



Apprenticeship Follow-up Survey: The views and experiences of 1999 registrants.

April 2007

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ISBN 0 947776 79 6



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Summary:

This report presents the findings from a survey conducted by FÁS Planning and Research in conjunction with FÁS Apprenticeship Services. To maintain confidentiality and anonymity the survey was carried out by an independent Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing company REDC, on behalf of FÁS.

This report is based on a representative sample of apprentices and former apprentices. The focus is to find out their views on aspects of their experience of apprenticeship. FAS has an interest in the success of the apprenticeship programme and what happens to participants after they left the programme. In this research the focus was on apprentices who started in 1999, of whom there were 7,513. With a normal duration of four years these apprentices potentially qualified in 2003. 1999 was chosen as these apprentices would have had sufficient time to establish themselves in the workforce as qualified craftspersons but not too long that those who dropped out would have forgotten the experience and thus would still be able to provide valuable comment. One thousand interviews were conducted during December 2006 and January 2007. The survey was conducted using CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing).

There are twenty-six trades in which apprenticeships can be taken. These trades can be grouped into trade families. Quotas were applied by trade family to try and ensure a sufficient sample in each trade family for analysis. The final sample was weighted to reflect the proportions of starters in 1999. There were sufficient respondent numbers to report on important trade groups and some individual trades.

Apprenticeship consists of 7 phases of training both on-the-job with an employer and off-the-job in a FÁS Training Centre or Institute of Technology. Phase 1, On the Job: is an introduction to apprenticeship, safety, the world of work and to the basic skills of the occupation. Phases 2, 4 and 6 Off the Job: give the apprentice structured full time skills training and related education and provide time for practice of the skills. The maximum duration of the off-the-job phases is generally 40 weeks, with Phase 2 of 20 weeks, and Phase 4 and 6 being 10 weeks each. Phases 3, 5 and 7 On the Job: entail the practice and further development of the skills learned in the off-the-job phases.

Assessment is carried out at a number of stages throughout the apprenticeship. During on-the-job phases the apprentices' competence is assessed in terms of their skill, knowledge and attitudes in performing specified tasks to the required standards under working conditions. During off-the-job phases the apprentice is assessed on the basis of exercises and projects together with standardized practical and theory tests.

The majority (92%) of respondents found their apprenticeship fairly or very useful. This implies that many who did not complete still found their apprenticeship useful. Only one third of those who did not find the training useful completed the course. Two out of three claim to have done some study/reading around the apprentice subject when at home. This was more likely in Electrical and Motor trades.

A high percentage of respondents (74%) completed the apprenticeship. Of the remaining 26% who did not complete, 29 out of 1000 respondents interviewed (3% of the total) are still apprentices (two thirds of those who are still apprentices after seven years are Electricians), a further 9% attended Phase 1 only and a further 6% attended up to Phase 2 only. Engineering showed the highest levels of incompletes (33%), with fall out most likely in Phase 1 or 2 for this trade family. Only 1 in 10 of those who did not complete the apprenticeship are still currently apprentices. The main reason for the delay in completion was difficulty in completing tests/exams, others dropped out for a while because of family or illness or they went travelling. Of those who dropped out 1 in 4 left the apprenticeship because they didn't like the work in the trade. However, for 1 in 8 assessments were an obstacle to completion. The remainder dropped-out because they took up better work or training opportunities. One hundred and fifty six of two hundred and fifty six (61%) apprentices who left without qualifying had no interest in returning to an apprenticeship. Six percent of those who completed all off the job phases did not receive a National Craft Certificate. Failure to reach the standard in the exam is the main reason why a cert was not received. Ten percent didn't want to take the test.

A major component of this survey was to assess the relevance of the curriculum and to examine the structure of the apprentice programme through the eyes of the participants. A series of questions on these topics was devised on attitudes to and satisfaction with apprenticeship. All were asked the questions (those who successfully completed, those who dropped out and those who are still apprentices) on the phases they had attended. The vast majority (89%) of those surveyed agreed that their skills were well developed during their apprenticeship and FÁS support services for apprentices were satisfactory (82%). Most (83%) were very optimistic about their future career and were satisfied that their earnings expectations were met (76%). While 83% agreed that the tests were examined adequately, only 64% found the technical drawing component of the programme easy.

There were differences of opinion about the length of 'off the job' and 'on the job phases', and the level of theory taught on the programme with roughly equal number agreeing and disagreeing on these aspects. The level of agreement of opinion between different trade families was very similar. Cabinet Making and Wood Machining trades appeared to have the least positive impression of the apprenticeship and Electrical and Construction had the most positive impression. Where information on individual trades was available the trends were also very similar.

Most respondents were satisfied with all aspects of the 'on the job' components of the apprentice training programme. Those still working in the trade tended to be more positive. The Furniture trades showed lowest satisfaction levels overall, followed by the Motor trades which showed the second lowest satisfaction level. While 67% of respondents were satisfied with their contacts with the FÁS adviser 17% were not. The greatest dissatisfaction was with the level of wages during apprenticeship, where 1 in 3 were dissatisfied. There was very little difference in opinion between trade families, except for wages where Furniture, Motor and Engineering express the greatest disappointment.

FÁS training centres scored well for both physical condition (91% satisfied) and equipment and facilities (89%). FÁS training centres also scored well in relation to practical skills development (90%), the relevance of the subjects to the work environment (83%), location of the training centres (82%) and level of theory taught (81%). Somewhat lower, whilst still positive, ratings were given to the level of maths and science (73%) and technical drawing (66%). Again, the Furniture trades appeared least satisfied, while Motor apprentices also showed lower satisfaction levels than average.

Institutes of Technology also scored highly, similar to levels of satisfaction achieved for FÁS training centres. For the Electrical trades the Institutes of Technology fell back for the level of theory taught, the level of technical drawing and the relevance of the subject to the work environment.

Over 3 in 4 were satisfied with the speed of progression through the apprenticeship training. However, this increases to over 4 in 5 of those who completed and qualified. Again the furniture trade showed lower satisfaction levels. Almost half of apprentices had no suggestion for improvement. The top suggestion was to shorten the phases, particularly from Motor and Furniture trades. Electrical trades tend to prefer more practical work and less theory.

Just over half continued to work with the same employer since receiving their qualification. When all of the qualified craftspersons were asked how much they used the skills which they learned on the apprenticeship, 78% said all or most of the time. The Construction craftspersons and Electricians required most use for these skills. Engineers and those in the Furniture trades used their apprenticeship skills less. Nearly a quarter of all craftspersons and one third in the Engineering trades surveyed said that they rarely, never or only sometimes used their skills.

A quarter of qualified craftspersons thought that they would have been able to get their current job without their apprenticeship. Only 1 in 8 Electrical respondents thought it would be likely to get their job without their qualification. All qualified craftsperson respondents were asked whether they were working with an apprentice, 52% said that they were. The majority of

craftsperson respondents work within the usual 39-40 hour week. However, 1 in 5 Electricians and Construction craftspersons are working 50+ hours a week on average. Only 2% of craftspersons who started training in 1999 are unemployed.

Eight in ten respondents have not undertaken any formal training or education since completing their apprenticeship. For those who have, those in the Motor trade were more likely to have completed a course. The majority of the courses taken were completed within a year, 8 in 10 were part-time. All who completed the apprenticeship were asked would they be interested in completing an advanced training programme to increase their skill level in their current trade. Interest in this type of training programme was high, with Electricians and Engineers expressing higher interest. When asked about future career ambitions, almost half of qualified craftspersons showed an ambition to run their own business, higher for those in the Construction trade. Six percent would like to become a teacher/trainer in their trade. Those in the Motor trade were the most likely to want to become supervisors/managers.

Electrical respondents were older than the sample average, while Motor and Furniture respondents were younger. This is due to the fact that Electrical apprentices tend to leave school later than Motor and Furniture apprentices. Seven in ten respondents in the survey had completed the Leaving Certificate. Electrical respondents were more likely to have completed the Leaving Cert, which explains their older age profile. Four per cent of those surveyed claimed that they left before Group, Junior or Intermediate examinations. Those who attained Leaving Cert or Higher were more likely to complete their apprenticeship. Seventy-eight percent of those with the Leaving Cert got the National Craft Certificate (NCC) whereas 64% of those without the Leaving Cert got the National Craft Certificate.

The respondents in this survey were asked what their net and gross weekly earnings were, 31% refused to reply. The average net weekly wage for respondent craftspersons who are still in the trade was €704 per week. The Motor trade appears least well paid, while Electrical and Construction trades command the highest wages. The average Construction trades wage was €751 and the average Electrical trades wage was €712 among qualified craftspeople who stayed in their trade. However, the average Motor wage was €493. Seven per cent of craftspersons in this survey earned more than €1,000 net per week, 10% of Construction craftspersons earned €1,000 net per week. In September 2006 the average construction gross wage was €770 and the average (Source Central Statistics Office) industrial gross wage was €600. This compares to the average craftsperson gross wage of €932. Of the individual trades in this survey, Bricklayers earned the most, €865 net per week, none earned less than €500 net per week, 12% earned more than €1000 net per week. Electricians and Metal Fabricators earned above the average.

The final section of the report presents highlights particular to trade groups and individual trades.

In conclusion, the survey shows very low levels of unemployment and a positive attitude with the apprenticeship system. The aspiration for self employment is at a very high level. However Motor and Furniture trades are less positive.

1. Introduction

This report presents the findings from a survey conducted by FÁS Planning and Research in conjunction with FÁS Apprenticeship Services. To maintain confidentiality and anonymity the survey was carried out by an independent Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing company REDC, on behalf of FÁS.

Apprenticeship is a method by which a person works for an employer as an apprentice in a chosen trade and learns the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes to become a qualified craftsman.

Apprenticeship means undergoing specific tests and assessment to ensure the student achieves certain pre-set standards of skill and competence during the course of the apprenticeship.

On successful completion of the Apprenticeship, apprentices receive a National Craft Certificate, recognized in Ireland as well as other EU and non-EU countries.

Apprenticeship consists of 7 phases of training both on-the-job with an employer and off-the-job in a FÁS Training Centre or Institute of Technology.

Phase 1, On the Job: is an introduction to apprenticeship, safety, the world of work and to the basic skills of the occupation.

Phases 2, 4 and 6 Off the Job: give the apprentice structured full time skills training and related education and provides time for practice of the skills. The total duration of the off-the-job phases is generally 40 weeks, with Phase 2 of 20 weeks, and Phase 4 and 6 being 10 weeks each

Phases 3, 5 and 7 On the Job: entail the practice and further development of the skills learned in the off-the-job phases.

Assessment is carried out at a number of stages throughout the apprenticeship. During on-the-job phases the apprentices' competence is assessed in terms of their skill, knowledge and attitudes in performing specified tasks to the required standards under working conditions. During off-the-job phases the apprentice is assessed on the basis of exercises and projects together with standardized practical and theory tests.

This report is based on a representative sample of apprentices and former apprentices. The focus is to find out their views on aspects of their experience of the standards based apprenticeship.

2. Background and Objectives

FAS has an interest in the success of the apprenticeship programme and what happens to participants after they left the programme. The main focus of this survey is to review the apprenticeship programme by determining the following information:

- Reaction to the FAS Apprenticeship Programme.
- Jobs that apprentices do now.
- Drop-outs from the FAS Apprenticeship Programme

In this research the focus was on apprentices who started in 1999, of whom there were 7,513. With a normal duration of four years these apprentices potentially qualified in 2003. 1999 was chosen as these apprentices would have had sufficient time to establish themselves in the workforce as qualified craftspersons but not too long that those who dropped out would have forgotten the experience and thus would still be able to provide valuable comment.

Table 1. Registration in 1999 by Trade Family and Trade

Trade Family	Trade	Number
ELECTRICAL	ELECTRICAL	2003
ELECTRICAL	NETWORK TECHNICIANS	88
ELECTRICAL	ELECTRICAL INSTRUMENTATION	44
ELECTRICAL	INSTRUMENTATION	35
CONSTRUCTION	CARPENTRY AND JOINERY	1512
CONSTRUCTION	PLUMBING	702
CONSTRUCTION	BRICK AND STONELAYING	393
CONSTRUCTION	PLASTERING	179
CONSTRUCTION	PAINTING AND DECORATING	131
CONSTRUCTION	CONSTRUCTION PLANT FITTING	95
CONSTRUCTION	FLOOR AND WALL TILING	17
ENGINEERING	FITTING	386
ENGINEERING	METAL FABRICATION	340
ENGINEERING	HEAVY VEHICLE MECHANICS	139
ENGINEERING	SHEET METALWORK	119
ENGINEERING	TOOLMAKING	107
ENGINEERING	REFRIGERATION AND AIR CONDITIONING	95
MOTOR	MOTOR MECHANICS	472
MOTOR	VEHICLE BODY REPAIRS	131
MOTOR	AIRCRAFT MECHANICS	83
MOTOR	AGRICULTURAL MECHANICS	48
FURNITURE	CABINET MAKING	276
FURNITURE	WOOD MACHINING	42
PRINTING	PRINTING	40
PRINTING	BOOKBINDING	22
PRINTING	ORINATION	14
		7513

3. Methodology

This survey was conducted via telephone with apprentices who started their apprenticeship in 1999. One thousand interviews were conducted with the respondents during December 2006 and January 2007. The survey was conducted using CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing).

Research Sample

There are twenty-seven trades in which apprenticeships can be taken. However these trades broadly fit into six trade families as follows:

- Electrical
- Construction
- Engineering
- Motor
- Furniture
- Printing

Quotas were applied by trade family to try and ensure a sufficient sample in each trade family for analysis. Motor, Furniture and Printing were over sampled to compensate for the smaller numbers. The final sample was weighed to reflect the proportions of starters in 1999. The FÁS apprenticeship database was used as the source of survey leads. The FÁS apprenticeship data base proved to be an exceptionally accurate source of survey leads, 88% of the leads were usable.

The next table shows the proportions details of 1999 starters, leads received, and actual numbers of achieved interviews in each trade family.

Sample Profile

Table 2. Sample Profile

Trade Family	No of Starters in 1999	% of Starters in 1999	No of usable leads received per trade family	% of leads per trade family	No of 1999 starters interviewed	Proportion split of 1999 sample interviewed
Electrical	2170	29%	1947	30%	263	26%
Construction	3029	40%	2617	39%	372	37%
Engineering	1186	16%	1060	16%	162	16%
Motor	734	10%	674	10%	108	11%
Furniture	318	4%	294	4%	73	7%
Printing	76	1%	68	1%	22	2%
	7,513		6,607		1,000	

The final sample (Table 2) achieved in each trade family allows us to look at all trade families individually, with the exception of Printing. Due to the small numbers involved, the Printing trade family data must be interpreted with caution.

The Electrical Trade Family is mainly composed of Electrical craftspersons, likewise the Motor Trade Family is mainly composed of Motor Mechanics. During the survey sufficiently large numbers of Brick and Stonelaying, Cabinet Making, Carpentry and Joinery, Fitting, Metal Fabrication and Plumbing craftspersons were sampled enabling us to also comment on these individual trades.

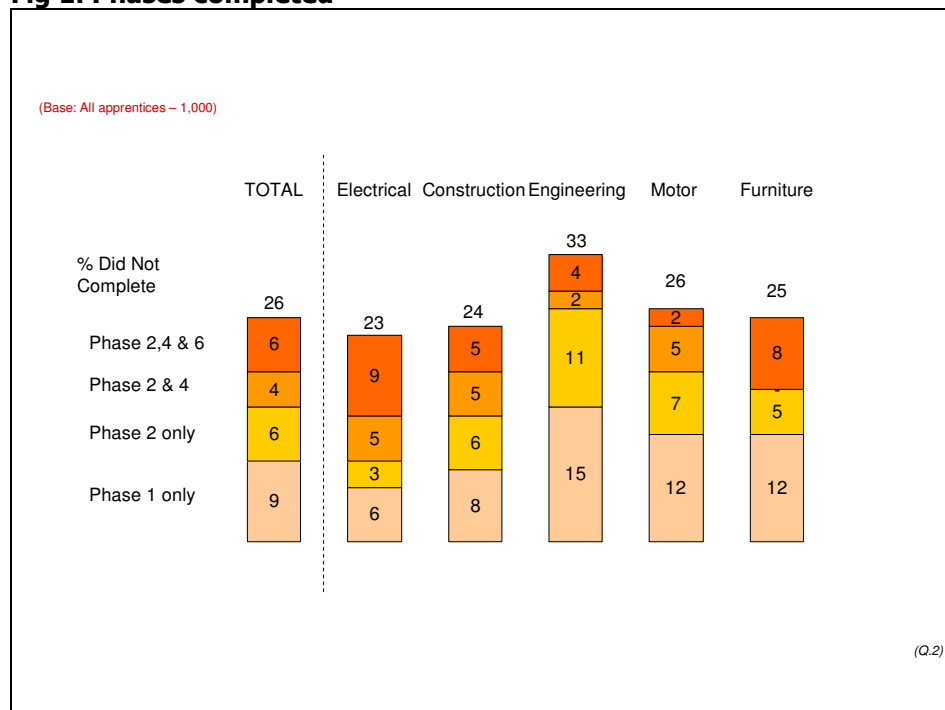
RESEARCH RESULTS

4. Progression through the apprenticeship

Completion

A high percentage of apprentices (74%) completed the apprenticeship (Fig.1). Of the remaining 26% who did not complete, 29 (3%) are still apprentices, a further 9% attended Phase 1 only and a further 6% attended up to Phase 2 only. Engineering showed the highest levels of incompletes (33%), with fall out most likely in Phase 1 or 2 for this trade family.

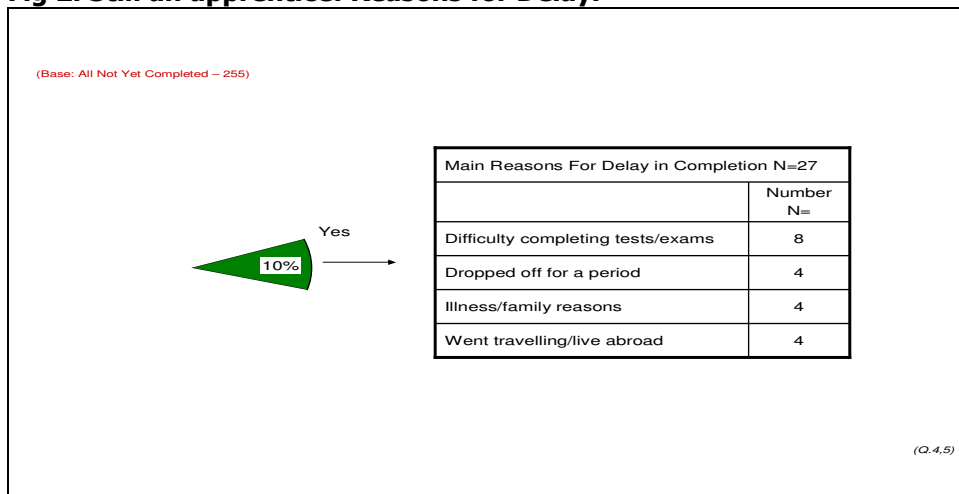
Fig 1. Phases completed



Only 1 in 10 of those who did not complete the apprenticeship are still currently apprentices (Fig.2). The main reason for the delay in completion was difficulty in completing tests/exams, others dropped out for a while

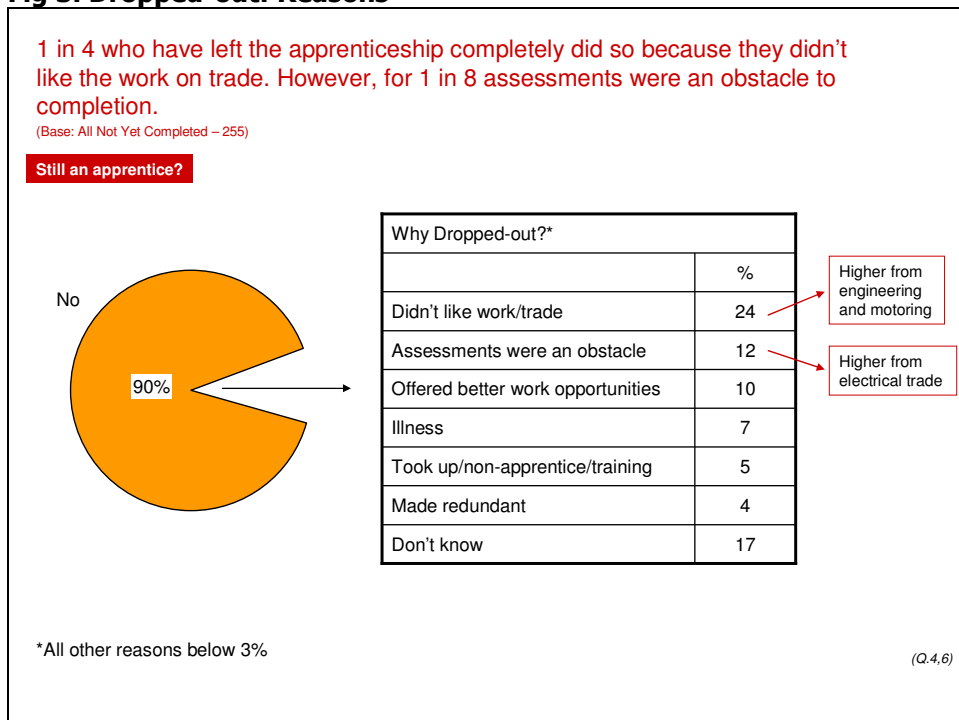
because of family or illness or they went travelling. Two thirds of those who are still apprentices after seven years are Electrical craftspersons.

Fig 2. Still an apprentice: Reasons for Delay.



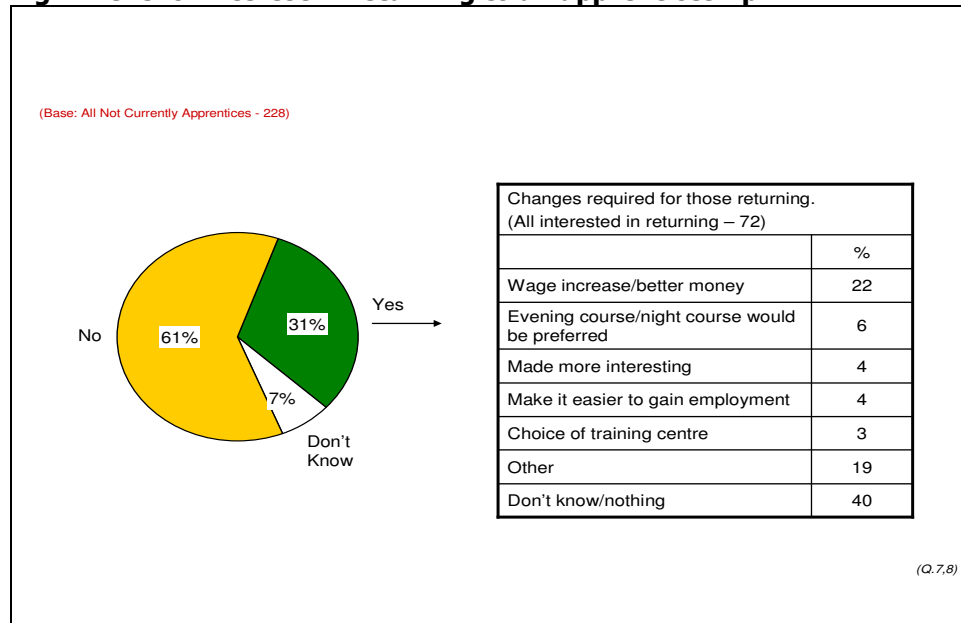
Twenty six of apprentices who started in 1999 have not completed and 90% of these have dropped-out completely. Of these 1 in 4 who have left the apprenticeship completely did so because they didn't like the work in the trade. However, for 1 in 8 assessments were an obstacle to completion. The remainder the remainder dropped-out completely because they took up better work or training opportunities (Fig.3).

Fig 3. Dropped-out: Reasons



Most (61%) apprentices who left without qualifying had no interest in returning to an apprenticeship (Fig.4). Financial incentive could be a key change required to encourage apprentices to return to complete the course.

Fig 4. Level of interest in returning to an apprenticeship



Why those who completed all off the job phases did not receive cert

Six percent of those who completed all off the job phases did not receive a National Craft Certificate. Failure to reach the standard in the exam is the main reason why a cert was not received. A quarter of the 6% don't know why they haven't received their certificate. Ten per cent didn't want to take the test.

5. Attitudes to and Satisfaction With Apprenticeship

A major component of this survey was to assess the relevance of the curriculum and to examine the structure of the of the apprentice programme through the eyes of all the participants. A series of questions on these topics was devised on attitudes to and satisfaction with apprenticeship. A summary of the answers are presented below (Fig.5,6,7). All were asked questions (those who successfully completed, those who dropped out and those who are still apprentices) on the phases they had attended.

The vast majority (89%) of those surveyed agreed that their skills were well developed during their apprenticeship and FÁS support services for apprentices were satisfactory (82%). Most (83%) were very optimistic about their future career and were satisfied that their earnings expectations were met (76%). While 83% agreed that the tests were examined adequately, only 64% found the technical drawing component of the programme easy. There were differences of opinion re the length of 'off the job', 'on the job phases',

and the level of theory taught on the programme with roughly equal number agreeing and disagreeing on these aspects.

Fig 5. Levels of agreement with statements about apprenticeship



The level of agreement of opinion between different trade families was very similar (Fig. 6). Furniture trades appeared to have the least positive impression of the apprenticeship and Electrical and Construction had the most positive impression. More people in the Engineering trades thought that the on the job/work experience components were too long

Fig 6. Levels of agreement with statements about apprenticeship by trade family and training outcome

(Base: All apprentices – 1,000)

Agree Strongly/Slightly	TOTAL %	Electrical %	Construction %	Engineering %	Motor %	Furniture %	Still Working in Trade %
During the apprenticeship my practical skills were well developed	89	89	92	88	85	84	92
My future career looks promising	84	85	88	78	77	73	89
FÁS support services for apprentices were satisfactory	82	82	83	83	81	71	84
The tests examined the subject adequately	82	83	84	85	78	68	86
My earnings expectations have been met	76	80	82	67	60	55	82
I found the technical drawing of the programme easy	64	65	64	60	63	68	67
The off the job/taught components of the programme were too long	43	40	47	38	49	41	42
There was too much theory taught on the programme	42	40	47	40	39	38	40
The on the job/work experience components were too long	35	31	34	40	39	36	34

(Q.10)

Note: Yellow shading highest scores and grey shading indicates lowest scores.

Where information on individual trades was available the trends were also very similar (Fig. 7)

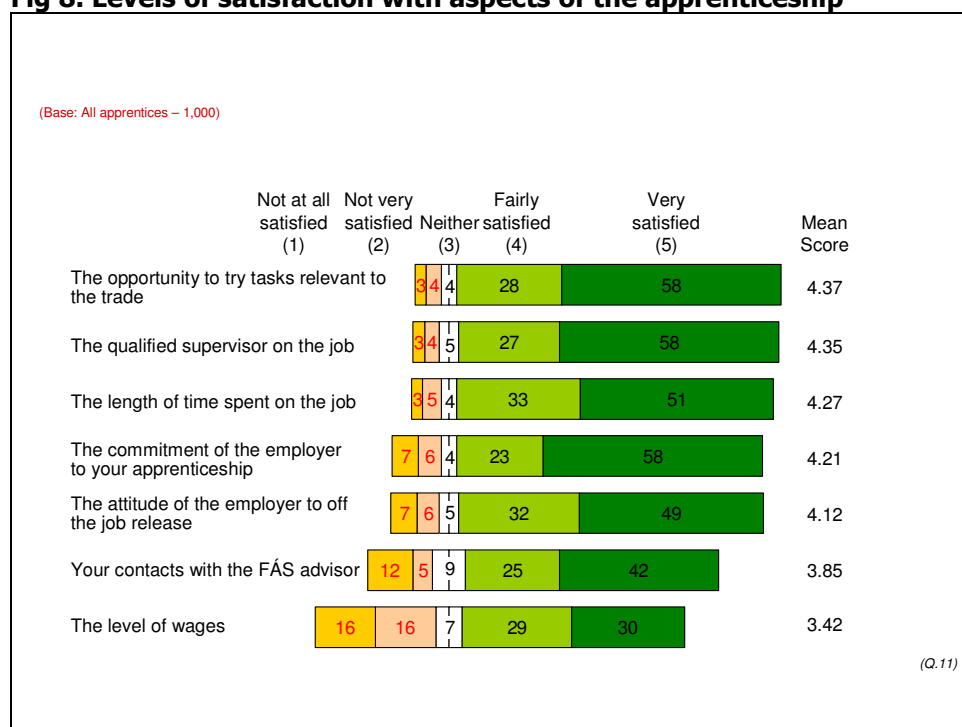
Fig 7. Levels of agreement with statements about apprenticeship by certain trades.

Agree Strongly/Slightly	Brick and Stonelaying	Cabinet Making	Carpentry and Joinery	Fitting	Metal Fabrication	Plumbing
During the apprenticeship my practical skills were well developed	94	85	91	92	90	94
My future career looks promising	88	76	88	76	86	93
FAS support services for apprentices were satisfactory	84	77	80	81	88	85
The tests examined the subject adequately	90	68	83	86	81	78
My earnings expectations have been met	86	53	81	70	69	84
I found the technical drawing component of the programme easy	80	69	55	63	50	75
There was too much theory taught on the programme	50	39	45	41	48	48
The off the job/taught components of the programme were too long	34	42	47	43	36	58
The on the job/work experience components were too long	32	37	34	41	43	39

6. Levels of satisfaction for apprenticeship phases

Most were satisfied with all aspects of the 'on the job' components of the apprentice training programme (Fig.8). Those still working in the trade tend to be more positive (Fig.9). The greatest dissatisfaction is with the level of wages, where 1 in 3 are dissatisfied. Furniture trade showed lowest satisfaction levels overall, followed by the Motor trades which show the second lowest satisfaction level. Seventeen percent of respondents were not satisfied with their contacts with the FÁS adviser.

Fig 8. Levels of satisfaction with aspects of the apprenticeship



There is very little difference in opinion between trade families, except for expected earnings where Furniture, Motor and Engineering express the greatest disappointment.

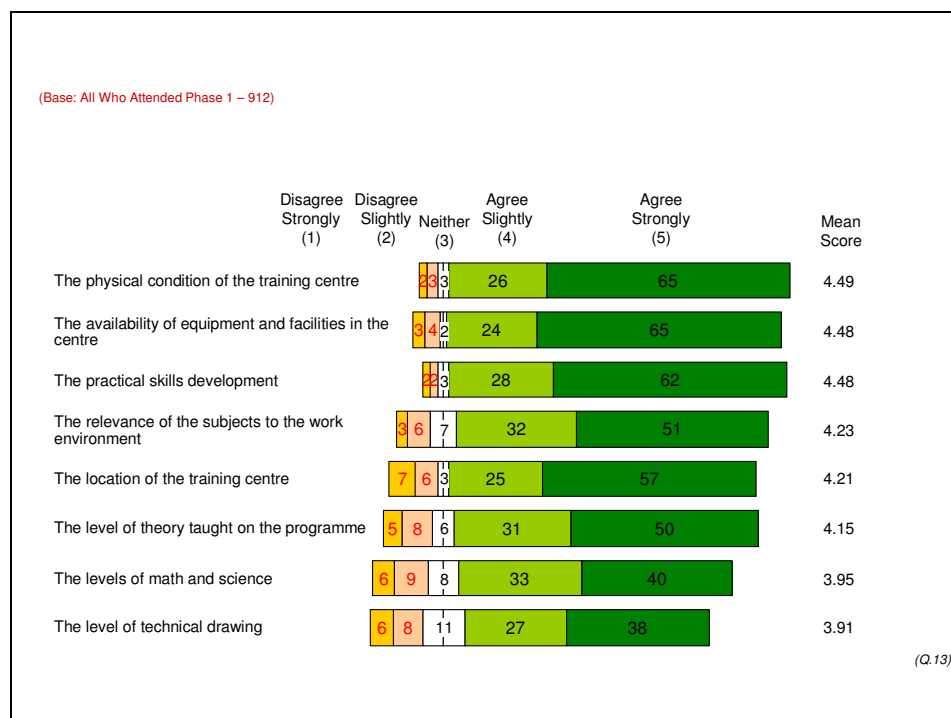
Fig 9. Levels of satisfaction with aspects of apprenticeship by trade family and training outcome

(Base: All apprentices – 1,000)

<i>Very/fairly satisfied</i>	TOTAL %	Electrical %	Construction %	Engineering %	Motor %	Furniture %	Still Working in Trade %
The opportunity to try tasks relevant to the trade	86	88	88	80	88	70	89
The qualified supervisor on the job	85	87	86	81	87	77	89
The length of time spent on the job	84	87	85	85	77	70	86
The commitment of the employer to your apprenticeship	81	82	85	77	76	59	85
The attitude of the employer to off the job release	81	84	81	80	79	64	83
Your contacts with the FÁS advisor	66	63	68	70	69	56	68
The level of wages	59	67	64	49	38	45	62

FÁS training centres scored well for both physical condition and equipment and facilities, training centres (Fig.10). One in seven were less than satisfied with the level of maths and science taught in FÁS training centres and the level of technical drawing taught (Fig.11)

Fig 10. Levels of satisfaction with FÁS training centre for Phase 2



Again the Furniture trades appeared least satisfied, while Motor apprentices also showed lower satisfaction levels than average.

Fig 11. Levels of satisfaction with FÁS training centre attended for Phase 2

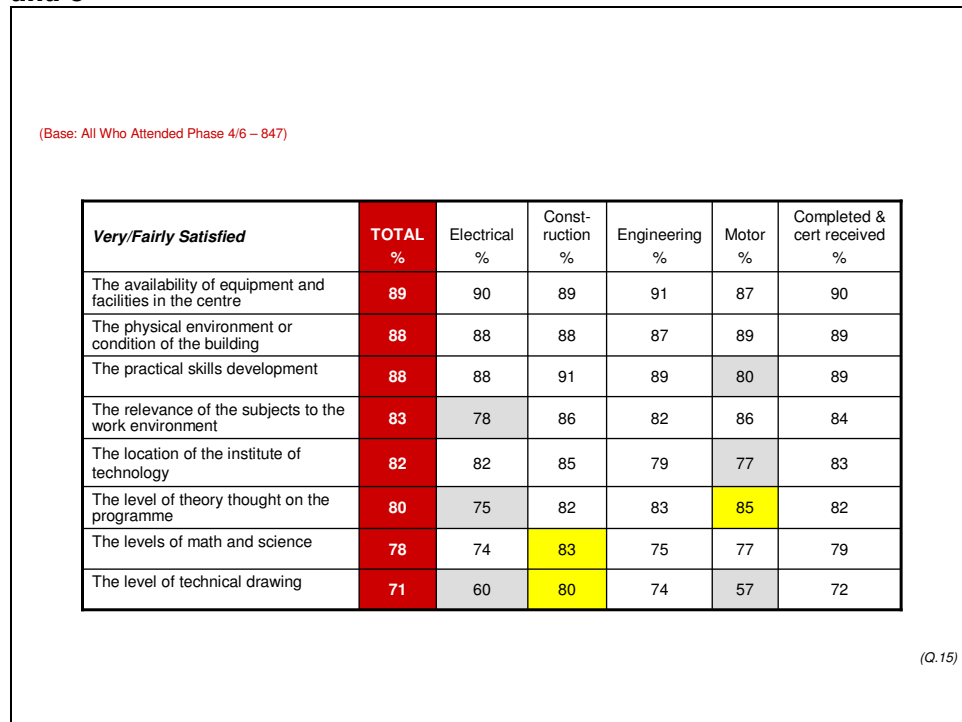
(Base: All Who Attended Phase 2 – 912)

<i>Very/Fairly Satisfied</i>	TOTAL %	Electrical %	Construction %	Engineering %	Motor %	Furniture %	Still Working in Trade %
The physical condition of the training centre	90	89	92	90	89	86	91
The availability of equipment and facilities in the centre	89	91	91	88	84	89	89
The practical skills development	90	92	90	91	88	86	92
The relevance of the subjects to the work environment	82	85	82	85	78	69	83
The location of the training centre	82	83	83	79	84	75	83
The level of theory taught on the programme	81	82	81	80	78	70	83
The levels of math and science	73	77	72	78	65	64	75
The level of technical drawing	65	56	73	70	54	67	65

Institutes of Technology also scored highly, similar to levels of satisfaction achieved for FÁS training centres (Fig.12).

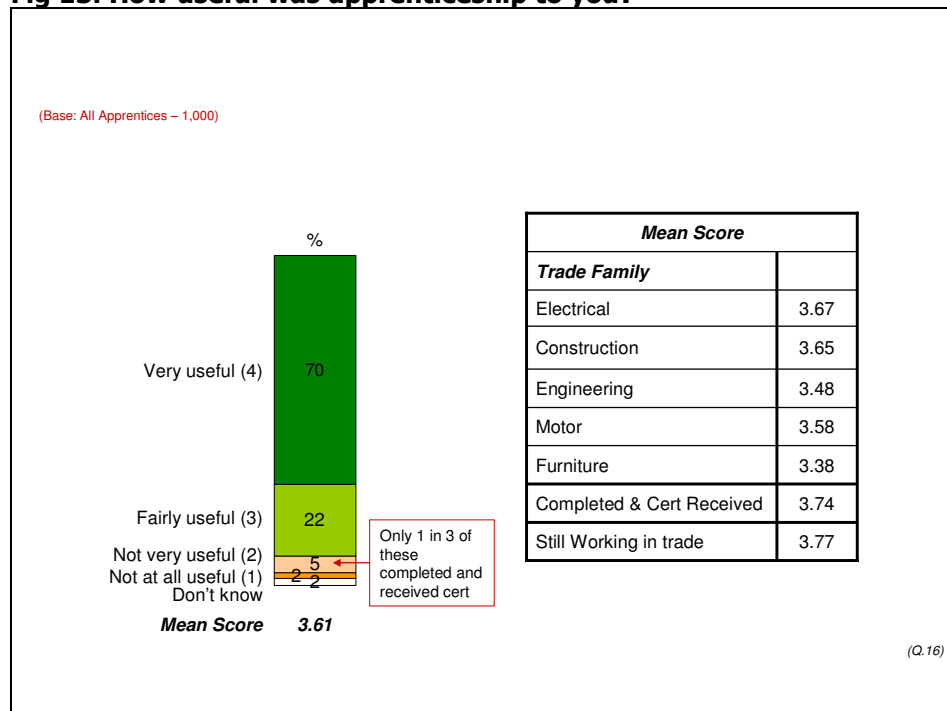
For the Electrical trades the Institutes of Technology fall back for the level of theory taught, the level of technical drawing and the relevance of the subject to the work environment.

Fig 12. Levels of satisfaction with Institute of technology attended for Phase 4 and 6



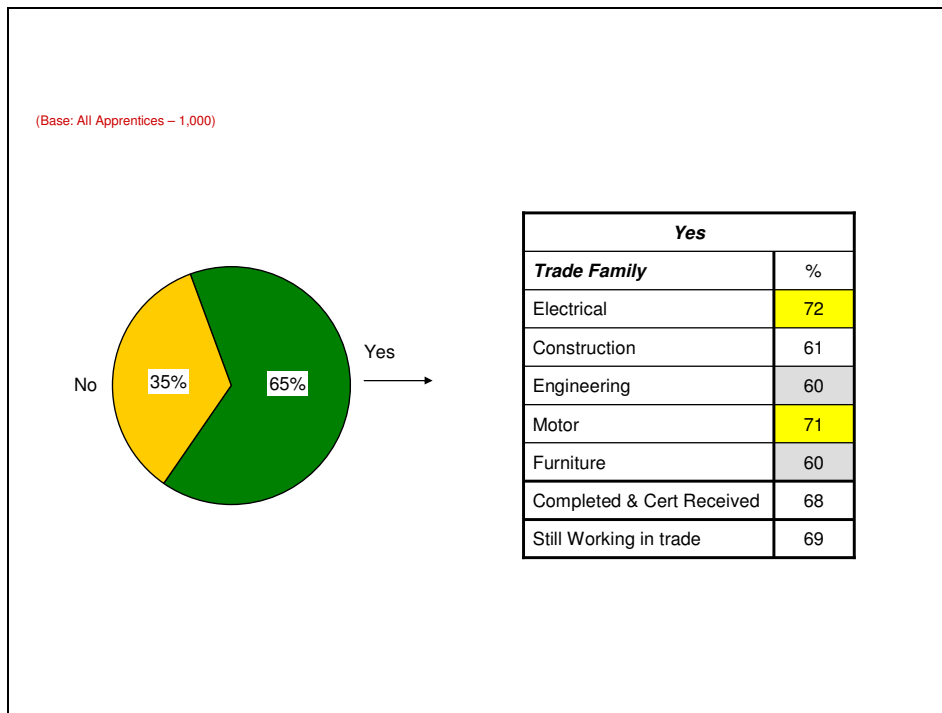
For the majority (70%) of apprentices training is very useful (Fig.13). Only one third of those who did not find the training useful completed the course.

Fig 13. How useful was apprenticeship to you?



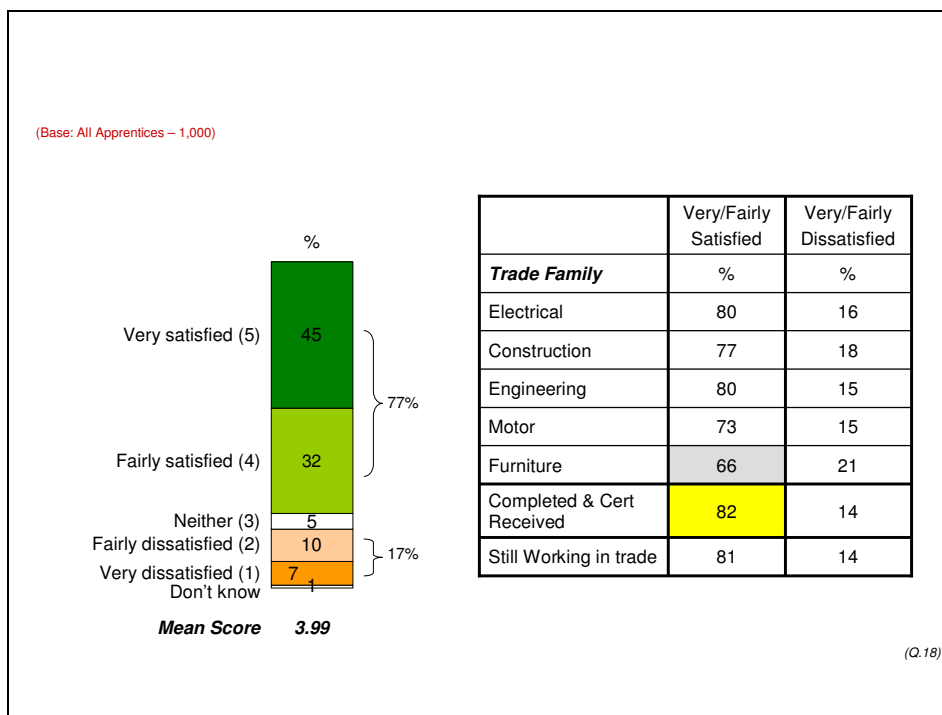
Two out of three claimed to have done some study/reading around the apprentice subject when at home (Fig.14). This was more likely in Electrical and Motor trades.

Fig 14. Incidence of home study



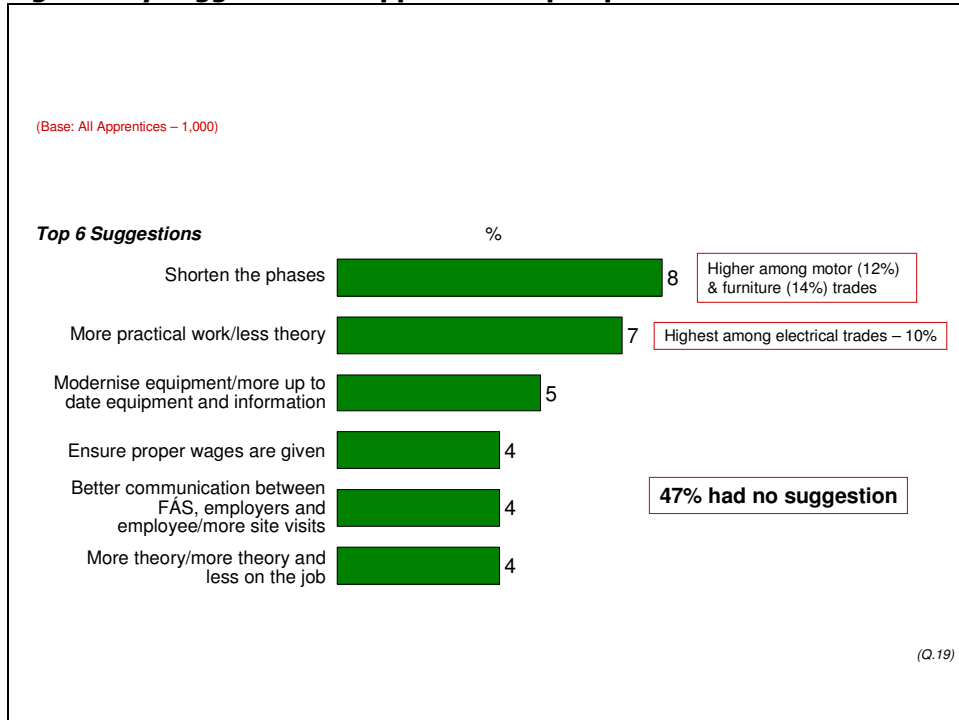
Over 3 in 4 were satisfied with the speed of progression through the phases of training (Fig.15). However, this increases for over 4 in 5 of those who completed and qualified. Again the Furniture trade showed lower satisfaction levels.

Fig 15. Level of satisfaction with speed of progression through phases



Almost half of apprentices had no suggestion for improvement (Fig.16). The top suggestion was to shorten the phases, particularly from Motor and Furniture trades. Electrical trades tended to prefer more practical work and less theory.

Fig 16. Key suggestion for apprenticeship improvement



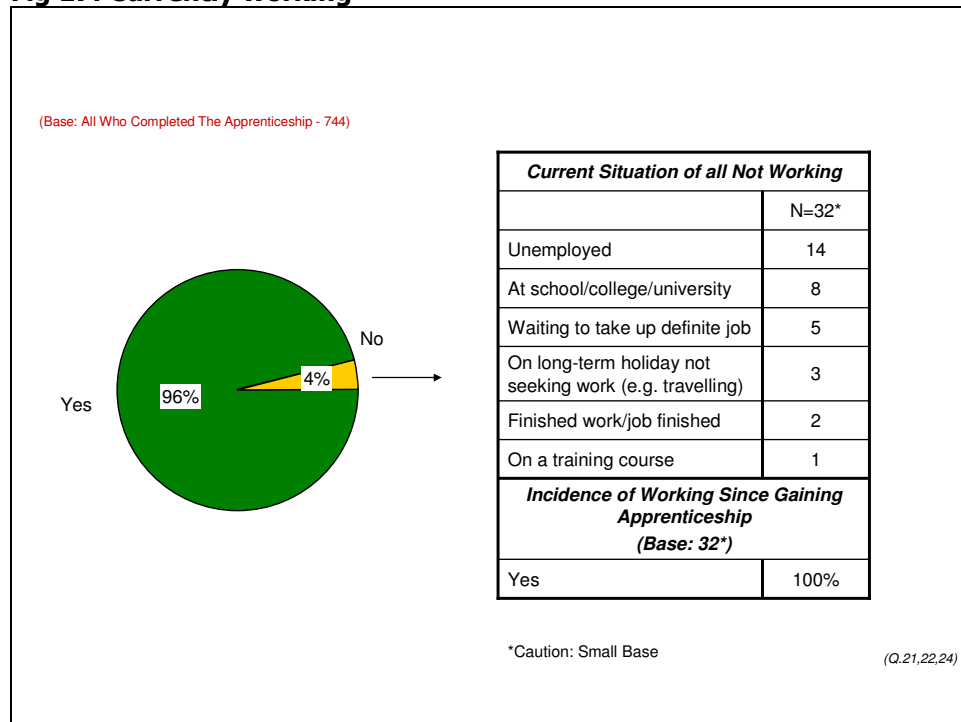
7. Views of qualified craftspersons

A major objective of this survey was to assess what apprentices did when qualified and a series of questions including such topics as whether they would like to see further training available) was devised. A summary of the answers are presented below, all qualified craftspersons were asked these questions (Fig.17).

Completes

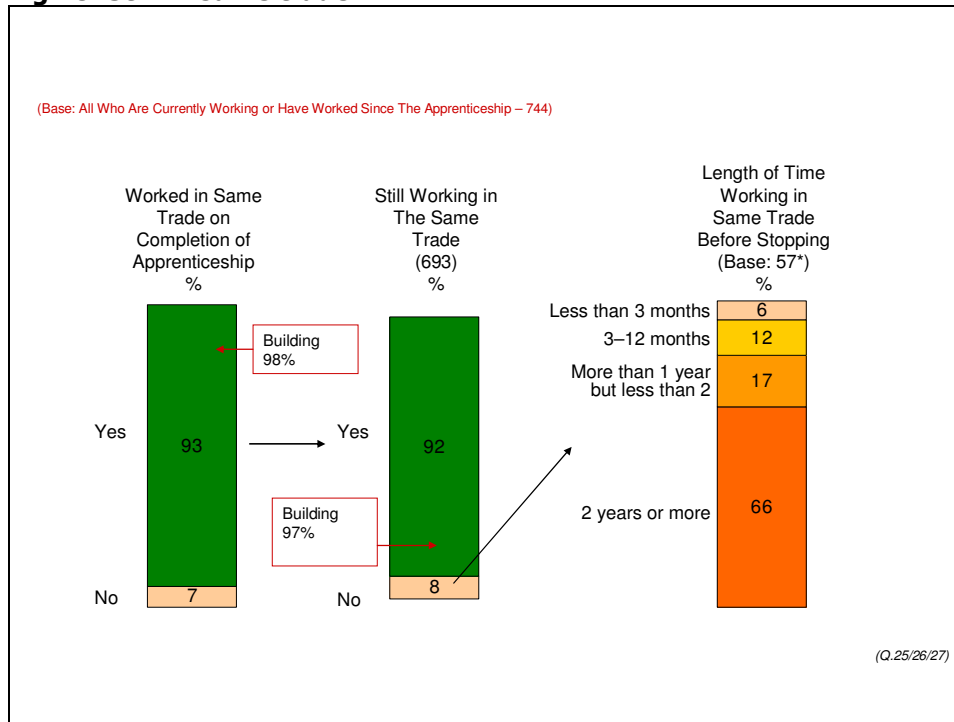
Ninety six percent of qualified craftspersons were working, 2% were unemployed, most of the remaining 2% were in some kind of further education or training. All had worked at some time since completing their apprenticeship.

Fig 17. Currently working



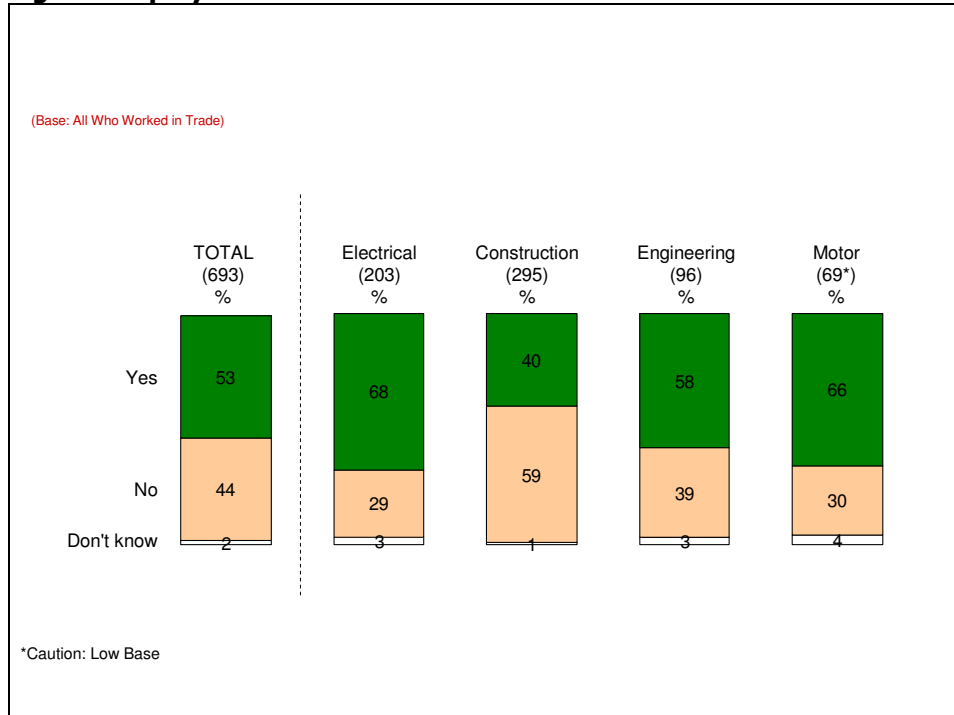
Most craftspersons were still working in the same trade (92%). Construction craftspersons were more likely to be still in the same trade (97%). Engineers were more likely to have moved onto something new (Fig.18).

Fig 18. Still in same trade?



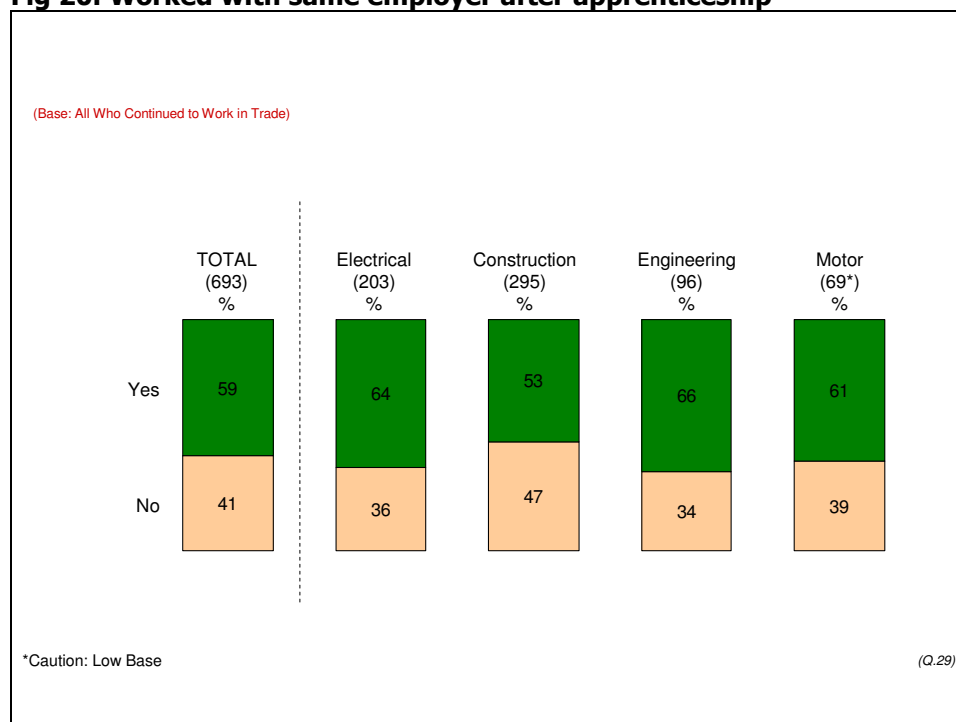
For those who completed the apprenticeship and found work in the trade , just over half deemed it necessary to have the national craft certificate to gain employment (Fig.19), this drops as low as 40% for those in the Construction trades.

Fig 19. Employment in the trade: was national craft certificate essential?



While being the most likely to still be in the same trade, construction craftspersons are the most likely to have moved employers (Fig.20).

Fig 20. Worked with same employer after apprenticeship

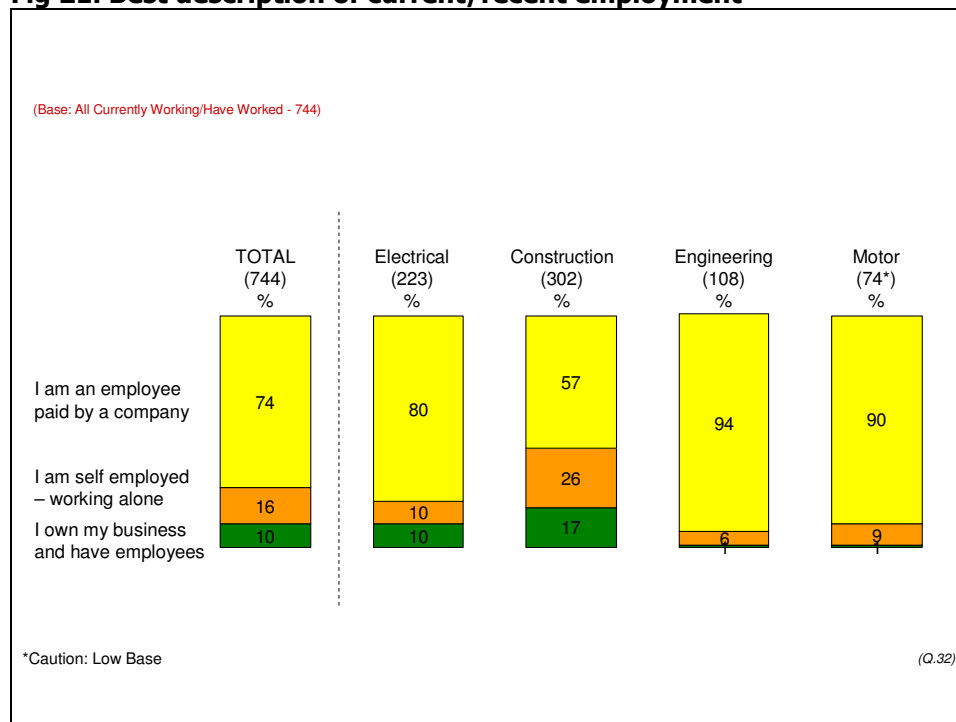


Just over half have continued to work with the same employer since receiving their qualification.

Type of employment

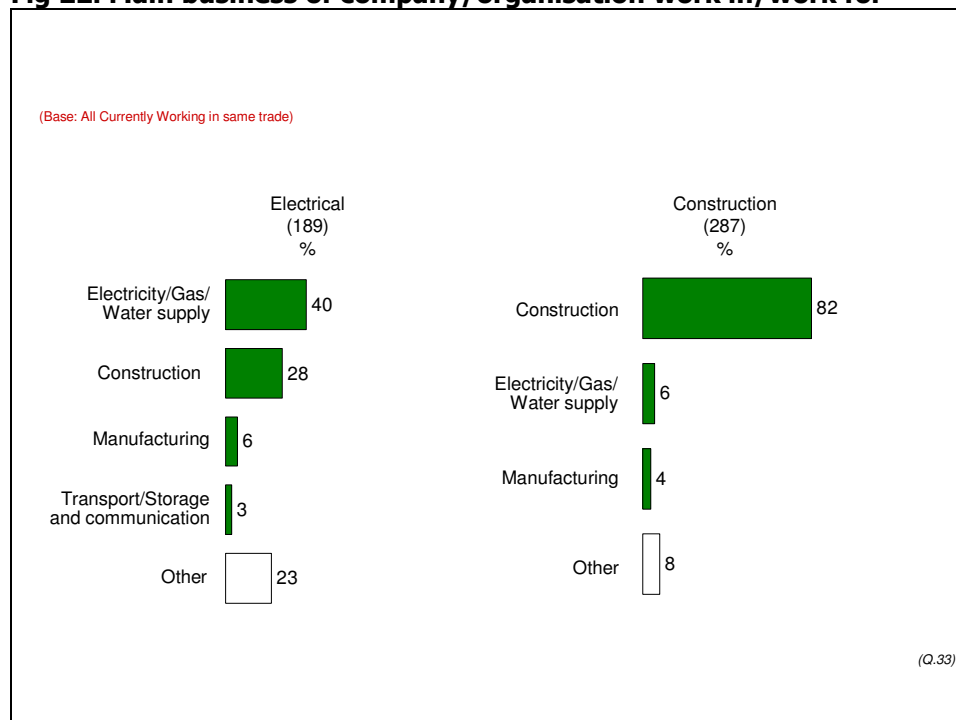
Three quarters were still working for an employer, however, nearly half of all construction craftspersons had their own business. Three quarters of craftspersons were employees of a company (Fig.21). This rises to 90% in the Motor trade and 94% in Engineering. Over four in ten (43%) in the Construction trades were either self employed or own their own business. Overall, 10% of craftspersons were running their own businesses employing others.

Fig 21. Best description of current/recent employment



Forty percent of those in the Electrical trades worked in the Electricity/Gas/Water Supply sector (Fig.22). One in four Electrical craftsmen are currently working in the construction trade. Eighty-two percent of those in the Construction trades worked in construction.

Fig 22. Main business of company/organisation work in/work for



A very high concentration (65%) of those in Motor trades worked in the Motor and other household repairs industry.

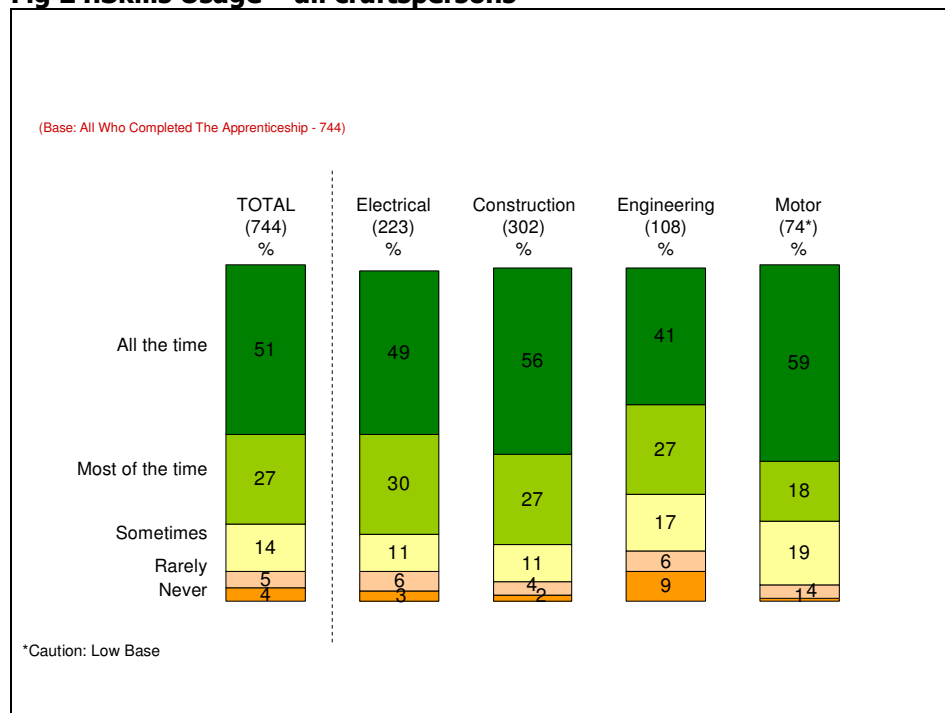
Engineering trades were spread across many different job sectors (Fig.23), 18% in Construction, 10% in Manufacturing, 9% in Motoring, 5% Mining and Quarrying, 4% Electricity/Gas/Water supply, 4% Health and Social Work, 4% Transport/Storage and communication, a further 46% worked in other occupations.

Fig 23. Main business of company/organisation work in/work for



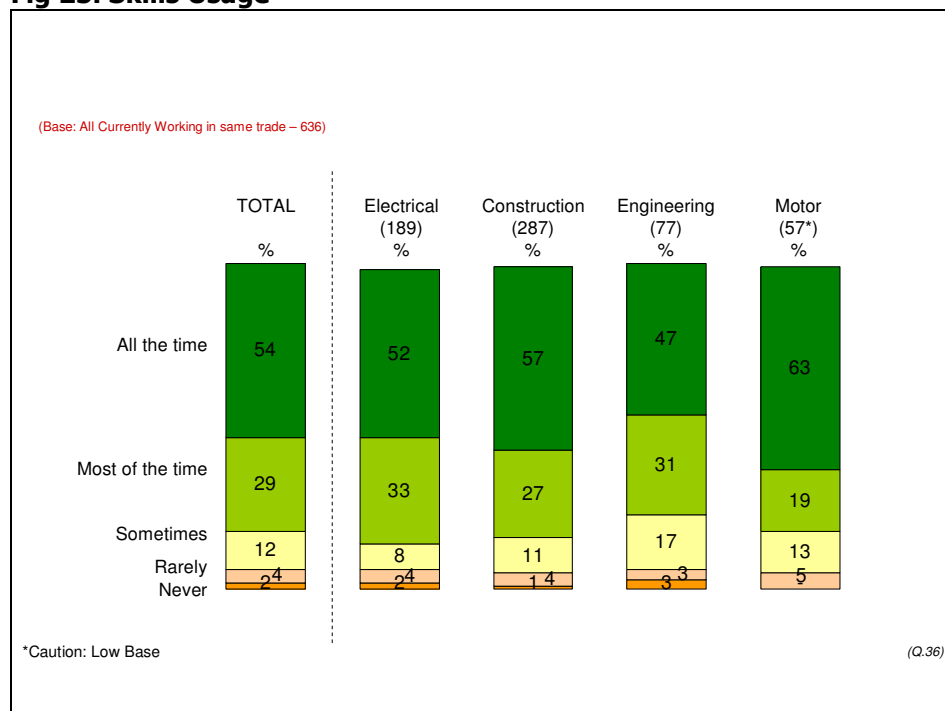
When all of the qualified craftspersons were asked how much they used the skills which they learned on the apprenticeship, the Construction and Electrical craftspersons require most use for these skills. Engineers and those in the Furniture trade saw less need for the skills they learned during their apprenticeship (Fig.24). Nearly a quarter of all craftspersons and one third in the Engineering Trades surveyed said that they rarely, never or only sometimes use these skills.

Fig 24. Skills Usage – all craftspersons



When all of the qualified craftspersons who were still working in the same trade (Fig.25) were asked how much they used the skills which they learned on the apprenticeship, the response showed higher levels of skills usage. Eighteen percent surveyed said that they rarely, never or only sometimes use these skills.

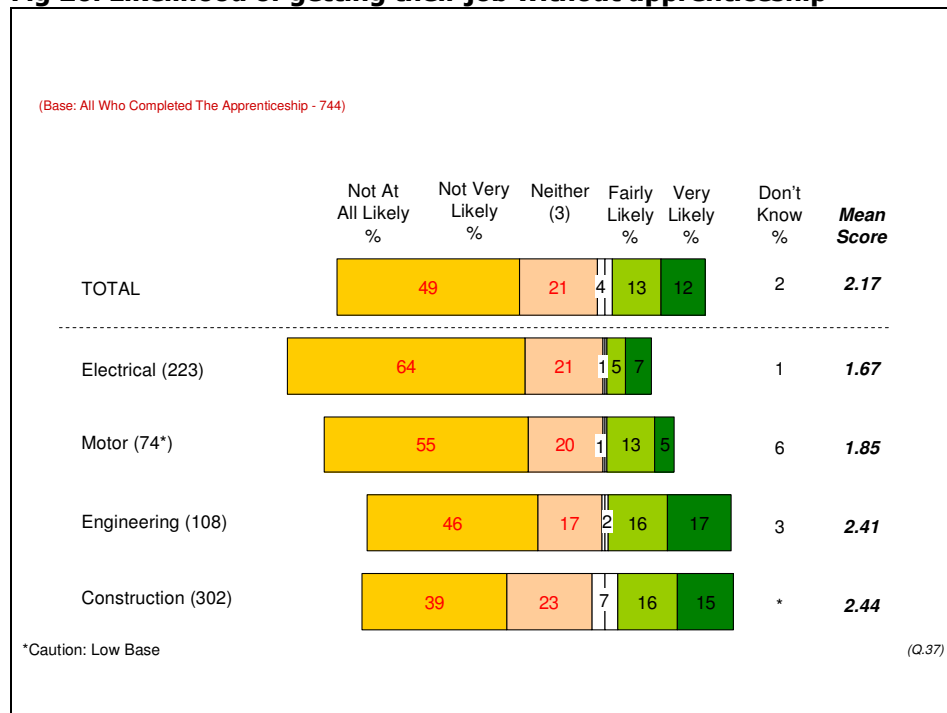
Fig 25. Skills Usage



When all of the qualified craftspersons were asked if they thought that it would be likely that they would get their job without their apprenticeship, half

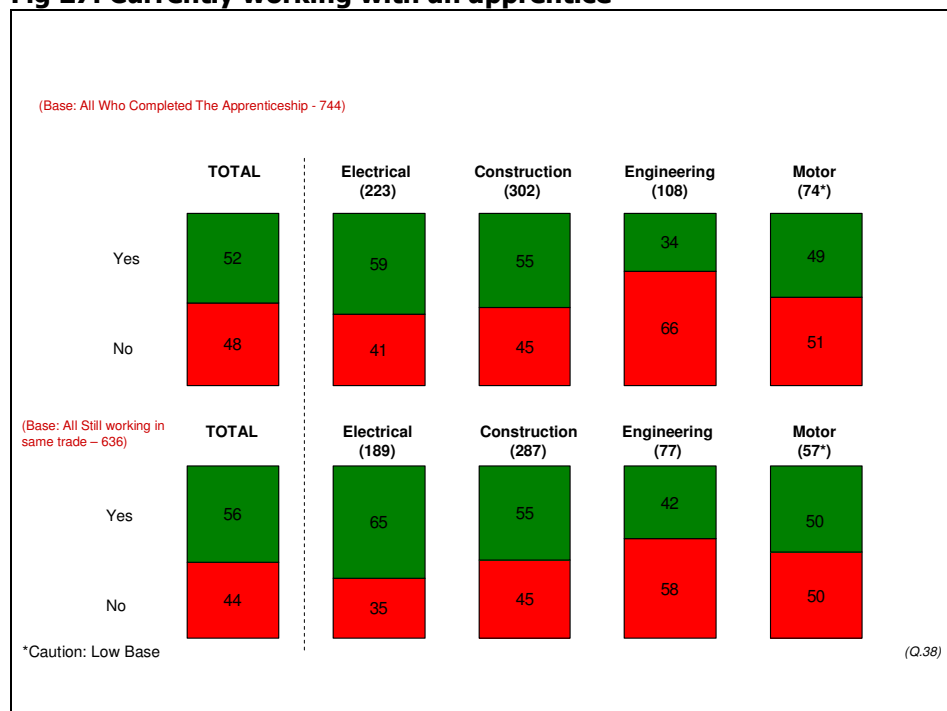
disagreed. Only 1 in 8 Electrical craftspersons thought it would be likely to get this job without their qualification (Fig.26).

Fig 26. Likelihood of getting their job without apprenticeship



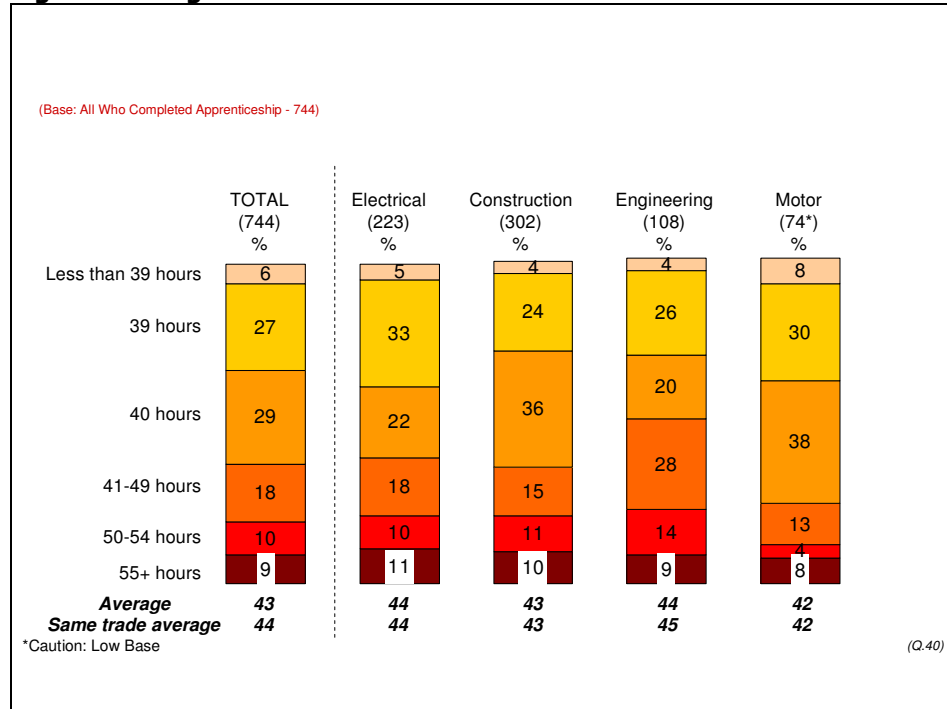
All qualified craftspersons were asked whether they were working with an apprentice (Fig.27), 52% said that they were. Engineers are least likely to be working with apprentices

Fig 27. Currently working with an apprentice



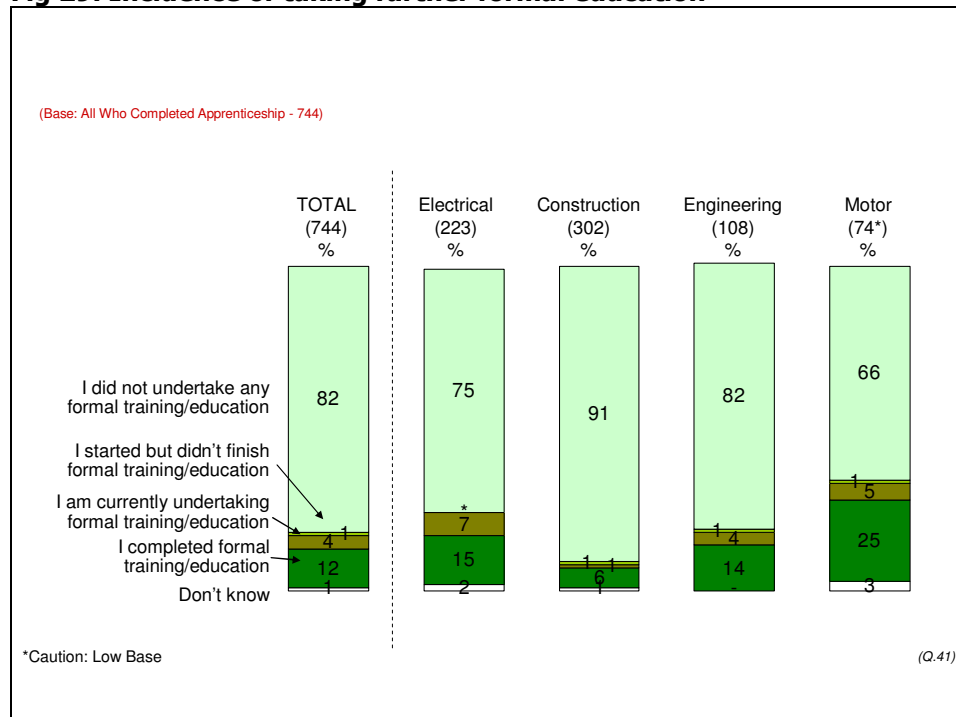
The majority worked within the usual 39-40 hour week (Fig.28). However, 1 in 5 Electrical craftspersons and Construction craftspersons were working 50+ hours a week on average.

Fig 28. Average number of hours worked



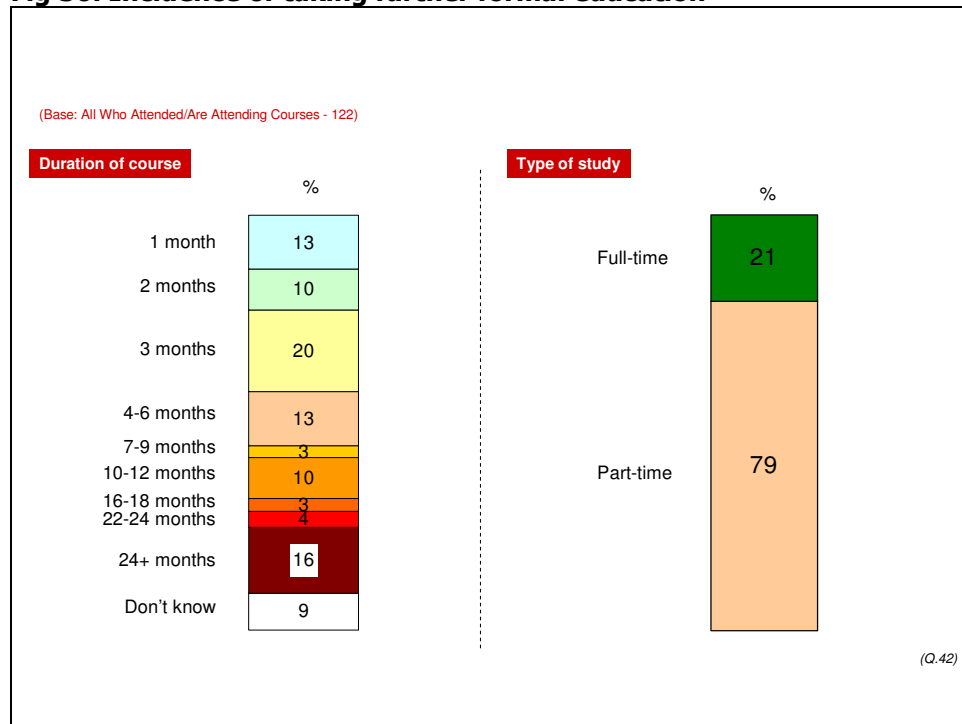
Eight in ten have not undertaken any formal training or education since completing their apprenticeship (Fig29). For those who have, those in the Motor trade were more likely to have completed a course.

Fig 29. Incidence of taking further formal education



The majority of the courses taken were completed within a year, 8 in 10 were part-time (Fig.30).

Fig 30. Incidence of taking further formal education

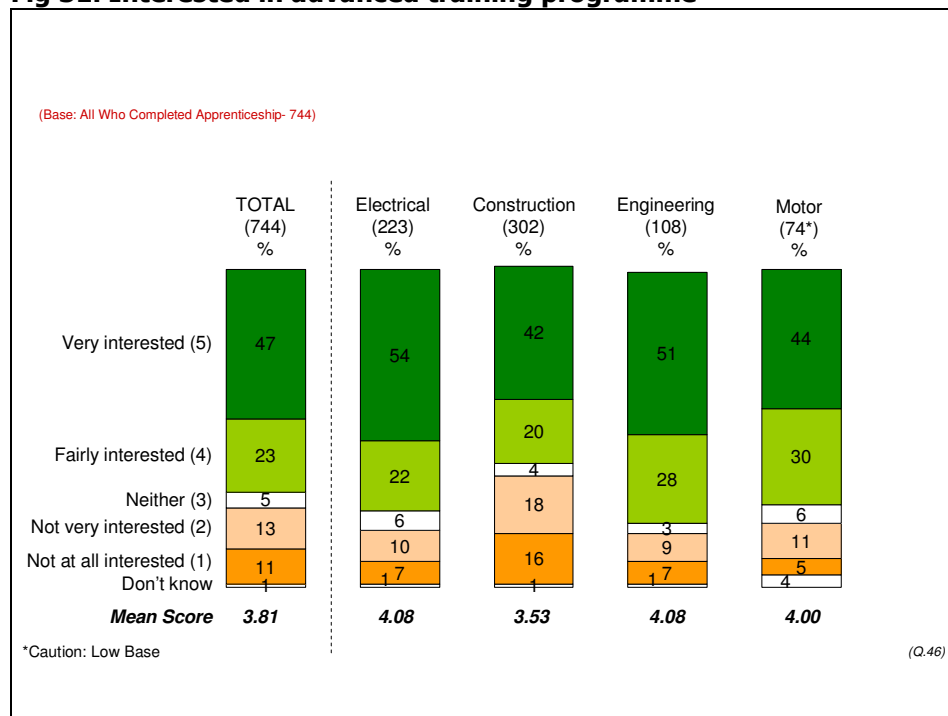


All who completed the apprenticeship were asked would they be interested in completed an advanced training programme to increase their skill level in their current trade. Interest in this type of training programmes was high (Fig.31), with Electrical and Engineering craftspeople expressing a still higher interest.

A number of craftspersons undertook formal training or education after completing their apprenticeship, 17% undertook degrees, 65% undertook certificates, 5% undertook diplomas and the remainder took courses which led to other qualifications. The courses were very varied and can be categorised broadly into computer related, business related, electrical related, trade specific, and health and safety.

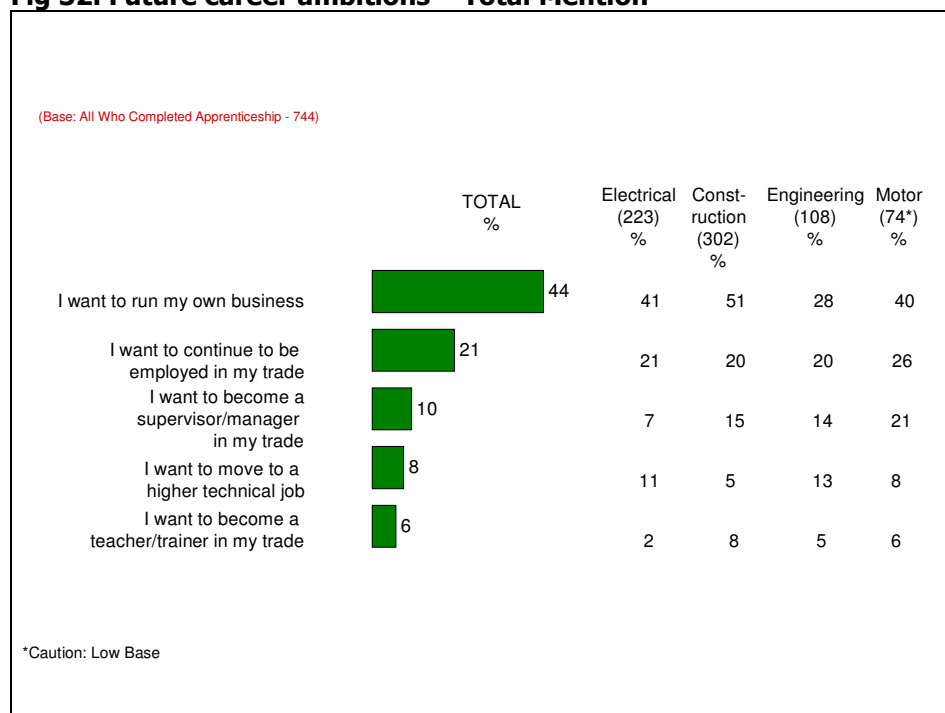
Only one fifth of those who undertook formal training did so on a fulltime basis.

Fig 31. Interested in advanced training programme



When asked about future career ambitions (Fig.32), almost half showed ambition to run their own business, higher for those in the Construction trades. Six percent would like to become a teacher/trainer in their trade. Those in the Motor trade were the most likely to want to become supervisors/managers.

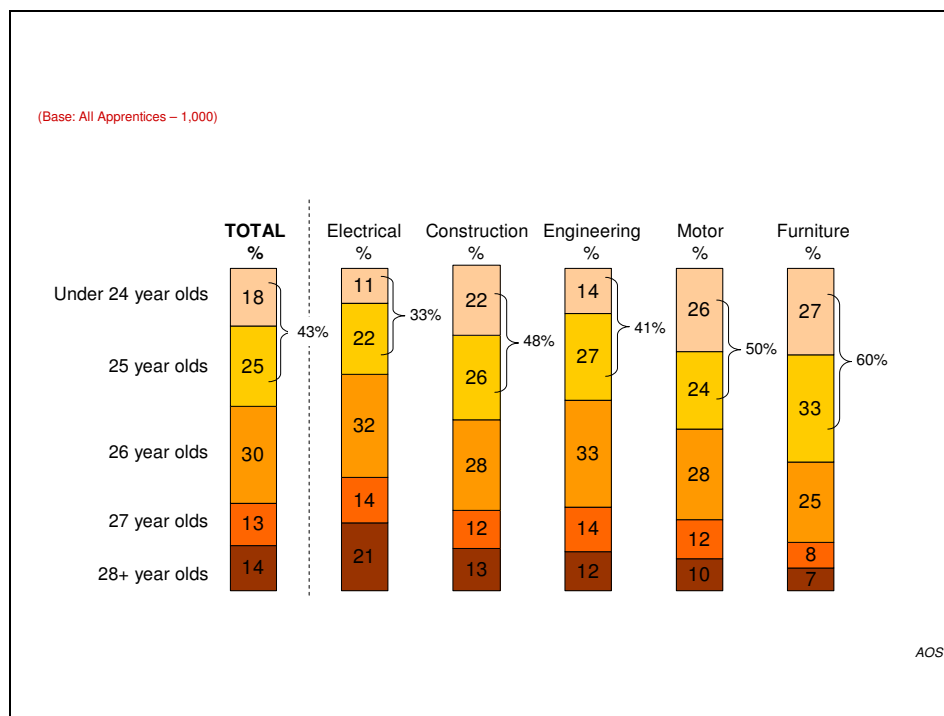
Fig 32. Future career ambitions – Total Mention



8. Age

Electrical respondents were older than the sample average (Fig.33), while Motor and Furniture apprentices were younger. This is due to the fact that Electrical respondents tended to leave school later than Motor and Furniture respondents. Seventy-three percent of those surveyed were 27 or younger.

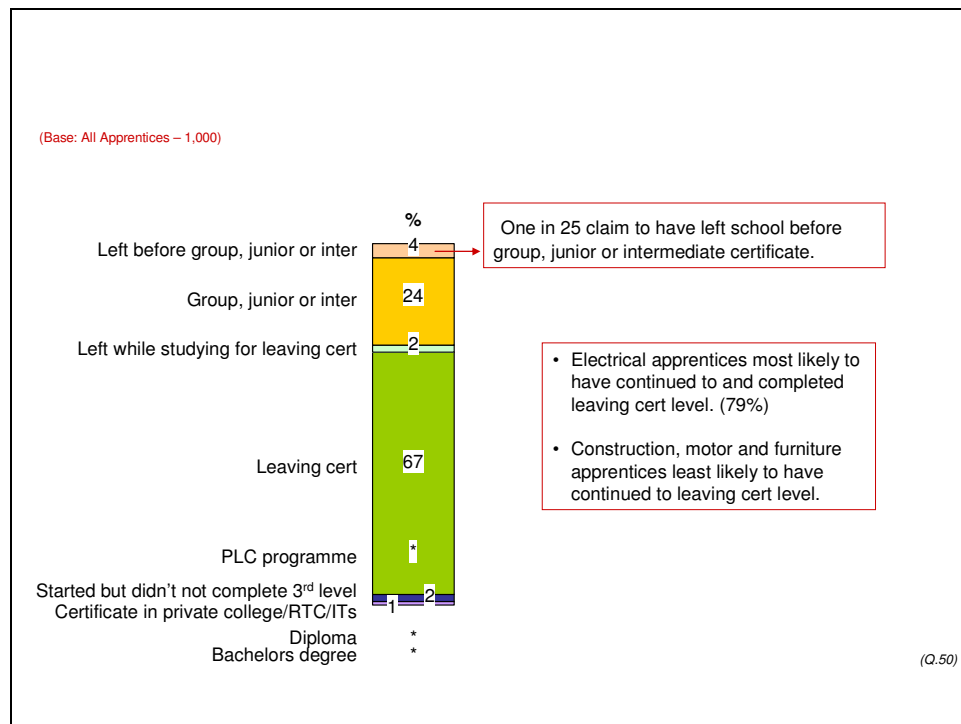
Fig 33. Apprentice type X Age



9. Education

Seven in ten respondents in the survey had completed the Leaving Certificate. Electrical respondents were more likely to have completed the leaving cert, which explained their older age profile. Four per cent of those surveyed claimed that they left before group, junior or intermediate examinations (Fig.34).

Fig 34 Highest level of education achieved before apprenticeship



Those who attained Leaving Cert or Higher were more likely to complete their apprenticeship (Fig. 35). Seventy eight of those with the Leaving Cert get the National Craft Certificate (NCC) and 64% of those without the Leaving Cert got the National Craft Certificate.

Fig 35. Linking Leaving Cert and National Craft Certificate Success

Education	No NCC	NCC	Total
Leaving Cert or Higher	150	549	699
Non Leaving Cert	105	196	301
Total	255	745	1000

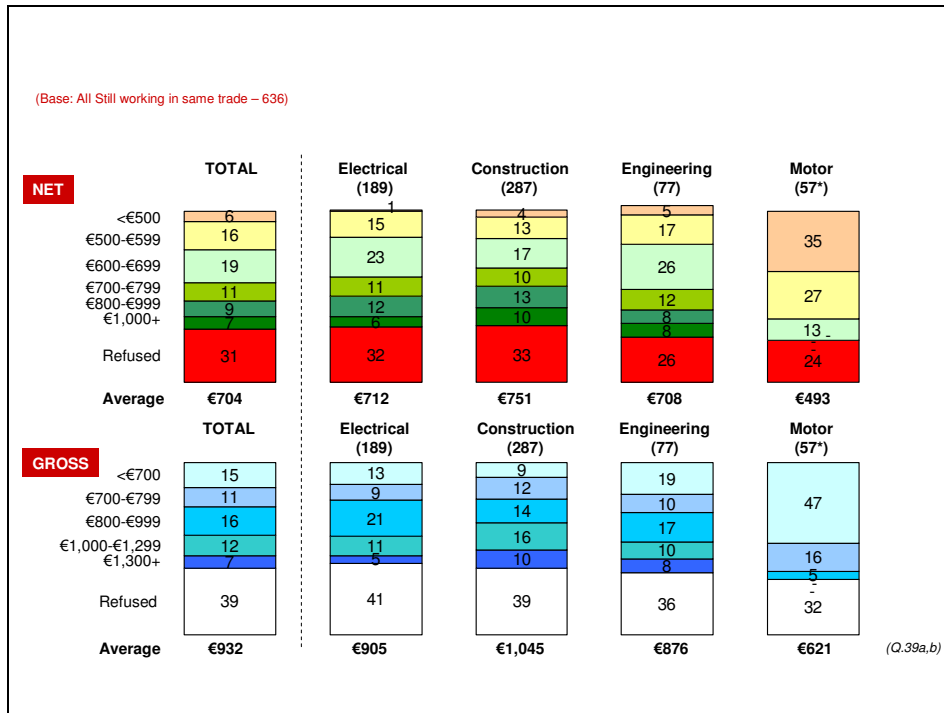
10. Income

Apprentice income currently

The respondents in this survey were asked what their net and gross weekly earnings were, 31% refused. The average net weekly wage for apprentices who are still in the trade was €704 per week (Fig.36). The Motor trade appeared least well paid, while Electrical and Construction commanded the highest wages. The average Construction wage was €751 and the average Electrical wage was €712 among qualified craftspeople who stayed in their trade. However, the average Motor wage was €493.

Seven percent of craftspersons in this survey earned more than €1,000 net per week, 10% of Construction craftspersons earned €1,000 net per week (Fig. 36).

Fig 36. Net and Gross Pay – Craftspersons working in their trade.



In September 2006 the average construction gross wage was €770 and the average (Source Central Statistics Office) industrial gross wage was €600, this compares to the average craftsperson gross wage €932.

Fig 37. Net and Gross Pay – Individual Trades.

	Brick and Stonelaying	Cabinet Making	Carpentry and Joinery	Fitting	Metal Fabrication	Plumbing
Less than €500	0%	13%	7%	7%	3%	1%
€500 - €599	5%	20%	18%	15%	21%	11%
€600 - €699	15%	16%	16%	32%	21%	20%
€700 - €799	5%	6%	11%	17%	14%	8%
€800 - €999	17%	13%	11%	0%	3%	16%
€1,000 or more	12%	2%	11%	10%	7%	5%
Refused	45%	39%	30%	25%	32%	37%

	Brick and Stonelaying	Cabinet Making	Carpentry and Joinery	Fitting	Metal Fabrication	Plumbing
Average	€ 865	€ 576	€ 639	€ 672	€ 706	€ 654

Of the individual trades, Brick and Stonelaying craftspersons in general earned the most, €865 net per week, none earned less than €500 net per week, 12% earned more than €1000 net per week. Electrical and Metal Fabrication craftspersons earned above the average for all trades (Fig.37).

11. Findings for specific trades and trade groups

Presented in this section are highlights particular to trade groups and trades.

Electrical

- Seventy nine of those beginning in this trade had continued to and completed leaving cert – compared to 67% on average for all apprentices.
- Two thirds were satisfied with their level of wages, with a net average wage of €712pw among those who are still working in their trade.
- This trade showed lower than average levels of satisfaction with the level of technical drawing at FÁS training centres and Institutes of Technology.
- In addition this trade rated lower than average satisfaction with the relevance of the subjects to the work environment and the level of theory taught on the programme in the Institute of Technology phases. Almost three in four of this trade family did some home study.
- Electrical craftspersons placed the highest emphasis on the need for the National Craft Certificate to gain employment, 68% - the highest level across the trades.
- Eight in 10 are still working for an employer and would use the skills they were taught 'all/most of the time'. Three quarters would be very/fairly interested in an advanced training programme.
- Electrical respondents were older than average, with two thirds of respondents over twenty-five.

Construction

- Construction craftspersons received the highest level of pay. On average those still working in the trade were making a net weekly wage of €750. For four in five they agreed that their earning expectations have been met
- The main areas of dissatisfaction with the course would be the level of theory taught, 47% feel it is too much.
- Ninety-seven of those who qualified in the Construction trades are still working in the same trade – the highest level recorded across the trades.
- These apprentices are less reliant on the National Craft Certificate to gain employment, only 40% thought it essential to gain employment.
- Among those qualified in the Construction trades 43% have set up their own business, with almost 1 in 5 having employees.
- Like Electrical craftspersons, 8 in 10 use their skills 'all/most of the time'. However, almost one in 3 claim 'very/fairly' likely to have been able to get the job without the apprenticeship. The Construction trades are also least likely to have taken any further formal education.

- They are the least likely to be interested in any advanced training programme, however, six in ten show some level of interest in this.

Engineering

- This trade family showed the highest drop-out level, 15% complete Phase 1 only, and 33% do not complete the course. Among the reasons why they don't complete, Engineering shows higher levels of not liking the work/trade. The survey indicates that prospective Engineering apprentices should be carefully screened before being accepted on to the course, they should fully understand what is involved in this trade at the outset.
- Engineers didn't see their career prospects being as good as other trades and like Motor are unhappy with their earnings versus expectations.
- Engineering trades showed highest satisfaction with the level of maths and technical drawing taught in the FÁS training centre. Sixty percent of Engineering trades did home study, lower than the 65% apprentice average.
- Engineering trades showed the highest fall off at all stages resulting in only 48% of 1999 starters currently qualified and working in the trade.
- Engineers still working in the trade earn an average net wage of €708 per week. However, there is high loyalty among this category, with two in three still in trade still working for the same employer of their apprenticeship. On the whole they are more likely to be working for a company, with low levels being recorded for owning their own business.
- Engineers are the least likely to be working with apprentices on a day to day basis, amongst those who qualified as engineers and those who are still in that trade
- Almost eight in ten qualified in the Engineering trades would be interested in an advanced training programme.

Motor

- These apprentices are more likely to be younger compared to all apprentices – with half of 1999 starters currently under 25. Unsurprisingly with this young age these apprentices were least likely to have continued to leaving cert level.
- Trade least satisfied with the level of wages. On average those still in the trade are earning just under €500pw - €200 less than the average.
- This trade showed lower satisfaction with the training they received. However, they are the most satisfied trade for the level of theory taught on the programme at the Institute of Technology phases.
- Two thirds found the national craft certificate essential in getting a job. Three quarters couldn't see themselves getting a job without their apprenticeship and a similar proportion claim to use their skills all/most of the time.

- Like Engineers, Motor apprentices are less likely to own their own business – which would go some way to explaining the lower levels of wages experienced.
- Those in the Motor trades claimed the highest incidence of undertaking further formal training, at one in three. Three in four are also interested in an advanced training programme.

Furniture

- Furniture trades appear to be younger, with half of 1999 starters still under 25 .
- This trade appears the most pessimistic towards the future, but still three in four agreeing that their future looks promising
- Wages have also fallen short of expectations with only 60% agreeing that their earning expectations have been met
- They are least satisfied with the progression through the phases, 66% being very/fairly satisfied vs. 77% overall

Brick and Stonelaying

- Brick and Stonelaying craftspersons had the highest weekly net pay €861.
- Sixty percent work with apprentices compared with 50% in all trades.
- Three hundred and ninety three started their apprenticeship in 1999, more were needed in order to keep wages down.

Cabinet Making

- Four in ten Cabinet Makings want to run their own business.
- Nine percent became involved in formal training since completing their apprenticeship
- One third thought it would be likely or fairly likely to obtain work without the qualification

Carpentry and Joinery

- Half were either self employed or owned their own business.
- Six percent thought that there should be a bigger component of roofing/tiling/slating on the course.
- Eight percent became involved in formal training since completing their apprenticeship

Fitting

- One quarter of Fittings claim to work 50 hours or more per week.
- Twenty five percent work with apprentices compared with 50% in all trades.

- One in 8 left the apprenticeship during Phase 1, compared to one in 10 in all trades.
- Less than 7% are either self employed or work for themselves.
- Ten percent are no longer working in the trade compared to 5% in all trades.

Metal Fabrication

- Nearly one third of Metal Fabrication craftpersons claim to work 50 hours or more per week.
- One in 6 left the apprenticeship during Phase 1, compared to one in 10 in all trades.
- Less than 3% are either self employed or work for themselves.

Plumbing

- They are among the least satisfied with the progression through the phases, 29% being very/fairly dissatisfied
- One third are either self employed or own their own business.
- Half want to run their own business.
- Seventy percent work with apprentices compared with 50% in all trades.

12. Insights and Recommendations

Insight	Recommendation
In total, only 53% thought the National Craft Certificate was essential in gaining employment.	Is there a need to convey the benefits of the National Craft Certificate. Both to apprentices and employers? This may particularly be the case in Construction.
A quarter have gone on to start their own business and 18% more would like to.	Is there a possibility of including more entrepreneurial and management aspects to the training apprentices receive? Or should this type of training be provided by FÁS post-apprenticeship?
Those currently working in the Engineering trades are least likely to be using the skills they were taught on the course when they get into the workplace, with 1 in 4 saying they use them 'sometimes/rarely or never'.	Are some phases of the courses becoming obsolete quicker these days? There could be a need to keep even more up to date in current practices. As the course lasts a couple of years from time of commencement are some of the skills being taught less useful when the person arrives into the workplace? There is a need to have more frequent curriculum reviews.
Engineering trades show high fall out and lowest incidence of qualified trades people working in the trade.	Do we need to pre-screen recruits to Engineering to ensure what they think they are training for is what they want? This could reduce fall out and provide a greater number of qualified trades people in Engineering. The recently introduced Apprentice Induction Programme may help new apprentices to better assess their suitability and interest in their chosen trade.