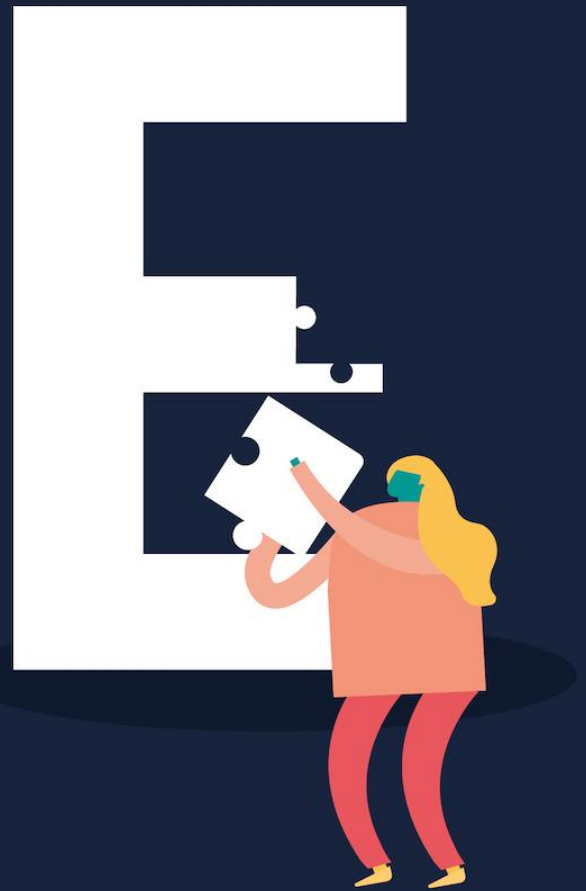




Improving adult skills



West Yorkshire Adult Education Budget 2021 – 2022

Contents

Foreword	3
Summary and purpose	5
Devolution and the Adult Education Budget	6
What is AEB?	6
AEB funding lines.....	7
Our AEB strategy	7
Headlines on progress (2021-22)	9
Data review	11
Introduction.....	11
Provider base	13
Overall number of learners and learning aims	14
Adult skills provision.....	15
Equality, diversity and inclusion.....	19
<i>Ethnicity</i>	19
<i>Disability</i>	21
<i>Gender</i>	23
<i>Age</i>	25
Supporting the unemployed.....	26
Supporting progression in employment.....	28
Basic skills.....	29
Systemic changes made in year 1	48
Local partnership management	48
Increasing the focus of funding on the most disadvantaged	48
Trialling new programmes	48
Future planned developments	49
Provider feedback	50
AEB success stories	52
Learner testimonials.....	53
Performance against priorities	54

Foreword

Tracy Brabin, Mayor of West Yorkshire

“I want everyone in West Yorkshire to have the skills and knowledge they need to secure a good quality job. Since becoming mayor, I’m pleased that we’re turning this commitment into reality.

I take great pride in supporting the people of West Yorkshire to access life-changing opportunities through our skills programmes. Our devolved Adult Education Budget (AEB) is one of the many examples of the huge and positive impact we can have when we can target funding to those who need it the most. In just one year, AEB has supported 43,000 residents learn new skills on over 56,000 courses, helping them to access better jobs and increase their income. I am especially proud of the impact AEB has had in helping those in our most disadvantaged communities to access a wider jobs market.

With the current cost of living crisis, there has never been a more important time to ensure that those out of work or those on low wages can progress into better paid jobs. Over the last academic year, 16,000 of our AEB learners were unemployed and 6,600 enrolments were for people on a low wage - that’s 2,000 more people than the previous year.



In the last academic year, 8,700 West Yorkshire residents took the first step and got their first ever qualification through an AEB course. And people of all ages are benefiting, proving it really is never too late to learn new skills and break down barriers to employment. I’m beyond delighted that we have been able to fund such an important start for people who can now embark on their journey to employment or progress into more senior roles, boosting their earning potential and improving lives.

I will continue to make the skills system more responsive and accessible to the people and businesses of West Yorkshire.”

Cllr James Lewis, Chair of the Employment and Skills Committee

“Providing all residents of West Yorkshire with the opportunity to develop their skills is a crucial part to building our economy and expanding the job market for the future.

Following West Yorkshire’s devolution deal, we were able to take control of the annual £65 million Adult Education Budget (AEB) for West Yorkshire and the direct management of training providers. This has allowed us to make many efficiencies such as cutting back on subcontracting and saving £1.4 million on management fees which has instead been invested directly into our learners.

With an agile approach, and the powers to do so, we have quickly identified skills shortages and prioritised sectors where there is a high demand. Our very first project responded to the urgent local need for more bus drivers. Over 120 learners undertook training, and many have already progressed to secure employment with



Arriva, First, and several transport organisations across the region.

We will continue to utilise the strength of regional partnerships to drive delivery and respond to the skills needs of West Yorkshire through the excellent Higher Education Institutions, Further Education Providers and Independent Training Providers.”

Summary and purpose

This report summarises the position of Adult Education Budget in West Yorkshire: the priorities for investment and the possibilities available through devolution.

The review is dual purpose:

- To state specifically what has been delivered in the first year of devolved AEB, in terms of impact on West Yorkshire residents
- To consider the change of this impact in comparison to pre-devolution data.

In the main, the report shows an overwhelming positive picture in the support that AEB delivers for West Yorkshires residents: 43,000 residents have been supported to upskill in over 77,000 courses. The partnership of providers has been rationalised to improve strategic planning and relationships, while learning programmes have been accessible in over 450 locations across West Yorkshire, ensuring residents have local access to reduce barriers to participation.



43,000 residents have been supported to upskill in over 77,000 courses

There is a similarly encouraging depiction of the changes and prioritisation of the funding in year 1. There is increased funding investment in priority areas: more residents supported from acutely disadvantaged areas, a more diverse demographics engaged in learning, more people on a low wage supported to upskill, increased learning in key sectors such as digital and construction.

The report also highlights areas for improvement and/or further investigation – such as ‘cold spots’ in disadvantaged areas where participation is low, the predominance of a younger demographic participating in AEB, and, while there’s an improvement in supporting individuals with a learning difficulty or disability, it is still reported as below the West Yorkshire demographic average.

The report provides detailed analysis across a range of key themes and summarises some of the key progress made against the five West Yorkshire AEB priorities.

Devolution and the Adult Education Budget

Devolution of the annual Adult Education Budget (AEB) was included as part of the March 2020 devolution deal agreed between West Yorkshire Combined Authority (the Combined Authority) and Government.

Devolution of AEB includes taking control of the annual £65million budget for West Yorkshire residents and direct management of the training providers in West Yorkshire who deliver the funding provision. It also allows the region to set its own priorities for funding and allows THE COMBINED AUTHORITY to align spending on skills to the opportunities and needs in the local economy.

More than 50% of AEB across the country is now controlled by devolved areas. Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) continues to contract non-devolved areas.

What is AEB?

The principal purpose of AEB is to engage adults and provide them with the skills needed for entering and sustaining work, an apprenticeship or other further learning and to achieve the equivalent of GCSE and A Level qualifications. The funding pays specifically for learning programmes (predominantly qualifications) and provides an element of learner support funding for those with learning difficulties and disabilities.

AEB supports the following legal entitlements to full funding for eligible learners:

- First Full Level 2
- First Full Level 3
- English and Maths
- Digital

In the national system, there are age restrictions regarding these entitlements, however as part of devolution we have removed these barriers and simplified access for West Yorkshire residents.

Any adult over the age of 19 is eligible for support through AEB. In particular, the following people are entitled to access free training if they are:

- Unemployed and seeking work
- Wanting to achieve Level 2 in Maths or English for the first time
- Earning a low wage (currently less than £21,255)
- Wanting to achieve basic digital skills
- Wanting to achieve their first GCSE or A Level equivalent qualification

AEB funding lines

AEB funding is made up of 4 components:

1. **Formula funding** – funding per learner, per qualification delivered. The funding rate achieved is based on the size/type of qualification and is weighted depending on a learner's status (eg unemployed) and based on areas of disadvantage. This constituted around £50.5 million of the West Yorkshire AEB pot in 2021/22, and funds sector specific vocational programmes, along with English, Maths, ESOL, digital skills and employability programmes.
2. **Community learning** is a sub-set of the Adult Education Budget. It is exceptionally flexible and operates on an open book accounting basis, with providers able to set their own fee policy, based on a set of funding principles. The purpose of Community learning is to develop the skills, confidence, motivation, and resilience of adults of different ages and backgrounds. Only LAs and FE Colleges hold this funding. Community Learning allocations in 2021/22 accounted for £8.44 million of the allocated AEB funds in West Yorkshire, which was 13% of the total AEB pot.
3. **Learner support** is available to provide financial support for residents with a specific financial hardship preventing them from taking part/ continuing in learning (i.e., travel, equipment, fee waivers).
4. **Learning support** meets the cost of putting in place a reasonable adjustment, as set out in the Equality Act 2010, for learners who have an identified learning difficulty and/ or disability, to achieve their learning goal.

Our AEB strategy

As part of preparation for devolution, we developed and consulted upon our AEB Strategy to determine the priorities and principles for the devolved fund.

The 5 priorities for funding are:

- Support the unemployed to gain and sustain employment
- Unlock progression opportunities and career adaptability through skills, particularly for those on low wages and with insecure work
- Make learning more inclusive to support disadvantaged residents
- Increase the supply of skills to support key sectors in our region
- Improve West Yorkshire's resilience by identifying and delivering the skills needed for the future

The ambition for devolution was to:

- Make the skills system more responsive and accessible through stronger local influence with all training providers
- Focus on our 'place', and ensure the right training and support offers are made to fill the skills gaps which are most prevalent locally
- Deliver a more efficient system by focussing on quality of provision and the impact it has on learners
- Make sure learning opportunities are joined up to local progression opportunities in life and work
- Work closely in partnership with providers to bring together planning of the wider skills and post-16 education system

To deliver this, the following key values and behaviours were agreed for both the MCA and prospective providers to uphold:



Place-based

Develop a place-based curriculum offer and wrap-around support with a clear focus on learner progression



Outstanding

Strive to deliver outstanding provision that puts the needs of learners and employees at the centre of delivery



Partnership

Work with partners and stakeholders in a positive and effective way, sharing best practice and improving the impact of skills system across West Yorkshire



Openness

Communicate openly and transparently with stakeholders, learners and partners



Progression

Develop approaches and partnerships which support adults to progress and prosper within their communities and employment



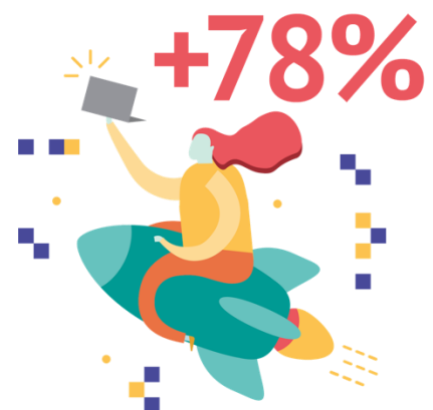
Subcontracting

Subcontract with integrity and ensure that positive outcomes for learners and employers is at the heart of all arrangements

This report provides data and examples of the progress made in these areas in year 1, and the alignment to the funding priorities.

Headlines on progress (2021-22)

- Devolved AEB programme supported **43,000** learners during the academic year, an **increase of 6%** on the previous year.
 - **8,700** West Yorkshire residents have attained their first ever qualification
 - **6,000** achieved their first level 2 qualification
 - **700** residents obtained their first level 3 qualification
- The number of providers delivering AEB in West Yorkshire was rationalised from **260 to 38**.
- Subcontracting was **reduced from £9m to £2.25m** in 2021/22, potentially saving around **£1.4m to directly support learners** rather than be taken in management fees
- West Yorkshire's learner profile for Adult Skills provision was **more diverse** than nationally – **52%** of learners were from a non-white ethnic minority in West Yorkshire compared with **34%** nationally for the same period.
- West Yorkshire's learner profile was also **more diverse** compared with the previous year: the proportion of non-white ethnic minority Adult Skills learners increased from 43% to 52%.
- The proportion of learners with a learning difficulty / disability /health problem also **increased slightly from 16% to 17%**.
- There was a stronger focus on digital skills – **digital was the fastest growing subject area** with the number of enrolments on digital courses growing by **1,700 (78%)** year on year in 2021/22, to almost **4,000**.



- There was a **strong focus on disadvantage**:
 - **6,600 enrolments** funded through AEB (12% of the total) were for people on a low wage (**2,000 more** than in previous years)
 - the proportion of Adult Skills learners who were out of work **increased from 59% to 64%**
 - The proportion of learners from the most acutely deprived neighbourhoods **increased from 37% to 41%**.
- Increased targeting of people with no qualifications or existing skills and qualifications at the lowest level and also focus on promoting progression:
 - Enrolments on basic skills courses **increased by 33% year on year** with a **57% increase** for ESOL enrolments
 - The proportion of learners with no qualifications or qualified at Entry level or Level 1 **only increased from 47% to 55%**
 - For **43% of learners** their course offered progression i.e. they undertook a course with a level higher than their prior attainment.
- **11% of Community Learning learners** progressed to an Adult Skills course during the academic year.
- A **success rate of 86%** was achieved for formal Adult Skills courses.



Data review

Introduction

This section examines the learning provision delivered in West Yorkshire through the devolved Adult Education Budget in 2021/22, the first year of devolved arrangements. It provides an analysis of the content of the learning delivered, in terms of subject, level and purpose and also examines the characteristics of the learners who were engaged through the programme, with a particular focus on equality, diversity and inclusion.

There is a strong focus on change over time, comparing aspects of the devolved programme in its first year with the position in 2020/21, the last year in which AEB in West Yorkshire was delivered through the national programme.

A key caveat to note is that restrictions relating to Covid-19 were in place throughout much of these two years. The pandemic had a significant impact on propensity to engage in adult education, particularly within the classroom setting.

Key points

- The number of AEB providers serving West Yorkshire learners has been rationalised during 2021/22, with a reduction from 260 to 38.
- The proportion of providers from outside the area and the proportion with very small numbers of learners has also been reduced.
- There was a year on year increase of 6% in the count of AEB-funded learners in 2021/22, driven by strong growth in Community Learning participants.
- The subject areas seeing the strongest growth in Adult Skills enrolments in 2021/22 were Information and communication technology and Construction. This growth was offset by declines in Health, public services and care and Business, administration, finance and law.
- People from an ethnic minority account for 52% of Adult Skills learners and 44% of Community Learning participants. Both proportions are above respective national averages. The number of ethnic minority learners increased by 25% in the first year of devolution.
- The proportion of learners with a learning difficulty, disability or health problems increased slightly in 2021/22 compared with the previous year from 16% to 17%. The proportion of West Yorkshire Adult Skills learners in this category is lower than the national average, although it is higher than average for Community Learning.

- Adult Skills learners are relatively young, with an average age below that of the West Yorkshire adult population.
- There has been an increased focus on getting people into employment within the devolved AEB programme. The proportion of Adult Skills learners who were out of work (either unemployed or inactive) has increased from 59% to 64%.
- Nonetheless, more than a third of Adult Skills learners were in employment, two-thirds of them fully funded, reflecting the commitment to enable learners to progress in employment. Around 40% of literacy learners and 41% of numeracy learners were in employment.
- During 2021/22 there were 6,600 enrolments under the low wage pilot in West Yorkshire, accounting for 12% of total Adult Skills enrolments.
- A total of 13,200 West Yorkshire learners undertook a basic skills course during 2021/22 academic year, equivalent to 41% of all learners on the Adult Skills programme.
- Almost three-quarters of basic skills learners are from an ethnic minority group.
- The number of basic skills enrolments saw year on year growth of 5,200 or 33% whilst the number of learners grew by 25%, a net increase of 2,600. This was driven primarily by an increase of 58% in the number of Language learners, although there was growth across all basic skills categories.
- During the 2021/22 academic year around 17,600 learners (or 41% of the total) were resident in the most deprived neighbourhoods (IMD decile 1). The proportion increases to around one half for both Bradford and Leeds. Year-on-year the proportion of learners from the most deprived neighbourhoods grew by 9% in volume terms, with the share of total learners increasing from 37% to 41%.
- The number of enrolments under each of the legal entitlements grew during 2021/22, with the exception of the entitlement relating to a first Level 2 qualification for 19-23 year olds.
- Overall, 43% of Adult Skills learners, or 14,100 in absolute terms, undertook learning that represented progression during 2021/22. Around 8,700 learners, or 27% of the total, undertook their first qualification through Adult Skills in 2021/22. Just over 6,000 learners achieved their first Level 2 through the Adult Skills programme in 2021/22, whilst 700 learners achieved their first Level 3.
- The overall success rate for the Adult Skills programme for 2021/22 academic year was 86%, broadly similar to the national average. ESOL aims had the highest success rate of all provision types during 2021/22, followed by vocational aims at Level 1, Entry Level and Level 2.

Provider base

Maintaining stability in the system was an important requirement from Department for Education in securing the devolution deal. Previously the AEB budget was split between 200+ providers: including 'grant holders' (Local Authorities and Colleges), and independent training providers

The implementation of the devolved AEB programme in West Yorkshire involved a rationalisation of the provider base, providing the potential for economies of scale and reduced management costs.

Commissioning of the AEB budget was divided in to three routes:

1. **West Yorkshire Grant Providers:** Local Authorities and the West Yorkshire Colleges – these are our local place shapers and have a strategic delivery role in supporting WY adults.
2. **Leeds City Region Grant Providers:** these neighbouring providers support learner choice and travel to learn/work patterns, thus reduced the need for cross-border agreements.
3. **Procured Training Providers:** The remaining allocations were procured through an open competitive tendering process to bring in specialist and targeted training provision for our residents and sectors of need.

The number of providers delivering AEB provision in West Yorkshire was reduced from 260 in 2020/21 to 38 in 2021/22.

Number of providers delivering AEB provision in West Yorkshire, 2020/21 to 2021/22

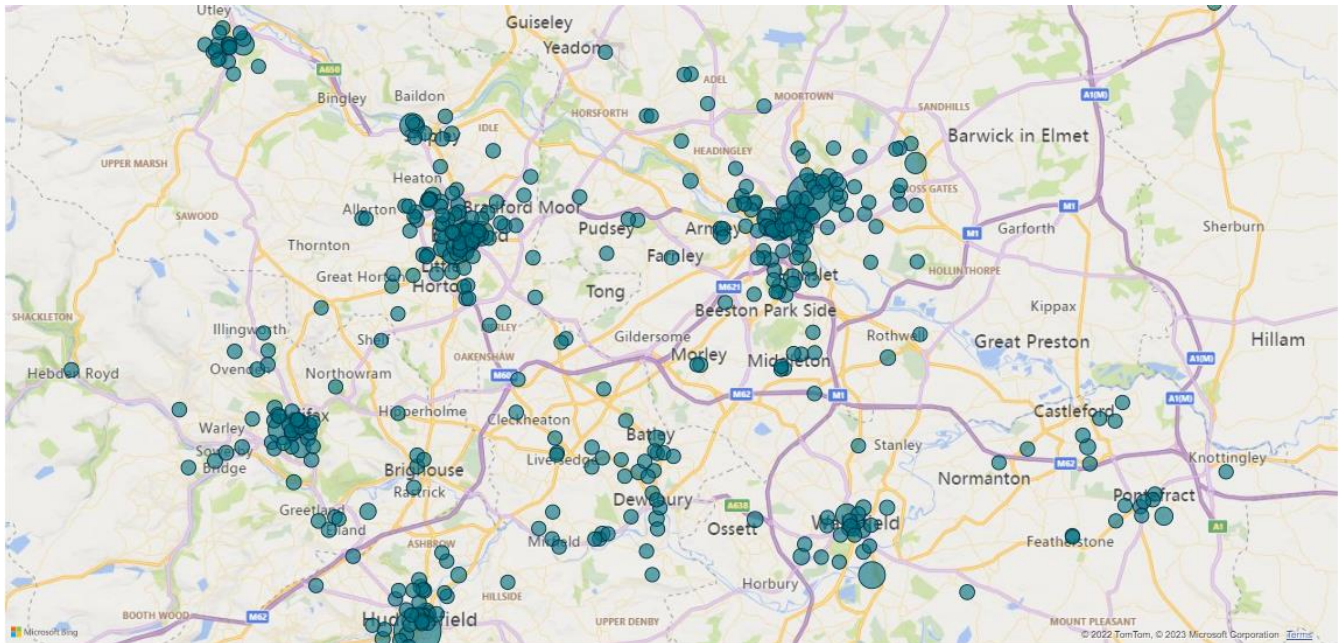
Number of learners supported	2020/21		2021/22	
	Count of providers	% of total providers	Count of providers	% of total providers
Fewer than 20	145	56%	1	3%
20 to 49 learners	34	13%	0	0%
50 to 99 learners	25	10%	3	8%
100 to 999	44	17%	14	37%
1,000+ learners	12	5%	20	53%
	260		38	

In 2020/21 more than half of providers active in West Yorkshire supported fewer than 20 learners, with only 22% supporting 100 or more learners. In 2021/22 only one provider had fewer than 20 learners and 4 out of 5 providers supported 100 or more learners.

In 2020/21, four-fifths of providers active in West Yorkshire were based outside the area. This proportion fell to less than a third (29%) under devolved management in 2021/22.

While the number of providers was reduced to 38, providers maintained a significant number of delivery centres across West Yorkshire which supported local access to learning, outlined in the diagram below.

Delivery centres in 2021-22



Overall number of learners and learning aims

Devolved AEB in West Yorkshire is a substantial programme. During the 2021/22 academic year there was a total of 32,000 learners supported through the Adult Skills element of AEB and a further 13,000 through the Community Learning strand, giving a total of 43,000 learners for the programme as a whole¹.

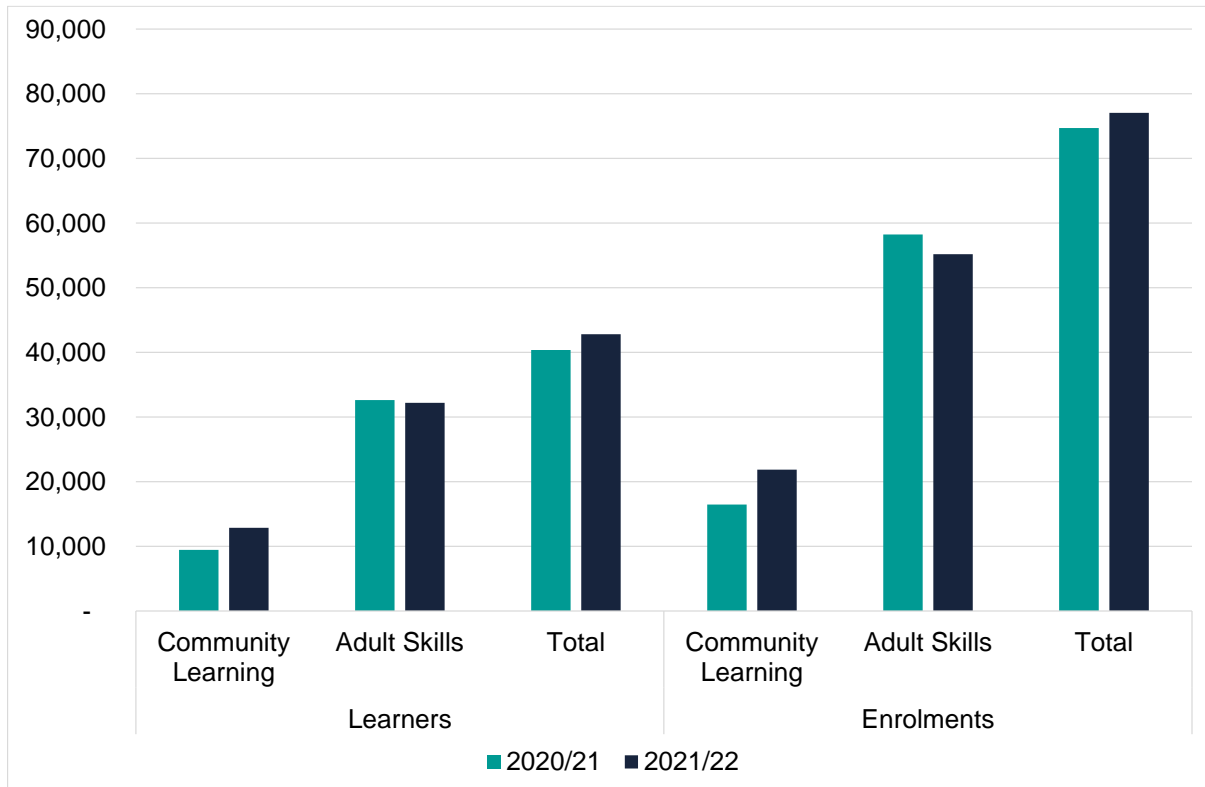
With regard to the number of enrolments on learning aims, there were 55,000 enrolments on Adult Skills courses and 22,000 on Community Learning, a total of 77,000 enrolments. On average, each learner enrolled for 1.8 aims – this same ratio applies to Adult Skills, Community Learning and the overall AEB programme.

Almost four-fifths (79%) of Adult Skills enrolments were fully-funded in 2021/22. This is an increase on the previous year when the proportion was 76%. This reflects an increased focus on provision that is more likely to attract fully-funded learners, such as basic skills courses and provision targeted on the unemployed. This shift has been achieved through provider management and changes to funding eligibility introduced by the Combined Authority.

¹ The figures do not appear to sum because a significant proportion of learners participated in both Community Learning and Adult Skills.

The number of learners supported through devolved AEB in West Yorkshire in 2021/22 saw a year-on-year increase of 6%, driven by growth of 36% in the number of Community Learning participants. Providers have supported more residents with the allocation provided, possibly due to increasing resident confidence following the pandemic. The volume of Adult Skills learners remained flat.

Change in number of learners and enrolments for AEB-funded learning aims in West Yorkshire

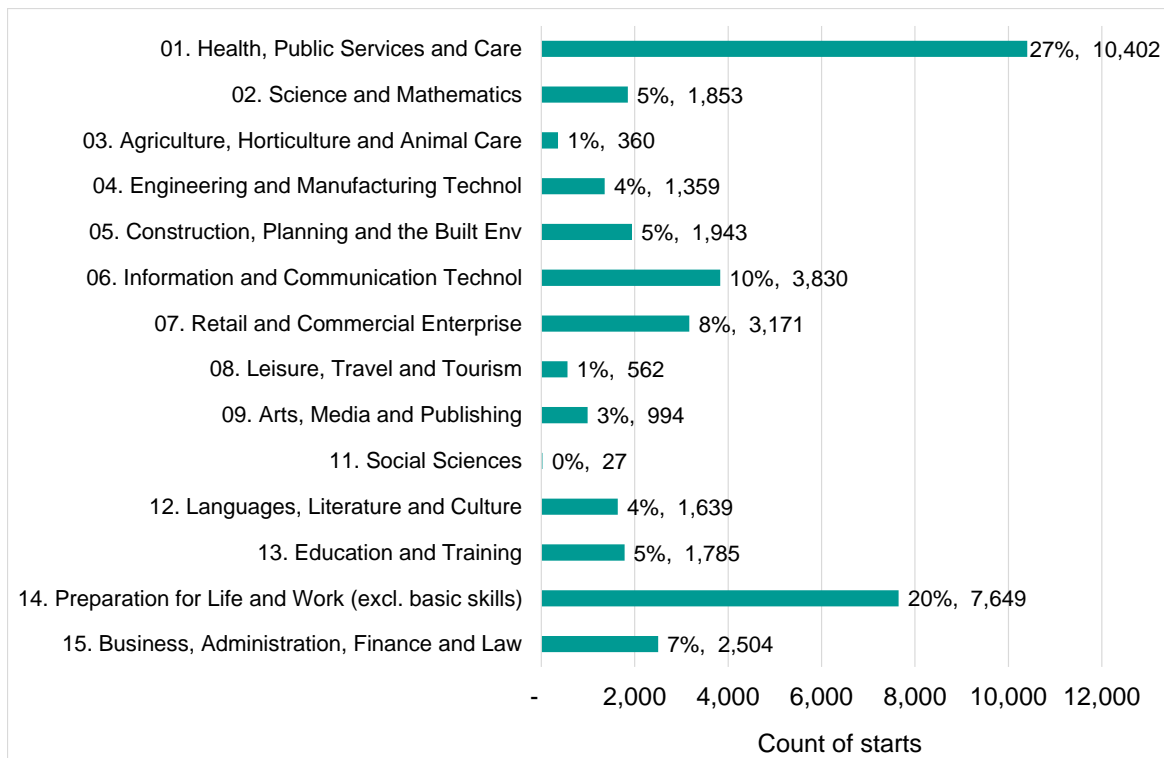


The total number of AEB-funded enrolments grew by 4% as Community Learning enrolments increased by around one third whilst Adult Skills enrolments declined by 5%.

Adult skills provision

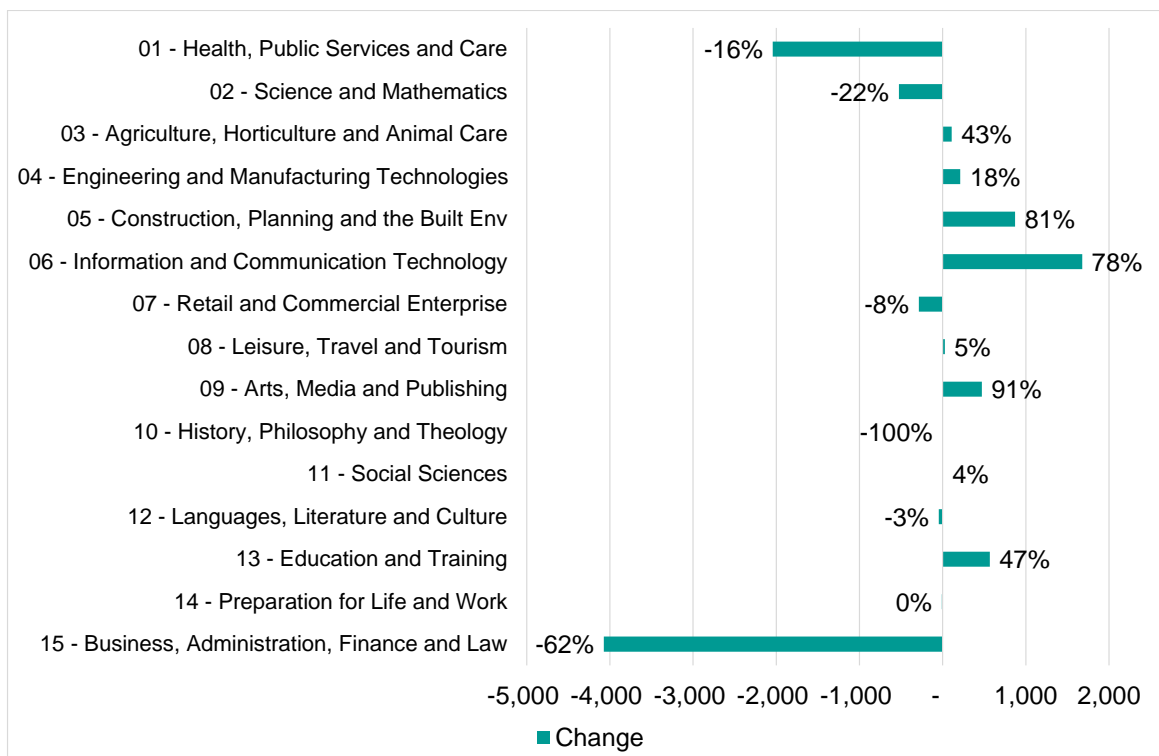
When basic skills aims are excluded, the subject areas with the highest take-up in terms of starts during the 2021/22 academic year were Health, public services and care (27% of total starts), Preparation for life and work (excluding enrolments for basic skills aims) (20% of total starts) and Information and communication technology (10% of starts).

Number of Adult Skills enrolments by subject area, West Yorkshire, 2021/22 academic year



The total number of Adults Skills enrolments declined by 5% year on year but performance at subject level was highly variable. The subjects with the biggest net growth in enrolments were *Information and communication technology, Construction, Education and training and Arts, media and publishing.*

Net change in number of Adult Skills enrolments by subject area – 2021/22 vs 2020/21, West Yorkshire (% net change in brackets)



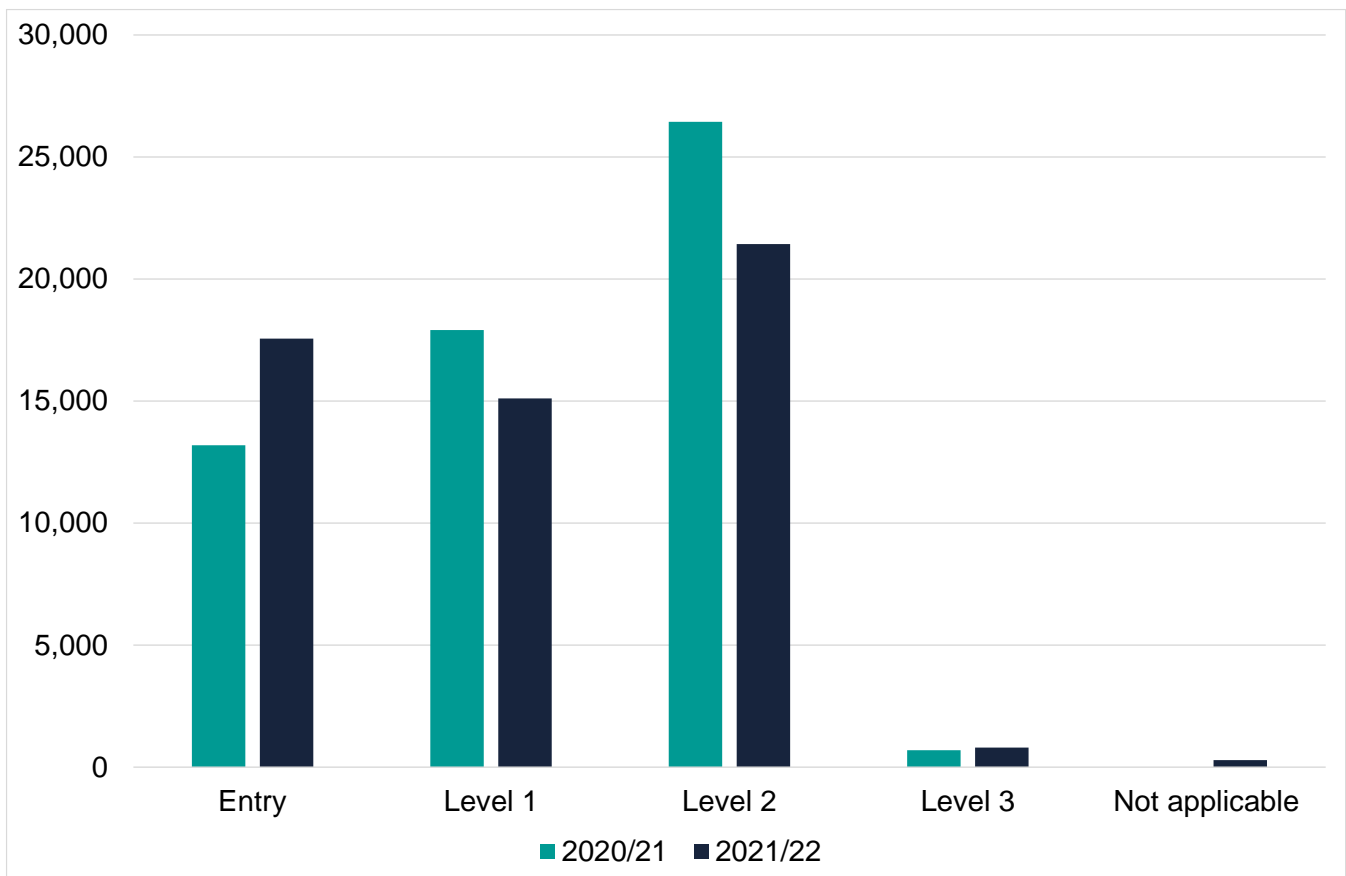
Two subject areas saw very large declines in enrolments in absolute terms: *Business, administration, finance and law*, with a reduction of around 4,100, and *Health, public services and care*, with a net decline of around 2,000. There were also significant falls for *Science and mathematics* and *Retail and commercial enterprise*.

Level

The main focus of Adult Skills provision is on qualifications up to and including Level 2. Level 2 is equivalent to GCSE and is typically equated with the qualification level required for basic employability. In addition, some Level 3 provision is fully-funded for 19-23 year olds in line with the relevant legal entitlement.

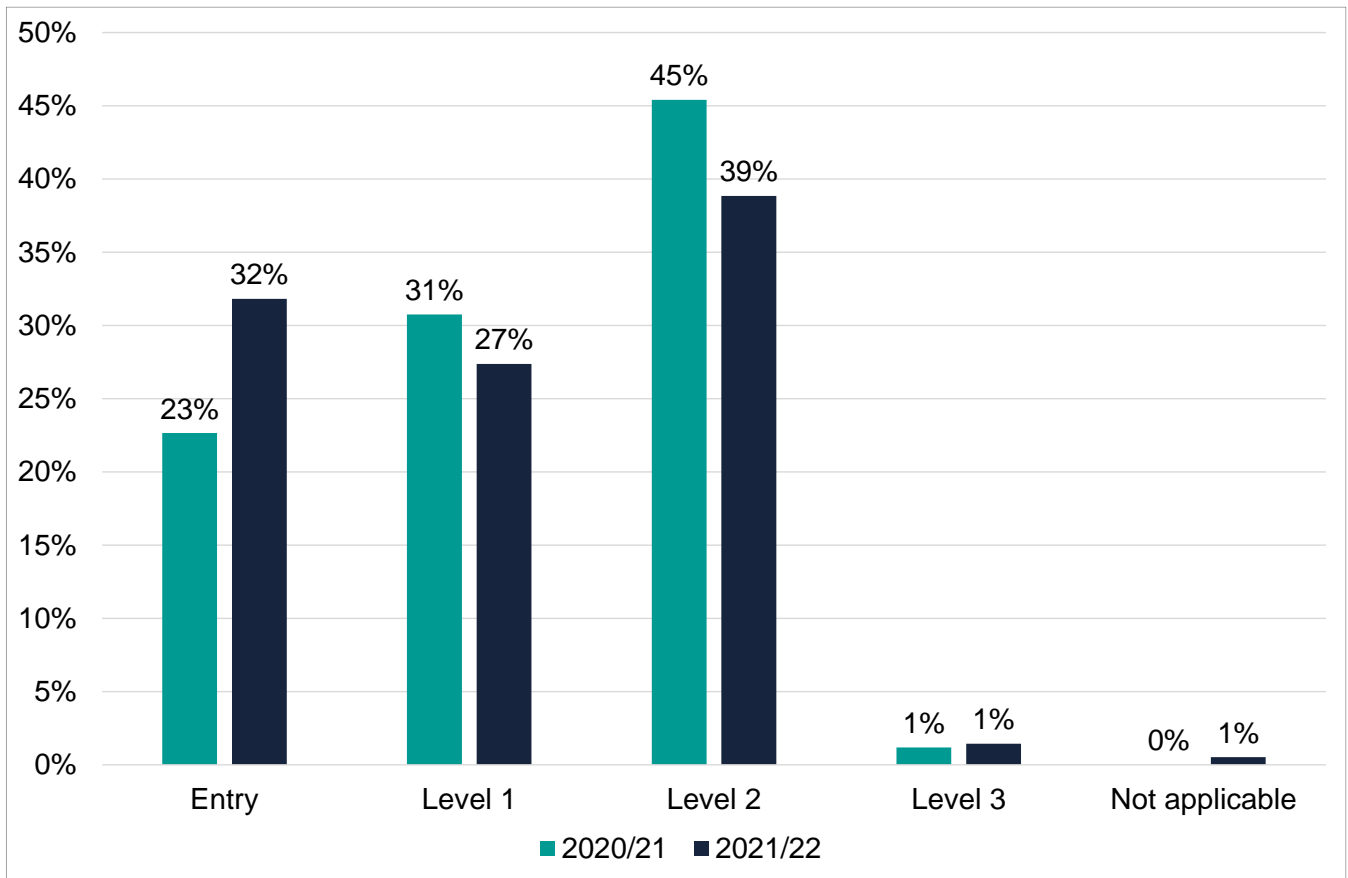
Alongside the overall decline in total Adult Skills enrolments, there was a fall in the volume of enrolments at Level 1 (-16%) and Level 2 (-19%) during 2021/22, offset by growth of 33% at Entry level (an increase of around 4,400 in absolute terms). There was also an increase of 15% (around 100 in absolute terms) at Level 3.

Net change in number of Adult Skills enrolments by notional NVQ level – 2021/22 vs 2020/21, West Yorkshire



The net increase in the number of enrolments at entry level reflects an increase in the share of provision that was at entry level in 2021/22. This grew from less than a quarter to nearly one third.

Change in the profile of Adult Skills enrolments by notional NVQ level – 2021/22 vs 2020/21, West Yorkshire (% of total enrolments)



There was a fall in the share of enrolments at both Level 1 and Level 2, whilst the proportion at Level 3 saw little change.

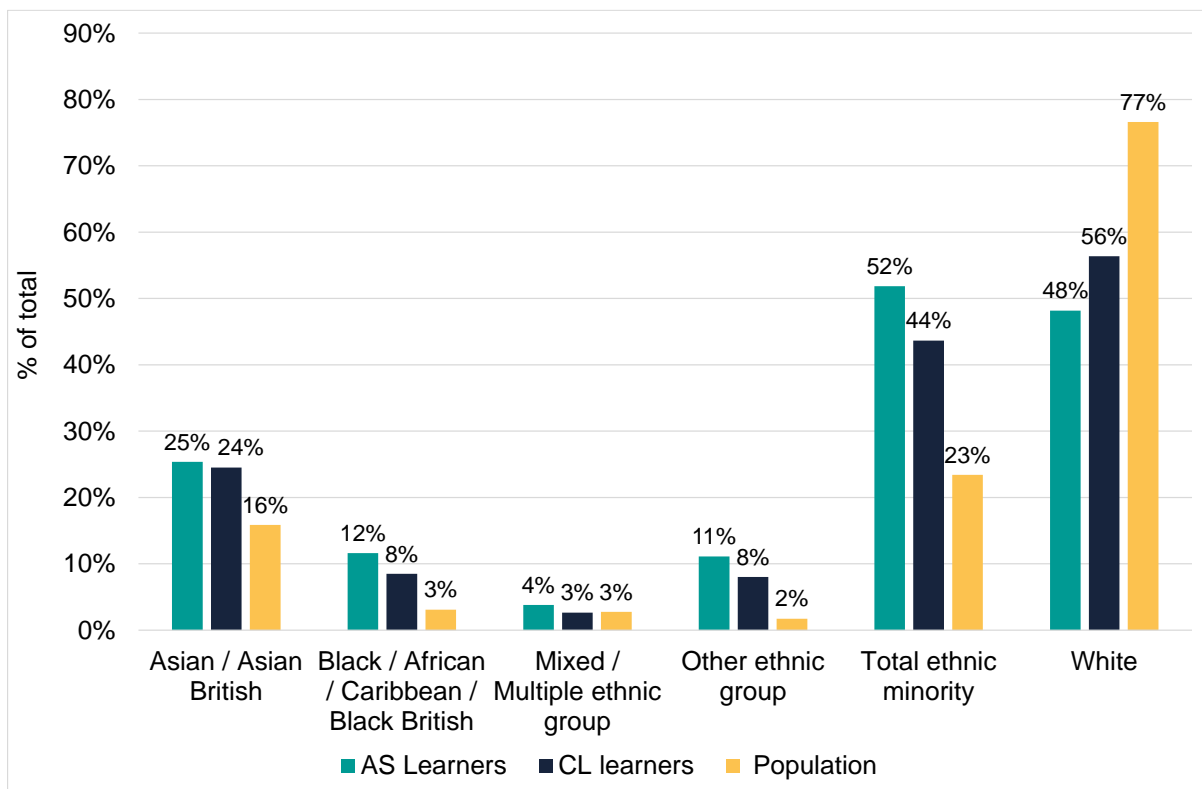
Equality, diversity and inclusion

One of the key objectives of West Yorkshire’s devolved AEB programme is to make learning more inclusive. This section examines the profile of learners according to their ethnicity, disability status and sex, focusing on the picture in 2021/22 and comparing it with the pre-devolution situation in 2020/21.

Ethnicity

People from ethnic minority groups are strongly represented among learners undertaking AEB-funded courses in West Yorkshire. For Adult Skills provision they are more than twice as strongly represented as might be expected based on their representation in the wider population² of the area.

Profile of learners starting AEB-funded learning aims in West Yorkshire by broad ethnic group versus ethnicity profile of West Yorkshire population



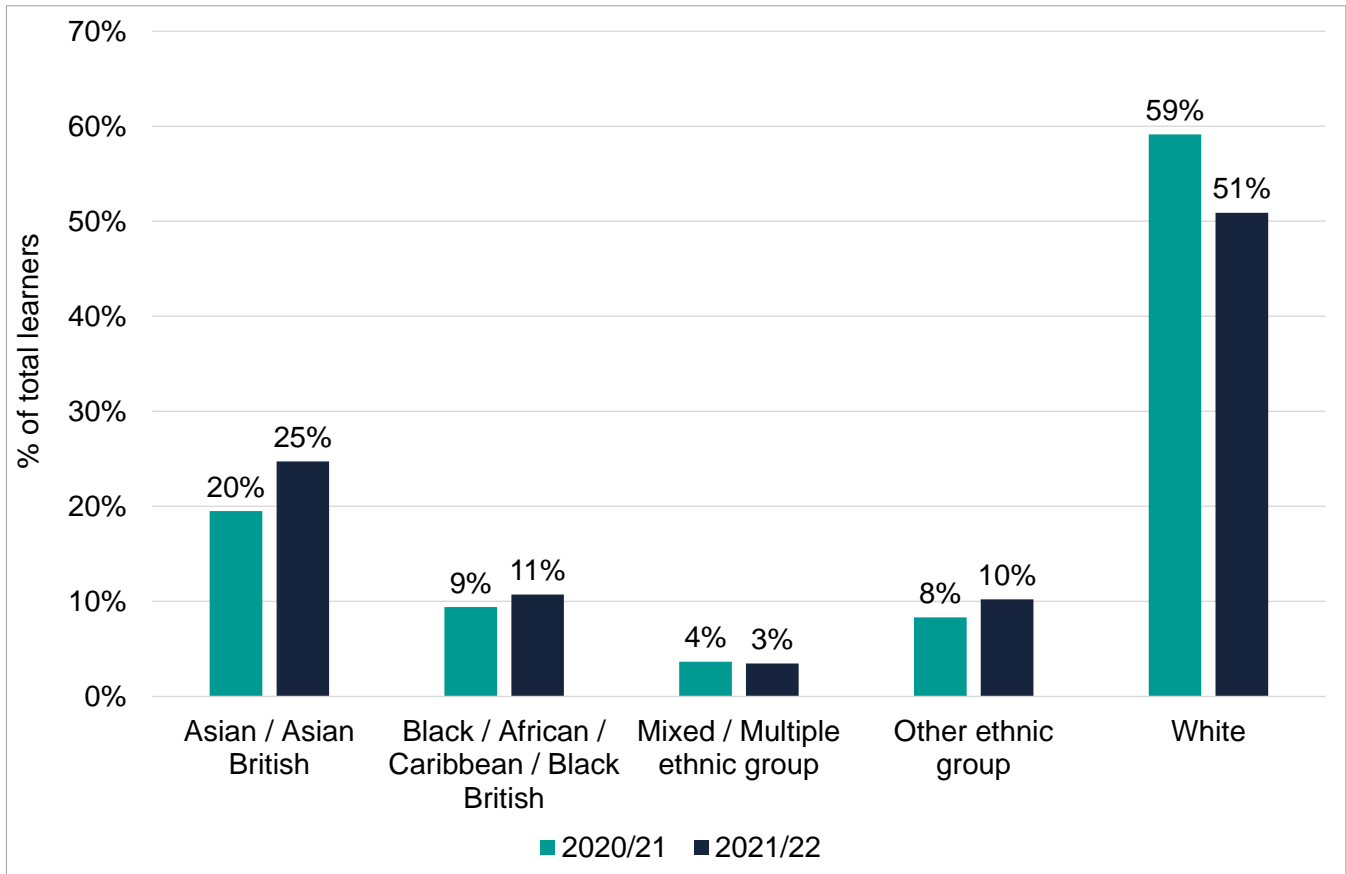
For both Adult Skills (AS) and Community Learning (CL) all broad ethnic minority groups account for a higher proportion of AEB-funded learners relative to their representation in the population. The single exception is the proportion of Community Learning participants who are

² At the time of writing population figures broken down by age and ethnic group were not yet available from Census 2021. It is therefore not possible to compare the AEB learner profile by ethnic group with the population profile of people aged 19+. Since a relatively high proportion of under-19 population is known to be from an ethnic minority it is expected that

from a Mixed ethnic group, which is smaller than the proportion of the total population who fall within this ethnic group.

The proportion of West Yorkshire learners who are from an ethnic minority is higher than the national average for both Adult Skills (national figure is 34%³) and Community Learning (national figure is 27%).

Change in profile of learners starting AEB-funded learning aims in West Yorkshire by broad ethnic group



There was an increase in the proportion of learners from a non-white ethnic minority group in 2021/22 compared with 2020/21 (pre-devolution), rising from 41% to 49% of total learners. Each broad ethnic minority group also saw an increase in learner share except for the Mixed / Multiple ethnic group. The number of ethnic minority learners participating in learning grew by 27% in 2021/22 compared with the previous year.

Learners from a non-white ethnic minority group were less likely to be in employment and more likely to be unemployed or inactive than white learners. Only 24% of ethnic minority learners were in employment (compared with a figure of 48% for white learners), whilst 60% were unemployed (white:39%) and 16% inactive (white: 12%).

³ National average figure is for 19+ Education and Training provision the closest available comparator for West Yorkshire Adult Skills provision.

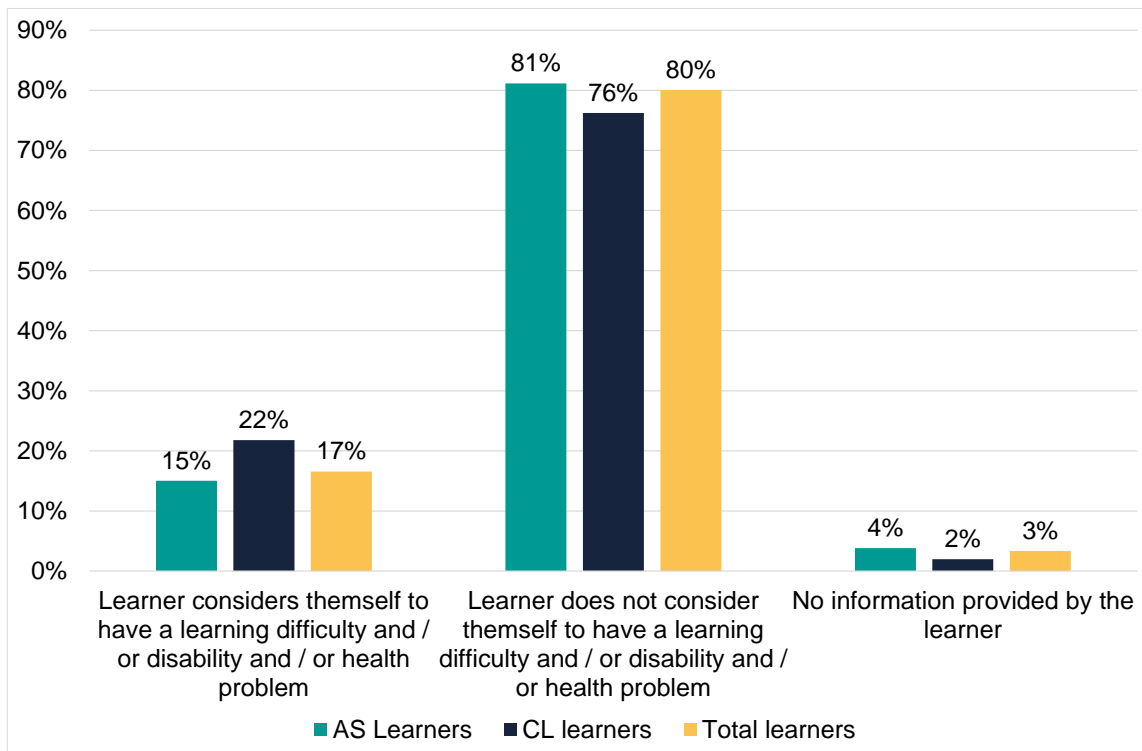
However, non-white ethnic minority learners were less likely to benefit from the low wage pilot. Only 12% of total learners in this group were part of the pilot, compared with 18% of white learners.

The proportion of ethnic minority learners participating in Adult Skills increased from 43% to 52%, whilst for Community Learning the proportion increased from 37% to 44%.

Disability

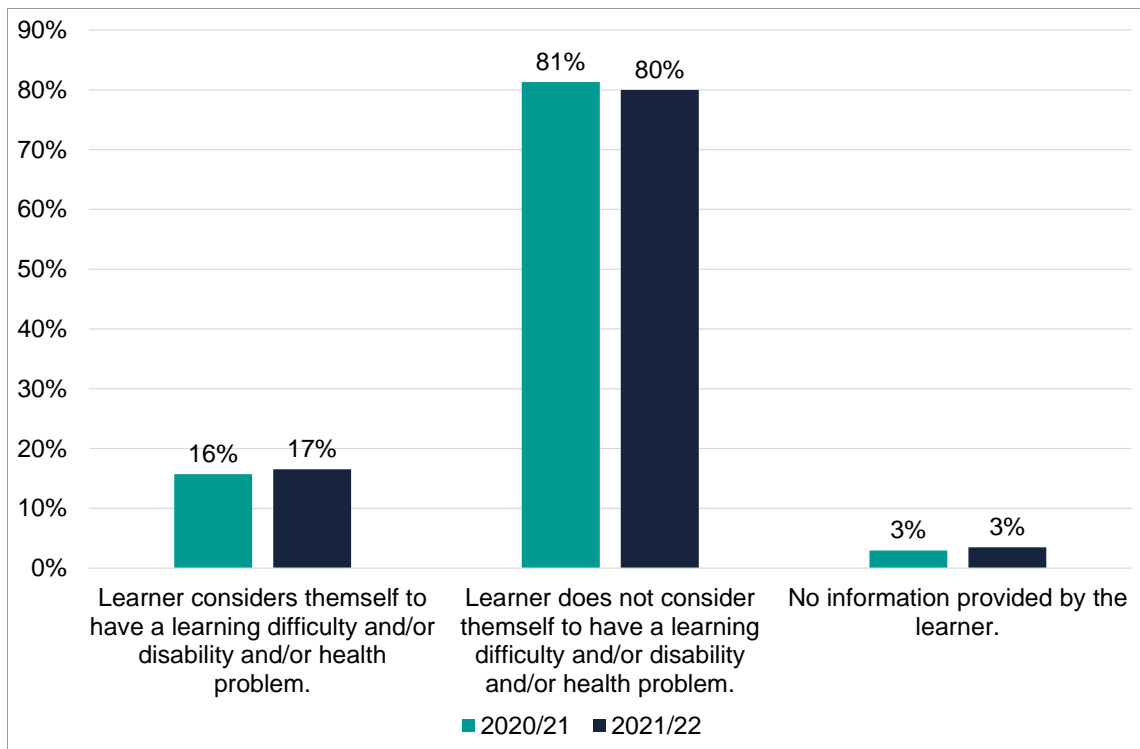
Around 17% of AEB learners in West Yorkshire indicate that they have a learning difficulty and / or disability and / or health problem. This is lower than the proportion of the wider working age population of West Yorkshire who are Equality Act core or work-limiting disabled in West Yorkshire, which stands at 24%.

Profile of learners starting AEB-funded learning aims in West Yorkshire by disability status



The proportion of Community Learning participants in West Yorkshire who say they have a learning difficulty / disability / health problem is somewhat higher, at 22%, than the figure for Adult Skills of 15%. It is also higher than the national average figure for Community Learning of 19%. The national average figure for 19+ Education and Training is 20% - 5 points higher than the West Yorkshire Adult Skills figure.

Change in profile of learners starting AEB-funded learning aims in West Yorkshire by disability status

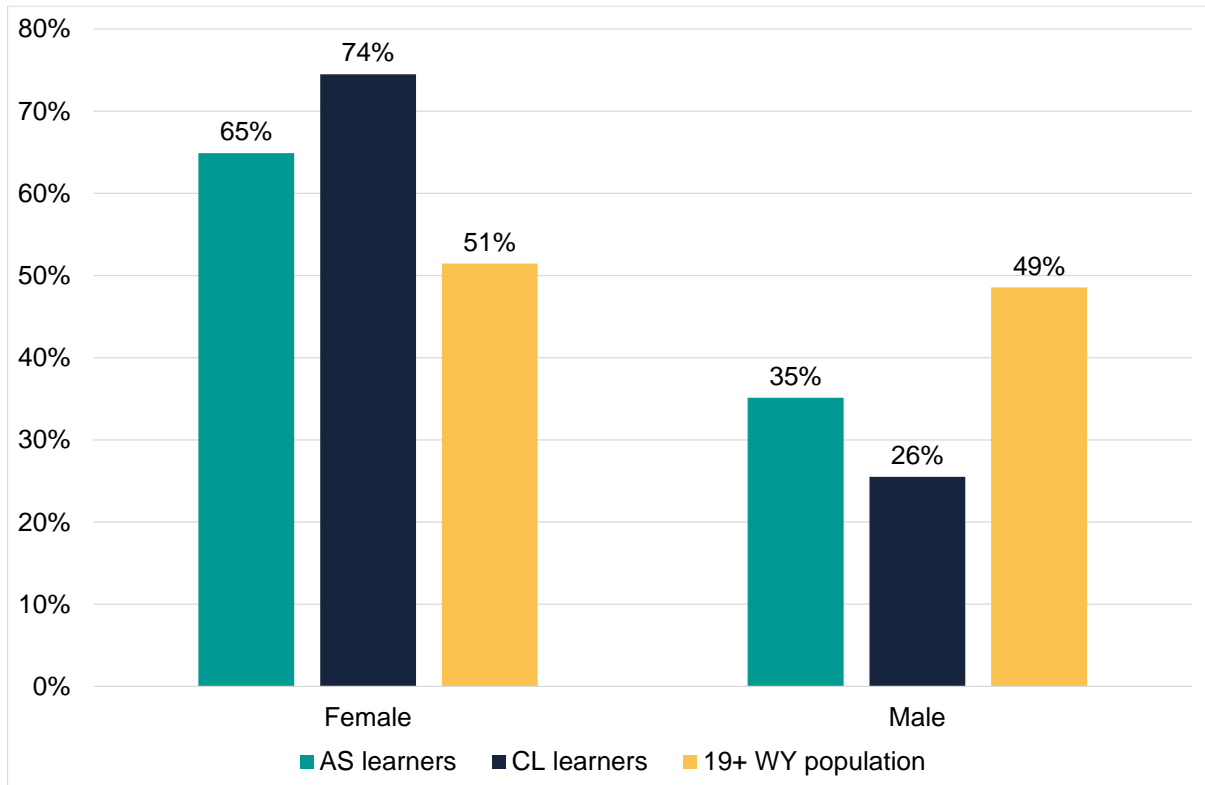


The proportion of learners with a learning difficulty, disability or health problem increased slightly in 2021/22 compared with the previous year, from 16% to 17%. This was due an increase of two percentage points for Community Learning from 20% to 22%; the Adult Skills proportion remained the same.

Gender

Women and girls are in the majority among West Yorkshire’s AEB learners, accounting for two-thirds 67% of total learners, 65% of Adult Skills learners and three-quarters (74%) of Community Learning participants. Both proportions are much higher than female representation in West Yorkshire’s population aged 19 and above.

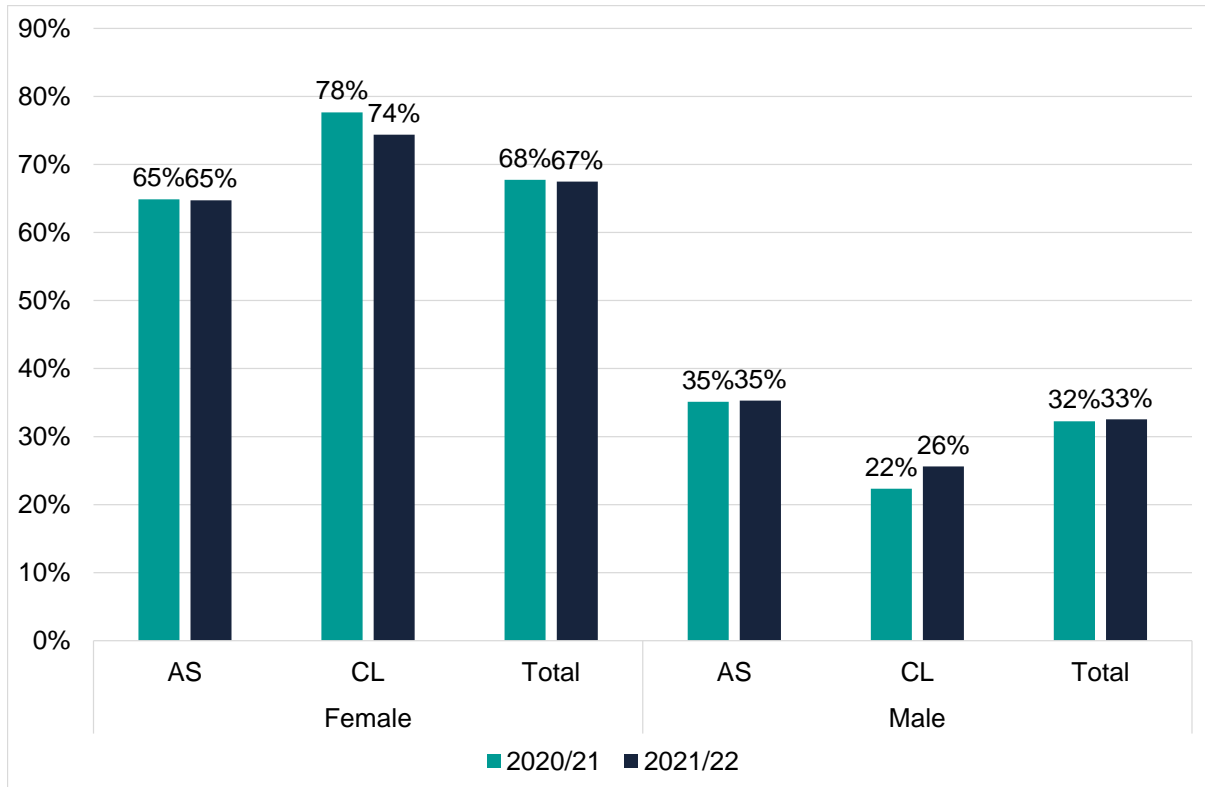
Profile of learners starting AEB-funded learning aims in West Yorkshire by sex



This picture is in line with the national profile. The national average proportions of female learners are 64% and 74% for 19+ Education and Training and Community Learning respectively.

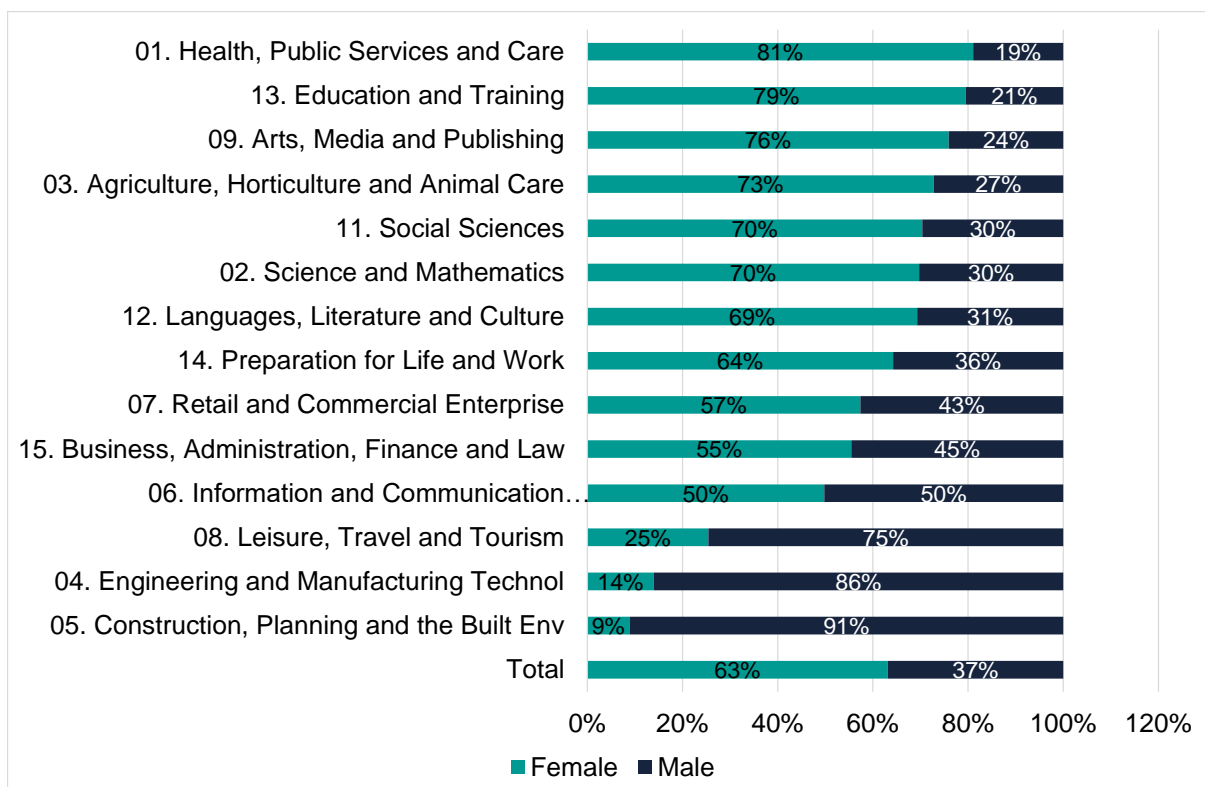
The proportion of female learners fell slightly between 2020/21 and 2021/22 (with a corresponding increase in the share of male learners) from 68% to 67%, driven by a 4 percentage point fall in the female proportion of Community Learning participants.

Change in profile of learners starting AEB-funded learning aims in West Yorkshire by strand and sex



The Adult Skills programme in West Yorkshire faces a similar challenge of gender segregation that is present in other forms of education and training and in the wider employment market.

Profile of Adult Skills enrolments by subject area and sex of learner, West Yorkshire, 2021/22 academic year

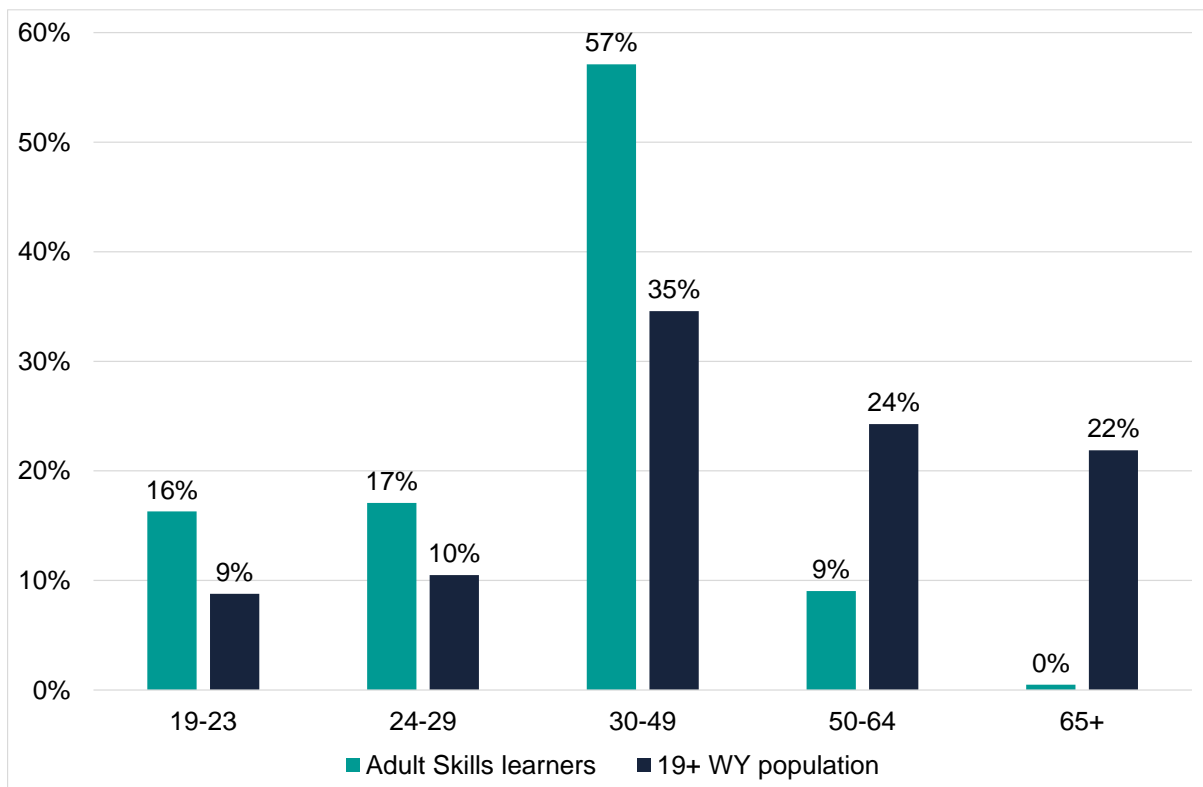


Women account for the vast majority of enrolments in some subjects, most notably Health, public services and care (81% of the total) and Education and training (79% of the total). But although women contribute almost two-thirds of total enrolments they represent a small minority in “traditionally male” subjects such as Construction (9% of enrolments) and Engineering and manufacturing (14%). This is a concern because these subjects offer good prospects for pay and progression.

Age

Adult Skills learners in West Yorkshire are relatively young, with an average age of 36 years compared to an average age for the wider West Yorkshire population (aged 19+) of 48 years.

Profile of learners starting Adult Skills learning aims in West Yorkshire by age, 2021/22



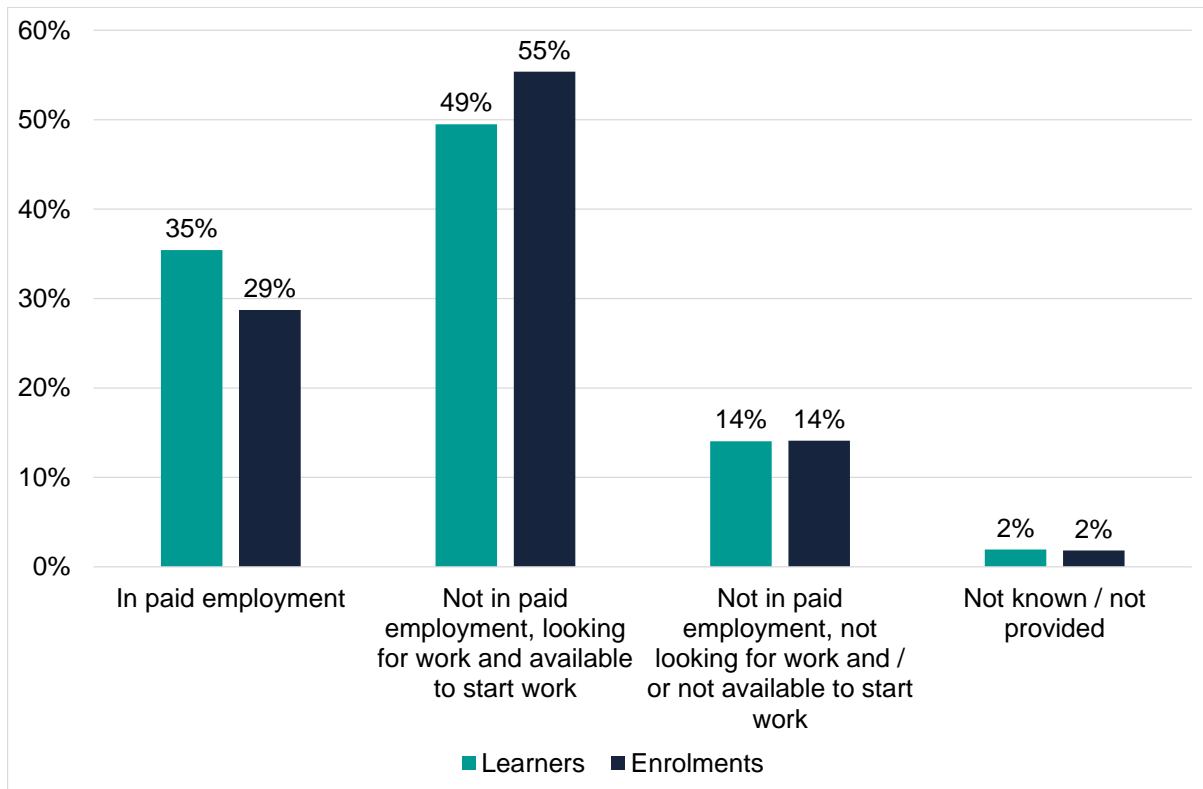
Sixteen per cent of Adult Skills learners fall into the 19-23 age category, almost twice the proportion of the wider 19+ population who are aged 19-23. This partly reflects the policy focus on this age group, including the presence of legal entitlements for 19-23 year olds. Adult Skills learners are also disproportionately represented in the 24-29 and 30-49 groups but are under-represented in the older 50-64 and 65+ groups.

The proportion of Adult Skills learners aged 19-23 fell slightly in 2021/22 compared with the previous year, from 18% of total learners to 16%.

Supporting the unemployed

The Combined Authority’s AEB Strategy prioritises supporting the unemployed to gain and sustain employment through the development of economically valuable skills.

Profile of Adult Skills learners and enrolments by learner employment status, West Yorkshire, 2021/22 academic year

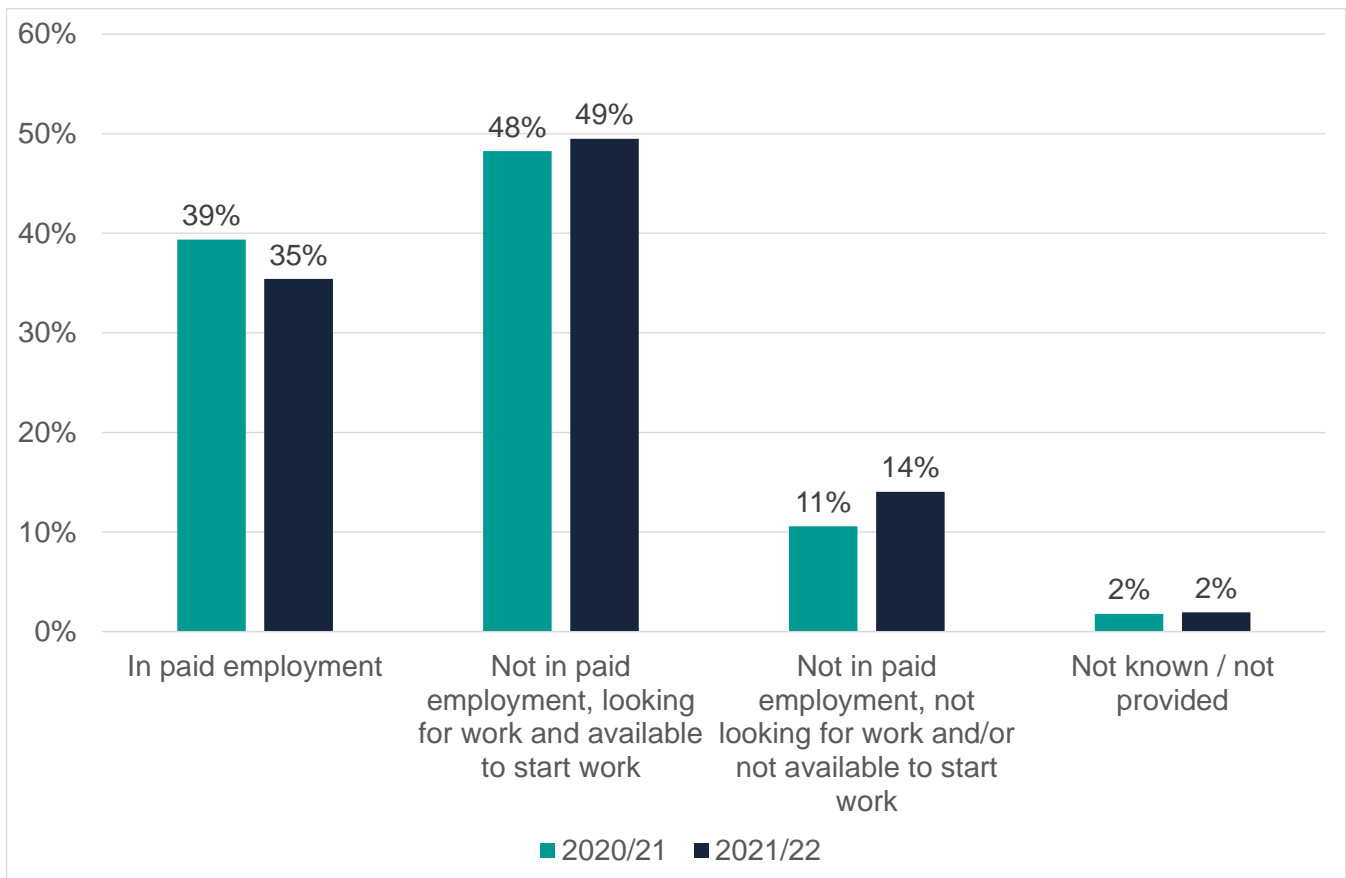


During the first year of devolved AEB in West Yorkshire, around 16,000 unemployed⁴ learners were supported through the Adult Skills strand of the programme, representing 49% of all learners and 55% of total enrolments.

In addition, 14% of learners were not in paid employment but were not looking for work and / or not available for work (i.e. economically inactive). Many of these inactive individuals will be making their first steps towards engagement with the labour market.

⁴ Defined here as “Not in paid employment, looking for work and available to start work”.

Change in profile of learners starting Adult Skills learning aims in West Yorkshire by employment status



The proportion of Adult Skills learners in paid employment fell by 4 percentage points between 2020/21 and 2021/22, with a corresponding increase in unemployed and inactive learners. The proportion of learners who were out of work grew from 59% of the total to 64% over the same period.

The sector-based work academy programme (SWAP) is designed to help Job Centre Plus claimants build confidence to improve their job prospects and enhance their CV, whilst helping employers in sectors with current local vacancies to fill them. SWAP consists of three elements: pre-employment training; work experience placement; and a guaranteed job interview.

Formal ‘SWAP’ provision formed a small part of the AEB programme in 2021/22, with 217 enrolments for 128 learners, equivalent to less than 1% of total Adult Skills enrolments. It should be noted that a range of similarly packaged programmes were delivered, but were not formally recorded as they do not fit the DWP criteria in terms of course length.

Enrolments were principally concentrated in Preparation for Work aims focusing on employability skills plus aims for the Rail Engineering sector, together with aims focusing on Construction and Horticulture.

Supporting progression in employment

A priority within the Combined Authority's AEB strategy is to unlock progression opportunities and career adaptability through skills, particularly for those on low wages and with insecure work.

Around a third (35%) of learners supported through the Adult Skills strand of AEB during 2021/22 were in employment. Employed learners accounted for 29% of total Adult Skills enrolments. Two-thirds of enrolments for employed learners were fully funded (compared with 79% of total enrolments).

Under the Combined Authority's funding rules for its low wage pilot providers may fully fund provision up to and including level 2 if the learner is employed but paid at a rate below the low wage threshold. The Combined Authority's threshold is pegged to the Real Living Wage and is higher than the national rate that is applied to non-devolved provision.

During 2021/22 there were 6,600 enrolments under the low wage pilot in West Yorkshire, accounting for 12% of total Adult Skills enrolments, with 4,900 learners benefiting from the pilot.

An additional 2,100 enrolments for low wage learners were supported in 2021/22 compared with the previous year, an increase of 46%.

Three quarters of enrolments under the low wage pilot in 2021/22 were in the *Health, public services and care* and *Preparation for life and work* subject areas. The latter category includes basic skills provision and 30% of enrolments for low wage learners were for basic skills aims, with 25% specifically for basic literacy aims.

Destinations

From the available data in the ILR it is difficult to assess the added value of the AEB in terms of supporting learners into positive destinations. For example, the proportion of learners in employment following their participation in AEB is of limited interest because a significant proportion of learners are already in employment at the start of their studies.

Looking specifically at the destinations of learners who were unemployed or inactive at the outset:

- 1,662 learners who were unemployed at the start of learning had a destination of paid employment (11% of total unemployed learners)
- 3,577 (23%) unemployed learners had a destination of part-time FE
- 264 (5%) inactive learners had a paid employment destination whilst 1,867 (35%) had an education destination.

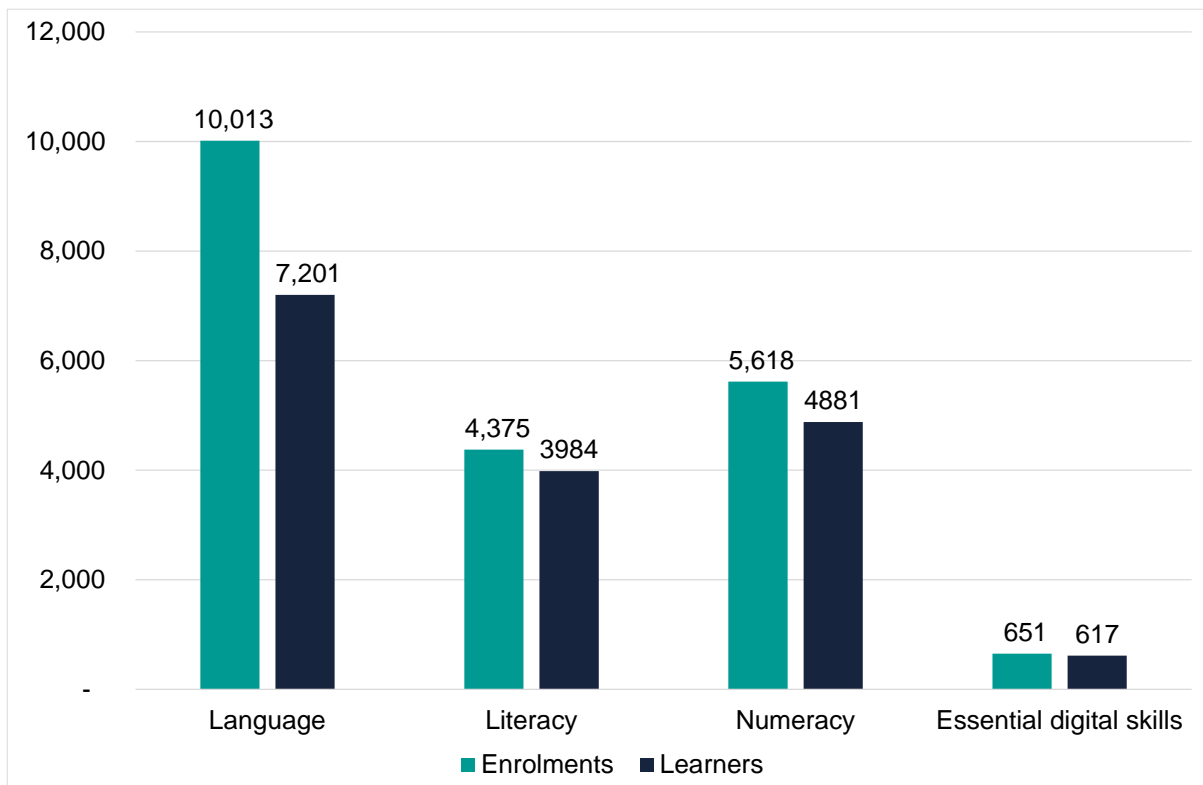
In addition, 1,748 learners who were in paid employment at the start of learning took up part-time FE.

Basic skills

Basic skills provision is a substantial element of the AEB programme, supported by a legal entitlement to full funding for English and maths, up to and including level 2 for adults who have not previously attained a GCSE grade 4 (C) plus full funding for essential digital skills qualifications, up to and including level 1, for adults who have digital skills assessed at below level 1.

A total of 13,200 West Yorkshire learners undertook a basic skills course during 2021/22 academic year, equivalent to 41% of all learners on the Adult Skills programme. Many of these learners undertook multiple courses with the total number of basic skills enrolments standing at 20,700 (37% of all Adult Skills enrolments).

Number of basic skills enrolments and learners by subject, West Yorkshire, 2021/22 academic year



The biggest basic skills category, in terms of both learners and enrolments, was Language, which primarily consists of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision. Around 7,200 learners took part in a Language course (18% of all Adult Skills learners), with a total of 10,000 enrolments (22% of the total).

Numeracy was the second largest category with 4,900 learners (15% of the Adult Skills total) and 5,600 enrolments (10% of the total).

Around 4,000 learners started a Literacy course during 2021/22 (12% of the total) with 4,400 enrolments (8% of total Adult Skills enrolments).

The fourth basic skills category – Essential Digital Skills – had much smaller volumes of learners (around 620 or 2% of the total) and enrolments (650 or 1% of the Adult Skills total).

In line with the legal entitlements, the vast majority of basic skills enrolments were fully funded, including 99% of literacy starts, virtually 100% of numeracy starts and 96% of essential digital skills starts.

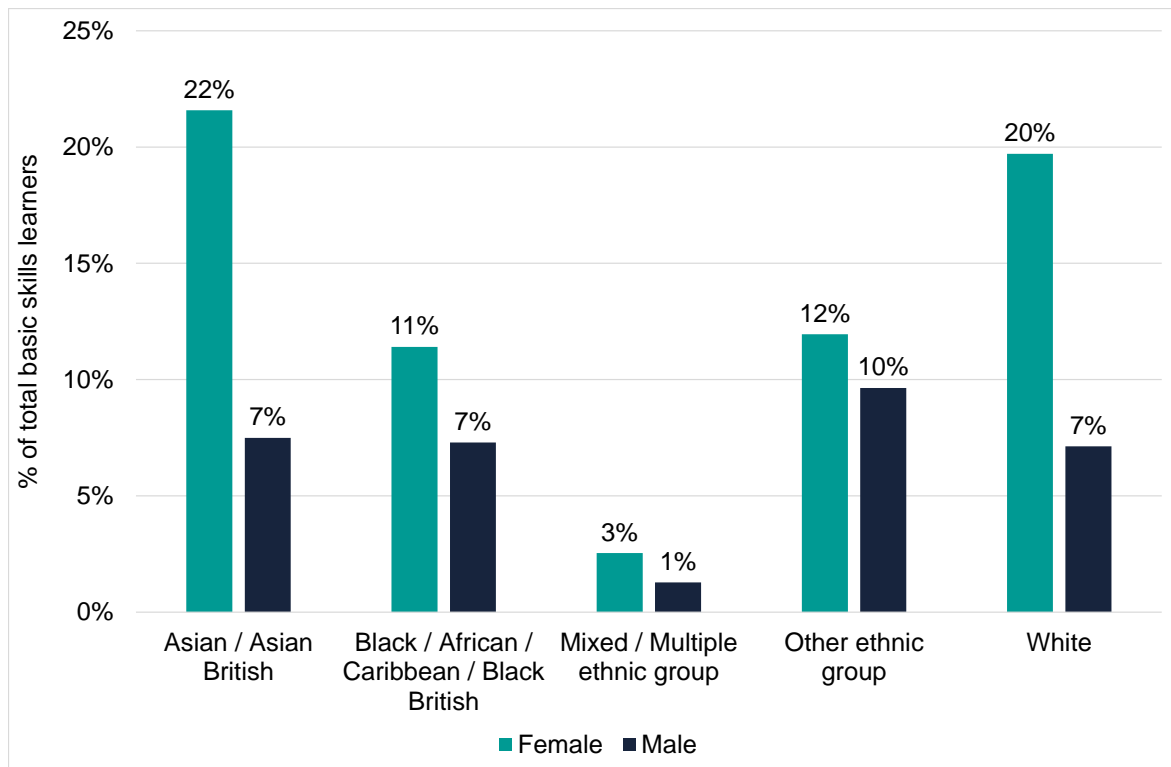
ESOL learners are entitled to full funding only when unemployed or when classed as being on a low wage. Accordingly, a smaller proportion (79%) of ESOL enrolments were fully funded.

The demographics of basic skills learners are distinctive:

- Basic skills learners are more likely to be from an ethnic minority. Seventy-three per cent of basic skills learners are from a non-white ethnic minority compared with an average for Adult Skills of 52%. The proportion of Language learners from a non-white ethnic minority is 87%⁵; but the proportions for Literacy (63%) and Numeracy (62%) are also above average. Language learners are most likely to be from the African (18%) and Pakistani (14%) groups plus the residual groups of Any other White background (12%) and Any other ethnic group (20%). It is notable that the representation of Pakistani learners in Language provision is lower than it is across the wider Adult Skills programme, for which 17% of learners are Pakistani.
- Basic skills learners are slightly less likely to be in employment, with 30% in paid work versus an average for Adult Skills of 35%. However, this is due to the small proportion of Language learners who are in work (20%), whereas Literacy and Numeracy learners have an above average likelihood of being in a job (41% and 40% respectively). Sixty-two per cent of Language learners are unemployed and 17% are inactive, well above the Adult Skills averages of 49% and 14% respectively.
- A majority of basic skills learners are female (67%), broadly reflecting the overall average for Adult Skills of 65%. Literacy (70%) and numeracy (73%) learners are more likely to be female than Language learners (63%). Basic skills learners who are Asian / Asian British (74%) or White (73%) are also more likely to be female.

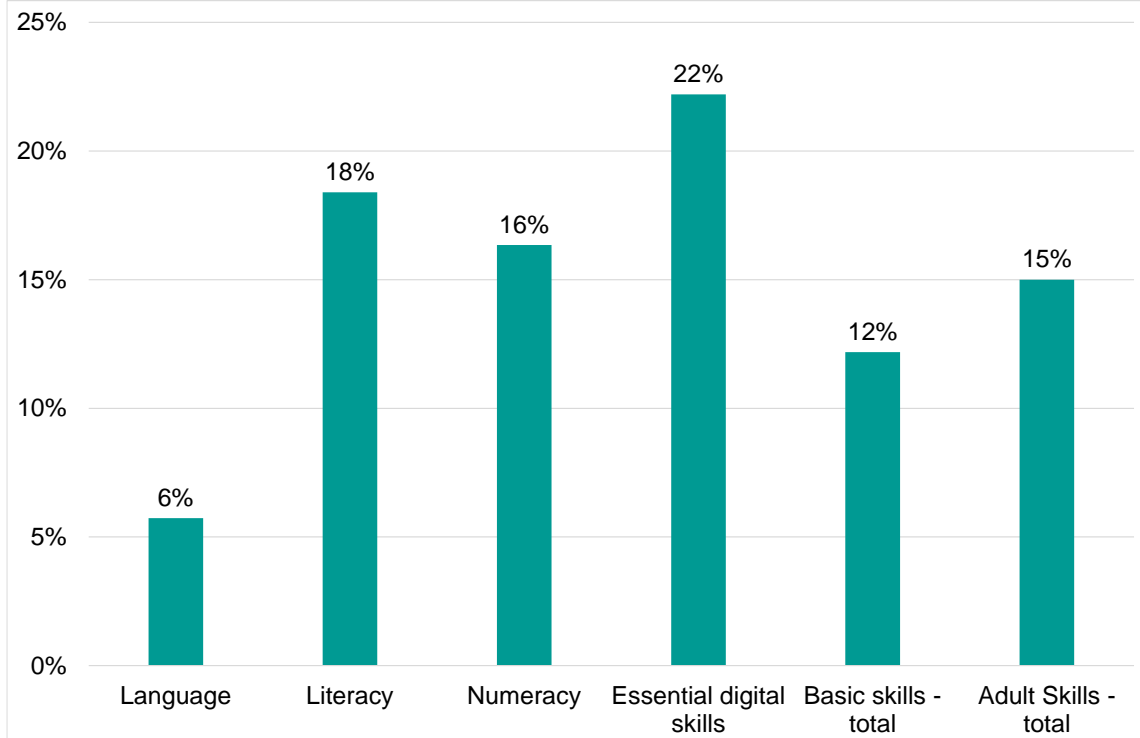
⁵ When White minority groups are included this proportion rises to 93%.

Profile of basic skills learners by ethnicity and sex, West Yorkshire, 2021/22



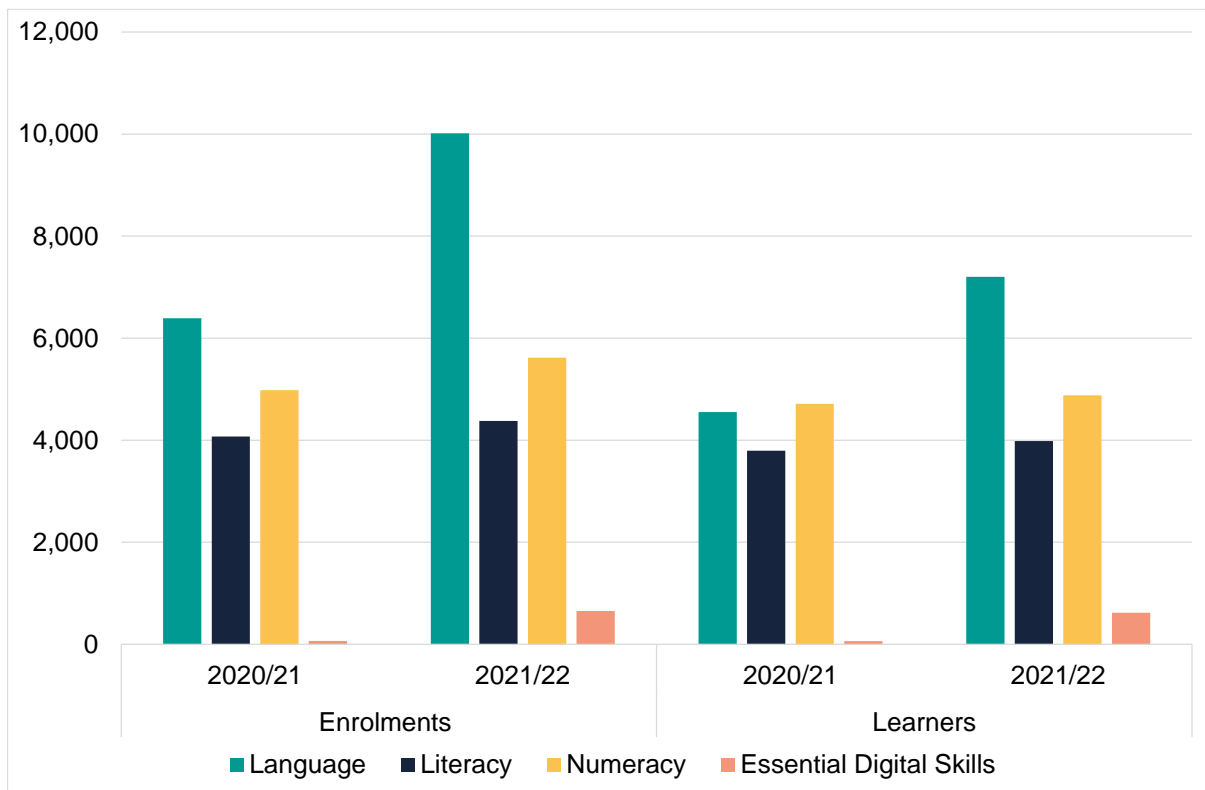
Basic skills learners in West Yorkshire are less likely to have a learning difficulty and / or disability and / or health problem – at 12% compared with 15% of learners for the wider Adult Skills programme. This is because only 6% of Language learners fall into this category, whilst Literacy (18%), Numeracy (16%) and Essential Digital skills (22%) learners are more likely to report a learning difficulty, disability or health problem.

Proportion of basic skills learners with a learning difficulty and / or disability and / or health problem, West Yorkshire, 2021/22



There was substantial growth in the number of basic skills enrolments and learners between 2020/21 and 2021/22. The number of enrolments increased by 5,200 or 33% year on year, at the same time as the overall number of Adult Skills enrolments fell by 5%. Consequently, basic skills provision increased its share of total Adult Skills enrolments by 10 points, from 27% to 37%. A key driver of this growth was an increase of 3,600 (+57%) in Language enrolments; although Literacy and Numeracy each saw a net increase in enrolments of 7% and 13% respectively.

Change in number of basic skills enrolments and learners by subject, West Yorkshire



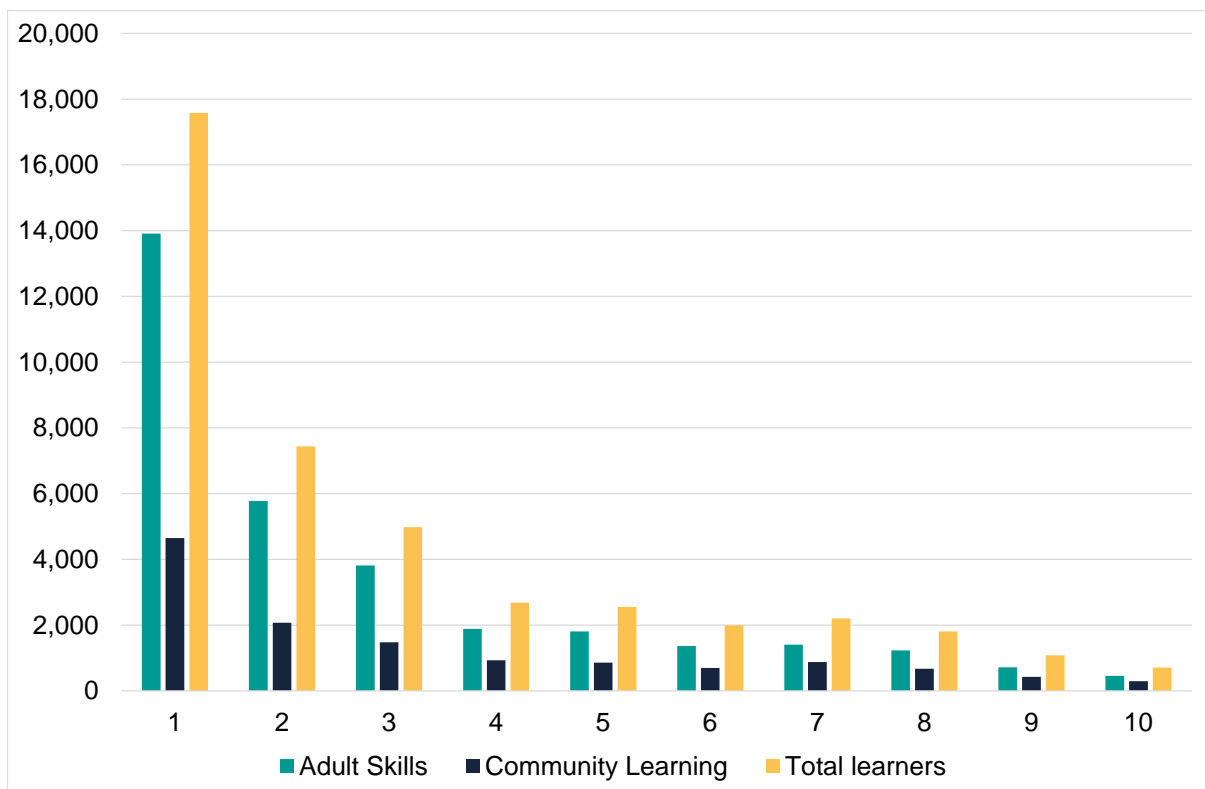
The number of basic skills learners saw year on year growth of 25%, a net increase of 2,600, driven primarily by an increase of 58% in the number of language learners.

Deprivation

Residents of deprived neighbourhoods are a priority audience for the Adult Education Budget and attract a disadvantage uplift in the Adult Skills funding that providers receive, recognising that they are sometimes more costly to recruit and retain.

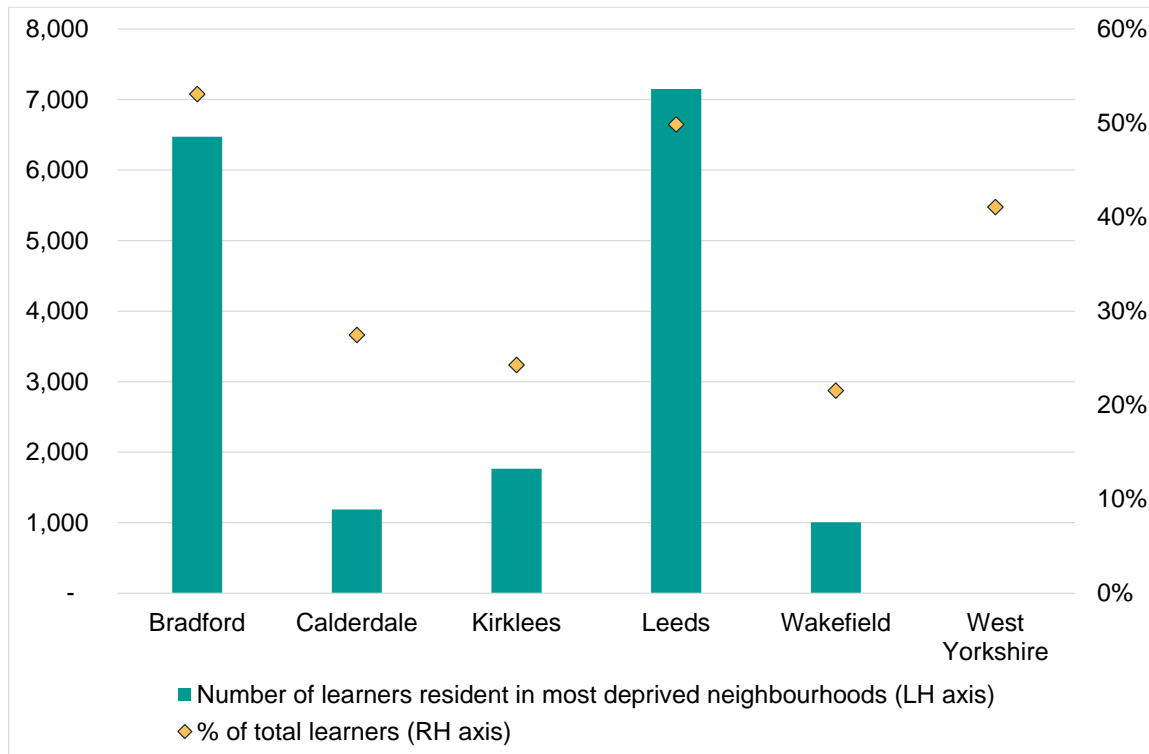
During the 2021/22 academic year around 17,600 learners (or 41% of the total) were resident in the 10% most deprived neighbourhoods nationally based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD decile 1).

West Yorkshire AEB learners by Index of Multiple Deprivation decile, 2021/22
(decile 1 = most deprived; decile 10 = least deprived)



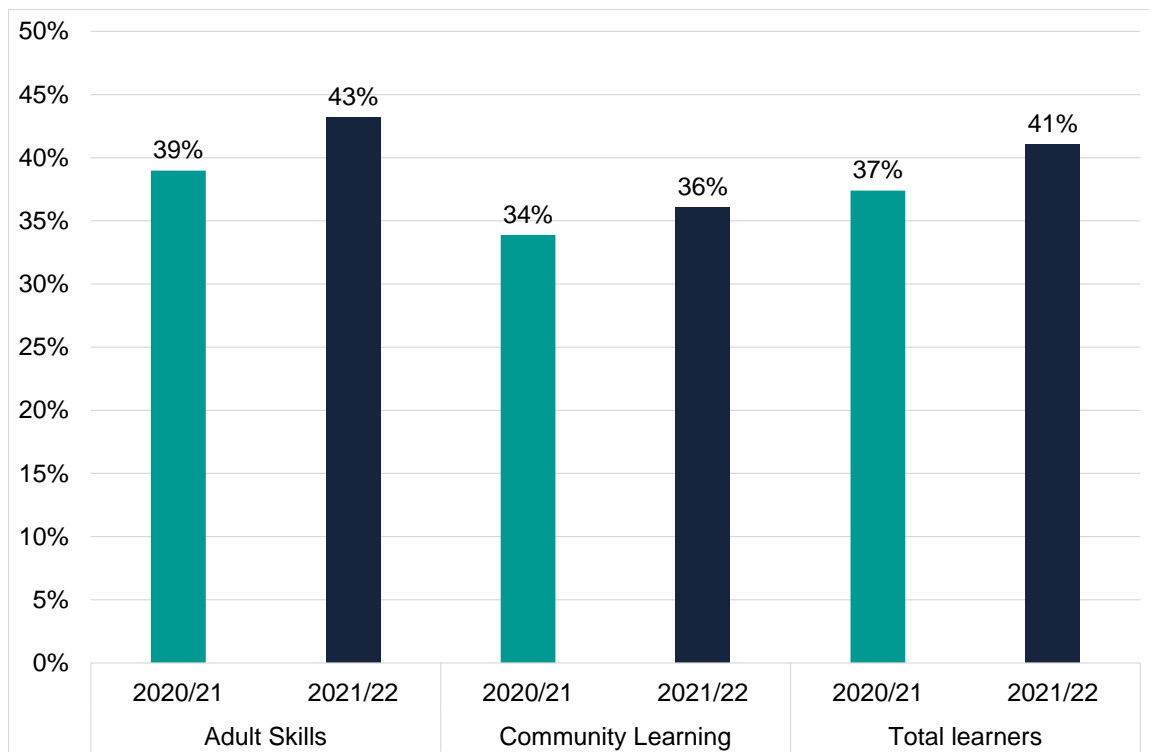
Just under 14,000 Adult Skills learners were residents of the 10% most deprived neighbourhoods, 43% of total learners in this strand and somewhat higher than the proportion for Community Learning of 36% (around 4,600 in absolute terms).

Figure: Number and proportion of West Yorkshire AEB learners who live in the most acutely deprived neighbourhoods nationally (IMD decile 1) by local authority



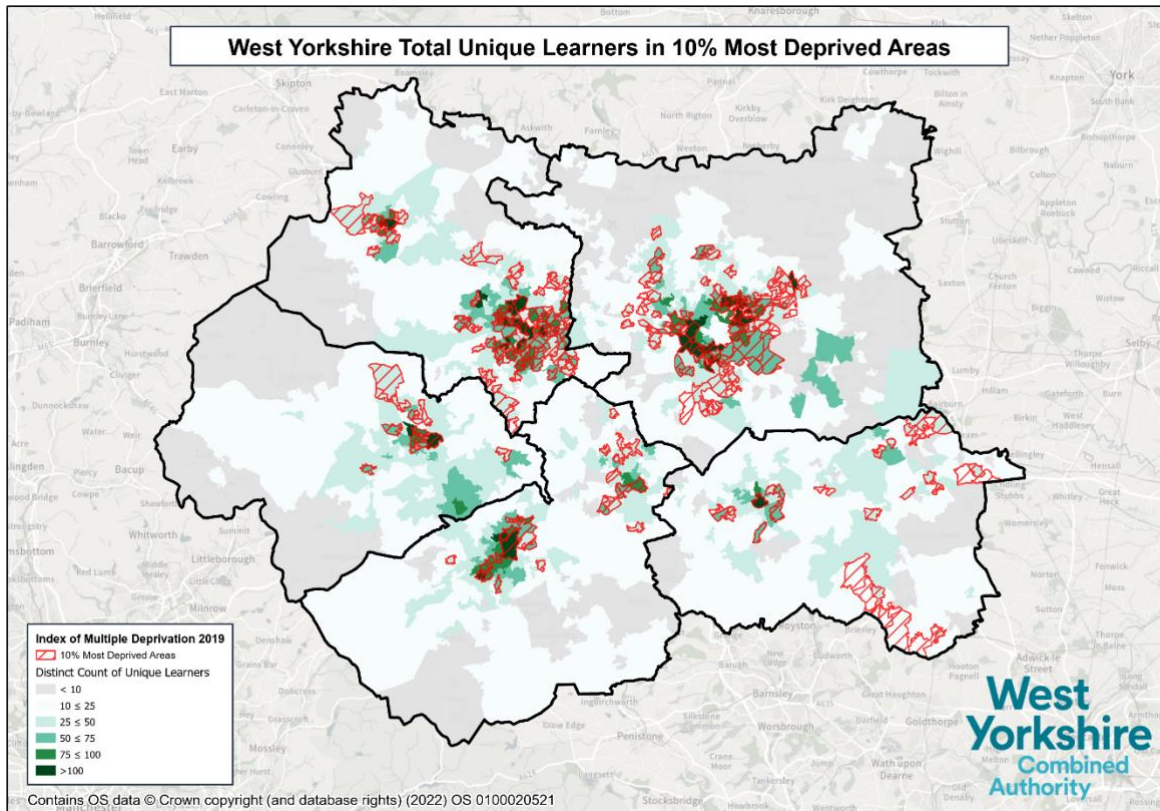
More than three quarters (78%) of learners from the most deprived neighbourhoods live in Bradford and Leeds, as compared with 62% of total learners. In Bradford, these learners represent 53% of total learners and in Leeds they account for 50% of the total.

Figure: Change in the proportion of West Yorkshire AEB learners who live in the most acutely deprived neighbourhoods nationally (IMD decile 1)



The proportion of learners from the most acutely disadvantaged neighbourhoods (which fall into top decile of the Index of Multiple Deprivation) has increased in West Yorkshire during the first year of devolution, from 37% to 41% across the programme as a whole. The proportion grew by around 4 points for Adult Skills and by two points for Community Learning.

Looking at this from the perspective of learner volumes, the number of learners from the most deprived neighbourhoods increased by nearly 2,500 or 9%. The overall growth in learner numbers in Community Learning drove a 45% increase in learners from the most deprived neighbourhoods (an increase of 1,400 in absolute terms).



Although the devolved programme has been successful in attracting large numbers of learners from deprived neighbourhoods there are still geographic cold spots – deprived neighbourhoods with relatively low volumes of AEB provision. As the above map shows, a key example is south east Wakefield, but the general pattern is that deprived neighbourhoods outside the main urban centres are more likely to have low levels of provision.

Legal entitlements

The AEB programme includes support for 4 legal entitlements to full funding for eligible adult learners. These entitlements apply nationwide and devolved areas are required to honour them.

These entitlements enable eligible learners to be fully funded for the following qualifications:

- English and maths, up to and including level 2, for individuals aged 19 and over, who have not previously attained a GCSE grade 4 (C), or higher, and/or
- first full qualification at level 2 for individuals aged 19 to 23, and/or
- first full qualification at level 3 for individuals aged 19 to 23

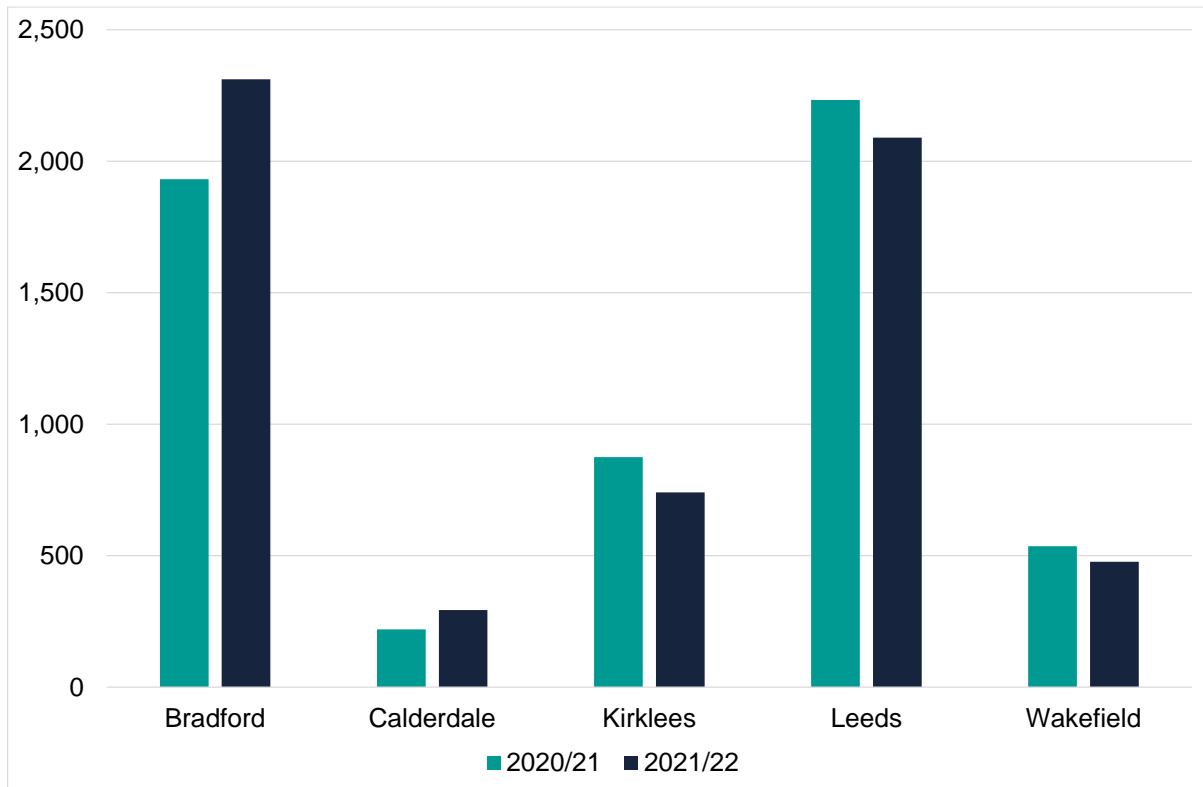
- essential digital skills qualifications, up to and including level 1, for individuals aged 19 and over, who have digital skills assessed at below level 1.

The following section examines the take-up of each entitlement in terms of enrolments during the 2021/22 academic year (starts) and highlights any changes with the previous year.

English and maths, up to and including level 2, for individuals aged 19 and over, who have not previously attained a GCSE grade 4 (C), or higher⁶

There were around 5,900 starts under this entitlement in West Yorkshire in 2021/22, with just over 4,000 learners taking up the entitlement.

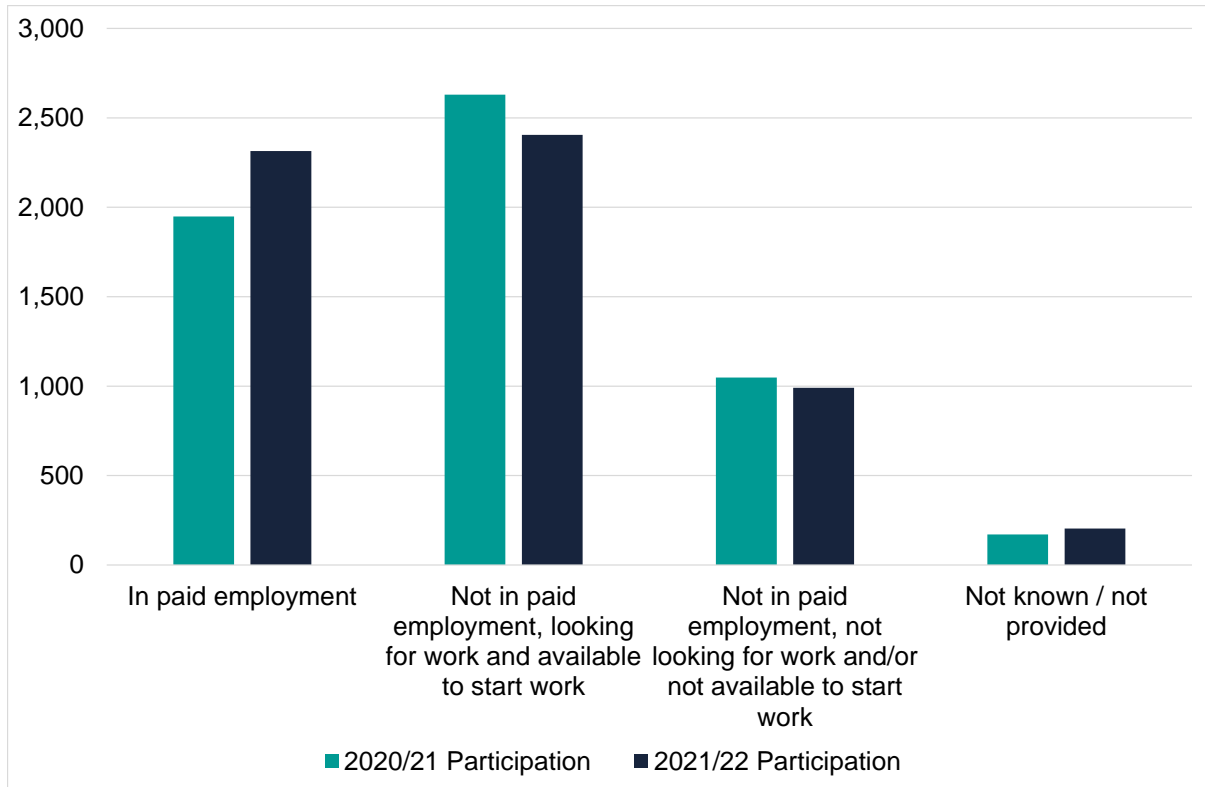
Figure: Adult Skills starts qualifying under English and Maths entitlement by local authority



There was a small increase in starts under this entitlement of 2% between 2020/21 and 2021/22. This increase was due to growth in Bradford (+20%) and Calderdale (+33%), whereas the remaining local authorities in West Yorkshire all saw reductions.

⁶ Definition used: Age = 19+; Prior attainment <Level 2 (codes 1, 2, 99); FFI = 1; Aim category code = 39

Figure: Adult Skills starts qualifying under English and Maths entitlement by employment status of learner



Turning to the employment status of learners who took up the entitlement, 39% of starts were for people in employment, with a similar proportion for the unemployed (41%) and 17% for learners who were inactive. Year on year growth was concentrated among people in employment – the number of starts for this group increased by 19%, whereas it fell for the unemployed (-9%) and for the inactive (-5%).

First full qualification at Level 2 for individuals aged 19 to 23⁷

This is one of two entitlements for learners aged 19-23. These entitlements are particularly important for West Yorkshire because relatively small proportions of young people in the region achieve a qualification at Level 2 and Level 3 by the age of 19 – 77% and 52% respectively, compared with national averages of 81% and 57%.

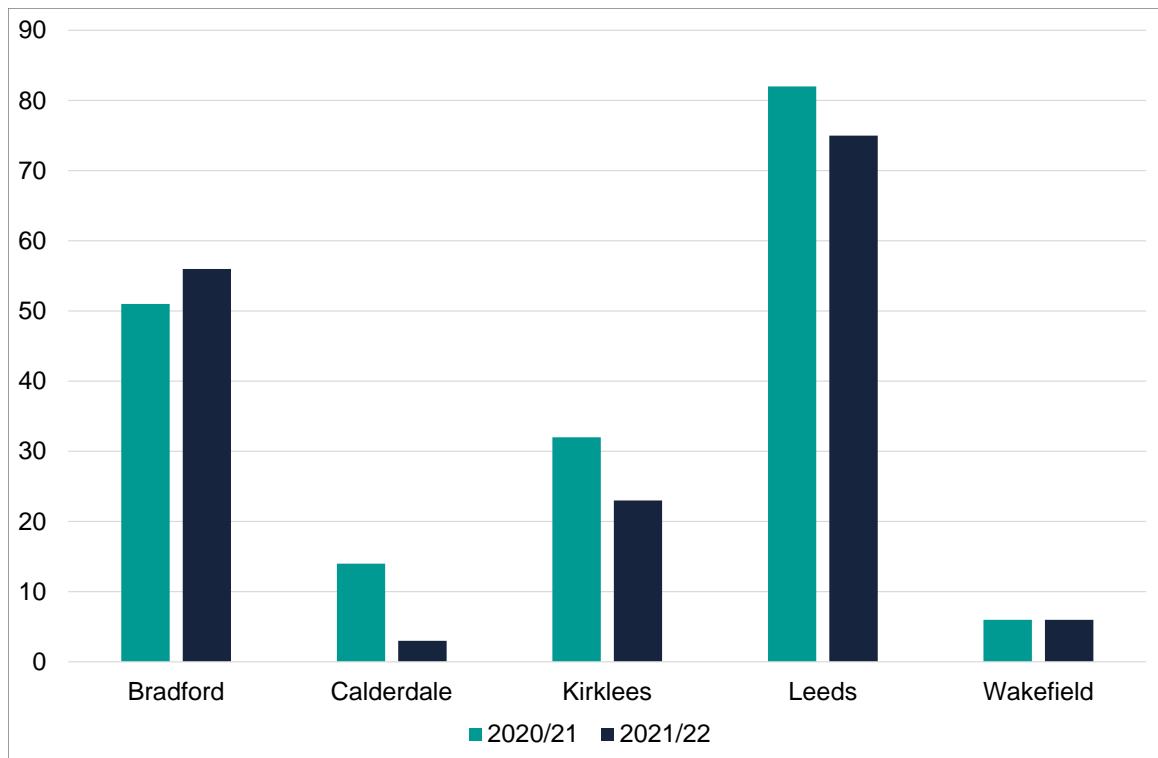
There were around 160 starts (undertaken by 130 learners) under this entitlement during 2021/22, less than 1% of total starts on the Adult Skills programme.

This makes it a very small element of total Adult Skills provision, accounting for less than 1% of total starts.

The number of starts falling within this entitlement also fell during 2021/22, by 12%. The decline was small in absolute terms because of the small size of this area of provision.

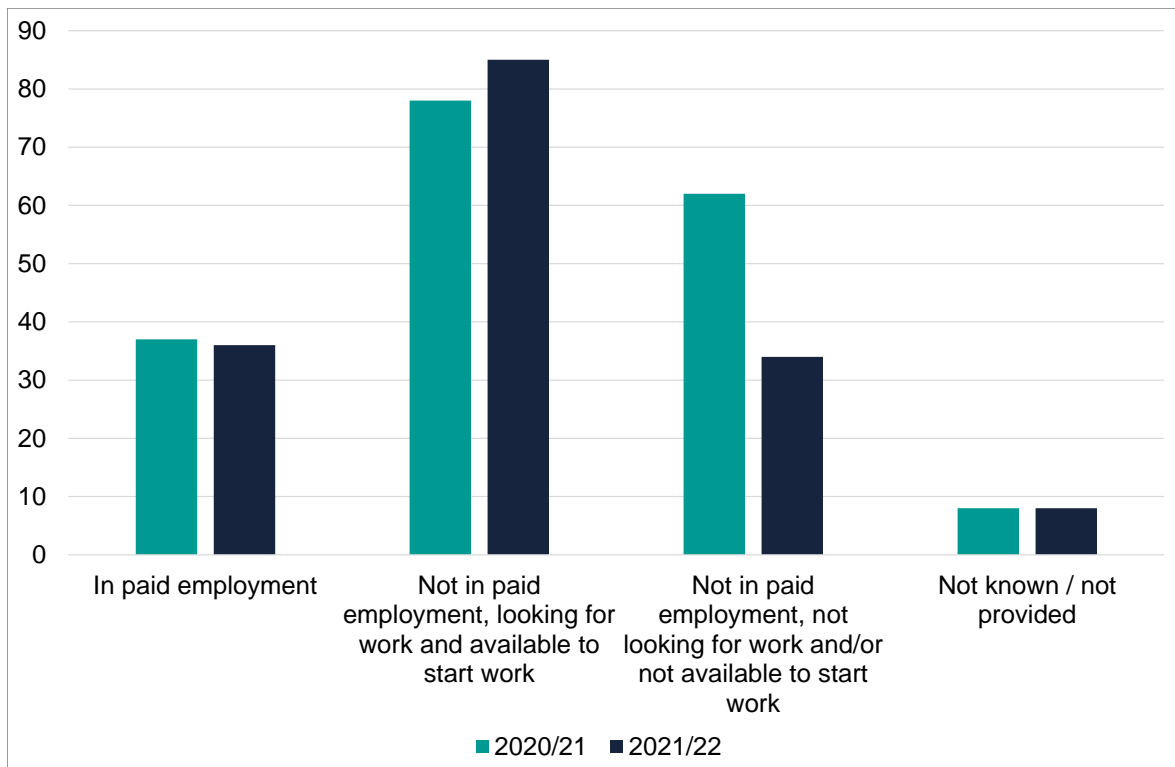
⁷ Definition used: Age = 19-23; Prior attainment <Full Level 3 (codes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 99); FFI = 1; Aim category code = 38

Figure: Adult Skills starts qualifying under First Level 2 entitlement by local authority



Only in Bradford did the number of starts within this entitlement increase during 2021/22. Wakefield’s position was flat and there were declines in the remaining local authorities.

Figure: Adult Skills starts qualifying under First Level 2 entitlement by employment status of learner

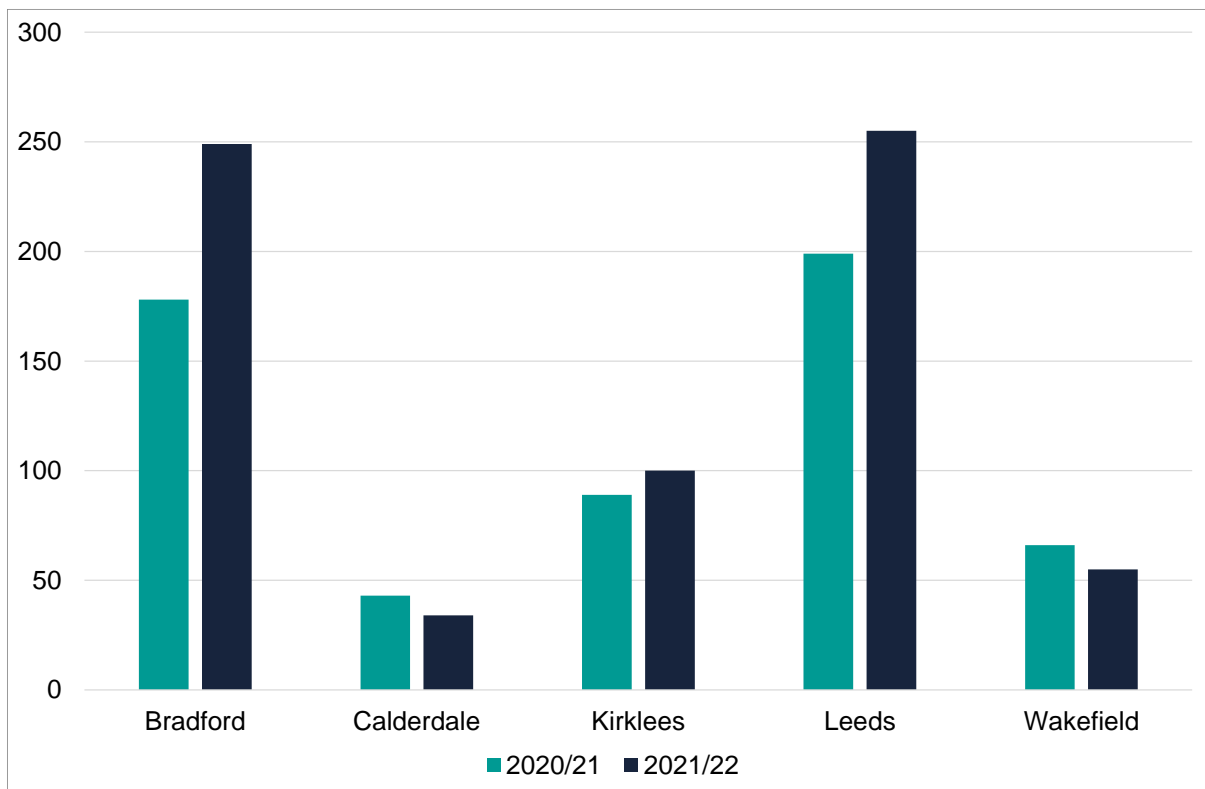


Among the small number of starts for this entitlement the number relating to employed learners remained flat, whilst it increased for unemployed learners and fell markedly for inactive learners. In 2021/22 unemployed learners accounted for around a half of starts, with the remainder evenly split between employed and inactive learners.

First full qualification at Level 3 for individuals aged 19 to 23⁸

There were around 690 starts under this entitlement during the 2021/22 academic year, relating to 650 learners. This makes it another small element of total Adult Skills provision, accounting for only 1% of total starts. However, the number of starts in 2021/22 represented an increase of 21% on the previous year.

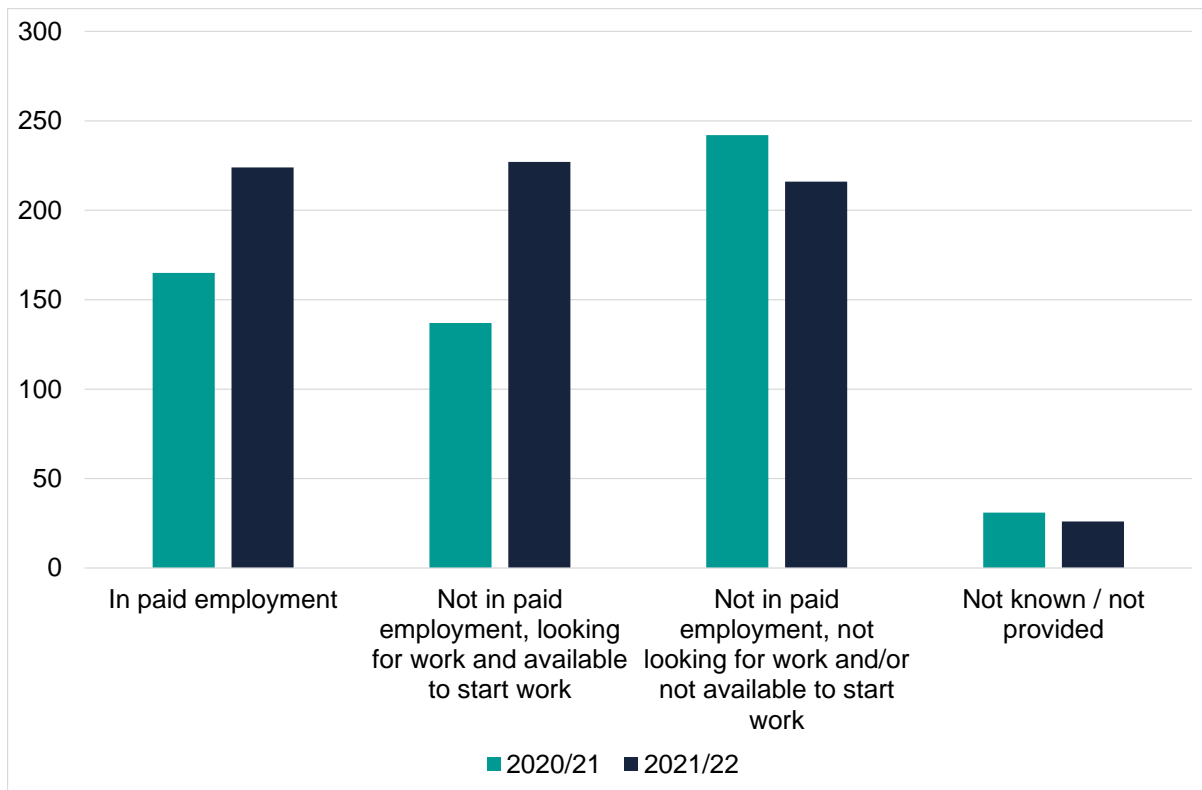
Figure: Adult Skills starts qualifying under First Level 3 entitlement by local authority



There was an increase in starts across three-out-of-five local authorities. Growth was strong in Bradford (+40%) and Leeds (+28%) with more moderate growth of 12% in Kirklees; but this was partly offset by declines in Calderdale and Wakefield.

⁸ Definition used: Age = 19-23; Prior attainment <Full Level 3 (codes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 99); FFI = 1; Aim category code = 38

Figure: Adult Skills starts qualifying under Level 3 entitlement by employment status of learner



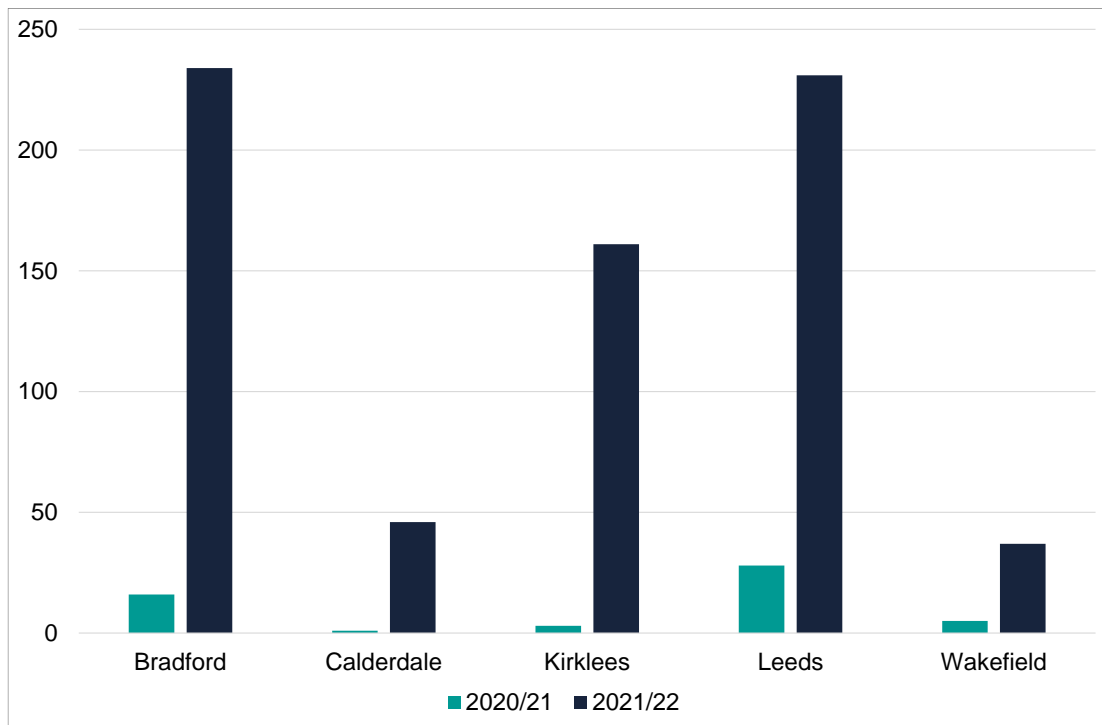
In 2021/22, starts under this entitlement were almost evenly split between employed, unemployed and inactive learners. The number of starts that were associated with employed and unemployed learners increased during 2021/22 but the figure fell for those undertaken by inactive learners.

Essential Digital Skills qualifications, up to and including level 1, for individuals aged 19 and over, who have digital skills assessed at below level 1

During 2021/22 there were just over 700 starts under the Essential Digital Skills entitlement⁹. This represents a large net increase on the barely 50 starts recorded in the 2020/21 academic year, when the digital entitlement was first introduced.

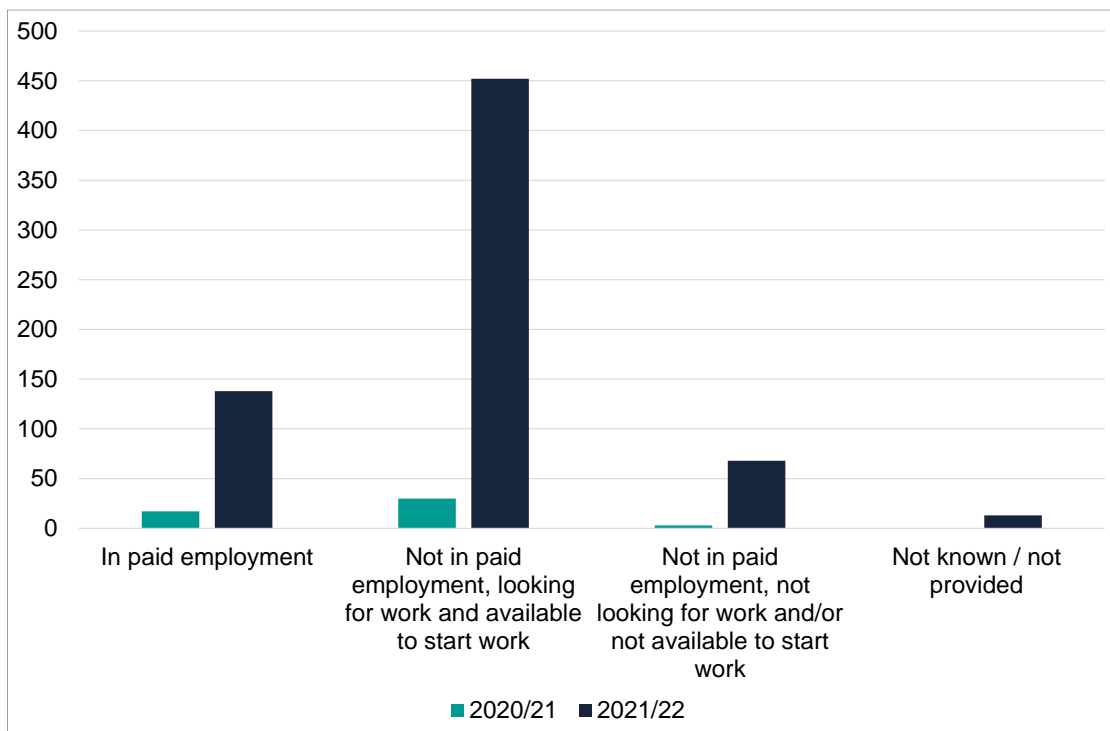
9

Figure: Adult Skills starts qualifying under Essential Digital Skills entitlement by local authority



Although the level of starts was highest in Bradford and Leeds, take-up of the digital entitlement was particularly strong in Kirklees as a proportion of total Adult Skills starts.

Figure: Adult Skills starts qualifying under Essential Digital Skills entitlement by employment status of learner

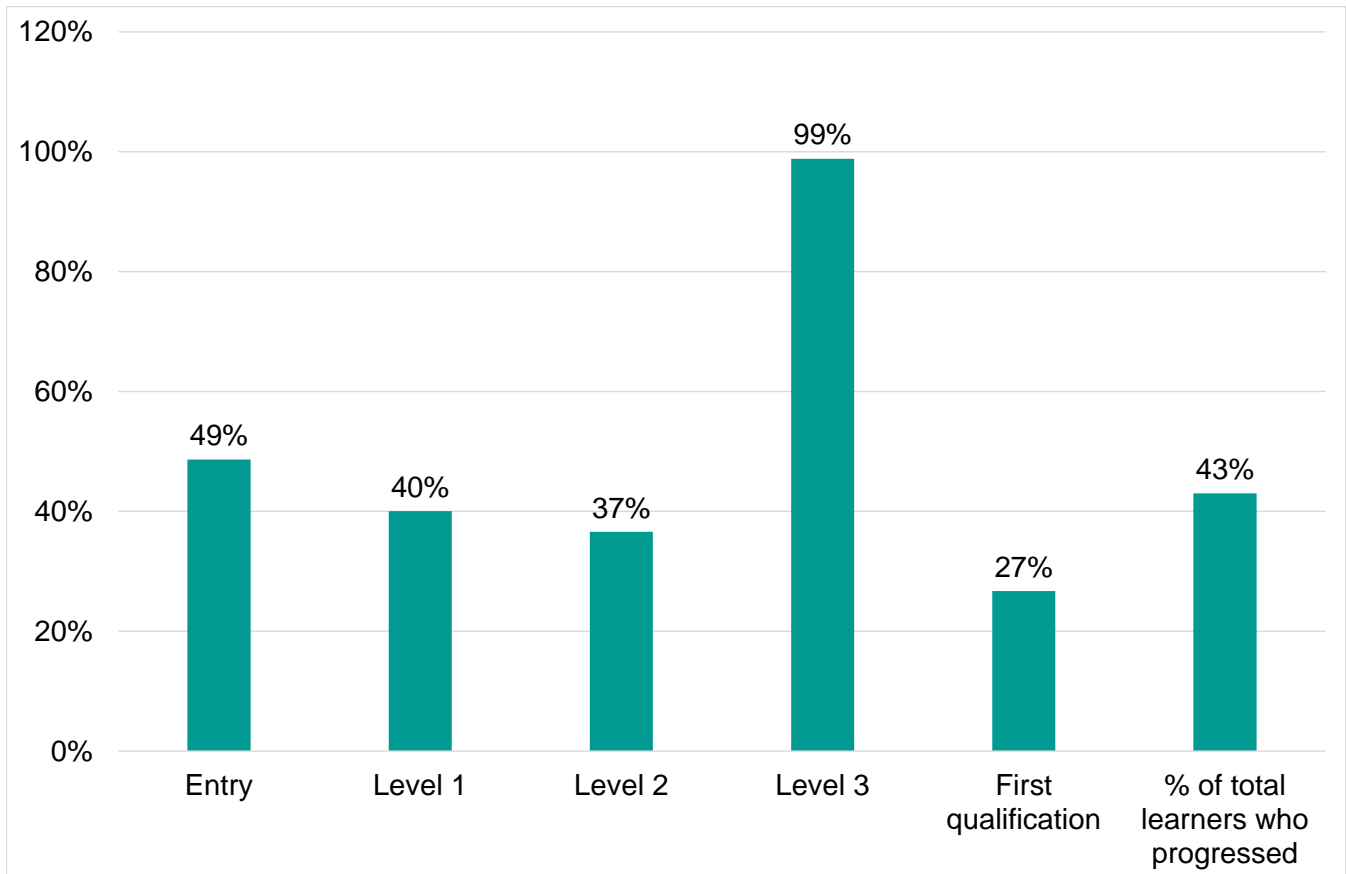


Two-thirds of starts under the Essential Digital Skills entitlement were for learners who were unemployed in 2021/22.

Progression

A key measure of the added value of AEB is the extent to which learners are progressing. The following analysis focuses on the number and proportion of learners who undertook a course at a higher level than their existing level of attainment or achieved their first qualification.

Proportion of Adult Skills learners progressing by Level
(% undertaking a course at a higher level than their prior attainment)

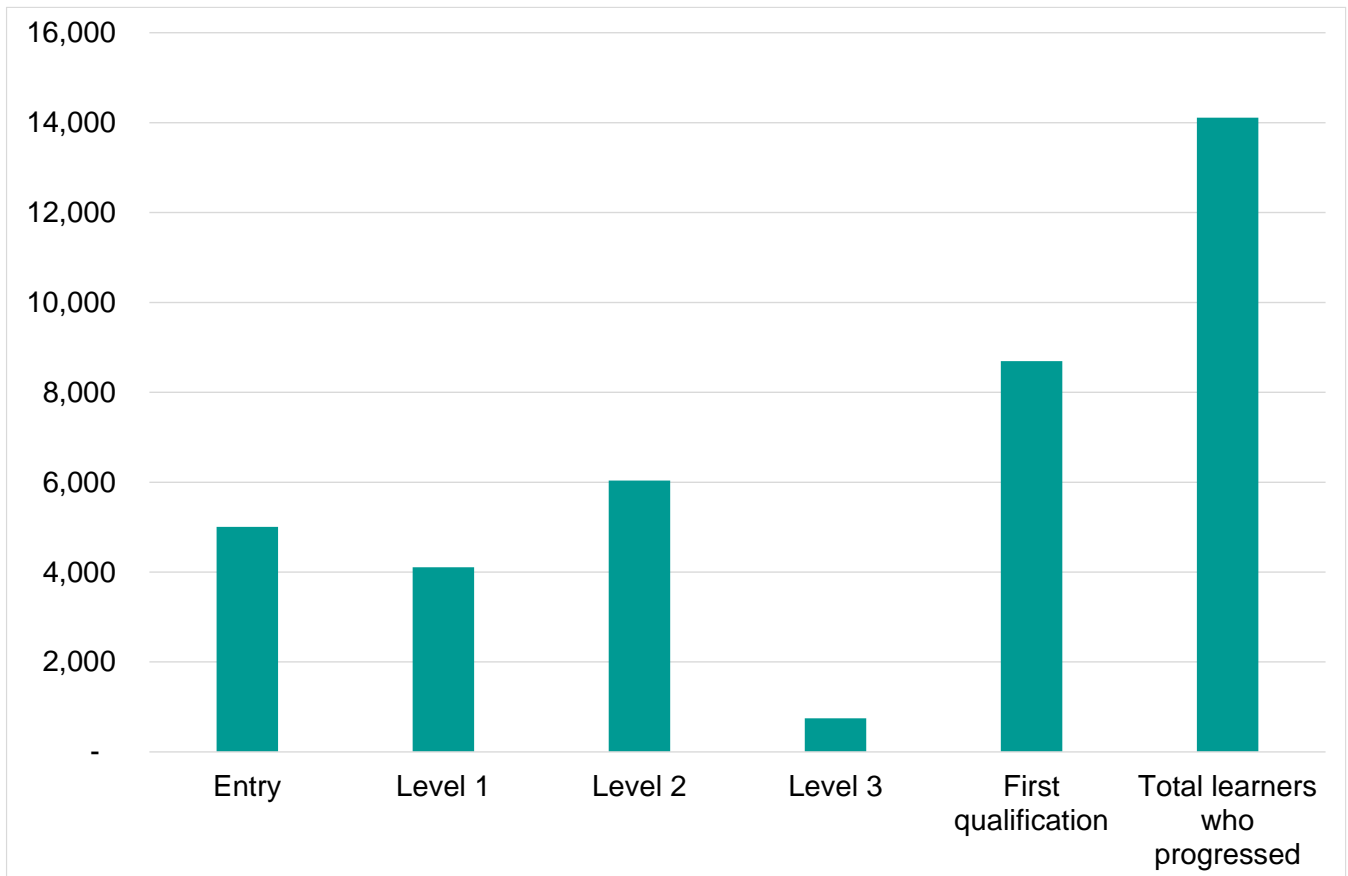


Overall, 43% of Adult Skills learners, or 14,100 in absolute terms, undertook learning that represented progression during 2021/22. Around 8,700 learners, or 27% of the total, undertook their first qualification through Adult Skills in 2021/22.

Virtually 100% of learners studying at Level 3 achieved progression, reflecting the funding eligibility for Level 3 study within Adult Skills. Around a half of those studying at Entry level experienced progression but the proportion for those undertaking a course at Level 2 was smaller at 37%.

Nonetheless, 6,000 learners achieved their first Level 2 through the Adult Skills programme in 2021/22, whilst 700 learners achieved their first Level 3.

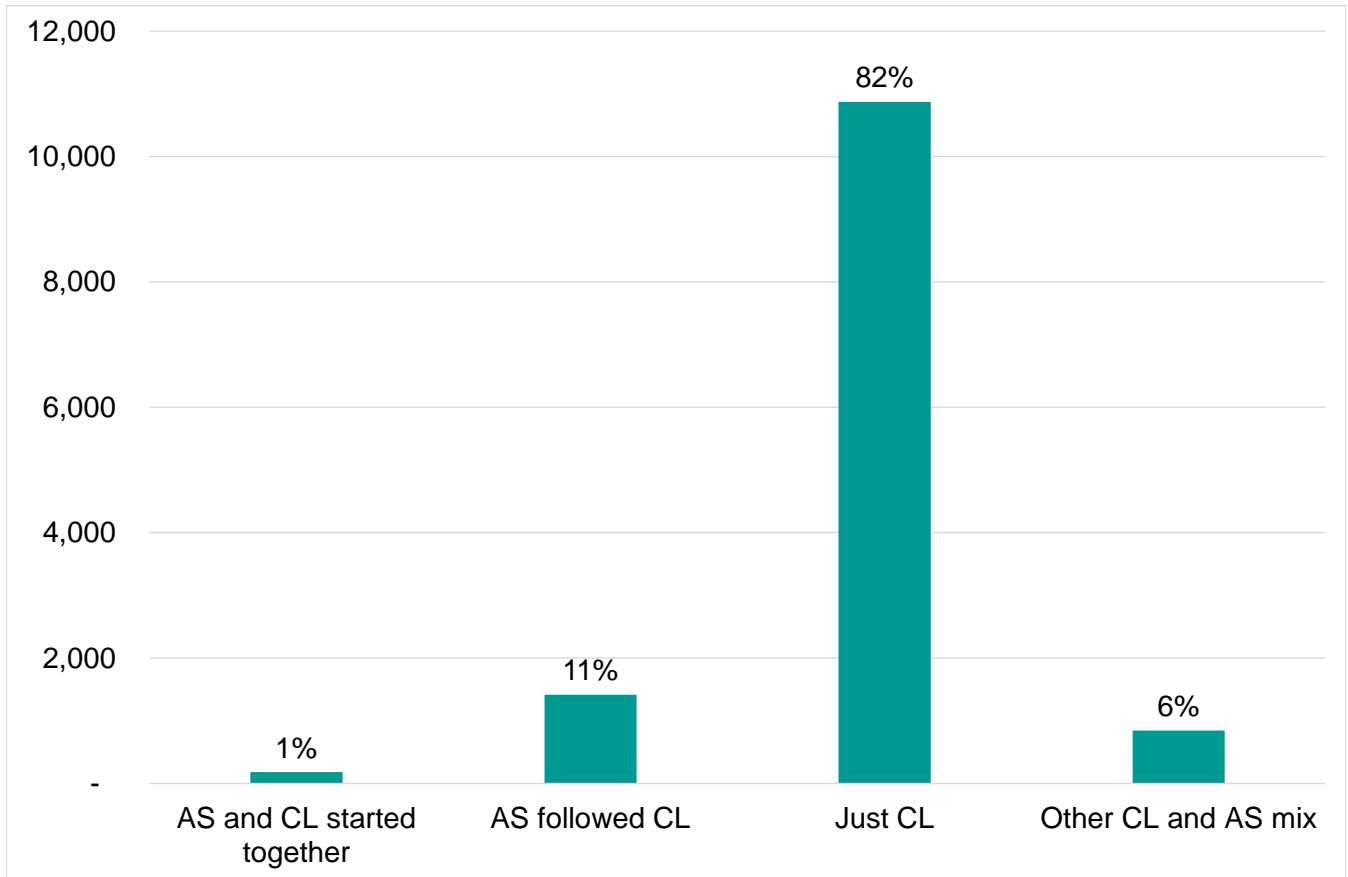
Number of Adult Skills learners progressing by Level
 (% undertaking a course at a higher level than their prior attainment)



Although the numbers studying their first qualification or experiencing progression through their learning is high in absolute terms there is clear scope to increase the proportions, for example through improved targeting of Level 2 provision on individuals who are not already qualified to this level.

Another measure of progression is the extent to which learners are progressing from Community Learning provision to more formal learning delivered through the Adult Skills programme.

Figure: Profile of mixed mode learning for Community Learning learners



During 2021/22, 11% of learners who enrolled for a Community Learning course subsequently enrolled on an Adult Skills course; this is equivalent to 1,400 learners in absolute terms. The progression rate for some individual providers is much higher, as supporting this kind of progression is central to their strategy for learners.

Success rates

The extent to which enrolments on courses linked to formal qualifications result in achievement of those qualifications is a key measure of the added value of the Adult Skills programme. The publication of official qualification achievement rates for providers and local areas has been suspended in recent years due to the impact of the pandemic. The following analysis is based on calculations undertaken by the Combined Authority.

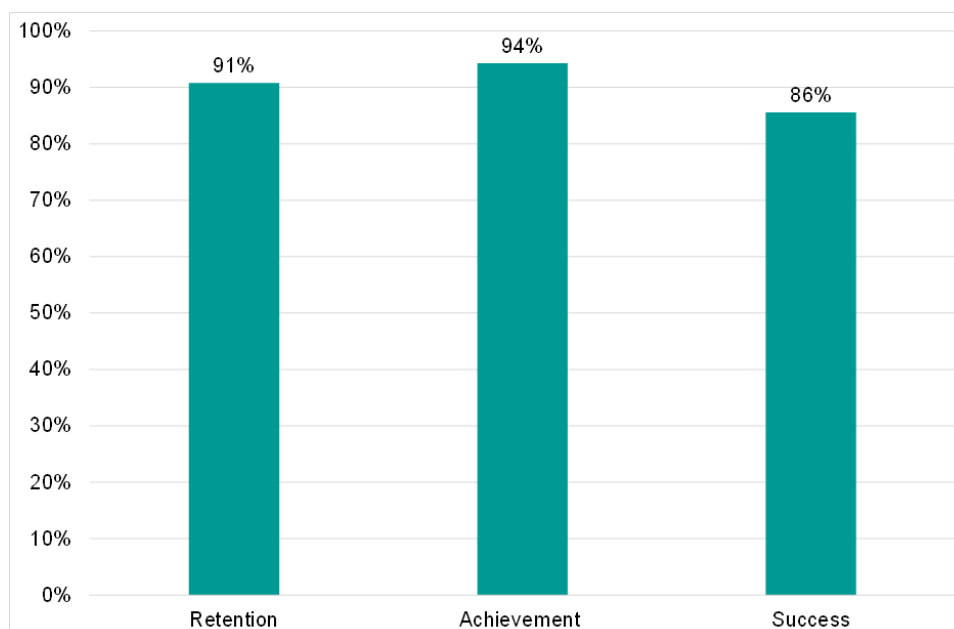
The method used to calculate success rates for Adult Skills is detailed in the box below.

Calculation method for success rate

1. Success Rate = Learners x Retention x Achievement
2. Retention = Completion status of 2: The learner has completed the learning activities leading to the learning aim (expressed as % of total leavers)
3. Achievement = Achievement Status of 1: Achieved (expressed as % of retained).

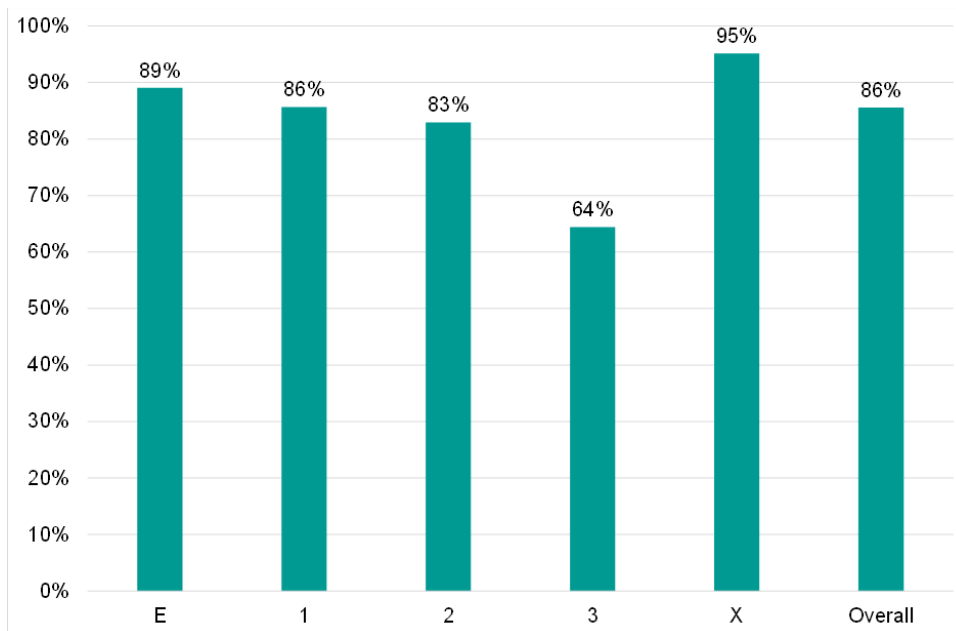
The overall success rate for the Adult Skills programme for 2021/22 academic year was 86%. This means that for 91% of starts on a learning aim the learner was retained; of these retained starts, 94% of learning aims were achieved. When multiplied together these two figures give the overall success rate of 86%.

Figure: Overall retention, achievement and success rates for Adult Skills, 2021/22



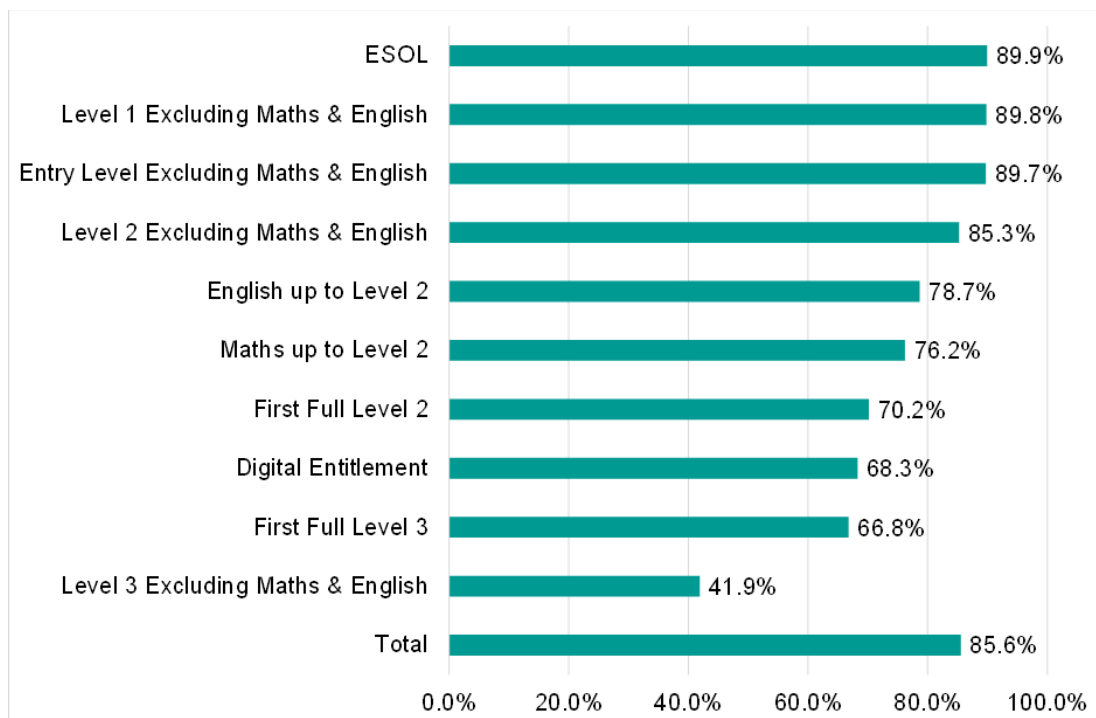
Success rates differ by the notional level of the learning aim. Entry level courses have the highest success rate and Level 3 courses have the lowest. This is to be expected since Level 3 courses are generally longer and more demanding.

Figure: Retention, achievement and success rates for Adult Skills learning aims by level, 2021/22



As the figure (below) shows, ESOL aims had the highest success rate of all provision types during 2021/22, followed by vocational aims at Level 1, Entry Level and Level 2. The success rates of literacy and numeracy aims plus digital entitlement aims was somewhat below the average for all aims. Success rates for First Full Level 2 aims and aims at Level 3 were the lowest of any of the categories.

Figure: Success rates for Adult Skills learning aims by provision type, 2021/22



Success rates are fairly consistent across other dimensions, including residence of learner (at local authority level) and sector subject area.

National figures are available for Education and Training provision for learners aged 19 and above for 2020/21. The scope of this provision is wider than the Adult Education Budget and therefore the national figures are not directly comparable with our local figures. However, they do show, on an indicative basis, that West Yorkshire's performance was similar to the national average during the period. Key figures are as follows:

- The national retention rate was 91.5% in 2020/21.
- The national achievement rate (referred to as pass rate in national reporting) was 93.4%.
- The national success rate, based on our definition was 85.5%.

The pattern of success rates by qualification level is broadly similar at national level to the West Yorkshire position in that the lower qualification levels have better rates than higher level qualifications.

Systemic changes made in year 1

Local partnership management

Prior to devolution the Combined Authority did not have visibility of delivery occurring in West Yorkshire until months after the year had ended. Through devolution we now obtain up front delivery plans from our providers, we have access to monthly data, and we meet regularly to discuss progress and challenges.

Regular meetings are held with Local Authorities, given their role as key place shapers in West Yorkshire. Data is analysed and shared regularly on a provider and area basis to help inform provision and steer partnership discussions, improving the targeting of the funding towards priority areas and groups.

Partnership meetings bring providers together to focus on a place-based approach. The team facilitates links to key providers in order to ensure AEB funds meet needs – this includes linking providers to NHS trusts to provide basic English and maths skills, linking providers to the WY Police service to provide recruitment training programmes.

Increasing the focus of funding on the most disadvantaged

In March 2022 the Combined Authority increased the low wage threshold from national living wage to real living wage. This means that anyone currently earning less than £21,255 has access to free training that can support in-work progression.

The Combined Authority approved the following flexibilities to adopt in Year 2. The flexibilities open up access to the funding, reducing complex eligibility criteria and investing funding in residents who most need support to upskill.

- Expanding the age of entitlement for a 'first full level 2' from 19-23 to 19+
- Providing full funding for eligible asylum seekers
- Increasing the number of courses 19-23s are entitled to
- Waiving the '3 Year UK Residency' status for full funding

Trialling new programmes

A £4 million fund was retained for year 1 to respond to emerging economic problems. Through this funding we were able to offer contract growth to providers who were successful in engaging with residents and meeting their needs.

For 2022/23 the Combined Authority also approved the following flexibilities to trial new programmes:

- Expanding the digital entitlement – making more qualifications available for free to residents looking to increase their digital skills
- Bridging Programmes - supporting residents to engage with and enrol on a level 3 programme: this may include refreshing skills, undertaking a taster to level 3, understanding the study skills required to succeed at level 3.

Two procurements were undertaken in year 1:

- To develop a Bus Driver Training scheme in collaboration with West Yorkshire bus operators.
- To increase the delivery of Level 3 in WY, including 'bridging programmes' that support learners in taking up this higher-level qualification. Successful providers are delivering training programmes in e.g., Telecoms engineering, Health and Social Care, Coding and Cyber Security.

Future planned developments

The year 2 responsiveness pot has been planned to focus on:

- Targeting 'cold spots' where participation is low in deprived areas
- Respond to the needs of the Green Jobs Task Force
- Respond to the needs of the digital skills plan
- Skilled sector ('good jobs') with vacancies
- Supporting ex-offenders
- Supporting care leavers
- Emerging economic needs

In light of this report and data analysis there will also be consideration of any actions needed to increase the take up and participation for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities, and also whether there should be provision targetted to support over 50s, and potential returners to the labour market.

An external review of the Community Learning provision began in 2021-22, and will report in Spring 2023. This is focussing on the impact of the funds which are invested in West Yorkshire, the effectiveness of progression and value for money the service brings. A report will be returned to the Employment and Skills Committee for discussion regarding the recommendations.

A review of subcontracting practices will begin in 2023. While the Combined Authority recognises a real positive in subcontracting allowing funds to flow to grassroot organisations who are key to engaging the most disadvantaged, we can see undesirable practice in the system which is losing unnecessary funds to management fees.

Provider feedback

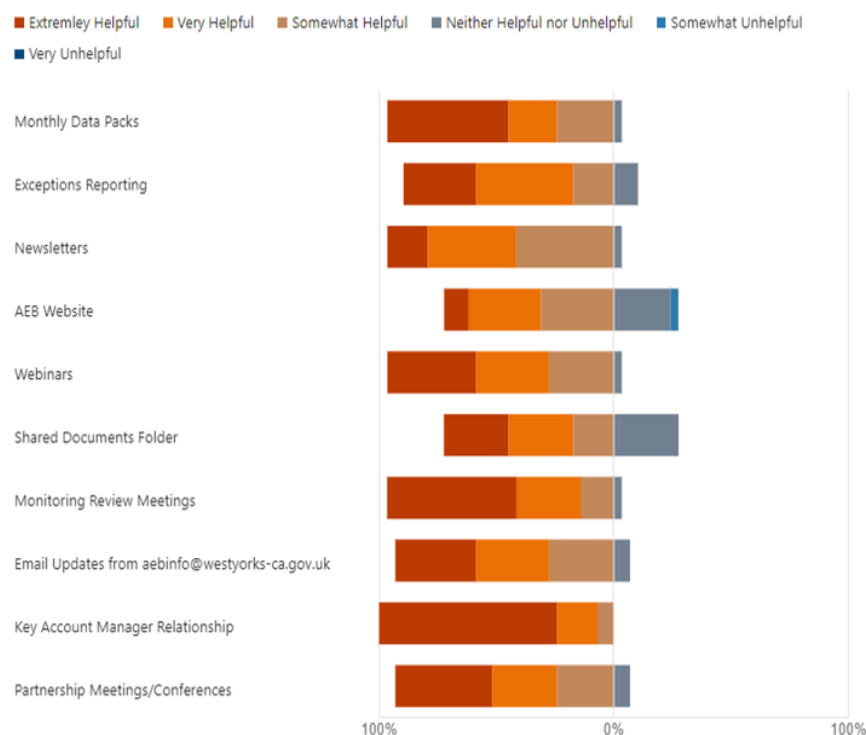
As noted above, maintaining stability in the system and supporting the provider base were important factors in year 1, as was working in partnership with providers to improve the impact of the Funding for West Yorkshire residents.

At the end of the first year of the Combined Authority’s management of the devolved AEB fund, a provider survey was undertaken to gather feedback on progress made and understand where to focus improvements for future years.

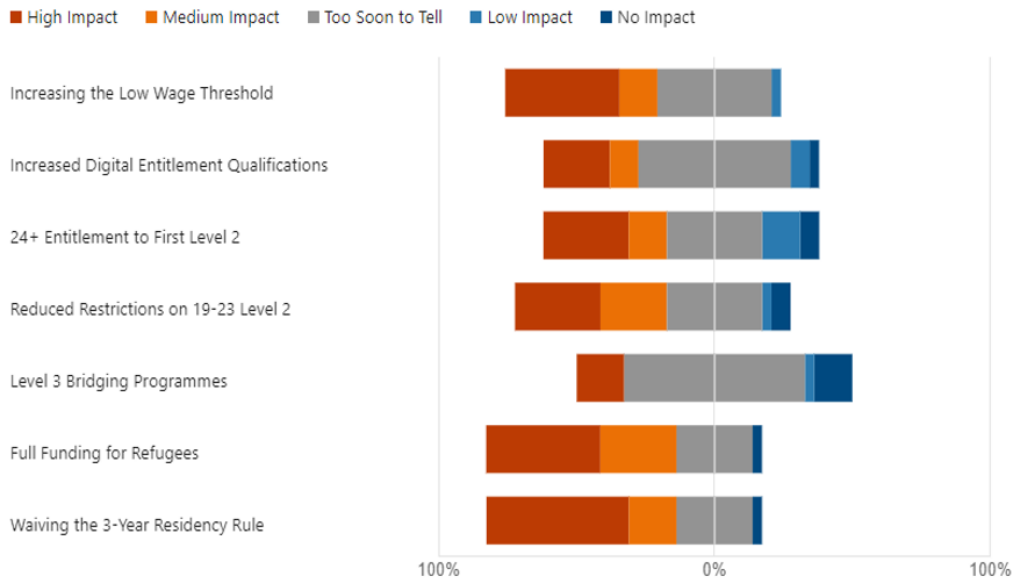
Providers were overall positive regarding the experience of devolution and impact made:

- 93% of providers found Key Account Manager relationship extremely or very helpful. (‘KAM is approachable, always available, will get back to you with an answer, supportive and professional’)
- 73% of providers reported that they had already seen an impact of the funding rule flexibilities on their ability to engage West Yorkshire residents.
- 70% of providers said they had already seen an impact in their ability to support refugees from the recent funding flexibility (‘Funding is now more targeted for the region’)
- 70% of providers have found Partnership meetings/conference extremely or very helpful (‘Working together has made a difference in the last year and we feel that the relationships are sound and supportive’)
- Providers were largely positive about the impact that devolution has made on residents.

How helpful have you found the management information and communication provided by WYCA?

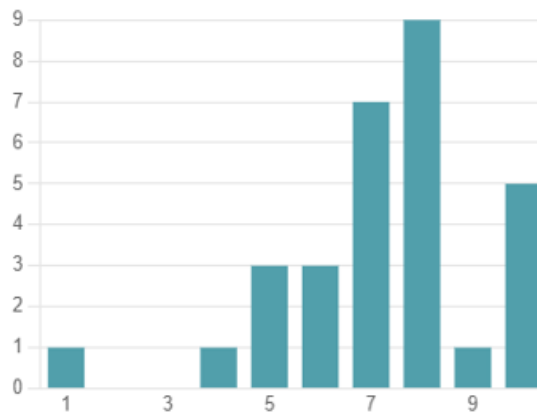


How much impact has the funding rule flexibilities had on the ability to engage West Yorkshire residents?



How much impact do you think the devolution of AEB has had on West Yorkshire Residents? (1 = low, 10 = high)

7.27
Average Rating



Providers were also asked for areas in which the Combined Authority could improve support including:

- Increase marketing and communication support: ('a proportion of residents don't know they can access an offer'; 'Strong messaging about value of adult education')
- Comments on how out of area providers with small allocations (mostly travel to learn provision) interact with the Combined Authority e.g., frequency of review meetings, contract arrangements, partnership meetings.
- Comments on a potential for a mutual arrangement with South Yorkshire CA for SY learners on the border to access WY providers.
- Consistent and regular way of communicating e.g., monthly updates, webinars, newsletter.

These will be focusses for improvement in Year 2 of devolution.

AEB success stories

Kristina

Kristina moved to Halifax with her husband in 2016. At first, Kristina struggled with having no family in the country and the different culture. Her biggest obstacle was speaking a new and different language – the English language. Kristina began learning basic grammar rules, but realised she wanted to try something new. She visited Calderdale College to find out what was on offer, “I came to an Open Event and found out that there are different courses available.” She decided to prepare herself properly for the course by immersing herself in English culture, including watching English television and visiting museums. “In my first lesson, the teacher gave me an initial test, and this showed a higher result than I was expecting – she moved me straight away to GCSE level.” Kristina’s initial experience of adult learning was a positive one, “My GCSE teacher created this amazing environment, and she evoked this sense of belonging in the classroom.” She went on to achieve a distinction and left the course feeling inspired and became an English Teacher for a large online company. “After a couple of years, I decided to return to the place which gave me this amazing opportunity to be the person I was always meant to be. I returned to Calderdale College.”



“Be yourself, be curious and be inspired.” – Kristina

Tazeem

In February 2021, Tazeem was told that her job was at risk of redundancy. Initially she felt she would struggle to find another career path, “I’ve got experience but haven’t got my GCSEs behind me. I thought there was no chance of getting my maths and English, no chance of getting a better job.” However, Tazeem’s sister saw an online advert offering Functional Skills courses, which is where she discovered Total Training Provision, delivered by the West Yorkshire devolution deal, “I thought, if it works, it works. Let’s give it a shot.” Tazeem had always struggled the most with English and, despite the support from TTP, failed the reading part of the course twice. “I thought I was probably going to give up after the second time because it’s not going to happen. My advisor convinced me to give it a third shot – she stood by me every step of the way. I did sit it again, and I did pass it.” After her hard work, Tazeem was able to proudly say that she had her maths and English qualifications and managed to secure a job within the same company.



“I’m very thankful to all of Total Training Provision for actually giving me this opportunity.” – Tazeem

Learner testimonials

“The relaxed and friendly environment in the classroom enabled me to develop my language skills in an enjoyable yet challenging way.”

“Undertaking this course permitted me to apply for a job, and once achieved I progressed to a more substantive post. I realised that I am no longer afraid of maths, in fact as a subject I have learned to really enjoy it.”

“Since completing this course, I feel more confident, and I use my skills I have developed from this course in my everyday work life as I am Additional Learning Support which I use this qualification in all subjects around the college.”

“Since completing the Access to HE Computing course at Wakefield College, many of the skills I learnt have provided good knowledge of basic ideas such as programming and web development. Without these skills I would not have been able to progress onto the BSc in Computing Course at College.”

“As well as progressing my career, my language skills enable me to engage in everyday tasks and social activities fully and independently.”

“I enjoyed the course a great deal and I really appreciated my teacher too. At 62 I found I was able to not only understand maths but learn this subject and then achieve a good pass.”

“If I did not complete this course then I would not be able to apply for a higher position within this sector. This would make my life harder because the main point of choosing this course was so that I could work from home with a good career.”

“Not only can I apply maths to my role, but I can apply it to all other aspects of my life too.”



Performance against priorities

Priority	Objectives	Delivered in year 1
<p>Increase the supply of skills to support key sectors in West Yorkshire</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase number of people with basic employability skills (L2 &3) • Increase number of people with higher level skills • Provide skills for key sector – decrease skills shortages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 43,000 learners supported (increase of 7% on the previous year) • 8,700 West Yorkshire residents have attained their first ever qualification • 6,000 achieved their first level 2 qualification • 700 residents obtained their first level 3 qualification • Targeted commissioning of Bus Driver Training • In addition to Digital (see below), number of starts in known shortage areas also grew, including Construction (+900; +81%), Engineering and manufacturing (+200; +18%)
<p>Improve West Yorkshire’s resilience by developing skills for the future</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills for climate emergency and changing economy • Boost basic and intermediate Digital Skills to support inclusion and workplace progression • Increase flexible methods of delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital was the fastest growing subject area with the number of enrolments on digital courses growing by 1,700 (78%) year on year in 2021/22, to almost 4,000 • Digital entitlement expanded to include more qualifications • Bridging programmes approved to provide flexible ‘steppingstone’ before a level 3 course.
<p>Make learning more inclusive to support disadvantaged residents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase participation and skills levels from disadvantaged communities and groups • Extend the reach of learning opportunities to a broader range of underrepresented groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proportion of learners from the most acutely deprived neighbourhoods increased from 37% to 41% • the proportion of Adult Skills learners who were out of work increased from 59% to 64%

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build confidence of lower skilled learners to engage and progress in learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the proportion of non-white ethnic minority Adult Skills learners increased from 43% to 52% and from 37% to 44% for Community Learning. • the proportion of learners with a learning difficulty/disability /health problem increased slightly from 16% to 17%. • 11% of Community Learning learners progressed to an Adult Skills course during the academic year
<p>Support the unemployed to gain and sustain employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase participation of people in 'good work' • Connect unemployment support with skills development, working with Jobcentres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16,000 unemployed learners were supported, 49% of all Adult Skills learners. • 14% of learners were not in paid employment but were not looking for work and / or not available for work (i.e. economically inactive). Many of these inactive individuals will be making their first steps towards engagement with the labour market. • 1,602 unemployed learners were recorded as progressing directly to employment after their course
<p>Unlock progression opportunities and career adaptability through skills, particularly for those on low wages and with insecure work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve career prospects of residents • Connect people to new job opportunities through increased skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6,600 enrolments funded through AEB (12% of the total) were for people on a low wage (2,000 more than in previous years)

West Yorkshire Combined Authority

Wellington House
40-50 Wellington Street
Leeds
West Yorkshire
LS1 2DE

Email communications@westyorks-ca.gov.uk

Web westyorks-ca.gov.uk

Twitter [@WestYorkshireCA](https://twitter.com/WestYorkshireCA)