Revised A level and other 16-18 results in England, 2016/2017 – Additional text
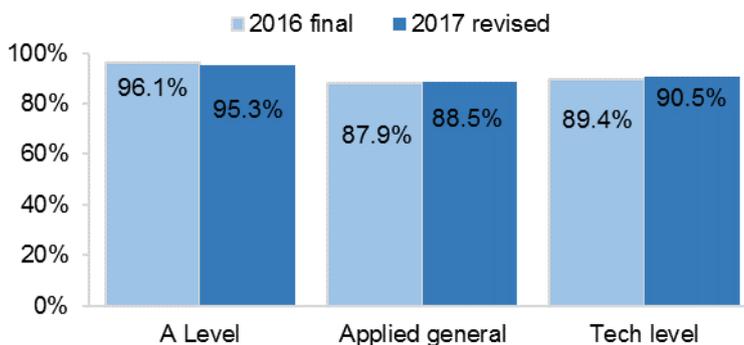
SFR 03/2018, 15 March 2018

Note on additional measures

This publication adds to the [Revised A level and other 16-18 results in England, 2016/2017 SFR](#), which was released in January 2018, and includes the retention measure, and completion and attainment measure. These measures use student learning aims information from the Autumn School Census and Individualised Learner Record (ILR). Both sets of data were collected in October 2017 and made available for analysis in January 2018[1].
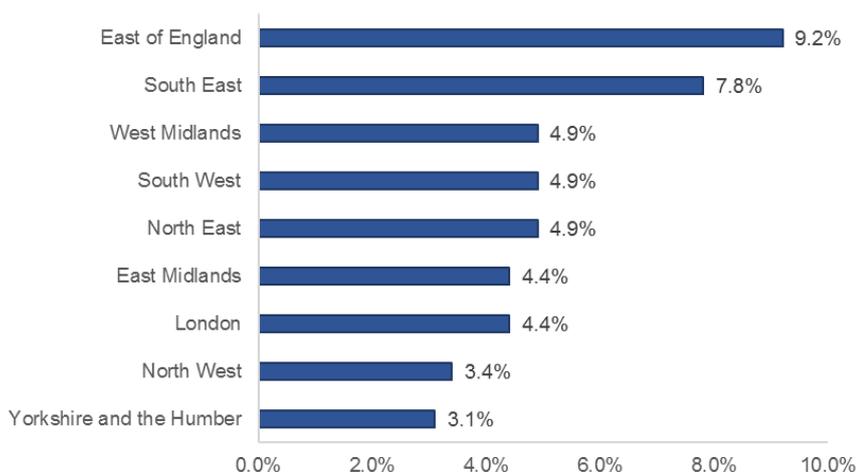
Retention rates decreased for A level programmes, but increased for applied general and tech levels

Retention rates are highest for A level study programmes, the same pattern as seen in 2016. The retention rate decreased for A level programmes (95.3%) compared to 2016 (96.1%), while the rates increased for applied general and tech level programmes (88.5% and 90.5% respectively) compared to 2016 (87.9% and 89.4% respectively).

The retention rates for tech certificate and level 2 vocational programmes are published for the first time in this SFR. The retention rates are 86.3% and 85.5%

A small proportion (5.4%) of 16-18 state-funded mainstream schools and colleges fell below the tech level minimum standards

Of the 651 16 to 18 state-funded mainstream schools and colleges assessed, 35 (5.4%) fell below the minimum standards set by the department for level 3 tech level qualifications, meaning these providers are seen as underperforming when compared nationally against other providers. The East of England had the highest proportion of underperforming schools and colleges in 2017 (9.2%), and Yorkshire and the Humber had the lowest proportion (3.1%).

---

[1] Information on the ILR and School Census data can be found in the [quality and methodology document](#)

Contents

About this release

The retention measure and the completion and attainment measure use information on student 16-18 learning aims from the Autumn School Sensus and Individualised Learner Record (ILR). The aims information were collected in October 2017 and made available for analysis in January 2018. Due to data availability, these measures are published in March 2018.

The statistics in this release are based on the same revised data extract as that used in the figures published in January 2018 in SFR 03/2018. The revised figures incorporate the small proportion of amendments that awarding organisations, schools or colleges and local authorities submitted to the department after August 2017; these amendments are included in the data for the retention measure, and the completion and attainment measure.

Note on comparisons over time

The retention measure and the completion and attainment measure have been published since 2016. Data on these measures is not available before 2016.

In this publication

The following files are published alongside the additional SFR text:

• Retention measure, completion and attainment measure and tech level minimum standards tables (. XLSX)

• Characteristics CSV (.CSV)

A full list of the tables and CSVs included in these files is shown in section 5 of the SFR.

The accompanying quality and methodology information document has also been updated to provide information on the data sources used to calculate the retention and completions and attainment measures, their coverage and quality, and explains the methodology used in producing the data.

Feedback

We welcome feedback on any aspect of this document at Attainment.STATISTICS@education.gov.uk

1. Retention

The retention measure shows the percentage of students who completed their main study programme at a provider. A student's main study programme is also known as a core aim.

Retention measure for tech certificates and other level 2 vocational programmes are published for the first time as headline measures in this additional release. In addition, breakdowns of the headline retention measures by student characteristics are published for the first time.

Alongside the headline retention measure there are two supporting retention measures included in this publication as well as the performance tables from 2017:

1) Returned and retained for a second year
2) Retained and assessed

Which students are included in the measure

A student is in scope for the retention measure if they are:

• aged 16-18 and at the end of their 16-18 study in 2017;

• enrolled in an eligible study programme, ie having a core aim[2] that is either a) level 3 academic (including A levels) b) A level programme c) level 3 applied general d) level 3 tech level e) level 2 vocational qualification (including tech certificates) or f) level 2 technical certificate.

In the majority of cases, the core aim will be at least the size of one A level. Other qualifications, including level 1 qualifications, supported internships and traineeships are not reported in the headline measures.

How retention is measured

Students are counted as retained if they are recorded as having "completed the learning activities leading to the learning aim"[3].

The retention measure is calculated by dividing the total number of students retained by the total number of students in scope for each A level, academic, applied general and tech level core aim. This is then expressed as a percentage. For example, if at a provider, 100 students had an academic core aim and of those students, 80 went on to complete the learning activities of their core aim, this provider would have a retention rate of 80%.

Since similar trends are seen in the measures for A level and academic programmes (99.3% of students in academic programme are in A level programmes in 2017), information for academic programmes is not shown here. Data for academic programmes can be found in the tables accompanying this document.

National retention rates

In 2017 (2016/17 academic year), the number of students enrolled in A level and applied general programmes remained broadly stable compared to 2016 (with a decrease of 0.5% for A level students). In contrast, the number of students in tech level programmes decreased by 9.1%.These patterns are in line with changes in the cohorts as published in the main SFR text in January.

The retention rate decreased for A level programmes (95.3%) compared to 2016 (96.1%), while the rate increased for both level 3 vocational programmes (Fig. 1).

Retention measures are published for the first time for tech certificate and level 2 vocational programmes. The retention rates are 86.3% and 85.5% respectively, which are lower than for students in level 3 programmes. One possible reason is that they have lower prior attainment than level 3 students and therefore could be more likely to change their chosen pathway to different education options (for example traineeships or apprenticeships).

---

[2] Information on exemptions and the process of selecting a student's core aim can be found in the 16-19 technical guidance.
[3] The Learning Aim Status Field of the School Census or the Completion Status Field of the ILR is used to show if a student is counted as retained.

Figure 1: Retention by study programme (Table 18)

England, 2017

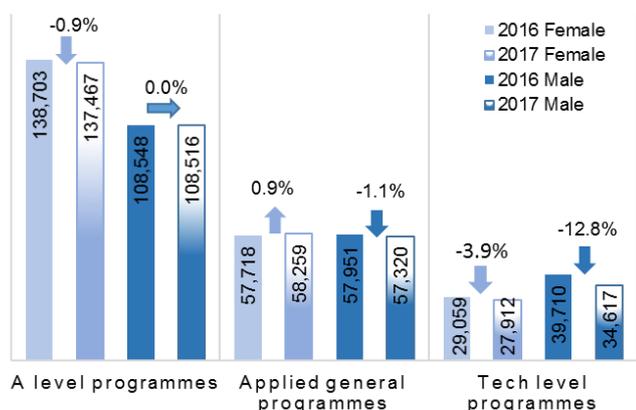|	A Level programmes		Applied General programmes		Tech Level programmes		Tech certificate programmes		Level 2 vocational programmes	
	Number of students	% of students retained	Number of students	% of students retained	Number of students	% of students retained	Number of students	% of students retained	Number of students	% of students retained
2016 (final)	247,251	96.1	115,669	87.9	68,769	89.4	-	-	-	-
2017 (revised)	245,983	95.3	115,579	88.5	62,529	90.5	38,582	86.3	88,317	85.5

Source: 16-18 attainment data

- data not available

Retention by gender

In 2017, the number of female students enrolled in A level programmes decreased by 0.9% compared to 2016, while the number of male students remained stable. For applied general programmes, the number of male students decreased by 1.1% compared to 2016. In contrast, the number of female students increased by 0.9% (Fig. 2).

The drop in the number of students enrolled in tech level programmes is mainly driven by the drop seen in male students. The number of male students dropped by 12.8% compared to 2016, compared to 3.9% drop for female students (Fig. 2).This is similar pattern seen in the participation of tech level students in the main text published in January 2018.
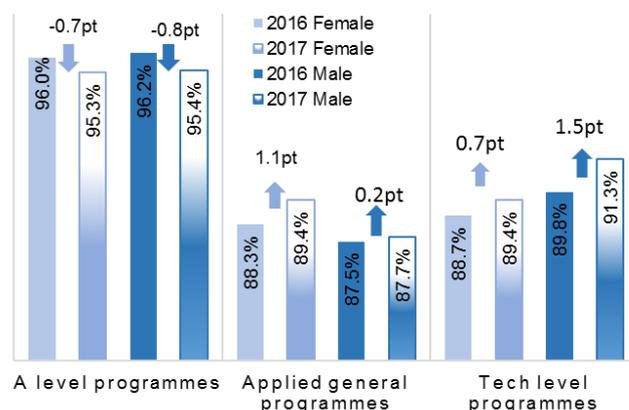
Figure 2: Number of students by gender and level 3 programme (measures by characteristics CSV) England, 2017

Source: 16-18 attainment data

PT: percentage points

Figure 3: Retention rate by gender and level 3 programme (measures by characteristics CSV) England, 2017

Source: 16-18 attainment data

Retention rates are broadly similar for females and males (95.3% and 95.4% respectively) in A level programmes, which is the same pattern seen in 2016 (Fig. 3). The retention rate for A level programmes dropped for both female and male students compared to 2016 (-0.7 percentage points and -0.8 percentage points respectively).

The retention rate in applied general programmes is higher for female students than males, the same pattern as 2016. Retention rates are higher in 2017 for both female and male students compared to 2016. However the gender gap increased in 2017 (1.7 percentage points) compared to 2016 (0.8 percentage points).

The retention rate in tech level programmes is higher for male students than females, which is also the same pattern as 2016. Retention rates are higher in 2017 for both female and male students compared to 2016. The gender gap also increased, from 1.1 percentage points in 2016 to 1.9 percentage points in 2017.

Similar to the pattern seen in tech level programmes, more male students were enrolled in level 2 vocational and tech certificate programmes in 2017 (Fig. 4) and the retention rate is higher for male students than female students (Fig. 5).

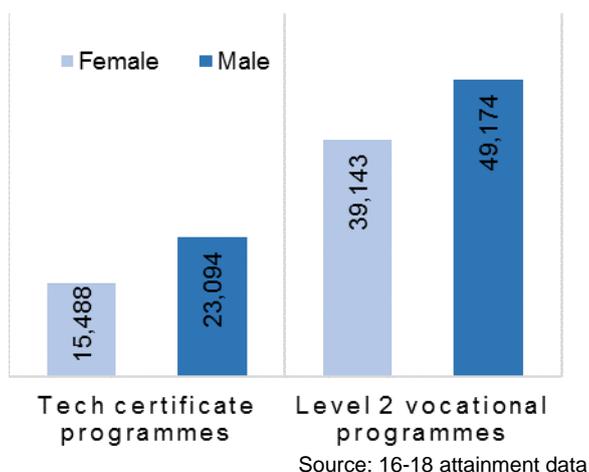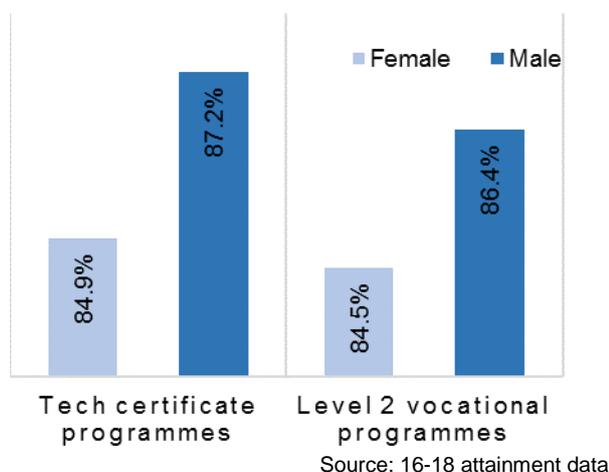**Figure 4: Number of students by gender and level 2 programme** (measures by characteristics CSV) England, 2017

Source: 16-18 attainment data

Figure 5: Retention rate by gender and level 2 programme (measures by characteristics CSV) England, 2017

Source: 16-18 attainment data

Retention by disadvantaged status[4]

Similar to the pattern seen in the main text for attainment measures, only 15.1% of students with A level programmes as their core aim were recorded as disadvantaged at the end of key stage 4. For tech level and applied general programmes, 25.3% and 27.3% of students respectively were recorded as disadvantaged. The level 2 vocational and tech certificate programmes have higher proportions of disadvantaged students (36.0% and 38.3% respectively) than level 3 programmes.

Pupils at the end of key stage 4 study in 2015 comprise the potential 16-18 cohort for 2017, and 27.3% of this group were disadvantaged. This shows disadvantaged students were underrepresented in the A level cohort, and overrepresented in the level 2 vocational and tech certificate programmes.

Retention rates are lower for disadvantaged pupils compared to non-disadvantaged students across all programme types (Fig. 6).

Figure 6: Retention by disadvantaged status and study programme (measures by characteristics CSV) England, 2017

	A level programmes		Applied general programmes		Tech level programmes		Tech certificate programmes		Level 2 vocational programmes	
	Number of students	% of students retained	Number of students	% of students retained	Number of students	% of students retained	Number of students	% of students retained	Number of students	% of students retained
Disadvantaged students	37,154	91.6	31,498	85.6	15,807	87.5	13,889	83.4	33,860	82.5
Non-disadvantaged students	205,687	96.0	82,351	89.6	45,932	91.5	23,967	87.9	52,073	87.3
Unknown status	3,142	94.2	1,730	90.0	790	92.4	726	89.1	2,384	89.8
All State-funded students[1,2]	245,983	95.3	115,579	88.5	62,529	90.5	38,582	86.3	88,317	85.5

Source: 16-18 attainment data

1. Includes students who were reported as disadvantaged, non-disadvantaged students, and for whom disadvantaged status cannot be determined at the end of key stage 4.
2. Covers state-funded mainstream schools and colleges.

---

[4] Students' disadvantaged status at the end of key stage 4 are used for 16-18 performance measures. More information about disadvantaged status can be found in the main text for this publication.

Retention by institution type

Care should be taken when comparing across institution types due to significant differences in number of students: for example, there are very low numbers of students in free schools, 16-19 free schools, university technical colleges (UTCs) and studio schools compared with other institution types.

Converter academies and sixth form colleges have the largest number of students enrolled in A level programmes (42.9% and 22.8% of the total number of A level students respectively). In contrast, just over half (50.2%) of state-funded students in applied general programmes are in FE sector colleges (excluding sixth form colleges), and over three-quarters (75.8%) of students in tech level programmes are in FE sector colleges. For tech certificate and level 2 vocational programmes, around 90% are in other FE sector colleges (95.1% and 89.7% respectively).

In 2017, A level programmes at converter academies had the highest retention rate (97.0%) and UTCs had the lowest retention rate (89.3%). In 2016, FE sector colleges (excluding sixth form colleges) had the lowest retention rate.

Sixth form colleges and other FE sector colleges had the higher retention rate in applied general programme and tech level programme than any of the state-funded school types (Fig. 7).

The retention rates for tech certificate and level 2 vocational programmes are 86.5% and 85.9% respectively for other FE colleges.

Figure 7: Retention by institution type (Table 18)
England, 2017

Institution type	A level programmes		Applied general programmes		Tech level programmes		Tech certificate programmes		Level 2 vocational programmes	
	Number of students	% of students retained	Number of students	% of students retained	Number of students	% of students retained	Number of students	% of students retained	Number of students	% of students retained
Local authority maintained mainstream schools	42,956	96.2	11,761	84.4	2,228	84.1	280	78.6	1,789	83.3
Sponsored academies	14,893	94.2	10,154	83.5	2,116	82.3	277	79.1	986	74.0
Converter academies	105,458	97.0	17,674	84.9	3,569	86.4	495	89.3	2,227	86.4
Free schools	745	96.0	75	80.0	111	76.6	11	63.6	32	78.1
Free schools (16-19)	1,476	95.5	400	88.0	155	85.8	28	89.3	94	86.2
University technical colleges	693	89.3	267	82.8	1,311	79.4	19	100.0	58	86.2
Studio schools	204	91.2	384	81.3	256	87.5	11	63.6	36	66.7
Sixth form colleges	56,022	93.4	16,547	90.8	5,244	93.2	766	82.6	3,880	81.3
Other FE sector colleges	23,283	91.5	57,985	90.7	47,389	91.5	36,695	86.5	79,215	85.9

Source: 16-18 attainment data

Retained and assessed

We are publishing the new retained and assessed measure for the first time for 2017 data. This supporting measure shows the percentage of students who are retained to the end of their course and are assessed. This allows users to see whether students are effectively completing their studies and taking the assessments needed to gain qualifications.

Students are considered retained and assessed if they have an exam result at the same level and at least the same size as the core aim qualification selected for the headline retention measure.

A higher proportion of female students were retained and assessed for all types of programme except tech levels. In particular, although female students have a lower retention rate in tech certificate and level 2 vocational programmes, the percentages retained and assessed for these measures are higher than male students for both programmes (76.6% and 74.8% compared to 70.7% and 71.0% respectively).

Figure 8: Retained and assessed by gender and programme type (measures by characteristic CSV)
England, 2017

	Percentage of students retained and assessed				
gender	A level programmes	Applied general programmes	Tech level programmes	Tech certificate programmes	Level 2 vocational programmes
Female	94.1	82.3	83.3	76.6	74.8
Male	94.0	78.6	83.4	70.7	71.0
All students[1]	94.0	80.5	83.4	73.1	72.7

Source: 16-18 attainment data

1. Covers state-funded mainstream schools and colleges.

Returned and retained for a second year

The returned and retained for a second year measure is also published for the first time for 2017 data. This supporting measure shows the percentage of level 3 students who return to the same provider for a second year of study and complete their programme of study in their second year.

> Students are in scope for the returned and retained for a second year measure if they have a level 3 A level, academic, applied general or tech level core aim. Students are excluded if they
>
> • have a level 2 core aim; or
>
> • are aged 18 in their first year in the institution; or
>
> • achieved at least two level 3 qualifications of size equivalent to at least 1 A level in their first year in the institution
>
> Students are counted as returned and retained for a second year if they have completed a level 3 aim of size equivalent to at least 1 A levels in their second (or third) year at an institution and are in the institution for at least 2 years.

In 2017, a higher proportion of female students in A level (82.9%) and applied general programmes (73.8%) returned to the same provider for a second year of study and are retained in their second year compared to male students (80.1% and 68.7% respectively).

For the tech level programmes, a higher proportion of male students (79.6%) are returned and retained for a second year compared to female students (76.0%).

Figure 9: Returned and retained for a second year by gender and programme type (measures by characteristic CSV)
England, 2017

	Returned and retained for a second year					
	A level programmes		Applied general programmes		Tech level programmes	
gender	Number of students	% of students returned and retained for a second year	Number of students	% of students returned and retained for a second year	Number of students	% of students returned and retained for a second year
Female	134,994	82.9	54,054	73.8	26,657	76.0
Male	106,642	80.1	53,789	68.7	33,067	79.6
All students[1]	241,636	81.7	107,843	71.3	59,724	78.0

Source: 16-18 attainment data

1. All students in state-funded mainstream schools and colleges.

2. Completion and attainment

This section covers results for the completion and attainment measure, which compares the attainment of students who have taken tech level, tech certificate and level 2 vocational qualifications with the national average attainment for each qualification. The scores for each qualification are aggregated to give an overall completion and attainment score for the provider, which will be expressed as points above or below the national average. More information on the completion and attainment measure can be found in the [16 to 19 technical guidance](#).

> **Which students are included in the measure**
>
> Student are included when they have studied at least one tech level, tech certificate or level 2 vocational course in a state-funded institution for years where the student attracted funding. Students who withdraw from a course within the funding "qualifying period"[5] are not counted in the measure[6]. Where a student is recorded as having withdrawn from a qualification after the qualifying period they will be treated as having failed the qualification.
>
> **How points are assigned in completion and attainment**
>
> For all students who complete relevant qualifications we assign a point score[7] based on the grade that they achieved. Fails and withdrawals after the qualifying period will be given zero points. The grading information is sourced from the data supplied to the Department by awarding bodies.
>
> **How completion and attainment is calculated**
>
> Attainment in each qualification delivered by a provider is first calculated by adding up all the point scores for the qualification and dividing them by the number of students who started the qualification after the qualifying period.
>
> A provider's attainment in a subject is then subtracted from the national average attainment in that subject to generate a score expressed as points above or below the national average. Scores for each subject are finally aggregated to produce an overall provider score relative to the national average.

National completion and attainment score breakdown by gender

In 2017, females had higher completion and attainment scores than males for tech levels, tech certificates and level 2 vocational qualifications. This means on average female students who have taken these qualifications achieve a higher result than males.

Figure 10: Completion and attainment score in tech level, tech certificate and level 2 vocational qualifications, for students entering these qualifications by gender (measures by characteristics CSV)
England, 2017

	Number of tech level qualifications studied	Completion and attainment Score	Number of tech certificate qualifications studied	Completion and attainment Score	Number of L2 vocational qualifications studied	Completion and attainment Score
Female	29,911	0.10	6,001	0.05	23,037	0.06
Male	39,080	-0.08	10,074	-0.03	29,672	-0.05
All students[1]	68,991	0.00	16,075	0.00	52,709	0.00

Source: 16-18 attainment data

1. Covers state-funded mainstream schools and colleges.

---

[5] Further information on qualifying periods can be found in the [16-19 technical guidance](#).
[6] For information on students excluded from the completion and attainment measure, see the [16-19 technical guidance](#).
[7] See annex B of the [16-19 technical guidance](#) for further details on how grades map to point scores.
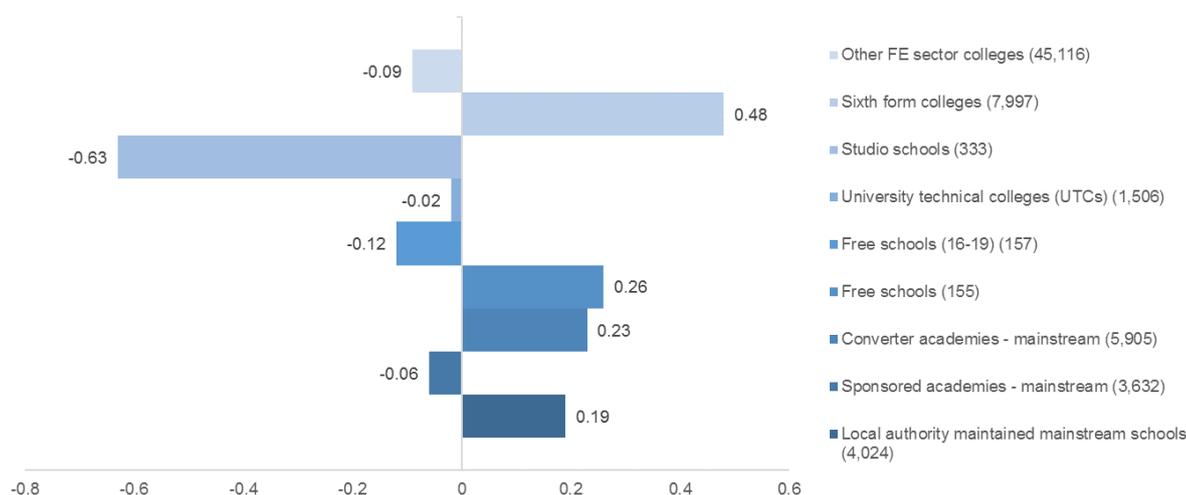
Completion and attainment score breakdown by institution type

Sixth form colleges had the highest completion and attainment score (0.48) for tech levels. The average completion and attainment score in other FE sector colleges, where the majority of tech level qualifications are taken (65% of the total number of tech level entries) was -0.09.

The vast majority of tech certificates and level 2 vocational qualifications are also studied at other FE sector colleges (excluding sixth form colleges); students in other FE sector colleges accounted for 90% and 83% of entries to these qualification types respectively. Other FE colleges (excluding sixth form colleges) have a completion and attainment score of -0.01 and -0.02 for tech certificates and level 2 vocational qualifications respectively. The next highest number of tech certificate and level 2 vocational qualifications are studied in sixth form colleges (6% and 10% respectively of the total number of entries). The average completion and attainment score for sixth form colleges is 0.34 for tech certificates and 0.29 for level 2 vocational qualifications.
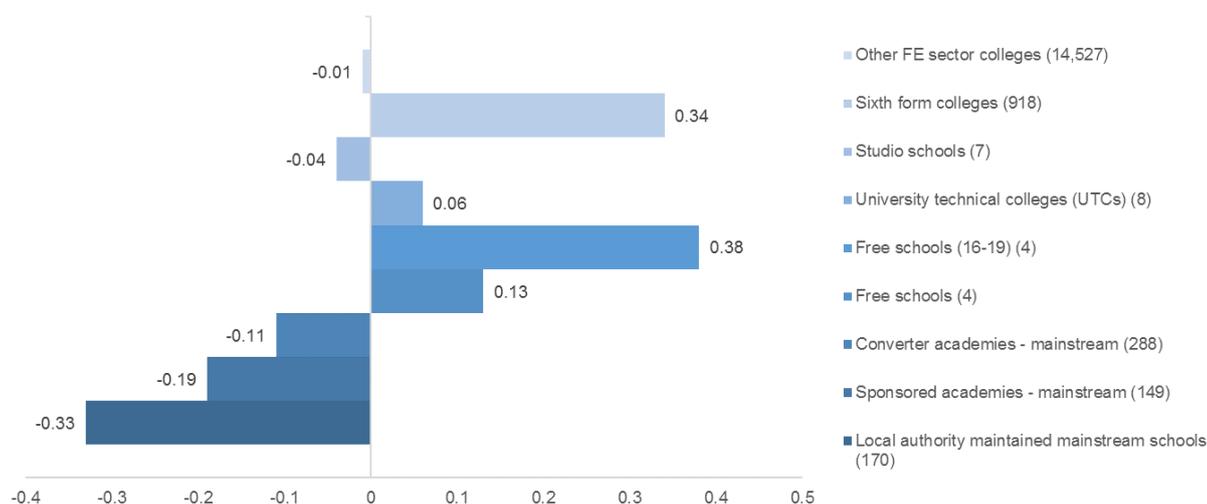
Care should be taken when comparing across institution types due to significant differences in cohort sizes: for example, there are very low numbers of students in free schools, 16-19 free schools, university technical colleges and studio schools compared with other institution types.

Figure 11: Completion and attainment score in tech level qualifications, for students entering tech level qualifications, by institution type (Table 19a)
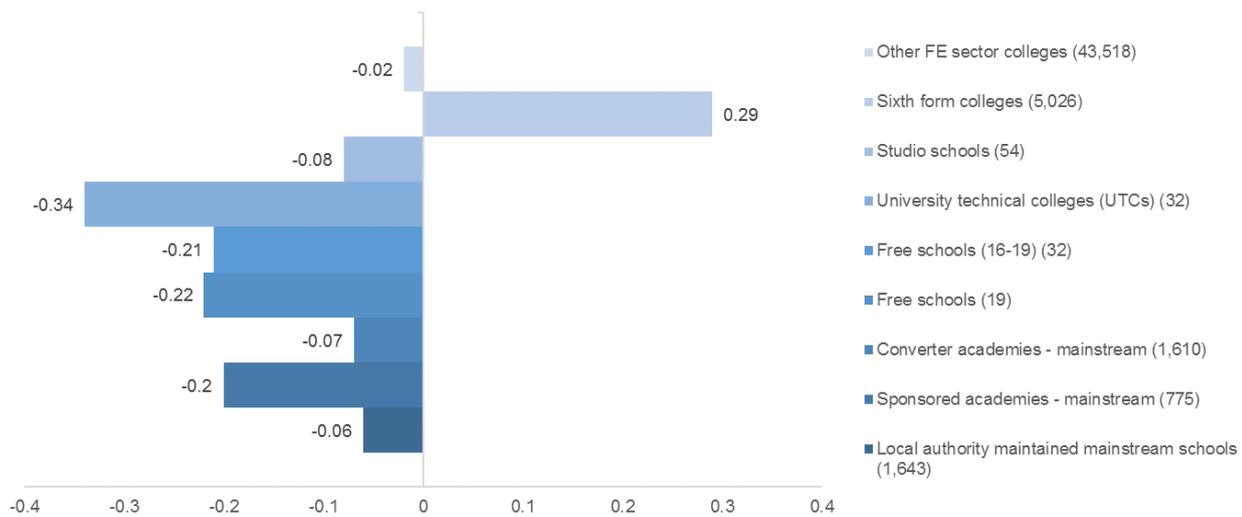England, 2017

Source: 16-18 attainment data

Figure 12: Completion and attainment score in tech certificate qualifications, for students entering tech certificate qualifications, by institution type (Table 19b)
England, 2017

Source: 16-18 attainment data

Figure 13: Completion and attainment score in level 2 vocational qualifications, for students entering level 2 vocational qualifications, by institution type (Table 19c)
England, 2017

Source: 16-18 attainment data

Completion and attainment score breakdown by disadvantaged status

Disadvantaged students represent 24.9% of the total number of students entered for tech level qualifications. A higher proportion of students entered for tech certificate and level 2 vocational qualifications are disadvantaged, with 35.6% and 38.4% respectively. Completion and attainment scores are lower for disadvantaged students than non-disadvantaged students for tech levels, tech certificates and level 2 vocational qualifications.

Figure 14: Completion and attainment score in tech level, tech certificate and level 2 vocational qualifications, for students entering these qualifications by disadvantaged status (measures by characteristics CSV)
England, 2017

	Number of tech level qualifications studied	Completion and attainment Score	Number of tech certificate qualifications studied	Completion and attainment Score	Number of L2 vocational qualifications studied	Completion and attainment Score
Disadvantaged students	17,168	-0.24	5,715	-0.14	20,255	-0.13
Non-disadvantaged students	51,041	0.08	9,968	0.07	30,868	0.07
Unknown status	782	0.19	392	0.35	1,586	0.39
All state-funded students[1,2]	68,991	0.00	16,075	0.00	52,709	0.00

Source: 16-18 attainment data

1. Includes students who were reported as disadvantaged, non-disadvantaged students, and for whom disadvantaged status cannot be determined at the end of key stage 4.

2. Covers state-funded mainstream schools and colleges.

3. Tech level minimum standards

The Department for Education applies 16 to 18 minimum standards to the performance of eligible institutions (state-funded mainstream schools and colleges), to assess whether or not each institution is performing at the minimum expected level set by the department.

> **Definition of minimum standards[8] for tech level qualifications**
>
> In the 2017 performance tables, an eligible tech level provider[9] is seen as underperforming if:
>
> 1. their completion and attainment score is below -0.50, i.e. half a grade below the national average; and
>
> 2. fewer than 70% of students achieved an average point score per entry in tech levels of 25 points (equal to a Merit grade)
>
> This is different to the 2016 minimum standard, which was based purely on the completion and attainment measure: in 2016 a 16 to 18 provider was below the 2016 tech level minimum standard if it had a completion and attainment score below -0.90.

In 2017, the Department raised the academic, applied general and tech level minimum standards so that each captures approximately 5% of eligible institutions, an increase of 1 percentage point compared to the percentage of providers below the 2016 minimum standard.

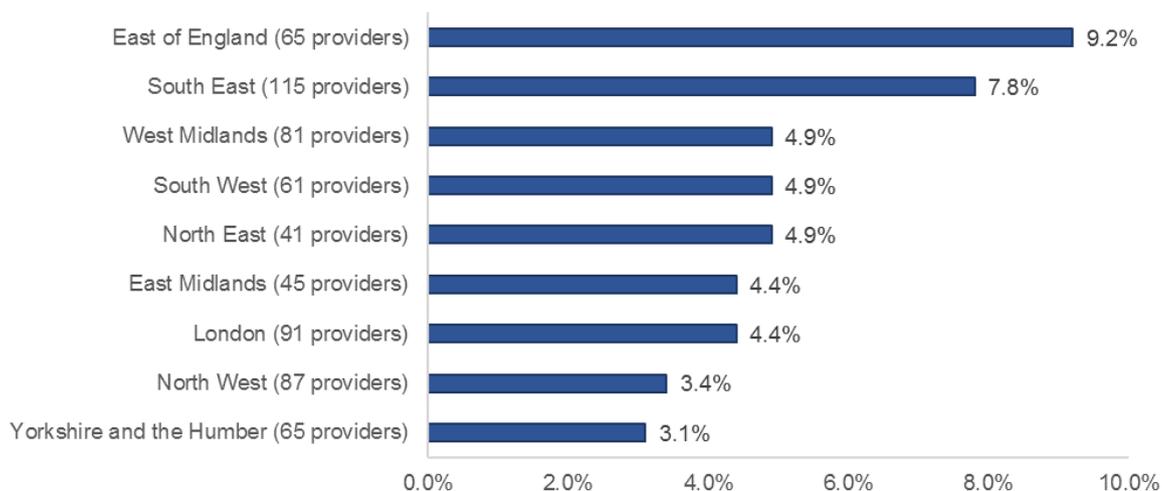## 16 to 18 institutions below the tech level minimum standard

In 2017, 651 state-funded mainstream schools and colleges were assessed against the tech level minimum standard. Of those, 35 providers, 5.4% fell below the minimum standard for tech level qualifications; these are seen as underperforming when compared nationally against other providers.

16 to 18 institutions below the tech level minimum standard by region

The East of England has the highest proportion of underperforming schools and colleges in tech level qualifications in 2017 (9.2%), whereas Yorkshire and the Humber has the lowest proportion (3.1%). This is a change to the pattern seen in 2016, when the East of England had the third lowest proportion below the minimum standard, though Yorkshire and the Humber had the second lowest proportion. Changes in patterns between years and differences between regions can in some cases be explained by a small number of institutions falling below the minimum standard in a particular year.

Figure 15: Percentage of providers below the tech level minimum standard (and number of providers assessed) by region (Table 20a)
England, state-funded providers, 2017

Source: 16-18 attainment data

---

[8] For more information on the 16 to 18 minimum standards please see the 16 to 18 minimum standards guidance published by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

[9] For the definition of an eligible tech level provider, please refer "section 1.1 coverage" on the guidance page here: 16 to 18 minimum standards for 2017

16 to 18 institutions below the minimum standard by institution type

FE sector colleges have a higher proportion of providers below the tech level minimum standard (6.5%) compared to state-funded mainstream schools (4.5%). This is a change compared to the pattern seen in 2016, when a higher proportion of schools were below the minimum standard, and is mainly driven by the change in methodology used to calculate the tech level minimum standard in 2017.

Further breakdowns by institution type are published in table 20b accompanying this release (available on the department's statistics website). Care should be taken when comparing across institution types due to significant differences in cohort sizes: for example, there are very low numbers of tech level students in free schools, 16-19 free schools, university technical colleges and studio schools compared with other institution types.

Figure 16: Percentage of providers below the minimum standard by institution type (Table 20b)
England, state-funded providers, 2017

	Numbers of providers assessed	Providers below the minimum standard
State-funded mainstream schools	375	17 (4.5%)
FE sector colleges	276	18 (6.5%)
All state-funded mainstream providers	651	35 (5.4%)

Source: 16-18 attainment data

4. Characteristics breakdowns

16-18 measures broken down by disadvantaged status were published for the first time in January 2018. In this publication, we are also publishing the 16-18 headline measures broken down by the following characteristics: ethnicity, English as an additional language (EAL), free school meal eligibility (FSM), and special educational needs status (SEN).

> **Characteristics definitions**
>
> **Disadvantaged status:** Students are defined as disadvantaged if they were known to have been eligible for free school meals in the six years prior to the end of key stage 4 (from year 6 to year 11), if they are recorded as having been looked after for at least one day or if they are recorded as having been adopted from care.
>
> **Eligible for free school meals:** Students are defined as eligible for free school meals (FSM) where a pupil's family claimed eligibility in the School Census when they were at the end of key stage 4. Parents are able to claim free schools meals for their children if they receive a qualifying benefit[10].
>
> **English as a first language:** "First Language" is the language to which a child was initially exposed during early development and continues to be exposed to in the home or in the community.
>
> **Special educational needs status:** The SEN variable indicates whether a pupil has learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for them to learn than most children of the same age. Pupils with special educational needs include those with SEN support, with statements of SEN or an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
>
> **Ethnicity:** Ethnicity is broken down into two ways: a major grouping (White, Black, Asian, Chinese, Other) and a minor grouping which includes more detailed categories.

The 16-18 schools and college performance measures cover full time students aged 16-18 and at the end of their 16-18 study; patterns of attainment by characteristics may therefore be influenced by the characteristics of students who choose to continue their studies. The destinations of students by characteristics can be found in the Destinations of key stage 4 and key stage 5 pupils statistical first releases.

Students may also choose to enter different types of qualifications. Students with special educational needs, recorded as disadvantaged or eligible for free schools meals at the end of key stage 4, and white students, were overrepresented in the level 2 vocational and technical certificate cohorts,
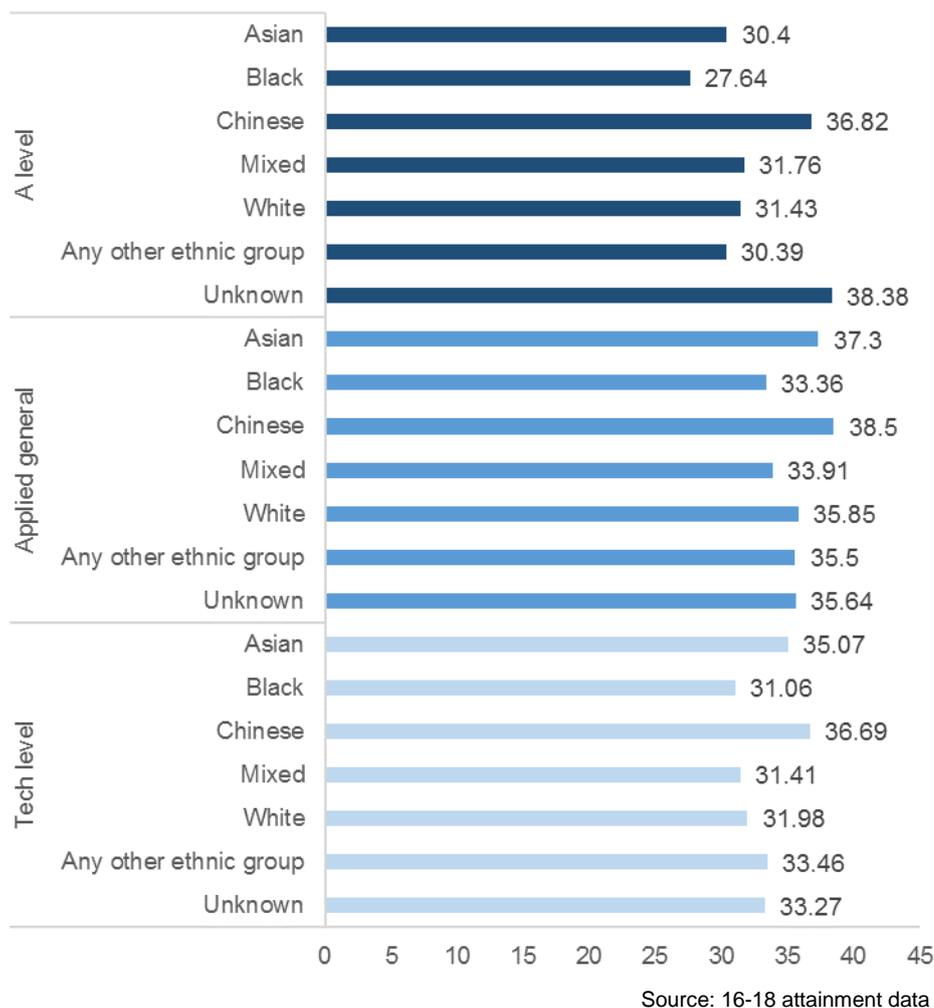
---

[10] For more information and a list of qualifying benefits, see the quality and methodology document that accompanies this SFR.

whereas Asian and Chinese students, and those with English as an additional language were slightly overrepresented in the A level cohort.

Figures 17 and 18 shows the pattern in average point score (APS) per entry for A level, applied general and tech level qualifications by different characteristics. These show similar patterns as seen at other key stages.

Across different ethnic groups, Chinese students have the highest APS per entry for all three qualification types shown, with black students the lowest. Students whose ethnic group is unknown have the highest APS per entry for A level; this is likely to reflect the fact that many of these students are likely to be studying at independent schools, which have the highest attainment across different institution types.
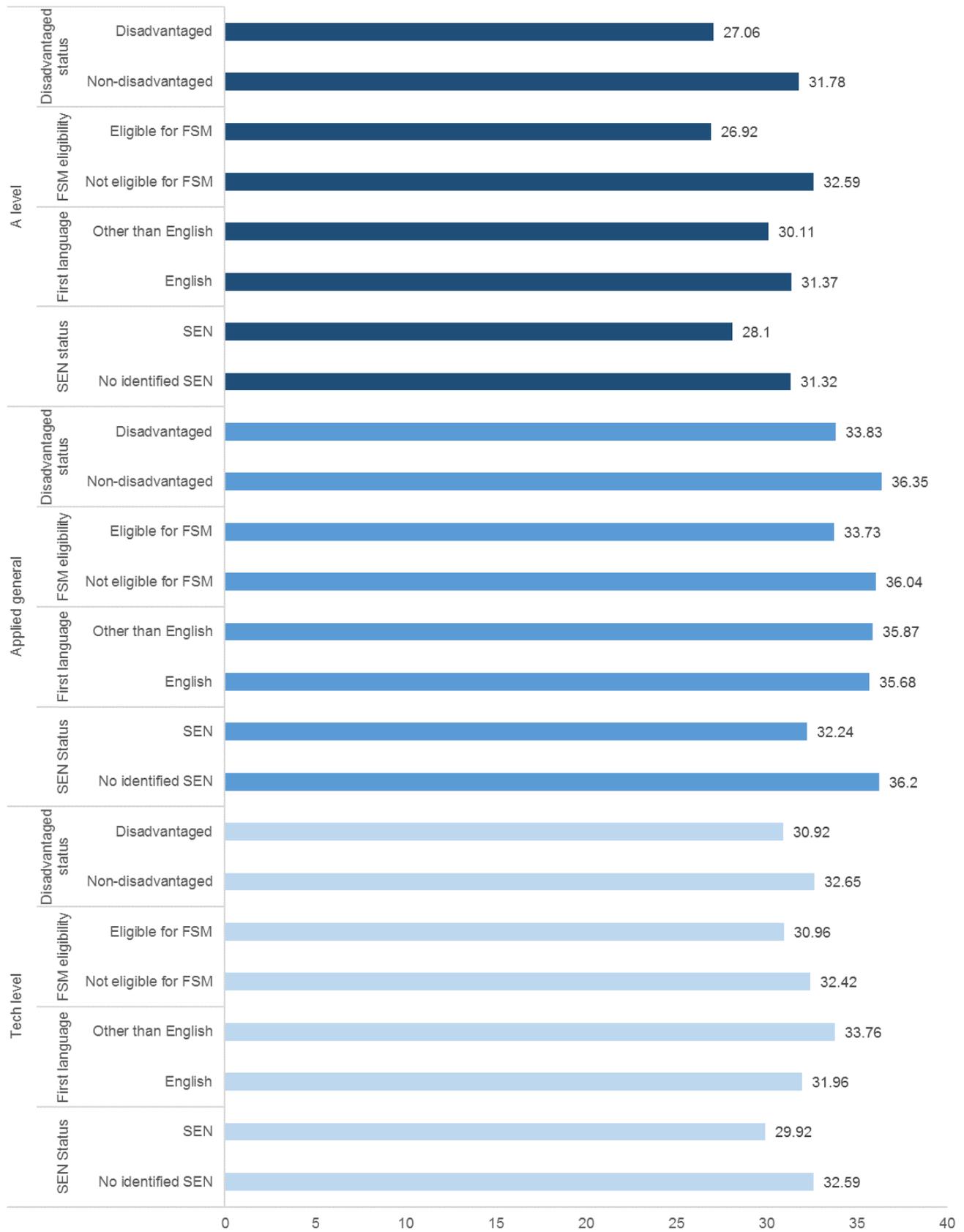
Figure 17: Average points per entry by major ethnic group (measures by characteristics CSV)
England, 2017

Source: 16-18 attainment data

Similarly, as seen at other key stages, disadvantaged, FSM eligible students, and students with special education needs have lower attainment than other students, across the three qualification types. Students with English as an additional language have slightly lower APS per entry for A level, but slightly higher for applied general and tech levels, compared to students whose first language is English.

Further information on other measures broken down by these characteristics is available in the 'performance measures by characteristics' CSV published alongside this release on gov.uk. The patterns are described here are broadly the same across the other 16-18 measures.

Figure 18: Average point score per entry by disadvantaged status, FSM eligibility, first language and SEN status (measures by characteristics CSV)
England, 2017

Source: 16-18 attainment data

5. Accompanying tables

The following tables are available in Excel format on the department's statistics [website](#).

National tables:

18a: Percentage of state-funded students at the end of 16-18 studies, who are retained to the end of their main level 3 study programme (core aim) at a provider, by institution type

18b: Percentage of state-funded students at the end of 16-18 studies, who are retained to the end of their main level 2 study programme (core aim) at a provider, by institution type

19a: Completion and Attainment score in tech certificate qualifications, for students entering tech certificate qualifications and who are at the end of 16 to 18 studies, by institution type

19b: Completion and Attainment score in level 2 vocational qualifications, for students entering level 2 vocational qualifications and who are at the end of 16 to 18 studies, by institution type

19c: Completion and Attainment score in level 2 vocational qualifications, for students entering level 2 vocational qualifications and who are at the end of 16 to 18 studies, by institution type

20a: Number of 16-18 eligible providers below the level 3 tech level minimum standard for each local authority and region

20b: Number of 16-18 eligible providers below the level 3 tech level minimum standard by institution type

CSVs:

Performance Measures by Characteristics CSV

A level Subjects by Characteristics

6. Further information is available

Performance tables	Data for institutions can be seen within the [school and college performance tables](#). The 16-18 performance tables were updated with retention measure and completion and attainment measure for 2015/16 data in March 2017.
Key stage 4	GCSE and equivalent results for key stage 4 can be found at [GOV.UK - Statistics: GCSEs (key stage 4)](#).
Key stage 2	Statistics on national curriculum assessments and review outcomes at key stage 2 (KS2), including measures of progress between KS1 and KS2, can be found at [GOV.UK - Statistics: key stage 2.](#)
Key stage 1	Statistics on national curriculum assessments at key stage 1 and phonics screening check results can be found at [GOV.UK - Statistics: key stage 1](#)
Destination measures	Statistics on educational or employment destinations of key stage 4 and key stage 5 students can be found at [GOV.UK - Statistics: destinations of key stage 4 and key stage 5 pupils.](#)
Level 2 and 3 attainment at 16-18	Statistics on the attainment of young people aged 19, based on matched administrative data can be found at [GOV.UK – attainment at 19 years.](#)
Level 1 and 2 attainment in English and maths at 16-18	Experimental statistics on level 1 and 2 English and maths by students aged 16 to 18 who failed to achieve A* to C by the end of key stage 4 can be found at [GOV.UK - attainment at 19 years.](#) Note that this release has now been discontinued.

Results for the rest of the UK	The Welsh Assembly publishes the results of external examinations taken by pupils aged 15 or 17, available at: Welsh assembly statistics and research
	The Department for Education Northern Ireland (DENI) published AS and A level statistics, available at: Department for Education Northern Ireland (DENI)
	The publication 'Summary statistics for attainment, leaver destinations and healthy living' is published by the Scottish Government and is available at: The Scottish Government website
Information published by Ofqual	Since 2010 Ofqual have used a process known as "comparable outcomes" to guide awarding decisions for AS and A levels. Awarding organisations predict AS and level outcomes for each subject based on prior attainment of the cohort. The aim is that, in normal circumstances, roughly the same proportion of students will achieve each grade in a given subject as in previous years. Background on the methodology and history of setting and maintaining exam standards can be found on GOV.UK - setting GCSE and A level grade standards
	Ofqual have also published information on variability in AS and A level results for schools and colleges, which is available at GOV.UK - variability in AS and A level results
Future changes	The 2017 performance tables will include further changes as part of previously announced reforms to 16-19 accountability. This includes additional performance measures for below level 3 students and further information on student characteristics, such as disadvantage. Further technical guidance on these changes has been published on gov.uk.

7. National Statistics

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics.

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, and

- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

The Department has a set of statistical policies in line with the Code of Practice for Statistics.

8. Technical Information

A quality and methodology information document accompanies this SFR. This provides further information on the data sources, their coverage and quality, and explains the methodology used in producing the data, including how it is validated and processed.

9. Get in touch

Media enquiries

Press Office News Desk, Department for Education, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT.

Tel: 020 7783 8300

Other enquiries/feedback

Tingting Shu, Education Data Division, Department for Education, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3BT

Tel: 0207 340 7712 Email: Attainment.STATISTICS@education.gov.uk

About this publication:

enquiries Tingting Shu, Education Data Division, Department for Education, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3BT
tel: 0207 340 7712   Email: Attainment.STATISTICS@education.gov.uk
download   Statistics: 16 to 19 attainment

Reference: SFR 03/2018

Follow us on Twitter:
@educationgovuk

Like us on Facebook:
facebook.com/educationgovuk