



Statistical First Release

Further Education and Skills

Learner Participation, Outcomes and Level of Highest Qualification Held

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Summary and Key Headlines – Provisional Full Year Data 2015/16

Adult (19+) Further Education and Skills 2,318,700 learners participated in government-funded adult further education in the full academic year 2015/16.

Apprenticeship participation 904,800 funded apprentices participated on an Apprenticeship in the full academic year 2015/16.

Apprenticeship starts There were 503,700 Apprenticeship starts in the full academic year 2015/16.

English and maths 809,400 adult learners participated on English and maths courses in the full academic year 2015/16

Provisional figures for the full 2015/16 academic year are based on information that has been reported to the Skills Funding Agency by further education colleges and providers in September 2016. The data will change as further data returns relating to the period are received later in the year (see paragraphs 50 and 51 for more detail).

Further breakdowns of the data for the provisional full year 2015/16 are presented from page 18.

Next Update: November 2016

Or view our web site at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/further-education-and-skills-statistical-first-release-sfr>

Coverage: England, academic year 2015/16 (and earlier)

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Summary and Key Headlines – 2014/15 Final Data

Adult (19+) Further Education and Skills Participation in government-funded adult further education fell to 2,613,700 in 2014/15. The number of learners participating on Full Level 2 courses declined to 753,300 and the number on Full Level 3 courses fell to 419,900.

Apprenticeship participation In 2014/15, Apprenticeship participation increased to 871,800, the highest number on record.

Apprenticeship starts There were 499,900 Apprenticeship starts in the 2014/15 academic year, an increase of 13.5 per cent on 2013/14.

English and maths 905,600 adult learners participated on English and maths courses in 2014/15, a decrease of 4.9 per cent on 2013/14.

Advanced Learner Loans There were 75,400 learners with an Advanced Learner Loan in 2014/15, an increase of 27.5 per cent on 2013/14.

Traineeships There were 19,400 Traineeship starts in 2014/15, an increase of 86.3 per cent on 2013/14.

Community Learning In 2014/15, there were 609,700 adult learners participating on a Community Learning course, a decrease of 7.2 per cent on 2013/14.

Offender Learning There were 101,600 offenders aged 18 and over in the prison system participating in learning in 2014/15, an increase of 6.6 per cent on 2013/14.

Key Definitions

Further Education (FE and Skills) includes: learners who are studying a course in a FE College, training provider or within their local community; and employees undertaking an Apprenticeship or other qualification in the workplace.

Apprenticeships are paid jobs that incorporate on- and off-the-job training leading to nationally recognised qualifications. As an employee, Apprentices earn as they learn and gain practical skills in the workplace.

Further key definitions can be found in the **Glossary** at page 23

Rates of Change (2013/14 to 2014/15) - Adult (19+) Further Education, Apprenticeship Participation and Apprenticeship Starts by Selected Level and Age

Participation	Full Level 2	Full Level 3	Level 4+	Total
Adult (19+) FE & Skills	-12.7%	-4.4%	19.7%	-10.8%
All age Apprenticeships	2.8%	-0.8%	64.1%	2.4%
Adult (19+) Apprenticeships	2.8%	-2.5%	64.9%	1.8%
Under 19 Apprenticeships	2.5%	7.8%	49.4%	4.5%
Starts				
All age Apprenticeships	4.1%	25.6%	114.5%	13.5%
Adult (19+) Apprenticeships	4.7%	30.7%	119.8%	16.6%
Under 19 Apprenticeships	2.6%	9.8%	54.1%	5.1%

In this release

This **Statistical First Release (SFR)** presents information on:

- Adult (aged 19+) government-funded Further Education (excluding schools and Higher Education) comprising:
 - Education and training, including Offender Learning (18+)
 - Apprenticeships
 - English and maths
 - Community Learning
 - Employer Ownership Pilots
 - Advanced Learner Loans
 - Traineeships (16-24)
- All age (16+) Apprenticeships in England.
- The highest level of qualification held by adults (aged 19 to 64) in England calculated from Labour Force Survey (LFS) data.

Final data are presented for Further Education and Apprenticeships between 2010/11 and 2014/15. In-year data for the first three quarters of 2015/16 are presented for the first time, based on information returned to the Skills Funding Agency so far by further education providers (See paragraphs 50 to 51).

Highest levels of qualification data are presented from 2008 to 2014, although 2014 figures are provisional and subject to revisions.

The **Employer Ownership Pilot (EOP)** 2014/15 collection was affected by the move to an improved collection system between provisional and final return dates. While this move has put future collections on a better footing, issues resulting from the transfer remain. Rather than extend the considerable work with providers to reconcile remaining differences between returns we have decided to continue to use the provisional data at this stage. The provisional data are almost complete and have passed full quality assurance.

The overall impact on the main FE tables will be negligible because EOP is very small in relation to the Individualised Learner Record collection, the main data source for this SFR. In 2014/15, just 1,500 apprenticeship starts of the 499,900 in total were EOP. The following tables include provisional 2014/15 EOP figures.

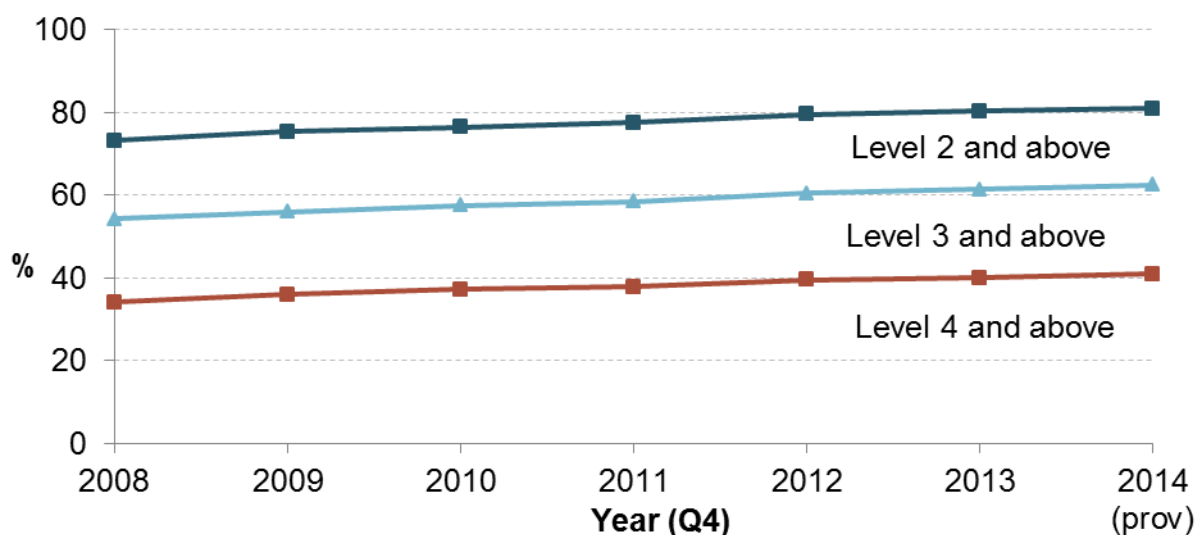
- Tables 1.1, 1.2: Adult (19+) FE and Skills Participation/Achievement by Level
- Table 2: All Age Apprenticeship Participation by Level and Age
- Table 3: Adult (19+) Education and Training by Level
- Table 4: Adult (19+) FE and Skills – English and Maths
- Table 5: Adult (19+) Demographic Summary of FE and Skills Participation
- Table 6: All Age Demographic Summary of Apprenticeship Participation
- Tables 7.1, 7.2: All Age Apprenticeship Starts/Achievements
- Tables 8.1, 8.2: Workplace Learning Starts/ Achievements by Level
- Table 12.1 – 12.3: Traineeship Starts, Completions and Progressions
- Table 28: Employer Ownership Pilot starts

Further Education Statistics for England, 2014/15

Adult Attainment in the Population

1. Having a skilled population is vital to maintaining the international competitiveness of our economy and creating high quality jobs. Improving our skills does not just improve our economy; it also has the potential to make the UK a fairer place by creating more social mobility and enabling people to play their part in society.
2. Labour Force Survey data are used to measure the highest qualification levels of the working age population in England, where Level 2 equates to achievement of 5 or more GCSEs at grades A*-C or equivalent qualifications, Level 3 equates to achievement of 2 or more A-levels or equivalent qualifications, and Level 4 and above to higher education and degree level qualifications. See <https://www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/compare-different-qualification-levels> for more information.
3. Provisional 2015 and finalised 2014 estimates for the highest level of qualification in the working age population are not included in this SFR. Due to resourcing issues the work has been put on hold. We will provide an update detailing when the data will be made available later in the year.
4. Provisional data for 2014 show that for men and women aged 19 to 64 [Table 14]:
 - 81.0 per cent were qualified to at least Level 2
 - 62.6 per cent were qualified to at least Level 3
 - 41.0 per cent were qualified to at least Level 4
5. Chart 1 shows that the proportion of men and women qualified to each of Level 2, 3 and 4 have risen each year between 2008 and 2014:
 - from 73.2 per cent in 2008 to 81.0 per cent in 2014 qualified to at least Level 2
 - from 54.3 per cent in 2008 to 62.6 per cent in 2014 qualified to at least Level 3
 - from 34.2 per cent in 2008 to 41.0 per cent in 2014 qualified to at least Level 4
6. Data on the highest level of qualification was revised in late 2014 following a reweighting of the Labour Force Survey (LFS) that affects figures from 2001 onwards.

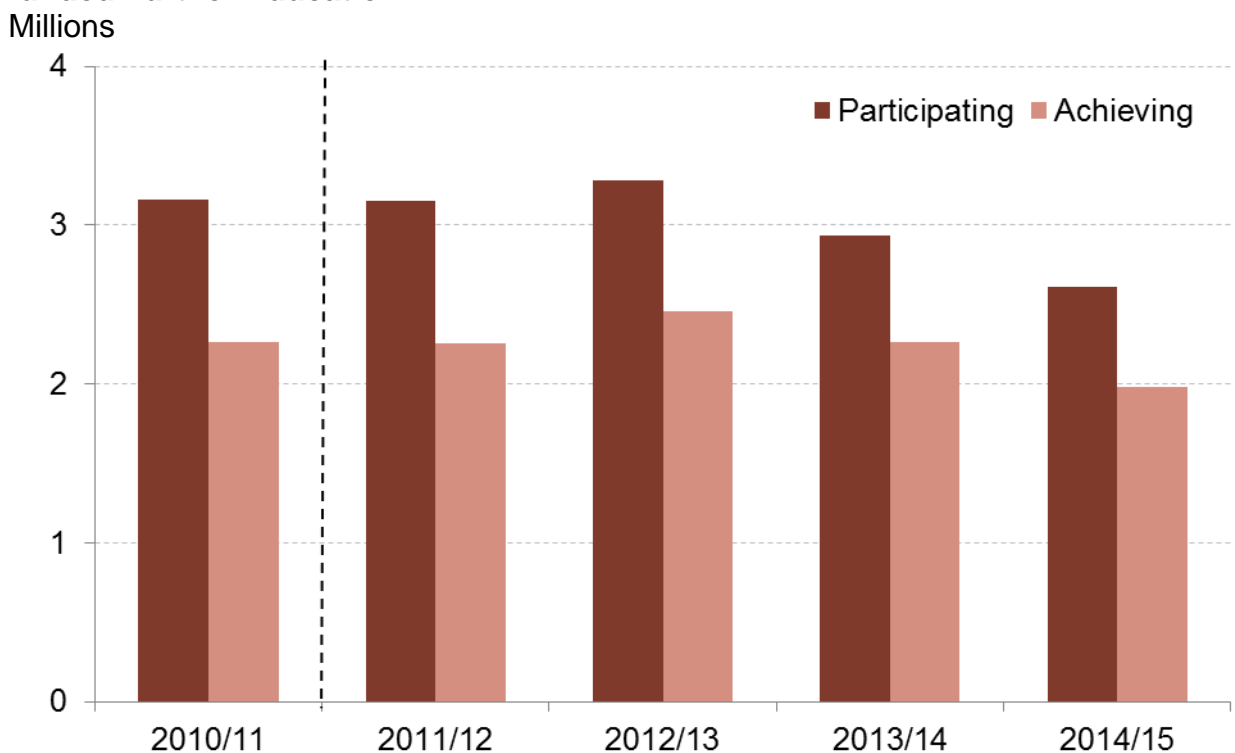
Chart 1: Highest Level of Qualification Held by Adults of Working Age



Adult Learner (19+) Participation and Achievement

7. Chart 2 shows that the total number of adult learners participating in government-funded further education in 2014/15 was 2,613,700, a decrease of 10.8 per cent on 2013/14 [Table 1.1]. The total number of adult learners achieving a government-funded further education qualification was 1,983,200 in 2014/15, a decrease of 12.4 per cent on 2013/14.

Chart 2: Adult Learner (19+) Participation and Achievement in Government-funded Further Education¹



8. Chart 3a shows that the number of adult learners participating on government-funded further education Level 2 courses decreased between 2010/11 and 2014/15 with a 10.2 per cent decrease seen in the most recent year. The number participating in full Level 2 courses fell by 12.7 per cent between 2013/14 and 2014/15.
9. The number of adult learners participating in Level 3 courses fell by 7.4 per cent between 2013/14 and 2014/15. Participation in full Level 3 courses fell by 4.4 per cent in the same period.
10. The number of adult learners participating in below Level 2 courses (excluding English and maths) declined sharply in 2014/15 to 597,300 (a decrease of 21.4% from 2013/14), while the number participating in English and maths fell by 4.9 per cent between 2013/14 and 2014/15 to 905,600. There was an increase in the number of learners participating on Level 4+ courses, from 36,400 in 2013/14 to 43,500 in 2014/15. [Tables 1.1 and 1.2].

¹ Learner Numbers for 2011/12 onwards are not directly comparable with earlier years. See paragraph 16 onwards of the SFR technical document: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/further-education-and-skills-statistical-first-release-sfr>

Chart 3a: Adult (19+) Learner Participation in Government-funded Further Education by Level²

Thousands

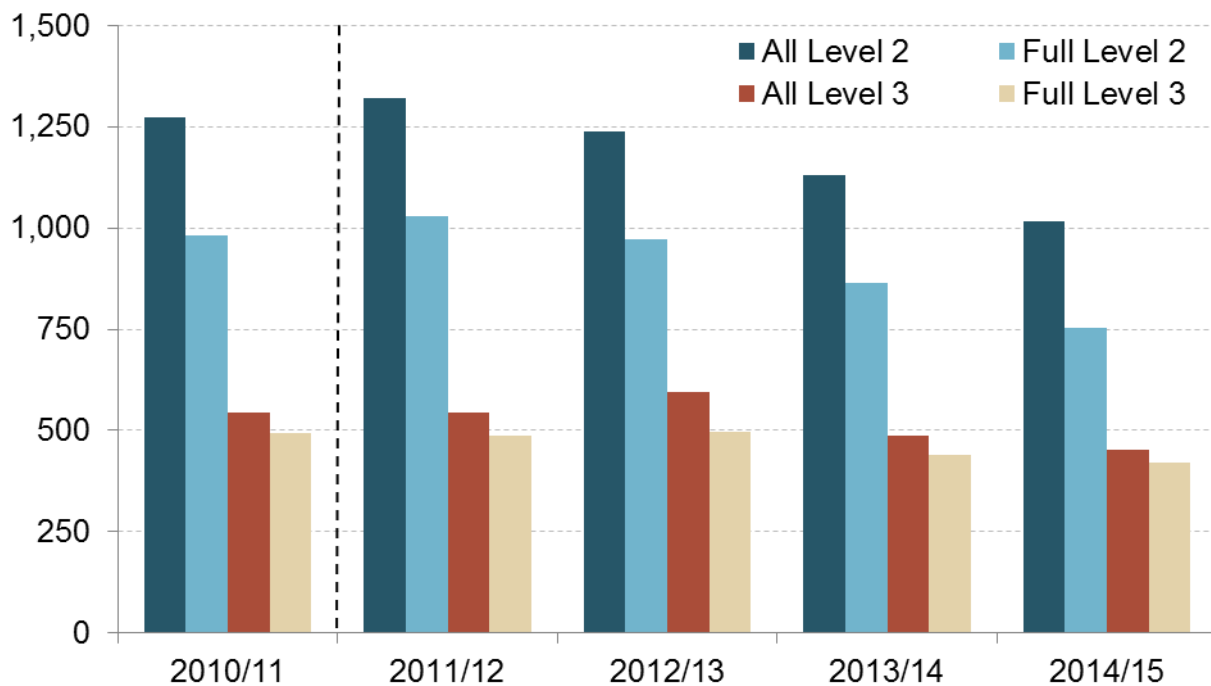
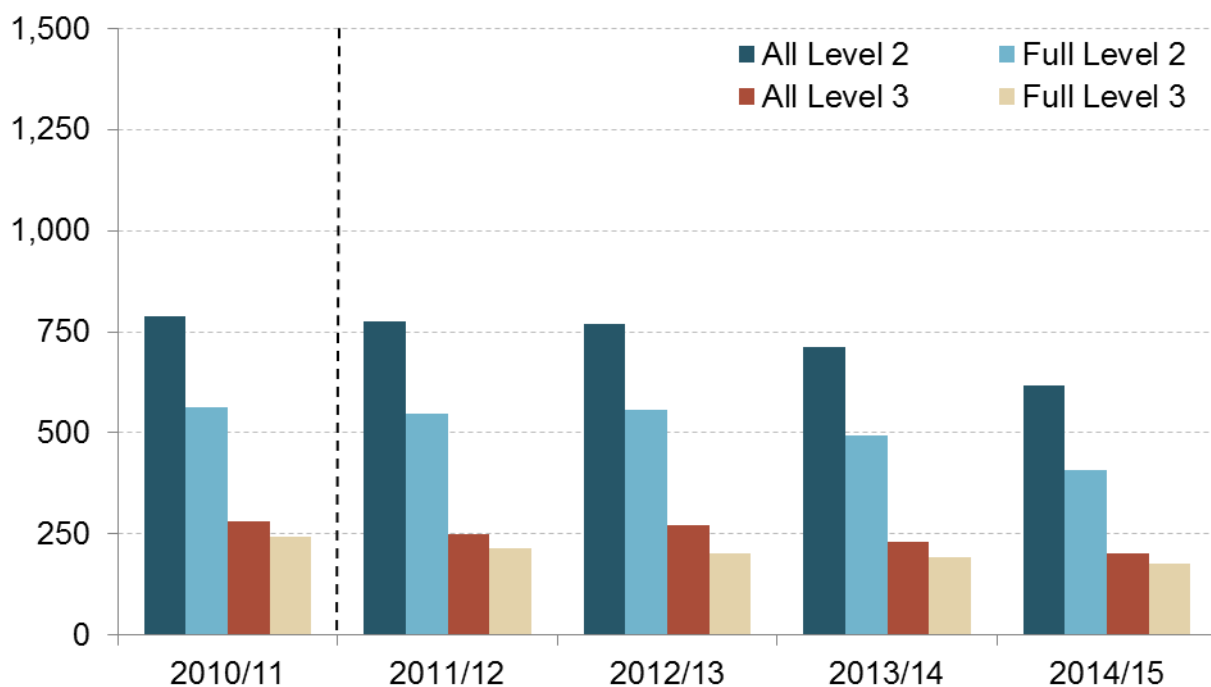


Chart 3b: Adult (19+) Learner Achievements in Government-funded Further Education by Level²

Thousands



11. Of the 2,613,700 adult learners participating in further education in 2014/15:

- 57.3 per cent were female and 42.7 per cent were male
- 16.0 per cent declared a learning difficulty and/or disability
- 20.0 per cent were from a Black or Minority Ethnic background (including Mixed, Asian, Black and Other Ethnic Group learners) [Table 5]

² Learner Numbers for 2011/12 onwards are not directly comparable with earlier years. See paragraph 16 onwards of the SFR technical document: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/further-education-and-skills-statistical-first-release-sfr>

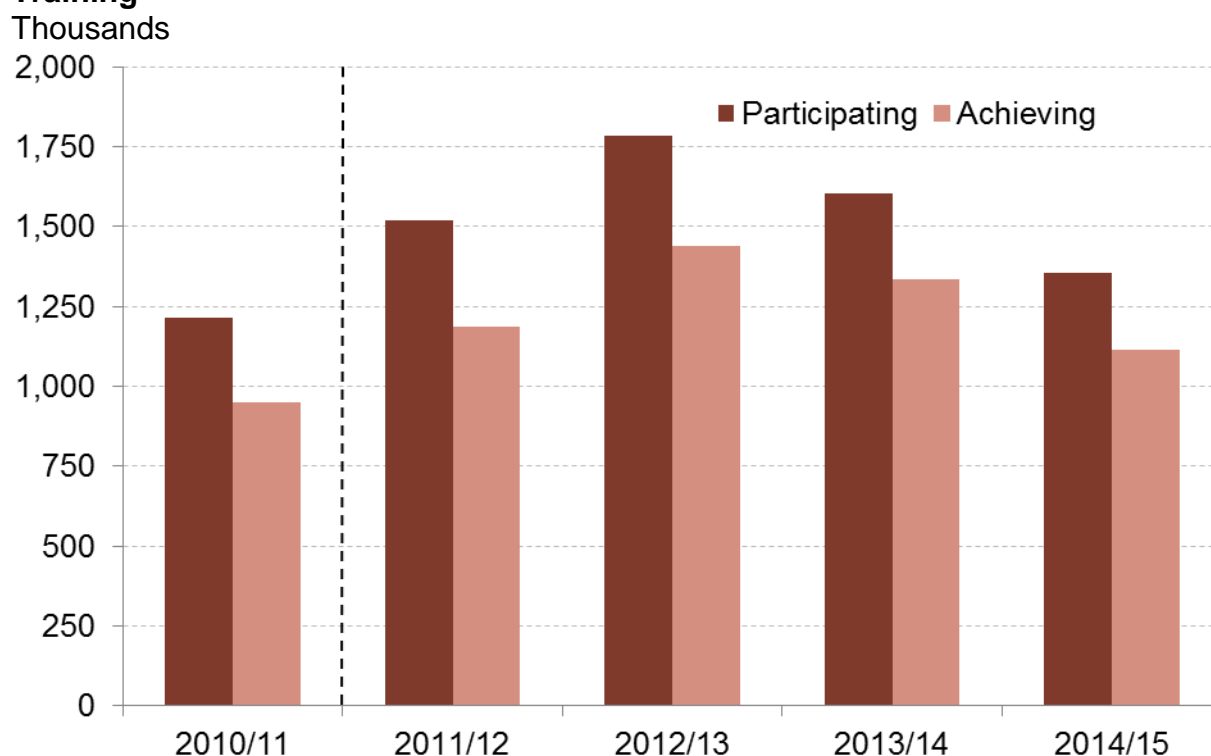
- 463,300 learners aged 19+ benefited from support for the unemployed. These are defined as those learners reporting that they were in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance - Work Related Activity Group (ESA WRAG), Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) or Universal Credit (if unemployed and looking for work).

Adult (19+) Education and Training Participation and Achievement

12. Chart 4 shows that the number of adult learners participating in government-funded Education and Training (classroom-based learning, see the glossary on page 23) in 2014/15 was 1,355,000, a decrease of 15.5 per cent on 2013/14 [Table 3.1]. The total number of adult learners achieving a government-funded further education qualification was 1,114,600 in 2014/15, a decrease of 16.6 per cent on 2013/14 [Table 3.2].

13. The number of learners participating in Education and Training has declined from a peak of 1,782,200 in 2012/13. The largest fall has been in the number of learners participating at below Level 2 (excluding English and maths), from 745,300 in 2013/14 to 544,600 in 2014/15. The number of learners participating at Level 2, Level 3, Level 4+ and on qualifications with no Level assigned has also fallen over the period [Table 3.1].

Chart 4: Adult Learner (19+) Participation and Achievement in Education and Training



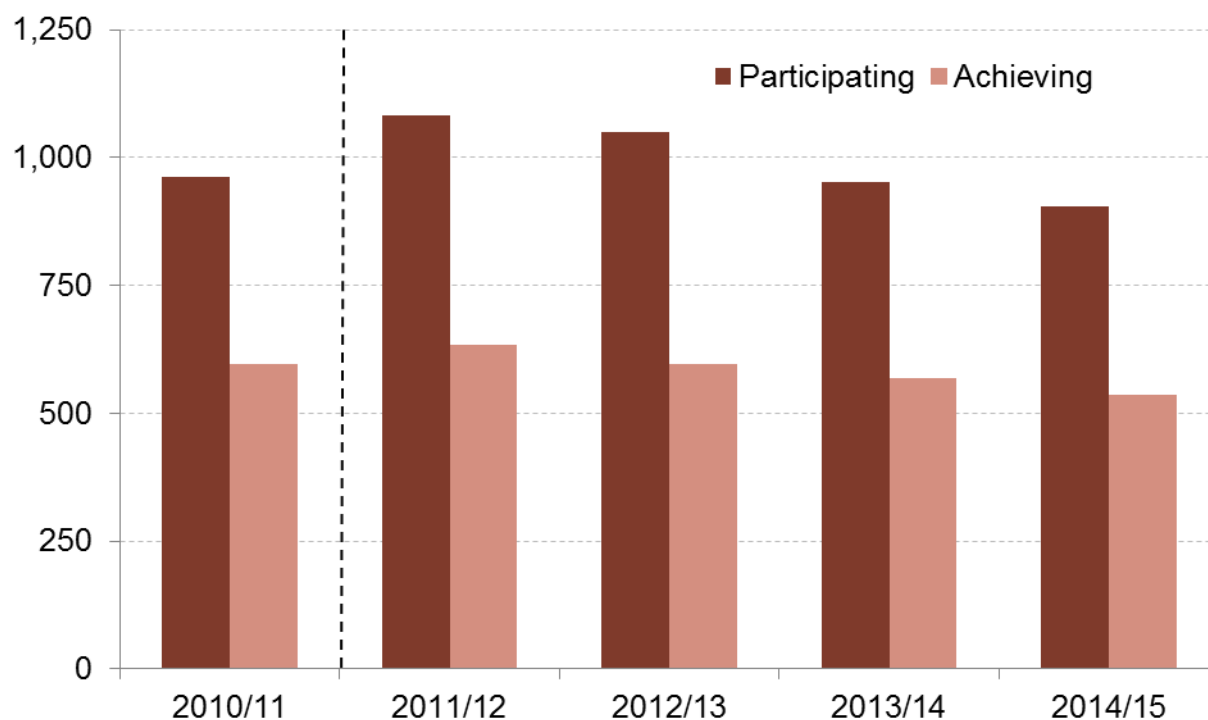
Adult (19+) English and Maths

14. Chart 5 shows that adult learner participation on English and maths courses rose between 2010/11 and 2011/12, but has since fallen from 1,083,000 in 2011/12 to 905,600 in 2014/15.

15. The number of learners participating on an English course fell by 5.5 per cent between 2013/14 and 2014/15 to 668,600; the number of learners participating on a maths course fell by 6.6 per cent to 623,900 and numbers participating on an ESOL course fell by 5.8 per cent to 131,100. [Table 4].

Chart 5: Adult Learner (19+) Participation and Achievement on English and Maths Courses³

Thousands



³ Learner Numbers for 2011/12 onwards are not directly comparable with earlier years. See paragraph 16 onwards of the SFR technical document: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/further-education-and-skills-statistical-first-release-sfr>

Apprenticeships

16. Two measures of Apprenticeships are presented to give a clearer view of the changes and trends in Apprenticeships in England:

- Participation refers to the number of people who are undertaking an Apprenticeship in a given time period. This measure is helpful for quantifying the number of people on an Apprenticeship programme throughout the academic year. An Apprentice studying towards more than one Apprenticeship at the same level is counted once.
- Starts refer to the number of programmes that begin in a given time period. This measure is helpful in determining the take-up of programmes. An Apprentice is counted for each Apprenticeship they start.

17. The Apprenticeship programme has expanded since 2010/11 as a result of increased government investment in adult Apprenticeships. More recently Apprenticeship policy has focused on raising standards, improving the quality and introducing minimum durations of Apprenticeships. This means some learners find it more difficult or take longer to complete their Apprenticeship.

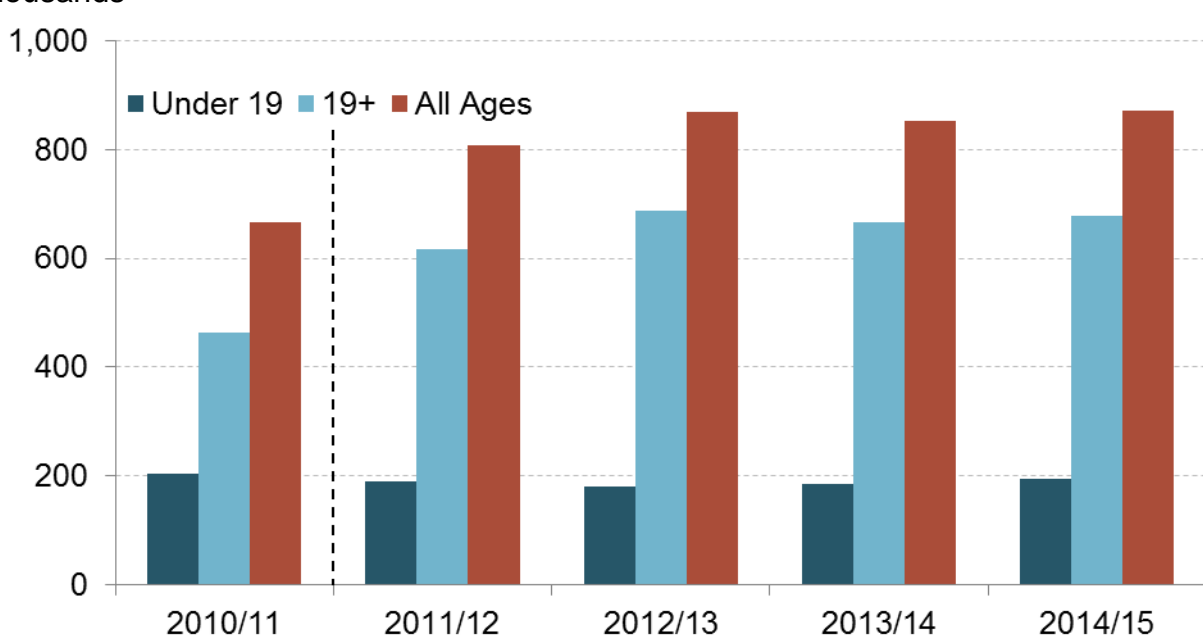
18. Advanced Learner Loans were introduced in August 2013, and withdrawn for Apprenticeships in March 2014. This appears to have affected learner numbers on Level 3 and above courses and Apprenticeships for ages 24 and over in 2013/14. This should be noted when comparing the 2014/15 volumes with 2013/14.

Participation

19. Chart 6 shows that all age Apprenticeship participation has increased since 2010/11 to 871,800 Apprenticeships in 2014/15, the highest number since records began. Apprenticeship participation increased between 2013/14 and 2014/15 for both under 19s and adults [Table 2].

Chart 6: Apprenticeship Participation by Age⁴

Thousands



⁴ Learner Numbers for 2011/12 onwards are not directly comparable with earlier years.

20. 517,400 Apprentices were participating on an Intermediate Level Apprenticeship in 2014/15, an increase on 2013/14 figures. An increase was seen for Higher Level Apprenticeships to 29,700 in 2014/15, but there was a slight decrease in Advanced Level Apprenticeships to 349,100 [Table 2].

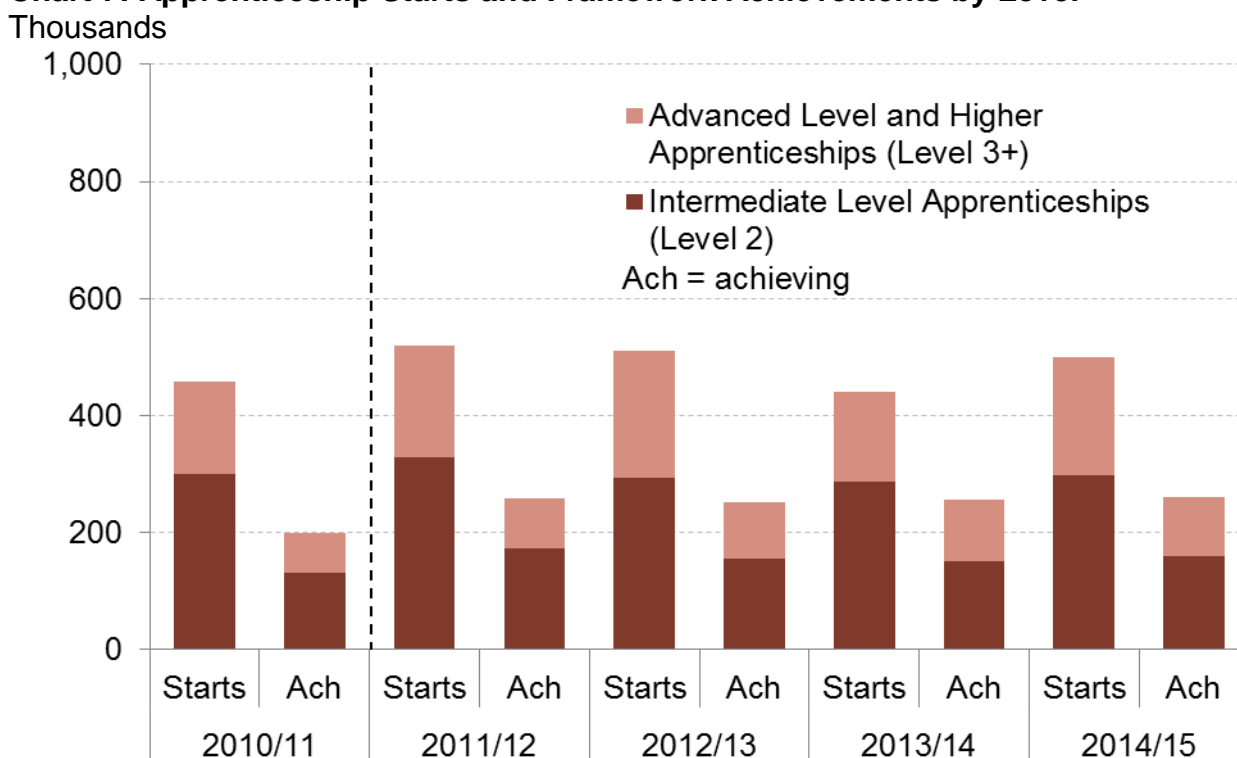
21. Of 871,800 Apprenticeships participating in 2014/15:

- 51.3 per cent were female and 48.7 per cent were male
- 8.6 per cent declared a learning difficulty and/or disability
- 10.4 per cent were from a Black or Minority Ethnic background (including Mixed, Asian, Black and Other Ethnic Group learners) [Table 6]

Starts and Achievements

22. Chart 7 shows that following a decline in Apprenticeship starts between 2011/12 and 2013/14, mostly due to a fall at Advanced Level, there was an increase of 13.5 per cent in 2014/15. Achievements have remained strong, with an increase seen in 2014/15 [Table 7].

Chart 7: Apprenticeship Starts and Framework Achievements by Level⁵



23. The length of an Apprenticeship is typically more than a year and Apprenticeship framework achievement is recorded against the year it was achieved, not the year it was started.

24. There were 499,900 Apprenticeship starts in the 2014/15 academic year, with increases across all levels. An increase was seen overall in Apprenticeship achievements, to 260,900 in 2014/15. Apprenticeship achievements rose for those aged under 19 and aged 19 to 24, but fell for those aged 25 and over. [Table 7].

25. In 2014/15, there were 400 starts on Apprenticeship Standards (previously referred to as Trailblazers - see the glossary for more information). The first starts on the

⁵ Starts and achievements for 2011/12 onwards are not directly comparable with earlier years. See paragraph 16 onwards of the SFR technical document: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/further-education-and-skills-statistical-first-release-sfr>

new Apprenticeship Standards were in September 2014. The volume of starts on Apprenticeship standards by Level can be found in a supplementary table⁶.

Planned Length of Stay

26. Minimum durations have been in place for framework-based Apprenticeships since August 2012. For learners aged 16 to 18, Apprenticeships must last at least 12 months, but for learners aged 19 and over there is more flexibility, as some adults have prior learning / attainment and can complete more quickly (for example if the training provider can evidence prior learning the minimum duration is reduced to 6 months). For new Apprenticeship Standards the minimum duration is 12 months, with no exceptions.
27. Based on the planned end date, the number of Apprenticeship starts with a planned length of stay of less than 12 months decreased sharply by 83.2 per cent between 2011/12 and 2012/13 to 34,300 and remained low in 2014/15 at 33,600. The volume of starts by planned length of stay can be found in a supplementary table⁶.

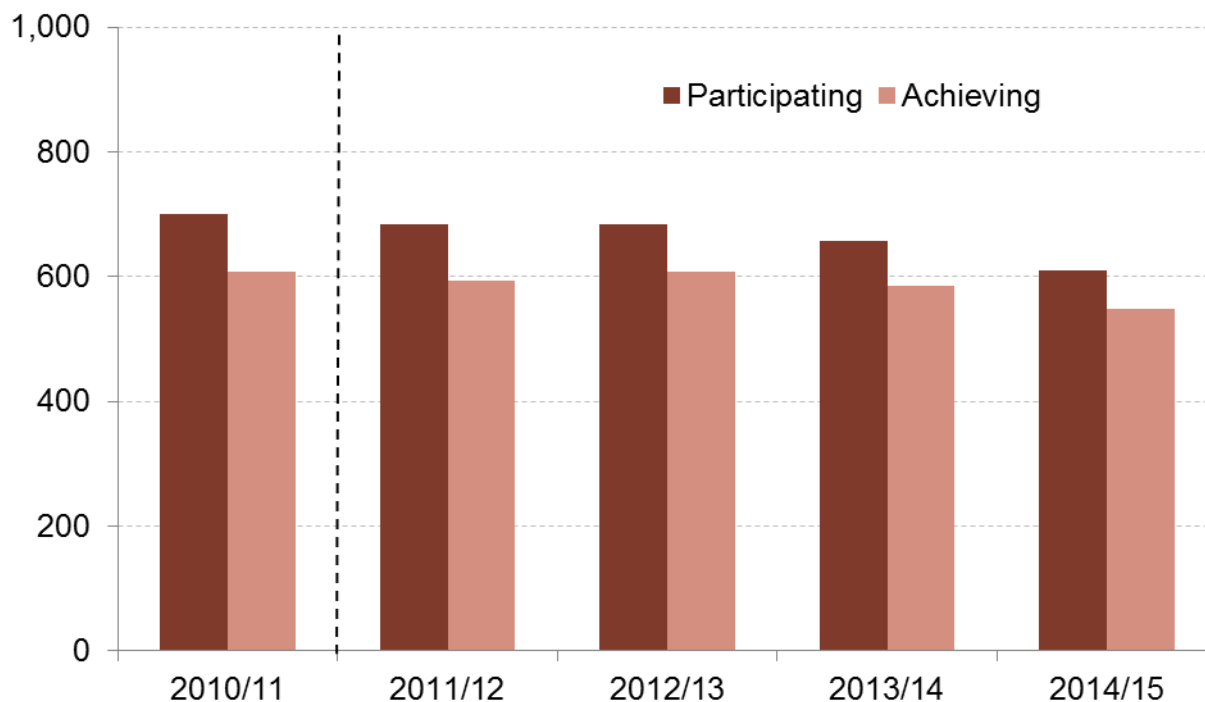
⁶ See paragraph 24 in the SFR technical document for more information: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/further-education-and-skills-statistical-first-release-sfr>

Community Learning

28. Chart 8 shows that the number of learners participating on Community Learning courses in 2014/15 decreased by 7.2 per cent on 2013/14 to 609,700. Achievements fell by 6.3 per cent over the same period to 548,000. [Table 9].

Chart 8: Community Learning Participation and Achievement⁷

Thousands



Advanced Learner Loans

29. Final data for the 2014/15 academic year show there were 75,400 learners with an Advanced Learner Loan [Table 11], an increase of 27.5 per cent on 2013/14. Of these there were:

- 70,700 learners with an Advanced Learner Loan participating at Level 3
- 4,800 learners with an Advanced Learner Loan participating at Level 4+

30. The number of learners with an Advanced Learner Loan reported through the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) differ from data showing loan applications (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/further-education>) and loans paid (<http://www.slc.co.uk/official-statistics/financial-support-awarded/england-further-education.aspx>).

31. Advanced Learner Loans Application Information is released quarterly. This data relates to applications received for FE provision in the 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16 academic years funded through Advanced Learner Loans. The data used to produce the publication are sourced from the Student Loans Company (SLC) application database. The data refer to received applications, including those not yet processed, and will therefore be different than actual number of learners participating on a course with an Advanced Learner Loan.

⁷ Learner Numbers for 2011/12 onwards are not directly comparable with earlier years. See paragraph 16 onwards of the SFR technical document: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/further-education-and-skills-statistical-first-release-sfr>

32. The SLC Advanced Learner Loans Paid in England data were released on 23rd June. These data refer to all payments made to FE providers on behalf of learners, and numbers of learners will be lower than the ILR numbers. Only payments made between August 2013 and April 2016 are captured, whilst the ILR captures learners on a course with an Advanced Learner Loan that started during this period, including some where the first scheduled payment date is beyond the end of April 2016.

Traineeships

33. In the 2014/15 academic year final data show there were 19,400 Traineeship starts [Table 12.1], an increase of 86.3 per cent on the previous year. Of these there were:

- 11,600 Traineeship starts aged under 19
- 7,800 Traineeship starts aged 19 to 24

34. There were 12,600 traineeship completions in 2014/15 [Table 12.2], of which 7,400 were aged under 19 and 5,200 were aged 19 to 24.

35. There were 7,700 traineeship progressions in 2014/15 [Table 12.3]. Of these, 5,400 were progressions to a job, apprenticeship, further full time education or other training for those aged under 19, and 2,300 were progressions to a job or apprenticeship for those aged 19-24.

Adult (18+) Offender Learning

36. In 2014/15 there were 101,600 offenders aged 18 and over in the prison system participating in learning, an increase of 6.6 per cent on 2013/14. 84,900 achieved a learning outcome, an increase of 6.5 per cent on 2013/14 [Table 10.1 and 10.2]. These offenders were funded via the Offenders' Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) budget.

Employer Ownership Pilot

37. The 2014/15 Employer Ownership Pilot data in this release [Table 28] are unchanged from the October 2015 SFR. See the *in this release* section on page 4 for more information.

Further Education Supplementary Tables

38. Additional breakdowns of further education statistics are published online. These include breakdowns by age, gender, ethnicity, learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, region, local authority, parliamentary constituency, sector subject area and funding stream⁸.

⁸ See paragraph 24 in the SFR technical document for more information: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/further-education-and-skills-statistical-first-release-sfr>

Qualification Achievement Rates

39. Qualification Achievement Rates (QARs), previously referred to as success rates, are calculated for individual qualifications. They show how many learners that started a qualification went on to successfully complete it. Achievement rates are typically calculated at a qualification level, but can be aggregated across different types of course, or for particular colleges or providers.
40. Prior to 2013/14 achievement rates were calculated using different methodologies for each of the different strands of further education provision. Employer-based provision (apprenticeships and workplace learning (WPL)) used a primary *Overall* achievement rate measure (based on the later of the actual and planned end dates) and a secondary *Timely* measure (based on the planned end date). However, Education and Training (E & T) provision had a different measure that was based upon the learning planned end date.
41. In the 2013/14 academic year the methodologies were aligned to give a consistent method of calculation across all provision areas, following changes to government-funded learning provision. E & T provision has adopted the Overall and Timely measures as used in apprenticeships and WPL. The Overall measure will be the principal measure and the one reported in this SFR, and will be used to assess the quality of provision against the minimum standards that are expected for funded training. The Timely measure will also be produced as a supporting measure.
42. The change in E & T methodology causes a break in the time series for these statistics and means that the qualification achievement rates for 2013/14 cannot be directly compared with those from the previous years. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sfa-qualification-success-rates-rationale-for-2013-to-2014> for more details of the changes. In 2014/15 the E & T and WPL achievement rates were combined into a single measure for E & T.
43. Chart 9a shows that adult (19+) Education and Training achievement rates have risen each year between 2010/11 and 2014/15 for Full Level 2s and Full Level 3s, but have decreased for English and maths between 2012/13 and 2014/15. Chart 9b shows that achievement rates for Apprenticeships have decreased in each year from 2011/12 and 2013/14, but increased in 2014/15 [Table 13].
44. The decrease in Apprenticeship achievement rates in 2013/14, and Higher Apprenticeship achievement rates in 2014/15, can be explained in part by the introduction of tougher SASE framework requirements in 2013/14.
45. In 2014/15, adult (19+) Education and Training QARs [Table 13.1] were:
- 87.0 per cent for all Education and Training, a decrease of 0.6 percentage points compared with 2013/14 and 80.2 per cent for English and Maths qualifications, a decrease of 0.4 percentage points compared with 2013/14
 - 86.0 per cent for Level 2 qualifications, a decrease of 0.3 percentage points compared with 2013/14 (88.4 per cent for full Level 2, an increase of 0.2 percentage points)
 - 82.9 per cent for Level 3 qualifications, an increase of 0.6 percentage points compared with 2013/14 (81.4 per cent for full Level 3, an increase of 0.2 percentage points)

46. In 2014/15, Apprenticeship QARs [Table 13.2] were:
- 71.7 per cent for all Apprenticeships, an increase of 2.7 percentage points compared with 2013/14
 - 70.8 per cent for Intermediate Level Apprenticeships, an increase of 2.0 percentage points compared with 2013/14
 - 73.5 per cent for Advanced Level Apprenticeships, an increase of 4.4 percentage points compared with 2013/14
 - 64.3 per cent for Higher Apprenticeships, a decrease of 7.1 percentage points compared with 2013/14
 - 71.2 per cent for Apprenticeships by those aged 19 and over, an increase of 3.0 percentage points compared with 2013/14
 - 72.9 per cent for Apprenticeships by those aged under 19, an increase of 1.8 percentage points compared with 2013/14
47. In 2014/15 there was a problem with the Qualification Management Application (QMA) of an awarding organisation that meant further education providers may have been unable to record results or obtain certificates during the period April to July 2015. In the majority of cases certificates were issued in time, although there is a risk that some results were missing or recorded in error.
48. **Apprenticeship** providers responded to this issue in different ways depending on their delivery models and the individual needs of learners and it may have resulted in a higher or lower QAR for different frameworks. For this reason there is the potential for some variation in the achievement rates between providers for specific frameworks but the data indicate that the impact on the overall rates presented here will be negligible.
49. There is no evidence of an impact on overall **education and training** achievement rates. The affected cohort for the duration of the QMA issues represents less than 4% of the total aims in scope for the 2014/15 E&T achievement rate calculations, and only a small fraction of these will have experienced problems.

Chart 9a: Adult (19+) Education and Training Qualification Achievement Rates 2010/11 to 2014/15^{9,10}

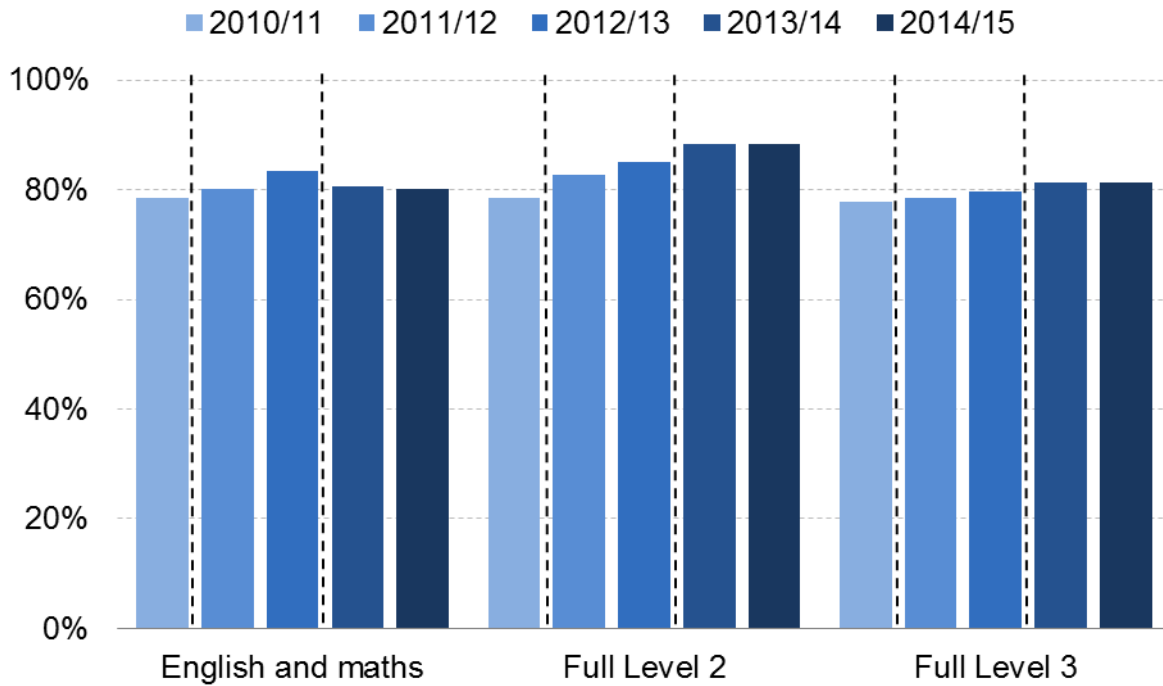
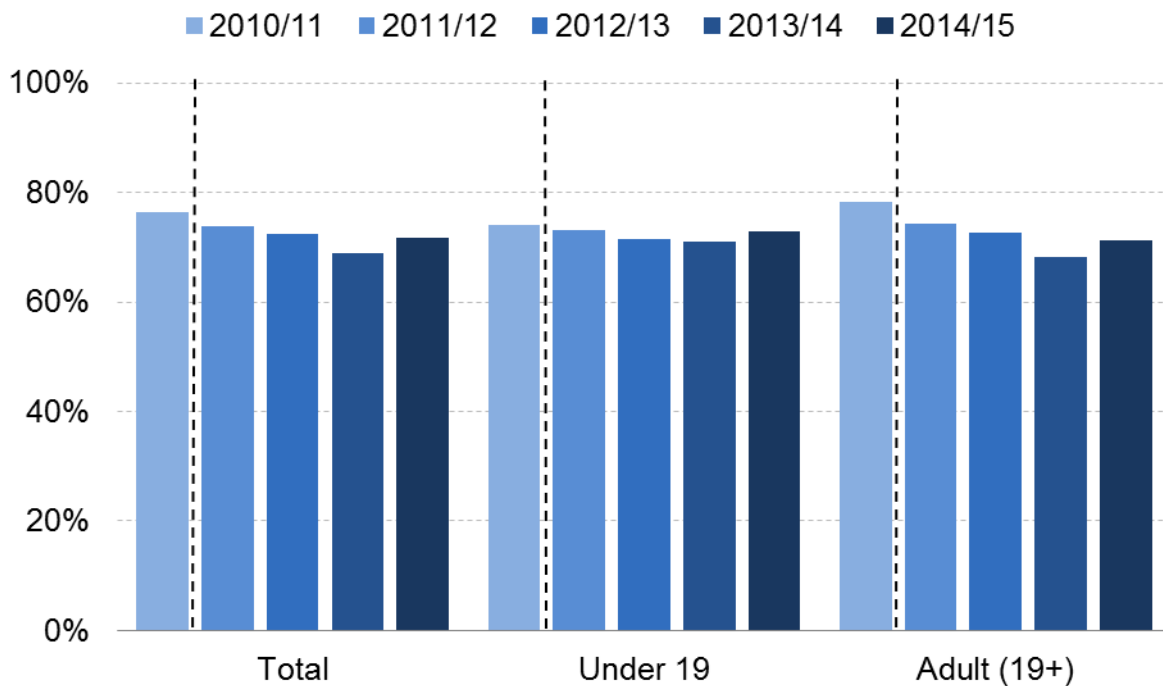


Chart 9b: All Age Apprenticeship Qualification Achievement Rates 2010/11 to 2014/15⁹



⁹ Qualification Achievement Rates for 2011/12 onwards are not directly comparable with earlier years.

¹⁰ E & T Achievement Rates for 2013/14 onwards are not directly comparable with earlier years. See paragraphs 40-42 for more information

PROVISIONAL FURTHER EDUCATION STATISTICS FOR ENGLAND, 2015/16

50. Figures for the 2015/16 provide an early view of performance for the full academic year (August 2015 to July 2016). Data are based on information that has been reported to the Skills Funding Agency in September 2016 by further education colleges and providers. The data provide an early view of performance and will change as further data returns are received. Since providers report some of their data for this period later in the year, the data are subject to change (in either direction) until final data are received. At this point in the year, 2015/16 figures are referred to as *reported to date* or *reported so far* to reflect this.

51. It is not possible to determine how complete or incomplete the information returned so far is, so we advise against direct comparisons with data from earlier academic years. Comparisons should only be made once final returns for the academic year are made by providers (data returned in October 2016, due to be published in November 2016)¹¹.

Adult Learner (19+) Participation

52. Data reported so far for the full 2015/16 academic year (August 2015 to July 2016) show there were 2,318,700 learners aged 19 and over participating in government-funded further education [Table 17]. Of these

- 809,400 participated on a English and maths course
- 863,700 participated on a Level 2 course, of which 663,200 were on a full Level 2 course
- 461,400 participated on a Level 3 course, of which 442,500 were on a full Level 3 course
- 58,600 participated on a Level 4+ course

Adult (19+) English and Maths

53. Data reported so far for the full 2015/16 academic year (August 2015 to July 2016) show that 809,400 learners aged 19 and over participated on an English and maths course [Table 18]. Of these:

- 589,100 participated on an English course
- 563,000 participated on a maths course
- 110,500 participated on an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) course

Adult (19+) Education and Training

54. Data reported so far for full 2015/16 academic year (August 2015 to July 2016) show there were 1,094,500 learners aged 19 and over participating in classroom-based education and training [Table 19]. Of these

- 450,900 participated on a Level 2 course, of which 253,300 were on a full Level 2 course
- 152,600 participated on a Level 3 course, of which 139,400 were on a full Level 3 course

¹¹ See paragraphs 12 to 15 in the SFR Technical Document for more information:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/further-education-and-skills-statistical-first-release-sfr>

Apprenticeships

55. Data reported so far for the full 2015/16 academic year (August 2015 to July 2016) show that there were:

- 904,800 **Apprentices participating** [Table 20]. Of these there were 517,700 at Intermediate Level; 369,100 at Advanced Level and 44,400 at Higher Level. 202,200 Apprentices were aged under 19 and 702,600 aged 19 and over.
- 503,700 **Apprenticeship starts** [Table 21.1]. Of these there were 288,600 at Intermediate Level; 188,400 at Advanced Level and 26,800 at Higher Level. 130,400 Apprentices were aged under 19 and 373,300 aged 19 and over.
- 3,800 **Apprenticeship starts** were on the new **Apprenticeship standards** [Table 21.1]. Of these 1,000 Apprentices were aged under 19 and 2,800 were aged 19 and over. The volume of starts on Apprenticeship standards is shown by Level in a supplementary table¹².
- 256,200 **Apprenticeship framework achievements** [Table 21.2]. Of these there were 155,000 at Intermediate Level; 94,900 at Advanced Level and 6,300 at Higher Level. 69,200 Apprentices were aged under 19 and 187,000 aged 19 and over.
- 212,600 starts for which a payment was made through the Apprenticeship Grant for Employers (AGE 16 to 24) scheme between February 2012 and July 2016. A further 5,200 were in the pipeline (started but not yet paid) [Table 22].

56. Additional breakdowns of Apprenticeship statistics reported to date are published online at the FE Data Library¹³.

Community Learning

57. Data reported so far for the full 2015/16 academic year (August 2015 to July 2016) show that 563,200 learners participated on a Community Learning course [Table 24], of which:

- 428,400 took a Personal and Community Development Learning course
- 55,900 a Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities course
- 39,700 a Family English, Maths and Language course and
- 58,700 a Wider Family Learning course

Advanced Learner Loans

58. Data reported so far show there were 89,700 learners with an Advanced Learner Loan in the full 2015/16 academic year [Table 26], of which 84,000 were participating at Level 3 and 5,900 at Level 4+.

59. The number of learners with an Advanced Learner Loan reported through the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) differ from data showing loan applications and loans paid¹⁴.

¹² Supplementary tables can be accessed from the [FE Data Library](#).

¹³ The FE Data Library can be accessed at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fe-data-library>. See paragraph 24 in the SFR technical document for more information: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/further-education-and-skills-statistical-first-release-sfr>

¹⁴ See paragraphs 30 to 32 for more information.

Adult (18+) Offender Learners

60. Data reported so far for the full 2015/16 academic year (August 2015 to July 2016) show there were 94,700 offenders aged 18 or over in the prison system participating in learning [Table 25]. These offenders were funded via the Offenders' Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) budget. This number does not include 16,400 learners who sat an English and/or maths assessment but had not yet participated in any further learning.

Traineeships

61. Data reported so far for the full 2015/16 academic year (August 2015 to July 2016) show that there were:

- 23,900 **Traineeship starts** [Table 27.1], of which 14,600 were aged under 19 and 9,300 were aged 19 to 24.
- 15,300 **Traineeship completions** [Table 27.2], of which 9,300 were aged under 19 and 5,900 were aged 19 to 24.
- 8,500 **Traineeship progressions** to a job, apprenticeship or further full time education [Table 27.3]. Of these, 5,800 were for those aged under 19, and 2,700 were for those aged 19-24.

NATIONAL STATISTICS

62. The UK Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registrations Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.
63. Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:
- meet identified user needs
 - are well explained and readily accessible
 - are produced according to sound methods
 - are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest
64. Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed. More information regarding our compliance with the Code of Practice is available on our website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sfr-compliance-with-official-statistics-code-of-practice>

CHANGES INCLUDED IN THIS SFR

65. Employer Ownership Pilot data for 2014/15 in this SFR are still classed as “provisional” rather than “final” and are unchanged from the data published in the October 2015 SFR. See the *in this release* section on page 4 for more information.
66. Data on Employer Ownership Pilot starts in for the full 2015/16 year are included in this release for the first time.
67. The methodology used to count Full Level 2 and Full Level 3 for Education and Training, Workplace Learning and Offender Learning has been revised. The previous method counted some learners as Full Level 2 or Full Level 3 based on all of their learning aims rather than only aims relevant to the specific type of provision. The relevant volumes in this SFR have been revised to account for this change. The revisions are only for volumes at Full Level 2 and Full Level 3, although the improvement to the methodology has resulted in very small changes in the Below Level 2 and English and Maths numbers in some cases.

CHANGES IN THE NEXT SFR

68. The next SFR will be November 2016 and will include finalised data for the full 2015/16 academic year (August 2015 to July 2016) reported to the Skills Funding Agency in October 2016 by further education providers.
69. Changes to the next release will be pre-announced on the website at least a month prior to coming into effect, at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/further-education-and-skills-statistical-first-release-sfr>

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

70. Background information is published alongside this SFR in a separate technical document: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/further-education-and-skills-statistical-first-release-sfr>

GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

Further Education and Skills includes: learners who are studying a course in a FE College, training provider or within their local community; and employees undertaking an Apprenticeship or other qualification in the workplace. For more information, see paragraphs 3 to 5 in the SFR technical document.

Apprenticeships are paid jobs that incorporate on- and off-the-job training leading to nationally recognised qualifications. As an employee, Apprentices earn as they learn and gain practical skills in the workplace. An Apprenticeship framework typically contains the following separately certified elements:

- A knowledge-based element (the theoretical knowledge underpinning a job in a certain occupation and industry, typically certified via a Technical Certificate).
- A competence-based element (the ability to discharge the functions of a certain occupation, typically certified via work-based assessed national vocational qualifications – NVQs).
- Transferable skills (English and maths) – key skills / functional skills.
- A module on employment rights and responsibilities.
- Personal Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS): independent enquiry, creative thinking, reflective learning, team working, self-management, effective participation.

See <https://www.gov.uk/topic/further-education-skills/apprenticeships> for further information.

The government has introduced reforms to Apprenticeships, see:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/future-of-apprenticeships-in-england-richard-review-next-steps>). As part of these reforms, in future all Apprenticeship standards will be designed by employers. For a full list of the standards and assessment plans designed and approved so far, see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/apprenticeship-standards>

Apprenticeship Grant for Employers (AGE 16 to 24) scheme provides Apprenticeship grants with a value of £1,500 to employers with up to 1,000 employees to encourage employers to take on new Apprentices aged 16 to 24. Eligible employers must not have taken on an Apprentice in the previous 12 months. Subject to budget availability and the employer's commitment to support the Apprentice to the end of their programme, any one employer can claim support for up to ten apprentices. AGE 16 to 24 has been extended to the 2015-16 financial year. See:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/apprenticeship-grant-for-employers-of-16-to-24-year-olds>

On the **Access to Apprenticeships pathway**, participants use elements of an Apprenticeship framework to brush up skills and workplace experience, with the aim of securing a paid Apprenticeship with an employer as quickly as possible, up to a maximum of six months. Participants are not categorised or counted as an 'Apprentice' until they become employed. This pathway was announced in May 2011 and closed to new starts end of December 2013.

Employer Ownership Pilot offers all employers in England direct access to up to £340 million of public investment over the period of the pilot (up to 2015/16) to design and deliver their own training solutions.

See: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/employer-ownership-of-skills-pilot>

Education and Training covers further education learning delivered mainly in a classroom, workshop, or through distance or e-learning. See: [Data Dictionary - Business Definitions - Learner Responsive Business Definition](#)

Workplace Learning covers a broad range of training including basic skills, Level 2, Level 3 and higher-level skills. Training is mainly delivered through the workplace (but excludes Apprenticeships). Between 2008/09 and 2010/11 this included Train to Gain programme, Employability Skills Pilot and other programmes such as Programmes for the Unemployed. From 2011/12 it includes all training mainly delivered through the workplace (excluding Apprenticeships).

English and Maths qualifications (previously Skills for Life) are designed to give people the reading, writing, maths and communication skills they need in everyday life, to operate effectively in work and to help them succeed on other training courses. See: [Skills Funding Agency - Providers - Our programmes - Basic Skills - Basic Skills](#)

Offender Learning aims to ensure offenders have the skills that will enable them to gain worthwhile, sustainable employment and in-so-doing reduce the likelihood of re-offending. The Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) funds a wide range of learning aims for adults (aged 18 and over) in custody in prisons in England, including awards and units, with a focus on addressing English and maths at the start of a sentence and vocational skills in the run-up to release.

Community Learning funds a wide range of non-formal courses, ranging from personal development through to older people's learning, IT courses, employability skills, family learning and activities to promote civic engagement and community development. Courses may be offered by local authorities, colleges, and voluntary and community groups, and include activity specifically targeted at deprived areas and disadvantaged groups. See: <http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/community-learning-government-funding>

Advanced Learner Loans – For academic years 2013/14 and 2015/16 loans were available for eligible learners, aged 24 and above studying full Level 3 and Level 4 qualifications, to help meet up-front course costs. An extension of the scope of Advanced Learner Loans from 2016/17 was announced in November 2015: any learner aged 19 or older on the first day of their course and studying at Levels 3 to 6 can apply for a loan to help fund the fees / course costs. Those aged 19-23 still retain an entitlement to full funding of their first full level 3 qualification. See: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/sfa-24-advanced-learning-loans>

Full Level 2 is equivalent to an NVQ at Level 2, or 5 GCSEs. The widths of all of a learner's Level 2 aims are summed to establish whether a learner is taking a full Level 2 programme. **Full Level 3** is equivalent to an NVQ at Level 3, or 2 A-Levels. The widths of all a learner's Level 3 aims are summed to establish whether a learner is taking a full Level 3 programme.

Traineeships were introduced in the 2013/14 academic year to provide young people with essential work preparation, English, maths and work experience to secure an apprenticeship or other work.

Academic year runs from 1st August to 31st July (except LFS figures in Tables 13 and 14 which are calendar year, and Ofqual figures in Table 15 which run from 1st October to 30th September).

TABLE GUIDE

This section provides a brief summary of what is included in each table of this release. Tables 1 to 16 focus on the 2014/15 academic year; Tables 16 to 28 show in-year data for the first three quarters of the 2015/16 academic year (August 2015 to April 2016).

The following tables can on the GOV.UK website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/further-education-and-skills-statistical-first-release-sfr>.

Further tables are also published in the FE Data Library here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fe-data-library>

- **Tables 1.1 & 1.2:** Adult (19+) FE and Skills Participation/Achievement by Level (2010/11 to 2014/15)
- **Table 2:** All Age Apprenticeship Participation by Level and Age (2010/11 to 2014/15)
- **Table 3.1 & 3.2:** Adult (19+) Education and Training Participation/Achievement by Level (2010/11 to 2014/15)
- **Table 4:** Adult (19+) FE and Skills – English and Maths Participation and Achievement by Level (2010/11 to 2014/15)
- **Table 5:** Adult (19+) Demographic Summary of FE and Skills Participation (2014/15)
- **Table 6:** All Age Demographic Summary of Apprenticeship Participation (2014/15)
- **Table 7.1 & 7.2:** All Age Apprenticeship Programme Starts/Achievements by Level and Age (2010/11 to 2014/15)
- **Table 8.1 & 8.2:** Workplace Learning Starts/Achievements by Level (2010/11 to 2014/15)
- **Table 9:** Community Learning Participation and Achievement by Type (2010/11 to 2014/15)
- **Table 10.1 & 10.2 :** Adult (18+) FE and Skills - Offender Learning Participation/Achievement by Level (2010/11 to 2014/15)
- **Table 11:** 24+ FE and Skills – Participation with Advanced Learner Loans (Level 3+) (2013/14 to 2014/15)
- **Table 12.1 - 12.3:** Traineeship Starts/Completions/Progression by Age (2013/14 to 2014/15)
- **Table 13.1 - 13.2:** Achievement Rates (2009/10 to 2013/14)
- **Table 14.1 & 14.2:** Level of Highest Qualification Held by People aged 19-64 in England (Quarter 4)
- **Table 15.1 & 15.2:** Level Of Highest Qualification Held By Economically Active Adults In England (Quarter 4)
- **Table 16:** Vocational Qualification Achievements in the UK by Qualification Type, 2006 (October) to 2015 (September)
- **Table 17:** Adult (19+) FE and Skills Participation by Level (2015/16) – Learner Volumes
- **Table 18:** Adult (19+) FE and Skills – English and Maths Participation by Level (2015/16) – Learner Volumes
- **Table 19:** Adult (19+) Education and Training Participation by Level (2015/16) – Learner Volumes
- **Table 20:** All Age Apprenticeship Participation by Level and Age (2015/16) – Learner Volumes
- **Table 21.1 & 21.2:** All Age Apprenticeship Programme Starts/Achievements by Level and Age (2015/16)
- **Table 22:** Starts on the Apprenticeship Grant for Employers Scheme (AGE 16 to 24) - Pipeline Starts Payments Made (February 2012 to April 2016)
- **Table 23.1 & 23.2:** Workplace Learning Starts/Achievements by Level (2015/16)
- **Table 24:** Community Learning Participation by Type (2015/16) – Learner Volumes
- **Table 25:** Adult (18+) FE and Skills - Offender Learning Participation by Level (2015/16) – Learner Volumes

- **Table 26:** 24+ FE and Skills – Participation with Advanced Learner Loans (Level 3+) (2015/16) – Learner Volumes
- **Table 27.1 - 27.3:** Traineeship Starts/Completions/Progression by Age (2015/16)
- **Table 28:** Employer Ownership Pilot Starts (2012/13 to 2015/16)

Table Footnotes

General Footnotes Relevant to All Tables

- 1) Volumes are rounded to the nearest 100; percentages are calculated on pre-rounded data.
- 2) '-' Indicates a base value of less than 50; '**' indicates a percentage of less than 0.5%.
- 3) Tables 1-6, 8-13, 17-20, and 22- 28 are based on learners that were funded by the Learning and Skills Council or Young People's Learning Agency and/or are now funded by the Skills Funding Agency or Education Funding Agency.
- 4) For definitions of variables used in the Tables please see the data dictionary:
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140107201041/http://www.thedataservice.org.uk/data/dictionary/>
- 5) Except for Tables 7.1, 7.2, 21.1, 21.2 and 28 (see footnotes 15 & 30), age is reported as at 31 August of the academic year for all provision.
- 6) In tables reporting full-year numbers, except for tables 7, 8 & 12 (see footnotes 16, 17, 24 & 25), full-year numbers are a count of the number of learners that participated/achieved at any point during the year. Learners undertaking/achieving more than one course will appear only once in the 'total learners' category for each data collection. All learners undertaking/achieving a full Level 2 or full Level 3 qualification will also appear in the Level 2 or Level 3 category, respectively.
- 7) The data source for all tables is the Individualised Learner Record, except where stated.
- 8) Further breakdowns of the data are available at the following website:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fe-data-library>

Tables 5 and 6 – Demographics

- 9) Learners undertaking courses at more than one level will be counted once for each applicable level, but once only in the Total.
- 10) Age, gender, learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and ethnicity are based upon self-declaration by the learner.

Tables 2, 6, 7, 20, 21, 13.2 – Apprenticeships

- 11) Apprenticeship starts and achievements include all funded and unfunded learners reported on the ILR.
- 12) Apprenticeship achievement rates are based on the number of learners who meet all of the requirements of their Apprenticeship framework, divided by the number of learners who have left training or successfully completed their training in the academic year.
- 13) Table 13.2 reports on achievement rates which are based on the reported achievement of frameworks that completed or were expected to complete in the academic year, for those learners where the later of their actual end date or planned end date fell in the academic year in question
- 14) Apprenticeship achievement rates are not affected by demand led funding.
- 15) For Apprenticeship starts and achievements, age is calculated based on age at start of the programme rather than based on 31 August.
- 16) In Table 7.1 full-year numbers are a count of the number of starts at any point during the year. Learners starting more than one Apprenticeship will appear more than once.
- 17) In Table 7.2 full-year numbers are a count of the number of framework achievements at any point during the year. Learners achieving more than one framework will appear more than once.
- 18) Programme-Led Apprenticeships recorded in ILR returns are included in the above figures.
- 19) In order to be counted as a successful achievement, all elements of the framework must have been achieved.
- 20) Quarter 1 is 1 August to 31 October; Quarter 2 is 1 November to 31 January; Quarter 3 is 1 February to 30 April; Quarter 4 is 1 May to 31 July.

Tables 8 and 23 – Workplace Learning

- 24) In Table 8.1 full-year numbers are a count of the number of starts at any point during the year. Learners starting more than one course will appear more than once.
- 25) In Table 8.2 full-year numbers are a count of the number of achievements at any point during the year. Learners achieving more than one course will appear more than once.
- 26) Quarter 1 is 1 August to 31 October; Quarter 2 is 1 November to 31 January; Quarter 3 is 1 February to 30 April; Quarter 4 is 1 May to 31 July.

Table 9 and 24 – Community Learning

- 27) For 2008/09 to 2010/11, only Community Learning provision recorded in the Community Learning collection is included in totals except for 2009/10 where Community Learning provision recorded in the Education and Training collection for five Specially Designated Colleges is also included.

28) There are a number of learners with Community Learning aims that are recorded in the Education and Training funding stream and are not included in the figures in Table 9. In 2009/10 there were 7,700 participating and 6,300 achieving learners and in 2010/11 there were 8,300 participating and 6,900 achieving learners. The only Community Learning provision included for Table 9 for 2010/11 is recorded in the Community Learning funding stream. Community Learning in 2011/12 onwards is recorded in the Single ILR collection only.

Tables 11 and 26 – Advanced Learner Loans (Level 3+)

29) Learners have been eligible to apply for an Advanced Learner Loan since the start of the 2013/14 academic year (August 2013).

30) A small number of learners aged 23 at the start of the academic year but aged 24 at the start of the aim are included in the figures.

31) This table includes 'Education and Training' learners only. Apprenticeships were removed from the scope of the loans programme in March 2014, Apprentices who already received a loan no longer need to repay it.

Table 13.1 – Education and Training Achievement Rates

32) Education and Training achievement rates are calculated as the number of learning aims achieved divided by the number of learning aims expected to complete, excluding any learners who transferred on to another learning aim within the same institution.

33) Table 1.2 reports on the actual number of achievements within the academic year without reference to those that were expected to complete. Table 13.1 reports on achievement rates which are based on the reported achievement of individual aims that were expected to complete in the academic year.

Table 16 – Vocational Qualifications

34) This table covers all levels of vocational qualifications reported through Ofqual. Data are supplied by awarding organisations.

35) Academic year is October to September. For example, the 2006/07 academic year is 1 October 2006 to 30 September 2007.

36) Key Skills data was not collected prior to October 2009.

37) 'Other Vocational Qualifications' include Basic Skills, Entry Level, English for Speakers Other Languages, Functional Skills, Free-Standing Mathematics Qualification, Key Skills, National Qualifications Framework and Other General types.

Table 28 – Employer Ownership Pilot

38) This table covers all Employer Ownership Pilot starts.

39) Age is calculated based on age at start of the programme rather than based on 31 August.