

Access and participation resources

Findings from the data: sector summary

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Purpose

1. This document provides a sector-level analysis of the access and participation open data resources that are available at the Office for Students' (OfS's) access and participation data dashboard.¹ We summarise some key findings in access, continuation and attainment at a sector level, focusing on the gaps between full-time undergraduate student groups.

Summary of published materials

2. We have published the access and participation data resources as Official Statistics. The interactive data dashboard¹ allows users to explore and evaluate access and participation at specific universities and colleges registered with the OfS. Comparing different student groups (for example, students who have reported having a disability or students by their ethnic background) for each stage of a student's journey through higher education may reveal gaps in access, continuation and attainment at both a provider and a sector level.
3. This publication summarises some of the key gaps in access, continuation and attainment at a sector level for different student characteristics.
4. In addition to this summary, we have published supplementary information about the access and participation data dashboard and its supporting data resources. The following documents explain how we have used individualised student data to produce the measures shown in the dashboard.

Access and participation data dashboard: User guide

Available at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/access-and-participation-data-dashboard/

Access and participation data resources: User guide

Available at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/access-and-participation-data-dashboard/guide-to-the-data-and-its-findings/get-the-dashboard-data/

Technical algorithms for institutional performance measures: Regulatory indicators, methodology and rebuild instructions

Available at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/institutional-performance-measures/

Technical algorithms for institutional performance measures: Core algorithms

Available at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/institutional-performance-measures/

These documents provide information about the definitions and methodology we have used in constructing institutional performance measures, including a detailed description of the indicators we currently use for the access and participation data resources.

¹ See www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/access-and-participation-data-dashboard/.

5. The following related publications supplement this document.

- An overview of access and participation plans and advice and guidance – www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/access-and-participation-plans/.
- Access and participation plan guidance (Regulatory notice 1) (OfS 2019.05) – www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/regulatory-notice-1-access-and-participation-plan-guidance/.
- How to prepare your access and participation plan (Regulatory advice 6) (OfS 2019.06) – www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/regulatory-advice-6-how-to-prepare-your-access-and-participation-plan-effective-practice-advice/.

Overview of the indicators included in access and participation data resources

6. The access and participation data resources include indicators for each stage of the student lifecycle:
- a. Access indicators, looking at the make-up of students entering higher education
 - b. Continuation indicators, looking at whether entrants continue their studies in higher education
 - c. Attainment indicators, looking at graduates awarded first or upper second-class honours
 - d. Progression indicators, looking at graduates progressing to highly skilled employment or higher-level study.²
7. The data dashboard allows users to explore and understand patterns identified by these indicators for a range of different student characteristics, including age, ethnicity, disability, disability type, sex, Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD³) and Participation of Local Areas (POLAR⁴). The dashboard also enables the user to consider combinations of the different attributes that may exist for a given characteristic.

² For the reasons given in paragraph 14, the progression indicators in the March 2021 publication remain unchanged from those published in 2020.

³ Index of Multiple Deprivation, as calculated in England only. It is calculated from a number of different measures which classifies areas in England by level of deprivation. It is presented here as five quintiles, where quintile 1 contains the most deprived 20 per cent of the English population, and quintile 5 the least deprived 20 per cent.

⁴ An area-based measure, classifying areas according to the likelihood of young people living within them of participating in higher education. Quintile 1 contains the areas with the lowest 20 per cent of participation rates for the young (18-year-old) population; quintile 5 the highest participating 20 per cent.

8. The student characteristics are reported at both individual provider level and for the sector overall. In each case, they are reported separately for each stage of the student lifecycle and for each mode and level of study, across a five-year time series.
9. In addition, the access and participation data includes sector-level information on students' qualifications on entry to higher education, and their subject of study.⁵ Users can explore this experimental data using the sector-level access and participation data dashboard.⁶
10. The access and participation data resources cover UK-domiciled undergraduate entrants at English higher education providers registered by the OfS. Some of the characteristics included in these data resources are necessarily limited to coverage of English-domiciled undergraduate entrants.
11. The sector-level comparative indicators include data for all English higher education providers as included in national student data collections by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and the Education and Skills Funding Agency's (ESFA) Individualised Learner Record (ILR).

Sector summary

Key data concepts

12. The summary of findings focuses on the gaps for undergraduates at sector level for different student groups, based on the most recent year of available data:
 - a. For measures of access we consider students who started in the 2019-20 academic year.
 - b. We assess continuation into 2019-20 for full-time students who started in 2018-19, and for part-time students who started in 2017-18.
 - c. Attainment measures are reported for graduates in 2019-20.
13. The sector-level gaps in progression, the final stage of the student's journey through higher education, have not been updated in this March 2021 publication of the access and participation data. Findings related to this stage of the student lifecycle remain as reported in 2020.⁷
14. The progression data currently shown in the dashboard uses data from the Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey, which surveyed graduates six months after completing their studies. This survey was conducted for the final time for higher education leavers in academic year 2016-17 and has now been replaced by the Higher Education

⁵ The introduction of the new HECoS system for coding subjects in 2019-20 causes some discontinuity in the subject time series between 2018-19 and 2019-20, which should be taken into account when comparing the distribution of subjects between these years.

⁶ See www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/access-and-participation-data-dashboard/sector-level-data/.

⁷ See the sector summary of findings from the access and participation data resources published in March 2020, at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/access-and-participation-data-dashboard/findings-from-the-data/.

Statistics Agency (HESA) Graduate Outcomes survey, which asks graduates about their activities 15 months after graduation. The OfS has proposed to transition to the use of the Graduate Outcomes survey in our measures of graduate destinations, and we are developing measures of student outcomes based on this instrument. We expect to consult on the detail of the construction of these measures this year, and to incorporate rates of progression defined using this new survey data into the dashboard later in 2021.

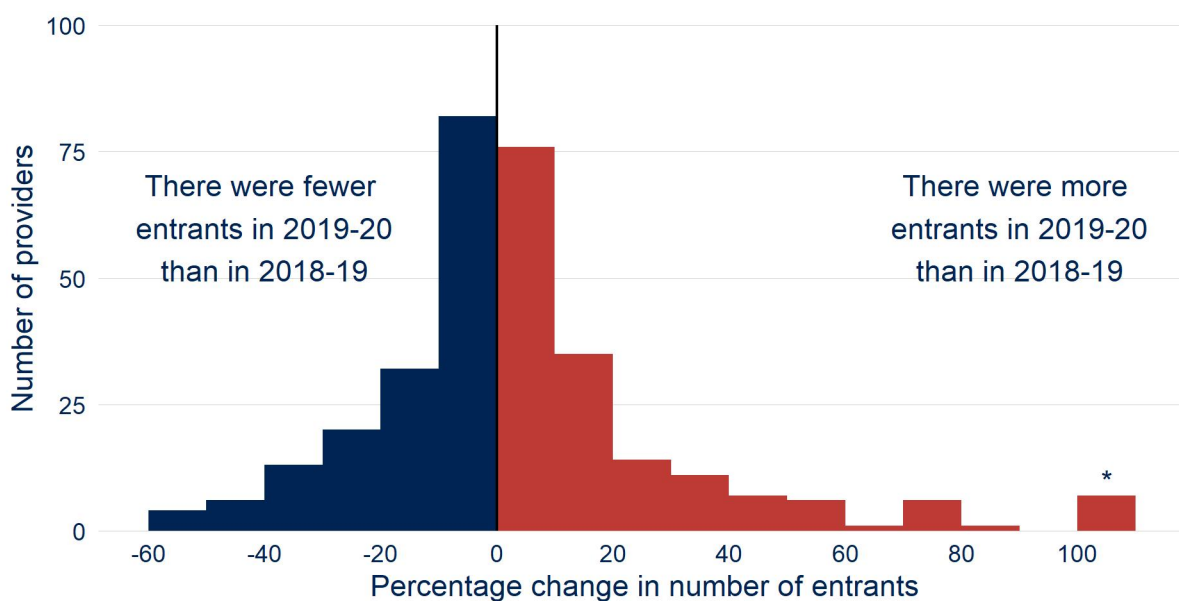
15. When we refer to 'gaps' we mean the difference between two proportions, which we express in percentage points (pp). For indicators of access to higher education, gaps are based on the profile of 18-year-old entrants at a provider compared with the profile of all 18-year-olds in the UK. For indicators of continuation and attainment, gaps are based on the differences in students' outcomes.
16. Gaps are always calculated as the proportion of the first group being referenced minus the proportion of the second group being referenced. A negative gap means that the first group has a lower proportion than the second. A positive gap means that the first group has a higher proportion than the second.
17. For example, the positive gap between a continuation rate of 92 per cent for young students and 84 per cent for mature students would be expressed as 8 percentage points, and the negative gap between an attainment rate of 82 per cent for men and 84 per cent for women would be expressed as -2 percentage points.
18. Findings for part-time students can be found in the table at the start of each section in the sector summary of lifecycle stages, but otherwise the focus throughout this document is on full-time or apprenticeship students. For simplicity, when reference is made to full-time students this includes both full-time and apprenticeship students.
19. Changes at provider level between the two most recent years are displayed in chart form, giving not only an indication of the distribution of providers' results, but also showing the extent to which observed differences are due to the characteristics of providers themselves. Only those providers who were registered with the OfS by 28 February 2021 are included in these charts. Providers are also excluded if their data does not meet the reporting threshold for that group of students or that metric, or if the data is unavailable. Hence the number of providers contributing to each of the provider-level charts varies. All the time series charts include all English higher education providers.

Overall sector summary

20. In this section, we examine how access, continuation and attainment have changed for the whole sector over the last five years, with additional focus on the change between 2018-19 and 2019-20. There may be some expectation that these statistics will reflect changes due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. However, since the first lockdown in the UK was not declared until late March 2020, there was little chance for this to impact the number of entrants between September 2019 and August 2020. While some courses may have commenced after March 2020, most standard academic years will have begun in the autumn of 2019 for this data reporting period, well before the pandemic. Similarly, because continuation for the majority of students will have been evaluated on the basis of their activities in autumn 2019 (one year after commencement for full-time students and two years after commencement for part-time students), the pandemic would not have impacted on continuation rates for those majority of students. However, there is more scope for assessments that took place in summer 2020 to have been impacted by COVID-19, as discussed later in this section.

Access to higher education

Figure 1: Percentage change in the number of entrants to full-time higher education in 2019-20 compared with 2018-19, across providers



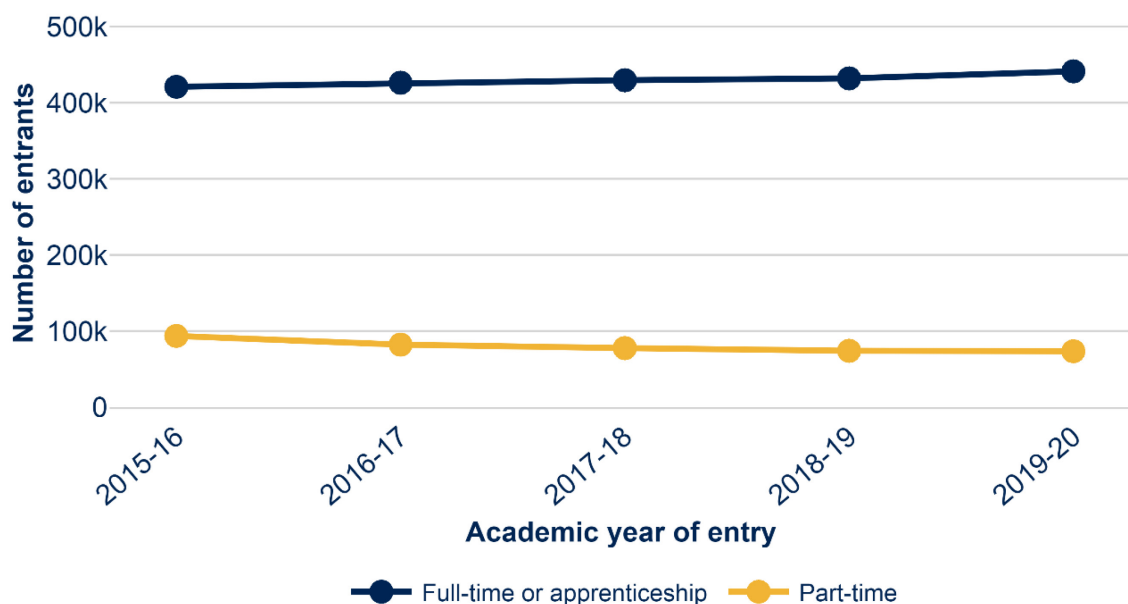
Note: Based on 321 providers.

* All providers with values over 100 have been grouped into this one bar.

Source: Access and participation dataset (March 2021).

21. Figure 1 shows that there is a similar number of providers where their student intake increased and where their intake decreased between 2018-19 and 2019-20 (an increase for 51.1 per cent of providers, a decrease for 48.9 per cent). For the majority of providers, the change was limited to between +/-10 per cent.

Figure 2: Number of entrants by mode

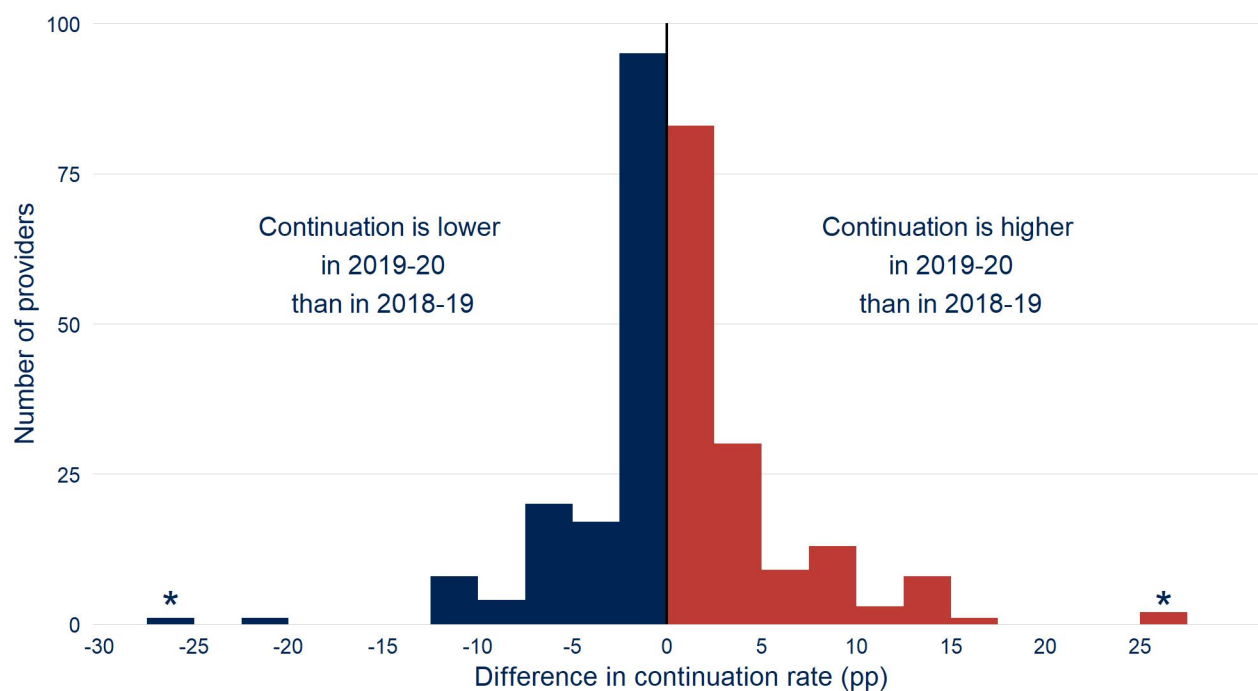


Source: Access and participation dataset (March 2021).

22. Figure 2 shows how the number of entrants to undergraduate courses changed over the last five years. For those studying full-time, the numbers gradually increased and stood at 441,210 in 2019-20. The pattern was the opposite for entrants studying part-time: numbers gradually declined over the five-year period and in 2019-20 there were 73,440 entrants.

Continuation

Figure 3: Change in full-time continuation rate since previous year, across providers



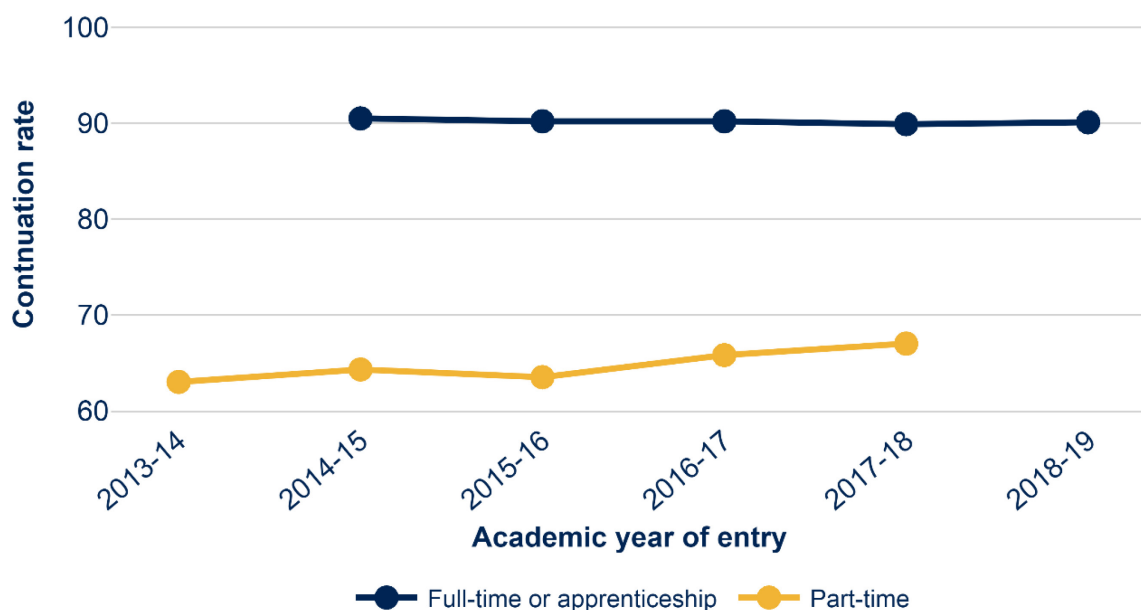
Note: Based on 295 providers.

* All providers with values greater than +25 have been grouped into this one bar, as have providers with values less than -25.

Source: Access and participation dataset (March 2021).

23. The pattern for the change in continuation rate since last year is very similar to the pattern seen for access. Figure 3 shows that there were almost equal numbers of providers where the continuation rate increased since last year (50.5 per cent of providers) as where it decreased since last year (49.5 per cent of providers). For the majority of providers, the change was limited to between +/-2.5 percentage points.

Figure 4: Continuation rates by mode

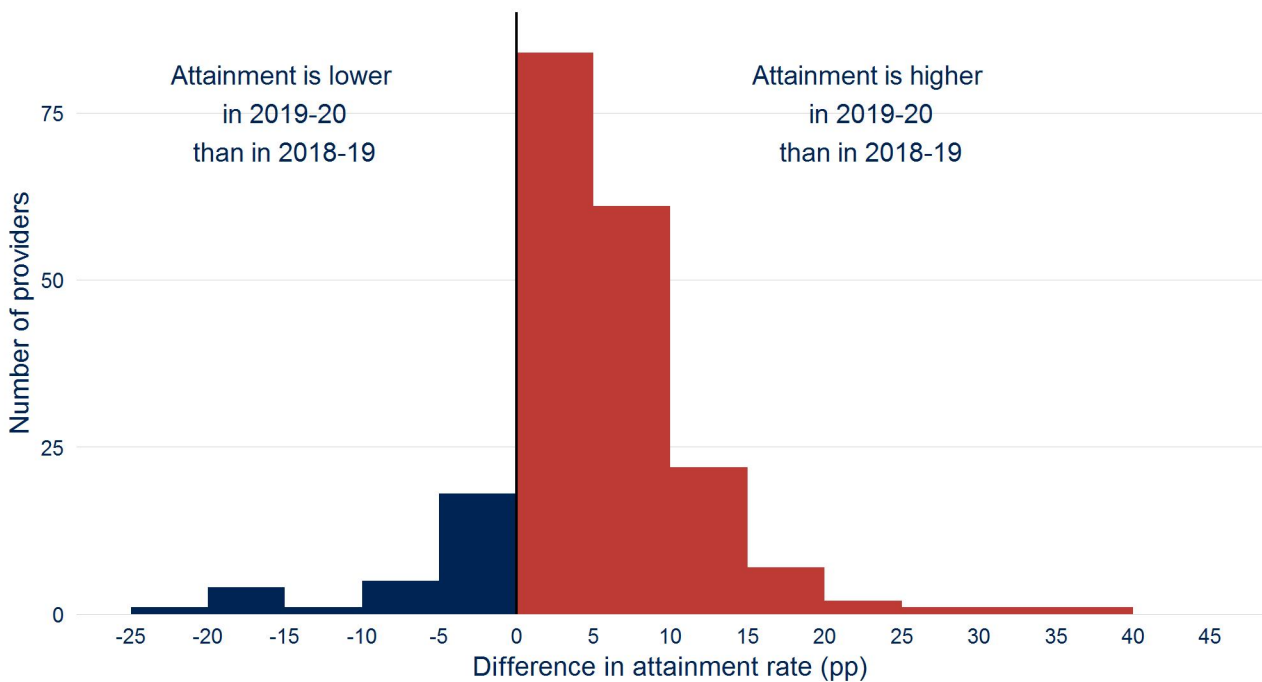


Source: Access and participation dataset (March 2021).

24. Figure 4 shows the continuation rates for both full-time and part-time students over the last five years. For those studying full-time, the rate hardly changed and was 90.1 per cent for those entering in 2018-19. This was much higher than the rate for part-time students (67 per cent for those entering in 2017-18, the latest year for which this data was available). However, the continuation rate for part-time students rose overall over the last five years, having increased from 63 per cent for 2013-14 entrants.

Attainment

Figure 5: Change in full-time attainment rate since previous year, across providers

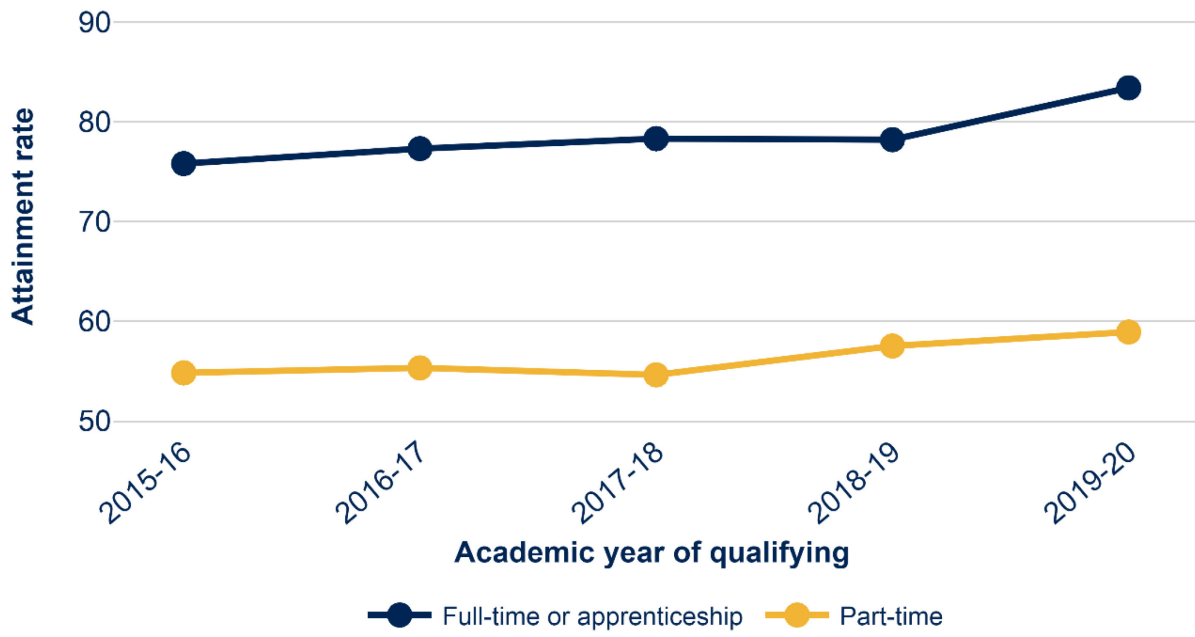


Note: Based on 208 providers.

Source: Access and participation dataset (March 2021).

25. The changes in attainment rate since the previous year for providers is shown in Figure 5. In this case, the pattern is not the same as seen for access or continuation. For the majority of providers (86.1 per cent), their attainment rate increased since last year. The majority of providers' increases were between 0 and 5 percentage points, followed by a change of between 5 and 10 percentage points. There were a number of providers where the increase was greater than 10 percentage points.
26. As a result of the pandemic, a number of providers made changes to assessment and classification arrangements to ensure students were not disadvantaged by the impact of COVID-19 when it came to assessment in 2019-20. Providers did not adopt a single approach, and as a result, the impact of these changes will have varied from provider to provider. It is not possible to determine the extent to which these actions by providers may have influenced the increase in attainment rates seen between 2018-19 and 2019-20.
27. Figure 6 shows how the attainment rate for both full-time and part-time students changed over the last five years. The attainment rate for part-time students remained below that of full-time students. In 2019-20 the rate for full-time students was 83.4 per cent, whereas for part-time students it was 58.9 per cent. In 2018-19 the rates were 78.2 per cent and 57.5 per cent respectively.
28. In both groups the attainment rate increased over the last five years. The increase of 5.2 percentage points between 2018-19 and 2019-20 for full-time students was greater than the increase of 1.4 percentage points for part-time students.

Figure 6: Attainment rates by mode



Source: Access and participation dataset (March 2021).

Sector summary of lifecycle stages by student characteristics

Access to higher education

29. These measures show the make-up of students entering higher education at English providers.
30. For some student characteristics it is possible to make comparisons between the proportion of 18-year-olds in the UK population and the proportion of 18-year-olds entering higher education. In this way, we can identify whether there is a gap between the proportion of 18-year-olds in the population and the proportion entering higher education at English providers.
31. Table 1 shows the gap between the proportion of 18-year-olds entering higher education in 2019-20 and the proportion of those in the UK population, for a number of student characteristics. Where the gap is positive, this indicates that students with this characteristic are underrepresented in higher education.

Table 1: Proportion of 18-year-olds in the UK and entering full-time higher education in England in 2019-20, by characteristic

Characteristic	Attribute	Proportion of 18-year-olds in UK population (%)	Proportion of 18-year-olds in English higher education sector (%)	Gap between population and higher education sector (pp)
Ethnicity	Asian	8.3	16.7	-8.5
	Black	3.6	7.1	-3.5
	Mixed	3.2	5.2	-2.0
	Other	1.1	2.1	-1.0
	White	83.9	68.9	15.0
IMD	Quintile 1	21.9	17.0	4.9
	Quintile 5	20.0	25.9	-6.0
POLAR4	Quintile 1	17.9	11.8	6.1
	Quintile 5	23.7	30.7	-7.1
Sex	Female	48.7	55.8	-7.1
	Male	51.3	44.2	7.1

Note: Because of rounding, the gaps shown in the table might not be the same as the difference between two proportions.

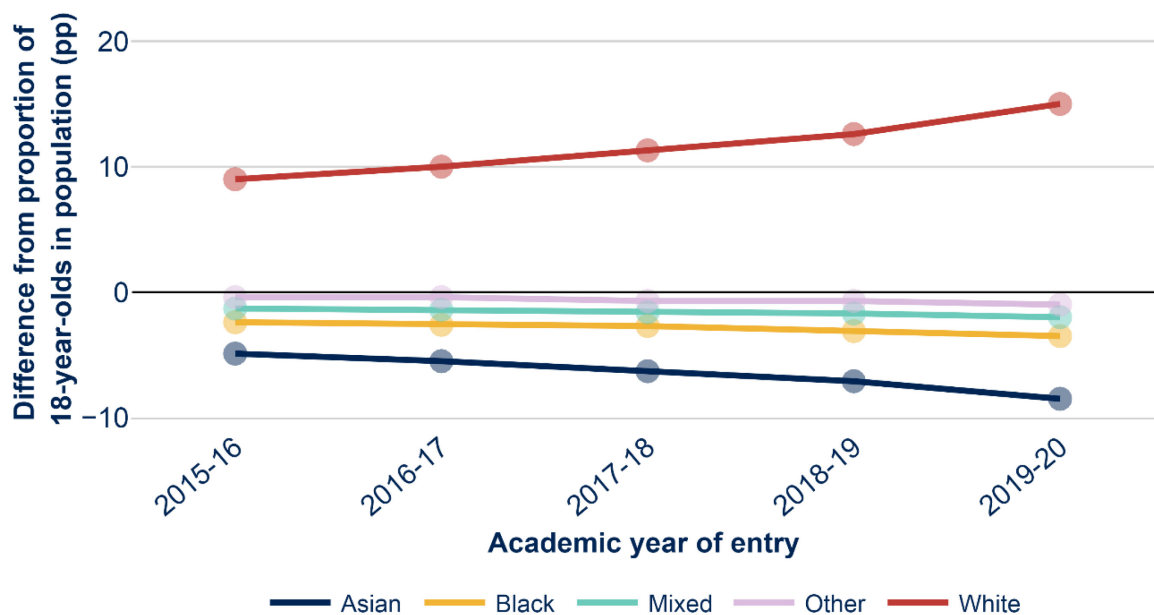
Source: Access and participation dataset (March 2021).

Access by ethnic group

32. Table 1 shows the proportion of 18-year-old white entrants to full-time higher education was 15 percentage points lower than the proportion of white 18-year-olds in the UK population. All other ethnic groups were overrepresented when compared to the population. This was most notable for Asian entrants, where the proportion was 8.5 percentage points higher than the proportion of 18-year-olds of Asian ethnicity in the UK.

33. Figure 7 shows the distribution of gaps for each ethnic group across the last five years. White students are the only group that were underrepresented across all years; this gap gradually increased over this period.
34. Conversely, in all other ethnic groups, the difference in proportion across all years was negative. The Asian ethnic group consistently had the largest difference in proportion, which gradually increased in size over the last five years.

Figure 7: Gaps in the proportion of 18-year-olds entering full-time higher education compared with the population, by ethnic group

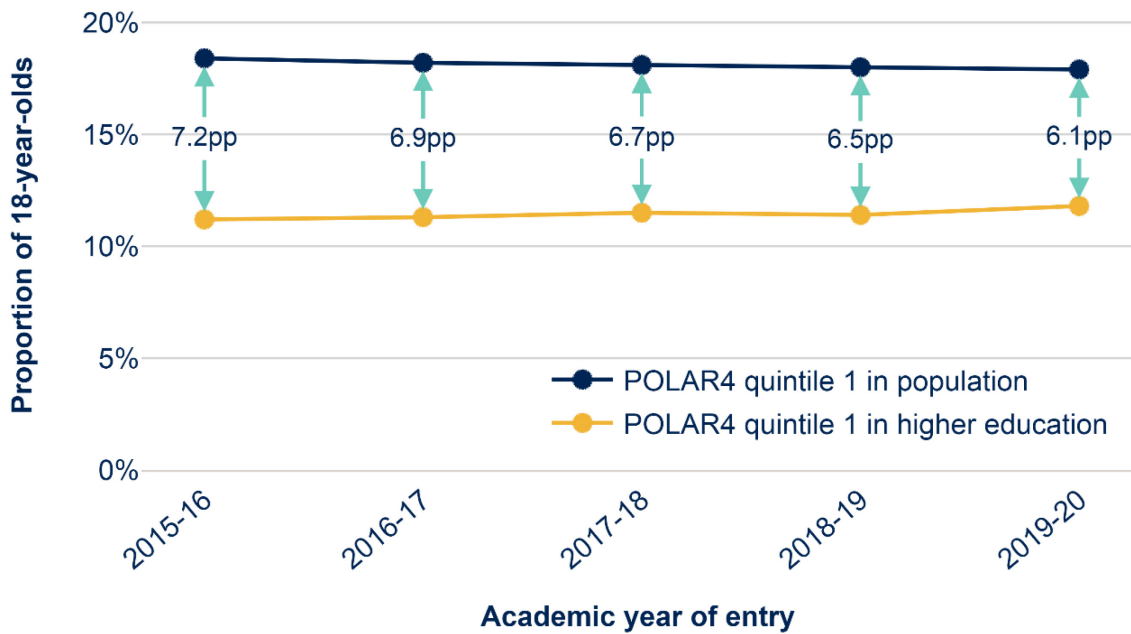


Note: All gaps in this chart are statistically significant at the 95% level.
 Source: Access and participation dataset (March 2021).

Access by POLAR4 quintile 1: the least represented student group

35. Figure 8 shows the proportion of 18-year-old entrants to full-time higher education from POLAR4 quintile 1 areas (the least represented) and the proportion of 18-year-olds in the UK living in such areas, over the last five years. The gap between these proportions saw a slight decline across the time series.

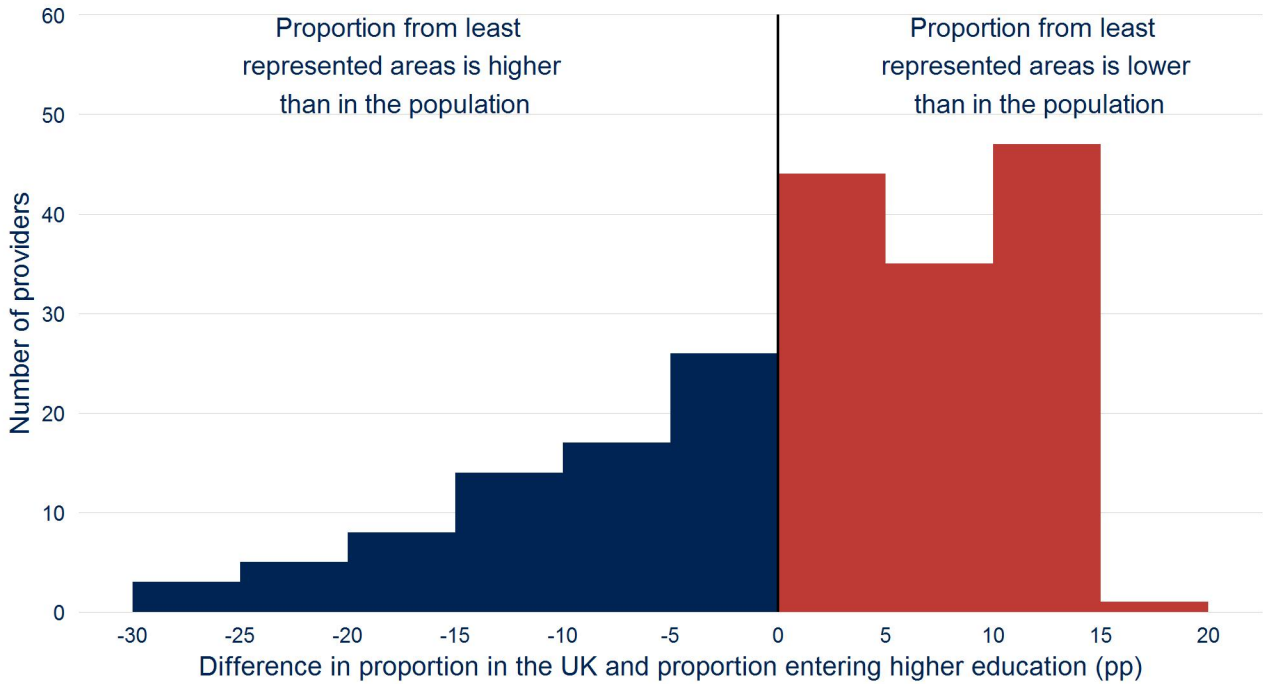
Figure 8: Gaps in the proportion of least represented 18-year-olds entering full-time higher education compared with the population



Note: All gaps in this chart are statistically significant at the 95% level.
Source: Access and participation dataset (March 2021).

36. Figure 9 shows the distribution of gaps across providers between the proportion of 18-year-old entrants to full-time higher education from POLAR4 quintile 1 areas and the proportion of 18-year-olds living in these areas in the UK. It shows that for the majority of providers (63.5 per cent), the proportion of 18-year-olds from these areas within higher education was lower than the proportion living in these areas in the population.

Figure 9: Gaps in proportion of 18-year-olds from least represented areas in 2019-20 (in full-time higher education compared with population), across providers

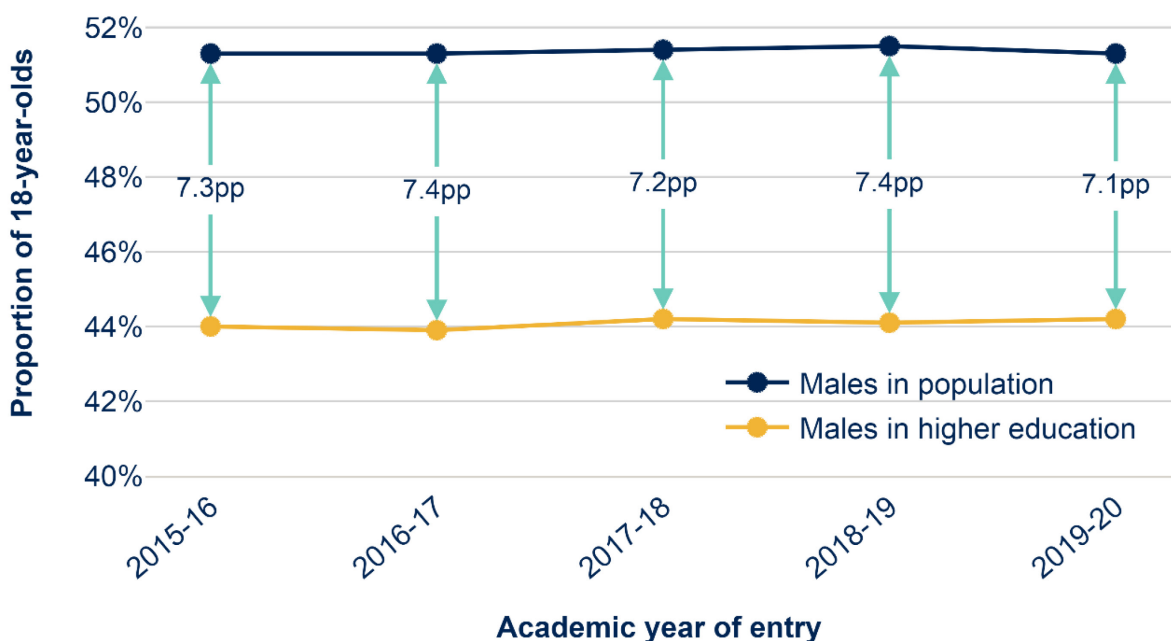


Note: Based on proportions for 200 providers.
 Source: Access and participation dataset (March 2021).

Access by sex

37. Table 1 shows that the proportion of 18-year-old entrants to higher education in 2019-20 who are male was 7.1 percentage points lower than the proportion of 18-year-old men in the UK population. Conversely, women were overrepresented by the same percentage. Figure 10 shows that this has remained the case across the last five years.

Figure 10: Gaps in the proportion of 18-year-old males entering full-time higher education compared with population



Note: All gaps in this chart are statistically significant at the 95% level.

Source: Access and participation dataset (March 2021).

Continuation

38. These measures show whether students continue with their studies.

39. Table 2 shows the continuation rates for full-time and part-time students for several student characteristics. It also shows the gaps that exist between the rates for students in a selected attribute compared with the rates for students in another attribute belonging to the same characteristic. Positive gaps indicate that these students had a lower rate of continuation than the selected attribute.

Table 2: Continuation rates for entrants continuing into 2019-20, by characteristic

Characteristic	Attribute	Full-time undergraduate continuation rate (%)	Full-time undergraduate continuation gap (pp)	Part-time undergraduate continuation rate (%)	Part-time undergraduate continuation gap (pp)
Age	Young *	92.4		72.8	
	Mature	84.4	8.0	66.2	6.6
Disability	No disability reported *	90.2		68.1	
	Disability reported	89.3	0.9	60.9	7.2
Disability type	No disability reported *	90.2		68.1	
	Cognitive or learning difficulties	91.5	-1.3	67.1	1.0
	Mental health condition	87.0	3.2	55.2	12.9
	Multiple or other impairments	89.4	0.8	57.8	10.3
	Sensory, medical or physical impairments	89.1	1.1	62.8	5.3
	Social or communication impairment	88.7	1.5	63.0	5.0
Ethnicity	White *	91.1		67.8	
	Asian	90.2	0.9	65.4	2.3
	Black	84.9	6.1	61.6	6.2
	Mixed	89.1	2.0	61.4	6.3
	Other	87.4	3.7	64.0	4.0
IMD	Quintile 5 *	93.9		72.8	
	Quintile 1	85.9	8.0	63.8	9.0
POLAR4	Quintile 5 *	94.4		75.0	
	Quintile 1	89.6	4.7	67.9	7.1
Sex	Male *	88.7		68.0	
	Female	91.2	-2.5	66.3	1.8

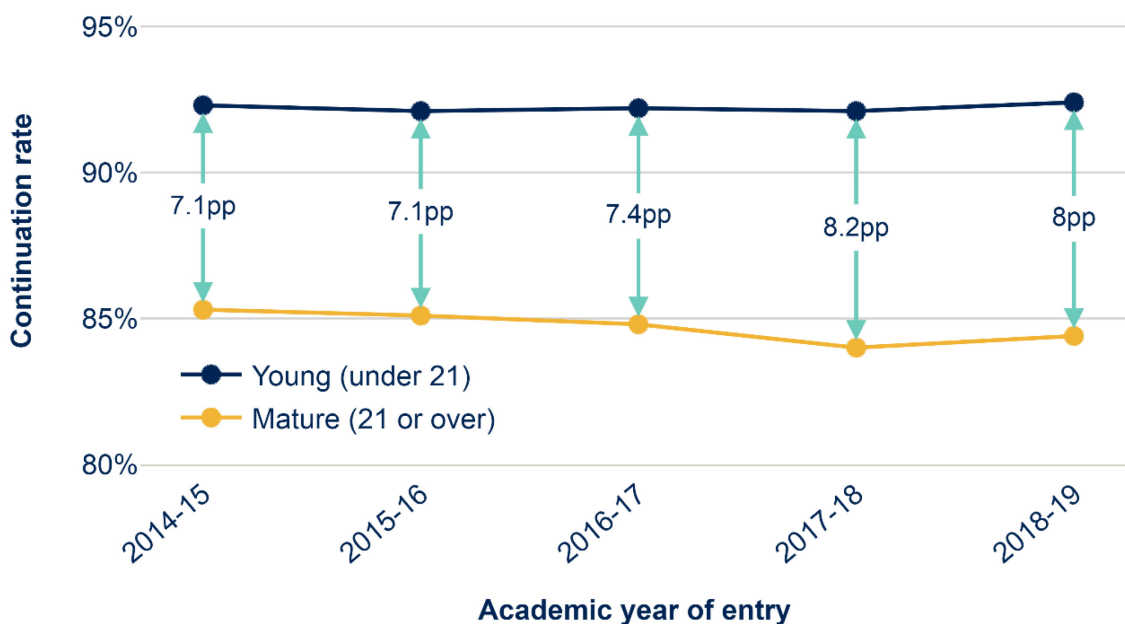
Notes: Full-time continuation rates are for 2018-19 full-time or apprenticeship entrants continuing into their second year in 2019-20. Part-time continuation rates are for 2017-18 entrants continuing into 2019-20. Attributes with a * indicate those against which other attributes are compared when deriving gaps. Because of rounding, the gaps shown in the table might not be the same as the difference between two rates.

Source: Access and participation dataset (March 2021).

Age: Gap in continuation rates between young and mature students

40. Figure 11 shows the gaps in continuation rates between young and mature students over the last five years. The continuation rate was consistently higher for young students (those aged under 21 at the start of their studies) than for mature students. For young students the continuation rate remained largely unchanged, whilst for mature students it decreased slightly over the five-year period.

Figure 11: Gaps in full-time continuation rates between young and mature students



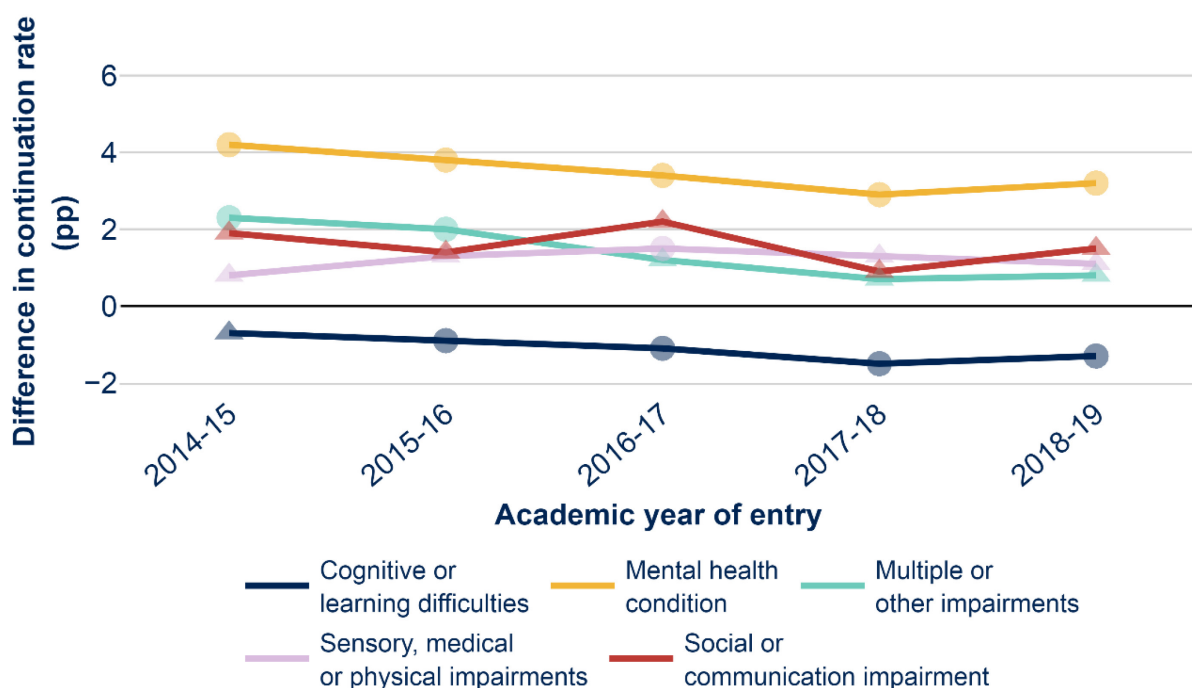
Note: All gaps in this chart are statistically significant at the 95% level.
Source: Access and participation dataset (March 2021).

Disability: Gap in continuation rates between students with no disability reported and students with a disability reported, by disability type

41. Figure 12 shows the gaps in continuation rates between students with no disability reported and students with a disability reported, by type of disability. The largest gap was for students who reported a mental health condition; however this gap decreased slightly across the last five years, from 4.2 percentage points in 2014-15 to 3.2 percentage points in 2018-19.

42. The pattern for students who reported having cognitive or learning difficulties was the opposite: their continuation rate was consistently higher than those with no disability reported. In 2019-20 the gap was 1.3 percentage points.

Figure 12: Gaps in full-time continuation rates between students with no disability reported and with a disability reported, by type of disability



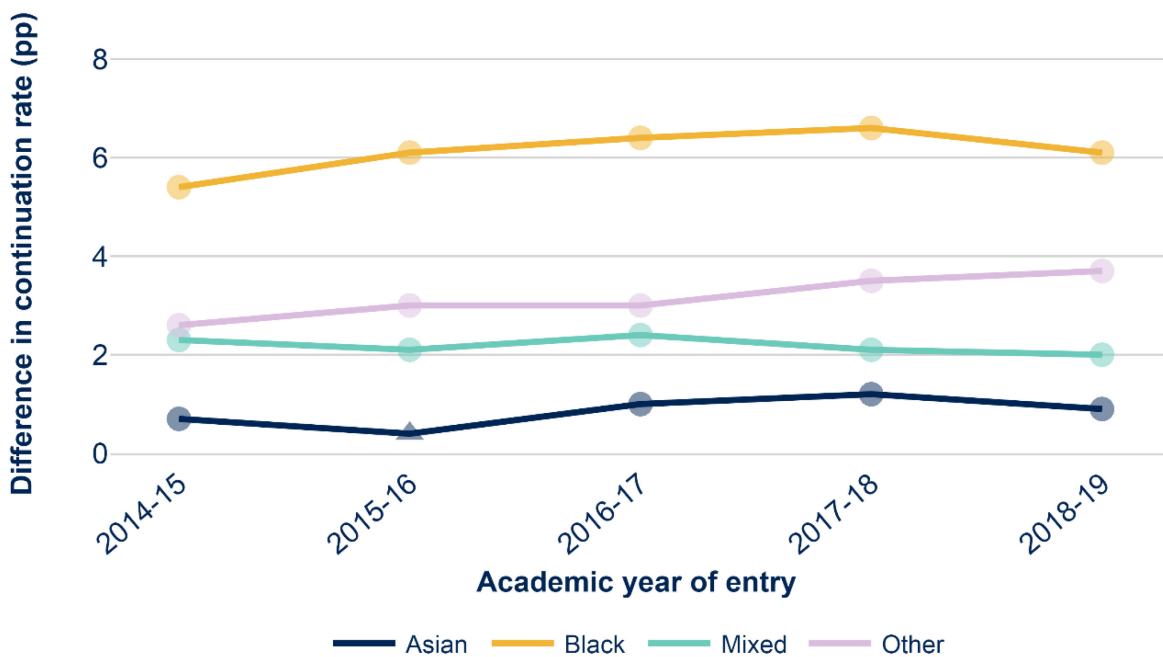
Note: Gaps that are statistically significant at the 95% level are indicated by circles, gaps that are not are represented by triangles.

Source: Access and participation dataset (March 2021).

Ethnicity: Gap in continuation rates between white students and those from other ethnic groups

43. Figure 13 shows that the continuation rate for white students was higher than those for students in all other ethnic groups. For Asian students, the gap was minimal: for 2018-19 entrants their continuation rate was only 0.9 percentage points lower than the rate for white students. The largest gap was for black students and, although the gap narrowed slightly between 2017-18 and 2018-19, over the five-year period it increased (from 5.4 percentage points in 2014-15 to 6.1 percentage points in 2018-19).

Figure 13: Gaps in full-time continuation rates between white students and students in other ethnic groups

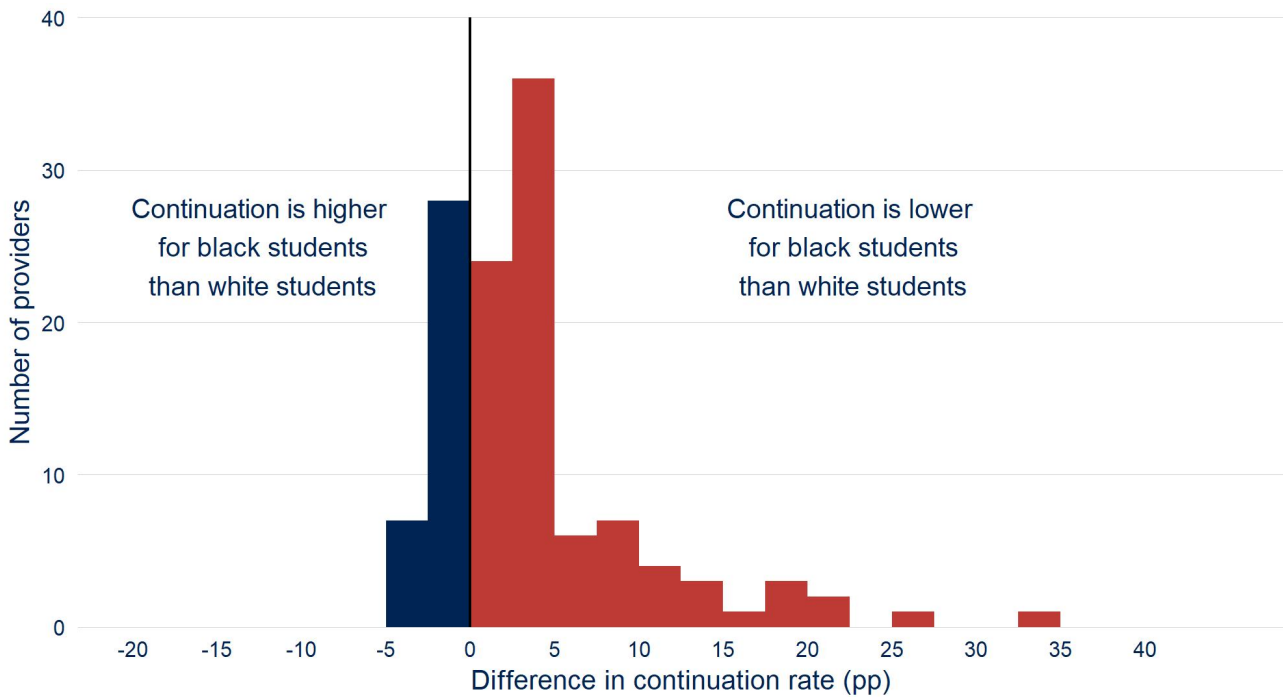


Note: Gaps that are statistically significant at the 95% level are indicated by circles, gaps that are not are represented by triangles.

Source: Access and participation dataset (March 2021).

44. Figure 14 shows that the continuation rate was lower for black students than for white students in 71.5 per cent of the 123 providers. The highest number of providers had a continuation rate that was between 2.5 and 5 percentage points lower for black students than for white students. There were also a number of providers where the gaps were even larger. Conversely, there were some providers where the continuation rate was higher for black students than white students, but the largest gap here was limited to -5 percentage points.

Figure 14: Gaps in full-time continuation rate between white and black entrants in 2018-19, across providers



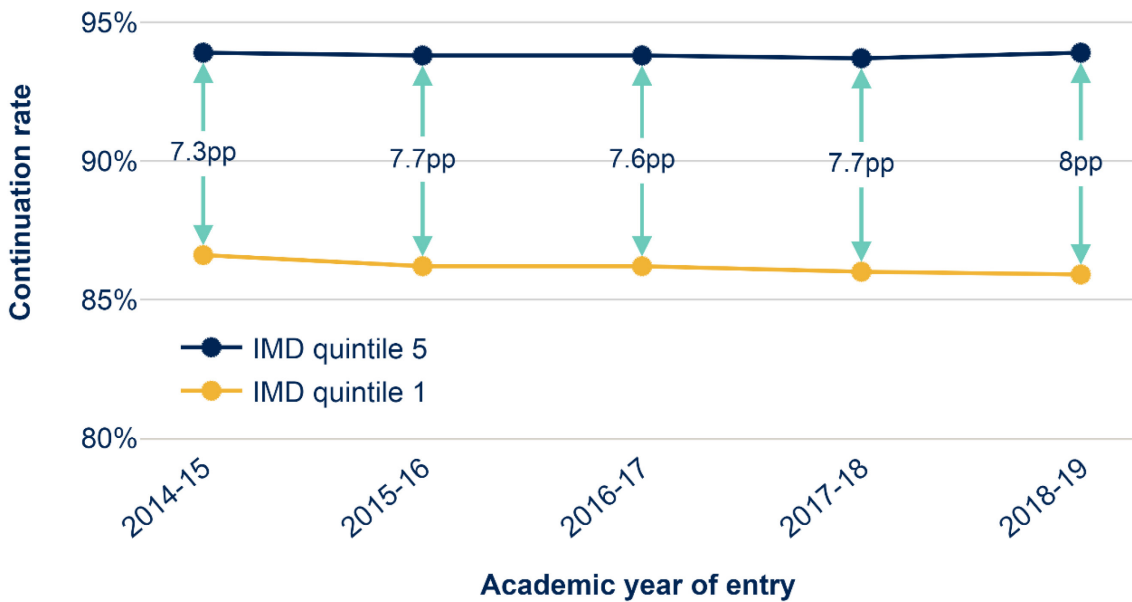
Note: Based on 123 providers.

Source: Access and participation dataset (March 2021).

IMD: Gap in continuation rate between the most and least deprived areas

45. Figure 15 shows the gaps in continuation rates between the most and least disadvantaged students (those from IMD quintile 1 and quintile 5 areas respectively) over the last five years. The continuation rate was consistently lower for the most disadvantaged students: it remained between 7 and 8 percentage points lower than the rate for the least disadvantaged students across the five-year period. For both groups, there was little change in rates over this time.

Figure 15: Gaps in full-time continuation rates between the most and least disadvantaged groups



Note: All gaps in this chart are statistically significant at the 95% level.
Source: Access and participation dataset (March 2021).

Attainment

46. These measures examine the proportion of graduates who achieved a first or upper-second class degree in 2019-20.
47. Table 3 shows the attainment rates for full-time and part-time students for several student characteristics. These are the percentages of students within these groups who achieved a first or upper-second class degree in 2019-20. It also shows the gaps that exist between the attainment rates of students in a selected attribute and the rates for students in another attribute belonging to the same characteristic.
48. For many student groups, there was a notable increase in attainment rates between 2018-19 and 2019-20. As noted in paragraph 26, as a result of the pandemic, a number of providers made changes to assessment and classification arrangements to ensure students were not disadvantaged by the impact of COVID-19 when it came to assessment in 2019-20. It is not possible to determine the extent to which these actions by providers may have influenced the increase in attainment rates seen between 2018-19 and 2019-20.

Table 3: Attainment rates for students obtaining a first or upper-second class degree in 2019-20, by characteristic

Characteristic	Attribute	Full-time undergraduate attainment rate (%)	Full-time undergraduate attainment gap (pp)	Part-time undergraduate attainment rate (%)	Part-time undergraduate attainment gap (pp)
Age	Young *	85.2		44.6	
	Mature	75.6	9.6	64.7	-20.0
Disability	No disability reported *	83.6		59.6	
	Disability reported	82.3	1.3	55.5	4.1
Disability type	No disability reported *	83.6		59.6	
	Cognitive or learning difficulties	81.0	2.6	54.0	6.0
	Mental health condition	83.4	0.2	58.0	1.0
	Multiple or other impairments	83.4	0.2	54.0	6.0
	Sensory, medical or physical impairments	83.3	0.3	59.0	1.0
	Social or communication impairment	78.8	4.8	48.0	12.0
Ethnicity	White *	86.6		68.0	
	Asian	78.8	7.7	37.7	30.3
	Black	68.2	18.3	30.2	37.8
	Mixed	83.0	3.6	51.0	17.0
	Other	76.6	9.9	40.0	28.0
IMD	Quintile 5 *	89.4		68.0	
	Quintile 1	74.2	15.2	46.4	21.6
POLAR4	Quintile 5 *	88.7		50.8	
	Quintile 1	80.0	8.8	40.0	11.0
Sex	Male *	81.9		60.9	
	Female	84.4	-2.5	57.1	3.8

Note: Attainment rate reflects students obtaining a first or upper second-class degree in 2019-20. Attributes with a * indicate the one against which other attributes are compared against when deriving gaps. Because of rounding, the gaps shown in the table might not be the same as the difference between two rates.

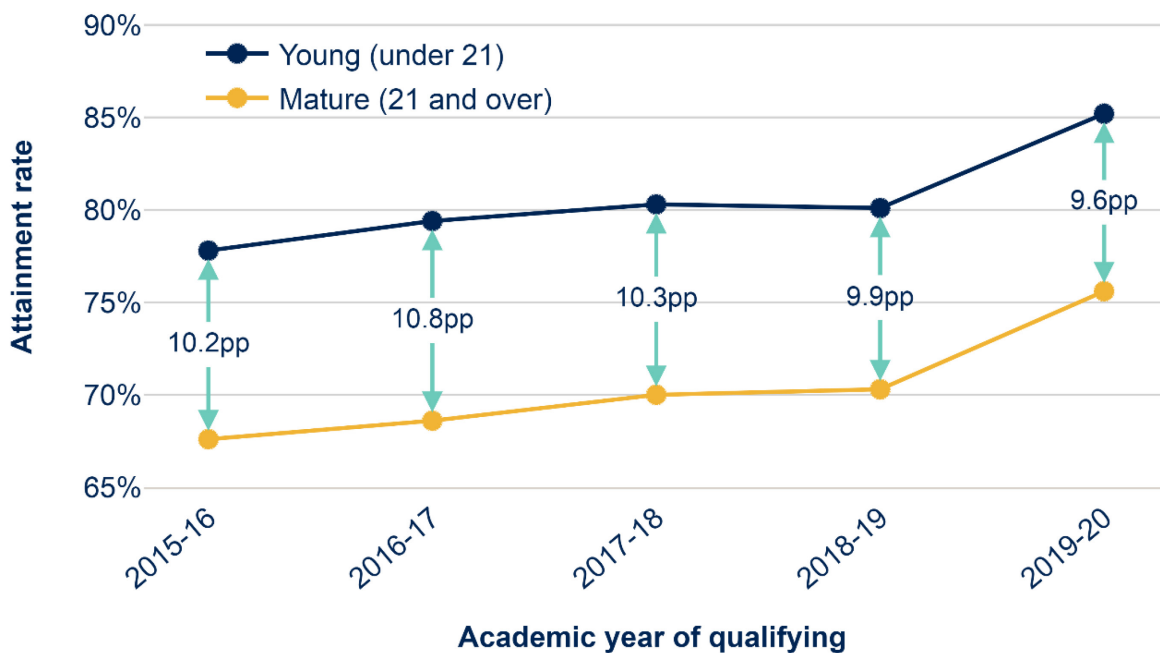
Source: Access and participation dataset (March 2021).

Age: Gap in attainment rate (first or upper-second class degrees) between young and mature students

49. Figure 16 shows that the attainment rate for young students (those aged under 21 at the start of their studies) and mature students both increased between 2018-19 and 2019-20. For young students it increased from 80.1 per cent in 2018-19 to 85.2 per cent in 2019-20 and for mature students it increased from 70.3 per cent in 2018-19 to 75.6 per cent in 2019-20.

50. The gap between the attainment rates of young and mature students saw a small reduction across the five-year period, but remained quite large, with young students having had an attainment rate 9.6 percentage points higher than mature students in 2019-20.

Figure 16: Gaps in full-time attainment rates between young and mature students

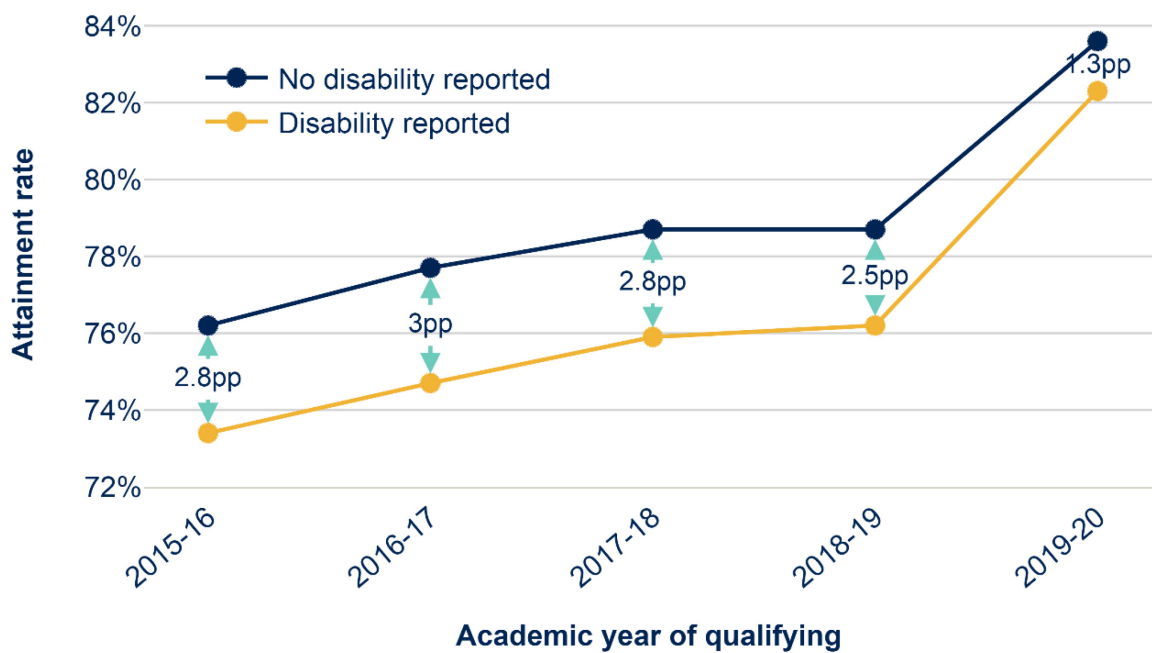


Note: All gaps in this chart are statistically significant at the 95% level.
Source: Access and participation dataset (March 2021).

Disability: Gap in attainment rate (first or upper-second class degrees) between students with no disability reported and with a disability reported

51. Figure 17 shows that the attainment rate for students with a disability reported was consistently lower than that for students with no disability reported. Over the five-year time series this gap more than halved, however, from 2.8 percentage points in 2015-16 to 1.3 percentage points in 2019-20. In both groups, attainment rates increased significantly between 2018-19 and 2019-20, with the slightly greater increase for students with a disability reported that resulted in the narrowing of the gap.

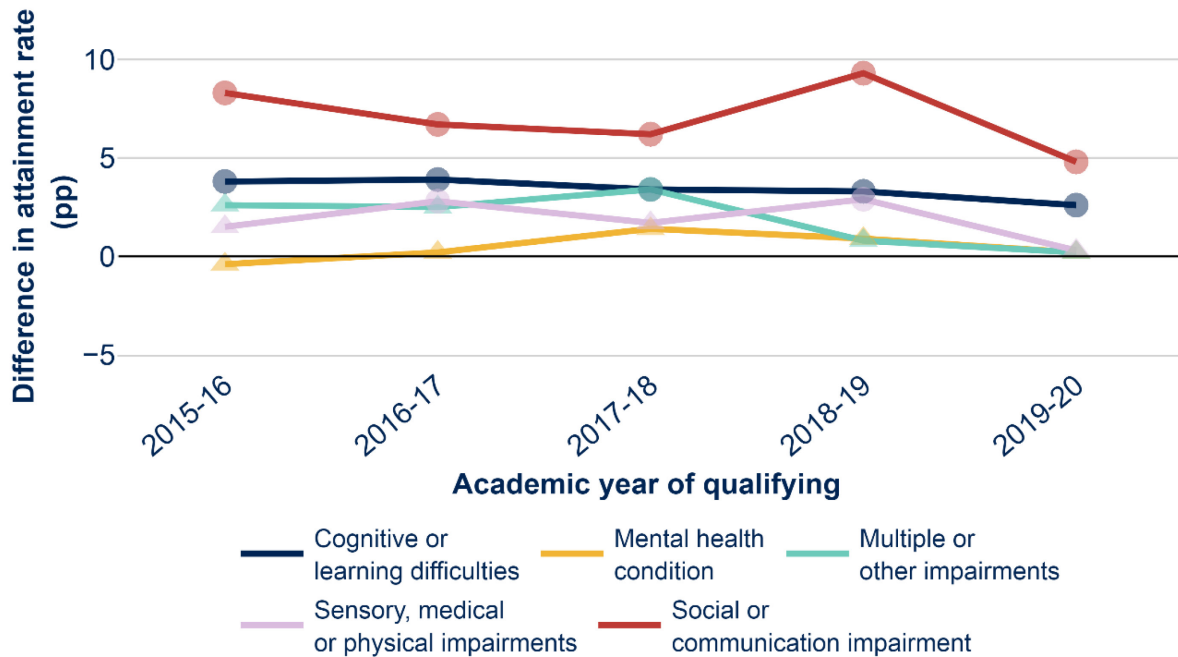
Figure 17: Gaps in full-time attainment rates between students with no disability reported and a disability reported



Note: All gaps in this chart are statistically significant at the 95% level.
Source: Access and participation dataset (March 2021).

52. Figure 18 shows that there is no clear pattern in the gaps between students with no disability reported and students with different types of disability reported. Students with social or communication impairment had the largest gap (4.8 percentage points in 2019-20), although the gap declined over the five-year period.

Figure 18: Gaps in full-time attainment rates between students with no disability reported and a disability reported, by type of disability



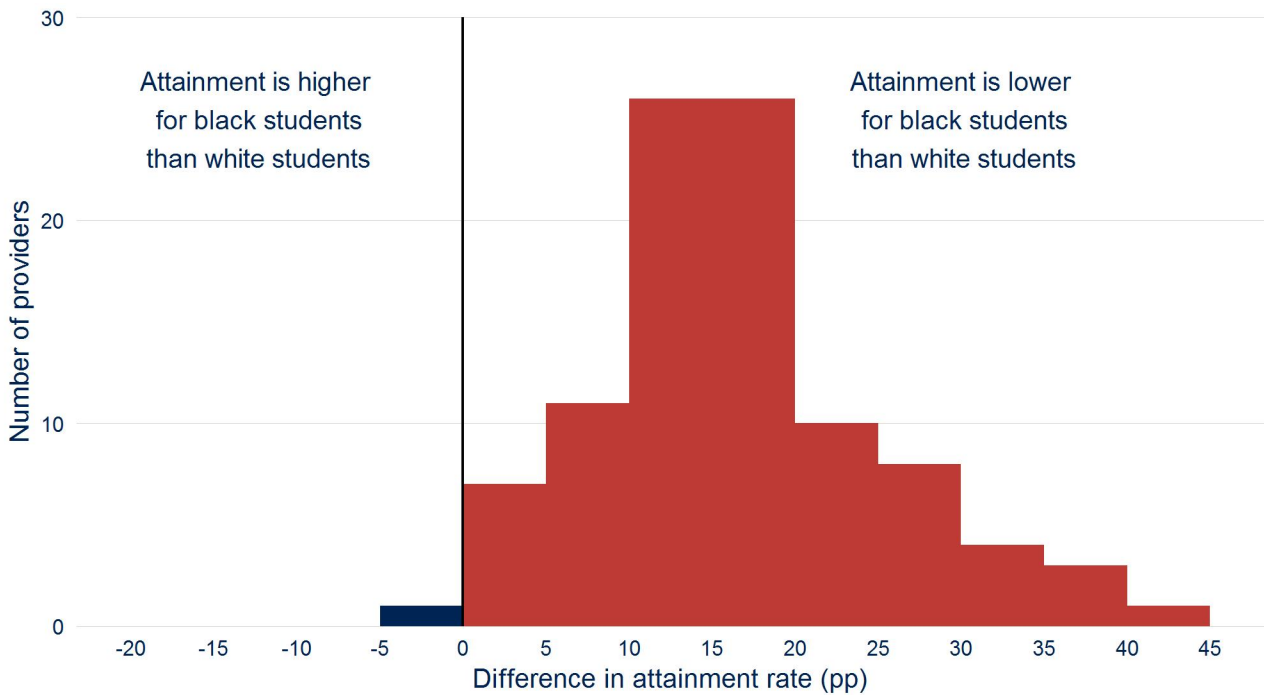
Note: Gaps that are statistically significant at the 95% level are indicated by circles; gaps that are not are represented by triangles.

Source: Access and participation dataset (March 2021).

Ethnicity: Gap in attainment rate (first or upper-second class degrees) between white and black students

53. Figure 19 shows that the gap in attainment rate between white and black students existed at nearly every provider in 2019-20. In 99 per cent of the 97 providers in total, black students had a lower attainment rate than white students. For the majority of providers, the gap was between 10 and 20 percentage points and there were a number of providers where the gap was even larger.

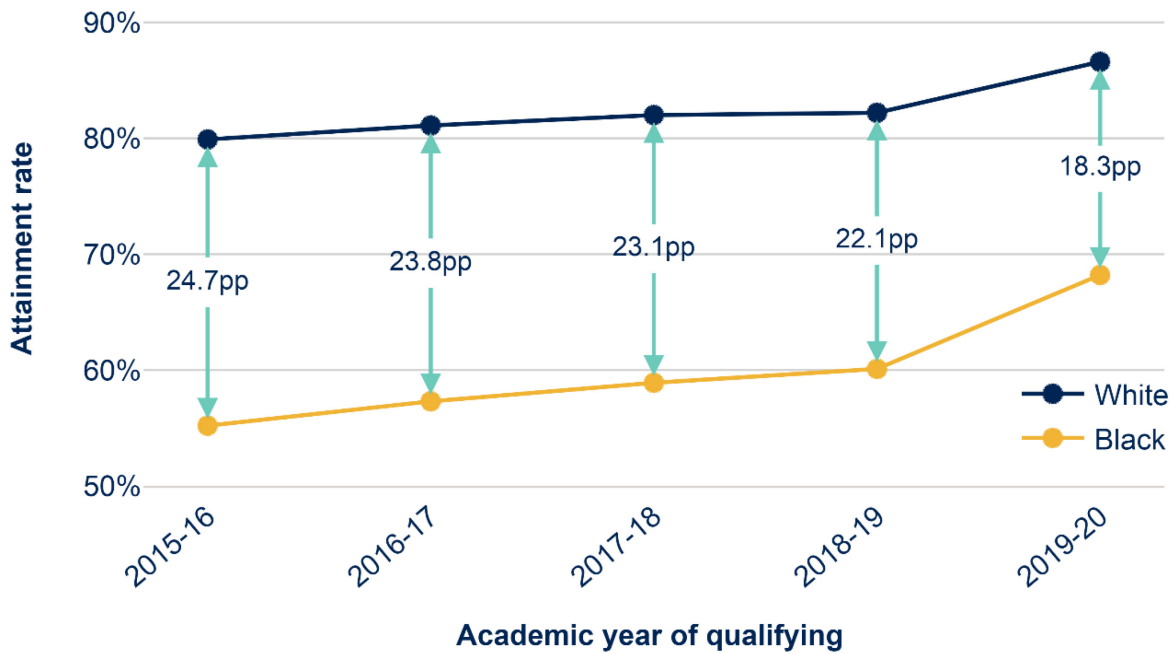
Figure 19: Gaps in full-time attainment rate between white and black students across providers



Note: Based on the attainment rate for 97 providers.
Source: Access and participation dataset (March 2021).

54. Figure 20 shows that the gap in attainment rate between white and black students narrowed in the last five years; however it remained very large (18.3 percentage points in 2019-20). Although attainment rates for both white and black students increased between 2018-19 and 2019-20, the greater increase for black students accounted for the narrowing of the gap.

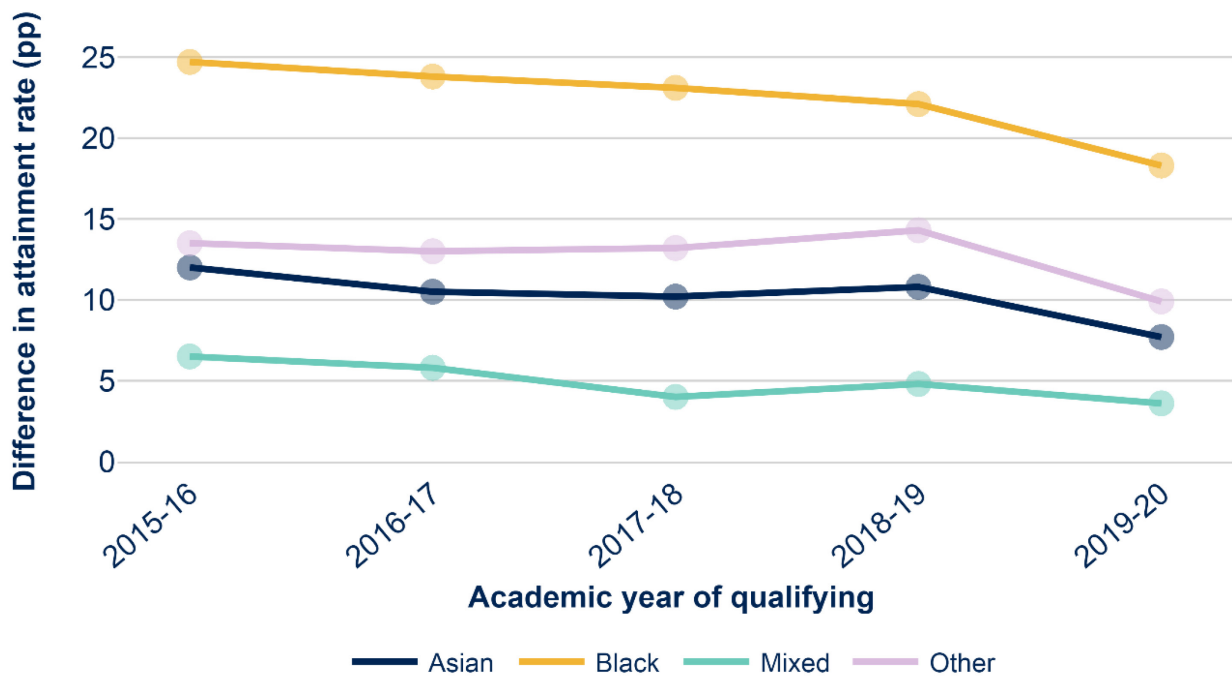
Figure 20: Gaps in full-time attainment rates between white and black students



Note: All gaps in this chart are statistically significant at the 95% level.
Source: Access and participation dataset (March 2021).

Figure 21 shows that the gaps in attainment rate between white students and those in the other ethnic groups all declined over the last five years. However, attainment rates for these ethnic groups all remained lower than for white students. Of all the ethnic groups, black students had the largest gap.

Figure 21: Gaps in full-time attainment rates between white students and students in other ethnic groups



Note: All gaps in this chart are statistically significant at the 95% level.

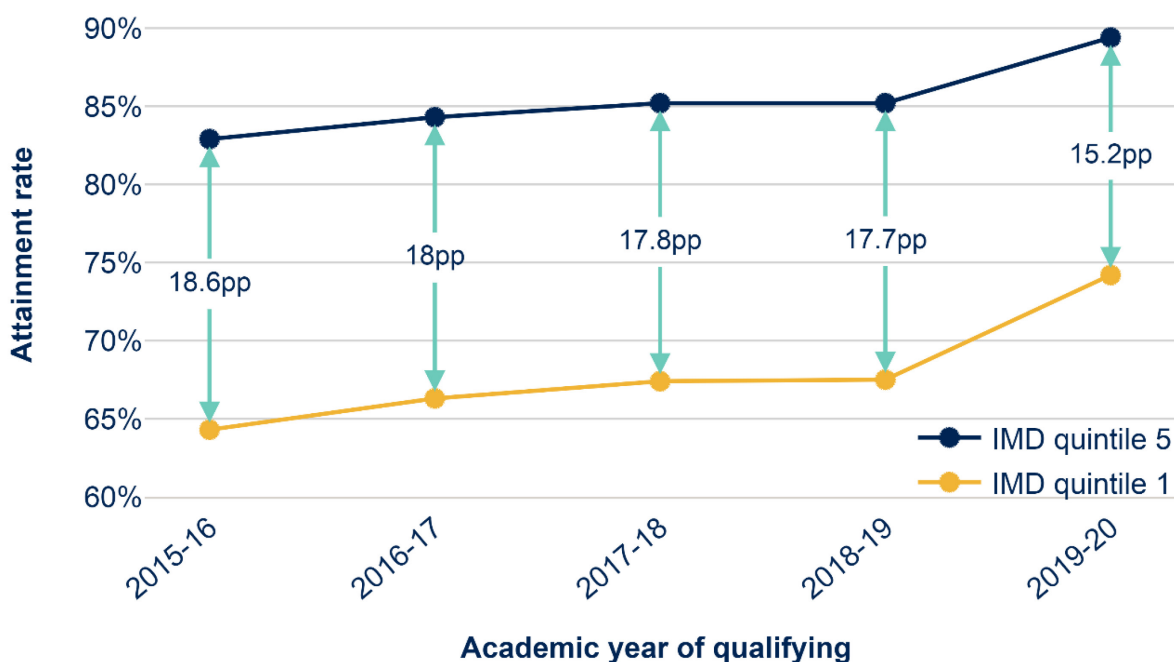
Source: Access and participation dataset (March 2021).

IMD: Gap in attainment rate (first or upper-second class degrees) between students from the most and least deprived areas

55. Figure 22 shows the gap in attainment rates between the most and least disadvantaged students (those from IMD quintile 1 and quintile 5 areas respectively) over the last five years. The attainment rate was consistently lower for the most disadvantaged students compared to the least disadvantaged, although in each year the gap decreased in size very slightly.

56. The attainment rate for students from IMD quintile 1 and IMD quintile 5 areas both increased by the largest amount between 2018-19 and 2019-20. The increase was greater for the most disadvantaged students, however, which caused the narrowing of the gap.

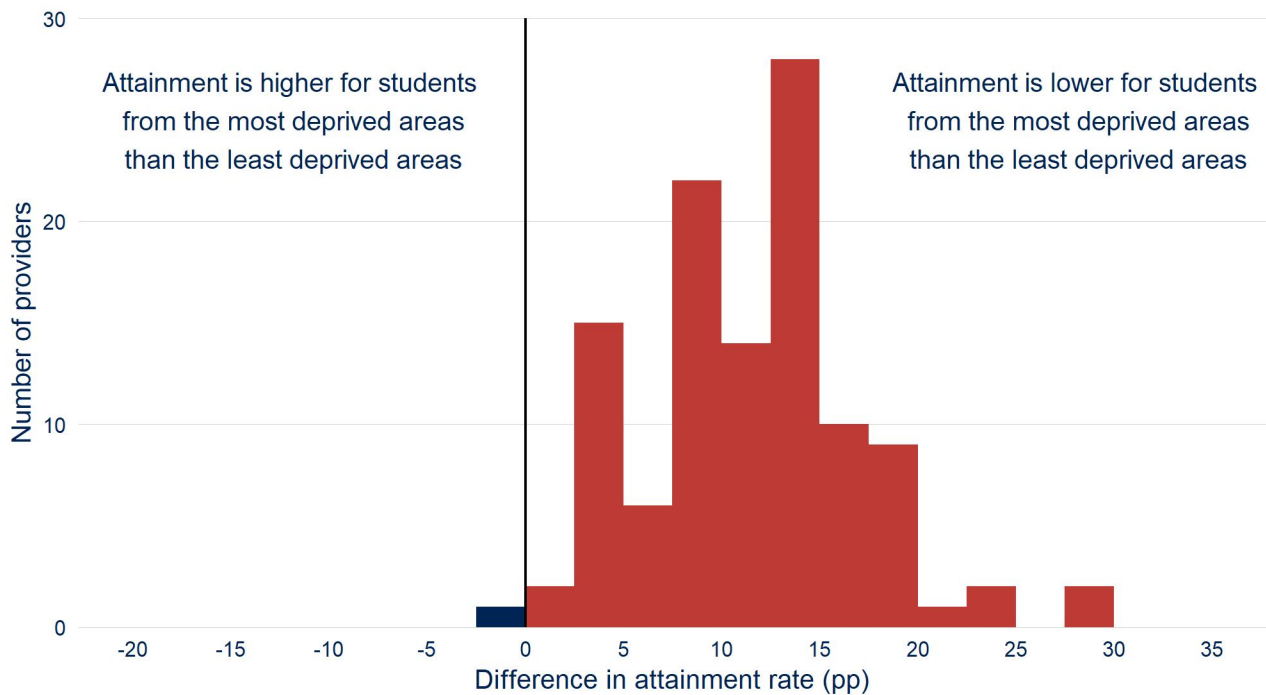
Figure 22: Gaps in full-time attainment rates between the most and least disadvantaged students



Note: All gaps in this chart are statistically significant at the 95% level.
 Source: Access and participation dataset (March 2021).

57. Figure 23 shows that the gap in attainment rate was lower for disadvantaged students, at 99.1 per cent of providers in 2019-20. The greatest number of providers had a gap that was between 12.5 and 15 percentage points and there were a number where the gap was even larger.

Figure 23: Gaps in full-time attainment rate between the most and least disadvantaged students across providers



Note: Based on the attainment rate for 112 providers.
 Source: Access and participation dataset (March 2021).

Related statistics and data sources

58. The access and participation data resources draw on nationally collected data, which is used in the construction of related statistics and analysis, including the following:

- Data and analysis about higher education students and providers published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency – www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis
- Data and analysis about higher education students and providers published by the Office for Students – www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/
- National Student Survey results data – www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/student-information-and-data/national-student-survey-nss/get-the-nss-data/
- UK Performance Indicators published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency – www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/performance-indicators
- Higher education graduate employment and earnings data published by the Department for Education – www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-higher-education-graduate-employment-and-earnings
- Metrics, data and provider submissions used in the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) – www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/teaching/tef-data/get-the-data/
- Analysis of degree classifications over time published by the Office for Students – www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/analysis-of-degree-classifications-over-time-changes-in-graduate-attainment/

Technical notes

59. Field naming conventions and valid entries shown in the open data resources are described in the supplementary data resources data definitions file.⁸

60. The Office for Students is committed to following the Code of Practice for the statistics it produces. Details can be found on the website of the UK Statistics Authority at www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/code-of-practice/.

⁸ See www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/access-and-participation-data-dashboard/about-the-dashboard-data/get-the-dashboard-data/.

List of abbreviations

DLHE	Destination of Leavers from Higher Education survey
ESFA	Education and Skills Funding Agency
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency
ILR	Individualised Learner Record
IMD	Index of Multiple Deprivation
OfS	Office for Students
pp	Percentage point
POLAR4	Participation of local areas
Q1	Quintile 1
Q5	Quintile 5



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www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/