

Modern Apprenticeship Statistics

Financial Year 2023/24 [1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024]

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Contents

User Information	4
About our Statistics.....	4
Quality Assurance	4
Limitations	4
Introduction	5
Modern Apprenticeship Starts.....	7
Starts by age	7
Starts by level.....	8
Starts by occupational grouping	9
Starts to STEM frameworks.....	11
Starts by gender	12
Starts by disability.....	14
Starts by ethnicity	17
Starts by care experience	20
Starts by local authority	22
Starts by SIMD	23
Time in employment before starting MA.....	24
Modern Apprenticeship In Training	25
In Training by age.....	25

In Training by level	26
In Training by occupational grouping.....	27
Modern Apprentices and local employment.....	28
Modern Apprenticeship Achievements.....	29
Achievements by age	29
Achievements by level.....	30
Achievements by occupational grouping	32
Achievements by gender	33
Achievements by disability	33
Achievements by ethnicity	34
Achievements by care experience.....	34
Achievements by local authority	35
Achievements by SIMD	36
Achievements and intersectionality	37
Modern Apprenticeship Redundancies	38
Further Information	39
Note to Readers.....	39
Appendices	42
Appendix A – SCQF Framework	42
Appendix B – STEM Framework List.....	43
Appendix C – Disability Monitoring Question.....	44

User Information

About our Statistics

Modern Apprenticeships (MAs) provide employed individuals (either new or existing) with the opportunity to secure industry-recognised qualifications at a range of Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels while in employment.

This report provides a summary of financial year 2023/24 (1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024) statistics for MAs where there is a public funding contribution administered by Skills Development Scotland (SDS), on behalf of the Scottish Government. Further analysis can be found in the [Supplementary Tables](#) on the SDS website.

We welcome feedback on the report content and format. Please contact user_feedback@sds.co.uk.

Quality Assurance

Our statistical reports go through many levels of quality assurance prior to publication. These checks include but are not limited to:

- Data validation checks of the source data
- Quality assuring figures, tables, and charts
- Ensuring supporting commentary provides insight for the end user.

Limitations

SDS aims to minimise data limitations wherever possible. However, we recognise that there are some constraints to our data that are beyond our control. For example:

- We are reliant on apprentices accurately self-reporting equality characteristics
- We are reliant on Learning Providers supplying data promptly and accurately

For more detailed information about our statistics, please see our [User Guide](#).

Introduction

Economic conditions improved at the start of 2024, with stronger business activity, consumer sentiment, and ongoing resilience in the labour market which is reflected in improved forecasts for economic growth and lower inflation in 2024 compared to 2023¹.

During 2023/24, changes were made to the Modern Apprenticeship (MA) contracting methodology to accommodate delays in the approval of the broader public sector budget position by Scottish Government. This led to delays in awarding new start contracts and, subsequently, in-year reallocations. Despite this, and the fact that MA start volumes were 6% behind the previous year at the end of Q3, SDS supported the delivery of over 25,000 new Modern Apprenticeships, benefitting businesses and individuals across Scotland. As a result, year-end start volumes were only marginally lower than last year (-0.3%) and within target range (up to 25,500).

There continues to be a strong appetite for Modern Apprenticeships and SDS will continue to work closely with the Scottish Government throughout 2024/25 to deliver high quality MAs that grow the young workforce and support economic growth, in line with the National Strategy for Economic Transformation.

¹ [Scottish Government: Scottish economic bulletin April 2024](#)

Key Results²

25,365 Modern Apprenticeship starts in 2023/24

Figure 1: Modern Apprenticeship starts by age group, 2023/24

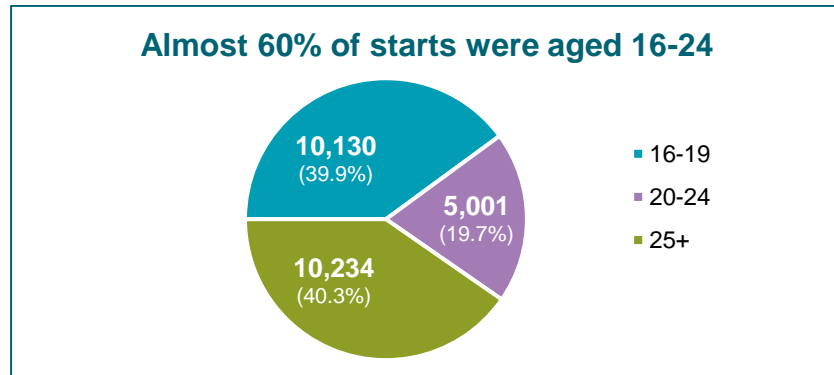


Figure 2: Modern Apprenticeship starts by gender, 2023/24

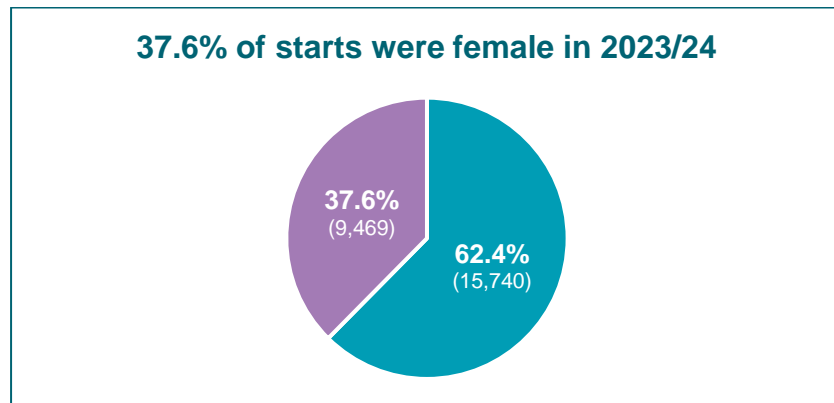


Figure 3: Modern Apprenticeship starts by level, 2023/24

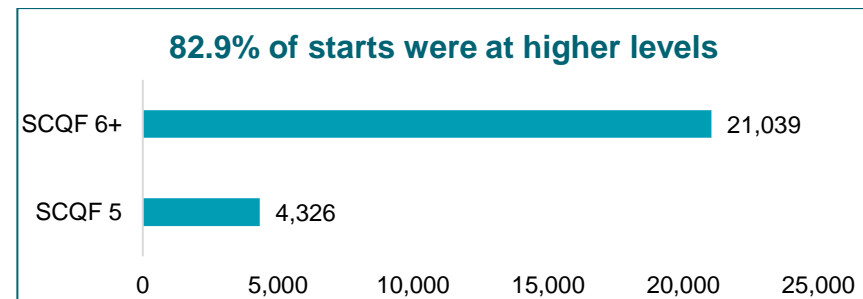
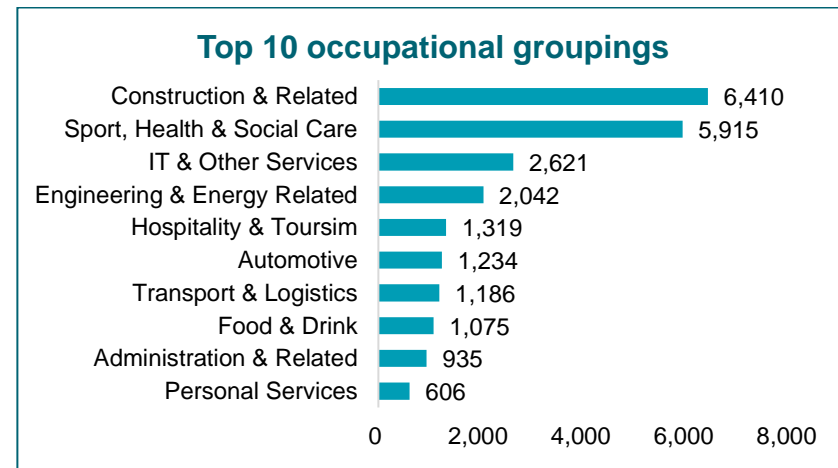


Figure 4: Modern Apprenticeship starts by occupational grouping, 2023/24



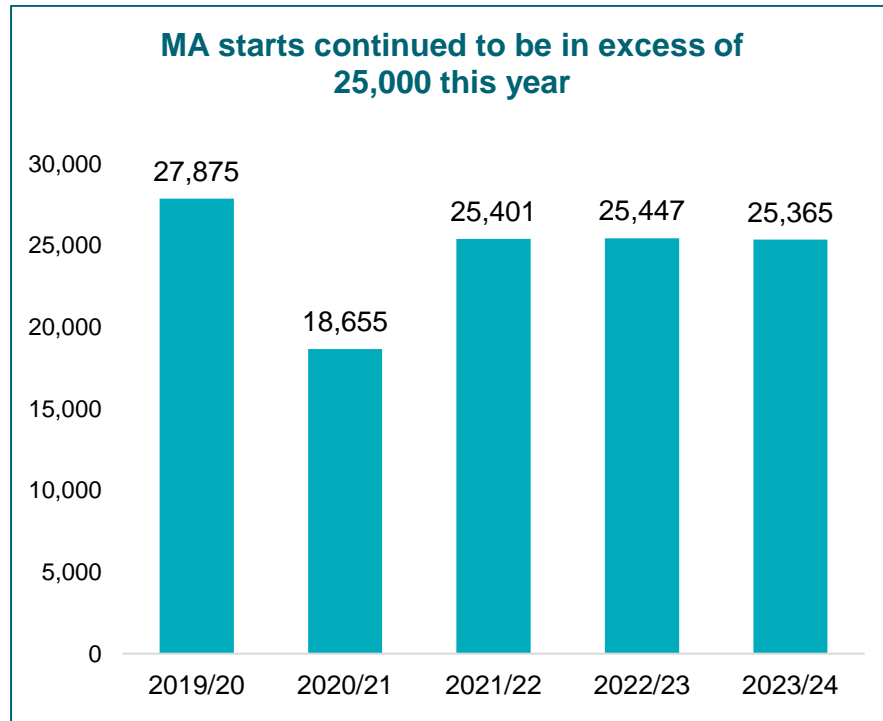
² In addition to the Modern Apprenticeship starts, the Scottish Funding Council has supplied an estimated start figure for Graduate Apprenticeships

of 1,250 FTE. Historic Graduate Apprenticeship start figures can be found [here](#).

Modern Apprenticeship Starts

There were 25,365 Modern Apprenticeship starts in 2023/24, a drop of 0.3% (-82) relative to last year.

Figure 5: Number of Modern Apprenticeship starts, 2019/20 to 2023/24



Starts by age

Figure 6: Number of Modern Apprenticeship starts by age group, 2023/24

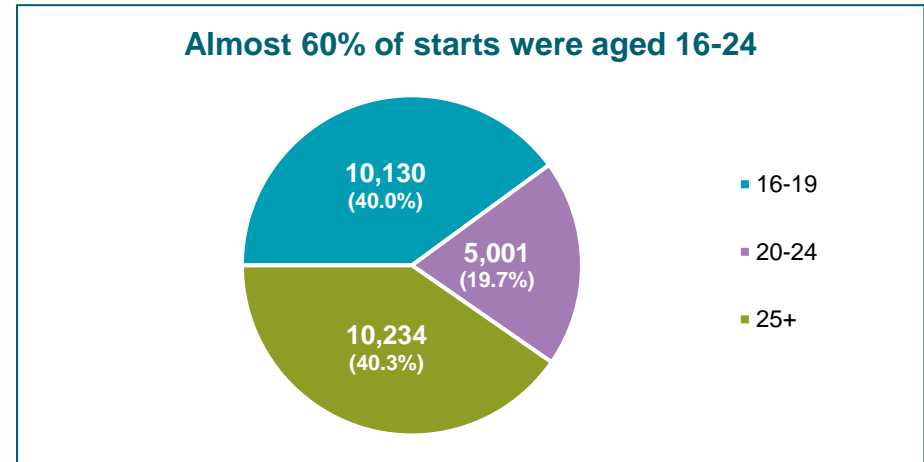


Figure 6 shows the number of starts by age group in 2023/24. In line with policy priority, the majority of MA starts were aged 16-24 (59.7% or 15,131) and 40.3% were aged 25+. The proportion of 16-24 year old starts was 0.7 pp higher than last year mainly driven by an increase in starts to the 16-19 age group, which may be an indication that young people have a positive view of apprenticeships on leaving education.

Figure 7: Modern Apprenticeship starts by age group, 2017/18 to 2023/24

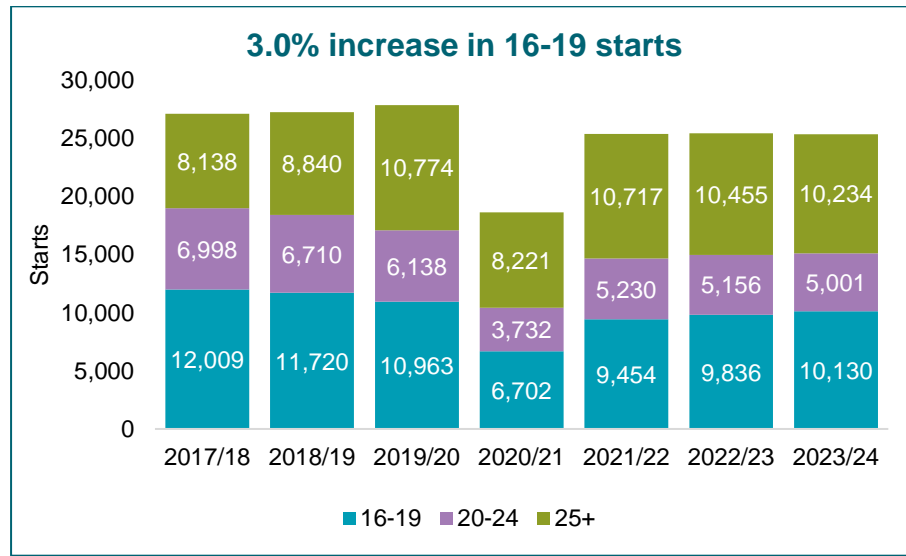
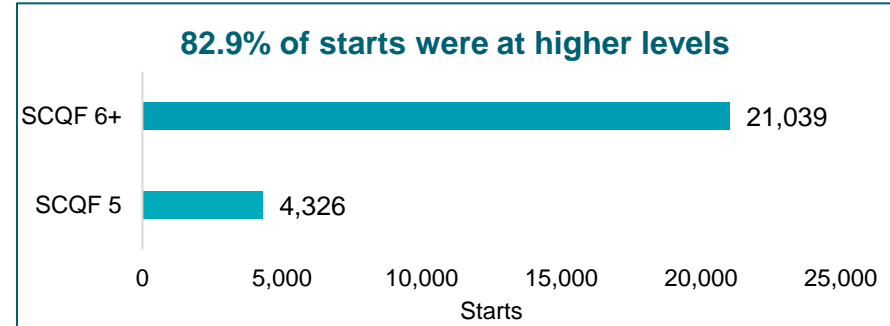


Figure 7 shows the number of starts by age group over the past seven years. In 2023/24 there was an increase in starts for those aged 16-19 (+3.0%) and a decrease in starts for those aged 20-24 (-3.0%), and 25+ (-2.1%).³

³ Funding for Modern Apprentices aged 25+ is only available in selected occupational frameworks in line with policy priorities.

Starts by level

Figure 8: Number of Modern Apprenticeship starts by SCQF level, 2023/24



In 2023/24, 82.9% of starts were at SCQF level 6 or above, 2.0 pp higher than last year. This is in line with the Scottish Government’s continued policy focus on higher level apprenticeships.

Table 1: Modern Apprenticeship starts by SCQF level, 2019/20 to 2023/24

SCQF	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Level 6+	74.9%	81.4%	79.3%	80.9%	82.9%
Level 5	25.1%	18.6%	20.7%	19.1%	17.1%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Figure 9: Modern Apprenticeship starts by SCQF level, 2019/20 to 2023/24

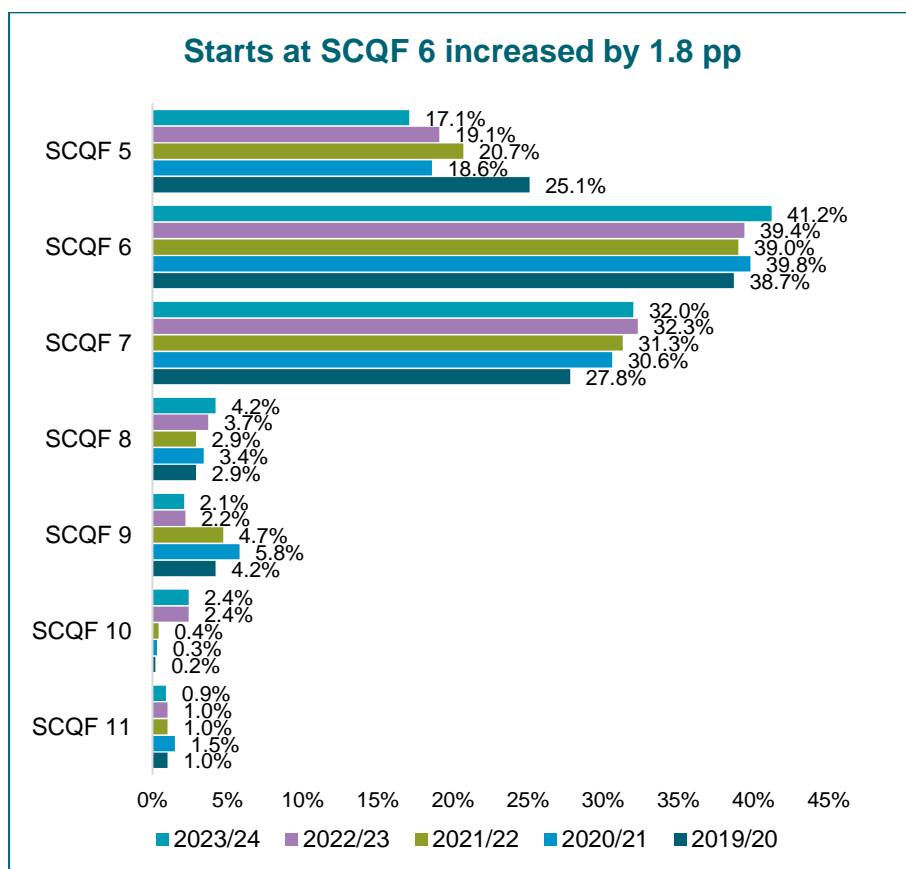


Figure 9 shows that starts to SCQF level 6 increased by 1.8 pp (+406 starts to 10,444) relative to last year. There were increases in level 6 starts across Engineering & Energy Related, Personal Services, and Food & Drink frameworks.

Starts by occupational grouping

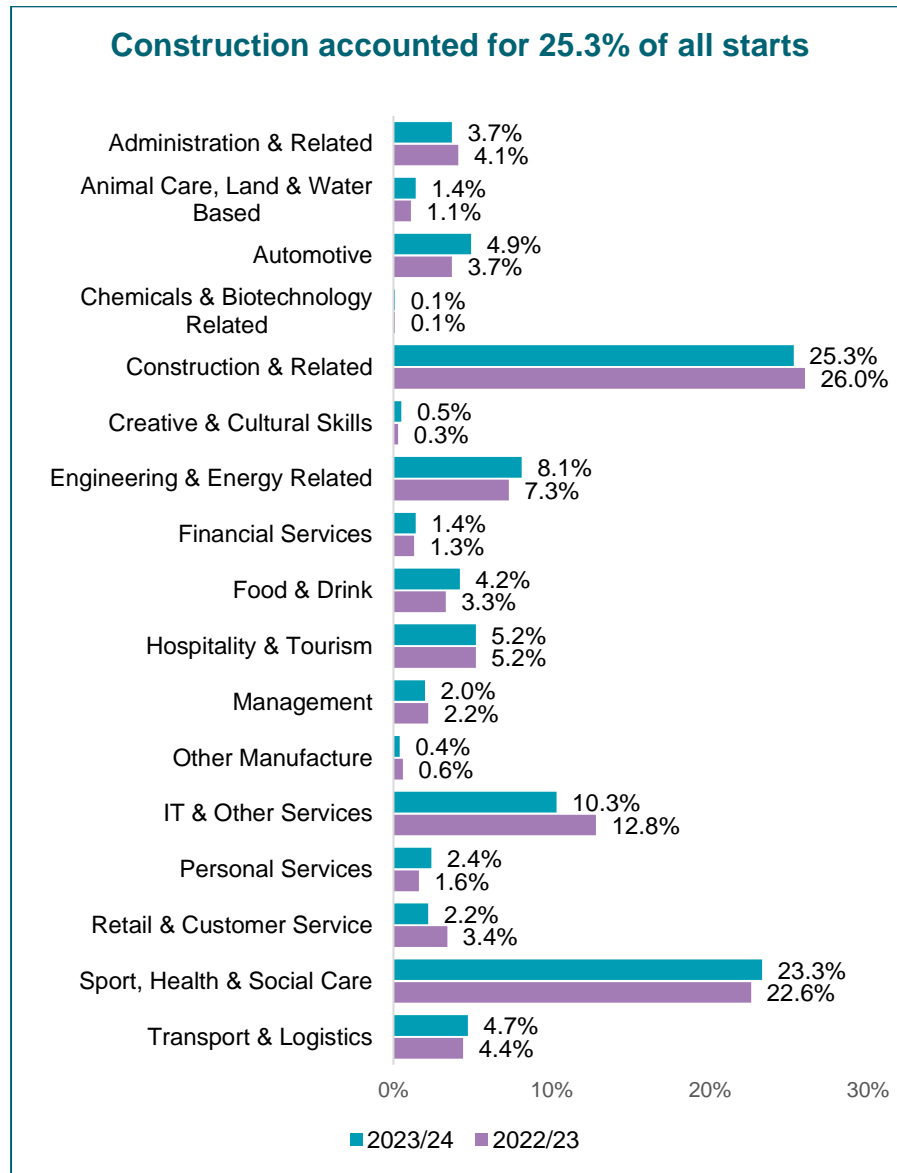
Occupational groupings are collections of individual MA frameworks relating to defined occupations. Each grouping has a different number of frameworks associated with it. The three occupational groupings with the largest volume of starts were:

1. **Construction & Related (25.3%)**
2. **Sport, Health & Social Care (23.3%)**
3. **IT & Other Services (10.3%)**

The top three tends to remain static, likely to be driven by the relatively high number of frameworks within these groupings.

Although the Construction & Related occupational grouping continued to have the highest proportion of starts and the largest number of starts (6,410), actual starts to this grouping decreased by 3.2% (-213) relative to last year.

Figure 10: Modern Apprenticeship starts by occupational grouping, 2022/23 to 2023/24



The Sport, Health, and Social Care grouping continued to have the second highest proportion of starts at 23.3%, 0.7 pp higher than last year. Starts to this grouping also increased by 2.9% (+166) to 5,915 relative to last year.

IT & Other Services had the third highest proportion of starts at 10.3% (2,621), despite a decrease in starts compared to last year (-19.6% or -637 starts). This decline is mainly due to the decrease in starts to Policing (-295) and Firefighting (-173).

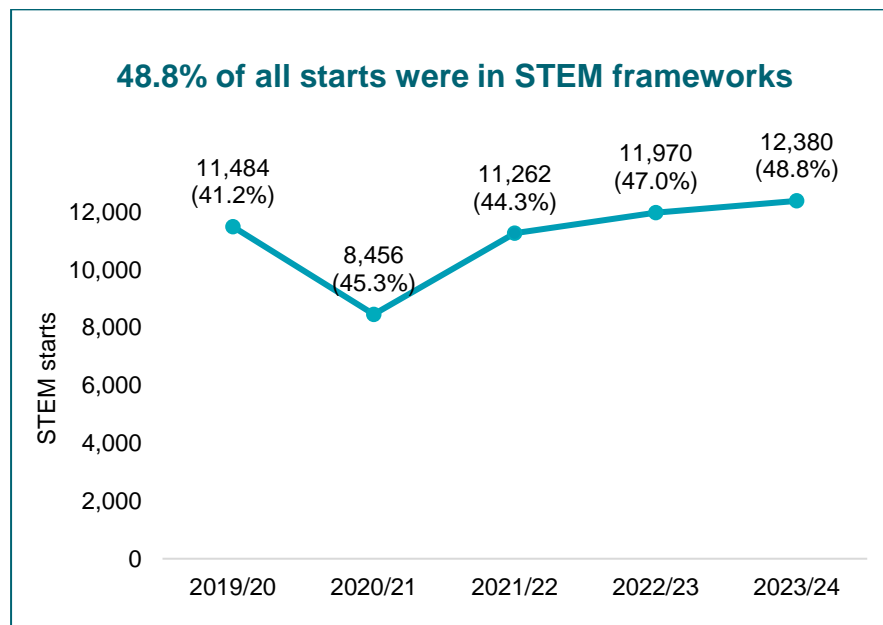
Other occupational groupings saw an increase in starts: Personal Services +201 starts (+49.6%), Automotive +304 starts (+32.7%), and Food & Drink +244 starts (+29.4%). The Retail and Customer Service grouping saw a notable decline in starts this year with -329 starts (-37.6%).

Starts to STEM frameworks

STEM frameworks are those related to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Maths. An agreed list of STEM frameworks is produced each year and included in Appendix B. This list is subject to change as frameworks are revised.

STEM frameworks accounted for 48.8% (12,380) of Modern Apprenticeship starts in 2023/24. This is an increase of 1.8 pp from 47.0% in 2022/23 and 7.6 pp higher than 2019/20.

Figure 11: Modern Apprenticeship starts in STEM frameworks, 2019/20 to 2023/24



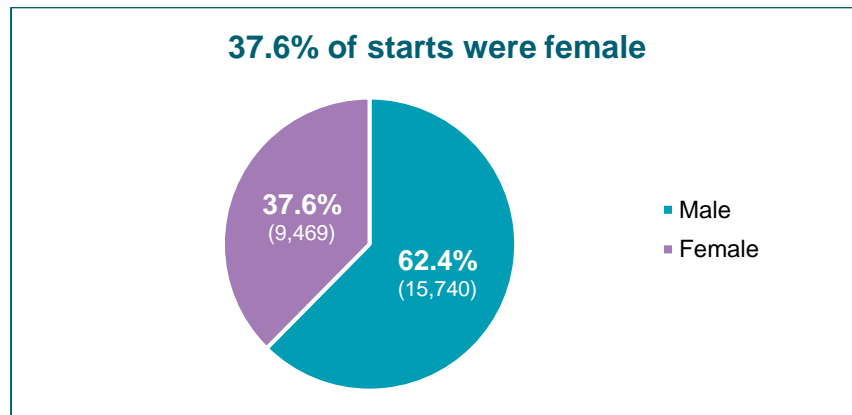
47.8% of all STEM starts were aged 16-19 (66.3% were aged 16-24) and 85.9% of STEM starts were at SCQF level 6 or higher (3.4 pp higher than last year). This is also higher than the proportion of starts at higher levels for all frameworks (82.9%). Female representation in STEM frameworks was 13.3% (1,648 starts) this year, 1.4 pp higher than last year (11.9%).

An [Integrated Equality Impact Assessment of Foundation Apprenticeships in STEM frameworks](#) was published in April 2024 with a particular focus on gender analysis. This includes detail of what we have already done and what we are planning to do to improve gender balance across STEM apprenticeship frameworks.

Starts by gender

Female starts accounted for **37.6%**⁴ of all starts this year, 0.5 pp lower than last year.⁵ The widening of the gender gap may be partly explained by the increase in starts to male-dominated occupational groupings like Automotive and Engineering. Female representation in these frameworks was 4.5% and 6.9%, respectively. Automotive saw a 32.7% increase in starts (+304), 4.5% (13) of which were female.

Figure 12: Gender balance of Modern Apprenticeship starts, 2023/24



⁴ Note: The gender balance across MA starts where Construction & Related frameworks are excluded from calculations is 49.2% female and 50.8% male.

Figure 13: Modern Apprenticeship starts by gender, 2017/18 to 2023/24

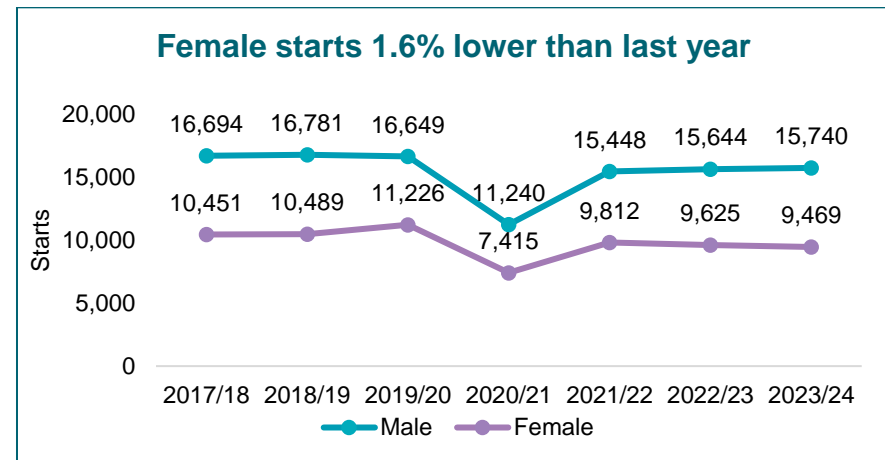


Figure 13 shows the number of female and male starts over the past seven years. In 2023/24, there were 9,469 female starts, 156 fewer (-1.6%) than 2022/23 and 15,740 male starts, 96 more (+0.6%) than in 2022/23. Male starts have been gradually returning to pre-pandemic levels whilst female starts have gradually declined since 2021/22. At the end of 2023/24 male starts were 95% of 2019/20 volumes, compared to 84% for female starts. This is partly driven by

⁵ Male + female starts

policy priority for sectors such as Construction and Engineering, which tend to be male dominated.

Table 2: Proportion of males and females entering Modern Apprenticeships, higher education, college, and employment in Scotland⁶

	MA	HEI	College	Other
Gender	starts	students	students	employment
Female	37.6%	57.2%	50.7%	38.9%
Male	62.4%	42.8%	49.3%	61.1%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 2 compares the gender balance across Modern Apprenticeships, higher education, further education, and employment. The data shows that more males undertake Modern Apprenticeships or go into employment, whereas higher and further education attracts more females.

⁶ Modern Apprenticeship data refers to 2023/24, [HESA HE data](#) refers to 2021/22, [SFC College data](#) refers to 2022/23, and employment (full-time, part-time, or self-employed) data refers to 2023 ([APM](#))

Figure 14: Modern Apprenticeship starts by gender and level, 2023/24

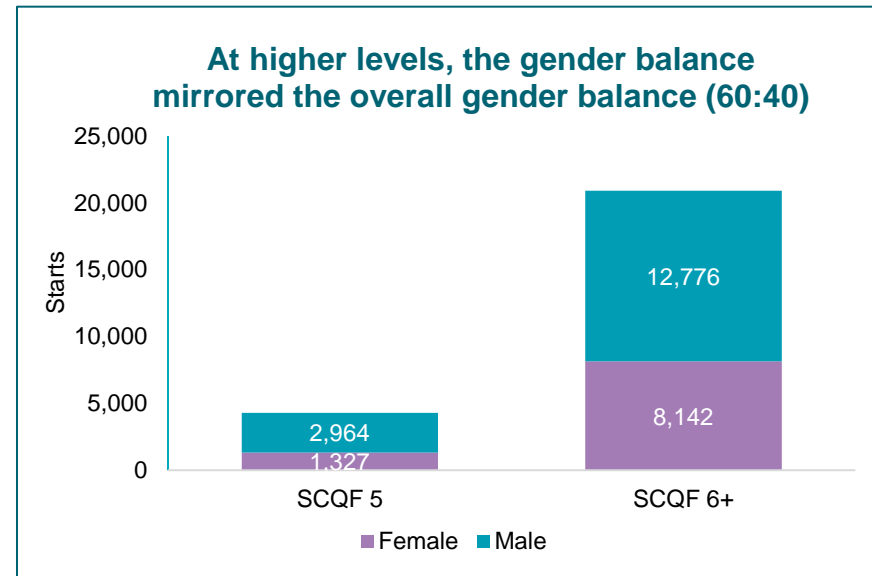


Figure 14 shows the gender balance (male + female starts) in Modern Apprenticeships by level. At higher levels, the gender balance mirrored that of all starts i.e., a 60:40 split: 61.1% male and 38.9% female. For apprenticeships at lower levels the gender balance is more of a 70:30 split with 69.1% of males and 30.9% of females. This follows the trend of previous years.

In 2023/24, 86.0% of female MAs were working towards frameworks at higher SCQF levels compared to 81.2% of male MAs (4.8 pp more females). Last year, 84.8% of females and 78.6% of males started at a higher level and in 2019/20 76.9% of females and 73.5% of males. This difference is partly due to the large number of male starts to Construction & Related frameworks at SCQF level 5.

Starts by disability

All Modern Apprenticeship starts are asked to complete an equality monitoring form prior to the start of their apprenticeship (Appendix C).

In 2023/24, **17.0%** of starts identified as disabled – the highest proportion ever reported – and 1.7 pp higher than last year. The number of starts self-identifying an impairment, health condition, or learning difficulty (I/HC/LD) increased from 3,828 to 4,239 (+10.7%) compared to last year. The proportion of disabled starts has surpassed its pre-pandemic level of 15.4%.

Figure 15: Number of Modern Apprenticeship starts self-identifying an I/HC/LD, 2017/18 to 2023/24

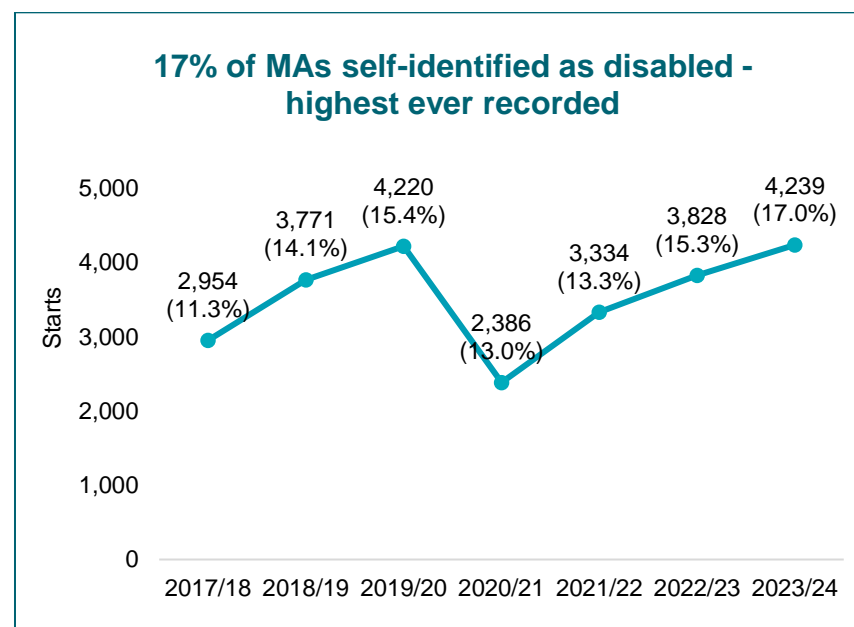
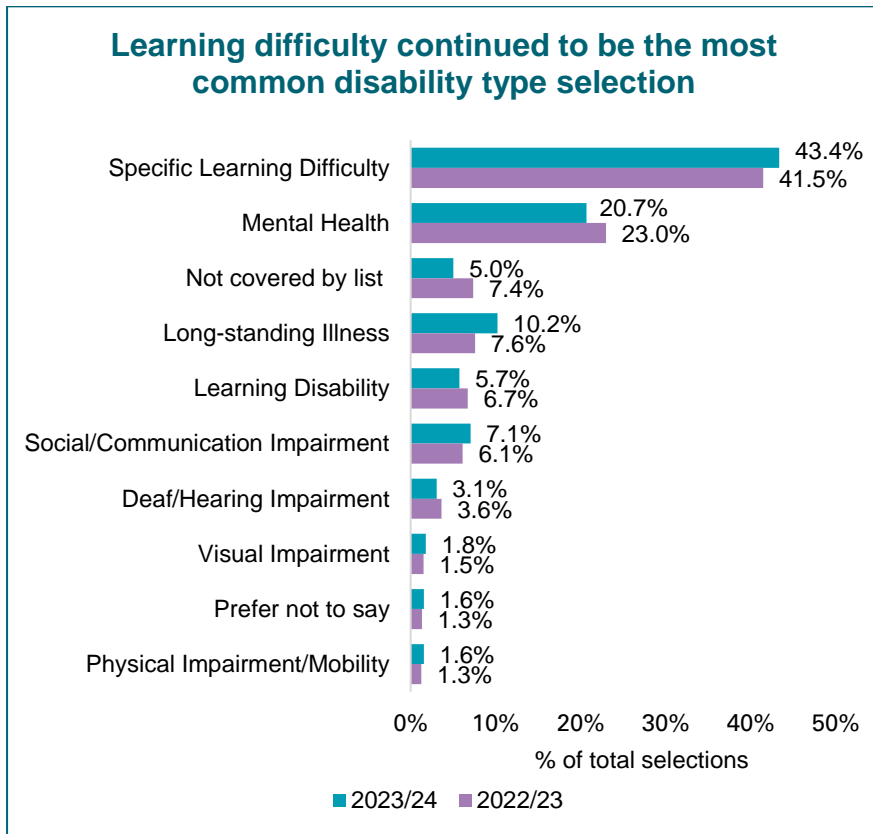


Figure 16: Modern Apprenticeship starts by disability type selection, 2022/23 to 2023/24



As shown in Figure 16, the most common disability types selected this year were Specific Learning Difficulty (43.4%) and Mental Health (20.7%).⁷ Of all starts who identified an

⁷ Individuals can choose more than one disability type therefore the figures reflect the number of selections not the number of individuals.

I/HC/LD, 16.1% of them selected more than one disability (+0.7 pp relative to last year). Modern Apprenticeship starts by disability type selection can be found in table 4.4 of the [Supplementary Tables](#).

Figure 17: Modern Apprenticeship starts by disability and age group, 2019/20 to 2023/24

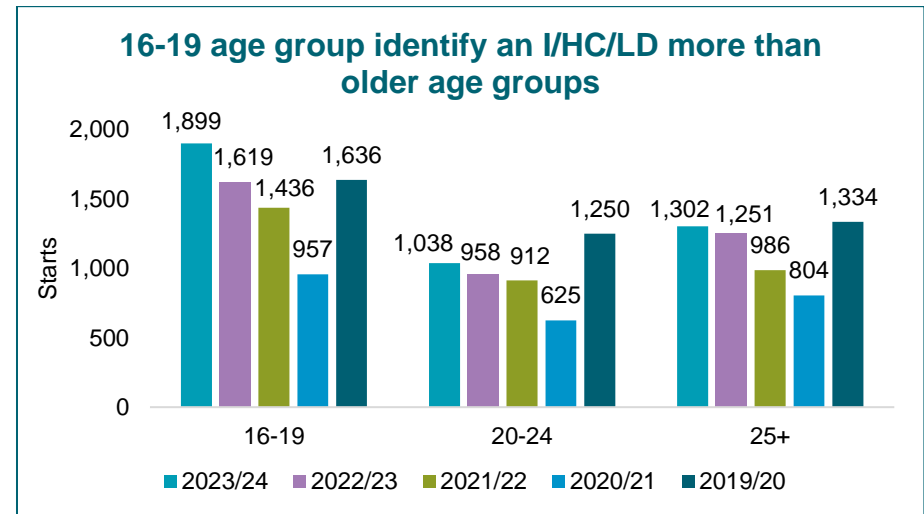
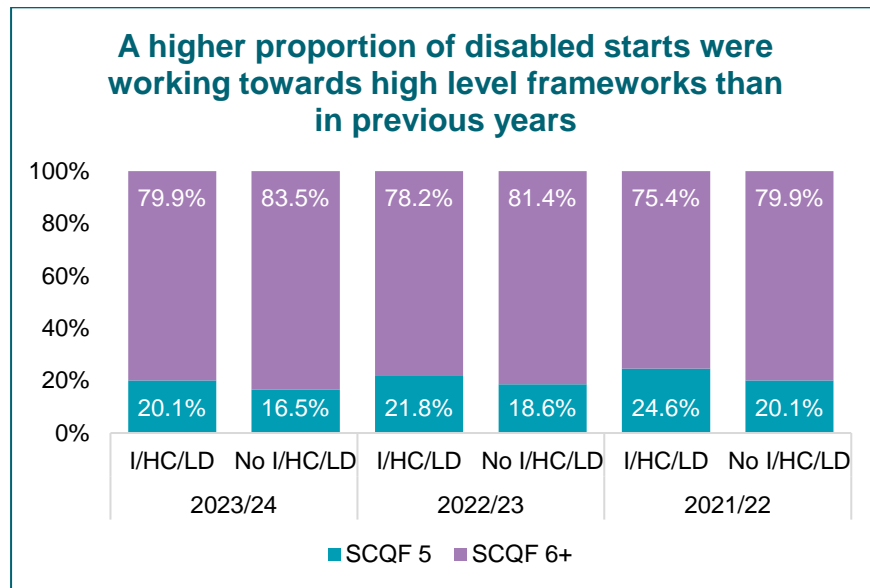


Figure 17 shows disabled MA starts by age group. In 2023/24, 69.3% of starts who self-identified an I/HC/LD were aged 16-24, 2.0 pp higher than last year. The remaining 30.7% were aged 25 or over, -2.0 pp on last year.

Figure 18: Modern Apprenticeship starts by level and disability, 2021/22 to 2023/24



In 2023/24, a lower proportion of starts who self-identified as disabled started their apprenticeship at higher levels, compared to those who had no disability (79.9% and 83.5%, respectively).

⁸ Annual Population Survey: Jan 2023-Dec 2023

⁹ [Scottish Health Survey 2022](#)

Contextual information – Disability

In 2023/24, 17.0% of Modern Apprenticeship starts self-identified an impairment, health condition, or learning difficulty. This is below the proportion of those aged 16-64 in Scotland who are Equality Act (EA) core or work-limiting disabled (28.3%).⁸ The latest Scottish Health Survey reported that 28% of those aged 16-24 had a limiting long-term condition (27% for those aged 25-34), an increase from 18% in 2021.⁹

The latest [Annual Participation Measure for 16-19 year olds in Scotland](#) found that 16-19 year olds with a disability were participating in education, training or employment at a lower rate than those who were not disabled, 89.9% and 94.5%, respectively.¹⁰

¹⁰ Definitions of disability vary by organisation and are therefore not fully comparable. The Scottish Health Survey disability definition is available [here](#).

Starts by ethnicity

In 2023/24, the proportion of starts self-identifying as Mixed or Multiple; Asian; African; Caribbean or black; and Other ethnic group was **4.5%**, the highest ever reported and 1.2 pp higher than last year. The number of starts self-identifying as an ethnic minority increased from 834 to 1,120 (+34.3%) compared to last year. The number of starts self-identifying as white decreased by 1.2% (-301 starts). The proportion of ethnic minority starts is now 2.1 pp higher than it was pre-pandemic (2.4%).

Figure 19: Modern Apprenticeship starts who self-identify as an ethnic minority, 2017/18 to 2023/24

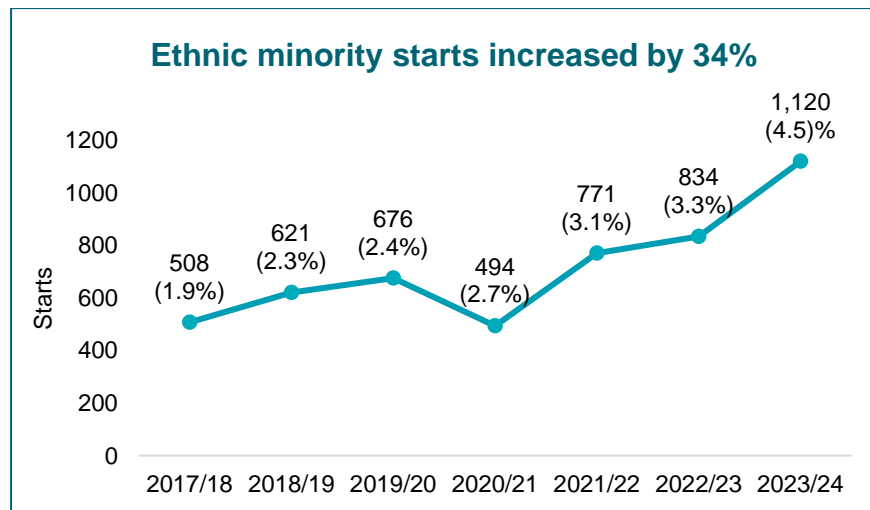
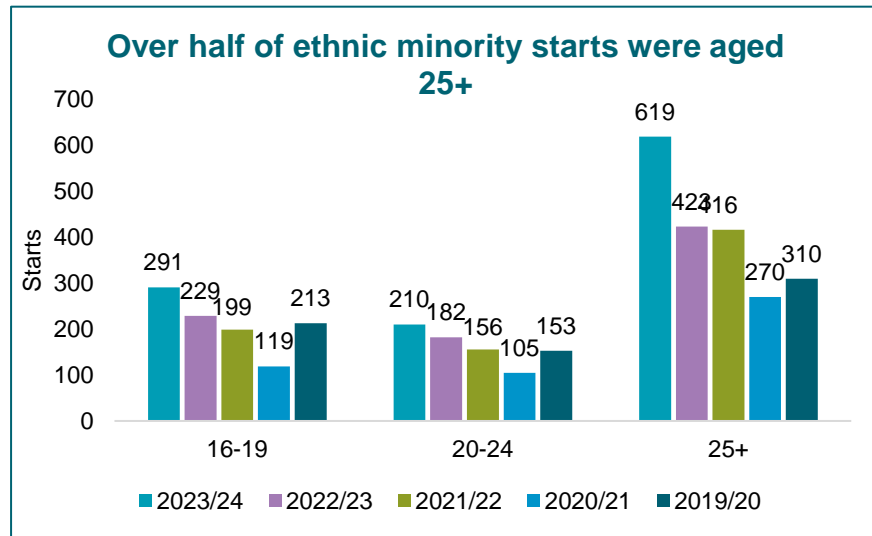


Table 3: Modern Apprenticeship starts by ethnic group, 2023/24

Ethnic Group	Starts	% of known
White	24,046	95.6%
Asian	454	1.8%
African	259	1.0%
Mixed ethnic background	198	0.8%
Other ethnic background	133	0.5%
Caribbean or black	76	0.3%
Total Known	25,166	100.0%
Unknown	199	-
Mixed or multiple; Asian; African; Caribbean or black; and Other ethnic group	1,120	4.5%
Total	25,365	100.0%

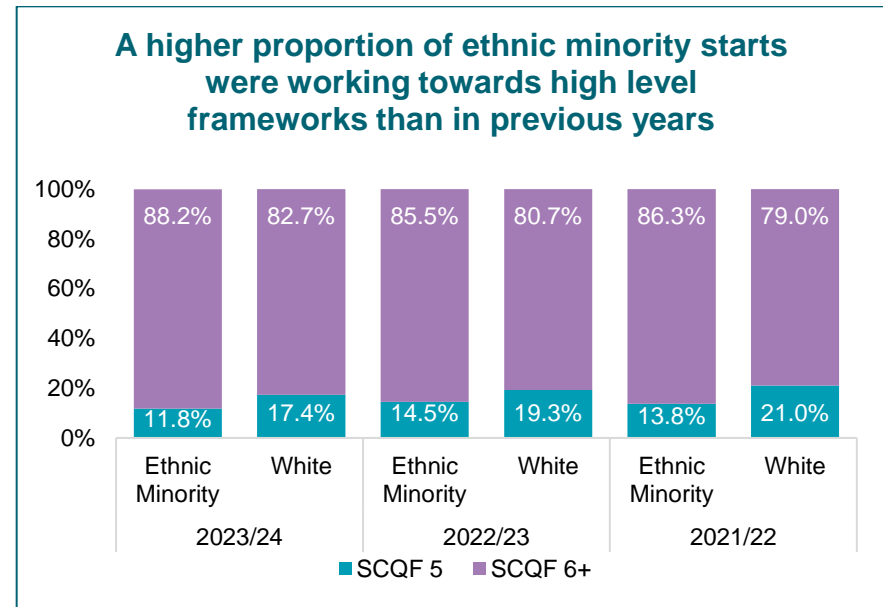
Table 3 details Modern Apprenticeship starts by ethnic group for 2023/24.

Figure 20: Modern Apprenticeship starts by ethnicity and age group, 2019/20 to 2023/24



This year we continue to see the increasing trend in the proportion of ethnic minority apprentices starting their apprenticeships later, compared to their white counterparts. In 2023/24, 55.3% of ethnic minority starts were aged 25+ compared to 39.7% of their white counterparts, +4.5 pp and -0.9 pp relative to last year, respectively.

Figure 21: Modern Apprenticeship starts by level and ethnicity, 2021/22 to 2023/24



In 2023/24, a higher proportion of ethnic minority starts were at higher levels, compared to their white counterparts (88.2% and 82.7%, respectively).

Contextual information – Ethnicity

In 2023/24, 4.5% of Modern Apprenticeship starts identified as an ethnic minority. Census data from 2011 reported that 4.0% of the Scottish population identified as an ethnic minority.¹¹ Furthermore, according to the [Scottish Surveys Core Questions \(2019\)](#), 7.8% of 16-24 year olds in Scotland were from ‘Asian’ or ‘all other ethnic groups’ backgrounds.¹²

The latest [Annual Participation Measure for 16-19 year olds in Scotland](#) reported that there was a higher rate of 16-19 year olds from ethnic minority groups who participated in higher education, relative to others on leaving school (27.7% and 19.5%, respectively). This, in part, explains their lower levels of representation in Modern Apprenticeships. There are actions within the [Equality and Diversity Mainstreaming Report](#), including an employer-led Commission on how to improve the participation of minority ethnic people in apprenticeships, that aim to address the real and perceived barriers to participation that we know exist for some ethnic minority groups.

¹¹ [Scotland's Census \(2011\)](#)

¹² ‘Asian’ includes Asian, Asian Scottish, Asian British. ‘All other ethnic groups’ includes ‘Mixed or multiple Ethnic Group’; ‘African’; ‘Caribbean or black’ and ‘Other Ethnic Group’.

Figure 22: Modern Apprenticeship starts by ethnicity, 2023/24 and the Scottish population by ethnicity, 2011

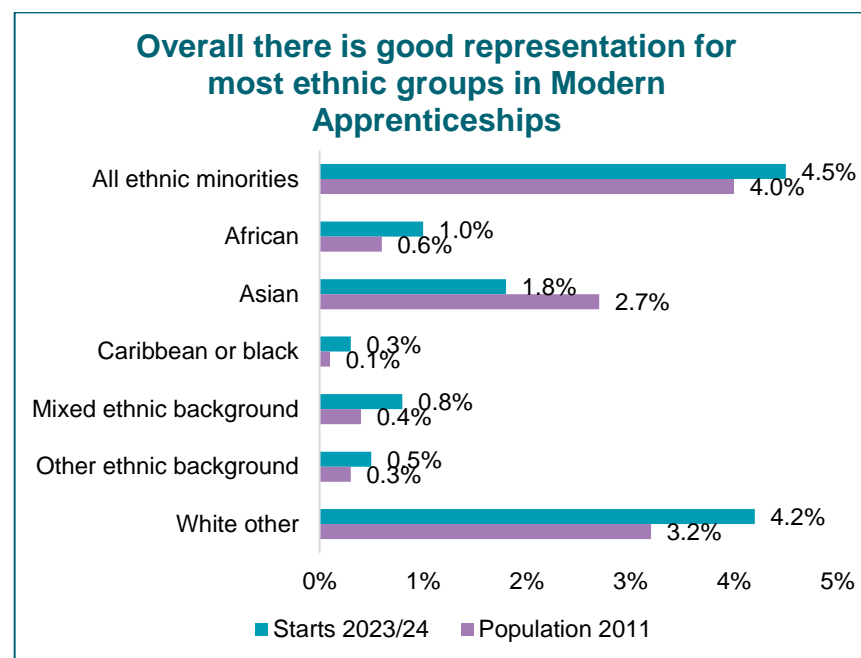


Figure 22 compares the representation of ethnicity in Modern Apprenticeship starts with that of the Scottish population. In 2023/24, the ethnicity rate when including “white other” was 8.7% (2,178 starts).¹³ The equivalent measure using census data was 7.1%.

¹³ “White other” refers to anyone who self-declared their ethnicity as Polish, Gypsy Traveller, or Other white background.

Starts by care experience

In 2023/24, the proportion of MAs self-identifying as care experienced was **2.3%**, 0.2 pp higher than last year and the highest it has been since we started reporting on this equality group. The number of care experienced starts increased from 535 to 583 (+0.2%) compared to 2022/23. At the end of 2023/24, the proportion of care experienced starts was 0.6 pp higher than it was in 2019/20, pre-pandemic (1.7%).

Figure 23: Modern Apprenticeship starts who self-identified as care experienced, 2017/18 to 2023/24

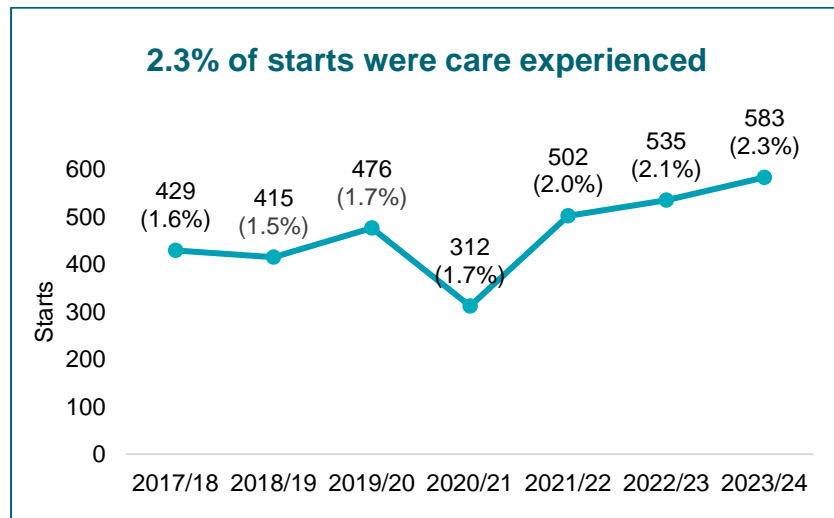


Figure 24: Number of care experienced starts by age group, 2019/20 to 2023/24

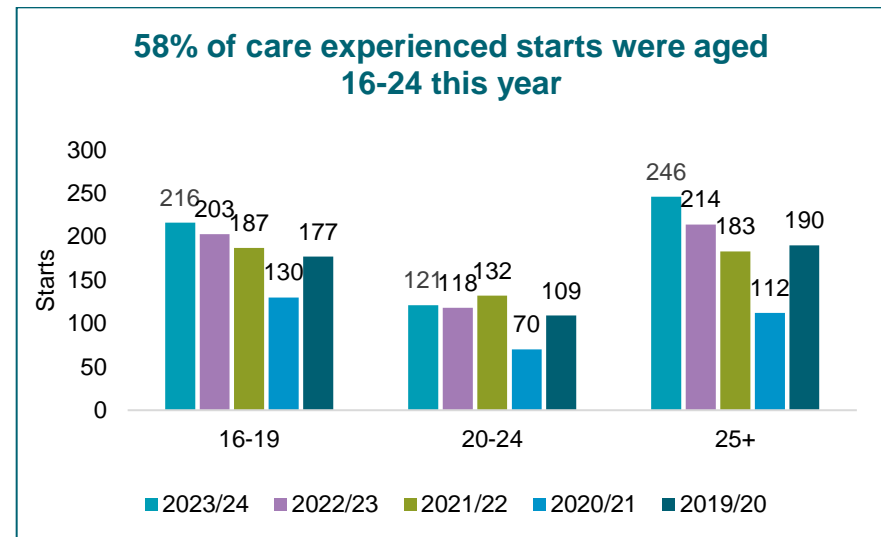


Figure 24 shows that in 2023/24, 37.0% of care experienced starts were aged 16-19, 20.8% were aged 20-24, and 42.2% were over 25.

The proportion of MAs who identified as care experienced was highest in the 20-24 and 25+ age groups (2.4%). 2.1% of starts in the 16-19 age group identified as care experienced.

Figure 25: Modern Apprenticeship starts by care experience and level, 2021/22 to 2023/24

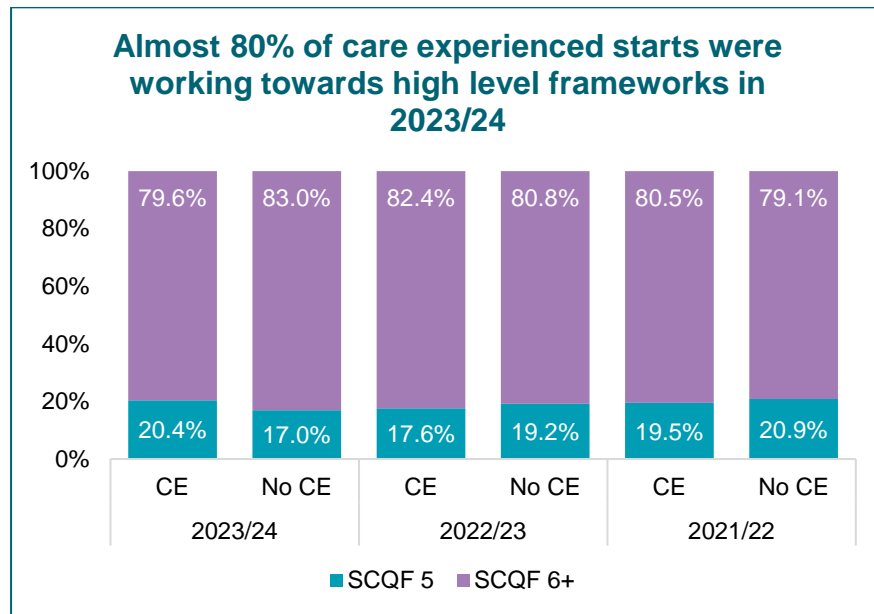


Figure 25 shows care experienced starts by SCQF level. In 2023/24, 79.6% of starts who self-identified as care experienced were working towards frameworks at higher levels, 2.8 pp lower than last year and 3.4 pp lower than those who were not care experienced.

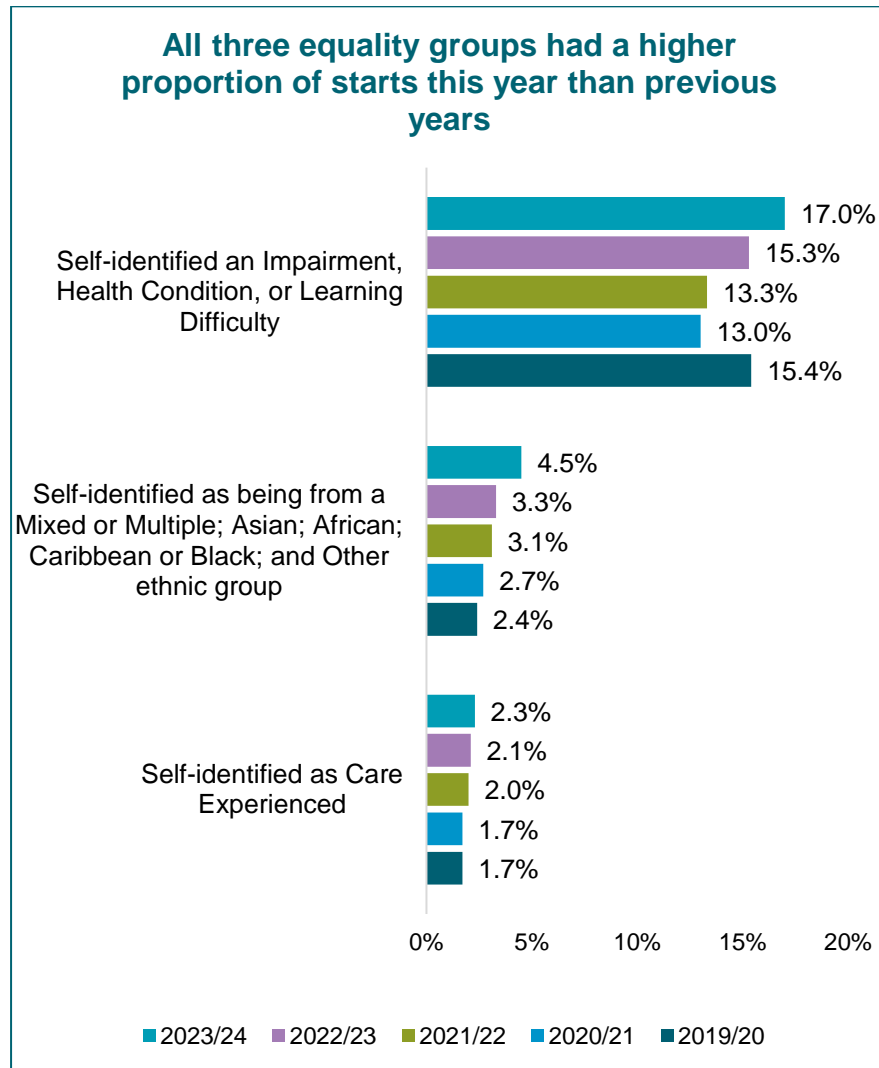
Our Equality and Diversity Mainstreaming Report commits to improving the accessibility and achievement of Modern Apprenticeships for care experienced young people, as does our [Corporate Parenting Plan](#) which specifically sets out our commitment to supporting care experienced individuals across SDS services.

Contextual information – Care Experience

There is no published figure for the proportion of the Scottish population who are care experienced. Data on looked after children and Scottish population data exists separately, although an accurate comparator population figure cannot be derived from these. Published data suggests 2.3% of the 16-25 year old population in Scotland are currently looked after or a care leaver, although this is only an approximation.¹⁴

¹⁴ This figure is derived from [Children's Social Work Statistics 2020-21](#)

Figure 26: Modern Apprenticeship starts equality rate summary, 2019/20 to 2023/24



Starts by local authority

Tables 1.4 to 1.7 within the [Supplementary Tables](#) detail the number of Modern Apprenticeship starts by local authority. Modern Apprenticeships are not allocated on a local authority basis but, instead, respond to employer demand as well as policy priorities.

Starts by SIMD

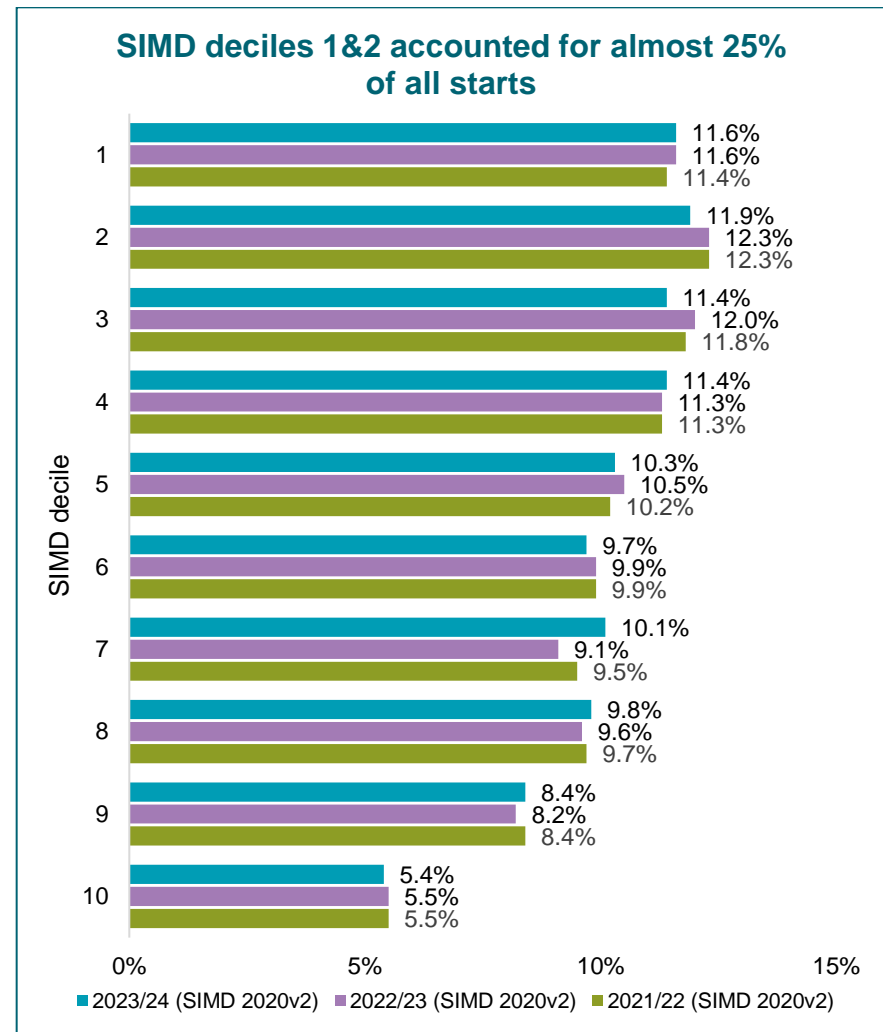
Analysis of Modern Apprenticeship starts by Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD, 2020v2) involved the matching of MA postcodes (based on home address) to SIMD data.

The proportion of Modern Apprenticeship starts who resided in the 10% most deprived areas (decile 1) continued to be higher than those who resided in the 10% least deprived areas (decile 10). Since 2017/18, the proportion of starts that lived in the 20% most deprived areas has decreased from 24.7% to 23.5%, whilst the proportion in the 20% least deprived areas has increased slightly from 13.3% to 13.8%.¹⁵

In 2023/24, 79.0% of starts from the most deprived areas (decile 1) were at higher levels, 1.5 pp higher than last year (77.5%). Comparatively, 87.1% of starts from the least deprived areas (decile 10) started their MA at higher levels, 0.4 pp lower than last year (87.5%).

¹⁵ It is important to note that [SIMD](#) identifies deprived areas, not individuals. Not all of those who live in a deprived area will be deprived and on balance there could be deprived people living in the least deprived

Figure 27: Modern Apprenticeship starts by SIMD decile, 2021/22 to 2023/24



areas. Additionally, 'deprived' does not just mean 'poor' or 'low income'. It can also mean people have fewer resources and opportunities, for example in health and education.

Contextual information – SIMD

The latest [Annual Participation Measure for 16-19 year olds in Scotland](#) shows that those who lived in more deprived areas were less likely to be reported as participating (in education, employment, or training) than those from less deprived areas. In the 20% most deprived areas, 89.6% of 16-19 year olds were participating compared to 97.9% in the 20% least deprived areas, although this gap has been narrowing since 2018.

The Scottish Funding Council reported that in 2022/23, a greater proportion of further education students were from the 20% most deprived areas (25.5%) than the 20% least deprived areas (14.5%).¹⁶ This reflects the pattern of Modern Apprenticeship starts.

The latest higher education (HE) data from [HESA](#) shows that in 2021/22, 14.7% of Scottish domiciled full-time first-degree entrants to Scottish Higher Education Institutions were from the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland (quintile 1), -2.0 pp from 2020/21.

¹⁶ Scottish Funding Council: College FE enrolments (2022/23)

Time in employment before starting MA

Before commencing their Modern Apprenticeship, individuals are asked about the length of time they had worked with their current employer. Table 4 shows the number of starts in 2023/24 and the length of time they had been with their current employer prior to commencing their MA.

44.4% of MAs began their training within six months of being with their current employer (-3.8 pp on 2022/23). 41.3% started their training after being with their current employer for 13 months or more (+4.9 pp) which reflects the increase in uptake of higher-level apprenticeships and could be an indication of employee progression.

Table 4: Length of time with current employer before starting a Modern Apprenticeship, 2022/23 to 2023/24

Time in employment	2022/23	% of known	2023/24	% of known
0-6 months	11,719	48.2%	10,813	44.4%
7-9 months	1,696	7.0%	1,609	6.6%
10-12 months	2,033	8.4%	1,869	7.7%
13 months+	8,852	36.4%	10,053	41.3%
Total known	24,300	-	24,344	-
Unknown	1,147	-	1,021	-

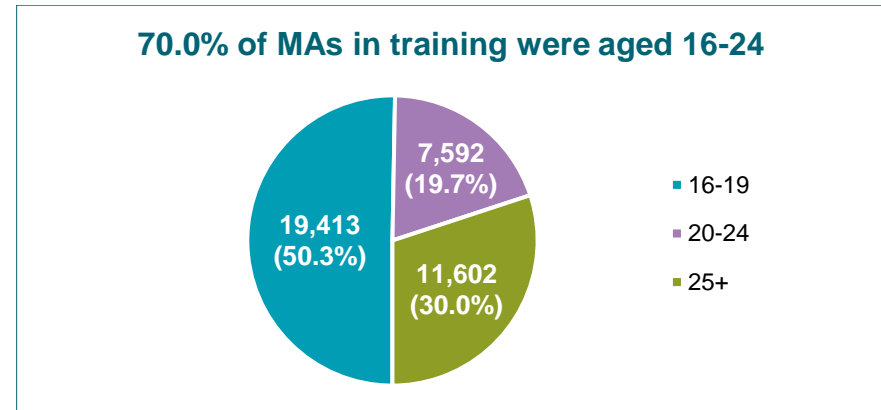
Modern Apprenticeship In Training

The number of Modern Apprentices in training is a snapshot at a point in time – in this case, 31st March 2024. Year on year, this number fluctuates as it is dependent on the number of starts across each framework. Frameworks typically vary in duration and even within frameworks individuals may progress faster or slower depending on the individual's pace of learning.

As at 31st March 2024, there were **38,607** Modern Apprentices in training, 1.0% (-399) lower than last year (39,006).

In Training by age

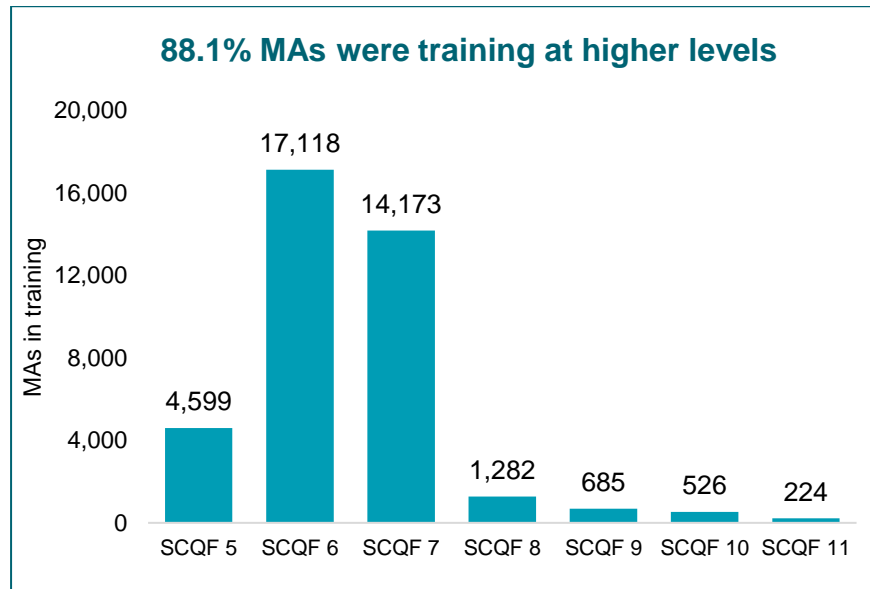
Figure 28: Modern Apprentices in training by age group, 2023/24



At the end of quarter 4, 50.3% of those in training were aged 16-19 (+1.2 pp on last year); 19.7% were aged 20-24 (-0.1 pp); and 30.0% were aged 25 or over (-1.1 pp). Those aged 16-24 accounted for 70.0% (27,005) of MAs in training, 1.1 pp higher than last year (68.9%).

In Training by level

Figure 29: Modern Apprentices in training by level, 2023/24



At the end of quarter 4, 88.1% (34,008) of Modern Apprentices were working towards a qualification at SCQF level 6 or above, 2.1 pp higher than last year.

¹⁷ IT & Other Services and Transport & Logistics occupational groupings have been removed due to disclosure control therefore in training figures will not sum to 1,435.

Figure 30: Modern Apprentices in training by level and occupational grouping, 2023/24¹⁷

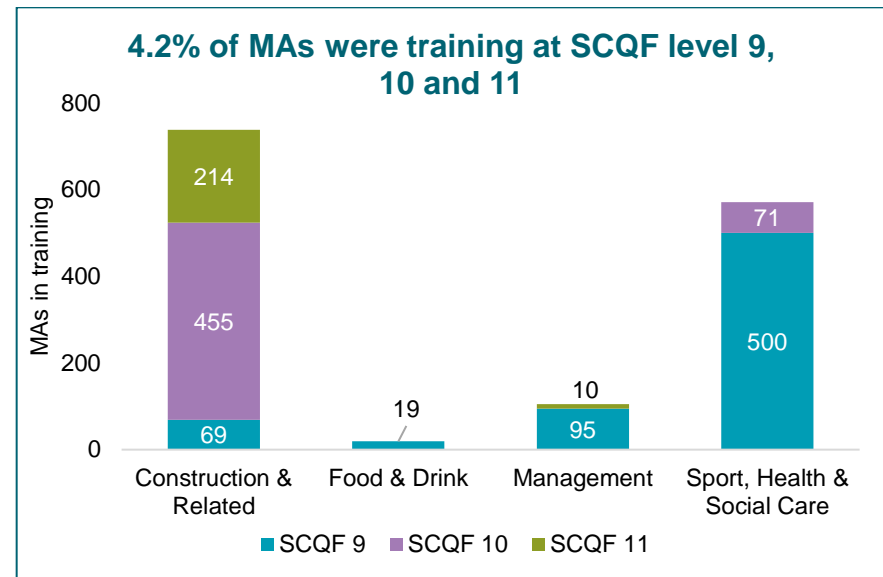


Figure 30 shows that at the end of 2023/24, 4.2% (1,435) of MAs were training towards a qualification at SCQF level 9, 10, and 11 (equivalent to an Ordinary Degree, Honours Degree, and Masters, respectively).¹⁸ Of all MAs training at those higher levels, 51.4% (738) were working towards a framework in the Construction & Related grouping and 39.8% (571) in the Sport, Health & Social Care grouping.

¹⁸ [SQA Qualifications in the SCQF](#)

In Training by occupational grouping

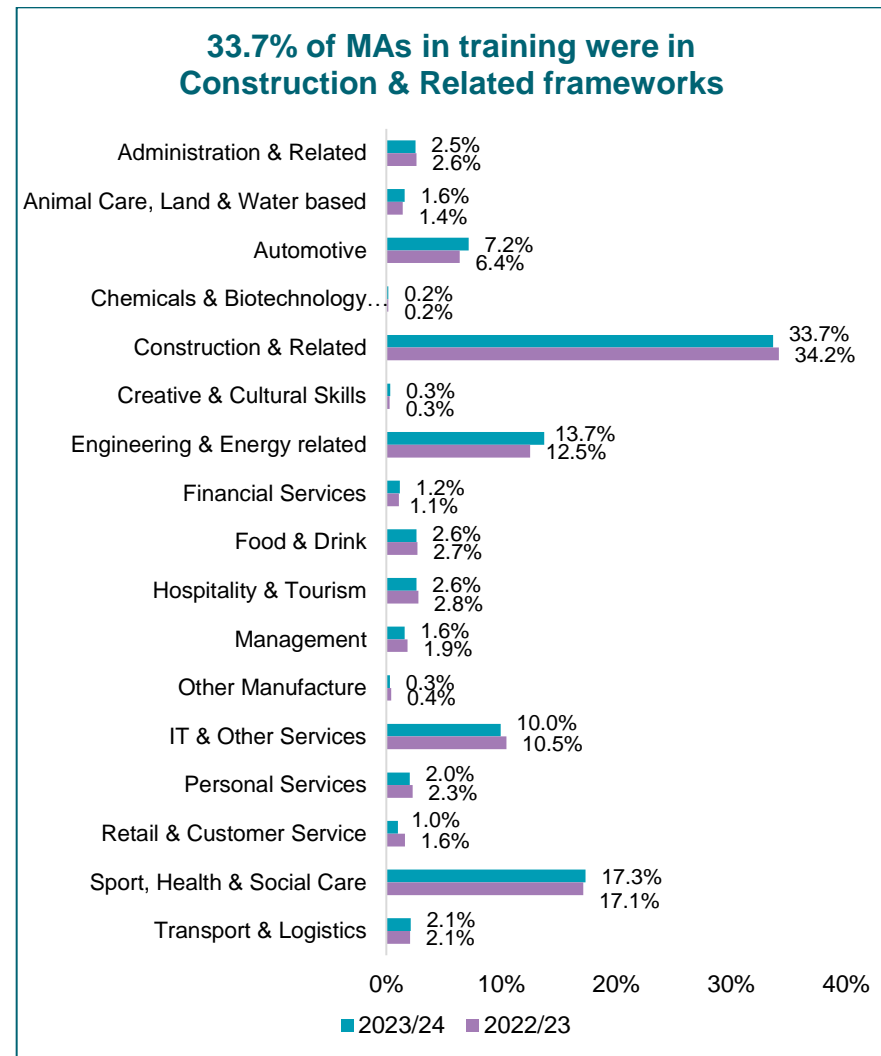
The four occupational groupings with the highest proportion of MAs in training reflected the, typically longer, duration of frameworks in those groupings:

1. **Construction & Related (33.7%)**
2. **Sport, Health & Social Care (17.3%)**
3. **Engineering & Energy Related (13.7%)**
4. **IT & Other Services (10.0%)**

62.4% of MAs in training were in STEM frameworks, 2.5 pp higher than last year.¹⁹ The majority of those in STEM frameworks were aged 16-24 (80.2%) and were training at SCQF level 6 or above (90.6%).

Tables 13.1 to 13.5 in the [Supplementary Tables](#) details MAs in training by age group, SCQF level, occupational grouping, and local authority area.

Figure 31: Modern Apprenticeship in training by occupational grouping, 2022/23 to 2023/24



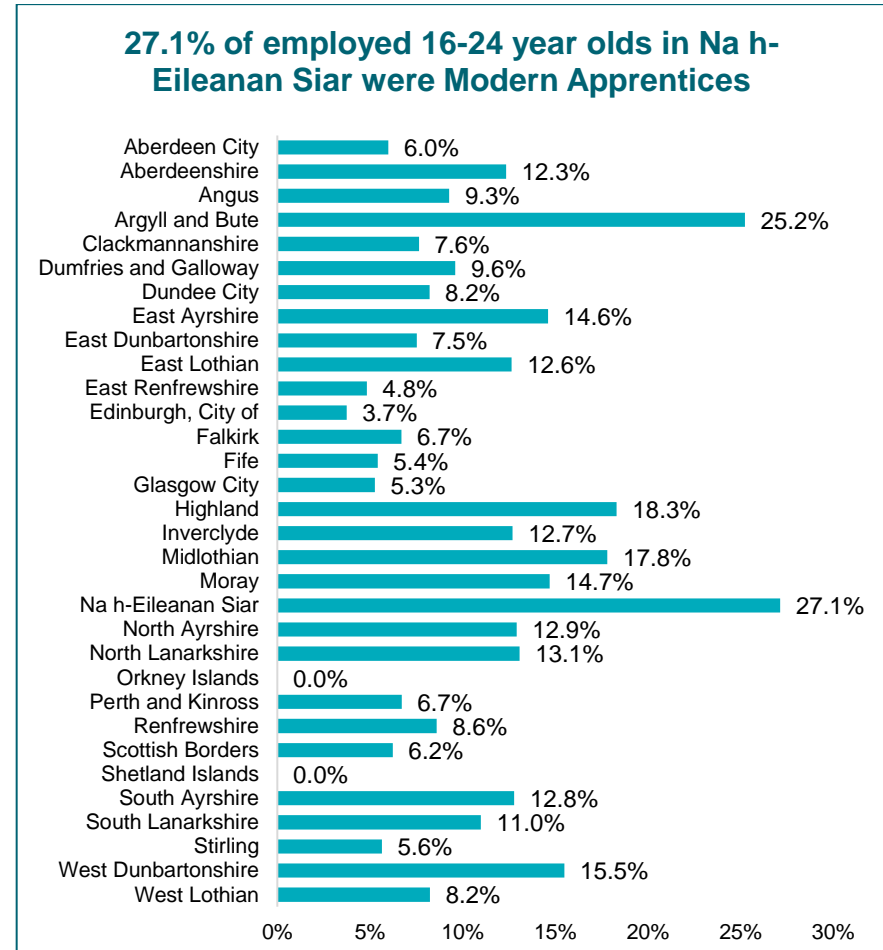
¹⁹ Based on the agreed STEM list in Appendix B.

Modern Apprentices and local employment

Further analysis considered the number of MAs in training aged 16-24 (as at 31st March 2024) compared to the number of 16-24 year olds in employment residing in each local authority.²⁰

In Scotland, approximately **8.3%** of 16-24 year olds who are in employment were Modern Apprentices, 0.1 pp lower than last year. Figure 32 provides a breakdown, by local authority, of 16-24 year old MAs in training as a proportion of the number of 16-24 year olds in employment.²¹ In 2023/24, Na h-Eileanan Siar had the highest proportion at 27.1%, followed by Argyll and Bute at 25.2%, and Highland at 18.3%.²² Last year 11.6% of 16-24 year olds in employment in Na h-Eileanan Siar were Modern Apprentices, 18.9% in 2021/22. The increase this year is due, in part, by the decrease in the 16-24 year old employed population in Na h-Eileanan Siar from 1,700 last year to 700 this year.

Figure 32: Modern Apprentices in training aged 16-24 as a proportion of 16-24 in employment by local authority, 2023/24



²⁰ The Annual Population Survey (Jan 2023 – Dec 2023)

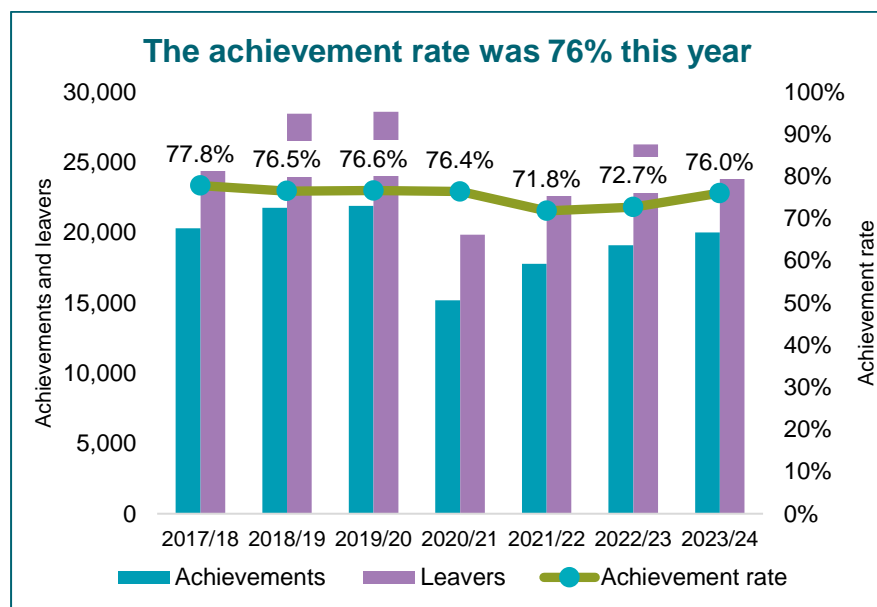
²¹ Orkney Islands and Shetland Islands removed due to disclosure control.

²² Na h-Eileanan Siar is also known as The Outer Hebrides or Western Isles.

Modern Apprenticeship Achievements

In 2023/24, the overall achievement rate was **76.0%**, with 20,013 of 26,329 leavers, achieving their full Modern Apprenticeship award, 3.3 pp higher than last year. Figure 33 shows that the achievement rate has been gradually increasing since 2021/22 following a gradual decline in previous years.

Figure 33: Modern Apprenticeship achievements, leavers, and achievement rate, 2017/18 to 2023/24



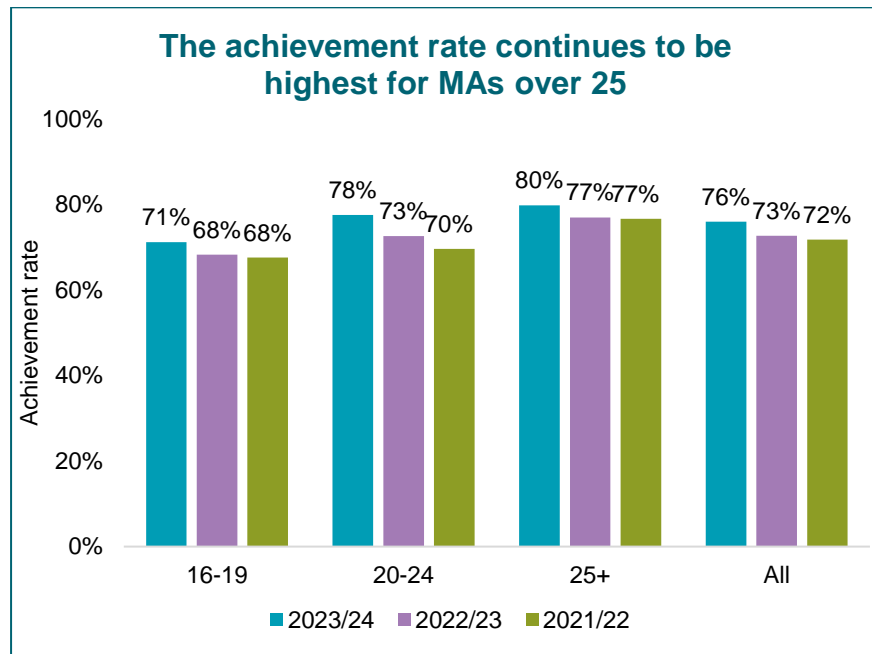
Completing a Modern Apprenticeship is a significant time investment for a young person and some frameworks can take four years to achieve. Research conducted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) shows that, in the United Kingdom, young people (aged 15-24) tend to stay in jobs for less time than all employed people. In 2021, 41.6% of young people stayed in their job for one year or less, compared to 13.4% for 25-54, and 15.0% across all ages.²³ Similarly, our data shows that Modern Apprentices aged 25 and older have a higher achievement rate (79.8%) than those aged 16-24 (73.4%).

Achievements by age

In 2023/24, the achievement rate increased across all age groups compared to last year. The 16-19 achievement rate was 71.2% (+2.9 pp higher than 2022/23), 20-24 achievement rate was 77.6% (+5.1 pp), 25+ achievement rate was 79.8% (+2.7 pp). The 25+ age group continued to have the highest achievement rate.

²³ [OECD: Labour Force Statistics – Employment by job tenure intervals - frequency](#)

Figure 34: Modern Apprenticeship achievement rate by age group, 2021/22 to 2023/24



The lowest achievement rate in our Modern Apprenticeship data was amongst 16–19-year-olds. A similar trend was found in further education. In college courses, younger age groups were less likely to complete successfully compared to older age groups.²⁴

²⁴ [College Performance Indicators 2020-21, SFC \(2022\)](#)

Achievements by level

The number of achievements, leavers, and achievement rate by SCQF level can be found in table 14.3 of the [Supplementary Tables](#).

Figure 35: Modern Apprenticeship achievement rate by level (groups), 2021/22 to 2023/24

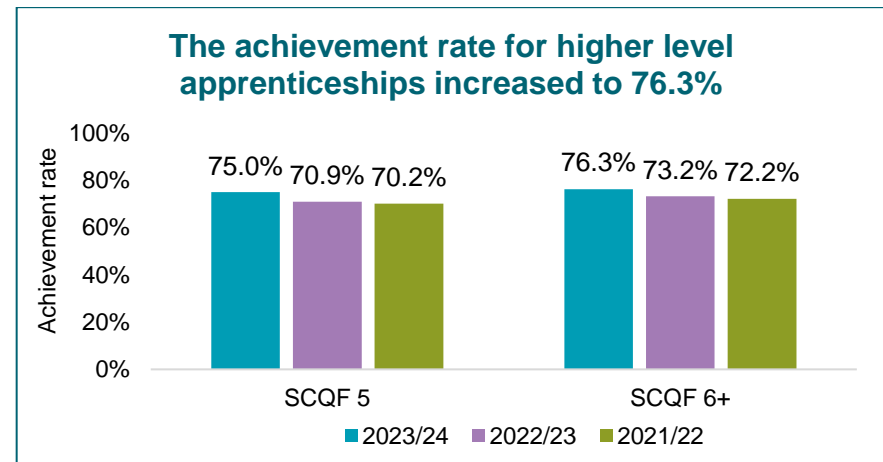


Figure 35 shows the achievement rate was 76.3% for MAs working towards SCQF level 6 and above. This is 3.1 pp higher than last year. The achievement rate was 75.0% for MAs working towards frameworks at SCQF level 5 or lower, 4.1 pp higher than last year.

Figure 36: Modern Apprenticeship achievement rate by level, 2023/24

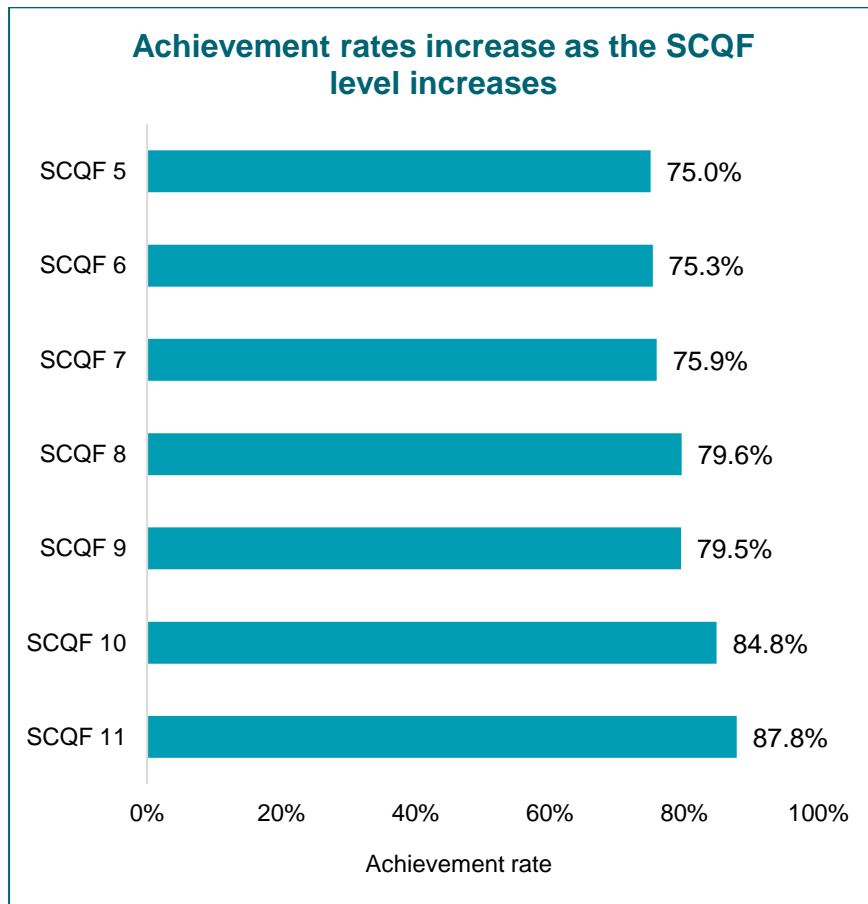


Figure 36 shows Modern Apprenticeship achievement rates by SCQF level in 2023/24.²⁵ Modern Apprenticeship achievement rates tend to increase as the SCQF level increases i.e., the complexity of the learning.²⁶ SCQF level 11 had the highest achievement rate this year at 87.8% with 194 achievements out of 221 leavers. Nearly all of these achievements came from the *Construction: Professional Apprenticeship* framework (188 achievements).

²⁵ SCQF levels VQ 2 and VQ 4 have been removed due to disclosure control.

²⁶ [SQA: SQA Qualifications in the SCQF](#)

Achievements by occupational grouping

The number of achievements, leavers, and achievement rate by occupational grouping can be found in table 14.4 of the [Supplementary Tables](#).

Figure 37: Modern Apprenticeship achievement rates by occupational grouping, 2022/23 to 2023/24

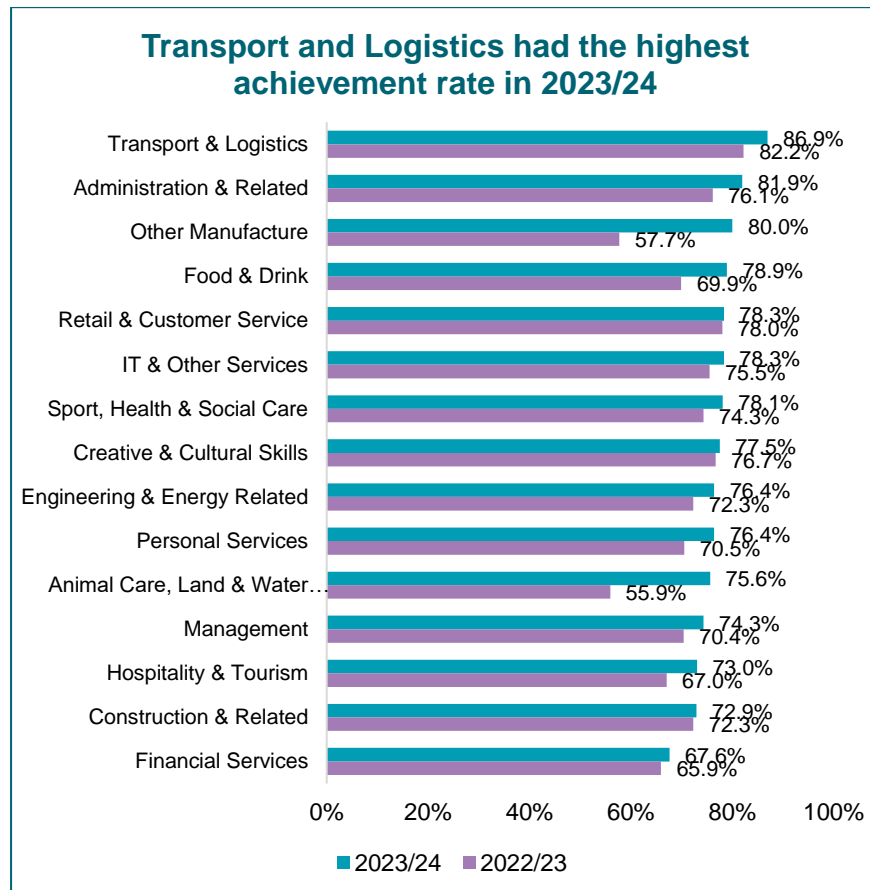


Figure 37 shows the top fifteen achievement rates by occupational grouping. Transport and Logistics had the highest achievement rate this year at 86.9%, 4.7 pp higher than last year.

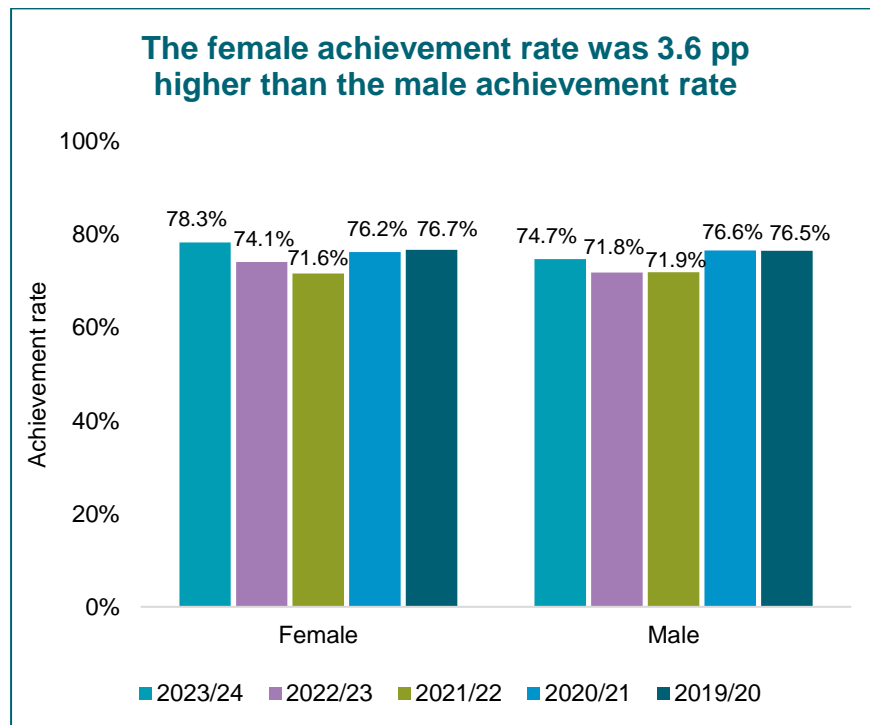
15 out of 17 occupational groupings had a higher achievement rate this year compared to last year. Notable increases include Animal Care, Land & Water Based (+19.7 pp), Food & Drink (+9.0 pp) and Hospitality and Tourism (+6.1 pp). The Other Manufacture grouping had an achievement rate of 80.0% in 2023/24, a significant increase from 57.7% last year, but it is worth noting this grouping had a relatively small number of achievements and leavers, 108 and 135, respectively.

The Construction & Related occupational grouping has historically had some of the highest achievement rates including a high achievement rate pre-pandemic. In 2023/24, the Construction & Related grouping had an achievement rate of 72.9%, 0.6 pp higher than last year.

Achievements by gender

In 2023/24, the female achievement rate was 78.3%, 3.6 pp higher than the male achievement rate of 74.7%, and 2.3 pp higher than the overall achievement rate (76.0%). The achievement rate gap widened by 1.3 pp relative to last year.

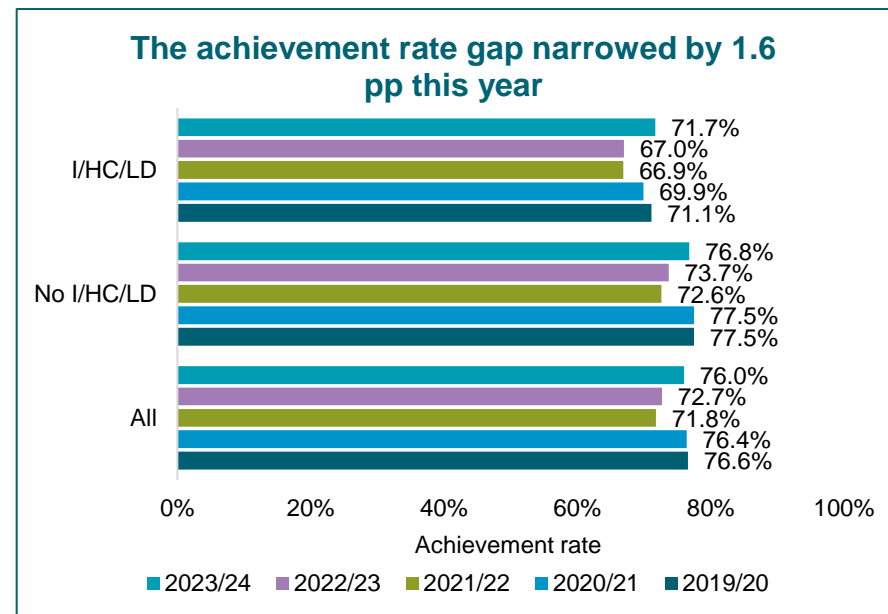
Figure 38: Modern Apprenticeship achievement rate by gender, 2019/20 to 2023/24



Achievements by disability

In 2023/24, the achievement rate of disabled MAs was 71.7%, compared to an overall achievement rate of 76.0%, and 76.8% for MAs who were not disabled. The achievement rate for disabled MAs increased by 4.7 pp compared to last year and the achievement rate for non-disabled MAs increased by 3.1 pp, narrowing the achievement gap from 6.7% to 5.1%, a decrease of 1.6 pp.

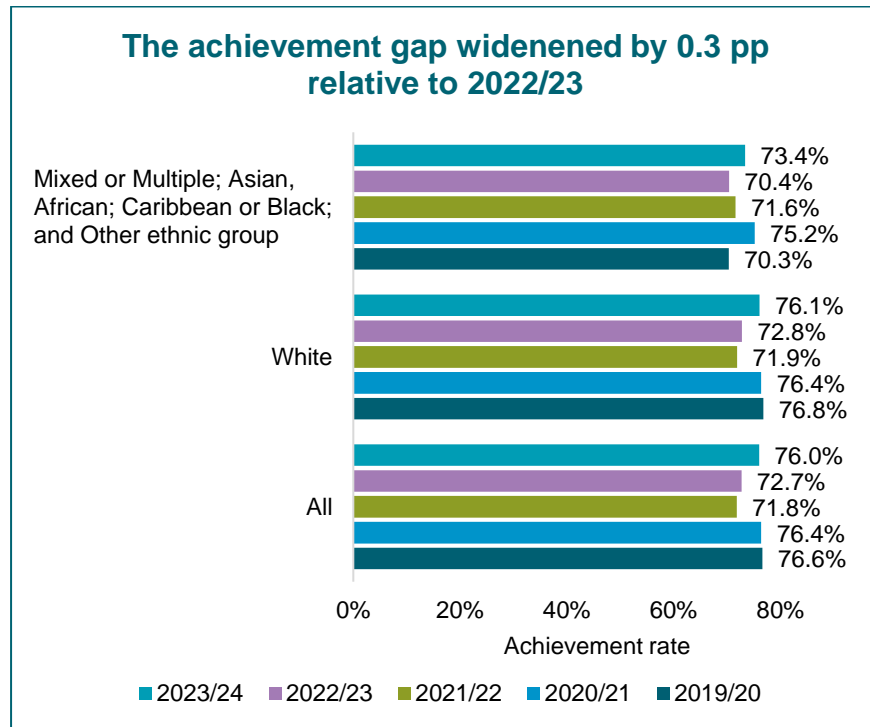
Figure 39: Modern Apprenticeship achievement rate by I/HC/LD, 2019/20 to 2023/24



Achievements by ethnicity

The achievement rate of MAs self-identifying as being from a Mixed or multiple; Asian; African; Caribbean or black; and Other ethnic group was 73.4% compared to 76.1% for those self-identifying as 'white', and an achievement rate of 76.0% overall. The achievement rate gap widened by 0.3 pp relative to last year.

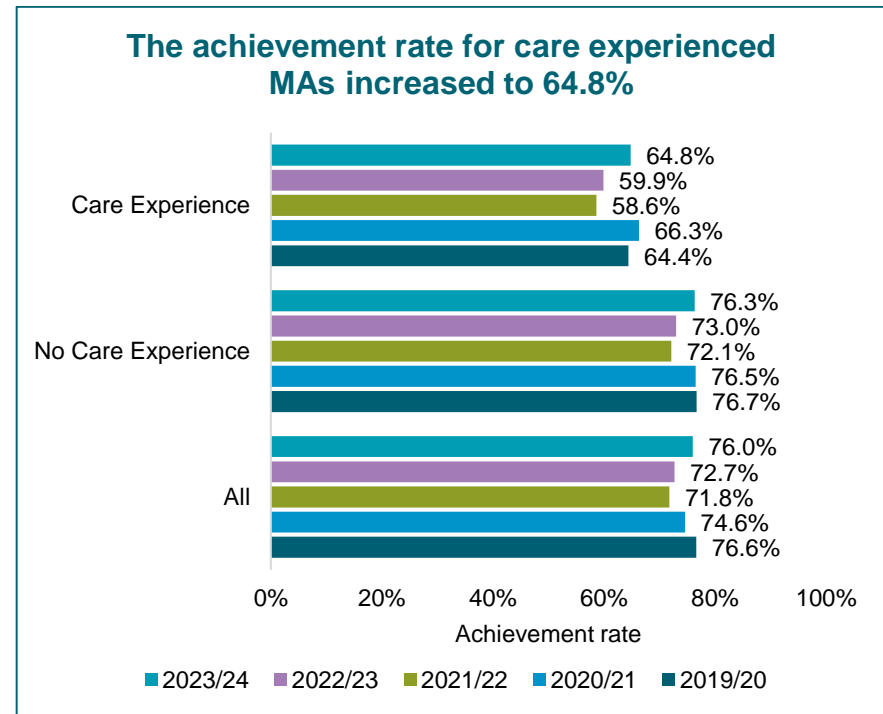
Figure 40: Modern Apprenticeship achievement rate by ethnicity, 2019/20 to 2023/24



Achievements by care experience

In 2023/24, the achievement rate for care experienced Modern Apprentices was 64.8%, 4.9 pp higher than last year. MAs with no care experience had an achievement rate of 76.3%, 3.3 pp higher than last year. The achievement rate gap narrowed by 1.6 pp from 13.1% to 11.5% relative to last year.

Figure 41: Modern Apprenticeship achievement rate by care experience, 2019/20 to 2023/24



The achievement rate for care experienced MAs reflects a similar trend to other sources such as Education Outcomes for Looked After Children.²⁷ This also shows that looked after young people in Scotland tend to have poorer outcomes including lower attainment and fewer securing positive destinations. In a recently published [Work-based Learning Integrated Equality Impact Assessment](#) on achievements in Foundation Apprenticeships, we outlined actions SDS are taking to improve the achievement rate gap (where there is one) for care experienced apprentices.

Achievements by local authority

Achievements, leavers, and achievement rate by local authority area can be found in table 1.4 of the [Supplementary Tables](#). The mix of Modern Apprenticeship frameworks and volume of starts in each area goes some way to explain the variation in the achievement rates between local authorities.

In 2023/24, the Shetland Islands had the highest achievement rate at 81.3% (5.3 pp higher than the overall achievement rate). This is the first year that the Shetland Islands has had the highest achievement rate.

²⁷ [Scottish Government: Education Outcomes for Looked After Children 2019/20 \(2021\)](#)

Achievements by SIMD

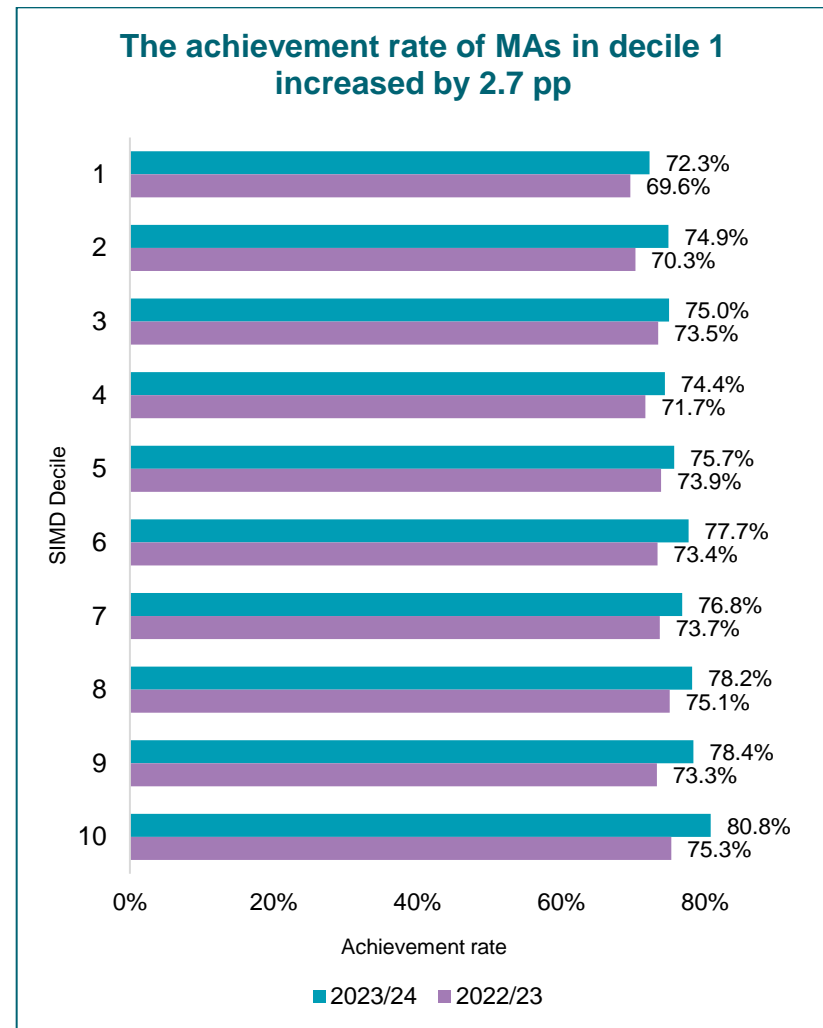
Figure 42 shows the achievement rate for Modern Apprentices by SIMD decile, from the 10% most deprived areas (decile 1) to the 10% least deprived areas (decile 10).

The achievement rate for those residing in the 10% most deprived areas in 2023/24 was 72.3%, 2.7 pp higher than last year and 3.7 pp lower than the overall achievement rate.

The achievement rate gap between those residing in the least deprived and most deprived areas was 8.5% in 2023/24.

Since 2020/21, the achievement rate gap has been narrowing from 8.0% to 5.7% in 2022/23. This is the first year since then that we have seen the gap widen (+2.7 pp on last year).

Figure 42: Modern Apprenticeship achievement rate by SIMD decile, 2022/23 to 2023/24



Achievements and intersectionality

SDS is committed to ensuring that individuals from a diverse range of backgrounds can access Modern Apprenticeships and achieve equitable outcomes. We are working to encourage employers to value and develop a diverse talent pool with the right skills for their business. SDS recognises that it is often the interaction of different protected equality characteristics that creates the greatest inequalities.

In last year's year-end report, we added this section to the report. As such, this will be the second year we have published intersectional data on Modern Apprentices. We recognise that a move to more intersectional reporting provides valuable insight on the achievements of apprentices from a variety of backgrounds. Where the reporting of statistics is limited by disclosure control, we will aim to provide commentary to give an indication of what the data is telling us.

Poverty has a significant negative impact on labour market and educational outcomes. Poverty can be seen to interact

with other protected characteristics to produce the greatest inequalities. In this report we use the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) as a proxy for poverty.²⁸ In 2023/24, Modern Apprenticeship achievement rates were lowest in the most deprived areas and highest in the least deprived areas. The achievement rate for MAs who lived in the 20% most deprived areas (quintile 1) was 73.6%.²⁹ This was lower if those individuals were also care experienced (61.8%), minority ethnic (68.3%), or disabled (71.0%).

Outcomes for care experienced young people tend to be poorer in comparison to other groups. The achievement rate for care experienced apprentices was 64.8% this year, 11.5 pp lower than MAs with no care experience (76.3%). The rate was lower again for those who were also disabled (59.7%), male (54.5%), or minority ethnic (57.7%).

Outcomes for disabled people tend to be poorer than non-disabled people. This year, the achievement rate for MAs with a disability was 71.7%, 5.1 pp lower than those who did not have a disability (76.8%). The achievement rate was

²⁸ If an area is identified as 'deprived' this can relate to people having a low income, but it can also mean fewer resources or opportunities.

²⁹ The achievement rate was 79.3% for MAs residing in the 20% least deprived areas (quintile 5).

lower for apprentices who were also male (68.1%), care experienced (59.7%), or minority ethnic (66.7%).

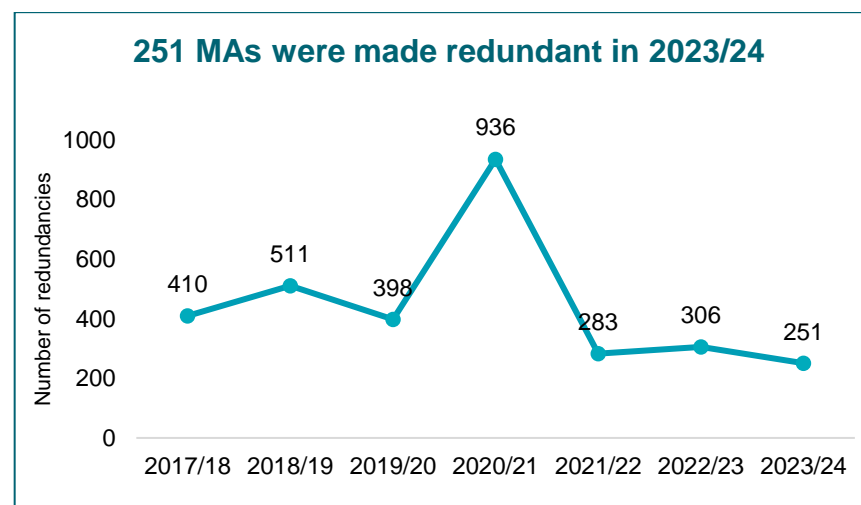
These examples clearly demonstrate more work is required to support people and businesses. Skills Development Scotland is working with partners across the skills and education landscape towards this goal. The [SDS Equality and Diversity Mainstreaming Report](#) highlights some of the work that we are undertaking to promote and increase equality of opportunity for all people in Scotland.

SDS is committed to providing insights on key intersectional groups who are disadvantaged in Modern Apprenticeships, and we will continue to include this section in every year-end MA report going forward.

Modern Apprenticeship Redundancies

In 2023/24, 251 Modern Apprentices were made redundant, 55 fewer than last year (306). 96 individuals continued a Modern Apprenticeship with an alternative employer.

Figure 43: Modern Apprenticeship redundancies, 2017/18 to 2023/24



All Modern Apprentices facing redundancy are offered Career Information, Advice and Guidance services and Learning Providers offer additional support in finding alternative employment opportunities for them.³⁰

³⁰ Note that not all apprentices accept the offer of support.

Further Information

This report provides analysis of publicly funded Modern Apprenticeship activity for the 2023/24 financial year.

Statistics associated with Modern Apprenticeships such as starts, in training, leavers, and achievements are provided in summary form. Further information including more detailed breakdowns of these statistics by framework, age, level, and equality characteristics can be found within our [Supplementary Tables](#) on the SDS website.

Note to Readers

Guidance on how Modern Apprenticeship data is collected and reported is available on the SDS website [here](#). We recommend that the guidance is read prior to any further analysis.

The impact of Covid-19 had a profound impact on the economy and Modern Apprenticeship data should be considered in this context. We recommend exercising caution when comparing figures to 2019/20 and 2020/21 statistics.

Gender

To ensure that we enable apprentices to record their gender in the most appropriate way for them, individuals can record their gender as 'female', 'male', 'prefer not to say', or 'in another way'.

Age

As programme funding is linked to the age of trainees, all age breakdowns in this report are based on the age of the individual when they commenced their Modern Apprenticeship.

Level

In line with Scottish Government direction, we carried out an exercise to align MA frameworks to SCQF levels (see Appendix A).

Occupational Groupings

Classifications of occupational groupings may be changed due to ongoing refinement and changes to frameworks each year. For this report, occupational grouping was defined by categorising the high-level framework titles. This means that

an MA on a management framework will fall into the “Management” grouping regardless of the sector they are employed in. This analysis may differ from other estimations of occupational grouping – for example, in the case of the Audit Scotland MA Report (March 2013). Details of the frameworks that fit into each grouping are available on the [SDS corporate website](#).

Frameworks

In this report, MA frameworks are classified as belonging to an SDS assigned occupational grouping. Details are available [here](#) on the SDS website.

Disability

The figures quoted in this report are in response to our disability disclosure question first introduced in 2016/17. This was aligned to the wording recommended by Advance HE (formerly Equality Challenge Unit) after extensive consultation with disability partners, Modern Apprentices, learning providers, and employers. In 2021/22 Learning Disability and Specific Learning Difficulty were both offered as a selection to the disability disclosure question (see Appendix C). We use this information to inform our strategy

to address under-representation, including supporting more individuals with physical and learning disabilities to undertake a Modern Apprenticeship.

Care experience

We started collecting self-declared information on care experience in 2015/16. In response to the question, ‘Have you ever been in care?’ In this instance, care is defined as: foster care, kinship care, residential care or looked after at home.

Starts

In April 2019 we adjusted the recording of starts, re-entrants, and progressions to accommodate the introduction of a new system to improve how Training Providers manage their contracts. As of 1st April 2023, all MA progressions are included as new starts. More details can be found [here](#) on the SDS website.

Modern Apprentices and local employment

Please note that the “employed” status from the Annual Population Survey includes all individuals that work (full-time or part-time) and could include college/ university students that work part-time. As data is based on trainee home address, rather than employer address, this analysis should be viewed as indicative as apprentices may travel to work in a different local authority.

Achievements

Achievements are counted when a claim against the final outcome payment has been made and approved in the financial year. Therefore, the achievement rate is the number of certificated leavers registered in the financial year as a percentage of all MAs registered as leavers on the system in that same year. For more information on how the achievement rate is calculated please see our [User Guide](#).

Leavers

Leavers are counted when a leaving date is entered on the system. A small number of assignments are discounted

where the leaving reason is recorded as maternity/paternity, redundancy, business ceased trading, death, or admin error.

Calculations

This report may refer to a percentage increase or decrease in values, which means the relative change between two numbers e.g., starts increased by 5% compared to the same quarter last year. The report may also refer to a percentage point (pp) increase or decrease, which means the absolute change between two percentages e.g., the achievement rate for MAs aged 25 or over increased by 8 pp.

Percentages in this report may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Similarly, calculating percentage point differences from the data presented in the report may differ slightly from figures cited in the text. This is also due to rounding.

Contact

Any comments or suggestions regarding the content of this report are welcome and can be emailed to user_feedback@sds.co.uk.

Appendices

Appendix A – SCQF Framework³¹

SCQF Levels	SQA Qualifications		Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions	Apprenticeships & SVQs	
12			Professional Development Award	Doctoral Degree	Professional Apprenticeship
11			Professional Development Award	Masters Degree, Integrated Masters Degree, Post Graduate Diploma, Post Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship, Professional Apprenticeship, SVQ
10			Professional Development Award	Honours Degree, Graduate Diploma, Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship, Professional Apprenticeship, SVQ
9			Professional Development Awards	Bachelors / Ordinary Degree, Graduate Diploma, Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship, Technical Apprenticeship, SVQ
8		Higher National Diploma, Advanced Diploma	Professional Development Award	Diploma of Higher Education	Higher Apprenticeship, Technical Apprenticeship, SVQ
7	Advanced Higher, Awards, Scottish Baccalaureate	Higher National Certificate, Advanced Certificate	Professional Development Award	Certificate of Higher Education	Modern Apprenticeship, SVQ
6	Higher, Awards, Skills for Work Higher	National Certificate	Professional Development Award National Progression Award		Modern Apprenticeship, Foundation Apprenticeship, SVQ
5	National 5, Awards, Skills for Work National 5	National Certificate	National Progression Award		Modern Apprenticeship, SVQ
4	National 4, Awards, Skills for Work National 4	National Certificate	National Progression Award		SVQ
3	National 3, Awards, Skills for Work National 3	National Certificate	National Progression Award		
2	National 2, Awards	National Certificate	National Progression Award		
1	National 1, Awards				

³¹ Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework: [The SCQF Interactive Framework](#)

Appendix B – STEM Framework List

Agriculture
Aquaculture
Automotive
Biotechnology
Bus and Coach Engineering Maintenance
Construction
Construction (Civil Engineering & Specialist Sector)
Construction (Craft Operations)
Construction (Technical Operations)
Construction: Building
Construction: Civil Engineering
Construction: Professional Apprenticeship
Construction: Specialist
Construction: Technical
Construction: Technical Apprenticeship
Creative and Digital Media
Data Analytics Technical Apprenticeship
Dental Nursing
Digital Applications
Digital Technology
Digital Technology Technical Apprenticeship
Domestic Plumbing & Heating
Electrical Installation
Electronic Security Systems
Electrotechnical Services
Engineering
Engineering & Digital Manufacturing Technical Apprenticeship
Engineering Construction
Equine
Gas Heating & Energy Efficiency
Gas Engineering
Gas Industry
Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration
Horticulture

Industrial Applications
Information & Communication Technologies Professional
Information Security
Information Security Technical Apprenticeship
IT and Telecommunications
IT and Telecommunications Technical Apprenticeship
Land-based engineering
Life Sciences
Life Sciences and Related Science Industries
Life Sciences and Related Science Industries Technical
Apprenticeship
Network Construction Operations (Gas)
Oil and Gas Extraction
Pharmacy Services
Pharmacy Services Technical Apprenticeship
Plumbing
Plumbing and Heating
Polymer Processing
Power Distribution
Process Manufacturing
Rail Engineering
Rail Transport Engineering
Scientific, Technical and Formulation Processing
Trees and Timber
Upstream Oil and Gas Production
Veterinary Nursing
Water Industry
Water Treatment Management
Wind Turbine Installation and Commissioning
Wind Turbine Operations and Maintenance

Blue text – older frameworks, included for calculation of STEM achievements/leavers
Bold text – frameworks added during this financial year

Appendix C – Disability Monitoring Question

Disability

a) Do you have an impairment, health condition, or learning difficulty?*

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>

*Lasting or expected to last 12 months or more

b) If you have an impairment, health condition or learning difficulty, please select all those on the list that apply.

You have a social/communication impairment such as a speech and language impairment or Asperger's syndrome/other autistic spectrum disorder	<input type="checkbox"/>
You have a learning disability (a condition that you have had since childhood that affects the way you learn, understand information and communicate) such as Down's Syndrome	<input type="checkbox"/>
You are blind or have a visual impairment uncorrected by glasses	<input type="checkbox"/>
You are deaf or have a hearing impairment	<input type="checkbox"/>
You have a long-standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy	<input type="checkbox"/>
You have a mental health difficulty, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder	<input type="checkbox"/>
You have a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D	<input type="checkbox"/>
You have a physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using your arms or using a wheelchair or crutches	<input type="checkbox"/>
You have a disability, impairment or medical condition that is not listed above	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>