

# Foundation Apprenticeships

## Progress report March 2020

Cohort 1 (2016-2018), Cohort 2 (2017-2019), Cohort 3 (2018-2020) and Cohort 4 (2019-2021)

## Foreword

As Chair of SDS, and as a Scottish employer, I am very pleased to introduce this progress and learning report for Foundation Apprenticeships (FA).

Foundation Apprenticeships are now in their fourth year of delivery and we have seen a continued growth in up-take from pupils in their senior phase at secondary school.

The addition of quality work-based learning opportunities, as part of senior phase subject choices in Scottish schools, offers young people a greater breadth of learning and enables them to gain industry, college and university recognised qualifications. Most importantly, perhaps, FAs provide valuable work experience and applied learning in a real workplace with a relevant employer.

Speaking as an employer, Foundation Apprenticeships provide an unrivalled opportunity for us to access a pipeline of talented young people, offering them insight into our business. We then have opportunity to recruit them into a Modern or Graduate Apprenticeship or provide them with a longer-term future employment opportunity immediately after school or once they've graduated from college or university.

Foundation Apprenticeships were introduced in response to the increasingly fast moving and ever-changing world of work. They have been designed to ensure that young people are work-ready sooner and that the future workforce is adaptive enough to progress and prosper.

SDS is incredibly optimistic that Scotland and its people can thrive in this rapidly changing future, one with a focus on productivity and well-being as a combined measure of success. To do this, we need to invest in a mobile, dynamic and agile skills system.

Achieving this kind of change in the skills system takes time. SDS continues to work across Scotland with partners to build systemic improvements across education. This is a radical, long-term, change programme and there are challenges to overcome before Foundation Apprenticeships are an integral and commensurate part of the senior phase offer.

The benefits of participating in the Foundation Apprenticeship – as either a learner or an employer are very clear. They deliver a recognised qualification that incorporates traditional and practical work-based learning, providing the skills that employers and industry need now and in the future.

FAs also provide the skills that young people need to adapt and evolve in their careers, which employers regularly cite as missing. There is growing consensus around the need for greater emphasis on the primacy of people - on the unique skills and characteristics that make us human.

These 'meta-skills' – including, problem-solving, critical thinking, communication, creativity and leadership – are vital, and the workplace is the right environment to support their development. These are the skills we will all need to drive innovation, create adaptability and resilience, encourage entrepreneurial behaviour and ensure future success for businesses and their employees.

The early access to the talent pipeline that FAs provide offers a unique opportunity for employers, as well as learners, to develop and harness the skills they need to prosper in an increasingly fast paced world of work.

**Frank Mitchell,**  
Chair of Skills Development Scotland



***“FAs also provide the meta-skills that young people need to adapt and evolve in their careers, which employers regularly cite as missing”***

## Learner experience – Business Skills

### Ferva Anjum – Cohort 2

Ferva completed the Foundation Apprenticeship in business skills during S5 and S6 and has since progressed onto a Modern Apprenticeship with Dell.

CEO and founder Michael Dell recently visited at the company's Glasgow hub and commented specifically on Ferva's success. The recognition continued as she was also a finalist in the Foundation Apprentice of the Year category at this year's Scottish Apprenticeship Awards.

Ferva, from Thornliebank, said: "I feel very shocked and honoured to be a finalist – it's a massive surprise and I'm actually really proud of myself."

Having found about the Foundation Apprenticeship through her pastoral support teacher, Ferva jumped at the chance to get involved with work-based learning at Dell after spending time at City of Glasgow College.

The 18-year-old explained: "As soon as I heard Dell was an option, I knew that was where I wanted to spend my placement. I never enjoyed studying and wasn't sure about university. I was keen to get into the world of work and the Foundation Apprenticeship provided me with that opportunity."

After completing, Ferva was then offered employment through a Modern Apprenticeship, offering her the opportunity to work, learn and earn at Dell – something she never expected to happen.

Ferva explained: "I wanted to stay at Dell but felt like my initial lack of confidence could be an issue. Even looking into someone's eyes was a challenge when I first started, however by the end of the Foundation Apprenticeship I was able to deliver a presentation to the leadership team."

Upon completion of her Modern Apprenticeship, Ferva plans to go on and become a sales rep within the organisation and is thankful for the Foundation Apprenticeship giving her the opportunity.

She said: "The Foundation Apprenticeship was a great way for me to gain experience and ultimately a job – I would highly recommend it to other pupils considering their options for the future."

Dell's Inside Sales Senior Manager said: "Creating a talent pipeline is one of the most critical factors in our continued success at Dell and the Foundation Apprenticeship has helped us do that."



Technology has always been  
enabling human potential  
Michael Dell



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# Introduction

Foundation Apprenticeships (FAs) were first introduced into schools in 2016. They provide work-based learning opportunities for secondary school pupils when making their senior phase subject choices. FAs have been designed and developed with industry and the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA). They are aligned to key sectors of the economy that are either currently facing skills shortages or have projected future jobs growth.

Strong international evidence shows that high performing economies offer school pupils educational experiences that balance academic with work-based learning (WBL). Creating this balance of opportunity is pivotal to the design of future skills systems if we want to enable more people to prosper and to narrow the gap between the supply of and demand for skills in Scotland.

Foundation Apprenticeships offer a blend of academic and work-based learning for young people in the senior phase of secondary school. They are designed to enhance and expand existing pathways from school, with multiple progression routes on completion to work, college or university.

The FA is delivered through partnerships between schools, a local college or learning provider, and local employers. FAs provide industry-recognised qualifications in key sectors where there is a real need for skilled employees.

There are three key components to a Foundation Apprenticeship:

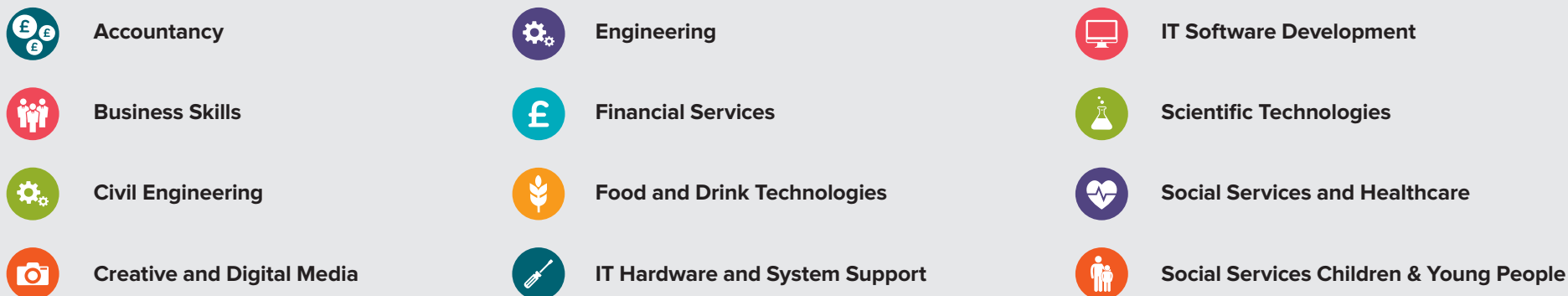
- **developing knowledge;**
- **gaining transferable skills; and**
- **demonstrating competence in the workplace.**

FAs are based on existing and successful, industry-endorsed, Modern Apprenticeship frameworks and they enable pupils to complete elements of a Modern Apprenticeship while still in school.

They offer qualifications that are valued at the equivalent of two SQA Highers, while offering a high-quality work placement in industry. FAs are available across 12 subject areas (frameworks) as shown in figure 1. The newest frameworks are Accountancy and Food and Drink Technologies – both introduced in 2017.

Foundation Apprenticeships provide qualifications which are at the same level of learning as a Higher (SCQF level 6). They include SQA certified qualifications at SCQF level 6 incorporating: National Certificate (NC) units, National Progression Award (NPA) units and SVQ units<sup>1</sup>.

Figure 1  
12 Frameworks supporting pathways to critical occupations



<sup>1</sup> In the case where an individual might not complete their FA in its entirety, they will be certificated, through SQA, for any of the components they have completed.

Due to the design of FAs, recognition of prior learning is made simple, either for those starting an FA (where they may have already achieved a Higher with some of the same NPA units as the FA, for example) or for those progressing to an MA or Higher National qualification (where some of the units may have already been achieved through the FA). This means that individuals can avoid repeating learning that they have already completed.

During their FA, learners have scheduled periods during their school class timetable to attend a college or learning provider where they build up their knowledge and skills. These skills are then put into practice during a work placement with an employer based in an industry relevant to the FA framework being undertaken. In recent years, to support pupils' access to FA opportunities, we have improved the flexibility of the FA, offering learning hubs within secondary schools to bring colleges to pupils where the logistics of pupils travelling from a potentially remote school may act as a barrier to FA participation.

FAs are an integral element of the senior phase curriculum and form part of subject choices so that they can be undertaken alongside other school qualifications, including Nationals, Highers, and Advanced Highers, for example.

They are designed to benefit a wide range of young people within the senior phase to support attainment and achievement. The profile of pupils who could benefit from an FA range from those choosing an FA as their **only** SCQF level 6 qualification, to those choosing an FA **in addition** to other SCQF level 6 qualifications.

FAs are designed to provide young people with:

- industry-designed, and co-delivered, recognised qualifications
- industry skills and work experience in a sector with projected future jobs growth
- a range of employability and meta<sup>2</sup> skills needed by employers
- connections and experience with employers in key industries aligned to their potential future career pathway
- qualifications and experience of work that will enable them to progress to a wider array of positive post-school destinations

FAs represent a fundamental change in the approach to offering industry-recognised, work-based learning in school – providing valuable skills and versatile qualifications. They have been designed to:

- address the needs and aspirations of many young people in the senior phase by providing work-relevant learning, industry skills and experience
- create strong links between young people, education and employers – with strategic partnerships, shared planning and delivery across schools, colleges/ learning providers and industry
- further strengthen industry leadership and engagement in the design and provision of industry-relevant learning in the senior phase
- address strongly held (traditional) perceptions about the value and equivalence of different learning pathways amongst teachers, parents, carers and senior phase pupils.

By undertaking an FA in the senior phase at school, the options for further study or for employment after leaving school are strengthened.

The range of post-school options after completing an FA include progressing:

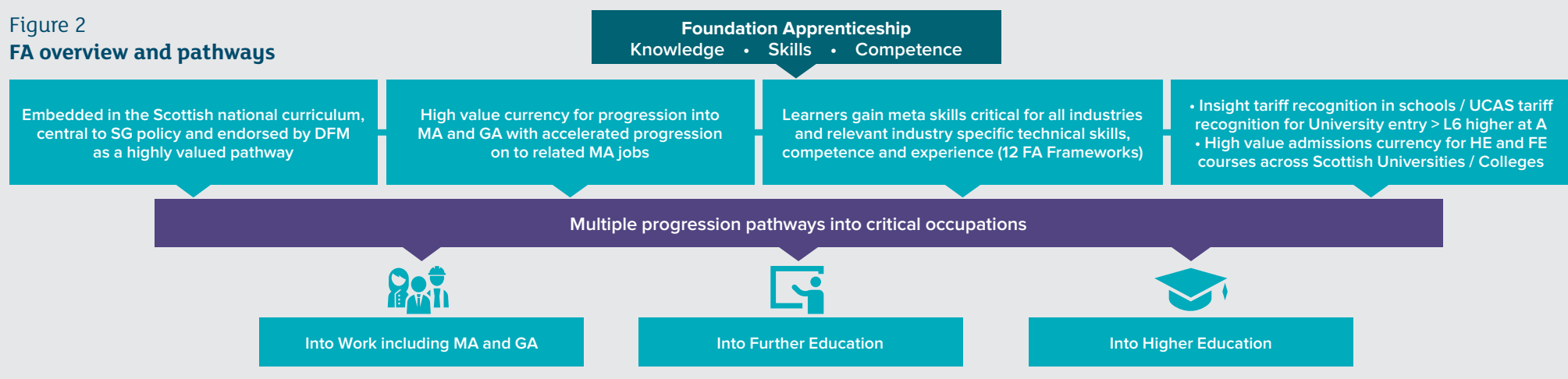
- directly into work – FAs provide valuable work experience in key sectors for those who want to go straight into work when they leave school
- directly into work and learning through a Modern Apprenticeship – FAs are designed to provide credit and accelerated progression into existing Modern Apprenticeships, with the learner completing several units of the related MA framework(s) as part of their FA
- directly into work and further learning through a Graduate Apprenticeship – FAs are a recognised element of the entry requirements for university to undertake a Graduate Apprenticeship
- directly into further learning through college or university – FAs are recognised by Higher and Further Education, offering clear pathways for entry to college HNC/D courses and university degree courses.

FAs reduce the number of Highers required for college entry to HNC and HND programmes. Universities recognise a FA as at least equivalent to a Higher. All universities in Scotland now accept FAs as part of their entrance criteria

The FA forms an important part of our work in enhancing the learner journey. We continue in our work to promote FAs across schools, with young people and their parents and carers, to enable and encourage more pupils to take the opportunity to experience learning out of the classroom, in a real workplace, where this is the right choice for them.

2 Meta-skills refer to acquired skills that can be applied to a wide variety of circumstances – for example: patience, reflection, reasoning, problem solving, teamwork, organisational skills, confidence and communication.

Figure 2  
FA overview and pathways



Working with national and regional partners, SDS has contracted with learning providers with the expectation that up to 5,000 young people will take up a Foundation Apprenticeship opportunity in the 2020 academic year – supporting pathways into critical occupations for the Scottish economy.

### Related work-based learning pathway developments

The vision for strengthening work-based learning pathways in Scotland is to provide coherent routes for young people into high quality employment through experiences that deliver the knowledge, skills and competence for them to thrive in the world of work. A core aspect of the design of work-based learning pathways is that there is a variety of entry and exit points in the journey, and permeability between qualifications, giving learners greater choice and increasing their opportunities to succeed and prosper.

In addition to the Foundation Apprenticeship, and in response to findings highlighted in feedback we have received from employers and learners, we are now piloting a new work-based learning qualification at SCQF levels 4 and 5.

These apprenticeships focus on three industry areas:



The aspiration is that these qualifications provide more opportunities for those in the senior phase, not quite ready for study at SCQF level 6, and for those in S3 for whom the FA is not available.

### Working collaboratively to deliver success

We are dependent on our partners and stakeholders in education for their support and for facilitating delivery of Foundation Apprenticeships across Scotland.

Key influencers of young people, including teachers, parents and carers also play a crucial role. Their engagement and enthusiasm for the wide benefits that the FA offers is critical in encouraging demand for work-based learning opportunities and enabling us to ensure more young people across Scotland have access to and the opportunity to choose an FA within their senior phase curriculum and can benefit from the opportunities FAs afford.

The Scottish Apprenticeship Advisory Board (SAAB) plays a vital role in facilitating a continued employer contribution to the development of apprenticeships in Scotland. In collaboration with SAAB, we will ensure that FAs continue to meet the needs of industry and are clearly aligned with economic growth and job opportunities.

We continue to engage with apprentices themselves, as part of our work through SAAB, to ensure that their voices are heard. We also carry out formative evaluations with employers and learners to gain a broader view and develop insight to drive programme improvements. One such example of this would be the introduction of the shorter duration delivery model for FA, which enables pupils to complete their FA over 12 months, rather than two years.

We are working very closely with a range of partners to ensure that the FA continues to evolve and grow, making it accessible, valued and recognised across Scotland and beyond.

## Context for readers

This is the third Foundation Apprenticeship progress report. As this is just the fourth year of delivery (while still being rolled out across schools), data is provided to describe its evolution, to date, and the progress made.

**It is important to note that FAs are part of the senior phase curriculum and should not be directly compared to Modern Apprenticeships. Senior phase school pupils choose to study a Foundation Apprenticeship in the same way as they choose any other senior phase subject.**

As part of our reporting, we would like to be able to make comparisons with other senior phase subject choices. However, statistics for other school qualifications are only available once pupils are presented for an SQA exam, rather than when they are enrolled in a class at school. This means that it is not currently possible to provide any meaningful comparison regarding the success of the Foundation Apprenticeship, relative to other school subject options.

FA progress reports will be produced on an annual basis.

In this report, we provide detail for four groups of Foundation Apprentices.

Each group of apprentices is categorised according to the year they started their FA: 2016, 2017, 2018 or 2019.

These are the first four groups (cohorts) of pupils that have engaged in the FA beyond the initial pathfinder phase. FA uptake figures are reported as at 30th September for each year<sup>3</sup>. They may be subject to revision if we receive late registrations. Any revisions to figures will be detailed in subsequent publications.

As more pupils participate in Foundation Apprenticeships, we will be able to provide a more detailed breakdown of the data we collect. Current cohort sizes remain relatively small and may distort any meaningful disaggregation of data and, in many cases, are subject to disclosure control.

Percentages in this report may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Throughout the report, disclosure control is applied to figures less than 5 or where such figures can be identified through differencing. Where disclosure control has been applied, an asterisk (\*) will be used in place of the actual figure.

Any comments or suggestions regarding the content of this report are welcome and can be emailed to: [user\\_feedback@sds.co.uk](mailto:user_feedback@sds.co.uk).

<sup>3</sup> In this report, all data is based on a snapshot taken on November 29th, 2019. Colleges and learning providers were given an additional time to submit registrations through SDS systems.

# Key results

**6,570** pupils taking up FA opportunities in the first 4 years of delivery

All **32** Local Authorities engaged in FA

**97.9%** FA completers in education, training or employment

**482** unique employers (cohorts 1, 2 and 3)

In Cohort 4, over **90%** of maintained secondary schools have pupils undertaking an FA

In Cohort 4 **22.1%** of pupils undertaking an FA in a STEM subject are female (+14.1% since 2016)

**91%** of learners 'in-training' said they would recommend the Foundation Apprenticeship to a friend or family member

Learners stated they would recommend it because:

- Experience of the industry
- Meeting new people
- Helps begin/further career
- Opportunity to learn in a different environment
- Gain a qualification
- Boosts CV/FE applications



## Learner feedback 2019



**86%** of learners due to complete were satisfied with their overall experience

Learners 'due-to-complete' said they gained the following through the Foundation Apprenticeship:

- Developed skills that will help them in the workplace
- Clearer idea about the career they want to pursue
- Better understanding of sector/industry

What learners enjoyed most:

- Practical experiences in the work placement
- Change of environment from school
- College work
- Learning new skills
- Social aspect

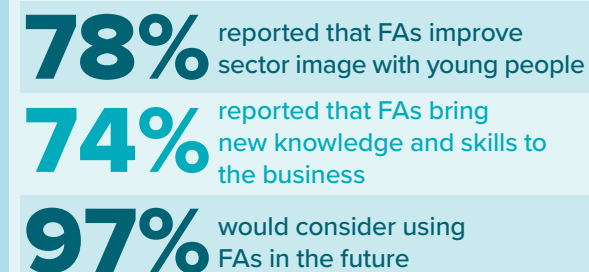
## Employer feedback 2019

A large proportion of FA Employers report that their FA achievers improved the following skills as a result of the FA:



**85%** of employers gave a rating of 7 or more on "satisfaction with provision of FAs overall". This is based on a 0-10 scale where 0 is very dissatisfied and 10 is very satisfied.

## Employer feedback 2020





## Learner experience – Engineering

### Ayli McInnes – Cohort 3, year 2

Not many school pupils can say they've spent their day working on a jet engine or being part of a national TV campaign. Ayrshire's Ayli McInnes can.

The teenager is studying for a Foundation Apprenticeship in engineering and is undertaking her work experience at Prestwick's GE Caledonian.

She is one of a group of Foundation Apprentices who feature in Skills Development Scotland's adverts on television and online.

Ayli said: "Since I was in second year I have always wanted to go into engineering. I have always preferred the practical subjects and that's why my teacher suggested the Foundation Apprenticeship which involves learning on the job while I was at school.

I did my work experience at GE Caledonian and I really enjoyed it. The Foundation Apprenticeship is different from school and I've learned so much that I've applied for an Engineering Modern Apprenticeship with the company now."

Ayli's achievements are even more remarkable after disaster struck in May 2017 when she went to see Arianna Grande perform, and was involved in the tragic bombing attack inside the Manchester Arena.

A will to succeed coupled with the tremendous support of Irvine Royal Academy Guidance Teacher Laura Gibson have kept her on track to achieve her goals.

Ayli doesn't want to go down the university route and prefers to work with her hands. She said:

"My mum and dad knew that university wasn't for me and we knew about apprenticeships because my aunt works in Irvine and my cousin was an apprentice with GE and she now works in Dubai.

"I think doing the Foundation Apprenticeship has been really good because it has given me a start in what I want to do."

# Learners

## Uptake of FA opportunities<sup>4</sup>

This section of the report provides detail about the learners registered for a Foundation Apprenticeship, as at 29th November 2019, across all 4 cohorts. Figure 3 shows the number FA opportunities that have been realised since Cohort 1 (2016/17) and illustrates a continued increase over the 4 years.

The contracting process for Cohort 5 was begun in the summer of 2019, earlier than in previous years, to ensure that learning providers are well prepared to offer up to 5,000 opportunities for S4, S5 and S6 pupils to potentially take up a Foundation Apprenticeship in September 2020.

In Cohort 4, 3,445 FA opportunities were taken up by senior phase school pupils, an increase of 1,910 (124.5%), more than double the size of the previous cohort.

This demonstrates a marked expansion on the previous year when the increase in realised opportunities (between cohorts 2 and 3) was less significant.

Recent learner feedback (October 2019) highlights some of the key motivators for pupils taking up a Foundation Apprenticeship opportunity and their main sources of influence.

Learner feedback provides an encouraging sign that pupils are beginning to understand the potential benefits of the FA and are demonstrating this through their motivations for choosing an FA as part of their subject choices. See figures 4 and 5.

Figure 4  
Key motivators for undertaking a Foundation Apprenticeship

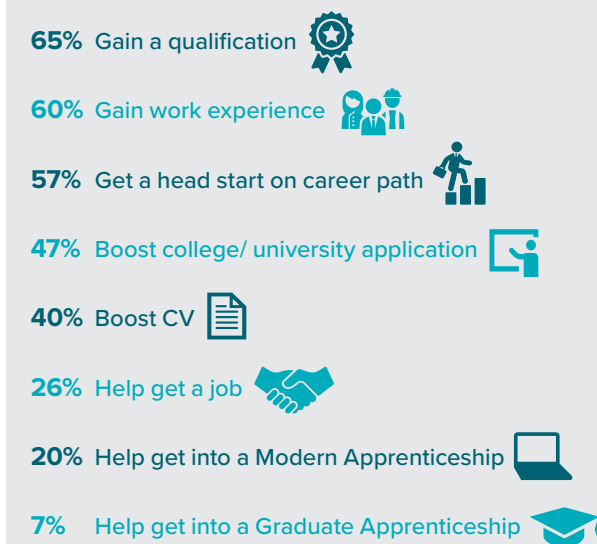


Figure 3  
Number of FA opportunities taken up

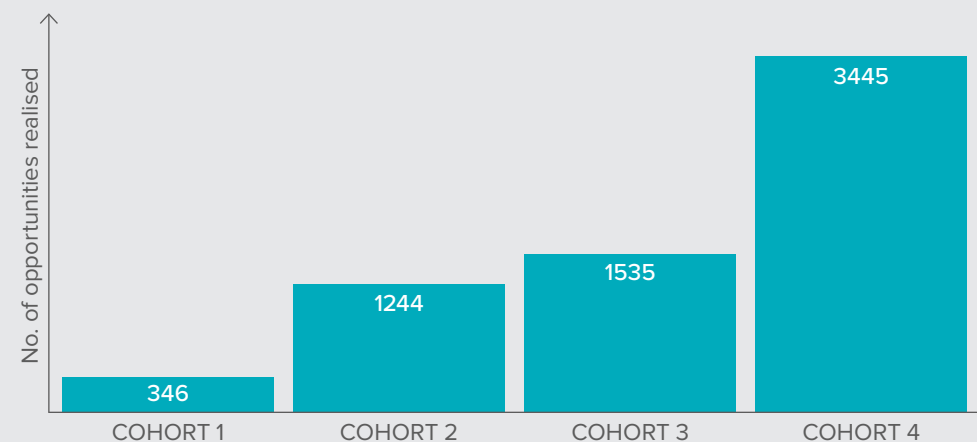
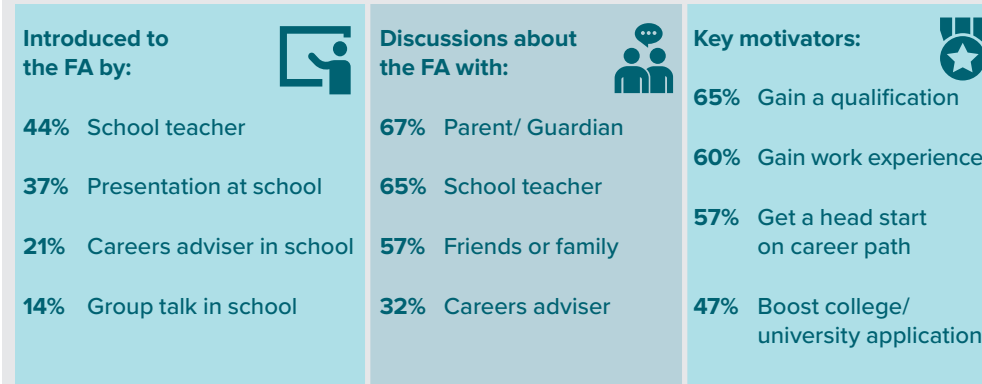


Figure 5  
FA learner survey – influence and motivation



<sup>4</sup> In previous reports, we referred to FA starts. SDS targets are based on the contracts we secure with providers – which was to secure 5,000 opportunities in 2019/20. Previous 'starts' are the number of these opportunities that have been realised

## Uptake of opportunities – gender

The number of FA opportunities realised has been relatively well balanced across male and female pupils. There has been some change in gender representation over time, with a steady increase in the proportion of female participants, as detailed in Table 1 and Figure 6.

Part of this change relates to the number and variety of frameworks that were available to Cohort 1 pupils, relative to Cohort 4. The expansion of the range of frameworks available has widened the appeal of the FA, while also taking account of the future employment requirements in critical skills areas and occupations in Scotland.

In Cohort 1 there were 8 available frameworks; this rose to 10 in Cohort 2 and 12 for Cohorts 3 and 4. Table 2 shows the number of FA opportunities taken up for each available framework. The social services and healthcare frameworks have accelerated the number of opportunities realised and are dominated by female pupils.

Accountancy and Food and Drink Technologies frameworks were introduced in 2017, with Cohort 3 being the first pupils to benefit from them. Growth in take up across both frameworks this year is very positive.

**Table 1**  
**Gender balance across all FA cohorts**

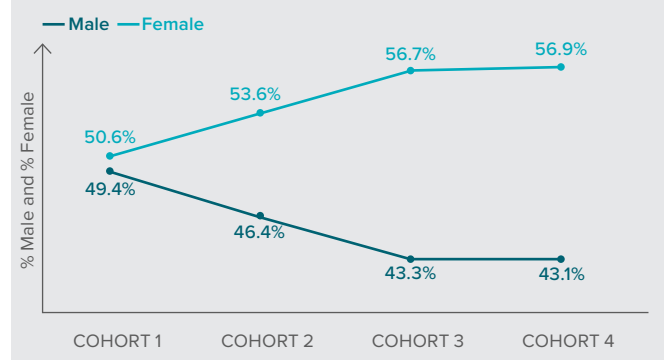
	Male	% of total	Female	% of total
Cohort 1	174	50.3%	172	49.7%
Cohort 2	577	46.4%	667	53.6%
Cohort 3	665	43.3%	870	56.7%
Cohort 4	1,485	43.1%	1,960	56.9%

**Table 2**  
**FA uptake by framework**

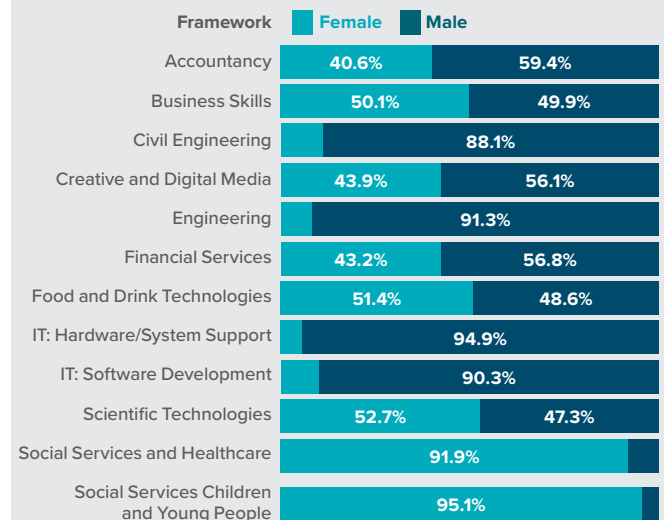
Framework	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Cohort 4
Accountancy			28	132
Business Skills	5	67	85	318
Civil Engineering	47	87	95	184
Creative and Digital Media		43	135	353
Engineering	71	232	304	469
Financial Services	38	54	13	41
Food and Drink Technologies			10	60
IT: Hardware/System Support	13	40	35	69
IT: Software Development	30	130	104	189
Scientific Technologies		20	39	108
Social Services and Healthcare	85	105	186	494
Social Services Children and Young People	57	466	501	1028
<b>Total</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>1244</b>	<b>1535</b>	<b>3445</b>

Figure 7 shows the gender split across frameworks for all cohorts combined. A breakdown detailing each separate cohort is included in **Annex 1**. The pattern of gender distribution across the different frameworks remains largely unchanged for each cohort, with females dominating social services and healthcare frameworks and males more prominent in engineering and IT-related frameworks.

**Figure 6**  
**Change in gender balance over time**



**Figure 7:**  
**% FA uptake by framework and gender**



Foundation Apprenticeships provide an opportunity to influence young people's perceptions at an earlier stage in their career journey. Our ambition is that this will help to alter stereotypes and improve the proportions of males and females entering key sectors in the future.

We are working across SDS and with partners to address this and to challenge stereotypes, as detailed in our Apprenticeship Equality Action Plan<sup>5</sup>.

### STEM opportunities

Given the continued policy focus on Science Technology Engineering and Maths (STEM) related study, we have identified that all frameworks, except Accountancy, Business Skills, Financial Services and the two social services frameworks, fit into the STEM category. On that basis, in Cohort 4, males represent 77.9% of participants in STEM framework and females 22.1% (+1.5% female representation in comparison to Cohort 3 and +14.1% since Cohort 1).

### FA delivery models

Part of the rapid growth in uptake of FA opportunities over the last year has been due to the wider availability of the shorter duration delivery model (SDDM). This enables pupils to complete their FA within one rather than two years. The number of pupils opting for the one-year FA has increased by ten-fold since Cohort 3, last year. Figure 9 shows the number of opportunities realised through each delivery model, with the SDDM becoming significantly more prominent in Cohort 4. The SDDM allows greater flexibility for pupils and has helped to improve the accessibility of the FA for those in S6. It also offers a shorter-term commitment for younger pupils who are studying for a broad range of qualifications in addition to the FA. A breakdown of framework uptake by delivery model is included in **Annex 2**.

Table 3  
FA uptake by STEM framework

Framework	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Cohort 4
<b>Civil Engineering</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>184</b>
Female	6	10	15	18
Male	41	77	80	166
<b>Creative and Digital Media</b>		<b>43</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>353</b>
Female		24	48	161
Male		19	87	192
<b>Engineering</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>469</b>
Female	5	15	40	34
Male	66	217	264	435
<b>Food and Drink Technologies</b>			<b>10</b>	<b>60</b>
Female			8	28
Male			2	32
<b>IT: Hardware/System Support</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>69</b>
Female	*	*	*	*
Male	*	*	*	*
<b>IT: Software Development</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>189</b>
Female	*	13	14	16
Male	*	117	90	173
<b>Scientific Technologies</b>		<b>20</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>108</b>
Female		10	21	57
Male		10	18	51
<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>552</b>	<b>722</b>	<b>1432</b>

Figure 8  
Gender split across STEM frameworks

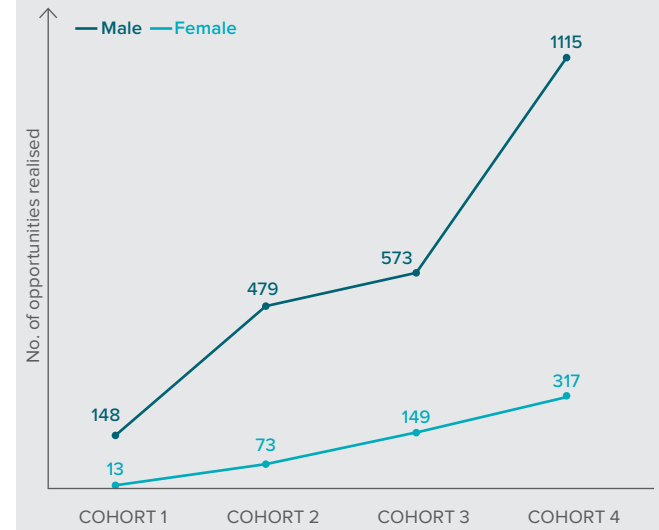
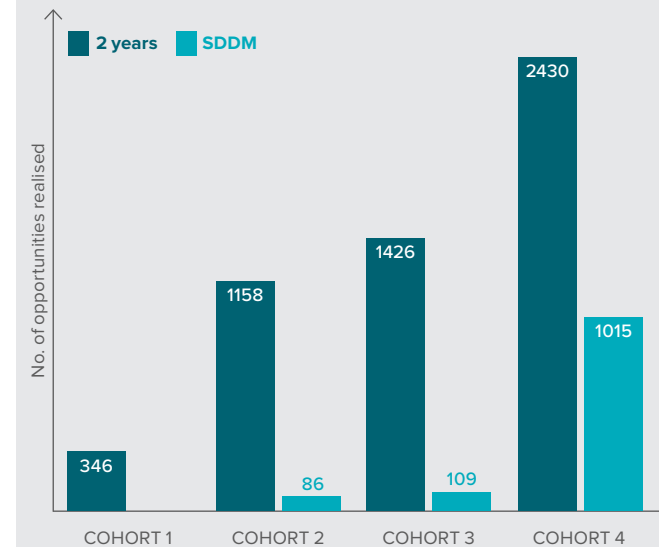


Figure 9  
FA delivery models (2 years or 1 year)



5 <https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/45850/apprenticeship-equality-action-plan-annual-report-2019.pdf>

Figure 10 shows FA opportunities taken up by each year group in the senior phase. Although FAs are available from S4, the majority of those taking an FA opportunity are in S5. Data for Cohort 1 is not available.

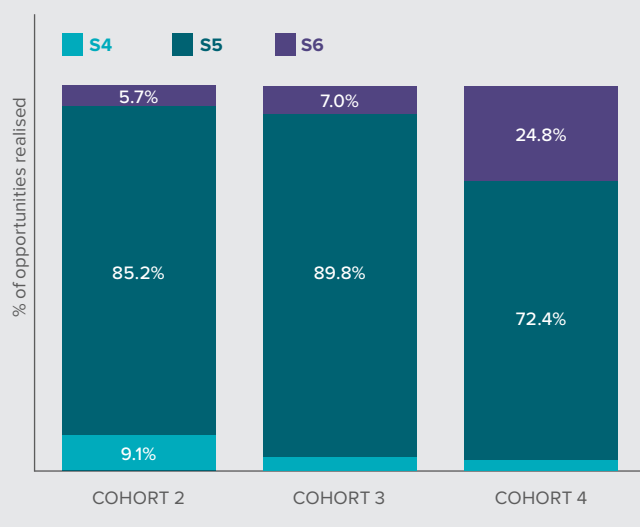
The proportion of those beginning an FA in S6 has grown over time, due to the increased availability of the option to complete over one year, rather than the original two-year model.

As the FA is a qualification at SCQF level 6 (same level as a Higher), we would not expect to see large numbers of S4 pupils in any cohort, as they would be traditionally studying to SCQF level 5, in line with the school curriculum.

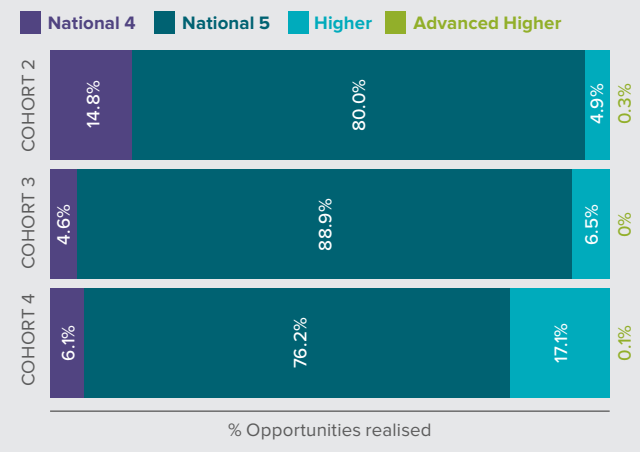
On registering for an FA, pupils are asked to provide details of their academic achievement to date. Figure 11 shows the level of attainment that pupils have already achieved on commencing an FA. It shows that most pupils have already achieved qualifications at National 5 (SCQF level 5 – which they would have been likely to get in S4) which is explained by most apprentices being in S5.

In Cohort 4, more pupils have already achieved qualifications at Higher level (SCQF 6), which aligns with the growth in S6 pupils undertaking an FA this year. The proportion of pupils with National 4 attainment (SCQF 4) has diminished<sup>6</sup>.

**Figure 10**  
Take up of FA opportunities by school year group



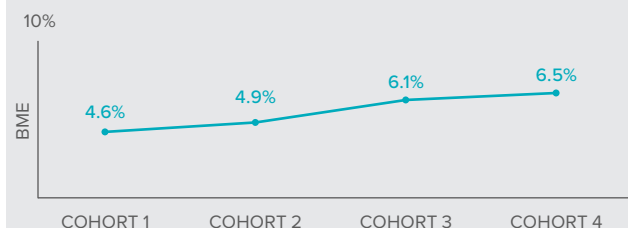
**Figure 11**  
Current level of attainment on commencing FA<sup>7</sup>



**Table 4**  
FA uptake by ethnicity<sup>8</sup>

	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Cohort 4
Ethnic minority	16	60	94	221
White	330	1,172	1,432	3,191
Prefer not to say	-	*	-	-
Unknown	-	*	9	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>1,244</b>	<b>1,535</b>	<b>3,445</b>

**Figure 12**  
% of FAs identifying as BME<sup>9</sup>



### Uptake of opportunities – other equalities characteristics

As part of the registration process, we collect equalities data for all pupils participating in the FA. Tables 4-6 and Figures 12-14 provide a breakdown by cohort of the characteristics of registered pupils.

The proportion of pupils self-identifying as BME has risen from 4.6% in Cohort 1, to over 6% in Cohorts 3 and 4 – greater than the proportion of BME in Scotland's population<sup>10</sup>. Pupils from an ethnic minority are most prominent in Engineering, Social Services Children and Young People and Business Skills frameworks.

6 We now also have opportunities for undertaking work-based learning at SCQF 4 and 5, which should improve accessibility for pupils at an earlier stage in secondary school.

7 Cohort 1 data is unavailable; data provided by pupils at registration

8 White includes those who identify as white Scottish, white other British, white Irish or other white background; Ethnic minority includes those that identify as Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, other Asian background, African or other black background.

9 Percentages are calculated as a proportion the total, excluding any unknown those who record prefer not to say.

10 <https://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/ethnicity-identity-language-and-religion>

FA uptake by pupils self-identifying a disability increased significantly (+9.2%) between Cohort 3 and 4. Improvements in reporting are likely to have had a positive impact, but there is no obvious explanation for this increase.

Around 10% of children in Scotland are classified as disabled<sup>11</sup>, although the definition of disabled might not exactly align with the SDS definition, this gives an approximate figure for comparison and suggests that an increase to in excess of 16% in the participation rate for FA is positive. The frameworks with the highest numbers of pupils self-declaring a disability are Social Services Children and Young People, Social Services and Healthcare and Engineering.

We also record any instance of care experience that registered pupils might have. This is self-declared by the pupils themselves and is potentially under-reported.

In Cohort 1, the number and proportion of registered pupils with care experience was too small to report. In Cohort 2, 7.8% of pupils self-declared that they had care experience and this fell to 5.1% in Cohort 3 and is now only 2.4% in Cohort 4. The frameworks with the highest numbers of pupils with care experience are Social Services Children and Young People, Social Services and Healthcare and Engineering.

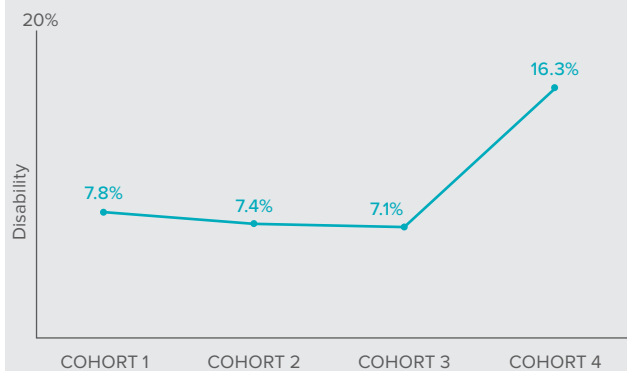
**Table 5  
FA uptake by disability**

	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Cohort 4
No	306	1,124	1,315	2,781
Yes	26	90	101	542
Prefer not to say	*	30	119	122
Unknown	*	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>1,244</b>	<b>1,535</b>	<b>3,445</b>

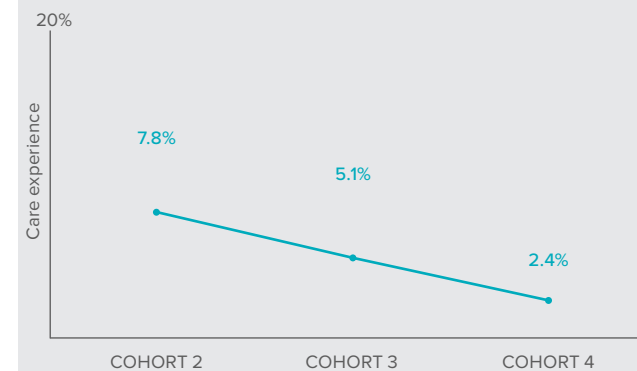
**Table 6  
FA uptake by care experience**

	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Cohort 4
No	311	1,117	1,408	3,263
Yes	*	94	76	81
Prefer not to say	*	33	51	100
Unknown	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>1,244</b>	<b>1,535</b>	<b>3,445</b>

**Figure 13  
% of FAs self-declaring a disability<sup>9</sup>**



**Figure 14  
% of FAs self-declaring care experience<sup>9</sup>**



11 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-wellbeing-measuring-national-outcomes-disabled-people/pages/17/>

Disability is defined in the Scottish Government report in line with the Equality Act 2010: a long-lasting health condition that limits daily activity.

## Uptake of opportunities – by geography

All college regions are now delivering Foundation Apprenticeships and we have continued to grow flexibility in the delivery of FAs, making their reach greater and improving accessibility for schools and their pupils.

The number of available training venues has grown from 19 to 98 since Cohort 1, which has helped to minimise some of the barriers to participation – specifically logistics – for many of the pupils interested in taking up an FA opportunity.

This is reflected in the growth in up-take between Cohorts 3 and 4, significantly in areas with a larger rural or less densely populated areas. **Annex 3** provides detail on the number of opportunities realised in each local authority area.

All local authorities are, again, participating in the FA. We have seen a continued rise in the number of individual schools offering the FA as part of senior phase subject choices, with some private schools now also taking part. Approximately 90% of maintained state secondary schools had pupils opting to study for a Foundation Apprenticeship in Cohort 4. **Annex 4** provides detail on the proportion of schools within each local authority area with pupils undertaking an FA.

Table 7  
FA uptake by college region

College Area (Contract)	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Cohort 4
Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire	21	75	61	412
Ayrshire	10	35	51	155
Borders		8		17
Dumfries and Galloway		13	18	62
Edinburgh and Lothians	19	54	78	259
Fife	27	238	166	205
Forth Valley	35	21	174	348
Glasgow	73	215	303	484
Highlands and Islands	91	159	195	469
Lanarkshire		212	277	598
Tayside	15	50	50	199
West	40	90	85	112
West Lothian	15	74	77	125
<b>Total</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>1244</b>	<b>1535</b>	<b>3445</b>

Table 8  
Numbers of schools and Local Authorities participating in the Foundation Apprenticeship

	Count of School	No. of Local Authority areas
Cohort 1	114	26
Cohort 2	242	32
Cohort 3	272	31
Cohort 4	325	32

## Learners in training

This section provides detail of those pupils still actively undertaking their FA. There are no pupils left in training for Cohorts 1 and 2, therefore, detail is provided for cohorts 3 and 4 only. Figure 15 shows that there are 890 pupils remaining in training from Cohort 3 and 3,226 from Cohort 4.

Table 9 shows the gender breakdown for pupils that remain in training in cohorts 3 and 4, across each framework. For Cohort 3, which commenced in September 2018, 58% of pupils that took up an FA opportunity remain in training (55% of females and 62% of males), as most are completing their FA over two years. Frameworks with the highest rates of non-completion in Cohort 3 are Financial Services (46%), Food and Drink Technologies (50%) and Social Services and Healthcare (41%).

For Cohort 4, which commenced in September 2019, 96.5% remain. **Annex 3** shows which local authorities have pupils in training for Cohorts 3 and 4. The 119 Cohort 4 pupils that are no longer in training chose to withdraw from the FA within the first 2 months<sup>12</sup>, so have not achieved any credit or qualifications. This outcome would be the same for a pupil withdrawing from any other school subject choice at an early stage.

Figure 15  
Pupils remaining in training, by cohort

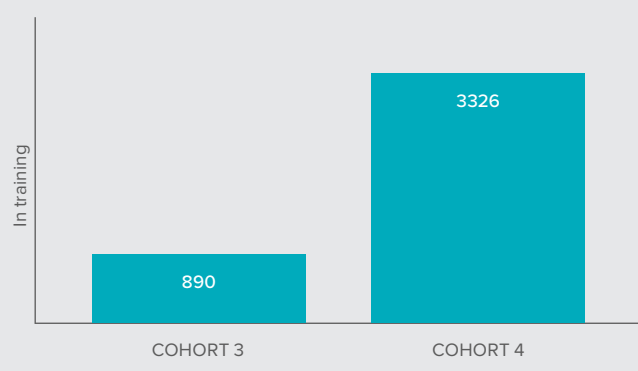


Table 9  
FAs in training by cohort, framework and gender

	Cohort 3		Cohort 4	
	Opportunities realised	In training	Opportunities realised	In training
<b>Female</b>	<b>870</b>	<b>479</b>	<b>1960</b>	<b>1891</b>
Accountancy	13	10	52	50
Business Skills	50	29	156	150
Civil Engineering	15	10	18	18
Creative and Digital Media	48	31	161	156
Engineering	40	27	34	32
Financial Services	*	*	*	*
Food and Drink Technologies	8	*	28	27
IT: Hardware/System Support	*		*	*
IT: Software Development	14	10	16	16
Scientific Technologies	21	17	57	55
Social Services and Healthcare	167	78	458	439
Social Services Children and Young People	484	259	969	937
<b>Male</b>	<b>665</b>	<b>411</b>	<b>1485</b>	<b>1435</b>
Accountancy	15	9	80	79
Business Skills	35	26	162	151
Civil Engineering	80	53	166	164
Creative and Digital Media	87	57	192	186
Engineering	264	159	435	415
Financial Services	*	*	33	33
Food and Drink Technologies	*	*	32	32
IT: Hardware/System Support	32	15	66	64
IT: Software Development	90	58	173	169
Scientific Technologies	18	13	51	50
Social Services and Healthcare	19	8	36	36
Social Services Children and Young People	17	9	59	56
<b>Total</b>	<b>1535</b>	<b>890</b>	<b>3445</b>	<b>3326</b>

# Completion and achievement

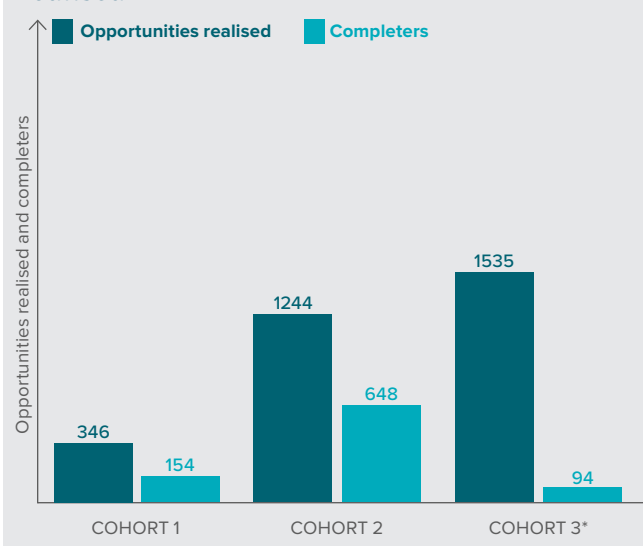
This section provides detail on the number of FA opportunities that have been realised in each cohort, relative to the number of pupils who complete their Foundation Apprenticeship. In Cohort 3, 890 remain in training. There are no pupils still in training in Cohorts 1 and 2. As expected, no pupils from Cohort 4 have yet completed their FA and we would not expect to see any completers for this Cohort until summer 2020 at the earliest.

Where pupils either do not complete the course, or complete but do not achieve their full FA qualification, they are certificated, through SQA, for any of the components they have achieved.

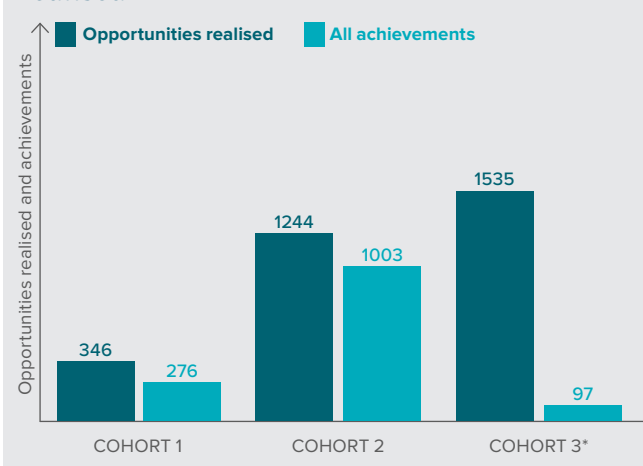
**Annex 5** provides examples of the component elements of four of the Foundation Apprenticeship qualifications, to offer a greater understanding of what they involve. In addition, each learner also has a work placement element which they do with an employer in an industry relevant to the FA framework they are undertaking.

Figure 16 shows the number of pupils from each cohort who completed their FA – meaning that they did not leave their study early. As with any qualification, not all of those who complete their FA achieve the full qualification. Figure 17 shows all full FA and component qualifications achieved, regardless of whether a pupil completed the course or not. A breakdown of these achievements, for Cohorts 1 and 2 is shown in Table 10. As there are still 890 pupils from Cohort 3 in training, achievement data for all Cohort 3 pupils will be provided in the next progress report. Table 11 provides achievement details for Cohort 3 pupils who undertook their FA over 1 rather than 2 years.

**Figure 16**  
FA completers, relative to opportunities realised



**Figure 17**  
All achievements, relative to opportunities realised



\*Cohort 3 completers relate only to those pupils undertaking their FA over 1 year

**Table 10**  
Cohort 1 & 2: all qualifications achieved

Qualification	Cohort 1	Cohort 2
Full Qualification Achievement		
FA Group Award	129	493
National Certificate	*	26
National Progression Award	54	186
Component Achievement		
National Certificate components	47	114
National Progression Award components	43	169
SVQ units	*	15
No Achievement		
None	70	241

**Table 11**  
Cohort 3: all qualifications achieved, to date

Qualification	Cohort 3
Full Qualification Achievement	
FA Group Award	63
National Certificate	*
National Progression Award	21
Component Achievement	
National Certificate components	*
National Progression Award components	8
No Achievement	
None	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>109</b>

To date, SDS systems hold a record of qualifications achieved for all pupils from cohorts 1 and 2, as at the end of their FA study and data for those Cohort 3 pupils who have, so far, either left or completed their FA.

All achievement data is captured by learning providers and submitted to SQA. As we are reliant on third parties to record pupil achievement, there is often a lag in SDS systems being updated. Therefore, achievement data can be subject to change.

In Cohort 1, 49 (70%) of the 70 pupils recorded as achieving no qualification had left the FA very early (before the end of January 2017). In Cohort 2, 134 (55.6%) of the 241 pupils with no qualification had left the FA before the end of January 2018.

As with any programme of learning in school, we would expect to see pupils dropping out within the first few months as they change their minds about what they are interested in studying or where to focus their time.

**Annex 6** provides detail of all destinations for all participants across each cohort.

Destinations for non-completers and for those that completed but did not achieve their full FA qualification are largely positive. Between 50-60% of non-completers remain in school, opting to focus on other subjects.

Employment/MA and college options are also popular with non-completers, with only single figures moving into unemployment or unknown destinations in each cohort. Research completed in October 2019 highlights some of the main reasons why pupils choose to leave their FA without completing it. The two most common reasons were:

- I decided to leave school
- I wanted to focus on other qualifications at school

There are two leaving dates in the school academic year – the last day in May and the last day before the Christmas holidays. This can obviously affect the number of pupils leaving the FA in the first few months, and chimes with the feedback received from pupils that left the FA early.

The introduction of the shorter duration delivery model and the chance for pupils, who choose to leave school at Christmas, to continue their FA at college are designed to help bring more flexibility and make the FA more accessible.

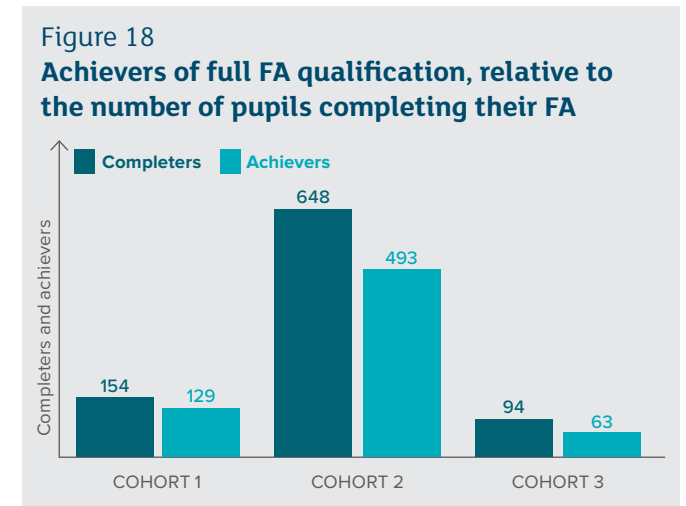
Where location and travel have proven challenging, school hubs have been developed to offer a solution by bringing college lecturers into schools. This means that FA delivery can take place if a learning provider is not accessible. We are also working on improving digital solutions for more remote learners.

We are now also in the process of rolling out apprenticeships at SCQF levels 4 and 5 across Scotland's secondary schools to make work-based learning more accessible to those who are, perhaps, finding SCQF level 6 too challenging. This should help to reduce the number of pupils that do not complete their FA and offer more appropriate learning for those at an earlier stage in school.

## Pupils achieving full FA qualification

Figure 18 shows the number of completers (pupils that have finished the full course) and the number of achievers (pupils that achieved their full FA qualification).

All pupils from Cohorts 1 and 2 have completed their FA study. In Cohort 1, 129 of the 154 completers (84%) achieved their full FA qualification. For Cohort 2, 493 of the 648 completers (76.1%) achieved their full FA qualification.



To date, the Cohort 3 completers only include those undertaking the shorter (12 month) duration delivery model. There are still 890 Cohort 3 pupils in training. Currently, of the 94 completers, we have confirmation that 63 have achieved their full FA qualification.

Additional achiever data will continue to come in from learning providers and SQA. The proportion of all Cohort 3 completers who achieve their full FA will be provided in the next progress report.

Table 12 provides detail of completers and achievers by framework. In Cohort 2, the Engineering framework has the lowest conversion rate of completers to achievers (57%). All other frameworks are in excess of 80%, except for Civil Engineering (71%), Social Services: Children and Young People (74.4%) and IT Hardware/System Support (74%).

On completion of the FA, college remains the dominant destination. In Cohort 2, there has been an increase in the proportion of pupils moving onto university. For those in Cohort 3 undertaking their FA in 1 year, 84.1% of completers have gone into employment, an MA, college or university. Very small numbers of achievers move into unemployment. Those remaining in school will be moving into their final year, S6.

**Table 12**  
**Completers and achievers by framework**

Framework	Cohort 1		Cohort 2		Cohort 3	
	Completers	Achievers	Completers	Achievers	Completers	Achievers
Business Skills			39	36	*	*
Civil Engineering	19	15	55	39	*	
Creative and Digital Media			33	29	6	6
Engineering	46	36	109	62	10	6
Financial Services	13	10	23	21		
IT: Hardware/System Support	7	6	27	20	9	*
IT: Software Development	17	14	78	68		
Scientific Technologies			8	7	*	
Social Services and Healthcare	35	31	61	51	23	13
Social Services Children and Young People	17	17	215	160	41	32
<b>Total</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>493</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>63</b>

**Table 13**  
**FA achiever destinations**

Destination	Cohort 1	%	Cohort 2	%	Cohort 3	%
Employment or Modern Apprenticeship	35	27.1%	109	22.1%	16	25.4%
College	64	49.6%	215	43.6%	18	28.6%
University	25	19.4%	142	28.8%	18	28.6%
Other training	*	*	*	*	*	*
Remain in school	*	*	17	3.5%	6	9.5%
Not yet recorded	*	*	*	*	*	*
Unemployed	*	*	7	1.4%	*	*
Unknown	*	*	*	*	*	*
<b>Total</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>493</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Comparative learning

Table 14 provides some context for considering the value of the Foundation Apprenticeship. It shows how FAs compare with Highers, the most common school qualification taken up by senior phase pupils at SCQF level 6.

SCQF credits are based on the notional learning hours required for each qualification. UCAS points are used to measure the relative value of all post-16 qualifications in the UK and are used by **some** universities to define entry requirements.

It should be emphasised that Foundation Apprenticeships are very different from Highers. However, this provides a simple means for comparison, using two established national frameworks.

Table 14 shows that all FAs are worth at least two C grades at Higher, with the Engineering frameworks being equivalent to at least two B grades at Higher. FAs also consist of more notional learning hours – with Highers being around 240 hours and FAs between 510 and 870 hours, due in part to the work placement that each learner undertakes as part of their FA.

Table 14  
SCQF and UCAS – A comparison

Qualification	Grade	SCQF Level <sup>3</sup>	SCQF credits	UCAS points
<b>Higher</b>				
All Higher subjects	A	6	24	33
	B	6	24	27
	C	6	24	21
	D	6	24	15
<b>Foundation Apprenticeship</b>				
Accountancy	Pass	6	64	42
Business Skills	Pass	6	51	42
Civil Engineering	Pass	6	84	56
Creative & Digital Media	Pass	6	64	42
Engineering	Pass	6	87	56
Financial Services	Pass	6	52	42
Food & Drink Technologies	Pass	6	53	42
ICT Hardware	Pass	6	59	42
ICT Software	Pass	6	59	42
Scientific Technologies	Pass	6	51	42
Social Services: Children & Young People	Pass	6	61	42
Social Services: Healthcare	Pass	6	61	42



## Learner experience – IT Software Development

Goudham Suresh – Cohort 3, year 2

Goudham Suresh is turning his passion into a career thanks to his Foundation Apprenticeship. The St Ninians High School pupil has a lifelong interest in computing and jumped at the chance to choose an FA in IT Software Development.

An opportunity to gain workplace experience while working towards a qualification at the same level as a Higher is perfect for the 17-year-old. He said:

“I was always planning to build a career in computer science and my Foundation Apprenticeship has reinforced that. I’m gaining work experience while working towards a recognised qualification and the idea of this really appealed to me.

“This is a calling for me, computing is my passion. I make computer programs as a hobby which allows me to build on the skills I’ve learned at work.”

Giffnock-based Goudham believes his work placement with Scottish Enterprise can put him ahead of the pack when it comes to applying for jobs in the highly competitive IT field.

He has also enjoyed his training away from school at Glasgow Clyde College and is considering choosing a Graduate Apprenticeship as his next step on the career ladder. Goudham said:

“My Foundation Apprenticeship has been amazing and counts as a Higher, therefore I’m getting the best of both worlds. I’ve been applying for Graduate Apprenticeships. I’d love the chance to take my apprenticeship further, gaining a degree while also working.

“My work placement at Scottish Enterprise is really interesting. I’ve been able to manage team meetings and lead on projects within the IT Software area. I have lots of new skills on my CV which will make me more employable.”

Scottish Enterprise Training Specialist Claire Shanks knows Goudham has high career ambitions and believes he has brought a touch of flair during his work placement. She said:

“Goudham loves interacting with people who already do the jobs that he’d like to do. It’s great for him to be able to see these people in action. Foundation Apprentices bring a fresh pair of eyes. They offer innovation and energy around the business.”



Scottish Enterprise

## Learner experience – Engineering

### Mia Pasquale - Cohort 4, shorter duration delivery model (1 year course)

Mia heard about Foundation Apprenticeships from her guidance teacher at East Kilbride's St Andrew's and St Brides High School.

Mia, from Jackton, liked the idea of doing something practical and chose an engineering Foundation Apprenticeship as one of her fifth-year subjects. She said:

"I've always liked working with my hands; working on car engines and things like that. I always knew that this would be the route I would go down. I got the opportunity to do the work experience part of my Foundation Apprenticeship at Coca Cola. It has been amazing, and every day is different. Everyone is happy to help, and I've learned a lot. It's also meant that I've been getting experience."

Mia has now applied for a Modern Apprenticeship in engineering at Coca Cola's College Milton factory. She said:

"I would say to anyone to think about doing a Foundation Apprenticeship in the area that they are interested in. You can't go wrong. If you are willing to work hard, put in the time and effort, a Foundation Apprenticeship is a great way to start your career."

Mia, who enjoys rock climbing and mountain biking in her spare time, is also part of Skills Development Scotland's latest campaign to encourage young people and parents to consider Foundation Apprenticeship. She and other young apprentices appear in television and online adverts.

Coca Cola's Professional Reliability Engineer, Brian Smith, is a former apprentice and he and his colleagues are all very happy to mentor and support people coming into their workplace. He said:

"It is great to have apprentices like Mia, who is always asking questions, in the business. We have three apprentices on site with us here. Apprentices bring enthusiasm, a different perspective and fresh eyes to what we do. I would say to any employer who might be considering taking on an apprentice to do it. They are keen and interested and bring a different approach."

**Coca-Cola**  
EUROPEAN PARTNERS





## Learner experience – Creative & Digital Media

### Connor Marshall and Megan Lee – Cohort 3, year 2

Two West Dunbartonshire secondary pupils are making airwaves through their Foundation Apprenticeships with a placement at radio station Clyde 1.

Connor Marshall and Megan Lee chose FAs in Creative and Digital Media which allow them to gain valuable workplace experience at Bauer Media Group.

Connor thinks his placement is the “highlight of the week” as he develops a range of audio and video editing skills. The 18-year-old said:

“I’d encourage anybody looking to build a career in the creative industries to choose an FA. It gives you a great head start and industry experience. The work placement has opened a lot of doors for me and I’ve gained practical experience. Once I saw the depth and range of skills we would cover, I knew the Foundation Apprenticeship was for me.”

Megan, 17, is aiming to follow in the footsteps of a long line of successful Scottish DJs by establishing herself as a full-time radio presenter. The Our Lady and Saint Patrick’s High School pupil said:

“I want to be a radio presenter. I’ve enjoyed making new friends and learning all these new skills which can be utilised in lots of media jobs. I’m hoping to stay in radio because I really enjoy this work. The FA has helped me decide this is the field I’d like to build my career in. I now have editing abilities as well as podcast production which I can offer to an employer.”

Bauer Academy Project Manager Martina Salveta believes the school pupils, who also train at West College Scotland, have slotted in perfectly as members of the team. She said:

“I love having Connor and Megan here. I wish there had been something like a Foundation Apprenticeship when I was at school. They’re treated as adults and have learned so many new skills.”



MEDIA GROUP

# Employers

Employers are an integral and necessary component of the successful design and delivery of Foundation Apprenticeships. Without employer buy-in and a willingness to offer placement opportunities for pupils, the FA would not be possible.

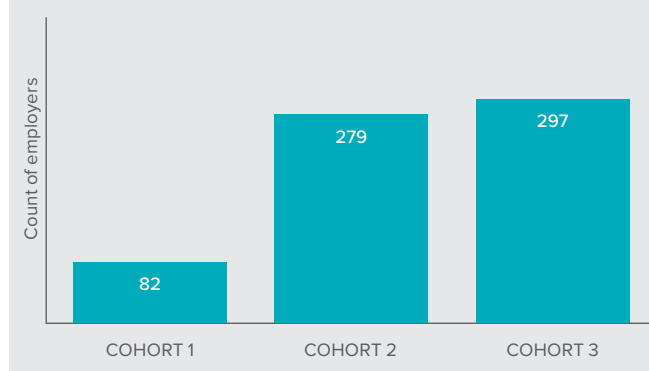
We are delighted that so many employers are supporting and benefitting from their involvement with Foundation Apprenticeships. We are also very pleased that a growing number of FA employers are returning to offer additional placements for senior phase pupils. As the number of pupils taking part grows, we will continue to work with new employers to foster increasing levels of support.

In Cohort 1, 82 employers offered FA placements, which grew to 279 in Cohort 2 and 297 in Cohort 3 – with a growing number of employers offering placements to more than one pupil in Cohort 3. As Cohort 4 is in its very early phase, participating employers have not yet been confirmed. These will be included in next year's report.

Table 15 shows the number of FA employers that support each FA framework.

As employers can offer placements on more than one framework (for example, an engineering company may support FAs in IT or scientific technologies, as well as engineering), the total number of frameworks supported exceeds the number of employers in each cohort.

**Figure 19**  
**No of FA employers, by cohort**



**Table 15**  
**No of FA employers by cohort and framework**

Framework	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3
Accountancy			13
Business Skills	*	36	39
Civil Engineering	14	33	25
Creative and Digital Media		22	53
Engineering	24	64	77
Financial Services	7	*	6
Food and Drink Technologies			6
IT: Hardware/System Support	*	18	19
IT: Software Development	12	49	30
Scientific Technologies		*	16
Social Services and Healthcare	24	38	45
Social Services Children and Young People	13	67	57
<b>Total</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>297</b>

Annex 7 provides a breakdown of employer support by school local authority. Employers can offer placements to pupils from different local authority areas and so the total number of school local authorities supported exceeds the number of employers in each cohort.

A broad variety of employers are engaging in the FA, offering pupils the opportunity to gain valuable work-based learning experience through work placements.

We are supported by all local authorities in their role as local employers, and they continue to be keen to support the FA as a clear pathway into some of their existing MA programmes. They are also significant providers of care services and have been very active in offering work placements for FAs undertaking the social care frameworks.

To give an idea of the range of employers and the frameworks they are supporting, a selection is listed:

- **Robertson Group**  
(engineering, business skills)
- **McTaggart Group**  
(engineering, creative & digital media)
- **Balfour Beatty**  
(civil engineering)
- **Scottish Enterprise**  
(financial services, creative & digital media, business skills, scientific technologies, IT software development)
- **Scottish Water**  
(engineering, business skills, scientific technologies)
- **Coca Cola**  
(engineering, food & drink technologies)
- **Network Rail**  
(engineering)
- **Fife Council**  
(social services)
- **AXA Insurance**  
(financial services)
- **Dell**  
(business skills)
- **Sparrows Offshore Group**  
(engineering, accountancy, business skills)
- **NHS**  
(scientific technologies, accountancy, business skills, engineering)

We do not currently record SIC code or additional company details for employers, so cannot provide a breakdown by sector or employer size. This is something that we will consider collecting in future.

### There are many reasons why employers get involved with FAs.

Employers reported the following reasons for participation:



**97%** reported that they participated in FAs to develop the young workforce

**81%** to improve sector image with young people

**80%** to improve ability to retain staff

**78%** to bring new knowledge and skills into business

**78%** to increase diversity in the workplace



### Employers value FAs

**85%** of employers are satisfied with FAs

**80%** reported that FAs improve sector image with young people

**74%** reported that FAs bring new knowledge and skills to the business

**69%** reported that FAs improve product or service quality

**97%** reported that they would consider using FAs in the future

## FA Employer – Arnold Clark

### IT: Software Development

Arnold Clark now offers all three types of Scottish Apprenticeships, recently taking on the Foundation Apprenticeship to support the digital needs of the business.

The business currently supports two IT Software Development Foundation Apprentices who gain hands-on experience at its Hillington headquarters.

Arnold Clark Early Careers Manager, Suzanne Sherry explained: “The company is historically known for fixing cars, but we have grown a massive outfit in software development at our head office to support sales and marketing and we have introduced Foundation Apprenticeships within this area.

Foundation Apprenticeships give us the opportunity to find new talent that will drive an essential and growing part of our business.

By introducing young people to the types of roles we offer at Arnold Clark, we can introduce them to the business and develop their skills to support our needs.”

For Arnold Clark, Foundation Apprenticeships provide a valuable opportunity to ensure that the business remains relevant with its customers and target market.

Suzanne explained: “In the business, we know the background of our customers and our aim is to employ staff that reflect this customer base. This means attracting young people from diverse backgrounds into Arnold Clark and Foundation Apprenticeships can help us do that.”

The company is keen to ensure that Foundation Apprentices have a career pathway within Arnold Clark.

“Our Foundation Apprentices have been able to see that there are progression opportunities within the business.

We want our Foundation Apprentices to develop, explore and be adventurous as they work through projects. Ultimately, we want to help them secure a positive outcome – potentially through a Modern or Graduate Apprenticeship with Arnold Clark.”

***“We want our Foundation Apprentices to develop, explore and be adventurous as they work through projects. Ultimately, we want to help them secure a positive outcome – potentially through a Modern or Graduate Apprenticeship with Arnold Clark.”***

**Suzanne Sherry**  
Arnold Clark Early Careers Manager

**Arnold Clark**

# FA Employer – Microsoft

## Business Skills

In 2019, Microsoft supported its first Foundation Apprenticeship opportunity, taking on a Business Skills Foundation Apprentice at its Edinburgh base.

Microsoft Country Regional Manager for Scotland, Steven Grier, wanted to support Foundation Apprentices to attract more talent into the business.

Steven explained: “We’ve had such an excellent experience with Modern and Graduate Apprentices, in terms of our early career contribution to the business.

When Foundation Apprenticeships came along Microsoft was keen to be involved. The FA offer hit a sweet spot in terms of timing – when young people were making career choices – and gave us the opportunity to introduce them to our workplace.”

The programme of experience Microsoft gives Foundation Apprentices is directly linked to what is required from the young person to complete their qualification, so the business ensures it meets the requirements of the modules set by the College.

Steven explained: “To make our Foundation Apprenticeship offer work we needed to make sure the right support was in place and give each young person experience of as many different areas of the business as possible.

We wanted to make sure our Foundation Apprentices were immersed in our culture and excited to be part of Microsoft.”

Steven added: “Taking on Foundation Apprentices has been fantastic. It’s great to have confident insights from young people in the business and helps with developing a positive culture.

Through Foundation Apprentices, we get current views on everything, making it good for diversity in the workplace and making us think about whether we are doing everything we need to do as an employer.” Microsoft plans to support more Foundation Apprentices on an annual basis.

Steven ended: “I would encourage other businesses to take part in all three apprenticeship offers as the benefits for employers, at least, match those gained by the apprentices.”

***“Taking on Foundation Apprentices has been fantastic. It’s great to have confident insights from young people in the business and helps with developing a positive culture.”***

**Steven Grier**  
Microsoft Country Regional Manager  
for Scotland



# System change

## Systemic change in education

FAs represent a fundamental change in the approach to offering industry-recognised, work-based learning in school – providing valuable skills and versatile qualifications.

Our ambition is to ensure that every school in Scotland can offer Foundation Apprenticeships as part of the senior phase curriculum, and that schools have the right mechanisms in place to ensure that there are no barriers for pupils choosing an FA as part of their subject choices. We want schools, pupils, parents and carers to recognise the FA as an equally valid and valuable qualification that all senior phase pupils should be entitled to access.

During the past year, SDS has been working closely with local authority education departments to ensure that there are effective partnerships with schools and Foundation Apprenticeship contract holders, increasing the reach to more young people.

There is now a more diverse range of delivery partners including colleges, independent learning providers, local authorities and individual schools providing work-based learning experiences across the 12 FA frameworks. There has been more collaboration, including an ever-increasing number of consortium arrangements between partner agencies, which evidences deeper levels of planning and review of senior phase provision, stimulated by Foundation Apprenticeships.

More and more schools are embedding Foundation Apprenticeships within subject choices processes for pupils in the senior phase, so that young people can consider how their portfolio of qualifications and skills can be developed. Pupils can now select from a wider range of qualifications at SCQF Level 6, combining work-based learning alongside their selection of National 4s and Highers.

We have more examples of faculty and subject teachers in schools working with college and learning provider colleagues to exchange knowledge with industry experts. This is helping to deepen understanding of industry challenges and to support the work-based learning aspects of Foundation Apprenticeships.

There continues to be strong emphasis on raising awareness for the people who have a significant influence over young peoples' learning and career decisions. Teachers, careers advisers, parents and carers actively support pupils to develop their career management skills. This means it is vital that we provide up to date, accurate information about the content and style of learning and teaching contained within Foundation Apprenticeships.

We have created an on-line CPD module for practitioners and established a modern promotions and marketing campaign, which outlines the benefits of Foundation Apprenticeships.

Flexible delivery models allow Foundation Apprenticeships to maintain a firm foothold within the senior phase, and we now have two year and shorter duration delivery models available.

This means that pupils can begin their Foundation Apprenticeships in S4, S5 or S6, and have a more adaptable means of obtaining a different mix of qualifications during their senior phase.

We aim to pilot some further flexibility within available delivery models, which would allow more creative timetabling of courses and more personalisation for pupils. We hope this will further extend the participation of disabled young people and other pupils who may not have previously had access to Foundation Apprenticeships.

Virtual learning is another pioneering delivery model being put to good use within Foundation Apprenticeships. Remote geographies are using digital solutions to deliver classroom-based activities across locations. We aim to further investigate the potential of virtual learning models to reduce logistical resources of transport and time and to consider wider equality of access for learners.

One of the most exciting aspects of Foundation Apprenticeships is the multiplicity of learner pathways, which can be followed. SDS has worked with industry experts and awarding bodies: SQA, AAT, ACCA alongside colleges, universities and other higher education institutions to ensure that the qualifications and work-based learning experiences incorporated within every Foundation Apprenticeship can lead to high quality progression into HNC/Ds, degrees, Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships.

Foundation Apprenticeships offer valuable recognised entry requirements to all these post school options. They can enhance any applicants' prospects of success and can accelerate progress within many of these options as, depending on the specialism, some of the future course content may already have been achieved. We aim to further develop recognition of prior learning procedures, so that there will be no unnecessary duplication of qualifications obtained throughout each learners' journey.

The 12 subject areas available within Foundation Apprenticeships have separately been awarded Insight Benchmarking Tool tariff points. This means that FA qualifications will be included in national data, which is used to report and track local authority and school attainment measures.

This is a highly progressive aspect of system change as it supports schools, local authorities, local and national government to evidence the significant contribution innovative work-based learning experiences make towards the SCQF level 6 achievements of learners, building on the international reputation of traditional qualifications such as Highers.

We are aiming for even greater developments that promote the parity of esteem between different learning, teaching and assessment methods, by championing the fundamental principles which underpin Foundation Apprenticeships.

### Systemic change in industry

Supporting the education system to embed work-based learning as part of the senior phase requires strong support from industry. The ambition to move from work-related, to work-based learning is a bold development which aims to better align elements of the education offer with the skills and requirements of the workforce.

Over the last 12 months, SDS has raised the profile of Foundation Apprenticeships across employer forums and groups. The work has spanned a diverse range of groups from the Creative Industry Skills Group to the Food and Drink People and Skills Group. The message has been delivered to employers from the very north to the very south of Scotland. Up and down the country SDS, stakeholders and partners have hosted roadshows, events and had individual conversations with employers. The result is that this year, more employers than ever have supported a Foundation Apprenticeship placement within their business and this trend looks set to continue.

Industry relevance is the cornerstone of an effective work-based learning system. Building on years of experience across the skills system, time and effort has been committed to ensuring that the 12 FA frameworks remain relevant to the roles they were designed for. Throughout the year, work has continued with employers and industry representatives to review the content and delivery. This confidence in the FA has resulted in an upward trend in employers returning to support work placements year on year.

Learning Providers have worked hard to refine and improve the employer experience and feedback this year highlights high levels of employer satisfaction. As the FA embeds in the education system, the scope to explore flexibilities within the model have created examples of innovation in the work placement.

Provider confidence has grown, and more examples of earlier employer engagement are emerging which support and encourage the learners.

The 12 FA frameworks focus on crucial occupations where skills shortages are predicated, however these are not sector specific. Diversity in the range of employers is essential to achieve the ambition of the FA. Employers from all sectors are required to support Foundation Apprenticeships and understand the value they bring to the skills system.

Work continues to ensure that FAs are better understood by the wider employer community. This diversity includes the size and scale of the employer and the geographic spread. Providing a national offer has required as much energy and effort in the Western Isles as in the central belt. Ensuring an equitable offer for all young people is a key driver for SDS.

Foundation Apprenticeships offer the opportunity to better prepare young people for the world of work. They support multiple pathways in to work, either directly through Modern or Graduate Apprenticeships or following additional learning. They provide young people with the core and meta skills that will support the Scottish Economy. They present employers with the chance to build and develop talent as well as showcasing their industry to the workforce of the future.

## Looking forward

We remain committed to providing more young people with the opportunity to start a Foundation Apprenticeship, as part of their senior phase curriculum. In the longer term, our ambition is to further expand Foundation Apprenticeships so that they are available in every school in Scotland and are an equal component of senior phase subject choices.

We have highlighted some of the challenges with effecting system change on such a broad scale, but the rewards of change outweigh these challenges. We can now evidence that apprenticeships deliver a phenomenal return for employers, for the Scottish economy and, most importantly, for the apprentices themselves.

We do recognise that to succeed, we need to engage every part of the education system to ensure that change can be achieved by working together.

Collectively, we are committed to making sure as many young people as possible have opportunity to select the FA, as a rewarding option, so that they can experience work-based learning at such an important point in their education. We recognise that the opportunity to learn in a different way, experiencing a real work environment and being able to contextualise theory with practical work-based learning can make a huge difference to the career choices and future pathways each learner might

consider.

Growth in uptake of FA opportunities has increased year on year and we continue to work with local authorities, regional colleges and other learning providers to improve accessibility of the FA and to get the right messages out to pupils, parents, schools and employers about the FA opportunities that are available to them.

This year, we will be placing greater focus on making improvements in FA delivery, addressing any issues that affect completion rates or the proportion of pupils who achieve their full FA qualification. We will also be working closely with learning providers to support them in developing flexible solutions to any specific issues that impede their ability to deliver.

Our on-going process of formative evaluation, as the FA matures, is helping to inform delivery and to expand the number of opportunities available for pupils across Scotland.

To ensure that these opportunities are realised, we rely on our partners to engage fully with the programme to help drive its success.

Further information about Foundation Apprenticeships, including additional learner case studies, can be found on our corporate website:

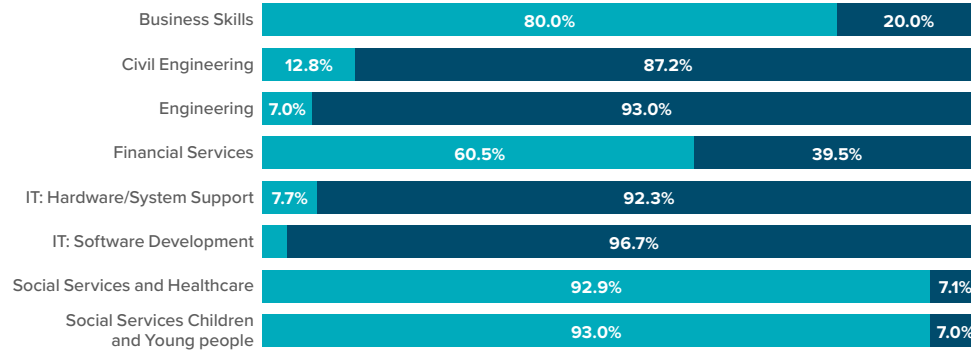
[www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/what-we-do/our-products/foundation-apprenticeships/](http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/what-we-do/our-products/foundation-apprenticeships/)

# Annex 1

## FA framework uptake by cohort and gender

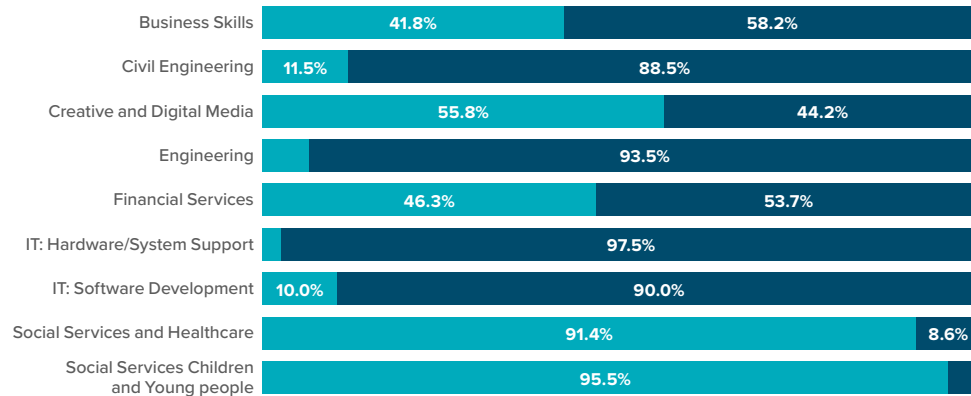
### Cohort 1

Female Male



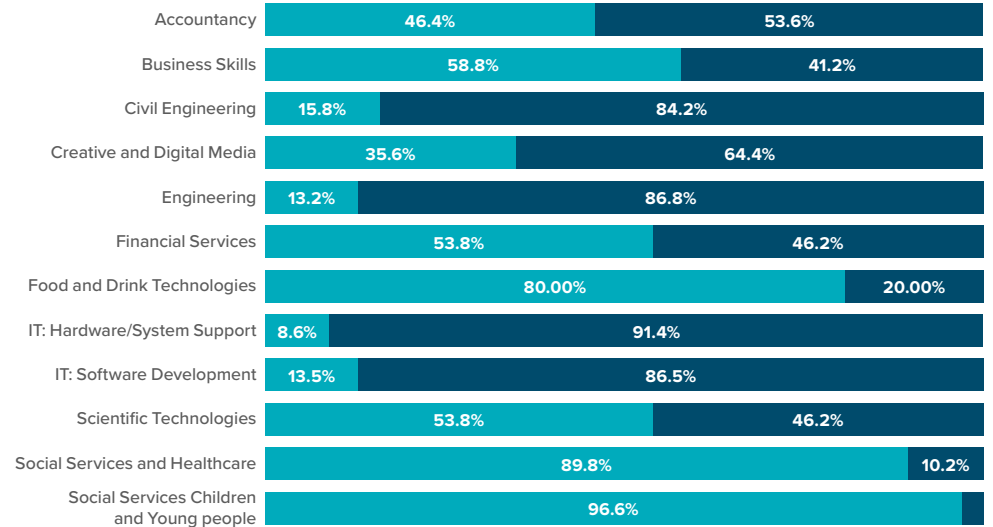
### Cohort 2

Female Male



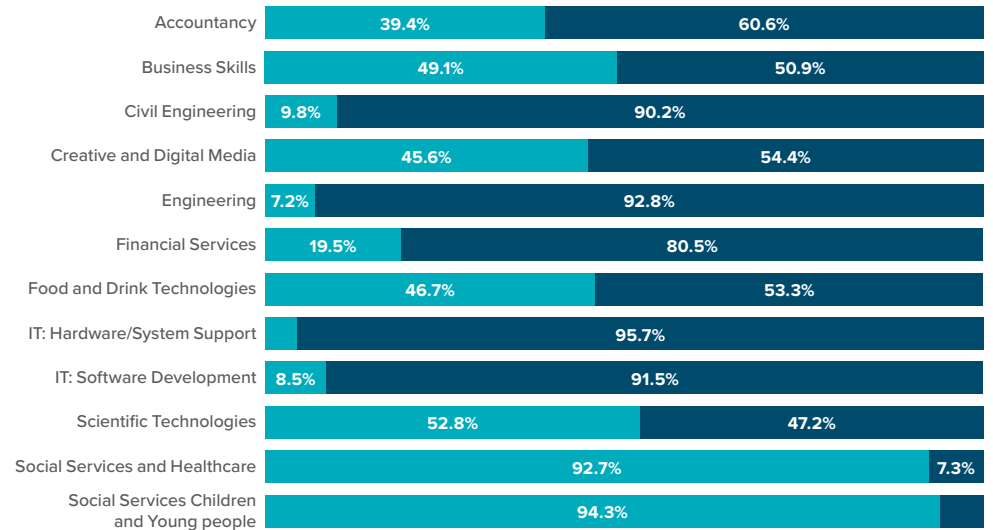
### Cohort 3

Female Male



### Cohort 4

Female Male



# Annex 2

## Framework uptake by cohort and delivery model

	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Cohort 4
<b>2 Years</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>1158</b>	<b>1426</b>	<b>2430</b>
Accountancy			28	82
Business Skills	5	58	85	201
Civil Engineering	47	86	84	151
Creative and Digital Media		39	128	223
Engineering	71	227	292	449
Financial Services	38	32	13	28
Food and Drink Technologies			10	54
IT: Hard-ware/System Support	13	31	23	51
IT: Software Development	30	129	104	160
Scientific Technologies		20	37	67
Social Services and Healthcare	85	97	160	280
Social Services Children and Young People	57	439	453	684
<b>SDDM</b>		<b>86</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>1015</b>
Accountancy				50
Business Skills		9	*	117
Civil Engineering		*	*	33
Creative and Digital Media		*	7	130
Engineering		5	12	20
Financial Services		22		13
Food and Drink Technologies				6
IT: Hardware/System Support		9	12	18
IT: Software Development		*		29
Scientific Technologies			*	41
Social Services and Healthcare		8	26	214
Social Services Children and Young People		27	48	344
<b>Total</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>1244</b>	<b>1535</b>	<b>3445</b>

## Annex 3

### FAs by local authority

Local Authority	Cohort 1		Cohort 2		Cohort 3		Cohort 4	
	Opportunities realised	In Training	Opportunities realised	In Training	Opportunities realised	In Training	Opportunities realised	In Training
Aberdeen City	*		31		24	17	95	93
Aberdeenshire	20		45		37	23	317	304
Angus	9		40		29	8	110	107
Argyll & Bute	*		7		9	3	66	63
Clackmannan-shire	*		*		39	31	68	68
Dumfries & Galloway			13		18	8	62	61
Dundee City	*		9		21	8	89	88
East Ayrshire			10		17	9	30	30
East Dunbartonshire	10		26		28	13	64	60
East Lothian	*		7		32	15	62	58
East Renfrewshire	7		47		66	43	61	60
Edinburgh, City of	14		33		43	26	147	141
Falkirk	16		16		77	45	199	199
Fife	27		239		167	93	205	193
Glasgow City	30		100		128	57	265	246
Highland	47		70		85	48	148	143
Inverclyde	22		31		31	13	13	12
Midlothian	*		17		6	*	53	50
Moray			24		29	17	72	68
Na h-Eileanan Siar	10		12		18	16	51	51
North Ayrshire	*		9		24	22	72	68
North Lanarkshire	27		204		210	138	457	450
Orkney Islands			*		5	*	22	21
Perth & Kinross	19		35		47	30	107	103
Renfrewshire	15		24		25	12	47	46
Scottish Borders			8				17	16
Shetland Islands	11		7		*	*	6	6
South Ayrshire	6		16		10	6	56	55
South Lanarkshire			46		141	77	256	248
Stirling	15		*		58	34	80	80
West Dunbartonshire	*		40		37	31	34	33
West Lothian	15		70		72	42	114	105
<b>Total</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1244</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1535</b>	<b>890</b>	<b>3445</b>	<b>3326</b>

## Annex 4

### Schools with pupils undertaking an FA

Local Authority	Cohort 1: % of schools in LA with FAs	Cohort 2: % of schools in LA with FAs	Cohort 3: % of schools in LA with FAs	Cohort 4: % of schools in LA with FAs
Aberdeen City	16.7%	83.3%	75.0%	100.0%
Aberdeenshire	23.6%	82.4%	70.6%	100.0%
Angus	50.0%	87.5%	75.0%	100.0%
Argyll & Bute	11.1%	22.2%	33.3%	77.8%
Clackmannanshire	33.3%	66.7%	100.0%	100.0%
Dumfries & Galloway	-	43.8%	43.8%	75.0%
Dundee City	25.0%	37.5%	87.5%	100.0%
East Ayrshire	-	55.6%	44.4%	87.5%
East Dunbartonshire	62.5%	87.5%	75.0%	100.0%
East Lothian	16.7%	33.3%	66.7%	100.0%
East Renfrewshire	28.6%	100.0%	100.0%	85.7%
Edinburgh, City of	17.4%	60.9%	65.2%	87.0%
Falkirk	62.5%	75.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Fife	44.4%	88.9%	100.0%	100.0%
Glasgow City	38.7%	67.7%	83.9%	93.5%
Highland	55.2%	69.0%	72.4%	96.6%
Inverclyde	83.3%	100.0%	100.0%	66.7%
Midlothian	16.7%	66.7%	66.7%	100.0%
Moray	-	87.5%	100.0%	100.0%
Na h-Eileanan Siar	25.0%	50.0%	50.0%	75.0%
North Ayrshire	22.2%	66.7%	88.9%	100.0%
North Lanarkshire	34.8%	82.6%	100.0%	100.0%
Orkney Islands	-	40.0%	20.0%	40.0%
Perth & Kinross	50.0%	60.0%	72.7%	81.8%
Renfrewshire	72.7%	72.7%	72.7%	81.8%
Scottish Borders	-	33.3%	-	66.7%
Shetland Islands	14.3%	14.3%	14.3%	14.3%
South Ayrshire	12.5%	50.0%	75.0%	100.0%
South Lanarkshire	-	70.6%	94.1%	94.1%
Stirling	100.0%	28.6%	100.0%	100.0%
West Dunbartonshire	16.7%	50.0%	100.0%	83.3%
West Lothian	45.5%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Total Number of schools delivering FA</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>325</b>

Note, the total number of maintained secondary schools in Scotland is: 358

## Annex 5

### Foundation Apprenticeship Group Award components – example frameworks

The Foundation Apprenticeship in Accountancy includes:

- A National Progression Award (NPA) in Accountancy at SCQF level 6
- Three units of the AAT Advanced Diploma in Accounting at SCQF level 6
- An ACCA Intermediate Certificate in Financial and Management Accounting
- A substantial work placement unit

Examples of course units include:

- **NPA**
  - Preparing management accounting information
- **Diploma**
  - Advanced bookkeeping
  - Final accounts preparation

The Foundation Apprenticeship in Civil Engineering includes:

- A National Certificate (NC) in Civil Engineering at SCQF level 6
- A minimum of one SVQ unit from Site Technical Support or Built Environment Design
- Registration with the Institute of Civil Engineering/professional institution
- A substantial work placement

Examples of course units include:

- **NC**
  - Civil Engineering materials
  - Civil engineering project
  - Computer aided drafting: an introduction
- **SVQ**
  - Develop and maintain working relationships and personal development in construction

The Foundation Apprenticeship in Creative and digital media includes:

- A National Progression Award (NPA) in Creative and digital media at SCQF level 6
- Part of a Diploma in Creative Digital Media at SCQF level 7
- A media project unit at SCQF level 6
- A substantial work placement

Examples of course units include:

- **NPA**
  - Create industries: an introduction – Scotland
  - Create industries: understanding a creative brief
- **Diploma**
  - Communicating using digital marketing/sales channels
  - Using digital and social media in marketing campaigns

The Foundation Apprenticeship in Social Services (Children and Young People) includes:

- A National Progression Award (NPA) in Social Services (Children and Young People) at SCQF level 6
- Four SVQ units at SCQF level 6 in Social Services (Children and Young People)
- A substantial work placement

Examples of course units include:

- **NPA**
  - Safeguarding of children and young people
  - Communication with children and young people
- **SVQ**
  - Develop your own knowledge and practice
  - Support the safeguarding of children

## Annex 6

### All destinations for all participants, cohorts 1-4

Destination	Cohort 1			Cohort 2			Cohort 3			Cohort 4		
	Achievers	Partial achievers	No achievement	Achievers	Partial achievers	No achievement	Achievers	Partial achievers	No achievement	Achievers	Partial achievers	No achievement
Other FA	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	-	-	-
Employment or MA	35	41	18	109	122	22	16	58	31	-	-	10
College	64	28	9	215	144	22	18	92	24	-	-	8
University	25	9	*	142	34	*	18	12	*	-	-	-
Other training	*	5	*	*	10	7	*	6	8	-	-	8
Remain in school	*	60	36	17	185	185	6	145	133	-	-	76
Not yet recorded	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	29	36	-	-	17
Unemployed	*	*	*	7	6	5	*	*	*	-	-	-
Unknown	*	*	*	*	5	*	*	*	*	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>493</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>119</b>
Still in training	0			0			890			3,326		
<b>Total Cohort</b>	<b>346</b>			<b>1,244</b>			<b>1,535</b>			<b>3,445</b>		

## Annex 7

### FA employers by school local authority

As employers can offer placements to pupils from schools in various local authority areas, they are likely to appear against more than one local authority area.

School Local Authority	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3
Aberdeen City	*	9	10
Aberdeenshire	*	7	16
Angus	*	12	8
Argyll & Bute	*	*	*
Clackmannanshire	*	*	7
Dumfries & Galloway		9	11
Dundee City	*	5	9
East Ayrshire		7	5
East Dunbartonshire	6	15	16
East Lothian	*	*	10
East Renfrewshire	*	20	27
Edinburgh, City of	*	13	14
Falkirk	*	5	7
Fife	5	32	26
Glasgow City	13	27	37
Highland	19	33	28
Inverclyde	6	13	8
Midlothian	*	9	*
Moray		13	15
Na h-Eileanan Siar	*	*	5
North Ayrshire	*	*	9
North Lanarkshire	6	26	30
Orkney Islands		*	*
Perth & Kinross	7	15	19
Renfrewshire	7	11	11
Scottish Borders		*	
Shetland Islands	*	5	*
South Ayrshire	*	7	5
South Lanarkshire		15	33
Stirling	*	*	9
West Dunbartonshire	*	14	15
West Lothian	7	24	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>297</b>

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