

ANNUAL STRATEGIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT 2021/22

JANUARY 2023

CONTENTS



SUMMARY OF OUTPUTS
AND INPUTS



ENGAGEMENT AND
PARTICIPATION



IMPACT ON DIVERSITY
AND INCLUSION



OUTCOMES FOR LEARNERS



STAKEHOLDER SATISFACTION



DISTANCE TRAVELLED
BY LEARNERS



LEARNER DESTINATIONS



IMPACT ON REGIONAL SKILLS
AND THE REGIONAL ECONOMY



REVIEW OF STRATEGIC INPUTS

1. INTRODUCTION	4
1.1 Executive scorecard	6
2. FULL-TIME LEARNERS AGED 16-18 YEARS	8
Balanced scorecard	8
Summary of outputs	9
2.1 Engagement and participation rates	11
2.2 Impact on diversity and inclusion	13
2.3 Outcomes for learners	14
2.4 Learner Satisfaction	18
2.5 Learner Destinations	20
2.6 Impact on regional skills and the regional economy	22
3. FULL-TIME A LEVEL LEARNERS AGED 16-18 YEARS	24
Balanced scorecard	24
Summary of outputs	25
3.1 Engagement and participation rates	27
3.2 Impact on diversity and inclusion	29
3.3 Outcomes for learners	30
3.4 Learner Satisfaction	31
3.5 Distance travelled by learners	32
3.6 Learner Destinations	33
3.7 Impact on regional skills and the regional economy	34

4. FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME ADULT SKILLS LEARNERS	36
Balanced scorecard	36
Summary of outputs	37
4.1 Engagement and participation rates	38
4.2 Impact on diversity and inclusion	40
4.3 Outcomes for learners	41
4.4 Learner satisfaction	44
4.5 Learner destinations	45
4.6 Impact on regional skills and the regional economy	48
5. APPRENTICESHIPS AND WORK-BASED LEARNERS	50
Balanced scorecard	50
Summary of outputs	51
5.1 Engagement and participation rates	52
5.2 Impact on diversity and inclusion	54
5.3 Outcomes for learners	55
5.4 Learner and employer satisfaction	56
5.5 Impact on regional skills and the regional economy	60
6. HIGHER SKILLS LEARNERS	62
Balanced scorecard	62
Summary of outputs	63
6.1 Engagement and participation rates	64
6.2 Impact on diversity and inclusion	66
6.3 Outcomes for learners	67
6.4 Learner satisfaction	68
6.5 Impact on regional skills and the regional economy	69

7. SUB-CONTRACTED APPRENTICESHIPS	70
Balanced scorecard	70
Summary of outputs	71
7.1 Engagement and participation rates	72
7.2 Impact on diversity and inclusion	74
7.3 Outcomes for apprentices	75
8. SUB-CONTRACTED APPRENTICESHIPS	78
Overview of the College's financial position	78
Key financial strengths and areas for improvement	78
8.1 Operating performance	80
8.2 Total income	81
8.3 Staff cost as a % of income	82
8.4 Adjusted current ratio	83
8.5 Cash days	84
8.6 Borrowing as a % of income	86
8.7 ESFA financial health scores	87

1. INTRODUCTION

The Annual Strategic Impact Assessment is a high level analytical document which reviews the College's progress in delivering our Strategic Plan. It explicitly assesses the impact the College has made on its learners and the wider economy. The Annual Strategic Impact Assessment (ASIA) subsumes the former self-assessment report and the College has been using this format since 2014-15.

In the previous academic year (2020-21) the College experienced another exceptional year as the world continued to deal with the pandemic. The year saw restrictions still in effect and exceptional arrangements still having to be put in place for delivery, assessment and exams. It means that many of the measures that we would use to judge the impact the College has made in our ASIA were not available that year, due to national achievement rates not being published. It was also a year where we saw the full impact of the pandemic on our communities, with employers facing significant financial challenges, apprenticeship opportunities disappearing and many adults unable to engage in training.

For the last academic year (2021-22), whilst some restrictions did still affect the start of many programmes it was very much a year that saw delivery and assessment arrangements returning to normal. For many of our students it was the first time they sat formal exams, having not had to complete them in school or previous study due to the pandemic arrangements. It was also a year where we saw a heightened level of student support needs and the College was pleased to provide additional tutoring and support sessions to help students through this. Adults and apprenticeship participation also started to improve again following a drop off during the pandemic, although not to the levels we were experiencing prior to this.

In recognition of the above our Annual Strategic Impact Assessment format remains much like the previous year. It still aims to show clearly the main strategic outputs that we have achieved for every key client group that we serve. Whilst national benchmarks are not available, we still feel it is important that all stakeholders can see how the College has performed in terms of key outputs such as achievement, diversity, participation, satisfaction and regional skills priorities. It also gives us the opportunity to share some of the main activity and achievements of the College throughout another exceptional year.

We hope that this format allows stakeholders to see the impact the College has achieved both in terms of our strategic outputs and the work undertaken over the past year. We are incredibly proud of the role the College has played and continues to play in supporting our community through the pandemic and our ongoing recovery from it.

Further information on the College's performance can be found on the Dudley Dashboard on the College's website. This is updated throughout the year to keep our stakeholders informed of our ongoing performance.

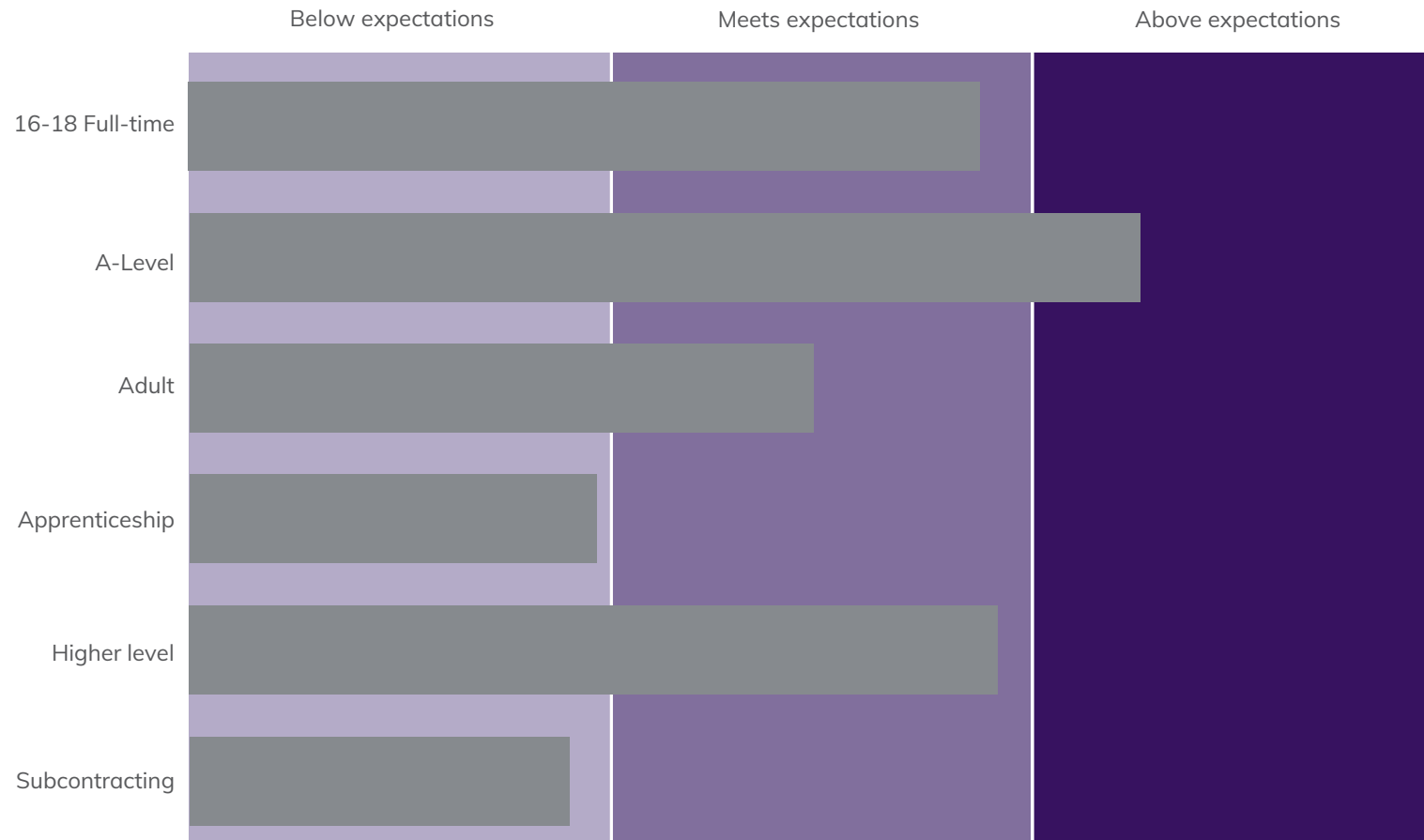
We also recognise that we could not have achieved what we have done without the incredible support of our community and the employers we serve locally. Dudley College of Technology is proud to be a member of a fantastic community which is working together for the benefit of us all.





1.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - BALANCED SCORECARD

HOW IS THE COLLEGE PERFORMING FOR EACH KEY CLIENT GROUP?



16-18 LEARNERS

The overall performance of this key client group is 'meeting expectations'. This group is exceeding expectations in terms of diversity of our learners, their destinations and the financial impact on the College. Participation, achievement rates, and regional impact are meeting college expectations, although there are specific areas where improvements can be made. Once this is consistent across all curriculum areas we would expect this key client group to be above expectations.

A-LEVEL LEARNERS

The overall performance of this key client group is 'above expectations'. It is particularly pleasing to see our continued trend of 6 year improvement in high grade performance and the positive destinations our students go on to after completing their studies with us. We will continue to drive for the highest achievement across all groups of A-level students as well as supporting more students to aspire for disciplines that allow learners to continue their HE study and employment locally and impact on regional productivity.

ADULT SKILLS LEARNERS

The overall performance of this key client group is 'meets expectations'. The group is exceeding expectations in terms of satisfaction and on the impact the provision has on the regional skills impact, an area we have worked on in collaboration with the West Midlands Combined Authority in order to better equip local residents with the skills required to contribute towards ambitious growth for the region. Participation and financial contribution was below expectations and we will continue to develop our curriculum offer in order to see an improvement in this moving forward.

APPRENTICESHIPS

The overall performance of this key client group is 'below expectations'. The ongoing pandemic and associated economic downturn have continued to impact apprenticeships recruitment and achievement. Apprentices' retention and associated achievement have also continued to be impacted as some sectors struggle with difficult trading conditions, an uncertain economic period and as the furlough scheme concludes. Despite the clear difficulties, those apprenticeships remaining on programme have continued to achieve to a good standard, however, there has been a decline in achievement rate compares to the previous year for in-college apprentices at 54.3% (60.9%). The provision continues to be very well aligned to local industry need and receives helpful feedback from employers and students.

HIGHER SKILLS LEARNERS

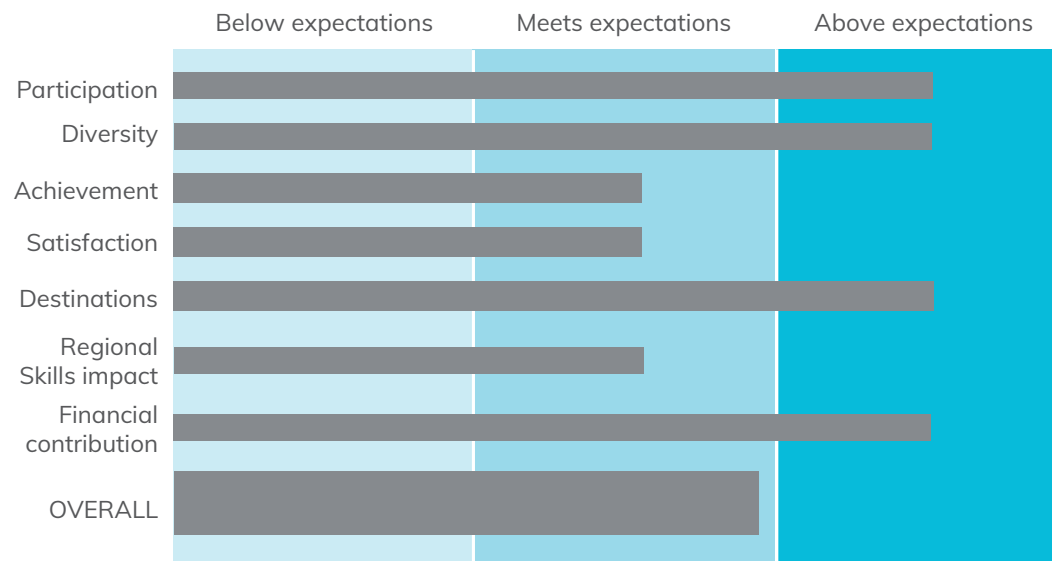
The overall performance of this key client group is 'meets expectations'. Student achievement and satisfaction feedback remain high and above expectation. There continues to be a fall in recruitment, and associated financial contribution, to traditional stand-alone HNC/D programmes. Our focus going forward will be to continue to expand the range of programmes at higher level by offering non-traditional routes to HE, delivered from the Black Country & Marches Institute of Technology (BCIoT) and in partnership with Regional Universities. We are looking to increase the number of students progressing from feeder programmes to the College's HE provision, particularly through the College's involvement in the Aspire to HE project initiative.

SUBCONTRACTED APPRENTICESHIPS

The overall performance of this key client group is 'below expectations'. The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the associated trading conditions and the full implementation of apprenticeship standards had a particularly profound effect on several partners who deliver apprenticeship provision on behalf of the College. Overall achievement rates for Partner sub-contracted apprenticeships was 44.5% in 2021/22 which shows some recovery in performance compared with 20/21 but remains below our expectations. The College will continue to work with, and selectively grow, high value-added partners where there is a clear alignment with our Strategic Plan. However low added-value partnerships will continue to be phased out as apprentices complete.

2. FULL-TIME LEARNERS AGED 16-18 YEARS

BALANCED SCORECARD



The overall performance of this key client group is 'meeting expectations'. This group is exceeding expectations in terms of diversity of our learners, their destinations and the financial impact on the College. Participation, achievement rates, and regional impact are meeting college expectations, although there are specific areas where improvements can be made. Once this is consistent across all curriculum areas we would expect this key client group to be above expectations.



SUMMARY OF OUTPUTS

OUTPUTS

What key outputs did we achieve?

We continued to maintain high levels of local participation in skills based learning:

- We engaged 4,755 young people in learning in 2021/22.

We successfully engaged learners from diverse communities:

- 1,511 learners (32.1%) were from ethnic minority groups. Our learners are more diverse than the local community where 11.9% of the population are from minority groups.
- 1,072 learners (23.1%) reported a learning difficulty or disability.

We supported high numbers of learners to successfully achieve their programme of study:

- Despite a slight dip in achievement compared to the last published national rates from 18/19, over 80% of learners on L3 and L1 programmes successfully achieved their programme.
- We had our first cohort of T Level learners achieve with a 90% pass rate.
- There are no significant gaps in achievement rates of male and female learners and those with and without a learning difficulty or disability are broadly similar.

We made a significant impact on the local skills gap by upskilling young people:

- 2,686 (56%) young people were following STEM programmes of study.
- 510 (54.3%) learners completing their level 2 programme, (those who joined us with less than 5 GCSEs grade C or above from school), progressed immediately to an advanced level skills programme.

- 57.1% achieved a grade 9-4 in mathematics and 80% achieved a grade 9-4 in English in their retake programme.

We successfully support the vast majority of our learners into positive destinations:

- 94.5% of our learners continued into training, employment or higher education.

We continued to achieve high levels of learner satisfaction against national comparators.

What better outputs could we achieve?

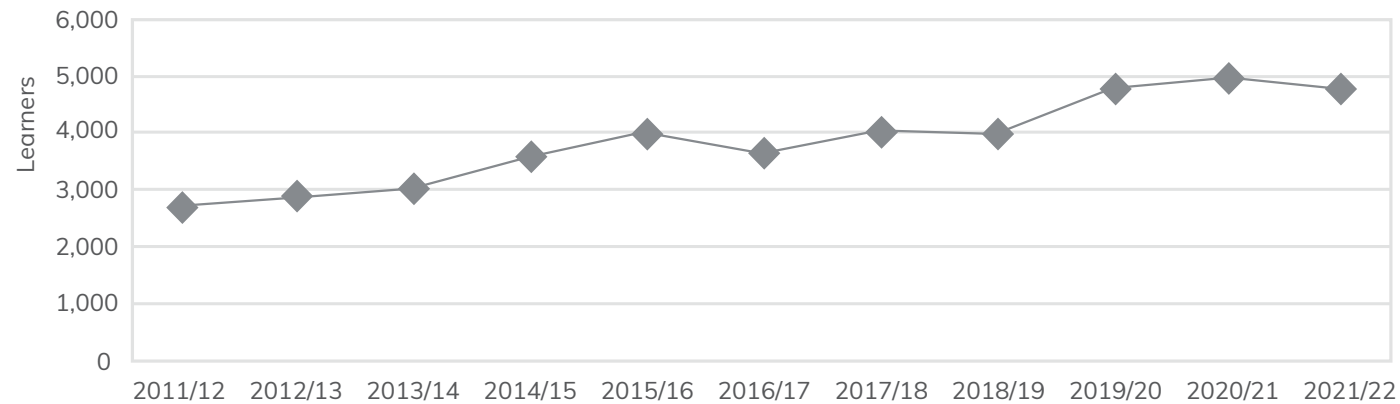
- Recruitment to certain curriculum areas
- Achievement rates on L2 programmes of study
- Close the achievement gaps between black and mixed ethnicity learners and their peers
- Support for vocational students in preparing for exams
- Improve attendance to English and mathematics in some areas.





2.1 ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION RATES

Learner engagement trend analysis
16-18 Classroom Trend

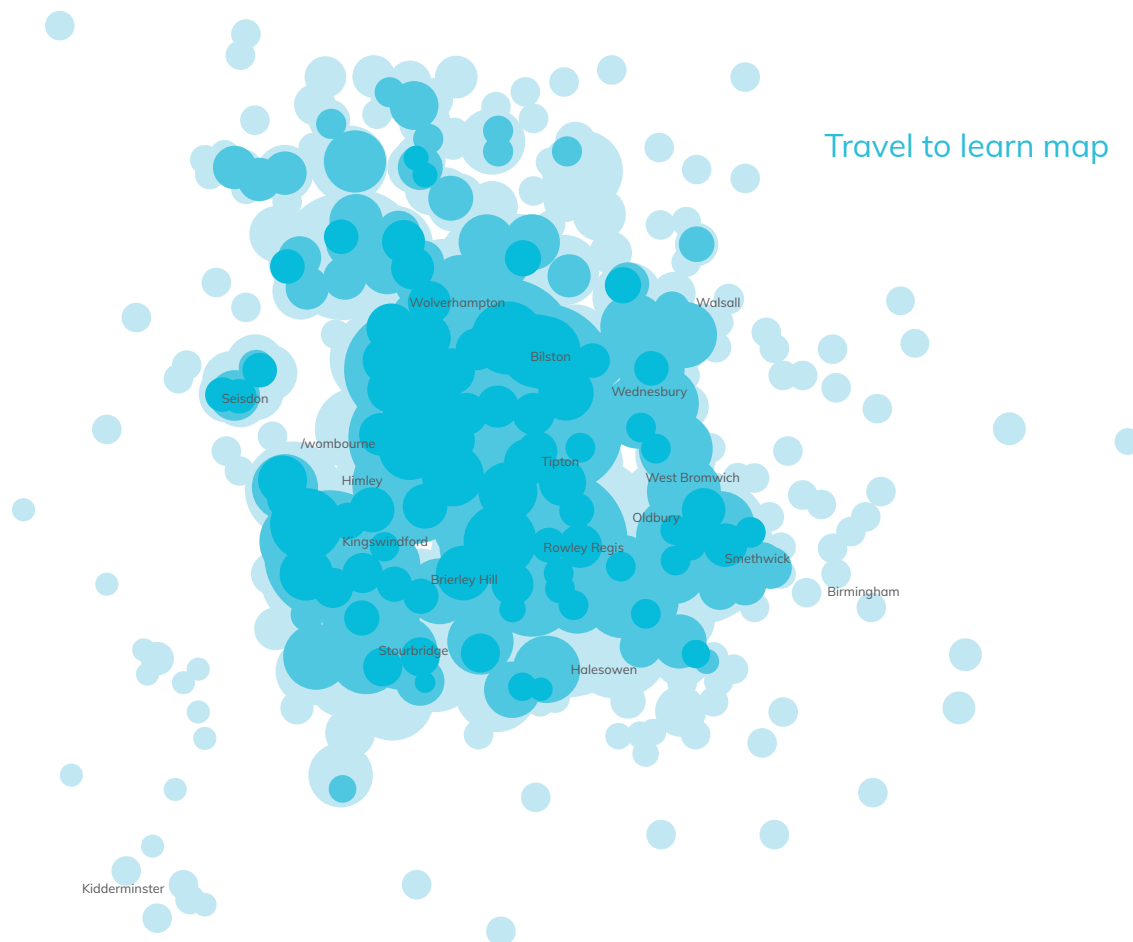


Following significant increase in overall 16-18 learner numbers in 2019/20 and a further rise in 20/21, we have seen a slight decrease in 21/22 with 4755 young people in learning. This is in line with learner numbers for 19/20.

Continued high numbers of 16-18 learners confirms high levels of confidence in Dudley College of Technology and will continue to support the regional economy as well as our own financial health.



2.1 ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION RATES CONTINUED

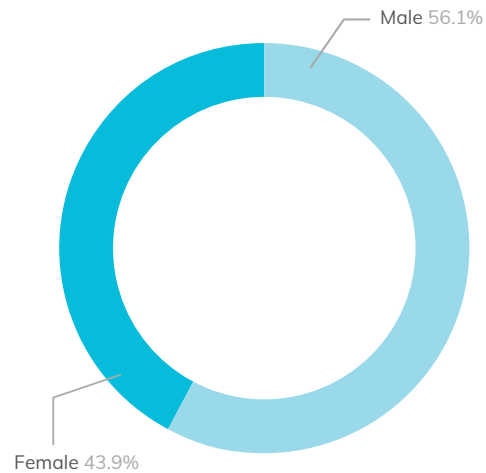


The map shows the travel to learn pattern of our learners in 2021/22. Most learners are from Dudley borough, as you would expect, with increasing numbers of learners looking to remain in Dudley to study rather than travel elsewhere. Our highly equipped estate across the Dudley and Brierley Hill Learning Quarters continue to transform the lives of young people aged 16-18 across the wider region.

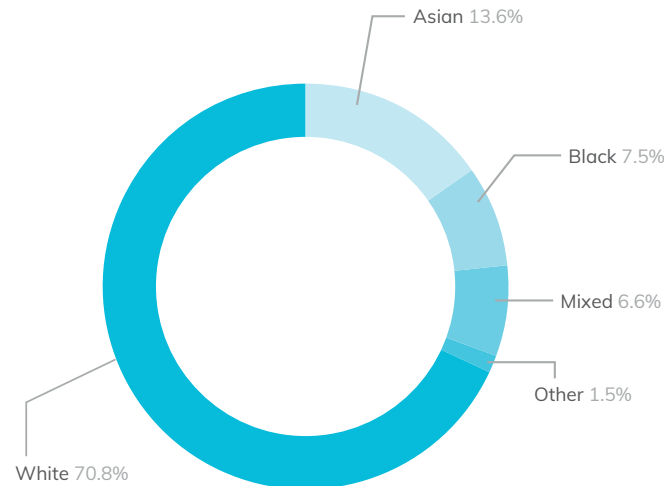


2.2 IMPACT ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

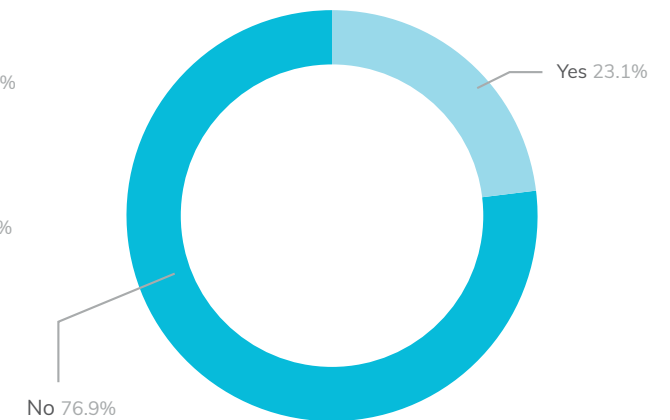
Gender



Ethnicity



Learning difficulty or disability



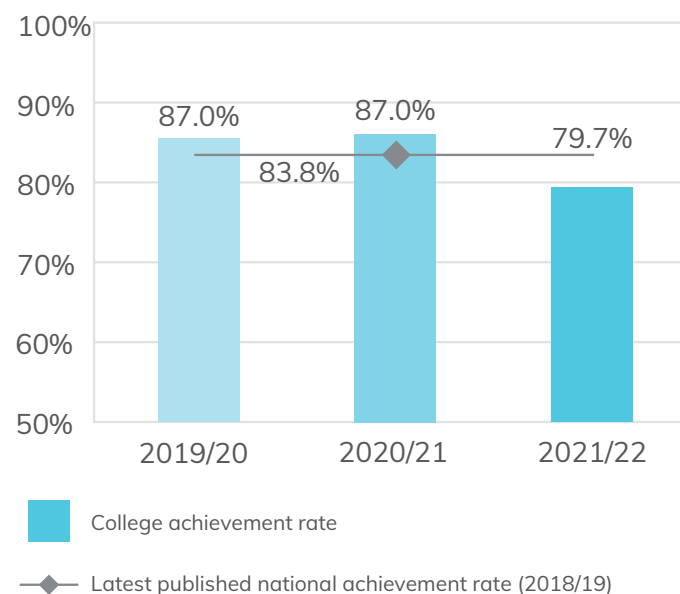
For learners aged 16-18, there were more male learners in 2021/22 than female, however both groups achieved at very similar rates. We continue to support a diverse cohort of learners with the 16-18 ethnicity profile showing our learners as a group are more diverse than the local population. 32.1% of our learners are from minority groups who make up 11.9% of the local population. Learners of Asian ethnicity succeed at 5.6% above college average whilst black and mixed ethnicity learners achieved at 3.8% and 8.3% below the College average respectively. The College will put a process in place to investigate this further and take any required action.

1,072 (23.1%) of the 16-18 learners we support have a learning difficulty or disability. Learners with difficulties and disabilities achieve at a comparable rate to their peers.



2.3 OUTCOMES FOR LEARNERS

Achievement rates - all programmes excluding English & Mathematics



Note – Latest published national rates are only available from 2018-19 due to pandemic.

21/22 saw the return of normal assessment methodology following 2 years of teacher and centre assessed grades. The majority of this cohort of learners had not previously sat examinations and their prior-learning was negatively impacted by Covid-19. Achievement rates for our full-time learners aged 16-18 years have therefore seen a slight decrease at all levels, but this is expected to be reflected nationally. The last published rates for comparison are from 18/19 pre COVID.

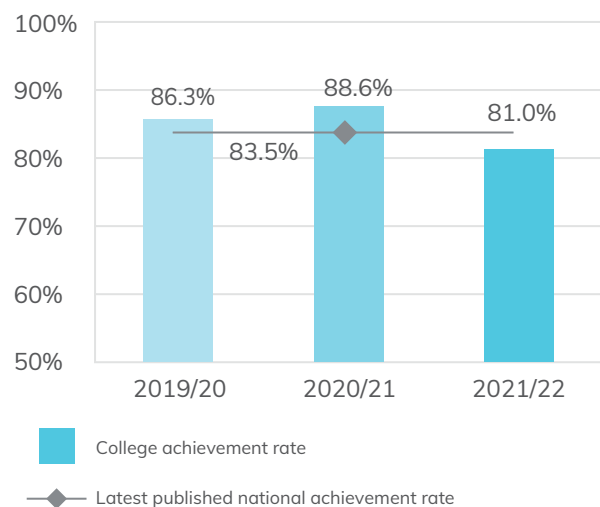
Through the Government's 'catch up' funding we were able to offer 889 learners additional tuition to close gaps in their knowledge due to lost learning during the COVID pandemic.

We supported our first three groups of T level learners to achieve this new qualification. 90% passed all elements of the T level including the industry placement.

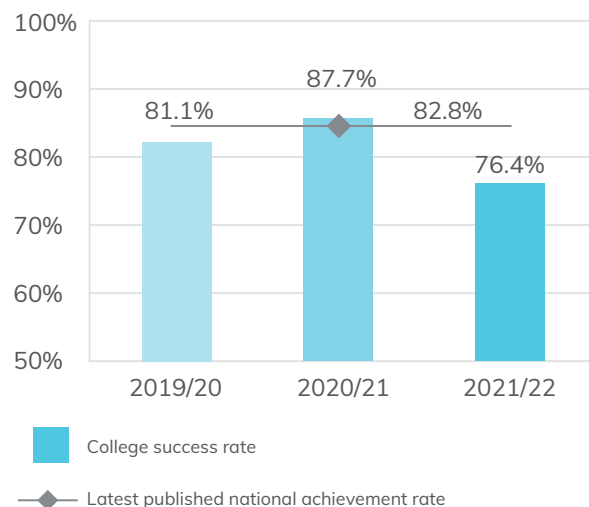


2.3 OUTCOMES FOR LEARNERS CONTINUED

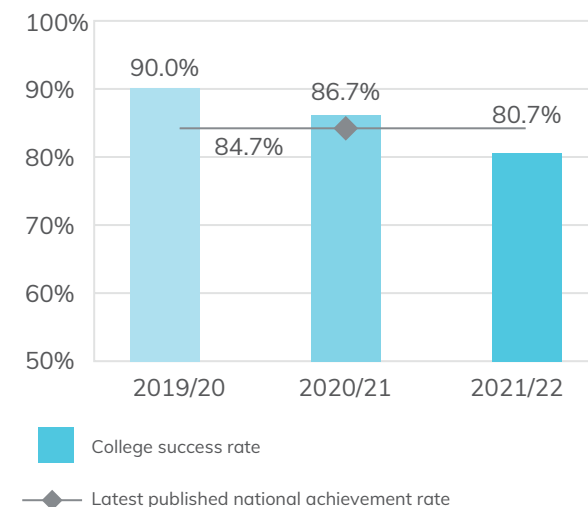
Achievement rate - Level 1



Achievement rate - Level 2



Achievement rate - Level 3



The overall achievement rate now stands at 79.6% and is 3.7% below the last published rate of 83.8%.

Level 1 achievement rate is now 81.0% which is 2.5% below the last published national rate.

Level 2 achievement rate is now 76.4% which is 6.4% below the last published national rate.

Level 3 achievement rate is 80.7% which is 4% below the last published national rate.

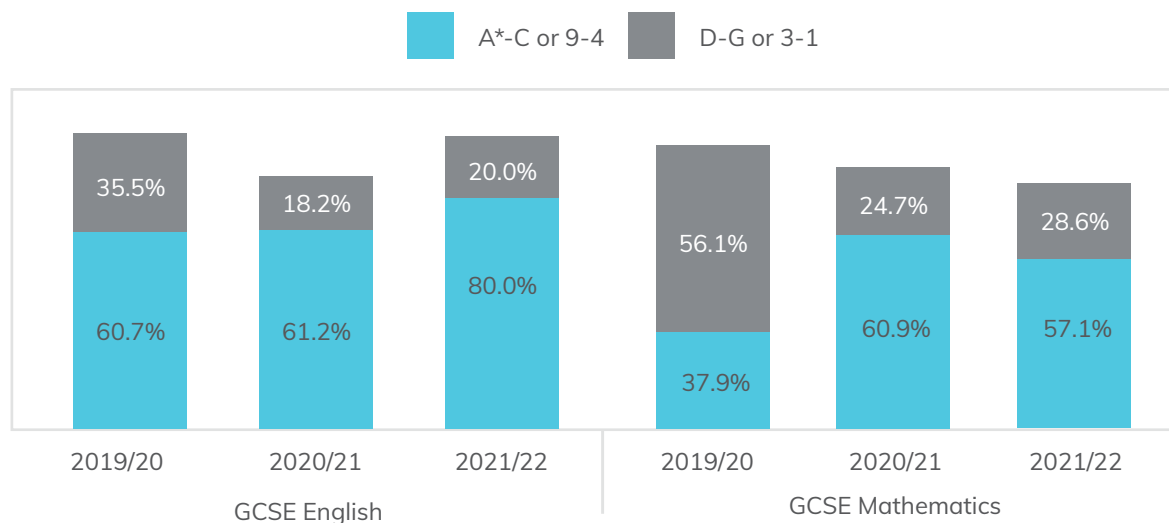
We are currently waiting for national rates for 21/22 for comparison.

Note – Latest published national rates are only available from 2018-19 due to pandemic.



2.3 OUTCOMES FOR LEARNERS CONTINUED

GCSE retake results - three year trend

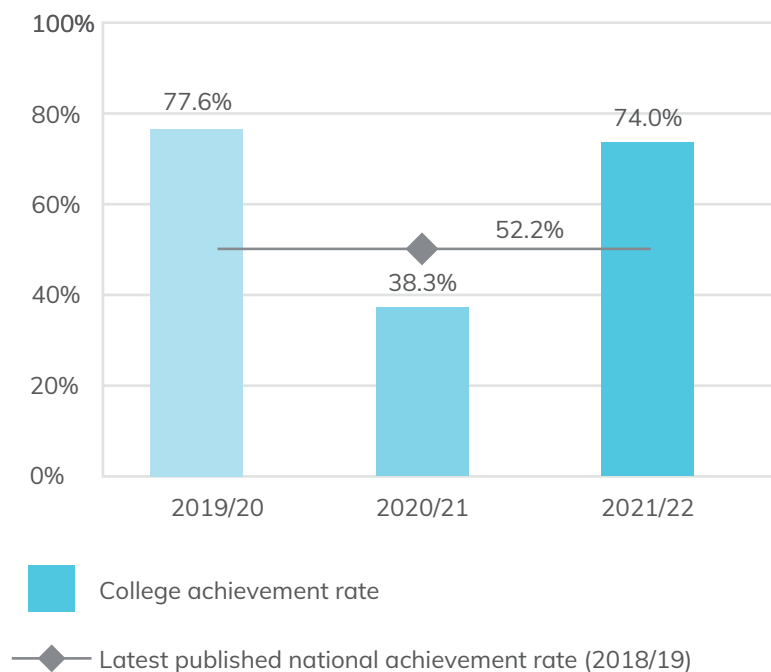


Due to many learners accessing GCSE resits being awarded a centre or teacher assessed grade when they joined the College, many were entered onto a 2-year GCSE resit programme as the gaps in their learning were significant. This meant that the number of learners completing their GCSE resit in 21/22 was lower than in previous years. The vast majority of learners, will resit and receive their grades in 22/23. Those who did complete demonstrated strong performance in grades 9-4 in both English and mathematics.



2.3 OUTCOMES FOR LEARNERS CONTINUED

Functional Skills SfL achievement rate - all levels



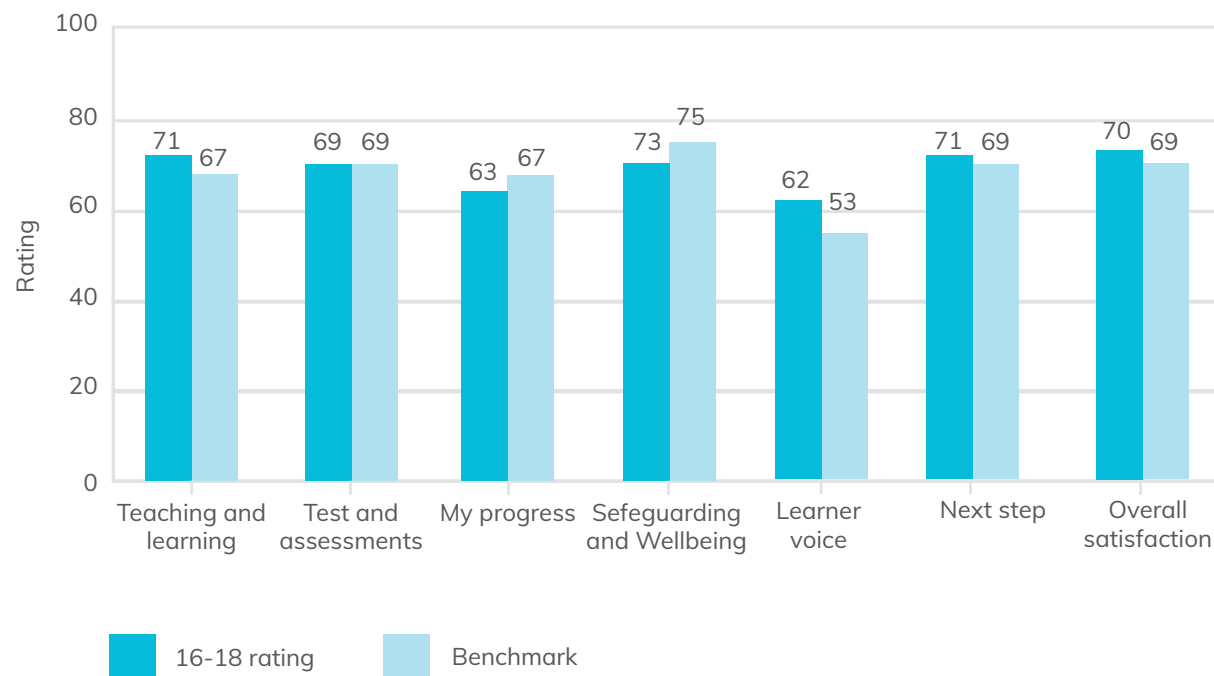
Note – Latest published national rates are only available from 2018-19 due to pandemic.

Following a significant drop in achievement rates in Functional Skills in 20/21 due to the impact of Covid 19, there has been a significant increase in achievement rates for 2021-22. This has seen an improved picture against the last published national achievement rate of 52.2%. A return to classroom face-to-face teaching has had a positive on learners studying Functional Skills.



2.4 LEARNER SATISFACTION

Year end learner satisfaction (QDP survey)



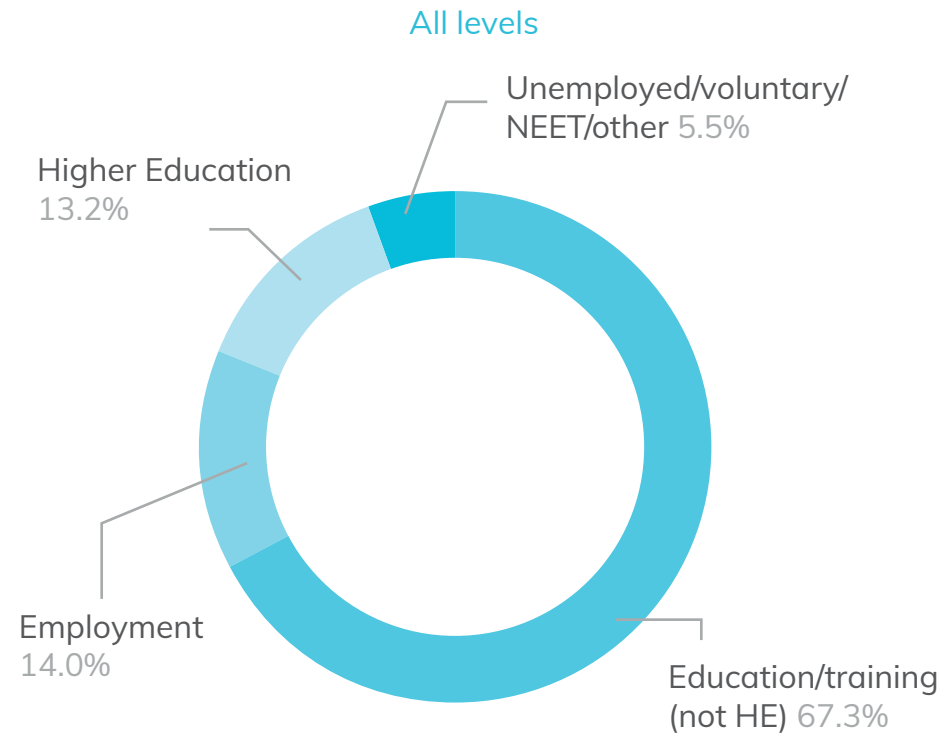
We conduct surveys each year to understand learners' satisfaction with their programme of study and the wider college. Their feedback informs subject impact assessment reviews and quality improvement plans. The College employs an external agency, QDP, to conduct mid and end year surveys and to benchmark the results against 80 other grade 2 or above general further education colleges.

We are proud of our performance against other providers with an overall satisfaction rating above the benchmark. Four of the six categories are rated at or above benchmark, with two being marginally below. These will be investigated at course level through our Subject Area Impact Assessments (SAIAs) with targeted actions to address any areas for concern.





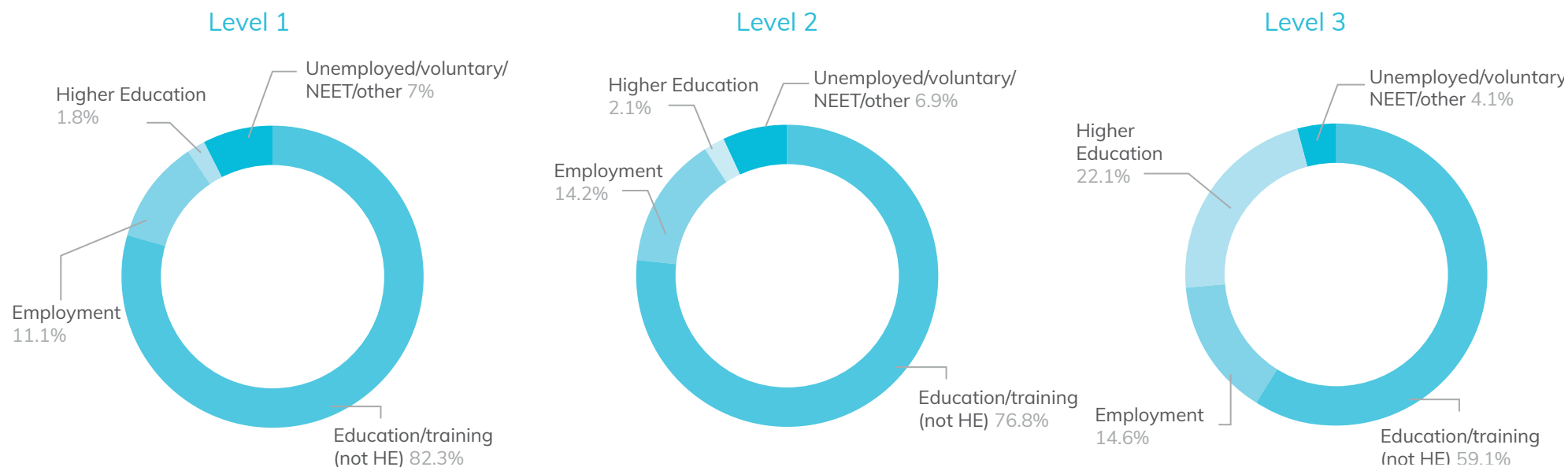
2.5 LEARNER DESTINATIONS



We successfully support the vast majority of our learners into positive destinations with 94.5% continuing in training, employment or higher education.



2.5 LEARNER DESTINATIONS CONTINUED



92.5% of Level 1 learners progressed into positive destinations.

93.1% of Level 2 learners progressed into positive destinations.

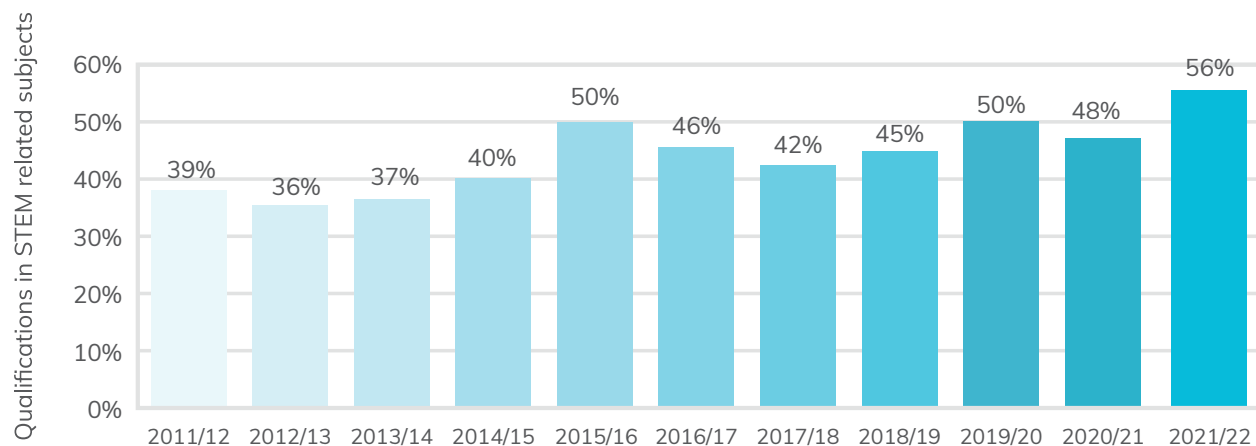
95.8% of Level 3 learners progressed into positive destinations.

The high rates of Level 1 and Level 2 learners continuing in education and training demonstrate the strength of our programmes in supporting young people to progress. These courses develop technical skills, build confidence and enhance future career prospects. Seamless progression pathways support individual learners whilst positively contributing to the productivity of the local and regional economy.



2.6 IMPACT ON REGIONAL SKILLS AND THE REGIONAL ECONOMY

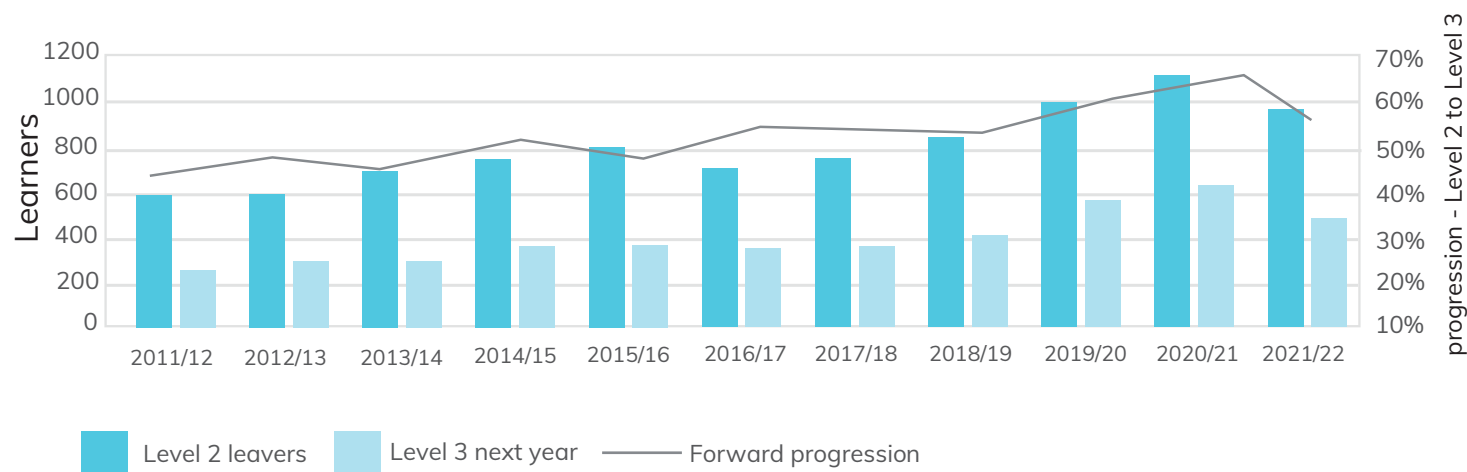
STEM in the curriculum - trend analysis



The local economy relies on a workforce with high level skills in STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and especially in mathematics). The chart shows the percentage of qualifications completed by learners aged 16-18 years that were in STEM related subjects. In 2021-22, 2,686 (56%) of our young people followed STEM programmes of study which is an 8% increase on the previous year. We continue to see a good percentage of our learners studying STEM, showing our continued focus on ensuring we develop curriculum to meet the needs of these important sectors.

2.6 IMPACT ON REGIONAL SKILLS AND THE REGIONAL ECONOMY CONTINUED

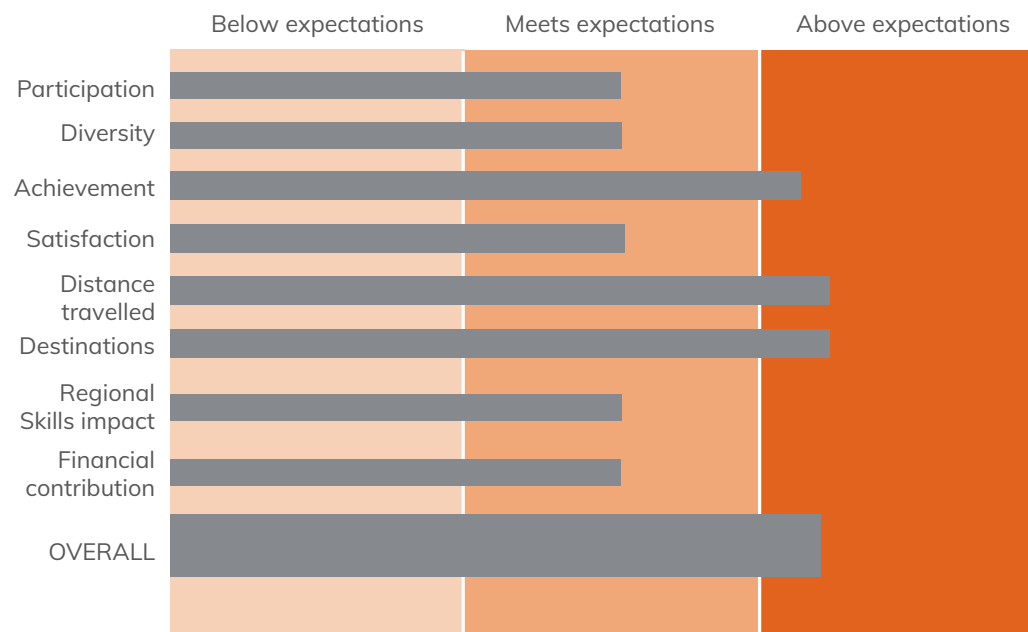
Progression to advanced level - trend analysis



As detailed in the graph, 54.3% of all the College's level 2 learners progressed directly into level 3 provision. This demonstrates the value of our level 2 provision in supporting learners to progress into advanced level technical training. The growing numbers of learners choosing this option shows the impact the College is having on the lives of young people and the benefits to the local and regional economy.

3. FULL-TIME A LEVEL LEARNERS AGED 16-18 YEARS

BALANCED SCORECARD



The overall performance of this key client group is 'above expectations'. It is particularly pleasing to see our continued trend of 6 year improvement in high grade performance and the positive destinations our students go on to after completing their studies with us. We will continue to drive for the highest achievement across all groups of A-level students as well as supporting more students to aspire for disciplines that allow learners to continue their HE study and employment locally and impact on regional productivity.

OUTPUTS

What key outputs did we achieve?

We significantly increased local participation in A-Level learning:

- We engaged 542 young people in A and AS levels in 2021/22.
- Despite a falling local demographic over recent years, we have continue the upward trend in increased participation of young people in A and AS levels since the centre opened, with further growth in 2021/22.

We successfully engaged A level learners from diverse communities:

- 203 (37.4%) A and AS learners were from ethnic minority groups. Our A and AS learners are significantly more diverse than the local community where 11.9% of the population are from minority groups.
- 51(9.5 %) A and AS learners reported a learning difficulty or disability.

We supported A level learners to successfully achieve their programme of study:

- Overall achievement rates on A levels are above national rates and have been for the last three years.
- The number of learners achieving high grades (A* - C) has increased over each of the last three years to 80.1% with 58% achieving A* - B.

We made a significant impact on the local skills gap by upskilling young people:

- 337 (62.18%) A and AS learners were studying STEM subjects.
- Overall satisfaction meets national benchmark for Sixth Form colleges.

What better outputs could we achieve?

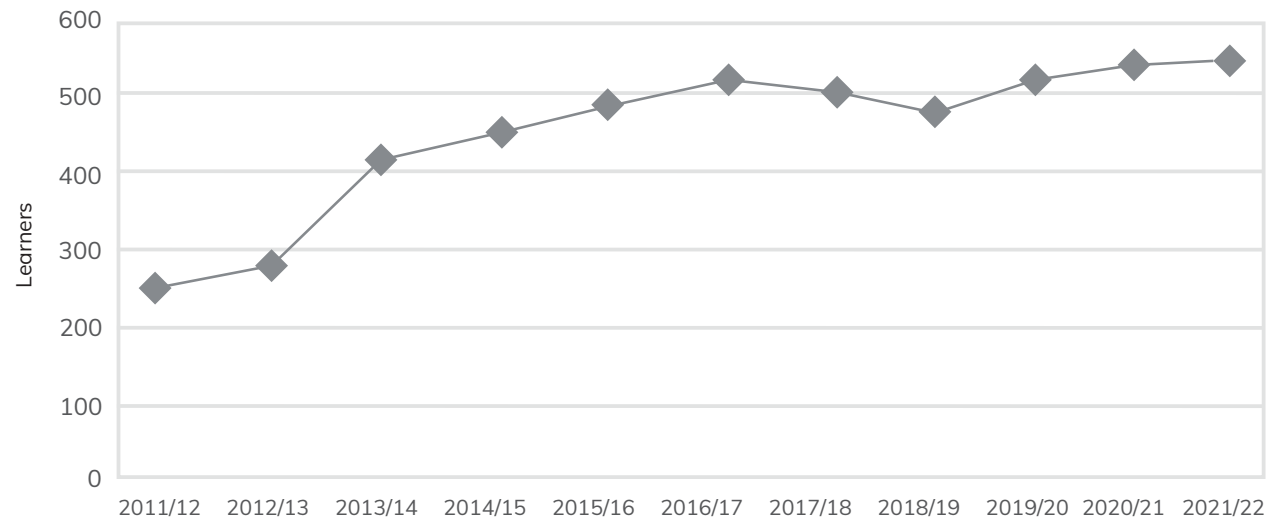
- The number of learners completing A levels progressing into higher apprenticeships.
- Reduce the gap in achievement between 'Black' learners and their peers.
- Reduce the gap in achievement between learners declaring a disability or learning difficult and those without
- Continue to improve progression rates from year 1 to year 2.





3.1 ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION RATES

Learner engagement trend analysis

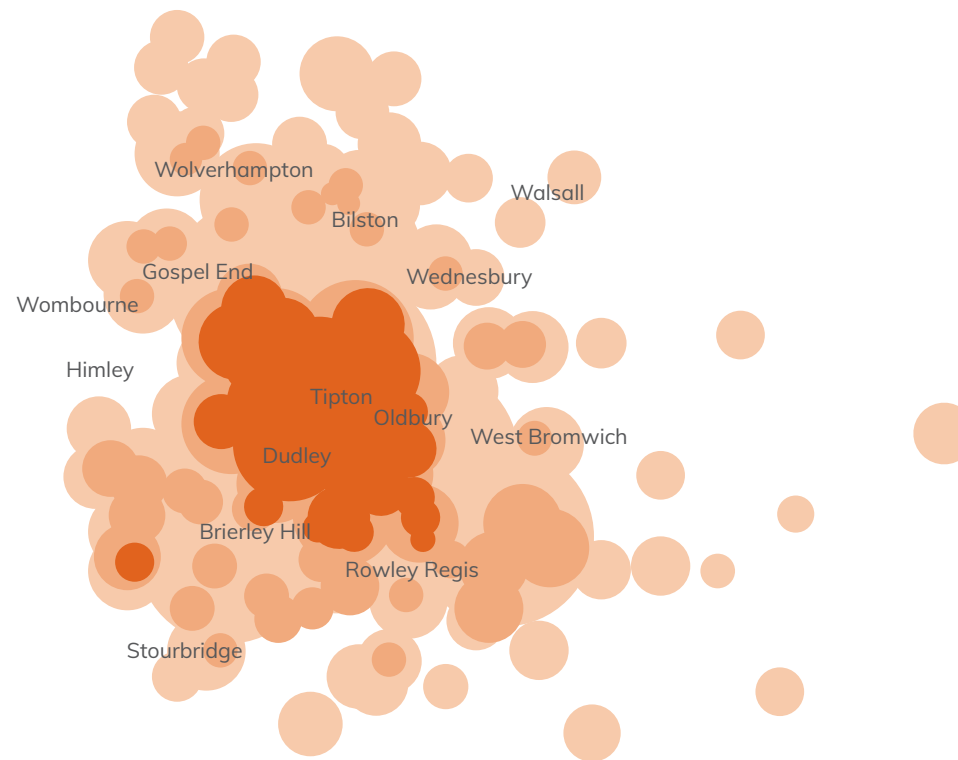


Dudley Sixth has continued its year on year growth in student engagement with A-Level learning, increasing participation again in 2021/22 to 542 learners. This growth has been influenced by the start of an upturn in the 16-18 population of the borough following a number of years of decline in this demographic, but also by the high-quality A-Level offer and growing reputation. This includes an established A-Level centre and a broad curriculum offer. We have continued to offer more delivery hours per A-Level as well as higher levels of support than other providers.



3.1 ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION RATES CONTINUED

Travel to learn map

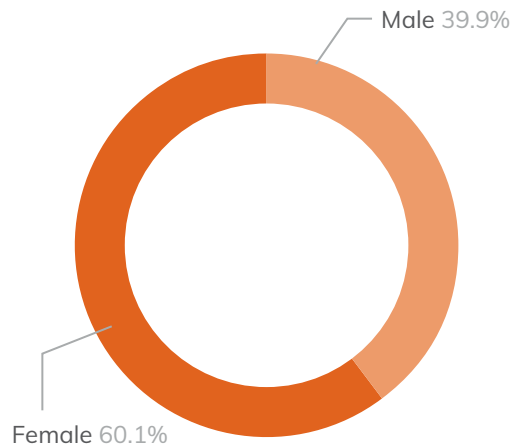


The map shows the travel to learn pattern of our A Level learners in 2021/22 is in line with 2020/21. We have continued to be the first choice for many local A Level learners who choose to study at Dudley Sixth rather than travelling elsewhere. We continue to attract learners from the wider region, which demonstrates the confidence young people and their parents have in Dudley Sixth to provide a positive post-16 experience with high levels of success.

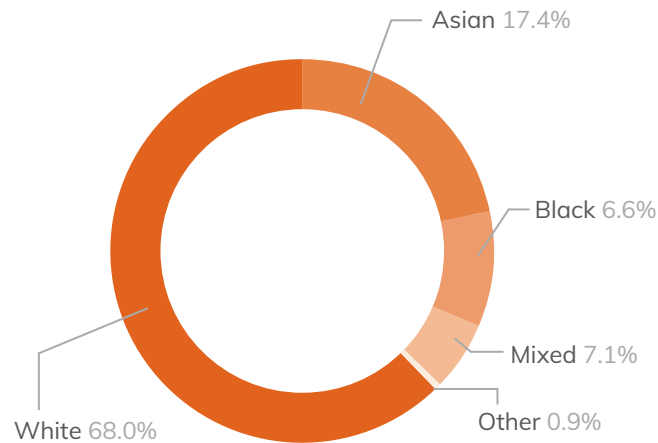


3.2 IMPACT ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

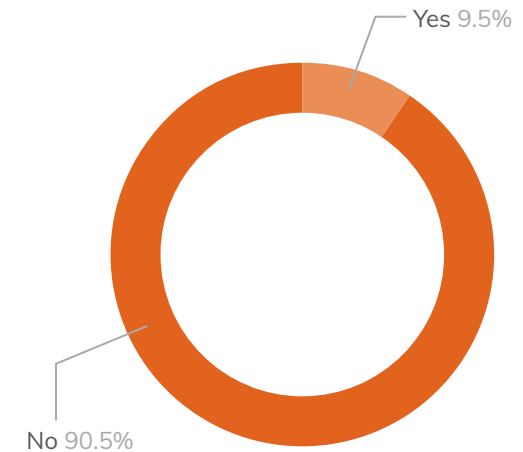
Gender



Ethnicity



Learning difficulty or disability



2021/22 continued to see more female learners choose to study A levels than male learners. Females achieved at a marginally higher rate than males (+2.3%), which is broadly in line with the previous year. The A Level ethnicity profile shows our learners are more diverse than the local community and in line with the previous year with 38% of our learners from minority groups who make up 11.9% of the local population. It is good to see an improvement in the achievement of learners whose ethnicity is 'black' which is now comparable with other groups, however we have instead seen a slight drop in achievement for learners whose identity is 'mixed'. We will work closely with this group in the coming year to see if improvements can be made.

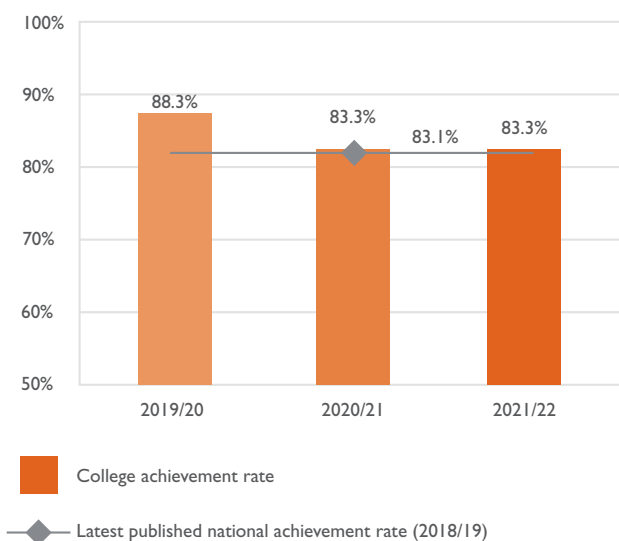
Dudley Sixth supports a number of students with learning difficulties or disabilities through a wide range of support mechanisms, although the proportion of learners declaring a disability/learning difficulty has fallen significantly in 2021/22 – down to 51 compared to 94 in 2020/21. Achievement rates of this group is slightly higher than their peers which may be as a result of the heightened focus applied to reducing the lower achievement rate of the previous year.

**DUDLEY SIXTH
CONTINUES TO
SUPPORT A
VERY DIVERSE
LEARNER BODY.**



3.3 OUTCOMES FOR LEARNERS

Overall achievement rate - A Level



	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
High grade pass % (A-B)	36.9%	55.9%	58.0%
High grade pass % (A-C)	76.6%	88.9%	80.1%

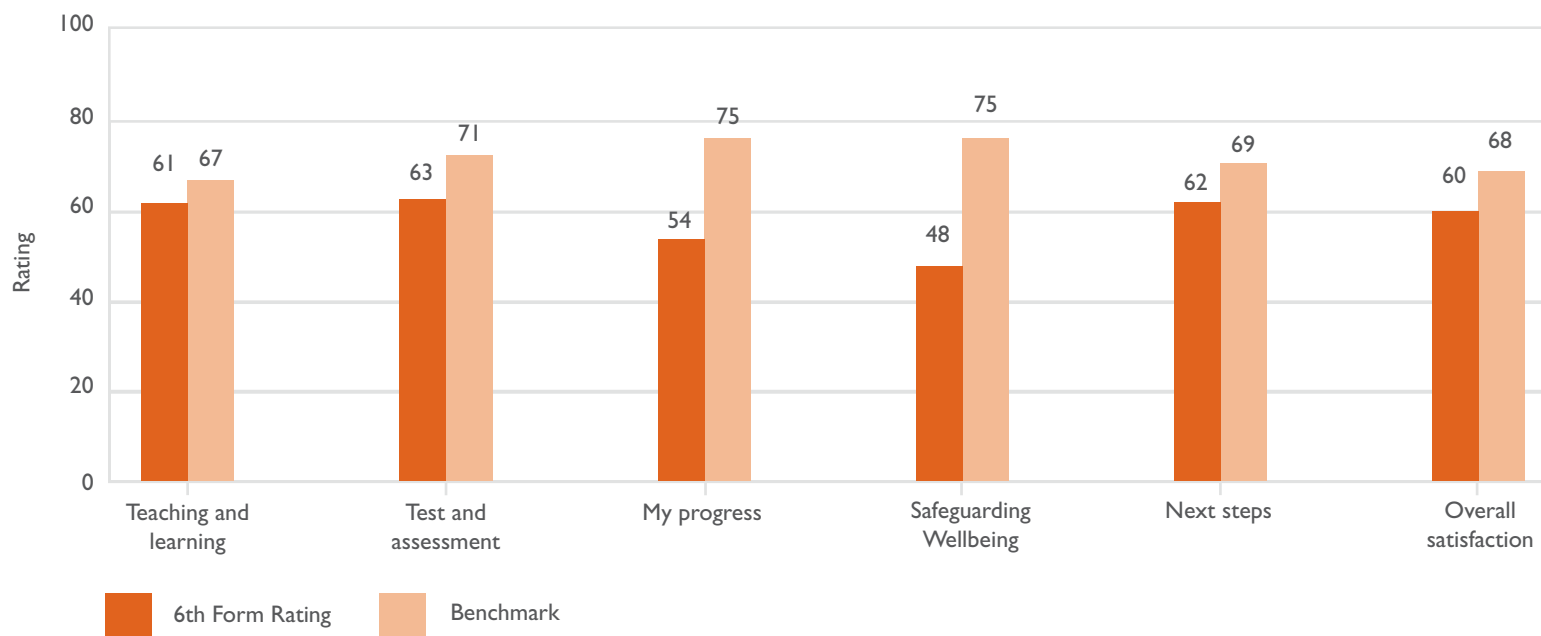
This year achievement rates were in line with 2020/21, again above national rates. High grades continued to rise with those achieving A* - B increasing to 58%, although A* - C dropped slightly to 80.1%.

Note – Latest published national rates are only available from 2018-19 due to pandemic.



3.4 LEARNER SATISFACTION

Year-end learner satisfaction (QDP survey)

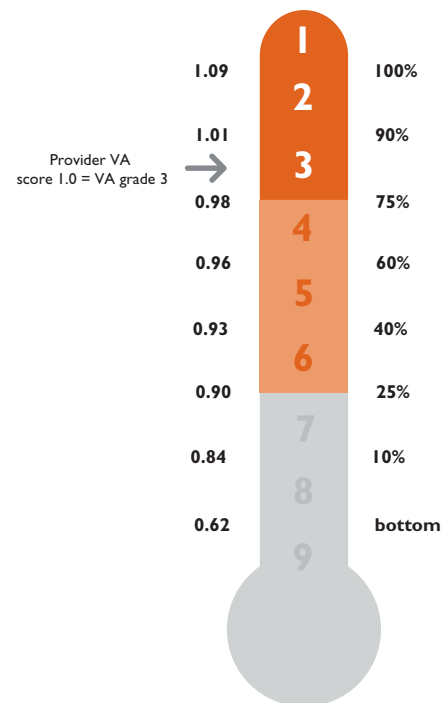


The impact of the pandemic on A Level learners who were unable to take examinations they had prepared for can be seen in the satisfaction results. Although the satisfaction is below benchmark in 5 categories, the overall satisfaction rating is equal to benchmark. Students demonstrated satisfaction in several ways outside of the survey including hosting a student led teacher awards event.



3.5 DISTANCE TRAVELLED BY LEARNERS

A Level Quality Improvement Grade and Score



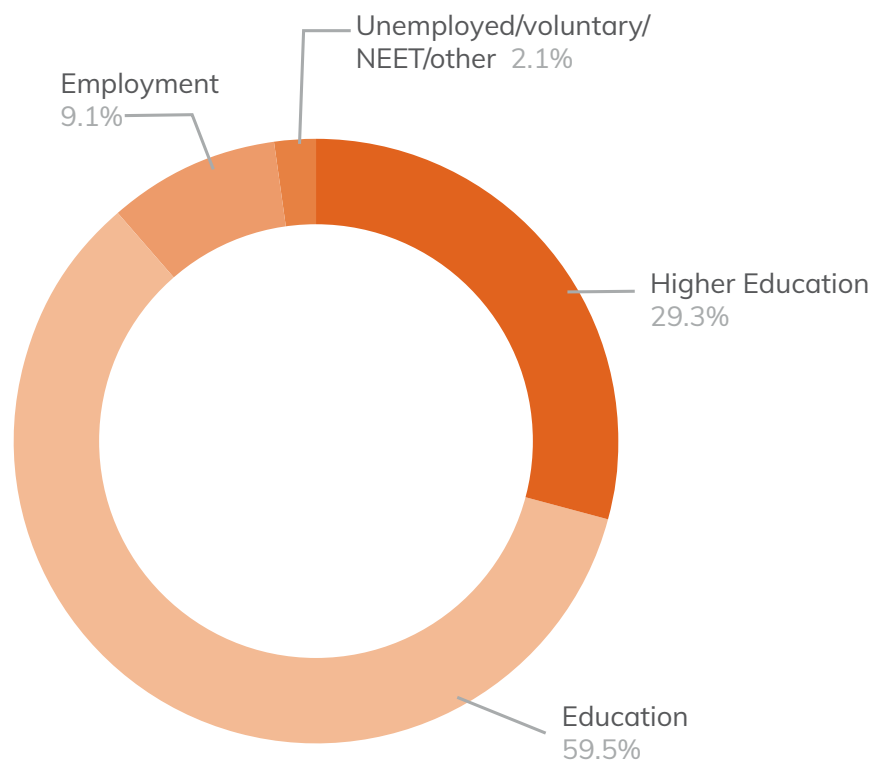
The national value added data is not available for this academic year as grades on entry were subject to Centre Assessed Grade or Teacher Assessed Grade process introduced at schools during the pandemic. The College has produced our own value added analysis as shown here, reporting a value added score of 0.96 (indicator grade 4). This is a slight reduction from the previous year due to the higher GCSE grades of students on arrival at college due to Centre Assessed Grades process. However it still shows a positive distance travelled for our students.

A further measure of distance travelled is to note the change in grade profile of our completing students over the previous three years. This shows a three year improvement in high grades performance.



3.6 LEARNER DESTINATIONS

All A Levels - all years

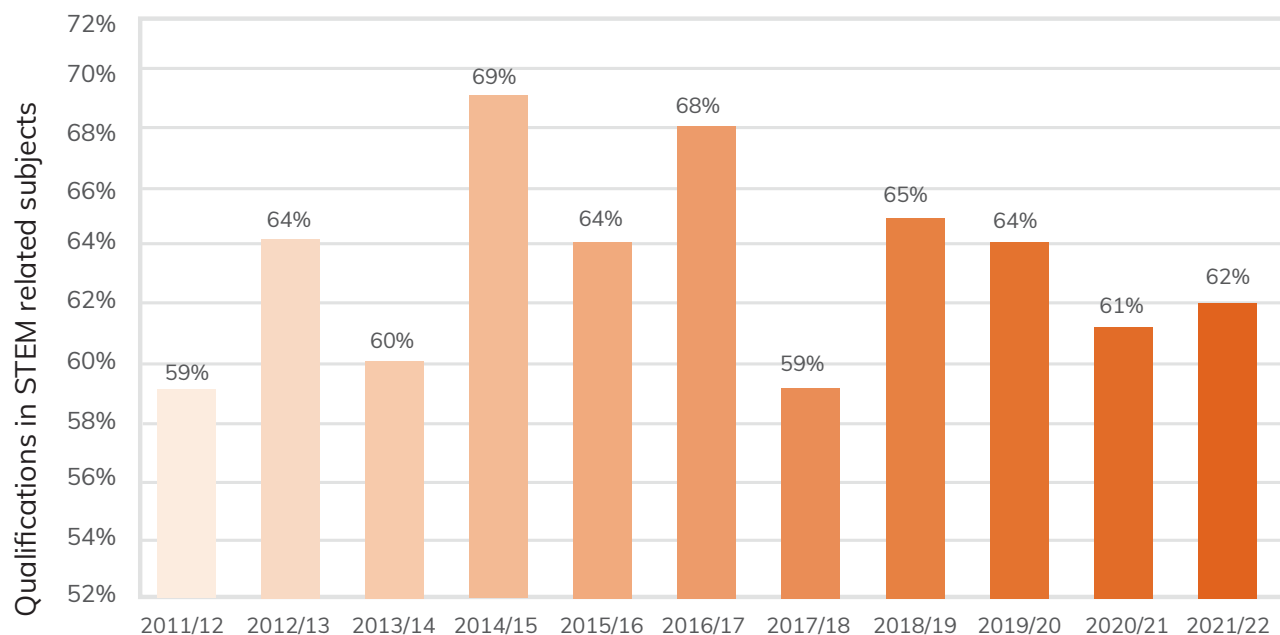


A level destination data confirms 96.6% of our learners gain positive destinations with the majority progressing into higher education. This demonstrates the significant impact the Dudley Sixth provision has on the lives of young people within the borough and the wider region: enhancing future career opportunities and benefitting the local economy.



3.7 IMPACT ON REGIONAL SKILLS AND THE REGIONAL ECONOMY

STEM in the curriculum - trend analysis



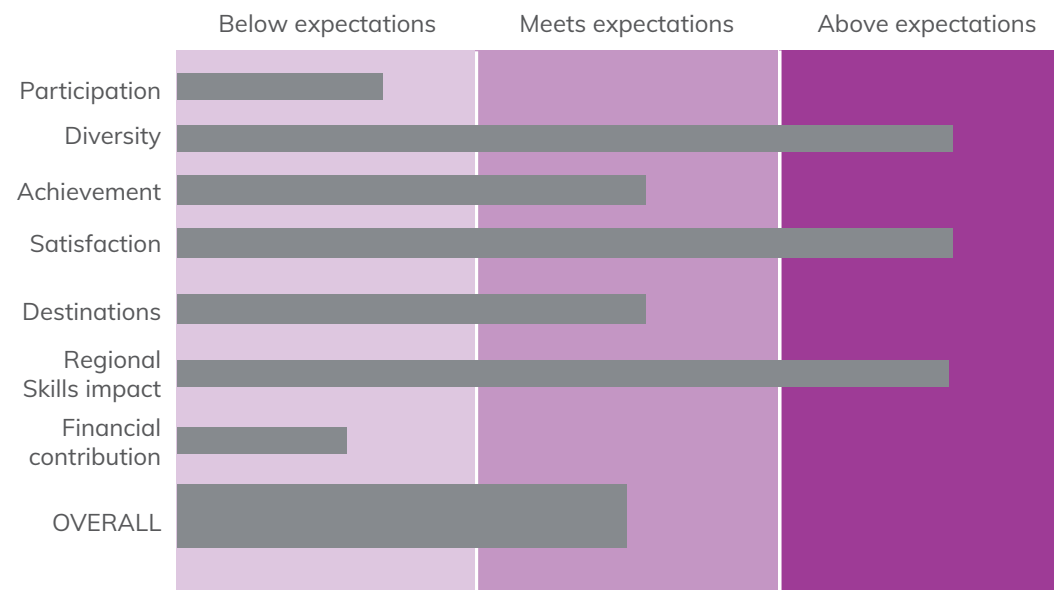
The local economy relies on a workforce with high level skills and skills in STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and mathematics).

The chart above shows the percentage of qualifications completed by A-Level learners that were in STEM related subjects. The number of learners studying STEM subjects has remained stable for a number of years.

There continues to be a very strong STEM provision across Dudley College of Technology as a whole. We are committed to finding more opportunities for A-Level learners to continue to higher education locally so that their skills might benefit the regional economy and the opening of the Black Country & Marches Institute of Technology will provide further progression pathways into higher apprenticeships and employment.



4. FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME ADULT SKILLS LEARNERS BALANCED SCORECARD



The overall performance of this key client group is 'meets expectations'. The group is exceeding expectations in terms of satisfaction and on the impact the provision has on the regional skills impact, an area we have worked on in collaboration with the West Midlands Combined Authority in order to better equip local residents with the skills required to contribute towards ambitious growth for the region. Participation and financial contribution was below expectations and we will continue to develop our curriculum offer in order to see an improvement in this moving forward.

OUTPUTS

What key outputs did we achieve?

We engaged local adults in skills based learning:

- We engaged 3,224 adults in skills programmes in 2021/22 which is over 571 more adults than in the previous year. This is in part due to the 'bounce back' following the impact of the removal of covid restrictions, but also due to an increasingly diverse and innovative curriculum offer, designed to appeal to local adults and their skills needs.

We successfully engaged learners from diverse communities:

- 1,412 learners (44.6%) were from ethnic minority groups. Our learners continue to be more diverse than the local community where 11.9% of the population are from minority groups.
- 536 learners (17.1%) reported a learning difficulty or disability.

We maintained high achievement rates on adult skills programmes:

- Achievement rates for learners on technical and vocational programmes remained consistently high and at national rates.
- There are no significant differences in the success rates of learners from different ethnicity backgrounds or those with and without a disability.
- Female learner achieved at a slightly lower rate than their male peers (-6.5%).

We made a significant impact on the local skills gap by upskilling adults:

- 876 (29.5%) adults were following STEM programmes of study. This is an increase on the previous year.
- 1,621 adult enrolments were in West Midlands Combined Authority priority sectors.

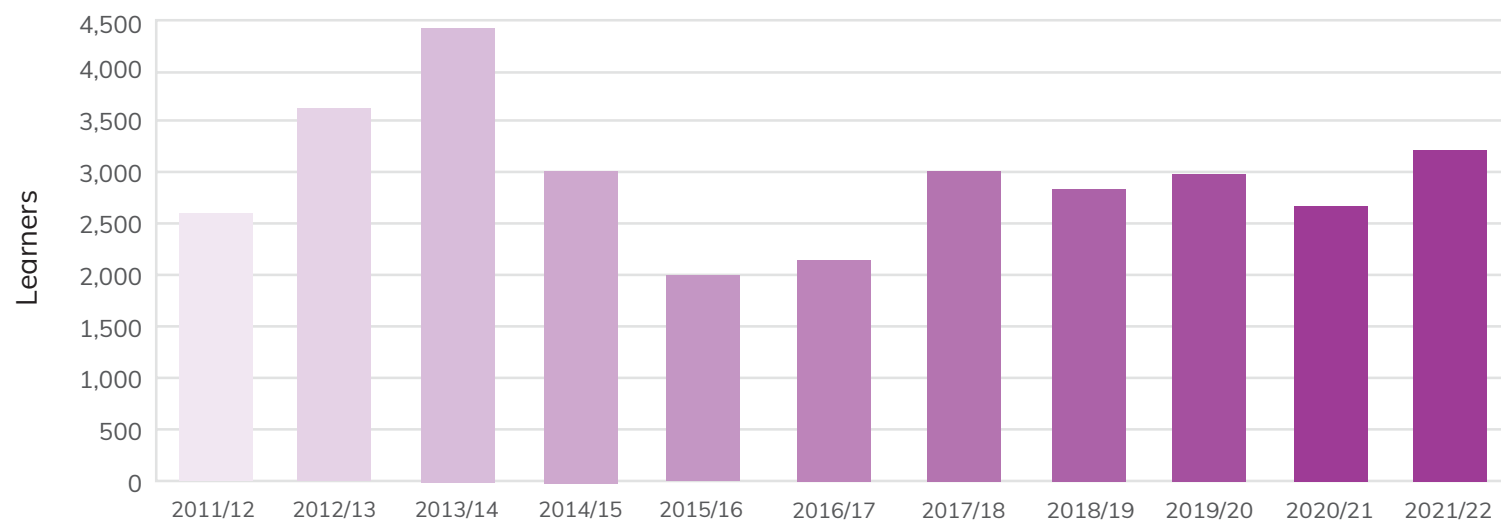
What better outputs could we achieve?

- Retention and achievement on Access programmes.
- The achievement rates of female learners.
- Continue to increase the number of unemployed adults going into employment..
- The number of entry level and level 1 learners reporting positive destinations.



4.1 ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION RATES

Learner engagement trend analysis

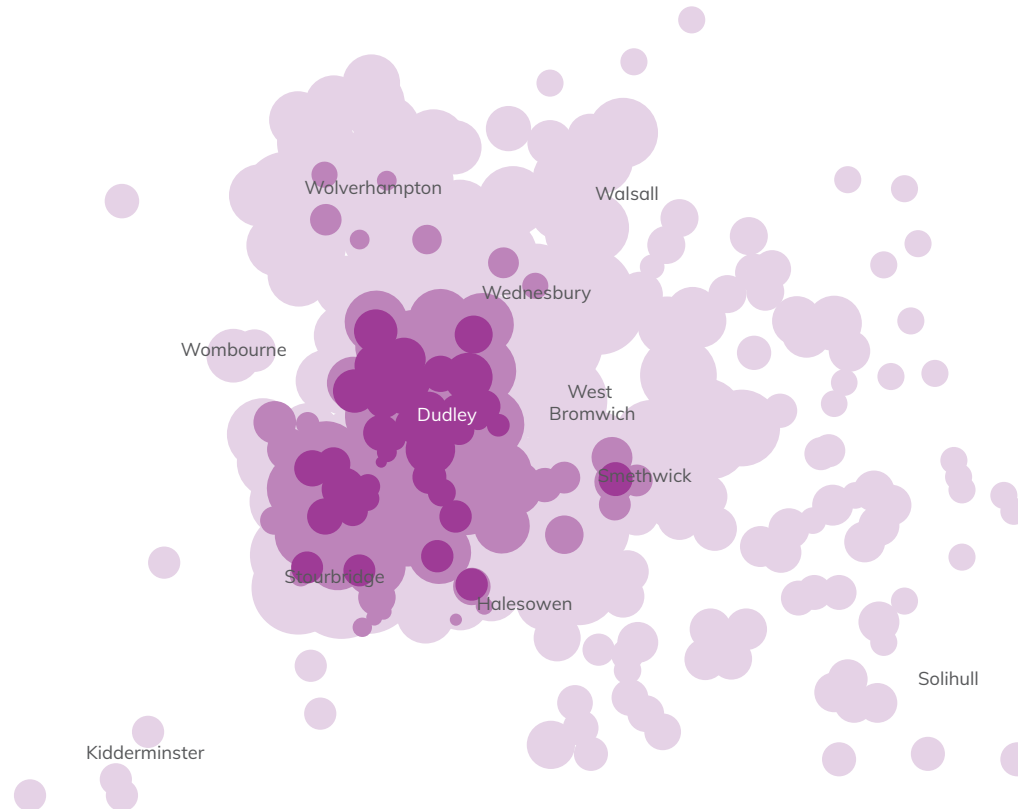


The removal of COVID restrictions saw a bounce back to pre-pandemic levels with an additional 571 adults engaged in learning compared to 20/21. This is particularly gratifying as curriculum teams worked hard to develop an exciting and innovative offer with a strong focus on meeting skills needs.



4.1 ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION RATES CONTINUED

Travel to learn map

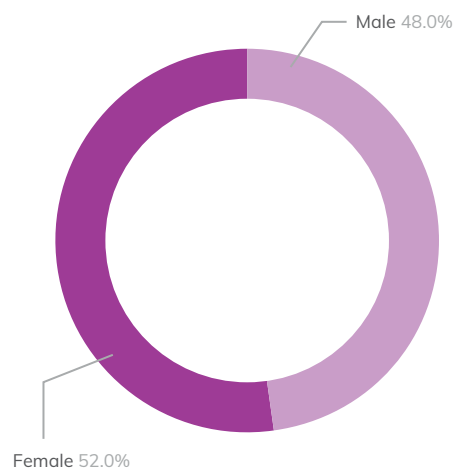


The map shows the travel to learn pattern of our adult learners in 2021/22. An increasing number of learners from the Dudley borough. There is an increasing number of adult learners looking to remain in Dudley to study rather than travel elsewhere.

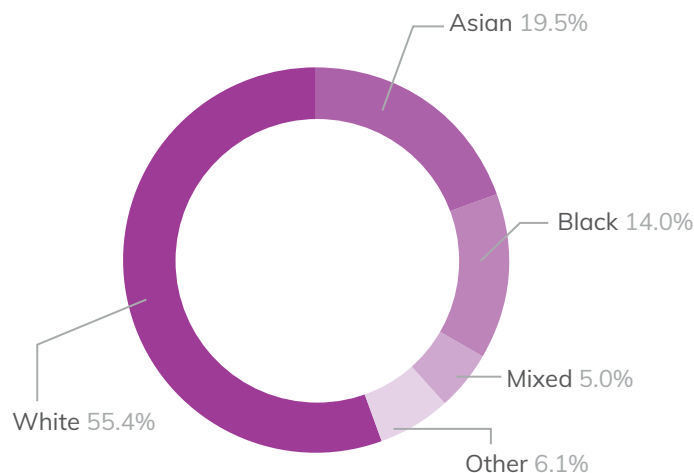


4.2 IMPACT ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

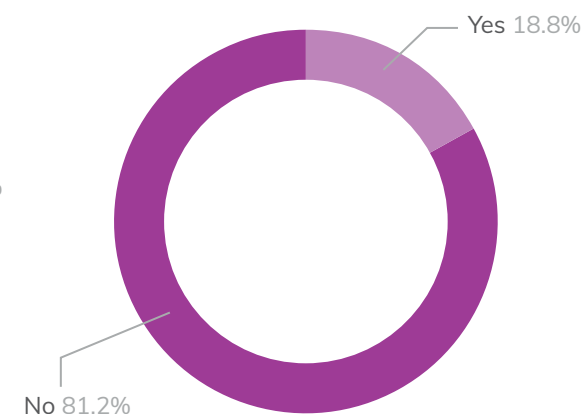
Gender



Ethnicity



Learning difficulty or disability



In line with 2020/21, slightly more females engaged with learning in 2021/2022. The ethnicity profile shows our adult learners as a group are increasingly more diverse than the local community. 48.1% of our learners are from minority groups. There are no significant achievement gaps based on ethnicity. When achievements of male and female learners are compared, males achieved at higher rate than females (+6.5%)

The College was pleased to support 536 adult learners with a declared learning difficulty or disability in 2021/22, through a wide range of support services. There is no significant difference in the achievement rates of adults who declare a disability and those who do not.

**THE COLLEGE CONTINUES
TO SUPPORT A VERY
DIVERSE LEARNER BODY.**

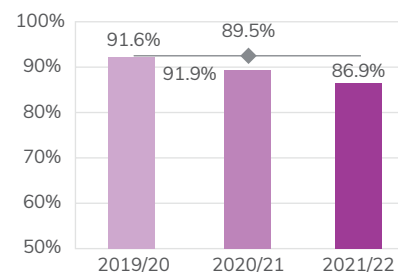


4.3 OUTCOMES FOR LEARNERS

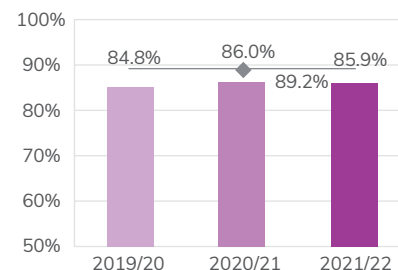
Achievement rate - all levels



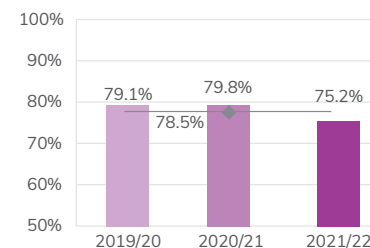
Level 1



Level 2



Level 3



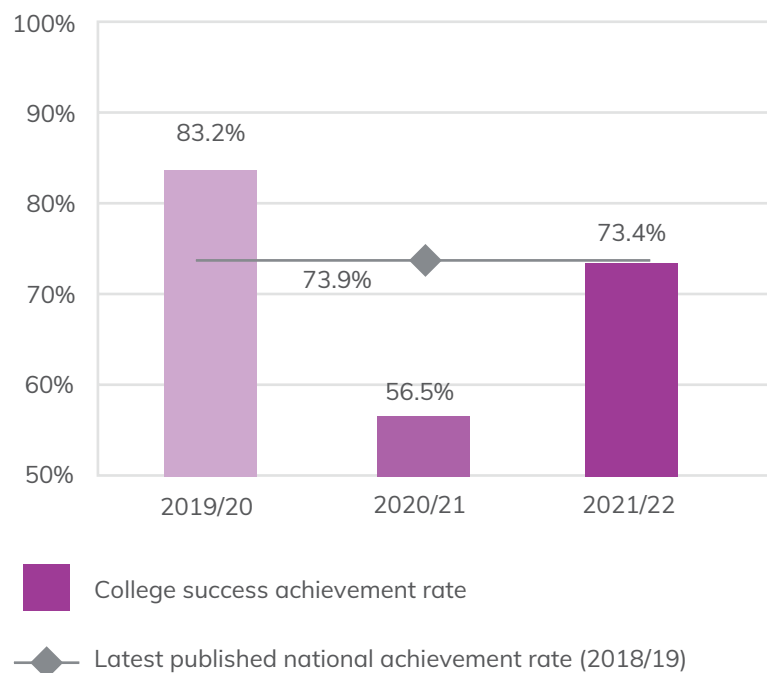
Overall achievement rates for our adult learners remain relatively stable compared with previous years, with a slight dip in Level 3 achievement of 4.6 % due predominantly to retention on Access programmes. At level 2 achievement rates remain slightly below last published national. Level 1 also saw a slight drop of 2.6% and we will be focusing on reversing this trend this year.

Note – Latest published national rates are only available from 2018-19 due to pandemic.



4.3 OUTCOMES FOR LEARNERS CONTINUED

Functional skills achievement rate - all levels



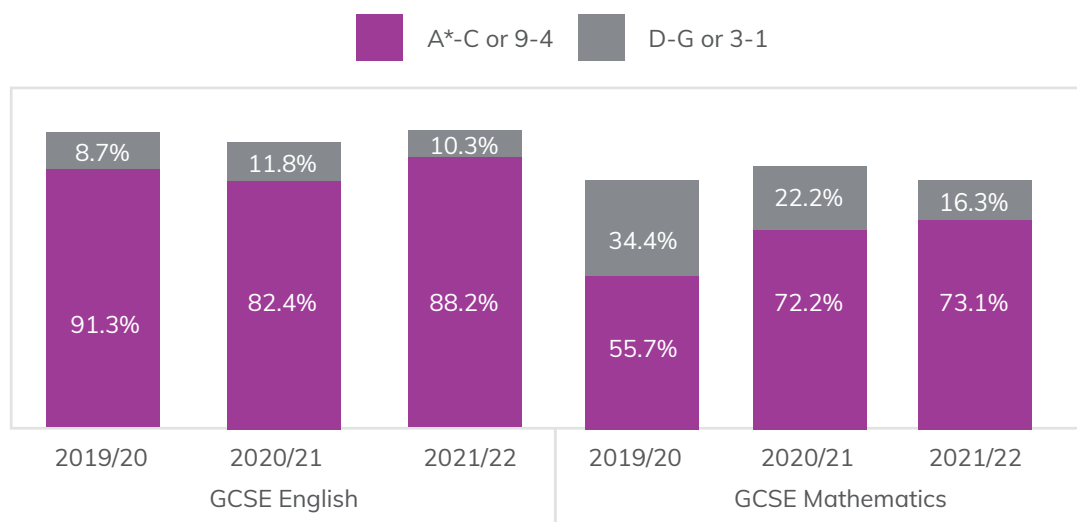
Note – Latest published national rates are only available from 2018-19 due to pandemic.

Functional Skills qualifications saw an upturn in achievement rates more in line with pre-pandemic levels with overall rates equal to nationally reported results.



4.3 OUTCOMES FOR LEARNERS CONTINUED

19+ GCSE results three year trend

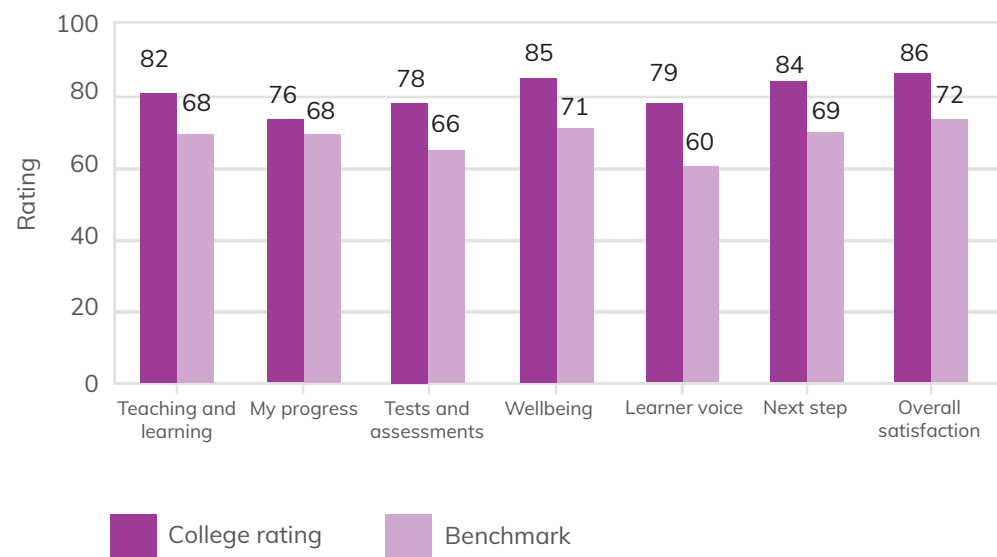


We are delighted to report a consistently strong high grades performance by adults who are resitting GCSE English and mathematics either through discrete adult classes or those infilling into programmes of study. GCSE English has maintained an extremely strong 9-4 high grades outcome of 88.2%. This year high grades in mathematics were 73.1% which is a very strong performance.



4.4 LEARNER SATISFACTION

Year-end learner satisfaction (QDP survey)

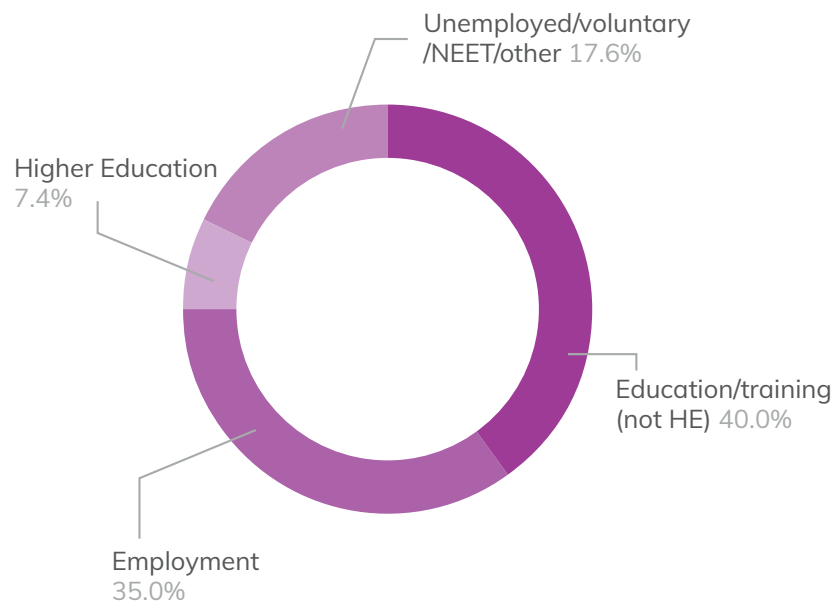


We use an external company to administer our student satisfaction QDP. This enables us to be benchmarked against other outstanding providers. Adults continue to be extremely satisfied with all elements of their programmes when compared with other colleges.

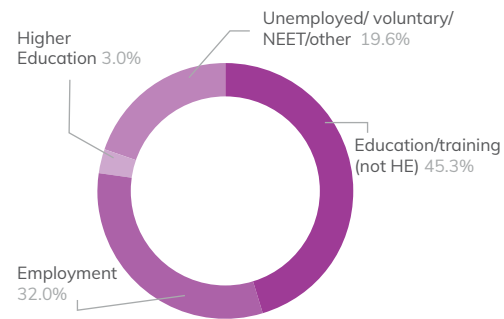


4.5 LEARNER DESTINATIONS

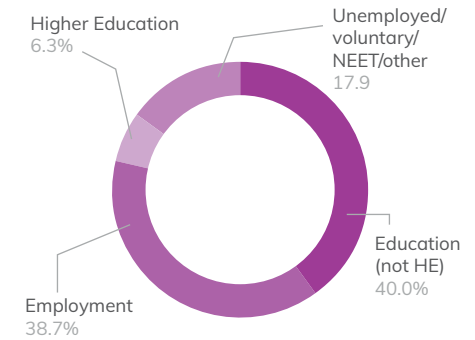
All levels



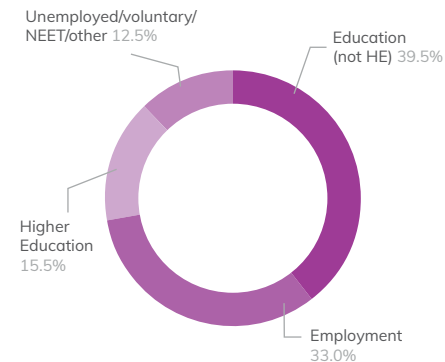
Level 1



Level 2



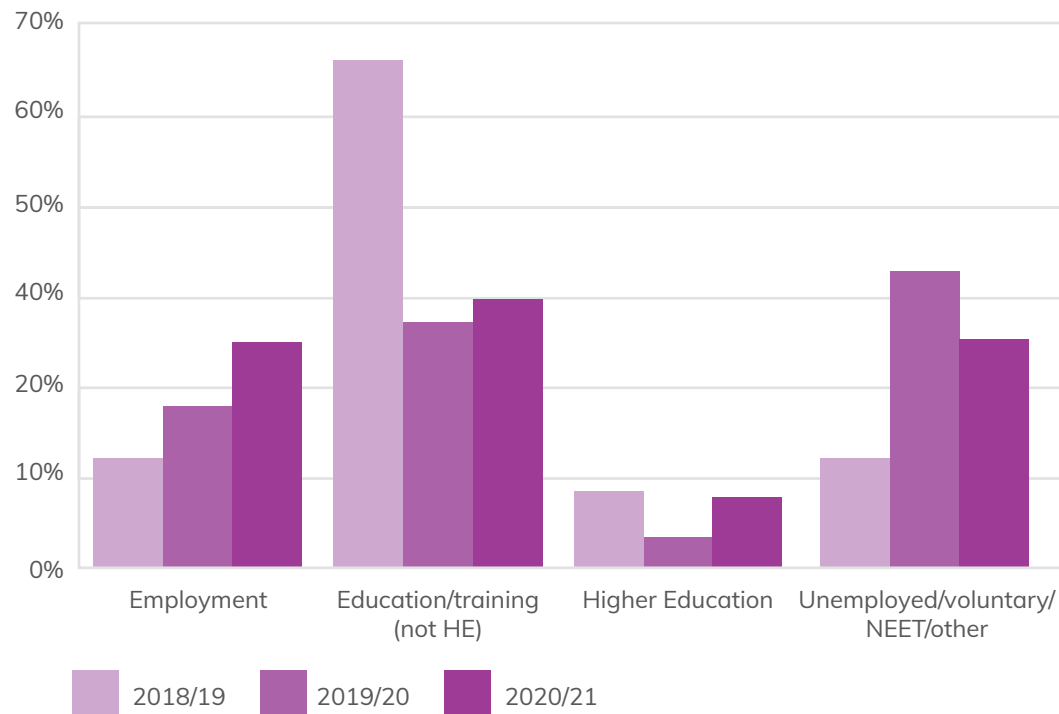
Level 3





4.5 LEARNER DESTINATIONS CONTINUED

Destination of unemployed adults



The destination data included in this report relates to leavers in academic year 2020/21. The College has employed a permanent Destinations Officer to enable us to more proactively pursue learners who have left us in order to improve the tracking of our outcomes. The destinations of adult learners studying level 3 programmes demonstrate 87.9% positive destinations. At level 2 this drops slightly to 85.1% but at entry and level 1 increases to 80.4%.





4.6 IMPACT ON REGIONAL SKILLS AND THE REGIONAL ECONOMY

BREAKDOWN OF LEARNER TYPE

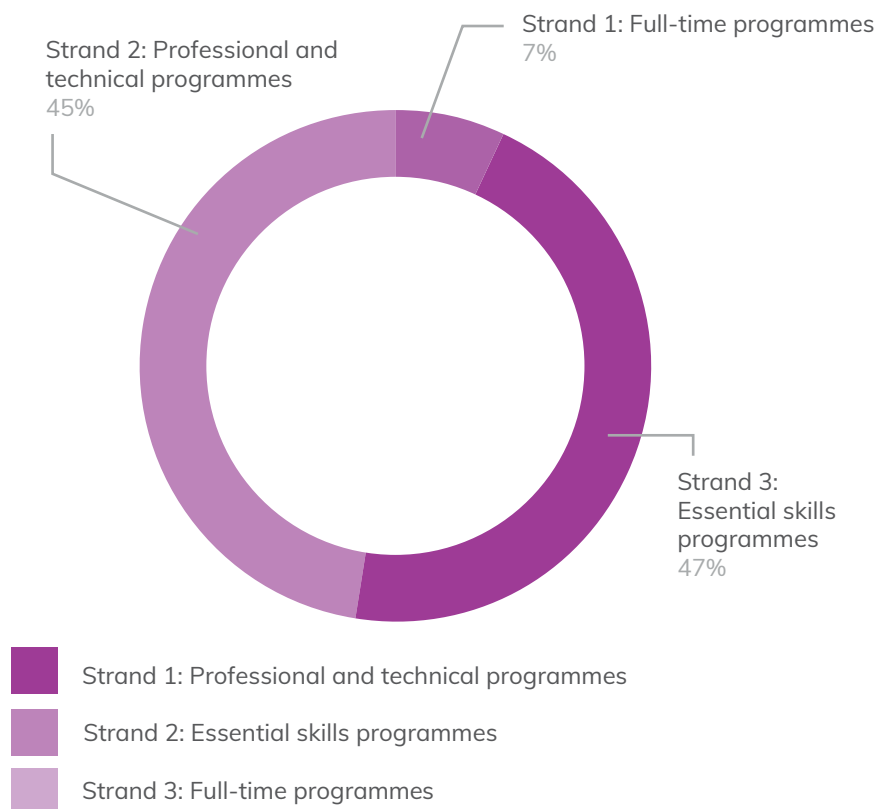
Our adult education provision can be broadly categorised into three strands:

STRAND 1: YOUNG ADULTS COMPLETING FULL TIME PROGRAMMES. This provision is for a small group of learners usually aged between 19 and 21 years old who complete their full-time technical education programme alongside full time learners aged 16-18 years.

STRAND 2: PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL UPDATING PROGRAMMES FOR ADULTS. These programmes will help adults develop skills for progression in their careers or for entry into higher education.

STRAND 3: ESSENTIAL SKILLS PROGRAMMES FOR ADULTS. These are programmes aimed at developing essential skills for adults to support them progressing in work and life.

Adult learners by strand



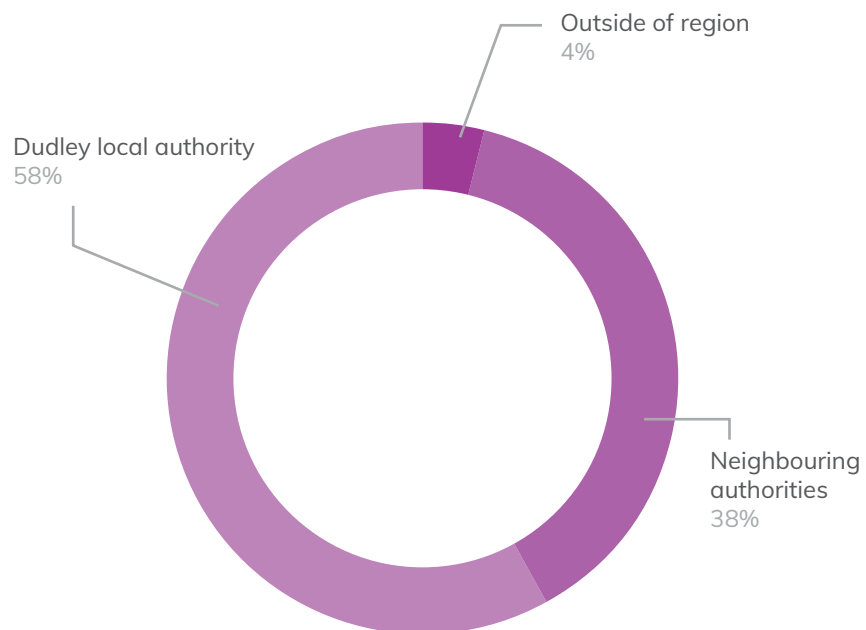


4.6 IMPACT ON REGIONAL SKILLS AND THE REGIONAL ECONOMY CONTINUED

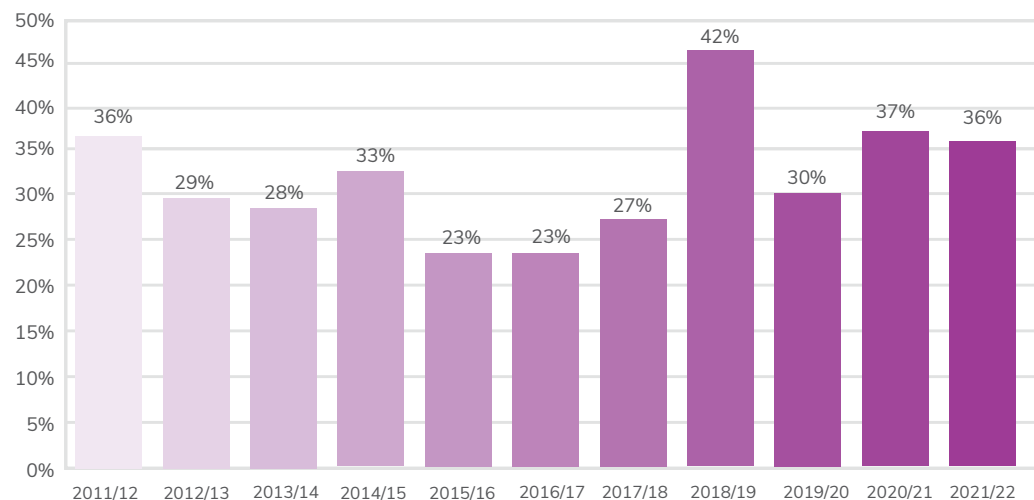
HAVING AN IMPACT LOCALLY

The chart below shows the proportion of our adult learners that reside in the Dudley Local Authority, in the neighbouring authorities (Wolverhampton, Birmingham, Sandwell & Walsall) and outside of the region. More than half of our adult learners live in the Dudley borough (58%). 96% of our adults are from Dudley or the neighbouring borough demonstrating the impact we are having locally.

Adult learners based within region



STEM in the curriculum - trend analysis

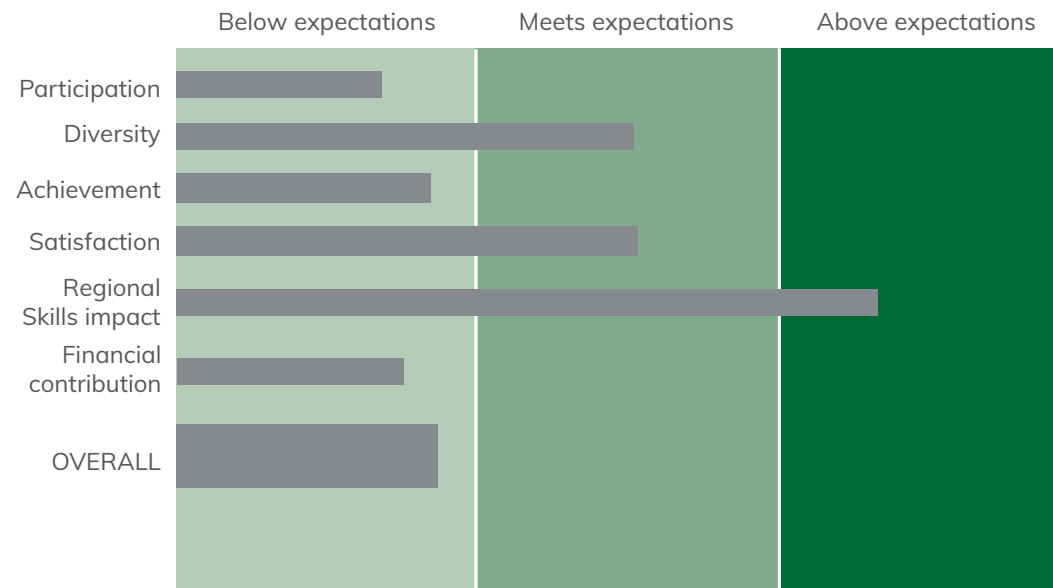


The local economy relies on a workforce with high level skills and skills in STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and mathematics).

The chart above shows the percentage of qualifications completed by adult learners that were in STEM related subjects. In 2021/22, 36% of our adults followed STEM programmes of study, a 1% drop compared to the previous year.

5. APPRENTICESHIPS AND WORK-BASED LEARNERS

BALANCED SCORECARD



The overall performance of this key client group is 'below expectations'. The ongoing pandemic and associated economic downturn have continued to impact apprenticeships recruitment and achievement. Apprentices' retention and associated achievement have also continued to be impacted as some sectors struggle with difficult trading conditions, an uncertain economic period and as the furlough scheme concludes. Despite the clear difficulties, those apprenticeships remaining on programme have continued to achieve to a good standard, however, there has been a decline in achievement rate compares to the previous year for in-college apprentices at 54.3% (60.9%). The provision continues to be very well aligned to local industry need and receives helpful feedback from employers and students.

OUTPUTS

Despite the impact of Covid-19, we continued to support a number of skills-based apprentices throughout the academic year. Overall recruitment is down compared to 2020-21 levels, which is in line with the national picture

We have maintained reasonable participation levels in both age groups (previous years in brackets).

- We engaged 841 (940) young people in college-based apprenticeships.
- We engaged 1,359 (1606) adults in college-based apprenticeships.
- In total we engaged 2,200 (2,546) individuals in college-based apprenticeships.
- Overall achievement rates for college-delivered apprenticeships are below expectations at 54.3% (60.9%).
- There are no significant or sustained differences in the success rates of apprentices by gender although participation by females remains low.
- There is a varying picture of apprentice achievement by BAME with Black, Mixed and Other ethnic below expectation.
- There is a decline in achievement comparisons between those apprentices declaring a disability or learning difficulty.
- Overall apprentice satisfaction is below expectations.

We made an impact on the local skills gap by upskilling young people and adults (previous year in brackets):

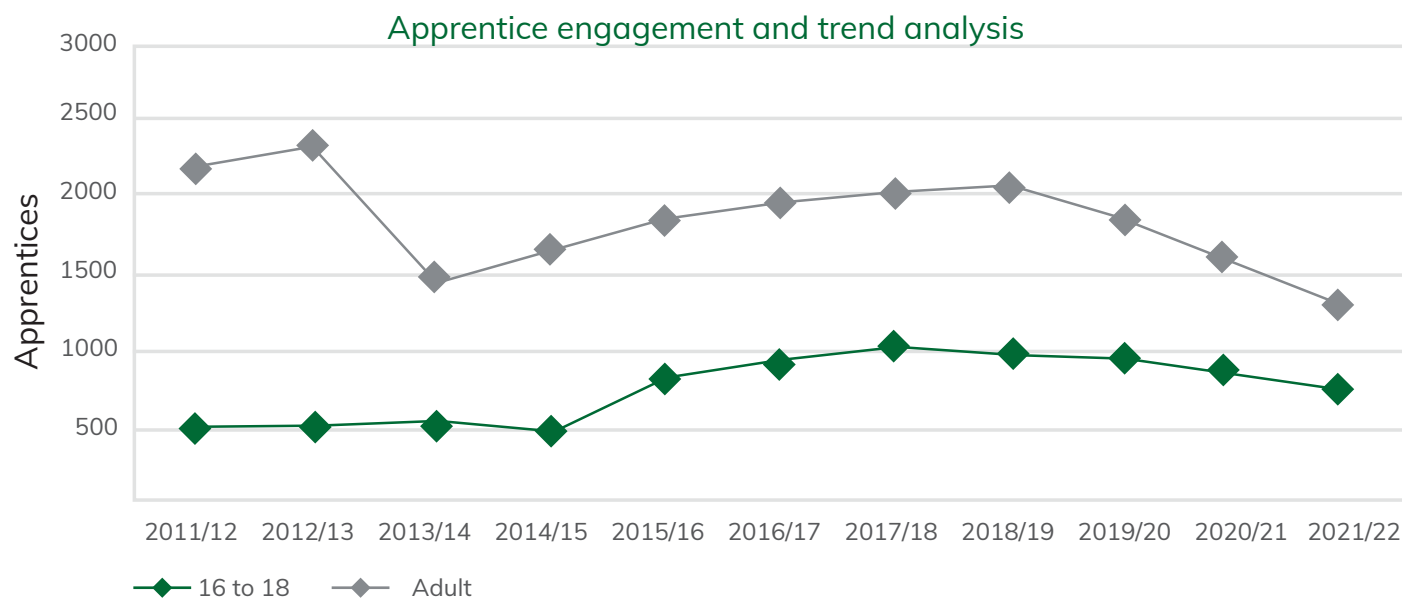
- 58% (59%) of apprentices were following STEM programmes of study.

What better outputs could we achieve?

- Recruitment into apprenticeships for all age groups needs to be a focus moving forwards.
- Achievement rates is be improved for all ages groups as currently they are below our expectations.
- Narrow the achievement gap for black, mixed and other ethnicities so they achieve at a rate similar to their peers.
- Apprentices completing their apprenticeship within the given duration (timely achievement).
- The universal quality of reviews, inclusion of employers and the reporting of apprentice progress.
- The satisfaction levels of apprentices.



5.1 ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION RATES



Despite our continued focus on the apprenticeship provision for all ages following on from the Covid-19 global health pandemic we have seen a decrease in the participation for both age groups. The participation for 16-18 apprentices was 841 in 2021/22 and the number of adult apprentices was 1359 in 2021/22.

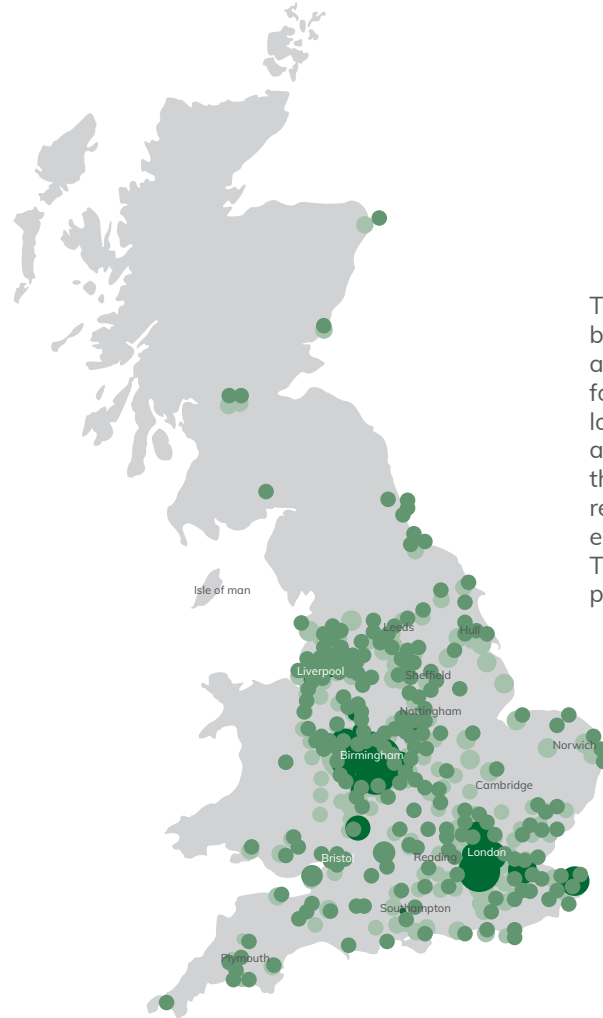
In total, some 2,200 individuals undertook apprenticeship training directly (excluding sub-contracted apprentices) with the College in 2021/22.

The provision is supported by effective engagement with local employers and dedicated apprenticeship placement services offered by our Employment Hub and Employer Engagement Managers (EEMs).



5.1 ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION RATES CONTINUED

Apprentice provision



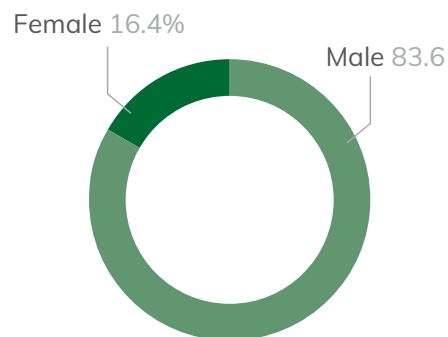
The heat map shows the home location of college-based (exc. sub-contracted partnership activity) apprentices. The majority of 16-18 apprentices following a day release programme and are based locally in the West Midlands Region. The adult apprenticeships are also based locally however there are pockets of focussed activity in other regions due to specific initiatives with key partner employers including national NHS trusts and Tesco. This can include delivery of bespoke apprenticeship programmes on employer premises.



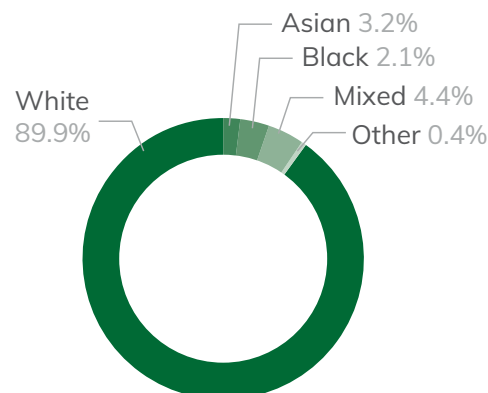
5.2 IMPACT ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

AGED 16-18 APPRENTICESHIPS

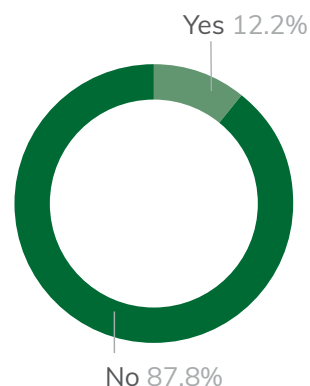
Gender mix



Ethnicity mix



Learning difficulty or disability

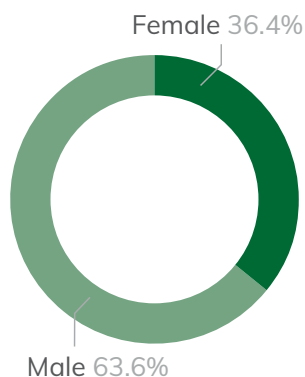


In 2021/22 although the percentage of female adult apprentices has remained at similar levels to the previous year 36.4% compared to 36% the previous year, the percentage of female 16-18 apprentices has continued to slightly decline from 17% to 16.4%. Overall female apprenticeship participation at 29% (31%) remains below expectation. This may be as a result in a fall in young people starting Health & Social Care, Early Years, Hospitality and Hairdressing apprenticeships, curriculum areas with traditionally high female to male ratios. We continue to work with schools to drive up female engagement in STEM careers, supported by the introduction of the Institute of Technology. There is no difference in achievement between male and female apprentices.

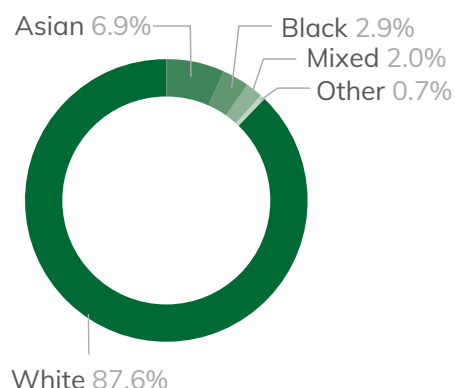
Our BAME apprenticeship participation profile is broadly representative of the communities we serve and marginally higher than the previous year 12% (11%) but lower than other College student cohorts such as classroom-based provision. There is variable achievement performance of BAME apprentices with Black, Mixed and Other ethnic minority being below expectations. The College will continue work hard to ensure intervention is in place to narrow the gap of achievement for the Black, Mixed and Other ethnic minority categories and this will remain a focus of the Equality & Diversity Group.

AGED 19+ APPRENTICESHIPS

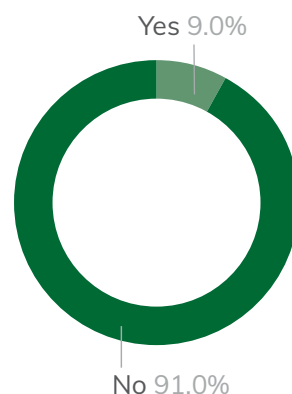
Gender mix



Ethnicity mix



Learning difficulty or disability



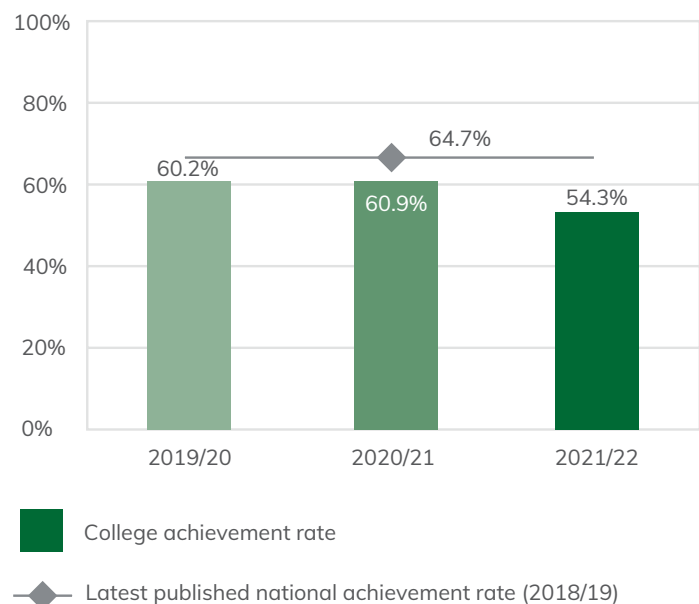
We were pleased to support 216 apprentices with self-diagnosed learning difficulties or disabilities (LLDD) in 2021/22, which is the same percentage to the previous year at 10% of all apprentices. We deliver support to these apprentices using a dedicated apprenticeship support team. We have continued to focus on ensuring this support programme meets individual needs.

Apprentices with a declared disability achieve at a slightly lower rate than their peers -6%. This is different to 20/21 where achievement of learners with a disability was better than their peers. The College will continue to use support systems to close the gap in achievement seen this year.



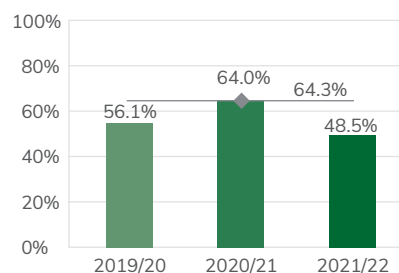
5.3 OUTCOMES FOR APPRENTICES

Overall achievement rate - all Apprenticeships

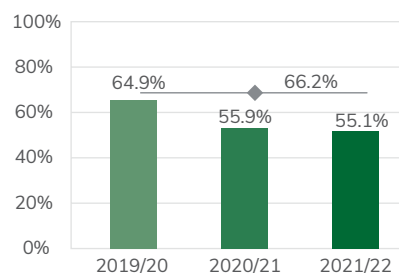


2021/22 continued to be an extremely challenging year for many employers and apprentices facing the aftermath of Covid-19. Overall achievement rates for college-delivered apprenticeships significantly declined to 54.3% (60.9%) compared to the previous year, with a significant amount of this drop being attributed to apprentices or employers withdrawing from training.

Intermediate Apprenticeships

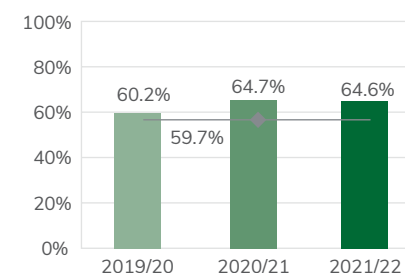


Advanced Apprenticeships



Achievement performance was also influenced by untimely completion due to the impact of the global pandemic and issues with awarding organisations (AOs), with higher than usual numbers of apprentices failing to complete End Point Assessment (EPA) because of delays in AO adaptations and availability of EPA Assessors. These apprentices will now achieve in academic year 2022/23.

Higher Apprenticeships

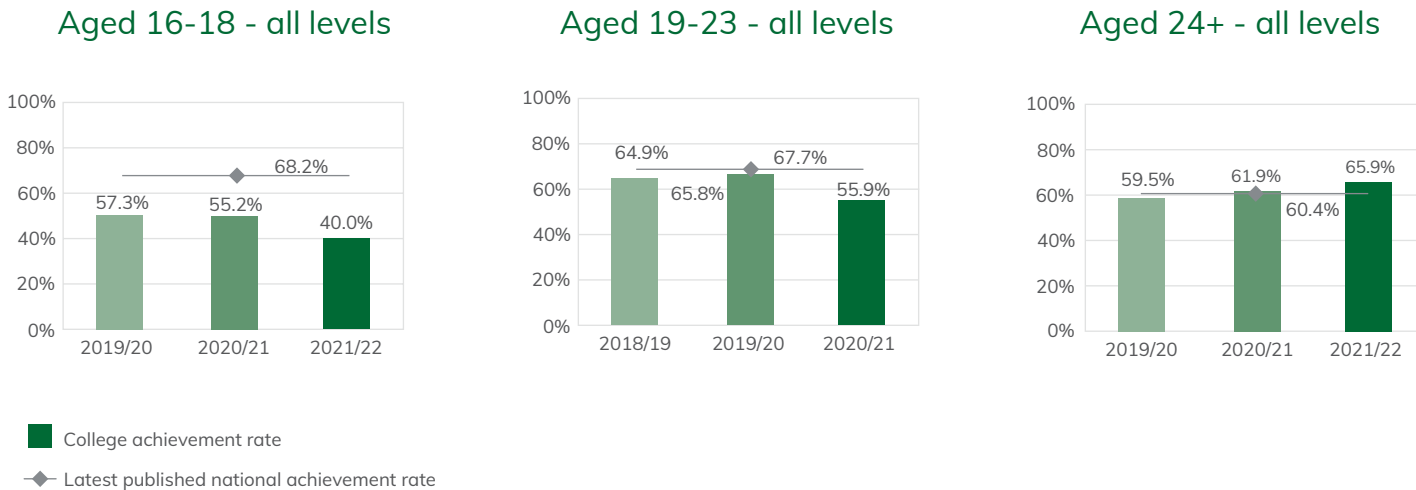


Note – Latest published national rates are only available from 2018-19 due to pandemic.

The need to improve college-based overall apprenticeship achievement is our primary focus for 2022-23, as is developing new partnership arrangements with high added-value partners and Universities.



5.3 OUTCOMES FOR APPRENTICES CONTINUED



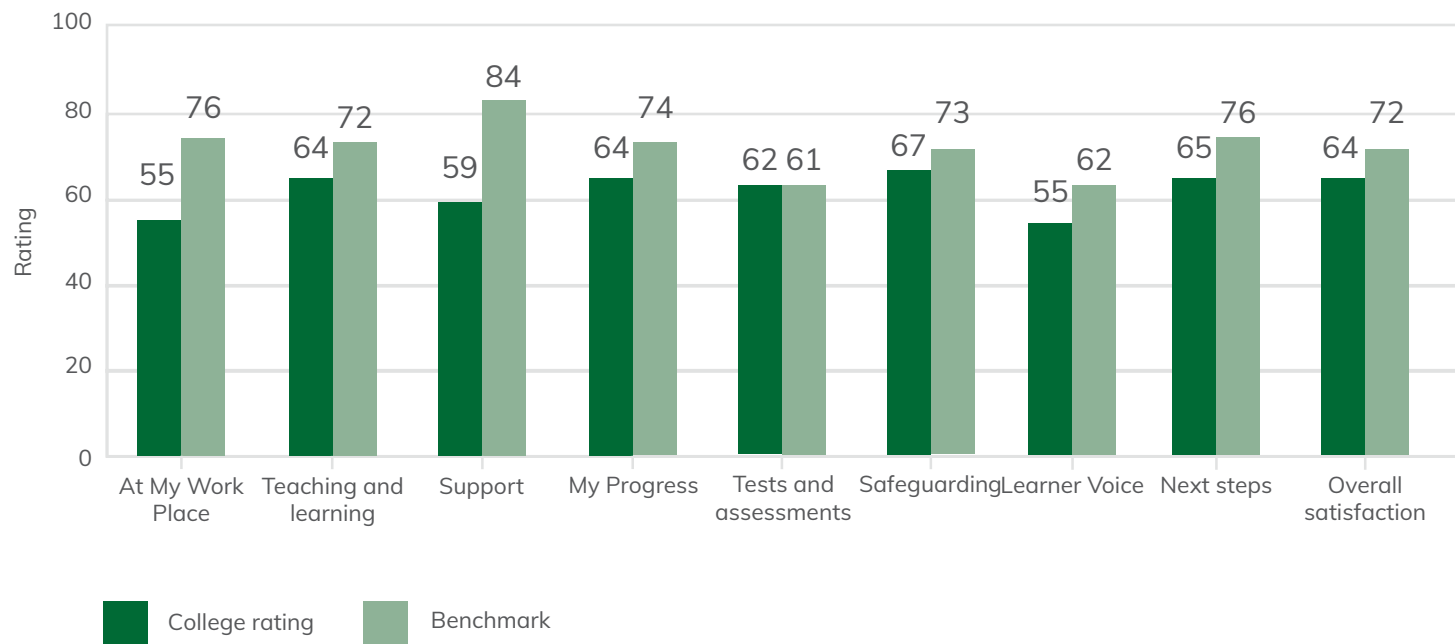
Analysis by age group shows underperformance in all age groups although a slight year-on-year improvement in adult24+ apprenticeships. Comparison remains challenging due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the issues around end point assessment. We are committed to growing high value-added college-delivered apprenticeships where local and regional needs exist.

We are also continuing to reduce low added-value sub-contracted partnership provision, replacing with new high value-added partners including NHS Trusts, Avensys Medical, CNET Training and regional Universities.

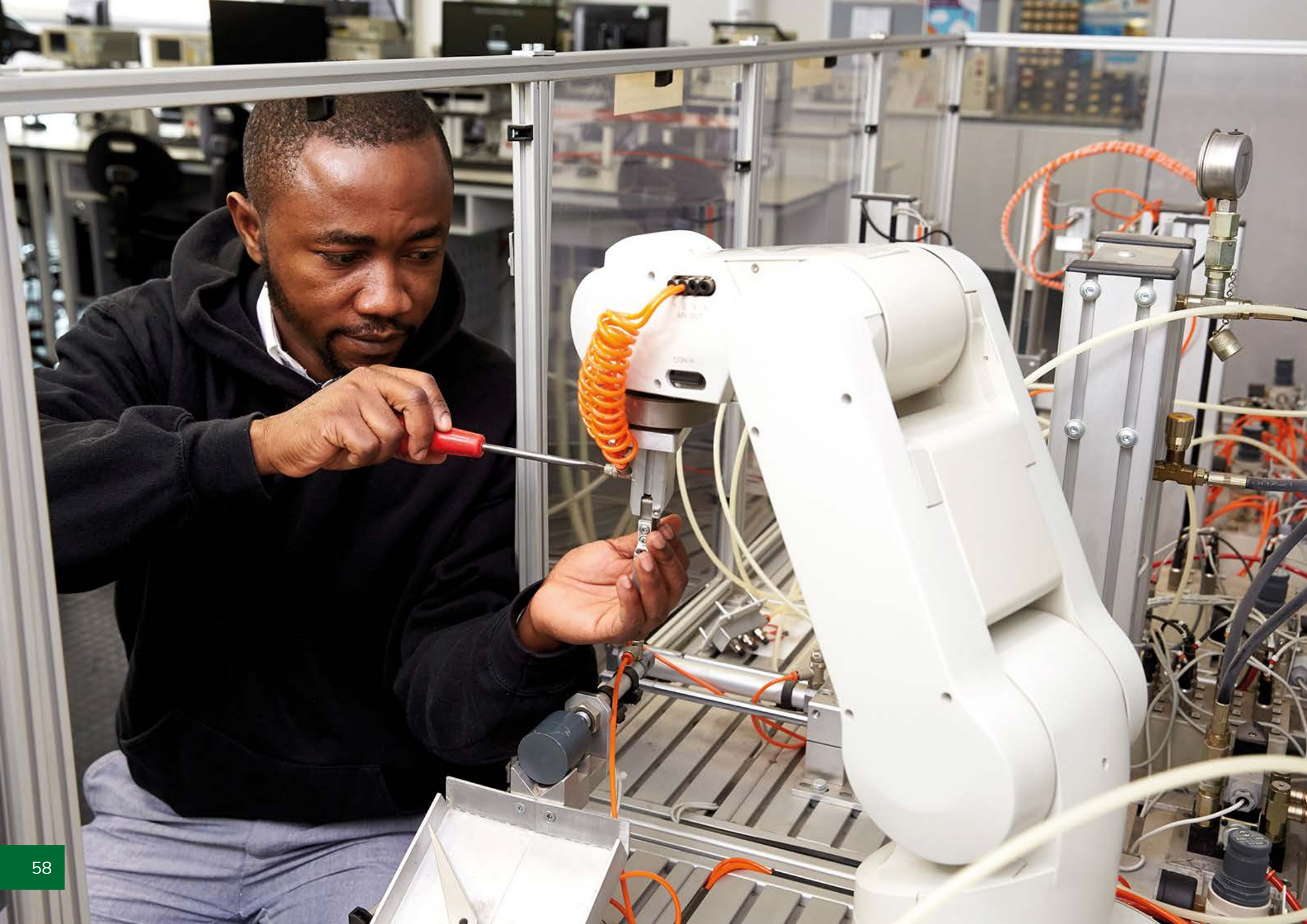


5.4 LEARNER AND EMPLOYER SATISFACTION

Year-end apprentice satisfaction (QDP services)




The satisfaction of apprentices has dropped and is below the benchmark of grade 2 and above providers. The College will focus on understanding the reasons for this and improving the apprenticeship experience, however the arrangements during the pandemic will no doubt have been a factor.




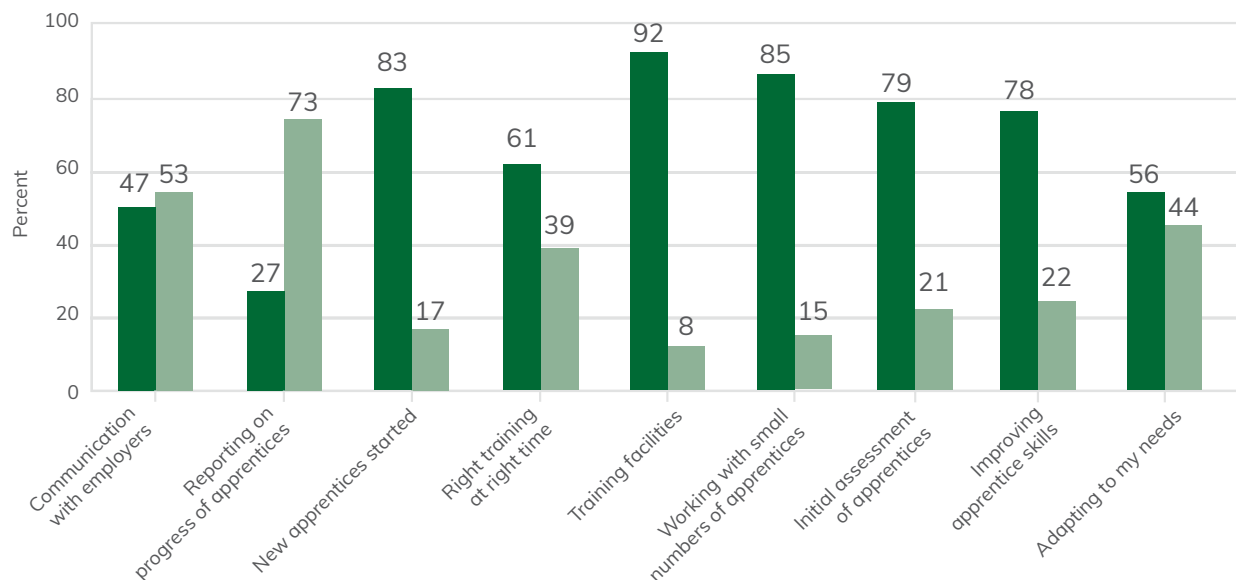


5.4 LEARNER AND EMPLOYER SATISFACTION CONTINUED

STEM Apprenticeships - trend analysis

 Percentage of employers that selected this a a 'strength'

 Percentage of employers that selected this a a 'needs improvement'



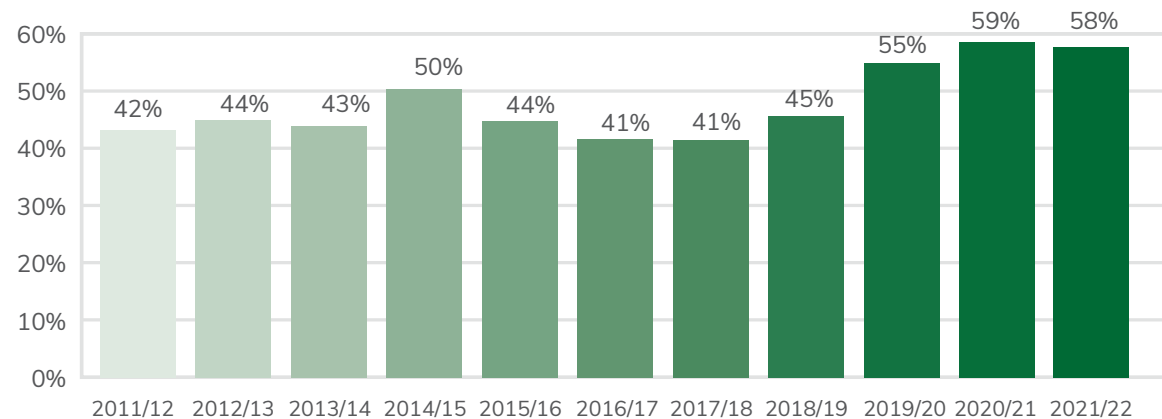
Employer reviews
★★★★☆ Good (414 reviews)

Taken from latest published information on Government 'Find an apprenticeship' service. Despite the clear challenges around the global pandemic, employers and apprentices remain reasonably pleased with the service Dudley College offer.



5.5 IMPACT ON REGIONAL SKILLS AND THE REGIONAL ECONOMY

STEM Apprenticeships - trend analysis

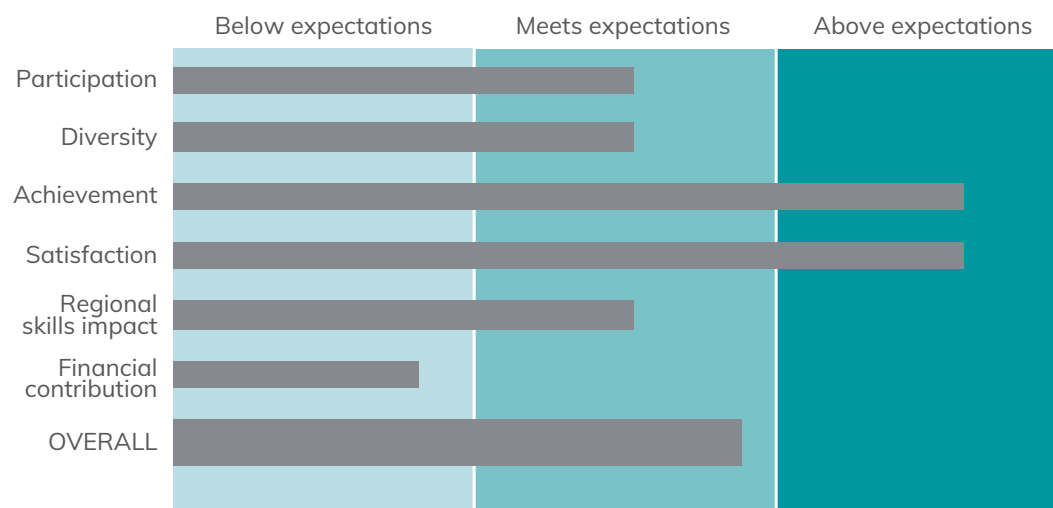


The local Black Country and wider West Midlands economy relies on a workforce with high level skills including in STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics). The charts above show the percentage of apprenticeship standards completed by apprentices in STEM related subjects. 58% of all college-based apprentices followed STEM programmes of study. We are committed to continuing to grow college-delivered and high-value partnership STEM apprenticeship provision, enhanced by the introduction of the Institute of Technology.



6. HIGHER SKILLS LEARNERS

BALANCED SCORECARD



The overall performance of this key client group is 'meets expectations'. Student achievement and satisfaction feedback remain high and above expectation. There continues to be a fall in recruitment, and associated financial contribution, to traditional stand-alone HNC/D programmes.

Our focus going forward will be to continue to expand the range of programmes at higher level by offering non-traditional routes to HE, delivered from the Institute of Technology and in partnership with Regional Universities. We are looking to increase the number of students progressing from feeder programmes to the College's HE provision, particularly through the College's involvement in the Aspire to HE project initiative.

OUTPUTS

What key outputs did we achieve?

We continued to support local participation in higher skills learning (21/22):

- We engaged 364 adults in higher level classroom based and HNC/D programmes across a range of subjects that support local skills needs;
- Additionally, we also engaged 245 adults in Higher Apprenticeships in 2021/22, despite still being impacted by the global pandemic.
- The Black Country and Marches Institute of Technology (IoT) successfully launched in September 2021, significantly expanding the range of higher-level courses available to local communities. The IoT achieved the Department for Education target for the total number of learners in Year 1 and other associated KPIs set by the Department.

We successfully engaged students from diverse communities:

- 21% of HE students were from BAME groups. Our HE students are more diverse than the local community where 11.9% of the population are from BAME categories and from other funding categories including apprenticeships and classroom-based provision at level 3 and below (exc. ESOL).
- High levels of engagement among female students in areas that are traditionally male-dominated

We continued to ensure higher skills students successfully achieved their programme of study and achievement rates remain consistent with previous academic years.

- Due to the ongoing Covid-19 impact on learning during this academic year, we have seen a slight drop in achievement rates, although many individual courses have maintained or increased their pass rates. The overall achievement rate remains broadly consistent with previous academic years.
- High levels of student satisfaction

We made an impact on the local skills gap and supported WMCA priorities by upskilling adults at a higher-level, enhanced by the opening of the Black Country and Marches Institute of Technology:

- The local economy relies on a workforce with high level education and skills in STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and mathematics). With the opening of the Black Country and Marches Institute of Technology and the related launch of new STEM-related programmes such as Healthcare Science, we have seen a significant increase in enrolments in these subjects. We remain committed to further expanding our higher-level STEM provision in higher apprenticeships through the expansion of our Science and Healthcare provision and the ongoing work of the Institute of Technology. to STEM measures. This has affected our HE STEM percentage but for explainable and valid reasons.

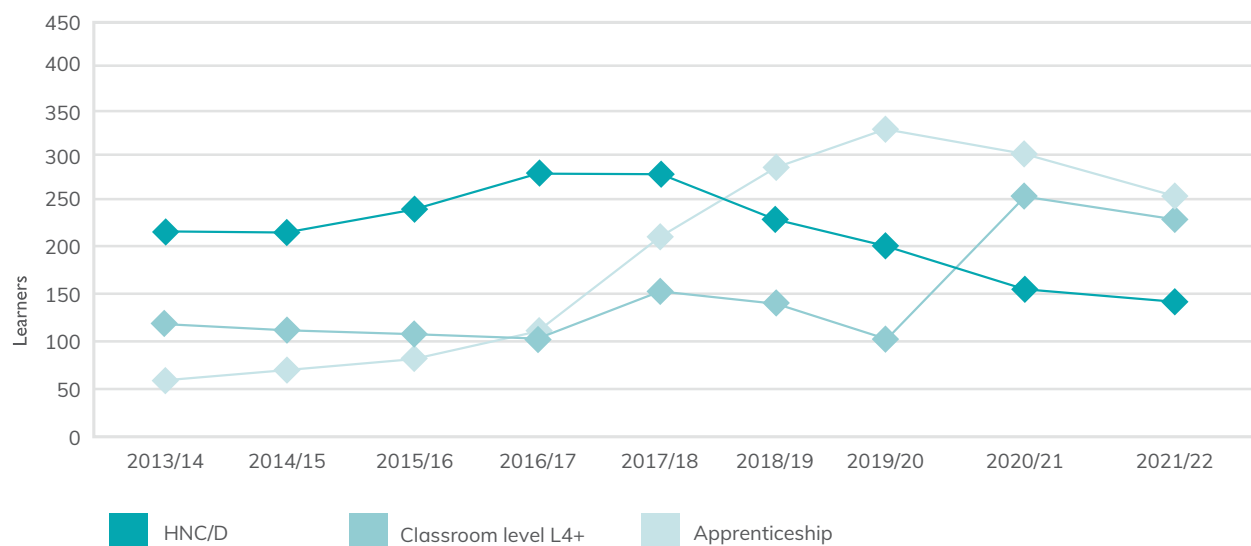
What better outputs could we achieve?

- The number of students on higher level apprenticeship programmes as we continue to grow and expand this provision.
- The breadth of our HE apprenticeship provision goes from strength to strength, but we are targeting some new provision in 2022/23 linked to the Institute of Technology, particularly in Health, Science and Health Management and newly-branded HTQ programmes.



6.1 ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION RATES

Learner engagement trend analysis



In 2021/22 we had 364 students undertaking higher level learning through classroom based and HNC/D programmes. The numbers on traditional stand-alone HNC/D programmes have continued to decline from a high point in 2017. Classroom based L4 programmes have declined slightly after a significant increase in 2020-21, but this should be viewed in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The impact of this was offset by the continuing use of West Midlands Combined Authority flexibilities for HE programmes and the opening of the Black Country and Marches Institute of Technology.

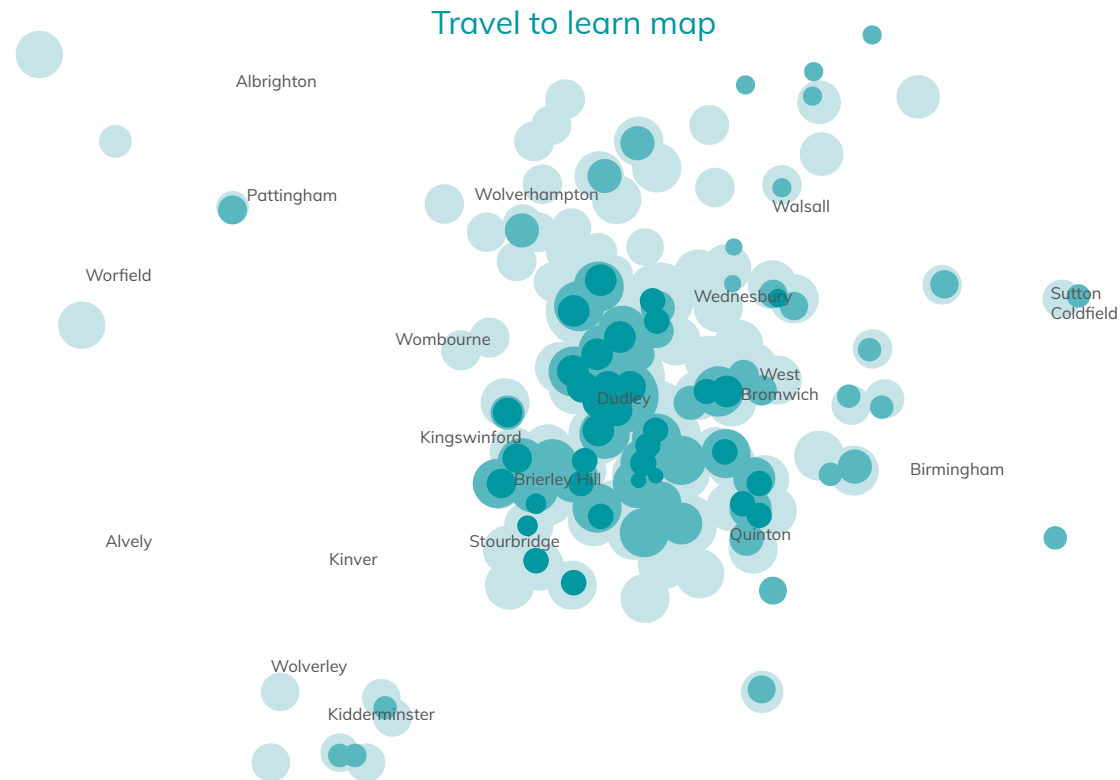
The pandemic also had an impact on Higher Apprenticeship recruitment, which fell from 305 in 2020-21 to 245 in 2021-22, although this still remains strong despite difficult external circumstances. These students continue to be a strategic priority for the College, and we have plans to further expand our HE apprenticeship offer, particularly through the ongoing work of the Institute of Technology.

The College considers higher skills learners as:

1. HNC/D students – those studying dedicated HE programmes on a full or part time basis.
2. Classroom based Level 4+ students – adults studying FE provision that is Level 4 or higher – including professional programmes such as Teacher Training.
3. Higher Apprenticeships- those studying a Level 4 and above through an Apprenticeship programme.



6.1 ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION RATES CONTINUED

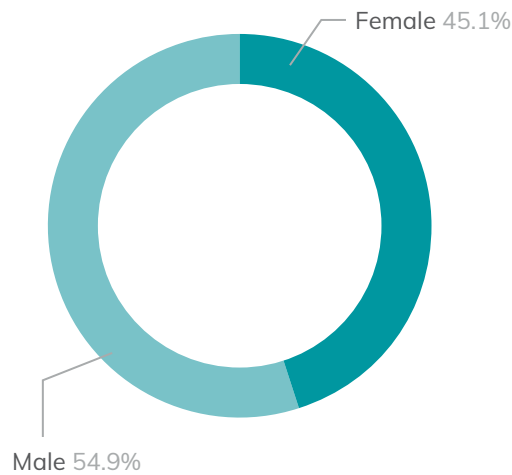


The map shows the travel to learn pattern of our Higher Education students in 2021-22. The majority of students continue to be from Dudley Borough and the wider Black Country area. Increasingly students are looking to remain local to study rather than travel elsewhere and it is expected the pandemic may make that an increasingly attractive option. However, it also shows that the College is attracting higher level students from across the wider West Midlands, and we expect that to broaden as the Black Country and Marches Institute of Technology continues to establish itself and as we participate in the Aspire to HE project. We are pleased to see that, as we strengthen our higher-level offer and build our reputation for quality delivery of learning and skills, we are able to draw students from farther afield, with the Institute of Technology giving us a national reach in some sectors.

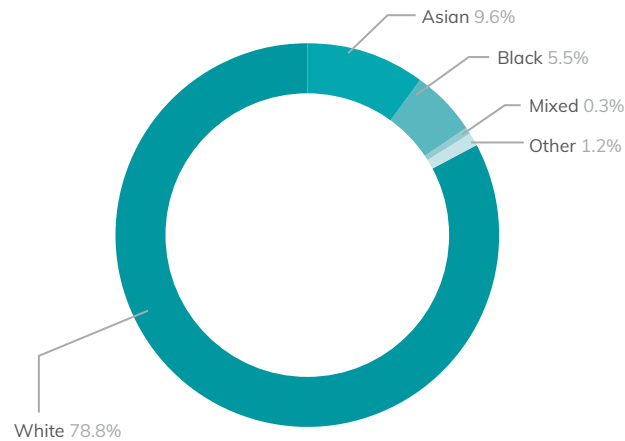


6.2 IMPACT ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

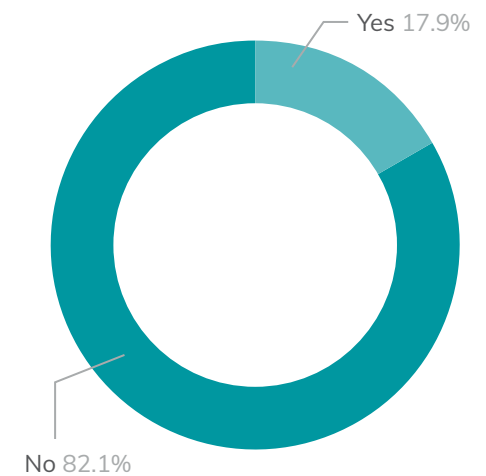
Gender



Ethnicity



Learning difficulty or disability



Whilst males remain the biggest cohort on Higher Education programmes, the percentage of the HE population who are female continues to remain relatively static (from 47% in 2020/21 to 45.1% in 2021-22). We continue to encourage more female students to pursue higher technical skills, particularly in areas such as engineering, manufacturing and construction.

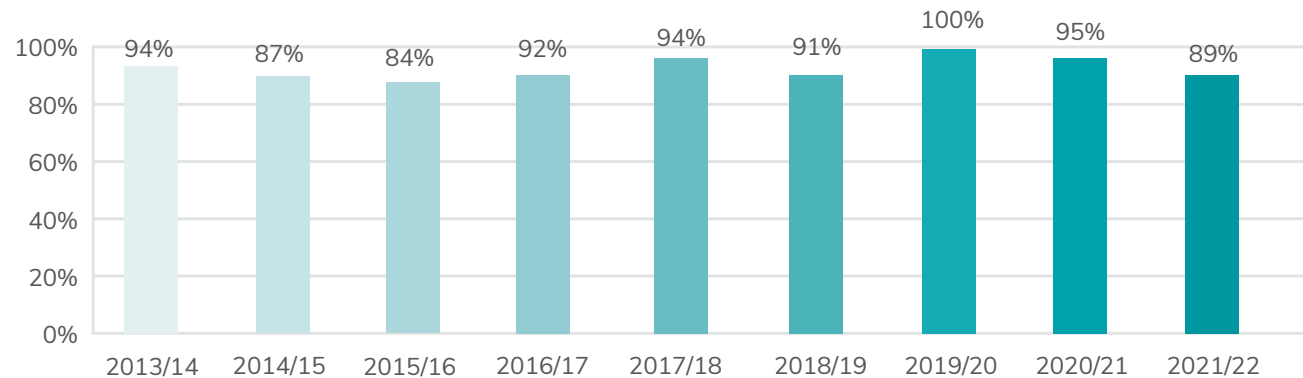
Their ethnicity profile shows our higher-level students as a group are more diverse than the local community. 21% of our HE students are from BAME groups compared to 11.9% of the local population.

We were pleased to support nearly 18% of higher-level students who have a self-declared learning difficulties or disabilities in 2021/22, a slight increase from 2020-21. We are happy to report that these students achieved at a rate comparable to their peers.



6.3 OUTCOMES FOR LEARNERS

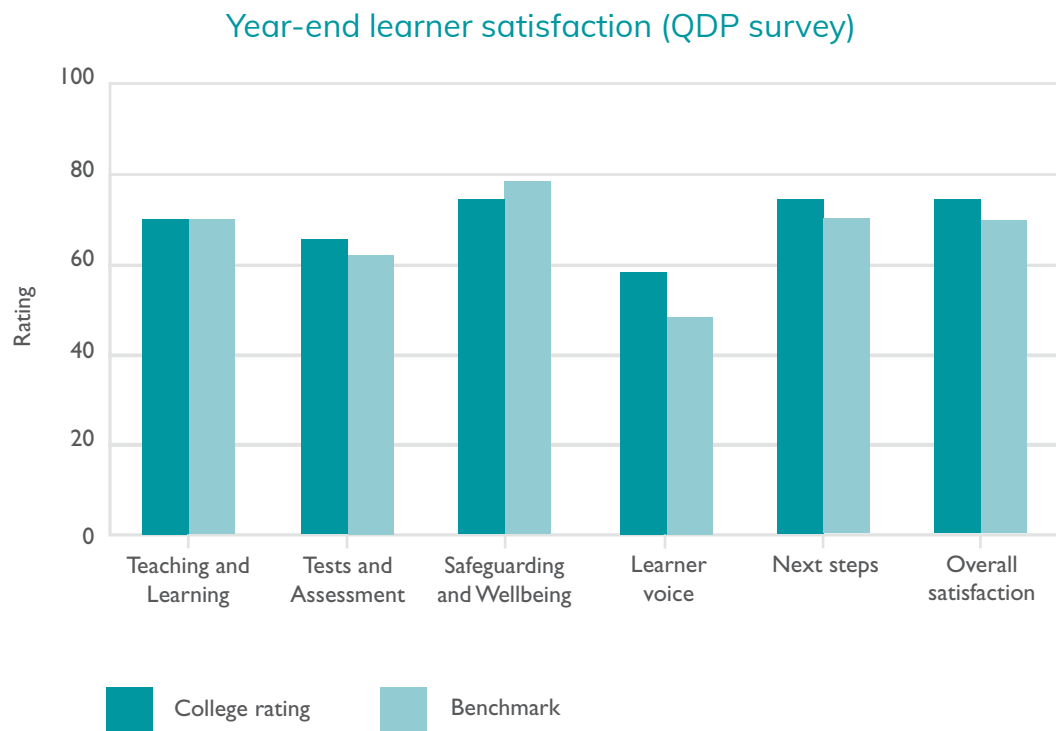
Higher achievement rate



Due to the ongoing Covid-19 impact on learning during this academic year, we have seen a slight overall drop in achievement rates, although individual courses, particularly classroom-based programmes, have maintained or increased their pass rates. The overall achievement rate remains broadly consistent with previous academic years.



6.4 LEARNER SATISFACTION

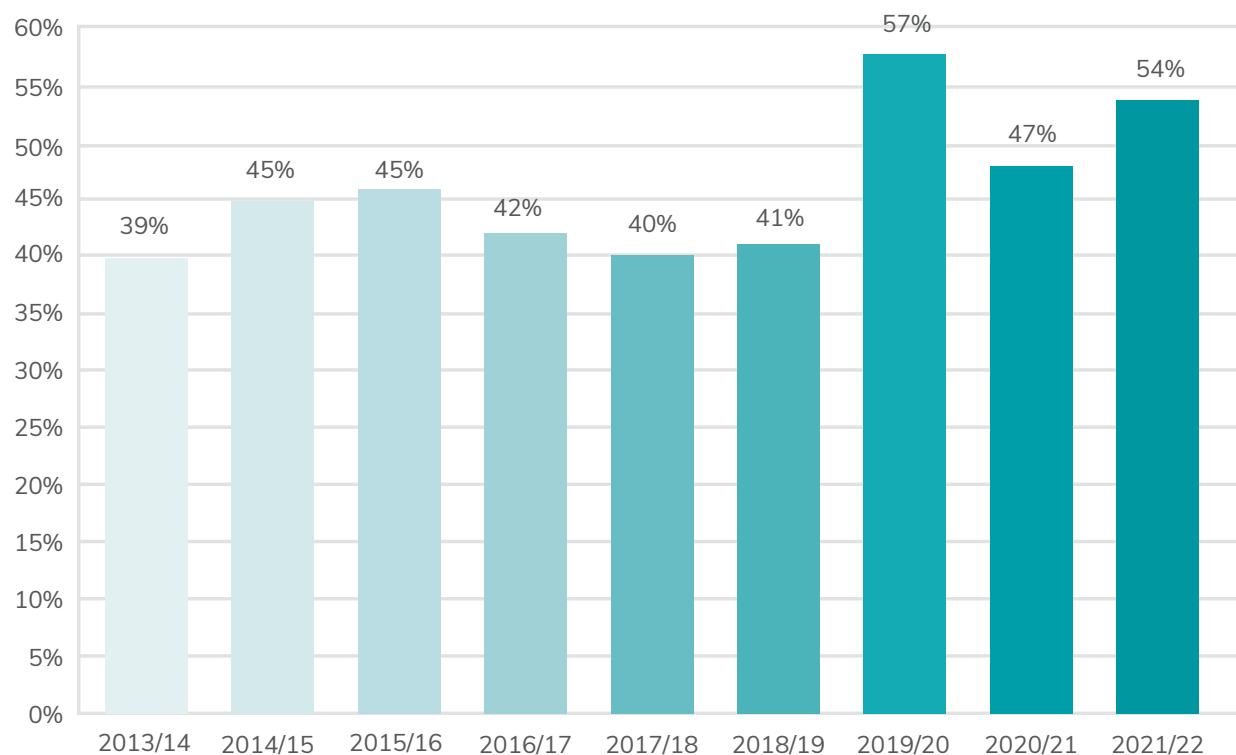


Despite the clear challenges presenting themselves as we emerged from the global pandemic, higher-level students remain pleased with the service Dudley College offer. With overall satisfaction being above the national comparative benchmark.



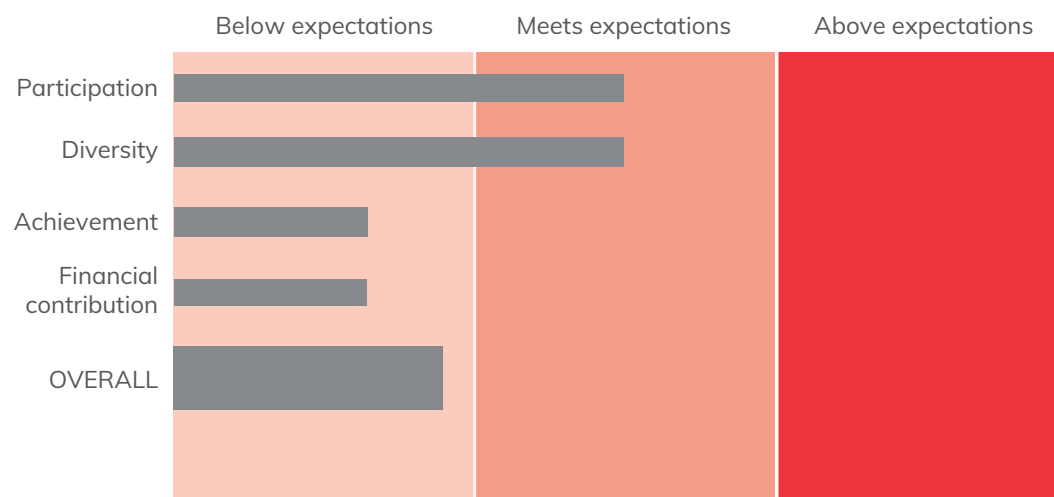
6.5 IMPACT ON REGIONAL SKILLS AND THE REGIONAL ECONOMY

STEM in the curriculum



The local economy relies on a workforce with high level education and skills in STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and mathematics). With the opening of the Black Country and Marches Institute of Technology and the related launch of new STEM-related programmes such as Healthcare Science, we have seen a significant increase in enrolments in these subjects. We remain committed to further expanding our higher-level STEM provision in higher apprenticeships through the expansion of our Science and Healthcare provision and the ongoing work of the Institute of Technology.

7. SUB-CONTRACTED APPRENTICESHIPS BALANCED SCORECARD



The overall performance of this key client group is 'below expectations'. The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the associated trading conditions and the full implementation of apprenticeship standards had a particularly profound effect on several partners who deliver apprenticeship provision on behalf of the College.

Overall achievement rates for Partner sub-contracted apprenticeships was 44.5% in 2021/22 which shows some recovery in performance compared with 20/21 but remains below our expectations.

The College will continue to work with, and selectively grow, high value-added partners where there is a clear alignment with our Strategic Plan. However low added-value partnerships will continue to be phased out as apprentices complete.

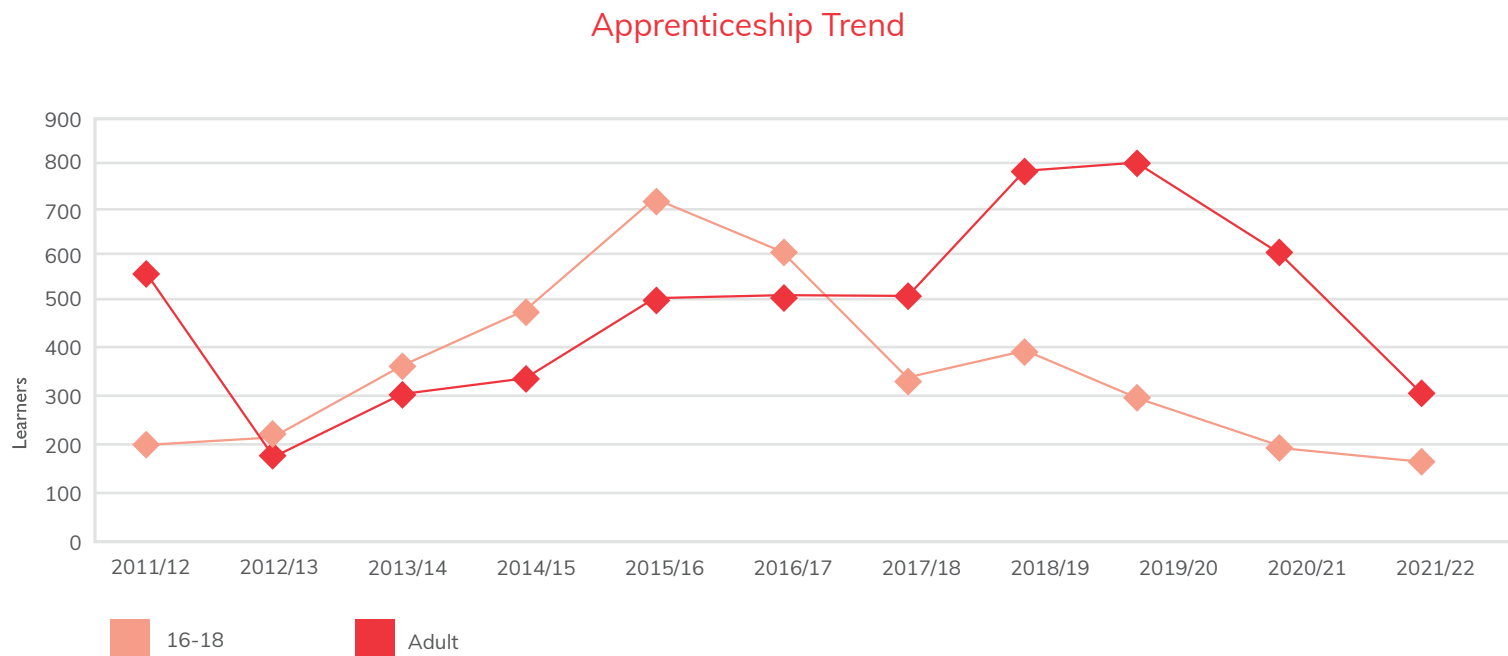
OUTPUTS

What key outputs did we achieve?

- Overall achievement rates for partner / sub-contracted apprenticeships is 44.5% in 21/22
- Participation fell from 846 to 476
- Managed decline of some low added-value partnership / sub-contractors due to below minimum level of performance (MLP) and/or not meeting strategic regional skills needs.
- Planned increased in some new high-value partners associated to the Black Country & Marches Institute of Technology (IoT) including NHS Trusts, Avensys Medical, CNET Network Training and Regional Universities.

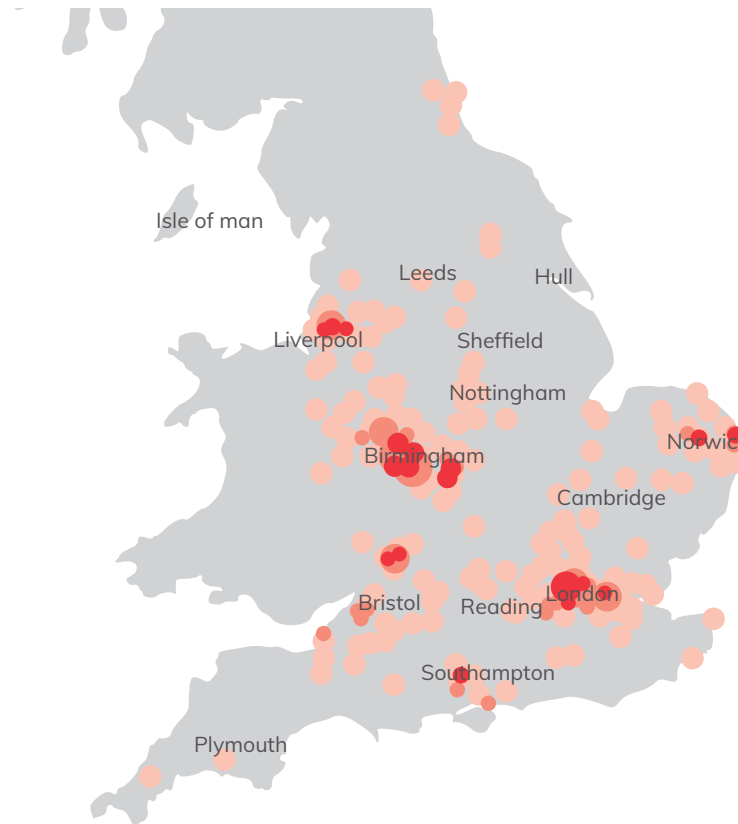
7.1 ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION RATES

Apprentice engagement and trend analysis – sub-contracted partnership activity



Participation rates for partnership activity fell in 2021/22 in both age groups. 16-18 partnership activity continued a 5-year decline and was 174 (239). Following two years of growth, adult partnership activity also fell to 302 (607) in 2021/22. This reflects the College's plan to reduce low added-value sub-contracted work and replace with in-college and/or high-value partner apprenticeships.

7.1 ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION RATES CONTINUED

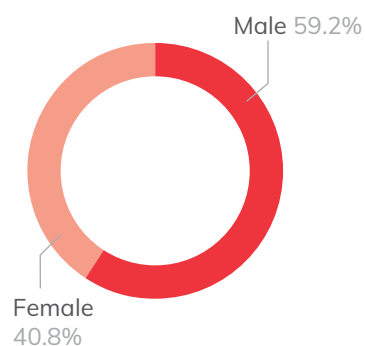


The heat map shows the home location of partnership apprentices. There is activity in other regions including delivery of bespoke apprenticeship programmes on employer premises.

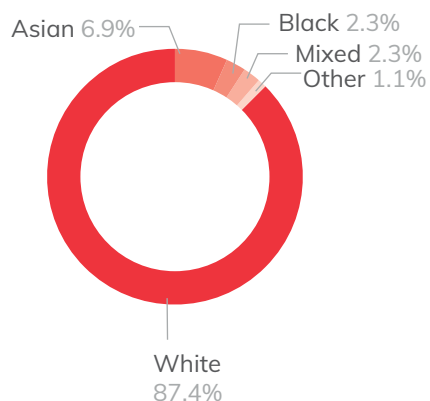
7.2 IMPACT ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

AGED 16-18 APPRENTICESHIPS

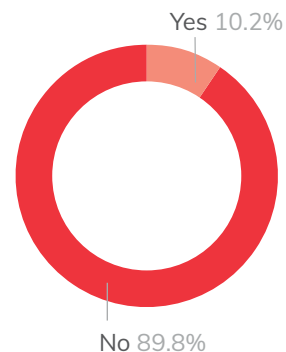
Gender mix



Ethnicity mix



Learning difficulty or disability



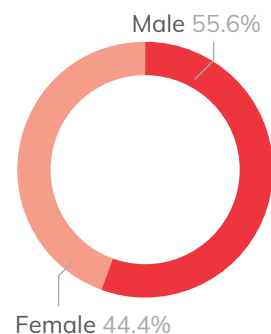
In 2021/22 the percentage of female apprentices with partners reduced to 40.8% compared with 58% in the previous year. Males achieve at a higher rate than females +8.9%.

Ethnic diversity in partnership activity remains similar to previous years and remains slightly more diverse than college apprenticeship provision. Apprentices from Asian, black and mixed ethnicity achieved at a lower rate than their peers.

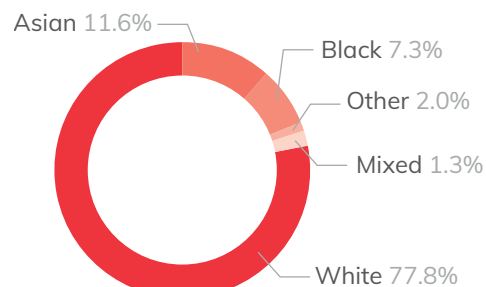
Apprentices with partner organisations declaring a learning difficulty or disability remains in line with previous years at 7% which is slightly lower than college apprentices.

AGED 19+ APPRENTICESHIPS

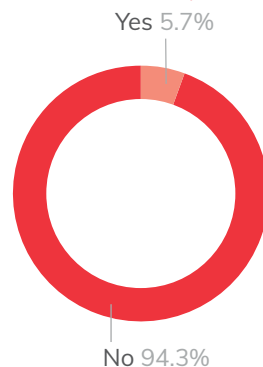
Gender mix



Ethnicity mix



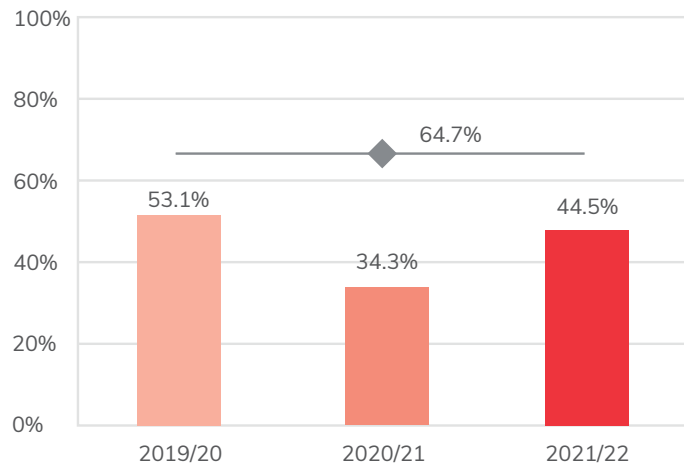
Learning difficulty or disability





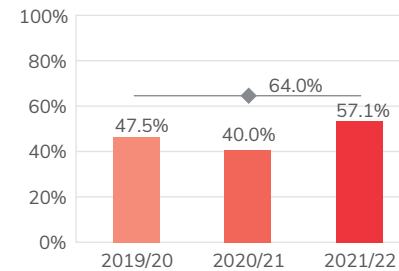
7.3 OUTCOMES FOR APPRENTICES

Overall achievement rate - all Apprenticeships

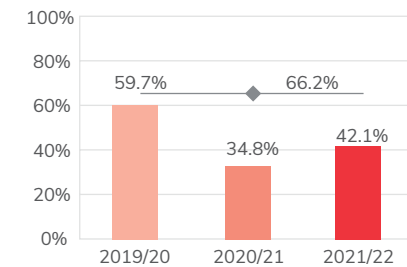


■ College achievement rate
◆ Latest published national achievement rate (2018/19)

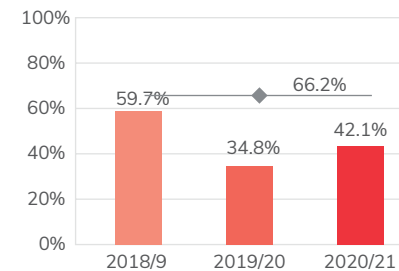
Intermediate Apprenticeships



Higher Apprenticeships



Advanced Apprenticeships



Note – Latest published national rates are only available from 2018-19 due to pandemic.

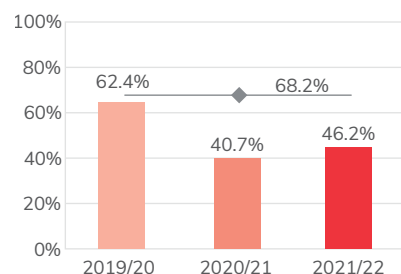
The impact of the Covid-19 health pandemic on partnership apprenticeship achievement has been significant. It makes comparison with previous year national rates and college partners' performance difficult, but this represents a below expectation performance. Overall achievement rate for partners is 44.5% for 2021/22 which is a 10% improvement on last year but still below the College's expectation.

Partnership achievement performance has traditionally been strong going back several years but has declined since 2015. Several Partners were further significantly impacted by Covid-19 due to operating in sectors directly affected by the health pandemic and as the full impact of apprenticeship standards (replacing frameworks)

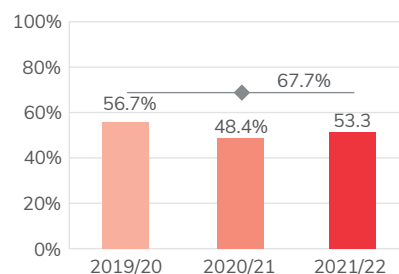


7.3 OUTCOMES FOR APPRENTICES CONTINUED

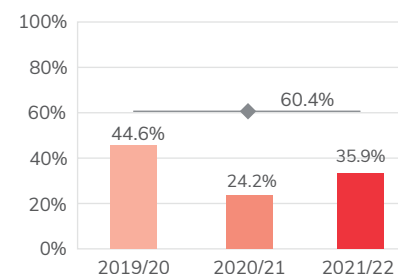
Aged 16-18 - all levels



Aged 19-23 - all levels



Aged 24+ - all levels



■ College achievement rate
◆ Latest published national achievement rate (2018/19)

Note – Latest published national rates are only available from 2018-19 due to pandemic.

Analysis by age group shows improvements in achievement compared with previous year across all age groups. This still shows performance which is below the College's expectations.



8. FINANCIAL HEALTH INDICATORS

OVERVIEW OF THE COLLEGE'S FINANCIAL POSITION

The College has invested substantially in its estate over the last 10 years to create sector leading education facilities within the Dudley and Brierley Hill Learning Quarters. Learners and employers have been at the heart of this investment by identifying skills gaps to meet the local and regional need. The College has stabilised its financial position following the Covid pandemic and along with on-going cost control measures, has enabled the College to deliver strong annual operating performances, despite the challenging financial environment.

The regional and national economy continue to be impacted in the post Covid world and this is having repercussions on the FE sector in terms of opportunities for growth. Dudley College of Technology has proactively responded to the government's skills agenda through the opening of the Institute of Technology, working with partners to adapt and tailor our apprenticeship and adult offer. The College is a large provider of apprenticeships and whilst we are not forecasting significant growth, our aim is to ensure that our offer meets the regional skills needs of our employers. The College has refreshed its adult offer to directly deliver on government and Combined Authority priorities and is forecasting small increases in income over the next two years.

The College continues to carefully manage its cost base and this has resulted in an improved EBITDA as a percentage of income of 10.9% (£5m), an increase on prior year of 5%. The continued benefits of 'Good' cost control means that EBITDA is set to remain above the FEC recommended benchmark.

Borrowing has remained at a similar level in recent years as the College has invested in new facilities and

acquisition of new premises in Brierley Hill. Borrowing as a percentage of income has dropped by 2% to 38% and a healthy cash balance means that a further drop to 34% is expected by 2023.

Historically the College's current ratio (an indicator of short-term liquidity – the higher the current ratio the better) has remained below 1.0 following the investment into our estate and facilities. However the current ratio has improved to 1.01 at July 2022, largely due to a healthy cash position. The College has closely managed cash balances, conserving cash for the challenging times ahead and this helped to increase the year-end cash balance and improve cash days to 60 at the July 2022 year-end, well above the FE Commissioner benchmark of 25. Careful cash management will continue to be a central component in the College's financial strategy, and we anticipate that cash, and cash days, will remain healthy in 2023 as we feel the full benefits of the cost control and from a continued measured investment approach in capital and maintenance projects.

Overall in 2021-22 the College's financial health as measured by the ESFA improved to 'Good' and this has been driven by more positive EBITDA and cash position than budgeted. Operating performance and improving liquidity should ensure that the College's financial health grade of 'Good' continues in 2022-23.

KEY FINANCIAL STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

For many years the College has had a strong and sustainable operating performance which has generated sufficient levels of cash from operating activities to service debt obligations and maintain investment in our staff, facilities and strategic projects. Substantial investment in the estate and facilities has increased the College's capacity to deliver more education and training at a time of demographic growth. As a result the College has sustained student numbers and income. This investment has also ensured a high standard of learning environment that reflects industry standard for our technical education areas. This investment has been achieved through careful borrowing and substantial support from central government and other agencies.

The College continues to review its operational base and consolidate activity to deliver to local and regional priorities. This has reduced the level of operational risk and means that management is able to focus on the quality of teaching and learning and financial stability of its core operations. The College works closely with the Combined Authority and has been innovative in meeting regional priorities; this has ensured ongoing opportunities for further income generation. Equally the College is not overly reliant on a single source of income, thereby reducing the financial risk of income fluctuation.

The College has taken a number of steps to re-align its costs and this has meant that staffing budgets have been met, and non-pay budgets are significantly under-spent. Combined with modest increases in income from 2022-23 with an increasing need for more training and upskilling to drive the economy forward, the College will continue to improve its

operating performance with an EBITDA of 8% of income by July 2023.

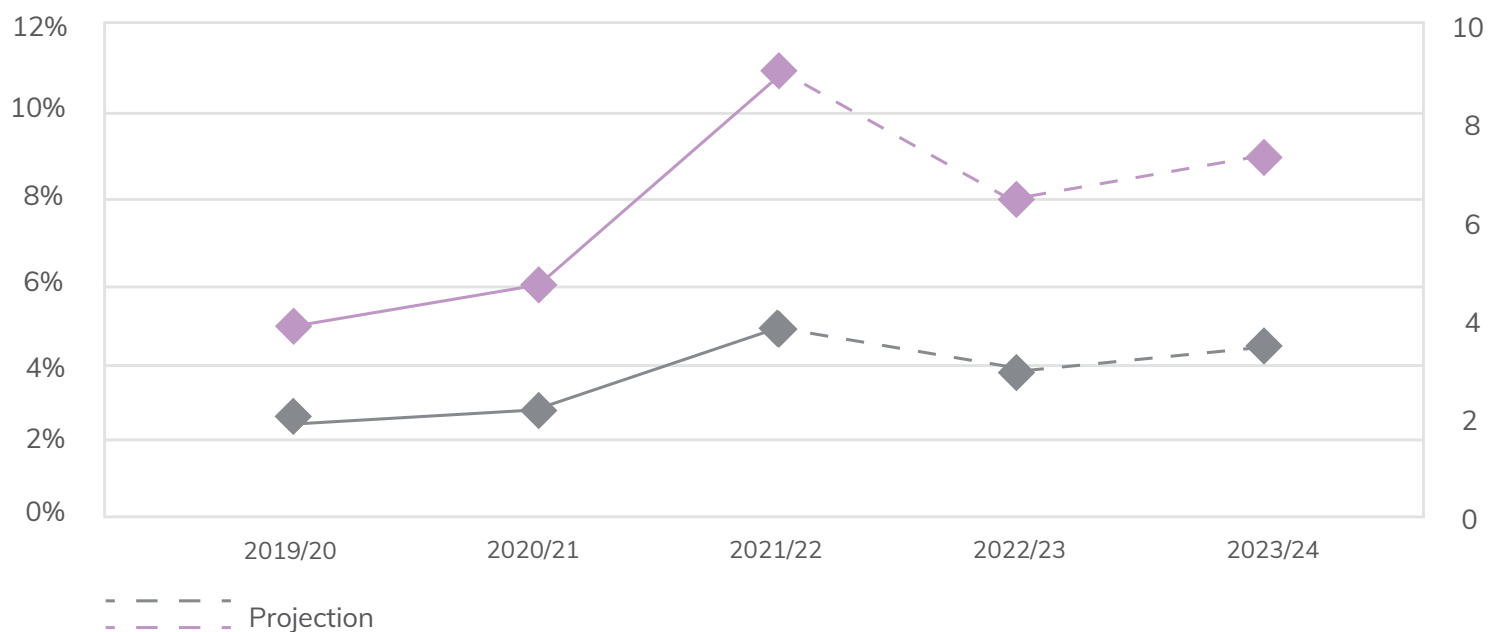
Cash generated from operations, alongside a controlled capital expenditure programme, is ensuring the College meets its longer-term financial objective of growing cash and removing any reliance on existing working capital facilities by 2025, whilst maintaining the milestone of 'Good' financial health. The Corporation agreed a financial strategy in 2021 to retain cash, repay loans, improve the College's financial health and protect its long-term sustainability. It includes key performance indicators on EBITDA, cash days, borrowing and pay as a percentage of income. At July 2022 all KPIs were achieved and loan covenants were comfortably met; this level of performance is expected to continue into 2023.

As a result of the planned investment, the college's cash balances and short-term liquidity measures, such as the current ratio of current assets compared to current liabilities, have improved although the latter continues to be lower than is seen on average in the sector. The College has set limited budgets for future capital investment: a successful bid to the FE Capital Transformation Fund means that a refurbishment to rooves, windows and a new Animal Science block is being 90% government funded. A joint project with DMBC and the University of Worcester to construct a new Health Innovation Centre is being entirely funded by the Towns Fund. The focus on cost control and cashflow management is going to be critical in order to sustain the improvements in EBITDA and current ratio.

Income from all sources continues to be susceptible from economic uncertainty and the College has put mechanisms in place to monitor recruitment against plans on a real-time basis. This will allow the College to quickly respond to variances in income either through generating additional opportunities or to reduce costs.



8.1 OPERATING PERFORMANCE



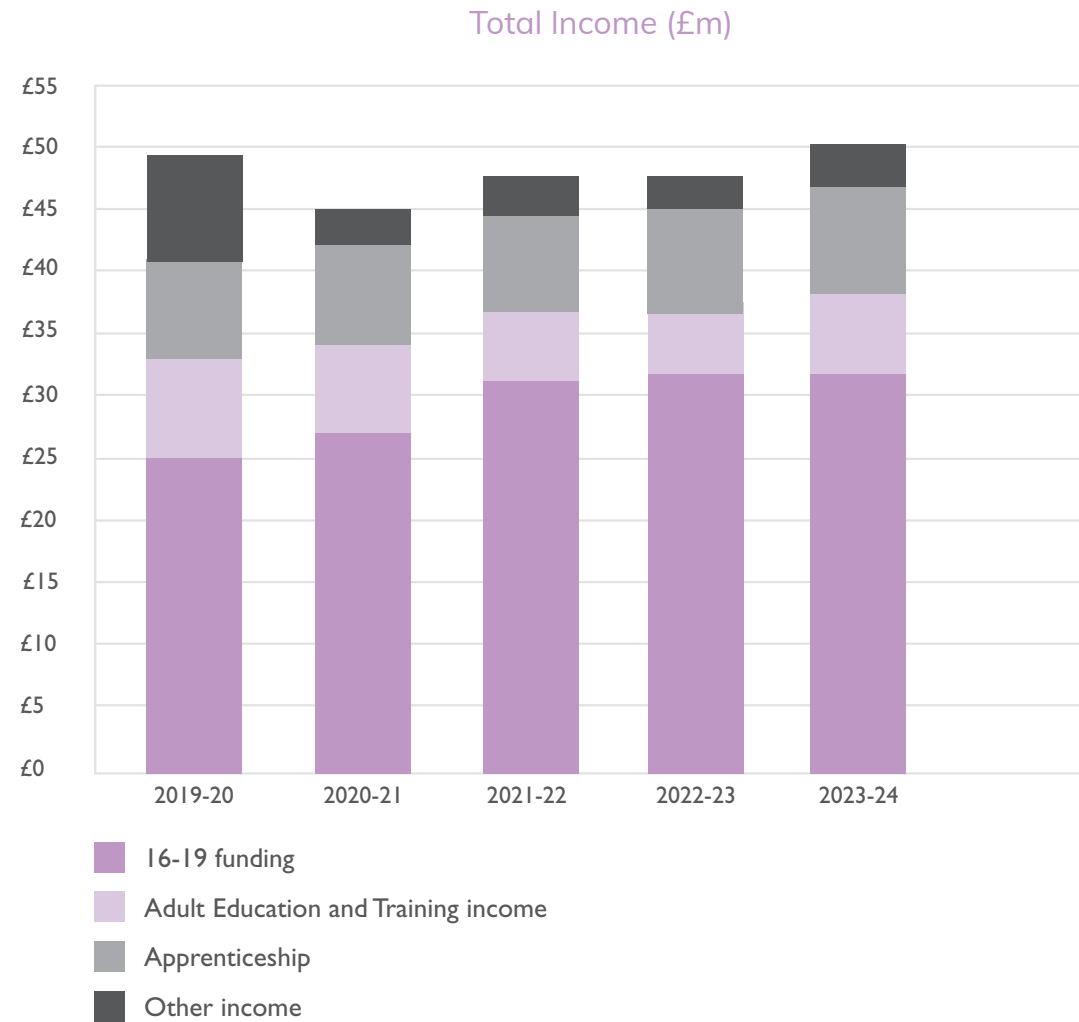
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23 Projection	2023/24 Projection
EBITDA as a % of income	5%	6%	11%	8%	9%
EBITDA £m	2.2	2.68	5.01	3.9	4.3

The current ratio is a measure of current assets compared to current liabilities and is used as an indicator of a college's short-term liquidity. Whilst not a direct measure of cash, the higher the percentage measure, the better a college's liquidity, which means the more cash, or assets that can be easily converted into cash, a college has got compared to its short-term liabilities. The ESFA 'good' benchmark is a current ratio of 1.2, whilst the FEC benchmark is 1.4.

The limited spend on capital projects in 2022 has resulted in an improved cash position and therefore a better current ratio. Cash management will continue to be

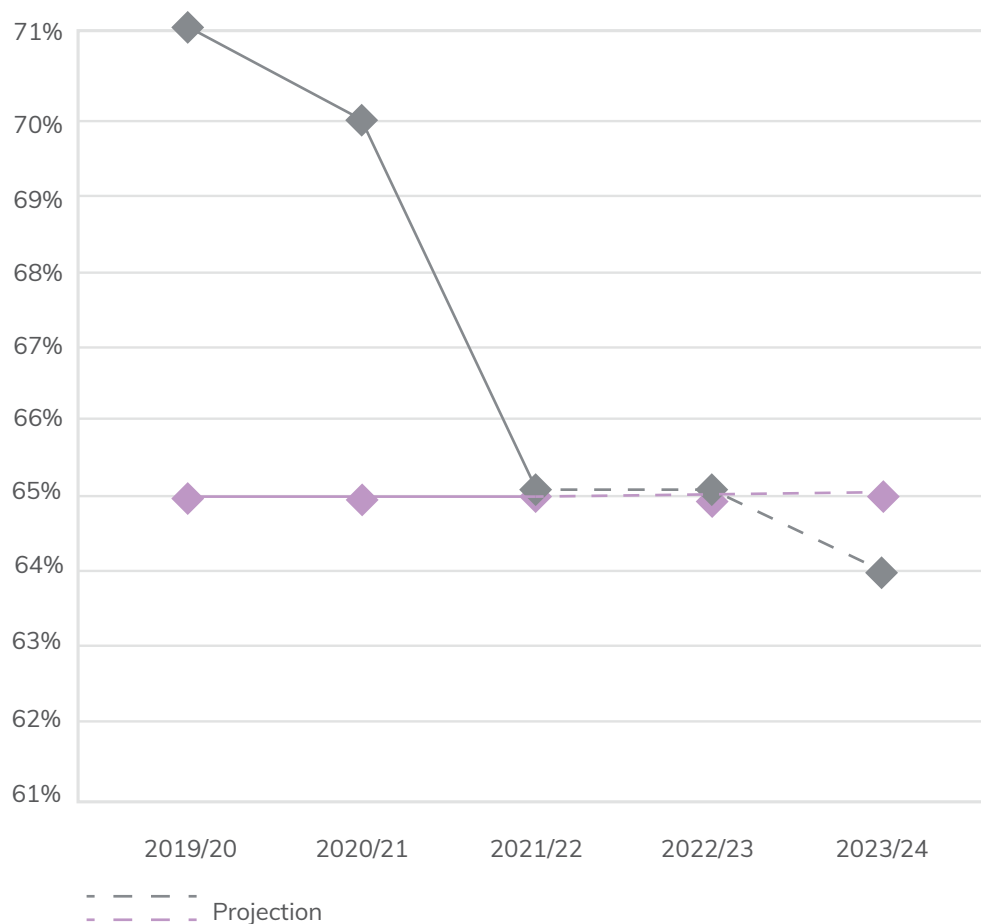
very important going forward as we balance the College's liquidity needs against the requirement to repay short term borrowing. We anticipate that the College's current ratio is set to improve over the next few years as the College maintains control on costs, limits capital expenditure and has a prudent repayment plan of short term borrowing.

8.2 TOTAL INCOME



College income dropped to £46m during the pandemic and has stabilised in 2022. The increase in income in 2023 is largely driven through higher levels of ESFA funding for students aged 16-19. There are smaller increases in adult and apprenticeship income.

8.3 STAFF COSTS AS A PERCENTAGE OF INCOME



The College continues to meet the AoC recommended pay awards for staff and despite a (temporary) increase in National Insurance contributions, pay costs continue to be tightly controlled. A restructure in 2021 resulted in a resizing of the College's establishment which now effectively matches the resource requirements.

The College has also been mindful of the need to retain staff with specialist skills in order to remain flexible and respond to emerging demand in the adult and apprenticeship market. Inevitably this puts pressure on pay budgets and increases the risk of carrying vacancies for skilled staff..

The controls over pay spending will ensure a continued reduction in pay costs as a percentage of income in 2023 and means that the College remains at or below the FEC benchmark of pay being 65% of turnover.

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22 Projection	2022/23 Projection	2023/24 Projection
 Dudley College	71.0%	70.0%	65.0%	65.0%	64.0%
 FE Commissioner benchmark	65.0%	65.0%	65.0%	65.0%	65.0%

8.4 ADJUSTED CURRENT RATIO



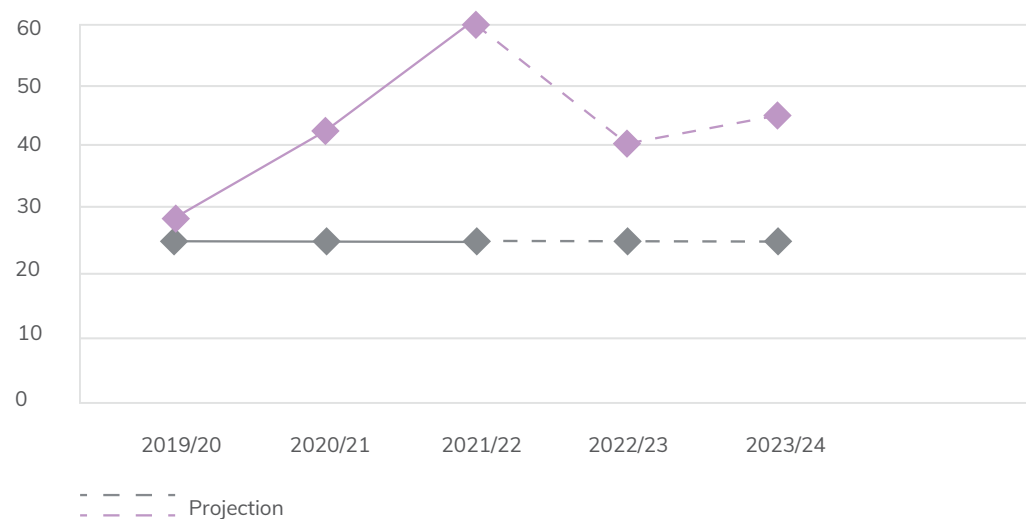
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23 Projection	2023/24 Projection
 Current ratio	0.86	0.84	1.01	0.9	1.15
 ESFA financial health score	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2
 FEC benchmark	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4

The current ratio is a measure of current assets compared to current liabilities and is used as an indicator of a college's short-term liquidity. Whilst not a direct measure of cash, the higher the percentage measure, the better a college's liquidity, which means the more cash, or assets that can be easily converted into cash, a college has got compared to its short-term liabilities. The ESFA 'good' benchmark is a current ratio of 1.2, whilst the FEC benchmark is 1.4.

The limited spend on capital projects in 2022 has resulted in an improved cash position and therefore a better current ratio. Cash management will continue to be

very important going forward as we balance the College's liquidity needs against the requirement to repay short term borrowing. We anticipate that the College's current ratio is set to be improve over the next few years as the College maintains control on costs, limits capital expenditure and has a prudent repayment plan of short term borrowing.

8.5 CASH DAYS



Cash days is the number of days that an organisation can continue to pay its operating expenses given its current level of available cash. The FE Commissioner's benchmark is for colleges to have sufficient cash to cover 25 cash days.

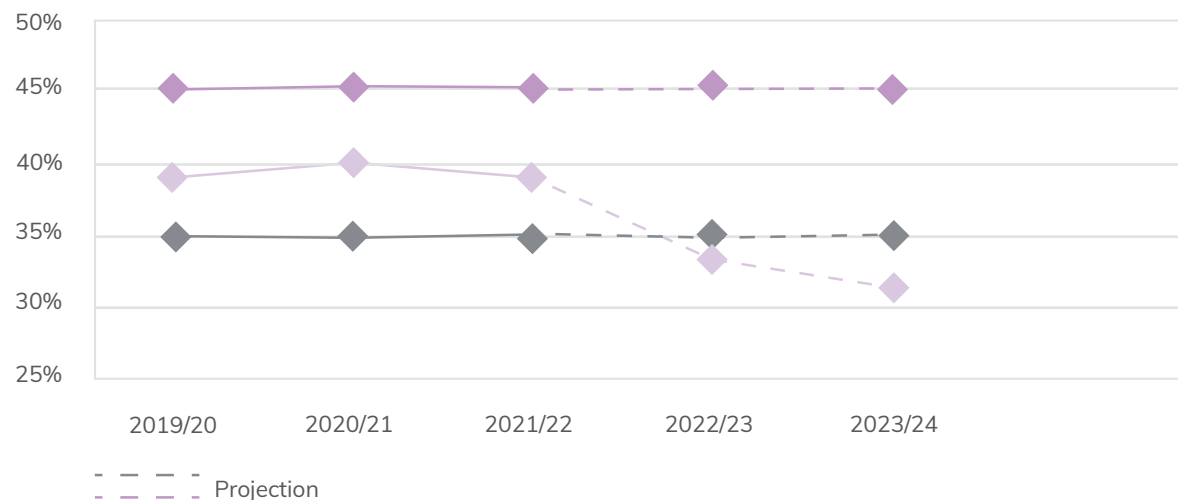
Strong cash generation from operating activities supported by a re-structure of our bank loan facilities helped improve the College's cash days since 2020. Closely managed cash balances, capital investment and costs, has helped to increase the year-end cash balance and cash days to 60 at 31 July 2022, well above the FE Commissioner benchmark of 25, and facilitated early repayment of some short term borrowing.

Cash management will continue to be imperative going forwards as we navigate through an economically challenging period. We anticipate that cash, and cash days, will continue to stabilise as we feel the full effects of careful financial management in 2022.

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23 Projection	2023/24 Projection
■ Cash days - Dudley College	19	42	60	40	45
■ FE Commissioner benchmark	25	25	25	25	25



8.6 BORROWING AS A PERCENTAGE OF INCOME

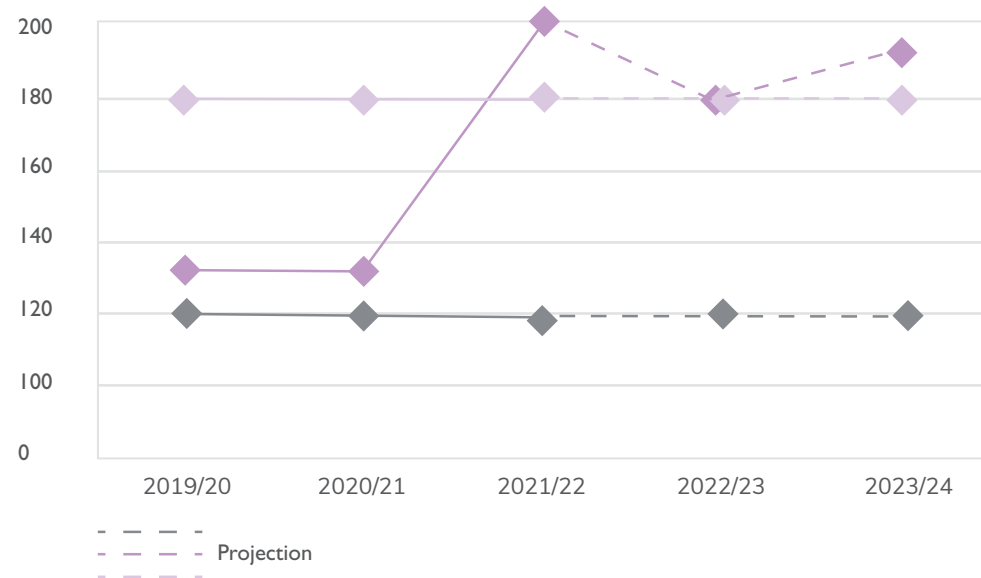


	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/23 Projection	2023/24 Projection
■ Borrowing as a % of income	39%	38%	40%	36%	34%
■ Requires improvement threshold	45%	45%	45%	45%	45%
■ Good threshold	35%	35%	35%	35%	35%

Borrowing as a percentage of income (also known as gearing or leverage) is used to measure the proportion of assets invested in a college that are financed by borrowing. It also provides an indicator to the longer term financial stability of a college, because the higher the level of borrowing, the higher the risk to a college since more cash will have to be set aside to meet debt and interest repayments leaving less cash for everything else. The lower the percentage measure, the better a college's gearing and its prospects for long term stability. Colleges with a financial health score of Good are likely to have borrowing at 35% of income or less.

The College's borrowing reflects a re-structure of bank loan facilities and funding of the transfer of assets and operations from BMet in 2019. Although the absolute level of borrowing has dropped through capital repayments, a reduction in income in 2021 and 2022, means that as a percentage of income, borrowing peaked at 40% in 2021. This has now dropped to 38% in 2022 and is set to drop further in 2023-24. The College's positive cash position means that borrowing is set to reduce to 31% in 2024.

8.7 ESFA FINANCIAL HEALTH GRADE



The College's financial health grade is assessed by scoring the adjusted current ratio, EBITDA as a percentage of adjusted income and borrowing as a percentage of income. The total scores provide an overall financial health grade, based on a banding structure illustrated in the chart.

Historically, the College has been graded Requires Improvement. The improved operating position and higher than expected cash levels resulted in a sharp increase in financial health score in 2022 to Good, despite the College's aim of reaching this in 2023.

The College expects to maintain its Good financial health score into 2023 and 2024.

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24 Projection
Financial health score	130	130	200	180	190
Good threshold	180	180	180	180	180
Requires improvement	120	120	120	120	120

Further information on the College's performance can be found on the Dudley dashboard on the College's website: dudleycol.ac.uk/our-college/about-us/dashboard