

Raising Participation Age policy and Local Authorities duties on Tracking young people

Michelle Thompson
Department for Education
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Department
for Education

Raising the participation age (RPA)

- The participation age has been raised so that all young people in England are now required to continue in education or training beyond the age of 16.
- Young people have a choice about how they continue in education or training post-16, which could be through:
 - full-time study in a school, college or with a training provider;
 - full-time work or volunteering (20 hours or more) combined with regulated part-time education or training (about one day per week);
 - an apprenticeship (www.apprenticeships.org.uk) or traineeship.

Definitions: Full-time work

- In order to count as full-time work, a job must be for eight or more weeks consecutively and for 20 or more hours per week.
- Where a young person's employment hours vary, employment of an average of 40 or more hours over a two-week period can be considered as meeting the requirement.
- This then needs to be combined with regulated part-time education or training to meet the duty to participate.

Definitions: Full-time education

- Where a young person is attending full-time education at a school (including at an academy or free school), they will be meeting their duty to participate – there is no set definition beyond that.
- For those young people attending other full-time education, such as a sixth-form college, general further education college, or independent college, the definition is a study programme of at least 540 planned hours a year.
- Planned hours mean the amount of time young people are being taught or given instruction by a lecturer, tutor, or being supervised. If a young person is enrolled on a 16-19 Study Programmes, the wider forms of education such as work experience can be included within those hours.
- In general, if a young person is enrolled on a full-time study programme they will be meeting the duty to participate.

Definitions: Part-time education

- If a young person is working full-time (20 hours or more per week) they should undertake part-time education or training alongside their job.
- Part-time education or training alongside full-time work must be of around 280 planned hours per year (equivalent to around one day per week) but these hours can be taken flexibly around working hours, as distance learning, or in blocks.
- This education or training may be provided directly by an employer or by another organisation.
- Part-time education or training must lead towards a regulated qualification. A list of regulated qualifications can be found at: <http://register.ofqual.gov.uk>.

Definitions: Apprenticeships

- Entering into an apprenticeship agreement as set out in the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 satisfies the duty to participate and no further monitoring of that young person's training or employment is needed.
- Apprenticeship providers are included in the requirement to notify a local authority if a young person is no longer participating.

Definitions: Traineeships

- Traineeships are a training route for young people aged 16-23 (and up to 25 for young people with SEN). Traineeships are an education and training programme with work experience focussed on giving young people the skills and experience they need to be able to gain apprenticeships or sustainable employment.
- Traineeships are part of 16-19 study programmes so a young person enrolling on a traineeship would meet the duty to participate.

Why was the participation age raised?

- Most young people already continue in education or training after they finish year 11, because it gives them the best chance to get the skills and qualifications that Universities and employers look for.
- However, we know that a small group of young people that are not participating includes some of the most vulnerable. We want to give **all** young people the opportunity to develop the skills they need for adult life and to achieve their full potential.
- Continuing in education and training means that young people are given the opportunity to develop skills and qualifications that will open doors to future employment, help them make the most of their potential, and earn more over their lifetime.
- Evidence shows that achieving qualifications at this age can help to boost a young person's prospects for life – for example, young people with two or more A-levels earn around 15% more than those without.

When and how was it phased in?

- Pupils who left year 11 in summer 2013 were required to continue in education or training for at least a further year, and pupils who left year 11 in summer 2014 were the first cohort required to continue until at least their 18th birthday.
- Prior to this the DfE funded a range of locally led projects to explore and develop good practice that would help local authorities to support young people to meet their duty to participate.

Exceptions: Home education

- For young people who are being home educated, no hourly requirement of education applies. The amount and content of the home education is at the discretion of the home educator. In most circumstances it will be the young person themselves who states that they are home educated.
- If a local authority believes there is some doubt in the matter, they may wish to seek confirmation of this from the parent or guardian, but no on-going monitoring of the education is required. If the authority has evidence to suggest that a young person who claims to be home educated is not, then they would be expected to clarify the position with the young person.

Exceptions: Re-engagement provision

- For young people who have been absent from the education system and are now attending a re-engagement programme, no hourly requirement of education applies. Local authorities should be satisfied that the express intention of the programme is to support the young person to move into full-time education at a school or college, an apprenticeship or traineeship, or full-time work or volunteering with part-time training alongside.
- Once re-engagement onto one of those routes is secured, the wider requirements for participation apply.

Exceptions: Non-registered education institutions

- Education institutions such as seminary or talmudic colleges provide a specialist education and young people attending these institutions would be considered to be complying with the duty to participate beyond the age of 16.
- Independent colleges should, however, be encouraged to provide a balanced education based on prior achievement and to include the continued study of English and maths where appropriate.

Exceptions: Armed forces

- Serving in the armed forces provides relevant training for young people and is a valid and valuable career route. As the terms of service and training within the armed forces vary, the government has made provision that a serving member of the armed forces who is participating in the training given to new members, will automatically be treated as meeting their duty to participate without further investigation or any requirement to deliver specific subjects or programmes.
- For the purposes of RPA, armed forces means - the naval, military or air forces of the Crown, but not the reserve forces.

Exceptions: Full-time caring responsibilities

- In exceptional cases where a young person aged 16 or 17 has assumed a full-time unpaid caring role for another person, they will be considered to be meeting their duty to participate if they are also undertaking part-time education or training leading to a regulated qualification.
- This provision is only for that small number of young carers who have had a young carer assessment and who are willing and able to undertake a full-time caring role, and balance that with their education or training, without any adverse impact on their own health or wellbeing.
- Young people who are parents caring for children are not classed as being young carers, and these young parents would normally be expected to participate full-time, and may qualify for Care to Learn funding to enable them to do so.

Exceptions: Young parents

- Local authorities are responsible for identifying young parents who are not participating and for ensuring that there is appropriate support in place to help them return to education or training as soon as practicable.
- There is no legal requirement that determines at what point a young mother on maternity leave should return to education and training. Local authorities could reasonably apply the same time period for which statutory maternity leave is available to those in work, although they should use their discretion and knowledge of the young mother's individual circumstances to agree a suitable return date.

Exceptions: Jobs with non-regulated training or training that does not lead to relevant regulated qualifications

- Those in jobs without the required training should be encouraged to take up suitable part-time regulated education or training alongside their work.
- Those in jobs with training that does not lead to a qualification should also be encouraged to take up part-time education or training that leads to a regulated qualification alongside their work.

Exceptions: Taking breaks in their formal education or training

- Young people should not take extended time out of education and training when they are required to participate. However, there will be occasions where young people are offered positive opportunities that have an element of education and training in them, although they may not fully meet RPA criteria.
- If the opportunity is abroad, local authorities will need to decide whether the young person is classed as being resident in England during this period.
- If the young person is deemed to be resident in England by their local authority, or if the opportunity itself is in England, the local authority will need to decide whether the young person is meeting the duty to participate in education or training.
- If the local authority believes that the young person is not fully meeting their RPA duty but is engaged in a positive activity that is improving their maths, English or other skills, then this would appear to be a positive outcome for the young person. We would not expect local authorities to intervene in such cases.

Exceptions: Taking gap years

- Most young people who take gap years do so at 18 or older and have achieved level 3. As such, they will be unaffected by the RPA changes.
- For the small group of 16 and 17 year olds who are considering taking a gap year, where the gap year is taken abroad, a local authority may need to make a judgement about whether that young person will be resident in England. Those remaining in England to work or volunteer are expected to comply with RPA.

Duties not commenced

The original RPA legislation contained two sets of duties which were not commenced but which we will keep under review. These are:

i) Powers for local authorities to take enforcement action against young people who are not participating.

Not commenced because: we want the system to positively support young people to participate.

ii) Duties on employers of young people to ensure that they had a suitable education or training offer when employing them.

Not commenced because: we want to reduce bureaucracy and prevent any disincentives to employing young people.

What RPA means for local authorities

- Under RPA legislation, local authorities are required to:
 - promote the effective participation in education or training of all 16 and 17 year olds resident in their area; and
 - make arrangements (an effective tracking system) to identify young people resident in their area who are not participating.
- These complement the existing local authority duties to: secure sufficient suitable education and training provision for all 16-19 year olds; and to encourage, enable and assist young people to participate.
- We published statutory guidance (updated in September 2014) to provide support to local authorities in undertaking their statutory duties.

How do local authorities track and support 16 and 17 year olds?

- How local authorities can decide how to undertake these duties to best support young people in their local area.
- Each local authority uses a Client Caseload Information System (CCIS) to record the status of their young people.
- Data is uploaded monthly from the CCIS to a National Client Caseload Information System (NCCIS) managed under contract by the Department.
- By identifying and tracking young people local authorities can then make decisions about where to focus their support services to reduce the number of young people whose status is NEET or not known.

What is the September guarantee?

- Under September guarantee legislation local authorities have a duty to ensure that all year 11 and year 12 pupils on a one year course receive an offer of a place in education or training for the following September.
- Details of offers made are recorded on local authority CCIS systems and NCCIS.

How local authorities are held to account

The department publishes a range of information about young people's participation in education and training in each local authority area. This includes:

- Annual NEET scorecard putting into context local authorities' figures on the proportion of young people NEET and those whose current activity is not known to the local authority;
- quarterly information which shows the proportion of 16 and 17 year olds in education and training, broken down by age, gender, disability and ethnic group and the proportion of 16 and 17 year olds whose current activity is not known to the local authority;
- the proportion of 16 and 17 year olds receiving an offer of a suitable place in education or training under the 'September Guarantee';
- KS4 destination measures which show what proportion of young people from each school and local authority progress to a sustained education, training or employment destination in the year after completing compulsory education.

Performance management of local authorities

- Following publication of the annual scorecards, the department undertakes performance management activity on local authorities in the bottom fifth for the “NEET plus Not Known” measure.
- Depending on the level of underperformance a variety of interventions are used including official level visits or letters, offers of peer to peer support and Ministerial letters or meetings.
- To date these measures have been shown to improve performance.
- We can, in extreme cases, serve a local authority with a non-statutory improvement notice, however, this has never been necessary.

What RPA means for employers

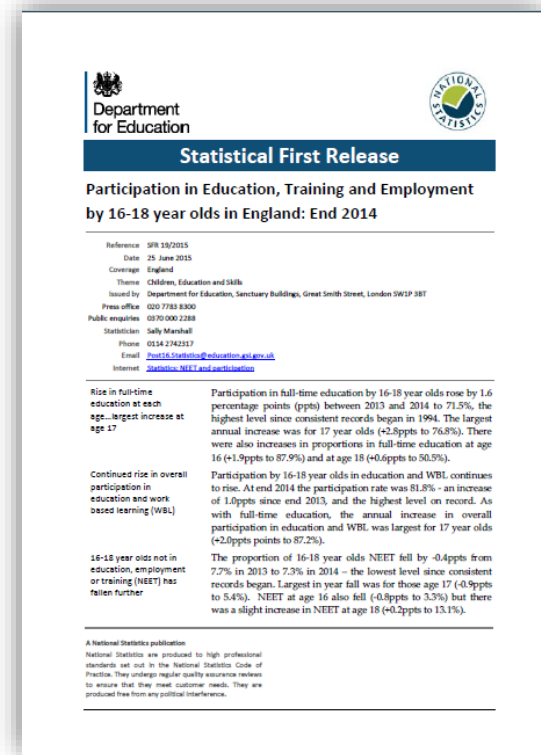
As an employer of a full-time young person - young employees who work full-time (over 20 hours a week) are required to take regulated part-time education or training (around one day per week) alongside their work.

As an employer of part-time 16 and 17 year olds - evening, weekend or holiday work. These young people are required to meet their duty through full-time education or an apprenticeship alongside their part time work.

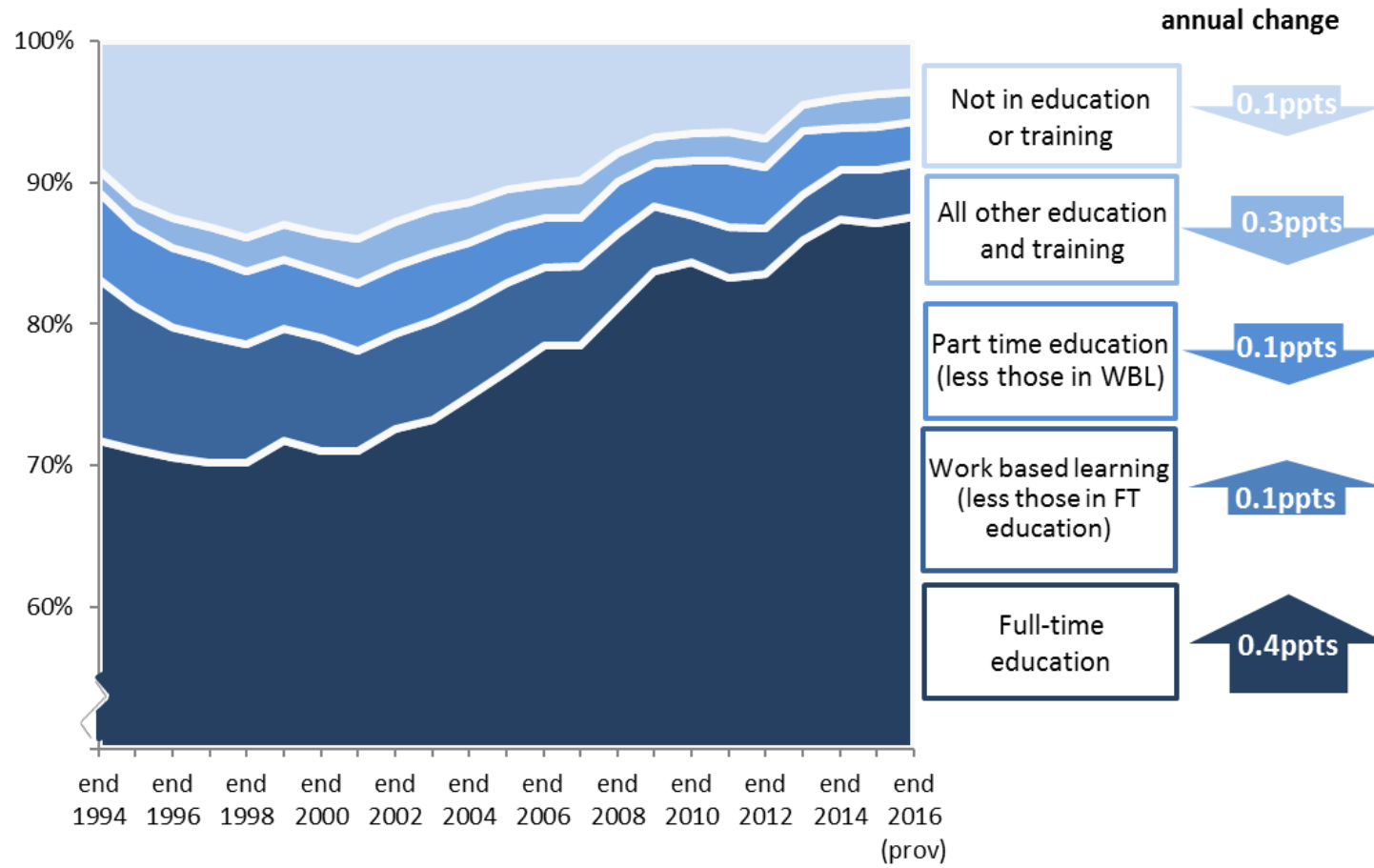
As an employer of an apprentice - no change. Apprenticeships are a valid route for young people to participate.

SFR - Participation in Education, Employment and Training by 16-18 year olds in England

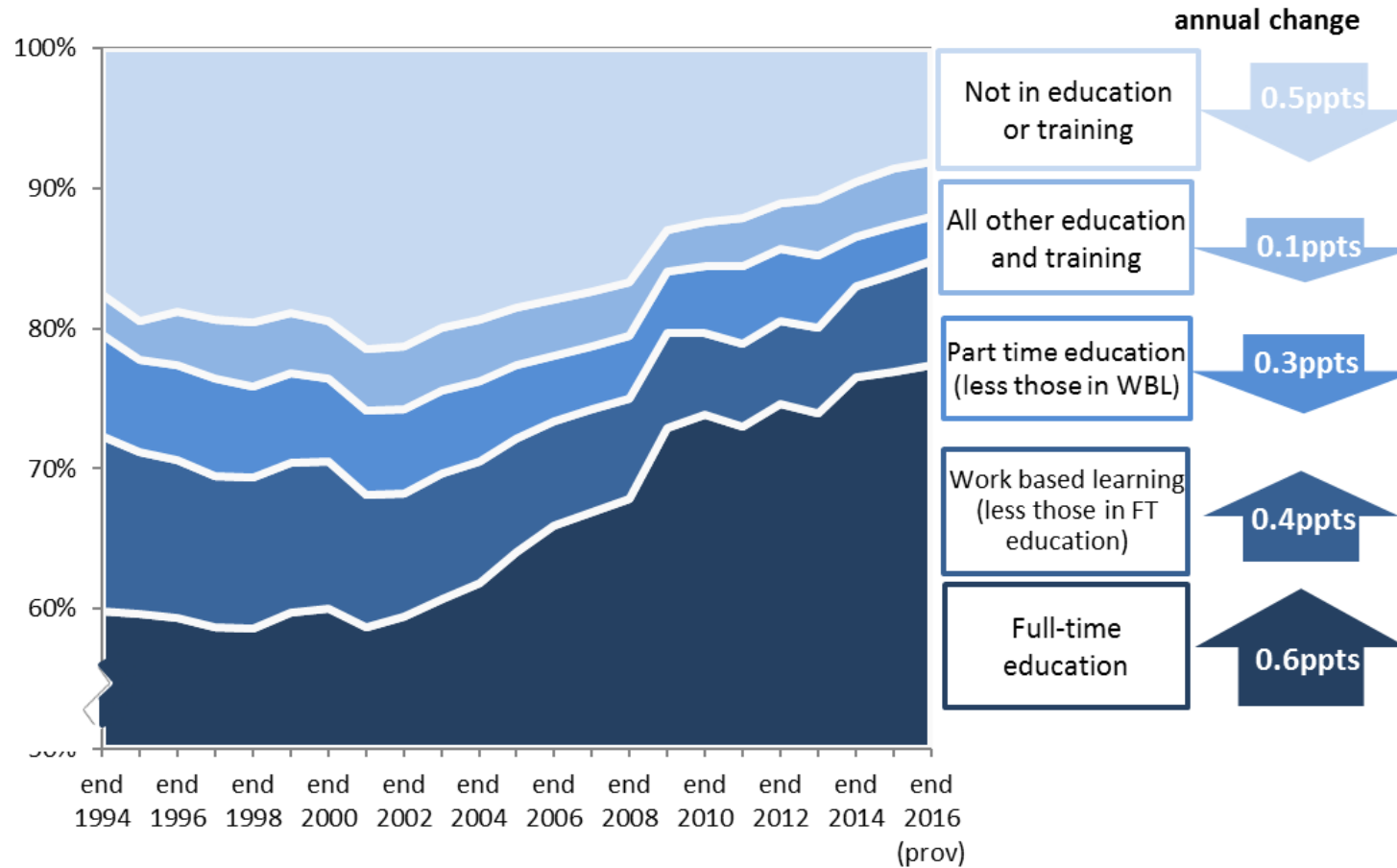
- Our most robust, headline, measures of participation and NEET.
- Uses combination of administrative and survey data.
- Data presented by
 - age,
 - gender,
 - mode of study,
 - type of learning,
 - institution type,
 - highest qualification studying for,
 - labour market status.
- Snapshot at the end of the year with SFR published in the following June.



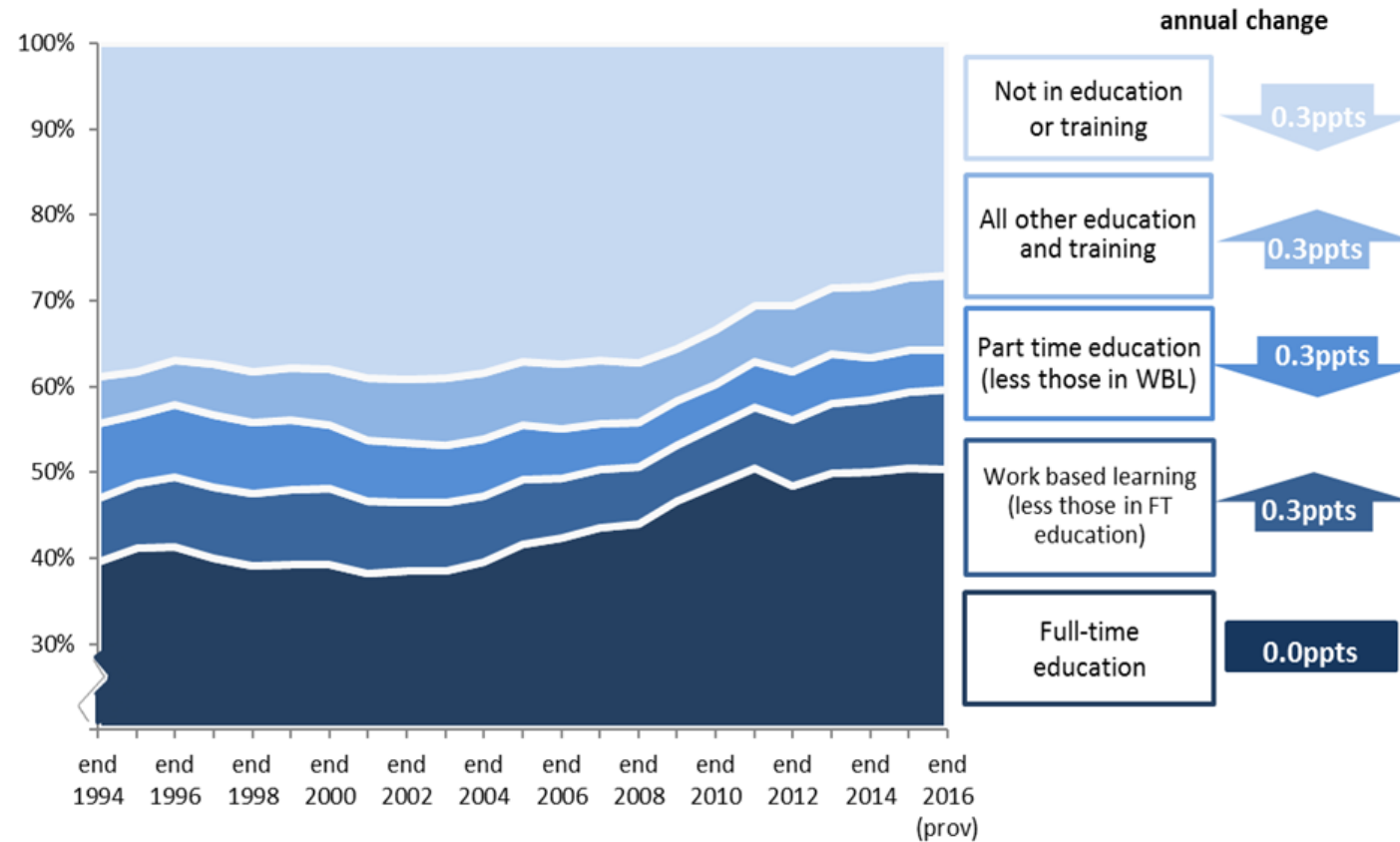
Trends in participation by age since 1994 (aged 16)



Trends in participation by age since 1994 (aged 17)

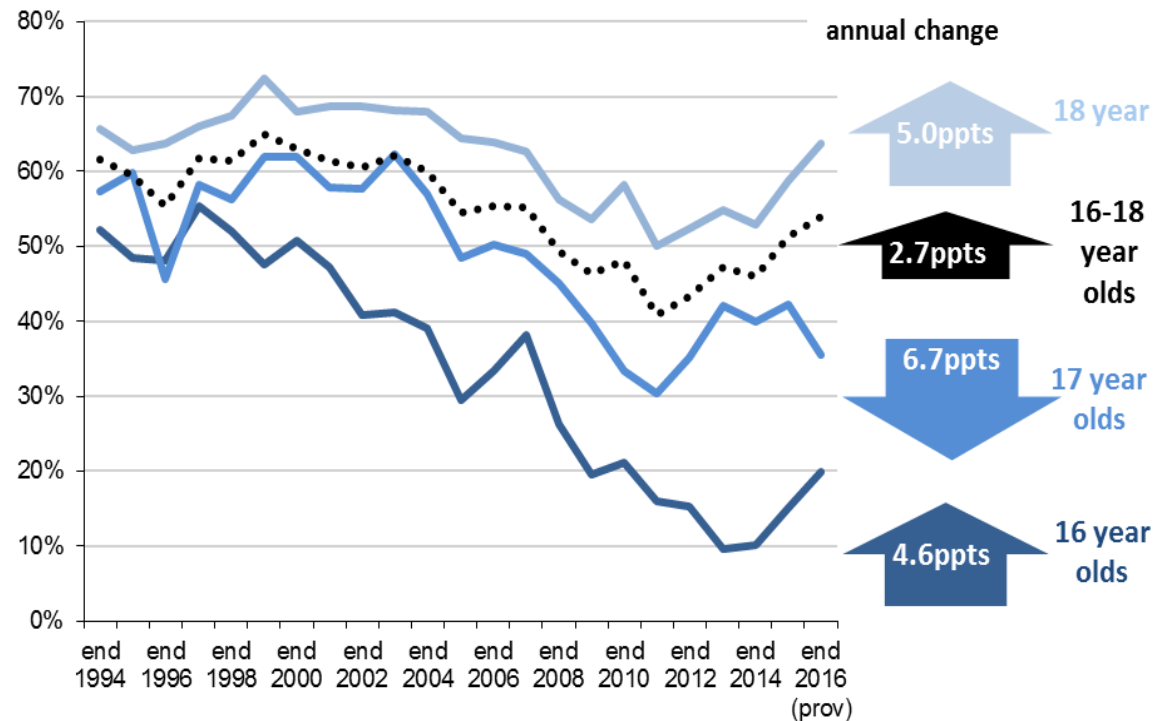


Trends in participation by age since 1994 (aged 18)



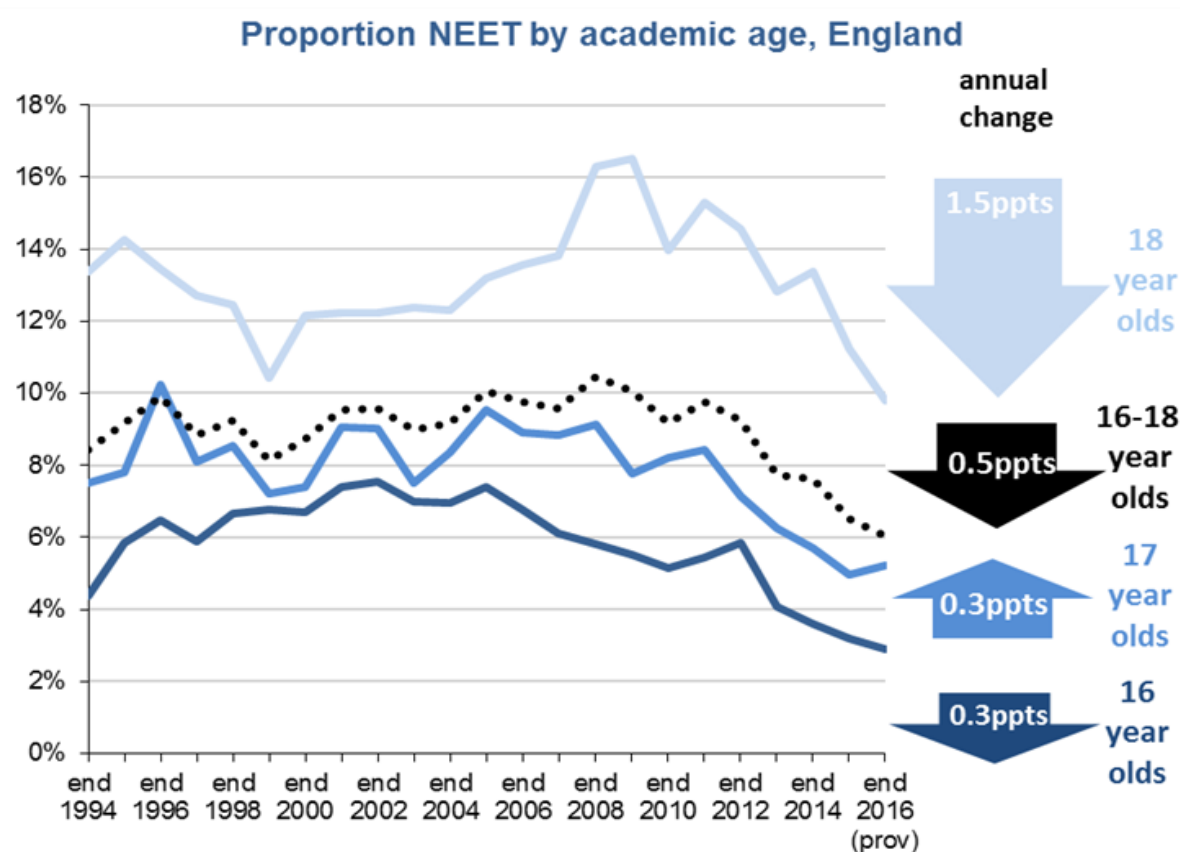
Trends in the proportion NEET since 1994 (aged 16-18)

- Employment rate of young people not in education or training (NET) by age




Trends in the proportion NEET since 1994 (aged 16-18)

- Proportion of 16, 17 and 18 year olds NEET




Participation has increased in the latest year (end 2015 – end 2016)


Proportion of **16-18 year olds in education and work based learning** increased to highest level since consistent records began in 1994

 Age 16-18: +0.3ppts to 81.9%  record high


- increases at ages 16 and 17



 Age 16: +0.4ppts to 94.3%  record high


 Age 17: +0.6ppts to 88.0%  record high



Age 18: flat at 64.2%  record high

And NEET has fallen in the last year (end 2015 – end 2016)

Ages 16-18  -0.5ppts to 6.0%  record low

Age 16  -0.3ppts to 2.9%  record low

Age 17  +0.3ppts to 5.2% (*however only end 15 was lower*)

Age 18  -1.5ppts to 9.8%  record low

Any questions, issues or comments?



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Links to statistics and resources

Statistical First Releases: Participation and NEET

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-neet>

Statutory guidance for local authorities: Participation of young people: education, employment and training

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/participation-of-young-people-education-employment-and-training>

NEET or activity not known local authority scorecard

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/young-people-neet-comparative-data-scorecard>

NEET figures by local authority

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/neet-data-by-local-authority-2012-16-to-18-year-olds-not-in-education-employment-or-training>

Links to statistics and resources

Participation in education and training figures by local authority

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/participation-in-education-and-training-by-local-authority>

September Guarantee figures by local authority

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/september-guarantee-offers-of-education-or-training-for-16-to-17-year-olds>

16 to 19 funding: planned hours in study programmes

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-funding-planned-hours-in-study-programmes#recording-planned-hours>

Destinations of key stage 4 and key stage 5 pupils statistics

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-destinations>