

# APPRENTICESHIP POLLING 2018

In order to get a fuller picture of attitudes to apprenticeships, the Sutton Trust asked both young people and their teachers for their views on the topic. On behalf of the Trust, Ipsos MORI surveyed 2,381 young people aged 11-16 at secondary schools across England and Wales between February and May 2018. The National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) surveyed 1,246 teachers and school leaders across England, 583 of which were at secondary school level, in March 2018. The Trust previously surveyed both groups on this issue in 2014.

## Young People

Two thirds (64%) of young people in 2018 say they would be very or fairly interested in doing an apprenticeship after leaving school. This is an increase of nine percentage points over the last four years (55% in 2014), indicating growing openness among young people to the concept of apprenticeships.

However many young people felt that the apprenticeship route was not being discussed as an option at school. 41% indicated that a teacher had discussed the idea of an apprenticeship with them at school, up from just 31% in 2014. However, an equal number (40%) still indicated they had never had such a discussion. Young people in Year 11 were more likely to have discussed apprenticeships with their teachers, but this is often too late.

## Secondary teachers

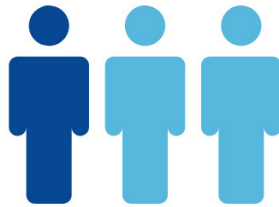
Teacher perceptions of apprenticeships were mixed, with just 26% of teachers agreeing that there are enough A level (level 3) apprenticeship opportunities for young people. Despite efforts by the government to create new apprenticeship opportunities in the meantime, this figure is unchanged from 2014. Just 3% thought that 'to a great extent' there are enough apprenticeship opportunities, with 22% answering 'not at all'.

Just 21% of teachers would 'always' or 'usually' advise a high performing student to opt for an apprenticeship over university. While this has also increased, up eight percentage points from 13% in 2014, almost two thirds of teachers (64%) would still rarely or never advise such an option. This reinforces young people's perspective on the lack of information given to them at school, and is indicative of one of the barriers to greater apprenticeship participation.

Of those teachers unlikely to advise an apprenticeship, 37% overall cited a lack of information, split evenly between a lack of information about apprenticeships in general, and details about specific available options. 14% cited negative views about apprenticeship quality. A majority (58%) mentioned reasons related to the perceived superiority of university, with 28% saying university offers better career prospects, 16% saying that a university education is expected of young people these days, and 14% citing their school's expectations of university attendance.

While these responses are indicative that there is some way to go before vocational routes are given the same status as higher education routes, the increased interest among young people in apprenticeships and increased willingness of teachers to recommend them show positive trends for the future. Substantial work remains to be done, however, in increasing awareness of specific options, improving the esteem of the apprenticeship route, and facilitating teachers to offer information on a wide range of educational options beyond higher education.

We asked young people and teachers what their views are on apprenticeships



**2 in 3**  
young people say they **would be interested** in doing an apprenticeship...



Despite this, **just 41%** say their teachers have discussed an apprenticeship with them at school.

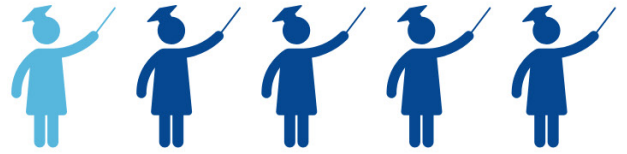


...an increase of **9 percentage points** since 2014.



**24%**

of teachers think there are enough apprenticeship opportunities at A-level...



...however **just 1 in 5** secondary teachers are willing to recommend one of these opportunities to their highest attaining pupils.



...giving reasons such as



**37%**

lack of information



**28%**

expectation that young people should go to university



**14%**

poor apprenticeship quality



**64%**  
of teachers would rarely or never advise an apprenticeship...

