

Report

WORKWELL SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL (SAT): INSIGHTS REPORT

What we have learned, one year on

January 2025

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In October 2024, we celebrated the one year anniversary of the launch of [the Workwell Self-Assessment Tool \(SAT\)](#).

This report introduces the tool, shares insights from the last year on its use, and the data gathered.

What is the Workwell SAT?

The Workwell SAT was developed by expert members of our Wellbeing Leadership and Advisory Services teams.

It provides businesses with a free, simple and accessible way to objectively review their organisational approach to health and wellbeing.

It also adapts the highly regarded, evidence-based [Workwell Model](#) (Figure 1) into a maturity matrix.

How is the Workwell SAT constructed?

The tool incorporates the seven elements of the Workwell Model (Leadership, Better Specialist Support, Better Health and



Figure 1: BITC's Workwell Model

Wellbeing, Better Work, Better Management, Inclusive Culture and Collaboration with Stakeholders).

It considers each of these elements through strategy and risk, measurement and disclosure, and taking action.

Together, these form a continuous improvement loop and can positively drive workforce wellbeing performance forward within any organisation.

Each question provides four answers from which to choose. These range in maturity from 'adopting', where the organisation is just getting started, to 'transforming',

where the organisation is actively contributing to shifting the dial on workforce wellbeing for UK PLC – not just for its own employees (Figure 2).

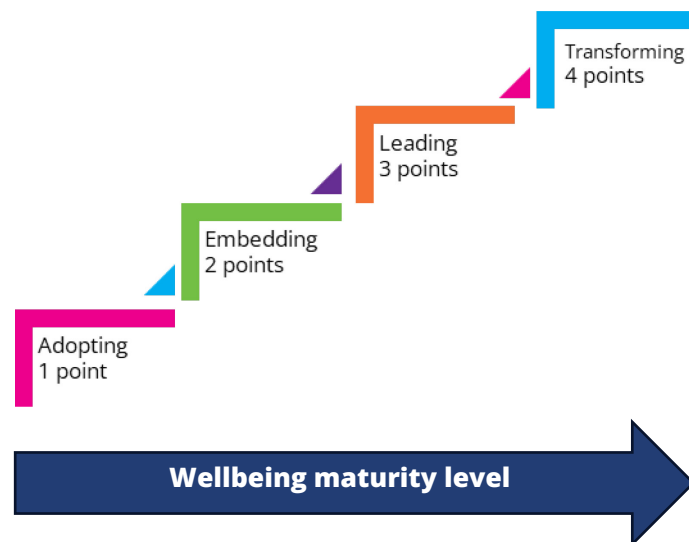


Figure 2: Levels of organisational maturity in the Workwell SAT

We recommend that the SAT submission is completed by a small group of business stakeholders, rather than an individual employee.

These stakeholders might represent organisational functions such as Health and Safety, Wellbeing, Diversity and Inclusion (D&I), employee relations, trade unions and staff networks.

Each organisation using the Workwell SAT will know best which stakeholders should be involved.

What can Workwell SAT users expect?

When a business completes the [Workwell SAT](#), it will receive a free report from our Wellbeing Team. This report provides:

- **An organisational baseline**, highlighting how effectively workforce wellbeing is being supported across each element of the Workwell Model
- **Benchmarking against other submissions**, helping businesses understand how their workforce wellbeing approach compares to other organisations. The report can be used in various ways, including:
 - Triangulation against internal data points to sense check the results.
 - Shaping the business' strategic approach to workforce wellbeing. For example, do planned activities address the areas with least mature performance, according to the Workwell SAT report?
 - Does the organisation need to gather and analyse more data points to better understand what is working about its approach – and what is not?

Who has used the Workwell SAT in its first year?

Since its launch in October 2023, 146 unique organisations have used the Workwell SAT, spread across 31 industry sectors.

The sectors most strongly represented amongst businesses using the Workwell SAT are construction (15), support services (15), utilities (12), industrials and engineering (11), accountants and management consultants (9) (Figure 3).

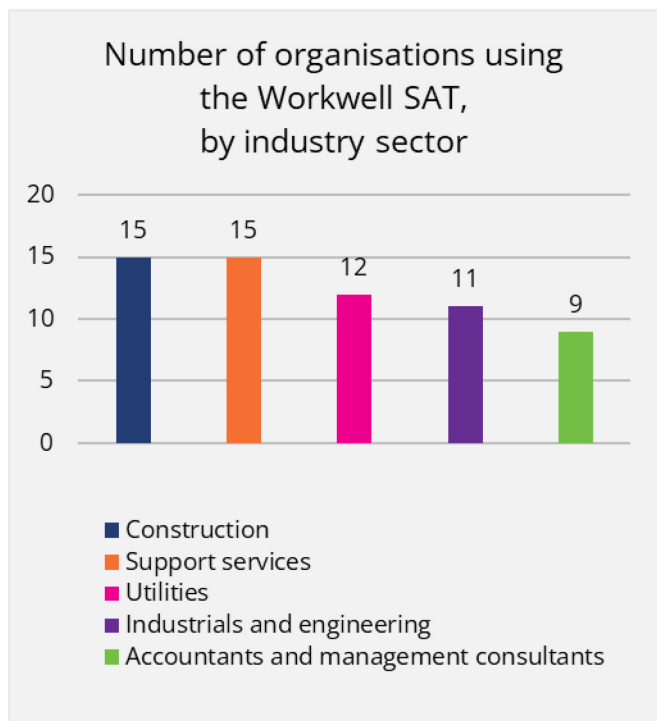


Figure 3: Number of organisations using the Workwell SAT, by industry sector

Organisations using the Workwell SAT are almost evenly split between those who are BITC member organisations (51%), and those who are non-members (49%) (Figure 4).

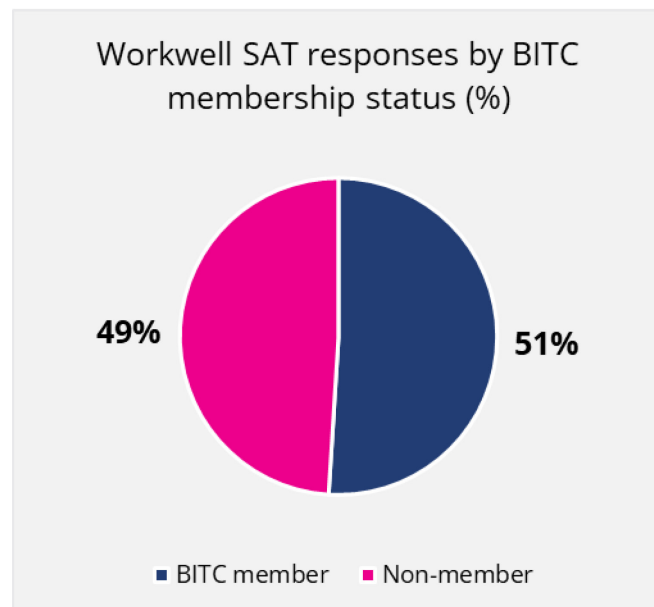


Figure 4: Workwell SAT responses by BITC membership status (%)

When considering organisation size, it is encouraging to note that a healthy number of SMEs have used the Workwell SAT, with 30% of submissions coming from SMEs (Figure 5).

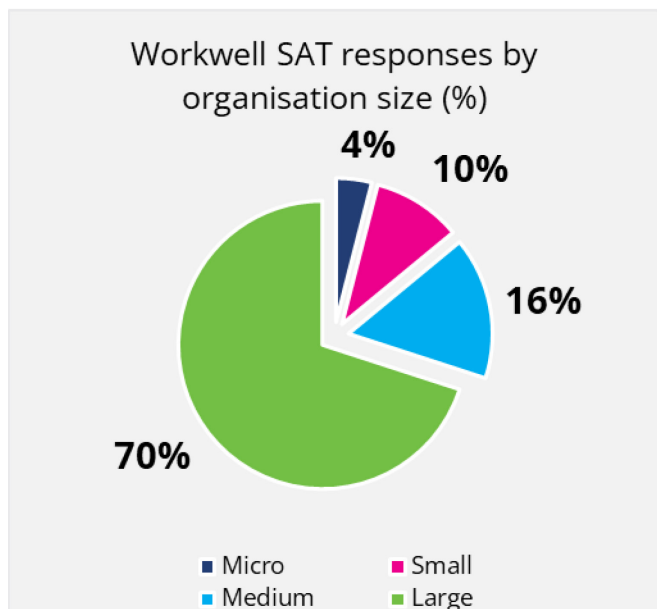


Figure 5: Workwell SAT responses by organisation size (%)

Between them, the 146 organisations employ almost 1.4 million people. To put that into context, that is more than the combined populations of Edinburgh (526,000 people)¹ and Leeds (818,000 people)².

¹ City of Edinburgh Council, Edinburgh by numbers (2023), available at <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/file/30669/edinburgh-by-numbers-2021>. Accessed 8 December 2024

² ONS, How the population changed in Leeds, Census 2021, available at

Analysing the submissions

We analysed all the Workwell SAT submissions made in its first year. We have discovered that across each element of the Workwell Model:

- Average scores across all users show Workwell SAT users to be in the 'embedding' phase of their wellbeing approach overall.
- Large businesses, on average, score more highly than SMEs.
- The range of scores amongst SME submissions is wider than for larger businesses, where responses are more tightly packed.
- This shows that, while SME scores are lower overall than for large businesses there are some SMEs that have a strong approach to workforce wellbeing.

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censuspopulationchange/E08000035/>. Accessed 8 December 2024

- BITC member organisations score higher than non-members.

Where are businesses performing best?

When we analysed all responses, **Better Specialist Support** performed best as the strongest element.³ This remains the case when focusing on large organisations.⁴

When considering SMEs, the element of **Leadership**⁵ performed best.

Where do businesses have greatest room for improvement?

For those from large organisations, the element of **Inclusive Culture** came up as an area for improvement, and where there is the most work to do⁶.

³ Across all responses, Better Specialist Support scored an average of 2.52 / embedding

⁴ Across all large business responses, Better Specialist Support scored an average of 2.70 / embedding

⁵ Across all SME responses, Leadership scored an average of 2.30 / embedding

⁶ Across all responses, Inclusive Culture scored an average of 2.12 / embedding. In large businesses, the average score for Inclusive Culture was 2.11 / embedding.

Once again, this differed for SMEs where the greatest area for improvement was for **Better Specialist Support**⁷.

Better Specialist Support

When considering the maturity of Better Specialist Support, the tool explores:

- The range of services offered to employees that supports wellbeing. This may include reasonable adjustments, Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs), GP services, gendered health services, occupational health, private medical insurance and health screening.
- The means by which the usage and usefulness of these services are measured, if at all.
- The extent to which organisations build partnerships with experts across physical and mental health that deliver measurable outcomes for employees.

Leadership

⁷ Across all SME responses, Better Specialist Support scored an average of 2.09 / embedding.

Senior leaders and business owners are responsible for the individual and organisational experience of the workforce.

The Workwell SAT explores the organisational approach to wellbeing amongst senior leadership, and the extent to which employees are supported and prioritised, both within organisational strategy and workplace culture, daily. Both factors will impact productivity and performance.

Inclusive Culture

A diverse workforce which represents the communities an organisation serves and from which its employees are hired is good for business. However, a 'one size fits all' approach, including how workforce wellbeing is planned and delivered, does not meet the needs of a diverse workforce.

The Workwell SAT explores the ways in which businesses prioritise their people, by understanding who works for them and the impact of their unique experiences, both in and out of work.

Better Specialist Support, Leadership and Inclusive Culture

The relative strength of **Better Specialist Support**, especially amongst large organisations, is mirrored in the experience of our Inclusion and Wellbeing Advisory team.

Our advisers find that the great majority of their clients have access to EAPs⁸, which offer support to employees who are experiencing poor wellbeing. This might include counselling.

Other support services may include in-house or external occupational health support⁹, private medical insurance (PMI)¹⁰

⁸ The 2023 Employee Assistance Programme Association report, Holding it Together, notes that, "at 24.45 million employees covered, the data suggests that EAPs provide cover for 75% of the UK working population" (p6). Available at <https://www.eapa.org.uk/revealed-how-employers-and-eaps-have-become-an-essential-pillar-to-the-uks-mental-health-provision/>. Accessed 8 December 2024

⁹ Acas, Using Occupational Health at Work, available at <https://www.acas.org.uk/using-occupational-health-at-work>. Accessed 8 December 2024

¹⁰ The Association of British Insurers reported in 2024 that 4.7 million people were covered by Private Medical Insurance (PMI) through their

and health cash plans¹¹, access to virtual GPs, and other digital services, such as support with gendered health care¹². In addition, the legal duty to provide reasonable adjustments for long-term health conditions and disabilities under the Equality Act 2010¹³ means that many

employer in 2023. Available at <https://www.abi.org.uk/news/news-articles/2024/112/private-medical-insurance-data-2023>. Accessed 8 December 2024

¹¹ Employee Benefits reports that LaingBuisson's *Health cover UK market report, 17 edition*, published in June 2022, found that 3.3 million people were covered by 2,531,000 health cash plan policies in the UK at the end of 2020. Of these, 42% were employer paid. Available at <https://employeebenefits.co.uk/healthcare-and-wellbeing/buyers-guide-to-health-cash-plans/257584.article>. Accessed 8 December 2024

¹² In illustration, Peppy is a digital healthcare product which "focuses on underserved areas of healthcare: menopause, fertility, having a baby, women's health and men's health". Peppy's 2022 impact report reports that over 1 million people now have access to Peppy, and that more than 250 businesses give their employees access to Peppy. Available at <https://peppy.health/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/2022-peppy-bcorp-report-1.pdf>. Accessed 8 December 2024

¹³ UK Government, Reasonable adjustments: a legal duty, available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reasonable-adjustments-a-legal-duty/reasonable-adjustments-a-legal-duty>. Accessed 8 December 2024

organisations are well positioned to provide specialist support.

It is, perhaps, unsurprising that **Leadership** is a relatively strong performance element for SMEs. In smaller organisations, leaders are likely to know a bigger proportion of their workforce better and are closer to the "shop floor".

They may be quicker to see the impact of negative workplace experiences within their workforce, such as pressure¹⁴ and non-inclusive behaviours¹⁵, which are often described as key drivers of poor workforce wellbeing.¹⁶

¹⁴ BITC, Mental Health at Work (2020), available at [bitc-report-wellbeing-mental-health-at-work-2020-Oct20.pdf](https://www.bitc.org.uk/report/wellbeing-mental-health-at-work-2020-Oct20.pdf). Accessed 8 December 2024

¹⁵ BITC, Prioritise People: Unlock the value of a Thriving Workforce (2023), p15. Available at <https://www.bitc.org.uk/report/prioritise-people-unlock-the-value-of-a-thriving-workforce/>. Accessed 8 December 2024

¹⁶ BITC, Mental Health at Work (2020) reports that 41% of survey respondents cited work as a cause or contributory factor of poor mental health. This figure was an increase of 3% from pre-pandemic reporting. Available at [bitc-report-wellbeing-mental-health-at-work-2020-Oct20.pdf](https://www.bitc.org.uk/report/wellbeing-mental-health-at-work-2020-Oct20.pdf). Accessed 8 December 2024

Leaders in SMEs are also likely to have more direct influence over the provision of good work (including factors such as psychological safety in teams and good job design), which positively influence workforce wellbeing.

The scores for SMEs on **Better Specialist Support** may reflect limited access to the internal skills, knowledge and expertise needed to take a data-driven approach when evaluating the performance and value of specialist support services, and the procurement of high-quality products and services.

In addition to the scores shown, our Inclusion and Wellbeing advisory services work with our members and clients suggests that there is still room for improvement around the healthy and inclusive experience of work, for people with one or more protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.¹⁷

¹⁷ There are nine protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. Available at <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/equality/equality-act-2010/your-rights-under-equality-act-2010>. Accessed 8 December 2024

For example, one way in which the relationship between wellbeing and inclusive culture is how reasonable adjustments are accessed and provided.

This is particularly true for mental health conditions, invisible illnesses, and neurodiversity. Another factor is ensuring specialist support services meet the needs of a diverse workforce, adapting to their evolving needs throughout their working life. When counselling is offered, employees should have access to counsellors who understand their lived experience.

A focus on strategy

Our [Prioritise People: Unlock the Value of a Thriving Workforce report](#) 2023, in collaboration with McKinsey Health Institute,¹⁸ recommended a three-point plan for workforce wellbeing interventions:

1. Assess the starting point of a business

¹⁸ BITC, Prioritise People: Unlock the value of a Thriving Workforce (2023), p15. Available at <https://www.bitc.org.uk/report/prioritise-people-unlock-the-value-of-a-thriving-workforce/>. Accessed 8 December 2024

2. Select a portfolio of employee health and wellbeing investments
3. Track and monitor interventions.

The Workwell SAT brings this into action. It enables businesses to assess their starting point and consider how strategic their approach is and understand how that strategy is converted into action and then evaluated. This is done through three lenses:

1. Strategy and risk
2. Taking action
3. Measurement and disclosure

These form a continuous improvement loop (Figure 6).



Figure 6: The Workwell SAT continuous improvement loop

When considering the average scores of all Workwell SAT respondents, organisations score higher for their approach to strategy and risk, than for measurement and disclosure, or for taking action. This is evident when BITC member organisations are compared to non-members, and when large businesses are compared to SMEs.

Businesses of all sizes, sectors and maturity should focus on bringing strategy to life through planning and implementation, measuring impact and then iterating accordingly.

Our [Prioritise People: The Next Step report 2024](#)¹⁹ provides expert guidance for businesses on how to create a dashboard of wellbeing KPIs, enabling that continuous improvement loop to be undertaken.

Conclusion

It is inspiring to see the commitment of Workwell SAT users in striving to make the

¹⁹ BITC, *Prioritise People: The Next Step* (2024), available at <https://www.bitc.org.uk/report/prioritise-people-the-next-step-report/>. Accessed 9 December 2024

workplace experience as positive and fulfilling as possible for their workforce.

However, there is more to be done to gain the productivity and performance benefits that an engaged, healthy, diverse and included workforce can deliver.

Recommendations

Our expert wellbeing and inclusion advisers recommend:

1. Whatever your starting point, there are benefits to be gained from improving your approach to workforce wellbeing. Start that journey today.
2. Use the Workwell Self-Assessment Tool annually. This will help you understand your relative and absolute performance on workforce wellbeing.
3. When you use the Workwell SAT, gather a group of stakeholders together who can give you a rounded view of the organisation. This array of diverse perspectives will be invaluable.
4. Focus on delivering, measuring and iterating wellbeing strategies, and ensure that your approach is inclusive by design.

How Business in the Community can support you

Our Wellbeing Advisers can help you develop every aspect of your approach to workforce wellbeing, ensuring that all colleagues feel valued and supported. We take a strategic, data-driven and evidence-based approach to help you gain maximum value from your commitment to your people.

We can undertake deep listening exercises to help you understand your business culture, and we have a wide range of learning and development products to meet all your requirements.

For more information, [contact our Advisory team today](#).