



Department
for Education

Apprenticeship achievements

An update for the sector

March 2024

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Introduction

Apprenticeships change lives. The sector plays a pivotal role not just in powering our economy but also helping people realise their ambitions. Apprenticeships are a core part of the government's skills agenda and integral to growing the economy, creating better-paid jobs and opportunity right across the country.

Nearly 70% of occupations can now be entered via an apprenticeship, as this route becomes the pathway of choice for many people. There were fewer than half a million people participating in apprenticeships in 2009/10. Last year over 750,000 were participating – and training to the more rigorous, industry-designed standards we introduced from 2014.

Having transformed apprenticeships, we are continuing to improve quality to ensure more apprentices successfully complete their programme. The 162,320 achievements reported for the 2022/23 academic year represented the highest number since before the pandemic in 2018/19. Achievement volumes were 18.3% up on the 137,220 reported for 2021/22.

In this year's update for the sector, we are pleased to report further progress with achievement volumes from August 2023 to January 2024 showing improvement with 73,530 total achievements compared to the same period in 2021/22 (50,920) and 2022/23 (62,030). Our [Qualification Achievement Rate](#) (QAR) on apprenticeship standards has risen from 51.4% in 2021/22 to 54.3% in 2022/23. These increases are due to the immense effort from everyone in the sector supporting apprentices at all levels to give the country a highly skilled workforce for the future.

While QARs are a key performance measure, our Apprenticeship Accountability Framework provides a broad approach to measuring provider quality and considers QARs alongside nine other indicators. The sector's efforts to improve quality are supported by Ofsted inspection of all apprenticeship providers by 2025.

In this report, covering apprenticeships in England, we bring together a range of key data to support a better understanding of the factors influencing apprenticeship achievements and to provide a more detailed update on progress.

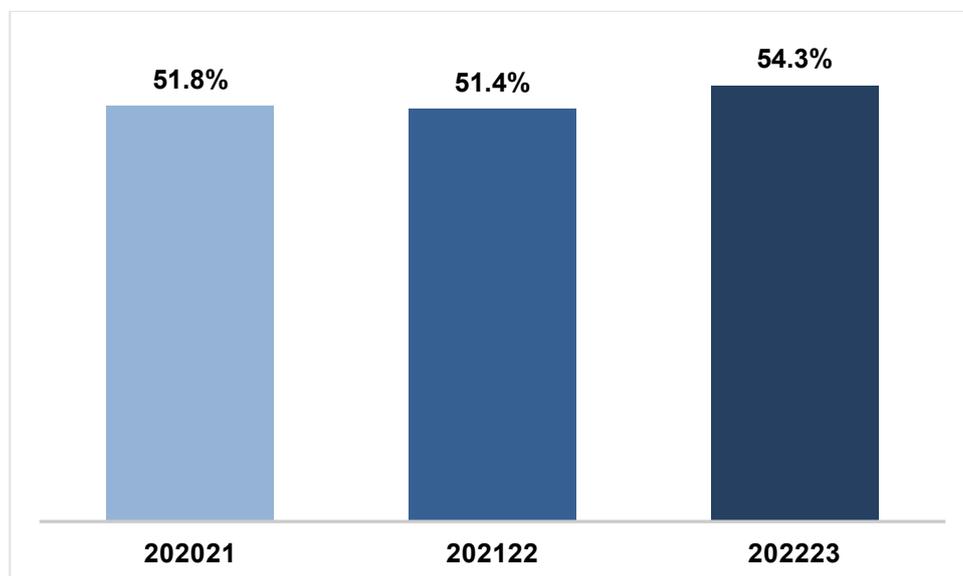
We know that there is more to do, and we will continue to set our sights high to make apprenticeships better still in the coming years and decades to follow.

Patterns of Apprenticeship Qualification Achievement Rates¹

Increase in apprentice achievement rates

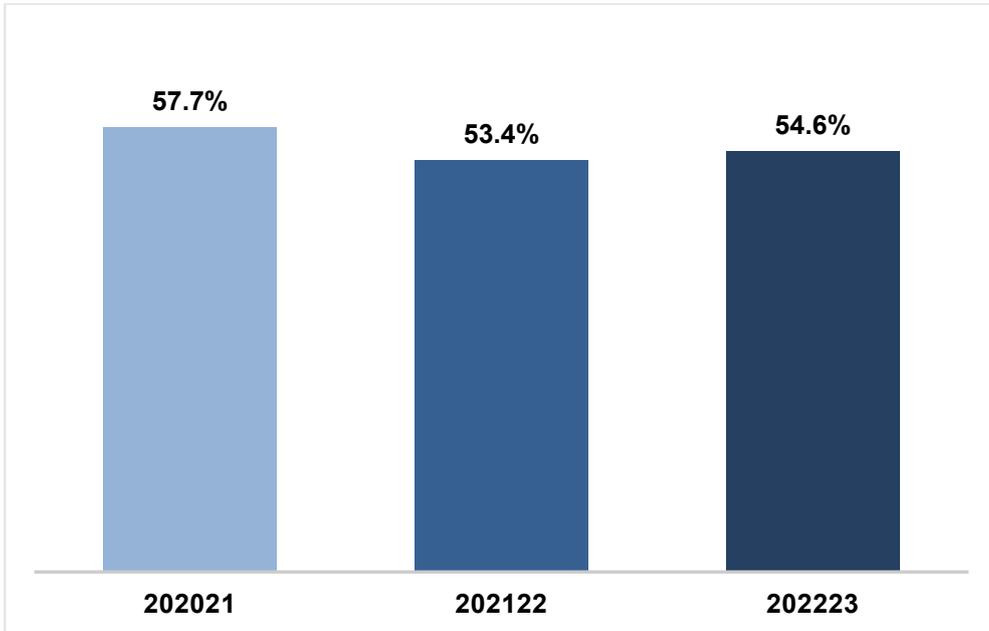
Since 1 August 2020, all apprentice starts have been on apprenticeship standards. In 2022/23, the achievement rate increased by 2.9 percentage points from 51.4% to 54.3%.

Figure 1-1: Achievement Rates (Standards only)



¹ QARs, and the associated pass rates and retention rates, are a measure of the quality of the training courses that a provider delivered in a funding year. show learners, providers and employers the relative quality of provision. The data also contributes to The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) risk assessment for provider inspections.

Figure 1-2: Achievement Rates (Standards & Frameworks)



Since 1 August 2020, all starts have been on apprenticeship standards which are more rigorous and difficult to achieve than the old frameworks system. Standards are occupation-focused; they are not qualification-led. Standards have raised the quality of apprenticeships by responding to the needs of employers, who know what they want from their employees. There are less than 2,000 apprentices currently enrolled on frameworks compared to over 600,000 on standards.

Figure 1-3: 2022/23 Achievement Rates by Standards with Top 10 Highest Achievement Volumes



Achievement volumes have risen significantly in the priority area for the Government of the free childcare and early education expansion, commencing in phases from April 2024 onwards. Achievement volumes for Early Years Educator have risen from 3,470 apprentices in 2021/22 to 5,540 apprentices in 2022/23, and Early Years Practitioner, in 2022/23, has moved into the Top 10 list above.

Figure 1-4: 2022/23 Achievement Rates by Funding Type (Standards Only)

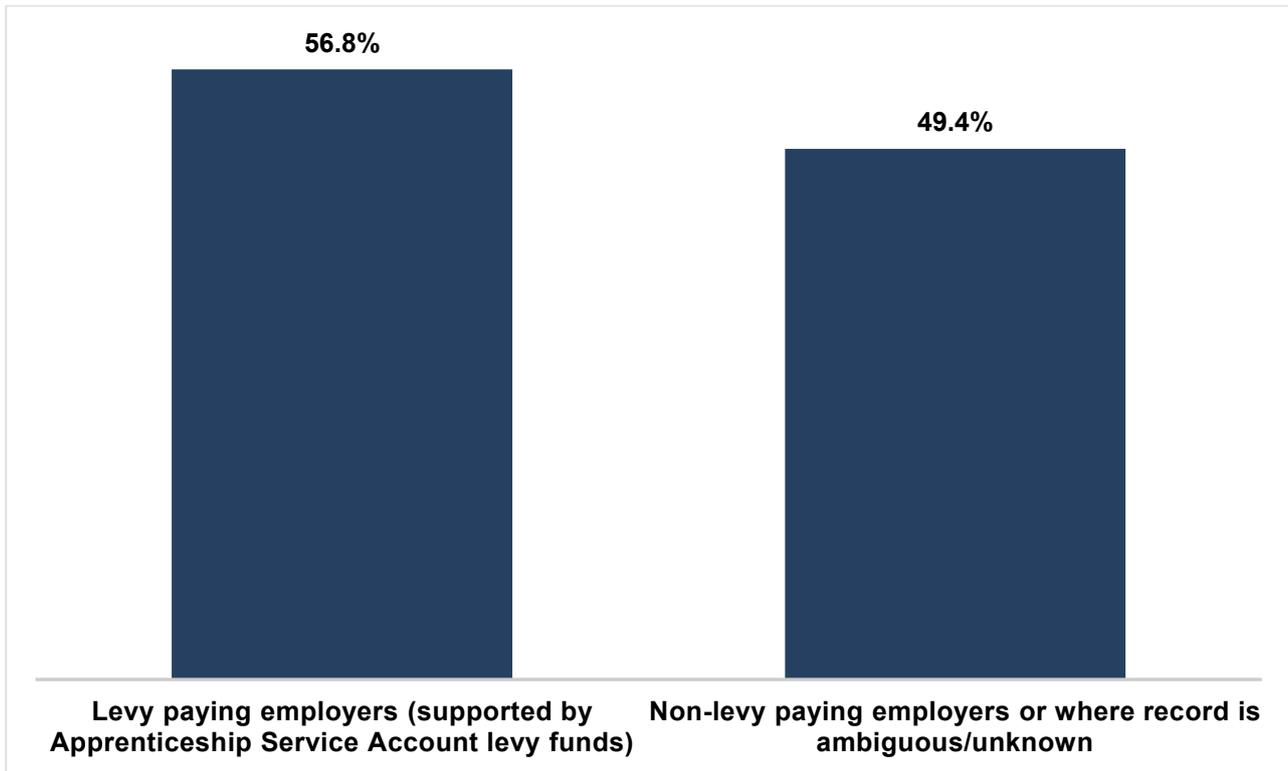


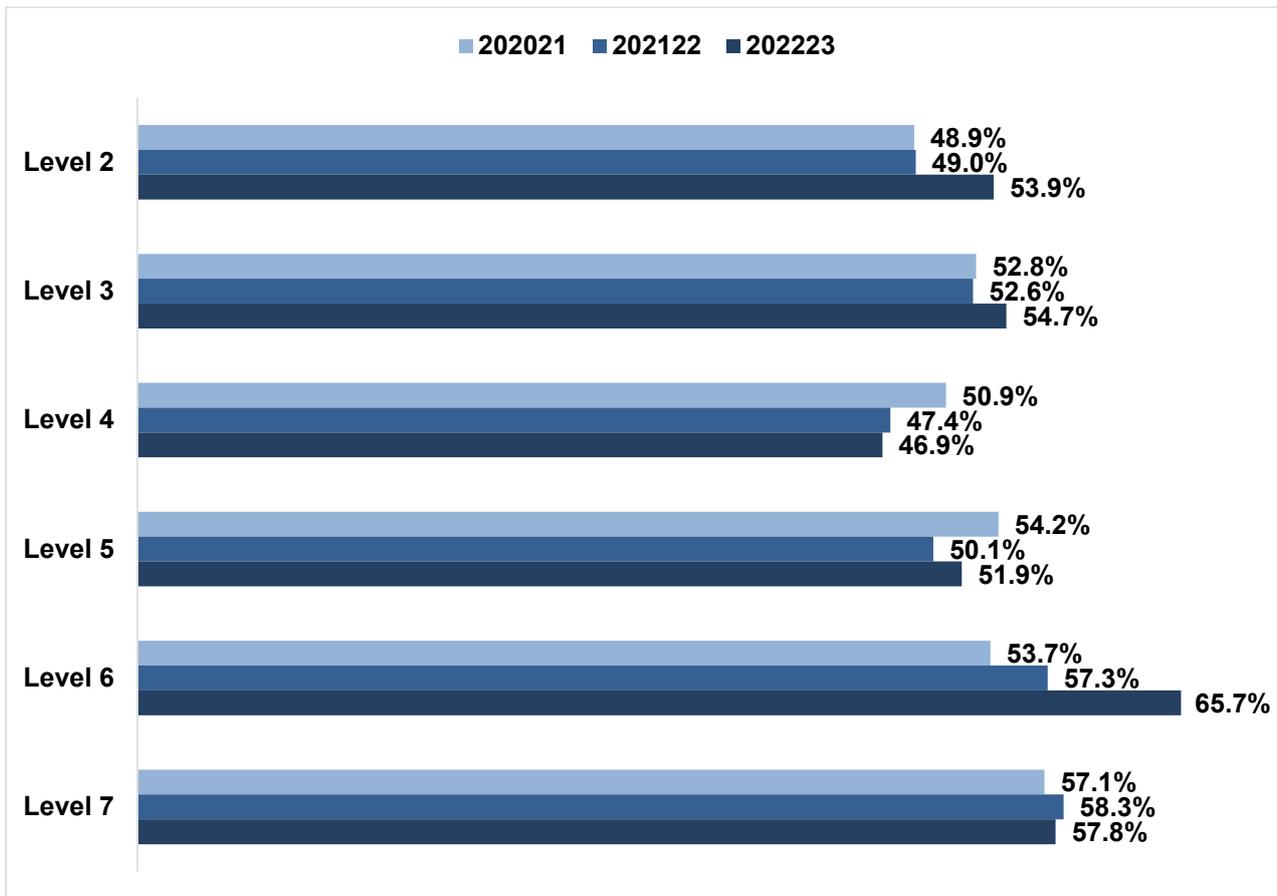
Figure 1-4 shows a higher achievement rate for levy paying employers. The achievement rates for both levy and non-levy employers have increased on 2021/22.²

The Government is increasing investment in the apprenticeships system in England to £2.7 billion by 2024-25. Part of this funding will support apprenticeships in non-levy employers, often SMEs, where the government will continue to pay at least 95% of their training costs. SME employers who do not pay the levy no longer have to contribute to the cost of apprenticeship training for 16–21-year-olds – government is fully funding the training costs for these individuals.

We have made it easier for SMEs to grow their businesses by removing the limit on the number of apprentices they can take on and cutting by a third the number of steps needed to register to take on an apprentice. Furthermore, levy-paying employers can now transfer up to 50% of their funds to support apprenticeships in other businesses – double the current 25%.

² 2021/22 Achievement rates by funding type [Apprenticeships and traineeships – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK](#)

Figure 1-5: Achievement Rates by Level (Standards Only)



There have been good increases in achievement rates at Levels 2 & 3. Apprenticeships at Level 2 & Level 3 deliver £17 and £14 of economic benefits respectively for each pound of Government investment.³ Level 3 apprenticeships (equivalent to A-levels) are now the most popular apprenticeship, accounting for 43.9% of starts in 2022/23.⁴ The significant increase in achievements at Level 6 (65.7%) pushes close towards our 67% achievement rate ambition.

³ [Measuring the Net Present Value of Further Education in England 2018-19 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

⁴ [Apprenticeships and traineeships, Academic year 2022/23 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk)

Figure 1-6: Achievement Rates by Sex (Standards & Frameworks)

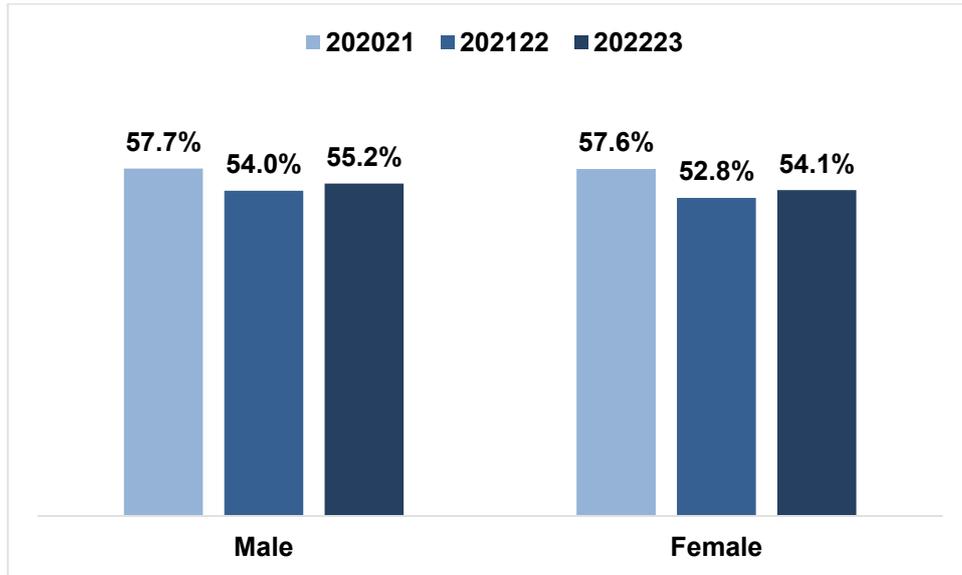


Figure 1.7: Achievement Rates by Learners with Learning Disabilities or Disabilities [LLDD]

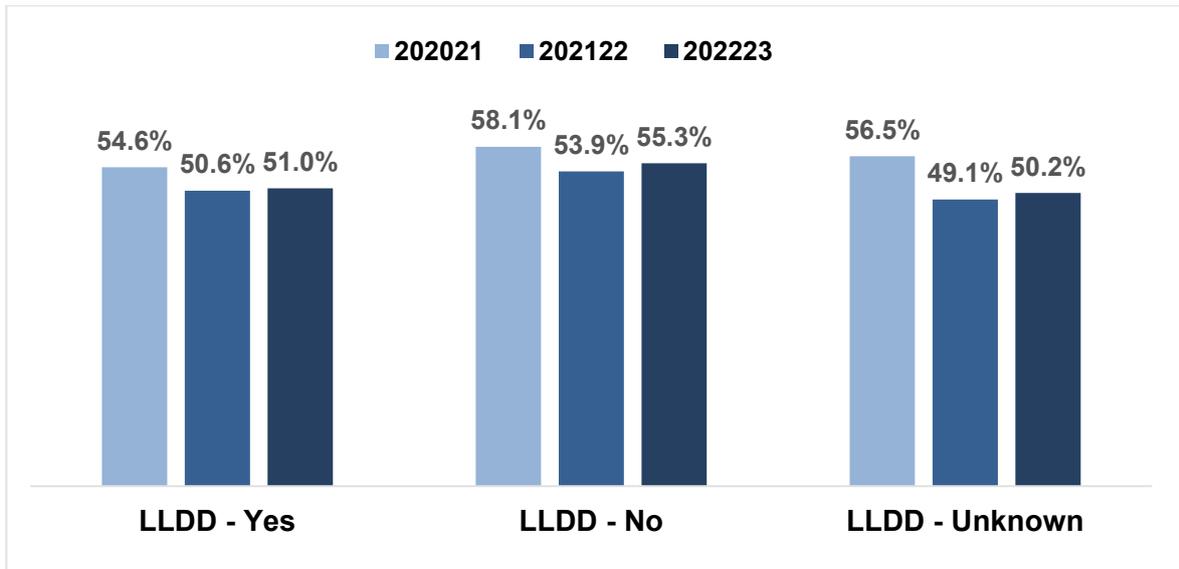


Figure 1-8: Achievement Rates by Ethnicity (Standards & Frameworks) ⁵

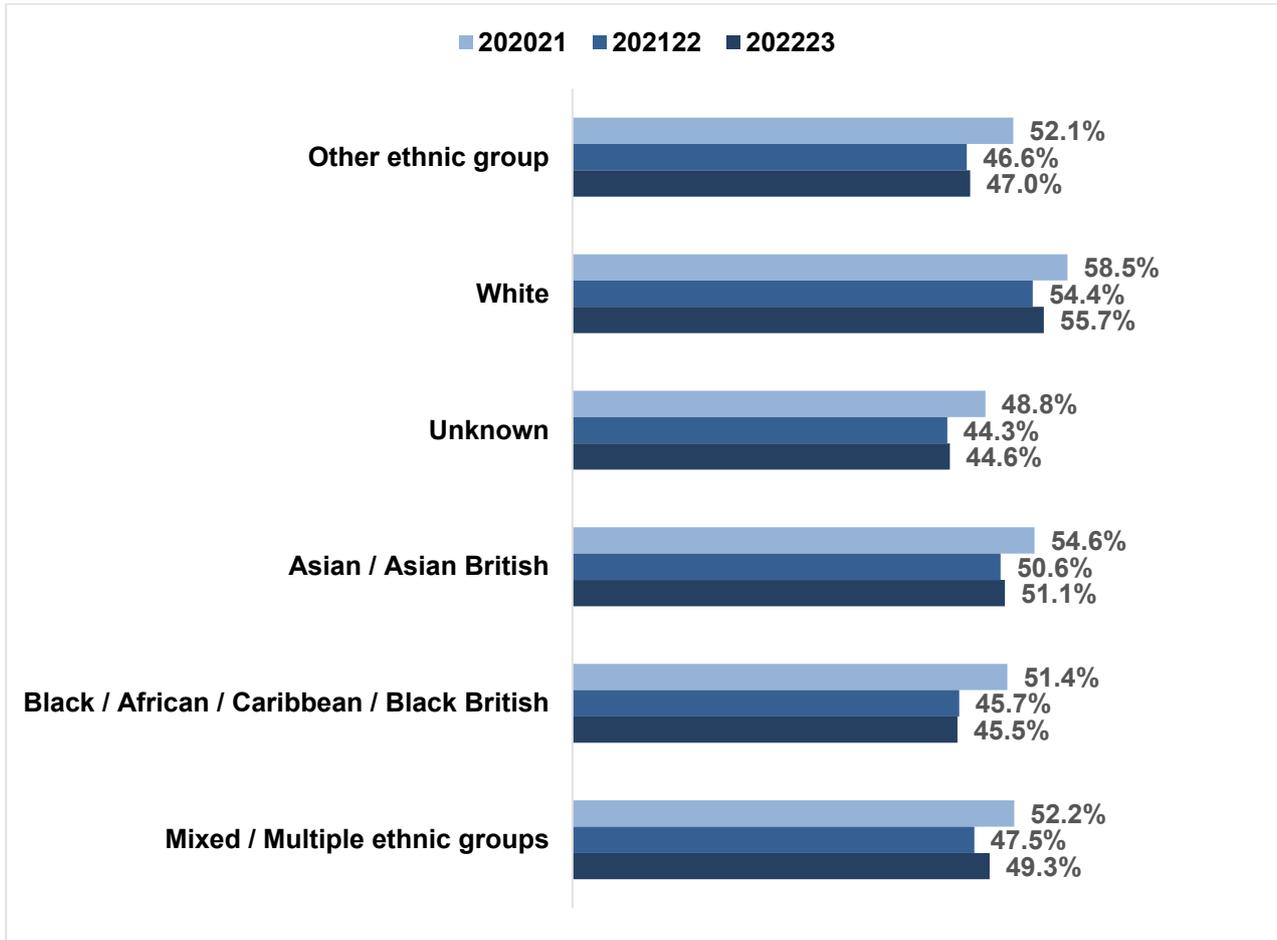
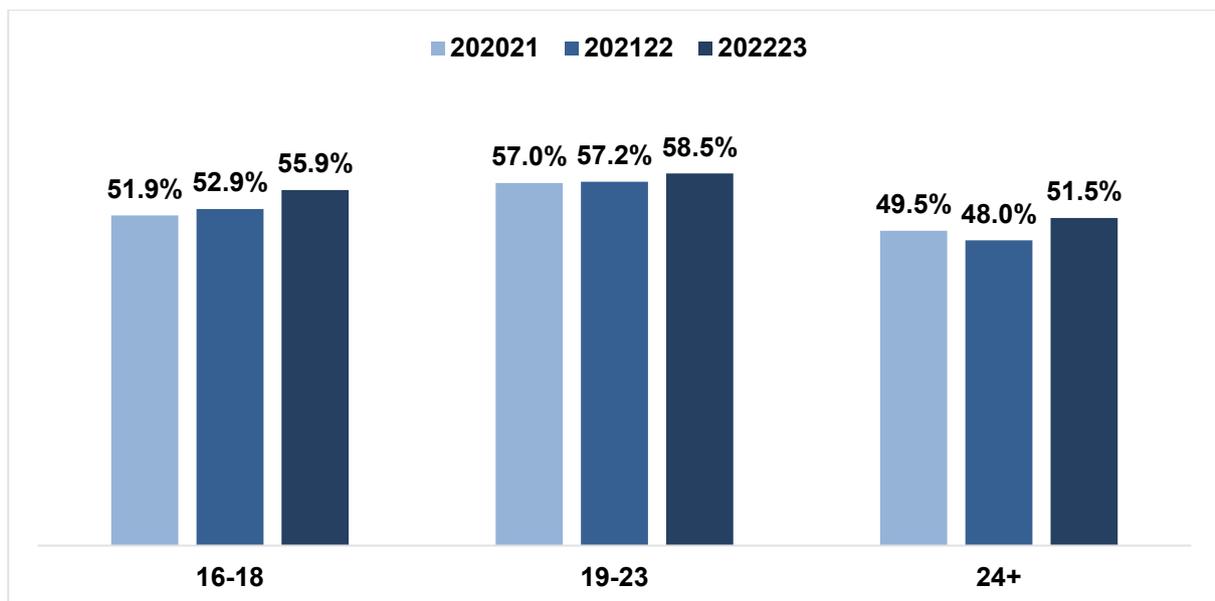


Figure 1.9: Achievement Rates by Age Group (Standards Only)



⁵ In England and Wales, there is an [agreed list of ethnic groups](#) you can use when asking for someone's ethnicity. The groups are usually those used in the Census, which happens every 10 years. The Censuses in Scotland and Northern Ireland use different ethnicity classifications.

Figure 1-10: Achievement Rates by Sector Subject Area (Standards Only)

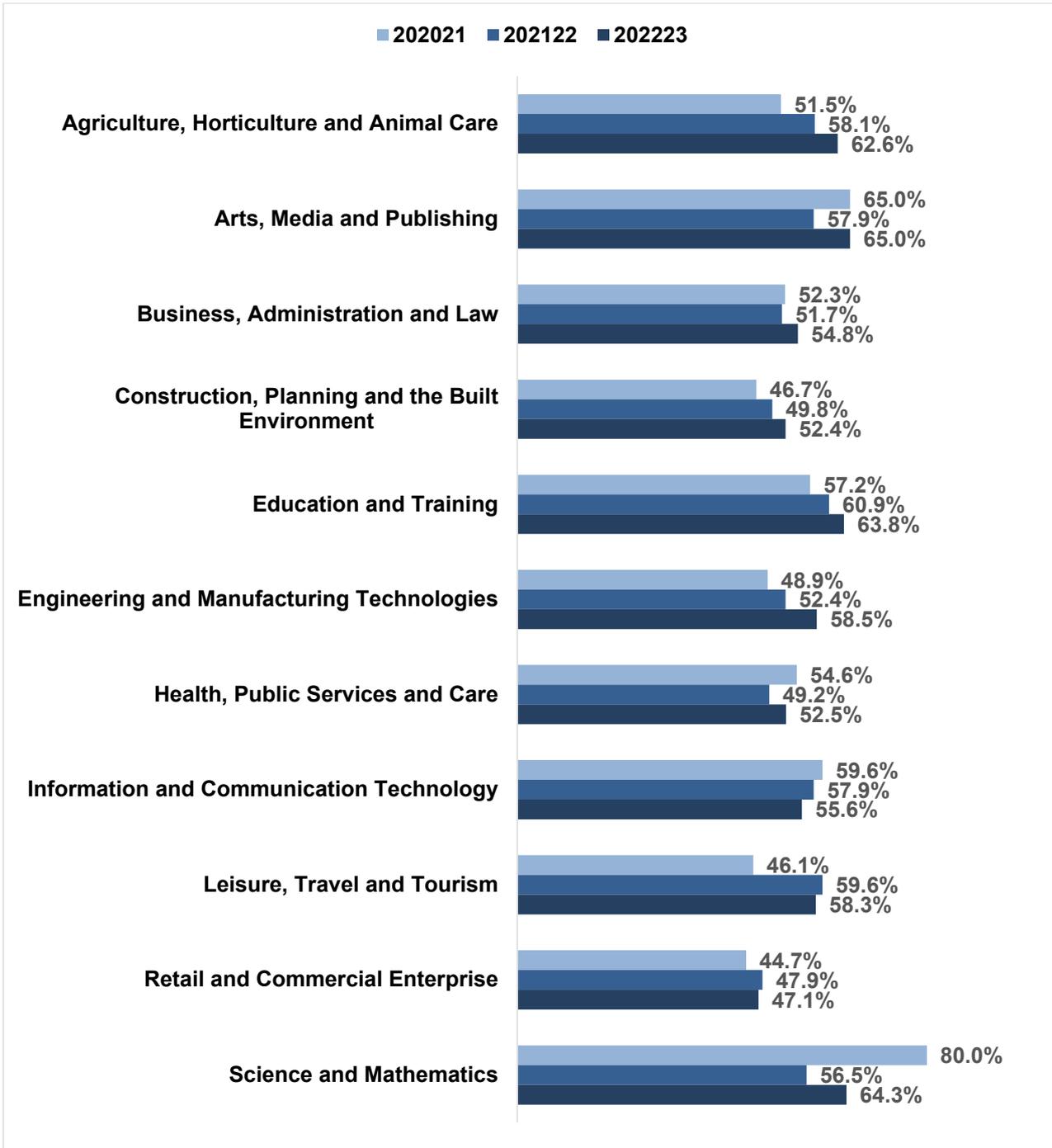
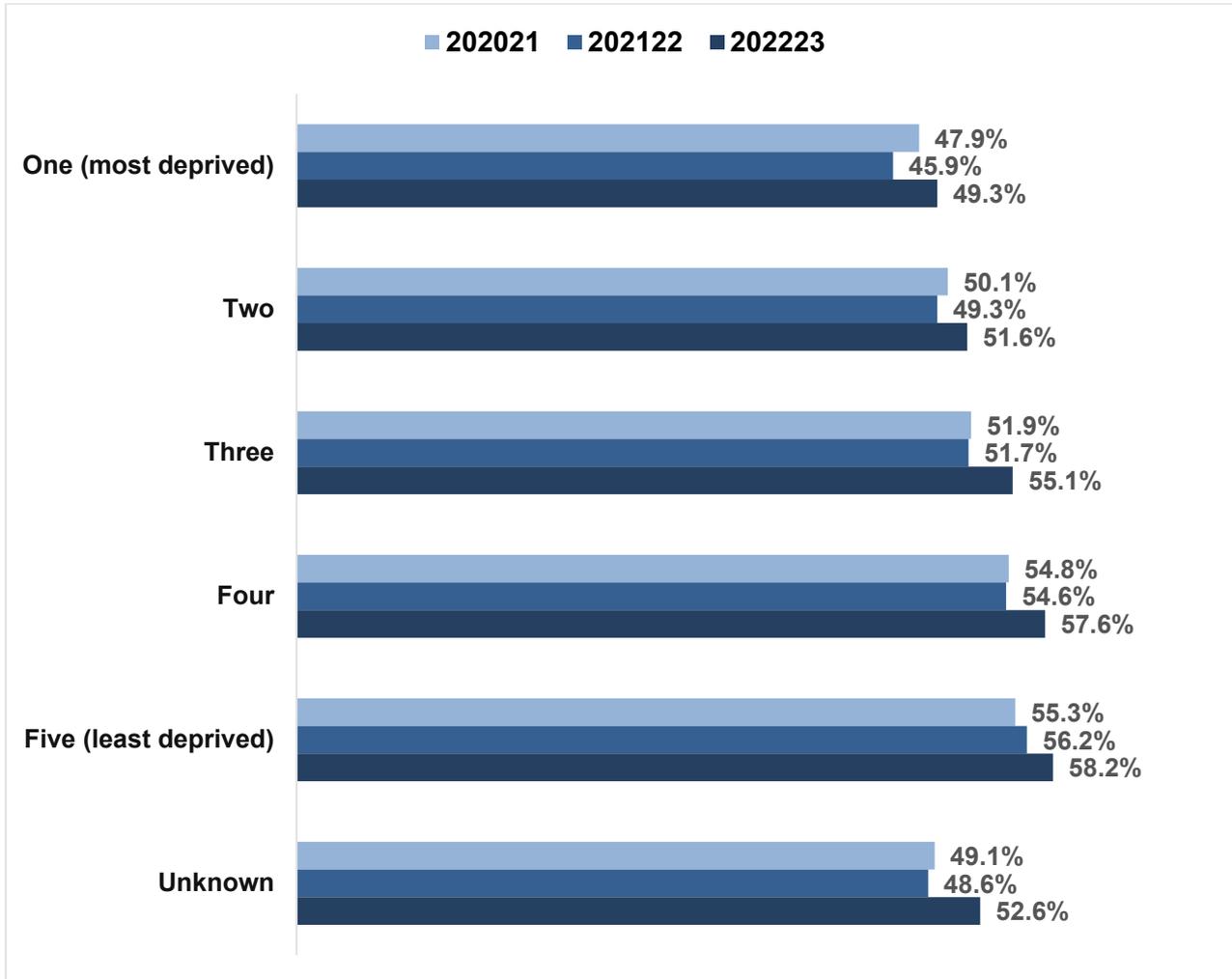


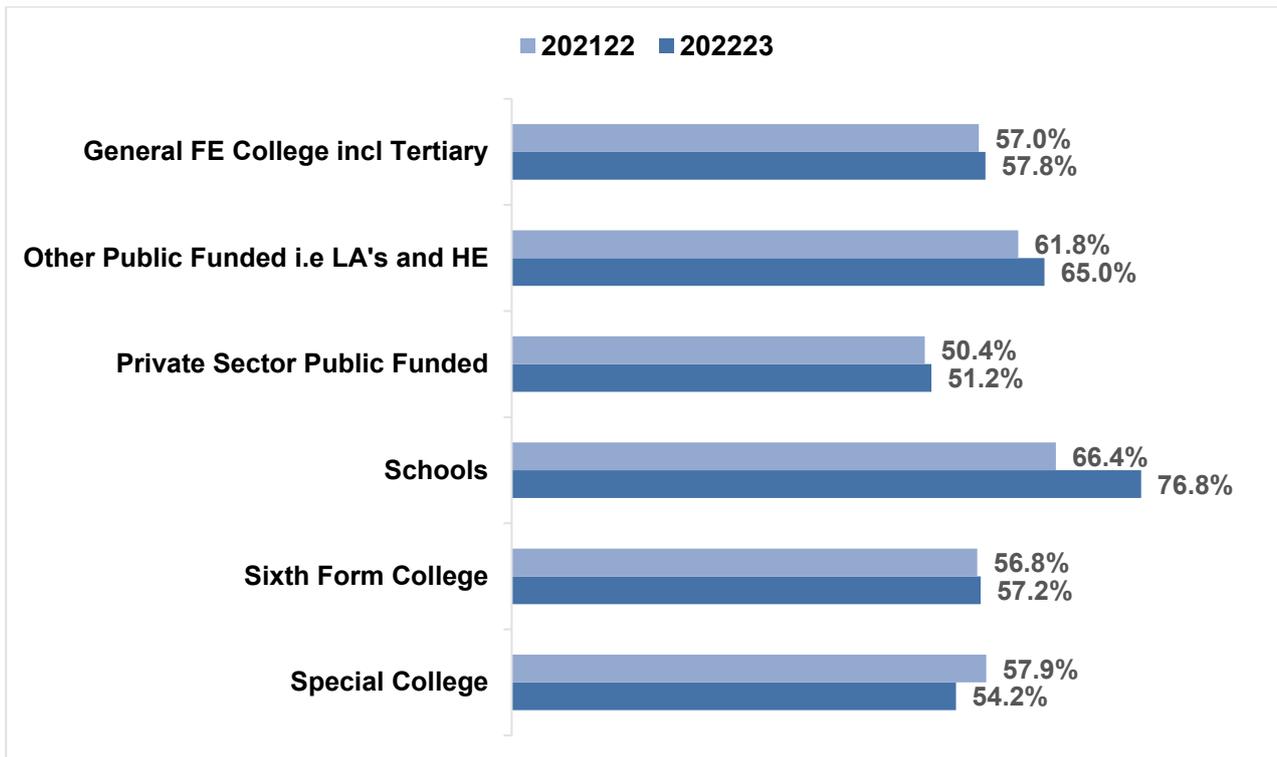
Figure 1-11: Achievement Rates by IMD Quintile (Standards Only)⁶



Achievement rates have increased at each IMD quintile from 2021/22 to 2022/23 and each quintile is higher than the rates seen in 2020/21.

⁶ The Index of Multiple Deprivation, commonly known as the IMD, is the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas in England. It is the most widely used of the [Indices of Deprivation](#). IMD classifies these areas into five quintiles based on relative disadvantage, with quintile 1 being the most deprived and quintile 5 being the least deprived. A quintile is a statistical value of a data set that represents 20% of a given population, so the first quintile represents the lowest fifth of the data (1% to 20%); the second quintile represents the second fifth (21% to 40%) and so on.

Figure 1-12: Achievement Rates by Provider Type (Standards & Frameworks)



National achievement rate tables are published on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) where you can also choose the data and area of interest you want to explore further.

Underlying factors affecting achievement rates

As a work-based programme, the pandemic had a major effect on the operation of the apprenticeship programme at a time when significant reforms were bedding in. In the 2020 lockdown period (23 March-31 July), the number of apprenticeships starts at intermediate level fell by 61% from the same period in 2019. This is in comparison to a 49% fall for advanced level apprenticeships, and a 3% fall for higher level apprenticeships.⁷

Various levels of COVID-19 restrictions and assessment flexibilities meant some achievements expected in a given academic year were delayed to the subsequent year. Understandably, during the pandemic, there was a sharp increase in the number of learners recorded as being on a break in learning from 28,100 in 2018/19 to 77,500 in 2019/20. As the UK started to emerge from the pandemic period, breaks in learning in 2020/21 dropped to 42,300 and a further fall to 38,500 in 2021/22.

An additional indicator of the damaging impact of the pandemic are the statistics on apprentices being made redundant by their employer but, as with breaks in learning, the outlook has improved, and redundancies have now fallen.

Table 1-1: Apprentice Redundancies 2021 to 2022/23⁸

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Total	5,120	3,880	3,770

Since the pandemic, the labour market has been smaller due to an increase in economic inactivity among people aged 16-64. In October to December 2023, there were 9.28 million people aged 16-64 in the UK who were economically inactive (not in work and not actively looking for work) which compared to 8.45 million in January-March 2020.⁹

Macroeconomic conditions may continue to be challenging for those apprentices who have higher household costs,¹⁰ and for those apprenticeship employers and apprenticeship providers experiencing higher operating costs.¹¹

⁷ [DfE Apprenticeships and traineeships data 2019/20](#)

⁸ [Apprenticeships, Explore education statistics](#). Prior to 01 April 2021 not all non-levy employers were using the apprenticeship service (AS). From 01 April 2021 all new starts are reported and managed through the AS.

⁹ [ONS, Vacancies and jobs in the UK, 13 February 2024](#)

¹⁰ [The rising cost of living and its impact on individuals in Great Britain - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

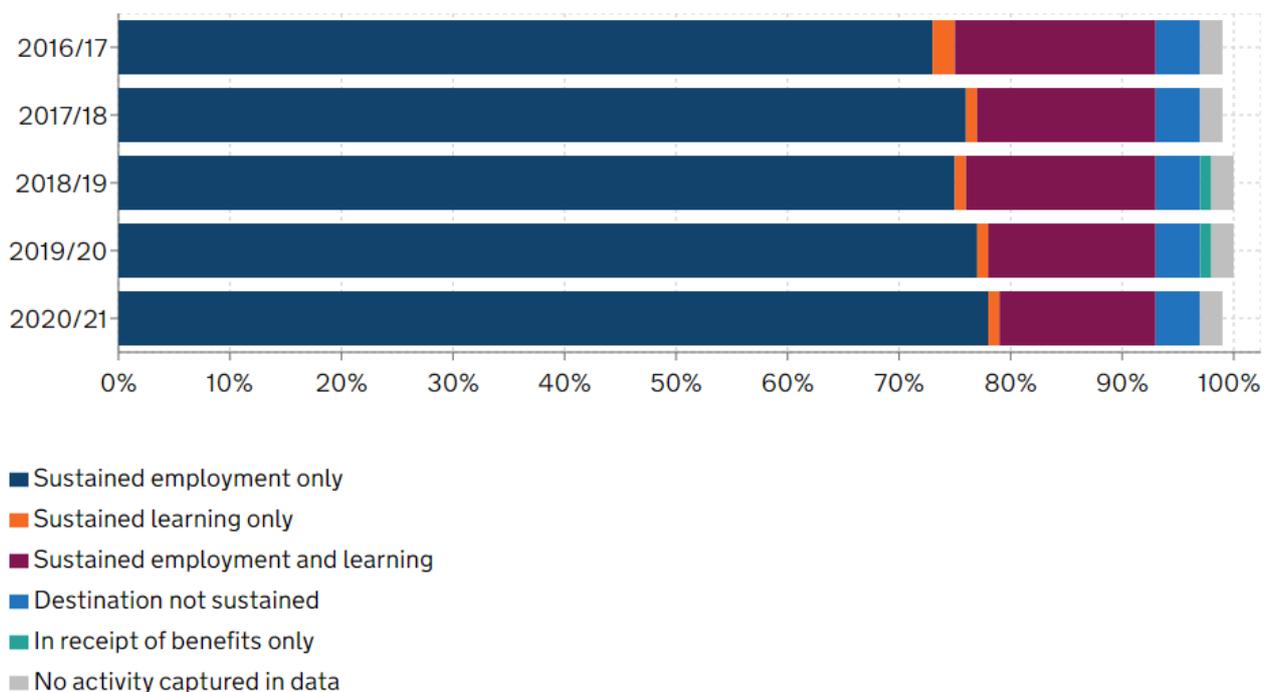
¹¹ [Labour costs and labour income, UK - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

Apprenticeship outcomes

Apprenticeships are jobs, therefore training quality is not the only factor influencing whether an apprentice achieves occupational competence. As an employee, apprentices earn as they learn and gain practical skills in the workplace. Apprentices who achieve have higher earnings compared to those who do not.¹²

Sustained positive destination rates for apprenticeships over the last five years have remained stable at 93%¹³. This is substantially higher than other types of further education and skills provision.¹⁴ This is one of the key benefits of apprenticeships as many apprentices remain with the employer following their apprenticeship, which results in a high rate of sustained employment.

Figure 2-1: Sustained positive destination rates for apprenticeships



¹² [Measuring the Net Present Value of Further Education in England 2018-19 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

¹³ The 'sustained positive destination' measure aims to count the proportion of learners with a sustained positive outcome, either into learning or employment (or both). [Further education outcomes, Academic year 2020/21 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk)

¹⁴ [Further education outcomes, Academic year 2020/21 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk). 78% of education & training learners went into a sustained positive destination in 2021/22. Education and training is mainly classroom-based adult further education that is not classed as an apprenticeship or community learning. It can also include distance learning or e-learning. Contrary to the Education & Training statistics in the 'FE and Skills' National Statistics, it excludes traineeships and offender learning.

A key strength of the apprenticeship system in England is its broad occupational coverage, providing a route into work for all and a route for those already in work to continue to progress their careers. Although earnings typically increase each year after achievement, across education and training, overall earnings are higher for apprenticeships as shown in the table below.¹⁵

Table 2-1: Median annualised earnings for learners who achieved in academic year 2016/17 by provision and level of learning

			Median annualised earnings				
			1 year after study	2 years after study	3 years after study	4 years after study	5 years after study
2016/17	Apprenticeship	Intermediate Apprenticeship	£16,810	£18,520	£19,750	£20,960	£22,450
		Advanced Apprenticeship	£18,910	£20,550	£21,810	£23,190	£24,920
		Higher (Level 4) Apprenticeship	£23,850	£26,120	£28,280	£30,650	£33,800
		Higher (Level 5) Apprenticeship	£26,470	£27,540	£28,770	£30,140	£31,380
	Education & Training	Full level 2	£10,950	£13,550	£15,240	£17,510	£18,180
		Full level 3	£11,250	£14,320	£15,660	£18,480	£17,640
		Level 4	£16,990	£18,670	£18,630	£20,640	£24,410
		Level 5	£20,470	£22,300	£23,360	£25,880	£20,360

¹⁵ Source: Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) dataset. [Further education outcomes, Academic year 2020/21 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](#)

At all levels, apprenticeships had higher levels of earnings one year after study than equivalent level education and training courses as shown in the table below.

Table 2-2: Lower quartile, median and upper quartile annualised earnings for learners who achieved in academic year 2020/21 by provision and level of learning¹⁶

		2020/21			
		Number of learners with earnings	Lower quartile annualised earnings	Median annualised earnings	Upper quartile annualised earnings
Apprenticeship	Intermediate Apprenticeship	29,810	£15,070	£19,600	£24,010
	Advanced Apprenticeship	39,600	£18,600	£23,660	£31,100
	Higher (Level 4) Apprenticeship	6,230	£23,600	£29,310	£36,790
	Higher (Level 5) Apprenticeship	5,950	£25,450	£33,710	£46,310
	Higher (Level 6) Apprenticeship	1,260	£28,490	£35,860	£44,820
	Higher (Level 7+) Apprenticeship	2,130	£37,930	£43,600	£50,710
Education & Training	Full level 2	2,210	£10,400	£16,420	£22,480
	Full level 3	1,650	£9,550	£15,950	£21,600
	Level 4	820	£13,040	£18,500	£23,230
	Level 5	360	£18,170	£24,360	£31,210
	Level 6	c	c	c	c

The clear benefits of doing and completing an apprenticeship came through strongly in the 2021 Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey.¹⁷ At the time of the survey, most apprenticeship completers (94%) were in work at the time of the interview.

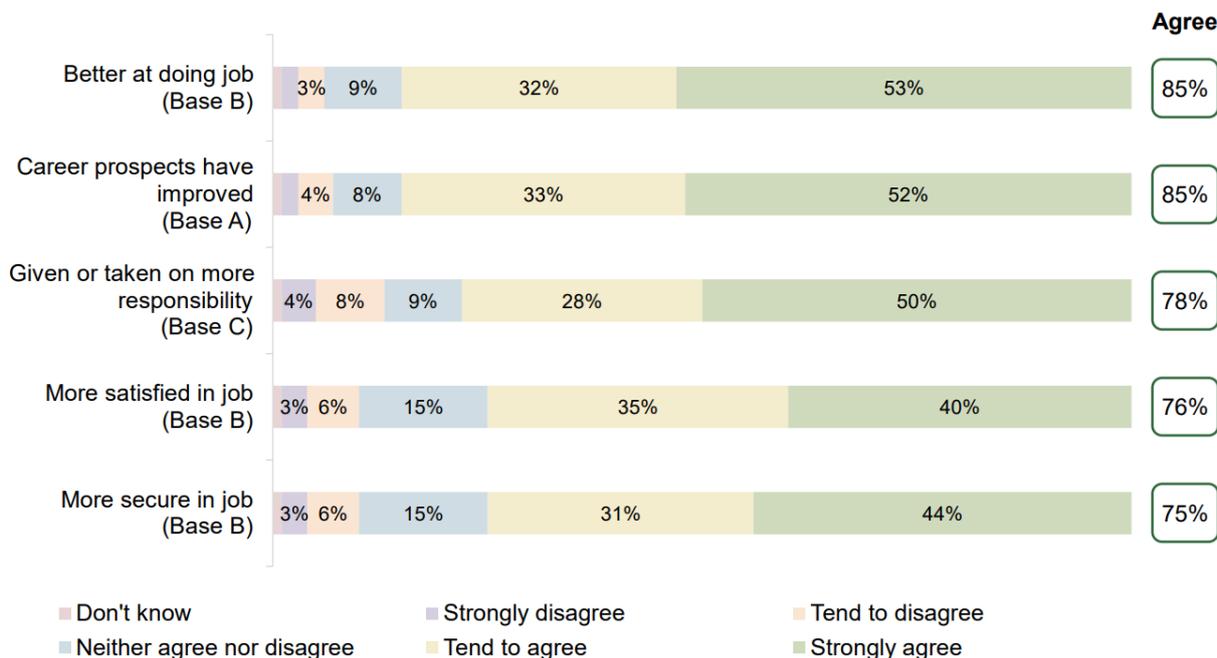
All current apprentices and apprentice completers were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with up to five statements in relation to jobs and careers. These included, for

¹⁶ Source: Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) dataset. [Further education outcomes, Academic year 2020/21 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/explore-education-statistics)

¹⁷ The [2021 Apprenticeship Evaluation](#) Learner Survey is a telephone survey of 5,122 current and completer apprentices and 541 non completers. The data is weighted to ensure it is representative of the overall population of apprentices.

example whether their job prospects had improved, and for those employed whether they were better at doing their job or more satisfied at work. The full list is shown in Figure 2-2 below.¹⁸

Figure 2-2: Impacts at work since starting apprenticeship (prompted)



Base A – all apprentices (5,122); Base B – apprentices in work (4,933); Base C – apprentices in work excluding self-employed (4,917).

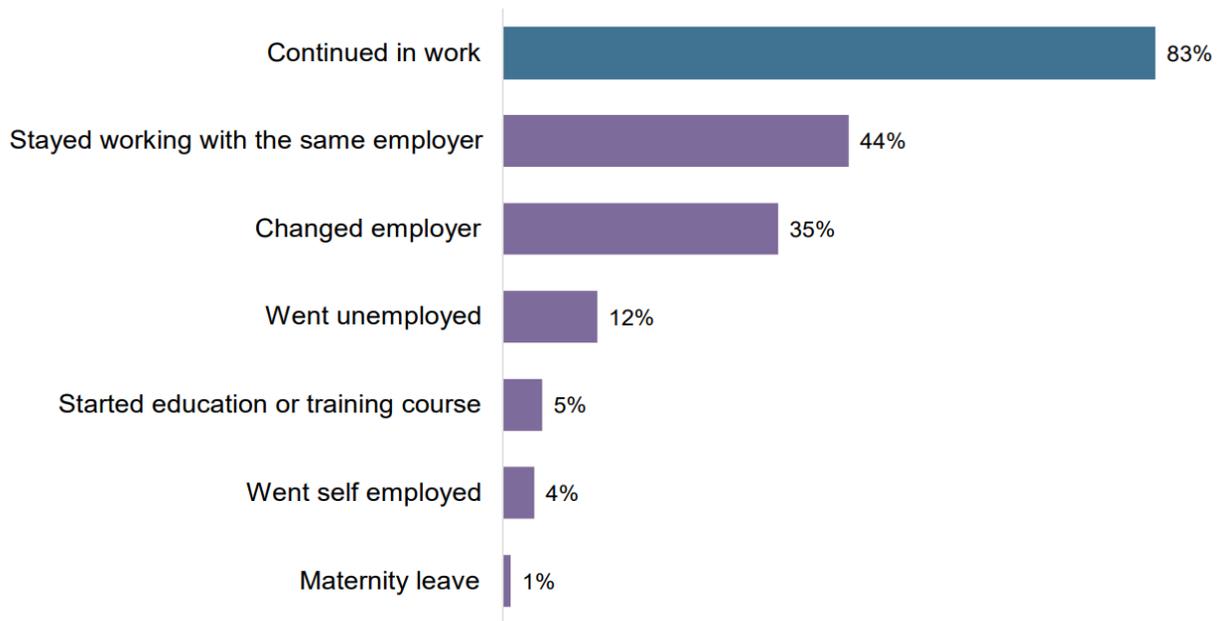
Almost all apprentices (95%) reported at least one positive impact on their job or career prospects since starting or completing their apprenticeship. A slight majority (56%) reported that all five positive outcomes applied. Apprentices were most likely to agree they were better at doing their job (85%) and that their career prospects had improved (85%). Around three-quarters agreed they had been given or taken on more responsibility (78%), were more satisfied with their job (76%), and felt more secure in their job (75%).

If we compare the apprenticeship system in England to other countries, operating a dual system (vocational education and training at the level of upper secondary education taking place in companies and part-time vocational schools), withdrawal usually means also dropping out of work, since apprentices have an apprenticeship contract rather than an employment contract. In England, an apprentice can withdraw from their apprenticeship without dropping out of employment. Indeed, most apprentices who withdraw also remain in employment. The Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey 2021 looked at what non-completers did next.¹⁹

¹⁸ [Apprenticeship Evaluation 2021 - Learner Survey](#), Figure 9-2, p.139.

¹⁹ The [Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey 2021](#) included a representative sample of 541 non-completers, who left their apprenticeship before completing between 1 September 2019 and 31 December 2020.

Figure 2-3: What non-completers did immediately after leaving their apprenticeship

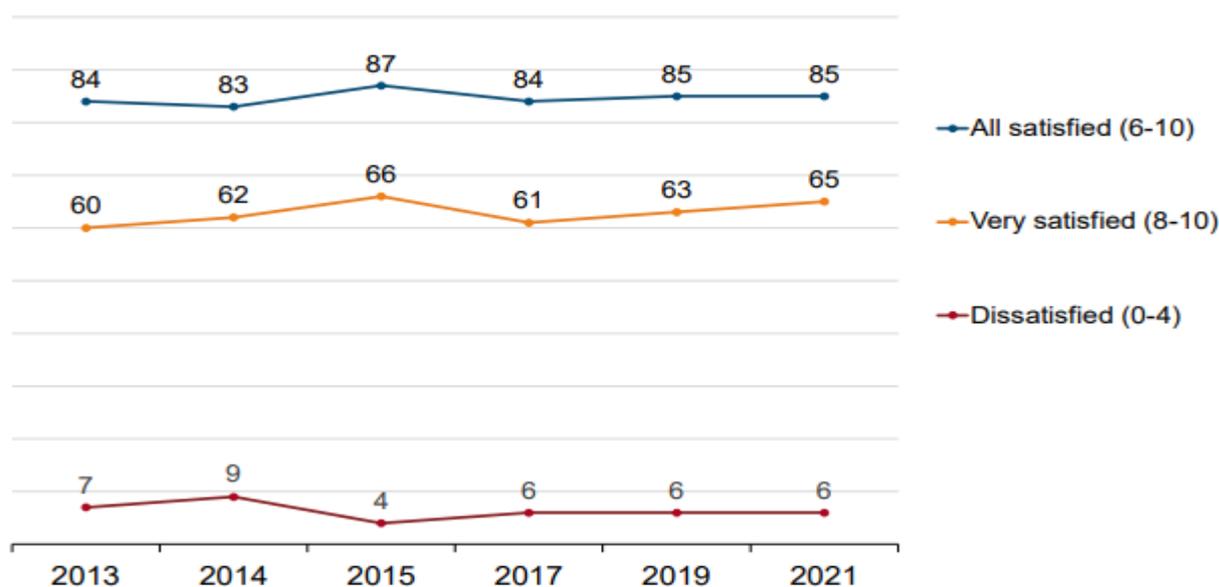


Employer Satisfaction

Employers see real benefits in having apprenticeships. From August 2020, all new apprenticeship starts in England have been on apprenticeship standards. It was expected initially to see lower achievement rates on standards, given that the bar was raised to make sure that apprenticeships meet the needs of employers, but achievement volumes and achievement rates are now increasing.

We know from the Apprenticeship Evaluation 2021 Survey²⁰ most employers (85%) would recommend apprenticeships to other employers.²¹ Furthermore, as shown in Figure 4.1 below, employer satisfaction (amongst employers with completer apprentices) remains consistently high at 85%.²² Those employers (with completer apprentices) who are dissatisfied has remained steady at 6%.

Figure 3-1: Changes in overall satisfaction with apprenticeships over time (amongst employers with completer apprentices)



Amongst employers with completer apprentices, satisfaction with the quality of applicants has continued to improve slowly over time (from 63% in 2015 to 70% in 2021).²³

²⁰ The 2021 Apprenticeship Evaluation Employer Survey is a telephone survey of 4,085 employers in England (this included employers who had staff complete an apprenticeship between 1st July 2019 and 29th February 2020 (977 interviews), and those who employed current apprentices (3,108)). The interviews were conducted at site level, rather than organisation and the data is weighted to ensure it is representative of the overall population of apprentice employers at site level.

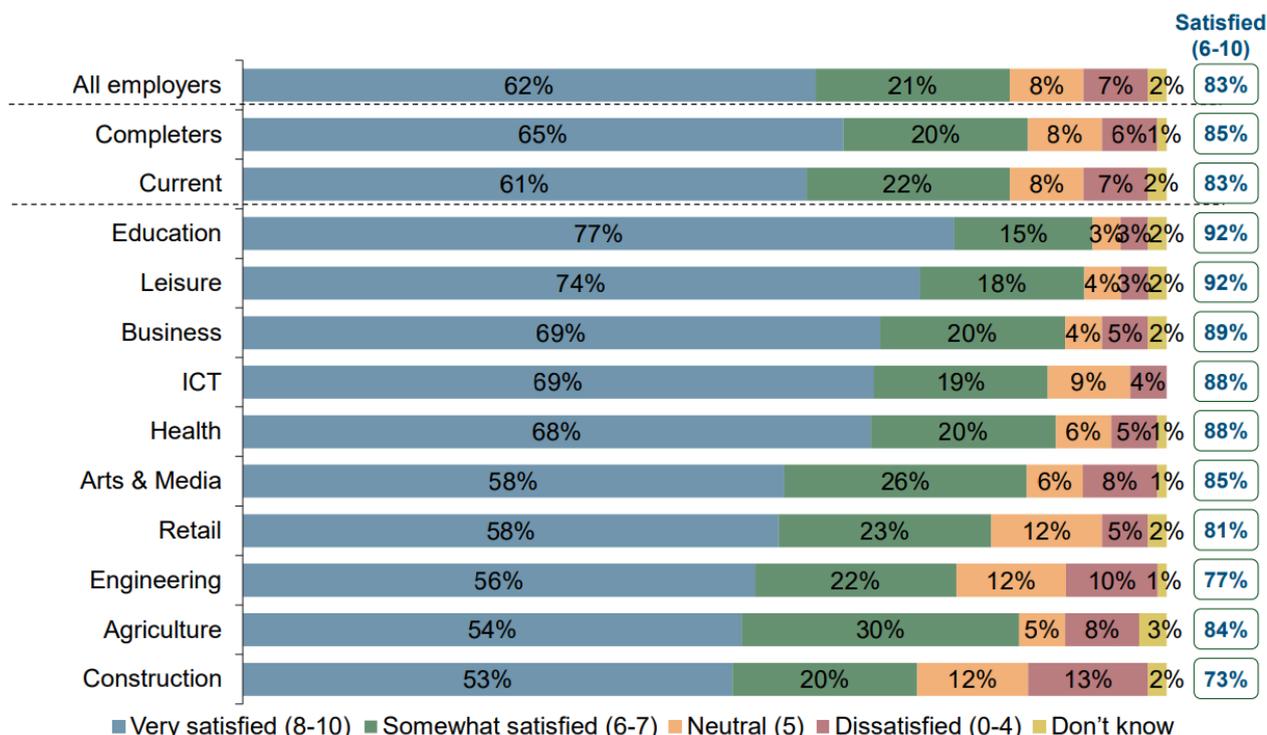
²¹ [2021 Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey Employer Report](#) p.18

²² [2021 Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey Employer Report](#) p.121. Base: Employers able to identify a main apprenticeship, with completer apprentices only, 2021 (905), 2019 (4,000), 2017 (4,004), 2015 (4,000), 2014 (4,030), 2013 (4,009). Satisfaction in 2021 was 85% for employers with completer apprentices and there is longer-term time series data available for this sample group. Employers with current apprentices were introduced as a sample group in 2021 and overall employer satisfaction including this group in 2021 was 83%.

²³ [2021 Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey Employer Report](#) p.14

The full distribution of overall satisfaction scores from all employers by main apprenticeship subject area breakdown is shown below.²⁴

Figure 3-2: Overall satisfaction amongst all employers, those with completer apprentices, with current apprentices and by main subject provider



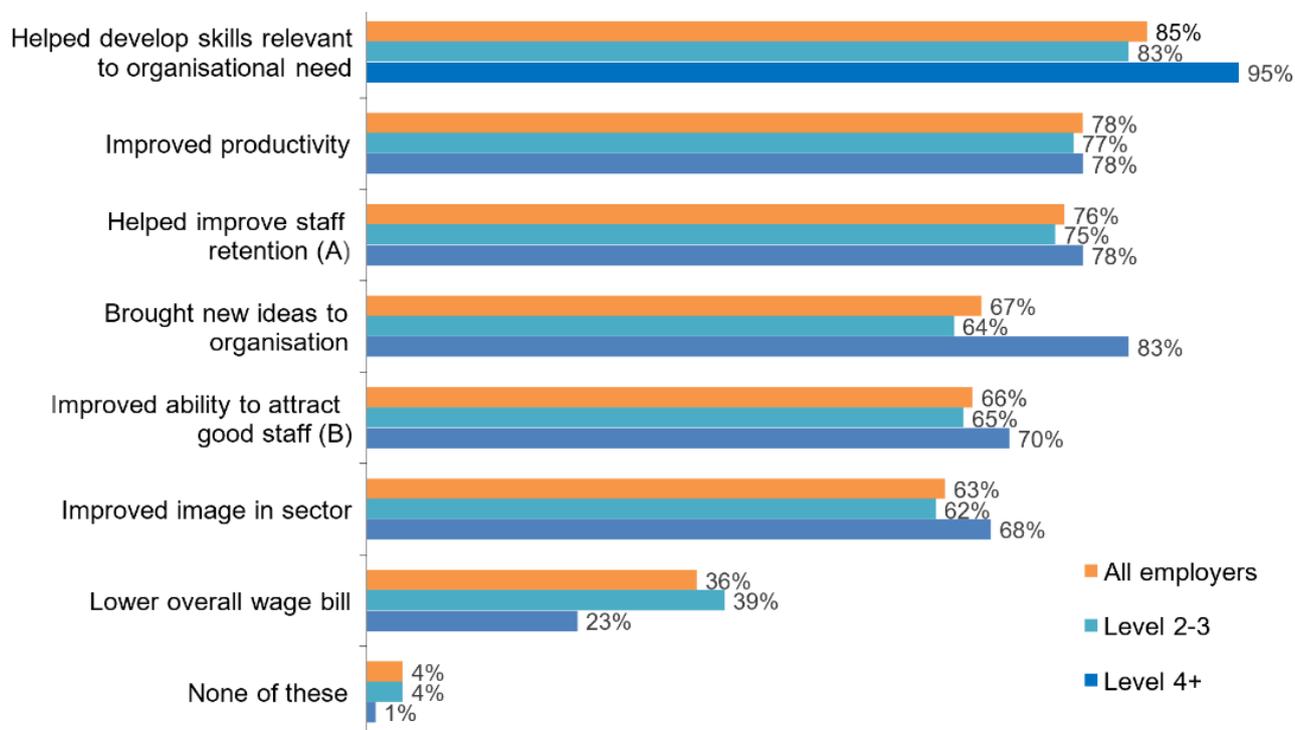
Standards require apprentices to pass End-Point Assessments (EPAs) which assess whether specific knowledge, skills and behaviours required for the role have been acquired. In the Apprenticeship Evaluation 2021, employers were asked about their satisfaction with the EPA process. A large majority of employers (87%) who confirmed they had experienced completer apprentices undertaking EPAs felt it had been a good test of the apprentice’s occupational competence. Employers whose main programme was at Level 3 were particularly positive (91% of those aware their completer apprentices had undertaken the EPA thought it a good test).²⁵

²⁴ [2021 Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey Employer Report](#) p.122, Figure 9.2. Base: All employers able to identify a main apprenticeship (3,852); of which: completer apprentices (905), current apprentices (2,947), Agriculture (198), Arts and Media (63), Business (664), Construction (398), Education (182), Engineering (714), Health (855), ICT (163), Leisure (134), Retail (456). Science not shown due to low base size (<30).

²⁵ [2021 Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey Employer Report](#) p.145.

Employers experienced a wide range of benefits as a result of training apprentices. The most common was the development of skills relevant to their organisation (85%), while over three-quarters benefitted from increased productivity (78%), as shown below.²⁶

Figure 3-3: Perceived benefits of apprenticeships to employers (prompted), by level of main apprenticeship ²⁷



Recent research by [LWI for the St. Martin's Group](#) aims to understand the experiences of employers in supporting apprentices to complete. The research found that almost all employers view apprenticeship completion as important because they think apprentices gain better technical and 'soft' skills, more industry knowledge and experience, and show increased productivity. A noteworthy proportion also require apprentices to complete their training and assessments to either perform their job roles or progress into higher level roles. This was notably commonplace for employers placing apprentices on Level 2 and Level 3 programmes.²⁸

²⁶ [2021 Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey Employer Report](#) p.18.

²⁷ [2021 Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey Employer Report](#) p.132. Base: All employers (4,085). Main apprenticeship programme at Level 2-3 (3,316), or Level 4+ (769). A – those who train existing employees on apprenticeships, all (1,694), at Level 2-3 (1,194), or Level 4+ (500). B – those who recruit externally for apprenticeships, all (2,958), at Level 2-3 (2,498), or Level 4+ (460).

²⁸ [Enabling-better-outcomes-a-wider-view-of-apprenticeship-success-Exec-Summary.pdf \(stmartinsgroup.org\)](#) p.14. The employer survey was conducted by an independent market research agency, with fieldwork taking place online during July and August 2023. In total, 811 employers responded. All employers are based in England, and had hired apprentices in the last 3 years. The survey was targeted at senior management professionals, including owners and board members, managing directors, and directors/senior management. Just over seven in ten respondents (72 per cent) currently hire apprentices and 28 per cent have done so within the last three years. For the purposes of this research, employer sizes are grouped as follows: small (10-49 employees), medium (50-249 employees), large (250+

Employer demand for apprenticeships is growing. The [Employer Skills Survey 2022](#) reported that approaching two-fifths (38%) of all UK establishments reported that they planned to offer apprenticeships in the future. This represents an increase since 2016 (30%). Employers in England were more likely to plan to offer apprenticeships (39%) than Wales (35%), Northern Ireland (32%) and Scotland (31%). The proportion planning to offer apprenticeships in future increased across all nations, though the largest increases were seen in England (39% vs. 31% in 2019) and Wales (35% vs. 26%).²⁹

employees). It should be noted that the survey data is self-reported, and therefore is based on respondents' understanding and interpretation of the questions.

²⁹ [Employer skills survey 2022 research report \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#) p.168. Number of interviews: 13,603 (England - 10,134; Wales - 1,239; Scotland – 1,325 ; N.Ireland – 905)

Apprentice Satisfaction

Since June 2022, we have been collecting feedback from on-programme apprentices on the quality of their programme. Both quality (and employer feedback) are published on Find Apprenticeship Training at provider level showing the individual rating scores for each provider. 26,790 apprentices have now given feedback on the quality of their training with an average satisfaction rate of 79%.³⁰ This is up from 78% in March 2023.³¹

Table 3-1: Quality Feedback headlines March 2024

Apprenticeships - quality feedback by APPRENTICES		
SURVEY HEADLINES		
Responses from apprentices to survey questions grouped by question category	Apprentices who:	
	Agree	Disagree
COMMUNICATION		
Communicating clearly with you	70%	30%
Ensuring you understand the requirements of your end-point assessment	77%	23%
Total	73%	27%
ORGANISATION		
Balancing online learning with classroom-based training to suit your apprenticeship	71%	29%
Giving you relevant training that helps you perform your job better	78%	22%
Organising well-structured training	74%	26%
Providing accessible training resources	84%	16%
Providing Off The Job training that takes up at least 20% of your total apprenticeship time	83%	17%
Taking into account your previous learning	75%	25%
Total	78%	22%
SUPPORT		
Helping you learn new skills and develop existing ones	83%	17%
Preparing you for success in your future career	78%	22%
Resolving any issues you have	77%	23%
Supporting you and your apprenticeship	79%	21%
Total	79%	21%

The percentage of apprentices agreeing with the statements in all three sections are similar compared to March 2023. The figures continue to compare reasonably well with the 84% of apprentices who stated they were satisfied in the 2021 Apprentice Evaluation Survey³².

³⁰ Aggregated programme level data accumulated since the launch of apprentice feedback in May 2022. Apprentices are asked whether they agree or disagree with 12 statements. 79% of the 26,790 apprentices who have given feedback so far, responded positively to the statements. Data is correct as of 6 March 2024 and is the aggregation of the provider level data published on [Find Apprenticeship Training](#). The response rate over the last twelve months is 3% (1 March 2023 – 1 March 2024).

³¹ [Apprenticeship achievements: an update for the sector \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#) March 2023, p.20.

³² [Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey 2021](#), Table 8-1, p.111. Out of 5,122 apprentices surveyed: 60% were very satisfied, 24% were fairly satisfied, 8% were dissatisfied and the rest were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

The 2021 Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey showed that there were noticeable differences in satisfaction by demographic subgroups as shown in the table below.

Table 3-2: Satisfaction by age, gender, and whether learner had a disability or learning difficulty

<i>Row percentages</i>	Base	ANY SATISFIED (6-10)	Very satisfied (8-10)	Fairly satisfied (6-7)	ANY DIS-SATISFIED (0-4)	Mean score
All	5,122	84%	60%	24%	8%	7.6
Age under 19	1,486	90%*	68%*	22%*	6%*	7.9
Age 19-24	1,575	83%*	55%*	27%*	9%	7.3
Age 25+	2,061	82%*	59%	23%	9%	7.5
Male	2,686	84%	58%*	26%*	9%	7.4
Female	2,436	85%	62%*	23%*	8%	7.7
Disabled	194	78%*	51%*	27%	17%*	6.8
Learning difficulty	313	79%*	53%*	26%	13%*	7.2
Neither a disability nor learning difficulty	4,721	85%*	61%*	24%	8%*	7.6

* highlights where proportional results are significantly different from the average of the rest of sample (those in bold show results specifically which are significantly higher).

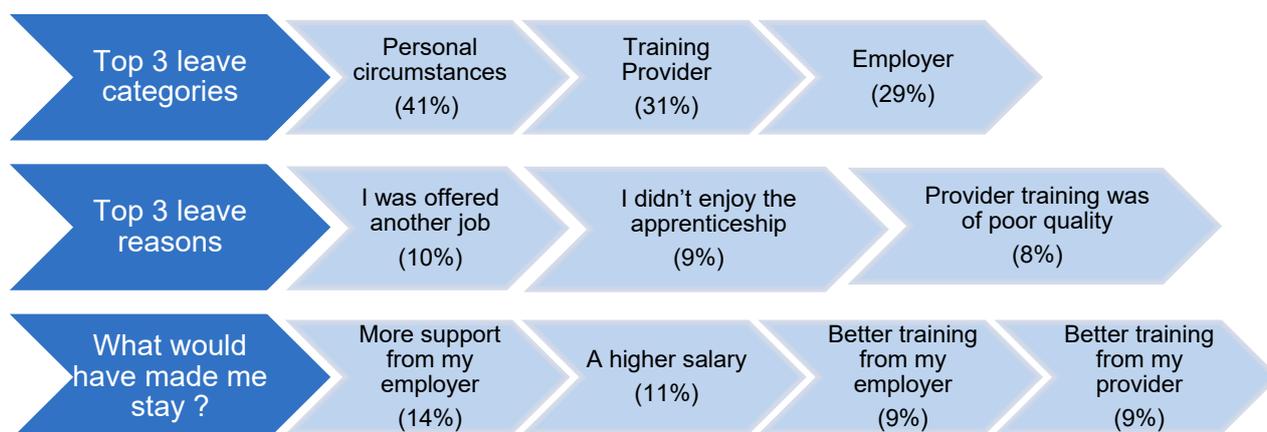
Younger apprentices were more likely to be satisfied; 90% of those aged under 19 were satisfied compared with 82% of those aged 25 and over. There was little difference between male and female apprentices in terms of overall satisfaction, however female apprentices were more likely to be 'very satisfied' (62% vs. 58% of male apprentices). Apprentices with either a disability (78%) or learning difficulty (79%) were less likely to be satisfied overall than apprentices without (85%).³³ Our accompanying [letter](#) sets out more detail on how we are supporting apprentices, including those with a disability or learning difficulty, to have a high-quality experience.

³³ [Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey 2021](#), Learner Survey, Table 8-4, p.114.

Withdrawals

In October 2022, we launched our exit survey for apprentices who have withdrawn. This tool enables us to better understand reasons for non-completion. 3753 apprentices have successfully completed the survey and personal circumstances are the biggest factor in withdrawal (41%),³⁴ a reduction from 45% reported in our March 2023 report,³⁵ when it was also the highest leave category. Also, in our March 2023 report, 'I was offered another job' was the top leave reason (12% v 10% March 2024). In March 2024, 'provider training was of poor quality' (8%) has gone down from March 2023 (11%).

Figure 4-1: Exit Feedback overview March 2024



Our exit survey and other surveys demonstrate that there are often multiple reasons why apprentices do not complete their programme. Personal circumstances consistently feature as a significant factor,³⁶ but these situations are not always negative as apprentices can withdraw for positive personal reasons such as finding alternative employment or higher wages.

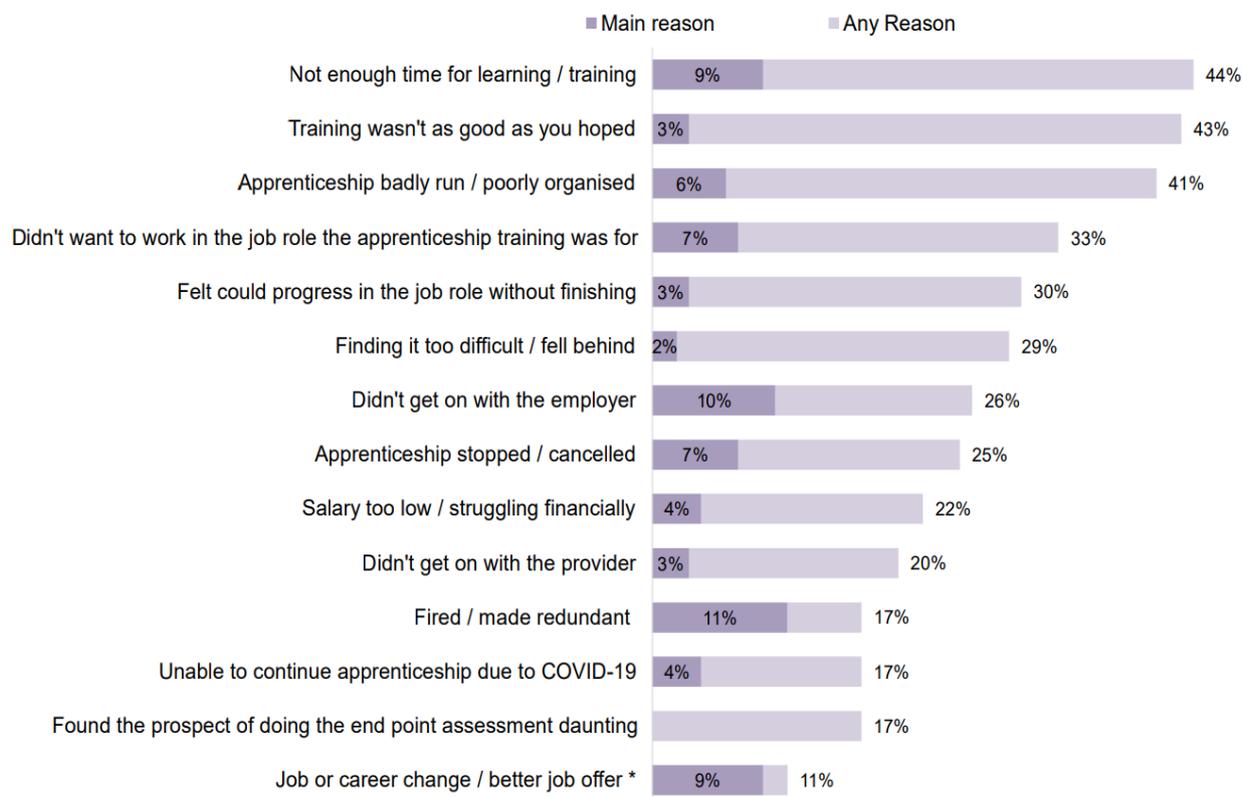
³⁴ This is aggregated programme level data accumulated since the launch of exit feedback in October 2022. Apprentices are asked to choose from a list of factors that contributed to not completing their apprenticeship (there is also the option to choose 'none of the above') and are then asked to choose what was the main reason for withdrawing. The top 3 leave categories are based on the main reason selection. Apprentices are also asked what would have made them stay on programme and can select several answers from a list (there is also the option to choose 'none of the above' – 16% of survey responses have selected this so far). Response rate 8%. Overall completion rate of the survey 6.5%. Data correct as of 6 March 2024.

³⁵ [Apprenticeship achievements: an update for the sector](#), March 2023, p.20.

³⁶ The 2021 Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey included a representative sample of 541 non-completers, who left their apprenticeship before completing between 1 September 2019 and 31 December 2020. 40% reported that personal or domestic factors were at least part of the reason for not completing.

The main reasons for withdrawal can differ from the most significant contributing reasons. The figure below from the 2021 Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey shows the main and contributing reasons clearly together.

Figure 4-2: Main and contributing reasons why respondent did not complete their apprenticeship ³⁷



The 2022 LWI/St. Martin's research reported that some non-completers spoke of the skills gained and the opportunities to network in their industries which had benefited them in their current roles. In a minority of cases, this had allowed them to move directly into other, higher-level opportunities immediately after withdrawing from their apprenticeship.³⁸ However, this research also affirms that the benefits of achieving are greater compared to those who withdraw before completing.

³⁷ [Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey 2021](#), Non-completer survey. Figure 10-3, p.164. Base: All non-completers (541) Responses prompted unless statement ends with *.

³⁸ [LWI & St.Martins Group Apprentice Outcomes and Destinations 2022 \(p.47\)](#).

Quality of Training Provision

A significant contributing factor to apprentice achievement is the quality of the training they receive from their training provider. We are focused on increasing the number of apprentices in good or outstanding provision. Ofsted are inspecting all apprenticeship providers by the end of 2025. Over 80% of all apprentices are in good or outstanding providers.

As of 31 August 2023, 1,390 FE and skills providers were offering apprenticeships. At that point, 1,256 providers had had a full inspection or New Provider Monitoring Visit. More information is available in the [Ofsted Annual Report 2022/23](#).

For an update on actions to improve the quality and achievement rate of apprenticeships, please see the [letter](#) from the Skills Minister to the sector.



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