



Education and training national achievement rates tables for the 2014/2015 academic year

Guidance notes

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Contents

Section 1 - Introduction	2
Purpose of this document	2
Purpose of the education and training national achievement rates tables	2
Location of national achievement rates tables	2
Changes to the education and training national achievement rates tables for 2014/2015 ...	2
Section 2 – Education and training national achievement rates tables worksheets	3
Contents of the tables	3
Format of the education and training national achievement rates tables	4
Headline report	4
Qualification level report.....	4
Institution report for overall measure	5
Institution report for timely measure.....	5
Excluded qualifications report	5
GCSE pass rate and achievement rate report.....	5
Section 3 – Education and training national achievement rates tables open data files..	6
Format of education and training national achievement rates tables open data files.....	6
Section 4 – Contents of national achievement rates tables.....	7
Report columns	7
Institution type	7
Age group	8
Qualification level	8
Qualification type	8
Qualification codes	8
Report measures	8
Overall qualification achievement rate	9
Timely qualification achievement rate	9
Overall retention rate	9
Overall pass rate	9
Overall and timely cohorts.....	9
Section 5 – Exclusions from the national achievement rates tables	10
Excluded qualifications.....	10
Excluded cohorts, suppression rules and rounding rules	10
Section 6 – Choosing information on the national achievement rates tables	10
Further information and help	11

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A partner organisation of the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills

Section 1 - Introduction

Purpose of this document

1. This document provides information about the education and training national achievement rates tables for the 2014/2015 academic year.

Purpose of the education and training national achievement rates tables

2. The education and training national achievement rates tables set out levels of success, in terms of the achievement of qualifications, of further-education institutions in England for the 2014/2015 academic year. We publish national achievement rates tables every year.
3. The information in the tables is comparable with the Education and Training qualification achievement rates reports for 2014/2015 made available to each institution. It expands upon the national achievement rates published in the statistical first release (at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/learner-participation-outcomes-and-level-of-highest-qualification-held>).
4. Education and training national achievement rates tables help institutions to raise the standard of their work. They allow institutions to assess their performance, and help them to plan action programmes to improve their qualification achievement rates, retention rates and pass rates.
5. Throughout this guidance we refer to 'national achievement rates tables' rather than 'benchmarking data'. National achievement rates tables allow for comparison, and are not a standard of best practice.

Location of national achievement rates tables

6. The national achievement rates tables for 2014/2015 are on our website (at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/sfa-national-achievement-rates-tables-2014-to-2015>).

Changes to the education and training national achievement rates tables for 2014/2015

7. The main changes made to the education and training national achievement rates tables to those produced for 2013/2014 are as follows.
 - The information from the 2014/2015 apprenticeships qualification achievement rates reports has been added to the national achievement rates tables for 2014/2015.
 - Only data for academic years 2013/2014 and 2014/2015 are present in the reports. Data for year 2012/2013 is not present as a different achievement rate methodology was applied. The change in the education and training achievement rates methodology causes a break in the time series of these statistics and means that the qualification achievement rates for 2013/2014 and 2014/2015 cannot be directly compared to 2012/2013.
 - The Excel format for the 2014/2015 NARTs have changed. All spreadsheets will be produced as Microsoft Excel 2010.
 - The names of two rates have changed on the 2014/2015 qualification achievement rate reports and have been applied to the national achievement rate tables. The consultation on the [outcome based success measures](#) identified that there are other equally important factors that determine the successful outcome of learning. In preparation for the introduction of a broader range of success measures, we are

changing the name 'Success Rates to 'Achievement Rates.' The 2013/2014 'achievement rate' has also been renamed 'pass rate.'

- Workplace learning aims have been included with classroom learning aims for the 2014/2015 qualification achievement rates.
 - A spreadsheet showing GCSE pass rates and achievement rates for maths and English has been included in the national achievement rate tables. This has been added as a separate spreadsheet with worksheets at a headline level and by institution.
 - A worksheet showing Access to HE qualification types have been included on a separate worksheet in the qualification spreadsheet for the 2014/2015 national achievement rate tables.
 - Qualification achievement rates for the qualification types have been added to the institution spreadsheet of the national achievement rate tables as separate worksheets for overall and timely achievement rates.
 - The derivation of the qualification type 'Functional Skills Sfl' has changed and has been replaced by 'Basic Skills Maths and English.'
 - The qualification achievement rates show 2014/2015 qualification types only as the derivation of the qualification types for 2014/2015 is different to that for 2013/2014.
 - UPIN is no longer the primary identifier of an institution and has been removed from the national achievement rates tables for 2014/2015.
 - Percentile data does not provide essential information and has been removed from the 2014/2015 national achievement rate tables.
8. The rationale for the change of education and training achievement rate methodology is available on the gov.uk website (at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sfa-qualification-success-rates-rationale-for-2013-to-2014>).
9. Because of the change to the overall and timely methodology, it is not advisable to make comparisons between the qualification achievement rates for 2013/2014 and 2014/15 with those published in the 2012/2013 national achievement rate tables.

Section 2 – Education and training national achievement rates tables worksheets

Contents of the tables

10. Our aim in publishing the education and training national achievement rates tables is to provide a useful but manageable amount of information, drawing on existing statistics.
11. The information in the education and training national achievement rates tables has been created from institutions' Individualised Learner Record (ILR) returns, and the tables provide a range of national-level and institution-level statistics for achievement, retention and pass rates. The method of calculating qualification achievement rates is available on the gov.uk website (at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sfa-qualification-achievement-rate-2014-to-2015>).
12. The education and training national achievement rates tables contain qualification achievement rates for academic years 2013/2014 and 2014/15. The information for the 2013/2014 academic year is sourced from the qualification success rates dataset produced for 2013/2014, calculated using the method that applied to the 2013/2014 academic year. The information for the 2014/15 academic year is sourced from the qualification achievement rates dataset produced for 2014/15, calculated using the method that applied to the 2014/15 academic year.

Format of the education and training national achievement rates tables

13. The education and training national achievement rates tables are published as seven compressed files. Each compressed file holds a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet that contains a number of worksheets. The separate spreadsheets are:

- headline report;
- qualification level report;
- institution report for the overall measure;
- institution report for the timely measure;
- excluded qualifications report;
- GCSE pass rates and achievement rates report and
- timely national report.

The contents of the spreadsheets are shown below.

Headline report

14. The headline report contains separate worksheets that show national qualification achievement rates, pass rates and retention rates at a headline level, which is an overview of all national qualification achievement rates. This report also presents the qualification achievement rates, pass rates and retention rates by:

- qualification type;
- gender;
- ethnic background;
- learning difficulty or disability;
- sector subject area tier 1, qualification type and qualification level;
- learners' Local Enterprise Partnership;
- delivery Local Enterprise Partnership; and
- learners' region;
- delivery region.
- learners' local authority (based on the learners' home postcode);
- delivery local authority for where the learning is delivered (based on the postcode of the institutions' delivery location);

Qualification level report

15. The qualification level reports contain worksheets that show the national qualification achievement rates, pass rates and retention rates for individual qualifications. For each qualification the worksheets show:

- qualification code;
- qualification type;
- qualification level;
- qualification title; and
- sector subject area tier 1;

16. The qualification level report is split into four worksheets containing:

- A-levels, AS-levels and GCSEs;
- QCF qualifications, which consist of QCF units, awards, certificates and diplomas;
- ESOL and Basic Skills Maths and English
- Access to Higher Education; and
- other qualifications.

17. Data suppression rules mean that qualifications delivered at a single institution are not shown in the reports.

Institution report for overall measure

18. The institution report contains worksheets that show the overall qualification achievement rates, pass rates and retention rates of each institution, by:

- qualification level;
- qualification type;
- gender;
- ethnic background;
- learning difficulty or disability;
- sector subject area tier 1;
- delivery local authority for where the learning is delivered (based on the postcodes of the institutions' delivery locations);
- delivery Local Enterprise Partnership; and
- delivery region.

Institution report for timely measure

19. The institution report contains worksheets that show the timely qualification achievement rates of each institution, by:

- qualification level;
- qualification type;
- gender;
- ethnic background;
- learning difficulty or disability;
- sector subject area tier 1;
- delivery local authority for where the learning is delivered (based on the postcodes of the institutions' delivery locations);
- delivery Local Enterprise Partnership; and
- delivery region.

Excluded qualifications report

20. Due to the suppression rules described in section 5, the full coverage of qualifications delivered is not available in the qualification level spreadsheets. The excluded qualifications are included in the excluded qualification report to allow the full scope of qualification delivery to be seen.

GCSE pass rates and achievement rates report

21. The GCSE pass rates and achievement rates report contains worksheets that show the overall pass grades, pass rate, achievement grades and achievement rates for maths and English, by:

- headline; and
- institution

Timely National report

22. The timely national report contains a worksheet that shows the national timely qualification achievement rates by age band and qualification level.

Section 3 – Education and training national achievement rates tables open data files

Format of education and training national achievement rates tables open data files

23. The education and training national achievement rates tables are also published in a non-proprietary format to meet the ‘three-star open data standard’. The comma-separated variable (CSV) file is our preferred non-proprietary format. For more information on open data, see the published white paper written by the Cabinet Office (at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/open-data-white-paper-unleashing-the-potential>).
24. The education and training national achievement rates tables open data files are published as 37 separate compressed files. The contents of each file, and which report the information comes from, is shown below.

File number	File contents	Source report
NART101	Headline overall achievement rates	Headline
NART102	Overall achievement rates by qualification type	Headline
NART103	Overall achievement rates by gender	Headline
NART104	Overall achievement rates by ethnic background	Headline
NART105	Overall achievement rates by learning difficulties or disabilities	Headline
NART106	Overall achievement rates by sector subject area	Headline
NART107	Overall achievement rates by learners' Local Enterprise Partnership	Headline
NART108	Overall achievement rates by delivery locations' Local Enterprise Partnership	Headline
NART109	Overall achievement rates by learners' region	Headline
NART110	Overall achievement rates by delivery locations' region	Headline
NART111	Overall achievement rates by learners' local authority	Headline
NART112	Overall achievement rates by delivery locations' local authority	Headline
NART113	Overall achievement rates by qualification	Qualifications
NART114	Overall excluded qualifications	Excluded qualifications
NART115	Headline overall achievement rates for institutions	Overall institution
NART 116	Overall achievement rates for institutions by qualification type	Overall institution
NART117	Overall achievement rates for institutions by gender	Overall institution
NART118	Overall achievement rates for institutions by ethnic background	Overall institution
NART119	Overall achievement rates for institutions by learning difficulties or disabilities	Overall institution
NART120	Overall achievement rates for institutions by sector subject area tier 1	Overall institution
NART121	Overall achievement rates by delivery locations' Local Enterprise Partnership	Overall institution
NART122	Overall achievement rates by delivery locations' region	Overall institution
NART123	Overall achievement rates by delivery locations' local authority	Overall institution

File number	File contents	Source report
NART124	Headline timely achievement rates for institutions	Timely institution
NART 125	Timely achievement rates for institutions by qualification type	Timely institution
NART126	Timely achievement rates for institutions by gender	Timely institution
NART127	Timely achievement rates for institutions by ethnic background	Timely institution
NART128	Timely achievement rates for institutions by learning difficulties or disabilities	Timely institution
NART129	Timely achievement rates for institutions by sector subject area tier 1	Timely institution
NART130	Timely achievement rates by delivery locations' Local Enterprise Partnership	Timely institution
NART131	Timely achievement rates by delivery locations' region	Timely institution
NART132	Timely achievement rates by delivery locations' local authority	Timely institution
NART133	Timely national achievement rates	Timely national
NART134	Overall GCSE pass rates	GCSE pass rates and achievement rates
NART135	Overall GCSE pass rates by institution	GCSE pass rates and achievement rates
NART136	Overall GCSE achievement rates	GCSE pass rates and achievement rates
NART137	Overall GCSE achievement rates by institution	GCSE pass rates and achievement rates

Section 4 – Contents of national achievement rates tables

25. This section describes selected columns in the education and learning national achievement rates table worksheets.

Report columns

Institution type

26. Each institution is classified into one of six institution types. The institution types are:

- General further-education or tertiary college
- Private-sector publicly funded institution
- School
- Sixth-form college
- Specialist college
- Other publicly funded institution

27. The 'specialist college' category includes agriculture and horticulture colleges, and art, design and performing arts colleges. An 'all institution type' summary is also available on some of the worksheets.

Age group

28. The age group of a cohort is based on their age as at 31 August in the year they started their learning aim. Learners of unknown age are included in the 19 and over age group. Learners under 16 are included in the 16 to 18 age group. All tables show the information divided into age groups:

- 16 to 18
- 19 and over
- All ages

Qualification level

29. Learning aims are grouped according to their qualification level recorded in our learning aims reference system (LARS). The levels are:

- Level 1 – qualifications at level 1 and level 'E' (entry level)
- Level 2
- Level 3
- Level H – all level 4 and level 5 qualifications
- Unknown – qualifications with unknown level 'U', mixed levels 'M', or classified as not applicable 'X'.

An 'all levels' category is also available. This combines all the levels listed above.

Qualification type

30. Learning aims are grouped according to their qualification type. The types are:

- A Levels
- Access to HE
- AS Levels
- Award
- Certificate
- Diploma
- ESOL
- Basic Skills Maths and English
- GCSE Maths and English
- GCSE Other
- Other Regulated
- Other Non-Regulated
- QCF Unit

An 'all types' category is also available. This combines all the qualification types listed above.

Qualification codes

31. The qualification codes shown for the qualification levels come from the LARS hierarchy file (at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/lara-learning-aim-reference-application-hierarchy-file>). If a qualification has a success rate code in the LARS hierarchy file, this is used on the report. Otherwise the learning aim reference is used.

Report measures

32. The achievement rates, retention rates and pass rates are calculated in line with our education and training qualifications achievement rates business rules and methods (at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sfa-qualification-achievement-rate-2014-to-2015>).

Overall qualification achievement rate

33. The overall qualification achievement rate measures the percentage of learning aims achieved against the overall number of learning aims completed. The overall qualification achievement rate is based on the hybrid end year.
34. The hybrid end year is the actual learning end year or the planned learning end year of an apprenticeship, whichever is later.

Timely qualification achievement rate

35. The timely qualification achievement rate measures the percentage of learning aims that were achieved by their planned end date, or within 90 days after their planned end date, against the number of learning aims that were expected to be completed.

Overall retention rate

36. The retention rate measures the percentage of learning aims successfully completed against the number of learning aims that have been completed.

Overall pass rate

37. The pass rate measures the percentage of learning aims that have achieved against the number of learning aims successfully completed.

Overall and timely cohorts

38. In the reports the term 'cohort' is used as shorthand for 'learning aims completed by, or expected to be completed by, learners'.
39. The full list of exclusions are detailed in the classroom-learning and workplace-learning achievement rates dataset specification (at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sfa-qualification-achievement-rate-2014-to-2015>).
40. The 'overall cohort' column shows the number of learning aims that were planned to be completed, or have actually completed, within a given hybrid end year.
41. The 'timely cohort' column shows the number of learning aims that are expected to be completed by their planned end date, or within 90 days of their planned end date, within a given academic year.
42. The number of learning aims in a sub-cohort (a distinct group of learning aims within a cohort) may not add up to the total number of learning aims in the cohort because:
 - the cohort is rounded to the nearest 10 at all levels; and
 - small cohorts (fewer than five) are not included in the published tables.

Section 5 – Exclusions from the national achievement rates tables

Excluded qualifications

43. A number of learning aims are not included when calculating the qualification achievement rate. The main reasons for not including a particular learning aim are that it:
- relates to new activity that providers need time to get used to delivering;
 - is delivered as part of a pilot programme;
 - is not funded by us or the Education Funding Agency, or is not financed by a 24+ advanced learning loan;
 - is not a qualification;
 - is affected by circumstances beyond the provider's control (for example, if the learner is transferred to a new provider due to intervention from us or the Education Funding Agency.)
44. The aims excluded from the education and training qualification achievement rate reports are also excluded from the education and training national achievement rates tables. The full list of exclusions are detailed in the education and training achievement rates dataset specification (at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sfa-qualification-achievement-rate-2014-to-2015>).

Excluded cohorts, suppression rules and rounding rules

45. The rules on excluding small cohorts, suppressing figures and rounding figures in the achievement rate worksheets are listed below:
- Cohorts with fewer than five learning aims are not shown on any worksheets.
 - Cohorts with five or more learning aims but fewer than 30 have the number replaced with a dash (–).
 - If the cohort is five or more, but the number of completers is less than five, the achievement rate is replaced with a dash (–).
 - The cohort is rounded to the nearest 10. This prevents the possibility of individual learners being identified.
46. Where individual qualification achievement rates are reported, if a qualification is only delivered at a single institution, the qualification is not included in the report. This is to prevent individual achievements from being identified. Any qualifications that are excluded are listed in the excluded qualifications report, together with the reasons why they are excluded.
47. Where individual qualification achievement rates are reported, the exclusion rules mean that the cohort reported for the individual institution types may be less than the number reported for the 'all institution type' row.

Section 6 – Choosing information on the national achievement rates tables

48. The qualification achievement rates, pass rates and retention rates are presented as a series of rows in Excel worksheets. Each row shows the qualification achievement rate, pass rate and retention rate of a specific cohort of learning aims. Summary information is shown at many levels (for example, all ages, all qualification levels and all institution types). All the columns in the worksheets contain drop-down menus that allow you to choose the information you want.

49. The screenshot below shows an example of how the information will appear in the headline achievement rate worksheet.

2	Institution Type	Hybrid End Year	Age	Qualification Level
3	General FE and Tertiary College	2014/15	16-18	1
4	General FE and Tertiary College	2014/15	16-18	2
5	General FE and Tertiary College	2014/15	16-18	3
6	General FE and Tertiary College	2014/15	16-18	H
7	General FE and Tertiary College	2014/15	16-18	Unknown
8	General FE and Tertiary College	2014/15	16-18	All Levels
9	General FE and Tertiary College	2014/15	19+	4
10	General FE and Tertiary College	2014/15	19+	5
11	General FE and Tertiary College	2014/15	19+	6
12	General FE and Tertiary College	2014/15	19+	I
13	General FE and Tertiary College	2014/15	19+	Unknown
14	General FE and Tertiary College	2014/15	19+	All Levels
15	General FE and Tertiary College	2014/15	All Age	7
16	General FE and Tertiary College	2014/15	All Age	8
17	General FE and Tertiary College	2014/15	All Age	9
18	General FE and Tertiary College	2014/15	All Age	J
19	General FE and Tertiary College	2014/15	All Age	Unknown
20	General FE and Tertiary College	2014/15	All Age	All Levels

50. The drop-down menus are used to choose the level of information. The screenshot below shows the effect of using the drop-down menus to choose achievement rates for all ages and all qualification levels.

2	Institution Type	Hybrid End Year	Age	Qualification Level
20	General FE and Tertiary College	2014/15	All Age	All Levels
38	Other Public Funded	2014/15	All Age	All Levels
56	Private Sector Public Funded	2014/15	All Age	All Levels
68	Schools	2014/15	All Age	All Levels
86	Sixth Form College	2014/15	All Age	All Levels
103	Specialist College	2014/15	All Age	All Levels
121	All Institution Type	2014/15	All Age	All Levels

Further information and help

51. We produce education and learning national achievement rates tables in line with our education and training qualification achievement rates business rules. The business rules and achievement rates dataset production specification are on the gov.uk website (at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sfa-qualification-achievement-rate-2014-to-2015>).

52. If you need more information about the education and training national achievement rates tables, please phone our service desk on 0370 267 0001 or email servicedesk@sfa.bis.gov.uk. Please provide a detailed explanation of your query.

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