



Department  
for Business  
Innovation & Skills

BIS RESEARCH PAPER NUMBER 222

Traineeships: First year process  
evaluation

MARCH 2015

RESEARCH

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Research paper number 222

March 2015

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## **Acknowledgements**

The authors would like to thank the research team at BIS for their support during the project, in particular Sophie Gerrard and Katya Williams.

Above all, we would like to thank the providers, employers and trainees who gave up their time to take part in this survey.

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# Summary

## Background and methodology

This executive summary presents the topline findings of the Traineeship Process Evaluation conducted in 2014. The evaluation explored the views and experiences of:

- 1,590 trainees who commenced a traineeship programme between August 2013 and July 2014.
- 200 providers delivering the traineeship programme between August 2013 and July 2014.
- 218 employers participating in the traineeship programme between August 2013 and July 2014.

The aim of the research is to understand learner, provider and employer view points on how the implementation of traineeships is working, risks to successful implementation and barriers to delivery.

Fieldwork took place between September and November 2014.

## Key characteristics

Before they started their traineeship, most **trainees** were either studying (39%) or looking for work (36%), while 9% said they were working (4% full-time, 5% part-time) and 4% were in an unpaid job or volunteering. Other trainees said they were 'doing something else' (7%) or 'not doing anything' (6%). These findings differ by age group, with 16-18 year olds more likely to have been in full-time education prior to the traineeship (43% compared with 18% of those aged 19+), and less likely to have been looking for work (23% compared with 50%). It is important to note that the age of trainees, quoted throughout the summary, reflects trainees' age at the time of the survey. This may not therefore be the same age they joined the programme. Around two in five trainees (42%) said they had previous work experience before starting their traineeship, including 32% who had done paid full-time or part-time work.

Around half of the trainees in the sample (48%) said that they were qualified to Level 2 before the traineeship, and 15% said they were qualified to Level 3 or above. One in four (25%) said they were qualified to Level 1 and 5% to Entry Level. Previous studies exploring qualification levels of respondents have found that qualification levels can be overstated in an interview situation because of issues with recall during the interview and in particular the complexity of identifying which qualifications constitute a full Level 2 or 3. This figure may also include trainees who hold a level 2 qualification but not a maths and/or an English GCSE. Eligibility guidelines for those aged over 18 restrict the

programme to those with less than a full Level 2 qualification<sup>1</sup>, but over half of trainees in this age group (63%) said they had a full Level 2 or higher.

**Providers** were asked about the number of learners they work with in total, across all training provision, to help gauge their size. There is a broad range: the number of learners ranged from under 100 (11% of providers) to 5,000 or more (12%).

Since the programme started in August 2013, providers had worked with an average of 32 trainees. This ranged from fewer than 10 (27%) to 50 or more (19%). Two in five providers (40%) said that the number of trainees that had started with them was in line with their expectations. However, a greater proportion (53%) said that they were expecting more trainees, while just 5% were expecting a smaller number.

Most providers said that they offered, or planned to offer, traineeship provision specifically for particular groups, most commonly young people who are NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) (84%) or benefit claimants (81%), as well as young people with learning disabilities (64%), young people with Special Education Needs (SEN) (64%) and Black and minority ethnic young people (62%).

The survey included **employers** that had been involved in providing traineeships at some point since the start of the programme. In 35% of cases, the employer offered at least one of the training elements in addition to work experience, while the remainder offered the work experience element only.

Many of the **employers** that offered work experience placements for traineeships were small<sup>2</sup>: Seven in ten (70%) had fewer than 25 employees at the workplace, and one in six workplaces had fewer than 5 employees. The largest employers - with 50 or more employees on-site - made up 17% of the sample of employers offering traineeships. Overall, the size profile of employers offering traineeships is very similar to the profile of employers offering apprenticeships.

In terms of industry sector, a large proportion of employers were in health and social work activities (29%, including 16% specifically in children's day-care activities), while 15% were in education. According to **trainees**, the actual type of work they did was most commonly in retail (8%), nursery (7%) or other childcare (5%), care home provision or caring (4%), school-age education (3%), car manufacturing (3%) and gym or fitness instruction (3%). One in three **employers** (33%) had hosted one trainee since the start of the programme, while at the other extreme one in six employers (17%) said that 10 or more trainees had started a placement with them since the start of the programme. The average number of trainees per employer was 8, ranging from 13 on average among employers with 25 or more staff on site, compared with an average of 6 among employers with fewer

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<sup>1</sup> This was part of the eligibility requirements at the time of the survey. They were revised in January 2015.

<sup>2</sup> As employer records are not always returned until the end of the academic year the sample may not reflect the entire employer population involved in delivering traineeships between August 2013 and July 2014.

than 25 staff. The average number was also higher among employers who provided training elements as well as work experience (17 compared with an average of 4 trainees among employers who only offered the work experience element).

In the majority of cases (67%), employers said that the number of trainees that had started a placement with them was in line with their expectations. However, 20% said they had expected more trainees, while 6% had not expected as many.

## Referral process

Almost one in three **trainees** (31%) said that they applied directly for a traineeship, without any help. The three main referral routes were through a college or learning provider (25%), Jobcentre Plus (18%) or a careers advisor, Next Step or Connexions service (18%).

Trainees first heard about traineeships through a school, college or learning provider (23%), friends or family (17%), Jobcentre Plus (16%) or a Careers Advisor, Next Step or Connexions Service (12%). Some respondents used online sources, such as the apprenticeship website (8%) or another website (8%). An additional 1% said they found out about the scheme through vacancies on the apprenticeships vacancy system.

Looking in more detail at trainees who said they applied directly, these respondents were most likely to have found out about the scheme either from friends or family (30%) or the Internet: 15% from the apprenticeships website and a further 1% from vacancies on the apprenticeships vacancy system, and 16% from other websites.

Around one in four **providers** (24%) said that none of their trainees had applied directly, while at the other extreme 21% said that all of their trainees had applied directly (the remainder were somewhere in between). Referrals to providers were most commonly from Jobcentre Plus (59% had received referrals from this source) or local government services (47%).

Just under half of all providers (47%) said that they had accepted all of the trainees that had applied or had been referred to them, while 51% said that they had rejected some potential trainees. Among those who had rejected a trainee, rejections were most commonly on the basis of candidate's commitment to or enthusiasm about the traineeship (60%), concerns about their ability to cope with the work experience element (46%) and the perceived likelihood of the candidate being ready for employment or an apprenticeship within 6 months (45%). Providers who said they had rejected some candidates were then asked if they had rejected young people aged 19 or over already qualified to level 2 (66% had) as well as those aged 16-18 and qualified to level 3 (48% had).

The majority of **employers** said that trainees were always referred to them by colleges or training providers (62%). However, 25% of employers said trainees sometimes came to them directly, while 10% said that trainees always came directly. Among employers who also offered at least one of the training elements in addition to work experience, 45% said that trainees always or sometimes came to them directly, compared with 29% of those who offered work experience only.

Around a third of all employers (32%) said that they had expected more referrals than they had actually received, while 6% had expected fewer referrals. The majority (55%) said that the number of referrals matched their expectations.

When asked about the **minimum education level of trainees** who were referred, the majority of employers said this was at level one or below (68%). Around one in four employers (26%) said that GCSEs (level unspecified) were the minimum education level held by referrals and 6% said the minimum education level held was level 2 or above (excluding GCSEs). This is different to the figures reported by trainees themselves as they are on an individual level, rather than employer/provider responses which are averages across all trainees.

## Motivations, information, guidance and advice

When asked what benefits they thought they would gain from the traineeship, **trainees** were most likely to mention good work experience (41%), gaining a qualification (24%) and increasing their chances of getting paid work (15%).

In terms of the different elements of the traineeship, the work experience placement was most frequently seen as the most important in helping trainees to decide to apply (51%), followed by the work preparation training (30%) and English and maths teaching (15%).

The majority of trainees (71%) said that, they had discussed the content of the traineeship with the college or training provider before they started. 52% said their views had been taken into account a great deal, and a further 29% said their views were taken into account 'a little'.

**Providers** are most likely to have received guidance or advice about traineeships from the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) website (95%), while 62% said they had contacted the SFA for additional guidance or advice, and 46% had contacted the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS).

The SFA website was also the most common source of guidance or advice for **employers** (38%), while 29% of employers said they had contacted providers for guidance or advice.

The majority of **providers and employers** said that the guidance or advice they received was clear. This applies to the SFA website (83% of providers and 90% of employers said this was very or fairly clear), as well as those who contacted the SFA (82% and 83% respectively found this very or fairly clear) or the NAS (77% and 83% respectively).

## Structure and content

Traineeships are intended to last for a maximum of 6 months. However, as could be expected in a programme which is designed to be tailored, there is considerable variation in length. One in six **trainees** (16%) said that it lasted (or was supposed to last) more than 6 months, while the average duration was 18 weeks. This is however likely to be due to recall issues as a re-contact exercise with a small number of trainees revealed that some had difficulty identifying the length of their traineeship. For example, 5 out of the 7 trainees

re-contacted revealed their traineeship lasted six months, having previously reported the traineeship lasted more than six months. Three of these five trainees reported that their English and maths training lasted beyond the six month traineeship, which is permitted within the delivery guidelines for traineeships, so this may be the case for a number of trainees reporting extended stays. The figures given by **providers** were more in line with expectations: providers mostly said that traineeships normally lasted between 6 and 12 weeks (32%) or between 13 and 26 weeks (65%). Their average reported duration was 17 weeks.

The provider figures are likely to be more reliable than the trainee figures (at least in relation to average durations), because providers deal with a large number of traineeships on an on-going basis. However, the trainee figures reflect individual experiences, and suggest that some trainees may actually have a shorter or longer duration than is intended.

As might be expected, work experience elements were shorter when they were delivered as discrete blocks, rather than for the duration of the whole traineeship. Where they were delivered in discrete blocks, 16% of providers said that they lasted less than 6 weeks and 59% said they lasted (on average) between 6 and 12 weeks. By contrast, where work experience elements ran for the duration of the whole traineeship, most providers said that they lasted between 13 and 26 weeks (66%).

The other main elements of the traineeship are English and maths training and work preparation training. These elements often run for the duration of the whole traineeship (in 77% and 79% of cases respectively according to trainees), and tend to involve a small number of hours per week.

## Programme delivery

The vast majority of **providers** said that they were working in partnership with local employers (87%), while more than half (54%) said they were working with voluntary and community organisations to deliver elements of traineeships, and 45% were working in partnership with local government services. Around one in four (24%) were working with other training providers.

Around half of providers (51%) said that they had fully tailored the design of the traineeship programme to individual trainees, while 41% said they had tailored the programme 'to a certain extent'. Just 8% said that they offered a single package.

The majority of **employers** said they had used mainly existing provision for their traineeships (67%), while 24% said they had developed mainly new provision specifically for traineeships. Employers were more likely to say they had developed new provision (either mainly or equally with existing provision) if they had delivered the training elements, in addition to the work experience element (47% of those who had delivered at least one training element, compared with 20% of those who had only delivered work experience).

The majority of **trainees** (77%) said they were offered additional support as part of their traineeship, involving either careers' guidance (60%), mentoring (55%) or support outside their normal working or teaching hours (49%).



Among **trainees** who completed their time on the traineeship, 39% said that they received a formal reference from the organisation that provided the work experience placement. More than half (63%) said they received feedback from the employer at the end of their traineeship. **Employers** were more likely than trainees to say that these things had been provided: 91% said that they offered trainees written references at the end of the traineeship, and 86% said they offered an exit interview/performance review. This difference may result from employers giving an aggregated response based on all the trainees that had, whereas trainees are reporting on their individual experiences.

## Completing the traineeship

Due to the wide range of dates which trainees commenced their traineeship (Aug 2013 to Jul 2014), the date of completion will also vary across a wide time period. At the time of the survey, the majority of **trainees** in the sample (59%) had completed their traineeship, while 30% left early and 11% were still on the traineeship.

Where trainees left the traineeship early, the reasons can broadly be divided into stopping the traineeship when they found a job (9% of all trainees); withdrawing from the traineeship early e.g. for health or personal reasons, or because they didn't like it (15% of all trainees) and the traineeship being terminated early (6% of all trainees). Elements mentioned by trainees when they said they did not like the traineeship included the work experience placement, English and maths training, the work preparation training, travelling to and from the placement, and the hours they worked.

## Perceptions of traineeship programme

**Trainees** were generally very positive about their time on the traineeship. Four in five (79%) were satisfied overall, and a similar proportion were satisfied with the individual elements (between 73% and 81% were satisfied). Trainees were also likely to say that the traineeship at least matched their expectations (82%), with 54% saying it exceeded their expectations. Attitudes were generally less positive among trainees who did not complete their traineeship.

Views were also positive about the work experience element. At least 80% of trainees were satisfied with different aspects of their work experience.

The majority of trainees thought that the time spent on the training elements was about right and that the level of the training was about right for them. However, 25% thought that the English and maths training was too easy, and 21% said the same about the work preparation training. Providers reported offering a range of English and maths provision, from Entry Level 1 to GCSE/ above Level 2 with the qualitative interviews finding that providers used initial assessment tools to determine the appropriate level of study for trainees.

Most employers had a positive impression of the trainees they had worked with. A quarter of **employers** said that the quality of trainees they received was better than they had expected, while a further 54% said they were in line with expectations; one in six (17%) said they were worse than expected.

The main improvements to the programme that were suggested by **providers and employers** were to offer a financial incentive to participating trainees, and to improve the promotion or advertising of the programme.

## Early outcomes and perceived impact

The **trainees** in the sample had participated in the programme over a timescale dating back to 2013 and others were still on the traineeship at the time of fieldwork. At the time of the survey, half (50%) of the trainees who had left or completed the traineeship were either on an apprenticeship (22%) or in work (28%). A further 17% were in training or education. These activities can be said to represent 'positive' outcomes, and when combined together, they account for two-thirds (67%) of those who had left or completed a traineeship. The remainder were either looking for work (26%) or doing something else (7%).

Of those who were in work or on an apprenticeship, 42% were still with the same organisation where they did their work experience placement, 18% elsewhere in the same industry and 39% in another organisation.

Trainees gave positive feedback on the impact the traineeship had made on their jobsearch activities. Four in five trainees (80%) said that the support they received during the work preparation training had helped to improve their jobsearch. Among trainees who had made applications for a job or an apprenticeship, either during or since the traineeship, 59% said that they were sending out more job applications per week than before the traineeship, and 58% said that they had applied for jobs that they had never considered applying for previously, as a result of attending the traineeship.

Trainees felt they had gained a number of positive benefits from their time on the traineeship: 57% said that the experience they had gained had greatly improved their chances of getting paid work. In addition, trainees felt that the traineeship had made a positive impact on their confidence and readiness for work. For example, 60% felt that it had motivated them a lot to look for work.

Nearly all **providers** (98%) said that they offered trainees an interview at the end of the traineeship. Usually, interviews were for a real position (93%), while 5% offered only a mock or practice interview. Similarly, the majority of **employers** (84%) said that they offered trainees an interview at the end of the traineeship, and most employers offered an interview for a real position (75%) rather than just a mock or practice interview (9%).

**Employers and providers** had very positive views about the impact of traineeships. Almost all respondents (98% of providers and 97% of employers) agreed that traineeships allow young people to develop new skills that will help them find paid jobs and apprenticeships, while almost as many (84% of providers and 94% of employers) that traineeships are an effective way of increasing young people's chances of finding paid jobs and apprenticeships.

## Qualitative case study findings

The specific aim of the qualitative case studies in Year 1 was to conduct a process evaluation to build up an in-depth picture of initial implementation and delivery of traineeships. We used a case study approach to provide a holistic and comprehensive overview of the programme's delivery. We undertook six case studies (March – September 2014) across England to create a full picture of the contexts of provision. Interviews were undertaken with: 12 providers; 20 trainees; 11 employers; and, 12 local referral agencies (including six interviews with local JCP staff).

Seven interviews were also conducted with providers who were eligible to offer the programme but decided not to do so. The interviews explore the reasons why eligible providers do not intend to deliver provision.

Overall the traineeships are perceived as working well by providers, employers, referral agencies and trainees.

**Trainees** valued the opportunity to experience a high quality placement that gave them experience and skills to gain an apprenticeship or employment.

*"Well I will have experience more than anything, so when I go for a job interview and they ask me what experience I have I can say yes I have done this. I had a traineeship."* (Damien<sup>3</sup>, Hospitality/Catering/Healthcare/Retail)

Trainees most valued work preparation and English and maths lessons when they were taught via engaging and diverse activities, which were relevant to the work place and their chosen sector of interest. However, there were barriers to learning when delivered via mixed ability teaching, which led to differences in trainees' levels of competence, skills and engagement within classes.

It was also important for trainees that they were matched to a placement that aligned with their interests and that there was flexibility to change the placement when the trainee and the employer were not perceived as a good match.

Typically, trainees who had completed their work placements went through exit interviews and moved on to apprenticeships and employment. Trainees at the earlier stages of the programme raised concerns about the clarity of communication about the next steps into apprenticeships, and in some cases had expectations of a guaranteed apprenticeship.

*"Obviously the weeks have gone by and I've got offered an apprenticeship. I was so happy, thank you so much. It was life-changing".* (Sophia, Hairdressing)

**Providers** had experienced initial barriers to set up and had been unclear about how to initially deliver the programme. It was felt that more external guidance would have been beneficial to support providers who were first to deliver the programme. Providers wanted

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<sup>3</sup> We have used pseudonyms to maintain participants' anonymity.

further guidance on key aspects of setup and delivery, such as the length and timing of work placements, accreditation and qualification options, and how could they provide evidence of trainee learning in the work placement.

Self-referral was the main pathway into traineeships for providers within the case studies. Providers reported low numbers of referrals via external agencies. Other referrals were through existing links via referral agencies, apprenticeship programmes and wider engagement and marketing activities. There were challenges in building awareness and relationships with **referral agencies**, which led to delayed starts to delivery and lower numbers of young people enrolling on the programme than providers initially expected.

Delivery of the programme was generally regarded as working well with structured and tailored models implemented for each element of the programme - English and maths, work preparation and work placement.

*“If someone came in with GCSE’s at Grade C and was not confident about their skills, we will tailor their course and then look at upskilling, so we have got that there for them as well”. (Provider, Horticultural/Retail)*

Areas for key learning were highlighted around ensuring greater opportunities to build on links with employer and further integrate each element of the programme into the work context.

Providers reported four key elements to providing a good quality placement:

- Quick movement from classroom to work placement to maintain the trainee’s engagement and enable the trainee to put the theory learnt within their work preparation sessions into practice within the work environment.
- Regular contact to oversee that the employer is providing learning and development; these were conducted via informal phone calls, regular face-face visits, and more formal assessments and reviews.

*“We go out and meet all of our employers, they are given a traineeship handbook and we explain about traineeships. Employers are quite vocal as well, so as soon as there are any issues they will always come straight to us.” (Provider, Childcare/ Business Administration)*

- Structured work books and progress diaries filled in by trainees alongside their employers to provide a joint record of aims and achievements.
- Mentoring and supervision provided by the employers (or in some case by existing apprentices) to allow the trainee to reflect on their ‘on the job’ experience and discuss their longer term development of skills or qualities required for employment.

**Employers** valued the opportunity to offer work placements because they provided a mutual opportunity to test and trial the relationship for both the employer and trainee. However, there were concerns about the limited financial reward for young people.

Employers had some confusion about differences between the traineeship and apprenticeship programmes, and wanted greater clarity on the next steps to progress the young person into an apprenticeship.

*"...It is like an interview period and then if you've got a place at the end of their traineeship you could actually put them onto a modern apprenticeship... the younger the person the better for me."* (Employer, Hairdressing)

All the case studies were in the earlier stages of the programme, with their first or second cohorts completing their work placements. Early progression routes were apprenticeships and employment with the employer, full time education and further learning or seeking employment in other sectors. There had also been early movement to apprenticeships (as early as six weeks) when employers were confident in the progress and commitment of the trainee and wanted to secure them as an employee.

**Providers who decided not to participate in** traineeships, did so largely due to their perceptions of the impact of delivering a new and untested programme on their resources and concerns about whether they had the full expertise to roll out all elements of the programme.

# Chapter 1. Introduction

## Chapter 1.1. Policy context

Traineeships are an education and training programme available for young people aged 16-24 and are delivered as a partnership between employers and education and training providers.

Traineeships were introduced in August 2013, following publication of the Framework for Delivery for 16-19 year olds in May 2013. This was revised in July 2013 to extend the programme to 16-23 year olds<sup>4</sup>. The programme was developed 'to help young people who are focused on getting an apprenticeship or sustainable job but who do not yet have the skills or experience to compete successfully for vacancies'. In 2014/15 the funding eligibility was extended to include 24-year olds, making traineeships available to young people aged 16-24 inclusive.

### Chapter 1.1.1. Who are traineeships for?

The core target group for traineeships are young people who:

- are not currently in a job and have little work experience, but who are focused on work or the prospect of it;
- are 16-19 and are qualified below Level 3 or 19-24 and have not yet achieved a full Level 2 qualification; and
- providers and employers believe have a reasonable chance of being ready for employment or an apprenticeship within six months of engaging in a traineeship.

There have been changes to the eligibility criteria since the survey was conducted.<sup>5</sup> Traineeships are not intended for the 'most disengaged' for which other more intensive schemes are available, including the Youth Contract and some local trailblazer programmes, such as Day One Support for Young People – DOSfYP (which was piloted by the Department for Work and Pensions in London), or for young people who already have the skills and experience to find an apprenticeship or paid work.

### Chapter 1.1.2. What do traineeships provide?

The high degree of flexibility and freedom in the way the programme has been designed allows providers and employers to tailor traineeships to the needs of individual trainees as well as local employers. This flexibility is also reflected in the range of organisations that are involved in referring trainees and delivering traineeships – including Jobcentre Plus (JCP), local authorities, schools, colleges, Youth Contract providers, National Careers Service advisers and National Citizen Service providers.

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4 Traineeships: Supporting young people to develop the skills for Apprenticeships and sustainable employment (BIS, July 2013).

5 [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/402249/Funding\\_Rules\\_2015\\_to\\_2016.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/402249/Funding_Rules_2015_to_2016.pdf)

There are three main components of traineeships, acknowledging that barriers to finding paid work (including apprenticeships) are often multi-faceted:

1. High quality work experience placement: Developing workplace skills
2. A focused period of work preparation training: Including CV writing, job search skills and interview preparation to help young people with the practicalities of finding and securing work.
3. English and maths training: To ensure trainees have, or are working towards, the levels of literacy and numeracy required in the workplace.

Traineeships are intended to last up to a maximum of six months. The aim of traineeships is to secure young people's progression to an apprenticeship or sustainable employment as quickly as possible. The programme is built around several of the same principles as apprenticeships; however, traineeships are not jobs (unlike apprenticeships) so offer unpaid work experience and the programme is limited to young people rather than the wider adult population. In this sense, traineeships will act as a stepping stone towards apprenticeships for some young people.

Currently only providers judged to be Outstanding or Good by Ofsted can deliver traineeships.

## **Chapter 1.2. Aims of the research**

The aim of the research was to understand learner, provider and employer view points on how the implementation of traineeships is working, risks to successful implementation and barriers to delivery.

This research is part of a wider programme of research undertaken for BIS that aims to evaluate whether traineeships offer a cost effective way of supporting young people into apprenticeships, sustainable employment or further learning.

## **Chapter 1.3. Methodology**

### **Chapter 1.3.1. Survey of trainees**

Interviews were conducted by telephone, using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI). In total, 1,590 interviews were conducted between September 2014 and November 2014 with trainees who had participated in the programme between August 2013 and July 2014. The response rate was 59%.

The sample frame of trainees was derived from the Individual Learner Record (ILR) files and included all trainees who registered on a traineeship programme between August 2013 and July 2014. All trainees with valid contact details agreeing to be contacted by post and telephone were selected to take part in the survey.

All sampled trainees were sent an advance letter before the start of fieldwork, which explained the purpose of the study, reasons for their inclusion in the research and the form that the survey would take. Respondents were invited to call TNS BMRB if they wished to enquire about further details of the research, or if they did not wish to take part.



A small pilot was conducted in the week commencing 25<sup>th</sup> August 2014, covering 30 interviews.

The distributions of age, gender, ethnicity, and working status within the proxy population were treated as weighting targets for the calibration of the survey data.

### **Chapter 1.3.2. Survey of providers and employers**

Interviews were conducted by telephone, using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI). In total, 200 interviews were conducted with providers delivering the traineeship programme and 218 interviews with employers participating in the traineeship programme between September 2014 and November 2014.

The response rate for providers was 83% and the response rate for employers was 55%.

In-scope providers were identified using the Individual Learner Records (ILR) which contains a flag to identify the provider for each trainee. The list of in-scope providers was matched to the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) records to append providers' telephone numbers and addresses. Providers taking part in previous research about traineeships were removed from the sample. All other providers with contact details delivering the programme between August 2013 and July 2014 were selected to take part in the survey.

A list of eligible employers and their contact details were obtained from the Employer Data Service (EDS)<sup>6</sup>. All eligible employers with contact details participating in the programme between August 2013 and July 2014 were selected to take part in the survey.

Sampled providers and employers were sent an advance letter before the start of fieldwork, which explained the purpose of the study, reasons for their inclusion in the research and the form that the survey would take. Respondents were invited to call TNS BMRB if they wished to enquire about further details of the research, or if they did not wish to take part.

A small pilot was conducted in the week commencing 25<sup>th</sup> August 2014, covering 40 interviews (20 provider interviews and 20 employer interviews).

As there was a lack of a suitable sample frame for weighting the data, the final employer and provider dataset could not be weighted.

When interpreting the findings, it should be borne in mind that:

- the survey is based on a sample of trainees, providers and employers who participated in /delivered the traineeship programme between August 2013 and July 2014.

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<sup>6</sup> A large proportion of records on the EDS were blank. This is thought to be because the EDS files are not always returned until the end of the academic year and so the employers contacted may not reflect the entire employer population involved in delivering traineeships.



- Findings may be subject to re-call issues, particularly for trainees who began their traineeship at the beginning of the programme being rolled out.
- There are some discrepancies between findings in the employer and provider survey and trainee survey. This may be due to trainees reporting their individual experience whereas employers and providers provided an aggregated view across all the trainees they have taken on.
- Ages reported in the report represent age at time of survey, not necessarily age at time of traineeship.
- Traineeships policy continues to evolve as we move into the second year of delivery.

# Chapter 2. Key characteristics

This chapter examines the key characteristics of trainees, providers and employers. This gives an insight into the types of individuals and organisations that are involved in the programme, and also provides context for the later findings on experiences of traineeships.

## Chapter 2.1. Trainees

In this section, we examine the demographic profile of trainees, their background and their previous experience of work and education. This section also looks at the length of time trainees spent on a traineeship and whether they completed it. Ages reported are age at time of survey, not necessarily age at time of traineeship.

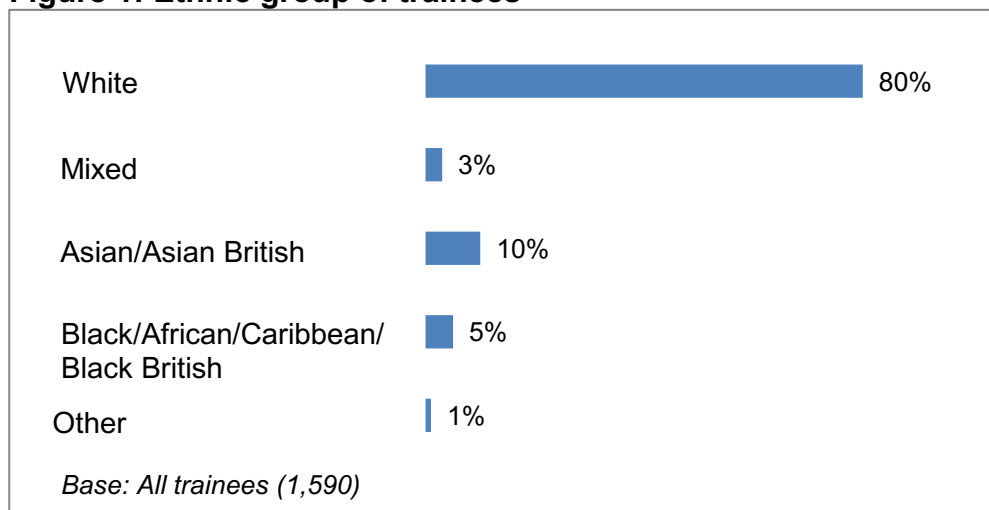
### Chapter 2.1.1. Profile of trainees

The sample of trainees was approximately evenly split between 16-18 year olds (54%) and those aged 19 or over (46%). There was also a fairly even gender split (53% male, 47% female).

Almost half of trainees (45%) said that they left full-time education by the age of 16, while 40% left at the age of 17 or 18, and 13% said they continued full-time education until the age of 19 or above.

Four in five trainees in the sample were White (80%); further details are shown below in Figure 1. This profile is very similar to the wider population of 16-24 year olds in England<sup>7</sup>.

**Figure 1: Ethnic group of trainees**



<sup>7</sup> In the latest available statistics (Quarterly Labour Force Survey, July - September, 2014), the population of 16-24 year olds in England are in the following ethnic groups: White 82%, Mixed 3%, Asian 9%, Black 4%, Other group 2%.

Around one in eight trainees (12%) said that they had a physical or mental health condition or illness lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more. This is lower than the proportion of 16-24 year olds in the wider population England (18%)<sup>8</sup>.

### Chapter 2.1.2. Activity and experience prior to traineeship

Immediately prior to starting their traineeship, trainees were likely to be either studying (31% were studying full-time and 8% part-time) or looking for work (36%), while 9% said they were working (4% full-time, 5% part-time)<sup>9</sup>, and 4% were in an unpaid job or volunteering. Other trainees said they were 'doing something else' (7%) or 'not doing anything' (6%).

These findings differ by age group: 16-18 year olds were more likely than those aged 19 or over to have been in full-time education prior to the traineeship (43% compared with 18%), and were less likely to have been looking for work (23% compared with 50%). In addition, those aged 16-18 were slightly less likely to have been working prior to their traineeship (7% compared with 10%).

Around half of the trainees in the sample (48%) said that they were **qualified** to Level 2 before the traineeship, and 15% said they were qualified to Level 3 or above. One in four (25%) said they were qualified to Level 1 and 5% to Entry Level (6% were not able to give an answer). Previous studies exploring qualification levels of respondents have found that qualification levels can be overstated in an interview situation because of issues with recall during the interview and in particular the complexity of identifying which qualifications constitute a full Level 2 or 3. This figure may also include trainees who hold a level 2 qualification but not a maths and/or an English GCSE.

A large majority of trainees were **living with parents** at the time they started the traineeship (87%).

Just over a third of trainees (36%) said they were **receiving benefits** at the time they were referred to or applied for the traineeship, most commonly Jobseeker's Allowance (73% of those who were receiving benefits).

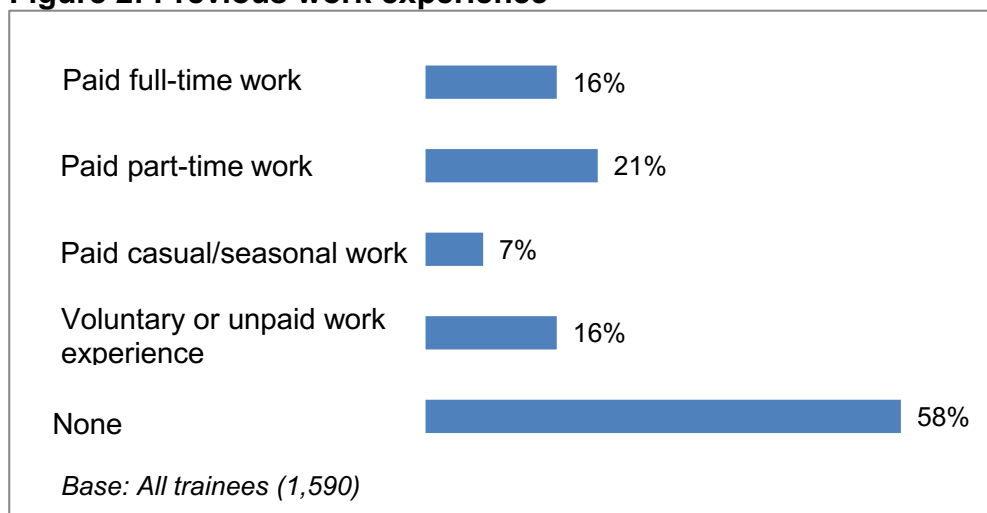
Around two in five trainees (42%) said that they had done **work of some kind** before starting their traineeship, including 32% who had done paid full-time or part-time work. Trainees also had experience of paid casual or seasonal work (7%) and voluntary or unpaid work experience (16%); see Figure 2 for details.

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<sup>8</sup> Data from Quarterly Labour Force Survey, July - September, 2014

<sup>9</sup> Traineeships are intended to be offered to young people who are not in work, although this does not apply to those working less than 16 hours per week.

**Figure 2: Previous work experience**



Please note that percentages can sum to more than 100% as respondents were able to give more than one answer

Around half of trainees (51%) said that they had applied for an apprenticeship at some point before starting their traineeship, and of these 30% said they were offered an apprenticeship (this equates to 16% of all trainees). It is unclear from the survey whether trainees were referring to the offer of an actual apprenticeship or the opportunity to apply for one.

### Chapter 2.1.3. Length and completion status

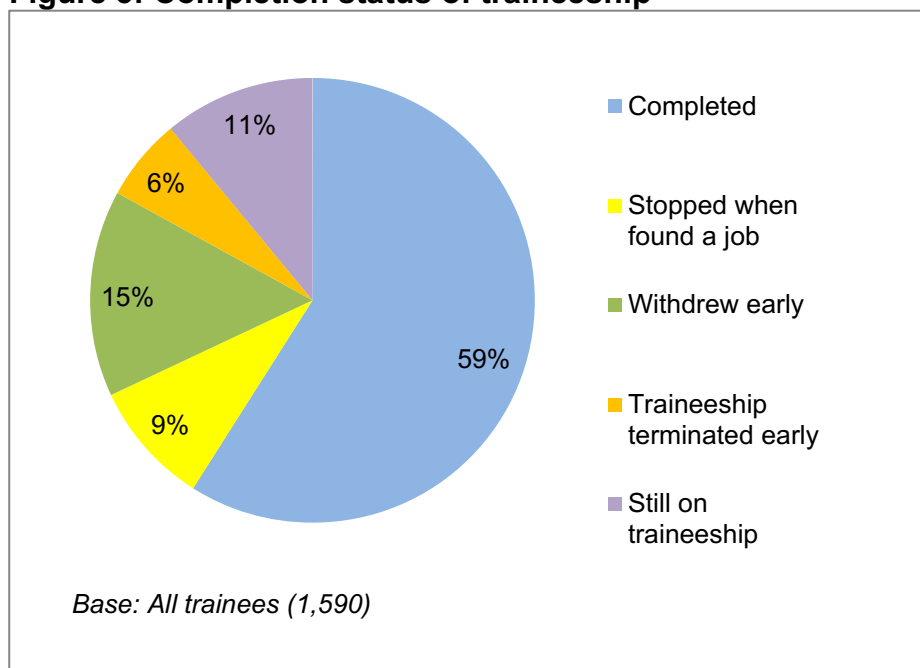
Traineeships are intended to last for a maximum of 6 months. When asked about the **length of their traineeships**, one in six trainees (16%) said that it lasted (or was supposed to last) more than 6 months, although trainees were most likely to say that it lasted either between 5 and 12 weeks (33%) or between 3 and 6 months (37%), while 7% said that it lasted no more than 4 weeks. The average duration was 18 weeks. These findings differ from those given by providers; this is discussed further below. This variation is likely to be due to recall issues as a re-contact exercise with a small number of trainees revealed that some had difficulty identifying the length of their traineeship. For example, when re-contacted, 5 out of the 7 trainees contacted revealed their traineeship lasted six months, having previously reported the traineeship lasted more than six months.

The sample included 59% of trainees who had **completed their traineeship**, 30% who left early and 11% who were still on the traineeship at the time of the survey. There were no differences in completion rate by trainee characteristics (e.g. by age or gender).

Trainees who left early had often spent a substantial amount of time on the traineeship before leaving. Around a third (31%) of these trainees said they had spent at least three months on the traineeship before leaving, while 37% spent between 1 and 3 months and 23% spent less than a month on the traineeship (9% did not know).

As shown in Figure 3, where trainees left the traineeship early, the reasons can broadly be divided into stopping the traineeship when they found a job (9% of all trainees), withdrawing from the traineeship early (15%) and the traineeship being terminated early (6%).

**Figure 3: Completion status of traineeship**



If trainees had withdrawn early or said the traineeship was terminated, they were asked for the specific reasons. These mostly fall into three categories:

- Going on to a different activity, including 8% who left to go into another form of education, 6% who went on to a different type of training, and 6% who received a paid job offer.
- Leaving because they did not like the traineeship; this was most commonly because of the work experience placement specifically (11%).
- Personal reasons, such as health problems (8%) or other personal reasons (11%).

Where respondents said specifically that the traineeship was terminated, this was either because of problems during the traineeship (e.g. 5% had 'problems with the employer' and 4% had other problems with the traineeship); because the employer didn't 'need them any more' (12%); because the employer or provider 'shut down' (7%); or because of the various reasons noted above (i.e. moving to a different activity, not liking the traineeship or personal reasons).

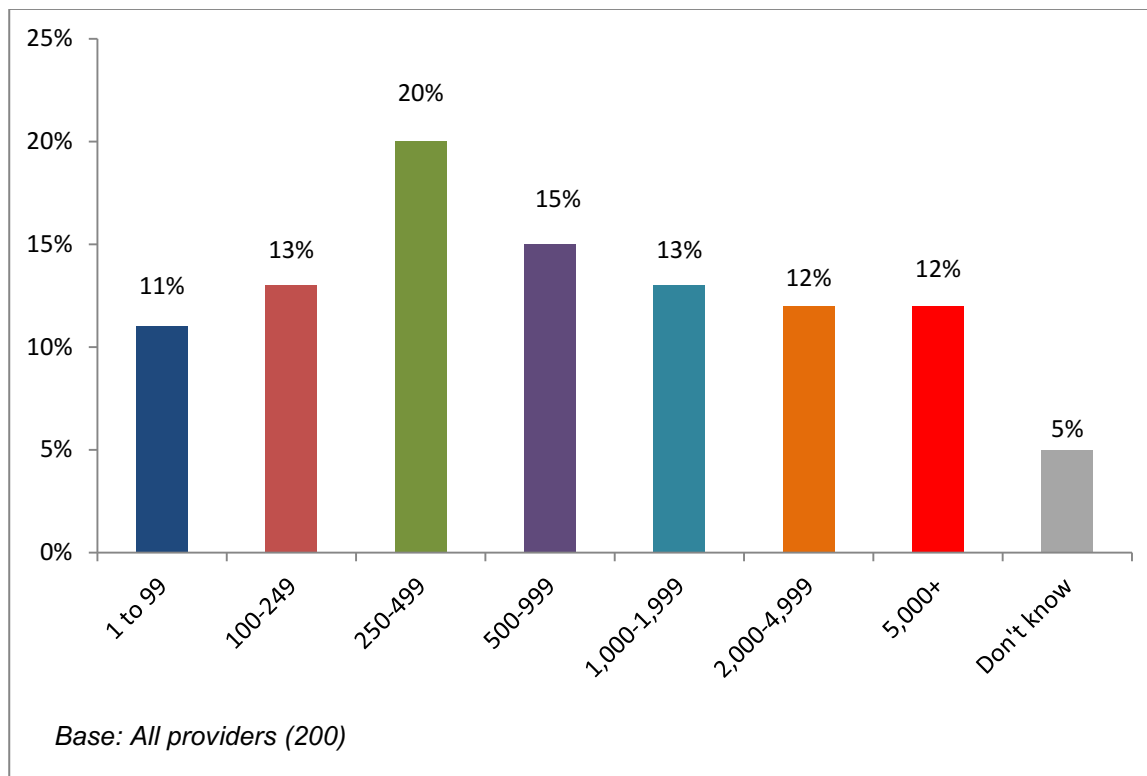
## Chapter 2.2. Providers

### Chapter 2.2.1. Provider profile

This section examines the characteristics of providers in terms of the number of learners they work with and the nature of the provision. These findings cover all training provision, not just the provision related to the traineeships offer.

Providers were asked about the number of learners they work with in total, across all training provision. There is a broad range: the number of learners ranged from under 100 (11%) to 5,000 or more (12%).

**Figure 4: Total number of learners (all provision)**



Nearly all providers said that they offer apprenticeships (96%), vocational training and qualifications (93%), and adult basic or functional skills training (90%). Providers were less likely to offer provision for GCSEs (44%), HNDs or HNCs (26%) or A-levels (20%).

Less than half of providers said that they delivered training for under 16s (41%), but nearly all providers delivered training for older age groups, specifically: 16-18s (98%), 19-24s (97%) and those aged 25 or over (91%).

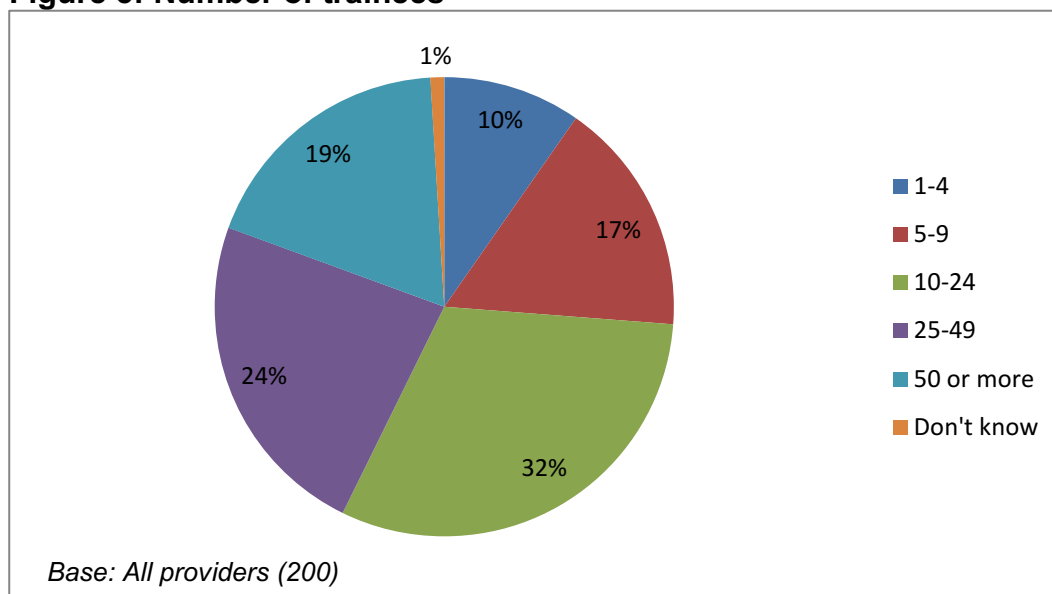
Most of the providers said that they offered **specialist training provision**, with 73% offering provision for learners with learning disabilities and a similar proportion (72%) offering training for learners with special educational needs. Two in five (41%) offered provision for ESOL learners. Just one in six providers (16%) said they did not offer any specialist provision for these groups.

### Chapter 2.2.2. Traineeship offer

Providers were asked how many trainees had started with them in total since the programme started in August 2013. Around one in four (27%) had worked with fewer than

10 trainees, whereas 19% said that 50 or more trainees had started with them (see Figure 5 for details). The average number of trainees per provider was 32.

**Figure 5: Number of trainees**

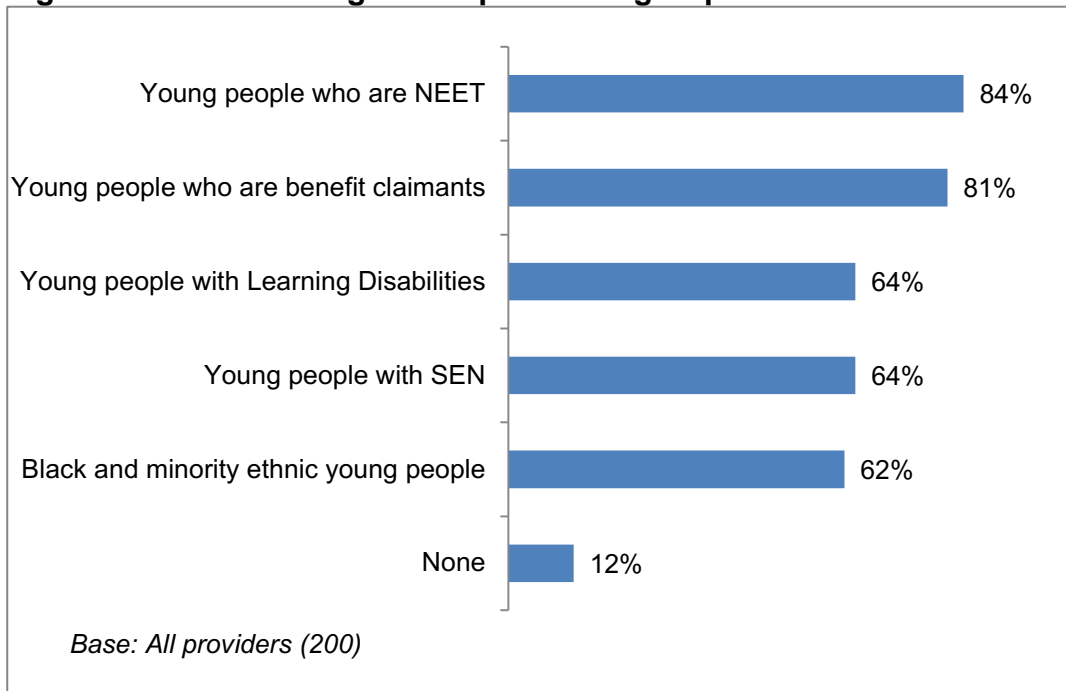


Two in five providers (40%) said that the number of trainees that had started with them was in line with their expectations. However, a greater proportion (53%) said that they were expecting more trainees, while just 5% were expecting a smaller number (3% did not know).

The majority of providers (85%) said they were offering traineeships to both 16-18 year olds and 19-23 year olds. The remainder offered traineeships either to 16-18 year olds only (11%) or to 19-23 year olds only (4%).

Most providers said that they offered, or planned to offer, traineeship provision that was **targeted at particular groups**, most commonly young people who are NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) (84%) or benefit claimants (81%). Around two in three had provision that was targeted at young people with learning disabilities (64%), and a similar proportion said they had provision that was targeted at young people with Special Education Needs (SEN) (64%) or on Black and minority ethnic young people (62%).

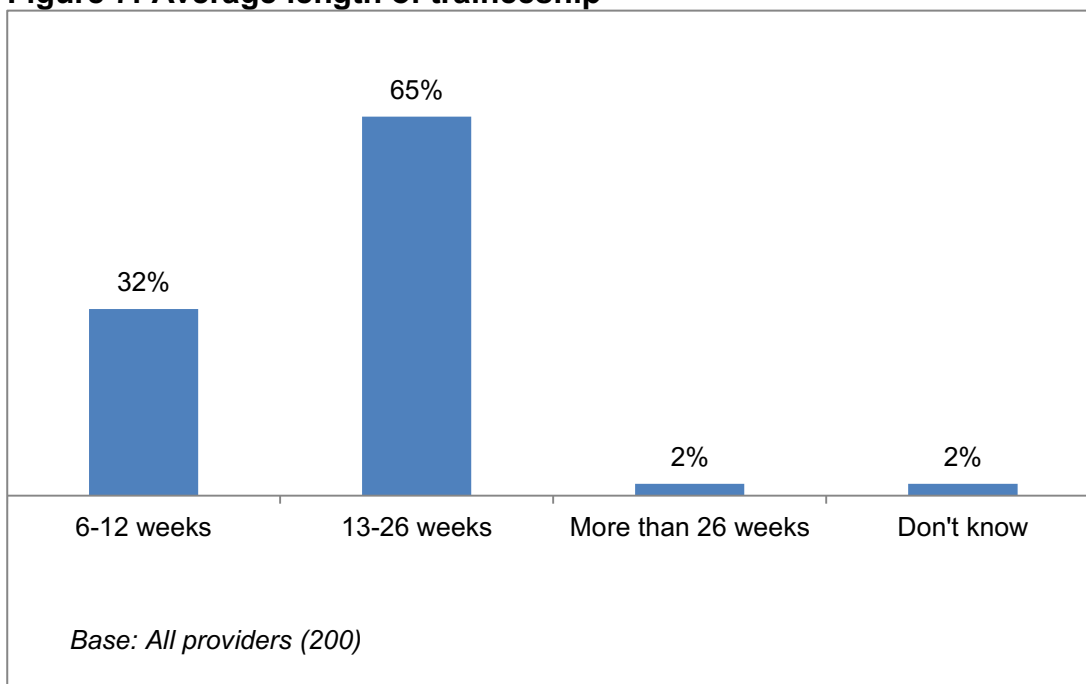
**Figure 6: Provision targeted at particular groups**



Please note that percentages can sum to more than 100% as respondents were able to give more than one answer

Traineeships are intended to last for a maximum of 6 months. When asked about the length of their traineeships, providers were most likely to say that they lasted between 13 and 26 weeks (65%), while 32% said that they lasted between 6 and 12 weeks. No providers said that their traineeships lasted less than 6 weeks, while 2% said the average duration was more than 26 weeks (6 months). The average duration was 17 weeks.

**Figure 7: Average length of traineeship**





These findings differ from those given by trainees (described earlier). The provider figures are in line with the intended length of traineeships, whereas the trainee responses include a substantial proportion of very short and very long traineeships. The provider figures are also similar to the administrative data held on trainees' participation dates, which suggests that the provider figures are more reliable than the trainee figures. At the same time, the provider figures will reflect the most common durations, and therefore give a summary of durations; the trainee figures reflect individual experiences, and suggest that some trainees may actually have a shorter or longer duration than is intended.

## Chapter 2.3. Employers

The survey included employers who had been involved in providing traineeships at some point since the start of the programme. In 35% of cases, the employer offered at least one of the training elements in addition to work experience, while the remainder offered the work experience element only. Further details on the nature of employers' involvement can be seen later in this report (see 'Structure of traineeship' section).

### Chapter 2.3.1. Sector and size of employers

The majority of employers were operating in the private sector (80%). The remainder were either in the public sector (8%) or were not-for-profit organisations (12%).

In terms of industry sector, a large proportion of employers were in health and social work activities (29% including 16% specifically in children's day-care activities), while 15% were in education. Employers were also in the following sectors: wholesale and retail trades (9%), accommodation and food service activities (7%), construction (6%) administrative and support service activities (3%), manufacturing (2%) professional, scientific and technical activities (2%) and arts, entertainment and recreation (2%), while a further 11% were in 'other service activities'.

Turning to size, there are two possible ways of analysing employers: (i) the size of the workplace; and (ii) the size of the whole organisation.

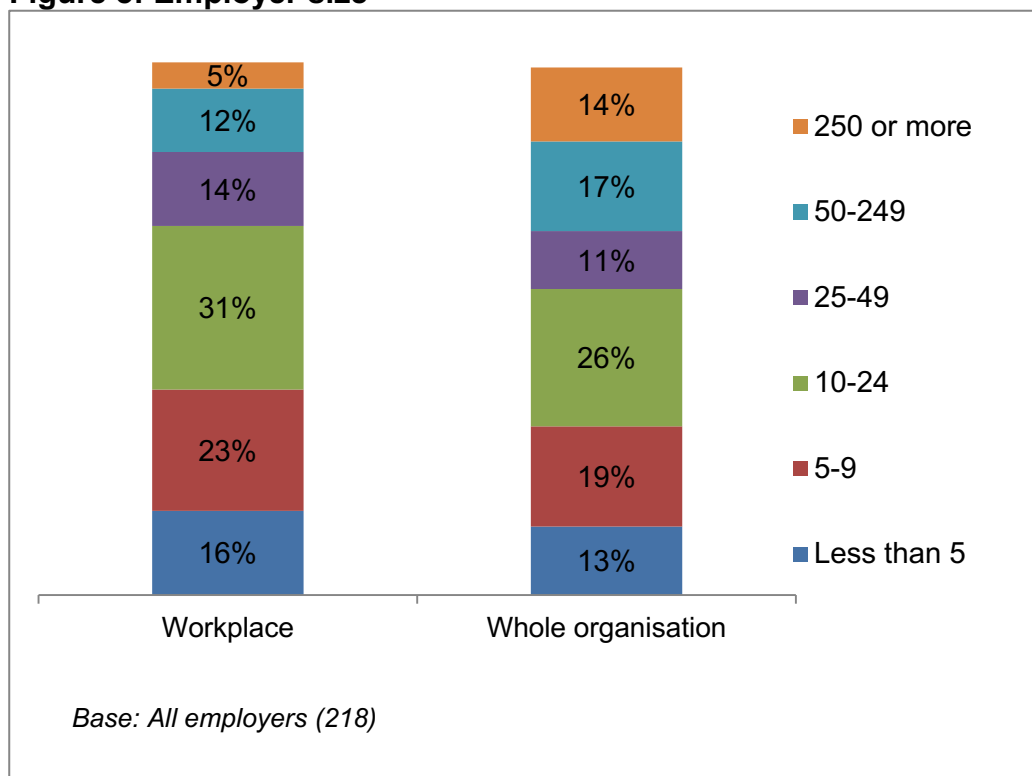
Looking firstly at **workplaces**, seven in ten (70%) employers with traineeships were relatively small, with fewer than 25 employees at the site. Indeed, one in six workplaces had fewer than 5 employees. The largest employers - with 50 or more employees on-site - made up 17% of the sample of employers offering traineeships.

Looking at **organisations as a whole** (as opposed to workplaces), more than half (59%) of employers offering traineeships had fewer than 25 employees overall, while one in seven (14%) were large organisations (with 250 or more employees).

Overall, the size profile of employers offering traineeships is very similar to the profile of employers offering apprenticeships, although the latter tended to be slightly larger at the

level of the whole organisation (e.g. 49% of employers offering apprenticeships had 25 or more staff, compared with 42% of those offering traineeships)<sup>10</sup>.

**Figure 8: Employer size**



More than half of the workplaces in the sample were the only site in the organisation (62%), while the remaining 38% were part of a wider organisation.

### Chapter 2.3.2. Traineeship offer

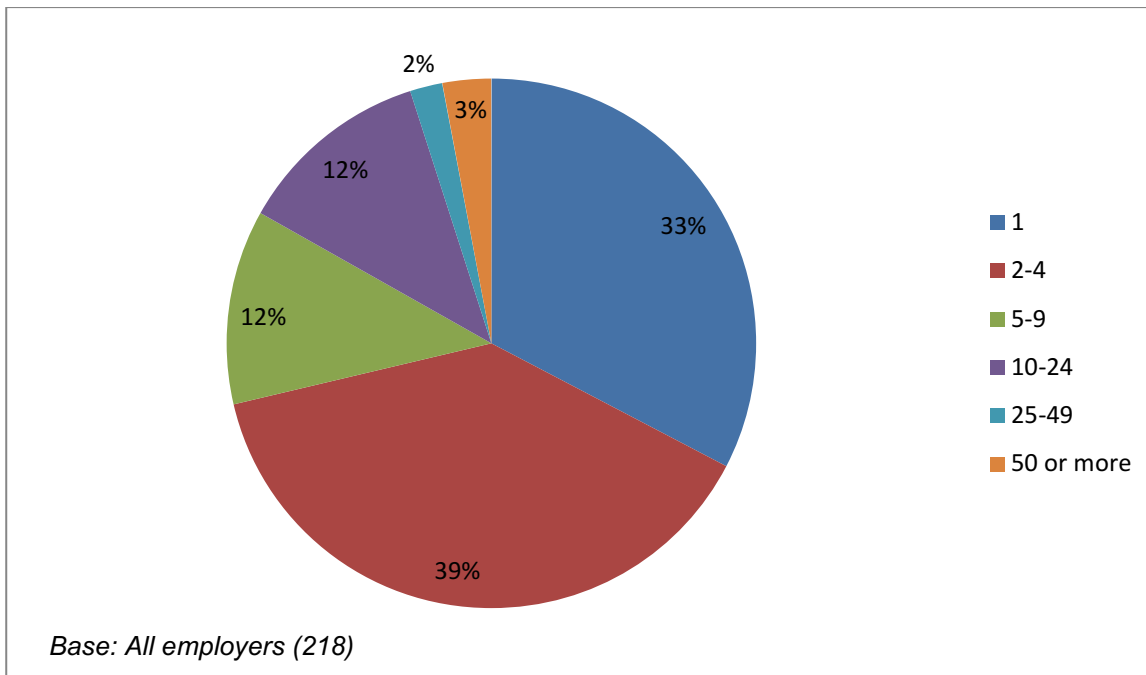
One in three employers (33%) had taken on just one trainee since the start of the programme, while a further 39% had taken on between two and four trainees. One in six employers (17%) said that 10 or more trainees had started with them since the start of the programme; see Figure 9.

The average number of trainees per employer was 8; this compares with an average of 32 trainees per training provider, as noted above. Employers who also provided training generally took on a much larger number of trainees (17 on average compared with an average of 4 trainees among employers who only offered the work experience element).

In addition, larger employers generally took on more trainees (average of 13 trainees among employers with 25 or more staff on site, compared with an average of 6 among employers with fewer than 25 staff).

<sup>10</sup> Ipsos MORI (December 2014) *Apprenticeships Evaluation: Employers*, BIS Research Paper Number 204

**Figure 9: Number of trainees**



In the majority of cases (67%), employers said that the number of trainees that had started with them was in line with their **expectations**. However, 20% said they had expected more trainees, while 6% had not expected as many (7% of respondents were not sure how many they had expected).

Around three in four employers (74%) said they were offering traineeships to **both 16-18 year olds and 19-23 year olds**. The remainder were divided between those offering traineeships only to 16-18 year olds (14%) and those offering traineeships only to 19-23 year olds (10%).

# Chapter 3. Referral process

This chapter examines the ways in which trainees applied for or were referred to the programme, and looks at this process from the perspective of the various parties: trainees, providers and employers.

## Chapter 3.1. Trainees

### Chapter 3.1.1. Awareness of and referrals to traineeship programme

Trainees were asked **where they first heard about traineeships**, and gave a range of answers. In some cases, trainees found out about the programme through the school, college or learning provider where they were studying prior to the traineeship (18%); a further 6% said that they heard through the college or learning provider where they ended up doing the traineeship. One in six (16%) first heard about traineeships from Jobcentre Plus, while 12% found out from a Careers Advisor, Next Step or Connexions Service.

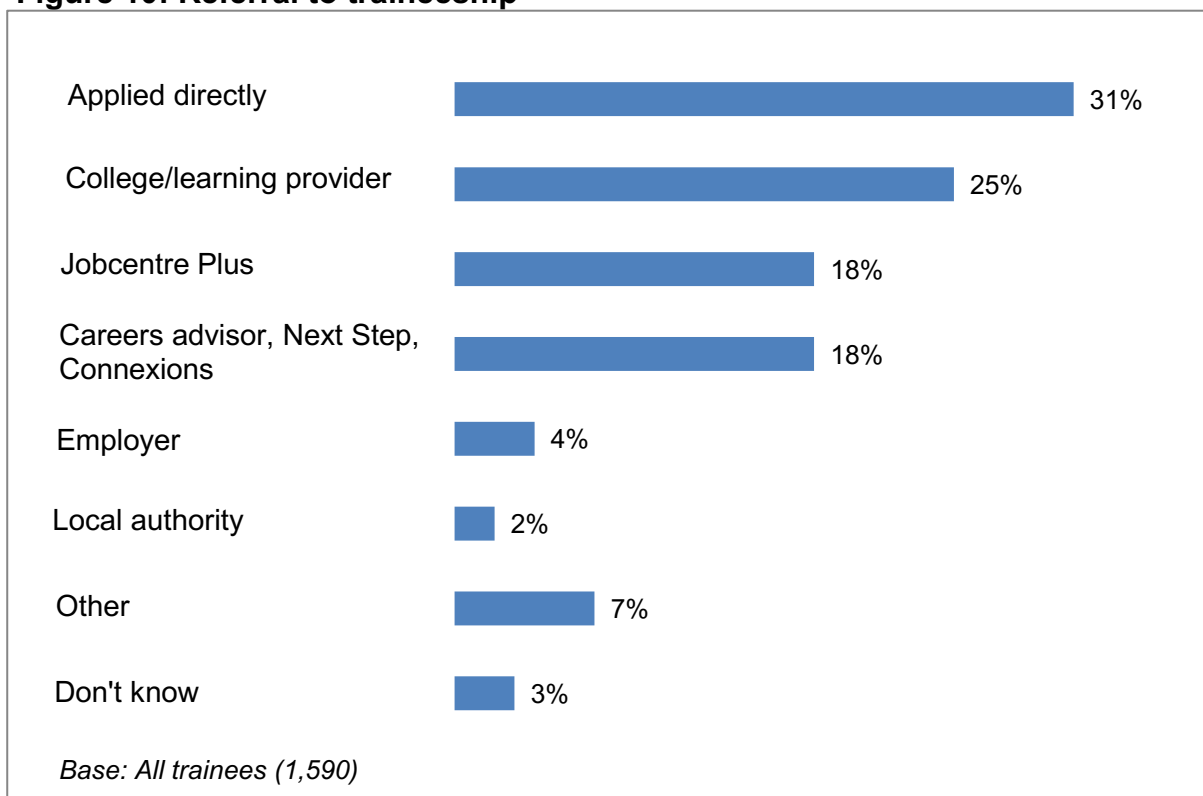
One in six trainees (17%) said that friends or family first made them aware of traineeships, while some respondents used online sources, such as the apprenticeship website (8%) or another website (8%). An additional 1% said they found out about the scheme through vacancies on the apprenticeships vacancy system.

Sources of information about traineeships varied by age group. Trainees aged 16-18 were more likely to find out about the scheme through a school, college or learning provider (31% compared with 15% of those aged 19 or over), from a careers advisor, Next Step or Connexions service (15% compared with 9%), or through friends or family (19% compared with 14%). Those aged 19 or over were more likely to have heard about traineeships through Jobcentre Plus (31% compared with 3% of 16-18 year olds).

Almost one in three trainees (31%) said that they **applied directly** for a traineeship, without any help. The three main **referral routes** were through a college or learning provider (25%), Jobcentre Plus (18%) or a careers advisor, Next Step or Connexions service (18%); details are shown in Figure 10.

The methods of referral differed by age group. Although the proportions that applied directly were similar (32% of 16-18s and 30% of those aged 19 or over), trainees aged 16-18 were more likely to be referred by a college or learning provider (31% compared with 19% of those aged 19 or over) or by a careers advisor, Next Step or Connexions service (23% compared with 12%), whereas those aged 19 or over were more likely to be referred by Jobcentre Plus (33% compared with 5% of 16-18 year olds).

**Figure 10: Referral to traineeship**



Please note that percentages can sum to more than 100% as respondents were able to give more than one answer

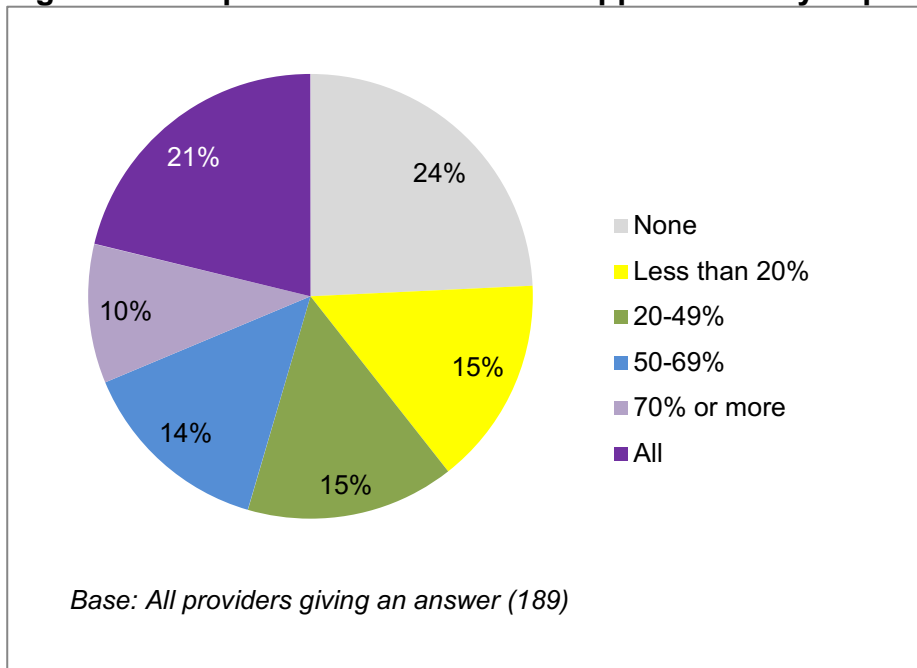
Trainees who said they applied directly were most likely to have found out about the scheme either from friends or family (30%) or the Internet: 15% from the apprenticeships website and a further 1% from vacancies on the apprenticeships vacancy system, and 16% from other websites.

## Chapter 3.2. Providers

### Chapter 3.2.1. Recruiting trainees

Providers were asked what proportion of trainees had **applied to them directly**, rather than being referred. Around one in four (24%) said that none of their trainees had applied directly, while at the other extreme 21% said that all of their trainees had applied directly. Figure 11 provides further details.

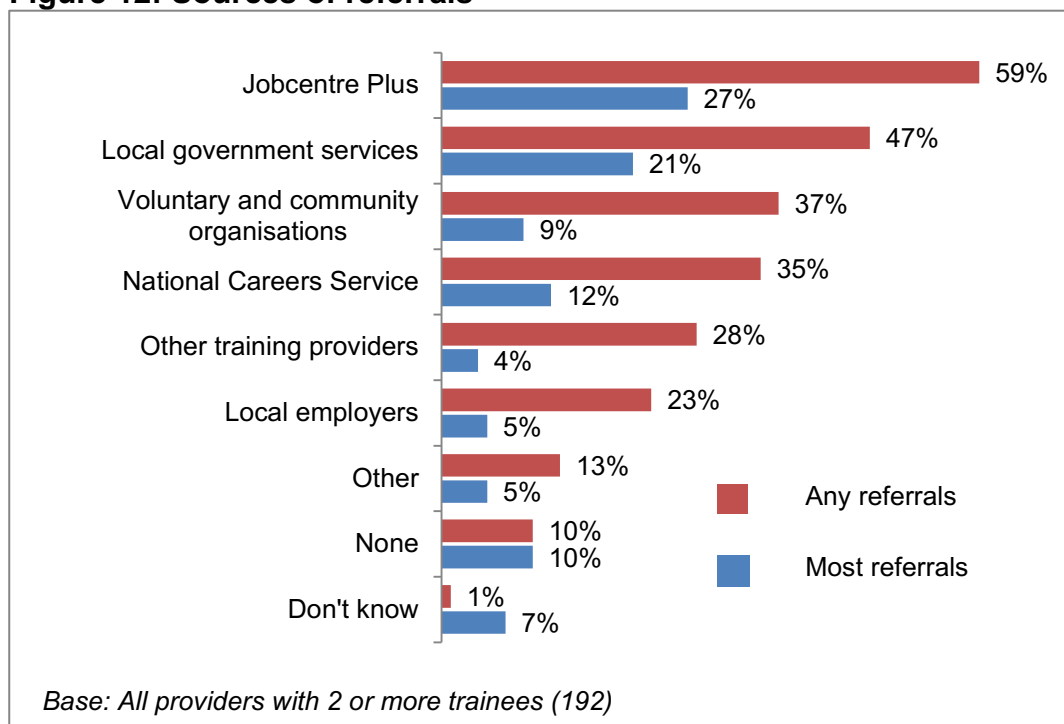
**Figure 11: Proportion of trainees that applied directly to providers**



Providers were divided between those that had received the number of direct applications that they had expected (46%) and those that had expected more direct applications (46%). Just seven per cent had expected fewer direct applications (2% did not know).

Providers said they had received **referrals from various sources**, most commonly Jobcentre Plus (59%), local government services (47%), voluntary and community organisations (37%) and the National Careers Service (35%). When asked which organisation had referred the most trainees to them, providers were most likely to mention Jobcentre Plus (27%) or local government services (21%).

**Figure 12: Sources of referrals**



Please note that percentages can sum to more than 100% as respondents were able to give more than one answer

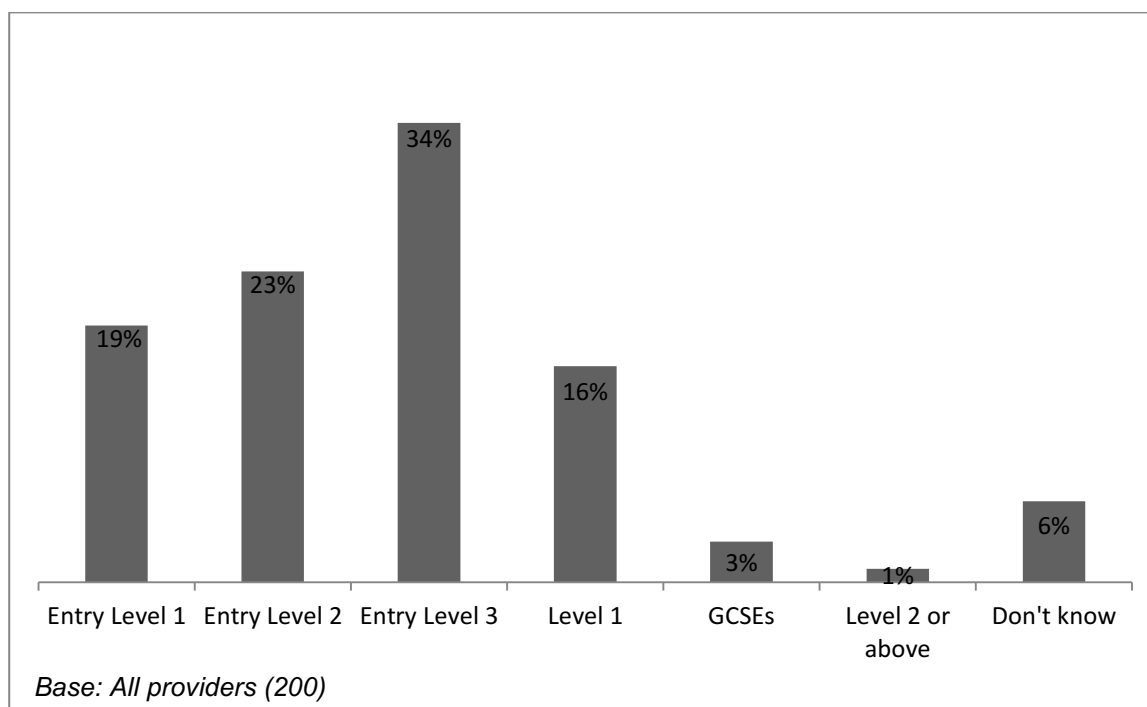
Providers were asked whether they had a **formal agreement** or partnership with any of the organisations that had referred trainees to them (this question was limited to providers who had specified a referral organisation). Around half (52%) said they had a formal agreement or partnership, most commonly with Jobcentre Plus (25%) or local government services (15%).

The eligibility guidance specifies that a traineeship may be appropriate for young people if they are: aged 16-18 and qualified to below Level 3, or aged 19-23 and qualified to below Level 2; are not working and do not have previous work experience; are motivated to enter training or work; and potentially ready for an apprenticeship or employment within 6 months.

Just under half of all providers (47%) said that they had **accepted all of the trainees** that had applied or had been referred to them, while 51% said that they had rejected some potential trainees. Amongst those who had rejected trainees, rejections were most commonly made on the basis of the candidate's commitment to or enthusiasm about the traineeship (60%), concerns about their ability to cope with the work experience element (46%) and the perceived likelihood of the candidate finding a job or apprenticeship within 6 months (45%). When asked directly about qualification restrictions, most providers who had rejected candidates said that they had rejected people who were over qualified (71%); specifically those aged 19 or over who were qualified to Level 2 (66%) and those aged 16-18 already qualified to Level 3 (48%). Most providers who had rejected candidates said that they had rejected people who were over qualified (71%, or 38% of *all* providers); specifically those aged 19 or over who were qualified to Level 2 (66%) and those aged 16-18 already qualified to Level 3 (48%).

When asked about the **minimum qualifications** held by trainees, around three in four providers (75%) said these were Entry Level qualifications. One in six (16%) said Level 1, while 3% said GCSEs (level unspecified) or level two or higher.

**Figure 13: Minimum education level for referrals**



Most providers (81%) said that the qualification levels of trainees had been about as they expected, although 12% said that they were lower than they expected, while 8% said qualification levels had been higher than expected.

The findings from trainees (self-reported) suggest that many of them were qualified to a higher level than intended for the programme. Although there may be some error or over-claiming in trainees' responses, the trainee findings suggest that some providers are accepting trainees who are over-qualified. Providers are talking about average levels, rather than individuals.

### Chapter 3.2.2. Attracting new trainees

Providers said that they had carried out various activities to **promote traineeships** to young people. The most common activities were promoting traineeships through Jobcentre Plus (82%), promoting them through apprenticeship vacancies (75%), and promoting through local schools (71%). In addition, 82% of providers said they had undertaken some form of advertising, including advertising in local or national newspapers or magazines (51%).

Nearly three in four providers (71%) said that they had promoted traineeships specifically to young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).Employers



### Chapter 3.2.3. Recruiting trainees

The majority of employers said that trainees were always **referred to them** by colleges or training providers (62%). However, 25% of employers said trainees sometimes came to them directly, while 10% said that trainees always came directly.

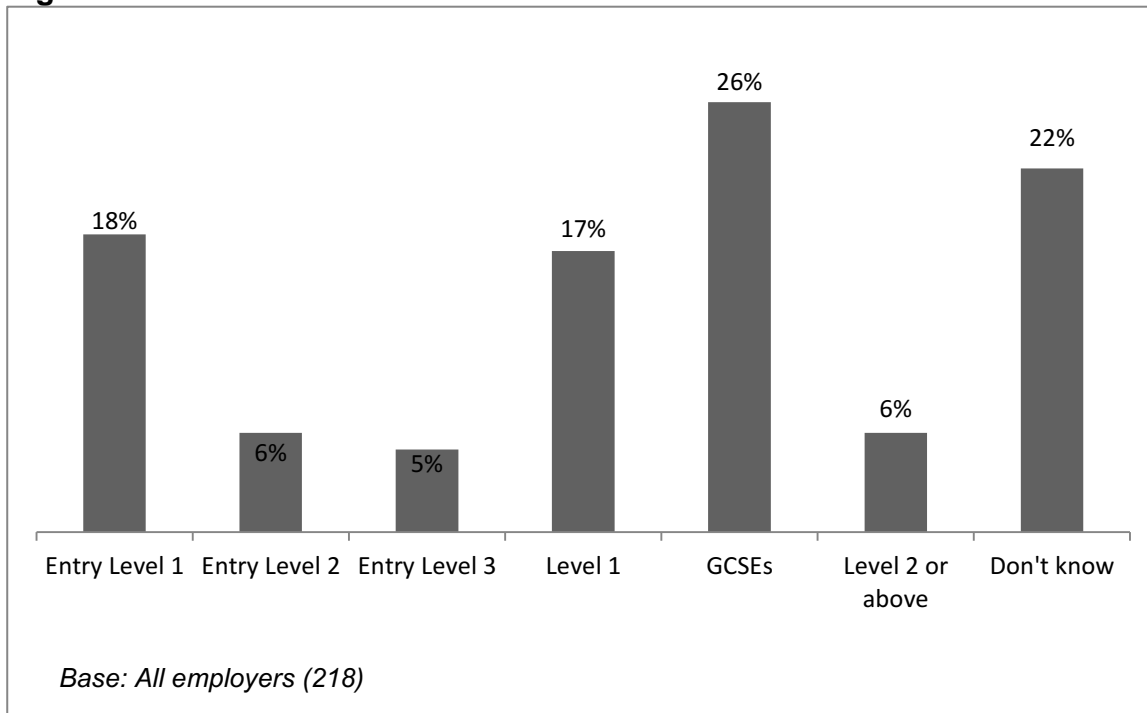
The findings differ between employers who only offered the work experience element and those who also offered at least one of the training elements:

- Where employers offered the work experience element only, 6% said trainees always came to them directly, and 23% said this sometimes happened, while 68% said they were always referred by a college or training provider;
- Among employers who also offered at least one of the training elements, 16% said trainees always came to them directly, and 29% said they sometimes did, while 51% said trainees were always referred to them.

Around a third of all employers (32%) said that they had **expected more referrals** than they had actually received, while 6% had expected fewer referrals. The majority (55%) said that the number of referrals matched their expectations. Employers who had at least some trainees coming to them directly were more likely to say they had expected more referrals (47%), compared with those that always had trainees referred by colleges or providers (24%).

When asked about the **minimum education level of trainees** who were referred, the majority of employers said this was at level one or below (46%). Around one in four employers (26%) said that GCSEs (level unspecified) were the minimum education level held by referrals and 6% said the minimum education level held was level 2 or above (other than GCSEs).

**Figure 14: Minimum education level of referrals**



The majority of employers (63%) said that the qualification levels of referrals had been about **as they expected**, although 22% said that they were lower than they expected, while 7% said qualification levels had been higher than expected. The remainder either said that qualification levels varied too much to give an assessment (3%) or did not know (5%).

# Chapter 4. Motivations, information, guidance and advice

This chapter looks at trainees' motivations and expectations for their traineeship, and also examines the information that they received before they started. The chapter then turns to providers and employers, examining the guidance and advice they received, as well as any additional training or recruitment undertaken to prepare for the programme.

## Chapter 4.1. Trainees

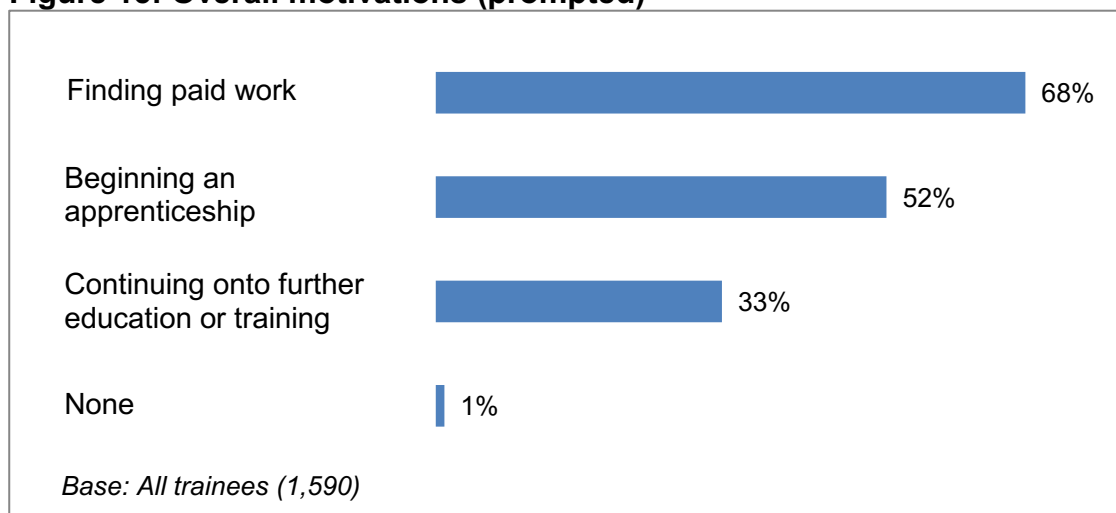
### Chapter 4.1.1. Motivations for joining the traineeship programme

When asked what **benefits they thought they would gain** from the traineeship, trainees were most likely to mention good work experience (41%), gaining a qualification (24%) and increasing their chances of getting paid work (15%). Other perceived benefits were job interview skills or experience (11%), increased confidence (10%), and the chance of getting an apprenticeship (10%).

When prompted, around two in three trainees (68%) said that they were hoping to find paid work as a result of the traineeship, while 52% were hoping to get on to an apprenticeship. One in three (33%) were hoping to continue into further education or training (see Figure 15). Respondents were able to give more than one answer, so by combining the responses for work and apprenticeships, we can see that: 30% were hoping for both an apprenticeship and paid work; 22% were hoping for an apprenticeship (without mentioning paid work), and 39% were hoping for paid work (but without specifying an apprenticeship).

These motivations differed by age group. For those aged 19 or over, finding paid work was a key motivation (77% compared with 60% of 16-18 year olds), particularly those aged 19 or over who were looking for work immediately before the traineeship (84%). By contrast, beginning an apprenticeship was more important for 16-18 year olds than for those aged 19 or over (58% compared with 45%).

**Figure 15: Overall motivations (prompted)**



Please note that percentages can sum to more than 100% as respondents were able to give more than one answer

When they applied for their traineeship, 29% of trainees said that this was to work for a specific employer who they knew offered traineeships.

In terms of the **different elements of the traineeship**, the work experience placement was most frequently seen as the most important in helping trainees to decide to apply (51%), followed by the work preparation training (30%) and English and maths teaching (15%).

### Chapter 4.1.2. Information received prior to joining

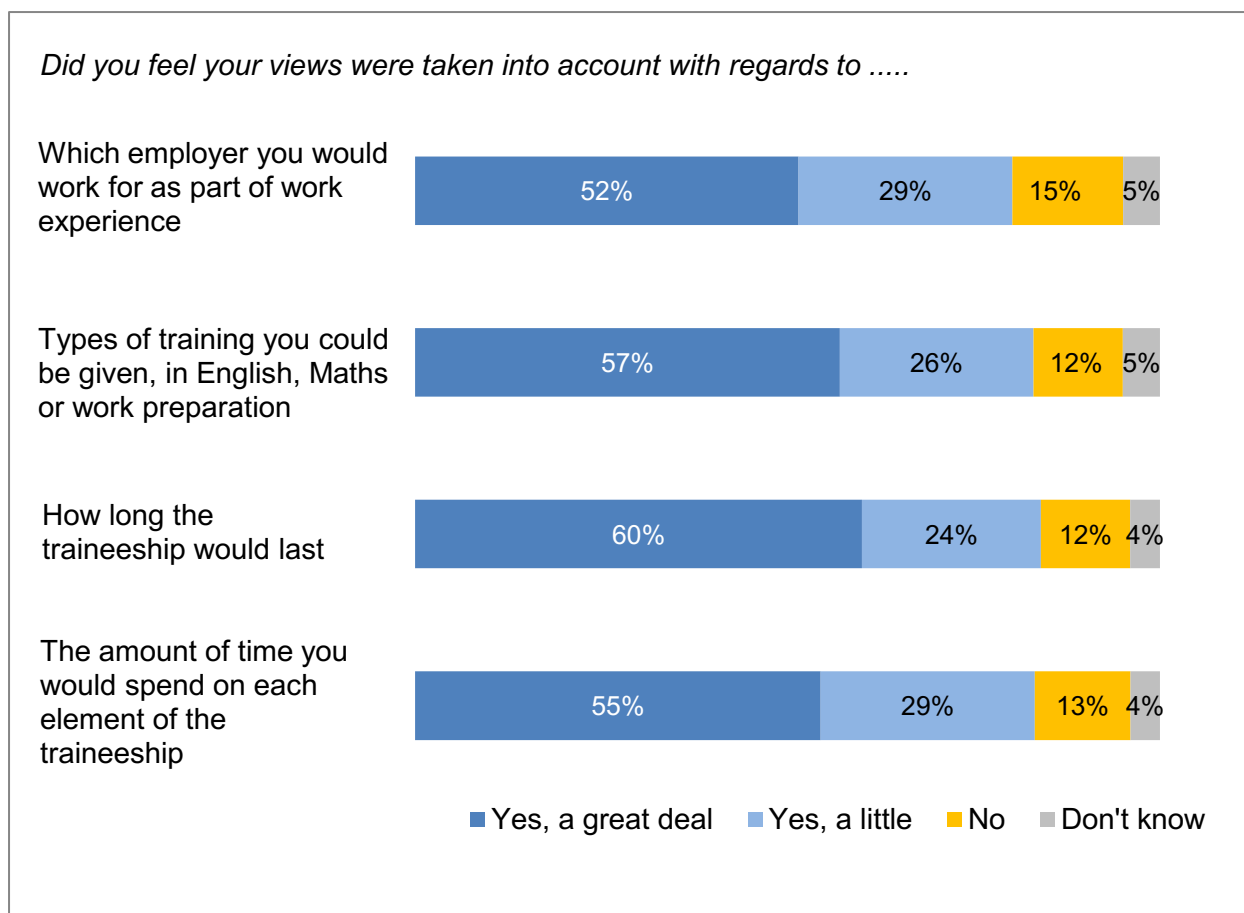
If trainees were referred to the traineeship by Jobcentre Plus or by a careers advisor, Next Step or Connexions service, they mostly said that the person they spoke to discussed the benefits of the programme with them: 74% said this about Jobcentre Plus and 80% in relation to a careers advisor, Next Step or Connexions service.

The majority of trainees (71%) said that, before starting the traineeship, they **attended a meeting with the college or learning provider** about its content. In these cases, nearly all (93%) were told how long the traineeship would last, and these meetings usually included information on the various elements (64% said that all of the elements were discussed).

In addition, more than half of trainees (56%) said that, before starting the traineeship, they **attended a meeting with the organisation** where they were to do their work experience.

Most trainees felt that their **views were taken into account** in the design of their traineeship. For example, 52% said that their views were taken into account 'a great deal' in relation to which employer they would complete their work experience with, while a further 29% said their views were taken into account 'a little'. Figure 16 provides further details.

**Figure 16: Were trainees' views taken into account**



## Chapter 4.2. Providers

### Chapter 4.2.1. Guidance and advice

Providers are most likely to have got **guidance or advice about traineeships** from the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) website (95%), while 62% said they had contacted the SFA for additional guidance or advice, and 46% had contacted the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS).

Providers were positive about the guidance or advice they had received. This applies to providers who had got guidance or advice from the SFA website (27% very clear and 56% fairly clear), as well as those who contacted the SFA (26% very clear and 56% fairly clear) or the NAS (31% very clear and 46% fairly clear). Only a minority of respondents said that the guidance or advice was not very or not at all clear (16% for the SFA website, 15% for contact with the SFA, and 20% for the NAS).

### Chapter 4.2.2. Additional training and recruitment

Most providers (70%) said that staff had attended **additional training** to prepare them for the delivery of traineeships. Among 43% of providers, new staff had been recruited specifically to help deliver traineeships.

## Chapter 4.3. Employers

### Chapter 4.3.1. Guidance and advice

Employers are most likely to have got **guidance or advice about traineeships** from the Skills Funding Agency website (38%), while 14% said they had contacted the Skills Funding Agency for additional guidance or advice, and 18% had contacted the National Apprenticeship Service. In addition, 29% of employers said they had contacted providers for guidance or advice. 29% said that they had not got any advice or guidance from these or any other sources.

Employers expressed positive views about the guidance or advice they had received. This applies to employers who had got guidance or advice from the SFA website (32% very clear and 59% fairly clear), as well as those who contacted the SFA (37% very clear and 47% fairly clear) or the NAS (38% very clear and 45% fairly clear). Only a minority of respondents said that the guidance or advice was not very or not at all clear (9% for the SFA website, 17% for contact with the SFA, and 18% for the NAS).

### Chapter 4.3.2. Additional training and recruitment

One in four employers (26%) said that staff had attended **additional training** to prepare them for the delivery of traineeships. Among 11% of employers, new staff had been recruited specifically to help deliver traineeships.

Employers who offered training elements as well as work experience were more likely to have taken on new staff (21% compared with 5% of those who offered work experience only) and to have arranged staff training to prepare for the delivery of traineeships (37% compared with 20%). Otherwise, there are no clear differences (e.g. by employer size or number of trainees) in the proportions who took on new staff or provided additional training.

# Chapter 5. Programme content and delivery

This chapter focuses on the structure, content and delivery of the programme, including details on the three components: work experience, English and maths training and work preparation training. It also looks at providers' use of partnerships in delivering the programme.

## Chapter 5.1. Trainees

### Chapter 5.1.1. Structure of traineeship programme

Two in three trainees (66%) said that their **work experience element** ran for the duration of the whole traineeship. Where this was not the case, it was most likely to take place in a single block at the end (in 35% of cases).

The work experience element was intended to last between 6 weeks and 5 months.<sup>11</sup> When asked about the **duration of their work experience element**, 37% said that they completed less than 6 weeks, while 4% said they spent more than 26 weeks on the work experience element. The remainder said that they completed between 6 and 12 weeks (45%) or between 13 and 26 weeks (15%). The average duration was 8.8 weeks.

Table 1 below shows these findings analysed by completion status. This shows that trainees that left their traineeship early often spent less than 6 weeks on the work experience element (54%), but that completers also reported short work experience elements (31% less than 6 weeks). Trainees who said they were still doing the traineeship were more likely to say they had spent more than 26 weeks on the work experience element (21%).

Also of relevance is whether the work experience element ran for the duration of the whole traineeship. Where this was the case, the average length was 9.5 weeks; where work experience did not run for the duration of the whole traineeship, the average length was 7.1 weeks.

As noted above in relation to the duration of the whole traineeship, there may be some recall error in trainees' responses. This is discussed further below when we consider the findings for providers and employers.

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<sup>11</sup> Since August 2014, this rule was replaced with a guideline of 100-240 hours.

17: Length of work experience				
	Traineeship completion status			
	Completers	Left early	Still on traineeship	Total
<i>(Base)</i>	<i>(712)</i>	<i>(278)</i>	<i>(92)</i>	<i>(1085)</i>
	%	%	%	%
Less than 6 weeks	31	54	31	37
6-12 weeks	50	34	41	45
13-26 weeks	17	10	8	15
More than 26 weeks	2	2	21	4
Average duration	8.8	6.6	14.9	8.8
<i>Base: All trainees who were able to give an answer (1,085)</i>				

One in four trainees (24%) said that they were usually at their work experience placement for **five days a week** (in the weeks that they were doing it), while 42% attended for no more than three days a week. The average was 3.6 days per week..

Reflecting the number of days at their work experience placement, there is variation in the **number of hours per week** spent on work experience: 37% of trainees said they usually attended their placement for less than 16 hours per week, while 27% spent between 16 and 29 hours on the work experience element, and 36% attended for 30 hours or more per week.

Work experience involved a diverse range of **types of organisation**. The most common activities were in retail (8%), nursery (7%) or other childcare (5%), care home provision or caring (4%), school-age education (3%), car manufacturing (3%) and gym or fitness instruction (3%).

Three in four trainees (76%) said that their traineeship included **English and maths** training. Where it was not included, this was most likely to be because trainees said they already had the relevant qualifications (58%), while other respondents said that they “didn’t need to do” this element (10%) or because there was a problem with the provider (4%).

Among trainees who said English and maths training formed part of their traineeship, 77% said that it ran for the duration of the whole traineeship. Where it did not run for the duration, it was most likely to take place in a single block at the start (39%).

When asked about the **duration of the English and maths training**, 41% said that it was offered over less than 6 weeks, 36% said that the duration was between 6 and 12 weeks and 19% between 13 and 26 weeks; while 4% said it lasted more than 26 weeks



(responses based on those able to give an answer). Durations were shorter where the training was run as one or more discrete blocks (66% of those who said it was run in discrete blocks said it lasted less than 6 weeks, compared with 34% of those who said it ran for the duration of the whole traineeship).

Trainees said that their English and maths training element usually involved no more than **6 hours per week** (70%, including 39% who said it took no more than 3 hours per week).

Around four in five trainees (79%) said that the **work preparation training** ran for the duration of the whole traineeship. Where it did not run for the duration, it was most likely to take place in a single block at the start (38%).

When asked about the **duration of the work preparation training**, 41% said that it was offered over less than 6 weeks, 39% said that the duration was between 6 and 12 weeks and 17% said it lasted between 13 and 26 weeks (responses based on those able to give an answer). Again, durations were shorter where the training was run as one or more discrete blocks (57% of those who said it was run in discrete blocks said it lasted less than 6 weeks, compared with 38% of those who said it ran for the duration of the whole traineeship).

Trainees said that the work preparation training element usually involved no more than **6 hours per week** when they were doing it (53%), although 22% said they spent 16 hours or more per week on this element when they were doing it as a block.

### Chapter 5.1.2. Additional support, qualification and references

The majority of trainees (77%) said they were offered **additional support** as part of their traineeship, involving either careers' guidance (60%), mentoring (55%) or support outside their normal working or teaching hours (49%). As discussed later in this report, trainees were generally very positive towards the support they received (83% were satisfied with the amount of support they received from staff).

At the end of the traineeship, 39% of those who completed it said that they received a **formal reference** from the organisation that provided the work experience placement. More than half (63%) said they received feedback from the employer at the end of their traineeship.

## Chapter 5.2. Providers

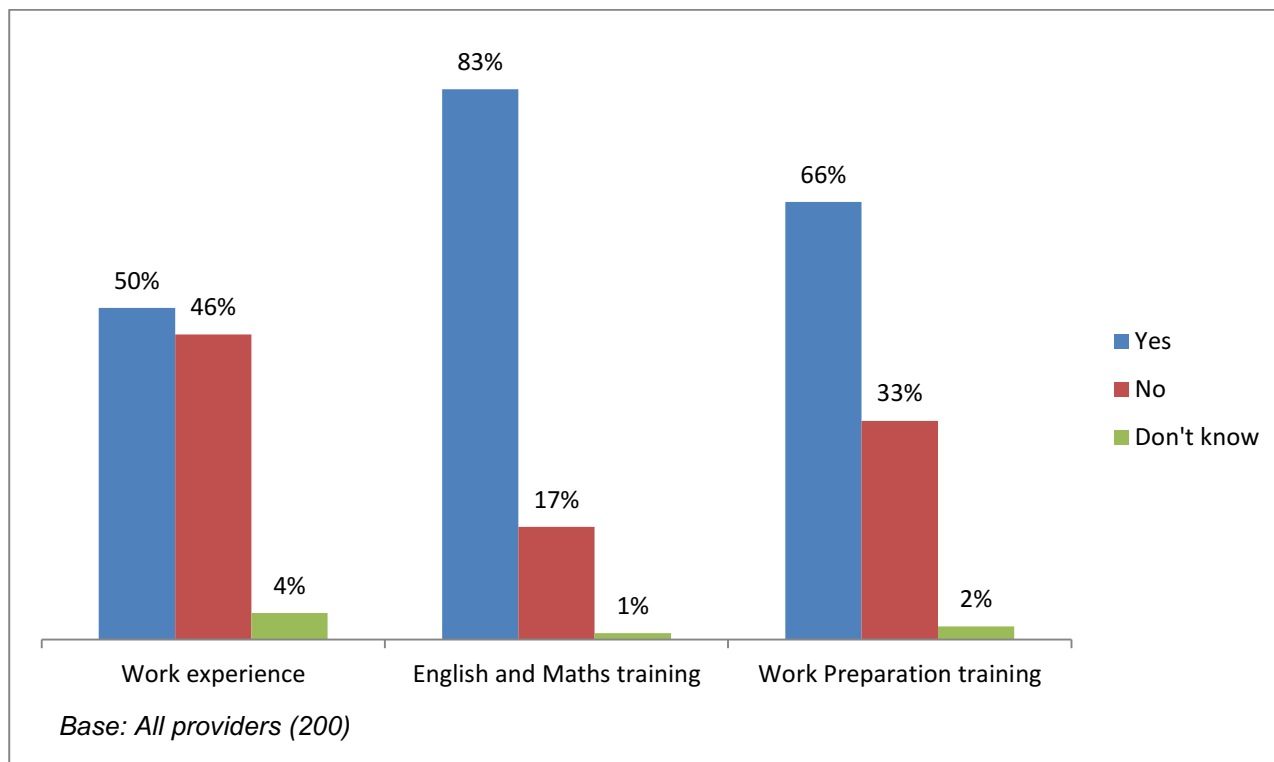
### Chapter 5.2.1. Structure of traineeship programme

Around half of providers (51%) said that they had fully **tailored the design** of the traineeship programme to individual trainees, while 41% said they had tailored the programme 'to a certain extent'. Just 8% said that they offered a single package.

The majority of providers said they had **developed mainly new provision** specifically for their traineeships (56%), while 28% said they used mainly existing provision. A further 15% said that they had delivered an equal combination of new and existing provision.

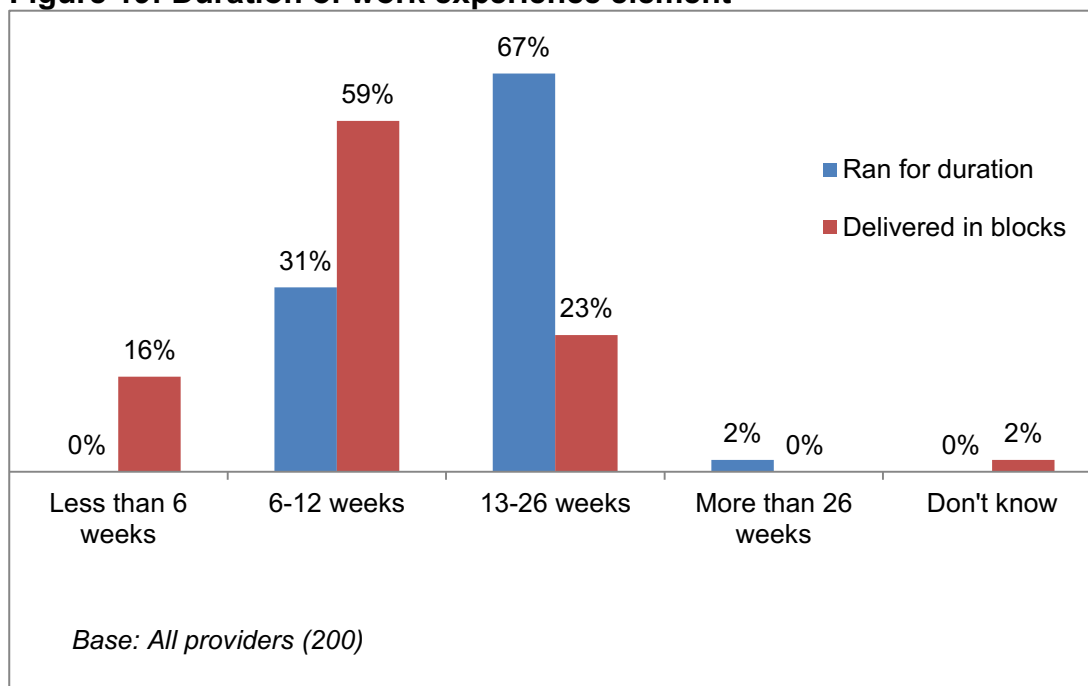
Providers were split between those who said the work experience element **ran for the duration** of the whole traineeship (50%) and those who said it took place in one or more discrete blocks (46%); see Figure 17 for details on this and the other elements of the programme.

**Figure 18: Whether elements ran for the duration of whole traineeship**



As might be expected, work experience elements were shorter when they were delivered as discrete blocks, rather than for the duration of the whole traineeship. Where they were delivered in discrete blocks, 16% of providers said that they lasted less than 6 weeks and 59% said they lasted (on average) between 6 and 12 weeks. By contrast, where work experience elements ran for the duration of the whole traineeship, most providers said that they lasted between 13 and 26 weeks (67%).

**Figure 19: Duration of work experience element**



Trainees are more likely to attend their work placement five days a week when the work experience element is delivered in discrete blocks rather than for the duration of the traineeship (27% compared with 7%).

Reflecting the number of days trainees attended the work placement, there is variation in the number of **hours per week** spent on work experience: 18% of providers said that trainees usually do less than 16 hours per week, while 53% do between 16 and 29 hours and 24% spend 30 hours or more per week on the work experience element. Further analysis indicates that most of the work experience elements that lasted less than 6 weeks involved attending 30 hours or more per week; this intensive approach may be an explanation as to why some work experience elements are shorter than intended.

Most providers said that the **English and maths training** element ran for the duration of the traineeship (83%), while 17% said it was run as one or more discrete blocks (see Figure 17 above).

Because the English and maths training element normally runs for the duration of the whole traineeship, the **average duration** is similar to that of the traineeship as a whole: 4% said that this element typically lasted less than 6 weeks, while 34% said that the duration was (on average) between 6 and 12 weeks and 58% between 13 and 26 weeks; 2% said it lasted more than 26 weeks and 4% did not know. Once again, durations were shorter where the training was run as one or more discrete blocks (although the small number of respondents prevents more detailed analysis of this issue).

Providers said that the English and maths training element usually involved just **one day per week** for trainees (in 67% of cases), and in a third of cases (33%) trainees spent no more than 4 hours per week on this element when they were doing it.

In two-thirds of cases (66%), providers said that the **work preparation training** ran for the duration of the whole traineeship, while 33% said it was run as one or more discrete blocks (see Figure 17 above).

Providers said that the work preparation element normally lasted either 6-12 weeks (30%) or 13-26 weeks (45%), reflecting the fact that it often runs for the duration of the whole traineeship. However, 20% of providers said that the work preparation element normally lasted for less than 6 weeks, and this accounts for the majority (62%) of providers who ran this element in one or more discrete blocks.

Providers said that the work preparation element usually involved less than **16 hours per week** for trainees (in 70% of cases), including a third of cases (34%) where trainees spent no more than 4 hours per week on this element when they were doing it.

Overall, the duration figures for the various elements, as given by providers, are longer than those given by trainees. In particular, trainees are more likely to say that durations were short (e.g. 42% of trainees said that the English and maths training lasted less than 6 weeks in total, compared with just 4% of providers). It is not clear whether the trainee figures are closer to the reality on the ground (whereas provider figures reflect 'normal' or planned durations), or whether trainee figures are prone to inaccuracy, perhaps because of poor recall of these details.

### Chapter 5.2.2. Partnerships

The vast majority of providers said that they were working in partnership with local employers (87%), while more than half (54%) said they were working with voluntary and community organisations to deliver elements of traineeships, and 45% were working in partnership with local government services. Around one in four (24%) were working with other training providers.

The majority of providers (60%) said that they had established new partners specifically for traineeships. These new partnerships were most likely to involve local employers (49%).

## Chapter 5.3. Employers

### Chapter 5.3.1. Structure of traineeship programme

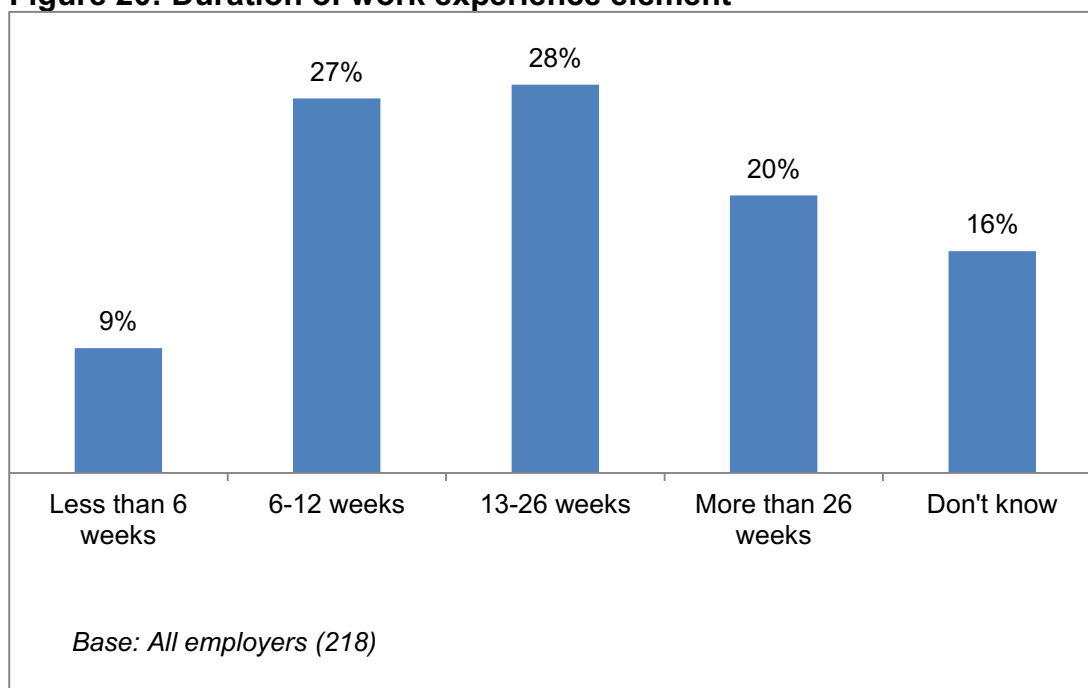
In addition to delivering the work experience element of the programme, just over one in three employers (35%) said that they had delivered at least one of the **training elements**; specifically, 33% had delivered work preparation training and 19% had delivered English and maths training.

The majority of employers said they had used **mainly existing provision** for their traineeships (67%), while 24% said they had developed mainly new provision specifically for traineeships. A small proportion (6%) said that they had delivered an equal combination of new and existing provision. Employers were more likely to say they had developed new provision (either mainly or equally with existing provision) if they had delivered the training elements, in addition to the work experience element (47% of those who had delivered at least one training element, compared with 20% of those who had only delivered work experience).

In most cases, employers said that the **work experience** element usually runs for the duration of the whole traineeship (82%). This proportion is similar both for employers who offer the work experience element only (81%) and those who also offer one or more training elements (83%). The figure for employers is higher than the figures given by providers (50%) or trainees (66%), which may reflect the actual delivery of traineeships (when employers also offer training elements) or the employer's perspective of the programme (when limited to work experience).

When asked about the **duration of the work experience element**, 9% said that this typically lasted less than 6 weeks, while 20% said it lasted more than 26 weeks, including 12% who said that (on average) it lasted 52 weeks. The remainder said that the duration of the work experience element was (on average) between 6 and 12 weeks (27%) or between 13 and 26 weeks (28%). One in six (16%) were unable to give an answer. Although a re-contact exercise was not undertaken with employers the answers given may also be subject to recall errors.<sup>12</sup>

**Figure 20: Duration of work experience element**



One in four employers (26%) said that trainees usually attend **five days a week** when they are on work experience, while 30% said they attend four days a week, 24% three days a week, and 20% just one or two days per week.

Reflecting the number of days attended, there is variation in the number of **hours per week** spent on work experience: 19% of employers said that trainees usually do less than 16 hours per week, while 34% do between 16 and 29 hours and 45% spend 30 hours or more per week on the work experience element.

<sup>12</sup> Previous surveys with apprenticeship employers have highlighted a lack of awareness of that programme with 37% of apprenticeship employers not aware they have an apprentice.

There is no indication from the data as to why some work experience elements last for less than 5 weeks or more than 6 months. For example, those employers who have trainees attending a smaller number of hours per week are no more likely than other employers to provide longer work experience elements. Overall, it is notable that the figures given by employers (Figure 19) are different to those given by providers (Figure 18), with a greater number of long durations (20% of employers said that work experience elements typically last more than 26 weeks, compared with just 1% of providers). This disparity may indicate a less precise knowledge of the programme among respondents to the employer survey.

# Chapter 6. Perceptions of traineeship programme

This chapter mainly focuses on trainees' perceptions of their traineeship: how satisfied they were with it and whether it reflected their needs and expectations. The chapter also includes findings from providers and employers on suggested improvements to the programme, as well as employers' perceptions of the trainees they have worked with.

## Chapter 6.1. Trainees

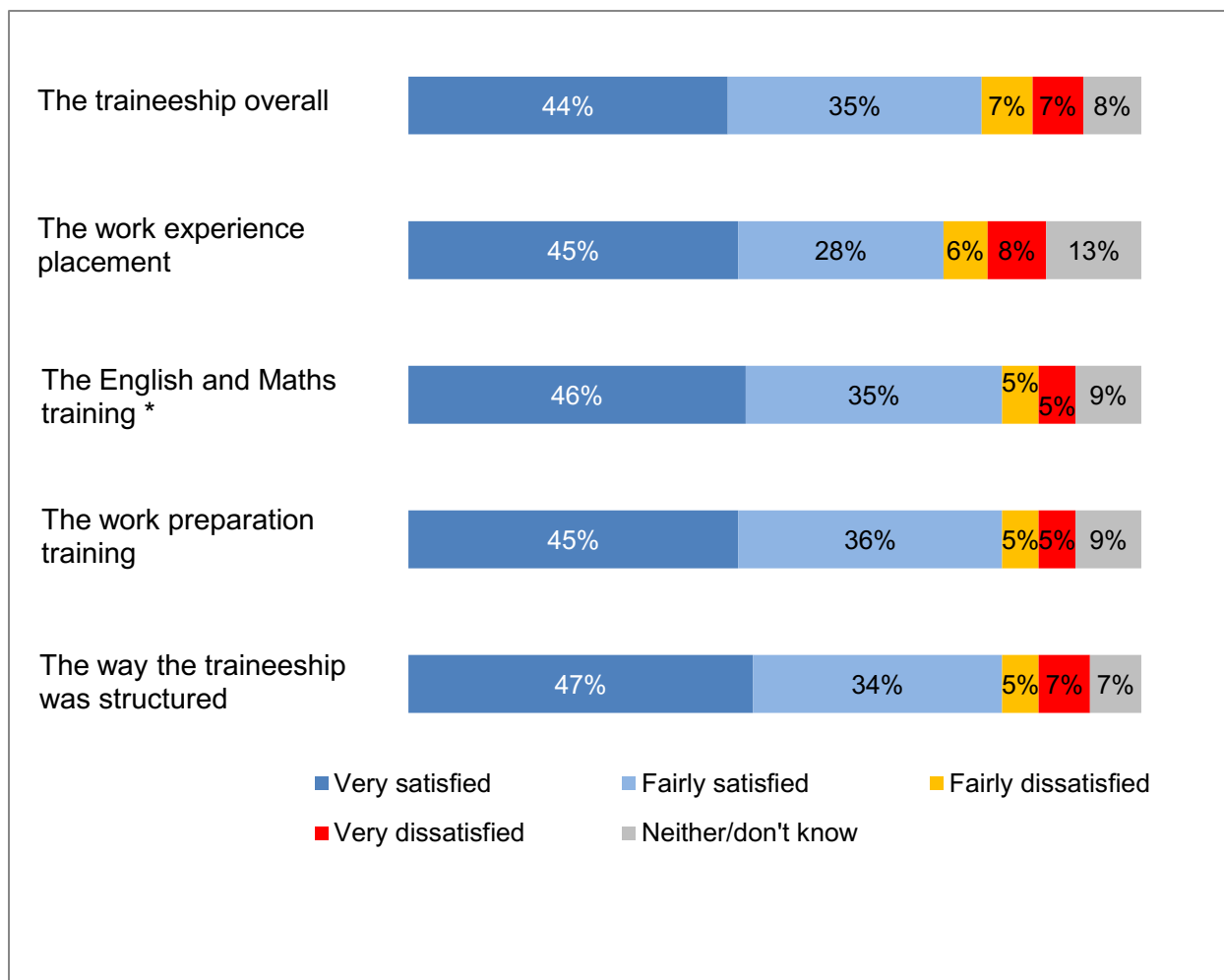
### Chapter 6.1.1. Perceptions of the traineeship programme

Most trainees gave very positive feedback about their time on a traineeship. Around four in five trainees (79%) said that they were **satisfied with the traineeship overall**, including 44% who were *very satisfied*, while 13% were dissatisfied. Trainees gave similar ratings for the specific elements of the programme (between 73% and 81% were satisfied with each of the three elements), as well as for the way that the traineeship was structured (81% satisfied).

Levels of satisfaction were lower among trainees who had left their traineeship early: 65% were satisfied with the traineeship overall and 24% were dissatisfied, compared with 85% of completers who were satisfied and 9% dissatisfied. This difference is particularly pronounced in relation to the work experience element: just 54% of trainees who left early were satisfied with this element, compared with 81% of completers.

Levels of satisfaction are also related to outcomes. Trainees who went on to an apprenticeship after the traineeship were most likely to be satisfied (for example, 84% were satisfied overall). There were no differences by demographic characteristics.

**Figure 21: Satisfaction with traineeship programme**

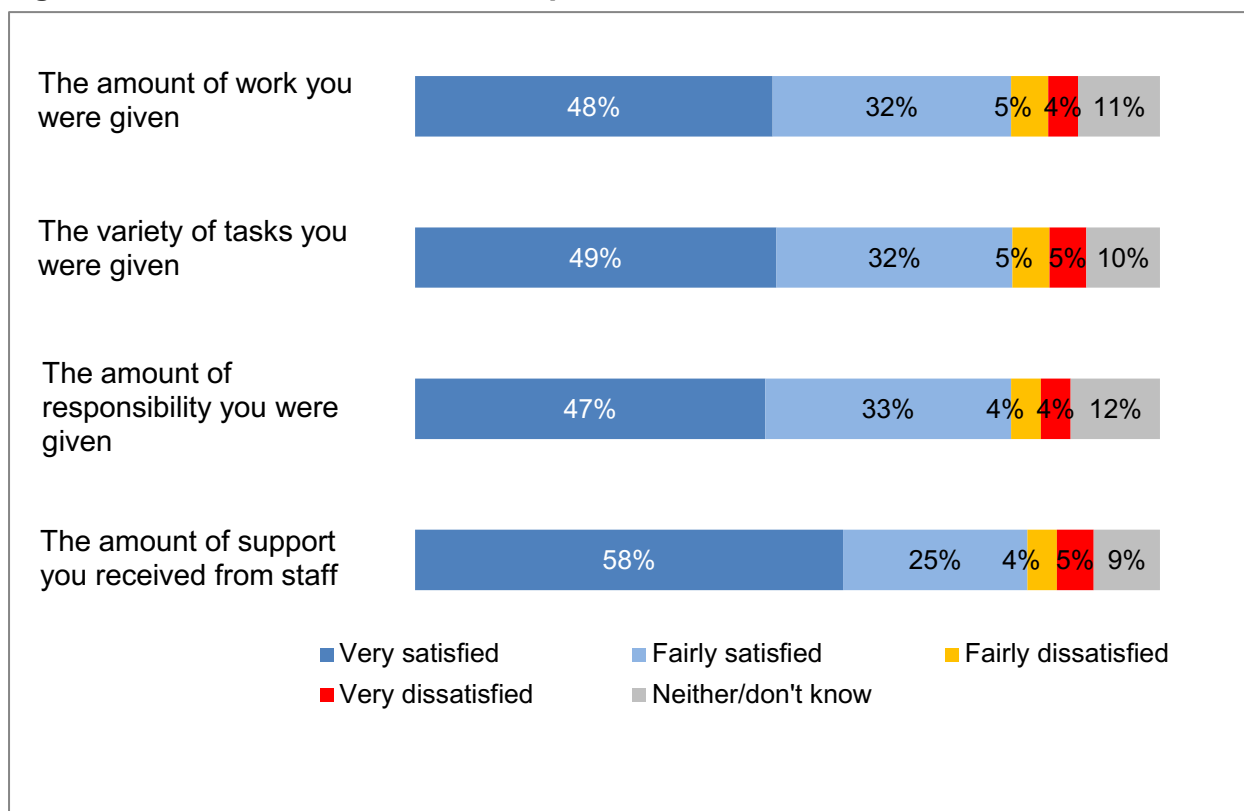


Trainees were also positive towards the **work experience element**, particularly the amount of support they received from staff: 83% were satisfied with this, including 58% who were very satisfied. At least 80% of trainees were satisfied with other aspects of the work experience element.

Once again, trainees who left early were less positive than those who completed the traineeship. In addition, trainees aged 16-18 were more likely to be satisfied than those aged 19 or over in relation to the amount of work they were given to do on the placement (82% compared with 77%). Men were more satisfied with women on this issue (82% compared with 77%), and men were also more satisfied than women about the amount of support they received from staff (85% compared with 80%).



**Figure 22: Satisfaction with work experience element**



Most trainees thought that the **amount of time spent** on the training elements was about right: 75% for English and maths training and 78% for work preparation training. Of the remainder, trainees were a little more likely to say that the length of time was too short (14% and 10% respectively) rather than too long (8% for each element).

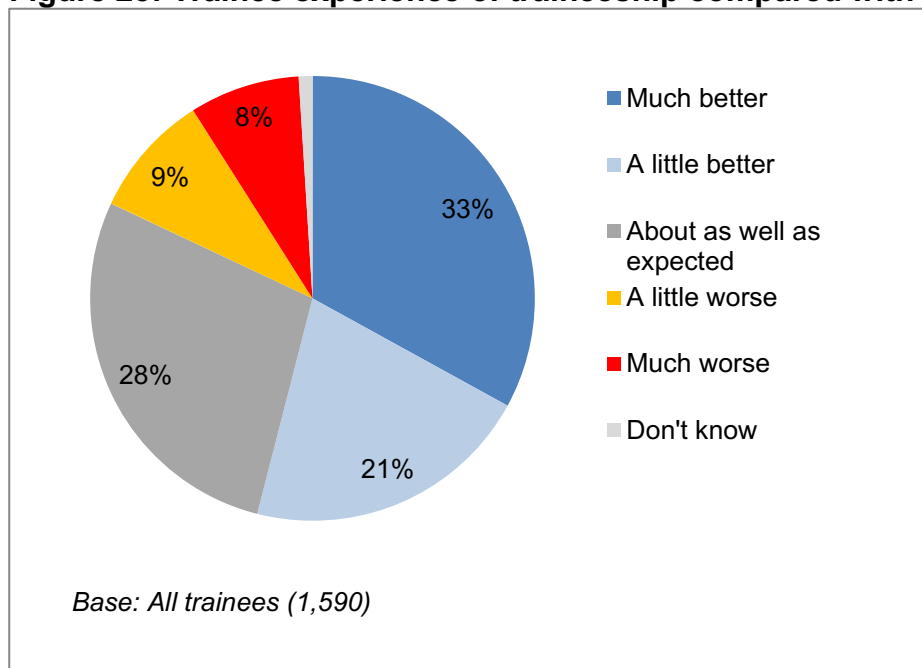
The majority of trainees also felt that the **level of the training** was about right for them, with 66% saying this about the English and maths training and 72% about the work preparation training. However, 25% of trainees said that the English and maths training was too easy and 21% said this about the work preparation training. Only a small proportion thought that the training was too hard (5% for English and maths training and 3% for work preparation training).

As might be expected, more highly qualified trainees were more likely to find the training too easy. Among trainees who said they were qualified to level 3 before the traineeship, 37% said that the English and maths training was too easy, and 30% said this about the work preparation training. In addition, trainees aged 16-18 were more likely than those aged 19 or over to say that the English and maths training was too easy (28% compared with 22%).

Just over half of trainees (54%) said that the traineeship overall was **better than they had expected** (including 33% who said it was much better), while 28% said it was in line with their expectations and 16% said it was worse than they had expected. Once again, trainees who left their traineeship early were more likely to be critical (29% said the

traineeship was worse than they had expected, compared with 11% of those who completed the traineeship).

**Figure 23: Trainee experience of traineeship compared with expectations**



Trainees who said the traineeship was worse than they had expected were asked why this was the case. Some respondents said just that it was “not what they thought it would be” (20%), while other comments were that the provider or employer didn’t “keep their word” by offering an apprenticeship (11%), that the traineeship was not very well organised (11%), that they didn’t learn anything (9%), or that the respondent didn’t like the work experience element (9%).

Trainees were asked what they thought could have been done to **make the traineeship more useful** to them. Less than half of respondents suggested improvements, such as more support or help (6%), longer work experience elements (4%), more information or explanation (3%), better organisation (3%) and a greater emphasis on the English and maths element (3%).

## Chapter 6.2. Providers

### Chapter 6.2.1. Suggested improvements

Providers were asked what they thought would make it easier to deliver high quality traineeships. Respondents offered a range of suggested improvements, most commonly the provision of a financial incentive to trainees (mentioned by 30% of providers), more advertising or better promotion (18%), and a change in the eligibility criteria (14%). Full details are shown in Table 2 below.

## Chapter 6.3. Employers

### Chapter 6.3.1. Perceptions of the trainees

Just over half of employers (54%) said that the **performance of trainees** in the workplace was as they had expected, while 25% said their performance was better than expected and 17% thought it was worse.

When asked in more detail about the trainees they had worked with, the majority (69%) thought that trainees had been below the standard they expected in at least one area. Specifically, trainees were perceived as being below the expected standard in their ability to cope in the workplace (39%), their self-confidence (37%), their level of previous work experience (35%), their commitment to or enthusiasm about the traineeship (35%), their literacy or level of English (30%) and their numeracy or level of mathematical ability (30%).

### Chapter 6.3.2. Suggested improvements

Employers were asked what they thought would make it easier to deliver high quality traineeships. Respondents offered a range of suggested improvements, most commonly the provision of a financial incentive to trainees (mentioned by 12% of employers), the availability of more information about the courses (11%), greater partnership working with schools and colleges (10%), more guidance and support (9%), and more advertising or better promotion (8%). Some employers focused on the quality of trainees, either in relation to the quality of their education (7%) or their willingness to work (6%).

## 24: Suggested improvements: providers and employers

	Providers	Employers
	%	%
Provide a financial incentive to trainees	30	12
More advertising/better promotion	18	8
Change the eligibility criteria	14	3
Work in partnership with schools/colleges	9	10
Encourage more employers to get involved	8	5
Increase funding	8	3
Better grant/funding for employers	7	6
Make young people aware of traineeships	6	4
More flexibility	6	3
Closer work with agencies/jobcentres	5	5
More guidance and support	4	9
Bigger employment base	4	1
More information about / advertising of traineeship	3	11
Better education/grades at school	3	7
Give trainees more opportunities/experience	3	4
Guaranteed job/apprenticeship at the end	3	2
Change the level of qualifications	3	1
If trainees were more prepared to work	1	6
More guidance from tutors	1	5
Other	11	17
None	2	6
<i>Base: All providers (200) and employers (218)</i>		

# Chapter 7. Early outcomes and perceived impact

**This survey is not intended to provide robust measures of the impact of the programme. However, the findings give an important insight into the perceptions of trainees, providers and employers about the extent to which traineeships have helped trainees to move into (or closer towards) an apprenticeship, employment or education/training, as well as other perceived impacts of the programme (e.g. on confidence and motivation).**

## Chapter 7.1. Trainees

### Chapter 7.1.1. Current and planned destinations

The trainees in the sample had been on a traineeship at different times. Some had left their traineeship as early as 2013, while some were still doing the traineeship at the time of the survey or had just finished it. It is important to bear this in mind when interpreting the findings in this section.

At the time of the survey (autumn 2014), half (50%) of the trainees who had left or completed the traineeship reported that they were either on an apprenticeship (22%) or in work (28%). A further 17% were in training or education. These activities can be said to represent 'positive' outcomes, and when combined together, they account for two-thirds (67%) of the trainees in the sample. The remainder were either looking for work (26%) or doing something else (7%).

Table 3 shows how these findings vary by age group. Trainees aged 19 or over were more likely than 16-18 year olds to say they were in work (34% compared with 23%) or looking for work (33% compared with 20%) at the time of the survey, and were less likely to be on an apprenticeship (15% compared with 29%) or in training or education (9% compared with 23%).

25: Economic status at the time of the survey, by age			
	16-18	19 or over	Total
(Base)	(802)	(614)	(1418)
	%	%	%
Employed or self-employed	23	34	28
Apprenticeship	29	15	22
Training or education	23	9	17
Looking for work	20	33	26
Other	5	9	7
<i>Base: All trainees who had finished their traineeship (1,418)</i>			

The destinations of those who left their traineeship early were similar to those who completed it, except that they were less likely to be on an apprenticeship (19% compared with 24%).

Other reported sub-group variations were as follows:

- Women were more likely than men to be in training or education (19% compared with 14%);
- Non-white trainees were less likely than White trainees to be on an apprenticeship (17% compared with 24%) but were more likely to be in training or education (22% compared with 16%);
- Disabled trainees were less likely than non-disabled trainees to be on an apprenticeship (12% compared with 24%), and were more likely to be in the 'other' category (15% compared with 6%);
- Trainees who had been on longer traineeships were more likely to be in training or education (ranging from 13% of those whose traineeship lasted less than 3 months to 25% of those with a traineeship lasting more than 6 months).

In total, 50% of respondents said they were employed or on an apprenticeship at the time of the survey. Of these:

- 42% were in the same organisation where they did their work experience placement;
- 18% were in a different organisation but were in the same industry;
- 40% were not in the same industry.

Trainees who were on an apprenticeship or in work were asked about the **type of work** they were doing, and this indicated a wide range of types of work. The most common activities were in retail (8%), business administration (6%), other administration (5%), childcare (5%), care work (4%), sales (4%) and customer service (3%).

All trainees were asked about their **preferred destination** in the future. They were most likely to say that they were most interested in finding paid work (63%), while 20% were most interested in moving into further education or training, and 13% in finding an apprenticeship (13%).

Four in five trainees (80%) said that the support that they had received during the work preparation training had helped to **improve their jobsearch**. Overall, 57% had submitted **job applications** during or since the traineeship, although this was higher among those who had found a job with a different employer (69%) and those who were still looking for work (79%). Two in five trainees (39%) had applied for an apprenticeship, either during or since the traineeship. Most of those who had applied for a job or apprenticeship said that they mentioned the traineeship as part of the application (77%).

Of those trainees who had applied for a job or an apprenticeship, either during or since the traineeship, 59% said that they were sending out more **job applications** per week than before the traineeship, and 58% said that they had applied for jobs that they had never considered applying for previously, as a result of attending the traineeship.

### Chapter 7.1.2. Perceived impacts

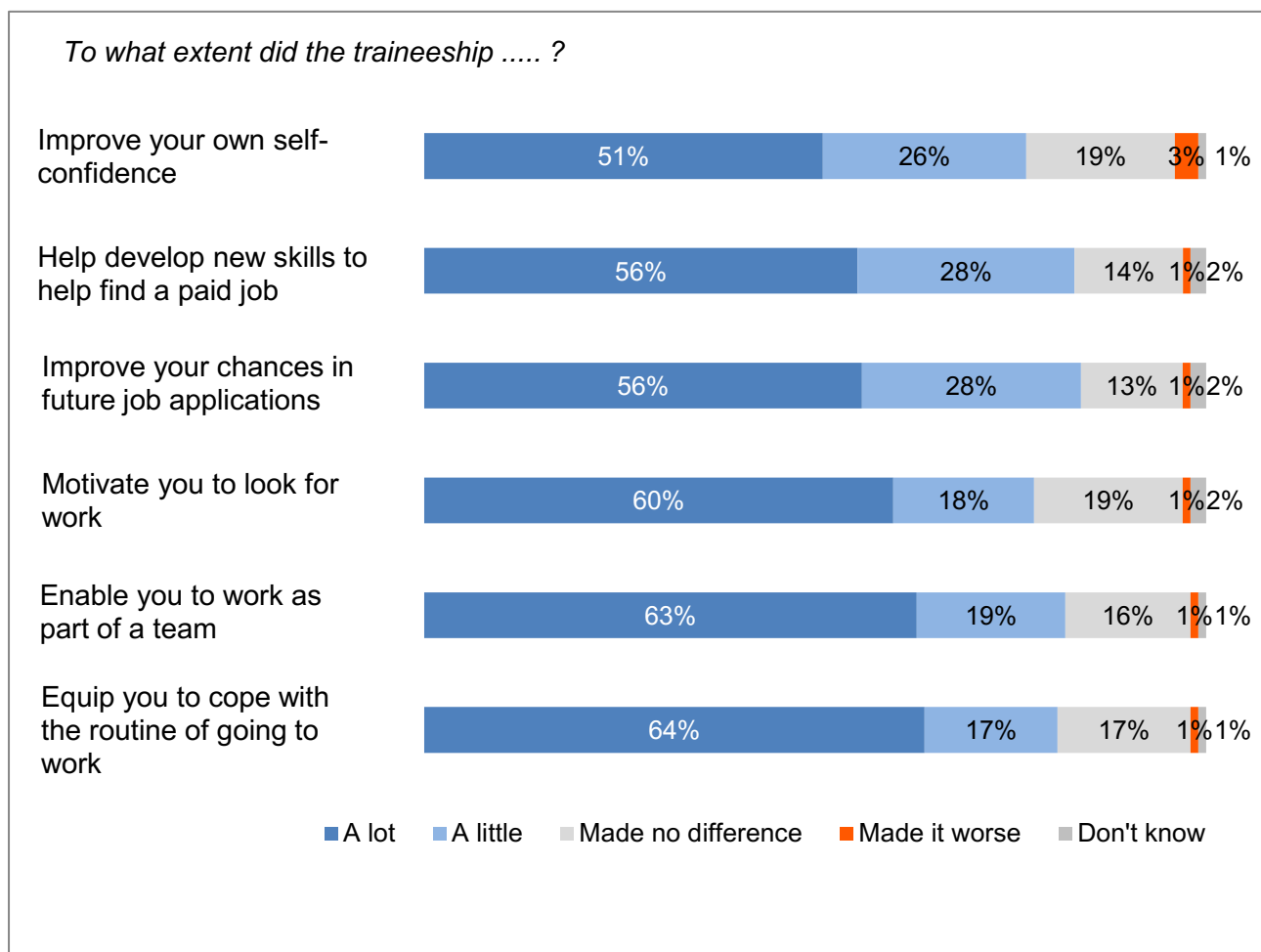
More than half of trainees said that the experience they had gained during their traineeship had greatly **improved their chances of getting paid work** (57% said they had improved 'a lot'), while 28% said they had improved a little; just 14% did not feel their chances of getting work had improved at all. Trainees who had left the traineeship early were least likely to say that their chances of getting paid work had improved (27% said they had not improved at all), while women were less likely than men to say their chances had improved (18% of women said that their chances of getting paid work had not improved at all, compared with 10% of men).

Just over half of trainees (58%) said that the traineeship had made them more likely to **apply for an apprenticeship**, although 22% said it had not made a difference, and 19% said it had made them less likely to do so. Negative responses (those saying they were less likely to apply) were again more frequent among those who had left the traineeship early (27%), and were more frequent among women than men (23% compared with 15%).

Trainees generally felt that the traineeship had made a positive impact on their **confidence and readiness for work**. For example, 60% felt that it had motivated them a lot to look for work, and 56% thought it had helped a lot to improve their chances in future job applications (see Figure 23 for further details).

As on other questions, trainees who left their traineeship early were less likely than other trainees to see a positive impact; for example 38% said that the traineeship had helped their self-confidence a lot, compared with 56% of completers.

**Figure 26: Perceived impact on confidence and readiness for work**



Overall, trainees recognised the **positive benefits** that they had gained from their traineeship. More than four in five (83%) said that they had 'gained good experience', while 77% said they had improved job interview skills and experience, and 72% had improved their chances of getting paid work.

## Chapter 7.2. Providers

### Chapter 7.2.1. Current and planned destinations

According to providers, the main destination of trainees has been into an apprenticeship: 71% of providers said that the majority of their trainees had moved into an apprenticeship, while 36% said that most learners had moved into paid work (other than an apprenticeship) and 32% said that most learners had continued learning or education.

Providers were asked what they thought were the **main barriers** to finding work or an apprenticeship among the trainees they had worked with. The main barrier was seen as a lack of jobs or apprenticeships in their area (mentioned by 30% of providers). Otherwise, respondents mentioned a lack of skills (12%), qualifications (12%) or work experience (11%), while some respondents felt that trainees showed a lack of commitment or motivation (13%) or a poor attitude (10%).



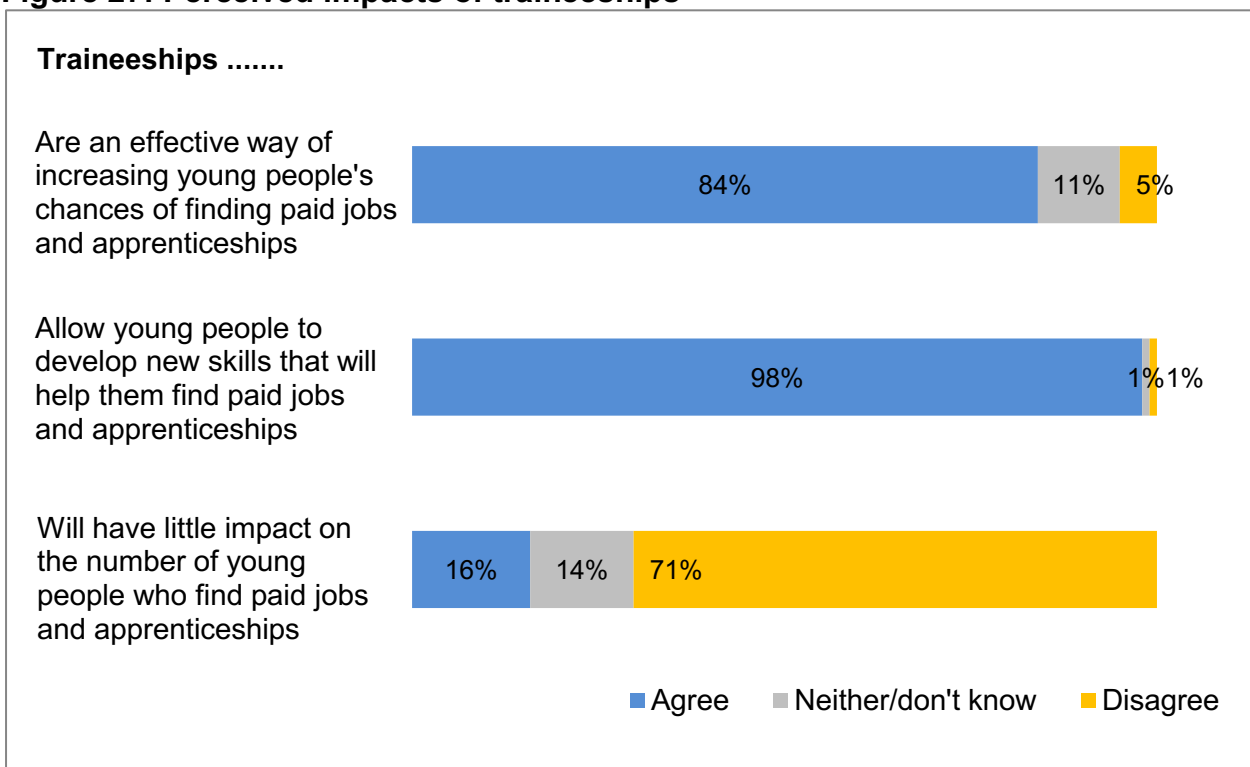
Nearly all providers (98%) said that they **offered trainees an interview** at the end of the traineeship. Usually, interviews were for a real position (93%), while 5% offered only a mock or practice interview.

At the end of the traineeship, nearly all providers (96%) offered trainees a **careers discussion** to encourage them to think about next steps.

### Chapter 7.2.2. Perceived impacts

Providers were very positive about the impact of traineeships. Almost all respondents (98%) agreed that traineeships allow young people to develop new skills that will help them find paid jobs and apprenticeships, while 84% agreed that traineeships are an effective way of increasing young people’s chances of finding paid jobs and apprenticeships. The majority of providers (71%) disagreed that traineeships will have little impact on the number of young people who find paid jobs or apprenticeships, although 16% agreed with this statement.

**Figure 27: Perceived impacts of traineeships**



Nearly all providers (95%) said that they offered **apprenticeships** as well as traineeships, and the majority (84%) felt that, in the long term, traineeships will lead to more young people becoming apprentices.

## Chapter 7.3. Employers

### Chapter 7.3.1. Current and planned destinations

Employers were asked what they thought were the **main barriers** to finding work or an apprenticeship among the trainees they had worked with. The main barrier was seen as a lack of jobs or apprenticeships in their area (mentioned by 27% of employers). Otherwise, respondents focused on a lack of work experience (8%), skills (7%) or qualifications (6%), while some respondents felt that trainees showed a lack of commitment or motivation (11%), low confidence (7%) or a poor attitude (5%). These responses are similar to those seen above for providers.

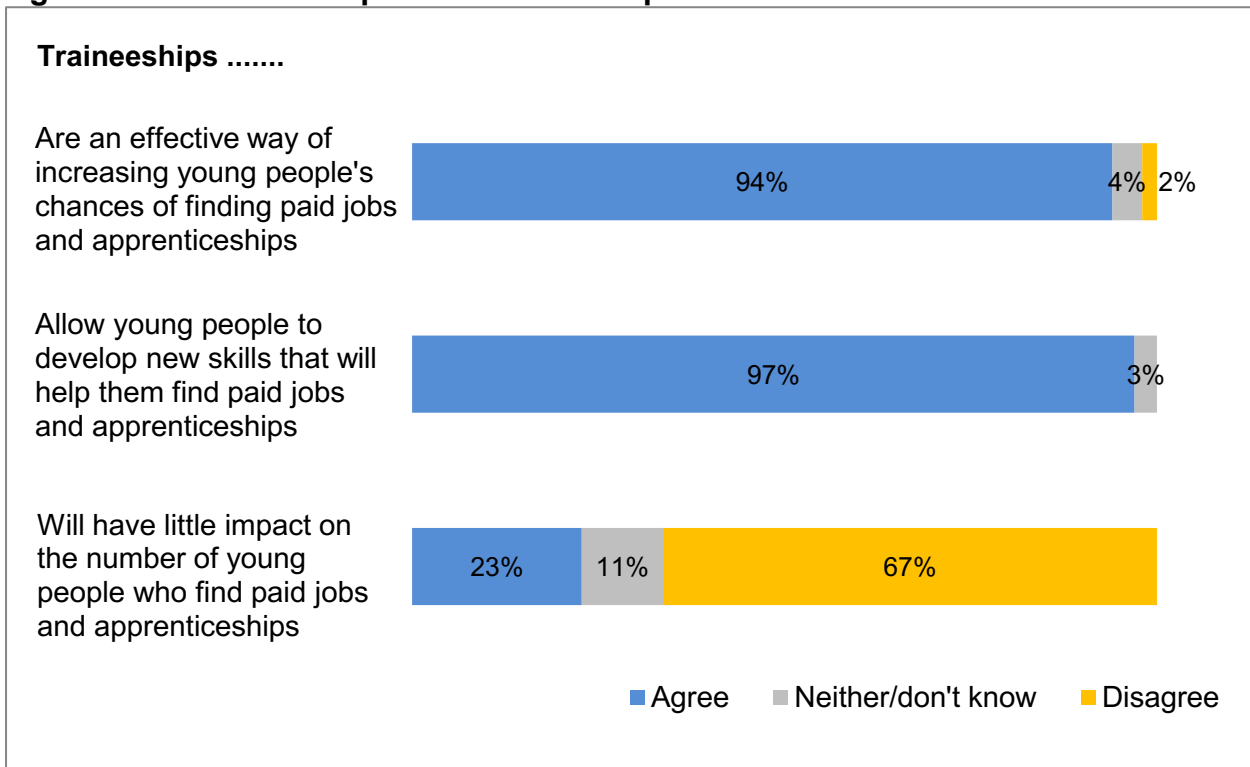
The majority of employers (84%) said that they **offered trainees an interview** at the end of the traineeship. Usually, interviews were for a real position (75%), while 9% offered only a mock or practice interview. Employers were more likely to offer an interview if they provided training elements as well as work experience (87% offered interviews for a real position, compared with 69% of those who provided work experience only).

At the end of the traineeship, nearly all employers (91%) **offered trainees a reference** or written statement that they could use when applying for jobs, while 86% offered an exit interview and 66% provided a careers discussion. Employers who provided training elements as well as work experience were more likely to offer a careers discussion (80% compared with 58% of those who provided work experience only), but there was no difference in relation to references or exit interviews.

### Chapter 7.3.2. Perceived impacts

Employers had very positive views about the impact of traineeships. Almost all respondents (97%) agreed that traineeships allow young people to develop new skills that will help them find paid jobs and apprenticeships, while 94% agreed that traineeships are an effective way of increasing young people's chances of finding paid jobs and apprenticeships. The majority of employers (67%) disagreed that traineeships will have little impact on the number of young people who find paid jobs or apprenticeships, although 23% agreed with this statement. These findings are similar to those for providers (see Figure 25).

**Figure 28: Perceived impacts of traineeships**



Nearly three in four employers (72%) said that they offered **apprenticeships** as well as traineeships, and the majority (81%) felt that, in the long term, traineeships will lead to more young people becoming apprentices.

Around two in five employers (42%) said that they expect the number of trainees they are working with will **increase over the next 12 months**, while 9% thought the number would decrease, and 47% thought the number would remain similar.

# Chapter 8. Conclusions

## Chapter 8.1. Attitudes to traineeships

The survey found very positive attitudes towards traineeships among all of the groups covered by the research: trainees, providers and employers. This was supported by the qualitative cases study findings which showed that the programme had been highly valued by all stakeholders involved.

The findings for **trainees** show consistently high levels of satisfaction: with their experience of the traineeship overall (79% satisfied), the way it was structured (81% satisfied), and with the three individual elements (between 73% and 81% satisfied).

Views were also positive about specific aspects of the work experience element. At least four in five trainees were satisfied with different aspects of their work experience, such as the amount of work they were given (80%), variety of tasks (81%), and the amount of support they received (83%).

**Employers** were generally happy with the trainees that they had on placement: 79% said that the quality of trainees was at least as good as they expected, if not better (25%).

## Chapter 8.2. Areas for improvement

Alongside the positive views highlighted above, the evaluation indicated some areas for possible concern or for potential improvement.

### Chapter 8.2.1. Communication and awareness

Across the case studies, providers experienced challenges in the initial set up of the programme, with providers wanting further information and support regarding the key aspects of delivery, such as length of placement, accreditation/qualification options and how to provide evidence of trainee learning and development in the work placement.

There were also challenges in building awareness and relationships with referral agencies due to limited national awareness activity and no additional resources for local marketing and communication. This had meant delayed set up of the programme and lower numbers of trainees than expected.

There were also specific issues regarding the clarity of information on the next steps for progression for both the trainee and employer, which could lead to confusion around the differences in the purpose of traineeships compared to apprenticeships and what options were available after a work placement was completed.

### Chapter 8.2.2. Integrating the work placement and sector specific skills throughout the programme

Despite the case study research showing good relationships between providers and employers, providers felt that further investment could be made in involving employers in

the programme from the set up to all stages of the delivery. This would ensure employers' needs were met and trainees were getting the best preparation for future work and employment. Trainees also valued the delivery of English and maths and work preparation when it was sector specific and related to skills they would require in the work placement.

### Chapter 8.2.3. Non-completion

Although the majority of **trainees** in the sample (59%) had completed their traineeship, 30% had left early (11% were still on the traineeship at the time of the survey). Some of the trainees left early for 'positive' reasons, for example because they found a job; others left for health reasons or for other personal reasons, while others left because they did not like the traineeship. Throughout the survey, attitudes were consistently less positive among trainees who did not complete their traineeship.

Although in the minority, there is a group of trainees who were dissatisfied with their traineeship and who left early. In addition, one in six trainees (17%) said that the traineeship was worse than they expected.

This suggests that levels of satisfaction and completion rates may be improved even further by managing trainees' expectations, for example by thorough advance briefing and explanation of what is involved and what will happen at the end of the traineeship. Once again, however, it is important to stress that it is only a minority of trainees where improvement is needed. The survey showed that most trainees are receiving information about the traineeship in advance (e.g. 71% said that, before starting the traineeship, they attended a meeting with the college or learning provider about its content); and are receiving support during the traineeship (77% were offered support such as mentoring).

### Chapter 8.2.4. Level of training

Although the majority of **trainees** thought that the level of the training was about right for them, 25% thought that the English and maths training was too easy, and 21% said the same about the work preparation training. This suggests that the training could be pitched at a more advanced level, but it also raises the possibility that some trainees had higher English and maths skills than expected.

Relevant to these findings are the qualifications levels held by trainees. Around half of the trainees in the sample (48%) said that they were qualified to Level 2 before the traineeship, and 15% said they were qualified to Level 3 or above. As discussed in the summary section, qualification levels can be overstated in an interview situation because of issues with recall during the interview and in particular the complexities of identifying which qualifications constitute a full Level 2 or 3.

In addition, other findings suggest that some trainees may have been more highly qualified:

- 24% of **trainees** said they did not do the English and maths training, and this was mainly because they already had the necessary qualifications..

- Around one in five **employers** (22%) said that the qualification level of referrals was lower than expected; these findings suggest that employers can have quite high expectations and/or requirements in terms of qualifications.
- Almost half of **providers** (47%) said that they had accepted all of the trainees that had applied or had been referred to them (i.e. they had not rejected trainees on account of their qualifications or for other reasons). Together with the other findings, this suggests that some providers are accepting trainees who are over-qualified.

### Chapter 8.2.5. Number of trainees

The findings from providers and employers indicate that both groups would like to have seen more trainees applying to or being referred to them. For example:

- 53% of **providers** said that they were expecting more trainees than they had actually worked with; 46% of providers had expected more direct applications;
- 20% of **employers** had expected more trainees (although 67% said the number was in line with their expectations), and 32% had expected more referrals.

### Chapter 8.2.6. Length of traineeship

Findings from **providers** suggest that traineeship durations are in line with the guidance. However, one in six **trainees** (16%) said that their traineeship lasted (or was supposed to last) more than 6 months. As detailed in the summary section, it is possible these findings may be subject to re-call issues by trainees. In relation to the work experience element, **providers** said that this element normally lasted between 6 and 26 weeks (86%), but, a substantial proportion of **trainees** (37%) said that their work experience placement lasted less than 6 weeks.

The provider figures are likely to be more reliable than the trainee figures (at least in relation to average durations). However, the trainee figures reflect individual experiences, and suggest that some trainees may actually have a shorter or longer duration than is intended.

### Chapter 8.2.7. Suggested improvements

The survey found that the main improvements to the programme that were suggested by **providers and employers** were to offer a financial incentive to participating trainees, and to improve the promotion or advertising of the programme.

This was further supported by the **qualitative case study findings**. Similarly, providers and employers raised concerns about the lack of financial reward for completing the programme and suggested that this could be a barrier for both motivation and ongoing engagement. It was also felt that there should be a greater focus on raising local and national awareness of the programme for trainees, referral agencies and employers.

Further suggestions were to **improve working links with referral agencies** to better utilise referral pathways and increase enrolment numbers **and involve employers in the content and design of delivery** to ensure the relevance of all elements of the programme are embedded in the work placement. Furthermore, the limited awareness of some employers and trainees of the next steps to apprenticeships emphasised the need to

## **ensure greater clarity of the progression options after the completion of the work placement.**

In addition, five key areas were identified to address non-providers current concerns about the resource and financial impacts of the programme and the suitability of the programme with eligible provider's existing skills and expertise. These were to:

- ensure direct and bespoke communication from EFA/SFA relationships manager about the programme and how it can be delivered by specific types of providers. However, current structure does not permit this to be implemented.
- continue to subsume similar programmes to simplify the system.
- allow flexibility to conduct work placements in specialist and high risk sectors via simulated site based conditions and controlled site based activities.
- increase awareness of the partnership opportunities for delivery and subcontracting elements of delivery.
- provide clear information about funding and expected outcomes of the programme through shared practice outputs and learning.

### **8.3. Perceived impacts**

The survey is not intended to provide robust measures of the impact of the programme. However, there were encouraging findings about the impact of participation, in so far as these were perceived by respondents, and as indicated by the activities undertaken since taking part.

Half of the **trainees** in the sample were in work (28%) or on an apprenticeship (22%) at the time of the survey, and a further 17% were in training or education. Most trainees, therefore, could be said to have a 'positive' destination after their traineeship. Of those who were in work or on an apprenticeship, 41% were still with the same organisation where they did their work experience placement.

Trainees also felt that they had gained a number of positive benefits from their time on the traineeship:

- Improved job prospects: 57% said that the experience they had gained had greatly improved their chances of getting paid work.
- Increased confidence and readiness for work: 51% said that their traineeship experience had improved their self-confidence a lot; 60% felt that it had motivated them a lot to look for work; and 64% said it had done a lot to equip them to cope with the routine of going to work.
- More intensive jobsearch, with a greater range of job applications: among those who had made applications for a job or an apprenticeship, either during or since the traineeship, 59% said that they were sending out more job applications per week than before the traineeship; 58% said that they had applied for jobs that they had never considered applying for previously.

**Employers and providers** also had positive views about the impact of traineeships; specifically in allowing young people to develop new skills that will help them find paid jobs

and apprenticeships (98% of providers and 97% of employers agreed with this), and in increasing young people's chances of finding paid jobs and apprenticeships (84% of providers and 94% of employers).

#### **8.4. Future surveys amongst the trainee population**

Based on the findings from this research, there are some areas which may benefit from future investigation amongst young people who begin a traineeship.

A follow-up survey of trainees would allow us to measure 'distance travelled' to placements and training. We would also be able to measure outcomes including: employment or apprenticeship; additional training or learning; jobsearch activities (including barriers to work or personal progression); confidence (in finding work, in own abilities, in current job); attitudes to future employment or training and wider future plans.



# Chapter 9. Qualitative case studies: trainee and stakeholder perceptions of implementation and delivery

**This chapter explores perspectives from trainees, providers, employers and referral agencies on the implementation and delivery of traineeships across six case studies. The chapter will first look at the experience and perceptions of trainees. It will then explore key stakeholder perceptions of set up, referral pathways and the content and delivery of the programme. The chapter will also examine the reasons why eligible non-providers did not take up the programme.**

## Chapter 9.1. Qualitative aims of the research, methodology

The specific aim of the qualitative case studies in Year 1 was to conduct a process evaluation to build up an in-depth picture of early implementation and delivery of traineeships. We used a qualitative case study approach to provide a holistic and comprehensive overview of the programme's delivery. We undertook six case studies (March – September 2014). Interviews were undertaken with:

- 12 providers
- 20 trainees
- 11 employers
- 12 local referral agencies (including six interviews with local JCP staff)

Seven interviews were also conducted with non-providers who were eligible to offer the programme but decided not to-do so, to explore the reasons why eligible providers do not intend to deliver provision.

Case studies were selected to represent a range of traineeship provision taking into account variation in delivery by age group, type of provider (e.g. Local Authority, Private, and Further Education), the sector that the traineeship provided training and work placement for, and a geographical spread across the UK. Please see appendix A for a full break down of the sample.

Each case study visit involved face-to-face and telephone interviews with providers, trainees, referral agencies and employers. All participants were sourced from sample

provided by BIS and DWP, with recruitment by TNS BMRB's specialist qualitative recruitment unit. All trainees received a small incentive of £20 as a thank you for their time.

Throughout the report, verbatim quotes have been used to illustrate the research findings. They are attributed in such a way as to retain the anonymity of the case studies and individual participants.

## **Chapter 9.2. Trainees' motivations for joining the traineeship programme**

The trainees included in the first year of the qualitative evaluation were aged 16 to 24; their educational attainment ranged from no qualifications achieved in school, through L1 -2 qualifications achieved in further education, to grade B – C in English and/or maths. Trainees also varied in terms of work experience, confidence and personal circumstances, and included young people who:

- Lived with their family or a partner (with the exception of a young person who identified as homeless).
- Were in receipt of JSA.
- Had dropped out of school/college and were looking for an alternative, or had opted to go into practical training instead of continuing with A levels
- Ranged from having no work experience at all to some through a voluntary position or a weekend job.
- Had struggled to find work due to personal circumstances (e.g. mental health problems and temporary homelessness) and/or experienced challenges to learning (e.g. young people with moderate learning disabilities).

The majority of trainees did not feel confident in their skills and therefore their prospects of getting a job; some said they felt job-ready but had not been lucky enough to secure one.

The key motivation to join the traineeship programme was to gain the necessary skills and experience to move into sustainable employment or apprenticeships. As discussed previously, barriers to entering the work arena ranged from a lack of qualifications to low confidence and limited work experience. The traineeship programme was seen as an opportunity to gain the qualifications and work experience needed in order to increase their employability prospects. The work placement not only enabled trainees to boost their confidence and develop their skills; it was also perceived as an opportunity to get a head start into their chosen field.

*"My main aim out of it was to find myself a job and develop confidence and just general skills for when I'm working". (Tanya, Case study 1, Childcare/Business Administration/Hospitality)*

Specifically young people expected the programme to provide:

- The opportunity to gain qualifications and work experience to increase their confidence in being able to offer skills required by employers and increase employability prospects.

*"I thought it was good because I'd be able to get out and do something and I'd be able to get a job easier because it goes on your CV, so I was looking forward to it because I thought it would help me get a job". (Darren, Case study 1, Childcare/Business Administration/Hospitality)*

- An opportunity to get a head start into their 'dream job'; they were attracted by the hands-on work placement and the potential for employment or an apprenticeship at the end of the traineeship, as opposed to more theoretical learning provided in a school setting.

*"I started thinking I'm going to carry on with college until I find an apprenticeship but then I saw a traineeship and, even though it wasn't paid and it was just 10 weeks, I thought I'm that desperate to get out of this and I'm just going to go for it". (David, Case study 5, Administration)*

- A taster of the field they wanted to pursue, and the flexibility to allow for a change of career focus, moving away from what they were doing prior to the programme and into a new vocational arena.

*"To find a job and a career. To get some experience and I always wanted to something in the hospital". (Cathy, Case study 5, Administration)*

- A structured activity for those who had left school not knowing what to do next.

### **Chapter 9.3. Trainees' experience of referral to traineeships**

Typically young people enrolled on the programme themselves, or were referred by providers and employment agencies. Referral pathways included:

- Word of mouth from someone in their family or social circle who had experience of the traineeships programme.
- Young people self-referring after searching providers' websites for further training or apprenticeships. Providers liaised with young people who applied in this speculative way, to gauge their readiness to begin an apprenticeship, and filtered them into an apprenticeship or traineeship where they met the necessary requirements.
- Providers directly contacting young people they thought were suitable after identifying eligible young people from local 'Not in Education, Employment and Training' (NEET) lists obtained from local authorities. These providers had a dedicated person/team to recruit young people meeting the programme's criteria.

- Referral by an external employment agency (e.g. Connexions, National Career Services) with which the provider employer enjoyed an established working relationship.

Less frequent referral routes were introductions to the programme by a sixth form tutor, further education tutor or JCP advisor.

## Chapter 9.4. Trainees' experience of the programme

### Chapter 9.4.1. Overall

Overall, traineeships were viewed positively by trainees – both those currently undertaking the programme, and those who had already completed one. Trainees generally thought the experience was extremely useful in boosting their confidence because it enabled them to develop maths, English and presentation skills, added to their CV and helped them enter a specific sector or get into paid employment more generally.

However, there was some scepticism about the long term impact of the programme among older trainees. These were trainees aged 19-24, in receipt of JSA, who had undertaken JCP- led training programmes with a view to improving their employability prospects, and were disappointed by the fact they still had not managed to get into work.

*“It wasn't explained properly. I was thinking I would get a job out of it. Everyone was putting their thumbs up saying I would get a job out of it and then when I found out it wasn't going to be a job I was like oh god, it was annoying”.* (Leon, Case study 2, Horticultural/Retail)

### Chapter 9.4.2. Work preparation

Work preparation was the first element of the programme delivered in the six case studies. It typically entailed structured class-based sessions which covered CV writing, employability skills, portfolio building, job searching and interviewing skills.

In general, trainees recognised the value of these activities to help them become more confident and prepared to enter the workplace. Trainees valued creative and engaging training, which involved games and role play, teambuilding activities and delivering presentations. Engagement and commitment to the programme was facilitated by short and diverse activities which were relevant to the work place and real life. Importantly, participants appreciated learning that was tailored to their sector of interest.

However, some aspects of the work preparation delivery were occasionally said to work less well. Where a provider covered a range of sectors, (e.g. hospitality, administration and healthcare), some trainees found the work preparation learning to be geared towards one sector at the expense of another, and felt that the training was less relevant to their upcoming or concurrent work placement. Another challenge was the impact of mixed ability teaching, which then led to a wide range of skills and engagement within teaching groups, and was perceived as barrier to progression for trainees who felt they were more able or faster learners. This was particularly salient among those with learning difficulties,

but not exclusively, with some trainees feeling they were not able to progress at the pace they had expected.

*“Because it there was other people with special needs, it's harder for us as a team to work together because it's the social interaction and stuff”. (Ashley, Case study 2, Horticultural/Retail)*

As part of work preparation, trainees received flexible content training that applied to the field their placement would be in. For instance, a provider that covered the childcare sector offered First Aid and City and Guilds Childcare accreditation, while another provider tailored flexible content training to specific opportunities within relevant industries (e.g. CSCS cards for the construction industry and health and safety awards for those working in the hospitality sector). Trainees expected that having extra qualifications would make them more attractive to employers and equip them with sector-specific skills that they could apply to the workplace.

### Chapter 9.4.3. English and maths

English and maths training was largely seen as beneficial by those who felt they lacked relevant qualifications and/or were less confident about their skills. Young people aged 19-24 were exempt from this if they had already achieved their first full Level 2 qualification, as were those aged 16-19 who had achieved Level 3. However there were some instances where these trainees had opted to re-take maths and/or English training in order to refresh their skills as it had been a while since they were in school.

Some young people felt nervous and apprehensive about the prospect of studying English and maths because they had previous bad experiences of school and education. Trainees who received English and/or maths teaching were generally happy with the quality of training, and liked the fact that it focussed on real life and the workplace and was delivered in an engaging way by passionate tutors who treated them with respect, as opposed to school-based learning which involved a larger number of students per class and a more academic focus.

*“It's a lot easier to understand here because you actually put into real life situations that you need it, whereas maths at school you didn't know why needed it and it was complicated. There are also not many people here and it's easier to concentrate”. (Lorna, Case study 6, Childcare/Business Administration)*

Other elements which were valued and enjoyed by trainees were:

- Tailored one-to-one sessions for those who required additional support, facilitated by small classroom numbers which made it easier to concentrate and receive personalised training and helped trainees to feel at ease and treated like adults.

*“I found the way she taught us a lot easier compared to how I was in school because it was more one on one than a whole classroom open”. (Daniel, Case study 1, Childcare/Business Administration/Hospitality)*

- Maths and English training delivered in short blocks of one-two hours, which helped to support their engagement and interest.

Initial assessments were conducted by the provider to determine the skills levels of trainees. Despite these processes, variation in trainees' competence, concentration and engagement posed challenges as some trainees felt their classmates may have held them back.

#### Chapter 9.4.4. Work placement

Work placement was a key element of the programme for trainees, who valued it because they expected it would help them develop skills in their sector of interest and ultimately secure an apprenticeship or job. Trainees appreciated being allocated to a placement that matched their interests and aspirations, which were determined through discussions with a tutor or the employer engagement manager, who would then liaise with an employer who was identified as a good match. Access to the work place was also taken into account, and employers were chosen to be within reasonable distance of the trainees' homes.

*"We got to write down a list of places that we wanted to have our placement and they picked one". (Charmaine, Case study 1, Childcare/Business Administration/Hospitality)*

There were variations in the way young people were allocated to their placement:

- providers asked trainees to source their placement on their own (with provider support); many trainees liked the element of personal responsibility this entailed, however some felt nervous about taking this on.
- other trainees were placed in allocated placements following interviews and discussions with employers to facilitate a good match.

For some trainees, finding a placement was a valuable task in its own right. Actively approaching employers made them feel more in control and therefore more committed and engaged.

In the main, trainees were happy with the range of activities undertaken on their placement and the respectful way in which they were treated by employers. This came as a surprise to some who were expecting to be assigned mundane tasks (e.g. making tea and printing photocopies).

*"Achieving something at the end of the day really. Like actual going into someone's house and actual painting it all and making a good job of it". (Ollie, Case study 3, Hospitality/Catering/Healthcare/Retail)*

Trainees received supervision visits from their providers to monitor their progress and discuss specific goals and tasks. Some trainees thought that supervisions were held too frequently (often fortnightly) as they did not have any further progress to report in that period of time.



On isolated occasions, trainees felt unhappy about the fit with their employer. There were instances where trainees complained to the provider that some tasks they were given were not relevant to learning sector specific skills (e.g. having to undertake cleaning). In most cases where a trainee was unhappy, the provider sourced a different placement which was more suited to them.

Those who had moved on to apprenticeships or employment were happy and valued the experience they had on the programme. All of the trainees interviewed said they would recommend the programme to other young people, as they thought it facilitated their skills development and career prospects.

*"Well I will have experience more than anything, so when I go for a job interview and they ask me what experience I have I can say yes I have done this. I had a traineeship."* (Damien, Case study 3, Hospitality/Catering/Healthcare/Retail)

*"Obviously the weeks have gone by and I've got offered an apprenticeship. I was so happy, thank you so much. It was life-changing".* (Sophia, Case study 4, Hairdressing)

## **Chapter 9.5. Providers initial set up and awareness of the programme**

The majority of providers were informed about the introduction of the traineeship programme through their local career/providers meetings, Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and Education Funding Agency (EFA) communications (e.g. bulletins, websites), direct approaches from relationship managers, NIACE publications and regional provider forums. Providers felt the traineeship programme would support young people who are committed to further development but are not yet ready for apprenticeships, and that it would fill a current provision gap among this group.

The decision to get involved in the delivery of the traineeships programme was easiest for providers who already held existing EFA/SFA contracts, and those who expected it would support their existing apprenticeships programme or replace previous pre-apprenticeship foundation programmes such as Entry to Employment.

*"We as an organisation have been trying for about ten years to get a foundation learning programme to lead into apprenticeships because the majority of apprentices, I would say fifty to fifty five percent have additional learning needs in English, maths and sometimes both".* (Provider, Case study 4, Hairdressing)

Aspirational senior management teams who wanted to be first to adopt new programmes aimed at young people was another facilitating factor; and there were some providers who had identified an unmet need for training opportunities for young people who needed further development but were not apprenticeship ready.

Initial set up of the programme was enabled by two main factors:

- Previous experience of delivering functional skills and employability skills for the same age group – so that existing resources/materials could be used.

- Established employer networks which facilitate access to employers – understanding the process involved and drawing on existing contacts.

Despite providers having previous experience of delivering similar training programmes, many experienced challenges setting up and establishing the programme and felt it had been a “learn as you go” process. Uncertainty had been due to perceived limited external guidance from funding agencies. Despite the availability of materials from funding agencies and introductory information, providers would have liked further guidance on key aspects of setup and delivery, such as the length and timing of work placements, accreditation and qualification options and how could they provide evidence of trainee learning in the work placement. There had also been a lack of additional budget for marketing and communications, which limited how far they could raise awareness of the programme locally. Providers received funding via existing SFA/ EFA streams of funding to implement and deliver the programme. However, some providers to tailor and adapt their current programmes, which led to additional cost and resource implications to hire specialist staff to deliver training, oversee the programme and manage the recruitment of employers.

Enrolment on to the programme typically involved a scoping telephone call which would then lead to a face to face interview at the provider’s premises. The applicant would then be assessed based on past attainment, willingness to get into work and past work experience. Providers used up-to-date diagnostic assessment tools (e.g. Edexcel) and prioritised assessment based on applicants’ current skills rather than their past attainment.

## **Chapter 9.6. Referral pathways**

As discussed earlier, self-referral was the main pathway into traineeship programmes: with providers reporting low numbers of referrals via external agencies.

Providers received referrals through existing links via referral agencies, apprenticeship programmes and wider engagement and marketing activities (e.g. networking at local council meetings). Other relationships were made with existing employers who had previously supported the provider on other employment programmes.

The referral process was also facilitated by initial assessment processes, including short interviews, portfolios and work trials to make sure the referral to the provider was successful.

Referral agencies included National Careers Services, Connexions and JCP. These organisations had direct contact with the target population and felt there was a need to provide alternatives for young people who experienced difficulties finding employment or securing an apprenticeship because they had poor maths and/or English skills.

However, although referral agencies valued the aims of the programme, they faced key barriers to referring young people to traineeships. First, referral agencies had received limited or fragmented initial information and contact from providers seeking to engage young people. The quality of information and contact may have been a result of the barriers providers had experienced in the initial set up of the programme.



Second, the numbers of eligible young people were dependent on the local labour market and young people's attainments in that area. Specifically, a growing local labour market led to limited demand. Referral agencies also felt that the range of work sectors and placements offered did not always reflect the needs of the local labour market or young people. For example, one of the referral agencies was unable to refer as many young people as they wanted due to low numbers of young people who were NEET in the local area.

There were specific issues which had led to lower than expected numbers of referrals via JCP. JCP staff did not appear to have a clear understanding of how to discuss and engage young people in the new programme, in part because they had received limited or untimely information about the programme (e.g. several months after the start of delivery) and had lacked guidance and information as to where the traineeships programme sits within the JCP offer of support to claimants. JCP staff had targets and aims to get claimants into work as quickly as possible. The duration of the traineeships programme (of up to six months) therefore was not seen to meet internal requirements to move claimants into work within a shorter timeframe.

JCP staff also had other referral options available through their own DWP suite of training, for example the Youth Contract and Sector-based Work Academies. Internal training was better known and was automatically available via JCP internal systems.

*"I know there are JCP that have been very reluctant to refer onto this programme because they are running their own work experience type programme, so some of the feedback I've heard is that JCP haven't been as engaged as we would have liked but I think that's regional". (Provider, Case study 1, Childcare/Business Administration/Hospitality)*

In the early stages of delivery, there was also an issue regarding the fit of the programme with claimant benefit entitlement because participation on traineeships exceeded the 16-hour threshold allowed for claimants to take part in training<sup>13</sup>.

Other barriers to the referral process included:

- 1) limited awareness of the programme among referral agencies due to limited budgets for marketing and communications.
- 2) the perception of eligibility thresholds as restrictive by both providers and agencies, i.e. seen as targeting a niche group of young people in terms of age and attainment. It was felt

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<sup>13</sup> DWP have **removed the 16-hour rule** which restricted the number of hours young people on Jobseekers Allowance could undertake the training elements that form part of their Traineeship. This came into effect in March 2014.

that there was need and demand for people over 24 years old who required work preparation and work experience.

3) traineeships were compared to high-profile apprenticeships and perceived as a fall-back option by trainees.

4) external agencies provided internal options which were more likely to be signposted and discussed with young people, this included JCP, but also further education and sixth form providers.

## Chapter 9.7. Programme content and delivery

### Chapter 9.7.1. English and maths

Providers delivered this element either by using existing resources and staff, or hiring new specialist tutors. Provision was designed in a way to best meet trainees' needs, achieved by comprehensive assessment processes. Assessing learners' maths and English level was enabled by utilising dedicated software (e.g. BKBS diagnostics) as well as in-house assessment tools and tests, designed by tutors. Assessment typically took place at interview stages so that providers could plan provision. Some providers offered sessions to trainees who felt they needed extra tuition even though they held qualifications at the required level.

*"If someone came in with GCSE's at Grade C and was not confident about their skills, we will tailor their course and then look at upskilling, so we have got that there for them as well". (Provider, Case study 4, Horticultural/Retail)*

Providers offered accredited functional skills (level 1 and 2) with a view that trainees would attain the qualifications either by the end of the programme or offered units of qualifications to achieve a whole qualification after completion of the traineeship. Lessons were taught via a mix of teaching approaches, including classroom based, online and personalised tuition for those in need of one to one support.

Learning was designed in a way that explicitly related to everyday life and the workplace to keep young people engaged and to prepare them as best as possible for the work placement experience. In addition, teaching English and maths in short blocks (e.g. one-two hour sessions) was viewed as an efficient way of delivering this element by some providers, because it minimised learners' boredom and disengagement.

However, there were some areas which had worked less well in the delivery of the training. Providers felt that it was easier to incorporate the relevance of maths within the workplace because there were practical examples of this – for example, how maths could be used to calculate the ratio of paint required for painting and decorating.

One provider offered the traineeship programme to young people with moderate learning difficulties; they encountered specific challenges in terms of the learners' ability to achieve a level 2 qualification within the duration of the programme. The provider opted to deliver units of qualifications so that young people could work towards whole qualifications after the traineeship (e.g. as part of their apprenticeship or further learning).

Generally employers and referral agencies had limited awareness of what English and maths elements entailed. However they were very keen on young people receiving training because good maths and English skills were seen as necessary for a successful placement and progression into employment. Although not directly raised by employers, their lack of awareness may testify to the fact that the delivery of English and maths could be further integrated within the work placement. This could be achieved by a closer working relationship between the employer and provider when designing this element to meet the former's needs and expectations of trainees. Providers felt that this would help support them to ensure that the relevance of the work placement was explicit within teaching and valued by trainees.

Overall, providers felt that a key learning for other providers was to deliver English and maths in small groups with similar ability levels and use rewards and tailored teaching approaches to keep up enthusiasm and engagement.

### **Chapter 9.7.2. Work preparation**

Work preparation typically took place within the first weeks of the programme and was offered as upfront block sessions. While some providers opted to continue offering work preparation sessions throughout the placement, others offered a dedicated extensive week at the start and end of the placement focused on skills for entering work. Providers varied in whether they provided accreditation for this element. Providers who offered accreditation did so in the form of employability skills qualifications through awarding bodies such as NCFE (formerly known as the Northern Council for Further Education).

The purpose of the work preparation training was to equip trainees with the skills and qualities to meet employers' expectations and needs. Training therefore focused on personal development, including confidence building, team working activities and teaching young people how to be punctual and behave in the workplace. Sessions also included more practical elements such as interviewing techniques.

Trainees also received sector-specific training, for example, customer service and hairdressing techniques. Tailored sector based training were further supported when providers worked closely with employers. Providers found that employer feedback and observations of training were valuable when designing this element to provide good quality work preparation that met the needs of both trainees and employers.

In practice, employers felt that trainees were well prepared and arrived with the right clothing and work equipment and a good awareness of the working environment. Work preparation was seen as providing the training that could not be taught as part of the placement, for example, confidence building or providing up to date sector information. However, employers still experienced challenges regarding the professionalism of trainees once in the work place (e.g. punctuality). It was also felt that there was a limit to the amount of work preparation needed and that the success of placements largely rested upon 'on the job' learning and the relationship between the employer and trainee.

Overall, providers and employers felt that good practice was evident where work preparation focused on confidence building to ensure a good first impression was made between the trainee and employer. It was important that work preparation was both fun and diverse and that there was a direct link with the placement sector to keep engagement

levels high. It was recommended that providers should ensure opportunities for individual learning where providers offered a variety of sector placements.

### Chapter 9.7.3. Additional flexibilities

In addition to the core elements of the programme, the programme allowed the flexibility to deliver additional content in order to best meet learners personal and labour market needs. This meant the ability to add elements depending on the needs of young people and the labour market.

In general, flexible content was part and parcel of the work preparation element in order to focus on training and sector specific accreditation (e.g. first aid and safety certificates and CSCS cards). It was also notable that the majority of the case studies did not recognise the term 'flexible content' or 'additional flexibilities' despite delivering training or support which met this description.

Providers found it is easier to tailor and adopt flexibilities when they offered a sector specific traineeship model; this enabled specific theoretical and practical tuition via the work preparation sessions. Providers felt that this type of targeted learning incentivised trainees to complete the traineeship because it gave trainees a clear sense of purpose that they were gaining skills to help them in their chosen sector. For some providers, limited access to relevant funding posed a barrier to offering additional training.

*“It would have been nice if we could have had an industry relevant qualification via distance learning or something like that I don't know, we would have to play with how it was best studied but I just think it just helps gel, it gives more purpose to everything that they are doing”.* (Provider, Case study 3, Hospitality/Catering/Healthcare/Retail)

It was suggested by providers that, as part of the additional flexible content, they could build in independent learning to allow trainees to work at different levels or explore specific areas of interest.

### Chapter 9.7.4. Work Placement

The work placement was expected to be a high quality learning experience tailored to the needs of each individual. Each case study provider designed tailored programmes, which varied in terms of how they delivered and supported the work placement.

Across the case studies, trainees had the opportunity to start their placement from two – six weeks of enrolment on the programme. The guidance for providers outlined that the expected duration should be between at least six weeks and no more than five months<sup>14</sup>. The frequency and length of placements varied across the six case studies. The frequency of sessions ranged from two –four days spent a week at the placement and length varied

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<sup>14</sup> Traineeships: Supporting young people to develop the skills for apprenticeships and sustainable employment, Framework for delivery 2014-2015 (BIS, DfE)

from six – eighteen weeks. The length of placement was dependent on the progress of the young person and there were instances of early transition to an apprenticeship where employers were confident in the young person's ability and wanted to make a commitment by offering them a job/ apprenticeship place.

It was also expected that providers would identify the lead employer for the work placement before young people enrolled on a traineeship. In practice there were two approaches to matching trainees with an employer, which were that either:

1) a young person is placed in an existing opportunity when they enrol (in line with the traineeship guidance), or

2) a young person identifies or is allocated a work placement to match their specific interests once they are on the programme.

Providers who adopted the second approach did so to provide tailored approaches that ensured that the specific sector and career interest of the trainee was met. Additionally, this guaranteed that the employer was in close proximity to a young person's home to remove any barriers of distance and transport to get to their placement. One provider changed their approach to match trainees to an employer after enrolment, because they felt that this encouraged good pairing of interest and ensured that placements were accessible.

Another provider asked trainees to identify and make initial introductions to employers because this would be seen positively by employers and demonstrated young people's ability to act independently. The college also provided support and advice during the process - for example, being on hand to follow up initial calls or identify placements if the young person was unsuccessful.

*"We also ask them to make their own introductions to some of the employers because again it's good for them, you know, in terms of making that introduction get the employer on board rather than us making that approach for them. It's another demonstration of their ability to be independent."* (Provider, Case study 3, Hospitality/Catering/Healthcare/Retail)

Providers had both existing and new relationships with employers. Typically providers sourced placements across a range of employers, but there was one case study where the provider had a relationship with one main lead employer. Existing relationships had been made via existing training programmes or apprenticeships. New relationships were forged by identifying employers through research of the local labour market, introductions from the apprenticeship team and presence at local career fairs.

Providers found that clearly presenting the traineeship as a mutual opportunity to test and trial the relationship for both the employee and trainee was a key enabling factor for recruiting and engaging employers. Employers' accounts confirmed this. They agreed that the main reason why they engaged in the programme was to support the development of young people and assess the skills of the young person for a permanent position as an apprentice or employee.

*"I think it's a good idea, easy for me and if it's the job for them then they can go onto the apprenticeship. If it's not the job for them then they can decide and go onto something else." (Employer, Case study 6, Childcare/Business Administration)*

*"...It is like an interview period and then if you've got a place at the end of their traineeship you could actually put them onto a modern apprenticeship... the younger the person the better for me." (Employer, Case study 4, Hairdressing)*

There were concerns by employers about the limited financial reward for young people, because trainees were not given a paid salary. Employers were worried that they may be perceived as exploiting free labour. However, these concerns were addressed when providers focused their discussions of traineeships as an opportunity to develop young people's confidence and skills and provide a stepping stone to pursue an apprenticeship or employment.

*"Well have you ever thought about giving a young person a go. The best way to sell this to employers is about trying before you buy, because a lot of employers have reservations about taking a young person on.." (Provider, Case study 3, Hospitality/Catering/Healthcare/Retail)*

*"We didn't just want to have somebody here as sort of cheap labour. The traineeship is a very good way of us saying we can bring in somebody. We can give them our best and educate them, and we'll learn whether or not we have a space in our employment for this extra person and you know sustain them." (Employer, Case study 2, Horticultural/Retail)*

Providers felt that the reasons why employers did not engage and declined to take part were often as a result of three main factors: 1) employees did not want to take part because this would mean extra workload and use of staff resource, 2) employers had concerns specifically regarding the time required for supervision and development of trainees and 3) employers had ethical concerns about the non-payment of trainees for the work placements.

Making sure there was a good match between the employer and trainee was essential for ensuring the delivering of an effective and useful traineeship. Providers facilitated this through arranging informal contact or interviews before the placement started. One example of this was the use of an induction day for the employer to meet trainees. In some cases, trainees who had already been matched were re-assigned placements after they had the chance to have more detailed discussion of what the placement would involve. Other providers had built in work trials before the placement to ensure both the employer and the trainees were happy with the match. However, there were incidences of less successful matches when there were problems regarding the young person's compatibility with the employer, the young person decided that they were no longer interested in the sector or the tasks given to young people did not meet the trainee's expectations.

Typically each employer had autonomy in how the placement was delivered in terms of the routine and tasks set out for trainees. They were additionally supported via regular contact and communication by traineeship staff or dedicated employer liaison officers. Contact

came in the form of work placement visits or phone calls to monitor and review the progress of the trainee from both the employers and trainees perspective.

From the provider's viewpoint, there were four key facilitators to providing a good quality placement, which were:

- Quick movement from classroom to work placement to maintain the trainee's engagement and enable the trainee to put the theory learnt within their work preparation sessions into practice within the work environment.
- Regular contact to oversee that the employer is providing learning and development; these were conducted via informal phone calls, regular face-face visits, and more formal assessments and reviews.

*"We go out and meet all of our employers, they are given a Traineeship handbook and we explain about the Traineeships. Employers are quite vocal as well, so as soon as there are any issues they will always come straight to us."* (Provider, Case study 6, Childcare/Business Administration)

- Structured work books and progress diaries filled in by trainees alongside their employers to provide a joint record of aims and achievements.
- Mentoring and supervision provided by the employers (or in some case by existing apprentices) to allow the trainee to reflect on their 'on the job' experience and discuss their longer term development of skills or qualities required for employment.

Overall employers discussed feeling well supported and felt there had been a good balance of input and flexibility provided by the college. Good relationships were built and maintained through close communication, collaboration and clear guidelines and arrangements that met employers' needs (e.g. guidance on health and safety and how to provide supervision support to the trainee).

*"Really they've been there for us I think, they've given us ideas and set targets of what they expect him to be achieving, but realistically they have let us to do what we know best and they just sort of kept an open eye on us."* (Employer, Case study 3, Hospitality/Catering/Healthcare/Retail)

However in practice, some employers felt that there could be improvement to the communication and information they received from providers. There was some confusion around the role of the trainee and how it differed to apprenticeships, particularly by those employers who had never supported this type of employment training programme before. Additionally, employers didn't consistently understand the purpose of provider site visits, and in some cases they were regarded as too frequent and not useful in supporting the programme. There was also concern that there was less support and communication once the work placement was underway.

At the end of the placement, there was an expectation that all trainees would be offered a guaranteed exit interview with the work placement host. Providers did not have to offer a

definite vacancy or opportunity. However some felt that this ensured the delivery of a high quality placement because there was an expectation that the employer had a potential opportunity, and therefore provided a clear purpose of the placement for the trainee.

*“It is important that they have the potential to develop, and so we have been quite rigid about the fact that employers who come on board have to have a job or apprenticeship opportunity at the end of it. There’s no way we would allow young people not to get something out of the placement and for us to be able to see that they are being developed within that role.”* (Provider Case study 2, Horticultural/Retail)

Providers felt that employers were generally engaged and enjoyed the experience of contributing to the development of young people. However there were some issues regarding how open and truthful employers were around providing feedback on the trainee. One issue was that employers gave good reviews until the exit interview and then disclosed negative accounts of their experience to the provider on issues such as the quality of work and lateness. Employers had specific concerns about whether they were able to terminate placements, with some have having misconceptions that they could not because they thought the placement was subject to employment laws . Others did not want to end the work placement and get them into trouble.

As discussed previously, the perceived limited financial support for trainees was seen as a barrier by providers, employers and trainees. The traineeship framework guidance stated that employers are not required to pay young people for the work placement under the traineeship. Traineeships fall under an exemption to the National Minimum Wage, but providers are encouraged to ask employers to consider providing trainees with support to meet their travel or meal costs. There was also no central funding for financial incentives to organisations hosting work placements as part of traineeships, but providers could use the funding they receive to offer support and incentives locally if they decided that is what is needed to generate high quality placements.

In practice, employers offered additional funds for travel and lunch, and although they were happy to provide this, some felt this was an additional cost to what they expected when they first agreed to take part.

*“We were asked if we could provide (travel and lunch expenses) but we're not getting any funding for this programme. We're doing it because we think it's the right thing to do and it's going to help the business, but we are providing a lot of staff time too and we haven't really got the budget to be providing food too.”* (Employer, Case study 5, Administration)



Another way to further support trainees was through provider hardship and discretionary funds<sup>15</sup> or additional payments for attendance and completion. An example of this was a provider who paid trainees a £30 allowance a week if they were in a situation of hardship and regularly attended their work placement. The provider felt this helped to incentivise engagement by trainees, as well as employers.

Both employers and providers felt that an important lesson learnt so far was to ensure that there was a mix of flexible and structured contact between the employer and provider, through informal phone call catch ups, email, guidance and reviews. Providers also felt there was greater value in implementing employer engagement from the start of the traineeship through breakfast meetings and informal training.

## Early perceptions of progression and outcomes

The case study areas were still in early progress in terms of the number of young people and cohorts that had completed their traineeships, and therefore the findings reflect early perceptions of progress so far. The stage of trainees on the programme varied from initial induction to having completed and secured an apprenticeship or employment. Trainees at the early stages of the programme were typically unaware of any support available towards or upon completion, whereas trainees in later stages were anticipating a review session to discuss next steps.

There were a range of pathways that young people entered at the end of their traineeships, these included apprenticeships, employment at the work placement employer, entry into education/training and seeking employment in other sectors. Some providers raised concerns whether other pathways, such as full time further education, would be perceived as a success outcome by the SFA and EFA.

It was evident in some cases that young people had experienced early movement into apprenticeships (e.g. as early as 6 weeks) when employers were confident in the progress and the commitment of the trainee and wanted to secure them as an employee.

Trainees across the case studies were offered an exit interview to secure an apprenticeship with the same provider, or another with whom the provider had links.

Successful transition to an apprenticeship or employment was facilitated by the provider and employer having clear steps in place to support progression and build the young person's confidence in their abilities and skills. This included:

- Early and regular meetings with the trainee to discuss progress on the work placement and future goals and development - for example, through joint review meetings with both the provider and employer.

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<sup>15</sup> Traineeship Framework for Delivery - Supporting young people to develop the skills for apprenticeships and sustainable employment (2013) BIS and DfE. "Young people taking part in traineeships will be undertaking education and training and, where they qualify, will be able to access our existing programmes of financial support, including the £180 million 16-19 Bursary Fund and Discretionary Learning Support funding for 19-24 year olds".

- Guaranteed interviews with employers provided the opportunity for the trainee to work towards an interview and provide evidence of how they had progressed over the course of the traineeship.
- Reward and recognition for the young person's completion of the traineeship. Providers had tailored approaches to this and included certification, support to update CVs, references provided by both the employer and provider, and awards and graduation ceremonies.

In all of the case studies the employers were clear that there was no obligation to provide a guaranteed apprenticeship or employment and this would be dependent on the performance of the trainee and also the business need and requirements of the employer. Not all employers were able to offer the trainee employment or an apprenticeship, even where they were happy with their progress. This was due to lack of funds or a lack of existing apprenticeship provision locally.

From a provider's point of view, it was important to be clear and transparent that there was no promise of an apprenticeship and employment. However there were issues regarding how this was interpreted by young people, with some assuming that if they worked hard that there would be an automatic position for them with the employer. This was an issue raised as a key barrier within a case study where the provider offered support for young people with learning difficulties; there were challenges around clearly communicating that a sustained and longer term position was not guaranteed.

Movement from the traineeship to an apprenticeship was facilitated by 1) review meetings and discussion between the trainee and provider to identify opportunities and areas of development; 2) providers having set up the programme with employers with clear links to apprenticeship provision and 3) employers having the flexibility to choose whether to take on the trainee without any risk involved.

However there were some barriers to employers fully understanding the progression process to apprenticeships. There were employers who felt uncertain or confused about what the process was. In some cases, there were unanswered questions regarding what they needed to do next as an employer and whether it had any cost implications. This was discussed specifically by small and medium sized businesses who had limited experience of taking on young people through apprenticeships or other work experience schemes.

*"I am under the impression we could be moving into an apprenticeship, but the college haven't given me or Jason a straight answer, and I don't know whether it's going to cost me £1500 to take him on for another year or whether it's free."*  
(Employer, Case study 5, Administration)

There was also general confusion by employers about the difference between a trainee and an apprentice and they often used the terms interchangeably. In light of these concerns and limited awareness, it suggests that providers could offer clearer guidance on the movement to apprenticeships.

Not all trainees completed their placements and there were a variety of reasons why this was the case, which included personal circumstances (e.g. caring issues), disengagement

with the sector and work placement, and the lack of financial reward. These factors were often seen as dependent on individual circumstances. However the financial reasons were discussed more broadly as both a barrier to initial sign up and engagement with the traineeship programme, which made attending the programme an unfeasible option for some.

In the circumstances where trainees completed their work placement and were not offered employment or apprenticeships, providers offered support where appropriate to find alternative opportunities (e.g. further training or learning at the provider or other providers) or signposted them to other career or support services for assistance.

When asked to reflect on key learning from the first year of delivery, providers and employers discussed two main recommendations for future delivery:

- The use of structured follow ups with employers and young people to monitor and evidence the sustainability and longer impact of the traineeship programmes
- Clear guidance on next steps to apprenticeships or employment to allay fears and lack of knowledge

## **Chapter 9.8. Providers who decided not to participate perspective on why they do not take up traineeships**

As previously discussed, the qualitative research also included interviews with providers who decided not to participate in traineeships to understand why eligible providers do not intend to deliver provision. Generally, the decisions not to take up the traineeship programme related to barriers focused on resources and/or lack of expertise. Other reasons included low demand for apprenticeships in the local area, the level of competition within the area and whether other providers had more relevant experience, and whether other types of provision was more appropriate for specific groups (e.g. young people with severe disabilities).

Discussions with providers who did not participate presented five main factors which led to non- take up of the programme. These included:

- ***Uncertainty about the target age group and how that aligned with providers current delivery and learner groups:*** There was confusion about whether traineeships were aimed for providers who already provided similar learning programmes and qualifications for 16-18 years old or 19-24 years old, with a perception that delivery was required to be delivered across the full age spectrum. For example, there was an assumption by a Sixth form school provider that EFA funded providers were not eligible to take part because the programme was a BIS-sponsored opportunity and aimed at older young people.
- ***Reluctance to change existing delivery of provision:*** There were providers who perceived that it was more pragmatic to continue with existing provision which supports pre- apprenticeships. This was largely driven by expectations of financial burden and impact. The confusion regarding the funding mechanisms and

requirements attached was discussed across non -providers. For example, a provider, who had an EFA contract to deliver a Level 1 pre-apprenticeship programme, was not interested in investing in additional resource to alter their current offer.

*“If a Minister said to me tomorrow, could you deliver traineeships, and we could get some flexibility around how we deliver it, such that we can simulate some of the site-based activity and get them onto site after a period of time; effectively you could call my level 1 programme a traineeship, in fact, we would name (our current programme) that tomorrow, and you could fund me for that.”* (Provider who decided not to participate in traineeships, Engineering/Manufacturing)

- ***The challenges of offering work placements in specialist and high-risk sectors:*** Providers felt there were too many challenges to offering work placement in sectors such as construction and manufacturing due to the health and safety risks. One example of this challenge was a provider specialising in construction; who felt that it would be impossible to offer work placements on site for 16-18 years old because employers would not want to take on any risks around the health and safety of young people.
- ***Limited existing expertise to deliver both learning and work placement support:*** This was where providers did not have the expertise to deliver the whole programme across each of the core elements – English and maths, work preparation and work placement. There were providers delivering training packages under the apprenticeships or wider adult learning programmes that did not consider themselves as ready or prepared to work with non-employed, young people or had limited experience recruiting and engaging with employers.

*“Well we have no experience with apprenticeships, so we have none of the links with employers, and we don’t have staff who have that type of experience of linking to employers. Now we would have to setup a whole new area of work for that. The bit that we would have is the actual confidence-building skills and the English, maths and ESOL. So we potentially could subcontract and do that work for other providers, but we didn’t feel that we could do the whole thing.”* (Provider who decided not to participate in traineeships , Arts & Languages)

- ***Delivering a new programme would incur additional costs and resource:*** Providers had concerns about the financial risks associated with delivering a new and untested programme without an additional funding incentive, and were therefore concerned about whether they would be able to effectively justify provision to senior management teams. One -provider discussed how they would need to invest in specialised tutors to deliver the programme and make changes to their Independent Learner Records (ILR) and general administrative systems to support traineeships.

Taking these issues into account, and drawing together key learnings from the experiences of non-providers and successful engagement of providers to address these, the issues could be addressed through the following **recommendations**:

- The use of direct and bespoke communication nationally and from EFA and SFA relationship managers about how the programme could be delivered by specific types of providers. However, current structure does not permit this to be implemented.
- To continue to subsume and cease similar existing programmes to simplify the system (e.g. the existing practice to cease funding for new starts on Access to Apprenticeships).
- To provide greater flexibility in the delivery of the work placement to allow a combination of simulated site-based conditions in a training centres and controlled site base activities.
- To increase awareness of the partnership opportunities for delivery and subcontracting elements of delivery of the programme (e.g. functional skills, work preparation and engagement work with referral agencies and employers).
- To provide clear guidance and information about funding, as well as expected outcomes. For example, sharing good practice and success stories from providers and employers delivering in year one of the programme. This may serve as motivation to consider delivery in the future and highlight the benefits of the programme to potential employers.

# Appendix A: Qualitative Case Study sample

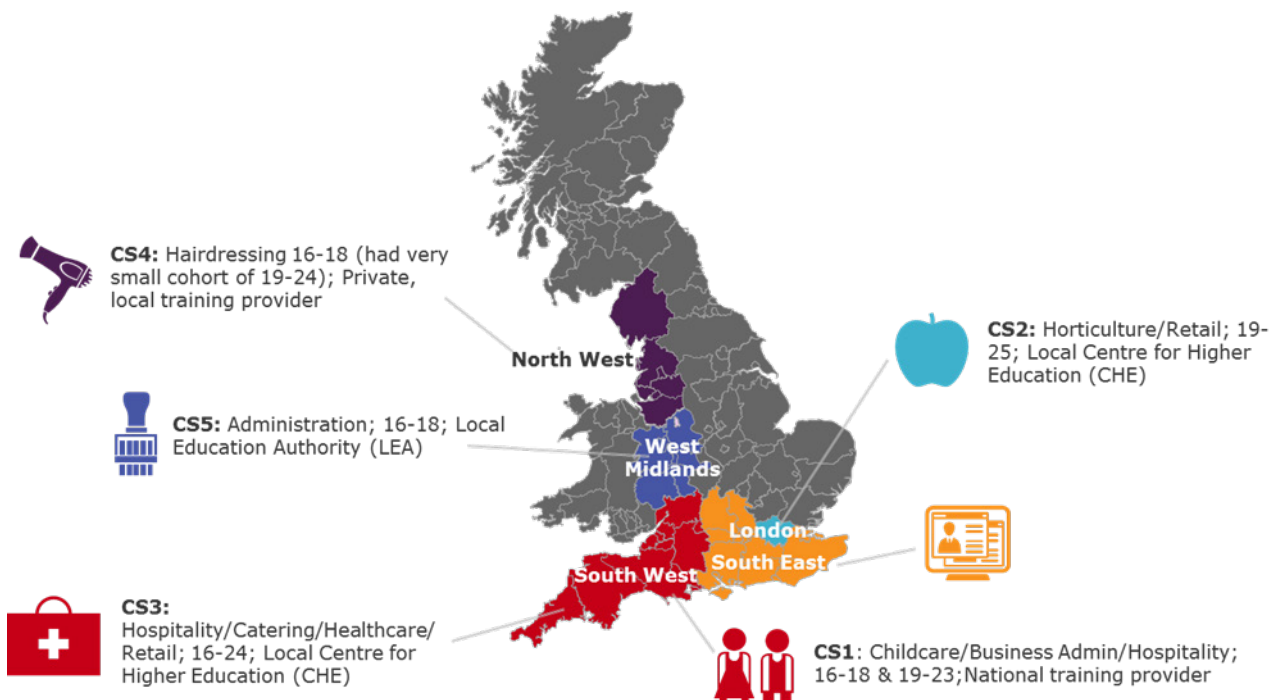
We undertook six case studies (March – September 2014) to create a full picture of the contexts of provision. Interviews were undertaken with the following below:

Case study	Providers	Employers	Referral agencies	JCP	Trainees	Sector	Age
1	2	2	1	1	4	Childcare/Business Administration/Hospitality	16-23
2	2	1	1	1	3	Horticultural/Retail	19-25
3	2	2	1	1	3	Hospitality/Catering/ Healthcare/Retail	16-24
4	2	2	2	1	4	Hairdressing	16 -18 (and small cohort 19-24)
5	2	2	0	1	3	Administration	16-18
6	2	2	1	1	3	Childcare/Business Administration	16-18

7 interviews were also conducted with non-providers who were eligible to offer the programme but decided not to deliver to explore the reasons why eligible providers do not intend to deliver provision, outlined below.

Case study	Sector
1	General HE
2	Construction
3	Engineering/Manufacturing
4	Arts and Crafts
5	ICT/Computer Sciences
6	Arts and Languages
7	General FE

The case studies were selected to represent a range of traineeship provision taking into account variation delivery by age group, type of provider (e.g. Local Authority, Private, and Further Education), the sector that the traineeship provided training and work placement for, and a geographical spread across the UK, the full breakdown is illustrated below:





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**BIS/15/189**