

2021 CAREERFORCE ANNUAL EMPLOYER SURVEY

Findings and Actions | June 2022



CARTE BLANCHE



Kia ora,

My personal thanks to those of you who completed our annual 2021 employer survey, first launched back in 2017. This survey represented its fifth iteration, and despite the backdrop of severe Covid-19 disruptions, we received a record response to the 2021 survey.

Overall satisfaction has been relatively stable over the past few years, and while the results and your comments indicate that most of you are very satisfied with Careerforce, there are some pockets of dissatisfaction. Identifying and acting upon the issues identified is critical to further lifting satisfaction, so we appreciate your generosity and honesty in sharing your feedback.

As with previous years, we have spent significant time analysing the results and your verbatim comments, and considering what further improvements we can make to address areas of concern.

This report shares some of the key results, but more importantly, it details actions we have committed to, to address areas that you have identified for improvement.

In September, we will transition into Te Pūkenga as a business division within its Work Based Learning subsidiary. It is our intention to take the best of what we have, but also to leverage the resources of the wider Te Pūkenga network to improve outcomes for our employers and learners.

Ngā mihi

Jane Wenman

Chief Executive



Survey Background

Careerforce is the Industry Training Organisation for the health, mental health, aged residential care, disability, social services, home and community support, youth work, cleaning and urban pest management industries. We work with employers nationwide to create, and help support the delivery of relevant New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) approved training programmes.

We are industry driven, seeking to understand and meet the workforce development needs, in order to improve the health and wellbeing of New Zealanders.

This research was first commissioned in 2017 to provide a benchmark for measuring Careerforce's performance from an employer perspective on an annual basis. The aim of the research is to gather feedback that can help identify Careerforce's strengths and areas where improvements can be made at operational/ delivery and strategic levels. Careerforce is committed to improving services and programmes, and the research findings provide valuable feedback that Careerforce can respond to.

The 2021 survey represented its fifth iteration and allows us to see any trends emerging over time.

Survey Methodology

Research company Carte Blanche conducted this research on behalf of Careerforce. The research is longitudinal in nature, allowing Careerforce to monitor employer satisfaction over time.

This fifth annual survey was carried out over November 2021 and pleasingly, we had a record number of survey completions which allows for more robust conclusions to be drawn.

Year	Number of employers who completed all survey questions	Maximum margin of error at the 95% confidence level
2021	489	+/- 3.9%
2020	434	+/- 4.2%
2019	433	+/- 4.2%
2018	423	+/- 4.3%
2017	242	+/- 5.8%

Key Findings

Overall satisfaction relatively stable in recent years.

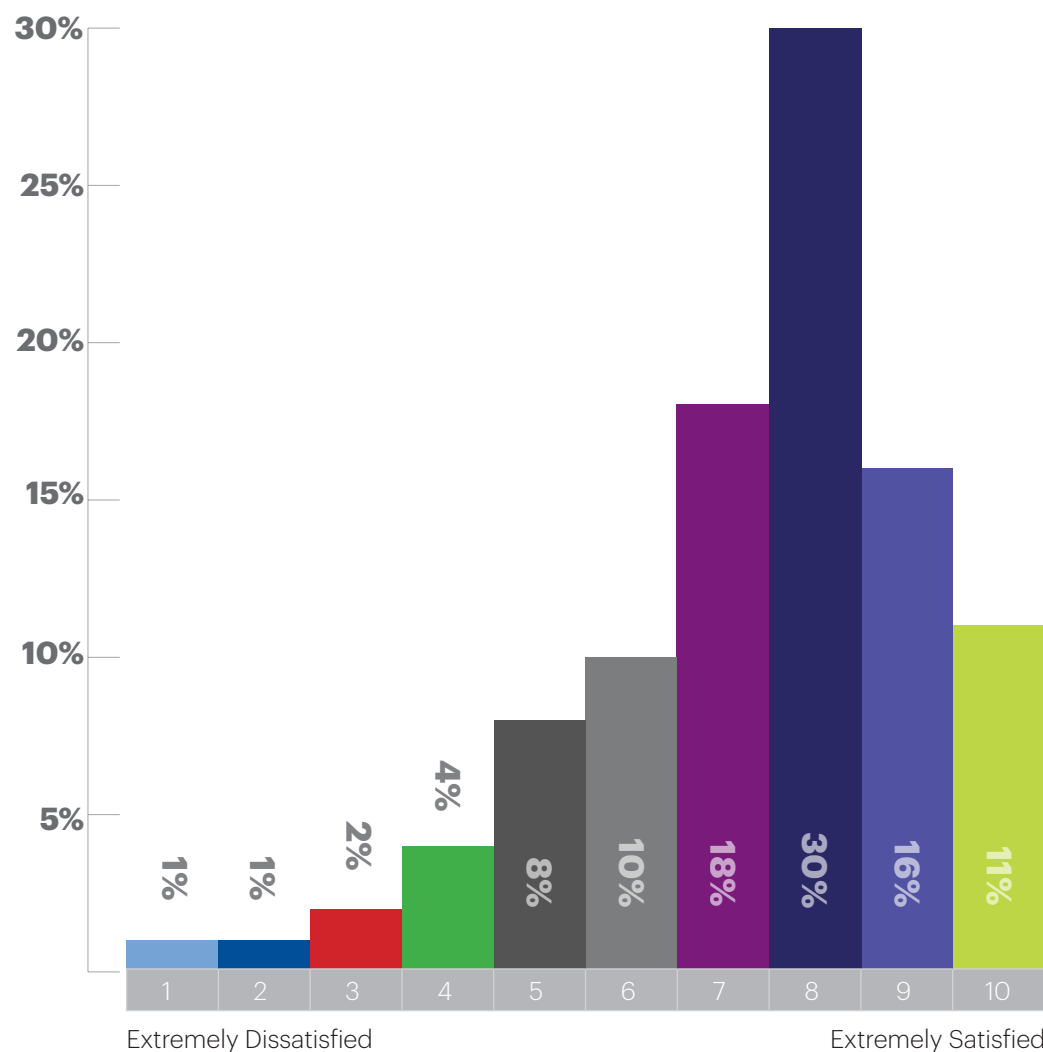
- **Very pleasing to get a record response rate to the 2021 survey given the significant Covid-19 disruptions upon our employers and learners.**
- **Overall satisfaction dipped slightly to 7.4 in 2021 (from 7.5 in 2020), but the trendline has generally tracked upwards since 2017.**
- **The proportion of dissatisfied employers has nearly halved; from 7.4% in 2017 to 4% in 2021.**
- **The proportion of employers who say our programmes don't meet their organisation's workforce development needs has significantly reduced; from 8.4% in 2018 to just 2.5% in 2021.**
- **The proportion of employers who say programme assessments don't match their workplace requirements has nearly halved; from 9% in 2018 down to 5% in 2021.**
- **When considering the next 12 months, lack of staff is the number one challenge, up from 7th in 2017.**
- **Close analysis of all employer feedback highlights that the positive sentiments significantly outweigh the negative sentiments. We know however that we ignore the latter at our peril.**

We must:

- **Improve our communication around staff changes, and ensure greater clarity around Careerforce touchpoints**
- **Continue to improve responsiveness, and ensure any issues are resolved promptly**
- **Continue to support our employers who remain under considerable pressure due to Covid-19 impacts upon the workforce, and particularly around assessor resourcing.**
- **Champion the workplace-based training needs of our employers and learners as we transition into Te Pūkenga, and minimise any disruptions.**
- **Do anything we can to help make things easier for employers; and to consider how we can continue to better directly support learners.**

Overall Satisfaction 2021

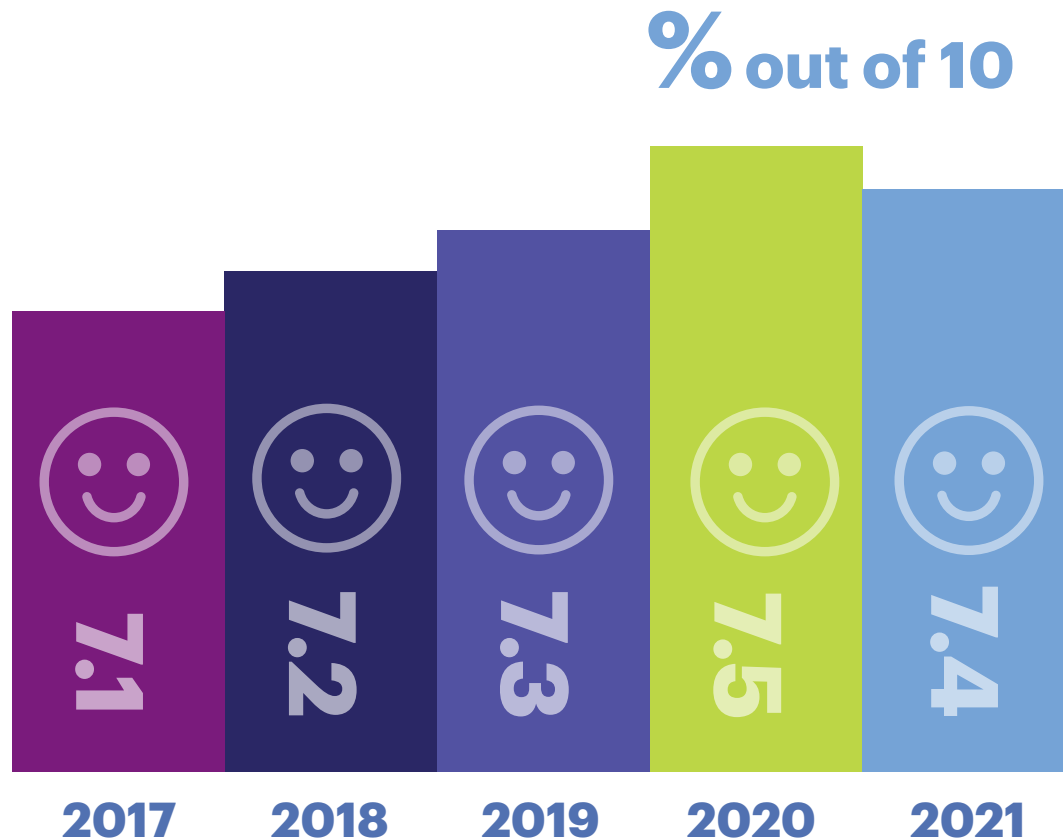
Most employers are satisfied with their relationship with Careerforce.
The average rating is **7.4** out of **10**.



Question: Taking all things into consideration, how would you rate your level of satisfaction with your overall relationship with Careerforce?

Overall Satisfaction Stable

Question: Taking all things into consideration, how would you rate your level of satisfaction with your overall relationship with Careerforce?



Base: All employers who answered, **2021** (n=499), **2020** (n=441), **2019** (n=435), **2018** (n=427), **2017** (n=246)

"Careerforce has been the driving force in workplace learning and throughout my training career."

"Careerforce team are an integral part of our team. They are wonderful, customer focused and passionate about what they do. I love working with them."

"Keep doing what you are doing. You do it well!"

"I am happy with the training the staff are currently undertaking, I can see improvements and the confidence of employees increasing."

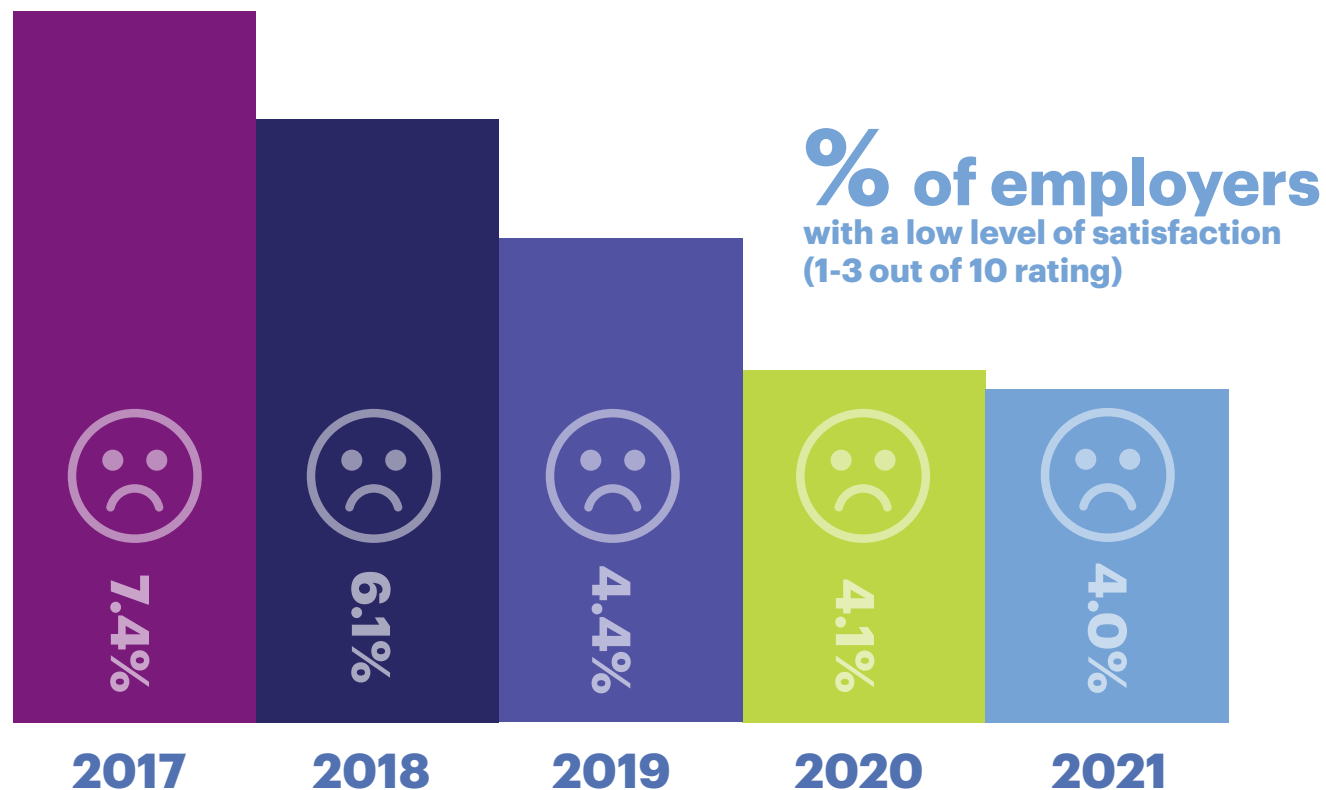
"Keep up the good work! You are making a huge difference in the lives of, not only our staff, but our clients as well."

Base: All employers who answered, **2021** (n=499), **2020** (n=441), **2019** (n=435), **2018** (n=427), **2017** (n=246)

Dissatisfaction has Gradually Declined

It has nearly **halved** since 2017.

Question: Taking all things into consideration, how would you rate your level of satisfaction with your overall relationship with Careerforce?

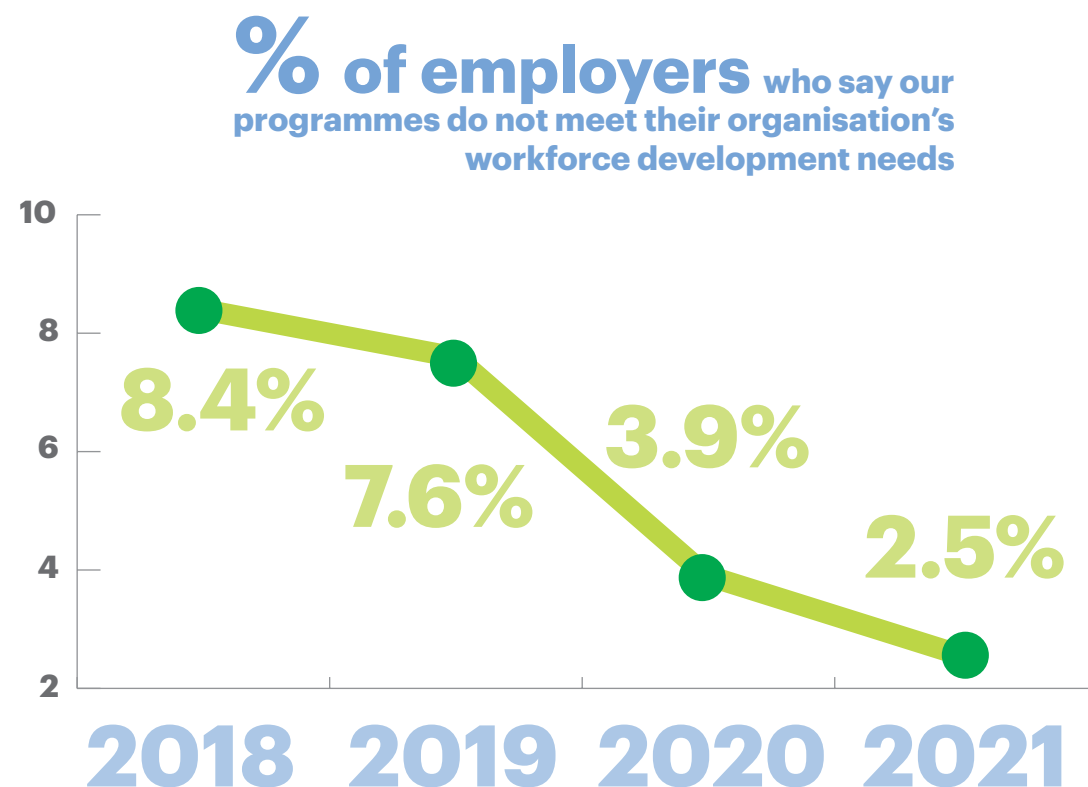


Base: All employers who answered, **2021** (n=514)

Programme Relevance

The proportion of employers who say our programmes **don't meet** their organisation's workforce development needs has **significantly reduced** since 2018.

Question: Overall, how well do Careerforce programmes meet your organisation's workforce development needs?



"All training undertaken has resulted in an increased staff knowledge and competency, also raised self awareness and self esteem. This has a positive flow on affect for clients and the company."

"Careerforce provides a programme that is accommodating to individual kaimahi needs and the organisation supports the kaupapa."

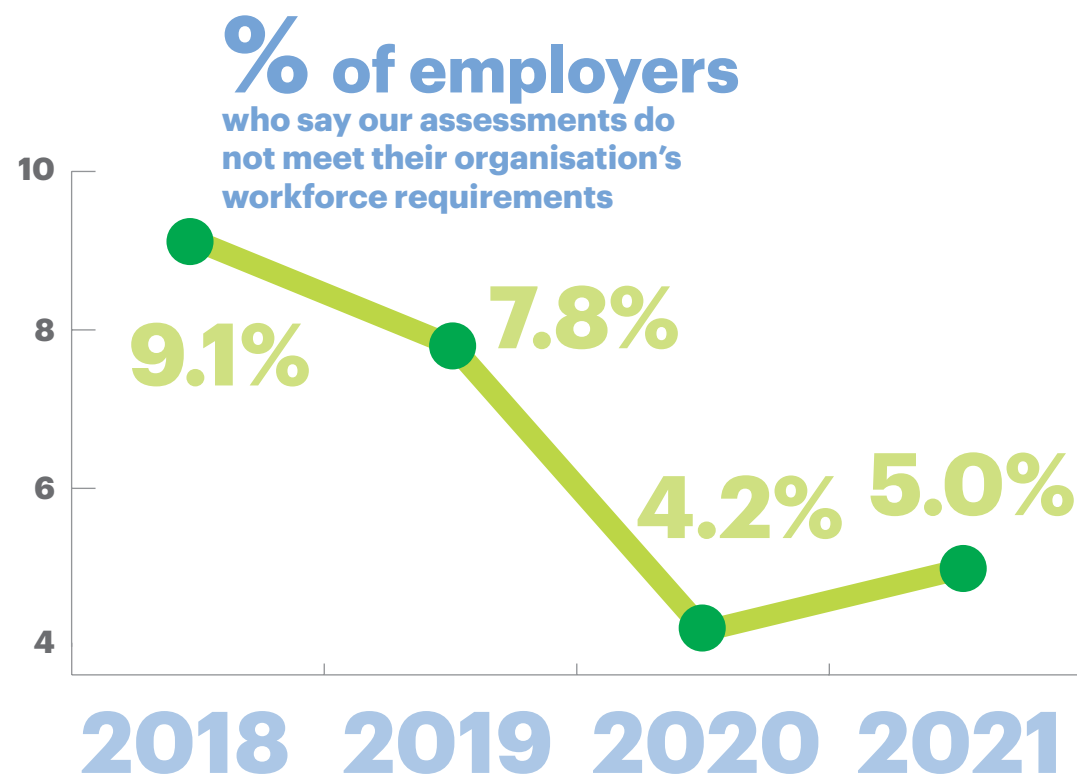
"I believe that Careerforce's programmes complement and reflect our organisation's mission and values."

"The training you provide is thorough, easily accessible and the content is great. We are very grateful for what you provide and our team (and ultimately the young people they serve) really benefit from it."

Programme Assessments

The proportion of employers who say our assessments **don't match** their workplace requirements has nearly **halved** since 2018.

Question: Overall, how well do the assessments in the programmes match workplace requirements?



"The assessments and discussions ... complement our organization perfectly. Working with tamariki, the assessments have allowed us to think more deeply about their needs and bigger picture the needs of all New Zealand children."

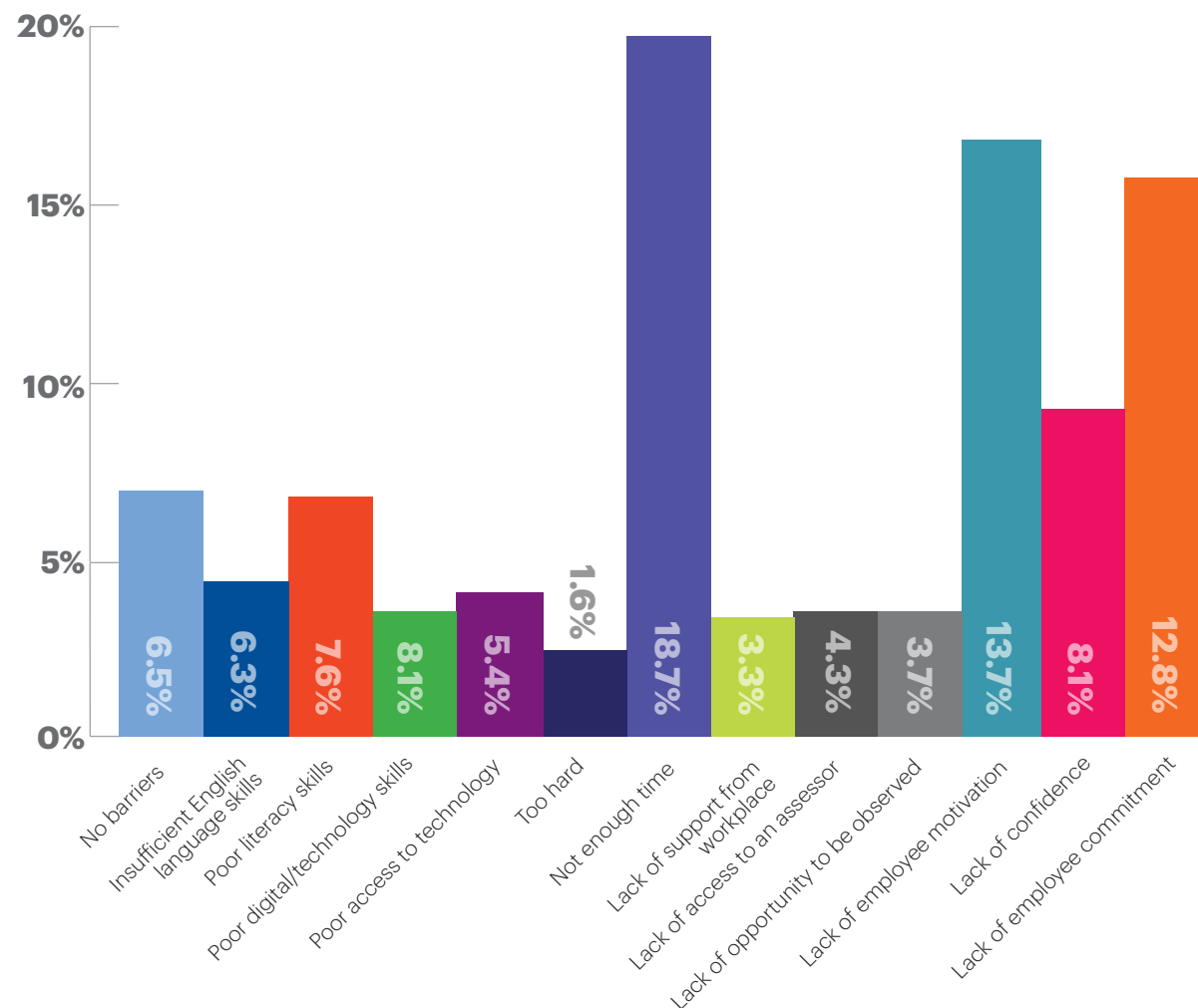
"Assessments are very easy to understand and complete online and offline."

"We got very comprehensive feedback from assessors detailing positives or areas to improve on ...with specific examples. Excellent feedback at individual module level as each module was submitted for marking."

"The learning guides for each assessment / unit standard provide great support."

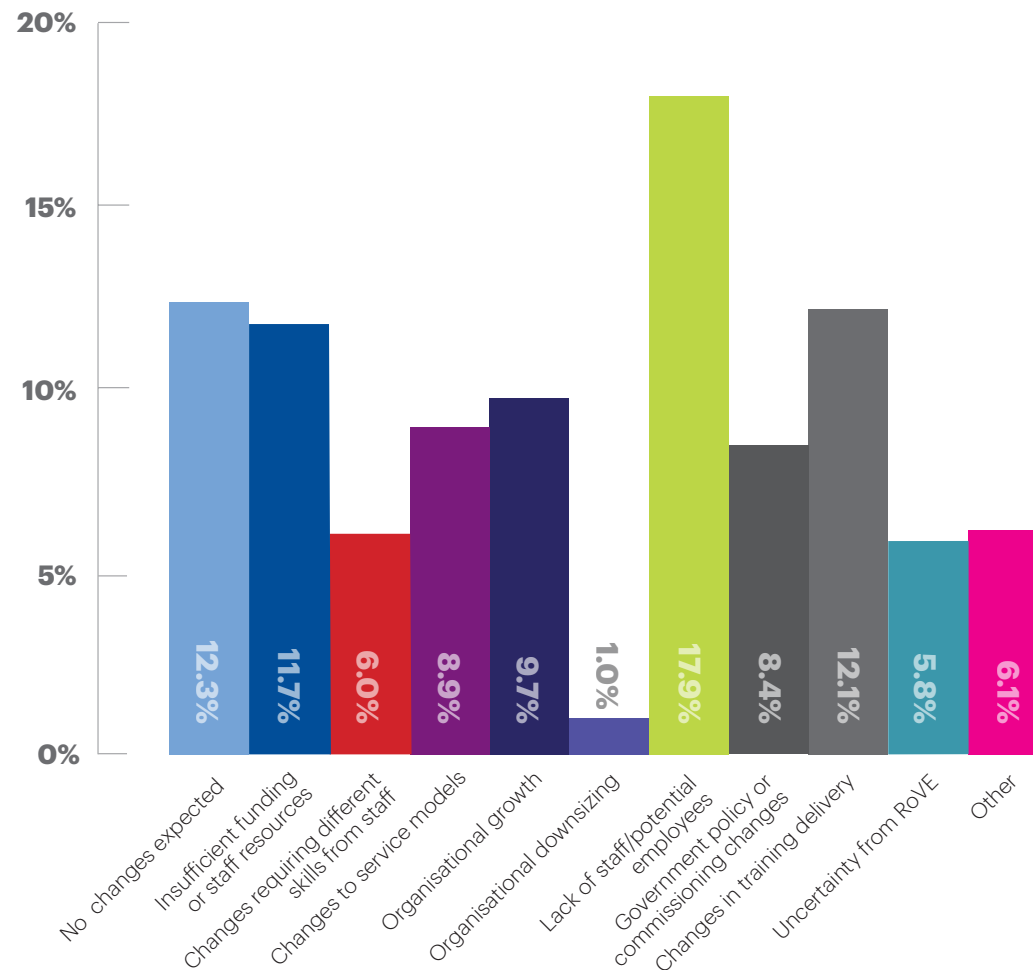
Barriers to Completing Training

The **top three barriers** to staff **completing** their **training** have remained consistent over the past five years.



Question: Please select the top three barriers to your staff completing training?

Challenges/Changes Facing Organisational Training



The most **significant challenges** or changes **employers** will **face** over the next twelve months are broadly in line with previous years. **Lack of staff** has leapt from **#7** in 2017 to **#1** in 2021.

Question: What are the most significant challenges/changes facing your organisation over the next twelve months in terms of training needs?

Top three challenges/changes:

- **Lack of staff**
- **Changes in training delivery**
- **Insufficient funding**

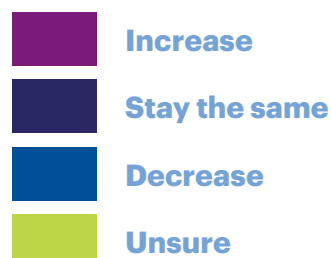
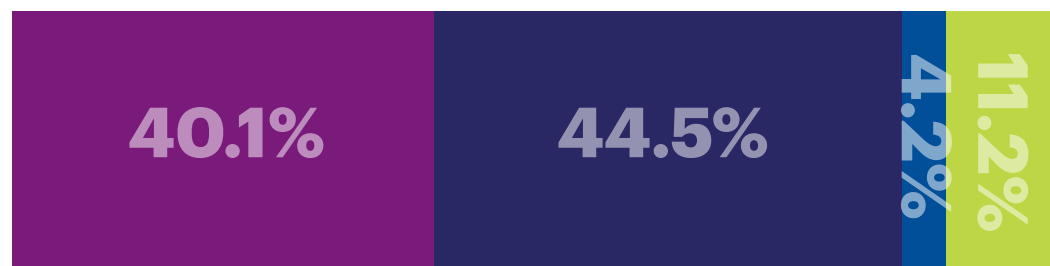
Base: All employers who answered, **2021** (n=499)

Next 12 Months Training Requirements

Most employers expect their **training requirements** to either **increase** or **stay the same** over the next twelve months (**85%**), few expect them to decrease (just 4%).

Question: Over the next 12 months, to what extent do you anticipate that your organisational training requirements will change?

Employers' expectations of their organisational training requirements over the next 12 months



"As an organisation we are growing rapidly and also extending those services currently provided as well as moving into new service areas with a very different client base requiring additional skill sets for staff."

"Due to the increased complexities of the clients we are needing to extend our training to increase the knowledge and skills of the staff in providing appropriate support."

"We will be looking to expand our services and we are prioritising staff learning and growth."

"We are doing more work that is slightly outside of our normal scope and will need our employee to be able to cope with this."

The Good Stuff :-)

Our staff



"Apprenticeship Advisor was very helpful, available for discussion and face-to-face consults. Collective training would be arranged and fulfilled by the advisor."

"Our Workplace Advisor is very supportive and responsive to our staff needs."

"Strong collaborative relationship with key members of Careerforce team that support us nationally and at sites."

"I believe the support provided by Careerforce assessors and support staff is excellent."

Our support



"The support and detailed training staff receives from Careerforce is very helpful in terms of the progress that we're developing in our role for caring for the elderly people."

"I have been extremely well supported in my new role, while still getting to understand about Careerforce training."

"Careerforce staff always very helpful and supportive with any interactions I have had with them."

Our technology services



"Accessing the iPortal is easy and the information on our staff is invaluable for other components of my job."

"The reports arrive on time, and reflects progress or lack of progress. If there is no progress, as Manager I would be able to identify problems with staff and work towards a solution. It helps to keep us on track."

"All of the technical services offered by Careerforce have been great. The Customer Service Team around technology are very responsive and helpful."

Our communication



"Careerforce has always been clear and direct in all communication. Numerous emails, updates and requests for feedback are often in my inbox."

"Very informative in their communications, panui updates and progress and achievements of modules completed by my staff member."

"Communications have continued with newsletters and emails so we feel up to date with events / workplans."

"The communication and relationship management with Career Force staff has been quite impressive to this point."

The Not so Good Stuff



Lack of contact



“I have had little interaction with Careerforce and this is mainly due to the number of new staff coming on board. It would be great to have someone call to say, 'Hows it going? Just checking in with you!'”

“We have had a change of Careerforce worker, but we've not had any contact with this new person.”

“I would like more clarification around contacts for the different services as I find this confusing. Maybe an update each quarter or half-yearly emailed.”

Enrolment related



“It would be great if enrolling in a programme and completing the training agreement was easier.”

“I would like to be able to electronically sign training agreements. Also for the trainees to be able to complete electronically would be helpful.”

“The most frustrating aspect of working with Careerforce has been completing the forms to enrol candidates, especially lately.”

Assessor related



“We had difficulty finding an assessor when we did not have one on site, and this caused delays. Careerforce was reluctant to provide us with one.”

“As we struggle to have assessors in each of our sites which is due to staffing shortages, high workloads and no dedicated time to do the assessing, if Careerforce could supply the assessors, this would help the trainees to progress and complete their training.”

Lack of responsiveness



“Emails seem to go around in circles without getting an answer on dedicated assessors. Phone messages take a very long time to have a response to.”

“Sometimes people are hard to get hold of, or take several days to respond to queries.”

Learning & assessment resources



“Unit standards which are written in plain language with clearer performance outcomes and evidence criteria would go a long way to clarifying achievement standards for staff.”

“Academic language is a sort of barrier for staff, when they read the questions, they don't really understand what is asked.”

“Reduce repetitive questions, if questions read the same apart from one or two words, the trainee either seems to lose interest or think it is the same question already answered, and frustration rises.”

Modes of Learning

In the 2021 survey, our 'drop-in' set of questions were around 'modes of learning'. Trainees and apprentices all prefer to learn in different ways, and Careerforce is considering the introduction of different modes of training delivery that will better meet individual learning preferences. The questions posed sought feedback to inform our planning.

- Over two-thirds (**69%**) of employers would support staff taking part in facilitated learning activities during work hours (**22%** don't know, and just **9%** said 'no')
- On-site short seminars and online seminars are the most preferred options with more than two-thirds of respondents fully supporting both. Off-site classes were the least preferred option, with just **36%** fully supporting.
- Nearly two-thirds of respondents would provide **1-2** hours per week for facilitated learning for their staff learners, and a further **1 in 5** would be prepared to provide more than **2** hours per week.
- Early afternoon is the preferred time of day for facilitated learning, followed by late afternoon. The least preferred times are evenings and midday.
- Mid-week days (**Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday**) are preferred over Monday, Friday and weekend days for facilitated learning.
- Over half (**59%**) of respondents would either somewhat or fully support learning alongside staff from other organisations, and **63%** would support making time available for independent study during work hours.

"The ones (facilitated learning options) you have mentioned are perfect - but I just know that we are low on support hours, number of staff and volunteers to cover when others are away for training."

"Due to staff shortages off-site or long sessions it's difficult to release staff to attend. I believe that real world, on-the-job learning is valuable. Apprenticeships give great results. There is a need for more mentors/tutors in the workplace to facilitate this. This is also something that is almost impossible for an agency to achieve as there is no fixed 'site'."

"I think online-based learning activities would be the most accessible for our staff. It is difficult to release a number of staff for extended training sessions due to the nature of our service - providing clients with essential care, and only having a small staff base."

"I think on-site is better for the trainees. I have found when training is organised outside of work hours, trainees don't attend or are unwilling to attend if they are not paid to attend."

Issues and Actions

We are committed to improving overall employer satisfaction, and have spent significant time analysing the feedback to identify the key issues emerging, and identifying actions either underway or that we will commit to, in order to address these issues.

What follows is a summary of the key issues and actions. We intend upon expanding on these in upcoming issues of our monthly employer e-newsletter, Skills for Good – if you don't currently receive this, you can sign up at: <https://www.careerforce.org.nz/skills-for-good-subscription>



Issue Themes Emerging	Careerforce Actions to Address
Lack of contact, and not knowing who to contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve communication processes around Careerforce staff changes (Note: there were significant staff changes in Q4 2021 due to transition of staff to workforce development councils). This will include the use of Skills for Good, our monthly employer newsletter which we strongly encourage you to read each month for important updates. • Please also feel free to call 0800 277 486, or email info@careerforce.org.nz • Regularly update Careerforce Workplace Advisor (CWA) contact information on Careerforce website - https://www.careerforce.org.nz/careerforce-workplace-advisors/
Aka Toi online learning platform can be difficult to navigate for new users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are looking at piloting coaching sessions for Aka Toi, plus refreshing the Aka Toi introduction videos
Unresolved issues and/or lack of responsiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminder issued to all Careerforce staff around expected response times, and ensuring clearer 'ownership' and accountability around issues raised
Make enrolment process easier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careerforce training agreements are being reviewed to improve ease of completion, and including options for an electronic form
Challenges around assessor resourcing/ availability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional Careerforce staff assessors have been recruited to alleviate employer pressures, plus we will continue to investigate the current assessment model to determine how we can provide more support. Any workplaces struggling with assessor resourcing should raise this with their Careerforce Workplace Advisor.
Accuracy of training reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training reports that are emailed out are accurate at the time they are sent, but quickly become out of date. We encourage you to log in to iPortal for the most up to date learner progress reports. Over the last year, iPortal has also been made available for learners to access themselves.
Access to digital devices for learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Off the back of a Tertiary Education Commission grant, Careerforce was able to purchase and distribute a large number of ChromeBooks. We will continue to monitor their use, and ensure they are most efficiently allocated. Please contact your Workplace Advisor if you have a worthy recipient.

Issue Themes Emerging	Careerforce Actions to Address
Language used in learning resources and assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant improvements have been made in recent years across Careerforce programmes, and particularly around the use of plain English. All learning and assessment resources are reviewed by our Literacy & Numeracy Advisor. This work remains ongoing.
Concerns with impacts from RoVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careerforce is absolutely committed to ensuring a seamless transition into Te Pūkenga, and minimizing any disruptions to employers and learners. We will continue to update you.
More support for learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careerforce is currently launching a mobile learner support unit, and which result in more direct face to face engagement and support to learners via wananga type sessions. • Progress reports are now also emailed directly to learners, and who now also have access to iPortal. • Learning to learn resources have been rolled out over the last year, and will continue to be rolled out.
Staff shortages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careerforce will continue to champion the Life Changing Careers campaign on behalf of our sectors, which is all about promoting care and support worker roles, and attracting greater diversity into the workforce. This is supported by over \$1m in campaign funding across 2021 and 2022. • Careerforce also continues to promote Jobs for Good, where you can list your vacancies for free, and to a very targeted audience.

A big thank you to all that completed this year's survey and provided such valuable feedback. We'll be rolling out the 2022 survey towards the end of the year.

If you have any questions or comments about this survey, please get in touch at:

Phone: 0800 277 486

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