

Perceptions of Vocational and Technical Qualifications in England

An Ofqual commissioned report

July 2020

Ofqual/20/6631

The logo for YouGov, with 'You' in red and 'Gov' in grey.

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Introduction

Background

This report presents the findings of wave 3 of the Perceptions of Vocational and Technical Qualifications Survey and should be read alongside the [background information document](#). To best appreciate the display of the data, this report should be viewed in colour.

The project was commissioned by Ofqual and conducted by YouGov. The aim of this project was to investigate learners', employers' and all types of providers' perceptions of vocational and technical qualifications in England. The survey also explored perceptions of a number of topical aspects of the system for vocational and technical qualifications.

The survey was conducted using an online method. The fieldwork for this wave was conducted between 20 January and 4 March 2020. Please note that the responses presented in this report do not relate to the [exceptional arrangements](#) being put in place this year in response to COVID-19. They refer only to the normal arrangements in place in 2019.

The final achieved samples were structured to be representative of the relevant target populations. However, while the sampling approach aimed to identify groups of participants who were representative, given that a survey of this kind only captures the views of those involved, throughout this report responses attributed to groups reflect only those respondents included in the study. Further information on sampling and methodology is available in the accompanying [background information document](#).

YouGov and Ofqual advise against drawing conclusions based on differences in the data in comparison with waves 1 and 2. This is due to key changes in the sampling approach and survey mode which were put into place for wave 3:

- 1) The sample for learners and employers was drawn from the YouGov panel in wave 3, as well as a portion of the provider group sample. By comparison, each sample was selected from targeted contact databases in previous waves.
- 2) Fieldwork for the employers' survey was conducted online in wave 3, whereas in previous waves it was done by telephone.
- 3) Weighting was applied to the wave 3 results to produce representative samples, which was not done previously.

Glossary of terms

Glossary	
Adult Community Learning (ACL)	Adult Community Learning includes a range of community based and outreach learning opportunities, primarily managed and delivered by local authorities and general further education colleges.
All provider types	The scope of the survey sample included providers of all types such as in the following categories: Further Education (FE); Higher Education (HE); private class-based; private work-based; public sector community based; public sector 'other'; schools; voluntary sector education; Independent Training Provider (ITP). ITPs are distinct from other types of Further Education providers as they are 'independent' and not run or directly controlled by the state. In the report when referring to the provider sample, this group may be referred to as the provider group/all types of providers/providers (all types).
Apprenticeship frameworks	These were developed by sector bodies, primarily focused on qualifications. They are being phased out by 2020/21 and being replaced by apprenticeship standards. Framework apprenticeships are assessed throughout by completing a unit at a time but there is no endpoint assessment.
Apprenticeship standards	New apprenticeship standards, developed by employers, to show what an apprentice will be doing, and the skills required of them, by job role. Standards are developed by employer groups known as 'trailblazers'. Standards are occupation-focused rather than qualification-led, with the apprentice being assessed through an end-point assessment. The Institute is an employer-led organisation focussed on enabling people of all ages and backgrounds have the opportunity to maximise their potential and contribute to improving social mobility and the UK's productivity. Working with business leaders and their representatives, the Institute ensure employers drive apprenticeship quality to the highest level, including supporting employer groups in the development of the standards on which apprenticeships are based. The Institute also has responsibility for managing the development and approval of T levels.
Awarding organisation	An organisation recognised by the qualifications' regulators in England, Wales or Northern Ireland to develop, deliver and award qualifications.
Effective base	When sampling is undertaken, it creates a 'design effect' that can impact upon the reliability of the information collected. The effective base size is the base size that is left when removing this effect. It is used for significance testing.

End-point assessment of apprenticeship (EPA)	The final assessment for an apprenticeship, taken at the end of the apprentice’s training and used to determine whether they are occupationally competent and will pass their apprenticeship.
Functional Skills qualifications (FSQ)	Functional Skills qualifications are available in English, maths and ICT and are available in levels from Entry 1 to Level 2. Functional Skills assessments test the fundamental, applied skills in these subjects for life, learning and work. Reformed functional skills qualifications were introduced for first teaching in September 2019, and this research does not cover perceptions of these qualifications.
Further Education (FE)	Further education (FE) includes any study after secondary education that’s not part of higher education (that is, not taken as part of an undergraduate or graduate degree).
Local Authorities (LAs)	Local Authorities (LAs) are responsible for a range of vital services for people and businesses in defined areas, including social care, schools and adult education.
Other Vocational & Technical Qualifications (VTQ)	These normally have a vocational focus and include, amongst others, Technical Qualifications and National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs). For this report, this term refers to qualifications other than FSQs and EPAs.

Executive summary

The below summary gives an overview of the key findings for each of the three respondent groups. This means for example, that although the same questions were answered on understanding of particular qualifications across the groups, responses to each of these statements are not all included in the below summaries. When making comparisons across respondent groups, please refer to the relevant charts in the main body of the report.

Employer perceptions

- Nearly half of employers (46%) report they value VTQs, although this is lower than the value reported amongst the provider group and learners. The vast majority (88%) of the providers said that they value VTQs, which is higher than the 70% of learners who said they value VTQs.
- Organisation size was a key factor influencing levels of understanding of qualifications and end-point assessments (EPAs) and employers' likelihood of holding positive perceptions of them. Large employers were more likely than smaller employers to be aware of each of the qualifications.
- Twenty six percent of employers reported that they have a very or quite good understanding of Functional Skills Qualifications (FSQs). Of those employers with at least some understanding of FSQs, a third (34%) agreed that their organisation values them.
- Approximately two-fifths (41%) of employers reported having a very or quite good understanding Vocational and Technical qualifications (VTQs). Just under half (46%) of employers with at least some understanding of VTQs said that they value them.
- Thirteen percent of employers reported having a very or quite good understanding of EPAs.
- Across different levels of job roles, similar proportions of employers reported that all or most training leads to a qualification. For those in entry level and admin roles, a quarter (25%) of employers reported that all or most training leads to a qualification, with similar numbers reporting this for skilled and supervisory roles (31%) and professional and managerial roles (29%).

Provider (all types) perceptions

- Roughly two-thirds (64%) of the provider group agreed that they value FSQs, making them the group most likely to support this statement.
- A smaller but sizable proportion (44%) of the provider group agreed that FSQs offer value for money.
- Understanding of EPAs of apprenticeships was highest among the provider group, with three in five (60%) providers reporting having a very or quite good understanding of these.
- In keeping with general higher levels of understanding of qualifications among the provider group, awareness that EPAs are specific to apprenticeship standards was highest among this group (77%).

Learner perceptions

- Just over half (54%) of learners said that they value FSQs. A similar proportion (52%) agreed that these qualifications offer good value for money.
- Learners were most likely to state that a benefit of undertaking FSQs is having better job prospects in the longer term (24%). The next most common benefits given are being more confident in English and maths and to progress to higher level qualifications (both 22%).
- Among learners who had started or completed a VTQ, the most frequently perceived benefit was an increase in confidence using their vocational / technical skills (41%).
- Almost half (48%) of learners reported a very or quite good understanding of EPAs of apprenticeships. Learners' understanding was lower than for the provider group, but higher than among employers.
- The three most commonly stated reasons as to why learners decided to take an apprenticeship were that they can learn new skills on the job (40%), progress in their current job (30%) or find a job / a better job (30%).

Section 1: Perceptions of Functional Skills Qualifications

Key findings – Functional Skills Qualifications

- Approximately a quarter (26%) of employers reported having a very or quite good understanding of FSQs. Large employers (24%) were significantly more likely than smaller employers to report having a *very good* understanding, as were public sector employers (22%) compared to private sector employers (7%), likely a reflection of organisation size.
- Learners who had undertaken an FSQ in the last three years most commonly said they decided to do so in order to progress in their studies (33%). This was particularly true among younger learners aged 18 or under (47%).
- The top benefits learners thought there were to taking FSQs were that they will have better job prospects in the longer term (24%), be more confident using English/maths (22%) and progress to higher level qualifications (22%).
- The provider group were most likely (64%) to agree that they value FSQs, followed by approximately half (54%) of learners and a third (34%) of employers.
- Medium-sized (47%) and large (56%) employers were significantly more likely than small (34%) and micro (33%) employers to value FSQs.
- Those from the provider group that are getting Advanced Learner Loans (77%) or who are in direct contract with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (69%) were more likely to say they value FSQs than those receiving funds through a sub-contractor (59%) or in another way (49%).
- Older learners aged 25+ (59%) were more likely than young learners aged 18 or under (43%) to value FSQs.
- Roughly half (52%) of learners agreed that FSQs offer value for money, as did a slightly smaller proportion (44%) of the provider group.
- Approximately two-fifths (39%) of learners agreed that the availability of FSQs is sufficiently flexible, compared to a fifth (19%) of employers.
- Roughly half (53%) of learners and the provider group (51%) agreed that those holding FSQs have the appropriate level of skill in English needed by their organisation, compared with 30% of employers.
- Roughly a quarter (27%) of employers agreed that those holding FSQs have the appropriate level of skill in math needed by their organisation. A notably larger group of learners (50%) and providers (48%) agreed when asked the same question.
- Agreement levels that people holding FSQs have the appropriate level of skill in ICT were higher among the provider group and learners (both 43%) and relatively lower for employers (25%).
- Roughly two-thirds of learners (64%) agreed that FSQs are good preparation for further study.

Understanding of Functional Skills Qualifications by employers

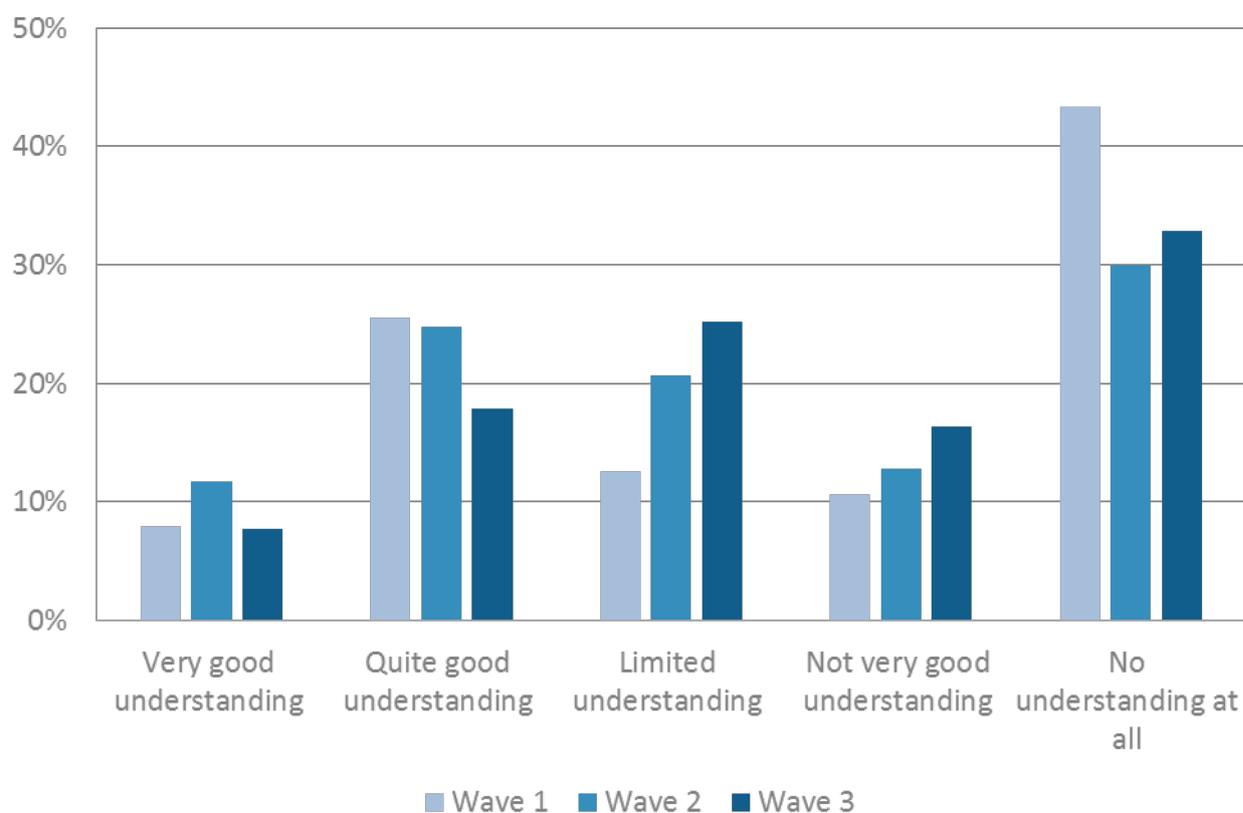
For figure 1, the wave 3 effective base is: All employers, 1,459.

Approximately a quarter (26%) of employers reported having a very or quite good understanding of FSQs, while an almost equivalent proportion (25%) said they have a limited understanding. Overall, 16% of employers reported not having a very good understanding, leaving a third (33%) saying they have no understanding at all of FSQs.

Large employers were significantly more likely than those in smaller businesses to report having a very good understanding of FSQs. While approximately a quarter (24%) of employers at large organisations with 250+ employees said they have a very good understanding, this was the case for just 14% of medium organisations (50-249 employees), 10% of small organisations (10-49 employees) and 7% of micro organisations (2-9 employees).

Differences in levels of understanding also appear when comparing by sector. Public sector employers (22%) were significantly more likely than private sector employers (7%) to say they have a very good understanding of FSQs. This likely reflects organisation size as public sector organisations tend to be larger.

Figure 1. Results for 'Please indicate your level of understanding about the four types of qualifications listed below.' – Functional Skills qualifications (Employers)



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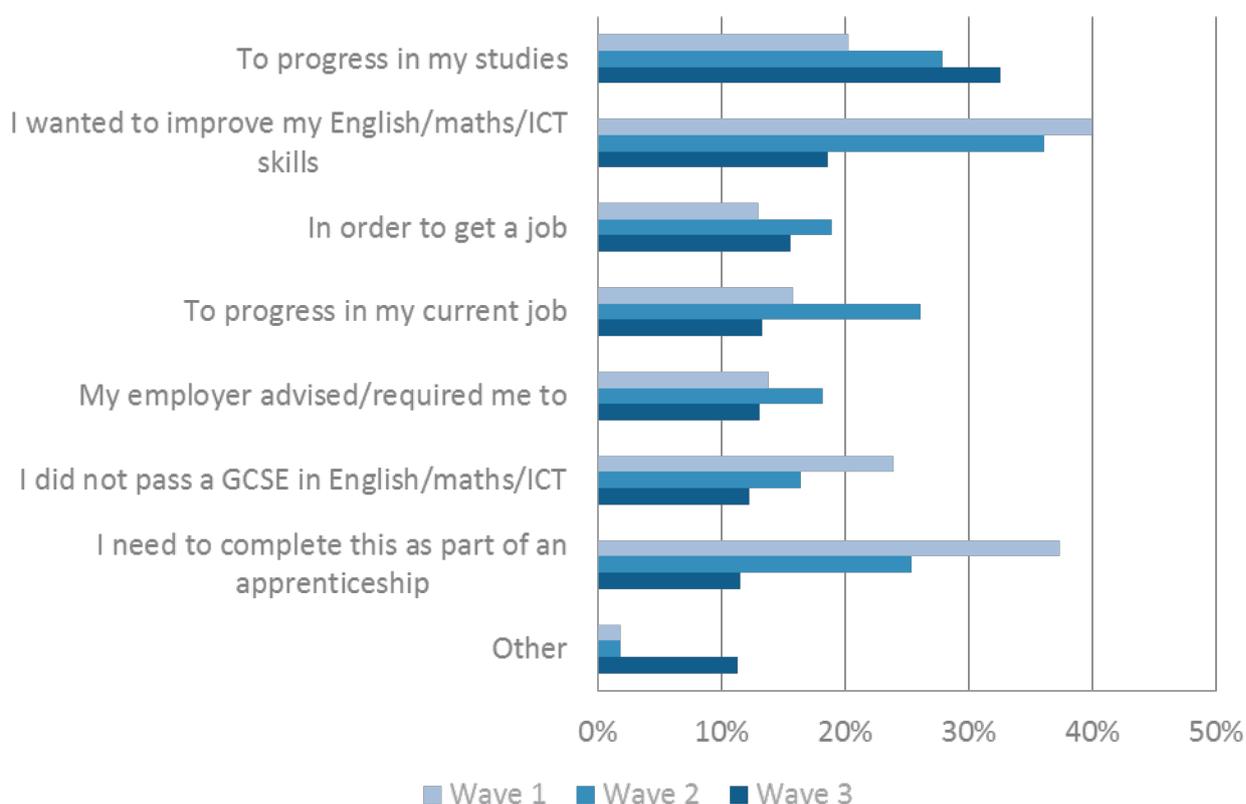
Why learners chose Functional Skills Qualifications

For figure 2, the wave 3 effective base is: Learners who are studying or have studied a FSQ in the last three years, 202.

Most commonly, learners who had undertaken an FSQ in English, maths, or ICT in the last three years said they decided to do so in order to progress in their studies (33%), which is likely due to these qualifications being a mandatory component of some programmes of study. Following this, learners reported that they wanted to improve their skills (19%) or get a job (16%).

Younger learners aged 18 or under (47%) were significantly more likely to say that they decided to take an FSQ to progress in their studies than learners aged 19 to 24 (25%) and 25+ (22%). Meanwhile, older learners aged 25+ were more likely than younger people to say they did so as part of an apprenticeship (20% compared with 11% aged 19-24 and 3% under 19) or to progress in their current job (22% compared with 12% aged 19-24 and 6% under 19).

Figure 2. Results for ‘Why did you decide to take a Functional Skills qualification?’ (Learners)



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Benefits associated with Functional Skills Qualifications by learners

For figure 3, the wave 3 effective base is: Learners who are studying or have studied a FSQ in the last three years, 202.

The top benefits learners who had undertaken an FSQ in the last three years perceived there to be associated with taking these qualifications were that they will have better job prospects in the longer term (24%), be more confident using English/maths (22%) and progress to higher level qualifications (22%). It was less common that they cited being able to complete their apprenticeship as a benefit (10%).

As might be expected, older learners aged 25+ (27%) were significantly more likely than younger learners aged 18 and under (12%) and 19 to 24 (12%) to feel that progressing in their current job is a benefit of undertaking a FSQ. In contrast, younger learners aged 18 and under (27%) and 19 to 24 (27%) were more likely than older learners aged 25+ (7%) to be unsure of the benefits.

Figure 3. Results for ‘Now that you have started learning/ have completed learning, what benefits do you expect from taking a Functional Skills qualification/s?’ (Learners). ‘Don’t know’ was added in wave 3.



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Perceptions of Functional Skills Qualifications: value and flexibility

For figure 4, the wave 3 effective base is: Employers who have an understanding of FSQs, 994; All types of providers, 386; All learners, 500.

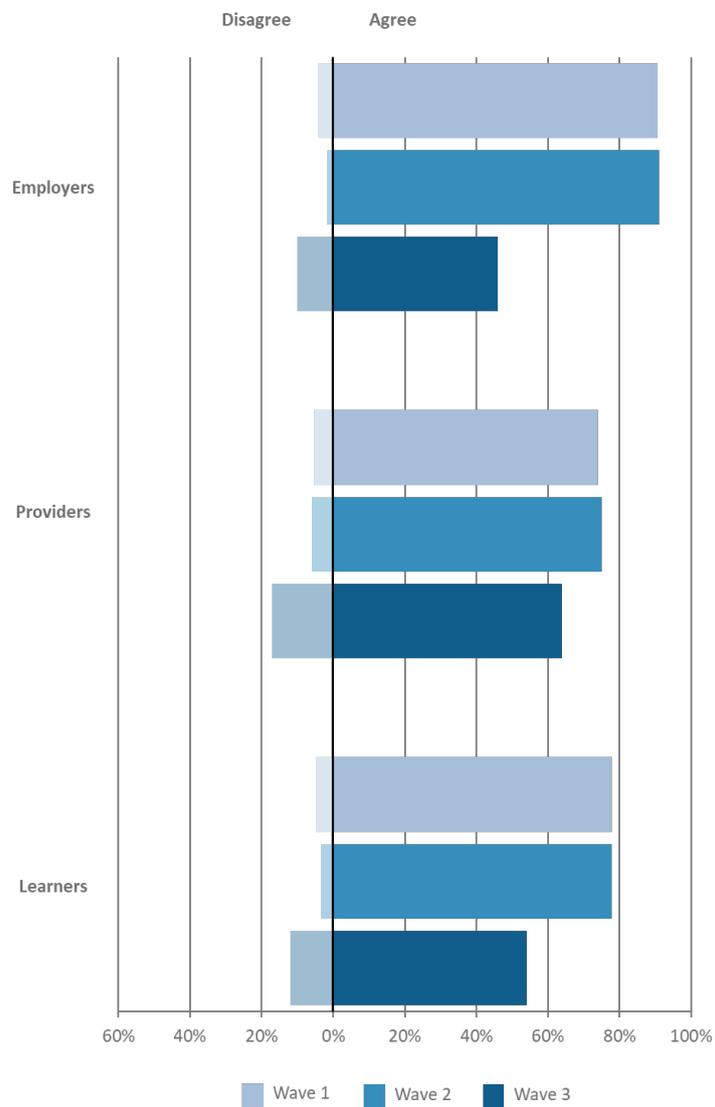
Roughly two thirds (64%) of the provider group agreed that they value FSQs, making them the group most likely to support this statement. Approximately half (54%) of learners agreed that they value these qualifications, followed by a third (34%) of employers agreeing that their organisation values FSQs.

Medium-sized employers (47%) and large employers (56%) were significantly more likely than small (34%) and micro (33%) employers to agree that their organisation values FSQs. This follows a similar trend to reported levels of understanding of these qualifications. In likely connection with this, public sector employers (50%) were much more likely than private (34%) and voluntary (34%) sector employers to feel that their organisation values FSQs.

Within the population of the provider group surveyed, there were some differences depending on which public funds they receive. Those getting Advanced Learner Loans (77%) or who are in a direct contract with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (69%) were most likely to say they value FSQs, while those receiving funds through a sub-contractor (59%) or in another way (49%) less often reported this.

Among learners, perceived value of FSQs increased with age. Older learners aged 25+ (59%) were more likely than young learners aged 18 or under (43%) to have agreed that they value FSQs. Meanwhile, half of learners aged 19 to 24 (52%) agreed.

Figure 4. Results for ‘To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about Functional Skills qualifications?’ – I value Functional Skills qualifications (Learners, All types of providers) / We value Functional Skills qualifications (Employers)



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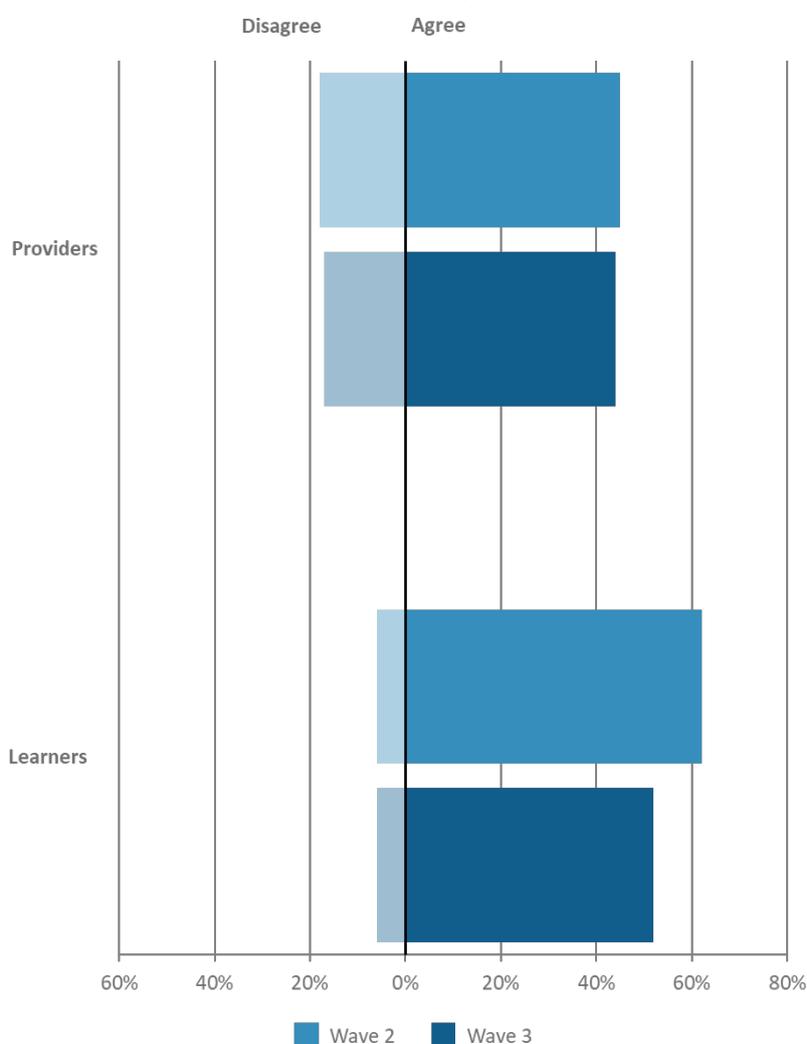
For figure 5, the wave 3 effective base is: All types of providers, 386; All learners, 500.

After being informed that employers, providers or colleges paid awarding organisations £15 to £20 per student in 2019 for each FSQ, 44% of the provider group agreed that FSQs offer value for money. Meanwhile, when shown the same information, a slightly higher but comparable proportion (52%) of learners agreed.

For both the provider group and learners, there were relatively sizeable proportions who provided a neutral response to this statement or said they did not know. In fact, just 6% of learners disagreed that FSQs offer value for money, and 17% of the provider group disagreed.

With the provider group, this perception was consistent across the size of the institution and the region in which it is based.

Figure 5. Results for 'In 2019, employers, training providers or colleges paid awarding organisations in the region of £15 to £20 per student for each Functional Skills qualification (Source: Ofqual 2019). To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? – Functional Skills Qualifications offer value for money.' (Learners, All types of providers)



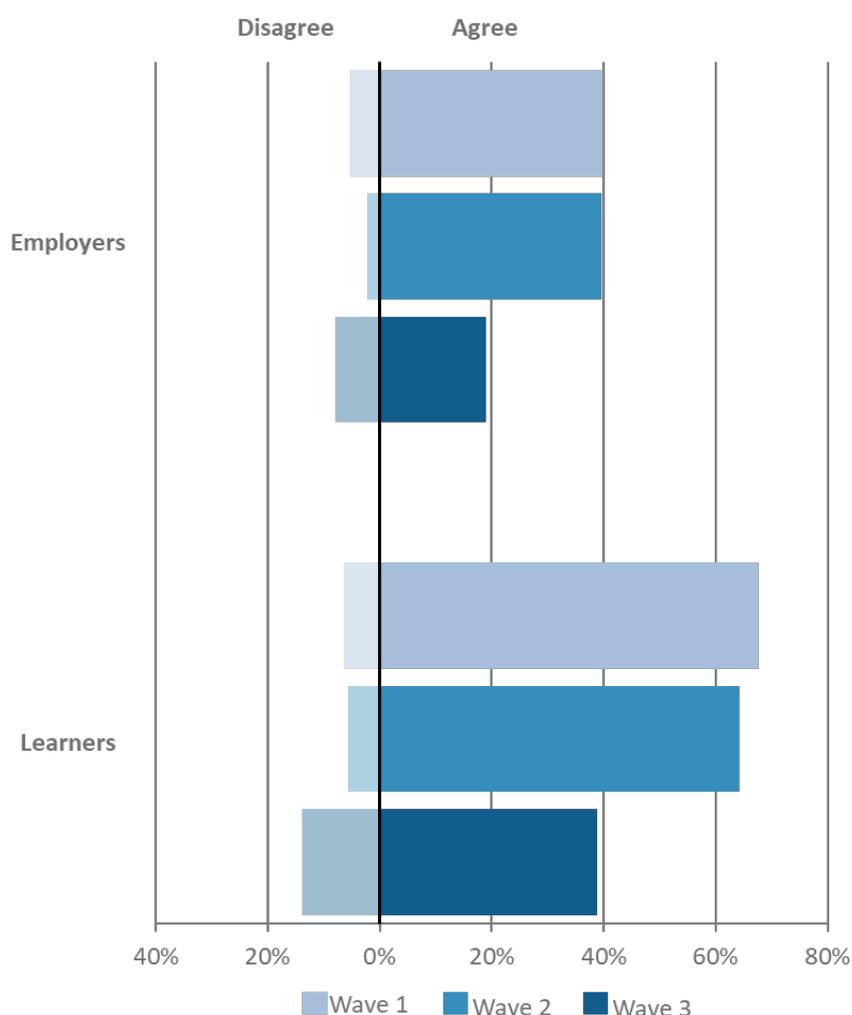
Please note that YouGov and Ofqual advise against drawing conclusions based on differences in the data in comparison with waves 1 and 2. This is due to key changes in the sampling approach and survey mode made for wave 3, which are outlined in more detail in the Introduction.

For figure 6, the wave 3 effective base is: Employers who have an understanding of FSQs, 994; All learners, 500.

Approximately a fifth (19%) of employers agreed that the availability of FSQs is sufficiently flexible, though only 3% strongly agreed with the statement. Results show that the majority of responses were uncertain; with just over a third (36%) saying they neither agreed nor disagreed that the availability of FSQs were sufficiently flexible. Broken down by organisation size, large employers (43%) were significantly more likely than micro (17%), small (21%) and medium (30%) employers to agree that the availability of FSQs is flexible.

Overall, a larger proportion of learners (39%) agreed when asked the same question. Those under 19 were notably more likely to disagree than their older counterparts (20% vs. 12% for both 19-24 and 25+).

Figure 6. Results for ‘The availability of Functional Skills qualifications is sufficiently flexible’ (Employers, Learners)



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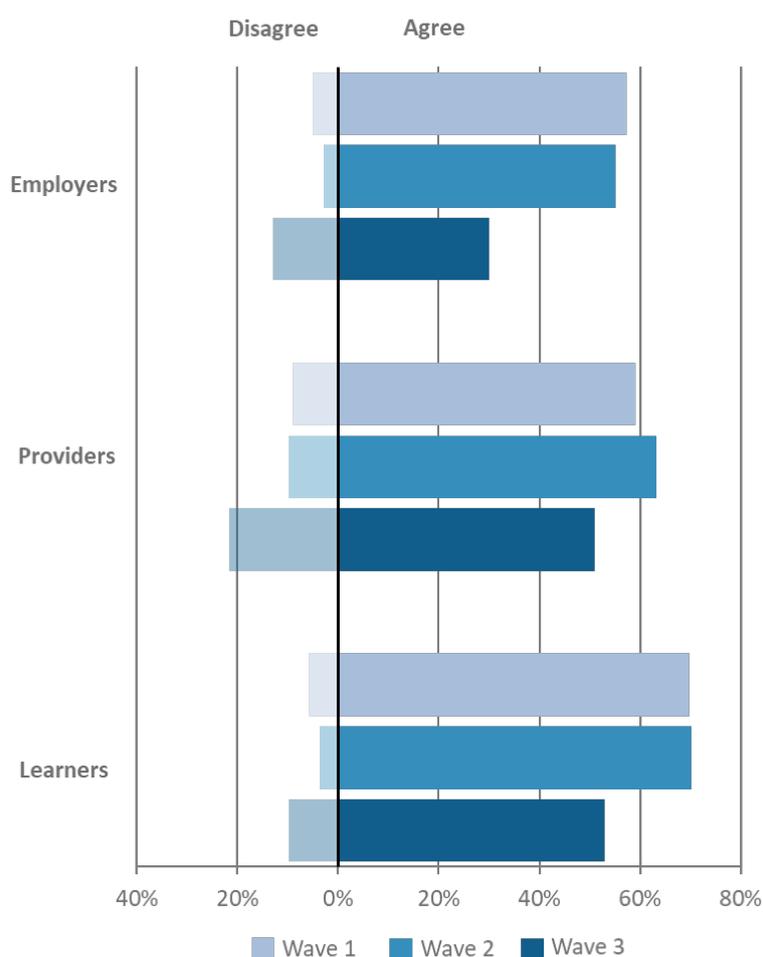
Perceptions of Functional Skills Qualifications: purpose and future opportunity

For figure 7, the wave 3 effective base is: Employers who have an understanding of FSQs, 994; All types of providers, 386; All learners, 500.

Roughly half (53%) of learners and the provider group (51%) agreed that those holding FSQs have the appropriate level of skill in English needed by their organisation, compared with 30% of employers. Agreement levels were higher among learners aged 25+ (57%), while the under 19 age group were more likely to disagree with the statement (12%).

Large (53%) and medium (42%) employers were more likely than micro employers (29%) to agree people holding FSQs have the appropriate level of English needed by employers. Public sector employers were distinctly more likely to strongly agree than both private and voluntary sector employers (21% vs. 7% and 3% respectively).

Figure 7. Results for 'People holding Functional Skills qualifications have the appropriate level of skill in English needed by my organisation' (Employers) 'People holding Functional Skills qualifications have the appropriate level of skill in English needed by employers' (All types of providers / Learners)



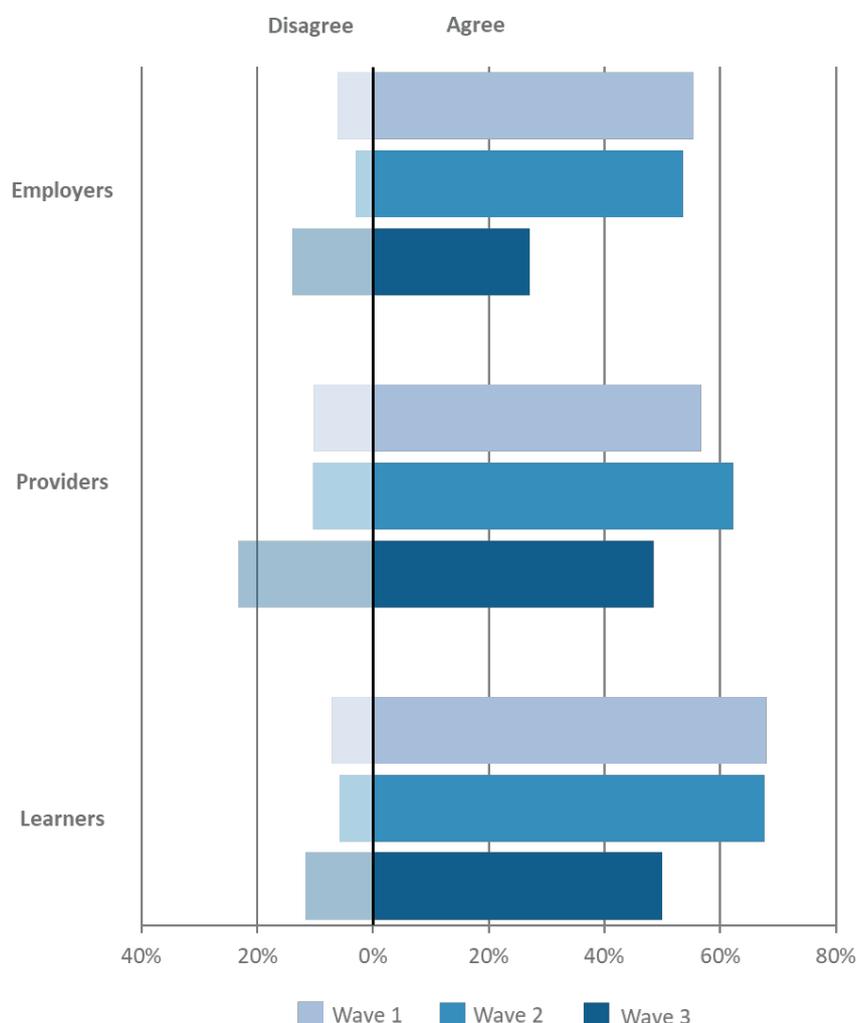
Please note that YouGov and Ofqual advise against drawing conclusions based on differences in the data in comparison with waves 1 and 2. This is due to key changes in the sampling approach and survey mode made for wave 3, which are outlined in more detail in the Introduction.

For figure 8, the wave 3 effective base is: Employers who have an understanding of FSQs, 994; All types of providers, 386; All learners, 500.

Roughly a quarter (27%) of employers agreed that those holding FSQs have the appropriate level of skill in math needed by their organisation. Large (48%) and medium (40%) employers were significantly more likely than average to agree with this statement. Public sector (18%) employers were again much more likely than private (5%) and voluntary sector employers (2%) to strongly agree with the statement.

A notably larger group of learners (50%) and the provider group (48%) agreed when asked the same question. Among the provider group there was no impact on agreement level when taking into account establishment size or the type of public funds the provider was in receipt of.

Figure 8. Results for 'People holding Functional Skills qualifications have the appropriate level of skill in math needed by my organisation' (Employers) 'People holding Functional Skills qualifications have the appropriate level of skill in math needed by employers' (All types of providers / Learners)



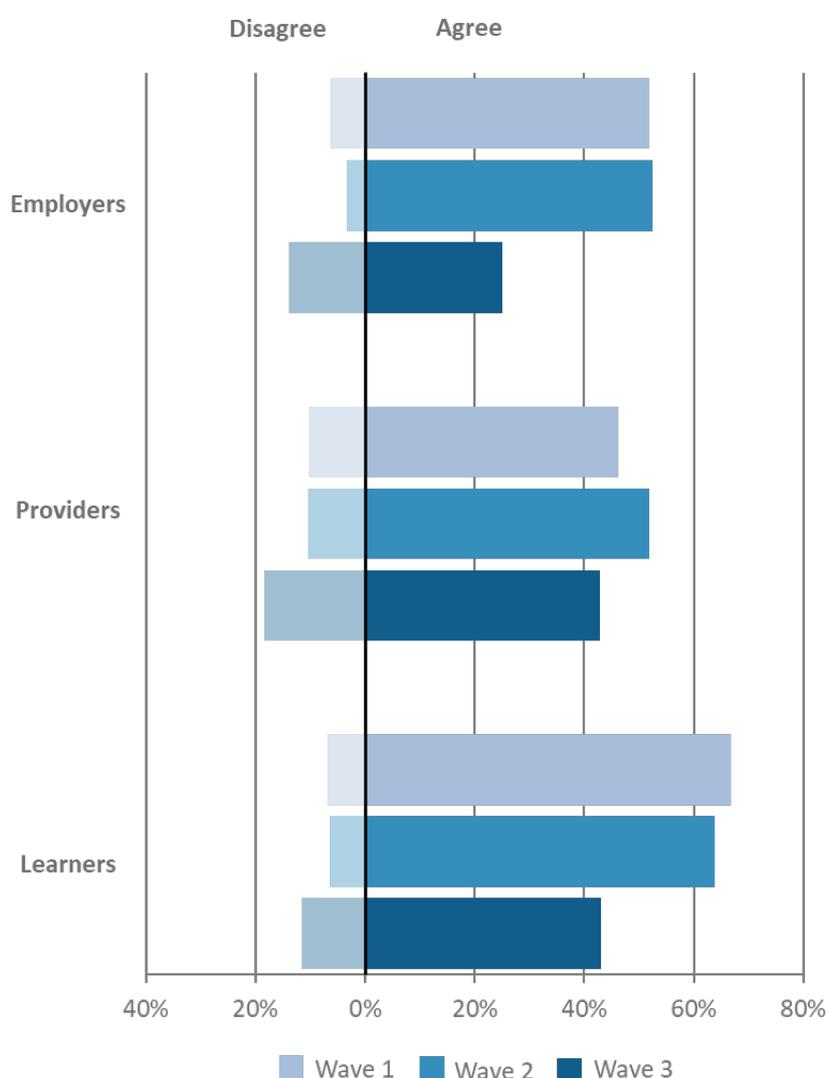
Please note that YouGov and Ofqual advise against drawing conclusions based on differences in the data in comparison with waves 1 and 2. This is due to key changes in the sampling approach and survey mode made for wave 3, which are outlined in more detail in the Introduction.

For figure 9, the wave 3 effective base is: Employers who have an understanding of FSQs, 994; All types of providers, 386; All learners, 500.

Agreement levels that those holding FSQs have the appropriate level of skill in ICT were higher among the provider group and learners (both 43%) and relatively lower for employers (25%). Among the provider group, those being funded by subcontractors were more likely to strongly agree than establishments with direct contracts with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (15% vs. 9%).

A fifth (20%) of public sector employers strongly agreed that people holding FSQs have the appropriate level of skill in ICT, compared to only 4% of both private and voluntary sector employers. The same trend can be seen when asked about English skills (see figure 7) and math skills (see figure 8).

Figure 9. Results for 'Functional Skills qualifications have the appropriate level of skill in ICT needed by my organisation' (Employers) 'People holding Functional Skills qualifications have the appropriate level of skill in ICT needed by employers' (All types of providers / Learners)



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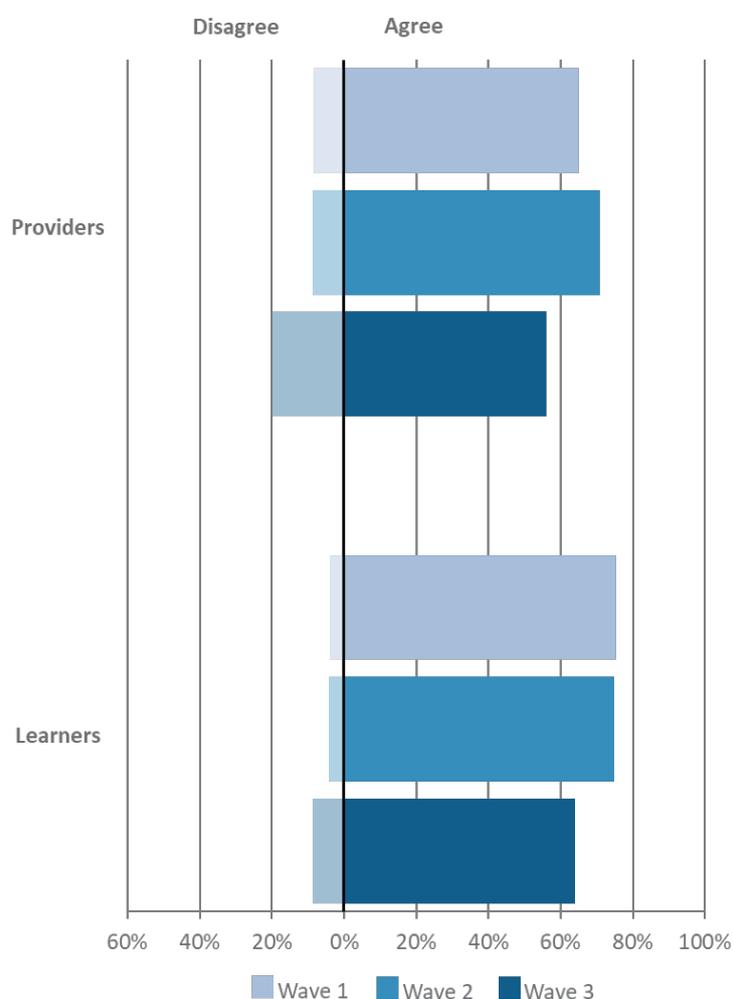
For figure 10, the wave 3 effective base is: All types of providers, 386; All learners, 500.

Roughly two-thirds (64%) of learners said they agreed or strongly agreed that FSQs are good preparation for further study. Agreement levels were higher among older learners (aged 25+) (70%), compared to those aged under 19 (54%) or 19-24 (60%).

A smaller proportion of the provider group (56%) than learners agreed that FSQs are good preparation for further study, with agreement levels climbing to 71% for FE / ACL / LA establishments.

The type of public funding an establishment receives also has an impact on the perception of FSQs as preparation for further study. Those with Advanced learner Loans (73%) were more likely to agree than those with direct contracts with the Educational and Skills Funding agency (60%) and sub-contractors (54%).

Figure 10. Results for 'Functional Skills qualifications are good preparation for further study' (All types of providers / Learners)



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Employer reasons for perceptions of Functional Skills Qualifications

Employers who agreed that their organisation values FSQs gave a variety of reasons for this through an open response question. Many said this was because it is a requirement for their organisation, or that they perceive maths and English skills to be vital. There were also many employers who wrote that they feel FSQs offer good/essential skills and increase employability.

Other employers who felt that their organisation values FSQs approached it from the perspective of training their existing workforce. From these employers there were mentions related to staff improvement and continuing professional development (CPD).

Among employers who disagreed that their organisation values FSQs, a common reason given was that they are not relevant to their business or sector. Many also said that they prefer or require other qualifications, and often that a university degree is needed in order to work for their organisation. In addition, employers often expressed that they require more technical or specialist capabilities than they feel FSQs offer.

Section 2: Perceptions of Other Vocational and Technical Qualifications (VTQs)

Key Findings – Other Vocational and Technical Qualifications

- Approximately two-fifths (41%) of employers reported having a very or quite good understanding of VTQs in their sector. Understanding increased with organisation size, with large employers (26%) more likely to have a very good understanding compared to micro employers (13%).
- Additionally, three-fifths (60%) of employers said they were aware of the changes that have been or are currently being made to VTQs. Fewer (7%) employers were aware and said they fully understand the changes that are proposed or taking place.
- Learners who decided to take VTQs were most likely to say that they did so because they wanted to improve their skills (38%), are interested in the vocational / technical area or took these qualifications to progress in their studies (both 28%).
- Among learners who are currently undertaking or have completed a VTQ, the most common benefit stated was the opportunity to increase confidence using vocational / technical skills (41%), followed by being able to find a job / better job (39%) and to progress in current studies (33%).
- The majority (88%) of the provider group value VTQs. Forty-six percent of employers said they valued VTQs, with large employers (67%) being most likely to see the value of VTQs.
- Across all employer types, less than half state that the purpose of VTQs is well understood by employers / their organisations (38%).
- The provider group (76%) and learners (70%) were more likely than employers (41%) to agree that VTQs prepare learners for the workplace.
- Two-thirds (67%) of the provider group agreed that people achieving VTQs have the skills needed by employers. Levels of agreement were lower among employers, with a third (33%) agreeing with this statement.
- There were similar levels of agreement among the provider group (69%) and learners (64%) that VTQs are good preparation for further study.
- Approximately a quarter (24%) of employers agreed that the availability of VTQs is sufficiently flexible. This was much higher among learners (46%).
- Just over three-fifths (63%) of the provider group agreed that VTQs were good value for money.

Understanding of other Vocational and Technical Qualifications by employers

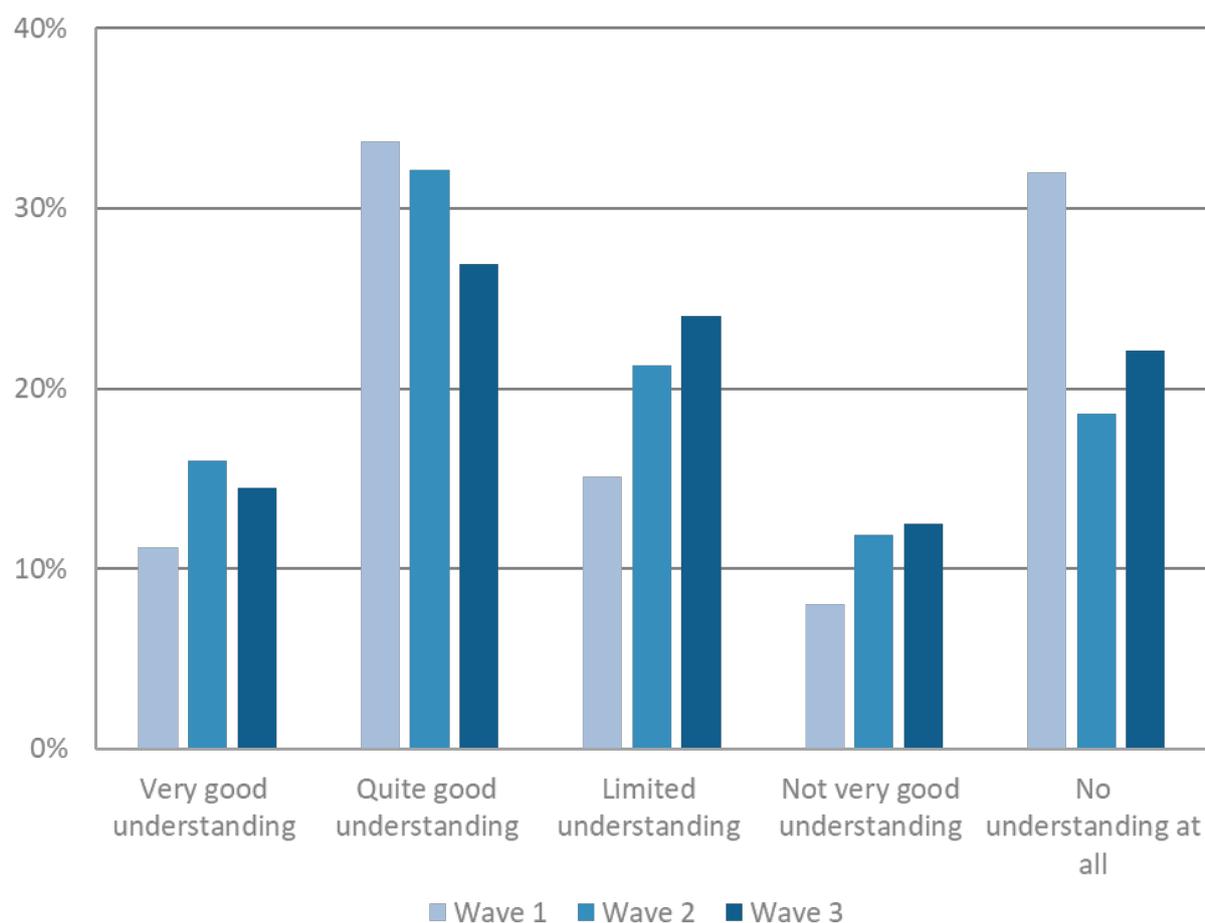
For figure 11, the wave 3 effective base is: All employers, 1,459.

Overall, approximately two-fifths (41%) of employers reported having a very or quite good understanding of VTQs in their sector. A much smaller proportion (14%) of employers described their understanding as very good. A fifth (22%) of employers said they had no understanding at all.

Large employers (26%) were the most likely to say they have a very good understanding of VTQs, followed by medium (21%), small (20%) and micro (13%) employers. A quarter (25%) of micro employers had no understanding at all of VTQs. This was significantly higher than any other employer size (small 14%, medium 8%, large 7%).

Employers working in the public sector (25%) were more likely than those working in the private sector (14%) to have a very good understanding of VTQs, likely reflecting organisation size.

Figure 11. Results for ‘Please indicate which of the following statements best describes your understanding of vocational and technical qualifications in my sector’ (Employers)



Please note that YouGov and Ofqual advise against drawing conclusions based on differences in the data in comparison with waves 1 and 2. This is due to key changes in the sampling approach and survey mode made for wave 3, which are outlined in more detail in the Introduction.

For figure 12, the wave 3 effective base is: All employers who have at least a limited understanding of VTQs in their sector, 961.

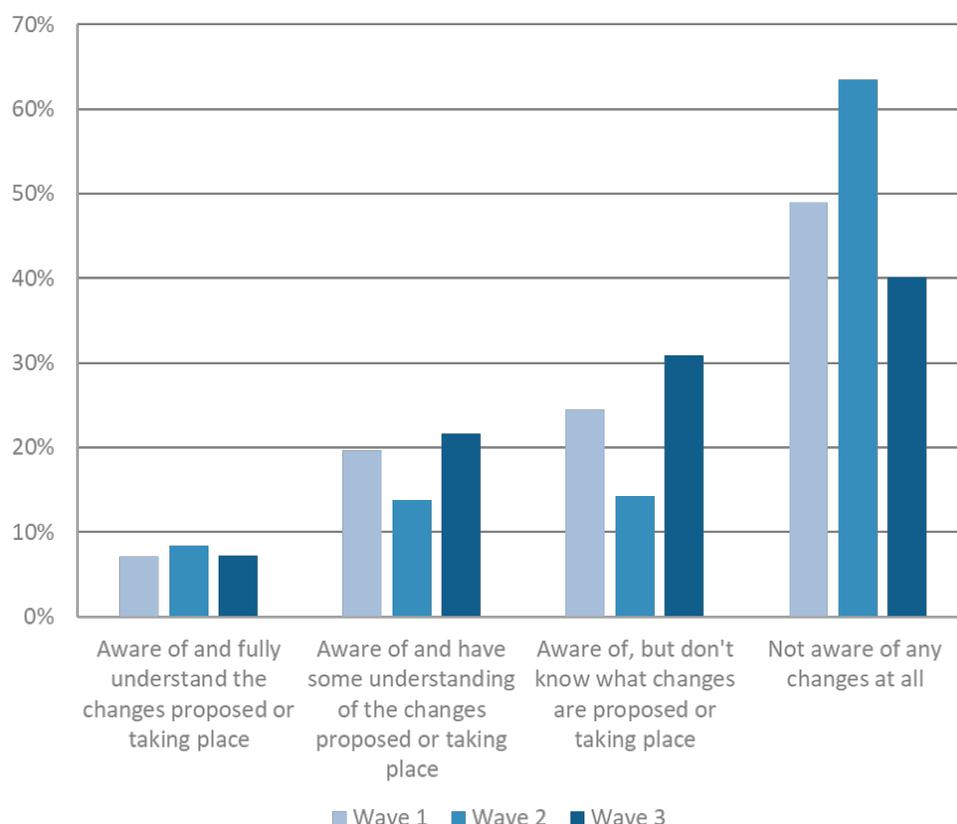
Employers were asked to describe their understanding of the changes that have been, or are currently being made to vocational and technical qualifications in their sector. They were not asked about specific changes.

Overall, three-fifths (60%) of employers were aware of the changes that had been made, or were currently being made, to VTQs. Broken down, only 7% of employers said they were aware and fully understand the changes proposed or taking place, whilst a larger proportion (22%) had some understanding or were aware, but did not know what changes had taken place (31%).

Two-fifths (40%) of employers were not aware of any changes at all. This was predominantly seen among micro employers, with just over two-fifths (43%) reporting no awareness compared to a fifth (19%) of large employers.

Public sector employers (17%) were significantly more likely than private sector employers (7%) to be aware and fully understand the changes. This is a continuation of earlier findings, where public sector employers tended to have higher understanding of VTQs.

Figure 12. Results for 'Please say which of the following statements best describes your understanding of the changes that have been, or are currently being made to vocational and technical qualifications in your sector' (Employers)



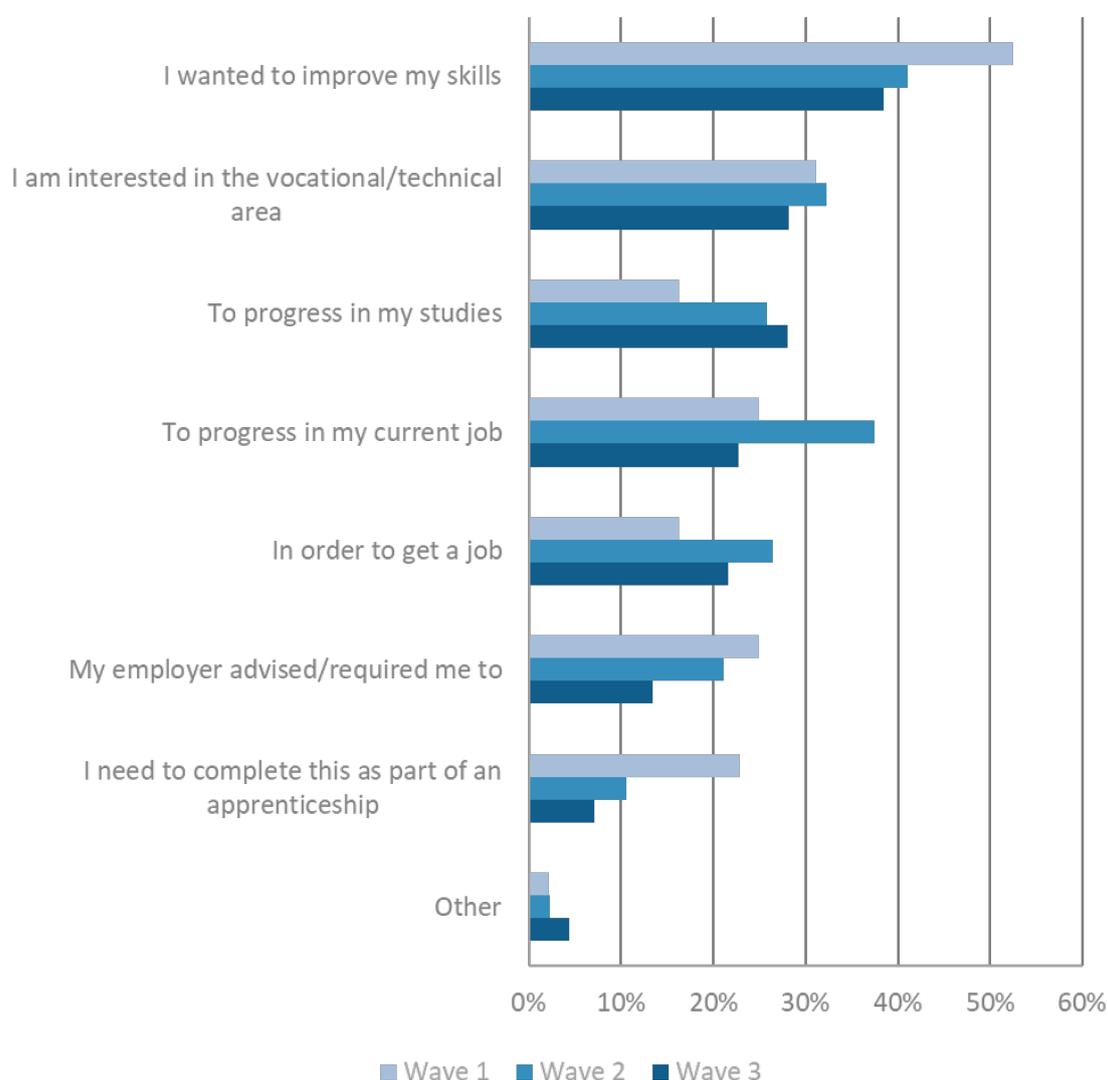
Please note that YouGov and Ofqual advise against drawing conclusions based on differences in the data in comparison with waves 1 and 2. This is due to key changes in the sampling approach and survey mode made for wave 3, which are outlined in more detail in the Introduction.

Why learners chose other Vocational and Technical Qualifications

For figure 13, the wave 3 effective base is: All learners who are studying a VTQ, 295.

Wanting to improve their skills was the most common reason (38%) given by learners as to why they decided to take a VTQ. Interest in the vocational / technical area or wanting to progress in studies were the next most popular (both 28%). Younger learners aged 18 or under (41%) were considerably more likely to state an interest in the area as a reason for taking a VTQ than those aged 25+ (24%).

Figure 13. Results for ‘Why did you decide to take a vocational or technical qualification?’ (Learners)



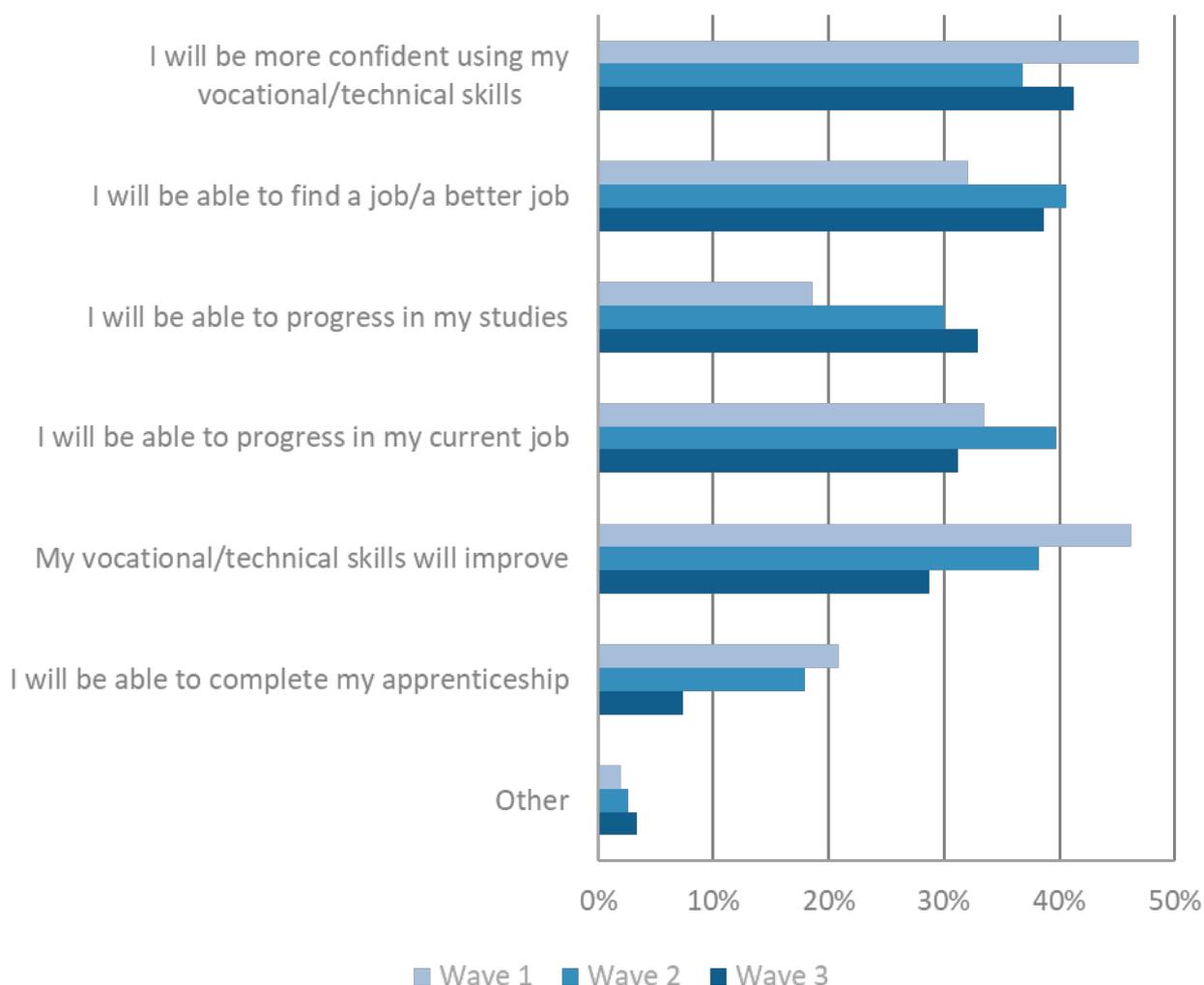
Please note that YouGov and Ofqual advise against drawing conclusions based on differences in the data in comparison with waves 1 and 2. This is due to key changes in the sampling approach and survey mode made for wave 3, which are outlined in more detail in the Introduction.

Benefits associated with other Vocational and Technical Qualifications by learners

For figure 14, the wave 3 effective base is: All learners who are studying a VTQ, 295.

The most frequently perceived benefit of taking VTQs, among those who have started or completed one, is an increase in confidence using their vocational / technical skills (41%). The next most common benefits were to find a job / better job (39%) and the ability to progress in their studies (33%).

Figure 14. Results for ‘Now that you have started learning/have completed learning, what benefits do you expect from taking a vocational and technical qualification?’ (Learners)



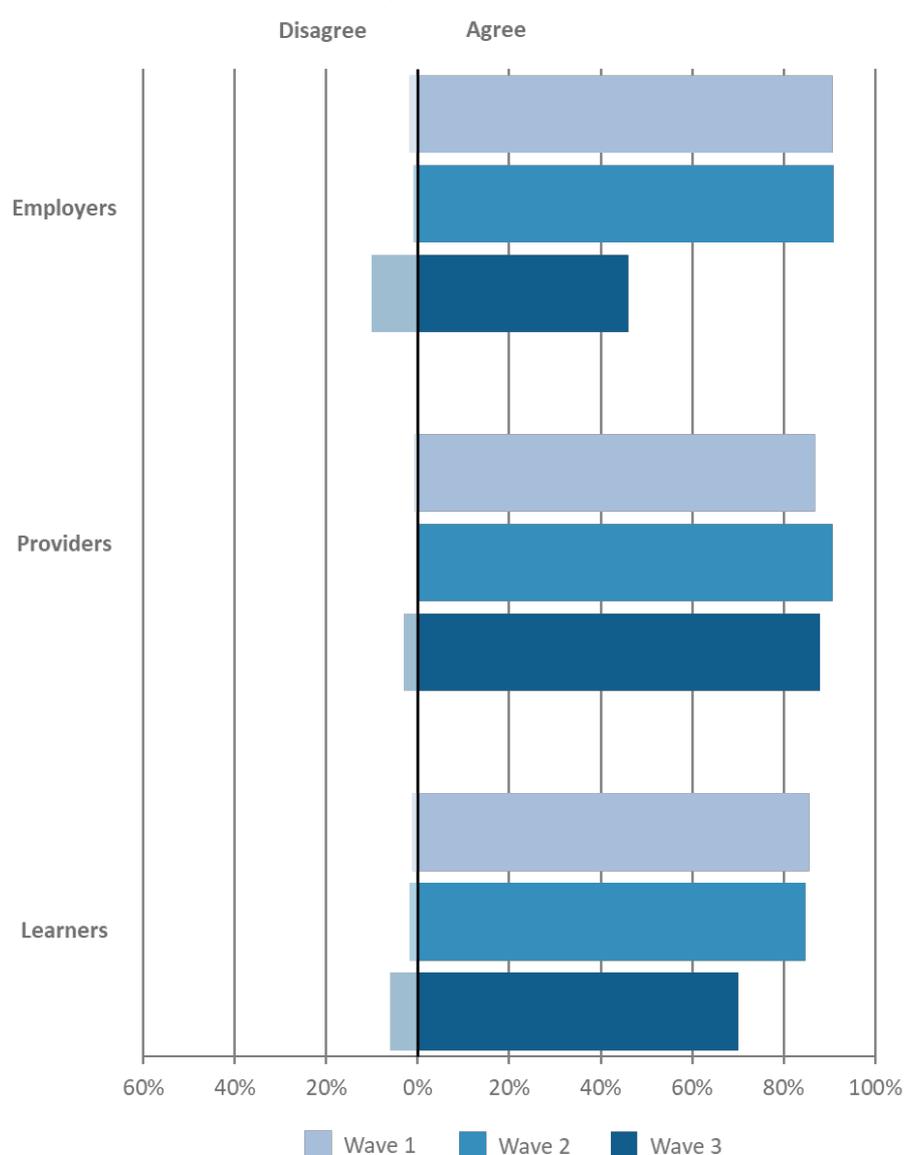
Please note that YouGov and Ofqual advise against drawing conclusions based on differences in the data in comparison with waves 1 and 2. This is due to key changes in the sampling approach and survey mode made for wave 3, which are outlined in more detail in the Introduction.

Perceptions of other Vocational and Technical Qualifications: value and flexibility

For figure 15, the wave 3 effective base is: All employers 1,147; All types of providers, 386; All learners, 500.

The majority (88%) of the provider group said that they value VTQs, higher than for learners (70%) and employers (46%). Large employers (17%) were more likely to strongly agree that they value these qualifications than micro employers (9%).

Figure 15. Results for ‘We value vocational and technical qualifications’ (Employers) / ‘I value vocational and technical qualifications’ (All types of providers, Learners)

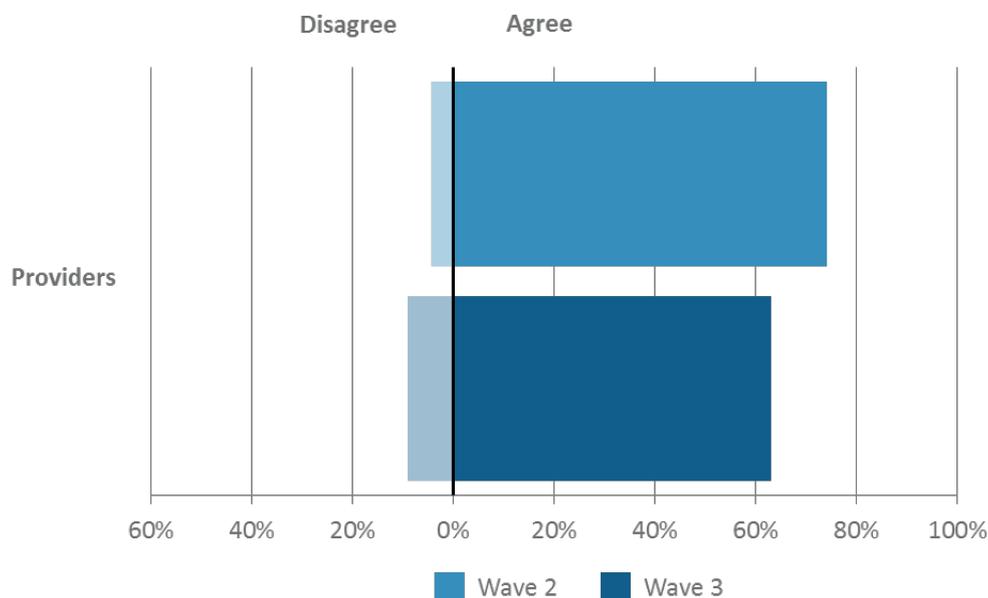


Please note that YouGov and Ofqual advise against drawing conclusions based on differences in the data in comparison with waves 1 and 2. This is due to key changes in the sampling approach and survey mode made for wave 3, which are outlined in more detail in the Introduction.

For figure 16, the wave 3 effective base is: All types of providers, 386.

Over three-fifths (63%) of the provider group agreed that VTQs offer value for money. This was higher among ITPs (71%) than sixth forms (52%).

Figure 16. Results for 'Vocational and technical qualifications offer value for money' (All types of providers)



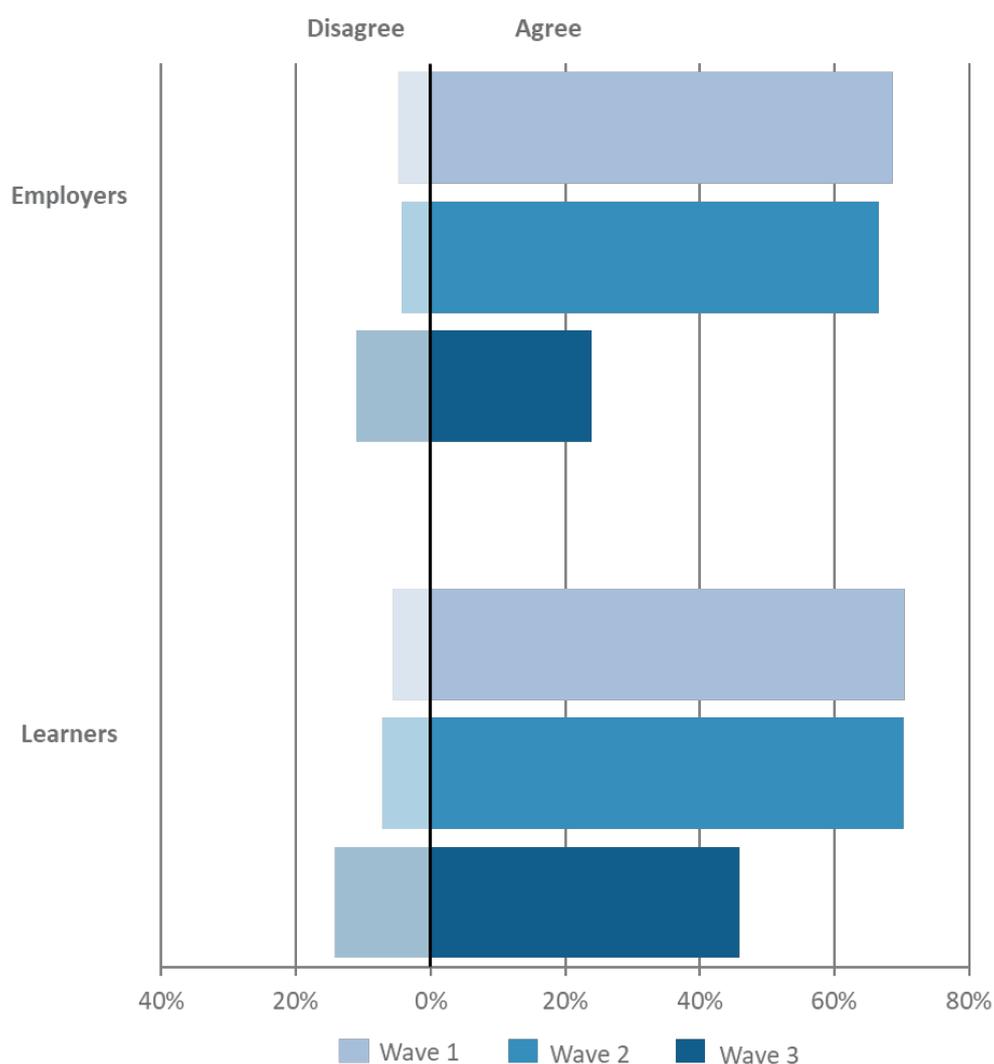
Please note that YouGov and Ofqual advise against drawing conclusions based on differences in the data in comparison with waves 1 and 2. This is due to key changes in the sampling approach and survey mode made for wave 3, which are outlined in more detail in the Introduction.

For figure 17, the wave 3 effective base is: All employers, 1,147; All learners, 500.

Only approximately a quarter (24%) of employers agreed that the availability of VTQs is sufficiently flexible, in comparison to 46% of learners who agreed with the same statement.

Large employers (52%) were significantly more likely than medium (34%), small (31%) and micro (22%) employers to agree that the availability of VTQs is sufficiently flexible. The proportion who strongly agreed was significantly higher for public sector employers (15%), compared to voluntary (4%) and private (3%) sector employers.

Figure 17. Results for 'The availability of vocational and technical qualifications is sufficiently flexible' (Employers, Learners)



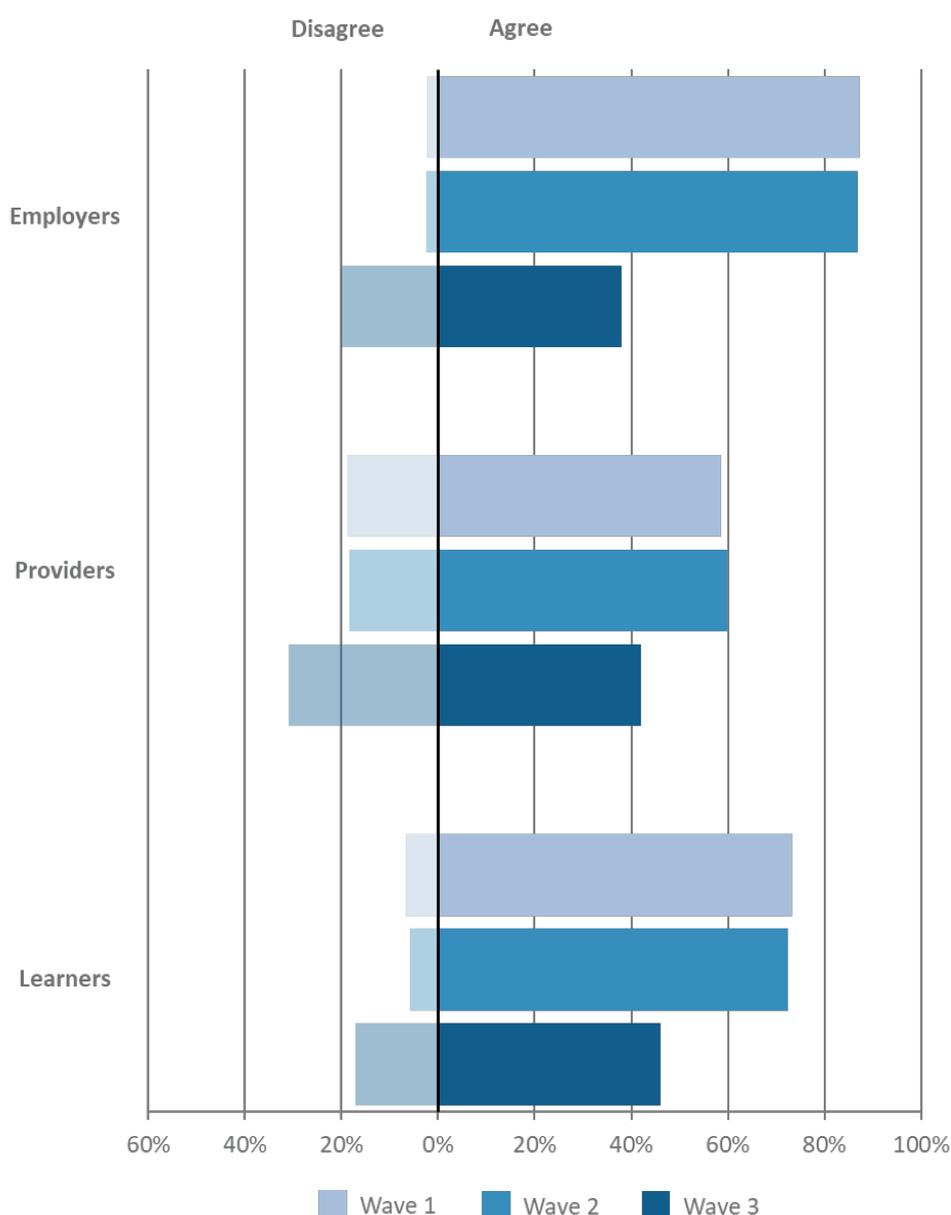
Please note that YouGov and Ofqual advise against drawing conclusions based on differences in the data in comparison with waves 1 and 2. This is due to key changes in the sampling approach and survey mode made for wave 3, which are outlined in more detail in the Introduction.

Perceptions of other Vocational and Technical Qualifications: purpose and future opportunity

For figure 18, the wave 3 effective base is: All employers 1,147; All types of providers, 386; All learners, 500.

Learners (46%), the provider group (42%) and employers (38%) all displayed similar levels of agreement that the purpose of VTQs is well understood by employers or their organisations. Roughly a third (31%) of the provider group disagreed that the purpose of VTQs is well understood by employers, higher than the proportion of employers and learners who disagreed.

Figure 18. Results for ‘The purpose of vocational and technical qualifications is well-understood by my organisation’ (Employers) / ‘The purpose of vocational and technical qualifications is well-understood by employers’ (All types of providers, Learners)



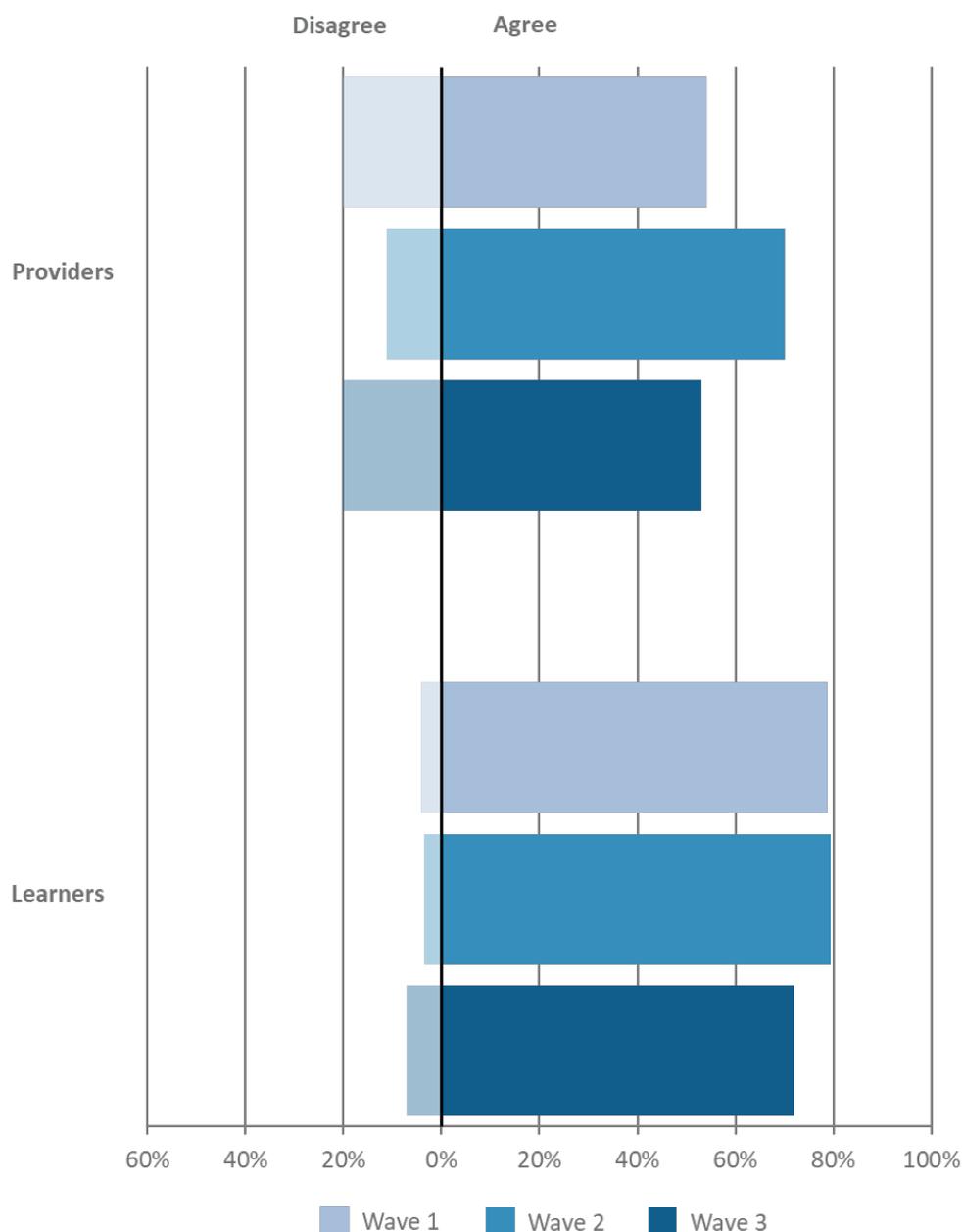
Please note that YouGov and Ofqual advise against drawing conclusions based on differences in the data in comparison with waves 1 and 2. This is due to key changes in the sampling approach and survey mode made for wave 3, which are outlined in more detail in the Introduction.

For figure 19, the wave 3 effective base is: All types of providers, 386; All learners, 500.

Over two-thirds (72%) of learners agreed that they understand the purpose of VTQs.

Roughly half (53%) of the provider group agreed that the purpose of VTQs is well understood by learners, while others were fairly evenly split between expressing neutrality (23%) or disagreeing (20%).

Figure 19. Results for ‘The purpose of vocational and technical qualifications is well-understood by learners’ (All types of providers) / ‘I understand the purpose of vocational and technical qualifications’ (Learners)



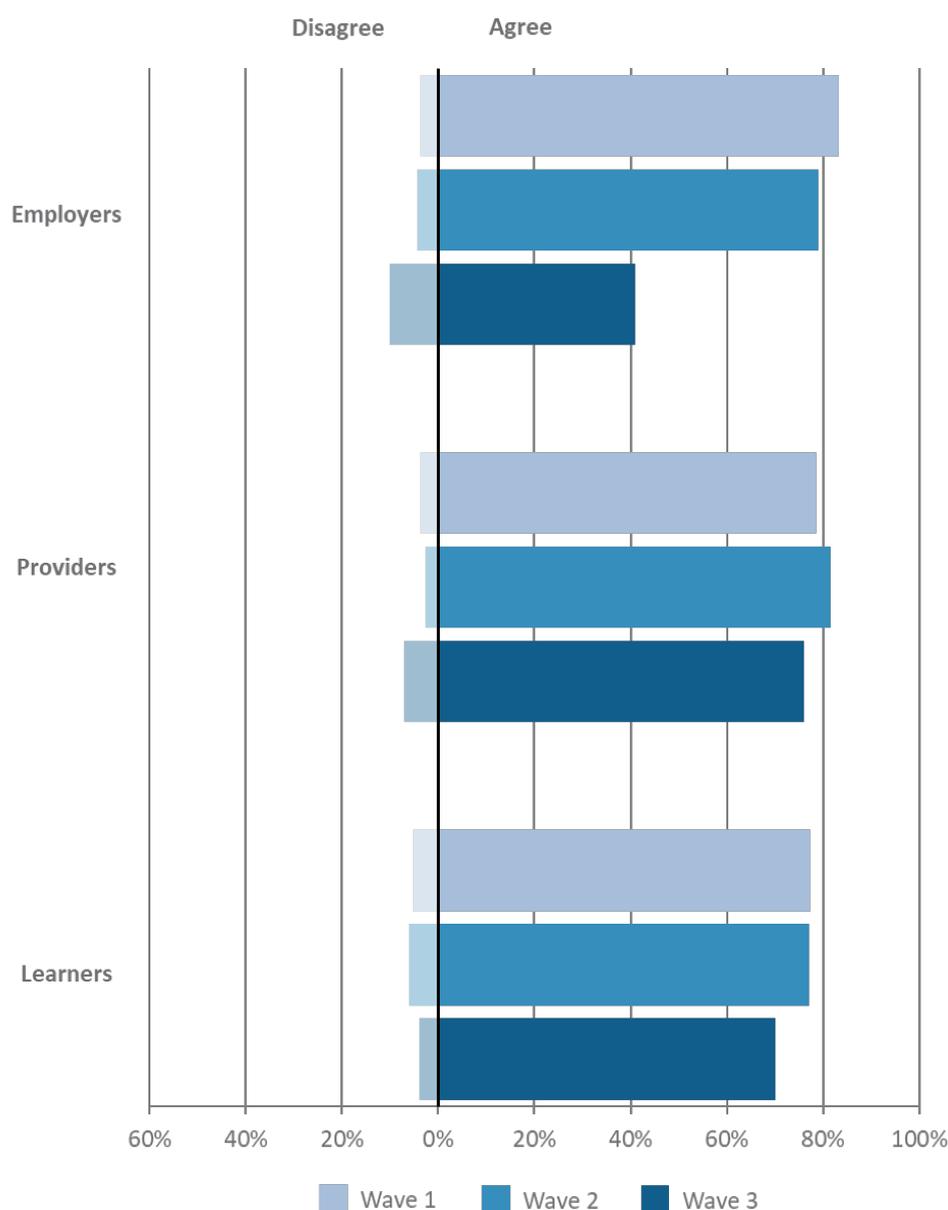
Please note that YouGov and Ofqual advise against drawing conclusions based on differences in the data in comparison with waves 1 and 2. This is due to key changes in the sampling approach and survey mode made for wave 3, which are outlined in more detail in the Introduction.

For figure 20, the wave 3 effective base is: All employers, 1,147; All types of providers, 386; All learners, 500.

Employers (41%) were considerably less likely than the provider group and learners to state that VTQs prepare learners well for the workplace. A large majority of the provider group (76%) and learners (70%) agreed that VTQs prepared learners well.

Among the provider group, a significantly higher proportion of ITPs (83%) agreed that VTQs prepare learners well for the workplace, more so than among those in Further Education colleges and FE / ACL / LAs (both 72%) and sixth forms (56%).

Figure 20. Results for 'Vocational and technical qualifications prepare learners well for the workplace' (Employers, All types of providers, Learners)



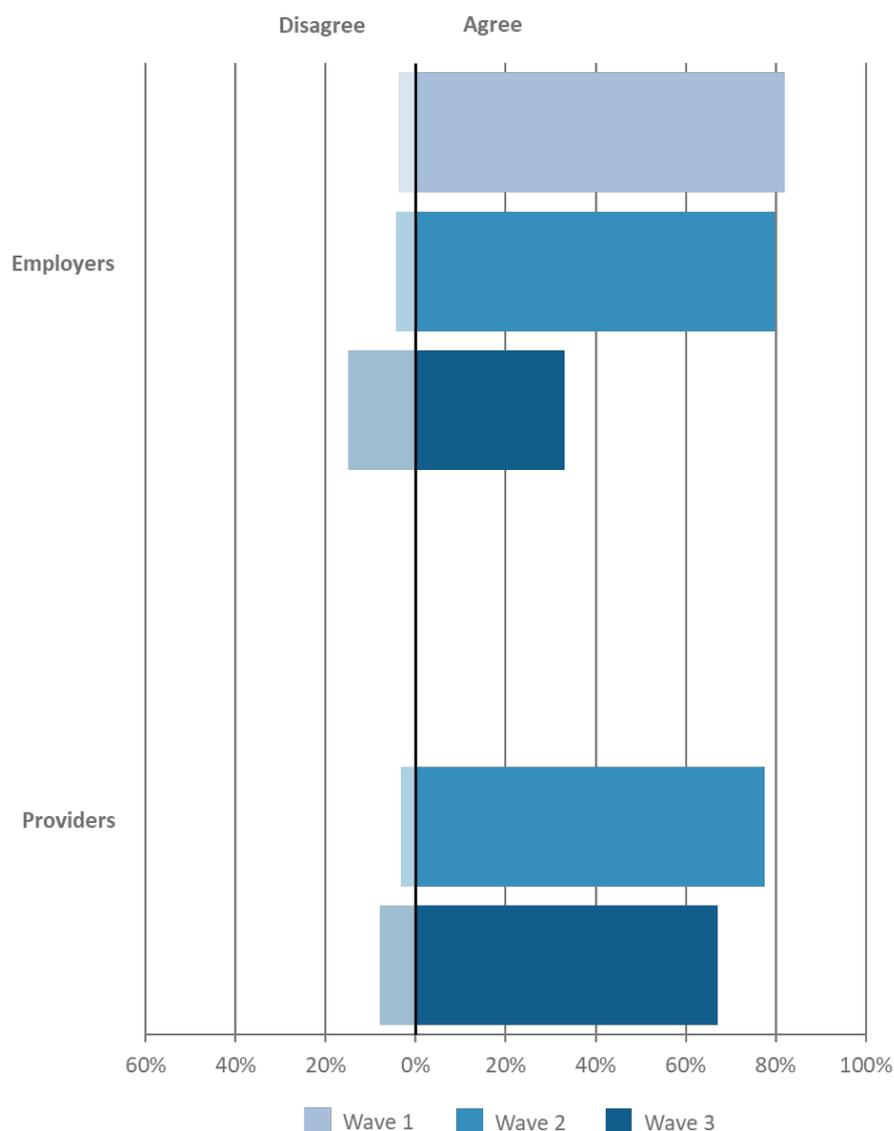
Please note that YouGov and Ofqual advise against drawing conclusions based on differences in the data in comparison with waves 1 and 2. This is due to key changes in the sampling approach and survey mode made for wave 3, which are outlined in more detail in the Introduction.

For figure 21, the wave 3 effective base is: All employers, 1,147; All types of providers, 386.

Two-thirds (67%) of the provider group agreed that people achieving VTQs have the skills needed by employers. Fewer employers (33%) agreed with the same statement. A fifth (21%) of micro employers stated that they did not know; this is significantly higher than for both medium (12%) and large employers (14%).

Levels of agreement were significantly higher among ITPs (78%) than Further Education colleges (66%), FE / ACL / LAs (63%) and sixth forms (38%).

Figure 21. Results for ‘People achieving vocational and technical qualifications have the technical skills needed by employers in my organisation’ (Employers) / ‘People achieving vocational and technical qualifications have the technical skills needed by employers’ (All types of providers)



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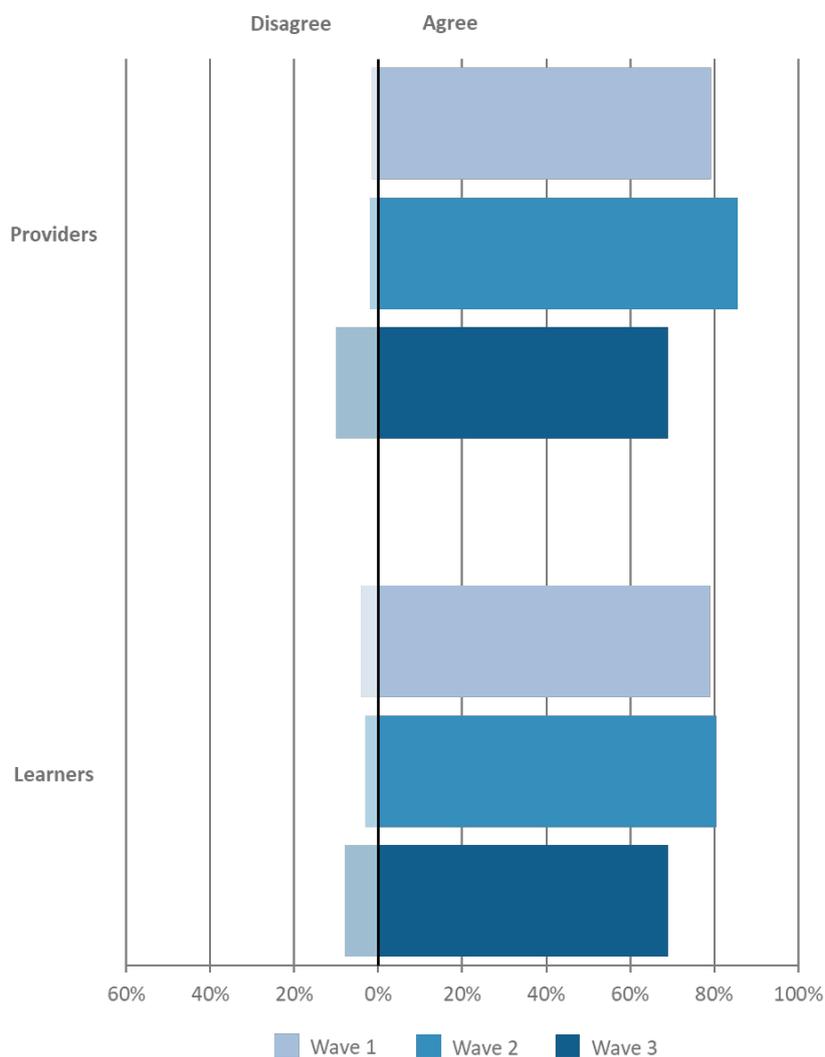
For figure 22, the wave 3 effective base is: All types of providers, 386; All learners, 500.

Roughly two-thirds (69%) of both the provider group and learners agreed that VTQs are good preparation for further study.

ITPs (77%) were more likely than other types of providers to agree that VTQs are good preparation for further study. This was higher than the proportion agreeing in FE colleges and FE / ACL / LAs (both 69%) and sixth forms (55%).

Over three-quarters (78%) of learners aged 25+ agreed that VTQs are good preparation for further study, significantly higher than among those aged 19-24 (62%) and those 18 and under (56%).

Figure 22. Results for ‘Vocational and technical qualifications are good preparation for further study’ (All types of providers, Learners)



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For figure 23, the wave 3 effective base is: All employers who have arranged or funded training for employees in last 12 months, 550.

Roughly three-fifths (62%) of these employers said that for their employees who achieve a VTQ outside of an apprenticeship, this leads to a pay rise at least some of the time. Overall, 7% of employers said that it leads to a pay increase all of the time.

Approximately a fifth (21%) of employers reported that for their employees who achieve a VTQ outside of an apprenticeship, this leads to a promotion or improved job status most or all of the time. Just over three-fifths (63%) said that this is the case at least some of the time.

A comparable proportion (69%) of employers agreed that achieving VTQs outside of an apprenticeship leads to new responsibilities at least some of the time, with 7% of those saying that this happens all of the time. Micro employers (14%) were more likely than medium (7%) or large (5%) employers to say that this never happens.

Figure 23. Results for ‘For your employees who achieve vocational or technical qualifications outside an apprenticeship, how often, if ever, does this lead to the following?’ (Employers)



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Employers' reasons for perceptions of other Vocational and Technical Qualifications

Employers who agreed that their organisations value VTQs (46%) were asked to explain further through an open response question.

The most commonly recurring explanations given by employers who agreed that their organisation values VTQs related to the more practical nature of these qualifications and the work-orientated structure in which they are conducted, meaning applicants' skills were aligned with the job they started. Some employers also suggested that those with VTQs bring diverse skills to their organisation, highlighting the importance of employing individuals with some 'real life' experience.

A lesser proportion of employers (10%) disagreed that VTQs are valued in their organisation. In these cases, employers stated that VTQs were not relevant to them due to the size or nature of their organisation, while others added that their organisation sought traditional educational qualifications. Some said that they disregard VTQs completely and employ on a more personal basis.

Section 3: Perceptions of End-Point Assessments

Key findings – End-Point Assessments

- Overall, roughly a quarter (27%) of employers reported having a very or quite good understanding of apprenticeships in their sector. Understanding increased with employer size, with large employers most likely to say that they have a good (56%) understanding of these.
- A lower proportion (13%) of employers said that they have a good (very/quite good) understanding of EPAs of apprenticeships in comparison to their good (56%) understanding of apprenticeships in their sector.
- Understanding of EPAs of apprenticeships was higher among the provider group in comparison to employers, with three in five (60%) of the provider group reporting having a very or quite good understanding of these. Those from independent training providers (ITPs) were much more likely to say that they have a good understanding (78%) than other types of providers.
- Among learners, understanding of EPAs of apprenticeships was lower than among the provider group, but higher than for employers. Half (48%) of learners reported a good (very/quite good) understanding of these.
- Two-thirds (66%) of the provider group said that they know the difference between apprenticeship frameworks and the new apprenticeship standards. Awareness of the difference was much lower among employers, with only 7% reporting this.
- Awareness that EPAs are specific to apprenticeship standards was highest among the provider group (77%), followed by learners (52%). Again, employers reported much lower levels of awareness (15%).
- It was most common for learners to say that they decided to take an apprenticeship because they can learn new skills on the job (40%), to progress in their current job or in order to find a job / a better job (both 30%).
- Since starting or completing an apprenticeship, learners were most likely to say that they expected to have more confidence in applying their skills / knowledge, with half (50%) reporting this.
- Just over half (55%) of learners said that they value EPAs of apprenticeship standards, with a similar proportion (53%) of the provider group reporting this. A smaller proportion (39%) of employers agreed.
- Three in five (60%) learners said that they understand the purpose of EPAs of apprenticeships, similar to the proportion (53%) of the provider group who said this.
- Overall, there was a strong sense that apprenticeships are good preparation for work - the majority (84%) of the provider group, learners (81%) and employers (74%) agreed with this statement.
- The provider group's views were fairly evenly split over whether or not EPAs of apprenticeships offer value for money. A quarter (25%) agreed whilst a similar proportion (29%) disagreed.
- Two-fifths (40%) of learners agreed that the availability of EPAs is sufficiently flexible, compared with 26% of employers and 23% of the provider group.

- Over half (57%) of the provider group agreed people passing EPAs have the competence and vocational and technical skills needed, compared to 47% of employers.
- Learners were the group most likely to agree that EPAs are qualifications within themselves (50%; meaning they are a qualification in their own right), followed by the provider group (43%) and employers (36%).

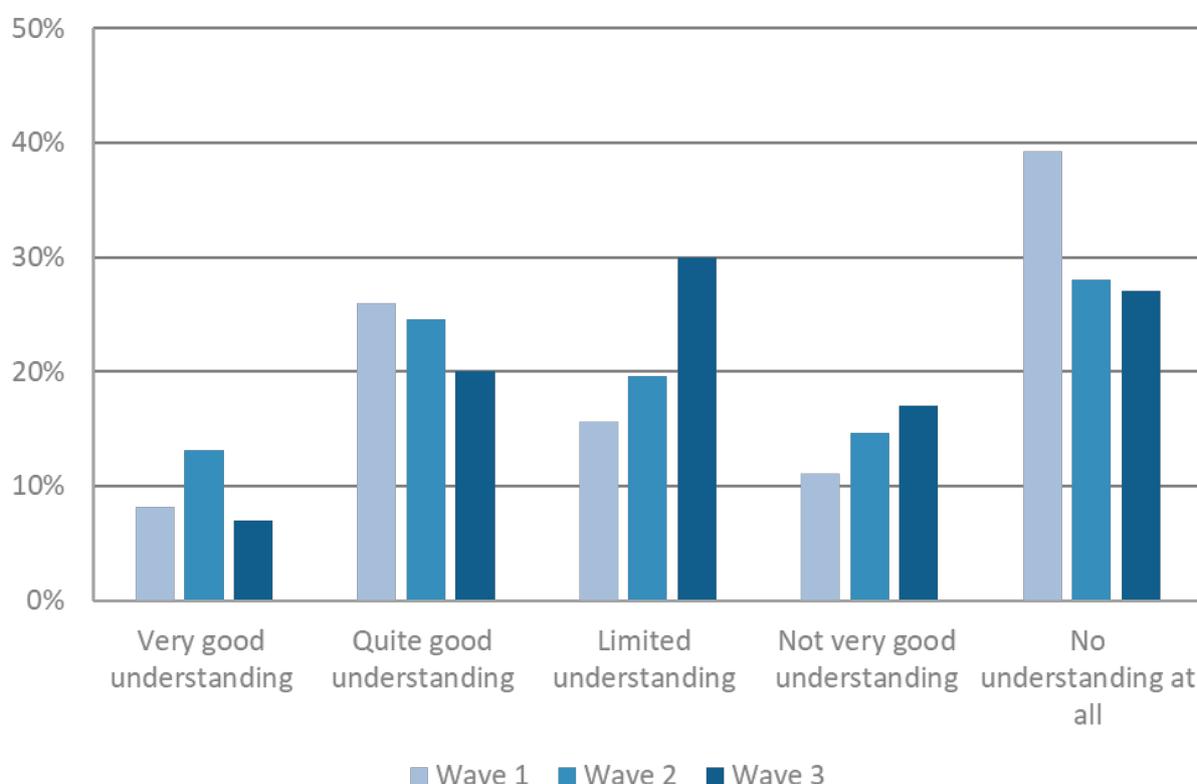
Understanding of End-Point Assessments

For figure 24, the wave 3 effective base is: All employers, 1,459.

Overall, roughly a quarter (27%) of employers reported having a very or quite good understanding of apprenticeships in their sector. Only 7% of employers said that they have a very good understanding of apprenticeships.

Large employers (24%) were more likely than medium (16%), small (10%) or micro (6%) employers to say that they have a very good understanding of EPAs of apprenticeships. In fact, over half (56%) of large employers said that they have a good (very/quite good) understanding of apprenticeships in their sector. Micro employers were more likely than larger employers to say that they have no understanding at all (29% vs. 7% of large employers).

Figure 24. Results for ‘Please indicate your level of understanding about the four types of qualifications listed below.’ – Apprenticeships in my sector (Employers)



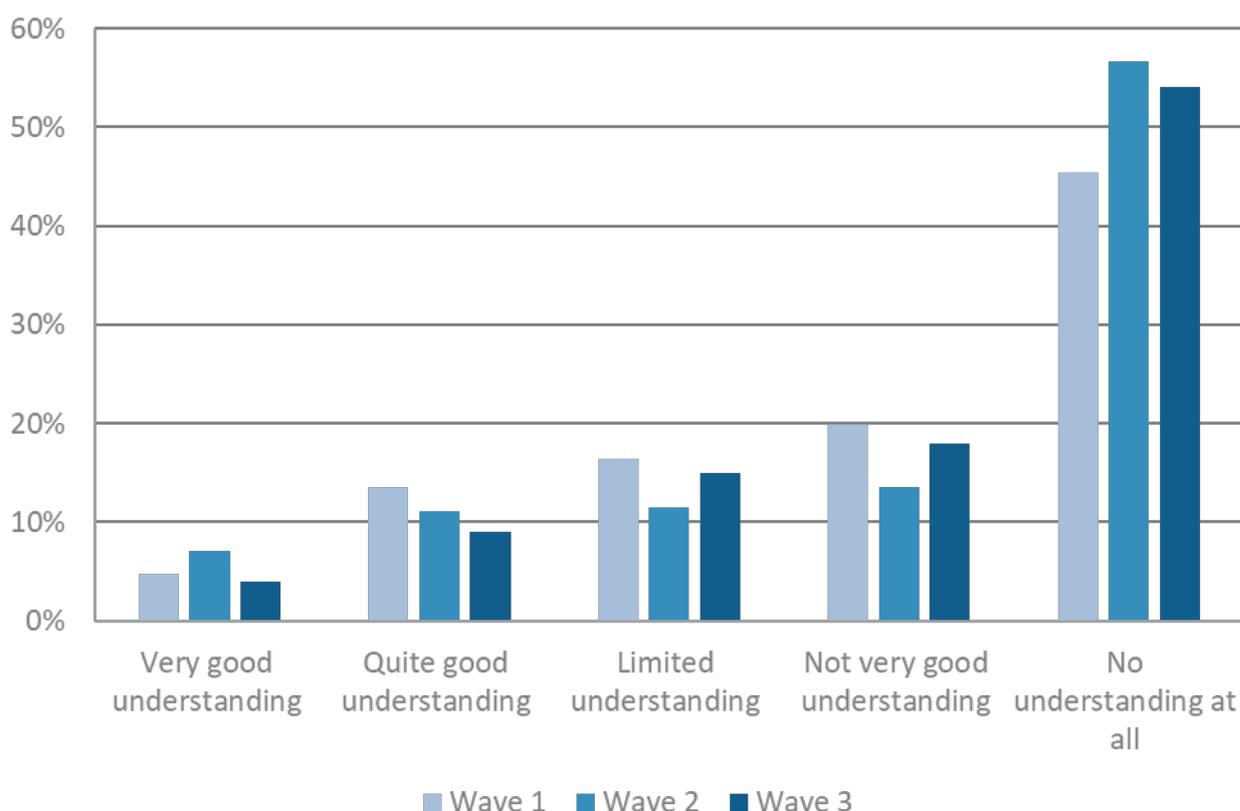
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For figure 25, the wave 3 effective base is: All employers who have at least some understanding of EPAs of apprenticeships in their sector, 1,079.

Overall, 13% of employers reported having a very or quite good understanding of EPAs of apprenticeships. Only 4% said that they have a very good understanding of these assessments.

In keeping with previous findings, large employers (12%) were more likely than medium (9%), small or micro (both 3%) employers to say that they have a very good understanding of EPAs of apprenticeships. Micro employers were more likely than large employers to say that they have no understanding at all of EPAs (57% vs. 31% of large employers).

Figure 25. Results for ‘Please indicate which of the following statements best describes your understanding of end-point assessment of apprenticeships.’ (Employers)



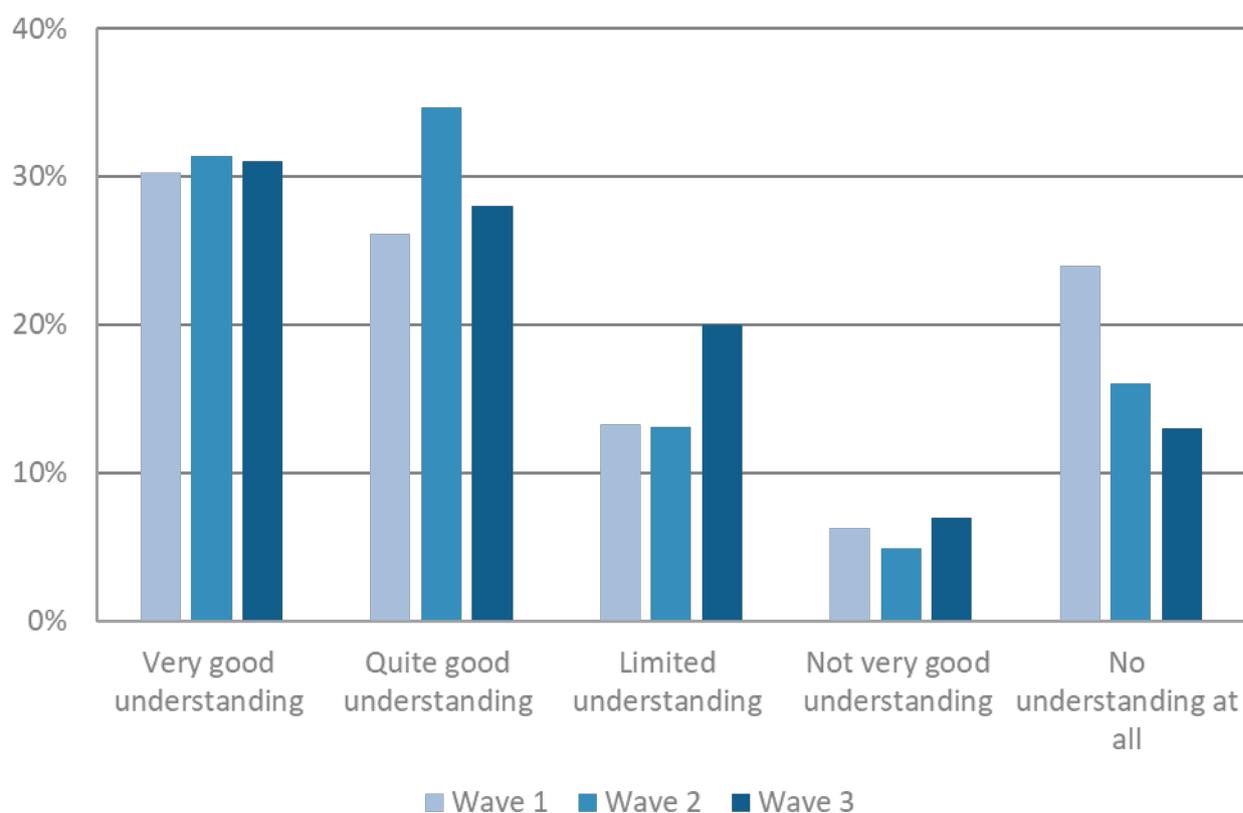
Please note that YouGov and Ofqual advise against drawing conclusions based on differences in the data in comparison with waves 1 and 2. This is due to key changes in the sampling approach and survey mode made for wave 3, which are outlined in more detail in the Introduction.

For figure 26, the wave 3 effective base is: All types of providers, 386.

Understanding of EPAs of apprenticeships was much higher among the provider group, with three in five (60%) of the provider group reporting having a very or quite good understanding of these. This was fairly evenly split between those with a very good (31%) and quite good (28%) understanding.

There were stark differences when looking at provider type, with ITPs much more likely to have had a good understanding (78%) of EPAs of apprenticeships, compared to those from Further Education Colleges or Further Education (FE) / Adults Community Learning (ACL) / Local Authorities (LAs) (both 32%) and those in sixth forms (23%).

Figure 26. Results for ‘Which of the following describes your understanding of end-point assessment of apprenticeships?’ (All types of providers)

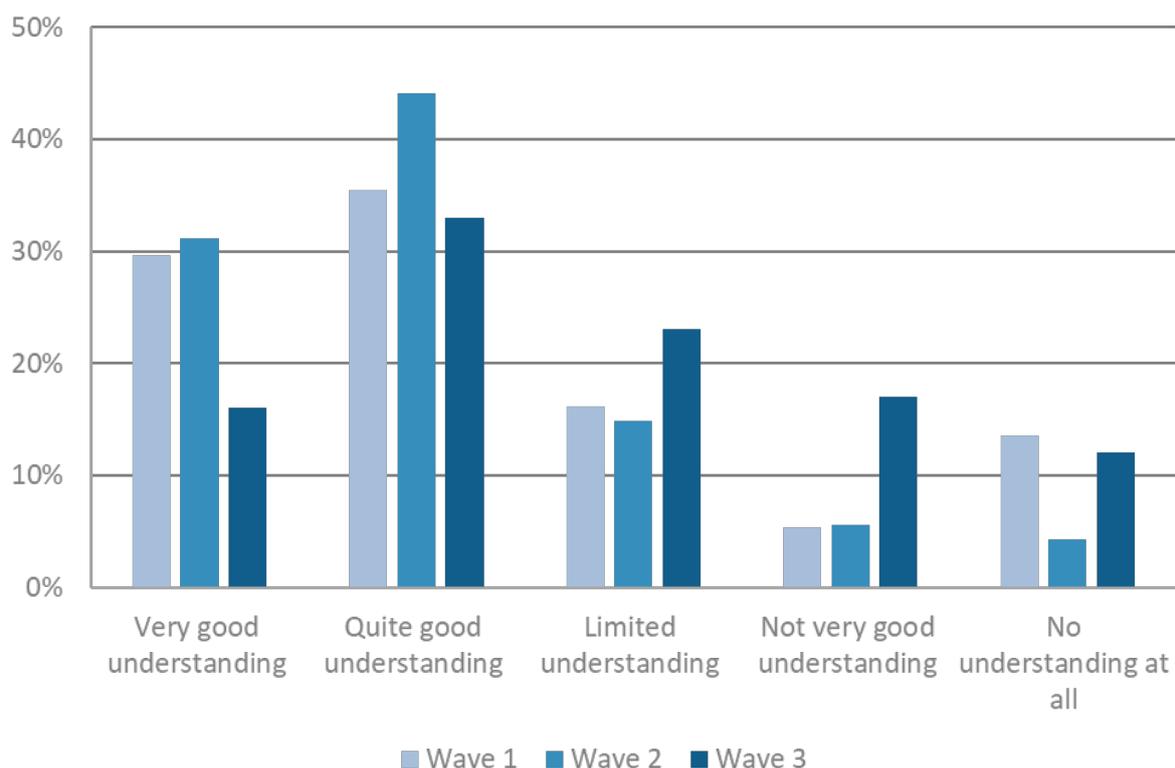


Please note that YouGov and Ofqual advise against drawing conclusions based on differences in the data in comparison with waves 1 and 2. This is due to key changes in the sampling approach and survey mode made for wave 3, which are outlined in more detail in the Introduction.

For figure 27, the wave 3 effective base is: All learners who are taking an apprenticeship, 77.

Understanding of EPAs of apprenticeships among learners was lower than among the provider group, but higher than among employers. Roughly half (48%) of learners reported a very or quite good understanding of these, with 16% saying that they have a 'very good' understanding.

Figure 27. Results for 'Please tell us which of the following statements best describes your understanding of end-point assessment of apprenticeships' (Learners)



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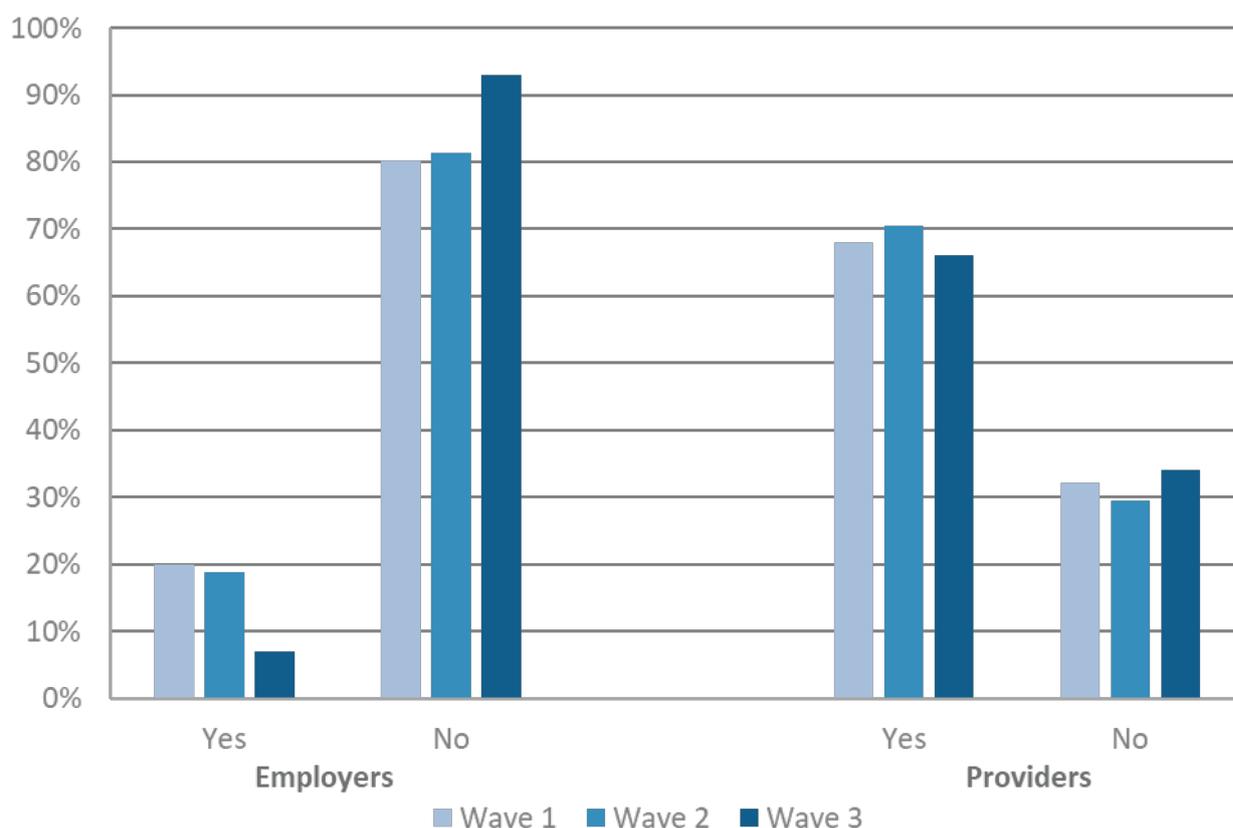
For figure 28, the wave 3 effective base is: All employers, 1,079; All types of providers, 386.

Two-thirds (66%) of the provider group said that they know the difference between apprenticeship frameworks and the new apprenticeship standards. This was much higher among ITPs (86%) than for those from Further Education Colleges (45%), FE / ACL / LAs (44%), with a lower understanding within sixth forms (18%).

Only 7% of employers said that they know the difference between apprenticeship frameworks and the new apprenticeship standards. Knowledge increased with organisation size; this was highest among large employers (19%) with comparable levels of knowledge for medium employers (16%) but lower for small (10%) and micro (5%) employers.

Similarly, public sector employers were more likely than those in the voluntary or private sectors to say that they know the difference (29% vs. 6% each).

Figure 28. Results for ‘Do you know the difference between apprenticeship frameworks and the new apprenticeship standards?’ (Employers, All types of providers)



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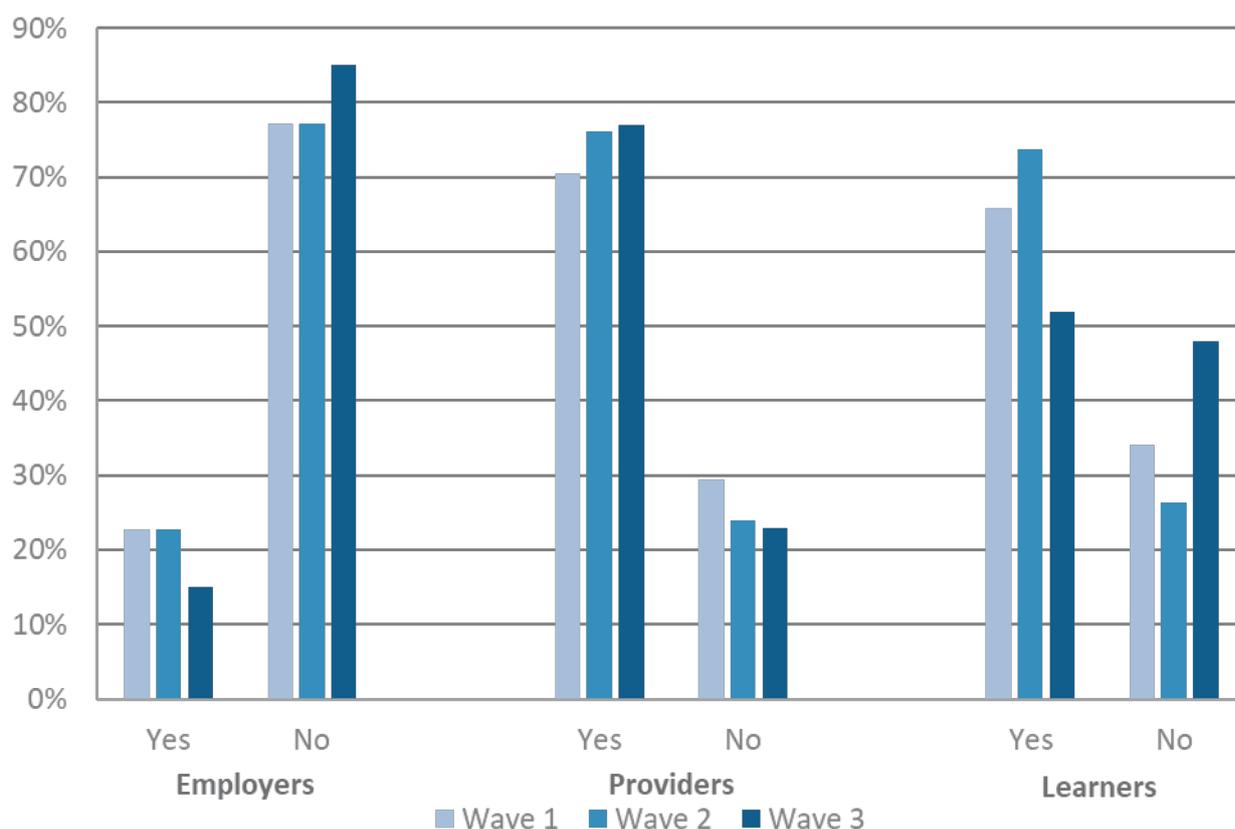
For figure 29, the wave 3 effective base is: All who have at least some understanding of EPAs. Employers, 1,079; All types of providers, 386; learners, 77.

Awareness that EPAs are specific to apprenticeship standards was highest among the provider group (77%), followed by learners (52%), with employers reporting much lower understanding (15%).

In line with their generally higher levels of understanding related to qualifications, almost all (91%) ITPs said that they were aware EPAs are specific to apprenticeship standards. This was higher than for those from Further Education Colleges (65%) and FE / ACL / LAs (63%), with a lower awareness in sixth forms (38%).

Awareness of EPAs varied greatly by employer size. Roughly a third (35%) of large employers said that they were aware EPAs are specific to apprenticeship standards, higher than medium (26%), small (20%) and micro (14%) employers.

Figure 29. Results for ‘Are you aware that End-Point Assessments (EPAs) are specific to apprenticeship standards?’ (Employers, All types of providers, Learners)



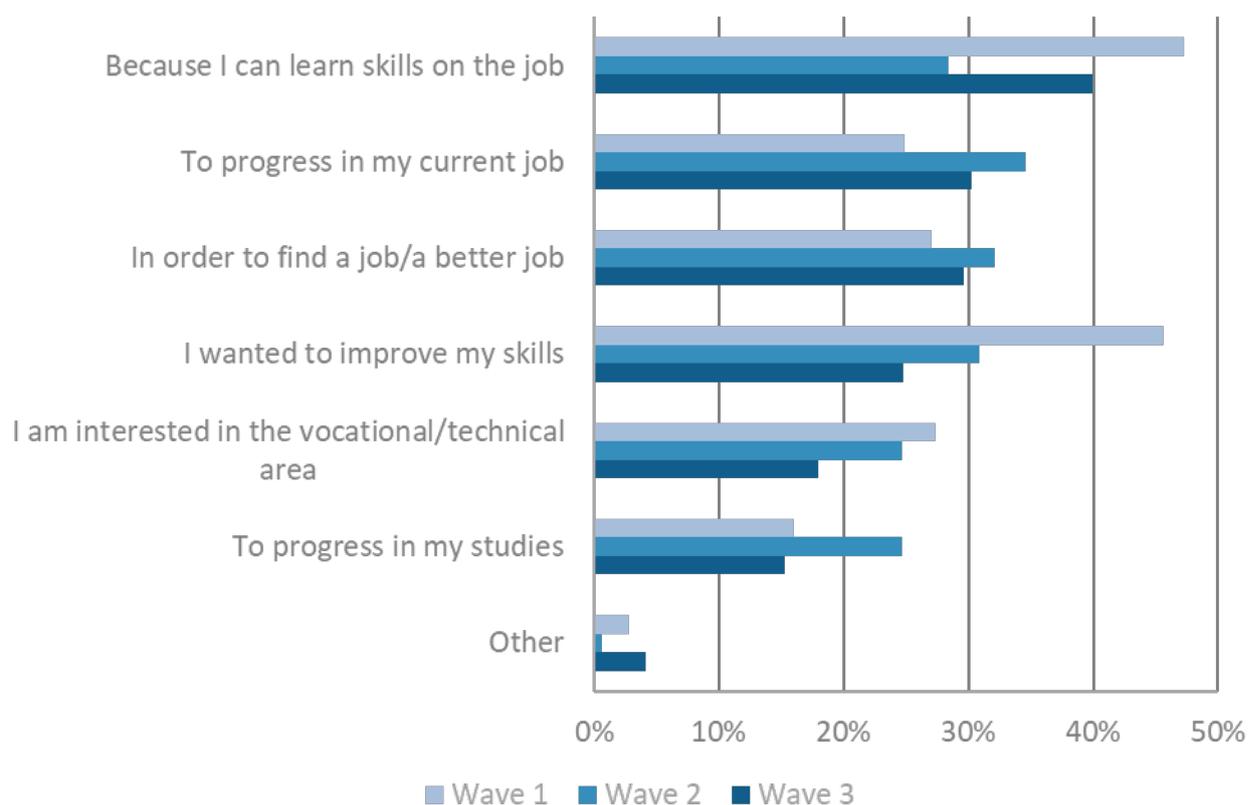
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Why learners chose an apprenticeship

For figures 30 and 31, the wave 3 effective base is: All learners who are taking an apprenticeship, 77.

It was most common for learners to say that they decided to take an apprenticeship because they can learn new skills on the job (40%), to progress in their current job or in order to find a job / a better job (both 30%). Wanting to improve their skills (25%), interest in the vocational / technical area (18%) or to progress in their current studies (15%) were less common reasons given by learners.

Figure 30. Results for ‘Why did you decide to take an apprenticeship?’ (Learners)

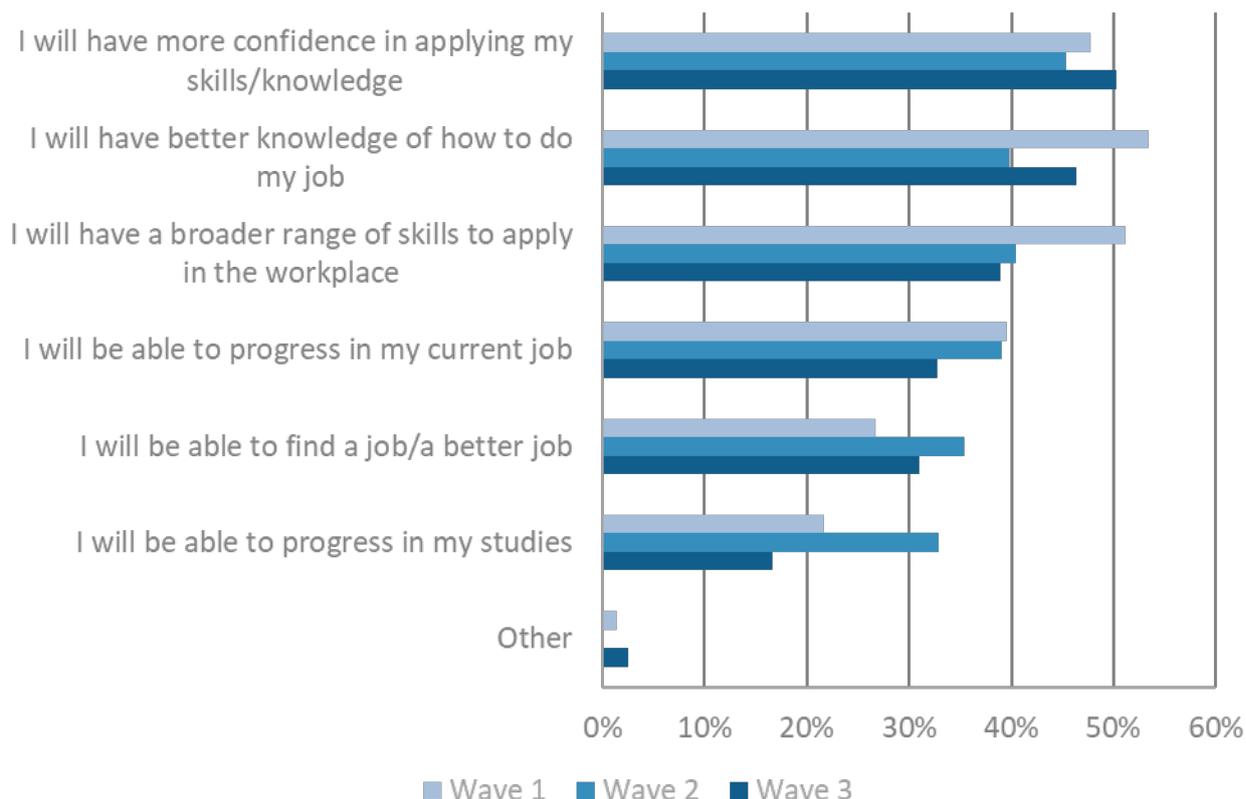


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Benefits associated with apprenticeships by learners

Learners were most likely to say that they expected to have more confidence in applying their skills / knowledge now they have started or completed an apprenticeship, with half (50%) reporting this. The next most common reported benefits were having better knowledge of how to do their job (46%), having a broader range of skills to apply in the workplace (39%) and being able to progress in their current job (33%).

Figure 31. Results for ‘Now that you have started learning/have completed learning, what benefits do you expect to get from taking an apprenticeship?’ (Learners)



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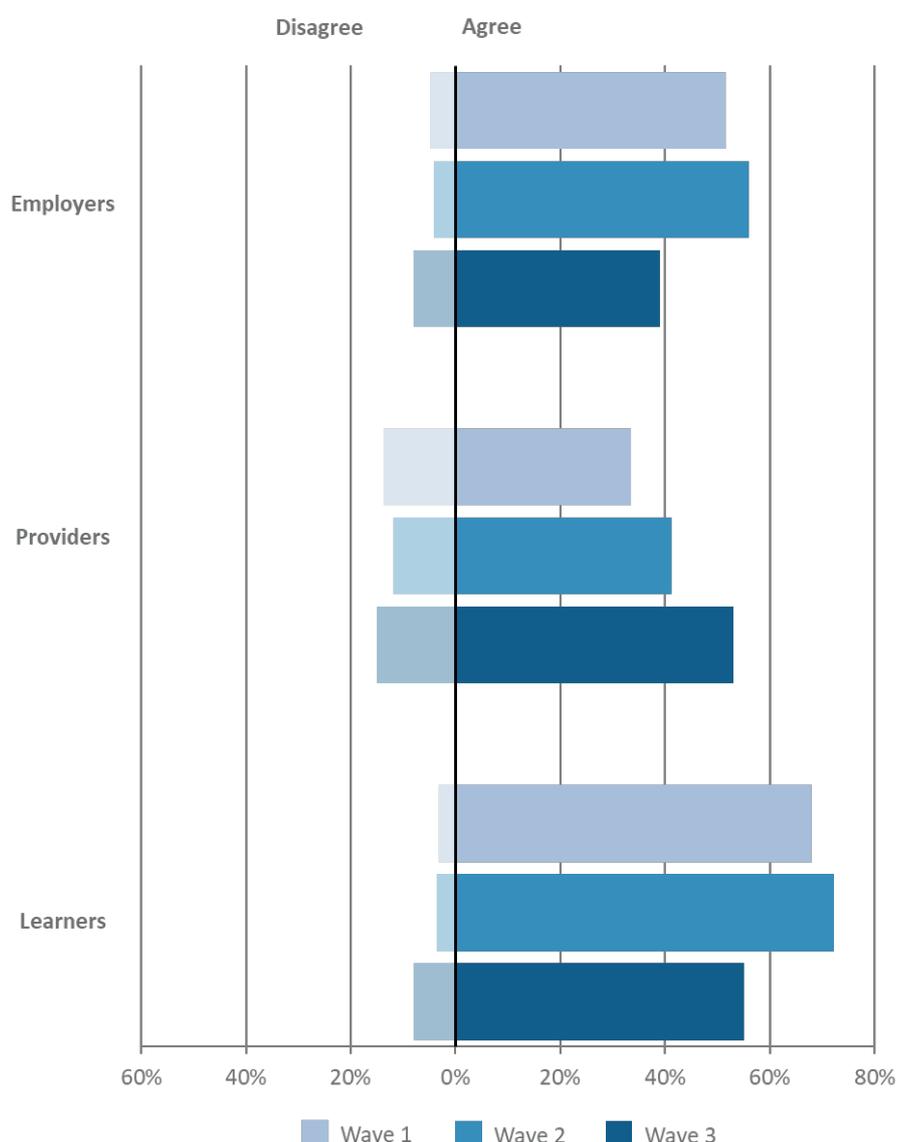
Perceptions of end-point assessments of apprenticeships: value and flexibility

For figure 32, the wave 3 effective base is: All employers who have EPAs of apprenticeships in their organisation, 314; All types of providers 386; Learners, 500.

Just over half (55%) of learners said that they value EPAs of apprenticeship standards. A similar proportion (53%) of the provider group said that they value these assessments.

A smaller proportion (39%) of employers said that they value EPAs of apprenticeship standards. This was highest among large employers (61%) and lowest for micro employers (35%).

Figure 32. Results for ‘We value end-point assessments of apprenticeships’ (Employers) / ‘I value end-point assessments of apprenticeships’ (All types of providers, Learners)



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Employer reasons for perceptions of End-Point Assessments

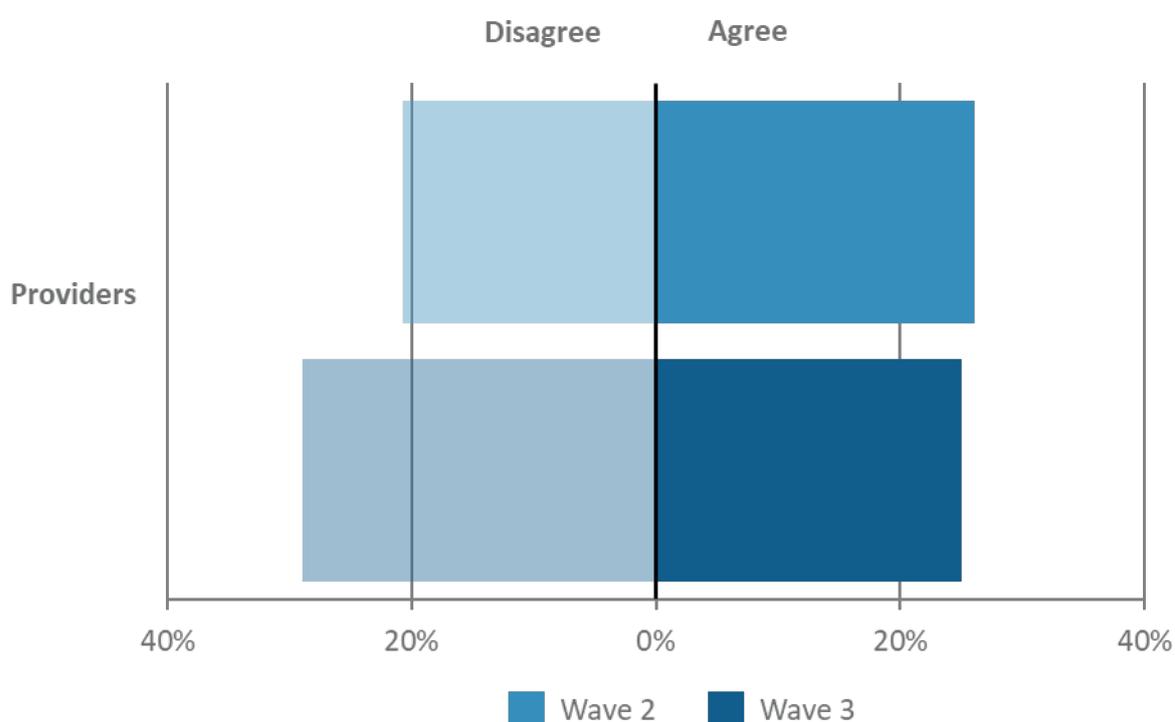
Employers who said that they value EPAs (39%) were asked to explain why they think this through an open response question. Responses indicated that their value of EPAs tends to stem from the idea that EPAs are a good way of measuring / showing that the learner has reached the required standard. Some employers also made the case that EPAs improve the value of the apprenticeship for the employer as they demonstrate apprentices' commitment to learning and applying training in a practical way.

A very small (8%) proportion of employers disagreed that they value EPAs. For some, this was because they do not hire people with apprenticeships or that they are not relevant for the role. Others felt that the level of skill was not high enough or that they only provide a snapshot of attainment.

For figure 33, the wave 3 effective base is: All types of providers 386.

Views for the provider group were fairly evenly split over whether or not EPAs of apprenticeships offer value for money. A quarter (25%) agreed, whilst a similar proportion (29%) disagreed. ITPs were much more likely to disagree, with approximately two in five (39%) disagreeing. This was higher than levels of disagreement from Further Education Colleges and FE / ACL / LAs (both 14%) and sixth forms (6%).

Figure 33. Results for 'End-Point Assessments of Apprenticeships offer value for money' (All types of providers)



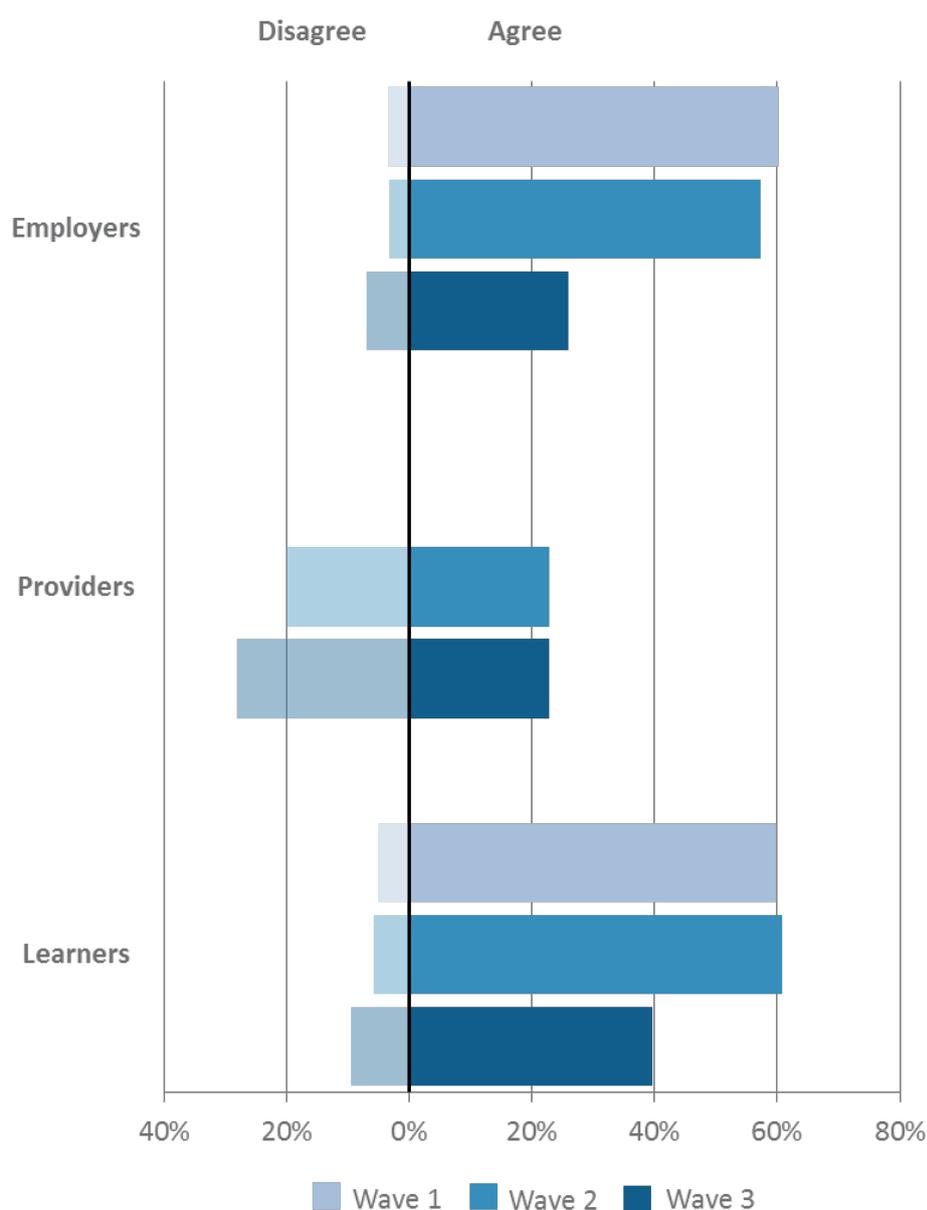
Please note that YouGov and Ofqual advise against drawing conclusions based on differences in the data in comparison with waves 1 and 2. This is due to key changes in the sampling approach and survey mode made for wave 3, which are outlined in more detail in the Introduction.

For figure 34, the wave 3 effective base is: All employers who have EPAs of apprenticeships in their organisation, 314; All types of providers, 386; All learners 500.

Two-fifths (40%) of learners agreed that the availability of EPAs is sufficiently flexible, compared to 26% of employers and 23% of the provider group. However, the provider group was much more likely to disagree (28%).

Across employers, large employers (52%) were more likely than micro (21%) and small employers (36%) to acknowledge the availability of EPAs is sufficiently flexible.

Figure 34. Results for ‘The availability of end-point assessments of apprenticeships is sufficiently flexible’ (Employers / All types of providers / Learners)



Please note that YouGov and Ofqual advise against drawing conclusions based on differences in the data in comparison with waves 1 and 2. This is due to key changes in the sampling approach and survey mode made for wave 3, which are outlined in more detail in the Introduction.

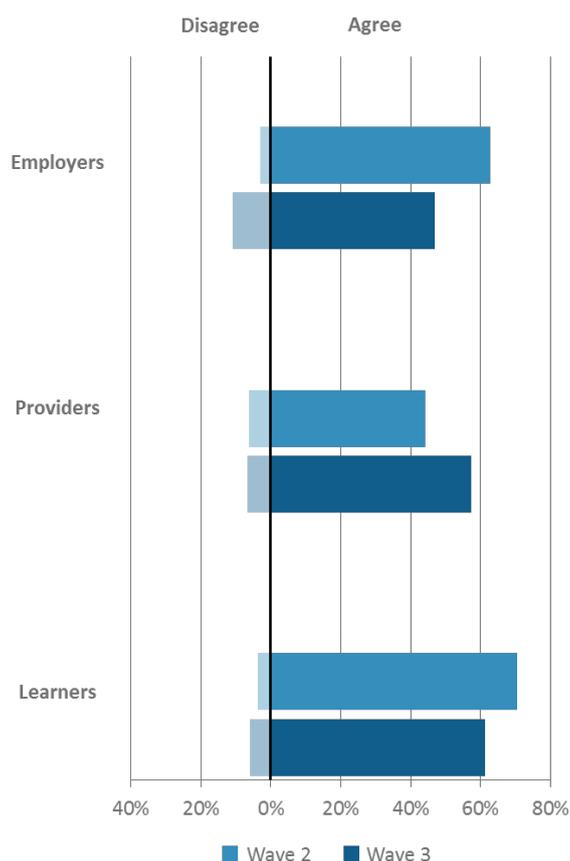
Perceptions of end-point assessments of apprenticeships: purpose and future opportunity

For figure 35, the wave 3 effective base is: All employers who have EPAs of apprenticeships in their organisation, 314; All types of providers, 386; All learners 500.

Just under half (47%) of employers agreed people passing EPAs have the competence and vocational and technical skills needed by their organisation. By organisation size, large employers (65%) were more likely to agree, compared to medium (52%) small (57%) and micro (43%) employers.

Overall, over half (57%) of the provider group agreed that people passing EPAs have the competence and vocational and technical skills needed by employers. In contrast, approximately three-fifths (61%) of learners agreed that EPAs test the competence and vocational skills needed by employers.

Figure 35. Results for ‘People passing end-point assessments of apprenticeships have the competence and vocational and technical skills needed by my organisation’ (Employers) ‘People passing end-point assessments of apprenticeship standards have the competence and vocational and technical skills needed by employers’ (All types of providers) ‘End-point assessments of apprenticeships test the competence and vocational and technical skills needed by employers’ (Learners)



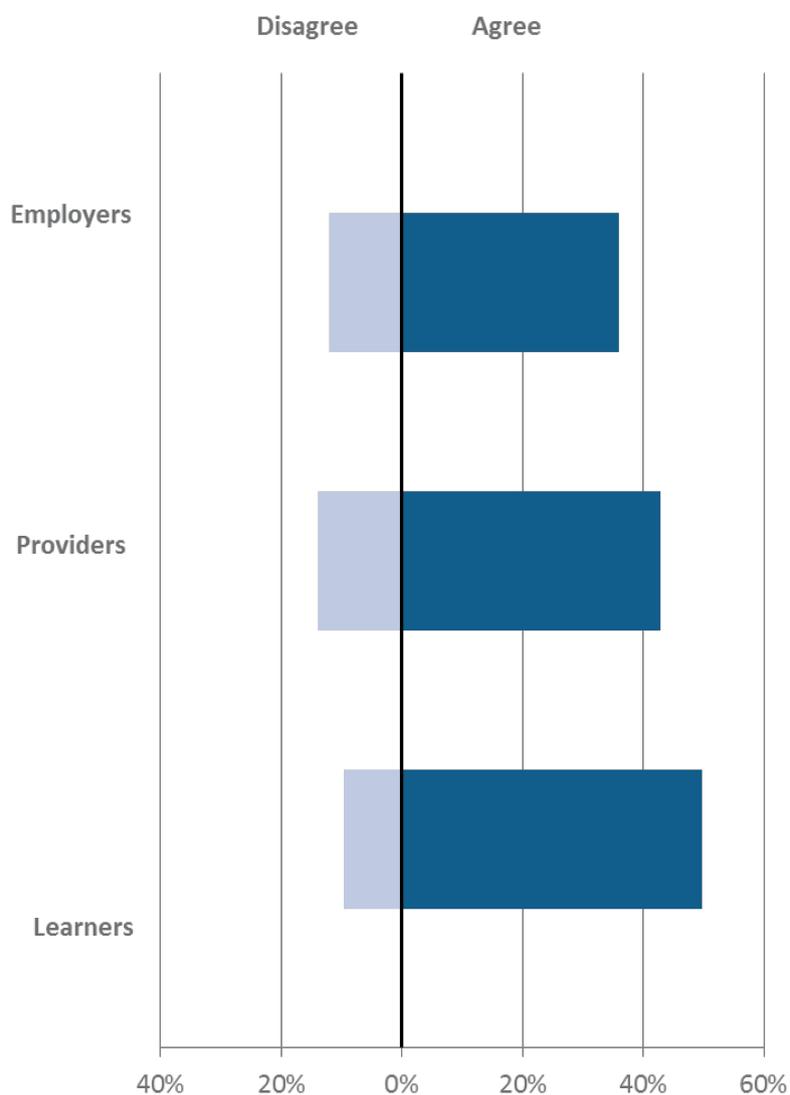
Please note that YouGov and Ofqual advise against drawing conclusions based on differences in the data in comparison with waves 1 and 2. This is due to key changes in the sampling approach and survey mode made for wave 3, which are outlined in more detail in the Introduction.

For figure 36, the wave 3 effective base is: All employers who have EPAs of apprenticeships in their organisation, 314; All types of providers, 386; All learners 500.

Learners were the group most likely agree that EPAs are qualifications within themselves, meaning they are a qualification in their own right (50%), followed by the provider group (43%) and employers (36%).

Organisation size affects the perceptions of EPAs, with large employers significantly more likely than micro employers to agree that EPAs are qualifications within themselves (53% vs. 32%).

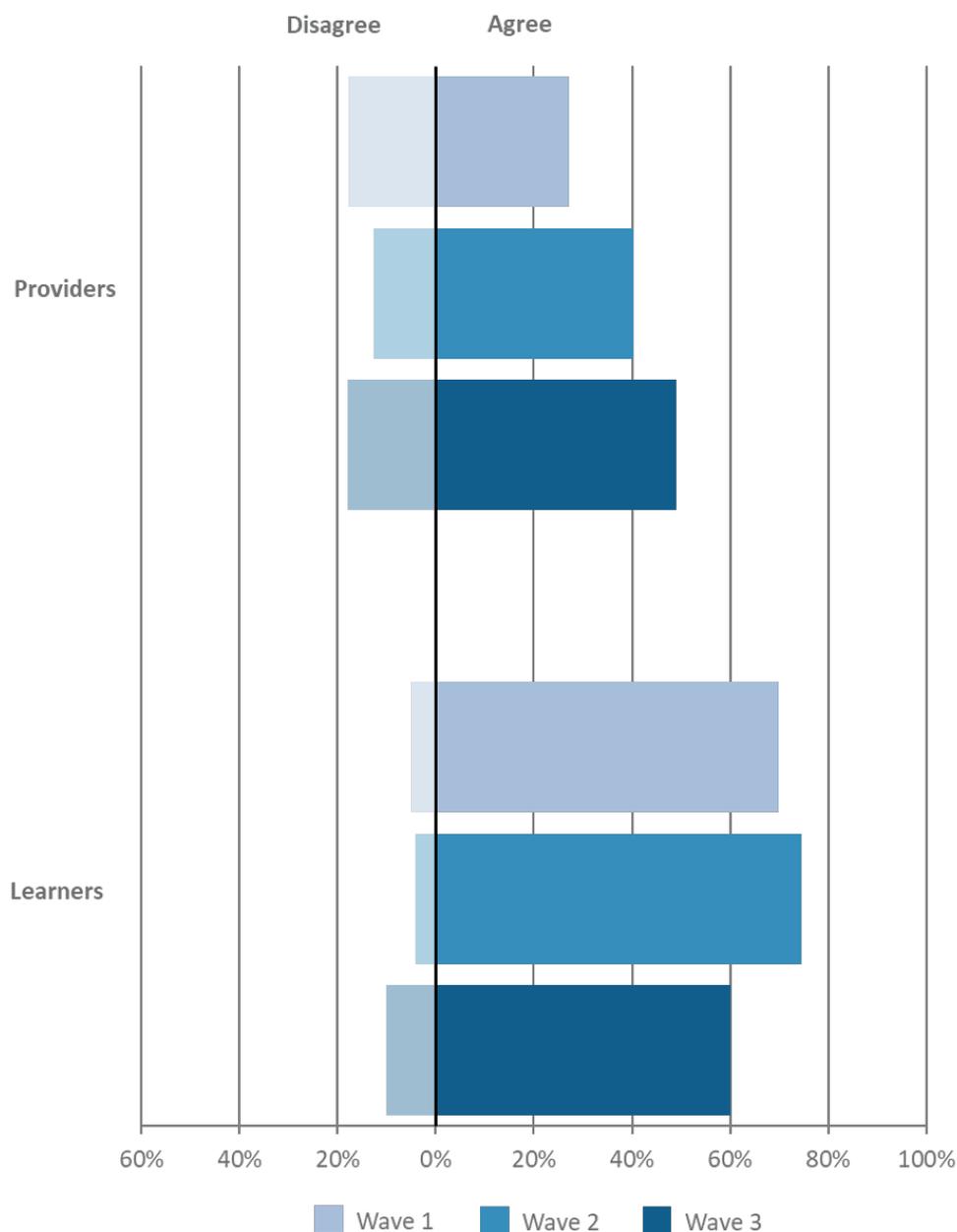
Figure 36. Wave 3 results for ‘End-point assessments of apprenticeships are a qualification within themselves’ (Employers / Learners) End-point assessments of apprenticeship standards are a qualification within themselves (All types of providers)



For figure 37, the wave 3 effective base is: All types of providers 386; Learners, 500.

Three in five (60%) learners said that they understand the purpose of EPAs of apprenticeships, compared to approximately half (49%) of the provider group.

Figure 37. Results for ‘Learners understand the purpose of end-point assessment of apprenticeship standards’ (All types of providers) / ‘I understand the purpose of end-point assessments of apprenticeships’ (Learners)

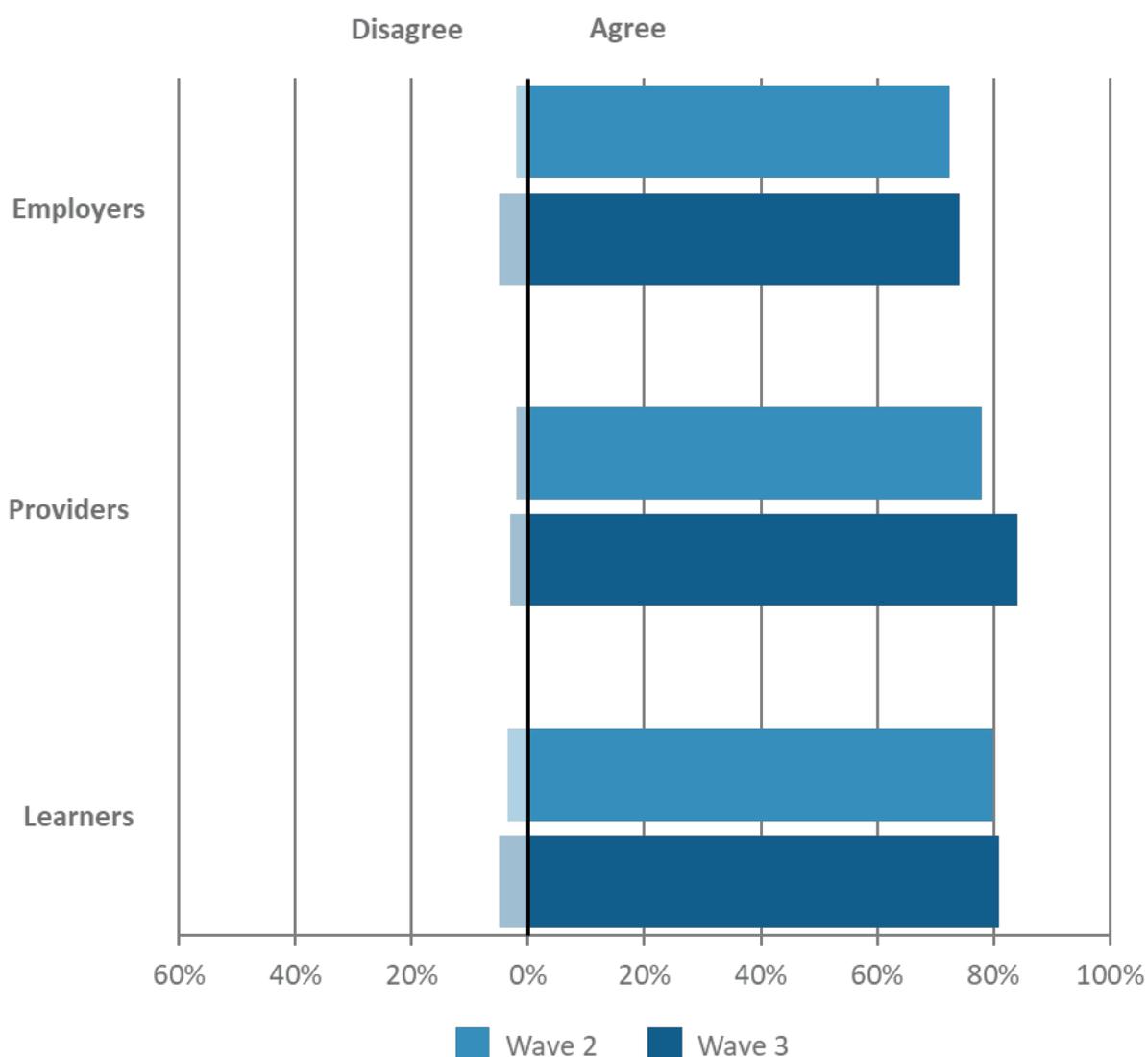


Please note that YouGov and Ofqual advise against drawing conclusions based on differences in the data in comparison with waves 1 and 2. This is due to key changes in the sampling approach and survey mode made for wave 3, which are outlined in more detail in the Introduction.

For figure 38, the wave 3 effective base is: All employers who have EPAs of apprenticeships in their organisation, 314; All types of providers 386; Learners, 500.

The majority (84%) of the provider group, learners (81%) and employers (74%) said that apprenticeships are good preparation for work.

Figure 38. Results for ‘Apprenticeships are good preparation for work’ (Employers, All types of providers, Learners)



Please note that YouGov and Ofqual advise against drawing conclusions based on differences in the data in comparison with waves 1 and 2. This is due to key changes in the sampling approach and survey mode made for wave 3, which are outlined in more detail in the Introduction.

Section 4: Perceptions of T levels

Understanding of T levels

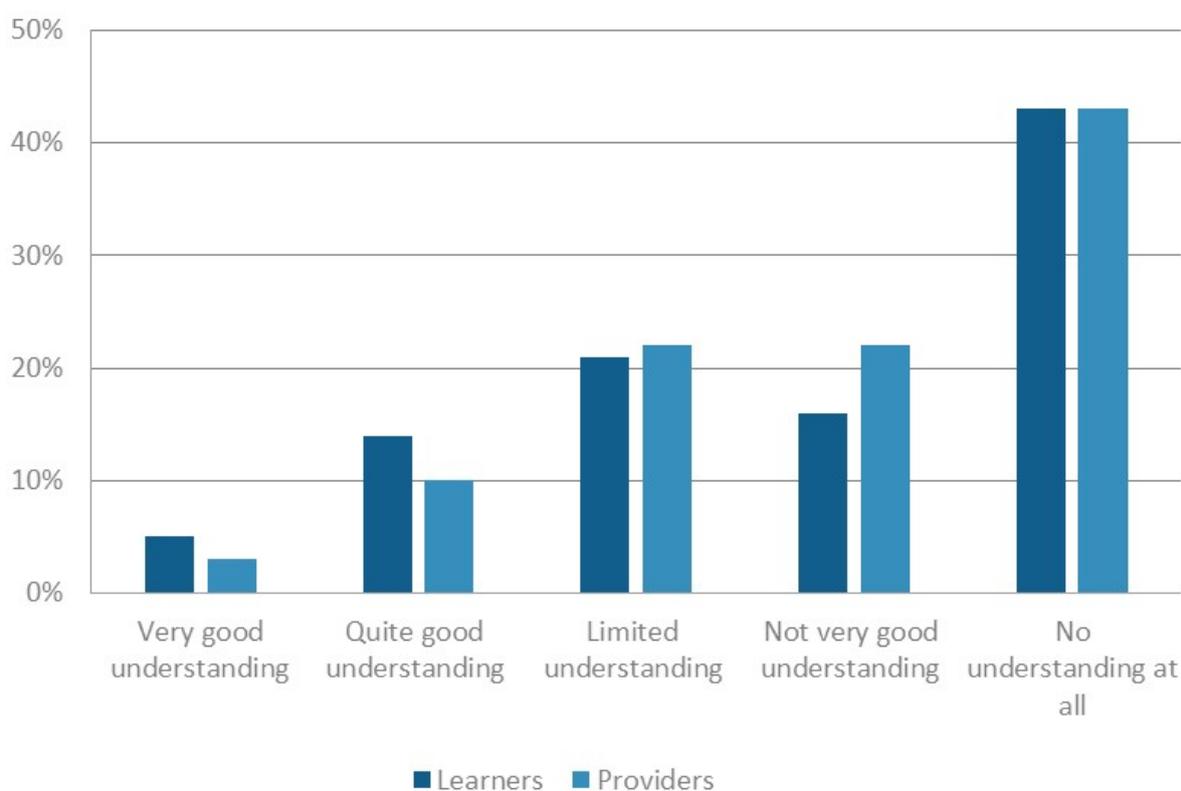
For figure 39, the wave 3 effective base is: All learners, 500, all employers, 2101. This question was asked for the first time this wave.

The first wave of three T-Levels will be introduced in September 2020 for a selected number of all types of provider and their learners. One in five (20%) learners reported having a very or quite good understanding of T levels, with 43% saying that they have no understanding at all.

In line with their general lower understanding of qualifications, employers also had a relatively low understanding of T levels. Only 13% reporting having a very or quite good understanding of these qualifications.

Large employers (29%) were more likely than medium (23%), small (18%) or micro (11%) employers to say that they have a very or quite good understanding of T levels. In contrast, micro employers were more likely than large employers to say that they have no understanding at all (45% vs. 21% of large employers).

Figure 39. Wave 3 results for ‘Which of the following statements describes your understanding of T levels?’



Section 5: Clarity regarding relevant qualifications

Key Findings – Clarity regarding relevant qualifications

- Five in ten employers (50%) said it is clear which qualifications are relevant to their organisation, and this was significantly higher among large employers (70%).
- Roughly three-quarters of learners (73%) reported that it is clear to them which qualifications are relevant to their needs, which is more prominent among younger learners aged 18 and under (79%).

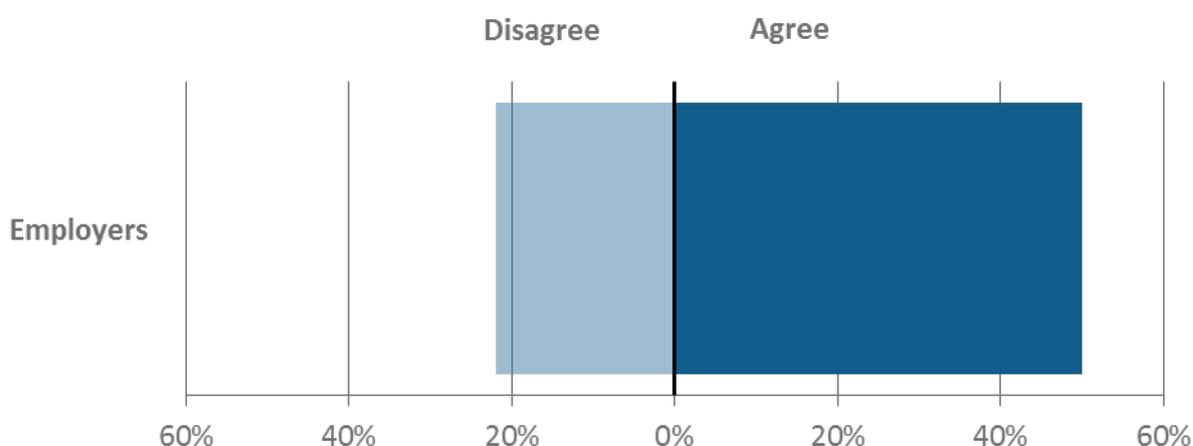
For figure 40, the wave 3 effective base is: All employers, 2,101.

Five in ten employers (50%) reported that it is clear which qualifications are relevant to their organisation, while roughly two in ten (22%) said that it is not.

Large employers (70%) were significantly more likely to feel that this is clear, while micro employers (47%) were least likely. Agreement that it is clear which qualifications are relevant decreased steadily alongside organisation size.

Mirroring these findings by organisation size, public sector employers (71%) were significantly more likely than private (49%) and voluntary sector (48%) employers to feel this is clear.

Figure 40. Wave 3 results for 'It is clear which qualifications are relevant to my organisation' (Employers)

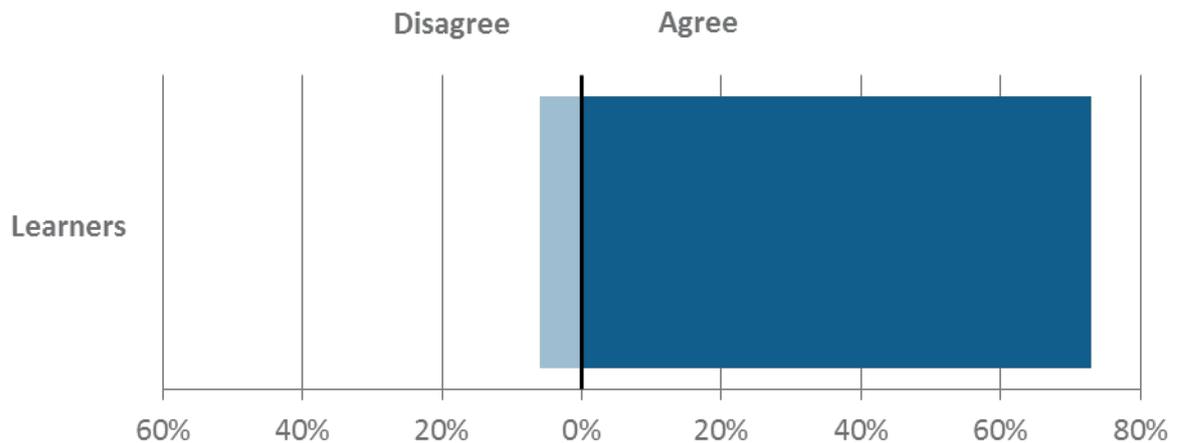


For figure 41, the wave 3 effective base is: All learners, 500.

Roughly three-quarters of learners (73%) agreed that it is clear to them which qualifications are relevant to their needs, while a much smaller proportion (6%) disagreed.

Younger learners aged 18 and under (79%) were more likely than those aged 19 to 24 (65%) to agree, while older learners aged 25+ were in the middle (74%).

Figure 41. Wave 3 results for 'It is clear to me which qualifications are relevant to my needs' (Learners)



Section 6: Use of qualifications for recruitment and training

Key Findings – Use of qualifications for recruitment and training (asked to employers)

- When recruiting to skilled and supervisory roles it was more common for employers to report it was essential that new employees had relevant VTQs (27%). In contrast, when recruiting for entry level and admin roles it was most common for employers to have reported that new employees should have Maths and English GCSEs (34%) or Maths and English FSQs (29%)
- For people in entry level and admin roles, a quarter (25%) of employers reported that all or most training leads to a qualification compared with 31% of employers who reported this for skilled and supervisory roles and 29% who reported this for professional and managerial roles.
- Micro and small employers were more likely than large employers to report that no training leads to qualifications for employees across all different roles.
- A third (33%) of employers reported that training their organisation had arranged or funded had led to a VTQ. Large employers were significantly more likely than micro, small or medium sized employers to have reported that training led to FSQs or EPA of an apprenticeship.
- Employers reported that the most common factor taken into account when they decide which qualification to offer to employees is the relevance of the qualification to their organisation (68%). Roughly two-fifths (38%) of employers mentioned that the qualification being valued in their sector was a factor taken into consideration.

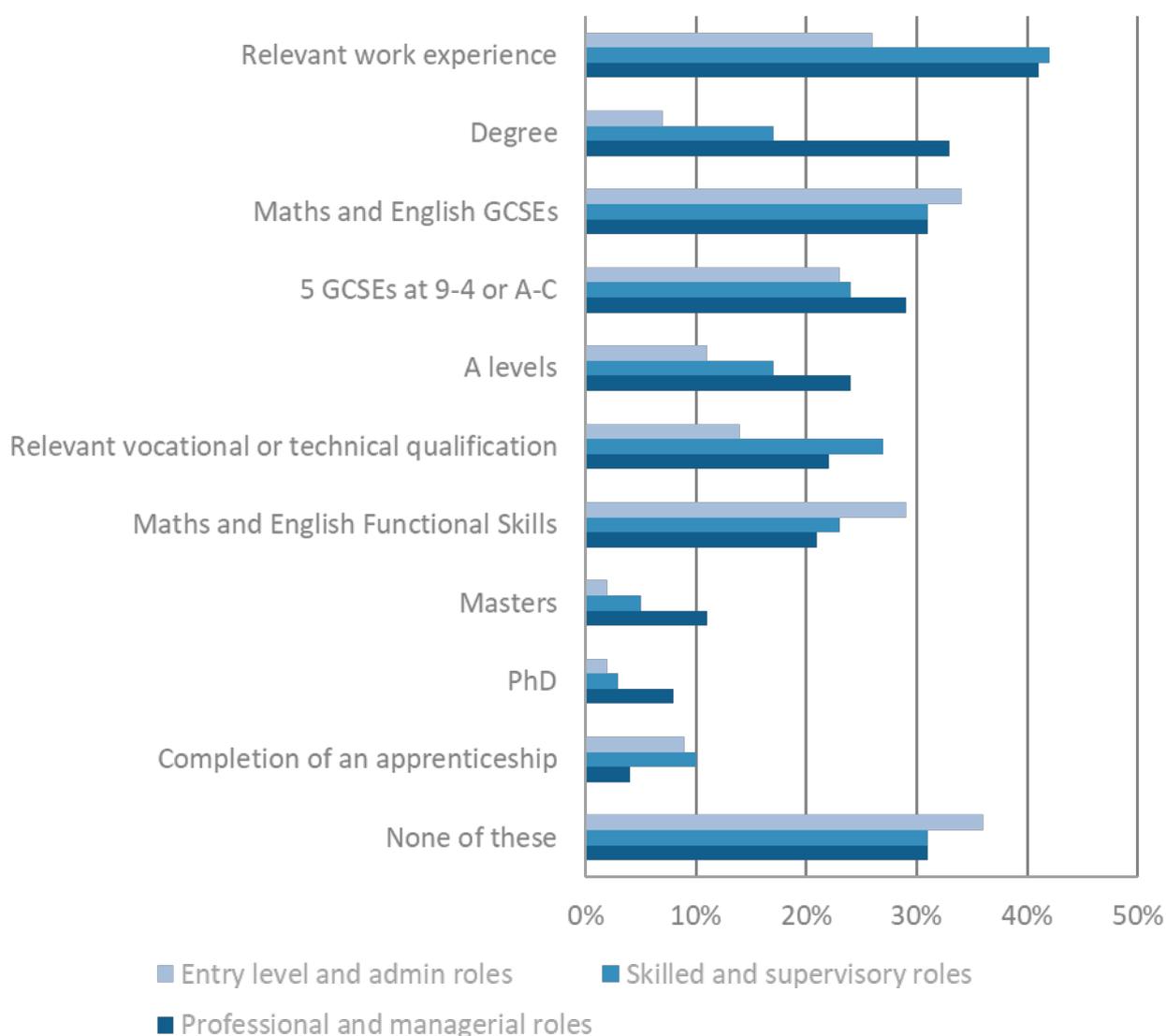
Qualifications deemed essential at different occupational levels

For figure 42, the wave 3 effective base is: All employers, 2,101.

Roughly two-fifths of employers reported that when recruiting to skilled and supervisory roles (42%) and to professional and managerial roles (41%), relevant work experience was essential. For professional and managerial roles, a third (33%) reported that it was essential that new employees had a degree.

When recruiting to skilled and supervisory roles it was more common for employers to report that it was essential that new employees had a relevant VTQ (27%). In contrast when recruiting for entry level and admin roles it was most common for employers to have reported that new employees should have Maths and English GCSEs (34%) and/or Maths and English FSQs (29%).

Figure 42. Results for ‘When recruiting new employees, are any of the following essential for the following types of roles’ (Employers)

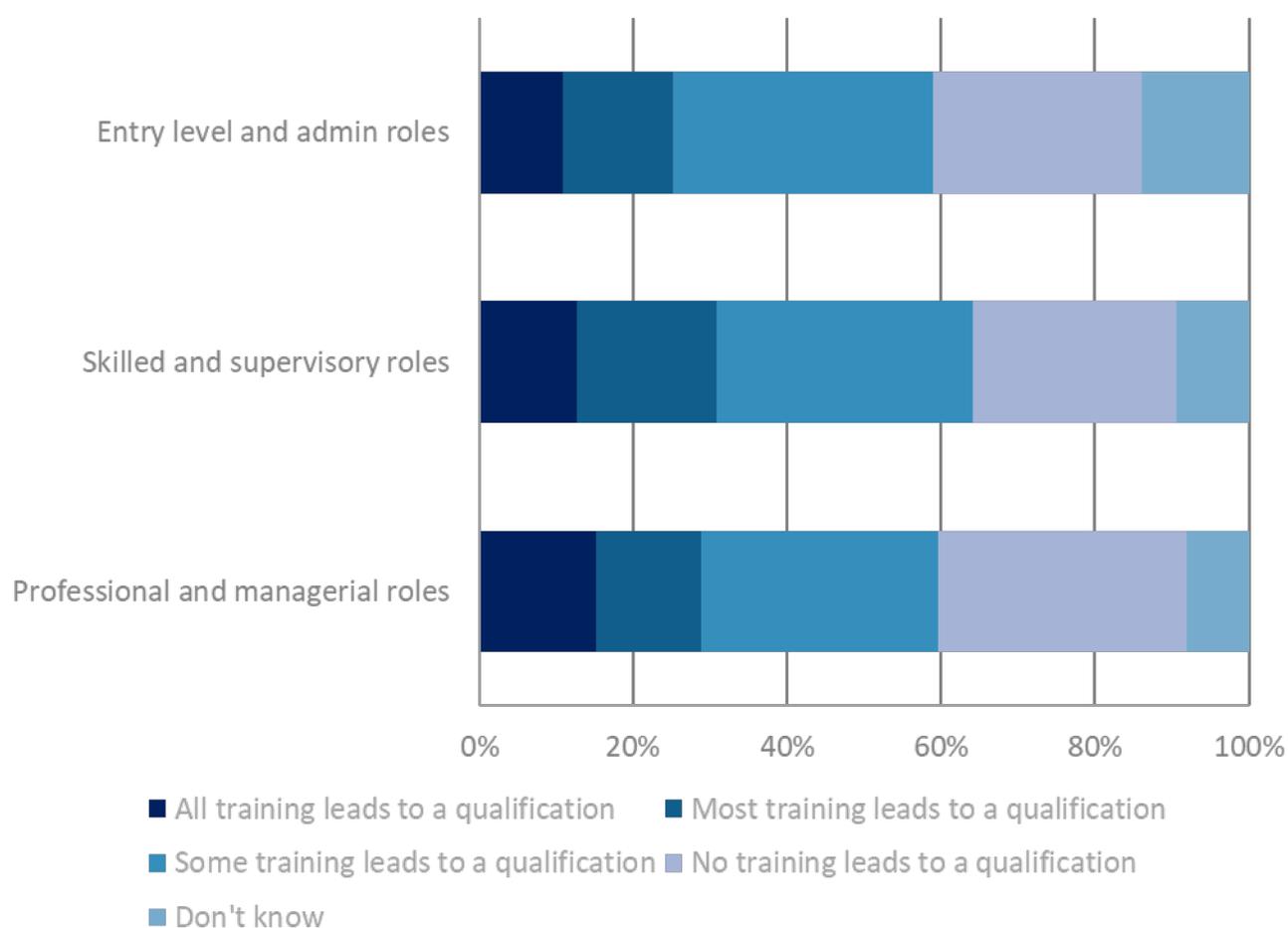


For figures 43 and 44, the wave 3 effective base is: Employers who have arranged or funded training for their employees, 550.

Across different levels of job roles similar proportions of employers reported that all or most training leads to a qualification. For people in entry level and admin roles, a quarter (25%) of employers reported that all or most training leads to a qualification compared with 31% of employers who reported this for skilled and supervisory roles and 29% who reported this for professional and managerial roles.

Micro and small employers were more likely than large employers to report that no training leads to qualifications for employees across all different roles. For entry level and admin roles, 29% of micro employers and 26% of small employers reported that no training they arranged or funded leads to a qualification compared to just 14% of large employers.

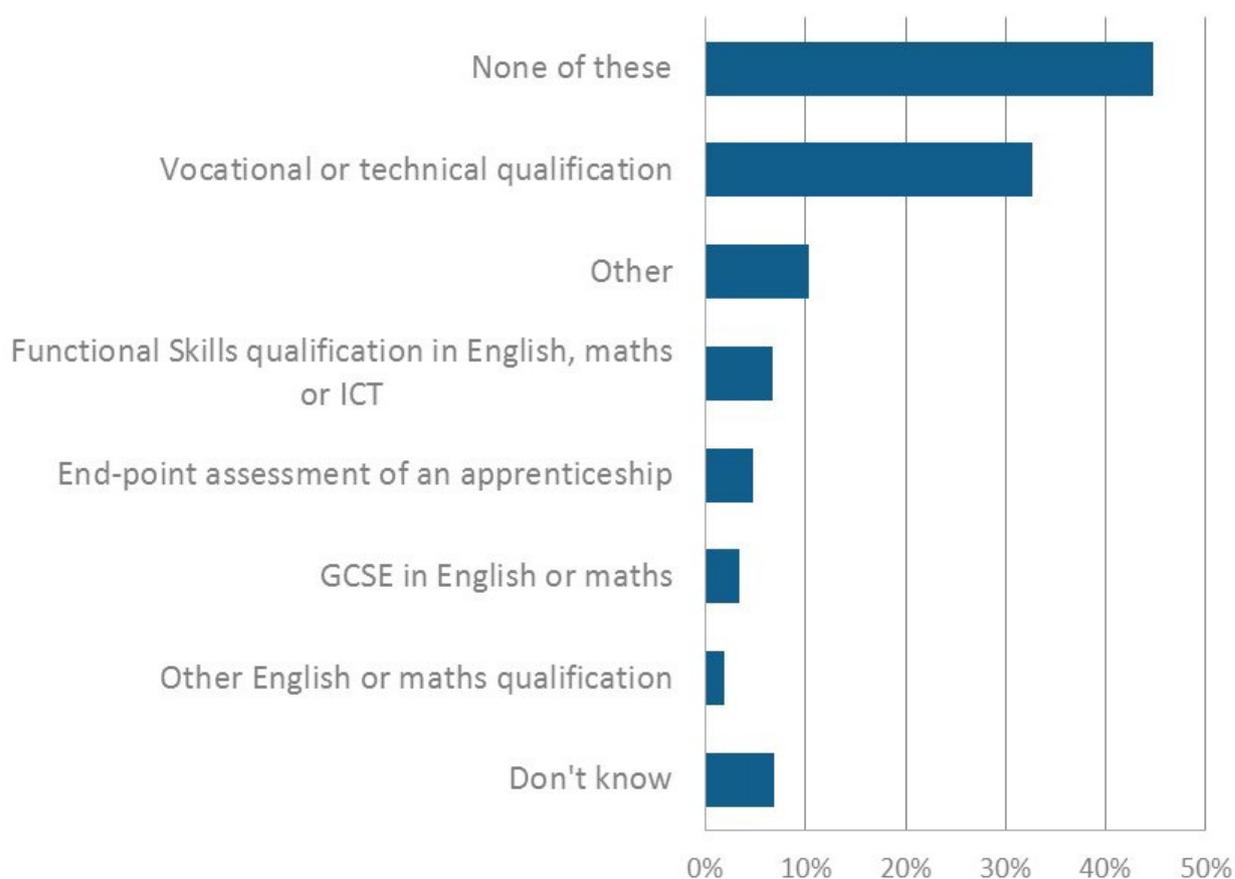
Figure 63. Results for ‘Thinking about the training your company has arranged or funded in the last 12 months, how much of it, if any, typically results in a qualification’



A third (33%) of employers reported that training their organisation arranged or funded had led to a VTQ, although most commonly employers reported that none of the training they arranged or funded led to any type of qualification (45%).

Large employers were significantly more likely than micro, small or medium sized employers to have reported that training led to FSQs or an EPA of an apprenticeship.

Figure 44. Results for ‘Has any of the training your organisation has arranged or funded in the last 12 months led to any of the following?’ (Employers who have arranged or funded training for employees in last 12 months)



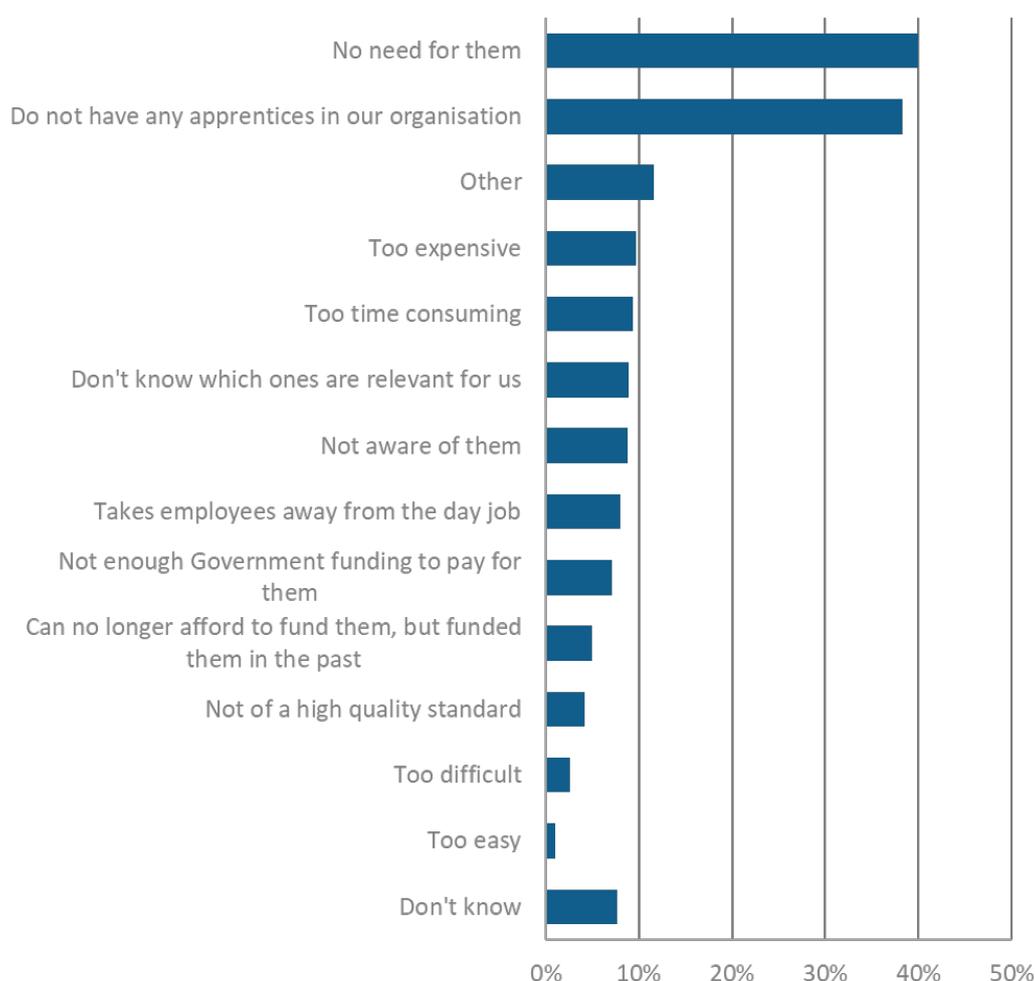
For figure 45, the wave 3 effective base is: Employers who arranged or funded training that didn't lead to a vocational or technical qualification or EPA of an apprenticeship, 352.

Employers who said that they had not arranged or funded training that had resulted in a vocational qualification, an apprenticeship or a technical qualification were asked why that was. Most commonly employers reported that they had no need for those qualifications (40%) or that they don't have any apprentices in their organisation (38%).

One in ten employers reported issues around lack of awareness, with 9% reporting that they were not aware of them or did not know which ones were relevant for them.

Of those employers who said they had no need to arrange or fund training that led to a qualification, over half (54%) reported this was simply because their employees do not need VTQs or apprenticeships.

Figure 45. Results for 'Can you please say why your organisation hasn't arranged or funded training that led to a vocational or technical qualification and/or apprenticeship?' (Employers who have arranged or funded training for employees in last 12 months which has not led to Vocational/technical qualification or End-point assessment of an apprenticeship)



For figure 46, the wave 3 effective base is: Employers who have arranged or funded training for their employees, 550.

Employers reported that the most common factor taken into account when they decide which qualification to offer their employees is the relevance of the qualification to their organisation (68%). Roughly two-fifths (38%) of employers mentioned that the qualification being valued in their sector was a factor taken into consideration.

Large employers were more likely than micro, small or medium sized employers to have reported that the size of the qualification (i.e. how long it might take) (37%) and their organisation's culture (23%) were factors taken into consideration.

Figure 46. Results for 'Can you please indicate which of the following factors are taken into account when your organisation decides which qualifications to offer its employees?' (Employers who have arranged or funded training for employees in last 12 months)

