



Department  
for Education

# **Key stage 4 destination measures (revised)**

**Guidance and technical note for 2019  
performance tables**

**February 2020**

# Contents

Summary	3
About this guidance	3
Expiry date	3
Main points	3
Background information	4
What are key stage 4 destination measures?	4
Why we publish destination measures	4
Understanding destination measures	5
Publication	5
Data sources	5
Cohort	6
Schools with destinations reported	6
Schools which have both 2019 attainment results and destinations include:	6
Schools which have 2019 attainment results but no destinations reported include:	6
Information included in the table	8
Destination categories reported	8
Pupils staying in education or employment for at least two terms after key stage 4	8
Total number of pupils included in destination measures (cohort)	8
Pupils staying in education for at least two terms after key stage 4	8
Apprenticeships	9
Pupils staying in employment for at least two terms after key stage 4	9
Pupils not staying in education or employment for at least two terms after key stage 4	10
Destination unknown	10
Suppression of destination data	10
Feedback and further information	11
Destination measures publications	11

# Summary

## About this guidance

This is to assist in understanding the key stage 4 destination measures data published in the 2019 school and college performance tables.

## Expiry date

This guidance will be updated in October 2020 when the provisional 2020 performance tables are published.

## Main points

This guidance explains

- the purpose of destination measures
- where data is sourced
- how the measures are calculated
- which schools have destinations reported
- the categories of destinations reported
- additional technical details

## **Background information**

### **What are key stage 4 destination measures?**

Destination measures are a headline accountability measure and show the percentage of pupils continuing to a sustained education, apprenticeship or employment destination in the year after completing key stage 4 study (after year 11).

Additional data shows whether students were in education, apprenticeships or employment, did not stay in education or employment for at least two terms, or whether activity was not captured in the data. Education destinations including further education (FE) colleges and other providers, sixth form colleges, school sixth forms or other education destinations are shown.

### **Why we publish destination measures**

The destination measures provide clear and comparable information on the success of schools in helping all their pupils take qualifications that offer them the best opportunity to progress. They will also encourage institutions to make sure their pupils receive the support needed to prepare for and complete the transition on to education or training that offers good long term prospects.

# Understanding destination measures

## Publication

The key stage 4 pupil destination measures for pupils who were at the end of key stage 4 in 2016-17 were published on the [school and college performance tables](#) website on 6 February 2020 as revised data. Destinations are also the subject of a [separate statistical publication](#) on the gov.uk website.

## Data sources

Data from the national pupil database (NPD) are used to calculate education destinations. The national pupil database links pupil and student characteristics (e.g. age, gender, and ethnicity) to school and college learning aims and attainment information for children in schools in England. Five administrative data sources used in compiling the national pupil database have been used to determine pupils' education destinations:

- individualised learner record (ILR) covering English further education providers and specialist post-16 institutions
- school census covering English schools
- awarding body data
- alternative provision census
- Higher Education Statistics Authority (HESA) data covering UK universities

Employment data and out-of-work benefit data have been linked to the national pupil database to form the longitudinal education outcomes (LEO) dataset. Along with local authority data, LEO data is used to calculate employment destinations. Three administrative datasets are used as follows

- employment data from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC)
- out-of-work benefit data from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
- local authority data from the National Client Caseload Information System (NCCIS)

## Cohort

The key stage 4 cohort consists of pupils completing key stage 4 (finishing year 11) in the 2016-17 academic year and identifies their destinations in the 2017-18 academic year.

The 2016-17 cohort reported for a school in the destinations measures in 2019 generally includes the same pupils who were reported against that school for attainment and progress measures in the published 2017 key stage 4 performance tables.

The key stage 4 cohort is from state-funded mainstream schools and maintained and non-maintained special schools.

The national and local authority totals in the performance tables website include both state-funded mainstream and special schools.

Destinations are not reported for independent schools (including independent special schools).

## Schools with destinations reported

The 2019 key stage 4 performance tables include information on schools which were open during the 2018-19 academic year and which had pupils at the end of key stage 4 in this academic year.

Because destinations measures are calculated for pupils who completed key stage 4 at the school two years previously (in 2016-17) not all schools with attainment results have destination measures reported.

The reference date for open schools is at the start of each academic year, so changes to school types, openings and closures between 12 September 2016 and 12 September 2018 affect reporting.

## Schools which have both 2019 attainment results and destinations include:

- schools which have **remained open** throughout the period and have not undergone any changes to school type
- schools which have become a **converter** academy
- schools which have undergone a **merger** (one continuing school 'absorbs' another)

## Schools which have 2019 attainment results but no destinations reported include:

- schools which have **opened** (as entirely new schools)
- schools which have become a **sponsored** academy

- schools which have formed from an **amalgamation** (two or more schools come together to form a 'new' school)
- schools which **did not have pupils at the end of key stage 4** in 2016-17 (this may include schools which were new in 2016-17)

## Information included in the table

### Destination categories reported

#### Pupils staying in education or employment for at least two terms after key stage 4

Any sustained education, apprenticeship or employment destination.

#### Total number of pupils included in destination measures (cohort)

This is the total number of pupils in the 2016-17 cohort, using the criteria outlined under 'cohort' at the start of this guide, and is used to create the denominator for the measure.

#### Pupils staying in education for at least two terms after key stage 4

Students finishing key stage 4 who stayed in education from October to March the following year, including at school sixth forms, sixth-form colleges, further education colleges and other settings in England.

#### Further education college or other further education provider

Sustained participation in one or more FE institutions identified from the ILR. General and specialist FE colleges (other than sixth-form colleges) are reported here as well as other FE providers.

Any provider in the ILR not identified as a sixth form college or FE college is designated as an 'other FE provider'. It also includes pupils studying further education in a higher education institution. A number of pupils were identified within the higher education statistics agency (HESA) data as being registered for FE level study at an HE institution.

#### School sixth form

State-funded mainstream school sixth forms are identified from the school census data. The measure reports the proportion of the cohort participating at these institutions.

#### Sixth-form college

Sixth-form colleges are identified separately from the ILR data. The measure reports the proportion of the cohort participating at these institutions.

#### Other education

All remaining education destinations are grouped under this heading and include:

- **independent schools:** These destinations were identified from awarding body data that has been used to provide an indication of participation. For example if a

student sat an A level exam in Summer 2019, it has been assumed the student completed a two-year course of study and fulfilled the full six months participation from October 2017 to March 2018.

- **alternative provision:** Data on pupils in alternative provision includes those who have their primary registration at a Pupil Referral Unit, an AP academy, an AP free school or a hospital school. These destinations include other alternative provision of education funded by the local authority outside of state place funded schools, including independent schools, non-maintained special schools, and providers who do not meet the criteria for registration as a school.

Attendance via alternative provision for a period of time in the first five months of the academic year is used as a proxy for sustained participation.

- **special schools:** Pupils recorded on the school census as attending maintained or non-maintained special schools.
- **specialist post-16 institutions:** This includes data on pupils attending specialist post-16 institutions, obtained from the ILR data.
- **UK higher education institutions:** Pupils who have gone to any HE institution in the UK, for higher level study (level 4 and above), as recorded in HESA data.
- **education combinations:** A number of students were identified as attending more than one type of institution over the 6 months. For example, a student may have attended an FE college for 3 months and a school sixth form for 3 months. Providing they fulfilled the sustained participation criteria across the institution types, they were counted in the measure.

## Apprenticeships

Pupils who started an apprenticeship at any point in the year and continued it for at least 6 months (2017 to 2018). From October 2018, apprenticeship destinations are reported separately from education and employment.

## Pupils staying in employment for at least two terms after key stage 4

Pupils finishing key stage 4 who were in employment in the UK from October to March the following year.

Employment destinations are calculated from HMRC data in the LEO dataset and NCCIS data recorded by local authorities. To count as a sustained destination a pupil must be recorded as in employment in 5 out of the 6 months between October and March. A one month pause is permitted to allow for those pupils taking separate periods of temporary employment. Should the one month pause occur in March then the student is required to be in employment in April for the destination to be counted as sustained.

Pupils with training participation recorded in NCCIS are also included in this category as are those completing the required 6 months participation through a combination of employment and education.

This category also includes pupils who have been identified as being self-employed because they completed a self-assessed tax return in the destination year (covering the financial year from April 2017 to April 2018). This is provided that they did not claim benefits for more than one month in the period from October to March.

Pupils who have sustained participation in education throughout the period are reported as being in a sustained education destination and not in employment, even if they were in employment alongside their study.

### **Pupils not staying in education or employment for at least two terms after key stage 4**

Students finishing key stage 4 study who did not stay in education or employment for at least two terms. They may have been enrolled on a course or in employment for part of this time, but not sustained this activity, or have been recorded by their local authority as 'NEET' or claimed out-of-work benefits in the year.

### **Destination unknown**

Students finishing key stage 4 who had no participation in education or employment found from October to March the following year and were not recorded by their local authority as NEET, nor recorded as receiving out-of-work benefits at any point in the year. Possible reasons for this could be that the young person was:

- not in education, employment or training
- living, working or studying overseas
- attending a Scottish, Welsh or Northern Irish school or college
- undertaking activity other than paid employment or study in the UK
- not successfully matched to a record in our data sources

### **Suppression of destination data**

The Code of Practice for Statistics requires us to take reasonable steps to ensure that our published or disseminated statistics protect confidentiality. Where appropriate we apply disclosure control to protect confidentiality.

## Feedback and further information

Questions, feedback and comments on destination measures can be sent to [destination.measures@education.gov.uk](mailto:destination.measures@education.gov.uk)

## Destination measures publications

Destination measures are published as a separate statistical publication and include additional data including destinations by pupil characteristics (gender, free school meals eligibility, special educational needs and ethnicity)

- [Destination measures](#)

A series of statistical working papers are also available providing information on the inclusion of employment and benefit data.

- [Improvements to destination measures](#)



Department  
for Education

© Crown copyright 2020

This publication (not including logos) is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

To view this licence:

visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3)

email [psi@nationalarchives.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gov.uk)

write to Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London, TW9 4DU

About this publication:

enquiries [www.education.gov.uk/contactus](http://www.education.gov.uk/contactus)

download [www.gov.uk/government/publications](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications)

Reference: DfE-00027-2020



Follow us on Twitter:  
[@educationgovuk](https://twitter.com/educationgovuk)



Like us on Facebook:  
[facebook.com/educationgovuk](https://facebook.com/educationgovuk)