



Employer Engagement Survey 2018

DWP Report 977

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Great Britain (exc. Northern Ireland)

About the survey

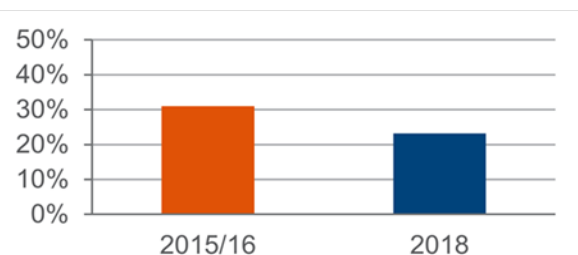
The Employer Engagement Survey (EES) 2018 is the third wave of a cross-sectional representative survey of GB employers with the previous waves having been conducted in 2015/16 and 2013. The survey is designed to develop understanding of employers' recruitment practices and their experiences of the services offered by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). This will enable employer views to be fed into operational management and policy development.

The results are based on 4,201 telephone interviews of GB employers conducted between February and June 2018. The sample was designed to be representative of GB employers based on their size, sector, and geographic region. Due to DWP's policy focus on Universal Credit the sample includes a 'boost' of GB employers who are known to have employees who are current or recent UC claimants. The sample in this survey includes employers who have had recent interactions with DWP as well as those who have not.

This research was commissioned by the DWP and conducted by IFF research. Our thanks go to all those who gave up their time to take part in this study.

The findings in this report are primarily based on employer's direct experience of DWP services and policies, and their experiences of a range of workplace management topics. The survey also included a small number of perception based questions which ask employers about their views of DWP services and policies, whether or not they had experienced them directly. Employer perceptions of DWP services and policies are important in better understanding how employers view what the Department delivers, and to help us understand and address any concerns.

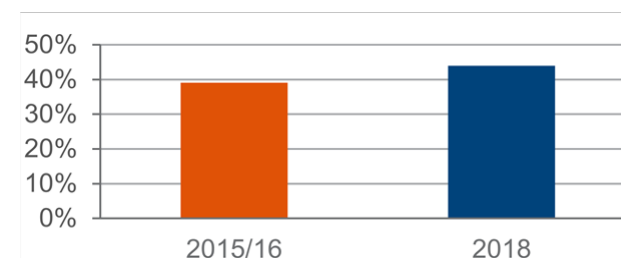
A smaller proportion of employers report contacting DWP in 2018 compared with 2015/16



Awareness of Universal credit has increased by seven percentage points

65 per cent
are aware of Universal Credit

The proportion of employers with policies to support common mental health conditions has increased



Online (through gov.uk) is the most commonly used access channel (49 per cent)

The majority of those who were aware of UC said there had been no negative impact on their business

From 39 per cent in 2015/16 to 44 per cent in 2018.

Section 1 – Introduction and sample description

At a glance

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What you need to know

The 2018 Employer Engagement Survey (EES) was designed primarily to help the DWP understand employers' recruitment practices, their experience of using DWP services and their views on key policy areas. The survey sought to gather information on a range of topics including:

- Workplace structure
- Use of DWP recruitment services
- Experience of DWP recruitment initiatives
- Older workers
- Mental health
- Access channels and internet usage
- Experience of Universal Credit
- Child maintenance
- Disadvantaged groups
- Occupational health and employee sickness

A total of 4201 telephone interviews were conducted with employers across Great Britain, including a boost sample of employers with employees in receipt of Universal Credit. The research was conducted at site-level – as opposed to organisation level. The rationale for this is that the workplace is the core interface between employers, their staff and the DWP. This also replicates the approach taken in the previous two waves of the employer engagement survey. As in 2013 and 2015/16, it is possible that more than one establishment from a multi-site organisation could have participated in the survey.

The research follows on from two previous waves of similar research in 2013 and 2015/16. The former was intended to act as a baseline against which the impact of policy changes could be judged. To this end, key questions used in the 2013 survey were replicated in the 2015/16 and 2018 surveys.

The core sample was sourced from the Market Location database and the UC booster sample was sourced from government databases. All workplaces with at least 2 members of staff were in-scope for the survey. Interviews took place February 23rd and June 28th 2018.

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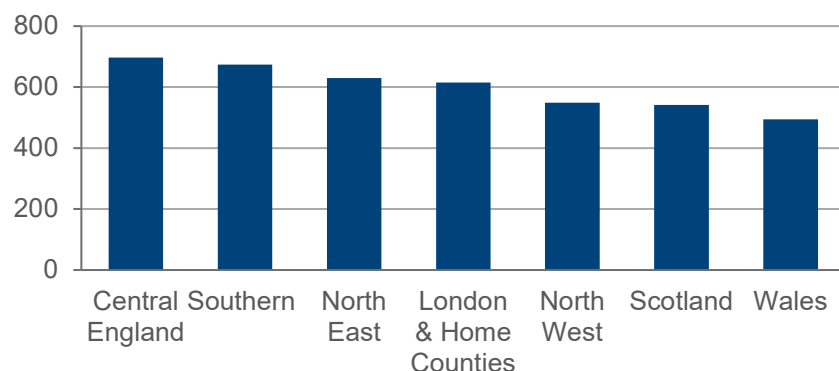
Feedback is welcome

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Other report summaries in the research series are also available from the website above. If you would like to know more about DWP research please email: Socialresearch@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Workplace structure

Number of achieved interviews by Jobcentre Plus region



Base: All businesses (4,201).

The 2018 Employer Engagement Survey was designed primarily to help the DWP understand employers' recruitment practices, their experience of using DWP services and their views on key policy areas.

The survey includes establishments with two or more employees across England, Scotland and Wales, in all sectors of the economy (across the commercial, public and charitable spheres).

In total, 4,201 telephone interviews were conducted with individuals responsible for HR.

See **Table 1.1** for full data.

The sector composition of the business population varies across regions

Businesses interviewed by sector and region

	Percentage							
	Southern England	London/ Home counties	Central England	North East	North West	Scotland	Wales	Total
Primary sector and utilities	6	2	6	6	5	9	11	5
Manufacturing	5	4	7	7	6	5	5	5
Construction	10	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
Trade, transport, accommodation	30	29	33	35	34	33	33	32
Business and other services	38	47	34	32	35	33	28	37
Non-market services	10	10	11	12	12	12	13	11

The sample was designed to be representative of not only different geographical locations but also the sector composition of the nation's businesses. Whilst some sectors, such as construction, make up a similar proportion of the business community across regions, this is not the case for all sectors.

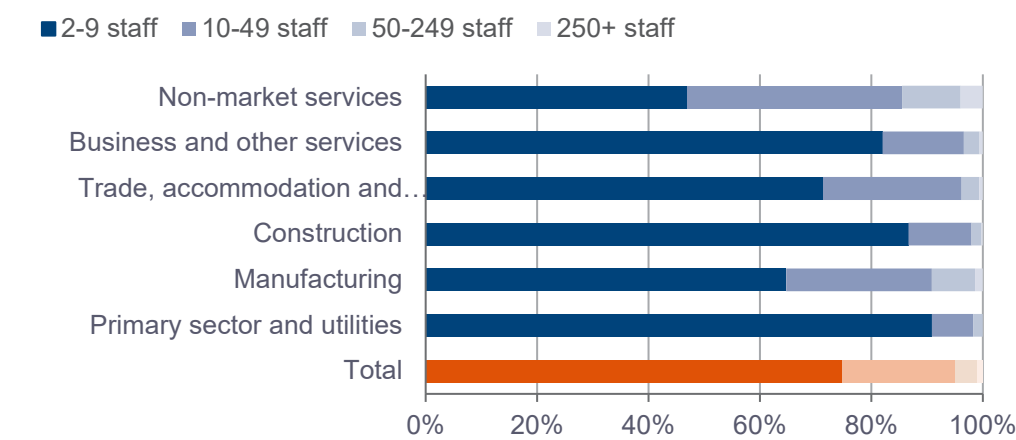
Sectors such as business and other services, for example, are disproportionately represented in London and Home Counties, where they make up almost half the organisations (47 per cent), compared to just over a quarter (28 per cent) of businesses in Wales. Primary sector and utilities make up a larger proportion of businesses in Wales (11 per cent) compared to London and Home Counties (2 per cent).

See **Table 1.1** for full data.

Base: All businesses (4,201).

The size composition of businesses varies across sectors

Businesses interviewed by sector and size



In all sectors, except the non-market services sector, the smallest employers constitute the majority of the employer base. They account for nine in ten employers (91 per cent) in the primary sector and utilities sector, but only account for two-thirds (65 per cent) of manufacturing employers. The smallest employers make up fewer than half of employers (47 per cent) in the non-market services sector.

See **Table 1.1** for full data.

Section 2 – Access channels and internet usage

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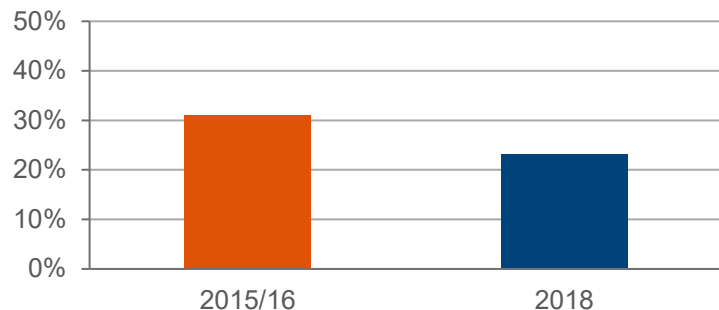
This chapter focuses on the channels used by employers to contact DWP. It covers a number of access channels including: online (via gov.uk), telephone, post, email and in person (via JCP). We assess rates of contact, preferences, and satisfaction with these access channels and explore issues experienced during contact with DWP. The chapter covers the following sub-sections.

- Rates of, and reasons for contact: Here we explore rate of contact with DWP and the reasons for employers gave for doing so.
- Methods of contact: In this sub-section we assess rates of contact for different access channels as well as preferred method of contact.
- Ease and satisfaction: This section focuses on the satisfaction with DWP access channels. We assess levels of satisfaction with DWP staff during contact as well as ease of using DWP access channels.
- Digital channels: Here we focus specifically on digital access channels used by employers. We look at the rates of use, satisfaction, ease of use and satisfaction with the information received.

Rates of contact

The percentage of employers who made contact with DWP in the 12 months prior to interview was lower in 2018 than in 2015/16

Employers who contacted DWP in the 12 months prior to interview, 2015/16 and 2018



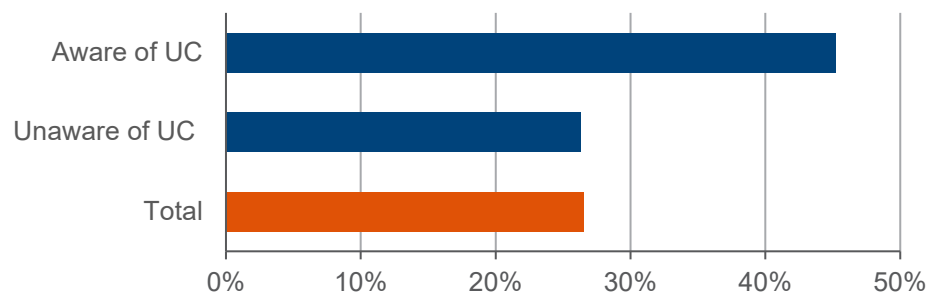
Base: All businesses who were asked this section, 2018 (n=2,283), 2015/16 (n=2,100).

In the 2015/16 survey almost 31 per cent of employers contacted DWP compared to 23 per cent in 2018. This represents a significant drop in levels of overall contact with the Department between the 2015/16 and 2018 surveys.

See **Table 2.1** for full data.

Employers who are aware of having UC employees are far more likely to contact DWP, as are those in the construction industry

Employers who contacted DWP by awareness of having UC employees



Base: All respondents who answered this section (n=2,283).

Employers who were aware that they had UC employees were more likely to contact the department (45 per cent) compared to those who were not aware of having UC employees (26 per cent).

Those employers in the construction sector (31 per cent) were more likely to contact the department than employers in any other sector (23 per cent for all).

There is little difference in the contact rates between organisations of different sizes. Employers with 2-9, 10-49 and 50-249 staff have relatively equal rates of contact whilst the largest organisations (250+ staff) do have a high rate of contact, however it is not significantly higher.

See **Table 2.1** for full data.

Reason for contact

Pensions, payroll and health and safety reasons were the most common reasons employers gave for contacting DWP

Reasons why employers contacted DWP

	Percentage	
	2018	2015/16
Pensions	59	55
Payroll	24	18
Health and Safety	21	16
Advertising jobs on UJ	19	26
Contracts and working hours	14	18
Employer advice service	13	17
Recruitment	9	11
Disability / LTH issues	8	5
Disability confident	3	N/A
Redundancy support	3	4
Other	8	9

Base: All businesses who were asked this section excluding those who 'had no contact' with DWP or were unsure of the reason: 2018 (529), 2015/16 (654).

Pension related issues were the most common reason why employers contacted DWP and the rates are similar between 2018 and 2015/16. Payroll, health and safety and advertising on Universal Jobmatch were the next most common responses in 2018.

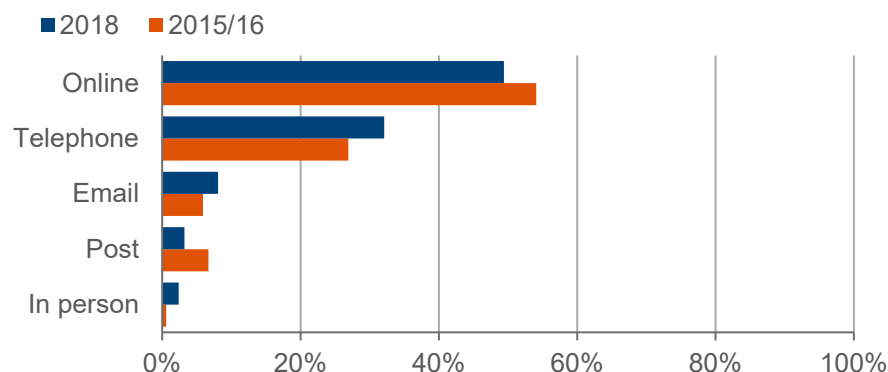
The percentage of employers stating that payroll queries were their reason for contacting DWP has increased significantly between 2018 and 2015/16 whilst the percentage citing 'Advertising jobs on Universal Jobmatch' has seen a significant drop to 19 per cent in compared to 26 per cent in 2015/16.

The table to the left only includes employers who contacted DWP in the past 12 months. For full 2018 data see **Table 2.1**.

Methods of contact

Online is the most common method of contacting DWP, followed by telephone and email

Method of contact on the most recent occasion, 2018 and 2015/16



Base: Businesses that have contacted DWP in the last 12 months, 2018 (n=636), 2015/16 (n=839).

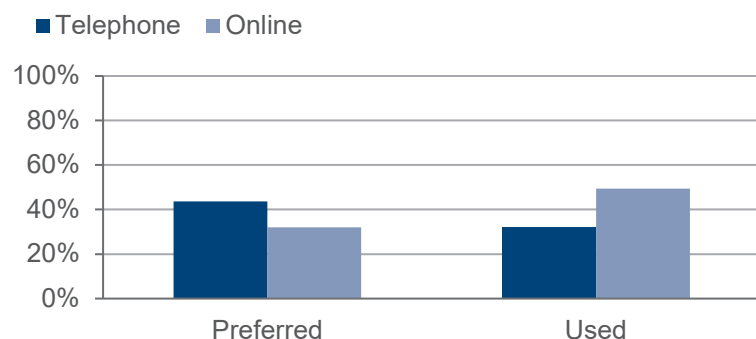
Almost 50 per cent of those who contacted DWP in the 12 months before the survey did so online, using gov.uk, on the most recent occasion. The second most common method of contact was telephone (32 per cent), followed by email (8 per cent). All other methods were reported by less than five per cent of employers. Contact by post and in-person were the two least common channels.

The only significant difference in access channel use between the two years of the survey is the drop in rates of contact via post, which has reduced by four percentage points between 2015/16 and 2018 and the increase in in-person contact, rising from one per cent in 2015/16 to four per cent in 2018.

See **Table 2.3** for full data.

Employers tend to prefer using telephone access channels but actually report using online channels more frequently

Preference and recent use of telephone and online channels



Base: Preferred - All businesses who were asked this section (2,283), Used - Businesses that have contacted DWP in the last 12 months (636).

When employers were asked about which access channel they preferred to use, the most common response was telephone (44 per cent) with online being the second most popular method of contact (32 per cent). This is the opposite pattern seen when employers were asked about their most recent use of various channels.

All other access channel use rates are not presented here because of low response rates.

See **Table 2.30** for preference and **Table 2.26** for recent use for full data.

Methods of contact

Employers prefer telephone contact as they value a direct interaction with an individual

Reasons for preferences for telephone, online and email access channels

Telephone	%	Online	%	Email	%
Prefer to talk to person	35	Easier / convenient	54	Easier / convenient	40
Quicker / more efficient	28	Quicker / more efficient	37	Record purposes	34
Easier / convenient	21	More information	11	Quicker / more efficient	17
Clearer / better answer	21	Always done it online	4	Always done it online	6
Poor IT skills	4	Clearer / better answer	4	Clearer / better answer	4
Do not have internet	2	Record purposes	2	More information	<1
Security reasons	1	Prefer to talk to person	1	Prefer to talk to person	0

Base: Businesses with a preferred contact method - Telephone (993), Online (730), Email (419).

Employers were asked about the reasons they preferred a particular channel for communicating with DWP.

Those who preferred to use telephone as their means of communication emphasised the importance of talking to a person.

The most frequent response for those who preferred online and email channels was that it is easier and more convenient. For email, 34 per cent of employers reported that they preferred it for record purposes.

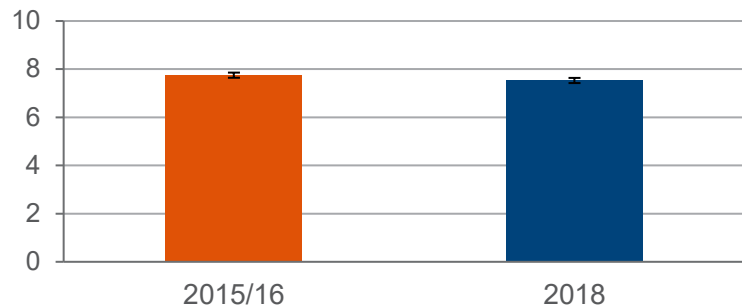
All other access channel use rates are not presented here because of low response rates.

See **Table 2.31** for full data.

Ease and satisfaction

Levels of satisfaction with DWP staff during contact was high and did not differ between 2018 and 2015/16

Level of satisfaction with DWP staff during most recent contact (10=highly satisfied)



Base: Businesses that contacted DWP but not via .gov.uk, 2018 (n=296), 2015/16 (n=349).

Employers were asked to rate their satisfaction with DWP staff during their recent contact with the department (10=highly satisfied) and on average they scored their satisfaction level at 7.5.

Satisfaction levels have not changed significantly since the 2015/16 survey (7.8).

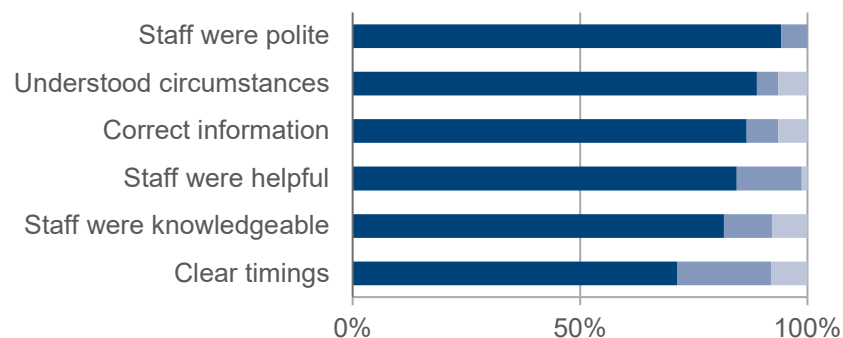
As these satisfaction figures only deal with the rates of satisfaction with DWP staff the online channel is not included in these figures.

See **Table 2.11** for full data.

The majority of employers agreed with all positive statements about their experience of DWP staff

Employer views on DWP staff performance during contact

■ Agree ■ Neither ■ Disagree



Base: Businesses that contacted DWP but not via gov.uk (n=214). Note: 'strongly agree' and 'agree' have been compiled into a 'agree' category and 'strongly disagree' and 'disagree' have been compiled into a disagree category.

Employers were asked about the extent to which they agreed with a series of questions about the performance of DWP staff during their most recent contact (excluding online). For all statements at least 70 per cent of employers either agreed or strongly agreed with the positive statements regarding DWP staff.

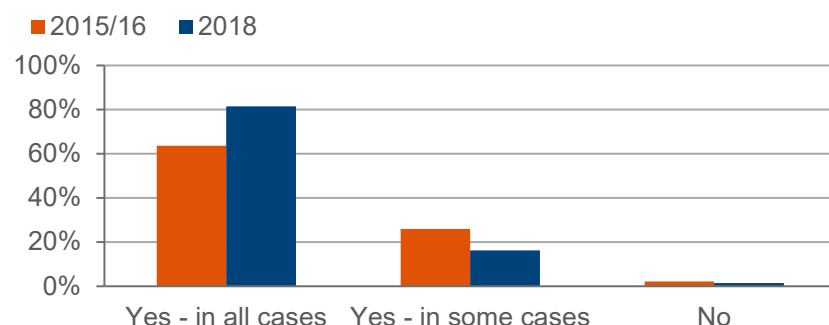
Ninety-four per cent of employers agreed that 'staff were polite', 85 per cent agree that 'staff were helpful' and 71 per cent agreed that 'staff gave clear timings on what they would do to help and by when.'

See **Table 2.18** for full data.

Digital access channels

The majority of employers who used online access channels found the information they were looking for in all cases

Ability to access the online information needed in 2018 and 2015/16



Base: Businesses that contact DWP online, 2018 (n=315), 2015/16 (n=466).

Of those employers who had contacted DWP using online channels in the previous 12 months, the vast majority (82 per cent) stated that they found the information they were looking for in all cases. This rate is higher in 2018 compared with 2015/16 where only 64 per cent of employers stated that they always found the information they were looking for.

In 2018, 16 per cent stated that they found information in some cases, rather than in all cases, and less than two per cent stated that they were unable to find the information they were looking for.

See **Table 2.21** for full data.

A lack of awareness and a preference for direct interaction with a person were the two main reasons given for not using online access channels

Reasons for not using DWP online

	Percentage
No need to contact DWP	57
Not my responsibility / not my remit	19
Unaware of online availability of DWP services	18
I prefer direct interaction with a person	16
Have a third party that deals with this e.g. Accountant, external HR advisor	4
Other	3
Couldn't find what I was looking for in the past	2
Don't Know	2

Base: Businesses that do not use the internet to contact DWP (1,392). Responses given at a rate of lower than 2 per cent have been removed from this figure

When employers were asked why they did not contact DWP online, approximately 57 per cent said they had no reason to contact DWP, 19 per cent stated that it was not their responsibility to contact DWP online and 4 per cent stated that a third party dealt with DWP issues.

Of the remaining responses, a lack of awareness (18 per cent) and a preference for direct interaction with a person (16 per cent) were the most common reasons why employers did not use DWP online access channels.

See **Table 2.29** for full data.

Section 3 – Use of DWP recruitment initiatives

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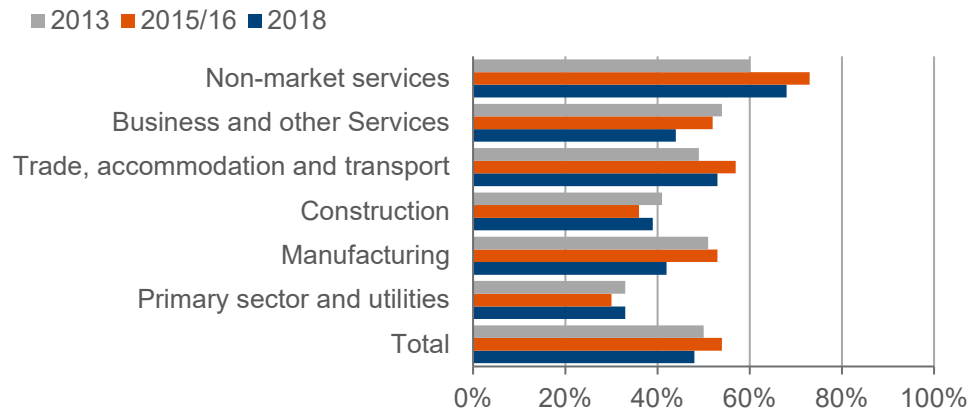
This chapter looks at recruitment practices and perceptions among GB employers, focusing particularly on their experience of using of the Universal Jobmatch system and Jobcentre Plus for recruitment purposes. The findings cover four main sub-sections:

- Recruitment practices: focuses on the recruitment levels among GB employers and the reasons for this recruitment
- Recruitment channels: examines the main recruitment channels used by those employers who have recruited or tried to recruit in the 12 months prior to interview. The section also explores the use of Universal Jobmatch and Jobcentre Plus for recruitment in more detail, examining usage levels, satisfaction and recommendations for improvements
- Use of part-time or zero-hours contracts: focuses on the use of different types of working patterns among employers
- Recruitment of disadvantaged groups: focuses specifically on the recruitment or use of practises designed to encourage recruitment from disadvantaged groups. The definition of 'disadvantaged groups' provided to the research participants included homeless people, ex-offenders, people with drug/alcohol issues, people struggling with debt, those identified as being in Entrenched Worklessness (claiming out of work benefits for 3 out of 4 years), complex jobseekers, and care leavers.

Recruitment practices

Recruitment activity has decreased by six percentage points since 2015/16

Employers who tried to recruit in the previous 12 months by sector



Base: All employers who answered this section: 2018 (n=1,918), 2015/16 (n=2,111), 2013 (n=2,082)

The proportion of businesses that had tried to recruit in the 12 months prior to interview fell by a small but significant amount, to 48 per cent, compared to 54 per cent in 2015/16 and 50 per cent in 2013.

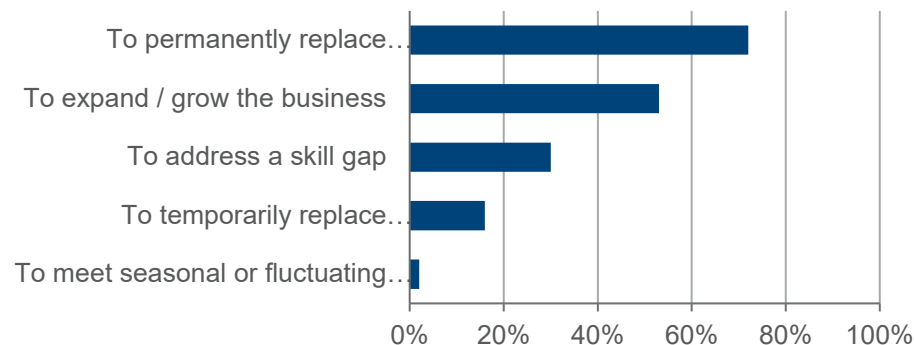
Businesses in the non-market services sector were significantly more likely to have tried to recruit in the 12 months prior to interview than all other sectors (68 per cent). This is consistent with findings from the 2015/16 and 2013 surveys.

Recruitment activities were higher among larger businesses (99 per cent for those with over 250+ employees) than the average. Variation by region was low, although the proportion of employers who had tried to recruit was significantly higher in London and the Home Counties (58 per cent – the same level as seen in 2015/16.)

See **Table 3.1** for full data.

Of those employers who had tried to recruit most had done so to permanently replace employees

Reason for trying to recruit



Base: Businesses that recruited or tried to recruit in the last 12 months (n=1,329)

Of those employers who had tried to recruit in the previous 12 months, the most frequently reported reason was to 'permanently replace employees who had left' (72 per cent). More than half (53 per cent) said that their recent recruitment was motivated by wanting 'To expand or grow the business'.

See **Table 3.3** or full data.

Recruitment channels

‘Word of mouth’ remains the most common method of recruiting new employees

Recruitment channels used by employers

	Percentage
Word of mouth / personal recommendation	76
Own websites	45
Social media e.g. Facebook, twitter	44
Self-service online recruitment sites other than Universal Jobmatch	41
Internal notices	41
High Street recruitment agencies	22
School / college/university job fairs or career services	22
Local Press	21
Trade press/professional publications	14
Jobcentre plus	13
Universal Jobmatch	11
National Press	6
Other methods	5

Base: Businesses that have recruited/ tried to recruit in the last 12 months, (n=1,329)

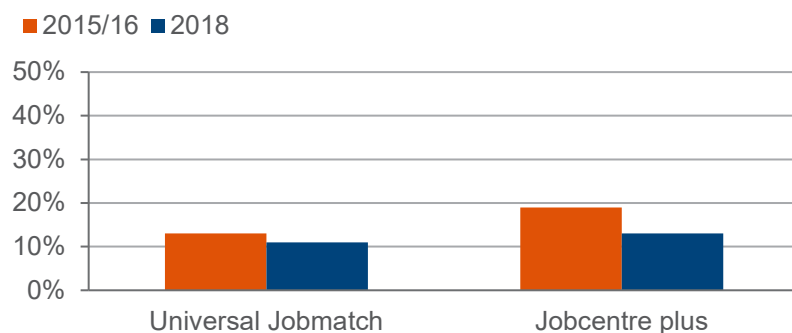
Around three out of four employers who had recruited or tried to recruit in the previous 12 months had done so using word of mouth or personal recommendations.

Recruitment via word of mouth was more common for employers in the trade, accommodation and transport sectors (82 per cent), than for those in primary sector and utilities (68 per cent), business and other services (73 per cent) and non-market services (70 per cent.)

This method was also significantly higher among for-profit organisations (78 per cent) than central government funded organisations (53 per cent) or local-government funded organisations (32 per cent.)

See **Table 3.17** for full data.

Employers that used JCP or Universal Jobmatch by year



Base: Businesses that have recruited or tried to recruit in the last 12 months, 2018 (n=1,329), 2015/16 (n=1,114)

Since 2015/16, there has been a drop in employers using Jobcentre Plus for recruitment, whereas use of Universal Jobmatch has remained stable. The percentage of employers who had used Jobcentre Plus to recruit in the last 12 months fell by six percentage points compared to 2015/16 (from 19 per cent to 13 per cent). Universal Jobmatch was used by 11 per cent of employers that had recruited or tried to recruit in the preceding 12 months.

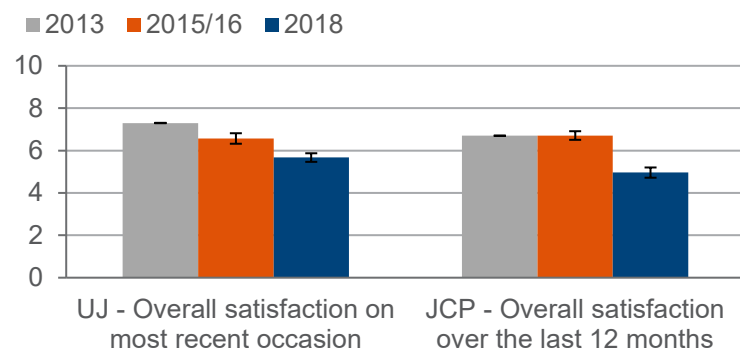
There was a statistically higher percentage of organisations with 250+ employees using Jobcentre plus (39 per cent) or Universal Jobmatch (35 per cent) than the average for all organisations. Use of Jobcentre Plus was statistically higher among those working in the non-market services sector (24 per cent) whereas there were no statistically significant differences by sector in the usage of Universal Jobmatch. In terms of region, there was a lower percentage of employers who used JCP in London and the Home Counties (8 per cent) compared to the average (13 per cent). A higher proportion of recruiting employers in the North West (20 per cent) had used UJ compared to the average (11 per cent).

See **Table 3.17** for full data.

Recruitment channels

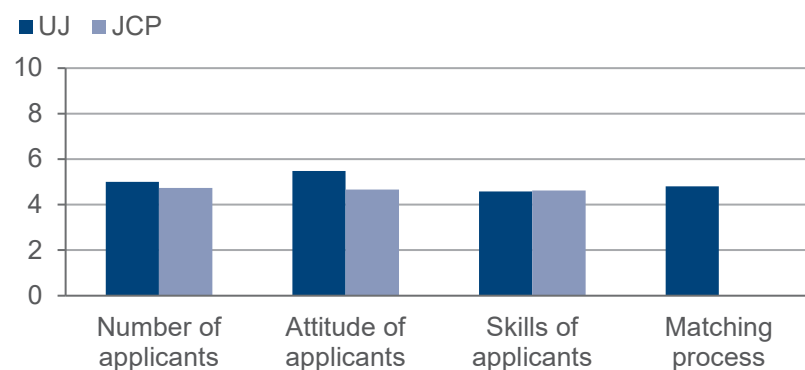
Overall satisfaction levels with Universal Jobmatch and Jobcentre Plus recruitment services have fallen since 2015/16

Mean satisfaction scores (1-10 scale) of employers that used Universal Jobmatch or Jobcentre Plus



Base: Businesses that have used UJ, 2018, (n=360), 2015/16 (n=456) or JCP, 2018 (n=300) and 2015/16, (n=519)

Mean satisfaction scores (1-10 scale) of employers that used Universal Jobmatch or Jobcentre Plus



Base: Businesses that have used UJ (n=217), JCP (n=300)

Overall satisfaction levels with Universal Jobmatch and Jobcentre Plus have fallen since 2015/16. The average satisfaction score for Universal Jobmatch in 2018 (based on employers' most recent experience of the service) was 5.7 out of 10, where 10 is extremely satisfied. Overall satisfaction with the service provided by Jobcentre Plus in recruiting new staff is significantly lower than that of Universal Jobmatch, at 5 out of 10. Both scores are lower than 2015/16 when average satisfaction levels were 6.6 out of 10 for Universal Jobmatch and 6.7 out of 10 Jobcentre Plus services.

Looking in more detail at satisfaction with Universal Jobmatch shows significantly lower average satisfaction levels with the number of applicants (5 out of 10), skills of applicants (4.6 out of 10) and the matching process itself (4.8 out of 10) than with the overall total satisfaction (5.7 out of 10). There was no statistically significant variation with satisfaction with these elements for Jobcentre Plus recruitment service.

Almost one third (31 per cent) of employers that had ever used the Universal Jobmatch service had needed to contact someone from Jobcentre Plus or from DWP when they first used it, and 17 per cent had to contact someone on a subsequent use of the service. Twenty per cent of employers that had used Universal Jobmatch had at some point, been unable to finish a vacancy posting on the service.

Almost one in five (19 per cent) of all employers (not just those who had used it previously) said they were likely to use Universal Jobmatch in the future. Just under a half (47 per cent) of employers that had used Jobcentre Plus described themselves as either very or fairly likely to recommend Jobcentre Plus services to other businesses.

See **Table 3.43** for overall satisfaction with JCP, **Table 3.32** for overall satisfaction with UJ, **Table 3.25** for satisfaction with aspects of UJ, and **Table 3.41** for satisfaction with aspects of JCP.

Recruitment channels

Employers would like UJ and JCP services to improve the screening processes and ensure job matches are more accurate

Ways Universal Jobmatch service could have been improved

	Percentage
Implement a screening process	17
Matches could be more accurate	14
Website could be more user friendly	9
Better customer service	7
Easier to log-in	7
Easier to add a vacancy	3
More matches	3
Match applicants to location	2
Other	9
Don't know / cannot think of any improvements	25
No improvements necessary	17

Base: Business that have used Universal Jobmatch for recruitment (n=360)

Those employers that had used UJ or JCP services were asked how each service could be improved.

For both, the screening process (implementing one for Universal Jobmatch, and improving the existing process for Jobcentre Plus) came top of the list, along with making matches more accurate.

Making the website more user-friendly and improving customer service were also suggestions for improving Universal Jobmatch. Users of Jobcentre Plus services suggested making services more user friendly and improving accessibility and amount of communications.

Just over two in five (41 per cent) recruiting employers did so using other self-service recruitment sites rather than Universal Jobmatch. Of those who used these channels and who were also aware of Universal Jobmatch, 29 per cent said it was because they received a better quality of suitable candidates through these other self-service recruitment sites

See **Table 3.33** for full data.

Ways Jobcentre Plus service could have been improved

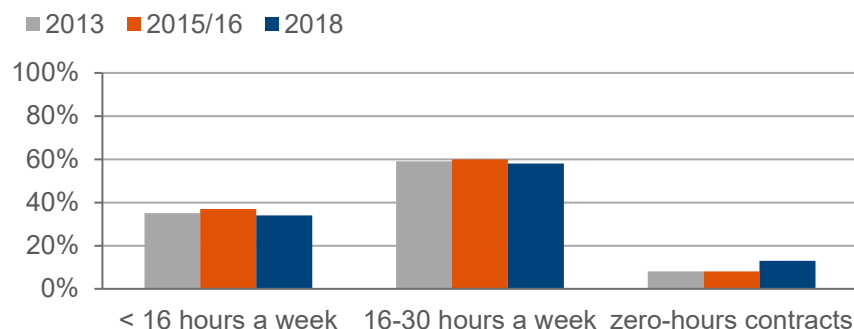
	Percentage
Matches could be more accurate / the screening process could be better	31
Service could be more user friendly	7
Be more accessible / greater level of communication	6
More applications	5
Filters for specialist roles / skills	5
More professional / supportive service	4
Other	3
Don't know / cannot think of any improvements	32
No improvements necessary	13

Base: Business that have used Jobcentre Plus for recruitment (n=300)

Use of part-time and zero hours contracts

There has been a small but significant rise in employers using zero-hour contracts since 2015/16

Percentage of employers with staff on part-time contracts



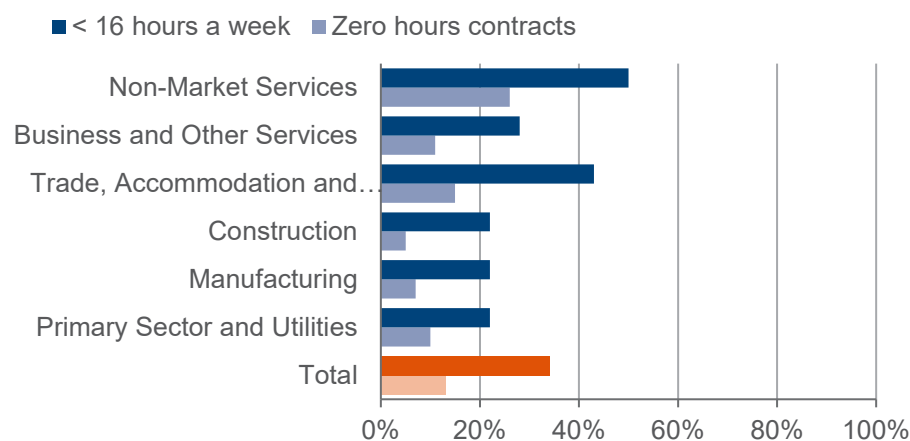
Base: All employers who answered this section, 2018 (n=4,201), 2015/16 (n=4,200)

In the 2018 survey, 13 per cent of employers reported having staff on zero-hour contracts, a small increase of five percentage points since 2015/16. On the other hand, the proportion of employers with staff working less than 16 hours a week decreased (34 per cent in 2018 compared to 37 per cent in 2015/16).

The 2018 survey also asked about a range of other contracts; 89 per cent of employers had staff who work more than 30 hours a week, seven per cent have staff directly employed on temporary or short-term contracts, five per cent have staff employed through an agency and 13 per have staff employed on an apprenticeship or a graduate scheme.

See **Table 1.1** for full data.

Percentage of employers with staff on part-time contracts by sector



Base: All employers who answered this section, (n=4,201)

Half of employers in the non-market services sector stated that they had employees on contracts of less than 16 hours a week, significantly higher than any other sector. More than a third (43 per cent) of trade, accommodation and transport employers reported having employees working less than 16 hours a week.

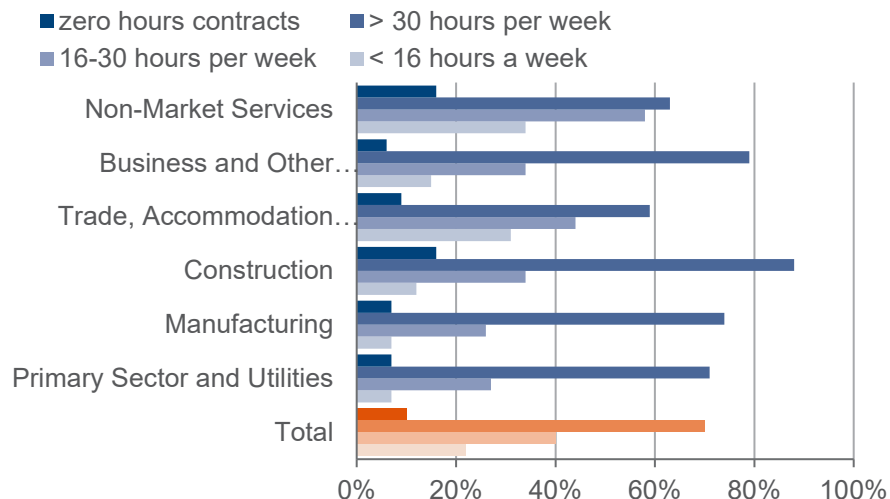
A significantly higher percentage of companies in non-market services reported having employees on zero-hour contracts (26 per cent), compared with all other sectors. Only five per cent of employers in construction had employees on zero-hour contract.

See **Table 1.1** for full data.

Use of part-time and zero hours contracts

Employers in the non-market services sector were more likely to have tried to recruit staff on part-time or zero-hours contracts

Percentage of employers that recruited staff on part-time contracts by sector



Of those businesses who recruited or tried to recruit in the 12 months prior to interview, those in non-market services and construction were more likely to have tried to find people prepared to take on jobs on zero-hours contracts (16 per cent) than all other sectors. Employers in non-market services were also more likely to have tried to fill a post that involved working between 16 and 30 hours a week than any other sector (58 per cent).

Businesses in the non-market services sector (34 per cent) and trade, accommodation and transport (31 per cent) were more likely to have tried to fill posts that involved working less than 16 hours a week than all other sectors.

Only seven per cent of employers working in the manufacturing and primary and utilities sectors had tried to recruit staff on either zero-hour contracts or for roles offering less than 16 hours per week.

Organisations in the construction sector were significantly more likely to have tried to fill posts of 30 hours or more per week (88 per cent) than any other sector, except those in business and other services sector (79 per cent). This compares to only 59 per cent of businesses in trade, accommodation and transport.

See **Table 1.1** for full data.

Recruitment of disadvantaged groups

Four out of five employers have no special procedures in place to encourage applications from disadvantaged groups

Proportion of employers with special procedures for recruiting from hard-to-reach groups

	Percentage
Special procedures for any of the below groups	16
People with children (excluding single parents)	11
Older workers	11
Women returning to work after having children	10
Single parents	10
Members of minority ethnic groups	10
People who are disabled or have long term health conditions	9
People who have been unemployed for 12 months or more	9
Don't know	4
None of these	81

Base: All employers who answered this section, (n=4,201)

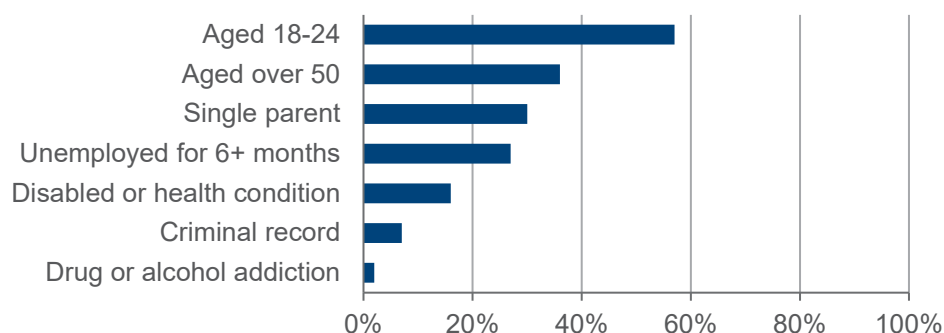
Only 16 per cent of GB employers have any special procedures in place to encourage applications from disadvantaged groups. It is more common for larger organisations to have such procedures in place than smaller ones (37 per cent for businesses with 250+ employees compared to 14 per cent for those with 2-9 employees)

Only nine per cent of employers have procedures in place to encourage applications from people who are disabled or have a long-term health condition, or who have been long-term unemployed.

See **Table 1.38** for full data.

More than half of recruiting employers had taken on someone aged 18-24 in the previous 12 months

Proportion of employers that recruited from target groups



Base: Businesses that have recruited or tried to recruit in the last 12 months (n=1,329)

Of those employers that had recently recruited or tried to recruit, 57 per cent had recruited a person aged 18 to 24 in the previous 12 months, compared to 36 per cent that had recruited someone over 50.

The proportion of employers that had taken on someone with a disability or long-term health condition was significantly lower, at 16 per cent. Only seven per cent of employers had taken on someone with a criminal record and only two per cent had taken on someone with a drug or alcohol addiction.

See **Table 3.76** for full data.



Section 4 – Experience and perceptions of Universal Credit

Sub-sections

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Awareness of Universal Credit

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Employer perceptions of Universal Credit

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Impacts of Universal Credit

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About this section

This chapter focuses on employers' general awareness of Universal Credit (UC) and the perceived benefits and drawbacks of UC. It also looks at the perceptions of a small number of employers who have experience of employing UC recipients and considers if this has had any impact on their business costs and the requests that they have received from their staff.

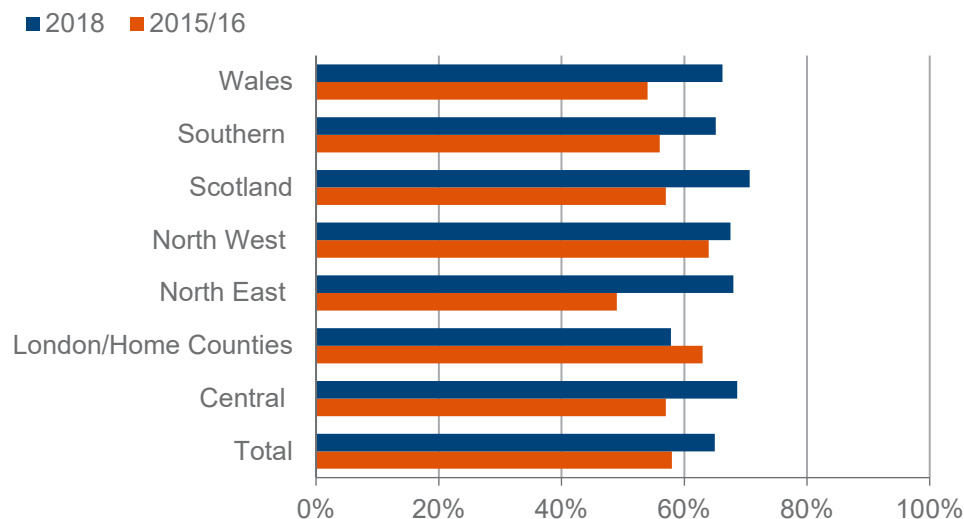
The pack cover the following sections:

- Awareness of Universal Credit: Employers' awareness of UC and how it has changed since the 2015/16 survey
- Benefits and drawbacks of UC: Employers' perceived benefits and drawbacks of Universal Credit
- Impacts of Universal Credit: How UC has impacted on business costs and the requests from staff in receipt of UC

Awareness of Universal Credit

Almost two-thirds of employers are aware of Universal Credit

Awareness of Universal Credit by region



Base: 2018 All businesses (n=4201), 2015/16 All businesses in section (n=2625)

Sixty-five per cent of employers were aware of UC, an increase of seven percentage points since 2015/16. Businesses in London and the Home Counties were significantly less likely to have heard of UC (58 per cent), compared to all other regions. Awareness of UC has increased significantly in all but three regions (Wales, the North West, London and Home Counties) since 2015/16. The largest percentage point increase came in the North East where it rose from 49 per cent in 2015/16 to 68 per cent in 2018.

There were higher than average levels of awareness amongst employers in the non-market sector (73 per cent) and business and other services (69 per cent) sectors. There were lower than average levels of awareness amongst employers in the trade, accommodation and transport sector (59 per cent) and construction (60 per cent). Larger organisations (250+) were more likely to be aware of Universal Credit than smaller organisations (<250 employees).

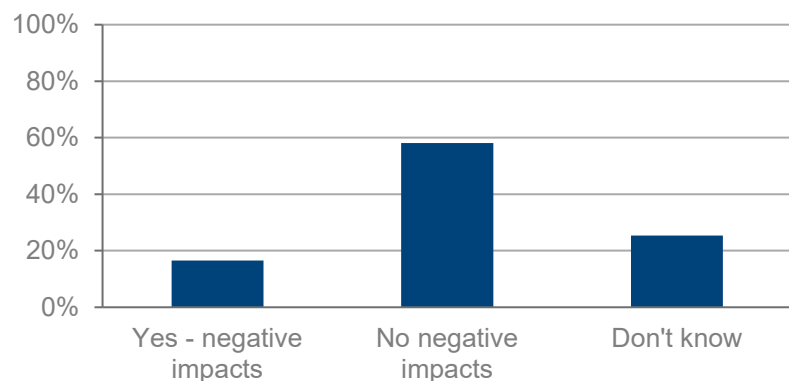
Overall, only two per cent of employers were aware of having one or more employees who were in receipt of Universal Credit.

See **Table 4.1** for full data.

Employer perceptions of Universal Credit

The majority of employers reported that Universal Credit has had no negative impact on their business

Perceived impact of Universal Credit on organisations



Base: Businesses aware of Universal Credit (2,864).

Employers who were aware of UC were asked about the positive and negative impacts, with a small proportion identifying both benefits and drawbacks to UC.

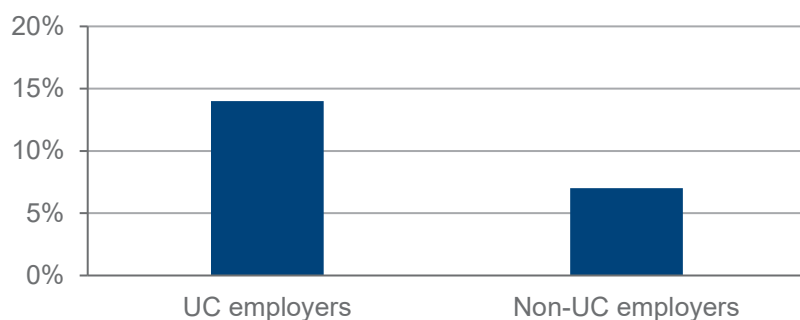
The majority of employers reported no negative impacts as a result of Universal Credit. Fifty-eight per cent of employers who were aware of Universal Credit felt there had been no negative impacts from UC, compared with 17 per cent who saw at least one negative impact.

These findings are from employers who reported an awareness of Universal Credit, and includes those without direct experience of staff in receipt of Universal Credit. As these results are perception based they are not linked to direct experience of the benefit in all cases.

See **Table 4.4** for full data.

Businesses with employees in receipt of UC were more likely to identify at least one benefit of UC

Employers identifying at least one benefit of UC to their business, 2018



Base: Businesses aware of Universal Credit (n=2,864)

Businesses with employees in receipt of UC were more likely to report positive impacts of UC to their business (14 per cent) compared to those without (7 per cent).

In 2018, a smaller proportion of employers who were aware of UC reported positive impacts of UC (7 per cent) on their business compared to the 2015/16 survey (11 per cent).

See **Table 4.2** for full data.

Employers see increased flexibility of workforce and more opportunities to get back into work as the benefits of Universal Credit

Perceived benefits of Universal Credit to the organisation

	Percentage
More flexible workforce	18
Gives people the opportunity to get back to work	16
Increase in number of available job applicants	12
Wider range of suitability of candidates	9
Tops up employee wages	7
Makes benefits easier to administrate	5
Posts being filled more quickly	4

Base: Businesses that felt there were benefits to their organisation as a result of Universal Credit (n=318).

Of those employers who were aware of UC, a small proportion (seven per cent) felt that the introduction of UC could result in benefits to their organisation.

This sub-group of employers were asked to identify the perceived benefits of UC. The most commonly suggested benefit for employers included 'a more flexible workforce' (18 per cent), 'giving people the opportunity to get back to work' (16 per cent) and an 'increase in number of available job applicants' (12 per cent).

Larger organisations are significantly more likely to say UC could result in benefits to their organisation than small and micro employers (16 and six per cent respectively).

See **Table 4.3** for full data.

A small proportion of employers told us that Universal Credit could result in delays in employees receiving benefits

Perceived drawbacks of Universal Credit

	Percentage
Delays receiving benefit payments	29
Payments reduced/recipients worse off	20
Decrease in hours worked/requested - penalises working more	7
Increase in 'poor quality' job applications	5
Heavy handed/unfair sanctions or allocation	5
Poorly administered/implemented	4
Increase in admin costs	4

Base: Businesses that felt there were negative impacts of Universal Credit (n=552).

Of those employers who were aware of UC, a small proportion of these employers (16 per cent) perceived that the introduction of UC could result in any negative impacts.

Of the small proportion of employers who were able to identify any perceived negative impacts, the most commonly suggested drawbacks included 'delays in receiving benefit payments' (29 per cent), and 'payments reduced/recipients worse off' (20 per cent). Perceived negative impacts were mainly focussed on the individual, with only a small proportion of employers identifying perceived negative impacts related to their business.

Only a small proportion of employers (2 per cent) who were aware of UC said that UC had impacted on the working patterns the business offers to staff.

See **Table 4.5** for full data.

Impacts of Universal Credit

A fifth of Universal Credit employers had received requests for increases in working hours from staff on Universal Credit

Requests from employees in receipt of Universal Credit to their employer



Base: Businesses aware of employees claiming Universal Credit (n=308).

Businesses who were aware of any employees on UC in their organisation were asked if they had received any requests from staff on a range of issues. A fifth of these employers had received requests from staff for increases in working hours (20 per cent), explanations of payslips (20 per cent) and 16 per cent received requests for skills development.

Although responses are too low to present statistically robust figures, employers often reported that these requests were perceived as a benefit to their organisation. In particular, increases in working hours, additional training and skills development.

See **Table 4.19** for full data.

Section 5 – Child Maintenance

Sub-sections

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Use of CSA and CMS

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Employer service-service portal

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About this section

This chapter focuses on employers who are making payments on behalf of their employees to the Child Support Agency (CSA) or Child Maintenance Service (CMS). We look at how the proportion of employers with employees using the CSA/CMS has changed since the last survey and the proportion of employers using the self-service portal to process their deductions.

Parents using the CSA or CMS can make payments directly or via the CSA/CMS. When payments are not being made in full, the CSA or CMS can take action to get the child maintenance owed. One of these actions is to take money from the paying parent's earnings through a 'deduction from earnings order/request'. The CSA or CMS will tell the paying parent's employer how much to take from their wages. The employer must then pass on the money or they can be taken to court.

Use of Child Support Agency (CSA) or the Child Maintenance Scheme (CMS)

Only a small proportion of employers had employees paying child maintenance through the CSA or CMS via a DEO

Employers with employees paying the CSA or CMS through a DEO, by region

	Southern England	London/ Home Counties	Central England	North East	North West	Scotland	Wales	Percentage Total
CSA	2	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
CMS	2	1	2	1	1	1	3	1
Neither	87	84	91	88	90	86	89	88

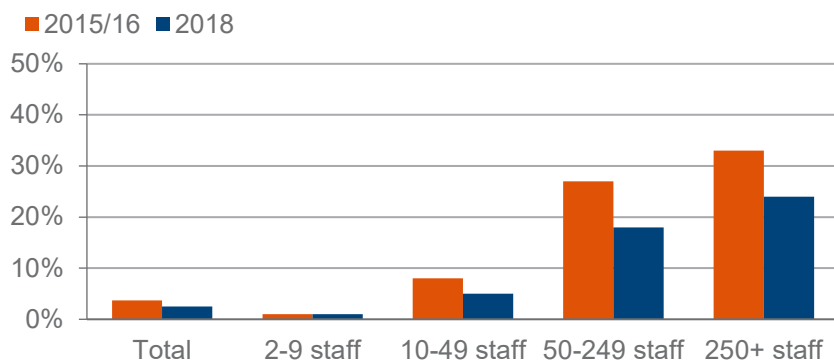
Base: All who answered this section (n=1,940).

The survey showed that only a small proportion of employers said they currently had employees who pay their child maintenance through a 'Deduction from Earnings Order (DEO)' to either the CSA or the CMS. Just two per cent of employers have employees who pay their child maintenance through a DEO to the CSA, and one per cent of employers have employees who pay through a DEO to the CMS.

See **Table 5.1** for full data.

The proportion of employers with a child maintenance DEO in place has remained broadly the same

Employers with employees paying the CSA/CMS with a DEO by size, 2015/16 and 2018



Base: All businesses who were asked this section, 2018 (n=1,940), 2015/16 (n=2,100).

Overall the proportion of employers with employees paying their child maintenance through the CSA or CMS using a DEO, has remained broadly the same at three per cent since 2015/16.

Larger organisations are more likely to have an employee paying their child maintenance through the CSA or CMS. Almost a quarter (24 per cent) of large organisations (250+ staff) had at least one child maintenance DEO in place compared to less than one per cent of micro employers (2-9 staff). There has been a nine percentage point reduction within this group (250+ staff), and the 50-249 group, since 2015/16.

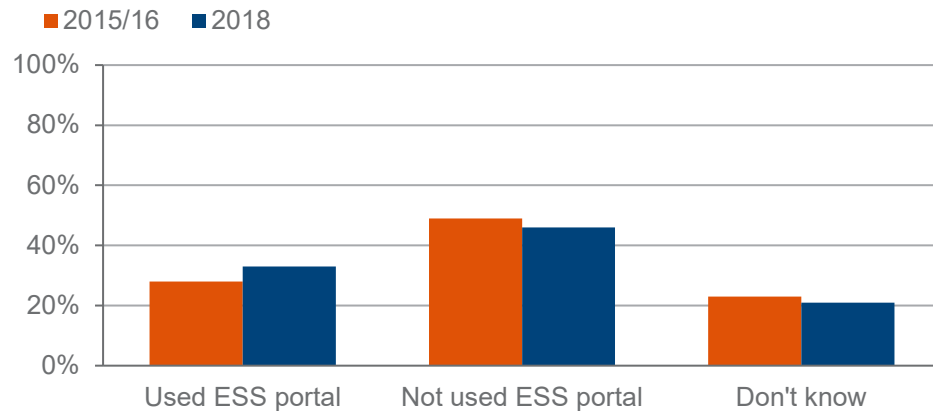
In 2012 the Child Maintenance Service was created to replace the CSA and cases managed by the CSA are being closed. Parents are encouraged to contact Child Maintenance options for support in setting up a new child maintenance arrangement. This means that the number of CSA cases is falling and the number of CMS cases is rising.

Table 5.1 for full data.

Employer self-service portal

The proportion of employers using the employer self-service portal has increased since 2015/16

Employers using the employer self-service portal, 2015/16 and 2018



Base: Businesses that have employees who pay Child Maintenance through DEO, 2018 (n=173), 2015/16 (n=460).

Organisations that have employees who pay their child maintenance through a DEO were asked if they used the employer self-service portal to process their DEOs online.

Overall, 33 per cent of employers who have at least one employee paying their child maintenance through a DEO had used the employer self-service portal to process it online. Around a fifth (21 per cent) of employers were unsure whether their organisation was using the portal to process DEOs online.

See **Table 5.2** for full data.

Section 6 – Occupational health and employee sickness

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The use of occupational health services

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Awareness and use of the fit note

[31](#)

About this section

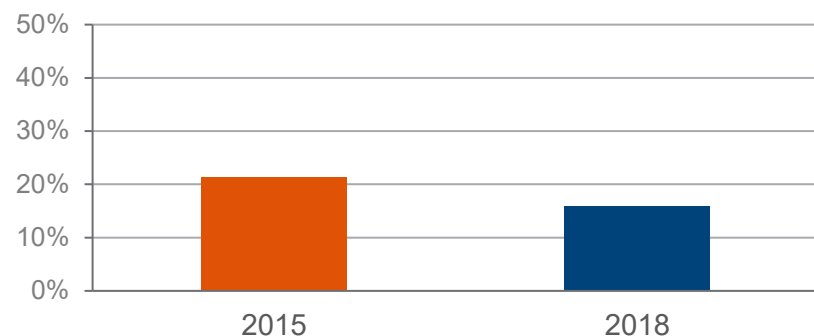
This chapter focuses on the practices and perceptions of employers in relation to occupational health services and sickness-related DWP policies, specifically the Statement of Fitness for Work or 'fit note'.

- Respondents in this survey were not given a definition of occupational health services. Definitions may refer to:
 - Advisory and support services which help to maintain and promote employee health and wellbeing. Occupational health services support organisations to achieve these goals by providing direct support and advice to employees and managers, as well as support at the organisational level e.g. to improve work environments and cultures.
 - Services which aim to improve the health and safety of employees in an organisation.
- The fit note is issued for Statutory Sick Pay or Social Security purposes and enables doctors to give advice to their patients about the impact of their health condition on their fitness for work. It is used to provide medical evidence for employers or to support a claim to health related benefits through DWP.

The use of occupational health services

The proportion of employers with an occupational health service was lower in 2018 than in 2015/16

Employers who have occupational health services, 2018 and 2015/16



Base: All businesses who were asked this section, 2018 (n=1,918) and 2015/16 (2,100).

In the 2018 and 2015/16 waves of the survey, employers were asked if their organisations use occupational health services.

Across both waves less than a quarter of employers stated that they have these services. Fifteen per cent of employers had occupational health services in 2018, significantly lower than in 2015/16 (21 per cent).

When looking at differences between sectors, organisations in the non-market services sector were more likely to have occupational health services (42 per cent) compared to the average for all organisations.

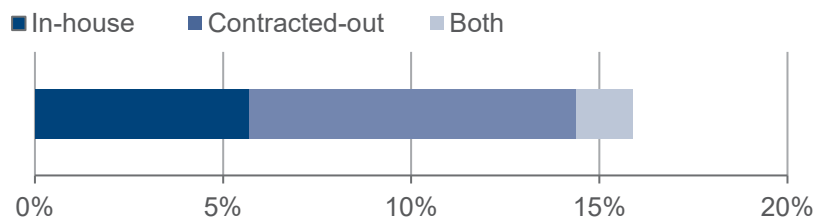
Small employers (2-9 staff) were less likely to have an occupational health service (11 per cent) compared to largest organisations (72 per cent).

Note that respondents in this survey were not given a definition of occupational health services.

See **Table 6.1** for full data.

Of employers who use occupational health services, there was no significant difference in the use of in-house vs contract services

Type of occupational health service



Base: All businesses who were asked this section, 2018 (n=1,918).

Employers were asked to indicate whether the occupational health services they used were in-house or contracted out.

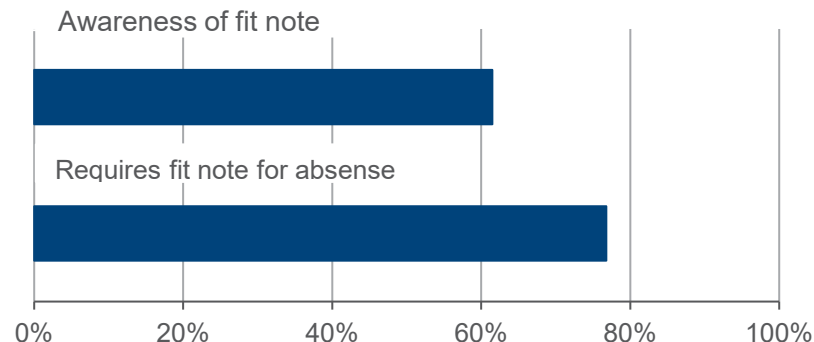
There was no significant differences between the proportion of employers with in-house (6 per cent) and contracted out (9 per cent) services, however very few organisations used both kinds of service (2 per cent).

See **Table 6.1** for full data.

Awareness and use of the fit note

Most employers were aware of the fit note and three-quarters of those require them to cover sickness absence

Awareness of the fit note and requirement of a fit note to cover sickness absence



Base: All businesses who were asked this section, 2018 (n=1,918); and Businesses aware of the fit note, 2015/16 (n=1,420).

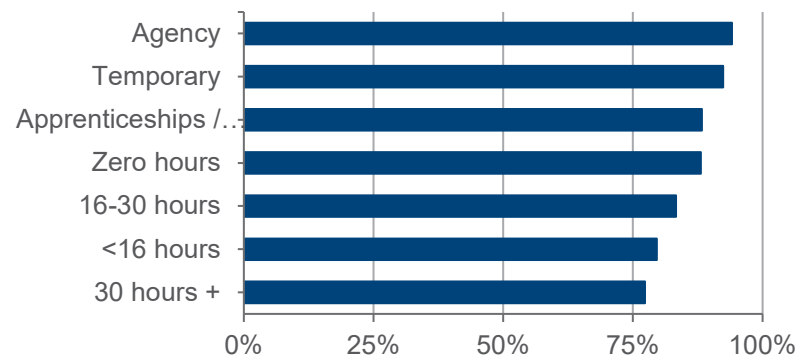
The fit note enables doctors to give advice to their patients about the impact of their health condition on their fitness for work and is used to provide medical evidence for employers or to support a claim to health related benefits through DWP. Sixty-two per cent of employers were aware of the fit note and, of those, 77 per cent required them for sickness absences lasting longer than seven days.

Larger organisations were more likely to require a fit note for sickness absence (17% compared with 6% for the total), as were businesses in the non-market services sector (10% compared with 6% for the total).

See **Table 6.2** and **Table 6.4** for full data.

Employers with 'non-standard' contracts were more likely to require a fit note to cover sickness absence

Employers requiring fit notes by contract type



Base: Businesses aware of the fit note, 2018 (n=1,420).

Employers who stated that they recruited employees on non-standard contracts, i.e. agency, temporary, apprenticeships and graduate schemes, and zero-hour contracts, also stated that they required a fit note for a sickness absence lasting longer than seven days at a higher rate than those who only recruited employees on 30+ hour a week contracts.

See **Table 6.4** for full data.

Awareness and use of the fit note

Three-quarters of employers who require a fit note for sickness absence make use the note’s recommendations

How employers use recommendations on the fit note

	Percentage
As medical evidence for sick pay	39
As guidance for an employee’s return to work	34
To make adjustments to support an employee	28
Haven’t needed to use the advice on the fit note	5
Record purposes	4
Other	9
Don’t know	13

Base: Businesses who use the fit note to certify sickness absences, 2018 (n=1,238).

Of those employers who stated that they required a fit note for sickness absences lasting longer than seven days, over three-quarters stated that they used the recommendations of fit notes for at least one of the main policy intentions of fit notes. That is:

- As medical evidence for sickness pay,
- As guidance for an employer’s return to work,
- To make adjustments to support an employee.

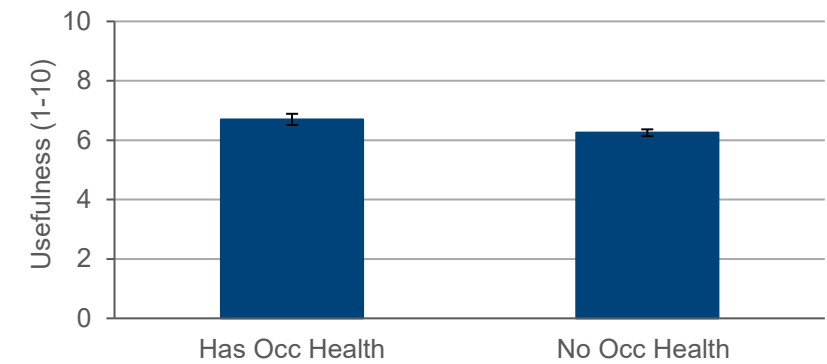
Half of these employers used them to help employees back into work either by guiding their return to work or to make adjustments for their employees.

Five per cent of employers who required a fit note haven’t needed to use the advice found on the fit note.

See **Table 6.5** for full data.

Those with occupational health services found the fit note more useful

Fit note usefulness by whether they have occupational health services



Base: Businesses who use the fit note to certify sick leave (with don’t know responses removed), 2018 (n=1,064). Error bars in this figure represent the standard error of the mean.

Fit note recommendations were found to be of moderate to high usefulness, with employers rating them as an average of 6.5 out of 10 (where 10 is extremely useful). These ratings did not differ based on the size or sector of an organisation.

Employers who had occupation health services rated the usefulness significantly higher at 6.7 out of 10 compared to employers without occupational health services who rated the usefulness at 6.3 out of 10.

See **Table 6.6** for full data.

Section 7 – Older workers

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Recruitment and monitoring

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Benefits and challenges

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Flexible working arrangements

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Pensions

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About this section

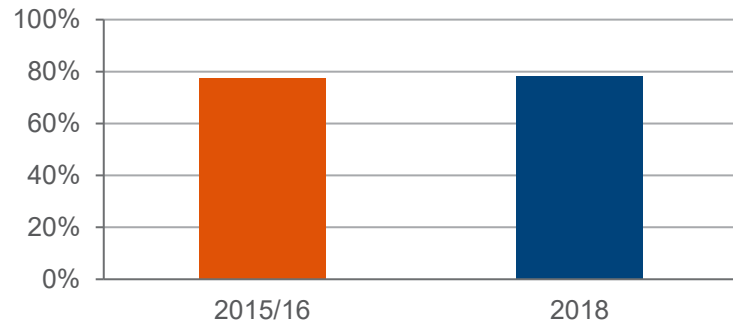
This chapter focuses on employers' perceptions and employment practices related to older workers. Here we classify older workers as those aged 50 and above in line with the Department's Fuller Working Lives Strategy. An employer may consider workers in this group to be approaching retirement. This survey provides important information on the views and actions of employers, who are central to achieving the Government's Fuller Working Lives ambition. The chapter includes the following subsections.

- Recruitment and monitoring of older workers: findings related to the employment for older workers as well as employer practices around monitoring the age profile of their organisation.
- Benefits and challenges: findings related to the perceived benefits and challenges related to older workers.
- Flexible working hours: results related to requests for changes to working patterns for employees who are approaching retirement.
- Information about pensions: changes between 2015/16 and 2018 based on the provision of information related to pensions.

Recruitment and monitoring of older workers

The employment of older workers has remained stable between 2015/16 and 2018

Employers who have older workers in their business in 2018 and 2015/16



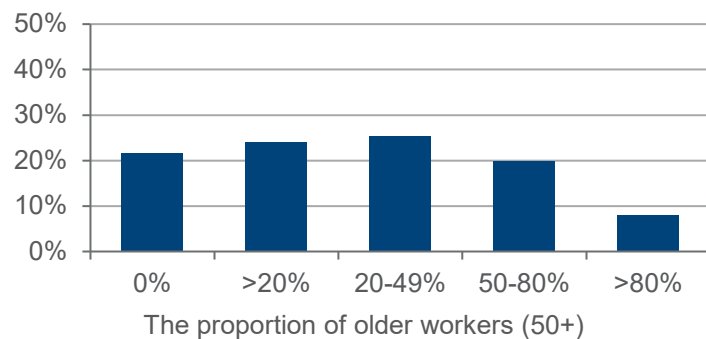
Base: All businesses, 2018 (n=4,201), 2015/2016 (n=4,200).

When asked about the age profile of their organisation 78 per cent of employers said that they have older employees (those over 50) in their workforce. This proportion has remained the same as in the 2015/16 wave of the survey.

See **Table 1.36** for full data.

Almost 30 per cent of employers report that the majority of their workforce are older workers

Proportion of older workers within organisations



Base: All businesses, 2018 (n=4,201).

Employers were asked to estimate what proportion of their workforce is comprised of older workers.

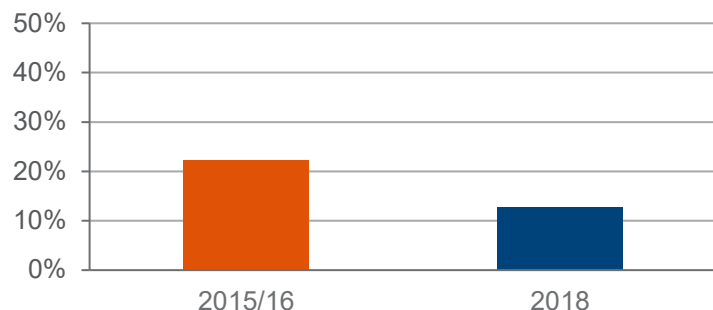
Almost 30 per cent of employers have a majority of older workers within their organisation whilst 71 per cent of employers stated that older workers make up less than half of their workforce. Less than 10 per cent of employers reported having 'more than 80% older workers' within their organisations.

See **Table 1.37** for full data.

Recruitment and monitoring of older workers

The proportion of employers monitoring the age of potential recruits has reduced since 2015/16

Employers who monitor the age of their workers during recruitment in 2018 and 2015/16



Base: All businesses who were asked this section, 2018 (n=2,261), 2015/16 (n=2,100).

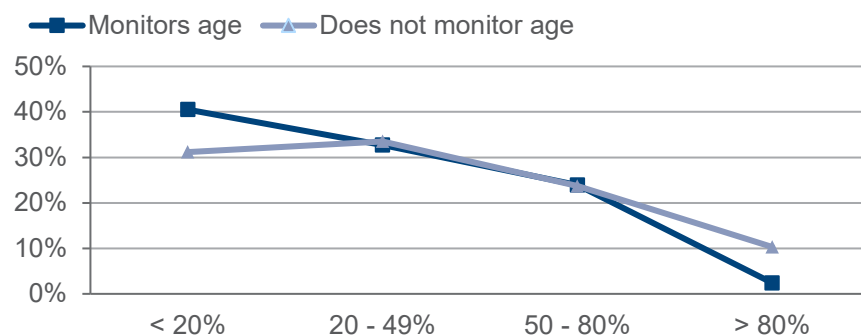
Between 2015/16 and 2018 the percentage of employers who stated that they 'monitor the age of candidates during recruitment' reduced by approximately 9 percentage points (22 percent in 2015/2016 to 13 per cent in 2018).

There was no particular difference in monitoring of age based on an employer's organisation size, sector or geographic region.

See **Table 7.3** for full data.

Employers who monitored the age of potential recruits were less likely to employ high proportions of older workers

Employers who monitor age during recruitment by the rates of employment for older workers



Base: Businesses who employ people over 50, 2018 (n=2,261).

Employers who monitor the age of their workforce during recruitment are more likely to have a lower proportion of older workers within their organisation compared with those who do not monitor the age of potential recruits. Thirty-one per cent of employers who do not monitor age during recruitment have less than 20 per cent of their workforce who are older workers, compared to 40 per cent who do monitor the age of potential recruits.

Conversely, those employers who do not monitor age during recruitment are more likely to have a high proportion of older workers in their organisation compared with those who do monitor their age of their workforce.

See **Table 7.3** for full data.

Benefits and challenges of employing older workers

Employers value the experience and reliability of having older workers in their workforce

Benefits of employing older workers

	Percentage	
	2015/16	2018
The experience of older workers	64	78
The reliability of older workers	24	33
Motivation/self-motivation of older workers	4	13
Loyalty to the company	8	11
Productivity of older workers	3	7
Good job specific skills	7	6
No particular benefits	14	6
Good customer skills	4	5
The punctuality of older workers	3	5
Good communication skills	4	4
Other	5	3

Base: Businesses who employ people over 50, 2018 (n=1,966), 2015/16 (2,100). All responses with less than 3 per cent response were removed from table (based on the 2018 results).

Among those employers who have employees over 50 years old in their organisation, 78 per cent listed the 'experience of older workers' as a benefit. This is a significant increase on the 2015/16 figures for this category (64 per cent)

The next most common response was the 'reliability of older workers' (33 per cent) whilst the 'motivation/self-motivation' and 'loyalty to the company' of older workers were both relatively common responses (13 and 11 per cent respectively). There was a significant increase between 2015/16 and 2018 for all four of these categories.

Very few employers (six per cent) reported there being 'no particular benefits' of older workers to their organisation. This is a significant decrease on the 2015/16 figures (14 per cent).

See **Table 7.1** for full data.

Almost half of employers who employ older workers stated there were no challenges associated employees from this group

Challenges of employing older workers

	Percentage	
	2015/16	2018
No particular challenges	29	54
Health related absence	13	15
Difficulty with physical aspects of the job	18	12
Older workers are stuck in their ways	5	5
Older workers are slow to learn new skills / tasks	5	5
Out of date skills and qualifications	3	4
Older workers might retire soon	15	4
Other	4	3

Base: Businesses who employ people over 50, 2018 (n=1,966), 2015/16 (2,100). All responses with less than 3 per cent response were removed from table (based on the 2018 results).

When asked about the challenges of employing older workers, 54 per cent of employers stated that there were 'no particular challenges'. This is a significant increase compared with the 2015/16 survey (29 per cent).

The next most common responses were challenges associated with 'health related problems' (15 per cent) and 'difficulty with the physical aspects of their jobs' (12 per cent), however these responses were relatively low compared with the 'no particular challenges' response.

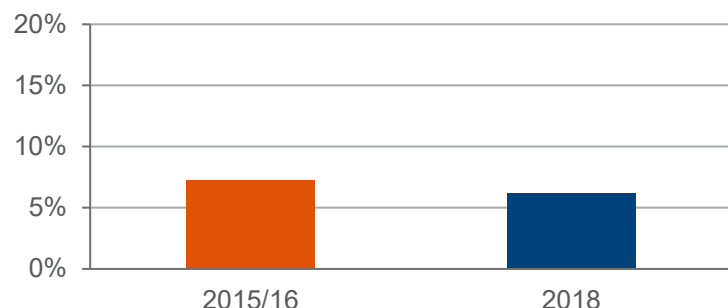
Significantly less employers stated that 'difficulty with the physical aspect of the job' and concern that 'older workers might retire soon' were drawbacks in 2015/16 compared with 2018 (18 and 15 percent respectively).

See **Table 7.2** for full data.

Flexible working arrangements when approaching retirement

Six per cent of employers received requests for changes to working patterns for older workers

Employers who received requests for changing working patterns from employees approaching retirement in 2018 and 2015/2016



Base: All businesses who were asked this section, 2018 (n=1,940), 2015/2016 (n=2,100).

The proportion of employers who received requests for changing working patterns from employees approaching retirement was relatively low (six per cent). Additionally, between 2015/2016 and 2018 there was no significant difference in the proportion of employers who received these requests.

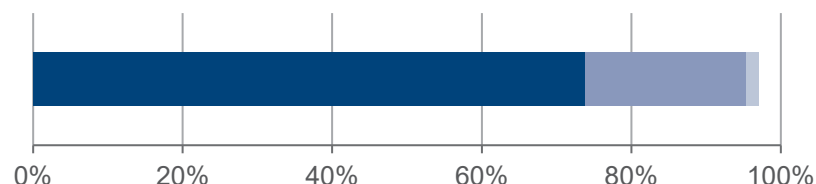
When broken down by organisation size, the largest employers were more likely to report more requests (35 per cent) than the smallest employers (three per cent), as did organisations with in-house or contracted-out occupational health teams (16 per cent) compared with those who didn't (four per cent).

See **Table 7.28** for full data.

Of those employers who received requests the vast majority stated that they were able to accept in all cases

Employer responses to requests to change working patterns when approaching retirement

■ Yes - all cases ■ Yes - some cases ■ No - no cases



Base: Businesses that have received requests for changing work patterns in the run up to retirement, 2018 (n=330). Don't know responses are not included in this figure.

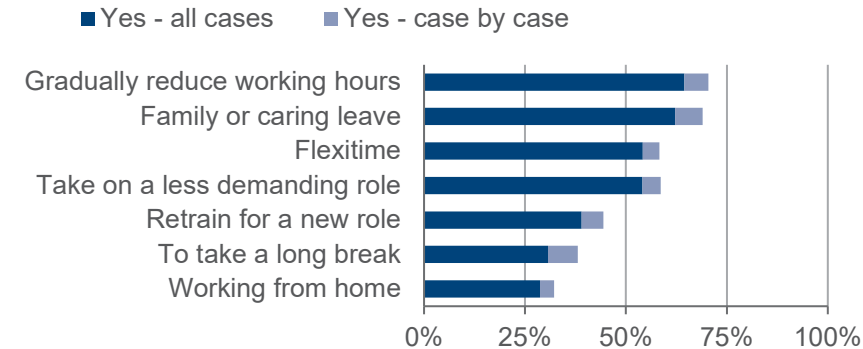
Of those employers who received requests for changes to working patterns in 2018, the vast majority stated that they were able to accept all requests (74 per cent) or that they were able to accept some requests, on a case-by-case basis (22 per cent).

Very few employers (two per cent) stated that they did not, in any cases, accept requests for changing working patterns from employees approaching retirement.

See **Table 7.28** for full data.

Employers’ decision to offer changes to working patterns varies considerably based on the nature of the request

Employers who would accept requests to change working patterns if asked



Employers were most likely to say that they would to accept requests for ‘gradually reduced working hours’ (71 per cent) or ‘family or caring leave’ (69 per cent) and were least likely to say they would accept requests to ‘take longer breaks’ (38 per cent) or to ‘work from home’ (32 per cent).

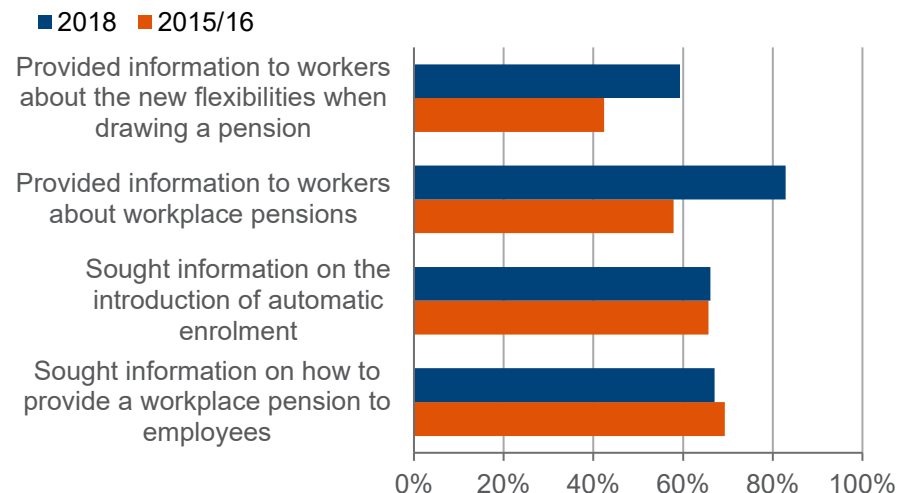
See **Table 7.29** for full data.

Base: All businesses who were asked this section, 2018 (n=2,261).

Pensions

Employers were more likely to provide information about pensions to their employees in 2018 compared to 2015/2016

Employers seeking or providing information regarding pensions



Base: All businesses who were asked this section, 2018 (n=2,261), 2015/2016 (n=2,100).

In 2018, a significantly higher percentage of employers reported providing their employees with information about 'work place pensions' (83 per cent) and 'new flexibilities when drawing a pension' (59 per cent) than in 2015/16 (58 per cent and 42 per cent respectively).

The rate that employers sought information on 'workplace pensions' or 'automatic enrolment' was similar between 2018 and 2015/16, at just over 65 per cent.

See **Table 7.27** for full data.

Section 8 – Disadvantaged groups

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Employment of disadvantaged groups

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About this section

This chapter focuses on the employment of disadvantaged groups. The definition of ‘disadvantaged groups’ used includes homeless people, ex-offenders, people with drug/alcohol issues, people struggling with debt, those identified as being in entrenched worklessness (claiming out of work benefits for 3 out of 4 years), complex jobseekers, and care leavers.

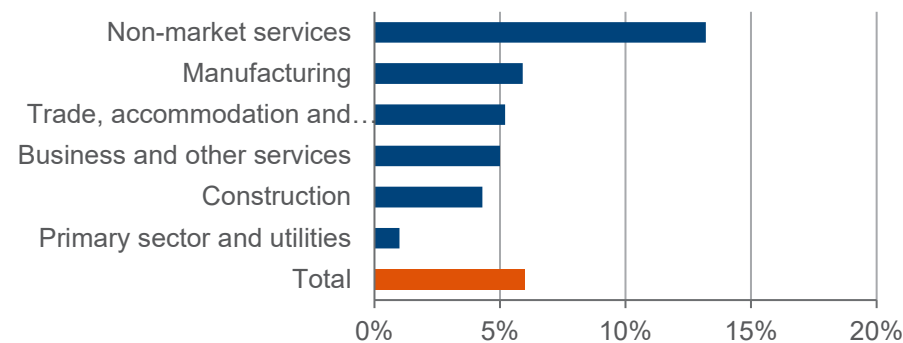
The chapter includes the following sections.

- Employment of disadvantaged groups: The percentage of employers who are aware of employing people from disadvantaged groups. The results also show which programs employers saw as most likely to convince them to employ more people from these groups.
- Disability Confident campaign: The levels of awareness of the campaign, as well as the impact that campaign had on the confidence of employers to recruit and support people with disabilities.
- Access to Work scheme: The levels of awareness of the Access to Work Scheme and the percentage of employers that have used the scheme.
- Support for carers: the prevalence of requests for support with caring responsibilities (excluding childcare).

Employment of disadvantaged groups

The proportion of employers employing someone from a disadvantaged group has fallen since 2015/16

Percentage of employers employing someone from a disadvantaged group by sector



Base: All employers in this section (n=1,940).

The percentage of employers aware of employing someone from a disadvantaged group has fallen by a small but significant amount since 2015/16 (six per cent in 2018 compared to eight per cent in 2015/16). (See earlier for the definition of disadvantaged groups).

The likelihood of being aware of employing someone from a disadvantaged group varies by sector. Thirteen per cent of employers in the non-market services sector were aware of employing someone from a disadvantaged group, which is statistically higher than any other sector. This compares to one per cent of those in the primary sector and utilities sectors.

See **Table 8.1** for full data.

Employers feel positive promotion and help from JCP would encourage them to consider employing from disadvantaged groups

Suggested programmes to encourage hiring from disadvantaged groups

	Percentage
Positive promotion of your company	47
Support from Jobcentre Plus for you as an employer	45
In work support provided by the Jobcentre to the employee	44
Better understanding of the 'benefits' of employing this group	44
Mentoring support for individuals provided externally	43
Information on how to reach/engage with people from this group	41
Hearing from other organisations who already employ people from this group	41
Buddying support from another company with a history of employing individuals with complex barriers	40
None of the above	42

Base: those who had not employed from disadvantaged groups (n=1,472).

Those who said they were not aware of employing anyone from a disadvantaged group were asked what would encourage them to consider doing so.

Positive promotion of their company was the most common option chosen with 47 per cent of employers saying it would encourage them to hire from among these groups. More support, for both employer and employee, from Jobcentre Plus were also commonly chosen options. Forty-four per cent of employers reported that Jobcentre Plus support for employees could encourage them to hire more people from disadvantaged groups. A similar proportion (45 per cent) stated that support from the Jobcentre Plus to them as an employer would encourage them to take on more from these groups.

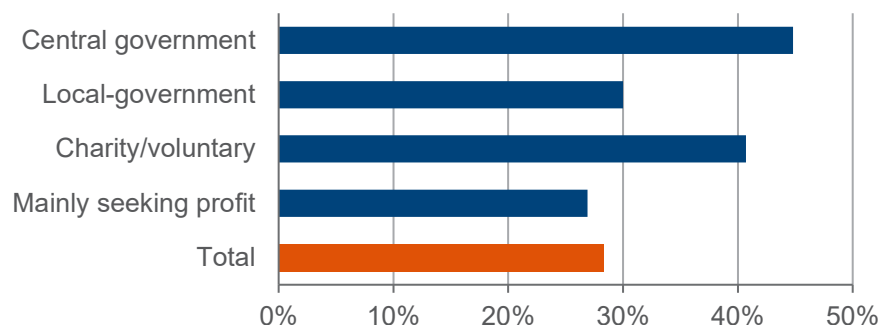
Forty-two per cent of employers stated that none of the listed programs would make them consider employing people from disadvantaged groups. This was higher for certain sectors with 59 per cent of employers in primary sector and utilities stating that none of these factors would convince them.

See **Table 8.2** for full data.

Disability Confident Campaign

More than a quarter of employers were aware of the Disability Confidence campaign

Percentage aware of the Disability Confidence campaign by organisation type



Base: All in this section (n=1,940).

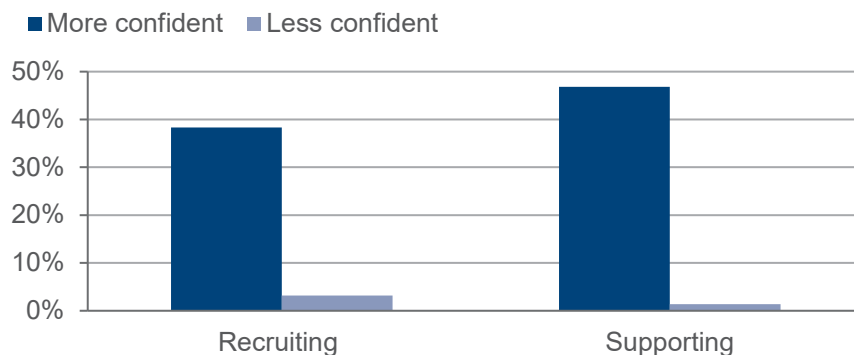
Between 2015/16 and 2018 there has been no significant change in the percentage of employers aware of the Disability Confident campaign. In 2018, 28 per cent of employers reported being aware of the campaign.

For 2018, results also showed that organisations working in the charity sector and local government were significantly more likely to have heard of the campaign (41 per cent and 45 per cent respectively) compared to 28 per cent awareness among organisations mainly seeking profit.

See **Table 8.3** for full data.

Almost half of those aware of the Disability Confident campaign, felt more confident supporting disabled people in work as a result.

Confidence in recruiting and supporting disabled people as a result of Disability Confident



Base: All aware of Disability Confident campaign (n=605).

Of those who were aware of the Disability Confident campaign, 38 per cent said it had made them more confident in recruiting disabled people, with only three per cent saying it had made them less confident. More than a third of respondents (35 per cent) had not recruited since becoming aware of the campaign.

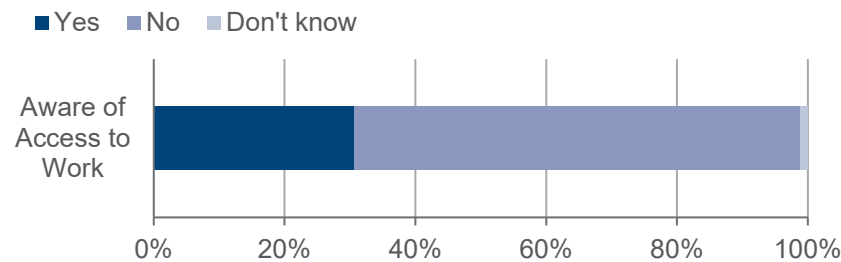
Forty-seven per cent of employers who were aware of the campaign, said they were more confident in supporting disabled people in work as a result of the campaign compared to one per cent who felt less confident following the campaign.

See **Table 8.4** and **Table 8.5** for full data.

Access to Work scheme

Larger employers have a greater awareness of Access to Work

Percentage of employers aware of Access to Work scheme



Base: All in this section (n=1,940).

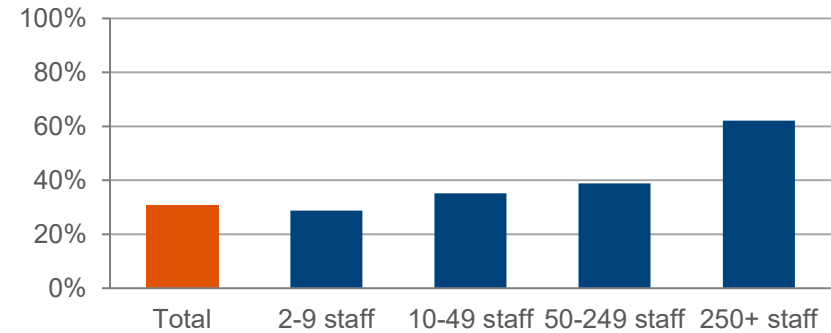
Employers were asked if they were aware that the DWP could provide support for employers through the Access to Work scheme. Thirty per cent of employers stated that they were aware of the scheme. Sixty-eight per cent were not aware of the scheme and one per cent stated that they didn't know.

Only two per cent of employers had received support through Access to Work

Organisations with more than 250 employees were significantly more likely to have heard of the Access to Work Scheme (62 per cent) compared to 29 per cent of small organisations (2 to 9 employees).

See **Table 8.6** for full data.

Percentage of employers aware of Access to Work scheme by size

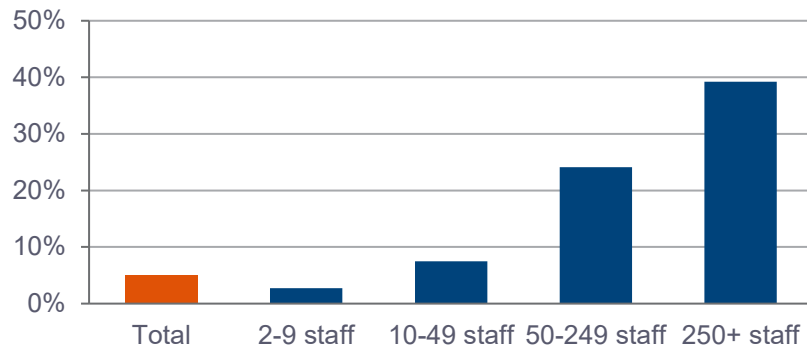


Base: All in this section (n=1,940).

Support for carers

A small proportion of employers received requests for support with caring responsibilities

Employers receiving requests for support with caring (not childcare) by size



Base: All businesses in section (n=1,940).

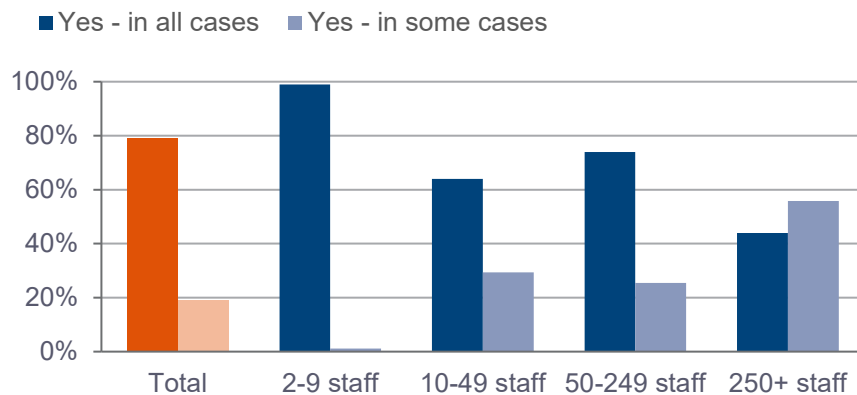
Overall, five per cent of employers had received at least one request for help with caring responsibilities in the 12 months prior to interview.

Larger employers were more likely to have received these types of requests. Thirty-nine per cent of employers with more than 250 employees had received at least one request for support with caring responsibilities compared with three per cent of businesses with 2 to 9 employees.

See **Table 8.8** for full data.

Smaller employers were more likely to meet all caring requests compared to larger employers

Requests met for support with caring (not childcare) by size



Base: Businesses that received requests for caring responsibilities other than childcare (n=273).

Overall, of those employers who had received at least one request for support with caring responsibilities, 79 per cent said that they were able to meet these requests in all cases. Nineteen per cent reported being able to meet some of these requests, and only two per cent reported they were unable to meet any of these types of request.

Smaller employers were more likely to report being able to meet all of these types of request compared with larger employers. Forty-four per cent of employers with more than 250 employees were able to meet all caring support requests compared with 99 per cent of employers with 2 to 9 employees.

See **Table 8.13** for full data.

Section 9 – Mental health

Sub-sections

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Supporting and monitoring

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Types of support

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Attitudes to mental health

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About this section

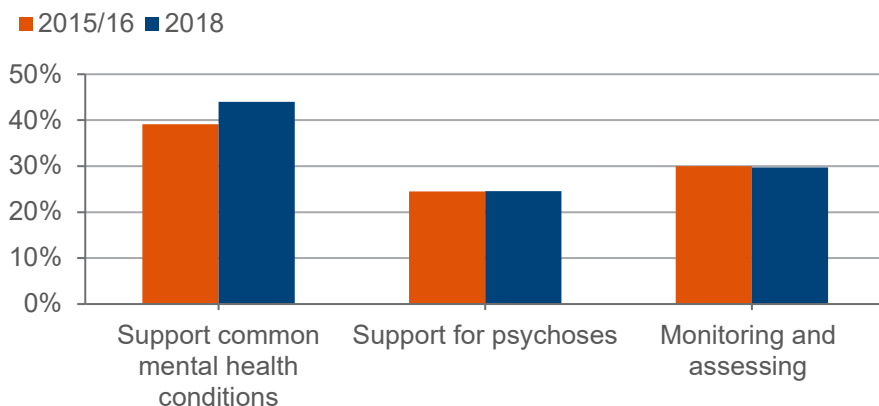
This chapter focuses on the practices and perceptions of employers in relation to the mental health of their employees. It includes the following subsections:

- Support and monitoring: This section covers the proportion of employers with systems in place for monitoring and supporting employees with mental health conditions
- Types of support: What kinds of support employers offer to employees with mental health conditions
- Attitudes to mental health: Employers' attitudes to mental health, including the impact they perceive it having on an employee's ability to do their work.

Systems to monitor and support mental health conditions

The proportion of employers with policies to support employees with common mental health conditions has increased since 2015/16

Employers with systems in place to monitor and support employees with mental health conditions



Base: All employers who answered this section, 2018 (n=2,283), 2015/16 (n=2,100).

Overall, 44 per cent of organisations had systems in place to support employees with common mental health conditions such as anxiety and depression. This is a statistically significant increase since the 2015/16 survey, when 39 per cent of organisations reported having such systems.

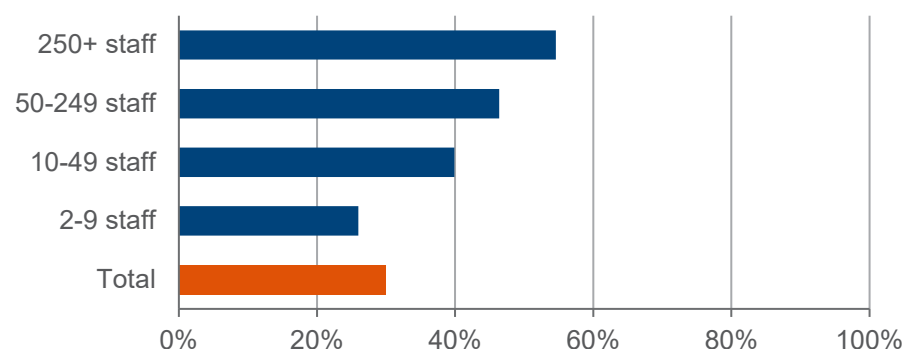
The proportion of employers with systems in place to support people with psychoses (e.g. schizophrenia, personality disorder) has remained constant at 25 per cent.

The percentage of employers who had systems in place for assessing and monitoring mental health wellbeing of employees has remained stable since 2015/16, at 30 per cent.

See **Table 9.1** and **Table 9.2** for full data.

Larger employers are more likely to have systems to assess and monitor mental wellbeing

Employers with systems in place for assessing and monitoring mental wellbeing of employees, by size



Base: All employers who answered this section, (n=2,283).

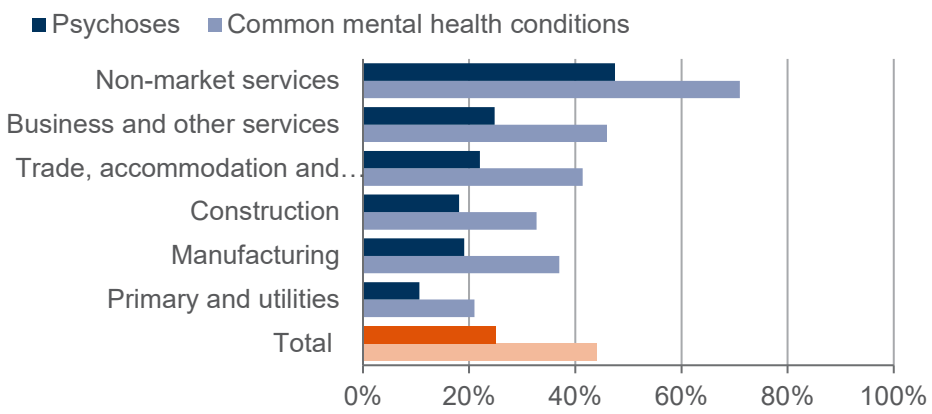
Larger organisations were more likely to report having systems to monitor and assess the mental health of employees. Fifty-five per cent of organisations with over 250 employees had systems in place compared to 26 per cent for employees with 2-9 members of staff.

There were also some large differences between sectors, with organisations in the non-market services sector being significantly more likely to have systems in place to monitor and assess the mental health of employees (60 per cent). This compares, to only 17 per cent of those in the primary sector and utilities sector.

See **Table 9.12** for full data.

Employers in the non-market services sector are most likely to have systems in place to support those with mental health conditions

Employers with systems in place to support employees with mental health conditions, by sector



The proportion of employers offering mental health support systems to employees, for either common mental health conditions or psychoses, varies significantly between sectors.

Seventy-one per cent of employers from the non-market services sector said they had systems in place to support those with common mental health conditions, whilst 47 per cent have systems in place to support employees with psychoses, both statistically significantly higher than all other sectors.

Employers in the primary sector and utilities were statistically less likely to report support systems for employees with either common mental health conditions (21 per cent) and psychoses (11 per cent) compared to all other sectors.

See **Table 9.1** and **Table 9.2** for full data.

Types of support offered

Permitting employees to take time off at short notice remains the most common form of mental health support

Types of support offered to employees with mental health conditions

	Percentage
Give permission to take time off at short notice	87
Change their working pattern	63
Change the type of task they do to relieve stress	61
Adjustments through Access to Work	46
Access to mentoring	41
Access to independent counselling or advice	33
Stress management training	32
Other	3

Base: All employers who answered this section (n=2,283).

The most common type of mental health support offered was allowing employees to take time off at short notice, with 87 per cent of all employers reporting this as a policy. Other common policies include the opportunity for employees to change their working pattern (63 per cent) or to change the type of tasks they do (61 per cent).

All of the support policies listed were more commonly offered by larger organisations than smaller organisations. For example, 87 per cent of organisations with 250+ staff offered employees with mental health conditions the opportunity to change the type of tasks they do compared to 57 per cent of those with 2-9 members of staff.

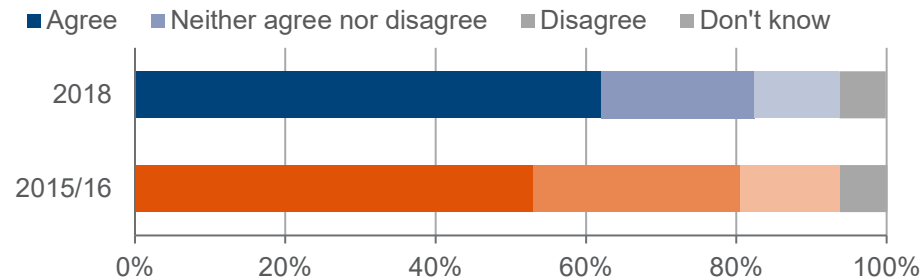
A smaller proportion of organisations in the primary sector and utilities, and manufacturing reported providing these kinds of support service, where as those in the non-market services sector consistently report higher than average levels of support.

See **Table 9.11** for full data.

Attitudes towards employees with mental health conditions

There has been an increase in positive attitudes towards employees with mental health conditions since 2015/16

Employers that agree that people with a mental health condition are as productive as everyone else



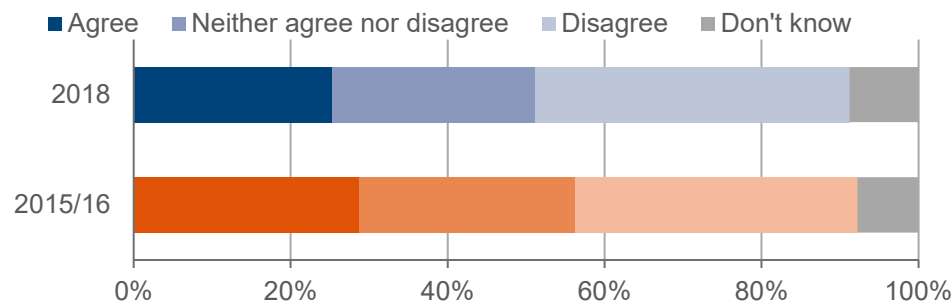
Base for all: All respondents in this section, 2018 (n=2,283), 2015/16 (n=2,100).

The percentage of employers who agree that people with mental health conditions are as productive as everyone else has seen a statistically significant increase since 2015/16. In 2018, 62 per cent of respondents agreed with this statement, compared to 53 per cent in 2015/16.

In 2018, only 11 per cent of employers disagreed that people with mental health conditions are as productive as everyone else. Twenty percent of employers stated that they 'neither agree nor disagree' with the statement, although this neutral response was significantly higher among employers in Southern England (32% state that they neither agree nor disagree) than in any other region.

Results for 2018 also saw a statistically significant increase in the percentage of respondents agreeing that having a mental health condition does not make a difference when hiring (64 per cent agree in 2018 compared to 54 per cent in 2015/16), or when considering an employee for promotion (60 per cent agree in 2018 compared to 51 per cent in 2015/16).

Employers that agree that people mental health condition are harder to make adjustments for than those with physical conditions



Base for all: All respondents in this section, 2018 (n=2,283), 2015/16 (n=2,100).

The survey also asked employees if they agree that 'people with mental health conditions are harder to make adjustments for than those with physical conditions.' For this statement we found a small but significant increase in the percentage of employers disagreeing with the statement between 2018 (40 per cent) compared to 2015/16 (36 per cent).

See **Table 9.17** for full data.

Code of Practice for Statistics compliance statement

This research complies with the three pillars of the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#): value, trustworthiness and quality.

Value

The report provides valuable insight to key policy and operational areas across DWP, and how some of these have changed since 2015/16. It also provides important data to inform policy development, and decisions in relation to the services that DWP provides to employers.

The research has already been used to inform the ways in which DWP engages with employers to deliver the full spectrum of labour market and pension policies. Examples of how we are using this research include;

- Using specific engagement and satisfaction evidence to inform DWP's Employer Strategy.
- Identifying ways to improve the service that the Department delivers to employers in supporting their recruitment needs.

Trustworthiness

This research was conducted by IFF Research, working to the Government Social Research code of practices. The analysis and report writing was carried out by Ashley Kershaw, Tom Grice-Jackson and Kate Cranston-Turner, social researchers at the Department for Work and Pensions.

Quality

The survey took place using established quantitative research methodology. It has been quality assured using IFFs internal processes which are subject to the requirements of the international quality standard for social research, ISO 20252. Additionally this data used in this report has been checked thoroughly by DWP analysts to ensure it meets the highest standards of analysis and drafting.