



BRIEFING PAPER

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Apprenticeship Statistics

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Summary

Apprenticeship starts in 2018/19

In 2018/19, there were 742,400 people participating in an apprenticeship in England, with 393,400 apprenticeship starts and 185,100 apprenticeship achievements.

The number of starts fell in 2017/18 following the introduction of a new apprenticeship funding system in May 2017. The number of starts has increased from 2017/18 to 2018/19, but is still below the number before the new funding system was introduced. Starts at intermediate level and by apprentices aged 25 and over were particularly affected.

72,400 fewer people were **participating** in an apprenticeship in 2018/19 than in 2017/18.

Constituency data on apprenticeship starts are available in the [Constituency Apprenticeship Statistics spreadsheet](#) accompanying this Briefing Paper.

Starts by apprentice characteristics

The **age profile** of people starting apprenticeships changed between 2017/18 and 2018/19, with a higher proportion of starts from apprentices over the age of 24.

46% of the apprenticeships started in 2018/19 were by people aged 25. The age group with the largest increase was by those aged between 35 and 44, with 21% more starts than in 2017/18.

The **gender profile** has also changed. The number of women and men starting apprenticeships were almost at the same level, with slightly more starts by women (50.1%). In 2017/18, there were slightly more starts by men (51%).

Starts by apprenticeship characteristic

Apprenticeship starts were more likely to be at a **higher level** in 2018/19.

44% of apprenticeships started in 2018/19 were at advanced level, with 19% started at higher level. In 2017/18, 44% of apprenticeship starts were at advanced level and 13% were at higher level.

The number of starts at intermediate level in 2018/19 have fallen heavily. **36%** of apprenticeship starts were at intermediate level in 2018/19. This is down from **63%** in 2011/12.

There were 22,500 level 6 and 7 starts in 2018/19. In 2017/18 there were only 11,000 starts at these levels.

The number of starts on **apprenticeship standards** increased by over 84,000 between 2017/18 and 2018/19, while the number of framework starts fell by almost 67,000. 63% of apprenticeship starts were on standards in 2018/19, up from 44% in 2017/18.

83% of all starts were in four **subject areas**: Business, Administration and Law; Health, Public Services and Care; Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies and Retail & Commercial Enterprise.

Policy Developments

In May 2017 the apprenticeship funding system was revised, and the apprenticeship levy was introduced. A summary of significant policy developments is provided in section 5 of this paper.

1. Overview of apprenticeships in England

Skills and training are devolved policy areas. This Briefing Paper covers apprenticeships in England. Sources of information on apprenticeships in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are included in the [Commons Briefing Paper, Apprenticeships Policy in England](#).¹

Apprenticeships are paid jobs that incorporate on and off the job training. A successful apprentice may qualify with a nationally recognised qualification on completion of their contract.

In 2018/19, there were **742,400** people participating in an apprenticeship in England, with **393,400** apprenticeship starts and **185,100** apprenticeship achievements.

Over 4.2 million apprenticeships were started between 2010/11 and 2018/19, with **2.2 million** apprenticeship achievements.

Apprenticeships can be studied at different qualification levels:

Name	Level	Equivalent educational level
Intermediate	2	5 GCSE passes at grades A* to C
Advanced	3	2 A level passes
Higher	4,5,6 and 7	Foundation degree and above

There are two different types of apprenticeship schemes, frameworks and standards. Apprenticeship frameworks are being progressively phased out and replaced by the newer apprenticeship standards, which were introduced in 2014. For further information see the [Commons Briefing Paper, Apprenticeships Policy in England](#).

Constituency data on apprenticeship starts are available in the [Constituency Apprenticeship Statistics](#) spreadsheet accompanying this Briefing Paper.

Changes to the funding system for apprenticeships

The way in which the government funds the training and assessment costs of apprenticeships was revised in May 2017, and the apprenticeship levy was introduced.

Prior to the changes being introduced the majority of apprenticeship starts were on apprenticeship frameworks. For this type of apprenticeship, the government paid all the training costs for 16-18 year olds, half the training costs for 19-23 year olds and up to half for apprentices aged 24 and over. Extra support was provided to apprentices living in the most deprived parts of the country or those in areas where training costs were higher.

¹ Data in this paper is taken from the Department for Education's [Apprenticeships and traineeships data](#).

The Apprenticeship Levy

All UK employers with a pay bill of over £3 million per year pay the apprenticeship levy. The levy is set at 0.5% of the value of the employer's pay bill, minus an apprenticeship levy allowance of £15,000 per financial year. The funds generated by the levy have to be spent on apprenticeship training costs. The government tops up the funds paid by the employer by 10%.

Since May 2017, apprentices on both apprenticeship frameworks and apprenticeship standards have been funded in the same way. Employers who pay the apprenticeship levy will pay for their training costs from their levy funds, while employers who do not pay the levy will generally pay 10% of the cost of training with the government contributing the remaining 90%. The government will provide additional payments, mainly targeted at younger apprentices.

A full description of the funding changes and the apprenticeship levy is available in the library briefing note [Apprenticeships and Skills Policy in England](#).

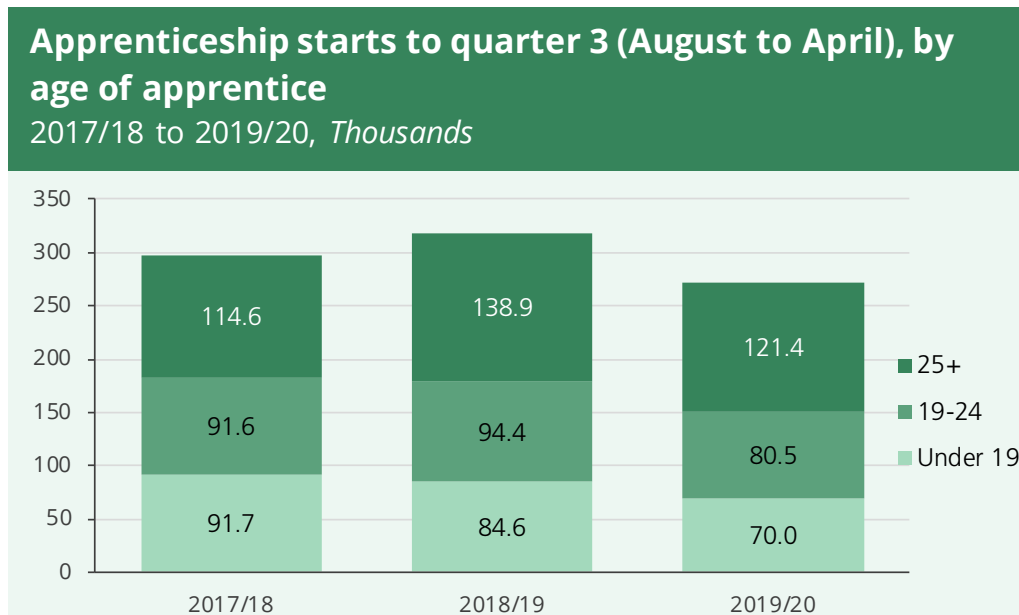
2. Total number of starts

This section provides a summary of the most recent data for apprenticeship starts, and the trends over time.²

2.1 Starts in 2019/20, quarter 3

In the first three quarters of the 2019/20 academic year (August to April), there were 275,900 apprenticeship starts. This was a drop of 13% from the same period in 2018/19, with around 43,000 fewer starts.

The number of apprentices under the age of 19 fell by the most over this period. There were 70,000 starts by apprentices under 19 in the first three quarters of the 2019/20 academic year, 14,600 fewer starts than the same period a year previously. This was a 17% fall in starts for this age group.



Source: [DfE Apprenticeships and traineeships data](#)

There has also been a fall in apprenticeship starts during the coronavirus pandemic.

The table below shows the number of starts in May 2019 and May 2020. There were 60% less starts in May 2020 than in the same month the previous year.

Intermediate level apprenticeship starts fell by 74%, the largest fall from May 2019 to May 2020. Those aged under 19 starting an apprenticeship at this level fell by 83%.

Higher level apprenticeship starts had the lowest proportional fall over this period: 28%

² Unless otherwise stated, the statistics within this paper are for academic years (August 1st to July 31st)

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Apprenticeships starts in England by age and level					
May 2019 and May 2020, thousands					
Level	Age	May 2019	May 2020	Change	% change
Intermediate level	Under 19	1.8	0.3	-1.5	-83%
	19-24	2.6	0.6	-2.0	-77%
	25+	3.6	1.1	-2.5	-69%
	<i>Total</i>	<i>8.0</i>	<i>2.1</i>	<i>-5.9</i>	<i>-74%</i>
Advanced level	Under 19	1.0	0.3	-0.7	-70%
	19-24	3.1	1.0	-2.1	-68%
	25+	5.9	2.5	-3.4	-58%
	<i>Total</i>	<i>10.0</i>	<i>3.7</i>	<i>-6.3</i>	<i>-63%</i>
Higher level	Under 19	-	-	0	0%
	19-24	0.8	0.5	-0.3	-38%
	25+	3.4	2.6	-0.8	-24%
	<i>Total</i>	<i>4.3</i>	<i>3.1</i>	<i>-1.2</i>	<i>-28%</i>
All apprenticeship levels	Under 19	2.9	0.6	-2.3	-79%
	19-24	6.6	2.2	-4.4	-67%
	25+	12.9	6.2	-6.7	-52%
	<i>Total</i>	<i>22.3</i>	<i>9.0</i>	<i>-13.3</i>	<i>-60%</i>

Note,

Age is calculated based upon age at start of programme

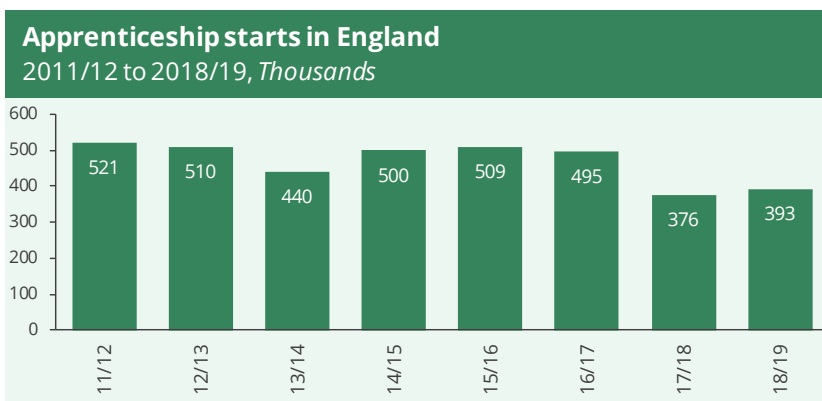
'-' indicates a base value of fewer than 5

Source: DfE, [Apprenticeships and traineeships statistics: July 2019](#) and [Apprenticeships and levy statistics: July 2020](#)

2.2 Starts in 2018/19

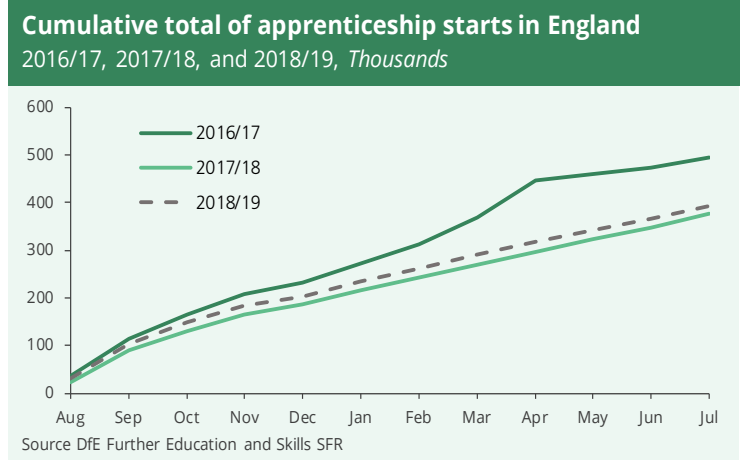
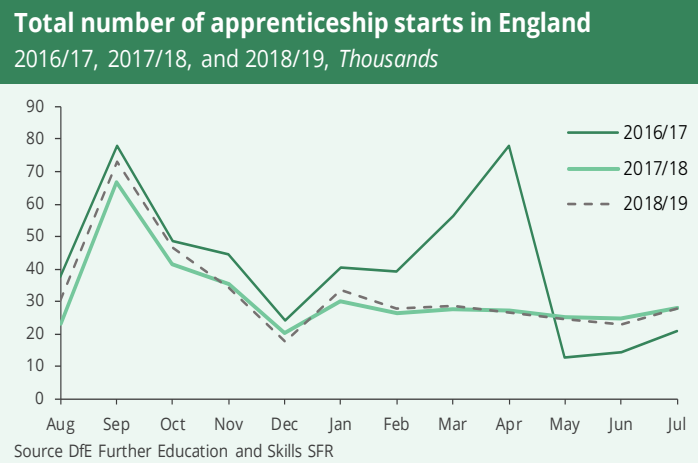
Between August 2018 and July 2019 (the 2018/19 academic year), there were 393,400 apprenticeship starts in England, 17,600 more than in 2017/18.

There were 393,400 apprenticeship starts in 2018/19, 17,600 more than in 2017/18.



The number of starts fell following the introduction of a new apprenticeship funding system in May 2017. This led to a large fall in starts in the final quarter of 2016/17, and the lower number of starts continued in 2017/18. The number of starts has increased by 17,600 in 2018/19, but is still below the number in 2016/17. The impact of the new funding system is explained in detail in [Section 2.2](#) of this note.

The chart to the left below shows the number of apprenticeship starts in each month of the 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 academic years, while the cumulative total of starts in the same years are shown in the chart to the right.³

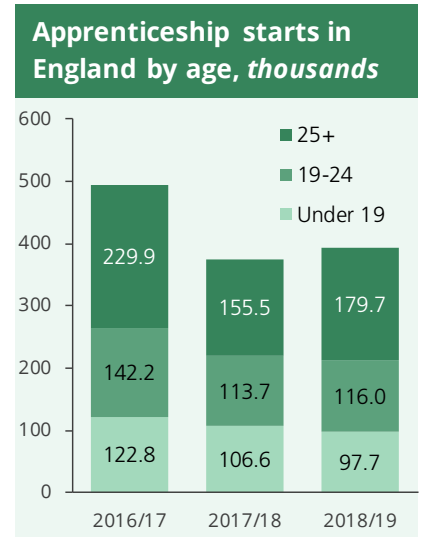


By age

The age profile of people starting apprenticeships changed between 2017/18 and 2018/19. In 2018/19, a lower proportion of starters were aged under 19 and a higher proportion were over 24.

179,700 (46%) of the apprenticeships started in 2018/19 were by people over the age of 24. A further 116,000 (29%) were started by those aged between 19 and 24, meaning that 295,700 (75%) of apprenticeships were started by people aged 19 or over. The remaining 97,700 (25%) of apprenticeships were started by those aged under 19.

In 2017/18, 41% of apprenticeships were started by people over the age of 24, 30% by those aged 19-24 and 28% by those aged under 19. In this year 71% of apprenticeships were started by those aged 19 or over.

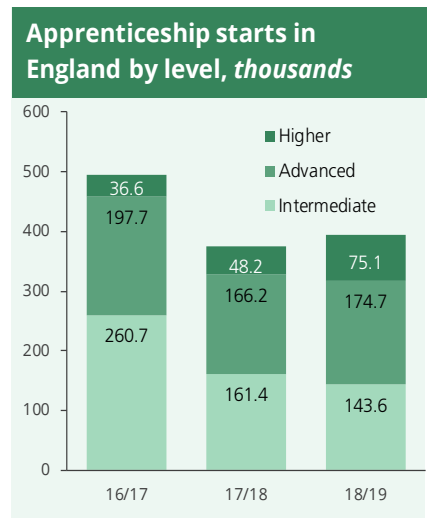


By Level

Apprenticeships starts were more likely to be at higher level in 2018/19 than in 2017/18.

174,700 (44%) of apprenticeships started in 2018/19 were at advanced level, with 75,100 (19%) started at higher level. In 2017/18, 44% of apprenticeship starts were at advanced level and 13% were at higher level.

The proportion of apprenticeship starts at intermediate level fell from 43% in 2017/18 to 37% in 2018/19.



³ DfE/ EFSA, Apprenticeship and traineeships: October 2019, table 2.1

By Region

All regions saw an increase in the number of apprenticeship starts between 2017/18 and 2018/19, although the increase was quite small in some regions. There was only as small increase in starts in the North East, while the increase in the South West and the North West were both less than 1,000.

Other regions had larger increases in the number of apprenticeship starts. London had the largest percentage increase of 11% (4,000), the South East, the West Midlands and the East Midlands had increases of 7%, and Yorkshire and the Humber had a 6% (3,000) increase.

The other regions saw increases of less than 5%.

Apprenticeship starts by region in England
2017/18 to 2018/19, Thousands

	17/18	18/19	Change since 2017/18	
			Level	%
London	37	41	4	11%
South East	53	56	4	7%
West Midlands	43	46	3	7%
East Midlands	34	36	2	7%
Yorkshire & The Humber	45	47	3	6%
East of England	37	38	2	4%
North East	23	23	1	3%
South West	43	44	0	1%
North West	58	58	0	0%

Notes: Data are for academic years (August 1st to July 31st)

Source: DfE Apprenticeships and traineeships data

By employer size

In March 2020 the DfE published statistics showing [apprenticeships in England by industry characteristics](#) from 2012/13 to 2018/19.

Small and medium-sized employers have seen a substantial drop in apprenticeship starts since 2016/17. From 2016/17 to 2018/19, small employers (0 to 49 employees) had 40% (66,090) less apprenticeship starts. Over the same period, medium-sized employers (50 to 249 employees) had 45% (33,680) less starts.

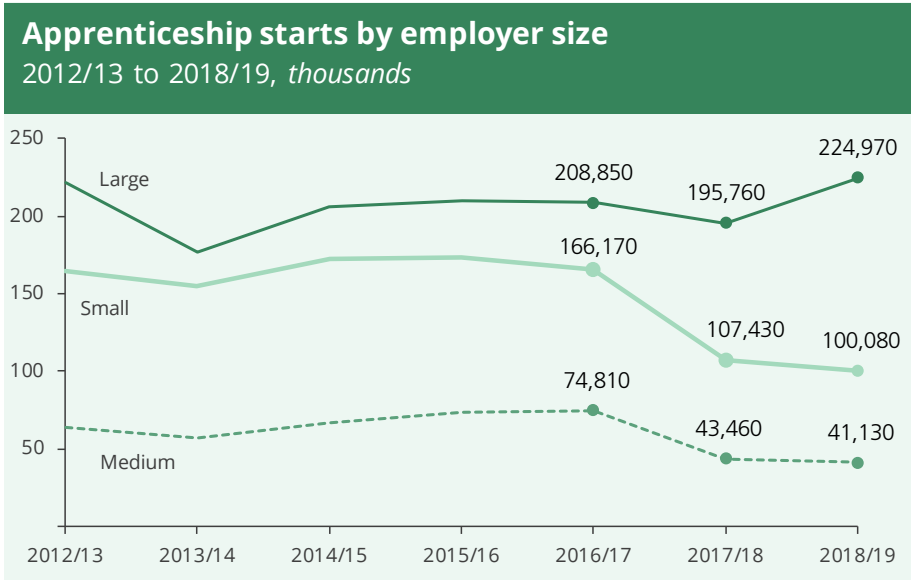
Starts increased by 8% (16,120) for large employers (250 or more employees) between 2016/17 and 2018/19, despite a fall of 6% (13,090) in 2017/18. The number of starts is now at the highest level since 2012/13.

All sizes of employers had a fall in the number of starts from 2016/17 to 2017/18 following the funding changes that were introduced in May 2017, including large employers. Small employers had the biggest fall over this period, with 42% less starts.

From 2017/18 to 2018/19, small and medium-sized employers had a further fall in the number of apprenticeships starts. Small employers had 7% (7,350) less starts in 2018/19 than in 2017/18. Medium-sized employers had 5% (2,330) less starts over the same period.

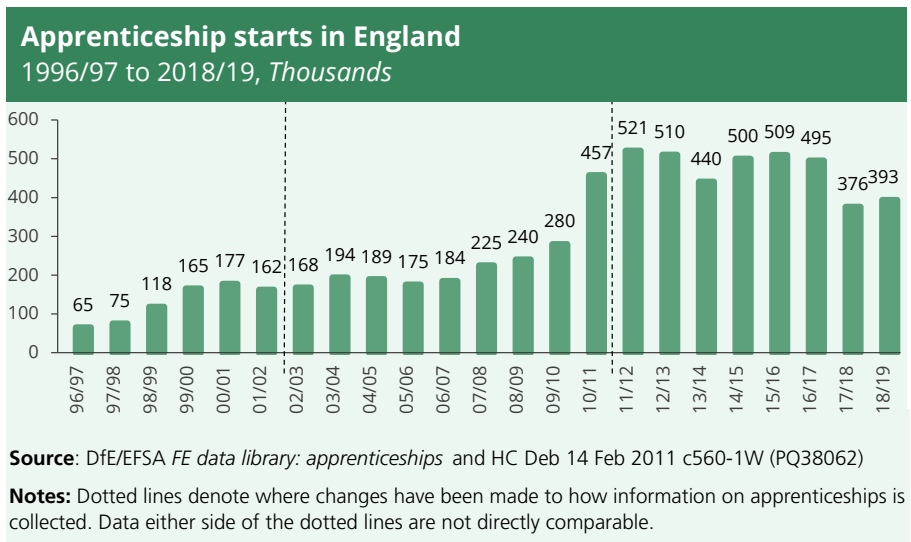
More information on the funding changes can be found in section 1 of this paper, and in the Library briefing [Apprenticeships Policy in England](#).

From 2016/17 to 2018/19, medium-sized employers saw apprenticeship starts fall by 45%. Small employers have had a fall of 40%.



2.3 Starts since 1996/97

The current apprenticeship scheme was launched in 1994 but it wasn't until 2007/08 that apprenticeship starts exceeded 200,000 per year. Between 2009/10 and 2011/12 there was a large increase in starts, and since then there were generally around 500,000 starts each year, before the large decrease in starts in 2017/18.



Apprenticeship starts increased from 279,700 in 2009/10 to 457,200 in 2010/11, an increase of 63%. There was then a further increase between 2010/11 and 2011/12. These increases can be attributed to

In May 2010 the Government [announced](#) that £150 million from the Train to Gain budget would be deployed to provide an extra 50,000 apprenticeship places.

As part of the March 2011 Spring Budget the [Plan for Growth](#) was announced which included an £180 million package for 50,000 additional apprenticeships.

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the increase in government spending on apprenticeships between these years (see box below).

Between 2011/12 and 2016/17 the volume of starts per year has been relatively steady at just above 500,000. The exception was 2013/14 when the number of starts dropped by 70,000 from the previous year. The Department for Education have attributed this fall to the introduction and subsequent withdrawal of advanced learner loans for apprentices aged 24+ (see section 6).⁴

⁴ DfE, [Further Education and Skills in England Statistical First Release](#), October 2017, pg 15

3. Starts by apprentice characteristics

This section provides a summary of apprenticeship starts broken down by the characteristics of the apprentice.

3.1 By Age

2018/19

As reported in section 2.1, the age profile of people starting apprenticeships changed between 2017/18 and 2018/19, with a lower proportion of starts from younger apprentices.

25% of apprenticeship starts in 2018/19 were from people aged under 19, down from 28% in 2017/18. Meanwhile the proportion of starts by apprentices aged 25 or over increased from 41% in 2017/18 to 46% in 2018/19.

A higher proportion of starts in 2018/19 were from apprentices aged 25 and over.

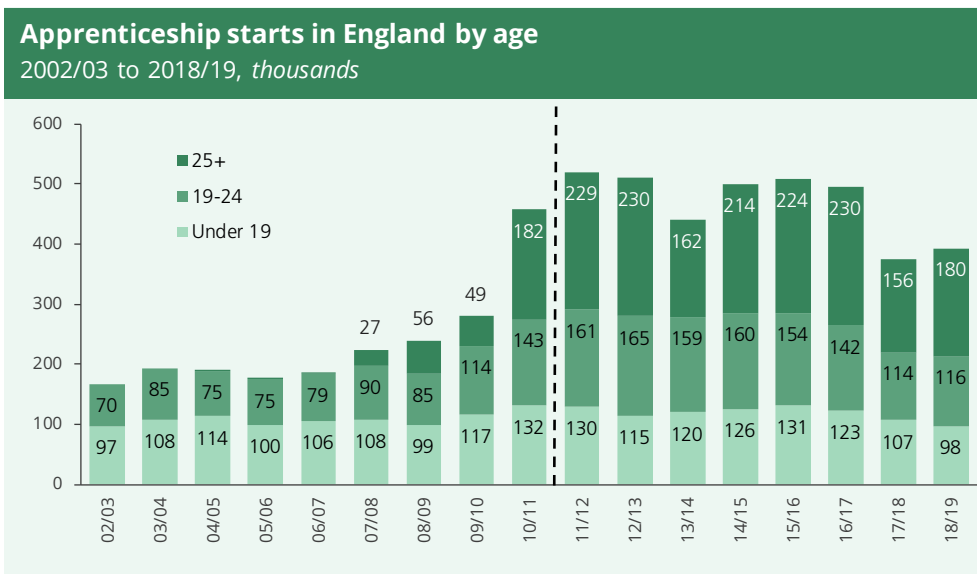
Apprenticeship starts by age England, 2018/19, thousands				
Age	Starts	Proportion	Change in starts from 2017/18	
			Level	% change
16	24	6%	-2	-6%
17	32	8%	-3	-10%
18	42	11%	-4	-9%
19-24	116	30%	2	2%
25-34	91	23%	11	14%
35-44	51	13%	9	21%
45-59	36	9%	4	13%
60+	2	0%		-3%

Notes Proportion is the percentage of all apprenticeship starts made by an age group.

The largest increase in starts for the older age bands was those aged 35 to 44, which increased by over a fifth. The number of starts by apprentices aged 45 or over increased by 12%.

Trend over time

The age breakdown of starts was quite stable between 2011/12 and 2016/17, with around a quarter under 19 years old, a further 30% aged between 19 and 24, and the remainder aged 25 or over. The exception was in 2013/14 when there was a large fall in the number of apprentices aged 25 or over, which can be attributed to the government's attempts in this year to make these apprentices pay for part of their apprenticeship.



The growth in the number of apprenticeship starts between 2009/10 and 2011/12 was largely driven by people aged 25 and over, with the number of apprentices of this age increasing from 49,000 to 229,000 between these years.

3.2 By Gender

In 2018/19, the number of women and men starting apprenticeships were almost at the same level, with slightly more starts by women. 50.1% of apprenticeships starts were by women (197,110) and 49.9% by men (196,270).

Starts for both men and women increased in 2018/19 from 2017/18, although the increase for women (12,870) was more than double the increase for men (4,750).

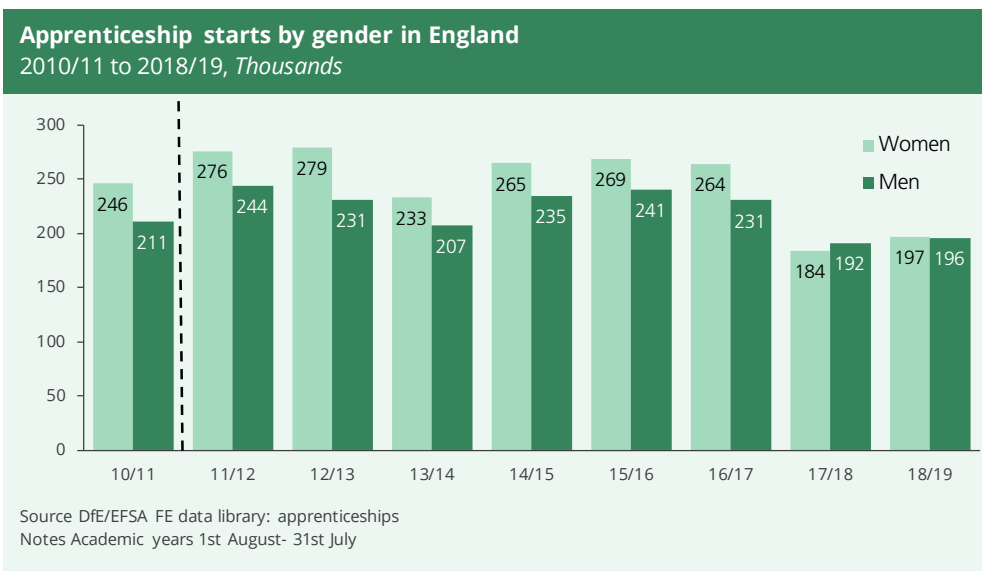
Over 7,000 more men than women started apprenticeships in 2017/18.

Trend over time

The number of women starting apprenticeships was higher than men for every year between 2010/11 and 2018/19, other than 2017/18.

In 2018/19, the number of women and men starting apprenticeships was almost at the same level.

50.1% of apprenticeships were started by women, with 49.9% started by men.



Source DfE/EFSA FE data library: apprenticeships
Notes Academic years 1st August- 31st July

Apprenticeship starts in England by gender since 2009/10										
	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19
% of total										
Women	49.6	53.8	53.1	54.7	52.9	53.0	52.8	53.5	49.0	50.1%
Men	50.4	46.2	46.9	45.3	47.1	47.0	47.2	46.5	51.0	49.9%

Source: DfE/EFSA FE data library: apprenticeships

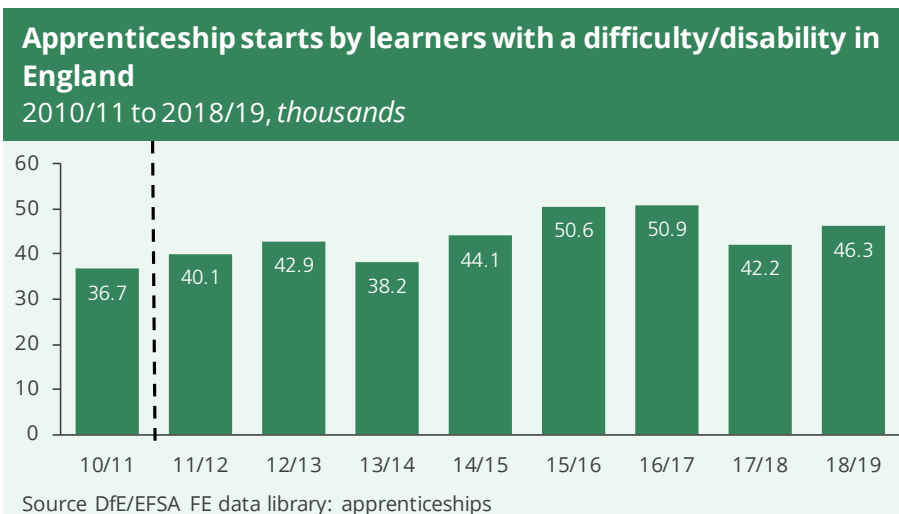
Prior to 2010/11, more men participated in apprenticeships than women. Between 2009/10 and 2011/12 there was a large increase in the number of starts for women, 35,000 higher than the increase for men.

3.3 By Disability

In 2018/19, 12% (46,000) of apprenticeship starts were learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The proportion of starts by apprentices with learning difficulties or disabilities increased from 11.2% in 2017/18 to 11.8% in 2018/19.

The proportion of starts by apprentices with learning difficulties or disabilities has increased each year since 2011/12.

The proportion of starts by apprentices with learning difficulties or disabilities increased in 2018/19.



Apprenticeship starts in England by learner difficulty/disability since 2009/10										
	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19
Level (thousands)										
Learning Difficulty/Disability	26	37	40	43	38	44	50	50	42	46
No Learning Difficulty/Disability	251	417	474	461	396	449	443	434	322	338
Not Known	3	4	7	6	6	7	10	7	11	9
% of total										
Learning Difficulty/Disability	9.4	8.0	7.7	8.4	8.7	8.8	9.9	10.3	11.2	11.8
No Learning Difficulty/Disability	89.6	91.2	91.0	90.4	89.9	89.8	88.5	88.3	85.8	86.0
Not Known	0.9	0.8	1.3	1.2	1.4	1.3	1.5	1.4	3.0	2.3

Source: DfE/EFSA FE data library: apprenticeships

3.4 By Ethnicity

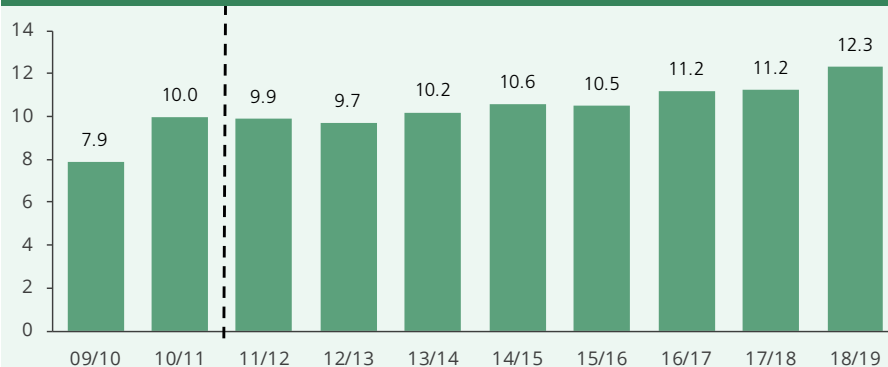
The overwhelming majority (86%) of all learners starting an apprenticeship were white in 2018/19. The proportion of starters from BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) backgrounds was 12.3%, its highest level. This was an increase from 11.2% in 2017/18.

The number of starters from a BAME background gradually increased between 2011/12 and 2016/17, from 51,350 to 55,310 in 2016/17. Both the number of starters from a white background and a BAME background fell between 2016/17 and 2017/18.

From 2017/18 to 2018/19, the number of starts by apprentices from a BAME background increased by over 6,000.

In 2018/19, apprenticeship starts by learners from a BAME background reached its highest level, 12.3%.

Proportion of total apprenticeship starts by learners from a BAME background in England
2009/10 to 2018/19, %



Apprenticeship starts in England by learner ethnicity
2009/10 to 2018/19, thousands

	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19
Asian/ Asian British	19,270	20,720	19,690	18,600	21,510	21,380	22,010	17,430	21,370
Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British	14,610	17,350	16,590	13,650	17,250	17,500	18,080	12,340	13,510
Mixed/ Multiple Ethnic Group	8,290	9,850	10,110	9,470	10,930	11,100	11,020	9,390	10,520
White	407,050	464,960	455,440	391,480	442,340	448,830	434,220	327,720	338,330
Other Ethnic Group	3,440	3,430	3,380	3,110	3,500	3,500	4,200	3,070	2,990
Not Known/ Not Provided	4,550	4,270	5,010	4,110	4,380	7,060	5,360	5,820	6,660

Notes: Academic years (1st August - 31 July)

Source: DfE/EFSA FE data library: apprenticeships

4. Starts by apprenticeship characteristic

This section provides a summary of apprenticeship starts broken down by the characteristics of the apprenticeships.

4.1 By Level

2018/19

As reported in section 2.1, apprenticeship starts were more likely to be at higher level (levels 4 to 7) in 2018/19 than in 2017/18.

174,700 (44%) of apprenticeships started in 2018/19 were at advanced level (level 3), with 75,100 (19%) started at higher level. In 2017/18, 44% of apprenticeship starts were at advanced level and 13% were at higher level. The proportion of apprenticeship starts at intermediate level (level 2) fell from 43% in 2017/18 to 37% in 2018/19.

Between 2017/18 and 2018/19, the number of starts increased for all levels except intermediate, which fell by 17,800. The number of advanced level starts increased by 8,500, while the number of higher level starts increased by 26,900.

The proportion of starts at intermediate level have fallen substantially. **36%** of apprenticeship starts were at intermediate level in 2018/19. This is down from **63%** in 2011/12.

There were 22,500 level 6 and 7 starts in 2018/19. Of the 22,500, 13,400 starts were degree apprenticeships. More information on this can be found in the Library Briefing Paper, [Degree Apprenticeships](#).

Trend over time

There were large increases in the number of Intermediate and Advanced Level apprenticeship starts between 2009/10 and 2011/12. Since 2011/12 the proportion of starts that are advanced level or higher has steadily been increasing, from 37% in 2011/12 to 63% in 2018/19.

Apprenticeship starts were more likely to be at higher level in 2018/19.

In 2018/19, **19%** of apprenticeship starts were at higher level in comparison to **13%** in 2017/18.

36% of apprenticeship starts were at intermediate level in 2018/19. This is down from **63%** in 2011/12.

Apprenticeship starts in England by level										
2009/10 to 2018/19, Thousands										
	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19
Level										
Intermediate (Level 2)	191	301	329	293	286	298	291	261	161	144
Advanced (Level 3)	88	154	188	208	145	182	191	198	166	175
Higher (Levels 4-7)	2	2	4	10	9	20	27	37	48	75
Level 4	1	2	3	4	4	7	10	12	17	25
Level 5	-	-	1	6	5	13	17	23	20	28
Level 6	-	-	-	-	-	0	1	2	6	11
Level 7	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	5	12
Proportion										
Intermediate (Level 2)	68%	66%	63%	57%	65%	60%	57%	53%	43%	36%
Advanced (Level 3)	31%	34%	36%	41%	33%	36%	37%	40%	44%	44%
Higher (Levels 4-7)	1%	0%	1%	2%	2%	4%	5%	7%	13%	19%

Notes: Proportion is the percentage of all apprenticeship starts made at each level.

4.2 By Sector

2018/19

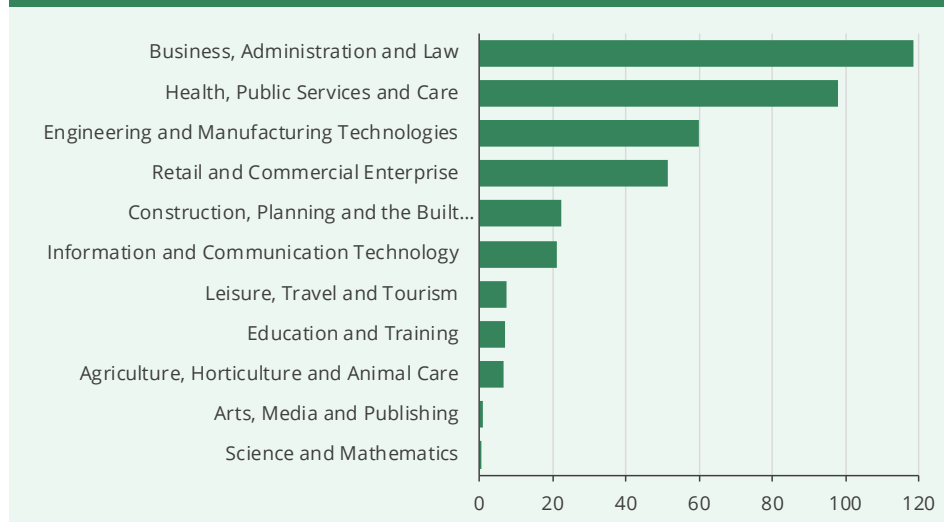
83% of starts in 2018/19 were in the following four sector areas, with over half in the top two areas:

- Business Administration and Law: 119,000 starts (30% of all starts), up 7,500 from 2017/18.
- Health, Public Services and Care: 98,000 starts (25% of starts), up 9,400 from 2017/18.
- Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies: 60,000 starts (15% of starts), down 1,500 from 2017/18.
- Retail and Commercial Enterprise: 51,000 starts (13% of starts), down by around 500 from 2017/18.

Over half of the apprenticeship starts in 2018/19 were in two sector areas.

Apprenticeship starts in England by subject sector

2018/19, thousands



Trend over time

Between 2011/12 and 2018/19 the Retail and Commercial Enterprise sector saw the biggest fall in the proportion of apprenticeship starts. In 2011/12, 21% of all starts were in Retail and Commercial Enterprise. In 2018/19, 13% of starts were in this sector. The Health, Public Services and Care sector had the largest increase over the same period: 21% in 2011/12, to 25% in 2018/19.

Apprenticeship starts in England by sector subject area									
2009/10 to 2018/19, thousands									
	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19
Business, Administration and Law	134	165	160	126	143	143	138	111	119
Health, Public Services and Care	90	109	123	109	130	132	139	88	98
Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies	55	70	66	65	74	78	75	59	60
Retail and Commercial Enterprise	103	108	101	87	90	85	75	54	51
Construction, Planning and the Built Environment	22	14	14	16	18	21	21	23	23
Information and Communication Technology	20	19	14	13	16	16	15	18	21
Leisure, Travel and Tourism	22	20	14	11	13	15	14	9	7
Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care	7	8	7	7	7	8	7	7	7
Education and Training	4	8	8	5	7	8	9	6	7
Arts, Media and Publishing	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Science and Mathematics	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0

Notes Under 500 people started an apprenticeship in Science and Mathematics for every academic year since 2009/10

4.3 Frameworks and standards

Over recent years, there has been a large increase in the number of apprenticeship starts on standards and a fall in the number on frameworks. In 2018/19 the majority (63%) of apprenticeship starts were on standards, whilst the number of frameworks apprenticeship starts fell. Between 2016/17 and 2018/19 the proportion of starts on apprenticeship standards increased from just 2% to 63%.

The number of starts on apprenticeship standards increased by over 178,000 between 2017/18 and 2018/19, while the number of framework starts fell by almost 67,000.

By 2020, the ESFA expect all apprenticeship starts to be on standards, and will not allow any starts on frameworks.⁵

63% of starts in 2018/19 were on apprenticeship standards. This was up from just 2% in 2016/17.

Number of framework and standards apprenticeship starts					
2014/15 to 2018/19					
	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19
Framework	498,910	505,080	470,270	212,080	145,300
Standard	10	1,240	9,130	69,920	248,080

Source DfE/EFSA FE data library: apprenticeships

The most popular framework in 2018/19 was Children's Care Learning and Development, with 24,000 starts. The highest number of starts in an apprenticeship standard was in the Team Leader/Supervisor standard with over 23,000 starts.

The table below shows starts in the 10 most popular apprenticeship frameworks and standards.

⁵ ESFA, [Information about the withdrawal of apprenticeship frameworks](#)

19 Apprenticeship Statistics

Apprenticeship starts in England by standards	
10 most popular standards in 2018/19, <i>thousands</i>	
	18/19
Team Leader / Supervisor	23
Adult Care Worker	15
Lead Adult Care Worker	14
Business Administrator	11
Operations / Departmental Manager	10
Customer Service Practitioner	8
Accountancy / Taxation Professional	7
Hair Professional	7
Retailer	6
Hospitality Team Member	6

Source DfE/ EFSA DE data library: apprenticeships

Apprenticeship starts in England by framework	
10 most popular frameworks in 2018/19, <i>thousands</i>	
	18/19
Children's Care Learning and Development	24
Business Administration	19
Construction Skills	12
Engineering	9
Industrial Applications	8
IT and Telecoms Professionals	7
Care Leadership and Management	7
Management	6
MES Plumbing	5
Health and Social Care	5

Source DfE/ EFSA DE data library: apprenticeships

5. Apprenticeship achievements and participation

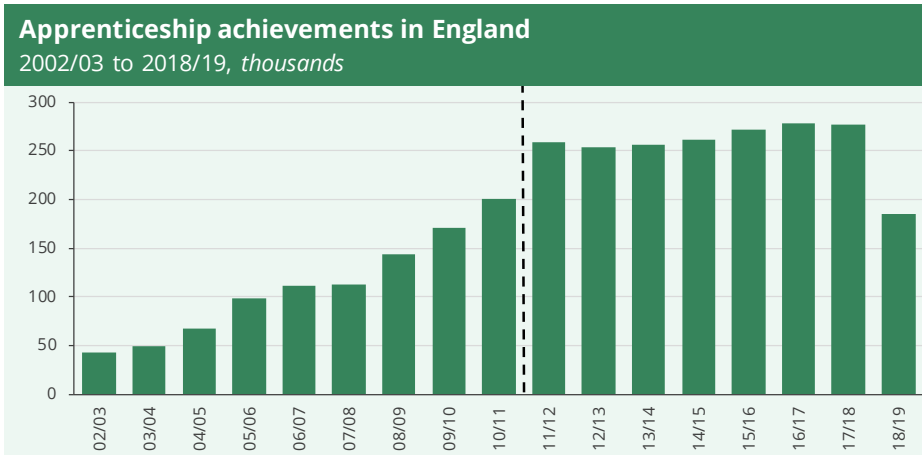
As well as statistics on apprenticeship starts, data are also available on the number of people who complete an apprenticeship (achievements) and the total number of people who were on an apprenticeship in a given year (participation).

5.1 Achievements

There were 185,100 achievements in 2018/19, down 91,100 (33%) on the previous year.

Apprenticeship achievements followed a similar trend to starts, with the number of achievements increasing up to 2011/12. Since then volumes had stayed at a similar level, until 2018/19 when achievements fell by a third.

The number of apprenticeship achievements fell for by a third, from 2017/18 to 2018/19.

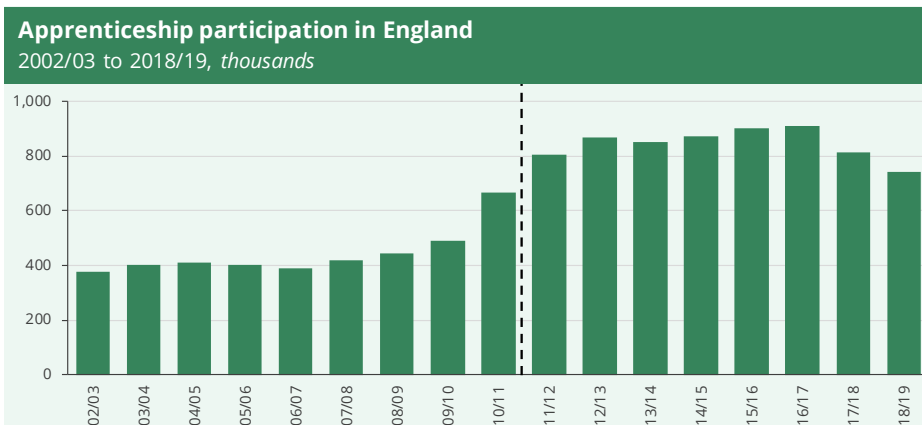


5.2 Participation

742,400 people were participating in an apprenticeship in 2018/19, the lowest annual level of participation since 2010/11. 72,400 fewer people were participating in 2018/19 than in 2017/18.

The trend for apprenticeship participation is also similar to that for starts with large increases from 2009/10 to 2011/12, and a gradual increase between 2011/12 and 2016/17.

The number of people participating in an apprenticeship fell to its lowest level in 2018/19 since 2011/12.



6. Significant apprenticeship policy developments

This section provides a summary of some of the key policy developments for apprenticeships.

1994 to 2010

A new apprenticeship scheme called “Modern Apprenticeships” was launched in 1994 which offered an opportunity to work and be paid a wage, while working towards a NVQ level 3 qualification. These were aimed at 18 and 19 year olds.⁶

Significant changes were made to the scheme in 2004 with the introduction of level 2 apprenticeships, revised level 3 apprenticeships and the removal of the upper age limit of apprenticeships, which meant that people over 25 could become apprentices. Higher level apprenticeships were introduced in 2006.⁷

In 2008, in response to the Leitch report that included a recommendation that the number of apprenticeships should be increased to 500,000 per year by 2020 (in the UK), the National Apprenticeship Service was created. It was launched in 2009. The government also committed to increase funding for apprenticeships between 2007/08 and 2010/11.⁸

2010 to 2015

In May 2010 the Government [announced](#) that £150 million from the Train to Gain budget would be deployed to provide an extra 50,000 apprenticeship places. As part of the March 2011 Spring Budget the [Plan for Growth](#) was announced which included an £180 million package for 50,000 additional apprenticeships. Also, in December 2011, the Skills System Reform Plan was launched which included an initiative to provide 40,000 incentive payments to small employers who take on apprentices.

The [Apprenticeship Grant for Employers of 16 to 24 year olds](#) (AGE 16-24) was introduced in February 2012, and provided £1,500 to small businesses hiring young apprentices.

In 2013/14 advanced learner loans were introduced, and individuals aged 24 and over were required to take these loans to pay half of the cost of advanced level apprenticeships. This was the first time that apprentices were expected to contribute to the costs of their learning, and led to an 88% fall in the number of people aged 25+ starting an advanced or higher apprenticeship. In February 2014 the Skills Funding Agency announced that apprentices would no longer be required to

Further information on apprenticeships policy in England is covered in the library briefing paper, [Apprenticeships Policy in England](#).

⁶ House of Commons Library briefing paper, [Apprenticeships Policy, England prior to 2010](#), July 2015, p5

⁷ Ibid, p7

⁸ Ibid, p8

take out a loan, and those who had were not required to repay them.⁹
10

An extra £40 million was announced in the 2013 Autumn Statement to deliver an additional 20,000 higher level starts between August 2013 and July 2015.¹¹

In 2014 apprenticeship standards were introduced, with the intention of replacing apprenticeship frameworks which are being progressively phased out.

2015 to 2019

In 2015 the Government announced a commitment to create 3 million new apprenticeships by 2020. The [Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016](#) placed an obligation on the Government to report annually on its progress towards meeting this target. The [Enterprise Act 2016](#) provided the Secretary of State with the power to set targets for apprenticeships in public bodies in England to contribute towards meeting the national targets.¹²

In March 2015 [Degree apprenticeships](#) were launched.

The [Institute for Apprenticeships](#) was established in May 2016 and launched in April 2017 with an aim of ensuring high-quality apprenticeship standards and to advise the government on funding for each standard.

The funding system was revised in May 2017, and the Apprenticeship Levy was introduced. A brief summary of the levy and the funding changes is provided in section 1 of this paper.

⁹ BIS/SFA [Skills Funding Statement 2013-2016](#), February 2014, pg 10

¹⁰ Second Reading, [No more advanced learning loans for apprentices after low take up](#), February 2014

¹¹ HM Treasury, [Autumn Statement 2013: key announcements](#), December 2013

¹² BIS, [Apprenticeships \(in England\): vision for 2020](#), December 2015, pg 9

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