, with definitions, for this stage of the transition process. However, some capabilities tend to be intertwined with each other and therefore, not interdependent, for example the capability for voice is limited if the individual is not allowed to participate in the classroom. In addition, there are factors that can have an impact on capabilities, whether in a positive or negative way. The greatest variable that affected capabilities for both groups was the support of teachers, or the lack of it in some instances.

The main capability that had the greatest impact on ethnicity was educational outcome. When making a comparison between the BAME and the white group, the main differential can be attributed to the ability to secure five GCSEs at A*-C. Turning to the issue of being excluded from school, the BAME group are more likely to be suspended in comparison to their white counterparts (Department for Education and Skills (DfES), 2007). The current study supports these findings because, although the BAME group and the white group were excluded, as was the case for Liam (Black), Max, Parker, Julian and Charlie (all white males), More importantly, in the case of Liam he was suspended on a regular basis, at least twice a year, up until year 11, which is the age of 16. The problem with being excluded on 'such a regular basis' limits one's opportunities to participate in the classroom, have a voice to participate in discussions and questions whether one is being treated fairly. Gillborn (2008) argues that Black children do not just happen to be expelled more than any other ethnic group, do not happen to be over represented in the lowest teaching groups and be the kids most likely to be entered for examinations where the highest pass grades are simply not allowed.

Focusing on Liam's story, it allows the possibility of a specific focus on the capability list that was produced and how this affected him. It was noted that resources such as parents and teachers, can also be a positive or negative influences on opportunities but also can impact conversion factors. Thus, individuals such as teachers and parents can affect any aspect of the capability approach. This chapter examined the school experience, which is the start of the transition process, and it is apparent that some children are being left behind, which the next chapter, seeks to explore in further detail.

8. The transition process: The college experience

8.1 Introduction

Liam: *Basically, I got into college but I couldn't pass the maths exam, I didn't have the relevant GCSEs, so they had to do an entry test ... 'what shall I do now?' I was on the computer, it kept on saying 'fail.*
(male, black, age 24, apprentice, contractor sample)

Liam, at age 19, tried to secure an electrical course at college. He did not have the minimum GCSE requirement and was subject to an entry exam. Liam described his difficulty in passing that exam, associating the computer statements of 'fail', with what he refers to during his interview as the 'label' attached to him at primary school, which followed him through to secondary school. It appears that some factors accompany the individual through the transition process, in this case psychological nuances, which could impair or derail the transition at a given point. Liam found entry into college an obstacle, leaving him wondering about his next steps. It appears that the college process of an entry exam provided a remedy for any injustice within the school experience stage of transition. The college, as an educational setting aims to provide an opportunity for any person who previously failed their exams at the end of compulsory schooling to take a college entrance exam.

Liam in previous chapters described his lack of discipline and his desire for peer recognition as the causes for his frequent exclusion. Equally, he blamed the school for the lack of providing quality information about relevant subjects that would have assisted with career choices. Liam perceives a level of injustice. Sen (2009) states that justice is connected with the way people's lives progress and not merely with the nature of the institutions surrounding them. At this stage of the transition, it is unclear how psychological nuances affect the process. However, it is clear that such factors can impede the transition, as highlighted in Liam's narrative.

This chapter focuses on the next stage of the transition process, the college experience. Although the previous chapter provided a reflective account of the

trainee narratives, this chapter looks actively at the situation. At the time of the interviews all the trainees were studying for an electrical qualification. It is important to provide an understanding of the sample, which is made up of three distinct sub-samples, comprising of:

1. *Non-apprentices*: those who are completing an electrical certificate, but are not in apprenticeships;
2. *Apprentice, the college sample*: those who worked for electrical contractors, either in the public or private sector but were not on the 2012 Olympic site; and
3. *Apprentices, the contractor sample*: those who worked for electrical contractors on the 2012 Olympic site, but who were not at the three colleges.

Chapter aims

The college experience is the second stage of the transition process. This chapter argues that the transition process is an individual activity, and it is necessary to look at the outcome, where someone ends up, in addition, to organisational processes, for example, those of colleges, electrical contractors and the individuals. This regard extends to an understanding as to how both organisational and individual factors intertwine to inform capabilities in the current and the next stage of the transition process.

The aim of the chapter is to provide the context of the transition to the college environment and seeks to understand the complexities of moving from school into further education. The chapter builds on the previous chapters and provides a capability list for electrical trainees at this stage of the transition process. The factors that affect the capability set are discussed. The narrative of Liam is used to examine in detail his transition process. Lastly, a short conclusion is presented.

This chapter answers the following questions:

1. 'What capabilities are necessary at this stage of the transition process?';
2. 'What are the factors that affect the trainees' capability set?'; and
3. 'Do the capability sets of the BAME group and the white group differ?'

8.2 Moving from school to the college

To examine the transition process a timeline is created for each of the trainees, as shown in Table 8.1 (non-apprentices) and Table 8.2 (apprentices). The timeline depicts every year after the trainee leaves school up until the point of starting an electrical qualification, which the grey box in the table highlights. For comparative purposes, although both tables show the trainees' transition up until age 24, a summary is provided of the activities of trainees who are older than 24.

Both tables indicate that the majority of trainees stayed in education after the age of 16. This is consistent with research from the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England (LSYPE) and the Youth Cohort study (YCS), which confirm that young people are more likely to stay in education than move into employment (DfE 2011). However, David delayed the STWT to travel; Faith, Jonathan and Parker, all of who are white, left education to work in a variety of jobs, prior to re-entering education. In terms of the BAME non-apprentice group, Tristan's transition reflects an issue that derailed his STWT where he cited that he had emotional problems. Cyril left school to work in the electrical trade only to find that he had to re-enter education to gain some qualifications in his original field of work. William came from overseas at the age of 23 and started the electrical course at 38. Aymer and Okitikpi (2002) suggest that college can be an opportunity for ethnic groups to re-enter education. However, this study, disagrees with this suggestion. In Chapter 6, when introducing the trainees, eight of the 17 (47%) non-apprentices were employed whilst studying. In this research, it is shown that college is an opportunity for all, not just those from

Table 8.1 Transition of the non-apprentices: from leaving school at the age of 16 until they entered college to study an electrical course.

TRAINEE: NON-APPRENTICE	AGE 16	AGE 17	AGE 18	AGE 19	AGE 20	AGE 21	AGE 22	AGE 23	AGE 24
BENJAMIN (White, Age 17)	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL COURSE	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL COURSE							
CARL (Asian, Age 16)	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL COURSE								
CARL (Asian, Age 17)	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL COURSE WORK: ELECTRICAL EMPLOYER	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL COURSE WORK: ELECTRICAL EMPLOYER							
COLE (White, Age 22)	COLLEGE: NVQ BUSINESS	COLLEGE: ADVANCED DIPLOMA IN ENGINEERING	COLLEGE: ADVANCED DIPLOMA IN ENGINEERING	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL COURSE WORK: ELECTRICAL EMPLOYER	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL COURSE WORK: ELECTRICAL EMPLOYER	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL COURSE WORK: ELECTRICAL EMPLOYER	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL COURSE WORK: ELECTRICAL EMPLOYER		
CYRIL (Black, Age 55)	WORK: ELECTRICAL	WORK: ELECTRICAL	WORK: ELECTRICAL	WORK: ELECTRICAL	WORK: ELECTRICAL	WORK: ELECTRICAL	WORK: ELECTRICAL	WORK: ELECTRICAL	WORK: ELECTRICAL AGE 24-55: WORK, NOT IN EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION
DAVID (Black, AGE 27)	COLLEGE: IT COURSE	COLLEGE: IT COURSE PRISON	PRISON CAME OUT OF PRISON AT 18 1/2	COLLEGE: BODY REPAIR COURSE AND WORKING IN A GARAGE	COLLEGE: BODY REPAIR COURSE AND WORKING IN A GARAGE	COLLEGE: BODY REPAIR COURSE AND WORKING IN A GARAGE. PRISON AT AGE 21/22	PRISON	CAME OUT OF PRISON	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL UP UNTIL AGE 27
FAITH (White, Age 46)	DROPPED OUT OF SCHOOL FROM AGE 13. 6 TH FORM: O LEVELS	6 TH FORM: O LEVELS	COLLEGE: DESIGN FOUNDATION COURSE	WORK: OFFICE	WORK	WORK	WORK	WORK	AGE 25-46: VARIOUS JOBS, EDUCATION, CHILDREN
FRANK (Black, Age 30)	WORK: MARKET STALL COLLEGE: VARIOUS COURSES	WORK: MARKET STALL COLLEGE: VARIOUS COURSES	NOT IN EDUCATION OR EMPLOYMENT	NOT IN EDUCATION OR EMPLOYMENT	NOT IN EDUCATION OR EMPLOYMENT	NOT IN EDUCATION OR EMPLOYMENT	NOT IN EDUCATION OR EMPLOYMENT	NOT IN EDUCATION OR EMPLOYMENT	NOT IN EDUCATION OR EMPLOYMENT COLLEGE: AGE 25-30: VARIOUS COLLEGE COURSES AND WORKING
GEORGE (Asian, Age 17)	COLLEGE: IT	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL COURSE							
LUKE (Asian, Age 38)	COMBINATION OF WORK AND STUDY	COMBINATION OF WORK AND STUDY	COMBINATION OF WORK AND STUDY	WORK	WORK	WORK	WORK	WORK	CAME TO THE UK FROM GREECE AT AGE 25.
MATTHEW (Asian, Age 19)	COLLEGE: MOTOR VEHICLE	COLLEGE: MOTOR VEHICLE	COLLEGE: MOTOR VEHICLE	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL					
MAX (White, Age 18)	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL						
MILES (Asian, Age 22)	SCHOOL	SCHOOL	LEFT SCHOOL AT 18	UNIVERSITY: DROPPED OUT	NOT IN EDUCATION OR EMPLOYMENT	NOT IN EDUCATION OR EMPLOYMENT CAME TO THE UK FROM NAMIBIA AT AGE 21	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL COURSE		
NATHAN (Mixed, Age 21)	COLLEGE: PLUMBING COURSE	COLLEGE: PLUMBING COURSE	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL						
SUSAN (White, Age 20)	6 TH FORM: A LEVELS	6 TH FORM: A LEVELS	COLLEGE: PLUMBING	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL				
TRISTAN (Black, Age 25)	LEFT SCHOOL AT 15	BOARDING SCHOOL IN GHANA COLLEGE: ENGLISH AND IT	COLLEGE: BTECH DIPLOMA IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION	COLLEGE: BTECH DIPLOMA IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION	NOT IN EDUCATION	EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS	UNIVERSITY:	UNIVERSITY – GOLDSMITH	ELECTRICAL COURSE
WILLIAM (Mixed, Age 39)	LIVING OVERSEAS	LIVING OVERSEAS	LIVING OVERSEAS	LIVING OVERSEAS	LIVING OVERSEAS	LIVING OVERSEAS	CAME TO THE UK FROM BURMA AT AGE 23	COLLEGE WORK: CUSTOMER SERVICE	AGE 25-38 COLLEGE AND WORKING AT AGE 38 – COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL COURSE

Table 8.2 Transition of the apprentices: from leaving school at the age of 16 until they entered college to study an electrical course.

TRAINEE: APPRENTICE	AGE 16	AGE 17	AGE 18	AGE 19	AGE 20	AGE 21	AGE 22	AGE 23	AGE 24
AIDEN (Black, Age 20)	PLUMBING AND ELECTRICAL AT COLLEGE/WORKING IN RETAIL	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP				
ALEXANDER (Mixed, Age 23)	A-LEVELS – FOR HALF A YEAR	A-LEVELS/ BARTENDER WORK	A-LEVELS /BARTENDER WORK	PLUMBING APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	
BLAKE (White, Age 18)	A-LEVELS	A-LEVELS	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP						
CARSON (White, Age 19)	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP					
CHARLIE (White, Age 20)	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL COURSE	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP				
DAVID (White, Age 17)	TRAVELLED OVERSEAS	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP							
HARRY (Asian, age 27)	A-LEVELS	A-LEVELS	GAP YEAR/WORKING AT SAINSBURY'S	WORKING IN CONSTRUCTION UNTIL AGE 26	WORKING IN CONSTRUCTION UNTIL AGE 26	WORKING IN CONSTRUCTION UNTIL AGE 26	WORKING IN CONSTRUCTION UNTIL AGE 26	WORKING IN CONSTRUCTION UNTIL AGE 26	WORKING IN CONSTRUCTION UNTIL AGE 26
HUNTER (White, Age 19)	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP					
JASON (White, Age 19)	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL COURSE	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP					
JAYDEN (Asian, Age 22)	A-LEVELS	A-LEVELS	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL COURSE	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL COURSE	WORKING	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP		
JONATHAN (White, Age 20)	WORKED IN A SPORTS SHOP	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP				
JULIAN (White, Age 21)	MECHANICAL COURSE	MECHANICAL COURSE	PLUMBING APPRENTICESHIP	PLUMBING APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP			
LIAM (Black, Age 24)	6 th FORM: STUDYING DRAMA	CONSTRUCTION COURSE	CONSTRUCTION COURSE	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL COURSE	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP
LOGAN (Asian, Age 19)	A-LEVELS	A-LEVELS	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP					
LUCY (White, Age 19)	COLLEGE: DRAMA	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP					
NOLAN (White, Age 21)	6 th FORM: WORK: WITH HIS FATHER IN CONSTRUCTION	WORKED WITH DAD IN CONSTRUCTION	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP			
PARKER (White, Age 20)	JOINED THE ARMY	A LEVELS	BTEC IN BUSINESS	BTEC IN BUSINESS	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP				
ROGER (Black, Age 18)	6 th FORM ELECTRONICS AND COMPUTER DESIGN	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP						
RYAN (Mixed, Age 20)	A-LEVELS	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP					
SEAN (White, Age 20)	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL COURSE	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP				

the BAME group, to re-enter education as part of enhancing their employment prospects, when making career decisions.

According to Dorsett and Lucchino (2013), using a statistical approach, nine out of ten transitions are successful. These authors point out that 'success' is getting someone into the labour market. Such a definition is unsatisfactory because it does not explain the factors that potentially impede the successful transition of all those in their research study. This is why Sen (2009) argues that there is a need to examine the processes that lead to an outcome. In Chapter 3, the Sen explanation of cumulative and comprehensive outcomes was discussed. Using the findings of Dorsett and Lucchino (2013), that nine of ten are seen as successful, this can be seen as a cumulative outcome, the point where the individuals ended their transition. This current study shows that the transition process varies in terms of when it starts and where it ends, and what happens in between these two points. All apprentices in this study are more likely to become employable in the electrical industry before non-apprentices, although they may all attend the same college. However, all the trainees may be embarked on an electrical course but may or may not be able to convert this learning into employment. This is due to the lack of practical work place experience, whereby a trainee is required to complete National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 3 as part of the prescribed electrical framework, as discussed in Chapter 2. Examining organisational processes that lead to an outcome is necessary in order to understand the transition. A weakness of just focusing on the transition outcome, or the literature that decides the transition process ends at a particular age (Goodwin and O'Connor, 2007), is that it fails to examine, understand and explore the length of time and the problems encountered by the individual in the transition. It would not consider for instance Tristan's temporary derailment or Cyril's working history as an electrician, as it is detached from processes' agency and relations (Sen, 2009, p. 215).

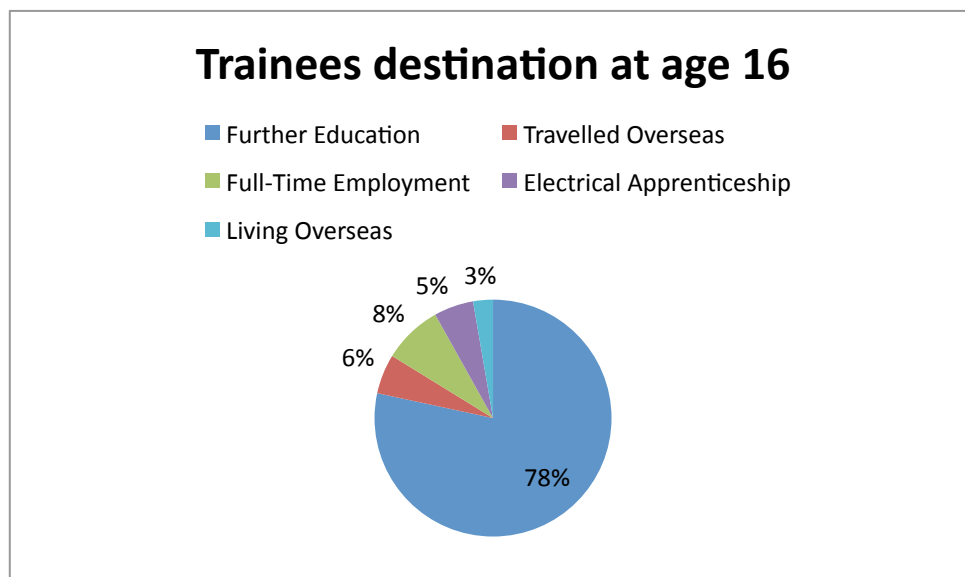
Although all 37 of those interviewed were studying for an electrical qualification, it is unknown whether all 37 will transition to the construction labour market as electricians. This is because accessing the construction labour market has its difficulties, especially for women, ethnic minorities and those who are disabled (Constructing Equality, 2014). Even for the apprentices, although they are currently working in the construction industry while studying for their electrical qualification,

it will not necessarily transpire that they will remain in the construction industry, as they are only on an agreement for the length of their apprenticeship. This is discussed further in Chapter 9.

The interviews highlighted the process of leaving school and deciding on a career path. For some trainees the path they embarked upon after school was in some instances specific and thought through, but for others it was left to chance.

Figure 8.1 provides a summary of the trainees' destination at age 16, grouped into five categories. The table shows that, of the 37 trainees: 29 (78%) stayed in education, two (5%) (Tristan and David) left school and travelled overseas, three (8%) (Parker, Jonathan and Cyril) went into full time employment, two (5%) (Hunter and Carson) secured an electrical apprenticeship, and one (3%) (William) was living overseas.

Figure 8.1 Trainees destination at age 16



The data conflicts with Bradley and Taylor's (2004) view that those from a Black Caribbean, Bangladeshi and Pakistani background are far more likely to proceed to vocationally related further education than other ethnic groups, particularly the white group. In this study, seven trainees stayed in education and embarked upon A-levels, five were from a BAME background and two were from a white

background. These findings suggest the inverse to Bradley and Taylor (2004), as the white group were more likely than the BAME group to be involved in vocational studies.

8.3 The practical capability list

This section creates a practical capability list for the college stage of the transition process and uses the narratives of the 37 electrical trainees. The capability list developed in the previous chapter may be the same or different from that in this chapter, as there has been a change in the context between the two stages.

8.3.1 To be able to make decisions, think and reason

The trainees spoke about their experiences in moving from the school environment to the college environment; many found the two very different.

Lucy: The most hardest thing right. I said this to my mum, it's so hard because when you're in school you're told what to study. When you're 16 and when you get your results and you're told 'right, the world's your oyster', you ain't got a clue what you wanna do, it's actually so 'ard. You think, 'alright, well, I'm not being told what to be taught and what to study and what lessons to go to, but now I've gotta make my own decisions," and the most hardest thing ... that's what I said to ya,' I only did photography 'cos of me grade in it, that's the only reason why.

(female, white, age 19, apprentice, contractor sample)

Lucy explains that she found it hard to decide what to do after compulsory education. The responsible task is to apply her agency of actually making that decision. In Lucy's example her support network, in the form of her mother, recognised her freedom through the words of the '*the world's your oyster*'. Lucy is able to choose the things that she values in that she selects to study drama. She does not decide upon a career in photography. This is in contrast to Liam's position. Liam, like Lucy, does not do well at school, which influences his ability to transition

to the electrical trade. Liam decides to pursue a course, and selects drama, which he knows he will do well in, as this was a subject he studied at school. As comparators, Lucy and Liam's, ability to make a decision achieves the same cumulative outcome, to continue further education. Lucy applies her freedoms, while Liam protects himself and chooses a subject that he believes he will not fail in. A comprehensive outcome review can determine that this decision is in order to appear in public without shame, where Sen (2009, p. 255) describes this comparison as differences in relational perspectives. Sen provides an example of relational resources where he refers to the personal resources for taking part in the life of a community, and in many contexts even to fulfil the elementary requirement of self-respect (Sen, 2009). He further states that this can influence the relative advantage of two people. Liam's narrative in Chapter 7 explains the identity issue he addressed and the need for him to be accepted at school, in the sense of the community. Lucy is free to do as she values.

For many of the trainees, at the age of 16, although there were in receipt of their exam results they did not have a tangible option in terms of what they should now do after leaving school. Jonathan said that being an electrician was an option he decided to choose as a career path, as it is a trade where an individual can make *'quite a lot of money'*. He also thought about the possibility of joining the Army but due to his health could not do so. At the age of 16 Jonathan left school and worked in a local sports shop. He then applied to and secured a place on an electrical course at college. Jonathan stated that he wished he had started his career path to become an electrician as soon as he left school:

Jonathan:*just the time lapse, I wish I did it from, as soon as I left school that's the issue the waste of time when I was qualified.*
(male, white, age 19, apprentice, college sample)

Jayden said that he wanted to *'get a trade'*, as he knew that he wanted to work with his hands and he could not see himself working in an office. He applied for an electrical apprenticeship but was unsuccessful in securing one. He completed his A-

levels and then enrolled onto an electrical course at college. The reason why he applied for the electrical course was because he found it '*impossible*' to find either an electrical apprenticeship or work as an electrician's mate. He was at college for two years and during this time he said that he '*stalled*', as he knew that he needed an employer to complete his National Vocational Qualification Level 3. Jayden said that he found work for one year, and fortunately, it was as an electrician's mate. After the year he then secured an electrical apprenticeship. For Jayden, it took five years before he was on the path that he wanted to be:

Jayden: *Just trying to get an apprenticeship, couldn't get it early enough.*

(male, Asian, age 22, apprentice, college sample)

Both Jonathan and Jayden wished that they had started their career path earlier. Both aspired to be electricians and had taken the time to think through and deliberate this choice of career. They both had the necessary information to achieve the outcome. The decisions they made after school were influenced by the options they could each access at the time, which ultimately had an impact on their employment and training outcomes.

8.3.2 To be adaptable and have aspirations

Sen (2005) argues that an individual should be able to do and be what they want to be. When interviewing some of the trainees, it transpired that not all wanted to become electricians. Nathan wanted to be a plumber. He was in his second year of college, after completing the first year of a plumbing course. He explained that he wanted to continue with plumbing in the second year but was unable to get on the course. Studying the electrical course was the better option rather than not being in training or employment for that year. The researcher wanted to understand why he did not undertake the second year of the plumbing course if this was his intention. Nathan explained that there were relationship dynamics between himself and the lecturer:

Nathan: *He gave me plenty of excuses firstly, y'know, emm ... first it was, y'know, 'you come too late in the year', but then I see other people, English people, getting onto the course at the same time. Then it was 'oh, it's 'cos of your attendance.' Ok. Then, when I said to him 'check on the system, you'll see my attendance.' Then, it was 'oh, emm ...' next excuse, y'know, just excuses after excuses.*
(male, Mixed, age 18, non-apprentice)

From Nathan's perspective he found that the college was a barrier for him because the college was the organisation that accepted or rejected individuals for courses. Although Sen (2009) focuses on agency, in this case, the trainee's institution had a major part to play in the opportunities that may be accessible.

This current study also finds that a trainee's decision to embark upon an electrical course took into consideration health and relationship commitments. Julian actually embarked upon a plumbing apprenticeship but then fell ill with stomach problems. Parker went into the Army but had to return home to look after his mother. Jonathan also suffered ill health.

Cole mentioned that after leaving school he embarked upon a business course, but decided to give it up, as he did not know what he would do with the qualification. He then studied for a Diploma in Engineering and decided to give that up due to finances. At the age of 19 he secured an electrical course and was also working in the electrical field but had to miss time from college as he was ill and missed the course start date:

Cole: *I tried to come to this college when I was 20. I'd been on holiday during August and I come in and I come back ill, so when I come in it was about the 1st September or something like that, I tried to join the course and the course was full, so I couldn't get in and I had to wait a year.*

All these trainees decided to adapt their original career path and embark upon an electrical course. Frank was overcompensating for the years he lost as a result of not being focused on what he wanted to do and be, which has now resulted in him

ensuring that he is well qualified in his career choice and limits 'any doors being shut in his face':

Frank: *Even now, me doing uni and college n'that, that just blows their brain but, at the end of the day, it's just the hunger isn't it and if I hadn't of, I would have probably done like most people, just get to a decent stage where I can make a decent amount of money, like an electrician makes a good amount of money and that's it. I don't really need to do anything more, d'yknow what I mean?.....But, where I was messing about in my younger years, I'm just kind of doing extra to over compensate and to make that money back that I should have made, even though it wasn't mine. Basically, I don't want any doors to be closed on me, I'm just not having it.*
(male, Black, age 30, non-apprentice)

Frank is simultaneously completing his electrical course and a part-time university course, in addition to working in a well-known department store. Although, other trainees were not involved in as many activities as Frank, all the trainees had aspirations to do something with their lives. Although the trainees had positive aspirations, not all were able to realise them.

A middle-aged trainee, Cyril, had already been working in the electrical field but thought he needed an electrical qualification to enhance his job prospects. Cyril now unemployed, mentioned the reason why he is now at college, as a mature student:

Cyril: *.....try to get my qualifications in electrical installation.*
(male, Black, non-apprentice, age 55)

Sen (2009) makes reference to choice. Here the trainees mentioned various ways in which choice is constrained by health, institutions and the trainees themselves, so illustrating that there are factors that influence the choice the trainees make. Choice was also depicted by the options that were available to the individuals at the time. The difference is whether the choice made is of the trainee's own volition or due to organisational barriers.

8.3.3 To be able to have formal education: securing an electrical course at college

There were also differences in the experience of securing an electrical course between those who had GCSEs and those who did not. Two trainees from the interview sample subsequently had to take a test to secure a college place, namely, Liam and Daniel, both from a BAME background. However, it transpired that Charlie, from a white background, also did not have GCSEs when starting his course. Unlike Liam and Daniel, he did not have to take a college entry test. A trainee from a BAME background in this situation describes the college recruitment process that he underwent:

David: *Came in and had an interview with one of the lecturers and did a test. Didn't do too well on it first time round, told I couldn't get onto the course, begged him and he said they'd let me do it again. I did it again, did better, got on the course.*
(male, Black, age 27, non-apprentice)

Both Liam and David had to take a maths test to secure their electrical course. Both had difficulties when doing the test but eventually passed it and were able to embark upon the course. The reason that these two trainees had to take the test is because they did not have five GCSEs when leaving school. This is an example of how the lack of functioning at school can impact on the next stage of the transition process.

Jayden described the recruitment process he underwent to secure his electrical course:

Jayden: *I just went there on their open day, I applied and ... can't remember how I got into there now. I must have got in through an interview at some point..... I did nothing, my company sorted it all out for me.*
(male, Asian, age 22, apprentice, college sample)

He went on further to say that that he took another test, in addition to the interview:

Jayden: *Yeah, we went in for an online exam, for two exams on the computers, and then they said they'll get back to us and let us know. It was simple stuff like 2+2, so ... that was easy really.*
(male, Asian, age 22, apprentice, college sample)

When Jayden embarked upon his electrical course, Level 2, he had nine GCSE, and three A-levels, in English Language and Literature, Economics, and Government and Politics, though his narrative tells us that he had to take a test to get into college. He then worked for one year before securing his electrical apprenticeship, at which point the employer placed him in another college different from the one where he was completing his electrical course. Jayden as an apprentice had the benefit of his employer sorting out his college place. Jayden's experience of getting into college was far less challenging than Liam's or David's.

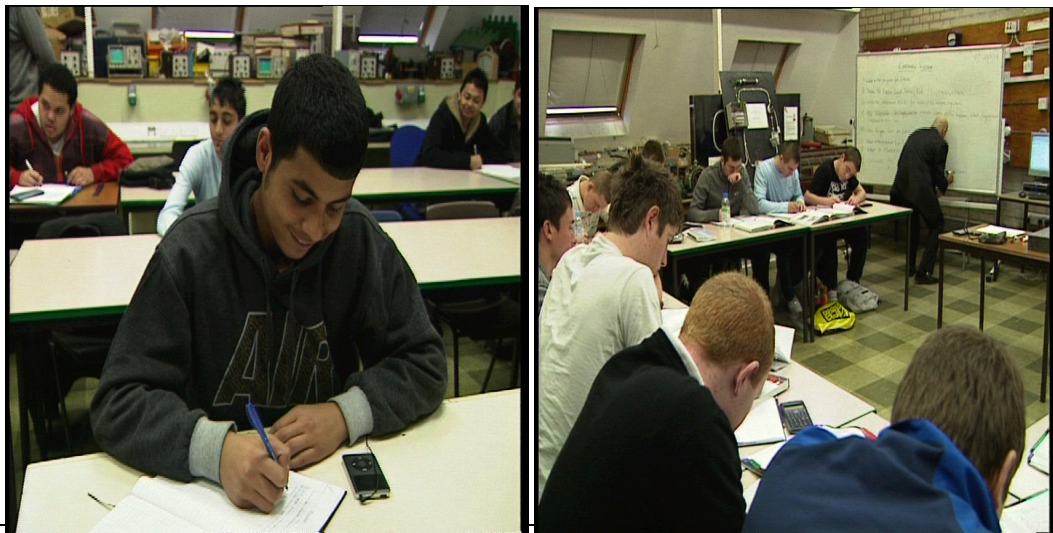
Although trainees were given the opportunity to start an electrical course, the findings highlight the differences in the college recruitment process. In the interviews with colleges, it was explained that parents were part of the interview process, to ensure that the young person was aware of the expectation of starting a course. Only one trainee though said this was the case. Irrespective of the recruitment practice, ultimately it is the colleges that make the final decision on whether or not to accept an individual.

However, consideration should be given to the extent to which students on these courses can find an apprenticeship, as happened with Liam and Charlie. There is little research to suggest that this occurs. Unlike Liam and Charlie, there are many who will not have the option of securing an electrical apprenticeship, even after completing their electrical certificate. The problem lies in the fact that the number of apprenticeships on offer does not match up with the numbers in the college environment. Furthermore, those in the college environment are not exposed to site experience in the field while at college.

8.3.4 To have knowledge about the electrical framework

Although all the 321 electrical trainees who completed the questionnaire were embarked upon an electrical course, there is a difference in the qualifications that can be achieved at the end of that course.

Figure 8.2 The college classroom: Students studying for an electrical qualification



Source: (Dickinson, 2012)

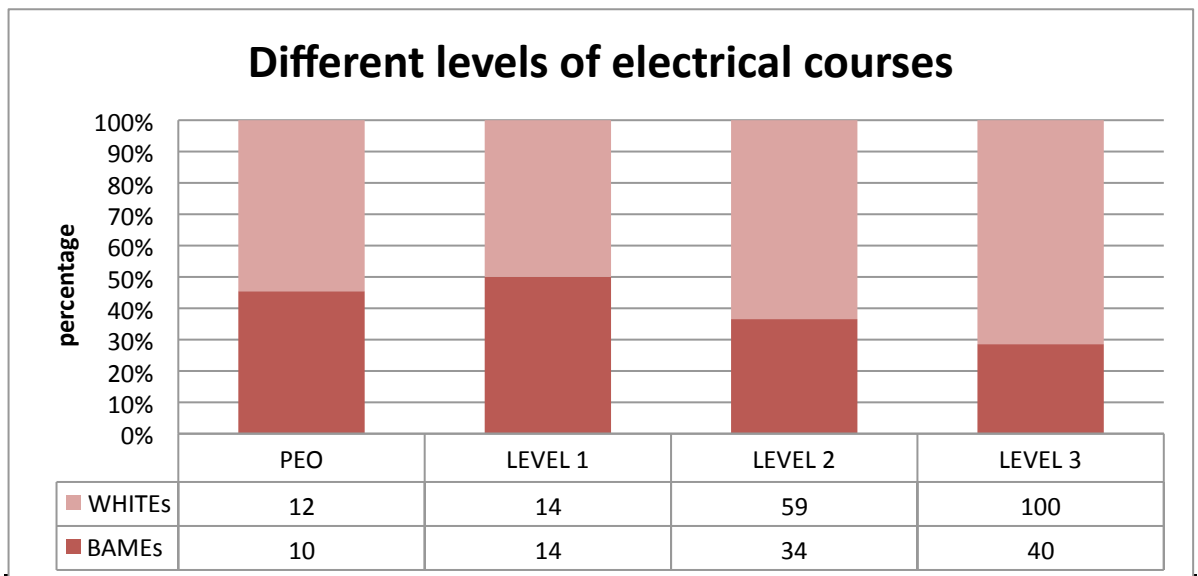
Figure 8.2 shows a picture of the electrical trainees, at college, studying in two separate classrooms, on one particular day, at the same time. The classrooms were next to each other. One classroom was predominately filled with trainees from a BAME background and the other classroom was predominately filled with trainees from a white background. The difference between the two classrooms is that one depicts non-apprentices, the picture on the left, and the other apprentices, the picture on the right. A College Principal interviewed explained the main four levels of the electrical courses, which are:

1. Performing Engineering Operations (PEO);
2. Level 1;
3. Level 2; and

4. Level 3.

The same College Principal explained that the PEO course was a pre-level one, electrical course. Upon further analysis of the questionnaire census, the data show, Figure 8.3, that both the BAME and the white group were embarked on lower levels electrical courses.

Figure 8.3 The questionnaire census: different levels of electrical courses that the trainees were embarked upon at the colleges



Note: n=283

The figure shows the response to the questionnaire census focusing concerning the different levels of qualifications being studied by the electrical trainees. The total number of responses is 283, of which, 185 (65%) trainees are from a white background and 98 (35%) from a BAME background. Although there is little difference between the white trainees and the BAME trainees at the PEO and Level 1, there is a significant difference between the white trainees and the BAME trainees at Levels 2 and Level 3. It appears that those at the higher levels are embarked upon an apprenticeship. The findings show that the electrical trainees forming part of this study wanted to work in an electrical capacity. The data do not support one of the reasons often given by employers for the underrepresentation of the BAME group in the construction, that they do not want to work in the

industry (Newton and Williams, 2013). This finding also contrasts with a report by The Research Centre (2005), which found that those from a BAME background are placed on lower level electrical courses. The findings of this study show that both the BAME group and the white group are placed on the low levels and any differences arises at the higher levels. This is the benefit of having a mixed method approach to data collection as this provides an in-depth analysis of the subject under study rather than just relying on the picture given in the questionnaire information. However, in the light of the questionnaire census, the trainees were asked about the electrical qualification they are embarked upon. One trainee explained that, by talking to people, on site, he knew what is required to become an electrician:

Carson: *Well, when we first started, we actually got told, y'know, what's expected to become fully qualified. So, like what the course is gonna entail and you talk to other people on the site who are doing it, like my mate last week, booked a week off work and he went and does his 2391 and now he's just waiting for the results n'that. Y'know, I know what it takes n'sort of ...*
(male, white, age 19, apprentice, contractor sample)

Carson benefits from having access to other individuals on site, who are electricians, and he is aware of the qualifications that he needs to complete. The problem is that not every trainee has access to this source of knowledge. There are some distinct parts of the electrical framework where the trainees had a lack of knowledge, for example, National Vocational qualifications and Achievement Measurement 2 (AM2):

George: *NVQ ... I think I've heard of it, but I don't know.*
(male, Asian, age 18, non-apprentice)

Carter: *I'm not sure.*
(male, Asian, age 16, non-apprentice)

Another trainee also showed confusion about the AM2 element of the electrical framework, and made reference to a pre-AM2, which no other trainee mentioned:

Hunter: *They give you like 3/4 months notice, so they normally ask you what you want to do ... if you want to do a bit of testing, there's glacier wiring, containment, then you do a pre-AM2 which you pay for off your own back I think, or they might pay for it, I'm not too sure, but that's like basically your AM2 and you do it. I think you basically do your pre-AM2 before you do your AM2.*

(white, age 19, apprentice, contractor sample)

Lucy as an apprentice and working on site had only recently found out that she needed to complete an NVQ as part of her electrical qualification:

Lucy: *I found this out yesterday, JIB will not entertain you if you haven't got your NVQ Level 3Yeah, you've gotta speak to him about that, I don't think he realised it and he's not English.*

(female, white, apprentice, age 19)

All the non-apprentices were embarked upon a Technical Certificate, which can be completed without an employer, unlike the National Vocational Qualification, where an employer is required. Charlie showed concern about the trainees who were embarked on the Technical certificate:

Charlie: *Yeah, one thing that I do want to actually tell you about. Apprentices that do pure college work until they're qualified to Level 3 and all the rest of it, when they come on site they're terrible. You can't be an electrician without site work. You can't have a full time college based course and come out the other end of it and say 'yeah, I'm an electrician'. You're not.*

(male, white, age 19, apprentice, contractor sample)

Charlie was completing a Technical Certificate, at the age of 16, prior to securing his apprenticeship at the age of 17. He described how when he went for his apprenticeship interview he believed that, as he was doing his Technical certificate, this assisted him in being able to answer questions that were posed to him about the electrical trade.

The interviews raised two concerns. First, the lack of knowledge on the part of the

trainees about what is necessary to complete the framework. Second, in relation to Sen's (2009) statement that opportunities should be real opportunities, how far many trainees who are at the college embarked on a qualification are afforded real opportunities as the specific course they are enlisted on may not give access to the industry.

8.3.5 To move from place to place

The capability of being able to move from place to place refers to having the freedom to move around without fear. The majority of the trainees attended a college in London, but those who were sampled through the electrical firms, predominately attended college outside London. However, irrespective of the trainee's geographical location, several trainees spoke about the environment.

***Benjamin:** I've never been a fan of being in Hackney, or anywhere else, because of what you've heard, and plus what I've seen n'all that. I've seen people get beaten up just for the fact that they looked at someone differently, and it makes me feel a bit like worried ... not that I'm scared or anything, I'm just a bit worried thinking 'that could have been me.' And then, that's about it, it's like it wherever you go.
(male, white, age 17, non-apprentice)*

Having the capability to move from place to place appears on several capability lists. On the list created by Nussbaum (2001), for instance, this is noted as '*bodily integrity*', which she refers to as the ability to move from place to place. Robeyns (2003) notes the capability of being mobile, which she states is important to women because if they have children it may limit their ability to move from place to place. Although Nussbaum (2001) states that being mobile is important, it can be seen as a gender issue as women with children may have more difficulty in being mobile than men. For this study, being mobile related to geographical location, to being able to move freely from place to place. Chapter 6 highlights the problems for some people in being able to move freely from one area to another area without becoming a victim of crime. The problem of being able to move freely is not only

restricted to the college environment but may potentially have implications for some people going to their place of work, moving to a new job or being able to take up a college course, which entails going to different locations.

Biggeri *et al.* (2006) using a capability approach in the context of young people found that the capability list can be dependent upon age. This was noted for this study because the interviews with the older trainees did not mention their concern about moving from one area to another area, although it was a topic openly discussed among the younger trainees.

Sen (2009) refers to the environment as a characteristic that may have an impact on converting resources to opportunities, or on limiting the opportunities. This is the reason why the trainees were asked about their environment. In discussion with the trainees, much reference was made to other students within the college setting. Ryan, for instance, described the environment and the people at college:

Ryan: *Could be intimidating if you came here for your first time. It can be intimidating, but it doesn't bother me, I'm used to it, and I don't really get intimidated about them sort of things, but I could see how, for someone else coming in, this could be quite an intimidating place.*
(male, Mixed, age 20, college apprentice)

The environment in this context is not only external but also internal to the college; the environment outside the college blurs with the environment inside the college. During interviews, the colleges spoke about the need to implement security measures to ensure that only those students embarked on a course had access to the building.

8.3.6 To have social relations

Biggeri *et al.* (2006) on their capability list note the importance of social relations, which they describe as 'being able to enjoy social networks and to give and receive social support'. Social support was important to the trainees, in the form of family members, partners, peers and teachers. Some of the younger trainees stated that

their girlfriends were instrumental in providing them with support. For Liam, his girlfriend was supportive and helped him to focus on his career path, change his negative peer groups and emotionally supported him during the transition process, especially at the times when things were not going so well for him. The support of family, friends and partners was not exclusive to Liam. Nathan admits that he was not the *'best behaved'* child when growing up and his girlfriend was an important factor in him being where he is now:

Nathan: *Yeah. So, it sort of focused me a bit more. She's quite an intelligent girl, she wants to succeed in life and it just focused me, y'know.*
(male, Mixed, age 18, non-apprentice)

This highlights how the trainee's attitude, can change once in the college environment. The trainees were asked about their likes at college and several spoke about the support they received:

Carl: *It's just the people in my class. They always encourage me, so support is really good and my teachers as well that I have.*
(male, Asian, age 16, non-apprentice)

Aiden: *Likes from college ... I guess it's everyone that I've met here, all the people that I've met in class, they've helped me along, we've helped each other. I've made friends that I know I'll be in contact with after college, after this year, so that's one like.*
(male, Black, age 20, apprentice, college sample)

The support received by the trainees relied heavily on the family. Any official support provided by the college, although evident, was less discussed. The apprentices were also provided with formal support, in the form of access to individuals in the working environment.

8.3.7 To take ownership of learning

The trainees considered that their experience at college was different from that at school. They were aware that they had to take ownership of their own learning, as

the college lecturers compared to the school teachers were less inclined to tell them what to do. A trainee explained:

Benjamin: *The negatives ... well, it was a big change. Right, in school, you had things done for you so you'd turn up and it's like all there for you, but college is completely different. College is like you had to basically fend for yourself, and that was a big change.*
(male, white, age 17, non-apprentice).

David understood the importance of being serious with his studies:

David: *Err, school was a doss where I didn't have to do anything, I say I didn't have to ... I didn't wanna do any work. Here, I don't have a choice, if I don't work, I don't pass my exams, I don't get paid, I don't get a job. This is more like a bit of school and work put together, a bit half and half. School was ... a bit of a laugh, a bit of a joke, mess around. This is serious, you've gotta get it done, it's gotta be done.*
(male, white, age 17, apprentice, college sample)

Julian also realised the importance of his studies, but in the classroom, at times, found his peers' behaviour distracting:

Julian: *No, I was always alright. I'd be the one chatting, but I suppose I was more aware than the other kids and when the teacher would be looking I'd shut up, where the rest of them would carry on talking and they still do it now, I don't understand why they think it's so hard to just shut up for 10 minutes, wait for them to look away and continue ... if I'm honest.*
(male, white, age 21, apprentice, contractor sample)

There were differences between the younger and the older trainees, the older being more focused on their studies with little time for distractions, though some trainees found that their studies could be challenging:

Nolan: *The exams are hard ... the exams are hard, they are, very hard. Emm ... I don't know really'.*
(male, white, age 21, apprentice, contractor sample)

The interviews highlighted how the trainees were more centred on their learning at college, as well as how capabilities can change with age, as Burchardt and Vizard (2009) found when creating a capability list for children compared to for adults.

8.3.8 To be treated fairly and to be treated with respect

Biggeri *et al.* (2006) on their capability list note 'respect', described as being treated with respect and dignity. An active element of respect and dignity can incorporate the act of being treated fairly, a wish that trainees declared. This capability was noted in Chapter 7, the school experience. One trainee expressed his perception of whether he was treated unfairly at college:

Jonathan: *No, I don't think so, no, I think they tend to be fair don't they, teachers?*
(male, white, age 20, apprentice, college sample)

Although Jonathan said he had no problems regarding his treatment, two trainees did claim that they were not treated with respect. One female trainee explained that, although she was completing her electrical qualifications, she had to use the toilet in the area where the health and beauty courses were studied:

Susan: *The only thing I remember at my last college was, in the construction block, they only had boy's toilets. There was one toilet. I was like 'where do I go, 'cos I ain't fucking well walking all the way over to the health, hair and beauty'.....Yeah, I ain't walking all the way over to the bloody hair and beauty, it was only like a 2 minute walk, but I was still a bit pissed. I ain't walking all the way over there, sort it out. There was this one toilet but it was locked, I had to ask the lecturer if I could have a key for it and then went in there, there wasn't a tampon bin in there. They said they'd sort it out, but they never did. I just went to the toilet and just walked.*
(female, white, age 20, non-apprentice)

The narrative reflects the structure of facilities creating an unfair situation in the college and then impacting on the rights and dignity of an individual. It also highlights how the trainee had to protest, in order to gain access to toilet facilities.

The resolution is achieved through agreement that Susan can use the toilet, but the dignity aspect remained absent in the form of a provision of a 'female bin'. There was a presumption that females could travel a further distance than the men to access a utility. Susan also gave a personal account in her interview of how an employer offered her an apprenticeship and then withdrew it, due to her rejecting his sexual advances. Another female, Faith, who is middle-aged, spoke openly about being treated differently, which she saw as a result of being a female, being middle-aged and having two young children. The trainees appeared comfortable talking about women being treated differently but were less open and less comfortable about discussing individuals being treated differently because of their ethnic background.

A male trainee did discuss his experience of being treated in the classroom:

***Nathan:** He was very friendly to other people and then, when it come to me, I dunno. Maybe it was something I did, something I said ... I dunno.....To be honest, at the time, I thought maybe he was slightly racist, but then, y'know, I don't know. I just left it.....Cos he was treating the English people a lot more better than me, if that makes sense.*

(male, Mixed, age 18, non-apprentice)

The teacher's behaviour towards Nathan gives the perception of not being treated the same in the classroom compared with his peers. Nathan, in contrast to Susan, does not mention to the teacher how he believed he is being treated. The BAME group, in some instances, spoke about how there were treated, but the instances were less defined and more difficult to tease out, in comparison to the gendered ways the females were treated. However, there were also similarities between the groups, and the ways there were treated were not dissimilar; as such, there were many shared experiences.

8.3.9 To be able to participate in the classroom and have a voice

Susan is a non-apprentice and was interviewed in 2012 at the college where she was studying for her electrical qualifications. When the researcher returned to the

college a year later at the end of the data collection process, she was still a student. Susan has 3 A-levels and 13 GCSEs but was completing the Technical Certificate and found the college work easy.

Susan: *The theory side of it is piss easy, 'cos I did physics for A-level, I've already got most of that.*

Researcher: *Is it really?*

Susan: *Yeah, for me. I mean, the practical part of it, I wouldn't say is easy, but it's not hard and the theory is piss easy.*

Researcher: *Piss easy because of what?*

Susan: *.....my own academic ability, probably, the others seem to be struggling, but I'm finding it easy.*

(Susan, female, white, age 20, non-apprentice)

Susan said that the work was easy due to her academic ability. Some trainees discussed the practical experience at college and the need to be independent with regard to their learning:

Jayden: *It was good fun, I enjoyed the workshop, 'cos at school you're just at a desk all day, but at college you had the workshop and it's a lot more independent learning as well. Teachers aren't on your back for anything really, which I suppose is probably good and bad in a way. That's probably it really.*

(male, Asian, age 22, apprentice, college sample)

The interviews showed that the apprentices had the added benefit of being exposed to practical experience from working on site:

Charlie: *Training-wise, the teachers weren't too good. It wasn't very structured. I had one teacher who would come in, give us a bit of work, wouldn't come in for another half an hour. Didn't have the best resources of tools. They give you a knife to strip cable with and we stripped cable with ... if we do, we have a Stanley knife, which is sharp. They gave us a knife, which was like a butter knife basically, so you're trying to strip cable and you used to always nick it and tools that they gave you were just terrible, but you can't complain because they're not buying the tools, it's just what they get given so it didn't seem like the best funded thing in the world. A lot of stuff was broken, yeah, it was one of the best overall sort of teacher I'd say.*

(male, white, age 20, apprentice, contractor sample)

Charlie's site experience provided him with an understanding of the standard of equipment for site use. Although he articulated the substandard resources within the college environment, he would not consider mentioning this to the college. Charlie also described the teaching standard and structure of the classroom, where he thought the quality of the practical experience did not translate to working on site. This highlights how the apprentices have access to greater resources compared to the non-apprentices. The different types of resources can therefore be context dependent. A simple factor is that Charlie possesses the knowledge that the resources are substandard, whereas a non-apprentice without site experience accepts the limitations in the quality of resources.

8.3.10 Summary: The practical capability list

The capability list created for this stage of the transition process is shown in Table 8.3. The list was created using the voices of the electrical trainees, taking a reflective approach. The table also includes the hypothetical list created in Chapter 4. The list, along with the other list created for this study is discussed in Chapter 10. However, the table already shows that the list at this stage of the process has changed from the hypothetical list.

Table 8.3 The capability list: The hypothetical list and the practical capability list created at this stage of the transition process

	The Hypothetical Capability List The capability.....	The Practical List: The College Experience The capability.....
1.	To have formal education	To be able to have formal education: securing an electrical course at college
2.	To move from place to place	To move from place to place
3.	To be healthy	
4.	To have social relations	To have social relations
5.	To have knowledge	To have knowledge about the electrical framework
6.	To be treated fairly, being respected and having dignity	To be treated fairly and to be treated with respect
7.	To be supported by institutions	
8.		To be able to make decisions, think and reason
9.		To be adaptable and to have aspirations
10.		To take ownership of one's learning
11.		To be able to participate in the classroom and have a voice

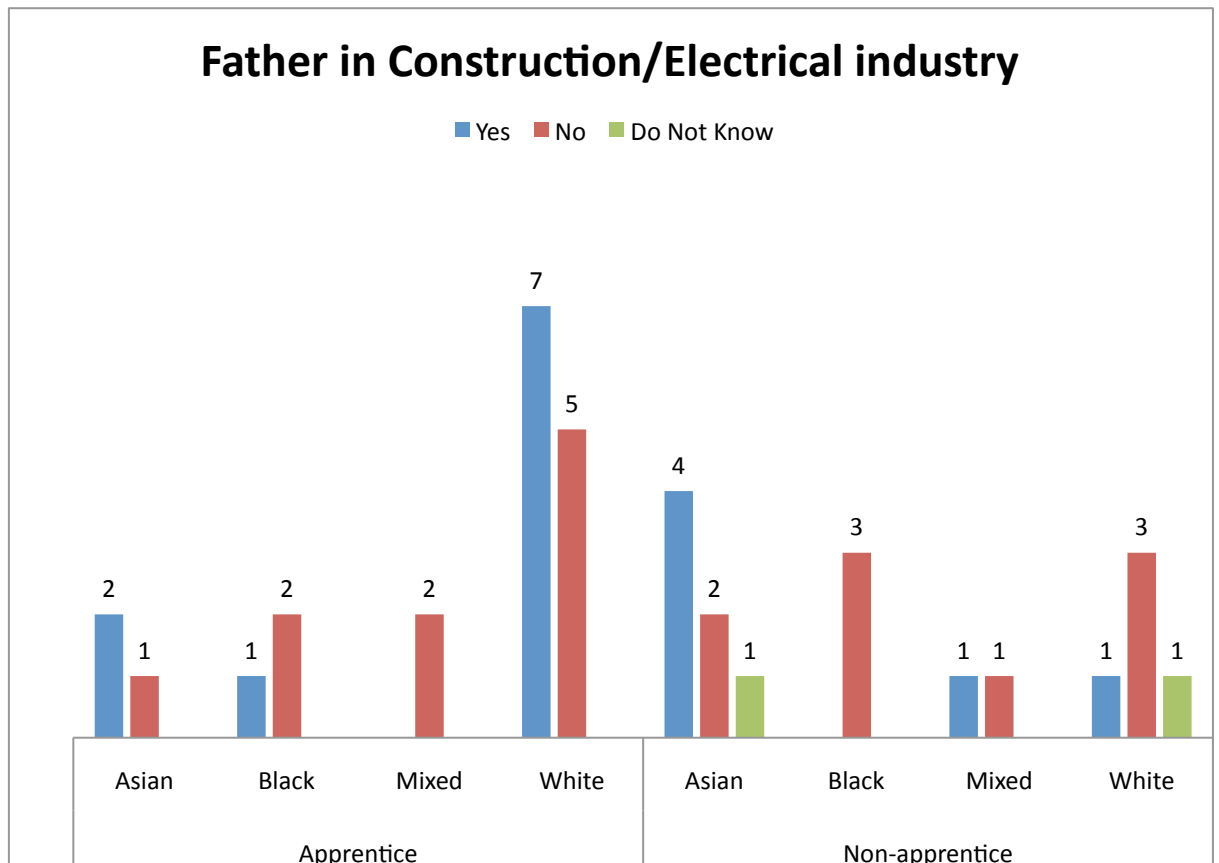
8.4 Factors that affect the capability set

This section discusses the factors that may enhance or limit the capability set created in the above section.

8.4.1 Turning resources into opportunities

Figure 8.4 identifies those trainees who had fathers connected to the construction industry and/or the electrical trade. From the 37 trainees interviewed, 16 (43%) trainees said 'Yes' to whether their father is employed in the construction/electrical industry, 19 (51%) 'No', and two (5%) that they 'did not know' if a connection exists.

Figure 8.4 Summary of the trainee interviews indicating those connected to the construction industry



Turning to the apprentices ($n=20$); ten trainees said that their father was employed in the construction/electrical trade and ten that their father was not connected. The ethnicity of the apprentices is: white (12), Asian (3) Black (3) and Mixed (2). The data show that seven out of 12 from the white group were able to convert this relationship resource into an apprenticeship; of the 6 apprentices from the BAME group, three had fathers connected to the industry.

Turning to the non-apprentices ($n=17$), six trainees said ‘Yes’ their father is employed in the construction industry/electrical trade, nine that they have ‘No’ father connection, and two that they ‘Do Not Know’ if a connection exists. The ethnic mix between the non-apprentices is: Asian (7), White (5), Black (3) and Mixed (2). The ethnic background of the six non-apprentices who said ‘yes’ their father is employed in the construction/electrical industry is: three Asian, one Black, one Mixed, and one white.

David explained that not everyone in the construction industry has a family member connection:

David: *Those kind of trades are kind of like your dad was doing it, your grandad was doing it. You pass on, you went on the job with your dad a few times, you found you liked it a bit, so you had a bit of interest in it yourself, you took it on yourself. With ethnic minorities, it's not so much like that. I didn't know my dad ... I know him now, but growing up I didn't, so it's a bit like ... ok, well I didn't take on his likes and maybe any of his characteristics whereas my mate, Paul, his dad's a plumber so he had a bit of knowledge about it. His dad probably did things in the house where he probably needed his help, holding a wrench.*

(male, Black, age 27, non-apprentice)

Although Figure 8.4 shows fathers' involvement in the construction industry/electrical trade, Alexander said that his mother, who works in a church, was the reason why he was able to access the electrical trade:

Alexander: *I found an electrician's apprenticeship through my mum*
(male, Mixed, age 23, apprentice, college sample)

Alexander was not the only trainee who spoke of his mother helping him to find an apprenticeship, though fathers were more likely than mothers to provide information about the electrical trade as a possible career path. Jason's father provided him with information about being an electrician, attended his interview at college and gave him an application form to apply for an electrical firm to become an apprentice. This is what Jason had to say about getting into construction:

Jason: *Dunno, when I was younger my dad said to me, he said, I was talking to him about what shall I do. I said I'd like to go into construction and he said you can either be a plumber and change toilets and that, all the shitty work, or you can be an electrician and you could be inside when it's already completed, warm and stuff like that. So, I thought electrician, but it didn't end up like that, you're on a freezing cold building site half the time.*

(male, white, age 19, apprentice, contractor sample)

A report on construction by Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) (2009) describes how construction is more accessible if an individual has a family member in the industry. Sen (2009) too argues that when examining equality resources have a part to play and do not have to be limited to the individual; in this case having a family member can be seen as a resource. The findings show that the trainees, from a white background are able to convert that resource more readily than other ethnic groups into an opportunity. The ability or inability to access or convert resources has an impact on the trainees' capability set.

8.4.2 Lack of financial resources

There are differences in the funding for electrical courses depending on trainee type. At the time of the interviews, in 2012, college was free for those under the age of 18. For an apprentice their employer funds the course fee; for trainees, who do not fall into the categories of being an apprentice or under the age of 18 or on job seekers allowance, there is a fee to pay to embark upon an electrical course. Liam had to fund his course because he was working. However, in order to benefit from not paying for the course, Liam decided to give up his employment. Constraints are not only a result of a resource but, in the case of Liam, have a prominent part to play in him accessing opportunities. Here Liam explained the problems he was faced with when he tried to secure a college place:

Liam: So I applied to go to college and then when I looked at the course, I think I was about 19 or 18 and they said I had to pay for it ... crap, how can I get around it 'cos I ain't got ... I think it was like £1,000 something and I didn't have that type of money, and then they said "well, you could do it if you signed on and then you get it for free," so I quit my job and I went to go and study electrical.

(male, Black, age 24, apprentice, contractor sample)

Liam was not the only individual who discussed problems with course funding.

David spoke about the lack of financial support:

David: *How do I fund them? Well, when I started this course, I was unemployed. Yeah ... but now I'm employed. I guess when I go for the second year, I'll be paying, so I'll pay I guess.*

(Daniel, male, Black, age 27, non-apprentice)

Frank was also unsure how he would continue to fund his studies:

Frank: *To be honest, next year, Level 3 I know is like £1,700. That is another thing that is really messing people up, course fees. Next year is like £1,700 just to get on a course and then to actually do your NVQ is another £1,700.*

(male, Black, age 30, non-apprentice)

Cole also experienced funding problems, but will ask his grandparents for assistance to pay for the course:

Cole: *It was roughly £900.....This year, it was Jobseekers.....£1,700.....Myself.....I have no idea yet. My grandparents are giving me £500 towards it and I'm gonna have to work seven days a week.*

(male, white, age 22, non-apprentice).

From the interviews the trainees have taken different approaches to paying for the cost of their course. However, the BAME group in the colleges are more likely to be older (see Chapter 5) compared to the white group, so this impacts on their ability to fund the course. In addition, as they are more likely not to secure an apprenticeship, this also affects their funding ability.

8.4.3 'It's more lucrative to be on the streets 'hustling''

One of the BAME trainees, Frank, spoke about his life 'on the streets', which culminated in him 'doing time' in prison. Frank explained that for seven years he was 'hustling on the streets':

Frank: *18-25, pretty much. I was bouncing around, sorting out my housing emm..... [] I was on the streets hustling*

(male, Black, age 30, non-apprentice)

Frank described hustling ‘*as what he needs to do to make money*’. He was not employed or in training. ‘Hustling’ had its inherent risks, as he was involved in activity that could be classed as criminal. Frank explained that, due to circumstances, he inadvertently got caught up in this way of life. Another BAME trainee spoke about the reason why he had to ‘*hustle*’, which was to support himself financially as he did not have the support of his family:

David: *It’s easier to maybe take something that isn’t yours rather than send out an application form for a job, or obtain something to do something with, rather than find yourself in a situation like this, college or ... so, yeah, I wouldn’t blame it on anyone else but myself, but I was living alone ...*
(male, Black, age 27, non-apprentice)

However, being involved in crime was not exclusive to the BAME group. White trainees also mentioned their involvement in criminal activity, albeit they did not end up going to prison. Carson explained that, although he was stealing when he was much younger, he never got caught:

Carson: *I never got caught I nicked loads of stuff from[...] once. There were prizes and the idiot; weren’t watching, so I just went ‘ere, I got a prize.’ Got one of those little alien babies, nothing like expensive, you can pick ‘em up from the pound store n’that.*
(male, white, apprentice, age 19, contractor sample)

Both the white and the BAME group in this study were therefore involved in criminal activity, though among the trainees this was not a common occurrence. The BAME group was more likely to have a criminal record, with implications for their ability to transition to the labour market. However, it is beyond this study to explore this area.

8.4.4 Organisational resources

Organisation resources refer to the teachers and the college that the trainees have access to in order to complete their electrical course. The trainees had mixed views about those resources provided to them:

Logan: *They seem to have the right facilities and equipment that you need to learn electrical engineering with and the teachings are very good. Sometimes, not sure about the teachers themselves like some its seems are a bit like they're not qualified to teach.*

Researcher: *What do you mean?*

Logan: *Sometimes, there's no guideline for them to follow. As they said, they were electricians before they became teachers, so I'm not sure whether their theory is very good, but only in some cases. I had a bit of an argument with them, 'cos I did A levels in maths and some maths kind of quite a bit wrong and ... (male, Asian, age 19, apprentice, college sample)*

Some trainees stated that they found on occasions the colleges were unorganised:

Carl: *It was just the organisation, it was poor. They wouldn't tell you anything, it's like that teacher I told you about who went away for about three months, no-one knew where she was, if she was coming back, so unorganised in that sense and it was not good (male, Asian, age 17, non-apprentice)*

As noted in the school chapter, the teacher can have an impact on trainees' capability set, which may in turn impact on trainees achieving their goals.

8.4.5 'Being pushed to go to university'

From the questionnaire, the BAME group was more likely than the white group, not to have five GCSEs at A*-C, after leaving compulsory education. However, the interviews showed that the BAME group was more likely to undertake A-levels with a view to going to university. In total seven trainees had taken A-levels from the age of 16, of who six were from a BAME background. One trainee explained the reason why he undertook A-levels as he thought this was his only course of action:

Ryan: *things being pushed to go to university, when I didn't want to, and they didn't really discuss alternative options. It was just like "go to uni, or you're on your own." (male, Mixed, age 20, apprentice, college sample)*

Although trainees from the white group were also given advice about going to

university, none actually did. Hunter, started his apprenticeship at the age of 16, but was provided with advice about going onto higher education:

Hunter: *They always said that I should have gone to university instead, so all the time I was doing the job interview and I was thinking they all say I should have gone to university and everyone always told me it was a bad choice to do it.*
(male, white, age 19, apprentice, contractor sample)

Although trainees were advised to undertake A-levels and go to university, some knew that this is not something they wanted to do. Others spoke about doing courses they did not want to do:

Miles: *When I think from 18 to this time, I think I wasted time on doing the wrong course, yeah, I wasted two years on this and I dropped out. I didn't want to do the course anymore, so I had to wait there for two years doing nothing and lucky I come and do this. But, he told me in the first place, he said "don't do that course, I know you don't like it*
(male, Asian, age 22 non-apprentice)

Matthew: *Well, I wasted two years of my life doing my mechanical and, if I never done that and I went straight onto the electrical, I could of got there, I could have been fully qualified end of this year.*
(male, Asian, age 19, non-apprentice)

Miles was originally doing a course that he did not enjoy and Matthew had similar experiences in terms of doing a course that, on reflection, he should not have chosen to do. Embarking on the wrong course not only extends the transition process but also has cost implications, as the course has to be paid for by someone, whether the individual or the Government.

8.5 Liam's story: his college experience

This section continues the story of Liam, his transition from school up to the point of securing and undertaking an electrical course at college.

Liam: *When I was at school, I didn't do too well. I didn't know what I wanted to do at the time, didn't know what I was good at and, on my work experience, I went to work with my uncle who's an electrician and I really enjoyed it while I was doing it, so I thought maybe this might be my field. Also, my dad's an auto electrician, he works on vehicles and stuff like that so sort of been around it you could say.*

To understand the transition to college the researcher explored what influences and factors helped and hindered the process for Liam. Liam undertook work experience in the electrical trade and decided that he might wish to become an electrician. Three factors contributed to the creation of this decision: the family association - his father and uncle being electricians, the session of work experience, and the realisation that this career might be of value to him.

Liam explained that he did not do well at school, meaning he did not achieve the relevant qualifications to progress to the next stage. At the point of leaving school Liam's actions revealed a competing priority when he decided to continue with a subject he always had a passion for, drama, in which he gained his GCSE qualification. Whilst studying drama, Liam seized an opportunity to realise his ambitions of working as an electrician and secured a place on a construction-training course. The focus of the course was a generalist approach and it provided overall training in all aspects of the construction industry.

Liam articulated the risk to his transition when the 'environment of making money' through illegitimate means threatened the process. The realisation for Liam was that the construction course now had to compete with the need for financial resources. Liam continued with the construction-training course until it abruptly came to an end. This left him in a vulnerable position in that he was 'Not in Education, Employment or Training' (NEET).

Within his family setting Liam had a brother and, on his father's side, a stepbrother. Liam's father arranged two interviews, on separate occasions, with his employer to secure an apprenticeship position for two of his children. This created an internal

conflict among the brothers. In the first interview, Liam's brother secured the apprenticeship. Liam then had a second interview, prepared for it, but lost that position to his stepbrother.

The repeating psychological nuances described in this chapter are acutely brought to the fore, this time through the voice of his father informing Liam that he was simply not good enough. This echoed the words of Liam's teachers. In Liam's view, his life was in turmoil. He was NEET, angry with himself, and with his parents, and it was this turbulent environment that spurred him on to the job centre. Liam found work in a small organisation, working in a 'juice smoothie bar'. At the same time, he also applied to attend college to do an electrical course. The cost of the course was £1,000, which Liam could not afford. Rather than try and raise the funds through illegitimate means, Liam quit his job. This brings us back full circle to the start of this Chapter and explains the reason why without the relevant qualifications Liam had to take the college entry test, which he initially failed.

At this point, Liam said that he had so much determination and that this was the start of his career; as he describes: 'I was on the path of what I wanted to do'. For Liam, after the negative experience at school, where he was labelled, he now saw college as a chance to make changes in his life, though it transpires that it actually took Liam four years to secure the electrical course at college. At college Liam found that other people did not have the same focus, which he found distracting, as he wanted to ensure that he was able to complete the course. This was a major shift in Liam's behaviour.

Liam's story provides specific details about his transition experience, as well as about the barriers faced and the impact on his capability set. First, the lack of achievement at school, not having GCSEs, impacts on the opportunity to access an electrical course at college. Despite having the opportunity of completing a college entry test, he initially failed it but eventually passed. Second, the environment that threatens to derail the transition. This refers to the external environment where there were social and economic pressures to acquire resources, in terms of 'making

quick money'. Third, despite both his father and an uncle being electricians and having himself the opportunity of an apprenticeship interview, he was not able to convert this into an outcome. Fourth, when he secured the electrical course, he was initially unable to take up the opportunity due to a lack of financial resources This supports Sen's (2009) argument not to focus on resources alone, because not everyone has the same access to resources, nor is every individual able to turn resources into capabilities.

8.6 Conclusions

The chapter has sought to answer the following questions:

1. What capabilities are necessary at this stage of the transition process;
2. What are the factors that affect the trainees' capability set; and
3. Do the capability sets of the BAME and the white group differ?

The chapter has produced a capability list for the college stage of the transition process. When comparing the hypothetical list and the practical capability list, there are changes; some aspects remain constant but are adapted to the environment, for example, compared to the younger trainees some older trainees did not discuss certain issues. In other cases, as a result of the college context, there are additional capabilities added to the list.

Without first having a hypothetical list, it is somewhat difficult to comprehend what has occurred in the past in order to contextualise the present for the purpose of understanding the transition process. Having the different list provides a measure that can be used to compare and contrast with trainees between the two stages.

The narratives of the trainees have highlighted a number of important key points, for example, that without asking questions about the trainees' family member connections in the construction industry it would not have been possible to show

how some trainees from a white background are able to convert this resource into an opportunity. It has also revealed that trainees from a BAME background also have family members in the industry, though they may not be able to convert this resource, as was the case with Liam. Two of the trainees' mothers, although not in the construction industry, were able to assist the trainees in securing their apprenticeship.

The narratives also highlight how the capabilities achieved at school have an impact on the next stage of the transition process, notably when both the BAME and the white group were undertaking electrical qualification at PEO and Level One. There are concerns at this point about whether the trainees are informed about the electrical qualifications they are embarked upon and where these can lead to.

The chapter has illustrated that capabilities can be interdependent or sometimes intertwine and be dependent on each other, for example to achieve one capability it is necessary to have another capability already in place. What the research tells us about the term combinations is that capabilities combine to make a set appropriate to achieving the functioning.

Focusing on a cumulative outcome is also insufficient when looking at equality. Numerous narratives from the trainees inform us about the quality of the transition, which impacts in turn upon the outcome. The following chapter examines the next stage of the transition process, the work-based learning experience, and in doing so provides a capability list for the final stage of the transition process. The chapter also continues the story of Liam.

9. The transition process: The work-based learning experience

9.1 Introduction

Liam: *I was speaking to my tutor. I said 'how do I get into the construction industry? What do I need to do, what do I need to get?'*

He was like 'just apply'. I was applying every day for apprenticeships and stuff like that and I found out that everyone was saying you need a CSCS card, ECS card, this 'n' that, so with the little bit of money I had, I started getting all these cards and I was planning for so much work that I couldn't even remember what I was applying for. I went for a few interviews, got knocked back and then I got an e-mail from [electrical contractor] saying I've got an interview. I was like aah ... yes.
(male, Black, age 24, apprentice, contractor sample)

This is the final stage of the school-to-work transition (STWT) process. From the last two chapters we gained an insight into Liam's transition from school to college, up until the point when he secured an electrical course. Liam's interview showed how challenging it has been for him to access the relevant organisations to train as an electrician. Whilst at college and completing his electrical course, Liam was told he had to obtain a 'CSCS card' (Construction Skills Certification Scheme)¹⁷, which demonstrates a person's skill within the construction industry (CSCS, 2014). An 'ECS card' on the other hand is the Electrical Technical Certification Scheme (JIB, 2012), issued by the Joint Industry Board (JIB), the recognised body for the electrical trade. This card also demonstrates the competence of an individual specifically in the electrical industry. CSCS and JIB are two of the many organisations that are involved in the construction industry and the electrical trades.

Chapter aims

Chapter 7 and Chapter 8 examined the trainees' school and college experiences. Chapter 9 will now discuss the third and final stage of the transition process: the work-based learning experience. This route is 'one way', to gain access to the

¹⁷ 'CSCS cards provide proof that individuals working on construction sites have the required training and qualifications for the type of work they carry out. CSCS is a not-for-profit limited company. Its directors are from employer organisations and unions representing the breadth of the industry' (Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS), 2014).

construction labour market. The chapter is centred around the 20 apprentices who are in electrical apprenticeships, at the same time arguing that the transition process is very individual as the BAME group are more qualified when starting their apprenticeship. The chapter also argues that, to examine the transition of electrical trainees, it is necessary to focus on organisational processes in order to explain the inequality experienced by the trainees.

The aim of the chapter is to examine the work-based learning experience. It begins by discussing the transition process of the electrical trainees, from college to securing electrical apprenticeships, goes on to create a capability list for this stage of the transition process, discussing the factors that affect the capability list, and continues with the story of Liam, who has now secured an electrical apprenticeship. Finally, a short conclusion is provided.

The chapter will answer the following questions:

1. What capabilities are necessary at this stage of the transition process;
2. What are the factors that affect the trainees' capability set; and
3. Do the capability sets of the BAME group and the white group differ?

9.2 The transition: from college to securing an electrical apprenticeship

This section examines the 20 apprentices' actual transition timelines, from college to securing an electrical apprenticeship. In Chapter 5, when the trainees were introduced, they were labelled as 'the contractor sample' and the 'college sample' as they fell into two sub-samples, as follows:

1. *The contractor sample*: those who worked for electrical contractors on the 2012 Olympic site; and
2. *The college sample*: those who worked for electrical contractors, either in the public or private sector, which were not on the 2012 Olympic site.

Both samples include apprentices, following the JIB prescribed electrical framework (Brawley, 2012). However, the apprentices in the ‘contractor sample’ worked on the 2012 Olympic site, while the college apprentice sample did not. As discussed in Chapter 2, the building of the London 2012 Olympic site promised to offer jobs to local people (London 2012, 2010b). More importantly, targets were set for the BAME group, to increase their participation in the construction industry (ODA, 2010a). Furthermore, targets were also set to ensure apprentices were working on the site (Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA), 2010b, 2011). Nevertheless, it transpired that the apprentices on the site were not always specifically recruited to work on the Olympic project, but were already anyway employed with a contractor (Minnaert, 2013).

Table 9.1 provides details of the 20 apprentices, consisting of 19 males and one female, 11 from a white and nine from a BAME background. Of the nine from the BAME, only one worked on the 2012 Olympic site, Liam. As already highlighted, Liam was recruited to work on the Olympic site because he met certain criteria; he was one of the fortunate few to have done so.

Table 9.1 The apprentice sample: the sub-samples, the number of apprentices and the ethnic groups.

Apprentice Sample	Ethnic Group		
	BAME	White	Total
COLLEGE	8	4	12
CONTRACTOR	1	7	8
TOTAL	9	11	20

Table 9.2 Transition of the apprentices: from leaving college to embarking upon an electrical apprenticeship

TRAINEE: APPRENTICE	AGE 16	AGE 17	AGE 18	AGE 19	AGE 20	AGE 21	AGE 22	AGE 23	AGE 24
AIDEN (Black, Age 20)	PLUMBING AND ELECTRICAL AT COLLEGE/WORKING IN RETAIL	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP				
ALEXANDER (Mixed, Age 23)	A-LEVELS – FOR HALF A YEAR	A-LEVELS/ BARTENDER WORK	A-LEVELS /BARTENDER WORK	PLUMBING APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	
BLAKE (White, Age 18)	A-LEVELS	A-LEVELS	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP						
CARSON (White, Age 19)	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP					
CHARLIE (White, Age 20)	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL COURSE	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP				
DAVID (White, Age 17)	TRAVELLED OVERSEAS	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP							
HARRY (Asian, age 27)	A-LEVELS	A-LEVELS	GAP YEAR/WORKING AT SAINSBURY'S	WORKING IN CONSTRUCTION UNTIL AGE 26	WORKING IN CONSTRUCTION UNTIL AGE 26	WORKING IN CONSTRUCTION UNTIL AGE 26	WORKING IN CONSTRUCTION UNTIL AGE 26	WORKING IN CONSTRUCTION UNTIL AGE 26	WORKING IN CONSTRUCTION UNTIL AGE 26
HUNTER (White, Age 19)	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP					
JASON (White, Age 19)	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL COURSE	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP					
JAYDEN (Asian, Age 22)	A-LEVELS	A-LEVELS	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL COURSE	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL COURSE	WORKING	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP		
JONATHAN (White, Age 20)	WORKED IN A SPORTS SHOP	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP				
JULIAN (White, Age 21)	MECHANICAL COURSE	MECHANICAL COURSE	PLUMBING APPRENTICESHIP	PLUMBING APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP			
LIAM (Black, Age 24)	6 th FORM: STUDYING DRAMA	CONSTRUCTION COURSE	CONSTRUCTION COURSE	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL COURSE	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP
LOGAN (Asian, Age 19)	A-LEVELS	A-LEVELS	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP					
LUCY (White, Age 19)	COLLEGE: DRAMA	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP					
NOLAN (White, Age 21)	6 th FORM: WORK: WITH HIS FATHER IN CONSTRUCTION	WORKED WITH DAD IN CONSTRUCTION	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP			
PARKER (White, Age 20)	JOINED THE ARMY	A LEVELS	BTEC IN BUSINESS	BTEC IN BUSINESS	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP				
ROGER (Black, Age 18)	6 th FORM ELECTRONICS AND COMPUTER DESIGN	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP						
RYAN (Mixed, Age 20)	A-LEVELS	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP					
SEAN (White, Age 20)	COLLEGE: ELECTRICAL COURSE	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP	ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP				

Table 9.2 shows the timeline of the 20 apprentices, illustrating their educational and training activities after compulsory education, for each year of the transition process. The grey highlighted boxes depict the duration of each trainee's electrical apprenticeship, at the time of being interviewed. Whilst the activities embarked upon by the apprentices prior to securing an apprenticeship varied, the majority were in educational establishments, having stayed on in education for a longer period post compulsory education (Raffe, 2000a).

Chapter 8 showed how the white in comparison to the BAME group were more likely to secure an electrical apprenticeship. However, table 9.2 is revealing in several ways: the white apprentices had fewer steps in the transition process than the BAME group and were more likely to secure an apprenticeship at a younger age; and the apprentices tended not to embark upon an apprenticeship directly at the end of compulsory education. The table shows that only two apprentices secured an apprenticeship upon leaving school, namely Carson and Harry, both of whom are white. The earliest age that an apprentice from a BAME background secured an apprenticeship was 17, namely Ryan. Nonetheless, all apprentices had secured their apprenticeship by the age of 21, except Harry who was 26.

Securing an apprenticeship as an older trainee has cost implications for the employer. When taking on an apprentice, an employer can receive financial assistance for the course costs. However the amount received is reduced for older apprentices (GOV.UK, 2014a; Mirza-Davies, 2014). This has implication for the BAME group because, as highlighted in Chapter 7, members of this group are more likely to be older than the white group when starting on an electrical course or on an apprenticeship. This is echoed in Table 9.2. An interesting finding from the table is that the BAME group are more likely to have A-levels than the white group when embarking on their apprenticeship, thus making them more qualified when starting this route of learning. For example, the table shows that there were six out of the 20 apprentices that undertook A-levels straight after school, five from the BAME group and one from the white group. However, not everyone who had embarked upon A-levels completed this mode of study.

9.3 The practical capability list: the work-based learning experience

In the previous two chapters, the school experience and the college experience, a capability list was created for each of those two stages of the transition process. This section creates a capability list for this final stage of the transition, the apprentice experience. The creation of the capability list follows, in the same vein, the creation of the capability list in the previous two chapters. This section again uses the narratives from the electrical trainees, whose importance was discussed in Chapter 7.

9.3.1 To be able to access formal qualifications

Being educated was identified as an important capability at both the school experience and the college experience stages of the transition process. In the school chapter the educational target for children leaving school of to achieving five GCSEs at A*-C was highlighted. In terms of the recruitment criteria to secure an apprenticeship, a College Principal supported this qualification requirement and explained:

Normally companies recruiting apprentices would like five GCSE A-C entry qualifications*
(College Principal, male, white, located in London)

Although there are many organisations involved with apprenticeships, the recruitment of apprentices is down to the goodwill of individual organisations. An electrical contractor, when interviewed, was adamant that any individual wishing to apply for an apprenticeship should have five GCSEs at A*-C. He further went on to stipulate the subjects they should undertake: maths, science, information technology (IT) and English. In contrast, another contractor stated that, even though he preferred an individual to have GCSEs, he was not prescriptive about the subjects that a prospective apprentice may or may not have taken as the individual can sway him during the interview process:

If they have a fantastic track record of hands on ... my father has been an electrician, or a builder, and I've really enjoyed my time when I've done this, this and this ...

(Human Resources Manager, female, white, Electrical Contractor located on the Olympic site, organisation located outside London)

This contractor also said that they would provide support if a prospective individual did not have the pre-requisite GCSE requirement. For example, Charlie, a white male apprentice, did not have maths GCSE, but the contractor offered him the apprenticeship and requested that he successfully complete this subject during the first year of his apprenticeship. Another contractor was equally focused on GCSEs as a recruitment selection criterion for prospective apprentices, explaining:

Because I won't over criteria it. Until you meet a person, you generally find out if they would fit in more or less in the 20 minutes.

(Labour manager male, white, Electrical Contractor, located on the Olympic site, organisation located inside London)

On one hand, the recruitment criteria can be rigid and some contractors explicitly stated that GCSEs are required. On the other hand, the interviews with the contractors showed this to be a somewhat subjective process and that they can be flexible in the recruitment process. Turning to the apprentices, Harry worked in the family firm, so for him there were no recruitment criteria that he had to adhere to. However, this was not a common occurrence. Another apprentice interviewed highlighted how, during his apprenticeship interview, his prospective employer was flexible regarding his GCSE achievements. Ryan works for a large organisation and explained:

Ryan: *Yeah, they said they preferred if you had Cs and above in Science, English and Maths but, again, I only had C's and above in Maths and English, but I didn't in Science, I had double Ds.*
(male, BAME, apprentice, age 20, college sample)

Ryan did not achieve a Science A*-C grade; he obtained a grade D. Nevertheless, his qualifications, or lack of, were not a barrier to securing his apprenticeship. He

explained, during his apprenticeship interview that he did not focus on science at school because he thought it was not a subject he would need in the future. As a result, he did not make much effort to pass the exam. The necessity of having a pre-requisite number of GCSEs in order to secure an apprenticeship was not the case for all apprentices. A small number of apprentices secured their apprenticeship before leaving school and thus the offer of an apprenticeship was made on the basis of their predicted GCSE grades. Hunter said:

Hunter: *They only asked for a C in English, Maths and Science, and they said that would be the least they would take, so that's why I had to make sure I got my C's, 'cos I already had the job, so I had to make sure I got Cs, otherwise they would have taken the job away from me.*

(white, male, apprentice, age 19, contractor sample)

As already mentioned, the BAME apprentices group started their apprenticeship with a higher level of qualifications compared to the white group. Although Jayden knew he wanted to complete an apprenticeship, it was suggested to him that, in the first instance, he should complete his A-levels:

Jayden: *A lot of people advised me to get A-levels before I did my apprenticeship, before I went to become a spark, so after GCSEs.*

(male, apprentice, age 19, college sample)

This capability is noted on the capability list in the two previous chapters. Walker and Unterhalter (2007), in their examination of education using a capability approach found that some capabilities are necessary to provide access to functionings. The trainees wished to access formal education, in the form of work-based learning, but found that there were differences in what was necessary for them to do so. These interviews demonstrated that, at this stage of the transition process, it was necessary to have GCSEs. However, the GCSE requirement varied between the different organisations. The difference occurred as each organisation had its own processes with criteria to follow. This illustrates that, when focusing on organisational processes, the construction industry with its multi faceted layers

provides another complexity and the process to secure an apprenticeship can have different outcomes for the trainees.

9.3.2 To have the knowledge about where to search for an apprenticeship

Searching for an electrical apprenticeship can be a complex activity. This is because there is a plethora of organisations involved in the apprenticeship framework and the electrical trade (Chan and Moehler, 2008). These organisations include, among others, colleges, electrical organisations, such as the Joint Industry Board (JIB), unions and employers. There were differences between the apprenticeship and the non-apprentices regarding their knowledge of where to look for an apprenticeship. The experience of the non-apprentice sample of searching for an apprenticeship fell into two main categories, namely:

1. I am not familiar with an apprenticeship; or
2. I am familiar with apprenticeships;
 - a. but I have tried to secure one without any success or I have not started to look for one.
 - b. but I do not need one or I am too old to start looking for one.

It transpired that Miles, a BAME non-apprentice, was not familiar with apprenticeships; he did not know about its importance because he had moved to the United Kingdom (UK) from Africa in 2011. The other 16 non-apprentices, both from the BAME group and the white group), were familiar with apprenticeships. Even when aware of the possibility of doing an apprenticeship, the BAME group, in comparison to the white group, were more likely not to apply for an apprenticeship. Two BAME non-apprentices, Carter and George, thought they did not need an apprenticeship, based on information provided to them by a family member, who surprisingly worked in the construction industry. Matthew, a white non-apprentice, said he had not yet applied for an apprenticeship, but will do so, once he has completed his electrical technical certificate.

The trainees made reference to searching through the 'yellow pages' and calling

around electrical companies, to establish who were taking on apprentices. Another complexity when searching for an apprenticeship is that of timing. Electrical contractors tend to start their apprentice recruitment process at a particular time of year so that prospective apprentices who apply late to the organisation have to wait until the following year to make an application. However, apprentices had no knowledge of when this occurred.

A non-apprentice explained his experience of trying to secure an apprenticeship:

Benjamin: *I have, but I finally gave up on it, 'cos there was nothing coming up and they was looking to ... when I was doing it, they was looking to send me out to Bristol n'all places, like I had to go live with other people to do work out there and it ain't ... I can't do that.....I was on apprenticeship websites, this was through my school, they gave us apprenticeship websites to have a look on. So, I've looked on there and typed in my details and put what I was looking for and a few jobs come up, but then you had to be like 21 to take 'em or something, so that was pointless.*

(male, white, non-apprentice, age 17, non-apprentice sample)

Benjamin not only shows the complexities of searching for an apprenticeship, but also the lack of understanding in terms of the construction industry. The non-apprentices' efforts in trying to secure an apprenticeship did not evolve due to lack of opportunity, but as a result of lack of knowledge, that led to a lack of opportunity.

Turning to the apprentices, some stated that it took them some time to secure an apprenticeship; for example, one apprentice took over two years. During this time he completed the electrical technical certificate at college. This apprentice recounted:

Jayden: *I did my A-levels and then after that I was trying to find work and I was finding it impossible to find work as a trainee electrician or as an apprentice. I ended up joining Southgate College to do the level 2 in electrical installation, but once I'd done that, in order to get the level 3, I needed to get a ... for*

NVQ level 3, you need to be in work as well, so that's when I kind of stalled a bit, 'cos I got a bit unstuck there trying to find the work to get the full qualification.

(male, BAME, apprentice, age 22, college apprentice sample)

Jayden contacted 20-30 companies to try and secure an apprenticeship. Another apprentice described the process he undertook in finding an apprenticeship:

Carson: *Well, I signed up for ... 'cos my electrical teacher at college, when I was in secondary school, he actually gave me the name for a couple of companies and JTL so, when I got home, I signed up for JTL 'n' that and they got back in touch with me and said I 'ad to like try and find a job, 'cos they're not 100 per cent they'll be able to find me one, so I got a massive list printed out of like loads of businesses. I called them all up, got denied, and I had to go through an exam with JTL to prove, y'know, how good your basic skills are. You're given an hour, it took about ten minutes, some of it was just like basic spelling and grammar and basic, and I really mean basic maths, something like I used to do in like primary school 'n' that.*

(male, white, apprentice, age 19, contractor sample)

Having knowledge about apprenticeships is an important factor for the electrical trainees. For Carson that knowledge was in the form of using the information provided by his electrical teacher at college, who was able to provide him with details of the relevant organisations involved in the electrical trade, who he subsequently contacted.

For many trainees, both apprentices and non-apprentices, there can be a lack of clarity as to where to look for an apprenticeship. This is despite organisations providing information on apprenticeships, such as The National Apprenticeship Service (2013), JTL Training (JTL, 2014), Joint Industry Board (2012) and electrical contractors. However, there is not one central place for those looking for an apprenticeship providing information and guidance on where or how to search for one. Apprentices were provided with different information as regards what they needed to do or where they needed to go to find an apprenticeship. The lack of knowledge about the apprenticeship programme was more prevalent among the BAME group, despite the Government running pilot programmes from 2010 - at the

same time as the interviews took place for this study - to increase the demand and supply of apprenticeships among this group (Newton *et al.*, 2012). None of the apprentices or non-apprentices referred to these pilots.

Lack of knowledge impeded the trainees' ability to be what they wanted to be, which was an electrician. Furthermore, although some organisations are trying to improve the awareness of apprenticeships, the interviews revealed that this information might not be finding its way to those individuals the organisations are trying to target. This is why Sen (2009, p. 242) argues that public discussion is important when looking at equality as it can lead to a better understanding of the role and the reach of a particular functioning (outcome). Through the interview narratives it was apparent that the trainees were not always aware of the organisations that can assist them in accessing information about apprenticeships.

9.3.3 To be healthy and be able to pass a colour blindness test

JTL is a training provider formed to manage training in the electrical sector (JTL, 2014). It can be seen as a conduit between the employer, the apprentice and the college. Importantly, JTL provide a colour blindness test, which, if the individual is colour-blind, precludes them from working as an electrician. This has implications for the non-apprentice sample as they may not have taken this test, but are doing an electrical course at college with the view to becoming an electrician.

JTL also plays an important role for apprentices, prospective apprentices and contractors. An Employment Skills Manager explained that JTL not only supports apprentices during their training, but is also involved in the recruitment process of a prospective apprentice. An apprentice spoke about taking the 'JTL test', which included maths and English. In taking the test, he was placed on a 'pre-approved' list of being a potential apprentice:

Sean: They would have got my contact through JTL I think, 'cos they do put all their apprentices through the JTL thing, even though they're Nottingham apprentices, they put them all

through the JTL, so I think they must have contacted JTL saying 'have you got anyone on the books that needs a job? (male, white, age 20, apprentice, contractor sample).

The importance of the JTL 'pre-approved' list is evident from the fact that apprentices referred to companies contacting them directly as their name was included on the JTL list. A representative from the Union Unite supports this claim and further stated that the benefit of being on the list is that it is circulated to contractors in various areas. This provides the contractor with potential candidates who may be suitable for an apprenticeship, as JTL has vetted them in terms of medical requirements and a certain level of aptitude. However, non-apprentices were more than likely not aware of JTL and thus would not have taken the test. More importantly, the group most likely to be affected by this were the BAME non-apprentices, given the higher numbers from this group in the college environment compared to the white group.

9.3.4 To have a voice and be able to participate in interviews

Participation, 'being able to participate in public and social life and to have a fair share of influence and being able to receive objective information', is a capability noted by Biggeri et al., (2006, p. 66). This is also an important capability for electrical trainees because, in order to take up an apprenticeship opportunity, the individual needs, among other things, to be able to participate in the recruitment process. However, the individuals applying for an apprenticeship were not always fully prepared. The researcher had the opportunity to attend the offices of an electrical contractor, located outside of London, when they were undertaking their apprenticeship interviews. The researcher observed that some potential apprentices were not dressed appropriately for the interview, were ill prepared and had not undertaken enough research about the company. At the completion of the interviews, the Human Resources manager stated that she found, on too many occasions, that individuals do not prepare for the interview and do not understand the complexities of the construction industry, such as the necessity to work early hours. She further stated that interviewees are not aware of the type of

installations electricians are involved in (domestic, industrial and commercial). In addition, they were unfamiliar with the extent of electrical work, such as, scoreboards at football stadiums, fire and alarm systems, and extractor fans for commercial and industrial use.

The apprenticeship recruitment process predominately took the form of interviews. Aiden, who works for a large construction company, talked about his experience during this process:

Aiden: *Obviously, in the interview, they ask you questions like what did I do in school, what were my predicted grades, what was my interest in electrical apprenticeships, have I got any experience electrical-wise, have I done any actual electrical work before that and then they just asked you normal, sociable kind of questions, so nothing I really had to do, it was just basically turn up and just go for the interview. They wanted to see my GCSE results, so I think the actual interview was back in August because we didn't get our results 'til August. So I did take a few certificates with me of my GCSE results and I think they took a copy of it but I don't think there was actually a criteria. I think you just had to be a certain age and I think that was it. I don't actually think there was a proper criteria saying that I could do it or could not do it.*

(male, BAME, apprentice, age 23, college sample)

For some apprentices the recruitment process was more robust, incorporating different stages and different approaches, such as presentations. Jayden explains:

Jayden: *Aah, it was long, it was proper long. There was like three or four different stages and first we had to do an online application, then a telephone interview, then they rang us up for another telephone interview and then they invited us into their headquarters for some exams, head office. So, we had to do three or four exams, we had to give a presentation and do an interview and then they got back to us and we went back in again for another test. This is all like over a period of four or five months and then that final test was when they said whether you've got it or not, so it was quite long.*

(male, BAME, apprentice, age 22, college sample)

The findings illustrated that even once an individual is faced with the opportunity of an apprenticeship, in some instances the finesse of taking part in the interview process, was lacking. This was mainly a result of prospective apprentices being ill-prepared.

9.3.5 To understand and reason, to have the skills to participate in society

There were differences in how the trainees secured their apprenticeships. Some trainees found the process quite straight forward. Charlie is a white male and feels he secured his apprenticeships because he was liked:

Charlie: *I don't know. Between me and you, when I asked the HR woman she said 'yeah I did quite like you Charlie ...' I was like alright'.*

(male, white, apprentice, age 20, contractor sample)

Charlie lives outside London. He did not have a good experience at school. He went to college for a year doing his electrical. He went to an apprenticeship fair and applied to about twelve companies for an apprenticeship. One of the companies he heard back from was his current employer. He had worked on a number of construction projects, one of which was the Olympic site. It should be noted that Charlie was working for the contractor and placed on the Olympic site and, thus, was not recruited specifically for the project.

Hunter lives outside London. His dad works in the electrical trade. He had no problems at school; he said it was 'plain sailing'. He left school with 10 GCSEs and secured his apprenticeship before leaving school as his father worked for a large construction contractor, which worked with the company that employed Hunter.

Hunter: *He actually knew the HR Manager who works for [electrical contractor on the Olympic site]*

(male, white, age 19, apprentice, contractor sample)

Hunter was also offered an apprenticeship with another company, which he subsequently turned down.

Jason lives outside London. He obtained 11 GCSEs and then went on to college for one year, undertaking an electrical course, before securing his apprenticeship. His father works for Rolls Royce fixing aeroplanes and picked up the apprenticeship application form for his son. This was the only apprenticeship that Jason applied for.

***Jason:** I didn't apply for anyone really, my dad applied, well he didn't apply, he got me the application form.*

(male, white, age 19, apprentice, contractor sample)

From the contractor sample, four apprentices lived in one of the six Olympic host boroughs - Liam, Sean, Nolan and Lucy. Nolan lives in Greenwich. At school, he attended the sixth form for one year and then worked with his father, who works in construction, for one year. In terms of securing employment on the Olympic site, Nolan's mother worked for the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA), responsible for building the Olympic site.

***Nolan:** my mum worked for the Olympic Delivery Authority, for [employment advisor], which is quite handy and he's good at getting apprenticeships, so I got a couple of interviews.*

(male, white, age 21, apprentice, contractor sample)

Nolan worked on the Aquatic Centre. At the time of the interview, Nolan had been working in the office learning the business.

Lucy lives in Greenwich and when she left school she did not know what she wanted to do.

***Lucy:** I started on photography, then I did multi-skills, which is a course, and every term we do a different trade, so it was carpentry, bricklaying, plumbing, electrics emm ... I signed up to JTL and then one day, out the blue, I got offered ... I started on the plumbing, I didn't like the plumbing, and then one day I got a letter offering an electrical apprenticeship, so I thought I'll try it and give it a go as it's been handed to me on a plate, so I just give it a go and that's how I got into it and I knew the money was good n'that and I prefer to work with blokes than women, 'cos they're too catty.*

(female, white, age 19, apprentice, contractor sample)

Lucy originally, at the age of 17, worked for a few weeks on the Westfield shopping centre site, a large-scale construction project next to the Olympic site:

I was only on there a couple of weeks, 'cos they didn't provide female facilities....No female toilets, no female space, it you know what I mean. Emm ... so, I put a complaint in and that's when I got moved onto the Olympics, 'cos you had to be 18 to go on there, and I was 18 in February.

(female, white, age 19, apprentice, contractor sample)

Lucy then worked on the Olympics and was made redundant in November 2011. Some of the apprentices spoke of finding their apprenticeship on the internet, as described by both Aiden and Blake:

Aiden: *I just applied to anyone and everyone, so I thought if it's something I wanna do after school, I've gotta start straight after school and not hanging about so I just applied to anyone and everyone, JTL, I went on the apprenticeship website, I looked at various companies if there was apprenticeships*

(male, Black, age 20, apprentice, college sample)

Blake: *I was gonna say, that was all done, basically googling, y'know, apprenticeships, found the apprenticeship website and all that lot, trying to find whatever I could and then, from the apprenticeships website, applied for a few places, ended up with JTL saying, y'know, 'you need to do this pre-assessment and eye test'.*

(male, white, age 18, apprentice, college sample)

There were differences and similarities in how the trainees secured their apprenticeship. In the contractor sample some apprentices were recruited specifically for the Olympic site, while others were already working for contractors. Some apprentices relied on family members and some found their apprenticeship on the internet. The interviews highlighted that for some apprentices resources in the form of family or a large-scale construction project can assist in securing this apprenticeship.

Although the narratives of the trainees are very revealing, the organisations themselves can be seen as a resource in securing an apprenticeship or turning an opportunity into an outcome. Examination of organisational processes provides some interesting findings. An electrical contractor spoke about recruitment on the Olympic site and described how he loaned his apprentices to another contractor. This was two fold, first, it allowed his apprentices to work on the site and allowed the other contractor to meet certain diversity targets set by ODA.

We sent about 25 of our electricians, who became available just at the right time for us, over to the Olympics, on loan to [electrical contractor].

(Labour Manager, male, white, Electrical Contractor, organisation located in London)

The contractor further went on to say that loaning staff was a common occurrence with contractors:

To catch up and talk about just how the industry is, y'know, what's new, what's going on in industrial relations, what's going on at the Olympics, what jobs are coming on the horizon, and you just build up a network so when you get to a situation when you think "I'm a bit low on work," you get in touch with them and say "do you need anyone for a couple of weeks? I've got some people sitting around" and they usually say "yeah, we'll take them at cost minus" and you say "no, I want cost plus" and you'll do a deal. You just get to know people, so they'll do you a favour now and again.

(Labour Manager, male, white, Electrical Contractor, organisation located in London)

This is another example supporting Sen's (2009) view of the need to focus on processes. A contractor interviewed pointed out that processes might be of a formal nature in terms of what should be done but also of an informal nature in terms of what actually happens. Both types of processes have an impact on the outcome of, for example, securing an apprenticeship.

9.3.6 To be able to move from place to place

Working in the construction industry may mean working on different sites. Although some apprentices work in offices, others had to work away from home and lodge near to their work site. For some apprentices lodging away this could be an extremely difficult time, especially for the younger ones who have not previously left home. There were a number of apprentices who lived outside of London, but had to travel to London to work on the Olympic site. An apprentice recollected his experience of working way from home:

Harry: *I hated it, I absolutely hated it. I couldn't stand it. I was dreading going out of town. I dreaded it when I got out there and the first night I couldn't stand it. I hated being away from home, it was just generally horrible I couldn't stand the thought of being out of town. I got back, the first weekend; I did not wanna go back on the Monday. I was thinking all the things I could tell people or say which could get me back in town, trying to think of every excuse, but I went out of town again Then after a couple of months I came back in town, so I was happy after that [...] I think, after a few months of doing it, I got into it and now it don't faze me at all really.*
(male, white, apprentice, age 19, contractor sample)

Harry mentioned 'being back in town', referring to his home geographical location. This is because he was working on the Olympics site for several months. Another apprentice also commented that doing an apprenticeship was not for the faint hearted, due to the hours of work, in addition to the travelling. Charlie explained his feeling towards doing an apprenticeship:

Charlie: *I'm selling my soul.*
(male, white, apprentice, age 20, contractor sample)

Charlie feels like this because, as he lives outside London, he had to travel to London on a Monday morning to work on the 2012 Olympic site, returning home on a Friday night. Nearing the end of the Olympic build, there were times that he was working on site over the weekend and not making it home to see his family.

For a few, although they resented their apprenticeship, none thought of giving it

up. However, the interviews showed that being in an apprenticeship is challenging, for example, in terms of what is expected of the apprentice, the working conditions and the pay.

9.3.7 To be financially rewarded

The rate of pay differed among the apprentices. Although there is a national minimum wage in existence, as shown in Table 9.3, there is a separate rate of pay for apprentices. In 2012, for an individual under the age of 18, the national minimum wage was £3.68 per hour. However, if the individual is an apprentice between 16-18 years of age or aged 19 in their first year the rate of pay is £2.65 per hour. All other apprentices are entitled to the National Minimum Wage for their respective age (GOV.UK, 2013; Unionlearn, 2014b). However, none of the apprentices interviewed stated that they were paid £2.65.

Table 9.3 National Minimum Wage

Year	21 and over	18 to 20	Under 18	Apprentice
2012 (current rate)	£6.19	£4.98	£3.68	£2.65
2011	£6.08	£4.98	£3.68	£2.60
2010	£5.93	£4.92	£3.64	£2.50

Source: (GOV.UK, 2013)

Table 9.4 JIB apprentice rates, effective January 2013

	At college	At work
Apprentice (Stage 1)	£4.42	£5.17
Apprentice (Stage 2)	£6.51	£7.27
Apprentice (Stage 3)	£9.42	£10.20
Apprentice (Stage 4)	£9.97	£10.75

Source: <http://www.jib.org.uk/handbook.aspx?cid=13>, dated 16 April 2013

For many apprentices, reference was made to Joint Industry Board (JIB) rates of pay, as shown in Table 9.4. JIB works in partnership with employers and trade unions. These rates are seen as the industry standard. Although JIB sets rates for the electrical trade, there is no requirement that electrical contractors follow the recommended pay structure, though JIB member organisations tend to pay this rate.

Some apprentices made reference to JIB rates:

Alexander: *You get paid initially, because you're on JIB, you get JIB rates and so in the first year you get paid a certain amount and the next year it goes up, next year it goes up. I think it was £5.80 an hour and then second year is £8.02, third year is £11.25 and then the fourth year is £11.80 something I think it is....Once trained...£14.00 I think it is. That's the normal rate when you first get qualified.*

(male, Mixed, apprentice, age 23, college sample)

Zac: *I'm JIB, we're a JIB company, so we're a joint industry board.*

(male, white, apprentice, age 21, contractor sample)

However, some apprentices were not paid JIB rates:

Laura: *No ... [company] weren't JIB, they pay what they want.*

(female, white, apprentice, age 19, contractor sample)

The pay for some of the apprentices was quite good compared to others, depending upon the organisation they worked for. The pay for one apprentice, working for a large public organisation, was twice as much as others:

Aiden: *I think, for my age, I get paid a lot compared to some of the others in my class ... I get paid way more than them. Yeah, and I think that's the whole point of just being on the NHS. Some of the people in my class now, they're on I think £8/£9 but me, at the moment, I'm on £13 something an hour.*

(male, BAME, apprentice, age 20, college sample)

For Jayden, taking up his apprenticeship meant a reduction in pay as he previously worked for a company not associated with construction or the electrical trade. Despite this, he was keen to take on the apprenticeship, as ultimately in the long term he would be a qualified electrician:

Jayden: *It was a burden off my shoulder. My parents were really happy as well. My money's gone down quite a bit, but the main thing is I've got secure work for the next three or four years. My money will go up sooner or later and I'll have a qualification.*

(male, BAME, white, apprentice, age 22, college sample)

Despite the low pay for apprentices, this does increase with training, as noted by one of the apprentices:

Parker: *At the moment, I'm on ... when I first started, I started off on about £6 an hour, which is quite a good starting wage. Once I qualified to the 1st qualification, the 1st year, it went up to £8 an hour and at the moment now, this last year before I get to fully qualified electrician, I'm on £11.50 an hour I think, which isn't bad. It would go up to electrician's rate, which is about £15.80, about £16.00.*

(male, white, apprentice, age 20, college sample)

The findings show that the rate of pay differed among the apprentices. A number worked for electrical firms who were more involved in industrial and commercial work, predominately those with JIB membership, and subsequently paid JIB rates. However, some firms may pay below the JIB rate. What confuses the issue is where the Government has set a rate of pay for apprentices far lower than the national minimum wage and lower than the JIB apprentice wage.

For some trainees, this was a barrier to searching for an apprenticeship, especially among the trainees who were older and had a family to support. For example David, BAME, non-apprentice, openly stated that the problem with being taken on as an apprentice is the low rate of pay, which would not allow him to support himself financially.

9.3.8 To be able to enjoy relationships, social networks and to make friends at work

Apprentices, irrespective of their ethnic background, experienced being treated differently because of social networks within the organisation. The traditional idea of an apprenticeship is that the older qualified person passes on his/her knowledge to the apprentice. One apprentice explained that some older workers within the organisation felt threatened by a younger apprentice:

Parker: *There's a bit of politics in the job. There's some older engineers that don't like it that the young people are coming up in the world because we're gonna take their job. Then there's a couple of other engineers that know that we're the future, so they try to pass the knowledge onto us and I have quite a good engineer at one of my sites and he just said "look, I didn't learn this in one day, I had to make mistakes to learn from my mistakes," so, that's what I'm doing right now.*
(male, white, apprentice, age 20, college sample)

Parker's interview also highlighted that some older workers were supportive of apprentices. A few apprentices refer to networks within the organisation, formed by socialising in the pub:

Charlie: *A lot of them go the pub at night and if you don't go to the pub it's like you're an outsider if you don't go drinking, but I don't wanna go drinking anyway. When you're a 1st year, you earn £4.14 an hour, you're earning pennies, so the last thing you wanna do is be spending an hour of your wage on a drink.*
(white, male, apprentice, age 20, contractor sample)

Although Carson and Charlie both work for the same electrical contractor, the difference between these two apprentices is that Charlie lives outside of London, whilst Carson lives in London. It is for this reason that he does not go to the pub:

Carson: *They all come from the same area, they're all mates 'n' go out 'n' play golf together 'n' go down the pub drinking whereas. You get someone like me, some of the people I'm friends with at work, we come from down 'ere'.*
(white, male, apprentice, age 19, contractor sample)

A few apprentices noted that, if they were 'liked' within the organisation, this had positive implications on the type of work they were given:

Justin: *One thing I don't like is it's a bit cliquey ... like our resource manager is [], but she'll have her favourites and they'll get sorted out. They'll get to decide where they go but other people it would be like "you're going there." for jobs. Say if you get a good job come up, she'll have her mates.*
(male, white, apprentice, age 19, contractor sample)

For Liam his experience of securing an apprenticeship was a struggle, so now that he has one he is not concerned whether or not he is liked; nor does he focus on whether he is disliked:

Liam: *Working for [company], where my mindset is changed that, not that I've become so hard, not as many things affect me as much that I'm on a mission to pursue something, so I've heard it all before, you can like me/dislike me, I'm not too fussed but to an extent.*
(male, BAME, apprentice, age 24, contractor sample)

The electrical contractors can be seen as gatekeepers in terms of opportunities, and whether those opportunities are achieved. Being in the 'favoured' group meant preferential treatment when it came to being placed on better projects.

Apprentices were treated differently irrespective of their ethnic background. In her work on the capability approach, Robeyns (2003) argues that being able to enjoy social networks is an important aspect. This is also supported in the works of Bradley and Nguyen (2004a) who argue that networking, among other things, is an important aspect in making a successful transition. However, Ahmed et al., (2008) argue that the social networks of the BAME group are limited compared to the white majority and this has an impact on securing employment in the construction industry. These interviews demonstrated why social networks are an important factor, first, because family members sometimes have a part to play in providing information about an apprenticeship and access to electrical contractors and, second, because, once the individual has secured an apprenticeship, being involved in social networks has implications for the type of work the apprentice is exposed

to undifferentiated by ethnicity.

9.3.9 To be supported to complete the apprenticeship framework

The support provided to apprentices to complete their apprenticeship, mainly took the form of the involvement of three actors: the college, the contractor and the managing agent¹⁸, such as 'JTL' or 'BEST'. In some instances, the individual had the added benefit of a mentor within the working environment.

9.3.9.1 Being supported by the employer

All employers provided support to their apprentices, although, among the electrical contractors, the type of support provided varied. One apprentice explained that the type of work he was doing did not warrant a great deal of support:

Ben: *Umm ... it's alright, y'know. If I need it, they'll give me time at work to do some of my sort of college work but, yeah, like I was saying earlier, in the classroom really there's not a lot my employer does. They sub-contract a lot of stuff, which is annoying, so we, y'know, we're more of a maintenance firm which is understandable. I'll do that, but it turns out more lately that we're just sort of changing light bulbs, re-setting a trip circuit and stuff like that, so we aren't doing the biggest amount of like install and, y'know, sort of bigger jobs. Obviously, we've done a little bit of install here 'n' that but, in my opinion, it could have been more.*
(male, white, apprentice, age 18, college sample)

In contrast, the support, offered by the employer extended to undertaking 'tickets', which are seen as additional training for the apprentice. One apprentice mentioned he benefitted from such additional training whilst working on site:

Sean: *They'll put you through all kinds of training like IPAF¹⁹, which is driving and stuff like that, y'know, elevated towers that you can drive around in. They put you through quite a lot of extra training. Just little things like they'll help you on site*

¹⁸ JTL and BEST and both managing agents and their role are to provide a training officer, who addresses any problems that the apprentice may have.

¹⁹ IPAF (International Powered Access Federation) is training undertaken on machinery.

basically. There's another one, Pasma, and they produce and build scaffolds.
(male, white, apprentice, age 20, contractor sample)

These interviews highlight that the type of support provided by the contractors varied among the apprentices. One raised concerns about the lack of support provided by the employer; another said that he did not feel supported; while another was extremely positive about the support received, which extended to his training and keeping the workforce safe.

9.3.9.2 Being supported by Managing agents, such as JTL and BEST

Both JTL and BEST are managing agents who work in partnership with contractors and colleges, and are seen as an important element in the delivery of apprenticeships. One apprentice spoke about his interaction with his managing agent:

Jayden: *Our training provider from BEST, he came into my site a couple of weeks ago and he was talking to me about it and he was like 'any problem that you have with anything, you can call me and sort it out. If you're open about work or with your college or studies, we'll do our best to ... we're like your point of contact for everything.*
(male, BAME, apprentice, age 22, college sample)

Another apprentice also discussed his experience of having a JTL officer:

Hunter: *My JTL officer, he'll come on site and he'll review certain works you've done and he'll review you and he'll get a report from the people, or someone you've been working with for a long time. They'll report you on punctuality, attendance and just how you've been.*
(male, white, apprentice, age 19, contractor sample)

Although the apprentices benefited from the support of a managing agent, this support is not available to non-apprentices by definition.

9.3.9.3 Mentor support

Another type of support that apprentices received was in the form of a mentor. Someone within the organisation normally gave the mentor support and was predominately provided in the first two years of the apprenticeship, when the apprentice is less experienced and requires the added benefit of additional support. Aiden mentioned his experience of having a mentor:

Aiden: *Yeah, at work. Well, not so much now 'cos obviously it is my 3rd year, but when I first started there was someone I followed, he taught me a lot of stuff you basically learn off that person. So, he was my mentor, yeah.*
(male, BAME, apprentice, age 20, college sample)

However, not all apprentices, working on site, had access to one:

Jason: *I got a letter about a month ago saying 'your new mentor is [],' but I've never met him, he's on a different job. It says in the letter that 'this is someone you can turn to, this is someone you work with, so you can learn everything they know ...' I've never worked with him in my life, I don't really know, I know of him, but I never worked with him, I wouldn't be able to ring him up if I had a problem. I reckon, if you go on site, and you have a mentor and you become a good apprentice, because if you're with someone through your whole apprenticeship, you'll learn everything they know, which will be good.*
(male, white, apprentice, age 19, contractor sample)

Unfortunately, at times, the mentor framework within organisations was uncertain:

Charlie: *You are, on a piece of paper, yeah. I started and my mentor was meant to be a certain bloke and I never, ever, worked with him, ever and I always thought he was my mentor and then I found out later on 'oh no he's not your mentor anymore.' 'Ok ...' 'There is no mentor, you haven't really got one.*
(male, white, apprentice, age 20, contractor sample)

There were occasions that the mentor was a supervisor, which caused problems, as they were not perceived as a mentor:

Sean: Cos it's like they think they're giving you a mentor, but it's just your supervisor at the end of the day, you don't get no different treatment or anything like that, if you know what I mean.

(male, white, apprentice, age 20, contractor sample)

Support is important to ensure that the apprentice is able to complete the electrical framework and the mentor can be an additional resource to that of the managing agents, for example, JTL and BEST. However, the practicality of having a mentor was of concern. For example, on the 2012 Olympic, the vastness of the area meant that apprentices did not have direct access to their mentor. In addition, having a supervisor acting as a mentor may inhibit the apprentice seeking and asking questions because of confidentiality concerns. Apprentices working in the Olympic site also had the additional support of the apprenticeship hub set up to provide support and guidance to the apprentices working on the 2012 Olympic site (Martins *et al.*, 2011). The filming on the Olympic site (Dickinson, 2012), see Appendix 1, documented this support.

These findings show that there was a difference in support provided to the two apprentices' sub-samples, namely, 'college' and 'contractor'. However, there was a difference in the support provided to the non-apprentices; being in the college environment, and thus not exposed to the construction labour market, they did not benefit from having access, for example, to a managing agent or a mentor.

9.3.10 To be treated fairly and without discrimination

Despite anti-discrimination legislation in the form of the Equality Act 2010 (GOV.UK, 2014b), there is still discrimination in the construction industry, which was experienced by both the BAME and the white group. Discrimination tended to take the form of 'inappropriate language' and 'banter', both of which would not normally be tolerated in other types of organisations. However, it appears to be more accepted in the construction industry. One apprentice initially played down the fact that he was bullied at work, as he did not want to discuss his experience. Once the researcher probed a little bit more, during his interview, he subsequently

did provide some insight:

Aiden: *The whole company hates them kind of people. They're just bullies, innit like. They just suck the positivity out of you. Them kind of people, you don't wanna be around them, they're just like old people and moany and shit.....Sometimes on site, there was a bit of trouble on site and whatever, but not too much. It's over now.....Just a bit of banter on site. Someone was being an idiot towards me basically, kind of bullying in a way, but just being stupid. I had to report him. Basically.....It was fairly bad, I'm not gonna lie. It was quite bad, but it's all been sorted out now anyway, so it don't matter.*
(male, BAME, apprentice, age 20, college sample)

Aiden was bullied at work, which he had to report to his employers so the issue could be resolved. From the interviews it was apparent that apprentices, in contrast to qualified electricians within the contractor's organisation, are generally seen to lie at the lower end of the staff hierarchy:

Harry: *When I was younger, you know you get a little picked on. When you just start, they make you the donkey don't they, as in get the tea and stuff like that, nothing really discriminating. If you're an apprentice working for an electrician, he's always gonna make you do the donkeywork, that's about it really, but that's normal on every trade I think.....Yeah. They don't make you do the donkey, donkeywork, but sometimes they'll be cutting off wires and you know the bits and pieces they leave, you have to clean. Basically, if you was labour, you have to do that anyway, but sometimes you think they take advantage of you sort of thing. They'll be cutting off wires there and they'll just snip them off and leave it and you'll have to do the sweeping up, it's just like donkeywork basically.*
(male, BAME, apprentice, age 27, college sample)

Harry sometimes found that his work consisted of clearing up after the electricians on site. Several apprentices also made reference to a hierarchy within the electrical trade, which was sometimes the cause of being treated differently:

Ryan: *In employment, obviously, you've got people who've got a higher status than you, I get treated differently to someone who's a fully qualified electrician 'cos I have to abide whereas they can say "y'know what, f you" and do their own*

thing..... I get treated differently automatically, just because I'm an apprentice, I'm not fully qualified. I'm there as a labourer and I'm learning, so I'm expected to do exactly what they tell me to do.

(male, BAME, apprentice, age 20, college sample)

Being treated differently on occasions was very overt and another apprentice discussed being bullied on site, which took the form of referring to his body type:

Carson: *I don't get along with many of 'em and I've had arguments with 'em, 'cos I've been bullied twice really. I mean, at work, at the site I'm on now. I've been called it many times by this guy, y'know, a fat, useless, idiotic prick and stuff like that and I put in a complaint against it the first time and it all went well.*

(male, white, apprentice, age 19, college sample)

Another apprentice was treated differently because of his background, coming from a council estate and, for him, his use of language was an issue:

Charlie *It used to be like "aah, you speak like you think you're black," that's what they used to say to me. I'm like "I really don't, sorry it's just my accent. It's just a really rural ... rural? No, council, sort of inner city accent so ... sorry about that.*

(male, white, apprentice, age 20, contractor sample)

Ryan, an apprentice living in London who identified himself as being mixed, also talked about language and the need to adapt the way he speaks, whether he was with his friend or at work. Charlie was white, but his employers associated the way he spoke with having an 'urban' accent. Charlie lived in Nottingham but grew up on a council estate so the way he spoke can be attributed to the environment where he lived. There is a difference between Charlie and Ryan; Ryan understands the need to change his language to suit the situation, while Charlie did not adapt his language and makes reference to his inner city accent. However, language in construction is normally discussed in the context of racial banter (Caplan *et al.*, 2009; CABE, 2005), which is seen as part of the culture of the construction industry. Furthermore, in the work of Ahmed *et al.*, (2007) language, specifically racist banter, is seen as a barrier for the BAME group accessing the construction industry.

The above interviews show that racist banter may affect both the BAME group and the white group within the industry. They reveal the pervasiveness of stereotypes.

9.3.11 To have goals and aspirations

Apprentices and non-apprentices were asked about their goals and aspirations after college. For the majority of non-apprentices these were to complete their current electrical training; several also spoke about what they would do once they had completed their qualifications, including working aboard, travelling and starting their own business to become self-employed. With regards to continuing with the training, a non-apprentice stated:

Benjamin: *Go on to do Level 3. Yeah, electrical/technical, whatever the course would be. Dunno what it is, but it's basically electrical installation. It's just changed the name.*
(male, white, non-apprentice, age 17)

Another non-apprentice divided his goals into short and long term ones, which included having a family:

David: *Immediate goals .. complete this course, hold down this job, 'cos I've never really been able to hold down a job for too long. I'm blessed I've got a job like this anyway, 'cos it's got its perks. I don't wanna go back to jail, I can't see how I could end up going back to jail really. The situation that I'm in now ... yeah, just be happy.....Happy looks like financially stable, maybe married, maybe one more kid. Yeah, just no worries. Obviously, you're gonna have little, niggling things that are not gonna go your way, but just happy man.*
(male, BAME, non-apprentice, age 27)

While the non-apprentice sample wanted to continue with their training, the apprentice sample focused on undertaking higher qualifications:

Roger: *Well, to be honest, the college actually gave me a book that shows how you can advance through engineering. I found that good. Also, a few craftspeople at my work are actually doing foundation degrees and everything like that, so I kind of*

seen where I could be headed. My goals and aspirations, personally, probably move onto a craftsperson. I don't actually intend to stay at the NHS, I'd like to move maybe somewhere close to home, or just get around, see different environments. You can always learn more. Also, I wanna do what they call a HNC or a HND, a Higher National Certificate or Degree, so move onto that and then just see where I could go. I mean, I've seen how you can advance. You can become a craftsperson, technician, supervisor, officer, director, so you can aim quite high.

(male, BAME, apprentice, age 18, college sample)

A few apprentices wished to continue learning, but were exploring the possibility of embarking upon different trades:

Nolan: *I just love all different trades and I think, after this, I maybe try and look at another trade. I just wanna get trades under my belt, just to have them. I don't know yet, but it would be handy, 'cos everyone needs a trade and if you've got multiple trades, it means you're gonna get more work don't it. So that's what I'm looking at. Everyone's goal is saying they want their own business and stuff and that is a massive goal. It is a massive achievement. It's a bit generic though because everyone just wants to do it. I just wanna be successful. I wanna have trades. I just wanna be clued up. I wanna have qualifications and maybe have a plumbing trade. Maybe have a carpentry trade and just, I dunno, just be successful. Just be someone who's respected.*

(male, white, apprentice, age 21, contractor sample)

Despite Lucy having a negative experience within the construction industry, mainly in the form of discrimination, being made redundant and needing to find another employer to continue her apprenticeship, she also had high hopes for the future. She shared the same views as many of the other apprentices in terms of wanting to start her own business:

Lucy: *Well, I wanna learn to drive. I wanna get me own van. I wanna work for myself, or I've been told by so many people, right, by different firms, I'm gonna be a supervisor by the time I'm 27 they went "cos you're so bossy." They said you're gonna be a supervisor by the time you're 27, so I could see myself*

running my own company. I wanna call it "Sparkles" 'n' all the men are gonna wear tight, extra small pink shirts.

(laughter)

I've already thought about it. All the vans gonna have glitter on it 'n' everything.

(female, white, apprentice, age 19, contractor sample)

The interviews showed that both apprentices and non-apprentices were committed to completing their qualifications. In that respect there were similarities between the two trainee groups.

9.3.12 Summary: The practical capability list

Table 9.5 provides a summary of the capability list, with definitions, for this stage of the transition process. As noted earlier, the list at this stage of the transition process was created using the voices of the electrical trainees, taking a reflective approach.

Table 9.5 The capability list created at this stage of the transition process

	The Hypothetical Capability List	The Practical Capability List: The Work-Based Learning Experience
	The capability.....	The capability.....
1.	To have formal education	To have formal qualifications
2.	To move from place to place	To move from place to place
3.	To be healthy	To be healthy
4.	To have social relations	To enjoy relationships, social networks and to make friends at work
5.	To have knowledge	To have knowledge
6.	To be treated fairly, to be respected and have dignity	To be treated fairly
7.	To be supported by institutions	To be supported at work
8.		To have goals and aspirations
9.		To have a voice and to participate in interviews
10.		To be financially rewarded
11.		To understand and reason, have the skills to participate in society.

9.4 Factors that may affect the capability set

This section examines the factors that may affect the capability set. The findings showed that the capability list could be affected by organisations. However, what was also of importance was the resilience of the trainees to navigate through the transition process, and their apprenticeship.

9.4.1 ‘Whatever obstacle comes my way, I’ll try to overcome it to get to my goal’

As discussed above, both of the apprentices and non-apprentices had aspirations for the future; more importantly, the trainees were very focused on completing their training. Benjamin, a non-apprentice, explained that nothing would get in his way of achieving his goals:

Benjamin: *'Nothing really, it's just ... that's it, like nothing that's stopped me. I wanna keep going, whatever obstacle comes my way. I'll try to overcome it to get to my goal'.*
(male, white, non-apprentice, age 17)

For most non-apprentices and apprentices a common theme was that nothing would inhibit them from achieving their goals. However, on further discussion with the trainees, there were a variety of factors referred to by both non-apprentices and apprentices that had so far hindered achieving their goals, such as education, opportunities, funding, qualifications, confidence, self-belief and their past.

9.4.2 No need to advertise apprenticeships vacancies: 'Our reputation precedes us'

Electrical contractors receive a large number of applications for apprenticeships so are selective with their recruitment process. An electrical contractor stated:

Our reputation precedes us in terms of training provided to our apprentices. So each year we receive somewhere between 150-250 applications for apprenticeships just for London'.
(male, white, Electrical Contractor, located in London Olympic site)

Another electrical contractor located in London also supported this view, namely that every year they are inundated with applications for apprenticeships. Both these companies did not find it necessary to advertise their apprenticeships due to the number of applications received. This could be a barrier for individuals who are not aware of these companies and, subsequently, the lack of advertising may mean that the prospective apprentice misses that recruitment cycle.

9.4.3 What happens when an apprentice loses their apprenticeship?

Although apprentices are closer to the labour market, there is no guarantee that at the end of the apprentice training that they will be kept on by the organisation. At the beginning of their apprenticeship, an apprentice will sign an 'apprenticeship agreement', a contract stipulating the training framework to be followed. However,

it is not a legally binding contract of employment (Mirza-Davies, 2014). What is of interest is that some apprentices did not realise they were on an apprenticeship agreement. Furthermore, there is no guarantee the apprentice will work for the same organisation for the duration of the training.

The findings showed that securing an apprenticeship might prove difficult and challenging. However, one apprentice spoke vividly about her experience in losing her apprenticeship:

Lucy: *Yeah, they say they do, but [managing agent] never helped me out. I phoned him up that day, I told him, I went "mate, I've got a bit of a problem here, I've just been made redundant," and he laughed and I went "don't laugh." I said that to him, I went "don't laugh." And he went "no, it's not funny, you're right".*

(female, white, apprentice, age 19, contractor sample)

Lucy worked on the Olympic site but said she was made redundant after complaining to her employers about the ill treatment she received from the male workers. After losing her apprenticeship, Lucy was left to find another employer. She had to call around to the electrical contractors in the 'yellow pages' in a bid to find a new employer who would allow her to continue her apprenticeship. She was finally able to find a small firm that would take her on. However, at first they were somewhat reluctant because they had never taken on a female and did not have many apprentices.

Lucy: *Mmm ... I was gobsmacked. I was crying 'n' everything. I was like "I'm not losing ..." So, I kept phoning him. I was like phone, phone, phone ... I was like "look, mate, you need to take me on, 'cos I need to save my apprenticeship". I went "I am not losing all the effort I've put in to do it all over again". 'Cos you'd have to re-sit the exams an' everything again. I said "I'm not doing it". He went, "well, look, I'm a bit nervous in taking a girl on 'cos you do bring a bit of unwanted attention". I went, "look Bob, I can 'andle meself, just give me a run-out, we'll see if I like you, you like me and we'll like take it from there".*

He went "alright then".

(female, white, apprentice, age 19, contractor sample)

Another apprentice felt he was at risk of losing his apprenticeship, not because of being made redundant, but because he did not fit in with the organisation:

Carson: *Cos, (1) they're trying to sack me at the moment and (2) I mean, they've been saying stuff like that since I first started. Y'know, it's the way they treated me different. If they didn't work on the Olympics 'n' that, if we didn't get the Olympics, they probably wouldn't have had to work down here, probably wouldn't need someone from the local area 'n' that and they would have carried on with what they usually do, 'cos you saw it, there was all different levels. You're gonna get your fourth years, third years, second years and first years. Every single one of 'em I've seen so far has all been from their area, or the local area, and they're based in [area], but you might get people from Stevenage and Hitchin, but it's still within that parameter. Whereas, me, I'm way down 'ere somewhere, I'm a bit broke off.'*
(male, white, apprentice, age 19, college sample)

Carson was recruited by the contractor to work on the Olympic site, but he believed that this was the only reason why he was taken on and that he might lose his apprenticeship, as at the time of the interview the Olympic build was coming to an end.

9.4.4 'My company, really, they've just sort of left me clearing up after everyone'

The concept of apprenticeships is that they should allow apprentices access to work so that they can demonstrate their competence in order to become fully qualified craftspersons. In addition, apprenticeship prepares apprentices for work by acquiring job specific skills (Colley *et al.*, 2003). Therefore, being exposed to a range of work while doing an apprenticeship is important. However, having the variety of work to gain the necessary practical experience was at times a concern for the apprentices. One apprentice explained that he was only exposed to a limited amount of electrical work:

Carson: *My company, really, they've just sort of left me clearing up after everyone. It's like they've hired me for cheap labour 'n' that.*

(male, white, apprentice, age 19, contractor sample)

Another apprentice who worked for a large public organisation, a hospital, described how not being on site does not allow him to gain the installation experience that he needs:

Aiden: *It can be an advantage and a disadvantage, 'cos say when we have practical, now 3rd year practical, they expect you to do a lot of stuff just from when you've been on site 24/7 but, while I'm not on site I'm in the hospital. I don't get the installation experience so I'm kind of not as fast off the mark as the others, but I know what I'm doing, so you have to expect me to maybe mess up or take things a little bit slower 'cos I've never done it before, but others have. Then, advantage-wise is they don't know how to maintain it after and I do, so it's like they can set up, they can start it fresh, but after that, where they go from there ... they might not have a clue. But I could set it up and sort it out and everything, but after I know what to do. But then the whole difference is that they can set up 2 times faster than me. I may take longer, not may, I would take longer.*

(male, BAME, apprentice, age 23, contractor sample)

So even once an individual has secured an apprenticeship, there are still barriers in terms of being able to complete the work. There was a consensus among the apprentices that the activities completed at college did not compare to those in the working environment. At college much emphasis is placed upon having a good understanding of Maths. However, many trainees said that, although this is a subject studied at college, the information is not used on site.

Alexander: *Nothing, nothing at all. What we do in college is so irrelevant to what you do on site, there's nothing at all. Some of the formulas, I think I'll understand. Like you're doing certain formulas, but I think college work you do at the moment is based for people who are gonna go higher up in the trade like consultants, that kind of thing. On site, I've never once seen any electrician use a formula. One of the things you do in college and none of them ... even some of the questions in my exams, I'll go into work and ask people I'm working with "do you know what this*

is?” They’re like “what’s that?” We don’t work in them kind of things, so they don’t know what it is. It’s just like no point doing it really.

(male, BAME, apprentice, age 23, college sample)

Ryan stated that the knowledge he gained at college was useful as it provided him with information about the fundamentals of the electrical trade. However, he also said that the majority of what he had learnt came from working on site:

Ryan: *Some of it’s similar, I suppose. Learning circuitry ... when you’re learning how to wire green circuits and lighting circuits and blah, blah, blah, that stuff’s kind of relevant, but most of what I know today and all of the skills that I use at work, I learn at work.*

(male, BAME, apprentice, age 20, college sample)

David thought that what he learnt at college was only a requirement to pass the necessary electrical exams:

David: *It’s different, it’s a lot different. Like some of the stuff we’ve .. err we do here I’ve spoken to some of the sparks and they said they’ve never used it, ever so ... like, it’s being taught to pass an exam at the end of the day really most of the time.*

(male, white, apprentice, age 17, college sample)

Jayden explained that what he is learning at college relates particularly to the domestic market. One of his college modules was learning about equations, information which he understood that he needs to know as he may use the mathematical equation on site. Jayden worked for a large contractor but the electrical work he was involved in did not take into consideration all aspects of the electrical installations, such as commercial and industrial.

Jayden: *You learn like a hundred million times more on site in a week than you do in college. Like here, for example, now we’re doing formulas and we’re doing electrons and mass and gravity and working out and stuff like that, you don’t ever do nothing like that at work. It’s nothing like that, but you’ve got to know it all anyway. But with the formulas, like later on, it will come in handy when you’re trying to work out stuff for circuits and all of*

that, but at the moment, there's not really much relevance. Even in the workshop, everything we're doing is for domestic stuff, and domestic electrician and commercial electrician are totally different. But, in the workshop, we will start doing like containment, which is like metal work, that'll be associated to what I do at work, but what we're doing on the little wooden boards and stuff, we don't do nothing like that at work.
(male, BAME, apprentice, age 22, college sample)

Jason also mentioned studying mathematical equations, but unlike Jayden, does not understand the importance of the subject. Also, his interview highlighted that his peers in the working environment did not inform Jason of the necessity of learning such subjects so that he did not think what he was learning at college translated to what is being done on site.

Jason: *What you learn in college you'll never, ever use on site. Yeah, never, ever. At college, you learn stuff like equations, you learn about electricity, about what goes through the cables, about how much current it can take, what voltage of all this, but you never, ever use any of it. Everyone says that, even the teachers tell ya, what we're teaching you now, we're teaching you this to get the qualification, but this information you'll never, ever use in your lifetime again, which you don't.... Pointless really, but it's what you need for the qualification innit, so you've gotta do it, so it is proper pointless. I go on site now and I'll never use an equation, but when you're at college, you study equations for like 6 months, but you never, ever use it. Nothing. Every apprentice will tell you that, every spark will tell ya, everything you learn in college, you never, ever use.*
(male, white, age 19, apprentice, contractor sample)

In the main, apprentices thought that the knowledge gained in the college environment did not align itself with the working environment. Charlie explained:

Charlie: *Yeah, one thing that I do want to actually tell you about. Apprentices that do pure college work until they're qualified to Level 3 and all the rest of it, when they come on site they're terrible. You can't be an electrician without site work. You can't have a full time college based course and come out the other end of it and say "yeah, I'm an electrician." You're not.*
(white, male, apprentice, age 20, contractor sample)

The point made by Charlie is that in his opinion the electrical technical certificate is not useful. However, this trainee did embark upon this certificate for one year prior to starting his apprenticeship. There were a few other apprentices who had completed the technical certificate prior to their apprenticeship who did not share Charlie's view, but thought that it helped them in securing their apprenticeship as they had some knowledge of the trade.

From the interviews there was concern as to whether the work completed at college had value in the work place. The Wolf report on apprenticeships also shared this concern about the disconnect between the labour market and VET provisions (Wolf, 2011). A representative from one of the electrical associations interviewed, whose role is to represent electrical contractors, shared this view. He considered that apprentices are asked to complete a framework that is not useful for the electrical industry and went on further to say that the electrical technical certificate is based upon 'book learning' and the only practical experience it offers is having access to a workshop at college. The interviews highlighted a disparity between what the trainees are asked to study at college and what some electrical organisations believe should be studied. While there maybe a disconnect, between organisations, for example, college and electrical contracting, the trainees are the ones studying for this qualification. More importantly, the interviews showed that the trainees valued the qualifications in that it could provide them access to the construction industry. Indeed, whilst some trainees were focused - as were the colleges - on the outcome of achieving the electrical qualification, they appeared at times to place less emphasis on what could be learnt within the confines of the colleges.

9.5 Liam's story: his work-based learning experience

This section focuses on Liam's story. In the last chapter, the transition period for Liam from school to securing an electrical course was discussed. Once Liam had secured his electrical course at college, he secured his electrical apprenticeship the

following year. In total, it took Liam four years after leaving school to secure his electrical apprenticeship.

Despite having two previous interviews with his father's electrical firm, Liam was not able to secure an electrical apprenticeship. In spite of that, Liam had the opportunity to attend a third interview for an electrical apprenticeship, with an electrical contractor located outside London. On this occasion things were different for Liam. He was now living with his father and he was in a different geographical environment compared to that where he grew up with his mother. His social network changed and he started associating with more positive people. One friend in particular had quite an impact on him and Liam changed his outlook on life. Liam's friend took him to church and this was the first time that Liam was not hearing anything negative. He also spent time speaking with the church pastor, who sat him down and spoke about life and the decisions one makes. Here, Liam provides an insight into how things were different:

This time, I felt equipped. I'd been to college.....I went to the interview and I remember speaking to a guy who really influenced me. I started going to church, to be honest and he sort of became ... when I moved to my dad's I got away out of my environment and I went to a friend named Stanley that I used to knock up with, we used to go to football together. I knew him as a goody two shoes. Never gets in trouble I always knew him, but I never hung around with him. Now, he told me come to this church thing ... "I don't wanna go."

So I went, and then I really enjoyed it. Everything was a bit more positive. I was hearing negative all my life, and now I'm hearing something positive. Then the pastor sat down with me and he said all these things that I never heard he was telling me, and then he told me one thing that stuck with me. He said "you can do it, think big." Like, 'what do you mean?'

This was one of the few times that Liam mentioned seeking help from someone in the form of an individual sitting him down to talk about things of a positive nature.

But what he was showing me is to broaden my mind. The capacity of my mind. Now I go ... "well ..." and he said "think big" and I told him I got an interview at [electrical contractor] and he sat down

with me and he gave me some interview techniques, so that you have ambitions to be one of the best electricians in London, and I'm like maybe this person such and such and such.

Prior to attending the interview with the construction firm, Liam sought advice on how he should perform at interviews, something that he had not done previously:

Anyway, I got the interview, so my identity sort of changed. I was hungry, there was an opportunity in front of me that I've been seeking for a while, and it come to a point where all the interview techniques went out the window and I said "I need this job, I've been seeking this all my life, the opportunity which is before me, I just wanna, like it's something that I've been longing for". I said I quit my job and went to college just to kick start that and they said "ok, we'll get back to yo" and it was "aah, please, please ..." and then I got a letter from them saying "you've got the job". It was like "yes, I actually did it".

When Liam secured his apprenticeship he was elated. Due to the journey that Liam endured through and after school he makes the point that he was 'hungry' for the opportunity. The opportunity he refers to is securing an electrical apprenticeship. He has had to deal with multiple barriers to secure his apprenticeship. Listening to Liam, as he describes how he begged for the electrical apprenticeship, he exuberates with joy when he tells the story of securing it:

I actually got someone that's gonna invest in me, like train me up. I get a qualification, I get a job and it was like ... I finally got it. I called my dad up and said "dad, I got the job," and I was 20, maybe 21, and like he said "you should have done this years ago" and I think not even a congratulations or anything like that?

Liam talks less about his father than about his relationship with his mother. Clearly his father's opinion matters to him. When Liam previously failed to secure his apprenticeship, his father told him that Liam 'was no son of his'. Liam had experienced disappointment through his life: from his father, his mother and the construction course he was undertaking when he was 19, prior to securing the electrical course. But, despite these disappointments, Liam was more resilient than he was previously:

*At the time, I didn't care, it was just like now I did it, not on my own, but my family ... everyone put me down so ... you didn't contribute for me getting a job. So, I got the job and then I started. I remember my first day, getting onto that site.
(laughter)*

*The Sunday before, I tried on my uniform.
(laughter)*

I tried on my uniform, looked in the mirror and it was ... yes!

Liam was so proud when he secured his apprenticeship; he had been on a journey that had been demanding, stressful and, at times, without hope and no sense of direction. The first site that Liam worked on was the 2012 Olympics and he was there for two years when he was then transferred to Crossness, a £145m upgrade project in East London to improve water quality in the River Thames (Matheson, 2012).

9.6 Conclusions

The chapter has sought to answer the following questions:

1. What capabilities are necessary at this stage of the transition process;
2. What are the factors that affect the trainees' capability set; and
3. Do the capability sets of the BAME group and the white group differ?

Turning to the chapter questions, a capability list was created for this stage of the transition process and the list. The list was created, again, using the narratives of the trainees. At this stage of the transition process the capability list is different for the two trainee types – apprentices and non-apprentices, in that the apprentices have an employer and are able to complete the electrical framework. However, there is an interesting difference between the BAME group and the white group because the BAME group had A-levels when they embarked on their apprenticeship and thus had higher qualifications than GCSEs.

In the creation of the list differences between the trainee types are highlighted but there are also differences in the contractor and college samples, in terms of the type of work some apprentices are exposed to and their treatment on site, some unrelated to ethnicity.

This chapter revealed that the transition process is very individual. Despite the time and effort required to find an apprenticeship, it could be argued that the treatment of the apprentices, in some instances, would not normally be tolerated in organisations. Notwithstanding, none of the apprentices thought about not completing their apprenticeship. The chapter also illustrates the importance of examining the transition by focusing on 'comprehensive outcomes', which Sen (2009) describes as seeing outcome in terms of whether it is through the dictation of others or refers to where a reason ends up. For example, the interviews highlighted that some apprentices did not have a choice in the type of work they were involved in, such as being exposed to labouring work or work that would not allow them to gain experience in certain areas, for instance industrial and commercial electrical work. This has implications for the trainees' ability to complete his/her framework.

The next chapter discusses the capability lists that have been created:

1. *The abstract list*; as noted in the literature;
2. *The hypothetical list*; created using published data, organisational interviews; and
3. *The three practical lists created*; at each of the three stages of the transition process, using the narrative of the voices of the trainees.

The lists are used to examine and explain how the trainees changed, why they changed and whom they changed for. The chapter, by comparing and contrasting ethnic groups and trainee types also answers some of the research questions identified in Chapter 1.

10. The overall transition process of electrical trainees: Discussion and conclusions

10.1 Introduction

Chapter 10 is the final chapter in Part Four of the thesis. The purpose of Part Four has been to present and analyse the core findings, using Sen's capability approach. This chapter provides a conclusion to Part Four and in doing so discusses and sets out the main findings from the previous chapters, highlighting the differences between:

1. the two ethnic groups, the BAME group and the white group; and
2. the two trainee types, apprentices and non- apprentices.

Throughout the last four chapters comparisons were made between the two ethnic groups and the two trainee types. Chapter 6 provided an introduction to the trainees and examined selected socio-economic characteristics of the trainees, showing patterns of advantage and disadvantage, with those from the BAME group more disadvantaged than the white group. Chapters 7-9 focused on the three stages of the transition process, namely, 'in school', 'at college' and 'in work-based learning'. Each of the three chapters answered the following three questions:

1. 'What capabilities are necessary at this stage of the transition process?';
2. 'What are the factors that affect the trainees' capability set?'; and
3. 'Do the capability sets of the BAME group and the white group differ?'

It was necessary not only to apply the same test to different points within the transition process in the creation of the capability list, but also to compare and contrast the lists from the two ethnic groups and the two trainee groups, in order to identify inequality in the process or outcome.

Chapter aims

The chapter argues that one of the most significant findings to emerge from this study is that the BAME group faced more and, in some instances, higher barriers in trying to access the construction industry in comparison to white trainees. The nature of the barriers varied, depending upon whether or not the trainee was an apprentice or non-apprentice.

This chapter aims to examine the capability lists and how they changed over the transition process. The barriers that the trainees faced and the factors that affected the capability sets are discussed. Thus, this chapter analyses the relative position of the BAME and white electrical trainees. It discusses the transition pathways that the trainees followed, highlighting possible intervention points to assist with the transition process. The chapter then provides overall conclusions to the research analysis and presents the capability framework for 'the school-to-work transition of electrical trainees'.

The chapter seeks to answer the main research question identified in Chapter 1:

How, and to what extent, do any inequalities in the experiences between, and within, the BAME group and the white group differ during the school-to-work transition (STWT) process?

10.2 The main conclusions

10.2.1 The capability list for the transition from school to the construction labour market, for electrical trainees

This section focuses on the capability list and discusses the practical lists created for this study and how they changed at each point of the transition process. The capability list started with a single list, but as the school-to-work (STWT) transition is a staged process, the result is a set of three practical lists reflecting each stage, as noted in Table 10.1.

Table 10.1 'School-to-work' transition: The capability list for electrical trainees - the original and adapted capability lists

	The Hypothetical Capability List	The Practical List: The School Experience	The Practical List: The College Experience	The Practical List: The Work-Based Learning Experience
	The capability.....	The capability.....	The capability.....	The capability.....
1.	To have formal education	To engage in formal	To be able to have formal education: securing an electrical course at college	To be able to have access to formal qualifications
2.	To move from place to place		To move from place to place	To move from place to place
3.	To be healthy			To be healthy and be able to pass
4.	To have social relations	To have social interactions	To have social relations	To have social enjoy relationships, social networks and to make friends at work
5.	To have knowledge	Knowledge	To have knowledge about the electrical framework	
6.	To be treated fairly, being respected and having dignity	To be treated fairly and to be treated with respect	To be treated fairly and to be treated with respect	To be treated fairly and to be treated with respect
7.	To be supported by institutions			To be supported to complete the apprenticeship framework
8.		To be able to reflect		
9.		To be able to make decisions	To be able to make decisions, think and reason	
10.		To have aspirations	To be adaptable and to have aspirations	To have goals and aspirations
11.			To take ownership of one's learning	
12.		To be able to participate in the classroom and have a voice	To be able to participate in the classroom and have a voice	
13.				To have knowledge about where to search for an apprenticeship and being resilient
14.				To have a voice and participate in interviews
15.				To be financially rewarded

The blank spaces in the table depict the items that were not demonstrated at that particular point of the transition process. The table is quite revealing in several ways. First, the findings clearly demonstrate that the list changes during the transition process. Second, having three lists depicting each stage of the process, not only showed that the list is context dependent, but also dependent upon the particular stage of the process.

An abstract list was initially created by examining other capability lists, for example, that of Nussbaum (2001). A hypothetical list was then created using the STWT literature and the narratives from the organisational interviews. The abstract list was then developed into a practical list by using the narratives of the electrical trainees. This process for developing the list supports Sen's (2009) idea that the list should be dependent upon the context being researched. Furthermore, he postulates that the list should address the concept of public reasoning, as discussed in Chapter 4.

The different stages of development of the capability lists were:

1. Abstract list: noted capability lists.
2. Hypothetical list: A hypothetical list was created from the organisational interviews and published data.
3. Practical list: Each of the three stages of the transition process presented different environments to the trainees.
4. Two things changed: (a) the actual capabilities and (b) the meaning of some capability definitions, for example, the capability may have been the same at two different stages but, as a result of the different context, the meaning changed.

The discussion now turns to how the lists changed, whom they changed for and, why they changed.

1. How the list changed?

The original abstract list was created from the literature and drew upon capability lists created by other researchers. In drawing up the hypothetical list the literature associated with the 'school-to-work transition' and factors affecting the process were considered. Moving from a hypothetical list to a practical list required discussion with the electrical trainees in the transition process. The list was drawn up in two stages, thus supporting the work of Robeyns (2003), who states that the creation of the list should adopt this approach if it is to be used for empirical application and/or policy. This research has built upon the work of Robeyns and

suggests that an abstract list is initially considered prior to the development of the two-stage approach.

2. Why did the list change?

In the development of the capability list, Sen (2009) advocates that the list should be relevant to the context. The research findings showed that the context of each of the three points in the transition process differed. For example, the trainees discussed how the environment and the purpose of college were very different from that of school. School was compulsory whereas college was a conscious decision made by the trainees to be there. More importantly, the trainees' experience within the institutions at the three points was very different.

Furthermore, the capability list was also dependent upon age, for example, the capability of being able to move freely from place to place was more of a concern to the younger trainees than the mature trainees. Sen (2009) states that the capability approach is based upon well-being, what an individual is able to be and do. On that basis, each capability list was based upon what the trainees valued in the transition process at that time.

3. What changed on the list?

The school experience: The list created from the trainees' school experience was retrospective because, at the time of the interviews, all the trainees had left school and were at college studying an electrical course or embarked upon an electrical apprenticeship. The list changed considerably in comparison to the hypothetical list; there were capabilities noted at the school stage that were not included on the hypothetical list and *vice-versa*.

The college experience: A participative approach was then followed to create a list at the college stage of the transition process. At this point of the transition process, there were additional capabilities added, for example, the capability of being able to take ownership of learning was noted. This capability was not noted on either the original hypothetical list or the adapted list at the school experience stage.

The work-based learning experience: The list created at the work-based learning stage also took a participative approach, as was the case at the college experience stage. Additional capabilities were added. It was also noted that the meaning of the capability changed as the practical capability list was created; for example, the capability of 'being able to think and reason' previously related to the college environment, but now related to the working environment. The change in definition occurred because the apprentice discussed having to take what was learned in the classroom at college and translate this to the workplace. Another capability that changed definition was 'being supported', which in the school environment referred to having the support to pass academic qualifications and in the college environment referred to being supported in the practical element of the work being undertaken, in addition to being supported academically. In the work based learning experience environment, the meaning related to being supported to undertake the work on the construction site.

This current study supports that a list should not be derived from theory. Sen (2004) firmly stated that having one predefined list, purely derived from theory, denies public participation on what should be included and why. This study highlighted some important considerations for developing the capability list, which are as follows:

1. The list is context dependent. Within the context of this research, the list is stage dependent. This is demonstrated as the capability list changed from the school context to the college environment to the work environment.
2. The list is age dependent. Older trainees spoke less about being able to move freely in comparison to the younger trainees.
3. The list can be influenced by certain social characteristics. In the case of this research, those characteristics are trainee type and ethnicity.

10.2.2 Evaluation of the capability set

In Chapter 4, regarding methodological considerations in implementing the capability approach, the question was discussed as to whether the framework

should be evaluated in the capability or the functioning space. It was argued that, for a full complete evaluation exercise to occur, evaluation should be in both the capability and the achievement space. Burchardt (2009) argues that you should only evaluate in the functioning set rather than the capability set because this provides a more robust form of assessment. However, research using the capability approach does not always undertake an evaluation exercise (Hart, 2008, 2011). A full evaluation was not undertaken, for this study, as this would have involved re-interviewing all the electrical trainees to examine fully each capability, focusing on the trainees' opportunities and achievements, for each point of the transition process.

Throughout this study the story of Liam has been extensively examined and this clearly supports the need to evaluate in both spaces. If one focused on Liam's achievement of securing an apprenticeship, this does not explain the barriers he had to face, for example, having two interviews with his father's electrical firm, without success. Furthermore, if we evaluate at the college stage, in the functioning space of 'being able to have formal education', this would not provide an explanation as to why Liam undertook the college entry test twice.

10.3 The school-to-work transition conclusions

This section discusses and focuses on the capability list created for each stage and examines, which capabilities were affected. The previous section discussed the capability list, focussing on how the lists changed, what changed on the lists, and why the lists changed. This section discusses the main findings for the BAME group and the white group. The BAME group had fewer opportunities in the transition process in comparison to the white group. Furthermore, the non-apprentices were less likely to transition to the construction labour market in comparison to the apprentices. This is more of a concern for the BAME group, who are less likely to secure an apprenticeship, as shown in Table 10.2. The table shows the questionnaire census depicting the percentages of BAMEs and whites 'entry from

school'. The left two columns show the percentages of the apprentices and non-apprentices, at the end of the transition process.

Table 10.2 The questionnaire: Electrical trainees

Ethnic Groups	Entry From School	Outcome At The End Of The Transition Process: Securing An Electrical Apprenticeship?	
		Non-Apprentice	Apprentice
BAME	<i>n</i> =114	BAME AND NON-APPRENTICE <i>n</i> =82 (26%)	BAME AND APPRENTICE <i>n</i> = 32 (10%)
WHITE	<i>n</i> =207	WHITE AND NON-APPRENTICE <i>n</i> =75 (23%)	WHITE AND APPRENTICE <i>n</i> = 132 (41%)
Column Totals	<i>n</i> =321	<i>n</i> =157 (49%)	<i>n</i> =164 (51%)

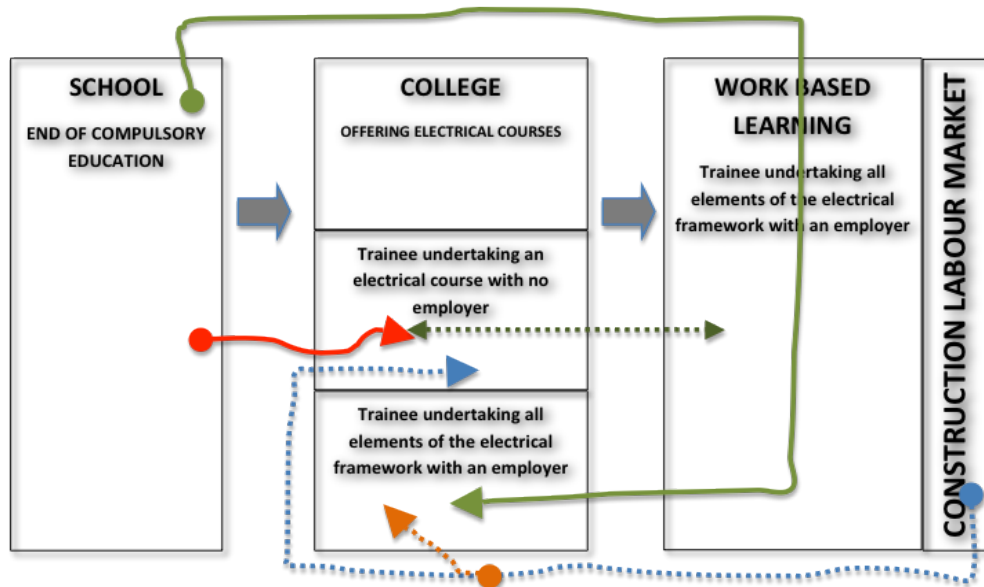
The diagram provides data regarding the outcomes of the BAME and white electrical trainees. However, it does not provide an understanding as to the reason for the stark differences, or what restricted the trainees from taking up the opportunity of an electrical apprenticeship. When examining opportunities Sen (2009, p. 231) argues that:

'a person's advantage in terms of opportunities is judged to be lower than that of another if she has less capability – less real opportunity – to achieve those things that she has reason to value'.

On this basis, the transition routes of the trainees were examined in detail during the interviews to gain a clearer understanding of their experiences, as discussed in the following section.

10.3.1 The transition routes

Figure 10.1 The ‘school-to-work’ transition process of electrical trainees: showing two basic routes in addition to variations in the routes as noted from the research findings



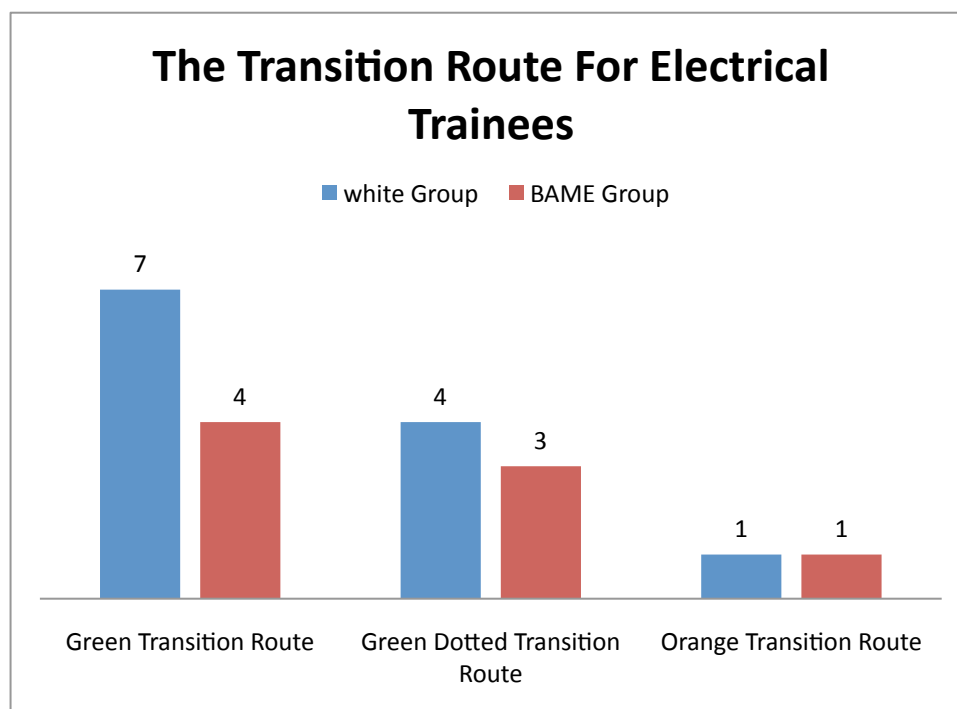
KEY: FOR FIGURE 10.1	
Red	An individual who is embarked upon an electrical course at college
Green	An individual who has secured an electrical apprenticeship and is placed at a college by their employer
Blue dotted	An individual who has previously worked in the construction industry and is now studying an electrical course at college
Green dotted	An individual who was embarked upon an electrical course at college and then secures an electrical apprenticeship and is placed at a college by their employer
Orange dotted line	An individual working in the construction industry who has then secured an electrical apprenticeship and is placed at a college by their employer

Figure 10.1 illustrates the transition routes identified from the findings. When focussing on the apprentices, what is of interest are the different routes they took, which were:

1. Eleven apprentices followed the green route: they secured their apprenticeship and the employer has placed them at a college.
2. Seven apprentices were initially non-apprentices and followed the red route. At that point they did not have an employer. However, these non-apprentices then secured their apprenticeships, which then meant they had an employer and in Figure 10.2 they are depicted by the green dotted line.
3. Two followed the orange dotted line route. This depicts how they were previously working in the construction industry as an electrician's mate. They then secured an apprenticeship.

The non-apprentice route is depicted by the red line and shows the process from school to college. Of the 17 non-apprentices, 16 followed this route, and one followed the dotted blue line route.

Figure 10.2 The Apprentice Transition Routes



Examining the routes that the trainee followed to secure their apprenticeship highlights the exact point of major concern for non-apprentices, those who are depicted by the red line. To move from a non-apprentice to an apprentice, following the green dotted line, requires the intervention of an employer. Jayden, who was at college studying for his Technical Certificate, realised the importance of finding an employer in order to complete his electrical qualifications:

.....stalled a bit, 'cos I got a bit unstuck there trying to find the work to get the full qualification.

(male, Asian, age 22, apprentice, college sample)

An intervention to assist the trainees in the colleges is that those who are on Technical Certificates can take the method of having a shared employer. Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council (2015), for instance, has adopted such a scheme, whereby apprentices have access to different employers to complete work experience in order to satisfy the criteria of an apprenticeship.

10.3.2 The transition process

This section discusses the transition process, highlighting the main difference at each stage of the process.

10.3.2.1 *First point of the transition: The school experience*

Turning to Chapter 7 of this study, which discussed the trainees' experience at school, the main finding was the difference in the achievement of five GCSE A*-C for both the BAME group and the white group. The BAME group were more at risk of not achieving this outcome.

10.3.2.2 *Second point of the transition: The college experience*

Chapter 8 discussed the college experience, and the main findings in this chapter were the differences for each of the two trainee types as a result of the two different transition routes; the non-apprentices are unable to complete the full electrical framework as they do not have an employer. Another main finding is that

the BAME group trainee is more likely to be a non-apprentice.

On further analysis of the non-apprentice route, the entry to an electrical course is dependent upon the college entry criteria. Chapter 7 discussed the different electrical course levels and the findings showed that with the lower level courses the distribution between the white and BAME groups was not dissimilar. However, differences started to occur at Level Two and Level Three, where there are a higher number from the white group in the courses in comparison to the BAME group. It was noted that this could be explained by the fact that the electrical trainees at these levels are often apprentices.

An important finding was the lack of knowledge among the electrical trainees in terms of where to look for an apprenticeship; in some instances, the BAME non-apprentices were unaware of what an apprenticeship is. Furthermore, when visiting the colleges, the researcher was on several occasions asked by the electrical trainees where to secure an employer in order to complete the practical element of the electrical framework.

Chapter 8 found that BAME non-apprentices had an older age profile. This group raised two main points, the first relating to the apprentice pay, which was considered too low, especially if there was a family to support. Second, employers receive less funding for taking on mature apprentices, so this may limit the chances of the trainee securing an apprenticeship.

A factor that did have an effect on the transition process was whether the trainee's father worked in construction. Sen (2009) argues that resources can extend to who or what an individual can access with regards to opportunities. Despite members of both the BAME and white group stating that their father was connected to the construction industry, the numbers were higher for the white group; the BAME group was less likely to have a member in construction and less able to convert this resource into a capability.

Another finding in Chapter 8 was the impact of the geographical location on the trainees. During a visit to one of the colleges, the researcher noted that there was a fatal shooting. Another college referred to its location next to a council estate, which meant having to use the services of a taxi to transport students to and from the college for their own safety. A third college spoke about the need to improve security through physical barriers to ensure only *'bona fide'* students attended the college. The college trainees spoke about 'hood rats', described as individuals intent on 'making trouble'. These negative influences affected the BAME and the white groups, irrespective of trainee type. Environmental factors, such as crime and negative geographical location, have an impact on trainees as the fear of moving around will affect their ability to attend college, as well as work. However, the mature trainees did not mention these concerns.

10.3.2.3 *Third point of the transition: The work-based learning experience*

Chapter 9 discussed the apprentice experience and the main findings from this chapter were that the white group were more likely to secure an apprenticeship, but the BAME group were more likely to have A-levels. This indicates that the BAME group needed higher qualifications to secure an apprenticeship.

A further interesting finding from the research that, out of the 20 apprentices, 12 had taken the JTL/Best²⁰ assessment and eight had not. Of the 12 apprentices who took the test, five were from a BAME background and seven from a white background. Out of the BAME apprentices, five took the JTL test and three did not. In comparison, of the 12 white apprentices five took this test and seven did not. Undertaking the JTL/Best assessment is important for several reasons. First, an element of the test is to ensure that the prospective trainee is not medically colour-blind. Second, the prospective trainee is then placed on a database, which is circulated to electrical contractors who are looking for apprentices. However, one contractor who was interviewed stated that he would not recruit from the JTL list as he preferred to train his apprentices from scratch, rather than pick up a displaced

²⁰ JT limited (JTL) and BEST are managing agents who work in partnership with electrical contractors, the college and the apprentice.

apprentice, meaning an apprentice who previously had an employer but had for some reason lost the apprenticeship.

However, being on the JTL list did have its benefits. It was for this reason that Liam was selected for his apprenticeship as the electrical contractor who employed him needed to comply with the contract on the Olympic site with respect to employing local people.

This study has found that an apprenticeship is not without its problems. The apprentices faced multiple barriers before securing the apprenticeship and while completing it.

The barriers in securing an apprenticeship were noted as follows:

1. Knowing where to look for an apprenticeship: this was relevant if no family member was in construction. Electrical contractors stated that they did not advertise apprentice vacancies. The findings showed that this had more of a negative effect on the BAME group in comparison to the white group.
2. Being medically tested with an eye test to ensure no colour blindness and the ability to work within this trade.
3. Equality in recruitment of apprentices: apprenticeships are reliant on an employer. There were differences in recruitment practices and offers with respect of an apprenticeship, which are subject to the electrical contractors' recruitment criteria. As noted above, the BAME group were more likely to have A-levels, in comparison to the white group.
4. Being able to perform at an interview. The researcher sat in on the apprentice interviews with one of the electrical contractors where it was noted that the prospective electrical apprentices were ill prepared for the role. In many instances, the interviewee did not fully know what an electrician does.
5. Having evidence of completion of the practical element of the electrical framework, constituting the National Vocation Qualification (NVQ) element of the portfolio. This affected the non-apprentice in comparison to the apprentices.

There were not only barriers to securing an apprenticeship. Barriers also existed even once the apprentices had secured their apprenticeship:

1. Apprentices were treated differently, perhaps because the apprentice spoke differently, had ginger hair or had made a complaint to their employer. This occurred for the white and BAME group, male and female, thus irrespective of ethnic background.
2. Losing the apprenticeship. The only female apprentice interviewed discussed the lack of support when she lost her apprenticeship.
3. Working conditions. One apprentice said that undertaking an apprenticeship is like 'selling your soul' because of the long hours on site and this despite the long time it had taken him to find an apprenticeship. Several of the apprentices on site spoke about working long hours, early starts, not going home for the weekend because, as the site was project based the work had to get done. However, a minority of the apprentices did not have to endure these working conditions, including, for example, one that worked for the National Health Service (NHS) - hence a large public organisation.
4. Low apprentice pay: the apprentice pay is lower than the national minimum wage. This affected the BAME group in comparison to the white group, due to family responsibilities.

Previous research on apprenticeships, for example Gambin (2012), has referred to the barriers to apprenticeships including problems with employer engagement, in addition to recruitment, retention and completion. This study found that the specific problems that the apprentices faced were varied and many.

One reason given why the BAME group do not want to enter an apprenticeship is because of parental influence (Anderson *et al.*, 2009; Anderson *et al.*, 2010).

However, those interviewed claimed that parents were supportive of their apprenticeship and working in construction.

10.3.3 The 2012 Olympic site

Chapter 2 discussed the context of the research and the chapter also noted that, at the time of the data collection, the Olympic site was the largest construction project in Europe. The project was located in east London, an area that is deprived. Throughout the thesis there were two types of analyses that were being completed. The first analysis focused on the 37 trainees. The second analysis focused on Liam. Liam was initially introduced in Chapter 1, in relation to the claim by the Olympic Delivery Authority that the targets set in terms of employment and training opportunities were met (Martins *et al.*, 2011). An interviewee from the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA), responsible for the building of the Olympic site, stated:

Getting local people into jobs with a focus on particular groups/communities that traditionally have either experienced discrimination and not been really featured in the construction industry, and they would be ostensibly black, Asian and minority ethnic communities.
(female, black, Olympic Delivery Authority)

This interview clearly illustrated why Liam was important to examine as part of this study. He was the type of individual that the ODA claimed should benefit from working on the Olympic site.

Another initiative that the Olympic site was involved in was the Women in Construction (WiC) project, an intervention to increase the number of women in construction (Wright, 2014). The WiC Project Manager interviewed stated:

Anyone who gets a contract for the Olympics has to sign up to taking on local people, addressing gender inequality and taking on people with disabilities.
(white, female).

She explained that companies are happy to sign the contracts to secure work on the Olympic site, but her role was to assist these companies in meeting the employment and training targets set. During the interviews, it was stated that this

project received financial support to assist in increasing the number of women in construction. Similar to targets being set to increase the underrepresentation of women, targets were set to increase the number of BAMEs in construction. However, there was no such project for the BAME group and no financial support to increase the number of BAMEs in construction. This was confirmed by those interviewed from the ODA and the WiC project. Such a project could have assisted in increasing access to the BAME group. As Wright (2014), in her evaluation of the WiC project, states, it was successful in providing work placements and opportunities to women and furthermore the project had continued, even after the 2012 Olympics.

Whilst contractors on the Olympic site were encouraged to take on local people, the study has shown that some respondent apprentices from the local area were indeed recruited especially to work on the Olympic site, namely, Liam (male, black), Sean (male, white) and Carson (male, white). All three lived in one of the host Olympic boroughs. These three apprentices benefitted from the Olympics and their interviews confirmed that living in one of the host boroughs led to them to obtain their apprenticeship. However, Liam was the only one from a BAME background, a group seriously underrepresented in construction. Liam's example clearly demonstrates that the contractual compliance to conform with employment and training conditions set in the form of Section 106 agreements can assist in increasing the access of specific groups to the industry.

It is noted that the majority of the electrical trainees did not try to secure employment on the Olympic site. The findings showed that those who were already employed as apprentices did not seek employment on the Olympics. Of the 17 non-apprentices interviewed, all indicated that they had not sought employment on the Olympic site.

10.4 Conclusion: a capabilities framework from education to the construction labour market for electrical trainees

This section provides the framework to be used to examine the transition process of electrical trainees to the construction labour market. In the methodological considerations in Chapter 4, a diagram depicting the capability approach to be used was presented. This diagram has now been updated to incorporate the data collected focused on the different experiences of those in the BAME and white groups, using a small sample and intensive interviewing, as shown in 10.3. The figure highlights the capability set, shaded in grey, developed from the rich data from the interviews with the electrical trainees. The other areas, surrounding the grey box, depict the resources, factors, influences and the element of choice that may affect the capability set. This framework is the culmination of the various data collection methods and is comprehensive in outlining various factors that may affect the trainee in accessing opportunities or actually achieving.

Muller (2005) explains that two main institutions are instrumental in influencing the STWT process, the educational environment and the labour market. The research findings from this study support this. Practices, culture and structure within schools, college and construction have an impact on the electrical trainees and in some instances exclude groups from achieving the necessary educational outcome and securing structured work experience or an apprenticeship. Policy can assist in increasing the capabilities for electrical contractors in the construction industry by, for instance, requiring improvements in training on large-scale construction projects. However, not all conversion factors that affected the trainees are attributable to organisations, as geographical location also affects the transition process.

Figure 10.3 The capability framework: The STWT of electrical trainees

<p>INFLUENCES: affecting the opportunities of the electrical trainees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • THE ENVIRONMENT: Crime • SCHOOL CONTEXT: Learning culture. • COLLEGE CONTEXT: Learning culture, practical experience 		<p>INFLUENCES: affecting the achievement of the electrical trainees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment • Financial resources • Loss of an employer 	
<p>RESOURCES</p> <p>Resources that the trainees may have access to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family member in construction • Support from school • Information about working in the construction industry • Financial resources • Large scale construction projects 		<p>CONVERSION FACTORS</p> <p>Factors that affected the capability set:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language • Academic ability • Lack of knowledge about apprenticeships 	
<p>CAPABILITIES TO SECURE AND COMPLETE AN ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP: THE CAPABILITY LIST</p>			
<p>1. Being able to have knowledge.</p> <p>2. Being able to have aspirations</p> <p>3. Being able to think, reflect and reason.</p> <p>4. Being able to move from place to place</p> <p>5. Being treated with respect</p> <p>6. Being able to make decisions.</p> <p>7. Being able to make contribution and take responsibility.</p> <p>8. Being able to participate in class and have voice</p> <p>9. Being able to pass a colour blindness test</p>		<p>10. Being treated fairly with respect and without discrimination</p> <p>11. Being able to take ownership of learning.</p> <p>12. Being supported to complete the apprenticeship framework.</p> <p>13. Being financial rewarded.</p> <p>14. Being able to have formal education.</p> <p>15. Being able to have social relationships and social networks.</p> <p>16. Being able to access to formal qualification.</p> <p>17. Being able to participate in interviews.</p> <p>18. Being able to be in a safe environment</p>	
<p>CHOICE</p> <p>Choices that affect the achievements of electrical trainees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apprenticeship or do A levels? • Should I make use of the support provided by educational institutions? 		<p>THE ACHIEVEMENT</p> <p>The actual achievements, i.e., the outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing an apprenticeship • Completing an apprenticeship • Having aspirations to be an electrician 	

Part Five: Conclusions

11. Conclusions

11.1 Introduction

This is the final chapter of the thesis and provides overall conclusions. The chapter presents a summary of the study and briefly outlines the reason for the research, the research problem and how the research was developed to answer the research questions, which are then answered. The chapter then reflects on the research process, the methods used and some limitations of the study. Original contributions to knowledge are proposed, specifically in the area of theory, practice and policy, and some implications for policy and recommendations for further research are noted. The chapter concludes with some final words from Liam, whose experience in the transition process has been discussed comprehensively throughout the thesis.

The reason for the research arose because the construction industry is one of the largest UK sectors, contributing almost £90 billion to the economy (or 6.7%) in value added, and making up 10% of the total UK employment (BIS, 2013b). The construction workforce is white and male dominated; the BAME population is highly underrepresented in terms of the numbers employed and can suffer from discrimination (CABE, 2005; Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), 2009). However, it is noted that there is a higher percentage from this group studying construction-related courses compared to the group's representation in the industry (EHRC 2009). On that basis, the research sought to examine the school-to-work transition process to understand how inequality in the transition from school, might lead to inequality in outcome, in terms of securing employment in the construction industry.

When the researcher embarked upon this study, the 2012 Olympic site was being built, which at the time was the largest construction project in Europe (London 2012, 2010a). The Olympic site was unprecedented in terms of the employment and training promises that were being made (London 2012, 2010b) regarding providing work opportunities for those living in one of the six Olympic host London boroughs. Furthermore, targets were set to increase the participation of the BAME group, in addition to providing apprenticeships on the Olympic site (ODA, 2010a). This was an important element of the Olympics, as the host boroughs have a high population of BAMEs. Furthermore, according to the 2011 Census, in the Greater London area, the white British population is shrinking (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2014). Therefore, the Olympics provided the possibility to increase the number of those from a BAME background working in construction.

It is was not the purpose of this study to examine the structure of the industry in terms of sub-contracting, casual and 'bogus' self-employment, the reliance on an itinerant workforce, skill shortage, and an ageing workforce, all of which are common place (Clarke, 2006; Clarke and Gribling, 2008; Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS), 2013a; Harvey and Behling, 2008). *The overall aim of the research, using a capability approach, has been to focus on the 'school-to-work' transition (STWT) process, examining the experiences of electrical trainees in their schooling, at college and in apprenticeships, in order to identify and understand possible inequality in the process.* The school-to-work transition is a fairly new concept, bringing together issues around schooling, employment and VET and is considered part of a single process (Ryan, 2000). The points between school and employment may include VET, work experience, unemployment, labour market programmes, casual work and fixed-term employment (Ryan, 2001). It can also include any combination of these.

In setting the research scene it was noted in Chapter 2 that there is a paucity of research focusing on the BAME group in the transition process. The limited research there is tends to focus on the educational outcomes of this group in terms

of the number of GCSEs achieved, rather than focusing on other aspects that may affect the transition, such as self-efficacy (Pinquart *et al.*, 2003), class and place (MacDonald *et al.*, 2005) and labour market institutions, and educational settings (Quintini, 2012). Another limitation of the STWT literature is that, although it is noted that structure and agency are important in the transition process (MacDonald, 2011), some studies do not focus on both. More crucially, research examining the BAME group who transition from education to employment in the construction industry is limited (Ahmed *et al.*, 2008).

This study has focused on the electrical trade, which has a VET system that takes four years to complete and culminates in a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 3. The two main routes for VET to develop an electrical capacity, referred to as apprenticeships and non-apprenticeships, were discussed. Effectively, the current research has centred on the transition process of electrical trainees, an area not widely researched. The paucity of research on electrical trainees limits any perspective of their transition journey. The current study investigated this group, the path and the route within the journey. To achieve this, the following areas were examined:

1. the transition process focusing on ethnicity (the group);
2. the transition from education to the construction labour market (the path); and
3. the transition comparing apprentices and non-apprentices (the route).

This study has used the Amartya Sen capability framework to examine the transition process of electrical trainees. In this sense, the research utilises an equality framework developed by a social theorist, adapting the context and setting in order to consider the influences and narratives of organisations within the process of electrical trainees' transition to the construction labour market. The capability approach moves away from targets, which may be associated with some theories of equality (Phillips, 2004), and instead has the ability to focus on

processes (Hart, 2009). Crucially, a framework that examines the journey within a process has the capacity to identify inequality in practice.

Sen (2009) argues that, when looking at justice, there is a need to focus on the well-being of individuals, referring to what an individual is 'able to do and be'. The author discusses many terms associated with the capability approach, such as, capabilities (opportunities) and functionings (achievements). All capabilities together should be the freedom that an individual enjoys. However, Sen (2009) states that, when using the capability approach, one needs to be aware of resources, for example, financial or otherwise, as this may have an impact on being able to turn a resource into an opportunity.

The capability approach has been used in quantitative and qualitative studies. However, the framework lends itself to a qualitative approach, to incorporate as many factors that may affect the choices and influences of the electrical trainees in the transition process. This allows the possibility to focus on the views of individuals and may assist in identifying inequality in terms of opportunity and means. However, for this study, it was also necessary to adopt a quantitative approach. This was partly attributable to the secretive nature and the security attached to the Olympic site, on which it transpired that apprentices were not always recruited specifically to work on the site but were already employed with the contractor (Minnaert, 2013). Furthermore, the construction industry consists of many organisations, and the study highlighted a basic problem within the industry, that training it is not organised 'collectively'. Thus it is unknown, specifically, how many individuals are involved in training. Equally, it is unclear how many individuals are embarked upon the electrical framework (GOV.UK, 2014d). Therefore, the study adopted a 'mixed method' approach, as noted in Chapter 5. The trainee interviews collected for the study were coded into themes, using NVivo 10 software, based upon the trainees' experience and the study compared trainee types and ethnicity as follows:

1. Three different stages: 'in school', 'at college' and 'in apprenticeships';

2. Between trainee type: apprentices and non-apprentices; and
3. Comparing and contrasting the white group and the BAME group - at the different points and between the different trainee types.

11.2 Review of the findings in the light of the research questions

The main research question was:

How, and to what extent, do any inequalities in the experiences between, and within, the BAME group and the white group differ during the school-to-work transition (STWT) process?

However, to answer the research question Chapter 1 identified the following four sub-research questions, which are now answered in this section:

1. What are the lived experiences of electrical trainees going through the school-to-work transition process?
2. What are the forms of inequality, if any, during the STWT and how can any differences, in the process or the outcome, be explained, for the:
 - a. Two trainee group: apprentices and non-apprentices; and
 - b. Two ethnic groups: the BAME group and the white group;
3. What elements are required to create an equality framework for the STWT of electrical trainees?
4. How can large-scale construction projects, like the 2012 Olympics, aid the transition routes to become an electrician?

11.2.1 The lived experience of the electrical trainees

The first research question was focused on the lived experiences of the electrical trainees, because research in this area is relatively sparse and the school-to-work transition process is non-linear. Therefore, to examine the electrical trainees' experience, particular attention was paid to the research context because, first, it is a vital element in the development of the capability list and, second, when

addressing the concept of public reasoning, it is a significant factor to ensure that those involved in the STWT have a voice regarding what is of value to them in the process. Although Sen (2009) provides the main concepts and terms associated with the capability approach, discussed in Chapter 3, it is left to the researcher to develop the framework.

The research context is important to creating a list of capabilities in order to ensure that the list is not abstract but is for a specific purpose and considers those in the STWT, focusing on what is important to them. Furthermore, any factor that may influence the list can be identified, for example, organisational processes that may affect the opportunities or the achievements of the electrical trainees. Both of these elements are important when developing a capability framework for the transition of electrical trainees to the construction labour market. Once the list is created, it is used to compare and contrast experiences between and within trainee types and the two ethnic groups to understand if it differs for any of these sub-samples.

The creation of the capability list, for this current study was based on the methodology suggested by Robeyns (2003), as outlined in Chapter 4. However, unlike Robeyns, prior to the creation of the list, it was decided to review the literature associated with the STWT, ethnicity, education, and training. Although Sen (2005) points out that any capability list should not be derived from theory, it is argued that theory has a part to play in the creation of the list as it not only allows an understanding of the factors that may influence the STWT but, by reviewing the theory, provides insight into the context to be researched. Unlike Robeyns, it was decided that this study would create three different types of capability lists; this allowed the list to move from the abstract to a practical list for the STWT of electrical trainees:

1. *An abstract list*: drawing from other capability lists, for example, Nussbaum (2001);

2. *A hypothetical list*: using published data and the in-depth organisational interviews that formed part of the data collection process; and
3. *A practical capability list*: using the narratives from the electrical trainees who are in the STWT process.

As an important element has been to identify any inequality in the transition process, three separate practical lists were developed at each of the three stages of the process: 'in school', 'at college' and 'in work-based learning'. This approach made it possible to identify where in the process inequality occurs and, more importantly, for whom.

To understand the context of the construction industry is a crucial element for the development of the capability lists because, as noted, the organisations in this industry are very diverse and do not always operate in a 'joined-up' manner, thus adding a level of complexity to the research. For example, the Chan and Moehler (2008) study acknowledged the myriad of organisations involved in the construction industry when they explored which organisations were involved in skills and training.

Turning to the second aspect of why the research context is important when using a capability approach, Sen (2009) proposes that, in the development of the capability framework, as discussed in Chapter 3, there should be some form of public reasoning. Public reasoning is a form of deliberation and public debate. The author does not provide explicit details as to how public reasoning should be addressed in the development of the framework, but leaves it to the researcher to decide.

The organisations that formed part of this research were not only used to provide context but also to be involved in the public debate, which took the form of the development of a hypothetical capability list. Not all authors using the capability approach focus on the concept of public reasoning, for example, Burchardt and Vizard (2009) who developed an equality framework using a capability approach. Although they involved individuals in the creation of the list, the limitation of their research is that the list was created for a general, rather than a specific context. In

contrast, some authors may not involve specific participants in the creation of the capability list (Alkire, 2007; Robeyns, 2003). Here in this study the voices of the trainees involved in the transition process played a crucial role in fulfilling the requirement of public reasoning, as democracy has to be judged not just by the institutions that formally exist, but by the extent to which different voices from diverse sections of people can actually be heard (Sen, 2009, p. xiii). This research gave the electrical trainees a voice, and in doing so, provided rich data about their lives. Furthermore, it has demonstrated that for some of the electrical trainees, an important factor to navigate through the transition process was their resilience to deal with persistent challenges. Another important finding is how the transition process is very individual and, as such, may cause difficulties in providing ‘a one size fits all’ policy to address issues with the process. However, the findings provide a better understanding of the ways in which the electrical trainees move from school, to college, to trying to become electricians. Another finding from the research is that trainees were not always aware of the possible opportunities afforded to them in the transition process. Although, Sen’s capability approach advocates the trainees as agents, the findings showed that the choices made by the trainees were not always a result of their own action, but also of the action of others, such as parents, and, in Liam’s case, his pastor.

11.2.2 The school-to-work transition process of electrical trainees

The second research question was concerned with the STWT of electrical trainees to examine any inequality in the process, and/or outcome. In order to answer this question, the practical capability list had to be developed in the first instance, as noted in Chapters 7 to 9. Each of these chapters centred on three main questions:

1. ‘What capabilities are necessary at this stage of the transition process?’;
2. ‘What are the factors that affect the trainees’ capability set?’; and
3. ‘Do the capability sets of the BAME group and the white group differ?’

The reason to pose the same three questions at each stage of the transition process was one of consistency, and to allow transparency in the creation of the lists. More importantly, it allowed comparisons to be made within each of the four sub-samples, that is, between apprentices and non-apprentices and between the BAME group and white group at each stage of the transition.

Chapter 5 explained how the 37 in-depth interviews were conducted with electrical trainees, 20 apprentices and 17 non-apprentices, centred on two different forms of analysis: ethnographic, with respect to the trainee interviews, as discussed in Chapter 5; and focused on Liam, a BAME apprentice introduced in Chapter 1. Although Liam is a specific case, he was chosen as the focus of the analysis chapters, being from a BAME background, an apprentice, working on the Olympic site and living in one of the host boroughs. His case demonstrated that the implementation of Section 106 agreements (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2006) in terms of training and employment can be of benefit to construction projects. Liam can be seen as the 'ideal type', illustrating how employment and training interventions can assist the BAME group to access the construction industry. Following Liam's story provided a comprehensive account of his transition and highlighted how individuals, even those who may not do well at school, can once given an opportunity excel in terms of being an electrical apprentice.

For each of the three stages of the transition process, the overall findings can now be discussed. At the school stage, the main capability that had the greatest impact on ethnicity was educational outcome: In comparing the BAME and the white group, the main difference is the ability to secure five GCSEs at A*-C. However, Gillborn (2008) argues that school children from a Black background are most likely to be entered for GCSE examinations, where even the highest grade at the foundation pass level is not acceptable on the labour market.

At the college stage it was noted that the lack of achievement at school, in terms of GCSEs obtained, had an impact on this stage of the transition. Both colleges and

electrical contractors stated that it was necessary for individuals to have GCSEs, although, the number of GCSEs required, grades and subjects that each of these organisations specified, differed. The interviews the findings showed that some of the apprentices did not have five GCSEs at A*-C when they started their apprenticeship. Therefore, although educational outcome is depicted as being important, organisations are using these outcomes as only one measure to determine who gains access to their organisations.

Sen (2009) argues that, when looking at justice, it is not enough to look at outcomes and introduces the notion of 'comprehensive outcome' and 'culmination outcome', referring to the level at which a person finishes. The concept of capability is linked to the opportunity aspect of freedom, which is seeing opportunity in the form of 'comprehensive outcome', an outcome that takes into account the way the person reaches the 'culmination' situation, for instance, whether the outcome is reached through a person's own choice or whether it is through the influence/input /involvement of others. Chapter 3 provided the example of two organisations interviewed that were involved in the recruitment of electrical trainees and whose purpose was to secure employment for individuals on the 2012 Olympic site. However, the findings showed that organisations can have the same goal, in this case getting trainees on site, but due to the different processes they adopted there was a different outcome for the trainees, for example, whether or not they worked on site, as well as the processes impacting more negatively on the BAME than the white group.

When examining the STWT, it is not sufficient to focus on outcomes. For example on the 2012 Olympic site, though it was claimed that employment and training targets were met, by focussing on targets insufficient information was provided on the organisational processes adopted, which can create inequality in outcome (Martins *et al.*, 2011). Focusing on Liam's transition, he is according to the Olympic Delivery Authority seen as a success because he secured a positive outcome in working on the Olympic site. However, Liam's STWT was one that was hindered by disappointment and negativity. He lacked GCSEs when he left school. This

subsequently meant he had to take a college entry exam test, which he initially failed. Both his father and uncle were electricians. Liam had two interviews with his father's firm to secure an electrical apprenticeship. In this instance, his father can be seen as a resource in terms of providing access to two interviews with his firm. On both occasions, Liam was unable to turn the opportunity into an outcome. This study has highlighted that, unless comprehensive outcomes are examined, it is difficult to know exactly where any inequality may arise, and more importantly, the factors that affect the individual's capabilities.

At the work-based learning stage, an important finding was that the BAME apprentices were more likely to have A-levels compared to the white apprentices. This suggests that the BAME group needs to have higher educational achievements to have the same chance of securing an apprenticeship as the white group. A higher proportion of the BAME non-apprentices were also not aware of apprenticeships, in comparison to the white non-apprentices. This is a concern because being unaware of what is necessary to complete the electrical framework, which requires an employer, limits the opportunity of an apprenticeship being sought, and thus impacts on the trainee capability set.

Comparing the BAME and the white group and how they secured their apprenticeship, it was evident that the fathers assisted the white trainees in becoming apprentices, consistent with other research, which has found that those from a white background are more likely to access the industry as a result of their family members (CABE, 2005). However, an important finding is that, although trainees from a BAME background may have their family working in construction, they were less able to turn this resource into an opportunity. Furthermore, on a few occasions the trainee's mother, from both the BAME group and the white group, provided the apprentices assistance in securing their apprenticeship. This does not support the notion that parents can be a negative influence for those wishing to access the construction industry (Anderson *et al.*, 2009; Anderson *et al.*, 2010).

Research discusses the barriers that the BAME group face when trying to access the industry, or while working in the industry (for example, Missa and Ahmed, 2011). The current research showed that the BAME group faced multiple barriers and in some instances the barriers were higher than those met by the white group. The differences that BAMEs faced occurred at each of the three stages, 'in school', 'at college' and 'in work-based learning'. Furthermore, the findings underline the great influence that education and the labour market have on the transition process, both negative and positive (Muller, 2005).

Furthermore, the research discovered many factors affecting the transition process of electrical trainees. One important finding was the impact of the external environment on organisations, discussed in Chapter 6, affecting the trainee's ability to move freely from place to place. This is an area not fully discussed in the transition literature, but is a concern for both the BAME and the white group, though less so for the older trainees. This research also showed that there are many other factors that have an impact on the transition process, besides ethnicity, affecting everyone equally.

11.2.3 Creating an equality framework

The third research question considers the creation of the capability framework for electrical trainees in the STWT. In answering research question three, it was noted that the development of the capability framework would focus on creating a capability list, ensuring that it paid particular attention to the context, and consideration of the concept of public reasoning.

The next consideration was how the practical capability lists created would be used for this study. Sen (2009) argues that it is up to the researcher to decide how the information collected in the development of the framework will be used and how the capability sets will be evaluated. Alkire (2008) considers that evaluation of the capability approach can be based on three different areas: prospective, evaluative and descriptive. Evaluative evaluation is based on comparing how individual

capabilities have expanded or contracted, rather than why and how they have expanded. In contrast, prospective evaluation looks at causality, probability and assumptions. The author discusses the first two options, prospective and evaluative, but provides no information about the third, descriptive.

This study was predominantly concerned with 'how' inequality in the transition process occurs and, if it does, 'who' does it affect and 'why'. Therefore, comparing and contrasting the two trainee groups and the two trainee types to examine the capability lists created at each stage of the transition process allows for an evaluation exercise. Chapters 6-9 highlighted the practical lists created at each stage and what influenced the lists, whilst Chapter 10 provided a summary of all three lists and produced the STWT framework for electrical trainees.

11.2.4 Large-scale construction projects: the 2012 Olympics

The final research question was concerned with how large-scale construction projects, like the 2012 Olympic site, can aid the transition process. To answer this question, the routes to becoming an electrician were examined, especially as the research was conducted at the time of the Olympic build. Chapter 2 discussed the benefits of undertaking work-based learning and being in an apprenticeship, but the chapter also noted that there are individuals studying for an electrical Technical Certificate who are non-apprentices. The work-based learning route follows the Joint Industry Board (JIB) prescribed electrical framework (Brawley, 2012), so that those individuals not following this route may have difficulties accessing the industry.

Chapter 10 identified two transition routes; school-to-college-to-work and school-to-work-to-college, which was the main route taken by apprentices. The research identified the key groups of concern:

1. Those embarked upon an electrical certificate; and
2. Those from an ethnic background.

The first group is without an employer and the risk is their inability to complete an electrical apprenticeship. Trainees from both the BAME and the white group were placed on a low-level electrical course. However, a higher proportion of the BAME group were not on the higher-level electrical courses compared with the white group as a result of their not being in apprenticeships. The problem is even more acute for the second group because, not only do they not have an employer, but also the research findings showed that they are less likely to secure an apprenticeship compared to the white group.

Chapter 2 clearly outlined that the Olympic bid, as a mega project, made promises about ensuring that those from a BAME background would benefit from the building of the Olympics. What is important to note is that the East End of London has a high proportion of ethnic minorities, with, for example, some of the Olympic host borough having an ethnic mix of over 40%. However, the findings demonstrated that the policy and practices of organisations associated with large-scale construction projects would need to be reviewed to ensure that any targets set to increase the numbers of those from BAME groups working on site really do meet the specified outcome.

11.3 Reflections on the research

11.3.1 Limitations to the conclusions

Whilst there are many stages within the school-to-work transition, this study has focused on three aspects: 'in school', 'at college' and 'in work based-learning'.

There are also a number of limitations, which can be categorised as follows:

1. Limitations to an alternative voice:

The research was carried out over a relatively short period of time and did not incorporate the views of the school, from an organisational perspective. This was because, at the time of the data collection process, the trainees were already in the college environment. Obtaining the views from schools would have provided

another layer of analysis to understand any influences that may have enhanced or limited the trainees' capability set.

The data collection process took into consideration those who had successfully embarked upon an electrical course at college. It did not examine any trainees who had made unsuccessful attempts to access an electrical course, nor those that started but did not complete a course. Those voices would have given an insight into the influences that may compete or conflict with the capability set.

2. Limitations to the exit of work-based learning:

It is not clear from this research exactly how many of the 37 electrical trainees convert their training into final employment. The study collected data over one year, which was too short in terms of time to capture any post-training data. Post-training analysis would have provided the information to increase an understanding of the outcomes of apprentices and non-apprentices and any difference between the white and BAME groups at the point of converting training into employment.

11.3.2 Reflections and limitations to the conceptual framework / methodology

One methodological limitation of the conceptual framework is that, while the research focused on three stages of the transition process ('in school, 'at college, and 'in work-based learning'), it did not fully examine the steps between each stage. This would have made it possible to examine how any activities between each stage affected any of the three stages. Furthermore, consideration could have been given to how capabilities may have been affected by other activities outside of the transition process. Nor, in the development of the capability list, did the research pay attention to the issue of weighting though Sen (2009) states that weighting is an exercise that will help policy makers in terms of what capability should be the focus when discussing any policy changes. This may actually be a weak point in Sen's work.

A limitation with the data collection is that the trainees were interviewed while they were embarked upon an electrical course, at college. The interviewee thus had to reflect upon their school experience and may have had problems in recollecting information, especially, in the case of the older trainees who may have left school some years previously.

There were no female BAME respondents interviewed for this study. Crenshaw (1991) argues that race and gender 'intersect' and produce inequality.

Furthermore, she states that ethnic minority women experience racism in ways not always the same as those experienced by ethnic minority men, and sexism in ways not always parallel to the experiences of white women. White females in the study stated how they were treated unfairly, as was the case with those from a BAME background. By examining ethnicity and gender in both these groups underrepresented in the construction industry, an understanding could have been obtained on whether, or not, the experience of each is different.

11.4 Contributions of the research

11.4.1 Contributions of the research to theory

The main original contribution to knowledge is the use of Sen's capability approach, which has also been used for other research, for example, on human development (Hart, 2009), education (Unterhalter and Brighouse, 2003; Walker and Unterhalter, 2007; Watts, 2009), neighbourhood regeneration (Jasek-Rysdahl, 2001) and policy making (Deakin and Koukiadaki, 2007; Robeyns, 2006), though only in a limited way with regard to the transition process. The current research is dissimilar to other research using a capability approach (Biggeri *et al.*, 2006; Kuzmina, 2012) in so far as it provides more than one capability set. This is an important original contribution because, as the thesis focused on three aspects of the transition, three separate capability lists were produced. The findings clearly show that the list changed at each stage of the process, demonstrating that the capability set of the electrical trainees changed over time.

A further original contribution to knowledge is that the capability approach has not been used, simultaneously, in the context of the construction industry, nor to focus on the process of transition of electrical trainees into the labour market. Thus, this research makes methodological contributions by recognising that the capability list is not only dependent on the context, as stated by Sen (2009), but in certain circumstances is also 'stage dependent'.

Another contribution of this research is that empirical data were collected from electrical trainees in the transition process. This is an important contribution to knowledge as there has been only limited research focusing on the BAME group in the transition process. Furthermore, research on those involved in VET from an ethnic background is limited (Helland and Støren, 2006).

A third original contribution to knowledge was provided in the analysis of the training and employment promises regarding the 2012 London Olympic site. Research associated with any Olympics has normally focused on the cost, environment, venue, stadium, transport and financial benefits of the Games (Blake, 2005; Bovy, 2004) and less on examining the employment and training opportunities of individuals. Despite employment and training promises being made as part of the 2012 Olympic bid (DCMS, 2008; London 2012, 2010b), this research showed that these promises, in terms of employment and training, did not fully materialise. Furthermore, those who should have benefitted, mainly the BAME group, were let down. The majority of electrical apprentices were already working for contractors on the site and, thus, were not always recruited especially to work on the Olympics. That is not to say that some electrical apprentices were not recruited, as in the case of Liam. But he was an exemplary case because, from the questionnaire census of 321 electrical trainees, he was the only individual who lived in one of the six Olympic boroughs, worked on the Olympic site and was from a BAME background.

11.4.2 Contributions of the research to policy

The STWT is a policy problem and as such thought has to be given regarding changes that can assist those in the transition process. This study has identified that the electrical framework is robust, as it culminates in a National Vocational Qualification (Level 3), which is specified by the Joint Industry Board (JIB). However, not all the electrical trainees in the colleges were following the JIB framework; specifically, this referred to the non-apprentices. This is not to say that these trainees will not be able to access the construction market as electricians, but it is doubtful if they will. An interview with a representative from an electrical organisation noted that colleges are offering qualifications that are not recognised in the electrical field. The problem arises because electrical trainees are studying for qualifications that may not assist them in securing employment in the construction industry. This highlights the need for an intervention that will allow electrical trainees who are studying for a Technical Certificate, at college, to have access to an employer to complete the JIB framework.

One such intervention could be in the form of the electrical trainees having access to multiple employers, in order to demonstrate their practical experience in the electrical trade, thus, allowing the possibility to complete the NVQ (level 3). One Council is using such a scheme to allow apprentices to have access to a wide range of experiences with different employers (Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council, 2015).

Another intervention, to assist those who are in colleges without an employer is the use of large-scale construction projects like the Olympic site, which can be an avenue to provide work-based experience and/or employment and training opportunities. Construction projects are time sensitive and for this reason it may not be possible to train an electrician during the construction build if the project lasts less than four years, as was the case with the Olympics. In the case of Liam, although he was recruited specifically to work on the site, his employer continued to employ him after the build and moved him to other projects. This allowed him to

continue with his apprenticeship. Comparing the case of Liam with Lucy, Lucy was not kept on by her employer after the Olympic build and she was left to find another employer in order for her to complete her apprenticeship. Although large-scale construction projects can be beneficial to assist with employment and training, any such initiative should be sustainable for the duration of the apprenticeship training.

Apprentices who worked on the Olympic site were, at times, being loaned out from one contractor to another contractor, allowing contractors greater scope to broaden their apprentices' site experience. One contractor spoke about negotiating, with another contractor, describing how each contractor will be reimbursed and whether that individual would be supplied 'at cost or below cost'. This is an informal practice, which can either enhance or limit opportunities.

The research showed that the intervention on the Olympic site did assist in providing training opportunities in the form of apprenticeships for some individuals. However, there are debates about whether this major project could have provided more training and employment opportunities (Clarke and Holborough, 2011). One thing noted with the Olympic site is that a 'Women in Construction (WiC)' project was implemented. The remit was to provide training opportunities for women. The project, which, as noted in Chapter 10, benefitted from financial assistance, has been evaluated and it is still being run as a viable project continuing to assist women to gain access to the construction industry, even after the Olympic build (Wright, 2014). However, no such project was being offered to individuals from a BAME background.

The point is that any opportunities offered in the construction industry should be 'real opportunities', which Sen (2009) argues should be what an individual values.

11.4.3 Contributions of the research to practice: the construction industry

This research builds upon earlier work as to the reason why the BAME group is underrepresented in the construction industry (Ahmed *et al.*, 2008; Clarke and Gribling, 2008; Craw *et al.*, 2007; Kenyon, 2005). Although many factors can shape the choices of an individual, for example, family, environment, social background and geographic location (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977; Briggs, 2010; Fanshawe and Sriskandarajah, 2010), the equality framework, shown in Chapter 10, is a tangible outcome from this study regarding what the electrical trainees valued and the factors that affected their capability set. The framework depicts the barriers that the trainees faced in the transition process. In addition, possible intervention points were noted, as a result of the research findings. Thus, the framework provides a 'roadmap' for employment and training practices that can be adopted by electrical and construction organisations to provide the BAME group and the white group equal chances, in accessing the construction industry.

Furthermore, the framework can be used as a tool to inform debates as to how to tackle the underrepresentation of the BAME group in the industry. The barriers in accessing the industry start from when individuals are at school, which is well before they try to access the construction industry. In addition, from a methodological standpoint, the framework can be used to increase the debate for public reasoning, an area that Sen (2009) states is of importance in the development of the capability framework. Therefore, for that reason it would be of interest to gain the views of the schools, colleges and electrical contractors with regard to the capability list developed for electrical trainees.

Ultimately, the framework created for this research encompasses what the trainees valued. Thus, the framework provides a discussion point for organisations in the development of their employment and training practices, to ensure any practices do not limit the capabilities of individuals when providing employment within the construction labour market.

The study has identified the importance of moving away from outcomes when trying to understand any inequality that may occur in the STWT, with a focus on the construction industry. It has highlighted the need to focus on comprehensive outcomes, which centre on examining processes, such as recruitment and training, which in turn may affect the employment and training outcome of the electrical trainees.

11.5 Recommendations for further research

The study has identified three areas for further research. The first is ethnicity and the STWT. The data collected were at one point in time but were focused on the transition process over time. Collecting data over time, specific to the construction industry, would allow further examination and identification as to the influences that enhance or affect the capability set. The reason for doing so would be to identify whether the capabilities identified in Chapter 10 require other capabilities or whether there are other factors affecting the capability sets of electrical trainees. This would allow the framework identified in Chapter 10 to be updated, reflecting the transition of the electrical trainees.

A second area for research is creating a capability set for electrical trainees, but in doing so, using the narratives of organisations. This would make it possible to compare and contrast a capability set produced by the electrical trainees with the one created by the organisations. The two sets could then be used to understand what the trainee value compared to what the organisation values.

The third area to emerge for further study is to ascertain how sensitive the capability approach is to other industries. A particular focus could be to examine the STWT in other industries underrepresented by the BAME group or otherwise use the capability approach to identify inequality in the process. This could provide insight into whether a capability framework is specific to different employment sectors or specific to certain occupations. Focusing on other sectors allows the possibility to identify inequality for other groups or individuals or occupations. This

study has focused on the electrical trade. How much would the capability list change if used for other occupations?

11.6 Final remarks

The final words of this thesis are from Liam, who was such an inspirational young person. The researcher asked him to reflect on his life:

Liam: Looking back now, for ethnic minorities, I wish people would sit down with them and say 'do y'know what, don't worry about the colour of your skin, you can be a board director, you can do this, you can ...' and saying more positive things, build 'em up instead of trying to label them'.

*It's like when you hear the news, another black person being stabbed, this n'that, or ethnic minorities ... it's like what is all this about, why can't we just be one people ... we all live in Britain, we go to the same school, we go to the same university.....[....] As a black guy myself, we can be this, we have got bundles of potential, education is free in Britain, but we should use that as an advantage.
(male, apprentice contractor sample)*

Despite the challenges that Liam faced in his transition process, at the time of the interview he had settled down with his partner and has a daughter. Liam stressed the need for him to be resilient in the transition process. In January 2015, the researcher tried to make contact with Liam to establish whether or not he was an electrician, but unfortunately no response to the enquiry was received.

Organisations, particularly those in the educational and employment sectors, ought to see the benefit of providing equal access to everyone. It is noted by the Annual Population Survey that the unemployment rate for the 16-24 age group is higher for BAMEs than for the white population, for example, the white group is 19%, whereas the black group is 44%, and the Asian group is

34% (Dar, 2014). As the BAME population is increasing at the greatest rate, this could cause future social and economic problems.

Despite this being the case, inequality still exists in the United Kingdom (Thane, 2010). Addressing inequality has come a long way, but still has a long way to go.

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Appendix 1: The film 'Builders and the Games'

The film submitted with this thesis was in DVD format.

Appendix 2: List of filming activities

Filming and Interviews	Date
North West London Construction College, North West London	23 November 2009
Unite Union, Central London	7 December 2009
National Construction College, Docklands, London	19 January 2010
Small construction contractor, West London	25 March 2010
Workers Memorial Day, Stratford, London	28 April 2010
2012 Olympic site, East London	18 June 2010 and 13 May 2011
Canary Wharf, London	14-17 February 2011
2012 Olympic Site, blacklisting demonstration, London	1 March 2011
Construction Skills Competition, Hackney College, London	10 March 2011
A new build housing construction site, London	27 May 2011
WorldSkills Competition, Excel Centre, London	8 October 2011

Appendix 3: Interview prompt sheet for organisations

Sample contractor interview questions

The purpose of these questions is to gain an understanding of the organisation, in addition to obtaining information about trainees, their experience in relation to construction training and employment and factors and influences that may have an impact on trainees. The research is particular focused on the electrician trade.

Ques.	Section	Question Types
1.	About the organisation	Details about the organisation to be obtained
2.	You role	Details about your role.
3.	Trades	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What types of construction trades are covered within the organisation
4.	About trainees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the total number of apprentices/trainees within the organisation? What is the breakdown of apprentices/trainees between gender, ethnicity and disability, within trades? How much are apprentices/trainees paid? How does this rate compare to other employers
5.	About recruitment of trainees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk through how construction trainees are recruited. What is involved in the actual recruitment process? Where are construction trainee vacancies advertised? How often do you recruit construction trainees? Talk about what is necessary to apply for an apprenticeship in terms of skills, qualifications etc? Talk about any factors that may affect the take up of an apprenticeship, especially for underrepresented groups within the construction industry
6.	Personal Development / support for trainees/retention of trainees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What support is provided to trainees during their apprenticeship/employment? What is the length of construction trainees training? What level of qualification do construction trainees obtain? Talk about what the actual training consists of in terms of skills, knowledge etc. The training received does it align itself with the work that is required on site/in the construction industry? What difficulties do you find construction trainees experience as part of their training or working on construction site? Talk about any issues around non-completion of construction trainees? How do you think further support can be provided to construction trainees Talk about any particular social group that may require any additional support
7.	Links with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What colleges/construction employers are you affiliated with? Talk through your involvement with these colleges/construction

Ques.	Section	Question Types
	employers/colleges	<p>employers in relation to construction trainees?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk about any issues faced by trainees securing employment within the construction industry once they have completed their training. • Talk about support provided to trainees once they have completed their training.
8.	Olympic site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk about trainees on the Olympic site from the organisations perspective: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - how many trainees are on site - what trades are they doing - the duration of working on site - what support is provided to trainees whilst on site - talk about any barriers/problems whilst working on site and how can these can be improved. - talk about trainees who may not complete their apprenticeship whilst working on the Olympic site and what is the plan to support them • Talk about whether there was a strategy to recruit local people on the Olympic site and what was your organisations involvement? How is this tracked – how do you know whether a construction trainee has always lived locally or has recently moved into the area to gain training on one of the construction sites in East London? • What is the strategy going forward in relation to construction trainees i.e. will numbers increase/stay the same/reduce?
9.	The organisation policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What process is in place to promote equal opportunities and equality within the organisation? How can these processes be improved? • Talk about the monitoring of trainees in relation to diversity • How can groups that are underrepresented in construction industry be improved? What influences individuals from this groups seeking a career in construction and how can this be improved. • Going forward how can underrepresented groups within the construction industry be improved • How are contractors/sub-contractors monitored to ensure that they adhere to your equal opportunity/diversity ethos? • What partner organisations are you working with to ensure a diverse workforce?
10.	Interviewing apprentices	Explore the possibility of interviewing construction trainees as they are the focus of this research; whether working on the Olympic site or any other construction site in the East End of London (for example Westfields)
11.	Additional interviews	Explore the possibility of other organisations that may be useful to interview as part of this research

Ques.	Section	Question Types
12.	Thank You	

Appendix 4: List of organisations interviewed

Number	Key	Interviewee Type
1.	female, BAME, Labour Market, No.1	Labour Market
2.	male, white, Labour Market, No.2	Labour Market
3.	female, white, Labour Market, No.3	Training
4.	male, white, Labour Market, No. 4	Labour Market
5.	male, white, Union, No. 5	Union
6.	male, white, Labour Manager , No.6	Labour Market
7.	female, white, Labour Market, No. 7	Job brokerage
8.	male, white, Labour Market, No. 8	Job brokerage
9.	male. White, Labour Market, No. 9	Training
10.	female, white, Labour Market, No. 10	Training
11.	male, white, Electrical Contractor, No. 11	Contractor
12.	male, white, Electrical Contractor, No. 12	Contractor
13.	male, white, Electrical Contractor, No. 13	Contractor
14.	female. white, Electrical Contractor, No. 14	Contractor
15.	female, white, Electrical Contractor, No. 15	Contractor
16.	male, white Electrical Contractor, No16	Contractor
17.	male, white, Electrical Contractor, No. 17	Contractor
18.	male, white. Electrical Contractor, No. 18	Contractor
19.	male, BAME, College, No. 19	Education
20.	female, white, College, No. 20	Education
21.	male, white, College, No. 21	Education
22.	male, white, College, No. 22	Education
23.	male. White, College, No. 23	Education
24.	male, white, College , No.24	Education
25.	male, white, College, No. 25	Education
26.	female, white, College, No. 26	Education
27.	male, white, College, No. 27	Education
31.	male, white, Electrical Trade, No. 31	Professional Body
32.	male, white, Electrical Trade, No. 32	Professional Body
33.	male, white, Electrical Trade, No. 33	Professional Body
34.	male, white, Electrical Trade, No 34	Union
35.	male, white, Electrical Trade, No. 35	Construction Industry
36.	male, white, Electrical Trade, No. 36	Union
37.	male, white, Electrical Trade, No. 37	Training
38.	male, white, Electrical Trade, No. 38	Training
39.	male, white, Construction Industry, No. 39	Labour Market
40.	female, white, Construction Industry, No. 40	Labour Market
41.	male, White, Local Authority, No. 41	Local Authority
42.	male, BAME, Police, No. 42	Police
43.	male, white, Police, No. 43	Police

Appendix 5: Events attended by the researcher

DATE	EVENT	ORGANISER
17 March 2010	The impacts and legacies of the Olympic Games	University of Westminster, London
10 March 2011	Apprenticeship Skills Day	Hackney College, London
9 March 2011	ODA Diversity Awards	ODA, London
6 May 2011	Apprenticeship London Networking Event	Apprenticeships in London, ODA
10 June 2011	Probe Book Launch	Nuffield Foundation, London
16 June 2011	ODA Film Showcase	ODA, London
6 September 2011	Apprenticeships for All	Unionlearn, London

Appendix 6: Electrical trainee questionnaire

UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER: SURVEY

1. Are you training or have recently trained to be an electrician?

- Yes No

If you have answered 'yes' we would like to thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. We are interested in your views of training and working in the construction industry, as an electrician. This University of Westminster, Business School research survey will take only **10 minutes**. All responses are **completely anonymous** and **any publication will not identify you or your organisation**.

<p>A. ABOUT YOU</p> <p>1. What is your date of birth? D D / M M / Y Y <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> / <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> / <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>2. What is your gender? <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female</p> <p>3. What is your ethnic background? Asian or Asian British <input type="checkbox"/> Indian <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi <input type="checkbox"/> Asian Other _____ Black or Black British <input type="checkbox"/> Black African <input type="checkbox"/> Black Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/> Other Black _____ Mixed <input type="checkbox"/> White and Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/> White and Black African <input type="checkbox"/> White and Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed Other _____ Other Ethnic Groups <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese <input type="checkbox"/> Any Other Ethnic Group White <input type="checkbox"/> White British <input type="checkbox"/> White Other, _____</p> <p>4. Please tick the region where you live? <input type="checkbox"/> London, please specify which borough, e.g. Barking _____ <input type="checkbox"/> East of England <input type="checkbox"/> South East England <input type="checkbox"/> South West England <input type="checkbox"/> East Midlands <input type="checkbox"/> West Midlands <input type="checkbox"/> Yorkshire and the Humber <input type="checkbox"/> North East England <input type="checkbox"/> North West England <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify _____</p> <p>5. What is your employment status? <input type="checkbox"/> Employed <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed <input type="checkbox"/> Self employed <input type="checkbox"/> Student <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify _____</p> <p>6. If employed or self employed, what is your job? _____ _____</p>	<p>B. ABOUT YOUR CONSTRUCTION TRAINING</p> <p>1. What qualifications do you have? Tick all that apply <input type="checkbox"/> Degree <input type="checkbox"/> A levels <input type="checkbox"/> GCSEs <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify _____</p> <p>2. Do you have 5 or more GCSEs at level A-C <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>3. Do you have the following GCSEs? (Tick all that apply and please specify your grade) <input type="checkbox"/> Maths, grade _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Science, grade _____ <input type="checkbox"/> English, grade _____ <input type="checkbox"/> ICT, grade _____</p> <p>4. Where are studying/did you study to become an electrician? <input type="checkbox"/> Waltham Forest College <input type="checkbox"/> Barking and Dagenham College <input type="checkbox"/> Hackney College <input type="checkbox"/> Greenwich College <input type="checkbox"/> College of North West London <input type="checkbox"/> College of North East London <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify _____</p> <p>5. Please state the name of the course, level and the year you are currently in. Name: _____ _____ Level: _____ Year: _____</p> <p>6. Please tick the mode of study for your course <input type="checkbox"/> full time <input type="checkbox"/> block release <input type="checkbox"/> day release <input type="checkbox"/> evening only <input type="checkbox"/> part time <input type="checkbox"/> other, please specify _____</p> <p>7. Please state when you: a. started your course <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> MM <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> YY b. will finish(ed) your course <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> MM <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> YY</p> <p>8. Is or was your training part of an electrical apprenticeship (i.e. attending college whilst working with an employer in the construction industry)? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>9. Are you a JTL trainee? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>10. What electrical qualification do you currently have? (Tick all that apply)</p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">I have now:</td> <td style="width: 50%;">I will have once trained:</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Key skills or functional skills</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Technical certificate, level 2</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Technical certificate, level 3</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> NVQ level 2</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> NVQ level 3</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> AM2</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify _____</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> _____</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> _____</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>	I have now:	I will have once trained:	<input type="checkbox"/> Key skills or functional skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Technical certificate, level 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Technical certificate, level 3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> NVQ level 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> NVQ level 3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> AM2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>C. WORKING IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY</p> <p>1. Are you currently working in the construction industry? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No, Go to question 3</p> <p>2. How long have you worked in the construction industry as an electrician? <input type="checkbox"/> 0 – 1 year <input type="checkbox"/> 5 – 8 years <input type="checkbox"/> 2 – 4 years <input type="checkbox"/> 9 years and over</p> <p>3. Who is your current employer? (Please tick one) <input type="checkbox"/> T.Clarke <input type="checkbox"/> Wingate Electrical Plc <input type="checkbox"/> Imtech G & H Ltd <input type="checkbox"/> Bovis Lend Lease <input type="checkbox"/> Haydon M&E <input type="checkbox"/> Wysepower <input type="checkbox"/> Marcoe Electrical <input type="checkbox"/> Crosby Electrical Services Ltd <input type="checkbox"/> DaleTech Services <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify _____</p> <p>4. How long have you been working for this employer? <input type="checkbox"/> 0 – 1 year <input type="checkbox"/> 5 – 8 years <input type="checkbox"/> 2 – 4 years <input type="checkbox"/> 9 years and over</p> <p>5. What electrical installations are you involved in? (Tick all that apply) <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic (housing) <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial</p> <p>6. What kinds of projects have you worked on? (Tick all that apply) <input type="checkbox"/> Large <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Small</p> <p>7. Have you worked on the 2012 Olympic site? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>8. How long have you/did you work on the 2012 Olympic site? <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 1 month <input type="checkbox"/> 1 - 2 years <input type="checkbox"/> 2 - 6 months <input type="checkbox"/> 2 - 4 years <input type="checkbox"/> 7 - 12 months <input type="checkbox"/> 5 years and over</p> <p>9. Please state other projects you have worked on? (Tick all that apply) <input type="checkbox"/> Crossrail <input type="checkbox"/> Heathrow Terminal 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Westfield, West London <input type="checkbox"/> Westfield, East London <input type="checkbox"/> Wembley Stadium <input type="checkbox"/> Other(s), please specify _____ _____ _____</p>
I have now:	I will have once trained:																					
<input type="checkbox"/> Key skills or functional skills	<input type="checkbox"/>																					
<input type="checkbox"/> Technical certificate, level 2	<input type="checkbox"/>																					
<input type="checkbox"/> Technical certificate, level 3	<input type="checkbox"/>																					
<input type="checkbox"/> NVQ level 2	<input type="checkbox"/>																					
<input type="checkbox"/> NVQ level 3	<input type="checkbox"/>																					
<input type="checkbox"/> AM2	<input type="checkbox"/>																					
<input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify _____	<input type="checkbox"/>																					
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/>																					
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/>																					

D. FACTORS

1. In your opinion how important are each of the below factors in terms of joining or trying to join the construction labor market?
CLASSIFICATION: 1 meaning the 'lowest importance' and 5 being the 'highest importance.'

Factors	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Personal safety						
Literacy skills						
Numeracy skills						
Self esteem						
Respect from others						
Earning a living						
To be employable						
To make my own decisions						
To have self confidence						
Being able to enjoy social networks						
To learn a trade						
Getting a qualification						

2. Please state other factors that you think are important in terms of working in the construction labor market.

E. INFLUENCES

1. Please tick what has influenced you, positively or negatively, (a) in taking up a course in construction and (b) gaining employment in the construction industry.

Influences	a. What has influenced you taking up a <u>construction college course</u>			b. What influenced you in gaining or trying to gain employment in the <u>construction labour market</u>		
	Positively	Negatively	N/A	Positively	Negatively	N/A
Career advisor						
School						
Home						
Social environment						
Need to earn an income						
Family member already in the construction industry						

2. Please state other things that influenced you. Please specify whether they were positive or negative influences.

F. THANK YOU

1. Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Please use the space below to tell us anything else that you think may help with our research.

2. Please provide your details, if we can contact you for further information. **Please use capital letters.**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Town: _____ Post Code: _____

Email Address: _____ Phone Number: _____

This questionnaire is part of a research degree being undertaken at: The University of Westminster, Westminster Business School, 35 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5LS. Comments should be directed to Aletha Holborough at: aletha.holborough@my.westminster.ac.uk or aletha4x@hotmail.com

Appendix 7: Interview prompt sheet for electrical trainees

RESEARCH QUESTION:

What is the experience of BAMEs during the STWT process? And do they differ from the white majority?

Note: need – (1) completed trainee survey and (2) Participation Information Sheet and Consent Form.

- **INTRODUCTION**
 - Explain what the research is about
 - Why did you want to be an electrician?
 - Describe what happened from getting interested in being an electrician, from applying, to getting a place

- **SCHOOL**
 - Talk about your experience in school
 - Talk about your likes and dislikes
 - Talk about any problems you experienced at school and how they were dealt with.

PROMPT: being treated less favourably

 - Talk about the support you received at school to help you achieve your qualifications.
 - Talk about the qualifications you received upon leaving school

- **THE TRANSITION PROCESS**
 - Tell me about moving from school to college

PROMPT: what was it like, what were the positives, negatives

PROMPT: any problems

- **COLLEGE**
 - Talk about the recruitment of getting into college.
 - PROMPT: Find out what type of learner they are.
 - Talk about your training to become an electrician
 - Talk about support provided by the college
 - Talk about the course itself – what is included
 - PROMPT: discussion about the modules
 - How similar is what is being studied at college compare to what you do on site (if they are on site)
 - Talk about your mode of study whilst working.
 - PROMPT: find out about day release, block release - any problems or issues?
 - Talk about the electrical qualification: what is required to be a fully qualified electrician
 - Talk about how you fund your studies
 - Talk about your likes and dislikes at college.

- **EMPLOYER (APPRENTICE)**
 - Talk about your employer
 - Talk about the recruitment process
 - PROMPT: experience of accessing the construction labour market
 - What support does your employer, in terms of your training, provide to you?
 - PROMPT: mentor, managing agent (JTL, best)
 - PROMPT: Talk about the support you are receiving.
 - What are your likes and dislikes working with the employer?
 - Talk about pay and benefits that you receive whilst training?
 - PROMPT: what will be pay and benefits once trained
 - Talk about the projects you have worked on.
 - What were your likes and dislikes on these projects.

Note: if working on 2012 Olympic site – additional questions

- Talk about how you was recruited to work on the 2012 Olympic site
- Talk about what it was like working on this site
- How did working on this site compare to working on other sites?
PROMPT: any differences on working on this site in terms of support, banter, problems issues - likes and dislikes
- Talk about targets working on the Olympic site – women, BAME, disabled – your thoughts about the need to have targets?
- Why do you think there are less BAME and women in construction

Note: If they have not worked on the Olympic site

1. Talk about trying to find employment working on the Olympic site

PROMPT: did they apply, did they not apply - Find out why

Note: If not an apprentice

1. Talk about your experience trying to secure an apprenticeship
2. Trying to secure employment with an electrical contractor
3. **Note**: if the individual is not a construction employer find out about their current job – why are they doing it.

- **FAMILY**

- Talk about your family
- Who is included in your household?
PROMPT: find out numbers and whether council, home owner
- What do your parents do?
PROMPT: anyone connected to the construction industry
PROMPT: If BAME- find out about whether first, second generation, second generation.

- **ENVIRONMENT**

- Talk about where you live
- What is it like?
- What do you like and don't like about it
- Talk about your friends – what do they do
PROMPT: any working in construction?

- **ABOUT YOU**

- What are your goals and aspirations in life?
 - If you did not train to be an electrician what would you have become?
 - Who supports you in what you want to do?
PROMPT: anyone particular – teacher, family friend, mentor, pastor, minister, school
 - What has stopped/hindered you from achieving your goals?
PROMPT: hindered - trouble with the police?
 - In school, college or in employment, talk about a time you have been treated less favourably than someone else.
 - What is next for you, after you complete your current course?
PROMPT: if completed training what are their next plans
1. If they are an apprentice will they stay with employer once they have finished training or move onto another employer

Appendix 8: Participation Information Sheet and Consent Form

PARTICIPATION INFORMATION SHEET

Research Addressing equality of construction trainees

Researcher: Aletha M. Holborough, University of Westminster

Staff Supervisor: Linda Clarke, University of Westminster

You are being invited to take part in a research study on the experience of trainees embarked upon a construction training course. There is evidence from studies to suggest that young people of ethnic backgrounds and women have (a) different experiences on training courses and (b) securing employment in the construction industry.

The aim of this research is to explore the underrepresentation of ethnic minorities and women in the construction industry.

The study will involve you:

2) Participating and consenting to an interview with me, about the recruitment, training and support of electrical trainees. This will take about 1 ½ hours and will be tape-recorded.

For this study, follow up interviews may be undertaken to support information already collected.

Please note:

9. Participation is entirely voluntary.
10. You have the right to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.
11. You have the right to ask for your data to be withdrawn as long as this is practical, and for personal information to be destroyed.
12. You do not have to answer particular questions either on questionnaires or in interviews if you do not wish to.
13. Your responses will be confidential. You will remain anonymous and your name will not be published. No individuals will be identifiable from any collated data, written report of the research, or any publications arising from it.
14. All personal data will be kept in a locked cupboard on University premises.
15. If you wish you can receive information on the results of the research.
16. The researcher can be contacted after participation by email (aletha.holborough@my.westminster.ac.uk) or by telephone (0207 911 5000 ext 3061).

CONSENT FORM

Title of Study: Addressing equality of construction trainees

Lead Researcher: Aletha M. Holborough

I have read the information in the Participation Information Sheet, and I am willing to act as a participant in the above research study.

First Name (PRINT): _____

Last Name (PRINT) _____

Email (PRINT) _____

Phone (PRINT) _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

This consent form will be stored separately from any data you provide so that your responses remain anonymous.

I have provided an appropriate explanation of the study to the participant

Researcher Signature _____

Appendix 9: Ethics application: Part Approval

UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER



26 August 2010

Dear Aletha

App. No. 09/10/37

Aletha Holborough: Westminster Business School

Mode: MPhil/PhD

Supervisor: Linda Clarke

Addressing equality: The construction industry and vocational education and training

I am writing to inform you that your response to conditions set to you by the Committee where considered. The application was **approved** by Chair's Action; please note your response below to the following condition:

- Will film-makers use their own consent mechanisms for participants?

Your response was: *Yes the project leader, Margaret Dickinson, is taking responsibility for ethics permission during any filming.*

However, the question was regarding consent of participants involved in making the film, but we assume that the ethics permission actually refers to consent.

Approval has been granted on 26 August 2010, for your study up to the point prior to entering colleges and conducting interviews. Full approval should be applied for once the letters of consent and collaborations (colleges, plus any other collaborators/organisations involved) have been received by you and sent to the Committee.

Yours sincerely

Huzma Kelly

Senior Research Officer (Policy and Governance)

Secretary, Research Ethics sub Committee

cc Dr. John Colwell, (Chair) Research Ethics sub Committee
Dr. Linda Clarke
Mike Fisher

Appendix 10: Ethics application: Full approval

**UNIVERSITY OF
WESTMINSTER**

5 October 2011

Dear Aletha

App. No. 09/10/37
Aletha Holborough: Westminster Business School
Mode: MPhil/PhD
Supervisor: Linda Clarke

Addressing equality: The construction industry and vocational education and training (additional approval following an addition to the original proposal approved by RESC on 26 August 2010)

I am writing to inform you that your response to conditions, set to you by the Committee, were considered by correspondence. Following further clarity by you on the issues of 'Structure of interviews' and 'Equal opportunities' on 4th October. The application was **approved** on 5th October 2011.

If your protocol changes significantly in the meantime, please contact me immediately, in case of further ethical requirements.

Kind Regards

Huzma Kelly
Secretary, Research Ethics sub Committee

cc. Dr. John Colwell
Mike Fisher
Prof. Linda Clarke
Dr. Elisabeth Michielsens

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Cavendish House, University of Westminster
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T: +44 (0) 20 7911 5051
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westminster.ac.uk/research



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I am advised by the Committee to remind you of the following points:

1. Your responsibility to notify the Research Ethics sub Committee immediately of any information received by you, or of which you become aware, which would cast doubt upon, or alter, any information contained in the original application, or a later amendment, submitted to the Research Ethics sub Committee and/or which would raise questions about the safety and/or continued conduct of the research.
2. The need to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998
3. The need to comply, throughout the conduct of the study, with good research practice standards
4. The need to refer proposed amendments to the protocol to the Research Ethics sub Committee for further review and to obtain Research Ethics sub Committee approval thereto prior to implementation (except only in cases of emergency when the welfare of the subject is paramount).
5. You are authorised to present this University of Westminster Ethics Committee letter of approval to outside bodies, e.g. NHS Research Ethics Committees, in support of any application for further research clearance.
6. The requirement to furnish the Research Ethics sub Committee with details of the conclusion and outcome of the project, and to inform the Research Ethics sub Committee should the research be discontinued. The Committee would prefer a concise summary of the conclusion and outcome of the project, which would fit no more than one side of A4 paper, please.
7. The desirability of including full details of the consent form in an appendix to your research, and of addressing specifically ethical issues in your methodological discussion.

Appendix 11: Electrical Trainees family information

Electrical Trainees	Label	Father occupational status	Mother occupational status	One or Two Parent Family	Sibling(s)
Carl	<i>(male, Asian, age 17, non-apprentice)</i>	Skilled trades occupations	Administrative and secretarial occupations	One parent	Two
Carter	<i>(male, Asian, age 16, non-apprentice)</i>	Skilled trades occupations	Sales and customer service	Two parent	Two
Cyril	<i>(male, Black, age 55, non-apprentice)</i>	Not known	Not known	Not known	One
David	<i>(male, Black, age 27, non-apprentice)</i>	Associate professional and technical occupations	Professional occupations	One parent	Three or more
Frank	<i>(male, Black, age 30, non-apprentice)</i>	Associate professional and technical occupations	Unemployed	Not known	Three or more
George	<i>(male, Asian, age 17, non-apprentice)</i>	Not known	Skilled trades occupations	Two parent	Three or more
Luke	<i>(male, Asian, age 38, non-apprentice)</i>	Professional occupations	Skilled trades occupations	Not known	Not known
Matthew	<i>(male, Asian, age 19, non-apprentice)</i>	Associate professional and technical occupations	Unemployed	Two parent	Two
Miles	<i>(male, Asian, age 22, non-apprentice)</i>	Not known	Unemployed	Two parent	Two
Tristan	<i>(male, Black, age 25, non-apprentice)</i>	Professional occupations	Unemployed	Two parent	One
William	<i>(male, Mixed, age 39, non-apprentice)</i>	Not known	Not known	Two parent	Not known
Nathan	<i>(male, Mixed, age 21, non-apprentice)</i>	Skilled trades occupations	Unemployed	Two parent	Three or more
Cole	<i>(male, white, age 22, non-apprentice)</i>	Skilled trades occupations	Administrative and secretarial occupations	Two parent	One
Max	<i>(male, white, age 18, non-apprentice)</i>	Caring, leisure and other service occupations	Not known	Two parent	Two
Susan	<i>(male, white, age 20, non-apprentice)</i>	Associate professional and technical occupations	Caring, leisure and other service occupations	Two parent	One
Benjamin	<i>(male, white, age 17, non-apprentice)</i>	Not known	Caring, leisure and other service occupations	One parent	None

Electrical Trainees	Label	Father occupational status	Mother occupational status	One or Two Parent Family	Sibling(s)
Faith	<i>(male, white, age 46, non-apprentice)</i>	Managers and senior officials	Administrative and secretarial occupations	Not known	Not known
Roger	<i>(male, Black, age 18, apprentice, college sample)</i>	Unemployed	Not known	Two parent	One
Aiden	<i>(male, Black, age 20, apprentice, college sample)</i>	Process, plant and machine operatives	Administrative and secretarial occupations	Two parent	None
Alexander	<i>(male, Mixed, age 23, apprentice, college sample)</i>	Professional occupations	Not known	Two parent	None
Liam	<i>(male, Black, age 24, apprentice, contractor sample)</i>	Skilled trades occupations	Elementary occupation	One parent	Three or more
Ryan	<i>(male, Mixed, age 20, apprentice, college sample)</i>	Associate professional and technical occupations	Unemployed	One parent	None
Harry	<i>(male, Asian, age 27, apprentice, college sample)</i>	Skilled trades occupations	Unemployed	Two parent	Not known
Logan	<i>(male, Asian, age 19, apprentice, college sample)</i>	Administrative and secretarial occupations	Skilled trades occupations	Not known	Two
Jayden	<i>(male, Asian, age 22, apprentice, college sample)</i>	Skilled trades occupations	Professional occupations	Two parent	None
Charlie	<i>(male, white, age 20, apprentice, contractor sample)</i>	Skilled trades occupations	Skilled trades occupations	One parent	Two
Jonathan	<i>(male, white, age 20, apprentice, college sample)</i>	Skilled trades occupations	Not known	Not known	Three or more
David	<i>(male, white, age 17, apprentice, college sample)</i>	Associate professional and technical occupations	Not known	Two parent	Three or more
Blake	<i>(male, white, age 18, apprentice, college sample)</i>	Skilled trades occupations	Skilled trades occupations	Two parent	None
Carson	<i>(male, white, age 19, apprentice, college sample)</i>	Personal service occupations	Administrative and secretarial occupations	Not known	None
Hunter	<i>(male, white, age 19, apprentice, contractor sample)</i>	Associate professional and technical occupations	Administrative and secretarial occupations	Two parent	One

Electrical Trainees	Label	Father occupational status	Mother occupational status	One or Two Parent Family	Sibling(s)
Julian	<i>(male, white, age 21, apprentice, contractor sample)</i>	Skilled trades occupations	Professional occupations	One parent	None
Lucy	<i>(female, white, age 19, apprentice, contractor sample)</i>	Elementary occupation	Elementary occupation	One parent	None
Parker	<i>(male, white, age 20, apprentice, college sample)</i>	Unemployed	Unemployed	Two parent	Three or more
Sean	<i>(male, white, age 20, apprentice, contractor sample)</i>	Skilled trades occupations	Elementary occupation	Two parent	Two
Nolan	<i>(male, white, age 21, apprentice, contractor sample)</i>	Skilled trades occupations	Not known	Two parent	One
Jason	<i>(male, white, age 19, apprentice, contractor sample)</i>	Associate professional and technical occupations	Not known	One parent	One