



Education & Skills  
Funding Agency

# Minimum Standards

How the Education and Skills Funding Agency will apply Minimum Standards for 2016 to 2017 to all age apprenticeships and adult (19+) Education and Training

September 2017

Of interest to colleges and training organisations

## **How the Education and Skills Funding Agency will apply Minimum Standards for the 2016 to 2017 Academic Year**

1. We will use the overall qualification achievement rate (QAR) methodology when calculating Minimum Standards.
2. In 2016 to 2017 we will calculate minimum standards for:
  - Apprenticeships - all ages for both frameworks and standards, regardless of how they are funded by us (framework funding for starts before 1 May 2017 and standards under the trailblazer pilot funding methodology).  
Apprenticeship starts from 1 May 2017 (funding model 36) will be excluded for the 2016 to 2017 QAR calculations, but included in the 2017 to 2018 QAR calculations.
  - Education and Training (Classroom and Workplace) – adult learners only
3. We review thresholds and tolerance levels annually to consider any policy requirements and/or the impact on QAR of recent QAR business rule or other policy rule changes.
4. The thresholds and tolerance levels will remain the same as in 2015 to 2016, including for apprenticeships. This is because of the impact of the QAR business rule changes on national achievement rates in 2015 to 2016.

### **Thresholds**

5. The thresholds in table 1 are applied to QARs at aim level for education and training, and at programme level for apprenticeships when we calculate minimum standards.

**Table 1: Minimum Standards thresholds for 2016 to 2017**

<b>Qualification Type</b>	<b>Threshold (%)</b>
Apprenticeships (framework or standard)	62
Access to HE	70
A-Levels	75
AS-Levels	63
Award	80
Certificate	80
Diploma	70
ESOL	70
Basic Skills Maths and English	63
GCSE Maths and English	75
GCSE Other	75
Other non-Regulated	85
Other Regulated	70
QCF Unit	85

Minimum Standard thresholds are not a target to achieve, they are the minimum acceptable level of performance.

### **Tolerance level**

6. The tolerance level will remain at 40% for apprenticeships and education and training in 2016 to 2017.
7. If the QAR for an apprenticeship or aim is below the relevant threshold in table 1, we will classify that apprenticeship or aim as falling below the minimum standard.
8. We will calculate how many of the apprenticeships or education and training aims delivered by a provider are below the minimum standard thresholds. If this is more than 40% of the total cohort for apprenticeships or education and training the provider will be in scope for intervention.
9. Due to the nature of the minimum standard calculation it is possible to fall below the tolerance level and have an overall QAR above either the national or provider type rates. For example, a provider delivering 100 apprenticeships in the 2016 to 2017 hybrid end year delivered:
  - a. 50 retail apprenticeship frameworks with a QAR of 60% and
  - b. 50 engineering apprenticeship frameworks with a QAR of 82%.

10. The overall QAR would be 71% but the provider would fall below minimum standards because more than 40% of their cohort were on an apprenticeship framework with a QAR below the 62% threshold used for apprenticeships.

## **Failure to Meet Minimum Standards**

11. If a college or training organisation fails to meet minimum standards, our [approach to intervention](#) will apply. We may also use the results of minimum standards to inform business decisions. If we do this, we will specify how as part of those business processes.

## **Proportionality**

12. Where the underperforming provision exceeds the tolerance level but there are fewer than 100 leavers in the cohort (we regard 'All age apprenticeships' and 'Adult (19+) education & training' as cohorts) that is below the minimum standard threshold we will take this into account in making our intervention decision. We expect a provider in this position to set quality improvement targets for the poor provision as a priority.

## **Traineeships**

13. In 2015 we published our intention to develop minimum standards for traineeship outcomes.
14. Through our engagement with the sector we recognise the importance of having the right quality and intervention measures that align across apprenticeships and Further Education where appropriate, whilst maintaining the principle of also measuring the success of traineeships through learner progressions to positive outcomes.
15. We are developing a traineeship success measure based on these principles and we will update the sector in due course. We will therefore continue to apply the existing minimum standards methodology for 2016 to 2017.

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