

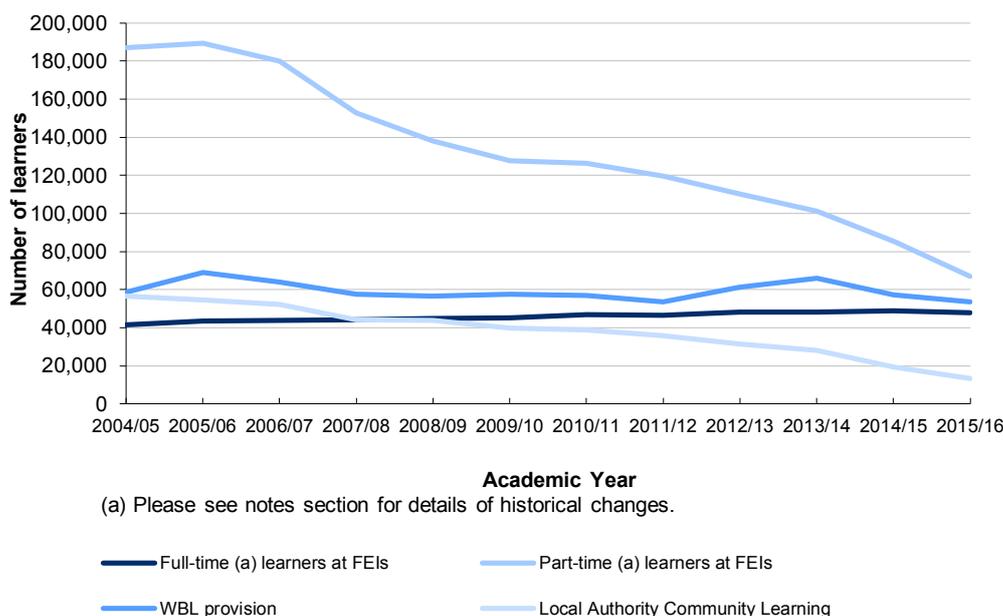


## Further Education, Work-based Learning and Community Learning in Wales, 2015/16 (provisional figures)

30 November 2016  
SFR 162/2016

There was a decline in overall learner numbers in post-16 education between 2014/15 and 2015/16 continuing the trend seen since its peak in 2005/06.

**Chart 1: Learners by provision type**



- In 2015/16 there were 173,075 distinct learners at FE Institutions, Local Authority Community Learning or Work-based Learning (WBL) providers, a 12 per cent decrease when compared to 2014/15.
- Total numbers at FE institutions fell by 13 per cent, with the reduction driven primarily by falling numbers in part-time learning.
- There were 32 per cent fewer learners in local authority community learning than in 2014/15.
- At 53,645, the total number of unique learners pursuing WBL programmes fell by 6 per cent, relative to 2014/15.

### About this release

This Statistical First Release for 2015/16 summarises provisional information on post-16 learning collected through the Welsh Government's Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR). The data coverage includes provision at Further Education (FE) institutions, work-based Learning (WBL) providers and Local Authority Community Learning providers, but excludes enrolments at Higher Education institutions and at school sixth forms. Additional detail is available on the Welsh Government's interactive data dissemination service [StatsWales](#). Final data will be published in March 2017.

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## Learners enrolled with FE institutions, Work-based Learning or Local Authority Community Learning providers

- 173,075 unique learners pursued one or more learning activities with FE Institutions, Local Authority Community Learning or WBL providers during 2015/16. Of these, 94,110 (54.4 per cent) were female and 78,970 (45.6 per cent) were male. The number in-learning in the week of 1 December 2015 was 112,540 [Table 1].
- With the percentage of learners under 25 increasing over the last 10 years, the age profile of post-16 learners is getting younger. 30.7 per cent of learners were aged under 19 and 50.9 per cent were aged under 25, an increase of 3.1 and 3.3 percentage points, respectively, when compared to 2014/15.
- Males outnumbered females for all ages below 20. However, the number of females aged 20 or above was 43.5 per cent higher than the number of males (a slight decrease from the 48.0 per cent difference in 2014/15).

**Table 1: Numbers of learners at Further Education Institutions, Local Authority Community Learning and Work-based Learning providers by age and gender, 2015/16 (a)**

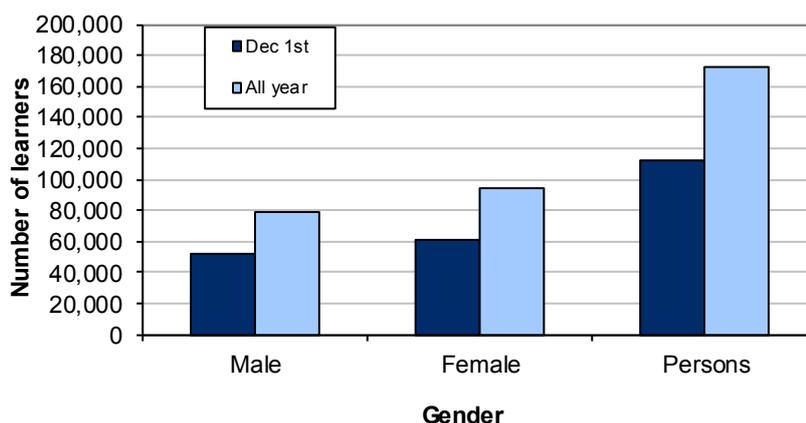
Age	Males		Females		Persons	
	1 <sup>st</sup>	All Year	1 <sup>st</sup>	All Year	1 <sup>st</sup>	All Year
	December		December		December	
Under 16	870	1,855	385	1,270	1,255	3,125
16	8,765	9,785	7,545	8,625	16,310	18,405
17	8,525	9,720	7,625	8,640	16,150	18,355
18	5,990	7,245	4,885	5,980	10,875	13,225
19	3,445	4,495	2,735	3,770	6,180	8,260
20-24	8,230	12,810	8,660	13,805	16,890	26,615
25-49	12,115	24,615	21,350	37,980	33,465	62,595
50-64	2,830	6,570	5,280	10,360	8,110	16,930
65+	1,095	1,835	2,185	3,630	3,280	5,465
Not Specified	10	40	10	55	20	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>51,875</b>	<b>78,970</b>	<b>60,660</b>	<b>94,110</b>	<b>112,540</b>	<b>173,075</b>

Source: Lifelong Learning Wales Record

(a) Age at 31 August 2015

Reports on  contain the information provided in table 1 with a breakdown by ethnicity.

**Chart 2: Learner numbers by gender**



## Trends in full year learner numbers

- Table 2 illustrates the trend in learner numbers for three (overlapping) areas of learning: total learners at FE institutions (including WBL at FEIs); total WBL provision (also including WBL at FEIs); and local authority community learning (including learners enrolled at FEIs, at local authorities, and through franchise arrangements between the two types of organisation).

**Table 2: Trends in learner numbers at Further Education institutions, Local Authority Community Learning and Work-based Learning providers, 2011/12 to 2015/16 (a)(b)(c)**

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Further Education Institutions (c)					
Full-time learners at FEIs	46,590	48,340	48,055	48,935	47,870
Part-time learners at FEIs	119,640	110,080	101,135	85,280	67,090
WBL provision at FEIs	16,125	16,505	18,520	16,010	15,890
Total at FEIs	182,355	174,925	167,715	150,225	130,850
Work-based learning provision (d)					
All WBL provision	53,480	61,255	65,875	57,100	53,645
Learners pursuing WBL programmes	51,980	59,955	64,635	57,005	53,645
Local Authority Community Learning (e)					
	35,785	31,475	28,050	19,375	13,260
Total learners at FE Institutions, Local Authority Community Learning and Work-based Learning providers (f)	231,250	229,555	223,140	195,700	173,075

Source: Lifelong Learning Wales Record

- (a) Counts are of unique learners, so removing, from each individual row, multiple counting of learners present at more than one learning provider and/or provision type.
- (b) In calculating each in-learning count, the population is largely determined by the actual start and end dates of learning programmes and activities. However an additional constraint is applied to each year in that learning activities with an expected end date more than two years before the start of the given academic year are excluded.
- (c) Learner numbers at FE institutions (FEIs) include learners pursuing work-based learning (and Pathways to Apprenticeships) programmes at FEIs and franchised ACL learners, enrolled at FEIs, whose teaching is contracted out to local authorities.
- (d) Work-based learning (WBL) provision includes learners pursuing WBL programmes (and the FE programme Pathways to Apprenticeships which had new starts primarily in the years 2009/10 to 2013/14) at FEIs and provision at other training providers.
- (e) Includes both those learners enrolled at local authorities directly and learners who are enrolled at FEIs but whose teaching is contracted out to local authorities.
- (f) The use of unique learner counts and definitional overlaps mean, for any given year, that the total for FE/WBL/CL learners is lower than the sum of the figures in the preceding rows.

- 2015/16 shows a reduction of 11.6 per cent for all learners when compared to 2014/15, continuing the trend seen each year since a peak in 2005/06. The decline has been driven primarily by the decreasing number of learners within part-time FE provision, but there has been a decline in all types of provision.
- Local authorities and FEIs have seen a decrease in numbers of learners in 2015/16. This can be attributed to a number of different issues including reductions in public funding. Providers are

encouraged to target their provision at developing the basic skills of adults and to deliver their leisure and recreational activity on a full cost recovery basis.

- Within the overall 11.6 per cent decline relative to 2014/15, the reductions were 12.9 per cent for FEIs, 31.6 per cent for local authority community learning and 5.9 per cent for WBL programme learners.
- There was a 2.2 per cent fall in the full-time component at FE institutions and a decline of 21.3 per cent in the number of part-time learners at FE institutions between 2014/15 and 2015/16.

## Learning programmes

**Table 3: Enrolments on learning programmes at Further Education Institutions, Community Learning or Work-based Learning providers by provision type, mode of study and gender, 2015/16 (a)**

	Males		Females		Persons	
	1 <sup>st</sup> Dec	All Year	1 <sup>st</sup> Dec	All Year	1 <sup>st</sup> Dec	All Year
<b>Further Education excluding Local Authority CL at FEIs</b>						
Full-time	22,225	25,105	22,720	25,660	44,945	50,765
Part-time	17,510	42,370	22,730	51,550	40,235	93,920
<b>Total</b>	<b>39,735</b>	<b>67,475</b>	<b>45,445</b>	<b>77,210</b>	<b>85,180</b>	<b>144,685</b>
<b>Higher Education at FEIs (b)</b>						
Full-time	0	0	0	0	0	0
Part-time	420	425	415	425	835	855
<b>Total</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>835</b>	<b>855</b>
<b>Work-based Learning Programmes</b>						
WBL programmes at FEIs	5,910	9,495	3,540	7,600	9,450	17,095
Programmes at other training providers	8,105	17,815	11,575	24,765	19,680	42,580
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,010</b>	<b>27,310</b>	<b>15,115</b>	<b>32,370</b>	<b>29,125</b>	<b>59,675</b>
<b>Local Authority Community Learning (c)</b>						
Full-time: enrolled at FEIs	0	0	0	0	0	0
Part-time: enrolled at FEIs	960	1,975	1,975	3,725	2,935	5,700
Full-time: enrolled at local authorities	0	0	0	0	0	0
Part-time: enrolled at local authorities	1,505	3,450	3,885	9,875	5,390	13,330
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,465</b>	<b>5,425</b>	<b>5,860</b>	<b>13,600</b>	<b>8,325</b>	<b>19,025</b>
<b>All Levels of Study</b>						
Full-time	22,225	25,105	22,720	25,660	44,945	50,765
Part-time	20,395	48,220	29,000	65,580	49,395	113,800
Work-based Learning	14,010	27,310	15,115	32,370	29,125	59,675
<b>Total</b>	<b>56,635</b>	<b>100,635</b>	<b>66,830</b>	<b>123,605</b>	<b>123,465</b>	<b>224,240</b>

Source: Lifelong Learning Wales Record

(a) See notes for definitions of level and mode.

(b) Excludes franchised Higher Education at FEIs

(c) Excludes 'assisted' Community Learning provision and direct FE community learning not involving local authorities (see notes).

- Over the academic year 2015/16 there were 224,240 enrolments on learning programmes in total, of which 50.7 per cent were part-time, 22.6 per cent were full-time and 26.6 per cent WBL [Table 3].
- Further commentary on the individual areas of provision is given below.

## FE Provision (excluding local authority community learning)

During the 2015/16 academic year, 144,685 Further Education learning programmes (excluding all Local Authority Community Learning) were pursued, 50,765 of which were full-time (a 0.9 per cent decrease from 2014/15) and 93,920 were part-time (a 19.1 per cent increase from 2014/15).

### Work-based learning programmes

59,675 learning programmes were pursued in 2015/16 within work-based provision, of which 17,095 were provided by FE institutions (including those participating as members of consortia) and 42,580 by other training providers. Table 4 provides a breakdown by programme type.

**Table 4: Work-based learning provision: Numbers of learning programme (LP) starts, leavers and in-training and of learners by programme type, 2015/16 (a)**

	Full year learning programmes (a)			Learner	Learners (b)		
	Starts	Leavers (c)	In learning	Starts	1st Dec (d)	31 <sup>st</sup> July (d)	All year
Foundation Apprenticeship	8,355	8,570	16,750	8,015	9,110	8,075	14,810
Apprenticeship (Level 3)	8,965	6,785	17,525	8,870	9,325	10,680	16,945
Higher Apprenticeship	5,900	3,625	10,770	5,820	5,880	7,110	10,455
Traineeships	7,985	7,645	11,360	6,220	3,535	3,685	8,325
Work Ready	2,125	2,795	2,885	2,075	820	85	2,735
Other WBL Programme	185	340	385	185	125	45	370
<b>Total</b>	<b>33,520</b>	<b>29,760</b>	<b>59,675</b>	<b>31,185</b>	<b>28,800</b>	<b>29,680</b>	<b>53,645</b>

Source: Lifelong Learning Wales Record

(a) Represents cumulative count of learning programmes enrolled at any point during the academic year.

(b) Distinct learners categorised according to their most recent learning programme of the year.

(c) Counts of leavers exclude those who have transferred to another learning programme at the same provider. They are also restricted to those identifiable from the standard database of learning providers for 2015/16. (All figures include early leavers.)

(d) Number of learners on the reference date.

The first column of Table 4 gives the number of new learning programme starts during 2015/16 and the fourth column gives the number of distinct learners starting new programmes (including early leavers).

The number of new learning programme starts for all WBL programmes was 33,520 during 2015/16 - this is 4.3 per cent higher than in 2014/15.

The number of individuals in learning on 31 July 2016, the last day of the academic year 2015/16, was 8.6 per cent higher than at 31 July 2015 for all WBL programmes. Day of week effects contribute some variability to the year on year changes of such snapshot figures.

The full year learner count for those pursuing WBL programmes during 2015/16 (taking each learner's most recent learning programme of the year only) was 5.9 per cent lower than in 2014/15. Learner numbers declined for those on Foundation Apprenticeship programmes by 22.2 per cent and for Level 3 Apprenticeship programmes by 2.5 per cent. However the number of Higher Apprentices grew by 36.7 per cent, reflecting a policy focus on expanding this provision.

## Higher education learning programmes

855 Higher Education learning programmes were pursued at FE Institutions during 2015/16. This is an apparent decrease from 1,875 in 2014/15, however, this at least in part reflects some of these learners now being recorded through Higher Education Institutions (via HESA data) rather than LLWR data - reflecting local partnership arrangements (see Notes section 5.2 for additional information). Note that these figures exclude franchised HE and only include programmes which are designated in their entirety (and coded on LLWR) as 'HE' and exclude, for instance, work-based learning programmes (Higher Apprenticeships in particular) with HE learning activities.

## Local authority community learning provision

19,025 learning programmes were pursued in 2015/16. The number of distinct learners pursuing local authority CL learning activities was 13,260 (see Table 2), 31.6 per cent lower than in 2014/15.

## Learning activities and qualifications

A learning programme is a defined period of learning undertaken by the learner. A learner can pursue multiple learning programmes in a single academic year and therefore learning programme counts can be larger than learner counts, which do not include this element of multiple counting. Further details can be found in the notes at the end of this release.

**Table 5: Enrolments on learning activities at Further Education Institutions, Community Learning or Work-based Learning providers by qualification level and gender, 2015/16**

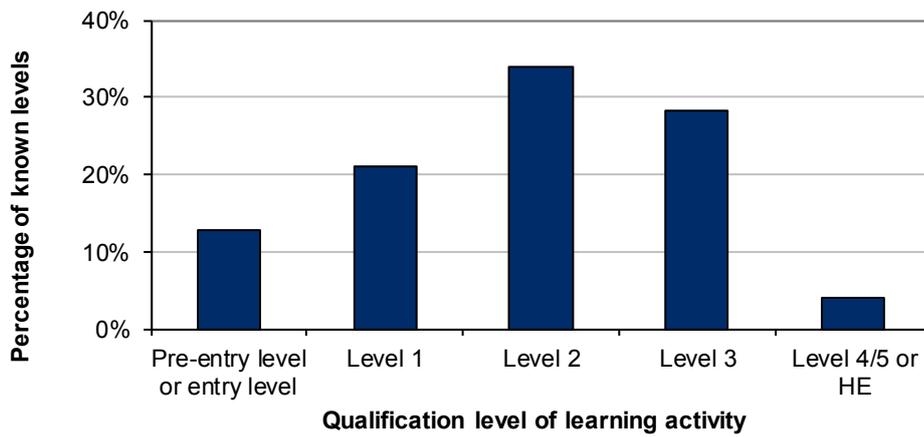
Qualification level	Further and Higher Education and Work-based Learning			Local Authority Community Learning		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
Pre-Entry Level	1,130	1,285	2,415	45	255	300
Entry Level	27,090	25,695	52,785	2,105	3,430	5,535
Level 1	49,400	47,750	97,150	1,005	2,700	3,710
Level 2	75,650	84,855	160,510	1,025	2,605	3,630
Level 3	58,290	77,850	136,140	80	325	405
Level 4 and above / HE	6,730	13,110	19,840	0	0	0
Unknown or not required	23,700	28,075	51,775	2,410	7,045	9,450
<b>Total</b>	<b>241,995</b>	<b>278,620</b>	<b>520,610</b>	<b>6,670</b>	<b>16,360</b>	<b>23,030</b>

Source: Lifelong Learning Wales Record

- Of learning activities for which the qualification level was known <sup>(a)</sup>, 20.9 per cent were at level 1, 34.0 per cent were at level 2 and 28.3 per cent were at level 3 [Table 5 and Chart 3]. Compared with 2014/15, a lower proportion were at both level 1 and level 2 (22.8 per cent and 34.9 per cent in 2014/15, respectively) and a slightly higher proportion at level 3 (27.9 per cent in 2014/15).
- Over the last 5 years, the overall trend in the proportion of learning activities has been decreasing for levels 1, 2 and increasing for level 3.

(a) 11 per cent of qualification levels were unknown or not applicable. For Further Education and Work-based Learning provision the figure was 10 per cent but for Local Authority Community Learning provision 41 per cent of qualification levels were unknown or undefined, as is the case for some leisure-related learning activities.

**Chart 3: Learning activities by qualification level**



- The proportion of pre-entry and entry level learning activities (combined) rose from 11.2 per cent in 2014/15 to 12.7 per cent in 2015/16, the highest proportion of pre-entry and entry level learning activities since 2012/13.
- The most popular subjects for learning activities (whose subject was specified) were Care/Personal Development (29 per cent), Science/Mathematics (10 per cent), Information Technology (9 per cent), Media/Communications (including Communication Skills) (8 per cent) and Business/Marketing (7 per cent), although popularity varied across types of provision.

## Notes

### 1. Context

#### 1.1 General

This Statistical First Release (SFR) summarises data on learner numbers in post-16 education and training at providers receiving funding from the Welsh Government (Economy, Skills and Natural Resources Group) for the academic year 2015/16. However, the figures are not restricted to fundable learners at those providers. The release contains information on the post-16 sector including Further Education institutions, Work-based Learning providers and Local Authority Community Learning providers but excluding HE institutions, HEI-based Welsh for Adults centres and school sixth forms. Further information on this series, the first release of which was SDR 38/2005, and earlier sources is given in the 'Data for previous years' section.

#### 1.2 Policy Context

Within the Welsh Government the release and other outputs from the LLWR data underlying it play a role in supporting decision making processes in relation to:

- The Welsh Government has introduced a [Post-16 Planning and Funding Framework](#) from the 2014/15 academic year onwards. The framework aims to relax the direct link between funding and learning activity. This enables the delivery of relevant learning to support the Government priorities and improves institutional efficiency and effectiveness. It focuses on the quality of the learning offer in terms of the outcome for individual learners. Programmes rather than qualifications are at the core of the new framework with each programme having a defined purpose and outcome against which it will be monitored.
- The [Learning and Skills \(Wales\) Measure 2009](#) “aims to provide wider learner choice, reduce duplication of provision and encourage higher quality learning and teaching, but it applies to all post-16 provision. These aims cannot be achieved by any single provider. Consequently providers are expected to establish effective collaboration to underpin 14-19 entitlement and maximise the chances of successful learner outcomes.”

See also section 5.1 on 'Relevance'.

### 2. Data source

#### Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR)

The Lifelong Learning Wales Record is the data collection system employed by the Welsh Government to enable FE, WBL and local authority community learning providers to submit on-line individualised data on learners, their learning programmes, activities and awards. Welsh Government (Economy, Skills and Natural Resources Group) systems load the data on to a post-16 database to facilitate analysis. Further information on LLWR including user support manuals can be found on the [Lifelong Learning Wales Record page](#).

Our [statement of administrative sources](#), which also refers to this data source.

The primary purpose of the LLWR is to provide FE/WBL/CL data to facilitate the planning and funding of learning delivery. The LLWR data are also a basis for the Welsh Government's Quality and Effectiveness Framework, monitoring of performance and outcomes, informing strategy and development and the provision of statistics on FE/WBL/CL learners in Wales.

### **3. Definitions and methods**

#### **Learner numbers, learning programmes and learning activities**

- The Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR) from which tables 1 to 5 were derived, has datasets based on learners, their learning programmes and their constituent learning activities (as well as awards which are not included in the current release.) Table 1 and 2 are based on counts of individual learners using a methodology which counts only once a learner present at more than one provider. Table 3 is based on counts of learning programmes, as are the first three columns of table 4, the remainder of which uses unique learners. A learner represented in table 1 or table 2 will have one or more learning programmes in table 3. Table 5 is based on counts of learning activities, there being one or more of these constituents to each learning programme.
- A learning activity, typically, is a specific qualification or course pursued by a learner. A learning programme is a group of related activities (and awards where applicable) such as a work-based learning framework (e.g. Apprenticeship).

#### **Learners at Further Education Institutions, Local Authority Community Learning or Work-based Learning providers (tables 1,2,3 and 5)**

- Information was collected from FE institutions, local authorities and work-based learning providers via the LLWR, from which data were extracted on 20 October 2016.
- Community Learning is a broad definition that can encompass, for instance, provision at FE institution outreach centres and Adult Basic Education. This release only identifies Local Authority Community Learning provision (see 'Provision Type' notes) and hence this is the term used throughout.
- WBL provision is included whether at an FE college, at a WBL subsidiary of an FE institution or at another training provider.
- August 2011 saw the introduction of a change in the structure of Welsh Government support to WBL providers, with funding being directed through a smaller number of contracted providers, including some consortia and lead providers.
- April 2015 saw the start of a new Work Based Learning (WBL) contracting period. This resulted in changes to the existing WBL provider network, with some sub-contractors/consortium members moving to different lead providers and one sub-contractor becoming a lead provider in their own right. There were also a small number of providers who lost all or part of their WBL contract and this resulted in a movement of learners to new providers.

- Where a provider is part of a WBL consortium, the assignment to 'WBL at FEIs' or to 'WBL at Other training providers' has been made according to the status of the consortium member (which may differ from the status of the lead provider of the consortium).
- December 1st counts are based on a snapshot of the week of 1 December 2015. All-year counts are based on all learners enrolled during the academic year.
- Ages are as at 31 August 2015.
- Includes students on courses at the Workers Educational Association Young Men's Christian Association Community College Cymru.

As in the March 2016 release for 2014/15 and the previous 2012/13 and 2013/14 versions, the figures in this release include FE learners at Merthyr Tydfil College which is a member of the University of South Wales Group. Between 2006/07 and 2011/12, these learners were included within the University of South Wales data collected by HESA (the Higher Education Statistics Agency) and appeared in, for example, '[Students in Higher Education Institutions](#)'. Learners with the Merthyr Tydfil College work-based learning subsidiary (part of a Skills Academy Wales consortium) were however included in all years of this Statistical First Release as the WBL data were not (and are not) collected by HESA. From 2012/13 onwards, the college has ceased to submit data to HESA but continues to do so to the LLWR. Merthyr Tydfil College's FE data are included in this release both for the more recent figures and also retrospectively in year on year comparisons and in time series (but the LLWR-based StatsWales cubes exclude Merthyr Tydfil College between 2006/07 and 2011/12).

#### **Work-based Learning (Table 4)**

This table summarises enrolments on work-based learning programmes.

- Starts and leavers in the first two columns denote the cumulative number of new starts and leavers of learning programmes during the academic year. The fourth column reduces the numbers of starts to an individual learner basis.
- Counts of leavers exclude those who have transferred to another learning programme at the same provider. They are also restricted to those leavers who are identifiable from the standard database population used for this release. All figures (starts, leavers and in-learning) include early leavers.
- In-learning figures are expressed as learning programme counts (in the third column), as the number of distinct learners at any time during the full year (final column) and also as learner counts on December 1st 2015 and July 31st 2016. The latter counts are for single days, in contrast to the December 1st figures in tables 1 and 3 which are based on a full week (and are therefore slightly higher).

## Provision type

The provision type is determined at the learning programme level. **Note that this is not a funding report and definitions can differ from those used for funding purposes. For example, some of the WBL provision included in this release will not have been included in the calculation of funding for WBL providers.**

For the purpose of this statistical release,

- **Further Education (FE)** provision is defined as that submitted to the LLWR by an FE provider excluding:
  - learning programmes categorised below as HE or WBL; and
  - learning delivered by a Local Authority via a subcontracted arrangement with an FE provider.
- **Higher Education (HE)** provision comprises learning programmes categorised as higher education namely:
  - Higher National Certificate; Higher National Diploma;
  - HE professional / HE vocational programme;
  - Foundation Degree; HE First Degree; other undergraduate qualification;
  - HE postgraduate;

The figures for HE include learners whose programme is designated as HE level but exclude learning programmes where the overarching learning programme is not designated as 'HE' although an element of the learning (i.e. one or more learning activities) is at HE level. The figures also do not include franchised higher education which is recorded through HESA (Higher Education Statistics Agency) data rather than LLWR.

- **Local Authority Community Learning** provision is defined as that submitted to the LLWR:
  - by a Local Authority directly ('maintained' or 'contracted-out' provision); or
  - by an FE provider but where the learning is delivered by a Local Authority through a partnership, franchise or subcontracted arrangement ('contracted-in' provision).

The Local Authority Community Learning figures **exclude** 'assisted' provision, i.e. courses controlled and managed by another organisation but which the local authority supports either financially or by providing premises or other facilities free of charge or at subsidised rates.

- **WBL programmes** are submitted to the LLWR by contracted WBL providers (including some FE institutions) and include the following (or their predecessor) programmes:
  - Apprenticeship (Level 3);
  - Foundation Apprenticeships (Level 2; including Young Recruits programme);
  - Higher Apprenticeship (Level 4 plus);
  - Steps to Employment;
  - Traineeships;
  - Work Ready;

Other WBL programmes (including Flexible Learning, 'Young Person's Guarantee: Routes into Work', bespoke programmes and smaller programmes).

The Pathways to Apprenticeships scheme, which was introduced in 2009/10 in the context of the economic downturn and concluded in the 2013/14 academic year, was included in the WBL provision category in previous years (see Table 2). As the number of these programmes is now negligible, they are no longer shown as a separate category, and have been counted within Further Education at FEIs for 2015/16.

## **Subjects**

References to subjects are based on an abbreviated form of the category associated with the first character of the LDCS code under the LearnDirect Classification System (LDCS).

## **4. Rounding**

Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and there may be apparent slight discrepancies between the sum of the constituent items and the total. An asterisk '\*\*' represents numbers greater than 0 and less than 5.

Percentages are also calculated using the unrounded figures; therefore, it may not be possible to recreate the percentages quoted throughout this release from the information included in the tables.

## **5. Key Quality Information**

### **5.1 Relevance**

The statistics are used both within and outside the Welsh Government to monitor educational trends and as a baseline for further analysis of the underlying data. Some of the key users are:

- Ministers and the Members Research Service in the National Assembly for Wales;
- Officials in the Welsh Government;
- Other government departments;
- Further Education Institutions, Work-Based Learning providers and local authorities;
- Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education and Training in Wales;
- Students, researchers, and academics;
- Individual citizens, private companies, and the media.

These statistics are used in a variety of ways. Some examples of these are:

- general background and research;
- inclusion in reports and briefings;
- advice to Ministers;
- informing and evaluating the education policy-making process in Wales. (See section 1.2 on 'Policy Context'.)

LLWR data are used to underpin funding and performance reports for learning providers, to calculate NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) figures and in student finance modelling.

## 5.2 Accuracy

Statisticians within the Welsh Government review the data and query any anomalies with the LLWR data management team and, where relevant, with learning providers before tables are published.

The LLWR data underlying this release are provisional and in the process of being updated by learning providers, validated and finalised. Final data for 2015/16 are due to be published in March 2017.

The impact of these updates is as yet unknown but they must only be submitted by learning providers in the interests of improving accuracy and data quality. An indication of revisions to data between previous provisional and final releases is presented below (with populations adjusted to be on a comparable basis where necessary for a small number of the historical years).

Percentage change between provisional and final release	Learners		Learning programmes		Learning activities
	Dec 1 <sup>st</sup>	All year	Dec 1 <sup>st</sup>	All year	All year
2003/04	+1.3	+1.4	+1.3	+2.0	+1.5
2004/05	+0.4	+1.7	+1.2	+3.0	+1.4
2005/06	+1.0	+1.3	-1.3	0.0	+0.4
2006/07	-0.6	+0.5	-1.0	+0.5	+0.2
2007/08	+0.2	+0.9	+0.4	+1.3	+0.9
2008/09	-1.5	-0.8	-1.4	-0.7	-2.2
2009/10	-1.3	-0.5	-1.6	-0.5	-2.1
2010/11	-0.9	+0.3	-1.5	+0.2	-0.9
2011/12	-0.3	+0.8	-0.3	+1.2	+1.2
2012/13		-0.1		+0.1	
2013/14	-1.3	+0.2	-1.2	+1.2	+0.2
2014/15	-0.9	+0.0	-0.4	+1.1	-0.4

There have been changes to the reporting of Higher Education learners – with some learners now being recorded through the partner Higher Education Institution (through their HESA data) rather than LLWR. Additionally, from 2016/17 it is intended that all HEFCW (Higher Education Funding Council for Wales) funded learners are recorded through HESA rather than LLWR, and this may have unintentionally impacted this provisional 2015/16 data. Further quality work will take place ahead of the final release to amend data if necessary and/or quantify the impact.

## 5.3 Timeliness and Punctuality

The annual timescale for the production of data balances timeliness against the need for accurate data quality. Final statistics on a given academic year are drawn from a database based on the LLWR as at February following the end of the academic year. The corresponding first release is produced and published as soon as possible during March. This timetable was accelerated for the 2010/11 final release. Previously the LLWR freeze had been taken near the end of March with the SFR published in April. Provisional statistics for the same academic year are released the previous November.

The statistics of the current provisional release for 2015/16 are drawn from the database as at 20 October 2016.

## **5.4 Accessibility and Clarity**

This statistical release is pre-announced and then published on the Statistics section of the Welsh Government website. It is accompanied by more detailed tables on StatsWales, a free to use service that allows visitors to view, manipulate, create and download data.

## **5.5 Comparability and coherence**

### **Data for previous years**

This series, the first Release of which was SDR 38/2005 containing provisional data for 2003/04 (finalised in SDR67/2005), replaces an earlier quarterly series on work-based learning enrolments (final edition SDR 22/2005) and an annual Statistical Bulletin on Adult Continuing Education (SB 52/2003) published by the Welsh Government.

The 2003/04 releases were based on LLWR data for Further Education, Community Learning and the component of Work-based Learning provided through FE institutions. However, WBL figures at other training providers (such as those included in a specific table of SDR 38/2005) were, then and previously, based on data collected through the National Trainee Database (NTD). Release SDR22/2005 contained the final data from the NTD as at June 2004. Data on all Welsh Government funded Work-based Learning providers have subsequently been collected solely via the LLWR and contribute to all areas of WBL provision in post-16 education releases in Wales from 2004/05 onwards.

Earlier data on Local Authority Community Learning (then referred to as Adult Continuing Education) were published in May 2003 in the National Assembly for Wales Statistical Bulletin 'Adult Continuing Education in Wales 2001/02 & 2002/03' (SB52/2003).

Owing to changes in data collection, comparisons with years prior to 2003/04 should be made with caution. Previously data on Further Education provision, sourced from the Individualised Student Record (ISR), were available through the ELWa/HEFCW annual volume 'Higher Education, Further Education and Training Statistics in Wales' ending with the edition covering the 2002/03 academic year, published in November 2004.

The first equivalent volume to be based on the LLWR, 'Further Education, Work-based Learning and Community Learning in Wales Statistics 2003/04', was published by ELWa in March 2006. The tenth of the series, based on 2012/13, was published by the Welsh Government in June 2014 and was the final version to be produced in pdf format.

The 2013/14 and 2014/15 edition of 'Further Education, Work-based Learning and Community Learning in Wales Statistics' is hosted in its entirety on StatsWales. It was published in June 2015 and embraces all aspects of the previous pdf volume while also allowing the extraction of additional detail.

## **5.6 In-learning Population**

In-learning counts for all years in the current release (and in the other bulletins using LLWR data listed at the end of this release) are on an adjusted population basis. The effect of introducing this population was described in the Key Quality section of the 2008/09 release [SDR 60/2010](#).

The in-learning population is adjusted by excluding unclosed activities with an expected end date more than two years earlier than the start of the given academic year. Having excluded these activities, the population is then determined from the remaining activities by means of the actual start and end dates (in conjunction with the learning programme end date, where available separately for WBL programmes).

The adjusted population was introduced in order to produce a more accurate reflection of 'live' activity after identifying an increasing number of unclosed activities since the inception of the LLWR.

## **5.7 Mode of learning**

Prior to 2014/15, Mode of learning was been derived using guided contact hours sourced from the LLWR field LA19. Non-WBL learning programmes were classified for statistical purposes as full-time if they contained at least 450 guided contact hours per year and other non-WBL learning programmes were designated as part-time. Owing to a change in LLWR data collection, this is no longer possible on the same basis. Instead, from 2014/15 onwards, the mode is determined directly from a marker in the new Learning Programme Code LLWR field (LP74).

The LLWR field LA19 used in derivation of the former mode of learning was not collected after the end of 2013/14 and the new field LP74 was not collected before the start of 2014/15. This lack of a period of overlap means that a direct comparison cannot be made. However the trend from the one mode to the other appears smooth. In the context of FE and community learning data, the new mode appears to have very similar characteristics to the old.

## **National Statistics status**

The [United Kingdom Statistics Authority](#) has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#).

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the UK Statistics Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is Welsh Government's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

## **Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)**

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act puts in place seven well-being goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10)(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must (a) publish indicators ("national indicators") that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the Well-being goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before the National Assembly. The 46 national indicators were laid in March 2016.

Information on indicators and associated technical information - [How do you measure a nation's progress? - National Indicators](#)

Further information on the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

The statistics included in this release could also provide supporting narrative to the national indicators and be used by public services boards in relation to their local well-being assessments and local well-being plans.

## Further details

The document is available at:

<http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/further-education-work-based-learning-community-learning/>

## StatsWales

Only summary tables have been provided in this release. Additional tables supplying greater detail, including analysis by programme and qualification type, subject, age, disability status and ethnicity, are available via the Welsh Government's online dissemination service StatsWales. Tables related to this SFR can be found at:



## Other statistical outputs using the LLWR data underlying this release

This release and other statistical outputs can be found on the [Welsh Government's Statistics and Research](#) site. Versions of the following outputs for 2014/15 will be made available on the site:

- ['Further Education, Work-based Learning and Community Learning in Wales Statistics, 2014/15'](#)
  - StatsWales cubes and tables containing substantial detail. The 2014/15 edition, published in May 2016, embraces all aspects of the previous pdf volume and allows the extraction of additional detail, with users able to develop their own tables interactively.
- ['Learner Outcome Measures for Further Education, Work-based Learning and Adult Community Learning, 2014/15'](#) - Statistics on learner outcomes at FE institutions, WBL providers and Adult Community Learning providers.

## UK nations

Examples of similar outputs from other UK nations can be found at:

England - [Further education and skills: statistical first release - gov.uk](#)

Northern Ireland - [Further Education Enrolments - Department for Employment and Learning](#)

Scotland - <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Lifelong-learning>

However, owing to differences in methodology and data collection, caution should be exercised in making direct comparisons with the figures contained in this release.

## Next update

March 2017 (provisional)

Period covered: 2015/16 (August to July)

Statistical First Release report and StatsWales cubes.

## We want your feedback

We welcome any feedback on any aspect of these statistics which can be provided by email to [post16ed.stats@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:post16ed.stats@wales.gsi.gov.uk).

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