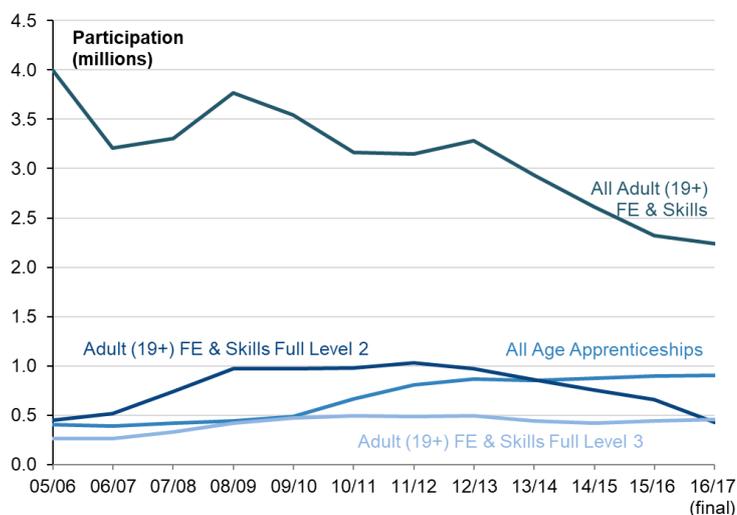




SFR 62/2017, 23 November 2017 – updated March 2019

**All age government funded apprenticeship participation has increased to the highest number on record, while participation in government funded adult (19+) further education decreased**

**All age apprenticeships and adult (19+) further education and skills participation (2005/06 to 2016/17)<sup>1,2</sup>**



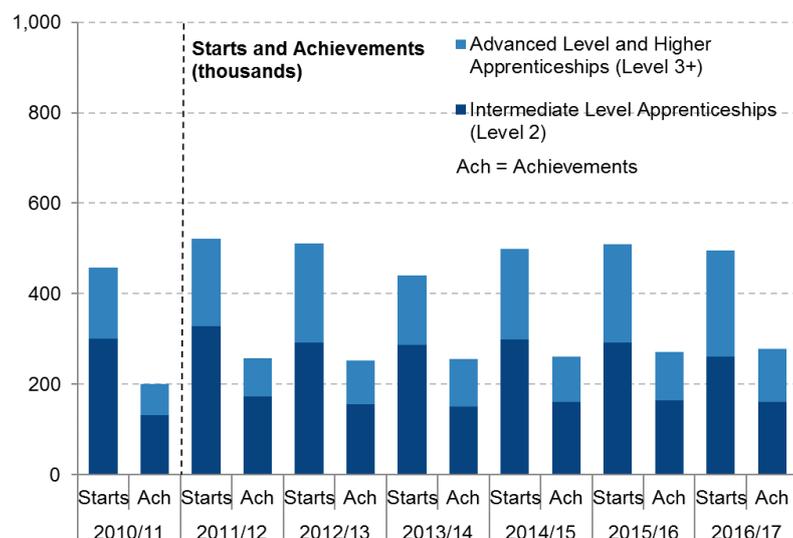
All age government funded **apprenticeship participation** increased to 908,700 in the 2016/17 academic year, from 899,400 in 2015/16, an increase of 1.0 per cent and the highest number on record.

Participation in government funded **adult (19+) further education** fell to 2,236,800 in 2016/17, compared to 2,324,700 in 2015/16, a decrease of 3.8 per cent.

The number of learners participating on Full level 2 courses declined to 426,700 and the number on Full level 3 courses rose to 454,300.

**Apprenticeship starts decreased in the 2016/17 academic year compared to 2015/16**

**Apprenticeship starts and framework achievements by level**



There were **494,900 apprenticeship starts** in the 2016/17 academic year, compared to 509,400 in 2015/16, a **decrease of 2.8 per cent**. There were increases in advanced and higher level apprenticeships and decreases in intermediate level apprenticeships.

There was an increase overall in apprenticeship achievements, to 277,800 in 2016/17, from 271,700 in 2015/16. Achievements rose for those aged under 19 and 25 and over, but fell slightly for those aged 19 to 24.

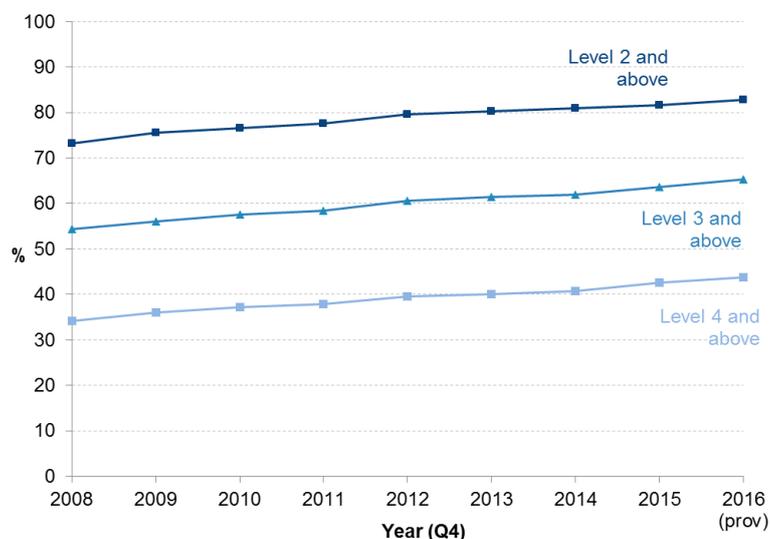
There have been **1,119,600 apprenticeship starts since May 2015**, and 3,497,100 starts since May 2010.

<sup>1</sup> Adult (19+) further education and skills includes 19+ apprenticeships.

<sup>2</sup> This chart was updated in March 2019 to correct a datapoint.

**The proportion of the adult population qualified to Level 2, 3 and 4 have risen each year between 2008 and 2016**

**Highest level of qualification held by adults of working age**



The proportion of men and women qualified to each of Level 2, 3 and 4 have risen each year between 2008 and 2016:

- from 73.2 per cent in 2008 to 82.8 per cent in 2016 qualified to at least Level 2
- from 54.3 per cent in 2008 to 65.3 per cent in 2016 qualified to at least Level 3
- from 34.2 per cent in 2008 to 43.8 per cent in 2016 qualified to at least Level 4

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## Changes to further education, skills and apprenticeship statistics

In response to a review of this statistical first release, its associated data cascade and user feedback, changes to the content, structure and periodicity are proposed. The next SFR in this format will be in March 2018. It will provide a mid-year update for the 2017 to 2018 academic year reported to date and there will be more frequent in-year updates to apprenticeship and traineeship data in January and June. We are also looking to expand the range of contextual data we provide alongside this publication. A separate statistical first release reporting on further education achievement rates will be released from spring 2018 on an annual basis.

For further information and details on these proposed publication changes please refer to *Annex: Proposed changes to further education, skills and apprenticeship statistics*.

### About this release

This statistical first release (SFR) presents information on:

- Adult (aged 19+) government-funded further education (excluding schools and higher education) comprising:
  - Education and training, including offender learning (18+)
  - Apprenticeships
  - English and maths
  - Community learning
  - Employer Ownership Pilots (EOP)
  - Advanced learner loans
  - Traineeships (16-24)
- All age (16+) apprenticeships in England.
- The highest level of qualification held by adults (aged 19 to 64) in England calculated from Labour Force Survey (LFS) data.

Final data are presented for further education and apprenticeships between 2010/11 and 2016/17.

Highest levels of qualification data are presented from 2006 to 2016, although 2016 figures are provisional and subject to revisions.

Note: there are no EOP starts in 2016/17.

### Changes included in this SFR

This SFR includes final figures for the academic year 2016/17 based on information that has been reported to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) by further education colleges and providers in October 2017.

We have also included data on the apprenticeship levy supported starts for the 2016/17 academic year since the introduction of the apprenticeship levy in April 2017.

### In this publication

The following tables are included in the SFR:

- National tables (Excel .xls):

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

- Supplementary tables and data tools (Excel .xls):

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

The accompanying technical document provides information on the data sources, their coverage and quality and explains the methodology used in producing the data, and further information on methodology changes impacting on the Full level 2 and Full level 3 data, and changes to the calculation of qualification achievement rates.

## Experimental statistics

On 2 November 2017, the latest experimental statistics were released using data from the apprenticeship service. This includes the number of apprenticeship service accounts registered (ASAs) and apprenticeship commitments on the new system, and provides information on the use of the apprenticeship service.

These statistics are available here: [Apprenticeship service registrations and commitments: September 2017](#).

We will publish these statistics on a monthly basis but may adjust content and timing as feedback is assessed. We will take into account what data is reported in this new system and how this is happening.

## Feedback

We are changing how our releases look and welcome feedback on any aspect of this document, please contact: [Dave.Bartholomew@education.gov.uk](mailto:Dave.Bartholomew@education.gov.uk).

# 1. Further Education Statistics for England 2016/17

The statistics show the final, full-year figures for the latest academic year for which full-year data are available.

## Summary and key headlines

Adult (19+) further education and skills	Participation in government-funded adult further education fell to 2,236,800 in 2016/17 from 2,324,700 in 2015/16. The number of learners participating on Full level 2 courses declined to 426,700 from 659,300 the previous year, and the number of participants on Full level 3 courses increased to 454,300 from 446,000 in 2015/16.
Apprenticeship participation	In 2016/17, apprenticeship participation increased to 908,700 from 899,400 the previous year, the highest number on record.
Apprenticeship starts	There were 494,900 apprenticeship starts in the 2016/17 academic year, a decrease of 2.8 per cent from 509,400 on 2015/16.  There have been 1,119,600 apprenticeship starts since May 2015 and 3,497,100 starts since May 2010.
English and maths	755,300 adult learners participated on English and maths courses in 2016/17, a decrease from 803,800 (6.0 per cent) on 2015/16.
Advanced learner loans	119,000 learners have been reported with an advanced learner loan in 2016/17 <sup>3</sup> .
Traineeships	There were 20,300 Traineeship starts in 2016/17, a decrease from 24,100 (15.7 per cent) in 2015/16.
Community learning	In 2016/17, there were 535,800 adult learners participating on a Community Learning course, a decrease from 570,600 (6.1 per cent) in 2015/16.
Offender learning	There were 88,900 offenders aged 18 and over in the prison system participating in learning in 2016/17, a decrease from 94,700 (6.1 per cent) in 2015/16.

In order to understand the impact of policy and methodology changes on any data published in this release, details are provided in the quality and methodology document that accompanies this SFR. As with many policy areas, further education is a broad and changing topic.

More information, please see the latest version in the most recent SFR release here:

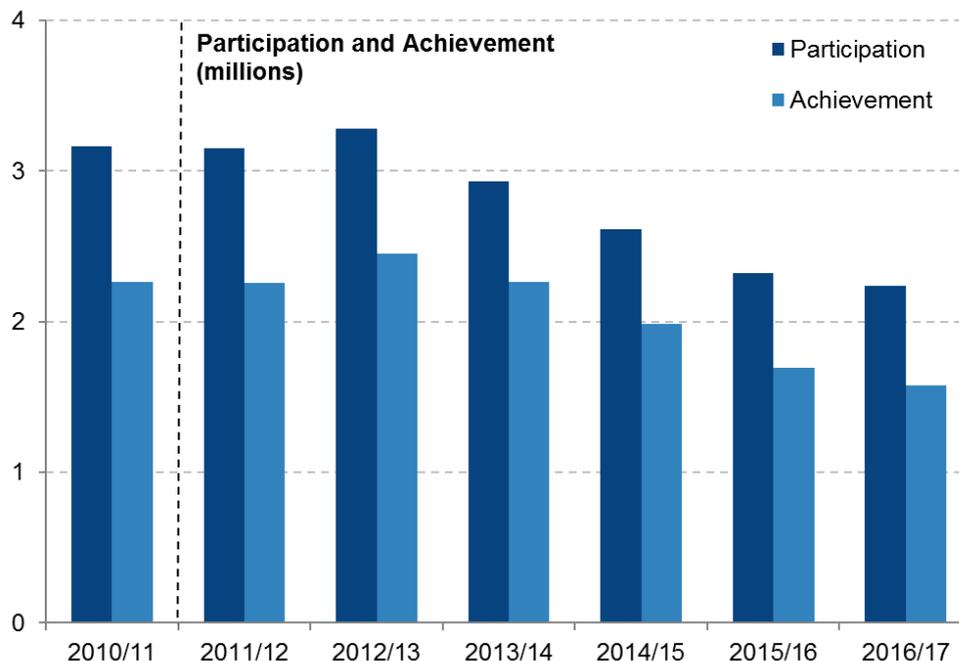
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/further-education-and-skills-statistical-first-release-sfr>

<sup>3</sup> A comparison to 2015/16 has not been made due to a policy change in 2016/17 (please refer to the Quality and Methodology document).

## Adult (19+) learner participation and achievement<sup>4</sup> (Tables 1.1, 1.2 & 3)

Figure 1 shows that the total number of adult learners participating in government-funded further education in 2016/17 was 2,236,800, a decrease of 3.8 per cent from 2,324,700 in 2015/16. The total number of adult learners achieving a government-funded further education qualification was 1,578,900 in 2016/17, a decrease of 6.8 per cent from 1,694,500 in 2015/16.

**Figure 1: Adult (19+) learner participation and achievement in government-funded further education<sup>5</sup> England, 2010/11 to 2016/17**



Source: Individualised Learner Record

Figure 2 shows the number of adult learners participating on government-funded further education. Participation in Level 2 courses decreased between 2010/11 and 2016/17 with a 4.8 per cent decrease seen in the most recent year. The number participating in Full level 2 courses fell by 35.3 per cent between 2015/16 and 2016/17.

The number of adult learners participating in Level 3 courses increased by 2.1 per cent between 2015/16 and 2016/17. Participation and achievement in Full level 3 courses increased by 1.8 per cent and 2.1 per cent respectively, in the same period (Figure 3). This is in contrast to decreases observed in participation and achievement at Level 3 and Full level 3 between 2013/14 and 2014/15, and between 2012/13 and 2013/14.

The number of adult learners participating in Below Level 2 courses (excluding English and maths) continued to decline in 2016/17 to 426,200 (a decrease of 8.5 per cent from 465,500 2015/16), while the number participating in English and maths fell by 6 per cent between 2015/16 and 2016/17 to 755,300 from 803,800. There was an increase in the number of learners participating on Level 4+ courses, from 58,300 in 2015/16 to 73,800 in 2016/17 (an increase of 26.6 per cent).

See also table 1 for percentage change between 2015/16 and 2016/17 for adult (19+) further education, apprenticeship participation and apprenticeship starts by level and age.

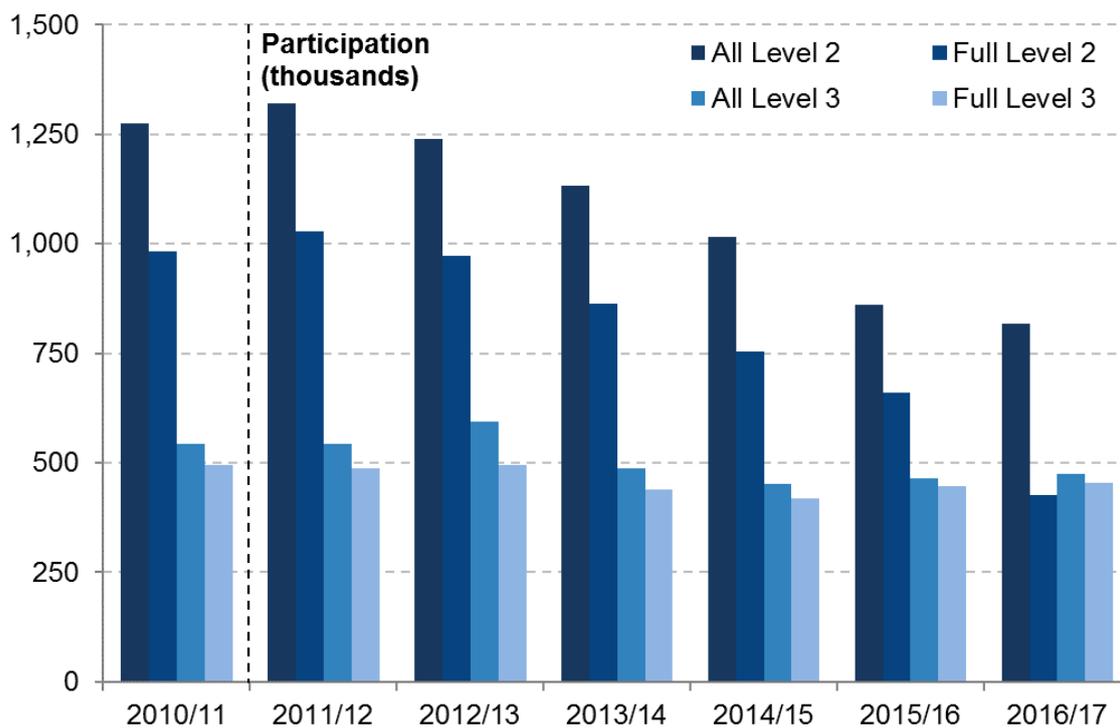
<sup>4</sup> The 2016/17 Full level 2 and Full level 3 figures have been calculated using a new methodology, please refer to the Quality and Methodology document for further information.

<sup>5</sup> Learner numbers for 2011/12 onwards are not directly comparable with earlier years.

**Table 1: Rates of change (2015/16 to 2016/17) - Adult (19+) further education, apprenticeship participation and apprenticeship starts by selected level and age<sup>6</sup>**  
 England, 2015/16 to 2016/17

	Full level 2	Full level 3	Level 4+	Total
<b>Participation</b>				
Adult (19+) FE & Skills	-35.3%	1.8%	26.6%	-3.8%
All age apprenticeships	-5.1%	5.3%	38.8%	1.0%
Adult (19+) apprenticeships	-4.9%	6.1%	40.0%	2.3%
Under 19 apprenticeships	-5.9%	1.7%	18.5%	-3.4%
<b>Starts</b>				
All age apprenticeships	-10.5%	3.6%	34.7%	-2.8%
Adult (19+) apprenticeships	-10.9%	5.0%	35.7%	-1.5%
Under 19 apprenticeships	-9.7%	-1.3%	19.4%	-6.6%
Source: Individualised Learner Record				

**Figure 2: Adult (19+) learner participation in government-funded further education by level<sup>7</sup>**  
 England, 2010/11 to 2016/17

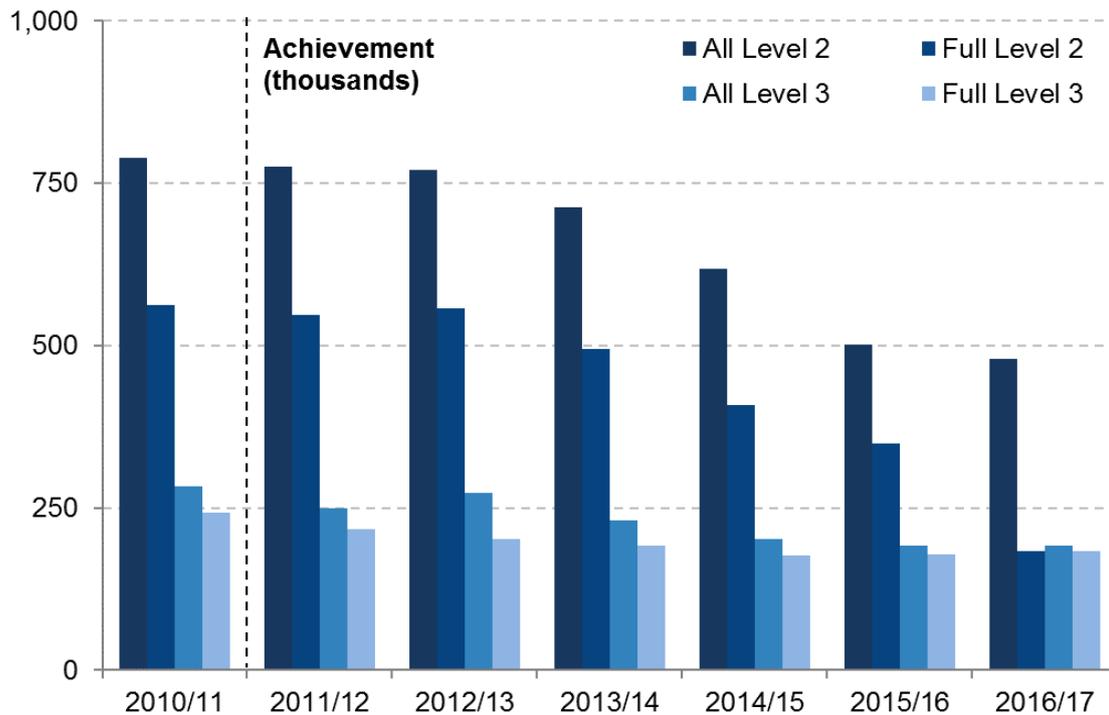


Source: Individualised Learner Record

<sup>6</sup> Intermediate, advanced and higher level apprenticeship figures are listed under Full level 2, Full level 3 and Level 4+ headings respectively, please refer to the Quality and Methodology document for further information on levels.

<sup>7</sup> Learner numbers for 2011/12 onwards are not directly comparable with earlier years.

**Figure 3: Adult (19+) learner achievements in government-funded further education by level<sup>4</sup>**  
 England, 2010/11 to 2016/17



Source: Individualised Learner Record

### Adult (19+) demographic summary of FE and skills participation (2016/17)

Of the 2,236,800 adult learners participating in further education in 2016/17:

- 57.9 per cent were female and 42.1 per cent were male
- 16.5 per cent declared a learning difficulty and/or disability
- 21.1 per cent were from a Black or Minority Ethnic background (including Mixed, Asian, Black and Other Ethnic Group learners)
- 298,600 learners aged 19+ benefited from support for the unemployed in 2016/17. These are defined as those learners reporting that they were in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance - Work Related Activity Group (ESA WRAG), Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) or Universal Credit (if unemployed and looking for work).

**Measures of apprenticeships**

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

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

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

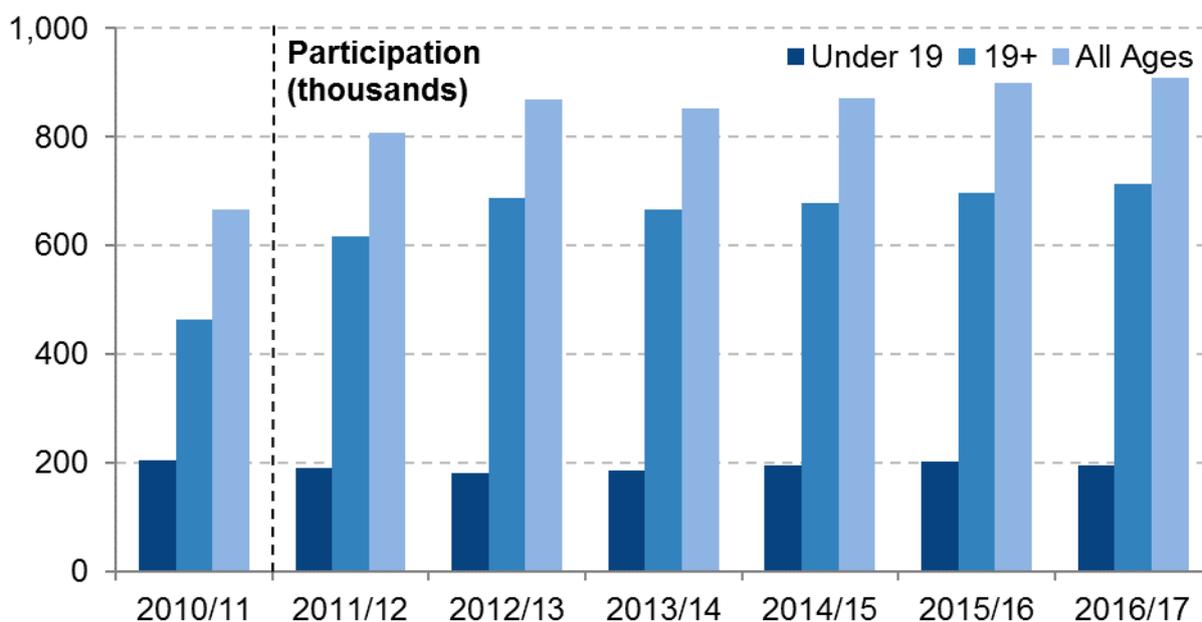
Advanced learner loans (known as 24+ Advanced Learning Loans till 2015/16) were introduced in August 2013, and withdrawn for apprenticeships in March 2014. This appears to have affected learner numbers on Level 3 and above courses and apprenticeships for ages 24 and over in 2013/14. This should be noted when comparing the 2014/15 volumes with 2013/14.

**Participation**

Figure 4 shows that all age apprenticeship participation has increased since 2010/11 to 908,700 apprenticeships in 2016/17, the highest number since records began.

Apprenticeship participation increased between 2015/16 and 2016/17 for those aged 25 and over, but decreased for both the under 19 and the 19-24 age group.

**Figure 4: Apprenticeship participation by age<sup>8</sup>**  
England, 2010/11 to 2016/17



Source: Individualised Learner Record

487,200 apprentices were participating on an intermediate level apprenticeship in 2016/17, a decrease on 2015/16 figures (513,600). A significant increase was seen for higher level apprenticeships to 60,800 in

<sup>8</sup> Learner numbers for 2011/12 onwards are not directly comparable with earlier years.

2016/17 from 43,800; and there was an increase in advanced level apprenticeships to 388,100 from 368,600 in 2015/16.

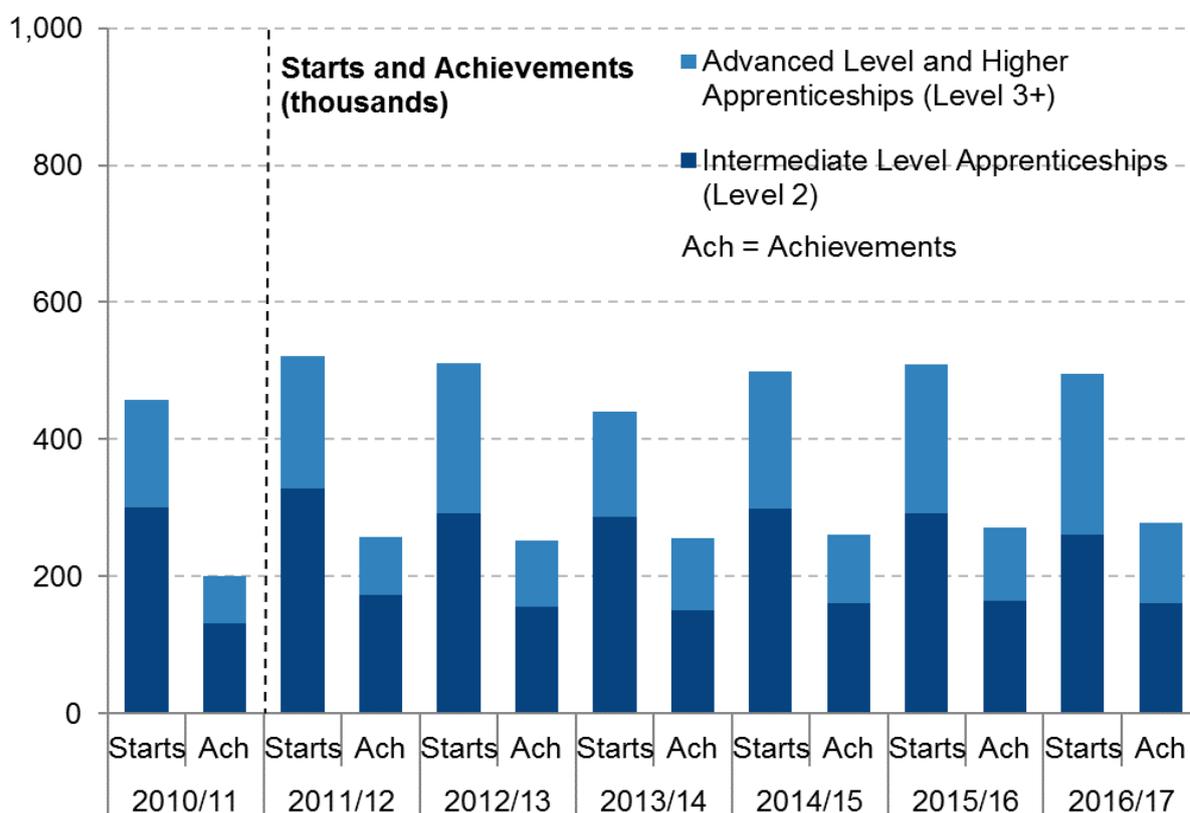
Of the 908,700 apprenticeships participating in 2016/17:

- 51.2 per cent were female and 48.8 per cent were male
- 9.8 per cent declared a learning difficulty and/or disability, an increase from 9.3 per cent in 2015/16.
- 10.9 per cent were from a Black or Minority Ethnic background (including Mixed, Asian, Black and Other Ethnic Group learners), an increase from 10.6 per cent in 2015/16.

## Starts and achievements

Figure 5 shows that following a decline in apprenticeship starts between 2011/12 and 2013/14, mostly due to a fall at advanced level, there was an increase of 13.5 per cent in 2014/15 and an increase of 1.9 per cent in 2015/16. In 2016/17, there was another slight overall decrease (2.8 per cent) compared to 2015/16.

**Figure 5: Apprenticeship starts and achievements by level<sup>9</sup>**  
England, 2010/11 to 2016/17



Source: Individualised Learner Record

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

<sup>9</sup> Starts and achievements for 2011/12 onwards are not directly comparable with earlier years.

There were 494,900 apprenticeship starts in the 2016/17 academic year, a decrease of 2.8 per cent on 2015/16 from 509,400, with fewer starts on intermediate level apprenticeships, but increases in both advanced and higher level apprenticeships (Figure 6). An increase was seen overall in apprenticeship achievements, to 277,800 in 2016/17 from 271,700 in 2015/16. Apprenticeship achievements rose for those aged under 19 and those aged 25 and over, but fell slightly for those aged 19 to 24.

Apprenticeship starts data for the 2016/17 academic year show that there were:

- **494,900 apprenticeship starts**, a decrease of 2.8 per cent from 509,400 reported for 2015/16.

Of which:

260,700 at intermediate level, a decrease of 10.5 per cent from 291,300 in 2015/16

197,700 at advanced level, an increase of 3.6 per cent from 190,900 in 2015/16

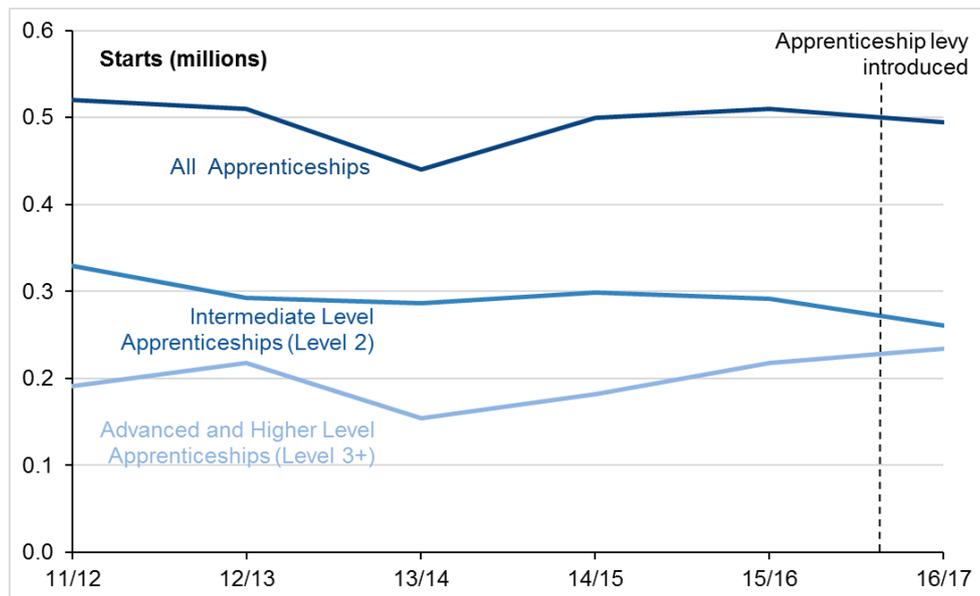
36,600 at higher level, an increase of 34.7 per cent from 27,200 in 2015/16

122,800 were aged under 19, a decrease of 6.6 per cent from 131,400 in 2015/16

372,100 aged 19 and over, a decrease of 1.5 per cent from 377,900 in 2015/16

**Figure 6: Apprenticeship starts by level**

England, 2011/12 to 2016/17



Source: Individualised Learner Record

- Between February and April 2017, there was an increase in apprenticeship starts compared to the same point a year earlier (173,800 and 118,800 respectively), an increase of 46.3%. Between May and July 2017 (quarter 4 of the 2016/17 academic year), apprenticeship starts decreased to 48,000 from 117,800 (quarter 4 of the 2015/16 academic year), a decrease of 59.3%.
- The UK wide apprenticeship levy came into force on 6 April 2017 requiring all UK public and private sector employers with an annual bill of £3 million or more to invest in apprenticeship training. Since May 2017, funding arrangements for apprenticeships changed to give employers greater control over funding for apprenticeship training. It may take time for organisations to adjust to the new funding system, and so it is too early to draw conclusions based on the number of apprenticeship starts recorded since May 2017.

- **21,100 levy supported starts** were recorded since the introduction of the apprenticeship levy in April 2017. More than half of the levy supported starts (11,400) were at intermediate level, with 7,800 at advanced level and 2,000 at higher level apprenticeships.

In order to be counted as a **levy supported start**, the apprenticeship must have been supported through levy funds.

- **24,600 apprenticeship starts** were reported on the new apprenticeship **standards**, compared to 4,300 reported for 2015/16.

Of which:

9,100 were levy supported starts

6,700 were aged under 19, compared to 1,200 in 2015/16

17,900 aged 19 and over, compared to 3,100 in 2015/16

There have now been **29,300 starts on apprenticeship standards since their introduction** in September 2014.

- 252,500 starts for which a payment was made through the **apprenticeship Grant for Employers** (AGE 16 to 24) scheme between February 2012 and July 2017. A further 2,100 were in the pipeline (started but not yet paid).

There have been **1,119,600 apprenticeship starts reported to July 2017 since May 2015** and 3,497,100 starts reported to July 2017 since May 2010.

## Starts since May 2010 and May 2015

The government has committed to reaching 3 million apprenticeships by 2020<sup>10</sup> from May 2015. With 115,300 apprenticeship starts in quarter 4 in 2014/15, there have been 1,119,600 starts reported to July 2017 since May 2015, and 3,497,100 starts reported to July 2017 since May 2010 (including 64,500 starts in quarter 4 2009/10).

## Planned length of stay

Minimum durations have been in place for framework-based apprenticeships since August 2012. For learners aged 16 to 18, apprenticeships must last at least 12 months, but for learners aged 19 and over there is more flexibility, as some adults have prior learning / attainment and can complete more quickly (for example if the training provider can evidence prior learning the minimum duration is reduced to 6 months). For new apprenticeship standards the minimum duration is 12 months, with no exceptions.

Based on the planned end date, the number of apprenticeship starts with a planned length of stay of less than 12 months decreased sharply by 83.2 per cent between 2011/12 and 2012/13 to 34,300 and remained low in 2016/17 at 40,400.

Apprenticeship starts by age and planned length of stay can be found in supplementary tables:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fe-data-library-apprenticeships>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-kick-starts-plans-to-reach-3-million-apprenticeships>

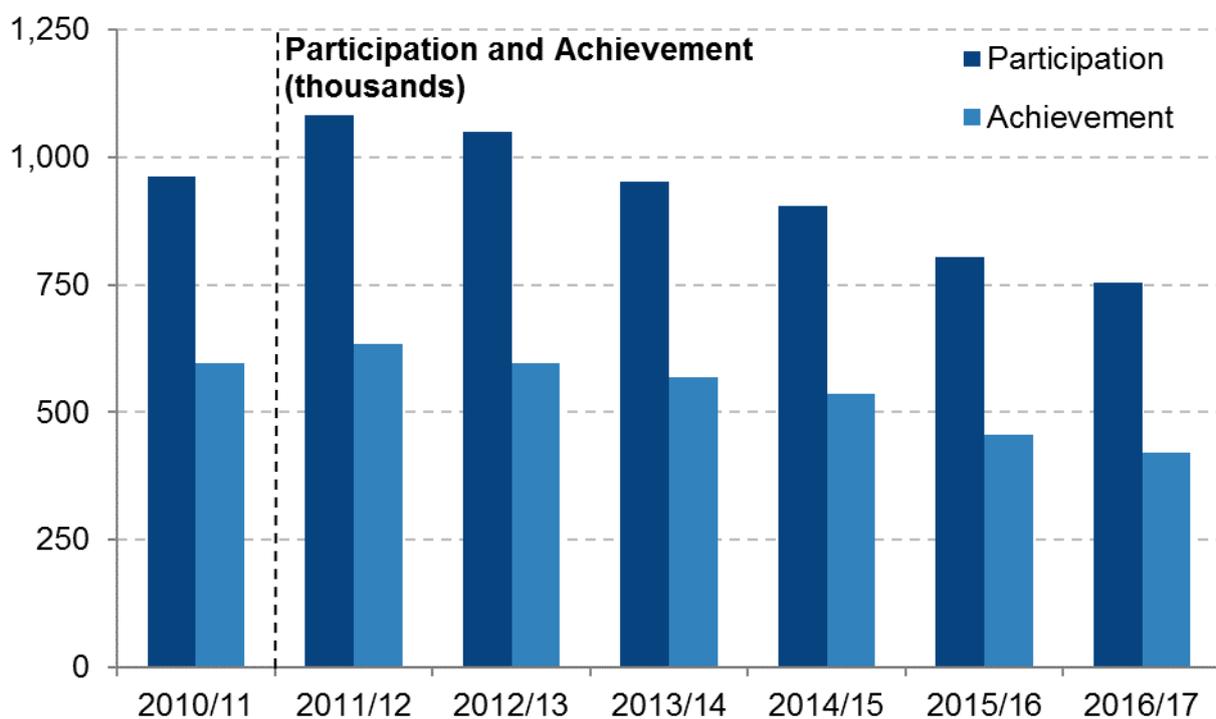
## Adult (19+) English and maths (Table 4)

Figure 7 shows that adult learner (19+) participation on English and maths courses rose between 2010/11 and 2011/12, but has since fallen from 1,083,000 in 2011/12 to 755,300 in 2016/17. The 2016/17 figure represents a decrease of 6.0 per cent from the 803,800 reported for 2015/16.

Of the 755,300 participants in 2016/17:

- 531,600 participated on an **English** course, a decrease of 8.9 per cent from 583,600 in 2015/16
- 524,100 participated on a **Maths** course, a decrease of 6.0 per cent from 557,400 in 2015/16
- 114,100 participated on an **English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)** course, an increase of 3.2 per cent from 110,600 in 2015/16

**Figure 7: Adult (19+) learner participation and achievement on English and maths courses<sup>11</sup>**  
England, 2010/11 to 2016/17



Source: Individualised Learner Record

<sup>11</sup> Learner numbers for 2011/12 onwards are not directly comparable with earlier years.

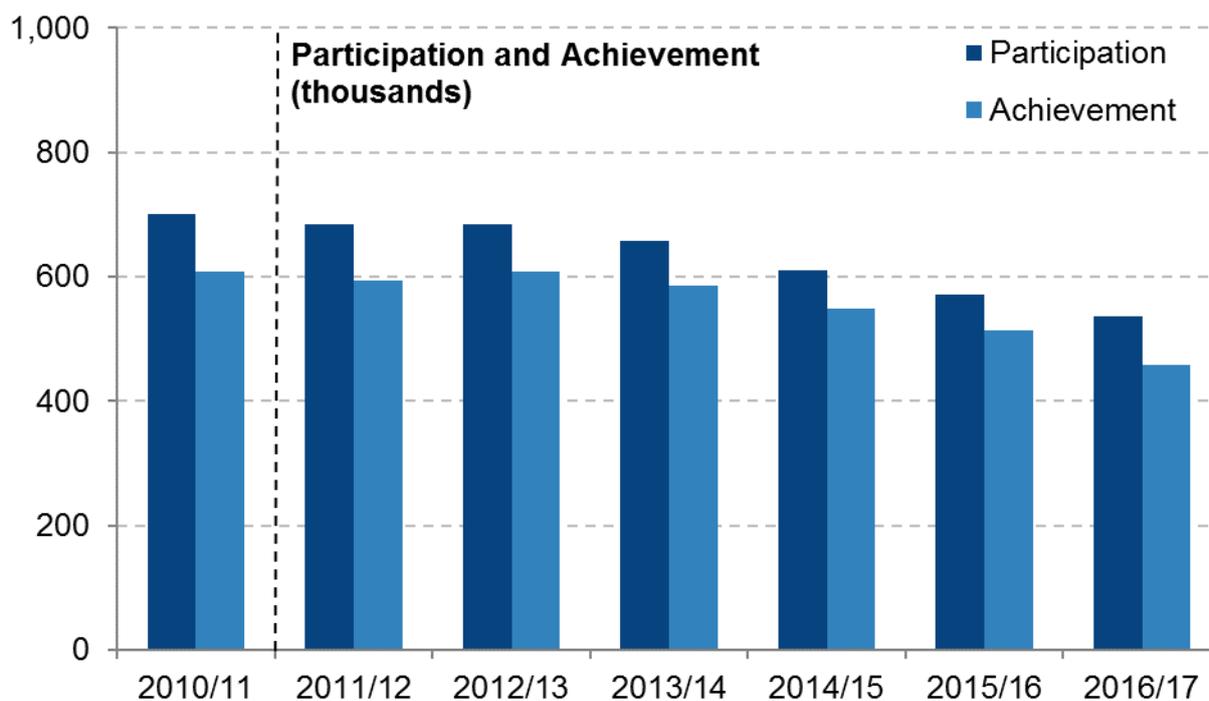
## Community learning (Table 9)

In the 2016/17 academic year, 535,800 learners participated on a community learning course, a decrease of 6.1 per cent from 570,600 in 2015/16 (Figure 8). Achievements fell by 10.7 per cent over the same period to from 512,900 in 2015/16 to 458,000 in 2016/17.

Of the 535,800 participants in 2016/17:

- 414,600 took a **Personal and Community Development Learning** course, a decrease of 4.2 per cent from 432,700 reported in 2015/16
- 50,200 took a **Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities** course, a decrease of 12.4 per cent from 57,300 in 2015/16
- 33,600 took a **Family English, Maths and Language** course, a decrease of 18.3 per cent from 41,100 in 2015/16
- 53,500 took a **Wider Family Learning** course, a decrease of 10.1 per cent from 59,500 in 2015/16

**Figure 8: Community learning participation and achievement<sup>12</sup>**  
England, 2010/11 to 2016/17



Source: Individualised Learner Record

## Adult (18+) offender learning (Table 10.1 & 10.2)

In 2016/17 there were 88,900 offenders aged 18 and over in the prison system participating in learning, a decrease of 6.1 per cent compared to 94,700 in 2015/16. 78,600 achieved a learning outcome, an decrease of 5.0 per cent compared to 82,700 on 2015/16.

This number does not include 15,800 learners who sat an English and/or maths assessment but had not yet participated in any further learning.

<sup>12</sup> Learner numbers for 2011/12 onwards are not directly comparable with earlier years.

## Advanced learner loans<sup>13</sup> (Table 11)

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

Loan application information relates to applications received for FE provision funded through advanced learner loans. The data used to produce the publication are sourced from the Student Loans Company (SLC) application database. The data refer to received applications, including those not yet processed, and will therefore be different than actual number of learners participating on a course with an advanced learner loan.

The SLC advanced learner loans paid in England data were released on 12 October 2017. These data refer to all payments made to FE providers on behalf of learners, and numbers of learners will be lower than the ILR numbers. It covers the payments made in the full academic year 2016/17 i.e. August 2016 to July 2017 inclusive and also includes the figures for the equivalent period in academic years 2014/15 and 2015/16 for comparison.

Final data for the 2016/17 academic year show there were 119,000 learners with an advanced learner loan. Of these there were:

- 110,200 learners with an advanced learner loan participating at **Level 3**
- 9,100 learners with a advanced learner loan participating at **Level 4+**

## Traineeships (Tables 12.1, 12.2 & 12.3)

In the 2016/17 academic year there were:

20,300 **traineeship starts**, a decrease of 15.7 per cent from 24,100 in 2015/16, of which:

13,900 were under 19, a decrease of 5.8 per cent from 14,700 in 2015/16

6,400 were aged 19 to 24, a decrease of 31.3 per cent from 9,400 in 2015/16

17,200 **traineeship completions**, a decrease of 0.9 per cent from 17,400 in 2015/16, of which:

10,900 were under 19, an increase of 4.4 per cent from 10,500 in 2015/16

6,300 were aged 19 to 24, a decrease of 8.8 per cent from 6,900 in 2015/16

9,800 **traineeship progressions** to a job, apprenticeship, further full time education or other training, a decrease of 6.7 per cent from 10,500 in 2015/16, of which:

6,700 were under 19, a decrease of 4.0 per cent from 7,000 on 2015/16

3,000 were aged 19 to 24, a decrease of 12.2 per cent from 3,400 in 2015/16<sup>14</sup>

## Further education supplementary tables

Additional breakdowns of further education statistics are published online, please see here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fe-data-library>. These additional breakdowns include breakdowns by age, gender, ethnicity, learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, region, local authority, parliamentary constituency, sector subject area and funding stream.

<sup>13</sup> See the Quality and Methodology document for the change in Advanced Learner Loans in 2016/17.

<sup>14</sup> Percentages are calculated on unrounded data.

## Qualification Achievement Rates (QARs) (Tables 15.1 & 15.2)

Qualification Achievement Rates (QARs), previously referred to as success rates, are calculated for individual qualifications. They show how many learners that started a qualification went on to successfully complete it. Achievement rates are typically calculated at a qualification level, but can be aggregated across different types of course, or for particular colleges or providers.

Prior to 2013/14 QARs were calculated using different methodologies for each of the different strands of further education provision. Employer-based provision (apprenticeships and workplace learning (WPL)) used a primary *Overall* achievement rate measure (based on the later of the actual and planned end dates) and a secondary *Timely* measure (based on the planned end date). However, Education and Training (E & T) provision had a different measure that was based upon the learning planned end date.

In the 2013/14 academic year the methodologies were aligned to give a consistent method of calculation across all provision areas, following changes to government-funded learning provision. E & T provision has adopted the Overall and Timely measures as used in apprenticeships and WPL. The Overall measure will be the principal measure and the one reported in this SFR, and will be used to assess the quality of provision against the minimum standards that are expected for funded training. The Timely measure will also be produced as a supporting measure.

The change in E & T methodology causes a break in the time series for these statistics and means that the qualification achievement rates for 2013/14 onwards cannot be directly compared with those from the previous years. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sfa-qualification-success-rates-rationale-for-2013-to-2014> for more details of the changes. In 2014/15 the E & T and WPL achievement rates were combined into a single measure for E & T.

In 2014/15 there was a problem with the Qualification Management Application (QMA) of an awarding organisation that meant further education providers may have been unable to record results or obtain certificates during the period April to July 2015. In the majority of cases certificates were issued in time, although there is a risk that some results were missing or recorded in error.

Apprenticeship providers responded to this issue in different ways depending on their delivery models and the individual needs of learners and it may have resulted in a higher or lower QAR for different frameworks. For this reason there is the potential for some variation in the achievement rates between providers for specific frameworks but the data indicate that the impact on the overall rates presented here will be negligible.

There is no evidence of an impact on overall education and training achievement rates. The affected cohort for the duration of the QMA issues represents less than 4% of the total aims in scope for the 2014/15 E&T achievement rate calculations, and only a small fraction of these will have experienced problems.

The QAR methodology was changed in 2015/16, please see the Quality and Methodology document for details and for an impact assessment.

### 15 June QAR update

The 2015/16 QAR figures in Tables 15.1 and 15.2 originally published in 16 February 2017 SFR have been refreshed in the revision to the March 2017 SFR.

This coincided with the publication of the National Achievement Rates Tables (NARTs) 2015 to 2016 on 15 June 2017 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/sfa-national-success-rates-tables>), and aligns with a corrected methodology used to calculate provider achievement rates.

The analysis and charts in this section show QARs figures for 2013/14 to 2015/16 are **based on the new 2015/16 methodology**.

Figure 9 shows that adult (19+) Education and Training achievement rates, from which the following can be seen when comparing 2013/14 to 2015/16:

- English and maths achievement rates have decreased by 1.3 percentage points (from 80.3 per cent to 79.0 per cent)
- Full level 2 achievement rates have increased by just over 1 percentage point (from 86.7 per cent to 87.8 per cent)
- Full level 3 achievement rates have decreased slightly by 0.2 percentage points (from 80.0 per cent to 79.8 per cent)

**Figure 9: Adult (19+) education and training achievement rates 2013/14 to 2015/16**  
England, 2013/14 to 2015/16

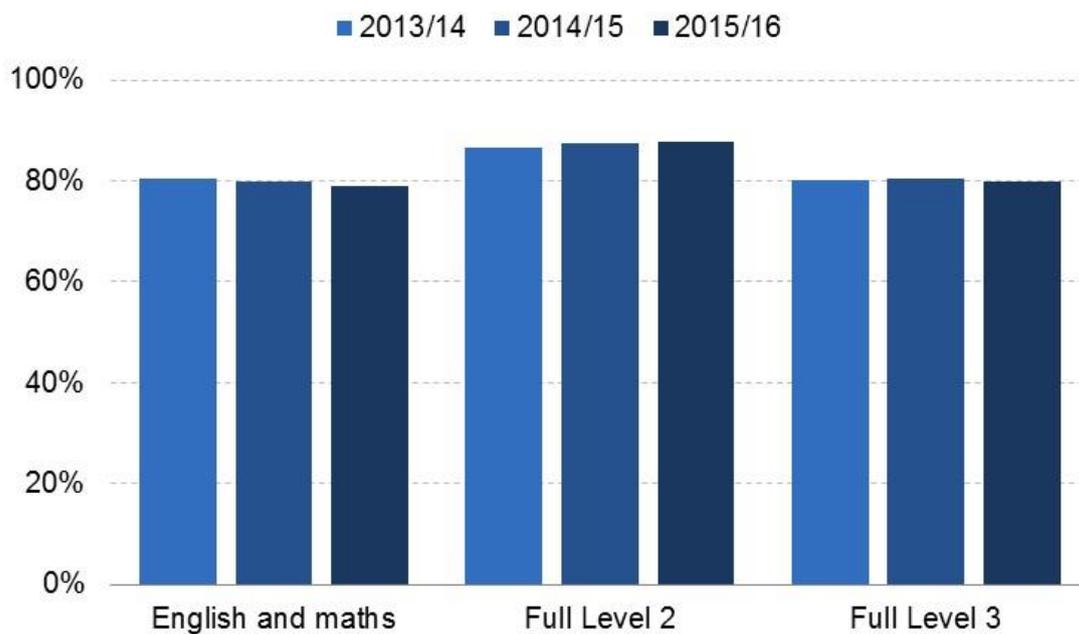
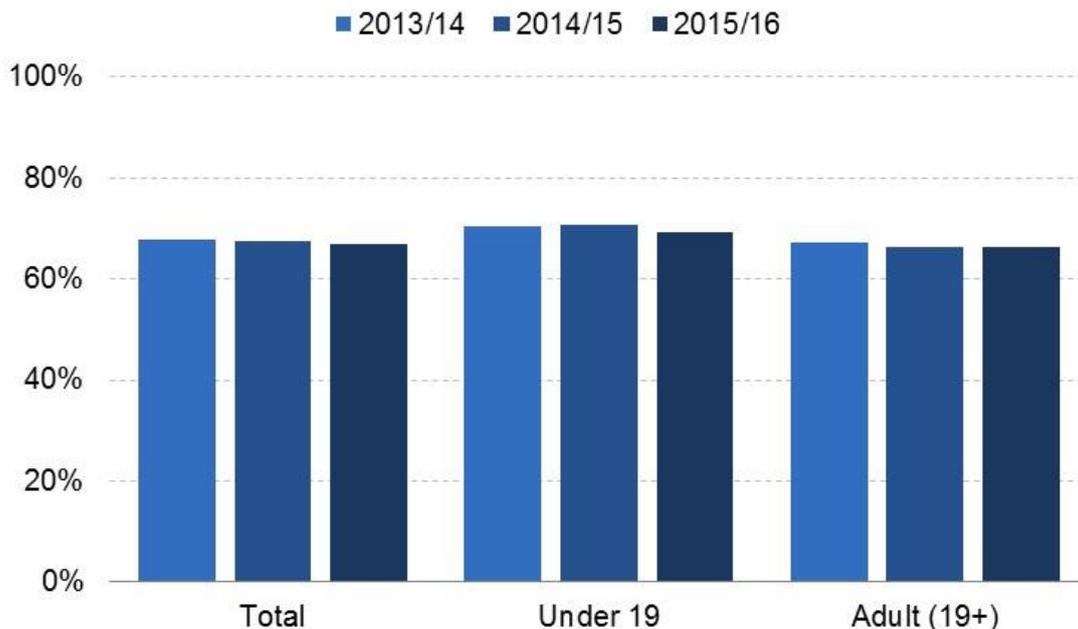


Figure 10 shows that achievement rates for all age apprenticeships have decreased between 2013/14 and 2015/16 by 0.9 percentage points (from 67.9 per cent to 67.0 per cent).

**Figure 10: All age apprenticeship achievement rates 2013/14 to 2015/16**  
 England, 2013/14 to 2015/16



In 2015/16, adult (19+) education and training QARs were:

- 85.9 per cent for all education and training, a decrease of 0.5 percentage points compared with 2014/15 and 79.0 per cent for English and maths qualifications, a decrease of 0.9 percentage points compared with 2014/15
- 83.6 per cent for Level 2 qualifications, a decrease of 1.8 percentage points compared with 2014/15 (87.8 per cent for Full level 2, an increase of 0.3 percentage points)
- 80.5 per cent for Level 3 qualifications, a decrease of 1.1 percentage points compared with 2014/15 (79.8 per cent for Full level 3, a decrease of 0.6 percentage points)

In 2015/16, apprenticeship QARs were:

- 67.0 per cent for all apprenticeships, a decrease of 0.5 percentage points compared with 2014/15
- 66.5 per cent for intermediate level apprenticeships, a decrease of 0.7 percentage points compared with 2014/15
- 68.5 per cent for advanced level apprenticeships, an increase of 0.2 percentage points compared with 2014/15
- 58.3 per cent for higher level apprenticeships, a decrease of 0.5 percentage points compared to 2014/15
- 66.2 per cent for apprenticeships by those aged 19 and over, an increase of 0.2 percentage points compared with 2014/15
- 69.3 per cent for apprenticeships by those aged under 19, a decrease of 1.4 percentage points compared with 2014/15

A more detailed breakdown of QARs can be found in the 'National Achievement Rates Tables', which are a set of supplementary tables to this SFR which can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/sfa-national-success-rates-tables>

## Adult attainment in the population (Tables 16.1, 16.2, 17.1 and 17.2)

Having a skilled population is vital to maintaining the international competitiveness of our economy and creating high quality jobs. Improving our skills does not just improve our economy; it also has the potential to make the UK a fairer place by creating more social mobility and enabling people to play their part in society.

Labour Force Survey (LFS) data are used to measure the highest qualification levels of the working age population in England, where Level 2 equates to achievement of 5 or more GCSEs at grades A\*-C or equivalent qualifications, Level 3 equates to achievement of 2 or more A-levels or equivalent qualifications, and Level 4 and above to higher education and degree level qualifications. See <https://www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/compare-different-qualification-levels> for more information.

Data on the highest level of qualification was revised in late 2015 following a reweighting of the LFS that affects figures from 2001 onwards.

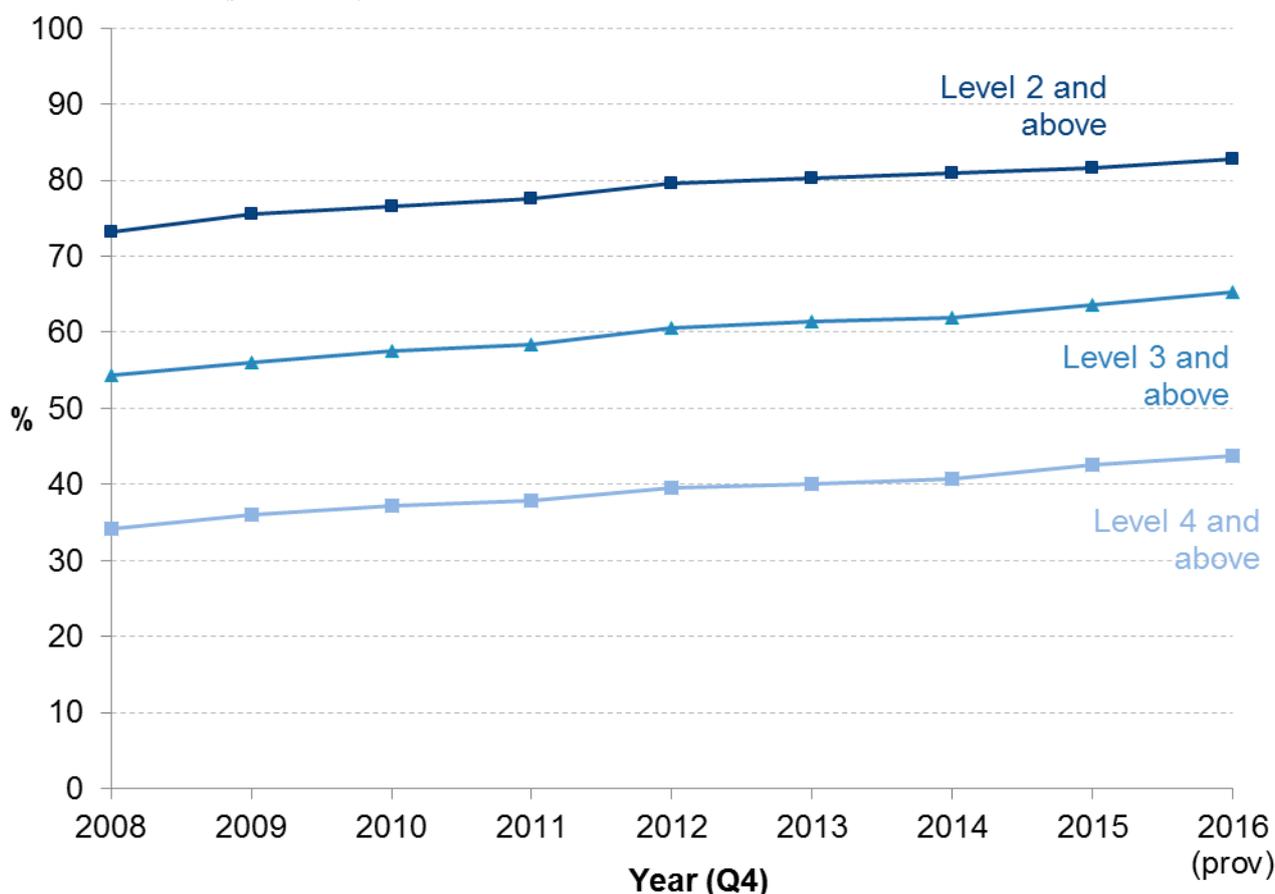
Estimates previously published for 2012 and 2013 have been revised following a reweighting of the Labour Force Survey (LFS) covering 2012 to 2015 (the 2014 data was revised in the November 2016 SFR). This SFR includes final 2015 data, along with provisional 2016 data.

Figure 11 shows that the proportion of men and women qualified to each of Level 2, 3 and 4 have risen each year between 2008 and 2016<sup>15</sup>:

- from 73.2 per cent in 2008 to 82.8 per cent in 2016 qualified to at least Level 2
- from 54.3 per cent in 2008 to 65.3 per cent in 2016 qualified to at least Level 3
- from 34.2 per cent in 2008 to 43.8 per cent in 2016 qualified to at least Level 4

**Figure 11: Highest level of qualification held by adults of working age**

England, 2008 to 2016 (provisional)



<sup>15</sup> Data in 2016 is provisional, all other years are final

## 2. Accompanying tables

The following tables are available in Excel format here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/further-education-and-skills-statistical-first-release-sfr>.

### Final 2016/17 Tables

- 1.1 Adult (19+) FE and Skills Participation by Level (2010/11 to 2016/17)
- 1.2 Adult (19+) FE and Skills Achievement by Level (2010/11 to 2016/17)
- 2 All Age Apprenticeship Participation by Level and Age (2010/11 to 2016/17)
- 3.1 Adult (19+) Education and Training Participation by Level (2010/11 to 2016/17)
- 3.2 Adult (19+) Education and Training Achievement by Level (2010/11 to 2016/17)
- 4 Adult (19+) FE and Skills: English and Maths Participation and Achievement by Level (2010/11 to 2016/17)
- 5 All Age Demographic Summary of of FE and Skills Participation (2016/17)
- 6 All Age Demographic Summary of Apprenticeship Participation (2016/17)
- 7.1 All Age Apprenticeship Programme Starts by Level and Age (2010/11 to 2016/17)
- 7.2 All Age Apprenticeship Programme Achievements by Level and Age (2010/11 to 2016/17)
- 8.1 Workplace Learning Starts by Level (2010/11 to 2015/16)
- 8.2 Workplace Learning Achievements by Level (2010/11 to 2015/16)
- 9 Community Learning Participation and Achievement by Type (2010/11 to 2016/17)
- 10.1 Adult (18+) FE and Skills - Offender Learning Participation by Level (2010/11 to 2016/17)
- 10.2 Adult (18+) FE and Skills - Offender Learning Achievements by Level (2010/11 to 2016/17)
- 11 FE and Skills: Participation with Advanced Learner Loans (Level 3+) (2013/14 to 2016/17)
- 12.1 Traineeship Starts by Age (2013/14 to 2016/17)
- 12.2 Traineeship Completions by Age (2013/14 to 2016/17)
- 12.3 Traineeship Progressions by Age (2013/14 to 2016/17)
- 13 Employer Ownership Pilot Starts (2012/13 to 2015/16)
- 14 Apprenticeship Grant for Employers Scheme Starts (2016/17)
- 15.1 Adult (19+) Education and Training Achievement Rates by Level (2010/11 to 2015/16)
- 15.2 Apprenticeship Achievement Rates by Level and Age (2010/11 to 2015/16)
- 16.1 Level of Highest Qualification Held by People aged 19-64 in England (Quarter 4) – percentages
- 16.2 Level of Highest Qualification Held by People aged 19-64 in England (Quarter 4) – volumes (thousands)
- 17.1 Level Of Highest Qualification Held By Economically Active Adults In England (Quarter 4) – Percentages
- 17.2 Level Of Highest Qualification Held By Economically Active Adults In England (Quarter 4) – volumes (thousands)
- 18 Vocational Qualification Achievements in the UK by Qualification Type, 2006 (October) to 2017 (June)

When reviewing the tables, please note that:

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We preserve confidentiality	The Code of Practice for Official Statistics ( <a href="https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/monitoring-and-assessment/code-of-practice/">https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/monitoring-and-assessment/code-of-practice/</a> ) requires us to take reasonable steps to ensure that our published or disseminated statistics protect confidentiality.
We suppress some figures	In the SFR main tables, headline volumes below 50 are suppressed (this includes values of zero). In the supplementary tables volumes below 5 are suppressed (this includes values of zero). A percentage of less than 0.5% is suppressed.
We adopt symbols to help identify suppression	Symbols are used in the tables as follows: ‘-’ indicates a headline volume with below 50 in the SFR main tables and below 5 in the supplementary tables. ‘*’ indicates a percentage of less than 0.5%.
We round figures	In the SFR main tables, headline volumes are reported rounded to the nearest 100. In the supplementary tables volumes are rounded to the nearest 10. The exception to this is any figure that is an exact duplicate of a value in the headline figures (e.g. Grand Totals), which are rounded to the nearest 100 and avoid contradictory figures. Percentages reported are calculated on pre-rounded data and given to one decimal place.
Coverage of the data	This SFR includes finalised data for the 2016/17 academic year (August 2016 to July 2017) reported to the Education and Skills Funding Agency in October 2017 by further education providers. It also includes final data for previous years for comparison where applicable.

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### 3. Further information is available

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

Please see the FE Data Library here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fe-data-library>

### 4. 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.

More technical information, please see the latest SFR release here:

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

## 5. 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 Official 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 Official Statistics.

## 6. Get in touch

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Department  
for Education



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

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