



Department
for Education

Changes to our statistical publications

Destination Measures, 2015 to 2016

October 2017

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One annual statistical publication

Our statistical first release provides annual information on what young people go on to do in the academic year after they complete key stage 4 or key stage 5 study, and whether they were in sustained education, employment or training for at least the first two terms.

We use a range of administrative data sources to find information on young people. There is a time lag between the end of the destination year and our publication because of the time taken for this data to become available and matched together.

For the last two years we published provisional information in October, with a revised publication the following January incorporating a small amount of additional data. We've decided to no longer release 'revised' information for our national and local tables. This is due to the marginal impact of changes to data available between the provisional and revised publications. Ceasing to produce the January publication will allow us to spend more time reviewing and developing our methodology so that we can publish more information in future.

In coming to this decision we have considered the following:

Additional data

In the revised 2014/15 data, published in January 2017, the only additional information we published beyond what was published in October 2016 was destinations from independent schools. We have brought forward the publication of destinations from independent schools at key stage 5 to this October release. Ongoing concerns with data quality for independent schools at key stage 4 mean we are [proposing not to publish this information at key stage 4](#).

Top third Higher Education Institutes (HEIs)

For state-funded schools the largest change to outcomes in the revised publication in 2014/15 was due to us updating the list of universities counted as the [top third of universities by best three A level grades of entrants](#). This has now been included in the October release.

Awarding body data

Later availability of awarding body data (on exam entries in independent schools) allowed us to pick up destinations of an additional 1000 state-funded school pupils at key stage 4 in 2014/15, or around 0.2%, in the revised publication. At national level this did not affect the outcomes we reported. It had an impact of 1 percentage point increase in 25 local authorities and 2 percentage points in two small local authorities. The impact on key stage 5 data was very small, adding fewer than 5 students in total.

This October publication still includes pupils going on to independent school sixth forms if they sat an exam in summer of year 12 but this is likely to be a small underestimate.

Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) data

Changes to start and end dates of employment spells recorded in employment data from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) are made throughout the year. This affected destinations reported for some key stage 5 students in 2014/15. Between the provisional and revised publications, around an additional 650, or 0.1%, became counted as being in sustained employment, while around 800, or 0.2%, were no longer counted as having sustained their employment for the relevant period.

At national level this did not affect the outcomes we reported, and had an impact of 1 percentage point in 16 local authorities. The impact on key stage 4 data was very small.

This October publication includes information as held by HMRC as at April 2017. This is well after the end of the tax year (2015/16) we are reporting on and the same point in time that will be used to publish information on graduate outcomes and FE outcome-based success measures for 2015/16.

We intend to continue using both summer 2017 awarding body data and a later extract of longitudinal education outcomes data to update destinations reported for individual institutions on school and college performance tables in January 2018.

Please let us know if you have any concerns about the decision not to update this information with a later extract of LEO data and 2017 awarding body data. You can email us at destination.measures@education.gov.uk

We've added some additional data sources

- This year we have included information on students attending [Higher Education Alternative Providers](#).
- We have also included information on students who are self-employed (returning a self-assessment tax return).

Together these categories account for just over 1% of students after key stage 5 and a small number (less than 0.5%) after key stage 4.

We've made some changes to our excel tables

Changes to presentation of tables

- Tables have been moved into Open Document Format (ODS) to meet accessibility guidelines for gov.uk. This means that there are no longer any drop down menus or interactive tables in our excel spreadsheets. Instead there are multiple tabs which may show similar information.
- We've tried to make some of the tables more readable by switching the order of reading and putting more information on to one tab so that you can easily compare destinations of different groups of pupils such as boys and girls, free school meal eligible pupils or by ethnicity.
- Geographic breakdowns have been moved into a separate workbook, including local authority, parliamentary constituency, and local authority district data.

Changes to information available

We've added:

- a new table on school funding types showing outcomes for academies and free schools at both key stages
- A breakdown of destinations by prior attainment at both key stages
- some additional pupil characteristic breakdowns, such as type of primary need for pupils with special educational needs at key stage 4 and the interactions between disadvantage and other key characteristics.
- Made information by characteristics more consistently available for state-funded mainstream schools and all state-funded schools.
- Information at local authority district level

We've removed:

- Most characteristics breakdowns for special schools and alternative provision.
- The most detailed destination categories for some characteristic breakdowns.
- We're proposing not to publish destinations from independent schools after KS4

Please let us know if you have any concerns about the changes we have made to our excel tables. You can email us at destination.measures@education.gov.uk

We're proposing not to publish key stage 4 destinations from independent schools

We're proposing not to publish destinations from independent schools after key stage 4 in January due to data quality concerns.

In October 2016, we made the decision to remove experimental statistics status from the Destination measures due to the increased coverage and reliability of the statistics once new employment and benefits information had been included. A number of issues remain with the quality of the independent school data, which we discuss further below.

Independent school data has previously been included only in the January revised publication. This year our intention is not to publish this information for pupils completing key stage 4 in independent schools. We will continue to publish key stage 5 information in our October publication.

Independent school data are less complete

We do not report destinations for all pupils in independent schools. Because we do not collect a pupil level annual school census from independent schools, we only know the identity of pupils who enter exams in year 11.

We only report destinations for independent schools where the number of pupils we can identify matches the official pupil count reported by the school. In 2014/15 only four-fifths (681 out of 857 schools) were included. We also did not report on any independent special schools.

Independent school data are less comparable

The national total for independent schools only includes pupils from these 681 schools and does not give a full picture of all pupils in independent schools nationally. Because the schools included change from year to year, it is not possible to make good comparisons of the performance of the independent school sector over time.

Because we cannot follow pupils who do not enter exams in year 11, we are also likely to disproportionately miss pupils in the independent sector with special educational needs.

Independent school data are less reliable and less timely

The majority of pupils in independent schools progress to independent school sixth forms. We rely on awarding body data to identify this following an exam entry in summer of year 12 or year 13 that has a longer delay than any of our other data sources. Coverage is lower in independent schools even after this is incorporated.

Key stage 5 data are now included in October

The same issues do not apply to key stage 5 because the cohort is based only on students who entered A levels or other level 3 qualifications during 16 to 18 study. At this age, young people are also not expected to continue in independent schools.

Users should be aware that coverage of key stage 5 destinations remains lower for independent school students and there is a lower match rate with employment data. Care should therefore be taken when making comparisons between independent and state funded schools on both the headline measure and on sustained employment rates.

Please let us know if you have any concerns about the intention not to include this information and how this will affect you. You can email us at destination.measures@education.gov.uk

We've published some new experimental tables

We've included some new experimental statistics, which aim to help users understand the bigger picture of destinations for all students. We expect to continue to publish information on these topics in future, but this may not be updated in the same format as in this release. Details of new experimental statistics are set out below.

We expect that we will continue to make methodology developments to cover wider groups of students appropriately and provide more information about longer term outcomes of young people following different educational pathways.

The department is in the process of reviewing the [coherence of its statistics](#) and will be outlining a wider set of proposed changes to its statistical outputs in due course.

We would welcome feedback on these statistics. Please let us know if you have any comments, questions or suggestions. You can email us at destination.measures@education.gov.uk

Destinations at age 16 and age 18

These tables show the immediate destinations pupils went into after key stage 4 in 2013/14 (aged 16) and then the destination they were in during the first two terms of the 2015/16 academic year (aged 18).

This shows how young people flow from their immediate destination to when most have finished 16 to 18 study. For many pupils this is the same point in time that they are captured in our standard key stage 5 destination measures, and the same methodology is used to capture their activity.

This allows us to see the differences between key stage 4 destinations and to see outcomes at age 18 (based on our existing key stage 5 methodology) for the full key stage 4 cohort, including those who do not participate in education post-16.

Destinations for 16 to 18 students studying different types of qualification

These tables show destinations for students aged 16 to 18 who were required to continue studying English and maths because they did not achieve good GCSE passes at key stage 4. It also shows outcomes for those who studied different types of level 3 qualifications: academic, applied general and tech levels.

This shows a high-level overview of outcomes for students beyond those who entered A levels or other level 3 qualifications (who are reported in our standard key stage 5 tables). [From 2016 and 2017](#) school and college performance tables have begun to report on the achievements of students aged 16 to 18 studying lower level qualifications.

Our experimental tables provide information about students who would have been reported in different categories based on these new rules in 2014/15, using our existing key stage 5 destination methodology.



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