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**STUDENT NUMBERS, IN-YEAR RETENTION AND ACHIEVEMENTS AT COLLEGES IN THE FE SECTOR, EXTERNAL INSTITUTIONS AND FE STUDENT NUMBERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN ENGLAND IN 2000/01**

**INTRODUCTION**

This statistical first release (SFR), prepared by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) in consultation with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), presents updated figures for the number of students enrolled at colleges in the further education (FE) sector, and FE provision funded by the Council in local education authority (LEA)-maintained and other institutions (external institutions) and in higher education institutions (HEIs) in England in 2000/01. It also presents estimates of in-year retention rates and achievement rates.

An SFR issued in December 2001 gave provisional figures for the number of students enrolled in FE colleges, external institutions (EIs), and of the qualifications they were studying in 2000/01. This SFR provides updated figures, replacing the provisional figures for 2000/01. It also contains a comparison between student numbers from 1994/95 to 2000/01.

The data for colleges and EIs are based on the individualised student record (ISR), which was introduced in 1994/95.

The data for HEIs are based on the ISR returned to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

Returns from 403 colleges, 207 EIs and 56 HEIs contributed to this SFR, representing all provision at FE colleges, except for specialist designated institutions (SDIs), and all Council-funded FE provision at EIs and HEIs.

**KEY POINTS**

# In-year Retention

* 85.1% of total students on Council-funded FE provision of at least 12 weeks in length in colleges and EIs were retained on their programme during 2000/01, up from 83.9% the previous year.
* The in-year retention rate for full-time full-year students increased from 85.6% to 87.1%. For students on other modes of attendance, in-year retention increased from 83.2% to 84.4%.

# Achievement

* Students on Council-funded FE provision in colleges and EIs achieved 79.3% of the qualifications for the courses they completed in 2000/01, a substantial rise from 74.5% the previous year. Achievement rates rose among all age groups, for both full and part-time learners, and at all levels of provision. The chart below summarises the long-term trend for achievement rates.



\* EI data not available for 1994/95

\*\* excludes Key Skills qualifications

* These figures exclude key skills qualifications as there are issues with the outcomes data provided by institutions for these qualifications.

**Student Numbers**

* A total of 3.46 million students were enrolled on Council-funded FE provision in England during 2000/01. Of these 3.06 million were in FE colleges and 0.35 million in EIs, in line with the provisional figures released on 21 December 2001, and 0.06 million were in HEIs.
* This represents an overall increase in Council-funded FE students of 4.8% from the previous year. Student numbers for the under 19 age group decreased by 1.3% to 0.64 million and those for over 19s increased by 6.2% to 2.82 million.
* The number of students on full-time full-year Council-funded FE programmes decreased by 4.2% to 0.65 million and the number on other modes of attendance increased by 7.1% to 2.81 million.
* In addition, there were 0.71 million students enrolled in FE colleges in 2000/01 on provision other than Council-funded FE, a decrease of 7.9% from the previous year.
* The total number of students enrolled in FE colleges increased by 1.6% to 3.77 million.

# Qualification aims

* Students on Council-funded FE provision in colleges, EIs and HEIs were enrolled on a total of 6.68 million qualification aims, an increase of 17.0% from the previous year.
* This increase followed the introduction of Curriculum 2000, with its move to broader programmes including key skills for full-time students aged under 19, and the introduction of 3 and 6 hour courses for adult learners.
* Students on Council-funded FE provision in colleges, EIs and HEIs in 2000/01 were enrolled on an average of 1.93 qualification aims each, compared with 1.73 the previous year.
* Those aged under 19 studied on average 3.95 qualifications each, up from 3.09. Those aged 19 and over studied on average 1.47 qualification aims each, up from 1.40.

**TABLES**

Table 1a: Students enrolled on Council-funded FE provision in 2000/01, in FE sector colleges in England.

Table 1b: Students enrolled on provision other than Council-funded FE provision in 2000/01, in FE sector colleges in England.

Table 1c: All students enrolled in 2000/01, in FE sector colleges in England.

Table 1d: Students enrolled on Council-funded FE provision on 2000/01, in FE sector colleges, EIs and HEIs in England.

Table 2a: Full-time full-year students enrolled on Council-funded FE provision in 2000/01, in FE sector colleges, EIs and HEIs in England, analysed by type and level of qualification.

Table 2b: Other full-time students enrolled on Council-funded FE provision in 2000/01, in FE sector colleges, EIs and HEIs in England, analysed by type and level of qualification.

Table 2c: Part-time students enrolled on Council-funded FE provision in 2000/01, in FE sector colleges, EIs and HEIs in England, analysed by type and level of qualification.

Table 2d: Students enrolled on Council-funded FE provision in 2000/01, in FE sector colleges, EIs and HEIs in England, analysed by type and level of qualification.

Table 3: Qualification aims of students enrolled on Council-funded FE provision in 2000/01 in FE sector colleges, EIs and HEIs in England.

Table 4: Student numbers enrolled each year from 1994/95 to 2000/01 in FE sector colleges, from 1995/96 to 2000/01 in EIs and from 1997/98 to 2000/01 in HEIs, in England.

Table 5: Student numbers enrolled each year from 1994/95 to 2000/01, on Council-funded FE provision in FE sector colleges, from 1995/96 to 2000/01 in EIs and from 1997/98 to 2000/01 in HEIs, in England, analysed by type and level of qualification.

Table 6 and Table 7: In-year retention of students enrolled on Council-funded FE programmes of at least 12 weeks in 1999/2000 and 2000/01, in FE sector colleges and EIs in England.

Table 8 and Table 9: Achievement of qualification aims completed by Council-funded FE students in 1999/2000 and 2000/01 in FE sector colleges and EIs in England.

**FUTURE STATISTICAL FIRST RELEASES**

The LSC publishes three FE student number SFRs each year:

* early information on numbers of students and qualification aims, derived from the ISR return relating to students enrolled on 1 November, published in March.
* whole-year data on numbers of students and qualification aims, derived from the ISR return relating to the end of the relevant teaching year, published in December.
* updated whole-year data on numbers of students and qualification aims together with data on student in-year retention and achievements, derived from the ISR return relating to 31 December following the end of the relevant teaching year, published in June.

Each SFR contains data for the current year and comparisons with previous years.

Published SFRs are currently available on the LSC website at:

http://www.lscdata.gov.uk /data/studentstatistics.html

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

On 1 April 2001 the LSC inherited responsibility in relation to funding FE provision in colleges and EIs from the FEFC. The LSC also took responsibility for other post-16 provision including work based learning. Statistics on these other areas of provision are reported separately.

References in this publication to Council-funded FE provision relate to types of provision formerly funded by the FEFC, including non-prescribed HE provision.

The main data in this SFR relate to the 2000/01 teaching year, which is defined as from 1 August 2000 to 31 July 2001.

The student numbers for 1994/95 to 1999/2000 in this SFR are similar in definition to those in the SFR published by the LSC, in consultation with the DfES, in July 2001. The numbers have been updated to take account of minor revisions of data by some institutions.

As far as possible this SFR follows the format of earlier SFRs on FE student numbers published by the FEFC.

**Source of Data**

The data for 2000/01 have been derived from the ISR with a reference date of 31 December 2001, for the 358 colleges and 183 EIs where these data are available, from the ISR with a reference date of 31 July 2001 for 41 colleges and 16 EIs, from the ISR with a reference date of 31 December 2000 for 4 colleges and 6 EIs, from the ISR with a reference date of 31 December 1999 for 1 EI, and from the ISR with a reference date of 31 July 1997 for the 1 remaining EI. Tables 6 to 9, showing achievement and in-year retention data, include only those institutions for which ISR data with a reference date of 31 December 2001 are available.

The data for HEIs for 2000/01 have been calculated from the data collected from these institutions by HESA with a reference date of 31 July 2001.

University for Industry (UfI) provision is included with data from the recipient colleges, which are mainly General FE and Tertiary Colleges (GFEC/TCs), as these are responsible for reporting on UfI provision funded through them. This includes Ufi provision funded through recipient colleges and delivered by other providers.

## Institutions included

In 2000/01, the FE sector comprised 403 FE and sixth form colleges incorporated under the *Further and Higher Education Act 1992* (the Act) and 14 institutions designated under the Act as eligible to receive support from funds administered by the FEFC. The FEFC was responsible for funding provision for FE and non‑prescribed HE other than HNDs and HNCs in colleges in the FE sector in England.

Under section 6(5) of the Act the FEFC also funded some FE provided by LEA- maintained and other institutions, referred to as ‘external institutions’ (EIs). This SFR reports numbers of students and qualification aims within the FE sector in 2000/01. It also reports numbers of students and qualifications in respect of Council-funded FE provision in EIs in 2000/01. Students studying HE qualifications in colleges are included.

Provision in EIs is reported in table 1d and in tables 2a to 9. EIs did not return ISR data in 1994/95, and so are not included in the 1994/95 column in tables 4 and 5.

Provision in HEIs is reported in table 1d and in tables 2a to 5. HEIs did not return ISR data in 1994/95, 1995/96 and 1996/97 and so are not included in these columns in tables 4 and 5.

This SFR does not include figures for SDIs, as these institutions had special arrangements for making data returns to the Council. It is estimated that a total of 0.14 million students were enrolled on Council-funded FE provision in these institutions in 2000/01.

The estimated figures for SDIs in paragraph 13 above are excluded from all the tables, including those giving time-series data, in this SFR.

This SFR does not include figures for dance and drama institutions, which made data returns to the FEFC for the first time in 1999/2000. It is estimated that a total of 400 students were enrolled on provision funded by the Council or DfES in these institutions in 2000/01.

**Classification of Data**

Students classified for statistical purposes as full-time are defined as those enrolled on programmes of at least 450 guided learning hours per year, or for at least 150 guided learning hours per tri-annual period or more than 16 guided learning hours per week for shorter courses. Full-time students who enrol on a programme of at least 450 guided learning hours per year are classified as full-time full-year. This includes those students who withdraw from the programme during the year and actually attend for less than 450 guided learning hours. Also counted as full-time full-year are students who enrol on programmes of less than 450 guided learning hours but stay longer than expected and actually attend for more than 450 guided learning hours. Full-time students who are not classified as full-time full-year are classified as other full-time. All other students are classified as part-time.

Tables 6 and 7 show the in-year retention rate calculated for students on programmes of at least 12 weeks’ duration. Students studying more than one qualification are included where at least one qualification is of 12 weeks or more duration. Students studying a number of consecutive short courses each of less than 12 weeks duration are excluded from the calculation. Qualifications that a student has transferred from are excluded from the calculation of the student’s retention status.

Tables 8 and 9 show the achievement rates calculated by comparing the number of students achieving a qualification with the total number completing courses intending to lead to one. Achievement rates are lower than pass rates, as not all students completing a course present themselves for assessment. These tables relate to qualification aims, so students with more than one qualification aim are included once for each qualification aim.

The Council has identified issues with the data provided by institutions on outcomes for key skills qualifications in 2000/01. For this reason, key skills qualifications have been excluded from the analyses in Tables 8 and 9.

Tables 10 and 11 in previous SFRs, showing student destinations, have been discontinued. The validity of the data is questionable, given the high proportion of unknown destinations. The LSC is currently reviewing its approach to collecting and reporting follow-up information on students.

Open College Network qualifications are no longer separately identified under level “Other” in Tables 2a to 2d, 3, 7 and 9. This change has been introduced following improvements to the way these qualifications are held within the LSC’s qualification database, phased in between 1998/99 and 2000/01, enabling these qualifications to be assigned to specific qualification levels.

In the key points in the SFR, students whose age is unknown are assumed to be aged 19 or over.

**General Notes**

In the tables, numbers may not add up exactly to totals because of differential rounding. Numbers are shown in thousands and the symbol ‘-’ represents fewer than 50 students or qualifications.

**ENQUIRIES**

Press enquiries should be made to Lisa White, Press Officer, Learning and Skills Council, Cheylesmore House, Quinton Road, Coventry, CV1 2WT (telephone number 024 7649 3515). Public enquiries about the information in this SFR should be addressed to Harri Mistry, Data Collection and Analysis, at the same address (telephone number 024 7649 3851).