

# RESEARCH SUMMARY

<b>Title</b>	Dial-a-Ride Application Process Evaluation		
<b>Objective</b>	To assess whether changes to the application process have not disadvantaged any groups of potential applicants, and to understand applicants' experiences of the new application process		
<b>Date</b>	February 2012	<b>Agency:</b>	SPA Future Thinking
<b>Methodology</b>	Review of applicant database, and 300 telephone interviews with applicants (successful, unsuccessful and 'still in progress')		

## Abstract

Following the introduction of an enhanced assessment process for non-automatic applicants, TfL commissioned research to understand the impact on applicants and understand any barriers. Review of applicant data comparing six months under the previous with six months of the current processes revealed a drop in the overall level of non-automatic applicants, but with no evidence that any particular groups were being discouraged from applying. Successful applicants were more likely to be satisfied with the process than those whose application failed, but there were very few issues with the administrative or clerical procedures involved in applying.

## Key findings

Comparison of the DaR database of accepted members from the periods 1/7/2010 – 31/12/2010 (before the introduction of the new application process for non-automatic applicants) and 1/7/2011 – 31/12/2011 (the corresponding period the following year, during which the new process was in operation) showed a large drop in both the number and proportion of non-automatic entrants.

This could be due to a variety of factors including changes to the categorisation of non-automatic applicants, as well as potential applicants realising that they were not eligible and deciding not to apply. There is some evidence of this from the telephone survey, in which some of those who had chosen not to return the application form that they had requested explained that they had realised they were not eligible.

There is no evidence that particular demographics were disproportionately less likely to apply than others. Although there had been an increase in the proportion of female non-automatic entrants in 2011 compared with 2010, this could be the result of random chance and should be monitored in future to confirm.

In the telephone survey, accepted members were more likely to agree that the application process had been fairly administered than those whose application was still pending or had been rejected. This was perhaps unsurprising and many explained that their appraisal of the fairness of the application process was based at least in part on the outcome of their individual application, rather than the clerical or administrative procedures involved in applying.

Based on the findings of this research, the greater assessment of DaR applicants should be continued as there are no signs that it is unfairly biasing applications to specific demographic groups, or that there are any significant difficulties for applicants in completing the forms. Additionally, auto-enrolment figures have remained relatively stable which indicate that there are no significant miscommunications for this group that deter them from applying.

**Job number 11031**