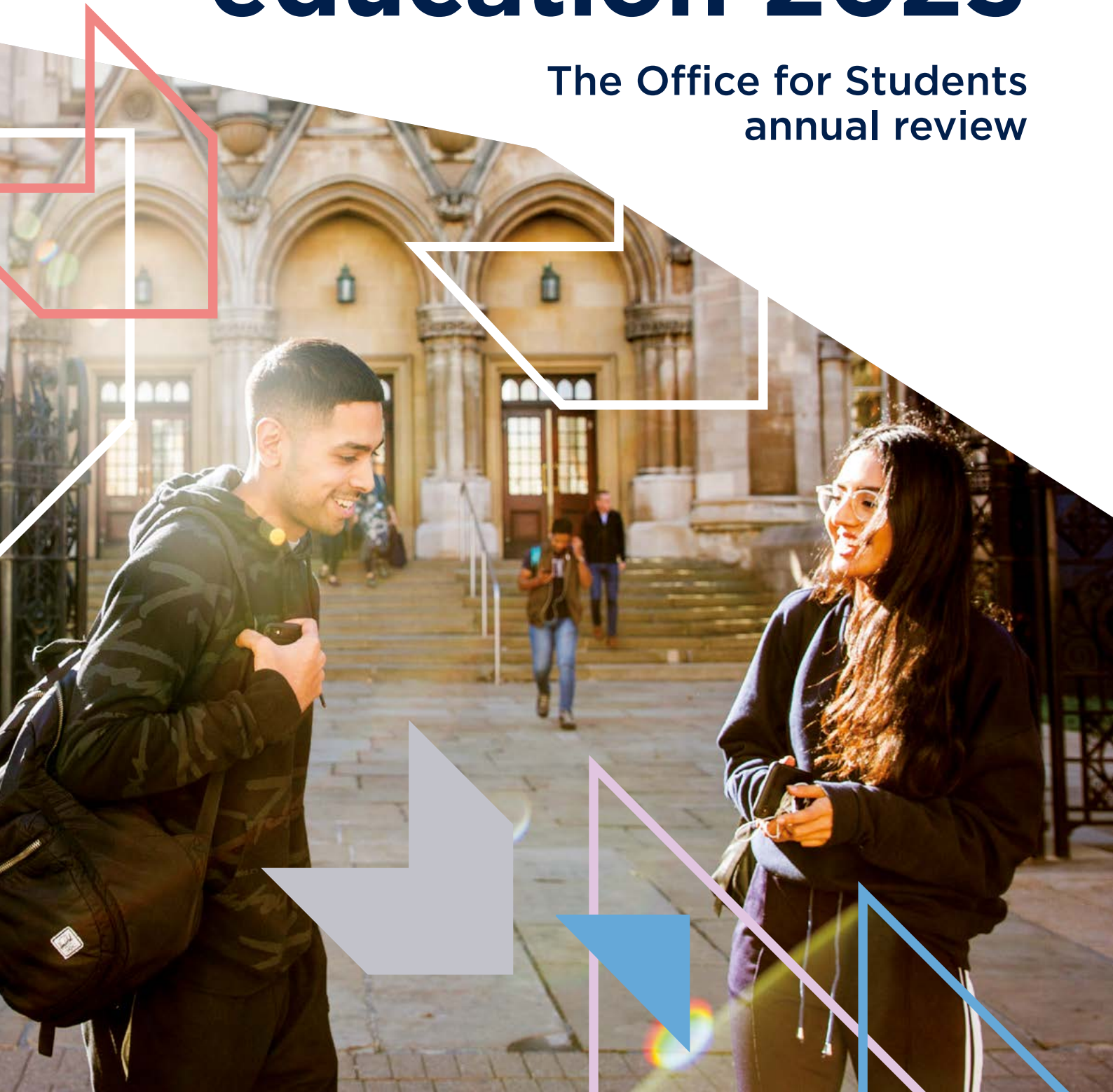


Office for  
Students

ofs

# English higher education 2023

The Office for Students  
annual review





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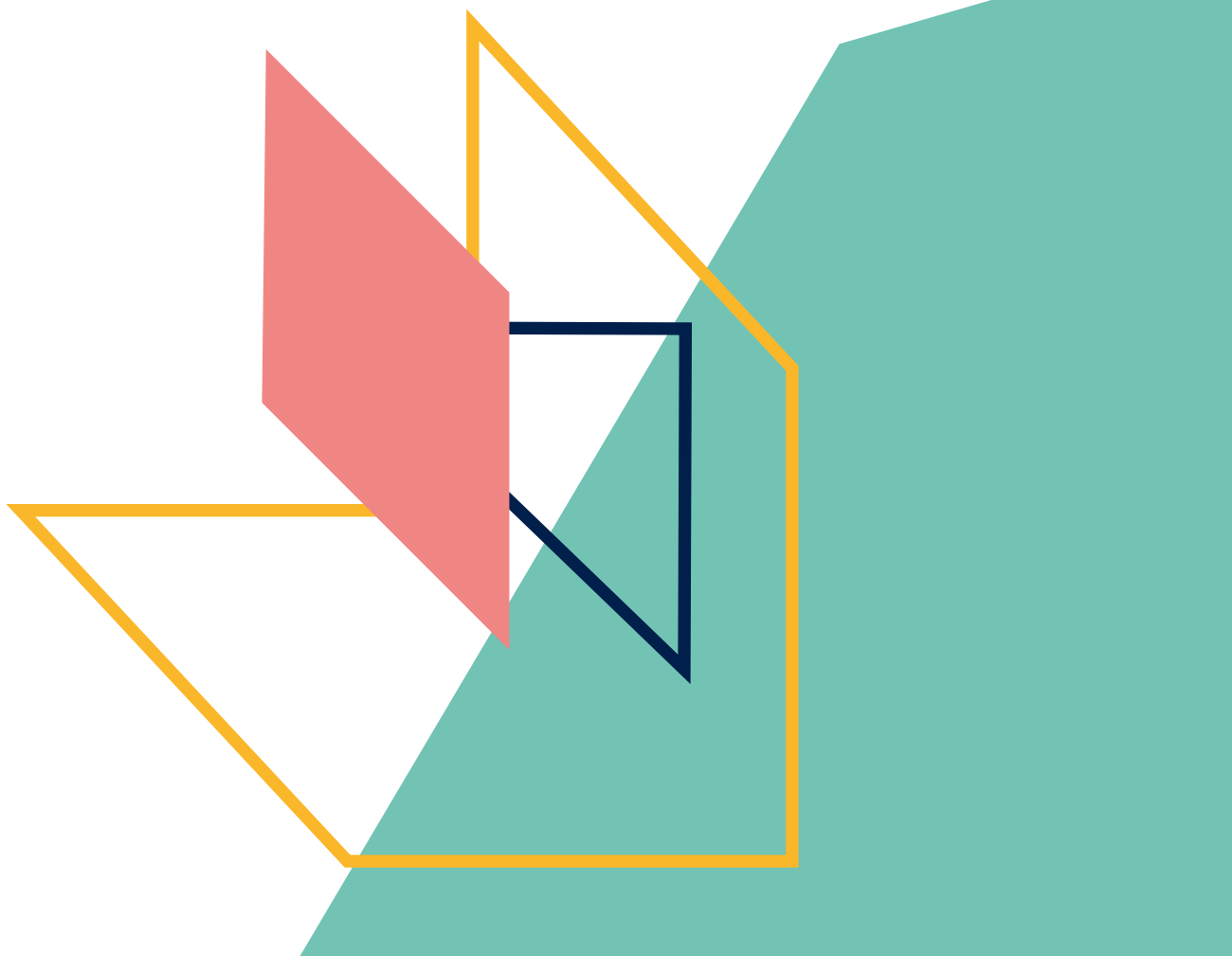
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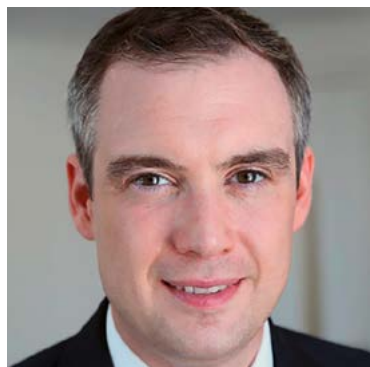
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# Foreword



Lord Wharton of Yarm, OfS chair

**Over the past year, the Office for Students (OfS) has continued to evolve to deliver our role of regulating the higher education sector in England for the benefit of students and the public.**

This role affects both the outcomes of a student's time at university or college – their qualifications and career opportunities – and the experience they have while taking part in higher education. Many universities and colleges already provide a high quality education for their students, and many students pass their time at university with positive experiences to look back on. However, there are times when these things may not be true, and then we have a duty to students to intervene.

I am pleased to say that the 2023 Teaching Excellence Framework rates student experience as well as student outcomes, to help prospective students with the important choice of what and where to study. Meanwhile, this year we have begun to publish reports on our quality assessments of specific institutions, to encourage all universities and colleges to ensure that their

courses meet our requirements for high quality. Encouragingly, some of these reports found no areas of concern, and where concerns were identified we are considering whether regulatory action is appropriate. In each case, we have been pleased to see institutions across the country engaging with the reports and the implications for their own courses and students.

It is clearly to students' benefit that their university or college continues to be financially secure, and we continue to monitor the sustainability of the higher education sector. We have identified and advised on a number of key risks and challenges faced by universities in maintaining a sound financial footing, such as cost pressures and an overreliance on income from overseas students.

Our work is done for the benefit of students from all backgrounds. Our Equality of Opportunity Risk Register, introduced this year and informing the latest round of access and participation plans that universities and colleges have sent to us, identifies and will help eliminate risks to the practical expression of this principle. We have also funded projects to address poor mental health among students, and have announced a new panel to review how universities and colleges support disabled students. Sexual misconduct on campus continues to be a concern to students and to the OfS, and we have launched a groundbreaking pilot survey on its prevalence, to inform our future work and that of others in this area.

Current national and international events make freedom of speech on campus an increasingly salient issue, and there have been times when students and staff have

felt unable to express themselves as freely as they should. Higher education providers should take steps to uphold free speech within the law for everyone – although this does not, and cannot, include discrimination against, or harassment of, Jewish students, or any other conduct prohibited by law. Arif Ahmed, the OfS's new Director for Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom, has set out our stall in a non-partisan and thoughtful way and has met with students and sector representatives to discuss approaches to free speech. He will continue to set direction for the OfS's work in this area as we begin to implement new legislation over the coming months.

The OfS senior team has also recently been joined by a new Director of Regulation, Philippa Pickford, and I welcome her alongside Arif. They join the OfS as we enter 2024 with a renewed commitment to serving students and society, and helping to protect the standing and reputation of English higher education.

### Office for Students milestones in 2023

- We began to publish the findings of quality assessment visits to universities and colleges, focusing on the quality of business and management courses and computing courses.<sup>1</sup> We expanded our pool of academic experts, whose independent judgements inform our regulation of quality, and commissioned our first assessments of providers seeking registration or degree awarding powers.
- Academics and students from across the sector formed the panel for the 2023 Teaching Excellence Framework. Students also had the opportunity to submit their views on the quality of their educational experience and outcomes through a student submission about their institution. 51 of the 227 universities and colleges whose outcomes were published in 2023 received Gold overall ratings, with a large majority performing well above the high quality baseline of our regulatory framework.<sup>2</sup>
- We launched the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register. This identifies 12 sector-wide risks to students' opportunities to access and succeed in higher education, to be taken into account in universities' and colleges' access and participation plans.<sup>3</sup>
- Alongside our monitoring of individual institutions, we published our annual assessment of the financial sustainability of the sector.<sup>4</sup> This flagged a range of risks, including the continuing impact of fixed undergraduate tuition fees, rising costs and an increasing reliance on income from international students on the part of some universities. We wrote to 23 higher education providers with high levels of recruitment of students from China, to ensure they have contingency plans in case of a sudden drop in income from these students.
- We launched our pilot survey on the prevalence of sexual misconduct in higher education, the first to be run at scale in the UK.<sup>5</sup>
- We launched consultations on a new free speech complaints scheme and our approach to regulating free speech in student unions.<sup>6</sup> These new areas are a result of the new Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023.<sup>7</sup>
- In 2023, 18 higher education providers were added to the OfS Register (as of 31 October 2023). We resolved five applications for new or full degree awarding powers from 1 January to 30 June 2023 (latest data available).<sup>8</sup>
- Halfway through our organisational strategy for 2022 to 2025, our key performance measures show good progress in our two areas of focus: quality and standards; and equality of opportunity.<sup>9</sup>



# Chief executive's commentary



**Susan Lapworth, chief executive**

**In my commentary for this Annual review, I reflect on some of the key issues facing students and the higher education sector in England over the past year, and present a summary of the work of the Office for Students in 2023.**

Regulation, and specifically the work of the OfS, has come under scrutiny in 2023. The House of Lords Industry and Regulators Committee ran an inquiry which identified areas in which the OfS could improve, such as student engagement and our relationship with higher education providers, and highlighted concerns about the financial sustainability of the sector more generally.<sup>10</sup> We thank the committee for its work on this inquiry and welcome its report as an important learning tool. Our response, published in November, considers the recommendations in detail and sets out how we are taking them on board.<sup>11</sup>

In this commentary I am particularly concerned with three of the themes identified by the report. One of these is the committee's understandable concern about the current and long-term financial

sustainability of the higher education sector in England. The view we expressed in May was that the aggregated data indicated that the sector was currently in good financial shape, but we were concerned about the financial fragility of the system in the future. Six months on from that publication, we see many of the risks we had identified persisting, and continuing to place pressure on institutions.<sup>12</sup>

The report also discussed our continuing engagement with universities and colleges, and with students. We value the perspectives we hear through our engagement, and have been revisiting our approach to ensure we are better able to understand the views of those directly involved in the day-to-day experience of higher education. We are planning a wide-ranging review to consider more fully the nature of students' experiences and their interests in higher education, and to identify where regulation can address the greatest risks they face.

The report also correctly argues that improving quality and standards across the sector for all students is of fundamental importance, not only to ensure value for money for students and taxpayers but to protect the international reputation of English higher education. We continue to learn from our work in this area, with the hope that we can enable all the universities and colleges we regulate to do likewise.

Students, and the higher education sector more generally, have faced considerable challenges in 2023. Rises in the cost of living continue to have an impact. The Insight brief we published on this topic in March 2023 cited research showing that almost one-fifth of the 4,021 students who responded



had considered dropping out of university or college because of cost of living increases. This was particularly the case among postgraduate students and disabled students.<sup>13</sup>

Students have also had to deal with continued disruption from industrial action taken by university and college staff. Although this has now largely been resolved, it has included a boycott of marking and assessment, which has been a major concern for many. We wrote to universities and colleges in June 2023 about protecting the interests of students during periods of industrial action and setting out our expectation that providers affected by the boycott would be working to ensure that students were not disadvantaged, and could graduate or progress on time where this was appropriate in academic terms. We also reinforced the need for any degrees awarded to be an accurate reflection of students' academic achievement.<sup>14</sup>

As 2023 draws to a close, a personal highlight has been the chance to meet students and staff during visits to higher education providers and to hear first-hand their perspectives on the benefits and challenges of higher education. I have also enjoyed engaging with senior staff from universities and colleges through our new series of online briefings. These visits and briefings are part of an ongoing, refreshed approach to our engagement with the universities and colleges we regulate, which we intend to continue to build on into 2024.<sup>15</sup>

## Quality and standards

### Definitions of rates used in this commentary

**Continuation rate:** The proportion of entrants who were continuing to study a higher education qualification (or who had gained a qualification) one year and 15 days after they started their course (two years and 15 days for part-time students).

**Completion rate:** The proportion of entrants who gained a higher education qualification (or were continuing in the study of a qualification) four years and 15 days after they started their course (six years and 15 days for part-time students).

**Attainment rate:** The proportion of undergraduate qualifiers who achieved a first or upper second class grade for their first degree.

**Progression rate:** The proportion of qualifiers who identified managerial or professional employment, further study, or other positive outcomes among the activities that they were undertaking at the Graduate Outcomes survey census date, 15 months after they left higher education.<sup>16</sup>



### OfS key performance measures

Our 11 key performance measures (KPMs) show the impact of our regulation and progress towards our strategic goals.

#### Quality and standards

KPM 1: Extent of poor student outcomes.

KPM 2: Student outcomes for all registered providers.

KPM 3: Assessment and awards.

KPM 4: Students' views on aspects of quality.

#### Equality of opportunity

KPM 5: Access to higher education.

KPM 6: Success and progression.

KPM 7: Degree attainment by ethnicity.

KPM 8: Student choice.

#### Enabling regulation

KPM 9: Value for money.

KPM 10: Student protection.

KPM 11: Efficient regulation.<sup>17</sup>

It is fundamental to a world-leading higher education sector that students should receive a high quality academic experience and positive outcomes. The OfS has worked to achieve this objective in a number of ways over the past year. Below I highlight four thematic areas. Students need the courses delivered to them to be of high quality. They need to be sure that the qualifications they receive will continue to inspire confidence in employers and others in the future. They must leave university or college equipped with the skills that employers need from them, including technical skills. And they must be able to study in an environment that secures freedom of speech within the law.

### Ensuring high quality and achieving excellence

At the OfS, we are proud to regulate one of the most respected higher education sectors in the world, where the vast majority of courses continue to be of high quality. This is evidenced through our monitoring of student outcomes data and the results from the National Student Survey (NSS).<sup>18</sup> The statistical overview section has details on student outcomes and NSS data.

This year, we have completed our first assessments of the quality of courses at certain higher education providers. In September, October and November 2023, we published the first quality assessment reports, looking at some business and management courses and computing courses.<sup>19</sup> The published reports set out the findings of the impartial and rigorous assessments by teams of academic experts. These include details of any concerns identified during the assessments.

We are considering whether any regulatory action is appropriate for any of these cases. Meanwhile, we have published the reports to enable all universities and colleges to consider any implications of the findings for the quality of their courses, including those where delivery is subcontracted to other providers, and to make any necessary improvements.

Completing and publishing these assessments was an important milestone in our regulation of quality in higher education and is building an important resource for learning across the sector.

The Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) encourages universities and colleges to deliver excellent teaching, learning and student outcomes.<sup>20</sup> The TEF is a cyclical peer review process taking place every four years, and students' submissions provide important evidence for the review. In September we published the final ratings

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of the TEF 2023 for 175 higher education providers, and in December the ratings for an additional 53 providers were published. In a change from previous TEF cycles, higher education providers taking part receive an overall rating and two ‘aspect’ ratings: one for the ‘student experience’ and one for ‘student outcomes’.

The TEF 2023 ratings demonstrate the outstanding quality of higher education in England, which is being delivered by a wide range of higher education providers. Most of the providers whose ratings were published in 2023 are performing well above the OfS’s regulatory baseline for high quality. 51 of them were rated Gold for delivering an outstanding experience and outcomes for their students. 125 providers were rated Silver and 48 were rated Bronze (overall ratings).<sup>21</sup> See the statistical overview section for more information on the TEF 2023 ratings.

### Ensuring the continuing credibility of qualifications

Ensuring the credibility of higher education qualifications over time is an important element of our quality and standards work. We have a strategic goal that students should be rigorously assessed, and the qualifications they are awarded should be credible and comparable with those granted previously.<sup>22</sup> For example, a first class degree awarded in 2023 should hold the same value as a first in the same subject awarded ten or 20 years ago.

Our KPM 3 measures the proportion of students who graduate with first class degrees.<sup>23</sup> Analysis we published in July 2023 suggests that some progress has been made in tackling ‘grade inflation’, but signals to higher education providers that there is still work to be done. 32.8 per cent of students were awarded a first class degree in 2021-22. Half of this attainment (16.4 percentage points) was not statistically explained when compared with 2010-11, after our analysis accounted for various observable factors that might affect students’ attainment.

This figure represents a decrease since 2020-21 of 4.8 percentage points in unexplained attainment for first class degrees across the higher education sector. In 2021-22, 56.2 per cent of students who entered higher education with A-level grades of AAA and above received a first, compared with 60.7 per cent in 2020-21 and 33.6 per cent in 2010-11.<sup>24</sup> (See also the information on attainment rates in the statistical overview section.)

### Equipping students with higher technical skills

Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs) are Level 4 or 5 qualifications approved by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education. They were first introduced in September 2022 and are designed to equip students with the skills to meet employment needs. In 2023, two more sector areas were added to the range of HTQs: construction, design and build; and health and science.<sup>25</sup>

In July 2023, we launched a consultation proposing to separate HTQs from other Level 4 and 5 qualifications in our student outcomes measures. We held two roundtable events on this consultation in October. The proposed change would allow the OfS, the higher education sector and the government to assess how far these new qualifications are delivering positive outcomes for students, employers and taxpayers.<sup>26</sup>

In 2023, seven more further education colleges joined the Open University’s validation project (set up by the OfS in 2022). This enables the Open University to validate qualifications gained on courses offered by further education colleges. The aims are to provide more choice to students, boost participation in higher education in areas where it is low, and deliver courses that produce a workforce that can meet local skills needs.<sup>27</sup>

### Securing free speech within the law

Ensuring that higher education providers are environments where free speech within the law is valued and upheld is fundamental to a high quality education for students.

There have been significant legislative developments in relation to freedom of speech in 2023, with the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023 becoming law in May.<sup>28</sup> The Act will place further responsibilities on registered universities and colleges and relevant students' unions to take steps to ensure lawful free speech. The legislation introduces an expanded role for the OfS and, since the Act became law, one of our main areas of focus has been setting up a new free speech complaints scheme for higher education in England.

Understanding students' experiences of freedom of speech is an important part of our new role. We began this work in a number of ways in 2023. This included incorporating a new question in this year's NSS on freedom of expression: 'During your studies, how free did you feel to express your ideas, opinions, and beliefs?' We also hosted roundtables with students and with students' unions and launched a consultation on how we should approach the regulation of students' unions in this area.<sup>29</sup> We have set out our priorities for this work and have been undertaking engagement work to support higher education providers to prepare for the legislation when it comes into force from August 2024.<sup>30</sup>

### Equality of opportunity

Our work on promoting equality of opportunity is closely linked with our work on quality and standards. We want all students, from all backgrounds, with the ability and desire to undertake higher education, to be supported to access high quality courses and achieve qualifications that are valued by students, employers, and society.

We launched a new approach to regulating equality of opportunity in March 2023. Informed by the outcomes of a consultation, we published the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) and updated guidance on access and participation plans.<sup>31</sup> The EORR identifies 12 sector-wide risks that may affect a student's opportunity to access and succeed in higher education. These risks are grouped across the three main stages of a student's higher education journey: access, on course, and progression. We ask universities and colleges registered with us to consider the EORR when writing their access and participation plans.<sup>32</sup> A first wave of higher education providers submitted access and participation plans in line with our new guidance in summer 2023.<sup>33</sup>

### Access to higher education

Risks 1 to 5 of the EORR address barriers to accessing higher education. Our regulatory guidance on access and participation plans includes the expectation that most higher education providers will consider risks to access to higher education, including knowledge, skill and attainment differences, by making 'meaningful and effective contributions to supporting schools to raise pre-16 attainment for students who do not have equal opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills required for higher education.'<sup>34</sup>

Annual statistics published by the government highlight that some student groups face particular barriers to accessing higher education. For example, the disparity in rates for progression into higher education by the age of 19 between those eligible for free school meals at age 15 and those who were not increased to 20.2 percentage points in 2021-22. This is the highest level since 2005-06. White male British pupils who were eligible for free school meals at age 15 are among the groups least likely to go on to higher education by age 19. 13.4 per cent of such pupils went on to study in higher education in 2021-22 (this is down from 13.6 per cent

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in the previous academic year). Black Caribbean pupils were among the groups least likely to go on to study in high-tariff higher education providers by age 19 in 2021-22: 6.7 per cent. This compares with an overall national figure of 13.4 per cent of pupils going on to study in such providers.<sup>35</sup>

Data analysed for the OfS's KPM 5 shows the number of 'significantly disadvantaged' students entering higher education in England. In 2021-22, approximately 286,700 young, full-time, England-domiciled students (who could be linked to their school record in their GCSE year) entered undergraduate higher education. Of these, 49,600 are categorised as 'significantly disadvantaged' (a decrease from 51,100 in the previous academic year).<sup>36</sup>

The statistical overview section gives more details about entrants to higher education.

### Diversity of pathways into and through higher education

The OfS's work on encouraging providers to develop more diverse pathways into and through higher education continued in 2023. Our updated regulatory guidance on access and participation plans includes the expectation that higher education providers should be 'expanding and promoting pathways for study at Levels 4 and 5, and on higher apprenticeships and degree apprenticeships.'<sup>37</sup>

In 2021-22, 25,240 apprentices entered higher education at undergraduate level (an increase from 21,290 in 2020-21).<sup>38</sup> We have set out our plans to fund up to £40 million worth of projects at registered providers that will increase capacity within the sector to deliver degree apprenticeships. We expect that this expansion will increase both the number of providers offering degree apprenticeships and the number of students studying Level 6 degree apprenticeships.

The Lifelong Learning (Higher Education Fee Limits) Act 2023 received royal assent

in September.<sup>39</sup> The Act supports the government's lifelong learning entitlement (LLE) policy, which plans to introduce a more flexible approach to studying in higher education.<sup>40</sup> When it is introduced, people up to the age of 60 will have access to a loan to cover the costs of the equivalent of four years of post-18 study. This loan may be used over their lifetime, on different courses and at different higher education providers. It is likely to lead to an increase in the modular provision of study. This introduction of greater flexibility in learning is also likely to have a positive impact on expanding who has access to higher education.

The OfS will regulate all providers offering courses funded through the Lifelong Learning Entitlement, and we are preparing for this role. We issued a call for evidence earlier this year on how we should understand and regulate outcomes for students studying on a modular basis, and are now reviewing the feedback we received.<sup>41</sup>

### On-course experiences

The Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (risks 6 to 11) recognises the importance of positive on-course experiences and access to strong academic and pastoral support. The overall continuation rate for undergraduate students entering full-time first degrees in 2020-21 was 88.9 per cent, and the equivalent completion rate (for entrants in 2017-18) was 88.5 per cent: in both cases a decrease compared with the previous three academic years.<sup>42</sup> This is the latest data available. Continuation and completion rates are often lower for disadvantaged groups (see the statistical overview section). This is why work to support students from all backgrounds to succeed in higher education is so important.

Risk 8 of the EORR highlights the risk to equality of opportunity if students do not experience an environment that is conducive to good mental health and wellbeing. There has been a lot of positive and innovative

work to address mental health in universities and colleges in 2023, including work tailored to the needs of specific student groups.<sup>43</sup> The 18 projects funded by our latest Mental Health Funding Competition have been completed this year. We are in the process of sharing their outputs and findings.<sup>44</sup> In October 2023, the Centre for Transforming Access and Student Outcomes launched the Student Mental Health Evidence Hub. Funded by the OfS, this digital hub brings together evidence, evaluation, examples of practice and resources for what works in supporting mental health among students.<sup>45</sup> And we commissioned a project to encourage improved collaboration and relationships between higher education and NHS providers on student mental health.<sup>46</sup>

We announced a new disabled students' panel, the Disability in Higher Education Advisory Panel, in June 2023.<sup>47</sup> The panel will review how universities and colleges currently support disabled students.

In July 2023, the Women and Equalities Committee published the report of its inquiry into 'Attitudes towards women and girls in educational settings'. The report concluded that 'Women students experience high levels of sexual harassment and sexual violence, both on and off the university campus.'<sup>48</sup> In 2023, we consulted on a new approach to regulating harassment and sexual misconduct and are currently considering the responses.<sup>49</sup> We are developing our own prevalence survey to establish the scale of sexual misconduct in higher education. A pilot version of this survey launched in September 2023. This is an important step in establishing a robust evidence base and improving our understanding of students' experiences of sexual misconduct.<sup>50</sup>

### Progression from higher education

Not all students have equal opportunities to progress to an outcome that they consider positively reflects their higher education experience (see risk 12 of the EORR). Overall

there is a progression rate of 73.9 per cent for full-time first degree students qualifying in 2020-21 (the latest data available).<sup>51</sup> However, students from disadvantaged groups often have lower progression rates.

For example, students who were eligible for free school meals at key stage 4 (or any stage before that) have a progression rate of 65.3 per cent. For students with a reported disability, the rate is 70.6 per cent.<sup>52</sup> For more data on progression rates, see the statistical overview section. Our updated regulatory guidance on access and participation plans includes the expectation that providers will look at multiple areas to improve graduate outcomes for disadvantaged groups, some of which are: development of the curriculum; pedagogy; learning resources; student support; employability; and opportunities such as work experience, placements and internships.<sup>53</sup>

### Financial sustainability

We monitor and analyse the financial performance and forecasts of higher education providers and take steps to increase this monitoring – or make other regulatory interventions – where there are additional risks associated with a provider.

Alongside this work, we publish an annual update on the financial sustainability of the sector. Our 2023 report set out our position that, while we did not consider the short-term financial viability of most higher education providers in England to be a cause for concern at that time, there were increasing financial sustainability risks for some providers in the longer term, and some could face short-term challenges as well.<sup>54</sup> This was particularly the case if multiple risks were to be realised at the same time. The key risks we identified in May included:

- The impact of inflation on costs and challenges in growing income to meet increasing costs. In particular, the 'per

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student' income from tuition fees from UK undergraduates is capped and not increasing, while other costs rise.

- Increasing reliance on fees from overseas students, particularly postgraduates, in some higher education providers' business plans.
- Challenges in meeting investment needs for facilities and environmental policies.

At the end of the year, these risks remain present in the operating environment and the pressure on institutions continues. While many universities and colleges are actively working to mitigate future financial risks, others are not fully assessing and managing these, and are having to respond reactively when they start to materialise. We also see an optimism bias in many financial returns: for example, while the projected growth in student numbers at individual providers may seem reasonable, across the higher education sector as a whole in England it may be unrealistic.

The sector as a whole continues to be reliant on the income from international students (from EU and non-EU countries) who pay increased tuition fees. The sector forecasts show that non-EU fee income as a proportion of total income is expected to increase by 52.3 per cent between 2021-22 and 2025-26. Fee income from EU-domiciled students is expected to increase by 6.0 per cent in the same time period. The sector is particularly reliant on fee income from students from China, who made up 22.3 per cent of the total number of overseas students 2021-22.<sup>55</sup> See the statistical overview section for more information.

In May 2023, the OfS wrote to 23 higher education providers with high levels of recruitment of students from China. We reminded them of the importance of contingency plans in case there is a sudden drop in income from international students. We asked a subset of those

higher education providers most exposed to a short-term risk to provide information about their financial mitigation plans. Each of these responded with their plans, which we have considered in the context of the other financial information that providers are required to submit.<sup>56</sup>

The risks facing the sector are of course subject to change. We will continue to monitor risks closely and are tailoring our approach to assessing the financial resilience of individual providers to reflect the changes in the overall risk context for the higher education sector. To support this risk-based approach, we have begun new engagement activity, including convening roundtable sessions with finance leaders from across the sector to discuss financial sustainability and the particular risks they are facing. This includes hearing from universities that are not experiencing financial difficulties, and using our engagement activity to set expectations about how universities should be assessing their own financial risks given the pressures they face.

In the statistical section that follows, you will find the latest data on higher education providers, students in higher education, student outcomes and the higher educational experiences of disadvantaged groups. This report puts the key numbers about higher education in England at your fingertips. I hope you find it helpful as a statistical overview of 2023.





# A statistical overview of higher education in England

This section uses the latest available data from a range of OfS reports and data dashboards to present key statistics about higher education in England. It is not a comprehensive overview; the endnotes include information where fuller statistical information is available on the OfS website.<sup>57</sup>

This section focuses on:

- **Higher education providers:** The number of providers, diversity of provision, TEF 2023 ratings, and financial sustainability.
- **Students in higher education:** Entrants to higher education and their experiences of their courses.
- **Student outcomes:** Continuation, completion, attainment and progression rates.

Where available we have included data on specific groups of students whose outcomes may be impacted by their disadvantaged or underrepresented status. Universities and colleges should be supporting these students to improve their outcomes, including targeting them where appropriate in their access and participation plan intervention strategies.

These groups include, among others:

- Students who were entitled to free school meals while at school.
- Care experienced students, those who are estranged from their families, and students from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.
- Students sharing a protected characteristic identified by the Equality Act 2010 who experience inequality of opportunity because of that protected characteristic.
- Students who experience multiple barriers to higher education, or who are identified when looking at intersections of different student characteristics, such as male students who are in receipt of free school meals.<sup>58</sup>

## Higher education providers

### Registration

There were 2,048,216 full-time equivalent students (at all levels of study) at higher education providers registered with the OfS in 2021-22.<sup>59</sup> On 5 December 2023, there were 423 registered providers. 78 of them were in the 'Approved' category and 345 in the 'Approved (fee cap)' category, which allows them to access certain funding and charge fees up to the higher statutory fee limit. On the same date, there were 163 providers with degree awarding powers (38.5 per cent of all registered providers). 105 providers (24.8 per cent) can award research degrees. 124 providers are universities (29.3 per cent), 71 are registered

as a charity and 266 are exempt charities (which means that they are not registered with the Charity Commission and the OfS is their principal regulator).<sup>60</sup>

### TEF 2023

In September 2023 we published the final Teaching Excellence Framework 2023 ratings for 175 higher education providers. The TEF is a cyclical peer review process run by the OfS every four years. It aims to encourage higher education providers to deliver excellent teaching, above the high quality baseline of our regulatory framework.

Providers that take part in the TEF receive an overall rating and two underpinning aspect ratings, for student experience and student outcomes. 227 higher education providers took part in TEF 2023. Their overall ratings include the following:

- 51 were rated Gold (meaning the student experience and student outcomes are typically outstanding).
- 125 were rated Silver (meaning the student experience and student outcomes are typically of very high quality).
- 48 were rated Bronze (meaning the student experience and student outcomes are typically of high quality, and there are some features of very high quality).<sup>61</sup>

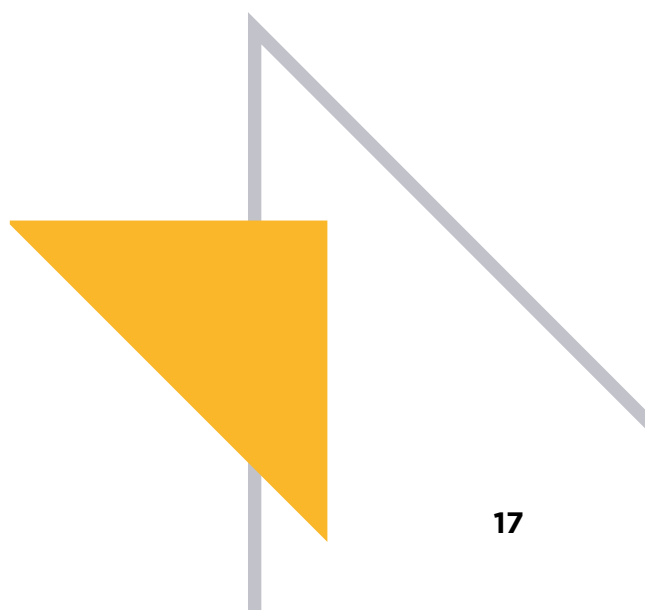
### Financial sustainability

Each year we analyse financial data returned by registered higher education providers in England (excluding further education colleges).<sup>62</sup> This year's analysis (published

in May 2023) concluded that the overall aggregate financial position of higher education registered with the OfS remained sound, although there was significant variation between providers, and there were some material risks. We did not have concerns about the short-term viability of most providers, but the financial position of many was expected to be tighter than in previous years.

Table 1 gives a breakdown of the sources of income (using actual and forecast data from providers) across the sector in the academic years 2020-21 to 2025-26. Course fees and education contracts make up the largest source of income for the sector as a whole. For many higher education providers, financial sustainability continues to be underpinned by actual and forecast income from international students (who pay increased fees). There are particular risks where providers are over-reliant on the income from students from a single country. Figure 1 shows the annual change in actual and forecast entrants to higher education (full-time equivalents) by student domicile across all levels of study.

Table 2 shows the top ten source countries for overseas students from 2020-21 to 2021-22. China was the top source country for overseas students in 2021-22. Students from China made up 22.3 per cent of the total number of overseas students in that academic year. The number of students from India has grown significantly in recent years.





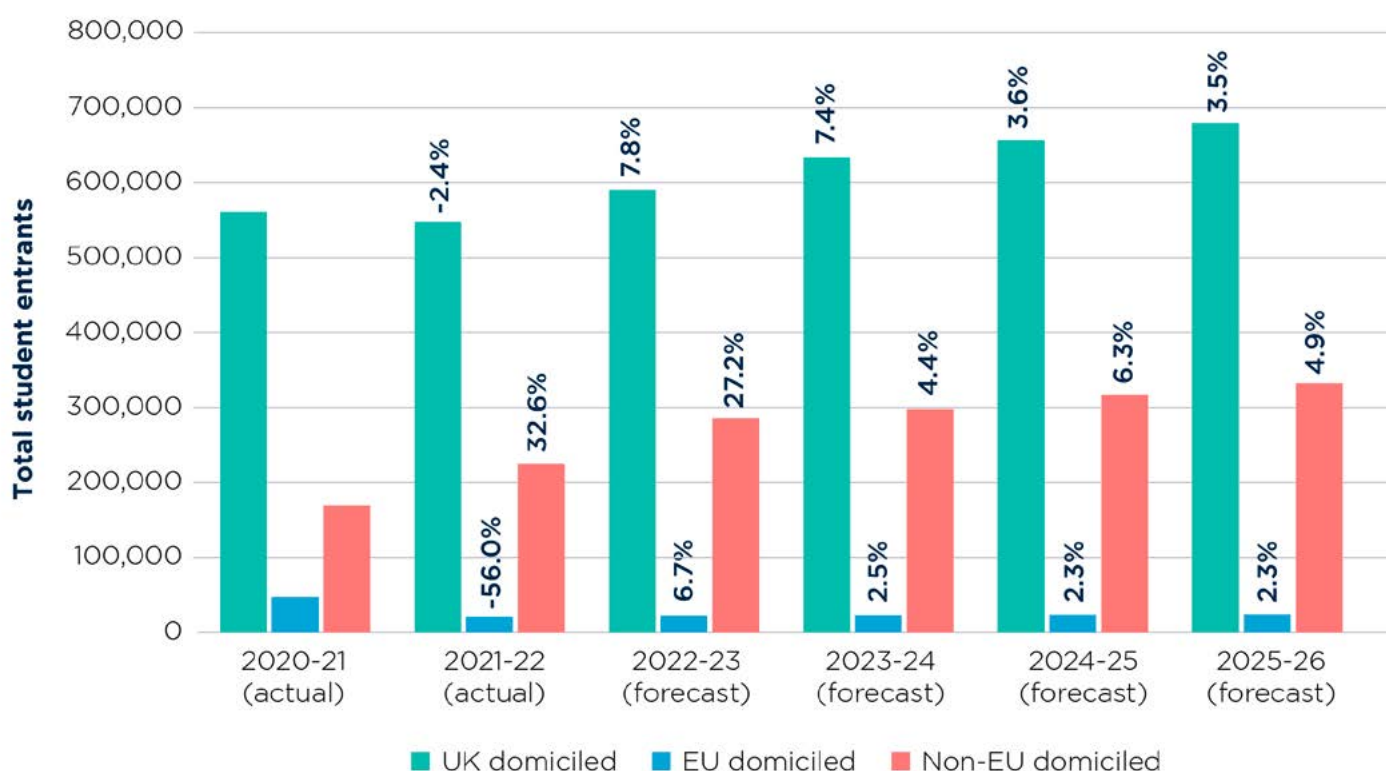
## A statistical overview of higher education in England

**Table 1: Sources of income, 2020-21 to 2025-26**

Income source	Income £M					
	2020-21 (actual)	2021-22 (actual)	2022-23 (forecast)	2023-24 (forecast)	2024-25 (forecast)	2025-26 (forecast)
Course fees and education contracts	20,682	22,501	24,139	25,974	27,690	29,280
Funding body grants	4,105	4,042	4,049	4,044	4,042	4,032
Research grants and contracts	5,377	5,748	5,966	6,254	6,583	6,916
Other income	5,941	7,438	7,648	8,060	8,397	8,719
Investment income	288	291	383	400	382	376
Donations and endowments	789	829	761	727	761	785
<b>Total income</b>	<b>37,181</b>	<b>40,848</b>	<b>42,947</b>	<b>45,461</b>	<b>47,855</b>	<b>50,107</b>

Source: OfS, 'Financial sustainability of higher education providers in England 2023 update' (OfS 2023.20), 2023, pages 13-14.<sup>63</sup>

**Figure 1: Student numbers and annual growth for all entrants (full-time equivalent) by domicile (UK, EU, and Non-EU), 2020-21 to 2025-26**



Source: OfS, 'Financial sustainability of higher education providers in England 2023 update' (OfS 2023.20), 2023, page 15.<sup>64</sup>

Note: Percentages show the year-to-year change for each domicile.

## English higher education 2023

**Table 2: Top ten source countries for overseas students (EU and non-EU), 2020-21 to 2021- 22**

Country	2020-21 (actual)	2021-22 (actual)	Proportion of total overseas students 2020-21	Proportion of total overseas students 2021-22
China	119,275	124,385	23.6%	22.3%
India	72,110	107,320	14.3%	19.2%
Nigeria	16,980	34,010	3.4%	6.1%
Pakistan	10,975	18,305	2.2%	3.3%
United States	13,260	15,825	2.6%	2.8%
Hong Kong	15,035	15,805	3.0%	2.8%
Bangladesh	5,420	10,005	1.1%	1.8%
France	11,710	9,905	2.3%	1.8%
Malaysia	9,565	9,715	1.9%	1.7%
Italy	12,390	9,580	2.5%	1.7%

Source: OfS, 'Financial sustainability of higher education providers in England 2023 update' (OfS 2023.20), 2023, page 20; Higher Education Statistics Agency data including amendments approved by the OfS data amendment panel.<sup>65</sup> Student numbers have been rounded to the nearest five.

## Students in higher education

### Profile of students entering higher education

546,110 full-time students, 75,870 part-time students and 25,240 apprentices entered undergraduate education in 2021-22 (the latest year of data).<sup>66</sup> The numbers of full-time and part-time undergraduate entrants have decreased since the previous academic year (2020-21). The number of apprentices has been increasing since 2018-19. Table 3 shows the number of undergraduate entrants by domicile for each academic year from 2018-19 to 2021-22.

The OfS's KPM 5 measures the number of young, full-time undergraduate students entering higher education, by differing levels of individual disadvantage. In 2021-22, approximately 286,700 young, full-time students who were domiciled in England (and could be linked to their school record in their GCSE year) entered undergraduate

higher education in England. This is the highest total in the past five years. Of these students, 49,600 were categorised as 'significantly disadvantaged'. This number has decreased from 51,100 in the previous academic year.<sup>67</sup>

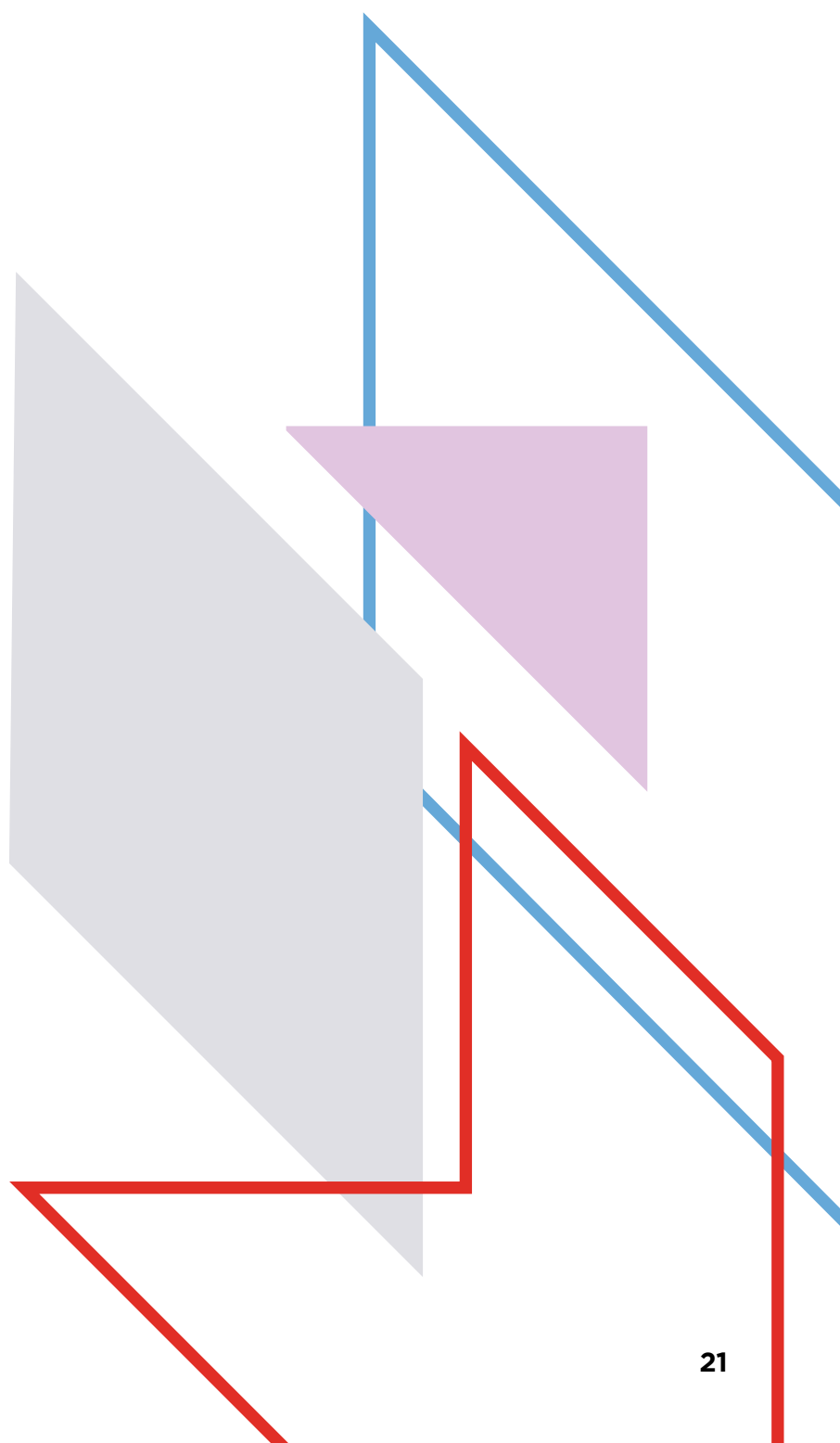
322,120 full-time students, 86,690 part-time students and 7,840 apprentices entered postgraduate education in 2021-22 (the latest year of data).<sup>68</sup> Full-time postgraduate entrants have been increasing in number each year since 2018-19. In 2021-22, part-time postgraduate entrants decreased in number by 5,380, and postgraduate apprenticeship entrants decreased in number by 560, compared with the previous academic year. However, the latest number of postgraduate apprentices entering higher education is more than double the number in 2018-19. See Table 4 for details of the number of postgraduate entrants by domicile for each academic year from 2018-19 to 2021-22.

## A statistical overview of higher education in England

Students domiciled outside of the UK comprised 16.4 per cent of full-time undergraduate entrants and 65.1 per cent of full-time postgraduate entrants in 2021-22.

Female students made up the majority of full-time undergraduate and postgraduate entrants in the latest academic year of data, 2021-22 (55.1 and 55.8 per cent respectively; see Table 5). However, these are sector-wide figures and it should be noted that there are striking differences in the proportions

of male and female students in certain course subjects. For example, in 2021-22 the majority of entrants for engineering, technology and computing were male (82.4 per cent of undergraduate entrants and 69.8 per cent of postgraduate entrants). Female students made up the majority of education and teaching entrants in the same year (82.5 per cent of undergraduate entrants and 72.3 per cent of postgraduate entrants).<sup>69</sup>



## English higher education 2023

**Table 3: Number of undergraduate entrants by domicile from 2018-19 to 2021-22**

Academic year	Domicile	Full-time undergraduate	Part-time undergraduate	Apprenticeship undergraduate
2018-19	UK	411,650	76,470	18,780
	EU	28,750	470	30
	Other international	60,390	540	30
	Unknown	0	0	10
	All domiciles	500,790	77,480	18,850
2019-20	UK	423,700	75,070	19,550
	EU	29,980	360	30
	Other international	72,880	650	20
	Unknown	10	10	0
	All domiciles	526,560	76,090	19,610
2020-21	UK	451,130	86,980	21,240
	EU	32,100	500	30
	Other international	69,560	2,360	20
	Unknown	40	0	0
	All domiciles	552,830	89,830	21,290
2021-22	UK	456,660	74,160	24,950
	EU	10,750	270	50
	Other international	78,700	1,450	240
	Unknown	0	0	0
	All domiciles	546,110	75,870	25,240

Source: OfS, 'Size and shape of provision data dashboard'. Data from all OfS registered providers.<sup>70</sup>

Note: For each category, student numbers have been rounded to the nearest ten, and totals were calculated using unrounded numbers and then rounded. This means that totals may not match the sum of the categories.



## A statistical overview of higher education in England

**Table 4: Number of postgraduate entrants by domicile from 2018-19 to 2021-22**

Academic year	Domicile	Full-time postgraduate	Part-time postgraduate	Apprenticeship postgraduate
2018-19	UK	102,710	74,530	3,660
	EU	19,040	2,580	20
	Other international	107,240	3,670	20
	Unknown	0	10	0
	All domiciles	228,990	80,780	3,700
2019-20	UK	104,070	72,590	5,200
	EU	18,780	2,400	20
	Other international	134,110	3,690	50
	Unknown	0	0	0
	All domiciles	256,960	78,680	5,280
2020-21	UK	128,270	84,780	8,350
	EU	18,730	2,710	20
	Other international	140,300	4,570	40
	Unknown	10	10	0
	All domiciles	287,310	92,070	8,400
2021-22	UK	112,270	80,440	7,560
	EU	10,960	1,600	40
	Other international	198,890	4,620	250
	Unknown	0	20	0
	All domiciles	322,120	86,690	7,840

Source: OfS, 'Size and shape of provision data dashboard'. Data from all OfS registered providers.<sup>71</sup>

Note: For each category, student numbers have been rounded to the nearest ten and totals were calculated using unrounded numbers and then rounded. This means that totals may not match the sum of the categories.

**Table 5: Sex of full-time entrants to higher education from 2018-19 to 2020-21**

	Proportion of full-time undergraduate entrants				Proportion of full-time postgraduate entrants			
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Female	55.9%	55.7%	56.0%	55.1%	58.7%	57.6%	56.7%	55.8%
Male	44.0%	44.3%	43.9%	44.7%	41.2%	42.2%	43.1%	43.9%
Other sex	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%

Source: OfS, 'Size and shape of provision data dashboard'. Data from all OfS registered providers.<sup>72</sup>

### Entrants to higher education from disadvantaged groups in 2021-22

Data is for full-time undergraduate entrants at OfS registered providers (unless otherwise noted). Where a student characteristic is unknown or not applicable, the students are excluded from the relevant calculation of proportions.<sup>73</sup>

#### Socioeconomic background and students from the most deprived areas

23.0 per cent of entrants came from the most deprived areas (quintile 1 measured by the Index of Multiple Deprivation) and 19.5 per cent came from the least deprived areas in England in 2021-22 (quintile 5).<sup>74</sup>

50.2 per cent of entrants had parents working in higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations, 27.4 per cent had parents working in routine and manual occupations, and 0.7 per cent had parents who had never worked or were long-term unemployed.<sup>75</sup>

18.5 per cent of entrants were eligible for free school meals at key stage 4 or during the prior six years.<sup>76</sup>

#### Students from areas of low higher education participation

13.7 per cent of England-domiciled entrants came from areas of England with the lowest rates of participation in higher education (TUNDRA quintile 1).<sup>77</sup>

#### Black, Asian and minority ethnic students

The proportions of entrants to higher education by ethnic group were as follows:

- Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi: 3.0 per cent
- Asian or Asian British – Chinese: 0.7 per cent
- Asian or Asian British – Indian: 3.8 per cent
- Asian or Asian British – other: 2.9 per cent
- Asian or Asian British – Pakistani: 5.2 per cent

- black or black British – African: 8.0 per cent
- black or black British – Caribbean: 1.8 per cent
- black or black British – other: 0.7 per cent
- Gypsy or Traveller: 0.1 per cent
- mixed – other: 1.7 per cent
- mixed – white and Asian: 1.7 per cent
- mixed – white and black African: 0.8 per cent
- mixed – white and black Caribbean: 1.3 per cent
- other ethnic group: 2.9 per cent
- white: 65.6 per cent.<sup>78</sup>

### **Mature students**

Most of the students entering courses in 2021-22 were under the age of 21 on entry (70.4 per cent of entrants). In contrast, most of the students entering part-time undergraduate courses were mature students, aged 21 or over (86.3 per cent).<sup>79</sup>

### **Disabled students**

15.6 per cent of entrants in 2021-22 reported having a disability. The proportions of entrants reporting different types of disability were:

- cognitive or learning difficulties – 5.1 per cent
- mental health conditions – 4.5 per cent
- multiple or other impairments – 2.8 per cent
- sensory, medical or physical impairments – 2.1 per cent
- social or communication impairments – 1.0 per cent.<sup>80</sup>

### **Care experienced students**

- 1.2 per cent of entrants in 2021-22 have experience of being in care.

## English higher education 2023

### National Student Survey 2023 findings

In 2023, an updated NSS was distributed to final-year undergraduates across the UK. It asked about their academic experiences, including the teaching on their course, assessment and feedback, and how well courses are organised. There were new questions about mental wellbeing services and, in England, about freedom of expression. The response rate in England in 2023 was 71.3 per cent, with 290,706 students taking part.

The OfS's KPM 4 uses data from the NSS. It evaluates the percentage of students responding positively to groups of questions about aspects of the quality of their academic experience. The results from the NSS in 2023 showed that in England:

- 84.7 per cent of students responded positively to questions about the teaching on their course
- 78.0 per cent responded positively to questions about assessment and feedback
- 83.4 per cent responded positively to questions about academic support
- 86.1 per cent responded positively to questions about learning resources
- 71.9 per cent responded positively to questions about student voice.<sup>81</sup>

### Some findings from the NSS 2023 (English higher education providers)

- 90.6 per cent responded positively to 'How good are teaching staff at explaining things?'
- 89.4 per cent responded positively to 'How well have the library resources (e.g., books, online services and learning spaces) supported your learning?'
- 85.4 per cent responded positively to 'How easy is it to access subject specific resources (e.g., equipment, facilities, software) when you need them?'
- 84.1 per cent responded positively on 'How often is the course intellectually stimulating?'
- 75.9 per cent responded positively to 'How well communicated was information about your university/college's mental wellbeing support services?'
- 85.9 per cent responded positively to 'During your studies, how free did you feel to express your ideas, opinions, and beliefs?'<sup>82</sup>

### Student outcomes

It should be noted that the coronavirus pandemic could have had an impact on the student outcomes data given here. The UK entered three national lockdowns in 2020 and 2021, and there were also public health related restrictions outside these periods. The consequent changes to the structure of learning and assessment could have affected students' decisions about continuing with their studies and negatively affected their opportunities to continue or complete higher education.

### Continuation

**Continuation rate:** The proportion of entrants who were continuing to study a higher education qualification (or who had gained a qualification) one year and 15 days after they started their course (two years and 15 days for part-time students).

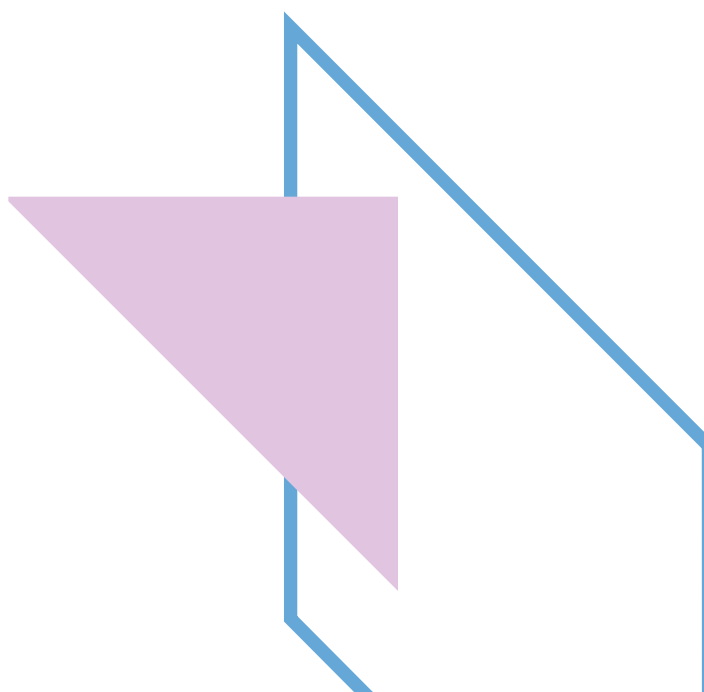
The continuation rate for full-time first degree students entering higher education in 2020-21 was 88.9 per cent, a decrease from 91.1 per cent for students entering in the previous academic year. Undergraduate apprentices (all modes of study) entering higher education in 2020-21 had a continuation rate of 88.5 per cent (a very slight decrease from 88.9 per cent for those entering in 2019-20).

For postgraduate students studying a full-time taught masters' (entering higher education in 2020-21), the rate was 93.1 per cent. This is a slight decrease from the rate for the previous academic year (93.9 per cent). Postgraduate apprentices (all modes of study) entering higher education in 2020-21 had a continuation rate of 85.2 per cent (a decrease from 86.8 per cent for those entering in 2019-20).

Students studying part-time have lower continuation rates. Part-time undergraduate students entering first degrees in 2019-20 had a continuation rate of 62.1 per cent, an increase of 0.3 percentage points from 2018-19.<sup>83</sup> See Figures 2 and 3 for more details about continuation rates.

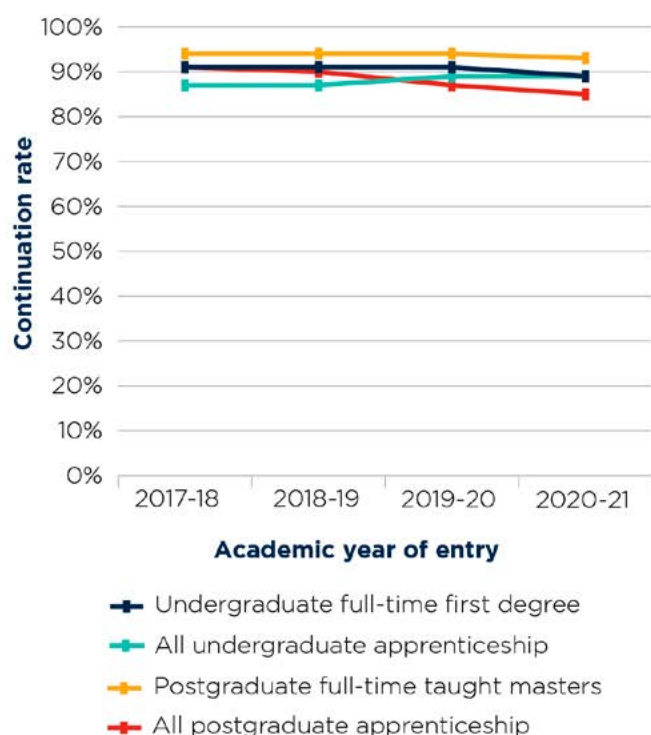
Female full-time first degree students had a higher continuation rate than their male counterparts (92.0 per cent and 88.5 per cent respectively).<sup>84</sup>

The OfS's KPM 1 looks at the extent of poor student outcomes. The proportion of students at providers where the relevant continuation indicator is below our minimum numerical threshold was 4.7 per cent for the most recent year of entry (2020-21 for full-time students and apprentices, 2019-20 for part-time students). This decreased from 7.9 per cent over the previous four years.<sup>85</sup>

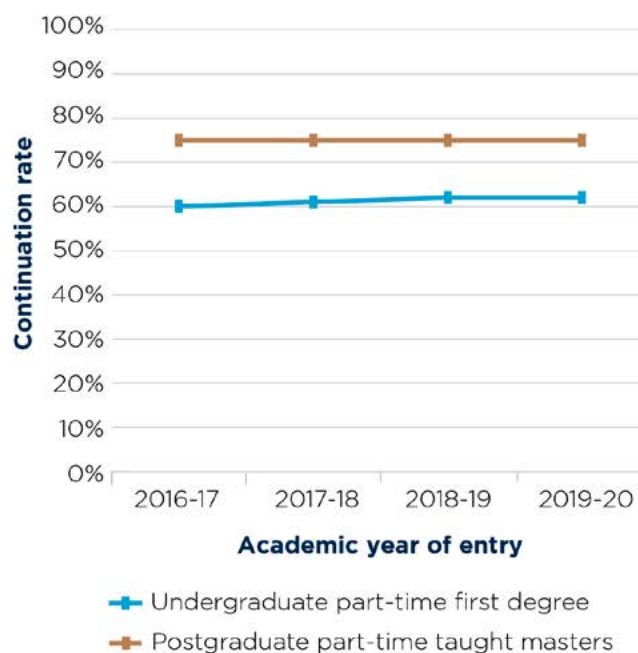


## English higher education 2023

**Figure 2: Continuation rates (full-time students and apprentices)**



**Figure 3: Continuation rates (part-time students)**



Source: OfS, 'Student outcomes data dashboard'. Data from all OfS registered providers – taught or registered population.<sup>86</sup>

Note: Part-time continuation rates are not yet available for entrants in 2020-21.

### Continuation rates for disadvantaged groups

Except where otherwise noted, this data is for full-time first degree students (all domiciles) and is for four years in aggregate (entrants from 2017-18 to 2020-21).<sup>87</sup> It describes actual differences between the disadvantaged group chosen and a reference group. No other factors (for example, entry qualifications) have been taken into account.

### Socioeconomic background and students from the most deprived areas

Students from the most deprived areas of England (quintiles 1 and 2 measured by the Index of Multiple Deprivation) and least deprived areas (quintiles 3, 4, and 5) have continuation rates of 87.5 per cent and 92.5 per cent respectively.<sup>88</sup> Those students who were eligible for free school meals at key stage 4 (or any stage before that) have a continuation rate of 88.4 per cent, compared with 93.1 per cent for those not eligible for free school meals.<sup>89</sup>

### Black, Asian and minority ethnic students

Most black and minority ethnic groups have lower continuation rates than the white ethnic group (91.5 per cent). Exceptions to this are the following ethnic groups: Asian or Asian British – Chinese; Asian or Asian British – Indian; and Mixed ethnicity – white and Asian. The continuation rates for student groups by ethnic background are as follows:

- Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi – 86.2 per cent

- Asian or Asian British – Chinese – 95.3 per cent
- Asian or Asian British – Indian – 93.6 per cent
- Asian or Asian British – Pakistani – 89.7 per cent
- Asian or Asian British – other – 91.1 per cent
- black or black British – African – 87.0 per cent
- black or black British – Caribbean – 83.8 per cent
- black or black British – other – 83.6 per cent
- mixed – white and Asian – 92.7 per cent
- mixed – white and black African – 88.0 per cent
- mixed – white and black Caribbean – 87.5 per cent
- mixed – other – 88.5 per cent
- other ethnic group – 87.7 per cent
- Gypsy or Traveller – 79.1 per cent.<sup>90</sup>

### **Mature students**

Mature students (whose ages on entry to higher education were 21 or over) have lower continuation rates in every age group, compared with 92.3 per cent for young students. The continuation rates for mature students by age group on entry to higher education are as follows:

- 21 to 25 years – 85.4 per cent
- 26 to 30 years – 83.8 per cent
- 31 to 40 years – 84.6 per cent
- 41 to 50 years – 84.7 per cent
- 51 years and over – 81.4 per cent.

### **Disabled students**

- Students with no reported disability have a continuation rate of 90.6 per cent. Students with reported disabilities have lower continuation rates, with the exception of students with reported cognitive or learning difficulties. The continuation rates for these students by reported disability are as follows:
- cognitive or learning difficulties – 92.1 per cent
- mental health condition – 87.7 per cent
- multiple or other impairments – 89.3 per cent
- sensory, medical or physical impairments – 89.7 per cent
- social or communication impairment – 89.2 per cent

### **Care experienced students**

Students who have experienced being in care have lower continuation rates than those who have not (85.6 per cent and 91.3 per cent respectively).<sup>91</sup>

## English higher education 2023

### Completion

**Completion rate:** The proportion of entrants who gained a higher education qualification (or were continuing in the study of a qualification) four years and 15 days after they started their course (six years and 15 days for part-time students).

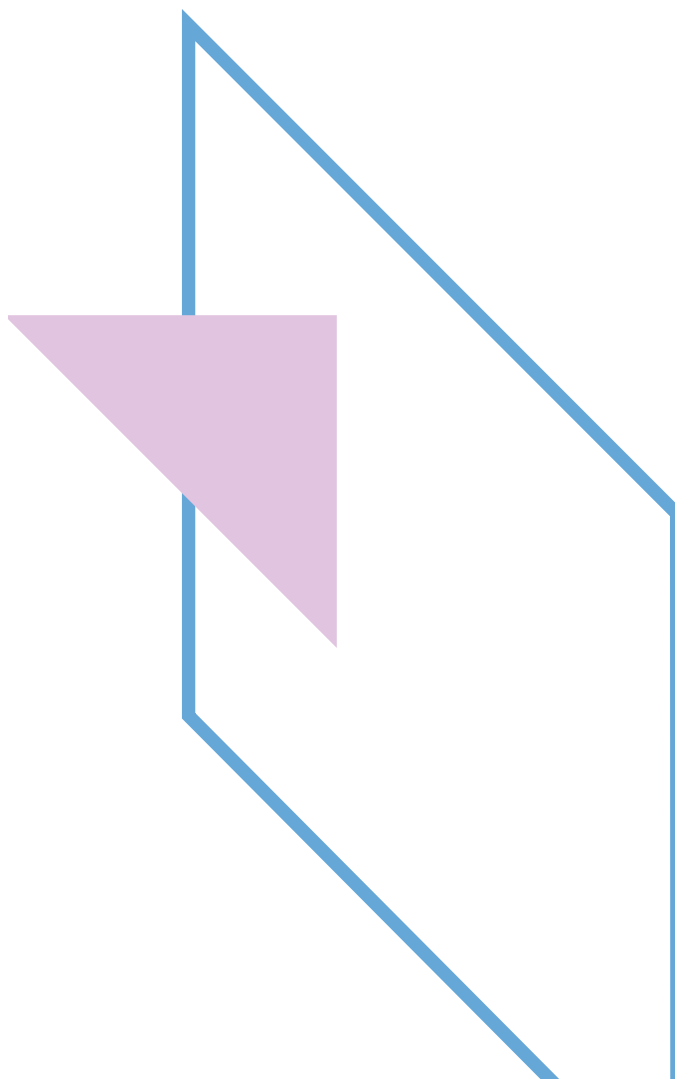
The completion rate for full-time students entering first degrees in 2017-18 is 88.5 per cent (a decrease of 0.7 percentage points from the previous year). For their part-time counterparts the rate for those entering in 2015-16 (the latest available data) is much lower, 48.4 per cent (an increase of 0.8 percentage points from the previous year). Female full-time first degree students have a higher completion rate than their male equivalents (91.3 per cent and 86.1 per cent respectively).<sup>92</sup>

Undergraduate apprentices (all modes of study) entering in 2017-18 have a completion rate of 78.9 per cent. This is noticeably higher than the previous academic year (an increase of 9.6 percentage points). For postgraduate apprentices (all modes of study) entering in the same year, the completion rate is 84.0 per cent. There is no data available for previous years for postgraduate apprenticeships.

For postgraduate students starting a full-time taught masters' in 2017-18, the completion rate is 94.5 per cent, 0.1 percentage points lower than the previous academic year. The completion rate for their part-time counterparts entering in 2015-16 is lower at 77.3 per cent.<sup>93</sup>

For more information on completion rates, see Figures 4 and 5.

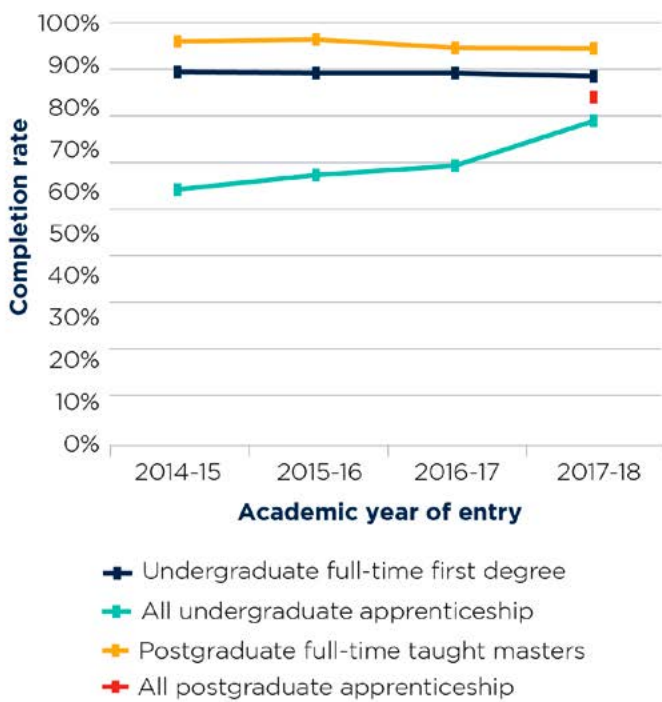
The proportion of students at higher education providers where the relevant completion indicator is below our minimum numerical threshold is 7.0 per cent for the most recent year (2017-18 for full-time students and apprentices, 2015-16 for part-time students). This decreased from 9.4 per cent over the previous four years.<sup>94</sup>



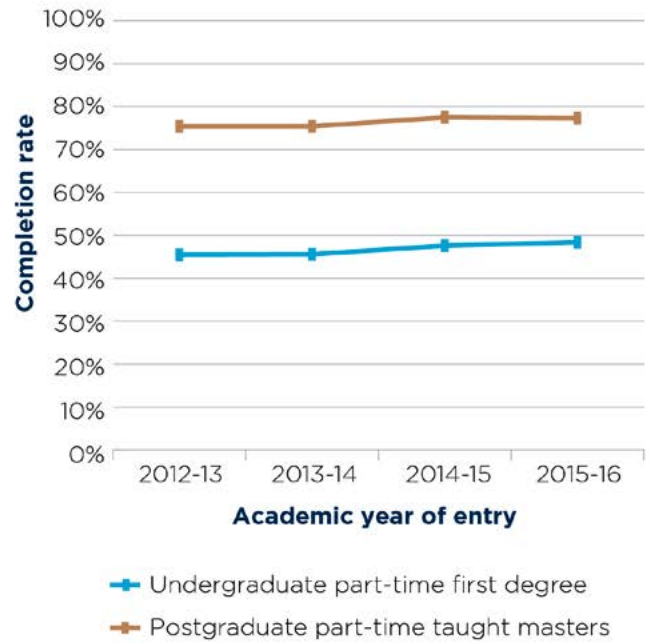


## A statistical overview of higher education in England

**Figure 4: Completion rates (full-time students and apprentices)**



**Figure 5: Completion rates (part-time students)**



Source: OfS, 'Access and participation data dashboard', last updated July 2023. Data from all OfS registered providers – registered population.<sup>95</sup>

Note: Attainment rates pertain only to undergraduate qualifiers.

### Completion rates for disadvantaged groups

Except where otherwise noted, this data is for full-time first degree students (all domiciles) and is for four years in aggregate (entrants from 2014-15 to 2017-18).<sup>96</sup> It describes actual differences between the disadvantaged group chosen and a reference group. No other factors (for example, entry qualifications) have been taken into account.

### Socioeconomic background and students from the most deprived areas

Students from the most deprived areas of England (quintiles 1 and 2 measured by the Index of Multiple Deprivation) and least deprived areas (quintiles 3, 4, and 5) have completion rates of 84.5 per cent and 90.9 per cent respectively.<sup>97</sup> Those students who were eligible for free school meals at key stage 4 (or any stage before that) have a completion rate of 84.0 per cent, compared with 91.2 per cent for those not eligible for free school meals.<sup>98</sup>

### Black, Asian and minority ethnic students

Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups have lower completion rates than the white ethnic group (89.7 per cent). The exceptions to this are the following ethnic groups: Asian or Asian British – Chinese, Asian or Asian British – Indian, and Mixed ethnicity – white and Asian. The completion rates for student groups by ethnic background are as follows:

- Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi – 84.3 per cent
- Asian or Asian British – Chinese – 93.9
- Asian or Asian British – Indian – 91.5
- Asian or Asian British – Pakistani – 86.1
- Asian or Asian British – other – 88.1 per cent
- black or black British – African – 83.9 per cent
- black or black British – Caribbean – 80.2 per cent
- black or black British – other – 79.1 per cent
- mixed – white and Asian – 90.8 per cent
- mixed – white and black African – 84.3 per cent
- mixed – white and black Caribbean – 83.8 per cent
- mixed – other – 85.5 per cent
- other ethnic group – 85.1 per cent
- Gypsy or Traveller – 81.3 per cent.<sup>99</sup>

### **Mature students**

Mature students (whose ages on entry to higher education were 21 or over) have lower completion rates in every age group, compared with young students at 90.6 per cent. The completion rates for mature students by age group on entry to higher education are as follows:

- 21 to 25 years – 84.0 per cent
- 26 to 30 years – 82.5 per cent
- 31 to 40 years – 83.5 per cent
- 41 to 50 years – 82.7 per cent
- 51 years and over – 75.9 per cent.

### **Disabled students**

Students with no reported disability have a completion rate of 89.4 per cent. Students with reported disabilities have lower continuation rates. The completion rates for these students by reported disability are as follows:

- cognitive or learning difficulties – 89.1 per cent
- mental health condition – 82.8 per cent
- multiple or other impairments – 85.2 per cent
- sensory, medical or physical impairments – 87.0 per cent
- social or communication impairment – 84.7 per cent

### **Care experienced students**

Students who have experienced being in care have lower completion rates than those who have not (79.6 per cent and 89.2 per cent respectively).<sup>100</sup>

## English higher education 2023

### Attainment

**Attainment rate:** The proportion of undergraduate qualifiers who achieved a first or upper second class grade for their first degree.

The data for overall attainment rates is taken from the access and participation data dashboard as this data is not included in the Student outcomes data dashboard, and only applies to undergraduate qualifiers.<sup>101</sup>

Undergraduate full-time first degree students who qualified in 2021-22 have an attainment rate of 78.1 per cent. This is a decrease from 82.4 per cent in 2020-21. Their part-time counterparts have a lower attainment rate of 70.5 per cent for qualifiers in 2021-22 (a 0.5 percentage point increase from the previous academic year). The attainment rate for undergraduate apprentices (all modes of study) is 89.4 per cent for those qualifying in 2021-22 (a decrease of 1.3 percentage points from 2020-21).<sup>102</sup> See Figure 6 for information about attainment rates for years of qualifying 2018-19 to 2021-22. The introduction by many OfS-registered providers in the 2019-20 and 2020-21 academic years of a 'no detriment' policy typically ensured no student would be awarded a final grade lower than the most recent provider assessment of their attainment.<sup>103</sup> This may have affected attainment rates in the 2019-20 and 2020-21 academic years.

Female full-time first degree students have a higher attainment rate than their male equivalents (81.5 per cent and 77.1 per cent respectively).<sup>104</sup>

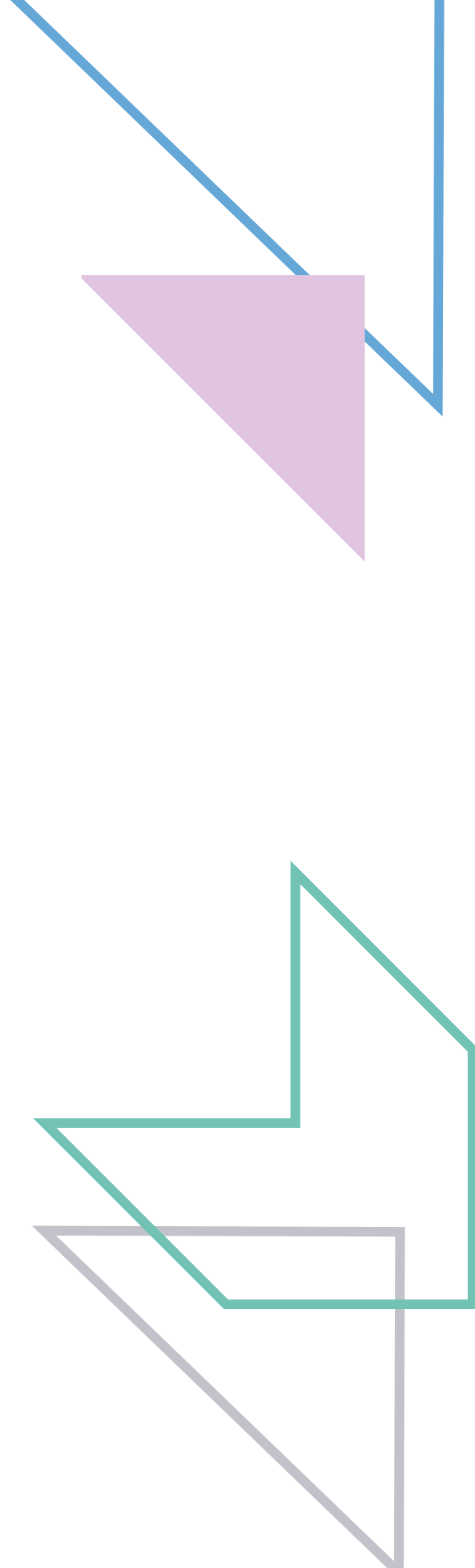
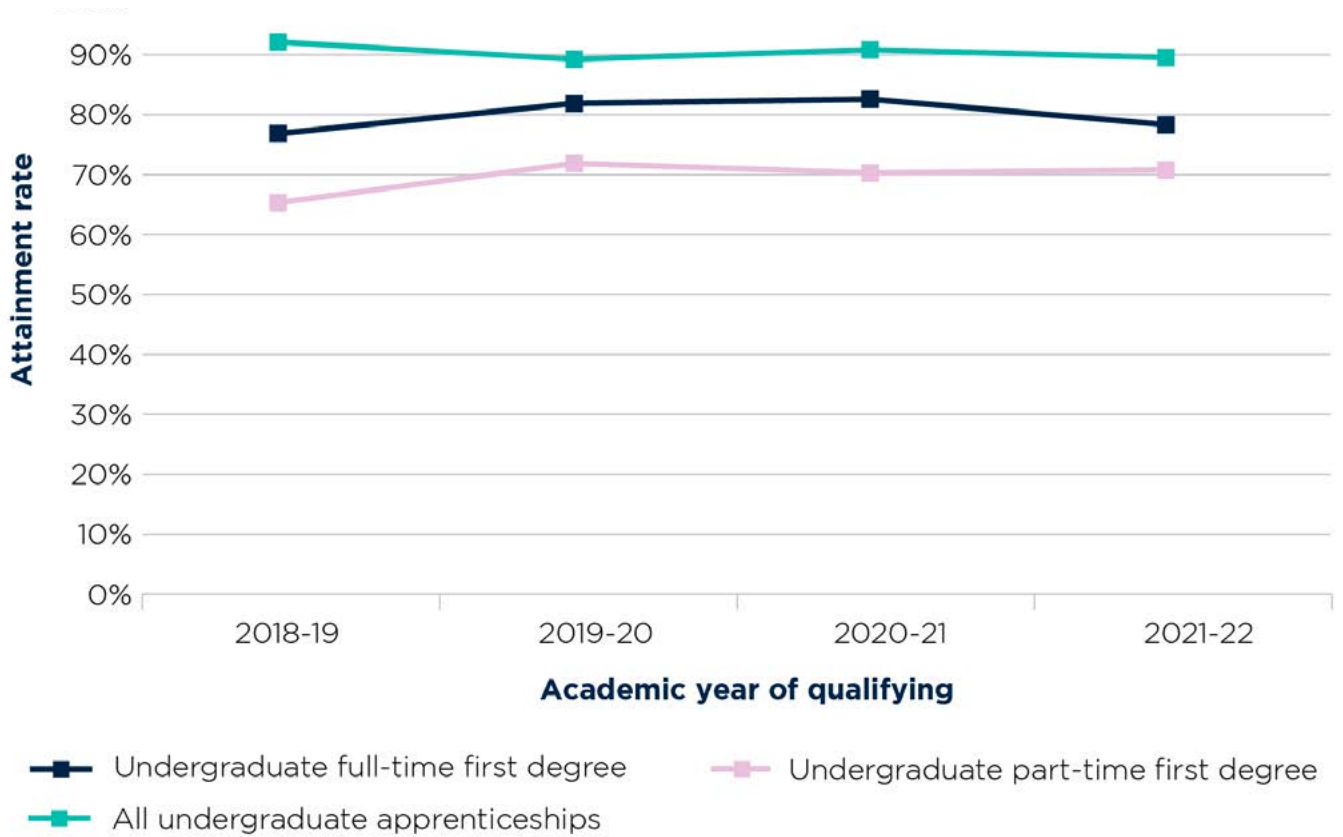
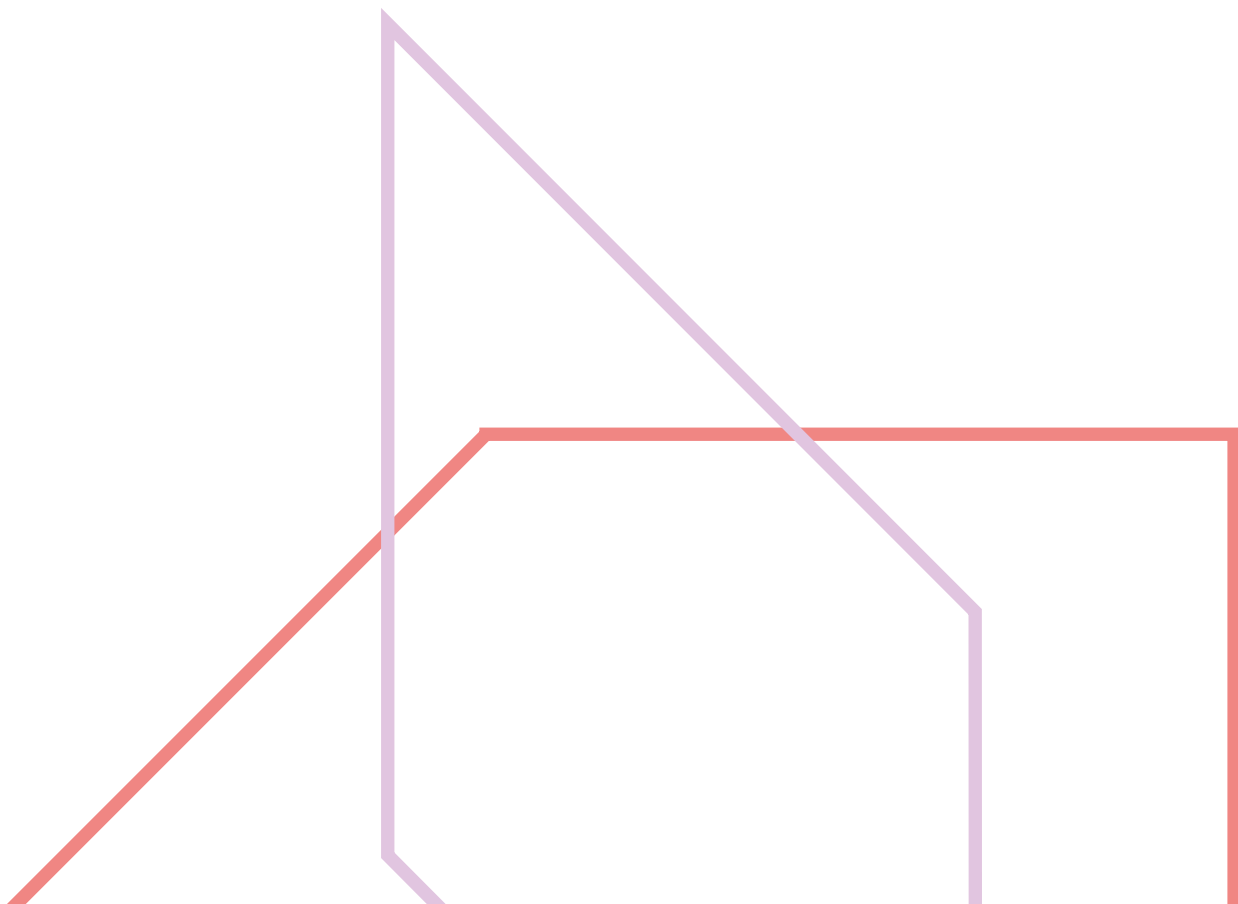


Figure 6: Attainment rates



Source: OfS, 'Student outcomes data dashboard'. Data from all OfS registered providers - taught or registered population.<sup>105</sup>

Note: Part-time completion rates are not yet available for 2016-17 onwards. Postgraduate apprenticeship completion rates are only available for the year of entry 2017-18



### **Attainment rates for disadvantaged groups**

Except where otherwise noted, this data is for full-time first degree students (all domiciles) and is for four years in aggregate (qualifiers from 2018-19 to 2021-22).<sup>106</sup> It describes actual differences between the disadvantaged group chosen and a reference group. No other factors (for example, entry qualifications) have been taken into account. The four-year aggregate includes data from 2019-20 and 2020-21 during which many OfS-registered providers introduced 'no detriment' policies because of the coronavirus pandemic. Attainment rates in 2019-20 and 2020-21 were higher than in pre-pandemic years and 2021-22, contributing to elevated aggregate attainment rates. See also our KPM 7: Degree attainment by ethnicity.<sup>107</sup>

### **Socioeconomic background and students from the most deprived areas**

Students from the most deprived areas of England (quintiles 1 and 2 measured by the Index of Multiple Deprivation) and least deprived areas (quintiles 3, 4, and 5) have attainment rates of 72.5 per cent and 83.9 per cent respectively. Those students who were eligible for free school meals at key stage 4 (or any stage before that) have an attainment rate of 71.2 per cent, compared with 82.8 per cent for those not eligible for free school meals.<sup>108</sup>

### **Black, Asian and minority ethnic students**

Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups all have lower attainment rates than the white ethnic group (83.6 per cent). The exception to this is the mixed – white and Asian ethnic group. The attainment rates for student groups by ethnic background are as follows:

- Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi – 70.6 per cent
- Asian or Asian British – Chinese – 81.5 per cent
- Asian or Asian British – Indian – 80.5 per cent
- Asian or Asian British – Pakistani – 70.1 per cent
- Asian or Asian British – other – 73.0 per cent
- black or black British – African – 62.8 per cent
- black or black British – Caribbean – 66.2 per cent
- black or black British – other – 60.6 per cent
- mixed – white and Asian – 84.8 per cent
- mixed – white and black African – 74.8 per cent
- mixed – white and black Caribbean – 77.0 per cent
- mixed – other – 78.7 per cent
- other ethnic group – 72.1 per cent
- Gypsy or Traveller – 65.0 per cent.<sup>109</sup>

### **Mature students**

Young students (aged under 21 years on entry to higher education) have an attainment rate of 81.6 per cent. Mature students have lower attainment rates (compared with young students) for all age groups. The attainment rates for mature students by age group on entry to higher education are as follows:

- 21 to 25 years – 73.5 per cent
- 26 to 30 years – 74.1 per cent
- 31 to 40 years – 71.5 per cent
- 41 to 50 years – 66.9 per cent
- 51 years and over – 63.5 per cent.

### **Disabled students**

Students with no reported disability have an attainment rate of 79.9 per cent. Students with reported disabilities have lower attainment rates, with the exception of students with a reported mental health condition. The attainment rates for these students by reported disability are as follows:

- cognitive or learning difficulties – 77.9 per cent
- mental health condition – 80.8 per cent
- multiple or other impairments – 79.8 per cent
- sensory, medical or physical impairments – 79.4 per cent
- social or communication impairment – 74.4 per cent.

### **Care experienced students**

Students who have experienced being in care have lower attainment rates than those who have not (68.8 per cent and 81.1 per cent respectively).<sup>110</sup>

## English higher education 2023

### Progression

Progression rate: The proportion of qualifiers who identified managerial or professional employment, further study, or other positive outcomes among the activities that they were undertaking at the Graduate Outcomes survey census date, 15 months after they left higher education.<sup>111</sup>

The progression rate for full-time first degree students gaining a higher education qualification in 2020-21 is 73.9 per cent (an increase from 71.9 for the previous academic year). Their part-time counterparts have a higher progression rate of 82.1 per cent (a decrease from 86.3 per cent in the previous academic year).

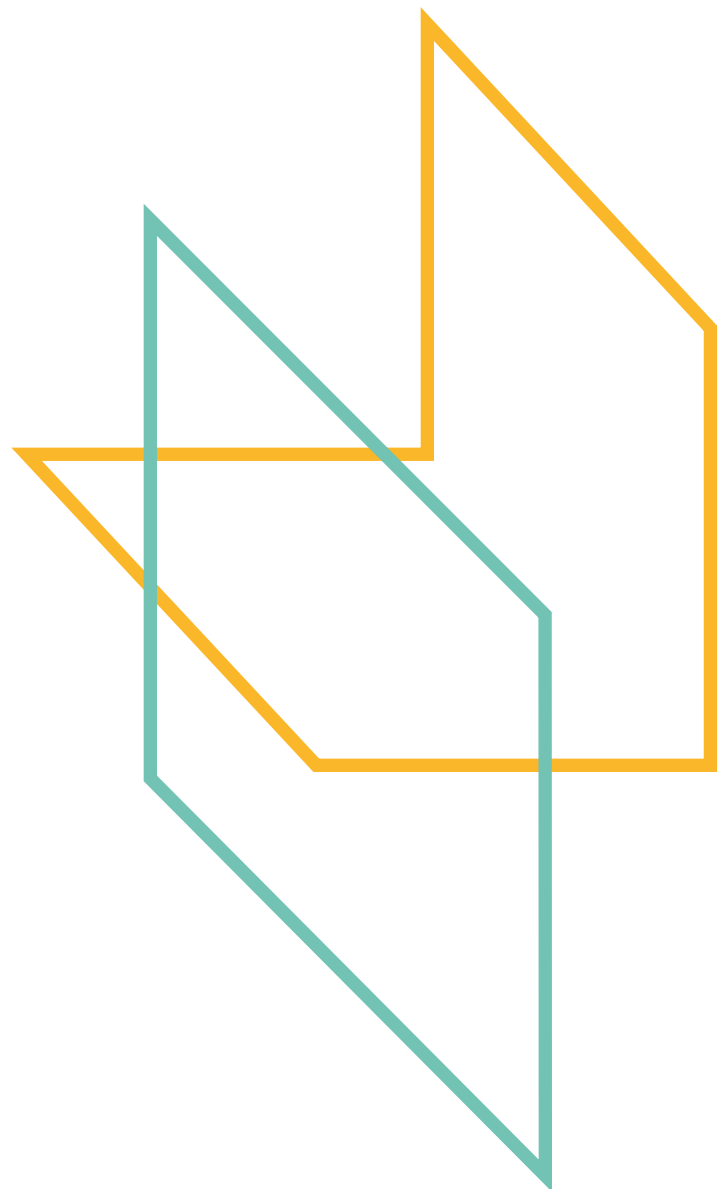
Female full-time first degree students have a slightly lower progression rate than male students (71.6 per cent and 72.8 per cent respectively).<sup>112</sup>

For postgraduate students studying a full-time taught masters and qualifying in 2020-21, the progression rate is 82.9 per cent (an increase from 80.3 per cent in 2019-20). Part-time postgraduate students studying a taught masters have a higher progression rate of 92.4 per cent (an increase from 91.4 in 2019-20).

Undergraduate apprentices (all modes of study) qualifying in 2020-21 have a progression rate of 92.9 per cent (an increase of 3.5 percentage points from the previous academic year). For postgraduate apprentices (all modes of study) qualifying the same year, the progression rate is 97.7 per cent (an increase of 0.5 percentage points from 2019-20).<sup>113</sup>

For more information on progression rates for years of qualifying 2017-18 to 2020-21, see Figures 7 and 8.

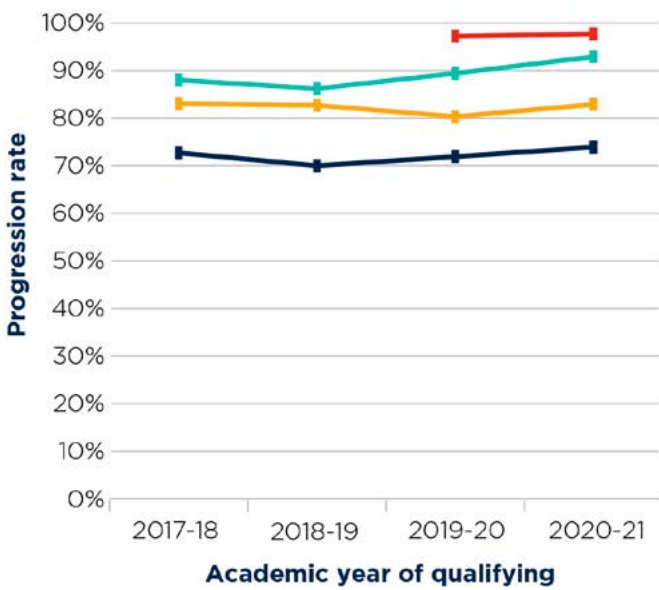
The proportion of students at higher education providers where the relevant progression indicator is below our minimum numerical threshold is 1.0 per cent for the most recent year of qualifying (2020-21), a rise from 0.7 per cent four years before.<sup>114</sup>





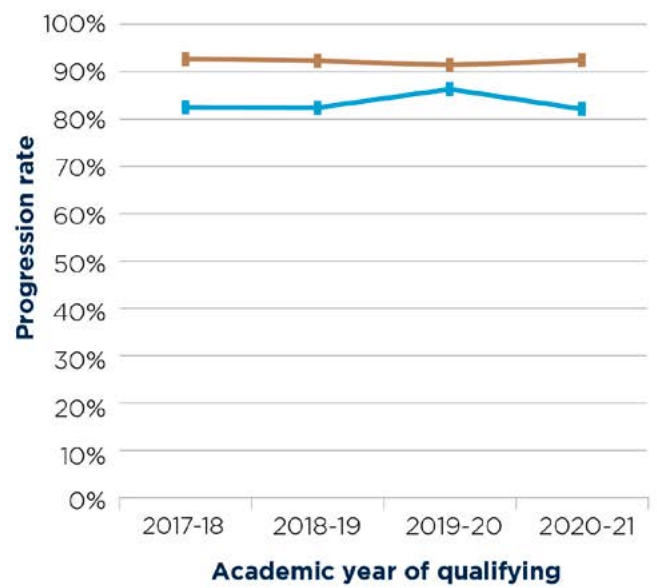
## A statistical overview of higher education in England

**Figure 7: Progression rates (full-time students and apprentices)**



- Undergraduate full-time first degree
- All undergraduate apprenticeships
- Postgraduate full-time taught masters
- All postgraduate apprenticeships

**Figure 8: Progression rates (part-time students)**



- Undergraduate part-time first degree
- Postgraduate part-time taught masters

Source: OfS, 'Student outcomes data dashboard'. Data from all OfS registered providers – taught or registered population.<sup>115</sup>

Note: Postgraduate apprenticeships (all) progression rates are only available for 2019-20 and 2020-21 years of qualifying.

### **Progression rates after higher education for underrepresented groups**

Except where otherwise noted, this data is for full-time first degree students (UK-domiciled only) and is for four years in aggregate (qualifiers from 2017-18 to 2020-21).<sup>116</sup> It describes actual differences between the disadvantaged group chosen and a reference group. No other factors (for example, entry qualifications) have been taken into account.

See also the OfS's KPM 6, which measures the completion and employment from entrant data rate over time for full-time undergraduate students at different levels of individual disadvantage. In the most recent year, this rate was 53.6 per cent for 'significantly disadvantaged' students, 60.6 per cent for 'economically precarious' students, and 68.4 per cent for students from the 'other' group.<sup>117</sup>

### **Socioeconomic background and students from the most deprived areas**

Students from the most deprived areas of England (quintiles 1 and 2 measured by the Index of Multiple Deprivation) and least deprived areas (quintiles 3, 4, and 5) have progression rates of 68.3 per cent and 74.1 per cent respectively.<sup>118</sup> Those students who were eligible for free school meals at key stage 4 (or any stage before that) have a progression rate of 65.3 per cent, compared with 71.4 per cent for those not eligible for free school meals.<sup>119</sup>

### **Black, Asian and minority ethnic students**

Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups have lower progression rates than the white ethnic group (73.0 per cent). The exceptions to this are the following ethnic groups: Asian or Asian British – Indian and Mixed ethnicity – white and Asian. The progression rates for student groups by ethnic background are as follows:

- Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi – 62.1 per cent
- Asian or Asian British – Chinese – 71.5 per cent
- Asian or Asian British – Indian – 73.9 per cent
- Asian or Asian British – Pakistani – 66.1 per cent
- Asian or Asian British – other – 68.2 per cent
- black or black British – African – 70.5 per cent
- black or black British – Caribbean – 68.0 per cent
- black or black British – other – 67.2 per cent
- mixed – white and Asian – 74.0 per cent
- mixed – white and black African – 70.3 per cent
- mixed – white and black Caribbean – 70.7 per cent
- mixed – other – 71.7 per cent
- other ethnic group – 68.5 per cent
- Gypsy or Traveller 50.0 per cent.<sup>120</sup>

### **Mature students**

Students under 21 on entry to higher education have a progression rate of 71.5 per cent. Those aged 31 to 40 have the highest progression rate (78.1 per cent), while those aged 51 years and over have the lowest (68.5 per cent). The progression rates for mature students by age group on entry to higher education are as follows:

- 21 to 25 years – 72.3 per cent
- 26 to 30 years – 77.9 per cent
- 31 to 40 years – 78.1 per cent
- 41 to 50 years – 75.3 per cent
- 51 years and over – 68.5 per cent.

### **Disabled students**

Students with no reported disability have a progression rate of 72.5 per cent. Students with reported disabilities have lower progression rates, with the exception of students with reported cognitive or learning difficulties. The progression rates for these students by reported disability are as follows:

- cognitive or learning difficulties – 73.6 per cent
- mental health condition – 67.8 per cent
- multiple or other impairments – 70.1 per cent
- sensory, medical or physical impairments – 71.4 per cent
- social or communication impairment – 61.0 per cent

### **Care experienced students**

Students who have experienced being in care have lower progression rates than those who have not (68.0 per cent and 71.1 per cent respectively).



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# Notes

- 1 OfS, [‘Quality assessments’](#), September 2023.
- 2 OfS, [‘TEF 2023 ratings dashboard’](#), last updated December 2023.
- 3 OfS, [‘Equality of Opportunity Risk Register’](#), March 2023. Access and participation plans set out how higher education providers will improve equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups to access, succeed in and progress from higher education.
- 4 OfS, [‘Financial sustainability of higher education providers in England 2023 update’](#) (OfS 2023.20), 2023.
- 5 OfS, [‘Students polled about prevalence of sexual misconduct in higher education in a UK first’](#), published September 2023.
- 6 See OfS, [‘Consultation on the OfS’s new free speech complaints scheme’](#) and [‘Consultation on the OfS’s approach to regulating students’ unions on free speech matters’](#).
- 7 OfS, [‘Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom Director: OfS to protect lawful speech rights independently of the views expressed’](#), 9 October 2023.
- 8 See OfS, [‘Regulatory activity for individual providers’](#) and OfS, [‘Operational measures’](#).
- 9 OfS, [‘Office for Students strategy 2022 to 2025’](#) (OfS 2022.15), 2022; OfS, [‘Key performance measures’](#).
- 10 House of Lords Industry and Regulators Committee, ‘Must do better: The Office for Students and the looming crisis facing higher education’, at Gov.UK, [‘The work of the Office for Students’](#), September 2023.
- 11 OfS, ‘Response to this report’, at Gov. UK, [‘The work of the Office for Students’](#), November 2023.
- 12 OfS, [‘Financial sustainability of higher education providers in England 2023 update’](#) (OfS 2023.20), 2023.
- 13 OfS, [‘Insight brief #17: Studying during rises in the cost of living’](#), October 2023
- 14 OfS, [‘Marking and assessment boycott 2023’](#), June 2023.
- 15 OfS, [‘Our engagement with providers’](#), September 2023.
- 16 See [Graduate Outcomes survey](#).
- 17 OfS, [‘Key performance measures’](#).
- 18 Data collected for our KPM 2 shows that, overall, sector-level measures are above the minimum numerical thresholds we have set for continuation, completion and progression for almost all modes and levels of study (OfS, [‘Key performance measure 2: Student outcomes for all registered providers’](#), last updated August 2023). The results from the 2023 National Student Survey (NSS) show that the majority of students are positive about the quality of their courses. This data is used in the OfS’s key performance measure 4 on students’ views on aspects of quality) OfS, [‘Key performance measure 4: Students’ views on aspects of quality’](#), last updated October 2023).
- 19 OfS, [‘Quality assessments’](#), last updated October 2023. Following the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education’s (QAA’s) announcement that it was stepping down as the designated quality body, since April 2023 the OfS has taken over all the quality and standards assessments the QAA previously delivered.

## English higher education 2023

- 20** OfS, '[About the Teaching Excellence Framework](#)', last updated September 2023.
- 21** OfS, '[TEF 2023 ratings dashboard](#)', last updated December 2023. Gold rating: the student experience and student outcomes are typically outstanding. Silver rating: the student experience and student outcomes are typically very high quality. Bronze rating: the student experience and student outcomes are typically high quality, and there are some very high quality features.
- 22** OfS, '[Office for Students strategy 2022 to 2025](#)' (OfS 2022.15), 2022, p3.
- 23** OfS, '[Key performance measure 3: Assessment and awards](#)', last updated March 2023.
- 24** OfS, '[Analysis of degree classifications over time: Changes in graduate attainment from 2010-11 to 2021-22](#)' (OfS 2023.35), published July 2023.
- 25** Gov.uk, '[Higher Technical Qualification \(HTQ\): An introduction](#)', updated September 2023; Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education, '[Introduction to higher technical qualifications and scope of approval](#)', last updated May 2023.
- 26** OfS, '[Consultation on the inclusion of higher technical qualifications in Office for Students' student outcome measures](#)' (OfS 2023.38), July 2023
- 27** OfS, '[Validation](#)', published July 2023; The Open University, '[Higher education for further education](#)'; FE News, '7 more FE colleges to offer advanced technical skills with the OU in 'cold spots'', published July 2023.
- 28** [Higher Education \(Freedom of Speech\) Act 2023](#)
- 29** OfS, '[Free speech complaints scheme: student roundtables](#)', last updated October 2023; OfS, '[Consultation on the OfS's approach to regulating students' unions on free speech matters](#)'.
- 30** OfS, '[Transcript of Arif Ahmed's speech at King's College London](#)', published October 2023.
- 31** OfS, '[Equality of Opportunity Risk Register](#)', March 2023; OfS, '[Regulatory notice 1: Access and participation plan guidance](#)' (OfS 2023.67), 2023; OfS, '[Regulatory advice 6: How to prepare an access and participation plan - Supplementary access and participation plan guidance](#)' (OfS 2023.66 ), 2023.
- 32** Access and participation plans set out how higher education providers will improve equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups to access, succeed in and progress from higher education. See OfS, '[Access and participation plans](#)'
- 33** See Shift Learning, '[Evaluation of the OfS 2023 reforms to regulating equality of opportunity in higher education: Wave one interviews research report](#)', OfS, December 2023.
- 34** OfS, '[Regulatory notice 1: Access and participation plan guidance](#)' (OfS 2023.67), 2023, p3.
- 35** Gov.uk, '[Widening participation in higher education](#)', published July 2023. High-tariff higher education providers are those that require the most UCAS points (the points allocated to qualifications and grades) for entry.
- 36** OfS, '[Key performance measure 5: Access to higher education](#)', last updated March 2023.
- 37** OfS, '[Regulatory notice 1: Access and participation plan guidance](#)' (OfS 2023.67), 2023, p13.
- 38** OfS, '[Size and shape of provision data dashboard](#)', last updated April 2023.

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- 39** [Lifelong Learning \(Higher Education Fee Limits\) Act 2023](#); UK Parliament, '[Lifelong Learning \(Higher Education Fee Limits\) Bill completes passage through parliament](#)', September 2023.
- 40** Gov.uk, '[Lifelong Learning Entitlement overview published September 2023](#)', .
- 41** OfS, '[Positive outcomes for students studying on a modular basis](#)', July 2023.
- 42** OfS, '[Student outcomes data dashboard](#)', last updated July 2023.
- 43** See the case studies at OfS, '[Mental health funding competition: Using innovation and intersectional approaches to target mental health support for students](#)', last updated May 2023; OfS, '[Evaluating training for university staff to support the mental health of autistic students](#)', published October 2023; OfS, '[Many Hands project: A collaborative approach by small-setting, independent, higher education providers to student mental health solutions](#)', October 2023. See also OfS, '[Insight brief #20: Meeting the mental health needs of students](#)', October 2023.
- 44** OfS, '[Mental health funding competition: Using innovation and intersectional approaches to target mental health support for students](#)', last updated May 2023; OfS, '[Student mental health: Higher education and NHS joined-up working](#)'.
- 45** Centre for Transforming Access and Student Outcomes, '[Student Mental Health Evidence Hub](#)'.
- 46** OfS, '[Case studies and resources for higher education providers](#)'.
- 47** OfS, '[New OfS panel to advise on what works in supporting disabled students](#)', published June 2023.
- 48** Women and Equalities Committee, '[Attitudes towards women and girls in educational settings](#)', [PDF] 2023, p4.
- 49** OfS, '[Consultation on a new approach to regulating harassment and sexual misconduct in English higher education](#)', published February 2023.
- 50** OfS, '[Students polled about prevalence of sexual misconduct in higher education in a UK first](#)', published September 2023.
- 51** OfS, '[Student outcomes data dashboard](#)', last updated July 2023.
- 52** Data for progression rates for specific student characteristics is for four years in aggregate (qualifiers from 2017-18 to 2020-21) and is taken from OfS, '[Student outcomes data dashboard](#)', last updated July 2023. See the statistical overview section for more details.
- 53** OfS, '[Regulatory notice 1: Access and participation plan guidance](#)' (OfS 2023.67), 2023, p13.
- 54** OfS, '[Financial sustainability of higher education providers in England 2023 update](#)' (OfS 2023.20), 2023.
- 55** OfS, '[Financial sustainability of higher education providers in England 2023 update](#)' (OfS 2023.20), 2023, p18 and p20.
- 56** OfS, '[University finances generally in good shape, but risks include over-reliance on international recruitment](#)', published May 2023.
- 57** It should be noted that each time we update our data resources, we may also incorporate approved amendments to the data previously published, and changes to a provider's registration status with the OfS. This can result in the data in our latest publications differing from previously published numbers.
- 58** OfS, '[Regulatory notice 1: Access and participation plan guidance](#)' (OfS 2023.67), 2023, p6.

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- 59** Higher education full-time equivalent data split by level for higher education providers that returned Student, Student Alternative or Individualised Learner Record data in line with requirements for OfS registered providers in 2021-22. OfS, '[Student number data](#)', last updated November 2023.
- 60** OfS, '[The OfS Register](#)'; see OfS, '[Regulatory advice 5: Exempt charities](#)' (OfS 2018.23), May 2018.
- 61** OfS, '[TEF 2023 ratings dashboard](#)', last updated December 2023.
- 62** OfS, '[Financial sustainability of higher education providers in England 2023 update](#)' (OfS 2023.20), 2023. Audited financial data from 2019-20 and 2020-21 and forecasts to 2024-25.
- 63** OfS, '[Financial sustainability of higher education providers in England 2023 update](#)' (OfS 2023.20), 2023, pp13-14.
- 64** OfS, '[Financial sustainability of higher education providers in England 2023 update](#)' (OfS 2023.20), 2023, p15.
- 65** OfS, '[Financial sustainability of higher education providers in England 2023 update](#)' (OfS 2023.20), 2023, p20.
- 66** Data on the profile of students entering higher education is taken from OfS, '[Size and shape of provision data dashboard](#)', last updated June 2023. Data is from all OfS registered providers.
- 67** OfS, '[Key performance measure 5: Access to higher education](#)', last updated March 2023.
- 68** Data on the profile of students entering higher education is taken from OfS, '[Size and shape of provision data dashboard](#)', last updated June 2023. Data is from all OfS registered providers.
- 69** OfS, '[Student characteristics data: Population data](#)', last updated July 2023.
- 70** OfS, '[Size and shape of provision data dashboard](#)', last updated June 2023.
- 71** OfS, '[Size and shape of provision data dashboard](#)', last updated June 2023.
- 72** OfS, '[Size and shape of provision data dashboard](#)', last updated June 2023.
- 73** For more information and for proportions that include data where student characteristics are unknown or not applicable, see OfS, '[Size and shape of provision data dashboard](#)', last updated June 2023.
- 74** Index of Multiple Deprivation data for UK-domiciled students only who have a home postcode in the same country as their provider.
- 75** Data is for UK-domiciled students only and only from providers that submit data to the HESA student record. The collection of the National Statistics Socio-economic Classification data differs depending on the student's entry age. For students aged 21 and over at entry, it is based on their occupation prior to starting their course. For students under 21, it is based on the occupation of their parent, stepparent or guardian who earns the most.
- 76** Data is for students under 21 years at age of entry who attended English schools, using information from the National Pupil Database for England.
- 77** Tracking underrepresentation by area (TUNDRA) is an area-based measure of young participation in higher education at age 18 or 19 for state-funded mainstream school students in England. It classifies local areas across England using middle super output area and lower super output area according to this young participation rate.
- 78** OfS, '[Student characteristics data: Population data](#)', last updated July 2023. Data is for UK-domiciled students only.



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- 79** Data is for all domiciles.
- 80** Data is for all domiciles.
- 81** OfS, '[Key performance measure 4: Students' views on aspects of quality](#)', last updated October 2023. For more detail of how positive responses are measured, see 'How do you calculate theme measures?' under 'Understanding the NSS data' at OfS, '[Changes in NSS 2023](#)'.
- 82** For full findings, see OfS, '[National Student Survey](#)'.
- 83** Data on continuation rates is for all domiciles and is taken from OfS, '[Student outcomes data dashboard](#)', last updated July 2023.
- 84** The data for male and female students is for full-time first degree students (all domiciles) and for four years in aggregate (entrants from 2017-18 to 2020-21).
- 85** OfS, '[Key performance measure 1: Extent of poor student outcomes](#)', last updated August 2023.
- 86** OfS, '[Student outcomes data dashboard](#)', last updated July 2023.
- 87** A four-year aggregate has been derived using rounded data from OfS, '[Student characteristics data: Outcomes data](#)', last updated July 2023.
- 88** Data is for England-domiciled students only and is taken from OfS, '[Student outcomes data dashboard](#)', last updated July 2023.
- 89** Data is for students under 21 years at age of entry who attended English schools, using information from the National Pupil Database for England and is derived using rounded data from OfS, '[Student outcomes data dashboard](#)', last updated July 2023.
- 90** Data is for UK-domiciled students only.
- 91** Data is for UK-domiciled students only.
- 92** The data for male and female students is for full-time first degree students (all domiciles) and for four years in aggregate (entrants from 2014-15 to 2017-18).
- 93** Data on completion rates is for all domiciles and is taken from OfS, '[Student outcomes data dashboard](#)', last updated July 2023.
- 94** OfS, '[Key performance measure 1: Extent of poor student outcomes](#)', last updated August 2023.
- 95** OfS, '[Access and participation data dashboard](#)', last updated July 2023.
- 96** A four-year aggregate has been derived using rounded data from OfS, '[Student characteristics data: Outcomes data](#)', last updated July 2023.
- 97** Data is for England-domiciled students only and is taken from OfS, '[Student outcomes data dashboard](#)', last updated July 2023.
- 98** Data is for students under 21 years at age of entry who attended English schools, using information from the National Pupil Database for England and is taken from OfS, '[Student outcomes data dashboard](#)', last updated July 2023.
- 99** Data is for UK-domiciled students only.
- 100** Data is for UK-domiciled students only.
- 101** The Access and participation data covers UK-domiciled undergraduate entrants registered at English higher education providers, while the Student outcomes data dashboard has a broader coverage and includes all students registered or taught at English higher education providers. However, each of the student outcomes and experience measures has a specific definition of which students are included and the coverage of some characteristics is also restricted. For more information see OfS, '[Student outcome and experience measures: Documentation](#)'.

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- 102** Data on overall attainment rates is for all domiciles and is taken from OfS, '[Access and participation data dashboard](#)', last updated July 2023.
- 103** The data for male and female students is for full-time first degree students (all domiciles) and for four years in aggregate (qualifiers from 2018-19 to 2021-22) and is taken from OfS, '[Access and participation data dashboard](#)', last updated July 2023.
- 104** '[Access and participation data dashboard](#)', last updated July 2023.
- 105** See HESA, '[Higher Education Student Statistics: UK, 2020/21 - Qualifications achieved](#)', published January 2022.
- 106** A four-year aggregate has been derived using rounded data from OfS, '[Student characteristics data: Outcomes data](#)', last updated July 2023. This is a different data source to that used for the overall attainment figures.
- 107** OfS, '[Key performance measure 7: Degree attainment by ethnicity](#)', last updated March 2023.
- 108** Undergraduate students aged under 21 years on entry who were found in the National Pupil Database key stage 4 data in 2009-10 or later.
- 109** Data is for UK-domiciled students only. The rate for Gypsy and Traveller students is based on much smaller numbers compared with other ethnic groups.
- 110** Data is for UK-domiciled students only.
- 111** See [Graduate Outcomes survey](#).
- 112** The data for male and female students is for full-time first degree students (UK-domiciled only) and for four years in aggregate (qualifiers from 2017-18 to 2020-21).
- 113** Data on progression rates is for UK students only and is taken from OfS, '[Student outcomes data dashboard](#)', last updated July 2023.
- 114** OfS, '[Key performance measure 1: Extent of poor student outcomes](#)', last updated August 2023.
- 115** OfS, '[Student outcomes data dashboard](#)', last updated July 2023. (For UK students only.)
- 116** A four-year aggregate has been derived using rounded data from OfS, '[Student characteristics data: Outcomes data](#)', last updated July 2023.
- 117** OfS, '[Key performance measure 6: Success and progression](#)', published March 2023. The latest year of data combines completion rates for entrants in 2017-18 with progression rates for qualifiers in 2019-20.
- 118** Data is for students domiciled in England only and is taken from OfS, '[Student outcomes data dashboard](#)', last updated July 2023.
- 119** Data is for students under 21 years at age of entry who attended English schools, using information from the National Pupil Database for England and is taken from OfS, '[Student outcomes data dashboard](#)', last updated July 2023.
- 120** Data for Gypsy and Traveller students is based on two years of data and very small numbers.

