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## Medr statistics

# Consistent performance measures for post-16 learning: Learner destinations, August 2023 to July 2024


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**Summary:** **Employment and learning destinations for further education, school sixth form and work-based learning learners in the year following their programme of study.**


**Theme:** Further education, sixth forms, work-based learning

**Source:**
Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) Study
Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR)
Post-16 Data Collection
Matched Education Data (MED)
Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC)
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)
P45 and P14 employment data


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## Note

This report uses matched education data linked with the Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) Study to show employment and learning destinations for further education, school sixth form and work-based learning learners in the year following their programme of study.

A separate release provides information on learner achievement.

This report highlights some of the messages in the data. The accompanying tables include the full breakdowns for all measures by all the characteristics in this article.

## Measure Definitions

A learner's destination relates to their activity the following academic year. So, for the 2023/24 cohort, destinations are reported for 2024/25.

We have grouped learner destinations into the following categories for reporting purposes.

### Sustained employment

Learners must be in paid employment as recorded in Pay-As-You-Earn (PAYE) records for at least one day per month in five out of the six months between October and March in the following academic year, or have returned a self-assessment form stating that they have received income from self-employment during that financial year.

### Sustained learning

Learners must be learning at an equal or higher level to the programme they terminated for at least one day per month in all six months between October and March in the following academic year.

### Sustained destination

Learners who progress to a sustained destination in employment or learning (or both).

In recognition that the sustained learning measure above may not reflect the full value of further learning at all levels, a secondary measure is presented showing all learning.

### Learning (non-sustained)

Learners must be in learning at an equal or higher level to the programme they terminated for at least one day between October and March in the following academic year.

### Learning and sustained employment destination

Learners who progress to a sustained employment destination or learning destination (does not need to be sustained).

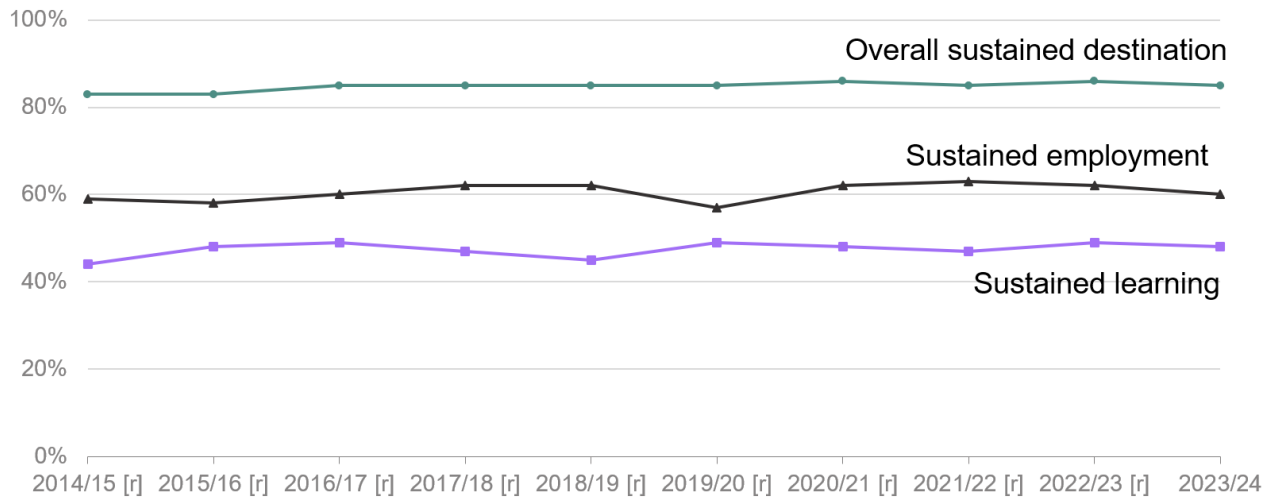
Data on the Learning (non-sustained) and Learning and sustained employment destination measures are included in the tables published alongside this release.

# Main points

## Overview

### The overall sustained destination rate has fluctuated between 85% and 86% since 2016/17

Figure 1: Destinations of post-16 learners, 2014/15 to 2023/24




Description: The sustained destination rate has remained relatively stable since 2016/17. It decreased by 1 percentage point between 2022/23 and 2023/24.

[Note r] Previously published figures have been revised with the latest data, see the key quality information for detail.

Data in Table 1a of the accompanying spreadsheet

48% of learners in 2023/24 went onto a sustained learning destination, a decrease from 49% in 2022/23. Sustained employment is the most common destination and the rate decreased for the second year in a row, dropping to 60% in 2023/24 from 62% in 2022/23.

# Destinations of post-16 learners

Of the 102,640 post-16 learners finishing a learning programme in 2023/24:

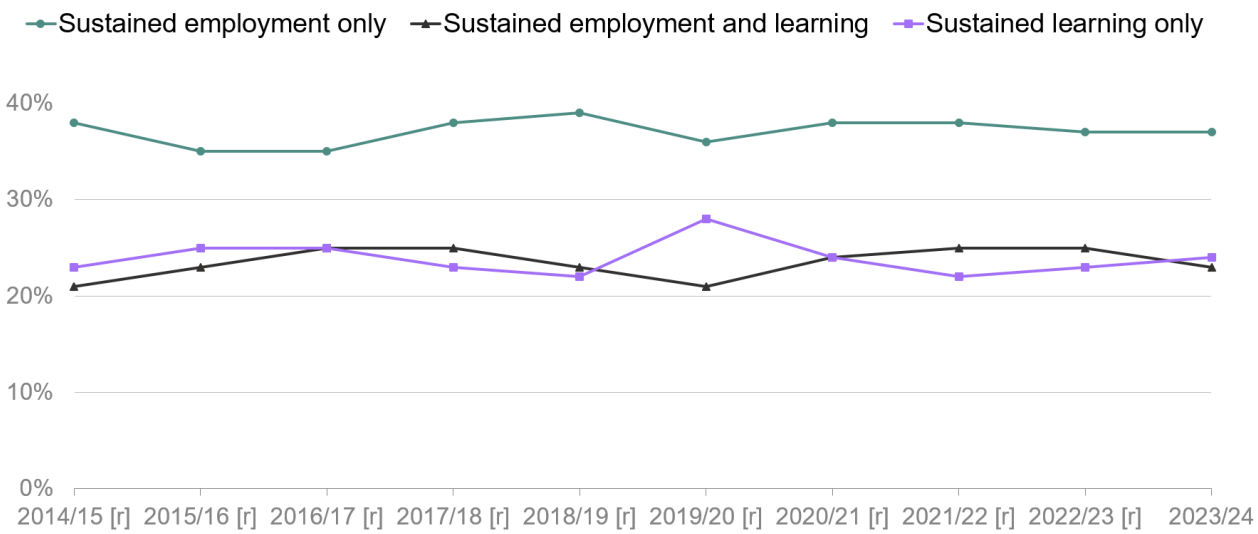
- 85% had a sustained destination in 2023/24.
- 60% were in sustained employment in 2023/24.
- 48% were in sustained learning in 2023/24.

The sustained destination, sustained employment, and sustained learning rates for 2023/24 learners are broadly in line with levels observed in previous years. Since 2014/15:

- Sustained destination rates have ranged between 83% and 86%.
- Sustained employment rates have ranged between 57% and 63%.
- Sustained learning rates have ranged between 44% to 49%.

### Sustained employment only remains the most common type of sustained destination

Figure 2: Destination types of learners with an overall sustained destination, 2014/15 to 2023/24




Description: Sustained learning only has overtaken sustained employment and learning as a destination for the first time since the pandemic.

37% of learners in 2023/24 were in sustained employment only, whilst 23% had a sustained employment and learning destination. 24% of learners had a sustained learning only destination.

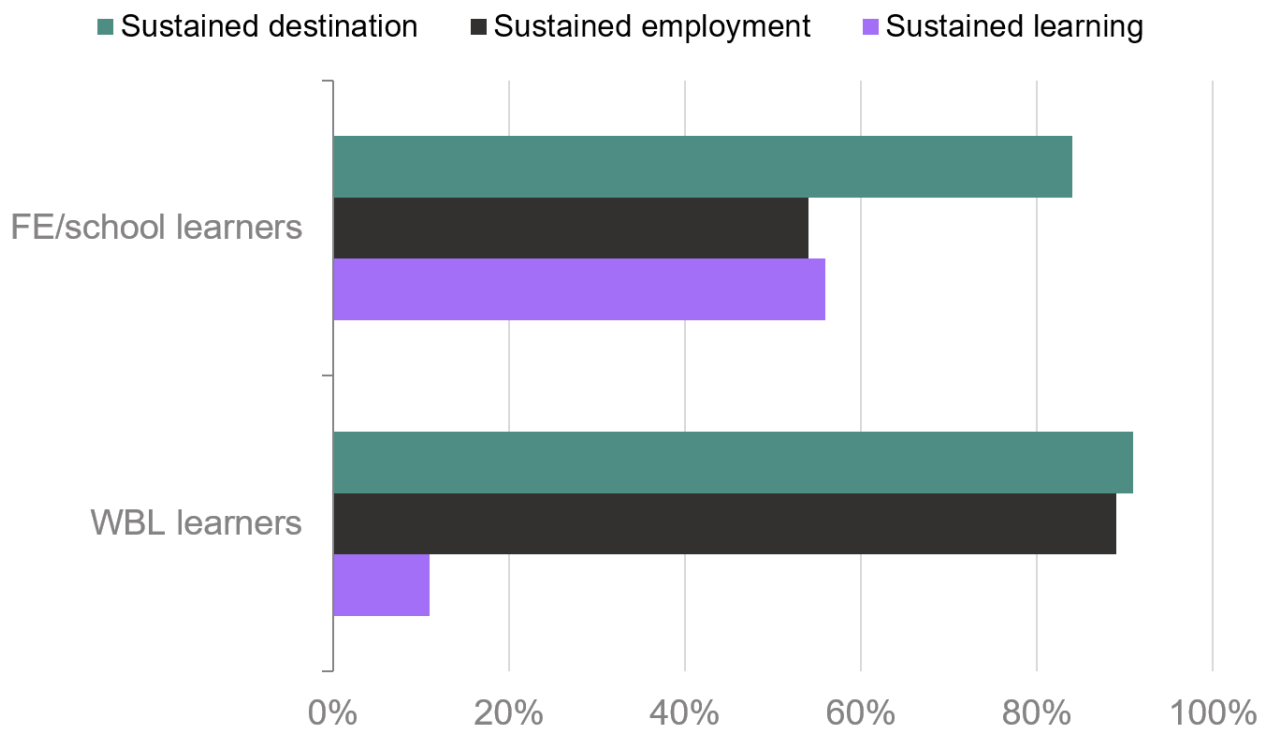
[Note 1] A small proportion of learners with 'other' sustained destinations (less than 0.1%) are not shown on the figure. Other sustained destinations include learners who were engaged in learning and/or employment in each of the six months between October and March the following year but didn't meet the criteria of sustained employment or sustained learning. The rate for other sustained destinations is consistently below 0.3%.

[Note r] Previously published figures have been revised with the latest data, see the key quality information for detail.

The remaining 15% of post-16 learners in 2023/24 had a non-sustained or not known destination. This includes learners with sustained learning at a lower level, and learners with no known outcome in the destination year.

**Destination rates vary by the type of learning provision a learner undertakes**

Figure 3: Destinations of 2023/24 post-16 learners, by sector




Description: WBL learners had higher rates of sustained destination and sustained employment than FE and school learners, and much lower sustained learning rates.

[Note 1] In this figure and throughout the release, sustained employment includes those with ‘sustained employment only’ and ‘sustained learning and employment’, and sustained learning includes those with ‘sustained learning only’ and ‘sustained learning and employment’.

Data in Table 1b and Table 1c of the accompanying spreadsheet

WBL learners were more likely to have a higher sustained destination than FE and school learners (91% compared to 84%), driven by a much higher rate of sustained employment (89% compared to 54%).

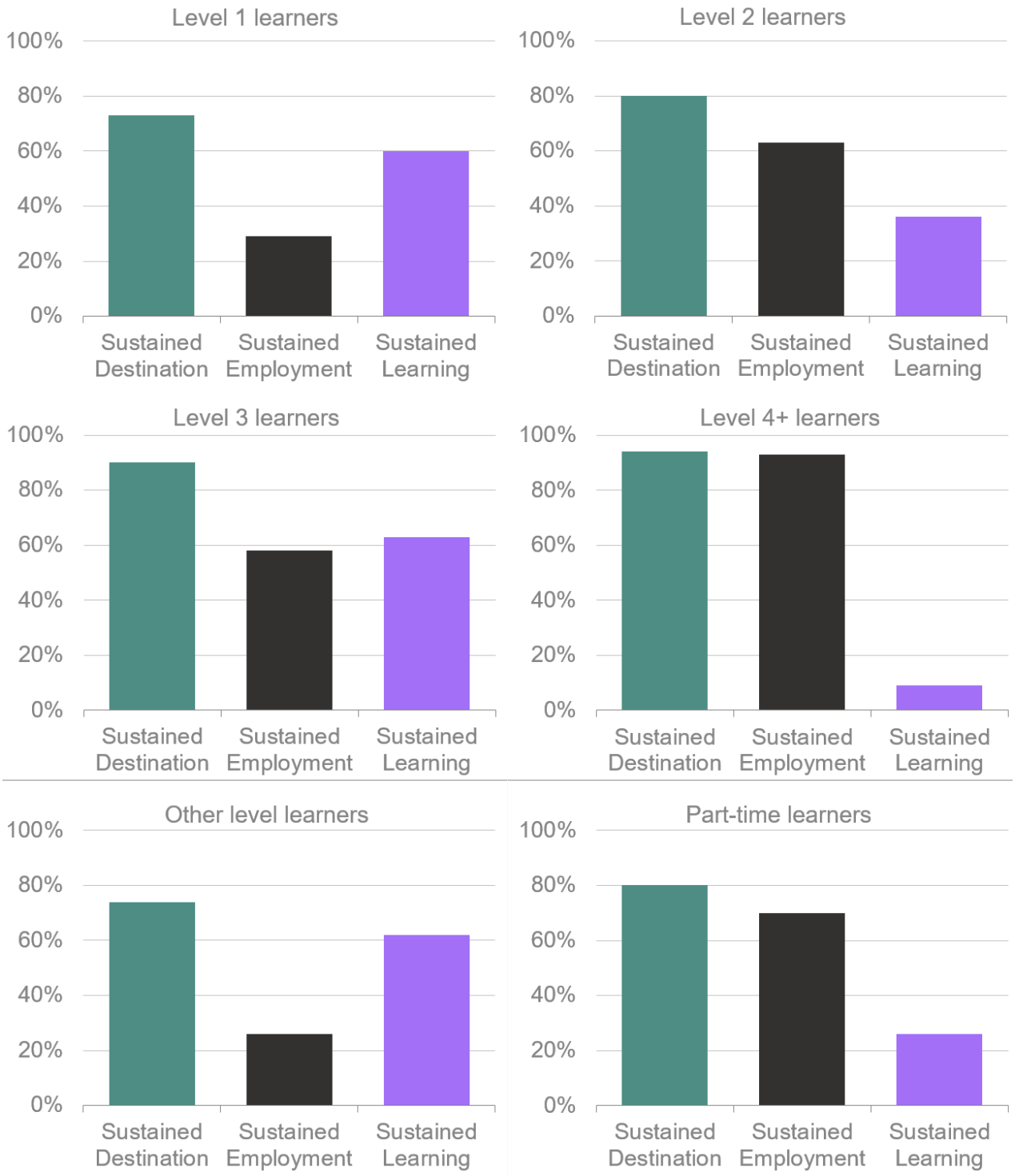
FE and school learners tend to have slightly higher sustained learning rates than sustained employment rates with the exception of 2021/22, where sustained employment was 2 percentage points higher. The general trend of WBL learners having a lower sustained learning rate and a higher sustained employment rate is consistent over time. The gap between the two rates has generally increased over time. The sustained learning rate for WBL learners in 2023/24 is the lowest it has been over the period covered by this analysis (since 2014/15), whilst the sustained employment rate is close to the highest.

# Destinations of post-16 learners by level of terminated learning programme

This section shows the destination measures by the level of study the learner finished.

**The proportion of learners in each destination category varies substantially between the different levels of learning programmes**

Figure 4: Destinations of post-16 learners, by level of terminated learning programme, 2023/24




Description: From Level 1 to Level 4+, sustained destination rates rise with level of learning.

[Note 1] Information on level of study is not captured for part-time learning programmes.

[Note 2] 'Other level learners' includes entry level, pre-entry level and full-time programmes where no level is specified.

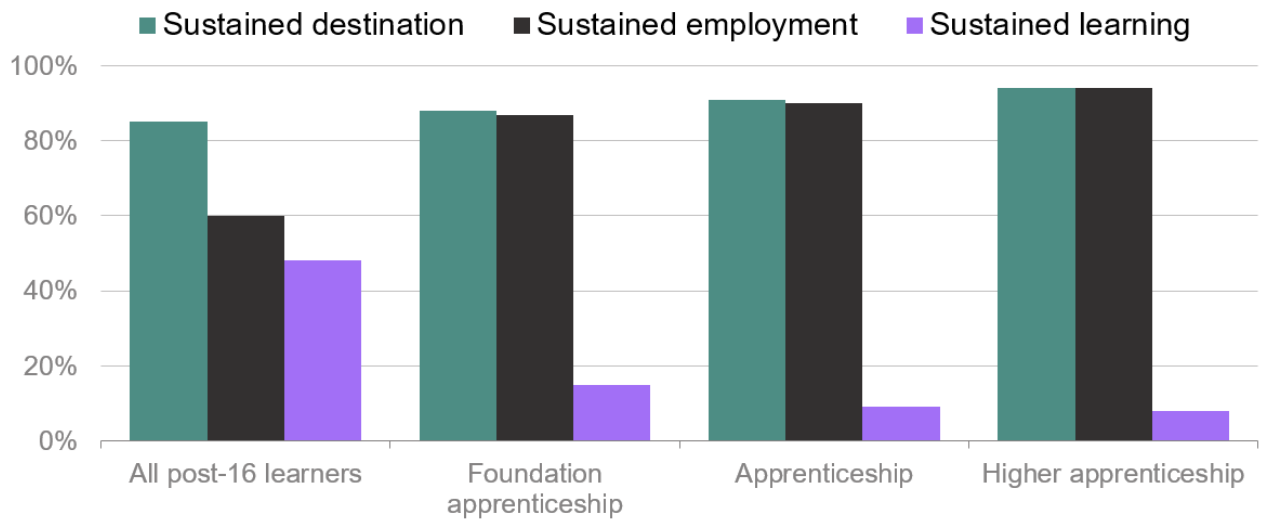
Data in Table 5a of the accompanying spreadsheet

There was a 67 percentage point difference between the sustained employment rate of learners at level 4+, who had the highest rate of 93%, and Other level learners, who had the lowest rate of 26%.

For the sustained learning rate, there was a 54 percentage point difference between learners at level 3, who had the highest rate of 63%, compared to learners at level 4+, who had the lowest rate of 9%.

**Apprenticeship learners have higher sustained destination rates than all post-16 learners, driven by higher sustained employment rates**

Figure 5: Destinations of apprenticeship learners, by level of apprenticeship, 2023/24




Description: Higher level apprenticeships tend to have higher rates of sustained destination and sustained employment. Conversely, apprenticeships show an opposing trend in sustained learning whereby rates fall as the level of apprenticeship rises.

Data can be found in Table 2a of the accompanying spreadsheet

The sustained learning rate ranges between 8% to 15% for apprenticeships in 2023/24, which is substantially lower than all post-16 learners at 48%.

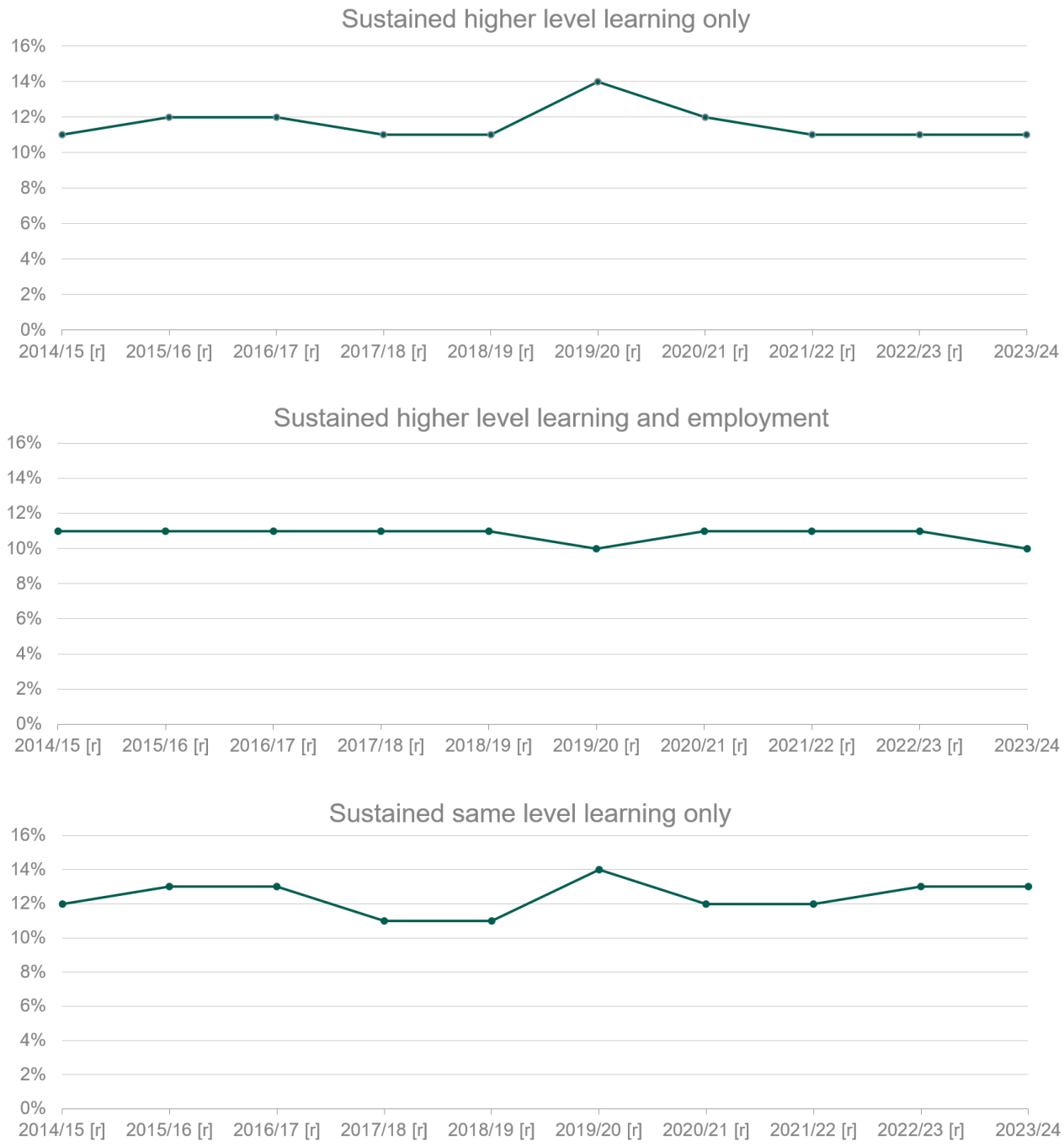
Across all apprenticeship levels, sustained employment rates are much higher than sustained learning rates.

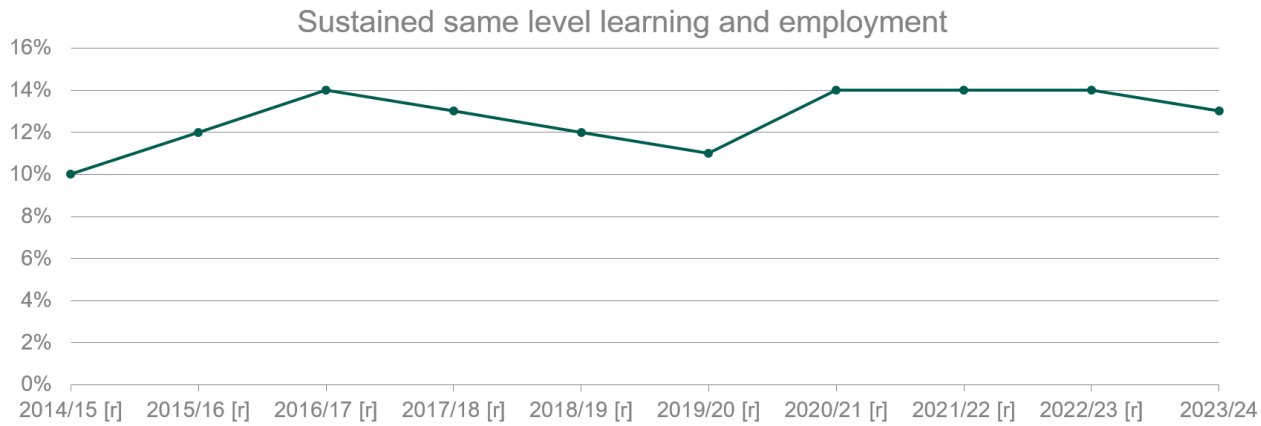
# Sustained learning destinations of post-16 learners

This section shows the sustained learning destination measures of post-16 learners; whether learners continue their study at the same, or higher level, and whether learners go on to study at a FE, school or WBL provider, or a Higher Education Provider (HEP).

### Learning destination rates have remained relatively stable over time

Figure 6: Sustained learning destinations of post-16 learners, by level of learning destination, 2014/15 to 2023/24






Description: Sustained same level learning only and higher level learning only rates are unchanged between 2022/23 and 2023/24. Both categories of sustained learning and employment saw a decrease.

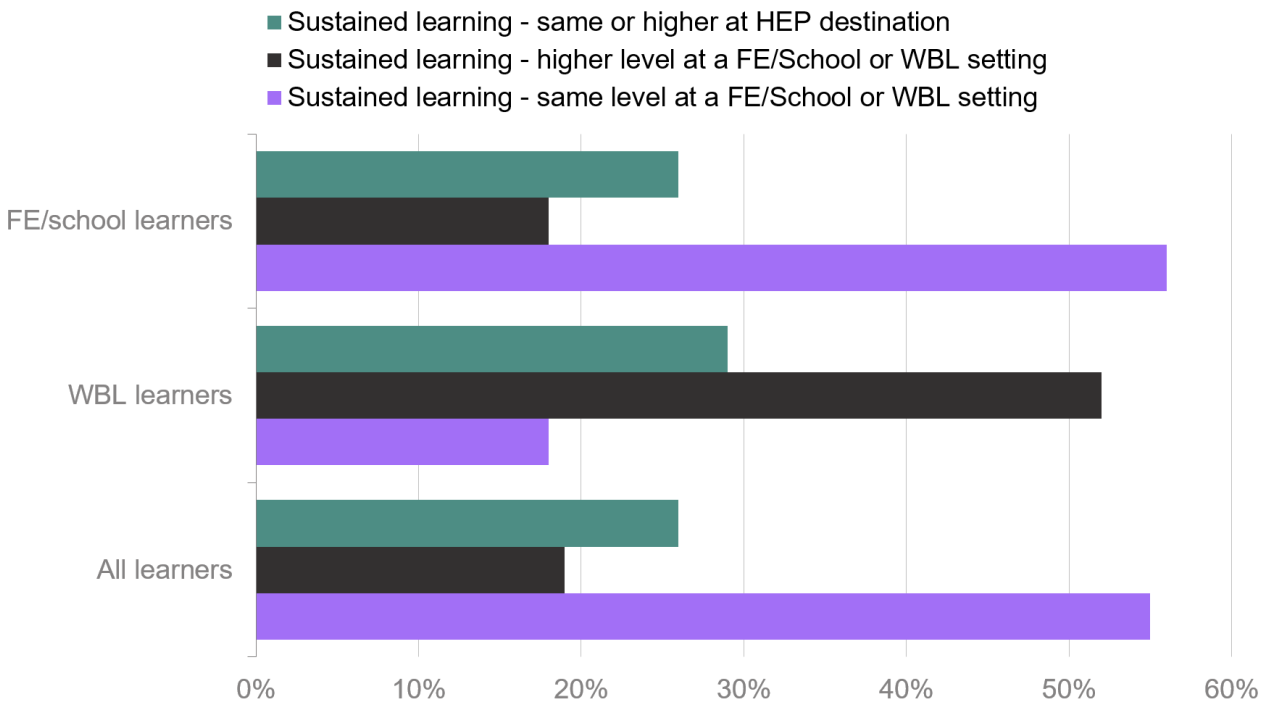
[Note r] Previously published figures have been revised with the latest data, see the key quality information for detail.

For the learners moving into a sustained learning destination in 2023/24 (48%), this was made up of 26% of learners studying at the same level and 21% of learners studying at a higher level.

Despite some fluctuations, sustained learning destination rates have remained broadly similar over time.

**Sustained learning rates vary by the type of destination provider**

Figure 7: Sustained learning destinations of post-16 learners, by destination provider type, 2023/24




Description: FE and school learners have the highest rate of sustained learning at the same level at a FE/school/WBL setting. WBL learners have the highest rate of sustained learning at a higher level at a FE/School/WBL setting, though relatively few WBL learners have sustained learning destinations overall.

[Note 1] The base cohort is learners with a sustained learning destination rather than all learners.

Data in Table 3b and Table 3c of the accompanying spreadsheet

In 2023/24, 56% of FE/school sixth form learners had a sustained learning destination. This was made up of 74% of learners learning at FE/school sixth form or WBL providers, and 26% were at a HEP.

A lower proportion of WBL learners had a sustained learning destination at 11%. 71% of these learners progressed to learning at FE/school sixth form or WBL providers, and 29% were learning at a HEP.

# Destinations of post-16 learners by learner characteristics

This section includes destinations of post-16 learners by characteristics such as gender/sex, age, ethnicity, special educational needs or additional learning needs provision, free school meal eligibility, and multiple deprivation decile.

## 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 and work-based learning (WBL) providers, 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.

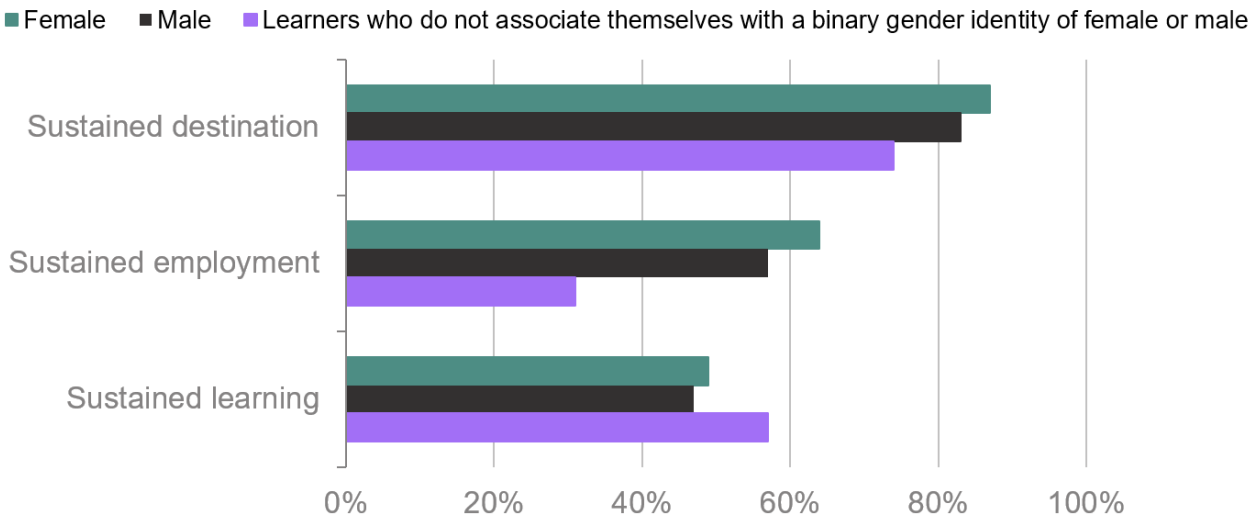
The Post-16 Data Collection, which collects data from sixth forms, records the sex of the learner as recognised in law. This data item was collected as 'gender' prior to 2023/24 but with the same binary categories of female and male, and a small number of pupils may have had their gender identity recorded. 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 learner destinations between females, males and, learners who do not associate themselves with a binary gender identity of female or male. Users should note the differences in the variables collected when interpreting the analysis.

In the 2023/24 leavers cohort, 80% of learners were from colleges/WBL providers, where 'gender' is recorded. The remaining 20% of the cohort is from sixth forms, where 'sex' is recorded. Learners who do not associate with a binary gender identity of female or male make up less than 1% of the cohort.

### Performance varied noticeably by gender/sex

Figure 8a: Destinations of post-16 learners, by gender/sex, 2023/24




Description: Females had the highest sustained destination and sustained employment rates however, learners who do not associate themselves with a binary gender identity of female or male had the highest sustained learning rate.

[Note 1] The category 'Learners who do not associate themselves with a binary gender identity of female or male' relates to learners in colleges/ work-based learning only.

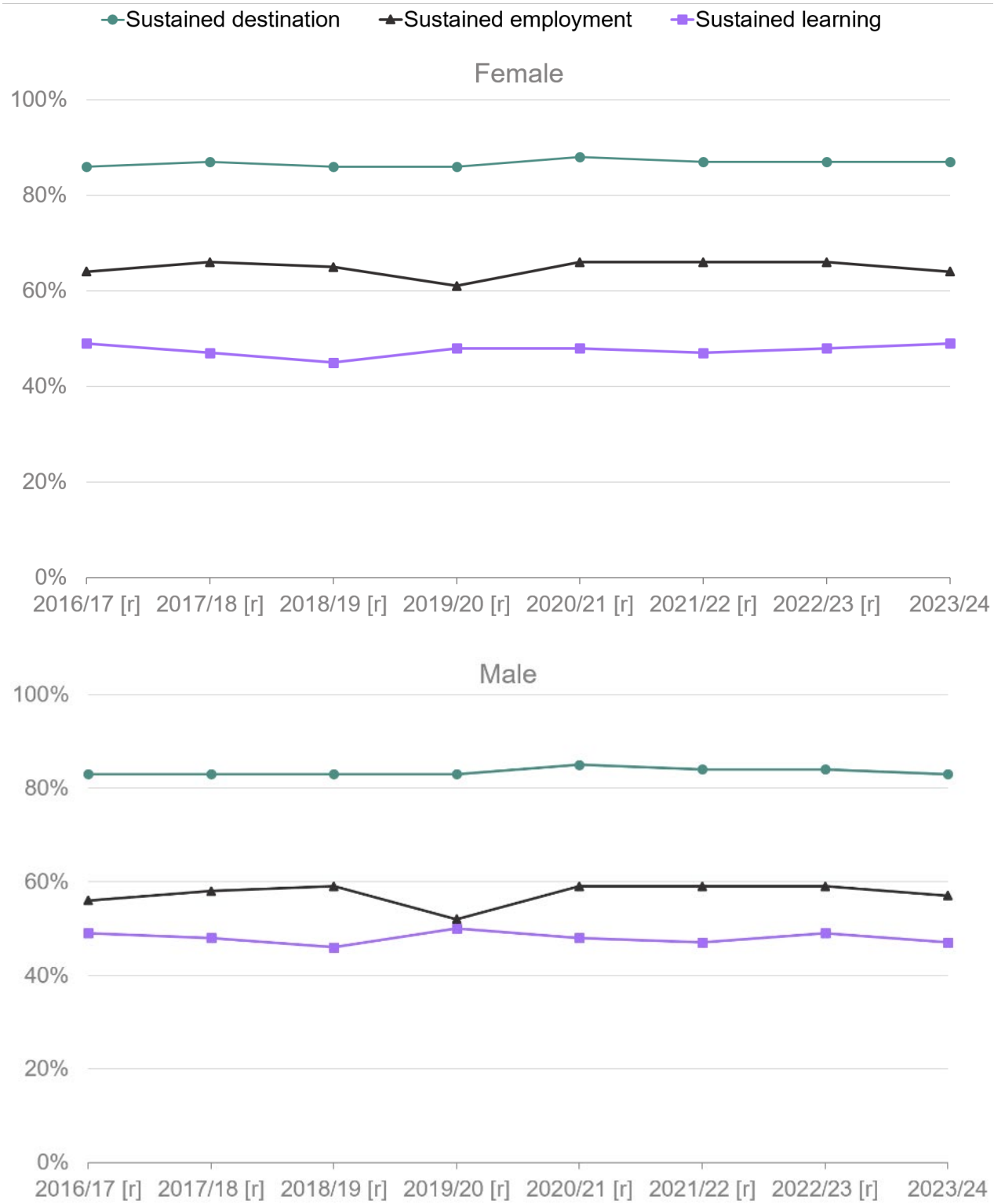
Data in Table 7a of the accompanying spreadsheet

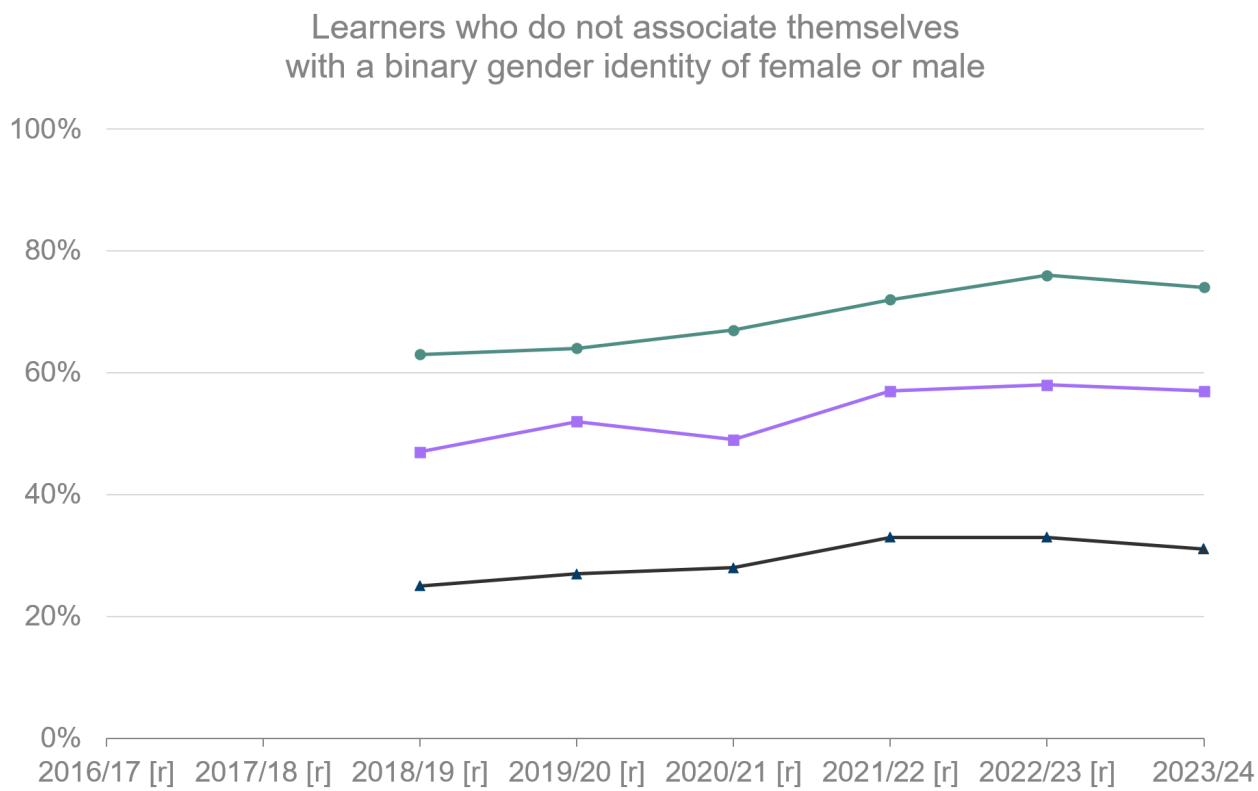
87% of female learners had a sustained destination, this compares to 83% of male learners and, 74% for learners who do not associate themselves with a binary gender identity of female or male in 2023/24.

The gap between the gender/sex breakdowns is most pronounced in sustained employment. While 64% of female learners had a sustained employment destination, the corresponding figure for male learners was 57% and, 31% for learners who do not associate themselves with a binary gender identity of female or male.

**Female learners consistently have higher rates of sustained destination and sustained employment than male learners**

Figure 8b: Destinations of post-16 learners, by gender/sex, 2016/17 to 2023/24






Description: Sustained destination rates for male and female learners have largely remained stable over time.

[Note r] Previously published figures have been revised with the latest data, see the key quality information for detail.

[Note 1] Gender/sex has not been consistently recorded overtime, please see details in the heading paragraphs of the Gender/sex section.

[Note 2] Data for learners who do not associate themselves with a binary gender identity of female or male were suppressed from 2016/17 to 2017/18 due to the small cohort sizes.Outcomes for this group may be more volatile because the cohorts remain relatively small, despite increasing in size since 2016/17.

The female/male gap in sustained destination has remained at 3 percentage points over the last 8 years, with the exception of 2017/18 and the latest year 2023/24 where the gap reached 4 percentage points.

The female/male gap in the sustained employment rate is slightly wider and has ranged between 6 and 8 percentage points since 2016/17. In 2023/24, the female/male gap was 6 percentage points.

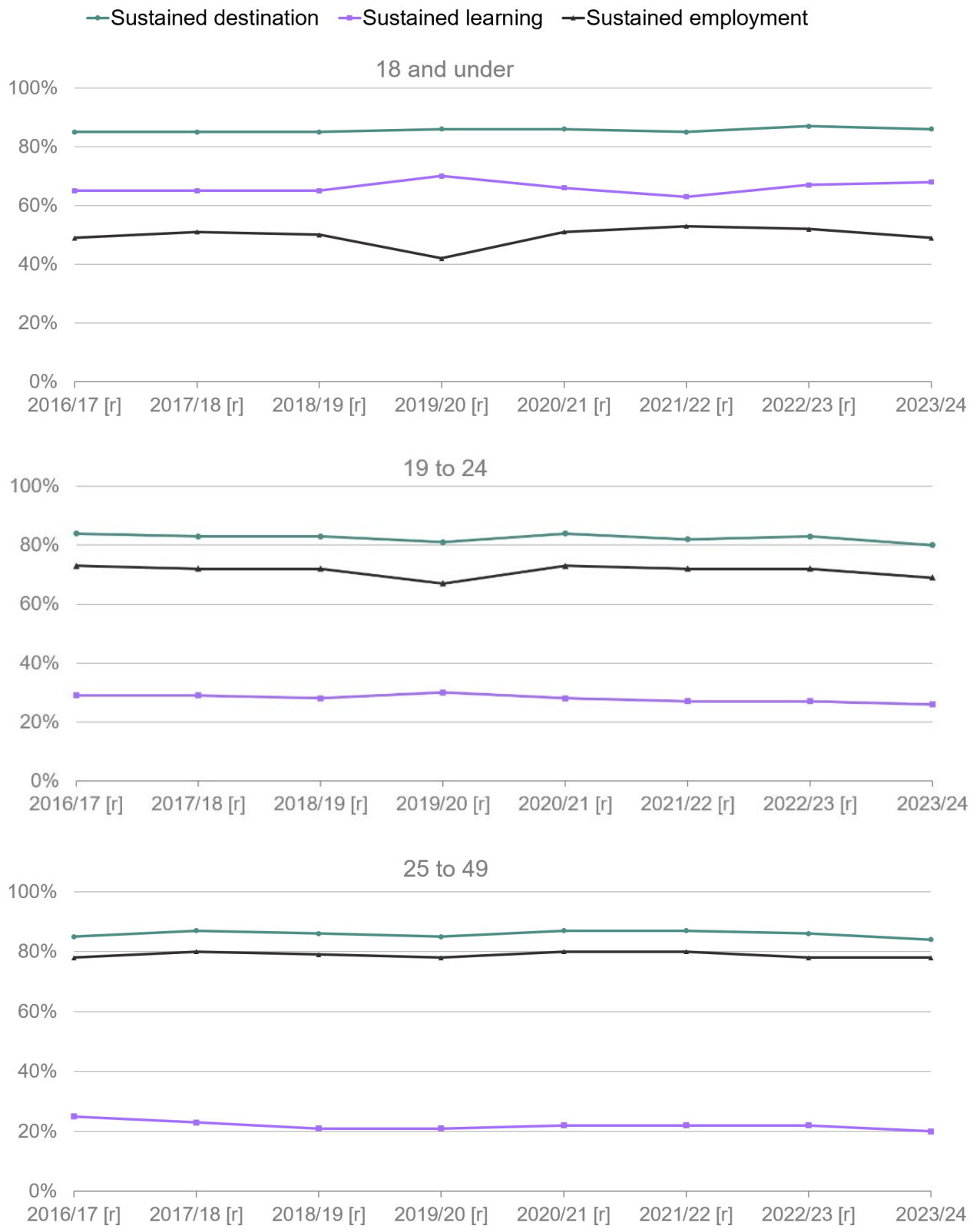
Since 2016/17, the sustained learning rates between male and female learners has been relatively consistent, differing by no more than 2 percentage points. In 2023/24, female learners had slightly higher sustained learning rates than male learners, whereas in other years, the rates for males were slightly higher or the same.

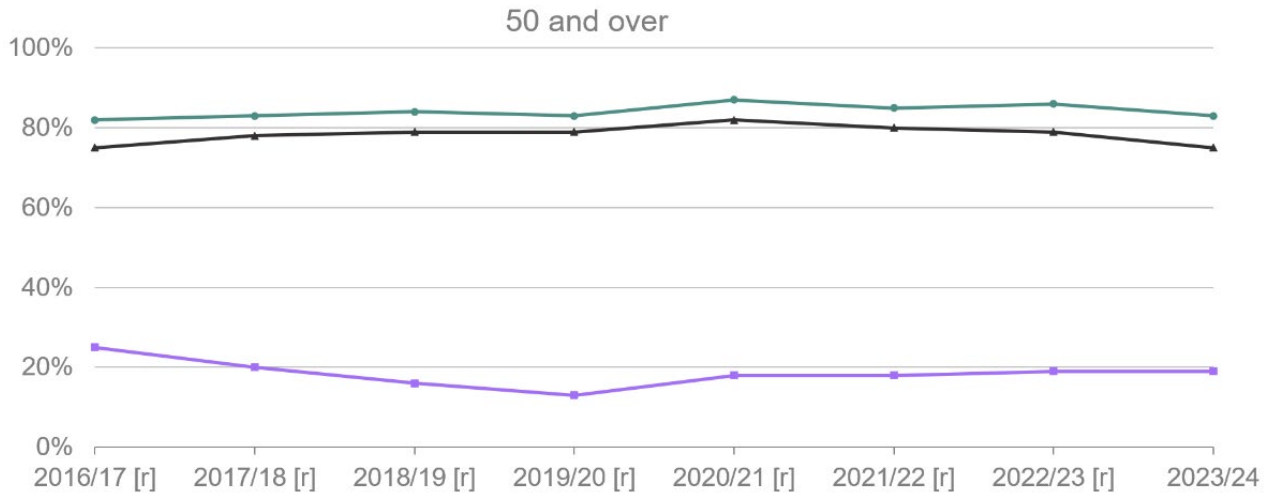
Learners who do not associate themselves with a binary gender identity of female or male generally had lower outcomes, with the exception of sustained learning rate. Overall, the outcome across all three measures have increased steadily since 2016/17.

## Age

### Learners aged 18 and under have higher sustained learning rates

Figure 9a: Destinations of post-16 learners, by age, 2023/24






Description: Overall sustained destination rates have fallen in 2023/24 across all age groups. However, the changes in sustained employment and sustained learning differ.

Data can be found in Table 6a of the accompanying spreadsheet

Learners aged 18 and under have opposite destination trends compared to the other age groups, with consistently higher sustained learning rates than sustained employment rates.

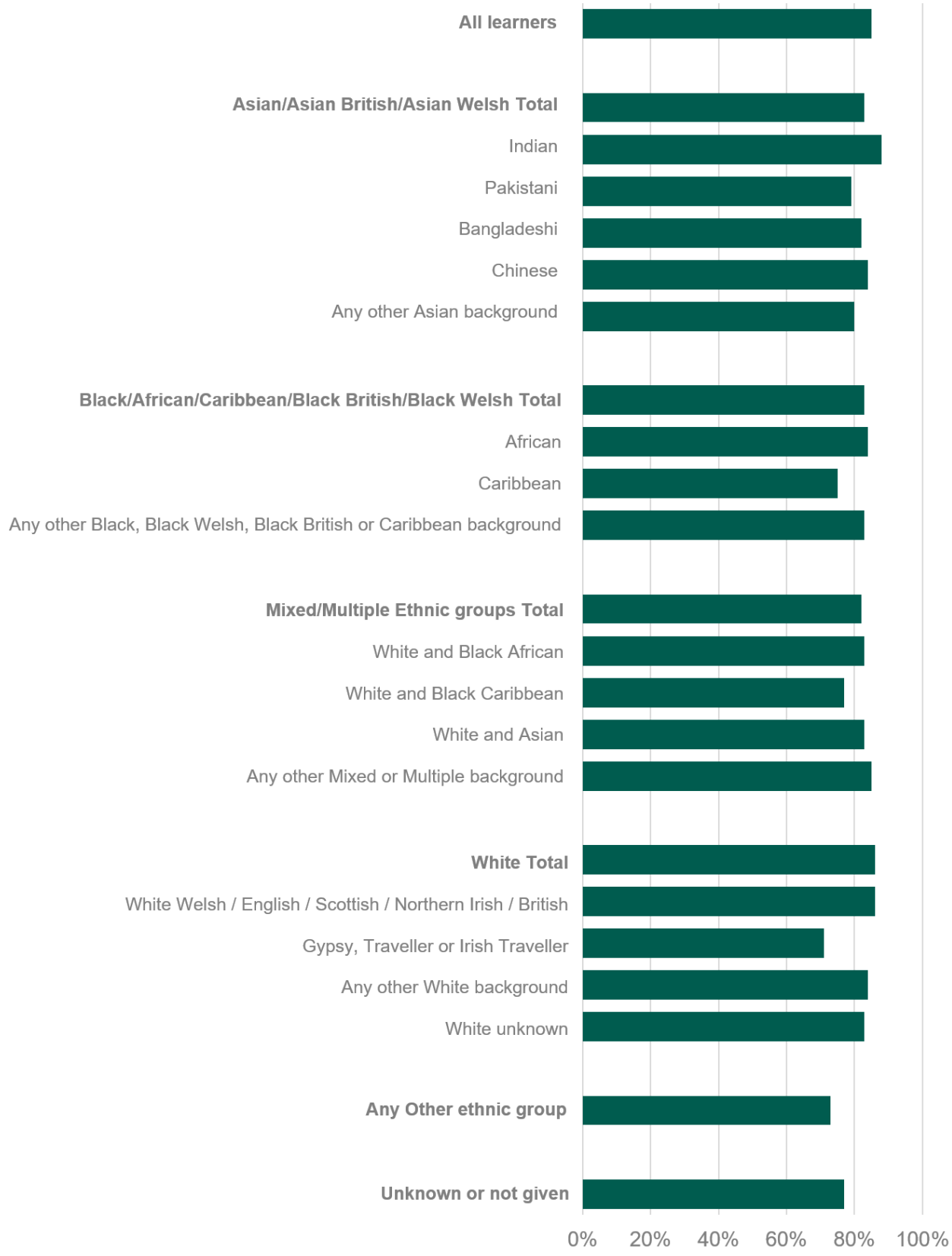
The sustained learning rate is the highest for those aged 18 and under and the lowest for the older age groups over time. Both higher and non-higher education sustained learning destinations are noticeably larger in proportion for those aged 18 and under compared to older age groups.

In 2023/24, the sustained employment rate was the highest for learners aged 25 to 49 at 78%, compared to the lowest at 49% for those aged 18 and under. Conversely, the sustained learning rate was the highest for those aged 18 and under at 68%, and the lowest for the learners aged 50 and over at 19%. Since 2021/22, sustained learning has increased from 63% to 68% for learners aged 18 and under.

## Ethnicity

### The destination rates are varied across ethnic groups

Figure 10a: Sustained destination rate of post-16 learners, by ethnicity, 2023/24




Description: The number of learners in some groups is smaller, therefore, the rates are more volatile. Futher detail including cohort numbers are available in the accompanying spreadsheet in Table 9a.

[Note 1] The Roma ethnic group is not visible on the figure as numbers are small and the data may be disclosive.

[Note 2] 11% of learners in the high level "White" ethnic group were recorded at a time when there was only one category in the Lifelong Learning Record Wales data collection for White ethnic groups. These learners are shown figure 11a as "White unknown"

Data in Table 9a of the accompanying spreadsheet

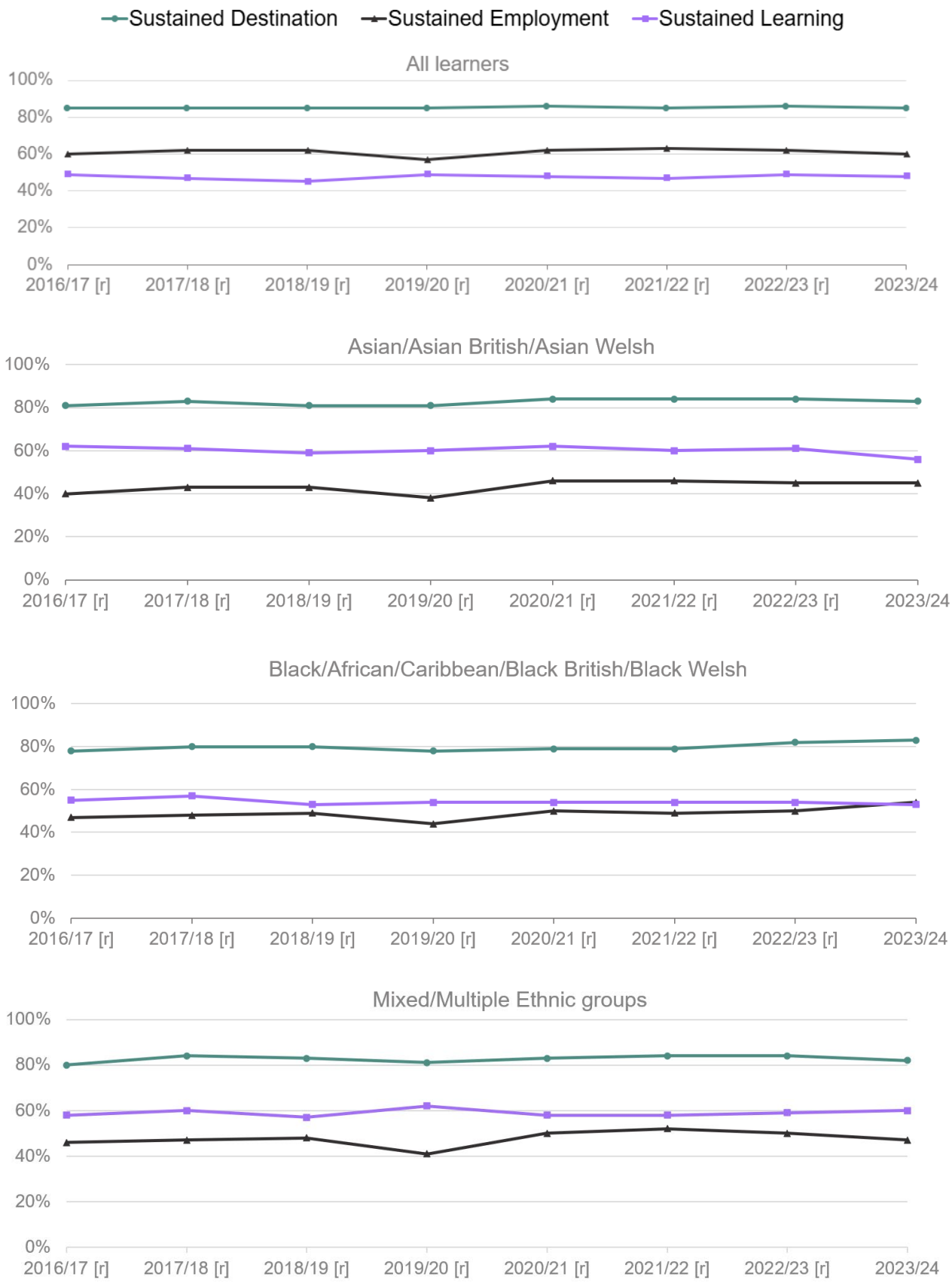
Across the aggregated ethnic groups, the sustained destination rate is the highest for learners with a White ethnicity (86%) and the lowest for learners from Other ethnic groups (73%). However, there is variation within the detailed groups in each category. Within the detailed groups, the Gypsy, Traveller or Irish Traveller ethnic group has the lowest sustained destination at 71% and learners in the Indian ethnic group have the highest rate of 88%.

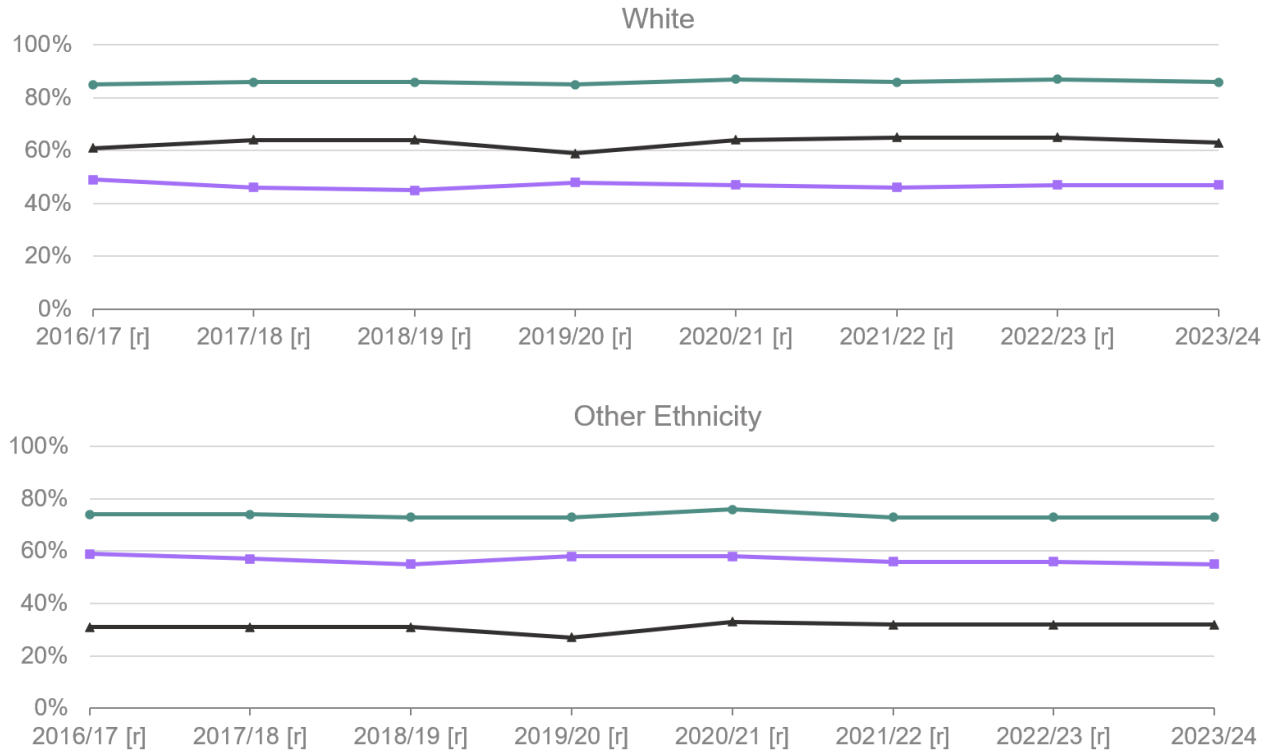
Learners with a White Unknown ethnicity (see note above) had the highest sustained employment rate at 65%. Learners in this group tend to have a slightly older age profile compared to the overall cohort which may explain the higher sustained employment rate. Learners from Other ethnic backgrounds had the lowest rate at 32%, followed by learners with a Pakistani ethnic backgrounds at 38%. In the aggregated groups learners with an Asian, Asian British, Asian Welsh ethnicity had a relatively low sustained employment rate compared to the other aggregated groups at 45%.

Conversely, when looking across the aggregated groups, the sustained learning rate was the highest for learners within the Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups at 60%. Looking at the more detailed groups, the Any other Mixed or Multiple background ethnic group had the highest sustained learning rate at 66%. The lowest rate was seen in learners with a Gypsy, Traveller or Irish Traveller ethnic background, at 35%.

**Learners with a White ethnicity have consistently higher rates of sustained employment through time**

Figure 10b: Destinations of post-16 learners, by ethnicity, 2016/17 to 2023/24






Description: All ethnic groups except for the White ethnic group typically have higher sustained learning rates than sustained employment rates.

[Note r] Previously published figures have been revised with the latest data, see the key quality information for detail.

In 2023/24, the sustained destination rate decreased for all ethnic groups, apart from the Black/African/Caribbean/Black British/Black Welsh group which increased by 1 percentage point.

Similarly, in 2023/24, the sustained learning rate decreased for all ethnic groups, apart from Mixed/Multiple Ethnic groups where it increased by 1 percentage point. The group that showed the largest difference from year to year was the Asian/Asian British/Asian Welsh ethnic group, where the sustained learning rate decreased by 5 percentage points from 61% in 2022/23 to 56% in 2023/24.

The sustained employment rate decreased or stayed the same for all ethnic groups between 2022/23 and 2023/24, except for the Black/African/Caribbean/Black British/Black Welsh ethnic group, where it increased by 4 percentage points. This was the driver in the increased overall sustained destination rate for the group.

The White ethnic group makes up around 9 out of 10 learners, hence its trends have a significant impact on the all learners trends.

## Special educational needs (SEN) provision or additional learning needs (ALN) provision

To get information on SEN/ALN, the Matched Education Dataset (MED) was used to link students in our LEO dataset with their Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) record. For more information on this, see the accompanying Quality and Methodology document.

Only learners able to be matched to PLASC were linked so the number of students included in this analysis is less than the total destinations cohort. As such, this analysis represents only 67% of the 2023/24 cohort and should be treated as a standalone analysis, not compared to the rest of the release.

For example, the learners included in the figure below have a younger demographic profile than the rest of this release. Figure 9a shows that younger learners have a lower rate of sustained employment than the whole cohort, so the sustained employment rate of all the students in figure 11a is lower than is shown for totals in the rest of this release.

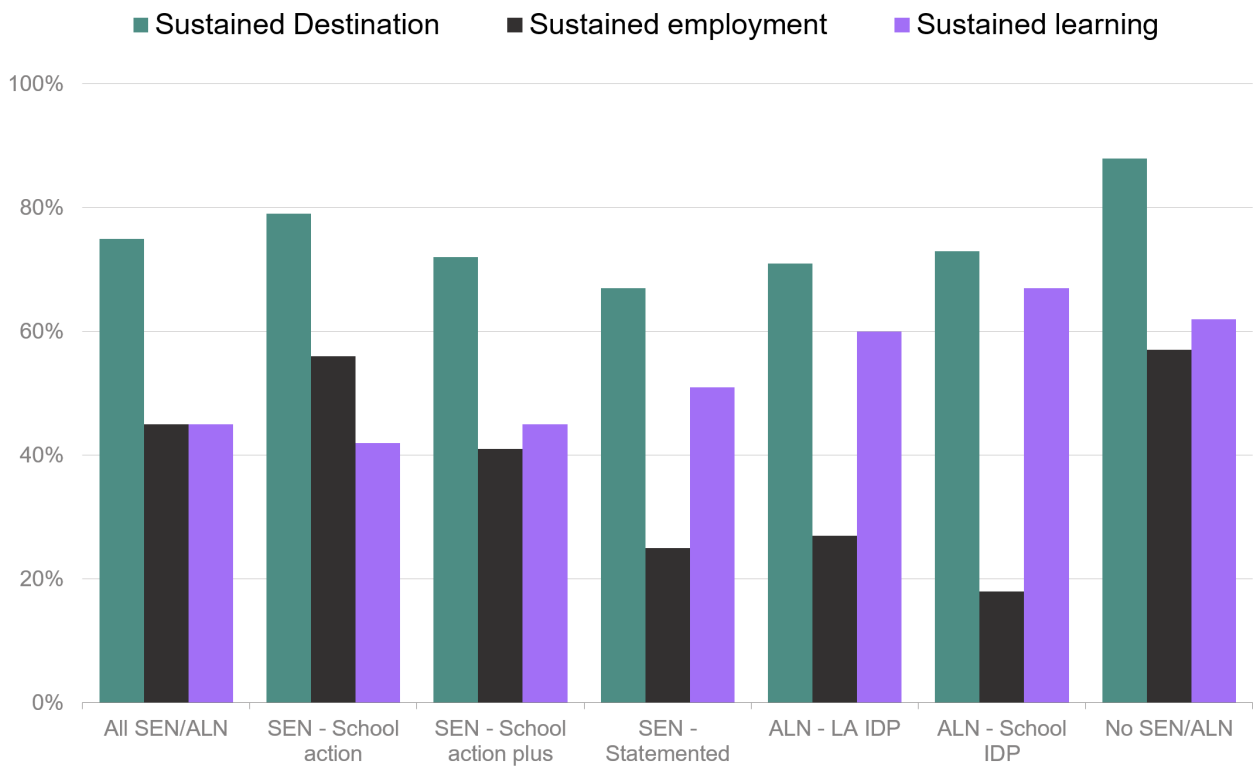
The SEN/ALN status shown for learners in this analysis is the most recent record of SEN/ALN provision they had in the PLASC record, e.g. if a learner in LLWR had one type of SEN/ALN provision in year 10, and another in year 11, this analysis uses what was recorded when they were in year 11.

Learners with SEN may have Statements issued by the LA or may have their needs identified by the school. In the latter case they come under one of two further categories: School Action or School Action Plus.

Learners with provision recorded under the ALN system appear in the cohorts included in this analysis from 2022/23 onwards. 50 learners had either school or local authority maintained Individual Development Plans (IDPs) in 2022/23 and 465 in 2023/24. Please see the notes for further information.

**Learners with SEN/ALN provision have lower rates of sustained learning, sustained employment and sustained destination**

Figure 11a: Destinations of post-16 learners, by SEN/ALN provision, 2023/24




Description: The sustained destination rate for 2023/24 was the highest for learners with no SEN/ALN provision at 88%.

Data in Table 8a of the accompanying spreadsheet

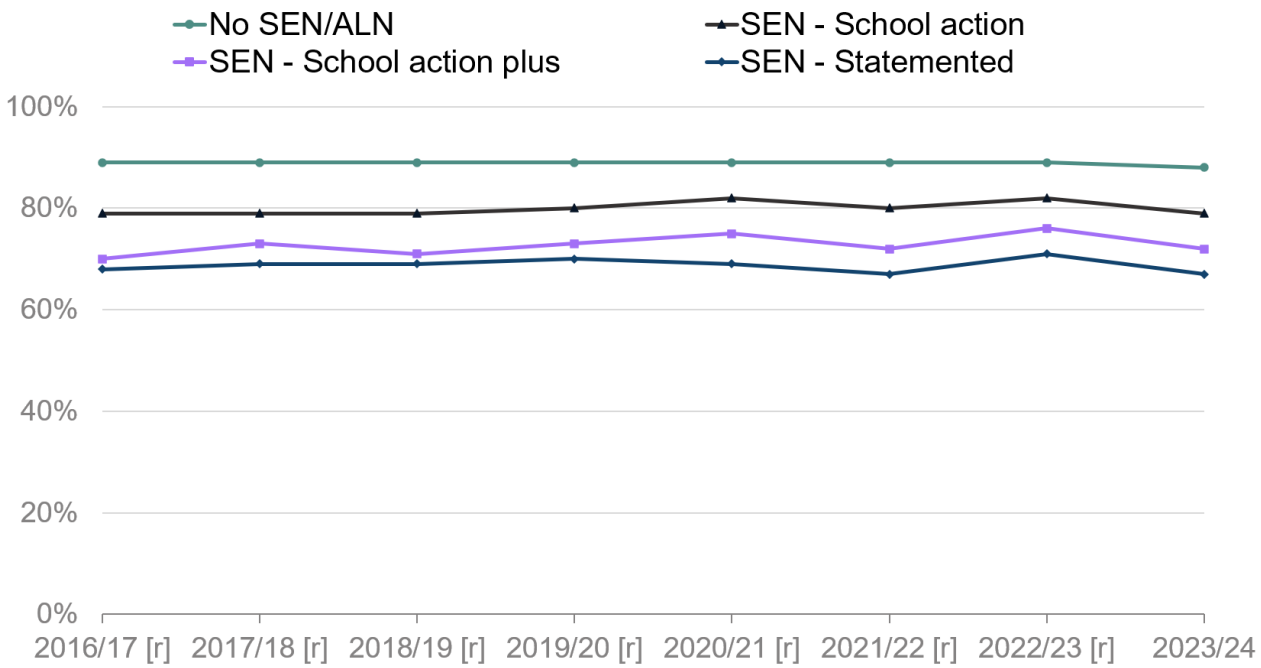
Of the learners with SEN/ALN provision, the sustained destination rate was the highest for those with School Action at 79% and the lowest for those with a statement of SEN at 67%.

A similar pattern was seen for the sustained employment rate, where learners with no SEN/ALN had the highest rate of 57% and those with a statement of SEN having the second lowest at 25%. The lowest rate was seen for learners with a school maintained IDP under the ALN system at 18%. This should be treated with caution as the size of this group is relatively small, with provision for most learners in the analysis still recorded under the SEN system.

The sustained learning rate was 62% for students with no SEN/ALN provision. This was lower than the rate for learners with a school maintained IDP at 67%, highest of all categories. Again, this finding should be treated with caution due to the cohort sizes. The sustained learning rate was the lowest for those with School Action SEN provision at 42%. Fluctuations in outcomes between groups may be influenced by variations in cohort size. Further details are provided in Table 8a of the accompanying spreadsheet.

**The sustained destination rate for learners with no SEN/ALN is generally consistent over time**

Figure 11b: Percentage of post-16 learners with a sustained destination, by SEN/ALN provision, 2016/17 to 2023/24




Description: Learners both with and without SEN/ALN provision saw decreases in 2023/24. Learners in all categories of SEN provision saw a greater decrease in 2023/24 than those with no SEN/ALN.

[Note r] Previously published figures have been revised with the latest data, see the key quality information for detail.

[Note 1] Data for the ALN categories has not been included as the only year with reportable figures was 2023/24.

Since 2016/17, the sustained destination rate for learners with School Action provision has stayed the same at 79% with exception of the years 2019/20 to 2022/23 where the rate fluctated to slightly higher levels.

Learners with School Action Plus provision have a more varied trend in sustained destination, but there has been an overall increase from 70% to 72% since 2016/17.

The sustained destination rate for learners with a statement of SEN has been relatively stable between 2016/17 to 2023/24 despite some fluctuations. Overall, it has decreased over this period from 68% to 67%.

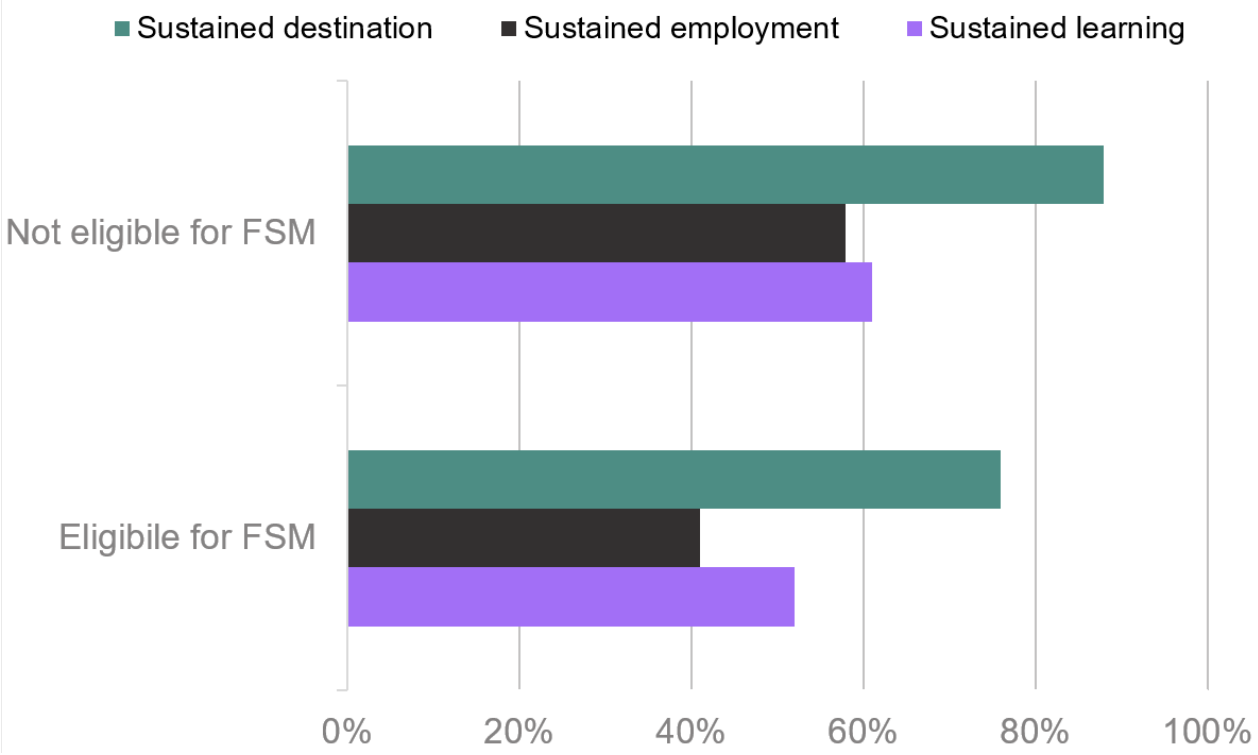
## Free school meals (FSM) eligibility

The analysis presented here is also derived by utilising the Matched Education Dataset (MED) to link students in the LEO dataset with their PLASC record. The match rate, and associated issues with comparing this analysis with that presented elsewhere in this release, is as described in the section on SEN/ALN.

The FSM eligibility shown for learners in this analysis is the most recent record of FSM eligibility they had in the PLASC record, e.g. if a learner in LLWR was eligible for FSM in year 10, but then recorded as not eligible in year 11 this analysis will record them as not eligible.

### Learners who were not eligible for FSM were more likely to have a sustained destination, sustained employment and sustained learning

Figure 12a: Destinations of post-16 learners, by FSM eligibility, 2023/24



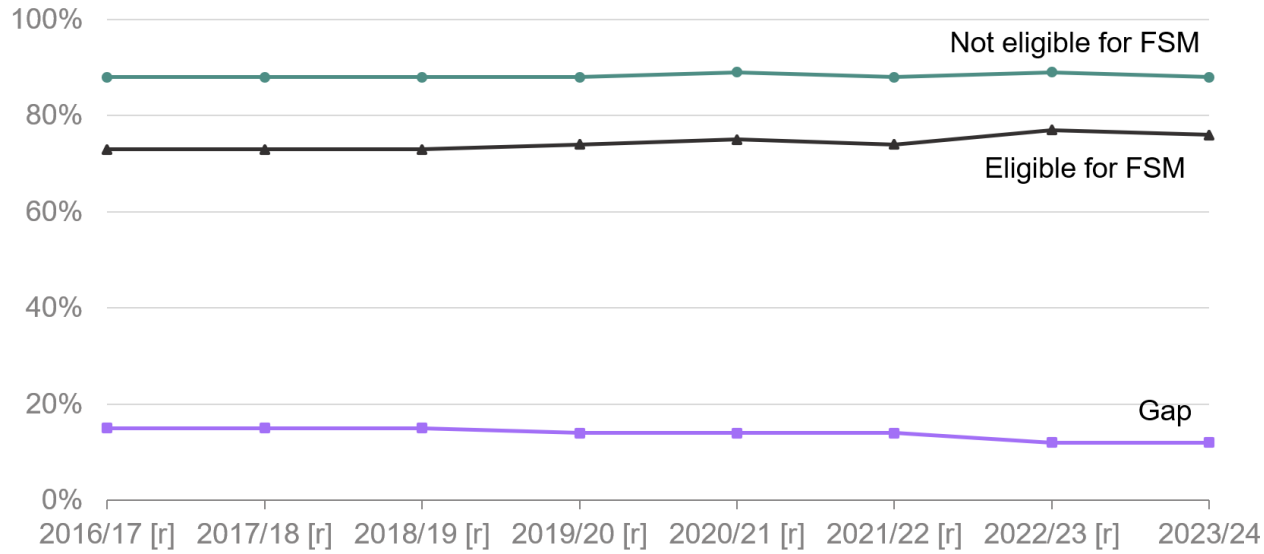

Description: The sustained learning rate is higher than the sustained employment rate for both learners not eligible for FSM and learners eligible for FSM, though the gap between the rates is larger for those eligible for FSM.

Data in Table 10a of the accompanying spreadsheet

The difference in rates is the lowest for sustained learning with a gap of 9 percentage points. In contrast, the gap in the the sustained employment rate is the largest at 17 percentage points.

**The sustained destination rate for learners eligible for FSM and not eligible for FSM has decreased in 2023/24**

Figure 12b: Percentage of post-16 learners with a sustained destination, by FSM eligibility, 2016/17 to 2023/24




Description: The gap in the sustained destination rate between learners eligible for FSM and those not eligible in 2023/24 was 13 percentage points, a slight increase on the previous year.

[Note r] Previously published figures have been revised with the latest data, see the key quality information for detail.

The sustained destination rate is stable over time for learners who are not eligible for FSM at 88%, with slight increases to 89% in 2020/21 and 2022/23. For learners eligible for FSM, the sustained destination rate has generally increased steadily over the years, but fell from 77% in 2022/23 to 76% in 2023/24.

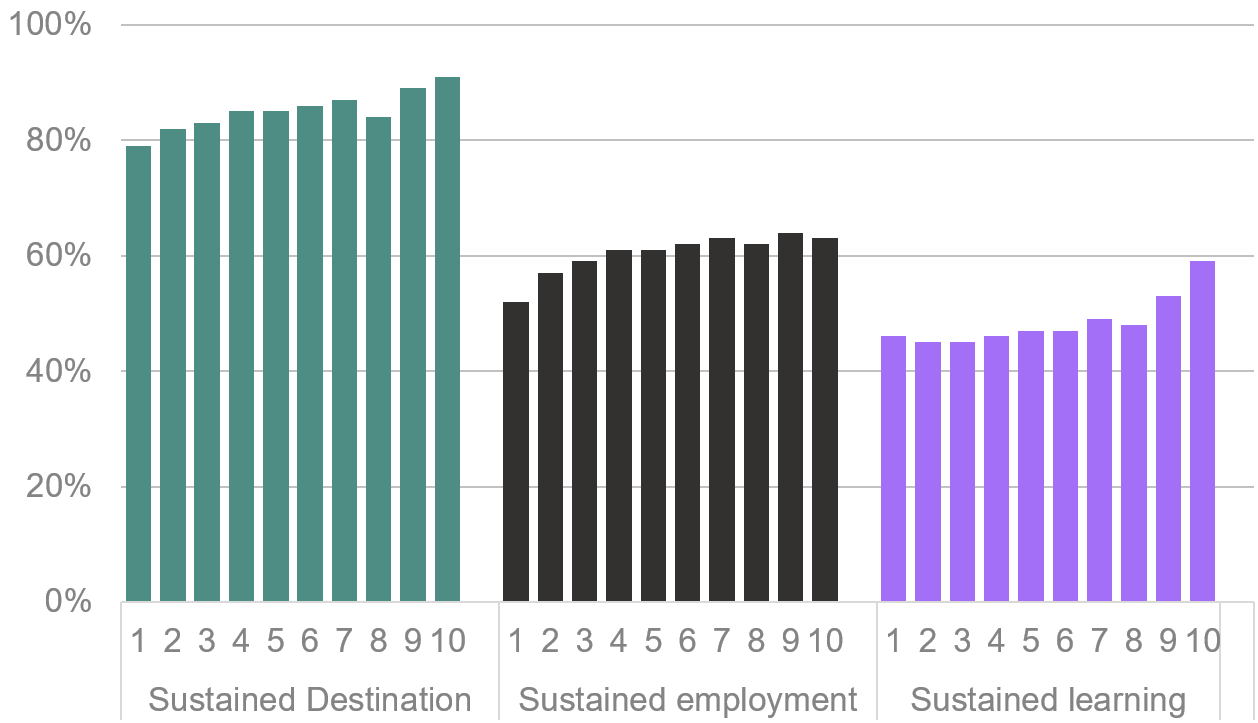
Learners who are not eligible for FSM consistently have higher sustained destination rates than learners eligible for FSM over time. This pattern also holds true for sustained employment and sustained learning rates.

## Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD)

The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) is the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas in Wales. It is designed to identify those small areas where there are the highest concentrations of several different types of deprivation. These small areas have been ranked, according to the 2019 WIMD, and grouped into deciles. The learner's postcode of residence is used to identify the deprivation decile that they reside in. This measure of deprivation is not based on the deprivation of the learner specifically. Many non-deprived learners live in deprived areas and vice versa. A small proportion of postcodes are not attributable to a WIMD decile i.e. those in England or with poor data quality.

**Learners from the least deprived areas generally have higher rates of sustained destination, sustained employment and sustained learning**

Figure 13a: Destinations of post-16 learners, by WIMD decile, 2023/24




1 = Most deprived 10% of neighbourhoods, 10 = least deprived

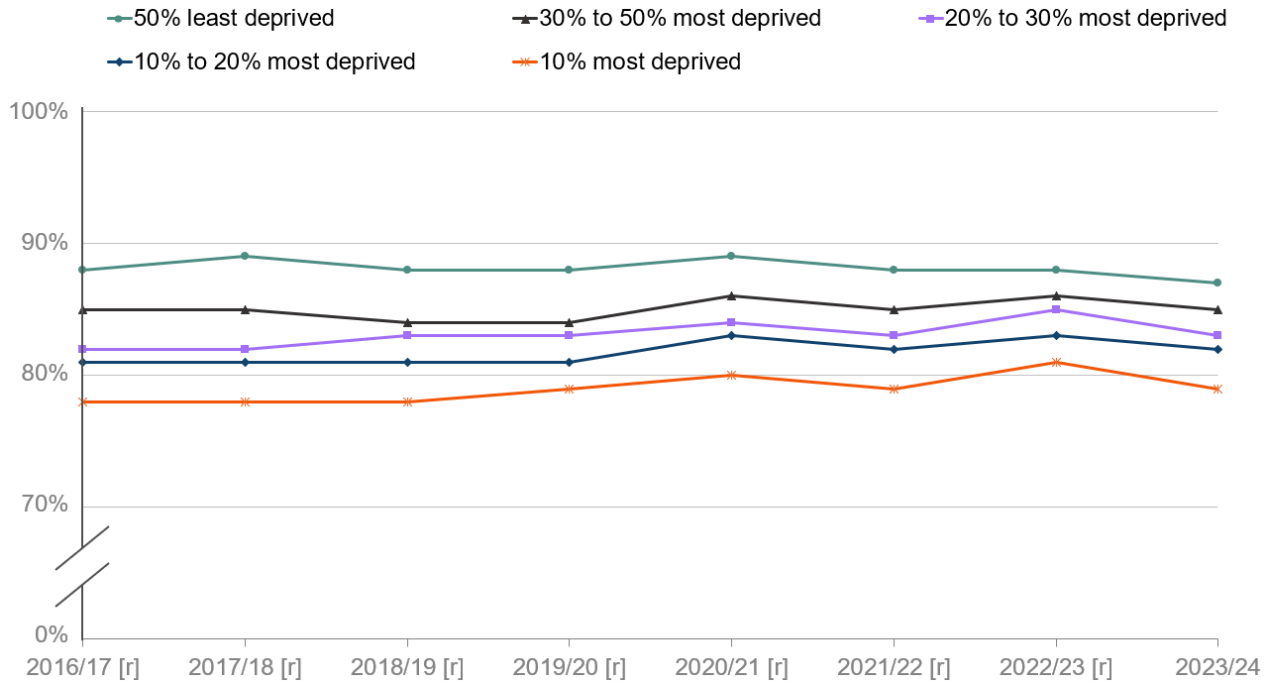
Description: For learners in the most deprived 10% of neighbourhoods, the sustained destination rate was 12 percentage points lower than the rate for learners from the least deprived 10% of neighbourhoods (79% compared with 91%).

Data in Table 11a of the accompanying spreadsheet

The gap in the sustained learning rate between the most and least deprived areas was 13 percentage points (46% compared to 59%). The gap in sustained employment was smaller, at 11 percentage points (52% compared to 63%), though the rate was the highest in decile 9 (64%).

**Learners from the least deprived areas consistently have higher rates of sustained destination**

Figure 13b: Percentage of post-16 learners with a sustained destination, by WIMD deprivation group, 2016/17 to 2023/24




Description: Deciles have been combined to create 5 groups. For example, '50% least deprived' includes learners from the 5 least deprived deciles.

[Note r] Previously published figures have been revised with the latest data, see the key quality information for detail.

In 2023/24, there was a decrease in the sustained destination rate for all groups, with the biggest decrease being in the 20 to 30% most deprived group, falling by 2 percentage points. However, overall since 2016/17, the sustained destination rate has either increased or remained the same for each of these groups except for the 50% least deprived group which has fallen by 1 percentage point.

# 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.

## 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.

## 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.

## Pupils with statements

Pupils for whom the Authority maintains a statement of special educational needs under Part iv of the Education Act 1996. A statement may be issued by the LA after assessment of a child's needs.

## School Action

When a class or subject teacher identify that a pupil has special educational needs, they provide interventions that are additional to or different from those provided as part of the school's usual curriculum.

## School Action Plus

When the class or subject teacher and the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator are provided with advice or support from outside specialists, so that alternative interventions additional or different to those provided for the pupil through 'School Action' can be put in place. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator usually takes the lead although day-to-day provision continues to be the responsibility of class or subject teacher.

# Notes

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

## Timeliness of this publication

Data for a given academic year is derived and published subject to availability of the data-sources and completion of the external data matching process. See 'Time lags' in Quality and Methodology Annex for further information.

## Impact of Covid-19

The measures in this release include learners in post-16 education up to July 2024, and their destinations up to March 2025.This data therefore covers periods of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The first national lockdown of 2020 was announced on 23 March 2020, during the 2019/20 academic year. Subsequent lockdowns or other restrictions remained in place over the period covered by this release. Following Covid-19, this publication gave an initial indication of the potential impact of the pandemic on these learners: Consistent performance measures for post-16 learning: learner destinations, 2019/20 (experimental statistics).

This release builds on that by showing learners' destinations in future years. Learners may have been impacted during their studies, their subsequent destinations, or both.

## Learners covered by these measures

The learner cohorts presented in this release include all post-16 learners who terminated an eligible learning programme in Wales in the academic year. Post-16 learners are those studying in further education institutions, school sixth forms and in work-based learning (apprenticeships, traineeships and other employability programmes), but excludes the adult community learning sector and Jobs Growth Wales+ provision. Finishing a learning programme does not necessarily constitute 'a leaver'. For example, many learners completing programmes of AS level study will remain with their learning provider to pursue an A2 programme.

The article does not include information on the destinations of learners who undertook:

- Learning delivered in independent schools
- Higher education learning in higher education providers
- Privately-funded training at FE organisations and independent training organisations

In the previous iteration of this release, following a review of the methodology, a number of learning programme types were removed from the cohorts, including cohorts for previous years. This aimed to improve comparability and coherence across the time series.

- Higher education (HE) programmes - from 2016/17 onwards, all HE programmes funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) moved from being reported through LLWR to being reported through the Higher Education

Statistics Agency (HESA). (See below) As a result the number of HE programmes at FEIs dropped between 2015/16 and 2016/17 as the destination of HE level learners from HESA are not available to be analysed and so not included in this release. This change mainly affects the 2014/15 and 2015/16 learner cohorts.

- Junior Apprenticeships – removed as this is pre-16 provision not within the scope of these performance measures.
- Creative Solutions and Independent Living Skills, Personal Learning Accounts (PLAs) – these programmes are not included in the post-16 consistent measures in the academic years covered by this release.
- Innovation programmes prior to 2023/24 are also not included.
- Programmes where the reason for termination was the death of the learner – removed for consistency with how such programmes are handled in the achievement measure.

This resulted in the removal of between 2,000 and 4,000 learning programmes from cohorts published in previous editions of this release. The main impact was an increase in sustained employment rates of around one percentage point for the 2014/15 to 2018/19 cohorts, an increase of one percentage point in sustained learning for the 2014/15 and 2015/16 cohorts, and an increase in sustained destination of one percentage point for the 2014/15 to 2016/17 cohorts. Sustained employment for the 2019/20 cohort increased by two percentage points, whilst the sustained destination rate went up by one percentage points. Some of this change will also be the effect of updated employment data from LEO.

Furthermore, Engagement Activities (recorded under LP74 code 9500AXXP) are also not included in the 2023/24 cohort.

Post-16 learners in school sixth forms and further education institutions and those in work-based learning all undertake a programme of study, consisting of a combination of qualifications. There are a range of programmes covering AS/A levels and the wide range of vocational qualifications offered. Eligible learning is identified using the LLWR and Post-16 Data Collection, in particular the learning programme start and end dates. The measures reported here cover learners terminating a learning programme in an academic year (1 September to 31 August for school sixth forms, 1 August to 31 July for other providers), whether or not the learning programme was recorded as 'completed'. Learning programme start and end dates in the Post-16 Data Collection have not been used due to data quality issues. Early drop outs (learners enrolled on a learning programme for fewer than 8 weeks) are excluded.

Learners age 16+ are those that are at least age 16 at the beginning of the year they terminate their learning or training, i.e. in the case of learners terminating in 2023/24 this covers learners aged 16 or older on 31 August 2023. Destinations are reported on a learner basis and learners appear once for each provider where they have terminated an eligible programme. In the case where a learner terminates multiple eligible programmes within the academic year, destinations are reported against their most recently started programme.

### Displaced Learners

Following some changes to new work-based learning contract arrangements, learners who were enrolled on an apprenticeship programme that transferred to a new provider were intended to be excluded from the analysis in previous iterations of this release, but were not.

Since the edition of this release published in 2025, this has been resolved.

The removal of these learners only applies to the 2020/21 leavers cohort, which should have removed approximately 4,000 learners. As a result, the proportion of WBL learners has dropped approximately 3 percentage points from 25% to 22%. The impact is most apparent on the sustained learning rate for WBL learners, which shows a 9 percentage point reduction. This issue has now been corrected and revised figures reflecting the removal of these learners has been included in this release.

### Learners with more than one learning programme

In older iterations of the release, where a learner has more than one programme, the programme with the latest start date was kept in the analysis. A review of this approach identified instances where some learners were being reported against a programme that didn't represent their primary programme of study, for example learners undertaking a - part-time programme alongside a full-time programme.

Since the edition of this release published in 2025, to ensure the correct learning programme remained in the analysis, changes were made to the methodology. The programme of study for reported purposes is now selected based on the latest end date and, where a learner has multiple programmes with the same end date, the methodology then selects the highest level programme. This resulted in a reduction in part-time level cohort sizes, ranging from 0.1% to 7.8% between 2014/15 to 2020/21.

There was also a shift from sustained higher level learning to sustained same level learning as a result of more learners being counted against higher levels in leaver cohorts. Consequently, sustained higher level learning as a proportion of all sustained learning has reduced, with the decrease ranging from 0.05 to 4.7 percentage points between 2014/15 to 2020/21.

Previously published figures have been revised with this change and have been included in this release. We will continue to review this aspect of the methodology.

## Changes to special educational needs data following the implementation of the Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018

The Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales 2021 (the ALN Code) and regulations came into force at the beginning of the 2021/22 academic year. Learners moved from the special educational needs (SEN) system to the additional learning needs (ALN) system in groups over 3 years, to ensure enough time for nurseries, schools, pupil referral units and local authorities to discuss the support needed and to prepare plans.

The edition of this release published in 2025 was the first that contained a mixture of both SEN and ALN provision codes in the analysis. At the time only 50 learners in the 2022/23 cohort were recorded as having either school or local authority maintained Individual Development Plans (IDPs) under the ALN system in their year 11 PLASC record. Due to the small number, a separate provision category was not presented for learners with IDPs but they were included in the "all SEN/ALN" figures.

However, as expected in this edition of the release which also includes the revised data from previous years, the number of learners reported with IDPs has grown to 465 in the 2023/24 cohort. Thus, this year the release will report on both categories of IDPs seperately along with the current SEN categories. The new categories are local authority maintained IDP (ALN - LA IDP) and school maintained IDP (ALN - school IDP).

# Quality and Methodology Information

Please see the accompanying Quality and Methodology: Consistent performance measures for post-16 learning: Learner destinations 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

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.

Previously published destination rates are recalculated using the latest matched data available at the time of publication as it may result in a higher match rate. The effect on the rates are minimal but figures may differ slightly from those previously presented.

## Quality

The measures are calculated using administrative data sources already held by the government, placing no additional burden on providers, individuals or employers to collect new information. Learner records from the LLWR and Post-16 Data Collection are linked to DWP and HMRC data to observe benefit and employment activity, and to other education datasets to observe post learning activity. Each year, between 97% and 98% of learners are matched with DWP or HMRC data, so provide representative coverage of activity.

The match rate would never be expected to reach 100% for several reasons including inaccurate recording of personal information in the datasets used in the matching exercise and movement of learners overseas etc.

Calculation of rates for previous years included in this publication are recalculated using the latest matched data available at the time of publication and so may result in a higher match rate. The effect on the rates is minimal, but figures may differ slightly from those

presented in previously, included in this series. When the statistics are being produced quality checks are undertaken by the statisticians.

### Value

These statistics provide insight into the employment and learning destinations (including higher education) for further education, school sixth form and work-based learning learners in the year following their programme of study. Producing these statistics helps to provide evidence for anyone with an interest in what learners do following their studies.

## Related statistics

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

Examination results: September 2025 to August 2026 (provisional) 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 meaures for post-16 learning (achievement) 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 2024 to July 2025 was published by Medr on 26 February 2026.

Learner outcome measures for apprenticeships, August 2024 to July 2025 was published by Medr on 18 March 2026.

Progression from Year 11 to tertiary education, August 2023 to November 2025 was published by Medr on 26 March 2026.

Graduate outcomes: higher education providers 2023/24 was published by Medr on 23 June 2026.

## Next update

Date: October 2027.

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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Y Comisiwn Addysg Drydyddol ac Ymchwil
Commission for Tertiary Education and Research

www.medr.cymru

2 Cwr y Ddinas
Stryd Tyndall
Caerdydd
CF10 4BZ

2 Capital Quarter
Tyndall Street
Cardiff
CF10 4BZ

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