

Perceptions of vocational and technical qualifications – wave 2

We have today (31 July 2019) published the results from our second annual survey of [Perceptions of vocational and technical qualifications](#) (PDF, 1.75MB, 59 pages) , which covers a range of regulated vocational and technical qualifications available for study in England. The survey reports the views of more than 3,000 employers, learners and training providers who were surveyed during late 2018 into early 2019.

The main report covers headline results, while a technical annex – [Perceptions of vocational and technical qualifications technical annex](#) (PDF, 1.7MB, 56 pages) – provides a more detailed breakdown of the survey data. In broad terms, there is a good deal of consistency with last year's results, although perceptions amongst all 3 respondent groups have improved slightly in this second wave.

Some highlights from this year's survey:

Functional Skills qualifications (FSQs)

1. Employers' understanding of FSQs has improved between waves 1 and 2, with levels of knowledge increasing with organisation size
2. Larger businesses and training providers are more likely to hold positive perceptions of FSQs
3. The proportion of learners in wave 2 who said that they valued FSQs (78%) was similar to wave 1

Vocational and Technical Qualifications (VTQs)

1. Employers, training providers and learners continue to hold very positive views of VTQs regardless of whether the qualifications are pursued within apprenticeships, or standalone
2. Amongst training providers, levels of agreement that learners/parents understand the purpose of VTQs has increased markedly (from 54% to 70%)
3. The proportion of learners in wave 2 who said that VTQs prepare them well for the workplace (77%) was similar to wave 1

End-point assessments (EPAs)

1. Reported understanding and perceived value of EPAs has improved across training providers and learners in wave 2, while the picture for employers is more mixed
2. Larger employers and training providers are more likely to understand the difference between apprenticeship frameworks and new apprenticeship standards
3. The proportion of learners who said that they value EPAs was highest among those that had experience of the workplace (76%)

Phil Beach, Executive Director for Vocational and Technical Qualifications,

said:

The results of this year's survey of stakeholder perceptions provide a first opportunity for us to review changes in levels of understanding and perceived value of vocational and technical qualifications among employers, learners and training providers.

There is positive evidence of general improvement in knowledge and understanding of qualifications among respondents. It is unsurprising that the perceptions of larger employers and training providers are typically more positive than their peers. The government's programme for reform will clarify the landscape for vocational qualifications and further assist employers' and learners' understanding. We are playing our part, and we are reflecting further on these results to consider what more we can do, where appropriate, to support this.