

Reed in Partnership
•••

Employer attitudes to
employing people with
criminal convictions

Eva Bell, Policy & Research Manager

reedinpartnership.co.uk

What we'll cover



- O1** Background

- O2** Insights from our report

- O3** How research insights can be built into practise

- O4** Q&A

Background

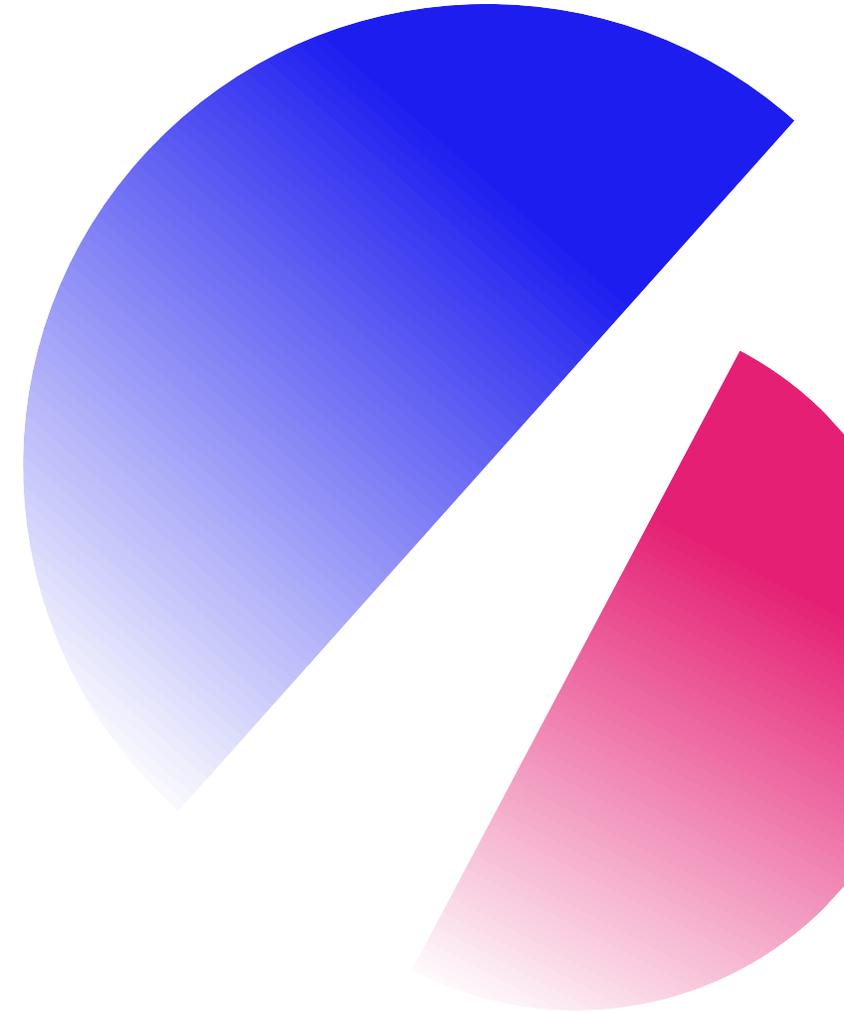
Our policy and research work

Our team works to:

- Gain insights from our service delivery and share with stakeholders and policy makers to help improve policy and tackle shared challenges
- Support the continuous improvement of our services
- Support our organisation's growth strategy and reputation

Our work in justice and employability

- We support people with criminal convictions through both dedicated programmes and our broader employment support services.
- We deliver Creating Future Opportunities (CFO) Evolution in London, supporting people who have left prison or are serving community sentences and are navigating their resettlement journey.



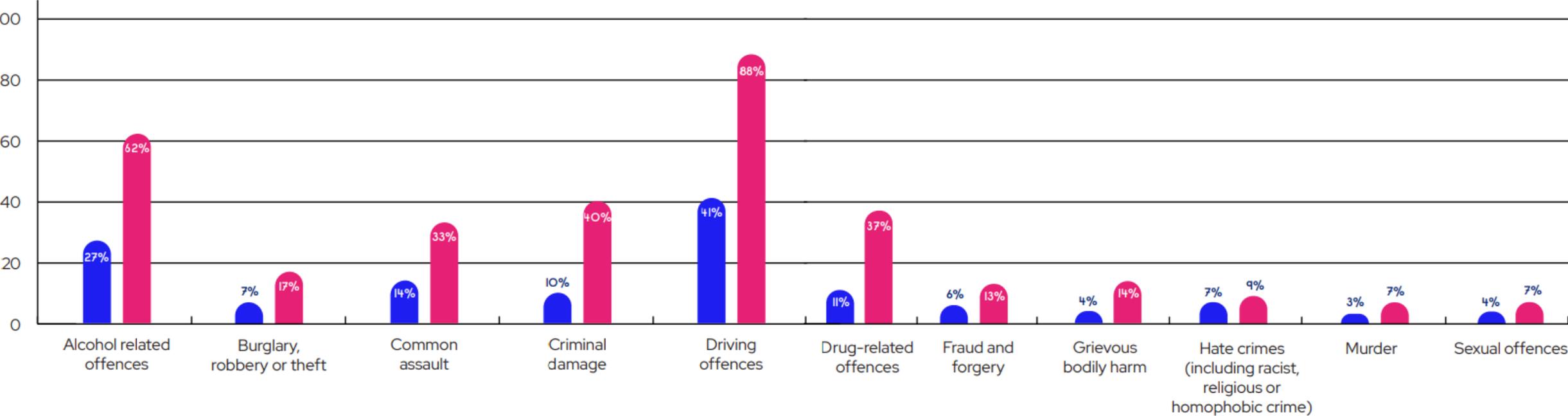
The research

- In 2013 we conducted a survey of 1,118 employers to understand employer attitudes and now 12 years later wanted to know how things had changed.
- We surveyed 1,045 employers in July 2025 to gain an understanding of their attitudes and approach.
- We also engaged with four employers who are successfully employing people with criminal convictions to identify best practice.



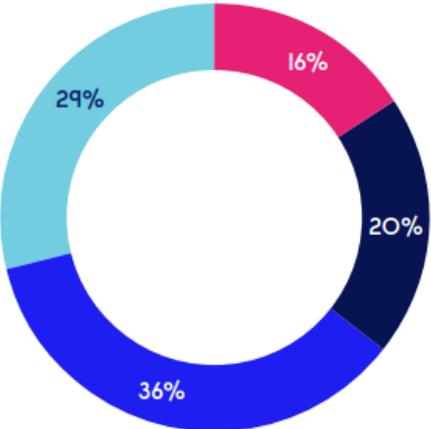
What we found

When considering recruiting staff with a criminal conviction, fewer employers in 2025 say they would consider doing this than in 2013, across all the offence types specified in the survey.



What we found

When asked what policies they have in place, one in five (20%) employers surveyed say that they will immediately reject a candidate if they disclose a criminal conviction in 2025.



Applicants who disclose a criminal conviction are considered in line with an organisation policy to guide recruitment decisions around criminal convictions



Applicants who disclose a criminal conviction are considered on a case-by-case basis



Applicants who disclose a criminal conviction are immediately rejected

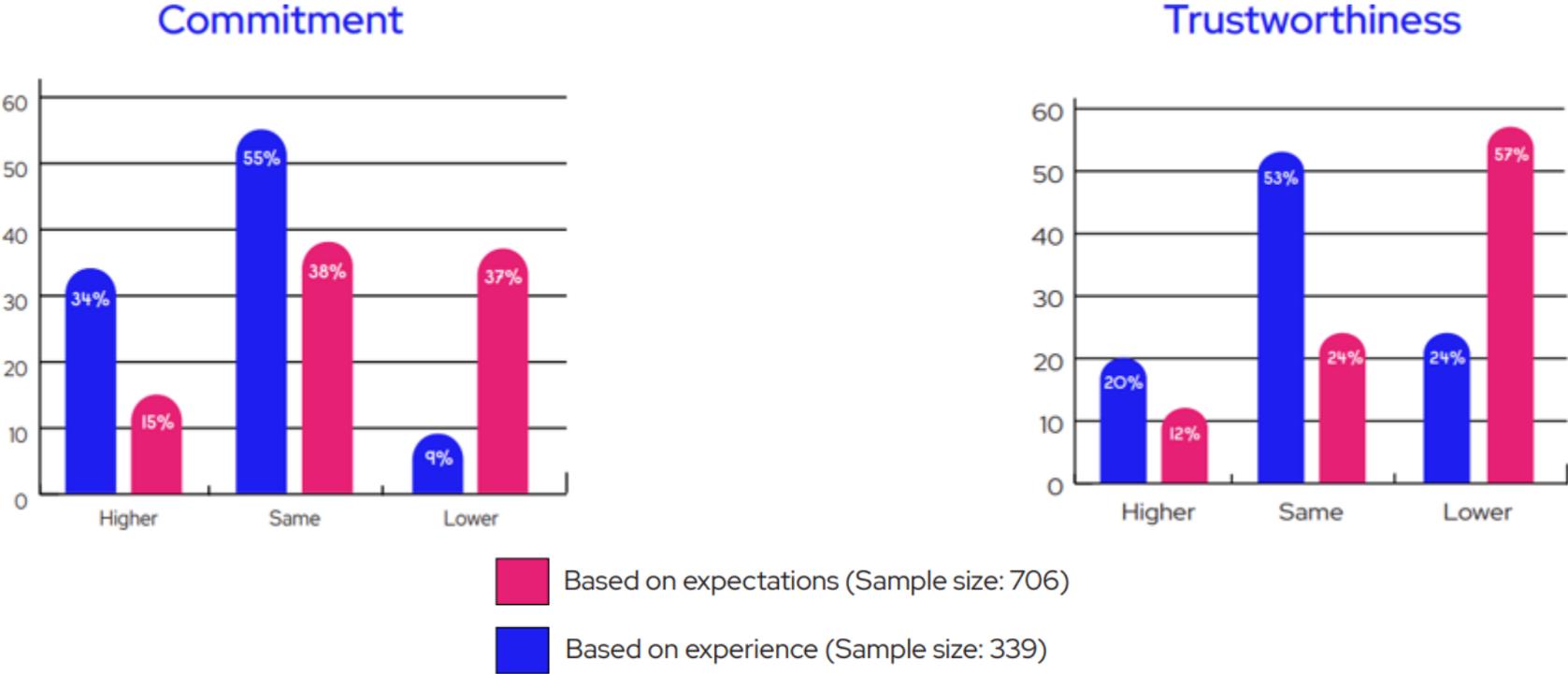


There are no policies in place in relation to recruiting people with criminal convictions

What we found

Employers who have recruited people with criminal convictions reporting them having the same or higher levels of commitment, resilience and trustworthiness as comparable staff with no conviction.

However, those employers that had no experience of recruiting people with criminal convictions had much lower expectations across the board.



What this means for employers

Employers who want to build inclusive, resilient workforces should take proactive steps to recruit people with criminal convictions.

We have identified three steps that employers can take to achieve this.



Develop a clear organisational policy

Employers in our network report that having a transparent approach builds trust and strengthens working relationships.



Provide practical guidance for hiring managers

This guidance empowers managers to make consistent, confident decisions and embed inclusive practices into recruitment processes.



Offer ongoing workplace support

Inclusive recruitment doesn't end at the job offer. To build a sustainable and resilient workforce, employers must continue supporting employees

Building on existing good practice

There is lots of support available to help achieve more inclusive workplaces for people with criminal convictions. Including:

- [Reed Screening's Employ with Convictions](#) guide offers practical steps to get started.
- [New Futures Network](#), part of HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS), connects employers with prisons to help prison leavers find meaningful work

Employers already working in this space are keen to connect to support the employment and progression opportunities for people they have worked with.



"Understand the issues that prison leavers face to adapt regular recruitment and employment practices."



"Start with the job you have to offer and work backwards to build a platform for prison leavers to enter that role."



"Pilot offering paid opportunities such as work placements or working with partners like us."

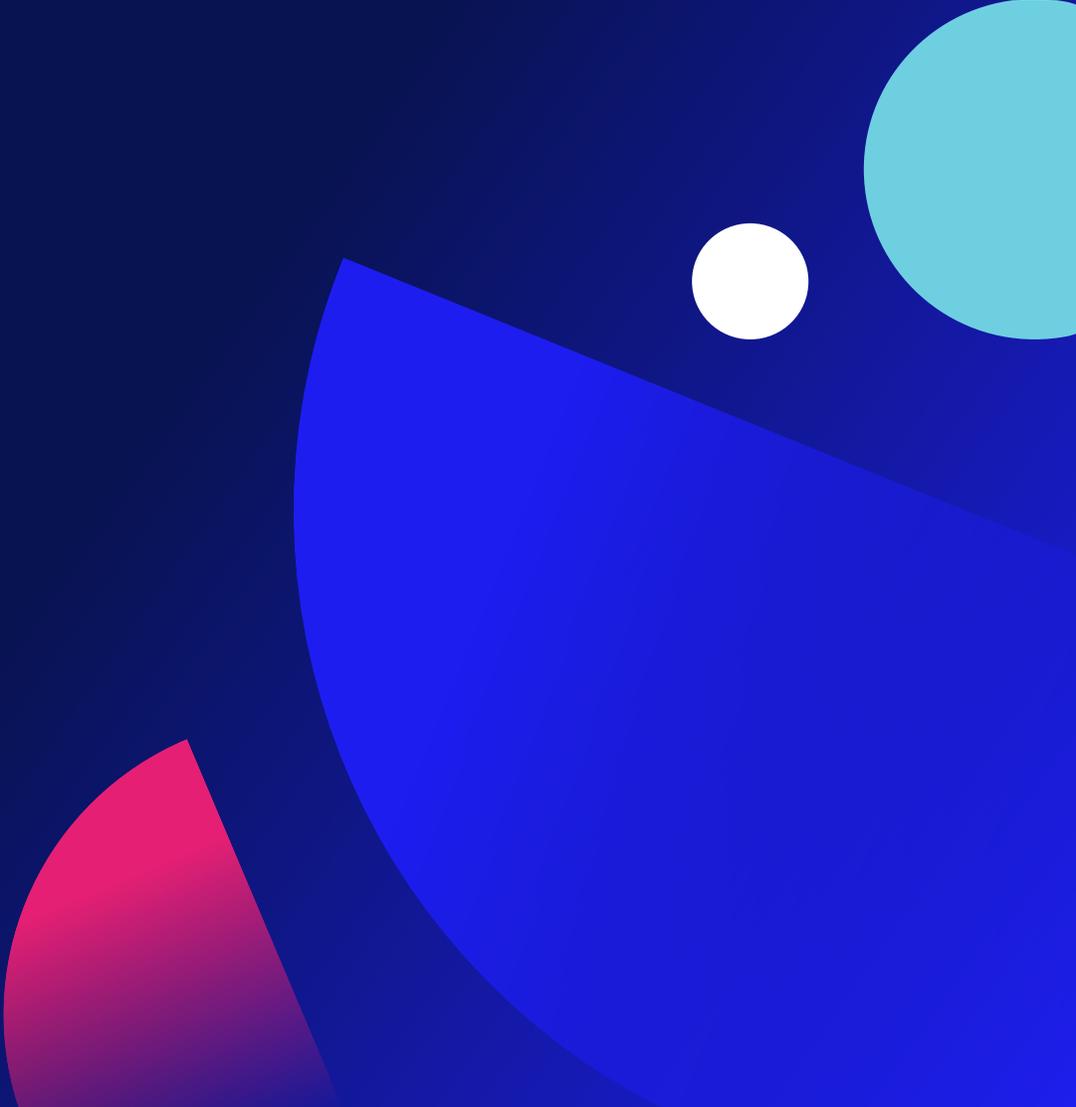
SOCIAL PANTRY

"Build trust through honest and open dialogue with members of the team who have criminal convictions."

Any Questions?



Reed in Partnership



Reed in Partnership Limited.
Registered Office: Academy Court, 94 Chancery Lane, London WC2A 1DT
Company Number: 00851645.

© Reed in Partnership Ltd