

Australian vocational education and training statistics

Employers' use and views of the VET system 2021

National Centre for Vocational Education Research



Highlights

In 2021:

- 56.6% of employers used the VET system to meet their training needs, up 5.7 percentage points from 2019
- 40.2% of employers had jobs that require vocational qualifications, up 6.0 percentage points from 2019
 - Of these, 74.3% were satisfied that vocational qualifications provide employees with the skills they need for the job
- 27.4% of employers had apprentices and trainees, up 4.2 percentage points from 2019
 - Of these, 74.2% were satisfied that apprentices and trainees are getting the skills they need from training
- 27.1% of employers arranged or provided their employees with nationally recognised training, up 7.2 percentage points from 2019
 - Of these, 78.7% were satisfied that nationally recognised training provides employees with the skills they need for the job.

Employers' use of training

This publication presents information on employers' use and views of the vocational education and training (VET) system. The findings relate to the various ways in which Australian employers use accredited and unaccredited training to meet their skill needs and their satisfaction with the training. Australian employers can engage with accredited training in three main ways, by:

- having jobs that require vocational qualifications
- having apprentices and trainees
- using nationally recognised training, other than through apprenticeships and traineeships.

Employers can also use unaccredited and informal training.

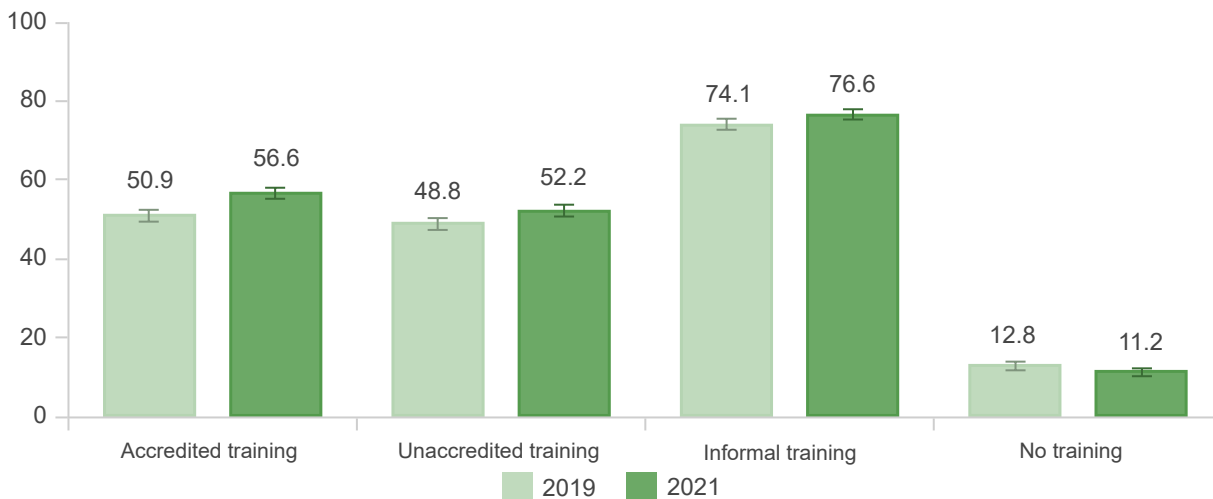
Also presented in this publication is information on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on training needs.

The figures in this publication are derived from the Survey of Employers' Use and Views of the VET System. A total of 5615 Australian employers were surveyed between February and mid-June 2021.

In 2021:

- 56.6% of employers used accredited training to meet their skills needs, up 5.7 percentage points from 2019
- 52.2% provided unaccredited training to their staff, up 3.4 percentage points from 2019
- 76.6% provided informal training to their staff, up 2.5 percentage points from 2019
- 11.2% did not provide any training to their employees, down 1.6 percentage points from 2019.

Figure 1 Employers' use of different types of training, 2019 and 2021 (%)



Of the employers who did not provide any training in the last 12 months, the top reasons were:

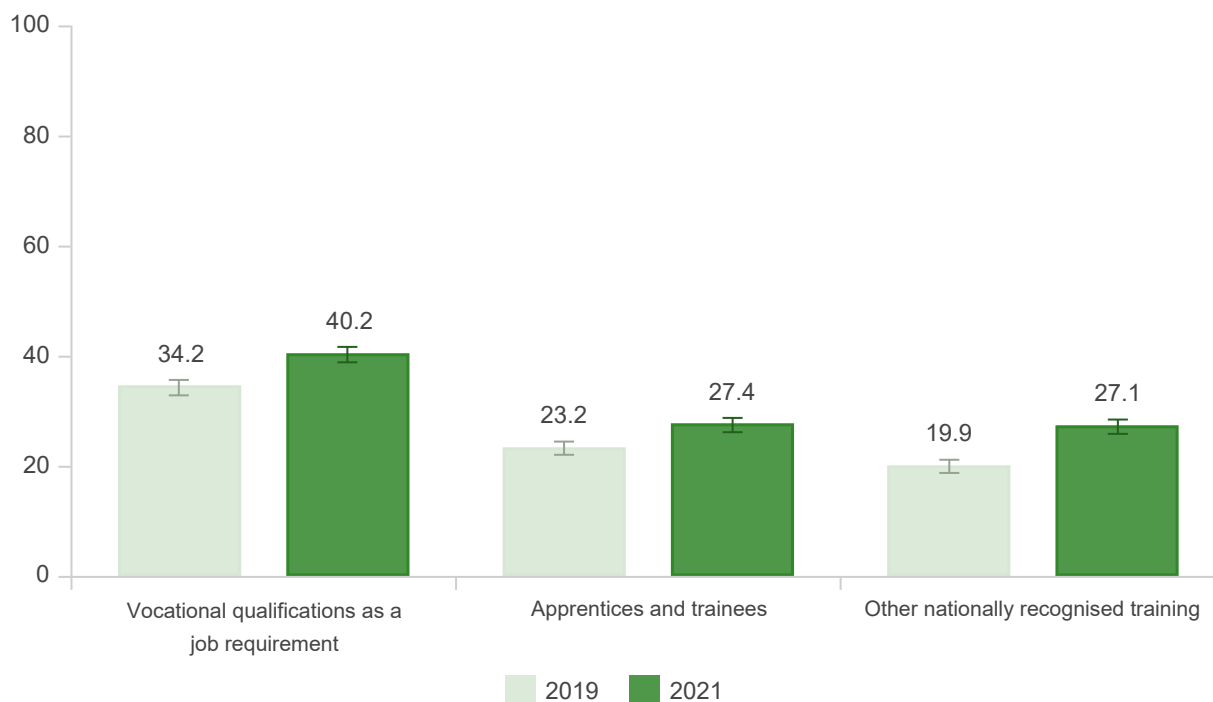
- no need/not relevant to the organisation (52.7%)
- staff were already adequately trained (51.6%).

Employers' use of accredited training

In 2021, 56.6% of employers used accredited training to meet their skills needs, up 5.7 percentage points from 2019. By different methods of engagement:

- 40.2% of employers had jobs that require vocational qualifications, up 6.0 percentage points from 2019
- 27.4% of employers had apprentices and trainees, up 4.2 percentage points from 2019
- 27.1% of employers arranged or provided their employees with other nationally recognised training, up 7.2 percentage points from 2019.

Figure 2 Employers' use of accredited training by choice of training, 2019 and 2021 (%)



Vocational qualifications as a job requirement

In 2021, 40.2% of employers had jobs that require vocational qualifications, up 6.0 percentage points from 2019.

Apprentices and trainees

In 2021, 27.4% of employers had apprentices and trainees, up 4.2 percentage points from 2019.

- Of these, 37.6% had increased the number of apprentices and trainees they employed in the last 12 months, whereas 14.1% had decreased the number they employed.
- Of the employers who changed the number of apprentices and trainees they employed in the last 12 months, 21.2% stated it was due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. See section 'Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic' for additional content.

Other nationally recognised training

In 2021, 27.1% of employers arranged or provided their employees with nationally recognised training (other than through apprenticeships and traineeships), up 7.2 percentage points from 2019.

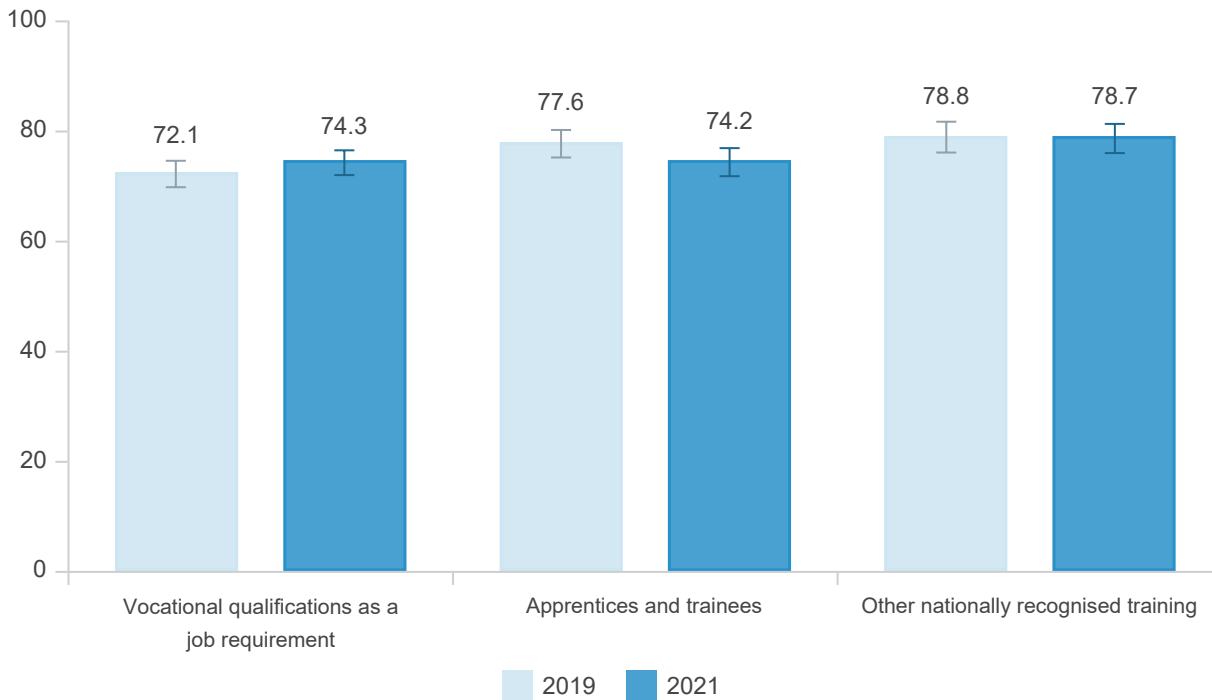
- Of these, 32.2% had increased the number of employees undertaking nationally recognised training in the last 12 months, whereas 6.4% had decreased the number of employees trained.
- Of the employers who changed the number of employees undertaking nationally recognised training in the last 12 months, 22.9% stated it was due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. See section 'Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic' for additional content.

Employers' satisfaction with accredited training

In 2021, the proportion of employers satisfied that training met their skill needs was:

- 74.3% for vocational qualifications, similar to 2019
- 74.2% for training provided to apprentices and trainees, similar to 2019
- 78.7% for other nationally recognised training, similar to 2019.

Figure 3 Employers' satisfaction with accredited training by choice of training, 2019 and 2021 (%)



Reasons for dissatisfaction

Vocational qualifications as a job requirement

9.8% of employers with jobs that require vocational qualifications were dissatisfied with the training as a way of meeting their skill needs. Of these, the top reasons for dissatisfaction were:

- relevant skills are not taught (54.7%*)
- the training is of a poor quality or low standard (47.0%*)
- not enough focus on practical skills (34.5%*).

Apprentices and trainees

10.7% of employers who had apprentices and trainees were dissatisfied with the skills apprentices and trainees were getting from training. Of these, the top reasons for dissatisfaction were:

- the training is of a poor quality or low standard (50.6%*)
- relevant skills are not taught (46.5%*)
- not enough focus on practical skills (31.5%*).

Other nationally recognised training

7.0% of employers who used other nationally recognised training were dissatisfied with the training in providing their employees with the skills they need for the job. Of these, the top reasons for dissatisfaction were:

- relevant skills are not taught (36.8%*)
- the training is of a poor quality or low standard (36.4%*)
- training is too expensive (20.5%*).

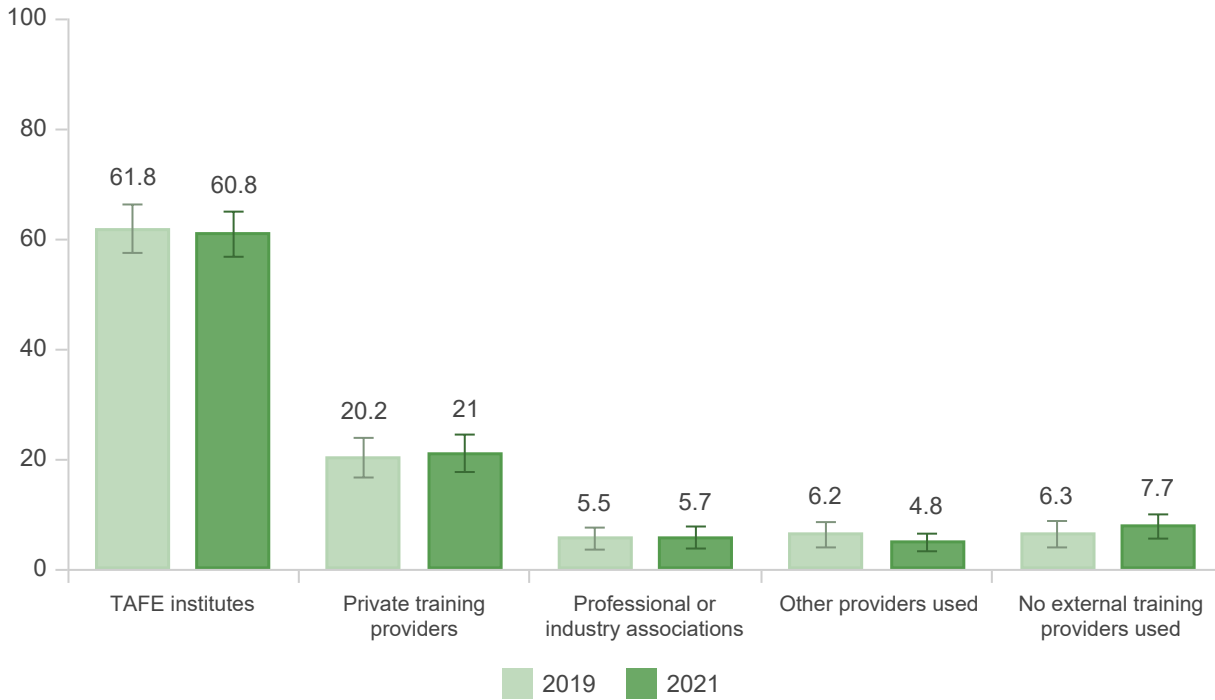
Note: * indicates the estimate has a margin of error of 10% or greater and should be treated with caution.

Use and satisfaction with the main training providers

Apprentices and trainees

Of the employers with apprentices and trainees, 60.8% used TAFE institutes as their main provider to train apprentices and trainees, similar to 2019. Of these, 75.1% were satisfied overall with the training provided.

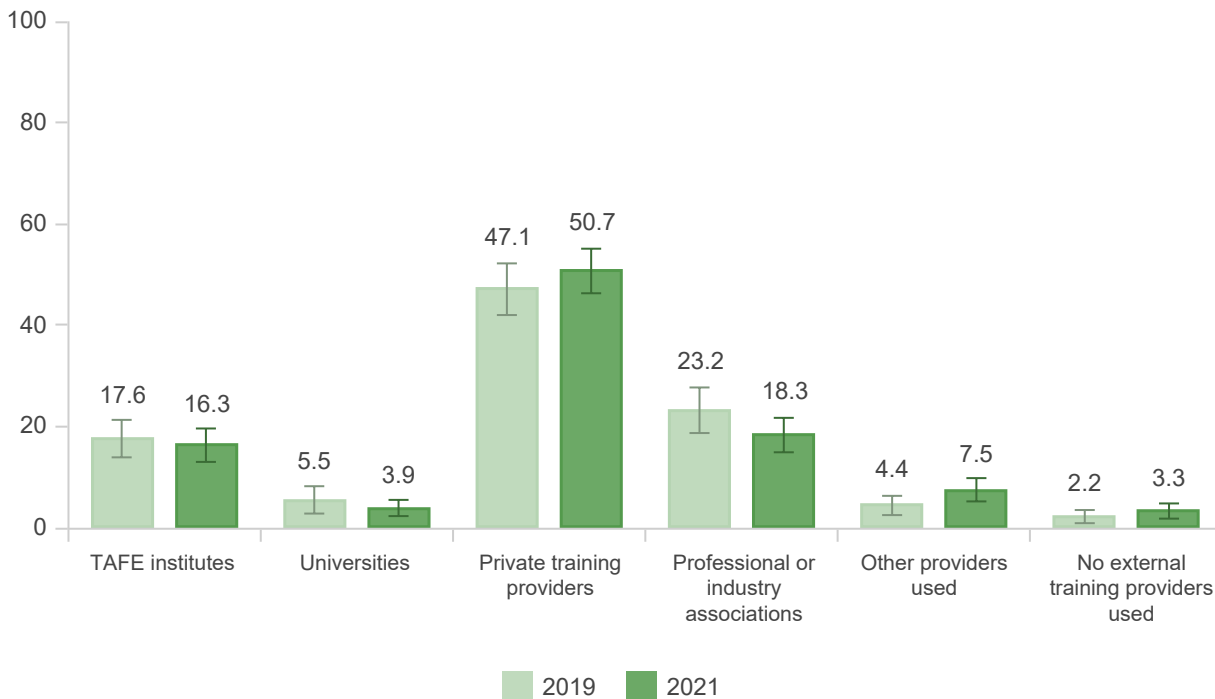
Figure 4 Provider types used to conduct training for apprentices and trainees, 2019 and 2021 (%)



Other nationally recognised training

Of the employers who provided nationally recognised training (other than through apprenticeships and traineeships), 50.7% used private training providers as their main provider to conduct the training. Of these, 91.1% were satisfied overall with the training provided, similar to 2019.

Figure 5 Provider types used to conduct nationally recognised training, 2019 and 2021 (%)



Unaccredited training

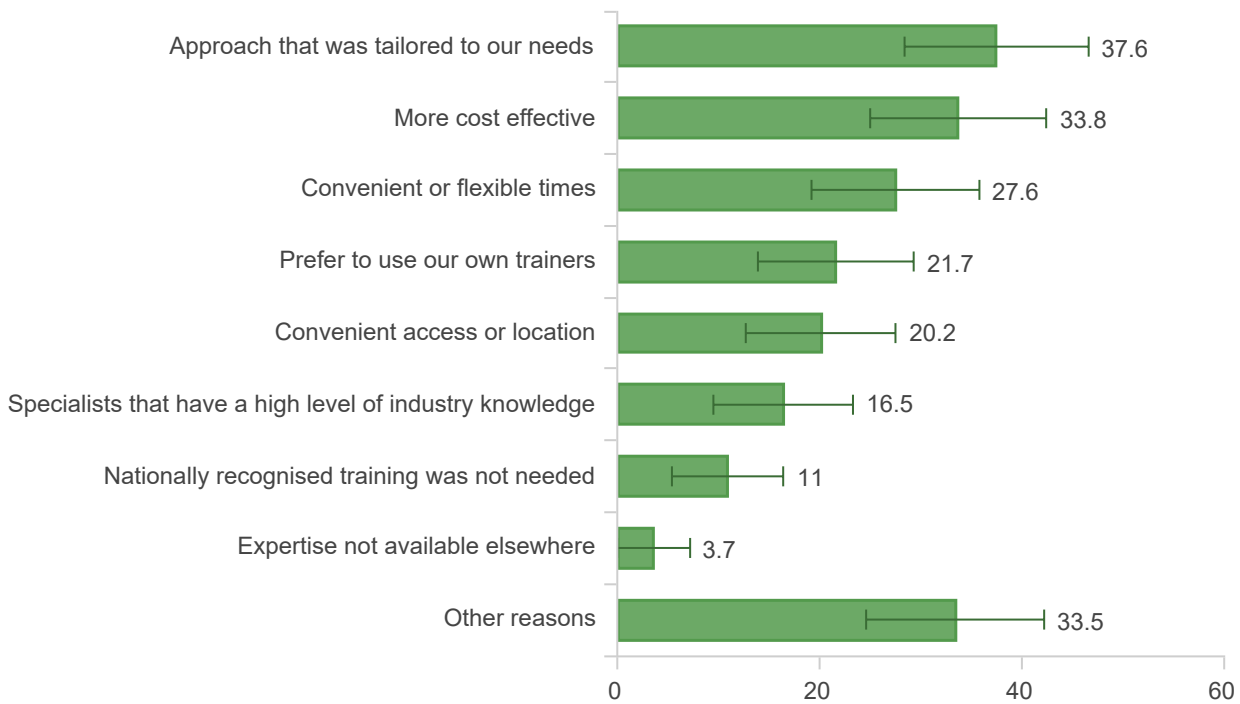
In 2021, 52.2% of employers used unaccredited training to train their employees, up 3.4 percentage points from 2019. Of these:

- 61.8% could not find any comparable nationally recognised training available, similar to 2019
- 27.0% did not explore if there was any comparable nationally recognised training, similar to 2019
- 11.1% found comparable nationally recognised training available, similar to 2019.

Reasons for choosing unaccredited training over nationally recognised training

Of the 11.1% who found comparable nationally recognised training but chose unaccredited training, 37.6% did so as its approach was more tailored to their needs, whereas 33.8% chose the training as it was more cost effective.

Figure 6 Reasons for choosing unaccredited training over nationally recognised training, 2021 (%)



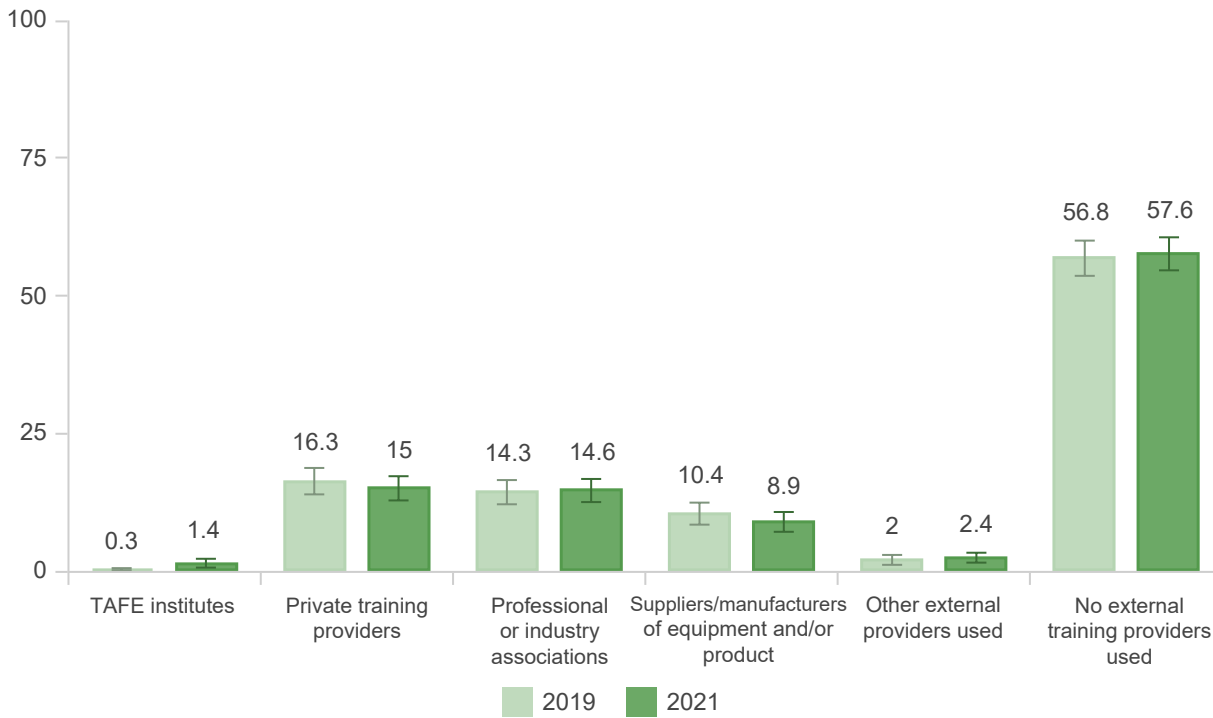
In 2021, the proportion of employers satisfied with unaccredited training was 83.5%, down 3.9 percentage points from 2019.

Main training providers used to conduct unaccredited training

Of the employers who used unaccredited training to train their employees:

- 57.6% conducted the training internally, similar to 2019
- 15.0% used private training providers to conduct the training, similar to 2019.

Figure 7 Provider types used to conduct the majority of unaccredited training, 2019 and 2021 (%)

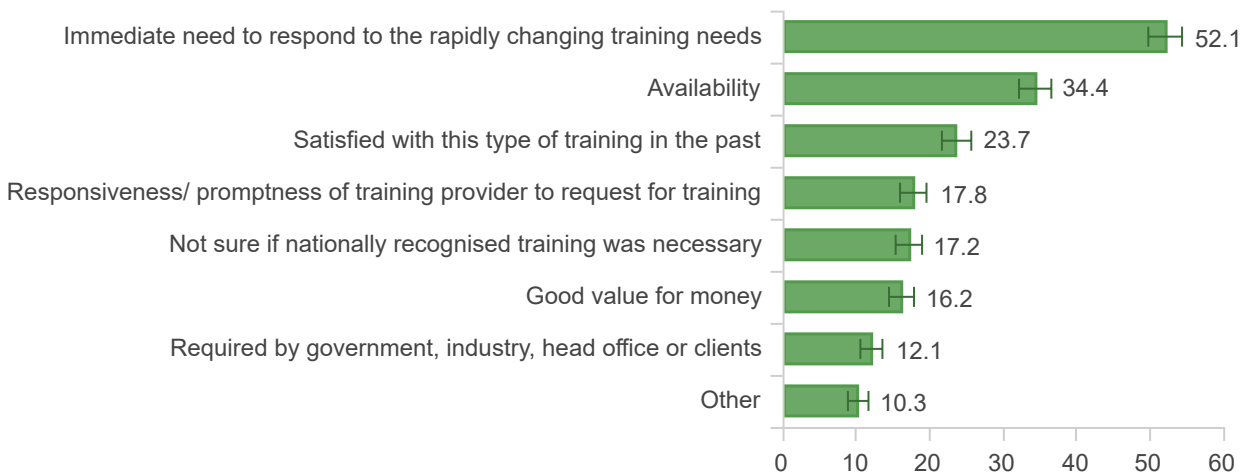


The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic

Overall, 44.0% of employers reported having new training requirements due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Of these:

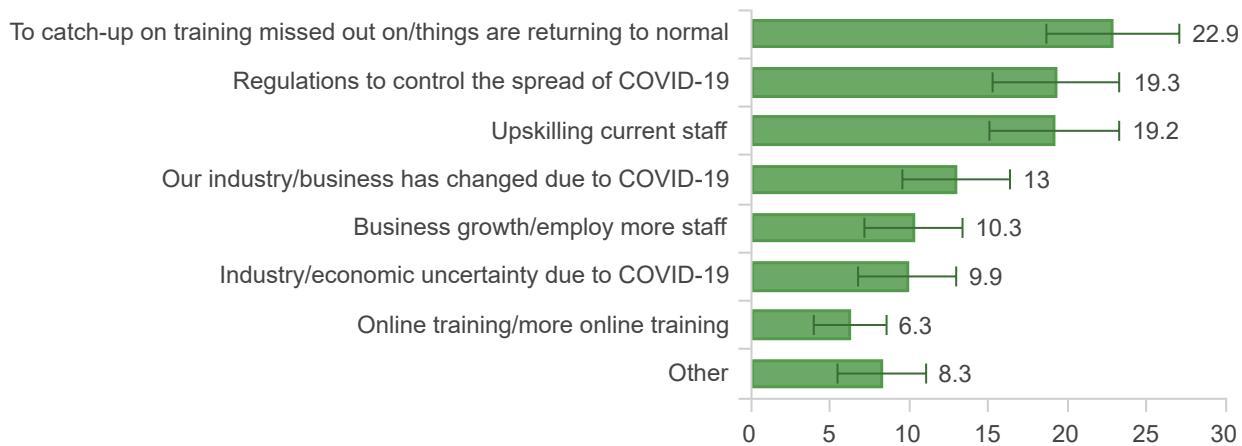
- 83.6% had new training requirements to effectively/safely operate in the COVID environment
- 70.8% had new training requirements in 'Health and safety training' and 68.0% in 'Infection control skills training'
- the main types of training used to cover the new training requirements were informal/ad-hoc training (55.5%), followed by unaccredited training delivered in-house by the organisation (50.3%), and unaccredited training from an external provider (22.0%)
- 3.5% used apprentices and trainees, 3.5% nationally recognised qualifications, and 9.2% nationally recognised subjects to cover their new training requirements
- 52.1% chose the type of training they used because of an immediate need to respond to rapidly changing training needs. A further 34.4% chose the type of training due to availability.

Figure 8 Reasons for choosing types of training, due to the impacts of COVID-19, 2021 (% of employers who had new training requirements due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic)



Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, 21.2% of employers have different training priorities for the next 12 months to those of the last 12 months. Of these, 22.9% need to catch up on training they missed out on.

Figure 9 Reasons organisations have different training priorities, due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, 2021 (% of employers who have different training priorities for the next 12 months due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic)



64.9% of employers expect the amount of training their organisation will provide in the next 12 months will stay the same, 30.6% expect it to increase, and 4.5% expect it to decrease.

Of the employers who expect the amount of training they provide to increase in the next 12 months, 40.7% expect it to increase because they are hiring more staff or expanding their business. Of those who expect the amount of training to decrease in the next 12 months, 29.2% expect it to decrease as staff will have finished their training.

Definitions and derivations

1. Nationally recognised training is defined as nationally recognised training that is not part of an apprenticeship or traineeship. For the purposes of this survey, employers with apprenticeships and traineeships are reported separately.
2. Satisfied was rated as a 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale. It includes employers who were satisfied and very satisfied. Dissatisfied was rated as a 1 or 2 on a 5-point scale and includes employers who were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.
3. Other providers used for training apprentices and trainees include universities, suppliers/manufacturers of equipment/product or providers not elsewhere defined.
4. Other providers used for nationally recognised training include suppliers/manufacturers of equipment/product or providers not elsewhere defined.
5. Other providers used for unaccredited training include universities or providers not elsewhere defined.

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