Tracker results – LPT Q1 2026 results

Headline findings include:

Business outlook and financial health

- UK GDP growth increased to 0.6% in Q1 2026, up from 0.2% in Q4, signalling stronger economic momentum, although transport and storage growth eased slightly.
- Business outlook softened to 5.8 out of 10 in Q1, a slight drop from 6.0 in Q3 2025.
- Financial health remains the top metric at 7.2 out of 10, though the slight fall from 7.4 ends a five-quarter run of stability or improvement.

Business impacts

- The near-term outlook for Q2 2026 remained weak and overall, slightly worse compared to Q1 and all metrics viewed more negatively than positively.
- Fuel prices are creating the most negative pressure, driving growing cost concerns.
- Staff availability remained the highest scoring area within the expected trends for Q2 2026 along with paying suppliers.

Supply chain issues

- Supply chain conditions deteriorated, representing the largest fall of any headline measure.
- Transport costs showed the greatest increase of all areas measured.
- Disruption to global shipping routes, alongside supplier delays, border friction and paperwork all remained key issues.

Freight rates and warehousing

- Freight rates are expected to increase across all modes in Q2 2026.
- International and domestic road freight recorded the highest scores, with sea freight the lowest.
- Shipping conditions remained broadly stable overall, with weaker performance in deep-sea routes and air freight.

Staffing and skills

- Workforce levels remain largely stable over the last 6 months, with most businesses reporting little change across key roles.
- No role stands out significantly in terms of staff numbers, although HGV drivers perform marginally stronger within a tightly grouped range.
- Recruitment conditions have improved slightly overall, but ‘fitters, mechanics and technicians’ remain the most difficult roles to fill, continuing a persistent skills challenge.