



Youth Voice Census Report 2019

THE CAREERS &
ENTERPRISE
COMPANY



FOREWORD

When I started Youth Employment UK in 2012, there were 1 million young people not in education, employment or training, triggering a huge investment into youth employment policy, funding and initiatives. However many of these initiatives did not include the voices of young people in their design and I understood that to create effective change you must listen to those you are trying to help. Our work since then has been to champion the voices of young people, to assume nothing and to let them shape our work, services and policy positions.



Laura-Jane Rawlings

Our annual Youth Voice Census provides an excellent tool for that, and I hope that those who are working in service or policy delivery can use it to support their own work too. More than 3000 young people responded to the 2019 Youth Voice Census; young people who want to be heard and who have something to tell us.

It is encouraging to see that since the 2018 Youth Voice Census there have been some improvements to the careers information young people are receiving in schools including a raised awareness of apprenticeships and a rise in the quality level young people are rating their work experience placements. However, there are many areas of concern where there is still a lot of work to do. Those young people who were 15 when our work at Youth Employment UK began are now 22, and we know that many have experienced some real challenges in their transition to employment, if by now they have gained employment. It is imperative therefore that we all address the issues that we see in this report, otherwise today's 15 year olds, who now also struggle with increased mental health and well being issues, will find it equally difficult to make successful transitions, and the cycle will continue.

We know not all young people are being treated equally; they do not get the same access to services, work experience, or skill development, and the opportunities available to them depend on where they live and who they know. Sometimes the differences exist because of age and gender. If you are a young person with a disability, mental health issue, or if you are from an underrepresented group you will likely face further inequality. If you fall through the gaps and become NEET, you are likely to struggle in cycles of unemployment and low paid jobs.

We are all aware of the funding challenges that schools and colleges are facing, as well as the huge reduction in funding to support some of the most disadvantaged young people. Many of us are also concerned by the re-invention, duplication and waste of investment in initiatives that do not work and how some recent policies such as apprenticeships have very serious unintended consequences. It is not just government investment that is required, but also the investment of business and of us, as individuals, who all have something to offer to this younger generation.

There is more all of us can do; young people want someone to talk to, someone who will listen and get to know them and tailor support and advice accordingly. How many of us will make that commitment to be that someone? We have to keep chipping away at the national policies, funding issues and employment challenges, but we can also do something very local and very meaningful too as individuals.

What we will be doing to respond to what we have heard

Youth Employment UK will be using the information young people have provided to develop our services in this coming year.

As we continue to work to deliver our three core objectives:

1. To give young people a voice and empower them to be more prepared for the world of work

We will:

- Work with our Youth Ambassadors and Youth Network to review our policy positions on education, careers education, skills, vocational pathways and welfare support
- Invest in our online careers and skills resources so that there is a more tailored approach for the young people accessing our services
- Work with partners to see what more we can do on our platform to support young people with mental health and confidence issues.

2. To help organisations be better equipped to support young people and adopt Youth Friendly Principles

We will:

- Work with more employers to ensure that they are adopting the best youth employment principles
- Work with employers and young people to identify best practice in the transition from education into employment, and support challenges such as anxiety and mental health in their early career journey
- Work at a local level with SME's and public sector stakeholders to support the needs of young people in areas of low social mobility.

3. To ensure that government policy is geared towards the real needs of young people

We will:

- Grow our partnerships to ensure that there is a more joined up approach to the journey facing all young people
- Further our research of what works in youth employment
- Support MP's to understand what more they can do in their constituencies to support young people.

We look forward to building on these areas and sharing our work with you all.

Laura-Jane Rawlings, CEO, Youth Employment UK

FOREWORD



Claudia Harris

The Youth Voice Census 2019 is a fantastic way to hear from young people in their own voice and enables us to understand the impact of careers education provision. A policy agenda on careers education for young people should be informed by young people.

There is much to celebrate. The census highlights that careers education is improving. It shows that there is increased engagement with employers among secondary school pupils. 63% of 14-24 year olds recalled having had an employer visit in their school, and 52% were offered work experience, with 71% rating the experience positively (substantially higher than last year). It's encouraging that most young people agreed that work experience could help build useful skills (83%) and the experience to help get a job (81%).

Apprenticeship awareness is on the rise. Last year's census reported that 58% of young people have had apprenticeships discussed with them, while in 2019 this figure increased to 83%, with 27% of students having had apprenticeships discussed with them five times or more. More young people are meeting employers and having work experience at secondary school now than at university. 36% of young people know what social action is (up substantially from last year). 50% of young people are 'quite confident' or 'very confident' that they will move into meaningful work.

There are clear signs of progress but we still have work to do. The census presented an opportunity to receive feedback directly from young people about what could be improved in careers education. From this, we know we need to ensure young people have career pathways presented to them more effectively. This involves more conversations, more face-to-face interactions – and more opportunities for work experience.

One young person said "schools should give students some options which are tailored to their interests/aspirations and not just let students try to find work experience placements on their own." This is exactly what we are setting out to do. It is paramount that we ensure equality of access to information and opportunities. When this is strengthened, barriers to employment are reduced. Since the launch of the National Careers Strategy in 2017, The Careers & Enterprise Company has been working with schools and colleges across England to ensure that excellent careers education is the new normal.

This transformation is underway. More than 2,000 business volunteers are mobilised across the country – working directly with schools and colleges. They're helping them to develop careers provision on a strategic level and they're making the most of their business networks to ensure repeated employer encounters with young people. While we still have work to do, I feel very proud of the progress that has been made. This is proof, that for every person involved, and every pound invested in careers education – young people are becoming better prepared and inspired for the world of work.

I congratulate Youth Employment UK on bringing together these rich insights for us to act on.

Claudia Harris, Chief Executive of The Careers & Enterprise Company

FOREWORD

Recent events have shown us that younger people are certainly not shy in making their voice heard. Whether it's on Brexit or climate change, we know that decisions taken today will impact the future. Yet too often it can seem like their voices are missing from discussions on one of the most relevant topics of all - education.

Engaging this cohort at every stage of the process is vital to the success of our education system. That's why we are delighted to once again be sponsors of the Youth Voice Census with our partners at Youth Employment UK and The Careers & Enterprise Company. Young people today have grown up with, and are comfortable in using, technology. They have an awareness of new and emerging careers, and of the flexible set of skills they will need to succeed. Therefore, it is crucial that we engage with them as we develop the educational pathways of the future.

The 2019 census continues to highlight a lack of information and guidance for young people on both careers and educational pathways at 16. Young people need an education system offering the right choices and a mix of academic curriculum, a career-focussed route and more specialised technical options. Getting this right is crucial for preparing young people for the changing world we live in – helping them make progress in their lives, realising their potential, ambitions and aspirations.

I hope that all of us involved in shaping education in this country will continue to use the Youth Voice Census as an important barometer of opinion amongst this group. I am proud to support it once again.



Cindy Rampersaud

**Cindy Rampersaud, Senior Vice-President, BTEC & Apprenticeships
Pearson UK**

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INTRODUCTION

Our Youth Voice Census Report 2019 follows the success and interest in our pilot report last year. We have expanded our reach to capture the experiences and views of 3,008 14 - 24 year olds, and are delighted to have doubled our sample size this year. The Census explores what young people are experiencing in education, training, employment and support services and how they are feeling about their future.

Our extensive group of partners supported the build of the pilot census, and with feedback from young people we have made small adjustments to this year's survey to improve the experience of participants as well as to support our tracking responses year on year.

As part of this year's Youth Voice Census we also worked with a group of young people representing our complete age range to get their insight into some of the key findings from the data including gender, apprenticeship awareness and mental health. You will read some of their feedback in this report. In general the group reinforced all the issues; that there are still too many inconsistencies in the information offered to young people and the support that is available.

We believe that all young people should get access to the resources and support they need to progress to the next stage of their journey. This is why the annual Youth Voice Census is such an important initiative. It allows us to identify where things are improving, where the tensions still are and helps us all to understand what more we should all be doing to better support young people as they transition from education into employment.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Although the government celebrate the current record levels of employment in the UK, young people are still three times more likely than any other group to be unemployed. There are almost 800,000 young people aged 16 to 24 who are NEET (not in Education, Employment or Training) and many report multiple and complex barriers to employment.

Young people who face periods of inactivity and unemployment also find themselves further disadvantaged in later life as they struggle to make up the difference from their early social and economic experiences. In addition to the social and economic disadvantage, youth unemployment also has a scarring impact on the mental health and wellbeing of those affected.

Underemployment and volatile employment are also challenges for young people; those young people who are underemployed are unlikely to be fulfilling their potential and are often taking up jobs that would benefit young people with fewer qualifications. Volatile employment is usually insecure and low paid, leaving young people unable to progress or have the means to live independently.

Compounding these challenges is the difficulty in identifying those young people who become long-term NEET or who are hidden NEETS as they miss out on accessing the support they need the most.

In the 2019 Census young people have identified their biggest barriers to employment as:

- **Mental health**
- **Location and travel**
- **Experience**
- **Either having or understanding the right skills**
- **Competition and there being enough jobs**

There is also a very real sense from young people that they want a job that really suits their talents. Any dream will not do for the young people who responded to our 2019 Youth Voice Census. In an age of personalisation, young people are searching for something that will be a genuinely good fit for them. The challenge? They need the support to help them find that. We are seeing some improvement in the information and choices offered to young people, but they still feel unsupported in navigating what this all means for them as individuals.

Most striking in this survey, is to see as we did in 2018, that young women's expectations of the workplace are not being set or met. They are experiencing the highest number of academic interventions, but fewer chances to explore the world of work, and are most often required to find work experience placements themselves. This can lead to them being less positive about finding work, and less fulfilled when they reach the workplace.

Youth Employment UK will be developing it's own services based on the findings from this years census. We hope to support our partners, employer community and network of policy makers to better understand where young people are today and how we can support them.

KEY FINDINGS

3,008 young people aged 14-24 responded to the 2019 Youth Voice Census.

64% female, **33%** male

56% aged 14-16, **33%** aged 17-19, **8%** aged 20+

45% of all respondents were educated to GCSE level

14% had additional needs.

1 Gender matters

Gender has an effect on a young person's level of engagement with school and employment. Gender also plays a part in determining which choices are offered to a young person who is considering their next steps while in education.

This year's findings highlight that the discussion of options and the suggestion of opportunities vary according to a young person's gender.

GENDER-SKEWED SUPPORT FOR NEXT STEPS WHILE IN EDUCATION

We asked young people to highlight which careers interactions they had received whilst in education.

Young women in school:

- Are more likely to have had university (55%) and sixth form (64%) discussed with them five times or more.
- Are less likely to be informed about traineeships (79% have never been spoken to about traineeships).

Not only do young women receive less information about all of their choices, they are also less likely to receive information on the support services they may need (82% of young women had never had Jobcentre Plus provision discussed with them).

Gender



64% Girls



33% Boys

3% Other/prefer not to say

Age groups

14 to 16: 56%

17 to 19: 33%

20+ : 8%

Young men in school are more likely to have had the following discussed with them more than once:

- Traineeships
- Starting a business
- Accessing Jobcentre Plus provision
- Getting a job.

Young women in college are:

- More likely to visit a university (57%), compared to 37% of young men

Young men in college are:

- More likely to have visited an employer site (23%).
- More likely to have attended CV workshops and careers fairs.

At university young women are half as likely to ever have received any careers-based interactions than young men.

GENDER BIASED CAREERS EDUCATION IN SECONDARY SCHOOL

Girls are more likely to:

Receive mentoring

Undertake CV workshops

Visit universities

Boys are more likely to:

Visit employers

Visit colleges

Undertake enterprise activities

IT IMPACTS 'WHAT'S NEXT'

In college young men are more likely (16% vs 7% of young women) to indicate they have undertaken or plan to undertake an apprenticeship, or will be getting a job (19% vs 8% of young women).

69% of young women indicate that they are planning to go or have gone to university after sixth form or college, compared to 47% of young men.

2 Confidence and happiness

Despite getting fewer interventions whilst in education, young women are typically more engaged and positive about the services they are offered. In questions where we ask students to rate their time in education, young women are more likely than young men to rate their time as positive. Young women also respond more favourably when asked how useful services were for them, with young men more likely to rate interactions and services as 'poor' or 'very poor'.

However, this positivity wanes as young women consider entering work. Their confidence in being able to find work is far lower than that of young men.

Young women in employment are also less likely to be happy and fulfilled in their current role than young men.



3 Apprenticeships awareness on the rise

– but students still twice as likely to be informed about the university route

Apprenticeships are increasingly being presented to young people as an option; our 2018 Youth Voice Census reported that 58% of young people have had apprenticeships discussed with them, while in 2019 this figure has increased to 83%, with 27% of students having had apprenticeships discussed with them five times or more.

51% of students have had going to university discussed with them five times or more indicating that the university route is discussed more often with nearly twice as many students as the apprenticeship route. Joining a sixth form had been discussed five times or more with 55% of respondents and going to college discussed five times or more with 46% of students.



HOW EFFECTIVE IS INFORMATION ABOUT APPRENTICESHIPS?

Of those young people currently in college or sixth form, 6% of 16 year olds and 9% of 17 year olds are planning an apprenticeship as their next step. Young people aged 19 or over, are more likely to indicate that an apprenticeship is their next move of choice, with 23% of 19 year olds and 31% of 22 year olds suggesting this is the route they are planning to choose, or have already chosen.

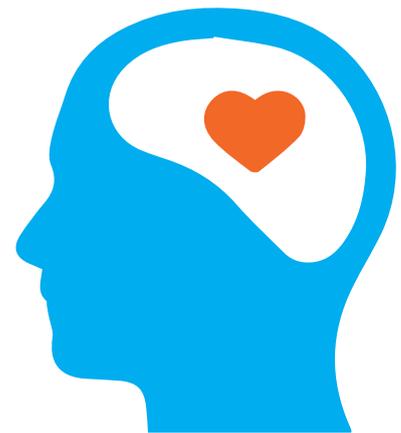
There is some indication that we still have some way to go before there is a parity in choices offered to all young people.

- **80%** of young people have never had accessing Jobcentre Plus provision discussed with them
- **77%** of young people have never been spoken to about a traineeship
- **61%** have never had starting their own business discussed with them

Support services and alternative pathways such as starting up businesses were rarely discussed.

4 Confidence and wellbeing

- **50%** of young people are 'quite confident' or 'very confident' that they will move into meaningful work
- **31%** think employers are 'supportive' or 'very supportive' of hiring young people
- **21%** of young people struggle with their wellbeing at work



YOUNG PEOPLE PERCEIVE THEIR BIGGEST BARRIERS TO ENTERING WORK TO BE:

- **Mental health issues**
- **Location/travel**
- **Not enough jobs**
- **Lack of experience**

This year there is a significant increase in the number of young people telling us, in their own words, that they think there are not going to be enough jobs to go round. There is a strong feeling that jobs are disappearing, and they are unsure what jobs there will be to choose from.

“I think mental health at the moment is a massive topic. Social media can have a negative effect on young people – they’re looking up to different people on social media which puts pressure on themselves to be what they should be, not what they can be.”

STEVIE

5 One to one support services

We asked young people to tell us how they could be better supported into their next step at each stage of their education and training. For every age group – at every stage – the ask is for personal support to help them navigate their options.

There is a recognition among young people that although they need information, they also insist that they would really benefit from someone being on hand to help them navigate this information and what the information means to someone with their particular skills and interests.



METHODOLOGY

We recognise that this Youth Voice Census is not statistically representative of every young person in the UK. However, it gives us a good indication of how thousands of young people feel on issues surrounding employability, education and careers.

The Youth Voice Census has received support from the Careers and Enterprise Company and has been widely shared across their network, as well as through a number of other key partners including the National Citizen Service.

The Youth Voice Census has been devised to assimilate information on the experiences of young people in school, college, university, and in and out of work. It has set out to determine how much careers education, support and work experience they receive and how they are feeling about skills, careers and their future.

Information and insight on the 2018 pilot survey build was fed into by young people, AELP, the Department for Education, the Careers and Enterprise Company, Collab Group, The Edge Foundation, Education and Employers, Impetus PEF, NYA, SLQ, WorldSkills UK and Dr Emily Rainsford from Newcastle University.

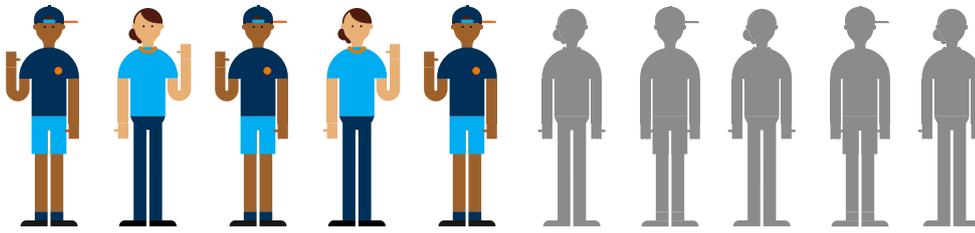
This year we have adapted the survey following feedback from young people who participated last year. Our improvements have included making the survey marginally shorter and some questions have also been adapted to offer a better experience for young people. Therefore not all questions will be directly comparable to last year's pilot survey.

The survey has been designed to engage 14-24 year olds, asking all young people the same set of questions around careers education and work experience in school, employability skills and social action, as well as surfacing additional questions for young people depending on their journey to date. Survey subsections investigate college and sixth form, university, traineeships, apprenticeships, those in work, those who are currently or have spent time NEET (not in education, employment or training), and those who have set up their own business.

We recognise the challenges of using surveys as a research method. There is a risk of fatigue when filling in long surveys such as this, as well as when questions appear repetitive as was necessary for this survey. We are therefore particularly encouraged to note the number of young people who added voluntary comments and suggestions where free-text allowed, suggesting a high level of engagement with the issues explored.

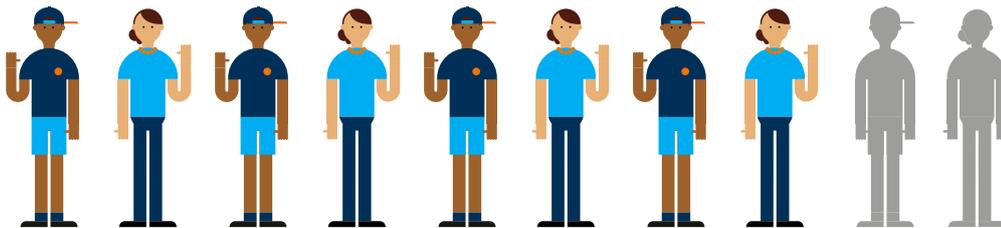
We also recognise that surveys in themselves are rarely sufficient for acquiring a deep understanding of an issue or challenge, and we have therefore supplemented the quantitative survey data with qualitative focus groups where required.

WORK EXPERIENCE IN SCHOOL



52%

of young people were offered work experience in secondary school (up from 51% in 2018)



82%

of young people offered work experience have taken it up



71%

of young people view their work experience as 'good' or 'excellent' (up from 64% in 2018)

Just over half of respondents have been offered work experience at school, with 54% of young women and 49% of young men being offered the opportunity.

82% of those offered work experience have undertaken it, with young boys more likely not to take it up (16% of young men vs 11% of young women).

Young women are more likely to find placements themselves, with young men more likely to have the school find placements for them.

We asked all respondents, not just those who had undertaken work experience, how much they agree with a number of statements relating to work experience.

RESPONDENTS 'AGREE' OR 'STRONGLY AGREE' THAT WORK EXPERIENCE HELPS TO...

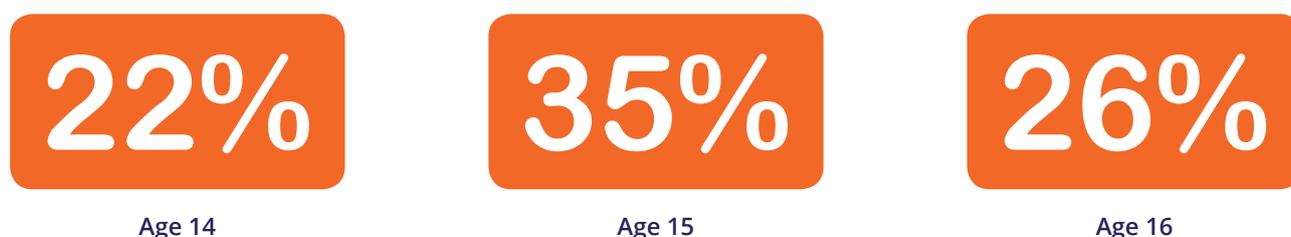


The value of work experience is not lost on respondents. It is worth noting that, although there is little gender disparity in the responses to the above statements, there is a slightly higher chance of young men 'strongly disagreeing' or 'disagreeing' with statements.

Those aged 14 and 22 years old are most likely to strongly disagree with every statement.

Young women are statistically more likely to 'strongly disagree' that work experience helps them build networks and will give them the experience that will help them to get a job.

AT WHAT AGE SHOULD WORK EXPERIENCE START IN SCHOOL?



Young women are more likely to think work experience should be offered earlier, particularly around the age of 15. Young men are more likely to think work experience should start at 16.

Having a job in school

- 32% of young people have found a job or planned to find a job whilst in secondary school.
- 19% have unsuccessfully tried to find a role, with no roles being suitable.
- 62% of 21 year olds had a job whilst in secondary school, in comparison to 32% of 16 year olds and 40% of 18 year olds.

The older the respondent in the 14-24 age range, the more likely they are to have had a job whilst in secondary school.

What do young people want?

- More options
- Access to a number of sectors
- The ability to be able to work in multiple areas of a business
- Work experience to take place more regularly
- The opportunity to do more 'real tasks'

ARE THERE ANY WAYS THAT WORK EXPERIENCE COULD BE IMPROVED IN SCHOOLS?

“Schools should give students some options which are tailored to their interests/aspirations and not just let students try to find work experience placements on their own.”

“They should make work experience easier to go on and less of an event – make it more common and often.”

“You should have more work experience options suited to you, rather than just picking from a pre-selected list.”

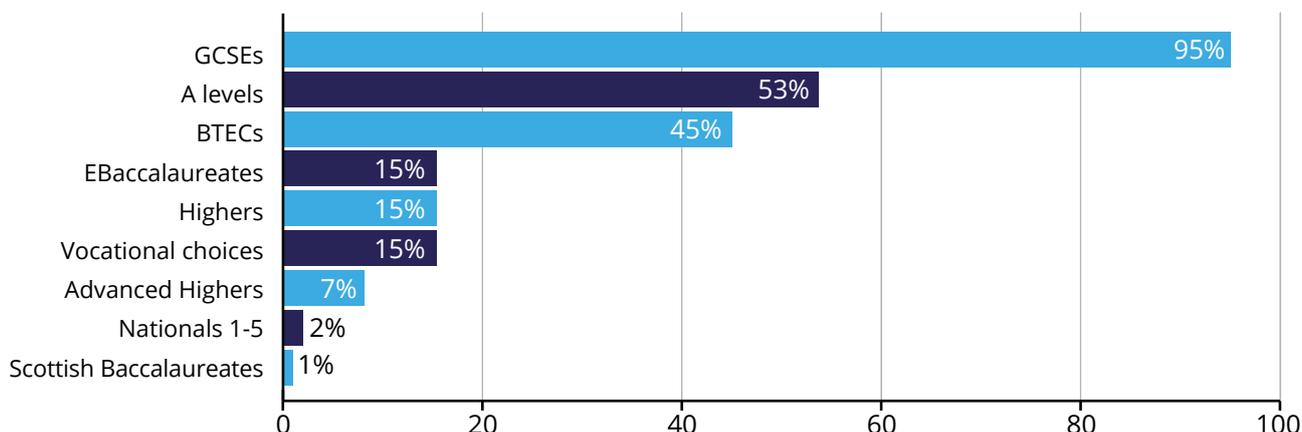
“We should have a wider range of options and contact networks for work experience.”

CHOICES, CAREERS & EMPLOYABILITY SUPPORT

We wanted to understand from young people what choices were offered and discussed with them whilst in secondary school, as well as what careers and employability information they were receiving.

Choices

In years 9 and 10 young people were spoken to about:



The percentage of young people being told about GCSEs, A levels, BTECs and vocational courses are up from last year. 16 and 17 year olds are most likely have been informed of BTECs (49%) and vocational courses (18%). A small cluster of aged 20+ respondents also indicate that vocational choices have been discussed with them.

The data suggests that information about choices might not be offered to young people until they are 16 years old. Respondents aged 14 and 15 are most likely to have heard about GCSEs with significantly fewer highlighting that they have been told about all other options. Only 40% of 14 year olds have been spoken to about A levels, and only 8% have been informed about vocational choices.

For 15 year olds the numbers only slightly improve – 46% have been spoken to about A levels and 12% about vocational choices.

66% of young people think that the learning style offered at their school suits them. The 44% who do not feel the learning style at their school suits them, suggest the learning styles are too academic and they feel unable to choose what they want.

Influencers of student choices

WHO INFLUENCES YOUNG PEOPLE THE MOST WHEN THEY ARE CHOOSING WHAT TO STUDY?

47%

select their own choices

22%

are influenced by their career aspirations

19%

are influenced by parents or carers

Those aged 20+ are more likely to have been influenced by their parents and teachers.

Career aspirations are the biggest factor for 16 and 17 year olds.

MAKING CHOICES AT SCHOOL - WHAT DO YOUNG PEOPLE WANT?

How do young people think their school should help them progress? In the 2019 Youth Voice Census, their consistent feedback is that schools should recognise different learning styles and explore more options than just university.

Many young people indicate that personalised support would have helped them, in particular in getting more support with 'real things'.

WHICH PRACTICAL AREAS DO YOUNG PEOPLE WANT SPECIFIC SUPPORT WITH WHILE IN SCHOOL?

- More information on how to apply for work
- More information on what studying A levels will be like
- Support with choosing subjects
- Support with picking jobs that will suit them



“I should have been given more information about external options.”

“School wasn’t very personal. The teachers didn’t know me well enough to help and suggest ways to help me progress.”

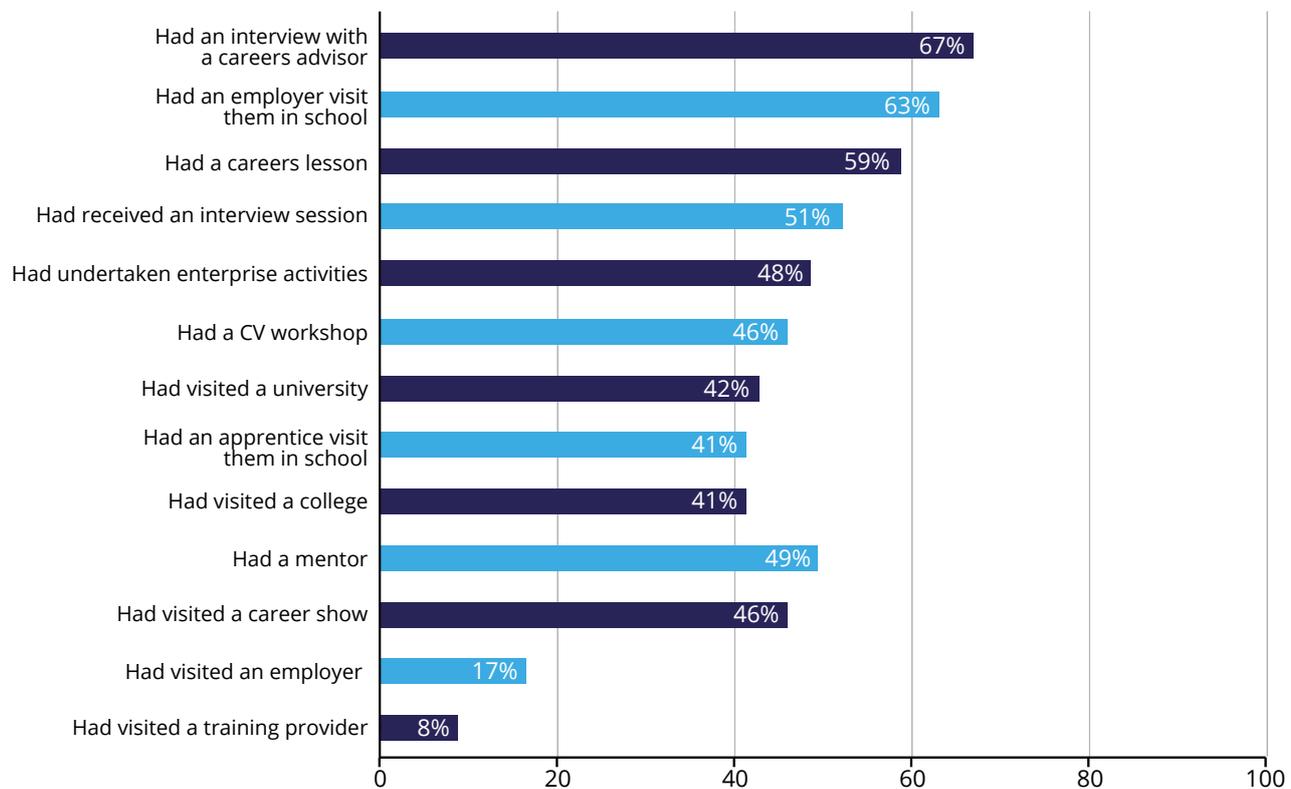
“They should explain what we need to do after GCSEs and offer help when we ask for it.”

“They could have talked more in depth of opportunities such as apprenticeships or other opportunities, that would benefit your CV and what career you want to do instead of focusing primarily on going to college.”

“They should offer more options to students about what they could do after school or college other than going to university and they could do more to promote trainee or apprenticeship programmes and what careers they could lead to.”

CAREERS EDUCATION

We asked young people if they had received any of the following in secondary school:



Young women are more likely to have had a mentor, and to have had one instance of a CV workshop and university visit. Young men are more likely to have visited colleges, visited employer sites, been to career shows, and have undertaken enterprise activities.

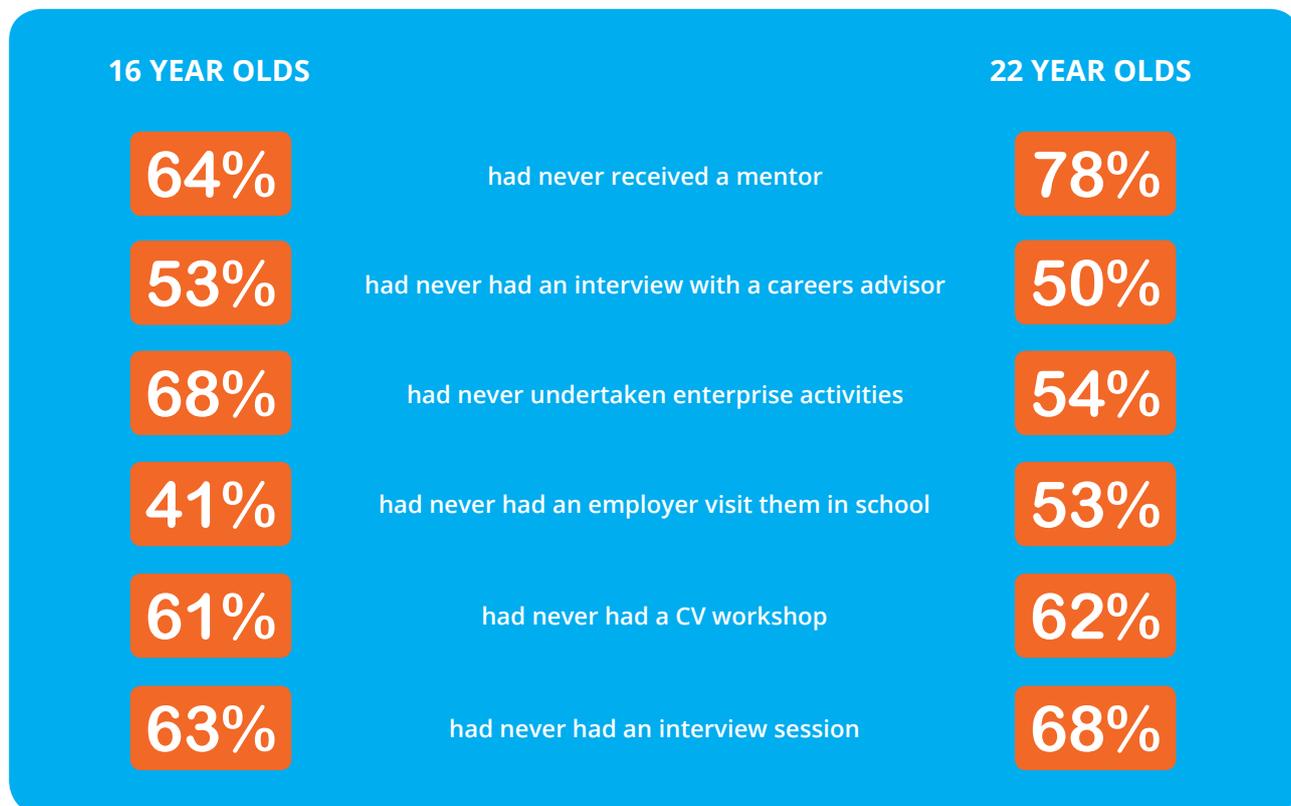
Age is a factor when it comes to careers education. Those aged 14 and 22 are most likely never to have received any of these interactions, with 15 year olds less likely to have had a mentor, an interview with a careers advisor, an employer visit them in school or visits to careers shows.

“I was not allowed to go to the apprenticeships talks at my school. By the time I was old enough to know what I wanted to do I was already going to university. I also believe that by not making it a priority for employers, they are not helping young people to be aware of the opportunities open to them. We need to work on breaking the stigma that apprenticeships are for people who can't get into university.”

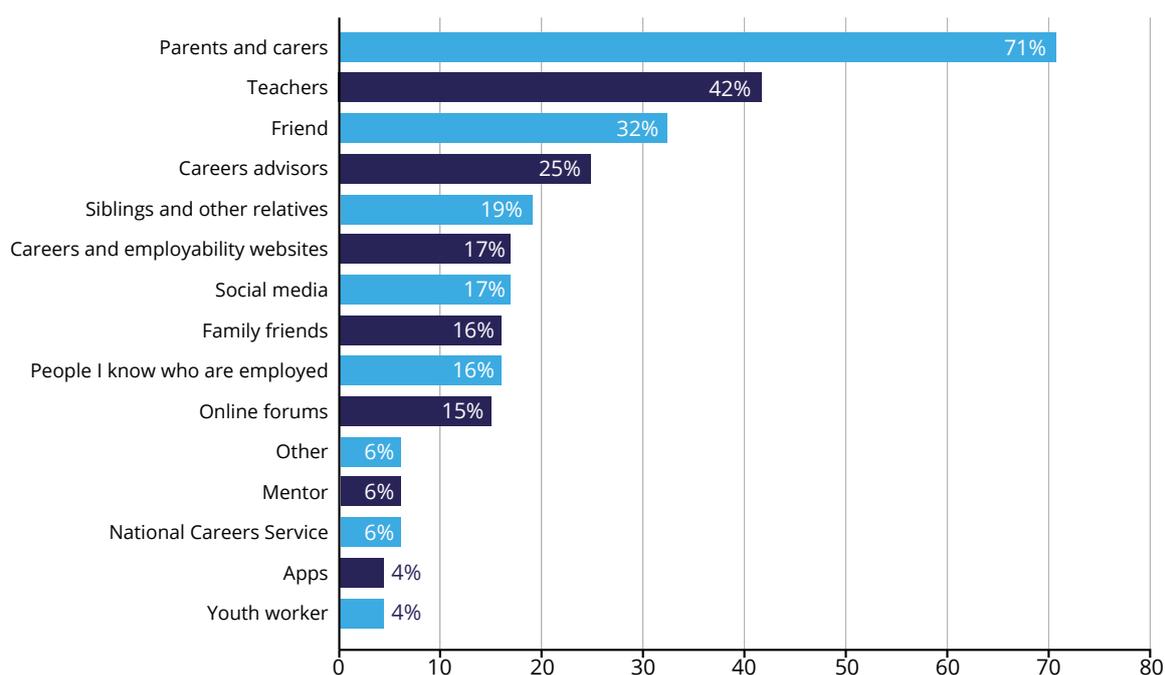
VICTORIA



SPOTLIGHT ON 16 AND 22 YEAR OLDS



WHO DO YOU GO TO FOR EMPLOYABILITY SUPPORT?



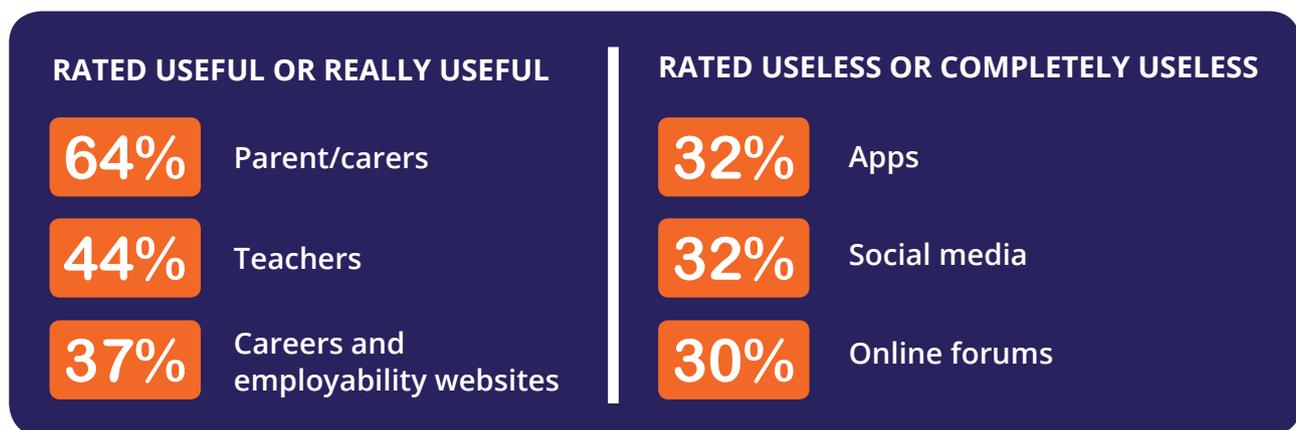
Young men are more likely to ask their parents or carers. Young women are more likely to use social media and careers and employability websites.

The most popular sources of advice for all age groups are parents and carers, with 14 and 15 year olds the most likely to seek advice from them. 46% of 16 year olds and 49% of 17 year olds would seek support from teachers, making them the most likely age groups to do so.

16, 17 and 18 year olds are most likely to seek support from employability websites, with only 9% of 14 year olds and 11% of 15 year olds saying they would do the same.

18, 19 and 20 year olds are most likely to use the National Careers Service website, with 2% of 14 year olds, 3% of 15 year olds and 5% of 16 year olds saying they would use it.

HOW USEFUL HAVE YOU FOUND THE FOLLOWING WHEN LOOKING FOR CAREERS SUPPORT?

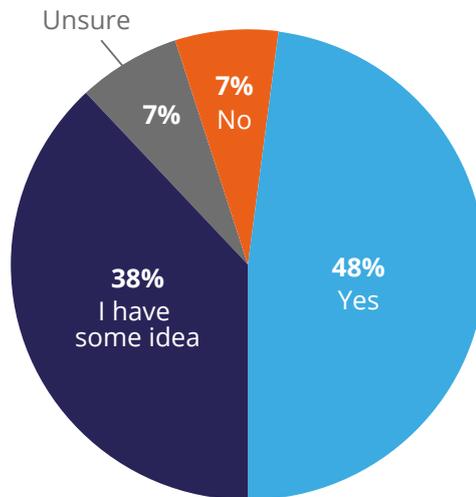


Young men tend to be harsher markers than young women. They are more likely to class apps, friends, siblings, people they know who are employed, careers and employability websites, online forums, social media as 'completely useless'. Young men are more likely to rate careers advisors and youth workers as 'useful' or 'extremely useful'.

Young women are more likely to rate careers and employability websites as useful or 'extremely useful'.

- 20 and 22 year olds are most likely to rate parents or careers advisors as 'extremely useful'.
- 16 to 18 year olds are more likely to say they find careers and employability websites 'useful'.
- 14 and 15 year olds are more likely to say their teachers are 'useless' when it comes to seeking careers support.
- 14 to 16 year olds are most likely to find the National Careers Service 'extremely useless' or 'useless' 19 and 20 year olds are most likely to find it 'useful' or extremely useful'.

DO YOU THINK YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT SKILLS EMPLOYERS ARE LOOKING FOR?



Young men are more likely to answer yes. (54%, compared to 45% of young women).

Age is a factor when it comes to understanding what skills employers are looking for. The older you are, the more likely you are to answer 'yes'. 17 and 22 year olds are the most likely to think they know which skills employers are looking for.

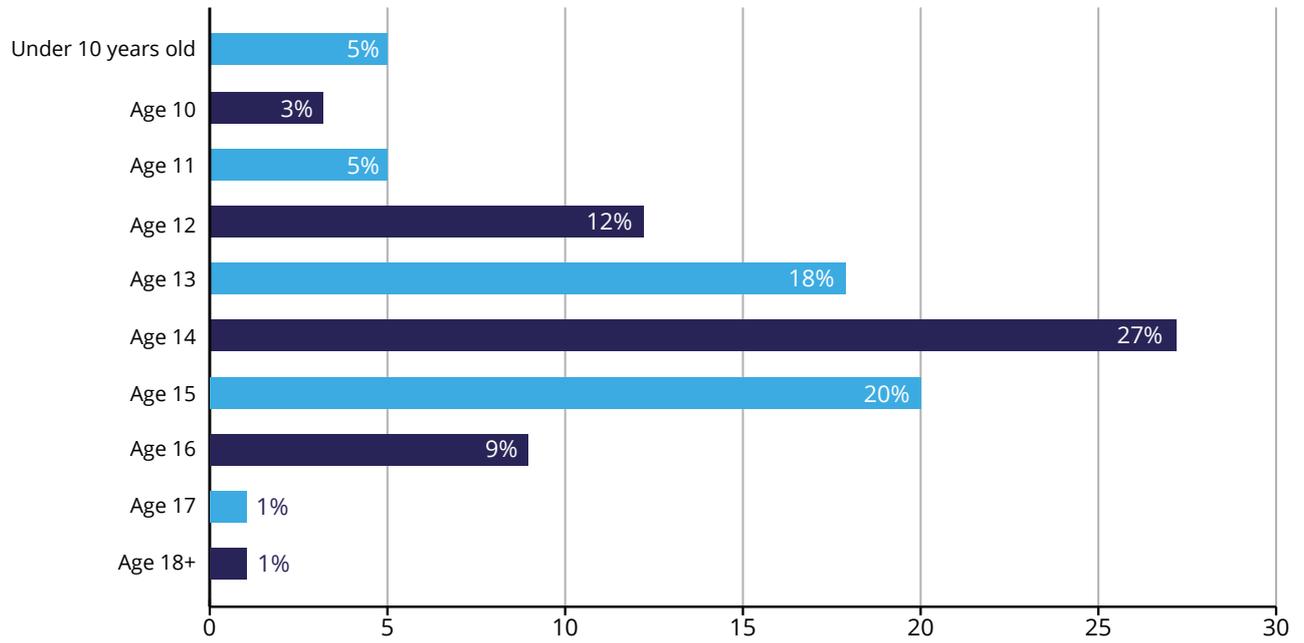
WHO DO YOU THINK IS RESPONSIBLE FOR HELPING YOU TO GROW YOUR EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS?



There is little distinction by gender in the responses.

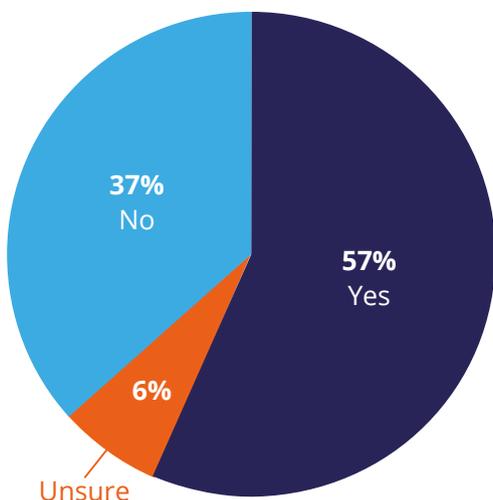
Different age groups had similar responses for most options, but age does play a part for Government services in particular. Our older age groups were more likely to consider these services responsible. 45% of 23 year olds and 38% of 24 year olds think the responsibility for skills education lies with the National Careers Service. 45% of 21 year olds and 35% of 23 year olds think the responsibility lies with Jobcentre Plus.

AT WHAT AGE SHOULD YOUNG PEOPLE TO START TO LEARN ABOUT EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS?

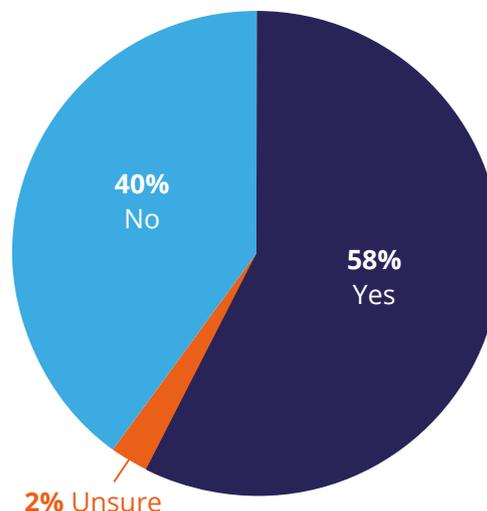


CVs & EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

DO YOU HAVE A CV?



HAVE YOU EVER APPLIED FOR A JOB?



60% of young women have a CV, compared to 51% of young men.

Young men who have undertaken an interview are more likely to say they felt prepared for it (44% vs 37%) or very prepared for it (22% vs 17%) when compared with young women who had similar levels of interview experience.

WHICH OF THESE SOURCES WOULD YOU USE TO FIND A JOB?

SOURCE	WOULD NOT ASK	USELESS	SLIGHTLY USEFUL	VERY USEFUL	N/A
Online job boards	16%	6%	36%	21%	21%
Personal networks	16%	8%	34%	17%	25%
Social media	21%	12%	33%	12%	21%
Newspapers	27%	17%	21%	4%	30%
Employer's own website	9%	6%	39%	33%	14%
Find an apprenticeship	19%	8%	27%	15%	32%
LinkedIn	27%	9%	17%	7%	40%

Young men are less likely to use online job boards, social media and newspapers to help them find a job. Young men are more likely to rate employers' own websites as 'useless' while 20% rate "Find an Apprenticeship" as 'very useful' (in comparison to 12% of young women).

Young women are more likely to rate online job boards and employers' own websites as 'very useful'. They are also more likely to say that they 'would not use' "Find an Apprenticeship" (20% vs 16%). In fact, 35% of young women think that "Find an Apprenticeship" is not applicable to them (compared to 20% of young men).

Young people were given the option to suggest other ways they would look for work. All young people (of both genders) who answered this question indicated that they would talk to people they know in business and drop their CV to businesses in the local area.

17 to 19 year olds are most likely to rate 'personal networks', 'online job boards' and 'employer's own website' as 'very useful'. 14, 19 and 20 year olds are most likely to find 'Find an Apprenticeship' very useful. 14 to 16 year olds are most likely to rate 'Newspapers' as 'slightly useful'.

“There are so many resources online it’s hard to decide which is best and most useful. Often reading huge chunks of writing can become tedious so many a short video will be helpful.”

SHEIDELLE

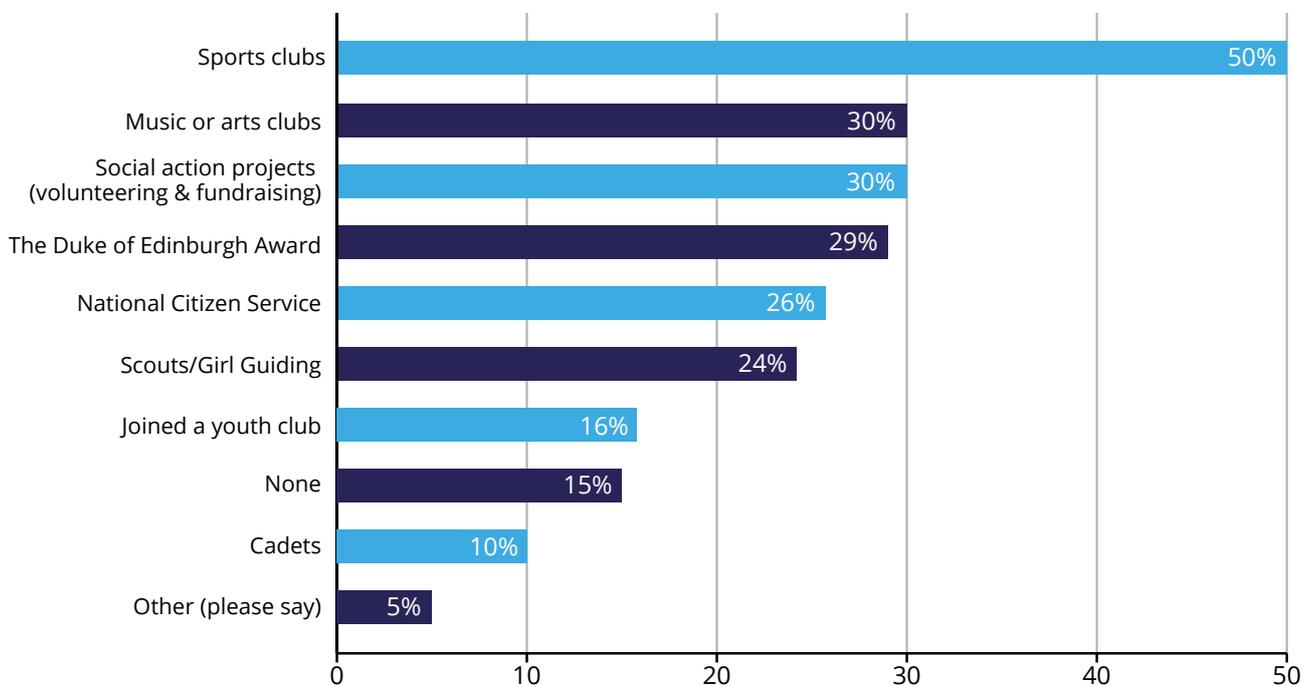


SOCIAL ACTION, VOLUNTEERING & EXTRA-CURRICULAR

36% of young people know what social action is (up 8% from last year)

70% of young women have undertaken social action, compared to **55%** of young men

Young people at school, college or sixth form take part in:



Young women are more likely to know what social action is and to have undertaken it. Young women are also more likely to have taken part in music or arts clubs, NCS, Scouts/girl guiding.

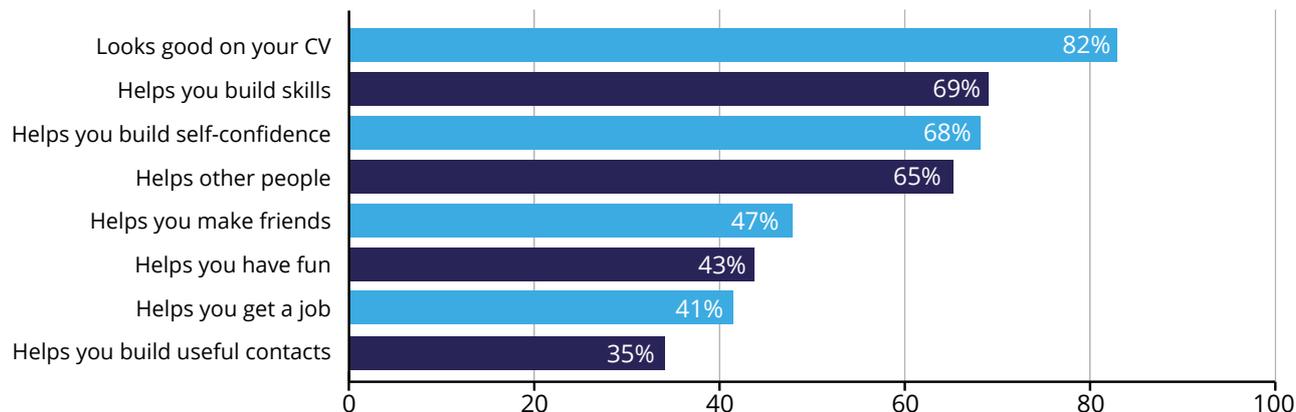
Young men are more likely to have taken part in a sports club, the DofE Award, cadets and to have joined a youth club.

41% of young people have undertaken social action outside of school, college or sixth form (down from 56% in 2018).

29% of young people have not undertaken any social action, and 30% are unsure.

41% of respondents say that social action is something they would consider doing. 52% of those who would consider it are young women, and 28% are young men.

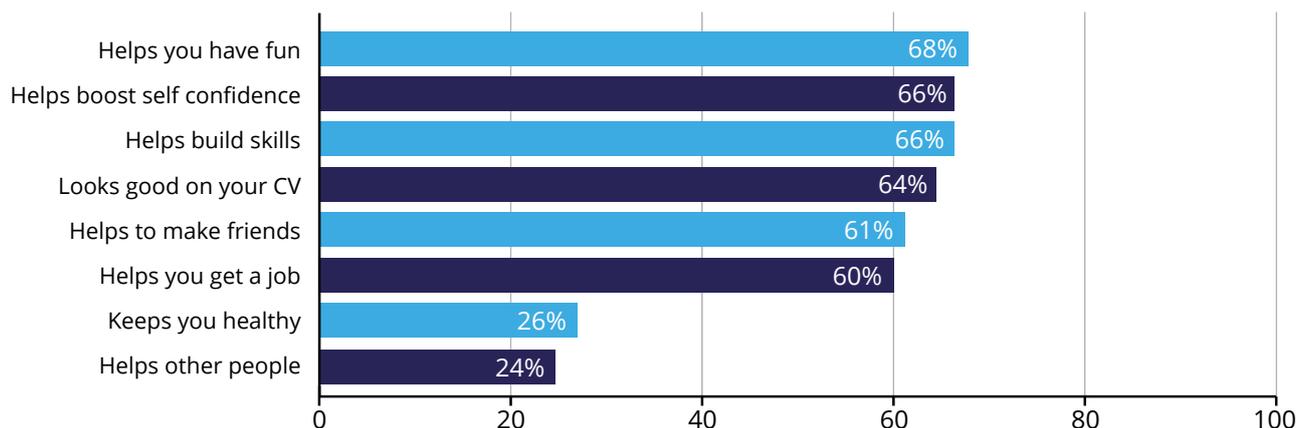
WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE BIGGEST BENEFITS TO SOCIAL ACTION?



Young men are more likely to suggest that the biggest benefit to social action is looking good on your CV (79%) and they are less likely to consider the biggest benefit being to help you build your self confidence.

Young women are more likely to suggest the benefits are to help you build skills, to help others and to help you build self confidence.

WHAT ARE THE BEST THINGS ABOUT DOING EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND HOBBIES (E.G. SPORTS CLUB, CADETS, GYM, DANCE CLASSES, CRAFTING)?



We asked young people how important they thought it was that they undertake social action, volunteering and extracurricular activities.

Young women are more likely (37%) to think that it's 'very important', in comparison to young men (27%).

Young men are more likely to think it's 'not important' or 'slightly important'.



WHAT MORE COULD BE DONE TO ENCOURAGE YOU TO UNDERTAKE SOCIAL ACTION?

“I feel social action opportunities need to be more widely advertised and encouraged.”

“Offer more sports as part of social action.”

“Make social action mandatory.”

“Make social action cheap or free.”

“Integrate clubs with charity projects. For example, people could raise money in school through sports teams that the community could watch. Offer more volunteering opportunities within the community and school. Give lectures from charity agencies and mini workshops for the younger years.”

CONFIDENCE & BARRIERS

We asked all respondents a series of questions designed to explore their level of confidence in transitioning into work and what barriers they might face. In this section, barriers are referenced in terms of what might prevent a young person from progressing. For those in work or who have spent time NEET (not in education, employment or training) we asked this question with more specific outcomes which we will explore later.

31%

think employers are 'supportive' or 'very supportive' of hiring young people

29%

think employers are 'very unsupportive' or 'unsupportive' of hiring young people

50%

are 'quite confident' or 'very confident' that they will move into meaningful employment

Young women are more likely to think that employers are 'unsupportive' of hiring young people (25% vs 16% of young men). Young men are more likely to think that employers are 'very supportive' of hiring young people (11% vs 3% of young women).

Young women are more likely to say they are 'not very confident' (13% vs 8% of young men) whilst young men are more likely to be 'quite confident' (37% vs 32% of young women) or 'very confident' (22% vs 14% of young women) that they will move in to meaningful employment.

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOUR BIGGEST BARRIERS ARE TO FINDING A JOB?

- Mental health
- Location and travel
- Experience
- Either having or understanding the right skills
- Competition and there being enough jobs

Additional needs

14% of respondents in the 2019 Youth Voice Census have indicated that they have an additional need. 16% of male respondents indicated they had an additional need compared to 12% of female respondents.

Young men indicate they are significantly less likely to have a social, emotional or mental health problem but are more likely to have autism or a multi-sensory impairment. The young women who indicated that they had an additional need were most likely (30%) to indicate that they have a social, emotional or mental health need.

COLLEGE & SIXTH FORM

68%

studies A levels

28%

studied BTEC

14%

studied GCSEs

Young women in this sample are more likely to have studied A levels, with young men more likely to have undertaken BTECs, GCSEs and apprenticeships.

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING WERE DISCUSSED WITH YOU IN SIXTH FORM OR COLLEGE?

NOT DISCUSSED

78%

Traineeships

65%

Starting a business

81%

Accessing provision

DISCUSSED 5 TIMES OR MORE

64%

Going to university

28%

Apprenticeships

29%

Getting a job

Further education

Young women are more likely to have going to university discussed with them five times or more, whilst young men are more likely not to have had going to university discussed with them at all.

Employer engagement

Young women are more likely to have had an apprentice visit them in college or sixth form five times or more, whilst young men are more likely to have gone to visit employer sites and to have done so on multiple occasions.

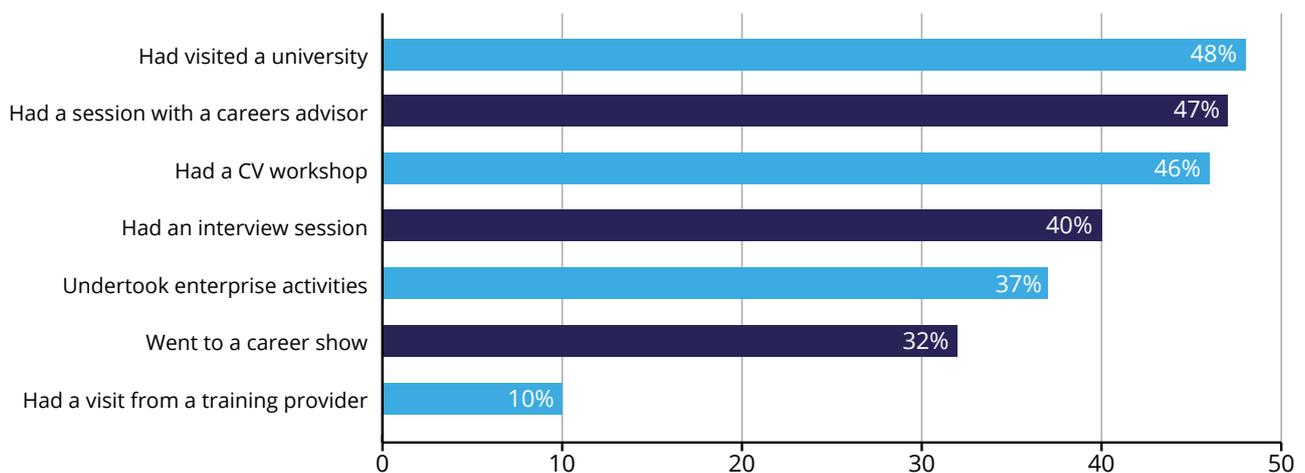
Preparing for the future

Young women are more likely to have visited a careers fair once and young men are more likely not to have done so at all.

Young women are more likely to have visited a university.

Young men are more likely to have had CV workshops four times or more whilst at college or sixth form.

HOW OFTEN DID YOU RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING IN SIXTH FORM OR COLLEGE?



Overall our survey respondents reported fewer careers interventions in college than in secondary school. The most common activities taking five times or more at college or sixth form are having mentoring (15%), career lessons (14%), and visits from employers (10%).

HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR TIME AT SIXTH FORM OR COLLEGE?

87% of young men rate their time at college or sixth form as 'OK' or above.

Young men are also more likely to rate their time at college or sixth form as 'excellent' (27%).

91% of young women rate their time at college or sixth form as 'OK' or above. They are more likely to rate their time as 'OK' (26%) and less likely to rate their time as 'excellent' (20%).

WHAT HAVE YOU ENJOYED MOST ABOUT STUDYING IN SCHOOL OR SIXTH FORM?

Overall 90% of students have given positive responses, rating each criteria as 'OK' or that they 'enjoyed' or 'really enjoyed' it.

Young men are more likely to be positive overall and express that they really enjoyed each criteria.

Young women are more likely to say they 'enjoyed' having ownership of their study and having the choice of subjects.

Young women are also more likely to indicate they have struggled with an overwhelming environment.

WORK EXPERIENCE IN SIXTH FORM/COLLEGE

56% of respondents are offered work experience in sixth form or college

65% of those offered it undertake the work experience

71% rate their work experience as 'good' or excellent'

There are no significant gender differences to these scores. Age does play a role, with 16 and 17 year olds more likely to rate their time as 'good' or 'excellent' and 18 to 20 year olds less likely to rate their time as 'good' or 'excellent'.

56% of respondents indicate they have had a job or planned to get one whilst in sixth form or college. Young women are more likely to have indicated this (59%).

WHAT'S NEXT?

60% of respondents know what they want to do after sixth form or college

62% plan to attend or are attending university

12% plan to get or have got a job

9% plan to get or have started an apprenticeship

Young men are more likely (16% vs 7% of young women) to indicate they have undertaken or plan to undertake an apprenticeship, or will be getting a job (19% vs 8% of young women).

69% of young women indicate that they are planning to go or have gone to university after sixth form or college, compared to 47% of young men.

Only 9% of 16 year olds and 6% of 17 year olds indicate that starting an apprenticeship was next for them. 23% of 19 year olds and 32% of 22 year olds indicate that starting an apprenticeship is next for them or is their next choice.

University is the most likely route for 16 year olds (65%) and 17 year olds (66%).

Using the 'Other' free text option in this survey question, young people have included joining the military and the police force as a next step. Many commented that they plan to take a mixed approach, combining travel with applications for university and apprenticeships, or they plan to get a job to see what they enjoy doing.

HOW MUCH DOES SIXTH FORM PREPARE YOU FOR YOUR NEXT STEP?

53% of young people rate sixth or college as 'helpful' or 'very helpful' in preparing them for their next step

14% rate sixth form or college as 'very unhelpful' or 'unhelpful' in preparing them for their next step

16 and 17 year olds are most likely to rate their time at college or sixth form as "helpful" (both 40%) whilst 19 year olds are least likely to rate their time as 'helpful' and are most likely to rate it as 'very unhelpful'.

WHAT ELSE COULD YOUR SIXTH FORM HAVE DONE TO PREPARE YOU FOR YOUR FUTURE?

“ Maybe be more stuff for non uni options. More 1 on 1 support or at least have someone approachable that you know you can talk to and who knows a lot about different application processes. ”

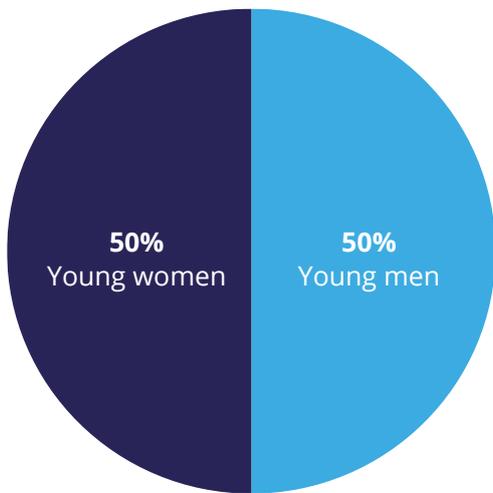
“ Sixth form could have taught me soft skills to help me get employed and given me more ideas about apprenticeships available and work experience. ”

“ Sixth form could give chances to have work experience and talk about the advantages to an apprenticeship. ”

“ I just wish that my sixth form had encouraged us to find some work experience. I was just focused on my A levels. ”



TRAINEESHIPS*



100% were looking to start an apprenticeship as their next step

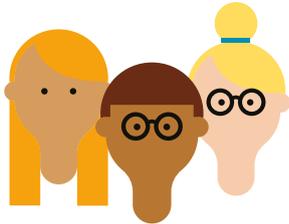
The young man was referred to a traineeship by Jobcentre Plus and the young woman was referred by a youth worker. When asked to rate their traineeship overall and in relation to the work experience, the training offered, and the english and maths learning, the young man rated all aspects as 'excellent' with the young woman more likely to rate each criteria as 'average'.

When asked to rate what they most enjoyed about their traineeship both respondents 'really liked' every aspect which included travel, work experience, routine, gaining support with english and maths and adjusting to new ways of working.

When asked to scale how much of a challenge routine, travel, work experience, gaining support for english and maths and adjusting to new ways of working the young woman rated each as more challenging with the young man scoring all aspects at the lowest end of the scale.

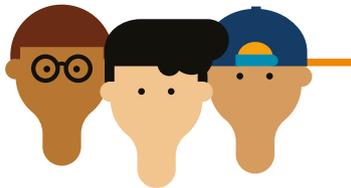
**We have included this data to show a fair reflection of routes but it is important to note that only 2 respondents of the 3,000+ respondents to the 2019 Youth Voice Census had had a traineeship-related experience.*

APPRENTICESHIPS



67%

of respondents were in the first year of their apprenticeship



39%

of boys were studying at level 2



48%

of girls were studying at level 3



88%

of respondents were offered off the job training.



61%

thought they'd stay with their current employer at the end of the apprenticeship



73%

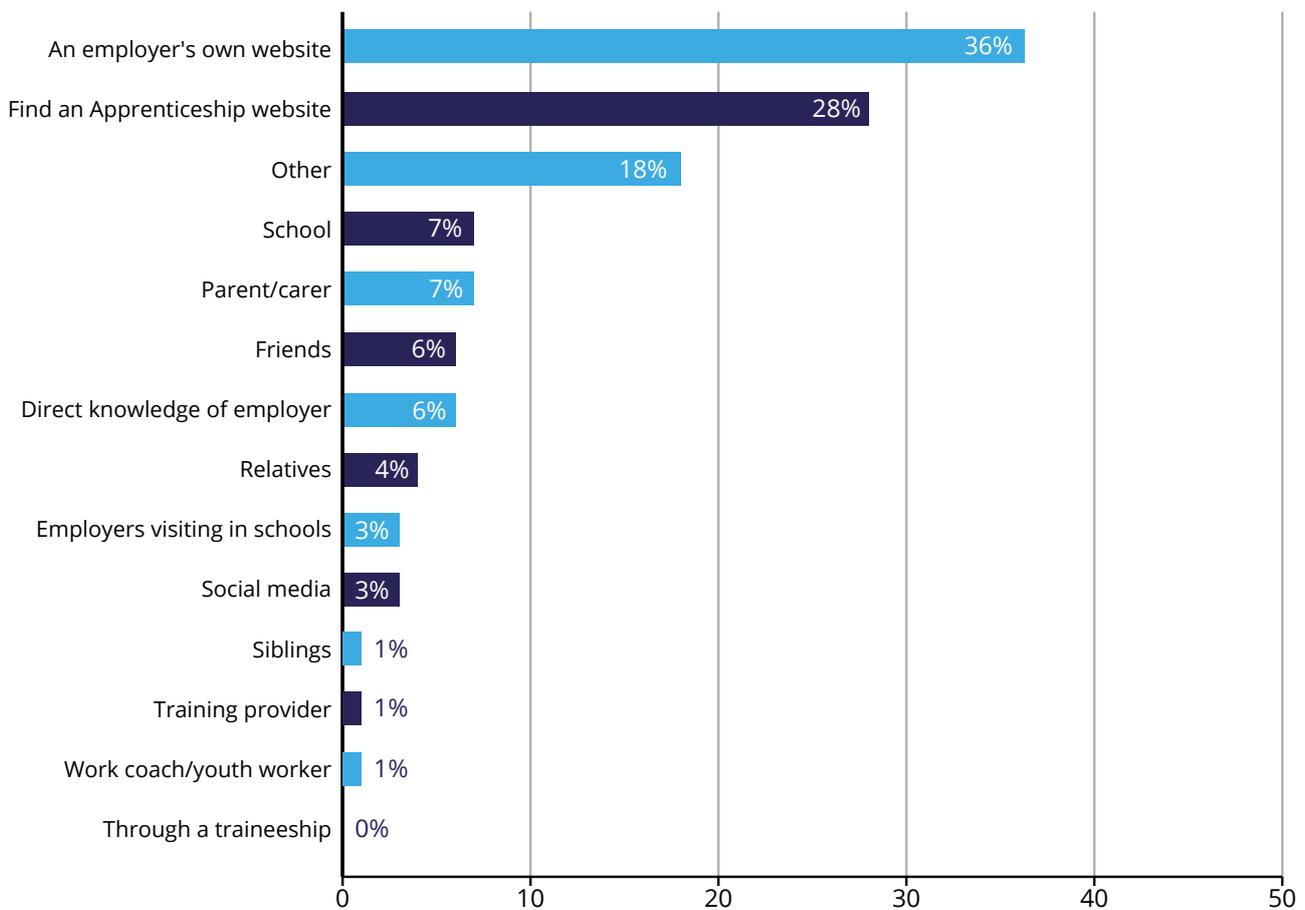
of respondents thought their apprenticeship was 'helpful' or 'very helpful' in preparing them for their next step

Of all census respondents with apprenticeship experience, 54% were young men and 46% were young women. 22% of the respondents were 19 years old and 25% were 20 years old.

The 2019 census results indicate that young people are most likely to have found their apprenticeship through an employer's own website (36%) or via the 'Find an Apprenticeship' website (28%).

7% of young people have been referred to an apprenticeship opportunity via their parent/carer and 7% by their teacher. 3% said they had found their apprenticeship via employers visiting their school, and 3% said they had found their apprenticeship via social media.

HOW DID YOU FIND YOUR APPRENTICESHIP?



The biggest motivation or influence for young people undertaking an apprenticeship is that they can earn and learn at the same time (78%). Just under half of respondents (49%) chose an apprenticeship because it was the right choice for them. 6% have undertaken the apprenticeship because they thought it was the only job available.

Overall, young people are positive about all aspects of apprenticeships. Young women are more likely to rate their apprenticeship as 'excellent' and young men are more likely to rate it as 'good'. 69% enjoy earning and learning at the same time and 64% enjoy gaining skills on the job. Young women are more likely to say they have 'enjoyed' or 'really enjoyed' working with new people (65%) in comparison to 39% of young men. Of all the factors in an apprenticeship, travel is the factor most likely to prove a challenge or frustration and receive the highest number of 'dislike' or 'really dislike' responses (from 25% of young people).

When we asked young people about the biggest challenges they face in their apprenticeship, they tend to respond positively, with the majority marking the criteria (including travel, routine, work experience, earning money and learning at the same time, working with new people, having a job and adjusting to a new way of working) as not challenging at all. 22% of young people rate travel as their biggest challenge and 17% rate adjusting to new ways of working as their biggest challenge.

Apprentices are generally very positive about their experience, with very few respondents rating any aspect as 'poor'. Salary has both the best and worst scores, with 11% rating their salary as 'poor' but 80% rating it 'good' or 'excellent'.

HOW MUCH HAS YOUR APPRENTICESHIP HELPED PREPARE YOU FOR THE NEXT STEP?



Only 4% of respondents rate their apprenticeship as 'very unhelpful' or 'unhelpful' in terms of helping them prepare for their next steps. 83% of respondents rate it as 'helpful' or very helpful'. Young women are more likely to rate it as very helpful (65% compared to 36% of young men). No young women in 2019 have rated their apprenticeship as 'very unhelpful' or 'unhelpful'.

When asked if they are likely to stay with their employer after their apprenticeship ends, 61% of young people say they are, with only 6% saying they are not and 33% unsure. Young women in particular are more likely to stay with their employer (74% compared to 50% of young men).

WHAT ELSE COULD YOUR APPRENTICESHIP HAVE DONE TO PREPARE YOU FOR THE NEXT STEPS?

The majority of respondents have stated that they are happy and nothing more was required to prepare them for their next steps. A handful have mentioned that they would have appreciated extra support from their boss.

WHAT, IF ANY, CAREERS ADVICE HAVE YOU RECEIVED DURING YOUR APPRENTICESHIP?

The majority of apprentices say they had not had much careers advice and might have benefitted from more support.

“ It doesn't matter who you are, there's an apprenticeship for you. ”

TOMMY



UNIVERSITY



78%

of respondents to university-related questions are young women



69%

of university students rate financial issues as their biggest challenge



59%

have a job while at university or plan to get one

Young people say that they receive most support and information about going to university from parents/carers and teachers, followed by friends and employability/careers websites. In this instance, social media is rated 'very unhelpful' or 'unhelpful' more frequently than any other source.

INFLUENCES ON UNIVERSITY CHOICES

When asked to choose their biggest motivation for attending university, 33% of young men say they have always wanted to attend and 33% have been influenced by parents/carers. For 17% it was perceived to be the only option and 17% of young men have had 'other' unspecified influences on their decision.

42% of young women choosing university say they have always known that they want to go, 23% have been influenced by parents/carers, 10% by teachers, 10% by careers advisors and 10% have had 'other' unspecified influences on their decision.

WHAT DO STUDENTS MOST ENJOY ABOUT UNIVERSITY?

Young women 'like' or 'really like' having ownership of their study (62%), meeting students who share an interest in the topic (72%), having the freedom to make their own choices (71%) and the change of teachers (49%).

Young women have generally responded positively to all questions relating to their university experience. However a percentage of them 'really dislike' the value for money (14%) and independent living (14%).

Young men 'like' or 'really like' their chosen area of study (80%), independent living (66%), the freedom to make their own choices (66%), the change of teachers (50%), the routine involved (40%) and having ownership of study with more independent learning (33%).

Young men are more likely than young women to suggest they 'really dislike' or 'dislike' something. Overall, young men 'really dislike' or 'dislike' travel (40%), value for money (50%) and the range of student support, particularly with regard to mental health (34%).

WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES FOR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS?

Young men at university find their biggest challenges to be:

- **Having ownership of study (50%)**
- **Value for money (50%)**
- **Financial issues (40%)**
- **Routine (40%)**

Young women at university find their biggest challenges to be:

- **Financial worries (76%)**
- **Routine (48%)**



CAREERS SUPPORT AT UNIVERSITY

We asked young people how often they had received interactions whilst at university:

- **23% had visited an employer**
- **66% had a one to one session with a careers advisor**
- **62% had a careers lecture.**

In every category, young women are more than twice as likely as young men never to have received any careers interactions. Students are most likely to have accessed online careers and employability support 5 times or more (33% of young women and 33% of young men).

63% of university students know they want to do after university

57% rate university as 'helpful' or 'very helpful' in preparing them for their next step. Only **3%** rate university as 'unhelpful' or 'very unhelpful' in preparing them for their next step.

WORK EXPERIENCE AT UNIVERSITY

59% of respondents have been offered work experience

Of that 59%, **81%** have undertaken work experience

Of that 81%, **85%** rate their work as 'very good' and **15%** rate it as 'average'

IN WORK



65%

of those in employment are happy or very happy



43%

of respondents have undertaken a zero hour contract



17%

of respondents have undertaken a short term contract or a gig economy role



55%

have undertaken cash in hand work



5%

have undertaken a black market job

Young men are more likely to be 'very happy' in their current role, with young women more likely to be 'unhappy'.

We asked young people if they had been offered zero hour contracts, short term contracts, gig economy roles, cash in hand work or black market jobs. We then asked if they had undertaken them. The majority of young people offered this type of work have taken it up.

Young women are more likely to have been offered zero hour contracts, with young men more likely to have undertaken cash in hand work (58% vs 49%), and black market jobs (8% vs 3%)

In general, young people have a positive outlook on their employment experience.

80% of young people 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that they are building useful skills in their job

67% 'agree' or 'strongly agree' they are given enough training and support to do their job well

61% 'agree' or 'strongly agree' they are paid fairly for the work they do

21% 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that they struggle with their wellbeing at work

STARTING YOUR OWN BUSINESS

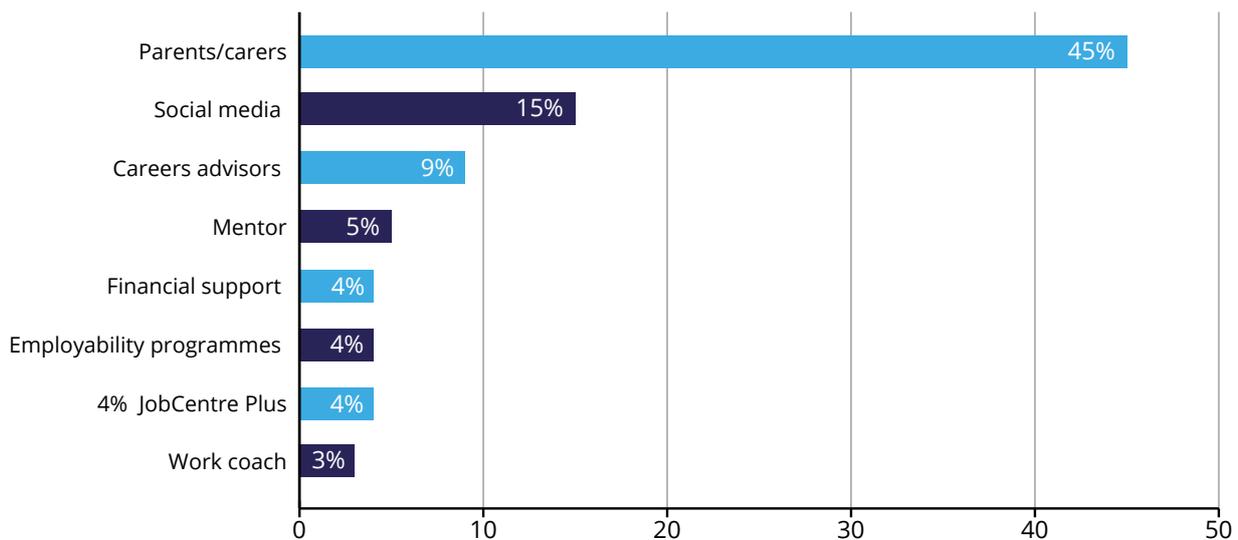
40% have considered starting their own business

3% have already started their own business

Young men are more likely to have considered starting their own business (48% of young men vs 36% of young women). They are also more likely to have started their own business (4% compared to 2%).

Age appears to play a part: 14 year olds and 20 year olds are the most likely to say they would consider opening their own business, and 17 and 18 year olds are the most likely to say they would not consider opening their own business.

WHAT SUPPORT HAVE YOU RECEIVED IN STARTING YOUR OWN BUSINESS?



Young men are more likely (5%) than young women (2%) to have received support from Jobcentre Plus.

“I think employers need to familiarise themselves with young people so there isn’t any awkwardness, trying to start relationships as soon as possible. Employers also need to give out a stronger message that mental health and bad days are ok and won’t affect your job.”

KANE



LOOKING FOR WORK



14%

have spent time NEET



27%

have spent 18 months+ NEET



14%

of those who have been NEET are currently claiming job seekers allowance/universal credit/other benefits

IF YOU HAVE USED ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SERVICES, HOW GOOD ARE THEY?

	Never used	Useless	Slightly useful	Very useful	N/A
Jobcentre Plus	83%	8%	6%	4%	21%
Talent Match	89%	4%	4%	3%	25%
Prince's Trust	88%	2%	7%	3%	21%
Employability programmes	83%	4%	8%	5%	30%
Movement to work	90%	2%	5%	3%	14%

Young men are more likely to think employability programmes (9% vs 2% of young women) and Movement to Work (7% vs 1% of young women) programmes are 'very useful'.

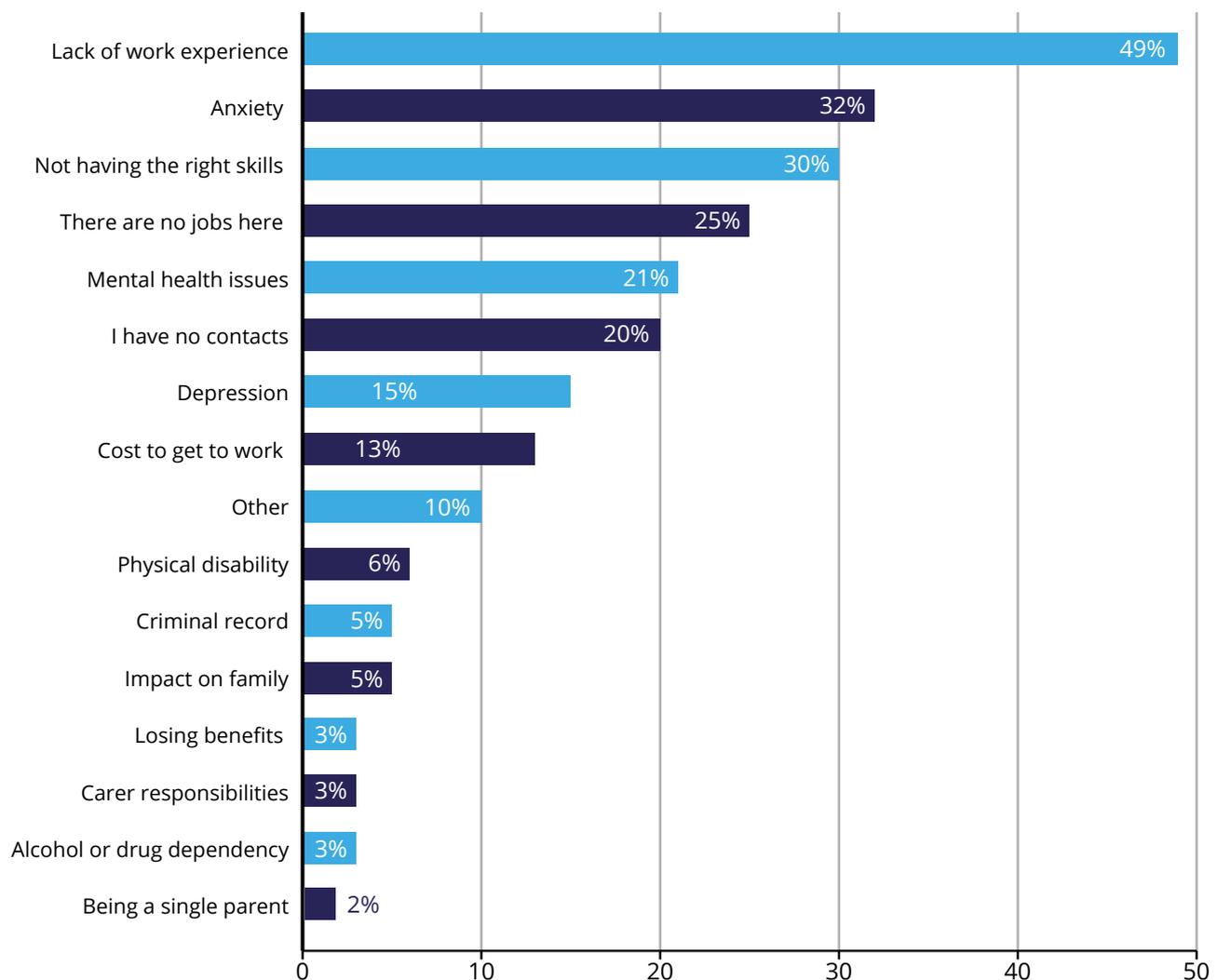
IF YOU HAVE USED THESE SERVICES HOW USEFUL ARE THEY?

	Never used	Useless	Slightly useful	Very useful
Sector based work academy	94%	3%	2%	2%
Mandatory work experience	84%	7%	5%	5%
Job coach support	85%	6%	6%	3%
CV help	77%	5%	11%	6%
Interview practice	79%	4%	10%	6%
Careers events at Jobcentre Plus	87%	7%	3%	3%

Young men are more likely to think that mandatory work experience is useless (11% vs 4% of young women). They are also more likely to find job coach support 'very useful' (6% vs 1% of young women), whereas young women are more likely not to have used the job coaches (90% vs 78% of young men).



WHAT ARE YOUR BIGGEST BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT?



WHAT MORE COULD BE DONE TO HELP YOU GET A JOB?

“Actually give me a direction. Careers advice is far too broad. I could get the same advice online. Makes going to JobCentre Plus pointless.”

“It would be good to have someone going through job adverts with me.”

“Having the knowledge that jobs are available that I would like to do, jobs that would suit me. Also someone helping me through jobs.”

WHO WE ARE & WHAT WE DO



Youth Employment UK are the leading voice and expert on youth employment issues in the UK. We are a not for profit organisation set up in 2012 to reduce youth unemployment and support every young person to progress.

We engage employers in quality youth friendly practice, and support them to become Youth Friendly Employers, as well as giving young people the tools to explore and develop their skills and career options. We lead key research into youth employment and unemployment and support government, business and third sector organisations with our insight and expertise. We champion collaboration and work with all stakeholders invested in youth employment.

Supporting young people

YOUNG PROFESSIONAL

The Young Professional is a free resource that provides professional and personal skills development to young people aged 14-24. Young people have access to an inspirational online platform to develop the core skills needed for life and work. Through the Young Professional young people aged 14-24 have ongoing access to inspiration, support, peer-led advice and guidance and access to weekly challenges to support their personal learning and development.



CAREERS HUB

The Careers Hub provides free, impartial and inspiring careers information to young people. It receives more than 60,000 page views each month and is promoted by a growing number of schools, colleges, youth organisations and job centres as the place for young people to build their skills, knowledge and confidence about the world of work.

In addition to careers information, the Careers Hub also provides up to date content on a range of issues important to young people, particularly





as they transition from education into employment including budgeting and how to manage personal finances and mental health and well-being.

The Youth Friendly Employers we work with, are invited to use the hub as a recruitment and brand awareness tool, connecting their opportunities to the thousands of site users every month.

Supporting employers

YOUTH FRIENDLY EMPLOYER COMMUNITY

Based on the principles of good youth employment practice, we support organisations to develop, enhance and be recognised for their commitment to youth employment. All employers working with young people are invited to sign up to our Youth Friendly Charter and become members of our Youth Friendly Employer Community which allows them to demonstrate their commitment to key youth friendly employment principles, as well as connecting them to our network of young people.

Through their membership, we support employers with advice and guidance on a range of youth employment topics including supporting young people with additional needs, developing work experience programmes, managing recruitment practice etc. We provide this support through webinars, training resources, templates, guides and case studies. Our members can also contact our expert team to discuss individual needs.



Supporting partners and policy makers

POLICY & RESEARCH

In addition to running the annual Youth Voice Census, Youth Employment UK has been the Secretariat for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Youth Employment (APPG) since 2015. This highly active group has received support from a number of Ministers and Civil Servants throughout its range of inquiries.

Our wider policy and research work includes the production of a number of reports and to date include:

- Employer support for youth employment
- The role of families in social mobility
- Work experience
- Skills frameworks review
- Supporting young people furthest from the labour market
- Careers education
- Youth unemployment data
- Transition to work

OUR PARTNERS & MEMBERS



“Coca-Cola European Partners are delighted to be working with Youth Employment UK. The Youth Friendly Employer Award is a tool that not only will recognise our work in this space but is helping us to develop the opportunities we provide young people. The support and insight given by Youth Employment UK has been really valuable.”

SHARON BLYFIELD, HR Business Partner, Coca-Cola European Partners, 2018



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*Youth Employment UK is a not-for-profit
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