people:skills:jobs:

Department for Employment and Learning
www.delni.gov.uk

Statistical Bulletin: Essential Skills Enrolments and Outcomes - December 2010.

The Department for Employment and Learning Northern Ireland (DELNI) launched the Essential Skills for Living Strategy and action plan in April 2002. The Essential Skills for Living Strategy aims to improve adult literacy and numeracy (& now Information & Communication Technology (ICT)) in Northern Ireland. Essential Skills courses are free to participants, which is funded by DEL and delivered by accredited tutors working in Further Education (FE) Colleges, private training providers and community organisations.

This statistical bulletin has been produced by the Department for Employment and Learning in Northern Ireland (NI). The bulletin focuses on students enrolled in Essential Skills courses across Northern Ireland since the start of the strategy in 2002. It details the number of enrolments, their characteristics and numbers qualifying in Essential Skills courses.

Key Points

- Since the start of the strategy in 2002 there have been nearly 177,000 enrolments (nearly 84,000 individuals) in Essential Skills courses.

- During the academic year 2009/10 there were nearly 50,000 enrolments, the highest for any academic year to date.

- The majority of enrolments are within Literacy (49%), with Numeracy accounting for 42% and ICT for 9%.

- The majority (71%) of enrolments are within the age band 16-25.

- Those part-time employed or unemployed accounted for nearly three quarters of enrolments (71%).

- There is a majority for Males, in terms of enrolments, with 53%.

- 31% of all enrolments came from the most deprived quintile of Northern Ireland super output areas.

- There have been nearly 87,000 qualifications issued by awarding bodies since the strategy began.

- Literacy qualifications accounts for just over half (51%) of all qualifications issued by awarding bodies. Numeracy accounts for 45% while ICT is 5%.

- Overall the Essential Skills programme has a retention rate of 85%, and achievement rate of 58% and a success rate of 49%.

How many are participating?

There have been nearly 177,000 enrolment records (nearly 84,000 individuals) in Essential Skills courses since the Strategy began in 2002. As set out in Table 1 and Figure 1, the numbers have increased progressively within each academic year as the Strategy has been rolled out.

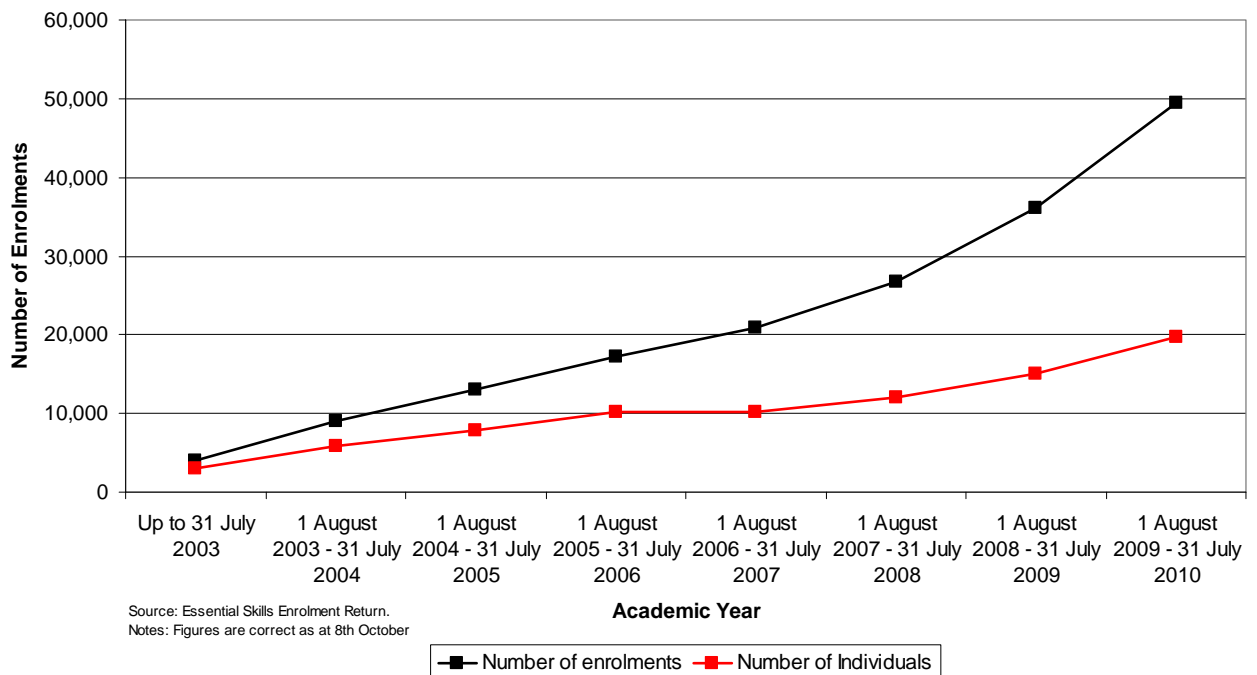**Table 1. Essential Skills enrolment by academic year.**

Academic Year	Number of enrolments	Number of Individuals
Up to 31 July 2003	4,008	3,022
1 August 2003 - 31 July 2004	9,077	5,869
1 August 2004 - 31 July 2005	13,054	7,912
1 August 2005 - 31 July 2006	17,259	10,147
1 August 2006 - 31 July 2007	20,811	10,272
1 August 2007 - 31 July 2008	26,712	12,028
1 August 2008 - 31 July 2009	36,175	14,968
1 August 2009 - 31 July 2010	49,515	19,683
Total	**176,611**	**83,901**

Source: Essential Skills Enrolment Return

Notes: Figures are correct as at 8th October 2010.

Individuals have been determined using name and date of birth and allocated to a particular academic year based on the start date of their first registration.

Figure 1: Number of Essential Skills Enrolments by Academic Year

Source: Essential Skills Enrolment Return.
Notes: Figures are correct as at 8th October

What are the characteristics of those participating?

Age

Table 2 and Figure 2 show the breakdown of the participants' age at the start of the course since the start of the Strategy. Nearly three quarters (71%) of the participants in Essential Skills courses are aged between16 – 25 years.
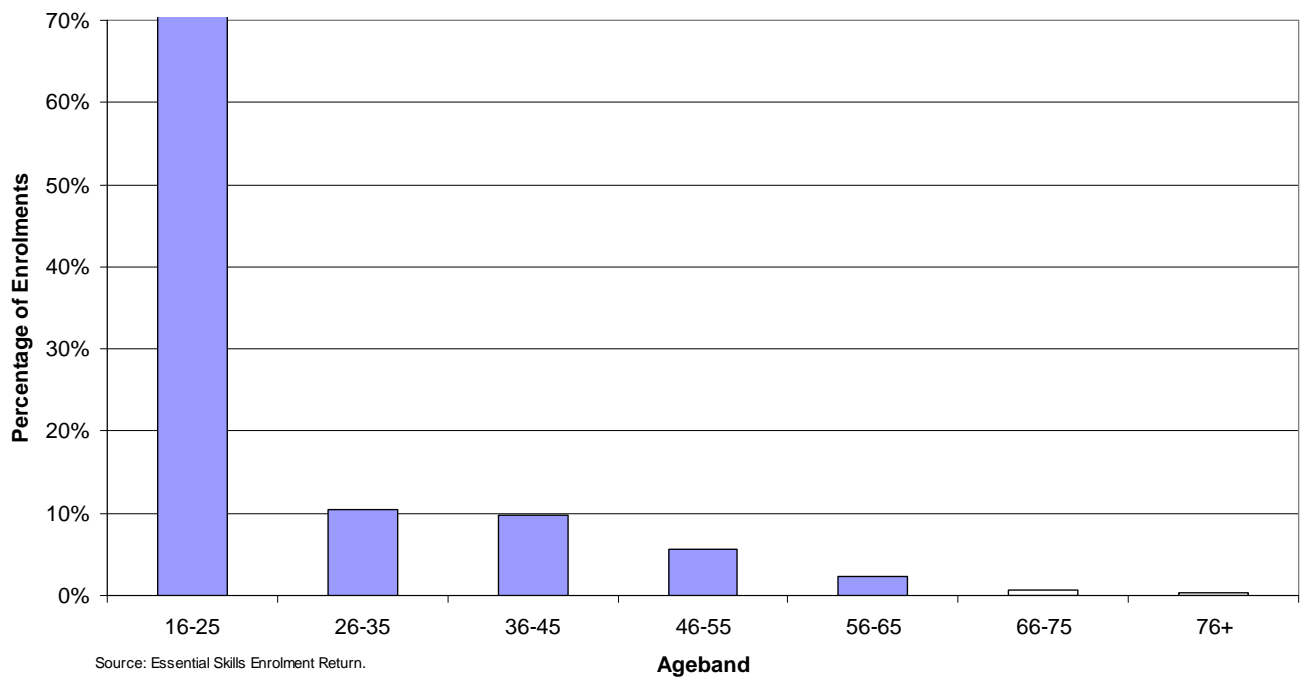
Table 2. Essential Skills enrolment by ageband and academic year.

Academic Year	Ageband								Number of enrolments
	16-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	66-75	76+	Unknown	
Up to 31 July 2003	1,374	975	800	384	130	44	241	60	4,008
1 August 2003 - 31 July 2004	4,685	1,691	1,399	690	341	106	31	134	9,077
1 August 2004 - 31 July 2005	6,354	2,365	2,292	1,251	507	123	15	147	13,054
1 August 2005 - 31 July 2006	11,036	2,150	2,241	1,166	513	112	11	30	17,259
1 August 2006 - 31 July 2007	16,302	1,669	1,585	823	321	55	13	43	20,811
1 August 2007 - 31 July 2008	22,643	1,526	1,432	735	287	49	6	34	26,712
1 August 2008 - 31 July 2009	26,916	3,505	3,210	1,854	556	99	27	8	36,175
1 August 2009 - 31 July 2010	35,485	4,489	4,398	2,924	1,382	627	156	54	49,515
Total	**124,795**	**18,370**	**17,357**	**9,827**	**4,037**	**1,215**	**500**	**510**	**176,611**

Source: Essential Skills Enrolment Return

Notes: Figures are correct as at 8th October 2010.

Figure 2: Essential Skills Enrolments by Ageband

Source: Essential Skills Enrolment Return.
Notes: Figures are correct as at 8th October

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Employment Status

The bulk of participants are in part-time employment, with 49% of all enrolments in this category. This 'part-time employment' group includes most of the 16-19 cohort, with 71% of all those in part-time employment within this age band. There are also a high proportion of enrolments who have registered as being unemployed (22%) or economically inactive (17%). This is positive, in that the Strategy appears to be targeting those on the lowest rung of the skills ladder.
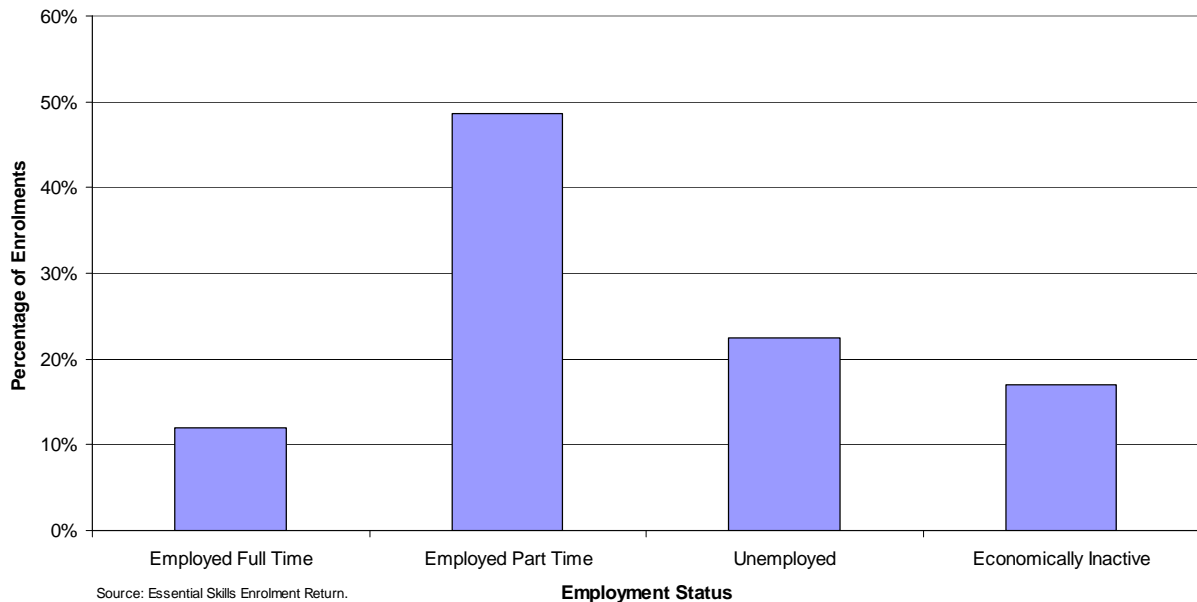
Table 3. Essential Skills enrolments by employment status and academic year.

Academic Year	Employment Status					Number of enrolments
	Employed Full Time	Employed Part Time	Unemployed	Economically Inactive	Unknown	
Up to 31 July 2003	1,082	383	961	514	1,068	4,008
1 August 2003 - 31 July 2004	1,634	2,748	1,753	952	1,990	9,077
1 August 2004 - 31 July 2005	2,134	3,552	2,434	1,434	3,500	13,054
1 August 2005 - 31 July 2006	2,213	4,964	3,328	3,160	3,594	17,259
1 August 2006 - 31 July 2007	1,799	8,013	3,996	3,018	3,985	20,811
1 August 2007 - 31 July 2008	2,629	11,960	4,693	3,659	3,771	26,712
1 August 2008 - 31 July 2009	3,012	18,940	6,714	4,476	3,033	36,175
1 August 2009 - 31 July 2010	3,303	22,211	9,587	8,211	6,203	49,515
Total	**17,806**	**72,771**	**33,466**	**25,424**	**27,144**	**176,611**

Source: Essential Skills Enrolment Return

Notes: Figures are correct as at 8th October 2010.

Figure 3: Essential Skills Enrolment by Employment Status

Source: Essential Skills Enrolment Return.
Notes: Figures are correct as at 8th October 2010.
Percentages are calculated where 'Employment Status' is known.

Community Background

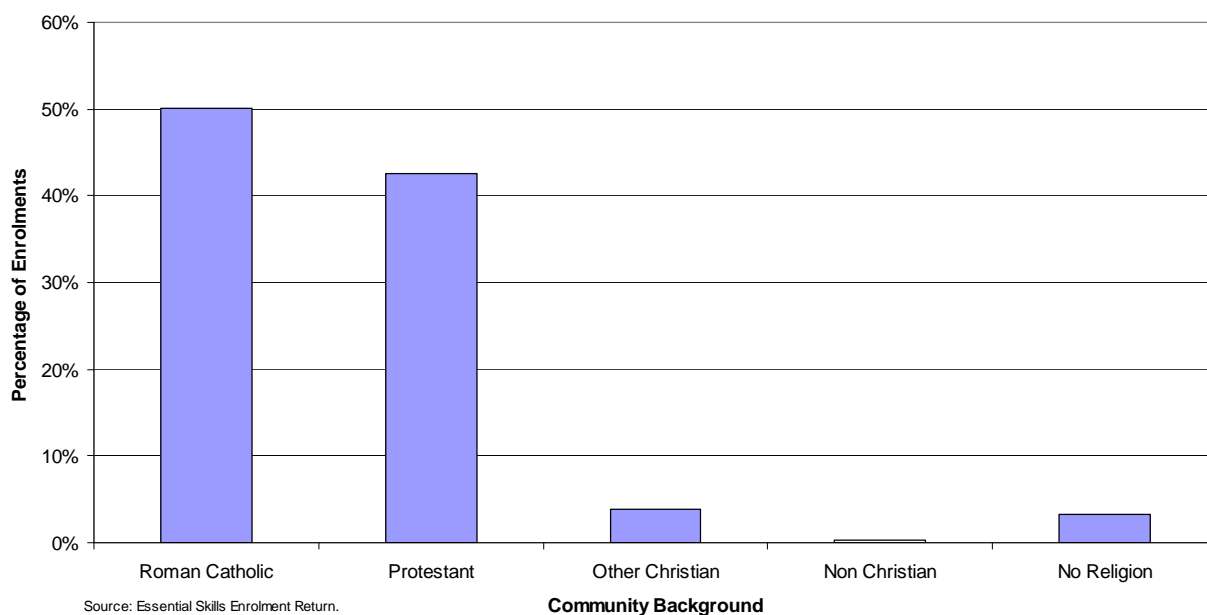There is an approximate even split across the two main religious denominations in NI, with a slight Catholic majority.

Table 4. Essential Skills enrolments by Community background and academic year.

Academic Year	Community Background						Number of enrolments
	Roman Catholic	Protestant	Other Christian	Non Christian	No Religion	Not Known	
Up to 31 July 2003	1,355	1,054	113	27	201	1,258	4,008
1 August 2003 - 31 July 2004	3,105	2,436	367	30	164	2,975	9,077
1 August 2004 - 31 July 2005	4,249	3,402	498	30	681	4,194	13,054
1 August 2005 - 31 July 2006	6,554	5,629	490	48	542	3,996	17,259
1 August 2006 - 31 July 2007	7,875	6,809	410	61	500	5,156	20,811
1 August 2007 - 31 July 2008	11,388	9,236	407	68	549	5,064	26,712
1 August 2008 - 31 July 2009	13,271	11,814	1,818	62	761	8,449	36,175
1 August 2009 - 31 July 2010	20,029	17,153	1,047	109	1,056	10,121	49,515
Total	**67,826**	**57,533**	**5,150**	**435**	**4,454**	**41,213**	**176,611**

Source: Essential Skills Enrolment Return

Notes: Figures are correct as at 8th October 2010.

Figure 4: Essential Skills Enrolments by Community Background

Source: Essential Skills Enrolment Return.
Notes: Figures are correct as at 8th October 2010.
Percentages are calculated where 'Community Backgrounds' is known.

Gender

Gender breakdown remained evenly split over the first few years. Interestingly since 2006/07, male enrolments have been the majority. In the last academic year males accounted for 53% of enrolments. This is actually the inverse for those enrolled in Professional & Technical subjects within Further Education Colleges (51% female, FESR, 2008/09).
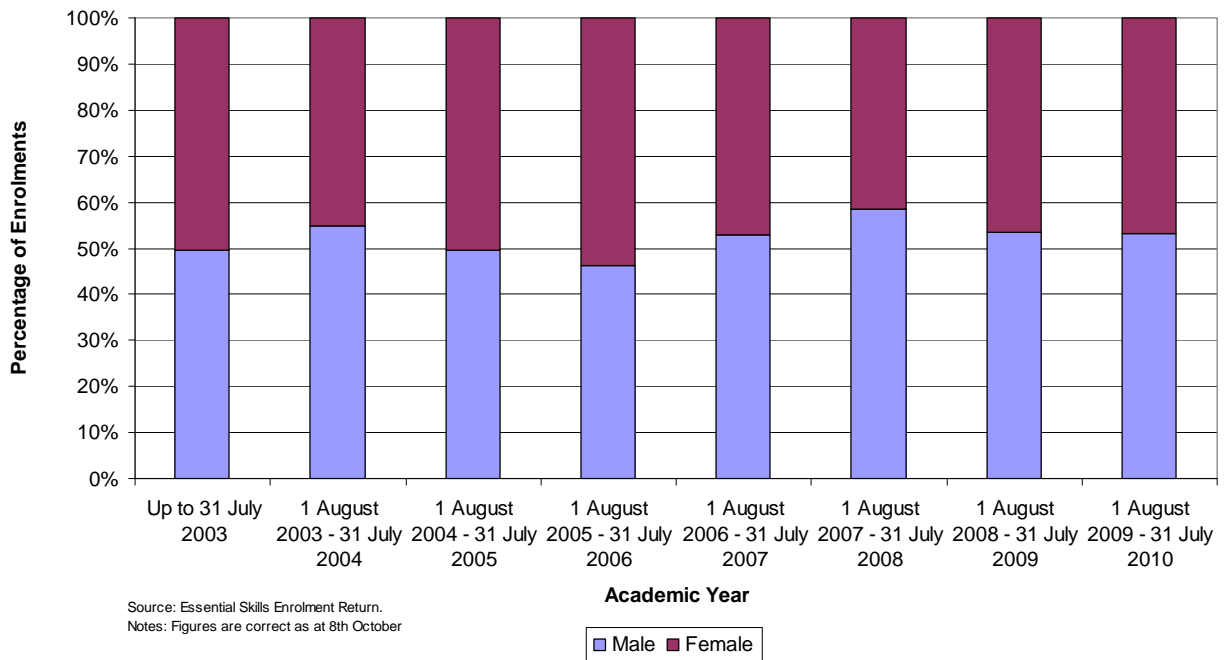
Table 5. Essential Skills enrolments by gender and academic year.

	Gender		Number of enrolments
Academic Year	**Male**	**Female**	
Up to 31 July 2003	1,991	2,017	4,008
1 August 2003 - 31 July 2004	4,978	4,099	9,077
1 August 2004 - 31 July 2005	6,483	6,571	13,054
1 August 2005 - 31 July 2006	7,962	9,297	17,259
1 August 2006 - 31 July 2007	11,021	9,790	20,811
1 August 2007 - 31 July 2008	15,631	11,081	26,712
1 August 2008 - 31 July 2009	19,357	16,818	36,175
1 August 2009 - 31 July 2010	26,334	23,181	49,515
Total	**93,757**	**82,854**	**176,611**

Source: Essential Skills Enrolment Return

Notes: Figures are correct as at 8th October 2010.

Figure 5: Essential Skills Enrolments by Gender and Academic Year

Source: Essential Skills Enrolment Return.
Notes: Figures are correct as at 8th October

Deprivation Analysis

Table 6 and Figure 6 show the number and percentage of Essential Skill enrolments within each quintile of super output areas (SOA) respectively, in terms of deprivation levels. The analysis has correlated the NI Multiple Deprivation Measure[1] against the SOA the participant has indicated where they are from (based on their postcode) upon enrolment. It is encouraging that people from the most deprived SOAs are engaging and enrolling in Essential Skills courses. The graph illustrates that 31% of all ES enrolments are within the most deprived quintile of SOAs.
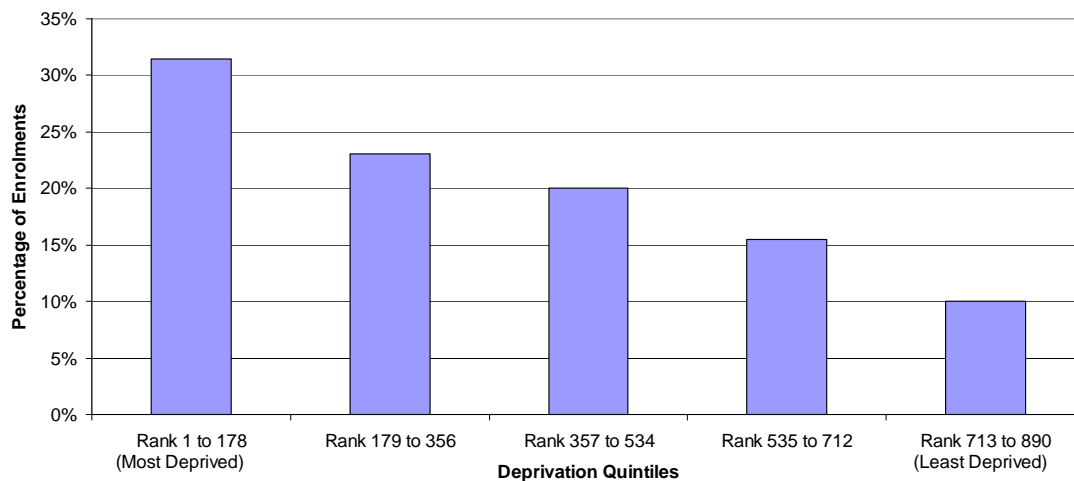
Table 6. Essential Skills enrolments by SOA quintile and academic year.

	SOA MDM Quintile						
Academic Year	Rank 1 to 178	Rank 179 to 356	Rank 357 to 534	Rank 535 to 712	Rank 713 to 890	Not Known	Number of enrolments
Up to 31 July 2003	1,184	810	622	580	297	515	4,008
1 August 2003 - 31 July 2004	2,700	1,982	1,772	1,312	824	487	9,077
1 August 2004 - 31 July 2005	4,205	2,838	2,576	1,710	1,169	556	13,054
1 August 2005 - 31 July 2006	5,264	3,896	3,305	2,552	1,590	652	17,259
1 August 2006 - 31 July 2007	6,928	4,785	3,819	2,918	1,950	411	20,811
1 August 2007 - 31 July 2008	8,464	5,880	5,280	4,114	2,483	491	26,712
1 August 2008 - 31 July 2009	10,992	8,226	7,201	5,505	3,614	637	36,175
1 August 2009 - 31 July 2010	14,177	11,093	9,721	7,929	5,303	1,292	49,515
Total	**53,914**	**39,510**	**34,296**	**26,620**	**17,230**	**5,041**	**176,611**

Source: Essential Skills Enrolment Return

Notes: Figures are correct as at 8th October 2010.

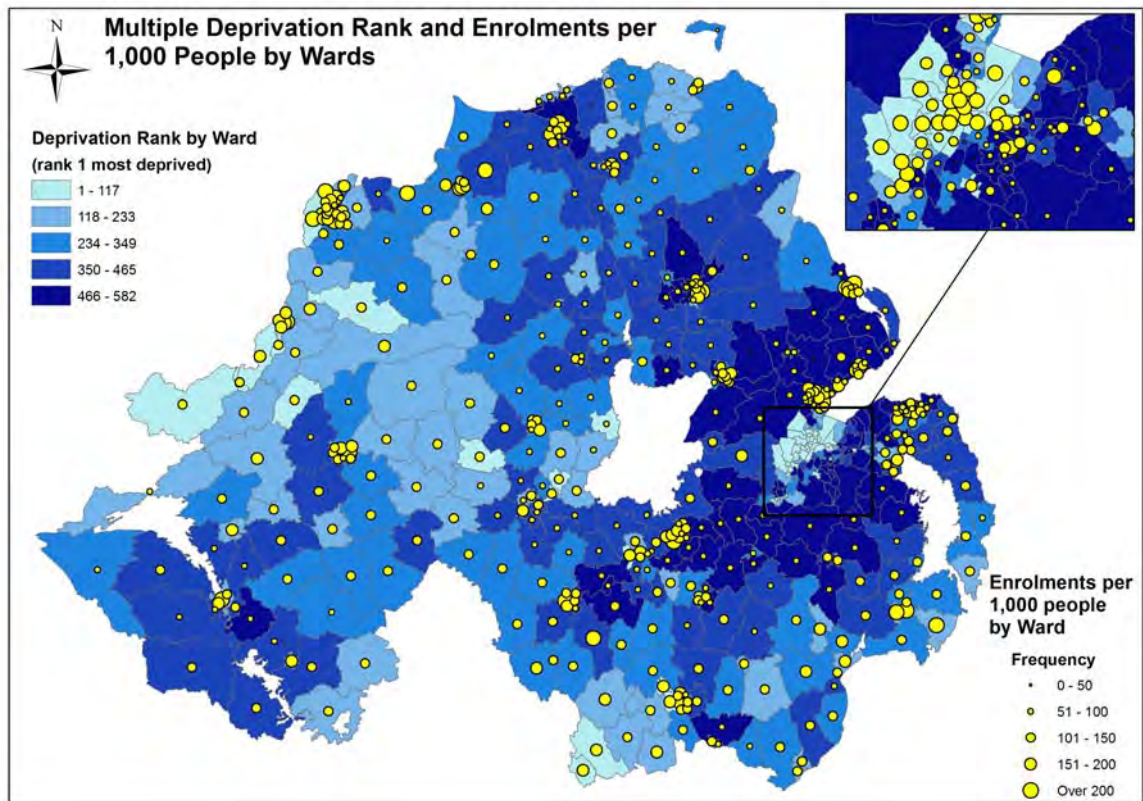**Figure 6: Essential Skills Enrolments by NI Multiple Deprivation Rank of Super Output Areas**

Source: Essential Skills Enrolment Return.
Notes: Figures are correct as at 8th October 2010.
Percentages are calculated where 'Postcode' is known.

[1] Information about the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure can be found at www.nisra.gov.uk

The map Figure 7, illustrates where the individuals are from, based on their postcode, and enrolling in Essential Skills courses in relation to the varying deprivation level of the wards within Northern Ireland. The number of enrolments per 1,000 of the population for each ward in Northern Ireland was mapped on top of the quintiles of wards in terms of their NI Multiple Deprivation Measure.

Figure 7: Quintiles of NI Multiple Deprivation Measure and Essential Skills enrolments per 1,000 of the population for each ward.

Source: Essential Skills Enrolment Return

Notes: Figures are correct as at 8th October 2010.

Only known postcodes are included in this analysis.

What courses are being studied?

There has been a shift in the most recent years from Literacy to Numeracy, resulting in an approximate balance in the courses that are being enrolled on. As can be seen in Figure 8, the most recent academic year indicates Literacy accounts for 39% and Numeracy 36% of Essential Skills enrolments. ICT enrolments are also accounted for as the full programme began rolling out in August 2009, accounting for 25% of enrolments in the last academic year.
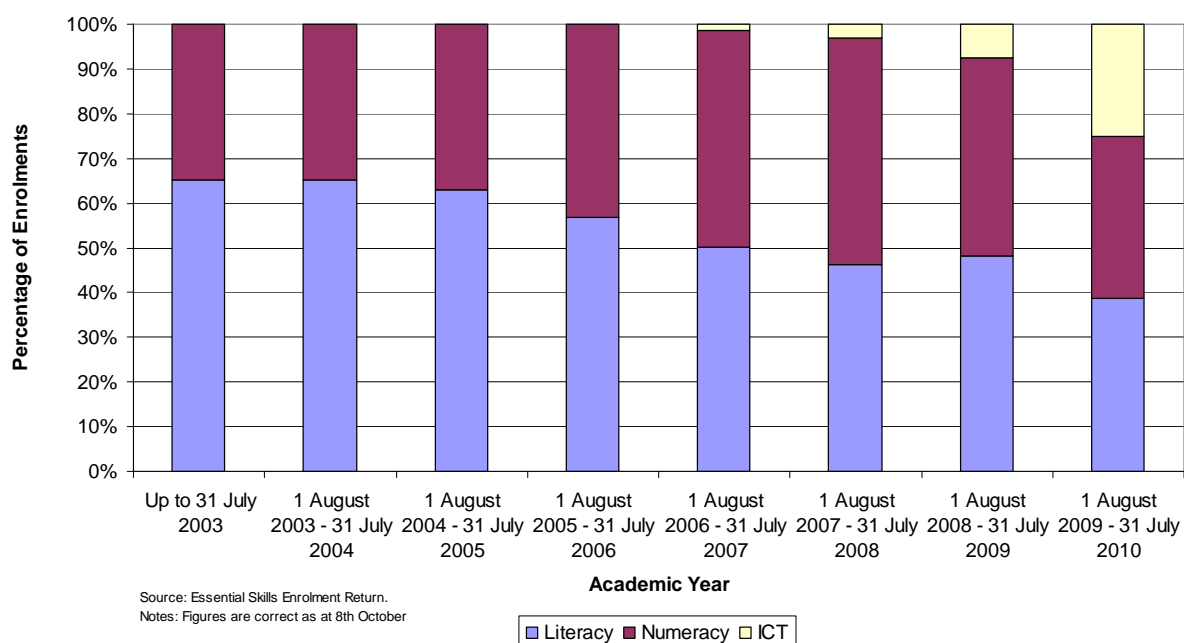
Table 7. Essential Skills enrolments by subject and academic year.

Academic Year	Subject			Number of enrolments
	Literacy	Numeracy	ICT	
Up to 31 July 2003	2,607	1,401	0	4,008
1 August 2003 - 31 July 2004	5,921	3,156	0	9,077
1 August 2004 - 31 July 2005	8,210	4,844	0	13,054
1 August 2005 - 31 July 2006	9,822	7,437	0	17,259
1 August 2006 - 31 July 2007	10,420	10,130	261	20,811
1 August 2007 - 31 July 2008	12,327	13,593	792	26,712
1 August 2008 - 31 July 2009	17,394	16,011	2,770	36,175
1 August 2009 - 31 July 2010	19,224	17,843	12,448	49,515
Total	**85,925**	**74,415**	**16,271**	**176,611**

Source: Essential Skills Enrolment Return

Notes: Figures are correct as at 8th October 2010.

Figure 8: Essential Skills Enrolments by Subject and Academic Year

Source: Essential Skills Enrolment Return.
Notes: Figures are correct as at 8th October

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Where are the courses being studied?

The main delivery of Essential Skills course has occurred within FE Colleges, accounting for 69% of all registered enrolments since 2002.

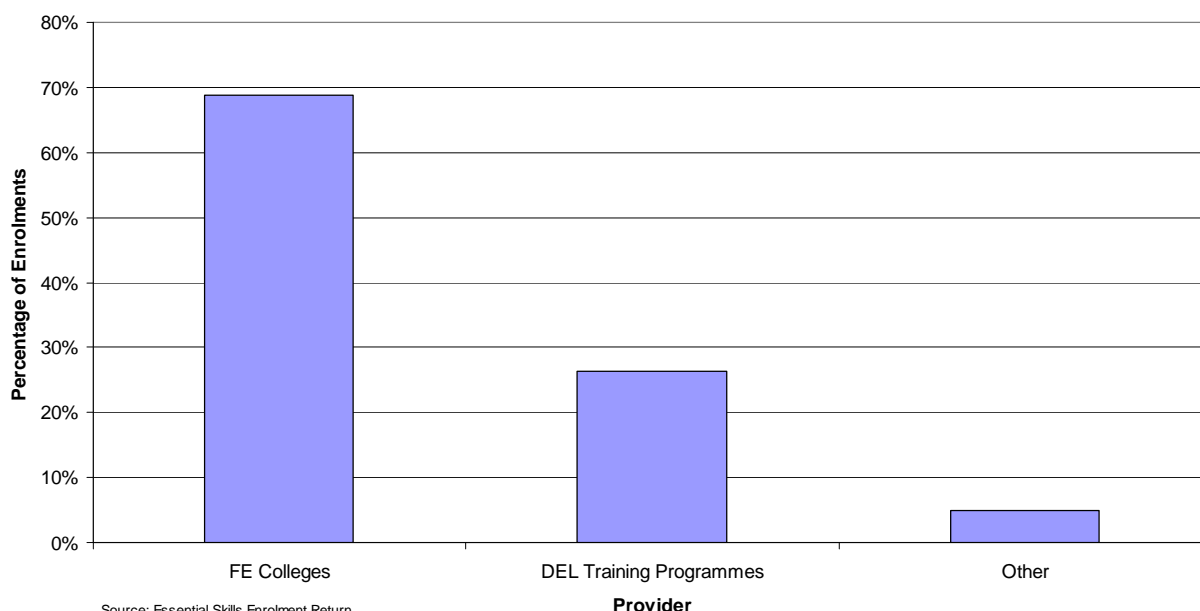**Table 8. Essential Skills enrolments by Provider and academic year.**

Academic Year	Provider			Number of enrolments
	FE Colleges	DEL Training Programmes	Other	
Up to 31 July 2003	3,700	52	256	4,008
1 August 2003 - 31 July 2004	6,177	1,781	1,119	9,077
1 August 2004 - 31 July 2005	8,469	2,095	2,490	13,054
1 August 2005 - 31 July 2006	11,853	2,938	2,468	17,259
1 August 2006 - 31 July 2007	13,985	5,655	1,171	20,811
1 August 2007 - 31 July 2008	18,361	7,331	1,020	26,712
1 August 2008 - 31 July 2009	23,992	12,183	0	36,175
1 August 2009 - 31 July 2010	34,931	14,584	0	49,515
Total	**121,468**	**46,619**	**8,524**	**176,611**

Source: Essential Skills Enrolment Return

Notes: Figures are correct as at 8th October 2010.

The category 'Other' includes enrolments registered against Proteus, Workers Education Association, EGSA and the Ulster People's College.

Figure 9: Essential Skills Enrolments by Provider

Source: Essential Skills Enrolment Return.
Notes: Figures are correct as at 8th October 2010.
The category 'Other' includes enrolments registered against Proteus, Workers Education Association, EGSA and the Ulster People's College.

Number of Qualifications

Information from the Awarding Bodies indicates that there have been nearly 87,000 qualifications issued in Essential Skills since the Strategy began nearly eight years ago. As can be seen from Table 9 and Figure 10, the number of qualifications issued has increased progressively within each academic year.
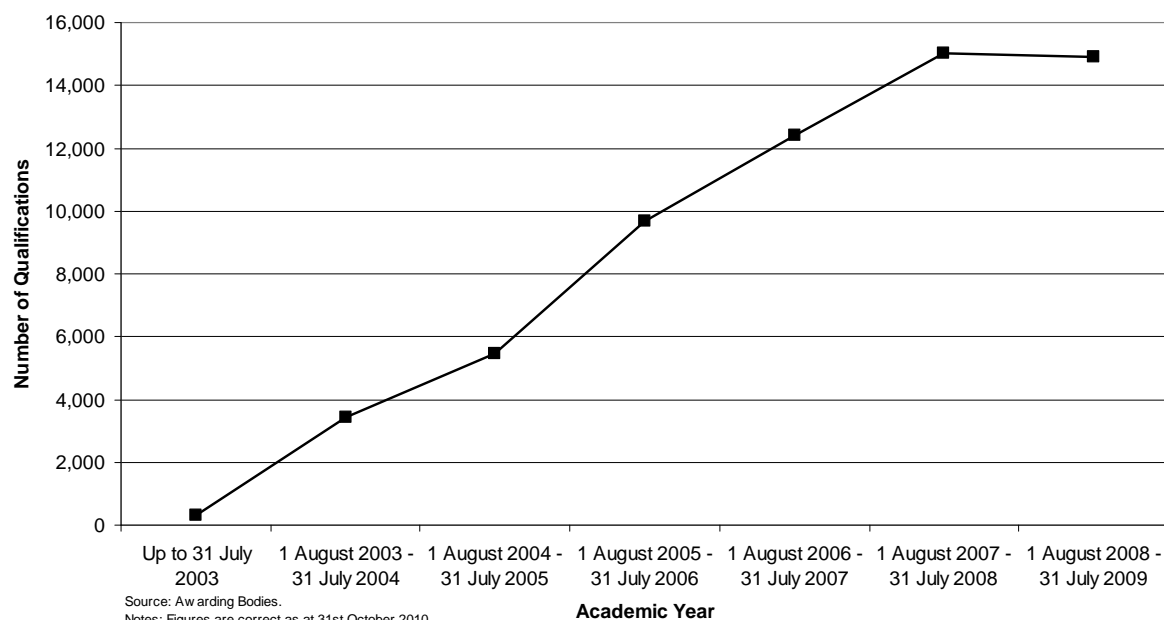
Table 9. Essential Skills qualifications by academic year.

Academic Year	Number of qualifications
Up to 31 July 2003	316
1 August 2003 - 31 July 2004	3,445
1 August 2004 - 31 July 2005	5,463
1 August 2005 - 31 July 2006	9,697
1 August 2006 - 31 July 2007	12,428
1 August 2007 - 31 July 2008	15,013
1 August 2008 - 31 July 2009	14,922
1 August 2009 - 31 July 2010	25,339
Total	**86,623**

Source: Awarding Bodies

Notes: Figures are correct as at 31st October 2010.

Figure 10: Essential Skills Qualifications Issued by Academic Year

Source: Awarding Bodies.
Notes: Figures are correct as at 31st October 2010.

Achievements by subject

The trend of enrolments shifting in the most recent years from Literacy to Numeracy, is also reflected in the achievements within Essential Skills by subject. Figure 11 illustrates this trend. In the most recent academic year Literacy accounted for 45% and Numeracy 42% of Essential Skills qualifications issued. ICT qualifications accounted for 13% of qualifications issued in the last academic year.
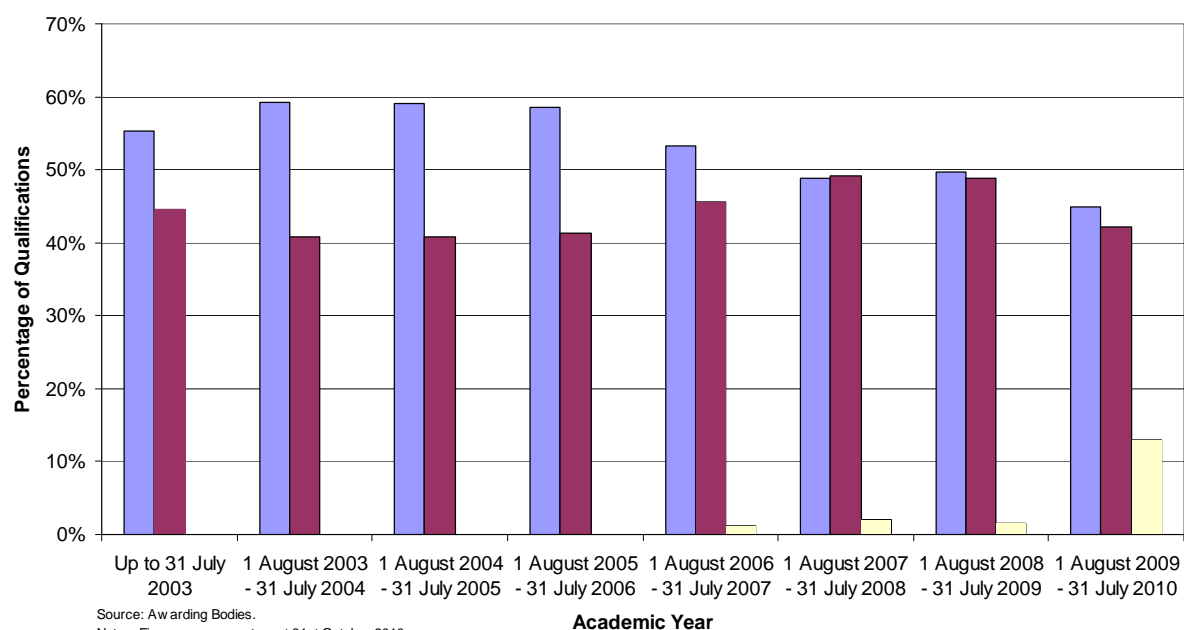
Table 10. Essential Skills qualifications by subject and academic year.

Academic Year	Subject			Number of qualifications
	Literacy	Numeracy	ICT	
Up to 31 July 2003	175	141	0	316
1 August 2003 - 31 July 2004	2,042	1,403	0	3,445
1 August 2004 - 31 July 2005	3,231	2,232	0	5,463
1 August 2005 - 31 July 2006	5,686	4,011	0	9,697
1 August 2006 - 31 July 2007	6,628	5,655	145	12,428
1 August 2007 - 31 July 2008	7,329	7,379	305	15,013
1 August 2008 - 31 July 2009	7,401	7,282	239	14,922
1 August 2009 - 31 July 2010	11,392	10,672	3,275	25,339
Total	**43,884**	**38,775**	**3,964**	**86,623**

Source: Awarding Bodies

Notes: Figures are correct as at 31st October 2010.

Figure 11: Essential Skills Qualifications by Subject and Academic Year

Source: Awarding Bodies.
Notes: Figures are correct as at 31st October 2010.

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Achievements by level

Figure 12 illustrates the number qualifications within each level of Essential Skills which have been issued by awarding bodies. It shows that the majority of qualifications are at Level 1, accounting for 35% of all qualifications.
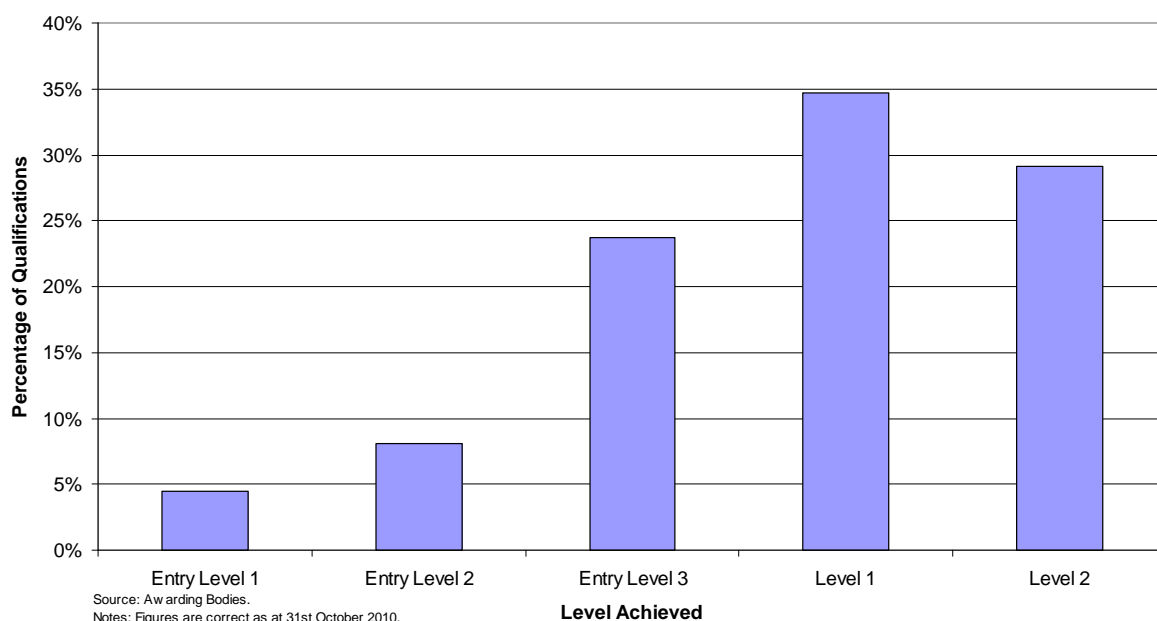
Table 11. Essential Skills qualifications by level and academic year.

Academic Year	Level Achieved					Number of qualifications
	Entry Level 1	Entry Level 2	Entry Level 3	Level 1	Level 2	
Up to 31 July 2003	0	0	0	238	78	316
1 August 2003 - 31 July 2004	381	455	834	1,484	291	3,445
1 August 2004 - 31 July 2005	741	985	2,849	689	199	5,463
1 August 2005 - 31 July 2006	773	1,339	3,625	2,634	1,326	9,697
1 August 2006 - 31 July 2007	655	1,163	3,433	4,232	2,945	12,428
1 August 2007 - 31 July 2008	582	1,200	3,560	5,007	4,664	15,013
1 August 2008 - 31 July 2009	326	913	3,077	5,227	5,379	14,922
1 August 2009 - 31 July 2010	393	917	3,131	10,534	10,364	25,339
Total	**3,851**	**6,972**	**20,509**	**30,045**	**25,246**	**86,623**

Source: Awarding Bodies

Notes: Figures are correct as at 31st October 2010.

Figure 12: Essential Skills Qualifications by Level Achieved

Source: Awarding Bodies.
Notes: Figures are correct as at 31st October 2010.

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Performance

Over the course of the strategy the retention rate within Essential Skills courses is very high at 85%. The achievement rate within Essential Skills courses is 58% while the success rate is 49%. Over a tenth (14%) of those qualifying are 'progressing' within an Literacy or Numeracy Essential Skills programme. The progression rate is an indicator of those who qualify at least twice within a specific subject area and obtain a level higher than before.

Table 12. Essential Skills performance indicators by subject.

Subject	Performance Indicator			
	Retention rate	**Achievement rate**	**Success rate**	**Progression rate**
Literacy	85%	61%	51%	14%
Numeracy	85%	61%	52%	14%
ICT	86%	28%	25%	2%
All Subjects	**85%**	**58%**	**49%**	**N/A**

Source: Essential Skills Enrolment Return; Awarding Bodies

Notes: Enrolments figures are correct as at 8th October 2010.

Qualifications figures are correct as at 31st October 2010.

Further details into how these percentages are calculated are available in Annex 1.

N/A – Not Applicable.

Assessment against Public Service Agreement (PSA) 2 Indicator 4

Table 13 details the previous and current PSA 2 Indicator 4 targets for Essential Skills set by the Department and the outcome and current position against these targets.

Table 13: Outcome/Position against PSA 2 Indictor 4 for Essential Skills

PSA Target for learners[1] achieving an Essential Skills Qualification	Outcome/Position on learners who achieved an Essential Skills Qualification
For 18,500 learners by 31st March 2007	As at 31st March 2007 22,162 learners
For a further 10,500 learners by 31st March 2008	As at 31st March 2008 a further 10,266 learners
For a further 42,000 learners by 31st March 2011	As at 31st October 2010 a further 47,959 learners

Source: Awarding Bodies

Notes: Figures are correct as at 31st October 2010.

Any qualifications within ICT (204) prior to 1st April 2008 are not included within the totals, as it was not part of the Department's Essential Skills Public Service Agreement target until 1st April 2008, which is based on the number of l0H1Hearners.

The current and third PSA Target, covering the next three years, has set a further 42,000 learners[1] to achieve an Essential Skills qualification (Literacy, Numeracy and ICT) by 31st March 2011. This current PSA target has been exceeded (as at 31st October 2010) 47,959 adult learners had achieved an Essential Skills qualification.

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1 **1 In calculating the number of 'learners', the number of individuals within each subject area (Literacy, Numeracy or ICT) is determined. If someone has achieved multiple levels within a specific subject area (Literacy, Numeracy or ICT) then the earliest level achieved is kept for the analysis. Once the number of individuals within each subject area (Literacy, Numeracy or ICT) is obtained, then these figures are added to together to reach the total number of 'learners'.**

Technical Notes

1. The source of the enrolment information is the Essential Skills enrolment return provided by all providers of the Essential Skills courses.

2. Essential Skills enrolment return lists the enrolment records which are assigned to a particular provider and returned to the Department. Through a process, detailed in the guidance 'Defining an Essential Skills enrolment', these records are analysed to determine the total number of Essential Skills enrolments.

3. Further Education colleges have indicated that there a number of Essential Skills enrolments which were collated on a paper basis and registered with awarding bodies but would never have been recorded on a computerised enrolment management system during the academic year 2002/03. Consequently these enrolments are not available and not included in this analysis.

4. The enrolment information is correct as at 8th October 2010. A small number of erroneous records are excluded from the Essential Skills enrolment database. Therefore figures are provisional are therefore subject to change.

5. The source of the qualification information is the monthly data provided by the awarding bodies.

6. The qualification information is correct as at 31st October 2010.

7. Due to ongoing technical issues with the reporting of qualifications by the awarding body CCEA, therefore figures can only be regarded as provisional and are subject to change.

8. Any qualifications within ICT (204) prior to 1st April 2008 are not included within the totals, as it was not part of the Department's Essential Skills Public Service Agreement target until 1st April 2008, which is based on the number of learners.

9. An academic year for this analysis has been defined as the 1st August 20XX to the 31st July 20XX+1.

10. Age is based on the date of birth provided, if known, and the start date of the course.

11. Please refer to Annex 1 for calculations on performance statistics.

12. In order to protect identification of individuals within this analysis disclosure policy has been applied were appropriate. This can either be cell sizes less than five being masked or certain categories being excluded from the full breakdown and only a total being presented within a note accompanying the table.

Essential Skills Performance Statistics – Calculations:

Retention rate $=$ $\dfrac{\text{Number of non-withdrawals}}{\text{Number of Enrolments}}$

Achievement rate $=$ $\dfrac{\text{Number of achievements}}{\text{Number of non-withdrawals}}$

Success rate $=$ $\dfrac{\text{Number of achievements}}{\text{Number of Enrolments}}$ OR Retention rate x Achievement rate

Any enrolment records that have been recorded as transfers will have an accompanying second enrolment record (the one they have transferred onto). Through the guidance of the 'Defining an Essential Skills enrolment', these will be accounted for and only one record will remain for analysis, so no records recorded as transfers are included in any of the analysis.

Number of non-withdrawals – These include any enrolments which have not been classified as a withdrawal, namely those options within Course Status - 'Continuing', 'Completed' or the status is unknown.

Number of achievements – For Essential Skills, if an enrolment has an achieved level recorded against it, relevant to whether it matches the target level set initially, it will be counted in the total number of achievements.

Further Enquiries

Further details about any of the statistics in this statistical bulletin can be obtained from

Tertiary Education Analytical Services Branch
Department for Employment & Learning
Adelaide House,
39/49 Adelaide Street
BELFAST
BT2 8FD

Telephone   (028) 9025 7708
Fax   (028) 9025 7696
E-mail   statistics@delni.gov.uk

Media enquires should be made to the Department's Press Office in Adelaide House.

Department for Employment & Learning
Adelaide House,
39/49 Adelaide Street
BELFAST
BT2 8FD

Telephone   (028) 9025 7793

This statistical bulletin and other statistical bulletins published by Tertiary Educational Analytical Services Branch (TEASB) are available to download free from the internet at:

http://www.delni.gov.uk/index/statsandresearch/statistics.htm