Fitzpatrick Associates

Irish National Employer Survey

Final Report

January 2019

Contents

Executive Summary

The National Employer Survey for 2018 provides valuable information on employer activities and views on the subject of recruitment from the higher education (HE) and further education and training (FET) sectors.

The survey was conducted by means of a CATI telephone survey of a representative sample of 760 employers in Ireland (completed responses), with fieldwork conducted from June-July 2018. It looked at:

- employers' recruitment activities in the past 24 months (including their recruitment of HE and FET graduates);
- barriers to graduate recruitment;
- levels of satisfaction with HE and FET graduates;
- emerging skills needs;
- levels of collaboration with HE/FET institutions;
- support for continuing professional development.

For the purposes of the survey, a graduate was defined as someone who has been recruited within the past 24 months and who has also completed their HE or FET qualification within the past 24 months.

The key findings of the survey show recruitment of both HE and FET graduates across a range of disciplines, with the most commonly cited recruitment areas, for example, including business and law, computing, engineering, services, health and welfare, and humanities and arts. Satisfaction levels with both HE and FET graduates are also very high, and this is generally consistent across a range of different workplace and personal attributes.

Just over one-fifth of employers suggest that they may have further HE graduate skills needs in the coming years, with nearly a quarter of employers suggesting that they may have FET skills needs. Typically, the key skills needs identified include computer skills, business and management skills, engineering skills, marketing skills and apprenticeships. Where employers have not engaged in recruitment in the past 24 months, however, this has been chiefly driven by a lack of vacancies being available, with lack of suitable candidates and salary expectations also being cited as barriers to recruitment to a much lesser extent.

Stated levels of collaboration between employers both HE and FET institutions are quite high, with most collaborations cited being of a work-oriented nature, e.g. work placements, upskilling and apprenticeships. More than 85% of employers suggest that they support staff to engage in continuing professional development, and about 75% of employers claim to provide in-company training for continuing professional development.

Further elaboration on the key findings of the survey are provided in the section that follows and in the main body of the report.

Key Findings

Incidence of Staff Recruitment

- The National Employer Survey for 2018 shows that about three-quarters of all employers in Ireland have recruited any type of staff in the last 24 months. Incidence of recruitment is noticeably higher among employers with 10 or more employees (89%), with recruitment also being above average among services sector employers (76%) and Dublin-based employers (79%).

- About one-third of all employers in Ireland have hired HE graduates in the past 24 months, while about one-quarter of all employers have hired FET graduates. Some 21% of employers have hired HE graduates only, 13% have hired FET graduates only, while 12% have hired both HE and FET graduates.

- When considering only those employers that have recruited staff in the past 24 months, meanwhile, some 45% have hired HE graduates, 34% have hired FET graduates, while 37% have hired neither HE nor FET graduates.

- In relative terms, the cohort of employers hiring HE graduates includes more large employers, more foreign-owned employers, more service sector employers and more Dublin-based employers.

- HE hiring employers, meanwhile, are also more likely than their FET hiring counterparts to be active in such sectors as professional, scientific and technical activities, information and communication, education[1], administrative and support service activities, and manufacturing.

- Employers hiring FET graduates are more likely to be involved in sectors such as construction, wholesale and retail trade, human health and social work activities[2], and transportation and storage.

HE and FET Graduate Profiles

- A large majority of both HE and FET graduates that were recruited in the past 24 months were hired from inside Ireland.

- About one-third of employers hiring HE graduates from within Ireland hired business and law graduates, with 20% hiring engineering graduates, 18% hiring computing graduates and 18% hiring humanities and arts graduates. In general, it is also notable that foreign-owned firms, larger firms and manufacturing firms appear more likely than others to hire graduates from science, technology, mathematics and engineering (STEM) disciplines.

- About one-third of employers hiring HE graduates from outside Ireland, on the other hand, also hired business and law graduates. However, recruitment of HE graduates from outside Ireland also appears to be slightly more skewed towards STEM disciplines, with nearly a quarter of relevant employers hiring computing graduates, 18% hiring science and mathematics graduates and 15% hiring engineering graduates.

[1] It should be noted that public sector organisations were not included in the survey.
[2] Again, it should be noted that the survey excluded public sector organisations.

- Meanwhile, 28% of employers hiring FET graduates from within Ireland hired business and law graduates, with 21% hiring services graduates, 20% hiring health and welfare graduates and 15% hiring engineering graduates.
- A similar 28% of employers hiring FET graduates from outside Ireland also hired business and law graduates. Some 23% of employers hired engineering graduates, 19% hired services graduates, 18% hired health and welfare graduates, and 14% hired humanities and arts graduates.

Overall Satisfaction with Graduates

- Employers that have hired either HE or FET graduates in the past 24 months are, in general, very satisfied with graduates across a range of workplace and personal attributes.
- In this regard, for example, 86% of employers have indicated that they are generally happy with the quality of HE graduates, while 84% of employers have indicated that they are happy with the quality of FET graduates (see chart below).

Share of Employers Being "Happy" with Quality of HE/FET Graduates
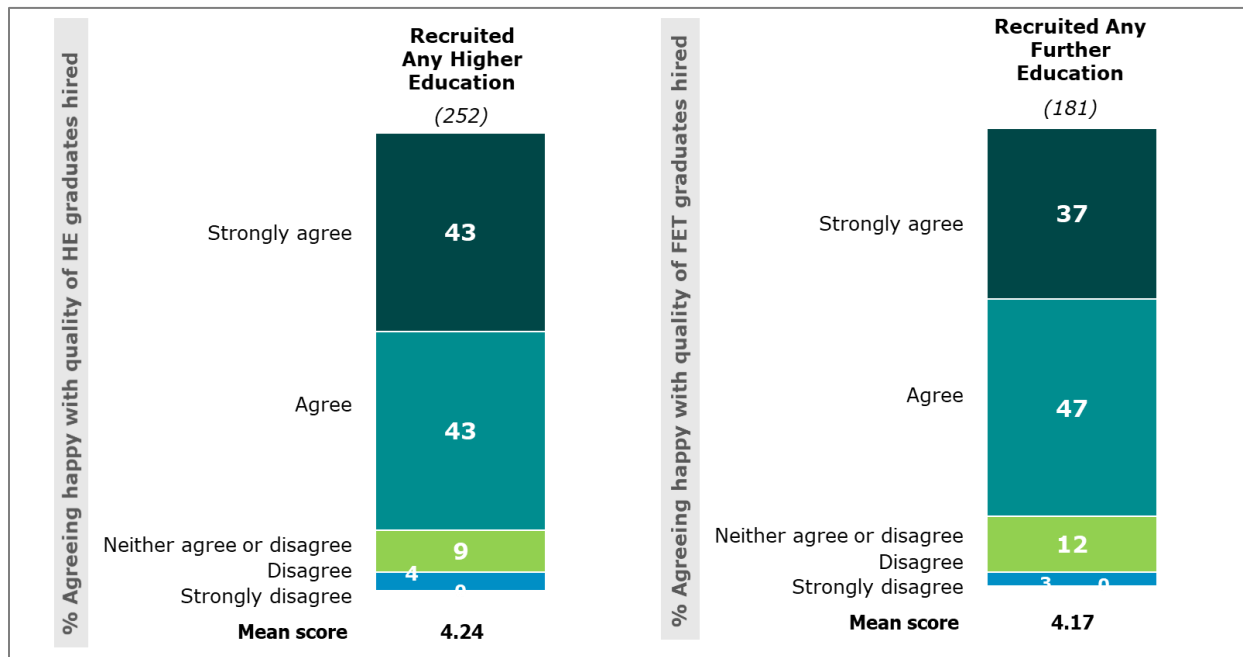
Q.15a I am happy with the quality of Irish higher education graduates recruited to my company in the last 24 months

Q.15b I am happy with the quality of Irish higher education graduates recruited to my company in the last 24 months

- Across pre-defined workplace attributes, meanwhile, at least 80% of employers suggested that they were satisfied with both HE and FET graduates in terms of; application of technical knowledge; computer and technical literacy; verbal and written

communication skills; numeracy, processing and data interpretation skills; ability to work effectively, both on their own or with others; and attention to detail.

- Employer satisfaction with graduates' levels of commercial awareness, entrepreneurial skills and foreign language capability, on the other hand, were at 75% or less.

- For all pre-defined personal attributes, moreover, satisfaction levels for both HE and FET graduates were at levels of about 80% or higher. This included satisfaction with graduates in terms of: professionalism and work ethic; reliability; positive attitude; ethical and social awareness; adaptability and flexibility; and ability to cope with work pressure.

- Satisfaction with graduates, in general, also shows relatively little variation by employer type, sector or size. Foreign-owned firms' satisfaction with graduates' foreign language capability, however, is noticeably lower than average (at 55% for those employing HE graduates and 44% for those employing FET graduates)[3].

Graduate Skills Needs

- About 22% of all employers in Ireland have indicated that there are HE graduate skills needs that they may require now or in the next 3-5 years, with a similar proportion (23%) indicating a potential need for FET graduate skills within the same timeframe.

- Moreover, HE graduate skills needs are identified in a greater proportion of foreign-owned employers (28%) and medium-sized or large employers (28% for those with 50-250 employees, 30% for those with more than 250 employees). FET graduate skills needs, on the other hand, are more likely to be found among manufacturing firms (26%) and medium-sized employers (26%).

- For HE graduates, the most frequently cited skills needs were computer literacy skills – incorporating IT, software, web and graphic design, and digital marketing skills – business acumen/management skills, engineering skills, and accounting and marketing skills. For FET graduates, the most frequently cited skills needs were computer literacy skills, apprentice skills, business and project management skills and marketing-related skills.

Graduate Recruitment Barriers

- The most common reason cited among employers in Ireland for not recruiting either HE or FET graduates in the past 24 months was a lack of vacancies. Among all employers not recruiting HE graduates, for example, 46% had no vacancies available within the organisation during the period, while 42% had no vacancies at HE graduate level. For employers not recruiting FET graduates, meanwhile, 44% had no vacancies within the organisation during the period, while 38% had no vacancies at FET graduate level.

- At the same time, however, a lack of availability of suitable graduates was cited as a barrier to recruitment by 8% of employers not hiring HE graduates and by 10% of employers not hiring FET graduates. Furthermore, 27% of large employers (250+ employees) also cited a lack of suitable graduates as a barrier to HE graduate recruitment, though sample size in this case was small, while 18% of foreign-owned employers and

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[3] In this case, it is also possible that Irish-owned companies' higher rating for foreign language capability might reflect a lesser need for such skills in their businesses, and therefore less consideration of the issue, rather than being a true critical assessment of skills in this area.

24% of medium-sized employers (50-250 employees) cited a lack of suitable graduates as a barrier to FET graduate recruitment.

- Lastly, salary expectations were cited as a barrier to recruitment by 5% of employers not hiring HE graduates and by 6% of employers not hiring FET graduates. However, for both HE graduates and FET graduates, this reason was much less cited by foreign-owned employers and large employers.
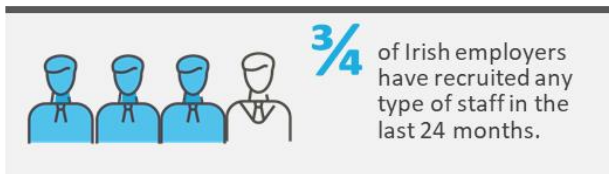
Collaboration and Continuing Professional Development

- Stated levels of collaboration between employers and both HE and FET institutions are quite high, with most collaborations cited being of a work-oriented nature. Some 31% of employers are involved in work placement collaborations with HE institutions, for example, with 24% collaborating on the upskilling of staff and 19% collaborating on apprenticeships. Another 13% collaborate on community engagement or outreach activities. Collaborations with HE institutions involving R&D, on the other hand, are cited by 9% of employers, with 7% collaborating on the use of equipment and facilities and 5% collaborating on course design.

- Meanwhile, 27% of employers are involved in work placement collaborations with FET institutions, with 22% collaborating on the upskilling of staff and 20% collaborating on apprenticeships. Another 10% collaborate on community engagement or outreach activities. Collaborations with FET institutions involving R&D, however, are cited by 5% of employers, as are collaborations on the use of equipment and facilities and course design.

- As might be expected, employers that hire HE and FET graduates are also more likely to collaborate with HE and FET institutions. Furthermore, these employers express high levels of satisfaction with their collaborations with such institutions.

- More than 85% of employers suggest that they support staff to engage in continuing professional development, with the incidence of this somewhat higher among employers with more than 50 employees (93%), multinational firms (91%) and employers in Dublin (91%).

- About 75% of employers claim to provide in-company training for continuing professional development. Some 46% claim to fully fund the cost of professional development, another 38% part-fund the cost of professional development, while 35% provide paid study leave. In general, these levels of support are also slightly higher among employers that have recruited HE or FET graduates in the past 24 months.

Fitzpatrick Associates
ECONOMIC CONSULTANTS

B&A

2018 IRISH NATIONAL EMPLOYER SURVEY

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

¾ of Irish employers have recruited any type of staff in the last 24 months.

46% of all employers have hired either HE or FET graduates.

12% of Irish employer organisations hired both HE and FET graduates in the last 24 months.

21% hired **only** HE graduates

13% hired **only** FET graduates

Key employer types within Ireland FETs recruited for:

28% Business & law

21% Services/ hospitality

20% Health & welfare

Key employer types within Ireland HEs recruited for:

34% Business & law

21% Engineering

18% computing

HE graduates
Of all employers hiring any staff in the last 24 months, HE graduates hire is highest amongst:

Multinational companies **(52%)**
Service Sector organisations **(49%)**
Dublin-based Companies **(54%)**

FET graduates
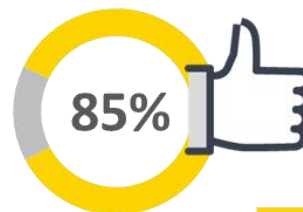Past 24 month employer hire of FET graduates is highest amongst:

Indigenous companies **(35%)**
Manufacturing organisations **(37%)**
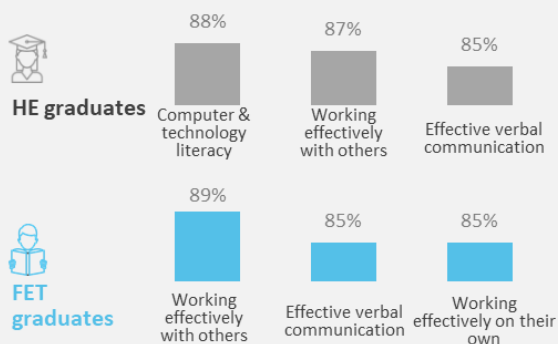Companies outside Dublin **(37%)**

85% 85% of Irish employers are happy with the quality of HE and FET graduates that they have recruited in the last 24 months.

86% HE (Higher Education Authority) graduates

84% FET (Further Education and Training System) graduates

HE and FET Graduates **workplace attributes** satisfaction levels are highest for:

HE graduates

- 88% Computer & technology literacy
- 87% Working effectively with others
- 85% Effective verbal communication

FET graduates

- 89% Working effectively with others
- 85% Effective verbal communication
- 85% Working effectively on their own

HE and FET Graduates **personal attributes** satisfaction levels are highest for:

HE graduates

- 87% Professionalism & work ethic
- 86% Reliability

FET graduates

- 87% Positive attitude
- 87% Reliability

22% of Irish employer indicate that they feel there are at least some HE skills gaps, with a similar proportion (23%) indicating the same of existing FET skills available

The most frequently identified HE and FET gaps required by companies were computer literacy – incorporating IT, software, web and graphic design, and digital marketing.

Business acumen/management skills are a short-term need for **HE graduates** in particular.

9% of all employers believe computer & digital skills need to be developed within the **HE** sector.

6% Of all employers feel **FET** graduates' computer skills need to be developed.

Graduate recruitment barriers

Main reasons for not recruiting either HE or FET graduates in the last 24 months include:

	HE graduates	FET graduates
No vacancies at graduate level	42%	38%
No vacancies within the organisation	46%	44%
Lack of availability of suitable graduates	8%	10%
Salary expectations of graduates	5%	6%
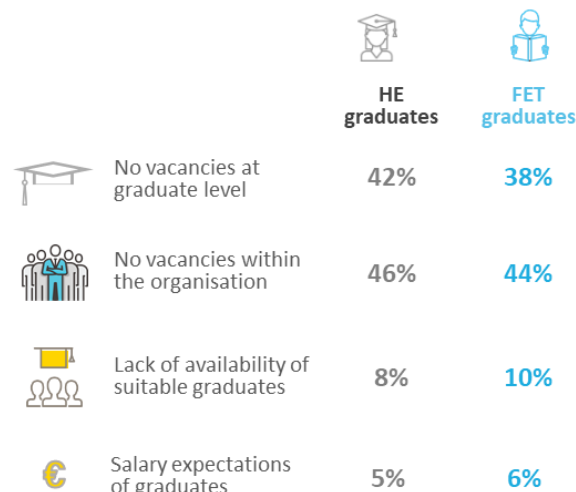
Collaboration and staff development

Claimed levels of collaboration with both HE and FET institutions are quite high, especially with regard to work placements, upskilling and apprenticeships.

	HE graduates	FET graduates
Work placement	31%	27%
Upskilling of staff	24%	22%
Apprenticeship	19%	20%
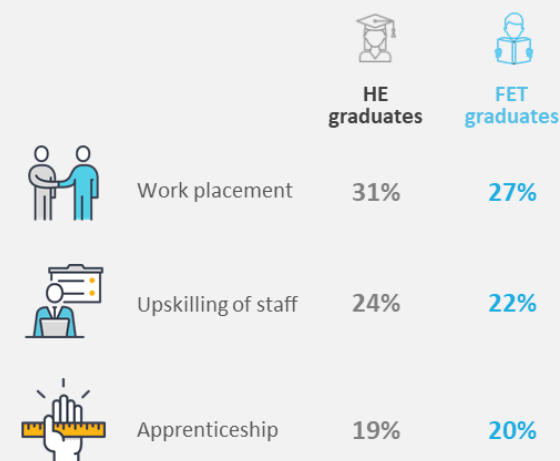
75% Of companies who claim to support their staff in professional development, upskilling etc., provide in-company training for such purposes.

2018 IRISH NATIONAL EMPLOYER SURVEY *KEY HIGHLIGHTS*

1. Introduction

1.1 Survey Background

Context

Strong engagement between further/higher education and enterprise has the potential to play a vital role in enhancing Ireland's economic competitiveness, and the education and training system is therefore a core part of the enterprise, development and innovation infrastructure in Ireland.

In this regard, both the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 and the Further Education and Training Strategy 2014-2019 present a vision of further and higher education that can successfully meet the many economic and social challenges facing Ireland over the coming decades. Both documents envisage the provision of a high-quality learning experience, leading to better outcomes for all those who engage with education through excellence in teaching and learning, research, scholarship and engagement with wider society as appropriate.

One of the strategic goals of the Further Education and Training Strategy 2014-2019, for example, is to develop skills for the economy by addressing current and future needs of learners, jobseekers, employers and employees, thereby contributing to national economic development. A key objective in meeting this goal, moreover, is to install an appropriate advisory infrastructure to ensure that the relevant FET provision is informed directly by employers and reflects/responds to emerging labour market challenges.

The National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030, meanwhile, suggests that innovation must be the driving force behind employer-academic engagement. This includes innovation in teaching, learning and research from higher education, and innovation in taking advantage of learning opportunities from the business community. It further suggests activities that business-academic partnerships could be progressed, ranging from knowledge transfer and the creation of joint research projects, to the development and provision of education and training for employees, and problem-solving and consulting services. Added to this, employer-academic partnership could also facilitate high-quality internships and work-placements for students, and could be a particularly useful means of enabling employer feedback on graduate employability and in facilitating employer input into curriculum design and development as well as course supply.

Furthermore, these goals are also echoed in the Department of Education and Skill's Strategy Statement and Action Plan for Education 2016-2019. In particular, Goal 4 of the Action Plan seeks to build stronger bridges between education and the wider community, and it the context of engagement with employers, it strives to enhance the capacity to meet national and regional skill needs through such mechanisms as the National Skills Council and the Regional Skills Fora.

National Employer Survey

All three key strategies and plans – the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030, the Further Education and Training Strategy 2014-2019 and the Action Plan for Education 2016-2019 – recommend that a National Employer Survey should be conducted on a regular basis in order to inform policy and programme development.

Fitzpatrick Associates, in conjunction with Behaviour and Attitudes (B&A), was therefore commissioned to conduct a telephone survey of employers/enterprises, which would gather a range of information on their views regarding further and higher education outcomes, which will then feed into the overall national strategy. The survey has been carried out on behalf of a number of key agencies in the higher and further education sectors, including:

- the Higher Education Authority (the national agency with responsibility for the effective governance and regulation of higher institutions and the higher education system);
- Solas (the national agency responsible for further education and training provision in Ireland);
- the Department of Education and Skills;
- Quality and Qualifications Ireland (the national agency responsible for promoting quality and accountability in education and training services in Ireland).

The 2018 survey is the third such survey to be carried out to date, following previous surveys conducted in 2013 and 2015.

1.2 Survey Objectives

Information on the experience of employers regarding employee training and related skills issues is crucial to aid Government in framing policy that supports the sector. In this context, the HEA has summarised the research objectives for this survey as being to gather reliable employer data in relation to:

- academic disciplines/field of education and training that employers have recruited from in the past 24 month24 months, both from within Ireland and outside of Ireland;

- why employers have not recruited further or higher education graduates in the past 24 months (if this is the case);

- satisfaction levels with further and higher education graduates across a range of workplace attributes;

- satisfaction levels with further and higher education graduates across a range of personal attributes;

- the skills employers feel will be required by the organisation/sector over the coming period (3-5 years), which are not available presently;

- views and information in relation to existing collaboration between the enterprise and education sectors;

- staff development via continuous professional development;

- overall quality of recent further and higher education graduates.

1.3   Methodology Overview

The survey was conducted by way of a CATI telephone survey, amongst a representative sample of enterprises/businesses domiciled in Ireland, by way of a pre-agreed questionnaire designed for the project by the HEA, Solas, the Department of Education and Skills and QQI.

Fieldwork for the survey was conducted through the B&A CATI Unit, which operates from call centres in Milltown House, Dublin and Carndonagh, Co. Donegal.

A sample of 760 businesses, excluding public sector organisations was surveyed, yielding a total dataset that can be deemed to be accurate to within +/-3.7 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

In addition, in adopting a disproportionate sampling approach by company size – i.e. across micro companies (1-9 employees), small companies (10-49 employees), medium companies (50-249 employees) and large companies (250+ employees) – we are in a position to analyse the survey data by a range of sub-sample groupings that include company size (as described), region (Dublin, Outside Dublin), broad industry sector and company ownership (indigenous or foreign owned).

It should also be noted that the current survey has significant differences, in terms of methodology and design, when compared to previous versions of the National Employer Survey, and that these differences were implemented so as to ensure that correct and adequate numbers of organisations employing both HE and FET graduates were surveyed.

 In particular:

- both the methodology used this time (CATI) and the way the survey sample was sourced are very different to the methodology and sample selection used in previous surveys;
- the questionnaire used this time was also much shorter than the questionnaire used for previous surveys, so some of the issues covered in previous surveys were not incorporated into the current survey.

For the purposes of this survey, a graduate is someone who has been recruited to the organisation within the last 24 months and who has also completed their qualification within the last 24 months.

Graduates from Higher Education (HE) and Further Education and Training (FET)

The term graduate includes persons qualifying from higher education institutions (e.g. Universities and Institutes of Technology) and also persons qualifying from further education and training where a wide range of programmes in terms of levels of and fields of study to a diverse group of learners are provided (e.g. National Craft Certificates for qualified apprenticeships (e.g. plumber, electrician, etc.). FETAC[3] qualifications (e.g. childcare, hairdressing, etc.) specific industry related qualifications (e.g. Microsoft).

Key Reporting Classifications

The questionnaire was designed to provide information on the types of graduates hired (i.e. Higher Education or Further Education) by companies across different sectors as well as provide information on the following key reporting classifications.

The primary analysis variables used in this report are:

- Company Ownership (indigenous or Foreign)
- Company type (manufacturing or Service)
- Size of company (Small: less than 50 Employees; Medium: 51 – 250 employees and Large: 251+ employees

1.4 Survey Sample Leads

Survey sample leads were drawn from the "gold standard" Bill Moss and Associates database of companies. The contacts provided were classified by sector, sub sector, number of employees and region. Indigenous vs foreign-owned dichotomies "fell out" in their natural proportions through the sampling frame.

A contact list of 8,936 companies was initially ordered from Bill Moss and Associates based on sector, together with specifications on the company location and company size.

Using these characteristics, B&A generated quota controls for company size, sector and region based on the most recently available Central Statistics Office (CSO) statistics for businesses in Ireland.

1.5 Business Sector Sample Control

To ensure representivity across business sector, the business sample was structured to be representative across NACE codes. NACE is the European statistical classification of economic activities, and it provides a reference framework for the production and dissemination of statistics related to economic activities. Statistics produced on the basis of NACE are comparable at European level and, in general, at world level in line with the United Nations' International Standard Industrial Classification of Economic Activities (ISIC).

The table below sets out the current distribution of Irish companies by NACE industry code:

NACE Rev 2 by Activity (Excluding Activities of Holding Companies)	Sampling
A AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHING	1%
C MANUFACTURING	6%
D ELECTRICITY, GAS, STEAM AND AIR CONDITIONING SUPPLY	0.20%
E WATER SUPPLY, SEWERAGE, WASTE MANAGEMENT AND REMEDIATION ACTIVITIES	0.40%
F CONSTRUCTION	20%
G WHOLESALE AND RETAIL TRADE, REPAIR OF MOTOR VEHICLES AND MOTORCYCLES	19%
H TRANSPORTATION AND STORAGE	10%
I ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD SERVICE ACTIVITIES	7%
J INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION	6%
K FINANCIAL AND INSURANCE ACTIVITIES (Excluding Activities of Holding Companies (K-642))	3%
L REAL ESTATE ACTIVITIES (L -6810)	5%
M PROFESSIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES	16%
N ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT SERVICE ACTIVITIES	6%
Total	**100%**

1.6   Achieved Sample

A total of 8,936 initial leads was randomly selected from the Bill Moss and Associates database.

Some 6,986 of these leads were contacted, with a final total sample of 760 companies surveyed, very much in line with the targeted sample of 750 employer organisations.

Fieldwork was conducted over the period 4th June - 11th July 2018, and the average interview length was 12.52 minutes. Of the 6,986 organisations contacted, 2,180 declined to complete the survey, 1,768 registered an engaged dial tone or went straight to voicemail, 1,587 requested that the interviewer calls back at another time, 497 did not fit any of the quotas required, 194 were no longer trading and 760 completed the survey.

The counts described in the previous paragraph represent the final call outcome upon completion of the project for each sample item. The 1,587 requests for call back would in most cases not be from the respondent we were looking to interview, rather it would more often be a general request from a receptionist or gatekeeper to try again another time.

While many of these call-back requests would be considered in effect to be soft refusals, B&A would nonetheless have continued to call back to attempt to convert these businesses.

1.7   Report Structure

The remaining sections of the report cover a range of topics as follows:

- Section 2 contains the key points from the study.
- Section 3 reviews the incidence of staff recruitment among employers over the past 24 months;
- Section 4 looks at the profile of higher education and further education graduates and employers;
- Section 5 examines employers' satisfaction levels with higher education and further education graduates;
- Section 6 provides insights on employers' unmet skills needs for higher education and further education graduates;
- Section 7 examines "barriers" to recruitment of higher education and further education graduates;
- Section 8 looks at collaboration between employers and education institutions, and employer engagement in continuing professional development;

2. Staff Recruitment Incidence

Figure 1 Incidence of Staff Recruitment Among Employers in the Past 24 Months

Sample size: All employer organisations – 760

76% service companies
79% Dublin
89% 10+ employees

YES 74%
No 26%

■ Yes ■ No
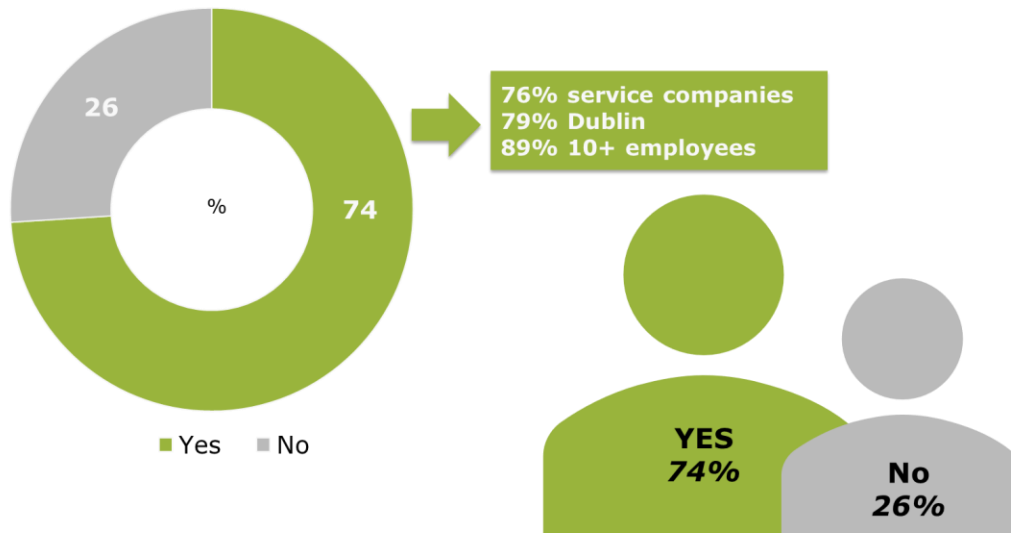
Q1. Have you recruited staff to your workforce over the last 24 months?

Figure 1 above shows the proportion of employers that have recruited any type of staff over the past 24 months, and is based on the total sample of 760 employer organisations surveyed. It suggests that just under three-quarters of all employers in Ireland have recruited any type of staff to their workforce in 24-month period prior to being interviewed.

Incidence of recruitment is slightly higher than average amongst service sector companies (76%) and companies based in Dublin (79%), and noticeably higher for companies with 10 or more employees (89%).

Figure 2 Share of Employer Organisations Hiring HE and/or FET Graduates in Past 24 Months
Sample size: All employer organisations – 760

ANY	Any Higher Education	33%
	Any Further Education	25%
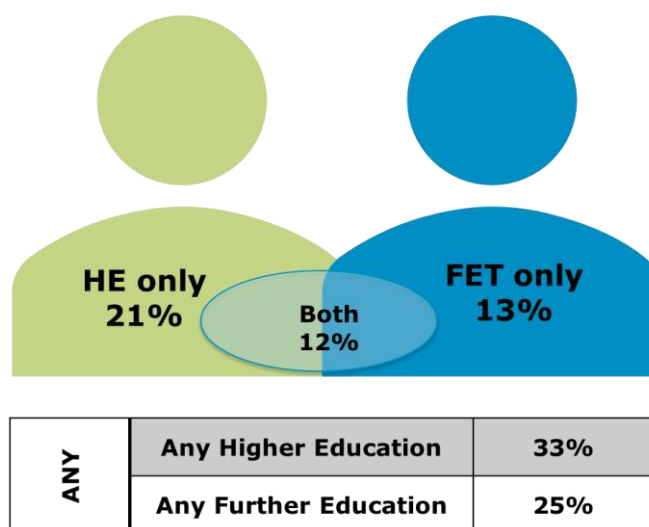
Q1. Have you recruited staff to your workforce over the last 24 months?
Q.3_2 Please enter the number of HE graduates that you recruited over the last 24 months?
Q.3_3 Please enter the number of FET graduates that you recruited over the last 24 months?

Figure 2 is again based on all employer organisations surveyed, and shows the share of employer organisations hiring higher education (HE) and/or further education (FET) graduates in the last 24 months. It shows that one-third of all employer organisations in Ireland have hired HE graduates over the last 24 months, while a quarter of employers have hired FET Graduates over the same period.

There is, however, some overlap between those organisations that hired HE graduates on the one hand, and FET graduates on the other.

A further analysis, for example, thus reveals that 12% of all employer organisations hired both HE and FET graduates in the last 24 months, 21% hired HE graduates but not any FET graduates, while 13% hired FET graduates but not any HE graduates.

Table 1 HE/FET Employer Profile: Size and Ownership
Sample size: All employer organisations – 760

	Total	Graduate Type			
		Recruited HE Graduates only	Recruited FET Graduates only	Recruited HE & FET Graduates	Recruited Neither
Base:	760	167	96	85	215
Number of Employees	%	%	%	%	%
1 to 9 employees	39	19	29	12	39
10 to 50 employees	39	43	48	43	44
51 to 250 employees	19	32	23	35	15
251+ employees plus	3	5	1	10	2
Company Ownership	%	%	%	%	%
Foreign/multinational	7	11	5	6	8
Irish/multinational	19	20	22	23	19
Irish exporter/importer	9	11	5	6	9
Domestic (i.e. companies that strictly serve the domestic economy, and do not serve a foreign market by way of trade or investment).	65	58	68	65	64
Company Type	%	%	%	%	%
Manufacturing	23	15	31	13	25
Service	77	85	69	87	75
Region	%	%	%	%	%
Dublin	32	46	26	32	29
Outside Dublin	68	54	74	68	71

The total column on Table 1 is based on all employer organisations, with adjacent columns based on different categories of organisations. This table shows how different sizes of employers, indigenous versus foreign-owned employers, manufacturing versus service, and Dublin versus outside Dublin differ in terms of their recent incidence of HE and/or FET recruitment.

In this regard, it should be noted that the type of employers recruiting HE graduates only on the one hand, and FET graduates only on the other, are quite different to each other.

For example, as can be seen from Table 1, HE-only recruiting employers are significantly larger than FET-only recruiters. Specifically, 37% of companies recruiting HE-only have 50+ employees, compared to just 24% of the companies recruiting FET-only.

In line with this skew towards larger companies hiring HE graduates, meanwhile, we can also see from Table 1 that about 10% of those hiring HE graduates only are part of a multinational group.

Table 2 Company Ownership Profile
Sample size: All employer organisations – 760

		Total Organisations	Ownership			
			Foreign/multi national	Irish/multi national	Irish exporter/ importer	Domestic
Base		760	60	153	74	473
		%	%	%	%	%
Ownership	Foreign/multinational	7	100	-	-	-
	Any Irish	93	-	100	100	100
Type	Manufacturing	23	17	26	25	22
	Servicing	77	83	74	75	78
Size	1 to 9 employees	39	11	28	32	46
	10 to 50 employees	39	38	43	43	38
	51 to 250 employees	19	37	25	24	15
	251+ employees plus	3	13	5	1	2
Region	Dublin	32	53	31	34	30
	Outside Dublin	68	47	69	66	70
Grad Type	HE Only	29	40	28	37	27
	FET Only	18	11	20	10	20
	HE & FET	16	12	18	11	17
	Any HE	45	52	47	48	43
	Any FET	34	23	38	21	36
	Neither	37	37	34	42	37

A further cross-analysis of company ownership by key survey variables confirms that foreign/ multinational and Irish exporter/importer companies are more likely to only hire HE graduates, while Irish/multinational and Irish domestic companies are more likely recruit FET graduates.

Table 3 HE/FET Employer Profile: Sector
Sample size: All employer organisations – 760

	Total	Graduate Type			
		Recruited HE Graduates only	Recruited FET Graduates only	Recruited HE & FET Graduates	Recruited Neither
Base:	760	167	96	85	215
	%	%	%	%	%
Construction	16	8	28	6	17
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	15	12	20	5	17
Professional, scientific and technical activities	13	21	4	11	11
Transportation and storage	8	3	6	5	10
Human health and social work activities	6	4	12	16	3
Accommodation and food service activities	6	4	5	12	9
Manufacturing	5	7	2	7	6
Information and communication	5	9	3	3	2
Administrative and support service activities	5	8	1	8	6
Real estate activities	4	5	5	1	2
Education	4	9	5	11	-
Other service activities	6	2	3	12	7

Table 3 shows how employers in different sectors differ in terms of their recent incidence of HE and/or FET recruitment.

It shows, for example, that HE hiring organisations are significantly more likely than their FET hiring counterparts to be active in professional, scientific and technical activities (21%), information and communication (9%), education (9%), administrative and support service activities (8%) and manufacturing (7%).

Conversely, companies hiring FET graduates are more likely than their HE hiring counterparts to be involved in construction (28%), wholesale and retail trade (20%), human health and social work activities (12%) and transportation and storage (6%).

Note, the reasonably low (9%) proportion of organisations recruiting HE graduates only which are educational establishments, is accounted for by the fact that public sector organisations were not included in the survey.

Table 4 Industry Sector Type Profile: HE/FET Employer category

Sample size: All employer organisations – 760

	Total	Nace Industry Sector Type																	
		Agriculture , Forestry & Fishing	Mining and quarrying	Manufacturing	Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	Water supply sewerage, waste management	Construction	Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles Cycles	Transportation and storage	Accommodation and food service	Information and communication	Financial and insurance	Real estate	Professional, scientific and technical	Administrative and support service	Education	Human health and social work	Arts, entertainment and recreation	Other service
Base	760	8	1	38	2	2	124	112	59	44	35	16	32	97	40	33	47	26	45
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
HE Only	29	-	100	35	-	100	16	24	14	16	60	59	47	48	40	48	15	19	9
FET Only	18	25	-	6	65	-	34	25	16	13	14	9	28	6	3	18	32	9	10
HE & FET	16	-	-	20	-	-	7	6	12	25	10	18	7	14	22	33	38	-	34
Any HE	45	-	100	55	-	100	23	30	26	41	69	77	53	62	61	82	53	19	43
Any FET	34	25	-	26	65	-	41	32	28	38	23	26	35	20	25	52	70	9	44
Neither	37	75	-	39	35	-	43	44	58	46	17	14	19	32	36	-	14	72	47

NB: Caution Low base sizes for some sectors

Table 4 cross-analyses the industry sector type of all organisations surveyed by type of graduate recruited.

The table indicates that organisations recruiting HE only graduates over-index within the ICT, finance, real estate, professional activities, administrative support and education sectors.

FET only recruiting organisations over-index on such sectors as construction and healthcare.

Figure 3 Incidence of Recruitment of HE/FET Graduates in the Past 24 Months

Sample size: All Employers who have recruited any staff - 563
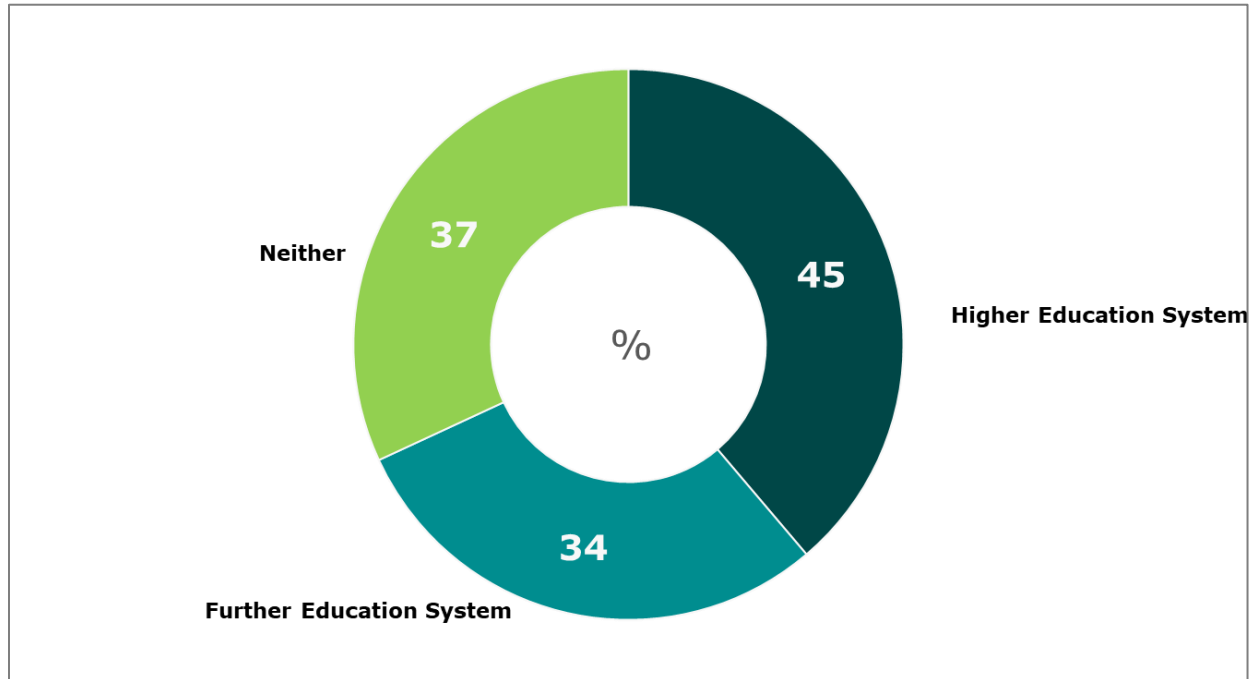
Q3.a *Have you recruited any graduates to your workforce, from within the Republic of Ireland over the last 24 months, from the …. (FULL DESCRIPTIONS OF EDUCATION TYPES PROVIDED)*

Q3.b *Have you recruited any graduates to your workforce from outside the Republic of Ireland over the last 24 months, from the …. (FULL DESCRIPTIONS OF EDUCATION TYPES PROVIDED)*

Figure 3 is based on all organisations that had recruited any staff at all over the previous 24 months.

This analysis shows that 45% of employers that have recruited staff in the last 24 months have hired HE graduates over that period. The equivalent figure for employers hiring FET graduates, on the other hand, is 34%, while 37% of employers hiring staff in the past 24 months have hired neither HE nor FET graduates.

Table 5 Average Number of Staff Hired in the Past 24 Months

Sample size: All Employers who have recruited any staff - 563

| | Total | Ownership* | | Type | | Size | | | Region | |
		Foreign/ multi-national	Any Irish	Manu-facturing	Service	<50 employees	50 to 250 employees	250+ employees plus	Dublin	Outside Dublin
Base	563	53	510	143	420	391	128	41	161	402
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
From 1 to 2	32	13	33	39	29	44	2	-	30	32
From 3 to 4	21	11	21	18	21	28	3	2	15	24
From 5 to 6	10	17	9	7	11	12	6	-	9	10
From 7 to 10	11	18	10	17	9	9	17	-	11	10
From 11 to 14	1	4	1	1	1	1	1	-	1	1
From 15 to 20	13	13	12	6	14	4	38	3	16	11
From 21 to 40	6	8	6	8	5	2	16	11	7	5
41 or more	8	16	7	5	8	-	17	84	11	6
Mean	**15.97**	**22.82**	**15.36**	**13.04**	**16.76**	**4.57**	**28.25**	**141.58**	**20.36**	**13.70**

Table 5 shows the average number of staff hired among those employers that have recruited staff in the past 24 months. It reveals that the average employer that has recruited staff of any kind over the last 24 months has hired 16 workers – and this figure is also higher amongst multinationals (23), employers with 50-250 employees, large corporate organisations with 250+ employees (142), and Dublin-based companies (20 employees).
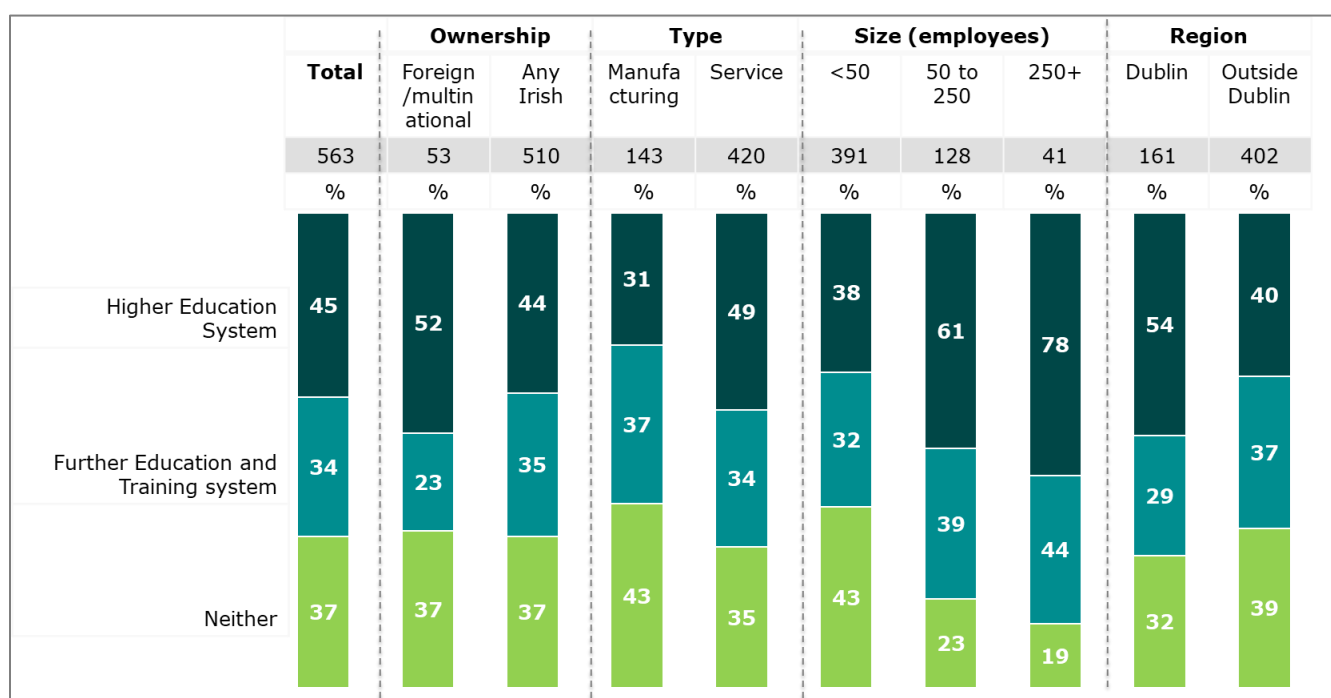
Employers with less than 50 employees, however, have typically hired less than five employees over the past 24 months.

*NB respondents categorised as foreign/multinational described the ownership of their organisation as "foreign/multinational" at C4 in the Questionnaire (see Appendix). Respondents categorised as "any Irish" described the ownership of the organisation as either Irish/multinational, Irish exporter/importer, or domestic at C4 in the questionnaire.

3. HE and FET Graduate Profile

Figure 4 HE/FET Graduates Recruited in the Past 24 Months – Employer Categories
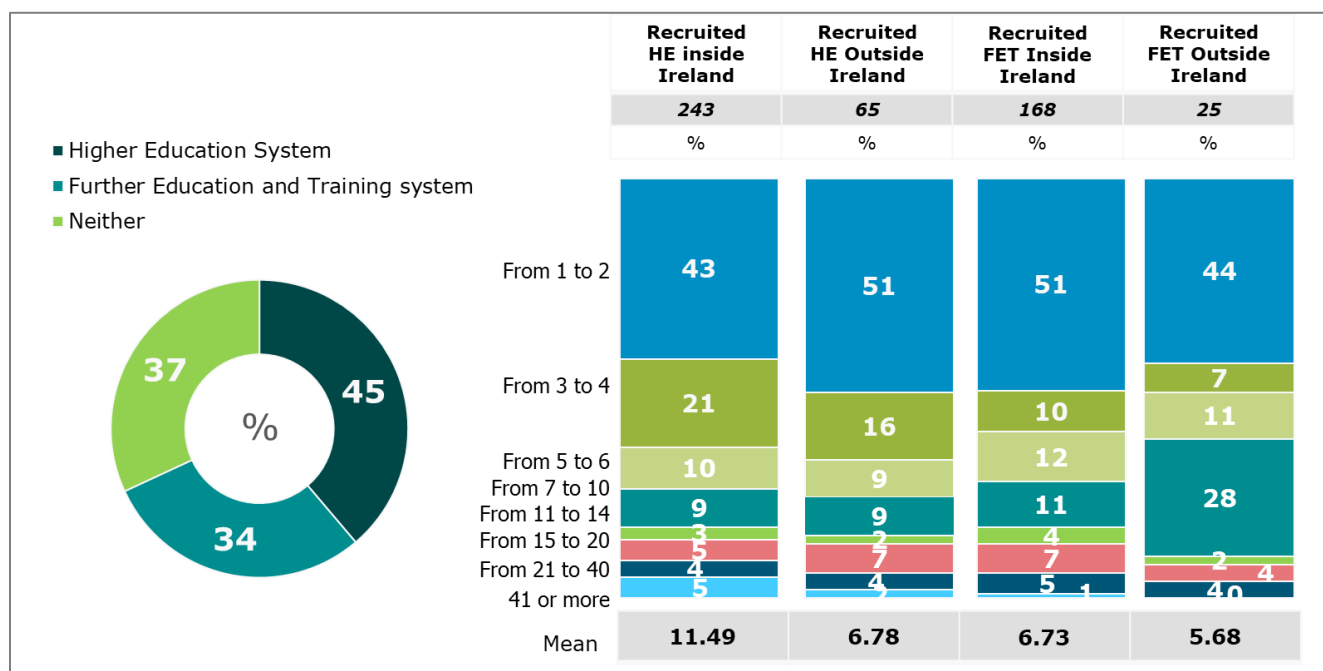Sample size: All Employers who have recruited any staff - 563

	Total	Ownership		Type		Size (employees)			Region	
		Foreign /multinational	Any Irish	Manufacturing	Service	<50	50 to 250	250+	Dublin	Outside Dublin
	563	53	510	143	420	391	128	41	161	402
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Higher Education System	45	52	44	31	49	38	61	78	54	40
Further Education and Training system	34	23	35	37	34	32	39	44	29	37
Neither	37	37	37	43	35	43	23	19	32	39

Q3. Have you recruited any graduates to your workforce over the last 24 months, from the..... (   ).

Figure 4 shows the type of graduates recruited in the past 24 months, and how this varies by company type. It shows that, compared to the average company hiring any type of staff in the last 24 months, the recruitment of HE graduates is higher amongst multinational companies (52%), service sector organisations (49%), Dublin-based companies (54%) and larger organisations (50-250 employees and 250+ employees) in general (61% and 78% respectively).

Companies hiring FET graduates, on the other hand, are more likely to be indigenous companies (35%), manufacturing organisations (37%), companies outside Dublin (37%) and larger organisations (39% and 44% respectively).

Figure 5 Recruitment of HE/FET Graduates from Inside/Outside Ireland
Sample size: All Employers who have recruited any HE or FET Graduates - 348

	Recruited HE inside Ireland	Recruited HE Outside Ireland	Recruited FET Inside Ireland	Recruited FET Outside Ireland
	243	*65*	*168*	*25*
	%	%	%	%
From 1 to 2	43	51	51	44
From 3 to 4	21	16	10	7
From 5 to 6	10	9	12	11
From 7 to 10	9	9	11	28
From 11 to 14	3	2	4	
From 15 to 20	4	7	7	2
From 21 to 40	5	4	5	4
41 or more			1	40
Mean	**11.49**	**6.78**	**6.73**	**5.68**

Q3. Have you recruited any graduates to your workforce over the last 24 months, from the.....
Q.3_2 Please enter the number of HE graduates that you recruited over the last 24 months from Institutions in the Republic of Ireland
Q.3_2 Please enter the number of HE graduates that you recruited over the last 24 months from Institutions Outside the Republic of Ireland
Q.3_2 Please enter the number of FET graduates that you recruited over the last 24 months from Institutions in the Republic of Ireland
Q.3_2 Please enter the number of FET graduates that you recruited over the last 24 months from Institutions Outside the Republic of Ireland

Figure 5 is based on the different types of organisations recruiting any HE or FET graduates in the past 24 months. Note, the number of respondents in each category adds to more than the total number of 348 organisations recruiting any HE or FET graduates, as there is overlap between the categories. In terms of where graduates have come from, Figure 5 indicates that the vast majority of HE and FET graduates recruited in the last 24 months were hired from inside Ireland.

The average number of HE graduates that were recruited by companies hiring from within Ireland was 11.5. Companies recruiting HE graduates from outside Ireland, meanwhile, hired and average of 6.8 graduates.

The average company recruiting FET graduates from inside Ireland hired 6.7 such workers, with those companies recruiting FET graduates from outside Ireland hiring 5.7 such workers.

Discipline	2016 % of all graduates	2018 % All HE Survey Graduates
Arts and Humanities	22%	12%
Business and Law	25%	23%
Engineering	8%	13%
Services	5%	8%
Health and Welfare	14%	9%
Computing	7%	12%
Construction	3%	6%
Science and Maths	9%	8%
Agriculture and Veterinary	2%	2%
Social Services	6%	7%
	100.0%	100%

Table 6 sets out the sector profile of actual 2016 HE Graduates versus the profile of the 2018 survey HE Graduates, and indicates a broadly similar HE graduate sector profile between the two data sources. The 2018 survey registers less Arts and Humanities, and Health and Welfare graduates, and more Engineering and Computing graduates, than was the case in 2016.
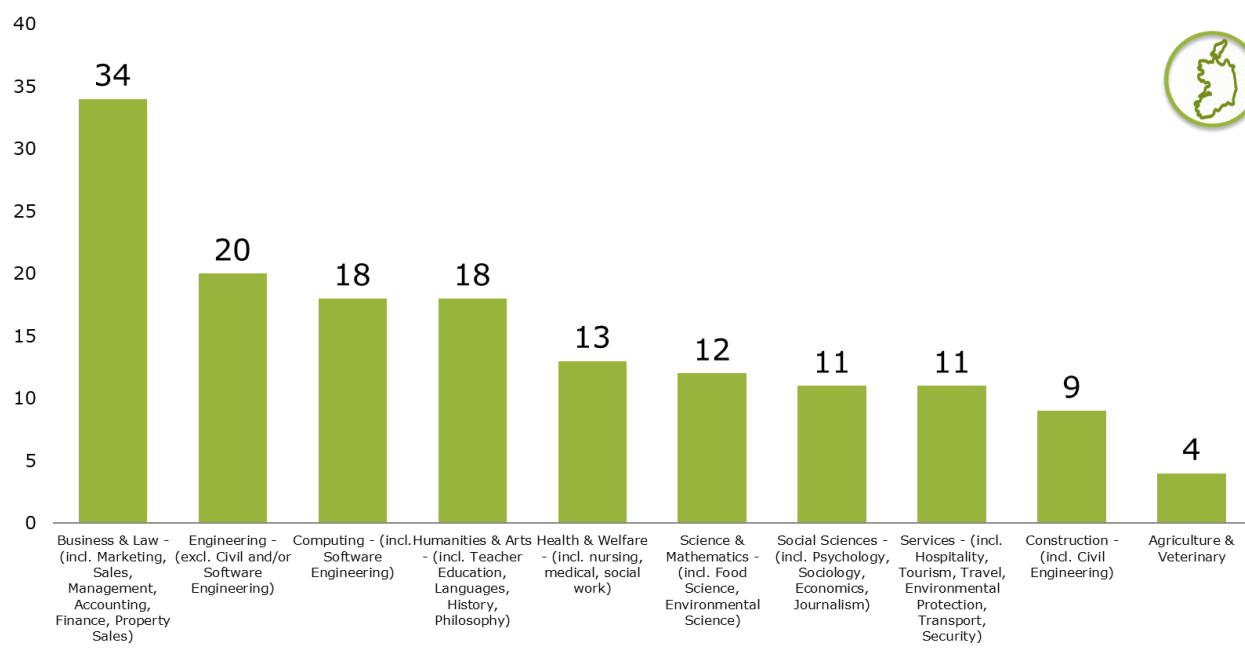
Q.4a From which disciplines did you recruit your higher education graduates from the Republic of Ireland?

Figure 6 is based on all organisations which have recruited HE graduates from within Ireland, and shows the disciplines that HE graduates recruited from within Ireland were hired from.

As can be seen from this analysis, a third of this sub-set of employers hired HE graduates from the business and law discipline. Other disciplines from which large proportions of HE graduates were recruited within Ireland, on the other hand, include engineering (20%), computing (18%) and humanities and the arts (18%).

Table 7 HE Graduate Disciplines – Within Ireland – Employer Categories

Sample size: All Employers recruiting HE Graduates from within Ireland - 243

	Total	Ownership		Type		Size		
		Foreign/ Multi national	Any Irish	Manufac- turing	Service	<50 employees	50 to 250 employees	250+ employees plus
Base:	243	30	213	49	194	132	78	32
%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Business & Law - (incl. Marketing, Sales, Management, Accounting, Finance, Property Sales)	34	38	34	11	38	29	36	73
Engineering - (excl. Civil and/or Software Engineering)	20	40	17	52	14	17	16	52
Computing - (incl. Software Engineering)	18	30	17	10	19	17	16	35
Humanities & Arts - (incl. Teacher Education, Languages, History, Philosophy)	18	6	19	5	20	17	15	39
Health & Welfare - (incl. nursing, medical, social work)	13	6	14	2	15	14	9	28
Science & Mathematics - (incl. Food Science, Environmental Science)	12	28	10	17	11	9	9	49
Social Sciences - (incl. Psychology, Sociology, Economics, Journalism)	11	9	11	-	12	10	8	25
Services - (incl. Hospitality, Tourism, Travel, Environmental Protection, Transport, Security)	11	13	11	4	12	6	18	19
Construction - (incl. Civil Engineering)	9	9	9	26	6	8	8	27
Agriculture & Veterinary	4	4	4	1	4	3	2	14

Q4a. From which disciplines did you recruit your higher education graduates from the Republic of Ireland?

Table 7 shows how HE graduate disciplines varied by company ownership, sector and size. In terms of the types of employers recruiting HE graduates from within Ireland, it shows that multinationals are more likely to hire HE graduates in Ireland from the engineering, computing and science and mathematics disciplines.

Conversely, indigenous employers recruiting HE graduates from within Ireland are marginally more likely to draw from the disciplines of humanities and the arts, and health and welfare.

Manufacturing employers are more likely to hire Irish HE graduates from within the engineering, construction and science and mathematics disciplines. The largest employers, meanwhile (250+ employees), are also more likely to hire graduates from across the broad range of disciplines.

Figure 7 HE Graduate Disciplines – Outside Ireland

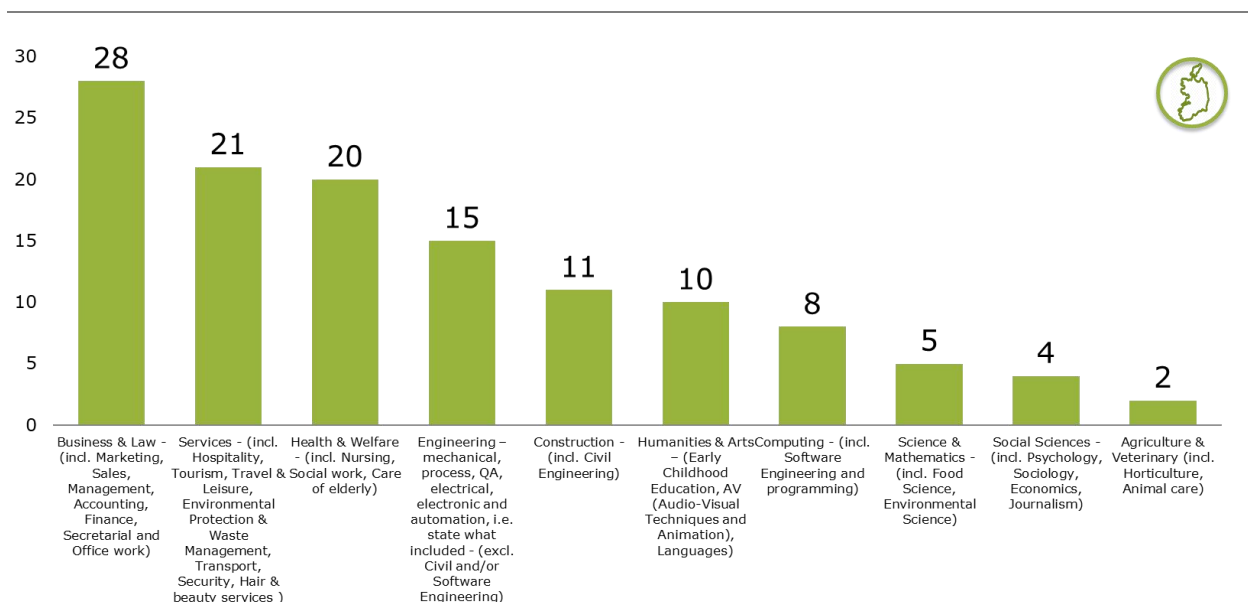Sample size: All Employers recruiting HE Graduates from Outside Ireland - 65
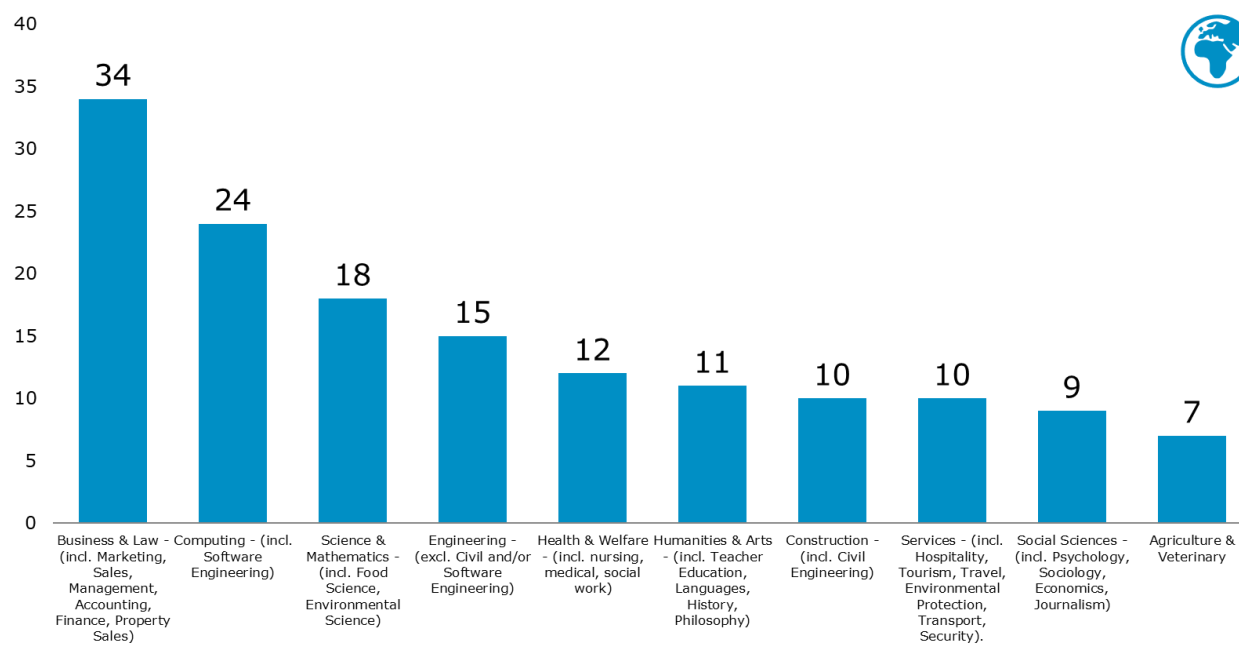
Q5a. From which disciplines did you recruit the higher education graduates from outside the Republic of Ireland?

Figure 7 is based on all organisations recruiting HE graduates from outside Ireland, and shows the disciplines that HE graduates recruited from outside Ireland were hired from. It shows that employers that recruited HE graduates from outside Ireland did so from broadly the same mix of disciplines as did those who recruited from within Ireland.

There is, however, some evidence to suggest that those seeking HE graduates from outside Ireland are more likely to seek science and mathematics graduates (18%) and less likely to look for HE graduates from the humanities and arts discipline (11%) from abroad.

Figure 8 FET Graduate Disciplines – Within Ireland

Sample size: All Employers recruiting FET Graduates from within Ireland – 168
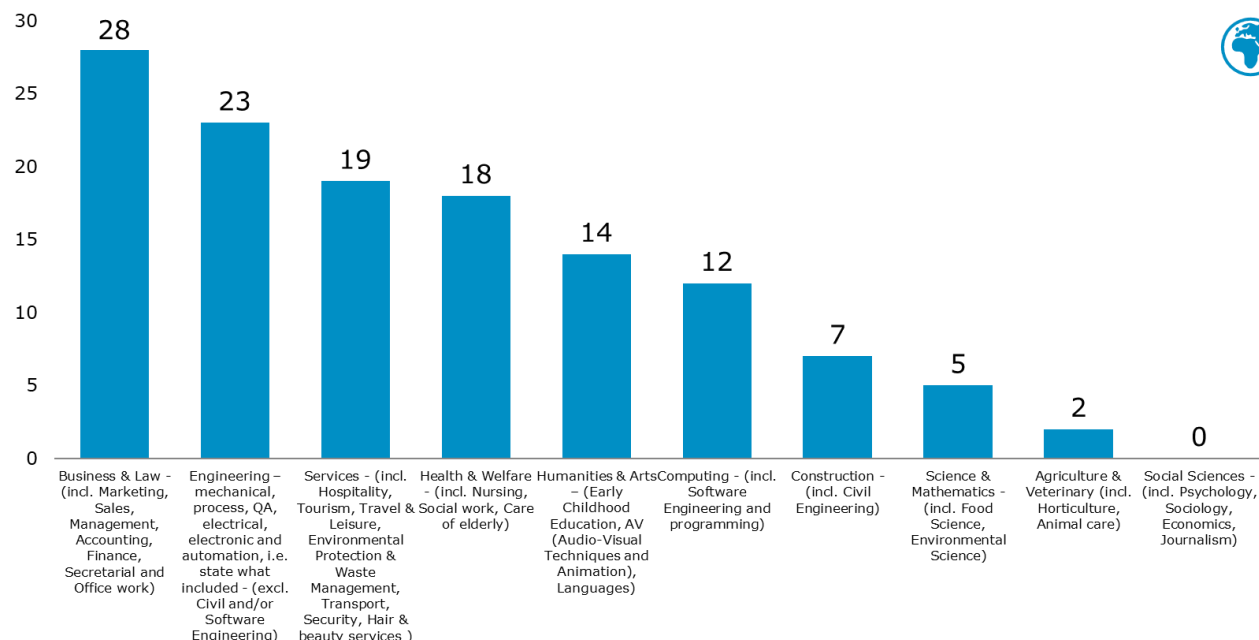

Q4b. From which disciplines did you recruit your further education graduates from the Republic of Ireland?

Figure 8 is based on all organisations recruiting FET graduates from within Ireland, and shows the disciplines that FET graduates recruited from within Ireland were hired from. It indicates that business and law, services, health and welfare and engineering are the most frequent disciplines drawn upon for FET graduates within Ireland.

Some 28% of employers hiring Irish FET graduates have hired from business and law disciplines, followed by 21% for services, 20% for health and welfare and 15% for engineering disciplines.

Figure 9 FET Graduate Disciplines – Outside Ireland

Sample size: All Employers recruiting FET Graduates from outside Ireland – 25

Q.5b   From which disciplines did you recruit the further education graduates from outside the Republic of Ireland

Figure 9 is based on all organisations recruiting FET graduates from outside Ireland, and shows the disciplines that FET graduates recruited from outside Ireland were hired from.

The number of employers recruiting FET graduates from outside Ireland in the past 24 months, however, is small – equating to just 4% of all organisations who recruited any staff in the last 24-month period.

As can be seen from Figure 9, this small group of FET graduates hired from abroad are taken from a range of disciplines, including business and law (28%), engineering (23%), services (19%) and health and welfare (18%).

4.   HE and FET Graduate Satisfaction Levels

4.1 Overall Satisfaction Levels

Figure 10 HE and FET Graduates Comparison – Satisfaction Levels – Workplace Attributes
Sample size: All Employers who have recruited Graduates – (HEA – 252, FET – 181)
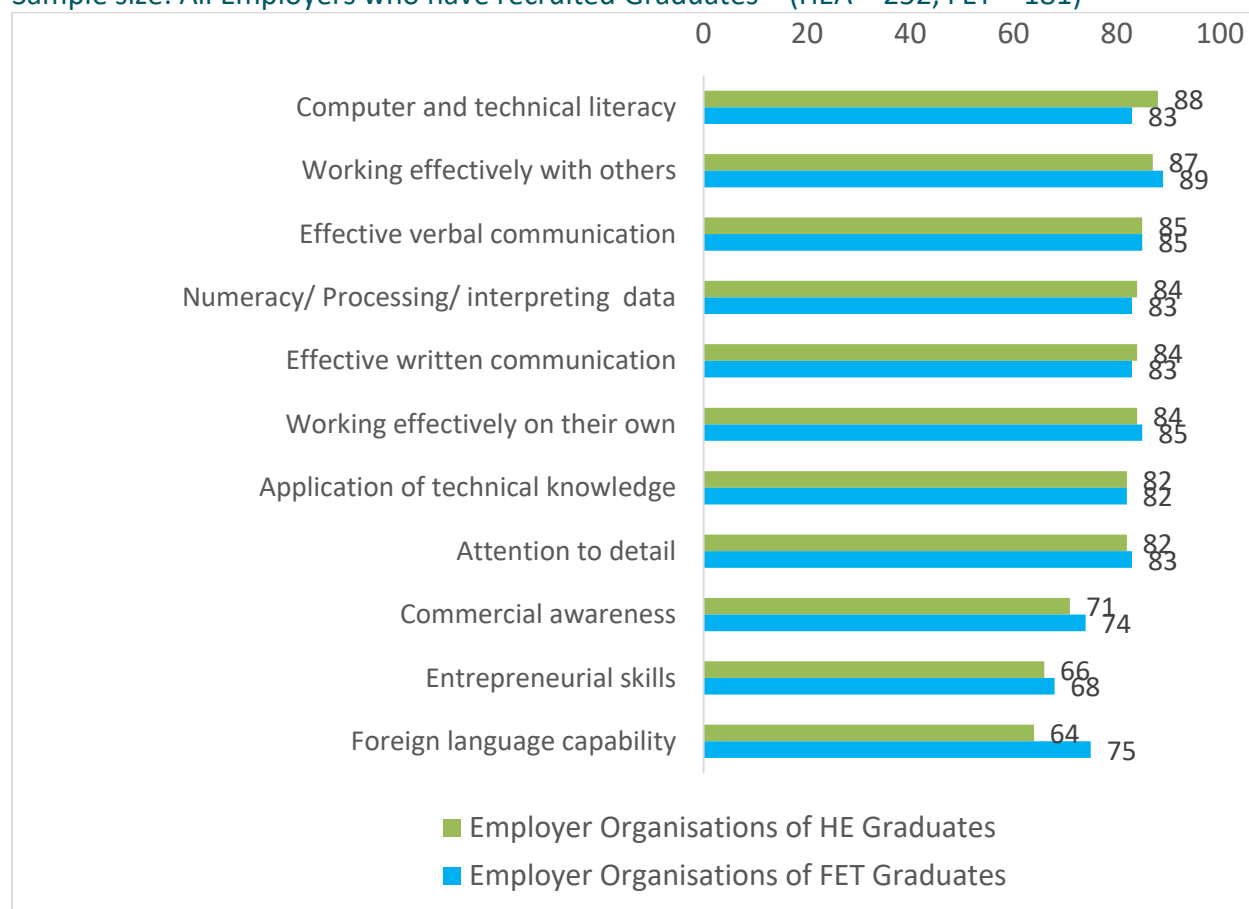
Q.6a   Please rate your level of satisfaction with your higher education graduate recruits as they relate to the following workplace attributes?

Q6b.   Please rate your level of satisfaction with your further education graduate recruits as they relate to the following workplace attributes?

The performance of both HE and FET graduates on a range of workplace attributes is rated very positively, with the only perceived weaknesses relating to commercial awareness, entrepreneurial skills and language capability.

Figure 11 Comparison of HE and FET satisfaction rates for Personal Attributes

Sample size: All Employers who have recruited Graduates – (HEA – 252; FET – 181)

Q7a.   Please rate your level of satisfaction with your higher education graduate recruits as they relate to the following personal attributes?
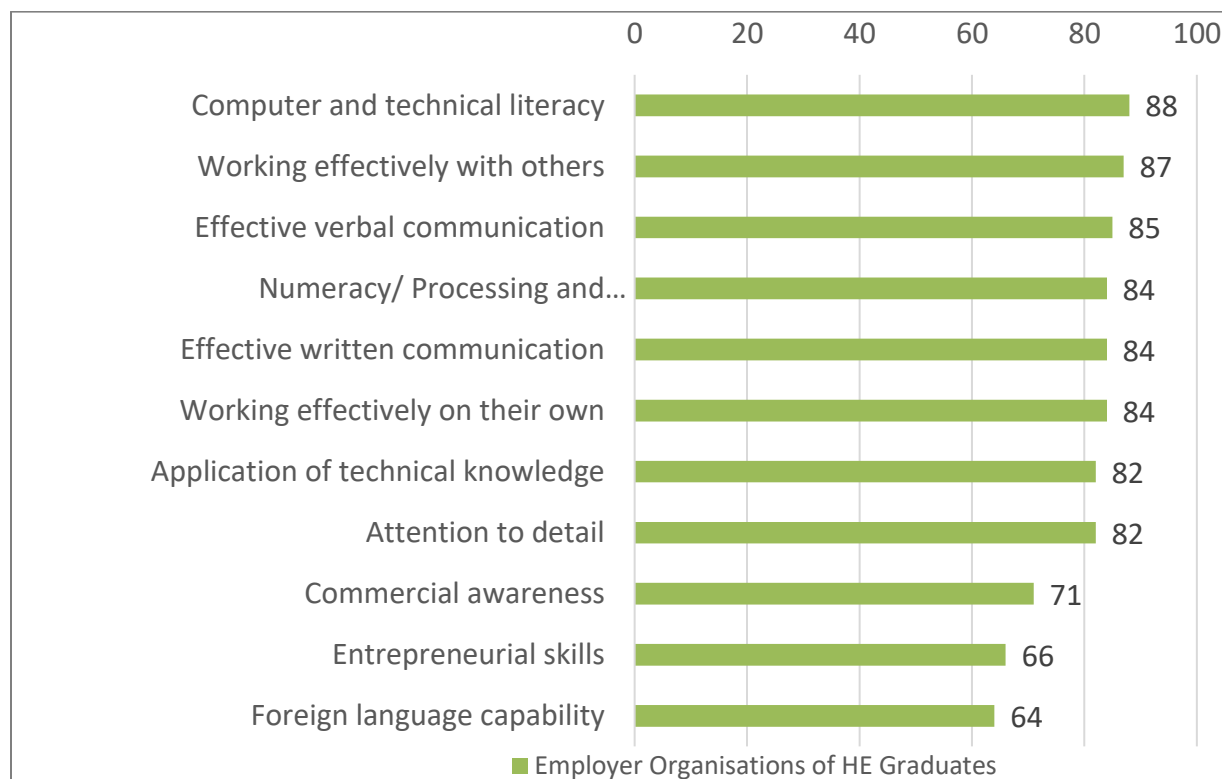
Q7b.   Please rate your level of satisfaction with your further education graduate recruits as they relate to the following personal attributes?

Both HE and FET graduates are also rated very positively across a whole range of personal attributes.

4.2 Workplace Attributes

Figure 12 HE Graduates – Satisfaction Levels – Workplace Attributes
Sample size: All employers have recruited HE graduates – 252

Q.6a Please rate your level of satisfaction with your higher education graduate recruits as they relate to the following workplace attributes

Figure 12 shows employer satisfaction levels for HE graduates across a range of workplace attributes. Satisfaction levels with HE graduates (amongst those employers who have hired any such graduates in the last 24 months) were measured across a range of pre-determined workplace attributes.

In this regard, Figure 12 reveals that employers are generally very satisfied with their HE graduates across a broad range of workplace attributes – including technical and numeracy skills, verbal and written communications skills, the ability to work effectively both on their own and with others, and attention to detail in what they do.

In general, satisfaction levels for most of the workplace attributes cited are above 80%. Exceptions to this, however, apply to satisfaction with graduates' commercial awareness (71%), entrepreneurial skills (66%) and foreign language capabilities (64%).

Table 8 HE Graduates – Satisfaction Levels- Workplace Attributes – Employer Categories
Sample size: All Employers recruiting HE Graduates – 252

	Total	Ownership		Type		Size			Region	
		Foreign/ multi-national	Any Irish	Manu-facturing	Service	<50 employees	50 to 250 employees	250+ employees plus	Dublin	Outside Dublin
Base:	252	31	221	51	201	140	79	32	95	157
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Computer and technical literacy	88	88	88	85	88	88	87	91	90	87
Working effectively with others	87	86	87	88	87	90	83	85	83	90
Effective verbal communication	85	79	86	82	86	87	82	86	82	87
Numeracy/ Processing and interpreting numerical data	84	84	84	84	84	84	82	90	82	85
Effective written communication	84	81	85	89	83	86	80	86	81	87
Working effectively on their own	84	87	84	84	84	85	83	80	82	86
Application of technical knowledge	82	84	81	78	82	83	79	82	80	83
Attention to detail	82	86	82	85	82	83	81	80	78	85
Commercial awareness	71	69	71	76	71	74	66	71	67	74
Entrepreneurial skills	66	66	66	69	66	69	62	64	66	67
Foreign language capability	64	55	65	70	63	64	63	62	59	68

Q6a.   Please rate your level of satisfaction with your higher education graduate recruits as they relate to the following workplace attributes?

Table 8, meanwhile, confirms that levels of satisfaction with HE graduates are high across all employer company types, regardless of size of operation, service sector, or indeed country of ownership.

With regard to perceived HE graduate foreign language capability, note that satisfaction with this attribute is significantly lower amongst foreign owned companies (at 55%), than it is amongst Irish owned ones (65%). At the same time, the lower satisfaction ratings for commercial awareness, entrepreneurial skills and foreign language capabilities are also common to the different employer categories. Foreign-owned firms' rating of graduates' foreign language capability, in particular, is noticeably lower than for other attributes.

|	Total	NACE INDUSTRY TYPE														
		Manufacturing	Water supply sewerage, waste management	Construction	Wholesale and retail trade; repair	Transportation and storage	Accommodation and food service	Information and communication	Financial and insurance	Real estate	Professional, scientific and technical	Administrative and support service	Education	Human health and social work	Arts, entertainment and recreation	Other service
Base	252	29	3	18	31	11	23	8	27	8	45	20	10	12	2	4
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Computer and technical literacy	88	86	100	84	85	87	81	93	94	87	82	89	100	94	75	95
Foreign language capability	64	74	64	67	48	22	75	44	72	52	68	50	67	100	75	75
Numeracy/ Processing and interpreting numerical data	84	87	81	83	81	92	76	81	85	87	81	83	87	86	100	94
Application of technical knowledge	82	86	91	69	83	74	81	80	81	77	81	88	82	90	100	81
Effective verbal communication	85	85	81	80	84	86	86	74	76	86	82	92	94	90	87	92
Effective written communication	84	88	100	89	86	93	79	66	78	83	80	90	91	91	75	79
Working effectively with others	87	91	81	86	89	91	91	77	85	90	83	89	88	89	87	92
Working effectively on their own	84	89	82	80	86	96	88	68	80	87	79	87	89	86	73	89
Satisfaction with Attention to detail	82	89	81	82	84	95	78	68	79	79	78	84	86	87	73	94
Satisfaction with Commercial awareness	71	75	72	76	71	88	69	63	66	84	64	70	74	74	60	81
Satisfaction with Entrepreneurial skills	66	69	72	69	66	80	65	58	53	69	59	63	81	77	50	85

NB: Caution Low base sizes for some sectors

Table 9 indicates that the highest levels of satisfaction with foreign language capabilities are amongst manufacturing, accommodation and food service, and financial service companies.

Figure 13 FET Graduates – Satisfaction Levels – Workplace Attributes

Sample size: All Employers recruiting FET Graduates – 181
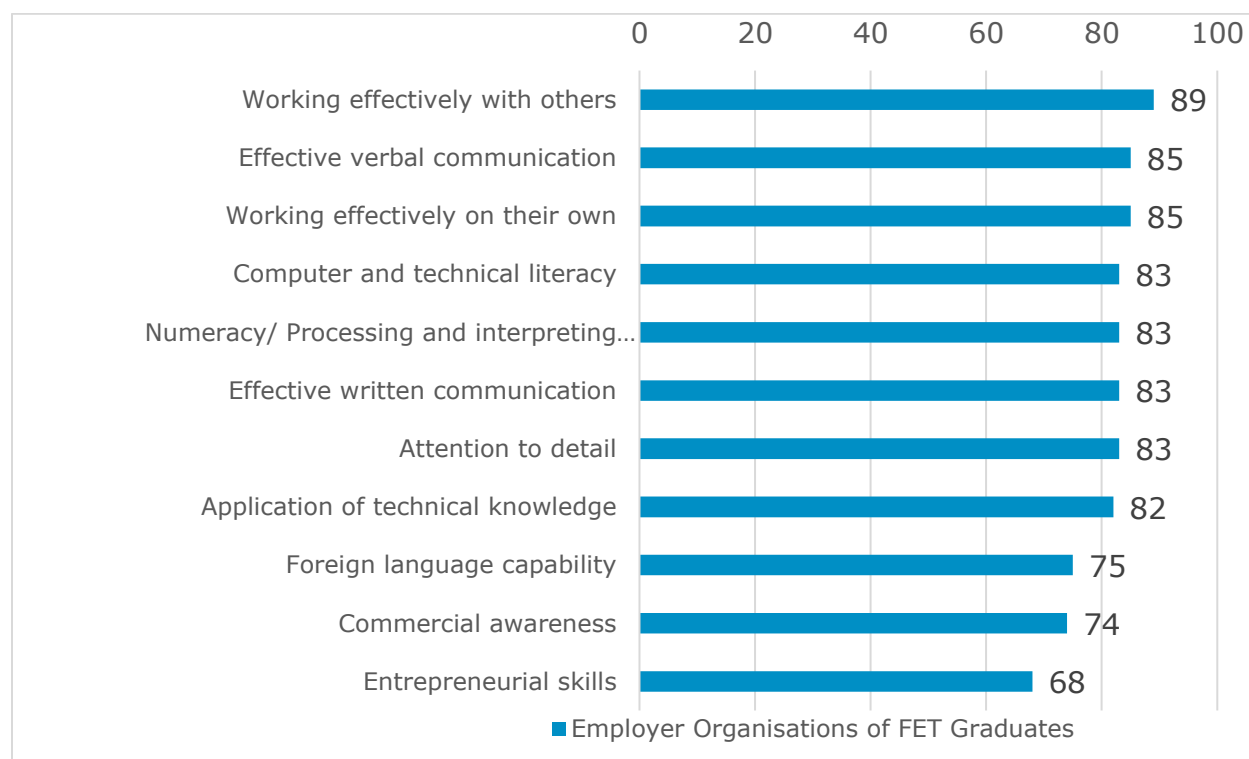
Q6b.   Please rate your level of satisfaction with your further education graduate recruits as they relate to the following workplace attributes?

Figure 13 shows employer satisfaction levels for FET graduates across a range of workplace attributes.

It shows that levels of satisfaction with FET graduates are also very high. Again, there are very few workplace attributes that FET employers do not provide an 80% plus satisfaction rating for.

Specifically, FET graduates' ability to work effectively on their own or with others, to communicate both verbally and in writing to the required level, and possessing the required technical and numerical confidence, are all rated very satisfactorily by their employers.

As with HE graduates, however, foreign language capability (75%), commercial awareness (74%) and entrepreneurial skills (68%) all have lower satisfaction ratings.

Table 10 FET Graduates – Satisfaction Levels – Workplace Attributes – Employer Categories

Sample size: All Employers recruiting FET Graduates – 181

	Total	Ownership		Type		Size			Region	
		Foreign/ multi-national	Any Irish	Manu-facturing	Service	<50 employees	50 to 250 employees	250+ employees plus	Dublin	Outside Dublin
Base:	181	16	165	49	132	113	49	19	47	134
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Working effectively with others	89	81	89	91	88	90	85	85	88	89
Effective verbal communication	85	84	85	85	85	87	81	81	85	85
Working effectively on their own	85	85	85	85	84	86	83	77	86	84
Computer and technical literacy	83	87	83	80	84	86	79	81	86	82
Numeracy/ Processing and interpreting numerical data	83	88	82	86	82	84	79	81	84	82
Effective written communication	83	83	83	82	83	85	78	83	84	83
Attention to detail	83	85	83	83	83	85	80	79	84	83
Application of technical knowledge	82	84	82	84	81	84	75	82	81	82
Foreign language capability	75	44	77	76	75	75	76	73	79	73
Commercial awareness	74	70	74	74	74	77	69	67	72	75
Entrepreneurial skills	68	59	68	69	67	70	65	59	63	70

Q6b.   Please rate your level of satisfaction with your further education graduate recruits as they relate to the following workplace attributes?

Table 10, meanwhile, again suggests that levels of satisfaction with FET graduates are high across all employer company types, regardless of size of operation, service sector, or indeed country of ownership.

Relative satisfaction ratings for foreign language capability, commercial awareness and entrepreneurial skills are also generally lower across most employer categories, with foreign language capability again being rated relatively low by foreign-owned firms (44%).

Table 11 Level of satisfaction with FET Graduates across workplace attributes x Industry Type

Sample size: All Employers recruiting FET Graduates – 181

	Total	NACE INDUSTRY TYPE												
		Manufacturing	Construction	Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles Cycles	Transportation and storage	Accommodation and food service	Information and communication	Financial and insurance	Real estate	Professional, scientific and technical	Administrative and support service	Education	Human health and social work	Other service
UNWTD	181	14	32	33	11	20	3	10	5	15	8	6	16	4
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Computer and technical literacy	83	72	82	74	91	79	100	83	86	80	86	83	86	92
Foreign language capability	75	48	86	65	11	71	71	59	25	78	75	91	95	100
Numeracy/ Processing and interpreting numerical data	83	74	89	78	97	61	90	87	70	76	85	88	91	83
Application of technical knowledge	82	75	86	77	84	72	90	82	76	81	86	83	90	79
Effective verbal communication	85	77	86	84	91	80	100	74	80	81	87	83	87	87
Effective written communication	83	75	84	78	92	70	100	82	80	76	89	83	86	92
Working effectively with others	89	85	92	85	93	81	90	85	95	84	89	83	92	94
Working effectively on their own	85	83	86	80	94	80	82	82	85	80	93	74	90	94
Satisfaction with Attention to detail	83	80	83	78	90	74	90	80	85	79	82	79	87	100
Satisfaction with Commercial awareness	74	62	77	68	82	60	100	63	82	69	86	75	84	79
Satisfaction with Entrepreneurial skills	68	65	68	56	77	56	74	64	82	62	71	75	78	71

NB: Caution Low base sizes for some sectors

Table 11 shows that satisfaction with foreign language capabilities of FET graduates is highest within the Construction, Professional/Technical/Scientific and Human Health/Social Work sectors.

While not directly comparable due to different technical designs, a comparison of the 2015 and 2018 surveys indicates a number of trends in relation to satisfaction with workplace attributes:

- The most positively rated graduate workplace attribute on both surveys is computer and technical literacy.

- The least positively rated aspects on both surveys are entrepreneurial skills, and foreign language capability, although satisfaction with both aspects has improved.

- Satisfaction with effective written and verbal communication also seems to have improved since 2015.

4.3   Personal Attributes

Figure 14 HE Graduates – Satisfaction Levels – Personal Attributes

Attribute	Value
Professionalism and work ethic	87
Reliability	86
Positive attitude	85
Ethically and socially aware	85
Personal commitment	84
Adaptability and flexibility	82
Ability to cope with work pressure	78

Q7a.   Please rate your level of satisfaction with your higher education graduate recruits as they relate to the following personal attributes?

Figure 14 shows employer satisfaction levels for HE graduates across a range of personal attributes, with employers again indicating extremely high satisfaction levels.

Particular personal strengths of HE graduates are identified as professionalism and work ethic, reliability, positive attitude and personal commitment, ethical and social awareness, adaptability and flexibility and ability to cope with work pressure (all close to or above 80%).

Table 12 HE Graduates – Satisfaction Levels – Personal Attributes – Employer Categories

Sample size: All Employers recruiting HE Graduates - 252

	Total	Ownership		Type		Size (Employees			Region	
		Foreign/ multi- national	Any Irish	Manufac- turing	Service	<50 employees	50 to 250 employees	250+ employees plus	Dublin	Outside Dublin
Base:	252	31	221	51	201	140	79	32	95	157
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Professionalism and work ethic	87	87	87	90	86	89	83	85	84	89
Reliability	86	91	86	88	86	88	82	87	84	87
Positive attitude	85	90	84	87	85	87	81	85	83	86
Ethically and socially aware	85	90	84	88	84	87	82	86	84	85
Personal commitment	84	88	84	86	84	85	82	85	83	85
Adaptability and flexibility	82	85	82	82	82	83	81	78	78	85
Ability to cope with work pressure	78	79	78	79	78	80	76	74	73	81

Q7a.   Please rate your level of satisfaction with your higher education graduate recruits as they relate to the following personal attributes?

Table 12, meanwhile, shows that there are no significant differences in satisfaction with HE graduates' personal attributes, when results are analysed by company type, size or region.

Table 13 Level of satisfaction with HE Graduates across personal attributes x Industry Type
Sample size: All Employers recruiting HE Graduates - 252

		NACE INDUSTRY TYPE												
		Manufacturing	Construction	Wholesale and retail trade; repair of	Transportation and storage	Accommodation and food service	Information and communication	Financial and insurance	Real estate	Professional, scientific and technical	Administrative and support service	Education	Human health and social work	Other service
Base	252	29	18	31	11	23	8	27	8	45	20	10	12	4
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Professionalism and work ethic	87	92	87	89	94	83	80	88	76	84	88	83	94	100
Reliability	86	91	86	87	97	86	81	82	76	85	89	86	89	89
Positive attitude	85	90	84	85	94	85	81	87	83	81	86	83	84	92
Ethically and socially aware	85	93	84	85	93	83	75	84	80	81	89	91	87	83
Personal commitment	84	89	83	82	91	84	84	82	76	81	88	83	87	94
Adaptability and flexibility	82	88	77	80	92	82	75	80	77	79	80	82	87	94
Ability to cope with work pressure	78	82	77	77	88	78	71	68	79	71	79	77	87	92

NB: Caution Low base sizes for some sectors

Table 13 also shows no significant differences in satisfaction within HE graduate personal attributes across industry sector.

Figure 15 FET Graduates – Satisfaction Levels – Personal Attributes

Attribute	Value
Positive attitude	87
Reliability	87
Ethically and socially aware	85
Personal commitment	85
Professionalism and work ethic	85
Adaptability and flexibility	83
Ability to cope with work pressure	79

Q7b. Please rate your level of satisfaction with your further education graduate recruits as they relate to the following personal attributes?

Figure 15 shows employer satisfaction levels for FET graduates across the range of personal attributes.

It shows that very high levels of satisfaction are also cited by FET employers across the full range of personal attributes measured – from positivity of attitude through to reliability and commitment, professionalism and work ethic, ethical and social awareness, adaptability and flexibility and ability to cope with work pressure (again all close to or over 80%).

Table 14 FET Graduates – Satisfaction Levels – Personal Attributes – Employer Categories

Sample size: All Employers recruiting FET Graduates - 181

		Ownership		Type		Size (Employees			Region	
	Total	Foreign/ multi- national	Any Irish	Manufac- turing	Service	<50 employees	50 to 250 employees	250+ employees plus	Dublin	Outside Dublin
Base:	181	16	165	49	132	113	49	19	47	134
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Positive attitude	87	81	87	85	87	88	84	86	88	86
Reliability	87	84	87	86	87	89	83	86	86	87
Ethically and socially aware	85	78	86	83	86	87	80	87	83	86
Personal commitment	85	83	85	83	86	86	83	86	87	84
Professionalism and work ethic	85	84	85	85	86	85	85	89	88	84
Adaptability and flexibility	83	80	84	84	83	84	80	84	81	84
Ability to cope with work pressure	79	72	80	83	78	81	76	80	78	80

Q7b.   Please rate your level of satisfaction with your further education graduate recruits as they relate to the following personal attributes?

Table 14, meanwhile, shows that, again, FET graduates are rated very satisfactorily across all of the personal attributes included in the survey, regardless of employer organisation type.

Table 15 Level of satisfaction with FET Graduates across personal attributes x Industry Type
Sample size: All Employers recruiting FET Graduates - 181

	Total	NACE INDUSTRY TYPE													
		Manufacturing	Electricity	Construction	Wholesale and retail trade; repair	Transportation and storage	Accommodation and food service	Information and communication	Financial and insurance	Real estate	Professional, scientific and technical	Administrative and support service	Education	Human health and social work	Other service
Base:	181	14	2	32	33	11	20	3	10	5	15	8	6	16	4
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Positive attitude	87	85	86	85	83	97	87	90	87	80	84	93	75	91	100
Reliability	87	88	86	85	85	97	83	90	84	95	84	93	74	87	100
Ethically and socially aware	85	85	75	81	86	90	80	82	89	85	88	93	78	92	70
Personal commitment	85	80	64	85	79	97	84	92	79	95	84	89	83	89	100
Professionalism and work ethic	85	83	64	87	79	94	86	90	80	94	87	89	83	92	100
Adaptability and flexibility	83	85	75	83	77	95	80	90	81	75	88	93	79	92	87
Ability to cope with work pressure	79	79	86	84	73	92	74	82	83	70	80	89	70	88	92

NB: Caution Low base sizes for some sectors

Table 15 reveals there are no significant differences in FET graduate personal attributes satisfaction across industry sector.

Satisfaction levels with the various attributes are broadly similar to those registered in the 2015 survey, although any such comparisons need to be treated with caution due to the different survey methodologies employed.

5. Graduate Skills Needs

Figure 16 HE/FET Skills Gaps – Next 3-5 Years

Sample size: All employer organisations – 760

Higher Education skills	Further Education skills
Yes 22% No 78	Yes 23% No 77
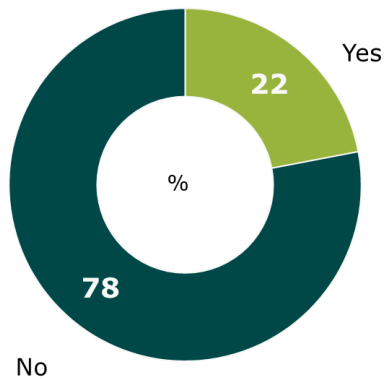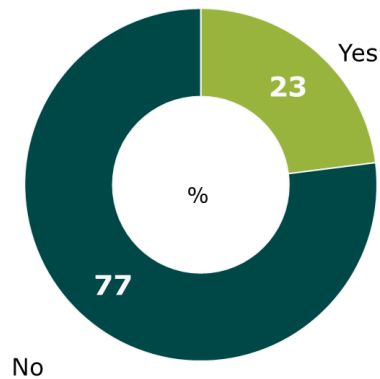
Q8a. *Are there skills which require higher education qualifications not currently available that you require now or in the next 3-5 years?*
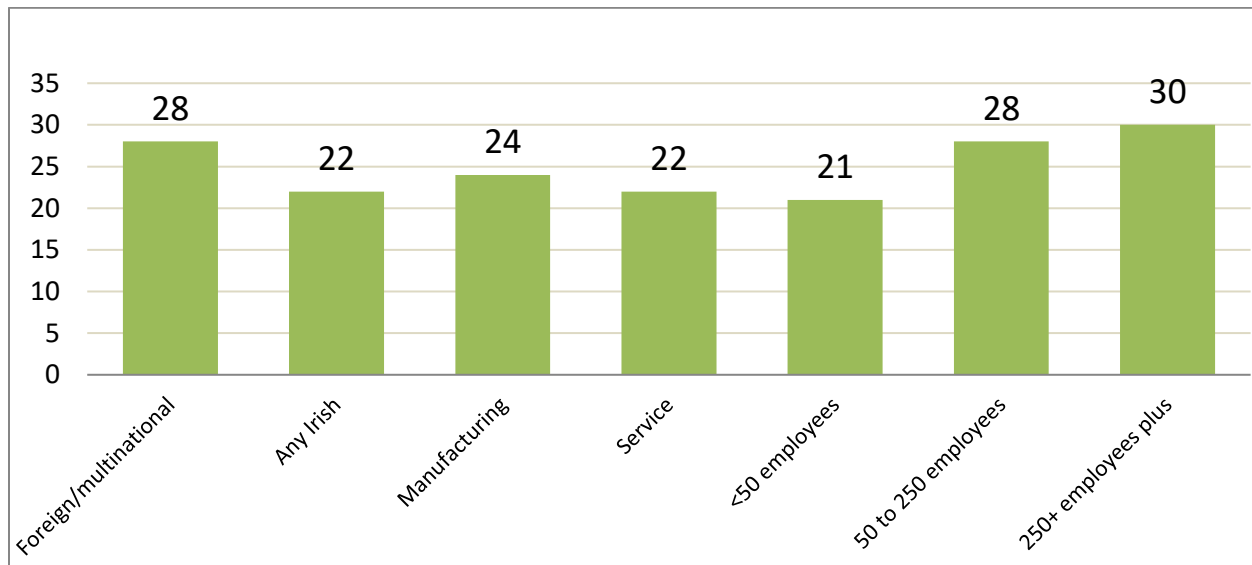
Q.8b *Are there skills which require further education qualifications not currently available that you require now or in the next 3-5 years?*

Figure 16 is based on all organisations participating in the survey. Respondents from all employer organisations in this sample were also asked whether there any HE or FET skills that they may need in the short to medium term, but which are not commonly available.

Employer insights in this regard are presented in Figure 16, and show that 22% of all employers indicate that they have HE skills gaps, while 23% state that they have FET skills gaps.

Figure 17 HE Skills Gaps – Next 3-5 Years – Employer Categories

Sample size: All employer organisations – 760 Percentage Indicating Yes

Q.8a Are there skills which require higher education qualifications not currently available that you require now or in the next 3-5 years?

When looked at by employer category, meanwhile, Figure 17 shows that HE graduate skills gaps are most relevant for foreign-owned employers (28%) and for employers with more than 50 employees (28% for those with 50-250 employees and 30% for those with 250+ employees).

Figure 18 FET Skills Gaps – Next 3-5 Years – Employer Categories

Sample size: All employer organisations – 760. Percentage indicating Yes
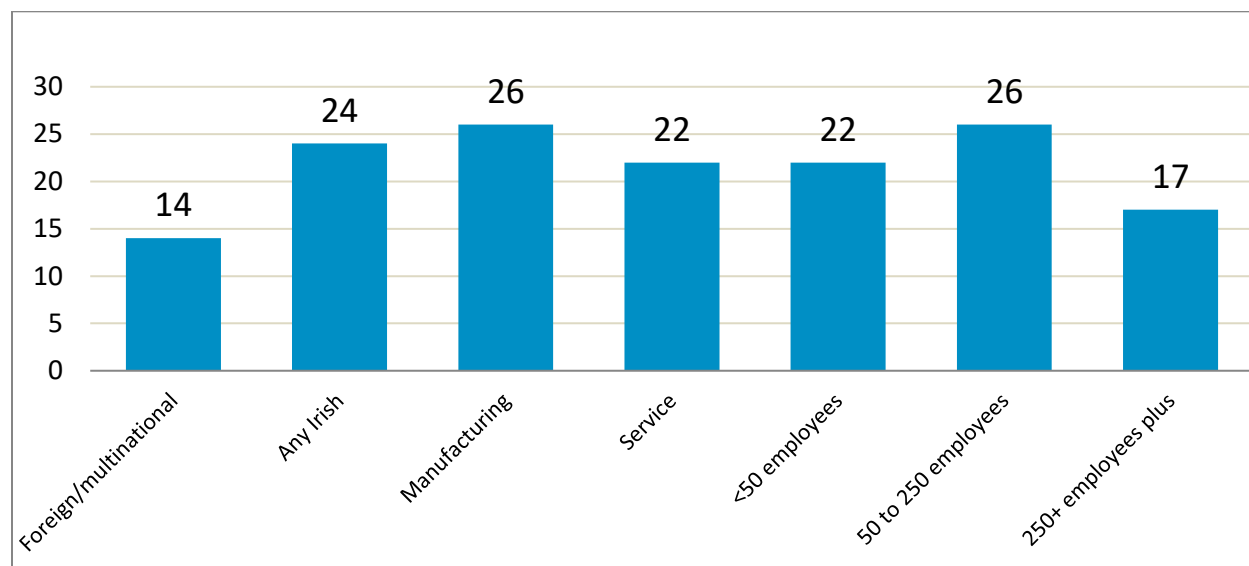
Figure 18, meanwhile, reveals that the greatest perceived FET skills gaps exist within indigenous Irish employers (24%), manufacturing companies (26%), and among employers with between 50-250 employees (26%).

Table 16 Employers with Particular HE Skills Requirements

Sample size: All employer organisations – 760

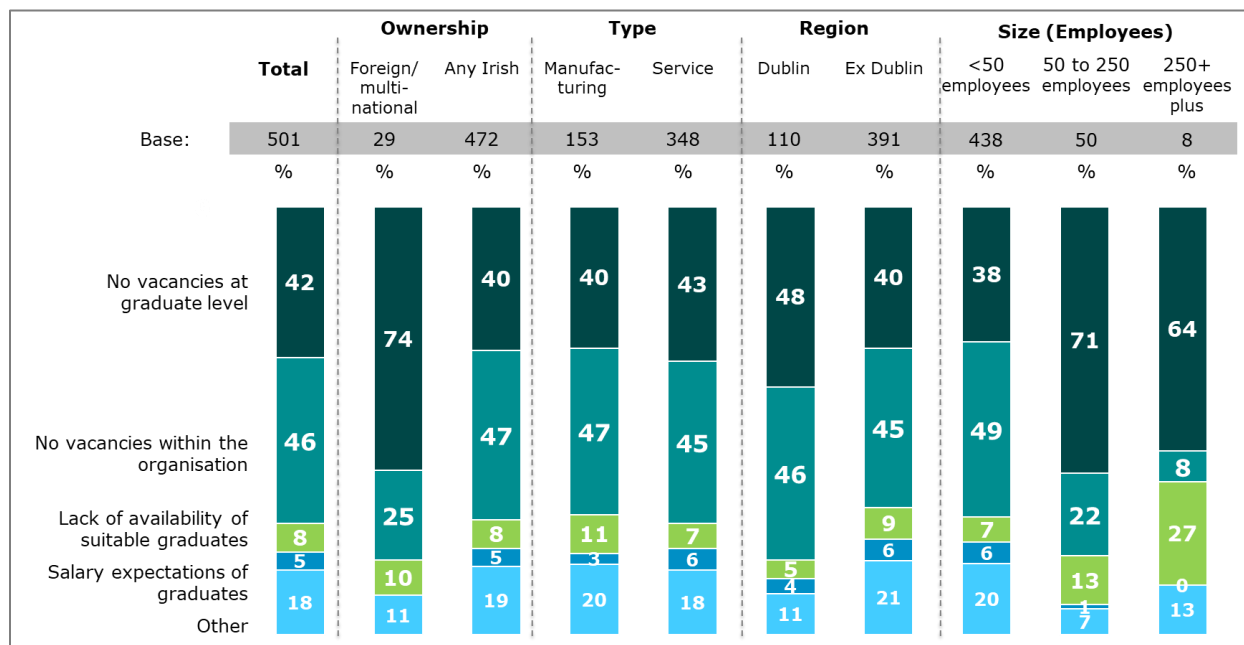|	Now (or within 1-2 years)	From 3 to 5 years (or beyond)
Base:	760	760
	%	%
Computer literacy - IT Skills, software, web design, digital marketing	9	3
Business acumen/Management skills	7	3
Civil engineer/Engineering degree/Network engineering	4	2
Accountancy/Accounting knowledge	3	2
Marketing degree/Promotional	3	2
Administration/Office/Secretarial	2	0
Food science degree/Food technology/Chef/Catering skills	2	0
Apprentices – e.g. Carpenter, Plasterer, Mechanic, Plumber, Electrician	2	1
Pharmaceutical/Medicine/Healthcare (Nursing)	2	1
Communication skills	2	1
Electrics/Electronics	1	0
Architecture/Structural engineer/Civil construction/ Construction/Building	1	1
Commercial awareness, aspects	1	-
Science/Chemical engineering	1	0
Technical knowledge, skills	1	-
Legal	1	1
Other	15	5
DK/None mentioned	63	86

Q10a.   Please list the particular *higher education* skills that your organisation requires now (or within the next 1-2 years), and 3 years or more from now.

Employers were also asked to identify, on a spontaneous and unprompted basis, those particular HE skills that their organisation requires either in the short term (now or within 1-2 years) and medium term (three years from now).

In this regard, Table 16 indicates that almost 10% of all Irish employer organisations believe that there is a need for HE computer literacy skills in the immediate term – including IT, software, web design and digital marketing skills.

Some 7% of all employer organisations identify a short-term need for HE business acumen/management skills.

A mix of other required HE skills, meanwhile, was also identified by employer organisations at lower levels of mention, including engineering, accountancy and marketing skills.

Note, however, the fact that such high proportions of employer organisations cannot think of any required HE skills at an unprompted level does not mean that they do not need any HE skills in their organisation – rather, they simply cannot think of any specific required skills at the time of being interviewed. This might suggest that an educational exercise is required to highlight to prospective employers the range of graduate skills and expertise they could potentially benefit from.

Table 17 Employers with FET Skills Requirements

Sample size: All employer organisations – 760

	Now (or within 1-2 years)	From 3 to 5 years (or beyond)
Base:	760	760
	%	%
Computer literacy - IT Skills, software, web design, digital marketing	6	2
Apprentices – e.g. Carpenter, Plasterer, Mechanic, Plumber, Electrician	4	3
Business management/Project	4	1
Marketing/Retail/Sales/Promotion	4	1
Accounting technician/Accountancy/Numerical literacy	2	2
Administration/Office skills/Secretarial	2	0
Chef/Catering skills	2	1
Engineering - Electrical, mechanical	2	0
Construction/Building	1	0
Communications	1	0
Agriculture	0	0
Science	0	0
Other	19	6
DK/None mentioned	68	89

Q.10b Please list the particular further education skills that your organisation requires now (or within the next 1-2 years), and 3 years or more from now.

Similarly, the most commonly mentioned FET skills required by employer organisations, as outlined in Table 17, include computer literacy – including IT, software, web design and digital marketing skills – as well as a broad range of apprentice skills, business management acumen and marketing/sales skills.

6.   Graduate Recruitment Barriers

Figure 19 Reasons for Not Recruiting HE Graduates in Past 24 Months

Sample size: All Employers not recruiting Higher Education Graduates - 501

	Total	Ownership		Type		Region		Size (Employees)		
		Foreign/ multi-national	Any Irish	Manufac-turing	Service	Dublin	Ex Dublin	<50 employees	50 to 250 employees	250+ employees plus
Base:	501	29	472	153	348	110	391	438	50	8
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
No vacancies at graduate level	42		40	40	43	48	40	38	71	64
No vacancies within the organisation	46	74	47	47	45	46	45	49	22	8
Lack of availability of suitable graduates	8	25	8	11	7	9	6	7	13	27
Salary expectations of graduates	5	10	5	3	6	5 4	6	6	1	0
Other	18	11	19	20	18	11	21	20	7	13

Q.9a   *Why did you not recruit any higher education graduates in the last two years?*

Figure 19 is based on all organisations which have not recruited any HE graduates in the past 2 years.

Irish employers that had not recruited any HE graduates in the last 24 months were also asked to indicate, from a pre-determined list, the reasons for this (with employers being able to give multiple responses).

The findings are presented in Figure 19. It shows that the most common reason cited for not recruiting HE graduates in recent years was simply that the organisation had no vacancies for staff, or had no vacancies for graduate level staff.

Some 8% of all employers not recruiting HE graduates did, however, suggest that they had not done so because they could not find suitably qualified graduates to meet their needs, while 5% of the same cohort indicated that they did not recruit HE graduates because their salary expectations were simply too high at the time

Larger employers (with 250+ employees) were however much more likely to cite a lack of availability of suitable HE graduates (at 27%) as a reason for not hiring such graduates in the past 24 months.

Figure 20 Reasons for Not Recruiting FET Graduates in Past 24 Months

Sample size: All Employers not recruiting Further Education Graduates - 575

	Total	Ownership		Type		Region		Size (Employees)		
		Foreign/ multinat ional	Any Irish	Manufac turing	Service	Dublin	Ex Dublin	<50	50 to 250 employees	250+ employees plus
Base:	575	43	532	156	419	158	417	467	81	21
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
No vacancies at graduate level	38	52	37	34	39	36	39	35	50	74
No vacancies within the organisation	44	29	45	43	44	47	42	48	26	
Lack of availability of suitable graduates	10	18	9	13	9	8	10	7	24	16
Salary expectations of graduates	6		7	6	6	5	6	6	5	12
Other	15	10	16	19	14	15	16	17	8	

Q.9b Why did you not recruit any further education graduates in the last two years?

Figure 20 is based on all organisations which have not recruited any FET graduates in the past 2 years.

Figure 20, meanwhile, shows that the main stated reasons for not recruiting FET graduates amongst those who had not done so in the last 24 months was again a simple lack of any vacancies within the organisation, or a lack of vacancies at FET graduate level.

One in ten of all organisations that did not recruit FET graduates indicated that they had not done so due to a lack of availability of suitable graduates – a reason which increases to 18% of all foreign-owned companies that had not recruited FET graduates, and 24% for companies with 50-250 employees.

Excessive FET graduate salary expectations was also an issue for 6% of this cohort.

Table 18 Industry Profile of those not recruiting due to lack of suitable candidates
Sample Size: All not Recruiting within past 24 months due to lack of suitable candidates

	All Identifying lack of suitable candidates	All Identifying Lack of suitable HE graduates	All Identifying Lack of suitable FET graduates
Base:	79	43	61
	%	%	%
Manufacturing	16	19	16
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	1	-	2
Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	1	-	2
Construction	15	21	15
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	15	19	13
Transportation and storage	6	9	3
Accommodation and food service activities	8	7	7
Information and communication	1	-	2
Financial and insurance activities	5	5	7
Real estate activities	4	5	3
Professional, scientific and technical activities	20	9	25
Administrative and support service activities	4	2	5
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	-	-	-
Education	-	-	-
Human health and social work activities	1	2	-
Arts, entertainment and recreation	1	2	2

Those identifying a lack of suitable HE graduates over-index on the construction and wholesale and retail trade sectors.

Table 19 Industry Profile of those not recruiting due to Salary Expectation of Graduates
Sample Size: All not Recruiting within past 24 months due to Salary Expectation of Graduates

	All Identifying Salary expectations of graduates	All Identifying Salary expectations of HE graduates	All Identifying Salary expectations of FET graduates
Base:	40	25	31
	%	%	%
Manufacturing	8	4	6
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	3	4	-
Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	-	-	-
Construction	18	12	19
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	15	24	13
Transportation and storage	8	12	10
Accommodation and food service activities	13	16	10
Information and communication	3	4	3
Financial and insurance activities	8	4	6
Real estate activities	8	8	10
Professional, scientific and technical activities	8	-	10
Administrative and support service activities	5	4	3
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	-	-	-
Education	-	-	-
Human health and social work activities	5	4	6
Arts, entertainment and recreation	-	-	-
Other services	-	-	-

7. Collaboration and Staff Development

Figure 21 Employer Collaboration with HE Institutions

Sample size: All employer organisations – 760
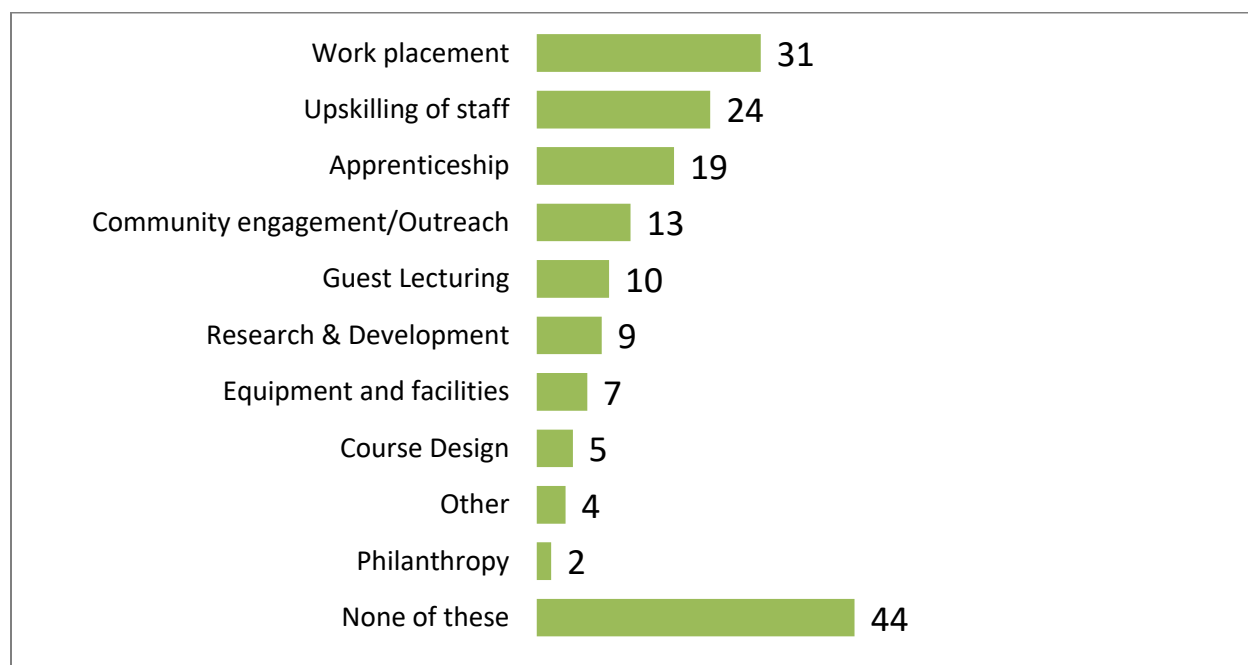
Q11.   Please indicate whether your organisation is involved in any of the following collaborations with Higher Education institutions

Figure 21 is based on all employer organisations and shows the extent to which employers cite involvement in collaborations with HE institutions. In this regard, significant proportions of employer organisations indicate that they are involved in work placement collaborations with HE institutions (31%).

About 25% cite collaboration with HE institutions with regard to the upskilling of staff, 20% with regard to apprenticeships, and 13% cite involvement in community engagement/outreach initiatives, with smaller proportions of employers citing a range of other collaborations.

Table 20 Graduate Type x HE Institution Collaboration Type

Sample size: All employer organisations – 760

	Total	Graduate Type					
		HE Only	FET Only	HE & FET	Any HE	Any FET	Neither
Base:	760	167	96	85	252	181	215
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Work placement	31	51	28	50	50	38	21
Upskilling of staff	24	34	26	27	31	26	22
Apprenticeship	19	21	22	31	24	26	15
Community engagement/Outreach	13	21	12	12	17	12	9
Guest Lecturing	10	20	9	13	17	11	6
Research & Development	9	15	8	13	15	10	7
Equipment and facilities	7	9	9	11	10	10	5
Course Design	5	10	1	10	10	5	3
Philanthropy	2	4	1	5	4	3	2
Other	4	4	2	9	5	5	3
None of these	44	24	44	24	24	35	54

Q11.   Please indicate whether your organisation is involved in any of the following collaborations with Higher Education institutions

Table 20 confirms that organisations hiring HE graduates are more likely than the average employer to collaborate with HE institutions in a number of different ways, from work placements through to Research & Development.

Figure 22 Employer Collaboration with FET Institutions

Sample size: All employer organisations – 760
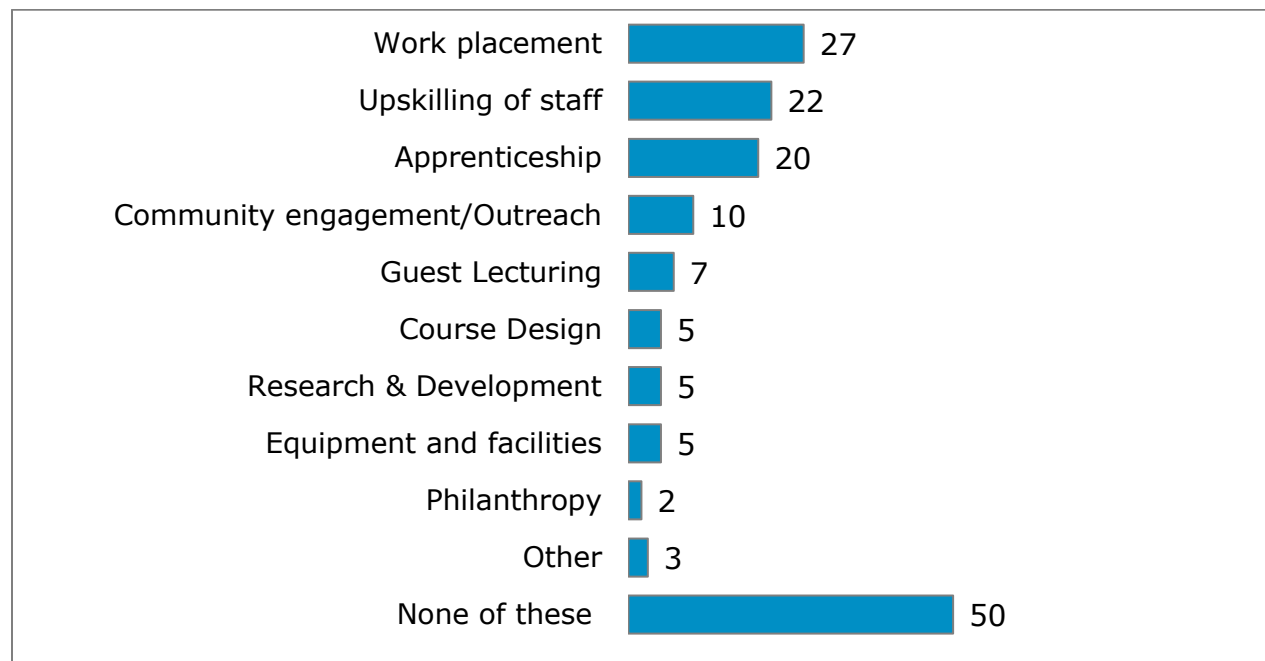
Work placement	27
Upskilling of staff	22
Apprenticeship	20
Community engagement/Outreach	10
Guest Lecturing	7
Course Design	5
Research & Development	5
Equipment and facilities	5
Philanthropy	2
Other	3
None of these	50

Q.11   Please indicate whether your organisation is involved in any of the following collaborations with Further Education institutions

Figure 22 shows the extent to which employers cite involvement in collaborations with FET institutions. It suggests that a similar pattern of response emerges with regard to collaboration with FET institutions, with work placements (27%), upskilling of staff (22%) and apprenticeships (20%) being most commonly cited, while other forms of collaboration are again cited to a lesser degree.

Table 21 Graduate Type x FET Institution Collaboration Type

Sample size: All employer organisations – 760

	Total	Graduate Type					
		HE Only	FET Only	HE & FET	Any HE	Any FET	Neither
Base:	760	167	96	85	252	181	215
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Work placement	27	36	25	55	43	39	21
Upskilling of staff	22	26	21	33	29	27	21
Apprenticeship	20	20	28	33	25	30	18
Community engagement/Outreach	10	13	11	14	13	13	8
Guest Lecturing	7	10	10	14	12	12	5
Course Design	5	7	2	12	9	7	3
Research & Development	5	7	2	10	8	5	5
Equipment and facilities	5	6	6	12	8	9	2
Philanthropy	2	4	1	3	3	2	1
Other	3	3	1	3	3	2	4
None of these	50	40	48	29	36	39	53

Q.11   Please indicate whether your organisation is involved in any of the following collaborations with Further Education institutions

As might be expected, organisations recruiting FET graduates are more likely than average to collaborate with FET institutions.

Figure 23 Employer Rating of Collaboration with Institutions
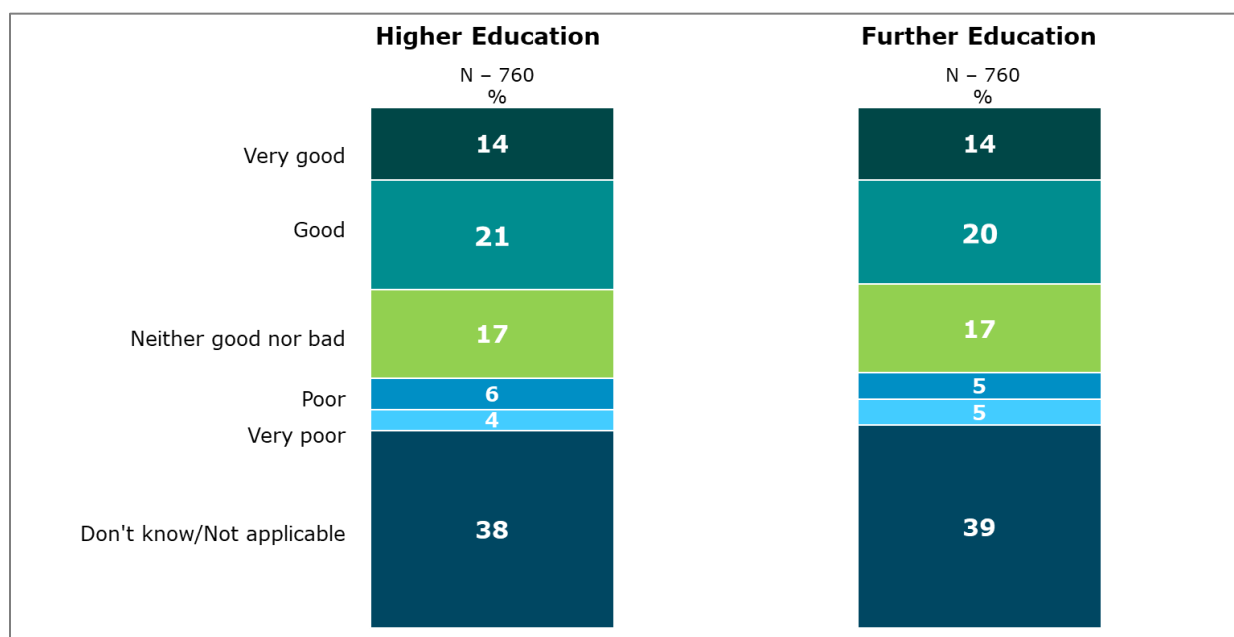
Higher Education

N – 760
%

Very good	14
Good	21
Neither good nor bad	17
Poor	6
Very poor	4
Don't know/Not applicable	38

Further Education

N – 760
%

Very good	14
Good	20
Neither good nor bad	17
Poor	5
Very poor	5
Don't know/Not applicable	39

Q.12   How would you describe the current level of collaboration with Irish education institutions by your organisation for Higher Education Graduates?
How would you describe the current level of collaboration with Irish education institutions by your organisation for Further Education Graduates?

Figure 23 shows employer ratings with respect to collaborations with HE and FET institutions. On balance, employer organisations rate any levels of collaboration they might have with institutions positively – with just 10% of all employer organisations rating both HE and FET institution collaboration levels as being poor.

Figure 24 Overall HE Graduate Rating x HE Graduate Type
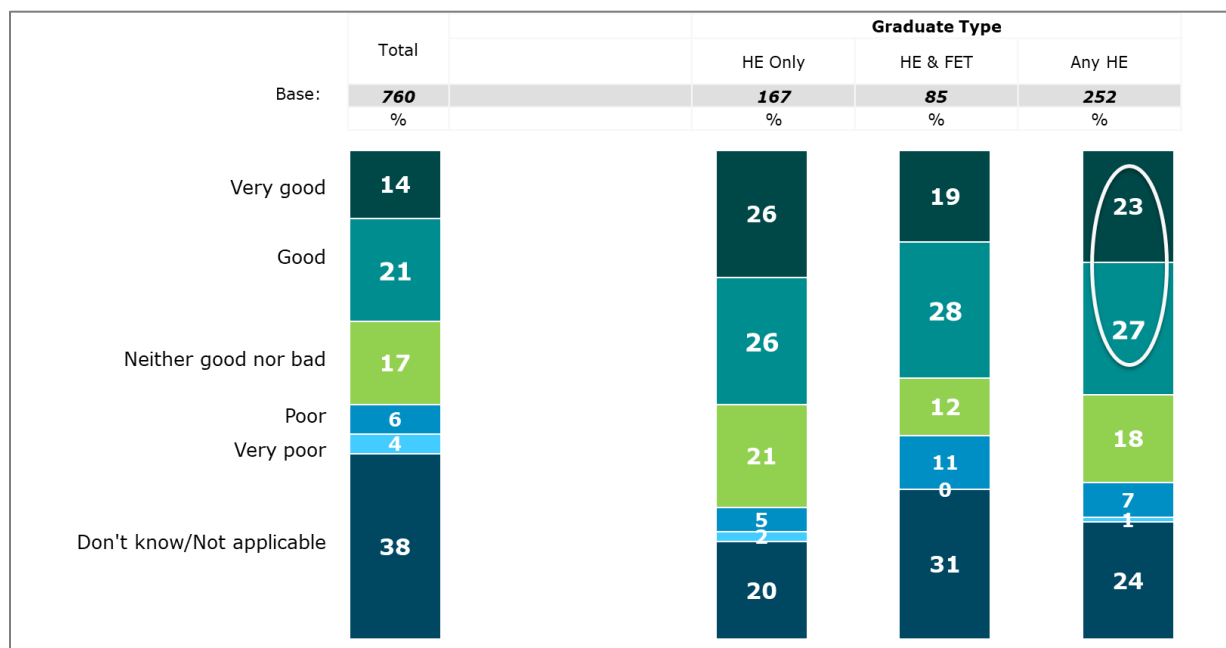
	Total		Graduate Type		
			HE Only	HE & FET	Any HE
Base:	760		167	85	252
	%		%	%	%
Very good	14		26	19	23
Good	21		26	28	27
Neither good nor bad	17		21	12	18
Poor	6		5	11	7
Very poor	4		2	0	1
Don't know/Not applicable	38		20	31	24

Q.12   How would you describe the current level of collaboration with Irish education institutions by your organisation for Higher Education Graduates?

50% of those hiring any HE Graduates in the last two years rate their levels of collaboration with Irish education institutions positively.

Figure 25 Overall FET Graduate Rating x FET Graduate Type
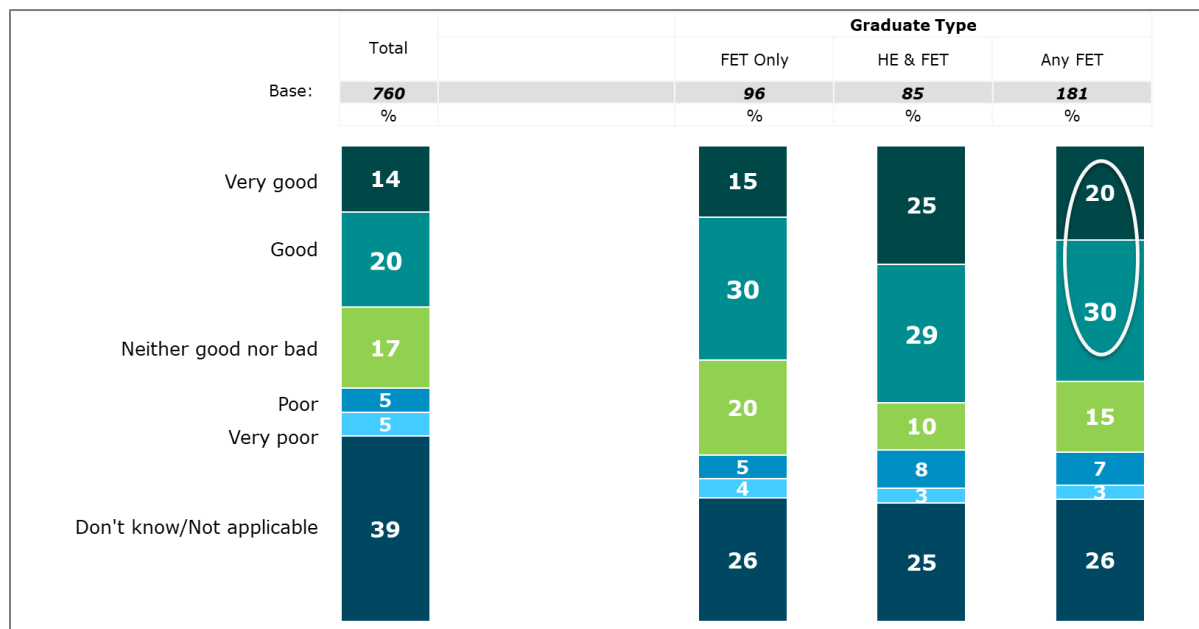
	Total		Graduate Type		
			FET Only	HE & FET	Any FET
Base:	*760*		*96*	*85*	*181*
	%		%	%	%
Very good	14		15	25	20
Good	20		30	29	30
Neither good nor bad	17		20	10	15
Poor	5		5	8	7
Very poor	5		4	3	3
Don't know/Not applicable	39		26	25	26

Q.12   How would you describe the current level of collaboration with Irish education institutions by your organisation for Further Education Graduates?

50% of those hiring any FET Graduates rate their level of collaboration with Irish education institutions positively.

Figure 26 Employer Support for Continuing Professional Development

Sample size: All employer organisations – 760
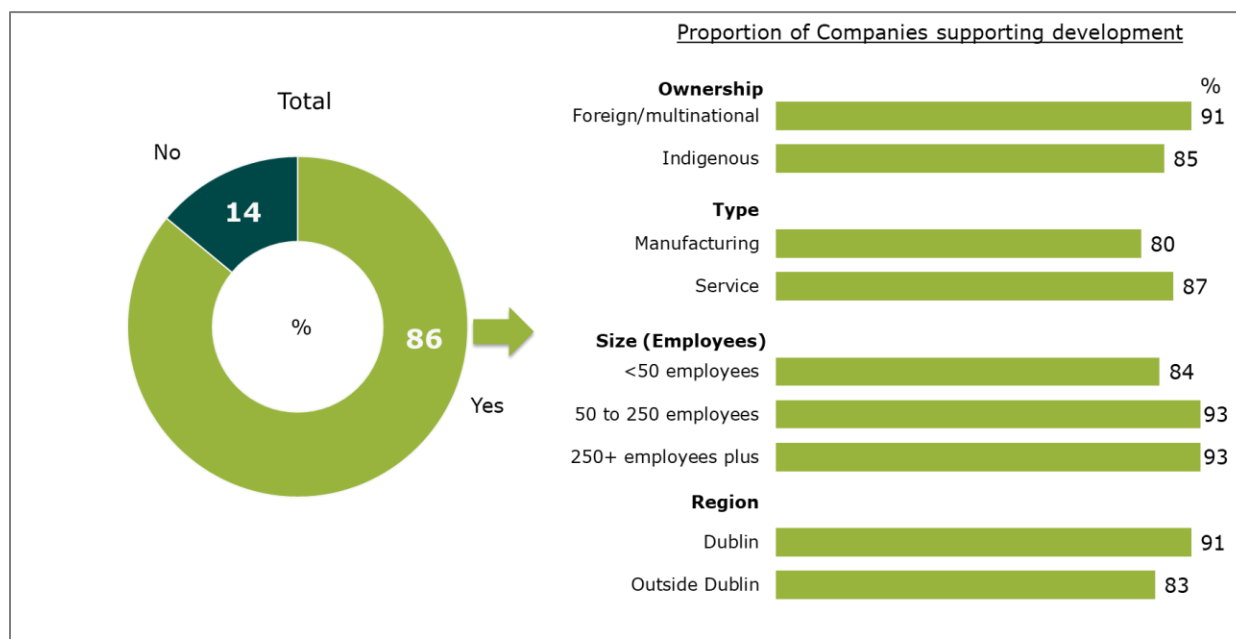
Q.13 Does your company support your staff to engage in Continuing Professional Development?

Figure 26 provides some insights on the extent to which employers provide support for continuing professional development. It suggests that a large majority of employer organisations (86%) support their staff to engage in continuing professional development.

Levels of staff professional development support are highest, however, amongst larger employers with 50+ employees (93%), multinational companies (91%) and companies operating in Dublin (91%).

Figure 27 Types of Employer Support for Continuing Professional Development

Sample size: All employers supporting development - 646
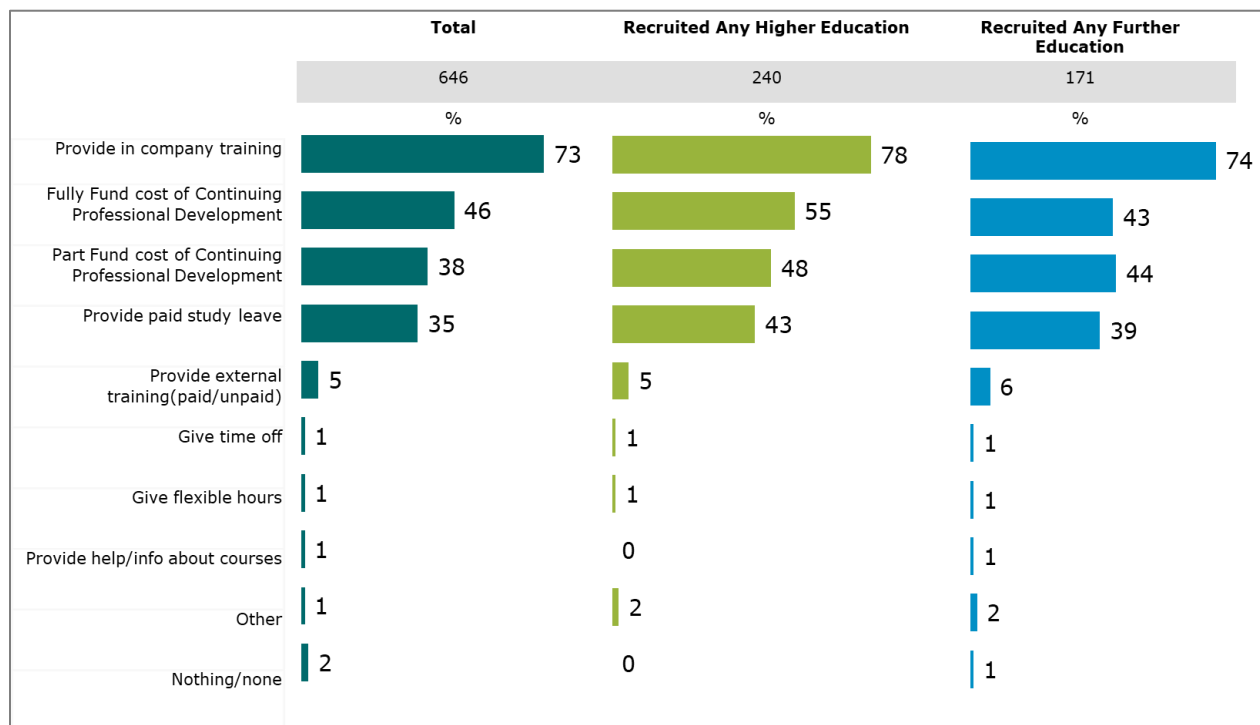
	Total	Recruited Any Higher Education	Recruited Any Further Education
	646	240	171
	%	%	%
Provide in company training	73	78	74
Fully Fund cost of Continuing Professional Development	46	55	43
Part Fund cost of Continuing Professional Development	38	48	44
Provide paid study leave	35	43	39
Provide external training(paid/unpaid)	5	5	6
Give time off	1	1	1
Give flexible hours	1	1	1
Provide help/info about courses	1	0	1
Other	1	2	2
Nothing/none	2	0	1

Q.14   How does your company support your staff to engage in Continuing Professional Development, Lifelong Learning, Upskilling or Reskilling?

Figure 27, meanwhile, provides insights on the types of staff development support provided by employers (with multiple responses per employer again provided).

By far the most prevalent type of support cited is in-company training (provided by 73% of all employers supporting professional development).

Some 46% of all such employers claim to fully fund the cost of continuing professional development for their staff, while 38% indicate that they part-fund such initiatives.

Finally, a third of these employers provide paid study leave to their staff for the purposes of professional development, lifelong learning, upskilling or reskilling.

APPENDIX : Questionnaire

2018 NATIONAL EMPLOYER SURVEY – QUESTIONNAIRE

Good Morning/afternoon/evening my name is …………………… from Behaviour & Attitudes, the independent Irish market research company. We are conducting a survey amongst Irish employers on behalf of the Higher Education Authority, and the Further Education & Training Authority Solas, regarding employers' views on Irish further and higher education.

The survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Everything you say to me over the course of the interview will be treated in strict confidence, and will be used for statistical purposes only.

This interview will be conducted in accordance with Market Research Society Guidelines. For quality control purposes, this call may be monitored by a supervisor.

Would you be willing to participate in the survey?

Yes	1	CONTINUE
Yes, later	2	INTERVIEWER MAKE APPOINTMENT
No/refusal to participate	3	INTERVIEWER PLEASE PROCESS AS A REFUSAL
Absolute Refusal – Respondent explicitly states unwillingness to participate in any future telephone research	4	INTERVIEWER PLEASE PROCESS AS A REFUSAL AND REMOVE

Q1. Have you recruited staff to your workforce over the last 24 months?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

If Yes go to Q2 If no go to Q8

Q2. If so how many staff have you recruited to your workforce over the last 24 months?

☐

Q3.a Have you recruited any graduates to your workforce, from within the Republic of Ireland over the last 24 months, from the …. (INTERVIEWER READ OUT FULL DESCRIPTIONS OF EDUCATION TYPES PROVIDED)

Q3.b Have you recruited any graduates to your workforce from outside the Republic of Ireland over the last 24 months, from the …. (INTERVIEWER READ OUT FULL DESCRIPTIONS OF EDUCATION TYPES PROVIDED)

(A) Higher Education System (e.g. Higher Certificate, Diploma, Ordinary or Honours Bachelor Degree, Postgraduate Diploma, Postgraduate Certificate, Higher Diploma, Masters Degree, Doctoral /PHD Degree).

AND/OR THE …

☐

(B) Further Education and Training system (e.g. persons with qualifications from an apprenticeship, traineeship, PLC or community and adult education offered through the Education and Training Board network throughout the country as well as through other local providers including SOLAS eCollege. Persons with FET qualifications will have qualifications at levels one to six on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), including National Craft Certificates (for qualified apprentices, plumber, electrician, etc.), FETAC/QQI qualifications (e.g. childcare, hairdressing etc.), specific industry related (vendor) qualifications (e.g. Microsoft)*. *These types of qualifications may have been obtained though paid-for courses or obtained free through an ETB.

Institution Type	Institutions in the Republic of Ireland	Institutions Outside the Republic of Ireland
No. of Higher Education graduates (e.g. Higher Certificate, Diploma, Ordinary or Honours Bachelor Degree, Postgraduate Diploma, PostGraduatge Certificate, Higher Diploma, Masters Degree, Doctoral/PHD Degree).		
Further Education and Training system (e.g. persons with qualifications from an apprenticeship, traineeship, PLC or community and adult education offered through the Education and Training Board network throughout the country as well as through		

other local providers including SOLAS eCollege. Persons with FET qualifications will have qualifications at levels one to six on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), including National Craft Certificates (for qualified apprentices, plumber, electrician, etc.), FETAC/QQI qualifications (e.g. childcare, hairdressing etc.), specific industry related (vendor) qualifications (e.g. Microsoft)*. *These types of qualifications may have been obtained though paid-for courses or obtained free through an ETB.		
Have recruited neither type of graduate in last 24 months (DO NOT READ OUT)	GO TO Q.8	GO TO Q.8

Q4a. From which disciplines did you recruit your *higher education* graduates from the Republic of Ireland? [Please tick all that apply]

- ❑ Business & Law - (incl. Marketing, Sales, Management, Accounting, Finance, Property Sales)
- ❑ Engineering - (excl. Civil and/or Software Engineering)
- ❑ Science & Mathematics - (incl. Food Science, Environmental Science)
- ❑ Computing - (incl. Software Engineering)
- ❑ Humanities & Arts - (incl. Teacher Education, Languages, History, Philosophy)
- ❑ Social Sciences - (incl. Psychology, Sociology, Economics, Journalism)
- ❑ Construction - (incl. Civil Engineering)
- ❑ Agriculture & Veterinary
- ❑ Health & Welfare - (incl. nursing, medical, social work)
- ❑ Services - (incl. Hospitality, Tourism, Travel, Environmental Protection, Transport, Security)

Q4b. From which disciplines did you recruit your *further education* graduates from the Republic of Ireland? [Please tick all that apply]

- ❑ Business & Law - (incl. Marketing, Sales, Management, Accounting, Finance, Secretarial and Office work)
- ❑ Engineering –mechanical, process, QA, electrical, electronic and automation, i.e. state what included - (excl. Civil and/or Software Engineering)
- ❑ Science & Mathematics - (incl. Food Science, Environmental Science)
- ❑ Computing - (incl. Software Engineering and programming)
- ❑ Humanities & Arts – (Early Childhood Education, AV (Audio-Visual Techniques and Animation), Languages)
- ❑ Social Sciences - (incl. Psychology, Sociology, Economics, Journalism)
- ❑ Construction - (incl. Civil Engineering)
- ❑ Agriculture & Veterinary (incl. Horticulture, Animal care)
- ❑ Health & Welfare - (incl. Nursing, Social work, Care of elderly)
- ❑ Services - (incl. Hospitality, Tourism, Travel & Leisure, Environmental Protection & Waste Management, Transport, Security, Hair & beauty services)

Q5a. From which disciplines did you recruit the *higher education* graduates from outside the Republic of Ireland? [Please tick all that apply]

- ❑ Business & Law - (incl. Marketing, Sales, Management, Accounting, Finance, Property Sales)
- ❑ Engineering - (excl. Civil and/or Software Engineering)
- ❑ Science & Mathematics - (incl. Food Science, Environmental Science)
- ❑ Computing - (incl. Software Engineering)
- ❑ Humanities & Arts - (incl. Teacher Education, Languages, History, Philosophy)
- ❑ Social Sciences - (incl. Psychology, Sociology, Economics, Journalism)
- ❑ Construction - (incl. Civil Engineering)
- ❑ Agriculture & Veterinary
- ❑ Health & Welfare - (incl. nursing, medical, social work)
- ❑ Services - (incl. Hospitality, Tourism, Travel, Environmental Protection, Transport, Security).

Q5b. **From which disciplines did you recruit the further education graduates from outside the Republic of Ireland?**

- ☐ Business & Law - (incl. Marketing, Sales, Management, Accounting, Finance, Secretarial and Office work)
- ☐ Engineering –mechanical, process, QA, electrical, electronic and automation, i.e. state what included - (excl. Civil and/or Software Engineering)
- ☐ Science & Mathematics - (incl. Food Science, Environmental Science)
- ☐ Computing - (incl. Software Engineering and programming)
- ☐ Humanities & Arts – (Early Childhood Education, AV (Audio-Visual Techniques and Animation), Languages)
- ☐ Social Sciences - (incl. Psychology, Sociology, Economics, Journalism)
- ☐ Construction - (incl. Civil Engineering)
- ☐ Agriculture & Veterinary (incl. Horticulture, Animal care)
- ☐ Health & Welfare - (incl. Nursing, Social work, Care of elderly)
- ☐ Services - (incl. Hospitality, Tourism, Travel & Leisure, Environmental Protection & Waste Management, Transport, Security, Hair & beauty services)

Q6a. Please rate your level of satisfaction with your *higher education* graduate recruits as they relate to the following workplace attributes:

[In your assessment please rate the graduates collectively within disciplines, i.e. as a group]

Each Discipline Selected						
	All satisfactory	75% satisfactory	50% satisfactory	25% satisfactory	None satisfactory	Don't know/Not Applicable
Computer and technical literacy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Foreign language capability	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Numeracy/ Processing and interpreting numerical data	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Application of technical knowledge	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Effective verbal communication	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Effective written communication	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Working effectively with others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Working effectively on their own	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Attention to detail	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Commercial awareness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Entrepreneurial skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q6b. Please rate your level of satisfaction with your *further education* graduate recruits as they relate to the following workplace attributes:

[In your assessment please rate the graduates collectively within disciplines, i.e. as a group]

	Each Discipline Selected					
	All satisfactory	75% satisfactory	50% satisfactory	25% satisfactory	None satisfactory	Don't know/Not Applicable
Computer and technical literacy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Foreign language capability	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Numeracy/ Processing and interpreting numerical data	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Application of technical knowledge	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Effective verbal communication	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Effective written communication	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Working effectively with others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Working effectively on their own	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Attention to detail	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Commercial awareness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Entrepreneurial skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q7a. Please rate your level of satisfaction with your *higher education* graduate recruits as they relate to the following personal attributes:

[In your assessment please rate the graduates collectively within disciplines, i.e. as a group]

Each Discipline Selected						
	All satisfactory	75% satisfactory	50% satisfactory	25% satisfactory	None satisfactory	Don't know/Not Applicable
Ability to cope with work pressure	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Adaptability and flexibility	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Positive attitude	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ethically and socially aware	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Reliability	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Personal commitment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Professionalism and work ethic	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q7b. Please rate your level of satisfaction with your *further education* graduate recruits as they relate to the following personal attributes:

[In your assessment please rate the graduates collectively within disciplines, i.e. as a group]

Each Discipline Selected						
	All satisfactory	75% satisfactory	50% satisfactory	25% satisfactory	None satisfactory	Don't know/Not Applicable
Ability to cope with work pressure	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Adaptability and flexibility	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Positive attitude	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ethically and socially aware	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Reliability	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Personal commitment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Professionalism and work ethic	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

ASK ALL

Q8a. Are there skills which require *higher education qualifications* not currently available that you require now or in the next 3-5 years?

Yes/No

Q8b. Are there skills which require *further education qualifications* not currently available that you require now or in the next 3-5 years?

Yes/No

ASK ALL NOT RECRUITING ANY HIGHER EDUCATION GRADUATES AT Q.3

Q9a. Why did you not recruit any *higher education* graduates in the last two years?
- ☐ no vacancies at graduate level
- ☐ no vacancies within the organisation
- ☐ lack of availability of suitable graduates
- ☐ salary expectations of graduates
- ☐ Other, please specify: _____

ASK ALL NOT RECRUITING ANY FURTHER EDUCATION GRADUATES AT Q.3

Q9b. Why did you not recruit any *further education* graduates in the last two years?
- ☐ no vacancies at graduate level
- ☐ no vacancies within the organisation
- ☐ lack of availability of suitable graduates
- ☐ salary expectations of graduates
- ☐ Other, please specify: _____

ASK ALL

Q10a. Please list the particular *higher education* skills that your organisation requires: now (or within the next 1-2 years), and 3 years or more from now.

	When do (or will) you need these skills? [Please tick one/both options]		
	Now (or within 1-2 years)	From 3 to 5 years (or beyond)	Skills
First	☐	☐	
Second	☐	☐	
Third	☐	☐	

Q10b. Please list the particular *further education* skills that your organisation requires (or will require in the next three to five years): now (or within the next 1-2 years), and 3 years or more from now.

	When do (or will) you need these skills? [Please tick one/both options]		
	Now (or within 1-2 years)	From 3 to 5 years (or beyond)	Skills
First	☐	☐	
Second	☐	☐	
Third	☐	☐	

Q11. Please indicate whether your organisation is involved in any of the following collaborations with education institutions:

Higher education
[Please tick all that apply, there is more information about each collaboration available by pointing towards the blue text]

☐ Course Design
☐ Work placement
☐ Upskilling of staff
☐ Guest Lecturing
☐ Research & Development
☐ Equipment and facilities
☐ Community engagement/Outreach
☐ Philanthropy
☐ Apprenticeship
☐ Other, please specify: _____

Further education
[Please tick all that apply, there is more information about each collaboration available by pointing towards the blue text]

- ❑ Course Design
- ❑ Work placement
- ❑ Upskilling of staff
- ❑ Guest Lecturing
- ❑ Research & Development
- ❑ Equipment and facilities
- ❑ Community engagement/Outreach
- ❑ Philanthropy
- ❑ Apprenticeship
- ❑ Other, please specify: _____

Q12. How would you describe the current level of collaboration with Irish education institutions by your organisation:
Higher education

- ○ Very good
- ○ Good
- ○ Neither good nor bad
- ○ Poor
- ○ Very poor
- ○ Don't know/Not applicable

Further education
- ○ Very good
- ○ Good
- ○ Neither good nor bad
- ○ Poor
- ○ Very poor
- ○ Don't know/Not applicable

Q13. Does your company support your staff to engage in Continuing Professional Development?

Yes/No

If yes route to Question 14

Q14. How does your company support your staff to engage in Continuing Professional Development, Lifelong Learning, Upskilling or Reskilling?

- ❑ provide in company training
- ❑ provide paid study leave
- ❑ Fully Fund cost of Continuing Professional Development
- ❑ Part Fund cost of Continuing Professional Development

❑   Other, please specify : _____

Q15a.Please rate the following statement from the scale below

"I am happy with the quality of Irish *higher education* graduates recruited to my company in the last 24 months"

Strongly agree	agree	Neither agree or disagree	disagree	Strongly disagree

Q15b.Please rate the following statement from the scale below

"I am happy with the quality of Irish *further education* graduates recruited to my company in the last 24 months"

Strongly agree	agree	Neither agree or disagree	disagree	Strongly disagree

ABOUT YOUR ORGANISATION

C.1 Please indicate region (or location of head office):

- ⭕ Dublin
- ⭕ South-West
- ⭕ Mid-East
- ⭕ Border
- ⭕ South-East
- ⭕ West
- ⭕ Mid-West
- ⭕ Midlands

C.2 Please assign your organisation into the most appropriate NACE Rev. 2 classification below:

- ⭕ Agriculture, forestry and fishing
- ⭕ Mining and quarrying
- ⭕ Manufacturing
- ⭕ Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply
- ⭕ Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities
- ⭕ Construction
- ⭕ Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles
- ⭕ Transportation and storage
- ⭕ Accommodation and food service activities
- ⭕ Information and communication
- ⭕ Financial and insurance activities
- ⭕ Real estate activities
- ⭕ Professional, scientific and technical activities
- ⭕ Administrative and support service activities
- ⭕ Public administration and defence; compulsory social security
- ⭕ Education
- ⭕ Human health and social work activities

○ Arts, entertainment and recreation
○ Other service activities
○ Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods- and services- producing activities of households for own use
○ Other, please specify: _____

C.3 Please indicate the total size of your workforce into one of the following categories:

○ Fewer than 10 people
○ Between 10 and 50 people
○ Between 51 and 250 people
○ 251 people and above

C.4 Please indicate the primary ownership of your organisation:

○ Foreign/multinational
○ Irish/multinational
○ Irish exporter/importer
○ Domestic (i.e. companies that strictly serve the domestic economy, and do not serve a foreign market by way of trade or investment).

C.5 Finally, would you be willing to participate in a further targeted follow-up survey or discussion based on your responses?

○ Yes, I am willing to take part in a follow-up
○ Yes, but only if necessary