

Medr statistics

Consistent performance measures for post-16 learning: Achievement, August 2023 to July 2024

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Summary: Outcomes for general education, vocational education and the Welsh Baccalaureate in sixth forms and colleges.

Theme: Further education, sixth forms

Source: Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR), Post-16 data collection, Welsh Examinations Database (WED)

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Note

This report covers outcomes for general education and vocational education in sixth forms and colleges. It looks at the progression across all the qualifications a learner took as part of their programme, as well as the grade outcomes.

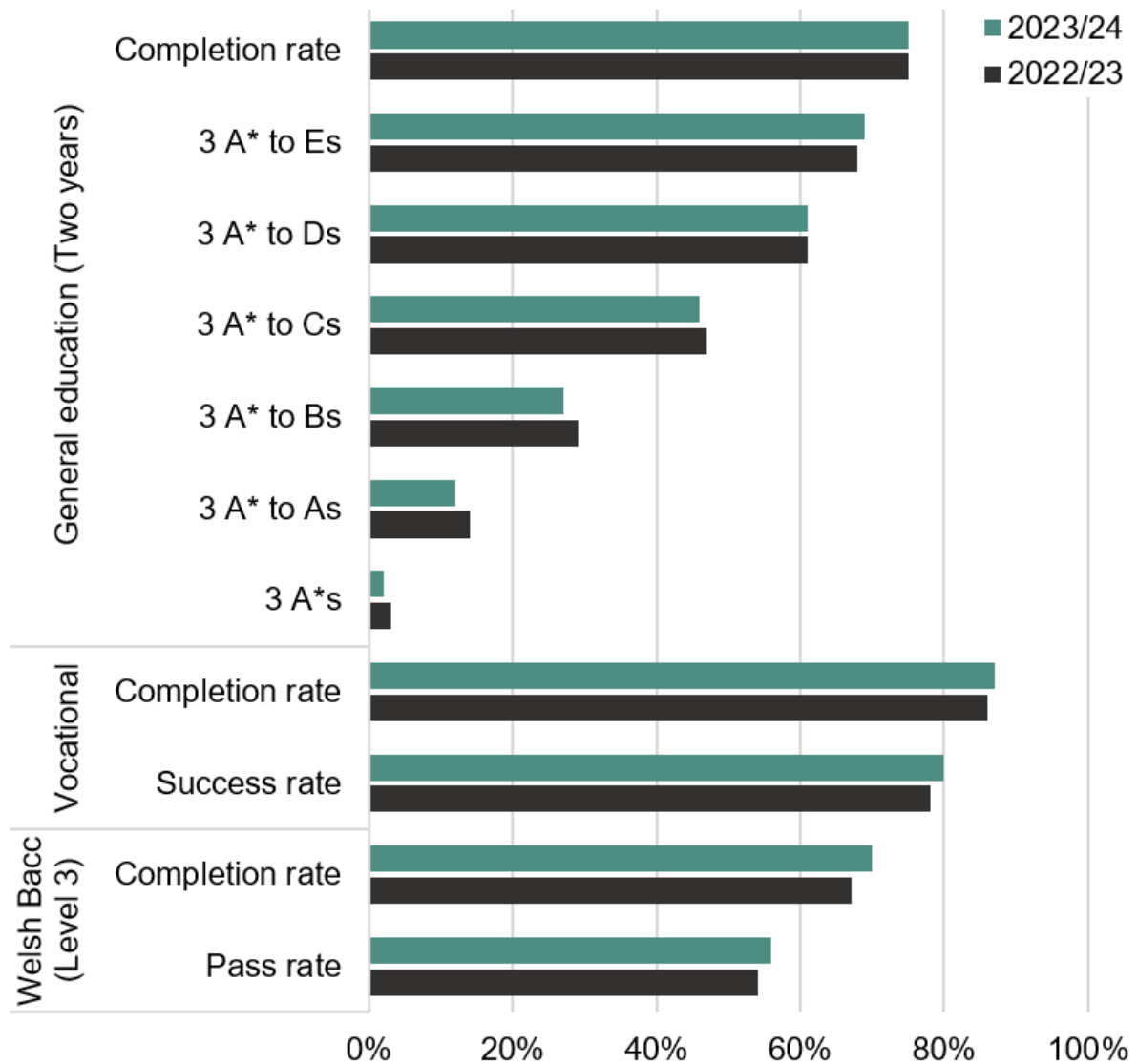
Statistics on apprentices are in the [Learner outcomes measures for apprenticeships](#) report. Statistics on adult community learning outcomes for 2023/24 have not yet been published due to data quality issues.

This report highlights some of messages in the data. The accompanying tables include the full breakdowns for all measures by all the characteristics in this article, and also by provider, local authority and impairments (for colleges).

Main points

Overview

Figure 1.1: Summary of achievement measures by academic year, August 2022 to July 2024



Description: 75% of A level learners completed their two-year programme in the 2023/24 [academic year](#). 87% of vocational learners completed their programme. 70% of Welsh Bacc learners completed the qualification.

General education (A levels)

- Grade outcomes remain higher than before the pandemic, but there was a decrease in the proportions of learners achieving at least three As and at least three Cs compared to 2022/23.
- There was a small increase in AS level completion and a small decrease in the proportion of learners who went onto their second year of A levels compared to 2022/23.
- Learners taking Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics and Biology were particularly likely to get high grades.
- Females had better outcomes than males in general education programmes, apart from learners achieving three A*s.
- 51% of female AS learners went on to achieve at least three Cs at A level, compared to 40% of male learners.
- 48% of 16 year old AS learners went on to achieve at least three Cs at A level, compared to 22% of older learners.
- Learners from deprived backgrounds were less likely to complete their A levels and less likely to get high grades if they did.
- Learners from Black, African, Caribbean, Black British or Black Welsh background generally had lower A level outcomes than other ethnic groups, but this was the only ethnic group to see an increase in achieving at least three As compared to 2022/23.

Vocational education

- Vocational outcomes at all programme levels improved in 2023/24. The recovery from the drop in outcomes following the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic continued and outcomes at levels 1 to 3 are now broadly in line with pre-pandemic figures.
- Completion and success rates for entry level vocational programmes are both 3 percentage points higher than pre-pandemic.
- The proportion of learners who did not complete their programme due to 'Personal reasons' has remained stagnant. Fewer learners did not complete their programme due to 'Failure'.
- Learners who did not complete their programme due to 'Other' reasons saw an increase of 10 percentage points compared 2022/23.
- Vocational learners linked to experiences of deprivation had lower outcomes than those who were not, but the relationship was less strong than in general education.
- There was no gender/sex gap in success rates for vocational programmes.

Welsh Baccalaureate (Welsh Bacc)

- Outcomes for the Welsh Bacc were higher than 2022/23 for learners on general education and vocational programmes, except for the proportions of vocational learners achieving A*, A* to A and A* to B in the Skills Challenge Certificate, which were slightly lower or remained the same.

General education (A levels)

These measures cover full time learners who started studying a programme of three or more [AS levels](#) (or equivalents) in their first year, and how many went on to achieve at least three A levels (or equivalents) by the end of their second year.

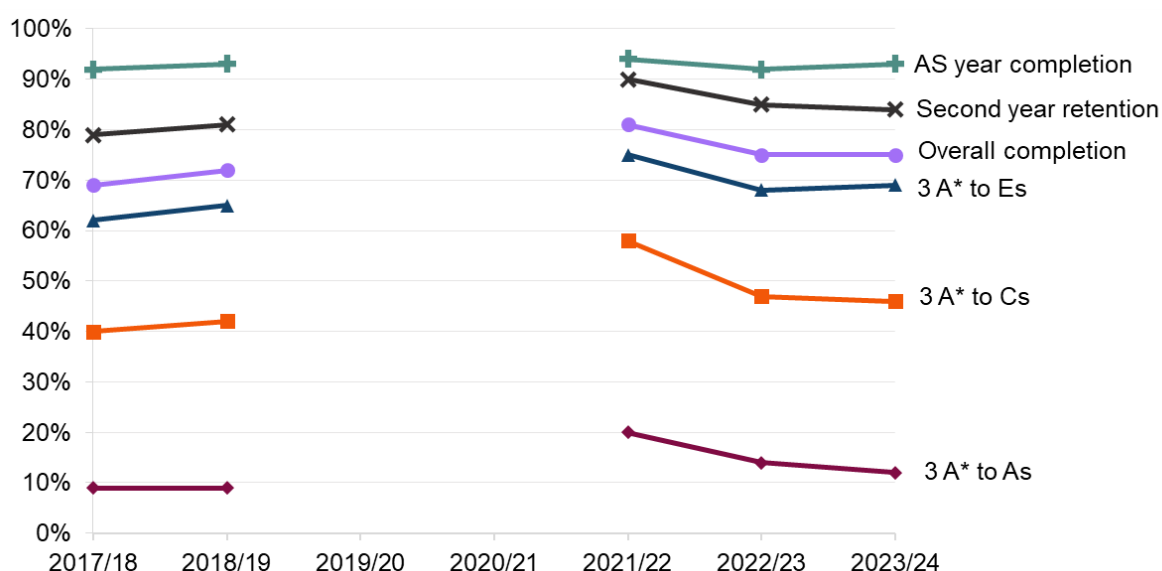
Exams were cancelled in the summer of 2019/20, and 2020/21 due to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic. In 2019/20 A level learners received the best of [centre assessed or standardised grades](#). In 2020/21, they received [centre determined grades](#). In both those years, grade outcomes tended to be higher than before the pandemic.

2021/22 was a transitional year for learners. Learners were given a wider choice of questions, and Qualifications Wales set results broadly midway between 2018/19 and 2020/21.

Some support remained in place for learners who sat exams in 2022/23. This support was in the form of advance information and a supportive approach to grading. Qualifications Wales set the results at a national level broadly midway between 2018/19 and 2021/22 outcomes.

For the 2023/24 academic year, Qualifications Wales returned to pre-pandemic approaches. Statistical protection was put in place during the awarding process to prevent results from falling significantly below pre-pandemic levels. This context should be kept in mind when comparing outcomes.

Figure 2.1: General education two-year achievement measures at A level by academic year, 2017/18 to 2023/24



Description: Outcomes for A levels remain higher than before the pandemic, except for AS year completion which is the same as 2018/19.

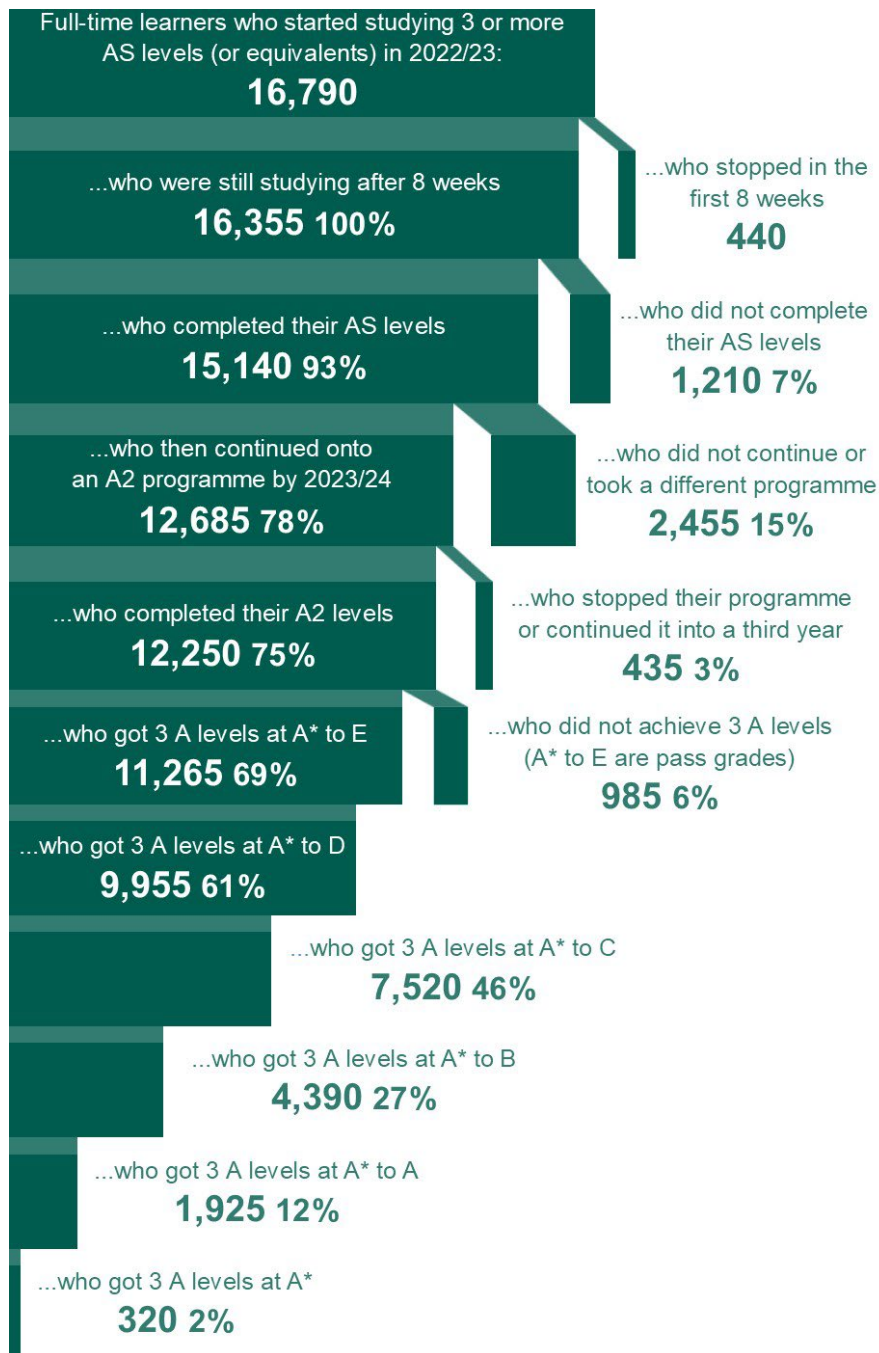
[Note 1] Measures were not produced for 2019/20 or 2020/21.

Data in Table 1.1 of the accompanying workbook

The grades learners have achieved slightly dropped in 2023/24, reflecting the return to pre-pandemic arrangements, except for learners achieving at least 3 Es. However, the proportion of learners completing their A levels has remained the same as 2022/23.

Figure 2.2: Two-year achievement measures for general education (A level) programmes

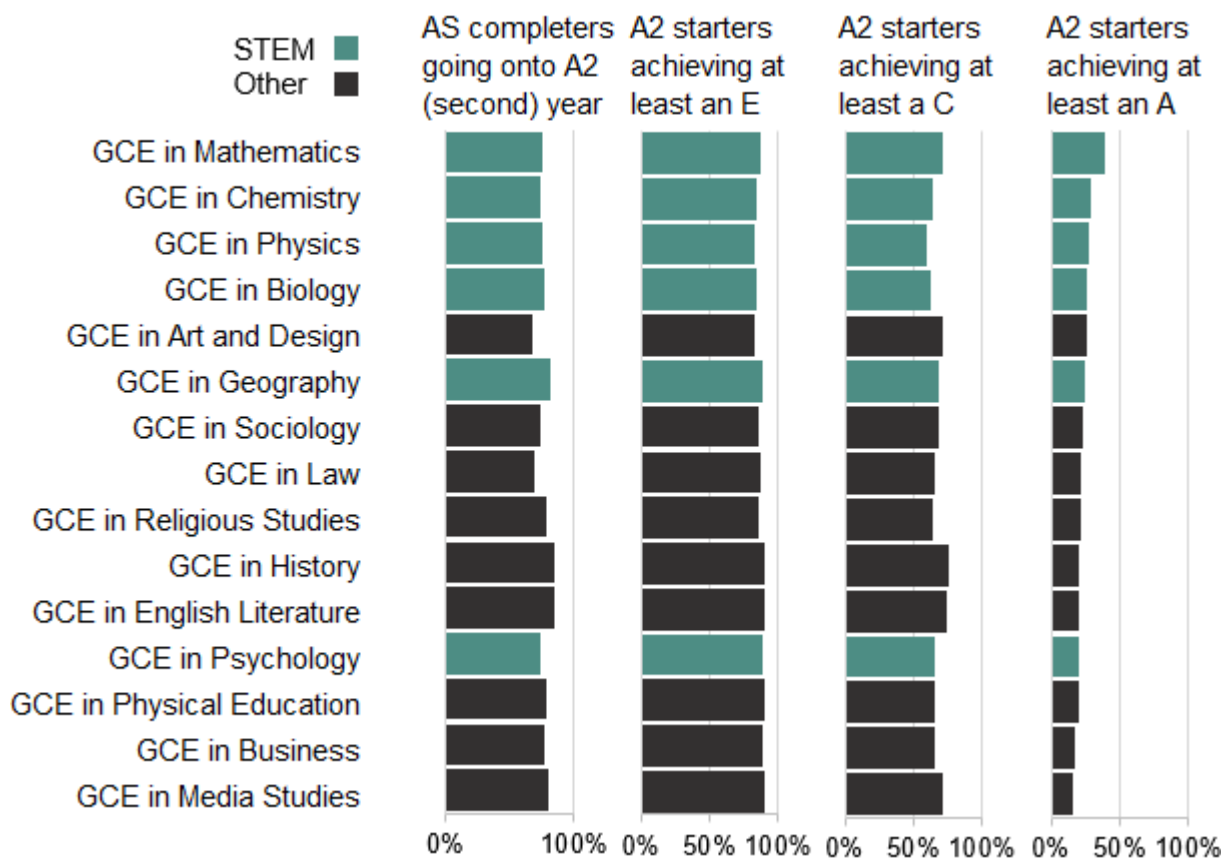
Percentages in this figure are expressed as the percentage of AS learners at 8 weeks



Description: The flow diagram shows the learner journey for full-time A level learners, starting in 2022/23 and completing their A levels in 2023/24. The biggest drop off was at the end of the AS year, where 15% of the AS learners studying at 8 weeks didn't go onto the second year.

Data in Table 1.2 of the accompanying workbook

Figure 2.3: A level course outcomes for the 15 most taken A levels by Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) status, academic year 2023/24



Description: Amongst the 15 most taken A levels, the 4 with the highest proportion of learners achieving an A or A* at A level were STEM subjects.

[Note 1] The broad definition of STEM has been used here which is defined as sector subject areas: 2: Science and Mathematics, 4: Engineering and Manufacturing technologies, 5: Construction, planning and the built environment, 1.1: Medicine and dentistry, 2.2: Nursing and subjects and vocations allied to medicine, 6.2: ICT practitioners, and 11.1: Geography.

Data in Table 4.1 of the accompanying workbook

Almost 4 in 10 learners who started the second year of their Maths A level went on to get an A or A*. Only 2 in 10 Physical Education A level learners achieved an A or A*, and even fewer learners in Business and Media Studies.

Over 8 in 10 learners who completed an English Literature AS continued onto English Literature A level in their second year, similar to History. These subjects, along with Art and Design, Mathematics and Media Studies, had a high percentage of learners achieving at least a C.

Different subjects may attract different types of learner, for example from different backgrounds or with different levels of prior achievement.

Vocational programmes

These measures cover full time learners studying programmes with mainly vocational qualifications, in a particular sector or subject area. They do not include apprenticeships.

Vocational qualifications have different lengths, so the vocational measures only look at achievement over one year. Success for vocational programmes is measured as the percentage of [main qualifications](#) studied that were successful.

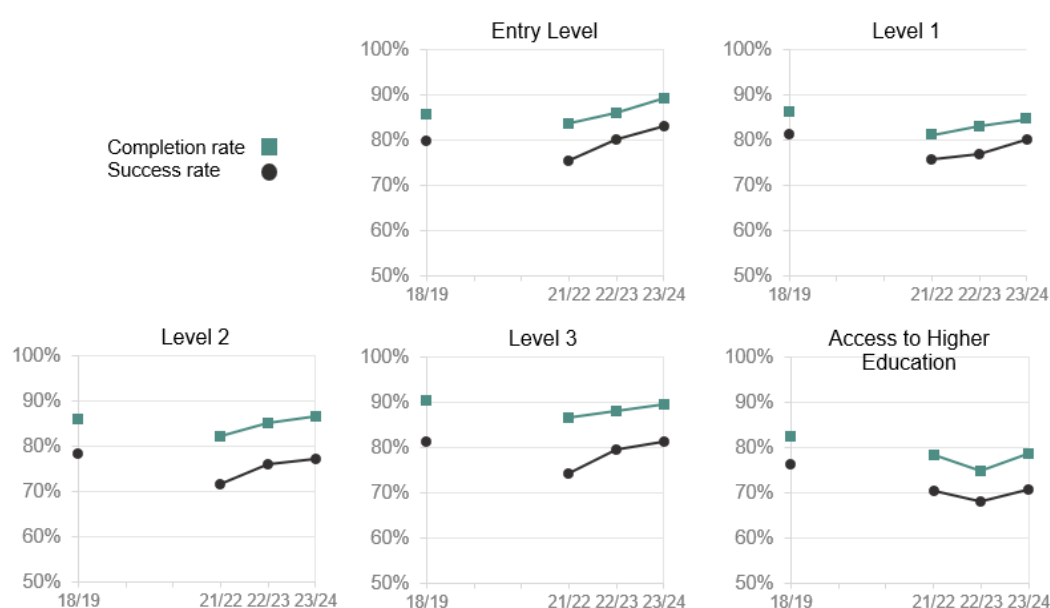
In 2019/20 and 2020/21, some assessments were cancelled and replaced with alternatives such as teacher assessed grades, others were adapted, and some were delayed. Outcomes in these years were generally lower, except for level 3 programmes (equivalent to A level).

In 2021/22 assessments went ahead, but awarding bodies were able to make adaptations to examinations and assessments, to help mitigate the disruption of the pandemic on learning. Outcomes for all programmes, including level 3 programmes, were below pre-pandemic levels.

In 2022/23, vocational qualifications that were Wales specific were [expected to take into account the approach taken with GCSEs and A levels](#). However Ofqual, in England, [supported a return to 2018/19 assessments](#), which affected Welsh learners taking vocational qualifications available in both England and Wales.

2023/24 saw a return to to pre-pandemic arrangements with provision for some statistical protection during the awarding process at a subject level.

Figure 3.1: Completion and success rate for vocational programmes by programme level and academic year, 2018/19 to 2023/24



Description: Completion and success rates across all levels of vocational programmes rose in 2023/24.

[Note 1] Measures were not produced for 2019/20 or 2020/21.

Data in Table 2.1 of the accompanying workbook

The increasing completion and success rates is a continuation of the trend observed between 2021/22 and 2022/23, except for Access to Higher Education programmes.

At levels 1 to 3, vocational outcomes are now broadly in line with pre-pandemic figures. Entry level outcomes in 2023/24 are 3 percentage points higher than 2018/19 for both completion and success rates.

In 2023/24, there was an increase in the number of learners enrolled at 8 weeks at levels 1 and 2 of 15% and 9%, respectively, compared with the previous year. However, for Access to Higher Education there was an 18% decline.

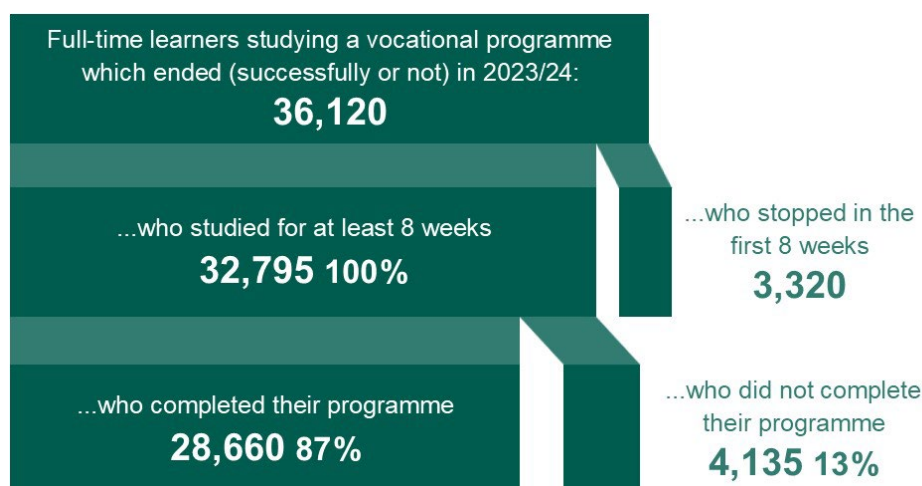
Access to Higher Education programmes saw an increase in completion and success rates whereas last year both rates dropped. Access to Higher Education programmes are designed to prepare people without traditional qualifications for study at university.

Similar to the last 2 years, around 7 in 10 starters in Access to Higher Education programmes were in Health, Public Services and Care.

Compared to 2022/23, all sector subject areas (SSAs) saw success rates increase or remain the same. The same was also true for completion rates, except for Preparation for Life and Work (excluding ESOL) and Science and Mathematics which saw small decreases.

Figure 3.2: Completion measures for vocational programmes, academic year 2023/24

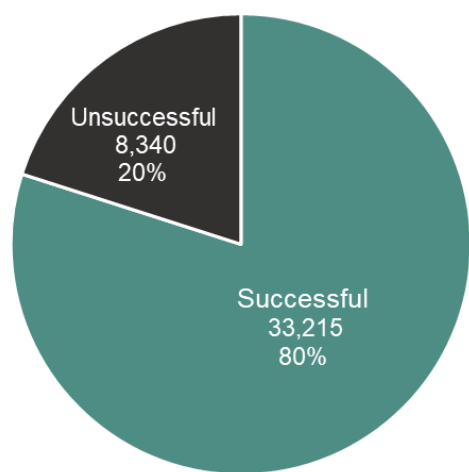
Percentages in this figure are expressed as the percentage of vocational learners at 8 weeks



Description: The flow chart shows the progression of vocational learners through their programme. 1 in 11 learners left their vocational programme within their first 8 weeks, this is down from 1 in 9 last year. 87% went onto complete their vocational programme, this is a 2 percentage point increase on last year.

Data in Table 2.1 of the accompanying workbook

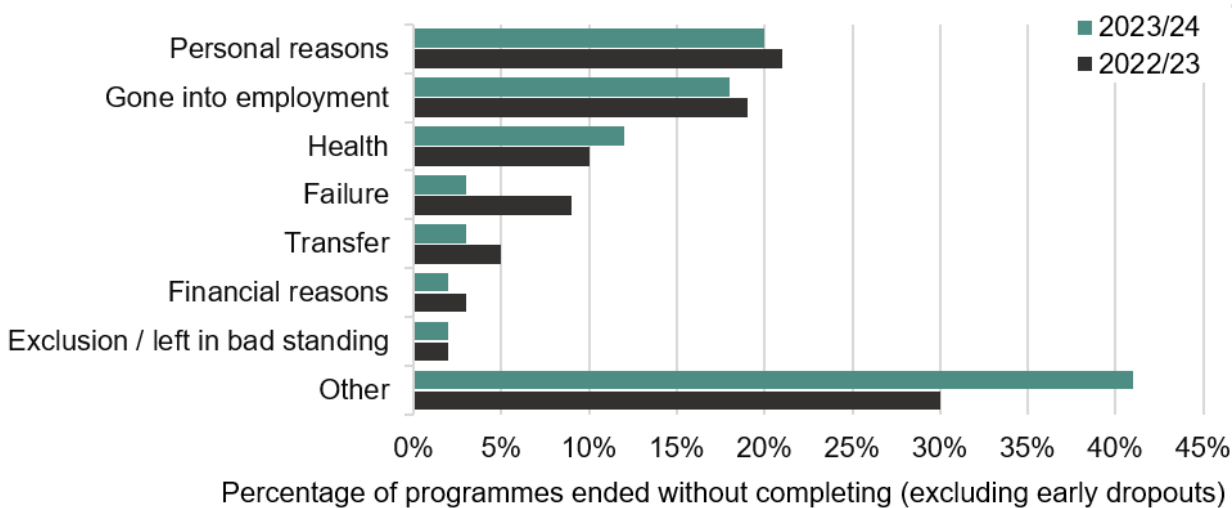
Figure 3.3: Success rate of main qualifications taken by learners in vocational programmes, academic year 2023/24



Description: 80% of the main qualifications taken as part of full time vocational programmes successfully achieved. This is 2 percentage points higher than the year before.

Data in Table 2.1 of the accompanying workbook

Figure 3.4: Reason for ending non-completed vocational programmes at colleges by academic year, 2022/23 to 2023/24



Description: ‘Personal reasons’, ‘Gone into employment’, ‘Failure’, ‘Transfer’ and ‘Financial reasons’ have decreased in proportion as a reason for non-completion. On the other hand, ‘Health’ and ‘Other’ reasons have risen in proportion as a cause for non-completion whilst ‘Exclusion/ left in bad standing’ has remained the same.

Data in Table 2.14 of the accompanying workbook

In 2023/24, the number of students who did not complete their programme because of ‘Failure’ was just over a third of the amount seen in 2022/23.

As per last year, the largest reasons for not completing were still recorded as ‘Personal reasons’, ‘Gone into employment’ and ‘Other’.

Welsh Baccalaureate

The Welsh Baccalaureate (known as the “Welsh Bacc”) is a Wales-only qualification, designed to be studied as part of general education or vocational programmes. It aims to develop skills useful for education and employment.

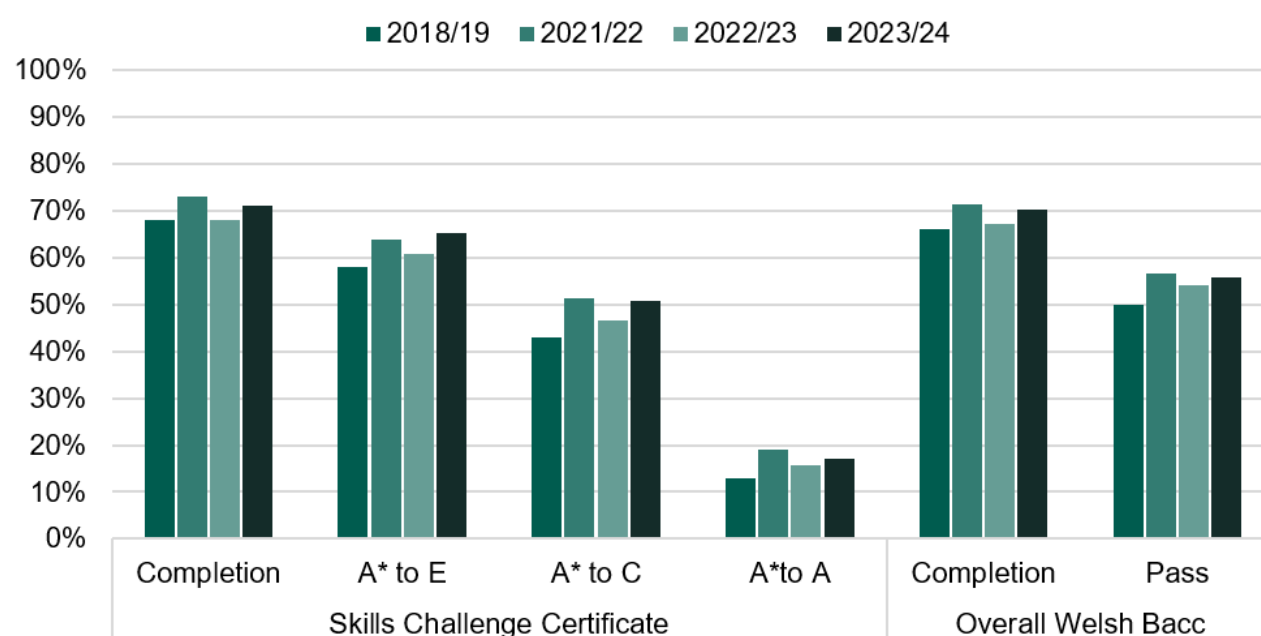
This report focuses on the two-year level 3 Advanced Welsh Baccalaureate. It was replaced for new starters in 2023/24 by the Advanced Skills Baccalaureate Wales. Future versions of this report will include outcomes for the new qualification.

The level 3 Welsh Bacc has several parts:

- Skills Challenge Certificate – this is a graded qualification, equivalent to an A Level
- GCSEs in Maths-numeracy and English or Welsh Language
- supporting A level or vocational qualifications

Learners need to achieve all of these to get the overall Welsh Bacc, although the Skills Challenge Certificate is also a standalone qualification.

Figure 4.1: Advanced Welsh Bacc achievement measures by academic year, 2018/19 to 2023/24



Description: The 2023/24 outcomes of the Welsh Bacc were higher than in 2022/23.

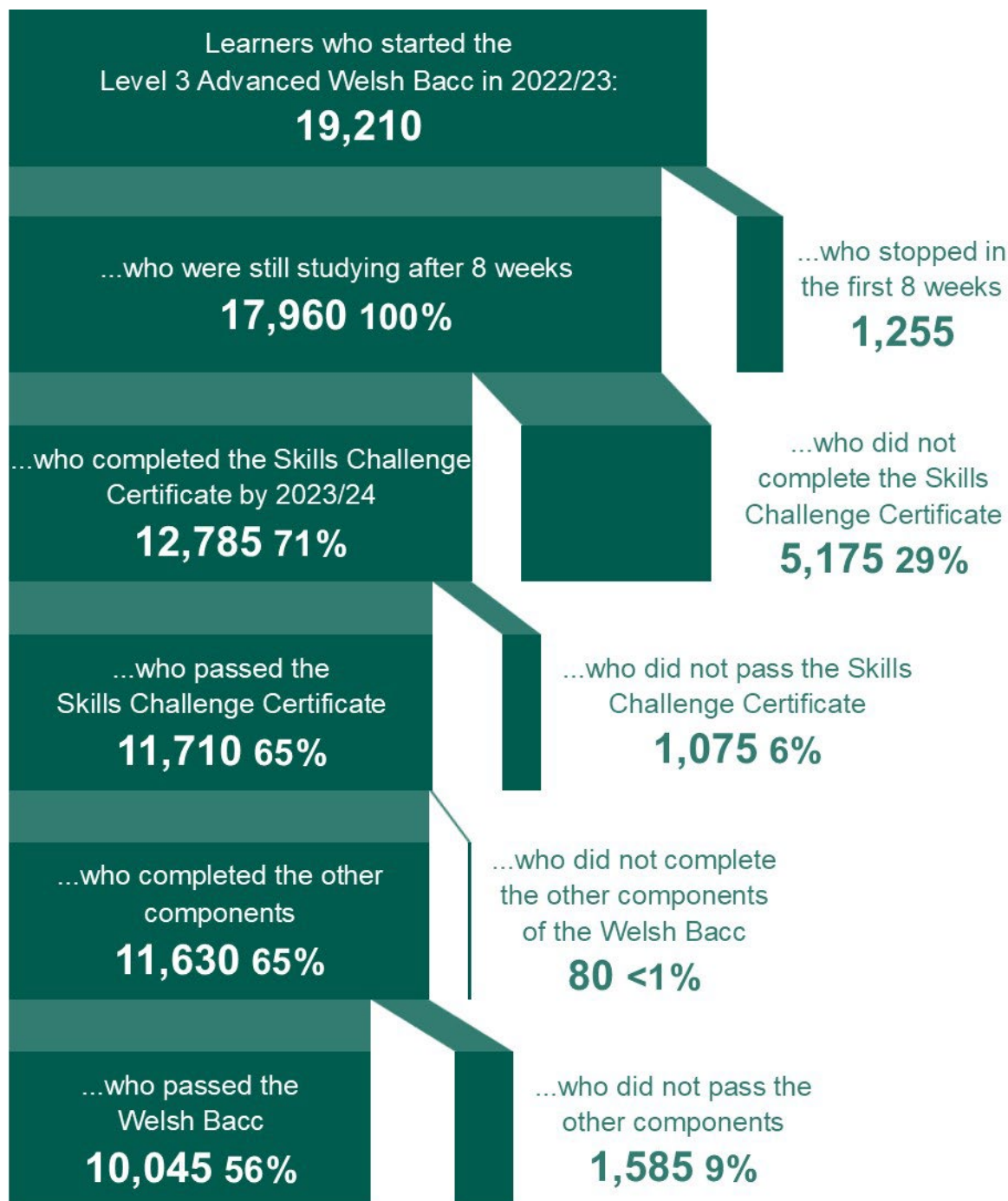
[Note 1] Measures were not produced for 2019/20 or 2020/21.

Data in Table 3.1 of the accompanying workbook

56% of learners passed the Advanced 3 Welsh Bacc in 2023/24, compared to 54% in 2022/23.

Figure 4.2: Advanced Welsh Bacc achievement measures

Percentages in this figure are expressed as the percentage of learners at 8 weeks

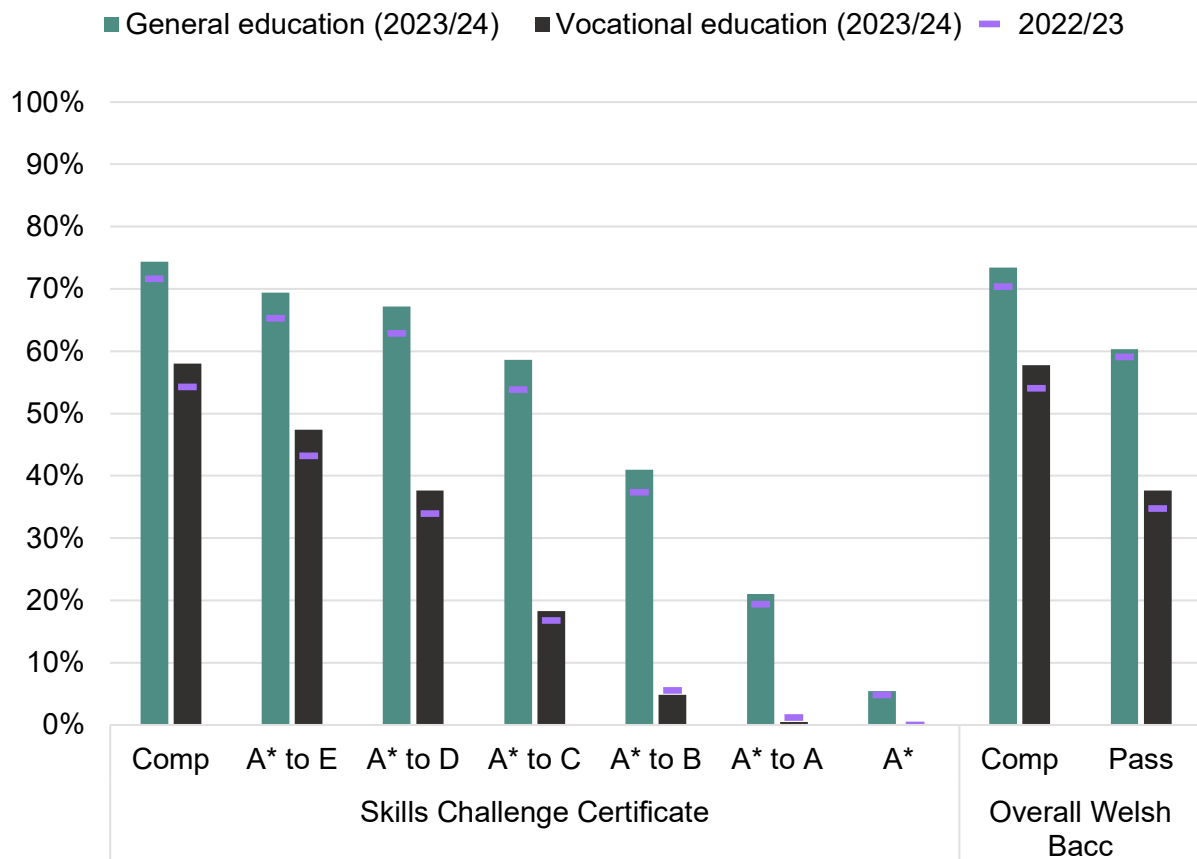


Description: The flow chart shows the progression of learners through the Welsh Bacc, including their progression on the Skills Challenge Certificate qualification. Most learners who didn't pass the Welsh Bacc didn't complete the Skills Challenge Certificate.

Data in Table 3.1 of the accompanying workbook

Around 3 in 10 learners who started the Welsh Bacc did not pass the Skills Challenge Certificate. Of the 11,710 who passed the Skills Challenge Certificate, a further 1,665 did not receive the Welsh Bacc. This is because they did not successfully complete or pass the other components.

Figure 4.3: Achievement measures by learner programme type for the Advanced Welsh Bacc and academic year, 2022/23 and 2023/24



Description: Learners studying general education programmes had higher Welsh Bacc outcomes than learners studying vocational programmes.

Data in Table 3.1 of the accompanying workbook

In 2023/24, there was an increase in Welsh Bacc outcomes for general education and vocational learners compared to 2022/23. The exception to this was for vocational learners achieving A*, A* to A and A* to B in the Skills Challenge Certificate.

2022/23 saw a decrease in the gaps in Welsh Bacc outcomes between general education and vocational learners, a partial reversal of the post-pandemic pattern where outcomes only increased for learners on general education programmes. The change in the gaps is mixed between 2022/23 and 2023/24. For some indicators the gap increased (for example learners getting A* to A or A* to C in the Skills Challenge Certificate) and for others they decreased (for example the overall Welsh Bacc pass rate).

Learners studying vocational programmes were less likely to achieve the Welsh Bacc. The Welsh Bacc pass rate for vocational learners was 38%, compared to 60% for general education learners.

Gender / sex

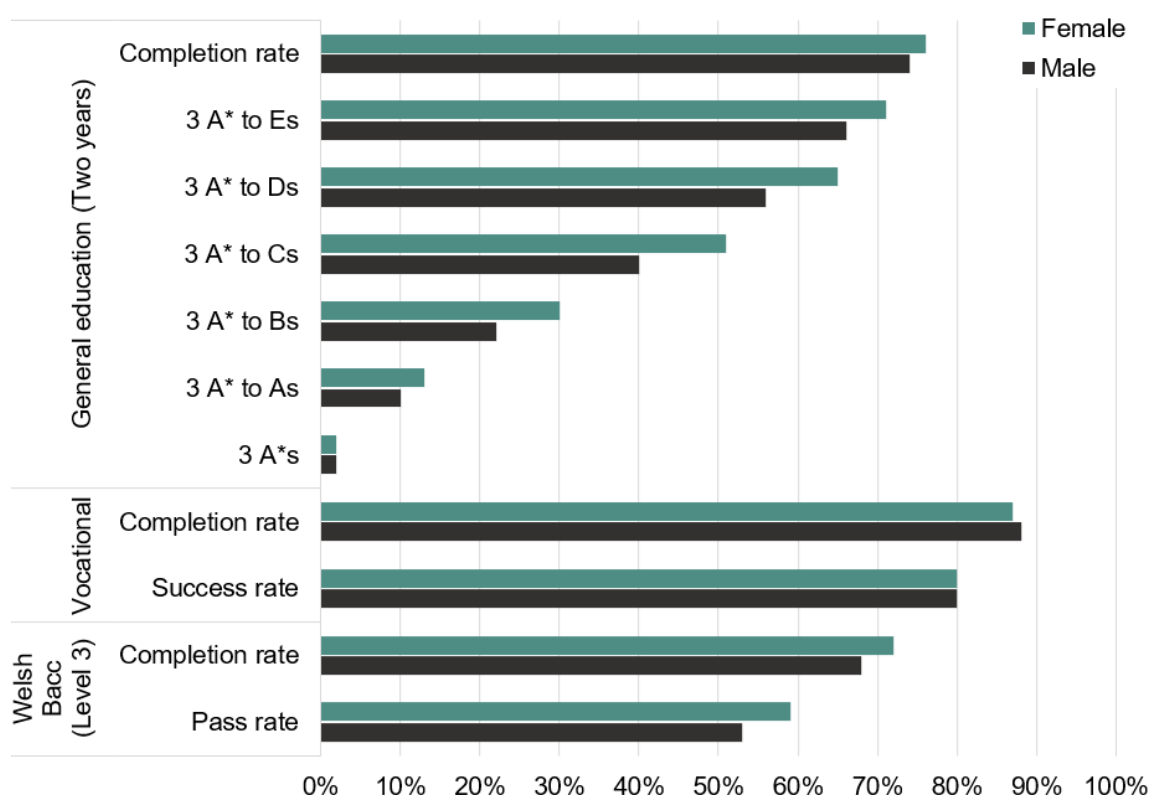
Gender and sex are not collected consistently across the data sources used for this release.

The Lifelong Learning Wales Record, which collects data from colleges, records the gender of the learner. The learner indicates the gender that should be recorded and has the option to record themselves as not associating with a binary gender identity of female or male.

The Post-16 Data Collection, which collects data from sixth forms, records the sex of the learner as recognised in law. This data item was collected as 'gender' prior to 2023/24 but with the same binary categories of female and male, and a small number of pupils may have had their gender identity recorded. Updated guidance was issued alongside the change to the variable name in 2023/24.

These two data sources are combined in this analysis to provide a full picture of general education, vocational and Welsh Baccalaureate outcomes between females and males. Users should note the differences in the variables collected when interpreting the analysis.

Figure 5.1: Achievement measures by gender/sex, academic year 2023/24



Description: Females had higher outcomes than males in general education programmes, except for the percentage of learners achieving 3 A*s. Males had a higher completion rate than females in vocational programmes.

Data in Table 1.2, 2.2, 3.2 of the accompanying workbook

76% of females who were 8 weeks into their AS levels went on to complete their A levels, compared to 74% of males. Female learners were less likely to complete their AS year

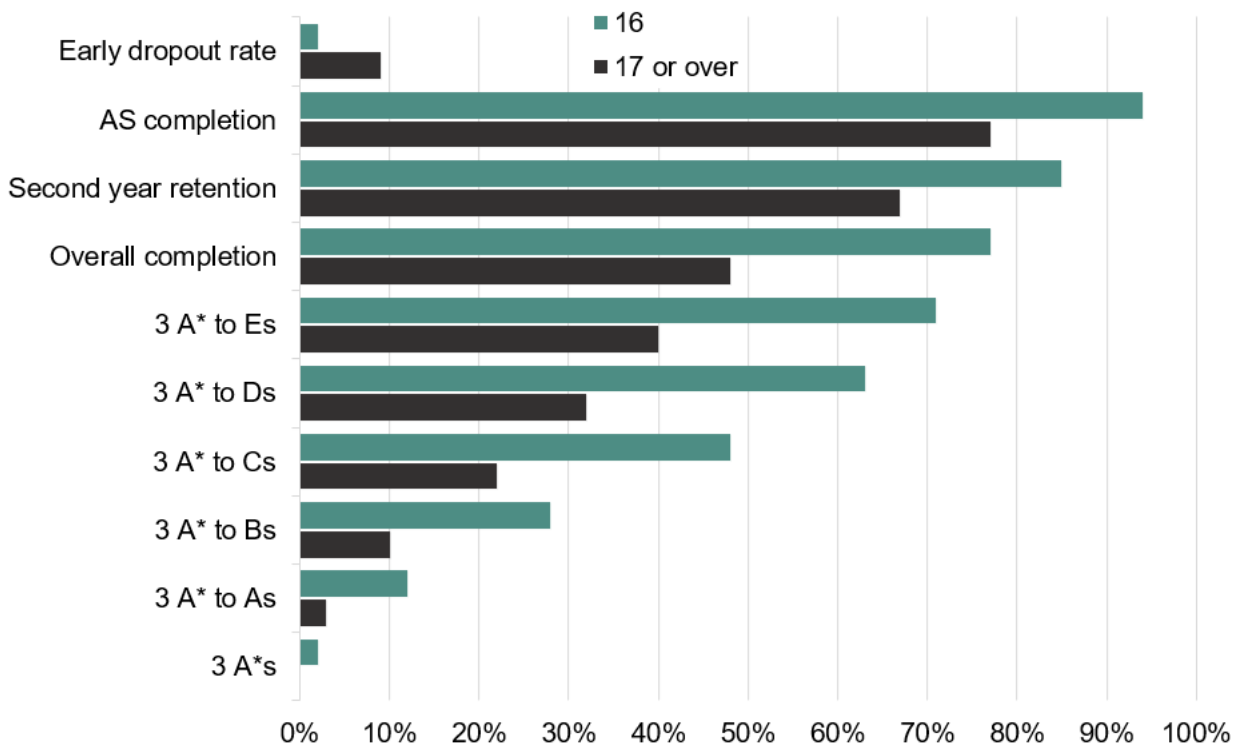
but were more likely to continue onto their second year if they did, leading to an overall higher completion rate.

51% of female AS learners went on to achieve at least three Cs at A level, compared to 40% of male learners.

Compared to 2022/23, the gender/sex gap for general education increased for learners achieving 3 A* to Es, 3 A* to Ds and 3 A* to Cs. The gap remained the same at 3 A* to Bs but has decreased at 3 A* to As. For 3 A*s, males outperformed females by 1 percentage point. The gender/sex gaps are now generally slightly wider than they were pre-pandemic.

Male learners were slightly more likely to complete their vocational programme than female learners in 2023/24, this is similar to 2022/23. Furthermore, there was no gender/sex gap in the success rate which was also similar to last year.

Figure 6.1: General education two-year achievement measures at A level by age at the start of the first year, academic year 2023/24



Description: Learners aged 16 at the start of their A levels had much higher achievement rates than older learners on full time general education programmes.

[Note 1] Some categories based on low numbers have been excluded to avoid disclosure.

Data in Table 1.3 of the accompanying workbook

Most learners in Wales will start their A levels at 16. In 2023/24, 15,525 learners started their AS levels at age 16 compared to 1,260 learners at ages 17 and over. Older learners may have followed a less traditional education route or could be retaking A levels.

48% of AS level learners aged 17 or older went on to complete their full A level programme, compared to 77% of 16 year olds.

48% of 16 year old AS learners went on to achieve at least three Cs at A level, compared to 22% of older learners.

The age gap in outcomes was slightly lower than last year, except for second year retention and grade outcomes 3 A*-As and 3 A*s. Also, the gap remained wider than before the pandemic.

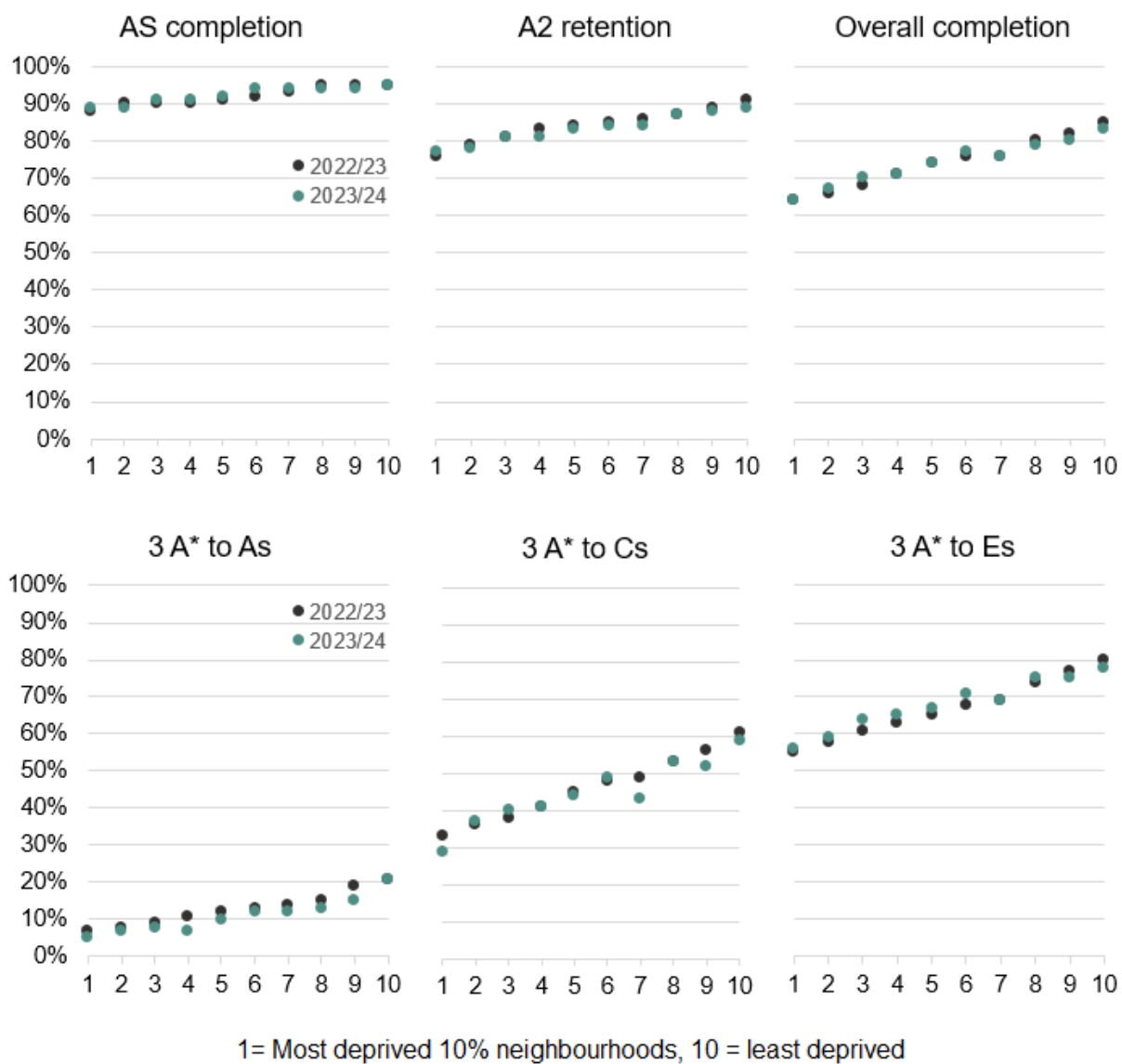
Deprivation

There are two measures of deprivation in this release. The first is 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. This comes from the main index of the [2019 Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation](#).

The second is a learner level proxy measure of deprivation: whether a learner was eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) at any point during secondary school.

This section contains a selection of the analysis based on these two measures. More detail is provided in the accompanying workbook.

Figure 7.1: General education two-year achievement measures at A level by the deprivation of the learner's home neighbourhood and academic year, 2022/23 and 2023/24



Description: The more deprived the area that learners lived in, the lower their outcomes were.

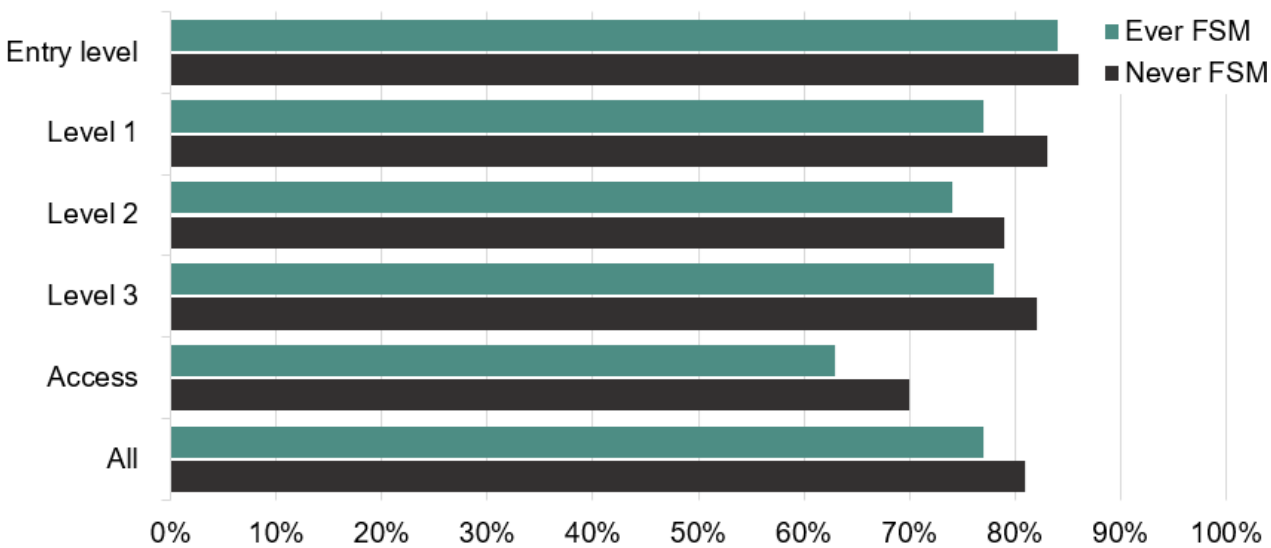
Data in Table 1.4 of the accompanying workbook

In 2023/24, in the most deprived 10% of neighbourhoods only 64% of AS learners went on to complete their A levels. In the least deprived 10% of neighbourhoods, 83% of AS learners completed their A levels. In 2022/23, the gap was 21 percentage points, but it has decreased to 19 percentage points for 2023/24.

Most of the gap stems from learners in deprived areas not continuing onto the second year of A levels. The retention rate was only 77% for learners living in the most deprived areas, compared to 89% for learners in the least deprived areas. Learners from the most deprived areas were also less likely to complete their AS levels in the first place.

A gap was also seen between learners who had been eligible for Free School Meals in secondary school, and those who were never eligible.

Figure 7.2: Vocational programme success rate by whether the learner was ever eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) in secondary school, academic year 2023/24



Description: Learners who were ever eligible for free school meals in secondary school had a lower success rate in vocational programmes than learners who were not.

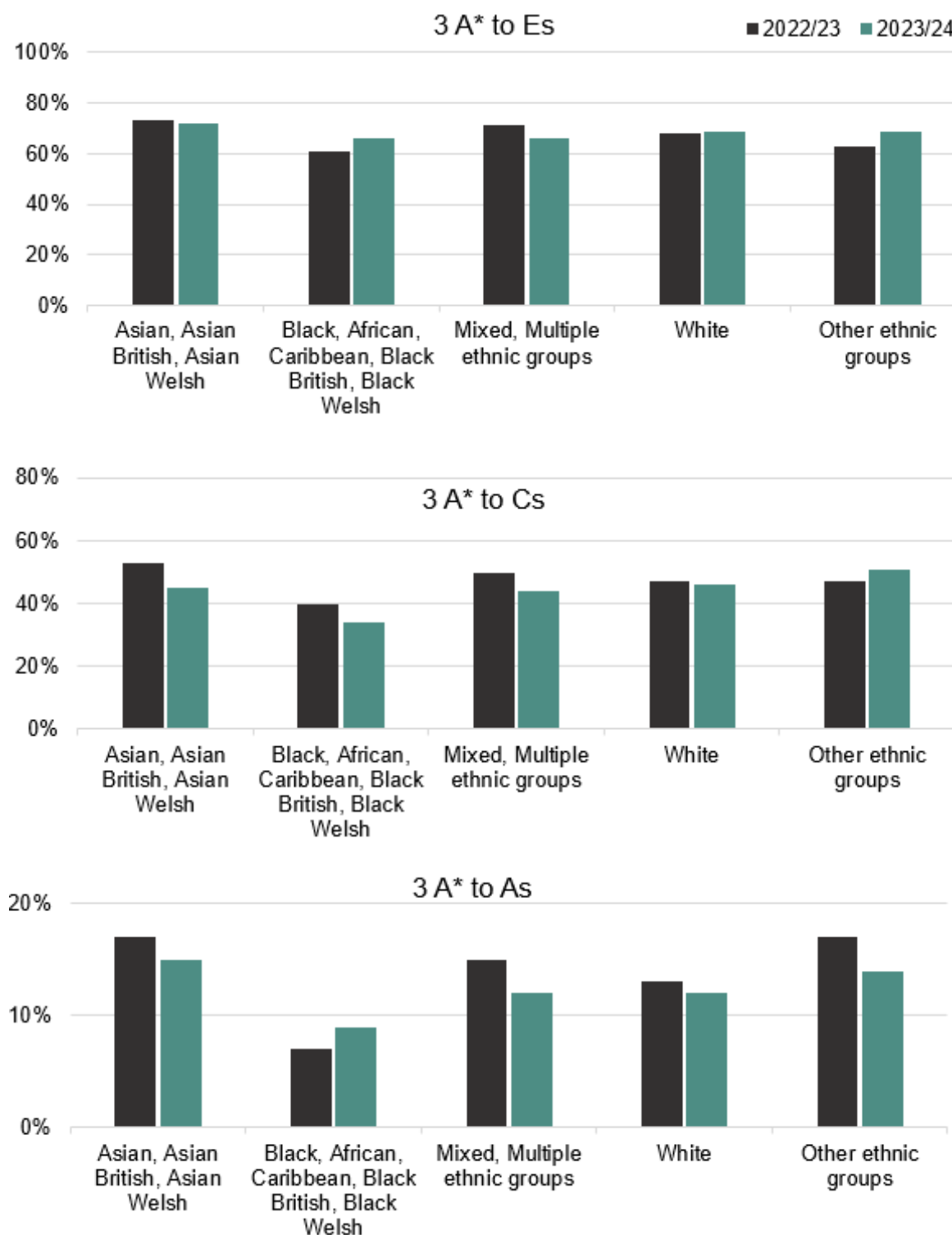
Data in Table 2.10 of the accompanying workbook

The link between deprivation and achievement in vocational programmes was not as strong as general education. 77% of learners from who were once eligible for [free school meals](#) achieved their vocational qualifications, compared to 81% who were not.

17% of vocational learners FSM status in secondary school could not be identified. This includes learners who did not go to secondary school in Wales, and learners who left secondary school before 2010/11, which is as far back as records can be matched in the dataset used for this. There was also a deprivation gap when looking at the area based measure of deprivation, where there were less unknowns.

Ethnic background

Figure 8.1: General education two-year achievement measures at A level by the learner's ethnic background and academic year, 2022/23 to 2023/24



Description: Some ethnic groups saw an increase in some of the grade outcome indicators in 2023/24 compared to 2022/23, while others have shown a decline or relatively stable outcomes.

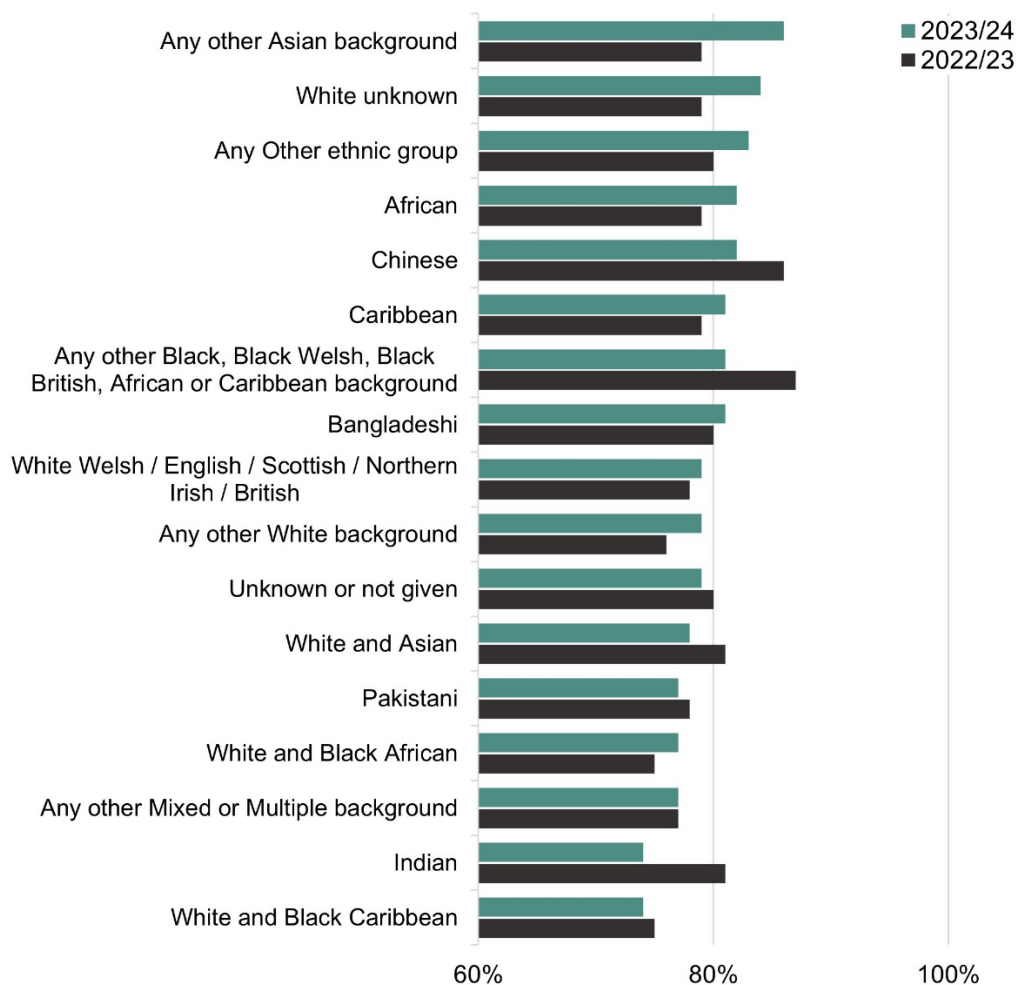
Data in Table 1.8a of the accompanying workbook

Learners from Asian, Asian British, Asian Welsh ethnic groups were the most likely to achieve three A levels and at least three As. However, learners from Other ethnic groups

were the most likely to achieve at least three Cs. The proportion of learners from an Asian, Asian British, Asian Welsh ethnic background achieving at least three Cs fell by 8 percentage points between 2022/23 and 2023/24.

The Black, African, Caribbean, Black British or Black Welsh ethnic group was the only group that saw an increase in the percentage of learners achieving at least three As, up 2 percentage points from 2022/23. Learners from Other ethnic groups saw the largest rise in achieving at least 3 A Levels, an increase of 6 percentage points from 2022/23. This proportion increased by 5 percentage points for learners from Black, African, Caribbean, Black British or Black Welsh backgrounds.

Figure 8.2: Vocational education success rate by the learner's detailed ethnic background and academic year, excluding English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), 2022/23 to 2023/24



Description: Some ethnic groups saw an increase in vocational education success rates in 2023/24 compared to 2022/23, while others have shown a decline or relatively stable success rate.

[Note 1] Some categories based on low numbers have been excluded to avoid disclosure.

Data in Table 2.9 of the accompanying workbook

Learners from Any other Asian backgrounds had the highest success rate (86%) on vocational programmes in 2023/24 (excluding programmes that teach English for

Speakers of Other Languages). This was a 7 percentage point rise compared to the previous year.

The learners with the lowest success rate were learners from White and Black Caribbean backgrounds, representing a slight decrease from 75% in 2022/23 to 74% in 2023/24.

Glossary

Academic year

For schools, the academic year is from 1 September to 31 August. For colleges, the academic year is 1 August to 31 July.

Age

A learner's age is calculated from the 31 August at the beginning of their AS year for general education, and at the beginning of the named year for vocational education.

AS, A2 and A level

A levels are qualifications which are usually taken over 2 years. Typically a learner takes Advanced Subsidiary GCE (AS) qualifications in the first year, and may then go on to take the overall Advanced GCE qualification in the second year. This second year is sometimes referred to as the A2 year.

Some learners will take linear A levels, where they spend two years working towards an A level qualification without taking an Advanced Subsidiary GCE.

Colleges and school sixth forms

In this release, 'colleges' means further education institutions, also known as FEIs. Some further education institutions are a group of several colleges. 'Schools' or 'Sixth forms' refers to maintained school sixth forms.

St David's Catholic Sixth Form College is defined as a college. Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen is a school sixth form.

Courses

Courses are individual qualifications that a learner studies. For example, a physics A level.

Completion rate

The completion rate is the proportion of programmes or activities that are finished, whether or not the qualifications were achieved. See the quality and methodology document for more information.

Early dropouts

Learners are defined as early dropouts if they:

- end their programme within 8 weeks of their start date
- and did not complete that programme
- and the programme had an expected length of 24 weeks or greater

Early dropouts are excluded from the measures.

Ethnic background

Ethnic categories are presented according to the [Government Analysis Function harmonised standards](#). The information is self-reported by the learner.

Free school meals

Learners are eligible for free school meals if their families are in receipt of certain benefits/support payments, or are on universal credit. Learners are only recorded as eligible if they have applied for free school meals to their local authority.

A learner is defined in this report as “Ever eligible for Free School Meals” if they were eligible for free school meals at any point during secondary school in Wales. If they were not eligible in any year of secondary school in Wales they are described as ‘Never eligible for Free School Meals’. Learners who could not be matched to a secondary school record in Wales are categorised as unknown.

General education

General education refers to a programme of learning which includes a mix of qualifications across several subject areas. In post-16 learning these qualifications are often A levels, but learners can also take a mixture of vocational qualifications as part of their general education programme.

Home neighbourhood

The small area called the Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA) which contains the learner's address.

Main qualifications

Main qualifications should take up at least 50% of the Guided Contact Hours for a programme, with the ideal target being 70%. They should be qualifications that are approved or designated by Qualifications Wales. Whether a qualification is a main qualification is self-reported by the provider.

Programme

A programme is a collection of qualifications that a learner will study. For example, an A level programme may include three A levels and a Welsh Bacc. An example of a vocational programme might be ‘Carpentry & Joinery Level 1’, which involves studying a ‘Diploma in Carpentry and Joinery’ as the main qualification, along with any supporting qualifications, such as pre-GCSE mathematics.

Qualification levels

Qualification levels range from entry level to level 8.

A level 1 qualification is equivalent to a D to G at GCSE, a level 2 qualification is equivalent to an A* to C at GCSE, and a level 3 qualification is equivalent to an AS or A level.

The [Credit and Qualification Framework learner guide](#) has a diagram outlining the levels of different qualifications.

Sector subject areas

The sector subject areas are based on the 15 first-tier areas of learning classified by the Office of Qualifications and Examination Regulation (Ofqual). They can refer to the subject of an overall vocational programme, or individual courses.

Success rate

The success rate is the proportion of main qualifications taken that were achieved. See the quality and methodology document for more information.

Vocational education

Vocational education is a set of learning activities taken by a learner with the aim of preparing them for a specific area of work. BTECs are a typical kind of vocational qualification taken as part of a vocational programme. In this release vocational education does not cover apprenticeships or [Jobs Growth Wales+](#).

Notes

Tables are published alongside this release containing all the data presented here, and further data.

Suspension of performance measures in 2019/20 and 2021/22

Due to the changes in how grades were awarded 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: Consistent performance measures for post-16 learning: Achievement document for detailed information.

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.

The standards expected around trustworthiness, quality and public value have been demonstrated and improved in the following ways.

Trustworthiness

From the beginning the measures have been developed by professional statisticians according to the Medr's [Statement of Compliance](#) and [pre-release access to official statistics policy](#). Release dates are pre-announced, protocols around data confidentiality are followed.

Occasionally, revisions can occur due to errors in our statistical processes or when a data supplier notifies Medr that they have submitted incorrect information. In these cases, a judgement is made as to whether the change is significant enough to publish a revised statistical release. Where changes are not deemed to be significant, figures will be corrected if they appear in future releases.

Quality

There is a validation process for data when it is collected. There is an additional reconciliation process for data from the Lifelong Learning Record Wales. The measures are created from code through a methodology that has been improved and validated over the years. Automated checks are built into the code. When the measures have been produced, the final report is written and checked by statisticians.

Each year, learning providers receive an achievement measures report for their own data, including information on how exactly the measures have been calculated and highlighting potential data quality issues. This gives providers a chance to highlight and raise issues.

Explanatory notes are sent to all providers each academic year which give guidance on how the measures are created and explain any changes to the methodology that year.

In 2021/22, colleges received the code that was used to generate the measures, giving them the opportunity to critique the methodology directly. We plan to expand this to publishing the code publicly in the future.

These processes and other work have led to the following improvements in quality:

- The data collection guidance and validation rules accompanying the data collection has been improved, leading to higher quality data.
- Changes have been made to the school sixth form and college data collections to further harmonise their results.
- The handling of data collection issues around the Welsh Bacc has been strengthened, including a reconciliation process, and a system for better dealing with incomplete records.
- A method was developed for multi-syllabus qualifications, where a learner may achieve multiple qualifications within one learning code (for example in GCE Art and Design).
- A system has been implemented to check that the reported grade achieved by a learner matched the grade outcomes possible for the qualification.
- A method was created to remove programme transfers from the measures, if and only if the learner could be identified as having moved onto to a valid programme.

Value

The measures were developed with the help of a regular technical group with representatives from colleges, sixth forms, local authorities and Estyn. Their feedback has led to changes to the methodology, and an expansion of the measures to cover more aspects of post-16 learning.

The Welsh Government held a public consultation on the Consistent Performance Measures for Post-16 learning in 2017 for people to give their input into the principles and details around the measures.

The following changes have been made to improve the value of the statistics since the measures were first published in 2018:

- The A level course measures were revamped to be two-year measures with information on completion and retention.
- Measures were created for courses other than A levels, that account for the wide variety of grade structures possible.
- The vocational programme measures were expanded to include learning in school sixth forms.
- Additional demographic data has been added around gender/sex, ethnic background, home local authority, deprivation of home neighbourhood, and FSM eligibility status in secondary school, and information about learners with impairments in data relating to colleges.
- Expanded A level grade outcomes to the full range (A* to E) instead of A, C and E only.

Related statistics

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

[Examination results: September 2023 to August 2024](#), published by Welsh Government, reports on A level examination results for schools on the basis of examination entries.

The Joint Council for Qualifications publishes [A and AS level results](#) on the basis of examinations sat.

The series [Consistent performance measures for post-16 learning \(learner destinations\)](#) forms part of the suite of consistent performance measures, of which this release is also a part.

[Further education, work-based learning and community learning: August 2023 to July 2024](#) was published by Medr on 4 March 2025.

[Learner outcome measures for apprenticeships, August 2023 to July 2024](#) was published by Medr on 12 March 2025.

[Progression from Year 11 to tertiary education, August 2017 to January 2025](#) was published by Medr on 25 February 2025.

Next update

Date: February or 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

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