



11 July 2019

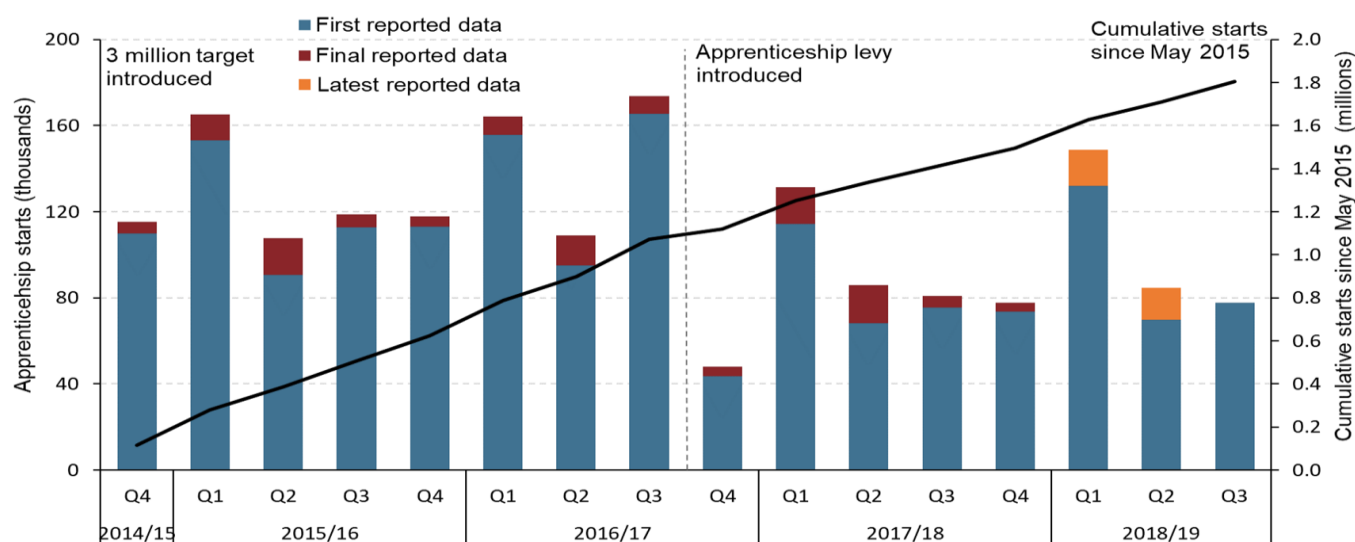
This statistics publication contains provisional data on apprenticeships and traineeships for the first three quarters of the 2018/19 academic year (August 2018 to April 2019).

Apprenticeship Reforms

As of May 2017, there were significant changes to how apprenticeship funding works including the introduction of the apprenticeship levy and Apprenticeship Service (please see [section 4](#) for more detail). The profile of apprenticeship starts changed significantly in the run up to the introduction of the levy and beyond, and this is likely to have impacted on apprenticeship starts and participation as the new approach beds in, so care should be taken in comparing and interpreting data presented in this release. This is especially the case when trying to compare starts in quarter 3 (February to April) in both 2018/19 and 2017/18 to starts in quarter 3 of 2016/17, as there was an unusually large increase in quarter 3 of 2016/17, and then an unusually large decrease in quarter 4 (May to July) of 2016/17. Please see section 3 for a glossary which includes further information on the apprenticeship levy.

Apprenticeship starts reported so far for the first three quarters of 2018/19 have increased in comparison to figures reported at this time in 2017/18, but are below equivalent figures reported at this time in 2016/17 and 2015/16.

Figure 1: All age apprenticeship starts, England^{1,2}



Source: Individualised Learner Record

There were 311,200 apprenticeship starts reported so far for the first three quarters of the 2018/19 academic year, an increase of 7.1 per cent from 290,500 reported at this time in 2017/18. Starts have decreased by 29.3 and 19.1 per cent compared to the equivalent period this time in 2016/17 and 2015/16, before the introduction of the apprenticeship levy.

As part of its election manifesto in May 2015, the government set a target of 3 million apprenticeship starts by 2020. There were 1,806,500 apprenticeship starts reported to April 2019 since May 2015. The government has an obligation in statute (introduced by the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016) to report on progress against the target until 2020.

¹ Final data for the full 2018/19 academic year will be published in November 2019.

² First reported data are those initially reported in-year, and final reported data are those submitted in October for each academic year. The chart shows data aggregated for each quarter of the academic year, which runs from August to July.

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About this release

This statistics publication contains provisional figures for the first three quarters of the 2018/19 academic year (August 2018 to April 2019) for England, based on information that has been reported to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) by further education colleges and providers in June 2019. Data are subject to change until final data is published in November 2019 as some learning providers report some of their data for this period later in the year. Provider behaviour in reporting can also change from year to year.

This statistical release presents information on:

- All age (16+) apprenticeships in England.
- Traineeships (16-24)

Please see the 'further information' section in this document for additional information on changes in this release and planned changes for the next release.

Please see the Quality and Methodology document that accompanied the [March Further Education and Skills release](#) for links to data for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

1. In-year apprenticeships and traineeships for England, 2018/19

The data in this statistical release provides an early view of performance and will change as further data returns are received. Since providers report some of their data for this period later in the year, the data are subject to change (in either direction) until final data is received.

At this point in the year, 2018/19 figures are referred to as *reported so far* or *reported to date* to reflect this. This release reports on the provisional first three quarters of the 2018/19 academic year.

It is not possible to determine how complete or incomplete the information returned so far is, and this can vary for each reporting period year-on-year, therefore care should be taken when comparing data reported so far in 2018/19 to the equivalent reporting periods in 2017/18 and earlier³.

This is particularly the case as provider reporting behaviour may change year to year. In addition, provider reporting behaviour may have particularly been affected since the introduction of the apprenticeship levy in April 2017. More accurate comparisons can be made once final returns for the academic year are made, due to be returned in October 2019 and due to be published in November 2019.

Summary and key headlines – 2018/19 (data reported so far)

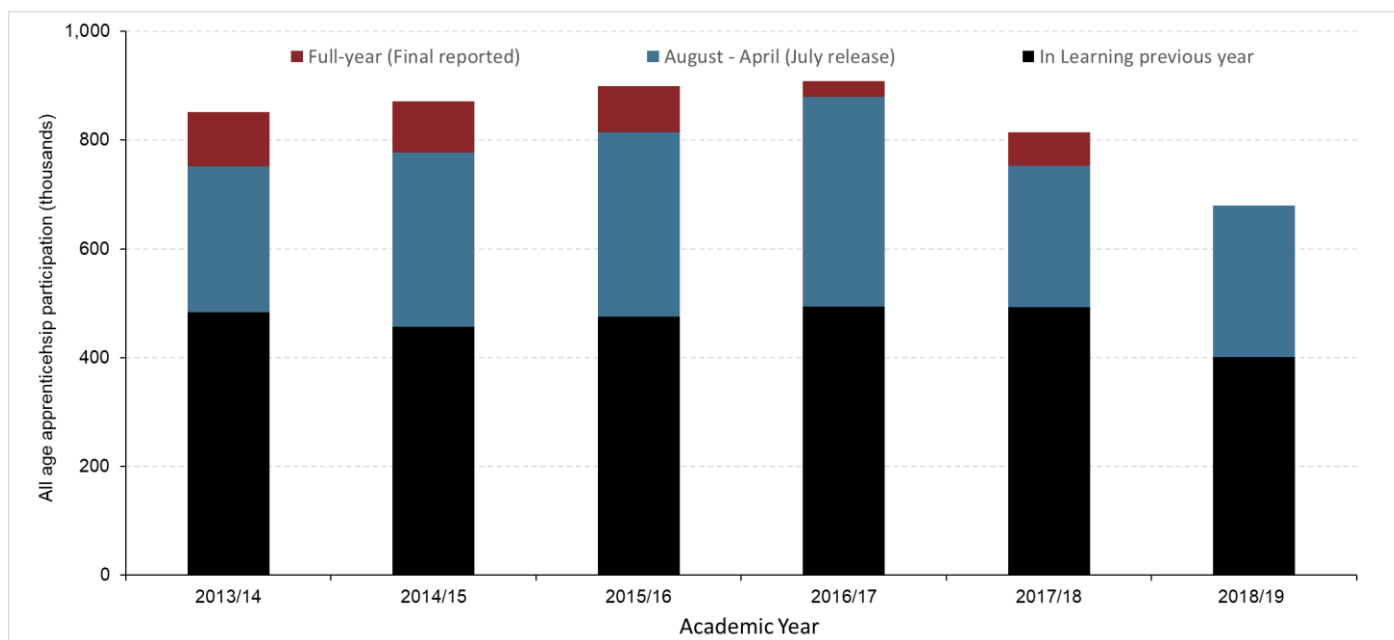
Apprenticeship participation	Participation decreased by 9.8 per cent so far in 2018/19 compared to the equivalent period in 2017/18, from 753,200 in 2017/18 to 679,500 participants reported to date for 2018/19.
Apprenticeship starts	<p>Starts increased by 7.1 per cent in the first three quarters of 2018/19 compared to the equivalent time period in 2017/18 from 290,500 in 2017/18 to 311,200 apprenticeship starts reported to date for 2018/19. However, starts remain lower than the equivalent time periods in 2016/17 and 2015/16; before the introduction of the apprenticeship levy.</p> <p>There have been 1,806,500 apprenticeship starts since May 2015, and 4,184,000 starts since May 2010.</p> <p>54.8 per cent of total starts in the first three quarters of 2018/19 were levy-supported (170,500). The levy has supported 377,700 starts since its introduction in May 2017.</p> <p>61.5 per cent of total starts were on apprenticeship standards (191,500) in the first three quarters of 2018/19. There have now been 384,500 starts on apprenticeship standards since their introduction in September 2014.</p>
Traineeships	Starts decreased by 16.8 per cent in the first three quarters of 2018/19 from 15,000 to 12,500.

³ Please refer to the Quality and Methodology document that accompanied the [March Further Education and Skills release](#) for more information.

Apprenticeship participation (Table 1)

Participation measures the total number of apprenticeships that were active for at least one day in the academic year. Final, full-year participation figures for 2013/14 – 2017/18 are made up of all starts in that year and those continuing learning from the previous year(s). In addition to the caveats noted on page 3 above, other factors may impact when making comparisons to previous years for participation given increases in apprenticeship duration and more starts on higher level apprenticeships over recent years.

Figure 2: All age apprenticeship participation, England^{1,4}



Of the 679,500 participants in the first three quarters of 2018/19, 401,400 apprenticeship participants have been carried over from 2017/18. The table below shows how many apprenticeship participants have been carried over since 2013/14.

Apprenticeship participation in Time Series

Academic Year	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19 (August to April reported so far)
Number of apprenticeship participants carried over from the previous academic year	483,200	456,400	475,200	493,700	492,400	401,400
Total Apprenticeship Participants	851,500	871,800	899,400	908,700	814,800	679,500

Apprenticeship participation data reported for the first three quarters of the 2018/19 academic year show that there were:

679,500 participants on an apprenticeship, a decrease of 9.8 per cent from 753,200 reported for the first three quarters of 2017/18, a decrease of 22.7 per cent from the 879,500 reported for the first three quarters of 2016/17 and a decrease of 16.6 per cent from the 814,400 reported for the first three quarters of 2015/16.

⁴ 2018/19 data show in-year data reported so far for 'August to April'. The chart shows full final year data for previous years as well as a breakdown for the period 'August to April' as reported at the equivalent time to this publication to allow comparisons.

The table below shows Apprenticeship participation measures compared to the equivalent time period in 2017/18. Care should be taken in comparing in-year participation with the equivalent period in 2017/18 and interpreting overall change. In-year figures will be affected by fluctuations in when starts occur within the academic year and the length of the apprenticeships for those continuing from previous year(s).

Additionally, the picture of how participation is changing will be further complicated by the increase in starts on apprenticeship standards and changes in the level of provision, therefore on average apprentices are staying longer on the programme.

Apprenticeship participation comparison

Level/Age	Measure	2017/18 (August to April reported this time last year)	2018/19 (August to April reported so far)	Percentage Change ⁵
All	All	753,200	679,500	-9.8%
Level	Intermediate	349,600	253,600	-27.5%
	Advanced	342,700	325,000	-5.2%
	Higher	73,600	111,300	51.3%
Age	Under 19	160,500	146,300	-8.9%
	19 and over	592,700	533,200	-10.0%

Apprenticeship starts (Table 2.1)

Apprenticeship Levy

The profile of apprenticeship starts changed significantly in the run up to the introduction of the levy and beyond, therefore care should be taken when comparing individual quarters with previous years, as they are unlikely to provide a meaningful year on year trend.

This is especially the case when trying to compare starts in quarter 3 of 2018/19 and 2017/18 to starts in quarter 3 of 2016/17, as there was an unusually large increase in starts in March and April 2017, and then an unusually large decrease in starts in May 2017 when compared to previous years (see [Figure 1](#)).

In quarter 3 of 2016/17, the 3 month period immediately before the introduction of the levy, apprenticeship starts were 46.3% higher than the equivalent period in 2015/16. In quarter 4 of 2016/17, the 3 month period immediately after the introduction of the levy, starts were 59.3% lower than the equivalent period in 2015/16.

For further details on monthly apprenticeship starts please refer to the Apprenticeships and Levy Statistics releases: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/further-education-and-skills-statistical-first-release-sfr>

There were 311,200 apprenticeship starts reported so far for the first three quarters of the 2018/19 academic year. This represents:

An increase of 7.1 per cent from 290,500 reported for the first three quarters of 2017/18.

A decrease of 29.3 per cent from the 440,300 reported for the first three quarters of 2016/17, prior to the introduction of the apprenticeship levy.

⁵ All percentages are based on unrounded data.

A decrease of 19.1 per cent from the 384,500 reported for the first three quarters of 2015/16.

The table below shows Apprenticeship starts measures compared to the equivalent time period in 2017/18. Higher level starts increased by 68 per cent compared to this time last year, and starts for adults (aged 19 and over) increased by 13.8 per cent.

Apprenticeship starts comparison

Level/Age	Measure	2017/18 (August to April reported this time last year)	2018/19 (August to April reported so far)	Percentage Change
All	All	290,500	311,200	7.1%
Level	Intermediate	127,000	114,800	-9.6%
	Advanced	127,900	136,600	6.8%
	Higher	35,600	59,800	68.0%
Age	Under 19	90,300	83,400	-7.7%
	19 and over	200,200	227,800	13.8%

80.8 per cent of starts were at the intermediate and advanced levels, a 6.9 percentage point decrease from 87.7 per cent in the first three quarters of 2017/18.

Apprenticeship standards represented 61.5 per cent of total apprenticeship starts in the first three quarters of 2018/19 compared to 41.2 per cent this time last year. The number of starts on standards has increased to 191,500, compared to 119,500 reported at this time last year, however more standards became available in 2018/19.

Of the 191,500 starts on standards:

124,200 were levy supported starts, meaning 64.8 per cent of starts on standards were levy supported.

42,000 were aged under 19, compared to 30,000 in the first three quarters of 2017/18

149,500 were aged 19 and over, compared to 89,500 in the first three quarters of 2017/18

- There have now been 384,500 starts on apprenticeship standards since their introduction in September 2014. This represents 17.9 per cent of total apprenticeship starts since September 2014.
- 36,800 apprenticeships were started by individuals who are from a black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) group⁶. This is 12.1 per cent⁷ of apprenticeship starts reported so far in 2018/19, compared to 11.2 per cent reported at the same point in 2017/18.

⁶ levels of BAME and LLDD do fluctuate over a year as providers submit data throughout the year, so care should be taken in comparing with previous years' full year data. Full year data for 2018/19 will be available in November 2019.

⁷ There has been a minor methodology change in the percentage calculation for the BAME and LLDD measures here to remove instances of unknown ethnicity and unknown learning difficulty/disability. The figures shown for 2018/19 and 2017/18 both have the new approach. If the unknowns were included in the denominator, both BAME and LLDD proportions would be 11.8 per cent for

- 36,900 apprenticeships were started by individuals who are from the learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LLDD)⁶ group. This is 12.3 per cent⁷ of apprenticeship starts reported so far in 2018/19, compared to 11.5 per cent reported at the same point in 2017/18.
- 377,700 levy supported starts have been recorded following the changes to funding arrangements since the introduction of the apprenticeship levy, representing 51.4 per cent of total apprenticeship starts since the levy was introduced in May 2017.
- 170,500 levy supported starts were reported in the first three quarters of 2018/19, representing 54.8 per cent of total starts reported so far in the academic year.

Of the 170,500 levy supported starts reported in the first three quarters of 2018/19:

53,800 were intermediate level

72,500 were advanced level

44,200 were higher level apprenticeships

- There have been 1,806,500 apprenticeship starts reported to April 2019 since May 2015 (including 115,300 in Q4 2014/15) and 4,184,000 starts reported to April 2019 since May 2010 (including 64,500 in Q4 2009/10).

Apprenticeship achievements (Table 2.2)

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. Care should be taken in comparing in-year achievements and interpreting overall change. In year estimates will be affected by historic fluctuations in when starts occur within the academic year (and therefore when they finish). Additionally, the picture of how participation and achievements are changing will be further complicated by the increase in starts on apprenticeship standards and changes in the level of provision.

There were 122,000 apprenticeship achievements reported for the first three quarters of the 2018/19 academic year. This represents:

A decrease of 32.8 per cent from 181,400 reported for the first three quarters of 2017/18.

A decrease of 32.3 per cent from 180,100 reported for the first three quarters of 2016/17.

A decrease of 29.5 per cent from 173,100 reported for the first three quarters of 2015/16.

The table below shows Apprenticeship achievements measures compared to the equivalent time period in 2017/18.

2018/19 so far, compared to 11.0 per cent for BAME and 11.2 per cent for LLDD for the first three quarters of 2017/18. See the technical information section below for detail.

Apprenticeships Achievements Comparison

Level/Age	Measure	2017/18 (August to April reported this time last year)	2018/19 (August to April reported so far)	Percentage Change
All	All	181,400	122,000	-32.8%
Level	Intermediate	99,600	58,500	-41.2%
	Advanced	72,600	55,000	-24.3%
	Higher	9,300	8,400	-8.7%
Age	Under 19	50,200	38,700	-23.1%
	19 and over	131,200	83,300	-36.5%

Additional breakdowns of apprenticeship statistics are published online at the further education data library⁸.

Traineeships (Tables 3.1, 3.2 & 3.3)

There were 12,500 traineeship starts reported for the first three quarters of the 2018/19 academic year so far. This represents:

A decrease of 16.8 per cent from 15,000 reported in the first three quarters of 2017/18.

A decrease of 26.3 per cent from 17,000 reported in the first three quarters of 2016/17.

A decrease of 35.4 per cent from 19,400 reported in the first three quarters of 2015/16.

Of the 12,500 traineeship starts recorded in the first three quarters of 2018/19:

10,200 were under 19, a decrease of 10.2 per cent from 11,300 in the first three quarters of 2017/18

2,300 were aged 19 to 24, a decrease of 36.9 per cent from 3,700 in the first three quarters of 2017/18

In the March 2019 Further Education and Skills we published data on traineeship completion and conversion rates for the first time. The next update to both of these measures will be in the November 2019 Further Education and Skills publication with final year figures for both of the rates. For completeness, the commentary and tables on these measures from the March 2019 release has been included in this release.

For learners starting traineeships between 2014/15 and 2016/17, the completion rate has increased year-on-year. 66.5 per cent of learners starting a traineeship during the 2014/15 academic year completed them, rising to 71.3 per cent of those starting in 2015/16 and 78.3 per cent in 2016/17.

Provisional figures show that 77.1 per cent of learners who started traineeships in the 2017/18 academic year went on to complete them. This is lower than the final reported completion rate based on 2016/17 traineeship starts but is not directly comparable until final data for completions occurring in the 2018/19 academic year are available in November.

⁸ Further information is available in the [further education data library](#).

- Of the traineeships started in 2017/18, provisional completion rates reported so far are:
 - 75.4 per cent for 16-18 year olds (equivalent final completion rate for 2016/17 starts was 76.7 per cent);
 - 82.0 per cent for those aged 19 and over (completion rate for 2016/17 starts was 81.7 per cent)
- 25.3 per cent of traineeships started in the 2016/17 academic year led to an apprenticeship start before the end 2017/18. This is a 1 percentage-point fall from the conversion rate seen from traineeship starts in 2015/16 (26.3 per cent) and 3.6 percentage points below the 28.9 per cent conversion rate from 2014/15 starts.⁹
- Of the 20,300 traineeships started in 2016/17:
 - 32.1 per cent of these traineeship starts by those who were aged 16-18 (at the start of the traineeship) were converted into an apprenticeship start by the end of 2017/18. This conversion rate is a 3 percentage point drop in apprenticeship starts following from traineeship starts in 2015/16 by 16-18 year olds (35.1 per cent).
 - 10.6 per cent of 19-24 year olds went on start an apprenticeship by the end of 2017/18, a fall of 1.9 percentage points from the conversion rate of 12.5 per cent reported starting an apprenticeship within a year, following 2015/16 traineeship starts.

2. Accompanying tables

The following tables are available in Excel format [here](#).

Year to date tables

- 1 All Age Apprenticeship Participation by Level and Age (2010/11 to 2018/19 reported to date)
- 2.1 All Age Apprenticeship Programme Starts by Level and Age (2010/11 to 2018/19 reported to date)
- 2.2 All Age Apprenticeship Programme Achievements by Level and Age (2010/11 to 2018/19 reported to date)
- 3.1 Traineeship starts by age (2013/14 to 2018/19 reported to date)
- 3.2 Traineeship starts and completion rates, by age-group, for traineeships started between 2014/15 and 2017/18 (provisional)
- 3.3 Traineeship starts and apprenticeship conversion rates by age-group, for traineeships started between 2014/15 and 2016/17

Supplementary tables

Additional breakdowns of further education statistics are published online in the [FE Data Library](#). These additional breakdowns include breakdowns by age, gender, ethnicity, learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, region, local authority, local authority district, parliamentary constituency, sector subject area and funding stream.

Supplementary data tools and tables

- 1 Apprenticeship demographic and sector subject area PivotTable tool: starts and achievements 2017/18 to Q3 2018/19
- 2 Apprenticeship framework/standard and sector subject area PivotTable tool: starts and achievements 2017/18 to Q3 2018/19
- 3 Apprenticeship geography and sector subject area PivotTable tool: starts and achievements 2017/18 to Q3 2018/19
- 4 Apprenticeship demographic, sector subject area and local authority district PivotTable tool: starts and achievements 2014/15 to Q3 2018/19

⁹ Further information on the destinations of trainees can be found in the [Outcome Based success measures publication](#).

- 5 Apprenticeship framework/standard, demographic and sector subject area PivotTable tool: starts and achievements 2014/15 to Q3 2018/19
- 6 Apprenticeships by region and sector subject area: participation 2009/10 to 2018/19 (reported to date)

When reviewing the tables, please note that:

- **We preserve confidentiality**
The [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#) requires us to take reasonable steps to ensure that our published or disseminated statistics protect confidentiality.
- **We suppress some figures**
In the 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 main tables and below 5 in the supplementary tables.
'*' indicates a percentage of less than 0.5%.
- **We round figures**
In the main tables, headline volumes are reported rounded to the nearest 100. In the supplementary tables, volumes are rounded to the nearest 10. There may be exceptions to this in instances where 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 release includes provisional data for the first three quarters of the 2018/19 academic year (August 2018 to April 2019) returned to the Education and Skills Funding Agency in June 2019 by further education providers.

3. Further information

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

Please see the [FE Data Library](#).

Monthly transparency data on apprenticeship and levy statistics are also available [here](#).

About this release

This statistics publication contains provisional figures for the first three quarters of the 2018/19 academic year (August 2018 to April 2019) for England, based on information that has been reported to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) by further education colleges and providers in June 2019. Data are subject to change until final data is published in November 2019 as some learning providers report some of their data for this period later in the year. Provider behaviour in reporting can also change from year to year.

This statistical release presents information on:

- Traineeships (16-24)
- All age (16+) apprenticeships in England.

Please see the Quality and Methodology document that accompanied the [March Further Education and Skills release](#) for links to data for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

In this publication

The following tables are included in this release:

- 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>

Glossary

Apprenticeship: apprenticeships are paid jobs that incorporate on- and off-the-job training leading to nationally recognised qualifications. As an employee, apprentices earn as they learn and gain practical skills in the workplace.

Apprenticeship levy: The UK wide apprenticeship levy came into force on 6 April 2017 requiring all UK public and private sector employers with an annual pay bill of £3 million or more to invest in apprenticeship training

Apprenticeship Service: an online service introduced as part of the levy reforms to allow employers to choose and pay for apprenticeship training more easily.

Apprenticeship start: the number of programmes that begin in a given time period. This measure helps determine the take-up of programmes. An apprentice is counted for each apprenticeship they start.

Apprenticeship achievement: where a learner has achieved all elements of an apprenticeship framework.

Apprenticeship participation: the number of people who are undertaking an apprenticeship in a given time period.

Traineeship: traineeships were introduced in the 2013/14 academic year to provide young people with essential work preparation, English, maths and work experience to secure an apprenticeship or other work.

Further definitions are available in the Quality and Methodology document that accompanied the [March Further Education and Skills release](#).

Changes included in this release

From July 2019, we have revised the method of calculating the percentages of apprenticeship starts by black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) group and of those learners declaring a learning difficulty and/or disability (see the technical information section in this document)

Changes in the next release

The apprenticeships and traineeships figures are released twice per year (January and July) as a stand-alone release, and will be subsumed and combined into the main Further Education and Skills statistics release each March and November. The next release containing apprenticeships and traineeships statistics will be included in the Further Education and Skills release in November 2019. This will contain final year data for the 2018/19 academic year (August 2018 to July 2019).

We are changing how we release our statistics to further modernise our approach to dissemination. This will be through a new DfE statistics dissemination platform to make our data and statistics easier to find, access, navigate and understand. See more information below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education/about/statistics>

We plan to move to using the new dissemination platform from November 2019. Further announcements will be made on this in due course.

As with many policy areas, further education is a broad and changing topic. 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 accompanied the [March Further Education and Skills release](#).

For the latest full year figures (for the 2017/18 academic year), please see the [November 2018 Further Education and Skills release](#).

Other related publications

The Apprenticeship and levy statistics: May 2019 statistics publication provides provisional apprenticeship starts figures for the first eight months of the 2018/19 academic year (August 2018 to March 2019) recorded on the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) in March 2019. This monthly transparency publication provides timely insight of headline apprenticeship starts, giving transparency on the development of the apprenticeships levy and the apprenticeship system as a whole, and is published while the levy system is bedding in. The next release of this publication will be on 25 July 2019 and will provide provisional apprenticeship starts figures for the first ten months of the 2018/19 academic year (August 2018 – May 2019).

Feedback

We are changing how our releases look and welcome feedback on any aspect of this document and accompanying tables, please contact: FE.OFFICIALSTATISTICS@education.gov.uk.

4. The apprenticeship funding system

Changes in the way apprenticeship funding works were introduced and implemented from May 2017. Guidance about these changes and paying the apprenticeship levy can be found [here](#) at this link:

A key aspect of these changes was the introduction of the apprenticeship service, an online service to allow employers to choose and pay for apprenticeship training more easily. Levy-payers are able to register on the apprenticeship service so that they can:

1. receive levy funds to spend on apprenticeships
2. manage their apprentices
3. pay their training provider

5. Other technical information

In this release, we have revised the way we calculate the proportions of black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) and learners with declared learning difficulty and/or disability (LLDD) by excluding the unknown figures from the total apprenticeship starts (see page 5 in this document) This is so we are in line with other DfE statistical publications. Previously we calculated the proportions using total starts as the denominator without excluding the unknown learners/starts. The impact of this is shown in the table below:

Proportions of Apprenticeship starts for BAME and LLDD groups by academic year

2014/15 2015/16 2016/17 2017/18 2018/19 (August to April)

	final data				data reported to date
BAME including unknown in the denominator	10.6%	10.5%	11.2%	11.2%	11.8%
BAME excluding unknown in the denominator	10.7%	10.6%	11.3%	11.4%	12.1%
unknown ethnicity as a proportion of total starts	0.9%	1.4%	1.1%	1.5%	2.1%
LLDD including unknown in the denominator	8.8%	9.9%	10.3%	11.2%	11.8%
LLDD excluding unknown in the denominator	8.9%	10.1%	10.4%	11.6%	12.3%
Unknown LLDD as a proportion of total starts	1.3%	1.5%	1.4%	3.0%	3.4%

Note: ethnicity and learning difficulty/disability are self-declared by the learner

For more technical information, please see the latest Further Education and Skills release and the accompanying quality and methodology information published alongside it [here](#).

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.

6. National Statistics

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority (UKSA) has designated these statistics as National Statistics in January 2012 (https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/images-assessment-report-78-further-education-and-skills_tcm97-35239.pdf), 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.

Since the last assessment, we have made the following improvements to these statistics to continue their compliance with the Code of Practice:

We highlighted the key methodology information in the Quality and Methodology document (see the methodology document accompanying the last [March Further Education and Skills release](#)) including data quality issues surrounding the in-year data in our releases and ensured our in-year statistics are now clearly caveated. We have improved the commentary with charts and the necessary caveats to aid interpretation and to visually reflect the variability with in-year statistics. We made a number of changes to our publication structure and publication timings from January 2018, which were outlined in the [Proposed Changes](#) document in November 2017. We have responded to various user needs by creating more data tools with the view to improving the richness of data, increasing efficiencies, and enabling re-use of those statistics, thereby improving flexibility of the statistics. We have developed a new table finder to help users navigate the tools in the further education data library. These changes, particularly those implemented for the 2017/18 academic year were informed by user feedback, an internal review of further education Official Statistics, and departmental priorities, with a view to improving consistency across our statistical publications. Furthermore, [the FE Official Statistics mailbox](#) has been introduced as the central point of contact for further engagement and to invite feedback.

The Department has a set of [statistical policies](#) in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

7. Get in touch

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

Reference: [Apprenticeships and Traineeships: July 2019]



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