



ETHNIC MINORITY YOUNG PEOPLE AND APPRENTICESHIPS IN ENGLAND

Briefing Paper

BTEG

Black Training and Enterprise Group

Supported by

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Joseph Rowntree

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Definitions

Black = Black Caribbean + Black African + Black Other

Asian = Indian + Pakistani + Bangladeshi

Mixed = White & Black Caribbean + White & Black African+ White & Asian

Young = aged 16 to 24

HEADLINES

Ethnic minority people are far less likely than White people to have done an apprenticeship.

- Over the period 2017 to 2020, 9% of White males reported that they had completed an apprenticeship, compared with 3% of Black or Asian males and just 1% of Asian females.¹

The rate of ethnic minority participation in apprenticeships has changed very little over the past decade.

- In 2010/11 Black, Asian, Mixed and Other minority ethnic groups made up 9% of apprenticeship starts in England, by 2019/20 this had increased to 13%.²

People from Black, Asian and Mixed ethnic groups continue to be very under-represented in some subject areas.

- Black, Asian and Mixed ethnicity apprentices represented 13% of starts in 2019/20 but only 6% of starts in construction, planning and built environment, and 7% of starts in engineering apprenticeships.
- Black, Asian and Mixed ethnicity apprentices are over-represented in information and communication technology, where they made up 18% of apprenticeship starts in the period August 2019 to April 2020.

Black, Asian and Mixed ethnicity apprenticeship starters are particularly under-represented in the youngest age group.

- Only 7% of young people age 16-18 starting an apprenticeship in 2019/20 are Black, Asian or Mixed ethnicity.
- Almost half of all apprenticeship starters are over the age of 25.
- Black people on apprenticeships are more likely to be over 25 than those from other ethnic groups; 65% of Black people and 71% of Black women starting an apprenticeship in 2019/20 were over 25, compared with 43% of White people, 43% of Mixed ethnicity people, and 49% of Asian people who started an apprenticeship in the same period.

1 All data sources for headline statistics are shown on the following pages.

2 The most recent data on apprenticeship starts and completions at the time of writing is for the period August 2019 to April 2020: where 2019/20 is referenced it should be noted that this is not the full year data.

Lower participation in apprenticeships is not due to lack of interest from ethnic minority populations.

- From 2010/11 to 2014/15 (the last year for which data are available) between one fifth and one quarter of apprenticeship applications were made by ethnic minority people but only one tenth of apprenticeship starts were by ethnic minorities.
- In the BTEG 2021 Survey of Ethnic Minority Young People, 75% considered that an apprenticeship was definitely or possibly a good route to the career they want.

Ethnic minority apprenticeship participation is highest in London.

- In 2019/20 40% of apprenticeship starters in London were from Black, Asian or mixed ethnic groups, compared with 13% nationally.

Apprenticeship places are lowest in the geographic areas where young ethnic minority populations are highest.

- The lower number of starts compared with applications for ethnic minority people is likely to in part result from large differences in the number of apprenticeship places available in different parts of the country.
- London has the largest population of ethnic minority young people and the lowest number of apprenticeship places per capita.

Many ethnic minority young people are not aware of where to find information about apprenticeships and most are not engaged by government awareness campaigns or agencies.

- The BTEG 2021 Survey of Ethnic Minority Young People found that 40% know where to find information about apprenticeship opportunities; 33% had visited the government apprenticeship website; 10% had seen or heard of the government's 'Fire it Up' apprenticeship campaign.
- Only 10% of BTEG survey respondents would definitely use a Jobcentre to help find a job or apprenticeship, while almost 30% would definitely not use a Jobcentre.

The proportion of all apprenticeships at Higher levels is increasing.

- Asian, Black and Mixed ethnicity apprentices are more likely than White apprentices to be on a Higher-level apprenticeship.

There may be less ethnic diversity on degree-level apprenticeships than on equivalent university courses.

- The government does not publish data on degree-level apprenticeships.
- Research in 2016/17 found they were less likely to be ethnically diverse than degree entrants studying similar subjects at the same universities – but this may not still be the case.

There are some ethnic disparities in apprenticeship achievement rates, particularly at Higher level.

- In 2018/19 the achievement rate for higher level apprenticeships was 64% for white apprentices but only 56% for Black apprentices (57% for Asian and 59% for Mixed).

RECOMMENDATIONS

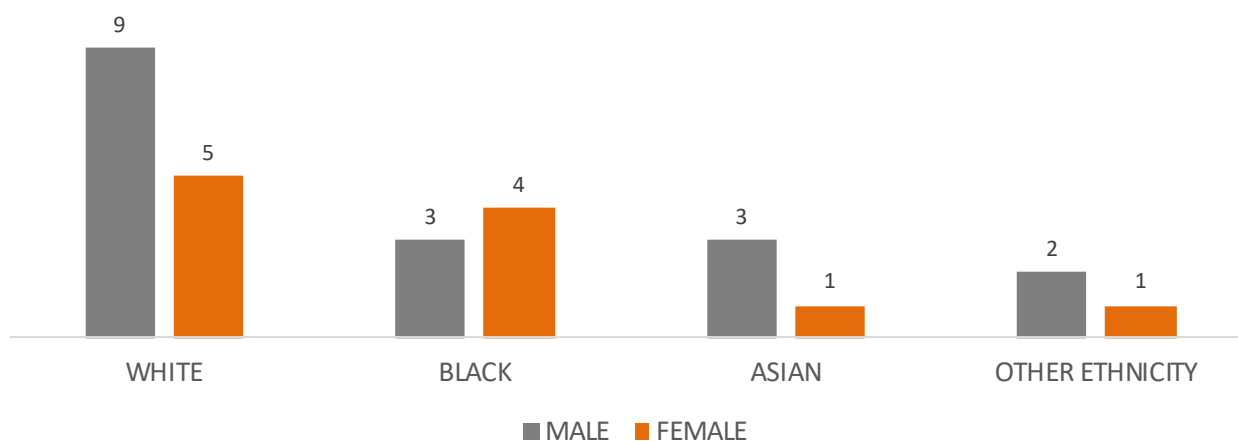
1. The government should lead action with employers to tackle the continued under-representation of ethnic minority young people on apprenticeships in higher value sectors such as construction and engineering
2. A renewed drive is needed to create more apprenticeships in higher value sectors in London, along with pilot initiatives to test ways of supporting young Londoners to take up apprenticeship opportunities in high value sectors in other regions.
3. In order that disparities in apprenticeship application success rates can be tracked, the government should require all employers with 50+ employees to monitor and publish information about apprenticeship applications and appointments by age, gender and ethnicity.
4. A national review of take up of Jobcentre Plus services by ethnic minority young people is urgently needed, with action to address barriers deterring some communities from accessing employment support and opportunities only available through JCP.
5. The government should publish data on degree-level apprenticeships, with breakdowns in application, start and completion rates by gender, age and ethnicity.

DETAILED FINDINGS

UNDER REPRESENTATION

People from ethnic minority groups are under-represented on apprenticeships in England.

CHART I: % of young people who have completed an apprenticeship UK



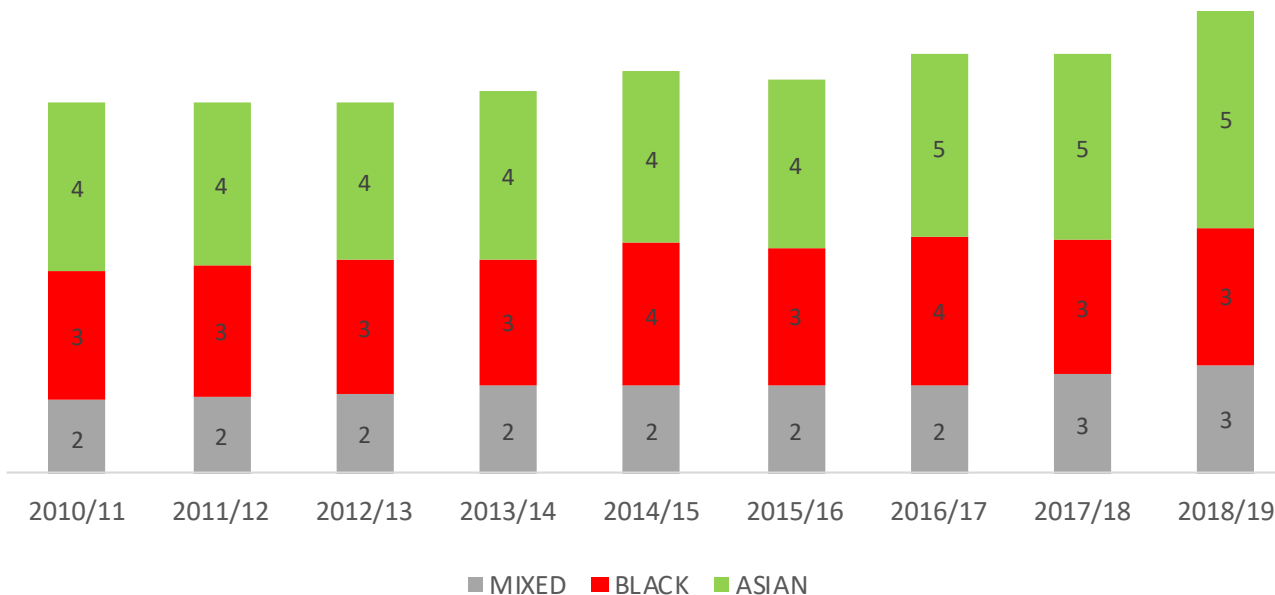
Source: Annual Population Survey Three-year average Jul 2017- Jun 2018 to July 2019 - Jun 2020

Black, Asian, Mixed and Other ethnic minority groups made up almost 15% of England’s population (at time of the 2011 census) but only 12% of the people who started an apprenticeship in England (in 2018/19). This disparity is likely to have increased, as the proportion of the population which is from minority ethnic groups has grown substantially since 2011.

The rate of ethnic minority participation in apprenticeships has changed very little over the past decade.

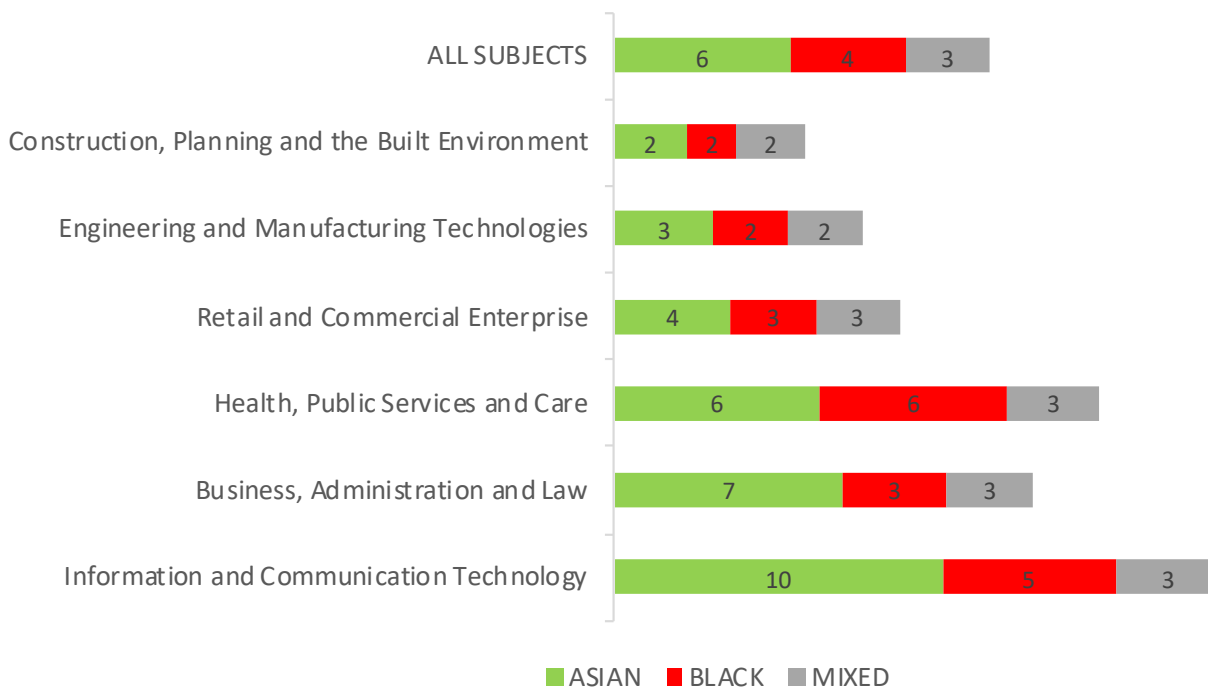
There has been little change in the proportion of apprenticeship starts by ethnic minority people over the past decade. In 2010/11 Black, Asian, Mixed and Other minority ethnic groups made up 9% of apprenticeship starts in England, by 2018/19 this had increased to 12%. Over this period, the largest ethnic minority increase has been for Asian people (from 4.2% to 5.4% of all starts in this period) and people of Mixed ethnicity (from 1.7% to 2.8%). There has been no significant increase in the proportion of Black people starting an apprenticeship (3.2% in 2010/11 and 3.4% in 2018/19).

CHART II: Apprenticeship starts in England by ethnicity (% of all starts): 2010/11 to 2018/19



Source: Apprenticeship Statistics, House of Commons Briefing Paper number 06113, August 2020 <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN06113/SN06113.pdf>

CHART III: Proportion of Black, Asian and Mixed ethnicity starts by subject area 2019/20 (%)

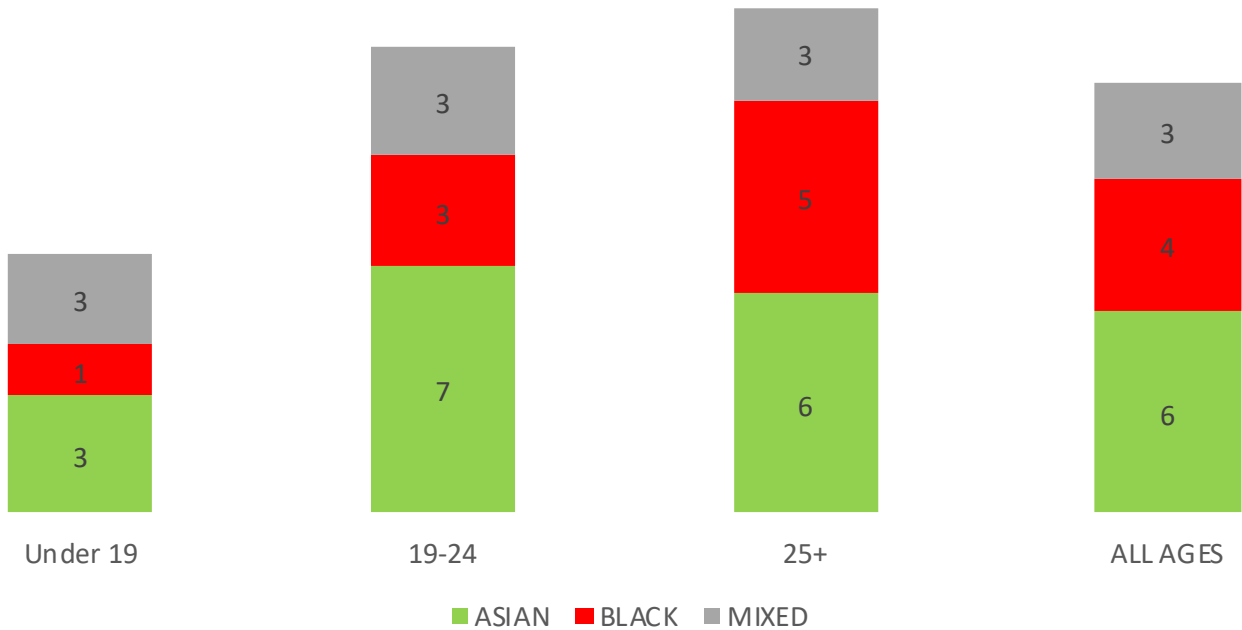


Source: FE Statistics Library.

Note: Chart shows proportion of Asian, Black and Mixed starters within ethnic group for the six most common subjects accounting for 94% of all starts within period.

People from Black, Asian and Mixed ethnic groups continue to be very under-represented in some subject areas, particularly in Construction and Engineering.

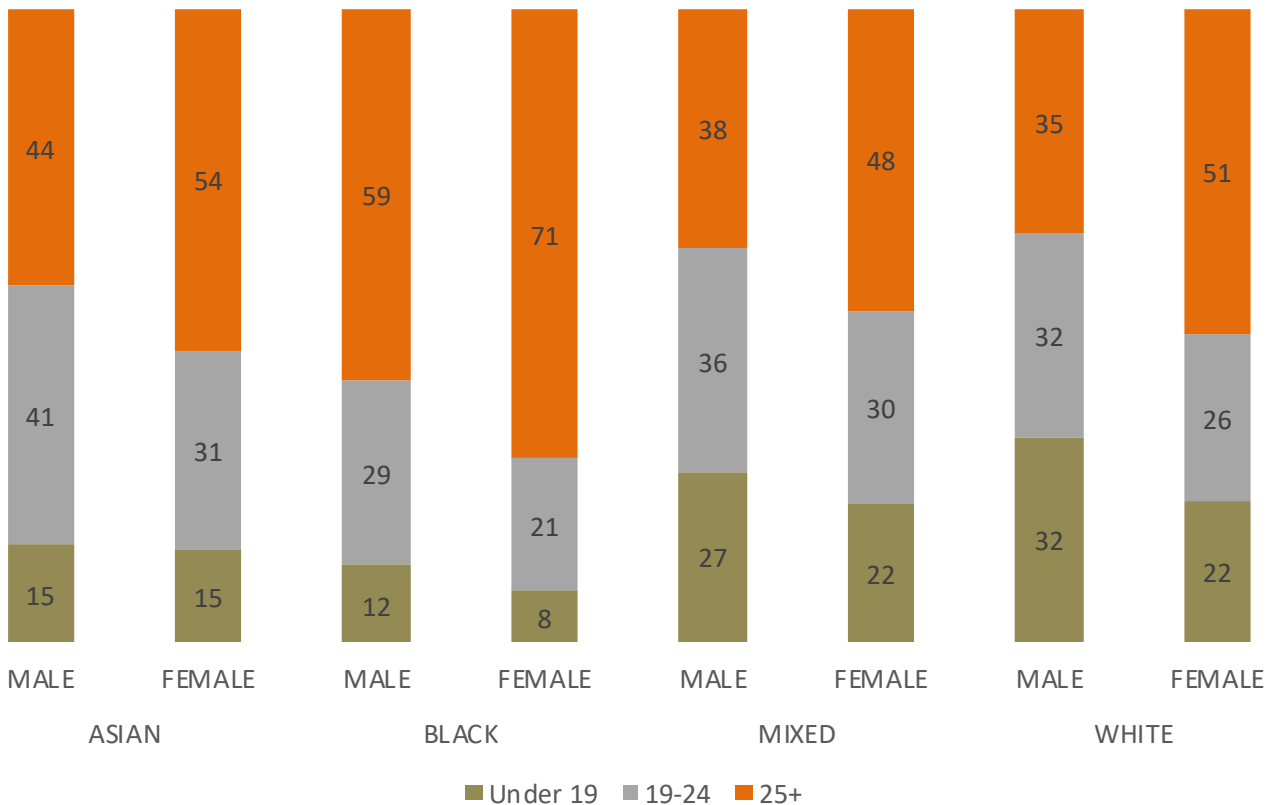
Chart IV: Apprenticeship starts 2019/20 % Asian+Black+Mixed within age group



Source: FE statistics library

Black, Asian and Mixed ethnicity apprenticeship starters are particularly under-represented in the youngest age group. In 2019/20, only 7% of starters in the 19-24 age group were from Black, Asian or Mixed ethnic groups, compared with 14% in the 25+ age group.

Chart V: Apprenticeship starts 2019/20: % within ethnic group by age



Source: FE statistics library

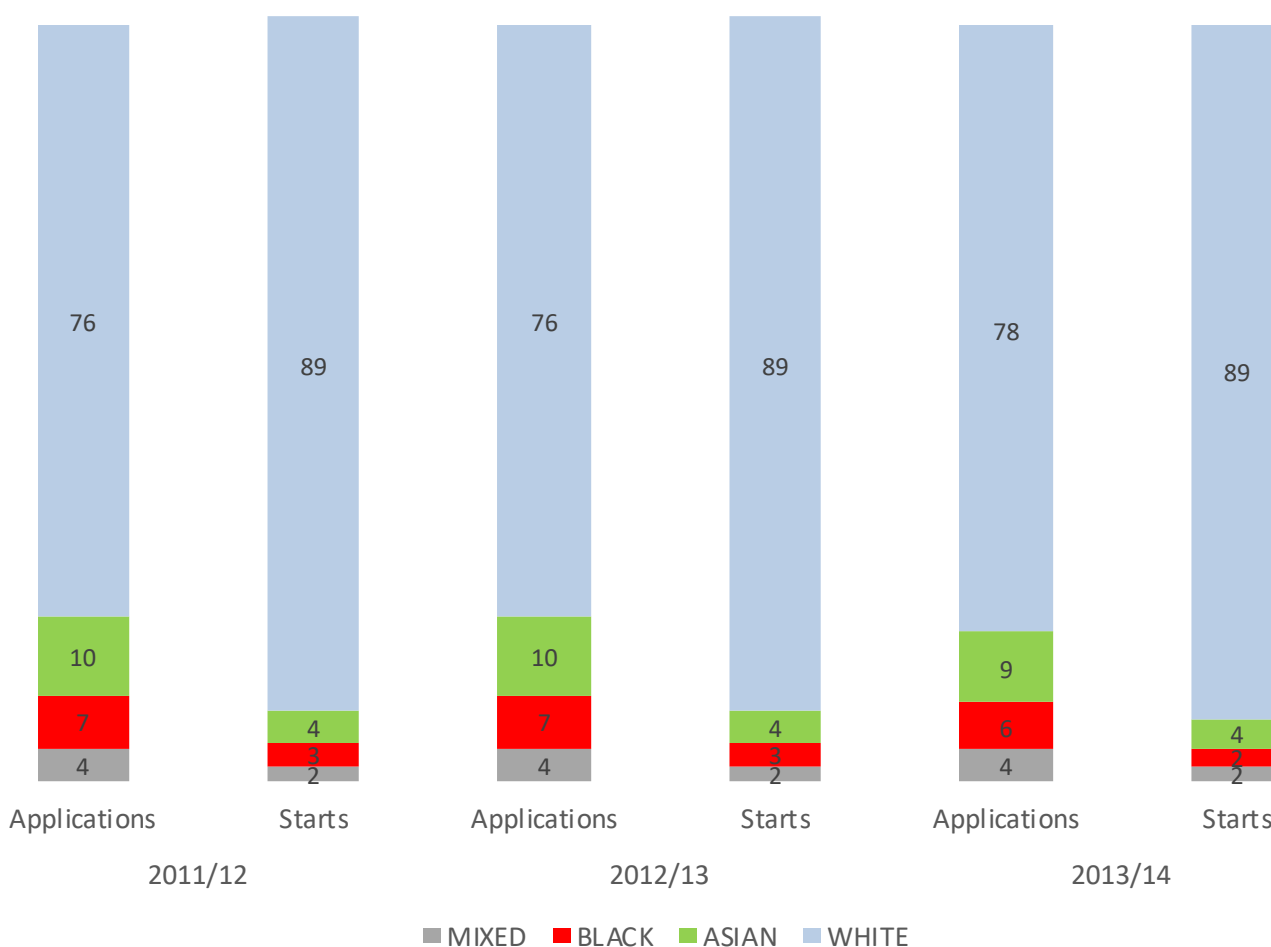
APPLICATION SUCCESS RATES

Lower participation in apprenticeships by ethnic minority groups is not due to lack of interest from ethnic minority populations.

Application rates by ethnic minority groups are high. The government no longer publishes apprenticeship applications by ethnicity. Analysis of previously published data shows that around one fifth of all those applying for apprenticeships via the centralised application platform were from Black, Asian or Mixed ethnic groups, while only one tenth of those starting apprenticeships in the same year were Black, Asian or Mixed ethnic.

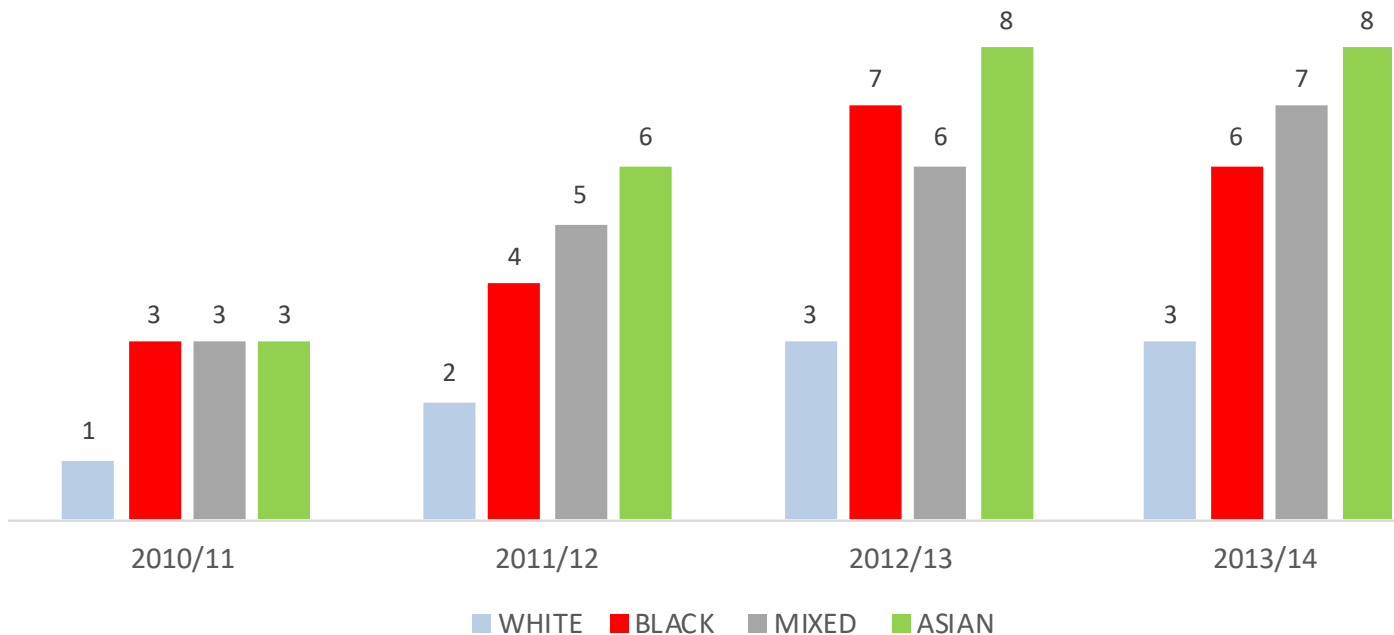
Data on apprenticeship application success rates by ethnicity is not available. The comparison of applications and starts suggests that apprenticeship applications from Black, Asian or Mixed ethnic people are less likely to be successful than those from White people. Comparing the number of applications by ethnic group in one year with the number of starts by ethnic group in the following year shows that in 2013/14, for example, there were three White applicants for every one white applicant starting an apprenticeship in 2014/15, but for Black people there were six applicants for one start, and for Asian people there were eight applicants for one start.

CHART VI: Apprenticeship applications and starts by ethnic group (% of all starts): 2011/12 to 2013/14



Source: FE statistics library & previous BTEG analysis of applications data

CHART VII: Number of applications to starts by ethnic group



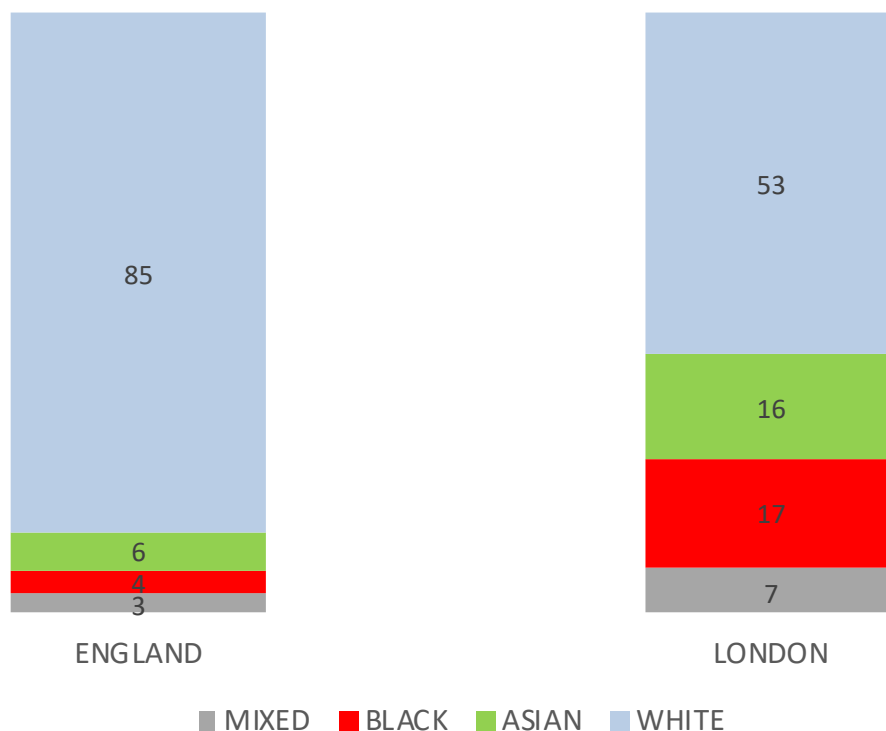
Source: FE statistics library

Note: The chart shows the number of applications by ethnic group in the given year divided by the number of starts by ethnic group in the following year.

REGIONAL DISPARITIES

The proportion of ethnic minority people starting apprenticeships is higher in London than any other region.

CHART VIII: 2019/20 Apprenticeship starts by ethnic group (% of all starts)



Source: FE statistics library

The lower number of starts compared with applications for ethnic minority people is likely to in part result from large differences in the number of apprenticeship places available in different parts of the country. London, which has the largest ethnic minority population, has the lowest number of apprenticeship places per capita.

Apprenticeship starts are highest in regions where young ethnic minority populations are lowest.

This disparity is starkest in London which has the lowest number of apprenticeship starts (40 per 1,000 of the 16-24 population) and the highest ethnic minority youth population (43% of the 16-24 population from Black, Asian and Mixed ethnic groups in the 2011 Census).

The lower number of apprenticeship places in areas with higher ethnic minority populations means that ethnic minority candidates are far more likely to be applying for apprenticeship in regions where competition is higher. The regional disparity is likely a leading factor in continued under-representation of ethnic minority young people in apprenticeships.

CHART IX: Black+Asian+Mixed young population by region AND apprenticeship starts in 2018/19 per 1,000 of 16-24 population per region



Source: FE statistics library; 2011 Census

The lower number of starts compared with applications for ethnic minority people may also result from ethnic minority applicants applying for more competitive subject areas, but data are not available to enable this analysis.

HIGHER LEVEL APPRENTICESHIPS

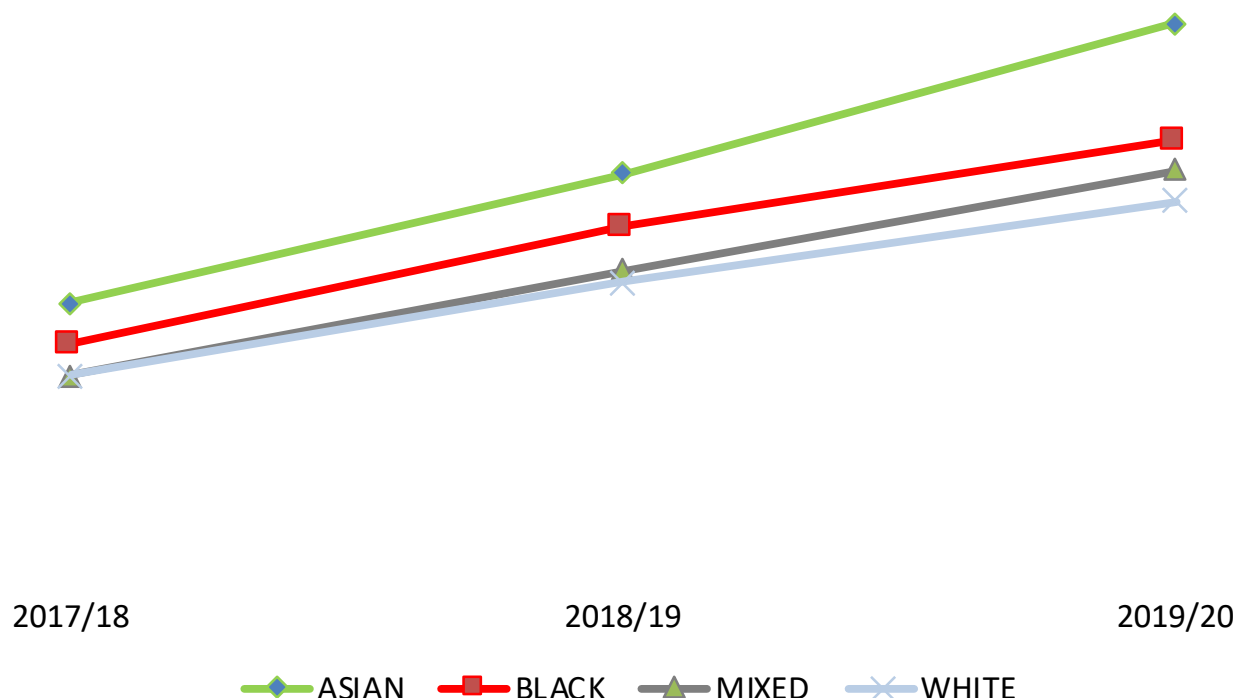
The proportion of all apprenticeships at higher levels is increasing. Asian, Black and Mixed ethnicity apprentices are more likely than White apprentices to be on a higher-level apprenticeship.

The government does not publish data on degree-level apprenticeships. Research in 2016/17 found they were less likely to be ethnically diverse than degree entrants studying similar subjects at the same universities – but this may not still be the case [House of Commons briefing Paper 8741, December 2019 <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-8741/>]

The proportion of apprenticeships at higher level has been increasing and the proportion at intermediate level decreasing. In 2019/20 24.5% of all apprenticeship starts were at higher level and 31.8% at intermediate level.

White apprentices are least likely to start a higher-level apprenticeship and Asians are most likely: in 2019/20 34.7% of Asians who started an apprenticeship started a higher level compared with 23.5% of White starters (Black = 27.3% and Mixed = 25.4%).

CHART X: Starts on Higher level apprenticeships



Source: FE statistics library

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