Further education college condition allocation 2025 to 2026: Methodology

April 2025

Contents

Introduction

Purpose of this document

This document should be read in conjunction with the FE College Condition Allocation (FECCA) 2025 to 2026 Spend Guidance. The purpose of this document is to set out the methodology used in the formula to calculate the allocations.

Changes to FE College structures

This formula takes account of all changes to FE college structures before 01 January 2025. Changes to college structures include mergers and closures of FE colleges, including Sixth Form Colleges that have merged into an eligible FE college.

For providers which have merged into an FE college, learning hours have been assigned to the successor college, and are factored into the total allocation received.

The FECCA Formula

Summary

The FECCA 2025 to 2026 allocation provides funding in proportion with the expected space at each provider. This is modelled using the academic year 2023 to 2024 Individualised Learner Record (ILR), specifically the snapshot 14 dataset (SN14). The steps involved in calculating the allocation are as follows:

- calculate the total learning hours delivered in academic year 2023 to 2024 by each FE college, by region[1] and sector subject area.
- weight the learning hours accounting for space requirements for each sector subject area, to model the expected teaching space for the provision delivered.
- model the expected non-teaching space (e.g. staff areas, corridors, dining spaces), based on learning hours and teaching space requirements.
- model the expected residential space, based on the maximum number of concurrent residential learners in each region during the academic year 2023 to 2024.
- weight the three amounts of expected space (teaching, non-teaching, and residential) by location factor to reflect differing construction costs by region.
- calculate allocation amounts in proportion to the weighted total expected space.

Counting learning hours

We count learning hours using Guided Learning Hours (GLH) from the Learning Aim Reference Service (LARS), or planned programme hours, depending on the type of provision.

For apprenticeships (FundModel 36):

- We count learning hours for apprenticeship 'off-the-job' training using the planned hours specified in the programme aim. Planned hours are capped at a maximum of 7 hours per week
- We count learning hours for English and Maths aims as any other aim (see below). These aims are defined as "Basic Skills Maths and English" as set out in page 18 of Qualification achievement rates: education and training specification 2023 to 2024
- We do not count learning hours for other apprenticeship aims. This is so that off-the-job training hours are not double-counted

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[1] Inner and Outer London are considered as distinct regions. The list of regions and the assigned location factor are set out in the annex

For aims other than apprenticeships, we count learning hours using the first of the following methods for which data is available for the aim:

- GLH from LARS
- Midpoint of the minimum and maximum GLH from LARS
- Hours specified in the aim title (if a range of hours is specified, use the midpoint). Examples are given in table 1
- Assign learning hours based on the length of the aim in calendar days, defined as the time between the learning start date and planned learning end date. The number of learning hours for each aim length is set out in table 2 and is based on the average learning hours of aims with a similar length.

Table 1: Examples of learning hours from aim title

Aim reference	Aim title	Learning hours
Z0059806	Multiply (numeracy) provision delivered together with employers, including courses designed to cover specific numeracy skills required in the workplace,6 to 10 hours	8
Z0007947	Non regulated Adult skills formula funded provision, Entry Level, Nursing and Subjects and Vocations Allied to Medicine, Up to 2 hrs, PW B	2
Z0059794	Multiply (numeracy) provision designed to help people use numeracy to manage their money, over 30 hours	30

Table 2: Learning hours by aim length

Planned aim length (inclusive)	Learning Hours
1 to 7 days	7 * [number of days, to a maximum of 5 days]
8 to 14 days	52
15 to 93 days	56.5
94 to 186 days	80.5
187 to 365 days	130
Over 365 days	360

Learning hours for some aims span multiple academic years. We only capture the learning hours which take place within academic year 2023 to 2024 for the FECCA. We assume that learning hours are evenly distributed throughout the length of the aim.

For aims which are withdrawn, we count the learning hours taking place before withdrawal.

Learning aims that are excluded

The aims excluded from the FECCA are:

- Programme aims, except for apprenticeships
- Aims delivered at distance
- Aims with an actual learning end date before the start of academic year 2023 to 2024
- HE aims
- Work experience/placement aims
- T Level occupational specialisms
- End-point assessments
- Skills bootcamp end-point aims
- Aims with no specified Source of Funding (i.e. the learner or employer is paying the full cost of the learning aim)
- Apprenticeship aims that aren't the programme aim, or Maths and English aims taken as part of an apprenticeship

All other aims are included in the allocation. Learning hours for all aims contribute equally to the final allocation, regardless of the source of funding.

Subject area weightings

We map each sector subject area to a space group and utilisation rate, as defined in the FE college Schedule of Accommodation. These are set out in Table 3 below. In cases where the sector subject area for an aim is missing, these are mapped to the 'Classrooms/ICT-rich Classrooms' teaching space group. A description for each sector subject area is available at Qualification descriptions - GOV.UK.

Table 3: Space groups by Sector Subject Area

Space group	Sector Subject Areas	m² per workplace	Utilisation rate
Classrooms/ ICT-rich Classrooms	1.4 (Public services), 1.5 (Child development and well being), 2.2 (Mathematics and statistics), 3.2 (Horticulture and forestry), 3.4 (Environmental conservation), 5.3 (Urban, rural and regional planning), 6.2 (Digital technology (users)), 8.2 (Travel and tourism), 9.4 (Publishing and information services), 10.1 (History), 10.3 (Philosophy), 10.4 (Theology and religious studies), 11.1 (Geography), 11.2 (Sociology and social policy), 11.3 (Politics), 11.4 (Economics), 11.5 (Anthropology), 12.1 (Languages, literature and culture of the British Isles), 12.2 (Other languages, literature and culture), 12.3 (Linguistics), 13.1 (Teaching and lecturing), 13.2 (Direct learning support), 15.1 (Accounting and finance), 15.2 (Administration), 15.3 (Business management), 15.4 (Marketing and sales), 15.5 (Law and legal services)	2.2	48%
Small-scale	2.1 (Science), 3.3 (Animal care and veterinary science), 5.1 (Architecture), 6.1 (Digital technology (practitioners)), 10.2 (Archaeology and archaeological sciences)	3.2	48%
Medium-scale	7.1 (Retailing and wholesaling), 7.3 (Services enterprises), 9.2 (Craft, creative arts and design), 9.3 (Media and communication)	4.9	44%
Large-scale	1.1 (Medicine and dentistry), 1.2 (Nursing, and subjects and vocations allied to medicine), 1.3 (Health and social care), 3.1 (Agriculture), 7.4 (Hospitality and catering), 9.1 (Performing arts), 14.1 (Foundations for learning and life), 14.2 (Preparation for work)	6.5	40%
Extra-large scale	4.1 (Engineering), 4.2 (Manufacturing technologies), 4.3 (Transportation operations and maintenance), 5.2 (Building and construction), 7.2 (Warehousing and distribution), 8.1 (Sport, leisure, and recreation)	7.5	36%

Expected teaching GIFA

Teaching space is the space used for delivery of learning hours, e.g. classrooms, animal care training rooms, workshops, and dance studios.

We assume that 70% of learning hours in each sector subject area take place in classrooms, with the remaining 30% of learning hours taking place in the space category to which the sector subject area has been assigned.

We calculate the number of workplaces required in each space type as follows:

learning hours / (total available hours x utilisation rate)

Where "total available hours" is 1,440 hours as set out in [Further education estates planning - Understanding the estate - Guidance - GOV.UK](#). Utilisation rates are taken from the Schedule of Accomodation and are defined as the proportion of workplaces that are in use (as an average) throughout the annual 1440-hour period.

We calculate the required teaching space as follows:

(workplaces required in mapped space × m^2 per workplace for mapped space) + (workplaces required in classrooms × m^2 per workplace for classrooms)

For each college, we calculate the teaching space required for each sector subject area in which teaching is taking place.

Expected non-teaching GIFA

Non-teaching space is the space used to support teaching, e.g. dining and social spaces, staffrooms, storage, toilets, and hallways. More detail can be found in [FE college Schedule of Accommodation](#).

We calculate non-teaching space in two parts: support space, and balance space. Calculations are based on two factors:

- Planned Average Attendance (PAA)[2]
- Teaching space

We calculate support space as follows:
(PAA × 2.6m^2) + (teaching space × 13%)

We calculate balance space as follows:
(PAA × 0.09m^2) + ((teaching space + support space) × 43%)

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[2] PAA is calculated as total learning hours, divided by total available hours (defined as 1,440)

Non-teaching space is the sum of support space and balance space. These values are taken from the Schedule of Accommodation ("Library volume 1") as the expected GIFA for support space and balance space.

Expected residential GIFA

Residential space is the space used for accommodation of residential learners.

Residential learners are defined as:

- Learners with code 5 for the learner accommodation field
- Learners with at least one aim with Learning Delivery Monitoring code 322

For each college with residential learners recorded, we calculate the highest number of concurrent residential learners at any point within the academic year. We multiply this by $34m^2$ to calculate the required residential space. If a college has residential learners in multiple regions, then this is done separately for each region to allow for location weighting in the next step.

An estimate of $34m^2$ is based on the standards set out in Annex B FE Residential Accommodation National Minimum Standards.

Total expected GIFA and resulting allocations

For each FE college, we calculate the total expected space to deliver the learning provision by that college in each region as the sum of teaching, non-teaching, and residential space.

We weight the expected space in each region by applying location factors, produced by Building Cost Information Service, to reflect the different cost of construction works around the country.

The FECCA formula allocates funding between FE colleges in proportion with their total expected space, accounting for regional cost differences.

Annex: excluded aims

Aims excluded	How aims are identified
Programme aims, except for apprenticeships,	Learning Aim Reference ZPROG001 and Funding Model not 36
Aims delivered at distance	Delivery Location Postcode "ZZ99 9ZZ"
Aims with an actual learning end date before the start of Academic Year 2023 to 2024	Learning Actual End Date before 01 August 2023
HE aims	EnglandFEHEStatus "H"
Work experience/placement aims	Any of the following Learning Aim References: • Z0009121 • Z0009122 • Z0009123 • Z0009124 • Z0009125 • Z0009128 • Z0009129 • Z0009130 • Z0009547 • Z0010081 • Z0010197 • Z0060200 • Z0060201 • Z0060203 • Z0060204 • Z0060205 • Z0060206 • Z0060207 • Z0060208 • Z0060209 • ZWRKX001 • ZWRKX002 • ZWRKX003

T Level occupational specialisms	Any [Learning Aim Reference](#) starting with "ZTLOS"
End-point assessments	[LearnAimRefType](#) 1467
Skills bootcamp end-point aims	[Learning Aim Reference](#) Z0059747, Z0059748, Z0059749
Aims with no specified Source of Funding	[Source of Funding](#) not returned
Apprenticeship aims that aren't the programme aim, or Maths and English aims taken as part of an apprenticeship	[Funding Model](#) 36 and [Learning Aim Reference](#) not ZPROG001 and SR_Qualification_Type not "Basic Skills Maths and English" as set out on page 18 of [Qualification achievement rates: education and training specification 2023 to 2024](#).

Annex: location factors

Region	Location factor
North East	0.93
Yorkshire and the Humber	0.94
West Midlands	0.95
North West	0.99
East of England	1.01
South West	1.02
East Midlands	1.05
South East	1.08
Outer London	1.19
Inner London	1.26

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