# Department for Education

# Annex: Changes to Further Education Statistics, including Apprenticeships, in 2018

## October 2018

# Introduction

The Further Education (FE) Statistical Dissemination team produce a wide range of official statistics on FE and skills, and we want to ensure they continue to remain relevant and fulfil a broad range of user needs.

In 2017 we publically announced we would be making changes to the content, structure and periodicity of our statistical releases here, and over 2018 we have been implementing these changes.

This aim of this document is to set out:

- A summary of the changes implemented this year announced in 2017.

- The remaining changes we previously announced coming in to effect in November 2018.

- Additional changes to be made in this period following further user feedback and priorities received during the year.

- A new public sector apprenticeship statistical release, provisionally announced for November 2018.

- New development work being investigated to improve the way we disseminate our data and statistics.

# 2017 change announcement

In November 2017 we announced that in 2018 we would:

- Produce one **mid-year FE and skills release in March** and have an **annual release in November** using final data for the full academic year. These releases cover all FE provision, including apprenticeships.

- Additionally, **two quarterly apprenticeship and traineeship releases in January and July** with updates to the data included in the main release for the first and third quarters of the academic year[1].

- Continue with our **monthly apprenticeship and levy transparency release**, which includes experimental data published to provide more timely insight into changes since the introduction of the apprenticeship levy and early insight into

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[1] August to January and August to April, respectively

the performance of the apprenticeship programme as a whole.

The following table summarises our data releases in 2018.

| Publication | Month | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec[2] |
| Main FE and Skills Release | | | ✔ | | | | | | | | ✔ | |
| Apprenticeships and Traineeships data* | ✔ | | ✔ | | | | ✔ | | | | ✔ | |
| Monthly Apprenticeship and Levy Statistics | ✔ | ✔ | ✔ | ✔ | ✔ | ✔ | ✔ | ✔ | ✔ | ✔ | ✔ | ✔ |

* Note: this data is a subset of the data published in the main FE and skills release.

We also announced we would move some tables from our main release to our FE data library (thereby making the main release more focused); remove some tables where there are alternative sources for the data; and stop other tables where they are no longer relevant (although retain all previously published data on GOV.UK).

# Subsequent user feedback in 2018

Feedback received while rolling out the announced 2017 changes has been for more granularity in some of our key data outputs, where users stated they would benefit from additional dimensions to allow wider analysis and support greater 'self-service'.

We also noted that we were already publishing many of the changes requested, which reflects how our FE data cascade has become increasingly complex for users to navigate and find what they are looking for, given the volume of material we release and the different publications we now provide (monthly, quarterly etc). We therefore plan to make associated improvements in November 2018 (please see '*New approaches to dissemination*' below).

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[2] We plan to publish some supplementary tables from the November cascade in December

# Summary of agreed changes already made in 2018 releases

- Tables moved to annual releases only: **offender learning** and **advanced learner loan participation**. These tables will also be moved from the main release and will be published within the FE data library.

- Tables no longer being updated due to being more historical in nature: **Apprenticeship Grant for Employers, Employer Ownership Pilots,** and **Workplace Learning** tables.

- **Advanced Learner Loan application** information was previously published as a standalone [release], and used data collected by the Student Loans Company. Associated tables will still be produced, but will be released annually in November as supplementary tables in the FE data library.

- Tables that provide more **contextual data** around FE are no longer being updated in this release, although users can still obtain related data from alternative sources:

  o **Vocational qualifications achievements** data: this remains available via Ofqual [publications].

  o **Level of highest qualification held by economically active adults in the population** (based on the Labour Force Survey): users can still obtain relevant data from [Nomis] provided by the Office for National Statistics, which allows users online access to UK labour market statistics[3].

- **Qualification achievement rates** tables are no longer included in this release, but are available as part of the National Achievement Rate publication: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/sfa-national-success-rates-tables.

- **Offender learning** tables will be included in the FE and skills release for the last time in November 2018, as both budget and delivery have transferred to the Ministry of Justice[4], although associated learners will continue to be included in our overall FE and skills national figures.

- Our current **traineeship completion and progression measures** rely on self-reported data, which is inherently inaccurate and can be misleading, particularly

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[3] Nomis statistics will not be directly comparable to the previously published FE and skills data due to some methodological differences. The previously published data used an ONS-agreed methodology to enhance raw Labour Force Survey data by reference to educational administrative data; this corrected for underreporting of levels of qualification.

[4] Departmental responsibility moved to the Ministry of Justice in October 2016.

for in-year publication[5].  In our 2018 releases we have been pointing users towards the Outcome-Based Success Measures alongside our current traineeship measures, as a more accurate source of outcome information for traineeships, and other forms of provision.  However, as noted in section '*Potential further changes in 2019*' below, we are reviewing our current traineeship measures to investigate how we may make better use of administrative data and may announce changes in January 2019.

# New changes to be made from November 2018

To address user feedback, we will be adding **more granularity** to various data products that users have requested, including:

*In our quarterly releases*

- Adding sector subject area tier 2, routes and levy supported information to the **'apprenticeships by framework/standard' pivot table** (which already includes age, detailed level, gender and sector subject area tier 1).

- Adding provider name and provider reference number (UKPRN) to the current **'apprenticeships by sector subject area and provider type' pivot table**.

- Updating the **'apprenticeship duration' tables** introduced in March, but expanding by age group.  We will also publish an updated version of the IfA's **'training hours' data** (which we will add to the FE data library).  We are exploring other measures that help show the trend towards longer and higher level apprenticeships.

- Expanding the **National Aims Report** to include sector subject area tier 2 and introduce an "of which loans funded" column, and change suppression to under 50 rather than under 100.

- Include new tables of FE and apprenticeship data by **'indices of multiple deprivation'** to expand on the ad-hoc tables published earlier in 2018 here.

*In our monthly releases*

We are also adding further information to our **monthly apprenticeships and levy statistics release** to include monthly starts on **standards and frameworks**.  We will publish this in October 2018.  We may also include information on **apprenticeship**

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[5] FE providers contact learners to collect destination information following completion of the traineeship or withdrawal from the learning.  The data therefore only reflects the learner's position at that point and does not necessarily reflect their final destination.

**transfers** in the November release, but this will be dependent on the volume of transfers prior to July 2018 which will be subject to disclosure control.

We may also include some **'indicative' ratios** to our November 'apprenticeship and levy statistics' release relating to **public sector apprenticeship starts** based information held on the ILR (subject to data quality). Such ratios may include indicators on the percentage of public sector apprenticeship starts for learners with a Learning Difficulty/Disability; percentage of starts by sector subject area, etc. These ratios are aimed at complimenting the new public sector release, noted below, within which it is not possible to provide such additional breakdowns using the returns public bodies will supply for measuring progress towards the target.

From November we are bringing together some statistics that provide some insight to the impact from apprenticeship reforms such, as duration and hours that are currently included in the FE library. We are also exploring additional data to complement this new section in the release.

# New apprenticeship public sector release

Alongside the main FE and skills release in November, we also plan to publish statistics relating to public sector apprenticeships in the first year of the target (covering 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018)[6].

Note: the public sector apprenticeships target was introduced in April 2017. Public bodies in scope of the target are required annually to publish their progress annually and send a report to DfE outlining their progress and the steps they took to meet the target. The reports for the first year were due by 30 September.

# New approaches to dissemination

Several of the changes implemented in 2018 have been designed to improve FE statistics for users as part of longer-term development work. This aligns with the wider findings of the **Hive IT- DfE data dissemination discovery project**, which will impact across other DfE statistical outputs[7].

We recognise that the current way we disseminate is not ideal for our users or us, therefore we are working to improve both user access and how we disseminate. Our

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[66] The public sector apprenticeships target was introduced in April 2017. It requires public bodies with 250 or more staff in England to aim to employ at least 2.3% of their workforce as new apprentices between April 2017 and March 2021.

[7] There will be further communication and requests for user feedback on this in due course. The first phase of work will concentrating more on the tools we use for dissemination

current outputs are heavily constrained by the legacy systems available to us and these limit the level of service we would like to offer.

The changes announced in this note have focused on both the contents and rationalising our releases, in part as a move towards the goals of the [DfE coherence review](#). In parallel, we are developing new processes and tools that we hope over time will improve our products and user access, but in the interim will help improve user navigation to our current data.

As a result the contents of our FE data library will be re-organised to ensure the most relevant data tables and tools are the most visible to users and related information is easily navigable. A 'table finder' will also be published to allow users to identify and locate current and historical data quicker . We are also developing new, more interactive approaches to dissemination and data visualisation; we will initially pilot an experimental application alongside our main November release[8].

Some work will continue in to 2019 and link to wider work in the department. We will continue to engage with users to ensure changes meet their needs and any changes to our publications will be pre-announced in line with the code of practice guidelines.

## Potential further changes in 2019

We will continue to seek user feedback on requirements for additional change going forward and will review the relevance of all statistical releases on a regular basis, alongside how we disseminate. Data visualisation is an area we plan to develop further in 2019, along with how we present data on GOV.UK (aligning further with the DfE coherence review).

We are reviewing our current traineeship measures and how we might improve on these through making better use of administrative data we hold. We will announce further details alongside our apprenticeship and traineeship release in January, with a view to making a change in our March mid-year FE and skills release.

## User feedback

Feedback on these proposed changes is welcome. Please contact the FE statistical dissemination team at: FE.OFFICIALSTATISTICS@education.gov.uk.

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[8] In 2017 we published some experimental data visualisation applications here. This followed some early 'proof of concept' work looking at how we may allow users to explore our data in a more visual, interactive manner.