

The 5% Club

EMPLOYER AUDIT

*Inspiring increased, socially-inclusive
'earn and learn' opportunities, through
employer benchmarking and annual
membership awards.*

2021-2023



Welcome & Introduction

Founded in 2013, **The 5% Club** is uniquely an employer-led charity organisation.

It works with UK employers – and key influencers – to inspire, educate, and retain a growing body of people into ‘earn and learn’ employment, to increase the number of apprentices, sponsored degree placement students, and graduate trainees.

Members of the Club aspire to having at least 5% of their UK workforce in ‘earn and learn’ positions within five years of joining – and it was with this in mind that we launched a major new research initiative for Club members in 2021, **The 5% Club Employer Audit**.



From its inception, the annual Employer Audit has enabled Club members to validate and benchmark their ‘earn and learn’ activities, and rewarded employers with **Bronze, Silver or Gold** membership of The 5% Club, in recognition of where they have reached in their journey towards having 5% of their UK workforce in ‘earn and learn’ positions – and beyond.

To celebrate The 5% Club’s tenth anniversary, a new **Platinum** membership category was introduced in 2023 – its highest-level of membership yet – for employers that had already achieved a Gold membership in both 2021 and 2022, and went on to have at least 10% of their employees in ‘earn and learn’ roles in 2023.

We are delighted that **217 employers**, large and small, have now taken part in the Employer Audit in its first three years.

In addition to providing each participating employer with invaluable benchmarking data and individual feedback on their ‘earn and learn’ employment, the scheme allows employers to demonstrate to Government, investors, customers, employees, wider society, and potential recruits that they are a business that is committed to developing its workforce and building the skills the UK economy now needs to thrive.

This short report summarises the data and findings from the Employer Audit in 2021, 2022 and 2023, and the resulting Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum memberships awarded by the Club.

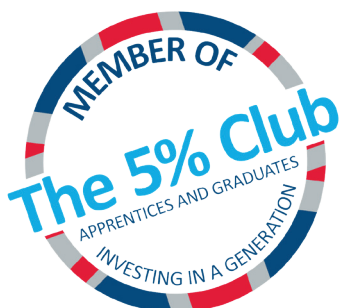
Finally, we are very grateful to **City & Guilds** for their lead sponsorship of the Employer Audit in 2023 and for sponsoring the ‘Employer of the Year’ award at **The 5% Club National ‘Earn & Learn’ Awards 2023**, which were awarded based on the results from the Employer Audit.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Cameron'.

Mark Cameron OBE

Chief Executive Officer, The 5% Club



Research Methodology

The **5% Club Employer Audit** is the prestigious annual employer benchmarking and membership awards programme that explores five aspects of employers’ ‘earn and learn’ programmes:

- the number of employees in **employment** on graduate programmes, apprenticeships, student degree placement schemes, and other ‘earn and learn’ training programmes
- the **breadth & balance** of employers’ schemes and programmes
- employers’ commitment to **inclusion & social mobility**
- the **quality** of employers’ training & development schemes, including assurance, standards and completion rates for apprenticeships and graduate programmes
- employers’ plans for **future growth** of ‘earn and learn’ opportunities



A total of 73 members of The 5% Club elected to participate in the inaugural Employer Audit in 2021 (see *Chart 1*), including 52 employers that have more than 250 employees and a further 21 employers that are small or medium-sized enterprises (SME).

A year later, 129 employers took part in the 2022 Employer Audit, including 85 larger employers and 44 SME employers. And in 2023, the number of participating employers increased again, to 114 larger employers and 74 SME employers.

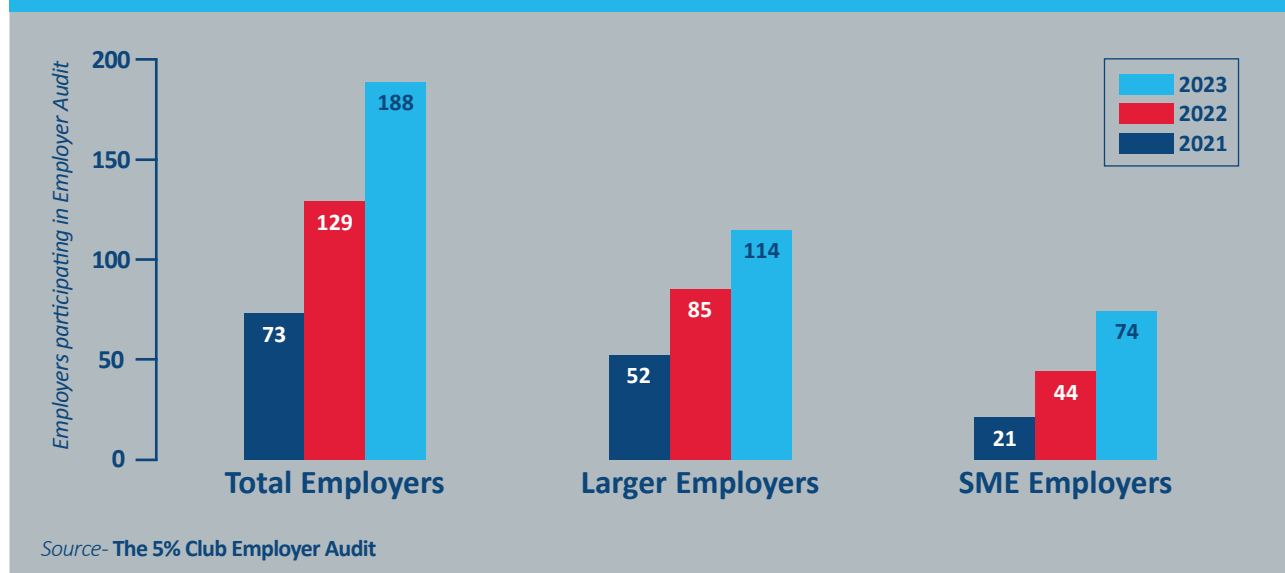
Over a dozen different industries & business sectors have been represented in the first three annual Employer Audits, including construction, manufacturing, accounting & professional services, retailing, banking & finance, technology and the public sector.

Employers participating in the Audit completed a questionnaire in June or July about their ‘earn and learn’ programmes and employees, and then took part in a short follow-up verification interview or email correspondence with a researcher.

Each employer then received a comprehensive benchmarking report – comparing their ‘earn and learn’ employment with other Club members taking part in that year’s Employer Audit – and were awarded either **Platinum, Gold, Silver** or **Bronze** annual membership of The 5% Club.



Chart 1 Employers Participating in The 5% Club Employer Audit in 2021, 2022 & 2023



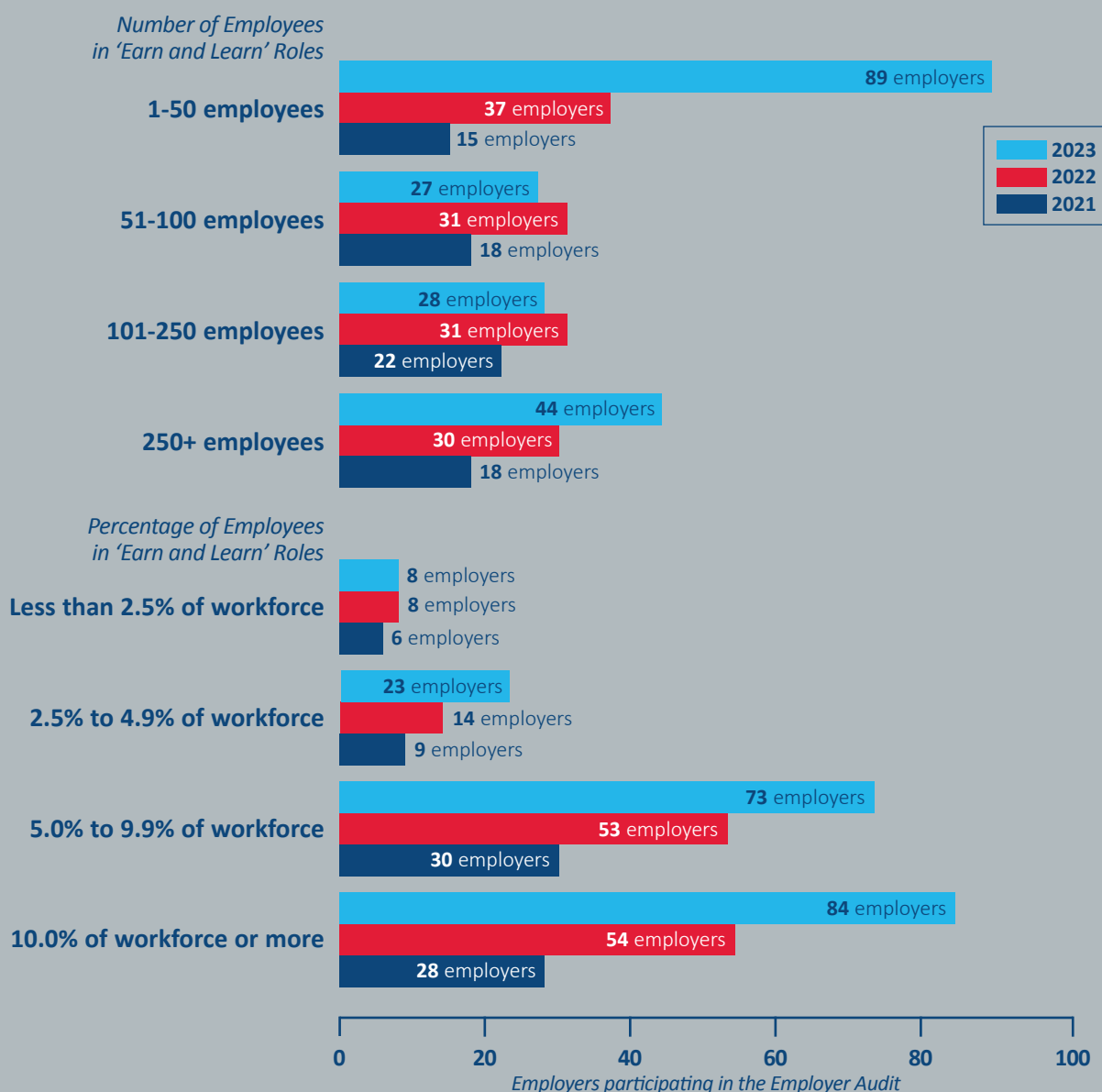
Employers’ ‘Earn and Learn’ Employment

The 5% Club Employer Audit begins by asking participating employers how many of their employees are in ‘earn and learn’ roles, in relation to the size of their UK workforce.

The number of employees on ‘earn and learn programmes’ at organisations participating in the Employer Audit has grown by more than a quarter in the past three years – from 48,460 employees in 2021 to 62,155 employees in 2023. In the latest Employer Audit, more than half of employers had at least 50 apprentices, graduates, degree placement students or other ‘earn and learn’ employees and 44 organisations had over 250 ‘earn and learn’ employees (see Chart 2). On average, 7.7% of the workforce at larger employers and 14.4% of employees at SMEs were in ‘earn and learn’ roles.

In total, 31 employers were awarded the new Platinum membership in 2023 for having at least 10% of their UK workforce in ‘earn and learn’ positions – and having achieved Gold membership in the two previous years (see Tables 7 & 8). A further 126 employers were awarded Gold in 2023, for reaching or exceeding their target of having 5% of employees on ‘earn and learn’ programmes, up from 107 in 2022 and 58 in 2021. Silver membership was awarded to 23 employers for reaching halfway to their 5% target and 8 employers achieved Bronze for being in the early stages of working towards 5%.

Chart 2 ‘Earn and Learn’ Employees at Employers participating in the Employer Audit



Source- The 5% Club Employer Audit

Breadth & Balance of ‘Earn and Learn’ Programmes

The second part of **The 5% Club Employer Audit** examines the range of different ‘earn and learn’ opportunities that employers currently offer.

The results from each of the first three years of the Employer Audit show that almost all participating employers ran apprenticeship programmes and that these accounted for more than three-quarters of the ‘earn and learn’ roles provided.

It is interesting to note that in 2021 the largest number of apprentices were those on Level 2 apprenticeships but that in the two years since, there have been fewer apprentices at this level. Level 3 apprentices were the biggest group in 2022 and 2023, and the volume of apprentices on higher & degree apprenticeships has doubled in the past three years.

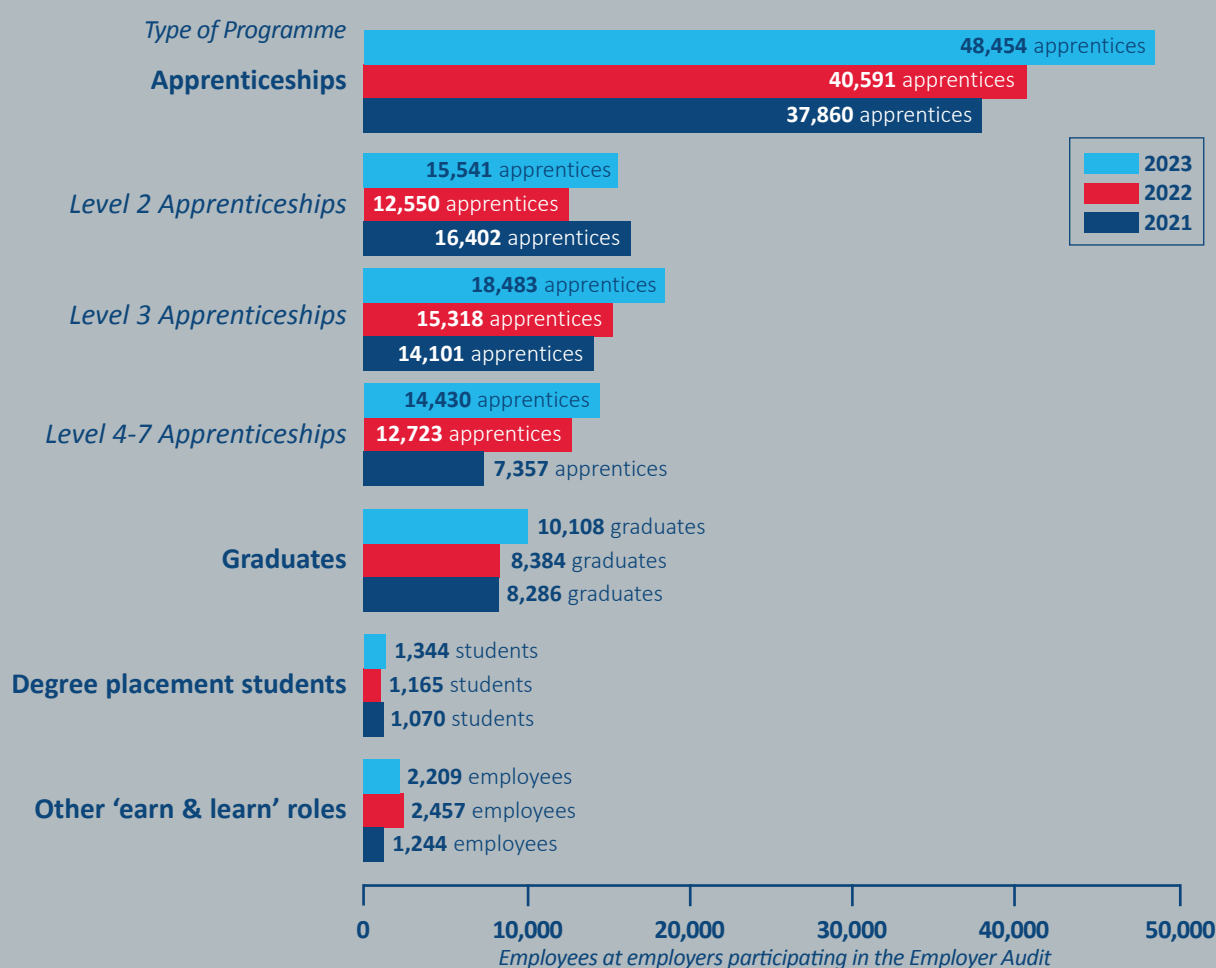
In 2023, more than half of employers that took part in the Employer Audit offered apprenticeships at Level 2, Level 3 and Levels 4-7.

The number of graduates employed has grown since 2021 too but continue to represent approximately one in six of the ‘earn and learn’ roles available at organisations participating in the Employer Audit.

Over the last three years, a much smaller proportion of ‘earn and learn’ employees have been students completing work placements as part of their university degrees, typically lasting either 6 or 12 months.

In the most recent Employer Audit, an impressive 81 employers out of the 188 organisations featured in the research offered apprenticeships, graduate programmes and degree course placements for university students. Of these, 30 employers provided apprenticeship programmes in all three categories – Level 2, Level 3 and Levels 4-7 apprenticeships.

Chart 3 ‘Earn and Learn’ Programmes at Employers participating in the Employer Audit



Source- The 5% Club Employer Audit

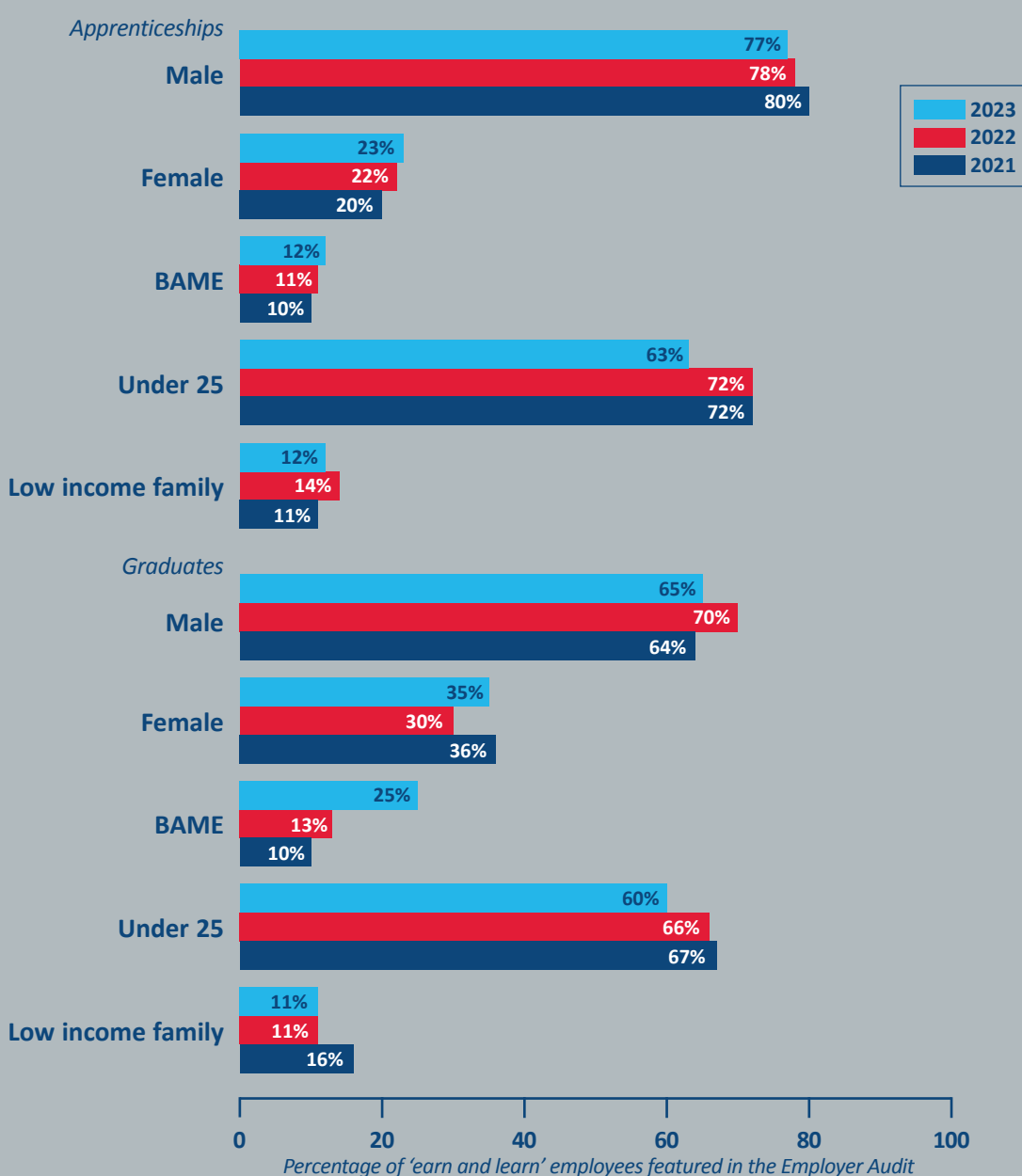
Employers' Inclusion & Social Mobility

The third aspect of **The 5% Club Employer Audit** addresses the inclusion and social mobility of 'earn and learn' employees at participating employers.

Within the Employer Audit, organisations are asked for details of the gender, ethnic background, sexuality, age and disability of their apprentices and graduates – five of the 'protected characteristics', as defined by the Equality Act 2010 – as well as data on whether their employees are from low-income families. Whilst most employers were able to provide detailed information about the gender, ethnic background and age of their 'earn and learn' employees, decreasing numbers had accurate data on employees' family backgrounds, their sexuality or disabilities.

The results from all three Employer Audits show that over three-quarters of apprentices were men (see *Chart 4*), fewer than one in eight were black, Asian or minority-ethnic, and around two-thirds were under the age of 25. Fewer than one in six apprentices were from low-income families, although this data was based on a very limited number of employers. There was a better gender balance amongst graduates – up to a third were women – and a higher proportion were black, Asian or minority ethnic.

Chart 4 Inclusion & Social Mobility of 'Earn and Learn' Employees featured in the Audit



Source- The 5% Club Employer Audit

Quality of Employers’ ‘Earn and Learn’ Programmes

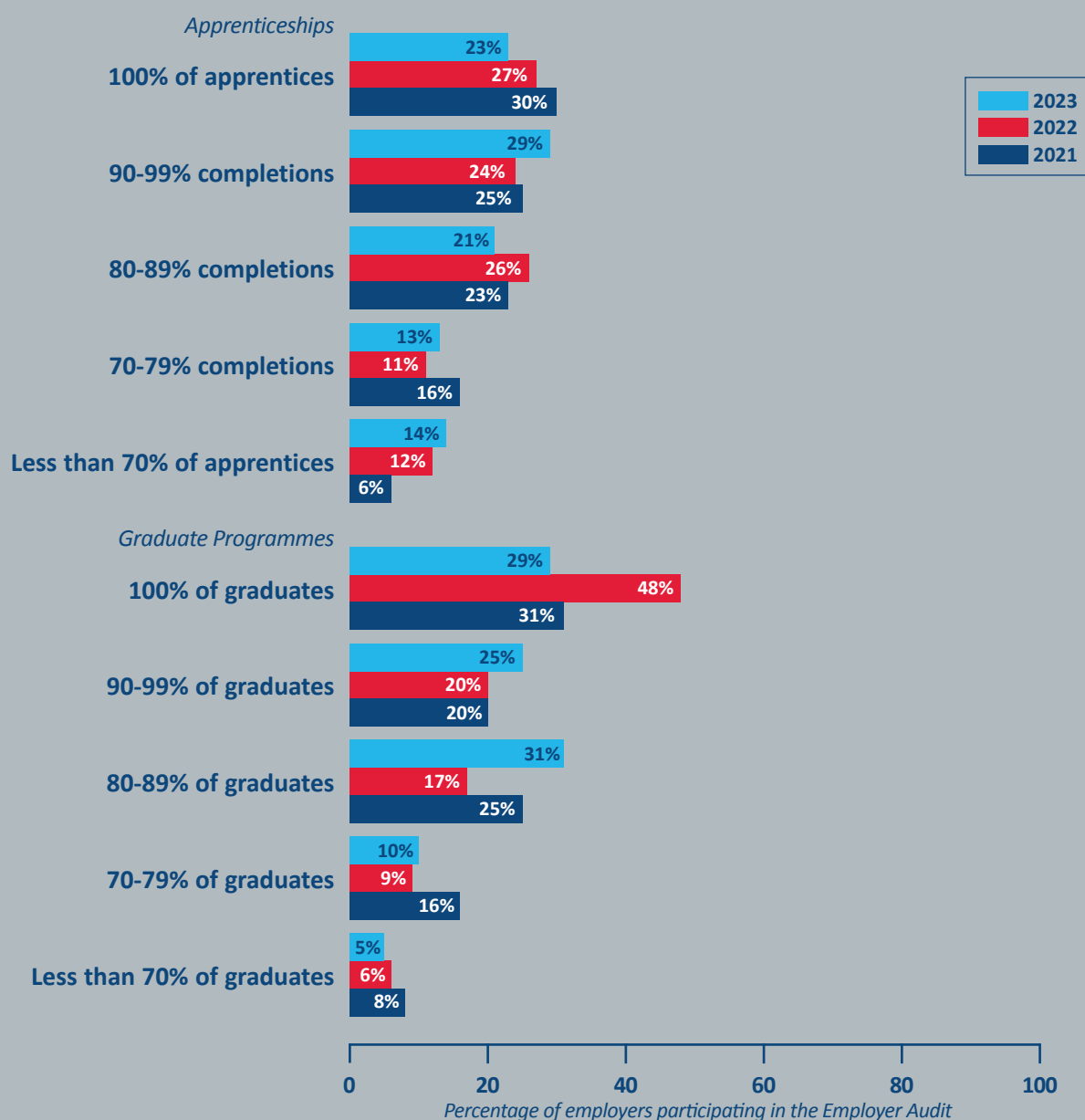
The penultimate section of **The 5% Club Employer Audit** examines the quality of the ‘earn and learn’ opportunities provided by employers participating in the research.

Employers were asked how they assured the quality of their apprenticeships, graduate programmes and degree course placements for university undergraduates. They were also asked about the percentage of apprentices and graduates who completed their training with the organisation, and then the percentage who progressed on to a permanent role within the organisation – either on another apprenticeship programme, further training or a full-time position.

The results show that the completion rates for apprenticeships have decreased a little over the past three years (see *Chart 5*), with fewer employers recording a 100% completion rate and more organisations reporting that less than 70% of their apprentices finish their apprenticeships.

Similarly, the number of graduates who complete their initial training & development programmes has also dropped – in 2022 over two-thirds of employers declared completion rates of at least 90%, compared with just over half of employers in the latest Employer Audit.

Chart 5 Completion Rates for ‘Earn and Learn’ Programmes at Employers in the Audit



Source- The 5% Club Employer Audit

Future Growth of Employers’ ‘Earn and Learn’ Opportunities

The final part of **The 5% Club Employer Audit** analyses employers’ latest plans for recruiting more apprentices and graduates in the future, as part of their continuing commitment to ‘earn and learn’ roles at their organisation.

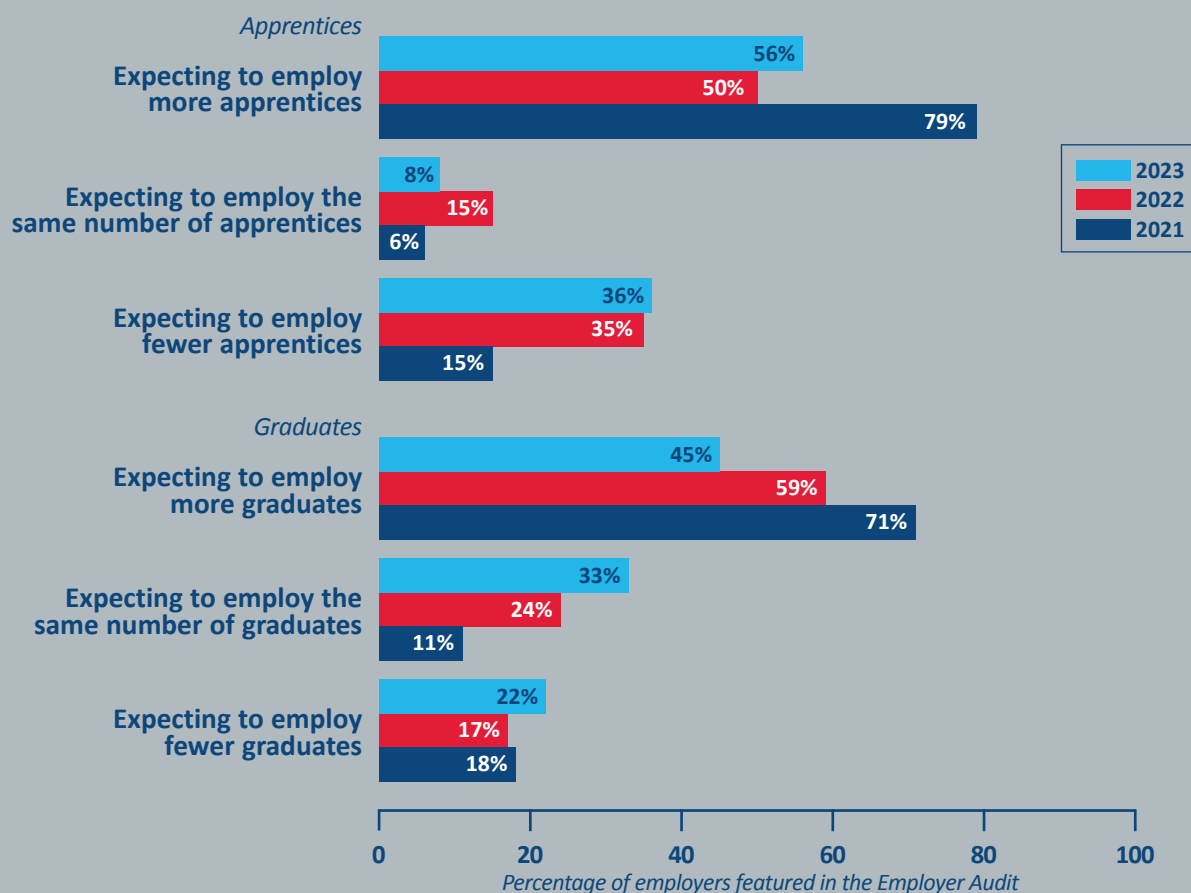
At many employers, recruitment of apprentices and graduates is often planned up to a year in advance. For example, applications for graduate programmes with September 2023 start dates typically opened in September 2022, with selection and assessment of candidates in January or February and job offers following shortly afterwards. This means that within the Employer Audit, the majority of employers are able to provide an accurate assessment of their likely recruitment in the year ahead.

The 2020-2021 recruitment year was dominated by the Coronavirus pandemic and because of the considerable economic uncertainty, many employers recruited fewer apprentices and graduates than usual during this period. As a result, the Employer Audit in 2021 reported that a large majority of employers expected to step-up their recruitment during 2021-2022, often to make up for under-recruiting in the previous recruitment round. Four-fifths of participating employers confirmed they intended to increase their apprenticeships in the year ahead (see *Chart 6*) and more than two-thirds believed they would take on more graduates in 2021-2022.

Twelve months on from these predictions, with all Coronavirus restrictions lifted and life returned to a ‘new normal’, employers anticipated more modest growth in their future recruitment of apprentices and graduates. Half of employers expected to employ more apprentices during 2022-2023 and three-fifths planned to increase their graduate recruitment.

At the time of the 2023 Employer Audit the outlook for recruitment seemed more cautious. Although over half of employers were planning to expand their apprenticeships in 2023-2024, just 45% of employers expected to recruit more graduates – the lowest proportion recorded so far by the Audit.

Chart 6 Outlook for Year Ahead for ‘Earn and Learn’ Programmes featured in the Audit



Source- The 5% Club Employer Audit

Table 7 The 5% Club Membership Awards to Larger Employers in 2021, 2022 and 2023

EMPLOYER	2023	2022	2021	EMPLOYER	2023	2022	2021
adi Group	Gold	Gold	Gold	Keltbray	Gold	-	-
AECOM	Platinum	Gold	Gold	Kids Inc Day Nursery	-	Gold	-
Aggregate Industries	Bronze	Bronze	-	Kier Group	Gold	Gold	Gold
Ainscough Crane Hire	Gold	Silver	Silver	Kilnbridge Construction Services	Platinum	Gold	Gold
Aldi	-	-	Bronze	Laing O'Rourke	Gold	Gold	-
American Express	-	-	Bronze	Leidos	Silver	Bronze	-
Amey	Gold	-	-	Leonardo	Gold	Gold	-
Aptus Utilities	Gold	-	-	Lidl	-	-	Bronze
B&Q	Silver	-	-	Lockheed Martin	Gold	Silver	Gold
Babington Business College	Gold	Silver	-	M Group Services	Silver	-	-
Bagnalls	Platinum	Gold	Gold	Marston Holdings	Silver	Bronze	-
Balfour Beatty	Gold	Gold	Gold	Mastek UK Ltd	-	-	Bronze
Bechtel	Gold	-	-	MBDA UK	Platinum	Gold	Gold
Bell Group	Platinum	Gold	Gold	McLaughlin & Harvey	Platinum	Gold	Gold
Bellway Homes	Gold	Gold	Gold	MGL Group	Gold	Gold	-
Berkeley Group	Gold	Gold	-	Ministry of Defence	Platinum	Gold	Gold
Bethell Group	Platinum	Gold	Gold	Morgan Sindall Infrastructure	Gold	Gold	Gold
Birmingham City Council	-	-	Bronze	Morris & Spottiswood	-	Gold	Gold
Boeing UK	Silver	-	-	Mott MacDonald	Platinum	Gold	Gold
Breedon Group	Silver	Silver	-	Network Rail	Silver	Silver	-
Briggs & Forrester Group	-	Gold	-	NHS Supply Chain	Silver	-	-
Bromford	Silver	-	-	Octavius Infrastructure Limited	Gold	-	-
BT	-	-	Gold	Ogilvie Construction	-	Gold	-
Cambridgeshire County Council	Silver	-	-	Paragon Banking Group	Gold	-	-
Cappgemini	Gold	Gold	-	Peel Ports Group	Silver	-	-
Capita	Bronze	Bronze	-	Pell Frischmann	Gold	-	-
Centrica	Bronze	-	-	Pennon Group	Gold	Gold	-
CGI	Gold	Gold	Gold	Persimmon Homes	Gold	Gold	-
CldN Ports	Gold	-	-	Places for People	Silver	-	-
Coca-Cola Europacific Partners	Gold	Silver	Silver	PwC	Platinum	Gold	Gold
Costain	Platinum	Gold	Gold	QA	Gold	Gold	Gold
Coyle Personnel Ltd	Gold	-	-	QinetiQ	Gold	-	Silver
CPI (Centre for Process Innovation)	Platinum	Gold	Gold	R G Carter	Gold	Gold	-
Crest Nicholson	Gold	Silver	-	Ramboll UK	Gold	Gold	-
CrossCountry	Gold	-	-	Redrow Homes	Platinum	Gold	Gold
Croudace Homes	Gold	Gold	-	Ringway Jacobs	Gold	Gold	-
Crown Worldwide Group	Silver	-	-	RS Group	Gold	Gold	Gold
Currie & Brown	Gold	Gold	-	Schneider Electric	-	-	Gold
Danny Sullivan Group	Bronze	-	-	SE Trains Ltd	Gold	Gold	-
Department for Education	Gold	Gold	-	Seddon Construction	Platinum	Gold	Gold
Deutsche Bank	-	-	Bronze	Serco	Silver	-	-
Digital Catapult	Gold	-	-	Severfield	Gold	Gold	-
Eurovia UK	-	Gold	Gold	Shepley Group	Gold	-	-
FM Conway	Gold	-	-	Siemens Energy	Gold	Gold	-
Forterra	-	Bronze	-	Siemens Mobility	Gold	-	-
Galliford Try	Platinum	Gold	Gold	Siemens plc	Gold	Gold	Gold
Gemini Accident Repair Centres	Platinum	Gold	Gold	Speedy Services	Silver	-	-
Genuit Group	Silver	Silver	Silver	SSEN Transmission	Gold	Gold	-
GMI Construction Group PLC	Gold	-	-	Stagecoach	Gold	Gold	Silver
Graham Group	Platinum	Gold	Gold	Sunbelt Rentals UK	Bronze	Bronze	-
Grant Thornton UK LLP	Gold	-	-	Swift Group Ltd	Gold	-	-
GSK	-	Gold	Gold	Tara Group	Gold	Gold	-
Heidelberg Materials	Gold	Gold	Gold	Tarmac	Gold	Gold	Silver
High Speed Two (HS2)	Gold	Gold	Gold	Thames Water	Silver	Silver	Silver
Hill Group	Platinum	Gold	Gold	The Co-op	Bronze	-	-
Ipsium Utilities LTD	Gold	-	-	The Encon Group	Bronze	-	-
ISG Ltd	Gold	Gold	-	Tilbury Douglas	Gold	-	-
ISS	Bronze	Bronze	-	Transport for Wales	Gold	-	-
J McCann & Co	-	Silver	Gold	TransUnion International UK	-	Silver	Silver
J. Murphy & Sons	Gold	Gold	-	VINCI Construction	Silver	Gold	-
Jackson Civil Engineering	Gold	Gold	-	Vistry Group	Gold	-	-
JN Bentley	Gold	Gold	-	William Hare	Platinum	Gold	Gold
John Sisk & Son	Gold	Gold	Gold	Willmott Dixon	Gold	Gold	-
K&T Heating	Gold	-	-	Womble Bond Dickinson	Gold	Gold	Gold
KAEFER	Gold	Gold	-	WSP	Gold	Gold	-
Keepmoat Homes	Gold	Gold	Gold				

Source- The 5% Club Employer Audit

Table 8 The 5% Club Membership Awards to SME Employers in 2021, 2022 and 2023

EMPLOYER	2023	2022	2021	EMPLOYER	2023	2022	2021
Accuracy UK Ltd	Gold	Gold	-	John Wainwright & Co Ltd	Silver	-	-
AD Construction Group	Gold	Gold	-	Karndeane Designflooring	Gold	-	-
Alexander Battery Technologies	Gold	Silver	-	KCE FM Ltd	Gold	Gold	-
Amplicon	Gold	-	-	Kingerlee Ltd	Gold	Gold	-
Auger Site Investigations	Gold	Gold	-	Kohler Uninterruptable Power	Gold	Gold	Silver
Baltic Apprenticeships	-	-	Gold	Langstone Construction Group Ltd	Gold	-	-
Barkers Engineering	Gold	-	-	Lincad	Silver	-	-
Beagle	Gold	-	-	Livingston Building Services Ltd	Gold	-	-
Berthon Boat Company Ltd	Gold	Gold	-	LocatED	Platinum	Gold	Gold
BOOM Construction Ltd	Gold	-	-	Malakoff Ltd	Gold	Gold	-
Camilleri Construction Ltd	Platinum	Gold	Gold	MCFT	Platinum	Gold	Gold
CEMCOR	Gold	-	-	Mivan Ltd	Gold	-	-
chapmanbdsp	Gold	Gold	-	MJ Abbott Ltd	Gold	Gold	-
Clark Contracts Ltd	Gold	-	-	Morgan Lovell	Gold	-	-
Clive Owen LLP	Gold	Gold	-	Morris & Spottiswood Ltd	Platinum	-	-
Commercial Property Maintenance Services	Gold	-	Gold	Multipave NW Ltd	Gold	-	-
Concurrent Technologies plc	Gold	Silver	-	Ogilvie Construction Limited	Silver	-	-
Coptrz Ltd	Gold	-	-	One Stop Hire	Gold	-	-
Coyle Personnel Ltd	-	Silver	Gold	Optyma Security Systems	Gold	-	-
CR Civil Engineering Ltd	Platinum	Gold	Gold	Pacific Building	Gold	Gold	-
CR Reynolds Ltd	Gold	Gold	-	PCE Automation Ltd	Gold	Gold	-
CWG Group Ltd	Gold	-	-	Price Building Services Ltd	Gold	-	-
D2 Rail & Civils Ltd	Gold	-	-	Prism Power Ltd	Gold	Gold	-
Dale Power Solutions Ltd	-	-	Gold	Quinn London Ltd	-	Gold	-
Danaher and Walsh Ltd	Gold	-	-	Resonate Group Limited	Gold	-	-
Dynamic FM & AT Nolan Building Contractors	Gold	-	Gold	RG Group	-	Gold	-
Ford Aerospace	Gold	-	-	Rose Builders	Gold	Gold	-
Hanham Secure Health	-	Gold	Gold	Slipstream Engineering	Gold	-	-
Harniss	Gold	-	-	Smart Tec Solutions Ltd	Gold	Gold	-
Harniss Contracting Ltd	-	Gold	-	Southbourn Rubber	Gold	-	-
Hertfordshire Building Control	Gold	Gold	-	SPV Group	Platinum	Gold	Gold
Highfield Professional Solutions	Platinum	Gold	Gold	SRC UK Ltd	Gold	Gold	-
Hill & Smith Infrastructure Limited	Silver	-	-	Swiftool Precision Engineering Ltd	-	Gold	-
Horstman Defence Systems Limited	Gold	Gold	-	Sycamore Process Engineering Ltd	-	Gold	-
Hungry Caterpillar Day Nurseries	Gold	Gold	-	Tenet Consultants	Gold	Gold	-
Hyde	Gold	-	-	Thomas Johnstone Ltd	Gold	-	-
Industrial and Marine Hydraulics Ltd	Gold	-	-	Thomas Sinden Ltd	Platinum	Gold	Gold
Introba Consulting Limited	Gold	-	-	VRS Solutions Group	-	Bronze	-
J Browne	Silver	-	-	Warren Services	-	-	Gold
J McCann & Co Limited	Gold	-	-	WG Jones	Gold	-	-
J T Mackley & Co Ltd	Platinum	Gold	Gold	Whitehead Building Services	Platinum	Gold	Gold
Jamieson Contracting NW Ltd	-	Gold	-	Wilson & Scott (Highways) Ltd	Gold	Gold	-
JJ Churchill Ltd	Gold	-	Gold	Woodford Heating and Energy Ltd	Platinum	Gold	Gold

Source- The 5% Club Employer Audit

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