

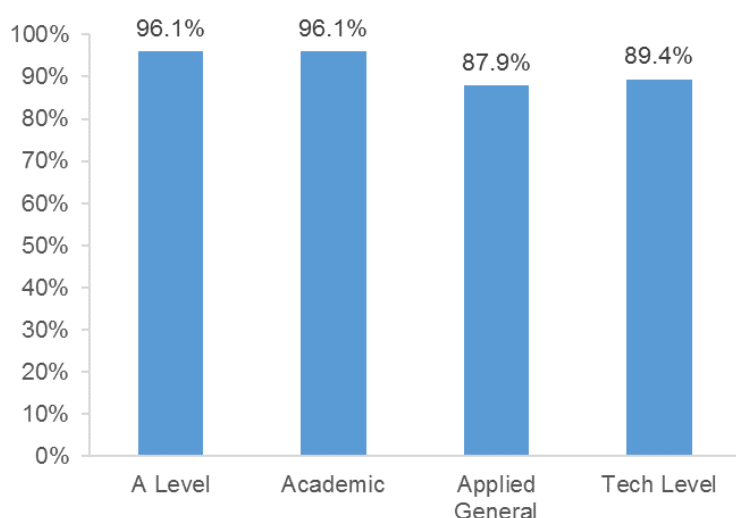


SFR 05/2017, 16 March 2017

Note on additional measures

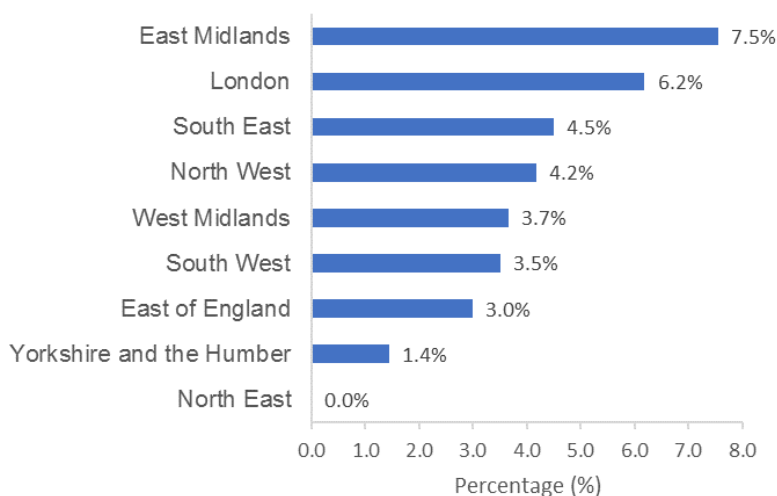
This publication adds to the [Revised A level and other 16-18 results in England, 2015/2016 SFR](#), which was released in January 2017. The content of this publication includes the new accountability measures retention, completion and attainment. The retention measure and the completion and attainment measure use student learning aims information from the autumn school census and Individualised Learner Record (ILR). Both sets of data were collected in October 2016 and made available for analysis in January 2017¹.

Retention rates are highest for academic and A level study programmes



In 2016, students enrolled onto academic (96.1%) or A level programmes (96.1%) were more likely to have completed their main study programme compared to students enrolled onto applied general (87.9%) or tech level (89.4%) programmes.

A small proportion (4%) of 16-18 providers fell below the tech level minimum standards



Of the total number of 16 to 18 providers assessed (679), 4.0% (27) had a completion and attainment score that 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 Midlands has the highest proportion of underperforming schools and colleges in 2016 (7.5%), whereas the North East has the lowest proportion (0.0%).

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

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Feedback

We are changing how our releases look and 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 are retained to the end of their main study programme at a provider. A student's main study programme is also known as a core aim.

The retention measure will show separate values for the four different programme types: A level, academic, applied general and tech levels. In 2016, the retention measure is only be applied to level 3 qualifications².

Which students are included in the measure

A student is in scope for the retention measure if they have an A level, academic, applied general or tech level core aim³. In the majority of cases, the core aim will be at least the size of one A level. However, where students are solely taking AS levels they can be counted as retained in year 12 provided they complete at least one AS level.

How retention is measured

Students are counted as retained if they are recorded as having “completed the learning activities leading to the learning aim”⁴.

The retention measure is calculated by dividing the total number of students retained from 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%.

National retention rate

In 2016, students in the academic or A level programme were more likely to have completed their core aim compared to a student in the applied general or tech level cohort.

Figure 1: Percentage of students who are retained to the end of their main study programme (core aim) (Table 20b)
England, 2016

	A Level		Academic		Applied General		Tech Level	
	Number of students in programme	% of students retained	Number of students in programme	% of students retained	Number of students in programme	% of students retained	Number of students in programme	% of students retained
2016 (revised)	247,273	96.1	249,045	96.1	115,771	87.9	68,847	89.4

Source: 16-18 attainment data

² Information on the qualifications included in the different programme types can be found in section 4 of the [‘Revised A level and other 16 to 16 results in England, 2015/16’](#) main text.

³ Information on exemptions and the process of selecting a student's core aim can be found in the [16-19 technical guidance](#).

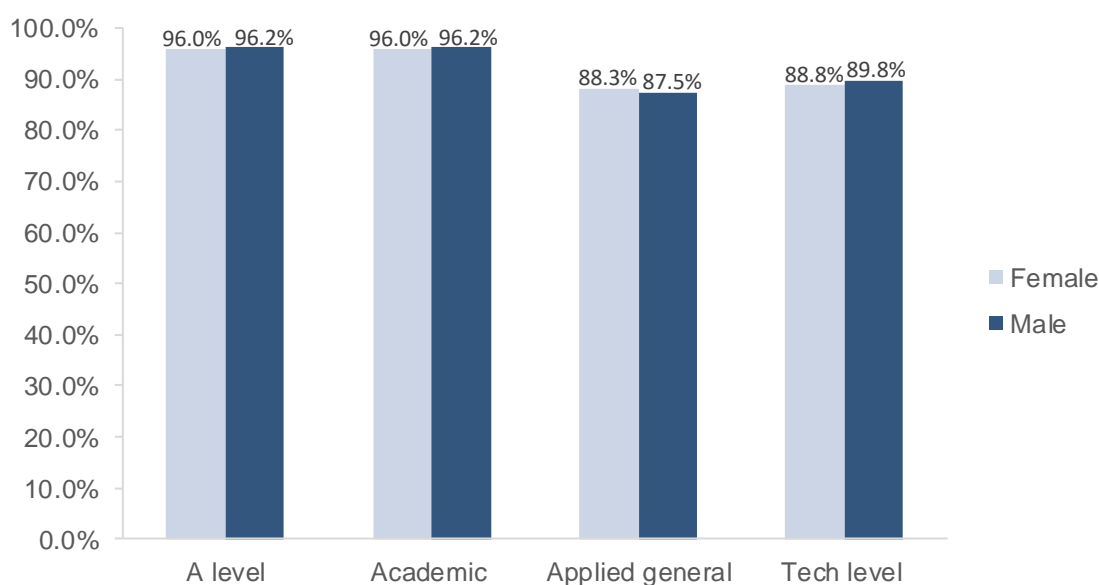
⁴ The Learning Aim Status Field of the School Census or the Completion Status Field of the ILR is used to show if a student is counted as retained.

Retention rate by gender

Retention rates are broadly similar for males and females (96.2% and 96.0% respectively) in the A level and academic study programmes.

Females had a retention rate of 88.3% (50,980 students retained out of a total of 57,729) for applied general core aims, which is a difference of 0.8 percentage points compared to males who had a retention rate of 87.5% (50,783 students retained out of a total of 58,042). In tech levels, 88.8% (25,834 students retained out of a total of 29,108) of females were retained to the end of their core aims, which is 1 percentage point lower than the male retention rate of 89.8% (35,684 students retained out of a total of 39,739).

Figure 2: Percentage of students who are retained to the end of their main study programme (core aim), by gender (Table 20b)
England, 2016



Source: 16-18 attainment data

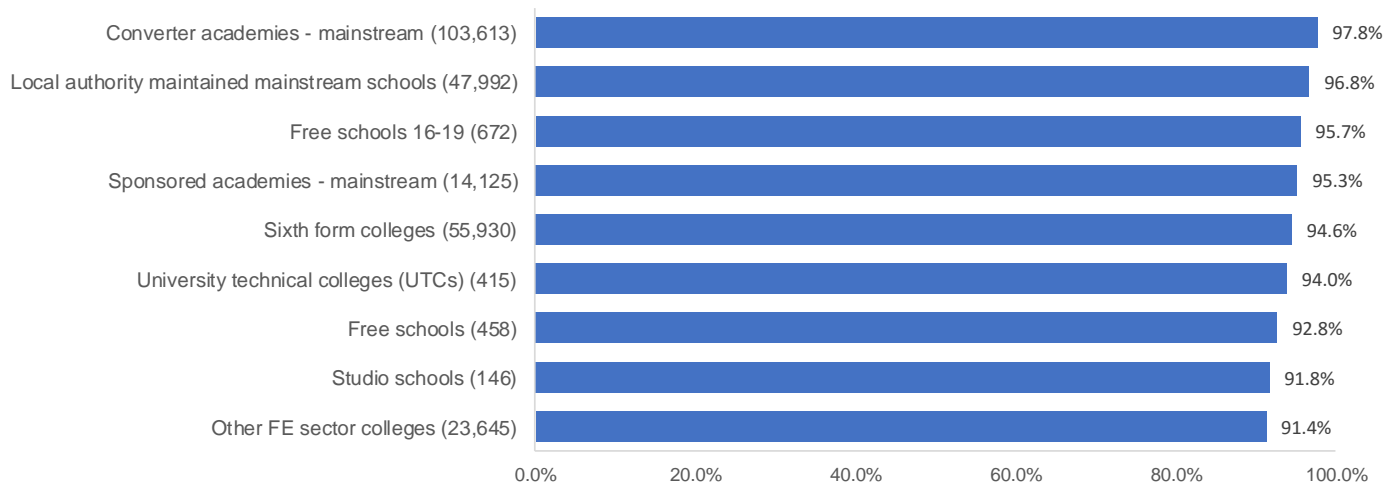
Retention rate breakdown by institution type

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 and studio schools compared with other institution types.

In 2016, A level students at mainstream converter academies had the highest retention rate (97.8%) and A level students at other FE sector colleges had the lowest retention rate (91.4%).

Figure 3: Percentage of A level students (and number of students in the programme) who are retained to the end of their main study programme (core aim), by institution type (Table 20a)

England, 2016

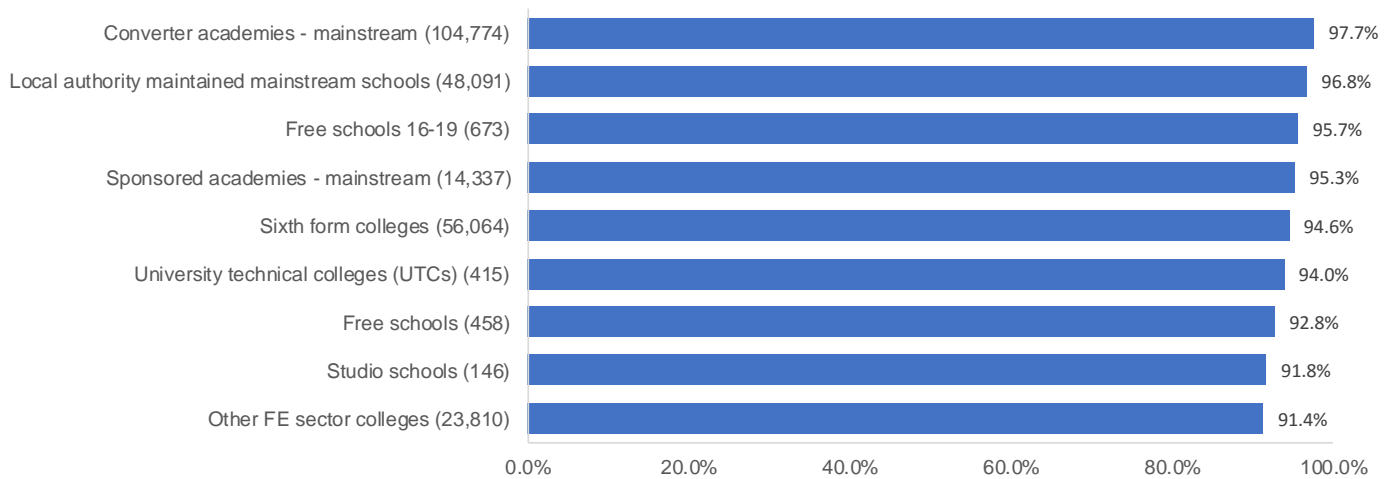


Source: 16-18 attainment data

In 2016, academic students at mainstream converter academies had the highest retention rate (97.7%) and academic students at other FE sector colleges had the lowest retention rate (91.4%).

Figure 4: Percentage of academic students (and number of students in the programme) who are retained to the end of their main study programme (core aim), by institution type (Table 20a)

England, 2016

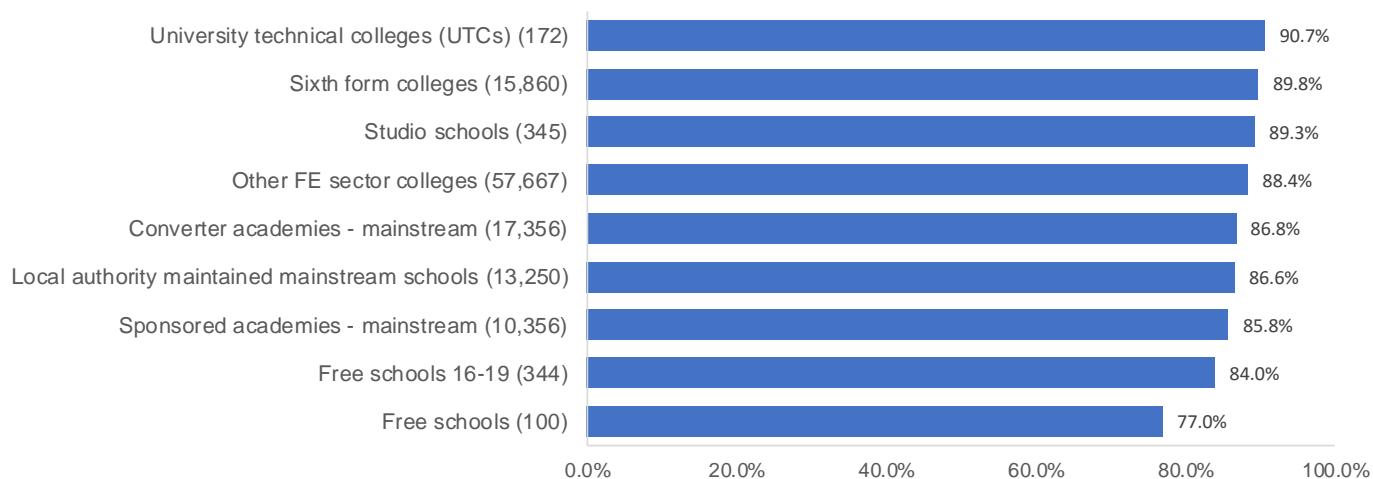


Source: 16-18 attainment data

In 2016, applied general students at University technical colleges had the highest retention rate (90.7%), which is 13.7 percent points higher than free school students who had the lowest retention rate (77.0%).

Figure 5: Percentage of applied general students (and the number of students in the programme) who are retained to the end of their main study programme (core aim), by institution type (Table 20a)

England, 2016

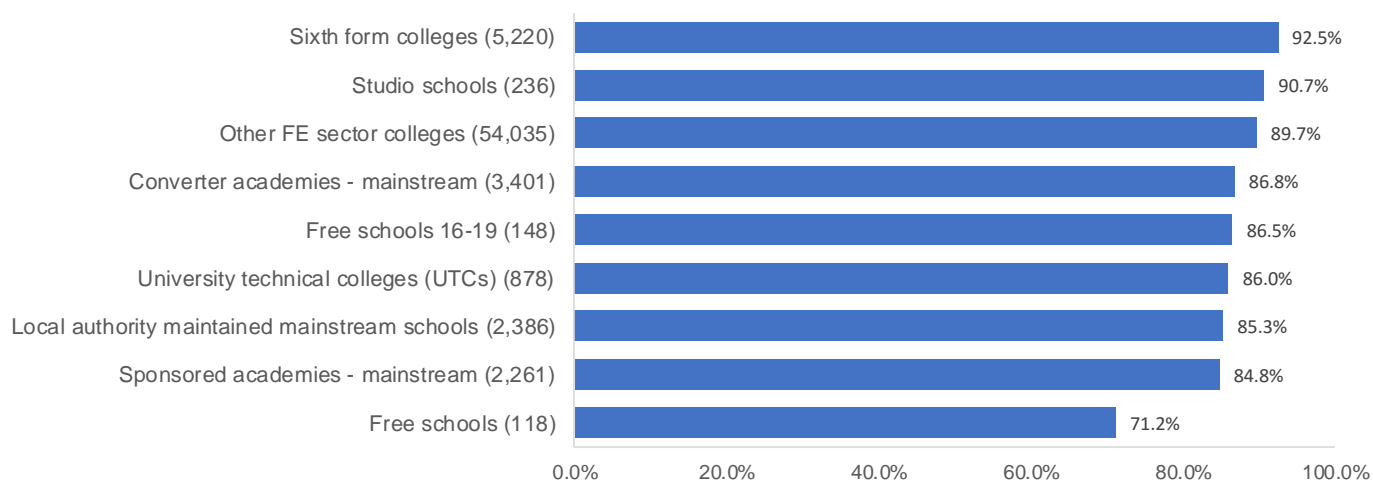


Source: 16-18 attainment data

In 2016, tech level students at sixth form colleges had the highest retention rate (92.5%) and tech level students at free schools had the lowest retention rate (71.2%).

Figure 6: Percentage of tech level students (and the number of students in the programme) who are retained to the end of their main study programme (core aim), by institution type (Table 20a)

England, 2016



Source: 16-18 attainment data

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 qualifications with the national average attainment for each qualification. The scores for each qualification will be aggregated to give an overall completion and attainment score for the provider, which will be expressed as a proportion of a grade 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

A student is included when they study at least one tech level course in a state funded institution – for years where the student attracts funding. Students who withdraw from a tech level within the funding “qualifying period”⁵ will not be counted in the measure⁶. 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 score⁷ based on the grade that they achieved. Fails and withdrawals after the qualifying period will be given zero points. The grading information will be 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 a proportion of a grade above or below the national average. Scores for each subject are finally aggregated to produce an overall provider score relative to the national average. Completion and attainment is a relative measure, therefore the national completion and attainment score for mainstream providers is zero.

For example, a provider may have a completion and attainment score of +0.5 in level 3 tech levels, meaning that on average in these qualifications, students achieve half a grade higher than the national average attainment for all students.

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.

National completion and attainment score breakdown by gender

In 2016, females had a completion and attainment score of 0.10 compared to -0.07 for males. This means on average female students who have taken tech level qualifications achieve a higher result than males.

Figure 7: Completion and attainment score in tech level qualifications, for students entering tech level qualifications by gender (Table 21b)

England, 2016

	Female		Male	
	Number of tech level qualifications studied	Completion and attainment Score	Number of tech level qualifications studied	Completion and attainment Score
2016 (revised)	34,838	0.10	48,343	-0.07

Source: 16-18 attainment data

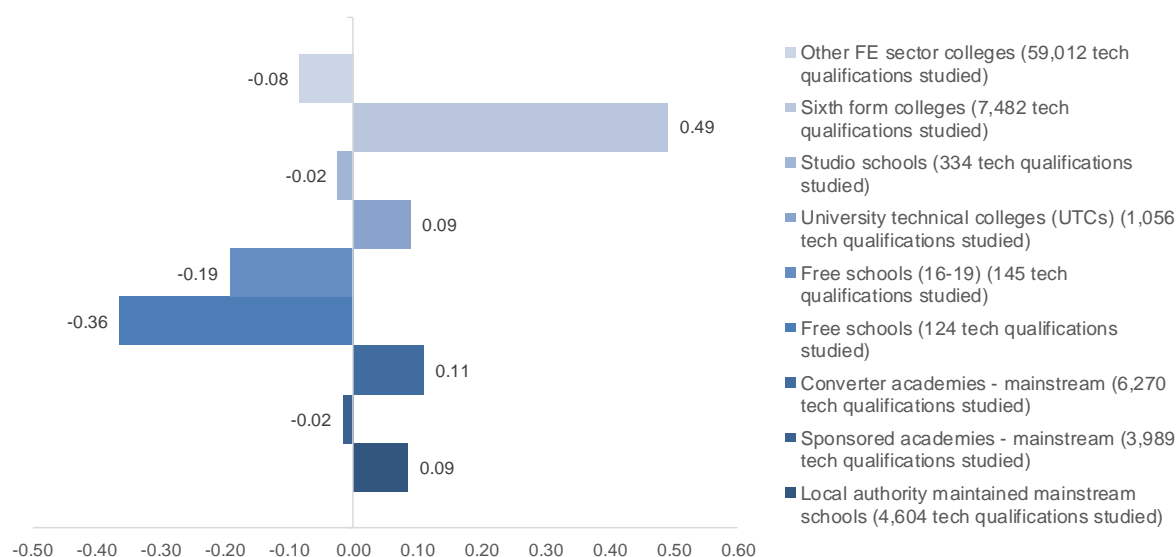
Completion and attainment score breakdown by institution type

In 2016, sixth form colleges had the highest completion and attainment score (0.49). This means on average students at sixth form colleges achieve nearly half a grade higher in tech level qualifications than the national average attainment for all students. Free schools had the lowest completion and attainment score (-0.36).

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 8: Completion and attainment score in tech level qualifications, for students entering tech level qualifications, by institution type (Table 21a)

England, 2016



Source: 16-18 attainment data

3. Tech level minimum standards

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

Definition of minimum standards⁸ for tech level qualifications

The minimum standards for Tech Levels will take the form of a number of grades (or a proportion of one grade) below the national average attainment.

A 16 to 18 provider is seen as underperforming and below the 2016 tech level minimum standard if:

- It has a completion and attainment score below the threshold set by the Department for Education. The threshold for tech level qualifications is -0.90.

16 to 18 providers below the tech level minimum standard

In 2016, 679 state-funded mainstream schools and colleges were assessed against the tech level minimum standard. Of those, 4.0% fell below the minimum standard for tech level qualifications; these providers are seen as underperforming when compared nationally against other providers.

Figure 9: 16 to 18 providers that are below the minimum standard for tech level qualifications (Table 22a)

England, 2016

	Number of providers below the minimum standard	% of providers below the minimum standard
Tech level qualifications	27	4.0

Source: 16-18 attainment data

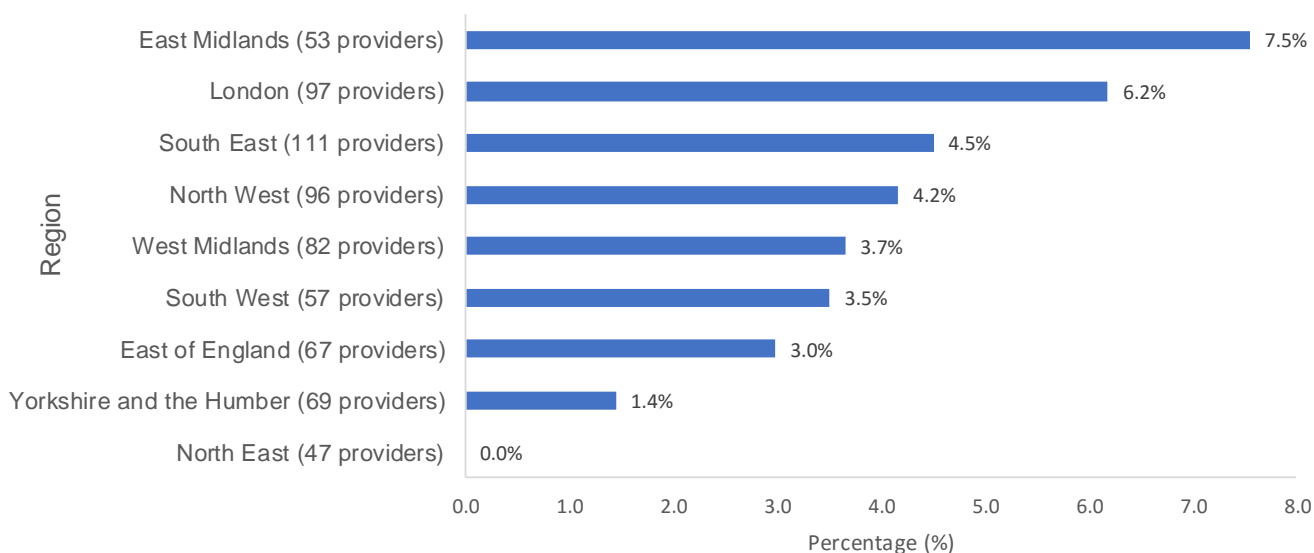
⁸ For more information on the 16 to 18 minimum standards please see the [16 to 18 minimum standards guidance](#) published by the Education Funding Agency.

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

The East Midlands has the highest proportion of underperforming schools and colleges in tech level qualifications in 2016 (7.5%), whereas the North East has the lowest proportion (0.0%).

Figure 10: Percentage of providers below the minimum standard (and total number of providers assessed) by region, 2016 (Table 22a)

England, 2016



Source: 16-18 attainment data

16 to 18 providers below the minimum standard by institution type

State-funded mainstream schools had a higher proportion of providers below the minimum standard (6.5%) compared to FE sector colleges (0.7%). For further breakdowns of institution types, see accompanying tables 22a and 22b (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 students in free schools, 16-19 free schools, university technical colleges and studio schools compared with other institution types.

Figure 11: Percentage of providers below the minimum standard by institution type, 2016 (Table 22b)

England, 2016

	Number of providers assessed	Number of providers below the minimum standard
All state-funded mainstream schools	386	25 (6.5%)
FE sector colleges	293	2 (0.7%)
All state-funded mainstream providers	679	27 (4.0%)

Source: 16-18 attainment data

4. Accompanying tables

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

National tables:

20a Percentage of students at the end of 16-18 studies, who are retained to the end of their main study programme (core aim) at a provider, by institution type

20b Percentage of students at the end of 16-18 studies, who are retained to the end of their main study programme (core aim), by gender

21a Completion and attainment score in tech level qualifications, for students entering tech level qualifications and who are at the end of 16 to 18 studies, by institution type

21b: Completion and attainment score in tech level qualifications, for students entering tech level qualifications and who are at the end of 16 to 18 studies, by gender

22a: Number of 16-18 eligible providers below the level 3 tech level minimum standard for each local authority and region

22b: Number of 16-18 eligible providers below the level 3 tech level minimum standard by institution type

5. 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 2015/16 data in January 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	<p>The Welsh Assembly publishes the results of external examinations taken by pupils aged 15 or 17, available at: Welsh assembly statistics and research</p> <p>The Department for Education Northern Ireland (DENI) published AS and A level statistics, available at: Department for Education Northern Ireland (DENI)</p> <p>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</p>
Information published by Ofqual	<p>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</p> <p>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</p>

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.

6. 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.

7. 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.

8. 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

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

Tel: 0207 227 5387 Email: Attainment.STATISTICS@education.gov.uk



Department
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About this publication:

enquiries Shaun Smith, Education Data Division, Department for Education,
Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3BT
tel: 0207 227 5387 Email: Attainment.STATISTICS@education.gov.uk
download [Statistics: 16 to 19 attainment](#)

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