

Further Education Funding

Further Education Core Funding

College funding has remained tight over the last few years. Colleges have largely absorbed increased costs including unfunded pay increases, increases in pension costs and national insurance and the administration costs of Educational Maintenance Allowances and Assembly Learning Grants.

There has been an overall cut of 6% to college funding in 2015/16.

Total allocation 2015/16 = £ 274,599,998 - a reduction of more than £18 million compared to last year.

This follows a series of funding cuts:

- In 2014/15 core funding fell by an average of 1.6%
- In 2013/14 the expected 1% cash increase turned out to be a 1.5% cut – an in-year cut reduction of £5.5m on what had been expected
- In 2012/13 there was a cash increase of 2.5% in recurrent funding
- In 2011/12 allocations fell by 1.4%.

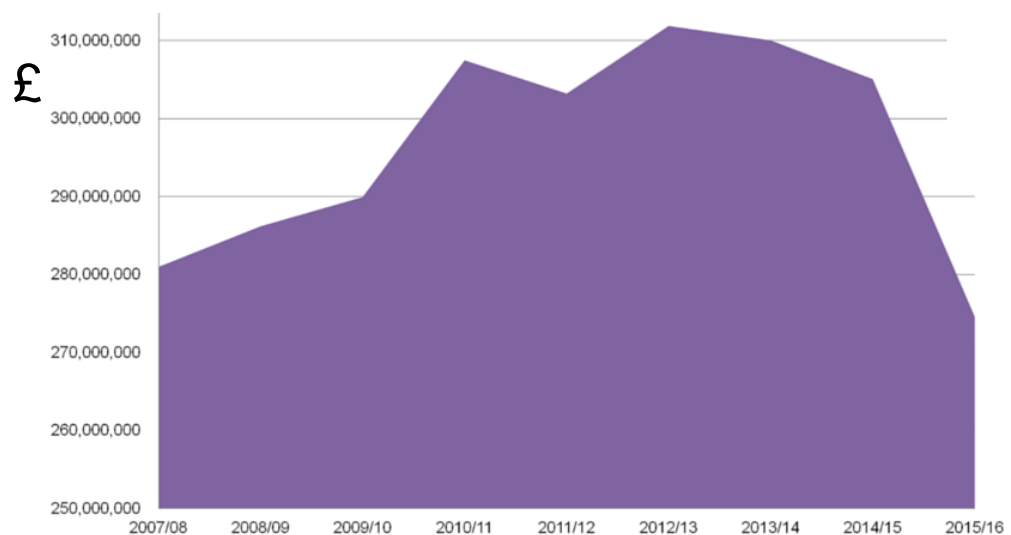


Diagram: core FE college funding 2007/08 – 2015/16

Data source: Welsh Government Funding Allocations

Funding effect by age group of learners

No single age cohort is completely immune from the cuts. However, funding for 16-19 year olds is largely protected and colleges are also expected to focus resources on higher level apprenticeships.

That means that the cuts fall disproportionately on adults and part time learners.

Part time adult learning

Welsh Government figures show that there were over 25,000 individuals aged 50+ studying at college in 2013/14.¹

Almost all learn on a part time basis, as do the majority of college learners: 60% of all college learners in 2013/14 studied part time, with the over 50s making up around a quarter of the part time learner cohort.

The latest figures from the Welsh Government (2013/14) show a total of 222,620 individuals in learning at college, in the workplace or in the community. This compares to over 310,000 in 2005/06 – the peak from which the year on year decline started.

Between 2004/05 and 2013/14, part-time adult learners had reduced by 46%. In human terms, this means that there was, in 2014, around 90,000 fewer adults in part-time learning than there were ten years ago in Wales.

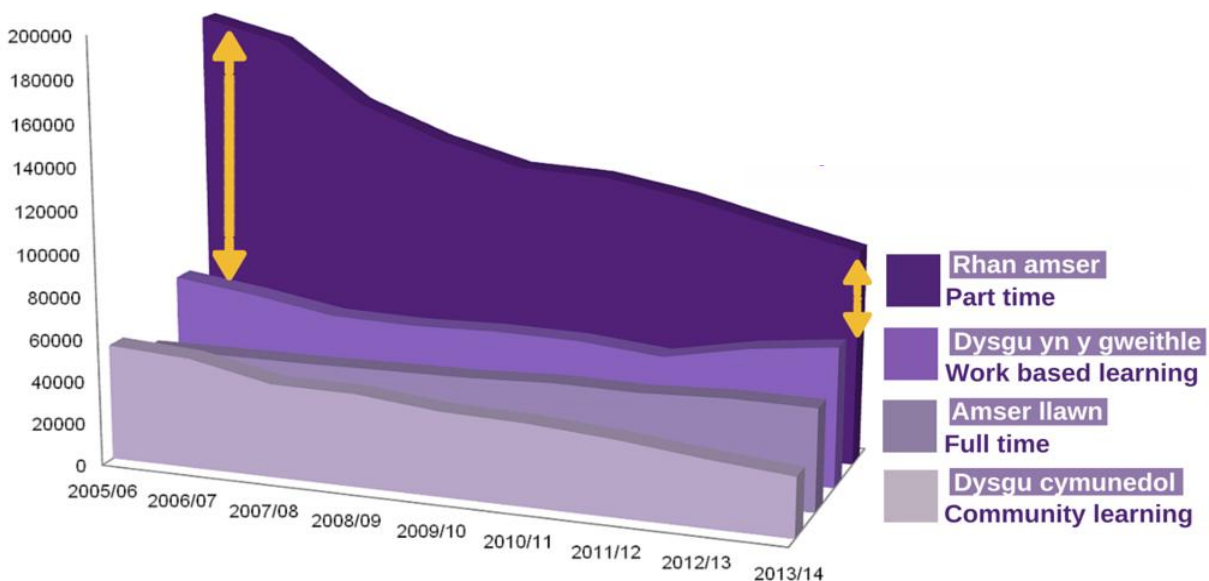


Diagram: learner numbers in colleges in Wales by mode of study over time.
Data source: *First release FE, WBL & Community Learning in Wales 2013/14*

The budget for part-time adult education in colleges has been further cut by 50% for 2015/16.

Gender breakdown

63% of the part-time learner population over the age of 25 in Wales' colleges are women.

Women are more likely to enrol at college at an older age and to study part time than men. It follows that a cut in funding for part time adult learners falls disproportionately on women.

¹ www.statswales.wales.gov.uk Database: Educ0160 last updated June 2015

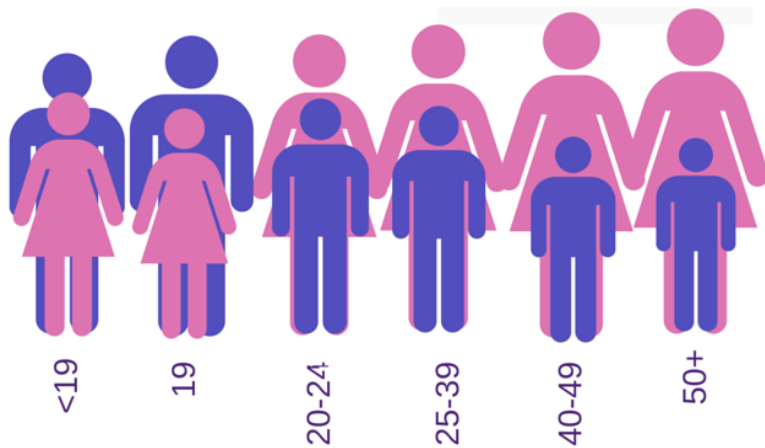


Diagram: proportion of male and female learners by age group at FE college in Wales 2013/14.

Data source: *First release FE, WBL & Community Learning in Wales 2013/14*

Further Information

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