

# Staff at the Office for Students

**Equality, diversity and inclusion  
statistics for staff employed by  
the Office for Students**

**Reference** OfS 2021.17

**Enquiries to** William Rimington at [dfa@officeforstudents.org.uk](mailto:dfa@officeforstudents.org.uk)

**Publication date** 8 June 2021

# Contents

**Foreword ..... 2**

**Introduction ..... 4**

**Staff characteristics ..... 7**

Age ..... 7

Disability ..... 9

Ethnicity ..... 11

Religion or belief ..... 13

Sex ..... 15

Gender identity ..... 16

Sexual orientation ..... 17

Caring responsibilities ..... 19

**Appointments ..... 20**

EDI targets ..... 20

**Leavers ..... 23**

## Foreword

### Nicola Dandridge, Chief Executive, Office for Students



The last year has been extraordinary. Like many organisations, we have had to adapt at pace to the changing context, working in different ways, while continuing to deliver our priorities for the effective regulation of higher education in England.

This changing and uncertain backdrop has brought to the fore the importance of creating a working environment which is diverse, welcoming and inclusive.

Equality, diversity and inclusion are core to our mission and our values, underpinning all the work we do and how we do it. As an inclusive employer we aim to challenge ourselves to fulfil the commitments set out in our mission and values, as well as ensuring we meet the same standards we expect of the providers we regulate, and the requirements of the equality and human rights legislation.

Gaining a better understanding our staff profile is one significant element of our approach. The staff profile data that we have gathered has enabled us to identify a range of aspirational targets, and to gain a better understanding of the impact of our objectives, plans and activities on different groups of staff; as well as the potential or actual bias and barriers that they may face.

The Civil Service routinely publishes its equality statistics, and we intend to do the same. In previous years, the statistics in this report have been released as part of our annual equality, diversity and inclusion report to the board. We now intend to be even more transparent by publishing this data as a separate report.

While we are making progress in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion, we know we have more to do. By continuing to develop our equality data, we can ensure that we have a strong evidence base to inform the action we take in the future to realise the ambitions for equality, diversity and inclusion that are at the heart of our mission and values.

## Highlights

The Office for Students (OfS) is the independent regulator of higher education in England. We employ a workforce of approximately 400 people. This report describes the makeup of our staff split by six protected characteristics and caring responsibilities:

- **Age.** The staff employed by the OfS are relatively young, with a median age of 39.
- **Disability.** Fifteen per cent of OfS staff have reported they have a disability, but around half of staff have not disclosed their disability status.
- **Ethnicity.** Nine per cent of OfS staff have declared they are from a minority ethnic background.
- **Religion or belief.** Almost half of OfS staff (49 per cent) have declared that they do not have a religion or belief.
- **Sex.** Two-thirds of OfS staff are female and one-third are male.
- **Sexual orientation.** Seven per cent of OfS staff have declared they are lesbian, gay, bisexual or other.
- **Caring responsibilities.** Over a quarter of OfS staff (27 per cent) have reported they have caring responsibilities, but almost half of staff have not disclosed their caring responsibilities.

We compare our staff with various other groups of individuals, including Civil Service staff and students at higher education providers in England. This report also includes discussion of our appointments and leavers and our progress against our recent equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) targets.

## Introduction

1. The Office for Students (OfS) is the independent regulator of higher education in England. We are publishing this data in the interests of transparency, to inform our work on improving the diversity of our workforce, to demonstrate our commitment to diversity and openness, and to contribute to our compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty. This forms part of wider activities within the OfS equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) workforce strategy, which sets out in more detail our plans for delivering our internal equality and diversity objectives.<sup>1</sup> This report builds on the publication of internal staff data, previously included in our July board papers.<sup>2</sup> This data does not constitute Official Statistics but was produced following the principles of the Code of Practice for Statistics.<sup>3</sup>
2. The OfS employs around 400 staff and so is considerably smaller than the majority of Civil Service departments and many other public sector regulators.<sup>4</sup>
3. The OfS staff profile data in this report covers all those employed by the OfS including permanent staff, fixed term staff and sandwich year placement students. It does not include members of our board, our committees, our student panel or contractors/agency staff.
4. As part of our Public Sector Equality Duty, OfS staff profile data is presented by reference to the following six protected characteristics. We also include data on the caring responsibilities of OfS staff. Our disclosure rates for these characteristics are good and, with the exception of disability and caring responsibilities, over 90 per cent of staff have responded to the questions regarding these characteristics.
  - age
  - disability
  - ethnicity
  - religion or belief
  - sex
  - sexual orientation.
5. OfS staff profile data is presented based on the following four annual census points to show the current composition of the OfS and how this has changed in the last three years. The total count of OfS staff at these census points can be found in brackets, rounded to the nearest 10.
  - 1 April 2018 (380 staff)
  - 31 March 2019 (350 staff)
  - 31 March 2020 (420 staff)
  - 31 March 2021 (400 staff).

---

<sup>1</sup> See [www.officeforstudents.org.uk/about/equality-and-diversity/objectives-for-staff-equality/](https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/about/equality-and-diversity/objectives-for-staff-equality/).

<sup>2</sup> See [www.officeforstudents.org.uk/about/board-papers/ofs-board-meeting-2-july-2020/](https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/about/board-papers/ofs-board-meeting-2-july-2020/).

<sup>3</sup> See <https://code.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/the-code/>.

<sup>4</sup> Civil Service statistics: 2020, available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/civil-service-statistics-2020>.

6. Around three-quarters of OfS staff work full-time and a quarter work part-time.
7. To help put our staff profile data in context, throughout this report we provide a number of comparisons between our staff and other cohorts. These comparisons include:
  - **Civil Service employees.** The OfS is a public sector organisation. To see how we compare with other public sector organisations, we compare the OfS staff profile data with the Civil Service National Statistics 2020, which represent the makeup of the Civil Service as of 31 March 2020.<sup>5</sup>
  - **Students.** To allow comparison between our staff and the students in whose interests we regulate, we compare our staff data with the higher education student body in England in 2019-20, as per our student equality and diversity (E&D) data.<sup>6</sup>
  - **General population.** The Civil Service and the higher education student body are not necessarily representative of the wider population, so we also make comparisons with the general public. We make these comparisons with the working age population (those aged 16 to 64 years) of the UK, or England where UK-wide data is not available. This primarily involved the use of 2011 Census data but we used other data sources if the data was not captured in the 2011 Census or a more recent source was available. We will be making comparisons with the 2021 Census data once available.
8. These comparisons are made where the data allows and where deemed appropriate. For example, we do not compare OfS staff ages with student ages as we would not expect the age profiles of these different groups of individuals to be alike.
9. This publication also includes data on the number of the appointments made to the OfS, including progress against our six EDI targets.<sup>7</sup> We also include some high-level data related to the number of staff that have left the OfS in recent years.
10. To allow a consistent approach to visualisation, the staff profile charts present the categories for which the characteristic is known in alphabetical order. Where relevant, these are then followed by 'prefer not to say' and 'not completed'. The only exception to this is age group, which is presented in ascending order.
11. To protect individuals' data we have rounded counts to the nearest ten and proportions to the nearest one percentage point. Furthermore, counts and proportions for categories that apply to five or fewer staff are suppressed. For the data on appointments and leavers, counts are rounded to the nearest five. This is because the data is not split by personal characteristics so the disclosure risk is much lower.

---

<sup>5</sup> Civil Service statistics: 2020, available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/civil-service-statistics-2020>.

<sup>6</sup> See [www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/equality-and-diversity-student-data/](http://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/equality-and-diversity-student-data/).

<sup>7</sup> See 'Annual Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report 2019-20' at [www.officeforstudents.org.uk/about/board-papers/ofs-board-meeting-2-july-2020/](http://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/about/board-papers/ofs-board-meeting-2-july-2020/).

12. The data associated with this report can be found in Annex A: Data for report 'Staff at the Office for Students'.<sup>8</sup>
13. As of April 2021, we have changed our collection of staff profile data so that it is more in line with the Government Statistical Service harmonisation standards. We anticipate this updated recording and categorisation of staff characteristics will allow us to have a better understanding of our staff, improve disclosure rates and will allow direct comparisons to census data when available. As a result of this change data may be presented differently in future publications of this report.

---

<sup>8</sup> See [www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/staff-at-the-ofs-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-statistics/](https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/staff-at-the-ofs-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-statistics/).

## Staff characteristics

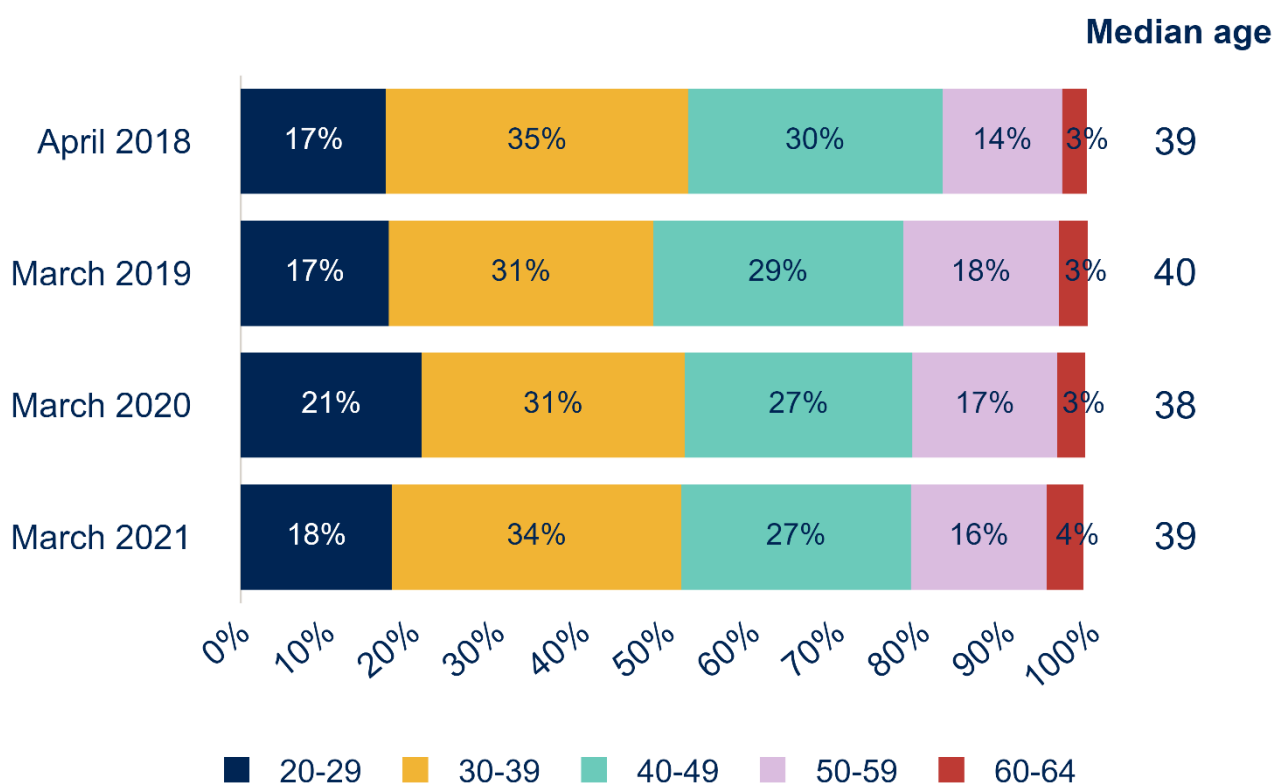
### Age

The staff employed by the OfS are relatively young, with a median age of 39.

**In this section we compare our staff with:** Civil Service employees.

14. Figure 1 shows the current age profile of OfS staff and how it compares with earlier years. Age is known for all members of staff given that birth date must be provided as part of the application process to our pension scheme.

**Figure 1: OfS staff by age group**



Note: Ages have been grouped in the same way as the Civil Service National Statistics to allow comparison.

15. Table 1 shows the proportions of OfS staff in the different age groups are markedly different from the Civil Service. Table 1 includes OfS staff data for 31 March 2020 rather than the more recent 31 March 2021. This is because the most recent Civil Service statistics apply to staff as of 31 March 2020 so allows for a more direct comparison. The same is true for Tables 2-5.
16. The OfS staff had a median age of 39 as of 31 March 2021 and 38 as of 31 March 2020. The median age of the Civil Service on 31 March 2020 was eight years older, at 46 years. The median age is the 'middle' number when the ages of all staff are listed in ascending order.

**Table 1: OfS and Civil Service staff by age group**

Age group	OfS March 2020	Civil Service March 2020
<b>16-19</b>	-	0%
<b>20-29</b>	21%	15%
<b>30-39</b>	31%	21%
<b>40-49</b>	27%	24%
<b>50-59</b>	17%	30%
<b>60-64</b>	3%	8%
<b>65 and over</b>	-	2%
<b>Median age</b>	38	46

Notes: To allow direct comparison, OfS data relates to the 31 March 2020 census point, which is the date of the Civil Service statistics. A dash indicates the proportion has been suppressed due to small numbers.

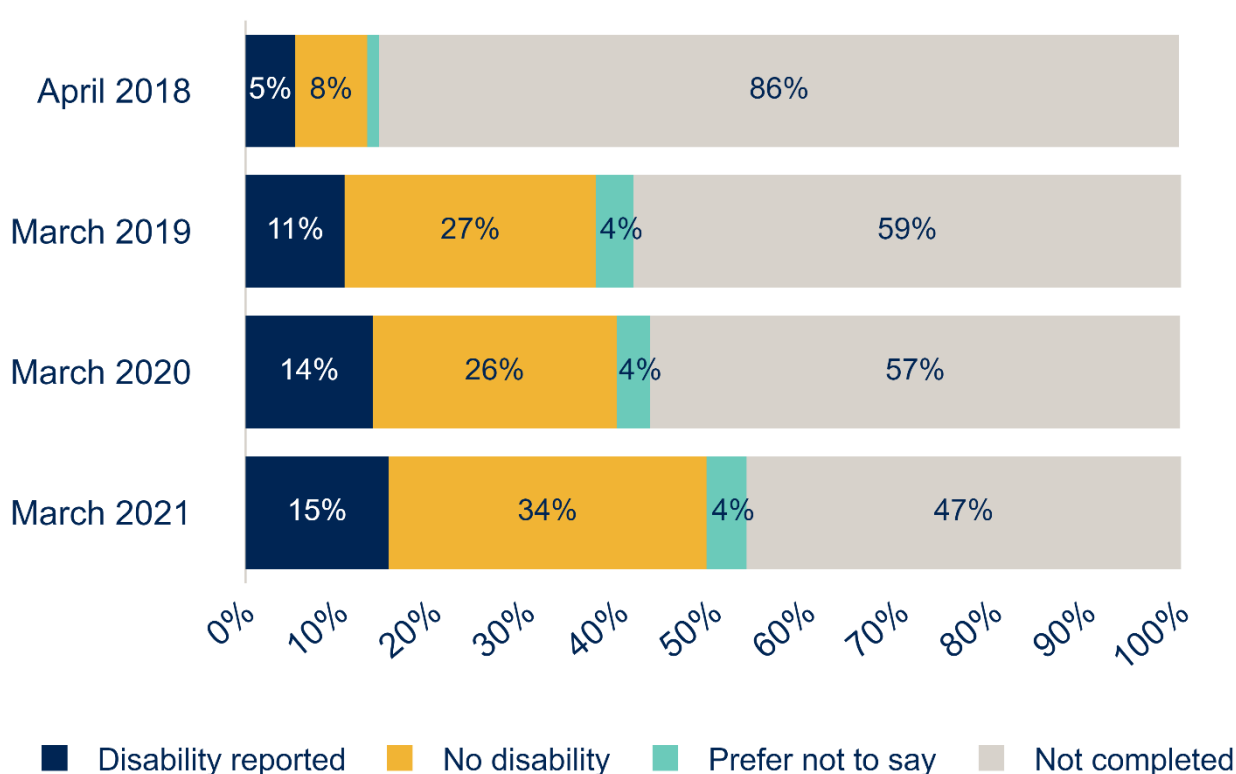
## Disability

Fifteen per cent of OfS staff have reported they have a disability. However, almost half of staff have not completed the question.

**In this section we compare our staff with:** Civil Service employees, students at higher education providers in England, and working age adults in the UK.

17. Disclosure of disability status for OfS staff is low. Figure 2 shows that, as of 31 March 2021, 47 per cent of staff had not completed the disability question. Fifteen per cent of OfS staff have reported they have a disability.

**Figure 2: OfS staff by disability**



18. The proportion of staff completing this question has increased from 14 per cent in April 2018 to 53 per cent in March 2021. The proportion of staff reporting a disability has increased ten percentage points in the last three years, but this is likely due to an improvement in data reporting rather than a large increase in the proportion of staff with a disability.
19. Staff complete this data in a different section of our internal reporting system and as a result we consider it to be unlikely that when compared to the 53 per cent of staff who have completed the question, the 47 per cent of staff who have not completed the question would have similar proportions of disability reported and no disability. It is likely that more of the staff who have not completed the question do not have a disability. As discussed in paragraph 13, we have changed how we collect this data and anticipate it will lead to an increase in disclosure rates in the future.

20. Table 2 shows a smaller proportion of Civil Service staff have declared a disability when compared to OfS staff: 10 per cent. A much larger proportion of Civil Service staff have declared they have no disability (67 per cent), but this is impacted by the higher completion rate of the disability question for Civil Service staff.
21. Another way of presenting characteristic data is to only include in calculations the categories for which the characteristic is known. For disability this would involve including disability reported and no disability but excluding those who reported 'prefer not to say' and those who did not complete the question. This method prevents 'prefer not to say' and non-completion from impacting proportions and allows for more direct comparisons. This is done in the Civil Service and student E&D statistics and we do the same later in this report for ethnicity, religion or belief, and sexual orientation. However, due to the large proportion of OfS staff who have not completed the disability question this would not be appropriate for our disability data.
22. When compared to OfS staff, a similar proportion of students at English providers in 2019-20 declared a disability, 15 per cent (see Table 2). In the student data, 85 per cent of students were recorded as having no disability reported. However, this no disability reported group includes students who chose not to declare whether or not they have a disability and those who did not answer the question.

**Table 2: OfS staff, Civil Service staff and students by disability**

Disability status	OfS March 2020	Civil Service March 2020	Students 2019-20
<b>Disability reported</b>	14%	10%	15%
<b>No disability</b>	26%	67%	85%
<b>Prefer not to say</b>	4%	7%	
<b>Not completed</b>	57%	17%	

Notes: To allow direct comparison, OfS data relates to the 31 March 2020 census point, which is the date of the Civil Service statistics. Student data does not allow for 'prefer not to say' or 'not completed' and these responses will be found in the 'no disability' group.

23. Though higher than the proportion of Civil Service staff who have declared a disability and similar to the student population, the proportion of OfS staff who have declared a disability is still lower than the working age population of the UK who are disabled, according to the Family Resources Survey (19 per cent).<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Family Resources Survey: financial year 2019 to 2020 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/family-resources-survey-financial-year-2019-to-2020>.

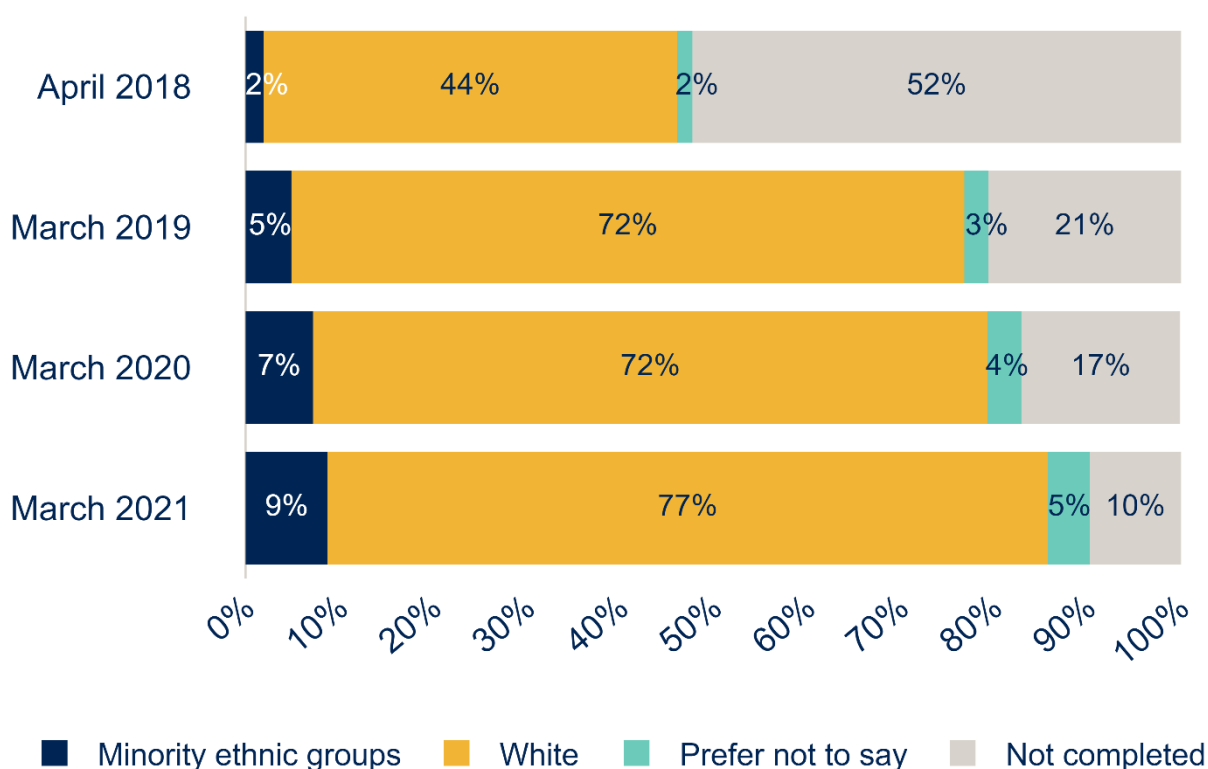
## Ethnicity

Nine per cent of OfS staff have declared they are from a minority ethnic background.

**In this section we compare our staff with:** Civil Service employees (UK-wide), Civil Service employees in the South West of England, UK-domiciled students at higher education providers in England, and the working age population of England and the South West of England.

24. Figure 3 shows the ethnicities of OfS staff. Nine per cent of staff have said they are from a minority ethnic background. In this report, any member of staff who has identified as any ethnicity other than white is considered to be from a minority ethnic background. Staff who have selected any white ethnicity, including white minority groups, are part of the white group.
25. The proportion of staff declaring they are from a minority ethnicity background has increased from 2 per cent in April 2018. However, given the proportion of staff answering the question has increased from 48 per cent in April 2018 to 91 per cent in March 2021, much of this seven percentage point increase is likely related to the increase in reporting.

**Figure 3: OfS staff by ethnicity**



26. As of 31 March 2020, 11 per cent of Civil Service staff were from a minority ethnic group, 70 per cent were white, 5 per cent chose not to disclose their ethnicity and 14 per cent have not completed the question.
27. Limiting this data to just those with a known ethnicity (not including those who reported 'prefer not to say' and those who did not complete the question) can allow more direct comparisons.

28. This limitation shows that, in March 2020, 9 per cent of OfS staff who declared their ethnicity were from minority ethnic backgrounds. In March 2021, 10 per cent of OfS staff that declared their ethnicity were from minority ethnic backgrounds.
29. Table 3 shows how OfS staff who declared their ethnicities in March 2020 compare with those in the Civil Service and students. The proportion of OfS staff who are from a minority ethnic background as of 31 March 2020 is four percentage points lower than Civil Service staff (13 per cent).
30. However, it is important to note the regional differences in ethnicity. The vast majority of OfS staff (over 90 per cent) are based at our office in Bristol (we also have a small office in London). Of our Bristol based staff with a known ethnicity, 9 per cent are from a minority ethnic background (the same proportion as all OfS staff, regardless of office location - see Table 3). This is higher than the proportion for Civil Service staff employed in the South West of England (5 per cent).
31. The proportion of OfS staff from a minority ethnic background is considerably lower than the 28 per cent of UK-domiciled students at English providers in 2019-20 with a known ethnicity who are from minority ethnic backgrounds (see Table 3).

**Table 3: OfS staff, Civil Service staff and students by those with a known ethnicity**

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>OfS March 2020</b>	<b>Civil Service March 2020</b>	<b>Civil Service March 2020 – South West of England</b>	<b>Students 2019-20</b>
<b>Minority ethnic groups</b>	9%	13%	5%	28%
<b>White</b>	91%	87%	95%	72%

Notes: To allow direct comparison, OfS data relates to the 31 March 2020 census point, which is the date of the Civil Service statistics. These statistics only apply to staff and students with a known ethnicity.

32. The proportion of OfS staff from a minority ethnic background is lower than the general population and, according to the 2011 Census, 15 per cent of the working age population of England were from a minority ethnic background.<sup>10</sup> But again the proportion of OfS staff from a minority ethnic background is higher than the working age population of the South West of England (5 per cent in the 2011 Census).<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> See <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/uk-population-by-ethnicity/demographics/working-age-population/latest>.

<sup>11</sup> See <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/dc2101ew>. This percentage was calculated based on 2011 Census data for people in the South West of England aged 16 to 64.

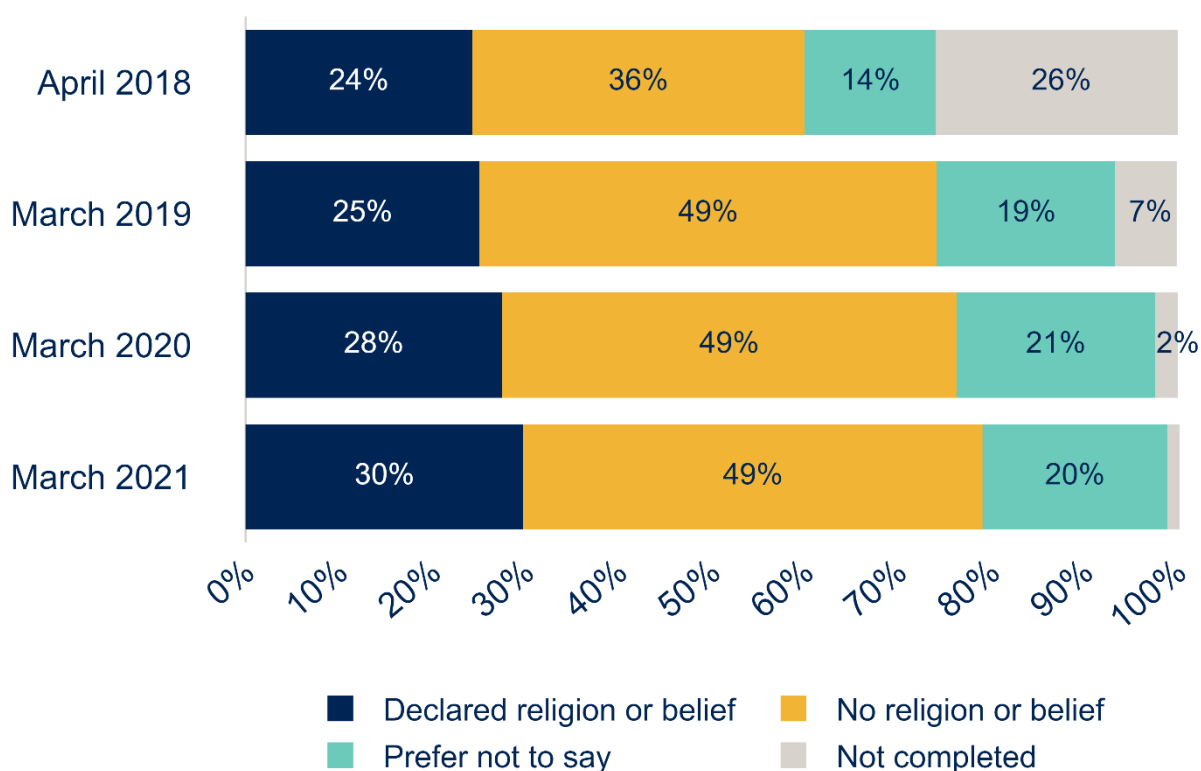
## Religion or belief

Almost half of OfS staff (49 per cent) have declared that they do not have a religion or belief.

**In this section we compare our staff with:** Civil Service employees, students at higher education providers in England, and the working age population of England.

33. Figure 4 shows the religion or beliefs of OfS staff. Almost half of OfS staff have declared that they do not have a religion or belief (49 per cent).

**Figure 4: OfS staff by religion or belief**



34. As of 31 March 2020, 24 per cent of Civil Service staff declared they do not have a religion or belief and 39 per cent declared that they do. Ten per cent chose to not disclose their religion or belief. A much larger proportion of Civil Service staff had not completed the question (27 per cent) when compared with OfS staff.

35. In 2019-20, 42 per cent of students declared they have no religion or belief while 45 per cent declared that they do. Thirteen per cent did not disclose their religion or belief. Note this proportion includes both those who answered 'prefer not to say' and those who did not answer the question.

36. Limiting this data to just those who disclosed their religion or belief status (not including those who reported 'prefer not to say' and those who did not complete the question) can allow more direct comparisons.

37. Table 4 shows that, as of 31 March 2020, 38 per cent of Civil Service staff with a known religion or belief status had no religion or belief. This is considerably lower than the proportion for OfS staff (64 per cent). However, the proportion of Civil Service staff who have not completed the question is much higher (27 per cent compared with 2 per cent) and it is not known how this is impacting these proportions. Despite this, it is very likely the proportion of OfS staff who have no religion or belief is higher than Civil Service staff.

38. Table 4 shows the proportion of students with a known religion or belief status who have said they have no religion or belief is 48 per cent. Again, this is lower than the proportion for OfS staff. It is not known how the 13 per cent of students who have not disclosed their religion or belief (by choosing 'prefer not to say' or not completing the question) would impact the proportions but it is likely that a larger proportion of OfS staff than students have no religion or belief.

**Table 4: OfS staff, Civil Service staff and students by those with a known religion or belief status**

Religion or belief	OfS March 2020	Civil Service March 2020	Students 2019-20
<b>Declared religion or belief</b>	36%	62%	52%
<b>No religion or belief</b>	64%	38%	48%

Notes: To allow direct comparison, OfS data relates to the 31 March 2020 census point, which is the date of the Civil Service statistics. These statistics only apply to staff and students with a known religion or belief status.

39. The proportion of OfS staff with a known religion or belief status who have no religion or belief is much higher than the working age population of England at the 2011 Census (29 per cent).<sup>12</sup> Religion or belief can change considerably between censuses and it is not known how reflective the 2011 data is of the current population.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> See <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/dc2107ew>. This percentage was calculated based on 2011 Census data for people in England aged 16 to 64. 'Religion not stated' was excluded from calculations.

<sup>13</sup> See <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/religion/articles/religioninenglandandwales2011/2012-12-11>.

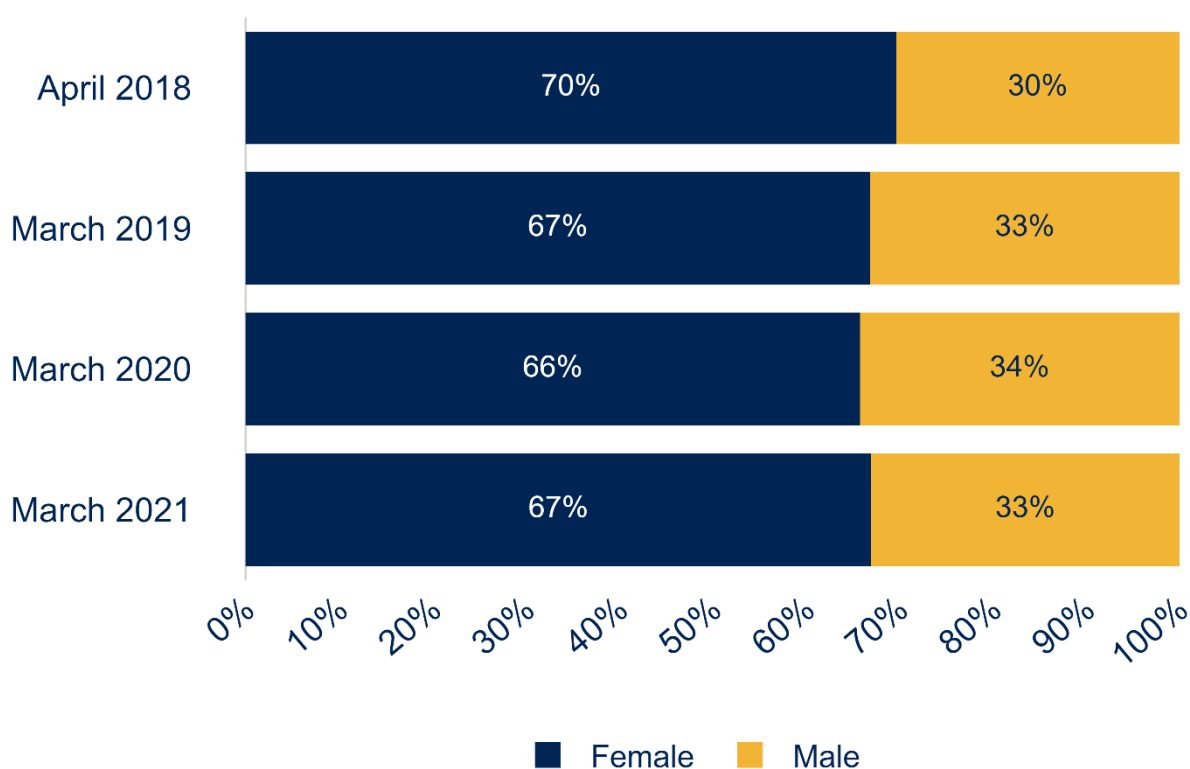
## Sex

Two-thirds of OfS staff are female and one-third are male.

**In this section we compare our staff with:** Civil Service employees, students at higher education providers in England, and the working age population of England.

40. Figure 5 shows the sex of OfS staff. Two-thirds are female (67 per cent) and one third are male (33 per cent). Sex is known for all members of staff as it must be provided as part of the application process to our pension scheme.
41. The proportion of female staff at the OfS is over ten percentage points higher than the proportion of female staff working at the Civil Service (54 per cent on 31 March 2020). This is also the case for students: 56 per cent of students at English higher education providers in 2019-20 were female.
42. The proportion of female staff at the OfS is considerably higher than the working age population of England: 50 per cent at the 2011 Census.<sup>14</sup>

**Figure 5: OfS staff by sex**



<sup>14</sup> See <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/lc1117ew> This percentage was calculated based on 2011 Census data for people in England aged 16 to 64.

## **Gender identity**

As gender reassignment is a protected characteristic, the OfS collects data on the gender identity of staff. However, because fewer than six staff have reported that their gender identity is different from their sex registered at birth, we have decided not to publish this data.

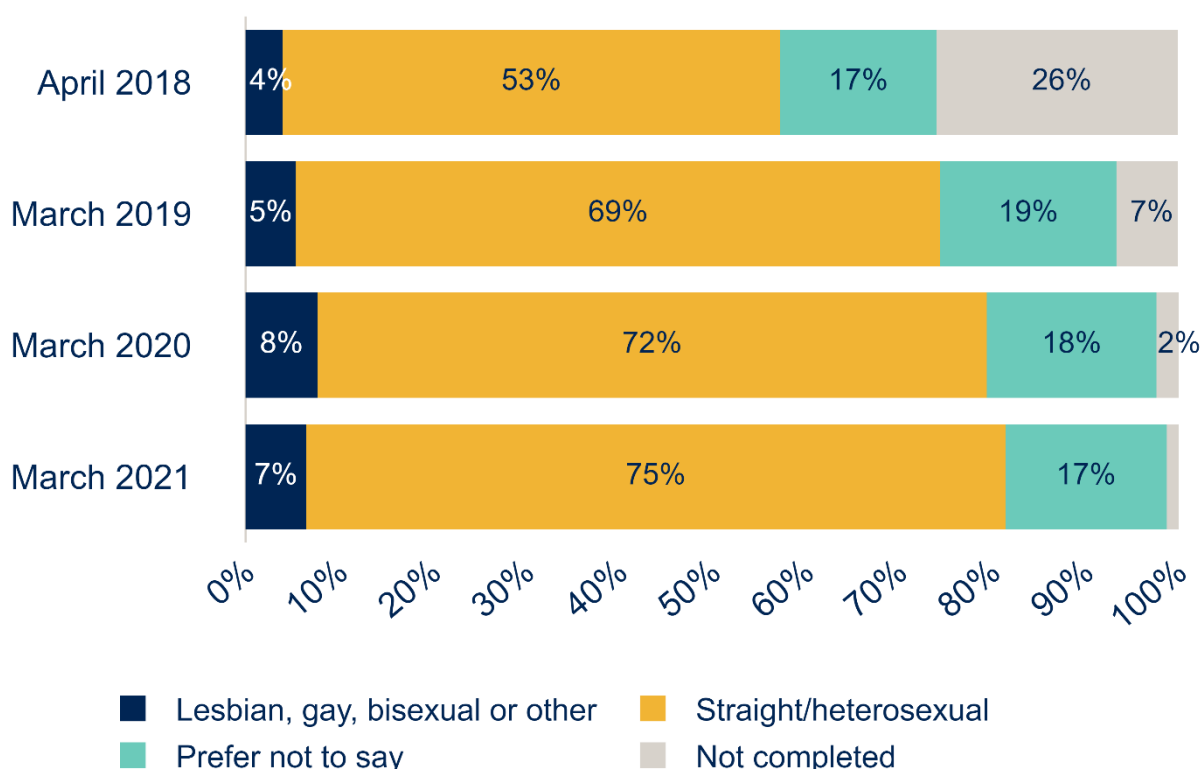
## Sexual orientation

Seven per cent of OfS staff have declared they are lesbian, gay, bisexual or other.

**In this section we compare our staff with:** Civil Service employees, students at higher education providers in England, and the working age population of the UK.

43. Figure 6 shows the sexual orientations of OfS staff. Seven per cent of staff have declared they are lesbian, gay, bisexual or other. The proportion of staff declaring they are straight/heterosexual has increased every year, but this corresponds to an increase in reporting of sexual orientation.

**Figure 6: OfS staff by sexual orientation**



44. As of 31 March 2020, 3 per cent of Civil Service staff declared they are lesbian, gay, bisexual or other and 62 per cent that they are straight/heterosexual. Nine per cent chose not to disclose their sexual orientation and 26 per cent did not answer the question.
45. In 2019-20, 6 per cent of students reported they are lesbian, gay, bisexual or other and 58 per cent that they are straight/heterosexual. Thirty-six per cent of students did not disclose their sexual orientation. Note this proportion includes both those who answered 'prefer not to say' and those who did not answer the question.
46. Limiting this data to just those with a known sexual orientation (not including those who reported 'prefer not to say' and those who did not complete the question) can allow for more direct comparisons.

47. Table 5 shows that, as of 31 March 2020, 10 per cent of OfS staff with a known sexual orientation were lesbian, gay, bisexual or other compared with 5 per cent for the Civil Service. While the proportion of OfS staff that are lesbian, gay, bisexual or other appears to be double that of the Civil Service, it is not known how the 26 per cent of the Civil Service who have not completed the question would impact the proportions; the proportion of lesbian, gay, bisexual or other staff at the Civil Service may be higher.
48. In 2019-20, 9 per cent of students with a known sexual orientation were lesbian, gay, bisexual or other (see Table 5). It is not known how the 36 per cent of students who have not disclosed their sexual orientation (by choosing 'prefer not to say' or not completing the question) would impact the proportions; the actual proportion of lesbian, gay, bisexual or other students may be higher.

**Table 5: OfS staff, Civil Service staff and students by those with a known sexual orientation**

<b>Sexual orientation</b>	<b>OfS March 2020</b>	<b>Civil Service March 2020</b>	<b>Students 2019-20</b>
<b>Lesbian, gay, bisexual or other</b>	10%	5%	9%
<b>Straight/heterosexual</b>	90%	95%	91%

Notes: To allow direct comparison, OfS data relates to the 31 March 2020 census point, which is the date of the Civil Service statistics. These statistics only apply to staff and students with a known sexual orientation.

49. The proportion of OfS staff with a known sexual orientation who disclosed they are lesbian, gay, bisexual or other is higher than the general population. According to the 2019 Annual Population Survey, 4 per cent of the working age population of the UK who disclosed their sexual orientation were lesbian, gay, bisexual or other.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> See

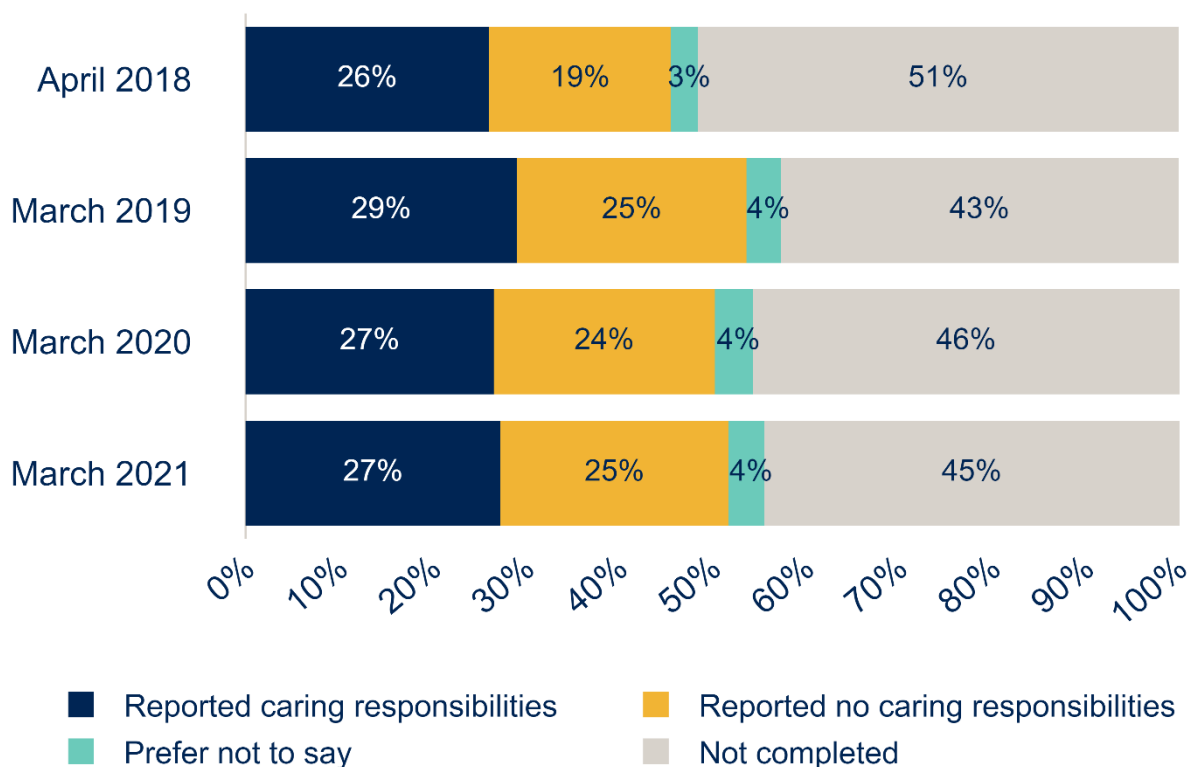
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/sexuality/datasets/sexualidentityuk>.

## Caring responsibilities

Over a quarter of OfS staff (27 per cent) have reported they have caring responsibilities, but almost half of staff have not disclosed their caring responsibilities.

50. Caring responsibilities are not a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. However, at the OfS it is important to us that our employment policies do not discriminate against people with caring responsibilities. Further, in the case of employees who are carers for disabled people, the Equality Act protects them from discrimination by association. Caring responsibilities include the following: primary carer of a child or children, primary carer or assistant for a disabled adult, primary carer or assistant for an older person or people and/or secondary carer.
51. Disclosure of OfS staff caring responsibilities is low and almost half of staff (45 per cent as of 31 March 2021) have not completed the caring responsibility question. Figure 7 shows that, despite this low disclosure rate, over a quarter of staff (27 per cent) have reported they have caring responsibilities. Staff complete this data in a different section of our internal reporting system and, as discussed in paragraph 13, we have changed how we collect this data and anticipate it will lead to an increase in disclosure rates in the future.
52. There is no available Civil Service or student data related to caring responsibilities to allow comparison to OfS staff.

**Figure 7: OfS staff by caring responsibility**



## Appointments

53. The OfS made 50 staff appointments between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021 (see Table 6). Of these, 35 were new starters who have joined the OfS, while 15 were internal appointments of staff already working at the OfS, which will include promotions. This was down on 130 appointments between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020. However, it should be noted that during the year between April 2019 and March 2020 the OfS undertook a reorganisation as we took on the full range of our powers. Due to small numbers we do not include data on appointments split by staff characteristics.

**Table 6: Appointments to the OfS**

Type of appointment	01 April 2019 – 31 March 2020	01 April 2020 – 31 March 2021
External	110	35
Internal	20	15
Total	130	50

## EDI targets

54. In 2020 the OfS put in place six EDI targets to help diversify the workforce at the OfS and lead to a step change in the way we work and ultimately lead to better outcomes.<sup>16</sup> These targets are outlined in Table 7. Staff turnover at the OfS is relatively low, and as a result the number of appointments each year is likely to be low. Further, for some of these characteristics the proportions in the population are low. As a result, targets for these characteristics are lower and detecting a change in the staff population will take time. For these reasons, Targets 2 to 6 were set for rolling periods of various lengths (see Table 7) and were put in place to allow a gradual change in the OfS workforce. Success against these rolling targets is being recorded for appointments made after 31 March 2019. As of 31 March 2021, only Target 5 had reached its minimum rolling period and the other targets are currently interim measures.
55. Roles in the OfS are assigned to pay bands, which relate to levels of responsibility and salary. EDI Target 2 concerns appointments at the level of pay bands 11 and above, while Targets 4 and 6 concern appointments to pay bands 10 and above. These pay bands were chosen to increase representation, in the most senior roles at the OfS, of female staff, staff from minority ethnic backgrounds, and lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender staff or those of other minority sexualities and gender identities (LGBT+). Staff at pay band 10 and above have the most responsibility at the OfS and, as per our scheme of delegation, are the only staff who are authorised to make decisions regarding functions and to act as the Relevant Director where needed.<sup>17</sup> OfS pay band 10 is roughly equivalent to Civil Service pay grade 6, while pay band 11 and above is roughly equivalent to the members of the Senior Civil Service (SCS). As of 31 March 2021, 10 per cent of staff were in pay band 10, 7 per cent were in pay band 11 and 4 per cent were pay band 12 and above.

<sup>16</sup> See 'Annual Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report 2019-20' at [www.officeforstudents.org.uk/about/board-papers/ofs-board-meeting-2-july-2020/](http://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/about/board-papers/ofs-board-meeting-2-july-2020/).

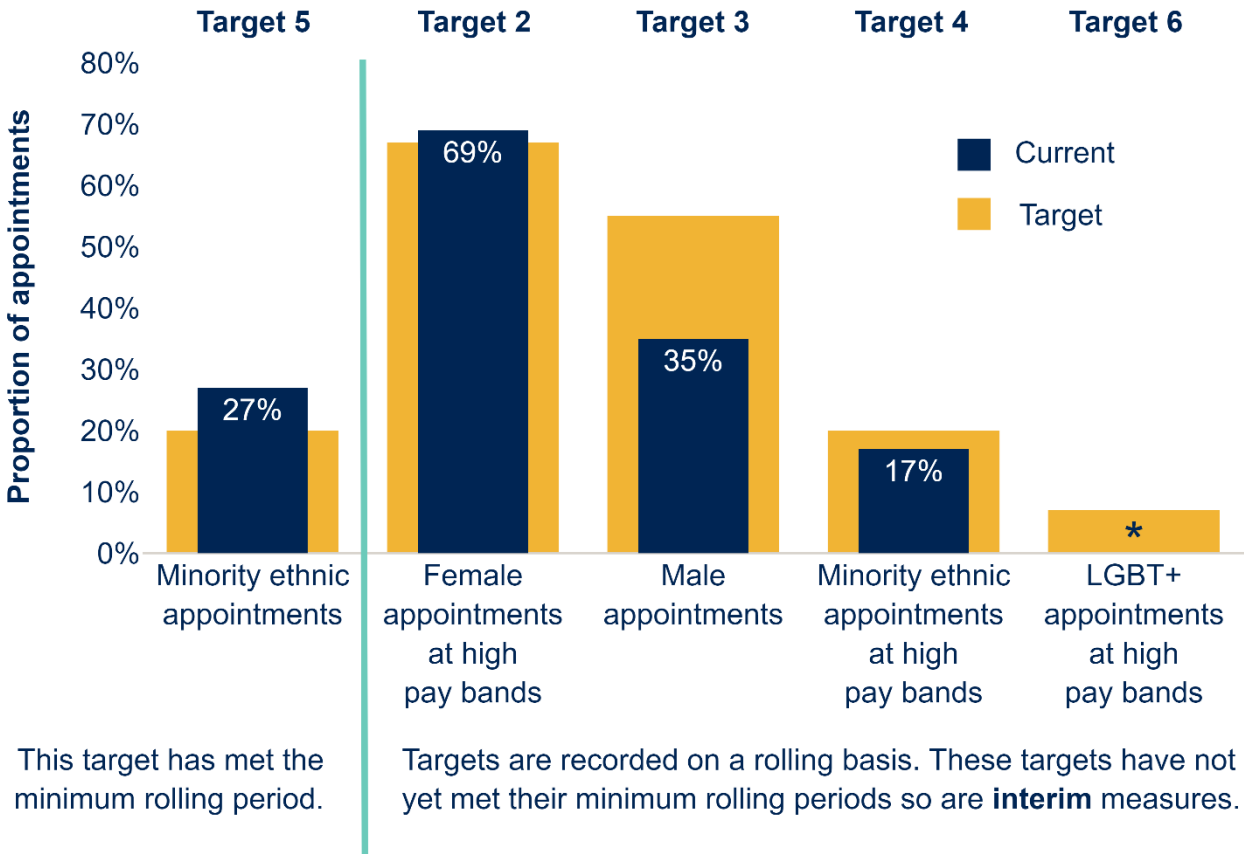
<sup>17</sup> The Office for Students Scheme of delegation (22 September 2020) is available at [www.officeforstudents.org.uk/about/who-we-are/our-board-and-committees/](http://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/about/who-we-are/our-board-and-committees/).

**Table 7: OfS EDI recruitment targets**

Target	Description	Rolling period	Minimum rolling period reached?
1	80 per cent disclosure rate for all protected characteristics by March 2021	N/A	N/A
2	Approximately two-thirds of appointments at pay band 11 and above should be women	Three-year	No
3	Approximately 55 per cent of appointments should be men	Three-year	No
4	Approximately 20 per cent of appointments at pay band 10 and above should be people from black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds	Three-year	No
5	Approximately 20 per cent of appointments throughout the organisation should be people from BAME backgrounds	Yearly	Yes
6	Approximately 7 per cent of appointments at pay band 10 and above should be LGBT+	Four-year	No

56. Target 1 was achieved by March 2021 for all protected characteristics except disability. As a result of our change to the collection of OfS staff profile data (see paragraph 13), we predict the disclosure rates for all the protected characteristics will be above 80 per cent by March 2022.
57. Our current progress against Targets 2 to 5 is visualised in Figure 8. As of 31 March 2021, only Target 5 has reached its minimum rolling time period so the other targets are interim measures at present. Target 5 is currently being achieved and between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021 27 per cent of appointments with a known ethnicity were from minority ethnic backgrounds. Though an interim measure, Target 2 is currently being achieved and between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2021 69 per cent of appointments at pay band 11 and above were female.
58. When compared to the other EDI targets, Target 6 has a lower target percentage and a longer rolling period. This is because the proportion of the population who identify as LGBT+ is low, as is our recruitment of staff at high pay bands. To reduce the risk of identifying individuals, we will not be publishing our progress against Target 6 until it has reached at least its minimum four-year rolling period. This is unlike Targets 2 to 4, which we consider safe to publish this year as interim measures without risking the identification of individuals. When Target 6 has reached the minimum four-year rolling period (April 2023), we will assess whether we can safely publish this data.

Figure 8: Progress against EDI targets



\* See paragraph 58.

## Leavers

59. Around 50 staff leave the OfS a year (see Table 8). These leavers comprise both staff on permanent contracts and those who have reached the end of fixed term contracts (including our sandwich year placement students). Due to these small numbers we do not include data on staff that have left the OfS split by characteristic.

**Table 8: Staff who have left the OfS**

Type of contract	01 April 2019 – 31 March 2020	01 April 2020 – 31 March 2021
Permanent	40	35
Fixed term	10	15
Total	50	50



© The Office for Students copyright 2021

This publication is available under the Open Government Licence 3.0 except where it indicates that the copyright for images or text is owned elsewhere.

[www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/)