

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Employer Experience Survey (EES) is designed to understand employers' recruitment practices and experiences of the services offered by DWP, to enable employer views to be fed into operational and policy development. The data in this report is based on 4,200 telephone interviews conducted between October 2015 and February 2016 with employers across all sectors and regions of Great Britain.

The survey is a random sample of employers who have experience of using DWP services as well as those who have not. The fieldwork was carried out by IFF research and the analysis by DWP analysts. Our thanks go out to those employers who gave up their time to take part in this study.

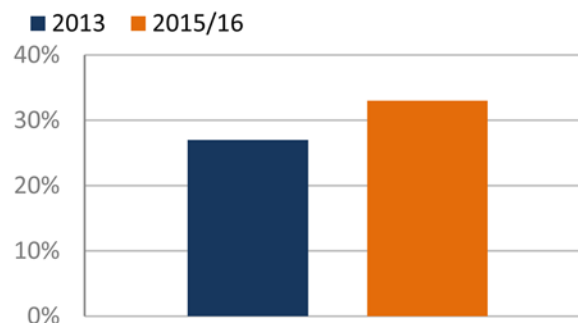
Main stories

Employer satisfaction with the service received from DWP is high

7.7 out of 10

Businesses who contacted the Department directly gave an average score of 7.7 where 10 is extremely satisfied

In 2015/16, 33 per cent of employers who had recruited in the last 12 months had taken on someone over the age of 50



This is a significant increase compared with 27 per cent of recruiting employers in 2013

More than half of employers are aware of Universal Credit

58%

There were no significant differences in awareness levels across organisation size

At a glance

	Page
Introduction and sample details	3
Access channels and information needs	6
Recruitment activity and the use of Universal Jobmatch and Jobcentre Plus	11
Awareness and experience of Universal Credit	18
Attitudes to employing older workers	27
Disadvantaged groups	30
Support for staff with a mental health condition	33
Workplace pensions and automatic-enrolment	38

What you need to know

The 2015/16 employer experience survey was designed primarily to help the DWP understand employers' recruitment practices, experience of using DWP services and their views on key policy areas. As well as demographic data on the organisations, the survey sought to gather information on other topics including:

- Workplace structure
- Use of DWP recruitment services
- Experience of DWP recruitment initiatives
- Older workers
- Mental health
- Access channels and internet usage
- Experience of Universal Credit
- Child maintenance
- Disadvantaged groups
- Pensions

A total of 4,200 telephone interviews were conducted with employers across Great Britain, including a boost sample of employers with employees in receipt of Universal Credit (UC). For the purposes of this report, businesses with employees in receipt of UC are referred to as 'UC employers'. The research was conducted at site-level – as opposed to organisation level. The rationale for this is that the workplace is the core interface between employers, their staff and the DWP. This also replicates the approach taken for the 2013 employer engagement and experience survey. As in 2013, it is possible that more than one establishment from a multi-site organisation could have participated in the survey.

The research follows on from a similar wave of research – the 2013 employer engagement and experience survey – which was intended to act as a baseline against which the impact of policy changes could be assessed. To this end, key questions used in the 2013 survey were replicated in the 2015/16 survey.

The core sample was sourced from the Experian business database and the UC booster sample was sourced from government databases. All workplaces with at least two members of staff were in-scope for the survey. Interviews took place between 14 October 2015 and 2 February 2016.

Lead Analyst: Elaine Squires

DWP Press Office: 0203 267 5129

Feedback is welcome

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Introduction and sample details

Number of interviews by Jobcentre Plus region

Jobcentre Plus Region	Number of interviews
Southern England	620
London	600
Central England	646
North East	571
North West	687
Scotland	570
Wales	506
Total	4,200

The 2015/16 survey includes establishments with two or more employees across England, Scotland and Wales, in all sectors of the economy (across the commercial, public and charitable spheres) – a population of 1.7 million establishments.

In total, 4,200 telephone interviews were conducted with individuals responsible for Human Resources.

See **Table 1** for full data.

The sector composition of the business population varies across regions

Businesses interviewed by sector and region

	Primary and Utilities sector	Manufacturing	Construction	Trade, Accommodation and Transport	Business and Other Services	Percentage
						Non-Market Services
Southern England	6	5	10	36	32	11
London	2	4	9	37	38	10
Central England	7	7	9	37	29	11
North East	6	7	9	38	29	12
North West	5	6	8	37	31	12
Scotland	9	5	9	36	30	12
Wales	12	5	9	36	25	13
Base	304	503	458	1,067	1,078	790

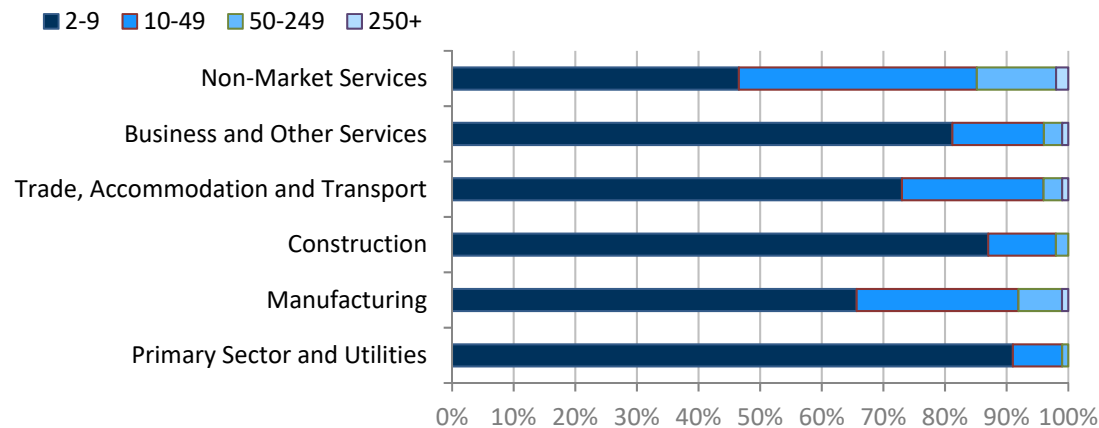
The sample was designed to be representative of not only different geographical locations, but also the sector composition of the nation's businesses. Whilst some sectors such as construction make up a similar proportion of the business community across regions, this is not the case for all sectors.

Sectors such as business and other services are disproportionately represented in London for example, where they make up 38 per cent of organisations, compared to only 25 per cent of businesses in Wales. The primary and utilities sector make up a larger proportion of businesses in Wales (12 per cent) compared to London (two per cent).

See **Table 3** for full data.

The size composition of businesses varies across sectors

Businesses interviewed by sector and size



Base: All employers (n=4,200)

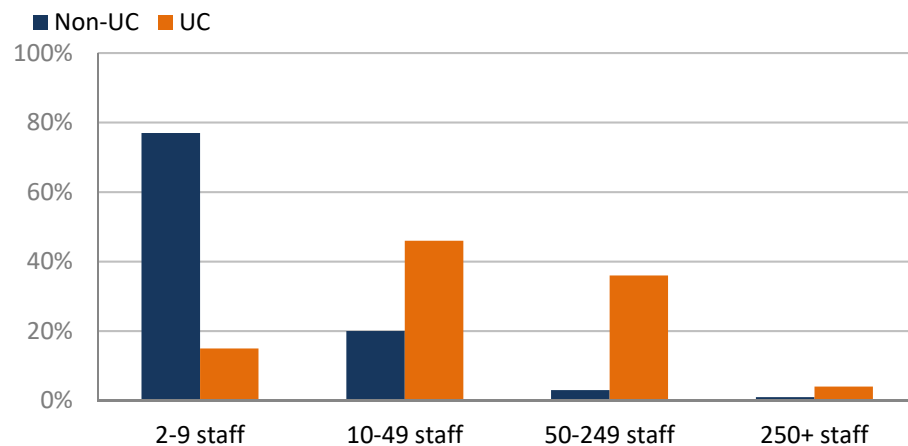
In all sectors, except the non-market services sector, the smallest employers constitute the majority of the employer base. While they account for around nine in ten employers (91 per cent) in the primary and utilities sector, they only account for around two-thirds (65 per cent) of manufacturing employers and fewer than half of employers (47 per cent) in the non-market services sector.

Non-market services include public administration, education, health and social work.

See **Table 2** for full data.

The profile of UC and non-UC employers differs considerably in terms of size

Type of employer interviewed by size



Base: All employers (n=4,200)

For the purposes of this report, businesses with employees in receipt of UC are referred to as 'UC employers'.

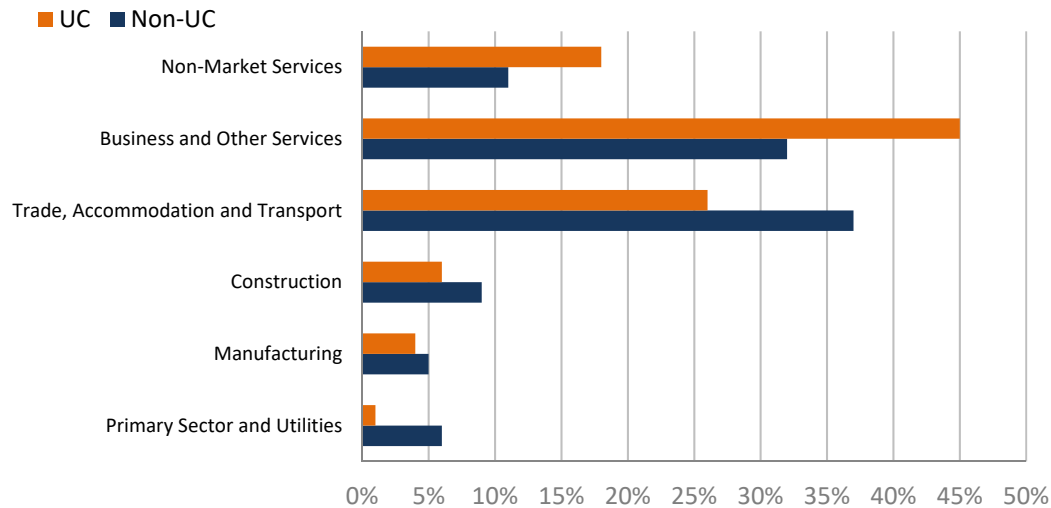
Around three-quarters (77 per cent) of all businesses interviewed had between two and nine employees, and a fifth had between ten and 49 employees.

Those businesses with employees in receipt of UC were much less likely to be micro employers. Only 15 per cent of UC businesses in the sample were micro employers (two to nine employees). UC employers were more likely to have between ten and 49 employees (46 per cent) or 50 to 249 employees (36 per cent).

See **Table 2** for full data.

The profile of UC and non-UC employers differs considerably in terms of sector

Type of employer interviewed by sector



Base: All employers (n=4,200)

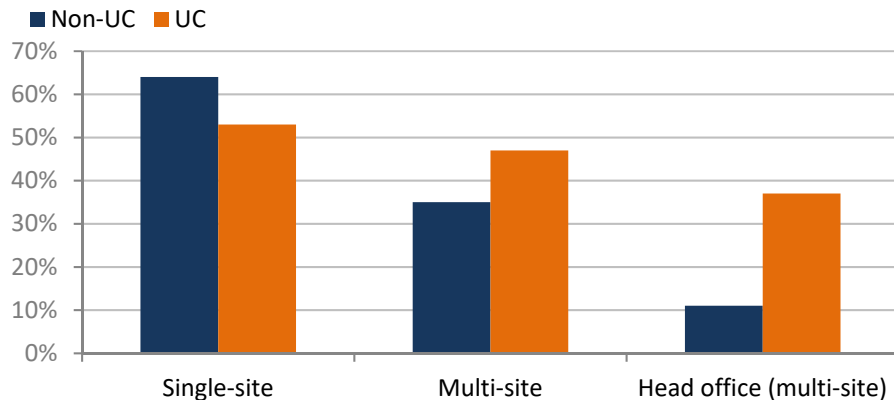
UC employers are also slightly different in terms of their sector composition. They are more likely to be in the 'business and other services' sector compared to non-UC employers (45 per cent and 32 per cent respectively). UC employers (26 per cent) are much less likely to be in the trade, accommodation and transport sector compared to non-UC employers (37 per cent).

It is important to note the differences between the size and sector profile of UC and non-UC employers as later in the report we highlight other significant differences between these two groups which may be driven by their size profile rather than being connected to whether they have employees in receipt of UC. Large businesses are more likely to employ staff using a range of different working patterns. This may explain why UC employers are more likely to employ staff on lower hours contracts than non-UC employers.

See **Table 3** for full data.

UC employers are more likely to be located across a number of sites than non-UC employers

Type of employer interviewed by number of locations



Base: All employers (n=4,200)

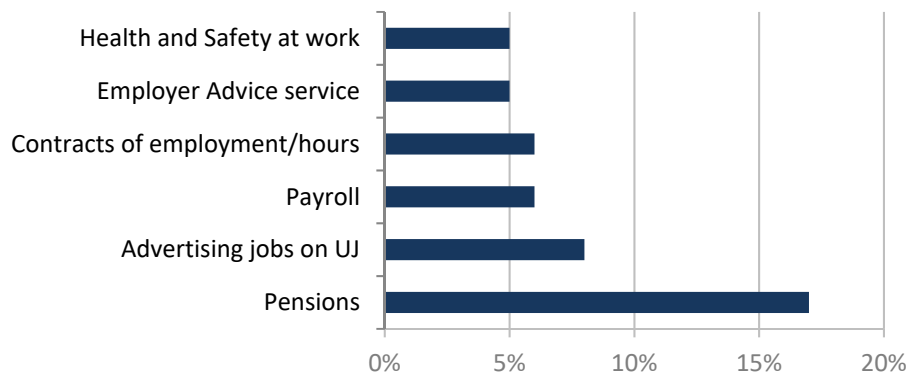
UC employers are more than three times as likely to be the head office of multi-site organisations compared to non-UC employers. This was the case for 37 per cent of UC employers compared to only 11 per cent of non-UC employers.

See **Table 1** for full data.

Access channels and information needs

The most common reason employers contact DWP is for information on pensions

Reason for contact



The survey shows that businesses contact DWP for a wide variety of reasons. The most common reason for employers to contact DWP in the 12 months prior to being interviewed was for information on pensions (17 per cent of all employers)¹. Other reasons for contacting DWP included advertising jobs on Universal Jobmatch (UJ) (8 per cent), payroll (6 per cent) and contracts of employment (6 per cent).

Businesses with employees on UC were more likely to have made contact with the Department in the 12 months prior to interview. Fifty-four per cent of UC employers had made contact with the Department compared to 32 per cent of non-UC employers.

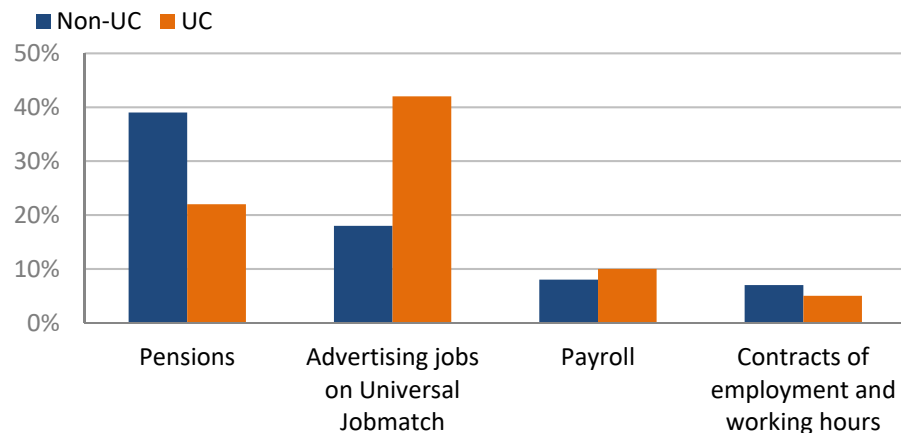
See **Table 25** for full data.

Base: All employers in section (n=2,100)

¹ The survey does not distinguish between DWP and The Pension Regulator (TPR) so we are unable to say for certain whether employers are seeing TPR as part of DWP in response to this question, but we suspect there may be some confusion between the two.

UC employers are more likely to contact us with queries about UJ

Reason for contact on the most recent occasion by type of employer



Base: Businesses that contacted DWP in the previous 12 months (n=839)

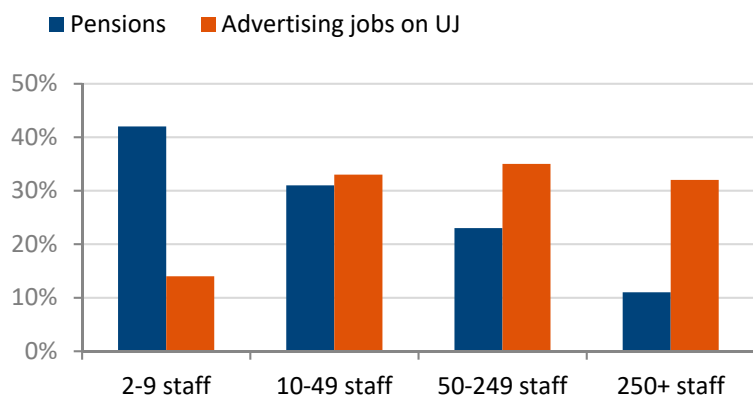
Businesses who had contacted the Department in the 12 months prior to interview were asked the reason for their most recent contact. The most common reasons for the most recent contact were pensions (39 per cent) and advertising jobs on UJ (20 per cent).

Businesses with UC claimants were more likely to contact the Department about advertising jobs on UJ (42 per cent) compared to non-UC employers (18 per cent). Thirty-nine per cent of non-UC employers had made contact about a pension-related issue on the most recent occasion compared with 22 per cent of UC employers.

See **Table 26** for full data.

Staging dates for automatic-enrolment may have prompted more small employers to contact DWP

Reason for contact on most recent occasion by employer size



Base: Businesses that contacted DWP in the previous 12 months (n=839)

Small and micro employers (less than ten employees) who had made contact with the Department tended to do so for pension-related issues (42 per cent), on the most recent occasion². Only a small proportion (14 per cent) made contact about advertising jobs on UJ.

Larger employers (250+ employees) were significantly less likely to make contact about pension-related issues (11 per cent) and most commonly made contact about UJ queries (32 per cent).

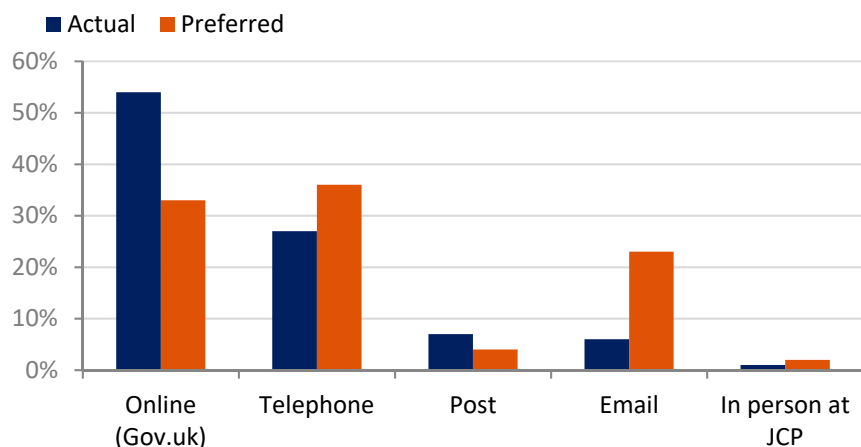
Automatic-enrolment staging dates for smaller organisations coincided with the fieldwork period or the recall period for some of the automatic enrolment questions which may explain why a higher proportion of small organisations made contact about pension-related issue.

See **Table 26** for full data.

² The survey does not distinguish between DWP and TPR so we are unable to say for certain whether employers are seeing TPR as part of DWP in response to this question, but we suspect there may be some confusion between the two.

Online is the most common method of contact, although telephone contact is preferred

Method of contact (actual versus preferred)



Base: Businesses that contacted DWP in previous 12 months (n=839)

Of those businesses that had contacted the Department in the previous 12 months, 54 per cent had done so online on the most recent occasion. Twenty-seven per cent had made contact by telephone.

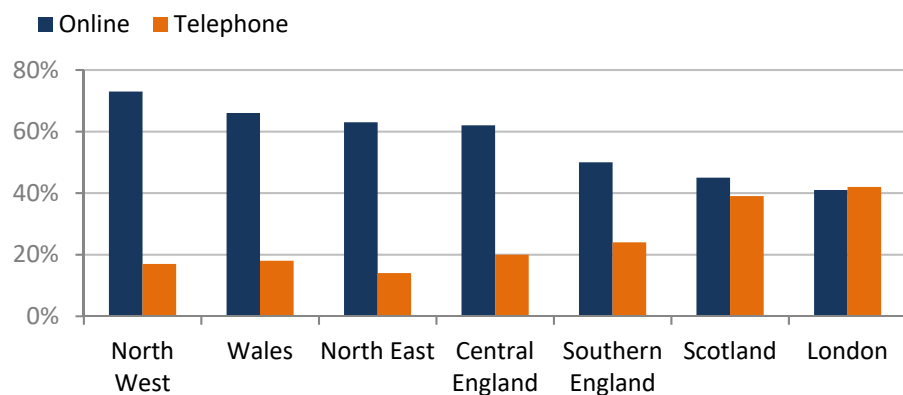
However, the preferred method of contact with DWP was via the telephone (36 per cent of employers who made contact in the previous 12 months), followed by online (33 per cent). The main reasons for preferring to contact the Department by telephone were that employers prefer a personal interaction, that it is easier and more convenient, as well as quicker and more efficient. Those employers who had no contact with DWP were less likely to say online would be their preferred method (25 per cent).

Of those who had not used online channels to contact the Department, the main reason given was that there was a general preference for a personal interaction with a staff member.

See **Table 27** for full data.

Method of contact varies considerably by region

How businesses contacted DWP on the most recent occasion by region



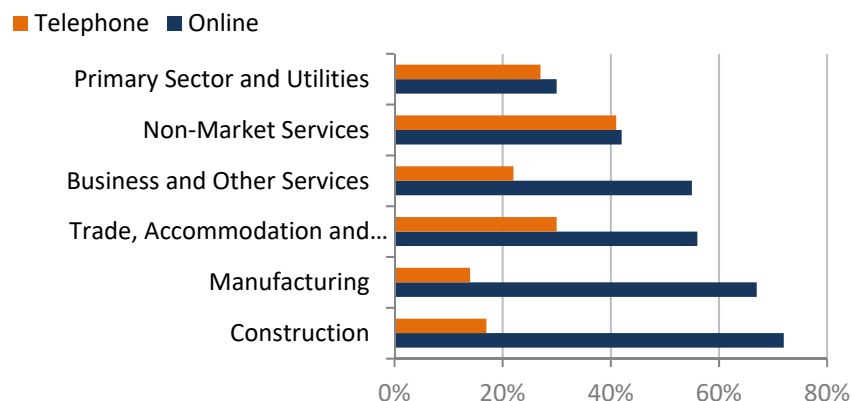
Base: Businesses that contacted DWP in the previous 12 months (n=839)

When asked about their most recent contact with the Department, businesses in the North-West were most likely to use online channels (73 per cent) compared with 41 per cent of businesses in London. Businesses in London were almost equally as likely to have contacted the Department via the telephone as they were via online channels (both around four in ten).

See **Table 27** for full data.

Method of contact also varies considerably by sector

How businesses contacted DWP on the most recent occasion by sector



Businesses from the construction (72 per cent) and manufacturing (67 per cent) sectors were more likely to contact DWP through online channels than businesses from the non-market services (42 per cent) and primary/utilities (30 per cent) sectors.

See **Table 27** for full data.

Base: Businesses that contacted DWP in the previous 12 months (n=839)

Employers' satisfaction with the service received from DWP was high

Satisfaction with the service received in person or on the telephone

	Percent	
	Agree	Disagree
Staff were polite	91	7
Staff were knowledgeable	87	7
Staff provided the right information	82	8
Staff were helpful	80	8
Staff understood business circumstances	76	9
Staff gave clear timings	71	10
Staff helped with recruitment requirements	44	9

Base = 250

Levels of satisfaction with how queries were dealt with by the Department were relatively high. Of those businesses who contacted the Department directly (not via gov.uk) the average satisfaction score with how their query was dealt with was 7.7 out of 10 (where 10 = extremely satisfied).

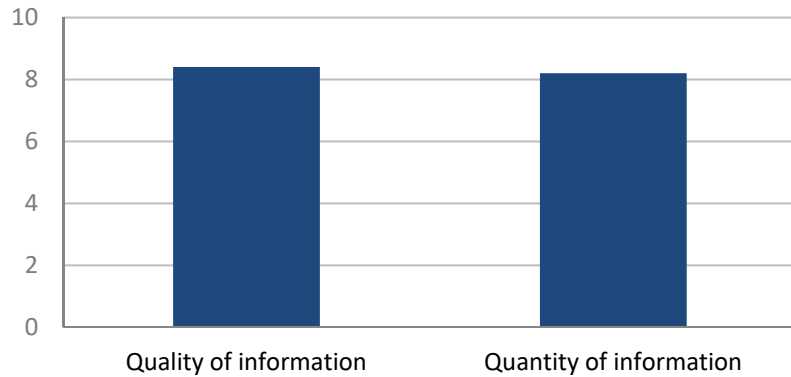
A high proportion of businesses contacting the Department either in person or over the phone agreed that the staff were polite (91 per cent), staff were knowledgeable (87 per cent), and provided them with the right information (82 per cent).

However, businesses were uncertain as to whether staff had helped with their recruitment requirements. Forty-four per cent agreed that staff had helped with their recruitment requirements, but around a third of employers said they 'did not know' whether staff had helped them with the recruitment needs.

See **Tables 35 to 42** for full data.

DWP-related information on gov.uk is easy to find and of a high quality

Satisfaction with the DWP – related information on gov.uk, (out of 10)



Base: Businesses that contacted DWP online and found all or some of the information needed (n=435)

For those employers who contacted the Department through gov.uk, most commonly they were looking for information on pensions (42 per cent), recruitment and vacancy posting (24 per cent), statutory leave (20 per cent), payroll queries (17 per cent) and Jobcentre Plus services (10 per cent).

Employers told us that accessing the relevant information through gov.uk was relatively simple, with 91 per cent of businesses suggesting it was easy to find the relevant page on the website and 64 per cent reporting that they found all the information they were looking for.

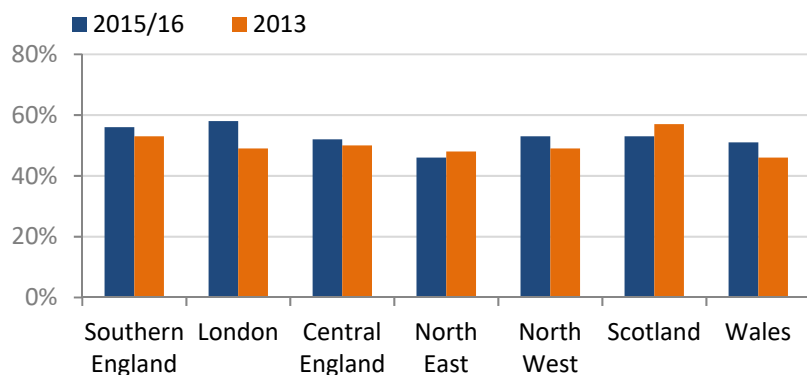
Satisfaction levels with both the quality and quantity of information accessed through gov.uk were high, with average scores of 8.4 and 8.2 out of 10 respectively (where 10=extremely satisfied).

See **Table 46 and 47** for full data.

Recruitment activity and the use of UJ and Jobcentre Plus

The proportion of recruiting employers has increased by four percentage points since 2013

Recruitment activity by region



Just over half of businesses (54 per cent) interviewed had recruited (or tried to recruit) in the 12 months prior to interview, an increase of four percentage points since the 2013 employer survey. The proportion of recruiting employers was highest in London (58 per cent – up nine percentage points since 2013) and lowest in the North East (46 per cent).

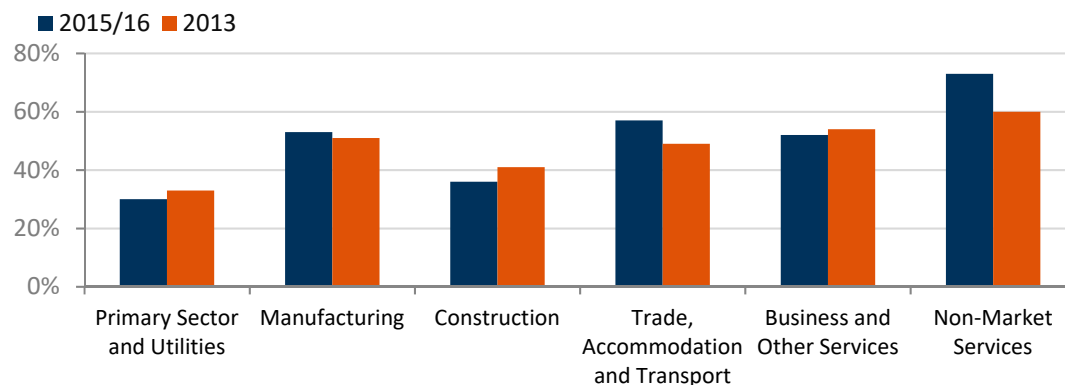
Almost all large employers had tried to recruit in the 12 months prior to the survey (97 per cent) compared with 43 per cent of micro businesses (less than ten employees).

See **Table 62** for full data.

Base: All businesses (n=4,200)

Recruitment activity was highest in the non-market services sector

Recruitment activity by sector



Recruitment activity was considerably stronger in some sectors than in others. Employers in the non-market services sector were considerably more likely to have recruited in the 12 months prior to the survey than employers from all other sectors (73 per cent of them had done so compared to 60 per cent in 2013). Employers in the construction sector (36 per cent) and primary and utilities sector (30 per cent) were significantly less likely to have recruited than average.

These differences relate closely to the size distribution of establishments in each sector. That is, the higher the average size/headcount of employers in a sector, the higher the level of recruitment activity that is observed in that sector.

See **Table 62** for full data.

Base: All businesses (n=4,200)

Part-time contracts with longer hours are common, but zero-hours contracts are relatively uncommon

Contract hours by sector

	Percentage			Base
	< 16 hours per week contracts	16 to 30 hours per week contracts	zero hours contracts	
Primary and Utilities	16	44	6	304
Manufacturing	25	54	3	503
Construction	19	41	4	458
Trade, Accommodation and Transport	46	66	8	1067
Business and Other Services	32	53	8	1078
Non-Market Services	49	90	16	790

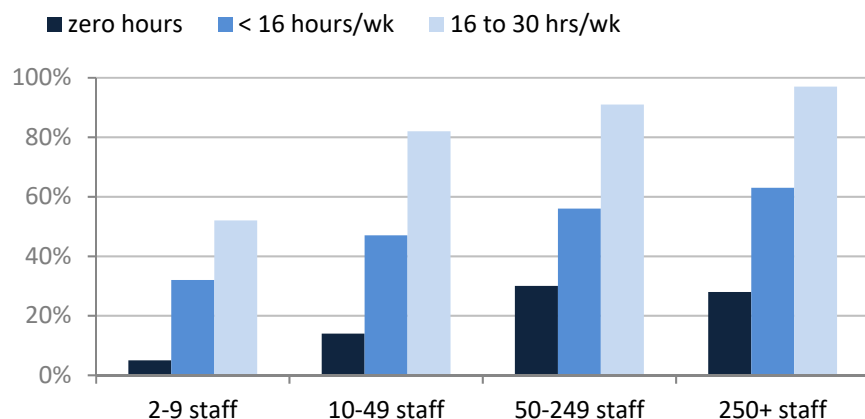
Overall, three in five employers (60 per cent) employed staff contracted to work between 16 and 30 hours a week, more than a third (37 per cent) had staff who worked fewer than 16 hours a week and one in 12 (eight per cent) employed staff on zero-hours contracts. This is consistent with the findings from the 2013 survey.

Businesses in the non-market service sector were significantly more likely to have members of staff working reduced hours (less than 30 hours/wk). Ninety per cent of non-market services businesses had staff who worked 16-30 hours a week, 49 per cent had staff working fewer than 16 hours and 16 per cent staff had staff employed on zero-hours contracts.

See **Tables 10 to 13** for full data.

Zero hours contracts are more common amongst larger employers

Contract hours by employer size



Base: All business (n=4,200)

Fifty-four per cent of employers recruited or tried to recruit in the last 12 months.

A small proportion of employers (12 per cent) tried to find people to take on jobs on zero hours contracts over the previous 12 months, up 7 percentage points since 2013. Businesses in the non-market services sector were most likely to do so (21 per cent).

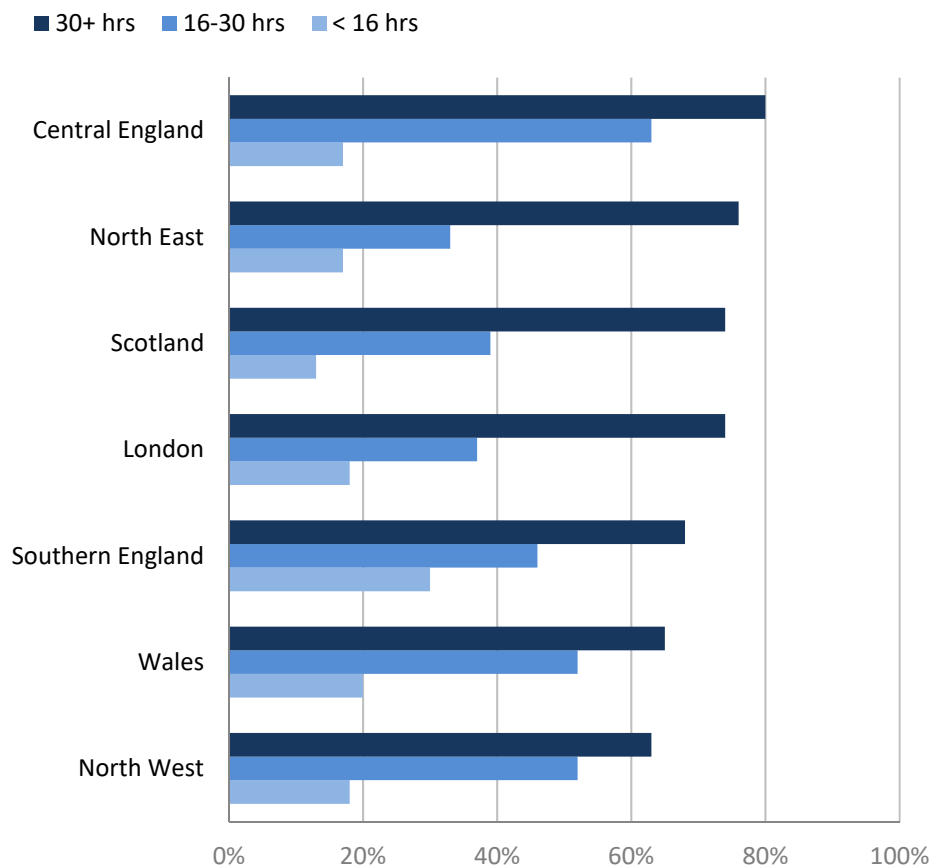
Larger employers were more likely to have employees on zero-hours contracts (30 per cent of businesses with 50 to 249 employees) compared to small and micro employers (5 per cent of businesses with two to nine employees).

However, small and micro employers tend to have a higher proportion of their staff on this type of contract. Of those micro-employers with staff on zero-hours contracts, around 40 per cent had more than 75 per cent of their staff this type of contract. This compares to 9 per cent of employers with 50 to 249 employees.

See **Table 13** for full data.

Recruitment of staff on full-time and reduced hours contracts varies by region

Recruitment of staff by contract type and region



Base: All businesses who recruited or tried to recruit in the previous 12 months (n=2,166)

Of those businesses who recruited or tried to recruit in the previous 12 months, employers in Central England (80 per cent) and the North East (76 per cent) were more likely to have tried to fill posts which were for more than 30 hours a week. This compares to Southern England (68 per cent), North West (63 per cent) and Wales (65 per cent).

Recruiting businesses in Central England are significantly more likely than businesses in any other region to have tried to fill posts which involved working 16 to 30 hours per week (63 per cent).

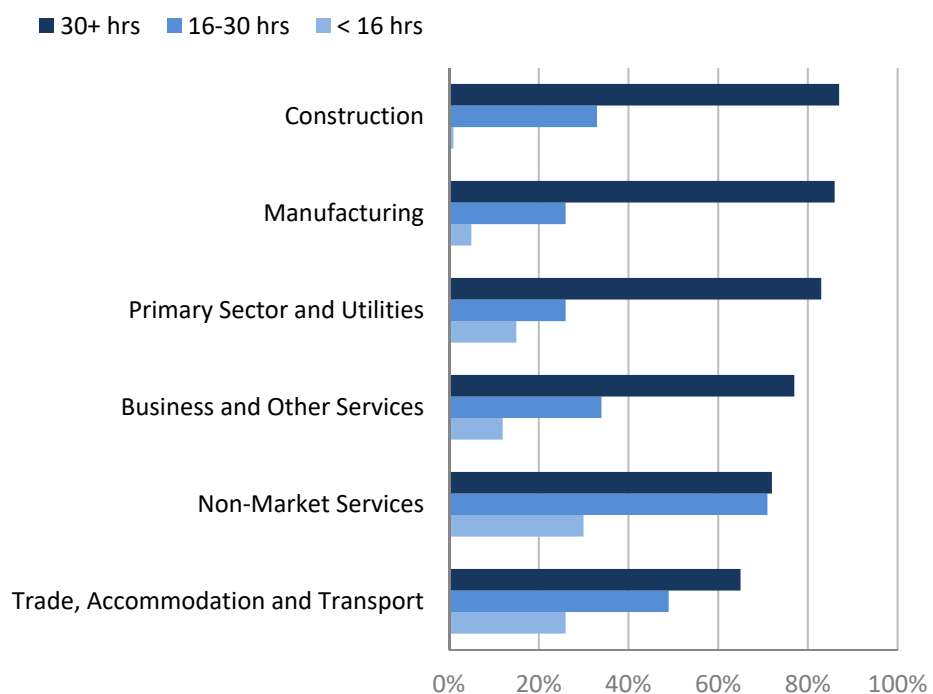
Recruiting businesses in Southern England (30 per cent) are more likely to have tried to fill posts which involved working fewer than 16 hours a week compared to all other regions, including Scotland (13 per cent). Larger employers are much more likely (42 per cent) to have tried to fill posts working less than 16 hours a week compared to micro employers (14 per cent).

Overall, 27 per cent of recruiting employers tried to find people prepared to take on short-term or casual work in the previous 12 months. Those businesses in Central England (36 per cent), North East (27 per cent), North West (26 per cent) and Wales were more likely to do so compared to firms in London (18 per cent).

See **Tables 10 to 13** for full data.

Recruitment of staff on full-time and reduced hours contracts varies by sector

Recruitment of staff on reduced hours contract by sector



Base: All businesses who recruited or tried to recruit in the previous 12 months (n=2,166).

Of those businesses who recruited or tried to recruit in the previous 12 months, employers in manufacturing (86 per cent) and construction (87 per cent) were more likely to have tried to fill posts for 30 hours or more per week. This compares to businesses in the primary and utilities sector (73 per cent); trade, accommodation and transport (65 per cent); and business and other services and non-market services sectors (72 per cent respectively).

Recruiting businesses in the non-market services sector are more likely (71 per cent) to have tried to fill posts involving working 16-30 hours a week compared to all other sectors including firms in manufacturing and the primary and utilities sector (26 per cent respectively).

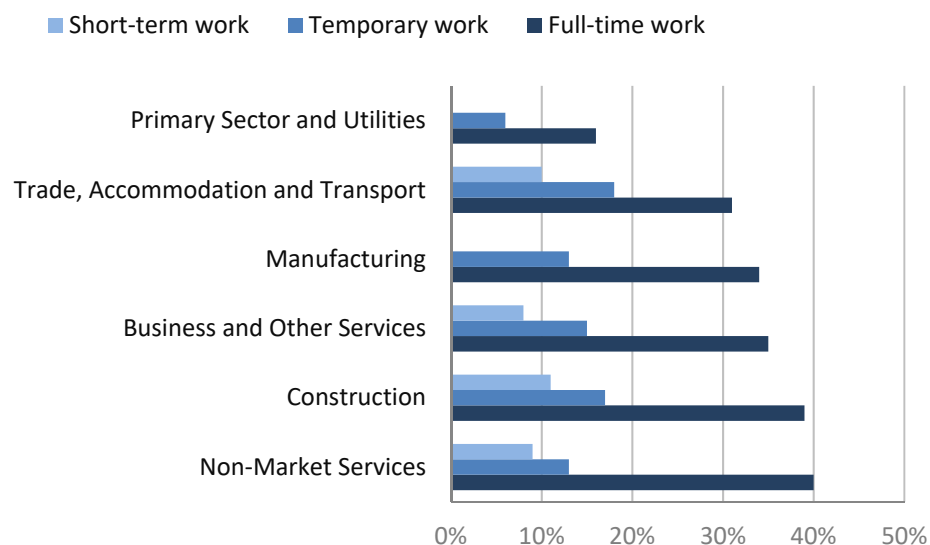
Only a small proportion of recruiting businesses in construction (1 per cent) and manufacturing (5 per cent) sectors tried to recruit for posts offering less than 16 hours per week. This compares to 30 per cent of recruiting businesses in the non-market services sector.

Only a small proportion (12 per cent) of employers have tried to find people to take on jobs on zero hours contracts over the past 12 months. Businesses in the non-market services sector were more likely (21 per cent) to do so compared to all other sectors, including businesses in construction and manufacturing (1 per cent respectively).

See **Tables 10 to 13** for full data.

One in three employers had seen an increase in enquiries for full-time work

Proportion of employers seeing an increase in enquiries from potential recruits by sector



Base: All businesses (n=4,200)

Thirty-three per cent of employers had seen an increase in enquiries from potential recruits for full-time working, 16 per cent had seen an increase for temporary vacancies, and nine per cent had seen an increase in enquiries for short-term hours.

Organisations in London (21 per cent) were more likely to have experienced an increase in enquiries for temporary vacancies from potential recruits compared to all other regions, including Scotland (10 per cent).

Firms in the construction sector are more likely to have experienced an increase in enquiries for short-term hours (11 per cent) compared to organisations in the primary and utilities sector (three per cent).

Employers in the primary and utilities sector were least likely to have experienced an increase in enquiries from potential recruits for full-time working, with 16 per cent doing so compared with two-fifths (40 per cent) of organisations in the non-market services sector.

See **Tables 18 to 21** for full data.

'Word of mouth' remains the most common method of recruiting new employees

Recruitment channels used by employer size

	Percentage			
	2-9 staff	10-49 staff	50-249 staff	250+ staff
Word of mouth / Personal recommendation	75	76	79	81
Internal notices	33	61	86	94
Own websites	32	59	73	91
Social media	25	33	36	58
Other online recruitment sites	22	30	44	53
Local press	17	33	42	44
High street agencies	17	27	48	59
University jobs fairs or career service	21	19	38	56
Jobcentre Plus	14	25	31	34
Universal Jobmatch	10	16	20	19
Trade publications	6	14	30	45
National press	6	9	21	34
Base	189	503	587	380

Around three-quarters (76 per cent) of employers who had recruited in the previous 12 months had done so through personal recommendation or word of mouth. This method was common across employers of all sizes.

There has been a slight increase in employers using UJ since the previous survey in 2013 (up four percentage points to 13 per cent of recruiting employers). Although UJ had only been in operation for seven months at the time of the 2013 survey.

However, there has been a drop in the proportion of employers using Jobcentre Plus for recruitment purposes over the same time period (down 11 percentage points to 19 per cent of recruiting employers).

See **Tables 65 to 77** for full data.

Overall satisfaction levels with UJ and Jobcentre Plus services are similar

Satisfaction with UJ and Jobcentre Plus recruitment services

	Mean score out of ten	
	UJ	JCP
Number of applicants	5.9	5.9
Attitude of applicants	5.7	5.3
Skills of applicants	4.9	5
Matching process	4.9	n/a
Overall on most recent occasion	6.2	6.1
Base	361	519

Overall satisfaction levels with UJ and Jobcentre Plus services were very similar, with employers scoring them both just over six out of ten (where ten is extremely satisfied).

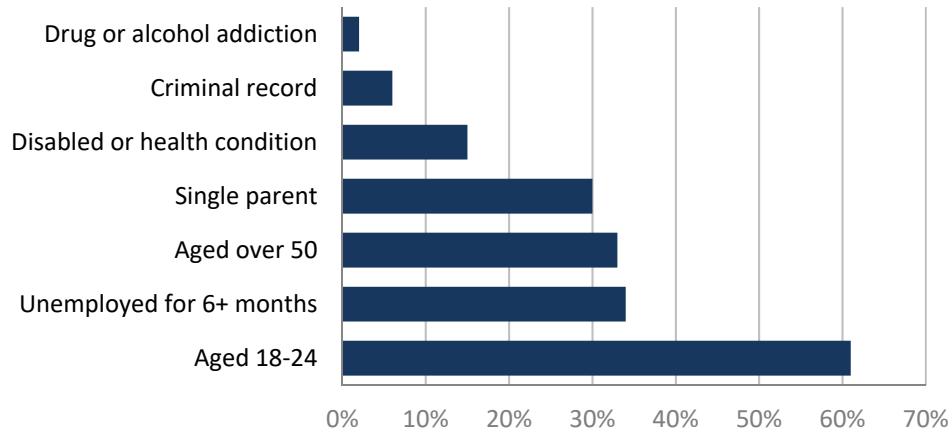
However, breaking this down by different aspects of the service it is clear that employers are less satisfied with the skills of applicants and, for UJ, the automatic matching of candidates to the vacancy. Employers tend to report higher levels of satisfaction in terms of the number of applications they receive.

Around three-quarters of employers who had used UJ in the previous 12 months said that they anticipated using the service again in the future. Sixty per cent of employers who had used Jobcentre Plus for recruiting said that they would recommend the service to other businesses.

See **Tables 80-83, 94, 99-101** for full data.

There has been a significant increase in the recruitment of older workers and those with a long-term health condition or disability

Proportion of employers recruiting from hard-to-reach groups



Base: Businesses that recruited or tried to recruit in the previous 12 months (n=1,659)

Around six in ten (61 per cent) employers had recruited a young person (aged 18 to 24 years) in the previous 12 months. There was a significant increase in the proportion of employers recruiting older workers (aged 50 or over) since the 2013 survey. Overall, a third (33 per cent) of recruiting employers had taken on someone from this group, compared to just over a quarter (27 per cent) in 2013.

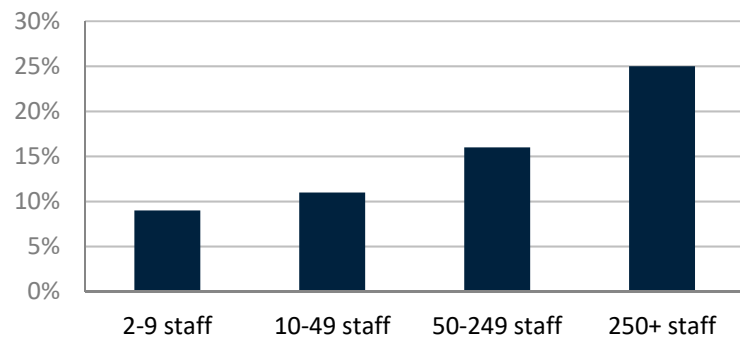
The proportion of recruiting employers taking on someone with a long-term health condition or a self-defined disability has almost doubled since 2013. Fifteen per cent of recruiting employers had taken on someone from this group compared to eight per cent in 2013.

Of these, around one in ten had received assistance from Jobcentre Plus or DWP in meeting this recruitment need.

See **Tables 109 to 115** for full data.

One in ten employers had used one of DWP's recruitment initiatives

Proportion of employers using a DWP recruitment initiative by employer size



Base: All businesses in section (n=2,100)

Overall, 10 per cent of employers had used or discussed one or more recruitment initiatives. Engagement with the individual DWP recruitment initiatives was generally quite low, the most common being 'work experience' (6 per cent).

The likelihood of having engaged with any initiative increased with company size increasing from 9 per cent of micro-businesses to 25 per cent of large employers (250 or more employees).

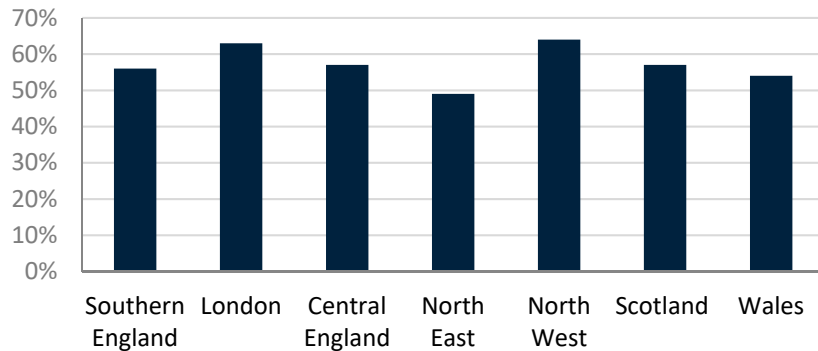
Levels of engagement with 'work experience' were significantly higher for those operating in non-market services (13 per cent) and lower for those operating in the construction sector (two per cent)

See **Table 239 to 243** for full data.

Awareness and experience of Universal Credit

More than half of employers are aware of Universal Credit

Awareness of Universal Credit programme by region



Base: All businesses in section (n=2,625)

Fifty-eight per cent of employers are aware of the Universal Credit programme. Awareness of Universal Credit was highest amongst firms in the non-market services sector (66 per cent) and business and other services (62 per cent) sector. This compares to firms in manufacturing (46 per cent) where awareness was lowest. There were no differences in awareness levels across organisation size.

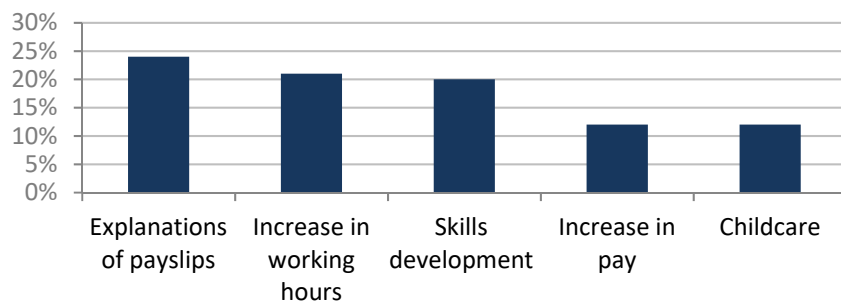
Businesses in the North West (64 per cent) are more likely to have heard of Universal Credit, compared to all other regions, with the exception of London (63 per cent). High awareness of Universal Credit in the North West is perhaps to be expected given the roll-out of the Universal Credit programme in this region in 2013-2014. This is in comparison to employers in the North East where awareness of Universal Credit is lowest (49 per cent).

Since the survey was carried out, Universal Credit has been rolled out more widely so these findings may not represent the current picture in terms of Universal Credit awareness.

See **Table 134** for full data.

Around a quarter of Universal Credit employers had received requests for payslip explanations

Requests from staff on Universal Credit



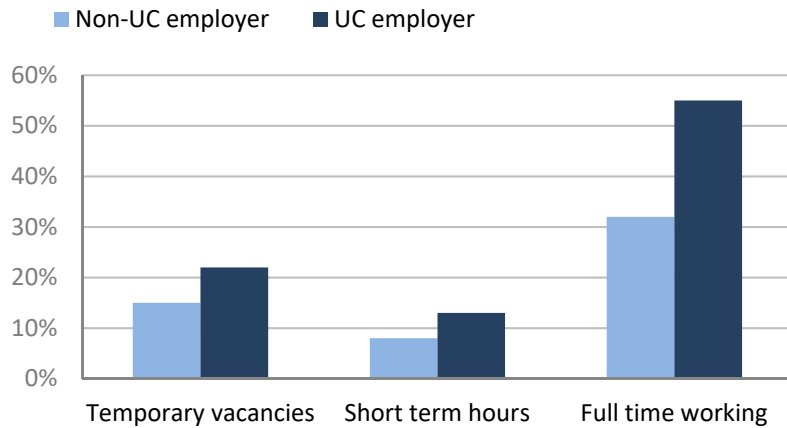
Base: Businesses aware of employees claiming Universal Credit (n=167)

Businesses who were aware of any employees on Universal Credit in their organisation were asked if they had received any requests from staff on a range of issues in the previous six months. These types of employers experienced requests from staff for explanations of payslips (24 per cent), increase in working hours (21 per cent) and for skills development (20 per cent).

See **Tables 143 to 152** for full data.

A third of employers had received an increase in enquiries about full-time vacancies in the previous six months

Proportion of employers reporting increases in enquiries from potential recruits



Base: All businesses in section (n=2,625)

Thirty-three per cent of employers had experienced an increase in enquiries for full-time working in the previous six months.

Businesses with employees on UC were more likely to have experienced an increase in all three types of enquiries compared to non-UC businesses.

Fifty-five per cent of UC employers had experienced an increase in enquiries for full-time working in the last six months compared to 32 per cent of non-UC employers.

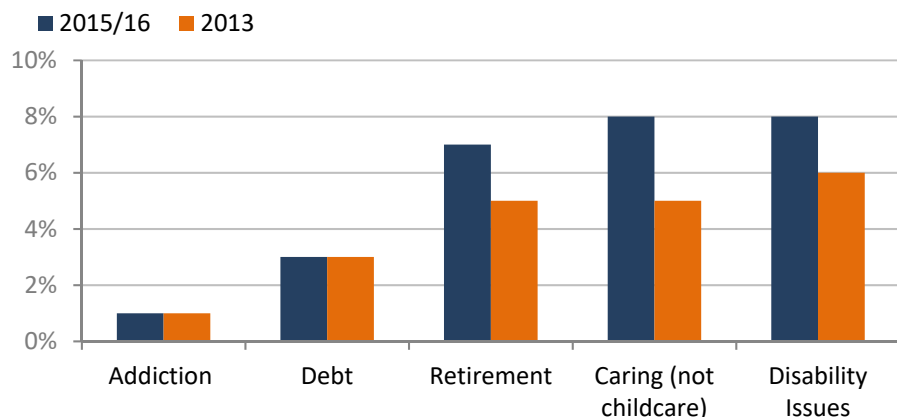
UC employers tend to be larger organisations which may partially explain these differences.

See **Table 205** for full data.

Requests for support from employees

One in six employers received a request for support from an employee

Proportion of employers receiving requests for support from employees



Base: All businesses in section (n=2,100)

Employers were asked if they had been approached by an employee to accommodate requests for flexible working; caring responsibilities (other than childcare), debt and alcohol problems, and changing working patterns in the run up to retirement.

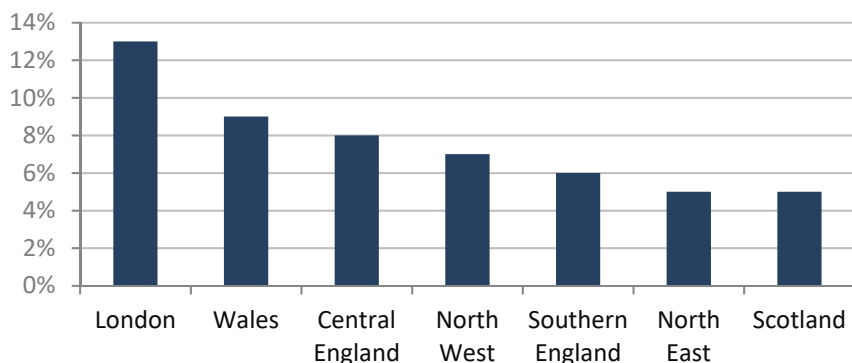
Overall, 17 per cent of employers had received at least one request across these workforce management themes (WMT).

The most common requests received by employers in the 12 months prior to being interviewed were concerning caring responsibilities (other than childcare) and health and disability issues (both 8 per cent).

See **Table 254 to 258** for full data.

Requests for support with caring responsibilities (not childcare) were most common in London

Requests for support with caring responsibilities by region



Base: All businesses in section (n=2,100)

There were significantly more businesses receiving requests for support with caring responsibilities, other than childcare, in London compared with all other regions (except Wales where the difference is not significant). Thirteen per cent of businesses in London received this type of request.

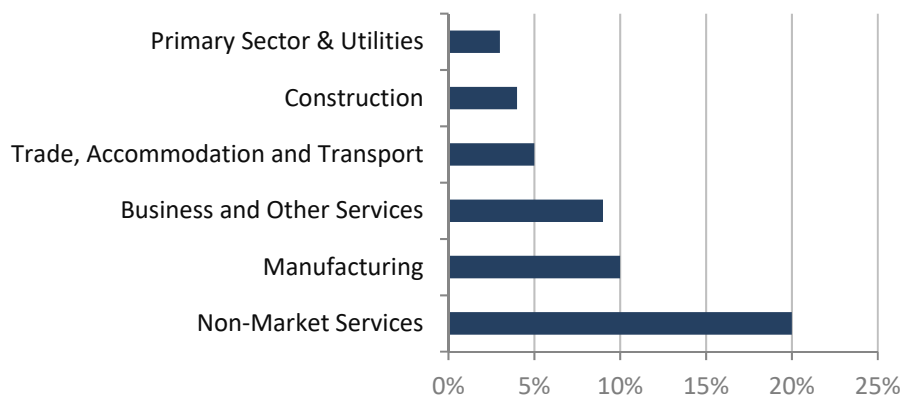
Forty-six per cent of large employers (250+ employees) had received this type of request compared to 5 per cent of companies with two to nine employees.

Businesses in the non-market services sector (17 per cent) were significantly more likely to have received this type of request than any other sector. The sector with the lowest proportion of employers receiving this type of request was in the primary and utilities sector (1 per cent).

See **Table 254** for full data.

Businesses in the non-market services sector were most likely to receive requests for support on health and disability

Proportion of employers receiving requests for health and disability support by sector



Non-market services organisations were significantly more likely to receive requests from employees for support with health and disability issues (20 per cent) compared to all other sectors.

Some of these factors may be correlated, for example, non-market service organisations tend to be larger in size. The larger the organisation the more likely they were to have received a request for this type of support. Four per cent of employers with two to nine employees received requests for support for health and disability reasons compared to 52 per cent of employers with over 250 employees.

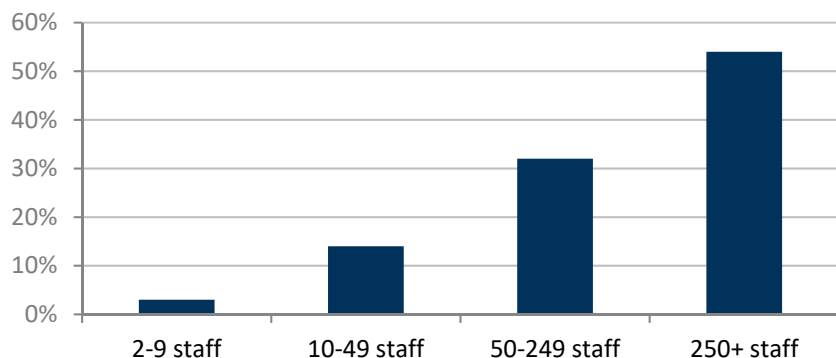
A significantly smaller proportion of employers received this type of request in Scotland (5 per cent) and Wales (4 per cent) compared to other regions such as London (10 per cent) and central England (10 per cent).

See **Table 255** for full data.

Base: All businesses in section (n=2,100)

Requests for support with retirement are common amongst larger employers

Requests for support with retirement by employer size



Overall, 7 per cent of employers had a request for support from an employee in the last 12 months concerning a change in working patterns in the run up to retirement.

Establishments with 250 plus staff (54 per cent) were more likely to receive this type of request compared to companies with two to nine staff members (3 per cent). A smaller proportion of employers received this type of request in Wales (5 per cent), compared to other regions such as the North East (9 per cent) and Scotland (9 per cent).

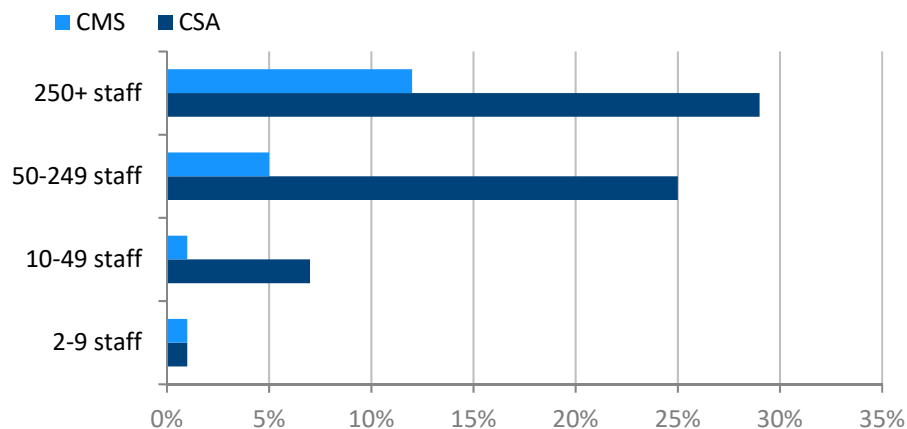
See **Table 258** for full data.

Base: All businesses in section (n=2,100)

Use of the Child Support Agency or the Child Maintenance Service

Large organisations are more likely to have an employee using a Deduction from Earnings Order to pay the Child Support Agency or the Child Maintenance Service

Employers with employees paying the Child Support Agency or Child Maintenance Service through a Deduction from Earnings Order by size



Base: All businesses in the section (n=2,100)

Only a small proportion of employers said they currently had at least one employee who pays their child maintenance through a Deduction from Earnings Order (DEO) to either the Child Support Agency (CSA) or the Child Maintenance Service (CMS) (4 per cent). Just three per cent of employers have an employee who pays their child maintenance through a DEO to the CSA, and one per cent of have an employee who pays the CMS via a DEO.

Larger organisations are more likely to have an employee paying their child maintenance either through a DEO to the CSA or the CMS. Twenty-nine per cent of large organisations (250+ staff) had at least one employee who pays their child maintenance through a DEO to the CSA compared to one per cent of micro employers (two to nine staff). Similarly, 12 per cent of large organisations had an employee who paid their child maintenance through a DEO to the CMS compared to one per cent of micro employers.

See **Table 259** for full data.

Smaller organisations were more likely to use the Employer Self-Service website to process DEOs

Employers using the Employer Self-Service website to process DEOs by establishment size

	Percentage		
	10-49 staff	50-249 Staff	250+ staff
Yes	26	15	18
No	53	52	34
Don't Know	21	33	48
Base	91	206	145

** Sample numbers are too low to present findings for the two to nine group

Businesses that have employees who pay their child maintenance through a DEO were asked if they were using the Employer Self-Service website to process their DEOs online. Overall, 28 per cent of employers who have at least one employee paying their child maintenance through a DEO use the Employer Self-Service website to process DEOs online.

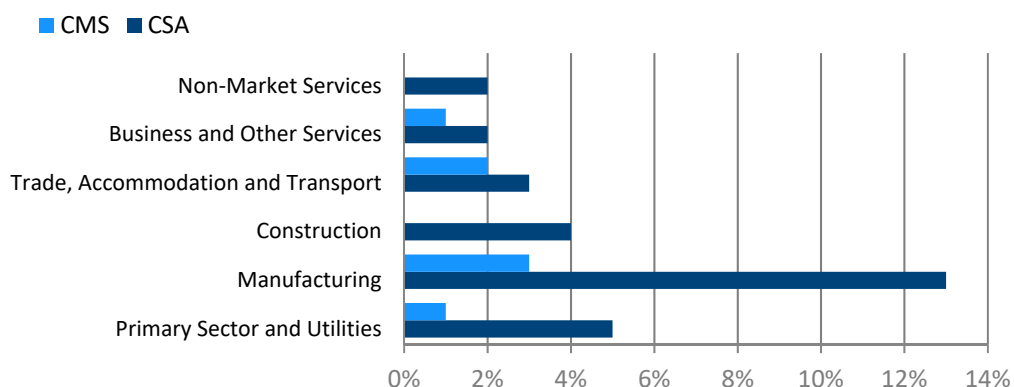
A higher proportion of businesses in the North West (48 per cent) were using the website compared to all other regions including London (12 per cent).

Employers with 10-49 staff were more likely to have used the Employer Self-Service website (26 per cent) compared to larger companies with 50-249 employees (15 per cent).

See **Table 260** for full data

Manufacturing businesses are more likely to have an employee paying their child maintenance through a DEO

Percentage of employers with employees paying the CSA or CMS through a DEO by sector



Base: All businesses in the section (n=2,100)

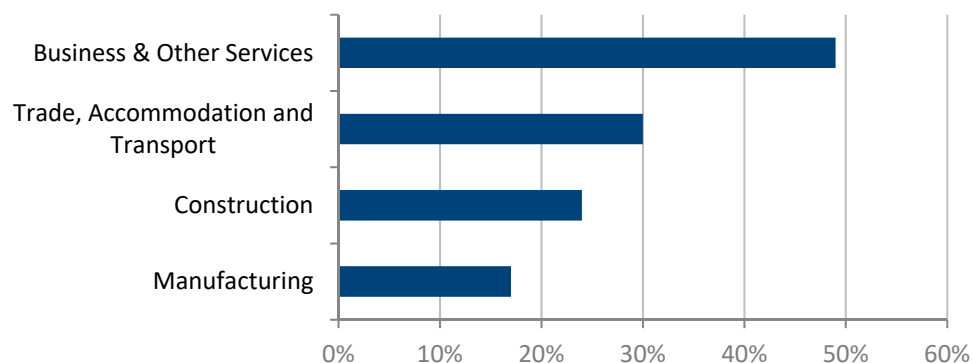
Businesses in the manufacturing sector are significantly more likely (13 per cent) to have an employee who pays their child maintenance to the CSA through a DEO compared to all other sectors, including the business and other services sector and non-market services (both two per cent).

Businesses in the manufacturing sector were more likely (3 per cent) to have an employee paying their child maintenance through a DEO to the CMS compared to employers in the construction sector and non-market services sector where the percentage was less than 0.5. Almost a fifth of businesses (18 per cent) in the non-market services sector did not know if they had an employee using a DEO to pay their child maintenance, higher than any other sector.

See **Table 259** for full data.

Organisations in the 'business and other services' sector were significantly more likely to have used the Employer Self-Service website to process DEOs

Employers using the Employer Self-Service website to process DEOs by sector



The survey showed that those organisations in the business and other services sector were more likely to have used the website (49 per cent) compared to other sectors. It was also evident that the manufacturing sector had a lower than average proportion of employers using this service (17 per cent).

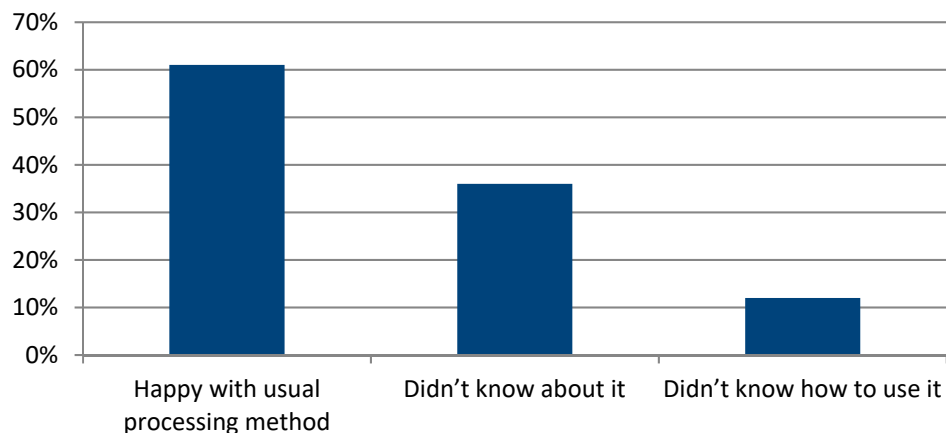
See **Table 260** for full data

Base: Businesses that have employees who pay their child maintenance through DEO (n=460)

** Sample numbers are too low to present findings for non-market services and the primary and utilities sector

The majority of employers not using the website said they were happy with their usual method of processing DEOs

Reasons for not using the Employer Self-Service website to process DEOs



Businesses that do not use the Employer Self-Service website were asked their reasons for not using it. Around three-fifths (61 per cent) of employers did not use the website because they were happy with their usual method of processing DEOs.

However, there were also other reasons employers did not use the website, including 36 per cent of employers not knowing about the website, and 12 per cent of employers not knowing how to use it.

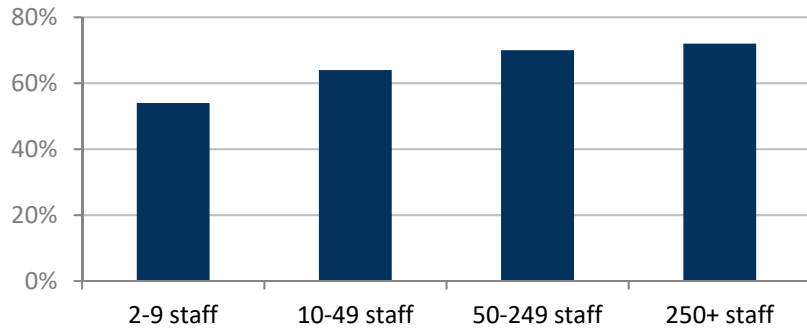
See **Table 261** for full data

Base: Businesses not using the Employer Self-service website (n=221)

Awareness and use of Fit for Work

The majority of employers have heard of Fit for Work

Awareness of Fit for Work by employer size



Base: All businesses in section (n=2,100)

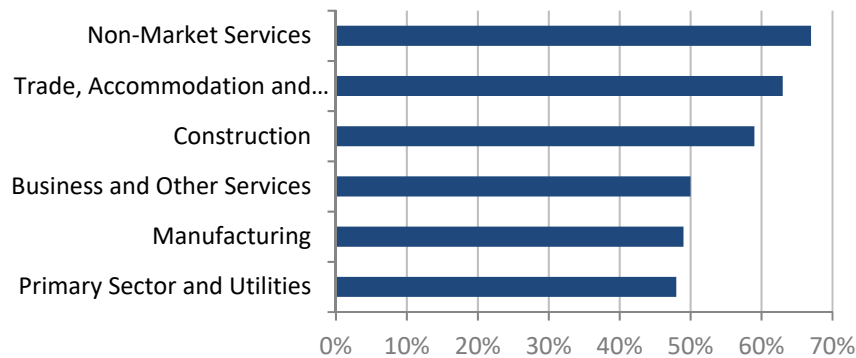
More than a half of employers (57 per cent) are aware of Fit for Work (FfW). Larger employers are more likely to have heard of FfW. Seventy-two per cent of large employers (250+ staff) are aware of Fit for Work compared to 54 per cent of micro employers (two to nine staff).

Of those employers who are aware of FfW, only 5 per cent had made use of the advice line or website.

See **Table 264** for full data.

Businesses in the non-market services sector are more likely to be aware of Fit for Work

Awareness of Fit for Work by sector



Base: All businesses in section (n=2,100)

There are some significant sector differences in employers' awareness of Fit for Work. Firms in the non-market services sector (67 per cent); trade, accommodation and transport (63 per cent); and construction (59 per cent) sectors are more likely to have heard of Fit for Work compared to businesses in the manufacturing (49 per cent) and primary and utilities (48 per cent) sectors.

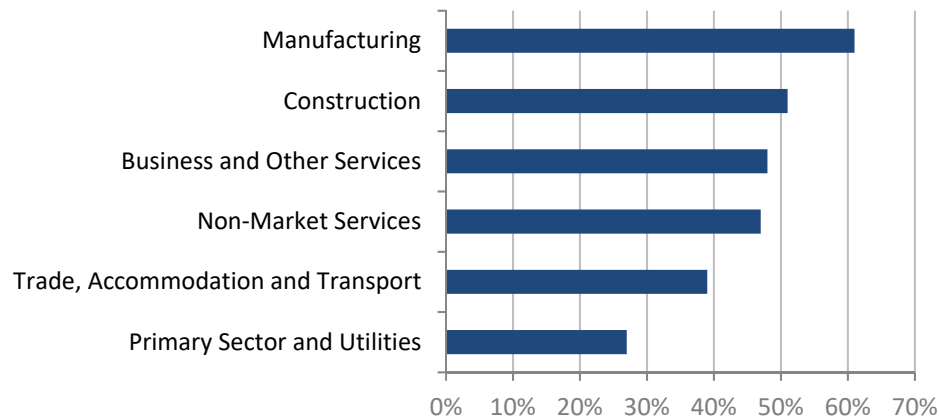
Employers in the North East are more likely (70 per cent) to be aware of Fit for Work than those in all other regions including London (43 per cent).

Most commonly employers heard about Fit for Work via the workplace (16 per cent).

See **Table 264** for full data.

Just under a half of employers said they were likely to use the Fit for Work service

Likelihood of using the Fit for Work referral service, by sector



Forty-five per cent of all employers (including those who were initially unaware of the service before the survey interview) reported that they were likely to use the referral service if they had an employee who was off sick for four or more weeks.

Micro employers (two to nine staff) are least likely to say they would use the referral service compared to larger organisations. Only 42 per cent of micro employers said they would use the service compared to 52 per cent of organisations with between 50 and 249 staff. Firms in the primary and utilities sector are the least likely (27 per cent) to say they would use the referral service compared to all other sectors, including 61 per cent of employers in the manufacturing sector.

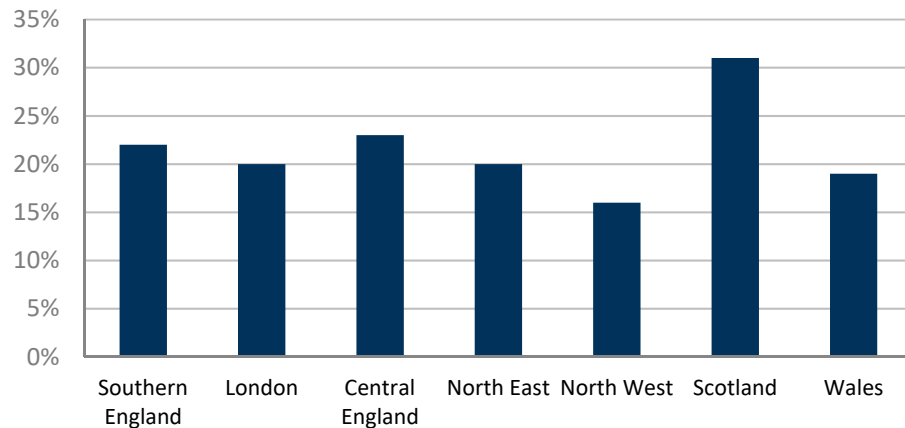
Employers in the North-West (54 per cent) were significantly more likely to say they would use the service compared to the average (45 per cent).

See **Table 268** for full data.

Base: All businesses in section (n=2,100)

Around a fifth of employers have their own in-house or contracted occupational health service

Proportion of employers with in-house or contracted occupational health service by region



Around one-fifth (21 per cent) of employers have their own in-house or contracted occupational health service (OHS). Businesses in Scotland are more likely to have an OHS (31 per cent) compared to all other regions, including the North West (16 per cent) and Wales (19 per cent).

Larger organisations are much more likely to have their own in-house or contracted OHS. Eighty-five per cent of organisations with 250+ staff have an in-house service compared to 16 per cent of micro employers.

Businesses in the non-market services (37 per cent) are more likely to have an in-house service compared to those in construction (15 per cent).

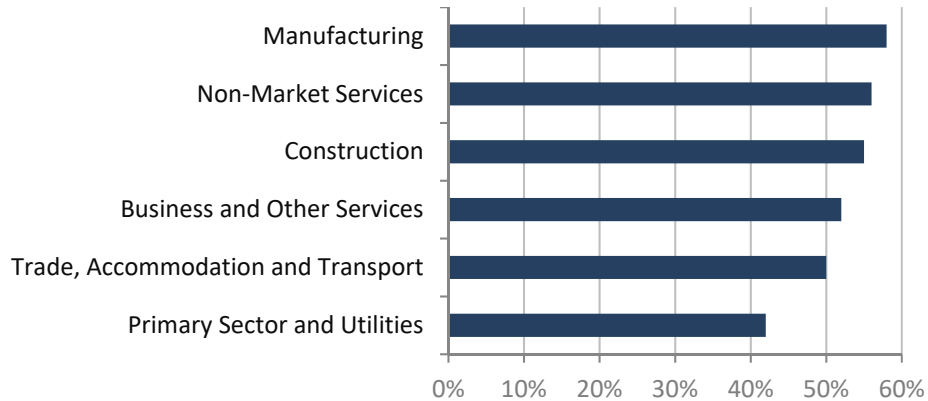
See **Table 269** for full data.

Base: All businesses in section (n=2,100)

Attitudes to employing older workers

Around a half of employers monitor the age profile of their business

Monitoring of age profile by sector



Just over a half (51 per cent) of employers monitor the age profile of their organisation. Larger organisations (250+ employees) are more likely to monitor the age of their employees (76 per cent) compared to micro employers (two to nine staff, 50 per cent).

Regional variations show that businesses in the North West are much more likely to monitor the age profile (56 per cent) compared with those in the North East (49 per cent).

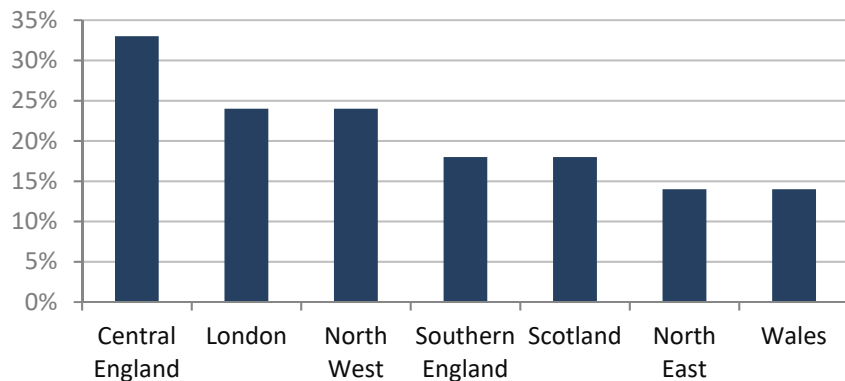
Around four in ten (42 per cent) of businesses in the primary and utilities sector monitor the age profile of their business, significantly less than all other sectors.

See **Table 22** for full data.

Base: All businesses (n=4,200)

More than a fifth of employers monitor age during the recruitment process

Monitoring of age during recruitment by region



Just over a fifth of all employers (22 per cent) monitor the age of candidates during recruitment.

Monitoring the age of candidates during recruitment varies considerably by region. Businesses in Central England are most likely to monitor age during the recruitment process (33 per cent) compared to all other regions.

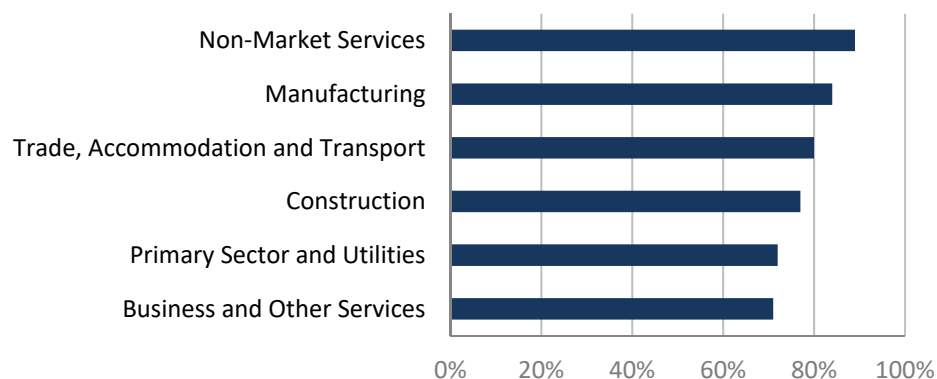
Those employers in manufacturing (30 per cent) and non-market services (25 per cent) are more likely to monitor age during recruitment compared to those employers in the primary and utilities sector (16 per cent).

See **Table 272** for full data.

Base: All businesses in section (n=2,100)

More than three-quarters of businesses employ someone over the age of 50

Businesses with employees over the age of 50 by sector



Around three-quarters of employers employ someone over the age of 50 (77 per cent). Looking at organisational size, the larger the organisation is, the more likely it is to employ somebody over the age of 50. Almost all (99 per cent) of large employers (250 + staff) employ somebody over the age of 50 compared to 73 per cent of micro employers (two to nine staff).

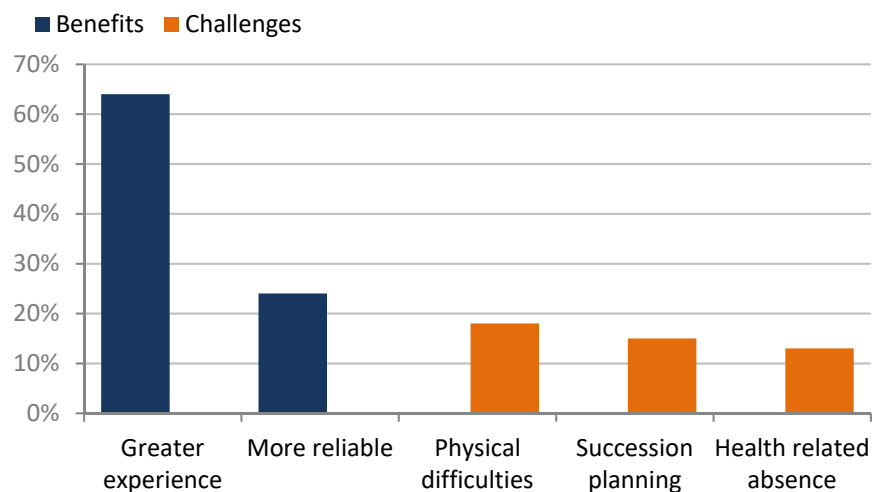
Employers in both the non-market services (89 per cent) and manufacturing (84 per cent) sectors are more likely to employ someone over the aged of 50 compared to employers in other sectors, such as the primary and utilities sector (72 per cent) and 'business and other services' sectors (71 per cent).

See **Table 23** for full data.

Base: All businesses in section (n=2,100)

Experience and reliability are the two most commonly perceived benefits of employing older workers

Commonly perceived benefits and challenges of employing older workers



The two most common benefits identified by employers of employing older workers were the experience (64 per cent) and reliability that older workers bring (24 per cent).

The most commonly perceived challenges of employing older workers were difficulties with physical aspects of the job (18 per cent) and succession planning problems as a result of retirement (15 per cent). Around three in ten employers identified no particular challenges of employing older workers (29 per cent).

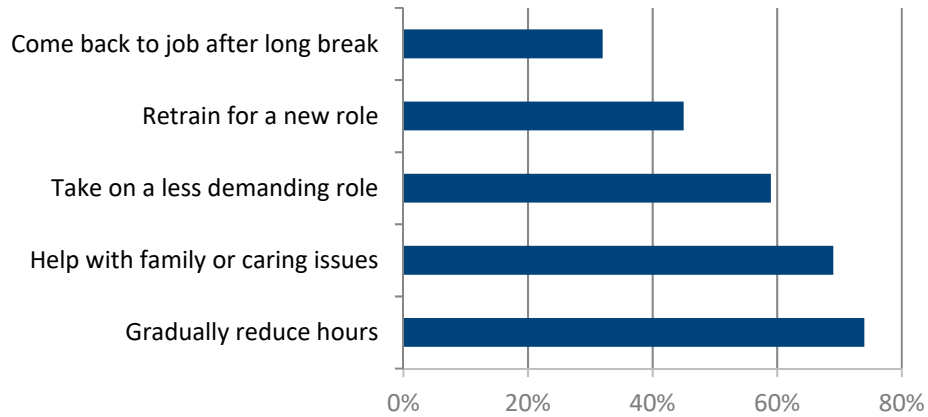
Businesses who have employees aged over 50 in their organisation are twice as likely to say a benefit of having someone approaching or considering retirement is their reliability (27 per cent) compared with businesses without an employee over the age of 50 (13 per cent).

See **Tables 270 and 271** for full data.

Base: All businesses in section (n=2,100)

A reduction in hours is the most commonly offered working arrangement in the approach to retirement

Flexible working arrangements offered in the run up to retirement



The most common flexible working arrangement offered by employers to employees approaching retirement was the opportunity to gradually reduce working hours, with 74 per cent of employers offering this arrangement. This was followed by providing opportunities for family or caring issues (69 per cent).

Fifty-eight per cent of large employers (250+ staff) employers provide opportunities to retrain for a new role for employees approaching or considering retirement compared to 41 per cent of micro employers. Similarly, 76 per cent of large employers offer the opportunity to take on a less demanding role to all employees, regardless of age, compared to 57 per cent of micro employers.

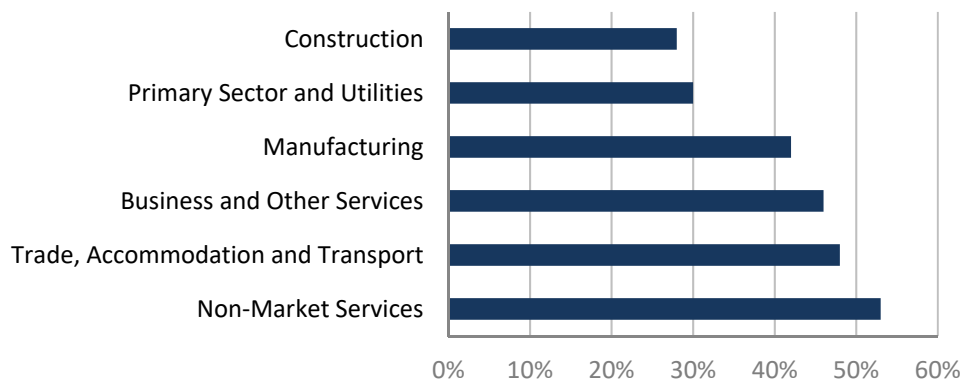
The main reason given for not offering flexible arrangements was it not being applicable to the organisation (48 per cent). For example, having no employees approaching retirement.

See **Tables 273 to 277** for full data.

Base: All businesses in the section (n=2,100)

Flexible working arrangements in the approach to retirement vary across sectors

Businesses offering any flexible working arrangements in the approach to retirement by sector



More than half of businesses in the non-market services sector offer flexible working arrangements to employees approaching retirement (53 per cent). Businesses in the primary and utilities sector (30 per cent) and construction sector (28 per cent) were significantly less likely to offer flexible working arrangements to those approaching retirement than all other sectors.

London and Wales had significantly higher proportions of employers who were likely to offer opportunities for flexible working arrangement to employees who are approaching retirement. Fifty-four per cent of employers in London offer the opportunity to retrain for a new role compared to 38 per cent of employers in Scotland. Seventy-eight per cent of employers in Wales offer opportunities for family or caring leave compared to 63 per cent of employers in the North West.

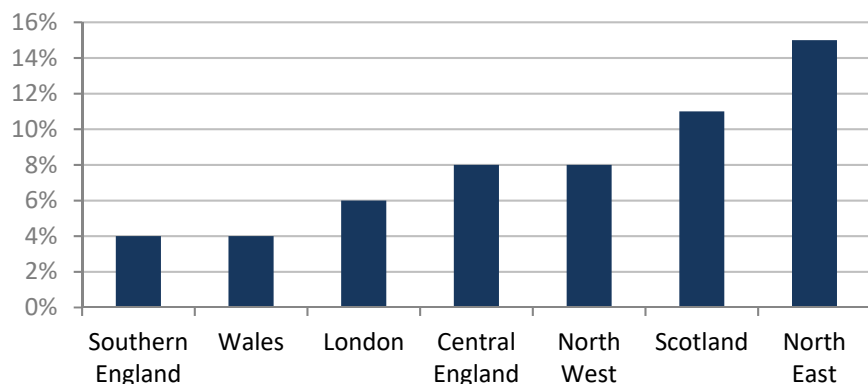
See **Tables 273 to 277** for full data.

Base: All businesses in section (n=2,100)

Disadvantaged groups

Only a small proportion of businesses are aware of employing someone from a disadvantaged group

Proportion of businesses reporting that they employ someone from a disadvantaged group by region



Only a small proportion of employers are aware of employing someone from a disadvantaged group (8 per cent). The survey defined disadvantaged groups to include homeless people, ex-offenders, people with drug/alcohol issues, people struggling with debt, those identified as being in entrenched worklessness (claiming out of work benefits for three out of four years), complex job seekers, and care leavers.

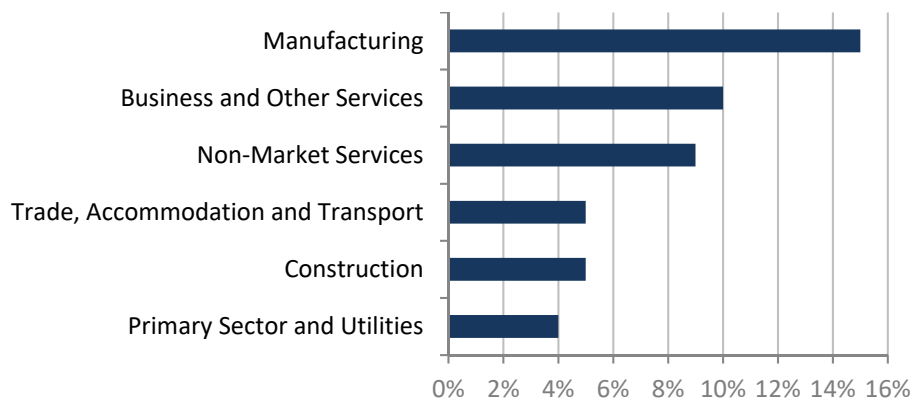
The likelihood of an employer saying they employ someone from a disadvantaged group varies by region. Businesses in the North East were most likely to say they were aware of employing someone from a disadvantaged group (15 per cent), compared to all other regions with the exception of Scotland, where the difference was not statistically significant (11 per cent).

See **Table 284** for full data.

Base: All businesses in section (n=2,100)

Businesses in manufacturing are most likely to report employing someone from a disadvantaged group

Proportion of businesses reporting that they employ someone from a disadvantaged group by sector



Large employers (250+ staff) are more likely (46 per cent) to be aware of employing someone from a disadvantaged group compared to four per cent of micro employers.

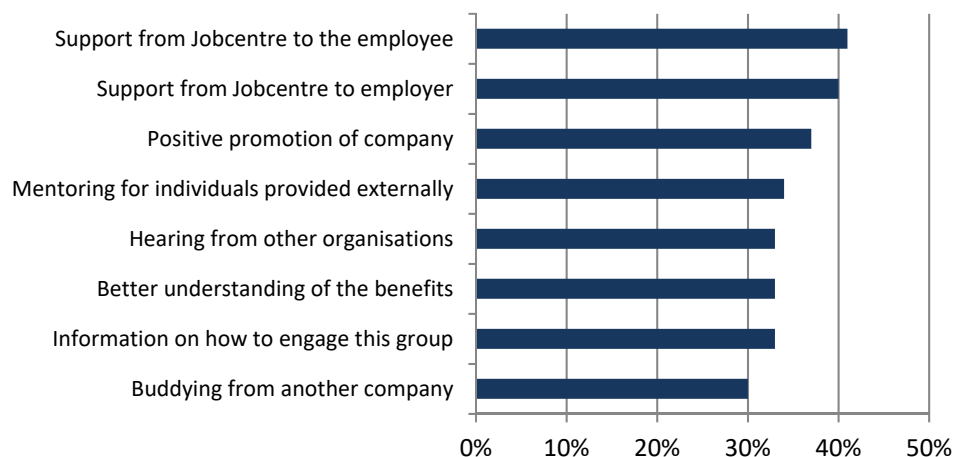
Businesses from the manufacturing sector were more likely to say they were aware of employing someone from a disadvantaged group (15 per cent) compared to all other sectors including construction (5 per cent) and the primary and utilities sector (4 per cent).

See **Table 284** for full data.

Base: All businesses in section (n=2,100)

Employers feel help from Jobcentre Plus would encourage them to consider employing from disadvantaged groups

Factors that would encourage employers to recruit from disadvantaged groups



The two most common factors that employers said would encourage them to consider employing people from a disadvantaged group were in-work support provided by the Jobcentre to the employee (41 per cent) and support from the Jobcentre Plus to them as an employer (40 per cent).

Larger employers (250+ staff), who do not employ staff from a disadvantaged group, are more likely to say that supportive factors would help them consider employing from disadvantaged groups. Sixty-six per cent of large employers said having mentoring support for individuals provided externally would help or encourage them to consider recruiting from these groups, compared to 31 per cent of micro employers.

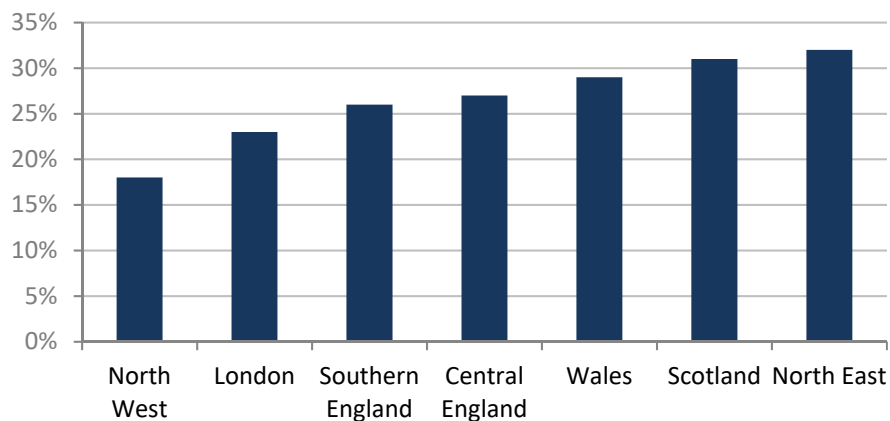
Forty-seven per cent of businesses not employing staff from a disadvantaged group thought none of the factors listed would encourage them to recruit from these groups.

See **Table 285** for full data.

Base: Businesses that were not aware of employing staff from a disadvantaged group (n=1,369)

Around a quarter of employers are aware of the Disability Confident campaign

Awareness of Disability Confident campaign by region



Just over a quarter of employers (26 per cent) were aware of the Disability Confident campaign when interviewed between October 2015 and February 2016.

There was some regional variation in awareness of the campaign with businesses in the North East (32 per cent) and Scotland (31 per cent) having the highest awareness levels. Businesses in the North West were the least likely to say they had heard of the campaign (18 per cent).

Employers in the non-market services sector are more likely than all other sectors to be aware of the campaign (38 per cent), compared to primary and utilities sector (20 per cent), and manufacturing (20 per cent).

See **Table 286** for full data.

Base: All businesses in section (n=2,100)

A large proportion of employers who are aware of Disability Confident are more confident in supporting disabled people in work as a result of the campaign

Confidence in recruiting and supporting disabled people as a result of Disability Confident



Base: Businesses that are aware of Disability Confident (n=597)

Just over a third (34 per cent) of employers who were aware of the Disability Confident campaign said that the campaign had made them more confident in recruiting disabled people. Although, around a quarter (27 per cent) of employers had not recruited since becoming aware of the campaign.

Forty-five per cent of employers, who were aware of the campaign, said they have become more confident in supporting disabled people in work as a result of the campaign.

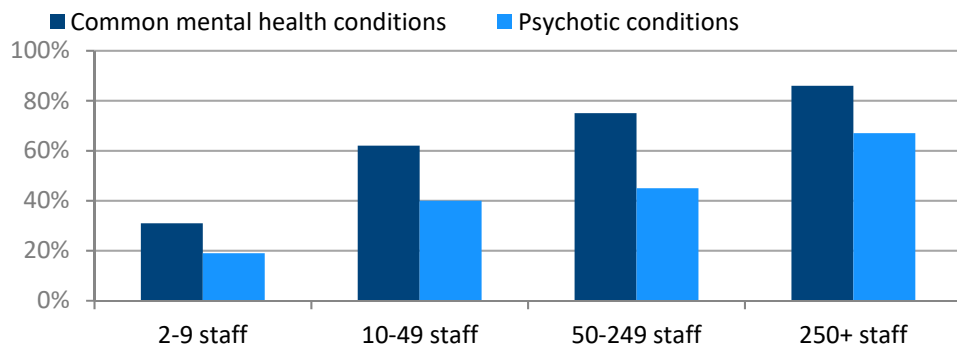
Fifty-nine per cent of businesses in Central England felt more confident in supporting disabled people in work as a result of the campaign compared with 27 per cent of employers in the North-East.

See **Tables 287 and 288** for full data.

Support for staff with a mental health condition

Larger organisations are more likely to have policies in place to provide support to employees with mental health conditions

Employers with policies to support mental health conditions by size



Overall, around four in ten organisations (39 per cent) have policies or systems in place to support employees with common mental health conditions such as anxiety and depression. Around a quarter (24 per cent) of employers have policies or systems in place to support employees with psychotic conditions such as schizophrenia and personality disorder.

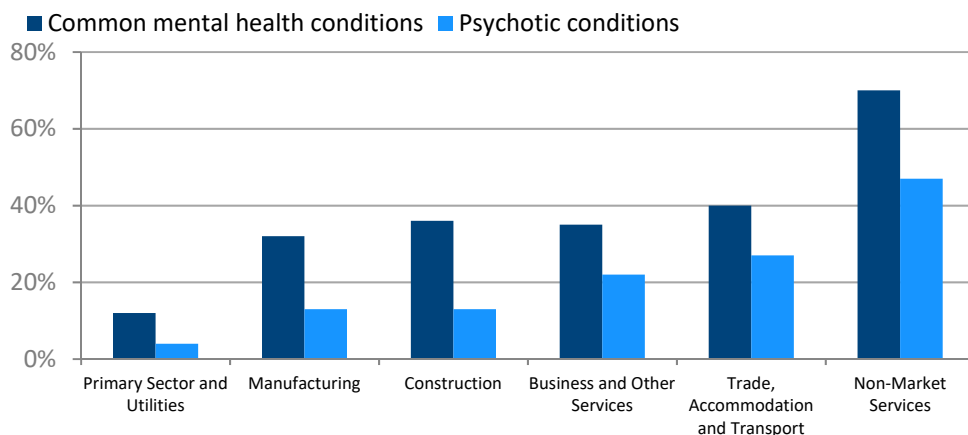
Eighty-six per cent of large employers (250+ staff) have policies in place to support common mental health conditions compared to thirty-one per cent of micro employers (two to nine staff). Around two-thirds (67 per cent) of large employers have policies or systems to support employees with psychotic conditions compared to around a fifth (19 per cent) of micro employers.

See **Tables 289 and 290** for full data

Base: All businesses in the section (n=2,100)

Firms in the non-market services sector are most likely to provide support for mental health conditions

Employers with policies to support common mental health and psychotic conditions by sector



There are clear sector differences in the propensity to provide support to employees with mental health conditions.

Those firms in the non-market sector are most likely to provide support for mental health conditions, with seven in ten providing support for common mental health issues and almost a half (47 per cent) for psychotic conditions.

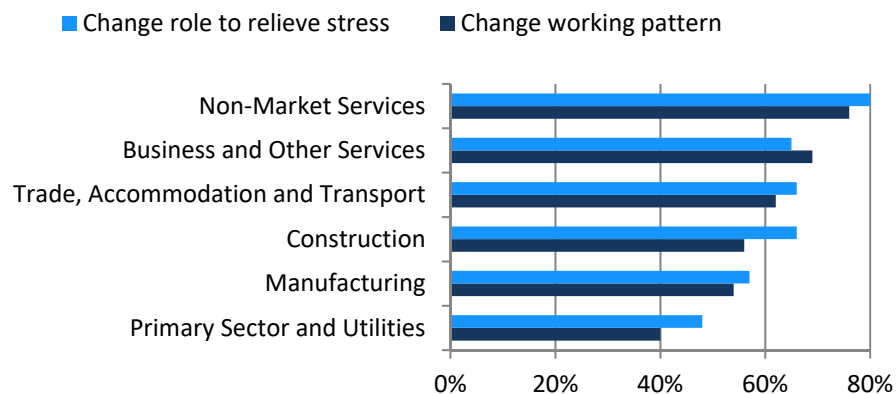
Organisations in the primary and utilities sector are least likely to provide support for mental health conditions, with around one in eight (12 per cent) providing support for common mental health issues and around one in 20 (4 per cent) for psychotic conditions.

See **Tables 289 and 290** for full data

Base: All businesses in the section (n=2,100)

The most common type of support offered was time off to attend medical appointments or therapy sessions

Employers who offer a change in role or working patterns to employees with mental health conditions, by sector



Base: All businesses in the section (n=2,100)

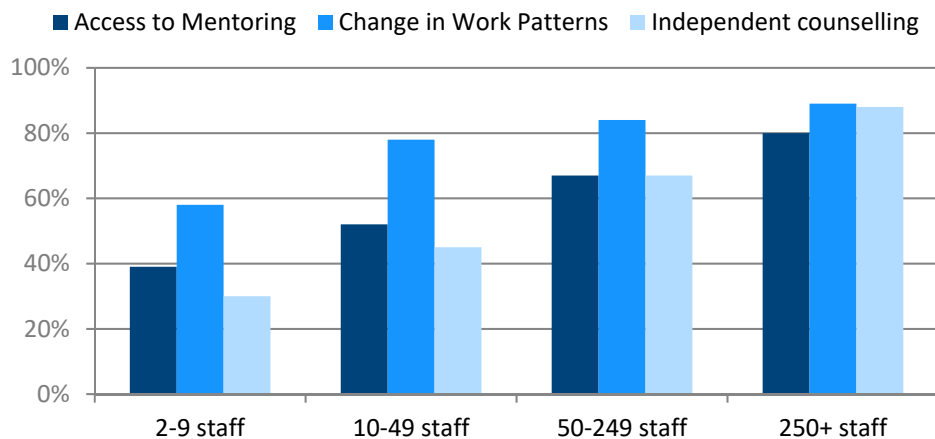
The most common type of support offered to employees with mental health conditions was time off to attend medical appointments or therapy sessions (91 per cent of employers). Around two-thirds (66 per cent) of businesses offer to change an individual's type of work in order to reduce stress.

Employers in the non-market services sector were most likely to offer a change in role to relieve stress (80 per cent), compared to 48 per cent of businesses in the primary sector and utilities.

See **Tables 291 to 298** for full data

The type of support offered varies considerably with the size of organisation

Types of support offered for mental health conditions, by size



Base: All businesses in the section (n=2,100)

The type of support offered by businesses also varies depending on the size of the organisation.

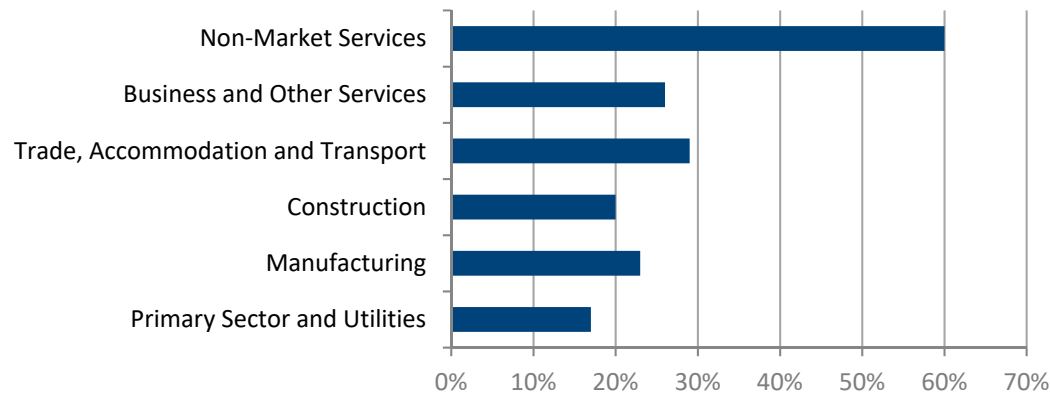
Eighty per cent of organisations with 250+ staff give employees with mental health conditions access to mentoring compared to 39 per cent of micro employers. Similarly, 89 per cent of large employers provide support by way of changing working patterns compared to 58 per cent of micro employers.

Organisations in the non-market services sector consistently report higher than average levels of support. Whereas those in the primary and utilities sector, and manufacturing sectors consistently report lower levels of support for employees with mental health conditions. Fifty-two per cent of employers in the non-market service sector offer access to independent counselling compared to 20 per cent of employers in the primary and utilities sector.

See **Tables 291 to 298** for full data

Just less than a third of employers have systems in place to assess and monitor the mental health of employees.

Employers who have a system in place for assessing and monitoring mental wellbeing of employees, by sector



Base: All businesses in the section (n=2,100)

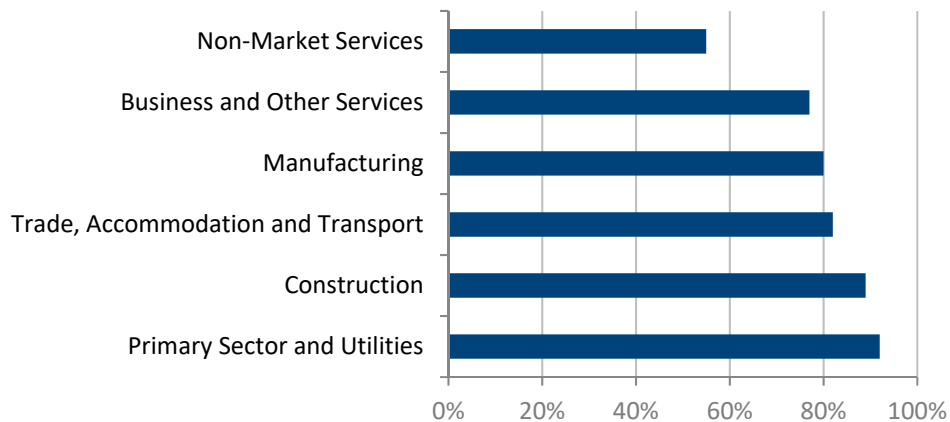
Similar patterns follow when looking at whether employers have systems in place to monitor and assess the mental health of their employees. Overall, 30 per cent of employers have systems in place to assess and monitor the mental health of employees.

Those in the non-market services are most likely to have systems in place to monitor and assess the mental health of employees (60 per cent). This compared to only 17 per cent of those in the primary sector and utilities. It is interesting to note that whilst 17 per cent of employers in the primary sector and utilities monitor the mental health of employees, only 12 per cent provide support for those with common mental health conditions.

See **Table 299** for full data

Eight in ten employers reported no cases of employees disclosing a mental health condition

Proportion of employers who reported no incidences of employees disclosing a mental health condition in last 12 months, by sector



Base: All businesses in the section (n=2,100)

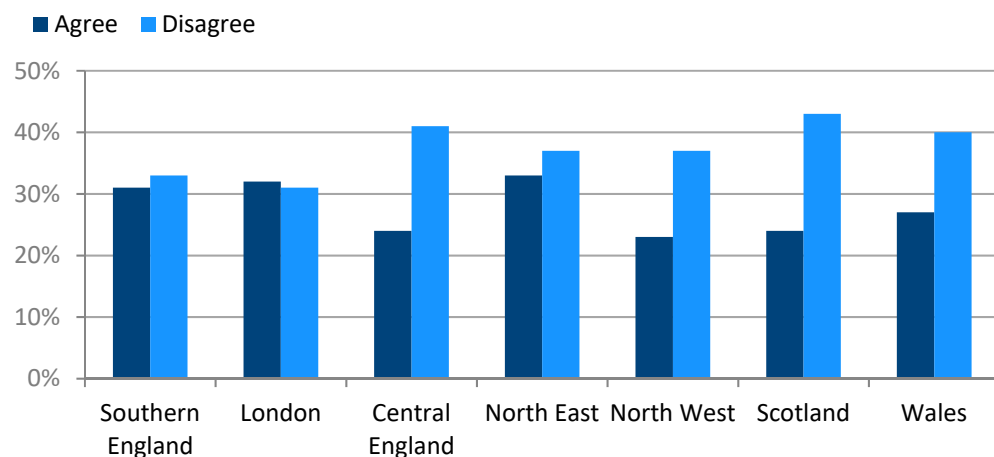
Overall, around eight in ten employers reported no incidents of employees informing them of a mental health condition in the 12 months prior to being interviewed. Employers in the North-East, Scotland and Wales were least likely to report no cases of employees disclosing a mental health condition. Overall, 15 per cent of employers reported one or two cases of employees reporting a mental health condition.

There were some large differences between sectors in the reporting of mental health conditions. Ninety-two per cent of organisations in the primary sector and utilities reported no cases of an employee disclosing a mental health condition. This compares to 55 per cent of employers in the non-market services sector.

See **Table 300** for full data

More than half of employers agreed that people with mental health conditions are as productive as everyone else.

Extent to which employers agree that 'people with a mental health conditions are harder to make adjustments for than those with physical impairments', by region



Base: All businesses in the section (n=2,100)

Employers were read a series of statements about mental health conditions and asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the statement. More than half of employers (53 per cent) agreed that people with mental health conditions are as productive as everyone else.

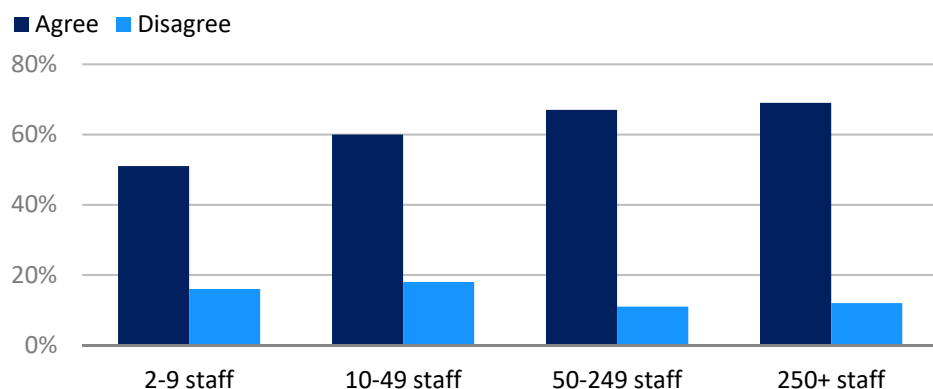
There were a number of regions (North West, Central England, Scotland and Wales) where significantly more employers disagreed (than agreed) that it is more difficult to make adjustments for mental health conditions than physical impairment. However, there were a number of regions where there were no statistically significant differences (Southern, London and North East).

Significantly more employers in Scotland and Central England disagreed with the statement compared to the average (43 and 41 per cent respectively).

See **Table 301** for full data

Large employers are more likely to agree that having a mental health condition does not make a difference when recruiting a new employee

Extent to which employers agree that 'Having a mental health condition does not make a difference when hiring a new person', by size



Base: All businesses in the section (n=2,100)

More than half of employers (54 per cent) agreed that having a mental health condition does not make a difference when recruiting a new employee.

The analysis shows that larger employers tend to have more positive attitudes towards people with mental health conditions. Around seven in ten large employers agree that having a mental health condition does not make a difference when recruiting compared to around a half of micro employers.

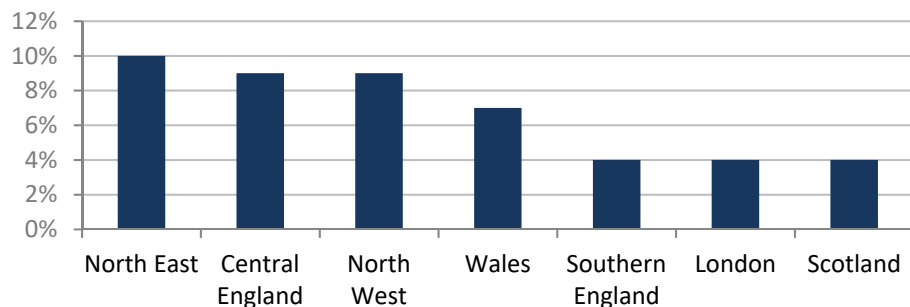
Employers in London are less likely to agree with this statement (46 per cent) compared with the average.

See **Table 304** for full data

Debt recovery and Direct Earnings Attachments

The majority of employers had not received a request from DWP to activate a Direct Earnings Attachment for an employee

Employers receiving requests from DWP to activate a Direct Earnings Attachment for an employee, by region



Overall, six per cent of employers reported receiving a request from DWP to activate a Direct Earnings Attachment (DEA) for an employee. The majority of employers (88 per cent) had not received a request.

Employers in the North East (10 per cent) the North West (9 per cent) and Central England (9 per cent) were significantly more likely to have received a DEA request from DWP than some other regions. In comparison, employers in London (4 per cent), Southern England (4 per cent) and Scotland (4 per cent), had the lowest proportion of employers receiving a request from DWP.

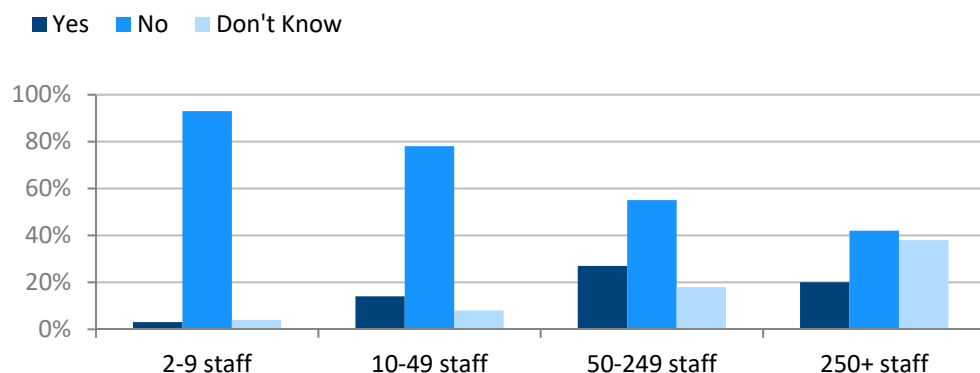
Only 2 per cent of businesses in the construction sector had received a DEA request, which is significantly lower than most other sectors.

See **Table 305** for full data

Base: All businesses in the section (n=2,100)

Micro employers were significantly less likely to receive a DEA request compared to other organisations

Employers receiving requests from DWP to activate DEAs for an employee, by size



Companies with 50-249 staff were significantly more likely to report receiving a request from DWP to activate a DEA compared than organisations of other sizes (27 per cent). Establishments with 250 plus staff were slightly less likely to receive this type of request (20 per cent) but were more likely to not know if they had received a request (38 per cent).

The survey showed that employers in the manufacturing sector were significantly more likely to report receiving a request from DWP (10 per cent) compared to some sectors. Employers in the primary sector and utilities were least likely to have received a request from DWP to activate a DEA (2 per cent).

Of the businesses that had a request from DWP to activate a DEA, only two per cent of employers had difficulty implementing this type of request.

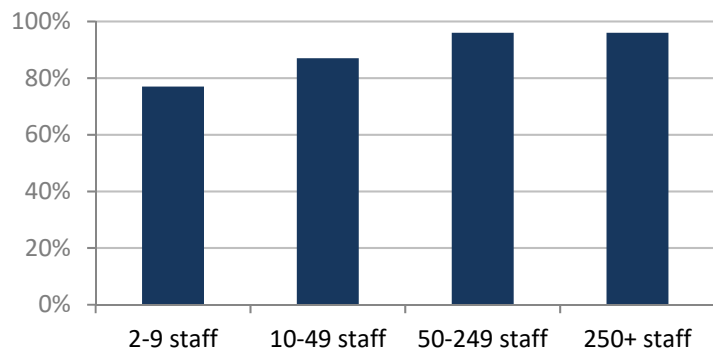
See **Table 305** for full data

Base: All businesses in the section (n=2,100)

Workplace pensions and automatic-enrolment

Awareness of automatic-enrolment was high across the business population

Awareness of automatic-enrolment by size



Eight out of ten employers said that they were aware of automatic-enrolment before responding to the survey. Awareness varies with organisation size with micro-employers (two to nine employees) being less likely to be aware of automatic-enrolment than larger businesses. Only a small minority of small and micro employers [less than 78,000] would have reached their staging date at the time of fieldwork, so these results are to be expected.

Seventy-seven per cent of micro employers were aware of automatic-enrolment compared with almost all of medium and large employers (96 per cent).

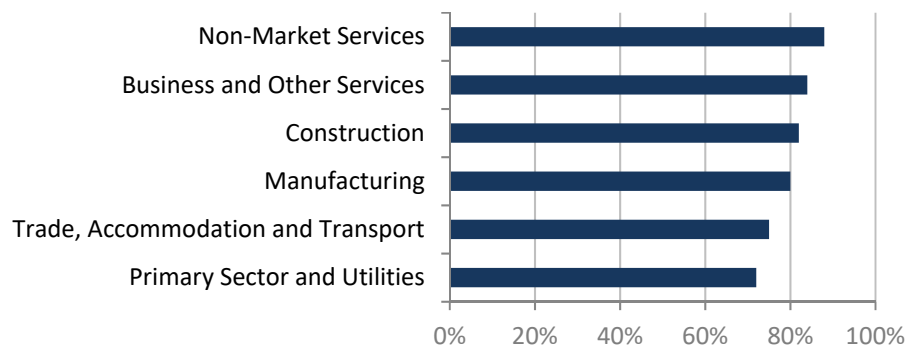
Regional variations in awareness show that businesses in Scotland are much more likely to have heard of automatic-enrolment (92 per cent) compared with those in the North-East, where awareness is at its lowest (70 per cent).

See **Table 312** for full data.

Base: All businesses in section (n=2,100)

Businesses in the non-market services sector are most likely to be aware of automatic-enrolment

Awareness of automatic-enrolment by sector



Overall, 37 per cent of employers interviewed had reached their staging date and had enrolled staff into a qualifying scheme. This was most common in firms within the non-market services sector (50 per cent) compared to only 16 per cent of organisations in the primary and utilities sector, highlighting the different size composition of firms within these sectors. So perhaps unsurprisingly, awareness amongst businesses in the non-market services sector was higher than in the primary and utilities sector (88 per cent and 72 per cent respectively).

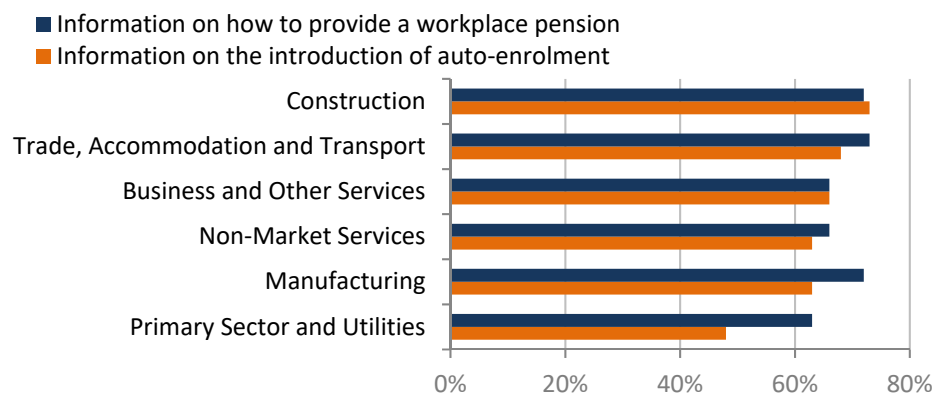
The sector that appears to buck this trend is construction. A high proportion of construction firms are micro employers (87 per cent), but awareness levels are relatively high amongst this sector (82 per cent).

See **Table 312** for full data.

Base: All businesses in section (n=2,100)

Two-thirds of employers had sought information on the introduction of automatic-enrolment

Proportion of employers seeking information on providing a workplace pension and the introduction of automatic-enrolment, by sector



Around two-thirds of employers (66 per cent) had sought information on the introduction of automatic-enrolment in the 12 months prior to being interviewed, and a similar proportion (69 per cent) had sought information on how to provide a workplace pension.

Demand for information on the introduction of automatic-enrolment was highest amongst organisations with ten to 49 employees (76 per cent), in line with the staging profile at the time of the survey.

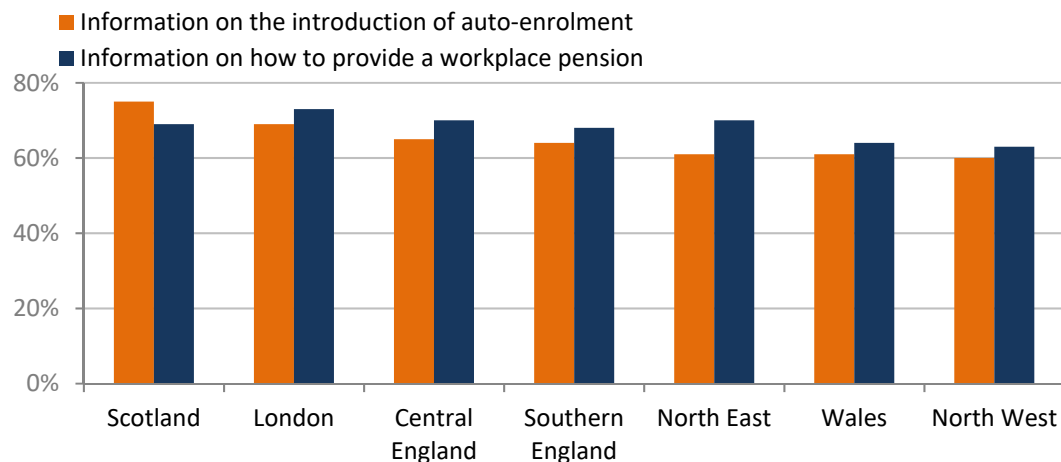
Businesses in the construction sector were more likely than average to seek information on the introduction of automatic-enrolment (73 per cent). Businesses in the trade, accommodation and transport sector were more likely than average to seek information on providing a workplace pension (73 per cent).

See **Tables 309 and 310** for full data.

Base: All businesses in section (n=2,100)

Businesses in Scotland were most likely to seek information on the introduction of automatic-enrolment

Proportion of employers seeking information on workplace pensions and automatic-enrolment, by region



Three-quarters (75 per cent) of businesses in Scotland had sought information on the introduction of automatic-enrolment in the 12 months prior to interview. This is significantly higher than all other regions except London (69 per cent).

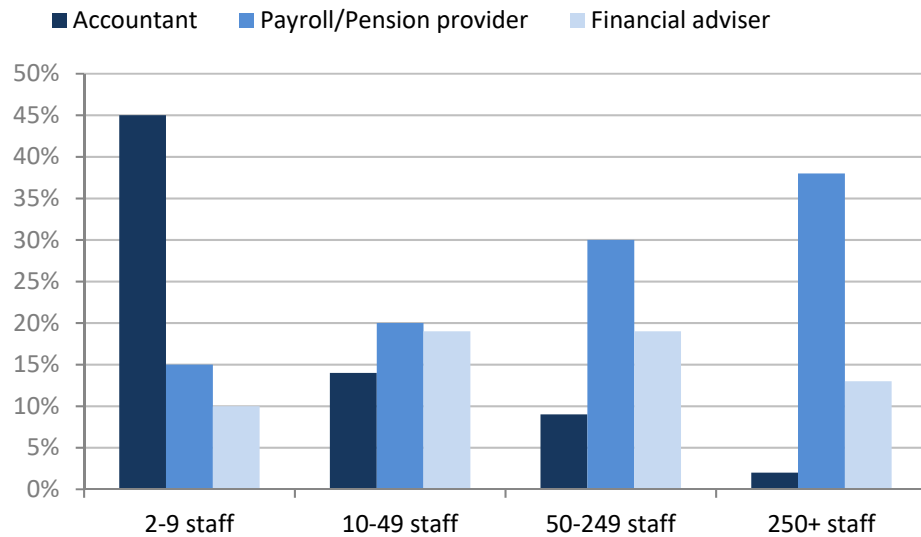
Businesses in London (73 per cent) were significantly more likely to seek information on providing a workplace pension than businesses in the North West (63 per cent) and Wales (64 per cent).

See **Tables 309 and 310** for full data.

Base: All businesses in section (n=2,100)

Most common sources of paid advice on automatic-enrolment are an accountant or pension provider

Source of paid advice on automatic-enrolment by size



Base: Businesses that have sought paid advice on automatic-enrolment (n=722)

Forty-two per cent of businesses that had reached a staging date or were close to doing so at the time interview had obtained paid advice on automatic enrolment.

Of those companies who sought paid advice on automatic-enrolment, the most common source of information was an accountant (29 per cent) followed by their payroll or pension provider (19 per cent).

Micro employers were much more likely to use an accountant as a source of paid advice than large employers (45 per cent compared to 2 per cent). Larger employers were more likely to rely on their payroll or pension provider (38 per cent) as a source of advice.

Around half of businesses in the survey were yet to reach their automatic-enrolment staging date, a group mainly consisting of micro employers. Of these, around a half (52 per cent) felt that paying for advice about automatic-enrolment would be helpful but not necessary, around a quarter (23 per cent) felt that paid advice would be a necessity.

See **Table 315** for full data.

About these statistics

Coverage

The 2015/16 employer engagement survey was designed primarily to help the DWP understand employers' recruitment practices, experience of using DWP services and their views on key policy areas.

The research follows on from a similar wave of research – the 2013 employer engagement and experience survey – which was intended to act as a baseline against which the impact of policy changes could be judged. To this end, key questions used in the 2013 survey were replicated in the 2015/16 survey.

A key area of policy interest for the latest wave of the research is the introduction and impact of UC. Consequently, questions designed to gauge levels of awareness, experience and perceived impact of UC were included.

A total of 2,869 interviews were conducted with 'core' businesses and a further 1,331 with 'UC' businesses. The core businesses were a cross-section of employers of all sizes and across all sectors of the economy. The UC businesses were employers known to have at least one member of staff claiming UC at the time of interview. The research was conducted at site-level – as opposed to organisation level. The rationale for this is that the workplace is the core interface between employers, their staff and the DWP. This also replicates the approach taken for the 2013 employer engagement survey. As in 2013, it is possible that more than one establishment from a multi-site organisation could have participated in the survey.

All workplaces with at least two members of staff were in-scope for the survey. The most senior individual at the site with responsibility for human resources was asked to take part.

Sample design and weighting

A Probability Proportionate to Size (PPS) approach was adopted whereby certain groups in the Great Britain employer population were overrepresented to allow for sufficient interviews and therefore sub-group analysis and reporting. The following groups were overrepresented:

- Larger employers
- Employers in smaller sectors
- Employers in smaller regions (to that interviews were spread evenly between Jobcentre Plus region)

Sample was drawn using a random stratified sampling approach with targets set by size and sector on an interlocking basis. The grid below illustrates the size by sector stratification which was applied to the sample overall and within each region.

The core sample was sourced from the Experian business database.

The UC sample was sourced from government data sources and consisted of any employer who has or has had a UC claimant in employment at a time where that person was claiming UC and payment for these purposes includes two or more payments [so not a final payment just after the date of claim]. The period covered for this sample is 2014/15 and 2015/16.

The contact details were then added to this list of employers using DWP's Debt Manager database and against data already held from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC). A similar process was undertaken separately by HMRC to match the employer size and sector information, where known.

A random sample of records was drawn from the final database to form the starting sample for the UC employer element of the survey.

It should be noted that there is no obligation for an employee to disclose that they are claiming UC, so not all employers were aware that they had staff claiming UC. Establishing a single weighting variable so that the core and UC employer elements could be analysed together required a reasonably complicated process which had to correct for;

- The oversampling of some groups within the core employer element (i.e. larger employers, employers in smaller sectors and employers in smaller regions)
- The oversampling of UC employers relative to their proportion in the population.
- The fact that some UC employers were picked up within the core employer element of the survey.

In order to do this, we needed to populate the size by sector by UC status grid below for each for the seven Jobcentre Plus regions – both for our achieved interviews and for the Great Britain population as a whole.

Response rates

An overall response rate of 38 per cent was achieved for the core employer element and 44 per cent for the UC employer element.

Report authors and acknowledgements

This report was produced by Ashley Kershaw, Karen Cave and Emily Rose who are analysts at DWP. Thanks are extended to the team at IFF research who carried out the interviews and produced the dataset for analysis. We would also like to thank those employers who took the time to participate in the survey.

Where to find out more

This report, along with a methodology document and summary data tabulations can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/departement-for-work-pensions/about/research#research-publications>