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Estimated apprenticeships additional achievements by region

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Applies to England

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Overview

This page provides the background methodology on the estimated impact on apprenticeships achievement volumes following the change in English and maths policy effective from 11 February 2025.

Apprentices who began their apprenticeship training when aged 19 or over will no longer be subject to the mandatory requirement to study towards and achieve

English and maths, usually to level 2. This applies to new starts and existing learners on programme.

More details on the change are:

- on page 10 of the [apprenticeships funding rules 2024 to 2025 summary of changes](#)
- in the [latest funding rules](#)

Analysis

Estimated additional apprenticeship achievements volumes due to change in requirement for learners to study English or maths alongside their apprenticeship

It is estimated that there will be 6,800 to 10,200 additional achievements per academic year based on apprenticeship leavers aged 19 and over in the 2023 to 2024 academic year who studied English or maths alongside their apprenticeship.

Table 1: Estimated additional apprenticeship achievements due to change in requirement for learners to study English or maths alongside their apprenticeship, split by learner region, per academic year

Region	Low estimate	High estimate
Total	6,800	10,200
East Midlands	630	940
East of England	800	1,200
London	830	1,240
North East	360	550
North West	900	1,350

South East	1,180	1,770
South West	750	1,120
West Midlands	800	1,190
Yorkshire and the Humber	510	770
Outside of England and unknown	40	50

Data Source

Apprenticeship achievement rates where the learner is studying English or maths alongside their apprenticeship

The modelling to estimate additional achievements is based on the latest available apprenticeship achievement rates for learners who studied English or Maths alongside their apprenticeship. Apprenticeship achievement rates are published as part of the [Apprenticeships](#) accredited official statistics.

The specific regional achievement rates for 2023 to 2024 underpinning this analysis are available in the [‘additional supporting files’ section of the apprenticeships official statistics on Explore Education Statistics \(EES\)](#). They are in the file ‘apprenticeship achievement rates – indicative rates for 19+ English and/or maths learners by region’.

The data source file shows indicative [qualification achievement rates](#) (QARs) data for apprentice learners aged 19 and over who studied English or maths alongside their apprenticeship. Rates are provided by region.

QARs use individualised learner record (ILR) data to calculate what proportion of apprentice learners successfully achieve their apprenticeship. The result is shown as a percentage figure.

In the 2023 to 2024 academic year, 65,700 out of 223,680 apprentice leavers aged

19 and over (29%) studied English or maths alongside their apprenticeship. Based on QARs, their indicative achievement rate was 48.2%. This is 17.3 percentage points lower than the rate for apprentices who did not study English or maths, which was 65.5%.

Methodology

Estimation approach

To estimate the number of additional apprenticeships achievements that might have occurred if the English and maths requirement had been removed in the 2023 to 2024 academic year, the following steps were taken.

Using academic year 2023 to 2024 qualification achievement rate (QAR) data, the number of apprenticeship leavers aged 19 and over in each region who studied English or maths alongside their apprenticeship were identified.

Two estimates were calculated for each region - a low and a high - to show a possible range of outcomes. This range accounts for the possibility that lower achievement rates among these learners might not be caused only by studying English or maths. Other contributing factors could also play a role. Therefore, removing the English or maths requirement might not fully eliminate the achievement gap.

The low estimate assumes that 60% of the gap in achievement rates would be closed. Nationally, this would increase the achievement rate of this group from 48.2% to 58.6%. This is equivalent to assuming that:

- 60% of the learner cohort would now achieve at the same rate as those who did not study English or maths
- 40% of the learner cohort would still achieve at the lower rate seen in those who did study English or maths

The high estimate assumes that 90% of the gap in achievement rates would be closed. Nationally, this would increase the achievement rate of this group from 48.2% to 63.8%. This is equivalent to assuming that:

- 90% of the learner cohort would now achieve at the same rate as those who did not study English or maths
- 10% of the learner cohort would still achieve at the lower rate seen in those who did study English or maths

These assumptions were applied to the identified group of learners to estimate how many might have achieved their apprenticeship if the policy change had been in place during the 2023 to 2024 academic year. The estimated achievement volumes were then compared to the actual figures to determine the potential increase.

Assumptions and limitations

The following assumptions apply to this analysis.

The estimate is indicative, developed in 2025 based on the latest achievement data available (2023 to 2024 academic year, published March 2025).

We have assumed, for each region, that there will be a similar volume of apprenticeship leavers that do not have English or maths prior attainment at level 1 and level 2 in future academic years as there were in the 2023 to 2024 academic year.

We have assumed that English or maths requirements are often a key reason for not achieving the apprenticeship, but this is not necessarily the only reason for the lower achievement rates for this group. This assumption is supported by:

- the [apprenticeship evaluation 2023 learner and non-completer surveys research report](#) – which says, on page 166: “A quarter of these [English or maths] non-completers (25%) reported that not enjoying or wanting to study these subjects had contributed to not completing their course”
- wider qualitative evidence, referenced in the [2024 Gatsby Foundation research report on apprenticeship completion](#), which points to the significant role that English and maths requirements play in withdrawals

Assuming that 25% of English or maths apprentices do achieve in future, this is equivalent to 75% of these learners achieving at the same rate as those who did not study English or maths.

As this remains uncertain, particularly given the often overlapping and associated

drivers of withdrawals, low (60%) and high (90%) scenarios were created for the range estimate.

The estimated volumes do not include any additional participation in the future that could increase achievement volumes from potential apprentices:

- who may not have chosen to do an apprenticeship in the past due to the former English and maths policy
- where employers may change their recruitment criteria due to the change in the English and maths policy

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