

[Home](#) > [16 to 18 minimum standards](#)



Education & Skills
Funding Agency

Contents

- [1. New 16 to 18 minimum standards](#)
- [2. Overview of the 2017 16 to 18 minimum standards](#)
- [3. How the academic and applied general minimum standards will work](#)
- [4. How the tech levels minimum standard will work](#)

1. New 16 to 18 minimum standards

The [16 to 19 accountability headline measures: technical guide](#) sets out changes in the school and college accountability system describing how from 2017, 16 to 18 minimum standards will be based on progress where possible.

1.1 Coverage

The 16 to 18 minimum standards apply to all schools and colleges with 16 to 18 year-olds studying level 3 qualifications. This means, there is no technical certificate minimum standard in 2017. However, this will be reviewed for future years.

All state-funded mainstream providers of further education included in the 16 to 18 performance tables are in scope for these standards. That includes local authority maintained school sixth-forms, academy school sixth-forms, 16 to 19 academies, university technology colleges, studio schools, sixth-form colleges and general further education colleges. However, there are a couple of exceptions:

- Any provider with fewer than 11 students taking level 3 or applied general qualifications will be excluded from the corresponding minimum standard.
- Any provider with fewer than 11 students taking tech levels, or with fewer than 11 tech level study aims,

will be excluded from the tech levels minimum standard.

3. Closed, independent and special schools will also be excluded from minimum standards.

2. Overview of the 2017 16 to 18 minimum standards

The main features of the 16 to 18 minimum standards for 2017 are that they:

1. Use a progress-based measure for level 3 academic and applied general qualifications. Refer to [how the academic and applied general minimum standards will work](#) section in this document for more information.
2. Use a combined completion/attainment based measure for level 3 tech levels. Refer to [how the tech levels minimum standard will work](#) section in this document for more information.
3. Show 3 separate cohorts: level 3 academic, applied general and tech level qualifications.
4. We do not publish lists of providers below the minimum standards. However, providers' progress scores are published in performance tables in January for academic and applied general cohorts and in March for tech level cohorts.

3. How the academic and applied general minimum standards will work

A provider will be seen as underperforming if:

1. Its academic or applied general value added score is below the threshold set by the Department; and
2. Its value added score is statistically significantly below the national average, for example, both its upper and lower confidence intervals are below zero.

In the 2016 to 2017 academic year, the thresholds, such as value added scores set by the department for academic and applied general qualifications are -0.52 and -0.65 respectively.

For academic qualifications, we expect that over 90% of eligible providers will score between minus 0.54 and plus 0.30 and for applied general qualifications, over 90% of eligible providers are expected to score between minus 0.70 and plus 0.85.

4. How the tech levels minimum standard will work

In 2016, a provider was considered as underperforming if its completion and attainment score was below the threshold set by the Department. This has changed from 2017 with the introduction of a more robust tech level minimum standard. Underperforming providers will now additionally fall below a raw attainment threshold set by the Department.

In 2017, a provider will be seen as underperforming if:

1. Its completion and attainment score is below the threshold set by the Department; and
2. It does not meet the threshold set by the Department in terms of the percentage of students reaching a minimum level of attainment.

Further details of the 2017 standard will be published in March 2018.

4.1 Examples for academic and applied general minimum standards only

School or College	Cohort	Lower confidence interval	Value added score	Upper confidence interval	Underperformance
A	Academic	-0.76	-0.53	-0.30	Yes
	Applied general	-0.85	-0.80	-0.75	Yes
B	Academic	-2.13	-0.91	0.3 1	No
C	Applied general	-0.47	-0.38	-0.30	No
D	Academic	0.02	0.15	0.28	No
E	Academic	-0.04	0.11	0.26	No
	Applied general	-1.00	-0.76	-0.70	Yes

4.2 Proposed future increases to the 16 to 18 minimum standards

Approximately 5% of eligible institutions are expected to be below the 16 to 18 minimum standards in 2017. DfE intends to raise them so that an additional 1% of institutions come below the standards each year up to and including 2022, when the percentage will be 10% of eligible institutions below the academic, applied general and tech level standards. This is because the 16 to 18 minimum standards have historically been set at a low threshold and increasing them to 10% over time will bring them into line with the percentage of providers below the key stage 4 floor standards.

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