Summary Statistics for Follow-Up Leaver Destinations, No. 5: 2023 Edition

13th June 2023



This annual National Statistics publication:

- Provides information on the follow-up destinations of school leavers in Scotland.
- Covers all **2021/22 school leavers** from publicly funded mainstream schools.

Follow-up destinations relate to outcomes approximately nine months after the end of the school year and the figures for the 2021/22 school leaver cohort relate to statuses recorded as at April 2023.

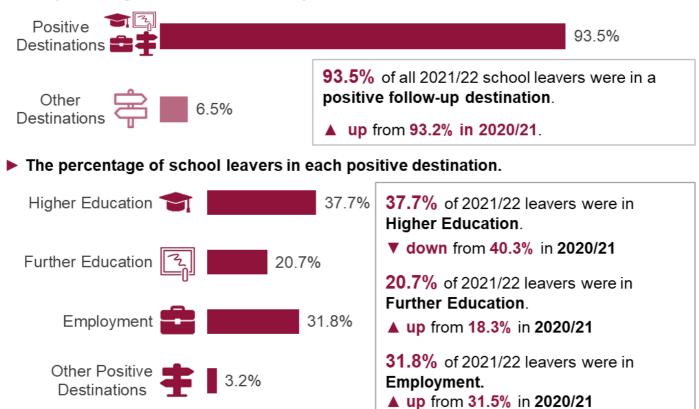
The time period covered by these statistics means that the data for some years will be affected by the **coronavirus (COVID-19)** pandemic. The effects of the pandemic should be considered when comparing data over time. Further information can be found in Chapter 1.

Full results are available from the supplementary tables.

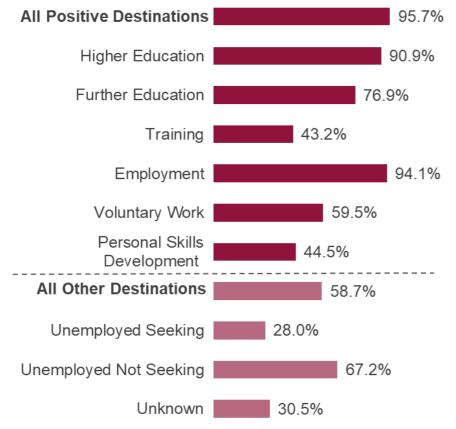




The percentage of school leavers in positive destinations and other destinations.



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



In 2021/22, **95.7%** of leavers in a **positive initial destination were also in a positive follow-up destination** (up from 95.5% in 2020/21). This includes leavers in the same destination or in a different positive destination.

Employment was the most sustained destination category. **94.1%** of leavers whose initial destination was Employment were also in Employment for their followup destination – although leavers may have changed their employer or type of employment during this time.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 School leaver follow-up destinations

This publication provides information on the **follow-up destinations** of **2021/22 school leavers**. It relates to outcomes approximately nine months after the end of the school year (the first Monday in April 2023).

A separate publication – <u>'Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver</u> <u>Destinations, No. 5: 2023 edition'</u> – published in February 2023 provided information on the **initial** destinations of 2021/22 school leavers approximately three months after the end of the school year (the first Monday in October 2022).

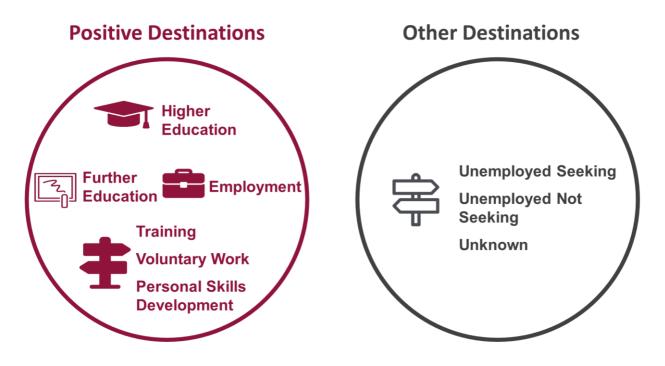
School leaver destinations data is based on the Skills Development Scotland (SDS) 'Opportunities for All' shared dataset, matched with <u>pupil census records for the school</u> <u>year 2021/22</u>.

A school leaver is defined as a young person of school leaving age, who left school during or at the end of the school year. For 2021/22 school leavers, the leaver year is 15th September 2021 to 13th September 2022. For more information on how this data is collected, see sections 4.3 and 4.4.

This publication covers school leavers from **all stages** of secondary school. For most young people, S4 (\approx 15-16 year olds) is the last compulsory year of school, but the majority choose to stay on and complete S5 (\approx 16-17 year olds) and S6 (\approx 17-18 year olds). (Pupil ages per stage are approximate; more information is available from <u>the Pupil Census</u> supplementary tables).

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

Destinations are grouped in the following categories:



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

The time series presented in this publication includes years where school leaver destinations are likely to have been affected – either directly or indirectly – by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The greatest impact of the pandemic on school leaver destinations is likely to have been seen in 2019/20. However, it is likely that there has been some ongoing impact on the destinations of some 2020/21 and 2021/22 school leavers.

The impacts of the pandemic should be kept in mind when comparing statistics on followup destinations for 2021/22, 2020/21, and 2019/20 school leavers, and when comparing statistics for these leaver cohorts to previous years. They should also be considered when comparing initial and follow-up destinations within each of these years.

The impacts of the pandemic include:

- Reduced availability of some destinations (e.g. employment), and/or start dates for some destinations being delayed. This will mainly have impacted destinations in 2019/20.
- The effect of different approaches to certification of SQA qualifications in 2020, 2021 and 2022 on pupils' attainment. This may have influenced the choices and opportunities available to some school leavers.
- A possible influence on some pupils' decisions on when to leave school. In some cases this may have affected their overall attainment and, as above, have influenced the choices and opportunities available to them.

More information is available in section 4.2.

How can I use school leaver follow-up destination figures?

Do use school leaver follow-up destination figures:

- as an accurate reflection of school leavers' (follow-up) destinations in each year;
- to compare the destinations of different groups of school leavers within each year;
- to make comparisons over time of the destinations of school leavers while bearing in mind the impacts of COVID-19.

Do not use school leaver follow-up destination figures:

• without considering the impact that COVID-19 may have had each year on the availability of particular opportunities, on pupils' attainment and on their decisions on when to leave school.

Chapter 2: School leaver follow-up destinations

- 93.5 per cent of 2021/22 school leavers were in a positive follow-up destination an increase from 93.2 per cent in 2020/21 and the highest proportion since consistent records began in 2009/10.
- **37.7 per cent** of school leavers were in **Higher Education** (the most common follow-up destination), a decrease from 40.3 per cent in 2020/21.
- **31.8 per cent** of school leavers were in **Employment** the highest proportion since consistent records began in 2009/10.
- The percentage of school leavers in a positive follow-up destination in 2021/22 increased for leavers from both the (20 per cent) most deprived and (20 per cent) least deprived areas compared to 2020/21.
- The gap between the two groups **narrowed** from 7.5 percentage points in 2020/21 **to 7.0 percentage points** in 2021/22 this is the narrowest the gap has been since consistent records began in 2009/10.

As described in section 1.2, the 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22 figures on school leavers' follow-up destinations will be impacted by the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19). The pandemic will have affected the choices made by, and opportunities available to, leavers in these years.

The impacts of the pandemic should be kept in mind when interpreting changes between 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22 and other years.

2.1 Destinations

Table 1 shows that 93.5 per cent of all 2021/22 school leavers were in a positive follow-up destination. This was higher than for 2020/21 leavers (93.2 per cent), and is the highest proportion since consistent records began in 2009/10. (A time series from 2009/10 is available in the <u>supplementary tables</u>). The proportion of 2021/22 leavers in an 'other' follow-up destination is therefore the lowest since consistent records began, at 6.5 per cent.

Table 1 also shows that 37.7 per cent of 2021/22 leavers were in Higher Education (the most common follow-up destination). This is lower than for 2020/21 leavers (40.3 per cent) and is the lowest proportion since 2015/16.

The percentage of school leavers in Further Education in 2021/22 was 20.7 per cent. This is the second lowest proportion since 2009/10, although it is an increase from 18.3 per cent of leavers in 2020/21 (the lowest proportion since 2009/10).

The percentage of school leavers in Employment was 31.8 per cent. This is the highest proportion since 2009/10. It has increased from 31.5 per cent of 2020/21 leavers (the second highest proportion since 2009/10).

The changes in Follow-up destinations between 2020/21 and 2021/22 are similar to those seen in the <u>Initial leaver destinations</u> data.

The percentage of school leavers who were Unemployed (Unemployed Seeking or Unemployed Not Seeking) has increased slightly, from 5.7 per cent of 2020/21 leavers to 5.8 per cent of 2021/22 leavers.

Destination	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Higher Education	38.3	39.0	38.4	42.9	40.3	37.7
Further Education	23.0	22.6	23.3	23.6	18.3	20.7
Training	1.5	1.6	2.3	3.2	2.3	2.3
Employment	28.3	28.3	28.0	21.3	31.5	31.8
Voluntary Work	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.5
Activity Agreement	1.0	0.9	[z]	[z]	[z]	[z]
Personal Skills Development	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.8	0.4	0.4
Positive Destinations	93.1	93.3	92.9	92.2	93.2	93.5
Unemployed Seeking	4.3	3.8	3.5	4.1	3.3	3.4
Unemployed Not Seeking	1.8	1.8	2.3	2.7	2.4	2.4
Unknown	0.7	1.1	1.3	1.0	1.0	0.7
Other Destinations	6.9	6.7	7.1	7.8	6.8	6.5
Number of Leavers	51,172	49,650	49,655	47,351	50,649	55,129

Table 1: Percentage of school leavers by follow-up destination category, 2016/17 to2021/22 [note 1][note 2][note 3]

Note 1: For 2018/19 onwards, support previously recorded as Activity Agreements is recorded in the Training category. For more information see section 4.6. Note 2: Data back to 2009/10 is available in the <u>supplementary tables</u>. Note 3: The 'Unknown' status in 2018/19 and 2019/20 may be affected by local partnerships' ability to track school leavers through home visits during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.2 Destinations by stage

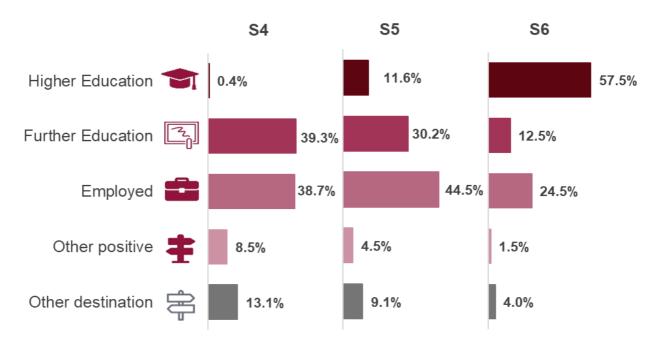
For 2021/22 school leavers, those who left from S6 were the most likely to be in a positive follow-up destination and those who left in S4 were the least likely. This is the same pattern as seen in previous years. Among S6 leavers, 96.0 per cent were in a positive follow-up destination. Among S5 leavers, 90.9 per cent were in a positive follow-up destination and among S4 leavers 86.9 per cent were in a positive follow-up destination.

The most common follow-up destination varied by stage. Chart 1 shows:

- the majority of S6 leavers were in Higher Education (57.5 per cent);
- the most common follow-up destination for **S5 leavers** was **Employment** (44.5 per cent) followed by Further Education (30.2 per cent);
- the most common follow-up destination for **S4 leavers** was **Further Education** (39.3 per cent) followed by Employment (38.7 per cent).

The destinations by stage for 2021/22 leavers are broadly consistent with years before the COVID pandemic (i.e. with 2017/18 and 2018/19). A time series from 2017/18 is available in table L1.9 in the <u>supplementary tables</u>.

Chart 1. Follow-up destination of leavers by stage of leaving, 2021/22 [note 4][note 5][note 6]



Note 4: Other positive includes Personal Skills Development, Training and Voluntary Work. Note 5: Other destination includes Unemployed Seeking, Unemployed Not Seeking and Unknown.

Note 6: A small percentage of school leavers left in other stages not shown in this chart. For more information see tables C1.1a and C1.1b in the <u>supplementary tables</u>.

A breakdown of the number of school leavers by stage is available in tables C1.1a and C1.1b of the <u>supplementary tables</u>. The 2021/22 follow-up leaver cohort was substantially larger than the 2020/21 follow-up leaver cohort (55,129 in 2021/22, up from 50,649 in 2020/21). The proportion of S6 leavers decreased from 63.2 per cent in 2020/21 to 59.8 per cent in 2021/22. This is the lowest proportion of S6 leavers in the follow-up cohort since 2010/11. The low proportion of S6 leavers in 2021/22 (along with the corresponding increases at S4 and S5) may be partly responsible for the reduction in the proportion of all leavers in Higher Education in 2021/22 compared to recent years.

A small number of school leavers identified in the initial leaver cohort are excluded from the follow-up leaver cohort. Further information is available in section 4.4.

2.3 Destinations by deprivation

Chart 2 shows that the percentage of 2021/22 school leavers in a positive follow-up destination has increased compared to 2020/21, for leavers **from both the most deprived and least deprived areas** (assessed using the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) – more information in section 4.5).

The deprivation gap between the two groups has narrowed from 7.5 percentage points in 2020/21 to 7.0 percentage points in 2021/22. The percentage of leavers in a positive follow-up destination increased more among leavers from the most deprived areas (a 0.7

percentage point increase between 2020/21 and 20221/22) than among those from the least deprived areas (a 0.2 percentage point increase).

The deprivation gap between leavers from the most and least deprived areas is now the narrowest it has been since consistent records began in 2009/10. A time series from 2009/10 is available in the <u>supplementary tables</u>.

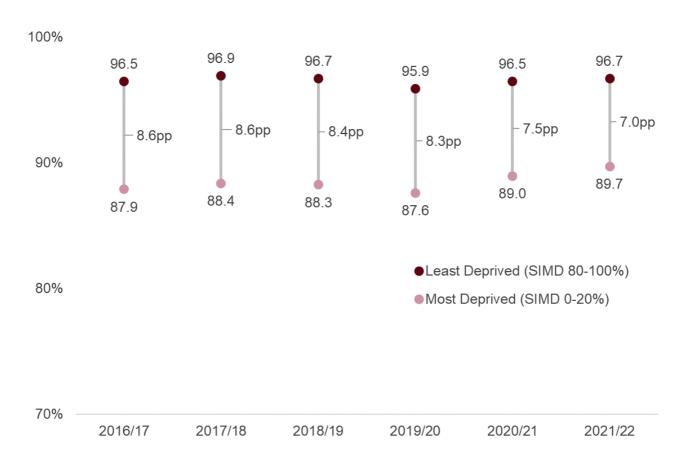


Chart 2. Percentage of school leavers in a positive follow-up destination, by SIMD, 2016/17 to 2021/22 [note 7][note 8][note 9][note 10]

Note 7: pp = percentage point difference between the most and least deprived SIMD quintiles.

Note 8: Based on SIMD 2009 for 2009/10 and 2010/11, SIMD 2012 for 2011/12 to 2015/16, SIMD 2016 for 2016/17 to 2019/20, and SIMD 2020 for 2020/21 and 2021/22. More information can be found on the <u>Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020</u> webpage.

Note 9: A time series from 2009/10 is available in the <u>supplementary tables</u>. Note 10: Left-hand axis starts at 70 per cent.

Table 2 provides a breakdown of follow-up school leaver destinations by SIMD.

In 2021/22, the most common follow-up destination for leavers from the least deprived areas was Higher Education, at 57.7 per cent, followed by Employment at 25.4 per cent. Leavers from the least deprived areas were more likely to be in Higher Education than leavers from other areas.

The most common destination for leavers from the most deprived areas was Employment, at 31.6 per cent, followed by Further Education (28.7 per cent) and Higher Education (23.6 per cent). Leavers from the most deprived areas were more likely to be in Further Education, Training or Personal Skills Development than were leavers from other areas. They were also less likely to be in Higher Education than leavers from other areas.

Among leavers from the most deprived areas, 9.4 per cent were Unemployed (Unemployed Seeking and Unemployed Not Seeking). This compares to 2.8 per cent of leavers from the least deprived areas.

Follow-up Destination	0-20% (Most Deprived)	20- 40%	40- 60%	-60 80%	80-100% (Least Deprived)	Percentage point gap	Total
Higher Education	23.6	29.1	35.5	44.5	57.7	34.1	37.7
Further Education	28.7	24.7	20.7	16.5	12.1	-16.6	20.7
Training	4.7	2.6	1.8	1.3	0.7	-4.0	2.3
Employment	31.6	34.5	35.2	32.4	25.4	-6.2	31.8
Voluntary Work	0.5	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.1	0.5
Personal Skills	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.2	-0.4	0.4
Development							
Positive Destinations	89.7	91.8	94.2	95.6	96.7	7.0	93.5
Unemployed Seeking	5.6	4.5	3.0	2.0	1.5	-4.1	3.4
Unemployed Not Seeking	3.8	2.8	2.2	1.7	1.3	-2.5	2.4
Unknown	0.9	0.9	0.7	0.7	0.5	-0.4	0.7
Other Destinations	10.3	8.2	5.8	4.4	3.3	-7.0	6.5
Number of Leavers	12,136	10,814	10,515	11,154	10,510	[z]	55,129

Table 2: Percentage of school leavers by follow-up destination category by SIMD, 2021/22 [note 11][note 12]

Note 11: Based on SIMD 2020. More information can be found on the <u>Scottish Index of</u> <u>Multiple Deprivation 2020 webpage</u>.

Note 12: The percentage point gap measures the difference between leavers from the 20% most deprived and 20% least deprived areas.

The time series of destinations by SIMD (available in the <u>supplementary tables</u>) can be used to help understand what has caused the gap in total positive destinations between school leavers from the most and least deprived areas to narrow between 2020/21 and 2021/22.

The proportion of school leavers who were in Further Education increased across all SIMD groups between 2020/21 and 2021/22. However, the increase was bigger for leavers from the 20% most deprived areas than for leavers from the 20% least deprived areas.

At the same time, the proportion of school leavers in Higher Education decreased across all SIMD groups. However the size of this decrease was bigger for those in the least deprived areas than it was for those in the most deprived areas.

The proportion in 'other' destinations (Unemployed Seeking, Unemployed Not Seeking and Unknown) decreased for most SIMD groups between 2020/21 and 2021/22. (The one exception is for leavers from the 40%-60% quintile, where it rose by 0.1 percentage point). The size of the decrease in 'other' destinations was bigger for leavers from the 20% most deprived areas than for leavers from the 20% least deprived areas.

Together these changes help to explain why the percentage of leavers in all positive destinations increased more for leavers from the most deprived areas than for leavers from the least deprived areas. This has led to the gap between the two groups narrowing.

2.4 Destinations by pupil characteristics

Table 3 shows the percentage of school leavers in a positive follow-up destination by various characteristics. The percentage of 2021/22 school leavers in positive follow-up destinations has increased for most groups, compared to 2020/21. However there are a few groups where the percentage in a positive destination has remained the same, or decreased.

Female school leavers are more likely to be in a positive follow-up destination than male school leavers. For 2021/22 leavers, 94.0 per cent of female leavers were in a positive follow-up destination, compared to 92.9 per cent of male leavers. This is the same pattern seen in previous years.

Pupils of an Asian ethnic background, or an African/Black/Caribbean ethnic background, tend to be more likely to go on to a positive follow-up destination than those from other ethnic backgrounds. In 2021/22, 98.5 per cent of leavers from an Asian – Indian ethnic background, and 97.6 per cent of leavers from an Asian – Chinese ethnic background, were in a positive follow-up destination. Compared to 2020/21, the percentage in a positive follow-up destination increased across leavers from most ethnic groups, but not all. The percentage of White – non-Scottish leavers in a positive follow-up destination remained the same as in 2020/21, at 93.2 per cent. And the percentage in a positive follow-up destination decreased compared to 2020/21 among leavers from an African/ Black/ Caribbean ethnic background, and among those from 'Mixed or multiple ethnic groups'. When considering these changes it is important to be aware that the total numbers of leavers in some categories (in particular Asian – Chinese, Asian – Indian and 'All Other Categories') are relatively small, which can lead to the percentage in a positive destination fluctuating year-on-year.

In 2021/22, Remote Small Towns had the lowest proportion of leavers in positive destinations (92.3 per cent). Accessible Rural areas had the highest (95.1 per cent). Accessible Rural areas saw the biggest increase in leavers in a positive follow-up destination compared to 2020/21, and Remote Small Towns saw the biggest decrease.

School leavers in 2021/22 with an Additional Support Need (ASN) were less likely to be in a positive follow-up destination than leavers without a recorded ASN (90.1 per cent compared to 95.7 per cent). This is the same pattern as seen in previous years. However the percentage of leavers in a positive destination increased more between 2020/21 and 2021/22 for leavers with an ASN than for those without.

School leavers who are declared or assessed disabled were also less likely to be in a positive follow-up destination than leavers who are not (89.2 per cent compared to 93.6 per cent). The percentage of leavers who are declared or assessed disabled who were in a positive follow-up destination remained the same in 2020/21 and 2021/22 (89.2 per cent). The percentage of leavers who are not declared or assessed disabled increased from 93.4 per cent in 2020/21 to 93.6 per cent in 2021/22.

More information on destinations by pupil characteristics is available in the <u>supplementary</u> <u>tables</u>. A list of these tables is available in section 4.11.

Table 3: Percentage of school leavers in a positive follow-up destination, by pupil characteristic, 2016/17 to 2021/22 [note 13][note 14][note 15]

Pupil Characteristic	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Sex						
Male	92.4	92.4	92.1	90.9	92.6	92.9
Female	94.0	94.3	93.7	93.6	93.8	94.0
Ethnicity						
White - Scottish	93.0	93.2	92.7	92.0	93.1	93.4
White - non-Scottish	93.9	94.2	93.5	92.3	93.2	93.2
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	92.7	93.6	92.8	91.7	94.7	93.9
Asian - Indian	[C]	97.2	94.4	95.4	[C]	98.5
Asian - Pakistani	95.7	93.5	94.8	95.6	95.5	96.5
Asian - Chinese	[c]	96.8	[c]	[c]	[c]	97.6
Asian - Other	95.3	93.9	[C]	[C]	95.5	96.4
African/ Black/ Caribbean	93.9 94.5	96.0 92.0	94.1 93.6	95.1 93.3	96.6 92.6	95.2 92.7
All other categories Not Disclosed/Not known	94.5 90.7	92.0 89.8	93.6 88.9	93.3 90.2	92.6 91.6	92.7 92.7
NOT DISCIOSED/NOT KNOWN	90.7	09.0	00.9	90.2	91.0	92.1
Urban/Rural						
Large Urban Areas	92.4	92.4	92.4	92.2	93.2	93.7
Other Urban Areas	92.4	92.9	92.1	91.4	92.3	92.7
Accessible Small Towns	93.3	93.7	93.7	93.0	93.8	93.7
Remote Small Towns	94.6	94.8	93.6	91.1	93.1	92.3
Accessible Rural	95.2	95.1	94.5	93.7	94.7	95.1
Remote Rural	96.4	95.9	94.6	93.8	95.4	94.8
Additional Support Needs						
ASN	87.7	88.4	87.9	87.2	89.2	90.1
No ASN	95.0	95.3	95.1	94.9	95.5	95.7
Disabled status						
Declared or assessed disabled	89.4	89.3	89.6	89.0	89.2	89.2
Not declared or assessed	93.2	93.5	92.9	92.3	93.4	93.6
disabled						
All Leavers	93.1	93.3	92.9	92.2	93.2	93.5
				V-14		

Note 13: Some categories have been grouped together due to small numbers. Some categories contain between 100-200 leavers and may be subject to fluctuation. Comparisons between groups should take this into account.

Note 14: The 'African/ Black/ Caribbean' category includes 'African', 'African - Other', and the 'Caribbean or Black' categories. 'All other categories' includes 'Other - other' and 'Other - Arab'.

Note 15: Additional Support Needs (ASN): pupils who have a Coordinated Support Plan (CSP), Individualised Education Programme (IEP), Child's Plan, are assessed or declared disabled, or have another need. See section 4.9 for more information.

Chapter 3: Initial to follow-up destination comparison

- 95.7 per cent of 2021/22 school leavers who were in a positive initial destination were also in a positive follow-up destination.
- Employment was the most sustained destination in 2021/22. Of the 2021/22 leavers who were in Employment as their initial destination, 94.1 per cent were still in Employment as their follow-up destination.

3.1 Initial and follow-up destinations

A school leaver's follow-up destination, nine months after they leave school, may differ from their initial destination, three months after they leave school. Information on the <u>initial</u> <u>destinations of 2021/22 school leavers</u> was published in February 2023.

Chart 3 compares 2021/22 school leaver initial destination rates (three months after leaving school) with follow-up destination rates (nine months after leaving school).

The percentage of 2021/22 school leavers in a positive follow-up destination (93.5 per cent) was lower than the percentage of school leavers in a positive initial destination (95.7 per cent). The same pattern can be seen across all previous school leaver cohorts since consistent records began in 2009/10.

In 2021/22, the largest reductions between initial and follow-up destinations were in Further Education and Higher Education. The percentage of leavers in these destinations decreased by 4.7 and 3.6 percentage points respectively between initial and follow-up. Analysis of leavers changing destinations (available in Table L1.8 of the <u>supplementary</u> <u>tables</u>) shows that the most common follow-up destination for those leaving Higher and Further Education was Employment.

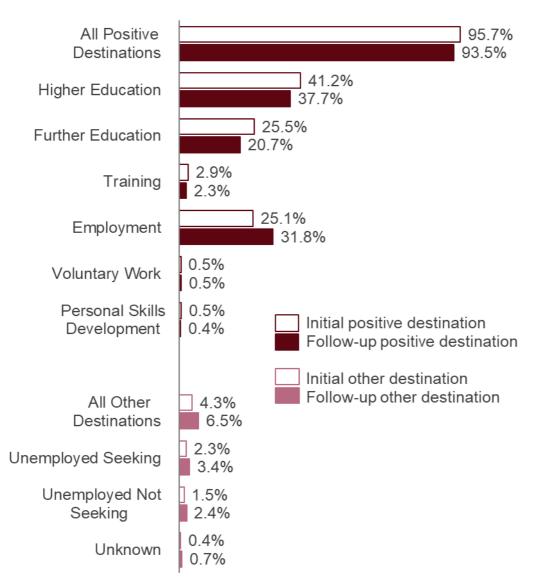
The largest increase between initial destination and follow-up destination was in Employment. The proportion of leavers in this destination increased by 6.7 percentage points between initial destination and follow-up destination.

These patterns are broadly consistent with those seen in most years since 2009/10.

The proportion of leavers in 'other' destinations (see section 1.1) increased by 2.2 percentage points between initial and follow-up destinations. Within this the percentage of Unemployed Seeking increased by 1.1 percentage points.

A time series of initial and follow-up destinations is available in the <u>supplementary tables</u>. A list of these tables is available in section 4.11.

Chart 3: Percentage of school leavers by initial and follow-up destination category, 2021/22 [note 16]



Note 16: Bars in chart 3 which are white on the inside with a coloured outline show data on initial destinations of leavers. Bars which are a solid colour show data on follow-up destinations. The darker colour (used in the top portion of the chart) shows positive destinations, while the lighter colour (used in the lower portion) shows 'other' destinations.

3.2 Leavers sustaining or changing destination

Chart 4 shows the percentage of 2021/22 school leavers whose follow-up destination was the same as their initial destination. In 2021/22, 95.7 per cent of those in a positive initial destination were also in a positive follow-up destination. This includes leavers in the same positive destination, and those who moved to an alternative positive destination. This is a slight increase from 2020/21, when 95.5 per cent of leavers in a positive initial destination were also in a positive follow-up destination.

The positive destination in which 2021/22 school leavers were most likely to remain between initial and follow-up was Employment, at 94.1 per cent; followed by Higher Education at 90.9 per cent. Of those leavers who were in Further Education as their initial

destination, 76.9 per cent were still in Further Education at follow-up. This follows the same pattern as 2020/21, when Employment was the positive destination leavers were most likely to sustain (94.2 per cent), followed by Higher Education (88.8 per cent) and Further Education (74.0 per cent). However the proportions of leavers remaining in Higher Education and Further Education between initial and follow-up was higher in 2021/22 than in 2020/21.

School leavers whose initial destination was Personal Skills Development or Training were less likely to remain in the same destination between initial and follow-up. Amongst leavers whose initial destination was Training, 43.2 per cent were still in Training as their follow-up destination, and 44.5 per cent of those in Personal Skills Development at initial were still in Personal Skills Development at follow-up. This may be due, in part, to the short-term nature of some of these activities (see section 4.6).

Chart 4: Percentage of school leavers whose follow-up destination was the same as their initial destination, 2021/22.

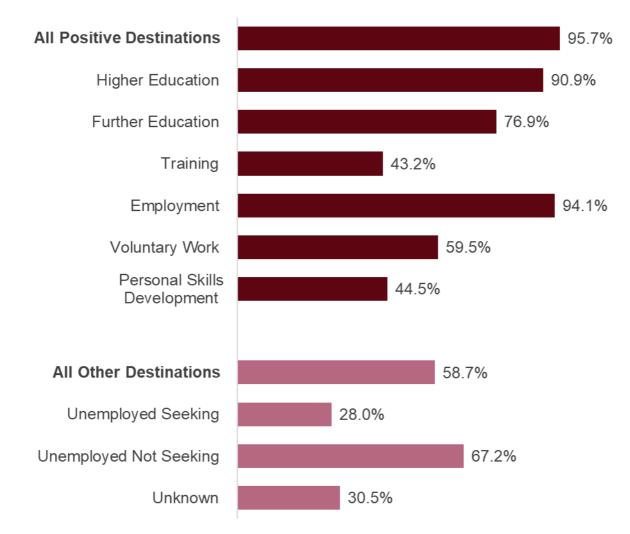


Table L1.8 in the <u>supplementary tables</u> provides information on school leavers staying in their initial destination or moving to an alternative destination. For example, it shows that for those leaving Higher Education and Further Education in 2021/22, the most common follow-up destination was Employment. Of those whose initial destination was Higher Education, 6.8 per cent had moved into Employment as their follow-up destination. Of those whose initial destination was Further Education, 13.4 per cent had moved into Employment.

Table L1.8 in the <u>supplementary tables</u> also shows that for those leaving Training and Personal Skills Development in 2021/22, the most common follow-up destination was also Employment. In 2021/22, of those whose initial destination was Training, 23.4 per cent had entered Employment as their follow-up destination and 10.1 per cent had entered Further Education. Of those whose initial destination was Personal Skills Development, 16.6 per cent had entered Employment at follow-up and 13.8 per cent had entered Training.

More information on school leavers who sustained a destination or moved into an alternative destination is available in table L1.8 of the <u>supplementary tables</u>.

3.3 Leavers sustaining or changing destination, by stage

Table 4 shows, for each stage of leaving, the number of leavers by category of initial destination (positive or 'other'), and the percentage of those who sustained or changed category by the time of follow-up.

S4 leavers were the least likely to sustain a positive destination between initial and followup. Of the 6,293 leavers from S4 who were in a positive initial destination, 90.8 per cent were still in a positive destination at follow-up, and 8.8 per cent had moved to an 'other' destination. S6 leavers were the most likely to sustain a positive destination. Of the 32,203 leavers from S6 who were in a positive initial destination, 97.3 per cent were still in a positive destination at follow-up, and 2.6 per cent had moved to an 'other' destination.

S4 leavers were the most likely to remain in an 'other' destination between initial and follow-up. Of the 570 leavers from S4 who were in an 'other' initial destination, 60.5 per cent were still in an other destination at follow-up, and 38.2 per cent had moved to a positive destination. S6 leavers were the most likely to leave an 'other' destination for a positive destination. Of the 836 leavers from S6 who were in an 'other' initial destination, 56.3 per cent were still in an 'other' destination at follow-up, and 42.9 per cent had moved to a positive destination.

Stage of leaving	S4	S5	S 6	All leavers
Number of initial leavers:	6,863	15,308	33,039	55,237
Number in a positive initial destination:	6,293	14,363	32,203	52,879
Of whom, percent still in a positive destination at follow-up:	90.8	94.2	97.3	95.7
Of whom, percent who moved to an 'other' follow-up destination:	8.8	5.7	2.6	4.2
Number in an 'other' initial destination:	570	945	836	2,358
Of whom, percent still in an 'other' destination at follow-up:	60.5	59.6	56.3	58.7
Of whom, percent who moved to a positive follow-up destination:	38.2	40.0	42.9	40.6

Table 4. Percentage of leavers sustaining or changing destination by stage, 2021/22[note 17][note 18]

Note 17: A small number of leavers in the initial leaver cohort were from other stages (S3 and other). For more information see tables C1.1a and C1.1b in the <u>supplementary tables</u> to the Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations. Data for these leavers is not shown here due to small counts.

Note 18: A small number of leavers from the initial leaver cohort are excluded from the follow-up cohort. See section 4.4 for more information. For this reason percentages may not sum to 100 per cent.

Chapter 4: Background notes

4.1 National Statistics publication

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

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

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

Destinations figures reflect both the choices made by pupils, and the opportunities available to them on leaving school. It is likely that the COVID-19 pandemic will have affected the destinations of some school leavers in 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22. The greatest effect is likely to have been seen in 2019/20. However it is likely that there has been some ongoing impact on the destinations of some 2020/21 and 2021/22 school leavers.

The impacts of the pandemic should be kept in mind when comparing statistics on followup destinations for 2021/22, 2020/21, and 2019/20 school leavers, and when comparing statistics for these leaver cohorts to previous years. They should also be considered when comparing initial and follow-up destinations within each of these years.

2019/20

The availability of particular opportunities (employment opportunities, for example) to some 2019/20 school leavers was directly affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. For example, the start dates of some opportunities were delayed, leading to a direct impact on the destinations recorded for some pupils. The pandemic may also have affected local partnerships' ability to track some school leavers through home visits.

In addition to this, the approach taken to the certification of SQA qualifications in 2020 will have affected the attainment of many 2019/20 school leavers. The pandemic may also have influenced pupils' decisions on when to leave school (for example, delaying leaving from 2019/20 to 2020/21). Together these factors could have affected the attainment of some 2019/20 school leavers, which may in turn have further affected the destination choices and opportunities available to them.

For more information on the approaches taken to the certification of SQA qualifications in 2020, 2021 and 2022 - and their affect on school leaver attainment - please see section 1.3.1 of the <u>Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations</u>, No. 5: 2023 Edition.

2020/21

For 2020/21 school leavers, it is likely that the pandemic continued to affect the choices made by, and opportunities available to, some school leavers.

As for 2019/20 school leavers, there may have been some ongoing direct impacts on the availability of some opportunities. In addition, the approaches taken to the certification of SQA qualifications in 2020 and 2021 will have affected the attainment of some school leavers; and the pandemic may have influenced some pupils' decisions on when to leave school, which may in some cases have affected their overall attainment. These factors may together have affected the choices made by, and opportunities available to, some 2020/21 leavers.

2021/22

For 2021/22 school leavers there may again be some ongoing impact on destinations, resulting from the effect of alternative approaches to certification of SQA qualifications since 2020, affecting overall attainment and in turn affecting the choices made by, and opportunities available to, some leavers.

4.3 Sources and quality assurance

School leaver destination data is sourced from the 'Opportunities for All' shared dataset which is managed and hosted by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) on behalf of partners. The data is held on the SDS operational Customer Support System (CSS). An extract of the dataset is taken in early May which provides information on school leavers' latest destination status recorded as at the first Monday in April. For 2021/22 leavers this is Monday, 3rd April 2023.

This dataset contains information shared by local authorities, colleges, Scottish Funding Council, Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS) and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) via a secure online portal known as the 16+ Data Hub. The data to be shared is documented within the Post-16 Education (Scotland) Act 2013 and there are a series of business rules governing the processing of this data.

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

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

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

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

4.4 Methodology

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

The <u>initial destinations data</u> (published in February) provides information on the outcomes for young people approximately three months after the end of the academic year (1st Monday in October) while the follow-up data in this publication provides information on the outcomes for young people approximately nine months after the end of the academic year (1st Monday in April). These collections should be seen as complementary to one another but it should be noted that various factors may affect the results at the different time periods.

Further, a relatively small number of school leavers identified in the initial leaver cohort are not included in the follow-up leaver cohort. This is typically where the individual has been identified as having moved outwith Scotland, as having returned to school or, in rare circumstances, having deceased. In 2021/22, 108 school leavers identified in the initial cohort were not included in the follow-up leaver cohort.

The follow-up destination statistics in this publication only relate to leavers from mainstream schools. They do not include data on destinations of leavers from special schools.

4.5 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD)

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) identifies small area concentrations of multiple deprivation across Scotland. The SIMD ranks small geographical areas – called data zones - from most deprived (ranked 1) to least deprived (ranked 6,976). The data zones can then be grouped into five quintiles, covering the 20% most deprived areas to the 20% least deprived areas.

In this publication, the SIMD is used to assess how the destinations of school leavers differ based on the level of deprivation in their home (or school) area. Pupils are assigned to an

SIMD quintile based on the data zone recorded for their home address in the Scottish Government's pupil census. If the pupil does not have a data zone recorded in the pupil census data, the data zone of the pupil's school is used.

The SIMD is updated periodically (typically every three or four years) and therefore the SIMD used in these statistics is also updated in line with this to ensure that the most appropriate version is used. For example, SIMD 2016 was first used for 2016/17 school leavers; and in line with this, <u>SIMD 2020</u> was first used for years 2020/21 and has also been used for this year (2021/22).

4.6 Definitions

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

Positive destination: includes Higher Education, Further Education, Training, Employment, Voluntary Work, Personal Skills Development and (between 2010/11 and 2017/18) Activity Agreements.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The way in which school leavers undertaking Personal Skills Development are counted in these statistics changed in 2018/19 and data for previous years was revised to allow consistent comparisons over time. Further information can be found in section 4.1 of the <u>June 2020 release of this publication</u>.

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

The integration of funding streams as part of the ongoing implementation of No One Left Behind¹ means that although local authorities provide the same type of support and opportunities for young people, this activity is no longer funded under the banner of 'Activity Agreements'. This means it is no longer appropriate to record school leavers receiving this support using this category. Instead they are recorded in the Training category for 2018/19 onwards. Note that data for earlier years continues to include the Activity Agreements category, reflecting the support that was available at the time. This means that the proportion of school leavers recorded in the Training category from 2018/19 onwards is not directly comparable with the proportion recorded in this category prior to 2018/19.

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

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

¹ '<u>No One Left Behind: review of employability services</u>' set out the steps to be taken to deliver more effective and joined-up employability support across Scotland. As part of it, the funding streams associated with Activity Agreements and other programmes were integrated into a new local employability delivery model, managed collaboratively between Scottish Government and Local Government from April 2019.

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

4.7 Rounding

Figures used in the commentary of this report are based on the unrounded data which can be found in the <u>supplementary tables</u>. This means that they may not always match with figures that are derived using the rounded data displayed in tables and charts.

4.8 Symbols

The following symbols are used in this publication:

- [z] = not applicable
- [c] = value suppressed to protect against the risk of disclosing personal information
- [low] = value less than 0.05 per cent

pp = percentage point difference

4.9 Additional Support Needs

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

4.10 UK comparisons

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

4.11 List of supplementary tables

Additional tables on follow-up leaver destinations are available in the <u>supplementary</u> <u>tables</u>. These tables on school leaver follow-up destinations include breakdowns by: characteristics of leavers; local authority; reason(s) for additional support needs; and stage of leaving. Table A1.1 shows attainment by follow-up destination category. Information on school leaver attainment and how the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic affects these statistics is available in <u>Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations</u>, No. 5: 2023 Edition.

School Leaver Follow-up Destinations, Supplementary tables:

- Tables C1.1a and C1.1b: Number and percentage of mainstream secondary school followup leavers by stage of leaving, 2009/10 to 2021/22
- Tables L1.1a and L1.1b. Percentage of mainstream secondary school leavers by initial destination category (1992/93 to 2021/22) and follow-up destination category (2006/07 to 2021/22)
- Table L1.2. Percentage of mainstream secondary school leavers by follow-up destination category and sex, 2009/10 to 2021/22
- Table L1.3. Percentage of mainstream secondary school leavers by follow-up destination category and 6-fold Urban Rural classification of school, 2009/10 to 2021/22
- Table L1.4. Percentage of mainstream secondary school leavers by follow-up destination category and Additional Support Need, 2009/10 to 2021/22
- Table L1.5. Percentage of mainstream secondary school leavers by follow-up destination category and ethnic background, 2009/10 to 2021/22
- Table L1.6. Percentage of mainstream secondary school leavers by follow-up destination category and national identity, 2009/10 to 2021/22
- Table L1.7. Percentage of mainstream secondary school leavers by follow-up destination category and whether declared or assessed disabled, 2009/10, 2014/15 to 2021/22
- Table L1.8. Percentage of mainstream secondary school leavers who sustained a destination or moved into another destination category, 2009/10 to 2021/22
- Table L1.9. Percentage of mainstream secondary school leavers by follow-up destination category and stage of leaving, 2017/18 to 2021/22
- Table L2.1. Percentage of mainstream secondary school leavers by follow-up destination category and local authority, 2009/10 to 2021/22
- Table L2.2. Number of mainstream secondary school leavers by follow-up destination category and local authority, 2009/10 to 2021/22
- Tables L2.3. Number and percentage of mainstream secondary school leavers in a positive follow-up destination, by local authority and SIMD, 2009/10 to 2021/22
- Table A1.1. Percentage of mainstream secondary school leavers by highest SCQF Level achieved and follow-up destination category, 2009/10 to 2021/22

4.12 Recording of 'Unemployed Seeking' statuses

The rollout of Universal Credit (UC) commenced in March 2016 and has replaced out of work benefits, such as Jobseekers' Allowance, that were previously used to update the status of individuals to 'Unemployed Seeking'. For previous releases of these statistics, Skills Development Scotland did not receive data from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) on Universal Credit claimants.

SDS now receive UC data from DWP which they have used to validate the destinations of 2021/22 school leavers.

SDS maintains an accurate record of the circumstances of the school-leaver-aged young people in unemployment that it engages with, through the delivery of post-school services. The availability of UC data from DWP will, in many cases, simply have confirmed the statuses of school leavers which had already been determined through this engagement.

4.13 Transcript of the infographic

The Infographic presented on page 2 shows the following:

That 93.5 per cent of all 2021/22 school leavers were in a positive follow-up destination (up from 93.2 per cent in 2020/21) and 6.5 per cent were in an other follow-up destination.

That 37.7 per cent of 2021/22 leavers were in Higher Education (down from 40.3 per cent in 2020/21), 20.7 per cent were in Further Education (up from 18.3 per cent in 2020/21), and 31.8 per cent were in Employment (up from 31.5 per cent in 2020/21). 3.2 per cent of leavers were in Other Positive Destinations.

That in 2021/22, 95.7 per cent of leavers in a positive initial destination were also in a positive follow-up destination. This includes leavers in the same destination or in a different positive destination. Employment was the most sustained destination category. 94.1 per cent of leavers whose initial destination was Employment were also in Employment for their follow-up destination – although leavers may have changed their employer or type of employment during this time.

4.14 Cost

As part of the overall approach to delivering the Scottish Government's Opportunities for All commitment, the follow-up of school leavers is a business as usual activity for Skills Development Scotland and costs are embedded within their daily operations.

4.15 Further information

This publication is available on the Scottish Government's website.

Information on positive initial destinations of senior phase school leavers (plus other school level information) is also available through Insight (a professional benchmarking tool used by local authorities and schools) and published on the <u>School Information</u> <u>Dashboard</u>. However these sources do not include follow-up destination statistics.

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

The Scottish Government and Skills Development Scotland (SDS) produce the <u>Annual</u> <u>Participation Measure</u> (APM) which complements school leaver destination statistics. Published every August, the APM captures the activity of all 16-19 year olds across a complete year, including those who choose to stay on at school as well as those who have left school. The APM has been adopted as the metric for measuring success in relation to the young people's participation national indicator within the <u>National Performance</u> <u>Framework</u>. The indicator measures the percentage of young adults (16-19 year olds) participating in education, training or employment. Latest results were published in August 2022. The table below provides summary information for some of the key sources of data on attainment and the activity of young people in Scotland.

Source	Organisation, usual month of publication	Key points
Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations	Scottish Government, February	Provides information on the attainment of school leavers and on the activities being undertaken by school leavers on a given day ~3 months after the end of the school year . Coverage: School leavers
Summary Statistics for Follow-up Leaver Destinations (THIS PUBLICATION)	Scottish Government, June	Provides information on the activities being undertaken by school leavers on a given day ~9 months after the end of the school year. Coverage: School leavers
Annual Participation Measure	Skills Development Scotland, August	Reports on the sustained economic and employment activity of the wider 16-19 year old cohort , including those at school. Coverage: All 16-19 year olds

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- are explained well.

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How to access background or source data

The data collected for this statistical bulletin:

are available in more detail through statistics.gov.scot

 \Box are available via an alternative route

 \boxtimes may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors. Please contact <u>school.stats@gov.scot</u> for further information.

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