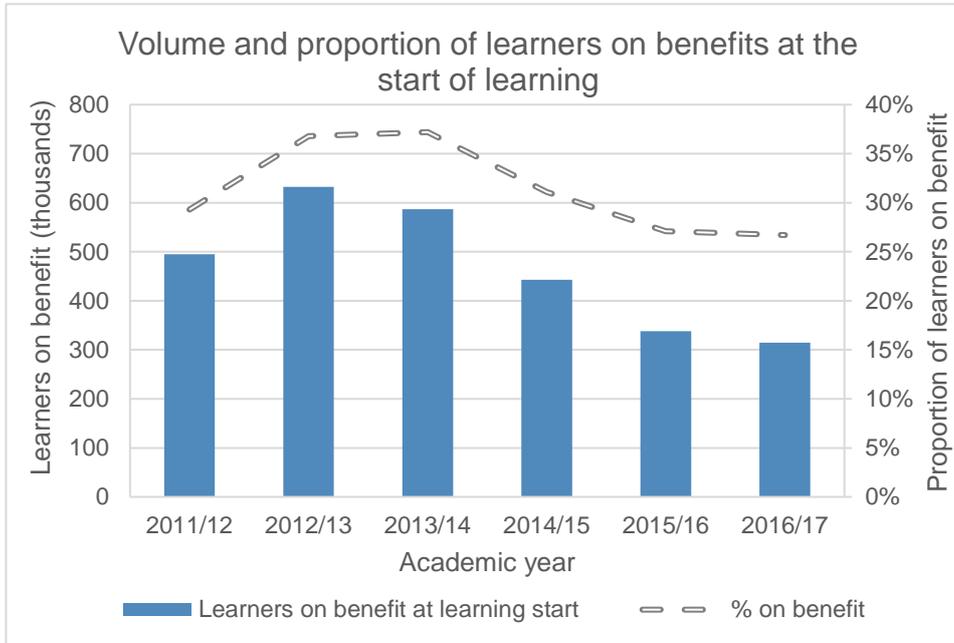




28 June 2018

Experimental Statistics

**In 2016/17, there was a small decrease in the number of adult further education learners on benefit at the start of learning compared with the previous year**



Source: Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) Study

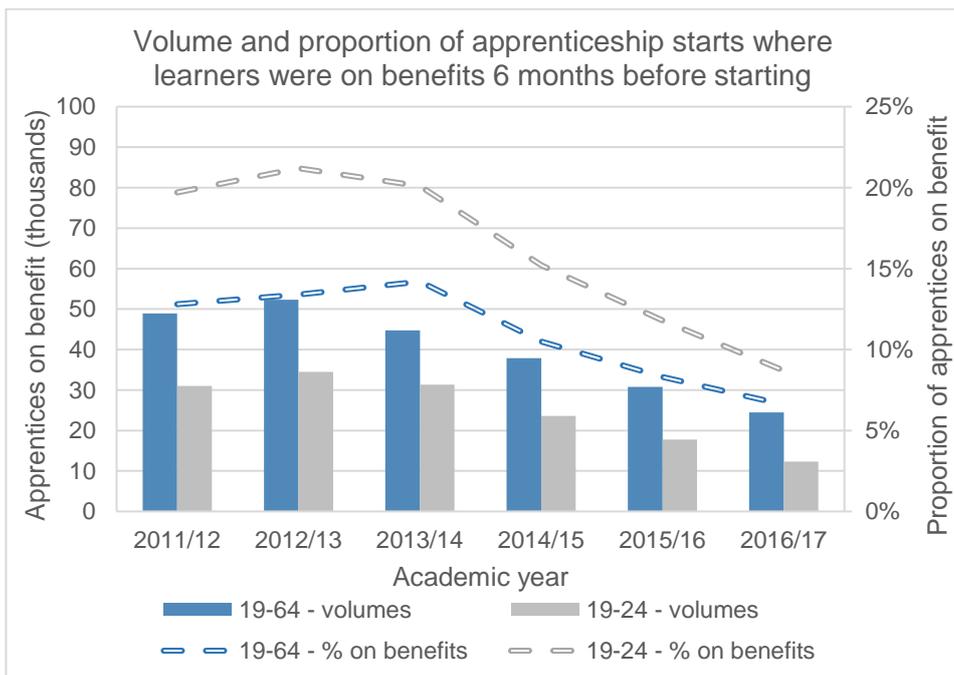
In 2016/17, 26.7 per cent of adult (19-64) learners were on benefit at the start of learning. This is a decrease of:

- 0.4 percentage points (ppts) on 2015/16 (27.1 per cent).
- 10.5 ppts from the peak in 2013/14 (37.2 per cent).

The volume of learners on benefit at the start of learning fell to 314,400 in 2016/17. A decrease of 6.9 per cent from 2015/16 (337,700).

The decline in recent years reflects declines in the number of working age out-of-work benefit claimants. See section 3 for more information.

**There has also been a decrease in apprenticeship starts by adults claiming benefit in the 6 months before starting their apprenticeship**



Source: Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) Study

In 2016/17, 6.6 per cent of adult apprenticeship starts were by apprentices on benefit in the 6 months before starting. This is a decrease of:

- 1.6 percentage points (ppts) on 2015/16 (8.3 per cent).
- 7.6 ppts from the peak in 2013/14 (14.2 per cent).

The volume of apprenticeship starts by adults on benefit fell to 24,500 in 2016/17. A decrease of:

- 20.6 per cent from 2015/16 (30,800).
- 53.2 per cent from the peak in 2012/13 (52,300).

# 1. Summary and Headline Results

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Further education learners on benefit at the start of learning	<p>26.7 per cent of learners who started in 2016/17 were on benefit at the start of learning, a decrease of 0.4 ppts on 2015/16 and 10.5 percentage points since the peak of 37.2 per cent in 2013/14.</p> <hr/> <p>314,400 government funded further education learners aged 19-64 were on benefit at the start of their learning in 2016/17, a decrease of 6.9 per cent from 337,700 in 2015/16.</p> <hr/> <p>74,300 government funded further education learners aged 19-24 were on benefit at the start of their learning in 2016/17, a decrease of 8.2 per cent from 80,900 in 2015/16.</p> <hr/> <p>In 2016/17, 153,000 (48.7 per cent) learners on benefits aged 19-64 were on JSA/ESA (WRAG) at the start of their learning, 66,700 (21.2 per cent) were on Universal Credit and 94,600 (30.1 per cent) were on other benefits.</p> <hr/> <p>In 2016/17, 176,200 (56.0 per cent) learners on benefit at the start of learning had a highest level of learning at below level 2, 109,200 (34.7 per cent) were at level 2, and 22,800 (7.2 per cent) were at level 3.</p>
Further education learning aims started by benefit claimants	<p>708,800 learning aims were started by benefit claimants aged 19-64 in 2016/17, which is a decrease of 3.3 per cent from 733,200 in 2015/16.</p> <hr/> <p>In 2016/17, 68.5 per cent of learning aims started were below level 2, and 23.5 per cent were English and maths.</p>
Apprenticeships starts	<p>6.6 per cent of adult apprenticeship starts in 2016/17 were made by learners on benefit in the 6 months before starting, a decrease of 1.6 percentage points from 8.3 per cent in 2015/16.</p> <hr/> <p>In 2016/17, 24,500 apprenticeship starts were made by learners aged 19-64 on benefit in the 6 months before starting, a decrease of 20.6 per cent on 30,800 apprenticeships in 2015/16.</p>
Traineeship starts	<p>In 2016/17, 5,900 traineeships were started by learners on benefit, a decrease of 34.7 per cent on 9,000 traineeships in 2015/16.</p>

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## About this release

This statistical release provides information on further education activity funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency for adult (aged 19-64) benefit claimants in England. These are experimental statistics produced using the Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) study. The statistics are experimental as the underlying data and methodology are undergoing evaluation. This year the methodology used to count Universal Credit claims has been updated to include full service claimants and to reflect changes to the underlying data source. The publication includes figures from the 2011/12 academic year to the 2016/17 academic year.

This release presents information on:

- Learners on benefit at the start of their learning by:
  - benefit type
  - highest level of training
  - characteristics including age, sex, learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and ethnicity
  - region and local authority district
- Learning aims by:
  - level of learning
  - monthly starts
- Apprenticeship starts where the learner claimed benefit 6 months prior to starting (16-64) by:
  - age
  - level of study

o sector subject area

- Traineeship starts (aged 16-24) by benefit type.

This statistical release excludes: community learning, non-apprenticeship learning for those aged under 16, and further education and training not funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

### Changes included in this publication

This publication includes new data on further education for benefit claimants in the 2016/17 academic year.

We have changed the methodology used to count Universal Credit to include full service and live service claimants and to reflect a change in the underlying data source. This will include a wider group of claimants than in 2015/16, which only included live service. We will continue to monitor these changes as the Universal Credit roll out continues and will review the methodology when we next publish these statistics in summer 2019.

The 2016/17 figures for learners claiming Universal Credit at the start of learning are provisional. New claims that started after June 2017 were not included in the LEO Study at the time these statistics were produced. We will monitor the impact of this when statistics for the 2017/18 academic year are published in summer of 2019.

The release also includes a new table showing the number of learners on benefit at the start of training by region and local authority district.

More information about the source data and matching process can be found in the technical note accompanying this release.

### In this publication

The following tables are included in this statistical publication:

- Further education for benefit claimants tables: 2016 to 2017 (Excel .xls)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/further-education-for-benefit-claimants-england-2016-to-2017>

The accompanying quality and methodology information document provides information on the data sources, their coverage and quality, and explains the methodology used in producing the data.

### Feedback

We are changing how our releases look and welcome feedback on any aspect of this document at [Alicia.Heptinstall@education.gov.uk](mailto:Alicia.Heptinstall@education.gov.uk) (Department for Education) and [Aniel.Anand@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Aniel.Anand@dwp.gsi.gov.uk) (Department for Work and Pensions).

## 2. Introduction

The Small Business, Employment and Enterprise Act 2015 allows the sharing of data between the Department for Education (DfE) and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC). The resulting matched dataset is called the Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) study. The privacy statement explaining how personal data in this project is shared and used is published at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/longitudinal-education-outcomes-study-how-we-use-and-share-data>

The LEO study links information about individuals, including:

- Personal characteristics such as age, sex and ethnicity.
- Education, including schools, further education colleges and higher education institution attended, courses taken, and qualifications achieved.
- Benefits claimed.
- Employment and income.

This publication uses the link between education and benefits data to produce estimates for volumes of government funded further education where individuals were claiming out-of-work benefits at the start of their learning. Work will continue to improve the statistics as knowledge of the underlying data source develops. Further information on the datasets, matching process, quality assurance and match rates are included in technical note accompanying this release.

### Background and context

Unemployed adults receive full funding for training up to and including level 2 (GCSE equivalent). Benefit claimants can be referred to training by a Jobcentre Plus work coach, and have the activity captured in their 'claimant agreement', or can access training independently. They can self-declare their unemployment status and eligibility to a training provider, who will then fund their course using funding allocated via the Department for Education's Adult Education Budget (AEB). A range of training can be accessed through the AEB, including Traineeships, Licences to Practice (e.g. security or fork-lift truck driver's licence), the Prince's Trust's Team programme, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and a range of other pre-employment support. Training should help claimants move into work or remove a barrier to getting into work.

These statistics reflect the policy and economic context during this period. The volume of benefit claimants was at a peak in 2011/12, and in recent years, DfE (and previously BIS) and DWP have worked together closely to refine and target the type of training support provided to benefit claimants. The volume of training starts provides a good indication of the demand for training (i.e. the number of benefit claimants either self-referring or referred to training by Jobcentre Plus), and particularly training provided through the skills funding entitlement for unemployed adults<sup>1</sup>. In addition, recent research<sup>2</sup> has reinforced the importance of further education as an effective intervention to help unemployed adults into the labour market.

For more information about these statistics please see section 4 on important policy changes and the accompanying quality and methodology document: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/further-education-for-benefit-claimants-england-2016-to-2017>.

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<sup>1</sup> More information about funding for adult education can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/sfa-funding-rules>.

<sup>2</sup> Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-education-impact-of-skills-and-training-on-the-unemployed>

### 3. Further Education for Benefit Claimants – Detailed Results

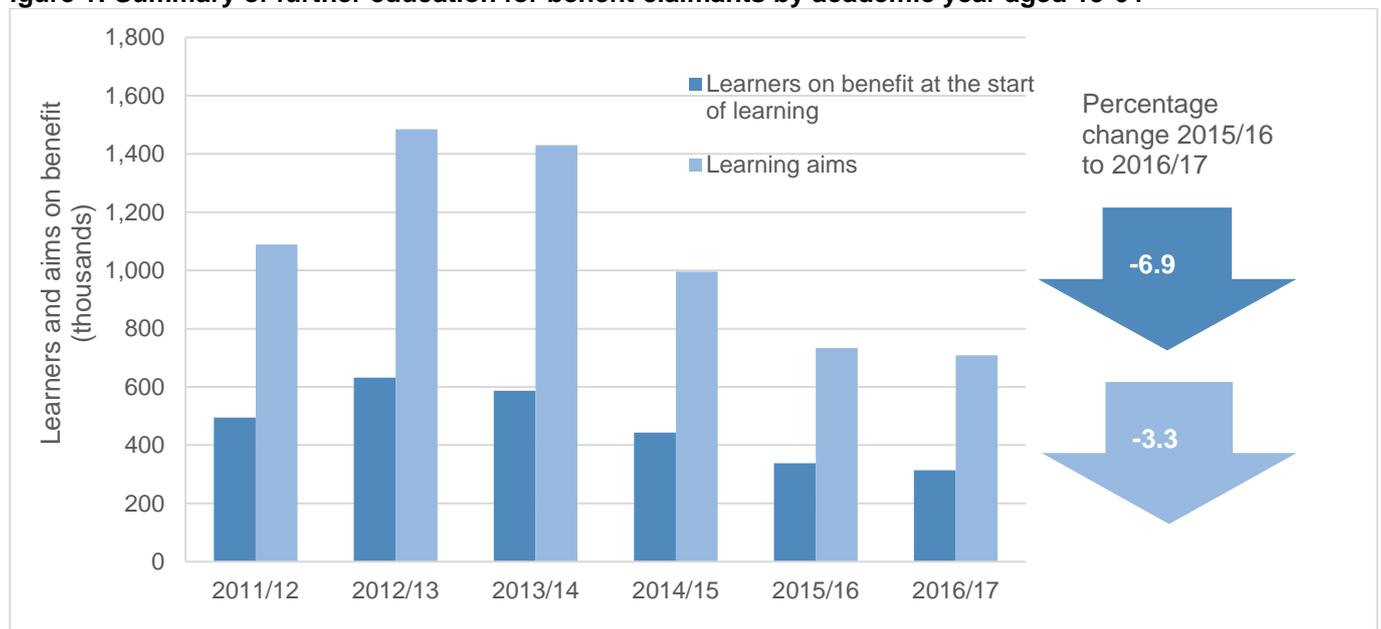
#### Further education learners

In 2016/17, 26.7 per cent of the 1,176,900 matched learners aged 19-64 were on benefit at the start of further education training. This is a small decrease of 0.4 ppts since 2015/16 (27.1 per cent) (Supplementary Table 2).

The number of learners aged 19-64 who were on benefit at the start of training was 314,400 in 2016/17, a decrease of 6.9 per cent from 337,700 in 2015/16 (Figure 1).

The small decrease reflects both a fall in the overall number of learners starting further education training, and a small decrease in out-of-work benefit claimants over the period. The overall number of learners starting further education training decreased by 5.6 per cent between 2015/16 and 2016/17, and the number of out-of-work benefit claimants fell by 2.2 per cent between August 2015 and August 2016<sup>3</sup>. See the “headline trends explained” section on page 6 for more information (Supplementary Table 2).

**Figure 1: Summary of further education for benefit claimants by academic year aged 19-64**



Source: Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) Study

Of all the learners on benefit at the start of learning in 2016/17, 23.6 per cent were aged 19-24, a slight decrease compared with 24.0% in 2015/16 (Supplementary Table 1).

Between 2015/16 and 2016/17, there has also been a small decrease in the number of learning aims started by benefit claimants (Supplementary Table 1). The number of learning aims started by adult learners on benefit was 708,800 in 2016/17, a decrease of 3.3 per cent from 733,200 in 2015/16.

#### Headline trends explained

The data presented covers the period from 2011/12 to 2016/17. Improvements in economic conditions have resulted in the volume of working age out-of-work benefit claimants to fall steadily, and, in 2015/16, Universal Credit full service started rolling-out to replace legacy benefits such as JSA and Employment Support Allowance (ESA), which has caused a further decline in claimants of these benefits in recent years.

<sup>3</sup> Further information on the total number of claimants over time can be found in the DWP Quarterly Statistical Summaries: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/dwp-benefits-statistical-summaries-2018>

The number of learners on benefit at the start of learning changes in response to the overall number of benefit claimants each year, the proportion of claimants that start training, and the make-up of the population of benefit claimants. Since 2013 there has been a large reduction in the number of overall claimants, to 3,653,000 in August 2016, from 4,333,000 in August 2013 – a decline of 15.7 per cent<sup>4</sup>. Over the same period, JSA claimants have declined by 60.6 per cent to 497,000 in August 2016, from 1,262,000 in August 2013, which is important as historically JSA claimants have been more likely than claimants of other benefits to start further education training<sup>5</sup>.

These declines are reflected in the declining numbers of further education learners on benefits since 2012/13. The slowdown of this decline in learners on benefits in 2016/17 is also a reflection of the slowdown in the decline in the number of benefit claimants between August 2015 and August 2016, which have decreased by 2.2 per cent from 3,737,000 to 3,653,000.

## Learners by benefit type

In 2016/17, 48.7 per cent of learners on benefit aged 19-64 claimed JSA or ESA (WRAG), 21.2 per cent claimed Universal Credit and 30.1 per cent claimed other benefits. In 2016/17, the proportion of learners on benefit claiming JSA/ESA (WRAG) was 7.8 ppts lower than in 2015/16. The lower proportion claiming JSA/ESA (WRAG) in 2016/17 is likely due to the increase in the proportion claiming Universal Credit to 21.2 per cent in 2016/17 from 9.7 per cent in 2015/16 (Supplementary Table 3).

Of the 66,700 learners claiming Universal Credit at the start of learning, 90.2 per cent were in the “searching for work” conditionality group at some point during the claim. 39.4 per cent of learners claiming Universal Credit are in the 19-24 age group; this is higher than the 23.6 per cent of learners claiming all benefit types who are aged 19-24 (Supplementary Tables 5 and 13).

## Highest level of learning

Data for 2016/17 indicates that the most common highest level of study for learners on benefit aged 19-64 was level 1 or entry level, at 56.0 per cent (Figure 2). The proportion is slightly higher for learners claiming JSA or ESA (WRAG), at 62.8 per cent.

A higher proportion of learners on benefit aged 19-24 undertake level 3 as their highest level of study (11.7 per cent) compared with older learners on benefit aged 25-49 (7.2 per cent) and aged 50-64 (2.0 per cent) (Supplementary Table 4).

An assessment of the highest qualification level studied for by JSA and ESA (WRAG) claimants for 2016/17 showed that:

- 62.8 per cent studied at level 1 and entry level.
- 32.5 per cent studied at level 2.
- 3.3 per cent studied at level 3.

Of those on Universal Credit:

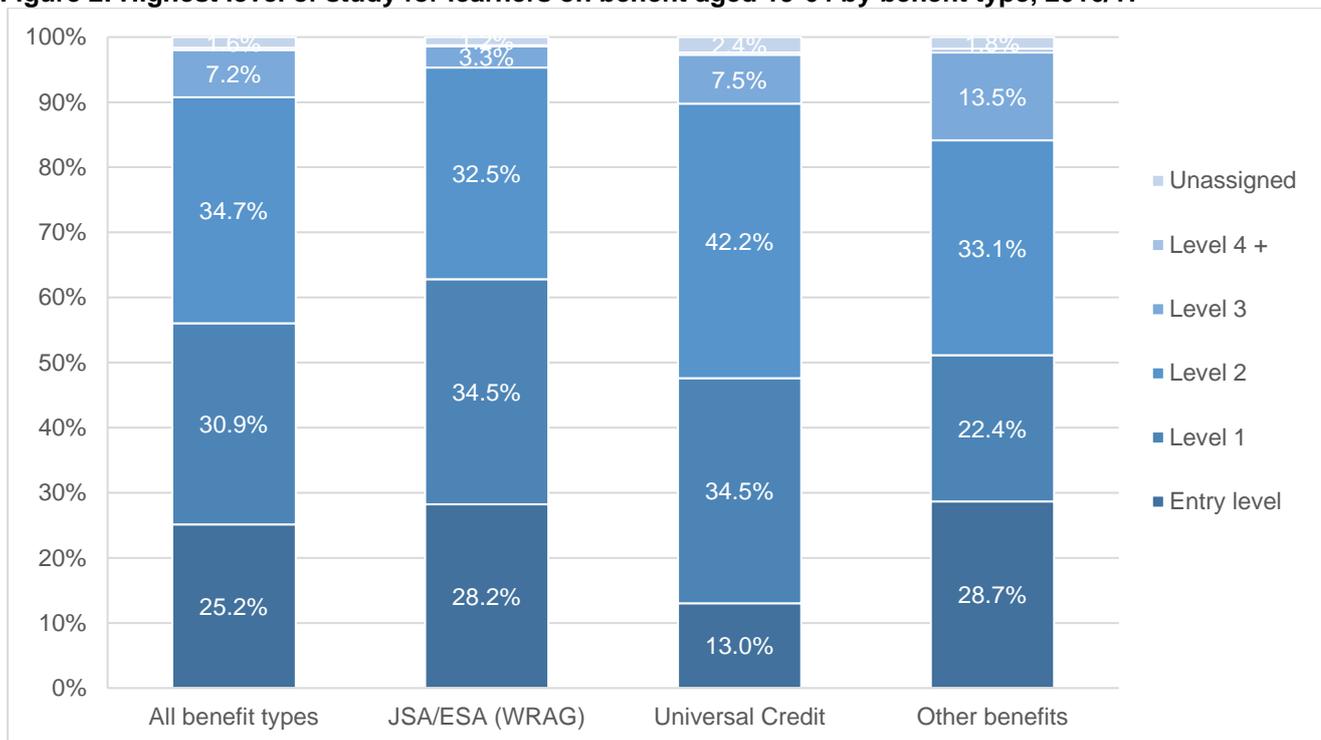
- 47.6 per cent studied at level 1 and entry level.
- 42.2 per cent studied at level 2.
- 7.5 per cent studied at level 3.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/dwp-benefits-statistical-summaries-2018>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/further-education-for-benefit-claimants-2014-to-2015>

**Figure 2: Highest level of study for learners on benefit aged 19-64 by benefit type, 2016/17**



Source: Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) Study

## Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are paid jobs that include an off-the-job programme of learning. Many apprentices who were on out-of-work benefits before starting will enter employment and cease claiming benefit before enrolling with a further education provider. For this reason the statistics presented here measure the volume of starts made by apprentices who claimed benefit in the 6 months before starting. In line with the rest of the report this section focuses on adult apprenticeships. However, for completeness, we also separately include information on apprentices aged under 19.

In 2016/17, there were 24,500 apprenticeship starts by adult (19-64) apprentices on benefit in the six months before starting their apprenticeship. This is a 20.6 per cent decrease from the number in 2015/16. 6.6 per cent of the 368,100 matched adult apprenticeship starts in 2016/17 were made by learners on benefit in the 6 months before training, a decrease of 1.6 percentage points on 2015/16 (Figure 3 and Supplementary Tables 6 and 7).

There were 12,300 apprenticeship starts made by learners aged 19-24 and on benefit in the 6 months before starting training in 2016/17, a decrease of 31.0 per cent on 17,800 starts in 2015/16.

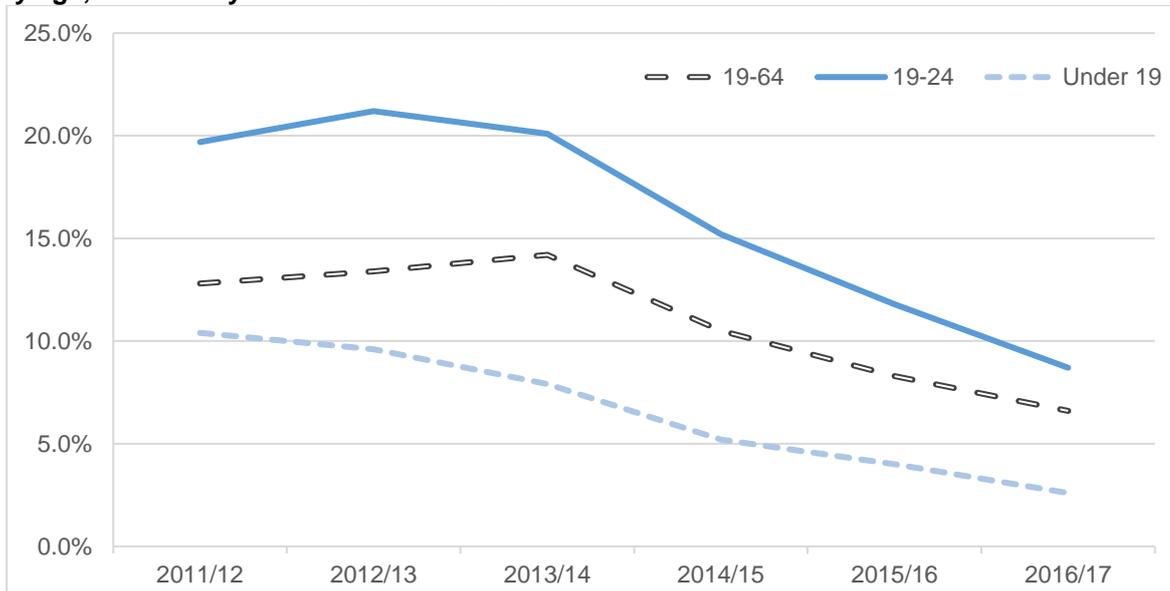
The fall reflects the overall decrease in out-of-work benefit claimants over the period and an increase in adult apprenticeship starts at higher levels and amongst older age groups that are less likely to involve learners who claimed benefits.

9.5 per cent of adult apprenticeships starts at level 2 are made by learners on benefit, compared with 3.9 per cent for level 3 or higher apprenticeships. Level 2 apprenticeships make up 70.1 per cent of all apprenticeship starts made by adult learners on benefit. Overall, matched level 2 adult apprenticeship starts have fallen from 200,000 to 179,800 (-10.1 per cent) between 2015/16 and 2016/17, while matched level 3 and higher apprenticeships have increased from 172,900 to 188,300 (8.9 per cent) (Supplementary Tables 6 and 7).

The age group 19-24 has the highest proportion of apprenticeship starts made by learners on benefit, at 8.7 per cent. The proportions of apprenticeship starts made by learners on benefit 6 months before starting in the other age groups are as follows (Figure 3 and Supplementary Tables 6 and 7):

- 2.6 per cent for the under 19 age group.
- 5.5 per cent for the 25-49 age group.
- 4.6 per cent for the 50-64 age group.

**Figure 3: Proportion of all apprentices who claimed benefits up to 6 months before their apprenticeship start by age, academic years 2011/12 to 2016/17**



Source: Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) Study

## Traineeships

The total number of traineeships (aged 16-24) started by benefit claimants was 5,900 in 2016/17, a decrease of 34.7 per cent from 9,000 in 2015/16 (Supplementary Table 8).

Overall, there were 6,400 matched traineeship starts aged 19-24 in 2016/17; 64.8 per cent of these were by learners on benefit at the start of learning. Of the 4,200 traineeship starts made by learners aged 19-24 on benefit at the start of learning in 2016/17:

- 42.9 per cent (1,800) were claiming JSA or ESA (WRAG).
- 44.2 per cent (1,800) were claiming UC.
- 12.9 per cent (500) were claiming other benefits.

## Learning aims by level and benefit type

The number of learning aims started by benefit claimants aged 19-64 was 708,800 in 2016/17, a decrease of 3.3 per cent from 733,200 in 2015/16 (Figure 4 and Supplementary Table 9).

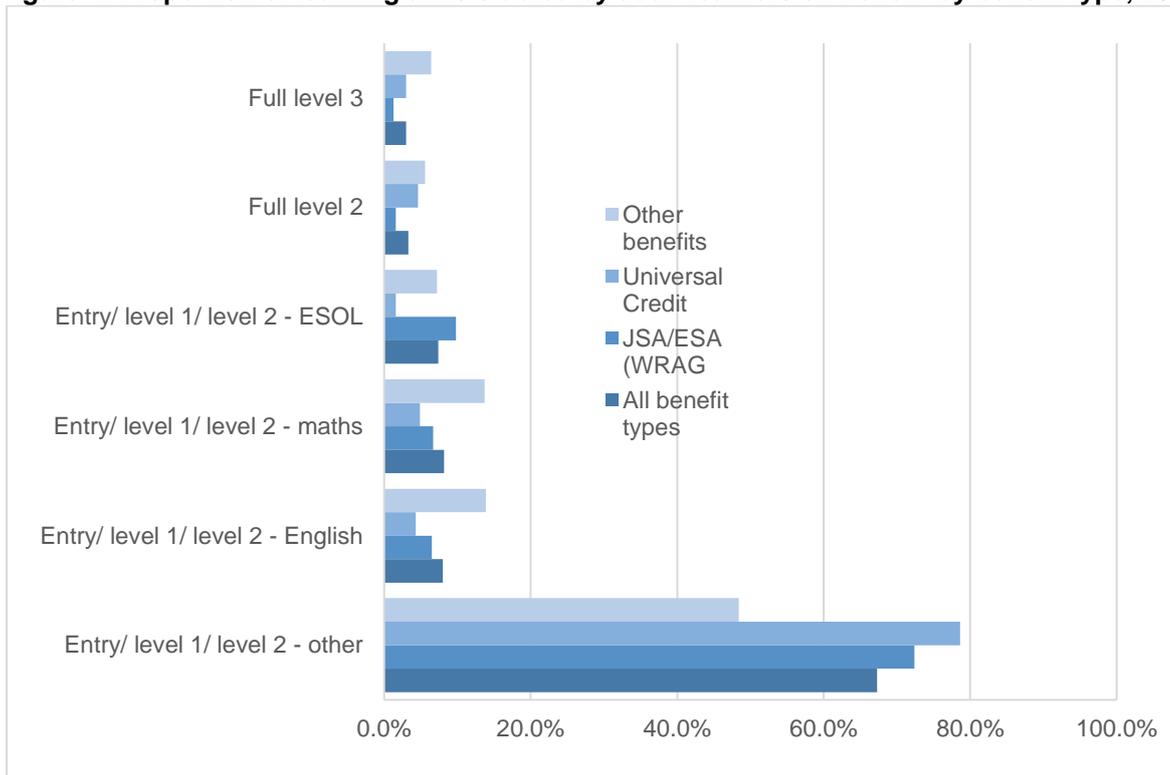
Of these:

- 8.0 per cent were for English at or below level 2.
- 8.2 per cent were for maths at or below level 2.
- 7.4 per cent were for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) at or below level 2.

3.3 per cent of aims were qualifications at full level 2, and 3.0 per cent were for qualifications at full level 3. A lower proportion of aims started by learners claiming JSA/ESA (WRAG) were at full level 2 or full level 3

(2.9 per cent) than for those claiming Universal Credit (7.6 per cent) or those claiming other benefits (12.0 per cent).

**Figure 4: Proportion of learning aims studied by adult learners on benefit by benefit type, 2016/17**



Source: Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) Study

## 4. Important policy changes

Below is a timeline of some important policy changes that will affect the content in this publication.

### 2011

August 2011 – Skills Conditionality launched in England for those claiming JSA and ESA (WRAG).

### 2013

January 2013 – Skills Funding Agency started to fund qualifications in food hygiene, health and safety at work, fork-lift truck and first aid at work for individuals in receipt of JSA and ESA (WRAG).

April 2013 – Universal Credit live service began roll out in pilot areas available only to single people or couples without children with national rollout starting in October 2013.

August 2013 – 24+ Advanced Learning Loans are introduced for learning at level 3 and higher.

October 2013 – A new Claimant Commitment for JSA claimants is introduced.

### 2014

March 2014 – 24+ Advanced Learner Loans are withdrawn for apprenticeships.

April 2014 – Claimants are referred to mandatory training if their level of spoken English is a barrier to work.

August 2014 – traineeships were opened up to those aged 24.

November 2014 – A limited test of the full service for Universal Credit was launched on 26 November.

### 2015

March 2015 – DWP introduced regulations to allow all young people, including those described as Qualifying Young People (predominantly 16 to 18 year olds), to benefit from full-time participation in a traineeship whilst maintaining entitlement to their DWP benefit.

### 2016

May 2016 – Universal Credit full service began its roll out to all other Jobcentre Plus areas and expanded across the country to include all claimant types and rollout will be completed in 2018.

## 5. General Footnotes

**Age** is defined as the age of the learner at the start of their learning in the current academic year. When there are more learning spells in the academic year, the age at the start of the first learning spell is considered.

**All learners** is the number of learners starting at least one aim within the year, regardless of whether the learner was on benefit at the start. Note that only matched data is included in this publication, i.e. where a match has been found between the ILR and DWP/HMRC administrative data. Figures will differ from the DfE Further Education and Skills Statistical First Release as not all learners therein will have been matched to a benefit and/or employment record and this release excludes training under 'Community Learning' and the Employer Ownership Pilot, which is included in the First Release.

A **learning aim** is a course a learner is studying and is counted in the year the learning started.

A **benefit spell** is defined as a continuous period of time claiming the same benefit. Benefit spells with training refer to benefit claims which occurred in the academic year of reference where the benefit claimant started training.

**Universal Credit** refers to Universal Credit claimants who are classed as out-of-work. Those in the following Universal Credit conditionality groups; “Searching for Work”, “Working with Requirements”, “Planning for Work” and “Preparing for Work” are classed as out-of-work. In 2015/16, the data include only Universal Credit live service claimants; in 2016/17, Universal Credit full service claimants are included. Universal Credit claimants are only included for the 2015/16 academic year onwards as data on conditionality were not available before April 2015.

The 2016/17 figures for learners claiming Universal Credit at the start of learning are provisional. New claims that started after June 2017 were not included in the LEO Study at the time these statistics were produced.

**Other benefits** includes: Other Employment and Support Allowance, Incapacity Benefit, Income Support, Severe Disablement Allowance, Pension Credit, Passported Incapacity Benefit.

For further information on different levels of qualifications see <https://www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean>

**Unassigned courses** are largely mandatory aims taken to compliment academic studies, for example tutorial sessions.

The figures presented here may not sum due to rounding. Percentages and percentage point changes are calculated using pre-rounded data.

## 6. Accompanying Tables

The following tables are available in Excel format on the department's statistics website (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/further-education-for-benefit-claimants-england-2016-to-2017>):

Table	Table description
1	Overview of Further Education Training for Benefit Claimants by Academic Year 2011/12 - 2016/17
2	Learners by Benefit Status and Academic Year 2011/12 - 2016/17
3	Learners on Benefit at the Start of Learning by Benefit Type 2011/12 - 2016/17
4	Learners on Benefit at the Start of Learning by Highest Level of Learning and Benefit Type 2016/17
5	Demographic Summary of Learners on Benefit by Benefit Type 2016/17
6	Apprenticeships Started by Learners Who Claimed Benefit 6 Months before Training by Benefit Type, Level of Learning and Academic Year 2011/12 - 2016/17
7	Apprenticeships Started by Learners Who Claimed Benefit 6 Months before Training by Benefit Type, Level of Learning and Academic Year (% of all Apprenticeships) 2011/12 - 2016/17
8	Traineeships Started by Learners on Benefit by Benefit Type 2014/15 - 2016/17
9	Aims by Highest Level of Learning, Subject Learned and Benefit Type 2016/17
10	Aims by Planned Duration, Benefit Type, Level and Subject of Learning 2016/17
11	Aims by Monthly Starts and Benefit Type 2011/12 - 2016/17
12	Apprenticeships Started by Learners Who Claimed Benefit 6 Months before Training by Sector Subject Area, Level and Age 2016/17
13	Learners on Universal Credit at the Start of Learning by Conditionality Group and Age 2016/17
14	Learners on Benefit at the Start of Learning by Region and Local Authority District 2016/17

## 7. Technical Information

A quality and methodology information document accompanies this statistical publication. 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.

## 8. Get in Touch

### Media enquiries

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### Other enquiries/feedback

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Department  
for Education



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions

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