

Perceptions of VTQ in England- wave 4

News story

The results of Ofqual's annual survey on perceptions of vocational and technical qualifications in England.



Ofqual has today (17 June 2021) published [wave 4 of the annual perceptions of Vocational and Technical Qualifications in England survey](#). Vocational and technical qualifications (VTQs) include functional skills qualifications, T levels, other qualifications with a vocational focus and End Point Assessments (EPAs) for apprenticeships.

The research organisation YouGov carried out the research on our behalf and we publish this information annually as official statistics.

The results of the survey help us to understand changes and variations in general perceptions of qualifications among learners, employers and the organisations which provide them – including schools, colleges and other training providers.

This year, to capture the extraordinary nature of the events and arrangements put in place in 2020 as a response to the pandemic, we also added a specific set of questions about 2020.

Learner perceptions

The survey showed that:

- approximately three-fifths (59%) of learners said that they value Functional Skills Qualifications (FSQs) (comparable with wave 3)
- 56% of learners agreed that these qualifications offer good value for money (comparable with wave 3)
- learners who had undertaken an FSQ in the last three years most commonly said they decided to do so to progress in their studies (34%)
- learners who had started taking an FSQ reported that the benefits were progressing to higher level qualifications (27%), becoming more confident using English/maths/ICT (24%) and having better job prospects

in the longer term (23%)

- just over half (54%) of learners reported a good (very/quite good) understanding of EPAs of apprenticeships (comparable with wave 3)
- learners reported that they decided to take an apprenticeship to progress in their current job (41%), because they can learn new skills on the job (39%) or in order to find a better job (30%)

Employer perceptions

The survey showed that:

- over two-fifths (45%) of employers reported valuing VTQs (comparable with wave 3 findings), with large employers more likely than smaller employers to be aware of qualifications
- approximately 3 in 10 (28%) employers reported that they have a very or quite good understanding of FSQs (comparable with wave 3)
- approximately a third (32%) of employers with at least some understanding of FSQs, agreed that their organisation values them
- approximately two-fifths (43%) of employers reported having a very or quite good understanding of VTQs (comparable with wave 3 findings)
- fifteen percent of employers reported having a very or quite good understanding of EPAs (comparable with wave 3 findings)

Provider perceptions

The survey showed that:

- two-thirds (67%) of the providers agreed that they value FSQs
- half (50%) of the providers agreed that FSQs offer value for money (comparable with wave 3 findings)
- three-fifths (61%) of providers reported having a very or quite good understanding of EPAs of apprenticeships (comparable with wave 3)
- 82% of providers were aware that EPAs are specific to apprenticeship standards

Questions specific to 2020

The survey showed that:

- while 64% of providers agreed that in 2020 VTQs were trusted qualifications, 52% agreed that FSQs were trusted and only 40% agreed that EPAs were trusted
- while 39% of learners agreed that in 2020 standards were maintained in VTQs, 37% agreed that this was the case in FSQs and only 29% agreed with regard to EPAs
- employers agreed that VTQs were good preparation for work (31%) and further study (29%)
- 39% of learners agreed that VTQs were well understood by people in 2020, although this dropped to 36% for FSQs and 34% for EPAs