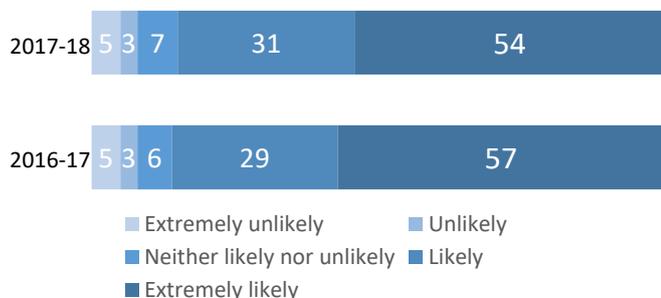




## Majority of employers were likely to recommend their training provider

% OF EMPLOYERS WHO WERE LIKELY OR UNLIKELY TO RECOMMEND THEIR TRAINING PROVIDER



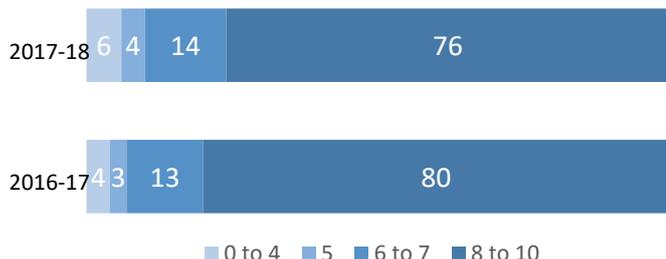
More than eight in ten employers were either 'likely' or 'extremely likely' to recommend their training provider to another employer seeking similar training.

The proportion of employers who were either 'likely' or 'extremely likely' to recommend their training provider has declined by one percentage point since last year.

**Number of respondents 2017 to 2018=54,648;  
Number of respondents 2016 to 2017= 60,054**

## Nine in ten employers were satisfied with overall quality of training but fewer were highly satisfied compared to last year's survey

% OF EMPLOYERS WHO WERE SATISFIED OR DISSATISFIED WITH THE QUALITY OF TRAINING AND PROVIDER



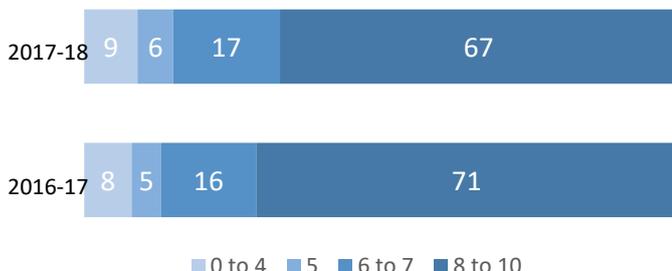
Nine in ten employers were satisfied with the overall quality of the training, giving a score of at least 6 out of 10.

In line with the changes in the level of advocacy, ratings for those who scored at least 8 out of 10 has also declined by four percentage points since last year.

**Number of respondents 2017 to 2018=54,648<sup>1</sup>  
Number of respondents 2016 to 2017 = 59,076**

## Over eight in ten employers were satisfied with their ability to influence the training

% OF EMPLOYERS WHO WERE SATISFIED OR DISSATISFIED WITH THEIR ABILITY TO INFLUENCE



Over eight in ten employers were satisfied with their ability to influence the structure, content, delivery and duration of training, giving a score of at least 6 out of 10. Rating on this aspect has also declined by three percentage points since last year.

Employers continue to rate this aspect lower than others measured in this survey.

**Number of respondents 2017 to 2018=54,648  
Number of respondents 2016 to-2017 = 53,749**

<sup>1</sup> The confidence interval for both surveys (2016-17 and 2017-18) is +/-0.4 percentage points. A change of 0.6 percentage points or higher, between the 2016-17 and 2017-18 survey, is statistically significant.

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## About this release

This publication provides the main findings of the FE Choices Employer Satisfaction Survey 2017 to 2018. This survey measures employers' satisfaction with training funded by the Department for Education (DfE). The survey applied to most general further education colleges, tertiary colleges, specialist colleges, local authorities and most independent learning providers that deliver Employer-Responsive training.

The survey used a multi-mode approach: postal, online and telephone. A total of 54,648 employer workplace locations took part in the survey, from an eligible population of 246,045 employers across 970 colleges and other training providers. Fieldwork took place during March to July 2018

Only differences which are statistically significant are reported in this release. The sample size is large so many small differences are statistically significant.

The survey was funded by the Department for Education, and carried out by Ipsos MORI and RCU Limited. The main aim of the survey is to provide comparative satisfaction data that employers and learners would use to inform their choice of college or training provider.

## Feedback

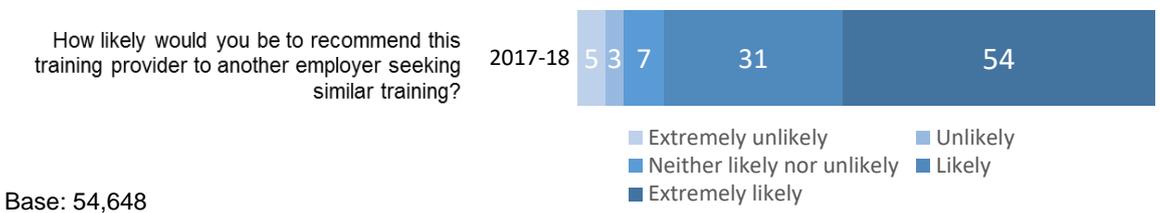
We are constantly monitoring and evaluating our release, and how our releases look. We would welcome feedback on any aspect of this document at [Andy.Cooke@education.gov.uk](mailto:Andy.Cooke@education.gov.uk).

# 1. Recommendation and overall satisfaction

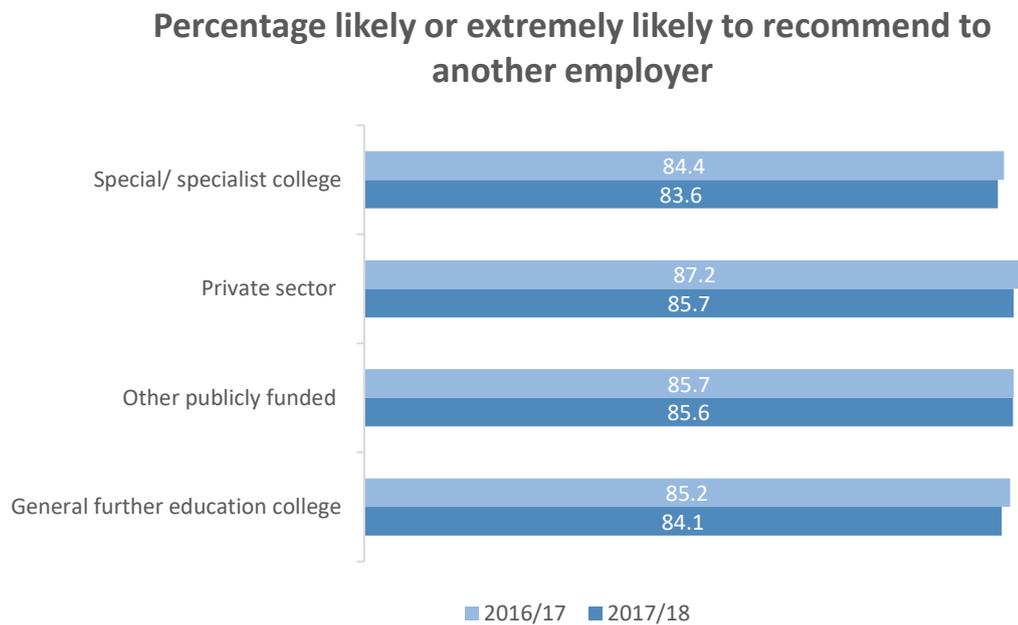
The large majority of employers were likely to recommend their training provider to another employer. Correspondingly, satisfaction with the overall quality of the training and the training provider were also very high. However, ratings have declined on both measures compared to last year's survey. This is likely to be linked to a rise in the proportion of employers reporting in the survey that they have paid towards the cost of the training for all their employees; these employers tend to have less positive views compared to those that have paid for some or none of the training.

Over eight in ten (85%) employers were either 'likely' or 'extremely likely' to recommend their training provider to another employer seeking similar training. Similar to last year's survey, employers using private training providers were slightly more likely to recommend their provider than those using general FE colleges, special and specialist colleges.

**Figure 1: Percentage for likelihood to recommend the training provider**



**Figure 2 Likelihood to recommend the training provider by type of provider used**



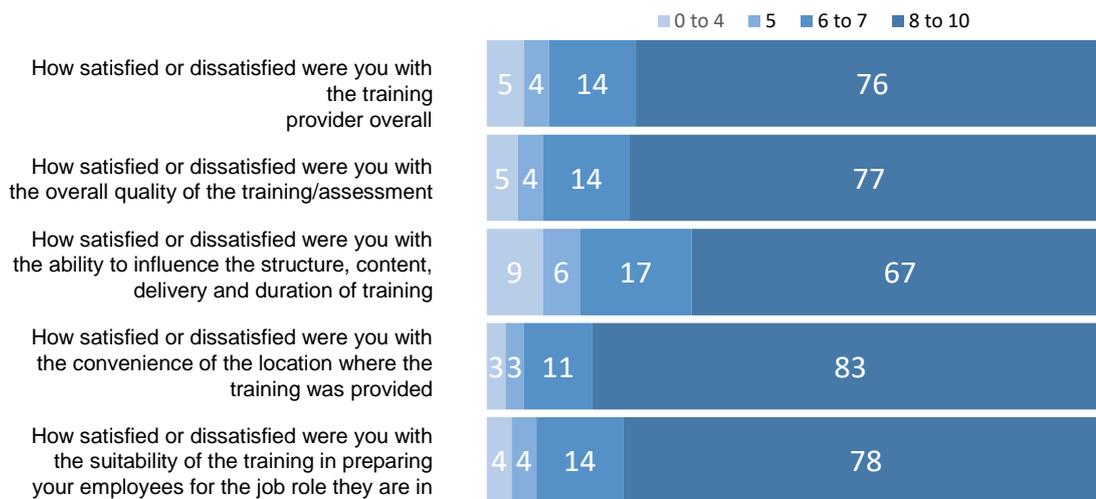
Bases: 54,648 for 2017-18 and 60,054 for 2016-17

Nine in ten employers were satisfied with the overall quality of the training (91%) and with their training provider (90%), giving a score of at least 6 out of 10. Compared to the previous year, the level of satisfaction has dropped by two percentage points for both. The decline was more pronounced for those giving a score of at least 8 out of 10 (a decline of three and four percentage points respectively).

85% of employers gave a rating of at least 6 out of 10 for their ability to influence the training. This remains less positive than other surveyed aspects. Consistent with the ratings for the other satisfaction measures, those who gave a score of at least 6 out of 10 declined by three percentage points.

This year's survey included two new measures on training relevance and convenience. The majority of employers (94%) gave positive ratings of at least 6 out of 10 for the convenience of the location where the training was provided, and more than nine in ten (92%) were satisfied with the relevance of the training in preparing employees for their job roles.

**Figure 3: Percentage of overall satisfaction across a range of aspects**



Bases: 54,648 (Where figures do not sum to 100% this is due to rounding)

Again employers who used private training providers awarded slightly more positive ratings than employers using other providers across all aspects of training. However, ratings have declined compared to last year across all types of providers.

**Figure 4: Overall satisfaction by type of provider used (% of employers giving a score of 6-10)**

Type of training provider	General further education college		Other publicly funded		Private sector		Special college	
	2016-17 Survey	2017-18 Survey	2016-17 Survey	2017-18 Survey	2016-17 Survey	2017-18 Survey	2016-17 Survey	2017-18 Survey
Percentage - satisfied with the training provider overall	90.9	<b>89.0</b>	91.0	<b>91.0</b>	93.8	<b>92.2</b>	89.1	<b>88.7</b>
Percentage - satisfied with the overall quality of the training/assessment	91.6	<b>89.8</b>	91.7	<b>91.1</b>	94.4	<b>93.0</b>	90.0	<b>88.9</b>
Percentage - satisfied with their ability to influence structure, content, delivery and duration of training	84.8	<b>81.2</b>	83.0	<b>80.4</b>	89.7	<b>87.5</b>	82.5	<b>80.0</b>
Percentage - satisfied with the convenience of location where the training was provided	-	<b>93.2</b>	-	<b>91.8</b>	-	<b>94.8</b>	-	<b>88.8</b>
Percentage of - satisfied with suitability of training in preparing employees for the job role they are in	-	<b>90.1</b>	-	<b>91.5</b>	-	<b>93.4</b>	-	<b>90.5</b>

Bases: 54,648 for 2017-18 and 60,054 for 2016-17

### Differences by organisation size, age of apprentices and sector subject area

There were some differences in rating for quality of training by organisation size, age of apprentice, and apprenticeship sector subject areas. Small organisations with less than 10 employees were less satisfied than larger ones. This pattern was also observed in last year's survey.

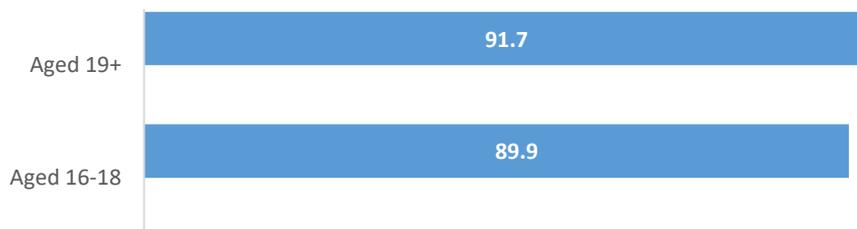
**Figure 5: Satisfaction with quality of training by size of organisation (% employers rating 6-10)**



Base: 52,560

Employers who were only delivering adult apprenticeships were also more satisfied with the quality of the training compared to those who were only delivering apprenticeships to 16-18 year olds.

**Figure 6: Satisfaction with quality of training by age of apprentices (% employers rating 6-10)**



Base: 43,008

Employers who delivered apprenticeships in Engineering, Manufacturing and Technologies were most satisfied with the quality of the training, followed by those whose with apprentices in Business Administration and Law, and Construction Planning and the Built Environment. Conversely employers with apprentices in Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care were least satisfied with the quality of the training.

**Figure 7: Satisfaction with quality of training by apprenticeship Sector Subject Area (% employers rating 6-10)**

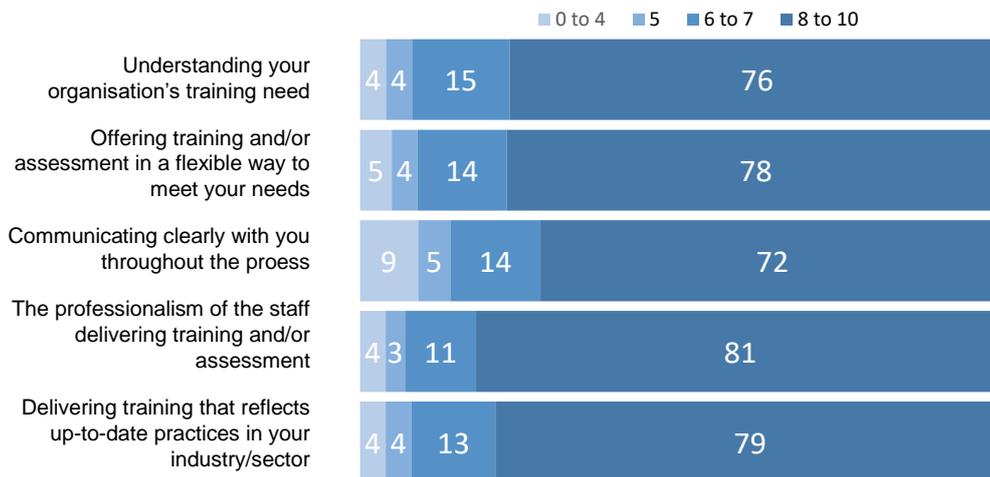
	Base	% Satisfaction
1. Health, Public Services and Care	9,298	91.7
2. Science and Mathematics	65	92.7
3. Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care	2,178	84.3
4. Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies	10,612	95.1
5. Construction Planning and the Built Environment	3,131	93.3
6. Information and Communication Technology	1,592	89.9
7. Retail and Commercial Enterprise	6,425	88.6
8. Leisure, travel and Tourism	656	89.6
9. Arts, Media and Publishing	142	90.7
10. Education and Training	741	91.6
11. Business Administration and Law	12,407	93.5

## 2. Detailed ratings

Employers were satisfied with the various aspects of their training experience, giving a rating of at least 6 out of 10. However, in line with the overall trends, satisfaction scores have declined for all aspects compared to last year's results.

Employers continued to be most satisfied with the professionalism of staff who delivered the training, with 81% giving the highest rating of between 8 and 10. They were least satisfied with the clarity of communication from the training provider throughout the training process with 72% giving a rating of 8-10.

**Figure 8: Percentage of overall performance on other aspects of training**



Bases: 54,648 (Where figures do not sum to 100% this is due to rounding)

**Figure 9: Change in satisfaction levels compared to the 2016-17 survey**

6-10 score (in %) on several aspects of the training	2016-17 survey	2017-18 survey	% point change
<b>Understanding organisation's training needs</b>	92.9	91.5	-1.4
<b>Offering training and/or assessment in a flexible way</b>	92.8	91.3	-1.5
<b>Communicating clearly</b>	88.9	86.7	-2.2
<b>Professionalism of staff delivering training and/ or assessment</b>	90.6	92.4	+1.8
<b>Delivering training that reflects up-to-date practices</b>	93.9	92.1	-1.8

Bases: 54,648 for 2017-18 and 60,054 for 2016-17

## Training undertaken

Employers with both young and adult apprentices were more likely to give a rating of at least 6 out of 10 across the different measures, while those delivering only to young apprentices, aged 16-18, were less positive about the training received.

**Figure 10: Satisfaction levels by age of apprentice**

6-10 score (in %) on several aspects of the training	Employers with apprentices aged . .		
	16-18 years	19+years	Both
Understanding organisation's training needs	90.0	91.8	93.4
Offering training and/or assessment in a flexible way	90.1	91.6	92.7
Communicating clearly	85.1	87.1	88.5
Professionalism of staff delivering training and/ or assessment	91.2	92.7	94.1
Delivering training that reflects up-to-date practices	90.4	92.8	93.6

### 3. Technical information

This section provides information on the data sources, their coverage and quality. It also explains the methodology used in producing the data, including how it is validated and processed.

The Employer Satisfaction Survey 2017 to 2018 measures employers' satisfaction with training funded by the Department for Education during August 2017 to January 2018. The survey applied to most general further education colleges, tertiary colleges, specialist colleges, local authorities and most independent learning providers that deliver provision to employers. The exceptions were sixth-form colleges; employers in receipt of an Apprenticeship Direct Grant; and colleges and other training providers funded to deliver training exclusively to their own employees. A total of 246, 045 employers, across 970 colleges and training providers were in-scope for the survey. There are fewer eligible employers and providers compared to last year's survey partly due to providers merging.

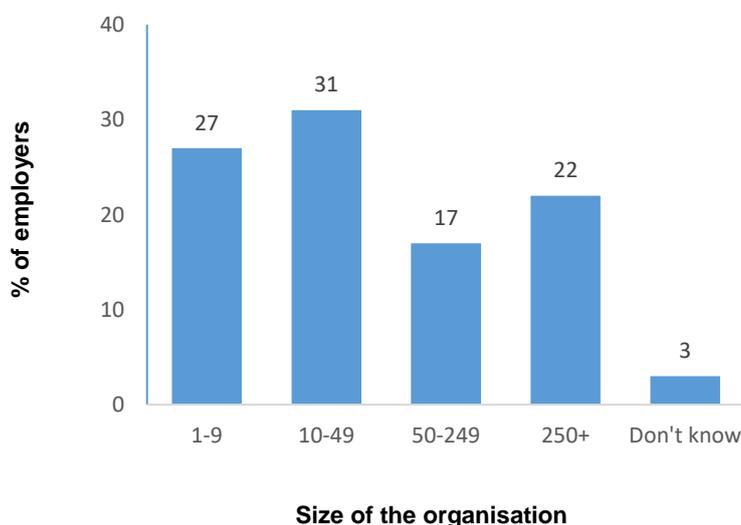
The survey was multi-mode comprising online, postal and telephone methodologies. A total of 54,648 employers took part in the survey. Employer respondents were broadly representative of the population by employee size and industry sector (as recorded in the sample). As a result, the survey data was not weighted.

#### Employer Profile

The majority of employers (58%) were small organisations with 1-49 employees; 17% were organisations with 50-249 employees; and 22% were the largest organisations (250+ employees). This contrasts with last year's survey when there were more small employers and fewer large employers (62% and 19% respectively in the 2016 to 2017 survey).

More than half (54%) were single site organisations, 28% were branches of an organisation, and a further 16% were head offices.

**Figure 11: Percentage of respondents by size of the organisation**



Base: 54,648

#### Training undertaken

Three in four employers (74%) who took part in the survey reported that they had between 1-4 learners. Ten percent had 5-9 learners and a similar proportion (11%) had more than 10 learners. Five percent of employers were unable to provide an estimate for the number of learners.

Nearly one in two employers (49%) used an private sector training provider and 44% used a General Further Education (FE) College. A very small minority of employers used other public-funded organisations such as local authorities (5%) and Special and Specialist Colleges (2%).

There has been a significant increase in the proportion of employers reporting that they had paid towards the cost of the training (39% compared to 24% in the 2016 to 2017 survey). This is likely to be linked to the introduction of the apprenticeship levy. The rise in employers reporting that they have paid for the training in all cases is also significant as it partly explains the decline in ratings compared to last year; employers who have contributed in all cases generally rate providers less positively compared to other employers.

**Figure 12: Percentage of employers who paid for the training of their employees**

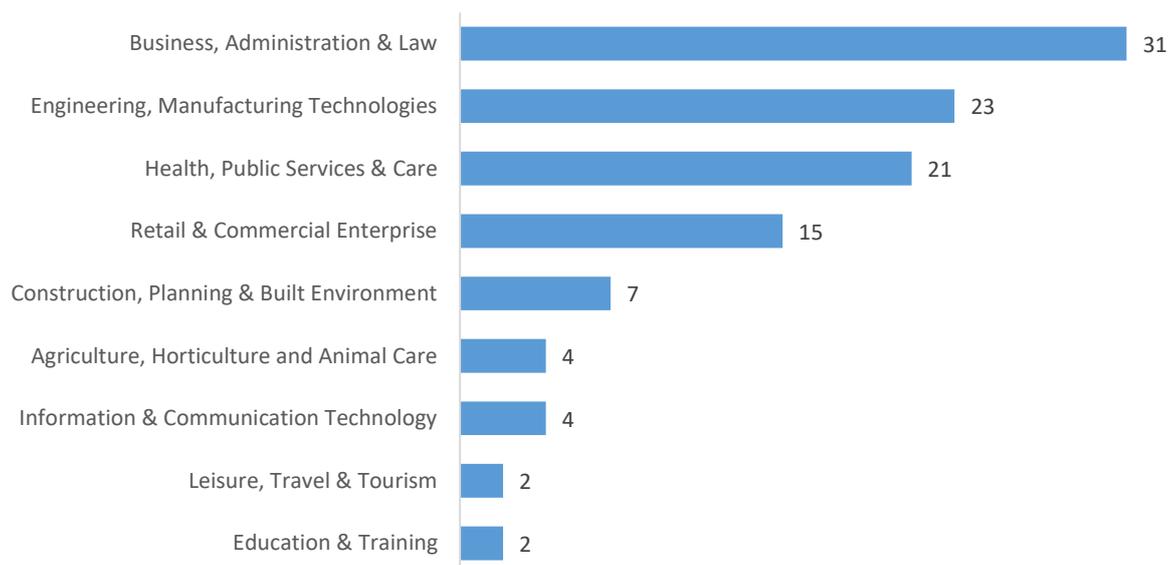
As the employer did you have to pay for any of this training	2017-18	2016-17
<b>Percentage who paid for training <u>in all cases</u></b>	19	10
<b>Percentage who paid for training <u>in some cases</u></b>	20	14
<b>Percentage who did <u>NOT</u> pay for training</b>	50	67
<b>Percentage who said '<u>Don't know</u>'</b>	11	9

Bases: 54,648 for 2017-18 and 60,054 for 2016-17

More than half of employers (52%) delivered apprenticeship for young people, aged 16-18, and two-thirds delivered training to adult apprentices (66%) with 18% of employers covering both age groups. The majority of employers delivered either Level 2 or 3 apprenticeships only (36% each), and six per cent delivered Level 4 only. One in five employers delivered apprenticeships at more than one level (22%).

Training offered to employees spans a diverse range of sector subject areas (SSAs). The most common SSAs reported by employers, who are delivering apprenticeships were Business, Administration and Law (31%), Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies (23%) and Health, Public Services Care (21%), which is similar to the 2016 to 2017 survey.

**Figure 13: Percentage of respondents delivering apprenticeships by sector subject area**



Base: 54,648 (Figures sum to more than 100% because some employers deliver multiple sector subject areas)

## 4. Get in touch

### Media enquiries

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## Department for Education

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download hyperlink to web address <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fe-choices>

Reference: FE Choices Employer Satisfaction Survey 2017 to 2018



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