



Skills Funding Agency

Employer Satisfaction Survey 2015 to 2016

Introduction

This report provides a national overview of findings from the FE Choices Employer Satisfaction Survey 2015 to 2016. FE Choices data, published on GOV.UK and the National Careers Service website, provides consistent and comparable information for employers and learners to help them make informed choices about publicly funded education and training. It also provides consistent management information on key performance indicators.

More than 60,000 employers took part in the 2015 to 2016 FE Choices Employer Satisfaction Survey representing over 20% of all employers who received training funded by the Skills Funding Agency between August 2015 and February 2016. Participating employers provided feedback on 689 providers including General Further Education (FE) Colleges, independent learning providers, other public-funded organisations, and Special and Specialist Colleges.

The characteristics of employers delivering public-funded learning

The majority of employers work in small workplaces (77% have 1-49 employees) reflecting the high representation of small businesses in England. One in six (16%) have 50-249 employees, and 7% have 250+ employees.

A diverse range of industry sectors were represented. As in the previous year survey, the largest groups of employer respondents were in the “human health and social work” and “wholesale and retail trade” sectors (19% and 13.5% respectively).

Almost a quarter (24%) had made a financial contribution towards the cost of the training. This is in line with the previous year’s survey.

The vast majority, 99%, of workplaces that took part in the survey were using providers to deliver apprenticeship training. More were delivering apprenticeships for adults than young people aged 16-18. Apprenticeships in Business, Administration and Law continue to be most common (30%), followed by Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies (22%) and Health, Public Services and Care (21%).

Key findings

As in previous years of the survey, employers were very positive about the training received by their employees. More employers were satisfied on these measures compared to the 2014 to 2015 survey:

- 78% were satisfied with the overall quality (giving a score of 8-10 out of 10) compared with 73% in 2014 to 2015.
- 82% were satisfied with the professionalism of the staff delivering the training (78% in 2014 to 2015).
- 78% were satisfied with the flexibility of the training (74% in 2014 to 2015).
- 80% would be advocates of the training provider (77% in 2014 to 2015).

Employers delivering apprenticeships to 16-18 year olds were least positive about the training but those with both young and adult apprentices were more positive.

There were limited subgroup differences since the majority of employers were satisfied. However, as in previous years, workplaces with 1-9 employees and those in Construction and Real Estate, Professional, Scientific and Technical and Administrative and Support Service Activities, were less positive than average. In contrast, employers in Accommodation and Food Service Activities and Human Health and Social Work were generally more satisfied.

Technical details

The Employer Satisfaction Survey 2015 to 2016 took place between March and July 2016. The survey was administered using multi-mode: postal, online and telephone. Over 60,000 employers took part in the survey: 75% completed the survey online, 16% used paper questionnaires and 8% by telephone. The employers that took part in the survey were representative of the 268,575 employers that received training funded by the Skills Funding Agency in 2015 to 2016 in terms of workplace industry sector and size, and provider type. As a result, the findings are unweighted. This report only comments on subgroup differences that are statistically significant.

Note regarding slides

The 'total base size' is the number of employers answering a question. The base size varies because some employers do not answer all of the questions. Slide 10, for example, shows total base size of 59,256, which is the total number of employers that responded to this question.

Slides 30 and 31 include breakdowns by Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP Areas) for each region. The regions are noted in abbreviated format, as follows: EE – East of England, EM – East Midlands, GL-Greater London, NE – North East, NW – North West, SE – South East, SW-South West, WM- West Midlands, YH - Yorkshire and Humber.