

Official statistics

Apprenticeships learning programmes started: August to October 2025 (provisional)

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Summary:

This publication contains statistics on apprenticeship learning programmes started. Includes data by region of domicile, programme type, age group, sector, gender and academic year.

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Note: Figures with (p) are provisional.



Key Points

- In 2024/25, 18,850 apprenticeship learning programmes were started. This number was a 13% decrease from 21,625 starts in 2023/24. 2024/25 saw the lowest number of apprenticeships starts since these statistics began in 2012/13.
- There were 7,385 apprenticeship learning programmes started in 2025/26 Q1 (p), compared with 7,250 starts in 2024/25 Q1.
- Higher apprenticeships saw the largest rise compared to Q1 the previous year, a 22% increase (p).
- Healthcare and Public Services apprenticeships were the most popular sector in 2025/26 Q1 (p) with 2,400 programmes started. This accounted for 32% of all apprenticeship learning programmes started.
- 52% of apprenticeship learning programmes started were by male learners in 2025/26 Q1 (p), a 2 percentage point drop from 2024/25 Q1.
- 33% of apprenticeship learning programmes started were by learners aged 19 and under in 2025/26 Q1 (p), compared to 35% in Q1 for the previous year.
- 12% of apprenticeship learning programmes started were by learners with ethnic minority backgrounds in 2025/26 Q1 (p), no change from 2024/25 Q1.
- 13% of apprenticeship learning programmes started in 2025/26 Q1 (p) were by learners identifying as having a disability and/or learning difficulty, a 1 percentage point increase from 2024/25 Q1.
- 10% of apprenticeship learning programmes started were by learners living in the 10% most deprived neighbourhoods in Wales in 2025/26 Q1 (p).
- There have been 88,455 apprenticeship starts between May 2020 and October 2025, as part of progress towards Welsh Government's target of 100,000 apprenticeships. Including the starts which are not counted as part of the more rigorous target measure, there were 97,355 apprenticeship starts overall in the time period.
- The Programme for Government contained a target to create 125,000 all-age apprenticeships. During the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee meeting on 26 June 2024, the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Welsh Language agreed a new target of 100,000 all-age apprenticeships to maintain the previous Senedd term's target of 100,000.

The Welsh Government financial year budget for apprenticeships in 2023-24 was £139m and £144m in 2024-25 (Source: [Medr Funding Allocations 2025 to 2026](#)). Previously, there was additional funding for apprenticeships from the European Social Fund (£43m in 2023-24 [Medr Funding Allocations 2025 to 2026](#)). This ceased by the 2024-2025 financial year.

[Apprenticeship learning programmes started: interactive dashboard](#)

Management information

Management information published on 29 January, next update 26 February.

Medr has access to more recent management information, that has not undergone the validation, or quality checks that are undertaken for the official statistics in this report.

According to the management information at 22 January 2026:

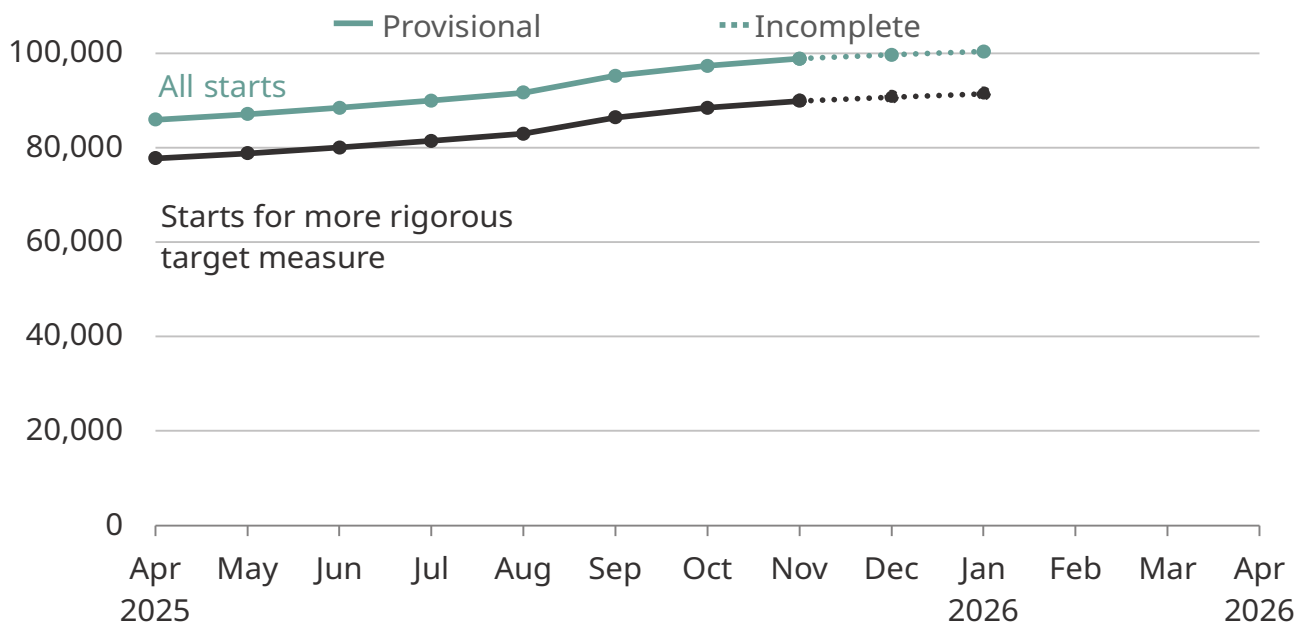
- There were 91,420 apprenticeship starts since Q4 2020/21, as part of the more rigorous measure of progress towards Welsh Government's target of 100,000 apprenticeships in the Senedd period.
- Including the starts which are not counted as part of the more rigorous target measure, there were 100,380 apprenticeship starts overall in the time period.
- The total number of apprenticeships started in the Senedd period crossed 100,000 in January 2026. The number of apprenticeship starts for the more rigorous target measure remained below 100,000.

For the purposes of this measure and to align with the quarterly reporting periods for these statistics, we consider the Senedd time period as stretching from 2020/21 Q4 to 2025/26 Q3 (1 May 2021 to 30 April 2026).

These measures include degree apprenticeships. Degree apprenticeships are sourced from a different data collection, which is available annually. The latest update to the degree apprenticeship data was made on 29 January, and included data for the 2024/25 academic year. Information on degree apprenticeships that started in the first three quarters of the 2025/26 academic year will be available in January 2027. There were 480 degree apprenticeships in 2024/25 as part of the target measure, and 485 starts overall.

Total apprenticeship starts in Senedd period

Figure 1: Management information at 22 January 2026



Description: There were fewer starts in December 2025 than other months. This is typical.

Providers have an 8 week period to record an apprentice as starting. This management information will not include all the apprentices who have started in the given time period.

It also takes time to learn if an apprentice is ineligible for the more rigorous target measure, which excludes apprentices who withdraw in the first 8 weeks, and those who transfer out of their programme to other learning.

Providers continuously make changes to their records to ensure accuracy. The final position for official statistics is based on the record as it stands in December after the end of the academic year.

As we come to the end of the Senedd period, we intend to provide monthly updates of management information on progress towards the 100,000 apprenticeship target.

This is the timetable for the updates:

Date of management information	Publication date
18 December 2025	8 January 2026
22 January 2026	29 January 2026
19 February 2026	26 February 2026
19 March 2026	26 March 2026
23 April 2026	30 April 2026
21 May 2026	28 May 2026
18 June 2026	25 June 2026

The management information is collected on the Thursday of the 3rd full week of the month. The figures reported in June should give a reasonable indication of the final figures over the Senedd period, although we won't have a complete picture of withdrawals, until the final data is published.

The updates will be made to the latest version of this report, and will be announced on our [Statistics publication calendar](#). The next Apprenticeship learning programmes report is scheduled for February 2026, and will include data up until October 2025.

The final position on the apprenticeship target according to the quality assured official statistics, will be reported in the Apprenticeship learning programmes report scheduled to be published in Spring 2027.

Degree apprenticeship starts for 2023/24 have been revised down from 385 to 360 due to some courses being incorrectly recorded as degree apprenticeships. The degree apprenticeship starts counted towards the more rigorous target measure were revised from 385 to 355.

Quality and Methodology

Freeze change

Starting from Q2 2024/25, the data freezes used for apprenticeship starts changed. Previously, Q1, Q2, and Q3 would use a snapshot of data of the Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR) as it stood six months after the end of the quarter. Going forward Q1, Q2 and Q3 will be based on freezes taken three months after the end of the quarter.

The change was made to improve the timeliness of the statistics.

The final figures will continue to be based on the December freeze after the end of the academic year.

The guidance states that a learner should be recorded within 8 weeks of starting. An analysis of Q2 2023/24 starts showed that the three month freeze (April 2024) captured 99.6% of the starts recorded in the sixth month freeze (June 2024), indicating that this change will have minimal impact on accuracy.

Provisional data

The statistics in this report are produced quarterly. Figures for the first three quarters in an academic year are provisional because they are based on earlier freezes of the Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR). This data will continue to be updated until the final freeze in December after the end of the academic year.

The provisional figures for the year are finalised when quarter 4 (May to July) data are published in February/March each year, based on the December freeze.

Target measure starts

The statistics for the target measures use a more rigorous measure of apprenticeship programme starts than other statistics in this output. This measure takes account of early drop outs (within first 8 weeks) and transfers between apprenticeships.

Degree apprenticeships are now included in the current target measure. Degree apprenticeships in Wales provide the opportunity to combine working with part-time study at university. Data is sourced from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). Whilst statistics from HESA have been calculated to be as comparable as possible with statistics for other apprenticeship programmes sourced from the LLWR (for example, removing early drop outs), some methodological differences will remain. Unlike the LLWR, HESA data is only available annually.

More quality information

Other than the provisional data and the target measure, these statistics are produced in the same way as the statistics in the [Further education, work-based learning and community learning annual reports](#). More information can be found in the quality section of those reports.

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 our [Statement of Compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics](#) and other [statistical policies](#).

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

Trustworthiness

This is produced by professional statisticians complying to the Code of Practice for Statistics. Release dates are pre-announced, protocols around data confidentiality are followed.

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 provide a quicker insight into the uptake of apprenticeships in Wales than the annually produced reports. They are used for monitoring and evaluating the sector. They report the progress against a target set by Welsh Government.

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