Medr statistics

Learner outcome measures for apprenticeships, August 2023 to July 2024

Statistics reference: Sta/Medr/07/2025

Date: 12 March 2025

Designation: Official Statistics (see change in accredited statistics status)

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Summary: **Statistics on the success and completion of apprenticeships by level of study, type of learning aim, sector, and learning characteristics**

Theme: Apprenticeships

Source: Lifelong Learning Record Wales (LLWR)

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg neu yn Saesneg

We welcome correspondence in Welsh and in English

Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi

Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delays.

Noddir gan Lywodraeth Cymru

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Contents

Note

Adult community learning statistics have been removed from this release due to data quality issues. Please see the Quality and methodology information for details on how the data quality issues are being investigated and will be handled.

Main points

Apprenticeships

- The success rate of apprenticeships increased in 2023/24 to 74%, it is still lower than before the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Foundation level apprenticeships showed the strongest recovery in 2023/24.
- The success rate for higher apprenticeships is much lower than for other levels and has recovered the least since the pandemic.
- Higher apprentices passed only a little over of half of the application of number essential skills activities they took.
- There were large increases in the overall success rate in the sectors of
  - Health Care and Public Services;
  - Hospitality;
  - Leisure, Sport & Travel.
- Among the larger sectors, the success rate fell in
  - Construction;
  - Management and Professional.
- The success rate gap between learners in the most deprived areas and least deprived areas is closing.
- There were large increases in the success rate for learners across minority ethnic backgrounds.
- Apprenticeship activities completed entirely in Welsh had a higher than average success rate.

Summary

This report presents the key outcomes of apprenticeships from the 2023/24 academic year.

The standard outcome measures were not produced in the 2019/20 and 2020/21 academic years due to the pandemic. More information can be found in the notes.

The apprenticeship success rate increased from 72% in 2022/23 to 74% in 2023/24

Figure 1: Apprenticeship success rate by academic year, August 2013 to July 2024
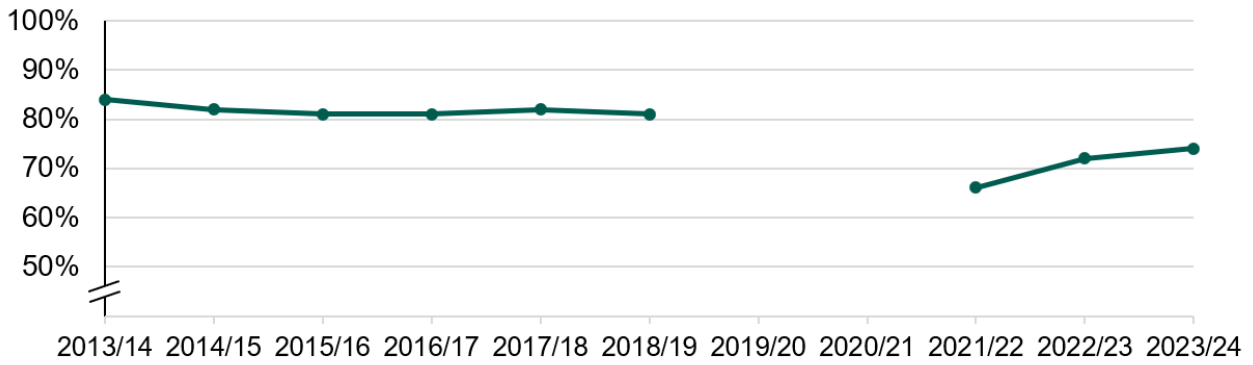
Description: The apprenticeship success rate continues to recover post-pandemic, a gap still exists between the current success rate and pre-pandemic success rates.

Data on StatsWales

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships have 4 levels:

- Foundation apprenticeships – Level 2 (equivalent to GCSEs graded A* to C)

- Apprenticeships – Level 3 (equivalent to A levels)

- Higher apprenticeships – Level 4 and above (equivalent to foundation degree)

- Degree apprenticeships – Level 6 and above (equivalent to bachelor's degree)

The statistics in this report cover foundation apprenticeships, level 3 apprenticeships, and higher apprenticeships. They do not cover degree apprenticeships.

Learners on apprenticeship programmes must achieve a range of qualifications to attain their apprenticeship. The success rate is the percentage of leavers from apprenticeships who attained the full apprenticeship framework.

Outcomes by programme level

All apprenticeship levels saw an increase in success rate

Figure 2: Apprenticeship success rate by level and academic year, August 2016 to July 2024
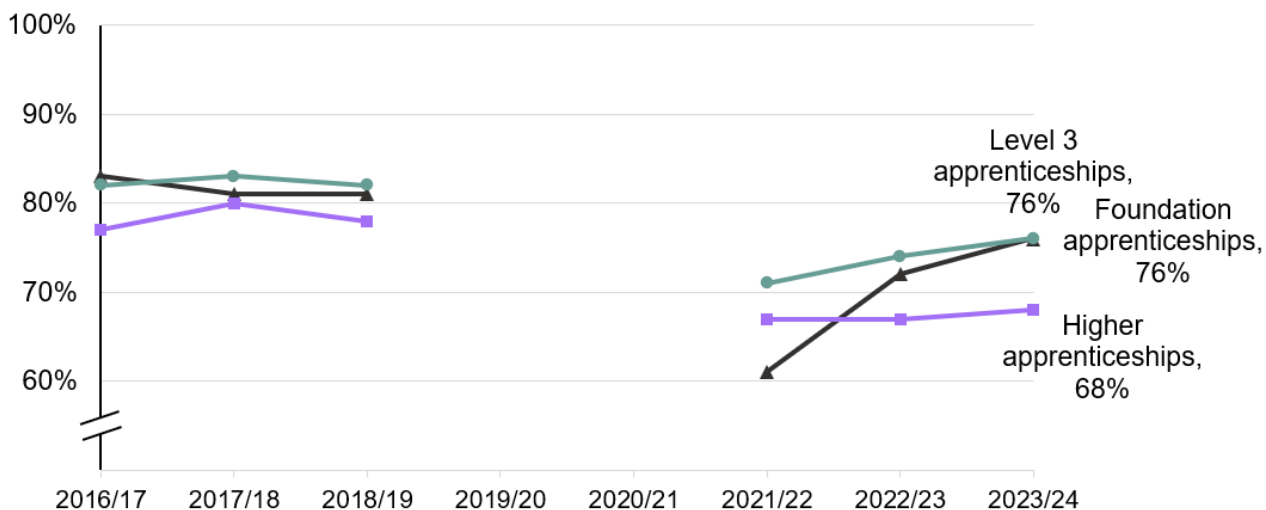
Description: The success rate for all three levels of apprenticeships are at their highest since 2018/19, prior to the pandemic.
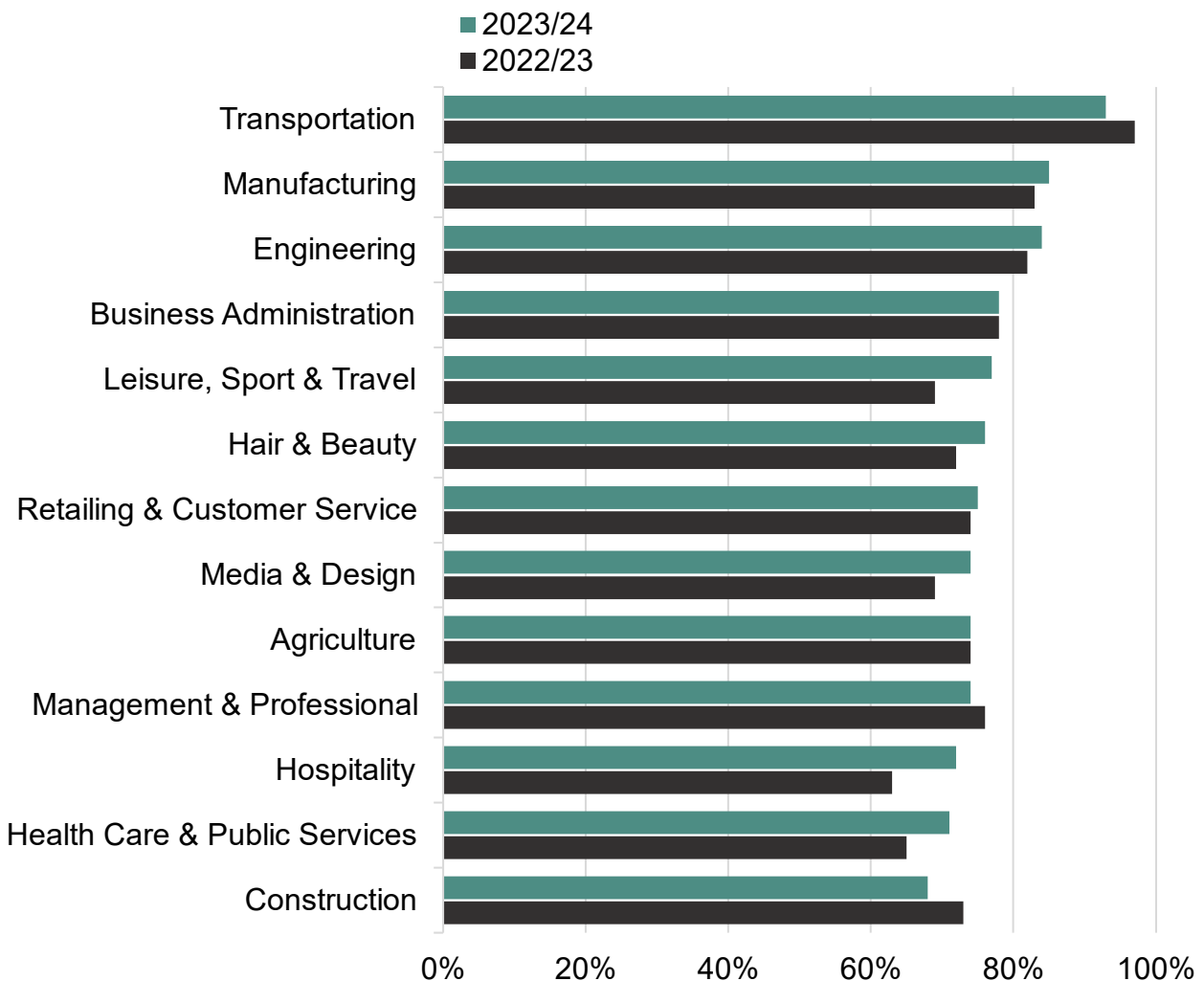
Data on StatsWales

Foundation apprenticeships saw the biggest increase in success rate in 2023/24 with an increase of 4 percentage points from 2022/23. Higher apprenticeships saw an increase of one percentage point from 2022/23, the first growth since 2017/18. Level 3 apprenticeships saw a further increase of two percentage points in 2023/24.

The higher apprenticeship success rate has not recovered after the pandemic to the same extent as foundation and level 3 apprenticeships have recovered. Two providers had substantially lower success rates in higher apprenticeships compared to the other eight providers. The overall higher apprenticeship success rate is 68%, excluding these two providers the higher apprenticeship success rate would be 71%.

Sector

The majority of sectors saw increases in success rate

Figure 3: Apprenticeship success rate by sector subject area and academic year, August 2022 to July 2024

Description: The sectors that saw the largest increases were Hospitality; and Leisure, Sport, & Travel. Construction and Transportation saw the largest decreases.

Data on StatsWales

Of the 13 sectors, eight saw a rise in success rate from 2022/23 to 2023/24. Of the remaining five sectors, three saw decreased success rates and two remained unchanged.

Health Care and Public Services is the largest sector and accounted for 42% of all apprenticeship leavers in 2023/24. Health Care and Public Services saw a growth in success rate of six percentage points in 2023/24. This has aided the continuing recovery of apprenticeship outcomes but the success rate is still lower than 11 of the other 12 sectors. Health Care and Public Services has been one of the strongest recovering sectors post-pandemic, with success rate increasing by 15 percentage points from

2021/22 to 2023/24. The success rate for this sector is still 11 percentage points below the last seen figure pre-pandemic.

Management and Professional; and Construction were the second and fifth largest sectors in 2023/24, respectively, but both saw decreased success rates.

Management and Professional was the largest sector for higher apprenticeships and represented 46% of leavers. There was a two percentage point drop in success rate observed which can partially explain the more modest increase in the success rate for higher apprenticeships.

Age

All ages, apart from 17 year olds, saw an increase in apprenticeship success rate

Figure 4: Apprenticeship success rate by age at start of apprenticeship by academic year, August 2021 to July 2024
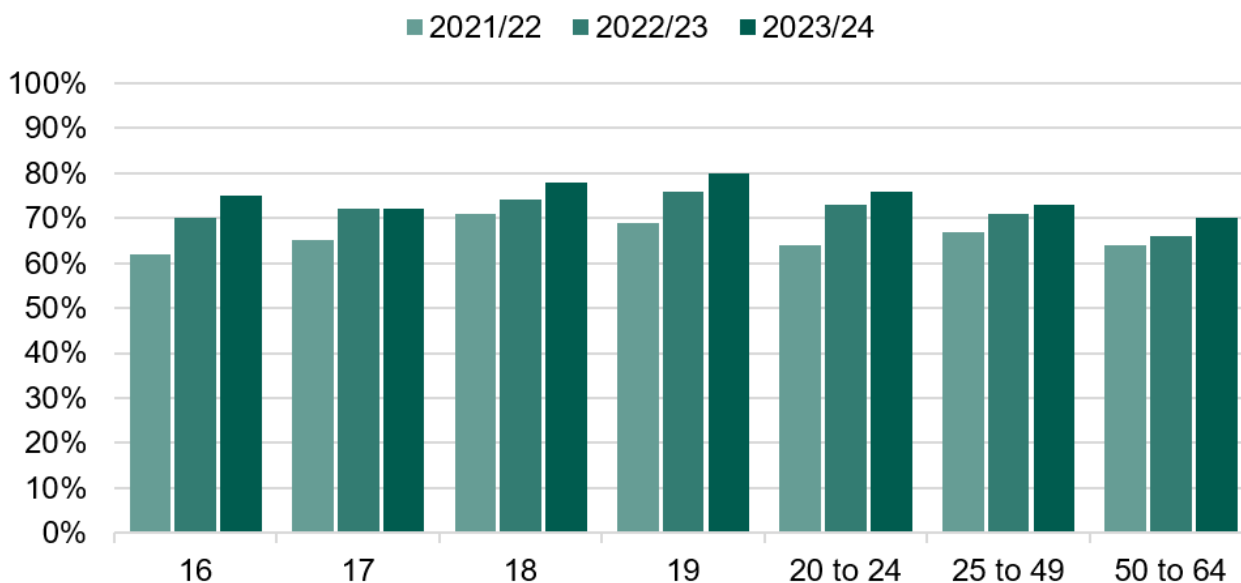
Description: 19 year olds were the best performing apprentices with an 80% success rate, a 5percentage point increase from the previous year.

Data on **StatsWales**

The worst performing age group was 50 to 64 year olds with a success rate of 70%, however this was a 4 percentage point increase from 2022/23.

The age group with the largest number of apprenticeship leavers was the 25 to 49 year old age group, these learners accounted for 49% of all apprenticeship leavers. The success rate for this age group was 73%.

Deprivation

The apprenticeship success rate gap between the most deprived and least deprived areas in Wales is closing

Figure 5: Apprenticeship success rate by Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) decile and academic year, August 2022 to July 2024

Decile of deprivation
(1st = most deprived 10% of small areas, 10th = least deprived 10% of small areas)
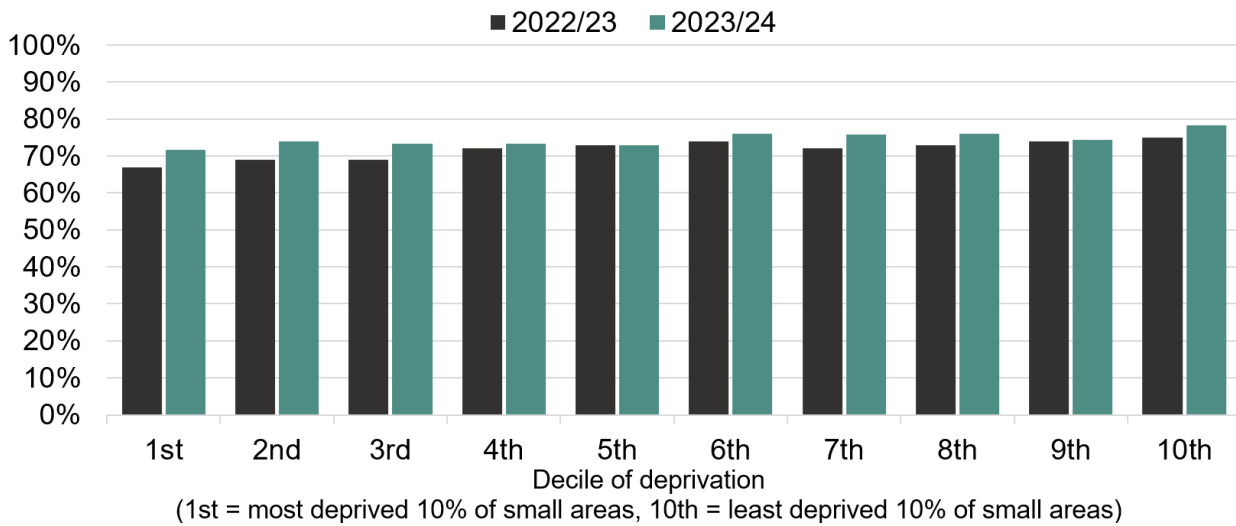
Description: Success rates improved across all levels of deprivation in 2023/24, apart from the fifth and ninth decile.

[Note]: This chart is based on the deprivation of the small area that a learner lives in. It is not based on the deprivation of the learner specifically. Many non-deprived learners live in deprived areas and vice versa. The 1st decile represents the 10% most deprived areas, and the 10th represents the 10% least deprived areas.

Data in table 1.1 of the accompanying workbook

In 2023/24, the gap between the success rates of the most deprived and least deprived areas was 7 percentage points; this was a 1 percentage point drop from 2022/23. However, the gap is still double pre-pandemic figures where there was a three percentage point difference between the outcomes of the most and least deprived areas in Wales.

Free School Meals

The success rate gap between apprenticeship leavers ever eligible for free school meals and never eligible for free school meals is closing

Figure 6: Apprenticeship success rate by free school meals (FSM) eligibility by academic year, August 2016 to July 2024
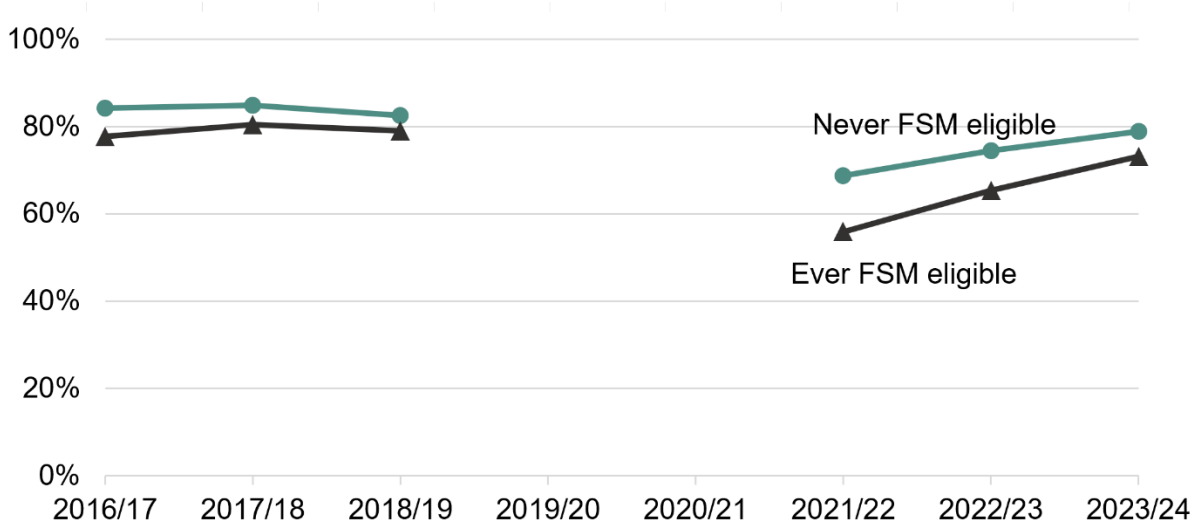
Description: Apprentices who had ever been eligible for FSM had a success rate of 73% in 2023/24, this was a gap of 6 percentage points compared to apprentices who were never eligible for FSM.

[Note]: Free School Meal eligibility is calculated by matching learners back to their secondary school Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) record via the Matched Education dataset (MED). Not all learners can be matched, for example, learners who attended secondary school outside Wales or before 2010/11 (the first year of records in the MED).

Data in table 1.2 of the accompanying workbook

The 6 percentage point gap in success rate between ever and never FSM eligible is half as large as it was in 2021/22. The gap is still 2 percentage points larger than pre-pandemic.

Ethnicity

The majority of ethnic groups saw increased success rates

Figure 7: Apprenticeship success rate by detailed ethnic group and academic year, August 2022 to July 2024
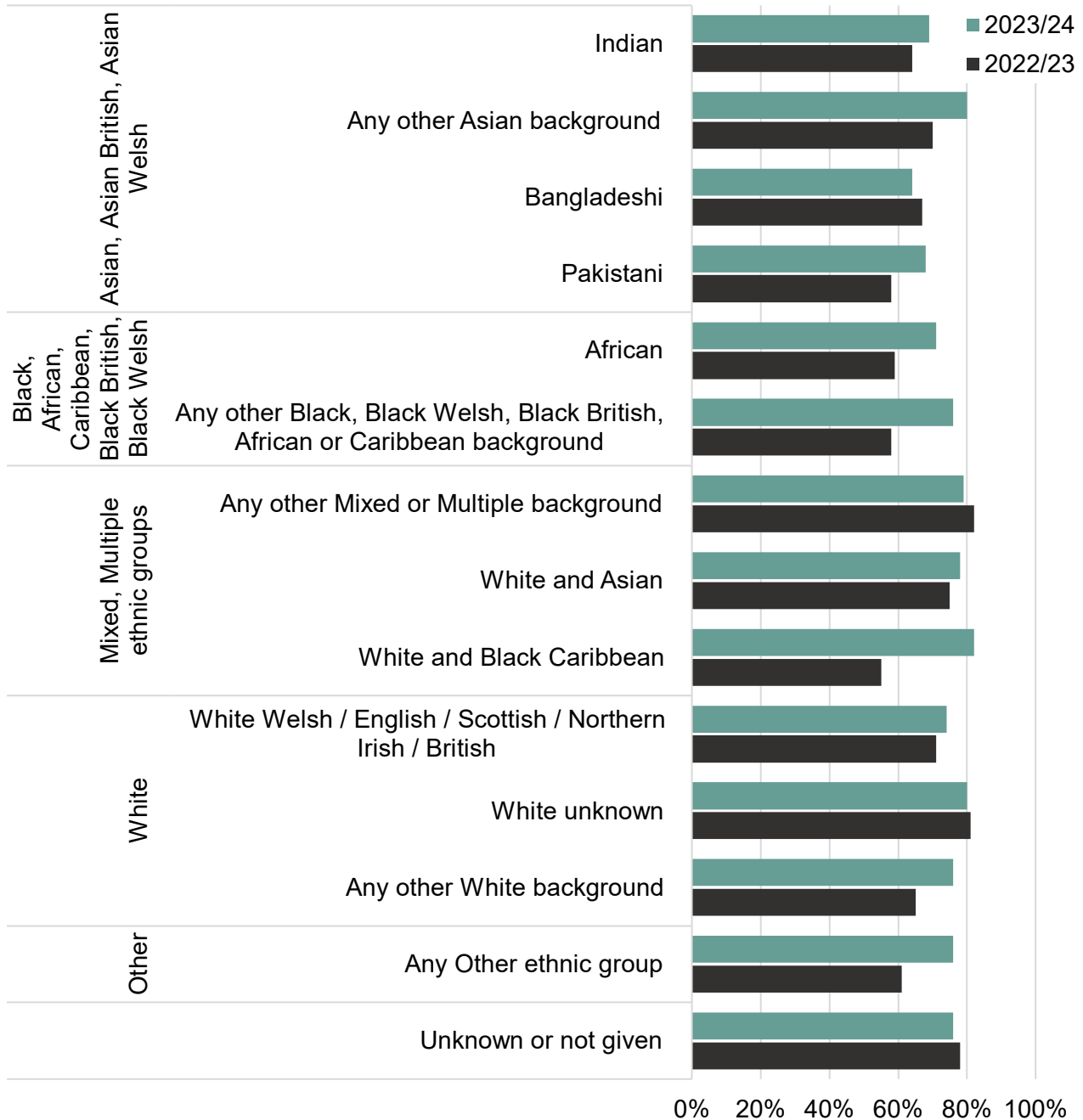
Description: The largest improvement in success rate was seen in learners with a White and Black Caribbean background, these learners had the lowest success rate in 2022/23 and the highest success rate in 2023/24. The learners with the largest decrease were from Bangladeshi backgrounds or any other Mixed or Multiple backgrounds.

[Note 1]: Some ethnic groups are not shown due to suppression as a result of small cohorts.
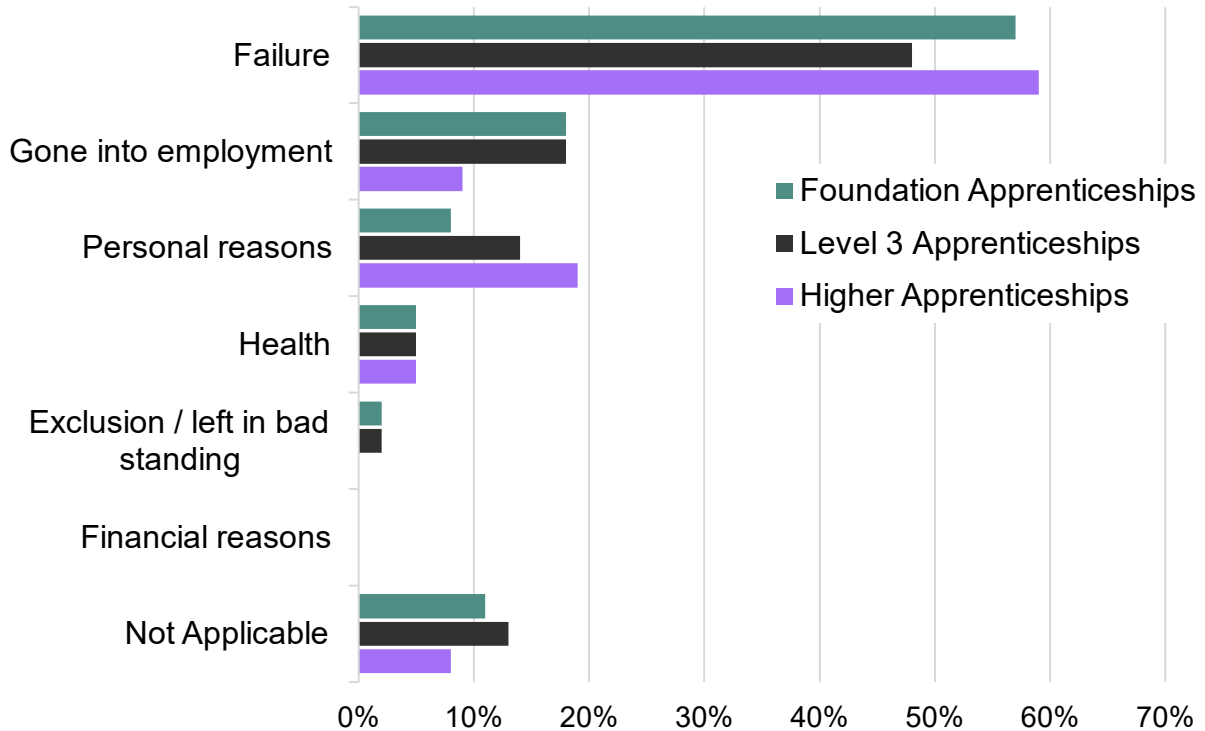
Data in table 1.3 of accompanying workbook

There were large increases in success rates for all broad ethnic minority groups. The largest increase was seen in learners from an 'Other ethnic group' background with success rates increasing by 15 percentage points.

Reasons for non-completed apprenticeships ending

Failure was the most common reason for apprenticeships ending

Figure 8: Apprenticeship reason for ending by level of apprenticeship, August 2023 to July 2024

Description: The second most common reason for non-completed apprenticeships ending was "gone into employment", followed by "personal reasons".

Data in table 1.4 of accompanying workbook

"Failure" was the most common reason for non-completed foundation apprenticeships to end, with 57% ending this way. "Gone into employment" was the next most common reason at 18%. Level 3 apprenticeships saw a similar pattern, with 48% of non-completed programmes ending in "failure" and 18% ending by learners "gone into employment".

Of learners who did not complete their higher apprenticeship, 59% ended in "failure". "Personal reasons" were the next largest reason for non-completed higher apprenticeships ending at 19%. In comparison to foundation apprenticeships and level 3 apprenticeships, there are a lower percentage of higher apprentices leaving to go into employment.

Essential Skills

Apprentices have lower success rates in application of number and communication essential skills than in digital literacy

Figure 9: Apprenticeship activity success rate by essential skill type, August 2023 to July 2024
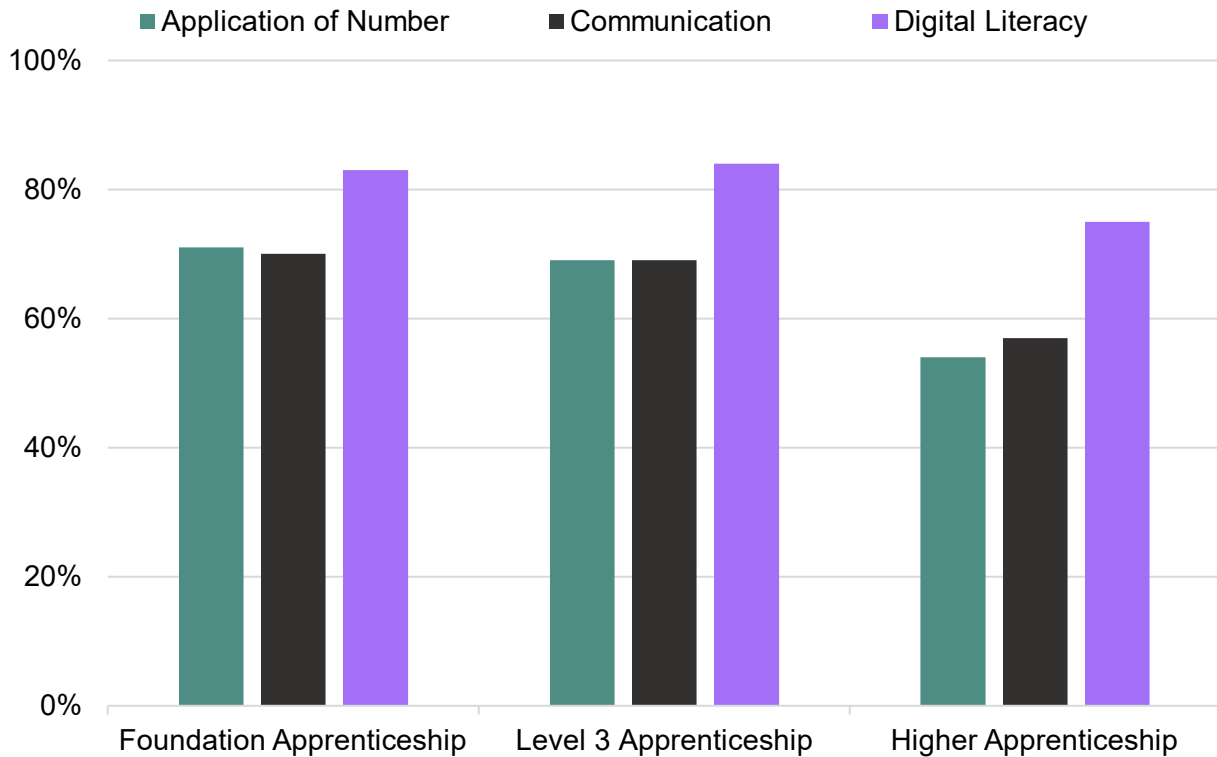
Description: Digital literacy qualifications have the highest success rates for essential skills activities taken as part of apprenticeships.

[Note 1]: An exception was made to some Health and Social Care apprenticeship frameworks that began before September 2022 where they could be achieved without completing their essential skills. They have been excluded from this figure.

Data in table 1.6 of accompanying workbook

Just over half of application of number essential skills qualifications taken by higher apprentices are passed. Higher apprentices have lower success rates generally across all essential skills activities.

Higher apprentices are more likely to be taking higher level essential skills, although the difference is not drastic. 88% of essential skills activities taken by higher apprentices are level 2, and 10% are level 3. For Level 3 apprenticeships, 96% of essential skills activities are level 2, and 4% are level 1.

For all apprentices, the success rate for essential skills qualifications in application of number and communication are lower than the success rate for the non-essential skills qualifications taken as part of their apprenticeship.

Apprentices who did not pass their essential skills, generally did not pass their other qualifications either

Figure 10: Types of activity passed for learners who did not achieve their apprenticeship (learners who took essential skills only), August 2023 to July 2024
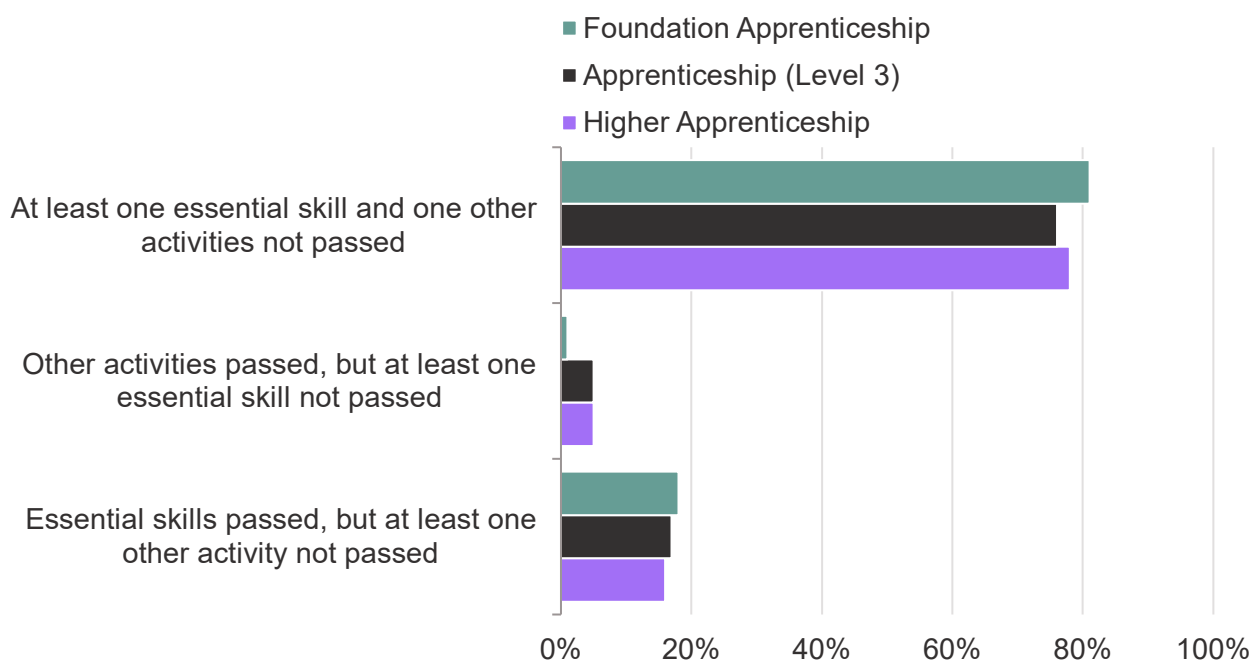
Description: 17% of learners who did not achieve their apprenticeship passed their essential skills activities, but didn't pass their other qualifications. This only includes learners who took essential skills as part of their apprenticeship.

Data in table 1.6 of accompanying workbook

Around 1 in 20 apprenticeships that were not achieved involved a situation were the learner passed the other parts of the apprenticeships but not the essential skills component.

The overall success rates for essential skills in communication and application of number are lower than for non-essential skills activities. There are two reasons for this:

A number of learners have been recorded as passing their apprenticeship framework whilst not passing their essential skills. We are investigating this, as it may be a data quality issue.

Apprentices do not need to take essential skills if they already have an equivalent qualification – for example an A* to C in GCSE maths. This might affect the comparison of essential skills activities (taken by a subset of learners who don't have particular qualifications) and not essential skills activities (taken by all learners).

Welsh Medium

Apprenticeship activities taken in Welsh have a high success rate

Figure 11: Apprenticeship activity success rate by programme and language medium, August 2023 to July 2024
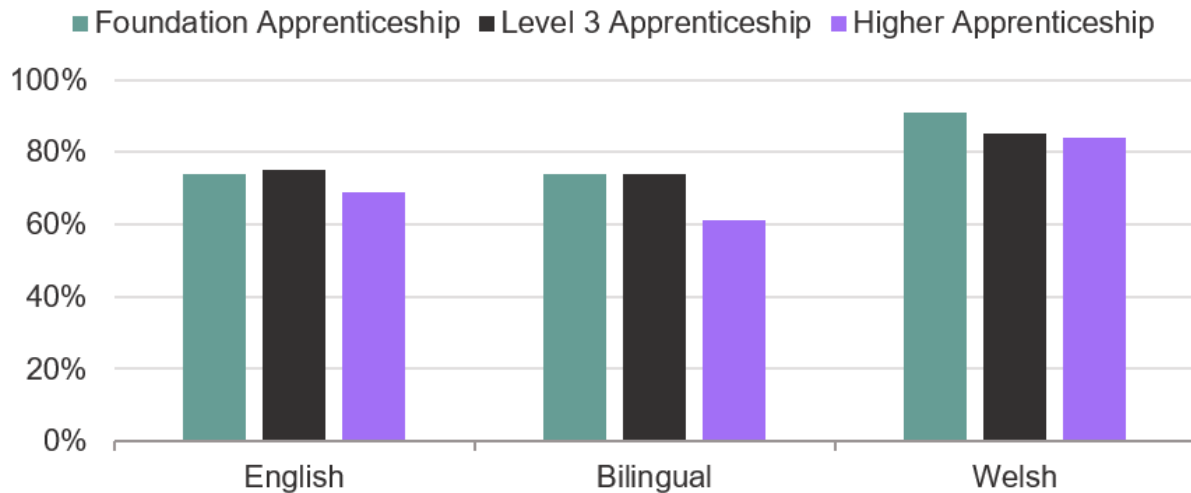
Description: Activities studied entirely in Welsh have the highest success rate, bilingual activities have the lowest success rates.

Data in table 1.5 of accompanying workbook

Activities taken by foundation apprentices entirely in Welsh had the highest success rate at 91%. Activities taken entirely in Welsh had higher success rates than activities taken through other mediums at all levels.

The lowest success rate was 61 for bilingual activities taken by higher apprentices. The lower success rate found in these bilingual activities can partially explain the lower activity outcomes found in higher apprenticeships, with 26 of activities taken by higher apprenticeship being through a bilingual medium.

The difference in success rates is not necessarily due to medium of learning. Welsh medium learners may have different characteristics than other apprentices – for example they may be less likely to be from deprived backgrounds or more likely to be taking a particular type of apprenticeship. Specific types of activity may be studied in Welsh.

Notes

There are StatsWales tables and an accompanying spreadsheet containing all the data, and further data, presented in this report.

A supplementary information document contains further information about data in this report.

Suspension of performance measures in 2019/20 and 2020/21

During the first two years of the pandemic, apprenticeship learning took place, but some apprentices were affected by furlough and redundancies. For both types of provision some assessments were cancelled, delayed or adapted.

Due to the changes in how grades were awarded in 2020 and the disruption to learning caused by the pandemic, the Welsh Government did not produce any of its usual performance measures for schools or post-16 learning in 2019/20 or 2020/21.

Statistics were calculated using new methods to assess how learners' outcomes were affected during the pandemic for all types of post-16 learning. These included new statistics on the length of delay in completing learning and on the choices of Year 11 learners going into post-16 learning. They were reported in the Outcomes for learners in post-16 education affected by the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic reports. The statistics in the pandemic reports should not be compared with the learner outcome measures reported in this release.

Quality and Methodology Information

Please see the accompanying Quality and Methodology: Apprenticeships document for detailed information.

Removal of adult community learning statistics

A local authority provider made us aware on 25 February 2025 of substantial errors in their data submitted to the Lifelong Learning Record Wales (LLWR) for 2023/24, prior to the final freeze of data in December 2024.

Due to the potential scale of the issue, Adult Community Learning statistics have been removed from this report, pending further investigations into the scale of the issue and any similar issues in the data submitted by other local authority providers.

Local Authority Community Learning is funded by the Community Learning Grant. Historically the grant has been a relatively small source of funding. Unlike other types of learning, the LLWR data collection is not used for allocating or validating the learning delivered by this grant. As a result, there is more potential for data quality issues that would not affect apprenticeships.

When we have established the scope and severity of the data quality issues, we will make a decision on whether any meaningful statistics on adult community learning can be reported on for 2023/24.

Colleges have a more established process of reporting data, as they also report on further education, and in some cases, work-based learning. For this reason the adult community learning delivered in colleges is likely to be more reliable. It may be possible to report on the outcomes for adult learning delivered in colleges, if it is not possible to report on overall adult community learning outcomes.

Moving forward, with the start of the next funding period, Medr will be transitioning to using the Lifelong Learning Wales Record to report and monitor against the delivery of the Community Learning Grant. This should lead to improvements in the data quality. We will be working with providers to ensure the data is recorded correctly on LLWR by providing further guidance and support.

Statement of compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics

Our statistical practice is regulated by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR). OSR sets the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics that all producers of official statistics should adhere to.

All of our statistics are produced and published in accordance with a number of statements and protocols to enhance trustworthiness, quality and value. These are set out in Medr's Statement of Compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics.

These official statistics demonstrate the standards expected around trustworthiness, quality and value in the following ways.

Trustworthiness

These statistics have been published according to Medr's Statement of Compliance and pre-release access to official statistics policy.

Quality

The data is sourced from the Lifelong Learning Record Wales which is submitted by learning providers. This data is also used to determine funding for learning providers and is subject to audit.

When the data is submitted it must meet certain validation rules. When the statistics are being produced quality checks are undertaken by the statisticians.

Value

These statistics are produced to provide an insight in the learning being delivered in Wales. They are used for monitoring and evaluating the work-based learning sectors.

Change in accredited statistics status

These statistics were previously published by the Welsh Government as National Statistics (now known as Accredited Official Statistics). As the statistics are now published by a new organisation, the Accredited Official Statistics status has been temporarily removed.

Medr has continued the systems and processes for producing the statistics from Welsh Government, and the statisticians producing the statistics include statisticians who

produced further education, work-based learning and community learning statistics at Welsh Government.

The OSR will assess the processes in place at Medr as an official statistics producer. The OSR will assess whether the statistics meet the requirements for Accredited Official Statistics.

Related statistics

Earlier reports in this series were published on gov.wales.

Students in higher education: August 2023 to July 2024 contains details for student enrolments and qualifications for Higher Education and will be published on medr.cymru at a later date.

Apprenticeships learning programmes started: May to July 2024 contains a dashboard with detailed breakdowns of apprenticeship starts.

Further education, work-based learning and community learning: August 2023 to July 2024 was published on 4 March.

Consistent performance measures post-16 learning (achievement), August 2023 to July 2024 contains outcomes for further education and sixth forms and will be published on medr.cymru at a later date.

Next update

Date: March 2026.

Period covered: August 2024 to July 2025.

The next update to these statistics may not be in the same form as this report.

Contact information

We welcome any feedback on any aspect of these statistics.

Feedback, questions, and requests for further data can be directed by email to: statistics@medr.cymru