

Overview and comparison of populations

As used in ‘Analysis of degree classifications over time: changes in graduate attainment’ (OfS 2018.54), TEF Year Four and HESA publications

1. The Office for Students’ publication ‘Analysis of degree classifications over time: Changes in graduate attainment’ (OfS 2018.54) reports an analysis of England-domiciled first degree graduates who studied full-time and graduated in the academic years from 2010-11 to 2016-17. The report attributes students to a specific higher education provider on the basis of the English provider responsible for registering the student.
2. Many of our definitions are consistent with those used in statistics published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and in the outputs that have been generated as supplementary grade inflation data for the Year Four exercise of the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF). However, there are some important differences in the population coverage and the measure used, which are summarised in Table 1.
3. The descriptions included in Table 1 provide the algorithm requirements for filtering to the relevant populations, expressed in terms of HESA student derived fields¹. Equivalent filters have been applied to the Individualised Learner Record collected from further education colleges by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. These equivalent filters can be found in the TEF Year Four metrics technical document².

Table 1: Summary of populations used in OfS 2018.54, TEF Year Four and HESA publications

	OfS 2018.54	TEF Year Four	HESA publications
Population			
Provider	Provider responsible for registering the student	Provider responsible for registering the student and teaching them directly	Provider responsible for registering the student
Level of study	First degree qualifiers (XPQUAL01 = 1 and XQLEV501 = 3)	First degree qualifiers (XPQUAL01 = 1 and XQLEV501 = 3)	First degree qualifiers (XPQUAL01 = 1 and XQLEV501 = 3)
Mode of study	Full-time (XQMODE01 = 1)	Full- and part-time (XQMODE = 1, 2)	Full- and part-time (XQMODE = 1, 2)
Student domicile	England (XDOMHM01 = 1)	All domiciles; UK, EU and non-EU (XDOMHM01 = any value)	All domiciles; UK, EU and non-EU (XDOMHM01 = any value)
Degree outcome	Classified degrees (XCLASS01 = 1, 2, 3, 4)	All degree awards (XCLASS01 = any value)	Classified degrees (XCLASS01 = 1, 2, 3, 4)

¹ See www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c16051/derived-fields.

² See www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/teaching/tef-year-four/further-technical-information/.

Data source

Status of data returns	Includes all data amendments submitted and signed off before 15 August 2018	Includes data amendments agreed for TEF purposes submitted and signed off before 15 August 2018	Original data submission, without amendments
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TEF Year Four compared with OfS 2018.54

4. The TEF Year Four supplementary grade inflation data population covers all Level 6 and higher undergraduate degree awards made by a provider with existing taught degree awarding powers to the students it has taught.

Differences to note: Students registered by the provider but taught elsewhere, by a sub-contractual partner, are not included in the population considered for the TEF Year Four supplementary data, but **are** included in the figures reported in OfS 2018.54. Note that the 'teaching provider' identified for TEF Year Four purposes is the provider that delivered the majority of the teaching in the student's first year of study (or 2005-06, whichever is later).

5. There are no restrictions to the population covered by the TEF Year Four supplementary data for mode of study or student domicile.

Differences to note: Students who have qualified from part-time study, or who were domiciled outside England (including EU and non-EU domiciled students) are included in the population considered for the TEF Year Four supplementary data, but are **not** included in the figures reported in OfS 2018.54.

6. The TEF Year Four supplementary data provides the number and proportion of degrees awarded as 1sts, 2:1s, other degree classifications and unclassified degree awards. Proportions are based on the total number of awards, such that unclassified degree awards are included in the denominator of the calculation.

Differences to note: The analysis reported in OfS 2018.54 includes the proportion of students awarded first or upper second class degrees, where the proportion is based on the total number of classified awards: unclassified degree awards are **not** included in the denominator of the calculation.

7. The TEF Year Four supplementary data is informed by HESA and Individualised Learner Record student data returns as originally submitted, unless a provider has had data amendments specifically approved for TEF purposes by the data amendment panel since summer 2017.

Differences to note: The analysis reported in OfS 2018.54 incorporates all data amendments that providers have submitted and signed off before 15 August 2018, regardless of the approved uses.

8. In technical terms, using HESA data definitions, the TEF Year Four supplementary data population is defined by selecting student records where XPQUAL01 = 1 and XQLEV501 = 3. It is further defined with a limitation requiring TEFUKPRNTF = TEFUKPRNRC, and the removal of any duplicated student records with TEFDUP = 0.
9. Using HESA data definitions, the OfS 2018.54 population is defined by selecting student records where XPQUAL01 = 1, XQLEV501 = 3, XQMODE01 = 1, XDOMHM01 = 1 and XCLASS01 = 1, 2, 3, 4. It is further defined with the removal of any duplicated student records with TEFDUP = 0.

Standard HESA publications compared with OfS 2018.54

10. Standard HESA publication populations cover all Level 6 and higher undergraduate degree awards made by a provider. As with OfS 2018.54, all students registered at the provider are included in the provider's figures. But unlike OfS 2018.54 (and as with TEF Year Four data) there are no restrictions to the population for mode of study or student domicile.

Differences to note: Students who have qualified from part-time study, or who were domiciled outside of England (including EU and non-EU domiciled students) are included in the standard HESA publication populations, but are **not** included in the figures reported in OfS 2018.54.

11. Proportions are based on the total number of classified awards in both OfS 2018.54 and in standard HESA publications: unclassified degree awards are **not** included in the denominator of either calculation.
12. The standard HESA publications are informed by HESA data returns as originally submitted, without any data amendments.

Differences to note: The analysis reported in OfS 2018.54 incorporates all data amendments that providers have submitted and signed off before 15 August 2018.