

The Apprenticeship position across the Leeds City Region

1 Analysis of apprenticeship take-up in Leeds City Region in 2017/18 academic year

The following analysis examines take-up of apprenticeships in Leeds City Region¹ during the last academic year. It is based on recently finalised (R14) data provided by Education and Skills Funding Agency via gov.uk.

The values presented here are approximate since all figures provided via gov.uk are rounded to the nearest 10. Leeds City Region figures are based on the sum of the figures for the 10 districts, all of which are rounded in this way.

Headlines

There were 22,250 apprenticeship starts in the City Region in the 2017/18 academic year.

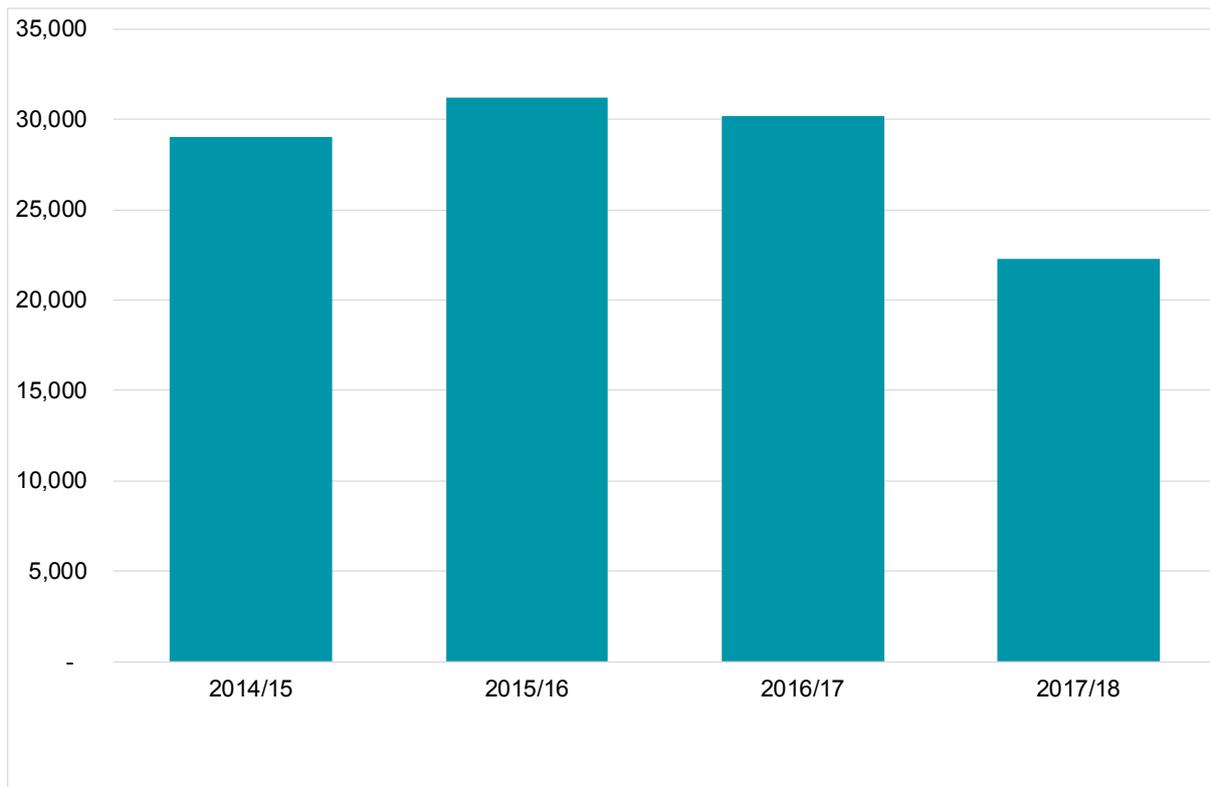
Apprenticeship starts fell by 7,970 (26 per cent) compared with the previous year, a slightly greater decline than the England average rate of 24 per cent. This follows a decline of 3 per cent in 2016/17 and growth of 8 per cent in 2015/16.

During 2017/18, there were 17,020 apprenticeship achievements, a fall of 3 per cent on 2016/17.

¹ Unless otherwise stated, the analysis relates to all apprentices whose home address lies within one of the 10 districts of the City Region.

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Figure 1: Change in total apprenticeship starts, Leeds City Region, 2014/15 to 2017/18



Source: Department for Education

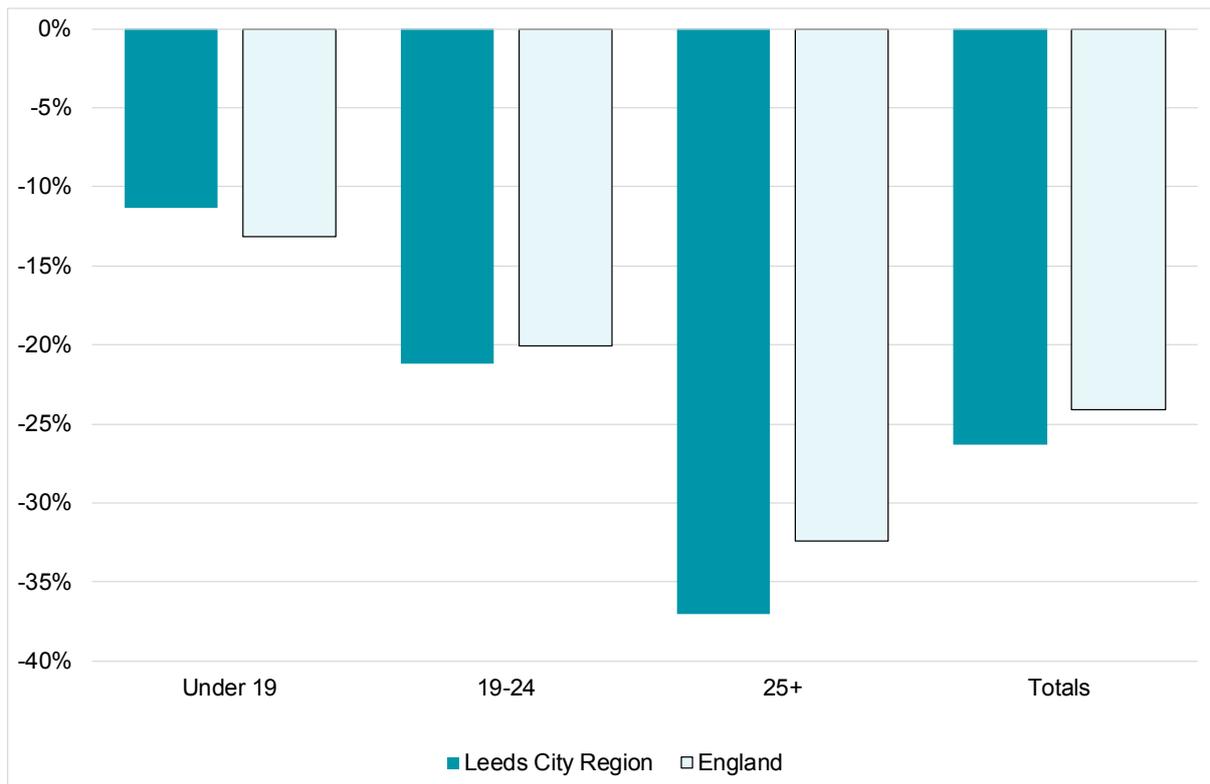
Age

During 2017/18, 41 per cent of starts were for apprentices aged 25 and over, with the remainder split almost evenly between 16-18 year olds and 19-24 year olds.

Starts among people aged 25+ fell fastest by -5,350 or -37 per cent, versus an overall rate of decline of 26 per cent; and this age group accounted for two-thirds of the total decline in starts. The fall for under 19s was much less pronounced at -11 per cent and also for 19-24 year olds – 21 per cent. The pattern of decline was similar to the national average, although 25+ starts fell to a greater degree in the City Region.

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Figure 2: Change in total apprenticeship starts by age, 2016/17 to 2017/18



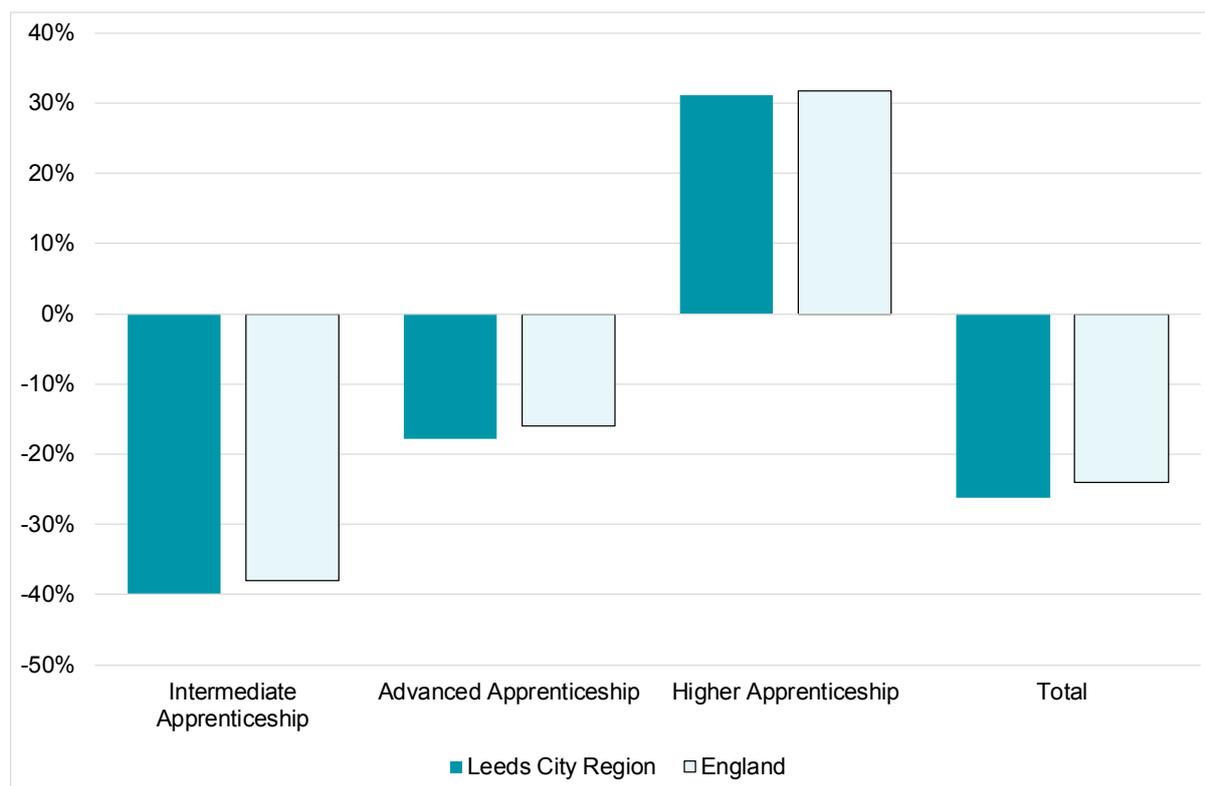
Source: Department for Education

Level

During 2017/18, starts on intermediate apprenticeships accounted for 43 per cent of total starts (down from 53 per cent in the previous academic year), advanced apprenticeship starts contributed 45 per cent (up from 40 per cent) and higher apprenticeships 12 per cent (up from 7 per cent).

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Figure 3: Change in total apprenticeship starts by level, 2016/17 to 2017/18



Source: Department for Education

This change in shares reflects a pronounced decline in intermediate apprenticeship starts (by 6,380 or 40 per cent), a less marked fall in advanced apprenticeships (-2,170, -18%) and strong growth in higher apprenticeships (+630, +31 per cent). This mirrors the pattern seen at national level.

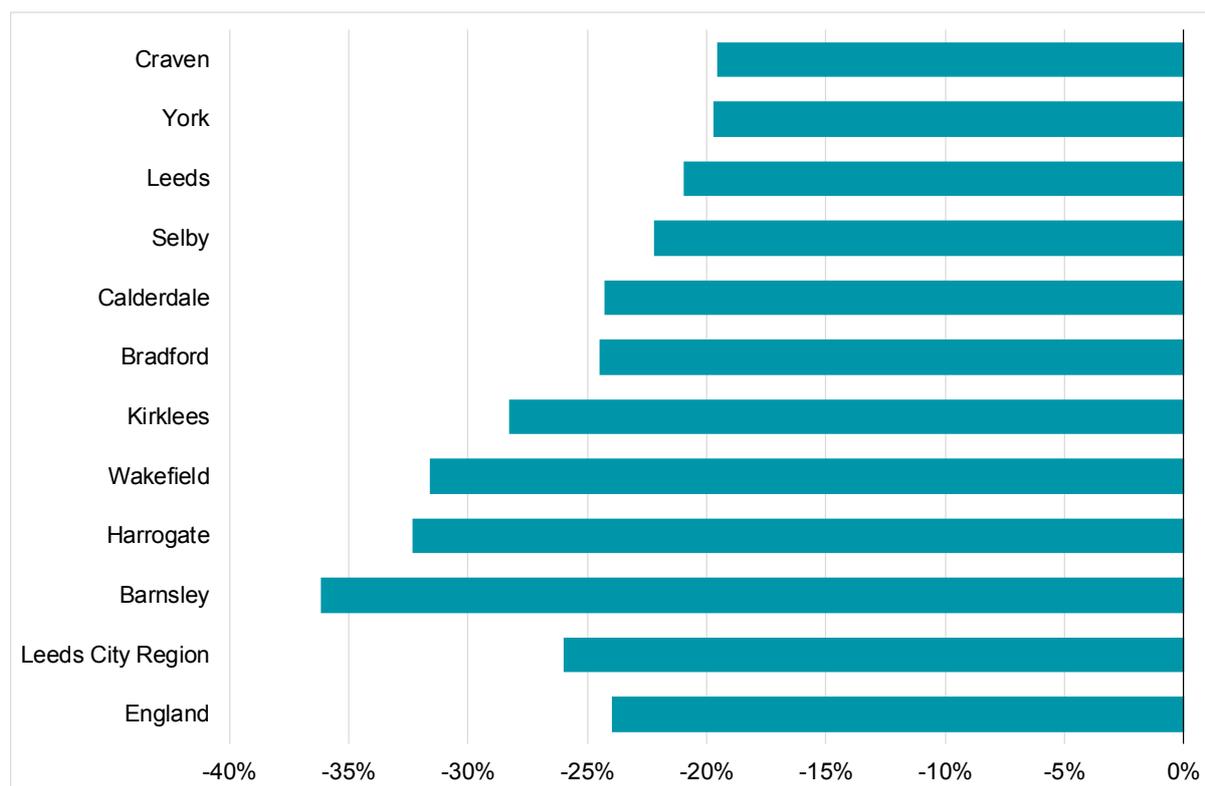
Districts

Based on location of learner residence, Leeds contributed the greatest number of apprenticeship starts during 2017/18 (25 per cent of the City Region total) followed by Bradford (18 per cent), Kirklees (14 per cent) and Wakefield (13 per cent); Craven had the fewest starts at 2 per cent.

All districts saw a decline in starts during the year but there was significant variation in the extent of the decline. Barnsley (-36 per cent), Harrogate (-32 per cent) and Wakefield (-32 per cent) saw the biggest proportionate falls, whilst Craven (-20 per cent), York (-20 per cent) and Leeds (-21 per cent) experienced the smallest declines.

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Figure 4: % change in total apprenticeship starts by district, 2016/17 to 2017/18



Source: Department for Education

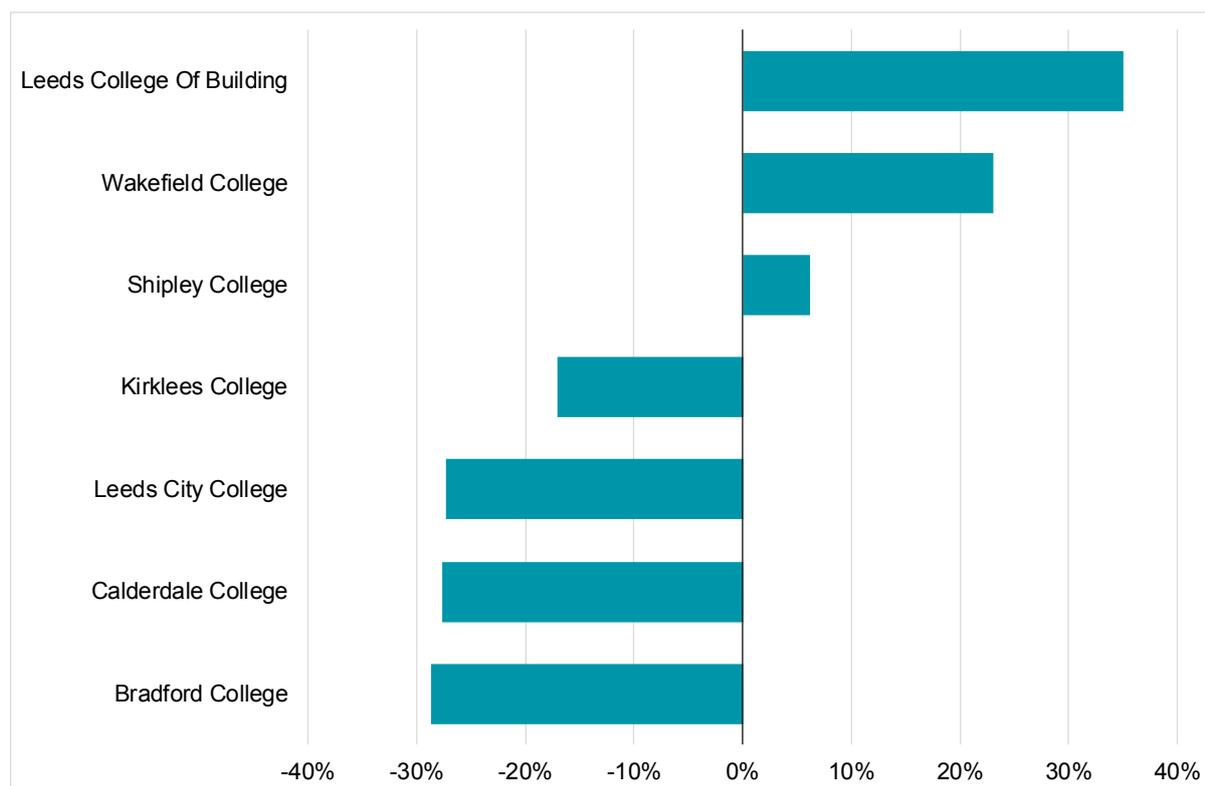
Providers

The performance of individual providers in respect of apprenticeship starts also varied markedly in 2017/18. Looking at total apprenticeship starts delivered by West Yorkshire colleges to learners resident in Leeds City Region, Bradford College, Calderdale and Leeds City College saw declines of 29, 28 and 27 per cent respectively. In contrast, Leeds College of Building and Wakefield College saw growth of 35 per cent and 23 per cent respectively. Shipley College also saw a modest amount of growth.

This variation in performance partly reflects the ability of institutions to adapt to the immediate impact of the introduction of the apprenticeship levy and other reforms. For example, Leeds College of Building has a range of existing commercial relationships with business customers in the construction sector that meant the transition to the levy presented an opportunity for growth. Other colleges faced a more difficult transition, although anecdotal evidence suggests that they are currently taking steps to capitalise on the opportunities presented by the reforms.

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Figure 5: Change in total apprenticeship starts by West Yorkshire college, 2016/17 to 2017/18



Source: Department for Education

In aggregate, apprenticeship starts at the six West Yorkshire colleges fell by 13 per cent.

The Combined Authority considers that the decline was linked mainly to the transitional effects of the introduction of the apprenticeship reforms during the latter part of the 2016/17 academic year.

Subject area

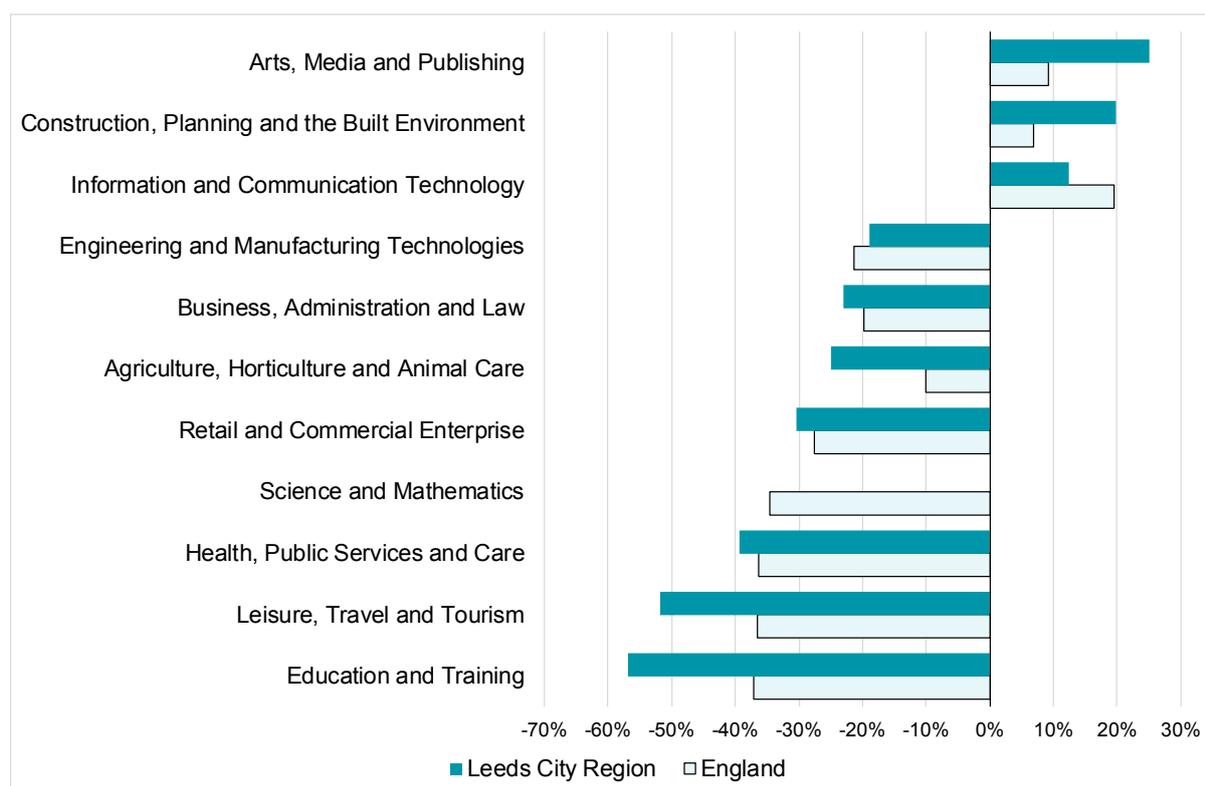
Two of the three LEP priority skill areas saw growth in starts: Construction, Planning and the Built Environment (+280, +20 per cent) and Information and Communication Technology (+100, +12 per cent).

The third, engineering and manufacturing, saw a decline of 19 per cent. All other subject areas also saw a decline in starts.

The areas of greatest absolute decline with regard to subject area were Health, Public Services and Care (-3,280, -39 per cent), Business, Administration and Law (-2,060, -23 per cent) and Retail and Commercial Enterprise -1,300, -30 per cent).

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Figure 6: Change in total apprenticeship starts by sector subject area, 2016/17 to 2017/18



Source: Department for Education

2 Analysis of apprenticeship take-up in Leeds City Region in Quarter 1 of 2018/19 academic year

Provisional figures are available for the number of apprenticeship starts reported in the first quarter of the 2018/19 academic year. These provide some insight into the latest trends in apprenticeship take-up, when compared with equivalent provisional figures for quarter 1 of the 2017/18 academic year, although the figures are subject to revision during the course of the year.

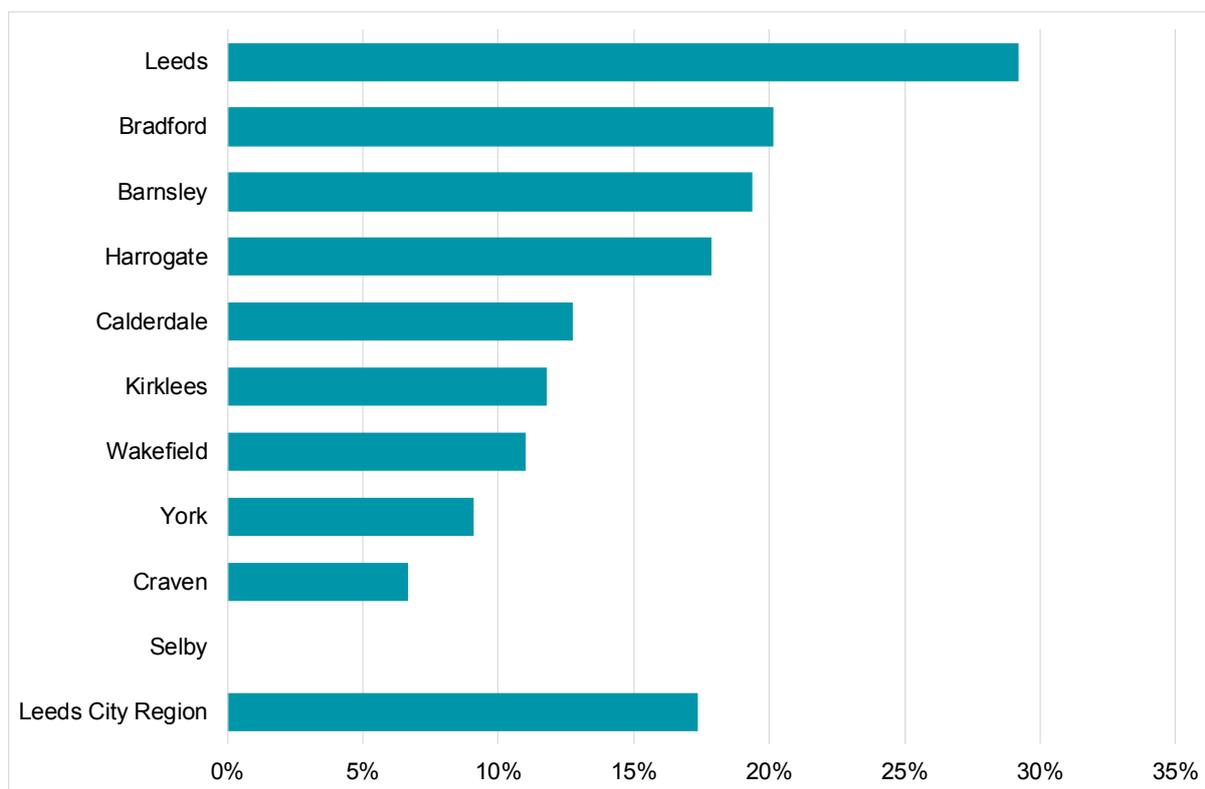
The figures suggest a partial recovery in the volume of apprenticeship starts both nationally and locally.

Nationally, 132,000 apprenticeship starts have been reported for the first quarter of the 2018-19 academic year, an increase of 15.4 per cent on the 114,400 reported at the same time in 2017-18. This is still 15 per cent lower than the figure for Q1 2016/17.

The equivalent position for the City Region is 17.4 per cent growth (1,200 additional starts) when comparing Q1 2017/18 with Q1 2018/19. The figure for Q1 2018/19 is nonetheless 20 per cent lower than for Q1 2016/17.

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Figure 7: % change in total apprenticeship starts by district, Q1 2018/19 compared with Q1 2017/18

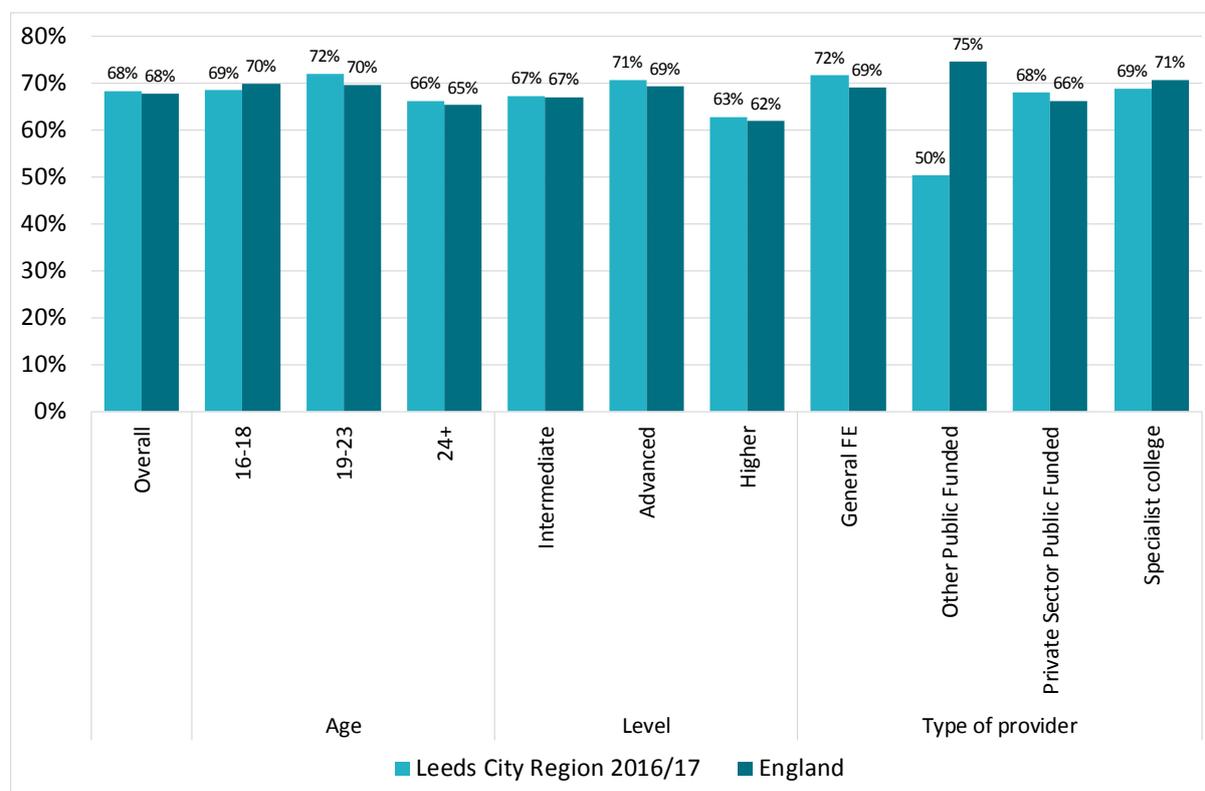


Source: Department for Education

3 Apprenticeship achievement rates

A key performance indicator for the apprenticeship programme is the proportion of apprentices who complete / achieve their apprenticeship. The most recent data currently available is for the 2016/17 academic year.

Figure 8: Overall achievement rates by apprenticeship type, 2016/17



Source: Education and Skills Funding Agency

As the chart shows the performance of Leeds City Region is similar to the national average and it ranks 16 out of 39 LEPs on overall achievement rates.

68% of apprenticeships are successfully completed in the City Region, suggesting that there is significant scope to improve the quality of apprenticeship opportunities and to increase the effectiveness of the process by which individuals are matched with apprenticeship opportunities. Unfortunately, consistent time series data are not available to allow us to track trends in performance over time.

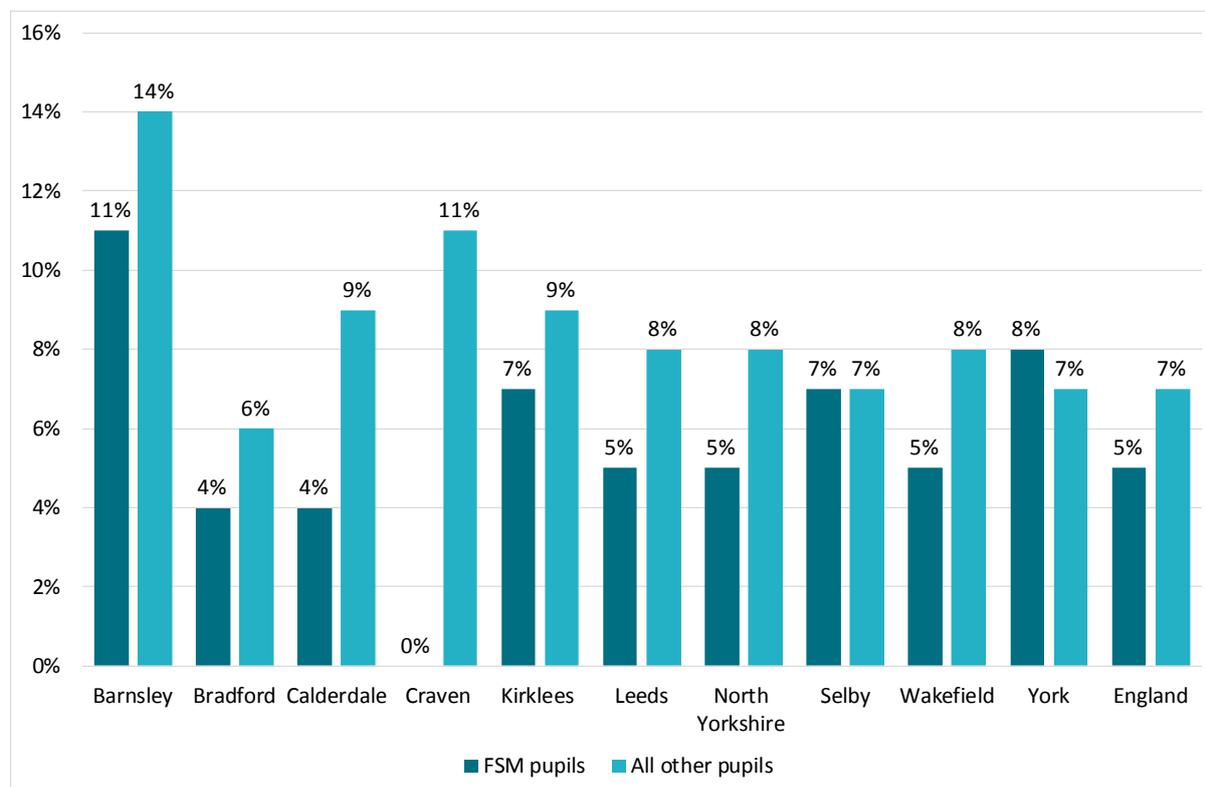
However, the City Region is similar or slightly higher than the national average with regard to most types of apprenticeship. With regard to differences in performance by type of scheme:

- Achievement rates are slightly lower for adult apprenticeship (24+) who will often be already employed rather than new recruits
- Advanced apprenticeships deliver higher achievement rates than the other levels - higher apprenticeships are around eight points lower than for advanced apprenticeships and intermediate four points lower.

4 Inclusion

In considering the supply of skills within the City Region, we need to take account of the inclusiveness of the skills pipeline, as well as the extent to which it is sufficient to meet needs. In the case of apprenticeships, which should provide an important mechanism for social mobility, there are issues about the degree to which they are inclusive.

Figure 9: % of pupils entering apprenticeships following completion of key stage 4



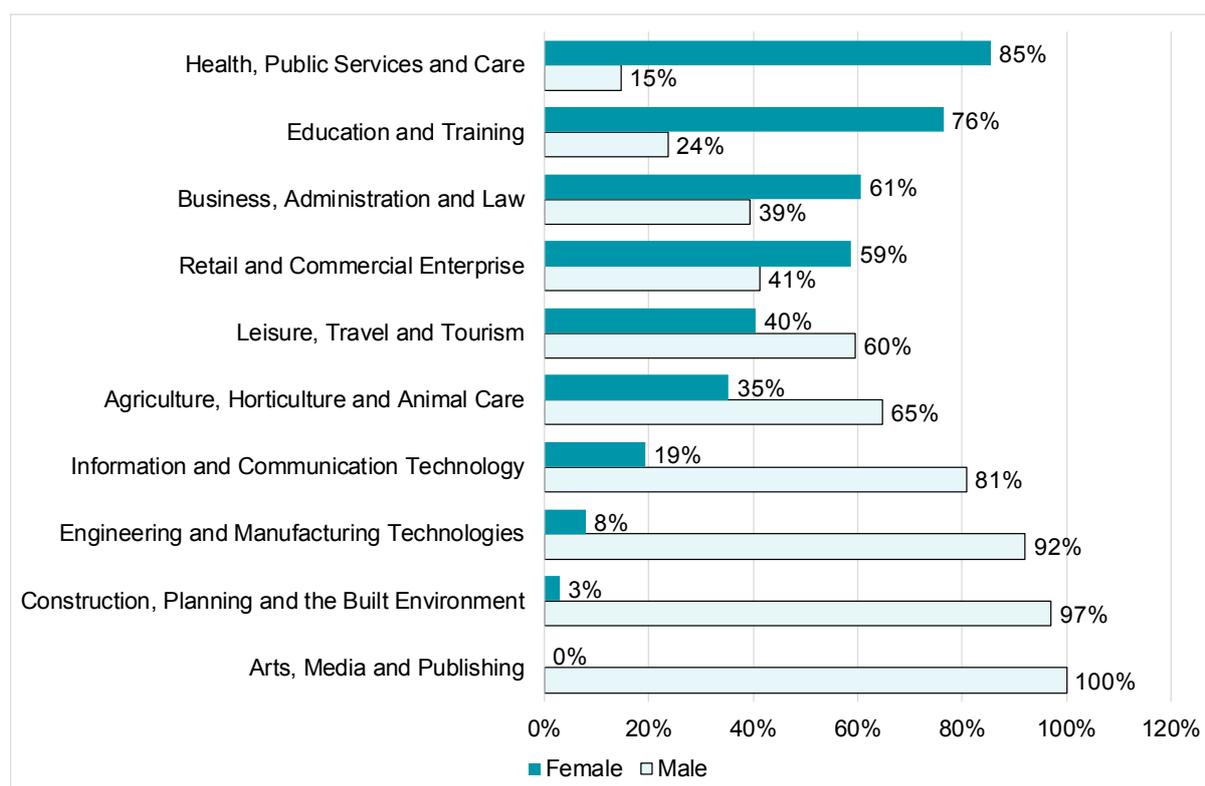
Source: Department for Education. 2015/16 destinations for the 2014/15 cohort (state-funded mainstream schools)

Across all districts of the City Region (with the exception of York, Selby and Craven) disadvantaged pupils are less likely to enter an apprenticeship than other pupils on the completion of key stage 4.

The national average figures also show a gap but this is less pronounced than for a number of districts in the City Region.

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Figure 10: Apprenticeship starts by subject area and gender, Leeds City Region 2016/17



Source: Department for Education

Note: there were fewer than 10 starts in total for Arts, Media and Publishing for this period

Another issue is that take-up of apprenticeships is highly segregated by gender and subject. For example, 85 per cent of starts on health, public services and care apprenticeships were for females but the proportion for construction, planning and the built environment was only 3 per cent. A range of national research shows that male-dominated apprenticeships such as construction and engineering offer better pay and prospects than those in which women are concentrated.

Relatively few people from ethnic minorities undertake an apprenticeship. Ten per cent of apprenticeship starts among under-25s in the City Region related to ethnic minority individuals during the 2017/18 academic year. This reflects the national average, also 10 per cent, but is much lower than the 20 per cent of the working age population of the City Region in this age group who are from an ethnic minority.