



EMPL_YER INDEX REPORT 2_22



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Top Employers

75

01	Browne Jacobson LLP		
02	Grant Thornton UK LLP		
03	KPMG UK	20	Sparta Global Ltd
04	PwC UK	21	Eversheds Sutherland
05	Severn Trent	22	Department for Work & Pensions
06	Accenture	23	Burges Salmon
07	Herbert Smith Freehills LLP	24	Phoenix Group
08	Baker McKenzie	25	Simmons & Simmons LLP
09	Squire Patton Boggs	26	Osborne Clarke LLP
10	Enterprise Rent-A-Car	27	BBC
11	Cabinet Office	28	Shepherd and Wedderburn
12	DLA Piper	29	Clifford Chance LLP
13	Allen & Overy	30	Penguin Random House UK
	BCLP	31	Slaughter and May
14	Linklaters LLP	32	Hogan Lovells
15	Aviva	33	Auto Trader
16	The British Land Company PLC		Financial Conduct Authority
17	DWF Law LLP	34	Brodies LLP
18	Lewis Silkin LLP	35	Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer
19	Civil Service Fast Stream & Early Talent	36	Crown Prosecution Service
	CMS	37	Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

	Mears Group plc		Mayer Brown International LLP
	W Communications		Radcliffe Chambers
38	Shoosmiths LLP	58	Bain & Company
39	Bank of England		Clyde & Co LLP
	Fidelity International	59	Fujitsu
	Norton Rose Fulbright LLP	60	Frontline
40	Mishcon de Reya LLP	61	dentsu UK & Ireland
	Santander UK	62	Akin Gump LLP
41	Department for Transport	63	Irwin Mitchell
	Womble Bond Dickinson (UK) LLP		Sharpe Pritchard LLP
42	Capgemini UK	64	TLT LLP
43	AMS	65	Wellcome Trust
44	Goldman Sachs	66	Jacobs
45	Lloyds	67	City of London Corporation
46	Reach	68	White & Case LLP
47	Burness Paull LLP	69	Haringey Council
48	FDM Group	70	Addleshaw Goddard LLP
49	Jones Lang LaSalle	71	National Grid
50	RPC LLP	72	Admiral
51	Co-op		Hanover
52	Charles Russell Speechlys		Royal Air Force
	Schroders	73	Valuation Office Agency
53	Macfarlanes LLP	74	Man Group
54	Legal and General	75	Food Standards Agency
55	National Audit Office		
56	M&G plc		
57	bp plc		



Foreword

In the sixth year of our Social Mobility Employer Index, the social mobility headwinds are becoming more intense. And yet the Index represents an island of optimism in a sea of pessimism.

Britain is in the grip of an economic crisis. This is a serious threat to social mobility on two counts. First, the increased cost-of-living will exacerbate Britain's deep social divide: limiting the life choices of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds at best and pushing families into impossible choices between heating and eating at worst. The flip side of the economic crisis is a social crisis.

Second, austerity is back on the political agenda. The pandemic wiped out progress on closing the attainment gap between students on free school meals and those not. While education spending has rightly been increased, it has not been targeted towards those most in need. In the most recent GCSE cycle, for example, the attainment gap between London and Yorkshire was wider than the pre-pandemic figure. There is talk of disadvantaged students being six to seven months behind their better-off peers. So much for levelling up.

Change cannot be left to the government alone. The workplace is as important as the classroom in increasing social mobility. The one hundred and forty nine employers – between them employing nearly one million people – who participated in the 2022 edition of the Social Mobility Employer Index take this responsibility seriously. They should be applauded for participating and where they are leading, I hope others will follow.

Britain remains a deeply elitist nation where someone's chances of getting a well-paid job in a top profession are still strongly correlated with their social background. However, several employers in financial and professional services, law, medicine, government, and the public sector have come to the realisation that a different mindset and a different set of processes are needed to make their intakes more representative of the public they serve. These employers are making these changes both because they see the social need to do so and because they recognise the business benefit that greater diversity can bring.

The Index is a celebration of those who are trying to tear down the barriers that stand in the way of too many able and aspirational youngsters getting a fair chance to succeed. There are employers who have used the cost-of-living crisis as a clarion call to double down on social mobility. We've seen examples of employers going the extra mile by providing accommodation for those living outside of London so they can participate in work experience. Firms such as PwC are not just providing technology for the duration of the work experience placement but allowing young people to keep the devices. Encouragingly, 30 per cent of entrants stated they do not have minimum grade requirements for their graduate programme. Moreover, Clifford Chance, KPMG and PwC have all taken the ambitious and brave decision to measure, report and seek to close their class pay gap, something we have campaigned for through the Department for Opportunities.

What the employers in the Index – particularly those at the top – are proving is that it is possible, even in the face of profound social mobility headwinds, to make progress. Change is happening.

These reasons for optimism are tempered, however, by some evidence that the momentum amongst employers to embrace the social mobility challenge is being lost. We have seen a notable drop in the quality and quantity of submissions to the Index. It is deeply disappointing that nine employers are still offering unpaid internships during a cost-of-living crisis, meaning nearly 500 young people effectively work for free. Talent is everywhere, but opportunity is not and penalising young people who are not able to work for free is unacceptable. Similarly, the phenomenon of graduate scheme 'exit fees' – where young people are financially penalised for deciding against their chosen career once they gain experience of it for the first time – must be eliminated.

Despite these challenges, there is much to celebrate in this year's Index. Employers are proving that it is possible to build a society where aptitude and ability, not background or birth, determine how far people progress. But if Britain is to become stronger and fairer, many more employers now need to step up to the plate.

Rt Hon Alan Milburn
Chair, Social Mobility Foundation

Executive Summary

The Social Mobility Employer Index

The Social Mobility Employer Index analyses what employers are doing to improve social mobility and celebrates those who are taking action to make their organisations more accessible and inclusive to individuals from lower socioeconomic backgrounds (LSEBs). The recommendations and insights in this year's Index reflect the pandemic's impact on lost education, the toll the cost-of-living crisis is having on those from LSEBs, and how employers are responding.

We received one hundred and forty nine entries. Thirty four employers entered for the first time, and one hundred and fifteen were returning organisations. Thirty six organisations have taken part in every year of the Index to date. The most represented sectors were law (34% of entrants), the public sector (15%) and banking, financial services and insurance who made up 11% of entrants. However, highly represented sectors are not always the best performers. law firms, for example, continue to disproportionately visit and recruit from Russell Group universities. On average, returning entrants performed better as they adopted our guidance and sought to progress.

Across all entrants the section covering Work With Young People was where entrants performed best, while Progression, Culture and Experienced Hires was where employers performed least well. If we are to capitalise on the benefits of employer-led social mobility, employers must ensure that individuals do not just get into an organisation, but progress. We encourage employers to redouble their efforts in this section in particular.

01 Work with Young People

This chapter reviews how effectively employers target young people from LSEBs and whether employer outreach provides accessible routes into their profession for those with an interest and the aptitude. The Index rewards employers that are moving towards well-targeted and well-evaluated employability programmes that are accessible to all.

This year, 19,527 young people were reached both through in person and virtual work experience with 75% of entrants targeting their outreach at schools with above-average levels of free school meals/pupil premium, lower levels of attainment, or lower progression rates to higher education.

Over half (58%) in Index entrants opted for hybrid delivery of outreach programmes. For these programmes to be valuable and accessible we continue to advise employers to offer the equipment required to participate virtually and the financial support to attend in-person.

Key recommendations



Target outreach work at schools with above-average levels of free school meals/pupil premium, lower levels of attainment, or lower progression rates to further/higher education and at a range of social mobility cold spot.

Collect socioeconomic background data on the young people you are engaging with.

Flag students from your outreach work in your recruitment process.

Link your outreach to recruitment through sustained contact, tracking and support.

Consider digital accessibility when delivering virtual outreach, offering technology to those who might not otherwise be able to participate.

Ensure virtual programmes match or exceed the quality offered through in-person activities.

Cover travel and lunch costs for in-person work experience.

02 Routes Into The Employer

This chapter details the steps that employers are taking to create well-structured routes into their organisations. These routes should provide comparable outcomes for non-graduates and graduates. For those who are hired as graduates, Russell Group candidates should not be automatically or unduly favoured in recruitment. Those from privileged backgrounds are accepted into Russell Group universities at disproportionate rates, so action on this is critical for improving social mobility.

Of entrants this year, 79% offered an apprenticeship, 77% offered graduate routes and 22% offered a school leaver programme. While 85% of entrants say that a candidate on an apprenticeship or school leaver programme can rise to the same level as a graduate within a comparable time frame, only 23% provided evidence to prove it.

Russell Group universities still dominate the figures for applications and acceptances for Index entrants. Half of applications, and two-thirds of graduate entrants, are from these 24 universities. Additionally, 44 Index entrants saw more than 75% of their graduates come from Russell Group universities, and 13 had more than 90%.

Disappointingly, 8% of Index entrants hosted unpaid internships, while a further 15% only paid travel.

Key recommendations



Offer well-structured non-graduate routes in including school leaver programmes and apprenticeships.

Review the socioeconomic background of each intake, in particular apprenticeships, to ensure they are having the desired impact and improving the diversity of your recruitment pool.

Offer paid, structured internships which involve a rigorous selection process and provide a reference at the end.

Ringfence internships for individuals from an LSEB, using a good range of criteria (had parents who did not attend university, are eligible for free school meals, or are from an LSEB by parental occupation).

03 Attraction

This chapter analyses the extent to which organisations recruiting graduates seek to attract a diverse range of applicants and make opportunities accessible to everyone. The Index rewards employers that make an active effort to diversify their attraction methods, ensuring they reach those from LSEBs.

39% of all visits amongst entrants were to Russell Group universities. One in ten entrants conducted 90% or more of their visits to Russell Group universities. To improve all employers should use the Higher Education Statistics Agency ([HESA](#)) data to identify the institutions with the highest representation of students from LSEBs and focus their resources on these universities.

To further recruitment from outside the usual pipelines, opportunities should be clearly communicated on employer websites, along with important information such as the financial or technical provisions on offer to ease the burden of accessing roles, be that an internship, apprenticeship or full-time job. Employers that go out of their way to reassure young people ahead of the recruitment process – with actions such as providing interview questions in advance and avoiding the use of industry jargon – will be rewarded with a more diverse workforce. Employers should also be clear and upfront about whether or not they take context into account in their recruitment.

Key recommendations



Ensure a good balance between Russell Group and non-Russell Group university visits.

Track the conversion rate of Russell Group and non-Russell Group applicants to acceptances to ensure that the balance is maintained throughout the recruitment process, and that it is translating into a more diverse recruitment pool.

Make your website more attractive to students from LSEBs by ensuring recruitment opportunities and requirements are clearly communicated and avoiding jargon.

Cover the costs of travel for interviews and supply the tech equipment required to participate in the process.

Indicate financial support available.

04 Recruitment and Selection

This chapter examines recruitment and selection processes that, too often, reward 'polish' – having the accent, appearance, or behaviours commonly associated with applicants from more privileged backgrounds – over potential. The best-performing employers in the Index engage in two categories of action to address this: a) removing barriers that prevent individuals from LSEBs progressing to selection, and b) rewarding current ability and future potential over past academic performance.

30% of entrants do not have minimum grade requirements for their graduate programme, 40% of entrants do not look at candidates' grades, and a further 34% place them in the context of the school or college attended during recruitment. We hope this is just the beginning for contextual recruitment becoming more commonplace.

Moreover, we are pleased that half of entrants (50%) monitor their recruitment process to identify whether applicants from LSEBs are disproportionately eliminated from the applicant pool at certain stages, with a view to improving the process.

Key recommendations



- Monitor your recruitment process to identify whether there are stages at which applicants from LSEBs disproportionately fall down.
- Flag students eligible for free school meals and other relevant background characteristics throughout the recruitment process and provide targeted support.
- Recruit for potential and be alert to the socioeconomic biases inherent in recruitment such as 'polish', 'fit', or 'culture'.
- Consider the use of contextual tools such as Rare to help place applicants' academic grades in context.

05 Data Collection

This chapter examines how employers collect and analyse data to understand their workforce's socioeconomic profile. The Index recognises companies that collect data and rigorously analyse it, using the insights it gives them to improve their socioeconomic diversity.

Collecting and analysing data is among the most important steps employers can take to track social mobility in their organisation and the effectiveness of their strategies.

Nearly three-quarters (72%) of entrants collect at least three data points on their current staff. But while six in ten (60%) collect parental occupation for current employees, the figure is half (48%) for new hires, and just a quarter (24%) for unsuccessful applicants. These rates should be more consistent across the different groups, and it should become standard to collect and analyse socioeconomic background data alongside other diversity characteristics in recruitment.

Key recommendations



- Collect socioeconomic background data for new and current employees, consisting of at least three data points.
- Collect socioeconomic background data for unsuccessful applicants to give you an accurate picture of the recruitment process.
- Publish your data and, to ensure the data set is robust, consider setting completion rate targets.

06 Progression, Culture and Experienced Hires

This chapter examines how employers measure the social mobility of their existing employees and the strategies undertaken to create an inclusive workplace culture. Social mobility is not just about individuals from LSEBs entering a higher-paid career; it is equally about having the ability to flourish and progress at work.

More employers must collect data on pay and progression by background; fewer than one in four (24%) entrants currently collect data on progression. Of the fifth (19%) of entrants who measure pay by background, a third (32%) are in the public sector, and a fifth (21%) are in law.

Just under a third (30%) of entrants have strategies to improve retention and progression for employees from LSEBs and only half (54%) of entrants have examined whether those from LSEBs feel that their workplace culture is welcoming to them. However, over half (53%) offer networks of employees from similar backgrounds and 52% offer buddying, mentoring and sponsorship schemes. We urge employers to collect data to assess the impact of these programmes on progression and retention.

Key recommendations



- Assess the organisational culture to see whether those from LSEBs feel it is welcoming to them – and make changes where necessary.
- Create a staff network, sponsorship or mentoring programme for staff from LSEBs.
- Collect data on pay, retention, and progression by socioeconomic background.
- Analyse pay data to see whether your organisation has a class pay gap, report and commit to closing it.

07 Advocacy

This chapter reviews the advocacy work that organisations do to improve social mobility and make their workplaces more welcoming for those without the financial means or familial contacts to access historically exclusive opportunities. Those who perform highly in this section are the employers who take action to engage staff, suppliers, and clients in their efforts. As the UK continues to recover from the long-term effects of Covid-19 and now faces a cost-of-living crisis, organisations must raise awareness that these crises have had a greater impact on those from LSEBs.

More than three-quarters (77%) of entrants participate in social mobility initiatives across their sector or industry, with law representing the sector with the highest percentage of entrants (41%) taking part in advocacy. Organisations must raise awareness of the impact of these crises on those from LSEBs inside their organisations, with their clients, and in supply chains where relevant.

Setting targets is key to the execution of these goals. Almost half (48%) of entrants have some form of targets relating to socioeconomic background or diversity. Of those who have targets, 72% (34% of all entrants) have targets for overall workforce diversity, but when the figures are broken down, the rates vary significantly. Just 3% of all entrants have targets relating to pay gaps by socioeconomic background and just 4% on progression.

Key recommendations



- Develop an internal advocacy strategy and encourage employees to share their own social mobility stories.
- Leverage your position within your supply chain to encourage clients and suppliers to act on social mobility.
- Establish social mobility targets within the organisation and commit to strategies for achieving them.
- Monitor targets at board level.

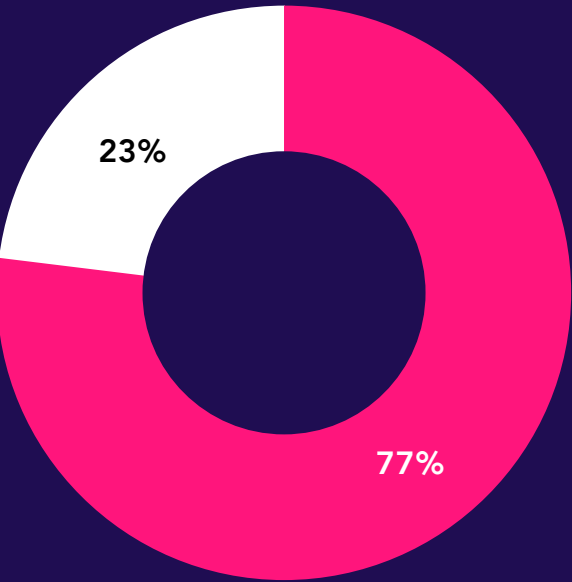
Overview of Entrants

This report outlines the key findings from the 2022 Social Mobility Employer Index.

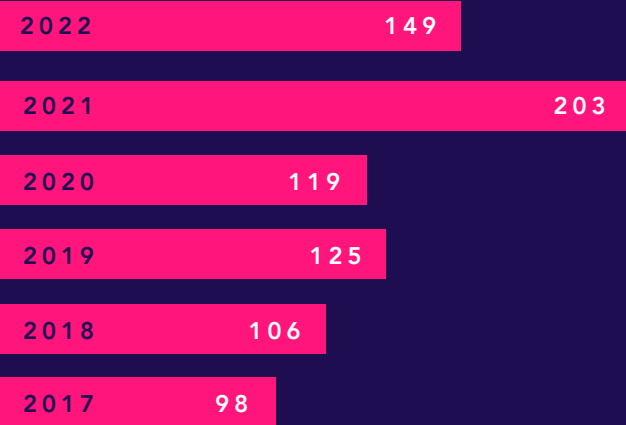
The Index has become the authority on employer-led social mobility since its creation in 2017, growing from 98 entrants to 149 this year. Seven key areas that drive social mobility in employer practice are assessed as part of the Index process. Our key findings across each area are set out below, along with our main recommendations for employers across the UK. Further detail is included in each chapter.

One hundred and forty nine organisations entered the Social Mobility Employer Index in 2022. In total, 2022 entrants employ nearly one million people (999,464).

Returning entrants scored nearly twice as high on average as new entrants, demonstrating the value for employers concerned about social mobility of entering the Index and acting on the feedback given.



Number of entrants per year



More than three-quarters of entrants in the 2022 Index have submitted entries previously.

Has your organisation submitted to the Social Mobility Employer Index previously?

- Yes
- No

Law remains the most represented sector

Law retained its place as the best-represented sector in 2022, with 50 Index entrants, the same figure as in 2021. However, only 42 (84%) of these 50 had previously submitted to the Index, meaning eight were new in 2022.

After Law, the sectors with the most entries were banking, financial services and insurance, and the public sector. The number of overall entrants has declined, with banking showing the largest reduction from 36 in 2021 to 17 in 2022. Public sector organisations are now the second-most numerous but remain 15% of the total entrants. More than four in five entrants are from the private sector, 15% from the public sector and 4% from charities.

2022 entrants by sector

Law	34%
Public sector	15%
Banking, financial services & insurance	11%
Professional services	7%
Third sector	4%
Technology, software & computer services	4%
Retail	3%
Energy, water or utility	3%
Real estate	2%
Fast-moving consumer goods	2%
Media	2%
Publishing	1%
Facilities management	1%
Construction	1%
Engineering or industrial	1%
PR and communications	1%
Hospitality	1%
Did not answer	1%
Talent acquisition	1%
Housing	1%
Packing organisation, manufacturing & recycling	1%
Leisure, tourism and sport	1%
Transport and logistics	1%
Management consultancy	1%
Advertising	1%
Market and social research	1%

London-based employers dominate

London is the most common region to have an office, with 95% of Index entrants having an office there. Nearly half (48%) have an office in the North West, the same as the figure for Scotland. Less than a third (30%) have offices in the East Midlands and a quarter (26%) have an office in Northern Ireland.

UK regions in which entrants have an office

London	95%
North West	48%
Scotland	48%
South East	43%
West Midlands	42%
Yorkshire and the Humber	41%
South West	39%
North East	35%
Wales	32%
East of England	32%
East Midlands	30%
Northern Ireland	26%

01 Work With Young People

This chapter reviews how effectively employers target young people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds (LSEBs) and whether employer outreach provides accessible routes into their profession for those with an interest and the aptitude. The Index rewards employers that are moving towards well-targeted and well-evaluated employability programmes that are accessible to all.

This section was answered by 136 entrants (91%).

Why outreach matters

The effects of both the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis are being felt more acutely by young people from LSEBs, leading to a growing attainment gap in education. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals increased by almost 300,000 during the pandemic as more families experienced economic precarity. This is concerning for career outcomes as young people eligible for free school meals have historically had lower educational attainment and are over 18 months behind their peers by age 16. Therefore, employers' outreach is more important than ever as it can play a significant role in helping young people navigate these crises by showing them what opportunities exist.

We applaud the 112 employers (75% of entrants) who target their outreach at schools with above-average levels of free school meals/pupil premium, lower levels of attainment, or lower progression rates to further/higher education. We also welcome the 89 employers (60%) targeting their outreach to young people living in social mobility cold spots. We were pleased that three in five Index entrants (59%) covered the cost of travel without means testing and urge the rest to follow suit. For students experiencing financial challenges, these measures make an enormous difference to them accessing top employers.

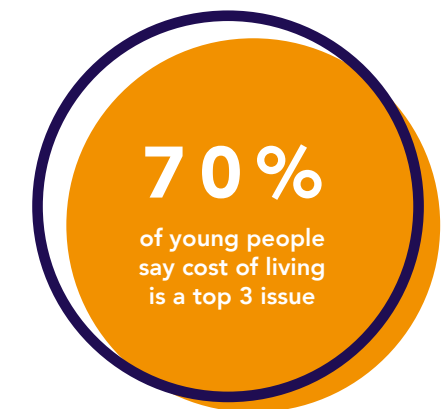
Helping with technology must become the norm

The pandemic has created extra work for young people to move online to access opportunities, a burden particularly felt by those for whom access to a strong internet connection and high-functioning tech equipment is not guaranteed due to their lack of financial resources or location in an area with poor connectivity. Over half (58%) of Index entrants opted for hybrid delivery with both in-person and virtual outreach, while 26% were wholly online. Given the ongoing cost-of-living crisis and the changing nature of work, employers must help with access to technology. If such access is taken for granted by employers, a significant barrier to entry by young people could be created.

Young people are deeply concerned about the cost-of-living crisis

Our Unheard Voices research, which explores the views of 16–18-year-olds, found that **70% of young people from LSEBs see the cost-of-living as among the three most important issues** facing the country and nearly half (47%) listed the cost-of-living as a major personal worry.

Employers must adapt their outreach programmes to factor in this new economic reality.



What equipment do you offer to young people in order to ensure they can complete online work experience, if they do not have it?



% of those who offered virtual work experience placements since March 2020

Starting out? 	Implement a fair approach to informal work experience placements so they are open to everyone – not just friends and family of existing employees – and ensure everyone has the technology they need to participate.	Looking to progress? 	Target work experience at schools with above-average levels of free school meals/pupil premium, lower levels of attainment, or lower progression rates to further/higher education and at a range of social mobility cold spots and let young people keep the devices after their work experience ends.
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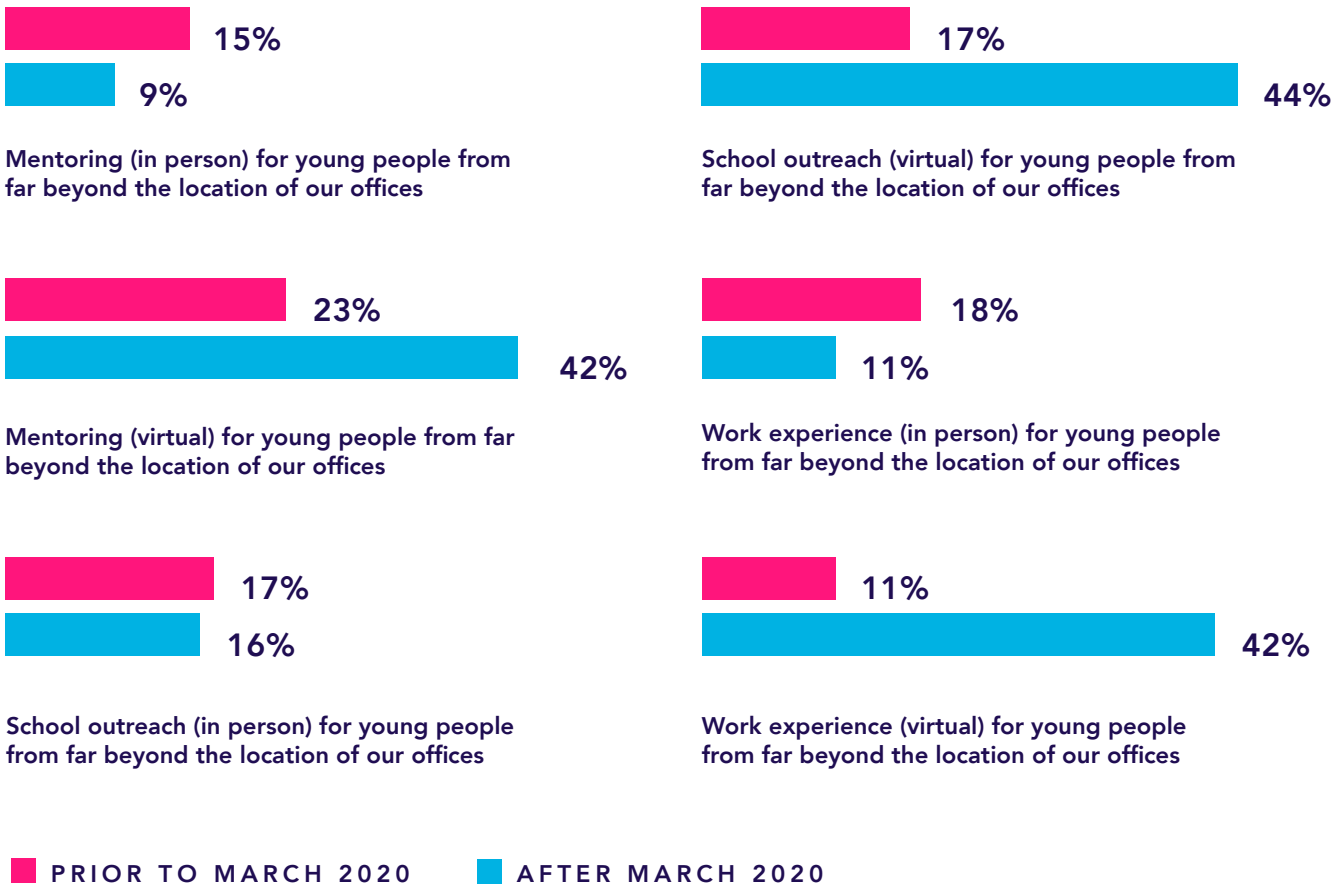
Four ways employers are responding to the cost-of-living crisis:

- Penguin Random House sponsors the [Spare Room Project](#), which provides free accommodation to those on work experience.
- Clifford Chance gives bursaries to cover lost earnings if young people will miss paid work to take part in work experience.
- Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer conducts technological surveys to identify digital poverty and purchase equipment, which can then be kept after the work experience ends.
- Eversheds Sutherland offers financial support for broadband.

Virtual outreach must still focus on quality

The pandemic has caused fewer entrants in the Index to run in-person activities, instead prioritising virtual events. This move to virtual provision promises greater reach but threatens to be more exclusive than intended if the financial situation of students from LSEBs and their access to tech is not considered. Employers must ensure their work can be accessed by those who would most benefit from it, supporting them to take part where necessary. Virtual offerings must be of the same quality as in-person; soft skills such as presentation and communication are often better suited to in-person sessions so addressing these through virtual offerings alone requires particular care.

Percentage of Index 2022 entrants who reported undertaking each activity



Schools outreach for those most in need is in decline

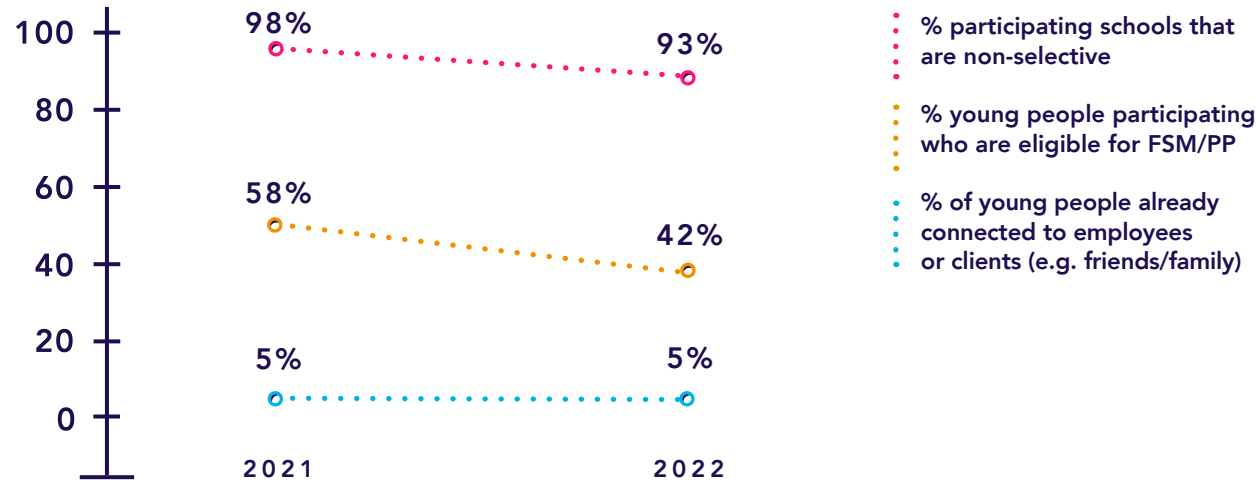
Better data on effective targeting is urgently required

In the 2021 Index, 98% of all school outreach was targeted at non-selective state schools, and 58% of the young people were eligible for free school meals. The comparable figures for 2022 are 93% and 42%. We are deeply concerned that targeted outreach appears to have worsened this year, and that not enough of the young people most in need have access to these programmes. Employers need to better monitor who takes part in their activities to ensure their work is targeting and reaching the right people.

More than half (55%) of Index entrants told us that they targeted their mentoring at schools with above-average levels of free school meals/pupil premium, lower levels of attainment, or lower progression rates to further/higher education. However, only 34% of entrants provided data on the percentage of young people participating in mentoring that are eligible for free school meals. To have activities as well-targeted and impactful as possible, employers should either collect data on their activities themselves or work with a partner who can collect it for them. Such data is critical to ensuring that these outreach strategies are achieving what they set out to and are attracting the people they are trying to target.

While it is a positive step that 11 of the 2022 entrants removed placements for friends and family, opportunities based on ability rather than social status should be the rule rather than the exception.

% of schools/young people participating in schools outreach by SEB criteria across all organisations who offer school outreach



Best practice:
Creating an impactful hybrid programme

The move to hybrid and virtual does not need to be seen as a step down from in-person. SMF's Aspiring Professionals Programme demonstrates that students generally engage well with and enjoy hybrid activities when they are well-designed. Employers should ensure sessions are engaging by using a variety of delivery methods such as polls, Q&A sessions, and breakout activities. Logistical elements such as travel, overnight stay, and dress code must be finalised in good time, and the employer must ensure the young people have access to all the necessary equipment as well as guidance around online etiquette. These steps are key to ensuring young people feel their circumstances are given due consideration and don't feel isolated from the recruitment process before it even begins.

Location matters

Employers must target outreach at social mobility cold spots to help young people recover from the pandemic and mitigate the effects of the cost-of-living crisis

Attainment gaps between regions in the UK have widened. For example, 39% of A-level students in London were awarded an A or A* in 2022, while only 31% in the North East received the same. The eight-point gap between these regions is double the gap in 2019. Young people from the areas with the highest proportion of people entering higher education are more than twice as likely to attend university as those from areas with the lowest rates.

Nearly nine in ten entrants (89%) conducted outreach in England, 43% in Scotland, 38% in Wales and 21% in Northern Ireland. However, employers do have a growing focus on social mobility cold spots such as in the north of England. Of those who worked in England, Liverpool was the most targeted cold spot, with 32% doing outreach there, followed by Bradford with 30%.

In addition to targeting social mobility cold spots, making an effort to conduct outreach outside of the areas where recruitment has been focused on in the past is critical for increasing employee diversity. Outreach must be targeted at those for whom it can have the most impact, so we are disappointed that a fifth (21%) of entrants offer work experience for young people at the schools their employees attended. This is likely to be harmful to social mobility as it risks recreating the class profile of the organisation. More than three-quarters (79%) target their outreach at young people close to their offices. With so many entrants having offices in London, this could limit the reach of their work.

Comparing the least and most visited social mobility cold spots in England

Social mobility cold spots are defined by the Government's Social Mobility Commission as those with the worst social mobility outcomes across 16 key performance indicators, ranging from early years through to working lives. Employers should use this data to identify the areas where recruitment outreach is most needed if they want to have the greatest impact on social mobility.

We need to prevent a rural/urban divide

Only 14% of disadvantaged young people in rural cold spots progress to university. It is therefore a concern that all the least visited cold spots are in rural areas where progression to higher education is less likely and opportunities for work are limited. Employers must target their work with young people across a variety of cold spots so that some areas are not left behind in outreach.

English cold spots

% of entrants who do outreach in England

Least visited

Babergh	4%
Chiltern	5%
Forest Heath	5%
Gedling	5%
Breckland	5%
Cotswold	5%
Erewash	5%
Rutland	5%
Waveney	5%
Wychavon	5%

Most visited

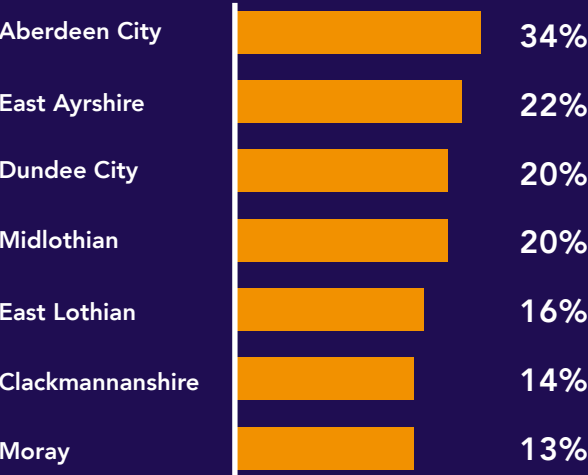
Liverpool	32%
Bradford	30%
Leicester	27%
Nottingham	27%
Blackpool	24%
Oldham	23%
Bolton	23%
Wolverhampton	23%
Cambridge	22%
Middlesbrough	22%

Scottish cold spots

% of those who do outreach in Scotland

In Scotland, the Social Mobility Commission ranked all local authority areas on a range of measures. The seven local authority areas with the lowest sum of life stage indicators for all residents are considered cold spots.

Scottish cold spot

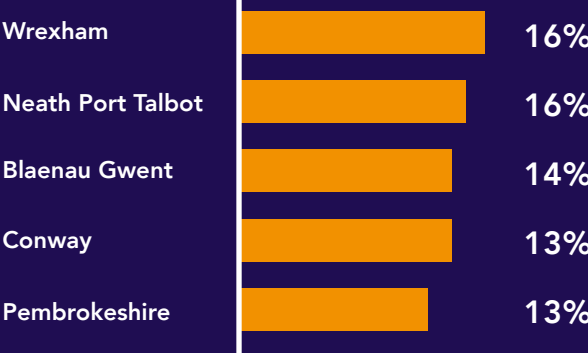


Welsh cold spots

% of those who do outreach in Wales

The Social Mobility Commission ranked the performance of local authorities in Wales across a number of measures. The lowest ranked five local authorities across the sum of life stage indicators are considered cold spots.

Welsh cold spot



Getting the most value from your outreach work

Evaluate and use best practice

To maximise impact, employers should monitor and continuously evaluate initiatives against rigorous criteria. While 81% collect ad-hoc feedback from participants, this feedback will be of less use than structured evaluation. Best practice is to track career and education outcomes. However, only 38% of entrants track career outcomes, and only 35% track educational outcomes. This is disappointing to see and suggests that employers are not as committed as they should be to the efficacy of their social mobility strategies.

To have a positive impact on social mobility, outreach must be sustained and feed into recruitment pipelines. We welcome the 85% who reported practising this. Employers can also help with applications (61%), offer work experience (61%), and host follow-up events after initial contact (60%). But too few (39%) flag students from their outreach in their recruitment processes. While this is an improvement from 22% in 2021 and 35% in 2020, it is low overall and down from 49% in 2019. Such an exercise is a simple way to ensure outreach is having the desired outcome of bringing more students from social mobility cold spots into the recruitment process. We hope to see this number rise as more employers deploy proper follow-up for outreach activities.

Careers education in schools is inconsistent, meaning employers have a huge role to play in improving access to information and guidance. Unheard Voices shows only 16% of the young people from LSEBs said their school or college had provided 'Very Good' career education and guidance. For meeting employers and employees, just 11% of the young people from LSEBs thought this was provided 'Very Well', while for first-hand experiences of the workplace the figure was just 7%. Employers should work with partners that follow the [Gatsby Benchmarks](#), which define what best practice careers education looks like. We hope to see more employers using these best practices to improve their offerings for young people's professional development.

02 Routes Into The Employer

This chapter details the steps that employers are taking to create well-structured routes into their organisations. These routes should provide parity of esteem between non-graduate and graduate routes. For those who are hired as graduates, Russell Group candidates should not be automatically or unduly favoured in recruitment.

This section was answered by 146 entrants (99%).

Why this matters:

Talent is everywhere but opportunity is not

The gap in attainment between disadvantaged and advantaged students stands at the highest level since 2011/12, wiping out a decade of progress. It is increasingly the case that the circumstances in which young people grow up impact their chances in life. Talent is everywhere but opportunity is not, especially when living costs are on the rise and fewer individuals can afford to pay the high fees attached to university education. Now more than ever, employers must think more broadly about how they attract talent to ensure they do not miss out on potential.

Unpaid internships in a cost-of-living crisis are unacceptable

Too many employers still expect young people to work for free. In 2022, 8% of entrants hosted unpaid internships, while a further 15% only paid travel. This means nearly 500 people were expected to work without any pay at all, while more than 8,000 were paid only their transport. All internships should be paid.

Internships should be mutually beneficial, but unpaid roles are only accessible to those able to work without pay. No wonder just 18% of young people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds (LSEBs) strongly agree that internships are open to everyone.

Sectors still offering unpaid internships

Sector	Entrants
Law	4
Banking, financial services and insurance	2
Energy, water or utility	1
Technology, software and computer services	1
Professional services	1

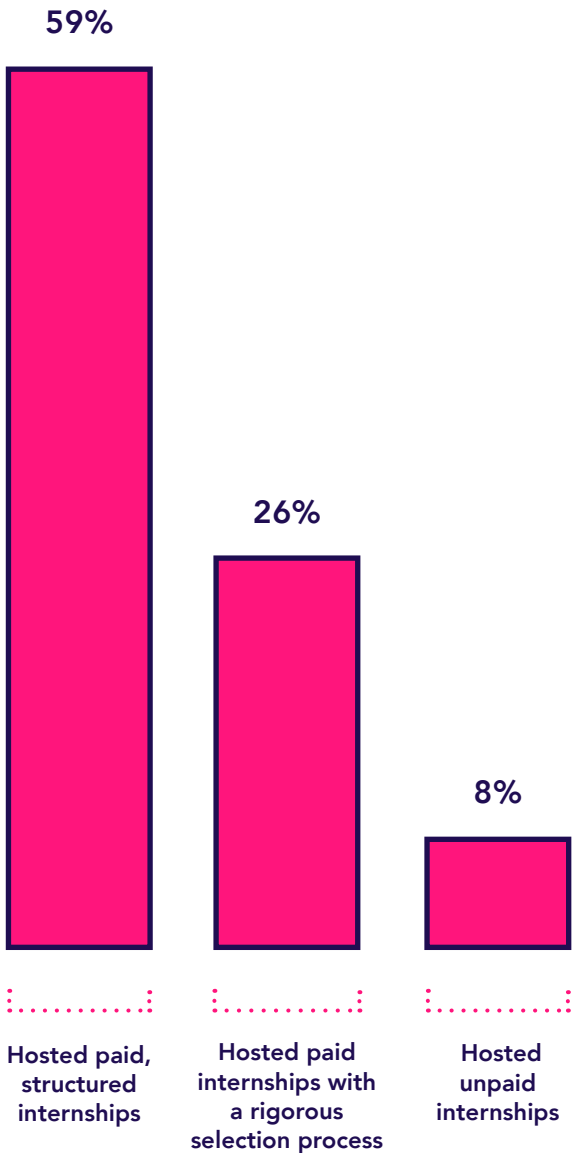
Internships must be about quality not just quantity

Three-quarters of Index entrants offered internships, but a mixed picture emerged about their quality.

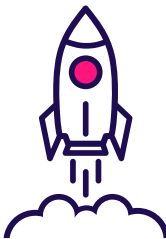
Unpaid internships are exploitative and unfair and take advantage of a legal grey area. Employers must adapt their offering to the reality that only young people from affluent backgrounds can afford to work for free, especially during a cost-of-living crisis and potential recession.

We want to see an end to unpaid internships full stop.

% of those who offered internships



Starting out?



Have a well-structured non-graduate route and pay all staff at least the National Living Wage.

Looking to progress?



Review the socioeconomic background of interns, apprentices and other hires to ensure the diversity of your organisation is improving.

Internships:

The positive end of the spectrum

The good news is that many employers are taking seriously the call for increased opportunities targeted at young people who might have otherwise been left out of the internship pipeline.

The proportion of Index entrants with internships ring-fenced for young people from LSEBs increased this year - 44% did so in 2022 up from 29% in 2020 and 37% in 2021.

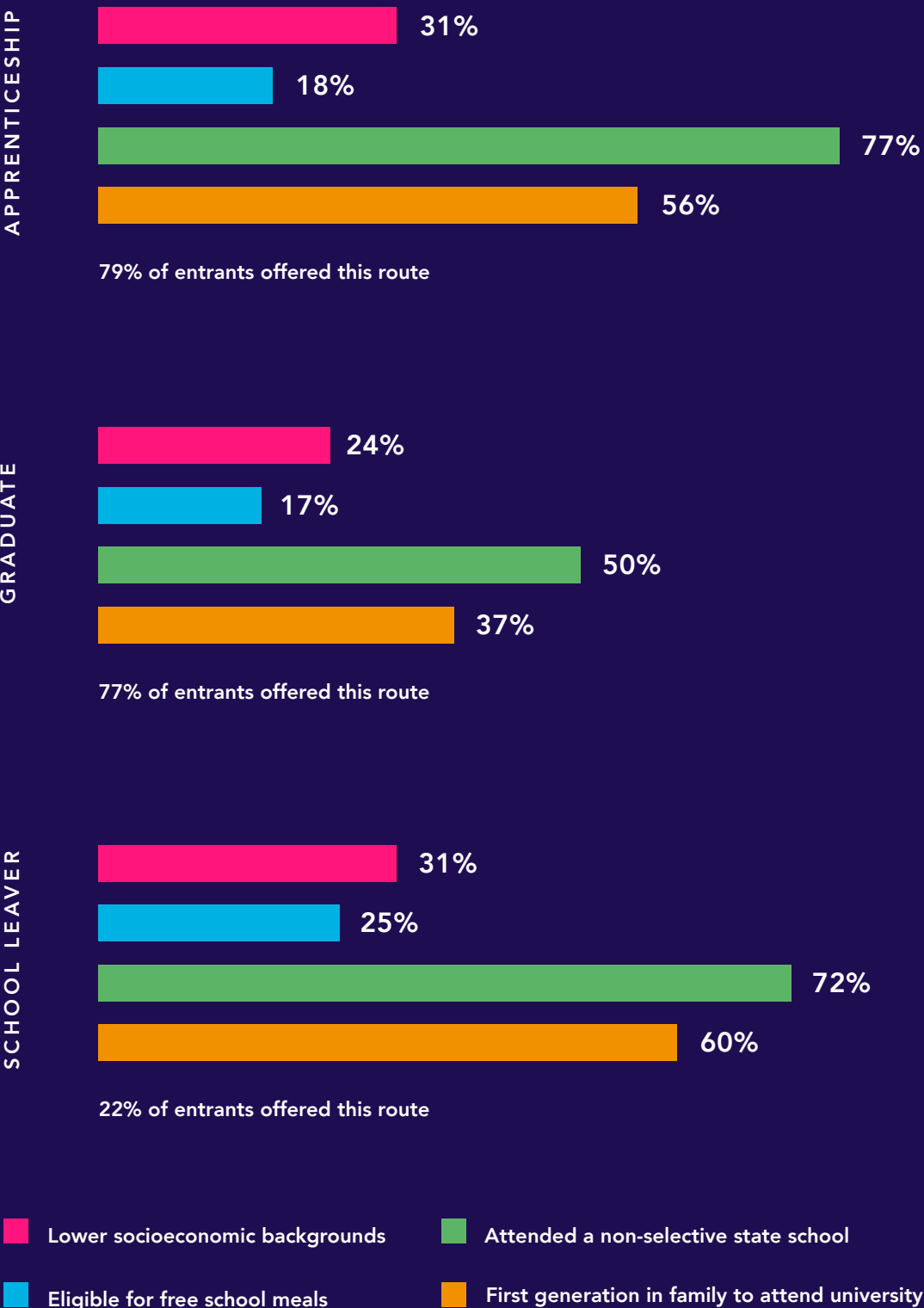
Ring-fenced criteria



Routes into the profession

Average percentage of successful applicants who are...

2022 Index report period



Apprenticeships are on the rise. We now need the same for school leaver programmes

Unfortunately, increasing internship opportunities is not enough to close the achievement gap when many students still do not have the option of a graduate route after school.

Employers should offer school leaver programmes to help diversify their routes in. Nearly eight in 10 entrants offered apprenticeship (79%) and graduate (77%) programmes, but just one in five (22%) offered school leaver programmes. School leaver programmes are more accessible to those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds (LSEBs) as they are most likely to be the ones not able to pursue a graduate education. One-quarter (25%) of successful applicants for school leaver programmes were eligible for free school meals, compared to 18% for apprenticeships and 17% for graduate schemes. Nearly a third (31%) of school leavers were from LSEBs by parental occupation, compared to 24% of successful graduates. This statistic highlights just how important it is for employers to prioritise apprenticeship and school leaver programmes in addition to graduate routes.

A lack of career guidance on apprenticeships is having an impact on attraction

Apprenticeships have the potential to significantly improve the prospects for young people from LSEBs. More organisations should offer degree-level apprenticeships to young people as they offer financial support and a clear career pathway. It is welcome that more than half (58%) of entrants offered degree-level apprenticeships (level 5 and above) in England, but disappointing that the figures are 23% in Scotland (Level 8 and above), 19% in Wales (Level 6 and above), and none in Northern Ireland. And too few are offered at the levels we would like to see. Apprenticeships at degree-level accounted for 27% of those offered by entrants in England (3,689 out of 13,549), 24% in Scotland (53 of 221), and 6% in Wales (13 of 201).

As per the data on the previous page, apprenticeships are more accessible than graduate routes to young people from LSEBs, but employers must not assume a good level of knowledge. While many more young people from LSEBs reported having careers guidance on apprenticeships than their more privileged peers, they felt less confident in their understanding. In Unheard Voices, 52% of young people from LSEBs reported having careers guidance on apprenticeships compared to 38% of their peers from higher socioeconomic backgrounds (HSEBs). Conversely, only 9% of young people from LSEBs were 'very confident' in their knowledge of apprenticeships, compared to 17% of their peers from HSEBs. The contradiction suggests that careers guidance is failing young people from LSEBs when it comes to adequately informing them on the opportunities available.

Employers state there is parity of esteem between routes, but lack the data to prove it

Apprenticeships are meant to offer routes into top professions for those not in graduate schemes. In an ideal scenario one could achieve the same outcome from either route. Unfortunately, we cannot confirm if this is the case because the data is not available. While 85% of entrants say that a candidate on an apprenticeship or school leaver programme can rise to the same level as a graduate within a comparable time frame, only 23% provided evidence to prove it. We recognise some employers have only recently begun to offer apprenticeships, but they must collect and evaluate data to ensure they are not creating a two-tier system. Young people should feel confident, and not be stigmatised, taking an apprenticeship over other career pathways.

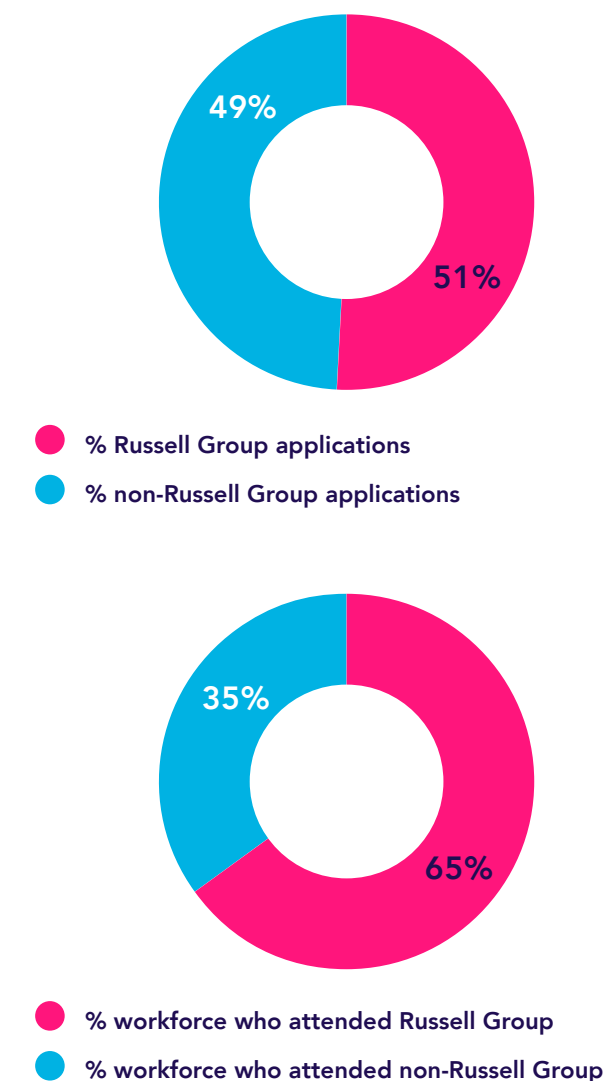
Russell Group applicants continue to dominate despite just one in 50 students being eligible for free school meals

It is not enough to offer different routes for young people to enter an organisation; there must be diversity in where these people are coming from to begin with. Russell Group universities still dominate the figures for applications and acceptances for Index entrants. Half of applications, and two-thirds of graduate entrants, are from these 24 universities. Additionally, 44 Index entrants saw more than 75% of their graduates come from Russell Group universities, and 13 had more than 90%. If more opportunity is to be given to graduates from LSEBs, there must be balance between those who attended Russell Group universities and those who did not.

Too many employers rely on Russell Group universities when entry to them is highly dependent on applicants' backgrounds. Just 2% of Russell Group students were eligible for free school meals, while nearly a third had attended private school.

In fact, young people from the most advantaged backgrounds are five times more likely to attend Russell Group universities than comparable peers. Ensuring that other universities are represented amongst employees is critical to fostering an environment in which there are multiple routes to career success besides attending Russell Group universities, which students from LSEBs are most likely to be excluded from in the first place.

Applications and acceptances for latest UK graduate intake



Case study:

PwC: an employer offering multiple routes in, with parity of esteem

In 2022 PwC offered a broad range of routes in for young people. They hosted more than 600 internships, offering permanent roles to 589 interns. Crucially, all these internships were paid, structured programmes with rigorous selection. PwC also hired 982 apprentices last year, compared to 1,056 graduates. All of PwC's apprenticeships are at least Level 4, and 86% of

apprenticeships are offered at degree level. PwC review the socioeconomic background of all their apprentices on several metrics, including whether the individuals recruited received free school meals. All apprenticeships offer parity of esteem and opportunity, as apprentices can progress to the same level as graduates.

03 Attraction

This chapter analyses the extent to which organisations recruiting graduates seek to attract a diverse range of applicants and make opportunities accessible to everyone. The Index rewards employers that make an active effort to diversify their attraction methods, ensuring they reach those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds (LSEBs).

This section was answered by 143 entrants (97%).

Why this matters

The impact of the pandemic on educational attainment coupled with the cost-of-living crisis means young people from LSEBs are even less likely to attend Russell Group universities. Given the current difficulties employers are facing in attracting talent it is a no-brainer to visit more non-Russell Group universities.

Tips to ensure you are open to and attracting talent in a cost-of-living crisis



Cover the costs of travel for interviews and supply the tech equipment required to participate in the process.

Indicate what financial support is available on your website.

State publicly your commitment to hire from outside Russell Group universities.

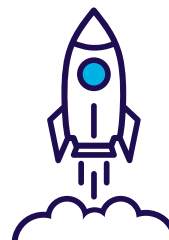
An easy win:

Employers should make their websites clear and accessible – making clear you value potential over polish

An organisation's website is a crucial window into who they are and what they stand for. Index entrants can take relatively straightforward steps to improve their website and make their recruitment accessible. Young people from LSEBs are less likely to have knowledge of or contacts within the industry, so making information readily available and easy to navigate should be a priority and easy to achieve.

Websites should be easily understood by people who do not have prior knowledge of the industry, including examples of every aspect of the recruitment process – from online tests, assessment centre exercises, and interview questions – so that candidates can get a flavour of what the tasks will involve before they undertake them. Additionally, avoid unexplained acronyms, industry terms, or vague competencies, for example 'commercial awareness' without explanation. These steps are just the beginning to eliminating any gatekeeping that previously kept underrepresented groups out of the applicant pool.

Starting out?



Ensure that you achieve a good balance of Russell Group and non-Russell Group university visits.

Looking to progress?



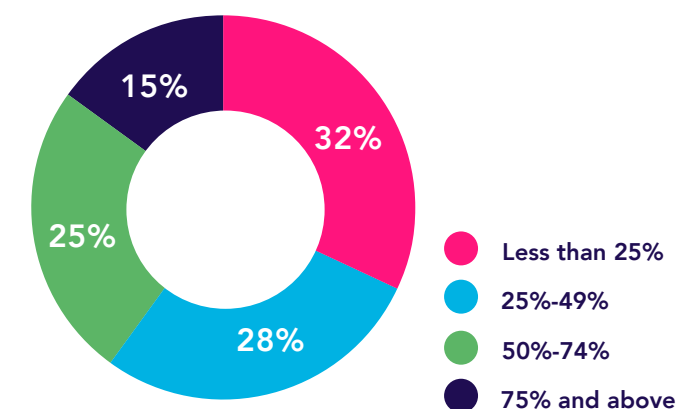
Track the conversion rate of Russell Group and non-Russell Group applicants to acceptances to ensure that the balance is maintained throughout the recruitment process, and that it is translating into a more diverse recruitment pool.

Visit universities beyond the Russell Group

The Russell Group accounts for 16% of all universities in the UK, yet 39% of all visits amongst entrants were to Russell Group universities (1,409 out of a total of 3,654). This shows there remains a stronghold of organisations and sectors that miss out on vast swathes of talented young people. One in ten entrants conducted 90% or more of their visits to Russell Group universities, and for all entrants in law, the figure was nearly half (48%).

All employers should use the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data to identify the institutions with the highest representation of students from LSEBs and focus their resources on these universities.

The proportion of visits to Russell Group universities



Best practice: For attracting non-graduate talent

Penguin Random House UK

Penguin Random House UK do not require degrees, so focus on outreach and initiatives to demystify the publishing industry for those aged 18 and over. They have a careers workshop which has been virtual since the first lockdown. One of their careers events was to promote The Scheme – positive action traineeships for those who identify as Black, Asian or minority ethnic and/or those from LSEBs based on parental occupation. The events included managers talking about the publishing process, the work of their teams, what trainees do and a question-and-answer session. Another event included a conversation between two alumni of The Scheme. The

outreach work was advertised through external partners such as the Sutton Trust and Sanctuary Graduates, and was well-targeted as nearly half (45%) were eligible for free school meals.

Financial Conduct Authority (FCA)

One innovative practice comes from the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). The FCA encourage hiring managers to share interview questions with candidates before their interview. They aim to provide equal opportunity to all candidates and to assist those less familiar with the recruitment process.

04 Recruitment and Selection

This chapter examines recruitment and selection processes that, too often, reward 'polish' – having the accent, appearance, or behaviours commonly associated with applicants from more privileged backgrounds – over potential.

The best-performing employers in the Index engage in two types of action to address this: a) removing barriers that prevent individuals from lower socioeconomic backgrounds (LSEBs) from progressing to selection, and b) rewarding current ability and future potential over past academic performance.

This section was answered by 146 entrants (97%).

Why this matters

Employers are overlooking talent at a time when they can ill afford to do so

The number of vacancies in the UK has been reaching record levels month after month while the numbers applying to them have fallen, providing a real incentive for employers to ensure that talented people are not overlooked in recruitment. The good news is that there is plenty of help on offer. We partnered with Totaljobs to produce guidance on what employers should do to diversify their talent pool and improve attraction, recruitment and retention, such as collecting and monitoring background data.

We urge a quick adoption of these suggested actions, as fewer than two-thirds (64%) of young people from LSEBs believe a satisfying job is open to everyone if they work hard enough, compared to four in five (78%) of those from higher socioeconomic backgrounds (HSEBs). These numbers could easily be corrected by employers adopting inclusive recruitment practices.

Recruiting talent in a cost-of-living crisis

Employers should help plug the skills gap by capitalising on existing resources

Considering the compounding economic crises placing increased burdens on young people entering the workforce, now more than ever employers must offer individuals from LSEBs the opportunity to develop employability skills. Skills gaps exist across all soft skills, most notably for communication, adaptability and critical thinking. Employers can take advantage of established programmes meant to build skills in creativity, problem-solving, and teamwork among young people from disadvantaged areas and embed them in their school programmes to help close this gap. Entrants such as Santander work with Business in the Community to plug skills gaps, utilising this toolkit to help tackle local skills and labour shortages.

Eversheds Sutherland are among those to use the Skills Builder Framework, which offers employers a way to build skills in creativity, problem solving, and teamwork with young people from LSEBs as part of their school programme.

If employers want the best talent, they must recruit for potential, not polish

Employers should always assess candidates on the competencies required for the job and the organisation's published values, not 'polish', 'fit', or accent. We are pleased that more than four in five entrants (85%) have guidelines and training clarifying that candidates should not be accepted or rejected on criteria irrelevant to the job, such as appearance, accent or other attributes associated with 'polish'. Such guidelines ensure that recruitment practices remain fair and often result in an applicant pool more diverse in background and skillset.

Employers should also monitor whether their recruitment process effectively assesses candidates' capability and potential to perform in the role over their work experience accolades, extra-curricular activities or highly subjective attributes like 'gravitas' or 'polish'. Very few entrants were awarded top marks for their work in this area. Those that scored highest collected detailed, high-quality data showing the impact of changes based on their assessments.



Best practice: Training hiring managers

JLL trains their managers ahead of assessment centres to look for 'potential over polish'. W Communications uses competency framework questions which do not require prior knowledge of their sector but instead focus on strengths and interests. After joining, they track performance against this competency framework to provide mentoring and training.





Employers must mark what matters:

Grade requirements do not predict success

An upper-second-class degree has long been the minimum grade needed for entry into the UK's most prestigious professions. However, academic grades are not always a good predictor of in-role success (particularly if context is not taken into account). We are thankfully seeing employers move away from relying on grades in favour of analysing a candidate's skills and potential.

Scoring extra-curricular activities in recruitment disadvantages young people from LSEBs and is deeply concerning in the wake of the pandemic and in a cost-of-living crisis

In normal circumstances, access to extra-curricular activities is restricted for those from LSEBs. In periods of economic crisis, the requirement to not only fund but allocate free time to additional unpaid activities is out of touch with the reality experienced by families up and down the country.

In our Unheard Voices work we found that 13% of young people from LSEBs felt that the government's education recovery agenda – meant to recover lost learning following the pandemic by restoring funding to the most deprived secondary schools – had come at the expense of their careers education or work experience. It is, therefore, disheartening that 7% of entrants scored extra-curricular activities, such as work experience, in the recruitment process.

Employers should not charge exit fees

Young people don't need further obstacles in the way of their success and certainly should not be penalised for trying to navigate these tricky systems. However, exit fees, which are charged when someone has been accepted on to a graduate scheme or similar but either does not complete the scheme or leaves shortly afterwards, are still being used in many sectors.

We asked about the use of exit fees for the first time this year as we are concerned about the disproportionate impact of this practice on young people from LSEBs in their early careers, who may not have the knowledge or confidence to understand the implications of signing up to a contract - and will not have the financial means to pay the fees due or negotiate a reduction.

A quarter (26%) of Index entrants told us they implement exit fees for graduates recruited who do not complete their graduate placement. We were surprised to find so many employers charging exit fees and concerned about the particular pressure this could put on graduates from LSEBs, especially in the context of the cost-of-living crisis.

Employers using exit fees gave two reasons for doing so:

- Three in ten (58%) do so to recoup cost of training
- One in ten (11%) do so to deter others from leaving

The use of financial penalties to retain staff who are otherwise keen to leave their roles is a concern and is likely to cause stress for employees from LSEBs.

Only one in eight (13%) of those who implement exit fees make this clear in their adverts. Employers should not charge exit fees. However, if they do, there are steps they should take to improve the practice. At a minimum, where employers consider it is fair and proportionate to recoup some of the costs of training through exit fees, they should ensure their approach is communicated explicitly in adverts, contracts and other information and should ensure that this practice is clearly explained to prospective recruits before contracts are signed. Where exit fees are levied, they should be proportionate to the value of training received, and employers should be conscious of the financial and mental health implications of debt recovery and offer reasonable payment plans.



Innovative practice to watch: Removing grade requirements

Encouragingly, 30% of entrants do not have minimum grade requirements for their graduate programme, 40% of entrants do not look at candidates' grades, and a further 34% place them in the context of the school or college. This is a great first step to ensuring that recruitment does not exclude bright, hardworking students with high potential who might be from areas that traditionally perform poorly in national grade rankings.

For example, Browne Jacobson found that, of all candidates from LSEBs who were offered roles at the firm but would not have previously been eligible to apply due to their grades, 70% received an 'exceptional' rating at the end of the year. Such analysis reaffirms the need to do away with recruitment systems that place too much emphasis on academic performance, which is not a reliable indicator of in-work performance.

Returning entrants are more likely to collect data to identify where LSEB applicants fall down during the recruitment process

Employers should collect and monitor data on their recruitment processes if they want to understand how these processes might unintentionally be harming applicants from LSEBs.

Half of entrants (50%) monitor their recruitment process to identify whether applicants from LSEBs get eliminated from the applicant pool at certain stages. Returning entrants are far more likely to do this (62%) than new entrants (12%), demonstrating the value of entering the Index and receiving this guidance. Collecting this data allows employers to discover barriers for candidates from different backgrounds and implement solutions to reduce them. For example, Grant Thornton replaced their application form with a form to register interest and redesigned the case study stage after identifying adverse impacts for those from LSEBs.

Contextual recruitment helps to identify top performers

The widening attainment gap means action on contextual recruitment is more important than ever. Contextual recruitment identifies those who have academically outperformed their peers, which may be a more accurate reflection of ability than raw grades due to the influence of background on attainment. A third of entrants (34%) look at grades within the context of the school or college attended during recruitment, but we hope this is just the beginning for contextual recruitment becoming more commonplace. More than a third (37%) of returning entrants use contextualised recruitment, which suggests that employers continuously engaging in the improvement of their employment processes are reaping the benefits of contextual recruitment. A quarter (24%) of new entrants said they use contextual recruitment; we hope to see more employers joining in on this practice in the future.

Unfortunately, more than half (58%) of entrants still use minimum grade requirements, which 30% of successful candidates exceeded in this reporting period. Maintaining minimum requirements when many of those hired greatly exceed them provides false hope for students just at the threshold, particularly those from LSEBs who are less likely to graduate with first or upper second-class degrees.

We recommend that employers remove minimum grade requirements from their entry-level routes to improve access.

Introduce systems to prevent you missing out on talent

Many employers use targeted measures to try to improve social mobility by directing support where it can make the greatest difference. Overall, two in five entrants (42%) flag students with certain socioeconomic background characteristics for a re-examination of their performance in the context of their economic circumstances later in the process. Returning entrants are far more likely to do so (48%) than new entrants (21%). Four in ten (40%) took a second look at those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds who would have otherwise been rejected (50% of returning entrants). These numbers show that targeted measures like this are likely to produce positive outcomes for employers when applicants who would have previously been overlooked are given the opportunity to prove themselves and become top-performing employees.



Innovative practice to watch: Removing grade requirements

Bain & Company

Bain & Company flags candidates using a combination of performance and social mobility, then runs an additional review of candidates using this information. Those selected for interview are then provided with a buddy to coach them through the interview process.

DWF Law LLP

DWF Law LLP uses body language assessments to make a judgement on whether candidates' lack of confidence may be related to their socioeconomic background. If the applicant is judged to have high capability and potential but is nervous in an unfamiliar environment, assessors are encouraged to see beyond the nervousness and candidates are likely to be progressed. Of the vacation scheme applicants in 2020-21, 53% of those offered a training contract had flags and 44% of those offered a direct training contract had flags.

05 Data Collection

This chapter examines how employers collect and analyse data to understand their workforce's socioeconomic profile. The Index recognises companies that collect data and rigorously analyse it, using the insights it gives them to improve their socioeconomic diversity.

This section was answered by 139 entrants (93%).

Why this matters:

Data is critical for building a social mobility strategy and knowing whether social mobility in the workplace is progressing or declining

Collecting and analysing data are essential first steps for those seeking to develop an effective social mobility strategy. One of the most important data points is where applicants were educated, as the privately educated are disproportionately represented in government, top-paying professions, and leadership roles. As the impact of the pandemic on lost learning and the cost-of-living crisis takes hold, we need employers to collect data to understand the scale of the challenge.



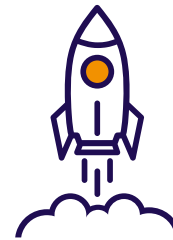
Case study:

Best practice in data

Grant Thornton LLP have asked current staff, new hires, and all applicants, including those who were unsuccessful, to complete a diversity survey. The survey collected five data points on socioeconomic background: type of school attended, parental occupation at age 14, eligibility for free school meals, 'first in family' to attend university, and employee postcodes during secondary education. This year the completion rate was over 90% across all levels of seniority.

Grant Thornton LLP have also analysed promotions and performance against diversity data for the first time this year. Within their roles, those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds (LSEBs) accounted for 13% to 24% of headcount and 12% to 22% of promotions. As part of this, they reviewed the allocation of work to associates, to consider the type of work associates were exposed to and whether this impacted performance ratings and promotion prospects. The findings were communicated to senior leaders and work began to remove bias from their work allocation systems. Specifically, they have invested in, and put in place, a new system to remove bias in decision making at the point of work allocation. This has been used in Audit so far and the results are positive, with bias removed from work allocation decisions. They are also creating a support and mentoring scheme for associates from LSEBs (with a focus on one to one and group support), including formal and informal sponsorship of career progression.

Starting out?



Collect socioeconomic background data for new and current employees and unsuccessful applicants, consisting of at least three data points. Collect socioeconomic background data for unsuccessful applicants to give you an accurate picture of the recruitment process.

Looking to progress?



Publish your data and, to ensure the data set is robust, consider setting completion rate targets.

The scale of the challenge:

Society and the professions remain dominated by the privately educated

Those who are privately educated still dominate top professions. Even though only 7% of the British population is privately educated, 61% of the cabinet formed by Rishi Sunak were educated at independent schools and 45% went to Oxford or Cambridge. These are worrying statistics which must be addressed urgently so that government more accurately reflects the population they represent.

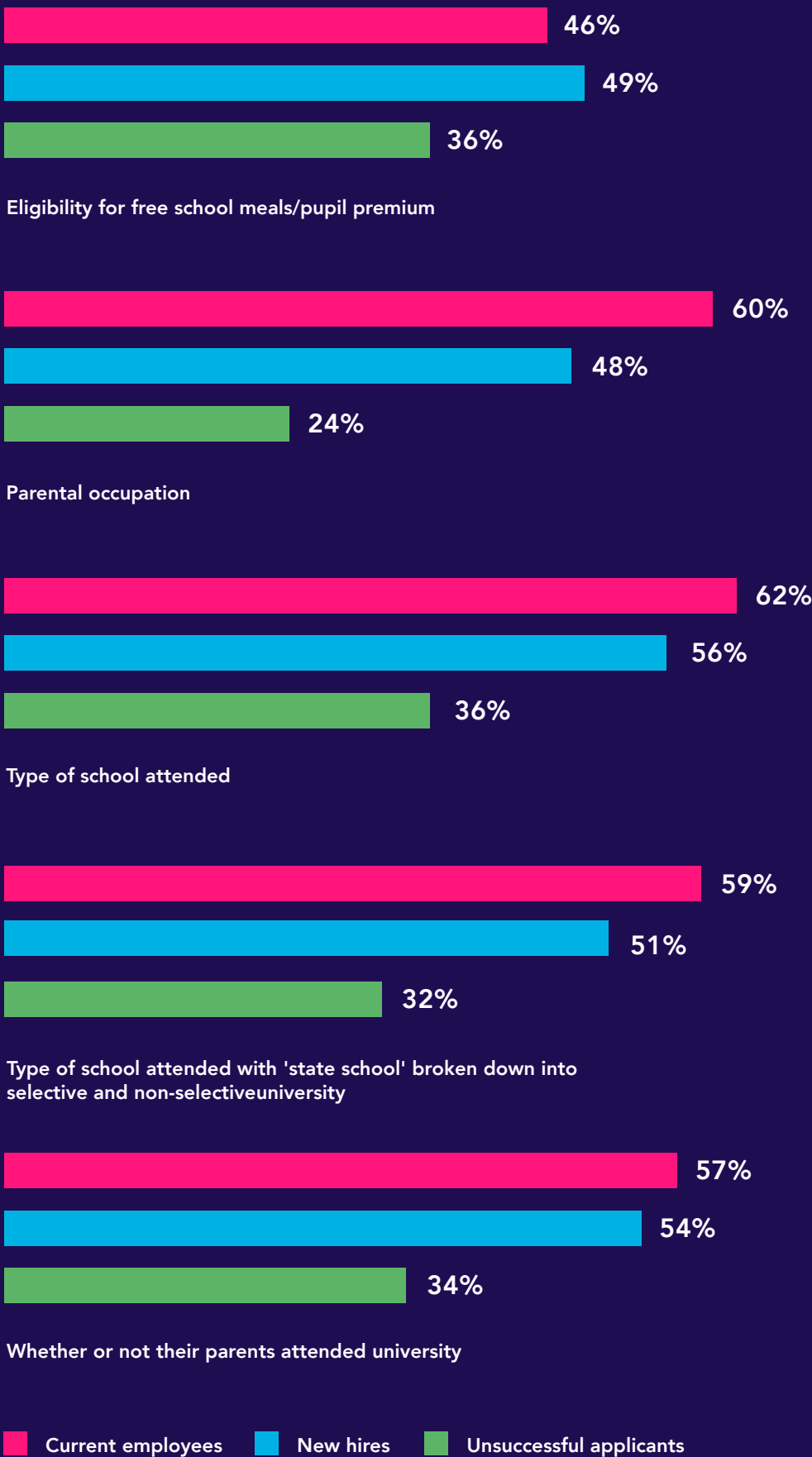
Top-paying industries demonstrate schooling matters. Some 59% of civil service permanent secretaries, 43% of influential media editors and broadcasters, and 34% of FTSE 350 CEOs were privately educated.

Data is crucial in order to see how this disparity is manifesting itself in the workforce composition across sectors, so all employers should collect data on the socioeconomic background of their workforce to guide which steps they take.

% privately educated

British population	7%
Cabinet members	61%
FTSE 350 CEOs privately educated	34%
Influential media editors and broadcasters	43%
Civil service permanent secretaries	59%
Creative industry	27%
Advertising and marketing	23%
Music and performing arts	23%

Data point collected



Data collection is pivotal to reducing the class ceiling

Employers should record workforce data at every level of seniority and across every business area in meaningful and relevant social mobility categories. In line with the Social Mobility Commission's recommendations, employers should collect socioeconomic data on their workforce across three to four areas by asking the following questions:

- What was the occupation of your main household earner when you were about aged 14?
- Which type of school did you attend for the most time between the ages of 11 and 16?
- If you finished school after 1980, were you eligible for free school meals at any point during your school years?
- Did either of your parents attend university and gain a degree (e.g., BA/BSc or equivalent) by the time you were 18?

If employers only collect one piece of data, they should collect the occupation of the main household earner when the respondent was aged 14, as this provides some of the clearest indication of a young person's current financial situation and the career opportunities historically available to them. Those collecting more data should split school type into selective and non-selective. Employers can find guidance on how to collect this data in the [Social Mobility Commission's Toolkit](#). After data collection, employers should analyse whether there is equal representation of socioeconomic backgrounds at each seniority level. It then becomes clear whether there is a 'cliff edge' effect, where those from LSEBs cannot progress, or a 'pyramid effect', where they progress at a much slower rate. HMRC have been [highlighted as a case study](#) by the Commission as an example of best practice. The knowledge of where a workforce comes from is critical to identifying improvements.

Collecting data on is not enough

Employers need to collect three data points set out above and do so for all staff and unsuccessful applicants. Currently too few do this. Nearly three-quarters (72%) of entrants collect at least three data points on their current staff. But while six in 10 (60%) collect parental occupation for current employees, the figure is half (48%) for new hires, and just a quarter (24%) for unsuccessful applicants. These rates should be more consistent across different groups. Nearly three-quarters of entrants (74%) conduct an annual or regular diversity survey, so the mechanism to collect information should be available.

Too few collect data on unsuccessful applicants

Employers should monitor their recruitment process to identify barriers for those from LSEBs and act on their findings. Collecting data on unsuccessful applicants can show who struggles to get into organisations, highlight unconscious bias in the recruitment process and identify priority areas to be addressed to increase workforce diversity. We hope to see greater consistency in what data is collected and from whom.

Around a third of entrants collect data on their unsuccessful applicants: 36% collect data on free school meal eligibility, 34% on 'first in family' status, 32% on school type (split into selective and non-selective state schools), but just 24% on parental occupation, and only 11% on postcode while in secondary education. Those collecting this data have a greater understanding of which diversity criteria must be addressed and prioritised, so we urge all entrants to follow suit as soon as possible. Only then will they be able to implement robust strategies to improve social mobility.

Geographic mobility is becoming an increasing challenge in the cost-of-living crisis

The ability to move to access better jobs and higher wages is heavily influenced by socioeconomic background, particularly at a time when the cost-of-living is soaring. Those from more remote areas would be even more financially strained if making the move to London.

Yet, just one in ten (11%) entrants collect data on the geographic mobility of current employees, which is worrying considering those from high socioeconomic backgrounds are much more likely to have moved for work by age 27 across all diversity measures.

Employers must collect data on all levels of seniority

The practice of collecting data seems to be more common for hired employees, but still only half (50%) of entrants provided data on the background of their staff. One in five (20%) members of entrants' UK Board or Management Committee were from a LSEB or working-class background (based on parental occupation), lower than the 39% of the population as a whole. This means those from LSEBs are less likely to make it to the boardroom than should be expected.

Only by collecting this data can the issue be identified, and action taken. As we have seen with the challenge of increasing the number of women in leadership roles, the collection and publication of data on gender has been used to successfully support new initiatives and increase the number of women recruited into senior level roles.

To demonstrate how pervasive the inequality in boardroom representation is, more than one in four (27%) of UK Board or Management Committee members were educated at private schools, even among the firms most committed to social mobility. Eight respondents reported that 40% or more of their partners, board, or non-executive directors were privately educated. It is only by collecting this data that reasons for differences in progression can be identified

Board-level accountability is key to success

Nearly two-thirds (63%) of entrants presented socioeconomic background data to their UK Board or Management Committee. We are encouraged to find that the number of entrants who present social mobility data at board-level is on an upward trend: from 52% in 2020 to 63% in 2022. If this data is reported to the highest levels within the organisation, it indicates how seriously the matter is taken. Board-level buy-in ensures accountability and sets a culture for all employees.

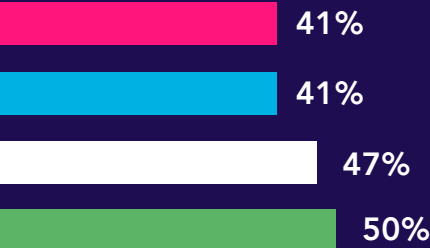
Only by knowing the real picture can change come about. Only 21 organisations (15%) achieved the highest marks in this area, awarded for detailed collection and analysis of the data. Those who were most highly marked collected data on the backgrounds of staff from different work areas within their organisations, which enabled them to identify differences in diversity across departments. Where this data is collected, it tends to show that certain areas of the organisation are staffed differently according to background. Many more prestigious roles, which usually are higher paid, are filled with those from higher socioeconomic backgrounds. We commend each organisation which collects this data, as it is only by collecting and monitoring it that more people from LSEBs will be intentionally considered for top-paying roles.

Staff background of Index entrants

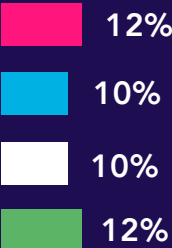


% that are from an LSEB based on parental occupation

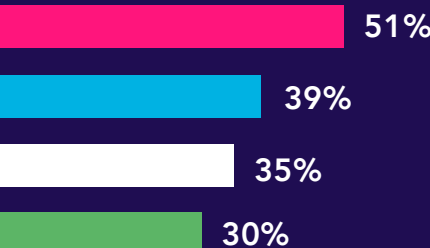
% that attended a private school



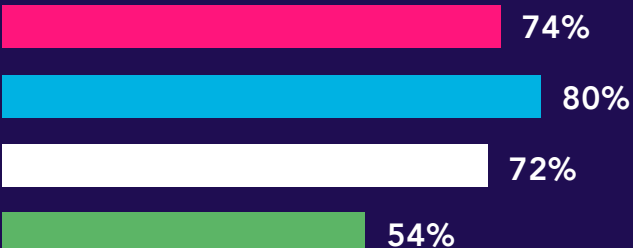
% that attended a non-selective state school



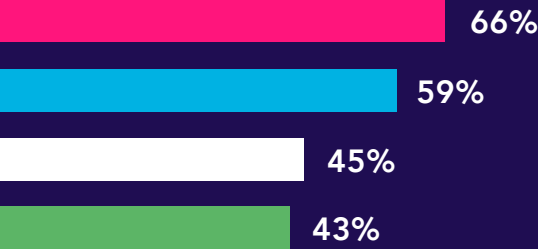
% that were eligible for free school meals/pupil premium



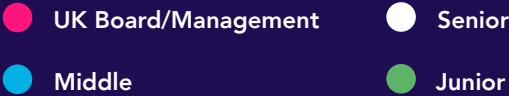
% that were the first generation in their family to attend university



% that are graduates



% of UK graduate population that attended a Russell Group university



06 Progression, Culture and Experienced Hires

This chapter examines how employers measure the social mobility of their existing employees and the strategies undertaken to create an inclusive workplace culture. Social mobility is not just about individuals from lower socioeconomic backgrounds (LSEBs) getting into a higher-paid career; it is equally about having the ability to flourish and progress at work.

This section was answered by 134 entrants (91%).

Why this matters:

Success means individuals getting in and getting on

Achieving social mobility is not possible without having access to the top professions and the ability to progress within them. All opportunities at every level should be open to anyone, regardless of background, and the culture of the organisation must ensure individuals from

all backgrounds can progress. Being able to see role models at every level is important to show all employees what is possible. Not only is recruiting and retaining diverse talent more fair and therefore positive for social mobility, but it benefits employers too.

Only 10% of those from working-class backgrounds make it into Britain's top jobs. Some professions are particularly restrictive, with over 70% of doctors coming from the most advantaged backgrounds. For those who do gain access, progression is often slower. Academics Professor Sam Friedman and Dr Daniel Laurison have shown that 'informal' routes disproportionately reward the privileged. Bridge Group have similarly identified a lack of opportunities for working-class employees in engineering. Different rates of career progression contribute to the class pay gap whereby employees from LSEBs are paid less than those from higher socioeconomic backgrounds.

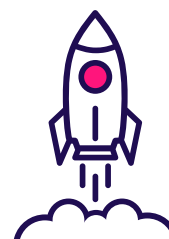
We welcome the City of London Taskforce, which has set an example for improving progression by calling for financial and professional services organisations to collect employee data and set targets for improvement in the representation of staff from LSEBs in senior positions.

Too few employers collect and analyse data to know the true picture on progression and retention

More employers must collect data on pay and progression by background; fewer than one in four (24%) entrants currently do so based on progression. Of the fifth (19%) of entrants who measure pay by background, a third (32%) are in the public sector, and a fifth (21%) are in law. These numbers are simply not high enough to achieve the sort of wide scale change we hope to see. Further, the correlation between measurement of pay by background and the low numbers of people from LSEBs in these industries underscores the impact that this analysis could have on ensuring more people are able to progress to the top of these professions.

Browne Jacobson are one employer that collects comprehensive data, analyses it and uses it to inform change in their business. As a result of their work, Browne Jacobson found that those who were not the first generation of their family to attend university earn 7% more than those who were. This insight demonstrates the sort of conclusions that can be made by this data analysis and illuminates a path forward for fostering a more equitable work environment.

Starting out?



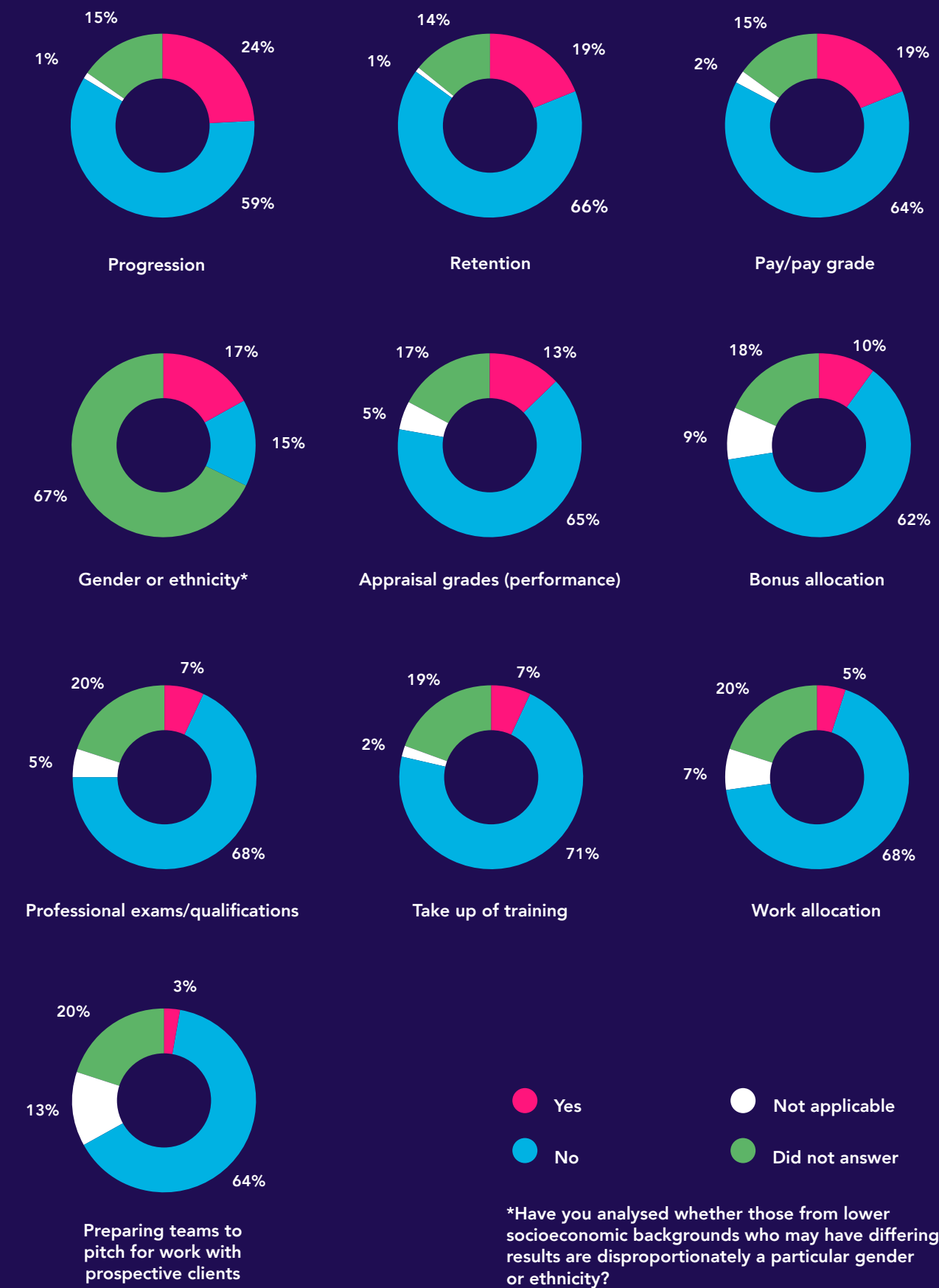
Collect data on pay, retention, and progression by socioeconomic background.

Looking to progress?



Analyse pay data to see whether your organisation has a class pay gap, report and commit to closing it.

Does your organisation analyse any of the following things by socioeconomic background at every level?

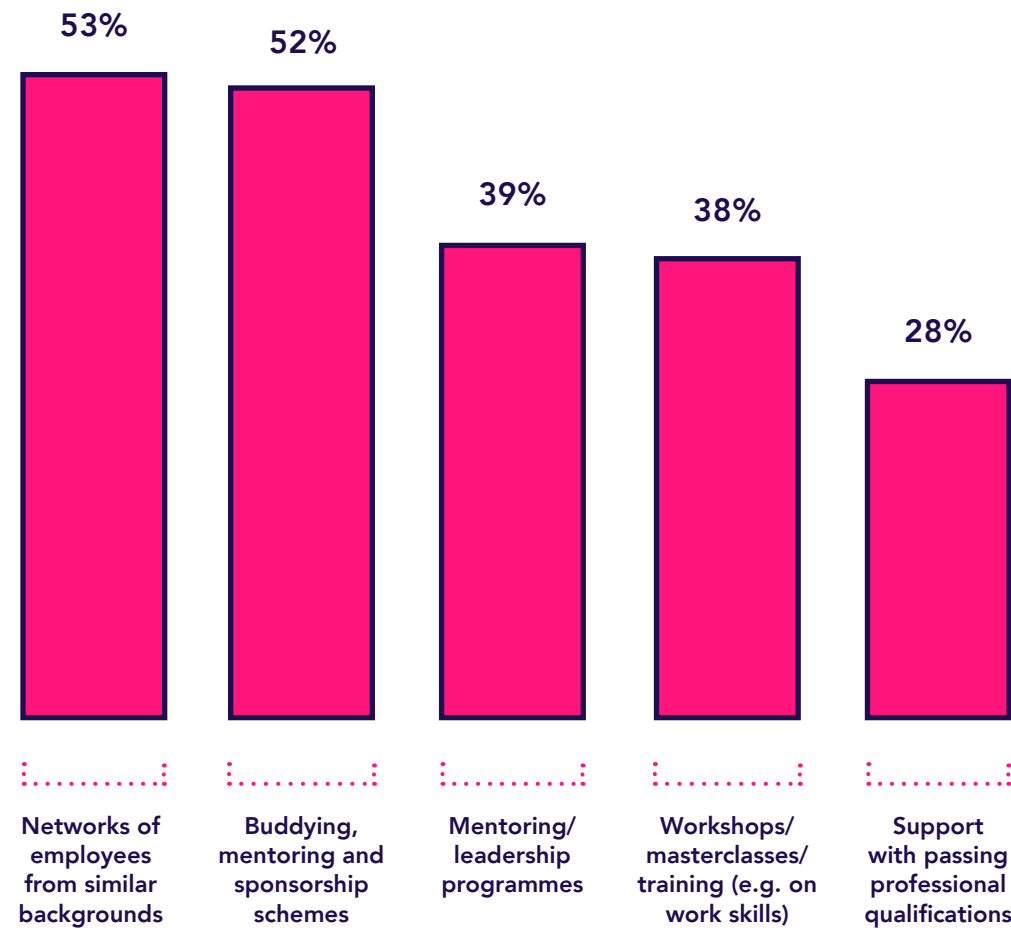


Robust strategies are needed to assist more equal progression

While collecting data is welcome, employers must not let a lack of data hold them back from taking action. Just under a third (30%) of entrants have strategies to improve retention and progression for employees from LSEBs. The best examples show detailed strategies, specific targets and deadlines for meeting these goals. For example, Bain & Company has employed reverse mentoring, in which a senior member of staff is paired with a more junior staff member. The aim is for the senior person to secure insights into the individual's working life and identify any barriers to progression.

Osborne Clarke offer leadership programmes for Paralegals from LSEBs, and the National Audit Office analyse work allocation to ensure employees from LSEBs receive comparable levels of work to aid their opportunities for progression.

How employers are aiding equal progression:



Internal sponsors hires can harm social mobility

Despite the well-evidenced role of networks and champions in supporting progression, only 7% of entrants examine the role of internal sponsors. Where those in senior positions are more likely to be from privileged backgrounds, they are, in turn, more likely to sponsor those with whom they have 'cultural affinity' – those who are like them and share similar interests. These senior people can provide a 'leg up' that excludes employees from LSEBs with equal potential but who lack opportunity. Recognising this, and formalising sponsorship and progression routes can help to distribute opportunities more equally.

External agencies can help ensure that those hired from outside the organisation reflect the population as a whole. More than a quarter (29%) of entrants use agencies and ask for shortlists that consider the socioeconomic background of candidates. For Browne Jacobson, agencies that do not deliver must explain the process, where the role was advertised, and how the barriers were reduced for working-class applicants.

Employers should not offer staff referral bonuses

We firmly believe that employers should not pay employees for recommending people within their networks for jobs. However, two-thirds (66%) of entrants offer financial incentives for referral hires, and 7% score referrals more favourably in the recruitment process. Referral schemes risk recreating workforces that lack diversity and is a practice we discourage. Any employers who use referral hiring must ensure a diverse set of people join through this route, and to do that will need to monitor the data on who gets hired. But it is extremely difficult to execute such a scheme in an ethical, inclusive way, and thus we continue to urge employers to not use such referral schemes in their hiring practices.

A welcoming culture increases a sense of belonging, but only half of employers measure it

A greater sense of belonging in the workplace increases performance and reduces turnover. But only half (54%) of entrants have examined whether those from LSEBs feel that their workplace culture is welcoming to them. Without regularly assessing belonging, employers cannot understand and therefore improve the experience of their employees. There are many things that employers can do to assess and improve their culture. Accenture uses 'culture assessments', consisting of focus groups and interviews with employees. Their findings are then fed into developing initiatives that focus on improving belonging.

An organisation's culture matters because it can impact both how employees feel and how they progress. Factors that impede progression for those from LSEBs are characterised as the 'unwritten rules of progression' that feed into the 'socioeconomic progression gap' – something that has been identified in the Senior Civil Service. It is these unwritten rules that make people from LSEBs think that certain industries or roles are simply not meant for them, especially when the path upward in these positions – or the existence of these positions to begin with – are completely obscured from their view.

It is time to close the class pay gap!



There is a significant class pay gap in Britain's top professions, meaning that those from working-class backgrounds are paid thousands of pounds a year less than colleagues from professional managerial backgrounds.

PwC, KPMG and Clifford Chance have shown change is possible, with all three taking the step of publishing their class pay gap.

To find out more about the class pay gap visit staydown.co.uk



Case study: Best practice

Browne Jacobson LLP asks recruitment agencies to anonymise applications, removing mentions of academic qualifications, ethnicity, gender and flagging applicants from low socioeconomic backgrounds. The firm ensures shortlists offer a balanced set of candidates (no more than 50% of candidates from Russell Group Universities). The firm has also established the Fairer Access Into Legal Experience (FAIRE) initiative, revolutionising how law firms' recruit future talent and encourages an industry-wide culture of inclusivity.

Browne Jacobson conducted an employer survey to assess progression and their workplace culture, achieving a 90% response rate across all seniority levels. The survey found very few barriers for recruitment or progression for those from low socioeconomic backgrounds, resulting from the firm's inclusive onboarding, targeted mentoring, and bespoke development programmes such as Thrive. One internal network is the Social Mobility Community Group – a place for employees to speak openly and constructively about social mobility, sharing ideas that can influence change from within the firm and beyond.

07

Advocacy

This chapter reviews the advocacy work that organisations do to improve social mobility and make their workplaces more welcoming for those without the financial means or familial contacts to access historically exclusive opportunities. Those who perform highly in this section are the employers who take action to engage staff, suppliers and clients in their efforts. As the UK continues to recover from the long-term effects of Covid-19 and now faces a cost-of-living crisis, organisations must raise awareness that these crises have had a greater impact on those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds (LSEBs).

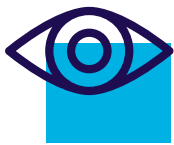
This section was answered by 147 entrants (99%).

Why it matters:

In a cost-of-living crisis we need employers to be flagbearers for change beyond their own work

Employers can influence and improve social mobility by involving their staff, their suppliers and others in their sector in their efforts. The [Living Wage Foundation](#) exemplifies how organisations can have an influence through their supply chains to make a difference in critical areas, as does the [Public Services \(Social Value\) Act](#) which requires those who commission services to consider wider benefits. PwC have produced [guidance](#) on how to use environmental, social and governance (ESG) reporting in advocacy, and The Social Mobility Commission have guidance on advocacy in their [toolkit](#).

More than three-quarters (77%) of entrants participate in social mobility initiatives across their sector or industry. We welcome so many employers demonstrating leadership and being examples for others. Several of those who scored highest have long-term, enduring partnerships with charities that focus their efforts on socioeconomic background, such as Young Citizens, The Prince's Trust, the Sutton Trust and ourselves.



Organisation to watch: Progress Together

We are pleased to see that a new membership body for the financial services sector in the UK has launched. Progress Together has stated that the success measure will be greater socioeconomic diversity at senior levels across its membership.

A meaningful sectoral approach can help move the dial quickly, as we have seen with initiatives like Access Accountancy. We urge more sectors to come together to help drive change at pace.



Sectors taking part in advocacy

Law	41%
Public sector	16%
Banking, financial services and insurance	11%
Professional services	8%
Technology, software and computer services	3%
Real estate	3%
Retail	3%
Fast-moving consumer goods	2%
Energy, water or utility	2%
Facilities management	2%
Construction	2%
PR and communications	2%
Media	2%
Housing	1%
Hospitality	1%
Third sector	1%
Publishing	1%
Engineering or industrial	1%
Management consultancy	1%

Examples of employers taking action:

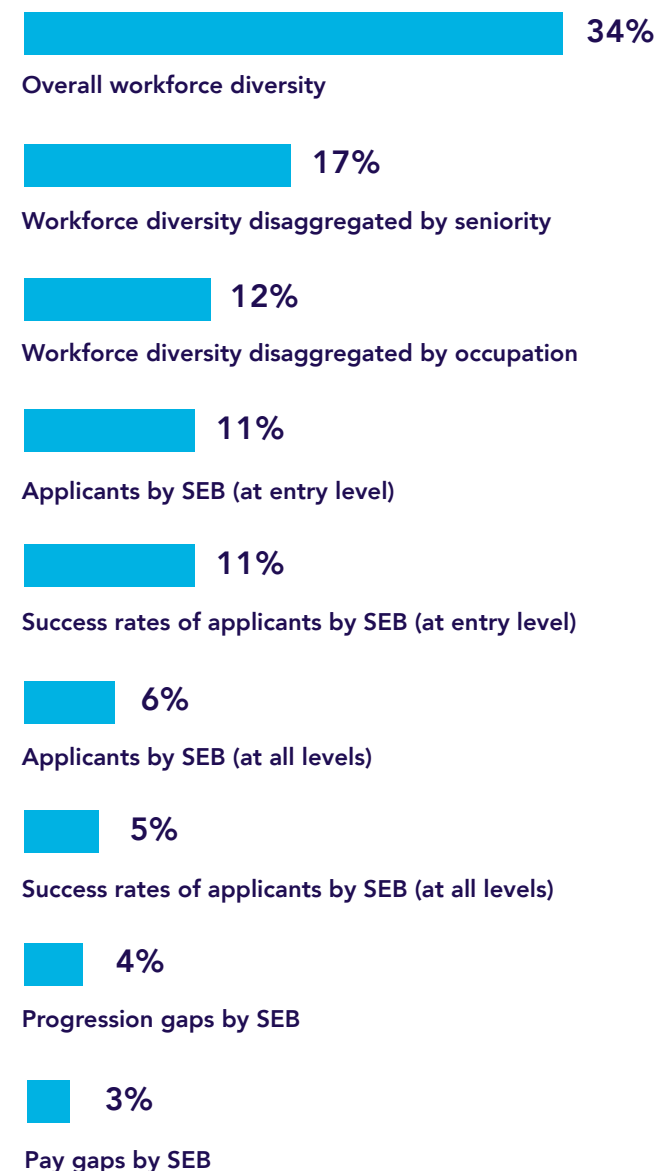
- Severn Trent have given 100,000 hours of free employability training to support people back into work.
- Lloyd's have an ESG committee which aims to embed social mobility across both the organisation and the broader sector through internships for young people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, participating in events such as the [Dive in Festival](#), a global diversity and inclusion festival for the insurance market.
- Accenture have co-sponsored thought leadership work with [Youth Futures Foundation](#), Movement to Work and Sage to explore employer engagement in the youth labour market.



Setting targets is critical: What gets measured gets done

We are encouraged to see that almost half (48%) of entrants have some form of targets relating to socioeconomic background or diversity. Of those who have targets, 72% (34% of all entrants) have targets for overall workforce diversity, but when the figures are broken down, the rates vary significantly. Just 3% of all entrants have targets relating to pay gaps by socioeconomic background and just 4% on progression. Employers must collect and monitor data and use targets to drive improvements. But targets for the sake of setting targets is not enough; this data must serve as an active driver for change in the way pay and progression is considered within an organisation. Understanding how these data points correlate to the lived experiences of the employees behind the numbers is critical for understanding the barriers they face.

Targets relate to



Targets should be monitored at board level

Monitoring at board level increases the likelihood of action from the top. Of those who do have targets, nine in ten (92%) monitor them at board level, and a third (35%) publish them externally. Each of these are crucial to ensure accountability and demonstrate that the organisation takes social mobility seriously. Of those without targets, under half (44%) are considering targets, one in seven (14%) have considered targets, and a third (32%) have not. For nearly eight in ten (78%), the most senior person accountable for the organisation's approach to social mobility is at board level.

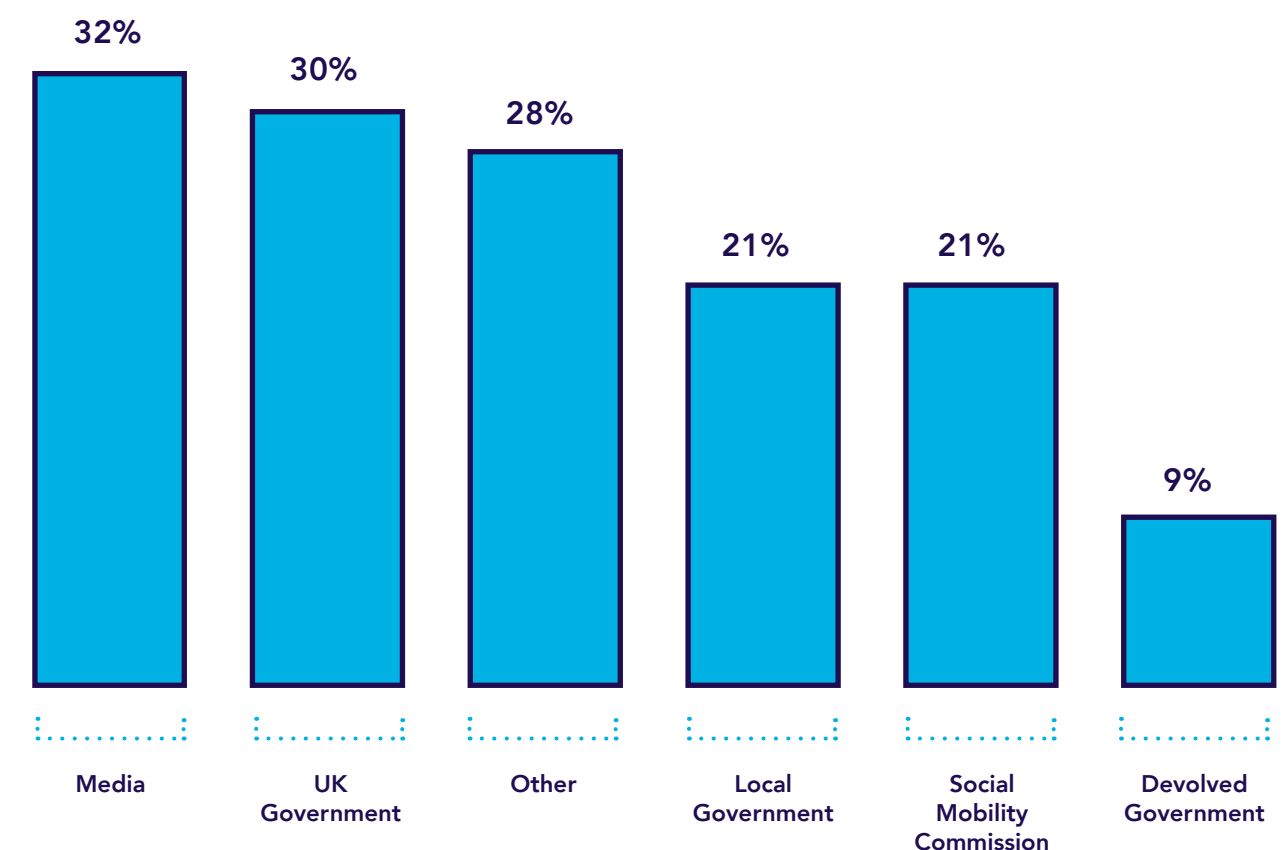
Monitoring at board level demonstrates how important this is to the organisation, and we welcome that over three in four employers have placed accountability at this level.

Engage suppliers to have an impact through the supply chain

Employers should encourage their supply chain to take key actions on social mobility, but too few are doing so. Engaging suppliers in key social mobility action allows employers to add social and economic value beyond their own organisation. They can use their purchasing power to encourage their supply chains to take actions they might otherwise not, which can impact social mobility. Almost half (47%) of entrants encourage suppliers to take positive steps regarding social mobility.

Best practice includes assessing a supplier's diversity and inclusion policies during tender and sharing what they have learnt, including getting suppliers to follow certain policies and procedures.

Does your organisation share reporting data or best practice with any of the following?



Social mobility stories:

Creating a positive internal culture

Employers should encourage senior employees to share their social mobility stories. Doing so can raise awareness and encourage others to feel comfortable about their backgrounds. An organisation's culture is critical so that all employees, regardless of background, feel welcome and comfortable. More than half of entrants (54%) had a staff network and we hope more will do so in the future. Further, 79% encourage employees to share their social mobility stories within the organisation to raise awareness and help others to feel more comfortable. This figure of 79% is up from 70% in 2021, 69% in 2020 and 61% in 2019.

Employers must share best practice with others to make meaningful differences in social mobility. It is good news that seven in 10 (70%) have shared the changes they have made with other organisations, but fewer than a third (32%) share with the media, and even fewer with the UK government (30%) or the Social Mobility Commission (21%). However, 30% of entrants do not share best practice at all. Employers cannot demonstrate their commitment to social mobility if they do not do this, so we hope to see more organisations commit to this practice.



Best practice: With suppliers

PwC engage with suppliers on social mobility when inviting them to tender, asking whether the supplier has a social mobility strategy or whether social mobility is part of their wider diversity and inclusion strategy with a defined action plan. A defined plan is essential to achieving impact, and we hope this example will inspire more employers.



Best practice: Severn Trent

Social mobility strategies should aim to improve communities, not only the employer they are part of. Severn Trent does this through the 'Wonderfully You' Diversity and Inclusion Plan. They are a leading partner in Coventry's Business in the Community (BITC) scheme, supporting skills and employability in local social mobility cold spots and are offering 100,000 hours of free employability training to help people in their communities find work and progress their careers. They have also donated £730,828 to the most deprived communities in their region through the Severn Trent Community Fund. Severn Trent's Sustainable Supply Chain Charter has encouraged 87% of their contracted and 41% of non-contracted suppliers to sign up for the Social Mobility Pledge.

Employee Survey

Key findings

A higher proportion of Index entrants had employees who participated in the employee survey this year, up to 28% from 24% last year. Overall, we received 11,071 valid responses from 42 employers. However, the average response rate fell to 14%, down from 20% in 2021 and at the same level as in 2020 (14%).

The most represented sector was law (45% of respondents worked for law firms), followed by the public sector (14%) and professional services (10%). Smaller employers were more likely to have their employees respond. Almost nine in ten (88%) responses were from organisations with under 10,000 staff.

While 86% of respondents from lower socioeconomic backgrounds (LSEBs) think their organisation is open to talent from all class backgrounds, 11% still feel they must hide their background at work and 10% had experienced barriers to progression because of their class background.

Encouragingly, almost three-quarters (73%) of employees think their senior leadership is doing enough to increase diversity in their workforce. The figure has risen from just over half (54%) in 2018. However, twice as many respondents from LSEBs feel out of place as they have different backgrounds to most employees (12% LSEBs, 6% professional backgrounds). The same is true for those who have experienced barriers to progression due to their class backgrounds (10% LSEBs, 5% professional). These findings show employers must do more on both the culture of their organisations and progression within them.

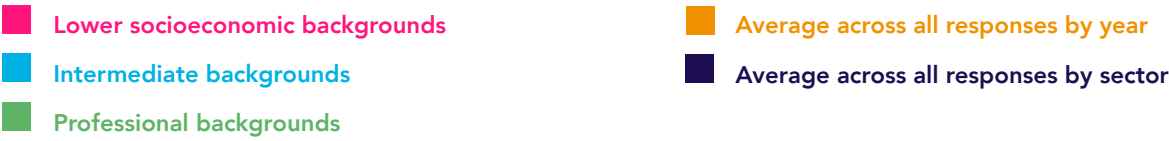
Actions employers can take

There is guidance throughout the Index on what employers can do to improve the experience of employees from LSEBs, but we highlight the areas most relevant to the employee survey here:

- Run an employee survey to assess how employees feel about social mobility.
- Collect and monitor data on pay and progression broken down by socioeconomic background.
- Regularly present the findings to senior staff and publish them alongside targets for improvement.
- Encourage employees to share social mobility stories.
- Ensure that a senior person has responsibility for social mobility and communicates its importance to staff.
- Offer buddying and mentoring schemes.
- Run training on diversity and bias.
- Reduce or remove informal progression routes including sponsorship.

Employee Survey Findings

% who responded 'agree'



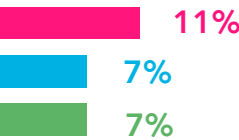
'My organisation is open to talent from all class backgrounds'



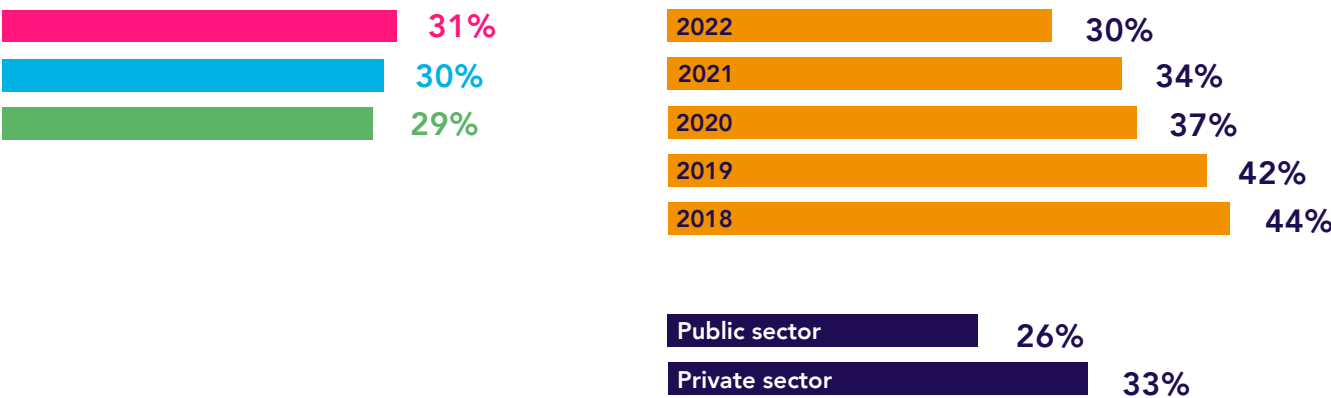
'I am comfortable openly discussing my class background with colleagues'



'I feel I have to hide my class background to get ahead in the workplace'



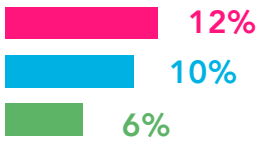
'People get ahead at my workplace because of who they know'



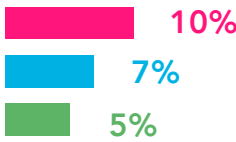
'The workplace culture in my organisation is inclusive of all class backgrounds'



I feel out of place at work as I don't have the same background as the majority of employees



I have experienced barriers to career progression in my workplace due to my class



Our senior leadership is committed to improving the socioeconomic diversity of our workforce



Our senior leadership is committed to improving the socioeconomic diversity of our workforce



My organisation is doing enough to ensure that remote working is accessible to employees of all levels from all class backgrounds during the Covid-19 pandemic



My organisation is doing enough to ensure that remote working is accessible to employees of all levels from all class backgrounds during the Covid-19 pandemic



Index Methodology

This year we have made a conscious effort to place the findings of the Index within the wider context of social mobility. As a result, we have used references to outside sources which readers can follow if they want to find out more. Links to the sources are in footnotes at the bottom of each page.

The Social Mobility Employer Index is comprised of two elements: questions that employers answer using qualitative and quantitative data, and an employee survey which was introduced in 2018. The former assesses employers' work across seven areas: their work with young people, routes into the employer, the attraction of staff, recruitment and selection, data collection, progression of staff and experienced hires and advocacy. The survey is to add insights and contextualise the data provided in submissions. Employers are then benchmarked against one another based on the results.

The Index questions are based on research from the Social Mobility Commission and leading academics working in this field. The Index has also been developed in consultation with, and following feedback from, the following advisory groups and individuals: **Bridge Group, Stonewall, The Institute of Student Employers, Dr Louise Ashley, Royal Holloway, University of London Claire Tunley (Head of Employability at City of London Corporation).**

Working with any of these organisations or individuals does not give an employer any advantage in the Index process. Responses are marked anonymously so that those marking are not aware of any work the entrant does beyond their submission.

Since the inception of the Index, some questions have been refined and others have been added, for example on exit fees in 2022. For key questions, organisations are asked for several years of data in order to assess the impact of measures being taken.

Index submissions are considered and marked against the latest empirical evidence of what interventions effectively advance social mobility in the UK workplace. Our approach is rigorous and ensures a fair process, recognising that different sectors and individual businesses do things differently.

- 1 **Identifying a broad range of questions** that interrogate the various ways in which employers can contribute to social mobility.
- 2 **Weighting responses based on the evidence** as some areas have more impact on social mobility than others. For example, there is substantial evidence that providing work experience placements for young people is more impactful than general outreach; and that some approaches to recruitment lead to more equal outcomes compared to others.
- 3 **Weighting whole sections of the marking scheme** based on where maximum impact can be delivered. Within each section, every organisation is then categorised within a decile, so that modest differences in scoring do not then significantly affect the overall ranking.
- 4 **Recognising that not all organisations will score marks for each question.** For example, they may not have formal graduate recruitment programmes because of their size. Therefore, organisations are ranked based on the percentage of available marks they have achieved.

Please note that data is presented in the report as a percentage of the overall submissions, unless otherwise stated. The sample size and profile of entrants differs from year to year so proportions allow the best method of comparison. There were 149 entrants in 2022, 203 in 2021, 119 in 2020. On average, first-time entrants in 2022 were larger than returning entrants with an average workforce of over 9,600 staff, compared to under 6,000 staff for returning entrants. This has changed from 2021 when returning entrants averaged almost 9,000 staff compared to the approximately 4,000 of new entrants.

It is therefore important to consider any year-on year comparisons in the context of these changes.

Unheard Voices methodology

The Social Mobility Foundation surveyed 1,819 young people aged 16-18 in Year 12 or 13 or equivalent in school or college in the United Kingdom in June. 2022

Of the 1,819 who answered, the 819 young people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds (LSEB) were on the Social Mobility Foundation's Aspiring Professionals Programme. The young people from higher socioeconomic backgrounds (HSEB) were part of a nationally representative online research panel, in households with an income above £25,000 per annum or in ABC1C2 social grades. The 20-minute online survey was designed by the Social Mobility Foundation in conjunction with Platypus Research.

Employee Survey Questions

Organisation name:

Organisation Code:

Type of school attended:

- ☐ Non selective state school (Comprehensive)
- ☐ Selective state school (Grammar or selective on faith)
- ☐ Private school
- ☐ Non-UK school
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Prefer not to say

What was the occupation of your main household earner when you were aged about 14?

- ☐ Modern professional & traditional professional occupations (e.g. teacher, nurse, physiotherapist, social worker, musician, police officer (sergeant or above), software designer, accountant, solicitor, medical practitioner, scientist, civil/mechanical engineer)
- ☐ Senior, middle or junior managed or administrators (e.g. finance manager, chief executive, large business owner, office manager, retail manager, bank manager, restaurant manager, warehouse manager)
- ☐ Clerical and intermediate occupations (e.g. secretary, personal assistant, call centre agent, clerical worker, nursery nurse)
- ☐ Technical and craft occupations (e.g. motor mechanic, plumber, printer, electrician, gardener, train driver)
- ☐ Routine, semi-routine manual and service occupations (e.g. postal worker, machine operative, security guard, caretaker, farm worker, catering assistant, sales assistant, HGV driver, cleaner, porter, packer, labourer, waiter/ waitress, bar staff)
- ☐ Long-term unemployed (Claimed Jobseeker's Allowance or earlier unemployment benefit for more than a year)
- ☐ Small business owners Who employed less than 25 people such as: corner shop owners, small plumbing companies, retail shop owner, single restaurant or café owner, taxi owner, garage owner
- ☐ Other (e.g. retired, this question does not apply to me, I don't know)
- ☐ Prefer not to say

If you finished school about 1980, were you eligible for free school meals at any point during your school years?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not applicable (finished school before 1980 or went to school overseas)
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ I prefer not to say

Are you aware that your organisation does any work on improving socioeconomic diversity in your organisation?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Are you personally involved in any work relating to social mobility or improving socioeconomic diversity in your organisation?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

1. My organisation is open to talent from all class backgrounds.

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Not sure / Prefer not to say

2. I am comfortable openly discussing my class background with my colleagues.

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Not sure / Prefer not to say

3. I feel I have to hide my class background to get ahead in the workplace

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Not sure / Prefer not to say

4. People get ahead at my workplace because of who they know.

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Not sure / Prefer not to say

5. The workplace culture in my organisation is inclusive of all class backgrounds.

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Not sure / Prefer not to say

6. I feel out of place at work as I don't have the same background as the majority of employees.

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Not sure / Prefer not to say

7. I have experienced barriers to career progression in my workplace due to my class background.

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Not sure / Prefer not to say

8. Our senior leadership is committed to improving the socioeconomic diversity of our workforce.

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Not sure / Prefer not to say

9. My organisation is doing enough to ensure that remote working is accessible to employees of all

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Not sure / Prefer not to say





Appendix D

References

Better Up. The value of belonging at work. 2020.

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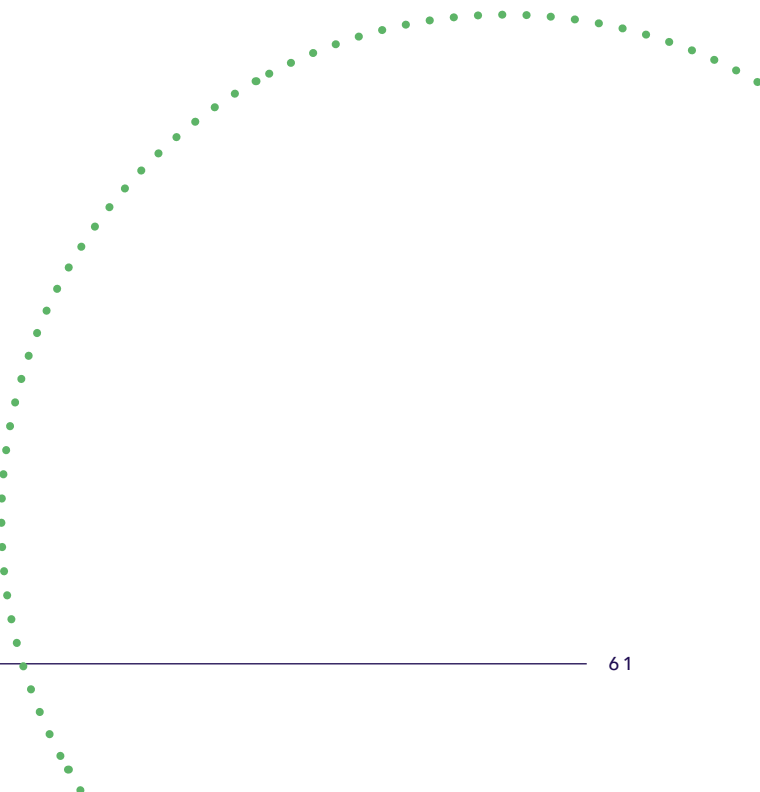
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