

RECRUITING THE NEXT GENERATION



Courtesy of TClarke

Introduction

The latest data from CITB shows that the construction sector needs to recruit almost 50,000 new entrants each year to maintain output. Coupled with the fact that around 40% of students undertaking a construction-related further education course have no involvement with the industry six months after finishing means that improving the Journey from Education to Employment in the sector has never been more important.

Build UK, supported by CITB, has carried out a survey of its members to understand current employment trends in the construction industry, particularly in relation to apprentices and other new entrants.

Key Findings

- On average, 81% of the workforce is directly employed, a 4% increase compared to May 2023.
- Contractor members are able to recruit all the apprentices they require, whereas Specialist Contractors are only able to recruit two-thirds, due mainly to a lack of applicants and/or suitable candidates.
- On average, 85% of apprentices employed by respondents complete their apprenticeship.
- For other new entrants, the most common route to employment with Contractor members is successful completion of a university degree (64%), whereas with Specialist Contractors it is moving from another sector (56%).
- On average, 90% of new entrants who come via university or college remain in employment with their company after completing their training or probationary period.

Employment Levels

The construction sector employs 2.8 million people, which is 1 in 9 of the UK workforce, and has the largest share of self-employed people of any sector across the economy at 20%.

The average size of the workforce of Contractor members was 2,634, with 84% directly employed. This is consistent with Build UK's previous survey of members in May 2023.

Specialist Contractors had an average sized workforce of 139, 78% of which were directly employed. Compared to May 2023, the average size of the workforce has reduced by 9%, with a 5% increase in the rate of direct employment.

The average number of job vacancies across Contractor members is 151, whilst Specialist Contractors have an average of 5, which is 6% of the total workforce.

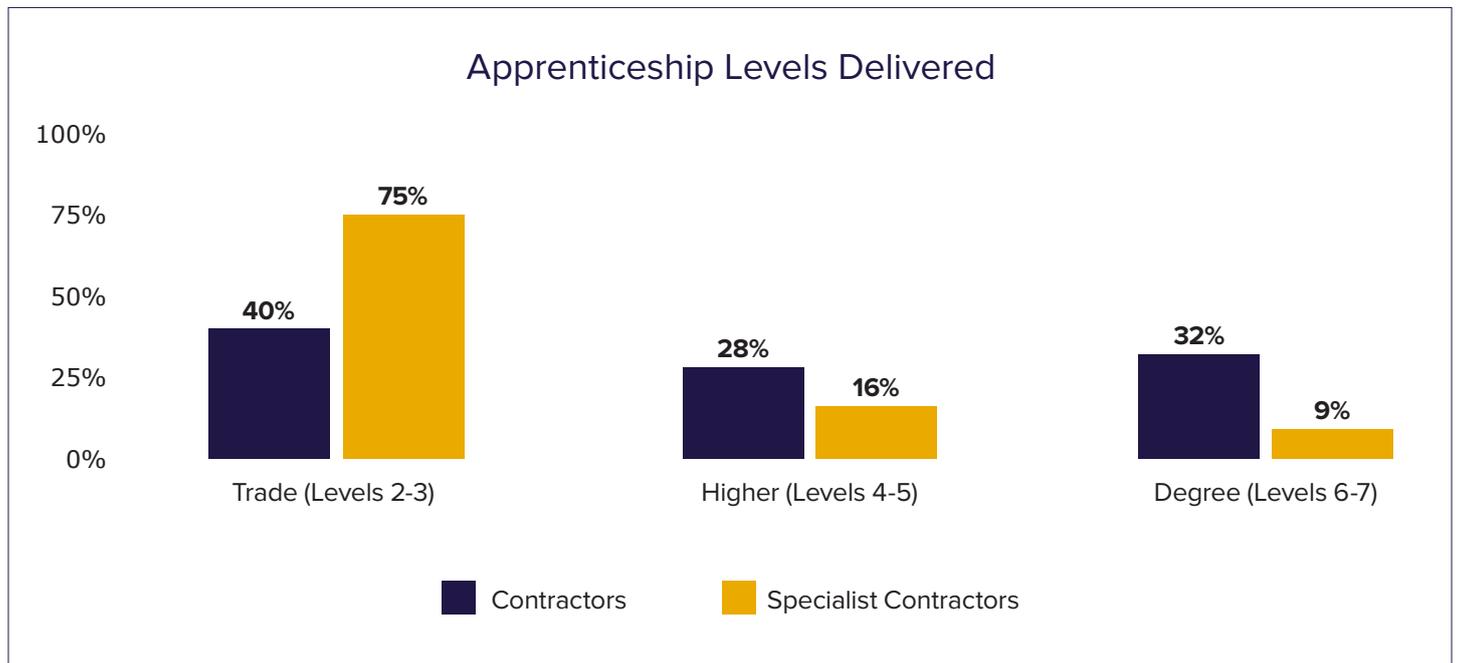
Apprenticeships

According to CITB, there were approximately 33,600 apprenticeship starts in construction in 2022/23, around a 5% decrease on the previous year but 10% more than the pre-COVID-19 average. CITB estimates that apprenticeship starts will need to double to meet current recruitment requirements.

92% of Contractor members directly employ apprentices, which make up on average 5% of their workforce. All Contractor members are able to recruit the number of apprentices they require each year.

61% of Specialist Contractors directly employ apprentices, representing on average 6% of their workforce. Only 66% of those Specialist Contractors are able to recruit the number of apprentices required each year, and the main reasons for this are not enough applicants or suitable candidates and they require too much supervision.

Contractor members deliver a relatively even split of apprenticeships across Trade, Higher and Degree levels, whereas the majority of apprenticeships delivered by Specialist Contractors are at Trade level.



The completion rate for Trade and Higher level apprenticeships delivered by Contractor members is 79%, with 86% of those apprentices remaining in employment with the company after completion. This compares to a completion rate of 89% for Specialist Contractors, with 87% remaining in their employment after completion.

75% of Contractor members deliver Degree Apprenticeships, compared to only 22% of Specialist Contractors. 86% of all Degree Apprentices complete their apprenticeship, with 92% remaining in employment with the company after completion.

The average completion rate for all apprenticeships delivered by Build UK members is 85%, which is significantly higher than the target of 67% set by Government for all apprenticeships by 2025.

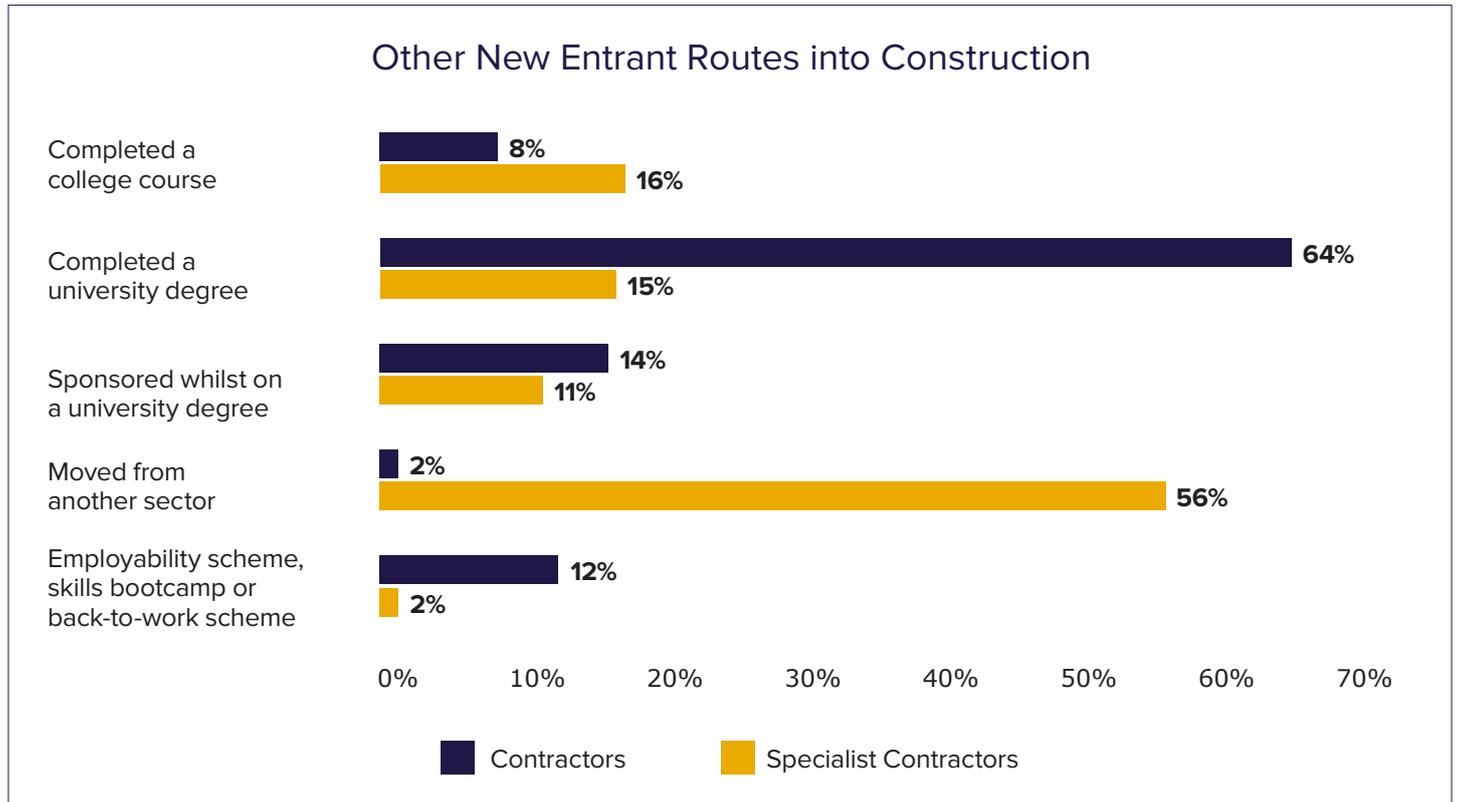
The most common Degree Apprenticeships being delivered by Contractor members are Chartered Surveyor, Construction Quantity Surveyor, and Construction Site Management. For Specialist Contractors, it is Civil Engineering, Construction Site Management, and Civil Engineering Site Management.

92% of Contractor members pay the Apprenticeship Levy, in contrast to just 34% of Specialist Contractors.

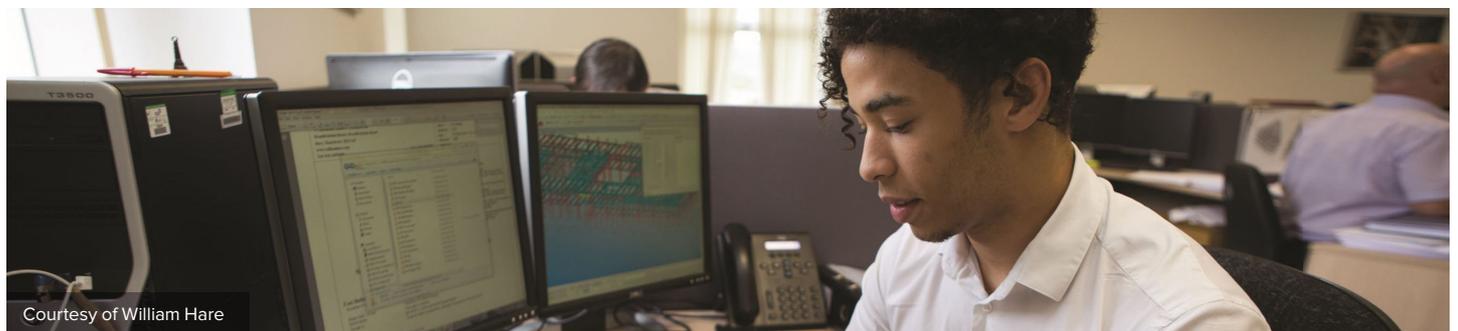
Other New Entrants

In addition to apprenticeships, there are a number of other routes into the construction sector for new entrants, and CITB estimates there are around 120,000 students on a construction-related further education course at any time. Build UK's guides set out the most common routes of entry into the industry for young people leaving school in [England](#) and [Scotland](#).

69% of Contractor members and 58% of Specialist Contractors directly employ or support other new entrants in their first construction role. For Contractor members, the most common route to employment is successful completion of a university degree (64%), whereas for Specialist Contractors it is moving from another sector (56%).



On average, 80% of all other new entrants remain in employment with their company after completing their training or probationary period. The university and college routes result in the highest retention rates at an average of 90%. 79% of new entrants who come from another sector stay with the company after completing their training or probationary period, compared to just 51% who join via an employability scheme, skills bootcamp or back-to-work scheme.



Courtesy of William Hare

Recruiting, Training and Retaining Talent

Build UK is committed to securing the right skills for the industry, now and in the future, and this report is part of our strategic priority to recruit, train and retain talent in the industry.

Recruit a diverse workforce across all roles.

Train individuals with the skills and qualifications required to develop and progress their careers.

Retain people in the sector by providing a fair and inclusive working environment with flexible working opportunities.