



Department
for Education

Technical Education Learner Survey 2023: end-of-course surveys

Research report

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Contents

List of figures	4
List of tables	6
Introduction	7
Policy background	7
Study aims in 2023	8
Survey approach	9
Questionnaire and data	10
This report	11
T Level learners	13
Key T Level and comparator cohort findings	13
Subject and learner characteristics	14
Course content and delivery	16
Workload and challenge	20
Satisfaction with the course	25
Satisfaction with industry placement	29
Course outcomes	31
Next steps	34
Conclusion	36
T Level Transition Programme	38
Key T Level Transition Programme findings	38
Subject and learner characteristics	38
Choosing the course	40
Course content and delivery	44
Workload and challenge	47
Satisfaction with the course	52
Programme outcomes	58
Next steps	62
Conclusion	65

Level 4 and 5 learners	66
Key level 4 and 5 findings	66
Subject and learner characteristics	67
Salary	70
Choosing the course	71
Course content and delivery	75
Workload and challenge	79
Satisfaction with the course	83
Satisfaction with work experience placement	87
Course outcomes	89
Next steps	91
Conclusion	94
Appendix A – Technical note	95
Appendix B – Questionnaire	107

List of figures

Figure 1: Number of taught hours per week (grouped)	17
Figure 2: Number of taught hours per week (grouped)	18
Figure 3: Number of industry placement hours completed.....	19
Figure 4: Manageability of taught hours.....	21
Figure 5: Barriers to learning	23
Figure 6: Perceived level of challenge relating to the course.....	24
Figure 7: Overall satisfaction	26
Figure 8: Whether respondent agreed that they were supported by education provider in deciding on next steps	35
Figure 9: Whether course has allowed learner to progress to what they want to do.....	36
Figure 10: Extent to which respondent is certain of future occupation.....	42
Figure 11: Number of taught hours per week (grouped)	45
Figure 12: Number of work experience hours completed	46
Figure 13: Barriers to learning	48
Figure 14: Reasons why learners found the course challenging.....	50
Figure 15: Reasons why the learner left the course early	52
Figure 16: Reasons why the learner was dissatisfied with the course	53
Figure 17: Extent to which course helped learner to develop study skills, IT skills, communication skills and confidence.....	59
Figure 18: Extent to which course helped learner prepare for T Level, develop knowledge of T Levels in chosen area, develop English and maths skills	60
Figure 19: Extent to which TLTP helped learners who intended to progress onto T Level prepare for the course, develop knowledge of T Levels in chosen area, develop English and maths skills	61
Figure 20: Whether course has allowed learner to progress to what they want to do.....	64
Figure 21: Reasons for choosing course	72

Figure 22: Reasons for choosing qualification	74
Figure 23: Number of taught hours per week (grouped)	76
Figure 24: Whether time was spent on an industry or work experience placement	78
Figure 25: Manageability of taught hours.....	80
Figure 26: Barriers to learning (multicoded ^a)	81
Figure 27: Perceived level of challenge relating to the course.....	82
Figure 28: Overall satisfaction	84
Figure 29: Areas in which industry or work experience placement met expectations	88
Figure 30: Whether course has allowed learner to progress to what they want to do.....	93
Figure 31: Whether respondent agreed that they were supported by education provider in deciding on next steps	93

List of tables

Table 1: T Level grades for 2021 starters	16
Table 2: Learner satisfaction with specific programme elements.....	28
Table 3: T Level learners' views on their placement	30
Table 4: Extent to which programmes helped learners develop key skills, knowledge and understanding	32
Table 5: TLTP learner satisfaction with specific aspects of the course.....	55
Table 6: Extent to which the TLTP programme helped learners develop	58
Table 7: Reported monthly salary of Level 4 and 5 learners prior to starting course	70
Table 8: Level of employer contact on the course (multicoded ^a)	77
Table 9: Specific aspects of the course where level 4/5 learners were 'very' or 'quite' satisfied	86
Table 10: Level 4/5 learners' views on their placement	89
Table 11: Extent to which the course helped learners develop skills, understanding and knowledge.....	90
Table 12: Respondent profile (CATI interviews versus non-CATI interviews) – Wave 1 cohorts (Level 4 and 5, Transition Programme).....	100
Table 13: Respondent profile (CATI interviews versus non-CATI interviews) – Wave 2 cohorts (T Level, A level, L3 Tech)	101

Introduction

Policy background

The government's ongoing reforms to technical education in England have been initiated and informed by the findings of the [2016 Sainsbury Review](#) by the Independent Panel on Technical Education which identified a range of shortfalls with the technical education landscape. The reforms aim to improve the quality of technical education and therefore the technical skills needed to boost productivity in the UK economy.

Key to the technical education reforms was the introduction of T Levels in 2020, two-year Level 3 courses which currently run alongside A levels and Level 3 technical courses. T Levels have been created in collaboration with employers and include a strong focus on technical content, as well as large industry placement, which together provides learners with the knowledge and skills to progress either into employment or into further or higher education. In March 2023, the [Department for Education announced](#) that 134 Level 3 technical courses which overlapped with the T Levels introduced in wave one and two would be defunded from August 2024. In October 2023, it was [announced](#) that a further 85 qualifications, which overlap with T Levels introduced in wave 3, would be defunded from August 2025. By 2024, 24 T Level subjects, across 12 routes, will be available for learners to study.

In 2020, the T Level Transition Programme (TLTP) – now called the T Level Foundation Year- was introduced to bridge the gap between GCSEs and T Levels for learners who required an additional year to prepare for their progression to a T Level. The programme was revised from September 2022, with clearer expectations about the knowledge, skills and behaviours learners are expected to develop to help them to progress onto, and succeed on, their chosen T Level route. The programme includes a technical component (based on the new national technical content for the programme, aligned to T Levels), work experience, English, maths and digital skills, and wider personal development. . As with the T Levels, the number of providers delivering the TLTP and the number of TLTPs available (aligned to the T Level routes to create a smooth transition) has increased. In September 2022, [over 70 T Level providers were delivering TLTPs across 11 routes](#).

In July 2023, the DfE published [Ofsted's thematic review of T Levels and TLTPs](#) which evaluated the early implementation of the new qualifications. Ofsted concluded that T Levels and TLTPs have been implemented with 'varying degrees of success' and as a result, learner experiences' varied. The report highlighted issues with the initial assessments of learners' abilities and knowledge gaps, the availability of suitable, high-quality industry placements and a lack of awareness of the T Level brand among stakeholders. Specifically related to T Levels, Ofsted found that although the practical aspects of the courses tended to be well taught, the theoretical content was more demanding than similar level 3 courses which had led to providers experiencing difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff with the expertise to deliver the courses. They also highlighted that while the resources providers had to teach the

courses were good, there was a lack of content from awarding organisations to facilitate the teaching and assessment of T Levels. The report noted variation in learners' completion of T Levels. Many learners do not complete the course, however of those who do, most achieve the T Level qualification and progress into employment, apprenticeships and higher education, as was intended by the reforms. This aligns with findings from the survey of the first T Level cohort nine months after completing their course. However, there are still issues around universities accepting T Levels. Specifically related to the TLTP, Ofsted highlighted that these courses are most effective when they include a relevant technical or vocational qualification and work experience, which were seen to enhance the curriculum and effectively prepare learners for their T Level. However, in line with 2022 and 2021 Technical Education Learner Surveys, Ofsted report that few TLTP learners do in fact progress onto a T Level.

Reforms have also been made to Level 4 and 5 programmes. In the academic year 2022/23, the new Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs) were introduced in response to concerns about the lack of participation in qualifications at these levels compared to other countries and in the UK, decreasing participation in comparison to the considerable increase seen in Level 6 (degree level) participation. These qualifications are approved by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) and, much like T Levels and TLTPs, are designed in collaboration with employers to ensure they provide learners with the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to succeed in their chosen industry. By 2025, HTQs will be available across a wide range of sectors, largely aligned with the T Level routes. HTQs are considered to be an important contributor to economic success, both nationally and for the individuals studying them.

The Tech Ed Study provides a series of reports between 2020 and 2027, delivering insights into whether the reforms are improving the technical education landscape as intended and the impact on learners' experiences. While the findings from the first [Technical Education Learner Survey \(2021\)](#) were largely positive, the COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted the first cohort of T Level and TLTP learners' experiences, particularly in relation to the delivery of courses and work placements. Findings from the [2022 report](#) suggest that although these challenges were alleviated (in line with the easing of COVID-19 restrictions), learner satisfaction with the programmes reduced, particularly among T Level learners and was lower than that reported by A level and Level 3 comparator groups. Related to the TLTP specifically, the small proportion of learners intending to progress onto a T Level was concerning. Along with the continued development, expansion and awareness of T Levels and TLTP, this 2023 report will explore any changes in learner satisfaction for reformed courses, and progression from TLTP, since the 2022 findings.

Study aims in 2023

The 2023 Tech Ed Study aimed to continue evaluating the success of ongoing technical education reforms in England, which aim to deliver high-quality learning experiences and support progression into desirable outcomes. The 2023 Tech Ed Study followed up with the second cohort of T Level learners in a second wave of longitudinal data collection, to

understand learners' views and experiences in relation to the final year of their programmes. These learners will be followed up again in a third wave of data collection in the academic year after they have completed their course.

To enable comparison between the second T Level cohort and learners enrolled on comparative courses, a sample of A level learners (all courses) and level 3 technical learners studying in the same technical routes as those offered for T Level were also surveyed about their experiences, reflections and short-term outcomes.

In addition, the 2023 Tech Ed Study surveyed the third cohort of TLTP learners at the end of their programme to capture experiences as the programme expands and develops.

Finally, learners on Level 4 and 5 programmes were surveyed in the 2023 Tech Ed Study to understand learners' experiences on the post-reform programmes. Findings from this group, and future cohorts, will provide comparisons to the experiences provided by the pre-reform cohort in the 2022 Tech Ed Study report.

Survey approach

This report is based on surveys carried out in 2023 covering five different learner groups:

- T Level learners
 - 2021 T Level starters. The second cohort of T Level Learners who started their programme in September 2021, completing in July 2023. This report covers a second survey (Wave 2) related to their second year of study.
- T Level Transition Programme (TLTP) Learners
 - 2022 TLTP starters. The third cohort of TLTP learners, starting in September 2022. Findings are from a survey at the end of their course in 2023.
- Level 3 technical learners
 - Level 3 technical programme learners who started their course in September 2021, completing in July 2023. This report covers a second survey (Wave 2) at the end of their second year of study.
- A level learners
 - A level learners who started their course in September 2021, completing in July 2023. This report covers a second survey (Wave 2) at the end of their second year of study.
- Level 4 and 5 learners e.g., Higher National Diploma, Foundation Degree
 - Level 4 and 5 learners who started their course in the academic year 2022/23, post-reforms. This report covers an initial survey (Wave 1) at the end of their first year of study in 2023.

All T Level learners who started in 2021 and all TLTP learners who started in 2022 were invited to participate in the survey due to the relatively small size of these cohorts. For the other learner groups, representative samples were selected to be surveyed (for the level 3 technical learners, the population comprised a group who were studying subjects in the same technical routes as those offered as T Levels in 2021). Learners were identified using the National Pupil Database and the Individualised Learner Record database operated by DfE. This does not cover level 4 and 5 learners recorded solely in Higher Education Statistics Agency data, such as those studying at Higher Education Institutions. See Appendix A – technical note for further details.

For the second wave of interviewing, eligible cases in the T Level cohort were defined as those cases who were interviewed in Wave 1 and who were still doing a T Level when interviewed at the end of their first year. Those who stated during the initial interview that they did not start a T Level or who requested to leave the study were also excluded. Likewise, eligible cases for the comparator cohort were those interviewed at Wave 1 who did not request to leave the study.

All learners were invited to take part via email, text message and postal invitation. Data collection used a 'web first' approach, with a series of reminders sent to prompt self-completion. Follow-up telephone interviewing was used to increase response rates. See Appendix A – technical note for further details.

Questionnaire and data

The questionnaire for the Wave 2 surveys of the second cohort of T Level learners, Level 3 technical learners and A level learners (2021 starters) was designed to closely align with the 2022 Wave 1 questionnaire to enable comparisons between different stages of the programme. The survey was also designed with the 2022 Wave 2 questionnaire in mind, to reflect the progression of learners into the second and final year of their programmes.

The questionnaire for the Wave 1 survey of the third cohort of TLTP learners (2022 starters) was designed to closely align with the 2021 and 2020 surveys so that experiences across the cohorts could be compared. Similarly, the Wave 1 survey of the post-reform L4 and 5 learners (2022 starters) was designed to align with the pre-reform questionnaire to compare experiences between the two cohorts.

One questionnaire was used for all learner groups, with routing to filter respondents to relevant questions, while textfills were used to ensure each learner received relevant contextual information where necessary. The questionnaire collected detailed information in the following areas for all learners:

- Learner characteristics, including reasons for choosing programmes, as well as more detailed socio-demographic characteristics not included in administrative data (only asked in cases where information had not already been collected in the 2022 survey).

- Experiences of the programme, including the format of delivery, how manageable and challenging learners found courses, time spent on work experience/industry placements (with the exception of A level learners), and satisfaction (overall, and with various aspects of learners' courses and, if relevant, work experience/industry placement).
- Short-term outcomes, including perceptions of how the programme helped learners to develop skills and knowledge, planned next steps into further education and work, whether learners felt that the course matched what was advertised and their likelihood of recommending the course to others, and factors that learners felt were important in their career decision making.

Questions related to the following areas were asked only to Level 4 and 5 learners:

- Employment situation, including what learners had been doing prior to their programme and whether they were working during their programme.
- Programme funding, including how learners had paid for their tuition fees, and whether cost and funding options influenced their decision to take their programme.

This report

Findings in this report cover the surveys of all five learner groups, discussed in three separate chapters. The second T Level cohort is discussed alongside the comparator A level and other Level 3 technical learner groups. The TLTP and level 4 and 5 learner groups are discussed in separate chapters, with references made to findings from previous reports to allow for comparisons of learners' experiences across cohorts.

This research report was written before the new UK Government took office on 5 July 2024. As a result, the content may not reflect current Government policy.

A separate set of Appendix tables has been published alongside this report (covering the five learner groups outlined previously, as well as a combined tables set for Wave 2 cohorts) and referenced in the report throughout.

Percentages are rounded to zero decimal points. As a result, figures may not sum to 100%.

All reported base sizes exclude those who refused to answer or selected the option 'don't know' unless these options were considered to be of particular interest (e.g. if it was of interest to know the proportion who did not know the answer to a particular question). Figures based on a sample size of less than 30 are not represented. For this reason, findings are only provided for the six of the twelve TLTP routes, due to small base sizes across six of the eight routes introduced in 2022.

All data are weighted to reflect the population of each cohort (see Appendix A – technical note). Unweighted bases are provided in tables and charts.

Comparisons discussed in the report are statistically significant at the 95% level unless stated otherwise. That is to say that there is less than a 5% probability of the difference between groups arising by chance if there was no difference in the population.

T Level learners

This chapter focuses on T Levels that started in 2021. It looks at subject and learner characteristics, reasons for choosing the programme, aspirations, delivery of the programme and its components, workload and challenges, learners' satisfaction, programme outcomes and next steps. It compares these learners with the 2020 T Level cohort. It also compares these learners with the same cohort (2021 starters) of A level and level 3 technical learners. Findings for A Level and level 3 technical learners include learners who took a combination of both types of course.

Key T Level and comparator cohort findings

- Almost all T Level learners (95%) were taught mostly or entirely in person. Across T Levels, A Levels and level 3 technical qualifications, learners were most commonly taught for 11-20 hours a week. T Level learners were more likely than other level 3 learners to have high teaching hours i.e., more than 20 teaching hours a week.
- Almost all T Level learners (94%) completed the required industry placement by the end of their programme. A quarter of T Level learners (25%) completed a placement of fewer than 300 hours, below the standard minimum T Level expectation of 315 hours, using the flexibilities allowed by DfE as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, including meeting a set of pre-agreed learning outcomes. Most placements (79%) related directly to the learners' occupational specialism. Most learners were satisfied with their placement (78%) and felt it met their expectations.
- T Level learners were more likely to have an industry placement (94%) and other contact with employers (75%) than other level 3 technical learners (49% and 53% respectively). T Level placements also tended to be longer than other level 3 technical work placements.
- Most learners found their workload manageable, including the number of taught hours on the programme and the work required outside of taught lessons.
- Lack of study materials was the most common barrier to learning for T Levels, reported by 42% of learners, and 65% of Health and Science learners.
- A small majority of T Level learners were satisfied with their programme (57%) and likely to recommend it (51%). Satisfaction varied significantly by T Level route: it was highest for Education and Early Years learners (79%) and lowest for Health and Science learners (39%).
- The proportion of satisfied learners in the 2021 T Level cohort was lower than for the 2020 T Level cohort at the end of their programme. This was driven by low satisfaction with the new Health and Science route and a decrease in satisfaction for the Digital route. Satisfaction improved on the Construction route, and remained high for the Education and Early Years route. Overall satisfaction was also lower than for the comparator cohorts of 2021 level 3 technical learners (76%) and 2021 A level learners (72%).

- T Level learners reported that the programme had helped them significantly develop their understanding of how workplaces operate (78%), their knowledge of the occupational area (77%), and relevant practical skills for their subject (77%) and occupation (74%). Education and Early Years learners were the most positive about the development of key outcomes, while Digital learners were the least positive.
- Most T Level learners (78%) planned to undertake further study, most commonly through a degree (41%) or an apprenticeship (25%). These next steps were similar across T Level and level 3 technical learners.

Subject and learner characteristics

The second cohort of T Level learners began their programmes in autumn 2021. Four T Level routes were available, including the three routes delivered from 2020 (Education and Early Years, Digital and Construction) and a new route in Health and Science. New pathways were available within the Digital and Construction routes. In addition, new T Level providers started T Level delivery.

There were significant problems with Health and Science T Level assessments in 2021/22.⁴ Many learners and providers raised concerns when results were released in August 2022, and an Ofqual review found the assessments did not secure a sufficiently valid or reliable measure of student performance. The [Technical Education Learner Survey 2022 report](#) found low programme satisfaction for Health and Science learners, and many learners left their programme before completing the course.

The learner characteristics outlined below are intended to provide a picture of the population profiles of T Level, A level and other level 3 technical learners. Where possible, data for T Level learner characteristics are based on statistics published in the [T Level Action Plan](#), while administrative data have been used for A level and level 3 technical learners. Comparative figures relating to the characteristics of those who responded to the survey can be found in tables TL001-010, AL001-008 and L3001-012.

Subject of study

Considering the whole cohort of 2021 T Level learners, similar proportions were studying subjects relating to Health and Science (29%, n=1,548) and Education and Early Years (27%, n=1,457), with fewer learners studying Digital subjects (23%, n=1,212) as well as those related to Construction (22%, n=1,170).

Among learners responding to the survey, very few (2%, n=26) had completed a T Level Transition Programme before their T Level.

Sex

Overall, there were slightly more female T Level learners (55%) than male learners (45%), though there were variations by T Level subject. The vast majority of Construction and Digital learners were male (both 90%), while subjects related to Education and Early Years and Health and Science had more female learners as a proportion of the overall cohort (94% and 87% female respectively). A similar proportion of A level learners were female (55%), and level 3 technical learners were also more likely to be female (62%).

Ethnicity

Over one fifth (22%) of students starting T Levels in 2021 were recorded [in official data](#) as being from an ethnic minority background. In terms of variation by subject, there was a larger proportion of Asian learners for Digital subjects (14%). A higher proportion of both A level and level 3 technical learners were recorded as being from an ethnic minority background (34% and 31% respectively).

Free School Meals (FSM)

Overall, 24% of 2021 T Level starters had received free school meals (FSM). Within this learner group, it was highest for Education and Early Years learners (29%) and lowest for Digital and Construction learners (22% and 20% respectively). Level 3 technical learners were slightly more likely to be eligible for FSM at 31%, compared to 18% among A level learners.

Special Educational Needs (SEN)

1 in 10 (10%) 2021 T Level starters were recorded as receiving Special Educational Needs (SEN) support, while this figure was 12% for level 3 technical learners. The proportion of A level learners with SEN was 7% according to administrative data. Among T Level 2021 starters, Digital learners were slightly more likely than other routes to have SEN, at 17%.

1.3% of students in the 2021 T Level cohort were recorded as having an Education, Health and Care Plan at the point they were enrolled. This was a little lower than the national picture for all students on level 3 vocational and technical qualifications, which was 2.8%.

Previous educational attainment

At the point of enrolment, almost all T Level learners had achieved GCSE English at Grade 4 or higher (96%) and GCSE maths at Grade 4 (97%).

To compare prior attainment across T Level learners as well as A level and level 3 comparator groups, quintiles have been calculated according to the 'Attainment 8' score, a score calculated across eight qualifications including maths and English (which are double weighted). Quintiles for this score were developed based on the first cohort T Level

population, and using this we see that 24% of T Level learners starting in 2021 are in the highest achieving quintile, 19% of level 3 technical learners and 65% among A level learners.

T Level attainment

In summer 2023, 3,448 T Level learners received a T Level result. [Results from provisional published statistics](#), broken down by grade, can be found in Table 1 below.

Table 1: T Level grades for 2021 starters

Grade	Number of learners	% of learners
Distinction*	9	<1%
Distinction	754	22%
Merit	1,624	47%
Pass	732	21%
Partial Achievement	316	9%
Unclassified	13	<1%
<i>Total</i>	<i>3,448</i>	<i>100%</i>

Base: All T Level learners, n = 3,448. Source: [T Level results from provisional published statistics](#)

Female learners were more likely to receive a Distinction grade when compared to male learners (29% vs 14%), while male learners were more likely to receive a Pass grade (27% vs 15%) or a Partial Achievement (14% vs 5%). Some of the key differences related to T Level route were also linked to gender. For example, learners studying subjects related to Education and Early Years (95% female learners) were more likely to receive a Distinction grade (34%) than those studying other subjects, while Digital learners (90% male learners) were more likely to receive a Pass grade (32%) or Partial Achievement (18%).

Course content and delivery

Teaching characteristics

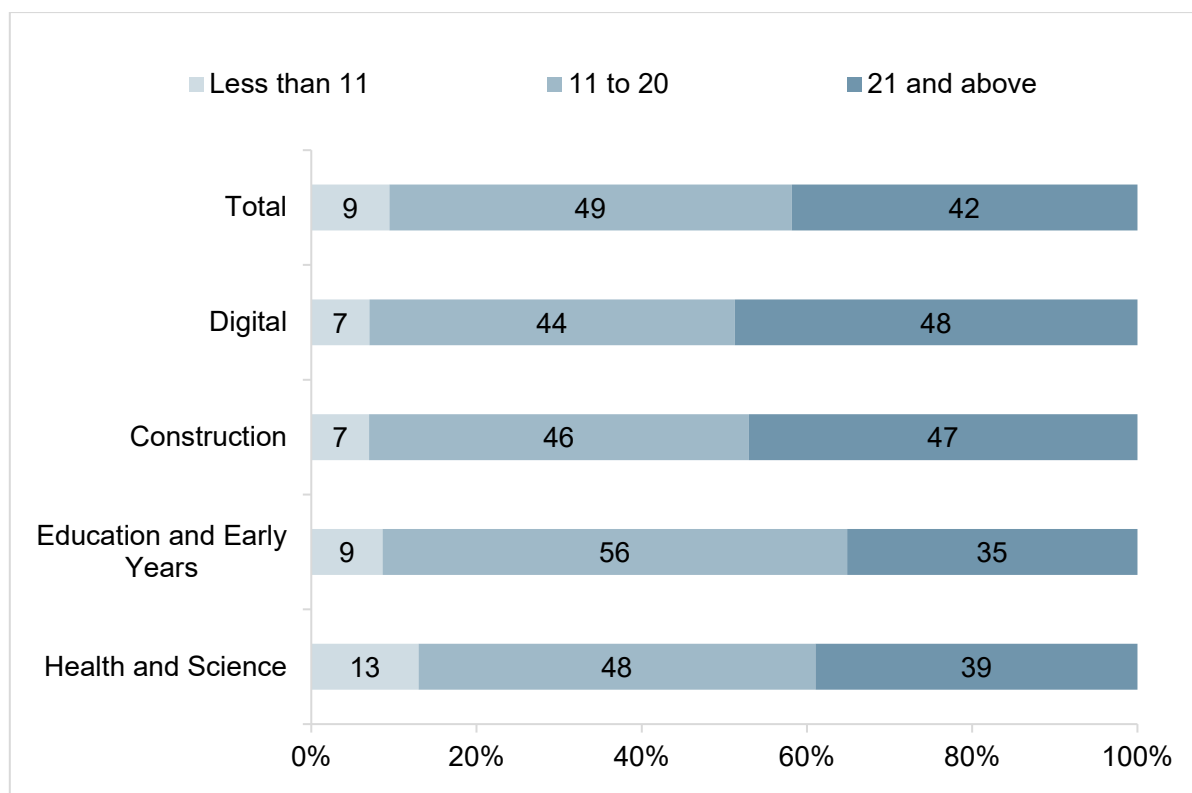
Almost all T Level learners were taught 'entirely' (58%) or 'mostly' in person (38%) in the 2022/23 academic year. The remaining learners were taught in 'roughly the same amount' online and in person (4%) or 'mostly online' (1%). This pattern was similar across T Level

subjects. More of the 2021 T Level cohort were taught entirely in person in their second year of the course (58%) compared with their first year (42%). This suggests a continuing growth of in-person teaching since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Almost all T Level learners (91%) were taught for at least 11 hours a week. This included about half (49%) of learners receiving 11 to 20 hours of teaching each week, and a further 42% receiving 21 hours or more. Fewer than one in ten learners (9%) received less than 11 hours. Teaching hours were similar to those reported by this cohort for the first year of their programme (50% taught for 11 to 20 hours, 43% for more than 20 hours), and to those reported by the 2020 T Level cohort at the end of their course (50% taught for 11 to 20 hours, 38% for more than 20 hours).

As also reported at the end of their first year, Construction learners received more teaching hours on average in their second year than Education and Early Years learners (47% of Construction learners reported receiving 21 or more hours, compared to 35% of Education and Early Years learners). This difference may relate to the varying length of industry placements between the subjects.

Figure 1: Number of taught hours per week (grouped)



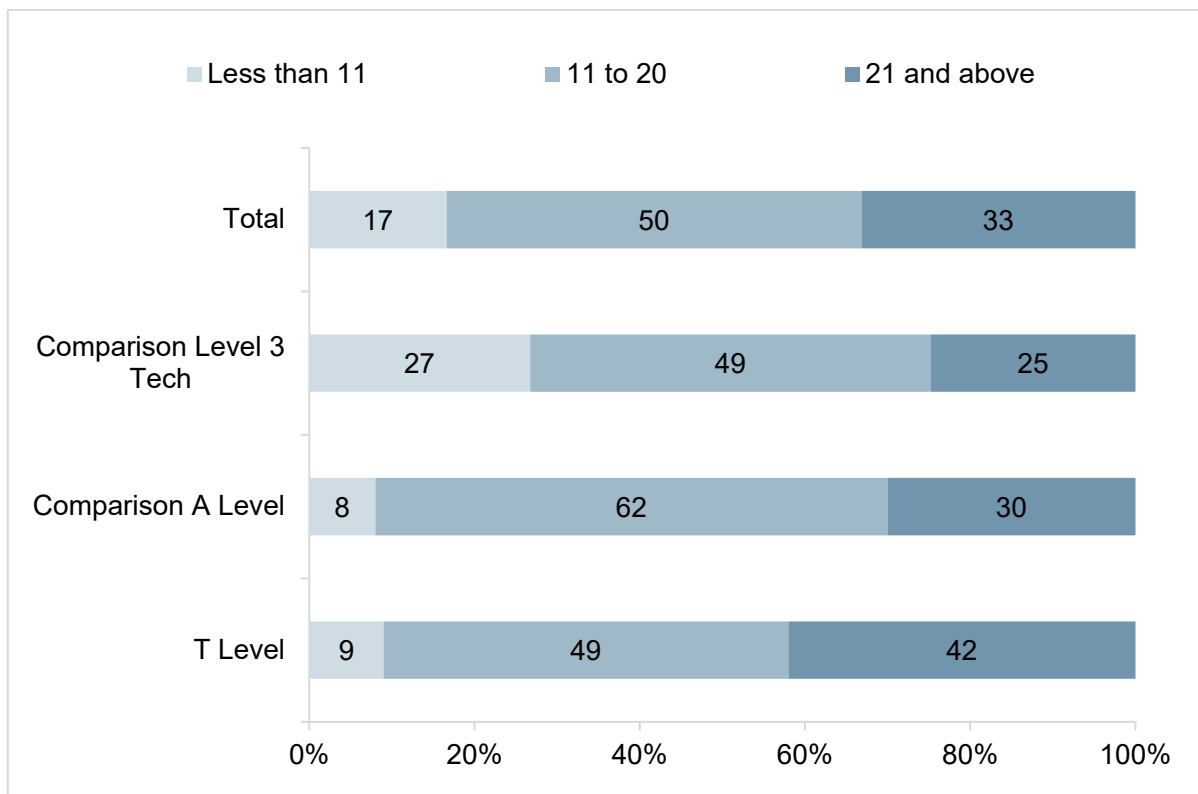
Source: Tech Ed Study – 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Base: T Level learners; Unweighted 1,388

The most commonly reported teaching hours for A levels and other level 3 technical qualifications were also 11 to 20 teaching hours a week (62% and 49% respectively). 2021

level 3 technical starters were more likely to report low teaching hours (27% reported less than 11 hours teaching per week) compared to A level learners (8%). Comparing these learner groups, T Level learners were more likely than the other level 3 learners to have high teaching hours (42% reported more than 20 teaching hours, compared with 30% for A level and 25% for other level 3 technical learners). This is in line with increased expectations for contact time for T Levels, compared with existing level 3 technical programmes. These differences between learner groups are similar to those reported for 2021 starters at the end of their first year.

Figure 2: Number of taught hours per week (grouped)



Source: Tech Ed Study – 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Base: All 2021 T Level, A Level and L3 Tech starters; Unweighted 3,071

Industry Placement

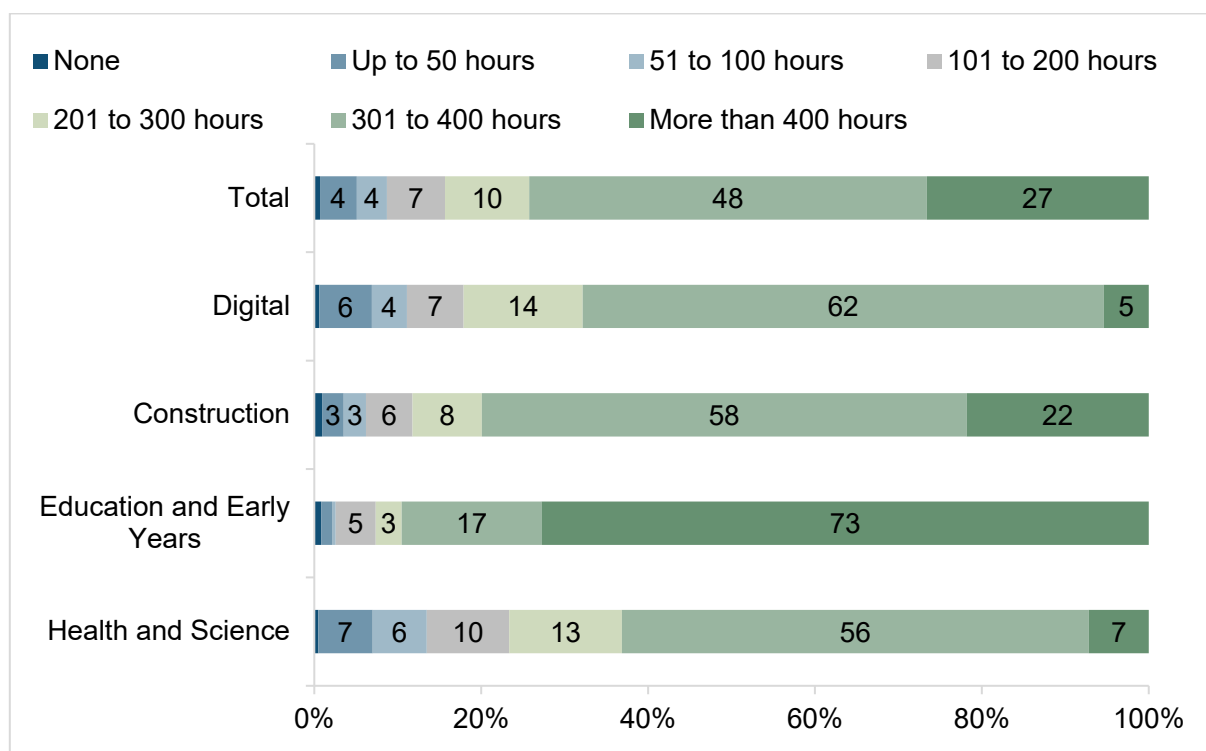
By the end of their programme, almost all T Level learners who responded to the survey had completed the required industry placement (94%). This was similar across T Level routes. These findings are similar to the provisional published results (95% placement completion, with similar rates for each route), which is the preferred data source as it covers the full population of T Level learners, and to the 2020 T Level cohort (98% completion based on published results). As expected given the T Level requirements, T Level learners were more likely to undertake a work placement than level 3 technical learners (49%) or A Level

learners (30%). T Level learners who completed a placement (n=1,317) were asked additional questions about placement length, specialism and experience.

The placement length for most T Level learners was in line with programme expectations. The most common placement length was between 301-400 hours (48%), in line with the minimum expectation of 315 hours for most T Levels. Over a quarter of T Level learners (27%) had a placement length of 401-750 hours. However, one quarter of learners (25%) had a placement length of no more than 300 hours, including 8% of all learners with a placement of no more than 100 hours. Shorter placements were permitted under flexibilities to the DfE Industry Placement guidance to reflect the challenges of delivering placements in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, including completion of a pre-agreed set of learning outcomes. Placement lengths for the 2021 cohort were similar to those for the 2020 T Level cohort. T Level placements were significantly longer than level 3 technical placements, which were typically no more than 100 hours (58% of placements between 0 to 100 hours).

The length of industry placements varied by subject. Education and Early Years learners completed more hours on placements than other learners (Figure 3). This reflects the special placement requirement of 750 hours for the Early Years Educator specialism within Education and Early Years, and was also reported by the 2020 T Level cohort.

Figure 3: Number of industry placement hours completed



Source: Tech Ed Study – 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Base: T Level learners; Unweighted 1,317

Almost all (94%) T Level learners reported their placement was related to their T Level general field, while most (79%) reported it was directly related to their occupational specialism. Education and Early Years placements had the highest proportions of specialism (98% in general field, 95% in occupational specialism) which Digital placements had the lowest proportions (89% and 66% respectively). The proportion of learners reporting their placement related to their occupational specialism was lower for the 2021 T Level cohort than the 2020 cohort (79% and 90% respectively).

Over a quarter (28%) of T Level learners partially completed their placement through additional part-time work. This proportion was highest for Health and Science learners (32%) and lowest for Digital learners (23%). Similarly, just under a third of learners (31%) worked on a team project with other learners within their placement. The use of team projects on placement varied by T Level route. They were most common for Digital (51%) and Construction learners (34%), and less common for Education and Early Years (22%) and Health and Science learners (17%).

2021 T Level starters in Construction, Digital and Health and Science subjects were allowed flexibility to complete up to 25% of their required 315 placement hours remotely, to enable completion of industry placements during the COVID-19 pandemic. Relatively few T Level learners who responded to the survey (n=148) had completed industry placement hours remotely, and most (79%) of these had completed no more than 60 hours remotely, below the 25% limit.

Almost all T Level learners (93%) had completed an employer-set project during their course, with proportions similar across routes.

Three quarters of 2021 T Level starters (75%) had contact with employers outside of their industry placement. This is slightly higher than reported at the end of the first year (69%). The most commonly reported contact was talks with employers (65%), with around a quarter of learners reporting visiting employers (28%) or employer contact as part of their project work (18%). Construction learners reported that they visited employers more (43%) than learners in other subjects (23-26%). Other level 3 technical learners were less likely than T Level learners to have contact with employers, with only 53% reporting they had some type of contact with employers beyond work experience.

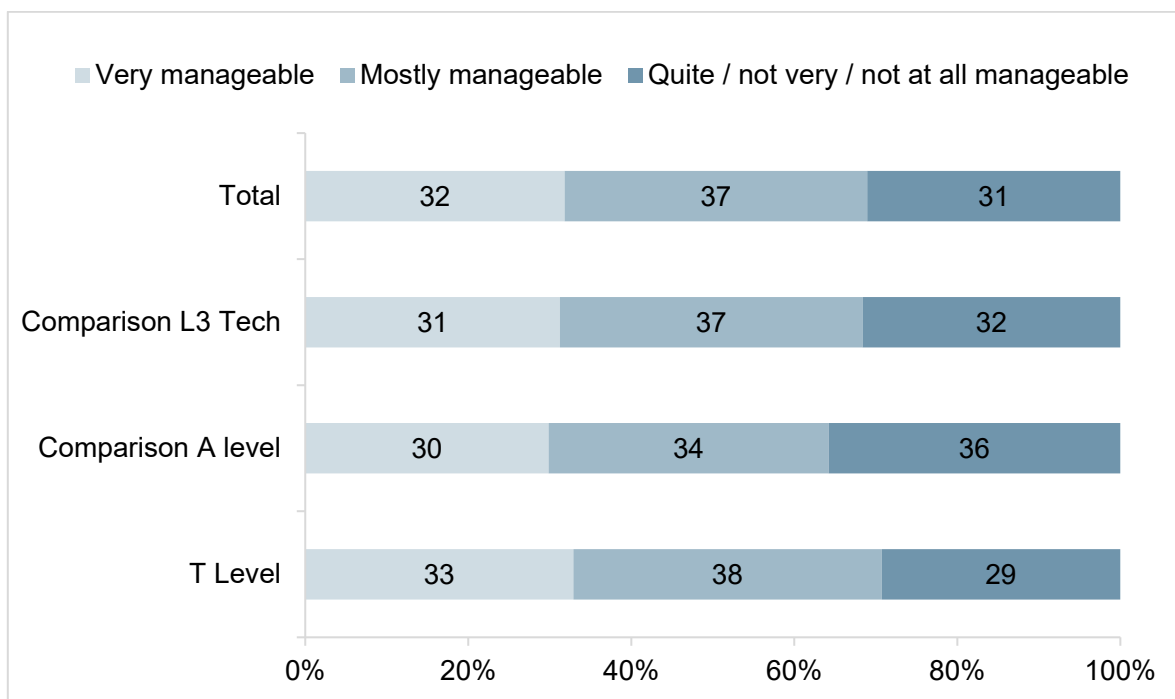
Workload and challenge

Workload

Most T Level learners (71%) felt that the amount of taught hours on their course was 'very' or 'mostly' manageable, higher than reported at their end of their first year (59%) and similar to the 2020 cohort (68%). This proportion was higher for Construction and Digital learners (80% and 76% respectively) than for Education and Early Years (70%) and Health

and Science (62%) learners, although this finding was not statistically significant at the 5% level ($p= 0.061$).

Figure 4: Manageability of taught hours



Source: Tech Ed Study - 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Base: Base: All 2021 T Level, A Level and L3 Tech starters; Unweighted 3,079

Most T Level learners reported that the work required outside of taught lessons was ‘very’ or ‘mostly’ manageable (66%), higher than reported at their end of their first year (53%) and similar to the 2020 cohort (65%). Over four fifths of learners (89%) reported that the work required outside of taught lessons was ‘very’, ‘mostly’ or ‘quite manageable’, with 11% reporting that it was ‘not very’ or ‘not at all manageable’. As seen with the manageability of taught hours, this proportion was higher for Construction and Digital learners (95% and 91% respectively) than for Education and Early Years (87%) and Health and Science (86%) learners.

Learners who reported their workload was ‘not very’ or ‘not at all’ manageable ($n=140$) were asked about the reasons. The most commonly reported reasons were ‘not enough support from the teacher/tutor’ (49%), ‘the work set was unclear’ (44%), and that ‘too much work’ was given (41%). Fewer learners reported that ‘other commitments outside the course’ (26%) or work being ‘too hard’ (20%) made their workload unmanageable.

Barriers to learning

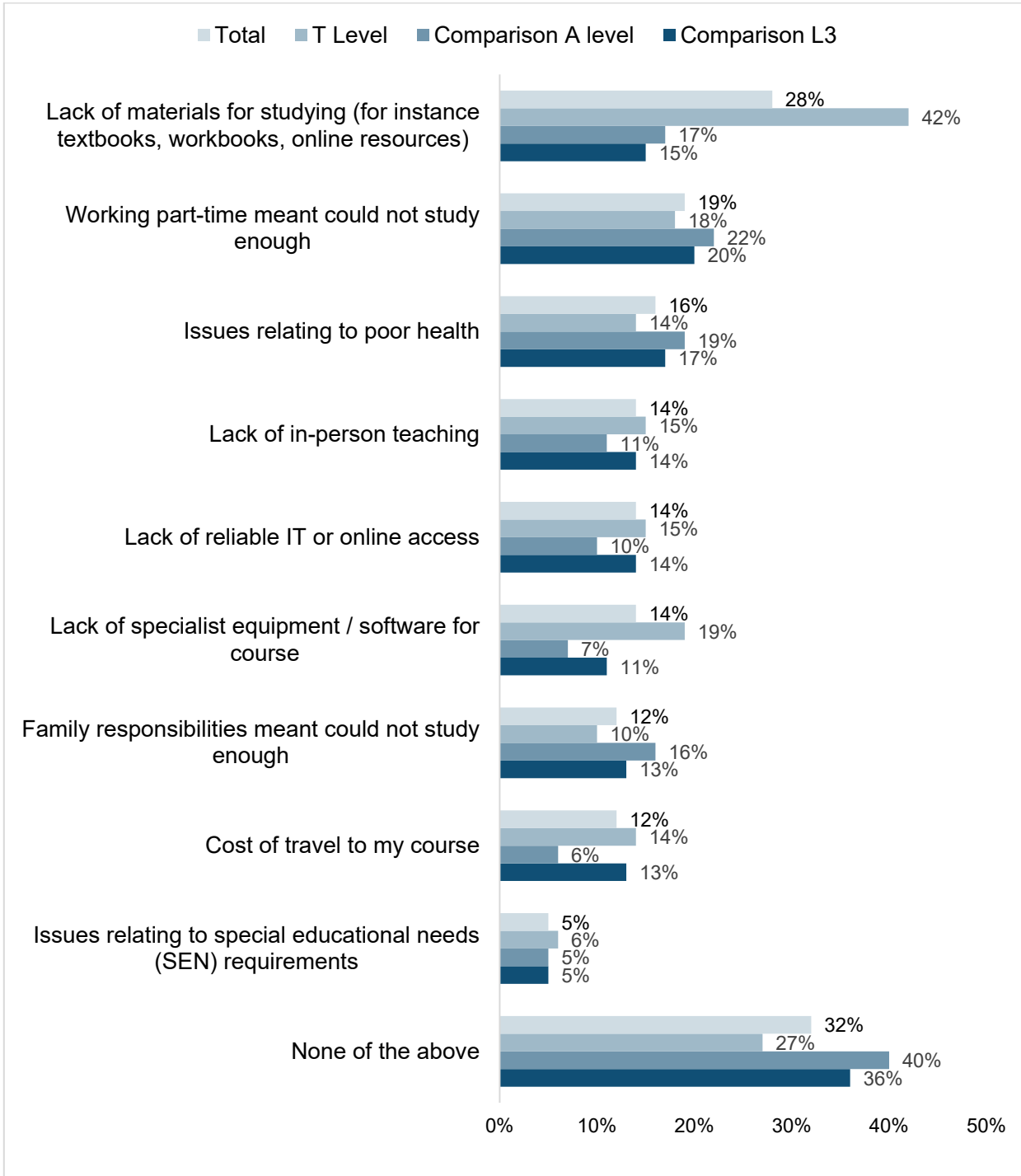
‘Lack of materials for study’ continued to be the most commonly reported barrier to learning for this cohort in 2022/23, with 42% recording this as a barrier in the second year of

their programme (compared to 43% of this cohort when they were in their first year). The next most common barrier was a 'lack of specialist equipment/software' (19%).

As seen in the first year of the course, lack of materials was most commonly reported by Health and Science learners (65%, compared with 43% of Digital learners, 37% of Construction learners, and 17% of Education and Early Years learners). Lack of materials was the most commonly reported barrier to learning for all routes except Education and Early Years, where the most commonly reported barriers were 'working part-time' (25%) and 'issues relating to poor health' (19%). 'Issues relating to special educational needs requirements were cited as a barrier to learning by about a quarter of SEN learners (24%).

Comparing the T Level learner group with other level 3 groups, A level learners and level 3 technical learners were much less likely to report lack of materials for study as a barrier (17% and 15% respectively). The most common barriers for A level learners and level 3 technical learners were 'working part-time' (22% and 20% respectively) and 'issues relating to poor health' (19% and 17%). This is similar to the profile of barriers for the Education and Early Years T Level.

Figure 5: Barriers to learning



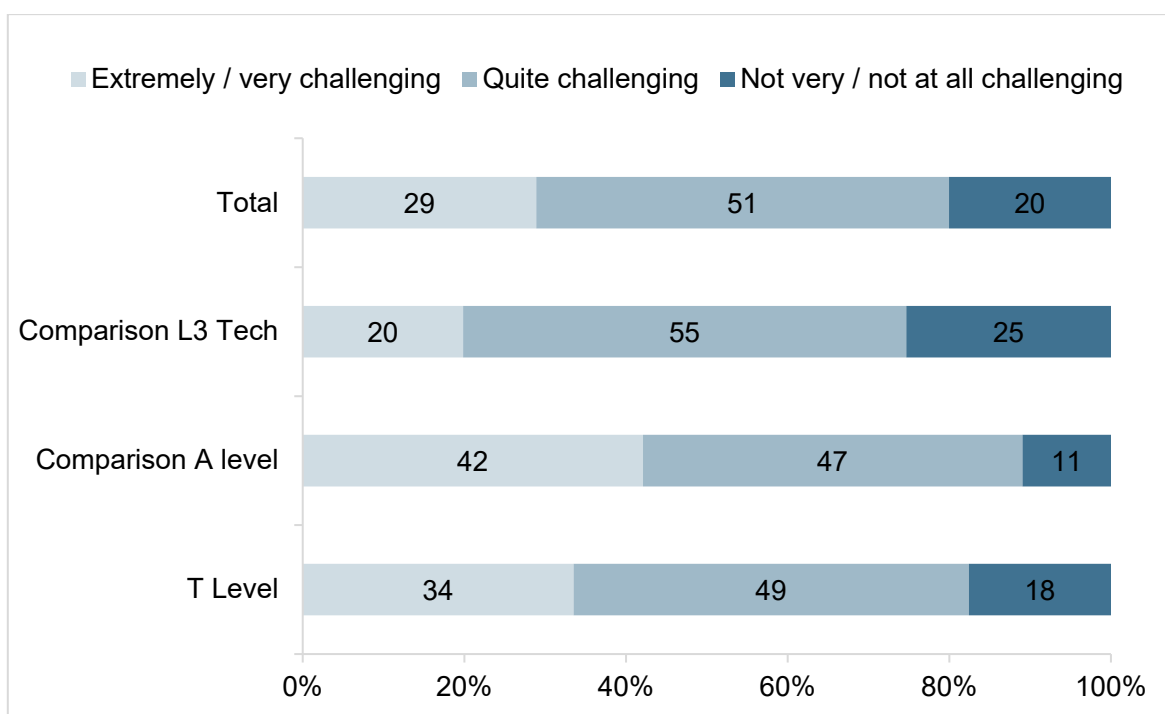
Source: Tech Ed Study - 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Base: All 2021 T Level, A Level and L3 Tech starters; Unweighted 1,307-1,388

How challenging learners found their course

About a third (34%) of T Level learners found their course ‘extremely’ or ‘very challenging’, whilst **nearly a half of learners (49%) found their course quite challenging**. Less than a fifth (18%) reported it to be ‘not very’ or ‘not at all challenging’. Course challenge was similar to that reported by this cohort at the end of first year (33% extremely / very challenging, 55% quite challenging). It was higher than the challenge reported by the first T Level cohort (2020 starters) at the end of their programme (23% extremely / very challenging, 65% quite challenging). However, this difference was due to the high level of challenge experienced by learners on the new Health and Science route (50% extremely / very challenging). For all other routes, the proportions of the 2021 cohort reporting that their course was extremely / very challenging was similar to those of the 2020 cohort (where 24-29% of learners on different routes reported that their course was extremely / very challenging).

Figure 6: Perceived level of challenge relating to the course



Source: Tech Ed Study - 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Base: All 2021 T Level, A Level and L3 Tech starters; Unweighted 3,087

As would be expected, course challenge was also associated with the manageability of teaching and work outside lessons. The following groups had higher proportion of learners reporting that their course was ‘extremely’ or ‘very challenging’:

- Learners who found the amount of teaching less manageable (47% of those who found it ‘quite’, ‘not very’ or ‘not at all manageable’, compared with 28% of those who found it ‘very’ or ‘mostly manageable’).

- Learners who found the work outside lessons to be 'quite manageable' (42%), 'not very manageable' (48%) or 'not at all manageable' (69%), compared with those who found it 'very' or 'mostly manageable' (28%).

SEN learners were slightly more likely to report that the course was 'extremely' or 'very challenging' (41%) compared with other learners (33%).

Compared with other learner groups, T Level learners found their programme more challenging than level 3 technical learners (20% extremely / very challenging, 55% quite challenging), and less challenging than A level learners (42% extremely / very challenging, 47% quite challenging).

Among T Level learners who reported that their course was 'extremely' or 'very challenging' (n=402), the most commonly reported reasons associated with the course were not receiving enough support (31%), high workload and exams (both 28%).

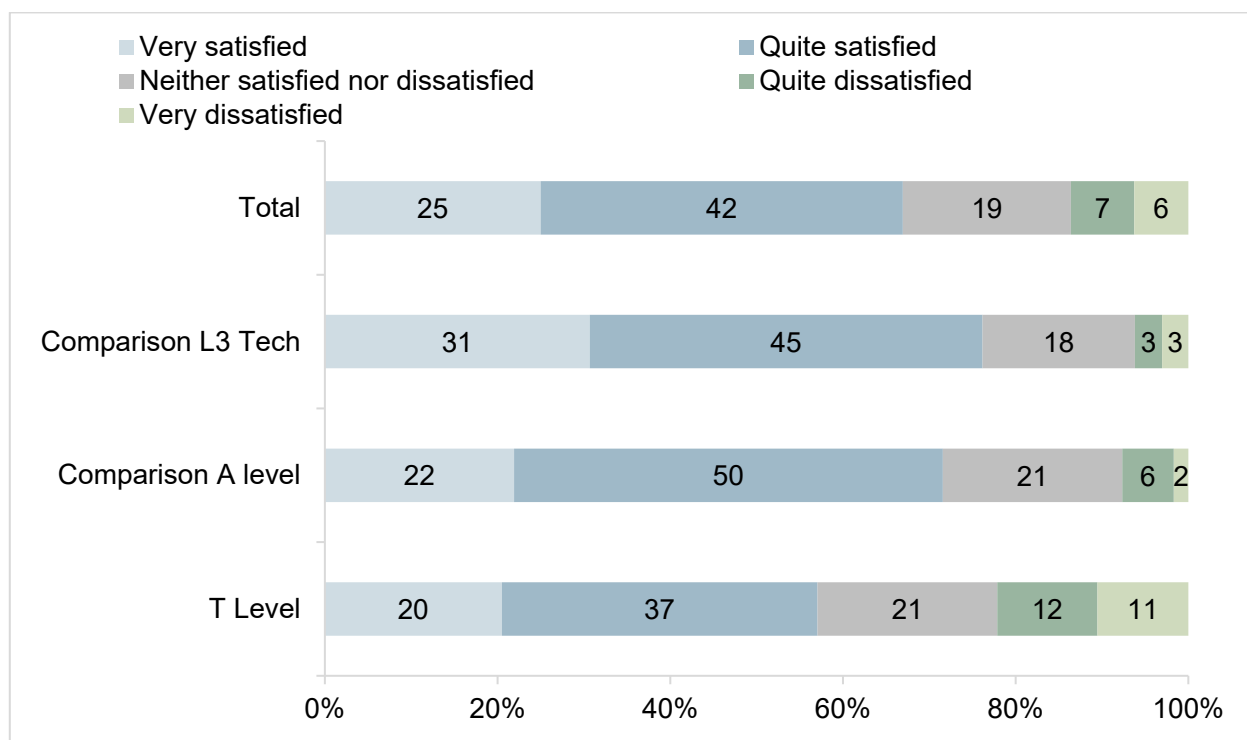
A small proportion of T Level learners responding to the survey (n=99) left their course early and were asked the reasons for this. Among Health and Science learners who left early (n=46), more than half cited issues with the way 'the course is delivered' (74%) and 'students are assessed' (51%), the latter reason reflecting the delivery and assessment issues for this course. Among learners from all other subjects (n=53), the most commonly reported reasons for leaving early were 'lack of support from teachers' (42%), 'personal problems' (32%) and 'issues with the way the course was delivered' (31%).

Satisfaction with the course

Overall satisfaction

A small majority of T Level learners (57%) were 'very' or 'quite satisfied' with their course, with more than a fifth (22%) 'very' or 'quite dissatisfied'. These proportions were similar to those reported at the end of the first year of the programme, and substantially lower than for the 2020 cohort at the end of their programme (71% 'very/quite satisfied'), and the comparator group of level 3 technical learners (76%). The proportion of T Level learners who were 'very' or 'quite' satisfied was also lower than A level learners (72%) who were studying at the same time, although this finding was not statistically significant at the 5% level (p= 0.069).

Figure 7: Overall satisfaction



Source: Tech Ed Study - 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Base: All 2021 T Level, A Level and L3 Tech starters; Unweighted 3,093

Overall, satisfaction was most strongly associated with T Level route. Education and Early Years learners had the highest satisfaction (79% very / quite satisfied, 7% very / quite dissatisfied), consistent with the 2020 cohort for this route (79% were very/quite satisfied, 8% very/quite dissatisfied). Learners on the new Health and Science route had very low satisfaction (39% very/quite satisfied, 35% very/quite dissatisfied). Two thirds (66%) of Construction learners were satisfied, a higher proportion than the 2020 cohort (56%), while just over half (51%) of Digital learners were satisfied, a substantially lower proportion than the 2020 cohort (69%).

Learners who found their course ‘quite challenging’ were more likely to report satisfaction with their course (69%), compared with learners who found it ‘not very/not at all challenging’ (57%) or ‘extremely / very challenging’ (41%).

Learners who were ‘quite’ or ‘very dissatisfied’ were asked the reasons for this. **The most commonly reported reasons for dissatisfaction among T Level learners were lack of organisation (28%) and quality of teaching (24%).**

Only half of T Level learners (51%) reported that they were ‘very likely’ or ‘quite likely’ to recommend their course to others, with more than a quarter (29%) reporting that they were ‘quite unlikely’ or ‘very unlikely’ to recommend their course. This was similar to the

proportions reported at the end of their first year (52% very/quite likely), and lower than for the 2020 cohort (67% very/quite likely).

Similar to course satisfaction, learners' likelihood of recommending their course was strongly associated with T Level route and the level of challenge experienced on the programme. Education and Early Years learners were the most positive (71% very/quite likely to recommend), followed by Construction learners (62% very/quite likely). For other routes, less than half of learners were likely to recommend their course (46% of Digital learners and 32% of Health and Science learners were very/quite likely to recommend). Learners who found their course 'extremely / very challenging' were less likely to recommend their course (36%) than those who found it 'quite challenging' (61%) or 'not very/not at all challenging' (53%).

Comparing learner groups for satisfaction and likelihood of recommending their course, T Level learners were less likely to be 'very' or 'quite satisfied' than comparator learner groups (57% of T Level learners, compared with 76% of level 3 technical learners and 72% of A level learners). Almost a quarter of T Level learners (22%) were 'very' or 'quite dissatisfied', compared with very few level 3 technical learners (6%) and A level learners (8%). Similarly, T Level learners were less likely to recommend their course (51% 'very' or 'quite likely' to recommend, compared with 69% of level 3 technical learners and 66% of A level learners). These proportions are similar to those reported by these cohorts at the end of their first year on their programmes.

Satisfaction with specific aspects

Table 3 below shows learners' satisfaction with specific aspects of their programme, including comparisons with the 2020 T Level cohort, and 2021 A Level and level 3 technical learners. Learners' views are from the end of their programme.

Table 2: Learner satisfaction with specific programme elements

Percentage of learners 'very/quite satisfied' with ¹	T Level 2021	T Level 2020	A level 2021	Level 3 technical 2021
Teachers' knowledge and expertise	72%	75%	82%	79%
The skills covered for chosen occupation/subject	71%	80%	71%	75%
The standard of classroom teaching	70%	72%	79%	74%
The support received from tutors	70%	73%	72%	73%
The standard of the practical 'hands on' work	68%	73%	79% ²	66%
Equipment, software and resources available	67%	71%	70%	70%
Preparation for future work	63%	n/a	38%	n/a
The careers advice provided	56%	64%	45%	58%
The level of employer contact in the course	55%	72%	30% ²	43%
Preparation for further study	55%	n/a	53%	61%
The way students are assessed on the course	50%	58%	50%	68%
Programme organisation and management	37%	41%	61%	60%
<i>Unweighted Base</i>	<i>1,398-1,404</i>	<i>755 - 800</i>	<i>377²</i>	<i>1,310-1,312</i>

Base: All T Level, A level and level technical learners. Source: Tech Ed Study – T Level Cohort 2 Wave 2 and other cohorts (Jun-Sep 2023) and Tech Ed Study 2022 (May-Sep 2022)

The highest proportions of T Level learners were satisfied with teachers' knowledge and expertise (72%), the skills covered for their chosen occupation/subject (71%) and the standard of classroom teaching (70%). The lowest proportions were satisfied with the careers advice (56%), the level of employer contact (55%), the way students are assessed on the course (50%) and programme organisation and management (37%).

Comparing T Level cohorts from 2020 and 2021, the proportions of learners reporting satisfaction were similar for most aspects of the course. Lower proportions of 2021 starters reported satisfaction with the skills covered for their chosen area (71% of 2021 starters,

¹ 'n/a' indicates questions which were not presented to those cohorts.

² A level learners were only asked these questions if they were also completing a level 3 technical course (n=31).

compared to 80% of 2020 starters), the way students are assessed (50% compared to 58%), careers advice (56% compared to 64%) and employer contact (55% compared to 72%). The lower satisfaction with employer contact is despite higher levels of employer contact outside work experience for 2021 starters (75%, compared with 69% for 2020 starters), but could reflect lower proportions of satisfaction with the industry placement (78%, compared with 85%) or placements within occupational specialism (79%, compared with 90%).

Comparing T Levels with level 3 technical qualifications, the proportions of satisfied students were broadly similar (differences < 10 percentage points) for most aspects of the programmes. However, more level 3 technical learners were satisfied with programme organisation and management (37% of T Level learners, 60% of level 3 technical learners) and the way students are assessed on the course (50% and 68%), while more T Level learners were satisfied with the level of employer contact on the course (55% of T Level learners, 43% of level 3 technical learners).

Comparing T Levels with A levels, the proportions of satisfied students were broadly similar (differences <10 percentage points) for most aspects of the programmes. More T Level learners were satisfied with the careers advice (56% of T Level learners, 45% of A level learners), level of employer contact (55% and 30%) and preparation for work (63% and 38%). This might be expected given the academic focus of A level courses. Conversely, more A level learners were satisfied with programme organisation and management (61% of A level and 37% of T Level learners), reflecting the low satisfaction of T Level learners with this aspect.

Satisfaction with industry placement

Most 2021 T Level starters who completed an industry placement were ‘very’ or ‘quite satisfied’ with it (78%), slightly lower than for 2020 starters (85%).

Learners who completed an industry placement were asked to respond to a range of statements³ about their placement. The results are shown in Table 3.

³ These questions were not asked in previous surveys so comparisons cannot be made.

Table 3: T Level learners' views on their placement

Elements of work experience	% of T Level learners 'strongly agree/agree'
The placement improved my knowledge of the workplace	87%
The placement was a good challenge for me	79%
My employer made sure I got the most I could out of the placement	74%
I felt a valued member of the team during the placement	73%
The placement came at the right point in the course	66%
I was fully prepared for my placement	64%
I had all the support I needed from the college/school during the placement	64%
<i>Unweighted Base</i>	<i>1,319-1,320</i>

Base: All T Level learners who completed an industry placement. Source: Tech Ed Study – T Level Cohort 2 Wave 2 and other cohorts (Jun-Sep 2023).

When looking at differences by subject area, in line with the overall level of satisfaction level, Education and Early Years learners were much more positive than other learners across all aspects, apart from being prepared for their placement in which Construction learners were equally positive. A particularly high proportion of Education and Early Years learners agreed that the placement improved their knowledge of the workplace (95%) and that it had been a good challenge (92%). Again in line with the overall level of satisfaction, **Construction learners were the second most positive learners, with Health and Science and Digital learners being the least positive.**

Regarding Health and Science learners, just over half (52%) agreed that they were fully prepared for their placement, with 59% agreeing that they felt a valued member of the team during their placement and 63% agreeing that their employer made sure they got the most they could out of the placement. In addition, a lower proportion of both Digital and Health and Science learners than learners of other subjects agreed that the placement came at the right point in the course (57% and 58% respectively) and that they had the support of their college/school during the placement (59% and 58% respectively).

Comparing T Level learners' responses to these statements to those of level 3 technical learners who had completed a placement uncovered little difference. Further, T Level and technical learners were generally more positive than A level learners, particularly in terms of the support they received from their college/school during the placement, feeling a valued member of the team and the placement being a good challenge.

In addition, most learners reported that their placement met their expectations across a range of other aspects they were asked about. Learners reported that their expectations were met for ‘experience of a real workplace’ (83%) and ‘the opportunity to build confidence in the workplace’ (75%), similar to findings for the first T Level cohort (2020 starters). There has been an increase in the proportion of learners whose expectations were met in terms of being ‘given real tasks to carry out’ (78% of 2021 starters compared with 67% of 2020 starters) and ‘able to apply technical knowledge and skills developed on the programme’ (70% compared with 58%).

Consistent with subject variation in overall placement satisfaction, Education and Early Years learners were the most likely to report that their expectations were met (81-91%), compared with learners in Health and Science (66-84%), Digital (63-76%) and Construction (67-80%) subjects.

Course outcomes

T Level learners were asked about the extent to which their T Level programme had developed a range of skills, knowledge and understanding. Table 5 shows the extent to which the programme had helped learners develop in relation to specific aims and outcomes. Comparisons are made to responses from T Level 2020 learners and the A level and level 3 technical comparator groups at the end of their courses.

Table 4: Extent to which programmes helped learners develop key skills, knowledge and understanding

Proportion of learners who developed 'a great deal' or 'quite a bit' in:	T Level 2021	T Level 2020	A level 2021	Level 3 Technical 2021
Study skills ⁴	56%	n/a	73%	71%
IT skills	53%	59%	33%	58%
Communication skills	72%	79%	58%	69%
Confidence	70%	76%	54%	66%
Knowledge of the occupational area that course covered ⁵	77%	86%	n/a	77%
Practical skills needed for chosen subject ⁵	77%	82%	n/a	71%
Practical skills needed for chosen occupation ^{4, 5}	74%	n/a	n/a	65%
Understanding of how workplaces operate ⁵	78%	85%	n/a	62%
Analytical ability ⁴	57%	n/a	69%	62%
Ability to present ideas and arguments in structured writing ⁴	55%	n/a	65%	62%
Ability to understand complex instructions ⁴	61%	n/a	71%	65%
Problem solving ⁴	69%	n/a	71%	70%
Working as a team ⁴	75%	n/a	50%	70%
Self-organisation and time-keeping ⁴	68%	n/a	74%	73%
<i>Unweighted Base</i>	<i>1,398-1,405</i>	<i>584-586</i>	<i>376-377</i>	<i>1,309-1,312</i>

Base: All T Level, A level and level technical learners. Source: Tech Ed Study – T Level Cohort 2 Wave 2 and other cohorts (Jun-Sep 2023) and Tech Ed Study 2022 (May-Sep 2022)

⁴ Items asked to 2021 T Level starters and comparator cohorts only, the first T Level cohort (2020) were not asked about these.

⁵ Items not presented to the A level cohort because A levels are not technical education programmes.

Most T Level learners reported that their programme had helped them develop specialist knowledge and skills in their chosen area and prepared them to enter the workplace. T Levels had developed 'a great deal' or 'quite a bit' learners' 'understanding of how workplaces operate' (78%), 'knowledge of the occupational area' (77%) and the practical skills needed for their chosen subject (77%) and occupation (74%).

The programme also helped most T Level learners to develop core skills and employability skills. Three quarters of learners reported that their programme had developed 'a great deal' or 'quite a bit' their ability to 'work as a team' (75%) and 'communication skills' (72%). For every competency which was asked about, at least half of learners reported their programme had helped them developed this 'a great deal' or 'quite a bit'. The intended outcomes which were least commonly developed were IT skills (53% developed 'a great deal' or quite a bit'), the ability to present ideas and arguments in structured writing (55%), study skills (56%) and analytical ability (57%).

Regarding the range of course outcomes, Education and Early Years learners responded the most positively and Digital learners the least positively. For example, almost all (>90%) Education and Early Years learners developed 'a great deal' or 'quite a bit' their knowledge of the occupational area, practical skills for the subject and occupation, and understanding of how workplaces operate, compared with less than three quarters (65-70%) of Digital learners.

There were no large differences by prior attainment, SEN or FSM status. As would be expected, learners who left their course early were less likely to report that the course had helped them develop key outcomes than learners who completed the course (differences of 19-38 percentage points).

Comparing the 2021 T Level cohort with the 2020 T Level cohort, broadly similar proportions of learners in each cohort developed key outcomes 'a great deal' or 'quite a bit'.

Comparing T Level learners with their peers studying only A levels, T Level learners were more likely to report 'a great deal' or 'quite a bit' of development in their IT skills, communication skills, confidence and teamwork (differences of 14-25 percentage points). A level learners were more likely than T Level learners to report 'a great deal' or 'quite a bit' of development in their study skills and analytical ability (differences of 12-17 percentage points). These differences may reflect the different nature of these courses.

Comparing T Level learners with their peers studying only Level 3 technical qualifications, T Level learners were more likely to report 'a great deal' or 'quite a bit' of development in practical skills for their chosen occupation and their understanding of how workplaces operate (differences of 9-16 percentage points). Level 3 technical learners were slightly more likely than T Level learners to report 'a great deal' or 'quite a bit' of development in their study skills (difference of 15 percentage points).

Next steps

Most (78%) of T Level learners planned to undertake further study after their course finished. The most common study routes were a degree (41%) or an apprenticeship (25%). Very few learners intended to take an HTQ (1%), another level 4/5 qualification (4%) or another qualification (7%). Less than a fifth (17%) of learners planned to undertake paid work as their main next step. The remaining learners (5%) intended to do something other than work or study or had not decided.

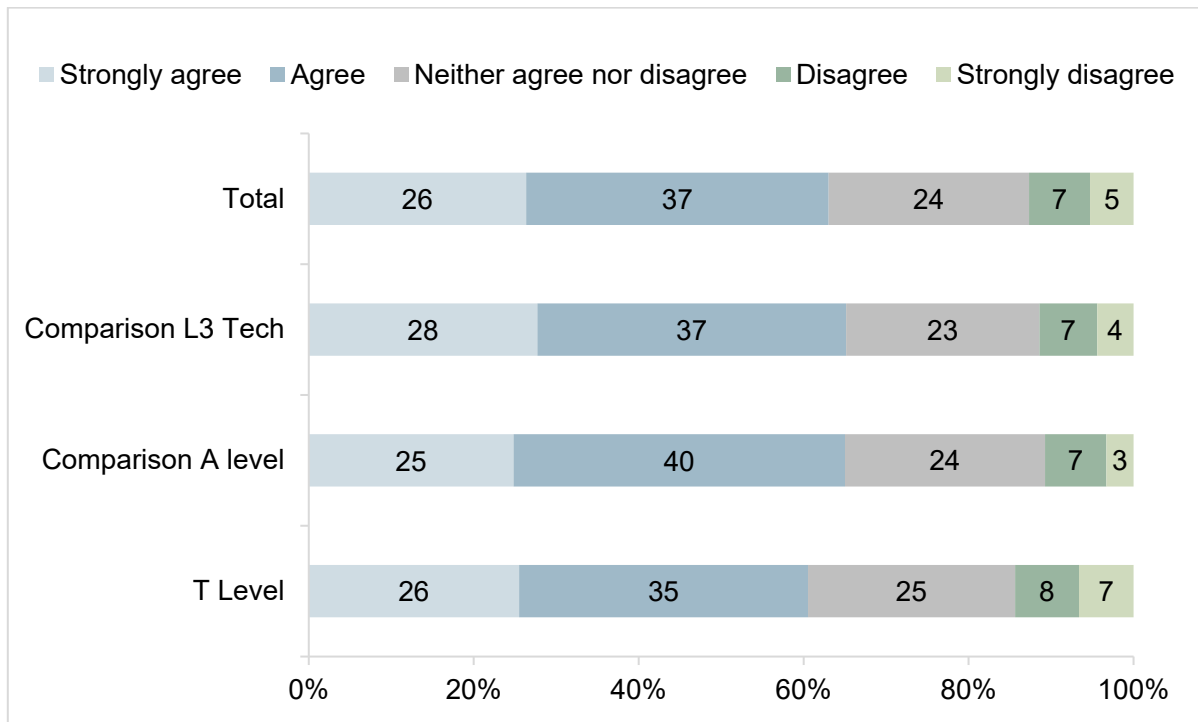
The most common next steps varied by T Level route. Education and Early Years learners most commonly planned to complete a degree (54%) or undertake paid work (28%). Health and Science learners most commonly planned to complete a degree (51%), followed by an apprenticeship (16%) or paid work (15%). Half of Construction learners (50%) planned to complete an apprenticeship, with a further fifth (20%) planning to study for a degree. Similar proportions of Digital learners planned to complete an apprenticeship (37%) or study for a degree (32%). These subject differences may indicate underlying differences in the available progression routes for each occupational area.

Planning further study (including apprenticeships) was associated with prior attainment (70-71% of learners in the top two quintiles of the T Level population, compared with 54-63% of learners in other quintiles. It was slightly less common for FSM learners to have plans for further study (59%) than other learners (66%).

Next steps for level 3 technical learners were broadly similar to those for T Level learners. A slightly higher proportion of level 3 technical learners intended to study for a degree (48%, compared to 41% of T Level learners). This difference was due to learners who were studying a combination of level 3 technical and A level courses, as more than half of these learners (61%) planned to study for a degree. Slightly fewer level 3 technical learners planned to complete an apprenticeship (17%, compared to 24% of T Level learners). As might be expected from the academic nature of the course, A Level learners were more likely to study for a degree (68%) than T Level or level 3 technical learners. A Level learners were less likely to go onto an apprenticeship (11%) as their main next step.

Most T Level learners (69%) ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘agreed’ that their course had ‘allowed them to progress to what they wanted to do’ while one in ten (11%) learners ‘disagreed’ or ‘strongly disagreed’. This varied by intended next step (78-82% of learners who intended to study for a degree, HTQ or level 4/5 qualification, compared with 63% each of learners who intended to undertake an apprenticeship or paid work). **Fewer learners (61%) ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘agreed’ that they felt ‘supported by their education provider to decide on their next step’** (14% ‘disagreed’ or ‘strongly disagreed’). Across these statements, Education and Early Years learners were most likely to agree (85% for progression, 71% for provider support with decisions) and Health and Science and Digital learners were least likely to agree (59% and 61% respectively for progression, 54% and 55% for provider support with decisions).

Figure 8: Whether respondent agreed that they were supported by education provider in deciding on next steps

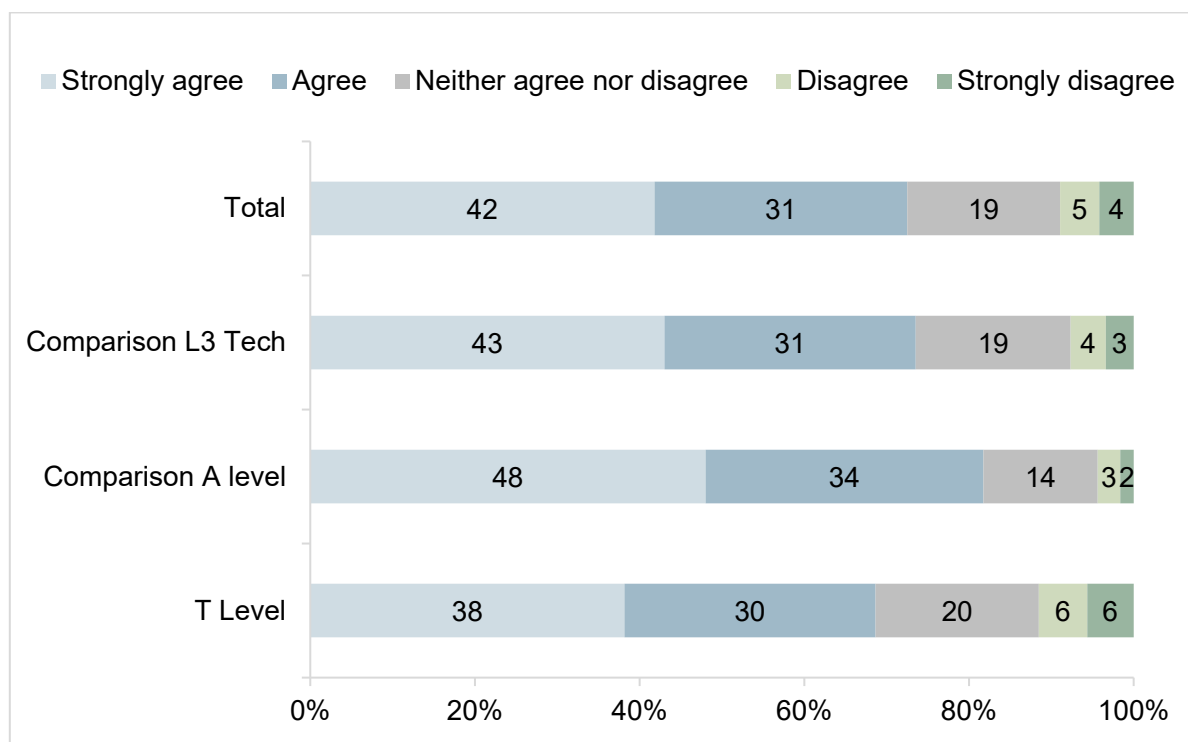


Source: Tech Ed Study - 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Base: All 2021 T Level, A Level and L3 Tech starters; Unweighted 3,086

A level learners were more likely than other learner groups to ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ that their course had ‘allowed them to progress to what they wanted to do’ (82% of A level learners, 74% of level 3 technical learners, 69% of T Level learners). The proportions of learners who ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘agreed’ that they felt ‘supported by their education provider to decide on their next step’ was similar across learner groups (65% of A level learners, 65% of level 3 technical learners, 61% of T Level learners).

Figure 9: Whether course has allowed learner to progress to what they want to do



Source: Tech Ed Study - 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Base: All 2021 T Level, A Level and L3 Tech starters; Unweighted 3,085

Conclusion

In summer 2023, surveys were administered with the second T Level cohort (who started in 2021 and have now completed their programme) and a comparison group who began other level 3 technical qualifications or A levels in 2021.

Just over half of T Level learners who started their two-year programme in 2021 were satisfied with their programme, lower than the first T Level cohort who started in 2020 and the comparator groups of A level and level 3 learners who also started their courses in 2021 (around three quarters of these two groups of learners were satisfied with their courses). As found in the previous cohort, most T Level learners found their programme ‘quite’ challenging, which is strongly associated with higher overall satisfaction, and they found the workload manageable.

Almost all learners completed the required industry placement. About one fifth of placements were below the minimum expected length of 315 hours, in line with flexibilities for placement length during the COVID-19 pandemic. Most learners who had undertaken an industry placement were satisfied with it.

The most common barrier to learning for T Level learners was a lack of study materials. This was not a key barrier for comparator learners on A level and level 3 technical courses, as

would be expected for more established courses. The small proportion of learners who struggled to manage workload outside classes reported this was due to unclear work being set, insufficient support from teachers/tutors and the amount of work.

Similar to findings from previous cohorts, most learners reported that their course had helped them to develop relevant knowledge, practical skills and understanding of their sector of study.

Learners' satisfaction and perceived outcomes varied substantially by route, suggesting significant differences in delivery and learner experiences. Learners in Education and Early Years were the most positive, with similar satisfaction and perceived course outcomes to A level and level 3 technical learners. Learners in Health and Science (a new route for 2021) were the least positive. Only four in ten of these learners were satisfied, and most reported lack of study materials as a barrier to learning. This may reflect difficulties with core assessments on this route, which Ofqual found were not fit for purpose, leading to regrading of first year T Level results for these learners.

Learners' most frequently reported intended next step was a degree, followed by an apprenticeship or paid work. This suggests that T Levels are enabling progression to a range of positive education and employment destinations. However, T Level learners were less likely than A Level and level 3 technical learners to report that T Levels had enabled them to progress to what they wanted to do.

T Level Transition Programme

This chapter focuses on the T Level Transition Programme (TLTP). It looks at learner characteristics, reasons for choosing the programme, aspirations, delivery of the programme and its components, workload and challenges, learners' satisfaction with the programme, learner outcomes and future plans.

Key T Level Transition Programme findings

- The most commonly reported reasons for choosing a TLTP were because it was important for the kind of job learners wanted (45%) or for further study (36%).
- 2022 learners found the course less challenging than 2021 learners. Over half of 2022 TLTP learners found the course challenging, but to varying degrees (47% 'quite challenging, and 12% 'very/extremely challenging') .
- 41% of TLTP learners did not experience any barriers to learning however, of those who did, personal reasons, namely 'issues relating to poor health' (16%) and 'cost of travel to their course' (14%) were the most commonly experienced barriers.
- 55% of TLTP learners spent time on work experience (similar to the 2021 cohort) and 45% of learners had completed, or were completing, an employer-set project. 75% of TLTP learners who completed work experience were satisfied with it.
- 71% of TLTP learners were satisfied with their course, similar to 2021 starters (69%) and slightly lower than 2020 starters (77%). In line with findings from 2021 TLTP learners, 2022 learners were most satisfied with 'teachers' knowledge and expertise' (81%) and least satisfied with the 'level of employer contact' (45%).
- Over half of learners reported that the TLTP had helped them to develop a range of skills, including study and communication skills and confidence. Only a small majority of learners felt that it had prepared them for the T Level (55%), though this figure was higher among those who intended to progress onto a T Level (68%).
- At the start of the TLTP, 42% of learners intended to progress onto a T Level, however, by the end of the course, this had reduced to 33%. The most common reason for not continuing onto a T Level was preferring to study another course.

Subject and learner characteristics

The subject and learner characteristics outlined here describe the profile of the 2022 TLTP learner population, which comprised 5,220 learners who undertook a TLTP programme in the 2022/23 academic year. While the below figures have been taken from administrative data, comparative figures relating to the characteristics of those who responded to the survey can be found in tables TP001-009.

Subjects of study

In the 2022/23 academic year, students had the option to study one of twelve TLTPs, eight of which were new courses. The largest proportion of learners who responded to the survey studied Health and Science (25%), followed by Digital (16%), Education and Early Years (15%), Construction, Business and Administration (both 13%) and Engineering and Manufacturing (12%).

Two percent of learners studied Creative and Design, while the following subjects were studied by one percent of learners: Agriculture, Environmental and Animal Care; Catering and Hospitality; Hair and Beauty; Legal, Finance and Accounting. Due to the small number of survey respondents studying these courses, subject comparisons in this chapter exclude these subjects.

Sex

A slightly higher proportion of TLTP learners were male (54%) as opposed to female (46%). As with the previous academic year (2021/22), there were marked differences in sex by subject. While most learners on the Education and Early Years (91%) and Health and Science (85%) TLTPs were female, the majority of learners on the Construction (96%), Engineering and Manufacturing (95%) and Digital (90%) TLTPs were male.

Ethnicity

Across all routes, the majority of learners were white (70%). The proportions of white learners were higher in the Education and Early Years (77%) and Construction (75%) routes. The proportion of white learners was lower for the Health and Science (64%) and Business and Administration (62%) routes.

Free school meals (FSM) in recent years

A third (33%) of TLTP learners had received FSM in recent years. This was highest for learners enrolled on Health and Science and Education and Early Years courses (both 39%) and lowest amongst learners enrolled on Digital courses (26%).

Special Educational Needs (SEN)

A quarter (25%) of TLTP learners were recorded in administrative data as having SEN. The Digital route had the highest proportion of learners with SEN (35%), whereas Health and Science, Construction and Business and Administration had the smallest proportion (all 22%).

Previous educational attainment

The prior attainment of 2022 TLTP starters was compared with the prior attainment of the first TLTP cohort, who started their programmes in autumn 2020, using attainment quintiles. The attainment profile for these two cohorts was broadly similar. 18% of 2022 learners were in the

lowest quintile of prior educational attainment, with 24% in the highest quintile based on administrative data. This suggests slightly higher prior educational attainment in the 2022 cohort when compared with the 2020 cohort. TLTP learners on the Construction (49%) and Engineering and Manufacturing (34%) courses were most likely to be recorded in the highest prior educational attainment quintile. Further details can be found in Appendix table TP002.

Choosing the course

TLTP learners were asked if they had been advised to apply for the programme, where they had heard about the programme, their aspirations upon completing the programme and their reasons for choosing the programme, subject area and the provider.

Awareness of the course

Around a third (34%) of 2022 TLTP starters reported that they were ‘advised to apply’ for their TLTP, for example by a teacher or careers adviser, while the same proportion reported that they ‘chose it without advice’. A similar proportion (32%) reported that, although they were not advised to apply, it was ‘discussed as an option’. The proportion of learners who were advised to apply to a TLTP was highest in the first cohort (43% of 2020 learners) and lower in subsequent cohorts (30% of 2021 learners and 34% of 2022 learners).

By TLTP route, Health and Science and Digital learners were most likely to report being ‘advised to apply’ (40% and 35% respectively), however, this finding was not statistically significant at the 5% level ($p=0.059$). Engineering and Manufacturing, Construction and Business and Administration learners were most likely to report choosing the course without advice (42%, 41% and 36% respectively). There were minimal differences by prior education attainment quintile.

The largest proportion of TLTP learners reported that they had heard about the course from teachers at their school (44%), followed by ‘from a college, university, school or training provider’ offering the course (41%). ‘Friends’ (23%), ‘careers advisors’ (21%) and social media (12%) were also sources of information. Smaller proportions of TLTP learners (less than 10%) heard about their course through ‘local advertising’, ‘an employer’, ‘family’ or ‘online’. There were no notable differences by TLTP subject. By prior attainment quintile, learners in the lowest quintile were more likely to have heard about the TLTP from a teacher at their school or college (52%) and less likely to have heard about it from an institution offering the course (31%) compared to learners in the four higher quintiles.

Aspirations

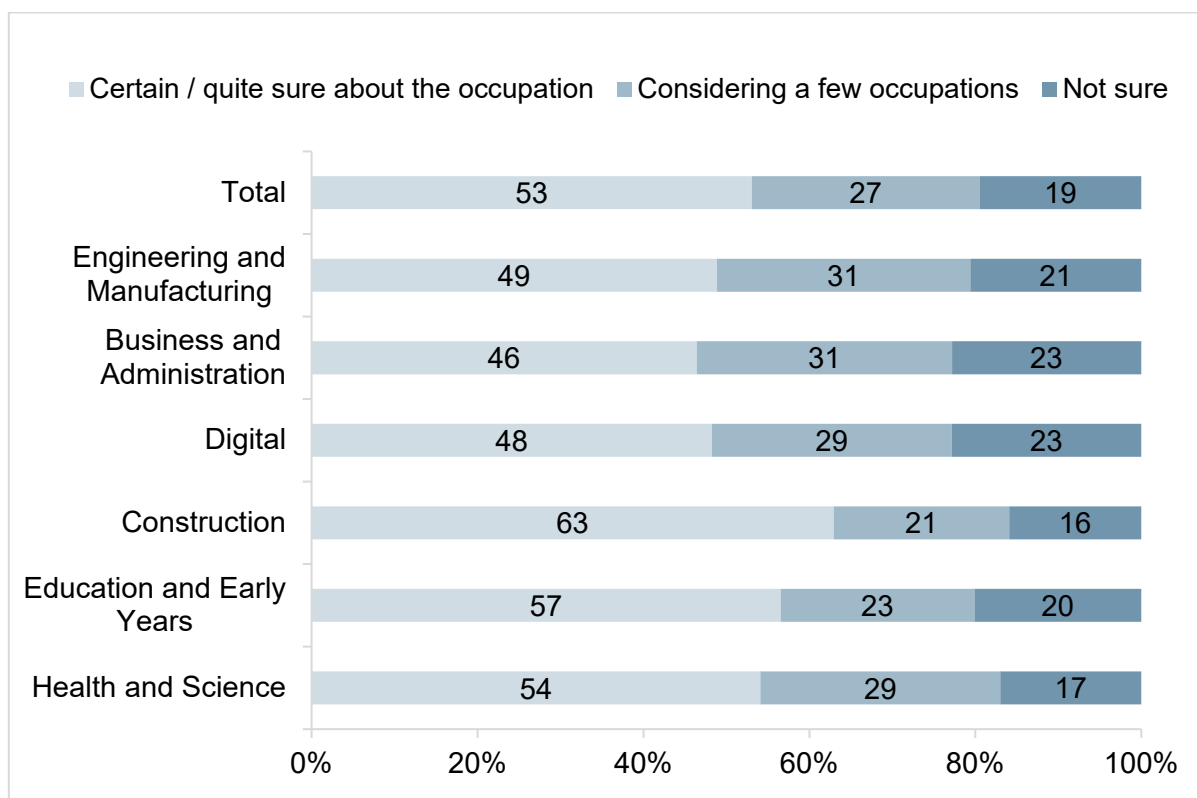
TLTP learners were asked to think back to before they started their course and consider what they planned to do after their course at that stage. **The largest proportion wished to go into paid work (45%).** Just less than a third (31%) wished to go onto ‘another type of study’, and a quarter (25%) wished to go onto something else or were unsure.

Learners were also asked if they hoped to go onto a T Level afterwards. **Around two fifths (42%) of TLTP learners reported that they did hope to do a T Level after the TLTP.** This is higher than the 36% of 2021 TLTP starters and similar to the 43% of 2020 TLTP starters who hoped to go onto a T Level. However, almost two fifths (39%) were unsure if they hoped to progress onto a T Level and one fifth (19%) reported that they did not intend to progress onto a T Level. This suggests that the TLTP is attracting a large proportion of learners who are unsure or do not expect to progress to a T Level, which may limit the primary aim of the TLTP to be a transition route into T Levels.

Just over half (53%) of TLTP learners reported that, at the start of their course, they were certain/quite sure about the type of occupation they wanted to find work in. Just over a quarter (27%) were 'considering a few occupations' (27%) and just less than a fifth (19%) were unsure of their future occupation. There were no significant differences by TLTP subject.

Learners who were 'certain' or 'quite sure' about their future occupation were more likely to report that they hoped to progress onto a T Level (50%), compared to those who were 'considering a few occupations' or were unsure (36% and 27% respectively). Learners who were 'unsure' of their future occupation (52%) or 'considering a few occupations' (46%) were also more likely to report being 'unsure' of whether they intended to progress onto a T Level. Learners who were very satisfied with their course were also more likely to report that they hoped to go onto a T Level (47%), compared to less satisfied learners (37% of learners who were 'quite dissatisfied' and 32% of learners who were 'very dissatisfied'). Learners who found their TLTP extremely or very challenging were more likely to intend to continue onto a T Level (50%) compared to learners who reported the TLTP to be not very or not all challenging (39%). Prior educational attainment did not seem to have any notable impact on learners' intentions to progress onto a T Level.

Figure 10: Extent to which respondent is certain of future occupation



Source: Tech Ed Study - 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Base: T Level Transition Programme learners; Unweighted 1,974

Reasons for choosing subject

In line with previous cohorts of TLTP learners, **the most common reasons 2022 TLTP learners gave for choosing their subject area was because they were ‘interested in the subject area’ (64%) and because it ‘fitted with the areas they wanted to work in’ (61%).** Smaller proportions of learners said they chose the subject area because it was ‘important for their intended further study’ (29%), because they were ‘advised to study this subject area’ (12%) or because ‘friends were doing the same subject area’ (8%). This trend was similar across subject areas, however larger proportions of Digital (76%) and Construction (73%) learners chose their course because there were interested in the subject area, compared to learners on other TLTP courses.

Reasons for choosing programme

Learners could select multiple reasons as to why they chose their particular type of programme. **The largest proportion of TLTP learners (45%) reported that they chose their type of programme because it ‘is important for the kind of job they want’.** **Just over a third (36%) chose their programme because it ‘is important for further study’.** Around a fifth reported that they chose it because ‘it offered the right mix of classroom

learning and practical study' (22%) or because 'it was the only type available in their subject' (21%).

Less than a fifth of TLTP learners chose their programme for the following reasons:

- 'The industry placement/work experience element' (17%)
- 'The programme/qualification is recognised by employers' (14%)
- 'They were advised to' (14%)
- 'It offered an alternative to academic study' (11%).

Some differences existed according to learners' intended next steps. Those who aspired to progress onto another type of study were most likely to report that they chose the programme because it 'is important for further study' (46%). Meanwhile, those who intended to progress into paid work were most likely to report that it 'is important for the kind of job they want' (45%). About half (49%) of TLTP learners who intended to progress onto a T Level after their TLTP reported choosing the programme because it 'is important for the kind of job they want', closely followed by those reporting that they chose the programme because it is 'important for further study' (44%).

Reasons for choosing provider

Learners could select multiple reasons why they ended up studying at their school, college or other educational institution. In line with findings from previous cohorts of TLTP learners, **the most common reasons 2022 TLTP learners gave for choosing their provider was because 'it was convenient to travel to' (55%) and because 'it offered the subject(s) they wanted to do' (52%).** A fifth (20%) said they chose the provider because 'their friends were going there'. Smaller proportions reported the following reasons:

- 'Its adverts or open day' (14%)
- 'Their parents/guardians chose it' (11%)
- 'Informal recommendations' (10%)
- 'Its formal rating' (9%)
- 'Studied there previously' (9%)
- 'Only option they had' (1%)

Alternatives to a Transition Programme

The largest proportion of learners reported that if they had they not chosen their TLTP course, they would have most likely completed an apprenticeship (31%). Around a fifth (21%) reported that they would have completed a different technical or vocational

qualification, while just less than a quarter (23%) said they did not know. Learners studying the Construction, Education and Early Years and Engineering and Manufacturing TLTPs were most likely to say they would have undertaken an apprenticeship instead (45%, 40% and 37% respectively). Digital learners were most likely to report they would have completed a different technical or vocational qualification (31%). Across the subjects, although a small proportion of learners, Business and Administration and Health and Science learners were most likely to report that they would have studied A levels instead (13% and 12% respectively) or a mixture of A levels and other courses (12% and 14% respectively).

Course content and delivery

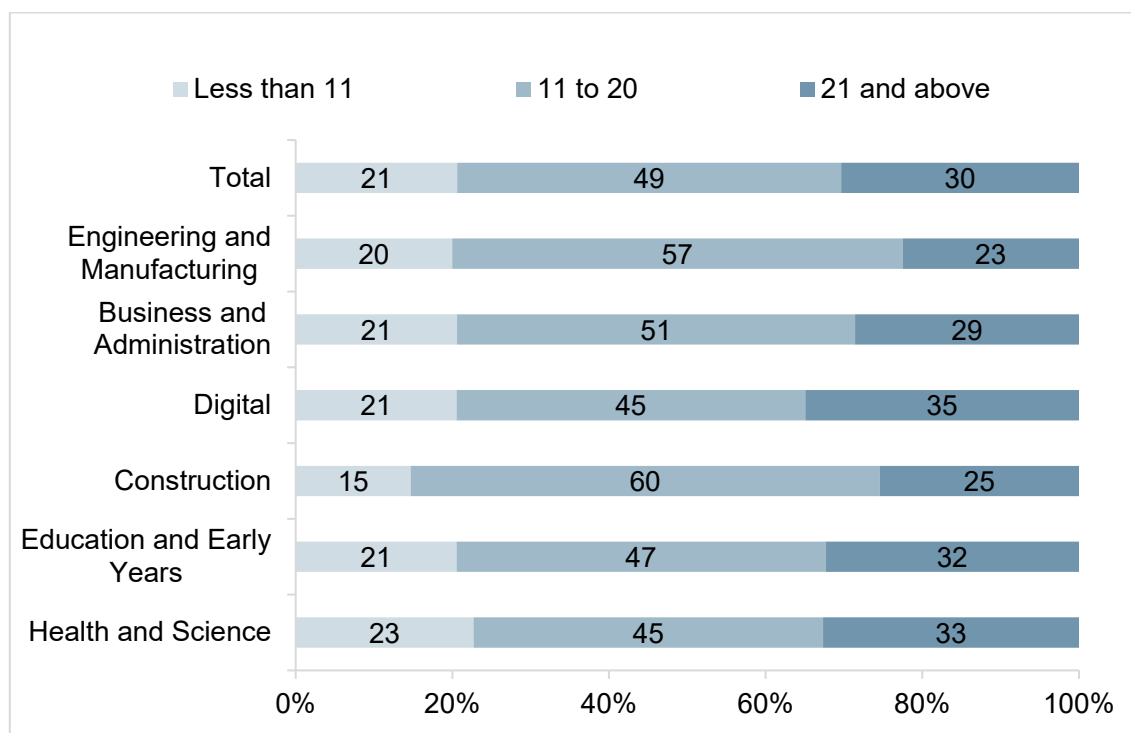
A small majority (57%) of TLTP learners reported that their courses included qualifications in their chosen subject area. Breaking this down, two fifths (40%) reported that their programme included one main qualification and 17% reported that their programme included more than one qualification. A third (32%) learners were not sure and 10% said their course did not include any qualifications. These figures are similar to those reported by 2021 TLTP starters.

Teaching characteristics

Almost all learners (91%) had been taught in person, either 'entirely' (54%) or 'mostly in person' (37%). Small proportions reported they had been taught 'roughly the same amount online and in person' (7%) or 'mostly online' (1%) and no students had been taught 'entirely online'. These overall proportions are very similar to those reported by 2021 TLTP starters and are therefore also considerably different to the 96% of 2020 TLTP starters who experienced a mix of online and in person teaching due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There was little difference by subject, with at least 89% of all 2022 TLTP starters for each subject reporting that they had been taught 'entirely' or 'mostly in person'.

Just less than half (49%) of 2022 TLTP starters reported receiving 11 to 20 hours of teaching per week. Just less than a third (30%) received 21 hours or more and around a fifth (21%) less than 11 hours of teaching per week. These figures are very similar to those reported by 2021 TLTP starters, with, overall, the 2021 and 2022 TLTP starters receiving more teaching hours compared to the first cohort of TLTP learners in 2020 who were affected by the pandemic.

Figure 11: Number of taught hours per week (grouped)



Source: Tech Ed Study - 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Base: T Level Transition Programme learners; Unweighted 1,960

Overall, 57% of TLTP learners reported that they were studying an English qualification, with about half (48%) of learners studying GCSE English and a further 8% studying English Functional Skills. Digital learners were most likely to report studying an English qualification (70%), followed by more than half of Engineering and Manufacturing (60%), Business and Administration (59%) and Health and Science (58%) learners. Education and Early Years (47%) and Construction (40%) learners were least likely to be studying an English qualification.

Overall, 62% of TLTP learners reported that they were studying a maths qualification. Just less than half (49%) reported that they were studying GCSE maths and a further 13% reported studying maths Functional Skills. Health and Science and Education and Early Years learners were most likely to report studying a maths qualification (74% and 71% respectively), followed by Digital (64%) and Business and Administration (55%) learners. Engineering and Manufacturing (47%) and Construction learners (40%) were least likely to be studying a maths qualification.

Work experience

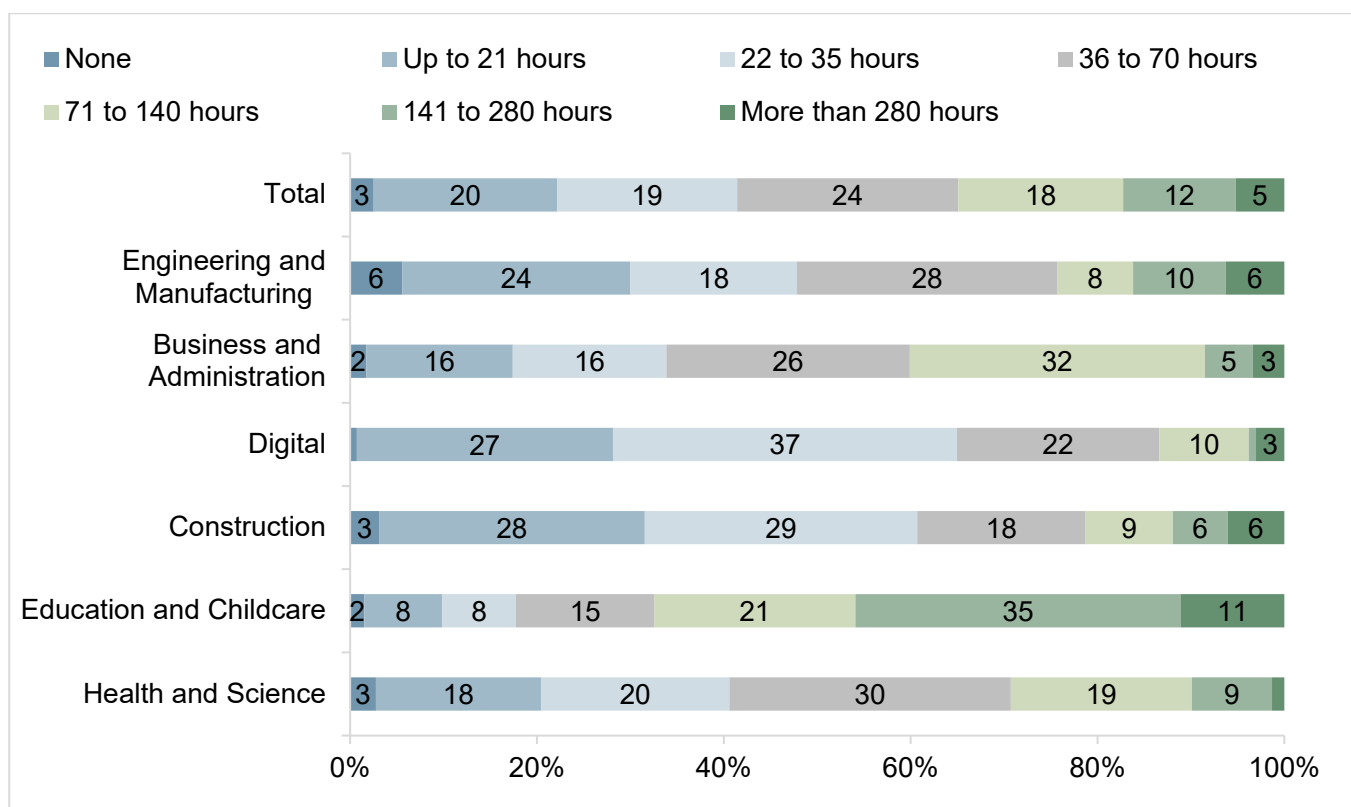
Just over half (55%) of 2022 TLTP starters reported spending time on work experience as part of their programme. This is similar to the proportion of 2021 TLTP starters who

undertook work experience (53%), but considerably higher than the 38% of 2020 TLTP starters, who were restricted due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

With a similar pattern to the 2021 TLTP starters, Education and Early Years (79%), Health and Science (63%) and Business and Administration (55%) learners were much more likely to undertake work experience as part of their programmes compared to Digital (45%), Construction and Engineering and Manufacturing learners (both 39%).

Most learners (63%) who spent time on a work experience placement (n=1,098) completed up to 70 hours (about 10 days) in their placement. Placement hours varied substantially, with 5% of learners completing more than 280 hours of work placement. The hours which learners completed by TLTP subject are shown in Figure 12:

Figure 12: Number of work experience hours completed



Source: Tech Ed Study - 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Base: T Level Transition Programme learners; Unweighted 1,098

Just over two fifths (45%) of TLTP learners completed (40%) or were currently completing (5%) an employer-set project as part of their programme. Business and Administration learners were most likely to have completed or be completing an employer-set project (62%) while Health and Science (39%) and Engineering and Manufacturing learners (35%) were least likely.

Outside of work experience, just less than half of TLTP learners (46%) reported other contact with employers, such as visits, talks, or contact as part of project work. Overall, and across all

six subject routes, 'talks with employers' was the most reported form of employer contact during learners' course, reported by 30% of all learners. Participation in other activities varied by subject.

Workload and challenge

Workload

The amount of teaching was manageable for most 2022 TLTP starters, with two thirds (67%) describing it as 'very' or 'mostly manageable', similar to previous cohorts (67% of 2021 learners and 64% of 2020 learners). Learners in the third, fourth and highest prior attainment quintiles were more likely to report finding the teaching 'very' or 'mostly manageable' (68%, 72% and 75% respectively) compared to learners in the second and lowest quintiles (58% and 61% respectively). There was minimal variation by subject, as well as learners' SEN or FSM status.

Three fifths (60%) of TLTP learners found the work they had to do outside of taught lessons 'very' or 'mostly' manageable. Construction learners (74%) were most likely to report the work outside of taught lessons to be 'very' or 'mostly' manageable, while Health and Science learners were least likely to report this (57%). Learners in the third, fourth and highest prior attainment quintiles were more likely to report finding the workload outside of taught lessons 'very' or 'mostly manageable' (62%, 62% and 65% respectively) compared to learners in the second and lowest quintiles (56% and 51% respectively). There were minimal variation by learners' SEN or FSM status.

Among the 11% of TLTP learners (n=220) who did not find the work outside of taught lessons manageable (i.e., 'not very' or 'not at all' manageable), the most common reason given was that there was 'not enough support from teachers/tutors' (48%), followed by 'too much work given' (44%) and 'the work set was unclear' (41%). Other reasons given included 'other commitments outside course' (25%) and 'the work was too hard' (21%).

Barriers to learning

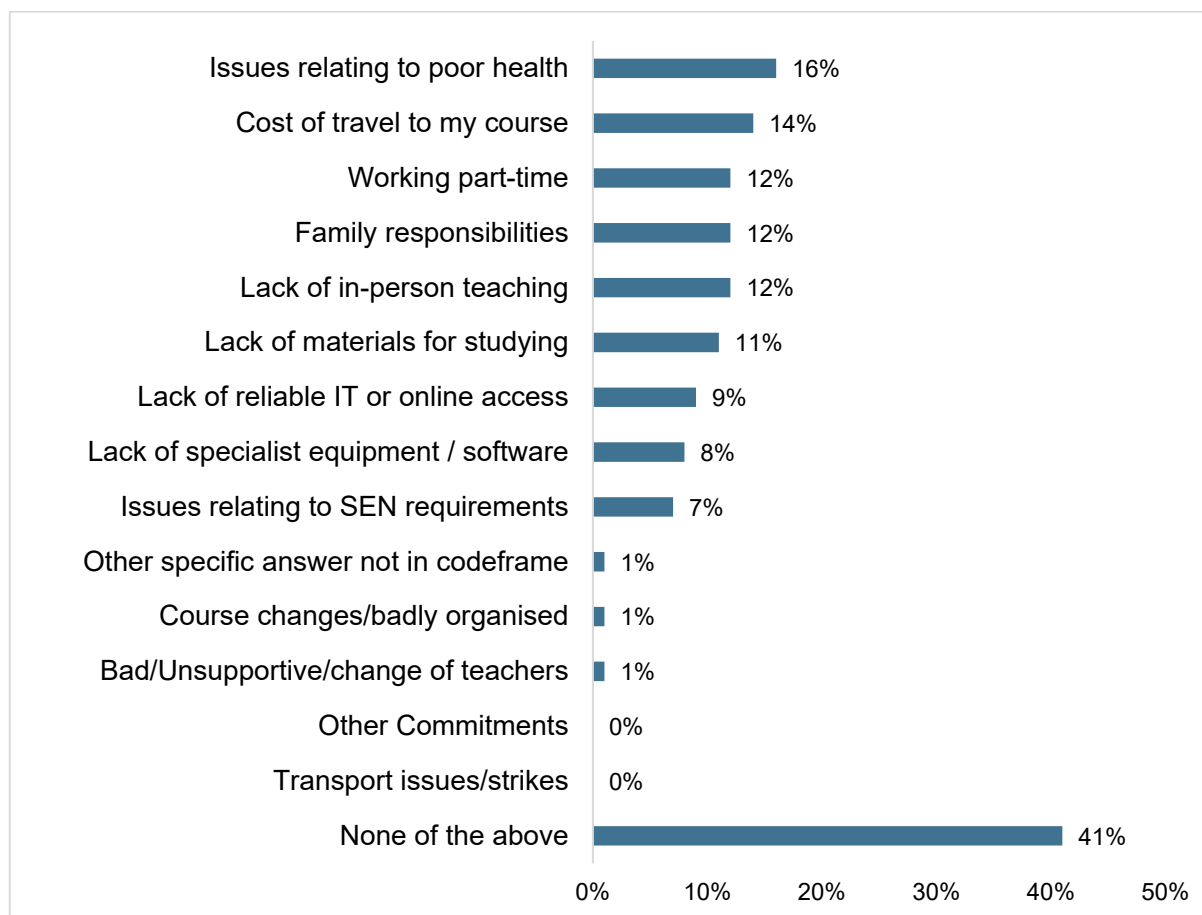
A large proportion of TLTP learners (69%) reported that their programme was tailored to identify and help address their specific learning and development needs. The most common approach reported was that 'learning and development needs were assessed at the start of the course' (36%). These figures are similar to those reported by 2021 TLTP learners: 71% reported that their programme was tailored and 34% said their 'learning and development needs were assessed at the start of the programme'. There was little variation in the tailoring of learners' courses based on subject, attainment, FSM or SEN status.

Two fifths (41%) of TLTP learners reported that they did not experience any of the barriers to learning presented to them in the survey. This is slightly lower than the 45% of 2021 TLTP

learners who reported this. Personal reasons, rather than elements of the TLTP course itself, were more likely to present barriers to learners.

The most common barriers to learning experienced by 2022 TLTP learners were ‘issues relating to poor health (16%) and ‘cost of travel to their course’ (14%). Barriers from health issues were much more prevalent in the 2022 cohort compared with the 2021 cohort. It is important to note the slightly different wording and response options between the two surveys, however just 4% of 2021 TLTP learners cited ‘mental/physical health issues or special needs’ as a barrier, compared to 22% of 2022 TLTP learners (16% reported ‘issues relating to poor health’ and 7% reported ‘issues relating to special educational needs’). The proportion of learners citing barriers including ‘lack of in person teaching’, ‘working part-time’ and ‘family responsibilities’ (each reported by 12% of learners) has remained stable across 2021 and 2022 learners.

Figure 13: Barriers to learning



Source: Tech Ed Study - 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Base: T Level Transition Programme learners; Unweighted 1,964

Overall, there was little variation in the proportion of learners who reported experiencing the range of barriers to learning by TLTP route, prior educational attainment, FSM or SEN status, however some more notable differences include:

- 'Lack of in person teaching' was mostly commonly reported by Construction learners (17%)
- 'Issues relating to poor health' (22%) and 'family responsibilities' (18%) were most commonly reported by Health and Science learners
- 'Issues relating to poor health' were also most commonly reported by Education and Early Years learners (22%) and those who received FSM (18%)
- 'Family responsibilities' and 'cost of travel to my course' were also commonly reported by learners who received FSM (15%)

How challenging learners found the TLTP

Just 12% of 2022 TLTP learners found their programme 'very' or 'extremely challenging' (the same proportion as 2021 TLTP learners). Almost half (47%) of 2022 TLTP learners reported that their programme had been 'quite challenging' (lower than the 59% of 2021 TLTP starters who reported this). Just over two fifths (42%) described their course as 'not very' or 'not at all challenging' (a figure somewhat higher than the 29% of 2021 TLTP starters who reported this). It is important to note that finding the course 'quite challenging' was associated with higher satisfaction with the programme than either higher or lower levels of challenge.

The following learners were more likely to report that their programme was 'extremely' or 'very' challenging:

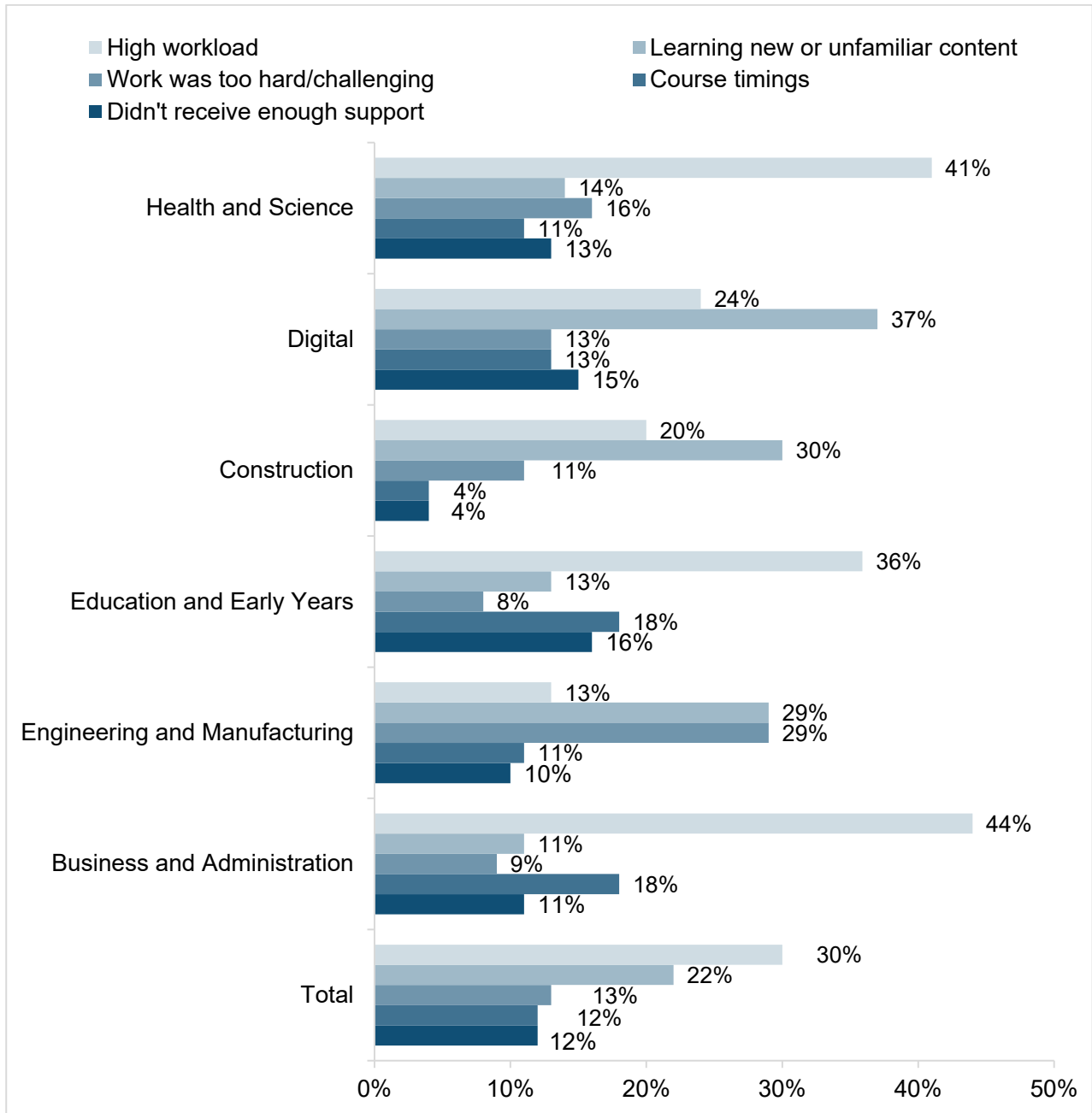
- Health and Science (14%), Business and Administration (13%) and Digital learners (12%), compared to Construction learners (7%).
- Learners who found the amount of teaching 'quite', 'not very' or 'not at all manageable' (19%) compared to learners who found the amount of teaching 'mostly' or 'very manageable' (8%).
- Learners within the lowest prior educational attainment quintile (17%) compared to those in the highest quintile (7%).
- Learners with SEN (13%) compared to those without (11%), although this finding was not statistically significant at the 5% level ($p=0.073$).

These trends are similar to those reported for 2021 TLTP learners.

Learners who reported finding their course 'extremely', 'very' or 'quite challenging' (n=817) were asked the reasons for this. 'High workload' was the most commonly reported reason (30%), followed by 'learning new or unfamiliar content' (22%). Less than a fifth reported

challenges related to finding the work 'too hard' (13%), 'course timings' (12%) or 'not receiving enough support' (12%).

Figure 14: Reasons why learners found the course challenging



Source: Tech Ed Study - 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Bases: T Level Transition Programme learners; Unweighted 817

The reasons learners gave for finding their course challenging differed by TLTP route:

- 'High workload' was more commonly cited by Business and Administration (44%), Health and Science (41%) and Education and Early Years (36%) learners, compared to Digital (24%), Construction (20%) and Engineering and Manufacturing (13%) learners.
- 'Learning new and unfamiliar content' was more commonly cited by Digital (37%), Construction (30%) and Engineering and Manufacturing (29%) learners, compared to Health and Science (14%), Education and Early Years (13%) and Business and Administration (11%) learners. This might be expected given the technical content of these subjects.
- 'Course timings' were least likely to be a challenge for Construction learners (4%) compared to 11% to 18% of learners studying other TLTP courses.
- Learners not receiving enough support was more likely to be a challenge for those on Education and Early Years (16%), Digital (15%) and Health and Science (13%) courses, compared to learners studying Business and Administration (11%), Engineering and Manufacturing (10%) and Construction (4%) courses.
- Finding that the 'work was too hard/a challenge' was most commonly reported by Engineering and Manufacturing (19%) compared to 7% to 16% of learners studying other TLTP courses.

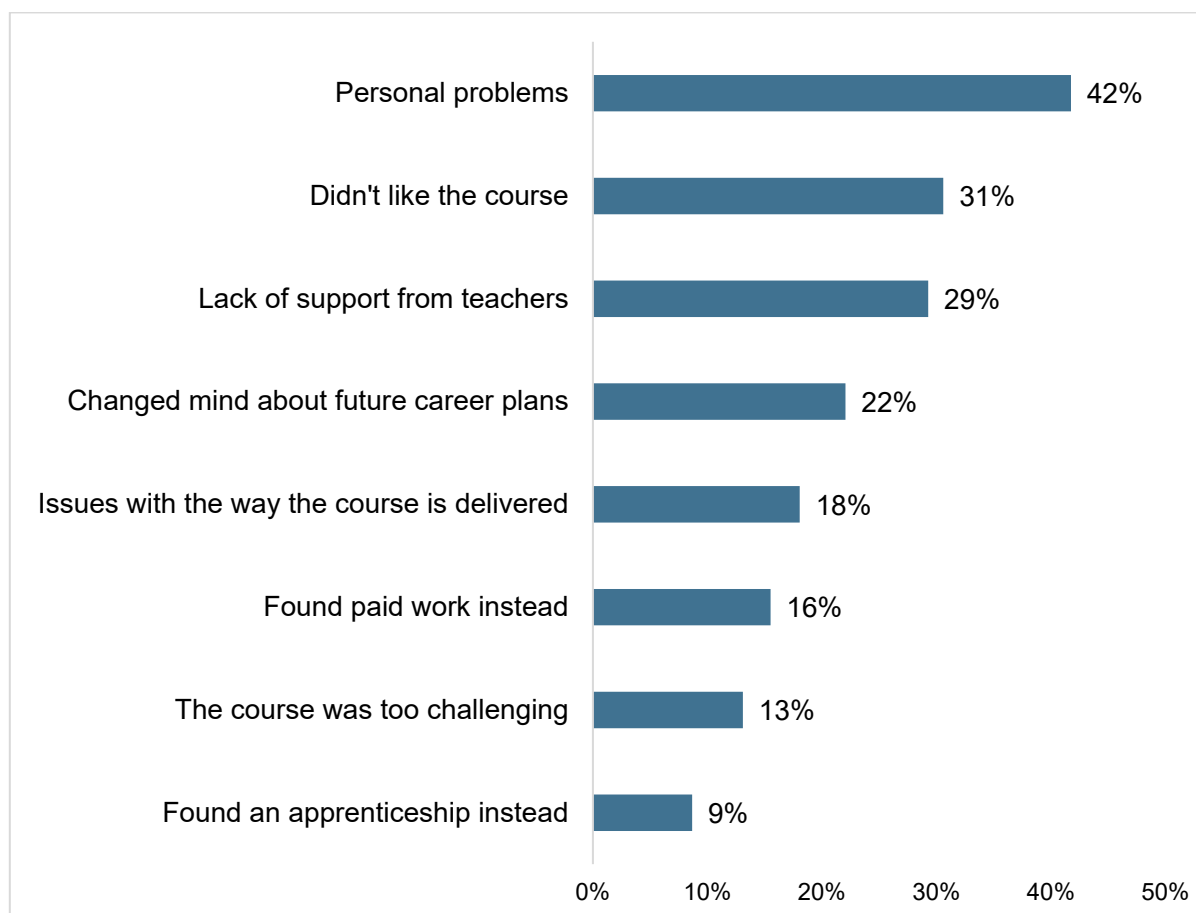
There was little variation in the prevalence of the range of challenges by other learner characteristics.

Leaving the programme early

Around 8% of 2022 TLTP starters who responded to the survey left their course early (n=149). The largest proportion (42%) cited 'personal problems' as the reason for this. Just less than a third reported that they 'didn't like the course' (31%) or because there was a 'lack of support from teachers' (29%). Around a fifth of TLTP learners left the course early because they had changed their mind about future career plans (22%), had issues with course delivery (18%) or because they found paid work instead (16%). Smaller proportions cited the following reasons for leaving their course early:

- 'The course was too challenging' (13%)
- 'Found an apprenticeship instead' (9%)
- 'Asked to leave by provider' (8%)
- 'Couldn't juggle studying with other commitments' (8%)
- 'Issues with the way students are assessed' (6%).

Figure 15: Reasons why the learner left the course early



Source: Tech Ed Study - 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Base: T Level Transition Programme learners who reported leaving the course early; Unweighted 135

Satisfaction with the course

Overall satisfaction

Almost three quarters (71%) of TLTP learners reported that they were 'quite' or 'very satisfied' with their programme. A small proportion (9%) were 'very' or 'quite dissatisfied'. Satisfaction amongst 2022 TLTP starters was similar to 2021 starters (69%), but lower than 2020 starters (77%). Across TLTP routes, there was little difference in reported levels of satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

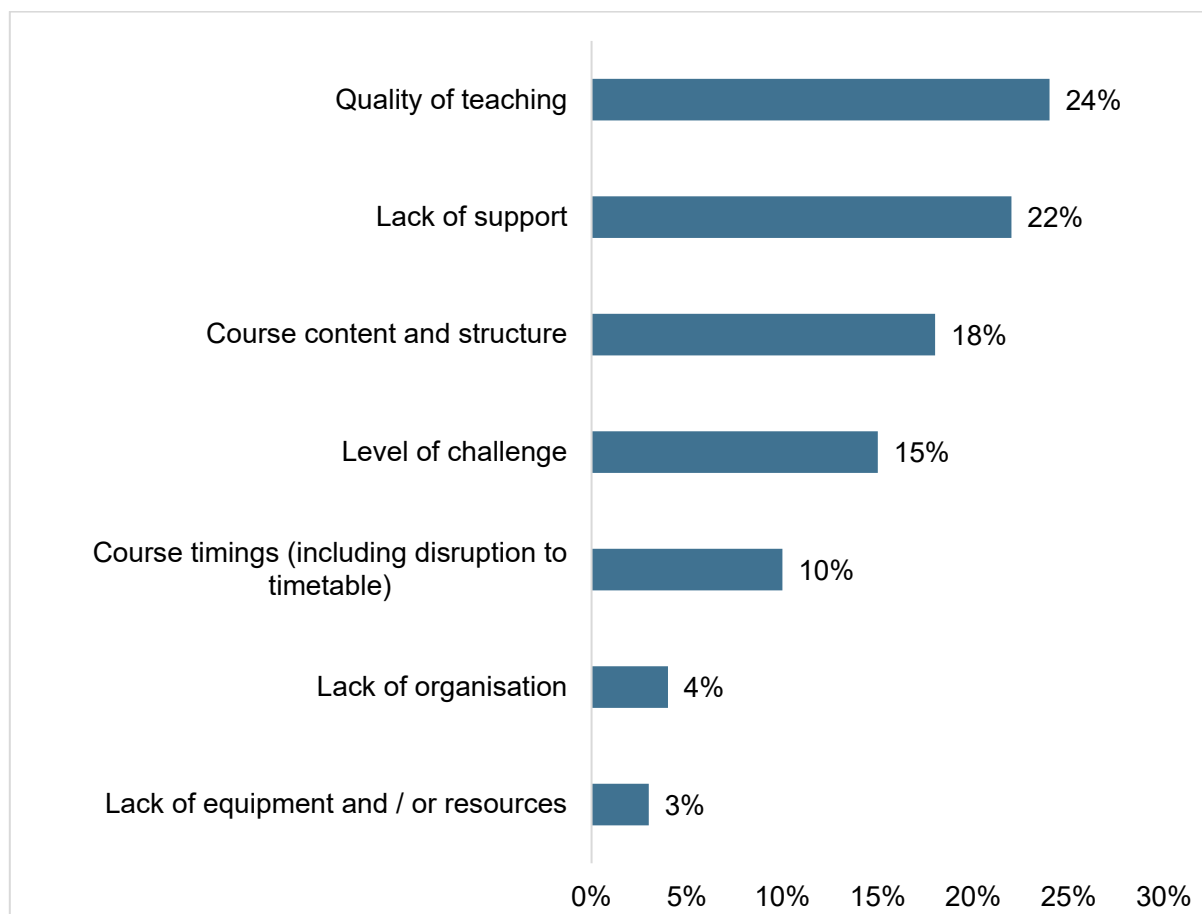
TLTP learners who were 'certain' or 'quite certain' about the occupation they wanted to find work in were most likely to report being 'very' or 'quite satisfied' with their programme (76%), compared to learners who were 'considering a few occupations' (67%) or were unsure (64%). This pattern is similar to that found from 2021 and 2020 TLTP starters.

TLTP learners who found their programme ‘quite challenging’ or ‘not very/not at all challenging’ were most likely to report being ‘very’ or ‘quite satisfied’ with their programme (76% and 70% respectively). TLTP learners who found the course ‘extremely’ or ‘very challenging’ were less likely to report satisfaction with their programme (56%) and more likely to report being ‘quite’ or ‘very dissatisfied’ (21%). These trends in satisfaction are broadly similar to those reported by 2021 TLTP learners.

As reported for previous cohorts, there was minimal variation in learners’ satisfaction by FSM or SEN status or prior educational attainment.

‘Quality of teaching’ (24%) and ‘lack of support’ (22%) were the most commonly reported reasons learners gave for being dissatisfied with their programme. Smaller proportions reported that any dissatisfaction was driven by ‘course content and structure’ (18%), ‘level of challenge’ (15%) and ‘course timings’ (10%).

Figure 16: Reasons why the learner was dissatisfied with the course



Source: Tech Ed Study - 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Base: T Level Transition Programme learners who reported dissatisfaction with the course; Un-weighted 136

Note: respondents were able to report more than one reason, meaning selected responses will add up to more than 100%

Almost two thirds (65%) of 2022 TLTP learners reported that they would be 'very' or 'quite likely' to recommend their course to others. This figure is the same as that of 2021 TLTP starters.

In line with findings from 2021 TLTP learners and as might be expected, the likelihood of recommending their course was strongly driven by learners' satisfaction. Almost all (94%) learners who were 'very satisfied' and around three quarters (74%) of those who were 'quite satisfied' would be 'very' or 'quite likely' to recommend their course. In comparison, most learners (81%) who were 'very dissatisfied' and around two thirds (62%) of those were who 'quite dissatisfied' said they would be 'quite' or 'very unlikely' to recommend their course to others.

Several other factors were associated with learners being 'very' or 'quite likely' to recommend their course to others:

- TLTP route – Education and Early Years (71%), Health and Science (68%), Engineering and Manufacturing (65%) and Construction (64%) learners were slightly more likely to report that they would recommend their course than Digital (62%) and Business and Administration (58%) learners.
- Certainty of future occupation – learners who were 'certain/quite certain' about the occupation they wanted to find work in were most likely to report that they would be 'very' or 'quite likely' to recommend their course to others (69%), compared to around learners who were 'considering a few occupation' (63%) and learners who were 'unsure' (55%).
- Level of challenge – learners who found their course 'quite challenging' were more likely to report that they would be 'very' or 'quite likely' to recommend their course to others (69%) compared to learners who found their course 'not very/not at all' challenging (62%) or 'extremely / very challenging' (57%).

There was minimal variation in learners' likelihood of recommending their programme dependent on prior educational attainment, FSM or SEN status and aspiration after their programme.

Satisfaction with specific aspects

Learners were asked about their satisfaction with a range of programme aspects. **The highest proportions of learners were 'very' or 'quite' satisfied with 'teachers' knowledge and expertise' (81%) and 'the standard of classroom teaching' (76%). The lowest proportions of learners were 'very' or 'quite' satisfied with careers advice (60%) and the level of employer contact' (45%).** Overall, proportions were similar to those for 2021 TLTP learners, and slightly lower than for 2020 TLTP learners. However, the proportion of learners who were 'very/quite satisfied' with the amount of content in their chosen subject area has decreased by 10 percentage points (61% of 2022 learners, 71% of 2021 learners). Subject differences are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: TLTP learner satisfaction with specific aspects of the course

% of learners 'very/quite satisfied' with:	All TLTP learners	Digital	Construction	Education and Early Years	Health and Science	Business and Administration	Engineering and Manufacturing
Teachers' knowledge and expertise	81%	80%	85%	86%	77%	77%	80%
Standard of classroom teaching	76%	78%	73%	79%	74%	74%	76%
Support received from teachers	74%	77%	73%	74%	70%	73%	76%
Skills covered for chosen occupation/ subject area	73%	73%	76%	77%	70%	67%	76%
Equipment, software and resources available	73%	74%	76%	75%	70%	66%	77%
The way learners are assessed	69%	72%	74%	70%	66%	62%	73%
Standard of practical hands-on work	69%	68%	82%	76%	61%	56%	74%
Teaching of English ⁶	68%	74%	53%	63%	70%	69%	69%

⁶ This statement was only presented to learners completing GCSE or functional skills in the relevant subject.

% of learners 'very/quite satisfied' with:	All TLTP learners	Digital	Construction	Education and Early Years	Health and Science	Business and Administration	Engineering and Manufacturing
Preparation for further study	65%	66%	64%	69%	65%	61%	64%
Teaching of maths ⁶	63%	65%	55%	60%	64%	65%	70%
Preparation for work	63%	55%	57%	72%	64%	58%	62%
Programme organisation/management	62%	61%	55%	68%	60%	65%	62%
Amount of content related to chosen subject area	69%	72%	70%	77%	65%	66%	66%
The careers advice provided	60%	60%	59%	63%	60%	56%	62%
Level of employer contact	45%	36%	43%	56%	47%	46%	44%

Base: All TLTP learners excluding those who said that the element was 'Not applicable' to them, n=1,063-1,973. Source: Tech Ed Study – T Level Cohort 2 Wave 2 and other cohorts (Jun-Sep 2023).

For most aspects of the course (9 out of 15 aspects), Education and Early Years had the highest proportion of learners who were 'very' or 'quite satisfied'. This is consistent with the higher proportions of Education and Early Years learners who reported that they were satisfied with their programme overall, were likely to recommend the course, and had substantially developed in relation to key course outcomes. Engineering and Manufacturing learners appeared to be least satisfied with the largest proportion of learners studying this route reporting being 'very' or 'quite dissatisfied' on 8 out of 15 course aspects.

Satisfaction with work experience

Three quarters (75%) of TLTP learners who did work experience were 'very' or 'quite' satisfied with this element. This figure is similar to satisfaction reported by the 2021 TLTP cohort (77%) and slightly lower than for the 2020 (82%) TLTP starters.

Education and Early Years learners were most likely to report being 'very' or 'quite satisfied' with their placement (80%), followed by around three quarters of Business and Administration (77%), Health and Science (76%) and Engineering and Manufacturing learners (74%). Construction and Digital learners were least likely to report being 'very' or 'quite satisfied' with their placement (69% and 65% respectively). These findings broadly align with levels of satisfaction reported by 2021 TLTP starters.

TLTP learners were asked about specific aspects of their placement. Over three quarters of learners agreed that their placement had improved their knowledge of the workplace (81% strongly agree/agree), that they benefitted from the placement (78%) and it was a good challenge for them (77%). Most learners agreed with each of the other statements: that their employer made sure that they got the most they could out of the placement (73%), that they felt a valued member of the team during the placement (73%), that the placement came at the right point in the course (70%), that they had all the support they needed from their college/school during their placement (70%), and that their college/school had fully prepared for them the placement (69%). Consistent with their overall satisfaction with work experience, Engineering and Manufacturing and Education and Early Years learners were broadly the most positive, while Digital learners were the least positive. TLTP learners were asked to indicate whether their work experience met their expectations in specific areas. Three fifths of learners reported that their placement met their expectations in gaining 'experience of a real workplace' (60%) and being 'given real tasks to carry out' (58%). These proportions are similar, albeit a few percentage points lower than 2021 TLTP learners. Almost half (48%) of 2022 TLTP learners reported that their placement met their expectations in having 'the opportunity to build their confidence in the workplace' (compared to 58% of 2021 TLTP learners). Just over two fifths (42%) of 2022 TLTP learners said it met their expectations in terms of 'applying technical knowledge and skills developed on the course' (compared to 47% of 2021 TLTP learners). Only a small proportion (8%) reported that their work experience did not meet their expectations in any of these areas. Digital and Engineering and Manufacturing learners were most likely to report this (both 13%).

Programme outcomes

Learners were asked to what extent their course had helped them to develop a range of skills, understanding and knowledge. The results are shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Extent to which the TLTP programme helped learners develop

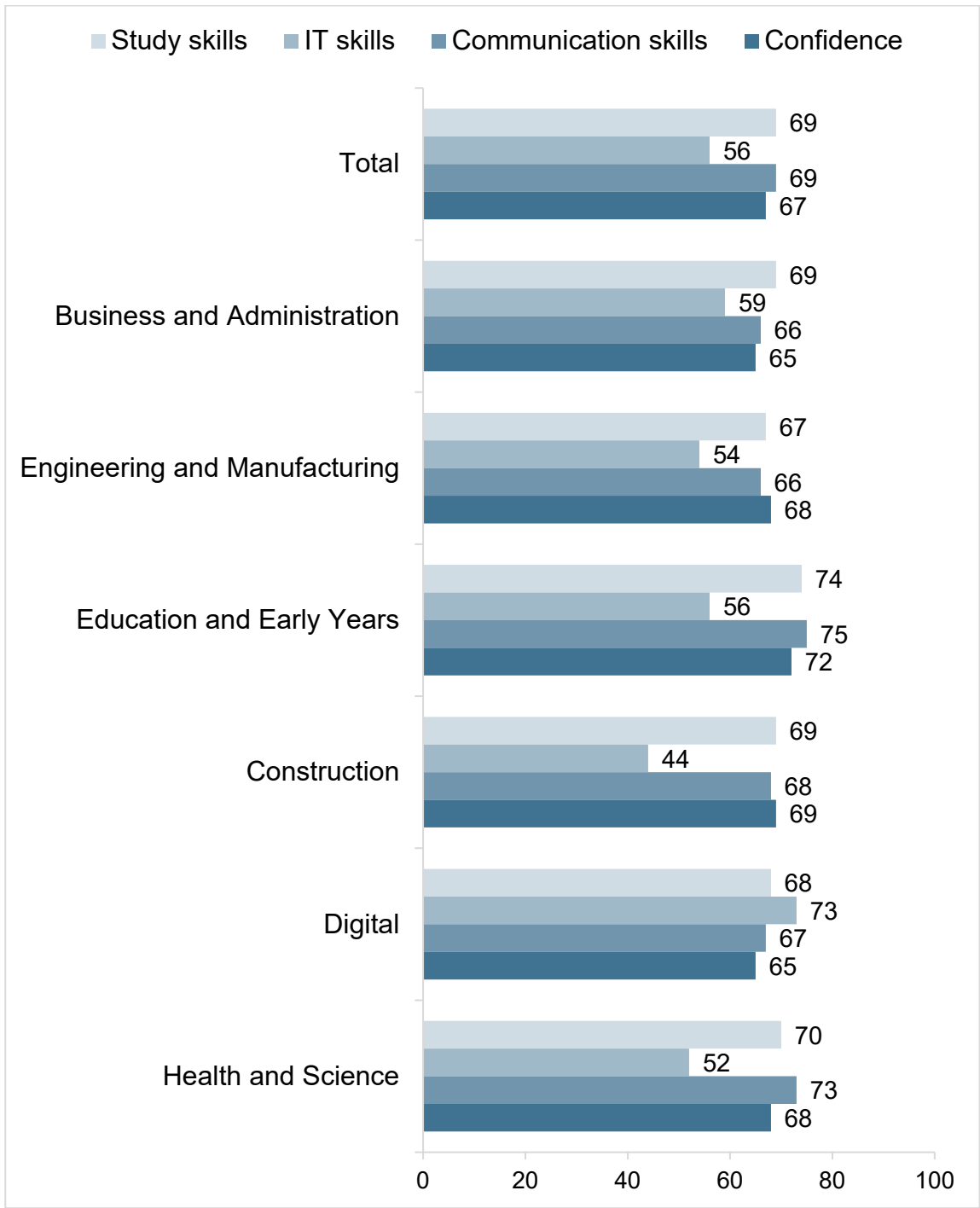
Extent to which the TLTP programme had helped learners develop 'a great deal/quite a bit'	% of 2022 TLTP learners	% of 2021 TLTP learners	% of 2020 TLTP learners
Study skills	69%	65%	63%
Communication skills	69%	66%	69%
Confidence	67%	62%	63%
English skills ⁷	67%	67%	72%
Maths skills ⁷	61%	60%	63%
IT skills	56%	50%	63%
Preparation for a T Level	55%	49%	n/a
<i>Unweighted Base</i>	<i>1,064-1,977</i>	<i>458-892</i>	<i>185-427</i>

Base: All TLTP learners. Source: Tech Ed Study – T Level Cohort 2 Wave 2 and other cohorts (Jun-Sep 2023), Tech Ed Study 2022 (May-Sep 2022) and Tech Ed Study 2021 (Jun-Aug 2021).

For each outcome, more than half of learners (56-69%) reported that their TLTP course had helped them develop 'a great deal' or 'quite a bit'. The findings are broadly consistent with those reported by previous TLTP cohorts, however for several outcomes, a higher percentage of 2022 TLTP learners reported developing the various skills compared to 2021 learners, which saw a decrease compared to 2020 TLTP learners. There were small variations by subject for specific course outcomes.

⁷ This statement was only presented to learners completing GCSE or functional skills in the relevant subject.

Figure 17: Extent to which course helped learner to develop study skills, IT skills, communication skills and confidence



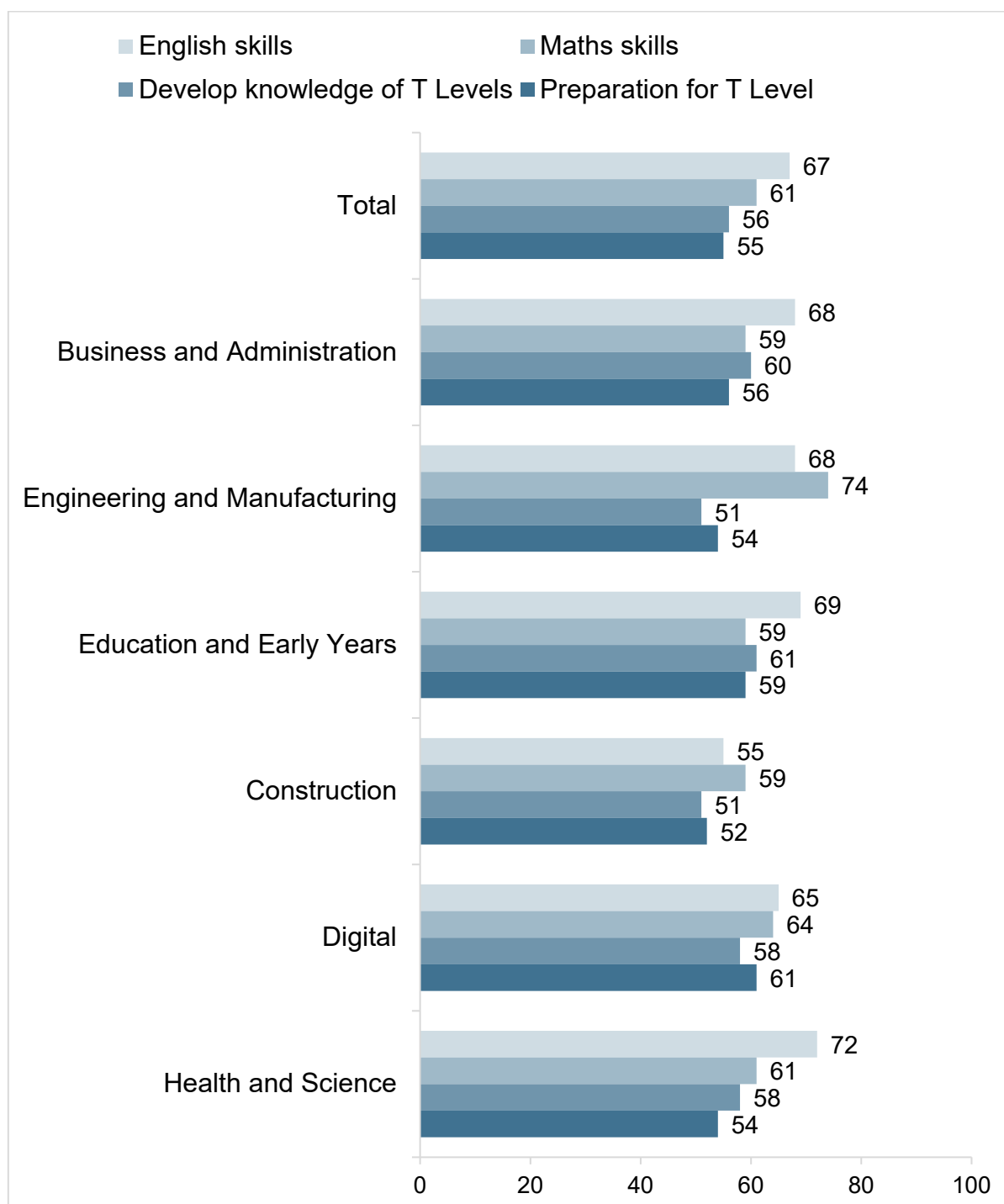
Source: Tech Ed Study - 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Bases: T Level Transition Programme learners; Unweighted 1,975-1,977

Preparing learners to undertake a T Level is a key aim of the T Level Transition Programme. **Just over half of TLTP learners (55%) reported that their programme helped them to**

prepare for a T Level ‘a great deal’ or ‘quite a bit’, slightly higher than for 2021 learners (49%). Similarly, just over half of TLTP learners (56%) felt that their programme had helped them to ‘develop knowledge of T Levels in their chosen area’, an increase on 2021 and similar to 2020 learners (48% and 54% respectively). However, these proportions are still lower than for other course outcomes, suggesting further work is needed in this area.

Figure 18: Extent to which course helped learner prepare for T Level, develop knowledge of T Levels in chosen area, develop English and maths skills

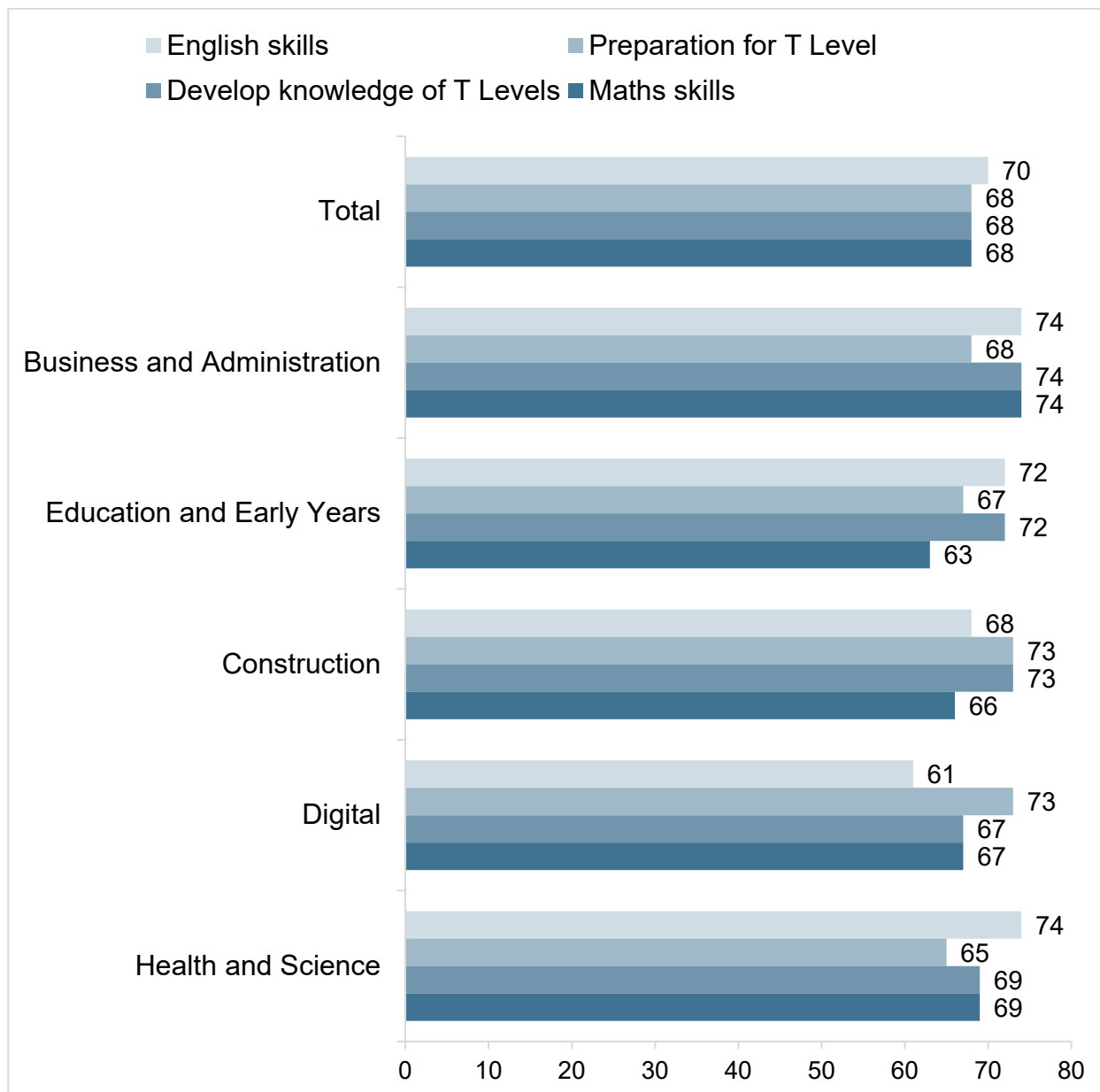


Source: Tech Ed Study - 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Bases: T Level Transition Programme learners; Unweighted 1,064-1,970

Variations did exist on the basis of whether each learner intended to progress onto a T Level. 68% of TLTP learners who intended to progress onto a T Level reported that their programme helped them to prepare for a T Level, and ‘develop knowledge of T Levels in their chosen area’. Of those learners studying English and Maths, as well as intending to progress onto a T Level, 70% reported that the programme helped them to develop English skills, while 68% reported that the programme helped them to develop maths skills.

Figure 19: Extent to which TLTP helped learners who intended to progress onto T Level prepare for the course, develop knowledge of T Levels in chosen area, develop English and maths skills



Source: Tech Ed Study - 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Bases: T Level Transition Programme learners who intended to progress onto a T Level; Unweighted 470-823

Next steps

TLTP learners reported a wide range of next steps on completing their programme. **The most common next steps were a T Level (33%), another qualification (31%) or an apprenticeship (20%).** Relatively few learners planned to complete A levels or AS levels (4%) or reported any other plan (2%), while the remaining learners (2%) were unsure.

Fewer TLTP learners reported at the end of the programme that they planned to progress onto a T Level (33%, compared to 42% at the start), with 39% reporting at the end of the programme that they did not plan to progress and 27% being unsure. The proportion of learners planning to progress onto a T Level is slightly higher than for 2021 TLTP starters (28%), but slightly lower than for 2020 TLTP starters (37%).

Digital learners were most likely to report that they planned to progress onto a T Level (42%). Although almost a third (28%) of Construction learners planned to progress, this group of learners were most likely to report that they did not plan to progress onto a T Level (48%).

Other factors were also associated with the intention to progress to a T Level:

- Learners who wished to go onto 'further study' immediately after their TLTP course were most likely to plan to progress to go onto a T Level (38%), however a similar proportion (39%) did not plan to go onto a T Level
- Learners who were 'very' or 'quite satisfied' were most likely to plan to progress onto a T Level (43% and 37% respectively), compared to those who were 'quite' or 'very dissatisfied' (14% and 7% respectively)

Learners who reported that they would not, or were not sure they would, be continuing onto a T Level at the end of the TLTP (n=1,286) were asked their reasons for this. Learners preferring to study a different course was the most common reason, reported by a third of learners (32%), followed by wanting to do an apprenticeship instead (26%). Almost a fifth (19%) reported that they were still undecided on their next step. Smaller proportions reported that they wanted to 'move into employment' (16%), 'would like to but don't have the required grades', felt a 'T Level would be too challenging' (both 14%) or cited 'personal reasons' (13%).

There were differences in learners' reasons for not pursuing a T Level by TLTP route, as detailed below.

Digital learners were most likely to express preference for studying a different course (45%), followed by Health and Science (38%) and Business and Administration (32%) learners, compared to smaller proportions of Education and Early Years (26%), Engineering and Manufacturing (25%) and Construction (19%) learners.

Engineering and Manufacturing and Construction learners were most likely to report that they wanted to move into employment (21%), compared to 15% to 18% of Health and Science, Business and Administration and Education and Early Years learners. Digital learners (10%) were least likely to plan to pursue this route rather than a T Level.

Among learners who intended to progress to further study other than a T Level (n=1,095), the most common routes were an apprenticeship (36%) and a level 3 technical qualification (33%). Very few learners (7%) intended to progress to A level study.

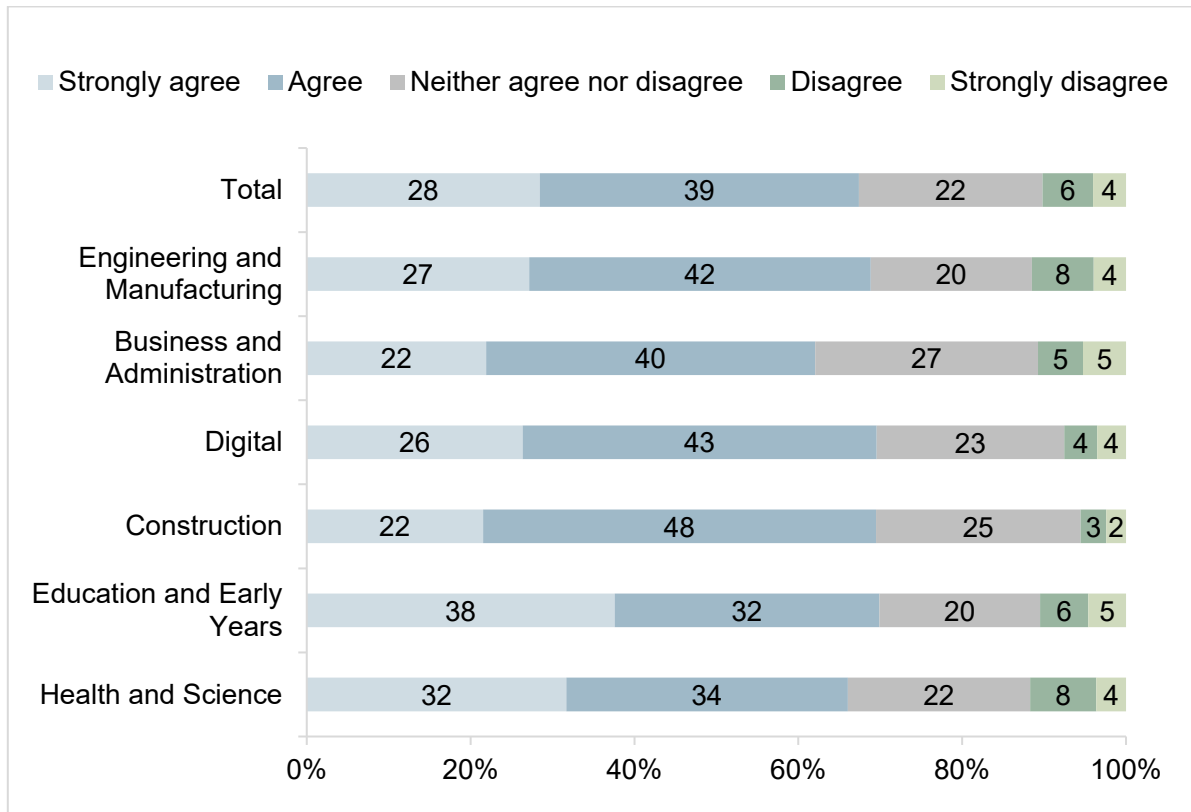
Construction learners were most likely to want to do an apprenticeship instead of a T Level (56%), followed by Education and Early Years (43%), Engineering and Manufacturing (41%) and Business and Administration (37%) learners. Smaller proportions of Health and Science and Digital learners (both 27%) reported wanting to do an apprenticeship instead.

Of the learners who reported that they wished to go onto an apprenticeship instead of a T Level in the year after their course finished, around two fifths (42%) intended to go onto an advanced (level 3) apprenticeship and just less than a quarter (23%) planned to go onto an intermediate (level 2) apprenticeship.

Two thirds (66%) of 2022 TLTP learners agreed that they felt supported by their education provider in deciding their next steps. This is a slight increase on 2021 TLTP starters (64%), but a slight decrease compared to 2020 starters (71%). There was little variation across 2022 TLTP learners' subjects.

Just over two thirds (67%) of 2022 TLTP learners agreed that their course had allowed them to progress onto what they wanted to do. There were small variations in this figure across TLTP routes.

Figure 20: Whether course has allowed learner to progress to what they want to do



Source: Tech Ed Study - 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Base: T Level Transition Programme learners; Unweighted 1,974

TLTP learners were asked if, aside from studying, they had any plans to progress into paid work in the next 12 months. Just over two thirds (69%) reported that they planned to get a paid job. Smaller proportions planned to take a break from study and work (12%) or planned to undertake voluntary work/unpaid internship (6%). A fifth (21%) reported that they were undecided.

Conclusion

In summer 2023, surveys were administered with the third TLTP cohort (2022/23). Surveyed learners were studying twelve TLTP routes, including eight new routes.

Learners most commonly chose a TLTP because the programme was important to their future intentions for employment or study. The TLTP primarily attracted learners who would otherwise have taken an apprenticeship or another technical/vocational qualification. Across TLTP cohorts, most learners had discussed the programme as an option with a teacher or careers advisor, or were actively advised to apply.

Almost three quarters of learners were satisfied with their programme, similar to the 2021 cohort, and slightly lower than for the 2020 cohort. As in previous years, most learners found their programme 'quite' challenging, which is strongly associated with higher overall satisfaction.

Slightly more than half of learners undertook work experience (most often a short placement of up to 10 days). Work experience was more common in the 2021 and 2022 cohorts, compared with the 2020 cohort who experienced more COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. Three quarters of learners who undertook a placement were satisfied with it. As in previous years, just under half of learners had contact with employers outside of work experience.

The most common barriers to learning were health issues, which have increased significantly when compared to previous cohorts, and the cost of travel. The small proportion of learners who struggled to manage workload outside classes reported this was due to unclear work being set, insufficient support from teachers/tutors, and the amount of work.

Most learners reported that their course had helped them to develop relevant knowledge, practical skills and understanding of their sector of study. However, only about half of learners reported that their programme had developed their knowledge of T Levels or prepared them for a T Level, which is a key aim for TLTP. Learners' reports of these course outcomes are broadly similar for all three TLTP cohorts.

Learners' satisfaction and perceived outcomes varied substantially by TLTP route, suggesting significant differences in delivery and learner experiences. Overall, learners in Education and Early Years were the most positive, while learners in Engineering and Manufacturing (a new route for 2022) were the least positive.

Only a third of this year's TLTP learners planned to continue onto a T Level, a broadly similar proportion to previous cohorts. Other commonly reported plans were studying for a different course or an apprenticeship.

Level 4 and 5 learners

This chapter focuses on level 4 and 5 learners, looking at reasons for choosing the course, aspirations, delivery of the course, satisfaction, and future plans. The system for Higher Technical Education is currently under reform. New Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs) in Digital subjects were delivered from autumn 2022, with HTQs in Construction and Health and Science delivered from autumn 2023, and other occupational routes available in subsequent years. The main focus of the reformed qualifications has been to create courses which are more employer-led.

The surveyed cohort are level 4 and 5 learners who undertook courses in the 2022/23 academic year. Almost all learners (90%) were undertaking pre-reform courses, including 38% of Digital learners and all learners in other subjects. About two fifths of Digital learners (39%) were studying for an HTQ, with a further 23% of Digital learners on a course which began before the HTQ reforms and was later accredited as an HTQ course. Findings from the 2022/23 cohort are compared with the cohort of level 4 and 5 learners surveyed in the 2021/22 academic year.

Level 4 and 5 learners are identified through the Department for Education's (DfE) Individual Learner Record (ILR). This includes individuals studying level 4 and 5 qualifications at Further Education (FE) institutions, but not those studying at Higher Education (HE) institutions. Qualifications being studied for included Certificates/Diplomas of Higher Education, HNCs, HNDs and Foundation Degrees (apprenticeships were excluded as they are covered by another DfE survey).

Key level 4 and 5 findings

- Before starting their course, 43% of learners were both studying and working, with about a quarter each working only (27%) and studying only (24%). Learners who were working reported a median monthly salary of £1,654.
- 51% of level 4/5 learners worked alongside their course.
- The key reasons for learners choosing level 4 and 5 programmes were an interest in the area (56%), upskilling in the same line of work (35%), and to increase earnings (30%). Relatively few learners took a course to retrain in a different line of work (19%). The key reasons for choosing the subject area were to fit with their intended work area and interest. Education providers tended to be chosen because they were convenient to travel to and offered the subject of interest.
- Most learners were taught entirely or mostly in-person, representing an increase of in-person teaching compared to the previous cohort of level 4 and 5 learners (85% compared with 58%). Learners were most commonly taught for less than 11 hours a week (57%), reflecting the expectation of independent study in higher education, and the prevalence of part-time courses.

- 24% of learners had completed work experience or an industry placement, but almost two thirds reported that their programme had not included contact with employers. 88% of learners who had completed work experience were satisfied with it.
- Comparing Digital learners undertaking HTQs with Digital learners on pre-reform courses, there were no substantial differences in the rates of work placements or employer contact.
- Most learners found their workload manageable, including the amount of teaching on their programme and work completed outside taught lessons.
- The most commonly reported barriers to learning were family responsibilities (26%) and working part-time (23%).
- About three quarters of learners were satisfied with their course (77%) and likely to recommend it (73%). Three quarters or more were satisfied with their teachers' knowledge and expertise, the skills covered for their chosen occupation/subject area, the standard of classroom teaching, support received from tutors, and the way learners are assessed. Learners were least satisfied with the level of employer contact (35% satisfied) and careers advice provided (51% satisfied).
- Most learners reported that the programme had helped them develop significantly in their knowledge of the programme's occupational area (77%) and practical skills needed for their chosen subject (70%) and occupation (65%).
- The most common next step for level 4/5 learners was studying for a degree (42%), followed by undertaking paid work (19%) or another level 4/5 qualification (15%). Among learners who had continued to work for their previous employer throughout their course, most (73%) intended to stay in their current job.

Subject and learner characteristics

The subject and learner characteristics outlined in the following sections describe the profile of the level 4 and 5 learner population, which comprised 28,885 learners studying in further education settings who undertook level 4 or 5 courses in the 2022/23 academic year, based on the DfE's ILR database. Comparative figures relating to the characteristics of those who responded to the survey can be found in tables L45001-008.

Subject of study

Level 4 and 5 subjects were categorised into subject groupings that aligned with the HTQ subjects available in the first two years of delivery: Digital (from 2022/23), Construction, and Health and Science (from 2023/24). Most learners did not fit into an equivalent category and were on programmes classified as 'Other technical' subjects (34%, 9,884 learners) or 'Other non-technical' subjects (33%, 9,608 learners). The 'Other technical' and 'Other non-technical' subject groupings were defined ahead of the first wave of fieldwork for Level 4 and 5 learners on the basis of enabling comparison with existing T Level routes. 'Other technical' subjects comprised the sector subject areas of Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care; Engineering

and Manufacturing Technologies; Retail and Commercial Enterprise; Leisure, Travel and Tourism; and Education and Training. 'Other non-technical subjects' comprised the sector subject areas of Arts, Media and Publishing; History, Philosophy and Theology; Social Sciences; Languages, Literature and Culture; Preparation for Life and Work; Business, Administration and Law.

Level 4 and 5 learners were most-commonly enrolled on either Health, Public Services and Care programmes, or Business, Administration and Law programmes. Of the learners in the available administrative data at the time of the survey, 6,187 (21%) learners were enrolled on the former and 5,151 (18%) on the latter. Among the three subjects where HTQs are available in 2022/23 and/or 2023/24, Health and Science had the highest proportion of learners, with 6,722 learners enrolled (23%), followed by Digital with 1,698 (6%) and Construction with 973 learners (3%).

Provider OfS registration

The Office for Students (OfS) has a registration system that identifies institutions providing 'high quality' higher education courses. According to administrative data, over half of learners (57%) were studying at an institution identified as an OfS-registered provider.

Course completion

Of the level 4 and 5 learners who took part in the survey, 45% reported that their course was finishing this year, while 53% reported that they would be carrying on after September 2023.

Personal characteristics

Sex

According to administrative data, there were more female than male level 4 and 5 learners (58% and 42% respectively), with marked differences by subject. Health and Science subjects had the largest proportion of female learners (83%), while Digital (15%) and Construction subjects (18%) contained the lowest proportion of female learners. Other technical subjects were more balanced between male and female students (53% and 47% respectively), and other non-technical subjects more female dominated.

Age

Level 4 and 5 learners varied in age. Thirty-six percent were over 30 years old, and 19% were aged over 40. A large proportion of younger learners were between 19 and 25 (33% of learners overall) while 20% of learners were aged 18 or under. There were some differences by subject: Digital learners tended to be younger (57% were 20 or younger), while Health and Science learners tended to be older (31% were over 40).

To account for this variation among Level 4 and 5 learners, age groupings have been defined as follows: Aged 16 or below, aged 17, aged 18, aged 19 or 20, aged 21 to 25, aged 26 to

30, aged 31 to 40, aged 41 and above. For the purposes of analysis and reporting, these groupings are often collapsed with ranges provided (e.g., 5-10% for those in age bands under 21).

Ethnicity

The ethnicity of learners was broadly similar across routes with some variation; Digital programmes tended to be more ethnically diverse, with a higher proportion of Asian (14%) and black (9%) learners enrolled than on subjects in other routes.

What were learners doing before the course?

Surveyed learners were asked a range of questions regarding what they were doing before their course in terms of study and work.

Over two-fifths of learners (43%) were both studying and working in the months immediately before their course. About a quarter each were in either employment (27%) or study (24%). The remaining learners (6%) reported that they were neither employed nor studying. Both studying and working was the most common pattern for all subject groups (41-50%), except for Digital subjects where studying (only) was the most common pattern (45%). Two thirds of learners (67%) were studying before their course, with 41% studying full-time and 26% part-time.

As might be expected, younger learners were more likely to have been studying before their course. Most learners aged 18-20 were studying full time (79% of learners aged 18, and 68% of learners aged 19-20). Older learners were less likely to have been studying in the months immediately prior to the course (47% of learners aged 31 to 40, 51% of those aged 41+). The proportion of learners studying was similar for male and female learners.

Almost three quarters of learners (72%) were working in the months immediately before their course, with 38% in full-time and 29% in part-time employment.

Looking at differences by subject:

- Most Construction learners (93%) and learners on courses categorised as other technical subjects (81%) were working prior to their course.
- Almost a third of Digital learners were not employed or looking for paid work (29%), which perhaps reflects the fact that they were younger and most were studying full-time.

Again, as might be expected, learners aged 18-20 were less likely to be working full-time prior to their course (10% of learners aged 18, 18% of learners aged 19-20) compared to around half or more for learners in older age groups. The variation on working full- or part-time before the start of the course did not differ greatly by sex; male learners were slightly more likely to have been working full-time than female learners (41% compared to 35%),

whilst female learners were slightly more likely to have been working part-time than male learners (33% compared to 24%).

Salary

Level 4 and 5 learners were asked for self-reported salary prior to starting the course and could either express this figure through an hourly rate (35%), a daily rate (2%), a weekly rate (4%), a monthly rate (14%) or an annual rate (44%).

Table 7 displays responses after being aggregated into a single monthly rate. Descriptive statistics are provided, including the median, mean, upper quartile and lower quartile. Further details can be found in Appendix table L45014.

Table 7: Reported monthly salary of Level 4 and 5 learners prior to starting course

Reported salary	Overall (monthly aggregate)	Digital (monthly aggregate)	Construction (monthly aggregate)	Health and Science (monthly aggregate)	Other technical (monthly aggregate)	Other non-technical (monthly aggregate)
Median	£1,654	£1,493	£1,979	£1,592	£1,600	£1,678
Mean	£1,797	£1,504	£2,138	£1,880	£1,795	£1,872
Upper quartile	£2,211	£1,794	£2,666	£1,987	£2,262	£2,432
Lower quartile	£1,118	£1,064	£1,448	£1,484	£1,091	£1,204
Unweighted base	1,124	164	86	234	345	295

Source: Tech Ed Study – 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Base: Level 4 and 5 learners in paid work prior to starting course; Unweighted 1,124

The small number of learners who were not working or studying (n=59) were asked about any other activities they were doing in the months immediately prior to their course. The most common responses were looking after family and children (34%), and unemployed and not looking for work (34%).

Working during the course

About half of learners (51%) had undertaken paid work whilst attending their course.

This is substantially lower than the proportion for 2021 learners (78%), driven both by an increase in the proportion of Digital learners, who had lower rates of employment during the course than other learners, and lower rates of employment for learners of other subjects (46-87% of 2022 learners, compared with 69-92% of 2021 learners). Digital learners were least likely to have undertaken paid work (44%). There was minimal variation by age or sex.

Most learners who worked during their course had continued in their pre-course job with the same employer (66%), with a further 28% undertaking work with a different employer. Learners aged over 40 were the most likely to be continuing in their pre-course job (80%, compared with 57-71% of other learners).

Choosing the course

Learners were asked about their reasons for undertaking their course, and could select more than one response. **The most common reasons for undertaking a course were an interest in the area (56%), upskilling in the same line of work (35%), and to increase earnings (30%).** Fewer learners reported undertaking the course in order to retrain to a different line of work (19%), to get promoted (12%) or because their employer required it (11%).

Reasons for choosing the course varied by age. For learners aged 18-20, interest in the area was by far the most common reason for choosing the course (71-73%, compared with 41-57% of learners aged over 20). Learners aged over 20 were more likely than those aged 18-20 to cite upskilling in the same line of work (35-47%, compared with 22-23%), retraining in a different line of work (14-36%, compared with 5-6%), or to get promoted (10-21%, compared with 3-5%).

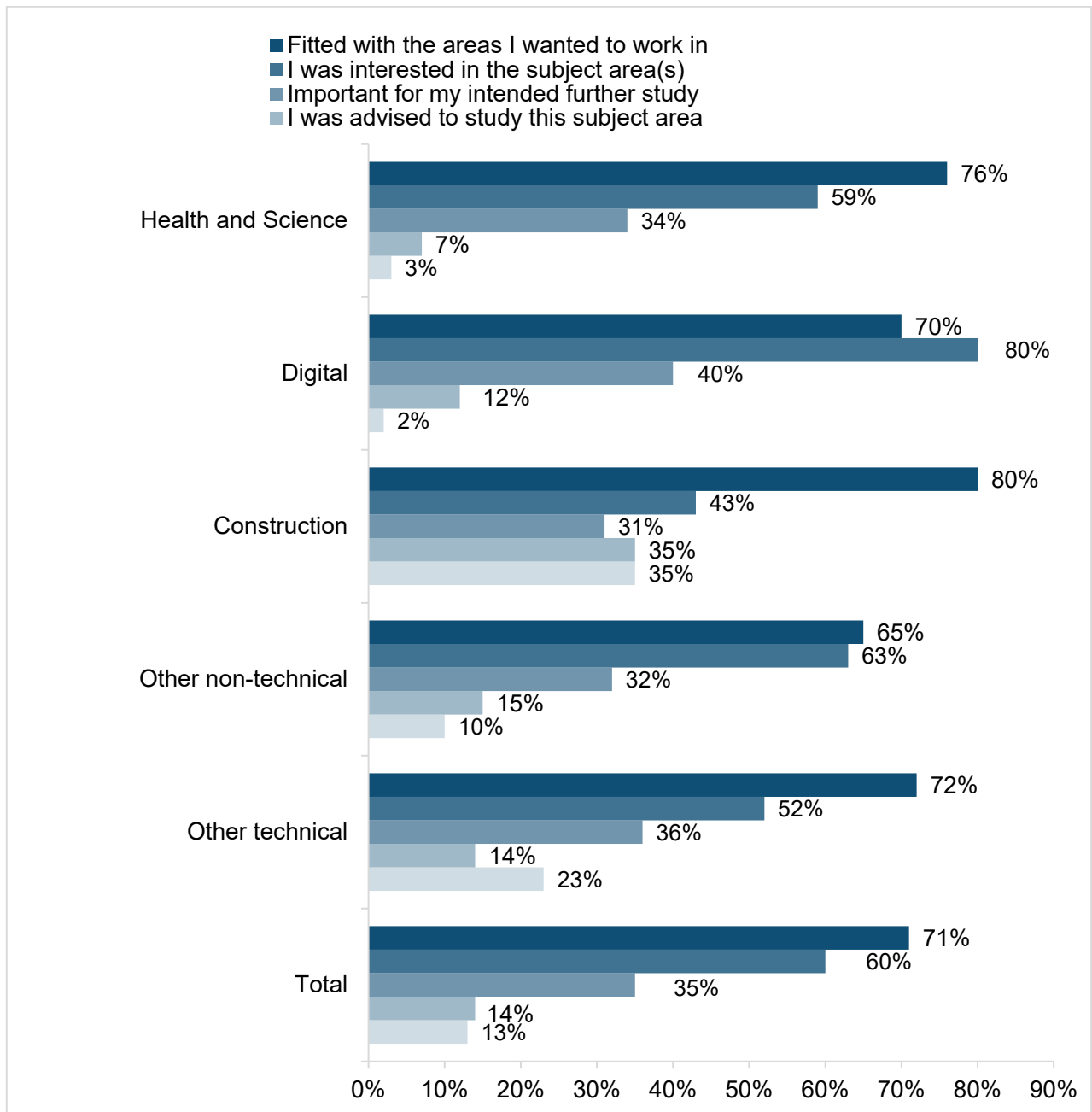
Reasons for choosing the course also varied by subject. For Construction learners, the most common reasons related to progression in their current field: upskilling in the same line of work (63%); an interest in the area (37%); to increase earnings (34%); and because their employer required it (31%). More Health and Science learners chose their course in order to retrain to a different line of work (37%), than to upskill in the same line of work (26%).

As might be expected, learners who were working (and not studying) before the course were more likely than other learners to take a course to upskill in the same area (52%), to increase earnings (36%) or be promoted (20%). Interest in the area was most commonly reported as a driver by learners who were neither studying or working (72%), or studying only (71%), while work-related reasons were less commonly cited by these learners (<25%).

As might be expected, learners continuing to work for the same employer during the course were more likely to choose the course to upskill in the same line of work (46% of learners in

the same job; 50% of learners in a different job with the same employer) compared with learners working for a different employer (25%).

Figure 21: Reasons for choosing course



Note: respondents could choose more than one option

Source: Tech Ed Study - 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Base: Level 4/5 learners; Unweighted 1,751

Learners were asked to think back to before they started the course and consider their intended next step after completing the course. Almost half intended to undertake further study (45%), while over a third (36%) wanted to do paid work. Almost a fifth (19%) wanted to do something else or were not sure. These proportions were similar across subjects,

although Digital learners were slightly more likely to want to undertake further study (51%). However, learners who were working in a new role with the same employer during their course (n=59) were more likely to intend to continue with paid work (46%) than further study (29%) after completing their course.

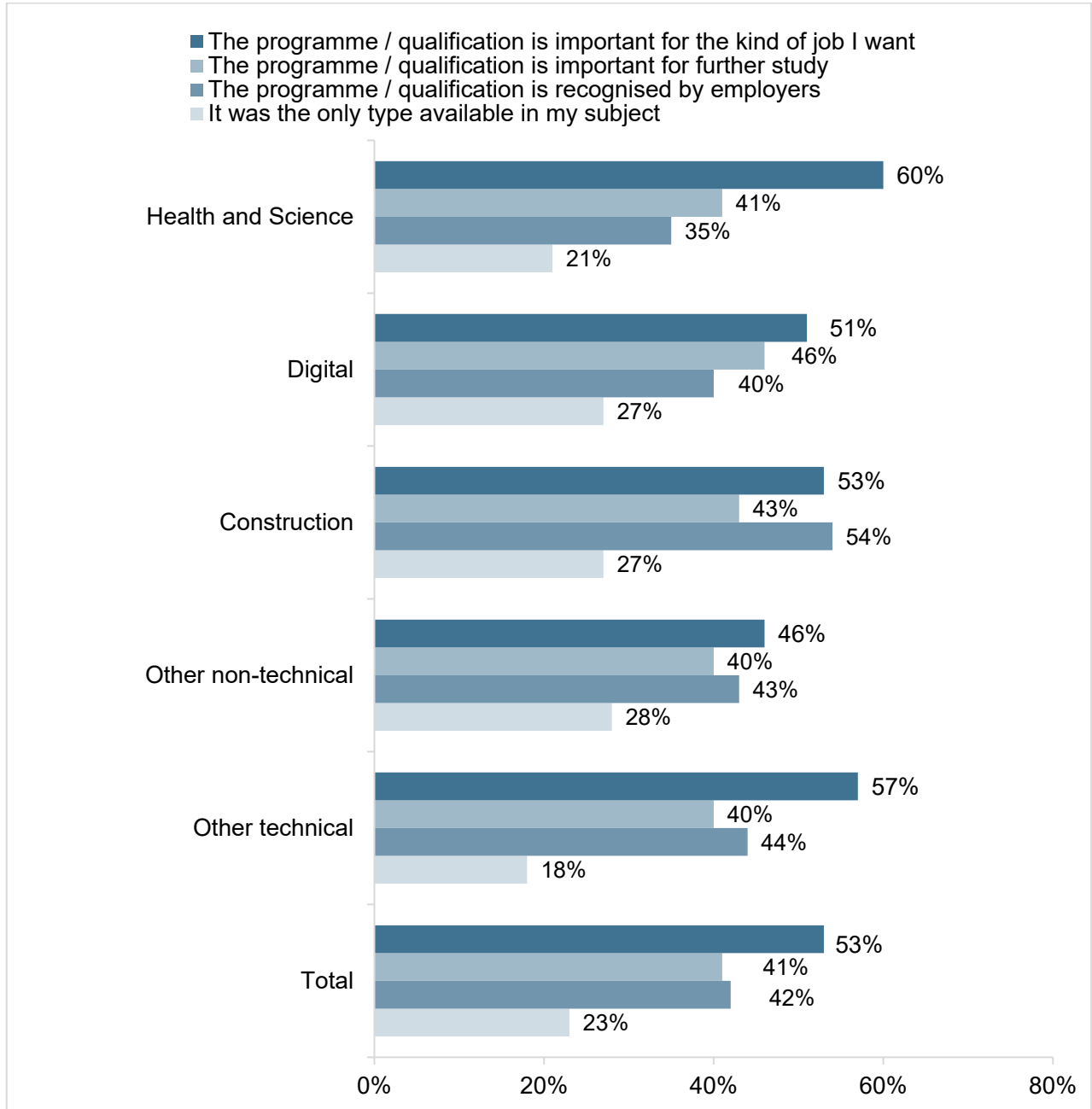
Most learners (73%) were certain or quite sure about their future occupation, while fewer learners were considering a few occupations (17%) or not sure (10%). Construction learners were most likely to be certain or quite sure (89%), while a lower proportion of Digital learners were certain or quite sure (66%). More learners continuing in their previous job during the course were certain or quite sure (80%), compared with learners working for a different employer (73%).

Almost three quarters of learners had chosen the subject area of their course because it fitted with the areas they wanted to work in (71%) and over half (60%) because they were interested in the subject area. Just over a third (35%) felt it was important for their intended further study, lower than the 45% of learners reporting that they had originally intended to go onto further study after their course. These were also the most common reasons reported by 2021 learners.

As drivers of course choice, the course fitting with intended work was commonly reported by learners from all subjects (65-80% of learners in each subject). However, the proportion of learners reporting interest as a driver of course choice varied substantively by subject, from four-fifths of Digital learners (80%) to less than half of Construction learners (43%).

Learners most commonly chose the particular type of qualification based on its usefulness for their future plans. The three most-commonly reported reasons learners reported for choosing their qualification were because it was 'important for the kind of job they want' (53%), 'recognised by employers' (42%) and/or 'important for further study' (41%). Important practical factors were the availability of part-time study (24%) and funding (21%), while the 'right mix' of classroom learning and practical study (23%) and the qualification type being the only one available (23%) were also fairly commonly cited. Fewer level 4 and 5 learners reported that they were influenced by advice (11%), that their course was an alternative to academic study (11%), or by an integrated industry placement or work experience (9%).

Figure 22: Reasons for choosing qualification



Source: Tech Ed Study - 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Base: Level 4/5 learners; Unweighted 1,676

The importance of the course for future jobs and further study, and its recognition by employers, were the most common drivers across all subjects. Construction learners were more likely than other learners to report employer recognition as a driver (54%). Learners working for the same employer but in a different job than when they started were particularly likely to highlight the qualification’s importance ‘for the kind of job they want’ (66%) and that it was ‘recognised by employers’ (56%) as drivers, reflecting the higher proportion of this group who intended to undertake/continue in paid work after their course.

Over half of the learners reported having chosen their provider partly because it was convenient to travel to (59%) and because it offered the subjects they wanted to do (55%). A third (33%) reported having studied there previously as a reason for choosing the provider. Only small proportions had chosen to their provider because their employer had chosen it (13%), it was informally recommended (11%) or because of its formal rating (9%). These responses are similar to those reported by 2021 learners.

How was their course funded?

Over half of level 4 and 5 learners (60%) had funded their course by taking out learner finance. About a fifth (21%) reported that their employer had paid their fees. Just over one in ten (11%) had paid out of their own money.

The vast majority of Digital learners and Health and Science learners (87% and 77% respectively) had taken out learner finance. Over half of Construction learners (64%) had their fees paid by their employer, which is higher than for 2021 Construction learners (48%).

As might be expected, the proportion of learners paying their fees themselves increased with age (from 5% of those aged 18, to 25% of those aged 41 or more). Higher proportions of learners in the age bands over 21 reported that their employers had paid their fees (20-32%), compared with 9-10% for those in age bands under 21.

These patterns in course funding and variations by subject and age group are broadly similar to those reported for 2021 learners.

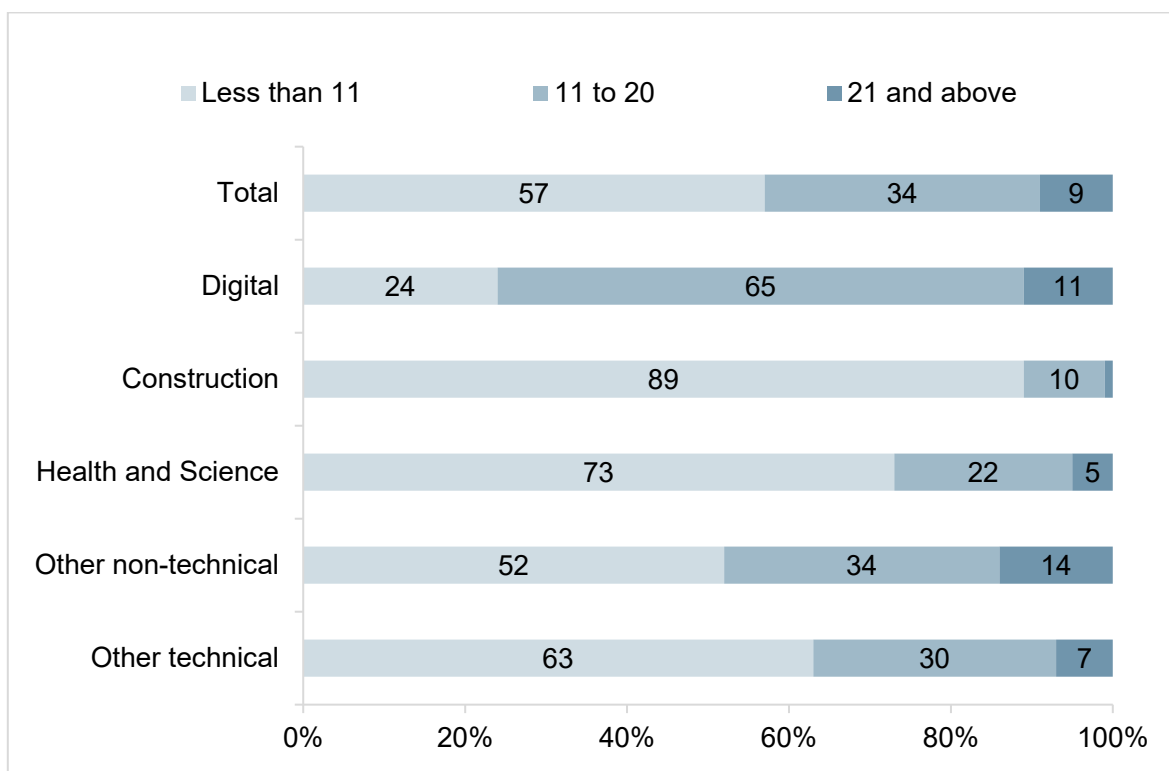
Course content and delivery

Number of teaching hours

Over half of learners (57%) reported being taught less than 11 hours a week, followed by 34% being taught 11-20 hours a week. Only a small proportion (9%) were being taught more than 20 hours a week. Reported teaching hours are lower than for level 3 technical education, reflecting the high proportion of part-time level 4 and 5 courses, and perhaps the lower contact hours and increased emphasis on self-study commonly found in higher education.

Digital subjects had the highest proportion of learners taught for 11 hours per week or more (76%) and Construction subjects had the lowest proportion (11%). This relates to Digital learners being younger and more likely to be on full-time courses and a high proportion of Construction learners (87%) working whilst studying on part-time courses of less than 11 hours.

Figure 23: Number of taught hours per week (grouped)



Source: Tech Ed Study - 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Base: Level 4/5 learners; Unweighted 1,767

As reported by 2021 learners, OfS-registered level 4 and 5 qualifications tended to deliver more hours than other qualifications: 53% of OfS-registered qualifications provided at least 11 hours a week compared to 26% of other qualifications. However, this may reflect an underlying difference in the proportion of part-time courses for these subjects and providers.

Mode of teaching

In the 2022/23 academic year, most learners had been taught either entirely in person (50%) or mostly in person (34%), while fewer than one in ten learners were taught mostly (5%) or entirely (3%) online. The remaining 7% were taught in similar amounts of in person and online. This represents a shift back to in person teaching compared with 2021 learners (23% entirely and 35% mostly in person).

The mode of teaching was broadly similar across subjects. However, as might be expected from the practical course content, Construction learners were particularly likely to be taught mainly or entirely in person (94%), with very few learners taught mainly or entirely online (3%). As also reported by 2021 learners, OfS-registered level 4 and 5 qualifications were less likely than other qualifications to be delivered online: 16% of level 4 and 5 qualifications were delivered entirely or mostly online compared to only 4% of OfS-registered qualifications.

Direct engagement with employers

Level 4 and 5 learners were asked about their experience of direct engagement with employers within their course, including through work experience.

Relatively few learners had engaged with employers outside of work experience with **almost two thirds (62%) of learners reporting that their course had not included contact with employers (excluding work experience).**

Table 8: Level of employer contact on the course (multicoded^a)

Method of employer contact	Level 4/5 learners (overall)	Digital	Construction	Health and Science	Other non-technical	Other technical
No employer contact	62%	58%	73%	59%	64%	63%
Contact with employers as part of project work	13%	11%	11%	16%	14%	12%
Talks by employers	23%	34%	14%	21%	21%	19%
Visits to employers	10%	10%	8%	10%	8%	11%
Other types of contact (please specify)	5%	3%	1%	5%	5%	7%

Base: All level 4/5 learners, n=1,756. Source: Tech Ed Study – T Level Cohort 2 Wave 2 and other cohorts (Jun-Sep 2023)

^aNote: respondents were able to select more than one method of employer contact, meaning selected responses will add up to more than 100% for each subject area

Small proportions reported talks by employers (23%), contact with employers as part of project work (13%), visits to employers (10%) or other contact (5%). These proportions were similar to those reported by 2021 learners. Among Digital learners, ‘HTQ post-reform’ learners were slightly more likely to report visits to employers (15% compared with 9% of non-HTQ learners).

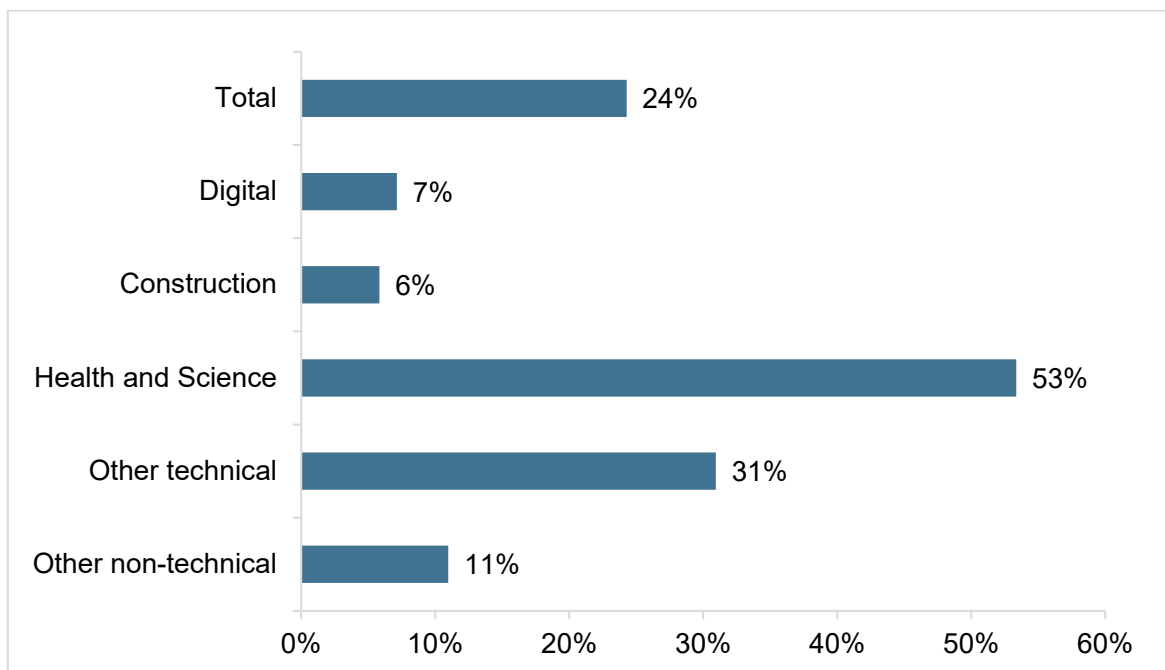
However, it is worth noting that, exploring these different ways of engaging with employers by the number of hours learners were studying showed that, as might be expected, learners on courses with a larger number of hours were more likely to experience this type of employer engagement. Less than a third (30%) of learners studying for fewer than 11 hours week experienced these types of engagements with the proportion rising to just less than half (48%) for those studying 11-20 hours and more than 21 hours a week.

A quarter of learners (24%) had spent time on a work experience placement during their course, a slightly lower proportion than reported in the 2022 survey (30%). This was similar for courses with different teaching hours, with 23% of learners studying less than 11 hours a week having spent time on a placement compared to 25% of those studying 11-20 hours and 28% of those studying 21 hours and above. The low proportion of learners completing a work experience placement seems to reflect the part-time nature of many courses and the high proportion of learners who continued working whilst studying. Learners in their final year were slightly less likely than learners in earlier stages of their course to have undertaken a work experience placement during their course (20% and 29% respectively).

Subject differences reported in the 2022 survey were also found in the 2023 survey, with high proportions of Health and Science learners (53%) and learners on other technical courses (31%) undertaking a work experience placement compared to 6% of Construction learners, 7% of Digital learners and 11% of other non-technical learners.

Learners completing OfS-registered qualifications were slightly less likely than other learners to undertake a work experience placement (22% and 29% respectively). Among Digital learners, there were no differences between the proportions of HTQ learners and other learners who spent time on a work experience placement (7% each).

Figure 24: Whether time was spent on an industry or work experience placement



Source: Tech Ed Study - 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Base: Level 4/5 learners; Unweighted 1,772

Of those learners who reported work experience (n=410), **the most common placement length up to the time of the survey was up to 50 hours (45%)**. However, there was significant variation in placement length, with 13% of placement learners completing more than 400 hours. A small proportion of learners had not yet completed any hours (5%). Comparing subjects, placements in other technical subjects were longer than placements in Health and Science and other non-technical subjects. Placements for OfS-registered qualifications were longer than placements for other courses. As might be expected, placements were longer for learners on courses with a larger number of teaching hours. It is likely that learners on courses with fewer hours would be juggling study with a more significant work commitment in the same subject area and have less need for a placement.

Around a half of learners (49%) reported that more than 15 hours of their placement were completed remotely, with one in ten (13%) reporting that more than 60 hours had been completed remotely.

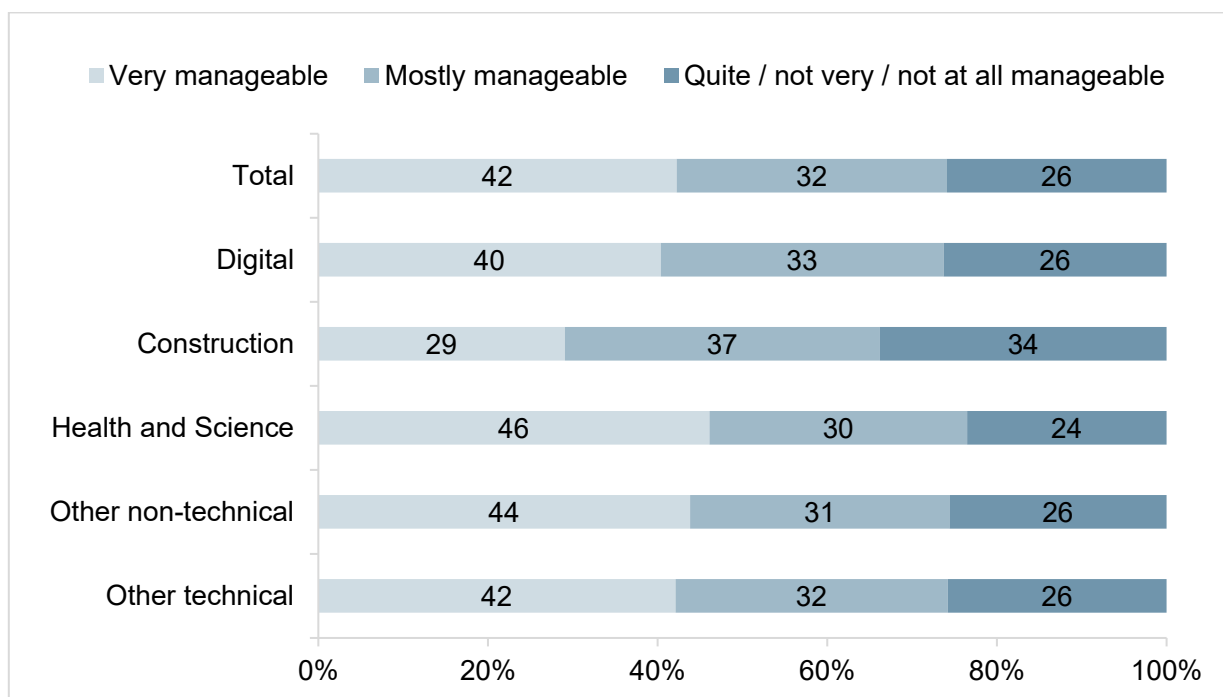
Workload and challenge

Workload

Most learners (74%) felt that the amount of teaching on their course was ‘very’ or ‘mostly manageable’, similar to 2021 learners (73%). This proportion was similar across most subjects and was similar for OfS-registered qualifications and other courses.

Learners who were taught mainly in person tended to find the amount of teaching more manageable (76% of learners taught ‘entirely/mostly in person’ found it ‘very’ or ‘mostly manageable’ compared to 68% of those taught ‘entirely/mostly online’ and 60% of those taught ‘roughly the same online and in person’). This pattern was also seen among 2021 learners.

Figure 25: Manageability of taught hours



Source: Tech Ed Study - 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Base: Level 4/5 learners; Unweighted 1,768

Most learners reported that the work required outside of taught lessons was manageable. Over four fifths of learners (86%) reported that the work required outside of taught lessons was ‘very’, ‘mostly’ or ‘quite manageable’, with 14% reporting that it was ‘not very’ or ‘not at all manageable’. These proportions were similar across subjects and did not vary by OfS-registration. These findings were similar to findings for 2021 learners.

Learners who reported their workload was ‘not very’ or ‘not at all’ manageable (n=247) were asked about the reasons. The most common reasons reported were other commitments outside the course (54%), ‘too much work’ being given (39%), ‘not enough support from the teacher/tutor’ (36%) and ‘the work set was unclear’ (36%).

Learners who said other commitments made their workload unmanageable (n=83) were asked about those commitments. The most common commitments mentioned were additional paid work (73%) and caring responsibilities (34%).

Barriers to learning

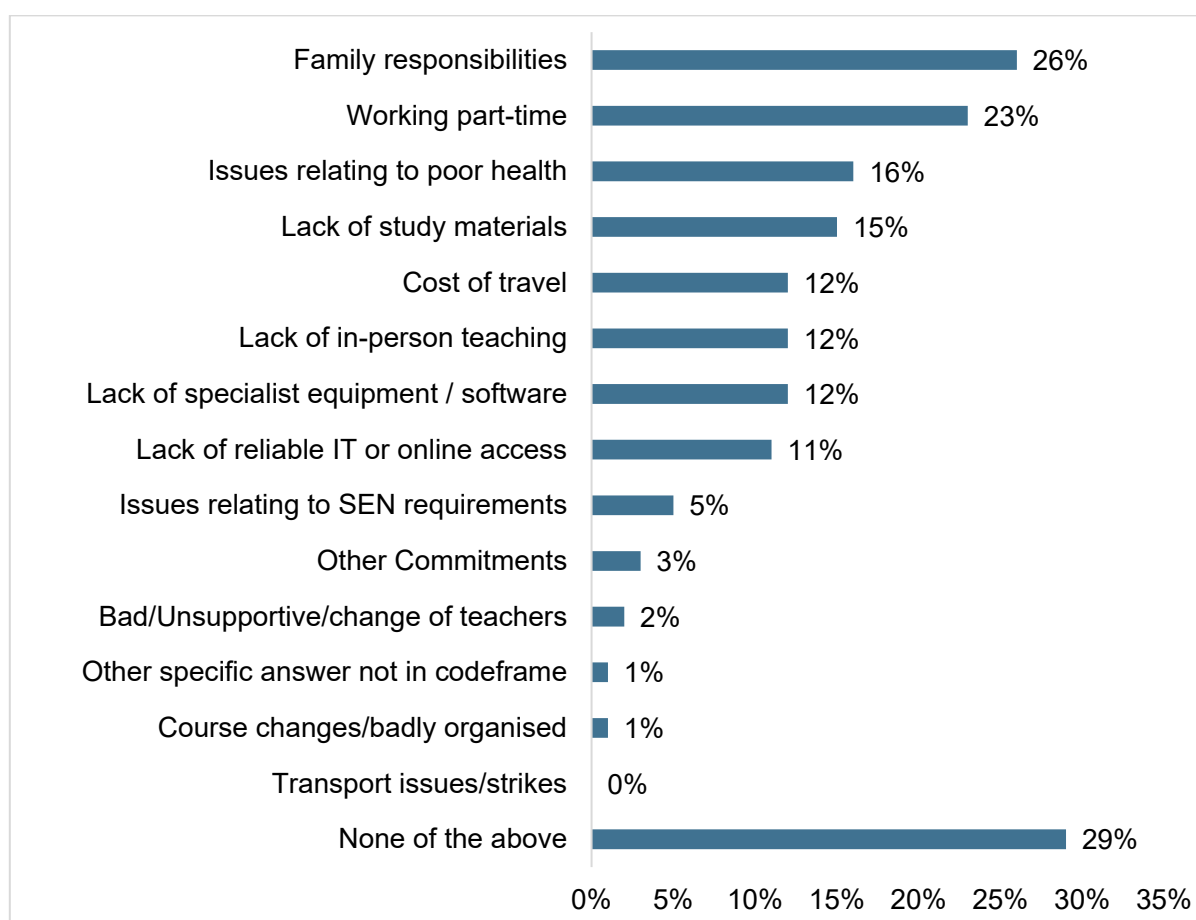
Learners were asked about their barriers to learning. **The most common barriers for level 4 and 5 learners were not being able to study enough because of ‘family responsibilities’ (reported by 26%) and ‘working part-time’ (23%).** ‘Lack of in person teaching’, which was a common barrier reported by 2021 learners (22%), was less commonly reported by 2022 learners (12%). Less than a fifth of learners reported ‘issues relating to poor health (16%), ‘lack of materials for studying’ (15%), ‘lack of specialist equipment/software for

the course' (12%), 'cost of travel to their course' (12%) or 'lack of reliable IT or online access' (11%) as barriers to learning.

For Digital learners, the most-commonly reported barrier was 'lack of specialist equipment/software for the course' (25%). For learners in all other subjects, the two most commonly reported barriers were that 'working part-time' or 'family responsibilities' meant they could not study enough. These barriers were particularly common for Health and Science learners (29% and 40% respectively, compared with 20-23% for other subjects). These subject differences were broadly consistent with the findings for 2021 learners.

Female learners were more likely to report 'family responsibilities' as a barrier (33%) than male learners (18%). More than two-fifths of those aged over 30 reported this as a barrier (42-46%), compared with less than a quarter of those aged 18-30 (11-23%).

Figure 26: Barriers to learning (multicoded^a)



Source: Tech Ed Study - 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

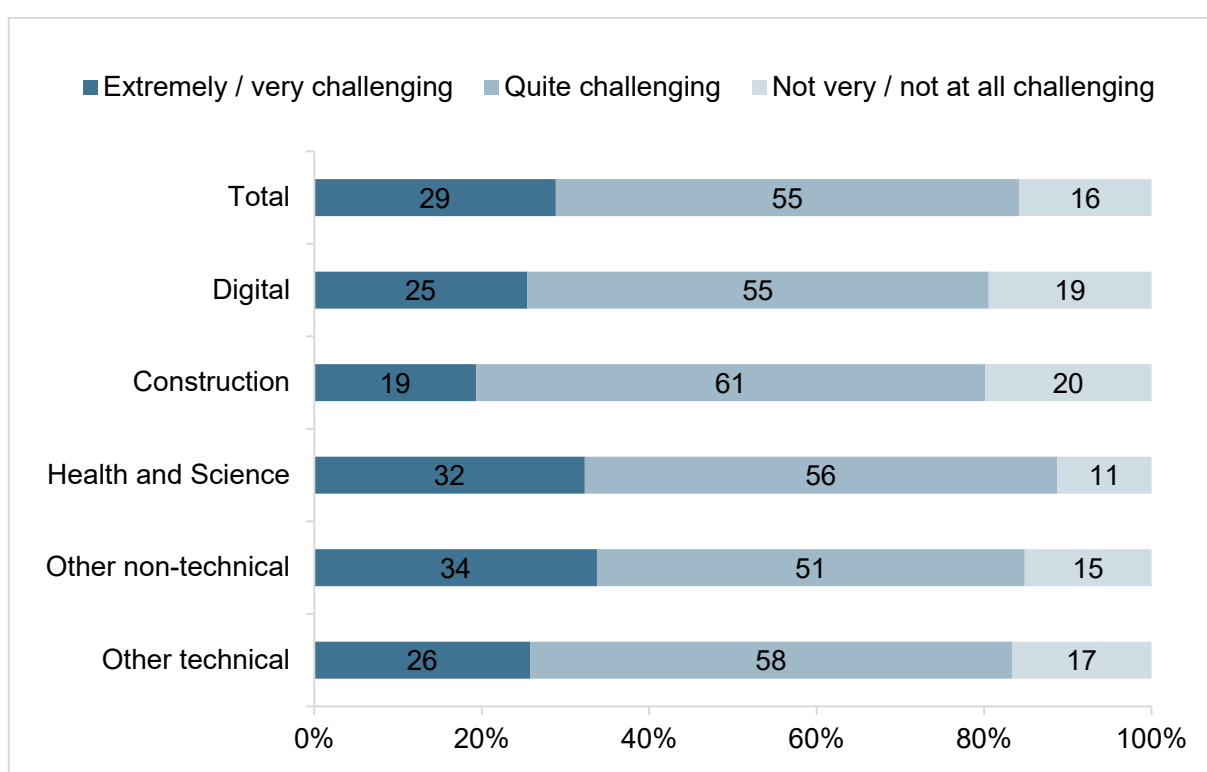
Base: Level 4/5 learners; Unweighted 1,764

^aNote: respondents were able to select more than one method of employer contact, meaning selected responses will add up to more than 100% for each subject area

How challenging learners found their course

Almost a third of learners (29%) found their course ‘extremely’ or ‘very challenging’. **About half of learners (55%) found their course ‘quite challenging’**, while less than a fifth (16%) reported it to be ‘not very’ or ‘not at all challenging’. Course challenge was slightly lower than reported for 2021 learners, when almost two fifths (39%) of learners found the course ‘extremely’ or ‘very challenging’. It was similar for OfS-registered and non-registered qualifications. Learners in Health and Science and other non-technical subjects were more likely to report that the course was ‘extremely’ or ‘very challenging’ (32% and 34% respectively) compared with other subjects (19%-26%).

Figure 27: Perceived level of challenge relating to the course



Source: Tech Ed Study - 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Base: Level 4/5 learners; Unweighted 1,769

As would be expected, course challenge was also associated with the manageability of teaching and work outside lessons. The following groups had higher proportion of learners reporting that their course was ‘extremely’ or ‘very challenging’:

- Learners who found the amount of teaching less manageable (37% of those who found it ‘quite’, ‘not very’ or ‘not at all manageable’, compared with 26% of those who found it ‘very’ or ‘mostly manageable’).

- Learners who found the work outside lessons to be ‘not very manageable’ (36% of those who found it ‘quite’, ‘not very’ or ‘not at all manageable’, compared with 22% of those who found it ‘very’ or ‘mostly manageable’).

Course challenge was also related to teaching mode. Challenge was highest for learners who were taught ‘roughly the same online and in person’ (36% ‘extremely’ or ‘very challenging’) compared with those taught ‘mostly/entirely in person’ (28%) and ‘entirely/mostly online’ (30%).

Learners who reported any level of challenge (n=1,155) were asked the reasons why. The most commonly reported reasons related to the course were high workload (32%), learning new or unfamiliar content (15%) and not receiving enough support (12%).

A small proportion of survey respondents (n=99) left their course early, and were asked the reasons for this. **The most commonly reported reasons for leaving early were ‘personal problems’ (36%), ‘issues with the way the course was delivered’ (32%) and ‘lack of support from teachers’ (28%).** These were similar to the most common reasons reported by 2021 learners, although the proportion of learners who left because they ‘couldn’t juggle studying with other commitments’ had reduced from 32% (2021 learners) to 17%.

Satisfaction with the course

Overall satisfaction

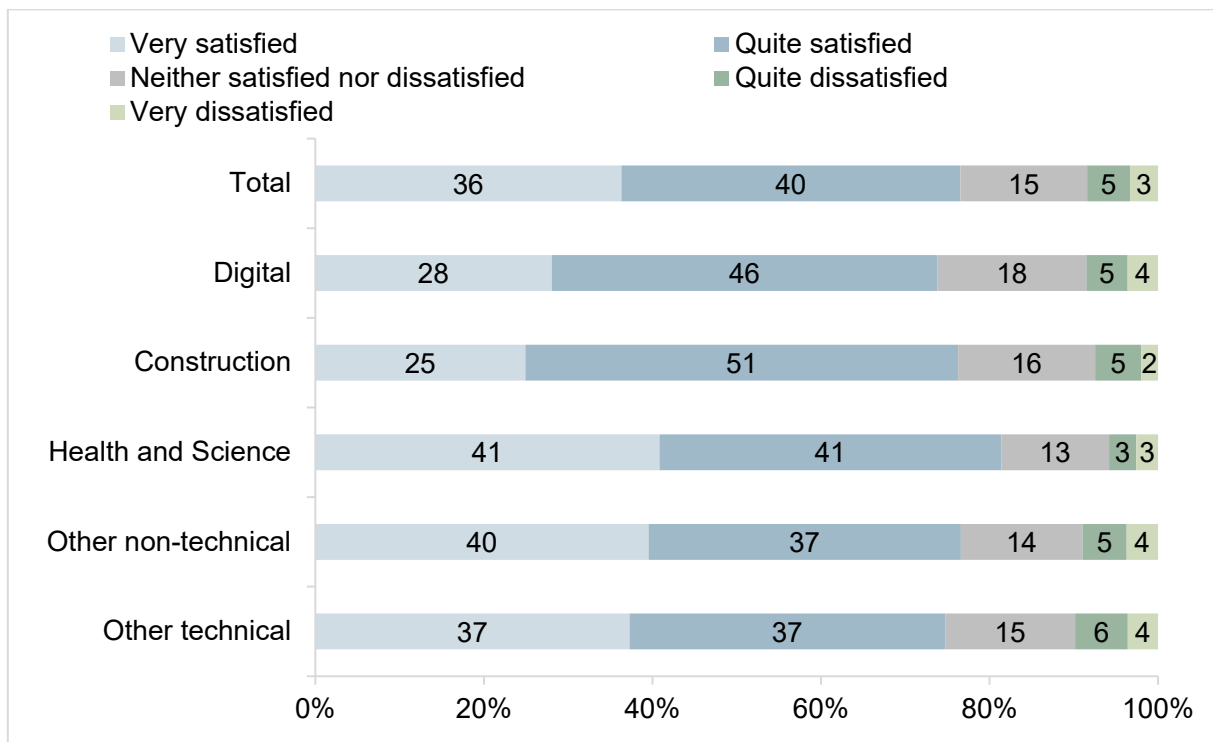
Most learners (77%) were satisfied with their course, with fewer than one in ten (8%) reporting that they were dissatisfied. These proportions were similar to those reported by 2021 learners. Course satisfaction was similar across subjects, OfS-registered and non-registered courses, whether the learner was in their final year, and learner sex. Learners aged over 30 were more likely to report being ‘very satisfied’ with their course (43-45%, compared with 26-36% of learners aged 18-30).

Overall satisfaction was associated with course challenge and teaching format:

- Learners who found their course ‘quite challenging’ were more likely to report satisfaction with their course (82%), compared with learners who found it ‘extremely / very challenging’ (73%) or ‘not very/not at all challenging’ (64%)
- Learners who had been taught mostly/entirely in person were more likely to report satisfaction with their course (78%), compared with those who were taught mostly/entirely online (71%) or ‘roughly the same amount in person and online’ (66%)
- Learners who found the workload outside of taught lessons ‘not very manageable’ were less likely to report satisfaction with their course (45%) than those who found the workload outside of taught lessons ‘very manageable’, ‘mostly manageable’ (both 86%) or ‘quite manageable’ (76%)

- Learners who found the amount of teaching ‘quite, not very or not at all manageable’ were also less likely to be satisfied with their course (57%) than those who found the amount of teaching ‘very manageable’ or ‘mostly manageable’ (86% and 80% respectively).

Figure 28: Overall satisfaction



Source: Tech Ed Study - 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Base: Level 4/5 learners; Unweighted 1,773

Learners who were ‘quite’ or ‘very dissatisfied’ were asked the reasons for this (n=128). **The most common reasons for dissatisfaction associated with the course were quality of teaching (34%), course content and structure (21%) and lack of support (20%).** Although level of challenge was associated with overall course satisfaction, very few dissatisfied learners (5%) reported it as a reason for dissatisfaction.

A high proportion of learners (73%) reported that they were ‘very likely’ or ‘quite likely’ to recommend their course to others, with only 12% reporting that they were ‘quite unlikely’ or ‘very unlikely’ to recommend their course. These proportions were similar to those reported by 2021 learners. Course recommendation was similar across different teaching formats. Female respondents were more likely to report being ‘very likely’ or ‘quite likely’ to recommend the course (77%) compared to male respondents (68%).

There were some differences by subject, level of course challenge, OfS-registration, and learner age.

- The highest proportion of learners who were ‘very’ or ‘quite likely’ to recommend their programme was for Health and Science subjects (80%), with the lowest proportions in

Digital and Construction subjects (64% each). This is a lower rate of recommendation for Construction learners compared with the previous year (79% for 2021 Construction learners).

- Learners who found their course 'extremely / very challenging' or 'quite challenging' were more likely to recommend their course (71% and 77% respectively were 'very likely' or 'quite likely' to recommend it) than learners who found it not very/not at all challenging (59%). This is similar to the findings for 2021 learners.
- Learners on non-registered courses were slightly more likely to recommend their course than learners on OfS-registered courses (77% 'very/quite likely' compared with 70%).
- Learners aged over 30 were more likely to recommend their course than learners aged 18-30 (76-82% 'very/quite likely' compared with 68-71%).
- Learners who found the workload outside of taught lessons 'not very manageable' were less likely to recommend their course (45%) than those who found the workload outside of taught lessons 'very manageable' (84%), 'mostly manageable' (82%) or 'quite manageable' (70%).
- Learners who found the amount of teaching 'quite, not very or not at all manageable' were also less likely to recommend their course (56%) than those who found the amount of teaching 'very manageable' or 'mostly manageable' (83% and 73% respectively).

Satisfaction with specific aspects

At least three quarters of learners were satisfied with key aspects of course delivery including teachers' knowledge and expertise (83%), the skills covered for their chosen occupation/subject area (78%), the standard of classroom teaching (77%), the support received from teachers (77%) and the way learners were assessed (75%). **Learners were least satisfied with the level of employer contact (35%) and the careers advice provided (51%).** The finding relating to employer contact is unsurprising given the lack of employer contact reported by most learners. Further detail is shown in Table 9 below.

Table 9: Specific aspects of the course where level 4/5 learners were ‘very’ or ‘quite’ satisfied

Extent to which learner was satisfied with:	% of level 4/5 learners ‘very/quite’ satisfied
Teachers’ knowledge and expertise	83%
Skills covered for chosen occupation/subject area	78%
Standard of classroom teaching	77%
Supported received from teachers	77%
The way learners are assessed	75%
Equipment, software and resources available	69%
Standard of practical hands-on work	63%
Course organisation and management	60%
Preparation for future work ⁸	57%
Preparation for further study	57%
The careers advice provided	51%
Level of employer contact	35%
<i>Unweighted Base</i>	<i>1,771 -1,773</i>

Base: All level 4/5 learners. Source: Tech Ed Study – T Level Cohort 2 Wave 2 and other cohorts (Jun-Sep 2023)

These findings are similar to those reported by 2021 learners, although a slightly lower proportion of 2022 learners were ‘very’ or ‘quite’ satisfied with the standard of practical hands-on work (63%, compared with 71% of 2021 learners) and the level of employer contact (35%, compared with 43% of 2021 learners).

Health and Science had the highest proportion of learners who were ‘very’ or ‘quite’ satisfied for most of these course aspects. Construction had the lowest proportion of learners who were ‘very’ or ‘quite’ satisfied for all of these course aspects (6-29 percentage points lower than for Health and Science learners).

⁸ This statement was added for the survey of 2022 learners and was not asked in the survey of 2021 learners.

Satisfaction with most course aspects was similar for OfS-registered courses and non-registered courses. However, non-registered courses had a higher proportion of 'very' or 'quite satisfied' learners for the standard of practical hands-on work (66% for non-registered courses, 61% for OfS-registered courses) and the skills covered (84% and 75% respectively). OfS-registered courses had a higher proportion of 'very' or 'quite satisfied' learners for preparation for further study (61% for OfS-registered courses, 51% for non-registered courses).

Satisfaction with work experience placement

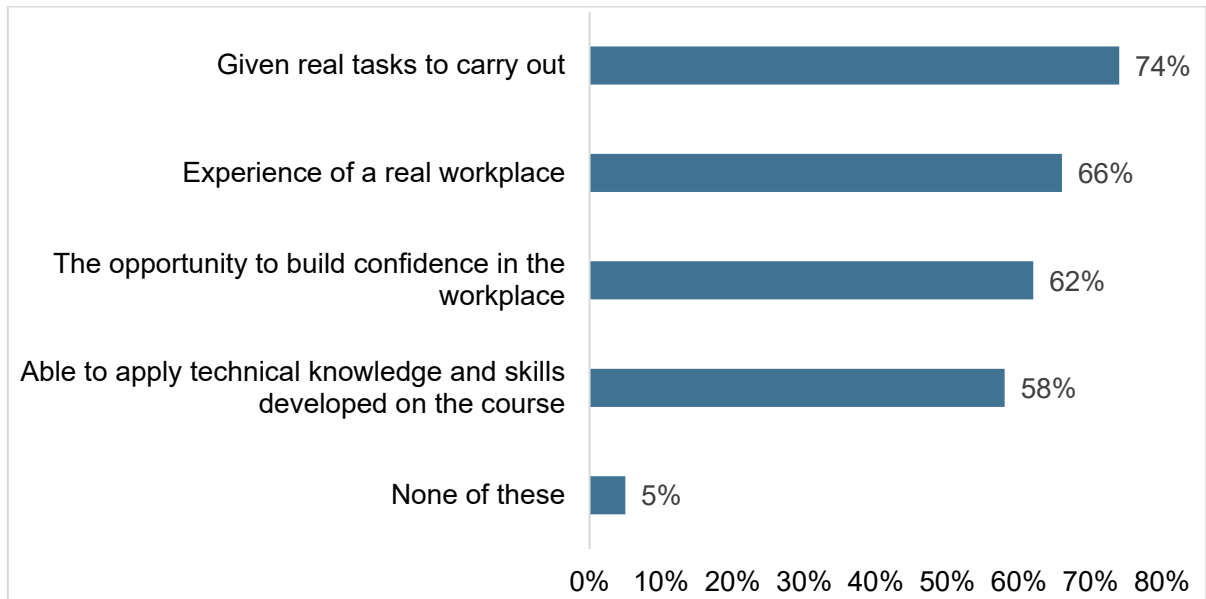
Learners who undertook a work experience placement (n=411) were asked about their satisfaction and how the placement met their expectations. It is important to note that findings about placements only reflect the quarter (25%) of level 4 and 5 learners who undertook a placement, and that these findings are skewed towards learners of Health and Science and other technical subjects, who comprised most of the learners who completed a placement. For this reason, robust comparisons between subjects cannot be made. Due to the small numbers of Digital learners who completed a placement, robust comparisons between HTQ and other qualifications cannot be made.

There were high levels of satisfaction with work experience placements (88% of learners were 'very' or 'quite satisfied', with only 4% of learners 'very' or 'quite dissatisfied'). This was similar across OfS-registered and non-registered courses. These proportions were similar to those reported by 2021 learners.

More than half of learners who had completed a placement reported that it had met their expectations in a range of ways. This included: being given real tasks to carry out (74% agreed that it had met their expectations), experience of a real workplace (66%), the opportunity to build confidence in the workplace (62%) and being able to apply technical knowledge and skills developed on the programme (58%).

These responses were generally similar to those of learners surveyed in 2021, although a slightly higher proportion of this year's learners reported that their expectations had been met in terms of being given real tasks to carry out whilst they were a little less positive in the other areas. In particular, a lower proportion of those surveyed this year reported that their expectations had been met regarding being able to apply technical knowledge and skills in the workplace (58%) compared to 68% of learners surveyed in 2021.

Figure 29: Areas in which industry or work experience placement met expectations



Source: Tech Ed Study - 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Base: Level 4/5 learners who spent time on industry or work experience placement; Unweighted 411

Learners who completed an industry or work experience placement were asked to respond to a range of statements⁹ about their placement. The results are shown in Table 10 below.

⁹ These questions were not asked in previous surveys so comparisons cannot be made.

Table 10: Level 4/5 learners' views on their placement

Elements of work experience	% strongly agree/agree
The placement improved my knowledge of the workplace	89%
The placement was a good challenge for me	82%
I felt a valued member of the team during the placement	80%
The placement came at the right point in the course	78%
My employer made sure I got the most I could out of the placement	77%
I was fully prepared for my placement	77%
I had all the support I needed from the university/college during the placement	74%

Base: Level 4/5 learners who spent time on industry or work experience placement; Unweighted 411-412.
Source: Tech Ed Study - 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023).

Course outcomes

Learners were asked to what extent their course had helped them to develop a range of skills, understanding and knowledge.

Most learners reported that their course had helped them to develop their knowledge and skills in their course area ‘a great deal’ or ‘quite a bit’, including their knowledge of the course’s occupational area (77%) and practical skills needed for their chosen subject (70%) and occupation (65%). Considering broader skills, almost three quarters of learners (72%) reported that their course had developed their study skills ‘a great deal’ or ‘quite a bit’. In addition, at least half of learners reported developing the following ‘a great deal’ or ‘quite a bit’: their communication skills (62%), confidence (64%), understanding of how workplaces operate (56%) and IT skills (51%). These outcomes are similar to those reported for 2021 learners. Further details, including a breakdown by subject, are shown in Table 11 below.

Table 11: Extent to which the course helped learners develop skills, understanding and knowledge

Extent to which the course had helped learners develop 'a great deal/quite a bit'	% of all level 4/5 learners	Digital	Construction	Health and Science	Other technical	Other non-technical
Knowledge of the occupational area	77%	71%	72%	85%	78%	76%
Study skills	72%	70%	57%	78%	73%	71%
Practical skills for chosen subject	70%	65%	51%	81%	67%	72%
Practical skills for chosen occupation	65%	60%	45%	77%	64%	66%
Confidence	64%	62%	43%	74%	64%	64%
Communication skills	62%	61%	37%	77%	62%	58%
Understanding of how workplaces operate	56%	46%	45%	68%	57%	54%
IT skills	51%	73%	34%	43%	50%	48%

Base: All level 4/5 learners, n=1,769-1770. Source: Tech Ed Study – T Level Cohort 2 Wave 2 and other cohorts (Jun-Sep 2023)

For most outcomes which learners were asked about, only a small proportion (<10%) reported their course had 'not at all' helped them develop these. However, slightly more learners (11%) reported that their course had 'not at all' helped them develop IT skills, although, as might be expected, a lower proportion of Digital learners reported this (2%). One in ten learners (10%) reported that their course had 'not at all' helped them develop their understanding of how workplaces operate. This could reflect the low level of work experience placements and employer contact, or learners' already strong understanding of how workplaces operate before they started the course, as most learners were already working. These outcomes are similar to those reported for 2021 learners.

Overall, Health and Science learners were the most positive about course outcomes and Construction learners were the least positive. This pattern was similar to that of course satisfaction. For seven of the eight outcomes, Health and Science learners had the highest proportion reporting their course had helped them develop them 'a great deal/quite a bit' (68%-85% for these seven outcomes). However, again, as would be expected, the highest proportion of learners reporting the development of their IT skills 'a great deal/quite a bit' was Digital learners (73%). For seven of the eight outcomes, Construction learners had the lowest proportion reporting their course had helped them develop these course outcomes

'a great deal/quite a bit' (34-57%). However, Digital learners had the lowest proportion of learners reporting 'a great deal/quite a bit' of development (71%) in their knowledge of the occupational area.

There were also some differences between learners on OfS-registered and other qualifications. **Learners on non-OfS registered qualifications were more likely to report developing their knowledge and skills relating to their course area 'a great deal' or 'quite a bit'**, compared with learners on OfS-registered qualifications. This included: knowledge of their occupational area (82% compared to 75%); practical skills for their chosen subject (76% compared to 66%); and practical skills for their chosen occupation (72% compared to 62%). Learners on OfS-registered qualifications were more likely to report the development of their IT skills 'a great deal/quite a bit' (58% compared to 39% for those on other level 4/5 qualifications). These findings are broadly similar to those reported for 2021 learners.

Next steps

In considering the next steps for learners after completing their level 4 or 5 course, it is important to note that many level 4 and 5 learners were already working in the sector of their course, and many were undertaking courses on a part-time basis alongside paid work.

The largest proportion of level 4/5 learners planned to study for a degree (42%), undertake paid work (19%), or undertake another level 4/5 qualification (15%) after their programme finished. Smaller proportions were planning to complete an apprenticeship (6%), or take an HTQ (2%) or another qualification (12%). The remaining learners had other plans (1%) or were not sure (2%). A degree was the most common next step across all subject groups. Digital subjects had the highest proportion of learners planning to go onto a degree (58%) and other technical and non-technical subjects the lowest (36% each). This might reflect the fact that Digital learners were younger.

About half (51%) of level 4 and 5 learners planned to undertake further study or complete an apprenticeship after their course finished. A further quarter (28%) were undecided. Planning to undertake further study was particularly common for learners on OfS-registered courses (59%, compared with 39% of learners on non-registered courses) and Digital learners (62%, compared with 48-55% of learners in other subjects), which may relate to the younger age profile of Digital learners.

Of learners who planned to study or were undecided (n=1,377), the most common plans were a degree (55%) or a different level 4 or 5 qualification (20%). Fewer learners were considering an apprenticeship (8%), a Higher Technical Qualification (3%) or another type of study (15%). Considering different learners within this group, learners on OfS-registered courses and Digital learners were more likely than other learners to consider studying for a degree (63% of learners on OfS-registered courses compared with 37% of learners on non-registered courses, and 72% of Digital learners compared with 48-57% of

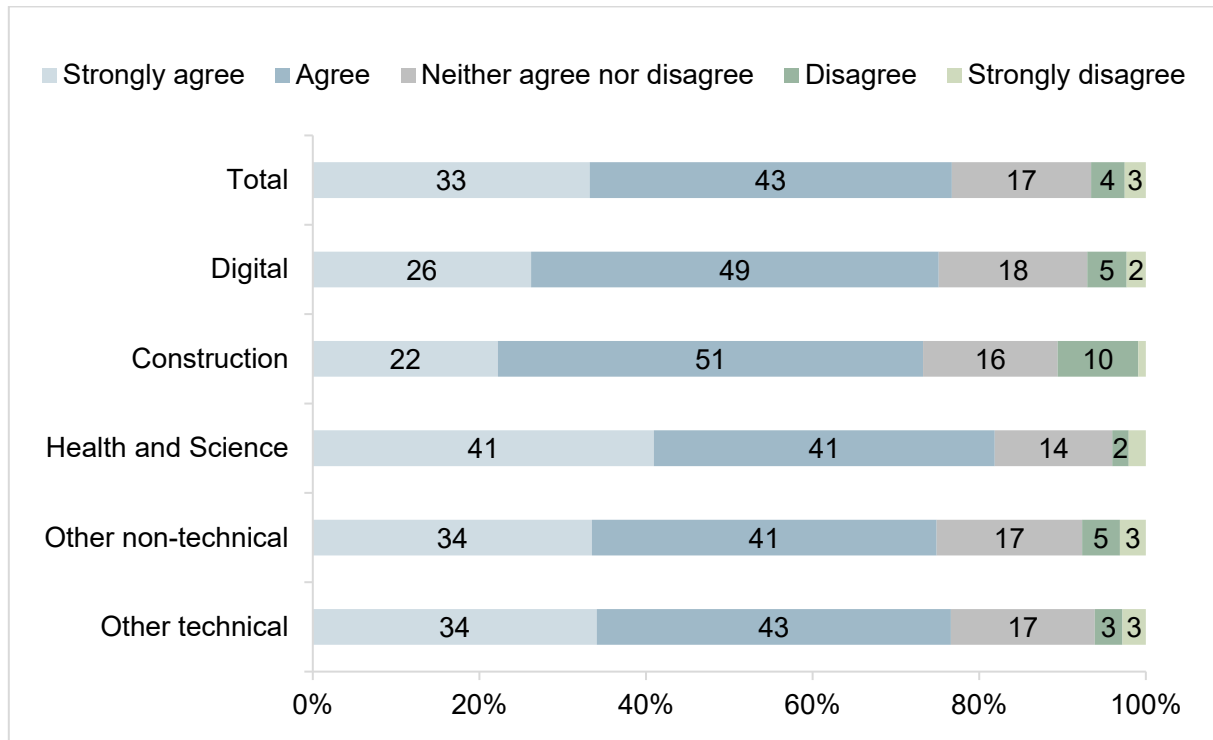
learners in other subjects). As Digital learners and those on OfS-registered courses were both more likely to intend to study, and more likely to consider a degree course than other learners intending to study, this suggests a substantial difference in intentions for these learner groups.

Learners were asked about their plans apart from studying, and could select more than one response. **Three quarters of learners (77%) intended to get a paid job after completing the course**, while fewer than one in ten learners intended to undertake voluntary work or an unpaid internship (9%), take a break from work and study (8%), or had no further plans (5%). Some learners (13%) had not decided their future plans.

Among learners who were still working for the same employer as before their programme and were planning to undertake paid work (n=636), most (73%) were staying in their current job and a further 5% were staying with their current employer but in a different job. The remainder (21%) planned to work elsewhere. This means that more than a quarter of all level 4 and 5 learners intended to stay with their pre-course employer after completing their course. The proportion of learners intending to stay with their pre-course employer was particularly high for Construction learners (90%) and slightly higher for male learners than female learners (77% and 70% respectively).

About three quarters of learners ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘agreed’ that their course had ‘allowed them to progress to what they wanted to do’ (77%) and ‘prepared them for their future career’ (71%), with fewer than one in ten learners ‘disagreeing’ or ‘strongly disagreeing’ (7% for progression and 9% for preparation). **Fewer learners (60%) ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘agreed’ that they felt ‘supported by their education provider to decide on their next step’** (13% ‘disagreed’ or ‘strongly disagreed’). Across these statements, Health and Science learners had the highest proportions of agreement and Construction learners had the lowest proportions of agreement. Learners on OfS-registered courses were slightly more likely to agree their provider supported them to decide next steps (63% compared with 55% of learners on non-registered courses) but less likely to agree their course had prepared them for their future career (69% and 75% respectively).

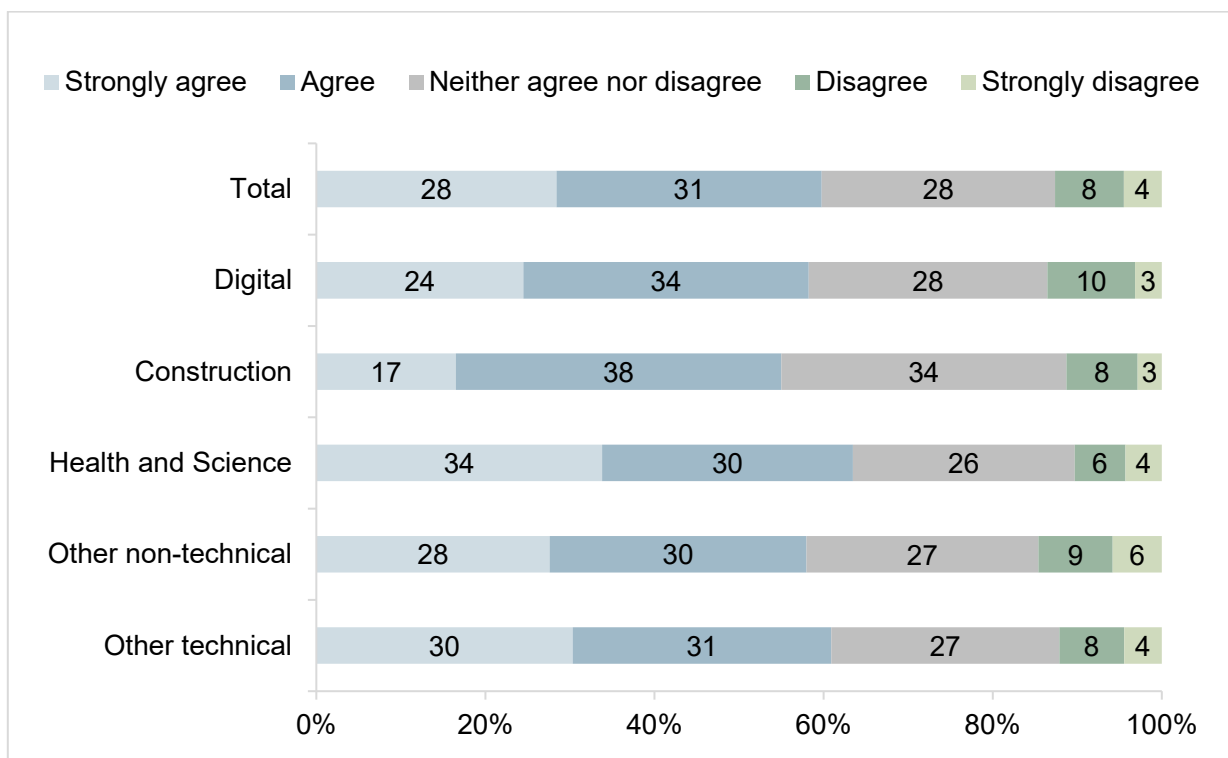
Figure 30: Whether course has allowed learner to progress to what they want to do



Source: Tech Ed Study - 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Base: Level 4/5 learners; Unweighted 1,768

Figure 31: Whether respondent agreed that they were supported by education provider in deciding on next steps



Source: Tech Ed Study - 2021 T Level starters & other cohorts (Jun-Aug 2023)

Base: Level 4/5 learners; Unweighted 1,767

Conclusion

In summer 2023, surveys were administered with learners studying for level 4/5 qualifications in further education settings. Almost all learners were studying pre-reform courses such as Certificates/Diplomas of Higher Education, HNCs, HNDs and Foundation degrees, although a small number of Digital learners were studying post-reform HTQ courses. Courses varied in length and surveyed learners were in different years of their course.

Over three quarters of level 4/5 learners were satisfied with their course, similar to the 2021/22 cohort. As for the previous cohort, most learners found their programme 'quite' challenging, which is strongly associated with higher overall satisfaction.

Most learners found their course's workload manageable. The most common barriers to learning were family responsibilities and part-time work meaning they could not study enough, reflecting the varied ages and prevalence of continuing paid work for level 4/5 learners. Similarly, the small proportion of learners who struggled to manage the workload outside classes identified other commitments as the key reason.

About half of level 4/5 learners continued to work during their course, a third undertook work experience as part of their course, and about a third had contact with employers in their course outside of work experience. Most learners who had undertaken work experience or an industry placement were satisfied with it.

Similar to findings from the previous cohort, most learners reported that their course had helped them to develop relevant knowledge, practical skills and understanding of their sector of study.

Learners' satisfaction and perceived outcomes varied substantially by the subject/route. This suggests significant differences in delivery and learner experiences between courses for different subjects and routes in the same type of programme.

Learners' most frequently reported next steps were a degree or a different level 4/5 qualification, suggesting that level 4/5 qualification is a pathway to continued study for most learners.

Appendix A – Technical note

Populations and samples

The survey was designed and delivered by NatCen with NFER providing policy expertise and questionnaire development guidance, alongside that from the research team and advisory board at DfE.

The 2023 surveys had many operational similarities and a single questionnaire was used across different learner groups and cohorts. Where necessary, the cohorts have been discussed separately under the subheadings ‘Wave 2’ and ‘Wave 1’. ‘Wave 2’ refers to the survey of the 2021 T Level starters (i.e. the second wave of data collection for this group) and comparator groups of level 3 technical and A level learners. ‘Wave 1’ refers to the survey of 2022 Transition Programme starters and level 4 and 5 learners (i.e. the first wave of data collection for these groups).

For all learner groups, the sample frames were provided by two registers controlled by the Department for Education.

- **National Pupil Database (NPD).** NPD is a database of pupils in state funded education and higher education in England.
- **Individualised Learner Record (ILR).** ILR data is collected by providers in the further education and skills sector in England.

Note that learner numbers in these sample frames may differ from other DfE publications due to the timing of the snapshot of the databases and minor differences in definitions. Please refer to the most recently published T Level action plan for official learner figures.

2021 T Level starters and comparator groups – Wave 2

The population of interest for the 2021 T Level starters was all those enrolled in the first year of T Levels in the academic year 2021/22, as listed in the NPD or ILR. Given the relatively small size of the cohort, the full population was invited to participate in the first survey in 2022. For the 2023 survey at the end of their second year, those interviewed in the first wave were issued for fieldwork with the exception of a small group who had requested to leave the study and those who had stated at their first interview that they had not started a T Level or had left within the first year. This represents a change in sampling approach between the 2020 and 2021 cohorts of T Level learners; all T Level learners in the first cohort were issued to Wave 2 due to the size of the sample, regardless of whether they were interviewed at Wave 1 or not. A total of 2,163 learners were invited to take part in the second wave of the survey. Note that this number may vary somewhat from the total starters listed in other DfE publications due to the timing of the snapshot of the databases and minor differences in definition.

T Level comparison group – Wave 2

To provide a comparison for the T Level 2021 starters, samples of learners at the end of the first year of A level programmes (all courses) and learners on other level 3 technical courses in the same broad subject areas as those currently offered for T Levels were also interviewed about their learning experiences and short-term outcomes. While not matched samples, it is expected that T Level learners will be diverted from these routes as the programme expands, providing a relevant point of comparison.

The other level 3 technical learner population was limited to subject areas that were broadly comparable to the T Levels offered in 2021/22, and learners on apprenticeships were excluded. Learners were sampled if they were studying for at least one substantial technical qualification, in a subject area that mapped onto the technical routes for available T Levels (i.e. Construction, Digital, Education and Early Years, Health and Science).

Using the published [list of qualifications approved for Education and Skills Funding Agency \(ESFA\) 16-19 funding](#) in 2021/22^[1], qualification types selected were those classed as: 'occupational', 'vocational', 'vocationally-related' or 'other general'. These categories include Applied General Qualifications (AGQs) and Tech Levels. Only courses of 360 hours or more were selected to limit the sample to substantial qualifications – i.e. the same size as an A level – while ensuring sufficient sample sizes.

The mapping used to link Ofqual's Sector Subject Areas (SSAs) to T Level routes was as follows:

- Childcare and Education: SSA 1.5 Child development and wellbeing
- Construction: SSA 5.2 Building and construction
- Digital: SSA 6.1 ICT practitioners
- Health and Science: SSA 1.1 Medicine and dentistry, SSA 1.2 Nursing and subjects and vocations allied to medicine, SSA 1.3 Health and Social Care, SSA 2.1 Science

The A level sample included students from any A level course, taking any number of A levels. Given that the majority of those taking T Levels are expected to have otherwise taken other level 3 technical courses (as opposed to A levels), this group formed a larger part of the issued sample for the comparison group (80%). A random stratified sample was taken from each learner group (i.e. A level and other level 3 technical). Stratification variables included sex, ethnicity, age, prior attainment and region for both groups, with the addition of broad subject categories for the level 3 technical sample.

As with the T Level cohort, those interviewed in the first wave were issued for fieldwork with the exception of a small group who had requested to leave the study, those who were not enrolled on the course or had left within the first year. In total, 3,055 cases were issued for fieldwork, broadly reflecting the number of productive interviews among this group at the

previous survey wave. Of this figure, 2,404 were enrolled on a level 3 technical course, while the remaining 651 were enrolled on an A level course.

There were a number of learners who were enrolled on both A level and level 3 technical courses. Cases were selected for each sample separately, in line with their levels in each population.

Transition Programme 2022 starters – Wave 1

The TLTP 2022 starter population included learners on the four routes designated to be available in the 2022/23 academic year (Education and Early Years, Digital, Construction and Health and Science). The full population was included in the survey given the numbers starting on the course – a total of 5,220 TLTP 2022 starters were invited to take part. 1,299 (25%) of these learners were enrolled on courses related to Health and Science, with a further 841 (16%) enrolled on Digital courses. 774 learners (15%) were enrolled on Education and Early Years courses, with 696 learners (13%) completing Construction courses. 663 and 649 were enrolled on Business and Administration and Engineering and Manufacturing courses respectively (13% and 12%).

As noted above, there may be small differences to the number of starters listed in other DfE publications due to the timing of the snapshot of the databases and minor differences in definition.

Level 4 and 5 – Wave 1

The Level 4 and 5 learner group sample was defined as level 4 or 5 courses starting in the 2022/23 academic year, rather than courses which were ending in the same academic year.

Level 4 learners who are planning to continue onto a level 5 course were eligible, as long as their level 4 course was ending within the academic year. Qualifications being studied for included Certificates of Higher Education, HNC, diploma, NVQ, HND and foundation degrees (apprenticeships were excluded as covered by [another DfE survey](#)). A random stratified approach was taken with disproportionate sampling to ensure that a sufficient number of learners for analysis were enrolled on Digital and Construction subjects.

Stratification variables included qualification type (OfS-registered or other) and subject area as a priority, as well as sex, ethnicity, age and level 4 or 5. In total, 4,600 cases were invited to take part.

^[1] Accessed through the following website in February 2022: [Qualification Downloads - List of Qualifications approved for funding \(education.gov.uk\)](#)

Fieldwork design

The 2023 surveys were operationalised with a sequential online then telephone fieldwork design. Learners were offered two possible modes of data collection:

- **Web** (or **CAWI**, Computer Assisted Web Interview) involves completing an online survey without the assistance of an interviewer.
- **CATI** (Computer Assisted Telephone Interview) is an interview carried out by a trained interviewer over a phone call.

Web was the primary mode given its cost-effectiveness and familiarity with the target group of respondents. Web was also the primary mode of the 2021 surveys. CATI was the secondary mode, beginning once learners had been given sufficient time and reminders to complete the survey via web.

Learners who had not completed by web were called by telephone interviewers, who encouraged them to take part online in the first instance. In this way, telephone interviewers acted as an active reminder, to push those who needed more active persuasion to engage with the study. The interviewers also enabled completion by supporting learners who had difficulty accessing the survey via web on their own (e.g. by providing them with the survey URL and log in details). Interviewers attempted telephone interviews if the learner appeared unable or reluctant to complete via web, or if they had not done so by a week after the first call.

The CATI mode was implemented to ensure greater population coverage and to limit potential bias in the data collection process. CATI does not require internet access, so enables data collection amongst learners who have low IT literacy, do not have internet access, or do not have a device that could be used to complete via web. Telephone interviewers play a crucial role in supporting these study participants who do not have the means to complete via web, as well as those with specific communication support needs.

As in the 2022 survey, a targeted design approach was implemented. To optimise sample representativeness whilst limiting costs, telephone interview resource was prioritised for cases with socio-demographic and course characteristics associated with lower likelihood to participate based on the web phase of fieldwork, based on a logistic regression.

Targeting was also implemented via the value of incentives. This was in relation to the free school meals (FSM) group, known to be less likely to respond in other surveys.

Fieldwork stages

Mainstage fieldwork for the 'in-course' wave of the Tech Ed Study lasted just over nine weeks, between the 23rd June 2023 until the 29th August. The sequential design meant that this wave had different phases:

- 23rd June – all students invited to complete a Web questionnaire by letter and email
- 14th July – CATI fieldwork started for the first batch of cases (Web unproductive cases considered to be the least likely to complete online)
- 29th August – fieldwork closed for all students

CATI prioritisation groups

To prioritise cases for CATI, following the start of fieldwork, unproductive cases were assigned into batches based on modelled likelihood of responding via the Web. This modelling exercise identified that male respondents were less likely to respond, while those studying A levels and L3 Tech courses were less likely to respond than T Level pupils. Likewise, those studying Level 4 and 5 courses were less likely to respond than those completing a Transition Programme.

Meanwhile, those who had never received Free School Meals (FSM) and those without Special Educational Needs (SEN) were also more likely to be included in earlier batches. There were no significant modelled differences by ethnicity or IDACI rank.

These batches were then prioritised by the Telephone Unit (TU) when contacting sample members who were yet to complete the survey online (a proportion of cases did not have telephone numbers from the ILR or NPD data). Cases were ordered from lowest predicted productivity to highest and separated into eight batches containing up to 1,200 cases each.

The Wave 1 and Wave 2 cohorts were modelled separately, given the different response expectations between them (given only those who responded in the first wave of the survey were issued for Wave 2, the response rate was expected to be substantially higher there). Wave 2 cases were relatively limited in number and were considered a higher priority for CATI fieldwork, despite the higher response rate being achieved in the initial web phase. The Wave 2 cohorts were therefore worked first, and all Wave 2 cases with a telephone number included in the CATI approach.

For the Wave 1 cases, batches were worked in priority order by the TU with lower priority cases therefore not included in the CATI phase by the end of fieldwork.

The tables below outline all productive cases for this wave, split by different learner characteristics and whether an individual received any contact from the TU or not. As well as response by course type, several sociodemographic characteristics were compared. These included: sex at birth, ethnicity, IDACI rank, FSM status and SEN status (the latter were not available for all Wave 1 cohorts).

Table 12: Respondent profile (CATI interviews versus non-CATI interviews) – Wave 1 cohorts (Level 4 and 5, Transition Programme)

Learner characteristics	Non-CATI	CATI	Combined	Proportion of population (via sample frame) (%)
	Proportion of Non-CATI interviews (%)	Proportion of CATI interviews (%)	Proportion of all interviews (%)	
Sex				
Female	51.3	0.0	48.1	48.5
Male	48.7	100.0	51.9	51.5
Ethnic group				
Asian	12.0	8.5	11.8	11.4
Black	5.2	9	5.4	5.9
White	73.9	74.8	73.9	73.8
Mixed	3.7	5.6	3.8	4.2
Other	2.7	0.4	2.6	2.2
Unknown	2.5	1.7	2.4	2.8
IDACI				
Pupils in most deprived 2.5% of LSOAs*	4.8	2.1	4.6	3.9
Next 5% most deprived	7.0	3.4	6.8	7.1
Next 5% most deprived	6.9	3.4	6.7	6.9
Next 5% most deprived	6.2	7.7	6.3	6.2
Next 10% most deprived	12.3	13.7	12.4	12.1
Next 10% most deprived	11.7	8.5	11.5	11.5
Least deprived 62.5%	50.5	59.8	51.1	51.5
Unknown	0.5	1.3	0.6	0.7
Course type				
L45	43.8	100.0	47.3	46.8
Transition Programme (TP)	56.2	0.0	52.7	53.2

*(Lower Super Output Areas)

The non-CATI sample, mostly achieved before the CATI commenced, was more likely to be female compared to the population (51.3% compared to 48.5%). Following the modelling of response and prioritisation of batches, the responses achieved by CATI were entirely among male learners. This corrected the sample profile achieved to be closer to the population.

Response by ethnicity is broadly similar across the CATI and non-CATI groups, while this was also true when looking at responses by IDACI rank when taking account of small sample sizes. Pupils in the least deprived 62.5% of LSOAs, however, made up a larger proportion of the CATI group.

In attempting to ensure the response profile reflected the Wave 1 cohort sample composition, early TU batches were focused on targeting responses from those enrolled on Level 4 and 5 courses. No Transition Programme students were included in the earlier batches of unproductive respondents covered by the TU, due to a higher likelihood of response to the web survey.

Table 13: Respondent profile (CATI interviews versus non-CATI interviews) – Wave 2 cohorts (T Level, A level, L3 Tech)

Learner Characteristics	Non-CATI	CATI	Combined	Proportion of population (sample frame) (%)
	Proportion of Non-CATI interviews (%)	Proportion of CATI interviews (%)	Proportion of all interviews (%)	
Sex				
Female	65.1	59.1	63.5	62.9
Male	34.9	40.9	36.5	37.1
Ethnic group				
Asian	15.8	13.0	15.1	15.0
Black	6.3	7.0	6.5	6.2
White	68.9	72.0	69.7	69.8
Mixed	3.7	2.9	3.5	3.6
Other	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.1
Unknown	3.0	2.9	3.0	3.2
IDACI				
Pupils in most deprived 2.5% of LSOAs	4.2	2.8	3.8	3.4
Next 5% most deprived	7.4	7.7	7.5	7.4
Next 5% most deprived	7.7	5.2	7.0	7.1
Next 5% most deprived	5.9	6.9	6.1	6.5
Next 10% most deprived	12.9	11.0	12.4	12.1
Next 10% most deprived	11.5	10.5	11.2	11.1
Least deprived 62.5%	50.4	55.6	51.8	52.2
Unknown	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.2
Free School Meals				
Unknown	0.9	0.5	0.8	1.0
FSM ever	34.3	24.7	31.7	29.3
Not FSM ever	64.8	74.8	67.5	69.7
Special Education Needs				
Unknown	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
SEN	6.7	6.9	6.7	6.1
Not SEN ever	93.3	93.1	93.3	93.9
Course type				
A level	13.4	9.1	12.2	12.5
L3 Tech	43.5	39.6	42.4	46.1
T Level	43.2	51.3	45.4	41.5

59% of all CATI interviews were completed by female respondents. This is, however, a smaller proportion compared to non-CATI interviews, of which 65% were completed by female respondents. 63% of the Wave 2 sample is female, while 37% is male. Response by ethnicity was broadly similar across the CATI and non-CATI groups, while this was also true when looking at responses by IDACI rank when taking account of smaller sample sizes. Pupils in the least deprived 62.5% of LSOAs, however, made up a larger proportion of the CATI group.

A larger proportion of the CATI group was comprised of those who had never received free school meals. A larger proportion of the CATI group was also comprised of T Level students (51%) when compared to the non-CATI group (43%).

Comms and incentives

For both Wave 1 and Wave 2 cohorts, communication with participants happened via three different routes: letters, emails and text messages. This was done to maximise the chance of successfully reaching and engaging as much of the sample as possible.

Invitation letters were posted in advance of the start of fieldwork so that they would arrive on the first day of fieldwork, coinciding with the invitation texts and emails. Learners received three batches of reminders over the fieldwork period, arriving at different days of the week to maximise the chance of learners engaging with the reminders. Each batch included a postal reminder, email and text message, and contained a different message designed to motivate learners to participate.

For Wave 2 learners, the same letter and text templates were used for all learners, regardless of learner group or voucher eligibility. Textfills were used to ensure that each learner received a personalised, tailored message. For the letters, pre-printed documents were used so that A level learners received the Pathways branding, whilst the other learner groups received the Tech Ed branding.

For the email templates, there were separate Pathways and Tech Ed templates with the different branding used in each. The template wording was otherwise the same, again with textfills so that learners received a tailored message.

Incentives

For all learner cohorts, a similar incentive strategy to that used in the 2022 survey was implemented: learners who were eligible for FSM were offered a £10 shopping voucher due to concerns about their response rates to other surveys, while learners from Wave 1 cohorts (Transition Programme, L45 learners) and those studying a subject related to Construction were also offered a £10 voucher. All other learners were offered a £5 shopping voucher.

Survey response

Across both stages of fieldwork (Soft launch and Mainstage) this wave of the study achieved a final response rate of 46% (6,849 productive interviews). Of these productive interviews, 96% were fully productive (6,602), while a further 247 were defined as ‘useable partial interviews’, meaning the respondent completed the interview up until the data linkage section before exiting. Data for all 6,849 productive interviews were included for analysis purposes.

Variation in response rate could be seen by subject type across different courses where applicable. T Level learners enrolled on Education and Early Years courses were more likely to take part in the study, while this was also true for Level 3 Technical learners when compared to those enrolled on Construction or Health and Science related courses. Some additional variation in response rate also exists between the 2020 and 2021 cohorts due to changes in Wave 2 sampling approach (see ‘Populations and Samples’ for further detail).

In relation to Wave 1, Level 4 and 5 learners enrolled on Digital courses were more likely to take part in the study. T Level Transition Programme learners completing courses related to Construction, Engineering and Manufacturing or Business and Administration were less likely to take part in the study when compared to those enrolled on Digital or Education and Early Years courses.

Course and subject	Response Rate (%)	n
Wave 2		
T Level	65	1405
Education and Early Years	68.8	403
Construction	63.7	212
Digital	64.1	356
Health and Science	63	434
Level 3 Tech	54.6	1313
Education and Early Years	59.4	374
Construction	54.5	61
Digital	56.6	304
Health and Science	53.4	878
A level	57.9	377
Wave 1		
Level 4 and 5	38.6	1775
Construction	34	102
Digital	50.6	376
Health and Science	37.7	343
Other (technical)	35.6	477
Other (non-technical)	36.6	477

T Level Transition Programme	37.9	1979
Education and Early Years	42	220
Construction	32.3	166
Digital	43.6	264
Health and Science	38.9	337
Engineering and Manufacturing	33.3	137
Business and Administration	33	172

Looking at key socio-demographic characteristics of the students, the survey data appears to be overall balanced, although the response rate varied between subgroups of the population of interest. Female students were slightly more likely to take part in the study compared to male students. The response rate was also higher amongst students who identified as Asian or belonged to “Other” ethnic groups. The response rate was lower for students who identified as having a mixed ethnicity. Learners without Special Educational Needs (SEN) were more likely to take part in the study compared to non-SEN students, or those whose SEN status was unknown.

A higher response rate was achieved within the FSM learner group, for which the incentive strategy was applied. The impact of this strategy can also be seen through higher response rates achieved for students in 2.5% most deprived of LSOAs.

Socio-demographic characteristics	Response Rate (%)	Issued (n)
Sex		
Female	46.8	8047
Male	44	6994
Ethnic group		
Asian	47.7	1908
Black	44.9	902
White	45.3	10890
Mixed	41.7	601
Other	51	326
Unknown	44.2	414
IDACI		
Pupils in most deprived 2.5% of LSOAs	49.9	583
Next 5% most deprived	45.7	1063
Next 5% most deprived	45.1	1041
Next 5% most deprived	45.5	939
Next 10% most deprived	46.5	1826
Next 10% most deprived	45.1	1733
Least deprived 62.5%	45.4	7746
Free School Meals		
Unknown	39.2	5054
FSM ever	51.1	3243
Not FSM ever	47.6	6744

Special Education Needs		
Unknown	39.1	4972
Not SEN ever	49.8	8435
SEN	43	1634

Interview mode

As well as having the ability to complete the survey online, some respondents were contacted later in the fieldwork period via telephone to complete a Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI).

Web was the most popular mode of completion during fieldwork. Of the productive cases, 6,535 (95%) had completed the survey online, while 314 (5%) had completed the entire survey on the phone with an interviewer. Of those that completed the survey online, 1,077 (16%) had received at least one call from a telephone interviewer before doing so.

Data processing

As far as possible, the interview conducted over the telephone included the same questions in the same format as the web version. However, due to the use of fed-forward data in text fills there were a small number of differences.

Coding of open-ended responses and ‘other specify’ answers was carried out by specialist coders and answers were back-coded into the original code frames where appropriate.

Weighting

Wave 2

The census approach meant that no design weights were required for the survey data. As in the 2022 survey, non-response weights were developed using logistic regression based on the population data available in NPD and ILR. The final variables in the model included sex, age, ethnicity and subject.

Wave 1

Non-response weights were also applied to the Wave 1 samples to align with the population, with design weights applied where there was oversampling (level 4/5 subjects).

To allow for analysis between groups, individual weights were calculated for each of the five learner groups. The final sample frames used for sample selection of each learner group were the populations that were weighted to. Variables used in weighting varied between the learner groups, but available variables from sample frames included subject, age, sex, ethnicity, income deprivation affecting children index (IDACI), SEN, FSM, prior attainment.

In addition, a combined weight was calculated to allow for cross-cohort comparisons. This combined weight did not take account of the relative size of each learner group in the population – the mean value of 1 for each learner group was maintained.

Statistical testing

Statistical testing was applied to all findings in the report at the 5% confidence level, taking account of the complex sample design. Where differences were not significant at this level this is stated in the text.

Appendix B – Questionnaire

Interviewer instruction definitions

G_ReadOut_1 “Read out instructions 1”

Web: “”

Tel: “INTERVIEWER: READ OUT”

G_NoReadOut_1 “Interviewer do not read out instructions 1”

Web: “”

Tel: “INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ OUT”

G_NoPrompt_1 “Interviewer no prompt instructions 1”

Web: “”

Tel: “INTERVIEWER: DO NOT PROMPT”

G_NoneAns_1 “None of these answer option 1”

Web: “None of these”

Tel: “INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ OUT None of these”

G_Multi_1 “Multicode instructions 1”

Web: “Please select all that apply”

Tel: “INTERVIEWER: READ OUT EACH OPTION AND CODE ALL THAT APPLY”

G_Multi_UpTo2_1 “Multi-code up to 2 instructions 1”

Web: “Please select up to two”

Tel: “INTERVIEWER: ‘Please select up to three’

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT ALL OPTIONS AND THEN CODE UP TO 2”

G_IfNec_1 “Interviewer if necessary instructions 1”

Web: “”

Tel: “INTERVIEWER, IF NECESSARY”

G_Collapsible_Grid_II1 “Grid instructions 1”

Web: "Please select one answer on every row"

Tel: "INTERVIEWER: READ OUT EACH STATEMENT AND THE ANSWER CODES.
REPEAT ANSWER CODES AS REQUIRED."

G_MultiUpTo3_1 "Multicode up to 3 instructions"

Web: "Please select up to three"

Tel: "INTERVIEWER: 'Please select up to three'"

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT ALL OPTIONS AND THEN CODE UP TO 3"

Introduction

{IF MODE = WEB}

Intro1

{IF WEB: “Welcome{IF Wave1Outcome = 1: “back”, ELSE: “”} to the {IF FF_CourseMajor_num=1,2,4,5: “Tech Ed”; If FF_CourseMajor_num=3: “Pathways”} survey! Thank you for your help with this important study on behalf of the Department for Education.

The survey should take about 15 minutes – your answers will be saved as you go along so you can stop and return at any time.”

IF TEL: “INTERVIEWER: Save and continue”

DISPLAY

Checks on identity

START FILTER: IF MODE = CAWI

{IF MailNameAdd <> “Study Participant”}

CvChk

“This is the questionnaire for {MailNameAdd}”.

Please confirm this is you.”

1. Yes
2. No
3. I am supporting them to complete the questionnaire

{IF CVChk=2}

NotResp

“Thank you for your time. It looks like we have the wrong information.

If you think this questionnaire is for you but your name needs updating, please go back and select ‘Yes’ at the previous question (there will be an opportunity to make amendments).

If you have any concerns, please contact NatCen at the details below.

Freephone: 0800 652 9294

Email: {IF FF_CourseMajor_num = 3: Pathways@natcen.ac.uk; ELSE:
“TechEd@natcen.ac.uk”}

DISPLAY

{EXIT INTERVIEW; OUTCOME=780; SHOW DEFAULT PAGE “You have ended the interview”}

{IF CvChk<>2}

DobSv

“Just to make sure we hold the correct information for you, please confirm your month and year of birth.”

“Month” RANGE 1 to 12

“Year” RANGE 1900 to 2009

PROGRAMMER: CHECK AGAINST SAMPLE VARIABLE

IF DobSvMonth = FF_MonthOfBirth AND DobSvYear = FF_YearOfBirth CheckDOB=1; ELSE
= 0

{IF CVChk=2 OR CheckDOB=0}

NotResp

“Thank you for your time. It looks like we have the wrong information.”

If you think this questionnaire is for you or if you have any concerns, please contact NatCen at the details below.

Freephone: 0800 652 9294

Email: {IF FF_CourseMajor_num = 5: Pathways@natcen.ac.uk; ELSE:
“TechEd@natcen.ac.uk”}

DISPLAY

{EXIT INTERVIEW; OUTCOME=780; SHOW DEFAULT PAGE “You have ended the interview”}

END FILTER: IF MODE = CAWI

Activity in last year

COMPUTE SYSTEM DATE

{ASK ALL}

WhichYear

"This survey is about the last academic year, that is from autumn 2022 to summer 2023. When answering the questions, please think back to your experiences last year."

DISPLAY

{ASK ALL}

OnCourse

"Have you been enrolled on {IF FF_CourseMajor_num=1: "a T Level Transition Programme"; IF FF_CourseMajor_num=2: "a T Level"; IF FF_CourseMajor_num=3 and JointL3=0: "A level courses"; IF FF_CourseMajor_num=4 and JointL3=0: "a course that includes a level 3 technical or vocational qualification"; IF (FF_CourseMajor_num=3,4) and JointL3=1: "A level and level 3 technical or vocational qualification courses"; IF FF_CourseMajor_num=5: "a level 4 or level 5 course"} over the past academic year, by which we mean {IF SYSTEM DATE<=31/08/2023: "since September 2022"; IF SYSTEM DATE>31/08/2023 "from autumn 2022 to summer 2023"}?"

G_IfNec_II1

1. Yes
2. Yes – but I left early
3. No – a different course
4. Not sure

DERIVATION OF TEXTFILL FOR HELP BUTTON {CourseDescr}

IF FF_CourseMajor_num = 1 (Transition Programme) CourseDescr = "A Transition Programme is a 1-year course that prepares young people for T Levels in a number of different areas, including construction, digital, education and childcare, health and science, agriculture, environmental and animal care, business and administration, catering and hospitality, creative and design, engineering and manufacturing, legal, finance and accounting. It includes technical training, work experience, and English and maths."

This course is also known by other names, for example Pre-T, Progression T, T Level Foundation Year/Programme, Route to Three, Pathways to T Levels, Skills to T, Get set 4 T, Yet T."

IF FF_CourseMajor_num = 2 (T Level) CourseDescr = "T Levels are two-year courses that are an alternative to A levels. They offer technical training and an industry placement in areas such as digital, construction, health, science, education and childcare."

IF FF_CourseMajor_num = 4 (Comparison Level 3 Tech) CourseDescr = "Level 3 courses may be studied after GCSEs and are the same level as an A level. Vocational and technical level 3 qualifications include BTECs, diplomas and certificates at level 3."

IF FF_CourseMajor_num = 5 (Level 4/5 Tech (HTQ)) CourseDescr = "Level 4 and 5 courses are done after compulsory education. They are the equivalent to the first or second year of Higher Education. Also known as Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQ), the courses may have 'level 4' or 'level 5' in their title, but also include HNCs, HNDs, and foundation degrees."

{IF OnCourse=3 (different course)}

WhatCourse

"What course have you been doing?"

STRING [4000]

{IF OnCourse=1 AND JointL3=1}

JointIntro

"For the rest of the questions, please think overall about all your courses together when answering."

DISPLAY

PROGRAMMING: COMPUTE DV

VARIABLE NAME: CType

VAR LABEL: "Type of course – confirmed in interview"

VAR TYPE: Numeric

VAR DERIVATION:

1. {IF FF_CourseMajor_num=1 AND Oncourse=1,2} "Transition Programme"
2. {IF FF_CourseMajor_num=2 AND Oncourse=1,2} "T Level"
3. {IF FF_CourseMajor_num=3 AND Oncourse=1,2} "A level"
4. {IF FF_CourseMajor_num=4 and Oncourse=1,2} "Level 3 technical qualification"
5. {IF FF_CourseMajor_num=5 and Oncourse=1,2} "Level 4/5 technical qualification"
6. {IF Oncourse=3} "Other"
7. {IF Oncourse=4} "Not sure"

PROGRAMMING: COMPUTE DV

VARIABLE NAME: CTypetxt

VAR LABEL: "Type of course – confirmed in interview – for textfills"

VAR TYPE: String

1. {IF CType=1} "Transition Programme"
2. {IF CType=2} "T Level"
3. {IF CType=3} "A level"
4. {IF CType=4} "Level 3 technical qualification"
5. {IF CType=5} "Level 4/5 technical qualification"
6. {IF CType=6 or 7} "course"

PROGRAMMING: COMPUTE DV
VARIABLE NAME: Course_s
VAR LABEL: "Textfill for course / courses"
VAR TYPE: String

1. {IF FF_CourseMajor_Num=1,2,5 or (FF_CourseMajor_Num=4 AND JointL3=0)}
"course"
2. ELSE: "courses"

PROGRAMMING: COMPUTE DV
VARIABLE NAME: hashave
VAR LABEL: "Textfill for has / have"
VAR TYPE: String

1. {IF FF_CourseMajor_Num=1,2,5 or (FF_CourseMajor_Num=4 AND JointL3=0)}
"has"
2. ELSE: "have"

{IF (OnCourse=1,3 or 4) AND (FF_CourseMajor_num=5)}
FinishYear

"Is your course finishing this year?"

Consider your course as finishing this year if you { IF SYSTEM DATE<=31/08/2023: "get"; IF SYSTEM DATE>31/08/2023: "got"} a qualification for it at the end of the academic year 2022-23, even if you are continuing with another course after September 2023."

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Yes – my course is finishing this year
2. No – my course is carrying on after September 2023
3. Yes – my course course finished, and I got a qualification for it before 2022-23

{ASK IF FF_CourseMajor_num=5 AND FinishYear =3}
L45Out

This survey is for students who have been studying for their course during the 2022/23 academic year. Thank you for your time.

If you think this questionnaire is for you or if you have any concerns, please contact NatCen at the details below.

Freephone: 0800 652 9294

Email: TechEd@natcen.ac.uk

DISPLAY

{EXIT INTERVIEW; OUTCOME=780; SHOW DEFAULT PAGE “You have ended the interview”}

{ASK IF FF_CourseMajor_num=2,3,4 AND Oncourse=1,2}

AssessComplete

“Have you completed all examinations and assessments related to your {CTypeTxt}?”

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not sure

{IF CType=1,2, (TP, TL)}

Subject

“What subject area {IF OnCourse=2: ‘was’; ELSE ‘is’} your {CTypeTxt} in?”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Digital
2. Construction
3. Education and Childcare
4. Health and Science
5. {IF CType=1 “Agriculture, Environmental and Animal Care”}
6. {IF CType = 1 “Business and Administration”}
7. {IF CType = 1 “Catering and Hospitality”}
8. {IF CType = 1 “Creative and Design”}
9. {IF CType = 1 “Engineering and Manufacturing”}
10. {IF CType = 1 “Legal, Finance and Accounting”}
11. {IF CType = 1 “Marketing”}
12. {IF CType = 1 “Hair and Beauty”}
13. Something else (specify)

{ASK IF Subject=13}

SubjectO

“What other subject area {IF OnCourse=2: ‘was’; ELSE ‘is’} your {CTypeTxt} in?”

STRING [4000]

{IF OnCourse=2 (left course early)}

WhyLeft

“Please tell us about why you left the course early.”

G_Multi_II1

1. The course was too challenging
2. Lack of support from teachers
3. Found an apprenticeship instead
4. Found paid work instead

5. Asked to leave by provider
6. Issues with the way the course is delivered
7. Issues with the way students are assessed on the course
8. Didn't like the course
9. Personal problems
10. Changed mind about future career plans
11. Couldn't juggle studying with other commitments
12. Other (please specify)

{IF WhyLeft=12(Other)}

WhyLeftO "Please tell us why you left the course early."

STRING [4000]

{IF OnCourse=2 (left course early)}

WhyLeftInfo

"We are still very keen to hear about your experiences of the course. You can skip any questions that you don't think are relevant to you."

DISPLAY

Employment situation (Level 4/5 only)

Pre-course

{IF FF_CourseMajor_num=5 (L4/5 Tech)}

StudySitu

"Thinking about what you were doing in the months immediately before starting your course, were you...?"

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Studying – full time
2. Studying – part time
3. Not studying

{IF FF_CourseMajor_num=5 (L4/5 Tech)}

EmpSitu

"And in the months immediately before starting your course were you...?"

G_Multi_II1

1. In full time paid employment
2. In part time paid employment
3. Self-employed – full time
4. Self-employed – part time
5. Looking for paid work
6. None of these {EXCLUSIVE}

{ASK IF EmpSitu = 1-4}

Salary

“In the months immediately before starting your course, what was your salary? You can give an hourly, daily, weekly, monthly or yearly amount, or an amount covering another period.”

NUMERIC RANGE 0.00...999999.00

{ASK IF EmpSitu = 1-4 AND IF NOT(Salary = DK/REF)}

SalaryPeriod

“What period does this cover?”

G_IfNec_1

1. An hour
2. A day
3. A week
4. A month
5. A year
6. Another period

{ASK IF SalaryPeriod = 6}

AnotherPeriod

“Over what other time period do you get paid?”

STRING [150]

{IF StudySitu=3 and EmpSitu=6 (not working or studying)}

OthSitu

“And in the months immediately before starting your course were you...?”

G_Multi_II1

1. Doing unpaid work / volunteering
2. Travelling
3. Looking after family or children
4. Unemployed and not looking for work
5. Retired
6. Something else (please specify)

{IF OthSitu=6 (Other)}

OthSitu “What were you doing in the months immediately before starting your course?”

STRING[4000]

During course – those working before the course

{IF EmpSitu=1,2 (employed before course)}

SameEmp

“Are you currently still in the same job, with the same employer?”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Yes – same employer and job
2. No – same employer but different job
3. No – not with that employer

{IF FF_CourseMajor_num=5 AND NOT (SameEmp=1 or 2)}

DuringEmp

“Have you done any paid work while attending the course?”

1. Yes
2. No

Reasons for choosing course

{ASK IF FF_CourseMajor_num =5}

ReasonHigher

“Which of these, if any, were reasons for doing the course?”

G_Multi_II1

1. Employer required it
2. Upskilling in the same line of work
3. Retraining to a different line of work
4. Because of an interest in the area
5. To increase earnings
6. To get promoted

7. Something else (please specify)
8. None of these {EXCLUSIVE}

{ASK IF ReasonHigher = 7}

ReasonHigherO

What other reason did you have for doing the course?

STRING [4000]

{ASK IF FF_CourseMajor_num=1 (TP)}

TPTLevel

“Thinking back to when you started this course, did you hope to go on to do a T Level afterwards?”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Yes
2. No
3. Wasn't sure

{ASK IF FF_CourseMajor_num = 1,5}

Aspiration

“Thinking back to before you started your {course_s}, what did you want to do immediately after your {course_s} finished?”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. {IF FF_CourseMajor_Num <> 1: “Study towards a degree”}
2. Another type of study
3. A paid job
4. An apprenticeship
5. Something else (please specify)
6. I wasn't sure

{IF Aspiration = 5}

AspirationO

" What did you want to do immediately after your {course_s} finished?"

STRING[4000]

{ASK (IF FF_CourseMajor_num = 1,5)}

Certainty

“And still thinking about that time, how sure were you about the type of occupation you wanted to find work in?”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. I was certain about the occupation
2. I was quite sure about it
3. I was considering a few occupations
4. I wasn't sure

{IF FF_CourseMajor_Num=1 (TP only)}

TPActive

“Were you advised to apply for this course, for instance by a teacher or careers advisor?”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Yes – advised to apply
2. No – but discussed as an option
3. No – chose it without advice

{ASK (IF FF_CourseMajor_num = 1,5)}

ReasonSub

“Thinking back to when you were choosing your {course_s}, why did you choose the particular subject area(s) that you did?”

G_Multi_II1

1. Fitted with the areas I wanted to work in
2. Important for my intended further study
3. I was interested in the subject area(s)
4. I was advised to study this subject area
5. Friends were doing the same subject area
6. Employer required me to study this subject area
7. Another reason (please specify)
8. {IF TEL: INTERVIEWER: READ OUT, if No to all above} No specific reason
{EXCLUSIVE}

{IF ReasonSub=7}

ReasonSubO

“What was the other reason you chose the particular subject area(s)?”

STRING [4000]

{ASK (IF FF_CourseMajor_num = 1,5)}

ReasonQual

“Thinking back to when you were choosing between types of {IF FF_Coursemajor_Num=1: “programme”, ELSE: “qualification”}, for instance {IF FF_Coursemajor_Num=1: “HNC, HND, degree and apprenticeship”; ELSE: A level, T Level, BTEC and apprenticeship”}, why did you do your particular type or types of {IF FF_Coursemajor_Num=1: “programme”, ELSE: “qualification”}?”

G_Multi_II1

1. It was the only type available in my subject
2. The {IF FF_Coursemajor_Num=1: “programme”, ELSE: “qualification”}is important for further study
3. The {IF FF_Coursemajor_Num=1: “programme”, ELSE: “qualification”}is important for the kind of job I want
4. The {IF FF_Coursemajor_Num=1: “programme”, ELSE: “qualification”}is recognised by employers
5. The {IF CType=2 (TL): “industry placement” ELSE: “work experience”} element}
6. {IF FF_Coursemajor_Num = 5: “I was able to do it part-time”}
7. {IF FF_Coursemajor_Num = 5: “I was able to get funding for it”}
8. I was advised to
9. Other reason (please specify)
10. {IF TEL: INTERVIEWER: READ OUT, if No to all above} No specific reason {EXCLUSIVE}

{IF ReasonQual=11}

ReasonQualO

“What was the other reason you chose the particular type or types of course?”

STRING [4000]

{ASK (IF FF_CourseMajor_num = 1, 5)}

ReasonProv

“Why did you end up studying at your {IF FF_Coursemajor_Num=5: “”; ELSE: “school, ”}college or other educational institution?”

G_Multi_II1

1. It was convenient to travel to
2. Its formal rating
3. Informal recommendations
4. {IF FF_Coursemajor_Num<>5: “My friends were going there”}
5. Studied there previously
6. {IF FF_Coursemajor_Num=5: “My employer chose it”}
7. {IF FF_Coursemajor_Num<>5: “My parents/guardians chose it”}
8. It offered the subject(s) I wanted to do

9. Its adverts or open day
10. Another reason (please specify)
11. {IF TEL: INTERVIEWER: READ OUT, if No to all above} No particular reason
{EXCLUSIVE}

{IF ReasonProv=10}

ReasonProvO

“What was the other reason you chose your school, college or institution?”

STRING [4000]

{ASK (IF FF_CourseMajor_num = 1,5)}

ReasonImp

“And which of these would you say was **most important<\b>** to you when you were making your choice?”

G_Multi_II1

1. The subject or subjects
2. The type(s) of qualification
3. The particular school / college / institution
4. None of these [EXCLUSIVE]

{ASK (FF_CourseMajor_num = 1,5)}

Aware

“Where did you hear about your {course_s}?”

G_Multi_II1

1. Teachers at your school or college
2. Careers adviser
3. {IF FF_CourseMajor_num= 2: “T Level website”}
4. From a college, {IF CType=5: “university”, ELSE: “school”} or training provider offering the {IF CType=1: “Transition Programme”; IF CType = 2: “T Level”; ELSE {course_s}} (their website, prospectus, open-day, etc.)
5. Friends
6. Social media
7. Local advertising
8. An employer
9. Somewhere else (please specify)

{ASK IF Aware = 9}

AwareSomeElse

Where did you hear about your {course_s}?

STRING[250]

{ASK IF FF_CourseMajor_num=1,2,3,4 (TP, TL, AL, L3)}

TLInstead

“If you had not chosen to do {IF CType=2: “a T Level”; IF CType=1: “a Transition Programme”; IF FF_CourseMajor_num=3 AND JointL3=0 “A-Level courses”; ELSE: “your {course_s}”}, what do you think you would most likely have done instead?”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. A {IF FF_CourseMajor_num=3 and JointL3=0: “”; ELSE: “different kind of”} technical or vocational qualification
2. IF (FF_CourseMajor_num=3 AND JointL3=0) DO NOT SHOW OPTION 2; ELSE SHOW: {“A-Levels only”}
3. {IF FF_CourseMajor_num =1,2 OR (FF_CourseMajor_num=3,4 AND JointL3=0): “A mixture of A-Levels and other courses”}
4. An apprenticeship
5. Another form of training
6. Don't know

NODK

{If FF_TPCConfirm =1}

TPPrepareTL

“Last time we spoke to you as part of this study, you told us you previously completed a T Level Transition Programme. To what extent do you agree with the following statement? My T Level Transition Programme prepared me well for my T Level”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree

{IF TPPPrepareTL=1,2}

TPPrepareHow

“What aspects of the course do you think prepared you best for T Levels?”

G_Multi_II1

1. Technical knowledge and skills related to my T Level

2. Work experience and preparation for an industry placement
3. Developing English or maths skills
4. Developing study skills
5. Doing assessments (e.g. exams, exam preparation, project work)
6. Something else (please specify)

{IF TPPrepareHow=6}

TPPrepareHowO

“What other aspect of the course do you think prepared you best for T Levels?”

STRING [4000]

{IF TPPrepareTL=4,5}

TPPrepareWhyNot

“Why do you think your Transition Programme did not prepare you for your T Level?”

STRING [4000]

Course Funding (Level 4/5 only)

{IF FF_CourseMajor_num=5}

CourseFunding

“How have you paid for your course’s tuition fee?”

G_Multi_II1

1. Paid the fee directly from own money
2. Took out student finance supported by government (e.g. an advanced learner loan, or tuition fee loan)
3. Took out another form of loan (not a government loan)
4. Borrowed money from friends or family
5. Employer paid
6. Help from an institution, for instance access funds or bursaries
7. Local authority grant
8. Other government funding
9. Charitable trust or other non-government organisation
10. Other (please specify)
11. Don’t know [EXCLUSIVE]

NODK

{IF CourseFunding=10}

CourseFundingO

“Which other way did you pay for your course’s tuition fee?”

STRING [4000]

{IF FF_CourseMajor_num=5}

FundingInfl

“Did the cost and funding options influence which course you took?”

1. Yes
2. No

Course content and delivery

Format of delivery

{ASK ALL}

TeachingFormat

“How have you been taught since September?”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Entirely taught online
2. Mostly taught online
3. Roughly the same amount online and in person
4. Mostly in person
5. Entirely in person

{ASK ALL}

Hours

“How many hours of **teaching**, either online or in person, did you usually have **each week**{IF FF_CourseMajor_Num=1,2,4,5: “, not including an industry placement or any work experience”; ELSE=“”}?”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Less than 5 hours a week
2. 5 to 10 hours a week
3. 11 to 20 hours a week
4. 21 to 30 hours a week
5. More than 30 hours a week

{ASK ALL}

HoursManage

“How manageable have you found the **amount of teaching**, whether online or in person?”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Very manageable
2. Mostly manageable
3. Quite manageable
4. Not very manageable
5. Not at all manageable

{ASK ALL}

Workload

“How manageable have you found the work you have to do **outside the taught lessons?”**

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Very manageable
2. Mostly manageable
3. Quite manageable
4. Not very manageable
5. Not at all manageable

{IF Workload=4 or 5 (not manageable)}

WorkloadWhy

“Why was it not manageable?”

G_Multi_II1

1. Too much work given
2. The work was too hard
3. The work set was unclear
4. Not enough support from teacher / tutor
5. Other commitments outside course
6. Other (please specify)

{IF WorkloadWhy=5}

WorkloadWhyOC

“If you wish to do so, please specify other commitments outside of your course that have made your workload unmanageable”

STRING [250]

{IF WorkloadWhy=6}

WorkloadWhyO

“What was the other reason why it was not manageable?”

STRING [4000]

Course elements delivered

{IF FF_Coursemajor_num=1 (TP only)}

Clarity

“Were you clear from the start what you needed to achieve to successfully complete the course? For example, achieving a technical qualification, achieving GCSE grade 4 in English or maths, undertaking work experience or developing specific knowledge, skills and behaviours.”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Yes
2. No
3. Can't remember

{IF FF_Coursemajor_num=1 – TP only}

Qualification

“Does your course include any qualifications in your chosen occupation area (for instance in digital, construction, health and science, or education and childcare)?”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Yes – one main qualification
2. Yes – more than one qualification
3. No
4. Not sure

{IF FF_Coursemajor_num=1 – TP only}

Tailored

“In which, if any, of these ways was your course tailored to identify and help you address your own specific learning and development needs?”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. My learning and development needs were assessed at the start of the course
2. I had an individual learning and development plan
3. I had personalised learning or development goals to achieve
4. Another way (please specify)

5. None of these

{IF Tailored=4}

TailoredO

“How else was your course tailored?”

STRING [4000]

{IF FF_Coursemajor_num=1 – TP only }

CourseLen

“Would you say the overall length of the course is...?”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Too long
2. About right
3. Too short

{IF FF_Coursemajor_num=1 – TP only }

English

“Are you studying English for...”

G_Multi_II1

1. GCSE
2. Functional Skills
3. Neither [EXCLUSIVE]

{IF FF_Coursemajor_num=1 – TP only }

Maths

G_Multi_II1

“Are you studying maths for...”

1. GCSE
2. Functional Skills
3. Neither [EXCLUSIVE]

{ASK ALL}

IndPlaceDone

“Have you spent any time {IF CType=2 (TL): on an industry placement; ELSE: on a work experience placement} during the {course_s}?”

EXPANDING HELP LINK: “What do we mean by {IF CType=2 (TL):industry; ELSE: work experience} placements?”

“{IF CType=2 (TL):An industry; ELSE: A work experience} placement is something organised as part of your course. Do not include paid or unpaid work that hasn’t been organised as part of your course – e.g. a Saturday job.”

1. Yes
2. No

{IF FF_Coursemajor_num=2,3,4,5 AND IndPlaceDone=1}

IndPlaceHrs

“How many hours at your {IF FF_CourseMajor=2 (TL): “industry placement”; ELSE: “work experience placement”} have you done?”

If you are still doing {IF FF_CourseMajor=2 (TL): “an industry placement”; ELSE: “a work experience placement”}, please answer with the number of hours you have done so far.”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. None
2. Up to 50 hours
3. 51 to 100 hours
4. 101 to 200 hours
5. 201 to 300 hours
6. 301 to 400 hours
7. More than 400 hours

{IF FF_Coursemajor_num=2,3,4,5 AND IndPlaceDone=1}

IndPlaceHow

What best describes how your industry placement took place?”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. **All in person** – where the employer is based or undertakes work
2. **Mostly in person** – some remote working
3. **About the same** amount of in person and remote working
4. **Mostly remote working**
5. **All remote working** – no time spent with the employer in person

{IF FF_Coursemajor_num=2,3,4,5 AND IndPlaceHow=2,3,4,5}

IndPlaceRemoteHrs

Approximately how many hours of your placement took place remotely?

1. 0-15 hours
2. 15-30 hours
3. 30-45 hours
4. 45-60 hours
5. More than 60 hours

**{IF FF_Coursemajor_num=2 AND IndPlaceDone=1}
IndPlacePTJob**

Did you complete part of your placement through additional part-time work?

1. Yes
2. No

**{IF FF_Coursemajor_num=2 AND IndPlaceDone=1}
IndPlaceTeam**

Did you work on a project with a small team of other students as part of your placement?

1. Yes
2. No

**{IF IndPlaceDone=1 and FF_CourseMajor_Num=2 (TL)}
IndPlaceOverall**

"Was your placement related to the **same general field** as your T Level?"

1. Yes
2. No

**{IF IndPlaceOverall=1}
IndPlaceOccSpec**

"Was the placement directly related to your course's **occupational specialism?"**

EXPANDING HELP LINK: "What does occupational specialism mean?"

"By occupational specialism we mean the component of your T Level that has developed skills specific to a particular occupation. You receive a separate grade for your occupational specialism."

1. Yes
2. No

{IF FF_Coursemajor_num=1 (TP) AND IndPlaceDone=1}

WorkExpHrs

“How many hours of work experience have you done?”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. None
2. Up to 21 hours
3. 22 to 35 hours
4. 36 to 70 hours
5. 71 to 140 hours
6. 141 to 280 hours
7. More than 280 hours

{ASK ALL}

OthEmpCont

“Apart from any {IF FF_CourseMajor=2 (TL): “industry placement”; ELSE: “work experience”}, {hashave} your {course_s} included other contact with employers?”

Please think about both in person and online/virtual contact”

G_Multi_II1

1. Visits to employers
2. Talks by employers
3. Contact with employers as part of project work
4. Other types of contact (please specify)
5. No employer contact {EXCLUSIVE}

{IF OthEmpCont=4}

OthEmpContO

“What other contact have you had with employers?”

STRING [4000]

Level of challenge

{ASK ALL}

Challenge

“Overall, would you say the {course_s} {hashave} been...”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Extremely challenging
2. Very challenging
3. Quite challenging
4. Not very challenging
5. Not at all challenging

{IF Challenge=1,2,3}

ChallengeWhy

“Why did you find the {course_s} challenging?”

STRING[4000]

Barriers

{ASK ALL}

Barriers

“Which, if any, of the following have got in the way of your learning during the {course_s}?”

G_Multi_II1

1. Lack of materials for studying, (for instance textbooks, workbooks, online resources)
2. Lack of specialist equipment / software for course
3. Lack of reliable IT or online access
4. Lack of in person teaching
5. Cost of travel to my course
6. Family responsibilities meant could not study enough
7. Working part-time meant could not study enough
8. Issues relating to poor health
9. Issues relating to special educational needs (SEN) requirements
10. Other (please specify)
11. None of the above {EXCLUSIVE}

{ASK IF Barriers=10}

BarriersO

“What else has got in the way of your learning during the {course_s}?”

STRING [4000]

Evaluation of course content

Overall satisfaction

{ASK ALL}

SatOverall

“How satisfied with your {course_s} are you overall?”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Very satisfied
2. Quite satisfied
3. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
4. Quite dissatisfied
5. Very dissatisfied

{IF SatOverall = 4,5}

SatOverallWhy

“Why were you dissatisfied with your {course_s}?”

STRING [4000]

Satisfaction with programme elements

{ASK ALL}

SatTeach [7 items on first page, 3 on second/final page]

“{IF FIRST PAGE: “Now we’d like to ask you about some elements of your {course_s}.

How satisfied or dissatisfied have you been with each of the following on your {course_s}?”

{“IF FINAL PAGE: “And how satisfied or dissatisfied have you been with...?””}

G_Collapsible_Grid_II1

GRID ROWS:

1. **The standard of classroom teaching**
2. {IF <> (FF_CourseMajor_Num =3 and JointL3=0): “The standard of the practical ‘hands on’ work”}
3. **Teachers’ knowledge and expertise**
4. **The support you received from tutors or teachers**
5. **Course organisation and management**
6. **The skills it covered for your chosen occupation / subject area **
7. **Equipment, software and resources available**
8. **The way students are assessed on the course**
9. **The careers advice provided**
10. {IF <> (FF_CourseMajor_Num=3 and JointL3=0): “The level of employer contact in the course”}

11. {IF English = 1,2: “The teaching of English”}
12. {IF Maths = 1,2: “The teaching of maths”}
13. Amount of course content related to your chosen subject area (for instance digital, construction or education and childcare) {TP only – FF_CourseMajor_num=1}
14. Preparation for further study
15. Preparation for work

GRID COLS:

1. Very satisfied
2. Quite satisfied
3. Neither satisfied not dissatisfied
4. Quite dissatisfied
5. Very dissatisfied
6. Not applicable

{IF FF_CourseMajor_num = 2 AND SatTeach5 = 4,5}

SatTeachOrgWhy

“What would you change about course organisation and management?”

STRING [4000]

{IF FF_CourseMajor_num = 2 AND SatTeach7 = 4,5}

SatTeachEquipWhy

“What would you change about the equipment, software and resources available?”

STRING [4000]

{IF FF_CourseMajor_num = 2 AND SatTeach8 = 4,5}

SatTeachAssessWhy

“What would you change about the the way students are assessed on the course?”

STRING [4000]

Satisfaction with industry placement / work experience

{IF IndPlaceDone = 1 – work experience or placement done}

SatPlacement

“The next few questions are about your {IF CType=2: “industry placement”; ELSE: “work experience placement”}.

How satisfied were you with your {IF CType=2: “industry placement”; ELSE: “work experience placement”}?”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Very satisfied
2. Quite satisfied
3. Neither satisfied not dissatisfied
4. Quite dissatisfied
5. Very dissatisfied

{IF IndPlaceDone = 1 work experience or placement done}

ExpPlacement

"In which, if any, of the following areas did the {IF CType=2, "placement"; ELSE: "work experience placement"} meet your expectations?"

G_Multi_II1

1. Given real tasks to carry out
2. Able to apply technical knowledge and skills developed on the course
3. Experience of a real workplace
4. The opportunity to build my confidence in the workplace
5. None of these [EXCLUSIVE]

{IF IndPlaceDone = 1 work experience or placement done}

PlaceRate

"{IF FIRST PAGE "Now think about the {IF CType=2 "industry"; ELSE "work experience"} placement on the {course_s} so far.

How much do you agree or disagree with the statement...?"}

{IF FINAL PAGE: "Finally, how much do you agree or disagree with the statement...?"}

G_Collapsible_Grid_II1

GRID ROWS

1. The placement came at the right point in the course
2. I was fully prepared for my placement
3. My employer made sure I got the most I could out of the placement
4. I had all the support I needed from the college / school / university / institution during the placement
5. The placement was a good challenge for me
6. I felt a valued member of the team during my placement
7. The placement improved my knowledge of the workplace
8. {IF FF_Coursemajor_num=1: I benefitted from the placement}"}
9. {IF FF_Coursemajor_num=1: "It was the right amount of time on the placement "}"

GRID COLS

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree

{IF OthEmpCont=1-4}

EmpSet

"Have you done an employer-set project as part of the {course_s}? This could include practice projects."

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Yes – I have completed one
2. Yes – I am currently doing one
3. No

{IF EmpSet=1,2}

EmpSetSat

"How satisfied have you been with the employer-set project?"

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Very satisfied
2. Quite satisfied
3. Neither satisfied not dissatisfied
4. Quite dissatisfied
5. Very dissatisfied

{ASK ALL}

Recommend

"How likely are you to recommend your {course_s} to others?"

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Very likely
2. Quite likely
3. Neither likely nor unlikely
4. Quite unlikely
5. Very unlikely

{ASK IF FF_Coursemajor_num = 1, 5}

ExpO

"What one thing would have improved your experience of your {course_s}?"

STRING[4000]

Outcomes from course

{ASK ALL}

Outcomes [7 items on first page, up to 6 on second/final page]

{IF FIRST PAGE: “Now we’d like to know how much your {course_s} {hashave} helped you to develop in different areas.

How much {hashave} your {course_s} helped you to develop ...?”}

{“IF MIDDLE OR FINAL PAGE: “And,” how much {hashave} your {course_s} helped you to develop ...?”}

G_Collapsible_Grid_II1 {4 items on first page}

GRID ROWS

1. My study skills
2. My IT skills
3. My communication skills
4. My confidence
5. {IF <> (FF_Coursemajor_num=3 and JointL3=0) (not A levels only): “And how much {hashave} your {course_s} helped you to develop ...?My knowledge of the occupational area that my course covered”}
6. {IF <> (FF_Coursemajor_num=3 and JointL3=0) (not A levels only): “The practical skills needed for my chosen subject”}
7. {IF <> (FF_Coursemajor_num=3 and JointL3=0) (not A levels only): “The practical skills needed for my chosen occupation”}
8. {IF <> (FF_Coursemajor_num=3 and JointL3=0) (not A levels only): “My understanding of how workplaces operate”}
9. {IF FF_Coursemajor_num=2,3,4 (T Level and comparator): “And how much {hashave} your {course_s} helped you to develop ...?Analytical ability”}
10. {IF FF_Coursemajor_num=2,3,4 (T Level and comparator): Ability to present ideas and arguments in structured writing”}
11. {IF FF_Coursemajor_num=2,3,4 (T Level and comparator): Ability to understand complex instructions”}

12. {IF FF_Coursemajor_num=2,3,4 (T Level and comparator): “And how much {hashave} your {course_s} helped you to develop ...? Problem solving”}
13. {IF FF_Coursemajor_num=2,3,4 (T Level and comparator): Working as a team”}
14. {IF FF_Coursemajor_num=2,3,4 (T Level and comparator): Self-organisation and time-keeping”}

GRID COLS

1. A great deal
2. Quite a bit
3. To some extent
4. Very little
5. Not at all

{ASK IF FF_CourseMajor_num=1 (TP)}

OutcomesTP

“How much has your course helped you to develop in the following areas?”

G_Collapsible_Grid_II1

GRID ROWS

1. Knowledge of T Levels in my chosen area
2. {IF English = 1, 2: “English skills”}
3. {IF Maths = 1, 2: “Maths skills”}
4. Preparing me for a T Level

GRID COLS

1. A great deal
2. Quite a bit
3. To some extent
4. Very little
5. Not at all

{ASK ALL}

MatchAdvertised

“How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

My experience of {IF FF_CourseMajor_Num=1,2,5 or (FF_CourseMajor_Num=4 AND JointL3=0: “the course”, ELSE: “each of the courses” matches what was advertised when I was choosing the {course_s}.”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree

{IF MatchAdvertised=4,5}

MatchAdvertisedWhy

“You said your experience of {IF FF_CourseMajor_Num=1,2,5 or (FF_CourseMajor_Num=4 AND JointL3=0: “the course”, ELSE: “each of the courses” didn’t match what was advertised. How was it different from what was advertised?”
STRING [4000]

Future plans

{IF FF_CourseMajor_num=1 (TP)}

TPContTL

“Are you planning to continue to a T Level at the end of the Transition Programme?”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not sure

{IF TPContTL = 2 or 3 No / not sure / DK}

TPContTLWhy

“Why {IF TPContTL=3, DK: “might ”; ELSE “will”}you not continue to a T Level?”

EXPANDING HELP LINK: “Why is this information important?”

“By telling us why you {IF TPContTL=3, DK: “might ”; ELSE “will”} not continue to a T Level, you are helping to improve our understanding of how the Transition Programme can better meet the needs of learners in future.”

G_Multi_II1

1. Would like to but don’t have the required grades
2. T Level would be too challenging
3. Prefer to study for a different course
4. Want to do an apprenticeship

5. Want to move into employment
6. Personal reasons
7. Still undecided
8. Other reason (please specify)

{IF TPContTLWhy=8

TPContTLWhyO

“What is the other reason not to continue to a T Level?”

STRING [4000]

**{ASK IF FF_CourseMajor_num=2,3,4,5, (TL, A levels, L3, L4/5) or TPContTL = 2 or 3
No/Not sure}**

NextStepEd

“Are you planning to do further study or an apprenticeship of any type {IF
FF_CourseMajor_num=2, 3, 4 OR (FF_CourseMajor_num=5 AND FinishYear=1): “in the next
12 months”; ELSE: “in the year after your course finishes”}?”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Yes – further study or apprenticeship
2. No
3. Not decided

{ASK IF NextStepEd=1 OR 3}

NextStepEdTypYes

“Which of these best describes your plans for further study {IF FF_CourseMajor_num=2, 3, 4
OR (FF_CourseMajor_num=5 AND FinishYear=1): “in the next 12 months”; ELSE: “in the
year after your course finishes”}?”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. “{IF FF_CourseMajor_num=(NOT(1)): A degree (e.g. at a university or higher
education institution)}”
2. {IF FF_CourseMajor_num=(NOT(1)): “Higher Technical Qualification (HTQ)”}
3. “{IF FF_CourseMajor_num=(NOT(1)): A different type of “Level 4 or 5 qualification”}
4. {IF_FF_CourseMajor_num = 1: “A level or AS level”}
5. An apprenticeship (including a degree apprenticeship)
6. {IF_FF_CourseMajor_num = 1: “A different type of Level 3 qualification (such as Level
3 award, Level 3 certificate, Level 3 diploma, Level 3 NVQ”)}
7. Another qualification / type of study

{ASK IF NextStepEdTypYes=5}

ApprenticeshipLevel

“What level of apprenticeship?”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Intermediate (Level 2)
2. Advanced (Level 3)
3. Higher (Level 4/5)
4. Degree (Level 6+)
5. Not sure

{ASK IF FF_CourseMajor_num=5 (L4/5) AND NextStepEd = 1 (Yes)}

RelatedQual

“Is the further study you are planning to do in a closely related subject area to the qualification you have been doing {IF SYSTEM DATE<=31/08/2023 “this year”; IF SYSTEM DATE>31/08/2023 “over the past academic year (i.e. from autumn 2022 to summer 2023)”?”

1. Yes
2. No

{ASK ALL}

NextStepWork

{IF NextStepEd = 1: “And apart from studying, which, if any, of these”; ELSE: “Which, if any of these”} best describe your plans {IF FF_CourseMajor_num=2, 3, 4 OR (FF_CourseMajor_num=5 AND FinishYear=1): “in the next 12 months”; ELSE: “in the year after your course finishes”}?

G_Multi_II1

1. A paid job
2. Voluntary work/unpaid internship
3. Take a break from study and work
4. Something else (please specify)
5. No further plans {EXCLUSIVE}
6. Not decided {EXCLUSIVE}

{ASK IF NextStepWork=4}

NextStepWorkNo_Other

Please specify what best describes your plans in the year after your course finishes.

STRING [4000]

**{IF SameEmp=1 or 2 (currently working for same employer) AND NextStepWork=1}
ContSameEmp**

“Are you planning on continuing in your current job?”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Yes
2. No – but plan to stay at the same employer
3. No – plan to work elsewhere}

{ASK ALL}

NextStepGeneralField

“Are you planning to work or study in the same general field as {IF
FF_CourseMajor_num= 1,2, 4, 5: “your course”; IF FF_CourseMajor_num=3: “any of your
courses”?”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not decided

{ASK IF FF_CourseMajor_num=2 AND IF NextStepGeneralField = 1}

NextStepField

“Are you planning to work or study in the same occupational specialism as your T
Level?”

EXPANDING HELP LINK: “What does occupational specialism mean?”

“By occupational specialism we mean the component of your T Level that has developed
skills specific to a particular occupation. You receive a separate grade for your occupational
specialism.”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not decided

{ASK ALL}

NSSupport

“To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

I feel supported by my education provider in deciding on my next step”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree

{ASK ALL}

Progress

“To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

My {course_s} {hashave} allowed me to progress to what I want to do”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree

{IF FF_CourseMajor_num=5 (L4/5)}

PrepareCareer

“To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

My course has prepared me for my future career”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree

{ASK ALL}

Careers [MULTICODE 1..8]

“Which of the following are the most important to you in your career decision-making?”

G_Multi_1

1. Secure employment over several years
2. Work that interests and stimulates me

3. Opportunities to further develop my occupational/technical knowledge, skills and competence
4. Opportunities to gain further qualifications
5. A high salary/wage
6. An innovative work culture that promotes creativity
7. An inclusive and supportive work environment
8. A work-life balance that suits me
9. None of the above (EXCLUSIVE)

{IF more than one option select at Careers 1..8}

CareersMain

“And which is the **most** important to you?”

G_ReadOut_II1

List of codes selected at Careers + “None of these – they are equally important”

Data linkage

{ASK ALL}

ConsentLink

“{IF FF_DataLink=1: “Last time we spoke to you as part of this study you gave your permission for your survey answers to be linked to”, ELSE: “We would like your permission to link information from the”} records held by the following government agencies:

- Department for Education – your past and future learning
- His Majesty’s Revenue and Customs – your employment, earnings, tax and benefits
- Department for Work and Pensions – your benefits and participation in government schemes
- Higher Education Statistics Agency – your university participation

Adding information from these records makes the information you have given us even more valuable. It will build a more detailed picture of you now and in the future. This will help researchers to understand what happens to learners like you and help improve things. Your information is confidential. You will not be identifiable in the data that researchers use. Your name, address or other contact details will never be included in the results. You can change or withdraw your permissions at any time by contacting NatCen or the Department for Education. If you withdraw your permission data that has already been linked will be retained but no future linking will take place.

{IF FF_DataLink=1: “Are you still happy for”, ELSE: “Do you give permission for”} a reference number to be passed to the Department for Education, so your records described above can be identified and linked to your survey responses?

TEL:"INTERVIEWER, IF NECESSARY":

EXPANDING HELP LINK: “Why is it helpful to add this information?”

“Adding extra details from administrative records opens up new possibilities for researchers from universities, charities and within government who all use the data to understand the experiences of learners and improve the services you use.

We learn a lot about your experiences from the questions we ask in the survey but adding extra information from administrative records helps us to build a more complete picture of how your course has helped you.

It also means we can make the data as valuable and accurate as possible, as it allows us to fill in the blanks for any details you may not know or remember and to avoid asking you for some other details during the survey.”

TEL:"INTERVIEWER, IF NECESSARY":

EXPANDING HELP LINK: “What do these records include?”

- “Department for Education’s (DfE) National Pupil Database (NPD) includes information about your participation and achievement in school and further education as well as details about the school, college or training centre you attended.
- Department for Education’s (DfE) Individual Learner Record (ILR) includes information about your participation and achievement in further education from age 16, as well as details about the college or training centre you may have attended.
- His Majesty’s Revenue and Customs (HMRC) records include Income Tax, Tax Credits and Child Benefit data, providing information about employment, earnings, tax, pensions and National Insurance contributions.
- Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) includes information about benefit receipt and participation in employment programs
- Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) includes information about higher education applications and offers
- Student Loans Company (SLC) records include information about applications for student finance
- Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) includes information about university participation and attainment”

TEL:"INTERVIEWER, IF NECESSARY":

EXPANDING HELP LINK: “How does this process work?”

“If you give your permission, NatCen Social Research will pass an anonymised reference number to the Department for Education. The Department will be able to identify you in their records and link your information to records from the other government databases listed.”

1. Yes
2. No

{ASK IF ConsentLink=2,ref,DK}

ConsentLinkIndiv

“Do you give permission for an anonymised reference number to be passed to the Department for Education, so that some of your records can be identified and linked to your survey responses? If so, please can you confirm which records you consent to having your survey responses linked to?”

TEL:"INTERVIEWER, IF NECESSARY":

EXPANDING HELP LINK: “What do these records include?”

“Department for Education’s (DfE) National Pupil Database (NPD) includes information about your participation and achievement in school and further education as well as details about the school, college or training centre you attended.

Department for Education’s (DfE) Individual Learner Record (ILR) includes information about your participation and achievement in further education from age 16, as well as details about the college or training centre you may have attended.

His Majesty’s Revenue and Customs (HMRC) records include Income Tax, Tax Credits and Child Benefit data, providing information about employment, earnings, tax, pensions and National Insurance contributions.

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) includes information about benefit receipt and participation in employment programs

Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) includes information about higher education applications and offers.

Student Loans Company (SLC) records include information about applications for student finance)

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) includes information about university participation and attainment”

G_Collapsible_Grid_II1

GRID ROWS

1. Department for Education's National Pupil Database
2. Department for Education's Individual Learner Record
3. Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
4. Department for Work and Pensions
5. Universities and Colleges Admissions Service
6. Student Loans Company records
7. Higher Education Statistics Agency

GRID COLS

1. Yes
2. No

Demographics

{ASK ALL}

DemIntro

"Now some questions about your household to help us understand more about your current situation.

Your answers will help us understand how students' personal circumstances relate to their experiences of the new technical education courses."

DISPLAY

{ASK IF FF_CVNumP = -1}

CvNumP

"How many people, including you, are currently living in your household?"

Please make sure you include yourself and any children when answering."

{HELPLINK: What do we mean by household? "By 'household' we mean the group of people (not necessarily related) living at your address who share cooking facilities with you and also share a living room or sitting room or dining area"

RANGE: 1...16

SOFT CHECK: IF CvNumP=1 “Just to check, are you living alone? If not, please change your answer to include yourself in the number of people in the household. If you are, please ignore this message and continue. Click OK to close this message.”

START RELATIONSHIP LOOP: IF CvNumP>1

{IF CvNumP > 1}

CvRelP

“Thinking about {IF CvNumP > 2: “each person in your household in any order, what is the {IF LOOP 1: “first”; IF LOOP 2 “second”; IF LOOP 3: “third”...up to LOOP16}”}; {IF CvNumP = 2: “the other person in the household, what is this”} person’s relationship to you?”

G_IfNec_II1

1. Mother (natural/adoptive/foster/step/in-law)
2. Father (natural/adoptive/foster/step/in-law)
3. Sister or brother (natural/half/adopted/foster/step/in-law)
4. Grandparent
5. Husband/wife/partner
6. Son or daughter (natural/adopted/foster/step/in-law)
7. Other relative
8. Other non-relative

{IF FF_CourseMajor_num = 1,5 AND CvRelP = 1,2 (mother/father)}

ParentEdu

“Does your {IF CvRelP = 1 “mother”, IF CvRelP = 2 “father”} have a university degree?”

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don’t know

{IF CvRelP = 1,2 (mother/father)}

ParentEconAct

“Which of these best describes what your {IF CvRelP = 1 “mother”, IF CvRelP = 2 “father”} was doing last week, that is the seven days ending last Sunday?”

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Full-time paid work (30 or more hours a week)
2. Part-time paid work (less than 30 hours a week)
3. Unemployed and looking for work
4. Full-time education or training course

5. Permanently sick/disabled
6. Looking after home/family
7. Retired from work
8. Something else
9. Don't know

END LOOP

{ASK ALL}

Tenure

"Thinking about the accommodation you are living in at the moment, does your household own or rent this accommodation?"

G_ReadOut_II1

1. Owned (with a mortgage or outright)
2. Rented privately
3. Rented from a local authority or housing association.
4. Something else
5. Don't know

{ASK IF Tenure=4}

TenureO

Under which other conditions does your household hold or occupy the accommodation you are living in at the moment?

STRING [4000]

Contact details

{IF Cur_Firstname <> EMPTY AND Cur_FirstName length >= 2 AND Cur_Surname <> EMPTY AND Cur_Surname length = 2}

NameChk

"It is important that we have the correct details for you so that we can keep in touch.

Please be assured that your details will only be used for the purpose of contacting you in relation to this research.

Are these your correct details?

First name: {Cur_Firstname}

Surname: {Cur_Surname}"

1. Yes
2. No

PAGE START

{(IF Cur_Firstname = EMPTY OR Cur_FirstName length < 2 OR Cur_Surname = EMPTY OR Cur_Surname length < 2 OR NameChk = 2)}

NameUpd

{IF Cur_Firstname = EMPTY OR Cur_Surname = EMPTY: "It is important that we have the correct details for you so that we can keep in touch.

Please be assured that your details will only be used for the purpose of contacting you in relation to this research."}

{IF Cur_Firstname = EMPTY OR Cur_Surname = EMPTY OR NameChk = 2}: "We do not currently have a full name for you in our records. {IF WEB: "Please enter"}{IF TEL: "Could I take"} your full contact details to update our records"

{IF TEL: INTERVIEWER: READ NAME BACK TO PARTICIPANT AND CONFIRM}

DISPLAY

NameUpd_Firstname

Firstname: {IF CUR_ Firstname<> EMPTY: "On our records as shown in the box below. If necessary amend it, and then click on 'Save and continue'."; IF CUR_ Firstname =EMPTY: "Not currently held. Please enter name in the box below."}

STRING [150] PROGRAMMING: PREPOPULATE WITH {CUR_ Firstname}

NO DK

ALLOW REF

SOFTCHECK: IF NameUpd_ Firstname is only 1 character: "The first name you have provided is only one character long. Are you sure this is correct?"

HARDCHECK: IF NameUpd_ Firstname contains numbers: "Please check and amend. First names should not contain numbers"

NameUpd_Surname

Surname: {IF CUR_ Surname<>EMPTY: “On our records as shown in the box below. If necessary amend it, and then click on ‘Save and continue’.”; IF CUR_ Surname =EMPTY “Not currently held. Please enter surname in the box below.”}

STRING [150] PROGRAMMING: PREPOPULATE WITH {CUR_ Surname}

NO DK

ALLOW REF

SOFTCHECK: IF NameUpd_ Surname is only 1 character: “The surname you have provided is only one character long. Are you sure this is correct?”

HARDCHECK: IF NameUpd_ Surname contains numbers: “Please check and amend. Surnames should not contain numbers”

PAGE END

{ASK IF Cur_AddressLine1 <> EMPTY}

AddrChk

“And could you confirm your address is:”

{Cur_AddressLine1}

{Cur_AddressLine2}

{Cur_AddressLine3}

{Cur_AddressLine4}

{Cur_AddressLine5}

{Cur_Postcode}

{Tel: “Is this correct?”}

4. Yes – this address is correct
5. No – this address needs updating

PAGE START

{IF AddrChk = 2 OR Cur_AddressLine1 = EMPTY}

AddrUpd1

{IF WEB: “Please enter”}{IF TEL: “Could I take”} your correct address details” {IF TEL: “?”}}

INTERVIEWER: ONCE ENTERED, PLEASE READ BACK TO RESPONDENT

DISPLAY

AddrUpd1_AddressLine1

“First line:”

STRING [40]

ALLOW NA (changed from DK/REF NOT ALLOWED)

SOFTCHECK: IF AddrUpd1_AddressLine1 = EMPTY: “A complete address should at minimum contain a valid first line of address and a town - please check”

AddrUpd1_AddressLine2

“Second line:”

STRING [40]

ALLOW NA

AddrUpd1_AddressLine3

“Third line:”

STRING [40]

ALLOW NA

AddrUpd1_AddressLine4

“Town:”

STRING [40]

ALLOW NA (changed from DK/REF NOT ALLOWED)

SOFTCHECK: IF AddrUpd1_AddressLine4 = EMPTY: “A complete address should at minimum contain a valid first line of address and a town - please check”

AddrUpd1_AddressLine5

“County:”

STRING [40]

ALLOW NA

AddrUpd1_Postcode

“Post Code:”

STRING [10]

ALLOW NA

SOFTCHECK: IF AddrUpd1_Postcode = EMPTY or INVALID: “Please check the postcode”

PROGRAMMING: IF AddrUpd1_AddressLine1 IS NOT EMPTY, THEN COPY AddrUpd1 to AddrUpd.

**IF AddrUpd1_AddressLine1 = <> "" then
AddrUpd_AddressLine1 = AddrUpd1_AddressLine1
AddrUpd_AddressLine2 = AddrUpd1_AddressLine2
AddrUpd_AddressLine3 = AddrUpd1_AddressLine3
AddrUpd_AddressLine4 = AddrUpd1_AddressLine4
AddrUpd_AddressLine5 = AddrUpd1_AddressLine5
AddrUpd_Postcode = AddrUpd1_Postcode**

PAGE END

{IF Cur_MobTelN <> ""}

MobChk

"Is your mobile phone number {Cur_MobTelN}?"

1. Yes
2. No

{IF (Cur_MobTelN = EMPTY OR MobChk = 2) }

MobUpd

{IF Cur_MobTelN = EMPTY: "We do not currently have a mobile phone number for you in our records. {IF WEB: "Please enter"}{IF TEL: "Could I take"} your mobile phone number if you have one{IF TEL: "?"}}

{IF MobChk = 2: "{IF WEB: "Please enter"}{IF TEL: "Could I take"} your correct mobile phone number" {IF TEL: "?"}}

INTERVIEWER: READ MOBILE NUMBER BACK TO PARTICIPANT AND CONFIRM

STRING [50]

1. {IF WEB: "I do"}{IF TEL: "Respondent does"} not have a mobile phone number
2. {IF WEB: "I do"}{IF TEL: "Respondent does"} not wish to give {IF WEB: "my"/IF TEL: "their"} mobile phone number

HARDCHECK: If contains characters other than numbers "Please only use numbers without any additional characters or spaces."

HARDCHECK: If does not contain 10 or 11 digits or does not start with a 0. "Your answer is not a valid telephone number. UK phone numbers start with 0 and are 10 or 11 digits. Please check and amend."

{IF Cur_OthTelN <> ""}

OthTelChk1

"And is your other phone number {Cur_OthTelN}?"

1. Yes
2. No

{IF Cur_OthTelN= EMPTY}

OthTelChk2

"And do you have another phone number we could contact you on?"

1. Yes
2. No

{IF OthTelChk1 = 2 OR OthTelChk2 = 1}

OthTelUpd

{IF WEB: "Please enter"}{IF TEL: "Could I take"} your correct other phone number {IF TEL: "?"}}

INTERVIEWER: READ PHONE NUMBER BACK TO PARTICIPANT AND CONFIRM

STRING [50]

1. {IF WEB: "I do"}{IF TEL: "Respondent does"} not have another phone number
2. {IF WEB: "I do"}{IF TEL: "Respondent does"} not wish to give {IF WEB: "my"/IF TEL: "their"} other phone number

HARDCHECK: If contains characters other than numbers "Please only use numbers without any additional characters or spaces."

HARDCHECK: If does not contain 10 or 11 digits or does not start with a 0. "Your answer is not a valid telephone number. UK phone numbers start with 0 and are 10 or 11 digits. Please check and amend."

{IF MobChk=1 OR MobUpd = ANSWER}

WhatsApp

"Would you be happy for us to contact you via WhatsApp?"

1. Yes
2. No
3. I don't use WhatsApp

PAGE START

{ASK IF VouchElig=1}

VoucherIntro

"As a thank you for your time, we would like to send you a £{IncentiveValue} voucher by email."

DISPLAY

{ASK IF Cur_Email<>EMPTY}

EmailChk

We want to make sure {IF VouchElig=1:"your e-voucher goes to the correct email address", IF ELSE: "we have your correct email address"}.

Is your email address <Cur_Email>?

1. Yes
2. No

{ASK IF EmailChk<>1 OR Cur_Email=empty}

NewEmail

{IF Cur_Email=EMPTY 'We do not currently have an email address for you in our records. {IF WEB: "What is"; IF TEL: "Could I take"} your email address, if you have one?}

{IF EmailChk = 2: "{IF WEB: "Please enter"}{IF TEL: "Could I take"} your correct email address:"}

{IF TEL: INTERVIEWER: READ EMAIL ADDRESS BACK TO PARTICIPANT AND CONFIRM}

STRING [150]

1. I do not have an email address
2. I would prefer not to give my email address

SOFTCHECK: If answer provided does not include @ or full-stop: "Please check and amend. E-mail addresses should contain an @ character and a full stop."

SOFTCHECK: IF NewEmail = 2 AND (AddrChk = 1 OR AddrUpd1_AddressLine1 <> EMPTY) “As we do not have an email address for you, we will be sending out a voucher in the post. This may take a bit longer. If you’d like to receive an e-voucher, {IF WEB: “please enter”}{IF TEL: “could I take”} your correct email address” {IF TEL: “?”}{IF WEB: “.”}} Please be assured this will only be used to contact you in relation to our research.”

SOFTCHECK: IF NewEmail = 1 AND (AddrChk = 1 OR AddrUpd1_AddressLine1 <> EMPTY) “As you do not have an email address, we will be sending out a voucher in the post. This may take a bit longer.”

SOFTCHECK: IF NewEmail = 2 AND AddrChk = 2 AND AddrUpd1_AddressLine1 = EMPTY “As we do not have an email address and a postal address for you, we cannot send out a voucher. If you’d like to receive an e-voucher, {IF WEB: “please enter”}{IF TEL: “could I take”} your correct email address” {IF TEL: “?”}{IF WEB: “.”}} Please be assured this will only be used to contact you in relation to our research.”

PAGE END

**{IF AddrChk = 2 AND AddrUpd1_AddressLine1 = EMPTY AND NewEmail = 1,2}
AddrUpd2**

“As we do not have an email address and a postal address for you, we cannot send out a voucher. If you’d like to receive a postal voucher, {IF WEB: “please enter”}{IF TEL: “could I take”} your correct address details” {IF TEL: “?”}}

INTERVIEWER: ONCE ENTERED, PLEASE READ BACK TO RESPONDENT

DISPLAY

AddrUpd2_AddressLine1

“First line:”

STRING [40]

ALLOW NA (changed from DK/REF NOT ALLOWED)

SOFTCHECK: IF AddrUpd2_AddressLine1 = EMPTY: “A complete address should at minimum contain a valid first line of address and a town - please check”

AddrUpd2_AddressLine2

“Second line:”

STRING [40]

ALLOW NA

AddrUpd2_AddressLine3

“Third line:”

STRING [40]

ALLOW NA

AddrUpd2_AddressLine4

“Town:”

STRING [40]

ALLOW NA (changed from DK/REF NOT ALLOWED)

SOFTCHECK: IF AddrUpd2_AddressLine4 = EMPTY: “A complete address should at minimum contain a valid first line of address and a town - please check”

AddrUpd2_AddressLine5

“County:”

STRING [40]

ALLOW NA

AddrUpd2_Postcode

“Post Code:”

STRING [10]

ALLOW NA

SOFTCHECK: IF AddrUpd2_Postcode = EMPTY or INVALID: “Please check the postcode”

IF AddrUpd2_AddressLine1 = <> “” then

AddrUpd_AddressLine1 = AddrUpd2_AddressLine1

AddrUpd_AddressLine2 = AddrUpd2_AddressLine2

AddrUpd_AddressLine3 = AddrUpd2_AddressLine3

AddrUpd_AddressLine4 = AddrUpd2_AddressLine4

AddrUpd_AddressLine5 = AddrUpd1_AddressLine5

AddrUpd_Postcode = AddrUpd2_Postcode

PAGE END

**{IF ((Cur_AddressLine <> EMPTY AND AddrChk = 1) OR Cur_Email <> EMPTY OR NewEmail <> EMPTY OR AddrUpd_AddressLine1 <> EMPTY) AND VouchElig=1}-
VouchSent**

“Please note that it may take up to 14 days for the voucher to arrive.

{IF Cur_Email <> EMPTY OR NewEmail <> EMPTY: “It will be sent to your email address. Please check your SPAM folder to ensure the electronic voucher did not end up there by mistake.”}

{IF Cur_Email = EMPTY AND NewEmail = EMPTY AND (Cur_AddressLine <> EMPTY OR AddrUpd_AddressLine1 <> EMPTY): “It will be mailed to your address.”}

NEXT

**{IF (Cur_AddressLine = EMPTY AND Cur_Email = EMPTY AND NewEmail = EMPTY AND AddrUpd_AddressLine1 = EMPTY) AND VouchElig= 1}
VouchNoSent**

“We do not have your postal or email address and cannot send you a £{IncentiveValue} shopping voucher.

If you want to update your records, please contact our freephone or send us an email:

Freephone: 0800 652 9294

Email: TechEd@natcen.ac.uk”

Please be assured that your details will only be used for the purpose of contacting you in relation to this research and for the delivery of your £{IncentiveValue} voucher.”

NEXT

Stable contact

**{IF FF_Coursemajor_num=2,3,4,5 (not TL)}
StContact**

“We would like to get in touch with you again to hear your views about your course and your situation. In case we can't reach you with the details you have provided, are you willing to give us the details of someone who could put us in touch with you?”

1. Yes
2. No

PAGE START

StName

Please give your contact's name.

STRING [XXX]

NO DK, REF, BLANK

SOFTCHECK: IF StName is only 1 character: "The name you have provided is only one character long. Are you sure this is correct?"

HARDCHECK: IF StName contains numbers: "Please check and amend. Names should not contain numbers"

StRel

And what is their relationship to you?

STRING [XXX]

NO DK, REF, BLANK

StAdd

"What is their home address?"

DISPLAY

AddUpdLine1_St

"First line:"

STRING [40]

SOFTCHECK: IF AddUpdLine1_St = EMPTY: "A complete address should at minimum contain a valid first line of address and a town – please check"

AddUpdLine2_St

"Second line:"

STRING [40]

AddUpdLine3_St

“Third line:”

STRING [40]

AddUpdLine4_St

“Town:”

STRING [40]

SOFTCHECK: IF AddUpdLine4_St = EMPTY: “A complete address should at minimum contain a valid first line of address and a town – please check”

AddUpdLine5_St

“County:”

STRING [40]

AddUpdPostcode_St

“Postcode:”

STRING [10]

SOFTCHECK: IF AddUpdPostcode_St = EMPTY or INVALID: “Please check the postcode”

1. Prefer not to say
2. Don't know their address

{Ask if StContact=1}

StTel

What is the best telephone number to contact them on?

INTERVIEWER: READ PHONE NUMBER BACK TO PARTICIPANT AND CONFIRM

STRING [XXX]

1. {IF WEB: “I do”}{IF TEL: “Respondent does”} not know their phone number
2. {IF WEB: “I do”}{IF TEL: “Respondent does”} not wish to give their phone number

SOFTCHECK: If contains characters other than numbers "Please only use numbers without any additional characters or spaces."

SOFTCHECK: If does not contain 10 or 11 digits or does not start with a 0. "Your answer is not a valid telephone number. UK phone numbers start with 0 and are 10 or 11 digits. Please check and amend."

PAGE END

Close

[] Submit

NO DK, NO REF

{IF MODE = WEB}

ClosePageWeb

"You have now completed the questionnaire and your answers have been saved. Thank you very much for taking the time to share your opinions with us!

If you have any further information you'd like to add, please include it in the box below. Otherwise, please click 'Save and continue' to submit your answers"

STRING [XXX]

ALLOW NA

{IF MODE = TEL}

ClosePageTel

"We have now completed the questionnaire and your answers have been saved. Thank you very much for taking the time to share your opinions with us!

If you have any further information you'd like to add I can record your comments now."

STRING [XXX]

ALLOW NA

{EXIT INTERVIEW; OUTCOME=110; SHOW DEFAULT PAGE "You have ended the interview"}



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