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A National Statistics publication for Scotland

CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Summary Statistics for Follow-Up Leaver Destinations, No. 3: 2021 Edition

15th June 2021

This annual National Statistics publication:

- Provides information on the **follow-up destinations** of school leavers in Scotland.
- Covers all **2019/20 school leavers** from publicly funded mainstream schools.

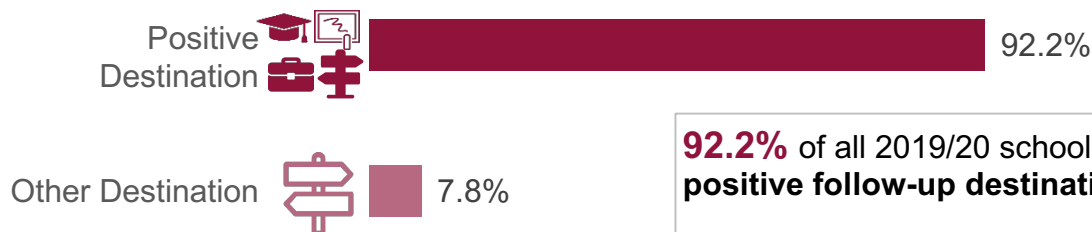
Follow-up destinations relate to outcomes approximately nine months after the end of the school year and the figures for the 2019/20 school leaver cohort relate to statuses recorded as at April 2021. These statistics will therefore be affected by the **coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic**. Further information can be found in section 1.1.

Full results are available from the [supplementary tables](#).

Summary Statistics for Follow Up Leaver Destinations, 2019/20



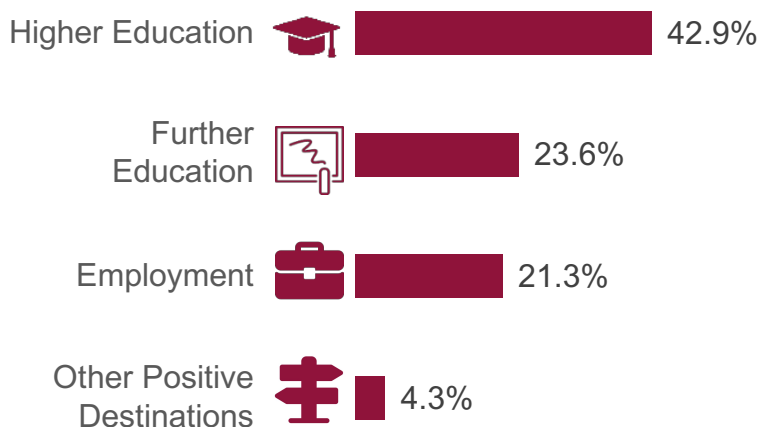
► The percentage of school leavers in positive destinations and other destinations.



92.2% of all 2019/20 school leavers were in a **positive follow-up destination**.

▼ **down** from **92.9%** in 2018/19.

► The percentage of school leavers in each positive destination.



42.9% of 2019/20 leavers were in **Higher Education**.

▲ **up** from **38.4%** in 2018/19

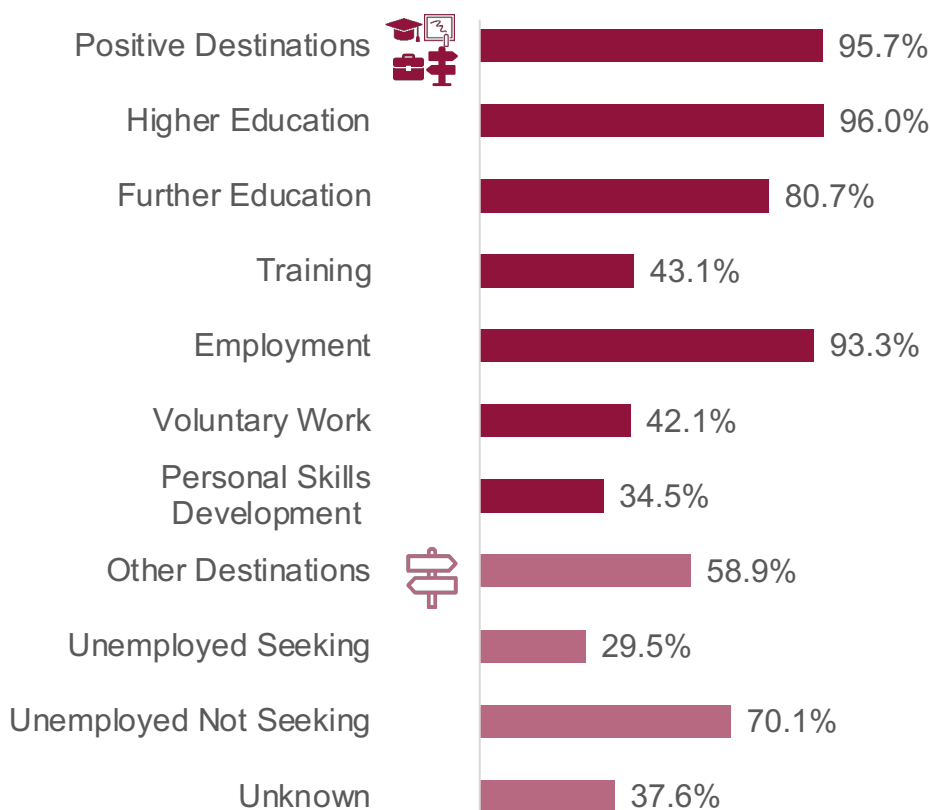
23.6% of the 2019/20 leavers were in **Further Education**.

▲ **up** from **23.3%** in 2018/19

21.3% of 2019/20 leavers were in **Employment**.

▼ **down** from **28.0%** in 2018/19

► The percentage of school leavers whose follow-up destination was the **same** as their initial destination.



In 2019/20, **95.7%** of leavers in a **positive initial destination** were also in a **positive follow-up destination**, although some of them will have moved from one positive destination to another.

96.0% of leavers whose initial destination was Higher Education were also in Higher Education for their follow-up destination.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) on these statistics

Follow-up destinations relate to the activity being undertaken by young people approximately nine months after the end of the school year (April 2021). A separate statistical publication in February 2021 provided information on the [initial destinations of 2019/20 school leavers](#), approximately three months after the end of the school term (October 2020).

Destinations figures may reflect both choices made by pupils, as well as the opportunities available to them upon leaving school. The availability of particular opportunities to 2019/20 school leavers may have been directly affected by the **coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic** (employment opportunities, for example). The options available to school leavers may also have been affected by the impact of the 2020 certification approach on school leaver attainment. Figures presented for the previous school leaver cohort (2018/19) relate to outcomes as at early April 2020 and therefore will not reflect the full impact of the ongoing coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Figures presented for earlier cohorts (2009/10 to 2017/18) are unaffected. The time series is comparable but further analysis and interpretation of these statistics and their trends should take into account the potential impact of the pandemic as noted above.

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic may have also affected local partnerships' ability to track some school leavers through home visits meaning that their initial and/or follow-up destination may be 'Unknown'. This is likely to have affected the proportion of 2018/19 and 2019/20 school leavers with an 'Unknown' follow-up status.

How can I use School Leaver Destination figures?

Do not use School Leaver Destination figures

- X** Without considering the impact that Covid-19 may have had on the availability of particular opportunities.

Use School Leaver Destination figures

- ✓ As an accurate reflection of school leavers' (follow-up) destinations.
- ✓ To compare the destinations of different groups of school leavers.
- ✓ To make comparisons over time of the destinations of school leavers.

1.2 School leaver follow-up destinations

This publication provides information on the **follow-up destinations of 2019/20 school leavers**, relating to outcomes approximately nine months after the end of the school year (first Monday in April 2021). Further information on how these statistics may be affected by the ongoing **Coronavirus (COVID-19)** pandemic is given in section 4.2.

A separate publication – '[Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations](#)' – published in February 2021, provided information on the initial destinations

of 2019/20 school leavers, approximately three months after the end of the school term (first Monday in October 2020).

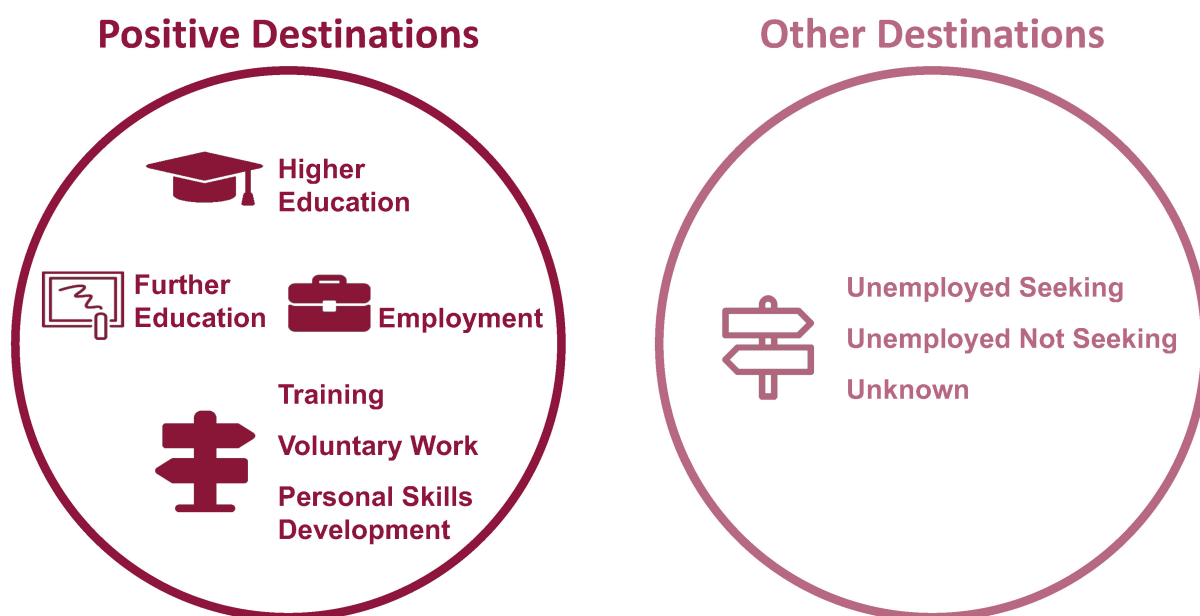
School leaver destinations data is based on the Skills Development Scotland (SDS) 'Opportunities for All' shared dataset matched with pupil census records for the school year 2019/20.

A school leaver is defined as a young person of school leaving age, who left school during or at the end of the school year. For 2019/20 school leavers, the leaver year is 18th September 2019 to 15th September 2020. For more information on how this data is collected, see section 4.3.1.

This publication covers school leavers from **all stages** of secondary school. For most young people, S4 (≈15-16 year olds) is the last compulsory year of school, but the majority choose to stay on and complete S5 (≈16-17 year olds) and S6 (≈17-18 year olds)¹.

Figures are based on pupils in **publicly funded mainstream schools**, in the 32 local authorities and one grant aided school.

Destinations are grouped in the following categories:



¹ Pupils ages are based on approximate age ranges, more information is available from the [Pupil Census supplementary tables](#).

Chapter 2: School leaver follow-up destinations

- **92.2 per cent** of 2019/20 school leavers were in a **positive follow-up destination** (92.9 per cent for 2018/19).
- **42.9 per cent** of school leavers were in **Higher Education** (the most common follow-up destination).

2.1 Destinations

Table 1 shows that 92.2 per cent of all 2019/20 school leavers were in a positive follow-up destination. This was slightly lower than for 2018/19 (92.9 per cent).

Table 1 also shows that, 42.9 per cent of the 2019/20 leavers were in Higher Education – the most common follow-up destination. This was higher than for 2018/19 (38.4 per cent) and is the highest share since consistent records began in 2009/10. The percentage of school leavers in Further Education has also increased from 23.3 per cent in 2018/19 to 23.6 per cent in 2019/20.

The percentage of school leavers in Employment has decreased from 28.0 per cent for 2018/19 leavers to 21.3 per cent in 2019/20, the lowest figure since 2009/10.

The percentage of school leavers who were Unemployed (Unemployed Seeking or Unemployed Not Seeking) has increased from 5.8 per cent for 2018/19 to 6.8 per cent for 2019/20 leavers.

Table 1: Percentage of school leavers by follow-up destination category, 2014/15 to 2019/20 [note 1]

Destination	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Higher Education	36.8	37.3	38.3	39.0	38.4	42.9
Further Education	23.4	22.4	23.0	22.6	23.3	23.6
Training	2.5	1.5	1.5	1.6	2.3	3.2
Employment	27.8	28.7	28.3	28.3	28.0	21.3
Voluntary Work	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.3
Activity Agreement	0.7	0.9	1.0	0.9	z	z
Personal Skills Development	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.8
Positive Destinations	92.2	91.6	93.1	93.3	92.9	92.2
Unemployed Seeking	5.6	5.7	4.3	3.8	3.5	4.1
Unemployed Not Seeking	1.6	1.8	1.8	1.8	2.3	2.7
Unknown	0.6	0.9	0.7	1.1	1.3	1.0
Other Destinations	7.8	8.4	6.9	6.7	7.1	7.8
Number of Leavers	52,337	52,113	51,172	49,650	49,655	47,351

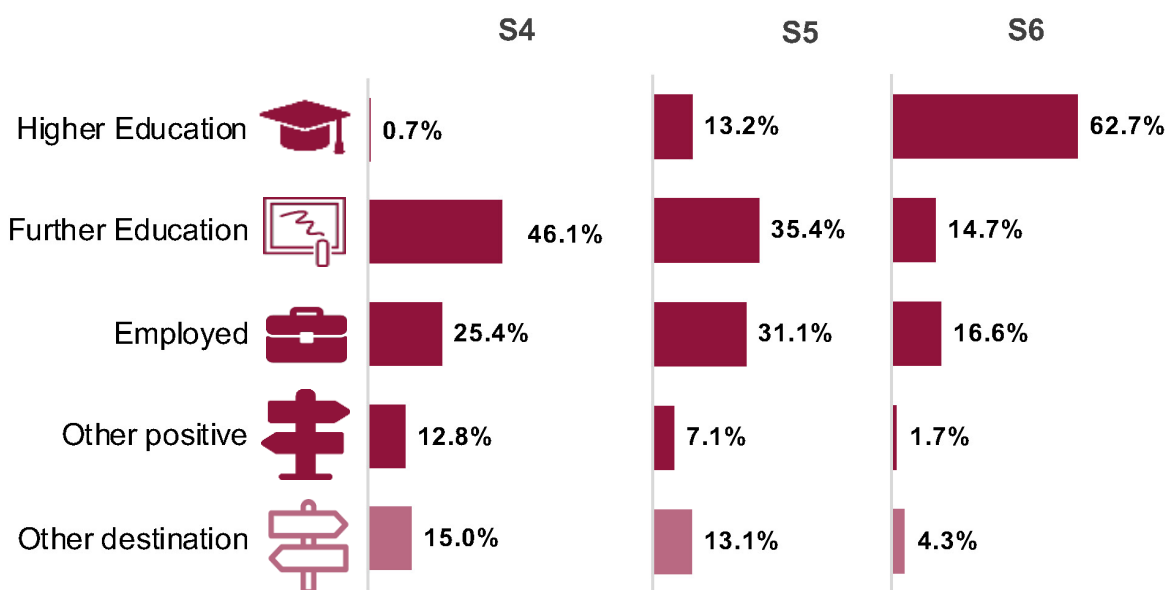
Note 1: For 2018/19 onwards, support previously recorded as Activity Agreements is recorded in the Training category. For more information see section 4.4.

2.2 Destinations by stage

The follow-up destinations of 2019/20 school leavers by stage of leaving (Chart 1) show:

- the majority of **S6 leavers** were in Higher Education (62.7 per cent);
- the most common follow-up destination for **S5 leavers** was Further Education (35.4 per cent) followed by Employment (31.1 per cent);
- the most common destination for **S4 leavers** was Further Education (46.1 per cent).

Chart 1. Follow-up destination of leavers by stage of leaving, 2019/20 [note 2][note 3][note 4]



Note 2: Other positive includes Personal Skills Development, Training and Voluntary Work.

Note 3: Other destinations include Unemployed Seeking, Unemployed Not Seeking and Unknown.

Note 4: A small percentage of school leavers left in other stages not shown in this graph. For more information, see the supplementary tables. A list of these tables is available in section 4.7.

A breakdown of the number of school leavers by stage is available in Table C1.1 of the [supplementary tables. Analysis of the 2019/20 school leaver cohort](#)² was published in February. These statistics showed that the 2019/20 cohort was the smallest school leaver cohort since consistent records began in 2009/10 and that 62.8 per cent of the school leaver cohort were made up of S6 leavers, 25.8 per cent were S5 leavers and 11.4 per cent were S4 leavers. Analysis of these figures alongside the Pupil Census³ suggests that the reduction in the number of school leavers in 2019/20 does not correspond to a reduction in the associated number of senior phase pupils recorded on school rolls at the beginning of the school year. It is possible that some S4 and S5 pupils who might have otherwise left school in 2019/20 decided instead to stay at school for reasons related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Further detail on the trends of the school leaver cohort by size and stage of leaving is available in '[Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations, No. 3: 2021 Edition](#)' (chapter 2).

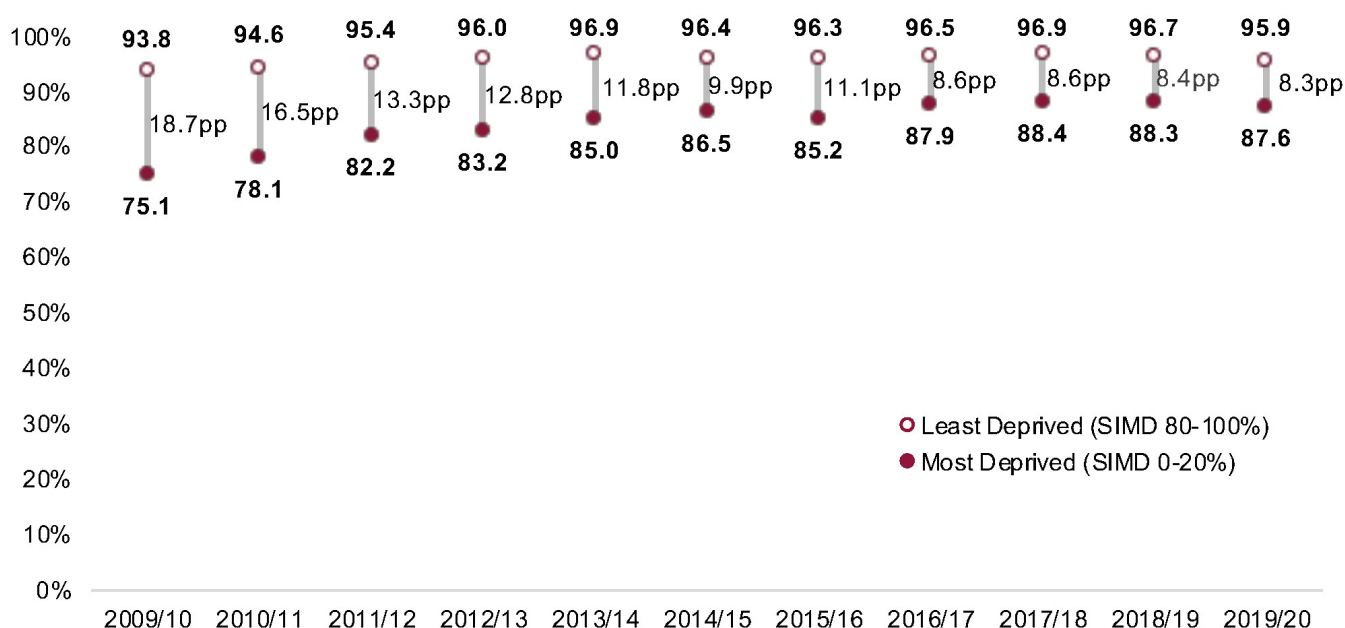
² A relatively small number of school leavers identified in the initial leaver cohort are excluded from the follow-up leaver cohort. Further information is available in section 4.3.2.

³ See [Pupil Census supplementary table 3.3](#)

2.3 Destinations by deprivation

Chart 2 shows that the percentage of school leavers in a positive follow-up destination has decreased slightly for leavers from both the **most deprived** and **least deprived areas** in 2019/20, based on the **Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD)**. The deprivation gap has remained broadly the same as in 2018/19, falling slightly from 8.4 percentage points in 2018/19 to 8.3 percentage points in 2019/20. The deprivation gap has slightly narrowed because the proportion in a positive follow-up destination decreased by more for pupils from the least deprived areas than for those from the most deprived areas.

Chart 2. Percentage of school leavers in a positive follow-up destination, by SIMD, 2009/10 to 2019/20 [note 5][note 6]



Note 5: pp = percentage point difference between most and least deprived SIMD quintile

Note 6: Based on SIMD 2009 for 2009/10 and 2010/11, SIMD 2012 for 2011/12 to 2015/16 and SIMD 2016 for 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20. More information on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2016 can be found at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-index-multiple-deprivation-2016/>.

Table 2 below provides a breakdown of follow-up school leaver destinations by SIMD. It shows that pupils from the most deprived areas continue to be less likely to be in Higher Education than those from the least deprived areas, 9 months after the end of the school year.

In 2019/20, the most common destination for leavers from the most deprived areas was Further Education at 31.5 per cent.

In 2019/20, 10.8 per cent of leavers from the most deprived areas were unemployed, compared to 3.6 per cent of leavers from the least deprived areas.

Table 2: Percentage of school leavers by follow-up destination category by SIMD, 2019/20 [note 7][note 8]

Follow-up Destination	0-20% (Most Deprived)	20-40%	40-60%	60-80%	80-100% (Least Deprived)	Percentage point gap	Total
Higher Education	27.0	33.5	42.7	50.3	62.6	35.6	42.9
Further Education	31.5	27.8	23.5	20.3	14.2	-17.4	23.6
Training	6.3	4.2	2.3	1.7	1.0	-5.3	3.2
Employment	20.5	23.8	23.7	21.6	17.4	-3.1	21.3
Voluntary Work	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.3	-0.1	0.3
Personal Skills Development	1.9	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.4	-1.5	0.8
Positive Destinations	87.6	90.3	93.0	94.7	95.9	8.3	92.2
Unemployed seeking	6.6	5.2	3.8	2.7	2.2	-4.4	4.1
Unemployed Not Seeking	4.2	3.4	2.2	2.0	1.4	-2.8	2.7
Unknown	1.6	1.2	0.9	0.6	0.6	-1.1	1.0
Other Destinations	12.4	9.7	7.0	5.3	4.1	-8.3	7.8
Number of Leavers	10,439	9,149	9,024	9,469	9,270		47,351

Note 7: Based on SIMD 2016. More information on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation can be found at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-index-multiple-deprivation-2016/>.

Note 8: The percentage point gap measures the difference between leavers from the (20%) most and least deprived areas.

Section 2.1 showed that the proportion of all school leavers that were in a Higher Education follow-up destination increased between 2018/19 and 2019/20 to a record high while the proportion who were in Employment decreased to a record low. Time series data of destinations by deprivation (see section 4.7) shows that the proportion who were in a Higher Education follow-up destination increased among all SIMD groups but by least among those from the most deprived areas. Leavers from each SIMD group saw a decrease in the proportion entering Employment with there being no clear pattern by deprivation. Meanwhile, the proportion who were in Training and Personal Skills Development (PSD) follow-up destinations increased among all SIMD groups, but by more among those from the most deprived areas.

A time series of destinations by SIMD is available in the [supplementary tables](#). A list of these tables is available in section 4.7.

2.4 Destinations by pupil characteristics

Table 3 shows the percentage of school leavers in a positive follow-up destination by various characteristics.

The percentage of 2019/20 school leavers in positive follow-up destinations has decreased for most groups, compared to 2018/19. The (percentage point) decrease was larger among males than among females; among those with an Additional Support Need than among those without; and among those from Remote Small Towns compared to those from other urban/rural categories. The percentage in a positive follow-up destination increased between 2018/19 and 2019/20 among some minority ethnic groups (including African/Black/Caribbean, Asian – Pakistani and Asian – Indian). However, the overall number of leavers in these ethnicity categories, in particular Asian-Indian, are relatively small and subject to fluctuation year-on-year.

As in previous cohorts, school leavers in 2019/20 with an Additional Support Need (ASN) were less likely to go on to a positive follow-up destination, compared to leavers without a recorded ASN (87.2 per cent compared to 94.9 per cent).

Pupils of an Asian ethnic background tend to be more likely to go on to a positive follow-up destination than those from other ethnic backgrounds.

Females continue to be more likely to be in a positive destination than males; 93.6 per cent of females and 90.9 per cent of males were in a positive destination.

Remote Small Towns had the lowest proportion of leavers in positive destinations (91.1 per cent), while Remote Rural areas continued to have the highest (93.8 per cent).

More information on destinations by pupil characteristics is available in the [supplementary tables](#). A list of these tables is available in section 4.7.

Table 3: Percentage of school leavers in a positive follow-up destination, by pupil characteristic, 2014/15 to 2019/20 [note 9][note 10][note 11]

Pupil Characteristic	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Sex						
Male	91.4	90.9	92.4	92.4	92.1	90.9
Female	92.9	92.3	94.0	94.3	93.7	93.6
Ethnicity¹						
White - Scottish	92.1	91.5	93.0	93.2	92.7	92.0
White - non-Scottish	92.2	92.8	93.9	94.2	93.5	92.3
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	93.0	93.0	92.7	93.6	92.8	91.7
Asian - Indian	96.3	96.9	c	97.2	94.4	95.4
Asian - Pakistani	95.2	92.5	95.7	93.5	94.8	95.6
Asian - Chinese	97.1	95.9	c	96.8	c	c
Asian - Other	96.2	95.1	95.3	93.9	c	c
African/ Black/ Caribbean ²	94.4	92.3	93.9	96.0	94.1	95.1
All other categories ³	91.2	88.4	94.5	92.0	93.6	93.3
Not Disclosed/Not known	90.6	88.8	90.7	89.8	88.9	90.2
Urban/Rural						
Large Urban Areas	91.6	90.2	92.4	92.4	92.4	92.2
Other Urban Areas	91.7	91.6	92.4	92.9	92.1	91.4
Accessible Small Towns	93.5	93.6	93.3	93.7	93.7	93.0
Remote Small Towns	93.5	93.3	94.6	94.8	93.6	91.1
Accessible Rural	92.7	92.4	95.2	95.1	94.5	93.7
Remote Rural	95.8	93.2	96.4	95.9	94.6	93.8
Additional Support Needs⁴						
ASN	86.2	85.2	87.7	88.4	87.9	87.2
No ASN	93.7	93.5	95.0	95.3	95.1	94.9
All Leavers	92.2	91.6	93.1	93.3	92.9	92.2

Note 9: Some categories have been grouped together due to small numbers. Some categories contain between 100-200 leavers and may be subject to fluctuation. Comparisons between groups should take this into account.

Note 10: The 'African/ Black/ Caribbean' category includes 'African', 'African - Other', and the 'Caribbean or Black' categories. 'All other categories' includes 'Other - other' and 'Other - Arab'.

Note 11: Pupils who have a Coordinated Support Plan (CSP), Individualised Education Programme (IEP), Child's Plan, are assessed or declared disabled, or have another need.

Chapter 3: Initial to follow-up destination comparison

- **95.7 per cent** of 2019/20 school leavers who were in a positive initial destination were also in a **positive follow-up destination**.

A school leaver's follow-up destination, nine months after they leave school, may differ from their initial destination, three months after they leave school. Information on the [initial destinations of 2019/20 school leavers](#) was published in February 2021.

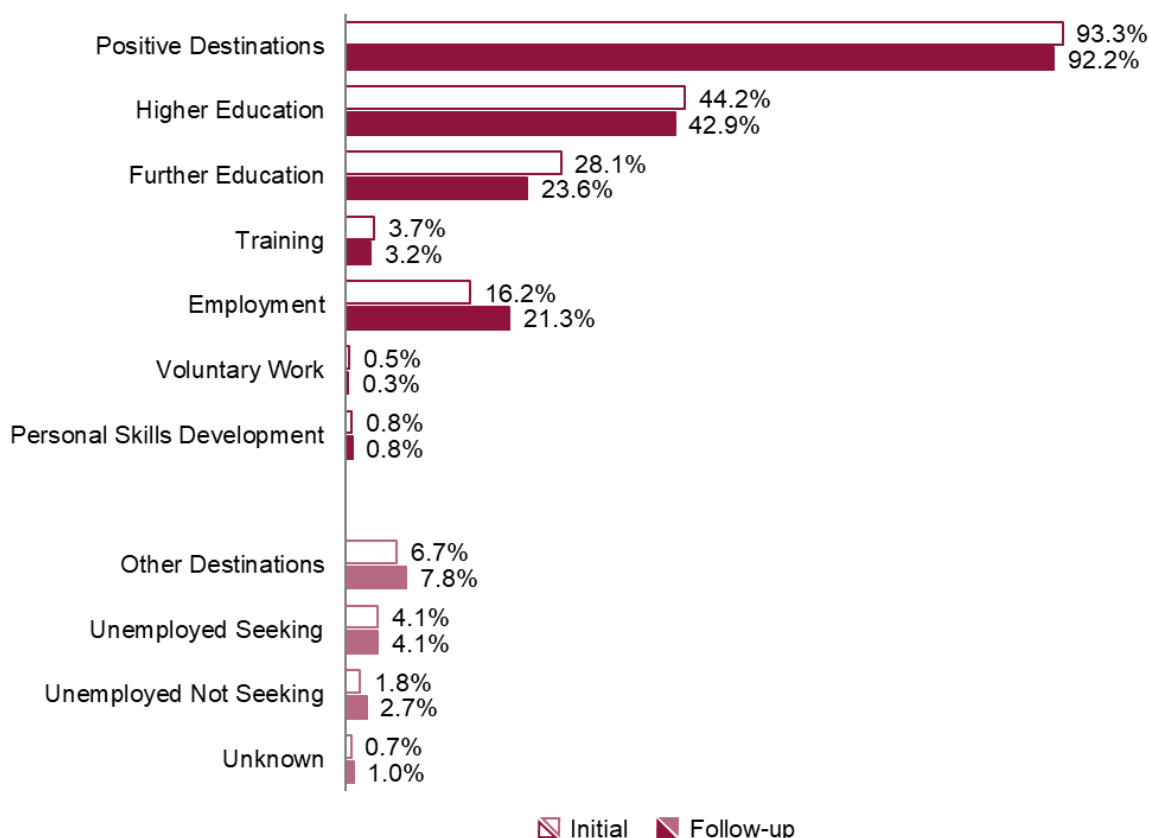
Chart 3 compares 2019/20 school leaver initial destination rates 3 months after leaving school with follow-up destination rates (9 months after leaving school).

The percentage of 2019/20 school leavers in a positive follow-up destination (92.2 per cent) was lower than the percentage of school leavers in a positive initial destination (93.3 per cent); a similar pattern can be seen across previous school leaver cohorts.

The largest reductions between initial and follow-up destinations were in Further Education and Higher Education, by 4.4 and 1.3 percentage points respectively. Meanwhile, the proportion in Employment increased by 5.2 percentage points between initial and follow-up destination.

The proportion of leavers in other destinations (see section 1.2) increased by 1.2 percentage points between initial and follow-up destinations with Unemployed Not Seeking increasing by 0.8 percentage points. A time series of initial and follow-up destinations is available in the [supplementary tables](#). A list of these tables is available in section 4.7.

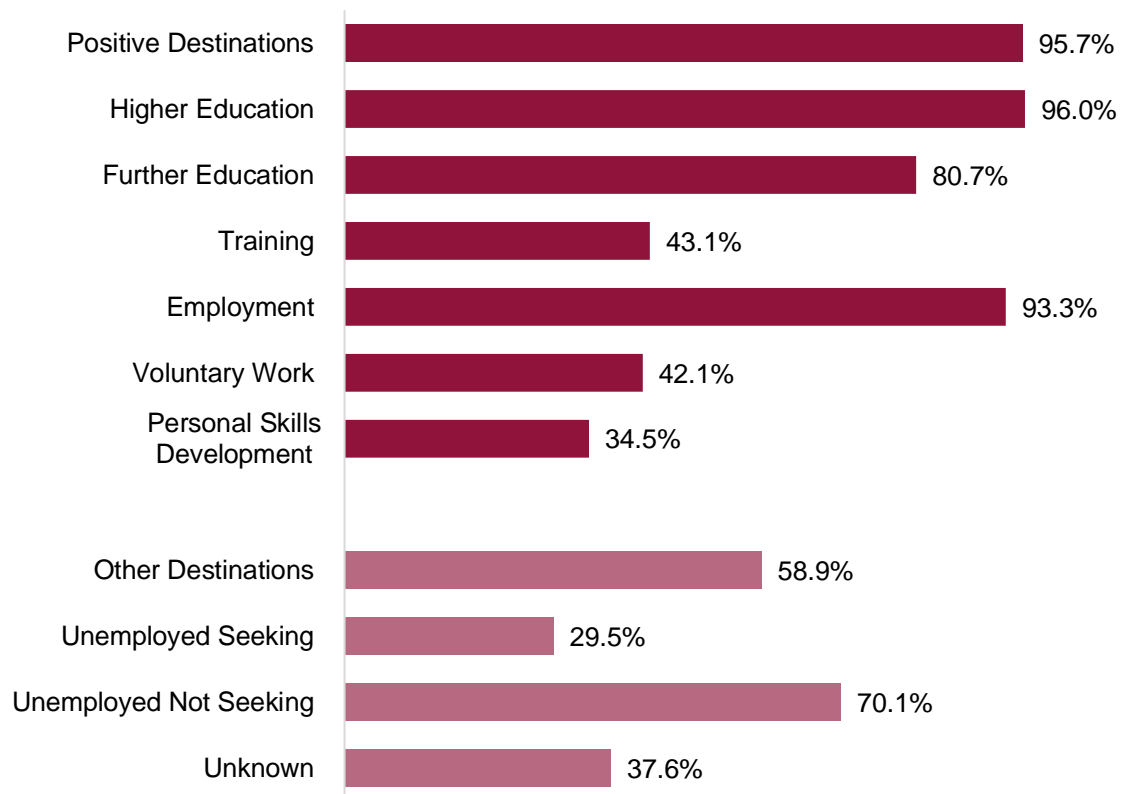
Chart 3: Percentage of school leavers by initial and follow-up destination category, 2019/20 [note 12]



Note 12: This chart uses fill to distinguish follow-up destination statuses from initial destination statuses and colour to distinguish between destination category types (positive and other). Bars with a fill represent follow-up destinations, while bars with no fill represent initial destinations. The lighter colour shown – used for the bottom four bars – represents other destinations, while the darker shade represents positive destinations.

Chart 4 shows the percentage of school leavers whose follow-up destination was the same as their initial destination. In 2019/20, 95.7 per cent of those in a positive initial destination were also in a positive follow-up destination, although some of them will have moved from one positive destination to another. The destination in which school leavers were most likely to remain between initial and follow-up was Higher Education, at 96.0 per cent; followed by Employment at 93.3 per cent. School leavers whose initial destination was Personal Skills Development were less likely to remain in the same destination, which may be partially due to the (typically) short-term nature of these activities (see section 4.4.1). More information on school leavers who sustained a destination or moved into another destination category is available in the [supplementary tables](#). A list of these tables is available in section 4.7.

Chart 4: Percentage of school leavers whose follow-up destination was the same as their initial destination, 2019/20



Chapter 4: Background notes

4.1 National Statistics publication

This is a National Statistics publication. National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Statistics.

These statistics undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference. This publication has been assessed by the UK Statistics Authority.

4.2 Coronavirus (COVID-19)

The statistics in this report are based on data held on the 'Opportunities for All' shared dataset. They provide information on school leavers' latest destination status recorded as at Monday, 5th April 2021 and extracted from the dataset in early May 2020 (see section 4.3.1).

Destinations figures may reflect both choices made by pupils, as well as the opportunities available to them upon leaving school. The availability of particular opportunities (employment opportunities, for example) to 2019/20 school leavers may have been directly affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The coronavirus pandemic meant that the start dates for some opportunities such as apprenticeship programmes, college courses etc. were delayed in 2020. Had these started as originally planned (prior to the initial destinations reference date of 5th October 2020) any school leavers participating in them would have been recorded as being in a positive initial destination (see section 1.2). In those instances where they instead started later than planned, and after the 5th October initial reference date, it is possible that some of these school leavers may have been recorded as being in an 'other' initial destination ('Unemployed Seeking', 'Unemployed Not Seeking', 'Unknown') depending on the activity they were undertaking prior to these opportunities starting. These delayed opportunities would likely have started by the follow-up destination reference date. This may, in particular, affect comparisons between initial and follow-up destinations of the 2019/20 cohort (see Chapter 3).

School leavers in Employment and on the Furlough scheme are recorded as being in Employment in these statistics.

The COVID-19 pandemic may have also affected local partnerships' ability to track some school leavers through home visits which is likely to have affected the proportion of 2018/19 and 2019/20 school leavers with an unknown follow-up status.

4.3 Sources and methodology

4.3.1 Source and quality assurance

School leaver destination data is sourced from the 'Opportunities for All' shared dataset which is managed and hosted by SDS on behalf of partners. The data is held on the SDS operational Customer Support System (CSS). This data set contains information shared by local authorities, colleges, Scottish Funding Council, Student Awards Agency for Scotland

(SAAS) and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) via a secure online portal known as the 16+ Data Hub. The data to be shared is documented within the Post-16 Education (Scotland) Act 2013 and there are a series of business rules governing the processing of this data.

Skills Development Scotland (SDS) aim to validate statuses of the school leaver cohort using a combination of data received through data sharing, ongoing case management of customers and direct follow up of customers by staff in SDS centres and their local contact centre. Most statuses are confirmed throughout March and April. In some cases, it is not possible to confirm a status, in which case latest status recorded is used. This is particularly the case for the employment category which is more reliant on manual data collection by SDS staff as SDS does not currently have any regular administrative data feed of employment information. SDS is currently engaging with HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) to establish a robust source of employment data for this purpose.

Data that has been shared by partners is combined with information gathered directly from young people, their parents/carers or their representatives by SDS staff delivering services to individuals, including transitional support to school leavers. SDS has at least one named adviser for each school in Scotland who work directly with pupils and school staff to support the transition of young people from school. As this combined data is primarily used for operational purposes the quality is continually monitored to ensure SDS, local authorities and colleges can monitor and plan for a young person's involvement in education, training or employment and identify those young people who require advice or support.

SDS has developed guidance documents for their staff which set out the specific activities and processes involved in identifying, engaging with and confirming the status of SDS customers. This information includes definitions of the available statuses on CSS and step by step recording guidance. SDS staff have access to specific reports for data quality and more specifically to support the school leaver destination process. These reports will identify school leavers and provide details of their destinations including the source of the information and the date the information was validated.

Prior to destination data being shared with the Scottish Government, final quality checks are carried out centrally by the Corporate Planning and Performance Reporting team within SDS. These include a review of statuses to ensure the reported destination reflects the available detail e.g. course details and course levels are correctly reported as higher or further education. In addition, final checks of shared data are made to ensure destinations are consistent with data sources e.g. matching information about modern or graduate apprentices.

4.3.2 Methodology

A pupil is counted as a school leaver if they have a leaver record on the 'Opportunities for All' shared data set, a pupil census record for the same academic year, and no pupil census record in the following academic year. School leavers do not include pupils who transferred to another school or moved outwith Scotland.

The initial destinations data (published in February) provides information on the outcomes for young people approximately three months after the end of the academic year (1st Monday in October) while the follow-up data in this publication provides information on the

outcomes of young people approximately nine months after the end of the academic year (1st Monday in April). These collections should be seen as complementary to one another but it should be noted that various factors may affect the results at different time periods. Further, a relatively small number of school leavers identified in the initial leaver cohort are not included from the follow-up leaver cohort. This is typically where the individual has been identified as having moved outwith Scotland, otherwise as having returned to school or, in rare circumstances, deceased. In 2019/20, 103 school leavers identified in the initial cohort were not included in the follow-up leaver cohort.

Throughout this publication the follow-up destination statistics exclude special school leavers from the calculations.

4.4 Definitions and symbols

4.4.1 Definitions

Leaver destinations are categorised by SDS based on shared administrative data wherever possible. Alternatively, they have been captured by staff in data sharing organisations or through direct data input by SDS staff, as a result of contact with individuals, their parents/carers or organisations an individual is engaging with. The following categories for leaver destinations are included in this statistical bulletin:

Positive destination: includes higher education, further education, training, employment, voluntary work, Personal Skills Development and (between 2010/11 and 2017/18) Activity Agreements.

Higher Education: includes leavers following HND (Higher National Diploma) or HNC (Higher National Certificate) courses, degree courses, courses for the education and training of teachers and higher level courses for professional qualifications. It includes programmes at a level higher than the standard of the National Qualifications, i.e. above SCQF Level 7. Leavers with a deferred, unconditional place in higher education have also been included in this category.

Further Education: includes leavers undertaking full-time education which is not higher education and who are no longer on a school roll. This may include National Qualifications.

Training: includes leavers who are on a training course and in receipt of an allowance or grant, such as the Employability Fund national training programme. It also includes leavers who are on local authority or third sector funded training programmes that are in receipt of a training allowance or those participating in Community Jobs Scotland.

From 2018/19 this category includes school leavers receiving support that would previously have been recorded as 'Activity Agreements'. This means that the proportion of 2018/19 school leavers with a destination category of Training cannot be directly compared to the proportion recorded for previous years. Further information can be found in the Activity Agreements definition below.

Employment: includes those who consider themselves to be employed and in receipt of payment from their employers. It includes young people undertaking training in employment through national training programmes such as Modern Apprenticeships and Graduate Apprenticeships.

Voluntary Work: includes those undertaking voluntary work/volunteering which will involve a young person giving of their time and energy through a third party with or without financial allowance.

Personal Skills Development: Young people who have a destination as Personal Skills Development (PSD) on the 'Opportunities for All' shared dataset fall into one of two different categories:

PSD (Employability): including individuals who participate in activities with the aim of employment. For example programmes run by community learning and development or third sector organisations.

PSD (Social & Health): includes individuals who may not be ready to enter the labour market and require access to support from support services to make transitions into learning/work or adulthood. An example of this is where an individual undertakes structured opportunities appropriate to their long term needs or to address their barriers to engaging in education, employment or training.

The way in which school leavers undertaking Personal Skills Development are counted in these statistics changed in 2018/19 and data for previous years was revised to allow consistent comparisons over time. Further information can be found in the [previous release of this publication \(section 4.1\)](#).

Activity Agreements: prior to 2018/19 this included those for whom there was an agreement between a young person and an advisor that the young person would take part in a programme of learning and activity which helped them become ready for formal learning or employment.

The integration of funding streams as part of the ongoing implementation of No One Left Behind⁴ means that although local authorities will provide the same type of support and opportunities for young people, this activity will no longer be funded under the banner of 'Activity Agreements'. This means it is no longer appropriate to record school leavers receiving this support using this category. Instead they are recorded in the Training category for 2018/19 onwards. Note that data for earlier years continues to include the Activity Agreements category reflecting the support that was available at the time. This means that the proportion of school leavers recorded in the Training category from 2018/19 onwards is not directly comparable with the proportion recorded in this category prior to 2018/19.

Unemployed seeking: includes those known by Skills Development Scotland or their partners to be seeking employment or training. This includes those receiving support from SDS, Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and other partners. It is based on regular contact between the supporting organisation and the individual. This does not refer to the definition of 'Unemployed' used by the DWP to calculate published unemployment rates.

Unemployed not seeking: includes all those individuals who are not yet ready or are unavailable to enter the labour market for a range of reasons. The reasons may involve ill health/sickness, prison, pregnancy, caring for children or other dependents or taking time out.

⁴ No One Left Behind: review of employability services sets out the next steps that will be taken to deliver more effective and joined-up employability support across Scotland. As part of this the funding streams associated with Activity Agreements and other programmes are being integrated into a new local employability delivery model managed collaboratively between Scottish Government and Local Government from April 2019.

Unknown: includes all leavers whose destination is not known either to Skills Development Scotland, the school attended, other partners or were not able to be contacted at the survey point.

4.4.2 Symbols

The following symbols are used:

- = nil

c = value suppressed to protect against the risk of disclosure of personal information

z = not applicable

pp = percentage point difference

4.5 Additional Support Needs

An Additional Support Need (ASN) is recorded where a pupil is receiving any form of additional support for learning, this could be for a wide variety of reasons, of different durations and of any type. The different types of support provided include Co-ordinated Support Plans (CSP) and Individualised Educational Programmes (IEP) as well as disabilities, Child's Plans and other plans. Under previous legislation a pupil may have been categorised as having a Record of Need (RoN).

4.6 UK comparisons

The information presented here is for young people who have left school in Scotland. In England and Wales information is also collected on school leaver destinations, but these statistics are not directly comparable as they use different methodology. For example, the Scotland follow-up figures use a snapshot of status as at April, while figures for England and Wales consider the sustained destination over a six-month period (October – March). Information is also collected in England and Wales on participation of 16-18 year olds in education, employment or training at a snapshot in time. However these figures include all young people of ages 16-18 irrespective of whether they were a school leaver or not. As a result direct comparisons cannot be made. Additionally, in Northern Ireland (NI), statistics are published on destinations of school leavers but due to differences in methodology (the NI destinations collection is based on a survey of destinations manually inputted by schools) and timing of collections (e.g. NI destinations are as at November/December, compared to April for follow-up destination statistics in Scotland) direct comparisons cannot be made.

4.7 List of supplementary tables

Additional tables on follow-up leaver destinations are available in the [supplementary tables](#). These tables on school leaver follow-up destinations include breakdowns by: characteristics of leavers; local authority; additional support needs; stage of leaving; and subject. Table A1.1 shows attainment by follow-up destination category. Information on school leaver attainment and how the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic affects these statistics is available in '[Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations, No. 3: 2021 Edition](#)' (chapter 1).

School Leaver Destinations

- C1.1: Number and percentage of follow-up school leavers by stage of leaving, 2009/10 to 2019/20
- Table L1.1. Percentage of school leavers from publicly funded schools in Scotland by follow-up destination category, 2006/07 to 2019/20

- Table L1.2. Percentage of school leavers from publicly funded secondary schools in Scotland by follow-up destination category and sex, 2009/10 to 2019/20
- Table L1.3. Percentage of school leavers from publicly funded secondary schools in Scotland by follow-up destination category and 6-fold Urban Rural classification of school, 2009/10 to 2019/20
- Table L1.4. Percentage of school leavers from publicly funded secondary schools in Scotland by follow-up destination category and Additional Support Need, 2009/10 to 2019/20
- Table L1.5. Percentage of school leavers from publicly funded secondary schools in Scotland by follow-up destination category and ethnic background, 2009/10 to 2019/20
- Table L1.6. Percentage of school leavers from publicly funded secondary schools in Scotland by follow-up destination category and national identity, 2009/10 to 2019/20
- Table L1.7. Percentage of school leavers from publicly funded secondary schools in Scotland by follow-up destination category and whether declared or assessed disabled, 2009/10, 2014/15 to 2019/20
- Table L1.8. Percentage of school leavers who sustained a destination or moved into another destination category, 2009/10 to 2019/20
- Table L2.1. Percentage of school leavers by follow-up destination and local authority, 2009/10 to 2019/20
- Table L2.2. Number of school leavers by follow-up destination and local authority, 2009/10 to 2019/20
- Table L2.3. Percentage of school leavers by follow-up destination and local authority and SIMD, 2009/10 to 2019/20
- Table A1.1. Percentage of school leavers by highest SCQF Level achieved and follow-up destination category, 2009/10 to 2019/20

4.8 Planned future changes to these statistics

4.8.1 Changes to the methodology of the follow-up destination measure

The Scottish Government and Skills Development Scotland (SDS) are investigating methods to develop a new measure of long-term outcomes for school leavers using the Annual Participation Measure (APM) methodology. We are undertaking discussions with stakeholders on this and in due course, if feasible, the intention is that it will replace the existing school leaver follow-up destination measure.

4.8.2 Changes to recording of unemployed seeking statuses

The rollout of Universal Credit commenced in March 2016 and has replaced out of work benefits such as Jobseekers' Allowance that were previously used to update the status of individuals to 'unemployed seeking'. SDS does not currently receive any data from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) on Universal Credit (UC) claimants, but is working with DWP to ensure this information is captured in future. SDS does however maintain an accurate record of the circumstances of school-leaver-aged young people in unemployment it engages with through the delivery of post school services, working with DWP to offer support to these young people.

Due to the extensive coverage of these services for school leavers, the impact of the administrative data gap on these statistics is likely to be negligible. However, it is not possible to fully quantify the impact of the lack of Universal Credit claimant data on these statistics, and it is possible that any future changes to the data to include information on UC claimants through data sharing with DWP may affect future trends.

4.9 Cost

As part of the overall approach to delivering the Scottish Government's Opportunities for All commitment, the follow-up of school leavers is a business as usual activity for Skills Development Scotland and costs are embedded within their daily operations. This is unlike earlier years where two dedicated exercises were undertaken and costs could be attributed to the school leaver follow up exercise.

4.10 Further information

This publication is available on the Scottish Government's website at:

<https://www.gov.scot/ISBN/978-1-80201-004-6>

School level information, including positive initial destinations of senior phase school leavers is also now available through Insight (a professional benchmarking tool used by local authorities and schools) and published on the School Information Dashboard:

<https://www.gov.scot/collections/school-education-statistics/#school-levelsummarystatisticsanddashboards>. There are no follow-up destination statistics published in this source.

The scope of these destination statistics is limited to school leavers, but other sources are available to assess patterns across the wider society. For example, information on employment trends more broadly is available from the [Scottish Government labour market statistics website](#), and the [Scottish Funding Council](#) publishes data on participation in Higher Education.

The Scottish Government and Skills Development Scotland (SDS) have developed the [Annual Participation Measure](#) (APM) which complements school leaver destination statistics. Published every August, the APM captures the activity of all 16-19 year olds across a complete year, including those who choose to stay on at school as well as those who have left school. The APM has been adopted as the metric for measuring success in relation to the young people's participation national indicator within the [National Performance Framework](#). The indicator measures the percentage of young adults (16-19 year olds) participating in education, training or employment.' Latest results were published in August 2020.

Skills Development Scotland have also more recently developed the [Monthly Participation Snapshot for 16 and 17 year olds](#) as a timely source of data on the participation of young people during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is a source of monthly management information (November 2020 – May 2021) related to the activities 16 and 17 year olds were participating in on a given day each month.

The table below provides summary information for some of the key sources of data on attainment and the activity of young people in Scotland.

Source	Organisation, usual month of publication	Key points
Summary Statistics for Attainment and	Scottish Government, February	Provides information on the attainment of school leavers and on the activities being

Initial Leaver Destinations		<p>undertaken by school leavers on a given day 3 months after leaving school.</p> <p>Coverage: School leavers</p>
<p>THIS PUBLICATION Summary Statistics for Follow-up Leaver Destinations</p>	<p>Scottish Government, June</p>	<p>Provides information on the activities being undertaken by school leavers 9 months after leaving school.</p> <p>Coverage: School leavers</p>
<p>Annual Participation Measure</p>	<p>Skills Development Scotland, August, www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk</p>	<p>Reports on the sustained economic and employment activity of the wider 16-19 year old cohort, including those at school.</p> <p>Coverage: All 16-19 year olds</p>
<p>Monthly Participation Snapshot for 16 and 17 year olds</p>	<p>Skills Development Scotland, TBC</p>	<p>Reports on the economic and employment activity of the wider 16 and 17 year old cohort, including those at school, on a given day. Based on Management Information.</p> <p>Coverage: All 16-17 year olds</p>

A National Statistics Publication for Scotland

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

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The data collected for this statistical bulletin:

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- are available via an alternative route
- may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors. Please contact school.stats@gov.scot for further information.
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