

Storyboard for Essential Skills Enrolments and Outcomes in Northern Ireland from 2002/03 to 2016/17

Enrolments have reached half a million...

Since the commencement of the Strategy, there have been over half a million (501,853) Essential Skills enrolments.

...however, they have decreased in recent years.

Between 2002/03 and 2010/11, annual enrolments in Essential Skills increased year on year. However, since 2011/12, enrolments have started to decrease. Over the past academic year, enrolments have decreased by 0.7% from 36,045 in 2015/16 to 35,779 in 2016/17, but still remain higher than totals in 2008/09 and earlier academic years.

There has been a shift towards Numeracy being the most popular subject in recent years....

While Literacy has been the most popular Essentials Skills subject (39.8%) over the course of the Strategy, Numeracy has accounted for the largest proportion of Essential Skills enrolments in each year since 2007/08. The most recent academic year indicates that Numeracy accounts for 37.6%, Literacy for 35.0% and ICT for 27.4% of Essential Skills enrolments.

...more males are enrolled in each of the three subjects...

Over the 15 year period, 53.3% of the Essential Skills enrolments have been male. There have been more male than female enrolments across the three subjects: Literacy (55.6%); ICT (53.3%) and Numeracy (51.1%).

...and students are typically young (16-24).

In each academic year since the Strategy began, those aged '16-24' have formed the highest proportion of Essential Skills enrolments, ranging from 46.8% to 83.3% across various years.

A smaller proportion of Economically Inactive individuals have enrolled....

The proportion of enrolments where the status of employment was reported as 'economically inactive' has decreased from 35.1% in 2015/16 to 34.3% in 2016/17.

....with 'Level 1' accounting for the highest proportion.

Since the start of the Strategy, 'Level 1' has accounted for the highest proportion (45.4%) of enrolments.

A higher proportion of enrolments are from the most deprived areas.

In the most recent academic year, 27.5% of enrolments were from the most deprived (Quintiles) areas, while 10.3% of enrolments were from the least deprived (Quintiles) areas.

Qualifications have recently decreased.

Between 2015/16 and 2016/17, the number of qualifications gained decreased by 27.2%, from 30,259 to 22,026, possibly related to a recent refresh of Essential Skills standards.

The majority of students gain a qualification.

Almost two thirds (65.5%) of Essential Skills enrolments result in a qualification. For Numeracy enrolments, the equivalent success rate is 68.1%, while it is 67.3% for Literacy and 57.0% for ICT enrolments.