

# COVID19 – Employers in lockdown

## Introduction

This report contains current results from the IMI COVID-19 survey which was designed to explore how individuals and organisations are responding in the current climate to furloughed working and the employment of apprentices, now and in the future. The survey was launched on the 9<sup>th</sup> April and will remain open while the current situation continues with survey results analysed periodically.

This analysis focuses on the experiences of employers whilst in lockdown, with a focus on the engagement and employment of apprentices.

For this report, results were downloaded on the 18<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

## Summary of findings

Survey results indicate that lockdown has been challenging for those in a position to continue working and supporting the automotive industry. In particular (supporting previous research) apprentices have felt the most strain.

### Employer challenges

- 62% of respondents stated that their organisation have or are planning to furlough staff.
- 51% of respondents who responded on an individual basis have personally been furloughed, of which 62 individuals have signed up for the IMI furlough register.
- 53% of those who stated that their organisation have or are planning to furlough staff are looking to furlough more than 80% of their workforce.
- Of those who stated that their organisation have or are planning to furlough staff 47% are not planning on topping up the 80% contribution.
- 89 (27%) of respondents have stated that their organisation have reduced staffing levels or made individuals redundant and 5% stated that their organisation / business has been temporarily closed.

### Supporting apprentices

- 92% of organisations that employ apprentices are planning to furlough staff.
- Of those who currently employ apprentices, 21% are unable to offer them support and a further 33% can only help to some degree.
- Of those who are currently employing apprentices, only 25% are planning to employ their apprentices on completion of their training and these plans have not changed.
- 26% of respondents reported that they are reconsidering (or think it is very unlikely) that they will employ apprentices in the coming year (2020/21) due to Covid-19. A further 40% are unsure of their plans and a further 9% of respondents state that their plans for apprenticeship employment are unchanged.

## Respondents

### Respondent - Type

	No.	%
I am an apprentice	200	62%
I am an individual working in the Automotive Retail sector	53	16%
I am an individual in a Training Provider, supporting the Automotive Retail Sector	13	4%
I am representing a Training Provider, supporting the Automotive Retail Sector	7	2%
I am representing an organisation/business in Automotive Retail	32	10%
Other (please specify)	20	6%
	325	

- As of the 18<sup>th</sup> May, we received 325 responses to our survey. 88% responded on an individual basis and 12% on behalf of an organisation.
- 94% are working in the automotive retail sector and 6% are training providers, supporting the automotive retail sector.

## Furlough

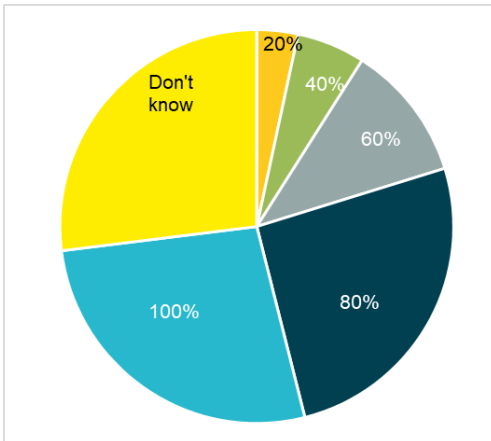
Respondents were asked “Has your organisation furloughed staff or is it planning to do so?” and individuals were also asked “Have you been furloughed or are you in the process of being furloughed?”.

### Furlough plans

Respondent	Respondents	Organisation furloughed	Personally furloughed	Signed up for furlough register
I am an apprentice	200	113	106	41
I am an individual working in the Automotive Retail sector	53	42	31	16
I am an individual in a Training Provider, supporting the Automotive Retail Sector	13	4	1	1
I am representing a Training Provider, supporting the Automotive Retail Sector	7	3	n/a	n/a
I am representing an organisation/business in Automotive Retail	32	28	n/a	n/a
Other (please specify)	20	11	8	4
	<b>325</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>62</b>

- 62% of respondents stated that their organisation have or are planning to furlough staff.
- 64% of respondents working in the automotive retail sector stated that their organisation have or are planning to furlough staff. Compared to 35% of training providers supporting the automotive retail sector.
- 51% of respondents who responded on an individual basis have personally been furloughed, of which 62 people have signed up to the IMI furlough register.

### Furlough plans – Proportion of organisation planned to be furloughed



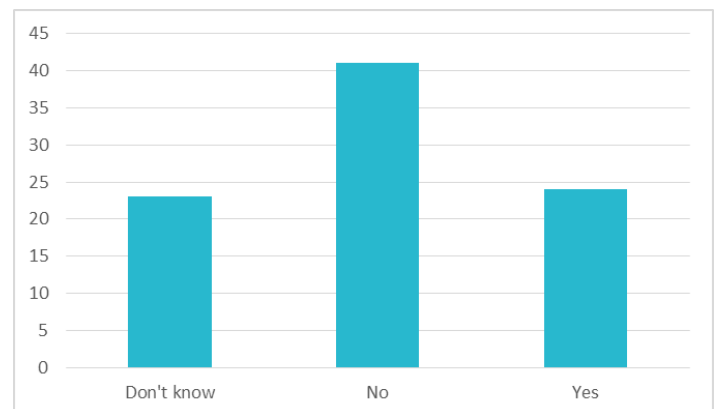
Of those who responded that their organisation were planning to furlough staff, excluding apprentices:

- 27% (24) have or are planning to furlough 100% of the organisations staff.
- 26% (23) have or are planning to furlough 80% of the organisations staff.

### Furlough plans – Is your organisation considering topping up the 80% government contribution?

Of those who responded that their organisation were planning to furlough staff, excluding apprentices:

- 27% are planning to top up the 80% contribution.
- 47% are not planning to top up the 80% contribution.



## Methods to manage workforce

What measures has your organisation taken to manage your workforce as a result of COVID-19  
(Select all that apply)

Method	IMI Survey Other Responses		ONS- Automotive industry**	ONS- All industries *
	No.	%	%	%
No measures have been taken	8	2%	14.2%	18.6%
Increased working hours	2	1%	13.8%	11.9%
Decreased working hours	52	16%	33.4%	30.1%
Staff are encouraged to work from home	20	6%	- ***	- ***
Staff have to work from home	47	14%	- ***	- ***
Reducing staff levels in the short-term	85	26%	45.4%	41.4%
Recruiting staff in the short-term	3	1%	10.3%	6.4%
Other (please specify)	67	21%	17.7%	22.2%
Business closed	16	5%		
Furlough	32	10%		
Redundancy or similar	4	1%		
Others	15	5%		

**Note:**

\* Source: ONS - Business impacts of COVID-19 data released 7/5/20 [Data relates to the period 6 April 2020 to 19 April 2020.]

\*\* Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles

\*\*\* This option was dropped from the survey

- 89 (27%) of respondents have stated that their organisation have reduced staffing levels or made individuals redundant.
- 5% of respondents have stated that their organisation / business has been temporarily closed.

This question is explicitly designed to mirror the ONS fortnightly business survey, enabling a comparison to the whole economy, although caution is required as our response rate is low but we can draw some comparisons:

- The most significant difference is that IMI respondent organisations are not implementing what could be judged as 'positive' measures such as increasing staff levels or working hours in comparison to the UK as a whole.
- IMI respondent organisations are not reducing staffing levels as much as the UK as a whole.

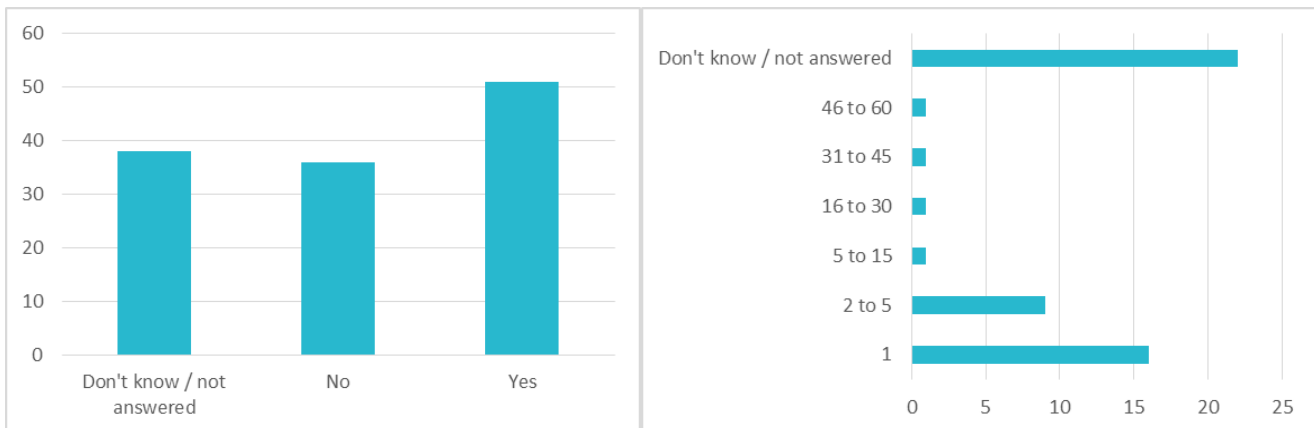
## Training providers - Methods of engagement

As part of the survey, we asked training providers what their organisation has done to engage with remote training/assessment of learners and apprentices. We asked for details of some of the methods and tools they are implementing. Some of the key methods are below:

- Using virtual meeting tools and technology such as Zoom, Facetime and Microsoft teams to continue communication and engagement.
- Setting up virtual classrooms via Skype and Microsoft teams classrooms.
- Using webinars more prominently.
- Using online courses / learning tools such as Electude, TES-Teach, LJ Create and IMI e-Learning.
- Bosch have developed virtual classroom platforms - delivering training through this means in order to maintain and increase the learning and engagement of apprentices.
- We are using the e-Portfolio system so that apprentices can carry on uploading work towards their framework qualification.

## Apprentices

### Those who employ apprentices and how many

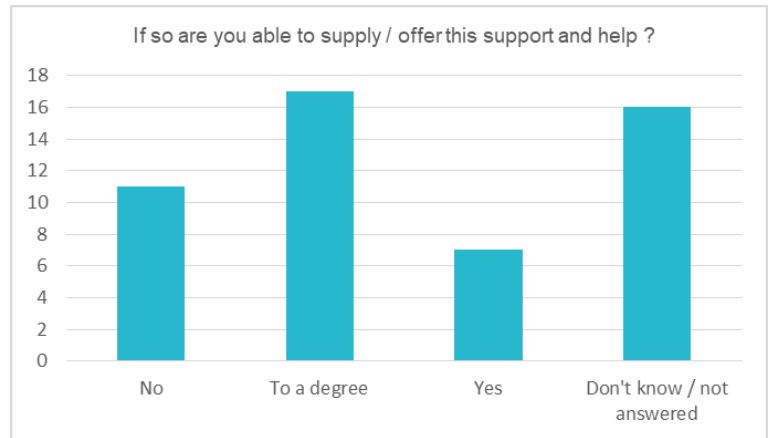


- 51 (29%) of respondents stated that they employ apprentices.
- The number of apprentices employed is spread between 1 and 50.
- 47 of the 51 organisations which employ apprentices are, or are, planning to furlough staff - 92%.

## Supporting apprentices

Do your apprentices need continued help with their studies or with completion of their programme during the lock-down period?	
Don't know	29
No	8
Yes	14

- 14 (27%) of those employing apprentices stated that their apprentices need continued help with their studies.
- 11 respondents (21%) have stated they have been unable to supply support to their current apprentices.
- 17 respondents (33%) are only able to support to some degree.



Respondents were asked to give details of their challenges and how they were supporting apprentices. This highlighted the following:

### Challenges

- Misunderstanding of the rules regarding furlough. Some respondents reported having been aware of furloughed apprentices being told not to do any work or college work due to furlough.
- Apprentices and employers being in different physical locations has caused difficulties.
- Some apprentice colleges are temporarily closed.

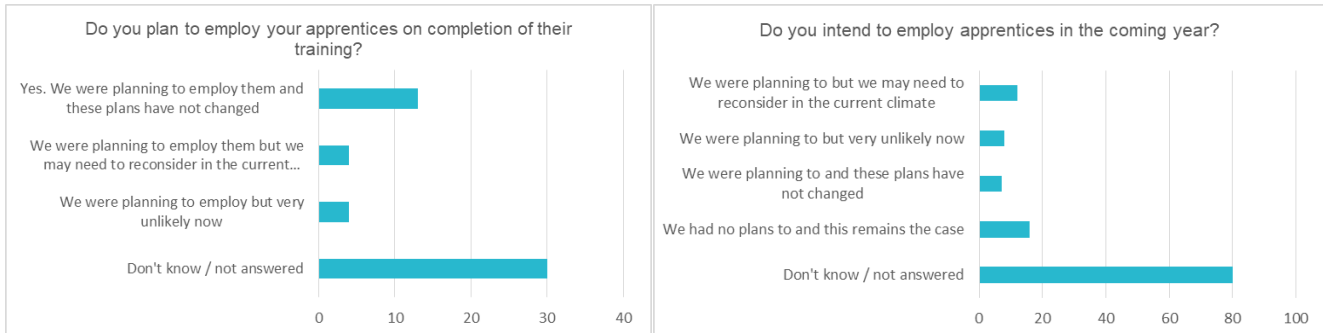
### Solutions

- Pointing apprentices to colleges who are offering online teaching.
- Employers supplying online training themselves.
- Virtual contact and communication by their mentor.
- Bosch are offering online mentoring.
- Instructors are available 24-7 for assistance.

This supports findings from the IMI Apprentices in Lockdown report which found:

- Only 17% of apprentices have been able to continue their studies with little or no change.
- 39% of apprentices have outlined significant barriers for continuing with their studies. 18% stating that they have been unable to engage with their employer.

### Future view - apprentices



- Of those who are currently employing apprentices only 13 (25%) were planning to employ their apprentices on completion of their training and these plans have not changed.
- 26% of IMI survey respondents reported that they are reconsidering or think it is very unlikely that they will employ apprentices in the coming year due to Covid-19.
- 40% are unsure of their plans to employ apprentices in the coming year (2020/2021).
- Only 9% of respondents stated that their plans for employing apprentices were unchanged.

## Appendix

All responses from training providers regarding engaging remotely with learners and apprentices:

- *Looking into webinars for some of the training.*
- *Microsoft teams classrooms, Electude lesson content modules, IMI e-Portfolio (which is fantastic!) and remote observations via FaceTime.*
- *Set up virtual classrooms, developed resources and content, delivering 1-2-1 virtually.*
- *We are using electronic portfolios, online learning such as TES-Teach, LJ Create and IMI e-Learning. Microsoft Teams is being used for communication.*
- *Bosch has developed virtual classroom platforms - delivering training through this means in order to maintain and increase the learning and engagement of apprentices.*
- *Development and design of online assessment and coaching activities using Zoom and Microsoft teams.*
- *Microsoft teams, Electude, e-Learning.*
- *Virtual classrooms / Skype reviews / professional discussions / use of e-Learning platforms.*
- *We are using the e-Portfolio system so that apprentices can carry on uploading work towards their framework qualification.*

All responses from those who engage apprentices who were asked to give details of their challenges and how they were supporting apprentices:

- *All our apprentices are furloughed and have been told not to do any work or college work due to furlough. We have our own lms system and not even allowed to log in and do e-Learnings to help with our own CPD.*
- *Apprentices are in other areas of the college.*
- *Apprentices work across many different areas of our business; they are being looked after by their mentors and our HR dept.*
- *Colleges are offering online teaching. Our company supplies online training.*
- *Guys are in contact with their mentors, and other staff.*
- *I only support new apprentices that rotate through our department.*
- *Live in different towns.*
- *Online mentoring and online with Bosch.*
- *Our staff of instructors are available 24-7 for assistance.*
- *The apprentices are primarily business administrative roles within the college and can continue their activities, support and mentoring from home.*
- *The college is closed at the moment.*
- *They are satisfactorily progressing with their studies.*
- *They have access to e-Learning.*