



OVERVIEW OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND APPRENTICESHIPSNI POPULATION

An analysis of individuals on registered ApprenticeshipsNI schemes in
Northern Ireland for the 2024/25 tax year

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Introduction

This report covers analysis carried out on ApprenticeshipsNI participants registered in Northern Ireland for the 2024/25 tax year. It will examine the sectors apprentices are employed in, the locations they live in, their age, gender and how their estimated income differs based on these characteristics.

The income estimates included in this report refer to earnings during the 2024/25 tax year during which workers were registered with DfE NI. For example, Individual A is an apprentice April 2024 – January 2025, but they continue employment post-apprenticeship February 2025 – April 2025 and beyond. We analyse all of this pay, albeit at different rates (due to changes in apprenticeship status).

This report covers only those apprentices who could be matched to the NMW (National Minimum Wage) Strategic Risk Model, which uses hours worked values from the Real Time Information system. Apprentices reported as working irregular hours have been excluded because they can not be accurately assessed. As such, this report covers approximately 50% of the apprentice population provided by the Department for the Economy, and thus should only be viewed as a guideline.

A small number of apprentices have been excluded from analysis in sections where relevant data could not be identified. For example, apprentices for whom a postcode could not be identified have been excluded from all analysis in the “Location” section, and apprentices for whom a sector could not be identified have been excluded from all analysis in the “Sector” section.

Level of study data were not included as part of this data matching exercise, so it was not possible to provide estimated apprentice earnings broken down by level of study.

Summary

The following findings relate to the registered apprentice population in Northern Ireland for the 2024/25 tax year.

OVERALL INCOME

The estimated annualised income for the population as a whole shows a 25th percentile of £8,580, a median of £16,360, a 75th percentile of £25,200 and a 95th percentile of £38,550.

TRADE SECTOR

- 59% of the apprentice population work across just three (out of 21) sectors: “Construction”, “Wholesale and Retail” and “Manufacturing”.
- Across the 7 most common trades, the estimated average income of apprentices is highest in Computing and Information Service Activities (£32,450) and the lowest in Administrative and Support Service activities (£12,850).

GENDER

- The estimated average income is 2.4% higher for female apprentices compared to male apprentices.
- The apprentice population is 67% male and 33% female, compared to a 46% male and 54% female population split in the Northern Ireland workers population as a whole (based on the NMW Strategic Risk Model).

LOCATION

- The CPDs with the highest percentage share of apprentices are: **Belfast, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon** and **Mid Ulster**
- Apprentices in **Ards and North Down** have higher estimated average income than those based in the other CPDs.

AGE

- The age distribution of apprentices peaks at 18 and 70% of individuals are aged between 16 and 25.
- The average age of female apprentices is 29.2 whereas the average age of male apprentices is 22.4.
- The estimated average income increases as age increases up to age 45.

Analysis

1 OVERALL INCOME

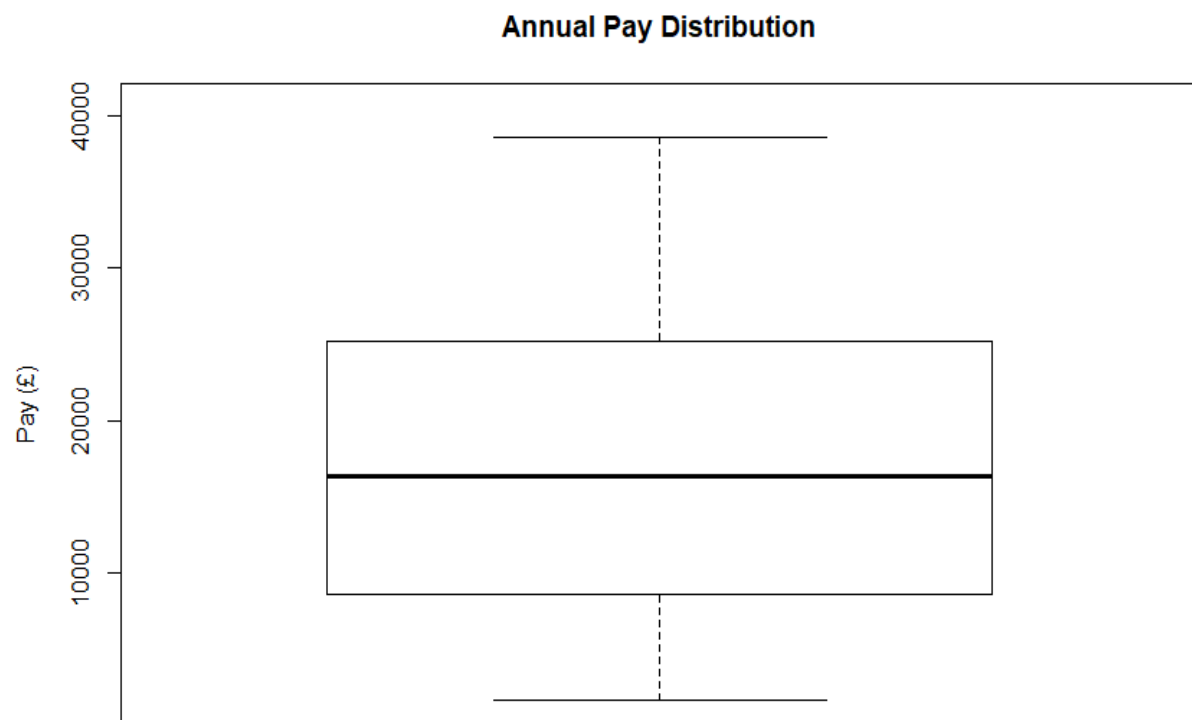
Key Finding: The estimated annualised income for the population as a whole shows a 25th percentile of £8,580, a median of £16,360, a 75th percentile of £25,200 and a 95th percentile of £38,550.

To give an overall picture, analysis was carried out on apprentices in Northern Ireland during the 2024/2025 tax year who were matched to the NMW strategic risk model.

Figures 1 and 2 show how estimated income is spread across NI apprentices, both annually and weekly. Instead of using averages, percentiles have been used to better reflect how pay varies across individuals.

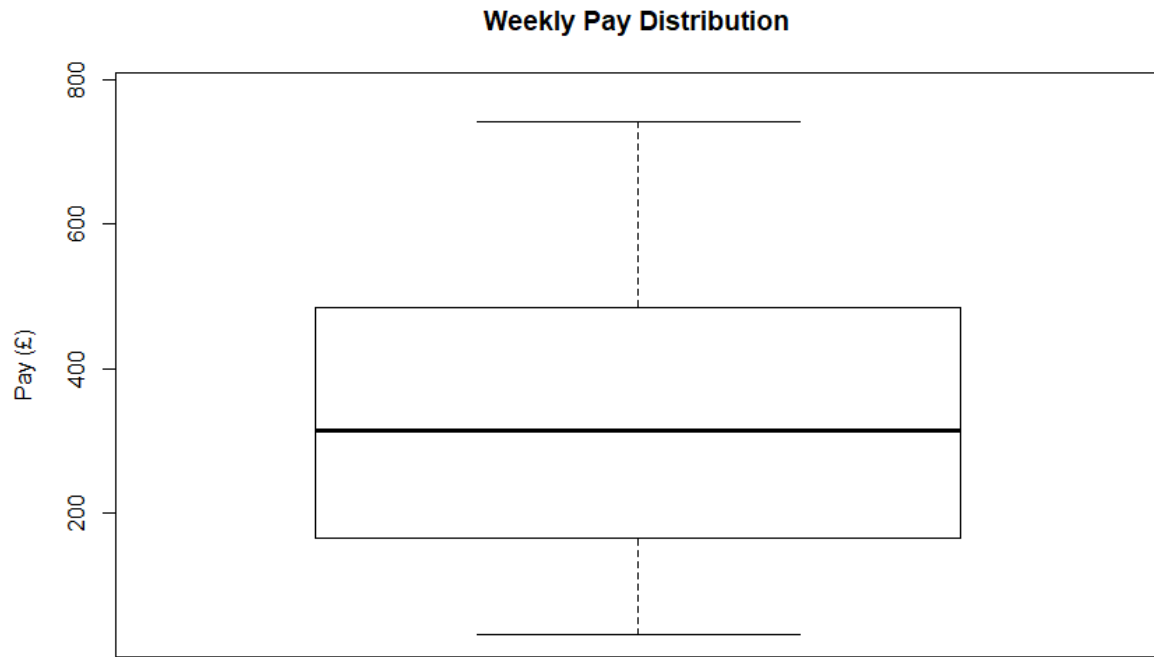
A **percentile** shows how a particular value compares to the rest of the group:

- The **25th percentile** means 25% of apprentices earn **at or below** this amount
- The **median (50th percentile)** is the middle value - half earn less, and half earn more
- The **75th percentile** means 75% earn **at or below** this level (only 25% earn more)
- The **95th percentile** shows the higher end - 95% earn at or below this, with only the top 5% earning more



Percentile	5 th	25 th	50 th (Median)	75 th	95 th
Annual Pay (£)	1,670	8,580	16,360	25,200	38,550

FIGURE 1: ESTIMATED ANNUAL INCOME FOR NORTHERN IRELAND APPRENTICE POPULATION 2024/2025



Percentile	5 th	25 th	50 th (Median)	75 th	95 th
Weekly Pay (£)	32	165	315	485	741

FIGURE 2: ESTIMATED WEEKLY INCOME FOR NORTHERN IRELAND APPRENTICE POPULATION 2024/2025

2 TRADE SECTOR

Trade sector will be considered as follows:

1. The percentage of the total apprentice population employed in each sector
2. How apprentice income varies across sectors

2.1 Apprentice Population by Sector

Key Finding: 59% of the apprentice population work across just three sectors: “Construction”, “Wholesale and Retail” and “Manufacturing”.

Figure 3 shows a breakdown of the apprentice population across the top-level SIC code categories sourced from the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Over half of the population is clustered in 3 sectors.

Overview of the Northern Ireland ApprenticeshipsNI Population

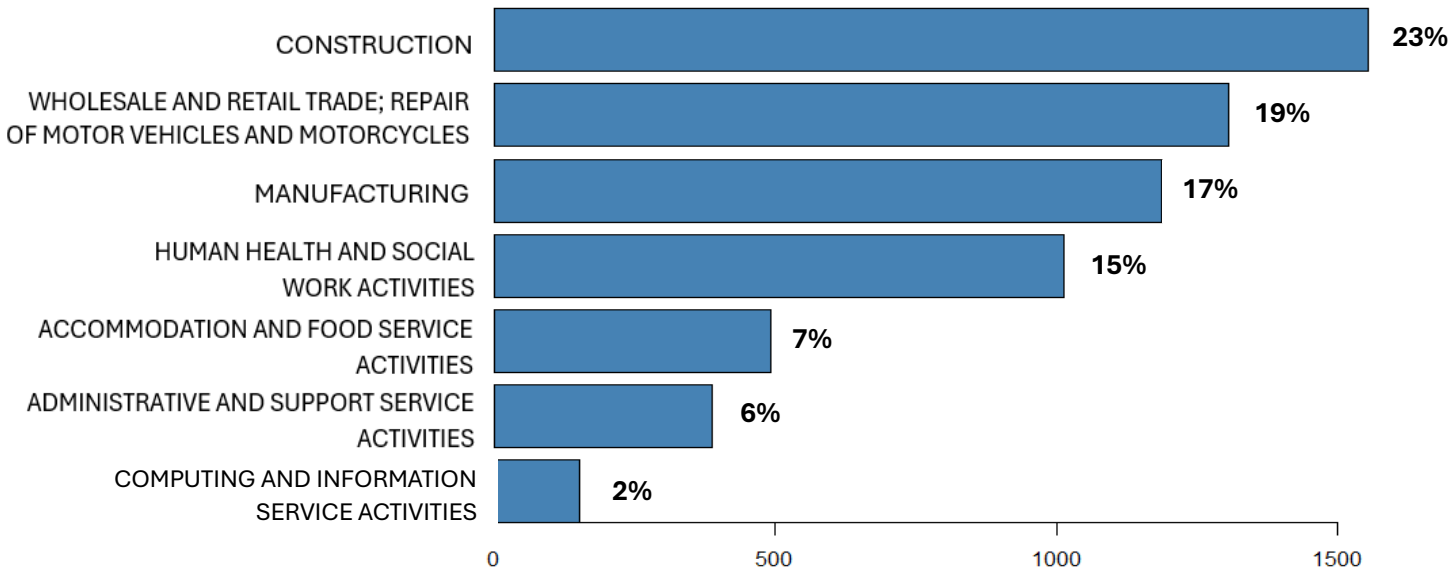


FIGURE 3: APPRENTICE POPULATION BY TRADE SECTOR (TOP SEVEN SHOWN)

2.2 Apprentice Income by Sector

Key Finding: Across the 7 most common trades, the estimated average income of apprentices is highest in Computing and Information Service Activities (£32,450) and the lowest in Administrative and Support Service activities (£12,850)¹.

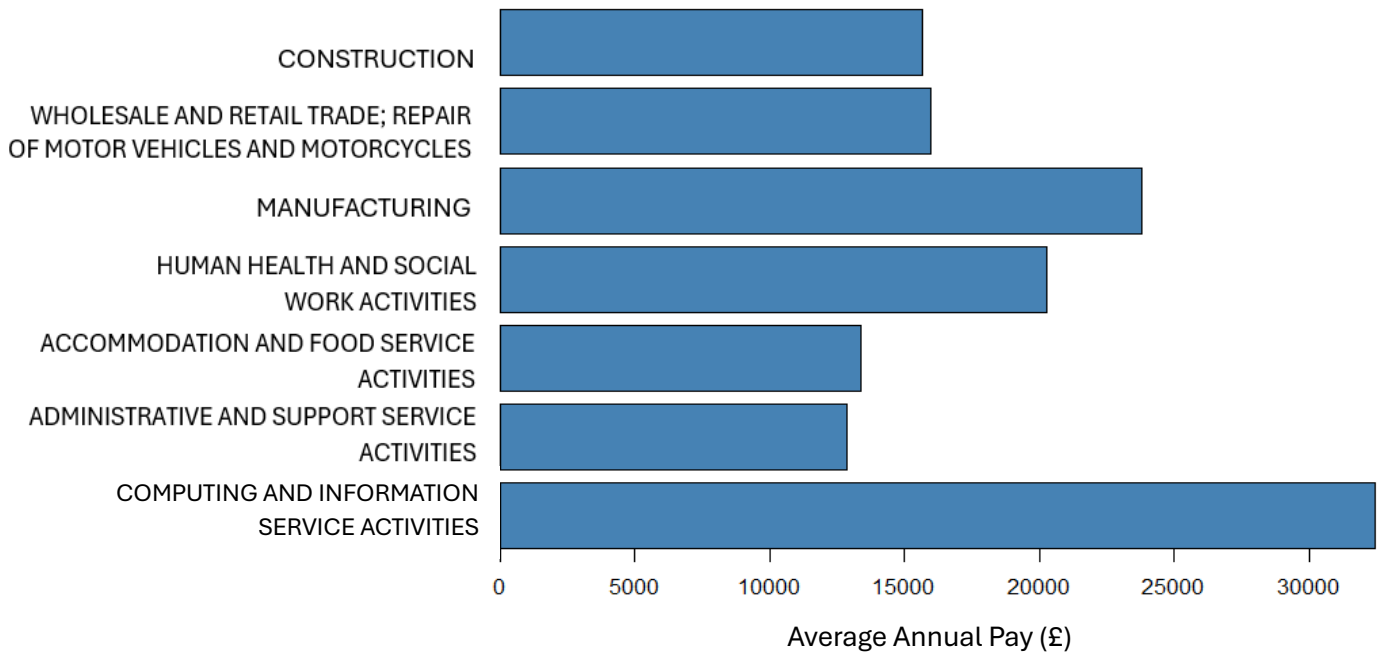


FIGURE 4: ESTIMATED ANNUALISED INCOME BY TRADE SECTOR (TOP SEVEN SHOWN)

¹ For ease of display, "Telecommunication, Computer Programming, Consulting, Computing Infrastructure and other Information Service Activities" has been shortened as "Computing and Information Service Activities".

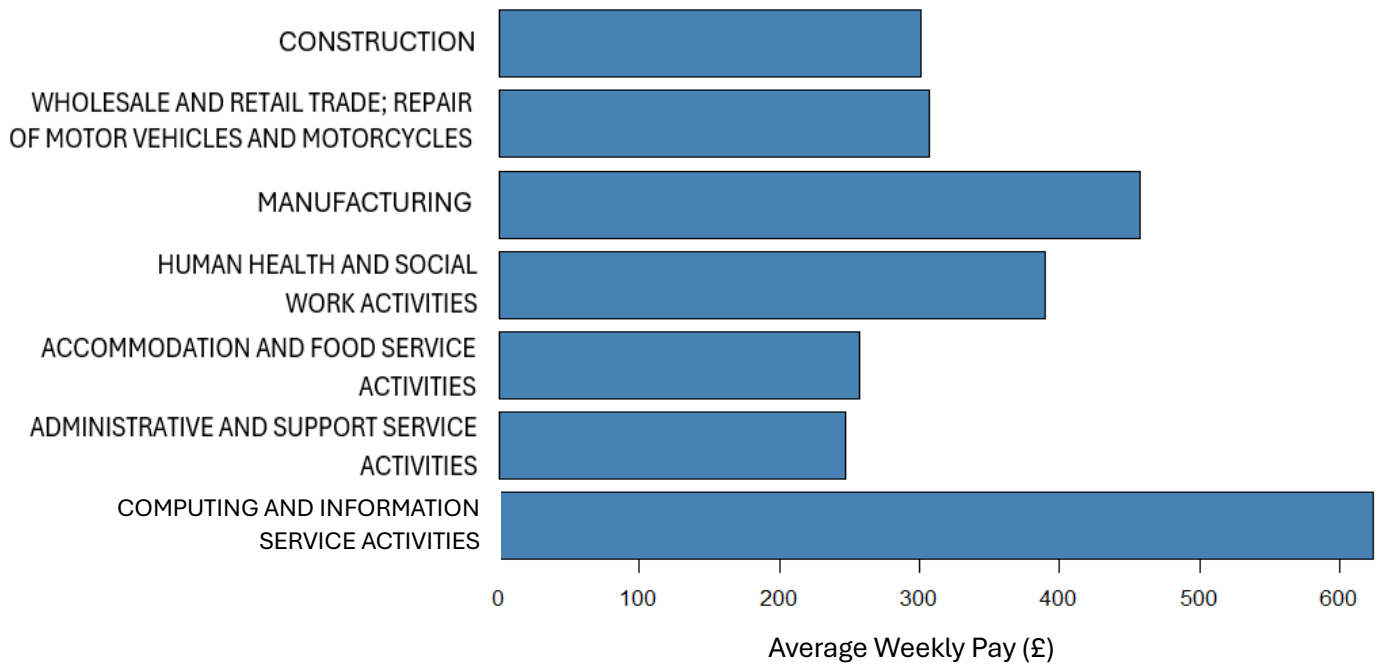


FIGURE 5: ESTIMATED WEEKLY INCOME BY TRADE SECTOR

3 Gender

Key Finding: The estimated average income is 2.4% higher for female apprentices compared to male apprentices

Key Finding: The average age of female apprentices is 29.2 whereas the average age of male apprentices is 22.4

Key Finding: The apprentice population is 66.8% male and 33.2% female

The data shows that female apprentices earned about 2.4% more than male apprentices in the 2024/25 financial year. However, when we looked more closely, we found that female apprentices were on average older (29.2 years old) than male apprentices (22.4 years old). Since earnings tend to increase with age (as shown in Figure 13), this suggests the higher pay for female apprentices is likely due to the difference in average age.

Gender	Estimated Average Annual Income (£)
Male	17,740
Female	18,160

FIGURE 6: ESTIMATED ANNUAL INCOME BY GENDER

Gender	Average Age
Male	22.4
Female	29.2

FIGURE 7: AVERAGE AGE OF APPRENTICES BY GENDER

Gender	Percentage of Apprentice Population
Male	66.8
Female	33.2

FIGURE 8: APPRENTICE POPULATION SPLIT BY GENDER

4 LOCATION

Analysis of location has been based on the latest known address of the apprentices themselves, rather than the address of their employer.

Location has been considered based on the Council Planning District (CPD) the apprentice is based in.

4.1 Apprentice Population by Council Planning District (CPD)

Key Finding: The highest numbers of apprentices live in:

1. **Belfast**
2. **Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon**
3. **Mid Ulster**

Figure 9 shows a breakdown of apprentice population by CPD.

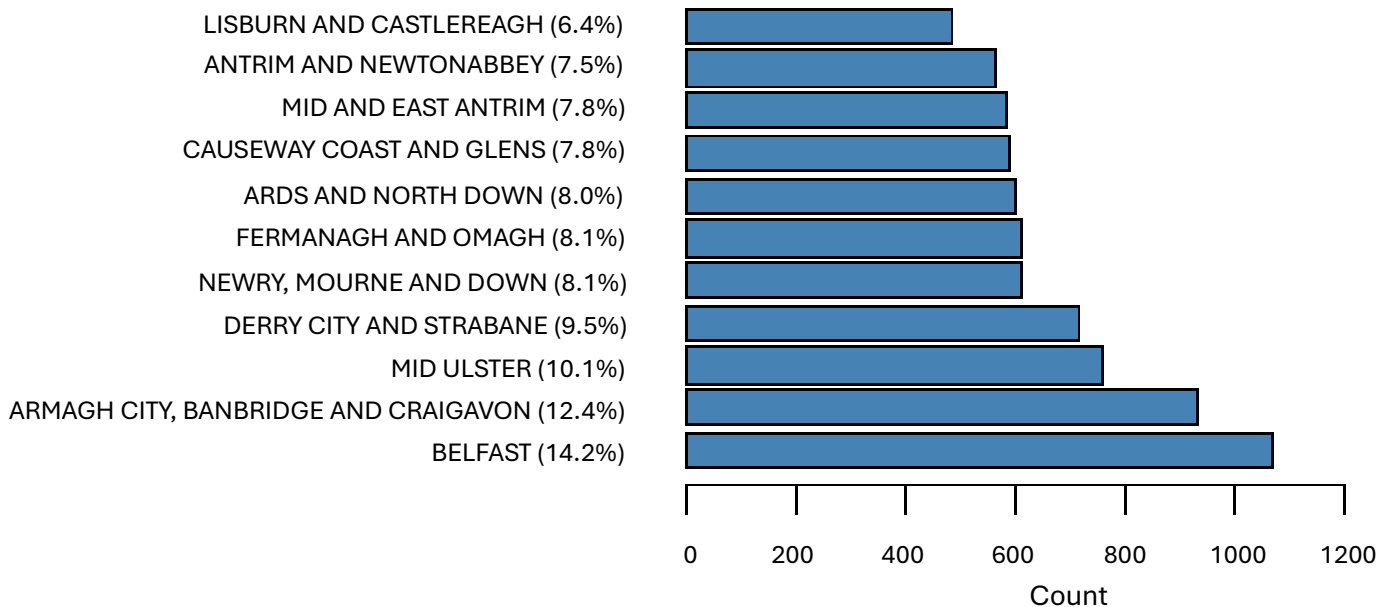


FIGURE 9: APPRENTICE POPULATION BY CPD (COUNCIL PLANNING DISTRICT)

4.2 Apprentice Income by CPD

Key Finding: Apprentices in Ards and North Down have higher estimated average income than those based in the other CPDs.

Figures 10 and 11 show a comparison of income across the CPDs. There is a £5,150 difference in average annual earnings between the highest (Ards and North Down) and lowest (Newry, Mourne and Down) CPDs.

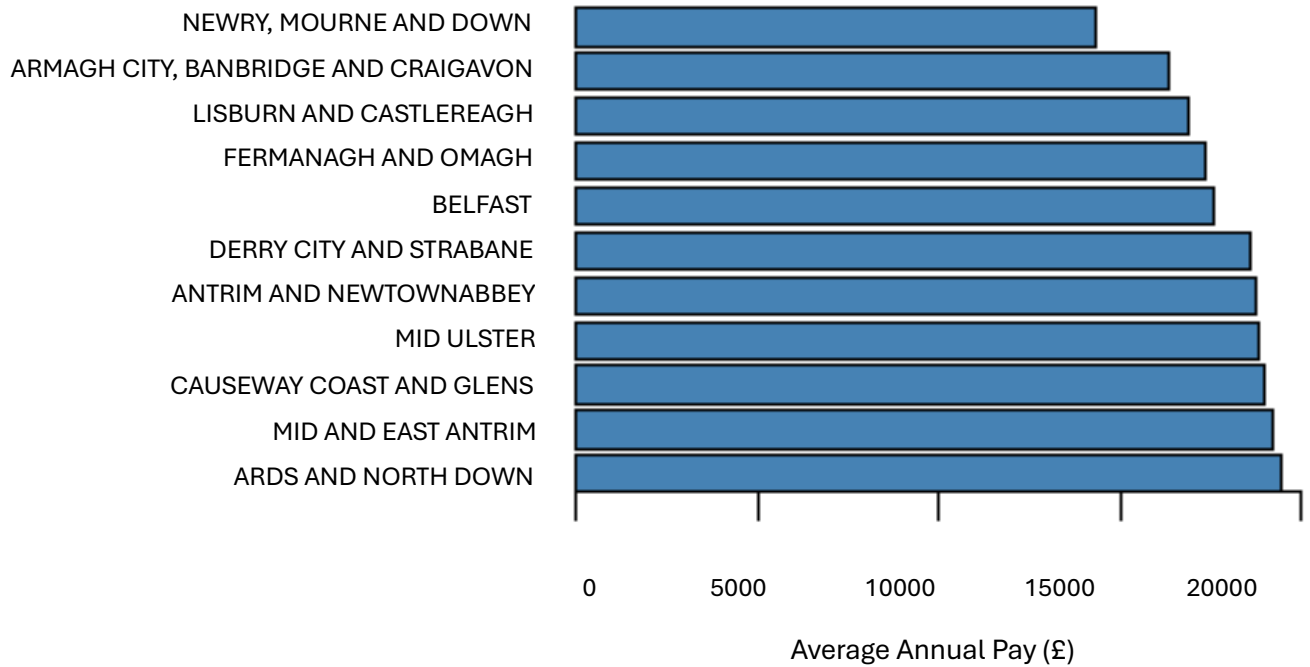


FIGURE 10: ESTIMATED ANNUALISED INCOME BY CPD

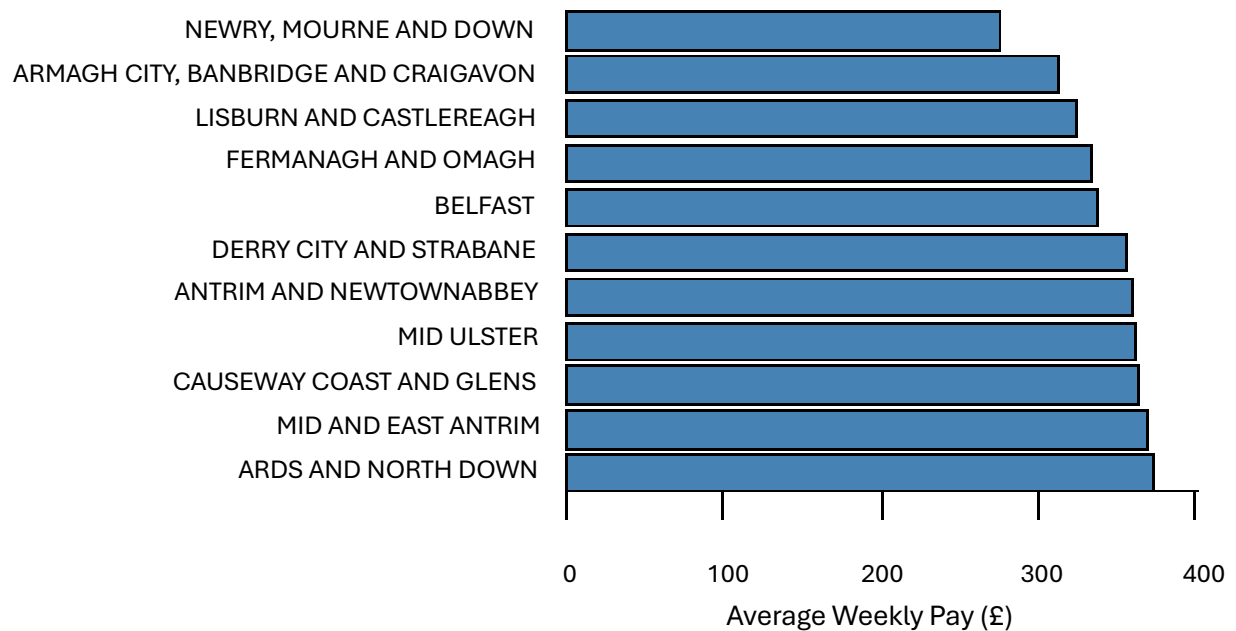


FIGURE 11: ESTIMATED WEEKLY INCOME BY CPD

5 Age Distribution

Key Finding: The age distribution peaks at 18 and 70% of individuals are aged between 16 and 25.

An age distribution for the population has been produced and is shown in Figure 11.

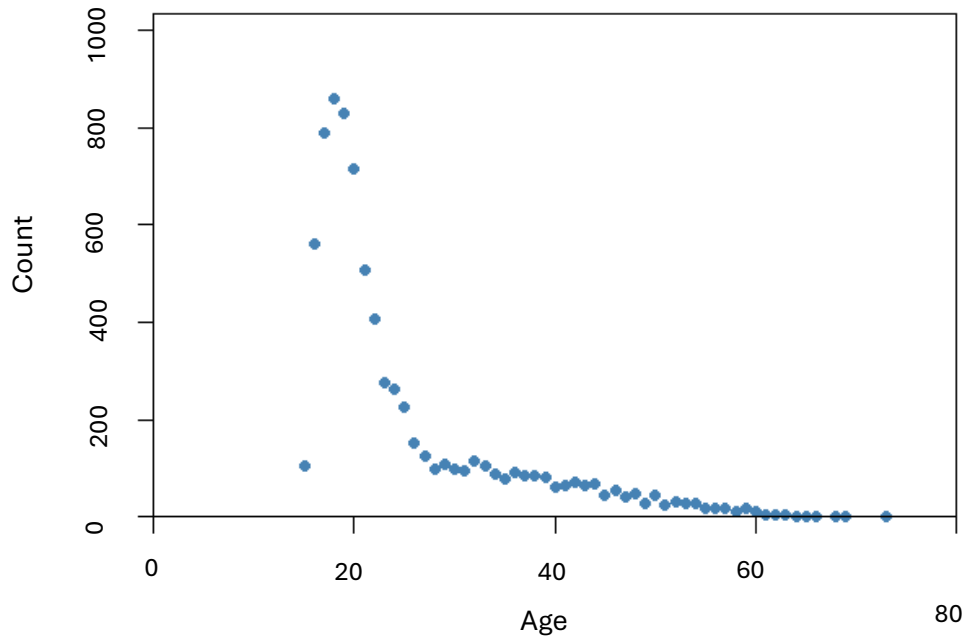


FIGURE 12: AGE DISTRIBUTION FOR APPRENTICE POPULATION

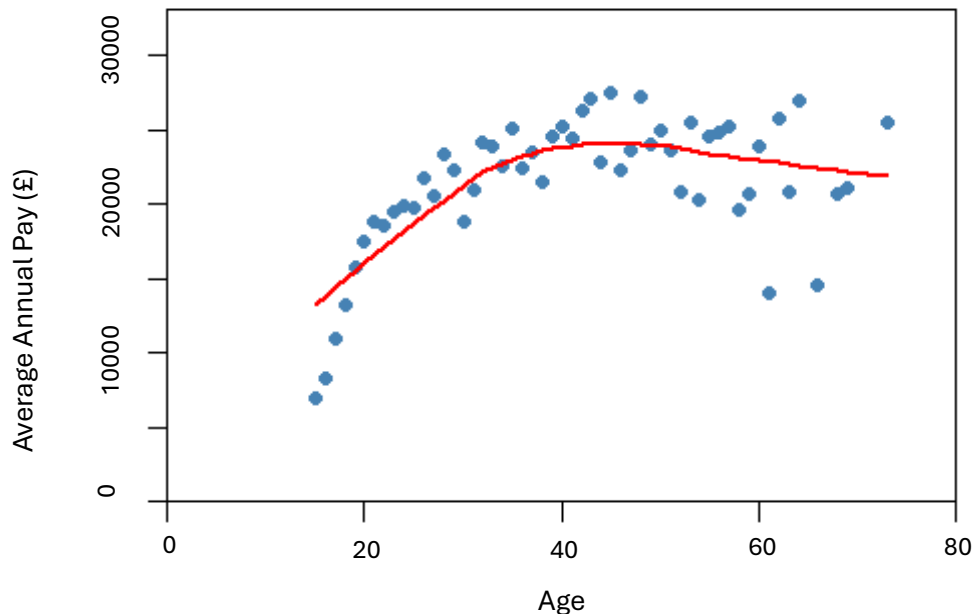


FIGURE 13: AVERAGE PAY DISTRIBUTION FOR APPRENTICE POPULATION GROUPED BY AGE

Key Finding: The estimated average income increases as age increases up to age 45.

It should be noted, however, that as per Figure 12, the significant majority of this population is clustered between ages 15-30, and as such there are fewer data points for older apprentices, and thus these data points may be less representative.