



CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Employer Perspectives Survey 2019

Employer Perspectives Survey 2019

Employer characteristics

Small employers with 2-4 employees make up **50%** of establishments but employ a smaller percentage (**8%**) of the workforce.

17% of establishments that were at least 12 months old had increased their number of employees over the last year. **10%** had seen a decrease.



Vacancies

48% of employers had vacancies over the past year...



...and **43%** of employers recruited staff.

Flexible working



47% of employers with vacancies offered flexible working roles.

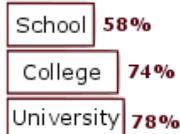
Gender Pay Gap

26% of employers who are subject to Gender Pay Gap legislation have changed their recruitment practices in relation to equality and diversity.

Developing the Young Workforce

30% of employers had recruited an employee in their first job directly from education.

The **majority** of employers find education leavers to be 'well' or 'very well' prepared.



62% of employers thought work experience is 'critical' or 'significant' when recruiting...

...and **20%** of employers provided work placements to young people at school in the last 12 months.

Employers that engaged with DYW Regional Groups were **more likely** to be doing DYW-type activities.

Training and apprenticeships



70% of employers had provided training to their staff in the last 12 months.

43% of employers were aware of Foundation Apprenticeships.



16% of employers offered apprenticeships, most commonly as 'a good way to get skilled staff' (**30%** of those with current apprentices).



90% of employers offering apprenticeships offered these to young people aged under 25.



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Introduction

The Scottish Employer Perspectives Survey (EPS) 2019 is a large-scale telephone survey of 2,652 employers in Scotland. It provides labour market information on how employers engage with the skills system in Scotland, including:

- their recruitment of new staff;
- their perceptions of new recruits (including young people and education leavers);
- their engagement with training providers; and
- their offering of work placements and apprenticeships.

The publication of the Scottish EPS follows a longstanding UK-wide EPS series (including Scotland) which was conducted biennially from 2010 to 2016¹. The Scottish EPS 2019 includes new questions on: (i) the Scottish Government's Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) programme; and (ii) equalities, with a focus on recruitment and Gender Pay Gap reporting.

Further information about the EPS method can be found in the Methodology section of this release and the accompanying Technical Report.

This is an Official Statistics release covering the key statistics in the survey. A fuller report covering all the questions asked in the Employer Perspective Survey will also be made available to accompany this release.

¹ The last UK-wide EPS was carried out in 2016, principally commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE). Earlier editions of the UK-wide EPS were principally commissioned by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES).

Employer characteristics

The population for the Scottish EPS 2019 is all ‘establishments’ in Scotland that had at least two people working there (including owners and working proprietors²). The sampling unit for the EPS was at an establishment level; this means that a phone interview was conducted with an individual at the site level (e.g. a ‘local office’) rather than at an organisation level (e.g. a ‘head office’). This is in recognition of the influence that local labour markets have on skills issues, and that skills issues are typically felt most acutely at the site level. This mirrored the establishment-based approach adopted in previous UK Employer Skills Surveys (ESS) and UK Employer Perspectives Surveys (EPS). The terms ‘establishment’, ‘site’ and ‘employer’ are used interchangeably through the report.

Figure 1 shows Scottish employer and employment profile by size for this population. Office for National Statistics (ONS) figures estimate that in March 2018 there were 151,200 establishments in Scotland employing over 2.4 million people between them.

The Scottish employer population is predominantly made up of small establishments as nearly three-quarters (73%) of employers have fewer than 10 staff. Since 2016³, there has been an increase in the proportion of establishments classified in the smallest 2 to 4 employee sizeband. This group tend to experience skills and human resources issues differently from larger employers (e.g. in terms of recruitment and retention).

Whilst employers with 2 to 4 staff make up 50% of establishments, they employ 8% of the workforce. Employers with 100+ staff make up 2% of establishments, but employ 43% of the workforce.

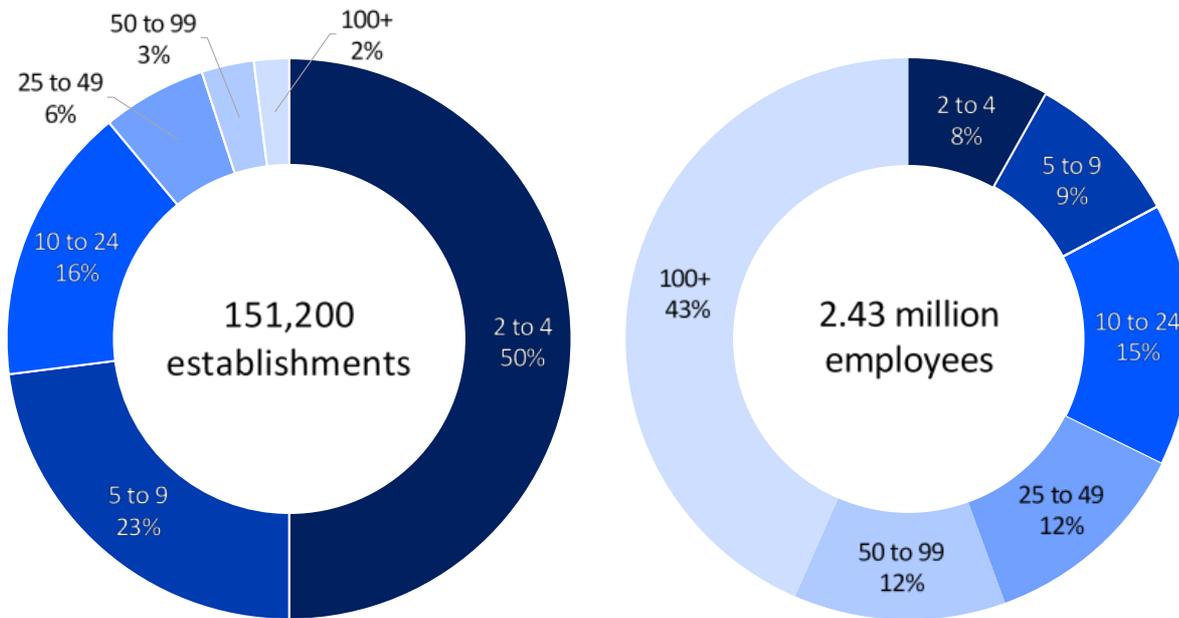
The largest sectors in the Scottish economy in terms of number of establishments are ‘Business Services’, and ‘Wholesale and Retail’ (20% and 19% of all establishments, respectively); the smallest are ‘Financial Services’ and ‘Public Administration’ (both 2%).

² See methodology section of this release for further information on what is meant by the terms ‘owners’ and ‘working proprietors’.

³ 2019 is the first year that the EPS has been published as Official Statistics. EPS 2014 and 2016 figures referred to in this document are available on the UK Government website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/employer-perspectives-survey-2016>.

Figure 1: Employer and employment profile by establishment size



Base population: 2,652

There is variation between the distribution of establishments and employment by sector. For example, 'Health and Social Work' is the largest sector by employment, accounting for 16% of all employees, whilst comprising 7% of all establishments.

In terms of business growth and outlook, 17% of establishments that have already been in business for over 12 months have increased their number of employees in the past 12 months⁴. Amongst private sector employers, 39% expect to grow in the next 12 months, compared with 10% who expect to contract. 47% expect to remain the same and 4% are unsure.

95% of employers in Scotland have been in operation for 5 years or more.

Entry to work

EPS questions on 'entry to work' topics include vacancies and recruitment practices, and employers' attitudes and actions towards supporting an inclusive labour market.

⁴ This question was only asked to those who had already been in business for 12 months or longer to prevent start-ups, who would be more likely to have grown during this period, from skewing the results.

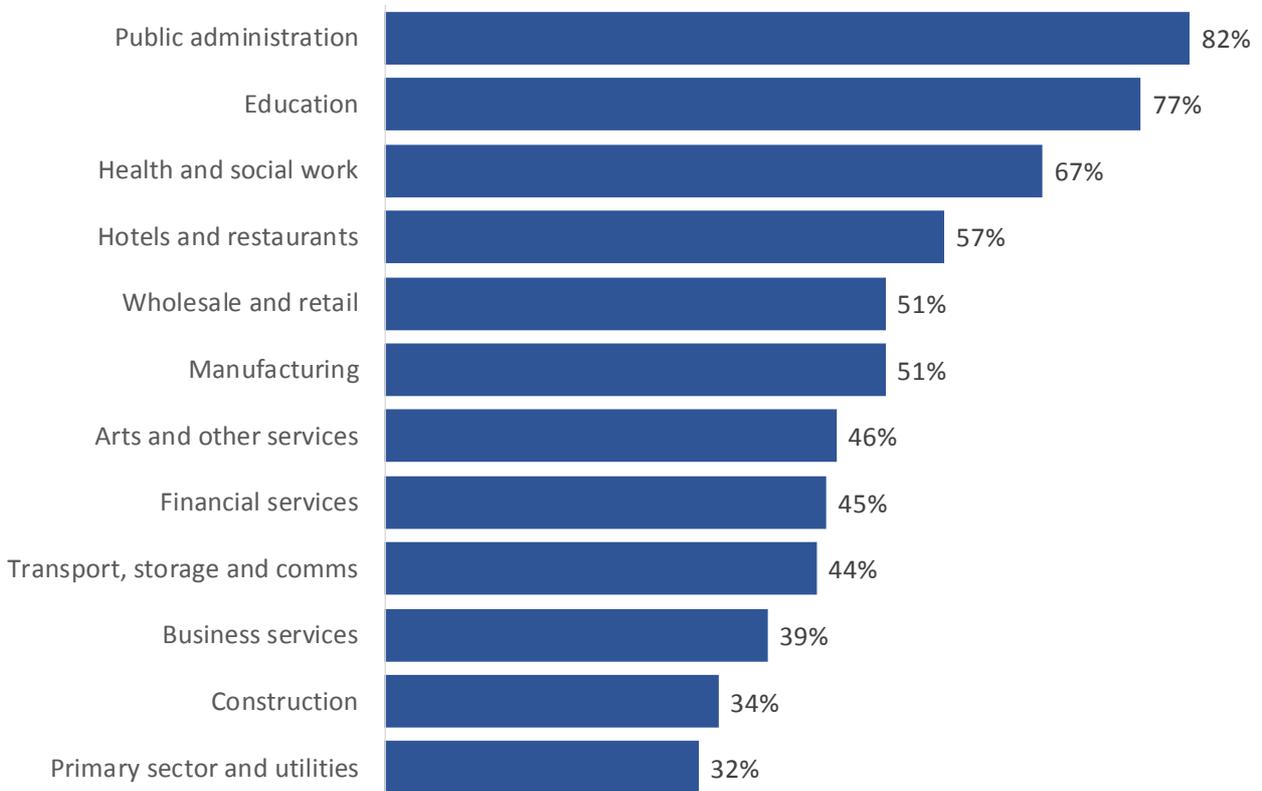
Vacancies

48% of employers have had at least one vacancy in the previous 12 months, and 43% have recruited staff.

Larger employers are more active in the labour market. 98% of employers with 100 or more staff have had a vacancy and 96% have recruited one or more employees, compared to 23% and 19% respectively of employers with 2 to 4 staff.

Figure 2 shows that 'Public administration' is the sector with the highest proportion of establishments with vacancies (82%); 'Primary sector and utilities' has the lowest proportion of establishments with vacancies (32%).

Figure 2: Proportion of establishments with vacancies in the last 12 months, by sector



Base population: 2,652

Recruitment methods and related issues

The majority of employers who recruited in the 12 months prior to the study used multiple recruitment methods.

20% of employers who have recruited in the preceding year used only a single approach to recruitment. This is an increase from 18% in 2016.

'Word of mouth or personal recommendation' is the most commonly used recruitment approach by employers with a vacancy (78%), compared to 77% in 2016. Other internal resources⁵ such as their 'own social media' (56%) or 'website' (53%) are also commonly used, compared to 47% and 55% in 2016 respectively. 33% of employers who have experienced vacancies use only 'internal resources'; an increase from 29% in 2016. 12% use only 'word of mouth or personal recommendation' to advertise vacancies; an increase from 10% in 2016.

Relevant work experience remains the attribute most commonly sought by employers in candidates for job roles, with 62% rating it as a 'significant' or 'critical' factor as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Importance of factors looked for in recruitment

Factor	Proportion who consider factor 'Critical' or 'Significant'
Having relevant work experience	62%
Having Maths and English to at least SCQF level 4 or 5 ⁶	51%
Having a relevant vocational qualification	46%
Having particular academic qualifications such as Nationals, Highers or a degree	35%

Base population: 2,652

⁵ External resources include methods like 'paid for recruitment scheme' and 'school, college or university jobs fairs or careers services'.

⁶This is equivalent to National 4 or 5, or to the historical qualifications Standard Grade General or Credit.

Equalities and diversity in recruitment

51% of employers who have experienced a vacancy collected information to monitor the diversity of applicants.

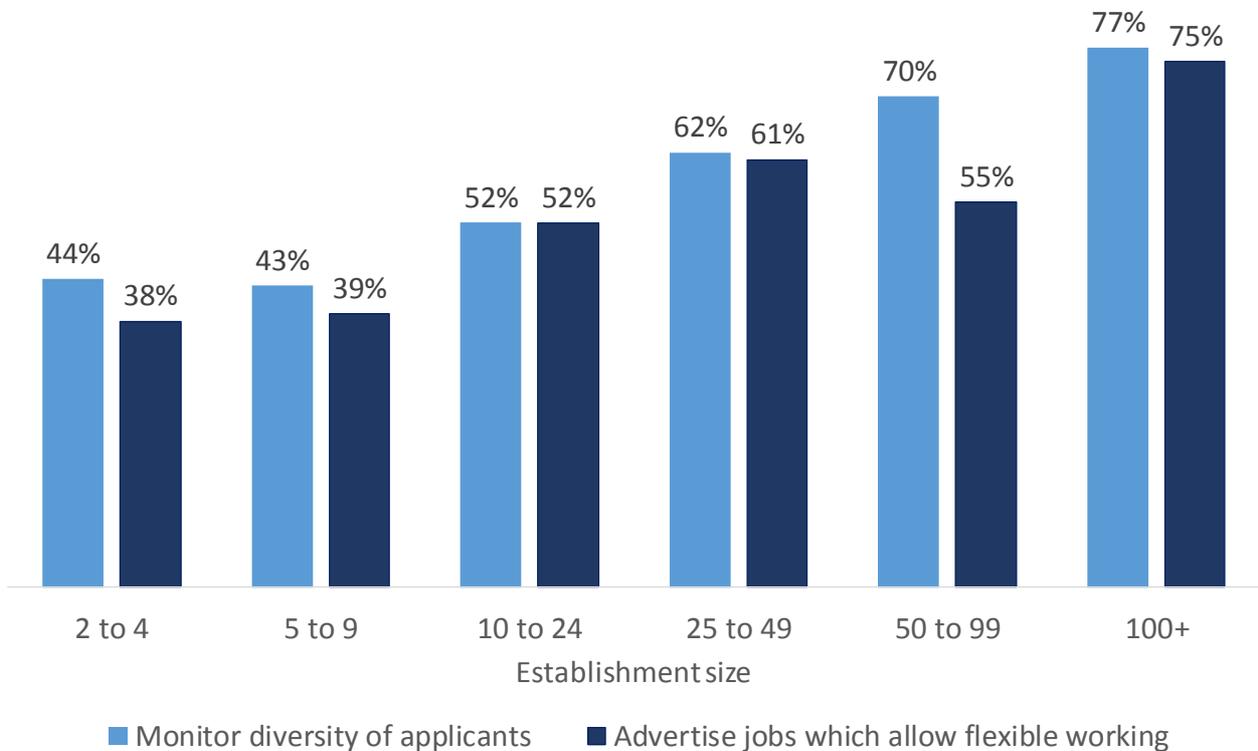
For employers with 100+ employees, 77% monitor the diversity of applicants (Figure 3). The practice is more common in the public sector (81%) where Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) rules require the collection of such information.

47% of employers who have experienced a vacancy advertised a role that would be suited to flexible working.

Generally, larger employers are more likely to advertise jobs that allow flexible working arrangements (Figure 3).

Across most establishment sizes, a higher proportion of employers who have had a vacancy monitor the diversity of applicants than offer applicants the ability to request flexible working.

Figure 3: Monitoring the diversity of applicants and advertising jobs which allow flexible working, by establishment size



Base population: 1,729

In terms of specific measures, 13% of employers with a vacancy use ‘positive action’⁷ and 8% use ‘blind or no name recruitment’⁸. Table 2 shows other attributes which are used by employers to promote equality and diversity.

Awareness of ‘positive action’ is higher amongst public and voluntary sector employers with a vacancy than amongst private sector employers with a vacancy (76% and 76%, compared to 63% respectively). The largest employers with a vacancy are more likely to use ‘positive action’: 19% of those with 100+ staff compared to 11% of those with 2 to 4 staff.

82% of employers with a vacancy could not identify any specific action they have taken to attract and encourage a diverse range of applicants. 73% of employers with a vacancy who currently monitor the diversity of applicants were also not able to identify any such action.

Table 2: Percentage of employers with a vacancy who have used specific recruitment practices in last year

Recruitment practice	Private	Voluntary	Public	All employers
Awareness of Positive Action	63%	76%	76%	65%
Monitoring equality and diversity of applicants	43%	73%	81%	51%
Flexible working vacancies advertised	42%	66%	70%	47%
Encouraged diverse range of applicants	7%	30%	33%	13%
Use of Positive Action	11%	19%	16%	13%
Use of ‘blind’ or ‘no name’ recruitment	4%	18%	26%	8%

Base population: 1,729

⁷ ‘Positive action’ is where a candidate with a specific protected characteristic is chosen over other equally qualified candidates because that characteristic is under-represented in the workplace. Positive action is enabled by Equality Act (2010):

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/part/11/chapter/2>

⁸ ‘Blind or no name’ recruitment is where irrelevant information such as names are left off CVs to help avoid unconscious bias.

Gender Pay Gap legislation

58% of employers who are required to report on their Gender Pay Gap have not changed their recruitment practices in relation to equality and diversity.

Since the previous wave of EPS research, Gender Pay Gap legislation has come into force. From 2018, public, private and voluntary sector employers with 250 or more employees have been required to publish information on their Gender Pay Gap⁹.

74% of all employers are aware of this Gender Pay Gap legislation. 95% of employers with 250+ employees (and therefore required to report) are aware of this Gender Pay Gap legislation.

Amongst those employers who are aware of the Gender Pay Gap legislation and have 250+ employees, 58% have made no specific changes to their recruitment practices in relation to equality and diversity, 26% had made at least one change and 16% did not know whether they had.

Specific changes include increasing the transparency of salaries / salary bands; altering the salaries of positions; recruiting more women; making changes to personnel on recruitment panels; altering the language used in job adverts; raising awareness; and implementing 'blind' or 'no name' recruitment practices.

Recruiting young and older people

60% of employers who recruited in the preceding year recruited a young person (aged under 25).

This has been decreasing since 2014, as shown in Table 3.

42% of employers who recruited in the preceding year recruited an older person (aged 50 or over).

This has been increasing since 2016, as shown in Table 3.

⁹ For further discussion on the legislation surrounding the Gender Pay Gap, see the note in the background.

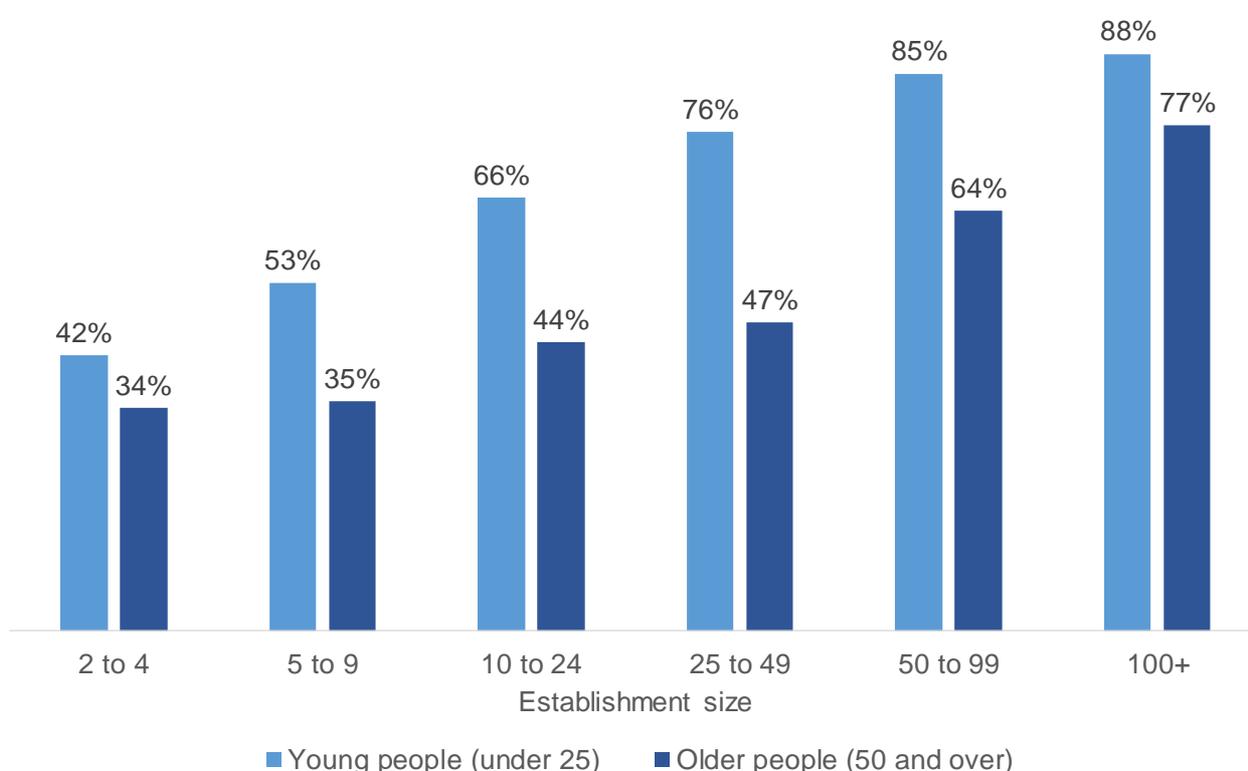
Table 3: Recruitment of young and older people, 2014, 2016 and 2019

Recruitment	Proportion of all recruiting employers		
	2014	2016	2019
Young people (aged under 25)	66%	64%	60%
Older people (aged over 50)	29%	31%	42%

Base population: 2,440 (2014), 2,470 (2016), 1,611 (2019)

For establishments with 2-4 employees who have recruited one or more employees, 42% have recruited a young person in the last year compared to 34% who have recruited an older person. For employers with 100+ employees, 88% have recruited a young person in the last year and 77% have recruited an older person (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Proportion of recruiting employers who have recruited young and older people in the last year, by establishment size



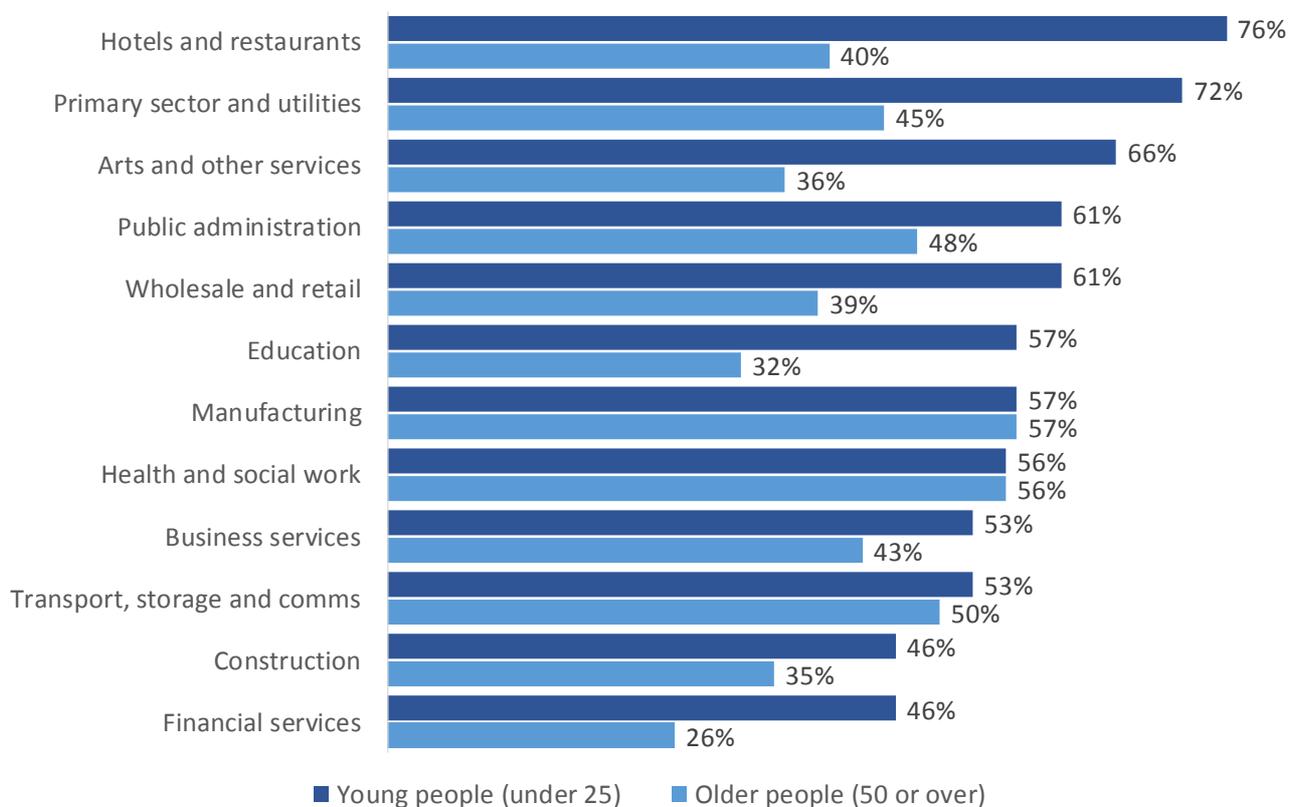
Base population: 1,611

The 'Hotels and Restaurants' sector has the highest proportion of recruiting employers who have recruited a young person (76%); 'Financial Services' and 'Construction' are the sector with the lowest proportions (46%).

As shown in Figure 5, 'Manufacturing' is the sector with the highest proportion of recruiting employers that have recruited an older person (57%); 'Construction' is the sector with the lowest proportion (26%).

Employers who monitor the diversity of their applicants, use positive action, blind recruitment, offer flexible posts and / or encourage a diverse range of applicants are all more likely to have recruited an older person than their counterparts who have not adopted these recruitment practices.

Figure 5: Proportion of recruiting employers who have recruited young or older people in the last year, by sector



Base population: 1,611

Recruitment directly from education

In the last 2 to 3 years, 30% of employers recruited an employee directly from education.

This is a decrease from 2016, as shown in Table 4.

Directly from education includes recruiting an employee to their first job from a school, college or university in Scotland. Overall, employers were less likely to recruit an employee directly from education than they were in 2016. The

percentage of employers recruiting from schools, colleges or universities was 20%, 12% and 11% respectively.

Table 4: Recruitment of education leavers, 2014, 2016 and 2019

Recruitment	Proportion of all employers		
	2014	2016	2019
Any education leaver	32%	32%	30%
<i>School leaver</i>	19%	19%	20%
<i>College leaver</i>	11%	11%	12%
<i>University leaver</i>	13%	14%	11%

Base population: 4,015 (2014), 4,009 (2016), 2,652 (2019)

Preparedness for work

The majority of employers find their education leavers to be 'well' or 'very well' prepared.

This level of preparedness varies with the education sector. 58% of employers who recruited a leaver from a Scottish school, 74% who recruited a leaver from a Scottish college and 78% who recruited a leaver from a Scottish university felt they were 'well prepared' or 'very well prepared'. These are decreases from the 2016 survey (Table 5).

Table 5: Preparedness of education leavers for work, 2014, 2016 and 2019

Education leaver	Proportion of employers who felt the leaver was very well / well prepared		
	2014	2016	2019
School leaver	63%	65%	58%
College leaver	81%	80%	74%
University leaver	88%	84%	78%
<i>Base population: School leaver recruiters –</i>	<i>1,101</i>	<i>1,052</i>	<i>779</i>
<i>College leaver recruiters –</i>	<i>754</i>	<i>707</i>	<i>538</i>
<i>University leaver recruiters –</i>	<i>840</i>	<i>827</i>	<i>401</i>

Work placements

36% of employers provided any type of work placement in the last 12 months.

Although the proportion of employers offering any type¹⁰ of work placements in Scotland has decreased to 36% in 2019 (by around 3 percentage points since 2016), those who do so are offering them to more individuals. In total, employers offering work placements each took an average of just over six individuals on to a placement in the 12 months preceding the survey. Almost 333,000 placements were offered to individuals by employers, an increase of 6% from the number of placements in 2016.

34% of employers who provided work placements had gone on to recruit a trainee to a permanent or long term paid role, in most cases directly following their placement.

Work placements were more common among larger employers, and among those in the public and voluntary sectors.

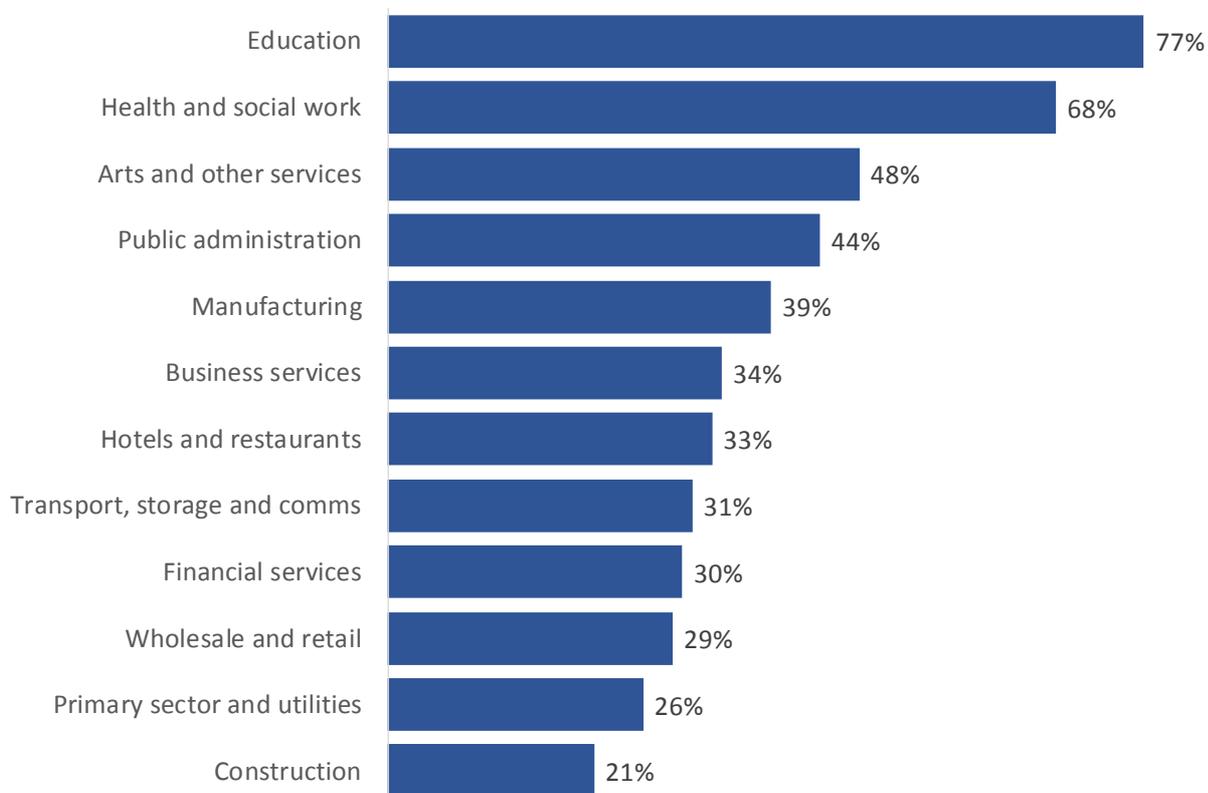
Variation was considerable across industrial sectors, with employers in the 'Education' and 'Health and social work' sectors most likely to have offered work placements (77% and 68% respectively). This can be compared to 'Construction' sector employers, among whom just 21% had offered work placements (Figure 6).

The main barriers cited by those who did not offer work placement opportunities were structural (68%). For example they had no suitable roles (38%) or lacked the

¹⁰ This include work placements for people at school, college and university; internships (either paid or unpaid); those targeted at giving work experience to the unemployed; and work trials for new recruits; and 'other' work placements.

time and resources to do so (20%). Lack of awareness was a barrier for 21% of employers, particularly among smaller employers, i.e. those with less than 25 staff.

Figure 6: Proportion of employers who have any type of work placements by sector, 2019



Base population: 2,652

Developing the Young Workforce (DYW)

The Scottish EPS 2019 included questions focusing on [DYW](#), the Scottish Government's youth employment strategy. 21 employer-led DYW Regional Groups in Scotland are a key mechanism for employers to engage with DYW and to develop employer-education partnerships.

The EPS 2019 asked a new set of questions on DYW Regional Groups. A key indicator of DYW's success is the extent to which employers are aware of the Groups and whether they have engaged with them, or conducted/facilitated employer-education partnership activities supported by them. Some questions included in previous years of the EPS were also edited to include DYW and/or DYW Regional Groups in their scope, or to reflect changes introduced as part of DYW (for example the Work Placement Standard).

Work placements at school

20% of employers provided work placements to young people at school in the preceding year.

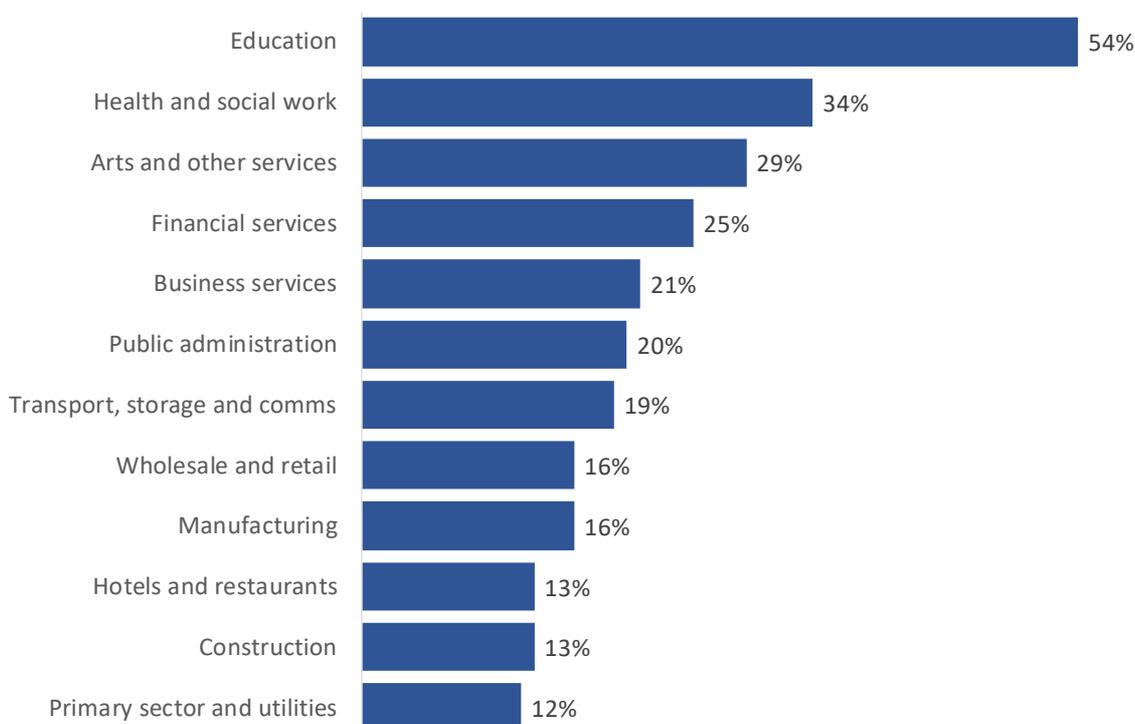
This is the same proportion as in 2016. Larger establishments are more likely to offer placements, with 51% of employers with over 100 employees offering work placements to school pupils.

Employers in the 'Education' sector are most likely to offer work placements to school pupils, with 54% of all employers doing so. 'Primary sector and utilities', 'Construction' and 'Hotels and restaurants' were least likely to offer such placements, with respectively 12%, 13% and 13% of employers doing so (Figure 7).

Most employers who provide placements for school pupils have had one or two such placements (40% and 23% respectively); 5% of employers have had 10 or more. Of those employers who provide work placements for school pupils, the average number of placements is 3.4 pupils.

The majority (84%) of employers had not recruited a school pupils into a permanent or long-term paid role following a work placement. However 14% of employers had, either at the end of the placement or once the pupil had finished their education.

Figure 7: Proportion of employers who have work placements for school pupils by sector, 2019



Base population: 2,652

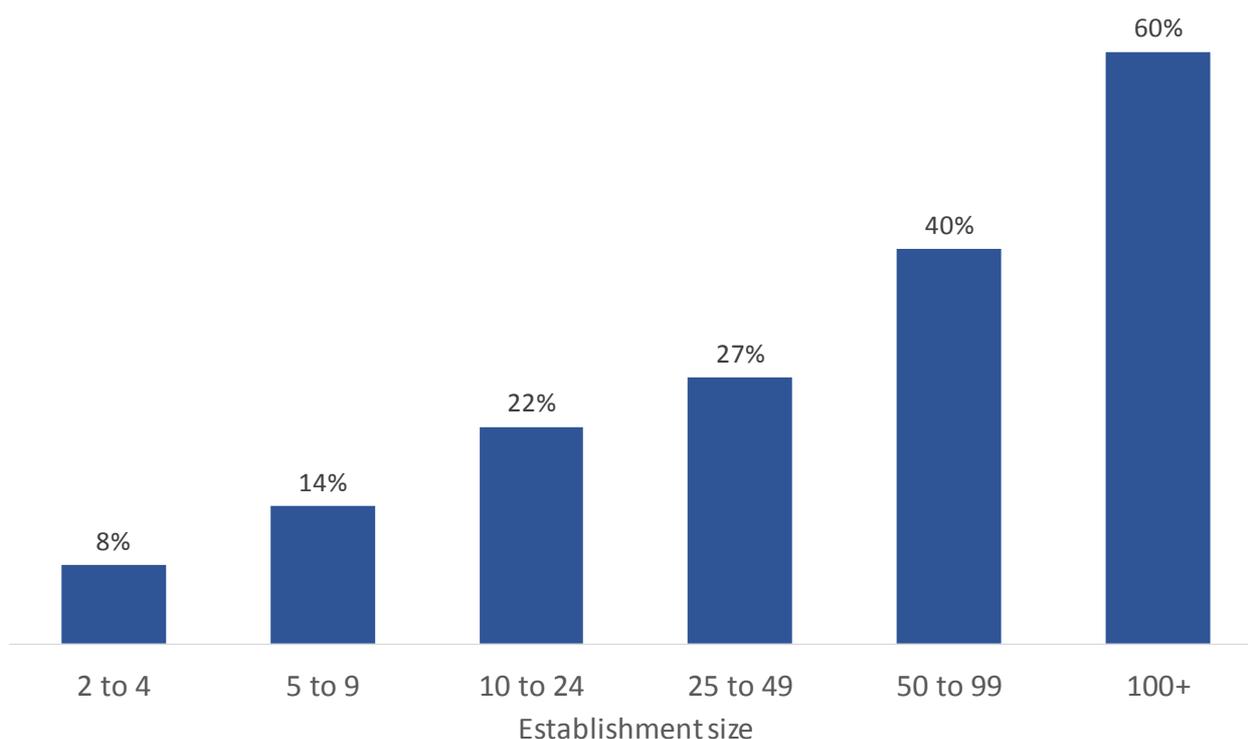
Work inspiration activities

15% of employers engaged with educational institutions to offer work inspiration activities to students in the last 12 months.

Work inspiration activities include hosting site visits for students, talking to them about their careers or conducting activities such as mock interviews to improve their employability¹¹. These activities are offered to people at school, colleges and universities.

Larger employers are more likely to offer work inspiration activities, with 60% of employers with over 100 employees doing so (Figure 8).

Figure 8: Proportion of employers offering work inspiration activities, by establishment size



Base population: 2,652

Employers in the 'Education' and 'Public administration' sectors are most likely to offer work inspiration activities, with respectively 39% and 31% of employers doing so. The sectors least likely to offer these activities are 'Construction' (6%) and 'Hotels and restaurants' (8%).

¹¹ See Background section for further details of work placements and work inspiration.

DYW Regional Groups

3% of employers engaged with their DYW Regional Group over the last 12 months.

14% of employers are aware of a DYW Regional Group. This means that around a fifth of employers who are aware of a DYW Regional Group have engaged with it. Larger employers are more likely to be aware of and to have engaged with a DYW Regional Group.

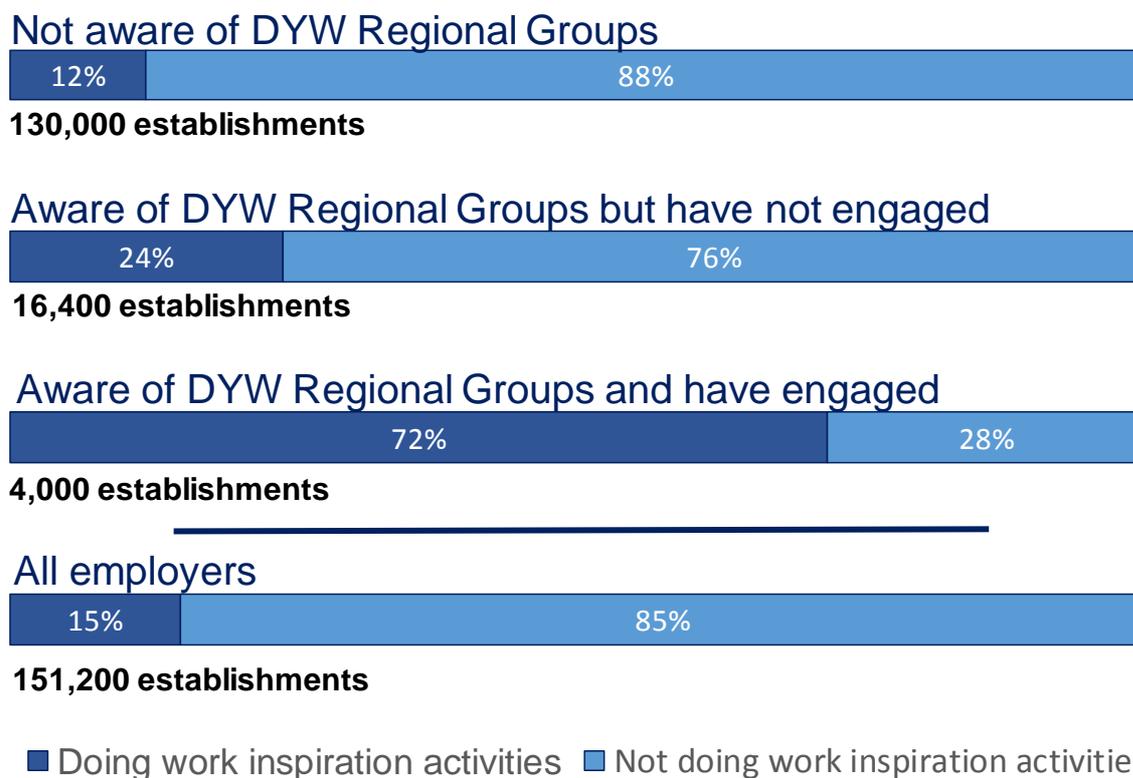
Employers who have engaged with a DYW Regional Group are more likely to have undertaken work inspiration activities.

Employers who are aware and have engaged with their local DYW Regional Group are more likely to have offered work inspiration activities: 72% of such employers, compared to 15% of all employers.

Figure 9 shows the percentage of employers who are doing work inspiration activities by awareness and engagement with DYW Regional Groups. 24% of employers who have heard of and not engaged with DYW Regional Groups have done work inspiration activities; 12% of employers who have neither heard of nor engaged with DYW Regional Groups have done such activities¹².

¹² The survey cannot tell us whether the DYW Regional groups are effectively encouraging the provision of work inspiration activities or whether it is simply that the sorts of employers engaging with the DYW Regional Groups tend to be more likely to offer these activities anyway.

Figure 9: Employers doing work inspiration activities by interaction with DYW Regional Groups



Base population: 2,652

Employers who are aware and have engaged with their local DYW Regional Group are also more likely to have offered work placements: 84% of such employers, compared to 36% of all employers.

Employer collaboration¹³ is also more common among employers who have engaged with their local DYW Regional Group: 33% compared to 14% of all employers¹⁴. Employer collaboration is also more common in larger employers and among the public and voluntary sectors. Encouraging employer collaboration is included in the remit of some DYW Regional Groups.

¹³ For example, to increase training provision for the workforce, through shared resources to fund courses or through working collaboratively to develop training policies or programmes for the industry or region.

¹⁴ The survey cannot tell us whether the DYW Regional Groups are effectively encouraging the collaboration or whether it is simply that the sorts of employers engaging with the DYW Regional Groups tend to be more collaborative anyway.

People development

EPS questions on 'people development' include employer approaches to training and their engagement with and views on vocational qualifications.

Training levels

70% of employers provided training to their staff in the preceding year.

This represents a decrease from 2016 when 73% of employers provided training in the preceding year.

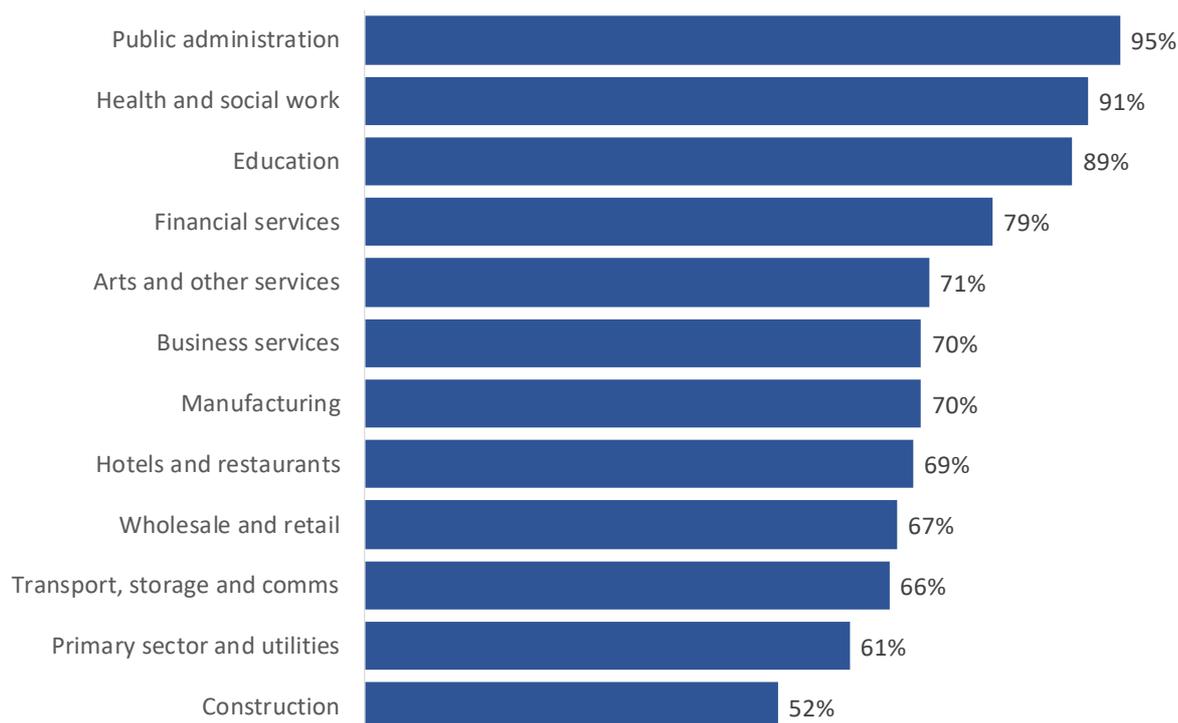
The vast majority of employers with 25 or more employees offer training to staff, compared to around half of employers with 2 to 4 employees.

As shown in Figure 10, 'Public Administration' is the sector with the largest proportion of establishments offering training to staff (95%); 'Construction' is the sector with the smallest proportion of establishments offering training to staff (52%).

More employers offer internal training (60%) than external training (49%) whilst 39% of employers provide both. Employers that provide training predominantly use private training providers (65%), with 19% using public providers (e.g. colleges and universities).

29% of employers experienced a skills or training issue in the last 12 months that required external information, advice or practical help. Of these, 76% sought or received such advice.

Figure 10: Training provision by sector, 2019



Base population: 2,652

Vocational qualifications

31% of employers have arranged or funded training designed to lead to a recognised vocational qualification in the last 12 months.

This is an increase from 2016 when 26% of employers arranged or funded training designed to lead to a recognised vocational qualifications.

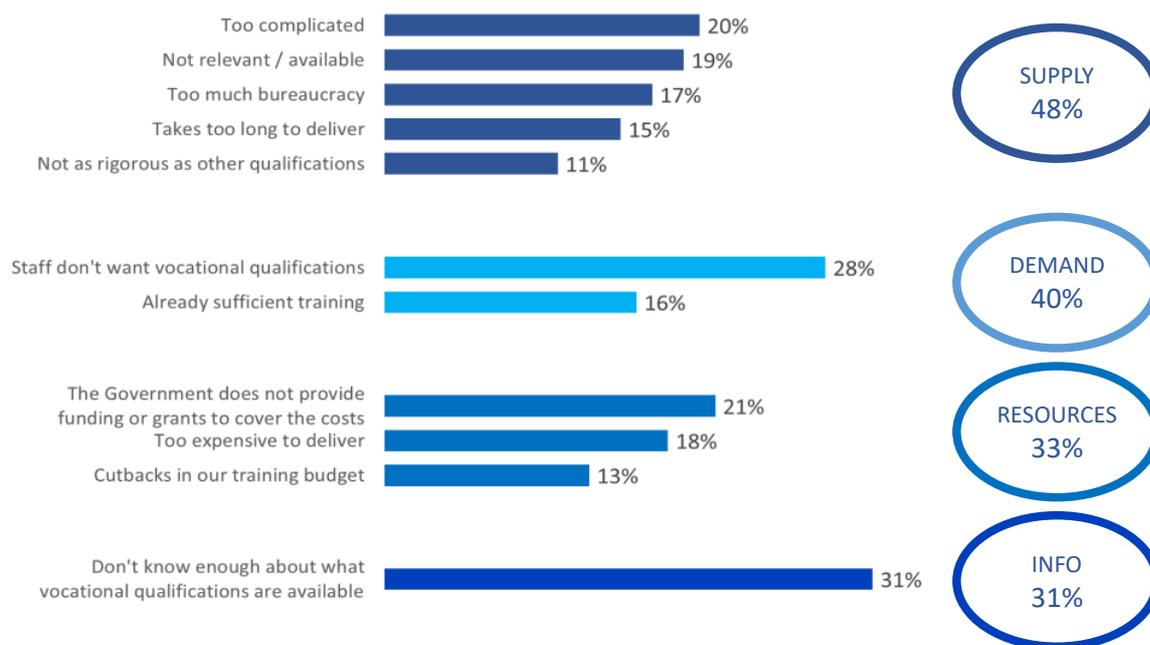
Among those who provide any form of training, 44% of employers provide some type of recognised vocational qualification.

44% of employers who provide training towards vocational qualifications are involved in the design of the delivery and / or content of the course. Of those who are not involved in the design of vocational qualifications, 18% said they would like to be.

Employers who arrange or fund training towards vocational qualifications have a positive view about the impact on their business: 85% agree or strongly agree that they lead to better business performance; and 84% agree or strongly agree that they can easily be adapted to business needs.

As shown in Figure 11, employers who do not arrange or fund training designed to lead to vocational qualifications most commonly cite reasons relating to the supply of qualifications (48% of all employers gave at least one supply reason). The most common single reasons given are that employers do not know enough about what qualifications are available (31%) and that their staff do not want vocational qualifications (28%).

Figure 11: Reasons for not arranging or funding vocational qualifications



Base population: 1,066

Apprenticeships

EPS questions on apprenticeships include employer engagement with apprenticeships, their reasons for offering (or not offering) apprenticeships, characteristics of the current offering, and the market potential for apprenticeships.

Foundation and Graduate Apprenticeships

Foundation and Graduate Apprenticeships (FAs and GAs) were introduced in Scotland in 2014 and 2017 respectively. 52% of all employers are aware of GAs and 1% had a current GA at the time of the survey; 43% are aware of FAs and 1% had an FA undertake a work placement with them.

Modern Apprenticeships

Modern Apprenticeships (MAs) in Scotland allow individuals to work whilst gaining an industry-recognised qualification, and allow employers to develop their workforce by training new staff and upskilling existing employees. Funding is available towards the cost of training for individuals aged 16 and over who undertake an MA – contribution rates depend on the type of apprenticeship, the

SCQF level of the apprenticeship, and the age of the apprentice. Funding for apprentices aged 25+ is only available in selected occupational frameworks in line with policy priorities. Enhanced funding contributions are available for disabled people and / or care experienced young people aged 20 – 29 who are undertaking MAs. 73% of all employers are aware of MAs.

Number of apprentices

16% of employers offered apprenticeships in 2019.

The apprentice numbers in this section include those doing either Modern or Graduate Apprenticeships in Scotland. The proportion of Scottish employers who apprenticeships has increased since 2016 (Table 6).

Table 6: Apprenticeships, 2014, 2016 and 2019

	2014	2016	2019
Proportion of employers offering apprenticeships	12%	15%	16%

Base population: 4,015 (2014), 4,009 (2016), 2,652 (2019)

Employers with 100+ employees have the largest proportion of establishments offering apprenticeships (56%); employers with 2 to 4 employees have the smallest proportion (8%), as shown in Figure 12.

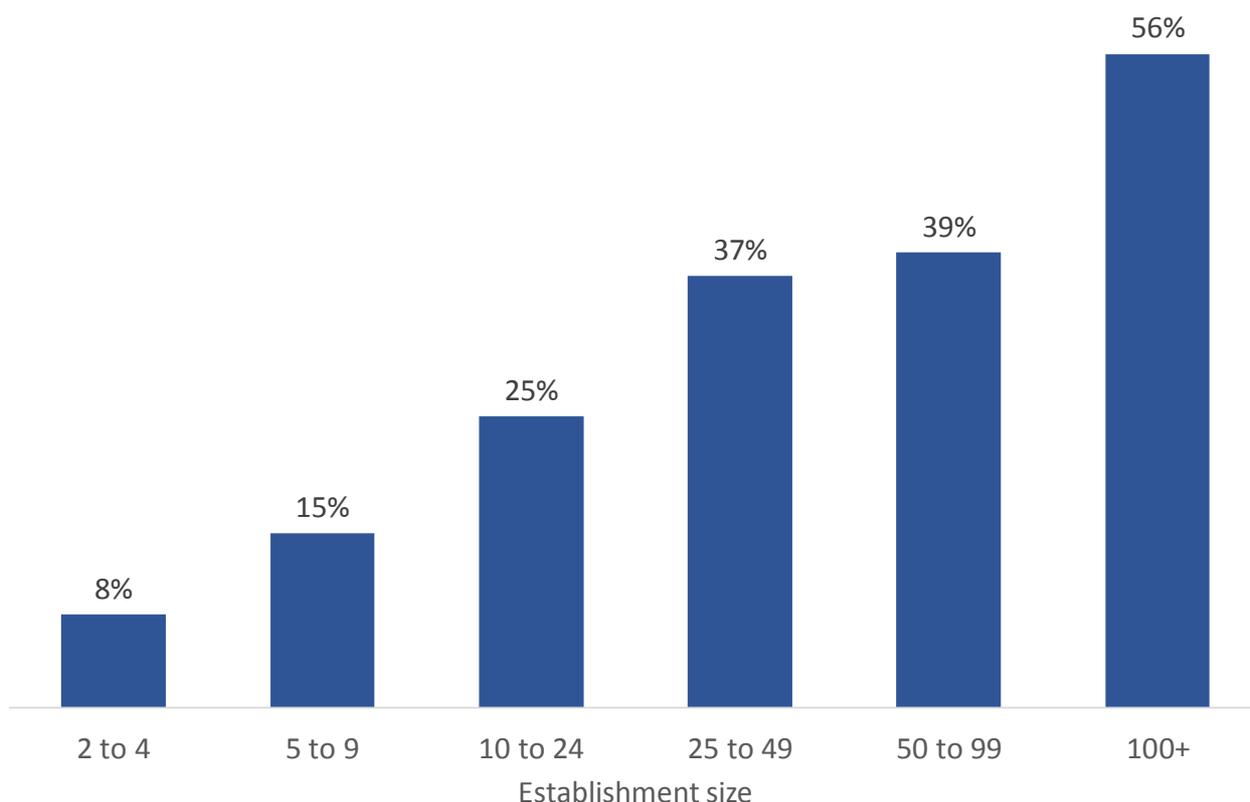
The sector with the largest proportion of establishments offering apprenticeships is 'Education' (32%); 'Primary sector and utilities' and 'Financial services' are the sectors with the smallest proportions (7%).

Most employers who employ an apprentice have only one (56% of such employers), and 12% have five or more. The average is 2.6 apprentices per participating employer.

22% of employers offering apprenticeships started doing so in the last three years. This is most commonly because they view apprenticeships as a good way to get skilled staff (30%) and to help bring young people into the company or industry (28%).

Employers who do not offer apprenticeships most commonly believe them not to be suitable for employers of their size (20% overall, higher among small employers); are not looking for staff (17%); feel their existing staff are fully skilled (14%); or believe that they are not offered for or relevant for their sector (13%).

Figure 12: Proportion of employers offering apprenticeships by establishment size, 2019



Base population: 2,652

Key characteristics of current apprenticeship offering

Apprenticeships are most commonly offered to young people under the age of 25.

The apprentice numbers in this section include those doing either Modern or Graduate Apprenticeships in Scotland.

Most employers who currently have or offer apprenticeships offer them to those aged under 25 (90%) and are less likely to offer them to people aged 25 and over.

Employers are also more likely to offer apprenticeships to new recruits than to existing employees. Table shows the groups of people to whom apprenticeships are made available.

Table 7: Groups to whom apprenticeships are offered

Apprenticeship group	Proportion of employers with apprenticeships who offer to this group
Age group	
Under 25 year olds	90%
Exclusively under 25 year olds	44%
25 year olds and older	47%
Exclusively 25 year olds and older	1%
Unknown	8%
Employment group	
Exclusively new recruits	43%
Exclusively existing employees	7%
New recruits or existing employees	46%
Unknown	3%

Base population: 624

Methodology

2019 is the first year that the EPS has been published as Official Statistics. EPS 2016 figures referred to in this publication were published in the research report by the UK Government Department for Education (DfE).

The population for the Scottish EPS 2019 is all 'establishments' in Scotland that had at least two people working there (including owners and working proprietors). This approach has been taken as it tends to be much easier for survey respondents to think in terms of the overall 'headcount' for their site – including both working proprietors and employees – than to separate out these two groups. This is particularly when the lines between the two are not clear-cut. For example, it is typically easier for employers to answer about recruitment channels for all managers/staff, rather than 'only those managers who are not working proprietors'.

The Scottish EPS 2019 also excluded the self-employed (with no employees). The question approach for this group would need to be somewhat different, since they are by definition not 'employers'. There is also an absence of robust population figures for this group, meaning robust and representative sampling and weighting is difficult to achieve.

Telephone interviews were conducted between February and March 2019.

Further detailed information is available in the accompanying technical report.

Background & policy context

The economic context in which the 2019 Scottish EPS was undertaken, and that in which previous runs of the UK-wide EPS were undertaken, is important in considering and analysing the results.

Equalities and diversity

The Scottish EPS 2019 has introduced new questions around equality and diversity relating to recruitment. All employers are subject to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 (and so should avoid unlawful discrimination) and public sector organisations continue to be subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), placing an obligation on them to positively promote equality across all protected characteristics.

Gender Pay Gap

Since the previous wave of EPS research, Gender Pay Gap legislation has come into force, and from 2018, employers with 250 or more employees have been required to publish information on their Gender Pay Gap.

Public sector employers must follow Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017, whilst all other private, voluntary and public sector employers must follow the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017. There are minor exceptions and differences between these two sets of regulations. Most Scottish public authorities are subject to specific gender pay gap reporting obligations, and are part of the list of public authorities in Schedule 19 of the Equality Act that are excluded from the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017. For further details, see: https://www.acas.org.uk/media/4764/Managing-gender-pay-reporting/pdf/Managing_gender_pay_reporting_07.02.19.pdf

Colleges

The regionalisation of colleges, which resulted in fewer, larger institutions is now largely embedded. There continues to be structural changes to the skills landscape, with increased focus on alignment and co-operation between the skills and enterprise agencies.

Work placements and work inspiration activities

Education Scotland's [Work Placement Standard](#), introduced in 2015, provides a definition of work placements, and outlines the ways in which work placements are distinct from 'work experience'.

Work placements are 'to enable young people to experience a relevant, challenging, enjoyable and appropriate learning experience within the contemporary workplace. A placement should help the young person to make informed decisions about their future career'. Whilst the term 'work experience' has become synonymous with a stand-alone, week-long experience of the workplace, work placements are to be personalised and flexible, with expectations set out before, during and after any placement and a greater focus on project based learning whilst in a workplace setting.

Young people are to experience the 'world of work' through a range of 'work inspiration' activities throughout their broad general education, for example site visits to employers and mock interviews. This is to lead to a more focused experience of work in the senior phase, in the form of work placements.

Developing the Young Workforce (DYW)

DYW is the Scottish Government's youth employment strategy, and has been in place since 2014. The Scottish EPS 2019 includes new questions focusing specifically on this policy area.

DYW aims to provide more young people with a labour market-relevant range of work-based learning opportunities, vocational qualifications, and a broader range of post-education employment opportunities – a key way this is pursued is by fostering partnerships between local industry and employers, and education providers. This

is part of longer term aims to establish parity of esteem between vocational and academic pathways, and to improve positive outcomes for all young people.

The DYW programme includes 21 employer-led Regional Groups, which work to foster employer-education partnerships. Another role of DYW Regional Groups is to encourage employers to work together.

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships in Scotland allow individuals to work whilst gaining an industry-recognised qualification, and allow employers to develop their workforce through training new staff and upskilling existing employees.

The Scottish Government has recently introduced two new types of Apprenticeship: Foundation Apprenticeships (FAs), and Graduate Apprenticeships (GAs).

Foundation Apprenticeships (FAs) were first introduced in 2014. They provide work-based learning opportunities for senior phase secondary school pupils. FAs are designed and developed with industry and the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) and are aligned to key sectors of the economy. They are based on existing Modern Apprenticeship frameworks and enable pupils to complete elements of a Modern Apprenticeship while still in school. FAs provide qualifications which are at the same level of learning as a Higher (SCQF level 6). During their FA, pupils attend a college or learning provider where they build up their knowledge and skills, which they then put into practice in a workplace with an employer.

Graduate Apprenticeships (GAs) were introduced in 2017. They provide a new route into degree-level study for individuals who are currently employed, or for individuals wanting to go straight into work. They are available to individuals aged 16 or over and combine a degree course (up to masters level) with paid employment. The GA programme is delivered through partnerships between employers, colleges and universities. GAs provide industry recognised, employer-specific qualifications in key sectors where there is a need for skilled employees. They have flexible entry and exit points that recognise an individual's previous qualifications and experience.

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are available in more detail through <https://statistics.gov.scot>

are available via an alternative route

may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors. Please contact FHEstatistics@gov.scot for further information.

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ISBN 978-1-83960-403-4 (web only)

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