



Department  
for Education

# Employer Pulse Survey

Research report

April 2022

**Authors: Mark Winterbotham, Genna Kik,  
Sam Selner, Oliver Gooding, Rory Jackson,  
Malina Cojocaru**



Government  
Social Research

# Contents

Key findings	4
Executive summary	6
Introduction	6
Homeworking in response to COVID-19	6
Training and workforce development	7
Apprenticeships	8
Traineeships	8
Placements and work inspiration	9
T Levels	9
1 Introduction	10
1.1 Background to the Employer Pulse Survey	10
1.2 Policy background	10
1.3 Reporting conventions	13
2 Homeworking in response to COVID-19	14
2.1 Impact of COVID-19 on homeworking practices	14
2.2 Impact on productivity	18
2.3 Future plans in terms of homeworking	20
3 Training and workforce development	24
3.1 Incidence of training	24
3.2 Number and proportion of staff trained	26
3.3 Impact of COVID-19 on training	28
3.4 Types of training provided	30
3.5 Engagement with, and perceptions of, external training providers	34
3.6 Training Support	45
4 Apprenticeships	48
4.1 Engagement with apprenticeships	48
4.2 Knowledge of apprenticeships	52
4.3 Reasons for not offering apprenticeships	53
5 Traineeships	56

5.1	Awareness and incidence of traineeships	56
5.2	Factors determining whether individuals were taken on to do a traineeship	59
6	Placements and work inspiration	63
6.1	Remote working	66
6.2	Incidence of work inspiration activities	67
6.3	Barriers to placements and work inspiration activities	70
7	T Levels	72
7.1	Awareness of T Levels	72
7.2	Interest in T Levels	73
7.3	Capacity for offering T Levels	75
8	Conclusions	77
9	List of figures	79
10	List of tables	82
11	Appendices	84
11.1	Methodology	84
11.1.1	Sampling	84
11.1.2	Fieldwork	84
11.1.3	Weighting	84
11.2	Size and sector profile of establishments	85
11.3	Definitions for grouped categories	89
11.4	Questionnaire wording	93

## Key findings

Measure	EPS 2016	ESS 2017	ESS 2019	Pulse 2021
<b>Training</b>				
% of all establishments training any staff over the last 12 months	n/a	66%	61%	48%
% of all establishments providing off-the-job training in the last 12 months	n/a	48%	43%	25%
% of the total workforce trained	n/a	62%	60%	52%
% of employers that train that provided any EXTERNAL training for employees in the past 12 months	64%	n/a	n/a	54%
% of employers that train using Further Education (FE) Colleges for training	12%	n/a	n/a	15%
% of employers that train using Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) for training	6%	n/a	n/a	7%
% of employers that train using other commercial organisations for training	50%	n/a	n/a	41%
% of employers that train using regulatory bodies for training	16%	n/a	n/a	16%
% of employers that train using customers for training	10%	n/a	n/a	5%
% of employers that train using suppliers for training	23%	n/a	n/a	14%
% of employers that train using other non-profit making organisations for training	11%	n/a	n/a	11%
<b>Apprenticeships</b>				
% all establishments that have any staff undertaking apprenticeships at their site	12%	n/a	11%	12%
SUMMARY: Currently have apprentices or offer apprenticeships	19%	n/a	19%	23%
<b>Traineeships</b>				
% of all establishments aware of Traineeships	48%	n/a	45%	56%
% of all establishments that had anyone undertake a Traineeship in last 12 months	1%	n/a	3%	4%

Measure	EPS	ESS	ESS	Pulse
	2016	2017	2019	2021
<b>Placements in the last 12 months</b>				
% of all establishments that had anyone on any placement	38%	n/a	35%	29%
Placement for people at school	20%	n/a	19%	7%
Placement for people at college	13%	n/a	12%	9%
Placement for people at university	11%	n/a	9%	8%
Internship	6%	n/a	6%	5%
Placements specifically targeted at giving work experience to the unemployed	5%	n/a	3%	4%
Work trial for potential new recruits	11%	n/a	10%	13%
<b>T Levels</b>				
% of all establishments interested in providing T levels	n/a	n/a	36%	30%
% of all establishments easy to offer T levels placement	n/a	n/a	33%	30%
% of all establishments aware of T levels	n/a	n/a	n/a	24%
<b>Working from home</b>				
% of all establishments with higher proportion working from home in the last 12 months than in the 12 months before the pandemic	n/a	n/a	n/a	37%

# Executive summary

## Introduction

This report presents findings from a survey of 5,000 employers in England conducted between July and November 2021. The topics covered in the survey include many that have been asked in previous iterations of the Employer Skills Survey (ESS) and the Employer Perspectives Survey (EPS) conducted by the department, such as training activity and engagement with apprenticeships, but also new topics, for example homeworking in response to COVID-19.

Findings are based on the experiences of employers at the establishment / site level. Interviews were conducted with the most senior person with responsibility for human resources and workplace skills for each site. Employers with at least two people on their payroll were in scope for the survey.

## Homeworking in response to COVID-19

Throughout much of the period since March 2020 to the fieldwork period (July – November 2021), government advice has been for staff to work from home where possible.<sup>1</sup> However fieldwork was undertaken *prior* to England moving to Plan B in December 2021, when government advised office workers to work from home where they can do so.

At the time of the survey results indicate that one in five (19%) of all staff were working at home for at least part of the working week. The highest proportions were found for staff working in among Financial Services (64%), Information and Communications (55%) and Public Administration (54%).

Just under two in five establishments (37%) had had a higher proportion of staff working from home in the last 12 months than in the 12 months before the pandemic. Most of these employers (60%) felt that increased homeworking during the pandemic had had no effect on the productivity of their workforce, though more thought it has decreased productivity (25%) than thought it had increased it (12%).

Among employers with higher levels of homeworking than before the beginning of the pandemic the vast majority expected the current level of homeworking to continue (51%) or decrease (42%); just 4% expected it to increase further.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

## Training and workforce development

Just under half (48%) of employers had funded or arranged any training over the last 12 months for any employees of their establishment. This is substantially lower than in previous waves of ESS (61% in 2019, and 66% in both 2015 and 2017).

There has been a reduction in off-the-job training; overall a quarter (25%) of employers had provided such training over the last 12 months, compared with 43% in 2019 and 48% in both 2015 and 2017. Employers were more likely than previously to have only arranged on-the-job training (23% vs. 17-18% between 2015 and 2019).

Employers had trained a total of 13.3m staff over the previous 12 months, a 13% reduction on the 15.2m figure in 2019. Employers had trained just over half (52%) of the overall workforce over the last 12 months. This is lower than at any time in the ESS series from 2011 to 2019, and seven percentage points lower than in 2019 (60%).

When asked whether the overall amount of training funded or arranged had risen, stayed the same, or fallen in the last 12 months compared with the 12 months before the start of the pandemic in March 2020, most said it had remained the same (66%), though more indicated that it had fallen (19%) than increased (11%).

More than half (54%) of employers providing training in the previous 12 months had provided external training i.e. delivered by people not employees of the organisation.

Repeating trends seen throughout the Employer Skills Survey series, the most common specific types of training provided by training employers were job specific training (84%) and health and safety / first aid training (71%). The majority of training employers also provided basic induction training (67%). Around half (49%) had provided training in new technology. Although less common, the proportion of training employers providing management and supervisory training had increased compared with 2019 (management: 35% vs. 32% in 2019; supervisory: 36% vs. 32%).

The proportion of employers providing online training has steadily increased over time, rising from 45% of training employers in 2015 to 56% in 2019 to 74% in 2021.

Training employers were more likely to have used private sector training providers than public providers, though compared with 2016 there has been a reduction in the use of private providers (49% vs. 60% in 2016) and a slight increase in the use of public providers (18% vs. 15%). There was some overlap, with 15% of training providers using both public and private providers to deliver external training. Only 3% solely used public providers.

Employers were asked about training being offered by FE colleges and commercial training providers, including whether they offer training in the skills areas employees require, offer flexibility around business needs and if they tailor and develop the content of their training to meet employees' needs. The majority tended to agree with these statements for both types of provider, though commercial providers were rated higher for each.

Overall, around a third of all employers were either slightly (25%) or very interested (10%) in working with external training providers to identify employees' skills needs.

## **Apprenticeships**

Approaching a quarter of employers either had apprentices at their site at the time of the interview (12%) or offered apprenticeships but did not have any current apprentices (11%). The overall proportion offering apprenticeships (23%) was higher than in 2019 and 2016 (19%).

General awareness of apprenticeships was very high, with nearly all employers that did not offer apprenticeships having heard of them (97%), and nine in ten (89%) having at least some understanding of what they entail.

Among those not offering apprenticeships, almost two thirds (65%) mentioned at least one structural barrier to offering apprenticeships, most commonly because apprenticeships are not seen as suitable for their size of establishment (21%, rising to 26% among establishments with 2 to 4 employees), because they are not looking to recruit any staff (17%) and the perception that apprenticeships are not offered in their industry / sector (9%). Structural factors have increased as a barrier to offering apprenticeships from 62% in 2019.

Over a third of employers not offering apprenticeships (35%) said they had made an active choice not to do so, up from 32% in 2019. This was mainly because their current staff already had all of the skills required (15%).

## **Traineeships**

Awareness of traineeships among employers has increased over time, from 48% in 2016 and 45% in 2019 to 56% in the current study. Employers in 2021 also had more knowledge of what traineeships involve, with 40% saying they had some or a good knowledge of traineeships, compared to a quarter in 2019 (25%) and 2016 (24%).

Overall, 4% of all establishments had had somebody undertake a traineeship in the last 12 months, a slight but statistically significant increase from 2019 (3%) and 2016 (1%).

The main reasons for having had someone on a traineeship was wanting to give someone a chance (48%), or seeing if the trainee was suitable for a permanent job (27%) or for an apprenticeship (14%).

By far the most common reason for not offering traineeships was a lack of awareness of traineeships and what they are and what they involve (50%). Other quite common reasons included not believing they had suitable roles (14%), not thinking themselves of a suitable size (9%) and not having the resources to manage the traineeship (8%).

## Placements and work inspiration

Around three in ten employers (29%) had had anyone on any type of placement in the last 12 months (including placements for individuals from school, college or university, those targeted at the unemployed, internships, or work trials), down from 35% in 2019. Unsurprisingly given the disruption to the education system caused by the pandemic, this fall was driven by a sharp decrease in the proportion providing placements to those in education (either school, college or university) from 27% in 2019 to 16% in 2021. However, the proportion providing adult placements (work trials or placements aimed at the unemployed) had increased from 12% in 2019 to 16% in 2021.

Separate to providing work placements, businesses can also provide advice and support to students about the workplace and their industry. In 2021, 7% of employers had engaged with educational institutions to offer such work inspiration activities in the 12 months preceding the survey, down from 11% in 2019.

The main reasons for not having offered work placements or work inspiration activities were employers believing they had no suitable roles (29%, down from 35% in 2019) and because of COVID-19 (26%).

## T Levels

A quarter (24%) of employers had heard of T Levels, though just 3% of all employers felt that they had a good knowledge of T Levels and what they involve. Fewer establishments were interested in providing T Level placements in 2021 than in 2019 (30% vs 36% in 2019). When employers were told they can claim £1,000 cash for every T Level student they host on a high-quality industry placement between 27 May 2021 and July 2022, this had relatively little impact on employers' interest in offering T Level placements (30% before, 34% after being told about the incentive).

Many more employers thought offering T Level placements would be difficult (64%) than easy (30%), and the proportion thinking they would be easy was lower than in 2019 (33%).

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background to the Employer Pulse Survey

The Employer Skills Survey (ESS) has been a definitive source of intelligence for understanding the skills challenges faced by employers for many years. The current research covers some similar topics to ESS 2019, but is smaller in scope. Some sections of the questionnaire were entirely new, relating to homeworking in response to COVID-19. However, all the other sections kept some of the same questions from ESS 2019, allowing these results to be tracked to the ESS 2019 findings for England (and in some cases earlier surveys in the ESS/EPS series).

The findings are based on the experiences of 5,000 employers (at establishment / site level) in England, with fieldwork taking place between July – November 2021. Throughout much of the period since March 2020, government advice has been for staff to work from home where possible.<sup>2</sup> However fieldwork was undertaken *prior* to England moving to Plan B in December 2021, when government advised office workers to work from home where they can do so. Interviews were conducted with the most senior person at each site with responsibility for human resources and workplace skills. Employers with at least two people on their payroll at the site were in scope for the survey. For more detail on how the questionnaire was developed, and relates to ESS 2019, see the technical report published alongside this report.

## 1.2 Policy background

The period between ESS 2019 and the Employer Pulse Survey in 2021 was economically turbulent. Along with the repercussions of leaving the EU, many sectors of the economy effectively stopped trading, and subsequently reopened several times from 26 March 2020 onwards due to the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>3</sup>

The economy has been slow to recover from the impacts of the pandemic, though there are signs of growth, with Gross Domestic Product (GDP) 0.5% below its pre-coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic level (February 2020). Services output overall has returned to its pre-coronavirus pandemic level; consumer-facing services are 5.2% below their pre-coronavirus levels, while all other services are 1.4% above.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/timeline-lockdown-web.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/economicoutputandproductivity/output/articles/ukeconomylatest/2021-01-25>

The number of payroll employees has recovered well, and the 29.2 million total in September 2021 had returned to pre-coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic (February 2020) levels.<sup>5</sup>

Many businesses received government support during this time through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, whereby the government paid a proportion of an employee's salary if they were put on furlough. This came to an end on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021, at which point 16% of businesses reported still having had employees on furlough.<sup>6</sup>

Throughout much of this period, government advice has been for staff to work from home where possible. According to research carried out for the Office for National Statistics, between 3 and 14 November 2021, three in ten working adults (30%) reported working from home at some point in the past seven days.

The number of job vacancies in July to September 2021 was a record high of 1,102,000, an increase of 318,000 from its pre-pandemic (January to March 2020) level. Vacancies across all industry sectors were above or equal to their January to March 2020 pre-pandemic levels in July to September 2021, with Accommodation and food service activities increasing the most, by nearly 50,000 (59%). Across all industries, 14% of businesses that had not permanently stopped trading reported they had experienced a shortage of workers; the accommodation and food service activities industry was most affected at 38%; this industry also reported the highest percentages for difficulties filling vacancies and staff turnover.<sup>7</sup>

Training and workforce development are vital means of addressing skills shortages and skills gaps, and to improve productivity. There have been a number of changes in training policy in recent years, with a particular focus on developing vocational skills and increasing the uptake and quality of apprenticeships.

In January 2021 the government produced the Skills for Jobs<sup>8</sup> white paper detailing their plan for reforming further education to support growth industries, focusing on post-16 skills. This included a Lifetime Skills Guarantee for adults across the country, under which all learners are entitled to a loan for the equivalent of four years of post-18 education from 2025.

---

<sup>5</sup><https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/uklabourmarket/october2021>

<sup>6</sup><https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddiseases/articles/coronaviruscovid19latestinsights/work>

<sup>7</sup><https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/business/businessservices/bulletins/businessinsightsandimpactontheukeconomy/4november2021#business-insights-and-conditions-survey-data>

<sup>8</sup>[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/957856/Skills\\_for\\_jobs\\_lifelong\\_learning\\_for\\_opportunity\\_and\\_growth\\_web\\_version\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/957856/Skills_for_jobs_lifelong_learning_for_opportunity_and_growth_web_version_.pdf)

The white paper also proposed a commitment to “put employers at the heart of the system” in part through closer collaboration with education providers on providing and improving apprenticeships and traineeships. Other key decisions included the continued roll-out of T levels and expansion of the Institutes of Technology programme. The Skills and Post-16 Education Bill which proposes some of these measures, among other reforms, is being debated by parliament.<sup>9</sup>

It is against this backdrop that the current research asked employers questions around:

- Homeworking in response to COVID-19;
- Training and workforce development;
- Apprenticeships;
- Traineeships;
- Work placements; and
- T Levels.

---

<sup>9</sup>[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/103545/9/Skills\\_and\\_Post-16\\_Education\\_Bill\\_November\\_2021\\_policy\\_notes.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/103545/9/Skills_and_Post-16_Education_Bill_November_2021_policy_notes.pdf)

## 1.3 Reporting conventions

The terms “establishment”, “employer” and “workplace” are used interchangeably throughout this report to avoid excessive repetition. “Staff” and “employee” are also used interchangeably.

Throughout the report unweighted base figures are shown on tables and charts to give an indication of the statistical reliability of the figures. These figures are always based on the number of *establishments* answering a question, as this is the information required to determine statistical reliability. This means, for example, that where percentages are based on “all vacancies” (such as the percentage of all vacancies which are hard to fill) the base figure quoted is the unweighted number of establishments with vacancies.

All differences referred to in the text are statistically significant at the 95% level of confidence.

## 2 Homeworking in response to COVID-19

This chapter explores the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on homeworking practices in England. Employers were asked about how homeworking practices had changed in the last 12 months as well as about homeworking practices currently, to examine how the proportion of staff working from home may have changed over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. This chapter also examines the impact of homeworking on productivity, and employers' future plans in terms of homeworking. Findings in this chapter on homeworking come from questions C1NW to C6 (see Table 11-9 in the appendices for the question wording).

### 2.1 Impact of COVID-19 on homeworking practices

Throughout much of the period since March 2020, government advice has been for staff to work from home where possible. However fieldwork was undertaken *prior* to England moving to Plan B in December 2021, when government advised office workers should work from home where they can do so.

#### Levels of homeworking in the last 12 months

Just under two in five (37%) establishments had a higher proportion of staff working from home in the last 12 months than in the 12 months before the pandemic.

Large establishments with 250 or more employees were more likely to have had a higher proportion of staff working from home in the last 12 months than in the 12 months before the pandemic (77%; this compares with 32% among those with 2 to 4 employees).

Establishments in the Financial Services (77%) and Public Administration (75%) sectors were the most likely to have had a higher proportion of staff work from home in the last 12 months than in the 12 months before the pandemic. By far the least likely to report this were employers in the Hotels and Restaurants sector (5%).

In terms of regional differences, establishments in the East Midlands (30%) were the least likely to have had a higher proportion of staff working from home in the last 12 months than in the 12 months before the pandemic. In contrast, just over two in five establishments in the North West (43%) and London (42%) said they had a higher proportion doing so.

## Current levels of homeworking

Employers reported that 4,562,930 staff were currently working from home for at least part of the working week at the time of the survey (July – November 2021), which equated to one in five (19%) of all staff (see Table 2-1). Just under two-thirds (64%) of all establishments had no staff currently working from home. Around one in eight (12%) establishments had 80% or more of their staff working from home for at least part of the week, with similar proportions having 50% to 79% (9%) and between 10% and 49% (12%). Only 3% of establishments had some but fewer than 10% of staff working from home.

There was no clear pattern between those with higher or lower proportions of staff that currently worked from home by establishment size. Just under a quarter of staff at sites with 2 to 4 staff (23%) and sites with 250+ staff (23%) worked from home for at least part of the working week.

In terms of sector, Financial Services had the highest proportion of staff that currently worked from home (64% of staff), followed by Information & Communications (55% of staff) and Public Administration (54% of staff). Hotels and Restaurants sector establishments reported that just 1% of staff currently worked from home.

**Table 2-1: Number and proportion of staff currently homeworking, by establishment size and sector**

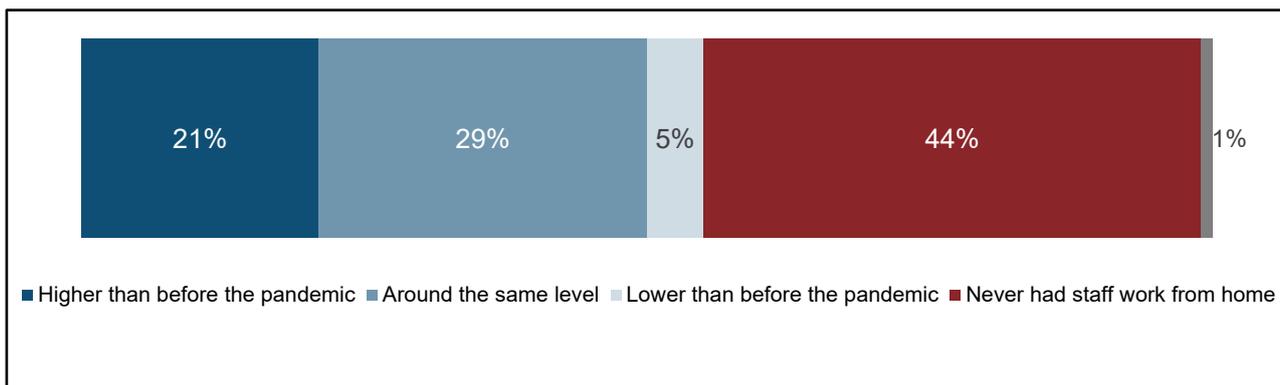
	Number currently working from home	% currently working from home
Total	4,562,930	18.7
<b>Size</b>		
2 to 4	543,884	22.9
5 to 24	829,595	14.1
25 to 49	408,109	13.4
50 to 99	545,678	17.8
100 to 249	742,134	20.8
250+	1,493,529	22.9
<b>Sector</b>		
Primary Sector & Utilities	77,427	12.8
Manufacturing	276,829	14.5
Construction	223,731	20.0
Wholesale & Retail	261,939	7.0

	Number currently working from home	% currently working from home
Hotels & Restaurants	25,627	1.3
Transport & Storage	92,557	8.2
Information & Comms	559,669	54.6
Financial Services	552,340	64.1
Business Services	1,447,930	30.9
Public Admin.	503,445	53.8
Education	98,150	4.8
Health & Social Work	282,627	8.5
Arts & Other Services	160,659	14.2

Base: All establishments who knew how many staff worked from home (and able to give figure) (4,928)

Employers were asked how the current levels of homeworking compared to levels before the pandemic. Three in ten establishments (29%) had around the same proportion of staff currently working from home as they did before the pandemic (see Figure 2-1), and over two-fifths (44%) did not have staff working from home either before the pandemic or currently. A quarter had seen some change, with nearly one in five (21%) having a higher proportion working from home currently than before the pandemic and 5% reporting a lower proportion.

**Figure 2-1: Current levels of homeworking compared to before the pandemic**



Base: All establishments (5,000)

Establishments in Public Administration (54%), Information and Communications (51%) and Financial Services (48%) were most likely to report having a higher proportion working from home now than before the pandemic. Just 2% of those in Hotels and Restaurants said they had more staff working from home now (90% in this sector said that they had never had staff work from home).

In terms of establishment size, larger establishments were more likely than smaller ones to say they had a higher proportion of staff working from home currently than they did before the pandemic. Just over three in five (62%) of those with 250+ staff said this was the case, compared to just under one in five (18%) of those with 2 to 4 staff.

Table 2-2 shows how the proportion of staff that worked from home has changed over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. Fewer establishments said they currently had a higher proportion of staff homeworking than those that said they had a higher proportion homeworking in the last 12 months (21% vs. 37%). The breakdown by size and sector can also be seen in the table below.

**Table 2-2: Employers with a higher proportion of staff homeworking in the last 12 months than in the 12 months before the pandemic, and those with a higher proportion homeworking currently, by establishment size and sector**

	<b>% with a higher proportion of staff working from home in last 12 months than in 12 months before pandemic</b>	<b>% with a higher proportion of staff currently working from home than before the pandemic</b>
Total	37	21
<b>Size</b>		
2 to 4	32	18
5 to 24	40	23
25 to 49	46	27
50 to 99	58	35
100 to 249	72	44
250+	77	62
<b>Sector</b>		
Primary Sector & Utilities	26	11
Manufacturing	39	22
Construction	29	12

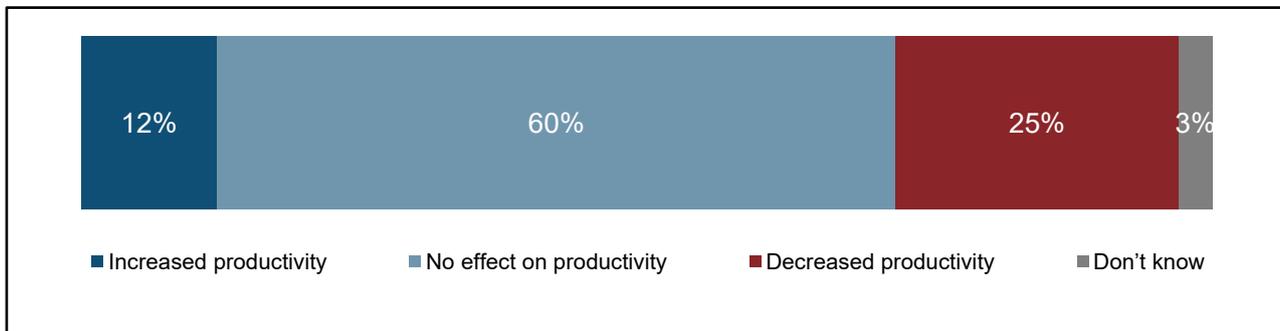
	<b>% with a higher proportion of staff working from home in last 12 months than in 12 months before pandemic</b>	<b>% with a higher proportion of staff currently working from home than before the pandemic</b>
Wholesale & Retail	23	13
Hotels & Restaurants	5	2
Transport & Storage	36	20
Information & Comms	63	51
Financial Services	77	48
Business Services	57	36
Public Admin.	75	54
Education	60	16
Health & Social Work	35	16
Arts & Other Services	27	16

Base: All establishments (5,000)

## 2.2 Impact on productivity

Employers with a higher proportion of staff work from home over the last 12 months than in 12 months before the pandemic (37% of all employers) were asked whether this increased homeworking had affected productivity. As seen in Figure 2-2, three in five (60%) said it had not affected productivity of their workforce. A quarter (25%) thought it had decreased productivity while one in eight (12%) thought it had increased it.

**Figure 2-2: Impact of increased homeworking on productivity**



Base: All establishments who have had a higher proportion of staff work from home over the last 12 months than in 12 months before the pandemic (2,487)

The largest establishments with 250+ staff were particularly likely to have seen higher productivity as a result of increased homeworking (23%). In contrast, the smallest establishments with 2 to 4 staff were the most likely to have seen decreased productivity (27%).

Of those establishments who had a higher proportion of staff work from home over the last 12 months than in 12 months before the pandemic, those in Public Administration (24%) and Health and Social Work (20%) were the most likely to report increased productivity, whereas Business Services (30%) and Education (29%) were the most likely to have experienced decreased productivity because of the increase in homeworking.

**Table 2-3: Impact of increased homeworking on productivity, by establishment size and sector**

	<b>% increased productivity</b>	<b>% no effect on productivity</b>	<b>% decreased productivity</b>
Total	12	60	25
<b>Size</b>			
2 to 4	11	58	27
5 to 24	12	60	25
25 to 49	13	62	21
50 to 99	12	61	20
100 to 249	15	62	16
250+	23	55	13
<b>Sector</b>			
Primary Sector & Utilities	13	67	19
Manufacturing	8	72	17
Construction	5	69	26
Wholesale & Retail	11	63	24
Hotels & Restaurants	3	74	21
Transport & Storage	10	70	18
Information & Comms	17	56	23
Financial Services	11	70	19
Business Services	11	56	30
Public Admin.	24	55	19

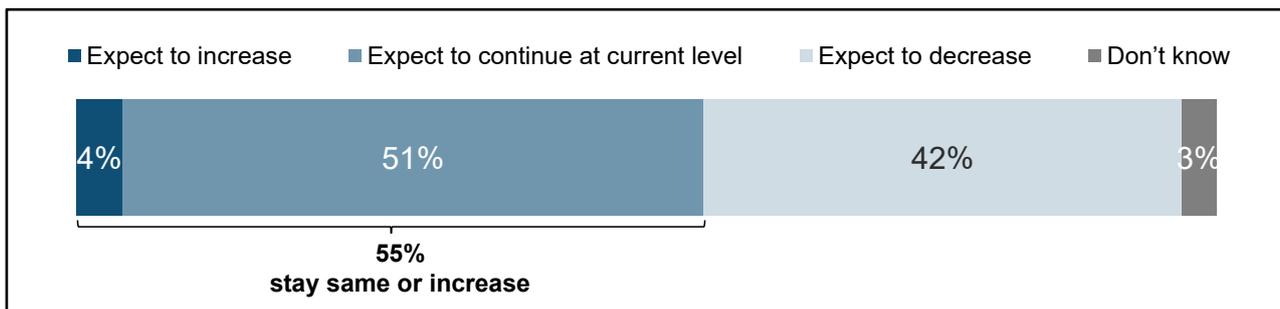
	% increased productivity	% no effect on productivity	% decreased productivity
Education	16	48	29
Health & Social Work	20	53	24
Arts & Other Services	10	54	25

Base: All establishments who have had a higher proportion of staff work from home over the last 12 months than in 12 months before the pandemic (2,487)

### 2.3 Future plans in terms of homeworking

Half (51%) of establishments that had higher levels of homeworking than before the beginning of the pandemic expected the current level of homeworking to stay the same (see Figure 2-3) in the future. The remainder were far more likely to expect current levels to decrease (42%) than increase (4%).

**Figure 2-3: Future homeworking plans**



Base: All establishments who have had a higher proportion of staff work from home over the last 12 months than in 12 months before the pandemic (1,516) Table 2-4 shows that among those that had higher levels of homeworking than before the pandemic, smaller establishments were more likely to expect this to stay the same or increase (58% of those with 2 to 4 staff). Larger establishments with 250 plus staff were more likely than average to expect the level to decrease (56%).

In terms of sector, nearly four in five (78%) establishments in the Health and Social Work sector that had higher levels of homeworking than before the beginning of the pandemic expect the level to stay the same or increase – the highest proportion to expect this of any sector. Conversely, more than three in five (63%) in the Hotels and Restaurants sector expect the level to decrease.

**Table 2-4: Expected future levels of homeworking among establishments with increased homeworking compared to before the pandemic, by size and sector**

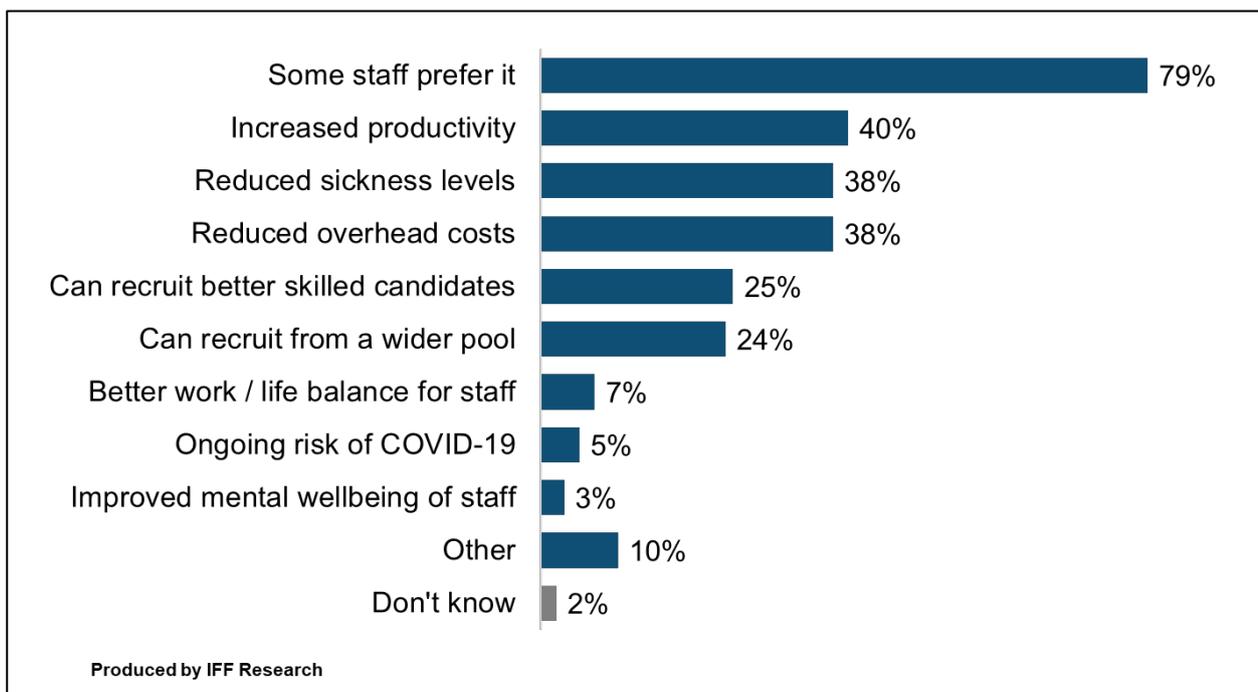
	<b>% expecting the level to increase</b>	<b>% expecting to continue at current level</b>	<b>% expecting the level to decrease</b>
Total	4	51	42
<b>Size</b>			
2 to 4	3	55	38
5 to 24	5	49	43
25 to 49	3	46	49
50 to 99	9	43	44
100 to 249	6	42	48
250+	3	39	56
<b>Sector</b>			
Primary Sector & Utilities	1	33	51
Manufacturing	2	44	53
Construction	0	49	51
Wholesale & Retail	1	54	44
Hotels & Restaurants	0	33	63
Transport & Storage	3	52	42
Information & Comms	6	49	34
Financial Services	1	53	42
Business Services	4	52	42
Public Admin.	9	41	47
Education	4	48	47
Health & Social Work	4	74	18
Arts & Other Services	11	44	41

Base: All establishments who have had a higher proportion of staff work from home over the last 12 months than in 12 months before the pandemic (1,516)

There was variation by region, with those that had higher levels of homeworking than before the beginning of the pandemic in the West Midlands (70%) the most likely to expect the level to stay the same or increase. In contrast, those in the North East (55%) and London (49%) were most likely to expect the level to decrease.

As shown in Figure 2-4, for establishments that plan to increase or maintain increased levels of homeworking, by far the most frequently cited reason for doing so was because staff prefer it (79%). Other frequently given reasons included that it had increased productivity (40%), that it had reduced overhead costs (38%), and that it had reduced sickness levels (38%).

**Figure 2-4: Reasons for planning to maintain or increase increased levels of homeworking**

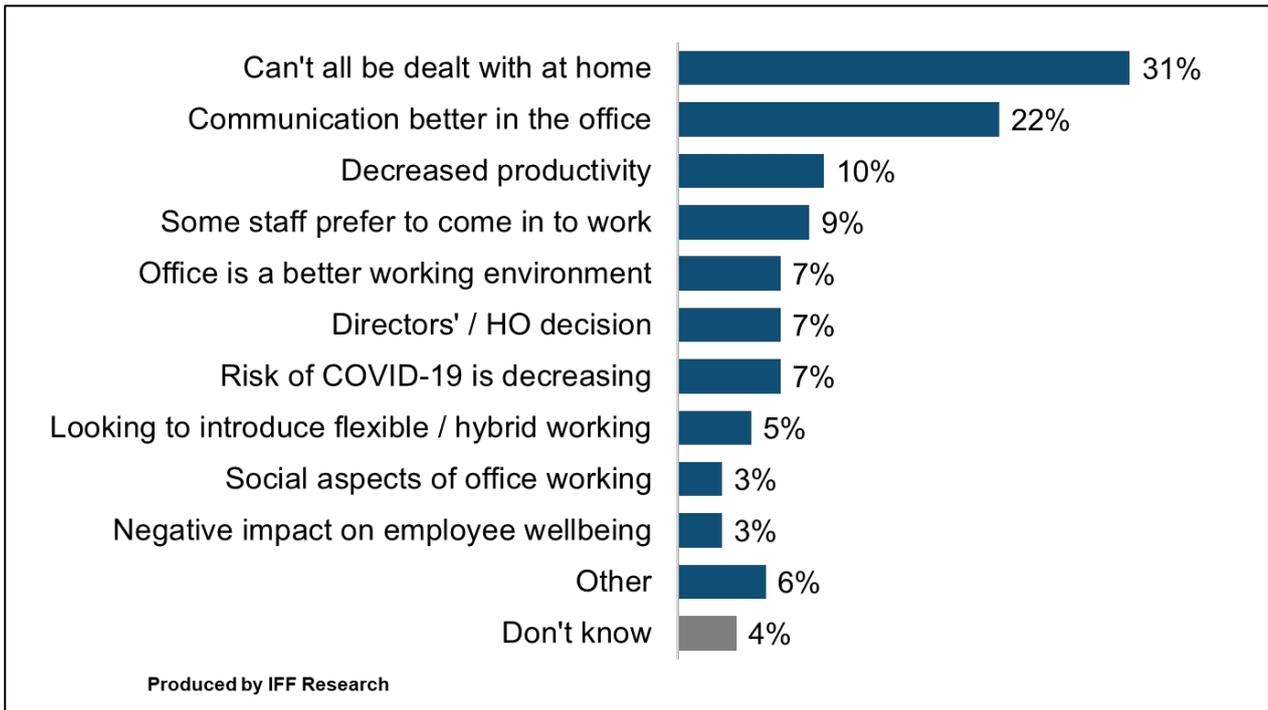


Base: All establishments who plan to increase or maintain increased level of homeworking (900).

Note: Reasons  $\leq 2\%$  are not displayed. The first six responses listed above were prompted responses read out to respondents, the others were mentioned spontaneously.

For establishments whose homeworking increased during to the pandemic, but who planned to reduce homeworking in the future, the most common reasons were that aspects of business could not be dealt with at home (31%) and that communication and collaboration are better in the office (22%) (see Figure 2-5).

**Figure 2-5: Reasons for planning to reduce increased levels of homeworking**



Base: All establishments whose homeworking increased but plan to reduce homeworking in the future (668). Note: Reasons  $\leq 2\%$  are not displayed. This was asked as an open question.

### 3 Training and workforce development

Exploring the prevalence of training provision and employer engagement with external providers of training helps understand how employers respond to skills issues within the workforce. ESS 2019 found that employer engagement in training and workforce and development had reduced compared with 2017 after fairly consistent levels in the 2011-2017 period. The 2021 Pulse Survey provides further time series data on the incidence of training and how training delivery has changed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The chapter specifically explores:

- The incidence of training among employers;
- The proportion of the workforce trained;
- The types of training provided;
- Sources of external training and views on the flexibility and suitability of the training offered by Further Education (FE) colleges and commercial training providers; and
- Sources of advice on skills and training-related issues.

Findings in this chapter on training and workforce development come from questions D1 to D17 (see Table 11-9 for the question wording).

#### 3.1 Incidence of training

In the survey, the off-the-job training question was modularised so that half the sample received the question that has been asked in previous waves of ESS (Version A) and half received a new version of the question (Version B), which sought to refine the definition of off-the-job training.

- **Version A (standard ESS wording):** ‘Over the past 12 months have you arranged or funded any off-the-job training or development for employees at this site? By off-the-job training we mean training away from the individual’s immediate work position, whether on your premises or elsewhere.’
- **Version B (new wording):** ‘Over the past 12 months, have you arranged or funded any off-the-job training or development for employees [If multisite: on the payroll at this site]? By off-the-job training we mean training beyond that which takes place on-the-job or as part of their normal work duties. This could be undertaken on your premises, at a provider, at home or elsewhere.’

The purpose of modularising these questions was to ensure that analysis of changes over time could still be conducted (using the standard ESS version), while at the same time providing the opportunity to test new question wording and the extent to which it affected the results. Overall, there was a slight impact; based on weighted results, a quarter (25%) answering the standard ESS version said they had provided off-the-job training, compared with 28% of those answering the new question.

In the reporting, the new wording (version B) has been used for presenting 2021 findings, while the 'standard' ESS wording (version A) is used to explore time series comparisons.

Under half (48%) of employers had funded or arranged any training over the last 12 months for employees at their establishments.<sup>10</sup> This is substantially lower than in previous waves of ESS (66% in 2015 and 2017, 61% in 2019), and levels have fallen sharply following the pandemic.

Figures varied widely by sector. Employers in non-market services such as Education (92%), Health and Social Work (78%), Public Administration (71%) and the Financial Services sector (70%) were most likely to have provided any training over the previous 12 months. Among employers in Transport and Storage (30%), the Primary Sector and Utilities (36%), Wholesale and Retail (40%) and Construction (40%) training was far less common. Provision of training increased with size, ranging from 35% among establishments with 2 to 4 employees to 85% of those with 100 or more employees.

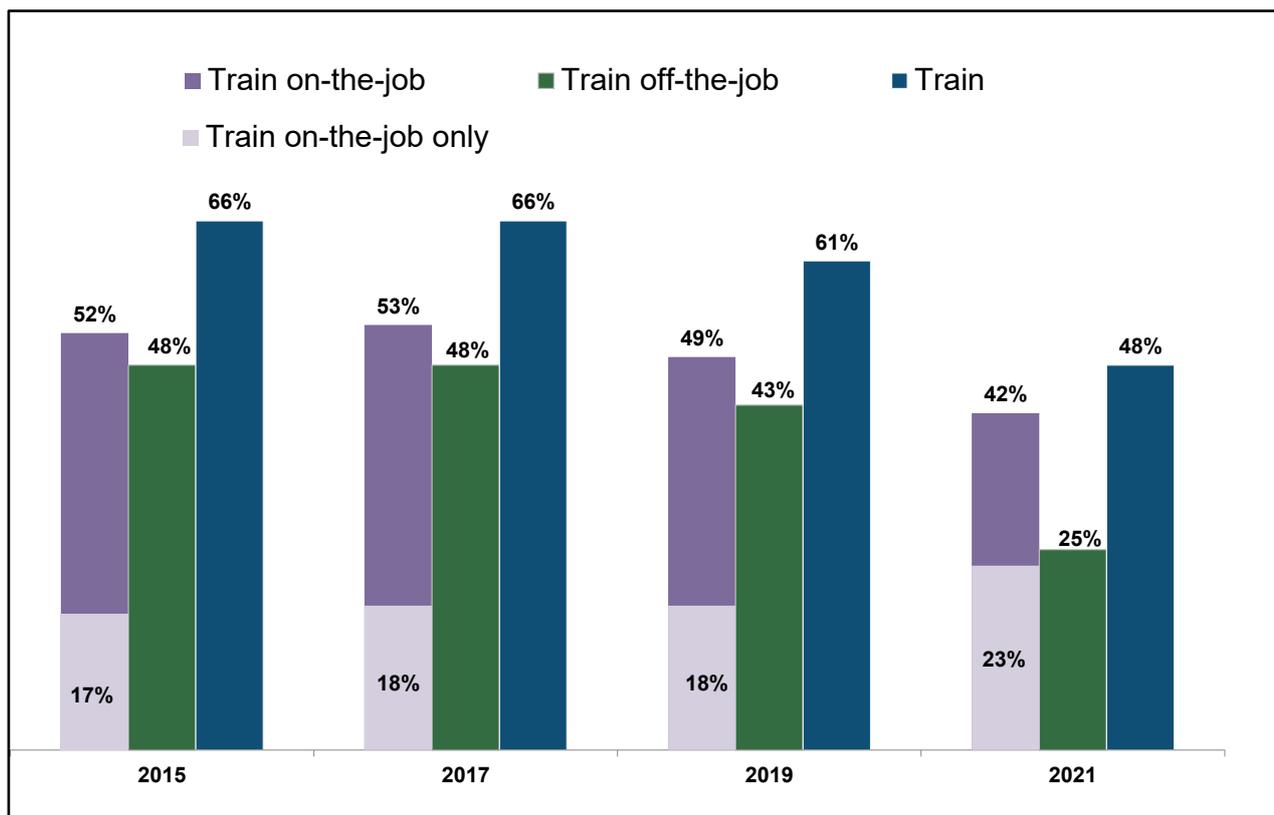
By region, employers in the East Midlands (58%) and Yorkshire and The Humber (54%) were most likely to have provided any training, whereas those in the South East (43%) were least likely.

There was a notable reduction in off-the-job training compared with 2019; in 2021 a quarter (25%) of employers had arranged or funded off-the-job training over the last 12 months, compared with 43% in 2019 (and 48% in both 2015 and 2017). Employers were more likely than previously to have only arranged on-the-job training (23% vs. 17-18% between 2015 and 2019).

---

<sup>10</sup> Note, although the results for the off-the-job training measure were different for the two different versions of the question, the results on the overall proportion providing any training were the same (48% for both versions).

**Figure 3-1 Proportion of employers that had funded or arranged training over the past 12 months and breakdown between on and off-the-job training**



Base: All establishments: 2019 (modularised: 2,499); 2019 (70,217); 2017 (71,527); 2015 (75,129)

### 3.2 Number and proportion of staff trained

Employers had trained a total of 13.3m staff over the previous 12 months, a 13% reduction on the 15.2m figure in 2019. The overall proportion of the workforce trained was 52%, down from 60% in 2019, lower than at any point in the 2011-2019 ESS series, and 10 percentage points lower than the peak in 2015, as shown in Table 3-1.

Larger establishments trained a higher proportion of their employees: establishments with 250 or more employees trained more than double the proportion of their total staff compared to those with 2 to 4 employees (62% vs. 30%). While there were reductions compared with 2019 in the proportion of the workforce trained across all size bands, the largest reductions were among the workforce of mid-sized establishments, particularly among those with 25-49 employees (51% of workforce trained, compared with 62% in 2019).

**Table 3-1 Number of staff trained over the last 12 months 2011-2019, by establishment size**

	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2021
Total	12.3m	14.1m	14.7m	15.2m	15.2m	13.3m
2 to 4	0.8m	0.8m	0.8m	1.0m	0.9m	0.7m
5 to 24	2.8m	2.9m	3.1m	3.2m	3.2m	2.6m
25 to 49	1.6m	1.8m	1.9m	1.9m	1.9m	1.6m
50 to 99	1.7m	1.9m	1.9m	2.0m	2.1m	1.8m
100 to 249	2.1m	2.3m	2.5m	2.6m	2.6m	2.1m
250+	3.3m	4.4m	4.4m	4.5m	4.6m	4.5m

Base: All establishments: 2011 (74,156); 2013 (75,255); 2015 (75,129); 2017 (71,257); 2019 (70,217); 2021 (5,000).

**Table 3-2 Proportion of staff trained over the last 12 months 2011-2019, by establishment size**

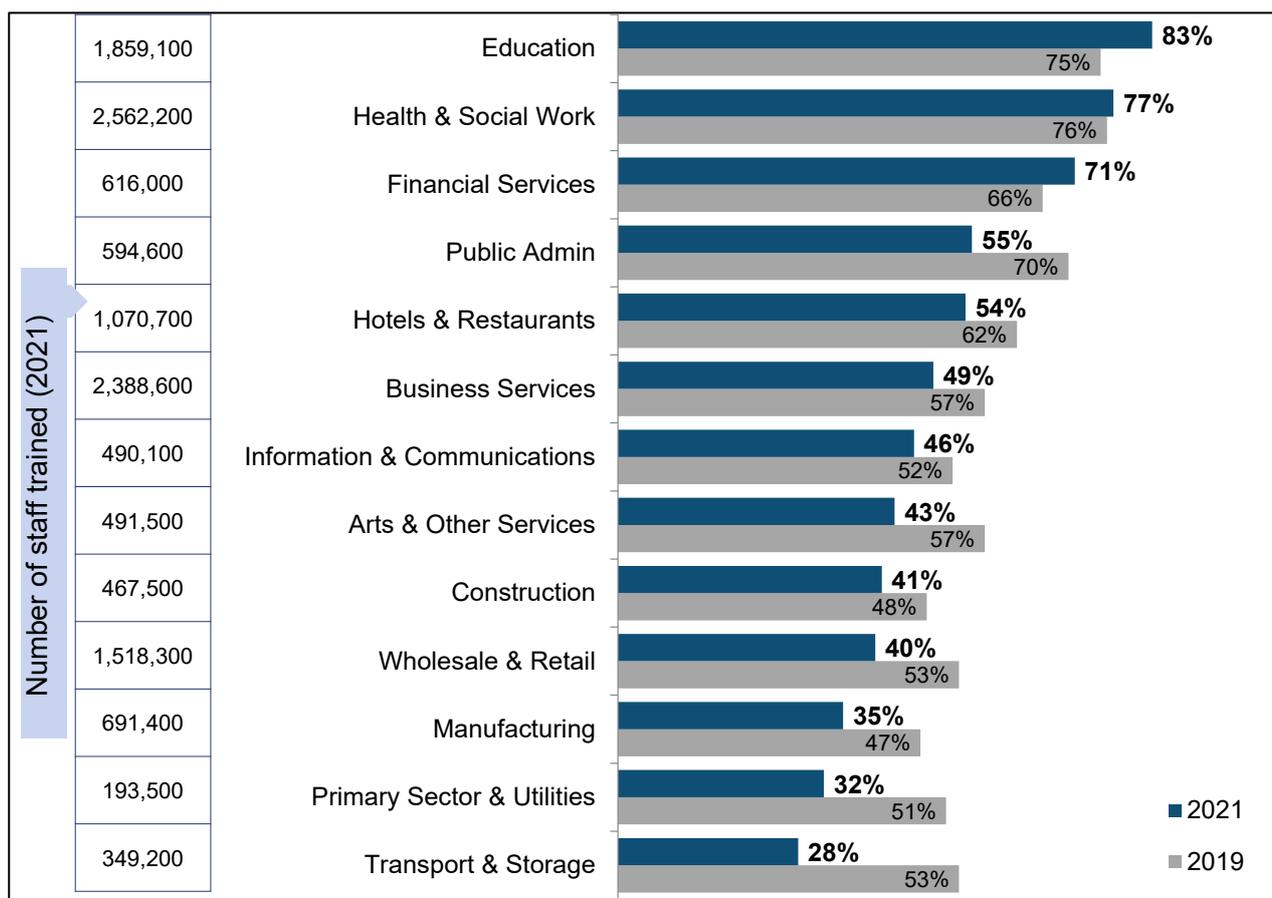
	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2021
Total	54	62	63	62	60	52
2 to 4	40	42	42	42	37	30
5 to 24	52	54	56	55	53	45
25 to 49	58	63	64	64	62	51
50 to 99	58	66	66	65	66	57
100 to 249	60	69	68	70	64	57
250+	54	71	70	68	67	62

Base: All establishments: 2011 (74,156); 2013 (75,255); 2015 (75,129); 2017 (71,257); 2019 (70,217); 2021 (5,000).

As shown in Figure 3-2, the Education and the Health and Social Work sectors trained the highest proportion of staff (83% and 77% respectively). The proportion trained was lowest in Transport and Storage (28%) and in Primary Sector and Utilities (32%); these were also the sectors with the largest reductions compared with 2019 (falls of 25 percentage points and 19 percentage points respectively). Generally however, there were reductions in the proportion of the workforce trained across most sectors, the exception being in Education, Financial Services, and Health and Social Work (and Education was the only sector where there was a significant increase in the proportion of the workforce trained, from 75% to 83%).

The largest regional reductions were seen in the South East (50% vs. 62% in 2019), the East Midlands (44% vs. 56%) and London (48% vs. 59%), though most regions saw a decrease. The East Midlands and London had the lowest proportion of staff trained.

**Figure 3-2 Proportion of staff trained by sector, 2019-2021**



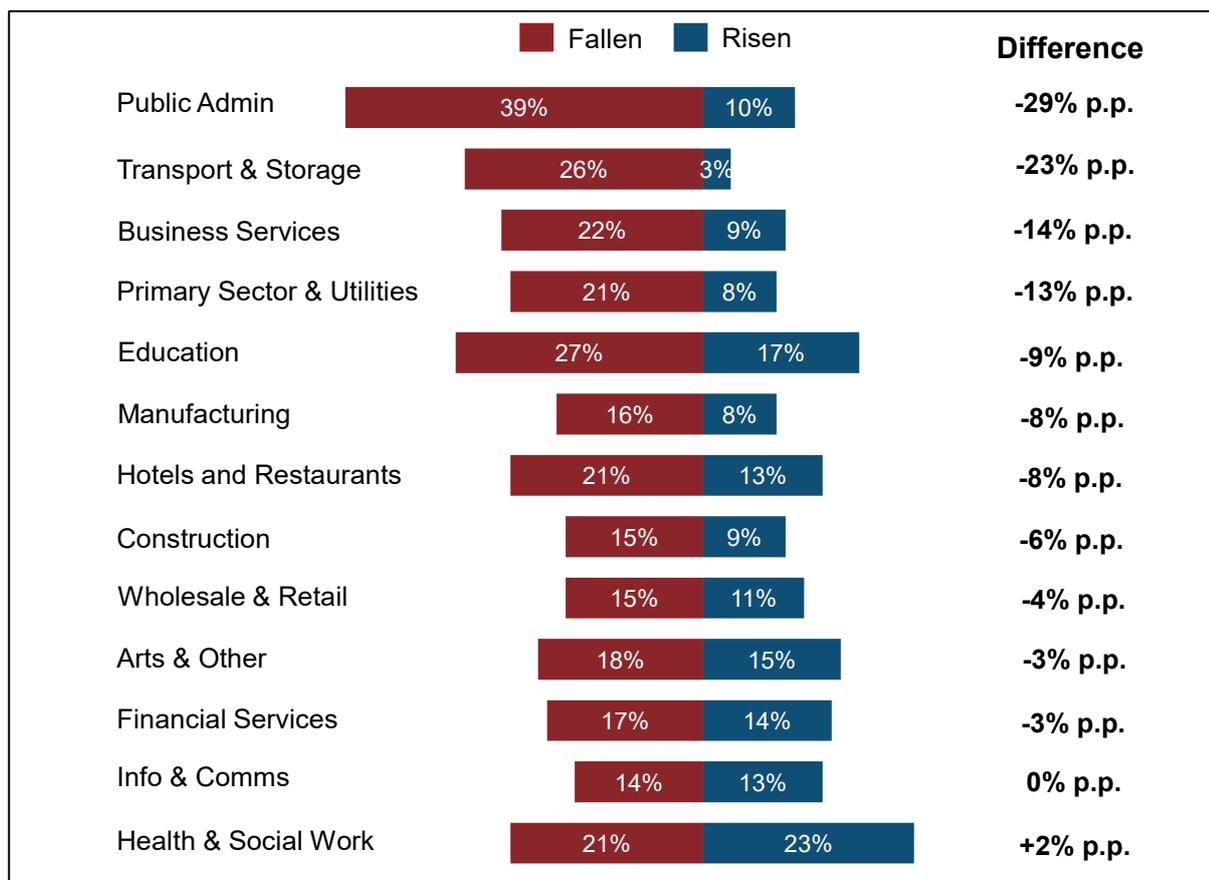
Base: All establishments: Base sizes are shown in Table 11-3.

### 3.3 Impact of COVID-19 on training

Results presented to date show a fall in training activity compared with 2019. A number of questions specifically explored the impact of the pandemic. Employers were first asked whether the overall amount of training arranged or funded had risen, stayed the same, or fallen in the last 12 months compared with the 12 months before the start of the pandemic in March 2020. Although most said (66%) said they had remained the same, employers were around twice as likely to say the amount of training they provided had fallen (19%) than had risen (11%).

Establishments with 50 or more employees were the most likely to say the amount of training had fallen (30%; this compares to just 16% of establishments with 2 to 4 employees), and reduction in training levels was also more commonly reported among employers in Public Administration (39%) and Transport and Storage (26%). Those in the Education sector were more likely to report both reductions (27%) and increases (17%), suggesting a more polarised set of experiences within this sector. Health and Social Work was the only sector where more employers reported an increase than a decrease. Full results by sector are shown in Figure 3-3.

**Figure 3-3 Amount of training provided in the last 12 months compared with the 12 months before the pandemic, by sector**



Base: All establishments: Base sizes are shown in Table 11-3.

Most employers said that COVID-19 had some influence on changes to training levels. Employers were more likely to attribute (at least in part) reductions to COVID-19 than increases (89% vs. 74%), and much more likely to say COVID-19 influenced reductions in training 'to a great extent' (51% vs. 29% among those reporting increases).

Among those that had reported a fall in the amount of training in the last 12 months compared with pre-pandemic levels, the sectors most likely to say COVID-19 had any influence were Education (100%), Health and Social Work (100%), Primary Sector and Utilities (98%), and Transport and Storage (97%). Employers in the Health and Social Work and Business Services were particularly likely to say COVID-19 influenced their reduced training to a great extent (66% and 58% respectively).

## 3.4 Types of training provided

### Who makes decisions about the types of training arranged for employees?

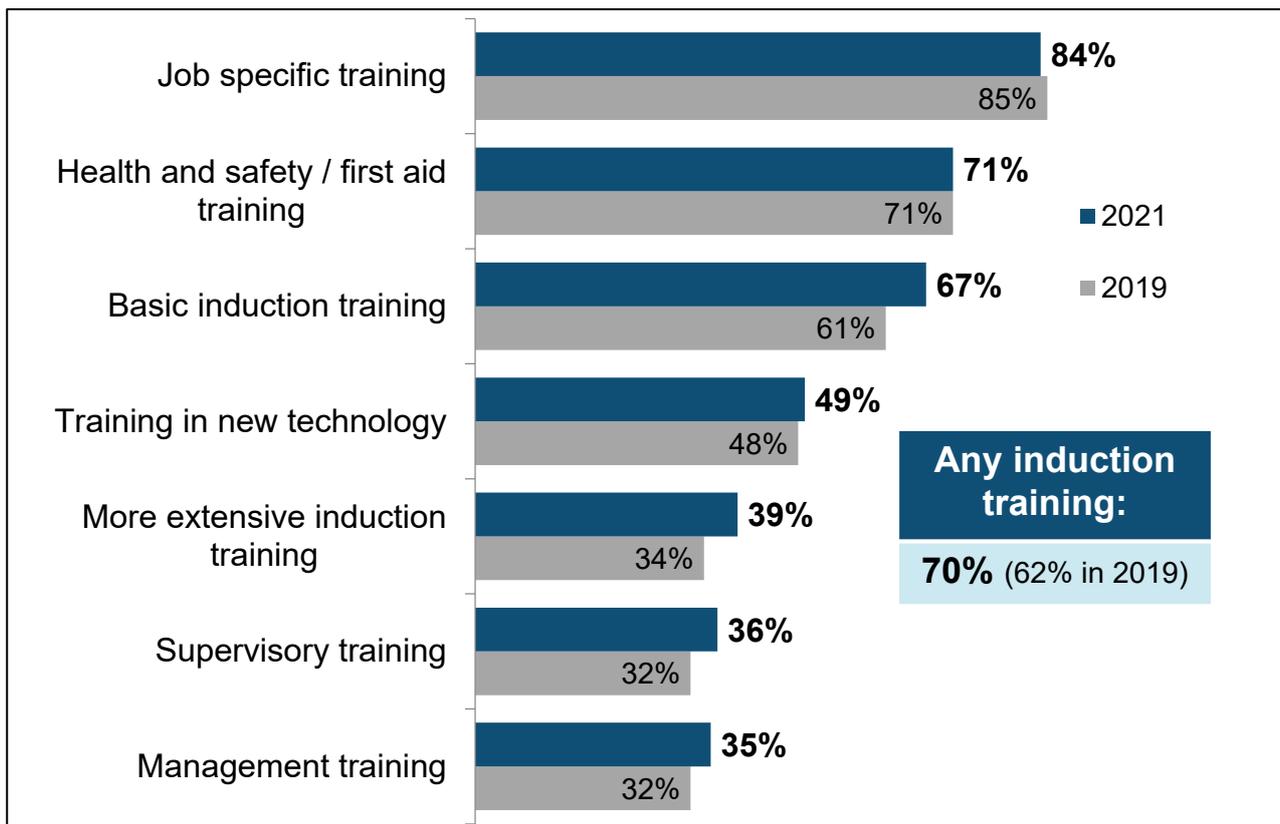
Among establishments which were part of multi-site organisations, decision-making on training was nearly always made solely by another site such as the head office (48%) or made jointly with other sites (45%); decisions solely at the site level was rare (7%). Among training employers as a whole (including single site organisations), decisions about the types of training arranged for employees were most commonly made only at site level (63%); around a fifth (19%) said another site made the decisions (including head offices), and a similar proportion (18%) said this was done jointly by their own site and another site.

### Specific types of training provided

Repeating historic trends, the most common specific types of training provided by training employers were job specific training, and health and safety or first aid training (84% and 71% respectively, both similar to 2019 levels), as shown in Figure 3-4. The majority of training employers also provided basic induction training (67%). Around half (49%) had provided training in new technology.

Despite management and supervisory training being less common, the incidence of both had increased compared with 2019 (management: 35% vs. 32%; supervisory: 36% vs. 32%).

**Figure 3-4 Types of training provided over the last 12 months among employers that train (prompted)**



Base: All establishments that train: 2021 (3,373); 2019 (51,203)

Overall, the provision of any induction training had increased (70% vs. 62% in 2019), and this applied to both basic induction training (67% vs. 61% in 2019) and more extensive induction training (39% vs. 34% in 2019).

Despite this, the proportion of training employers that said health and safety or induction training accounted for *all* their training remained at similar levels to 2019 (11% vs. 12%). Around four in ten (38%) said these forms of training accounted for at least half of their training, which was higher than in 2019 (30%).

Generally, provision of each specific form of training was higher among larger training employers (see Table 28 in published data tables for more information). Provision of induction training was most common among training employers in the Hotels and Restaurants, Health and Social Work, and Transport and Storage sectors (92%, 83% and 84% respectively).

Management and supervisory training were more common than average in the following sectors:

- Education (management: 53%; supervisory: 44%);
- Health and Social Work (47%; 48%);
- Hotels and Restaurants (46%; 49%);
- Public Administration (management only: 48%); and
- Wholesale and Retail (supervisory only: 41%).

Training in new technology was more common than average among the following sectors:

- Information and Communications (73%);
- Public administration (65%); and
- Business services (58%).

### **Provision of online training**

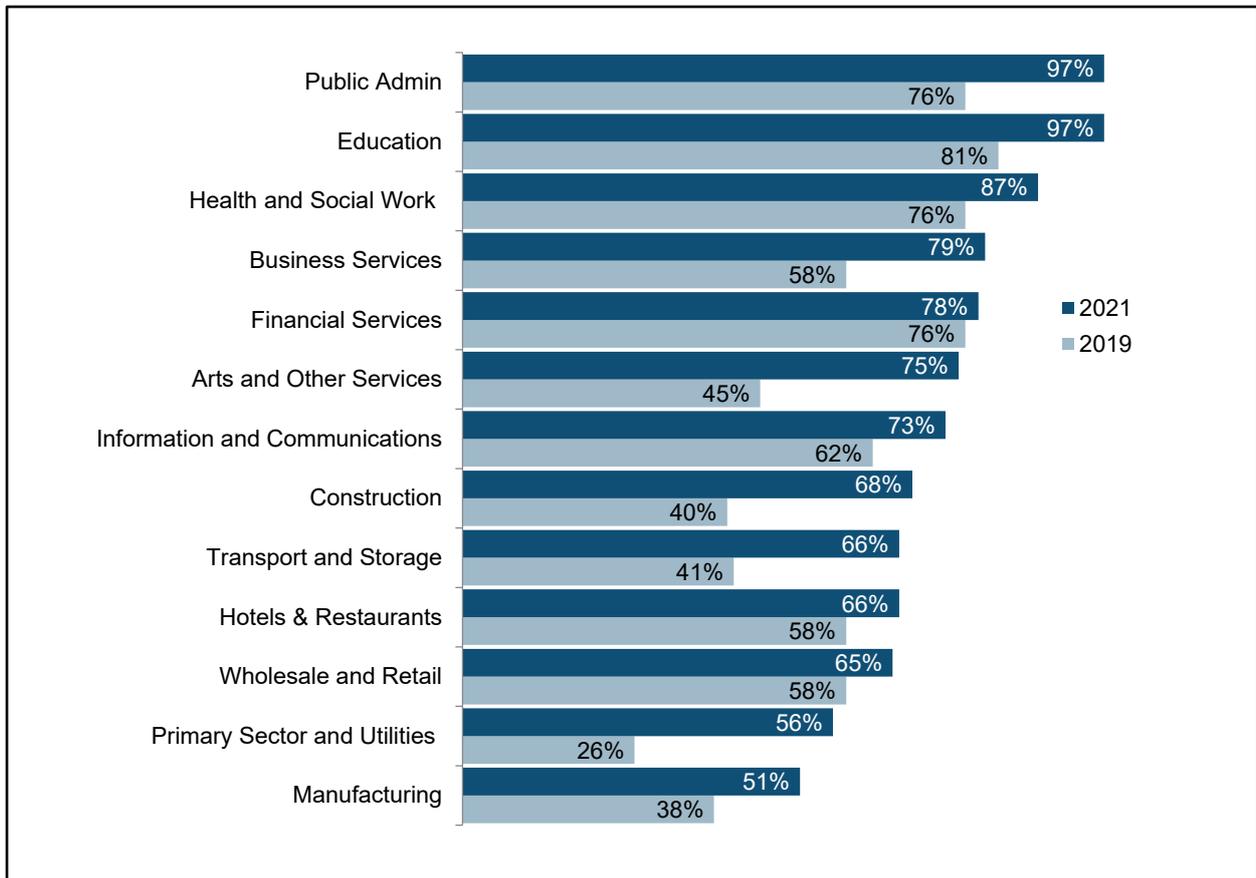
In the Employer Skills Survey series, the proportion of training employers arranging or funding online training for their employees has steadily increased over time, rising from 45% in 2015 to 56% in 2019. In 2021 there was a marked increase on previous levels, with three-quarters of employers (74%) having provided online training over the previous 12 months. While undoubtedly, COVID-19 and increases in homeworking will have had some influence on rising levels of online training, it is notable that even among those that had never had staff working from home a large majority had provided online training (68%).

Provision of online training increased with size, ranging from 69% among training establishments with 2 to 4 employees, to 94% among the largest establishments with 250 or more employees. However, it was those with 2 to 4 employees that had seen the largest increases since 2019, when only 45% of employers had provided online training in the previous 12 months.

Figure 3-5 shows how the provision of online training breaks down by sector. Following previous trends, non-market services remain most likely to provide online training; in particular, almost all training Public Administration and Education sites had provided online training the last 12 months (each 97%). Conversely, just over half of training establishments offered online training in the Manufacturing sector and the Primary Sector and Utilities (51% and 56% respectively).

The proportion of employers providing online training has increased across almost all sectors since 2019, though despite comparatively low prevalence, the largest increase was seen in the Primary Sector and Utilities, where the proportion providing it more than doubled (56% vs. 26%) and the Arts and Other Services sector (75% vs. 45%).

**Figure 3-5 Proportion of employers providing online training or e-learning, by sector**



Base: All establishments that train. Base sizes are shown in Table 11-4.

### Provision of other development opportunities among non-training employers

The survey also explored the extent to which non-training employers had provided other development opportunities (they were read a list of three, as listed in the bullets below). Overall, close to two-thirds (63%) of these employers had provided at least one of the opportunities, unchanged from 2019. However, the prevalence of each individual development opportunity had decreased:

- 47% had provided supervision to ensure that employees are guided through their job role over time (vs. 50% in 2019);
- 40% allowed staff to perform tasks that go beyond their strict job role and provided them with feedback as to how well they had done (vs. 46% in 2019); and,

- 39% provided opportunities for staff to spend time learning through watching others perform their job roles (vs. 46% in 2019).

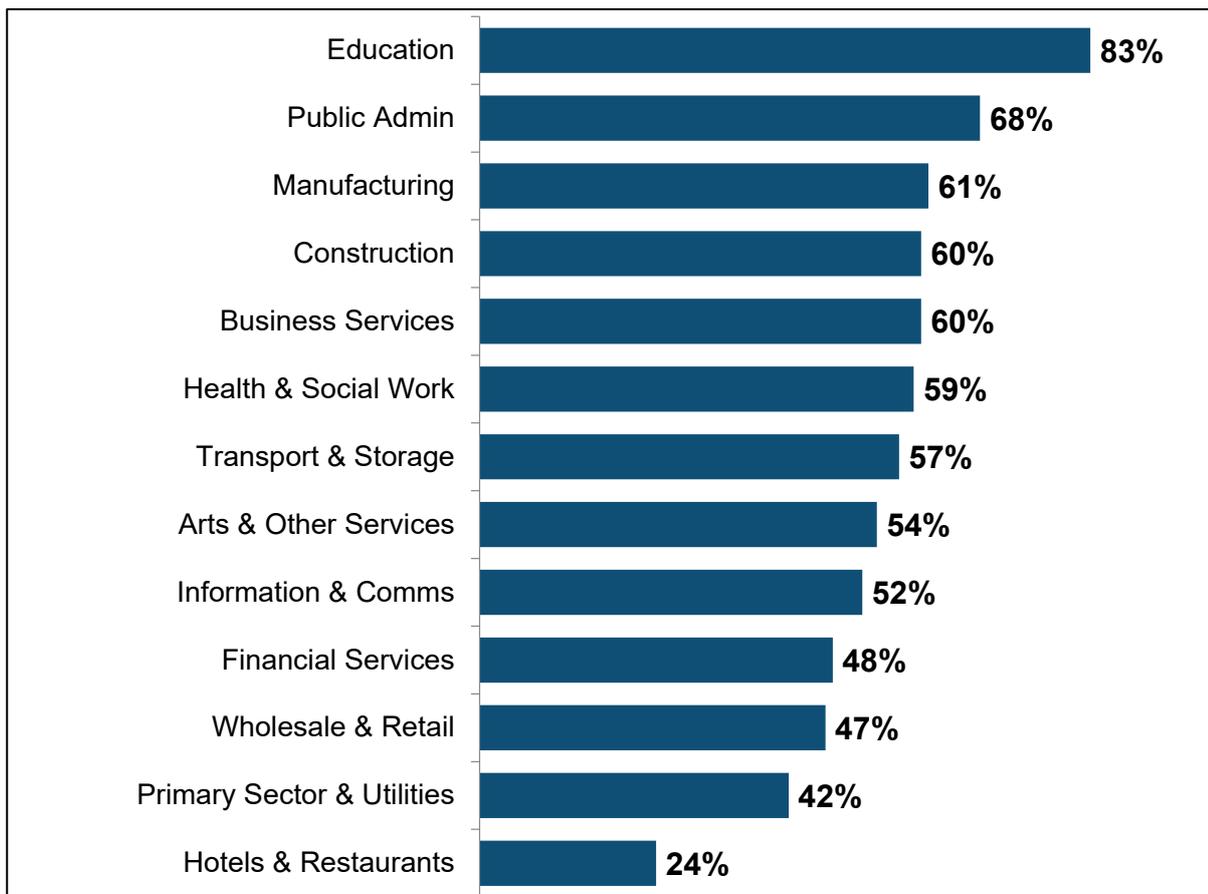
## **3.5 Engagement with, and perceptions of, external training providers**

### **Provision of external training**

More than half (54%) of employers that train had funded or arranged external training for their employees over the past 12 months (external training was described to respondents as any training delivered by people who were not employees of their organisation).

Provision of external training typically increased with size, ranging from 48% of training employers with 2 to 4 employees, up to 81% among those with 100 or more employees. As shown in Figure 3-6, training employers in the Education and Public Administration sectors were most likely to have arranged external training (83% and 68% respectively); it was also arranged by around six in ten employers in the Manufacturing, Construction and Business Services sectors. Training employers in the Hotels and Restaurants sector were by far the least likely to provide external training (24%), with relatively low levels observed also in the Primary Sector and Utilities (42%) and in Wholesale and Retail (47%).

**Figure 3-6 Proportion of training employers arranging or funding external training for their employees**



Base: All establishments that train. Base sizes are shown in Table 11-5.

There was also regional variation. Around two-thirds of training employers in the North East (66%) and the East of England (64%) had arranged external training, compared with fewer than half of those in London (46%), the North West (47%) and the East and West Midlands (47% and 48% respectively).

## Sources of external training

As discussed above, more than half (54%) of training employers had funded or arranged external training for their employees over the past 12 months.

As Figure 3-7 shows, among employers that train, use of private training providers remains more common than using public providers.<sup>11</sup> However, compared with 2016 there has been a reduction in the use of private providers (49% vs. 60%) and an increase in the use of public providers (18% vs. 15%). There was some overlap, with 15% using both public and private providers to deliver their external training. Only 3% solely used public providers.

The following sectors were particularly likely to use private providers over public ones:

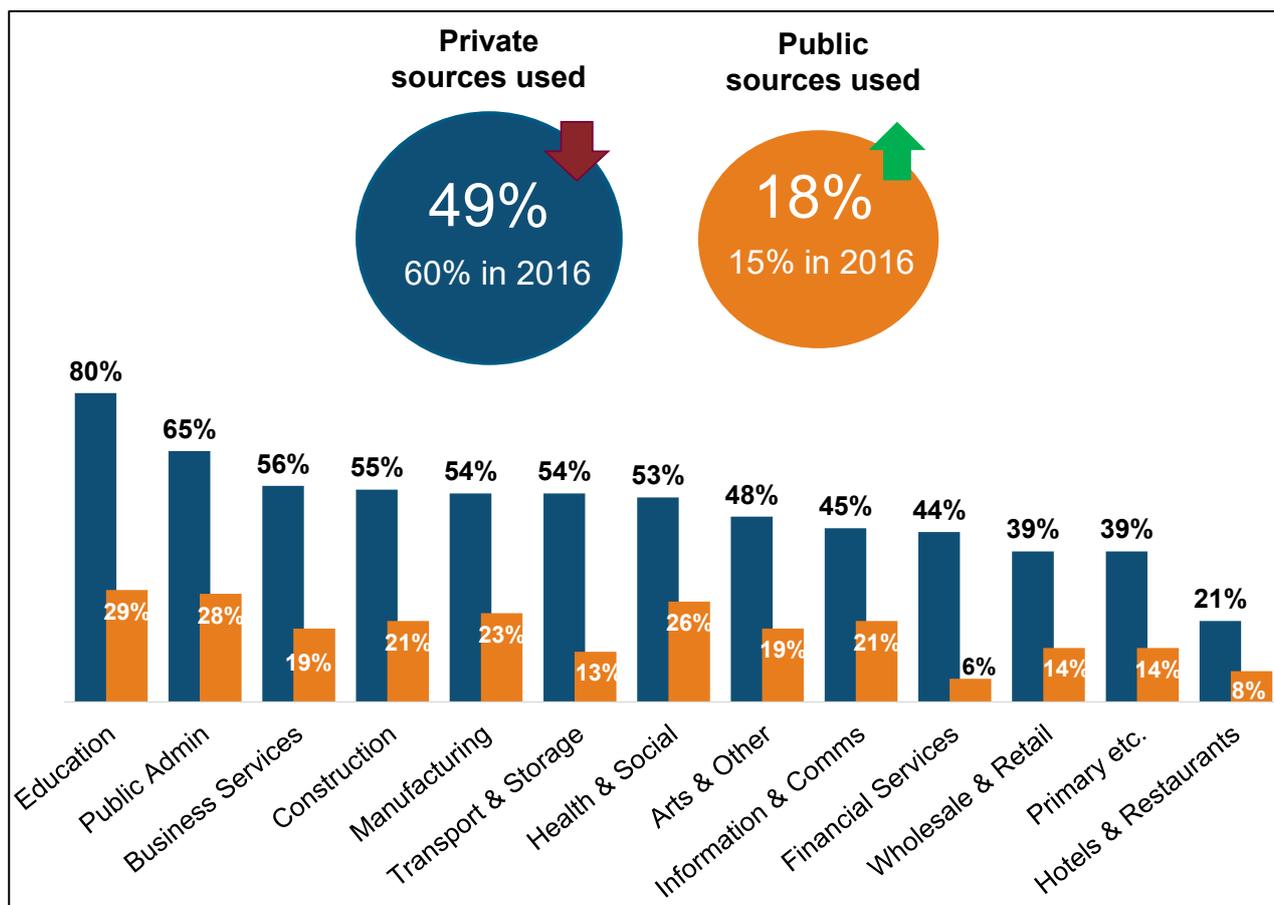
- Education (80% vs. 29%);
- Transport and Storage (54% vs. 13%); and
- Financial Services (44% vs. 6%).

Though there were reductions compared with previous years in the use of private providers across all sectors, the largest decreases were seen among training employers in the Primary Sector and Utilities (39% vs. 66% in 2016); Hotels and Restaurants (21% vs. 42%); and Health and Social Work (53% vs. 27%). The largest increase in the use of public providers was seen in the Information and Communications sector (21% vs. 8%).

---

<sup>11</sup> The definitions for the 'public' and 'private' groups can be found in Table 11-6 in the appendices.

**Figure 3-7 Use of private and public training providers among establishments that train, by sector**



Base: All establishments that train: 2021 (3,373); 2016 (8,362). 2021 Sector base sizes are shown in Table 11-5.

### Specific training providers used by employers

As Figure 3-8 shows, by far the most common type of training provider used were commercial organisations; more than half (52%) of employers that train had either used them (41%) or considered using them (12%). Around a quarter had used or considered using FE colleges (25%), regulatory bodies (24%) or their own suppliers (23%) to deliver training.

The following sectors were more likely than average to use commercial organisations such as private training providers:

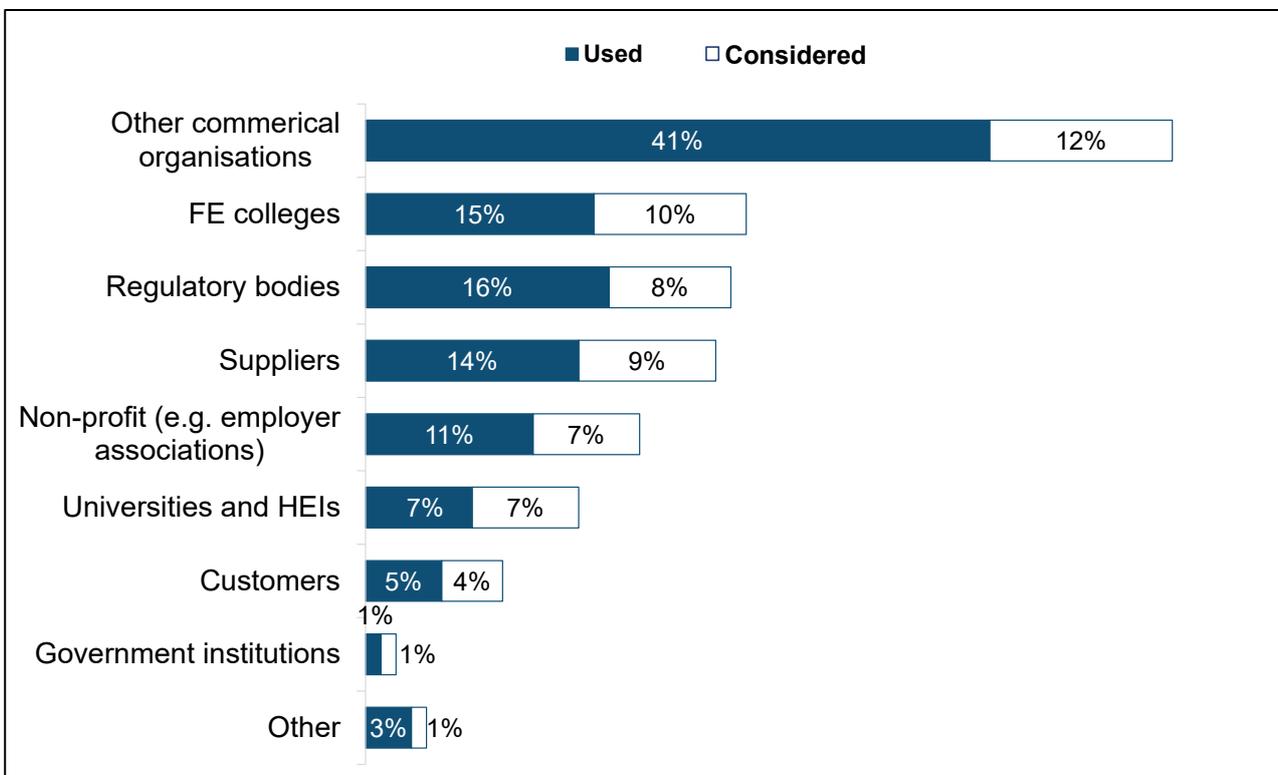
- Education (67%);
- Transport and Storage (52%);
- Manufacturing (48%); and
- Business Services (47%).

Use of Further Education colleges was more common than average among the following sectors:

- Public Administration (22%);
- Health and Social work (22%);
- Manufacturing (22%); and
- Education (20%).

Further information in differences in the use of each provider by subgroup can be found in Table 39 in the published data tables.

**Figure 3-8 Proportion of training employers that had used or considered specific sources external training**



Base: All establishments that train: 2021 (3,373)

## **Views on the suitability and flexibility of the training offer provided by FE colleges and commercial training providers**

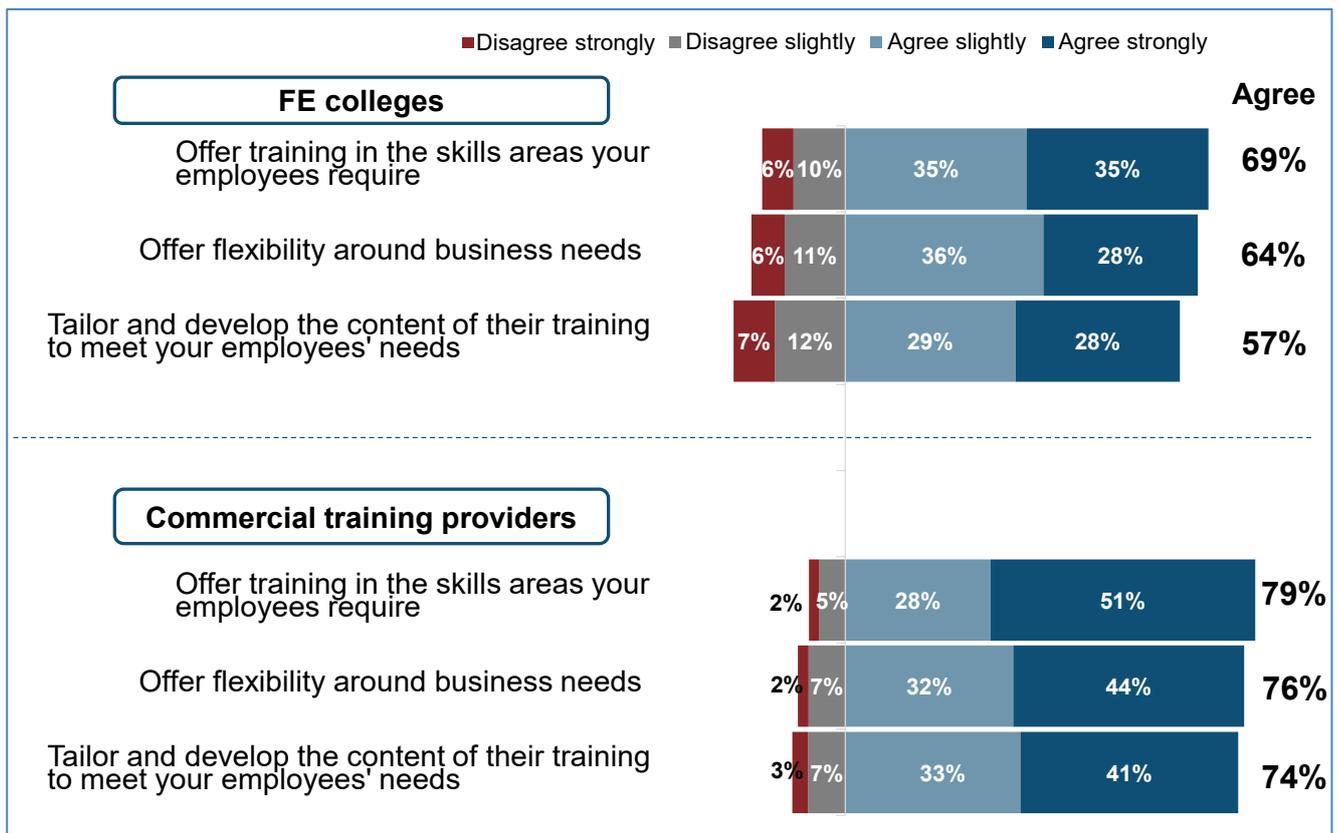
Employers that had used or considered using FE colleges and / or commercial providers were asked about the extent to which they agreed with a series of statements about the training being offered by FE colleges and commercial training providers, including whether they:

- Offer training in the skills areas employees require
- Offer flexibility around business needs – for example, in terms of the format and timing of training
- Providers tailor and develop the content of their training to meet employees' needs

The majority of employers that had used or considered using these providers agreed with each of the statements. However, a higher proportion agreed with each statement when answering in relation to commercial training providers than when answering in relation to FE colleges.

In both cases, employers were in most agreement that FE colleges and commercial training providers offer training in the skills areas required by employees (69% and 79% respectively). They were least likely to agree that FE colleges and commercial training providers tailored and developed the content of training to meet employees' needs (57% vs. 74%).

**Figure 3-9 Views on the suitability and flexibility of the training provided by FE colleges and commercial training providers**



Base: All establishments that had used or considered FE colleges (1,136); all establishments that had used or considered commercial training providers (2,170)

There were no significant differences by size in terms of the overall proportion agreeing with each statement in relation to FE colleges. However, the proportion that agreed that commercial training providers offer flexibility around business needs and tailor and develop the content of their training to meet employees' needs increased with size (the former ranging from 70% among those with 2 to 4 employees to 90% among those with 250+ employees; the latter ranging from 69% to 88% among these groups).

There was wide variation by sector in terms of agreement with these statements. As shown in Table 3-3 and Table 3-4, Hotels and Restaurants were more likely than average to agree with each statement, both in relation to FE colleges and commercial training providers. In contrast employers in the Business Services sector were less likely than average to agree with each statement when answering about FE colleges, but were more likely than average to say that commercial training providers offer training in skills areas needed by employees (84% vs. 79% overall).

By region, employers in the East Midlands were more positive than average in relation to FE colleges but were in line with the average when answering in relation to commercial providers. Those in the South East were less likely than average to agree that FE colleges offer training in the required skills areas or offer flexibility around business needs (56% and 52% respectively), but more likely than average to agree with these statements in relation to commercial providers (83% and 80% respectively).

**Table 3-3 Suitability and flexibility of the training provided by FE colleges, by sector and region (% agreeing)**

	Base (n)	Offer training in skills areas required (%)	Offer flexibility around business needs (%)	Tailor and develop content to meet needs (%)
All	1,136	69	64	57
<b>Sector</b>				
Primary Sector & Utilities	58	77	73	56
Manufacturing	131	72	65	54
Construction	128	78	65	64
Wholesale & Retail	102	66	69	58
Hotels & Restaurants	61	91	90	89
Transport & Storage	46	51	57	59
Information & Communications	37	55	51	36
Financial Services	36	57	61	49
Business Services	198	62	56	48
Public Administration	54	75	73	61
Education	89	77	67	55
Health & Social Work	125	70	61	61
Arts & Other Services	71	70	67	56
<b>Region</b>				
East Midlands	118	81	82	70
East of England	146	64	53	48
London	56	83	71	57
North East	115	72	62	70
North West	150	61	60	51

	<b>Base (n)</b>	<b>Offer training in skills areas required (%)</b>	<b>Offer flexibility around business needs (%)</b>	<b>Tailor and develop content to meet needs (%)</b>
South East	161	56	52	53
South West	146	66	70	54
West Midlands	107	80	82	64
Yorkshire and The Humber	137	76	61	60

**Table 3-4 Suitability and flexibility of the training provided by commercial training providers, by sector and region (% agreeing)**

	<b>Base (n)</b>	<b>Offer training in skills areas required (%)</b>	<b>Offer flexibility around business needs (%)</b>	<b>Tailor and develop content to meet needs (%)</b>
All	2,170	79	76	74
<b>Sector</b>				
Primary Sector & Utilities	112	86	83	70
Manufacturing	197	85	84	68
Construction	189	76	67	70
Wholesale & Retail	220	77	69	72
Hotels & Restaurants	130	87	88	84
Transport & Storage	117	87	73	87
Information & Communications	102	70	74	58
Financial Services	106	73	74	76
Business Services	353	84	74	76
Public Administration	82	84	75	79
Education	201	77	79	73
Health & Social Work	216	72	76	77
Arts & Other Services	145	71	79	72

	Base (n)	Offer training in skills areas required (%)	Offer flexibility around business needs (%)	Tailor and develop content to meet needs (%)
<b>Region</b>				
East Midlands	238	80	80	77
East of England	302	83	83	78
London	172	79	69	74
North East	166	83	80	77
North West	228	80	76	73
South East	339	83	80	72
South West	265	77	65	63
West Midlands	217	71	74	75
Yorkshire and The Humber	243	76	76	81

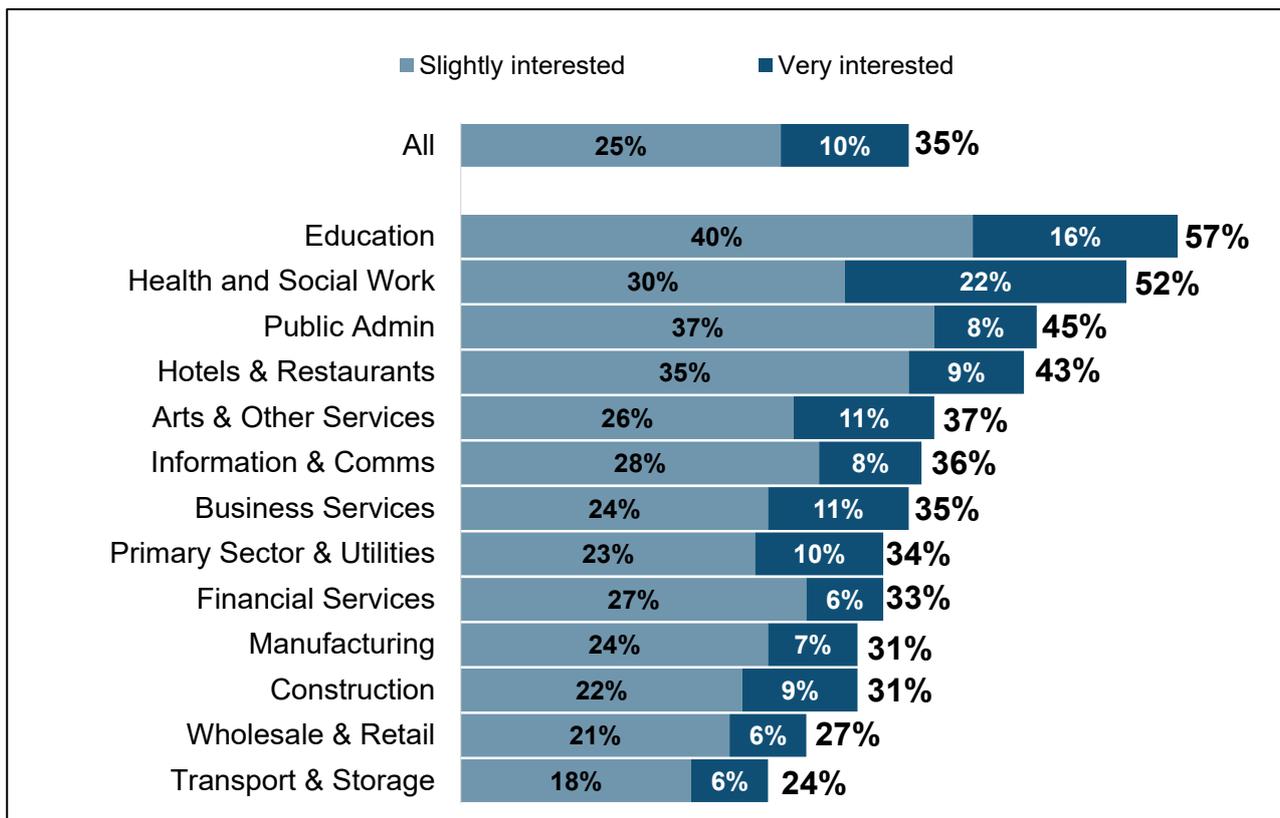
### Interest in working with external training providers to identify skills needs

Overall, around a third (35%) of all employers were either slightly (25%) or very interested (10%) in working with external training providers to identify employees' skills needs. Interest increased with size of employer, ranging from around a quarter (27%) of those with 2 to 4 employees, to over half (54%) of those with 100 or more employees. As shown Figure 3-10, non-market services including Education, Health and Social Work, and Public Administration were the most likely to be interested (57%, 52% and 45% respectively).

A relatively high proportion of Hotel and Restaurant sector employers were also interested (43%) despite being the least likely sector to have arranged or funded training from an external training provider. As discussed above, employers in the Hotels and Restaurants sector who had used or considered FE colleges or commercial training providers were also more positive about the suitability and flexibility of their training offer.

Employers in the Transport and Storage and the Wholesale and Retail sectors were least likely to be interested in working with external training providers to identify skills needs.

**Figure 3-10 Interest in working with external training providers to identify employees' skills needs**



Base: All establishments (5,000). Sector base sizes are shown in Table 11-3.

The overall proportion interested in working with external providers to identify skills needs was higher among employers that had trained staff over the last 12 months (49%) and specifically those that had arranged or funded external training for their employees (56%). The proportion was even higher (63%) among those that had not done external training but had considered it.

### 3.6 Training Support

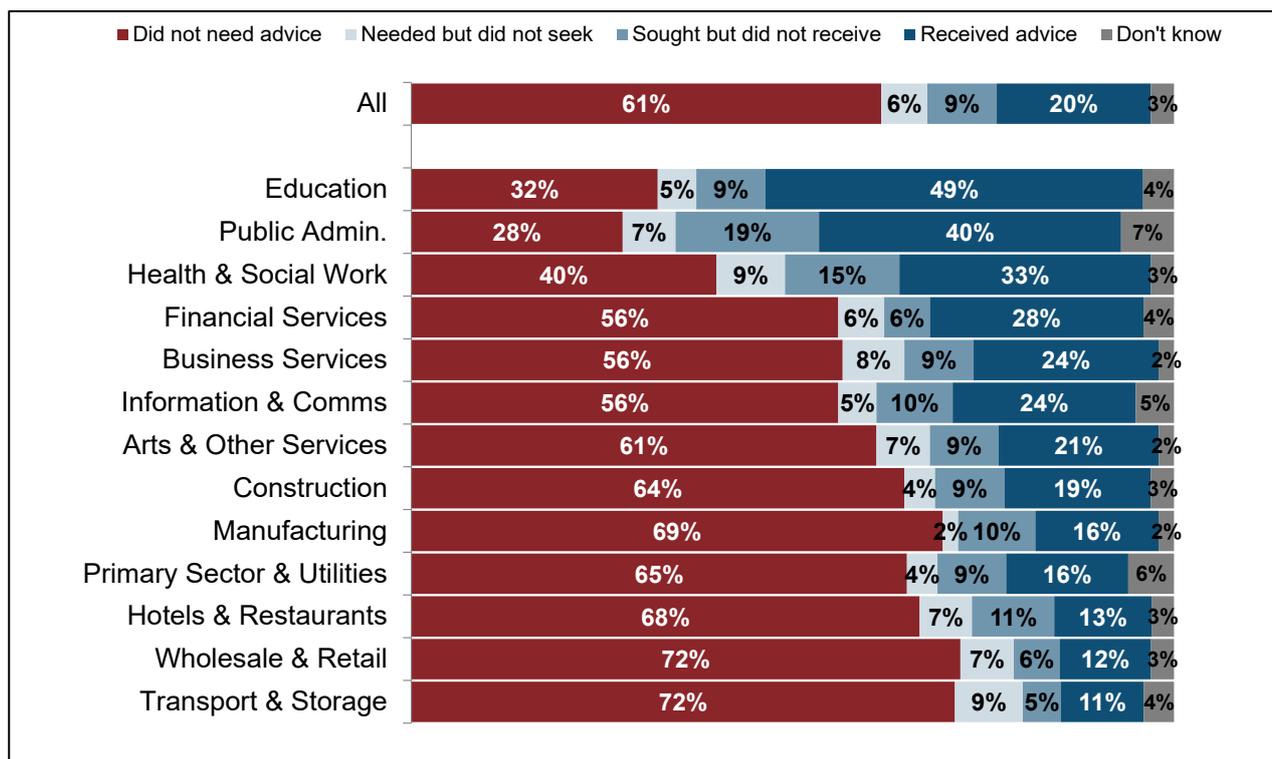
Overall, a fifth (20%) of all employers had received information, advice or more practical help on skills or training-related issues from people external to their organisation in the previous 12 months. Around one in ten (9%) had sought such information but not received any, and 6% needed information on skills or training issues but had not sought it. However, the majority of employers (61%) said they had no need for such information.

The likelihood of employers not seeing a need for external information or advice on skills and training-related issues decreased with size; ranging from 68% of those with 2 to 4 employees to a quarter (27%) of those with 250 or more employees. Those with 250 or more employees were three times as likely as those with 2 to 4 employees to have received external training-related information or advice (49% vs. 16%).

Figure 3-11, shows how results varied by sector. Non-market services were again the most likely to have received information or advice, in particular employers in the Education sector (49%). While relatively high proportions of employers in the Public Administration and Health and Social Work sectors had received advice (40% and 33% respectively), these sectors were also most likely to have an unmet need for advice (25% and 24% respectively had either needed but not sought advice, or sought it but had not received it).

The Transport and Storage and Wholesale and Retail sectors were the most likely to say they had no need for information or advice on skills or training-related issues.

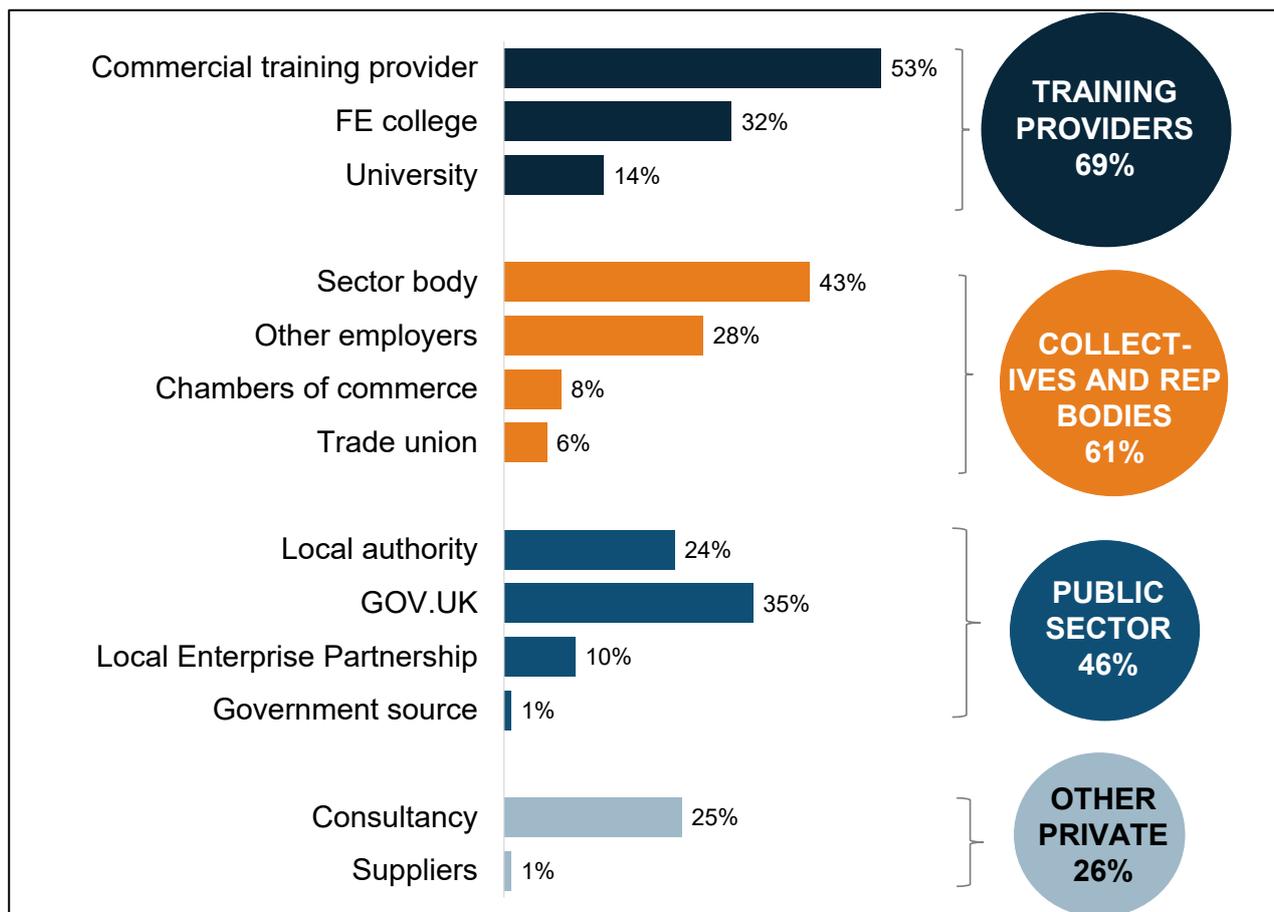
**Figure 3-11 Whether information, advice or practical help on skills or training-related issues needed / sought / received**



All establishments (5,000). Sector base sizes shown in Table 11-3.

The sources of help and advice on skills and training-related issues (shown in Figure 3-12) can be condensed into four broad categories: training providers (e.g. FE colleges, universities and other training providers), “collectives and representatives” (e.g. sector bodies, other employers and trade unions), public sector organisations (e.g. Local Authorities) and other private sector bodies (predominantly consultants). Training providers were the most common broad source used (69%), followed closely by collectives and representative bodies (61%). The most common specific sources used were commercial training providers (53%), sector bodies (43%) and the GOV.UK website (35%).

**Figure 3-12 Sources of information or advice sought or used in the last 12 months**



All establishments that had sought or received information or advice on skills or training-related issues in the last 12 months (1,906)

The use of training providers and the public sector as sources of information and advice had increased since 2019 (69% vs. 58% and 46% vs. 37% respectively), while using collectives and representatives bodies was less common (61% vs. 65%).<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> It should however be noted that the questions were not completely like-for-like in 2019 and 2021. 2019 respondents were asked which sources they had *received* advice from in the last 12 months on skills and training-related issues, whereas in 2021, it was asked in relation to advice that was either *sought or received*.

## 4 Apprenticeships

This chapter explores employers' level of engagement with apprenticeships at the time they were interviewed in terms of whether they currently had any apprentices or whether they offer apprenticeships. It also explores employers' reasons for offering or not offering apprenticeships and the extent to which employers retain apprentices as permanent employees. Findings in this chapter on Apprenticeships come from questions E1 to E5 (see Table 11-9 in the Appendices for the question wording).

### 4.1 Engagement with apprenticeships

Just over one in five employers (23%) offered apprenticeships, more than in 2019 (19%), 2016 (19%) and 2014 (15%).<sup>13</sup><sup>14</sup> The proportion with current apprentices in 2021 (12%) was also higher than in 2019 (11%), returning to the 2016 level (12%).

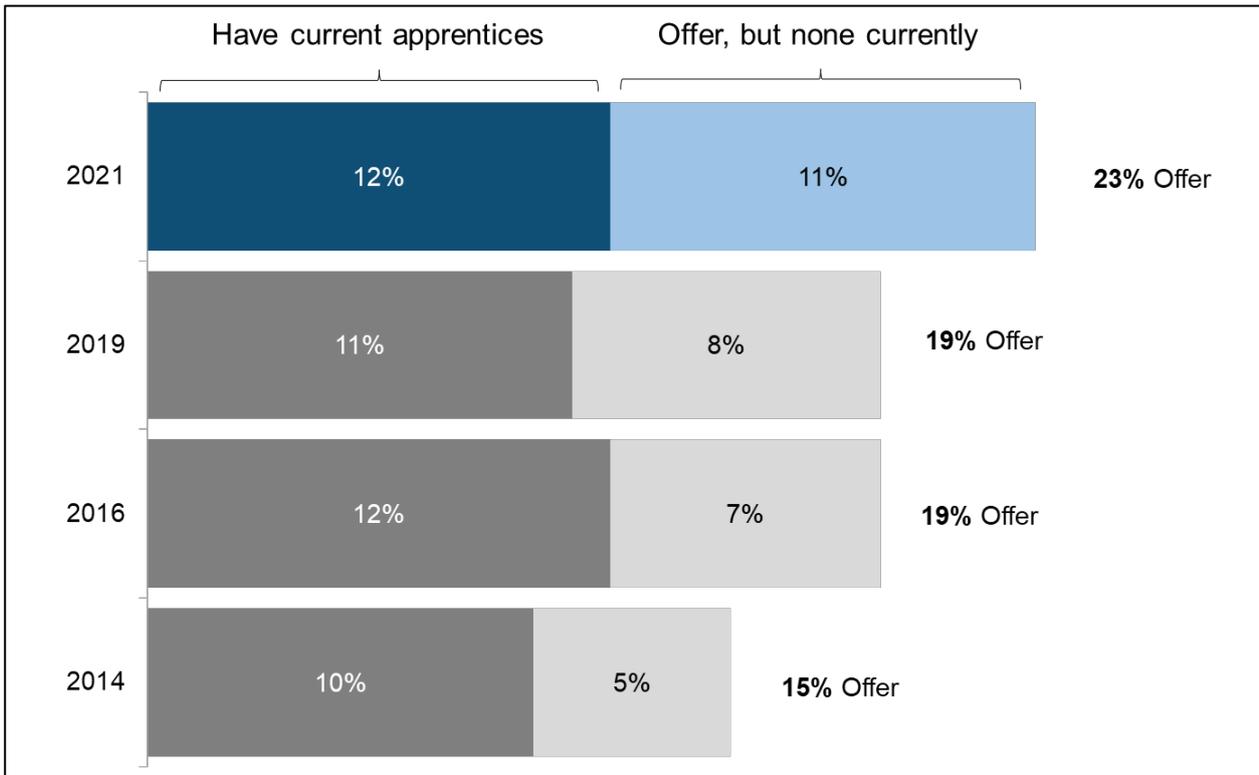
A breakdown of both these metrics compared to previous years is shown in Figure 4-1.

---

<sup>13</sup> Government data, published on GOV.UK ([Apprenticeships and traineeships data - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)), on the number of workplaces employing apprentices, as opposed to offering apprentices as discussed in this section, can be found here [201819-final\\_workplaces-of-apprentices-by-region.xlsx \(live.com\)](#)

<sup>14</sup> The Department's Apprenticeship Evaluation Employer Survey 2021 provides information on employer experiences and views regarding apprenticeships, such as reasons for engagement, satisfaction, the retention of apprentices, and future plans regarding apprenticeships. The survey involved interviews with 4,085 employers in England engaged with apprenticeships (all had staff complete an apprenticeship between July 2019 and February 2020 or employed apprentices at the time of the survey).

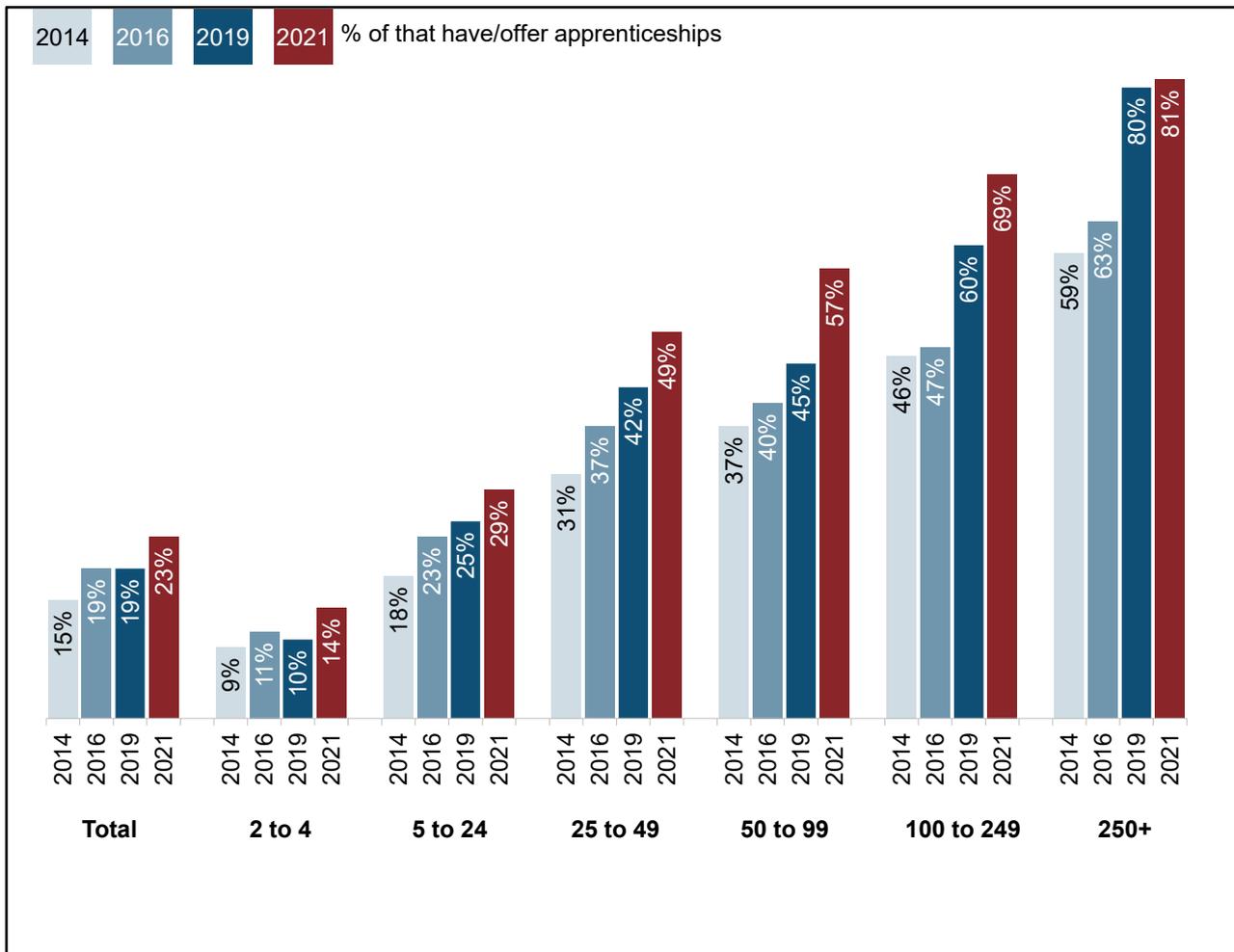
**Figure 4-1 Changes over time in the proportion of employers who offer apprenticeships and those who have a current apprentice**



Base for 2021: All establishments 2021(5,000) 2019 (13,358), 2016 (10,051), 2014 (10,032)

The likelihood of offering apprenticeships increased with size, from 14% among those with 2 to 4 staff to 81% among establishments with 250 or more staff. In line with the rise in the overall proportion of establishments offering apprenticeships since 2019, this rise can be observed in each establishment size too, compared with previous years, as shown in Figure 4-2.

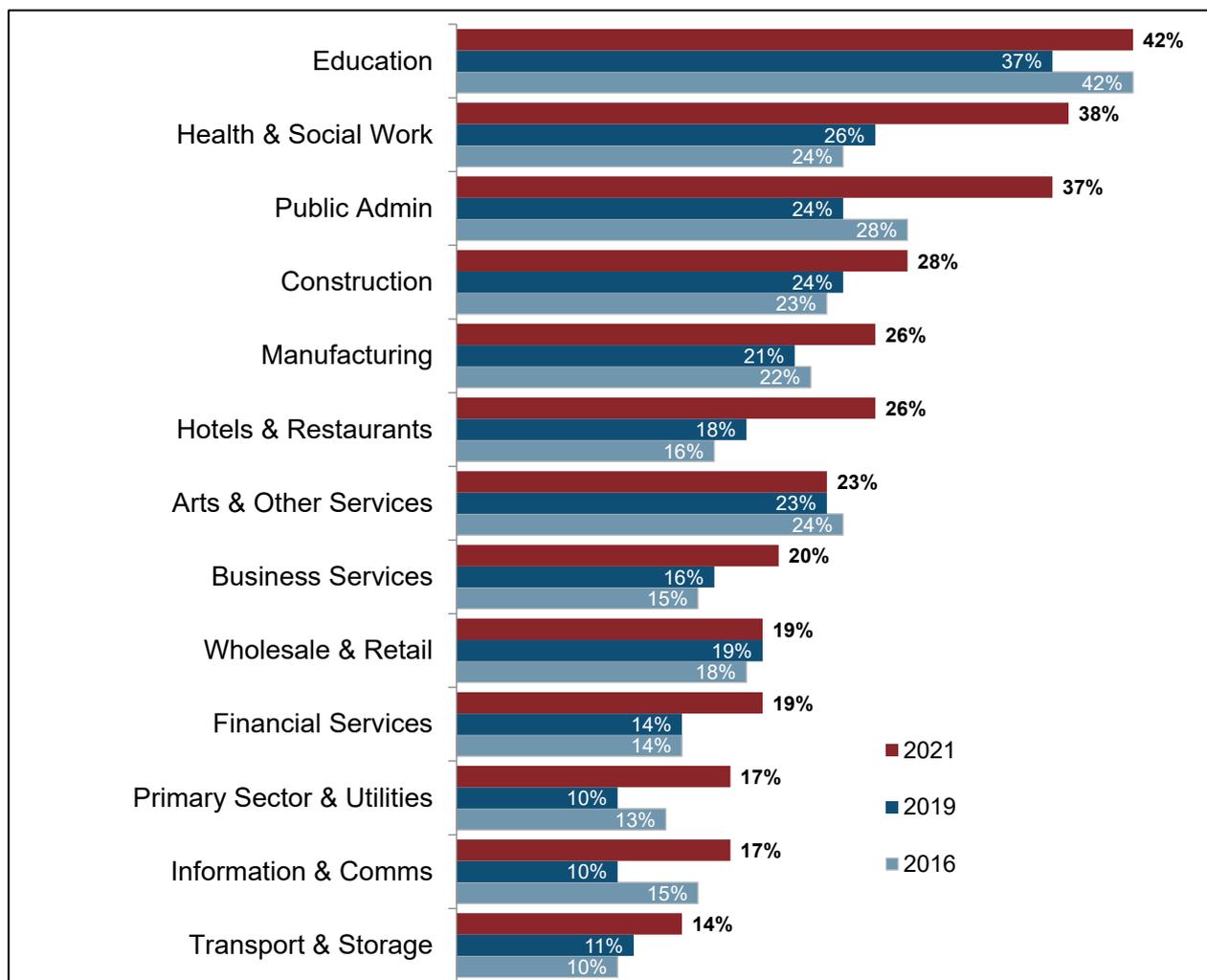
**Figure 4-2 Changes over time in the proportion of employers offering apprenticeships, by establishment size**



Base for 2021: All establishments 5,000. By size: 2-4: 770, 5-24:1,891; 25-49: 975; 50-99: 823; 100-249: 359; 250+: 182

There were also considerable differences in the proportion of employers offering apprenticeships by sector. As in previous years, sectors dominated by large and/or public sector employers and those in “traditional” apprenticeship industries (such as Construction) were much more likely than average to offer apprenticeships. This includes Education (42%), Health and Social Work (38%), Public Administration (37%), Construction (28%), and Manufacturing (26%). Conversely, establishments operating in Transport and Storage (14%), the Primary Sector and Utilities (17%), Information and Communications (17%), Wholesale and Retail (19%) and Business services (20%) were significantly less likely than average to have or offer apprenticeships. Results are shown in Figure 4-3.

**Figure 4-3 Changes over time in the proportion offering apprenticeships, by sector**



Base for 2021: All establishments 5,000. By sector bases range from 182 in Public Admin, to 774 in Business Services.

There has been a significant increase compared to 2019 in the proportion of employers offering apprenticeships in Public Administration (a 13 percentage point increase than in 2019) Health and Social Work (12 percentage points higher), Hotels and Restaurants (8 percentage points higher), the Primary Sector and Utilities (7 percentage points higher), and Information and Communications (7 percentage points higher). No sectors were less likely to be offering apprenticeships than in 2019.

Regionally, the North East (31%), North West (28%) and Yorkshire and the Humber (27%) had the highest proportion of employers offering apprenticeships, while the South East had the lowest rate (18%). By establishment type, 44% of local and central government funded establishments offered apprenticeships, compared to 23% of for-profit businesses.

More details about employer reasons for offering apprenticeships can be found in the 2021 Apprenticeship Evaluation survey.

## 4.2 Knowledge of apprenticeships

For this year's survey, two questions were used asking about employer awareness and knowledge of apprenticeships, with each asked of half the employers that did not offer apprenticeships. The first repeated the question text used previously, and is used for time series comparisons. The answer categories were: very good knowledge of what they involve, good knowledge, some knowledge, knowing them just in name or not having heard of apprenticeships.

The new version was phrased the same way but had a good level of knowledge as the highest answer. This version has been used for 2021 results and for discussing subgroup differences.

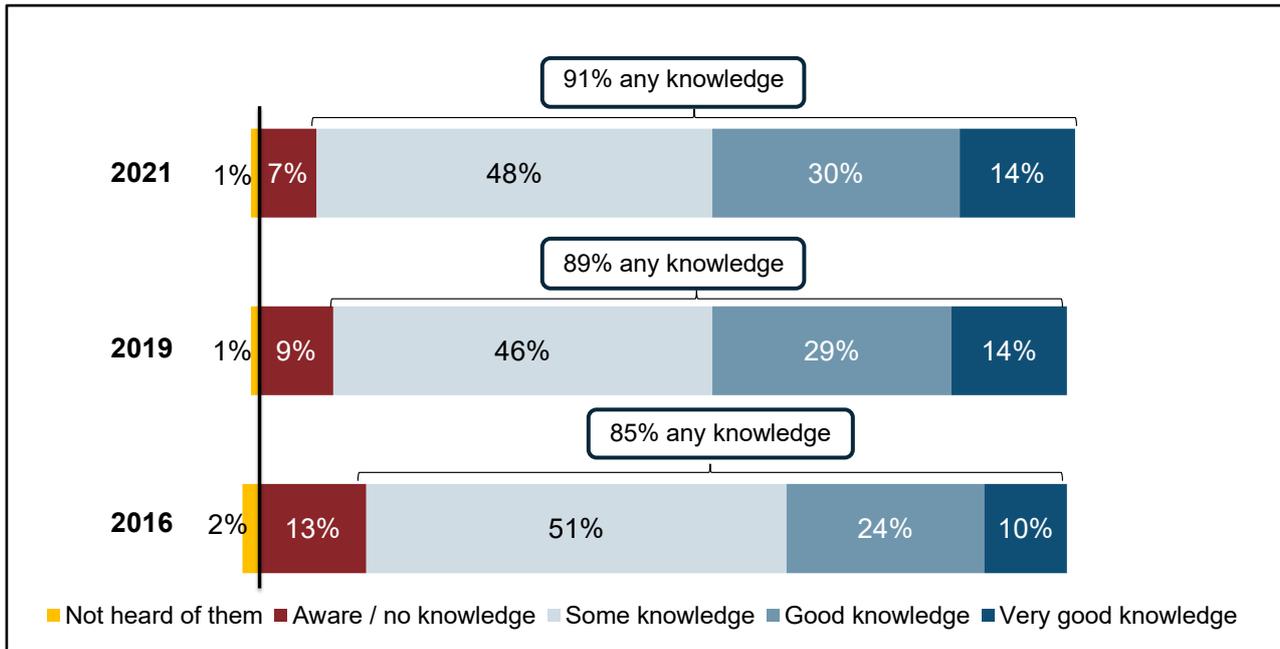
General awareness of apprenticeships was high, with nearly all employers not offering apprenticeships having heard of them (97%). Nine in ten (89%) felt they had at least some understanding of what they entail: more having some knowledge (53%) than feeling they had a good level of knowledge about apprenticeships (35%).

Employers not offering apprenticeships were more likely to have some knowledge of apprenticeships in Information and Communications (96%) and Business Services (94%). The Education (70%) and Construction (48%) sectors had the highest proportion of employers with a good understanding of apprenticeships.

There were no significant differences in the proportion of employers with at least some understanding of apprenticeships by size of establishment.

The proportion of employers with at least some knowledge about what apprenticeships entail has increased slightly to 91%, from 89% in 2019, continuing the upward trend from 85% in 2016 (as mentioned above this uses the version of the question identical to that used in 2016 and 2019). Results are shown in Figure 4-4.

**Figure 4-4 Change over time in the awareness levels of apprenticeships**



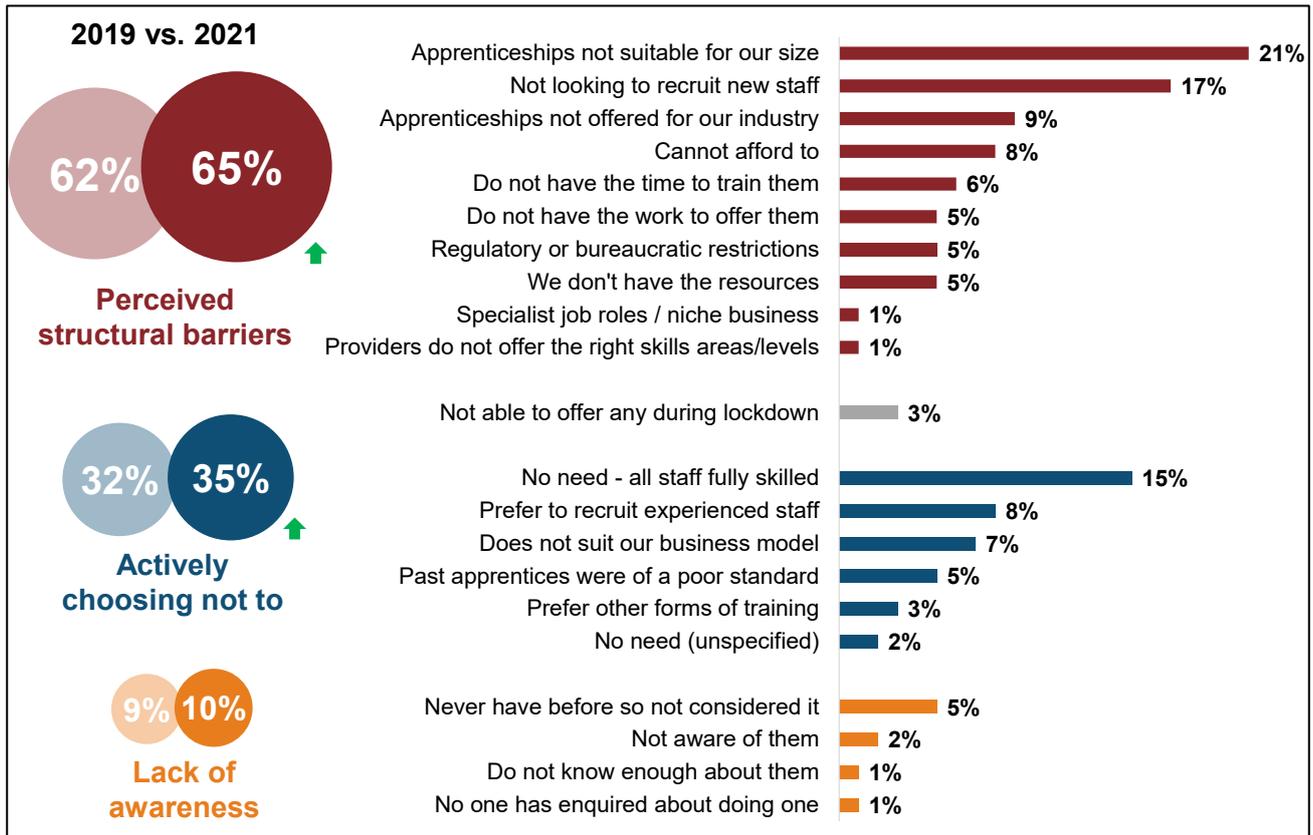
Base: Establishments who do not offer apprenticeships. 2021 Module C (1,461) 2019 (9,632); 2016 (7,332)

### 4.3 Reasons for not offering apprenticeships

Understanding the barriers employers face to offering apprenticeships is key to understanding how to increase uptake. Employers that were aware of apprenticeships but did not currently offer them were asked why this was. Results are shown in Figure 4-5. As well as the most common specific responses, answers have been categorised into three broad themes:

- Perceived barriers around the way apprenticeships are designed and structured;
- An active choice not to offer apprenticeships at the establishments; and
- A lack of awareness of what is involved.

**Figure 4-5 Reasons for not offering apprenticeships (unprompted)**



Base: All establishments not offering apprenticeships (2,921). Note: multiple responses allowed. Some responses with 1% or fewer not shown. The full set of definitions is shown in Table 11-7 in the appendices.

Almost two-thirds (65%) of establishments mentioned at least one structural barrier to them offering apprenticeships, up from 62% in 2019. The main such barrier was feeling apprenticeships were not suitable for their size of establishment (21%). This response was predominantly given by establishments with fewer than 25 staff; 26% of employers with 2 to 4 staff and 14% with 5 to 24 cited this as a reason compared with just 6% of employers with 25 or more staff. Additionally, 17% of employers not offering apprenticeships mentioned they were not looking to recruit new staff. Almost one in ten (9%) mentioned as a reason the view that apprenticeships were not offered in their industry. This view was more prevalent in the Transport and Storage sector (23%).

A further 3% said their reasons for not offering apprenticeships was that they were unable to the inability to do so during COVID-19/lockdowns. This response was more common among employers with over 25 staff (6%), and those in the Education sector (10%).

Over a third of employers (35%) had made an active choice not to offer apprenticeships, up from 32% in 2019. This was mainly because their current staff already had all the skills required (15%). Others preferred to recruit experienced staff (8%) suggesting that the messaging for them would need to be around the benefits of training an individual to their own specific needs or upskilling existing staff through apprenticeships.

One in ten (10%) gave reasons suggesting a lack of awareness, such as never having offered them before and therefore not considering them (5%). This was more common among Hotels and Restaurants (19%) and Manufacturing (15%), and charities or employers in the voluntary sector (14%).

Employers were also prompted with two potential reasons as to why they may not offer apprenticeships. Only 12% considered that apprenticeship training providers lacking flexibility in the delivery of training was a factor, though this rose to almost a fifth (19%) in the Manufacturing sector.

However, more than a quarter (27%) considered that training providers not offering the right skills areas or levels they require was at least part of the reason for them not offering apprenticeships. This reason was most common in Transport and Storage (36%) and Manufacturing (33%).

## 5 Traineeships

Government traineeships in England are designed to improve employability among young people and have four key components: providing work experience opportunities to young individuals, supporting them with basic skills such as Maths and English, offering work preparation training, and an occupationally focused element such as work-based qualifications. Through a traineeship, young people can gain the skills and experience employers are looking for. They can last from 6 weeks up to 1 year, though most traineeships last for less than 6 months, and have been open to 16- to 24-year-olds since 2013 (with some also open to 25-year-olds).<sup>15</sup> Findings in this chapter on Traineeships come from questions F1 to F4 (see Table 11-9 in the Appendices for the question wording).

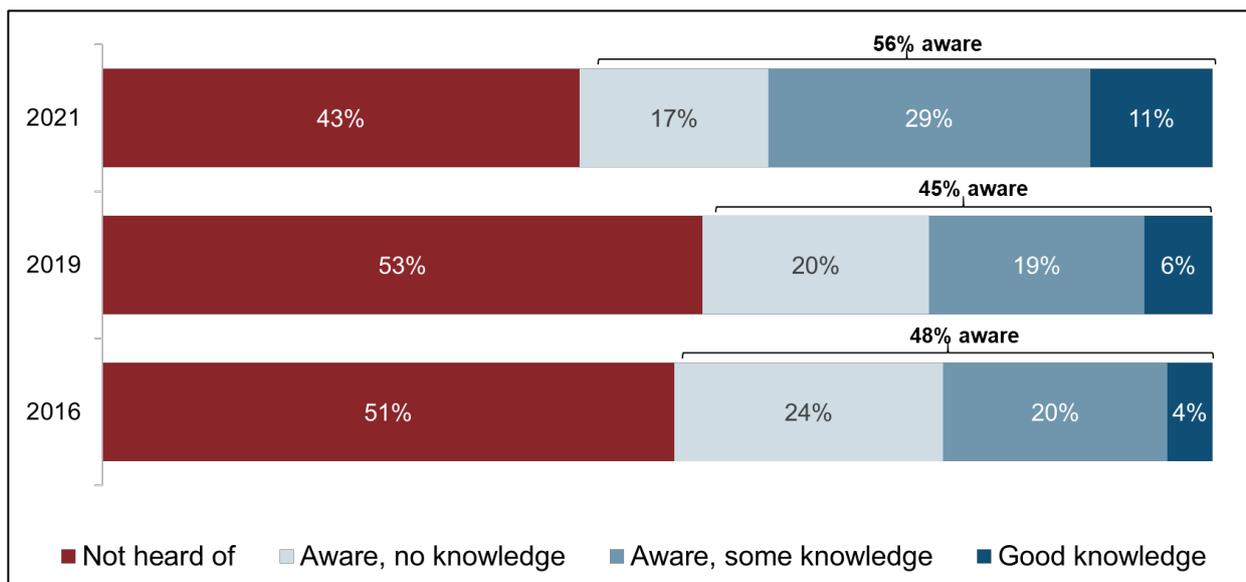
### 5.1 Awareness and incidence of traineeships

Just over half (56%) of employers were aware of traineeships, with one in nine (11%) claiming to have a good knowledge of them and what they involve, and three in ten (29%) claiming to have some knowledge. Around one in six (17%) had heard of the traineeship name but did not know anything about them. Just over four in ten (43%) had not heard of traineeships at all.

---

<sup>15</sup> More information on traineeships in England is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/traineeships-programme#traineeships:-overview-for-young-people>

**Figure 5-1 Awareness of traineeships**



Base: All establishments in 2021 (5,000), in 2019 (England Module A) (13,358), in 2016 (England) (10,015)

Awareness of traineeships has increased over time, and was noticeably higher in 2021 (56%) than in 2019 or 2016 (45% and 48% respectively). Employers in 2021 were also more likely to feel they knew what traineeships involve, with two-fifths (40%) saying they had some or a good knowledge compared to a quarter in 2019 (25%) and 2016 (24%).

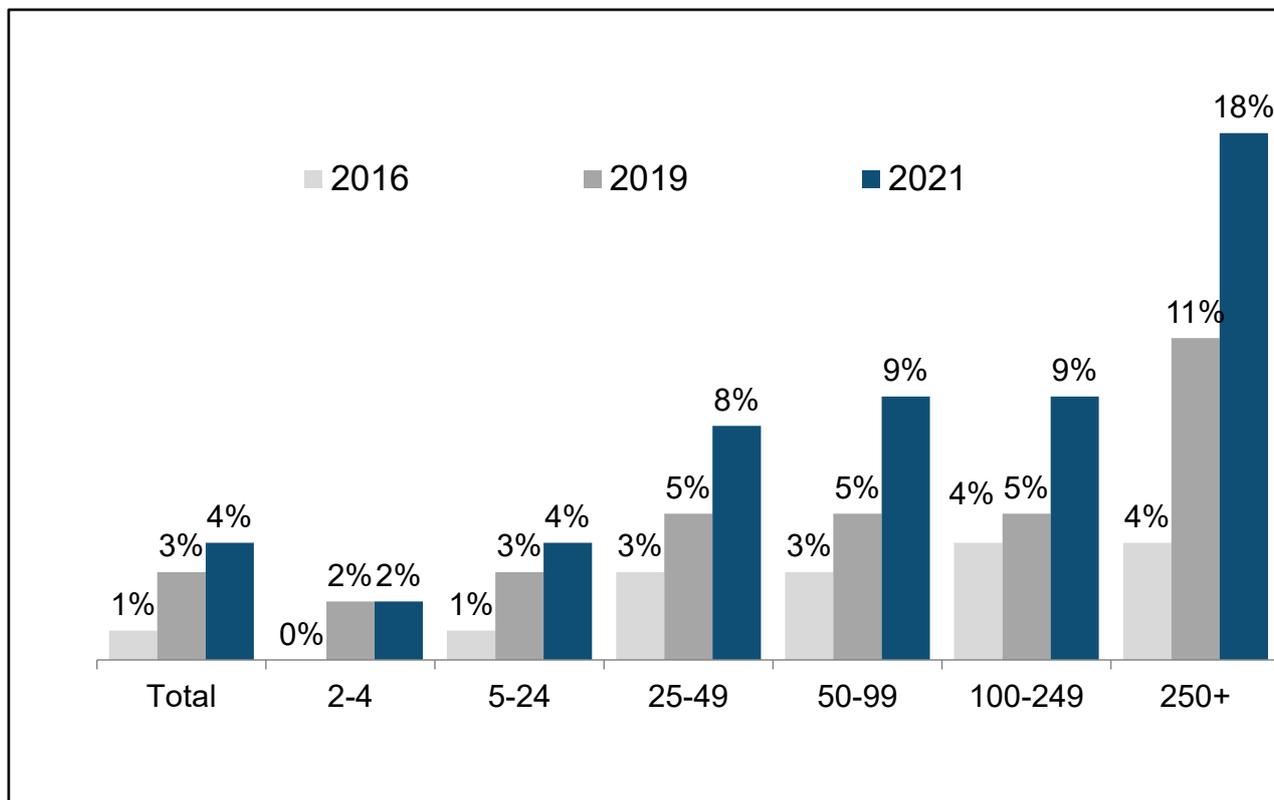
As found in previous years, larger establishments were more likely to have heard of traineeships and to be more knowledgeable about them compared to smaller establishments. For example, nearly seven in ten (68%) of those with 250+ employees were aware of traineeships, compared to just under three-fifths (57%) of those with 2 to 4 employees. Similarly, 17% of those with 250+ employees had a good knowledge of traineeships compared to 11% of those with 2 to 4 employees.

There were also differences in awareness and knowledge by industry sector. Awareness was higher than average amongst the Health and Social Work (64%), Arts and Other Services (62%) and Transport and Storage (62%) sectors, and lower than average in Financial Services (47%), Information and Communications (50%), and Manufacturing (50%).

Overall, 4% of all establishments had had somebody undertake a traineeship in the last 12 months. This is a statistically significant increase compared with 2019 (3%) and 2016 (1%).

Again, mirroring the situation in previous years, larger establishments were more likely than smaller establishments to have had somebody undertake a traineeship in the last 12 months: 18% of establishments with 250+ employees compared to 4% of those with 5 to 24 employees and 2% of those with 2 to 4 employees.

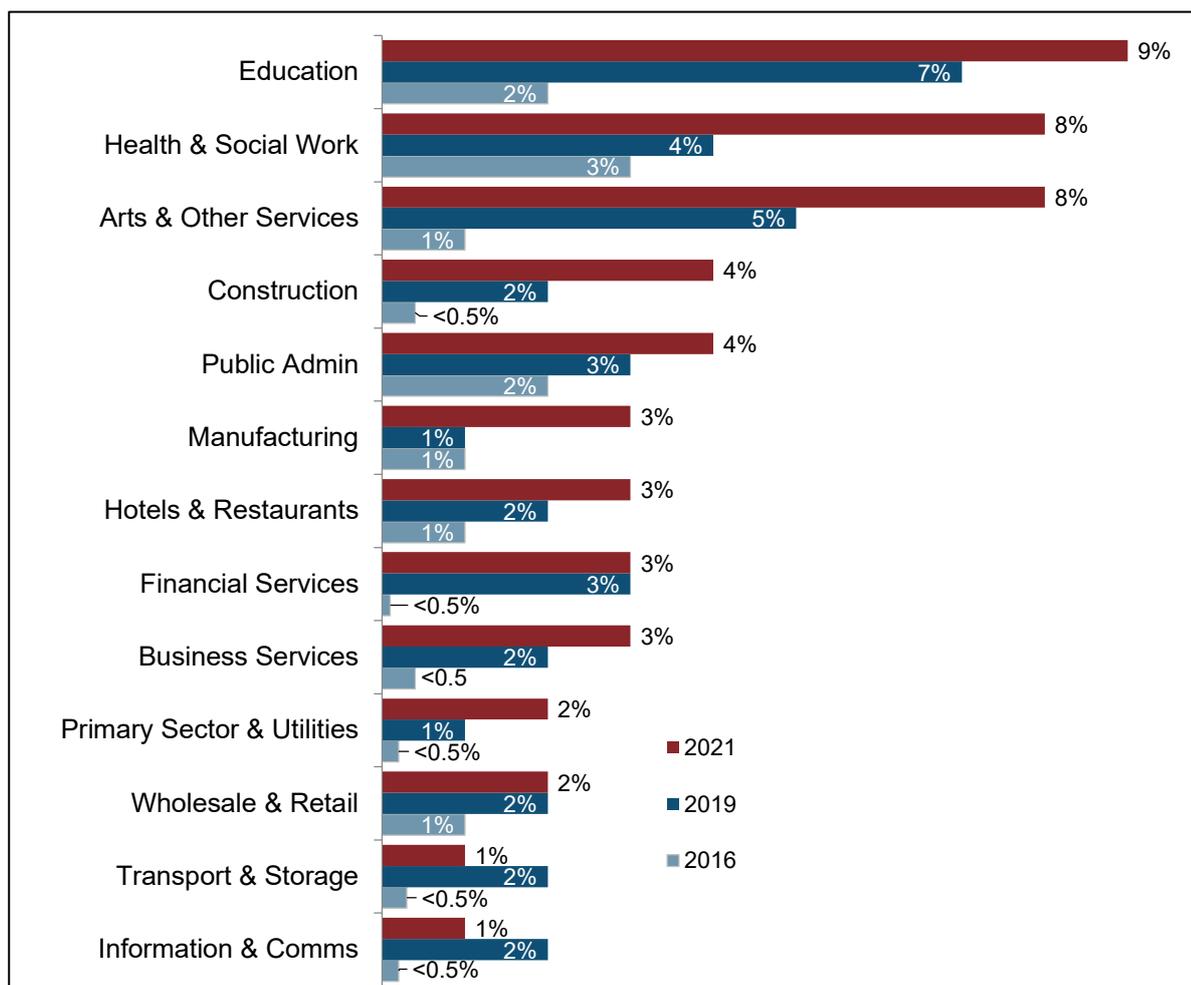
**Figure 5-2 Proportion that had somebody undertake a traineeship in the last 12 months, by size of establishment**



Base: All establishments in 2021 (5,000), in 2019 (England Module A) (13,358), in 2016 (England) (10,015)

The Education, the Health and Social Work, and the Arts and Other Services sectors were the most likely to have had someone undertake a traineeship (9%, 8% and 8% respectively). The proportion having had anybody on a traineeship is markedly lower for the other sectors and is particularly low for the Transport and Storage and the Information and Communications sectors (just 1% of whom have had anybody on a traineeship).

**Figure 5-3 Proportion that had somebody undertake a traineeship in the last 12 months, by sector of establishment**



Base: All establishments in 2021 (5,000), in 2019 (England Module A) (13,358), in 2016 (England) (10,015).

## 5.2 Factors determining whether individuals were taken on to do a traineeship

In terms of the reasons why establishments had taken on people to undertake traineeships, close to a half (48%) said that they wanted to give someone a chance. The other main reasons centred on the opportunity it gave the employer to see if the trainee was right for their business, with 27% saying that it allowed them to see if the person was suitable for a permanent job, and 14% that it allowed them to see if the person was suitable for an apprenticeship.

Other reasons included it being a means to find staff (9% said it was a good way to get skilled staff, 4% said they were unable to find qualified staff), and a way to train people to their specific business needs (6% said to train people from scratch/to their needs, and 4% said to improve general skills/knowledge of staff).

**Figure 5-4 Reasons for offering traineeships (spontaneous)**

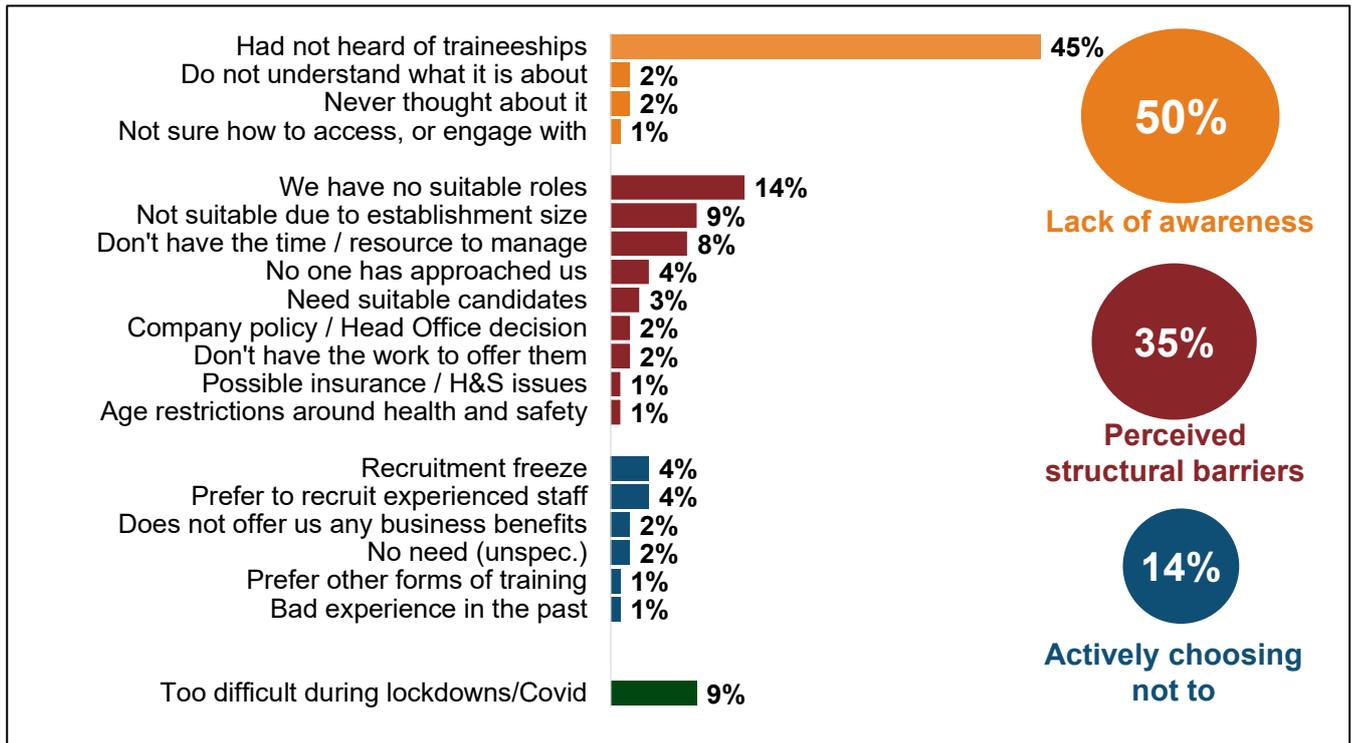


Base: All establishments that have taken on traineeships (329)

The most common reasons for not having anyone undertake a traineeship in the last 12 months were linked to a general lack of awareness of traineeships (50%). Perceived structural barriers also featured quite highly, with a third (35%) mentioning one or more of these types of barriers; the most common being that they did not have suitable roles, did not perceive themselves to be of a suitable size or to have the resources to manage the traineeship.

Around one in seven employers (14%) actively chose not to offer traineeships, with this particularly being due to recruitment freezes or preferring to recruit experienced staff. One in ten (9%) said that they felt it was too difficult to take on a traineeship because of the pandemic and related restrictions.

**Figure 5-5 Reasons for not offering traineeships (spontaneous)**

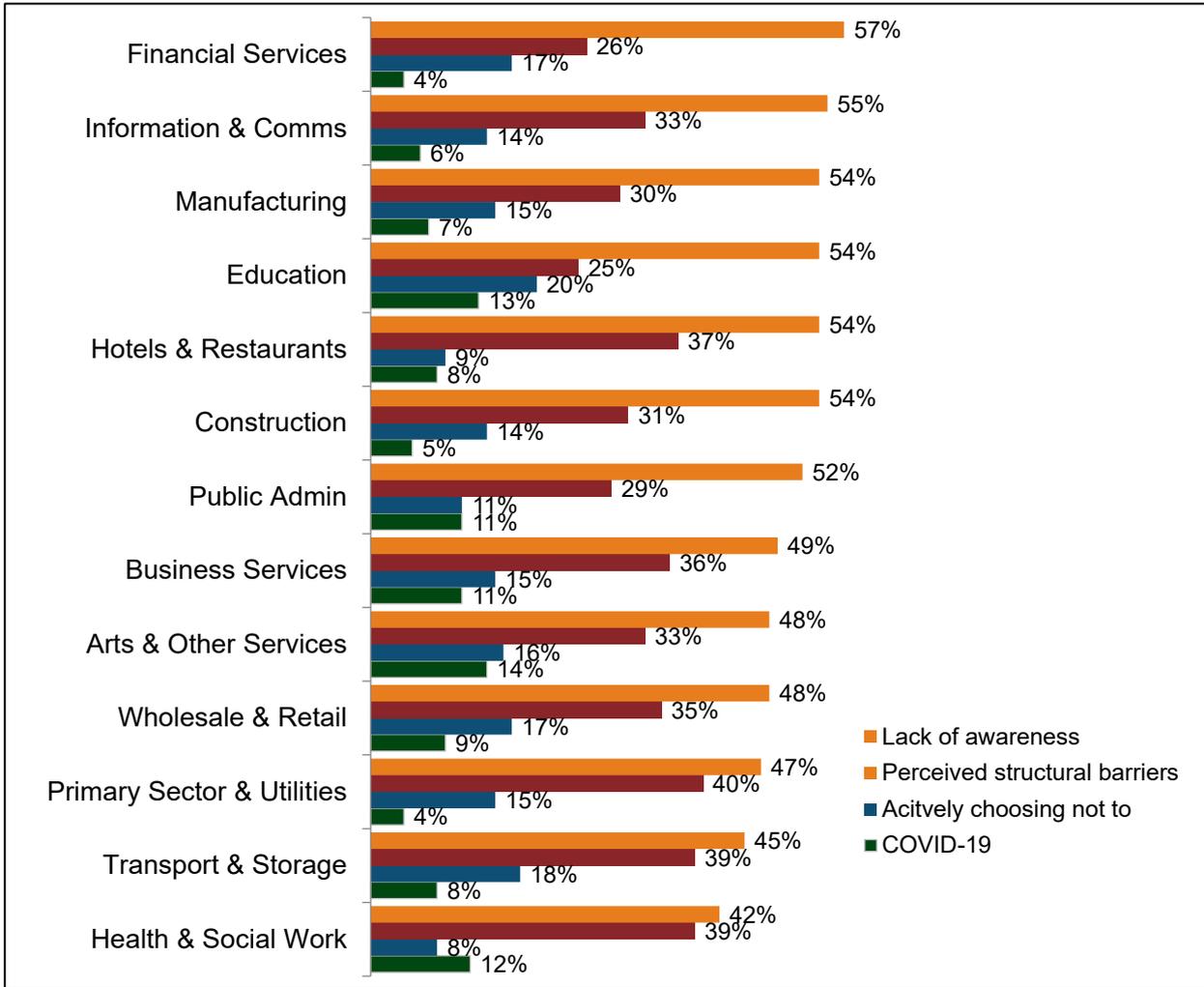


Base: All establishments that have not taken on traineeships (4,622)

Overall, the reasons for not providing traineeships were broadly similar across the different sizes of establishments and the different sectors. That said, some differences were found. For example, the smallest establishments of 2 to 4 employees were more likely than establishments with 100+ employees to say that it was due to structural barriers (38% vs 30%), and less likely that it was due to COVID-19 pandemic (9% vs 13%).

By sector, establishments in the Financial Services were the most likely to say it was because of a lack of awareness (57%), and those in the Arts and Other Services, Education, Health and Social Work, and the Business Services sectors were more likely to say it was due to difficulties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic (14%, 13%, 12% and 11% respectively). Those in the Education Sector were more likely than average to say that it had been an active choice (20%).

**Figure 5-6 Reasons for not offering traineeships (spontaneous) by sector**



Base: All establishments that have not taken on traineeships (4,622)

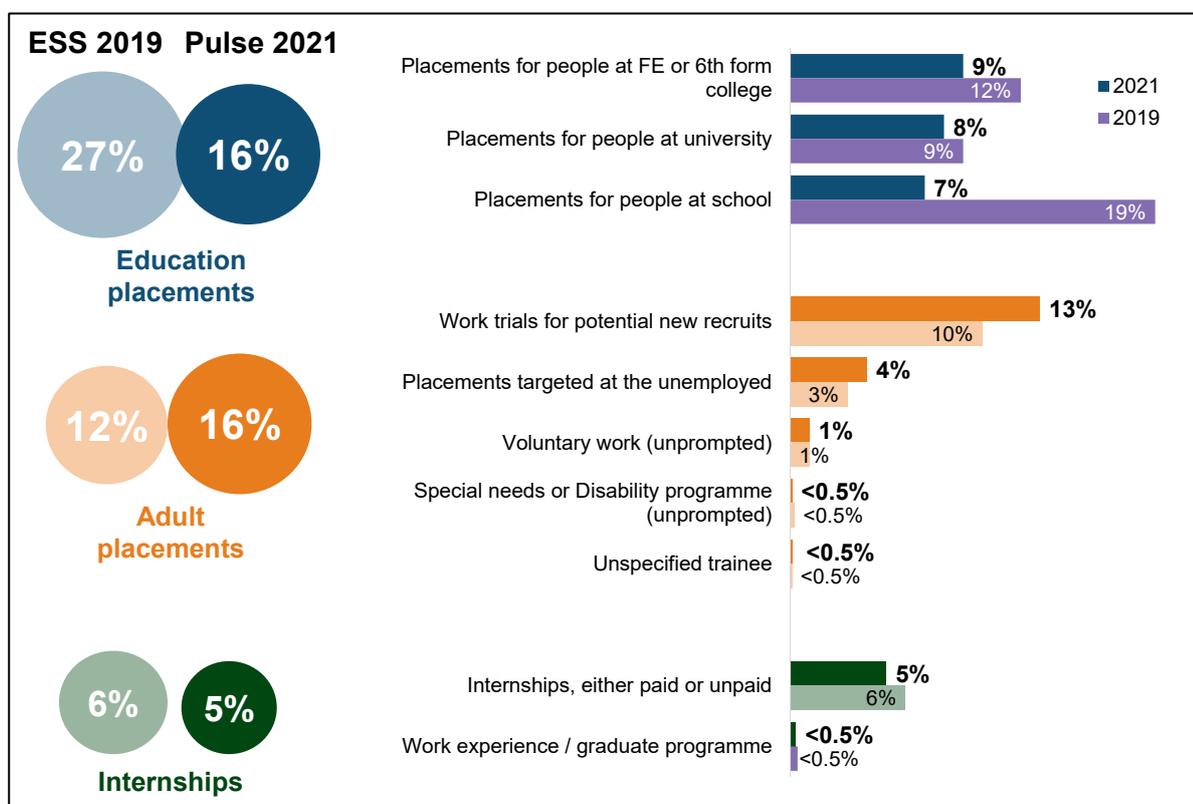
## 6 Placements and work inspiration

This chapter focuses on the extent to which employers offer various types of work placements and engage with educational institutions to offer work inspiration activities. Placements discussed in this chapter include those for individuals in education, work placements or trials targeted at adults, and internships (but exclude apprenticeships, traineeships and T levels). Findings in this chapter on placements and work inspiration come from questions G1 to G4 (see Table 11-9 in the Appendices for the question wording).

The overall proportion of employers that had anyone on any type of placement in the last 12 months had decreased from 35% in 2019 to 29% in 2021. Unsurprisingly given the disruption to the education system caused by the pandemic, this was driven by a steep fall in the proportion providing placements to those in education (either school, college or university) from 27% in 2019 to 16% in 2021.

However, the proportion providing adult placements (most commonly work trials or placements aimed at the unemployed) had increased from 12% in 2019 to 16% in 2021. These are broad categorisations of a series of more specific types of work placements read out to employers in the survey, as Figure 6-1 illustrates.

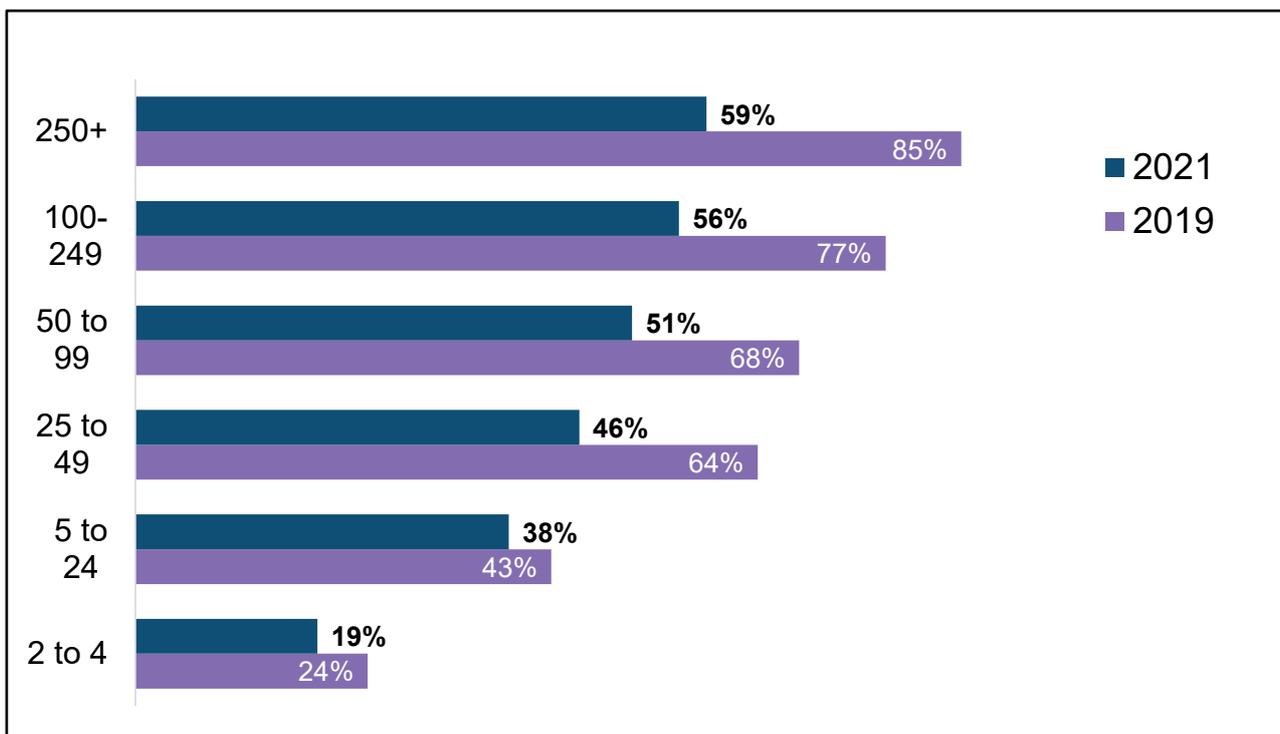
**Figure 6-1 Type of work placements provided in the last 12 months**



Base: 2021 All establishments (5,000). Base 2019: All establishments (Module C) 13,365

As would be expected, larger establishments were more likely to have had someone on any type of placement, with over half of those with 100 or more staff providing placements (57%), compared to around one in five of those with 2 to 4 staff (19%). However, the largest fall compared to 2019 in those providing placements was among employers with 250 or more staff (59% vs. 85%).

**Figure 6-2 Proportion of establishments that had someone on any placement in the last 12 months, by size**

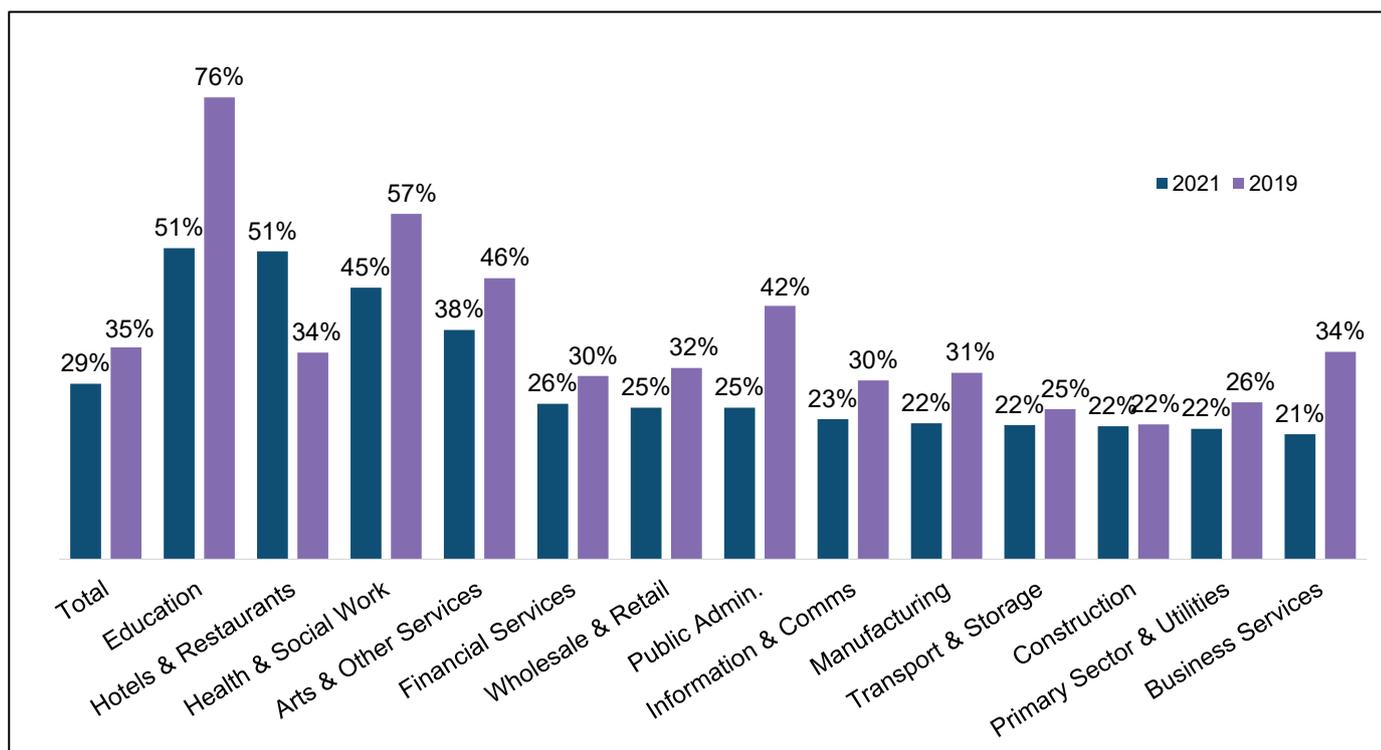


Base: All establishments in 2021 (5,000), in 2019 (England Module C) (13,365)

The proportion providing placements also varied substantially by sector. As shown in Figure 6-3, all sectors showed a significant decrease in total placements other than Construction (22% and 22% in 2019). The largest decrease compared to 2019 was among Education sector employers (51% vs. 76% in 2019), followed by Public Administration (25% vs. 42% in 2019) and Business Services (21% vs. 34% in 2019).

In 2021, employers in Hotels and Restaurants (51%), Education (51%), Health and Social Work (45%) and Arts and Other Services (38%) were more likely than average to provide placements, while those in Business Services (21%) were the least likely to provide placements.

**Figure 6-3 Proportion of establishments that had someone on any placement in the last 12 months by sector**



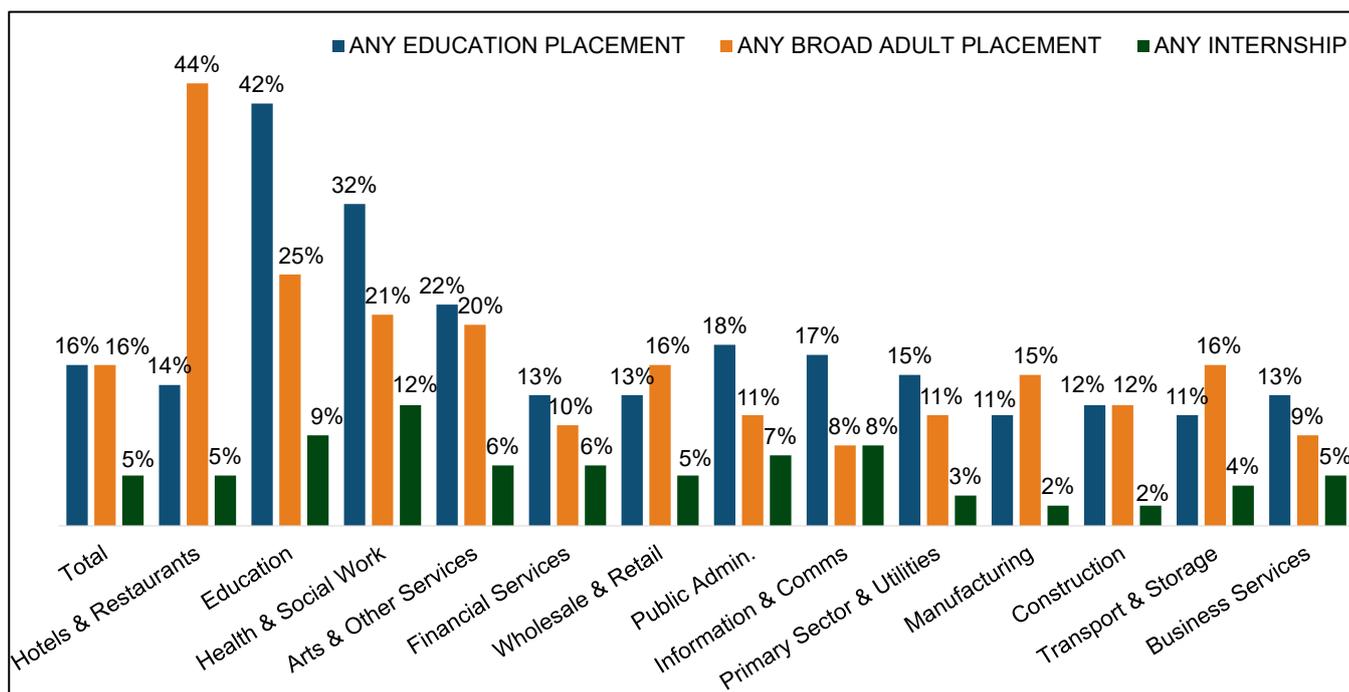
Base: 2021 All establishments (5,000), 2019 Base: All establishments (Module C) 13,365

Figure 6-4 shows the different types of placements, by sector. While placements for students in education (school, college, or university) remained the most common form of work placement for most sectors, adult work placements have become relatively more common. The increase in the proportion of adult work placements was mostly driven by Hotels and Restaurants (44% vs. 26% in 2019). This also became the most common type of placement for several other sectors though, and there were increases in the following sectors:

- Education (25% vs. 16% in 2019);
- Transport and Storage (16% vs. 10% in 2019);
- Business Services (10% vs. 5% in 2019);
- Wholesale and Retail (16% vs. 11% in 2019); and
- Construction (12% vs. 8% in 2019).

Internships were the least common type of placement across all sectors except for Information and Communications, where they were equal with adult placements (8% and 8%). Financial Services in particular saw a decline from 13% in 2019 providing internships to 6% in 2021.

**Figure 6-4 Proportion of establishments providing different work placements, by sector**



Base: 2021 All establishments (5,000), 2019 Base: All establishments (Module C) 13,365

Employers in the North West (35%) and London (32%) were more likely than average to provide any work placements, while those in Yorkshire or the South East were less likely (24% each).

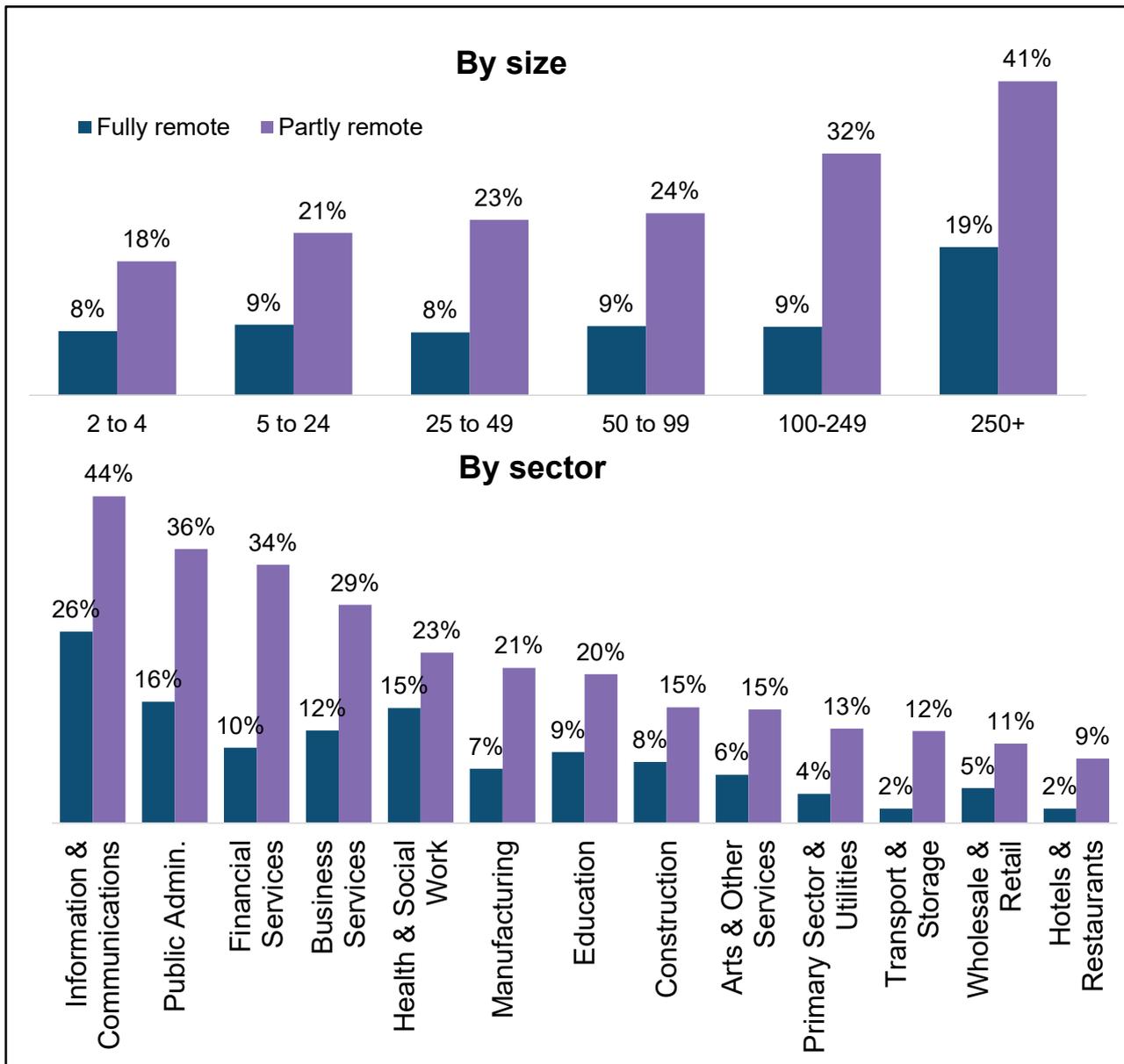
## 6.1 Remote working

Around one in ten (9%) employers would consider offering work placements where work took place completely remotely, rising to one in five (20%) who would consider a placement where work was partly remote and partly in person.

As shown in Figure 6-5, willingness to offer remote or partly remote placements varied considerably by size. Larger establishments with over 100 staff (12%) or over 250 staff (19%) were more likely to consider a fully remote placement than smaller establishments. This was also the case for placements that would be partly remote and partly in person (34% of establishments with 100 or more staff).

By sector, employers in Information and Communications were the most likely to say they would consider fully remote placements (26%), followed by Public Administration (16%), Health and Social Work (15%) and Business Services (12%). Transport and Storage (2%) and Hotels and Restaurant (2%) were least likely to consider this.

**Figure 6-5 Whether site would consider offering fully or partly remote working placements, by size and sector**



Base: 2021 All establishments (5,000), 2019 Base: All establishments (Module C) 13,365

## 6.2 Incidence of work inspiration activities

Separate to providing work placements, businesses can also provide advice and support to students about the workplace and their industry. These might involve one-to-one mentoring support for students, visiting institutions to talk with students about careers or holding site visits for students to visit the establishment and develop a better understanding of the working world. This report refers to such activities as 'work inspiration'.

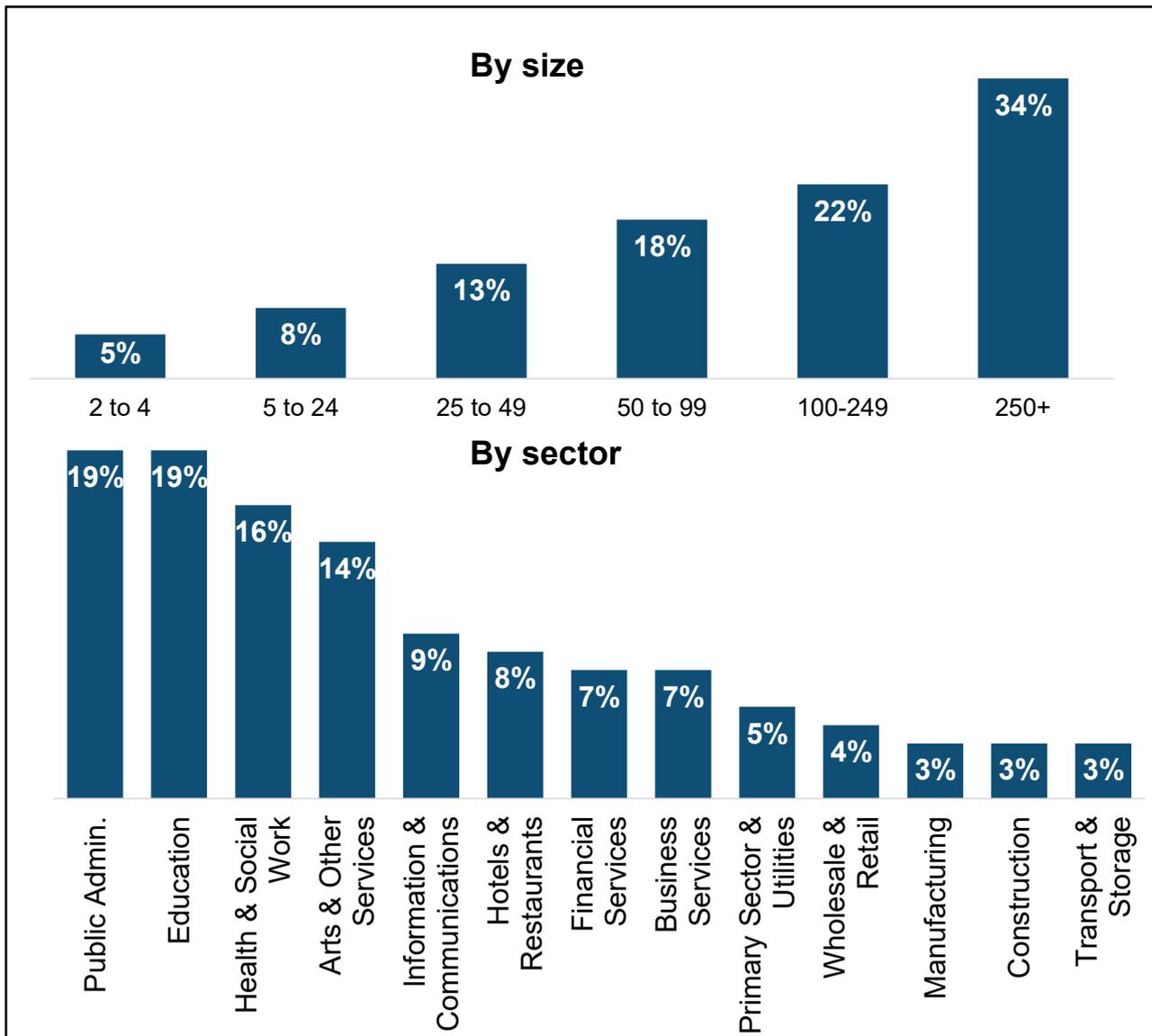
In 2021, 7% of employers had engaged with educational institutions to offer work inspiration activities in the 12 months preceding the survey, down from around one in ten (11%) in 2019.

As shown in Figure 6-6 engagement with work inspiration activities increased with business size, ranging from just 5% of those with fewer than 5 employees, to around a third (34%) of those with 250 or more employees.

Repeating the trends seen in 2019, the sectors most likely to engage in work inspiration activities were Public Administration (19%) and Education (19%). Employers in Construction, Transport and Storage and Manufacturing were all the least likely to offer work inspiration activities (3% each). The biggest relative fall was in the Manufacturing sector, falling from 9% in 2019 to 3% in 2021.

Third sector (20%) and public sector employers (19%) were much more likely to have offered work inspiration activities in the 12 months preceding the survey than private sector employers (6%).

**Figure 6-6 Proportion of establishments offering work inspiration activities in the previous 12 months, by sector and size**



Base: 2021 All establishments (5,000)

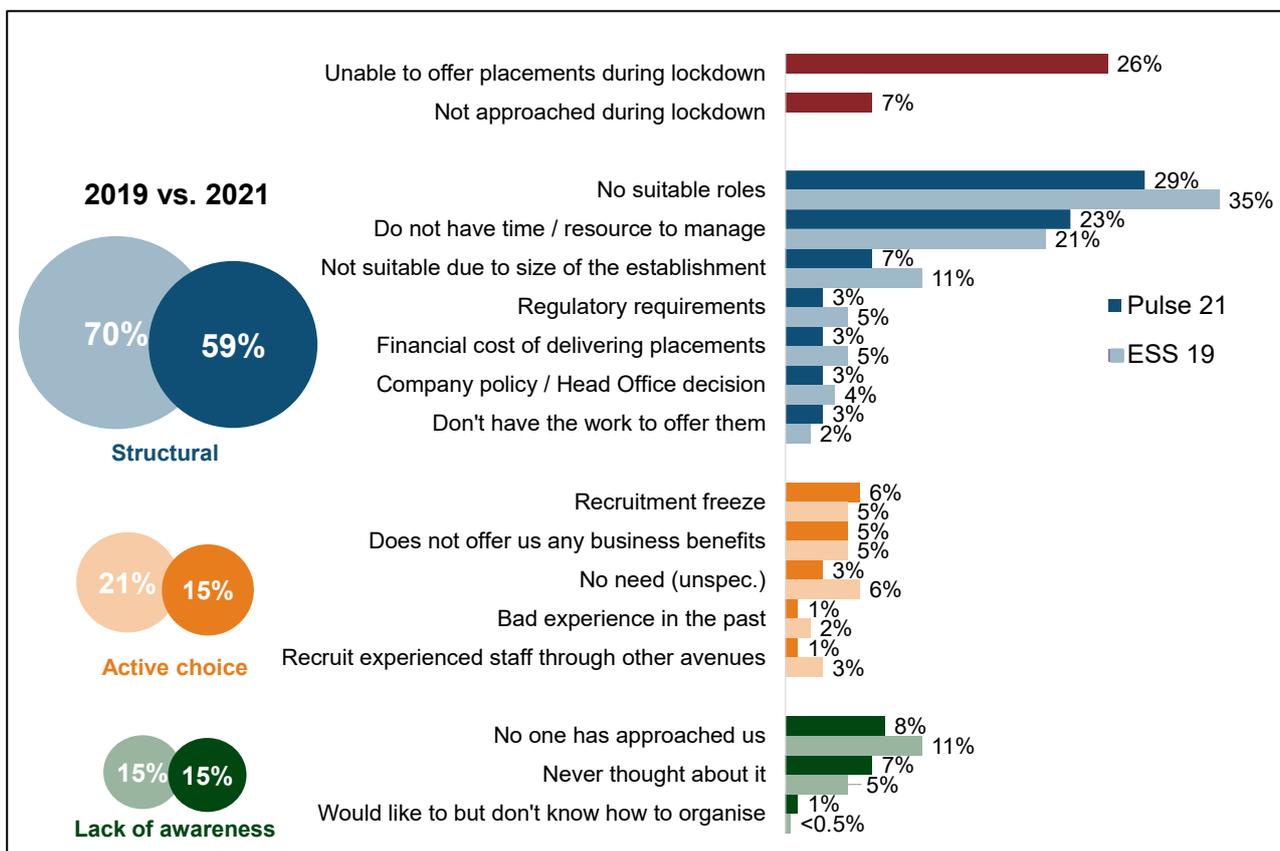
Only 3% of UK establishments provided work inspiration activities without also offering work placements. Those that did offer placements were more than twice as likely as average to offer work inspiration activities (18% vs. 7%).

### 6.3 Barriers to placements and work inspiration activities

Understanding the barriers that employers face regarding their provision of work experience opportunities allows any interventions that seek to encourage such provision to be better targeted and focussed. All employers that had neither offered a work placement in the last 12 months nor provided work inspiration activities to students were asked their reasons for this lack of engagement.

As was the case in previous years, a lack of engagement was often attributed to the nature of the business: as shown in Figure 6-7, three in ten (29%) employers that had not offered work placements or work inspiration activities said this was because they had no suitable roles, though this was less commonly mentioned than in 2019 (35%).

**Figure 6-7 Main reasons for not offering work experience opportunities in the last 12 months (spontaneous)**



Base: All establishments who have not offered placements in the last 12 months 2021 (2,818) 2019 (6,745). Some structural reasons are not shown in the chart. The full list is shown in Table 11-8 in the appendices.

2021 saw COVID-19 emerge as a core reason for not offering placements or engaging with work inspiration activities, with more than a quarter (26%) of employers saying this, and a further 7% said they were not approached about such activities during lockdown. Being unable to offer placements due to the COVID-19 pandemic was particularly likely to be cited by larger employers (48% of those with over 100 staff) and those in Health and Social Work (49%), Public Administration (43%), and Arts and Other services (36%).

The proportion that said they did not have time or resource to manage a placement had increased since 2019 (23% vs. 21%). This was a particular issue for employers in Manufacturing (35%) and Construction (29%).

Continuing previous trends, the smallest establishments, with between 2 and 4 employees, were more likely than average to cite barriers related to structural issues, including not having any suitable roles (32%, compared with 24% of establishments with 5 or more staff), not having the time or resource to manage it (23%, compared with 17% of those with 5 or more staff) and that placements are not suitable due to the size of the establishment (9%, compared with 4% of those with 5 or more staff).

The Primary Sector and Utilities (11%), Construction (7%) and Transport and Storage (7%) sectors were the most likely to mention facing regulatory requirements as a barrier. Transport and Storage were also more likely to specifically mention age restrictions (8%).

## 7 T Levels

T Levels are a new technical qualification introduced in September 2020 for 16-19-year-olds. T Levels are designed to sit as one of three options for students at level 3 (alongside A Levels and Apprenticeships). Courses last for two years and include a compulsory work placement which must last at least 45 days in total in an industry directly relevant to their course. The timing and structure of the placement is flexible to meet employers' needs. Findings in this chapter on T Levels come from questions H1 to H3 (see Table 11-9 in the Appendices for the question wording).

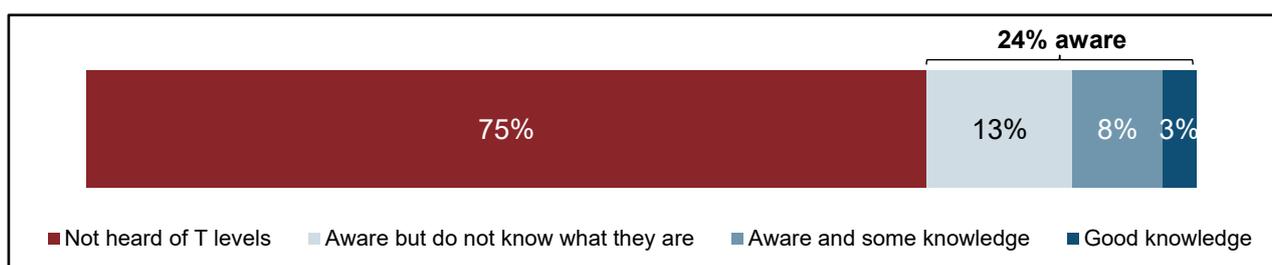
Although students will be able to undertake T Levels in subject areas covering most sectors, for the initial launch in 2020 only three routes were offered: Construction, Digital, and Education and Childcare. In 2021 the Health and Science route was added, and T Levels within Business and Administration, Engineering and Manufacturing and Legal, Finance and Accounting will follow in 2022.

This chapter examines employers' awareness of T Levels, as well as their interest in providing T Levels placements. It also explores employers' perceived capacity for offering such placements and the impact of the cash incentive offered to employers providing placements.

### 7.1 Awareness of T Levels

As shown in Figure 7-1, a quarter (24%) of all establishments had heard of T Levels. Just 3% of employers felt they had a good knowledge of T Levels and what they involve, 8% had some knowledge, and around one in eight (13%) were aware of them in name only.

**Figure 7-1: Awareness of T Levels**

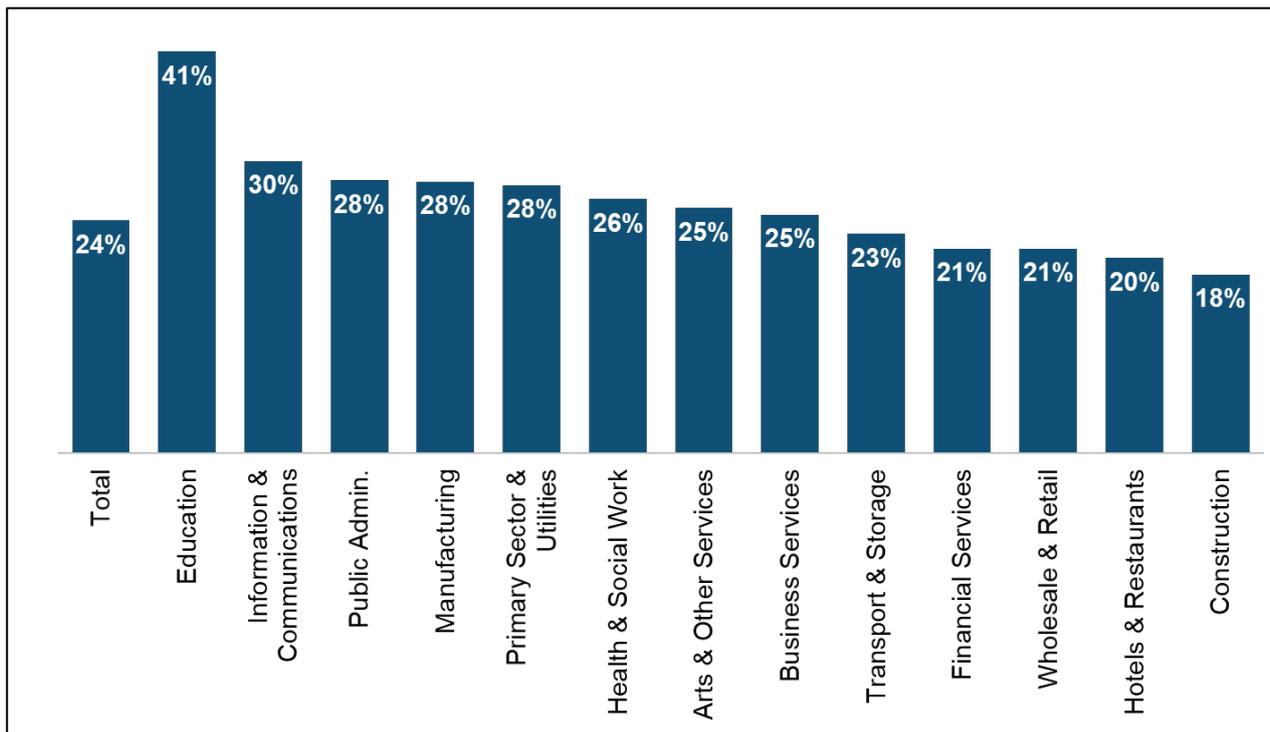


Base: All establishments (5,000)

By size, larger establishments were more likely to have been aware of T Levels, with close to two in five (37%) of those with 100 or more staff aware but only a quarter (24%) of those with 2 to 4 staff.

As mentioned previously, as T Levels have gradually been rolled out across different industries, this should be taken into account looking at differences by sector, where lower awareness or interest might be expected among employers who may have only been eligible to offer placements recently or are still unable to offer placements. There was wide variation in the levels of awareness by sector, from with two in five (41%) in the Education sector aware of T Levels, to fewer than one in five (18%) in Construction. Both of these sectors began offering T Level routes in 2020.

**Figure 7-2 Awareness of T levels by sector**



Base: All establishments (5,000)

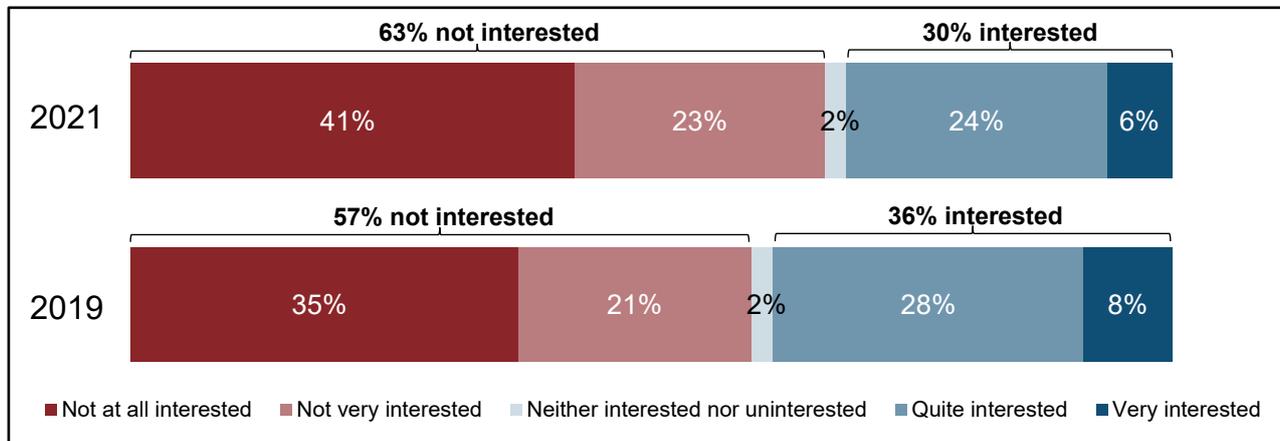
In terms of regional differences, the areas of England with the highest levels of employer awareness were the South West (31%) and North East (30%). The lowest level of awareness was in the South East (17%).

## 7.2 Interest in T Levels

All establishments were provided with some information on T Levels before being asked about their interest in offering such placements. They were informed that T Levels require students to complete an industry placement of at least 45 days in total in an industry directly relevant to their course. It was also outlined that the timing and structure of the placement is flexible to meet employers' needs and it is at the employer's discretion whether to pay students during their placement.

After receiving this information, three in ten (30%) establishments said they were interested in providing work placements to T Levels students, although just 6% were very interested. In contrast, more than three in five (63%) were not interested, including two in five (41%) not at all interested (see Figure 7-3).

**Figure 7-3: Interest in offering T Levels**



By size of employer, the largest establishments were nearly twice as likely as the smallest ones to be interested in providing placements to T Level students (47% among those with 250+ staff vs. 25% among employers with 2 to 4 staff).

In terms of sector differences, establishments in the Education (47%) and Hotels and Restaurants (46%) sectors were most likely to be interested in providing T Level placements. In contrast, fewer than one in five (17%) Business Services establishments were interested. This low level of interest within Business Services could be due to this T Level route not being available until 2022, although this sector was also among the least likely to offer other types of placement – suggesting generally low engagement in offering placements in this sector.

Interest also varied by region, with a third (34%) of establishments in the South West interested in providing T Levels, compared to just a quarter (26%) of those in the East of England.

Fewer establishments reported being interested in providing T Level placements in 2021 (30%) than in 2019 (36%). Slight question wording changes between the 2021 and 2019 surveys, means comparisons should be treated with caution.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> The explanation of T Levels was shortened for 2021. For full details, please see the technical report.

Those not initially interested in offering T Level placements were told employers can claim £1,000 cash for every T Level student they host on a high-quality industry placement between 27 May 2021 and July 2022. Overall, 7% of those initially not interested in T Levels expressed interest in providing work placements after the incentive was explained. Factoring in those interested after the cash incentive was explained, overall a third (34%) of all establishments were interested in providing work placements to T Levels students.

### **7.3 Capacity for offering T Levels**

Asked to consider their site's capacity for offering placements to T Level students, just under two-thirds (64%) of said it would be difficult to offer these types of placements – including just under two in five (37%) for whom it would be very difficult. Conversely, three in ten (30%) felt it would be easy to offer T Level placements, with just 5% saying it would be very easy.

Establishments with 25 to 49 staff (38%) and 50 to 99 staff (42%) were particularly likely to have said it would be easy to offer T Level placements. Establishments with 2 to 4 staff were the least likely to say it would be easy (27%) and the most likely to say it would be difficult (68%).

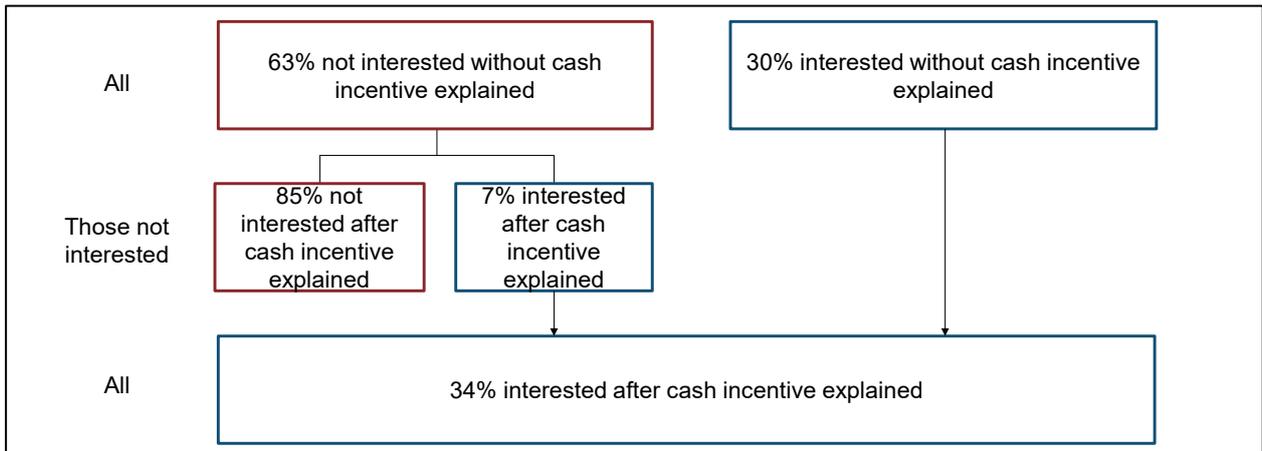
As well as being the sectors with the greatest interest in offering T Levels, establishments in the Education (43%) and Hotels and Restaurants (41%) sectors were most likely to feel offering these placements would be easy. In contrast, those in Public Administration and Transport and Storage (71% respectively) were the sectors most likely to feel this would be difficult to offer T Levels.

Compared to 2019, a slightly smaller proportion of establishments in 2021 said that it would be easy to offer T Level placements (30% in 2021 vs, 33% in 2019) and a slightly higher share felt it would be difficult (64% vs. 61% in 2019), including a greater proportion who said it would be very difficult (37% vs. 34% in 2019).

One in five (20%) establishments indicated that they were interested in providing T Level placements and that they would be easy to offer. Around one in ten (9%) said that while they were interested, they would be difficult to offer.

As outlined previously, employers that indicated they were not initially interested in offering T Levels were subsequently informed about the £1,000 cash incentive, then asked again whether they would be interested in offering T Levels. As shown in Figure 7-4 the cash incentive appeared to have only a marginal impact on employer interest in offering T Level placements for those employers who had not initially been interested. After the cash incentive was explained, a total of 34% of employers were interested in offering T levels.

**Figure 7-4 Interest in offering T Levels placements before and after cash incentive explanation**



## 8 Conclusions

The period between ESS 2019 and the Employer Pulse Survey in 2021 was economically turbulent. Along with the repercussions of leaving the EU, many sectors of the economy effectively stopped trading, and subsequently reopened several times from 26 March 2020 onwards due to the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>17</sup>

The economy is still recovering from the impacts of the pandemic. Services output overall has now reached its pre-pandemic level, as has the number of payroll employees, while the number of job vacancies has reached a record high.<sup>18</sup>

Furthermore, the nature of work has changed for many professions, with homeworking now far more prevalent than prior to the pandemic. Just under two in five establishments (37%) had had a higher proportion of staff working from home in the last 12 months than in the 12 months before the pandemic. Most of these employers (60%) felt that increased homeworking during the pandemic had had no effect on the productivity of their workforce, though more thought it had decreased productivity (25%) than thought it had increased it (12%). This research provides evidence that around half (51%) of those who increased homeworking due to the pandemic are likely to continue this in some form, while two fifths (42%) expect homeworking to decrease.

Training and workforce development are vital means of addressing skills shortages and skills gaps, and to improve productivity. There have been a number of changes in training policy in recent years, with a particular focus on developing vocational skills and increasing the uptake and quality of apprenticeships.

In January 2021 the government produced the Skills for Jobs<sup>19</sup> white paper which included a Lifetime Skills Guarantee for adults across the country, under which all learners are entitled to a loan for the equivalent of four years of post-18 education from 2025. The white paper also proposed a commitment to “put employers at the heart of the system” in part through closer collaboration with education providers on providing and improving apprenticeships and traineeships. Other key decisions included the continued roll-out of T levels.

---

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/timeline-lockdown-web.pdf>

<sup>18</sup>

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/uklabourmarket/october2021>

<sup>19</sup>[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/957856/Skills\\_for\\_jobs\\_lifelong\\_learning\\_for\\_opportunity\\_and\\_growth\\_\\_web\\_version\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/957856/Skills_for_jobs_lifelong_learning_for_opportunity_and_growth__web_version_.pdf)

The periods where government advice was to work from home in response to the pandemic had a clear impact on training, with overall provision reaching historic lows, both in terms of the proportion of employers providing training (42%) and the proportion of all employees receiving training (52%).

Off-the job training fell particularly steeply, although use of online training has, perhaps understandably, seen a sharp increase – provided by 74% of training employers in 2021 compared to 56% in 2019.

Training employers were more likely to have used using private sector training providers than public providers, though compared with 2016 there has been a reduction in the use of private providers (49% vs. 60% in 2016) and a slight increase in the use of public providers (18% vs. 15%).

Alongside the fall in training, the proportion of employers offering placements and work inspiration activities also fell during the period since ESS 2019, and interest in T levels declined slightly. Just under a third of employers (29%) had had anyone on any type of placement in the last 12 months, down from 35% in 2019. This decrease was driven by a fall in the proportion providing placements to those in education (from 27% in 2019 to 16% in 2021). Similarly, the proportion of establishments interested in providing T Levels placements fell from 36% in 2019 to 30% in 2021.

Despite this, there are signs of increased uptake and awareness of apprenticeships and traineeships. The overall proportion offering apprenticeships (23%) was higher than in 2019 (19%), and the proportion of employers with at least some knowledge about what apprenticeships entail has increased slightly to 91%, from 89% in 2019. Awareness of traineeships among employers has risen by 11 percentage points, from 45% in 2019 to 56% in 2021.

## 9 List of figures

Figure 2-1: Current levels of homeworking compared to before the pandemic.....	16
Figure 2-2: Impact of increased homeworking on productivity .....	18
Figure 2-3: Future homeworking plans .....	20
Figure 2-4: Reasons for planning to maintain or increase increased levels of homeworking .....	22
Figure 2-5: Reasons for planning to reduce increased levels of homeworking .....	23
Figure 3-1 Proportion of employers that had funded or arranged training over the past 12 months and breakdown between on and off-the-job training .....	26
Figure 3-2 Proportion of staff trained by sector, 2019-2021 .....	28
Figure 3-3 Amount of training provided in the last 12 months compared with the 12 months before the pandemic, by sector .....	29
Figure 3-4 Types of training provided over the last 12 months among employers that train (prompted) .....	31
Figure 3-5 Proportion of employers providing online training or e-learning, by sector .....	33
Figure 3-6 Proportion of training employers arranging or funding external training for their employees .....	35
Figure 3-7 Use of private and public training providers among establishments that train, by sector .....	37
Figure 3-8 Proportion of training employers that had used or considered specific sources external training .....	38
Figure 3-9 Views on the suitability and flexibility of the training provided by FE colleges and commercial training providers .....	40
Figure 3-10 Interest in working with external training providers to identify employees' skills needs .....	44
Figure 3-11 Whether information, advice or practical help on skills or training-related issues needed / sought / received .....	46
Figure 3-12 Sources of information or advice sought or used in the last 12 months.....	47

Figure 4-1 Changes over time in the proportion of employers who offer apprenticeships and those who have a current apprentice .....	49
Figure 4-2 Changes over time in the proportion of employers offering apprenticeships, by establishment size .....	50
Figure 4-3 Changes over time in the proportion offering apprenticeships, by sector .....	51
Figure 4-4 Change over time in the awareness levels of apprenticeships .....	53
Figure 4-5 Reasons for not offering apprenticeships (unprompted).....	54
Figure 5-1 Awareness of traineeships .....	57
Figure 5-2 Proportion that had somebody undertake a traineeship in the last 12 months, by size of establishment.....	58
Figure 5-3 Proportion that had somebody undertake a traineeship in the last 12 months, by sector of establishment .....	59
Figure 5-4 Reasons for offering traineeships (spontaneous) .....	60
Figure 5-5 Reasons for not offering traineeships (spontaneous) .....	61
Figure 5-6 Reasons for not offering traineeships (spontaneous) by sector .....	62
Figure 6-1 Type of work placements provided in the last 12 months .....	63
Figure 6-2 Proportion of establishments that had someone on any placement in the last 12 months, by size .....	64
Figure 6-3 Proportion of establishments that had someone on any placement in the last 12 months by sector .....	65
Figure 6-4 Proportion of establishments providing different work placements,by sector .....	66
Figure 6-5 Whether site would consider offering fully or partly remote working placements, by size and sector.....	67
Figure 6-6 Proportion of establishments offering work inspiration activities in the previous 12 months, by sector and size .....	69
Figure 6-7 Main reasons for not offering work experience opportunities in the last 12 months (spontaneous) .....	70
Figure 7-1: Awareness of T Levels .....	72

Figure 7-2 Awareness of T levels by sector .....73

Figure 7-3: Interest in offering T Levels .....74

Figure 7-4 Interest in offering T Levels placements before and after cash incentive  
explanation .....76

## 10 List of tables

Table 2-1: Number and proportion of staff currently homeworking, by establishment size and sector .....	15
Table 2-2: Employers with a higher proportion of staff homeworking in the last 12 months than in the 12 months before the pandemic, and those with a higher proportion homeworking currently, by establishment size and sector .....	17
Table 2-3: Impact of increased homeworking on productivity, by establishment size and sector .....	19
Table 2-4: Expected future levels of homeworking among establishments with increased homeworking compared to before the pandemic, by size and sector .....	21
Table 3-1 Number of staff trained over the last 12 months 2011-2019, by establishment size .....	27
Table 3-2 Proportion of staff trained over the last 12 months 2011-2019, by establishment size .....	27
Table 3-3 Suitability and flexibility of the training provided by FE colleges, by sector and region (% agreeing) .....	41
Table 3-4 Suitability and flexibility of the training provided by commercial training providers, by sector and region (% agreeing) .....	42
Table 11-1 Profile of establishments in England for 2019 and 2021 .....	85
Table 11-2 Profile of employment in England for 2019 and 2021 .....	86
Table 11-3 Unweighted base sizes (completed interviews), for all establishments in England, by size and sector .....	87
Table 11-4 Unweighted base sizes (completed interviews), for all establishments <i>that train</i> in England, by size and sector .....	88
Table 11-5 Unweighted base sizes and population, for all establishments in England, by region .....	89
Table 11-6 Grouped sources of external training .....	89
Table 11-7 Grouped reasons for not offering apprenticeships .....	90
Table 11-8 Grouped reasons for not offering work experience opportunities .....	92

Table 11-9 Employer Pulse Survey question numbers and wording.....93

# 11 Appendices

## 11.1 Methodology

This section briefly summarises the key features of the methodology. Full details of the are provided in the technical report published alongside this report on the gov.uk website.

### 11.1.1 Sampling

The population covered by the survey comprised employers in England at the establishment level (rather than at an organisational level)<sup>20</sup> with at least two staff on the payroll, including any working proprietors. Sole traders with a single person on the payroll were excluded.

The survey covered all sectors of the economy (the commercial, public and charitable spheres). The profile of this population was established through Office for National Statistics (ONS) data from the March 2021 Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR), the most up to date business population figures available at the time of the survey.

The sample of establishments was sourced from the commercial data supplier Market Location. Quotas for the main survey were set by size within sector, with soft targets by region.

### 11.1.2 Fieldwork

Fieldwork for the core survey was undertaken between July and November 2021 and comprised 5,000 completed interviews. An overall response rate of 40% was achieved. Breakdowns of response rate by size and sector can be found in the technical report accompanying this report.

### 11.1.3 Weighting

Findings from the core survey have been weighted and grossed up to accurately represent the total population of establishments in England with at least two people on their payroll, calculated using the March 2021 IDBR population statistics. This has been done on a size, sector and geographic basis. Separate weights were generated which allow findings to be presented (a) based on the number of workplaces reporting a particular experience, and (b) based on the number of employees and/or job roles that were affected by a particular experience.

---

<sup>20</sup> i.e. multiple sites (or premises) of a larger organisation were in scope for the research and were thus counted separately for sampling purposes. This was in recognition of the influence that local labour markets have on skill issues and the fact that skills issues are felt most acutely at the site level.

The weighting approach has retained consistency with previous iterations of the survey and allows for time series comparisons across the ESS (and EPS) series.

## 11.2 Size and sector profile of establishments

The tables below outline key firmographics, using population data for the size, and sector profile of establishments and employment for England. These are compared to the profile in 2019 when the last Employer Skills Survey took place.

**Table 11-1 Profile of establishments in England for 2019 and 2021**

	2019 (000s)	2019 (%)	2021 (000s)	2021 (%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,683</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,679</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Size</b>				
2 to 4	918	54%	920	55%
5 to 24	594	35%	589	35%
25 to 49	90	5%	90	5%
50 to 99	46	3%	45	3%
100 to 249	25	1%	24	1%
250+	10	1%	10	1%
<b>Sector (2007 SIC code)</b>				
Primary Sector and Utilities (01-03, 05-09, 35-39)	80	5%	76	5%
Manufacturing (10-33)	86	5%	86	5%
Construction (41-43)	165	10%	171	10%
Wholesale and retail trade (45-47)	319	19%	316	19%
Hotels and restaurants (55-56)	157	9%	162	10%
Transport and storage (49-53)	57	3%	61	4%
Information and communications (58-63)	87	5%	82	5%
Financial services (64-66)	34	2%	33	2%
Business services (68-82)	403	24%	401	24%

	<b>2019 (000s)</b>	<b>2019 (%)</b>	<b>2021 (000s)</b>	<b>2021 (%)</b>
Public admin. (84)	13	1%	13	1%
Education (85)	49	3%	50	3%
Health & Social Work (86-88)	108	6%	108	6%
Arts and Other Services (90-96)	123	7%	120	7%

Source: ONS Inter-Departmental Register IDBR (2019 and 2021)

**Table 11-2 Profile of employment in England for 2019 and 2021**

	<b>2019 (000s)</b>	<b>2019 (%)</b>	<b>2021 (000s)</b>	<b>2021 (%)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,481</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>25,374</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Size</b>				
2 to 4	2,370	9%	2,379	9%
5 to 24	5,959	23%	5,899	23%
25 to 49	3,091	12%	3,090	12%
50 to 99	3,154	12%	3,113	12%
100 to 249	3,722	15%	3,663	14%
250+	7,183	28%	7,230	28%
<b>Sector (2007 SIC code)</b>				
Primary Sector and Utilities (01-03, 05-09, 35-39)	619	2%	612	2%
Manufacturing (10-33)	2,012	8%	1,962	8%
Construction (41-43)	1,128	4%	1,133	4%
Wholesale and retail trade (45-47)	3,926	15%	3,800	15%
Hotels and restaurants (55-56)	1,977	8%	1,976	8%
Transport and storage (49-53)	1,219	5%	1,251	5%
Information and communications (58-63)	1,030	4%	1,056	4%
Financial services (64-66)	870	3%	868	3%
Business services (68-82)	4,986	20%	4,917	19%
Public admin. (84)	1,018	4%	1,079	4%

	<b>2019 (000s)</b>	<b>2019 (%)</b>	<b>2021 (000s)</b>	<b>2021 (%)</b>
Education (85)	2,240	9%	2,242	9%
Health & Social Work (86-88)	3,261	13%	3,338	13%
Arts and Other Services (90-96)	1,195	5%	1,138	4%

Source: ONS Inter-Departmental Register IDBR (2016 and 2019)

**Table 11-3 Unweighted base sizes (completed interviews), for all establishments in England, by size and sector**

	<b>2019</b>	<b>2021</b>
England total	70,217	5,000
<b>Size</b>		
2 to 4	17,286	770
5 to 24	35,102	1891
25 to 49	9,510	975
50 to 99	4,710	823
100 to 249	2,781	359
250+	828	182
<b>Sector</b>		
Primary Sector & Utilities	2,394	278
Manufacturing	5,391	412
Construction	4,531	423
Wholesale & Retail	15,131	681
Hotels & Restaurants	6,486	424
Transport & Storage	2,047	273
Information & Communications	2,305	264
Financial Services	1,387	236
Business Services	14,040	774
Public Administration	683	182
Education	4,190	282
Health & Social Work	6,828	408
Arts & Other Services	4,804	363

**Table 11-4 Unweighted base sizes (completed interviews), for all establishments *that train* in England, by size and sector**

	2019	2021
England total	51,203	3,373
<b>Size</b>		
2 to 4	8,114	275
5 to 24	26,578	1171
25 to 49	8,657	780
50 to 99	4,423	679
100 to 249	2,639	310
250+	792	158
<b>Sector</b>		
Primary Sector & Utilities	1,594	180
Manufacturing	3,650	283
Construction	3,029	270
Wholesale & Retail	9,943	385
Hotels & Restaurants	4,765	286
Transport & Storage	1,455	156
Information & Communications	1,465	154
Financial Services	1,113	172
Business Services	10,098	511
Public Administration	587	132
Education	3,991	258
Health & Social Work	6,107	348
Arts & Other Services	3,406	238

**Table 11-5 Unweighted base sizes and population, for all establishments in England, by region**

	<b>Number of interviews</b>	<b>Population</b>
England	5,000	1,679,000
<b>By region</b>		
East Midlands	523	139,000
East of England	681	188,000
London	507	316,000
North East	343	62,000
North West	534	199,000
South East	785	282,000
South West	589	180,000
West Midlands	517	164,000
Yorkshire and The Humber	521	149,000

### 11.3 Definitions for grouped categories

**Table 11-6 Grouped sources of external training**

<b>Public providers</b>	<b>Private providers</b>
Further Education Colleges	Customers
Universities	Other commercial organisations, for example consultants or private training providers Other non-profit making organisations Regulatory bodies Suppliers

**Table 11-7 Grouped reasons for not offering apprenticeships**

<b>Structural</b>	<b>Active choice</b>	<b>Lack of awareness</b>	<b>Reforms</b>
Apprenticeships are not offered for our industry	All our staff fully skilled, no need	Don't know enough about them	Because of recent reforms (needing to make a 5% contribution to the costs)
Apprenticeships are only for manual staff / not for professionals	Bad experience with training providers in the past	Never have before so haven't considered it	Because of recent reforms (minimum of 20% of apprentices' hours being off-the-job training)
Apprenticeship training providers do not offer the right skills areas*	Don't suit our business model	Not heard of apprenticeships / don't know at question E3/E3NW	
Apprenticeship training providers lack flexibility on when and how training is delivered*	No need (unspecified.)	No one has enquired about doing one lately	
Decision made by Head Office / someone else	Past apprentices have not been of a good standard		
Don't have the work to offer them	Prefer other forms of training		
Don't have time to train them	Prefer to recruit experienced staff		
Not relevant to business			
Regulatory or bureaucratic restrictions or requirements			
Specialist job roles / niche business			
They are not suitable due to the size of establishment			
We are not looking to recruit new staff			
We cannot currently afford to			
We don't have the resources (various)			

<b>Structural</b>	<b>Active choice</b>	<b>Lack of awareness</b>	<b>Reforms</b>
We have struggled to find a suitable applicant			

**Table 11-8 Grouped reasons for not offering work experience opportunities**

<b>Structural</b>	<b>Active choice</b>	<b>Lack of awareness</b>	<b>COVID-19</b>
Age restrictions	Bad experience with placements in the past	Never thought about it	Not approached during lockdown
Confidential / sensitive work	Does not offer us any business benefits	No one has approach us	Unable to offer placements during lockdown
Company policy / Head office decision	No need (unspecified)	Would like to but don't know how to organise	
Don't have the time / resource to manage it	Prefer to recruit experienced staff through other avenues		
Don't have the work to offer them	Recruitment freeze		
Education institutions are difficult to engage with			
Financial cost of delivering placements			
No providers locally			
Regulatory requirements			
They are not suitable due to the size of the establishment			
We have no suitable roles			

## 11.4 Questionnaire wording

**Table 11-9 Employer Pulse Survey question numbers and wording**

Question Number	Question wording
C1NW	<p>Have any staff or former staff at this site ever worked from home?</p> <p>ADD IF NECESSARY: By working from home, we mean conducting any of their usual work duties within their normal contracted hours either partly or completely from home.</p>
C1A	<p>And overall, over the last 12 months, have you been generally operating with a higher proportion of staff working from home than in the 12 months before the pandemic?</p>
C3	<p>How has this increase in homeworking affected the productivity of your workforce on average over the last 12 months? Has it...?</p> <p>ADD IF NECESSARY: We are interested in the productivity of your workforce specifically. If your overall output is lower because you have fewer staff but these staff are more productive since working from home, then this should be considered an increase in productivity.</p>
C2	<p>Approximately how many employees at this establishment, if any, currently work from home for at least part of their working week?</p>
C2RAN	<p>Can you give a percentage estimate from the following bands?</p>
C3A	<p>So can I just check, would you say the proportion of staff currently working from home for some or all of their time is...?</p>
C4	<p>Thinking about working arrangements for your staff [IF MULTISITE (A1=2): at this site], going forward, do you expect homeworking to...</p>
C5	<p>Which of the following, if any, are reasons why you intend to (C4=1 &amp; C3A=1: continue to use increased) (C4=2 increase) levels of homeworking in the future?</p>
C6	<p>Why do you not intend to continue with the current increased levels of homeworking in the future?</p>

Question Number	Question wording
D1	Over the past 12 months have you funded or arranged any off-the-job training or development for employees at this site. By off-the-job training we mean training away from the individual's immediate work position, whether on your premises or elsewhere?
D1NW	Over the past 12 months have you arranged or funded any off-the-job training or development for employees at this site? By off-the-job training we mean training beyond that which takes place on-the-job or as part of their normal work duties. This could be undertaken on your premises, at a provider, at home or elsewhere.
D1A	And have you funded or arranged any on-the-job or informal training and development over the last 12 months. By this I mean activities that would be recognised as training by the staff, and not the sort of learning by experience which could take place all the time.
D2	Over the last 12 months, has the overall amount of training arranged or funded by your establishment changed in comparison to the 12 months before the start of the pandemic in March 2020? Has it:
D2A	To what extent has COVID-19 influenced this change in training levels within your establishment over the last 12 months?
D3	Which of the following types of off the job training have you funded or arranged for employees at this establishment over the past 12 months?
D3A	And how much of the training that you have funded or arranged has been for health & safety or basic induction training new staff receive when they start the job?
D5	Have you arranged or funded any training for staff in the last 12 months which has involved....
D6	And are decisions about the types of training arranged for employees at this establishment made...
D7	And has your establishment done any of the following to aid the development of your employees in the last 12 months?
D8	Thinking about both on- and off-the-job training, over the last 12 months how many staff employed at this establishment have you funded or arranged training and development for, including any who have since left?

Question Number	Question wording
D8chk	You said you have xx employees but you have trained xx staff in the past 12 months. Is this correct?
D8chk2	Were these all your current staff?
D11	Has your site [IF MULTISITE or organisation] provided any EXTERNAL training for employees in the past 12 months? By external training we mean any training that has been delivered by people who are not immediate employees of your organisation.
D12	Which of the following external sources of training has your site used in the past 12 months...?
12A	Has your site [IF MULTISITE (A1=2): or organisation] investigated options for providing any EXTERNAL training for employees in the last 12 months?
D12b	Which of the following external sources of training has your site considered using in the past 12 months...?
D12x	Are there any other external sources of training your site has considered using in the past 12 months that you have not already mentioned...?
D12c	And to what extent would you agree or disagree that Further Education Colleges ...?
D13	And to what extent would you agree or disagree that external commercial training providers generally... ?
D14	And to what extent would you be interested in working with external training providers to identify the skills your employees need?
D15	In the past 12 months, as far as you know, has anyone at this establishment received information, advice or more practical help on skills or training-related issues from people external to your organisation?
D15A	And in the past 12 months, as far as you know, has anyone at this establishment sought information, advice or more practical help on skills or training-related issues from people external to your organisation?
D15B	Has your establishment had any skills or training-related issues in the last 12 months where information, help or advice might have been useful?

Question Number	Question wording
D17	Has anyone at this establishment sought [D15=1: or received] advice or help on skills and training related issues in the last 12 months from any of the following?
E1	I'd now like to ask some questions about Apprenticeships. By Apprenticeships I mean those which follow a formal framework and lead to a nationally recognised qualification. Do you currently have any staff undertaking Apprenticeships at this site?
E2	Do you currently offer Apprenticeships at this site?
E2A	Has your site previously offered Apprenticeships in the last 3 years?
E3	Which of the following would you say best describes your knowledge of Apprenticeships?
E3NW	Which of the following would you say best describes your knowledge of Apprenticeships?
E4	Why does your establishment not currently offer Apprenticeships?
E5	And just to check, were any of the following reasons why you did not offer apprenticeships...
F1	Which of the following best describes your awareness of Traineeships?
F2	In the last 12 months have you had anyone undertake a Traineeship at this site?
F3	What are the main reasons you decided to take someone on to do a Traineeship?
F4	What are the main reasons why you have not taken on anyone at this site to do a Traineeship?
G1	Now thinking about activities related to work experience, thinking about people of all ages, in the last 12 months has this site had anyone in for
G2	Due to the increase in remote working during the pandemic, some businesses have offered work placements that are either fully or partly remote, rather than in person. Would your site consider offering work placements where: [ITERATION TEXT]?

Question Number	Question wording
G3	I'd now like to ask about other ways that employers might engage with schools, colleges or universities. This may involve things such as hosting site visits for students, talking to students about careers, or conducting activities such as mock interviews to improve the employability of students. During the past 12 months has your establishment engaged with schools, colleges or universities to provide such activities to students?
G4	You mentioned that your site has not had any work placements or internships in the last 12 months, or engaged with educational institutions to provide other forms of work-related experience to their students. What would you say are the main reasons for not doing so?
H1	The Government introduced a new technical education qualification for 16-19-year-olds, called T Levels in September 2020. Which of the following best describes your awareness of T levels?
H2	<p>I'm going to read out some background information about how employers might engage with these new qualifications then ask about your interest in them.</p> <p>As part of T Levels it will be compulsory for students to complete an industry placement of at least 45 days in total in an industry directly relevant to their course. The timing and structure of the placement will be flexible to meet employers' needs and it would be at the employer's discretion whether to pay students during their placement.</p> <p>Based on this information, how interested would your site be in providing work placements to T levels students?</p>
H2a	Thinking about your site's capacity for offering placements to T levels students, how easy or difficult would it be for you to offer these types of placements?
H3	Employers can claim £1,000 cash for every T Level student they host on a high-quality industry placement between 27 May 2021 and July 2022. Would your site be interested in providing work placements to T-levels students in light of this information?



Department  
for Education

© Department for Education 2022

**Reference:** RR1206

**ISBN:** 978-1-83870-354-7

For any enquiries regarding this publication, contact us at:

[employer.surveys@education.gov.uk](mailto:employer.surveys@education.gov.uk) or [www.education.gov.uk/contactus](http://www.education.gov.uk/contactus)

This document is available for download at [www.gov.uk/government/publications](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications)