

The Employee Benefits Index 2025

Which sector offers
the best incentives?



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Introduction

Welcome to our latest Employee Benefits Index – a look at how UK industries are supporting their teams, and where there's work to be done.

The data shows a clear trend: sectors that invest in strong, well-rounded benefits packages tend to perform better when it comes to attracting and retaining talent.

Long-term incentives, like share schemes, play a part in that success – but so do broader efforts to support employees' wellbeing, security, and future.

By contrast, sectors such as education and healthcare, where benefit provision is often limited, continue to face challenges around staff turnover and retention.

In today's climate, with rising National Insurance contributions and tightening budgets, it's more important than ever to think creatively about how to reward and retain people.

For many companies, equity-based schemes are one of several tax-efficient ways to do just that. If you ever want to explore new ways to strengthen your benefits offering, [we're always happy to help](#).

But for now, enjoy the findings – I hope they offer some useful insights and inspiration.

Ifty Nasir

Founder & CEO of [Vestd](#)



Methodology

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Which industries offer the best benefits?

To find out, the Vestd team analysed the figures to create a comprehensive index of employee benefits.

We crunched the numbers from more than 130,000 jobs listed on Reed, one of the UK's biggest jobs boards. Our experts searched for 20 different incentives in job descriptions and filtered the results by industry.

We took the number of jobs listed for each benefit per sector and divided that by the total number of jobs currently listed in the UK on Reed. This calculation gave us the percentage of jobs in each sector offering each specific benefit.

In order to create our Employee Benefits Index, we gave each industry a weighted score out of 100 for each benefit, based on the proportion of jobs offering the incentives and totalled the scores to give an overall ranking.

The industries with the highest scores have the best benefit packages.



As part of our analysis, we compared the following sectors:

- Education
- Accountancy
- Social care
- Legal
- Transport and logistics
- Engineering
- Strategy and Consulting
- Health and Medicine
- Construction and property
- IT and Telecoms
- Admin, Secretarial and PA
- Financial Services
- Hospitality and Catering
- Retail
- Sales
- Manufacturing
- Customer service
- Recruitment Consultancy
- General Insurance
- HR
- Estate agency
- Marketing and PR
- Motoring and Automotive
- Banking
- Energy
- Charity and Voluntary
- Security and Safety
- FMCG
- Leisure and tourism
- Media, Digital and Creative
- Scientific
- Purchasing



We also searched for the following common benefits in job descriptions:

- Employee share schemes
- Hybrid/flexible Working
- Cycle To Work
- Private Medical Insurance
- Subsidised Gym Membership
- Bonus
- Life Insurance
- Employee Discount
- Income Protection
- On-site parking
- Referral Programme
- Dental Insurance
- Company Car
- Enhanced Paternity Leave
- Enhanced Maternity Leave
- Bereavement Leave
- Profit Sharing
- Health & Wellbeing Programme
- Four Day Week

To download the full data set, [click here](#).

The Employee Benefits Index



Top 10 industries with the best benefits

 Motoring & Automotive 704	 Customer Service 671
 Hospitality & Catering 660	 Security & Safety 651
 Social Care 639	 Health & Medicine 608
 Energy 595	 Charity & Voluntary 575
 FMCG 570	 Leisure & Tourism 562

The **motoring and automotive sector** raced ahead of the competition to offer the best employee benefits.

Our analysis of more than 1,600 vacancies in the sector found that a bonus scheme was the most popular incentive for jobs in this industry.

The second and third most popular benefits, in a sector where major employers like Enterprise, Renault and Halfords are hiring, were cycle-to-work schemes and a company car - reflecting the different ways employees like to get to their jobs.

The second-best industry was **customer service**, which scored highly for company bonuses, flexible working and cycle to work schemes.

Rounding off the top three industries was **hospitality and catering**, which scored 660, closely followed by **security and safety** and the **social care sector**.



The 10 industries with the most work to do



Scientific

210



Media, Digital
& Creative

215



Education

229



IT & Telecoms

235



Admin, Secretarial
& PA

278



Banking

289



Transport &
Logistics

297



Accountancy

331



Marketing & PR

333



Purchasing

362

At the bottom of the table, the **scientific industry** was ranked as the industry with the most work to do for employee benefits offering, with a final index score of just 210.

With over 500 present job openings, companies within the sector were found to rely heavily on benefits such as flexible working (offered in 19% of listings) and bonus schemes (18%) to attract top talent.

Yet, more progressive company perks, such as profit sharing, bereavement leave, and a four-day working week found to be offered in most other sectors, remained notably absent across the scientific job board.

The **media, digital, and creative industry** ranked the second-worst performing for benefits with an index score of just 215.

Strikingly, it was the only industry where no job listings included enhanced maternity leave, and none offered enhanced paternity or bereavement leave either. This is despite recent [findings](#) revealing that 65% of workers consider current statutory parental leave provisions to be inadequate.

The **education sector** also fell short, earning an index score of only 229. Despite having over 19,500 vacancies currently open, the highest number of openings across all industries, its benefits packages remained limited.

Flexible working appeared in just over 28% of job listings, but [other in-demand perks](#) such as health & wellbeing programmes, cycle-to-work schemes, and profit sharing were scarcely available.

Elsewhere, the **accountancy, marketing & PR, and purchasing sectors** rounded out the 10 lowest-performing industries for employee benefits, emphasising a clear need for improvement in how these fields attract and retain talent.



This trend is underscored by findings from [Vestd's Employee Retention Report](#), which revealed that **marketing**, **IT**, **education**, and **healthcare** all ranked among the lowest sectors for employee tenure. **Marketing**, in particular, recorded the shortest median tenure at just 2.8 years, the lowest of all industries analysed.

These figures critically underscore the need for competitive benefits, especially investment in long-term incentives designed to boost retention and improve talent loyalty.

So, when it comes to offering [a company share scheme](#), including the likes of [growth shares](#), [unapproved options](#) or an [EMI scheme](#), which industries are leading the way?



Top 10 industries offering share schemes



Motoring &
Automotive

100



Security &
Safety

98



Retail

66



Energy

65



Hospitality &
Catering

64



Leisure &
Tourism

47



FMCG

42



Construction &
Property

33



Customer
Service

28



Banking

27

Dominating in the overall rankings, the **motoring and automotive industry** also led the way in providing company share scheme options to employees, with a perfect score of 100.

Close behind was the **security and safety sector**, scoring 98 out of 100. In combination with the sector's high ranking for overall benefits, this reflects a strong commitment to long-term incentives by companies to retain top talent.

More unexpectedly, the **retail industry** secured third place with a score of 66, an indication that even traditionally high-turnover sectors are starting to recognise the value of equity-based retention schemes.



Share schemes: The industries falling behind

Industry	Employee Benefits Score (out of 100)
Education	0
Health & Medicine	1
Media, Digital & Creative	3
Social Care	3
Legal	4
IT & Telecoms	4
Purchasing	6
Scientific	6
Marketing & PR	7
Accountancy	8

At the other end of the scale, several major industries are notably underperforming when it comes to offering employee share schemes, and are potentially missing out on the opportunity to invest in long-term staff retention.

Education ranked last, indicating no evidence of share scheme offerings across its wide number of job listings. **Health and medicine** followed closely behind with a score of just 1, while creative sectors like **media, digital, and creative**, along with **social care**, each scored just 3 out of 100.



Despite operating in highly competitive job markets, professional service industries such as **legal, IT and telecoms, marketing and PR**, and **accountancy** all scored below 10, suggesting an urgent need to implement a more strategic benefits offering, such as equity-based incentives.

“

Despite growing awareness of the importance of employee benefits, too many organisations still view benefit packages as a cost hit rather than a strategic investment. But when you consider the ROI of a well-designed employee benefits package, chiefly in improving retention and employee engagement, the financial need is clear.

- Ifty Nasir, founder & CEO of Vestd.



Summary



The results paint a clear picture: industries that invest in long-term benefits and total compensation packages are far better placed to attract and retain top talent.

Motoring and automotive came out on top, thanks to a well-rounded approach that includes bonuses, cycle-to-work schemes and even share schemes.

Customer service and hospitality also scored highly, with a strong focus on flexibility and performance-based rewards.

At the other end of the scale, sectors like science, healthcare and education are falling behind, offering fewer perks and little access to equity-based incentives.

As National Insurance costs rise and competition for talent grows, it's clear that smarter, more sustainable benefits are no longer a nice-to-have – they're a must.

We hope this report sparks some ideas. And if you ever want to chat about using equity to build a standout benefits package, you know where to [find us!](#)

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