



Department
for Education

Apprenticeship Achievements

An update for the sector

March 2023

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Introduction

Apprenticeships are a core part of the government's skills agenda, helping to drive economic growth by improving the skills pipeline. A key strength of the apprenticeship system in England is its broad occupational coverage, providing a route into work for all and a route for those already in work to continue to progress their careers.

We have transformed apprenticeships, so they are higher quality and better meet the needs of employers and individuals. We are continuing to improve quality to ensure more apprentices successfully complete their programme. Our ambition is to have at least two thirds of apprentices (67%) achieving their apprenticeship standard by 2025.

This report is designed for use by all stakeholders with an interest in apprenticeships. This brings together a range of key data into one place to support a better understanding of the factors influencing apprenticeship achievements and to provide a more detailed update on progress.

Patterns of Apprenticeship Qualification Achievement Rates¹

Figure 1-1: Achievement Rates (Standards & Frameworks)

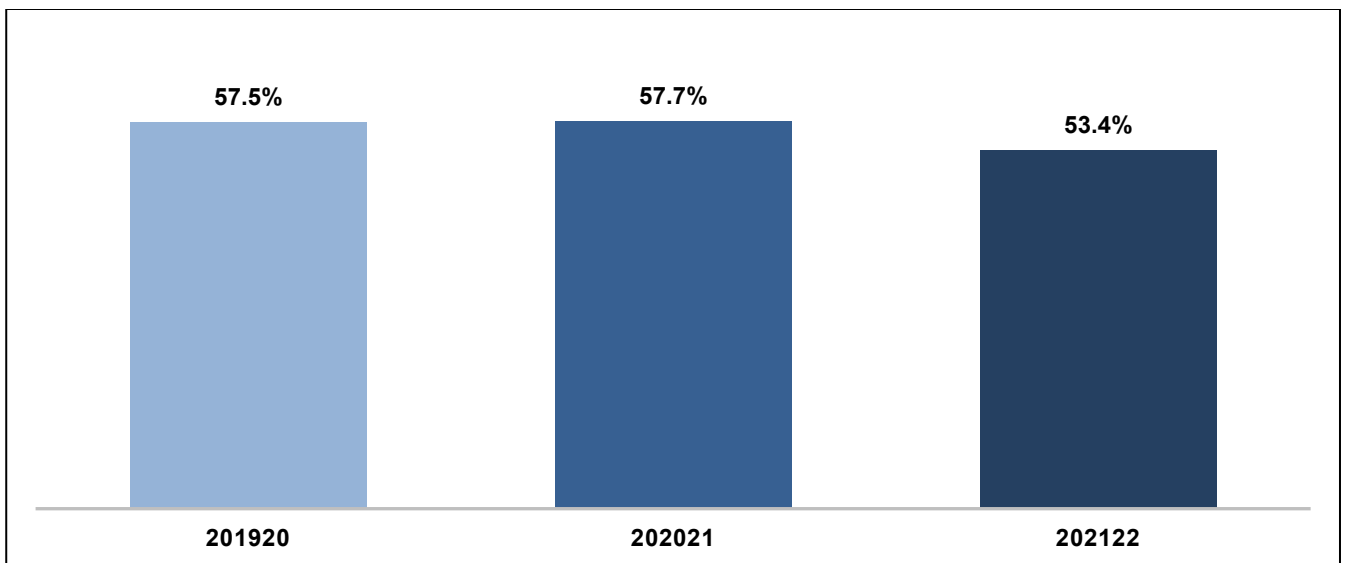
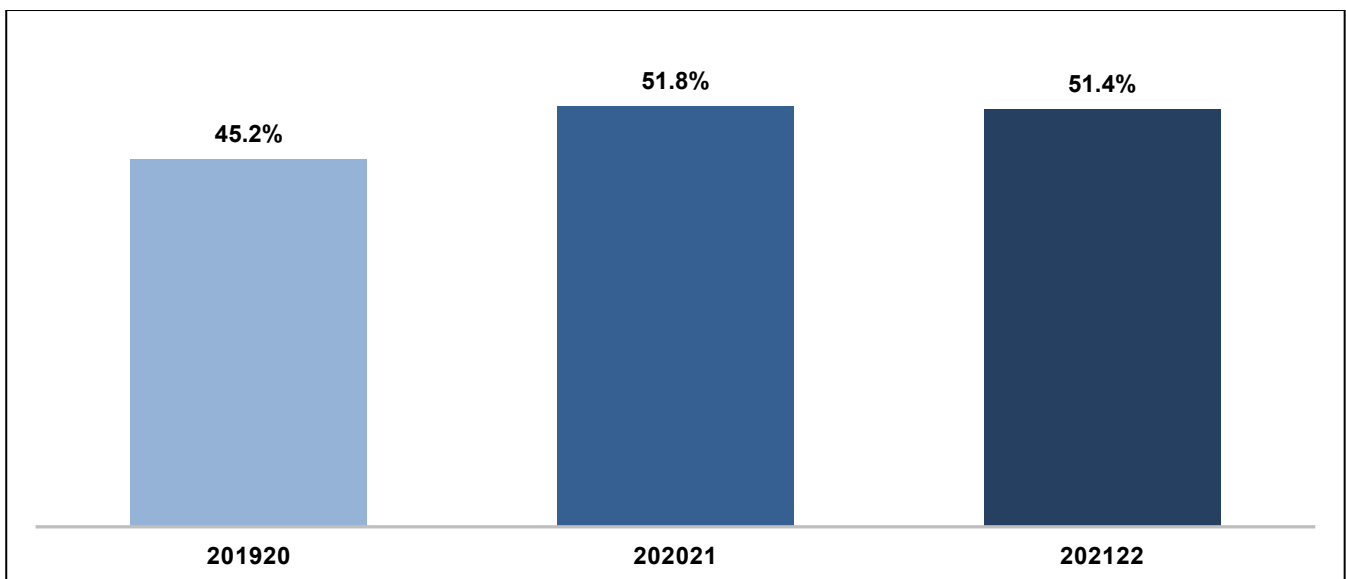


Figure 1-2: Achievement Rates (Standards Only)



¹ QARs, and the associated pass rates and retention rates, are a measure of the quality of the training courses that a provider delivered in a funding year. show learners, providers and employers the relative quality of provision. The data also contributes to The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) risk assessment for provider inspections.

Figure 1-3: 2021/22 Achievement Rates by Standards with Top 10 Highest Achievement Volumes

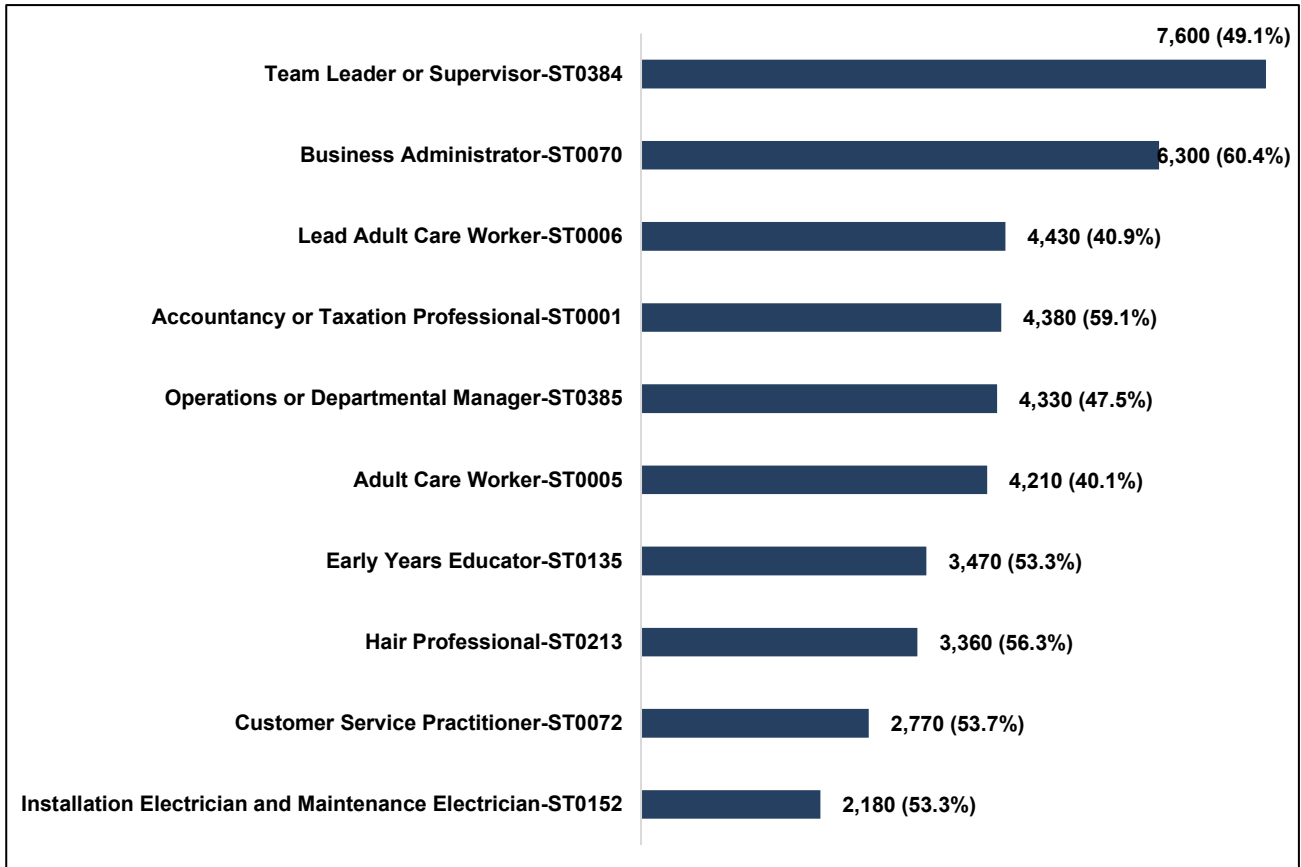


Figure 1-4: 2021/22 Achievement Rates by Funding Type (Standards Only)

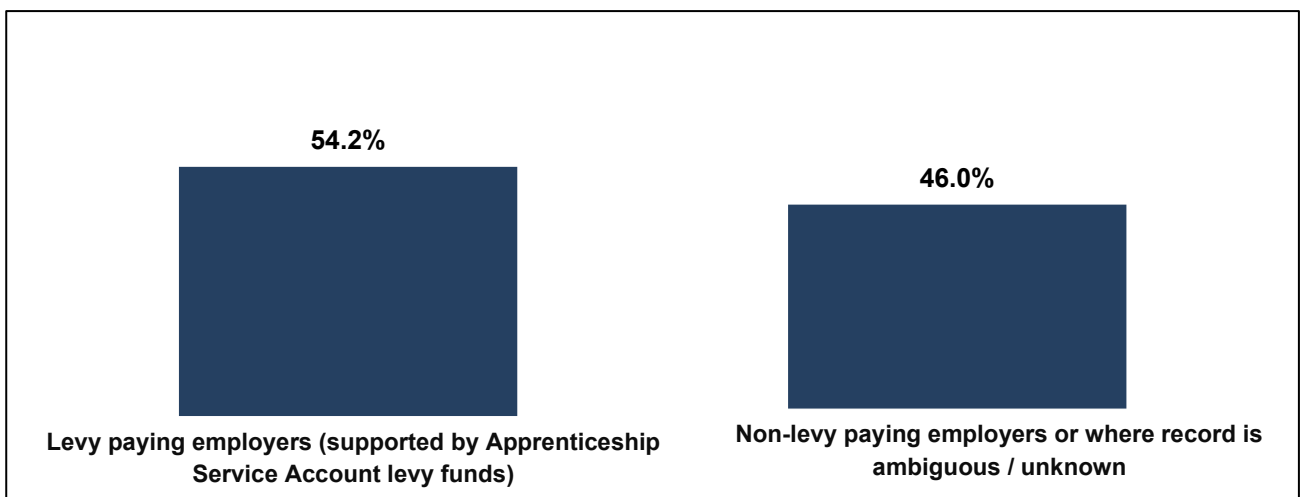


Figure 1-5: Achievement Rates by Level (Standards Only)

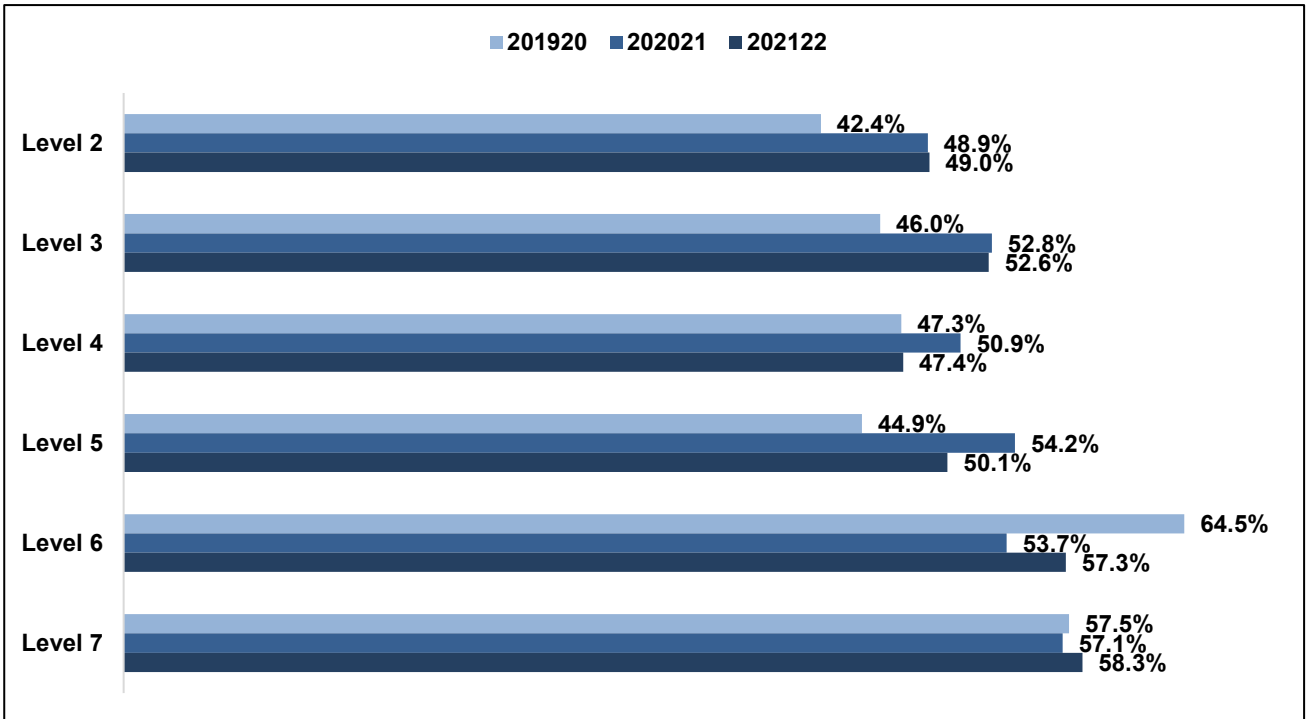


Figure 1-6: Achievement Rates by Sex (Standards & Frameworks)

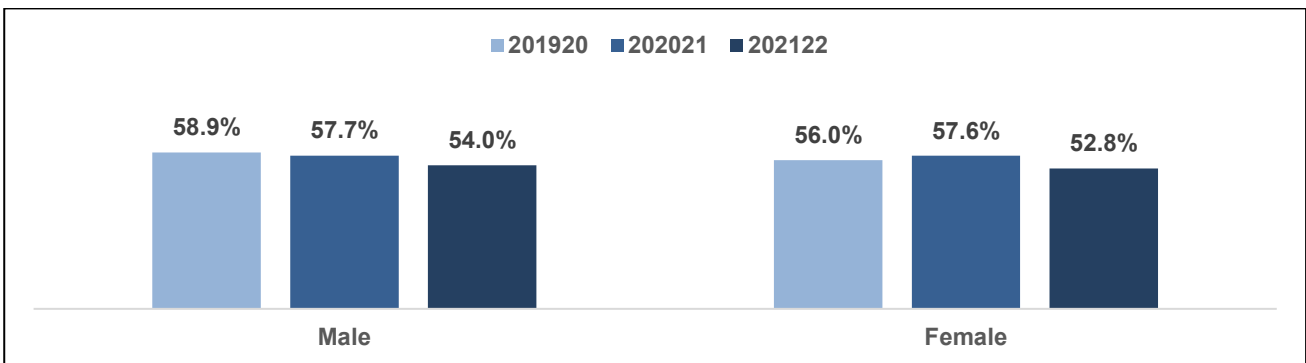


Figure 1-7: Achievement Rates by Learners with Learning Disabilities or Disabilities [LLDD] (Standards & Frameworks)

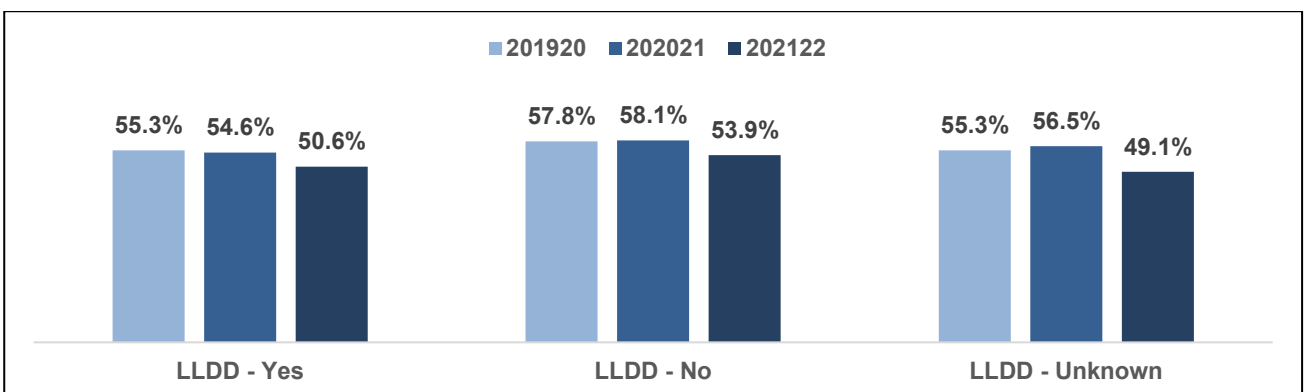
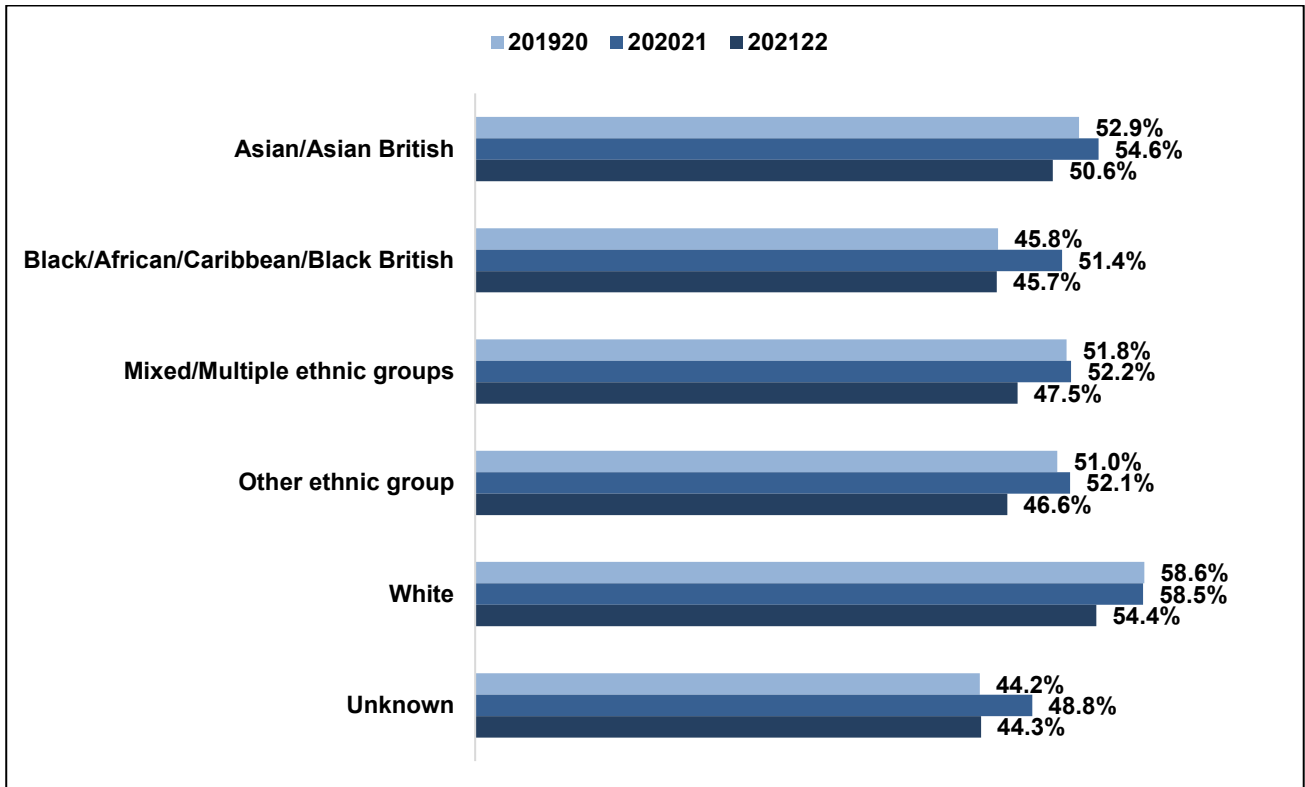
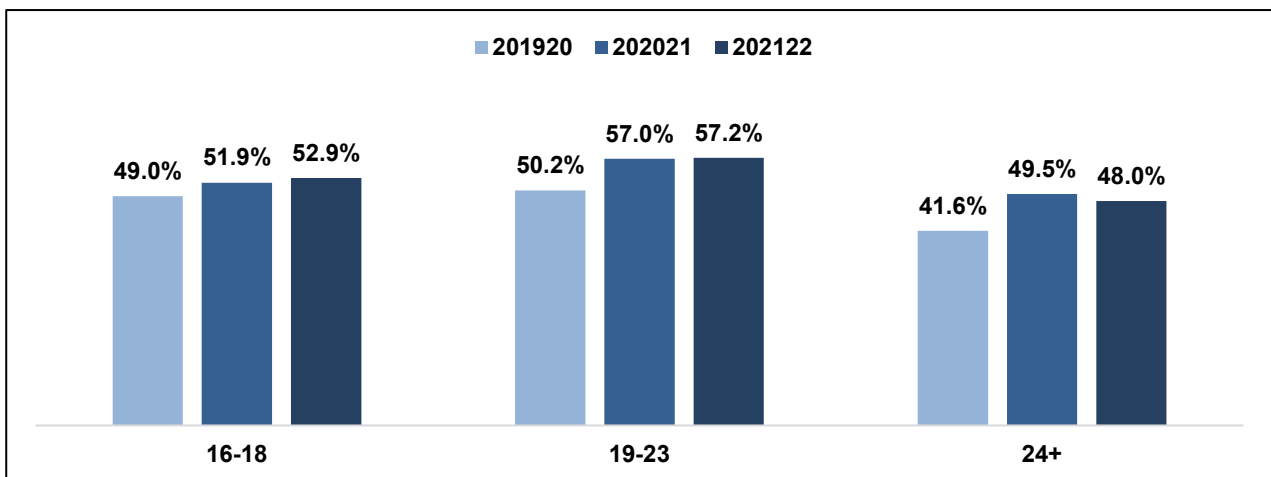


Figure 1-8: Achievement Rates by Ethnicity (Standards & Frameworks)



2

Figure 1-9: Achievement Rates by Age Group (Standards Only)



² In England and Wales, there is an [agreed list of ethnic groups](#) you can use when asking for someone's ethnicity. The groups are usually those used in the Census, which happens every 10 years. The Censuses in Scotland and Northern Ireland use different ethnicity classifications.

Figure 1-10: Achievement Rates by Sector Subject Area (Standards only)

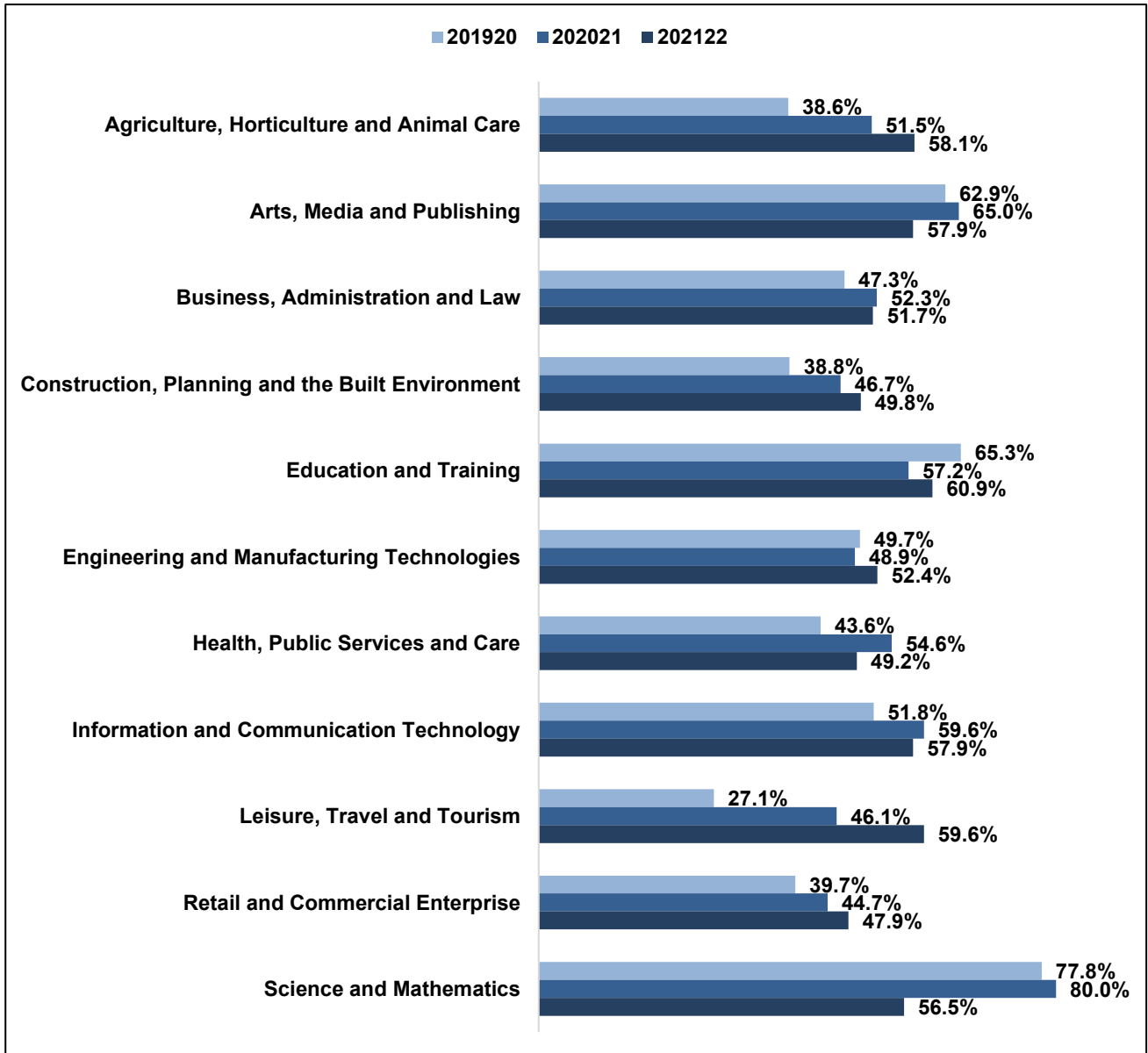
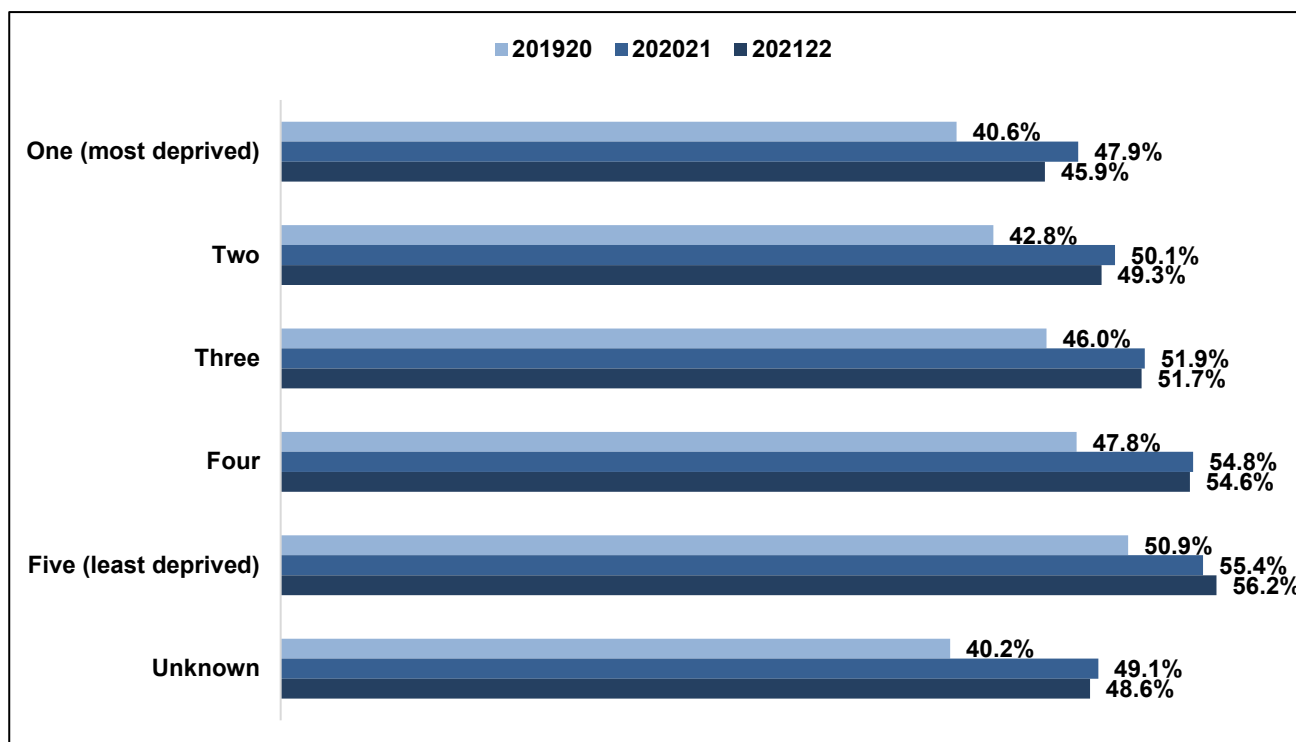


Figure 1-11: Achievement Rates by IMD Quintile (Standards Only)



3

National achievement rate tables are published on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) where you can also choose the data and area of interest you want to explore further.

Apprenticeship achievements by volume

Achievement volumes from August 2022 to January 2023 show improvement with 62,030 total achievements compared to the same period in 2020/21 (59,390) and 2021/22 (50,920).

³ The Index of Multiple Deprivation, commonly known as the IMD, is the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas in England. It is the most widely used of the [Indices of Deprivation](#). IMD classifies these areas into five quintiles based on relative disadvantage, with quintile 1 being the most deprived and quintile 5 being the least deprived. A quintile is a statistical value of a data set that represents 20% of a given population, so the first quintile represents the lowest fifth of the data (1% to 20%); the second quintile represents the second fifth (21% to 40%) and so on.

Other Data Factors

We know that there are other factors impacting the achievements data, for example when apprentices change their provider/apprenticeship/employer within a given year. DfE is simplifying the processes for providers, employers and apprentices to reduce disruption and support apprentices to resume their learning. For example, in response to feedback from the sector, from 2022/23 providers are now given longer (three months instead of one month) to sign up with a new employer where the apprentice changes employer but wishes to continue with their apprenticeship.

Care should be taken when comparing outcomes with previous years because of the pandemic which caused an increase in the number of breaks in learning and delayed assessments. Different sectors have been affected by the pandemic in different ways and it has meant that more apprentices went past their planned end date than would otherwise have happened. In terms of the number of learners recorded as being on a break in learning, the data showed an increase from 28,100 in 2018/19 to 77,500 in 2019/20. 2020/21 showed 42,300⁴. These variables caused by Covid are still working their way through the system.

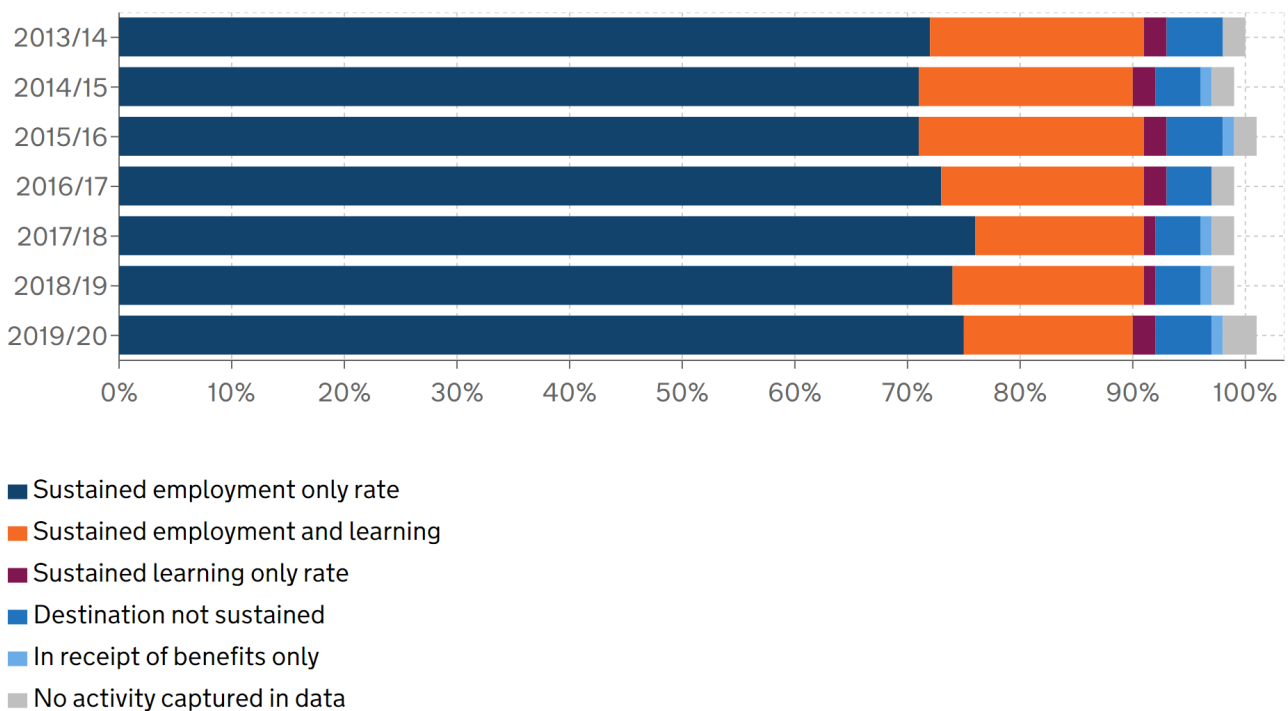
⁴ [Explore education statistics – GOV.UK](#)

Apprenticeship Outcomes

Apprenticeships are jobs, therefore training quality is not the only factor influencing whether or not an apprentice achieves occupational competence. Successful apprenticeships happen when providers, employers and assessment organisations work in partnership to ensure a positive end-to-end journey for the apprentice. A thriving apprenticeship system is integral to the Government’s vision of a high skill, high wage economy. Apprentices who achieve have higher earnings compared to those who do not⁵.

Looking at the long-term data regarding sustained positive destination rates for apprenticeships⁶, this decreased slightly in 2019/20 compared to the previous year, but they remain high, and higher for apprenticeships than other types of further education and skills provision. This is one of the key benefits of apprenticeships as many apprentices remain with the employer following their apprenticeship, which results in a high rate of sustained employment.

Figure 2-1: Sustained positive destination rates for apprenticeships



Source: Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) dataset

⁵ [Measuring the Net Present Value of Further Education in England 2018-19 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

⁶ [Further education: outcome-based success measures, Academic Year 2019/20 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk)

Recent research by [LWI for the St. Martin's Group](#)⁷ reported that some non-completers spoke of the skills gained and the opportunities to network in their industries which had benefited them in their current roles. In a minority of cases, this had allowed them to move directly into other, higher-level opportunities immediately after withdrawing from their apprenticeship⁸.

However, this research affirms that the benefits of achieving are greater compared to those who withdraw before completing. More than three in five survey respondents (63%) have experienced an increase in their salary since starting their apprenticeship⁹. The research also found that of 'completers' employed by the same employer after the apprenticeship¹⁰:

- 35% stayed in the same job as they had before they started their apprenticeship
- 25% started a permanent job with the same employer
- 14% obtained a promotion with the same employer

Respondents who did not complete their apprenticeship were statistically less likely to secure either a permanent job (8%, compared to 29% who completed) or a promotion (7%, compared to 18% who completed) with the same employer¹¹.

The 2021 Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey¹² has found that there were more apprentice achievers working full-time in 2021 than there were in 2018-19 and earlier years (81% vs. 74%-75%) with fewer working part-time.¹³ More apprentices in 2021 than in 2018-19 said their promotion was a direct result of their apprenticeship (25% vs 18%), also reflecting a longer-term trend, as shown in the table below.

⁷ The research took a mixed methods approach, involving an online survey of 2,427 apprentices sampled through Individualised Learner Record (ILR) data, and qualitative follow-up interviews with 20 apprentices who completed their programme and 18 who withdrew. [LWI & St.Martins Group Apprentice Outcomes and Destinations 2022 Appendix 1 \(p.50-54\)](#)

⁸ [LWI & St.Martins Group Apprentice Outcomes and Destinations 2022 \(p.47\)](#)

⁹ [LWI & St.Martins Group Apprentice Outcomes and Destinations 2022 \(p.19\)](#). Salary bands for respondents employed both before their apprenticeship and currently were directly compared to measure distance travelled. Don't know' and 'prefer not to say' responses are excluded for this comparison.

¹⁰ [LWI & St.Martins Group Apprentice Outcomes and Destinations 2022 \(p.5\)](#)

¹¹ [LWI & St.Martins Group Apprentice Outcomes and Destinations 2022 \(p.15-16\)](#)

¹² The [2021 Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey](#) is a telephone survey of 5,122 current and completer apprentices and 541 non-completers. The AEvS is also weighted to ensure it is representative of the overall population of apprentices.

¹³ [Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey 2021, Table 9-3, p.151](#)

Table 1-1: Impacts on progression and pay, 2015 to 2021¹⁴

<i>Column percentages</i>	2015	2017	2018-19	2021
Received a promotion	32%	34%	39%	42%
Received a pay rise	48%	51%	58%	67%*
<i>Base: all longer-term completers</i>	2,736	2,767	1,580	1,039
Promotion a direct result of apprenticeship	19%	22%	18%	25%*
<i>Base: all longer-term completers who were promoted since completing</i>	852	916	608	438
Pay rise a direct result of apprenticeship	27%	28%	21%	27%*
<i>Base: all longer-term completers who received a pay rise since completing</i>	1,297	1,347	901	687

* highlights where figure is significantly different from 2018-19 result.

The same research asked 541 non-completers what they did immediately after they left their apprenticeship.¹⁵

- The vast majority (83%) continued in work, typically either at the same company (44%) or at a different employer (35%)
- 4% were self-employed
- One in eight (12%) became unemployed after leaving their apprenticeship.

There were also some differences by age and ethnicity:

- Those aged under 19 were more likely to be unemployed (14%),
- Those aged between 19-24 were more likely to be in education (10%),
- Those aged 25 or older were more likely to be in work (93%),
- Ethnic minority non-completers were more likely to be unemployed (14%).

¹⁴ [2021 Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey](#) Table 9-6, P.155. There are differences across the four surveys in the gap between completion and the time of interview, which may underlie some of the differences. In 2021 and 2018-19 the interval was 15-25 months, compared with 13-22 months for the 2017 survey and 12-20 months in 2015.

¹⁵ [Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey 2021 p.177](#)

Apprentice Satisfaction

Apprentice satisfaction with their programme and providers remains high¹⁶. The [2021 Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey](#) has shown that most apprentices (84%) are satisfied with their apprenticeship overall¹⁷.

The vast majority (92%) of all respondents in a survey done by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education felt the employer-defined knowledge, skills, and behaviours learnt through their apprenticeship would equip them to succeed, while 80% said they felt empowered to have successful careers in their industry. The survey identified key areas to improve as we continue to raise the quality of apprenticeships, such as improved induction and strengthening collaboration between the employer and training provider for the benefit of the apprentice.¹⁸

Since June 2022, we have been collecting feedback from apprentices on the quality of their programme. Both quality (and employer feedback) are published on [Find Apprenticeship Training](#) at provider level showing the individual rating scores for each provider. 15,130 apprentices have now given feedback on the quality of their training with an average satisfaction rate of 78%¹⁹.

¹⁶ Overall satisfaction among current apprentices is similar to 2018-19 (83%), but lower than in 2015 and 2017 (both 89%). The proportion very satisfied has also continued its downward trend (57% vs. 62% in 2018-19 and 74% in 2017).

¹⁷ [Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey 2021 p.111](#). The 84% refers to all apprentices - current and completers. There was a statistical difference between current and completers, in that completers were more satisfied than current: "Current apprentices reported lower levels of overall satisfaction (82%) than both recent (90%) and longer-term completers (88%). Similarly, current apprentices were less likely to be 'very satisfied' (57%) than recent and longer-term completers (both 65%)

¹⁸ [IfATE Apprentice Panel Survey](#)

¹⁹ Aggregated programme level data accumulated since the launch of apprentice feedback in May 2022. Apprentices are asked whether they agree or disagree with 12 statements. 78% of the 15,130 apprentices who have given feedback so far, responded positively to the statements. Data is correct as of 27 March 2023 and is the aggregation of the provider level data published on [Find Apprenticeship Training](#).

Table 2-1: Quality Feedback headlines

Responses from apprentices to survey questions grouped by question category		Apprentices who:	
		Agree	Disagree
COMMUNICATION			
▲			
Communicating clearly with you	71%	29%	
Ensuring you understand the requirements of your end-point assessment	77%	23%	
Total	74%	26%	
ORGANISATION			
▲			
Balancing online learning with classroom-based training to suit your apprenticeship	71%	29%	
Giving you relevant training that helps you perform your job better	78%	22%	
Organising well-structured training	75%	25%	
Providing accessible training resources	85%	15%	
Providing Off The Job training that takes up at least 20% of your total apprenticeship time	82%	18%	
Taking into account your previous learning	73%	27%	
Total	77%	23%	
SUPPORT			
▲			
Helping you learn new skills and develop existing ones	84%	16%	
Preparing you for success in your future career	79%	21%	
Resolving any issues you have	77%	23%	
Supporting you and your apprenticeship	80%	20%	
Total	80%	20%	

The responses from our apprentice feedback service compare reasonably well with the 84% of apprentices who stated they were satisfied in the 2021 Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey.²⁰

Where apprentices were satisfied or very satisfied with their programme, the main reasons given in 2021 Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey included:²¹

- Learning is enabling better performance (85%)
- Quality of learning (85%)
- Quality of feedback on progress (85%)

Where apprentices were not satisfied with their programme (8% of apprentices)²², the main reasons given were:

- Lack of support or contact from the training provider (54%)
- The apprenticeship being badly organised (41%)
- Poor quality of training (33%)
- Problems with the timeframe and management (22%)
- Problems with the employer (22%)
- An overall lack of training (21%)

Apprentices who declared either a learning difficulty or disability had a lower satisfaction rate (78% for apprentices with a disability and 79% for apprentices with a learning difficulty) than the overall average (84% satisfied). These apprentices were also less satisfied with individual elements of their programme including the amount of time spent learning and the balance between time spent learning and working.

²⁰ [Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey 2021, Table 8-1, p.111](#). Out of 5,122 apprentices surveyed: 60% were very satisfied, 24% were fairly satisfied, 8% were dissatisfied and the rest were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

²¹ [Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey 2021, Table 8-2 p.118](#)

²² [Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey 2021, p.116](#)

Retention and Underlying Causes for Apprentices Withdrawing Early

There are often multiple reasons why apprentices do not complete their programme and achieve their end assessment. Quality of provision is cited as a key factor by many. Personal circumstances can be a significant factor, including when apprentices withdraw for positive personal reasons such as finding alternative employment or higher wages.

Given the close connection between apprenticeships and the labour market, the current macroeconomic conditions may be challenging for apprentices who may have higher household costs, and for apprenticeship employers and apprenticeship providers who may have higher operating costs. However, the labour market remains tight due to the number of vacancies in the economy and insufficient volumes of available workers. The ONS estimate c.1.1m vacancies in the economy as of January²³. This may signal an increased number of opportunities for current and potential apprentices.

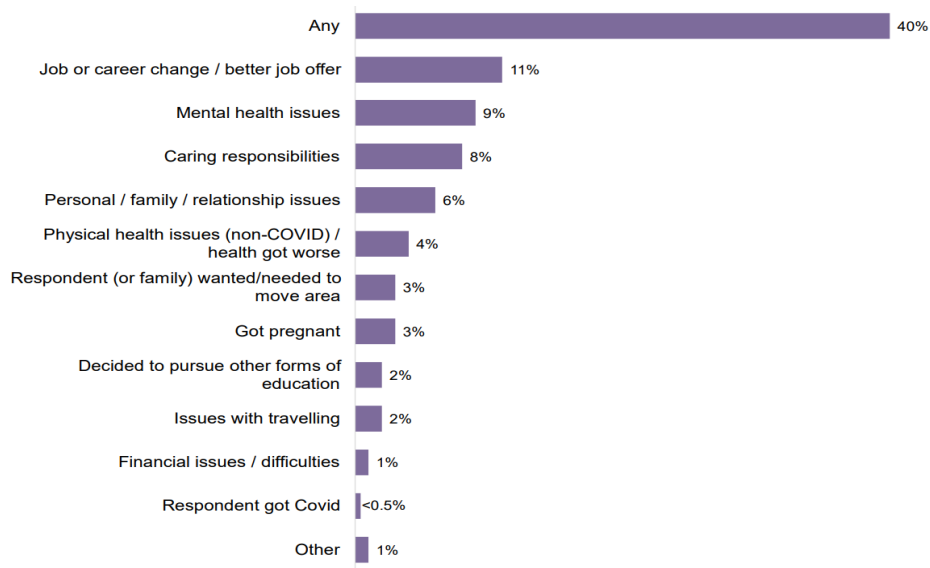
When comparing the apprenticeship system to other countries, it is worth understanding that in England an apprentice can withdraw from their apprenticeship without dropping out of employment. However, in countries operating a dual system (vocational education and training at the level of upper secondary education taking place in companies and part-time vocational schools), withdrawal usually means also dropping out of work, since apprentices only have an apprenticeship contract, and no employment contract. So, in the dual system countries dropout is less frequent, but more serious when it happens.

The 2021 Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey included a representative sample of 541 non-completers, who left their apprenticeship before completing between 1 September 2019 and 31 December 2020. 40% reported that personal or domestic factors were at least part of the reason for not completing. The most common personal or domestic reasons, as shown in Figure 3-1²⁴, were a job or career change (11% of all non-completers) followed by mental health issues (9%) and caring responsibilities (8%).

²³ [Vacancies and jobs in the UK - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk)

²⁴ [Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey 2021, Table 10.2, p.162](#)

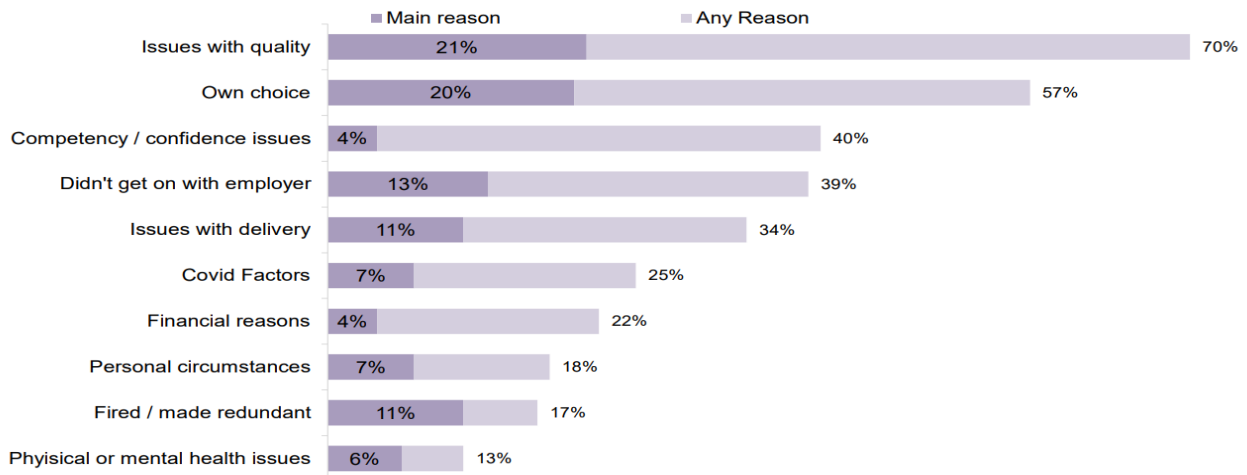
Figure 3-1: Personal or domestic reasons for non-completion



Base: All non-completers (541).

Figure 3-2 summarises reasons for not completing into broader, grouped categories. It shows that seven in ten non-completers (70%) had issues with quality and a fifth (21%) selected quality issues as their main reason for leaving²⁵.

Figure 3-2: Grouped reasons why non-completers did not complete their apprenticeship

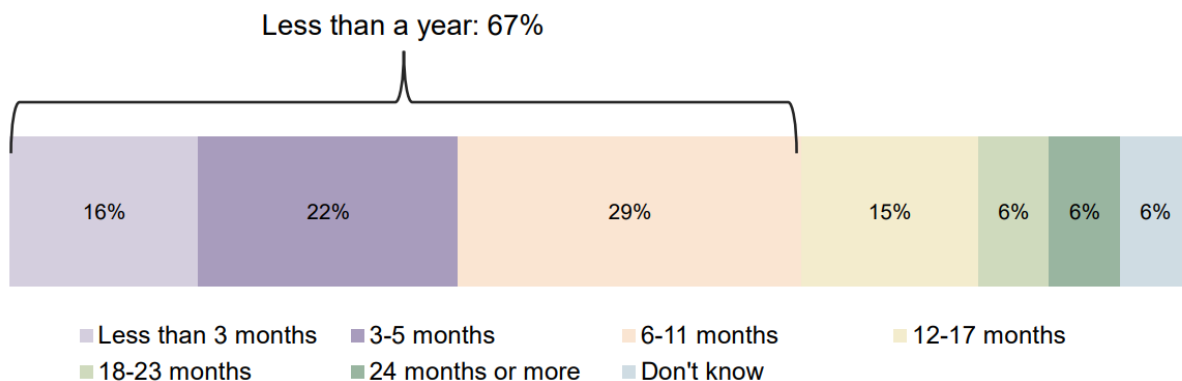


Base: All non-completers (541).

²⁵ [Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey 2021, Table 10-4, p.165](#)

Figure 3-3 shows the proportion of non-completers to have dropped out by the number of months they had completed of their apprenticeship (6% were unsure when they left, which explains why the figure only reaches 94%). The average number of months of the apprenticeship completed before leaving was nine²⁶.

Figure 3-3: Proportion of non-completers leaving by number of months of apprenticeship completed



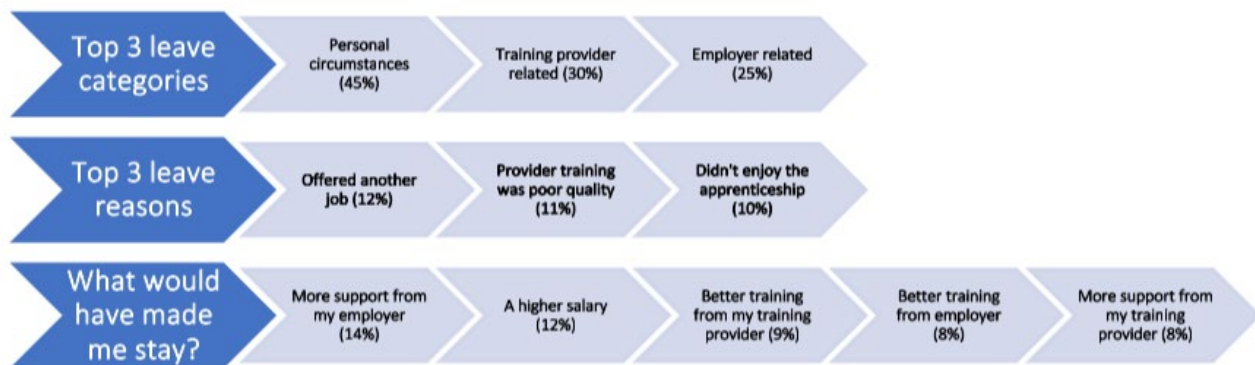
Base: All non-completers (541).

Apprentices in Business and Engineering were more likely than average to have done a year or more before they dropped out, whereas apprentices in Retail and Health were less likely to have completed at least a year. There were also some demographic differences: white apprentices were more likely to have completed less than 12 months (70% vs. 54% among ethnic minority apprentices).

²⁶ [Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey 2021, Table 10-1, p.160](#)

To further understand the reasons for withdrawal, in October 2022 we launched a new exit feedback service aimed at all apprentices who did not complete their programme²⁷. Based on 1442 responses received to date, personal circumstances are the biggest factor in withdrawal.

Figure 3-4: Exit Feedback overview



Nearly two thirds (64 per cent) of the LWI/St Martin’s survey respondents reported that they had completed their apprenticeship, and 37 per cent stated that they had withdrawn from their programme early.²⁸ These figures are broadly consistent with overall completion rates from Individual Learning Record data between 2017/18–2019/20.

The LWI/St Martin’s survey indicates that some groups are more likely to withdraw from their apprenticeships than others. This includes those with a disability or long-term health condition who were more likely to cite withdrawal reasons related to a lack of support when compared to those with no disability or long-term health condition.

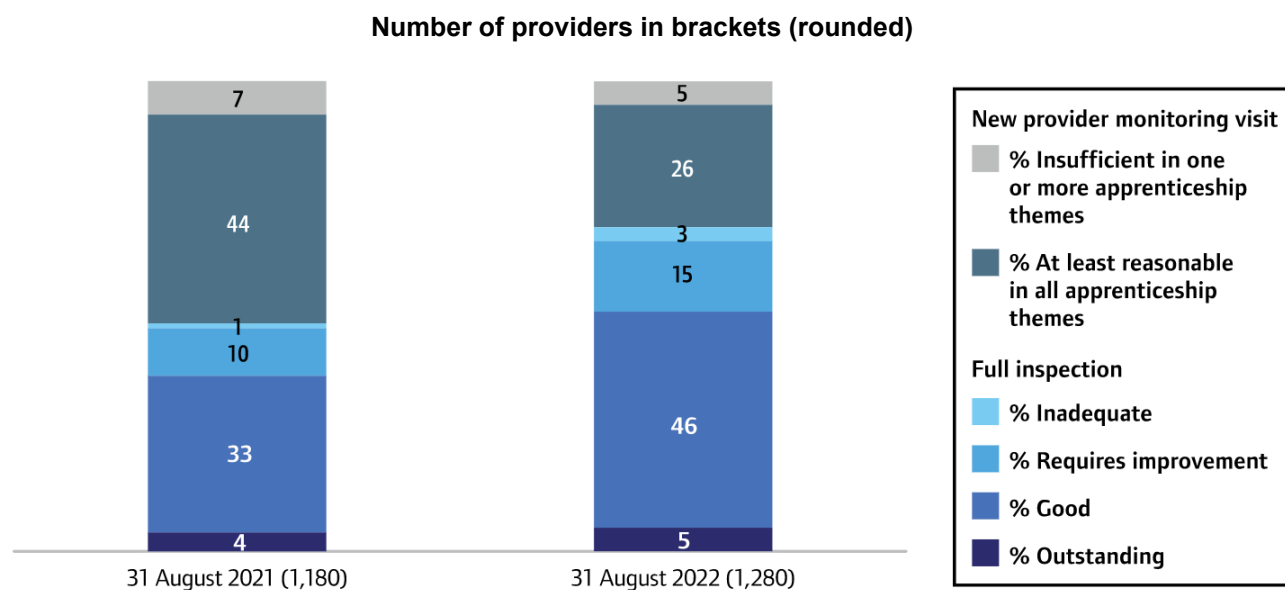
²⁷ This is aggregated programme level data accumulated since the launch of exit feedback in October 2022. Apprentices are asked to choose from a list of factors that contributed to not completing their apprenticeship (there is also the option to choose 'none of the above') and are then asked to choose what was the main reason for withdrawing. The top 3 leave categories are based on the main reason selection. Apprentices are also asked what would have made them stay on programme and can select several answers from a list (there is also the option to choose 'none of the above' – 21% of survey responses have selected this so far). Overall completion rate of the survey 6.5%. Data correct as of 27 March 2023.

²⁸ [LWI & St.Martins Group Apprentice Outcomes and Destinations 2022 \(p.13\)](#)

Quality of Training Provision

We are focused on increasing the number of apprentices in good or outstanding provision. Ofsted are inspecting all apprenticeship providers by 2025. As of 31 August 2022, 1,560 FE and skills providers were offering apprenticeships. Of the providers inspected, 77% were judged good or outstanding in a full inspection or to be making at least reasonable progress in an NPMV.²⁹

Figure 4-1: Quality of apprenticeship provision, over time³⁰



1. Includes inspections that had a report published by 7 October 2022.

2. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.

For an update on actions to improve the quality and achievement rate of apprenticeships, please see the [letter](#) from the Skills Minister to the sector.

²⁹ [Ofsted Annual Report 2021/22 - Section 6.4](#)

³⁰ [Ofsted Annual Report 2021/22 Figure 31](#)



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