

Office for
Students



Supporting information about constructing student outcome and experience indicators for use in OfS regulation

Description and methodology

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Introduction

Purpose

1. The Office for Students (OfS) has issued a consultation about the construction of student outcome and experience measures¹ to be used in our regulation of student outcomes and in the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). This document has been published as supporting information alongside the consultation, to aid providers and other stakeholders in understanding the definitions and approaches we have proposed. We anticipate that some readers of the consultation proposals, particularly those at higher education providers with in-depth knowledge of the student data collected by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), or the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), will find the information in this supporting document useful for exploring the impact of our proposals on their own student data.
2. The definitions and approaches described within this document are directly aligned to our consultation proposals and remain subject to change upon conclusion of the consultation exercise. We expect to publish similar information to that found in this document alongside publication of the consultation outcomes later in 2022, and when we implement our final approach to constructing student outcome and experience measures.
3. The adoption of the proposed definitions and approaches may impact other OfS functions that utilise the same measures of student outcomes as TEF and the regulation of student outcomes, or otherwise rely on the same underlying data and categorisations of students and their activities in higher education. Definitions that contribute to the construction of indicators used within our regulation of access and participation are included in this document, with the purpose of illustrating the wider potential impact of the consultation proposals on the access and participation data dashboard in particular.
4. As a result, this document covers definitions that contribute to all of the data indicators that the OfS constructs as numerical measures for understanding the outcomes and experiences that a provider delivers for its students at different stages of the student lifecycle in higher education:
 - a. Access to higher education study
 - b. Continuation in, and completion of, the study of higher education qualifications
 - c. Student views and perceptions of different aspects of their higher education experience
 - d. Achievement and the awards made to higher education students at the end of their studies
 - e. Progression into the labour market and other destinations after leaving higher education.

¹ Available at: www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/student-outcomes-and-teaching-excellence-consultations/outcome-and-experience-data/.

5. Throughout this document, content that is relevant only to the regulation of student outcomes is highlighted **green**, content that is relevant only to the TEF is highlighted in **salmon** and content that is relevant only to access and participation data dashboard is highlighted **mauve**.
6. To further support providers in exploring the practical effect of implementing our proposals within their own student data, the OfS has also released data resources to providers (including individualised student data files and workbooks showing data and indicators at provider level, in dashboard and excel formats). Providers may wish to consider one or more of these resources when reading through this document.

Guidance for using this document

7. This is one of a series of supporting technical documents that provide details of the definitions and methods that the OfS has proposed to use in constructing student outcome and experience indicators.² Readers may want to consider this document alongside the following document(s) and resources in particular:

Consultation

- Consultation on constructing student outcome and experience indicators for use in OfS regulation

Supporting information about constructing student outcome and experience indicators for use in OfS regulation

- Core algorithms
 - Instructions for rebuilding OfS datasets
 - Data dashboards user guide³
 - Description of statistical methods.
8. This document is structured to provide a description of the key points about how the OfS proposes to construct student outcome and experience indicators, with a detailed technical description about each indicator explaining the method, coverage and exclusions. The document also includes a description about the supporting data on the broad size and shape of a provider's student population. Readers can navigate through this document using the links provided in the contents page.

Enquires and feedback

9. For enquiries regarding the methods described in this document, and to give feedback, contact providermetrics@officeforstudents.org.uk.

² See www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/student-outcomes-and-teaching-excellence-consultations/outcome-and-experience-data/.

³ Available at: www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/student-outcomes-and-experiences-data-dashboards/student-outcomes-and-experiences-data-dashboards-user-guide/

Key points about the data

Reporting of student outcome and experience indicators

10. The data indicators that the OfS constructs as numerical measures for understanding the outcomes and experiences that a provider delivers for its students at different stages of the student lifecycle in higher education are constructed on the same basis for all providers, as described through this document. They will be reported through a hierarchical reporting structure, to form a series of indicators and split indicators.
11. Paragraphs 12 to 18 describe a general, overarching reporting structure for student outcome and experience measures rather than one for any specific use. Different OfS functions use different sections of the general reporting structure to construct the indicators which inform their approaches, selecting the sections that are most applicable to their uses. The indicators and split indicators proposed for use in the regulation of student outcomes, the TEF and regulation of access and participation are illustrated in Annex A.
12. There are four different views of a provider's student population which are defined as follows:
 - a. **Registered population:** These are students who are registered at the provider in question. They may also be taught at that provider, or they may be taught elsewhere, at another provider, under a subcontractual or partnership arrangement (subcontracted out, or franchised out).
 - b. **Taught population:** These are any students who are taught at the provider in question. This may be the same provider where they are registered (taught and registered) or it may be that the provider in question is teaching the student on behalf of another one, under a subcontractual partnership arrangement (subcontracted in).
 - c. **Taught or registered (TorR) population:** These are students who are either registered or taught at the provider in question, including those who are taught and registered by the same provider, subcontracted in to the provider for teaching, and subcontracted out to another provider for teaching.
 - d. **Partnership population:** These are students who are either:
 - i. Registered by the provider in question and taught elsewhere, at another provider, under a subcontractual partnership arrangement (subcontracted out); or
 - ii. Neither taught nor registered by the provider in question, but that provider acts as the awarding body for the qualification that a student is studying (validation-only).
13. The teaching provider is the provider where the student received the majority of their teaching in the relevant year for the student outcome in question:
 - a. Student outcome and experience indicators which report on entrant cohorts – those measuring access to higher education, and continuation and completion rates – identify the teaching provider as the one who delivered the majority of the teaching in the student's first year of study.

- b. Student outcome and experience indicators which report on qualifier cohorts other than entrants – those measuring student experience, degree outcomes and progression rates – identify the teaching provider as the one who delivered the majority of the teaching in the student’s final year of study.
 - c. Student experience indicators identify the teaching provider as the one who delivered the majority of the teaching in the penultimate year of study.
14. Having selected one of the views defined in paragraph 12, calculation of an **indicator** involves each measure being reported separately according to students’ mode and level of study. These indicators are then broken down further, to generate a series of **split indicators**, which relate to various categories of a provider’s students and provision including:
 - subject studied
 - student characteristics
 - year of entry or qualification (as appropriate to the student outcome in question)
 - specific course types
 - provider partnership arrangements.
15. When calculating indicators and split indicators, we report on full-time, part-time and apprenticeship modes of study, where students are always attributed to these categories on the basis of the mode of study reported in the first year of their programme of study.
 - a. Student outcome and experience indicators which report on entrant cohorts – those measuring access to higher education, and continuation and completion rates – take the mode of study from the year in which we identify a student as an entrant who contributes to calculation of the measure.
 - b. Student outcome and experience indicators which report on cohorts other than entrants – those measuring student experience, degree outcomes and progression rates – track students back to the earliest student record submitted by their provider for the programme on which they are a final year student in the year that they contribute to calculation of the measure. The student will be categorised according to the mode of study reported by the provider in the earliest student record located for the student, even if later records for the same student identify that they subsequently changed to a different mode.
16. When calculating indicators and split indicators, we report on students aiming for higher education qualifications at the following levels of study, which are defined further in Annex B:

Full-time and part-time modes:

- a. Other undergraduate
- b. First degree
- c. Undergraduate with postgraduate components

- d. Other postgraduate
- e. PGCE
- f. Postgraduate taught masters'
- g. Postgraduate research

Apprenticeship modes:

- h. Undergraduate
 - i. Postgraduate.
17. The definitions in paragraph 15 extend to qualifications which are not eligible to be included in the OfS funding calculations for Approved (fee cap) providers, or are regulated by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (listed on the Register of Regulated Qualifications, and for which students may be entitled to Advanced Learner Loans). The definitions do not cover any student reported with a qualification aim for their course which refers to a module of higher education provision or, in the case of degree awarding and progression measures, gaining awards of higher education credit.
18. The student and course characteristics that we use in the construction of split indicators are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1: Student and course characteristics and attributes for which we construct split indicators

| Student and course characteristic | Attributes considered |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Time series | Year 1 (earliest) Year 2 Year 3 Year 4 (most recent) Note the academic year that these relate to depends on the indicator. Further description of years are provided in the indicator definition |
| Teaching arrangements | All taught or registered by this provider (TorR population) Registered and taught by this provider Only registered by this provider (subcontracted out from this provider) Only taught by this provider (subcontracted in to this provider) Only validated by this provider Some of the attributes are only available on some of the provider views |
| Course type | Other undergraduate Level 5+ Other undergraduate Level 4 First degree with integrated foundation year |

| Student and course characteristic | Attributes considered |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Subject of study | Business and management Creative arts and design Performing arts Education and teaching Computing Engineering Materials and technology Combined and general studies English studies History and archaeology Languages and area studies Media, journalism and communications Philosophy and religious studies Economics Health and social care Law Politics Sociology, social policy and anthropology Medicine and dentistry Veterinary sciences Nursing and midwifery Agriculture, food and related studies Architecture, building and planning Geography, earth and environmental studies Biosciences Chemistry General, applied and forensic sciences Mathematical sciences Physics and astronomy Sport and exercise sciences Allied health subjects Medical sciences Pharmacology, toxicology and pharmacy Psychology |
| Age on entry | For undergraduate courses: Under 21 years 21 to 30 years 31 years and over For postgraduate courses: Under 25 years 25 to 30 years 31 years and over |

| Student and course characteristic | Attributes considered |
|---|---|
| Disability | Disability reported No disability reported |
| Ethnicity (for UK-domiciled students only) | Asian Black Mixed Other White |
| Sex | Female Male |
| ABCS quintile ⁴ (for the continuation indicator only and only for UK-domiciled students on undergraduate courses who are registered with English providers) | Quintile 1 Quintile 2 or Quintile 3 Quintile 4 or Quintile 5 (where students in quintile 1 have the lowest modelled continuation rates and those in quintile 5 have the highest modelled continuation rates) |
| Deprivation quintile (IMD) ⁵ | Quintile 1 or Quintile 2 Quintile 3, Quintile 4 or Quintile 5 (where individuals in quintile 1 have the highest level of deprivation and those in quintile 5 have the lowest) |
| Domicile | UK Non-UK |
| Eligibility for free school meals (for undergraduate students aged under 21 years on entry who were found in the NPD KS4 data in 2009-10 or later) | Eligible Not eligible |

⁴ ABCS is a set of analyses which aims to improve our understanding of the outcome of different groups of young people. It uses statistical modelling to calculate modelled continuation rates. These rates are then used to separate groups of students into continuation quintiles. Further detail can be found at: www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/update-to-associations-between-characteristics-of-students/. The ABCS quintiles used for this consultation use data from the 2020 analysis on associations between characteristics of students.

⁵ For students domiciled in England at registering providers in England, this will be based on the English Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 quintile. For students domiciled in Wales at registering providers, this will be based on the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 quintile. For students domiciled in Scotland at registering providers in Scotland, this will be based on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020 quintile. For students domiciled in Northern Ireland at registering providers in Northern Ireland, this will be based on the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2017 quintile.

| Student and course characteristic | Attributes considered |
|---|--|
| Geography of employment quintile ⁶ (for the progression indicator only and only for undergraduate students who responded to the Graduate Outcomes survey) | Quintile 1 Quintile 2 or Quintile 3 Quintile 4 or Quintile 5 (where graduates in quintile 1 live in an area with the lowest rates of positive outcomes and those in quintile 5 live in an area with the highest rates of positive outcomes) |

Information included in our reporting of student outcome and experience measures

19. When reporting student outcome and experience indicators and split indicators, the following information contributes to, or results from, our calculations. Most of these are included in our data outputs.
- Denominator of the indicator: The total number of students in the population for which we are measuring outcomes or experiences.
 - Numerator of the indicator: The number of students who achieve the outcome or experience in question.
 - Indicator value (as a proportion): Calculated in percentage terms as the numerator divided by the denominator. This is the rate at which students have achieved the outcome or experience in question, expressed as a point estimate providing a factual representation of the actual population of students present at a particular provider at a particular time.
 - Benchmark value (as a proportion): Calculated in percentage terms for each provider as a weighted sector average which takes account of that provider's particular mix of students. Benchmarks give information about the values that the sector overall might have achieved for the indicator if the characteristics included in the benchmarking factors are the only ones that are important.
 - Difference between indicator and benchmark: This is a point estimate of the difference between the indicator and benchmark (expressed as indicator minus benchmark).
 - Contribution to benchmark: Calculated in percentage terms for each provider as the weighted average of the provider's own students contributing to the sector averages that are used to calculate their benchmark.

⁶ GO quintile is a quintile based on the graduate's travel to work area (TTWA) which is derived from information reported in a graduate's response to the Graduate Outcomes survey. Further information on the methodology can be found in the OfS report 'A geography of employment and earnings', www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/a-geography-of-employment-and-earnings/.

- Response rate (for progression outcomes and student experience measures):
Calculated in percentage terms as the number of students who responded to the relevant survey, divided by the total number of students eligible to be surveyed.

- When calculating student outcome and experience measures as data indicators, each indicator that the OfS calculates is a factual representation of the outcomes or experiences of students observed at a particular provider at a particular point in time. However, the actual students in a provider's observed population are just one realisation of many other populations of students who could have attended that provider, or may do so in the future.
- The OfS uses the observed indicator values we calculate from data about the set of students which actually did attend, as representations of the most likely underlying provider performance in respect of student outcomes and experiences. As described in 'Description of statistical methods', there exists statistical uncertainty about a provider's true performance on account of the potential for random variation in student behaviours and outcomes. This uncertainty impacts on the interpretation of both of the point estimates we calculate: the indicator value which reports on the observed outcomes or experiences and, consequently (where relevant), the difference between that indicator and its corresponding benchmark.
- The student outcomes data resources seek to communicate this uncertainty through the construction of confidence intervals around the point estimates.
- For the regulation of student outcomes and through the TEF scheme, confidence intervals are calculated at a range of different significance levels, ranging from 75 per cent upwards in 2.5 percentage point increments. This series of discrete confidence intervals around the point estimates are then plotted as shaded bars (see Figure 1 and 2), which represent the continuous spread of statistical uncertainty associated with the observed value. Each confidence interval plotted in the series represents a different confidence level, such that the shading of the bars indicates the changing likelihood that underlying provider performance takes different values, with the darkest shading representing the range with the highest likelihood of containing the provider's true underlying performance. Much like the bell curve of a normal distribution, as the shading lightens in both directions it represents a lower likelihood that true underlying performance falls at that point. It should be noted that confidence intervals can appear to overlap due to rounding.

Figure 1: Example of green shaded bars, showing spread of statistical uncertainty around indicator values

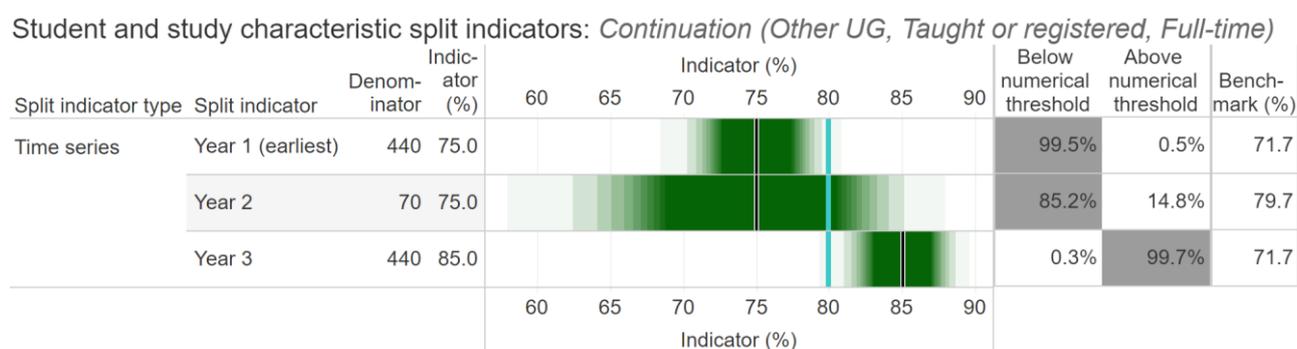
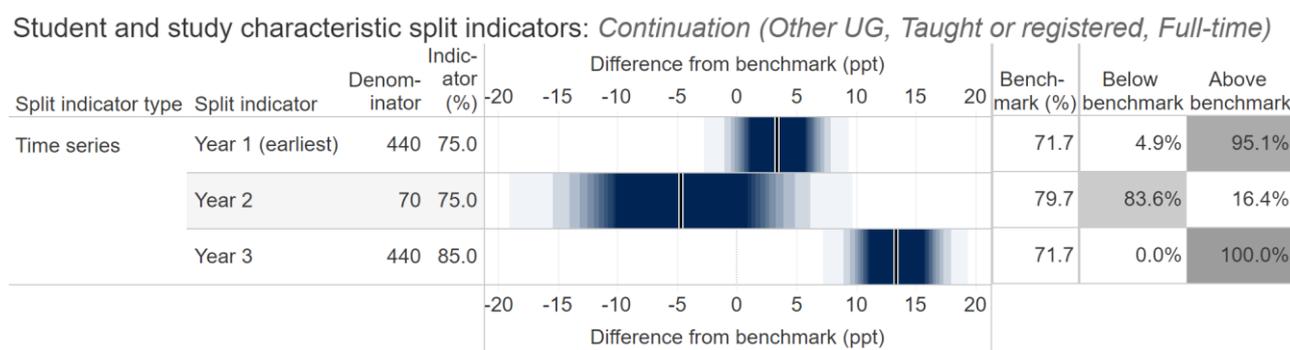


Figure 2: Example of blue shaded bars, showing spread of statistical uncertainty around difference between indicator and benchmark



24. For access and participation data dashboards, confidence intervals have been calculated at the 95 per cent significance level.
25. Further details about the statistical methods used and the OfS approach on benchmarking can be found in ‘Description of statistical methods’.

Rounding and suppression of indicators data and data on overall shape and size of provision

26. Student outcomes and experience indicators and data on overall shape and size of provision are calculated and reported at person level within each provider, mode and level.⁷
27. In this section, where we refer to rounding and suppression of indicators, we use the terms numerator and denominator. When talking about rounding and suppression of overall shape and size of provision data we use the term headcounts.
28. The data has been rounded as follows:
 - a. Denominators or headcounts have been rounded to the nearest 10.
 - b. Indicators, percentages, benchmarks, differences and their confidence intervals have been rounded to the nearest 0.1.
29. Any data point that is not reportable will be replaced with a symbol to indicate why, as follows:

⁷ It is known that a small number of individual students engage in multiple instances of higher education study concurrently. The student outcome and experience indicators report data at a person level within each provider, mode and level of study. This means, for example, that a student who is concurrently studying two postgraduate certificates on a part-time basis with the same provider would only count in that year’s indicator once. A student who was studying those same certificates across two different providers, or at the same provider but one on a full-time basis, would count twice, once in each provider or mode. A student who was studying concurrently for both an undergraduate and a postgraduate qualification at the same provider would count twice, once for each level of study. To preserve an accurate overall headcount of students when reporting data about a student’s subject studied, we report counts of full-person equivalents (FPE). The count of FPE involves apportioning each person according to the proportion of their course in each subject.

- a. [low]: where there are fewer than 23 students in the denominator.
- b. [N/A]: where the data item is not applicable to that population.
- c. [DPL]: where data has been suppressed for data protection reasons. The code [DPL] has been used to indicate where the data has been suppressed due to numerator or headcount that is less than or equal to 2.
- d. [DPH]: where data has been suppressed for data protection reasons. For the indicators data, the code [DPH] has been used to indicate where data has been suppressed due to a numerator that is greater than 2 but is within 2 of the denominator. For the overall shape and size of provision data, the code [DPH] has been used to indicate where data has been suppressed due to a headcount for a particular category of students being greater than 2 but within 2 of the total number of students who are taught or registered by the provider.
- e. [DP]: where data has been suppressed for data protection reasons. The code [DP] has been used where further data protection has taken place for sensitive data (see paragraphs 32 and 33 below).
- f. [RR]: for the progression or student experience measures where the provider participated in the relevant survey (Graduate Outcomes survey or National Student Survey (NSS) respectively) but has not met response rate threshold required (50 per cent for the NSS, 30 per cent for the Graduate Outcomes survey).
- g. [BK]: where the benchmarks are suppressed because at least 50 per cent of the provider's students have unknown information for one or more of the factors used for that benchmark calculation.

Data publication and transparency

- 30. Data resources were released to providers in January 2022 to assist providers in understanding the methodology provided in this document. The data resources include individualised student data files, and workbooks showing data and indicators at provider level (both in dashboard and Excel formats). Sector-level data (a summary of all higher education providers registered with the OfS) is also included.
- 31. Individualised student data files include only those students registered by the provider. Data on student experience (NSS) is not provided in individualised files for data protection reasons.

Sensitive data items: Free school meals measure

- 32. The free school meals (FSM) measure is based on the population of students matched to the Department for Education's National Pupil Database (NPD) who were identified as having ever been eligible for FSM in school.⁸ The NPD census for key stage 4 (KS4) covers pupils attending maintained and independent schools in England, and censuses for academic years from 2009-10 to the latest have been matched to HESA and ILR student records. From

⁸ The Department for Education does not accept responsibility for any inferences or conclusions derived from the NPD data by third parties.

academic year 2013-14, the NPD data includes local authority-maintained Pupil Referral Units and alternative provision academies, including alternative provision free schools. Since pupils are generally 15 years old in their last year of KS4, the academic year 2014-15 is the earliest academic year that a full cohort of young entrants (under 21 on entry) can be tracked back to the NPD.

33. It is proposed that for OfS student outcome and experience measures the NPD population is restricted to state funded mainstream schools. This includes the following school types:
- Academies (16-19 converter, 16-19 sponsor-led, converter, sponsor-led)
 - Free Schools (16-19, mainstream, studio school, UTC)
 - Voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools
 - Community and foundation schools
 - City technology colleges and further education sector institutions.

Indicator definitions

34. This section of the document describes the definitions of the student outcome and experience measures. Measures proposed for use in both regulation of student outcomes and in the TEF are included first (continuation, completion, and progression outcomes), followed by the student experience indicators which are only used for TEF. Finally, we provide the definitions of the student outcome indicators that are currently used for access and participation (access and degree attainment). We have included the latter for awareness and understanding of the consequences of consultation proposals relating to entrant, qualifier and student characteristic definitions.

Continuation measures

35. Continuation outcomes are measured by identifying a cohort of entrants to higher education qualifications at the provider and following them through the early stages of their course to track how many continue in active study, or qualify, in subsequent years. The measure is based on the individualised student data captured in the HESA and ILR student records.
36. The continuation measure tracks students from the date they enter a higher education provider to their activity on a census date.
 - a. For full-time continuation outcomes, and apprenticeship continuation outcomes, the census date is one year and 15 days after their commencement date.
 - b. For the part-time continuation outcomes, the census date is two years and 15 days after their commencement date.
37. To be counted as continuing, a student must either have qualified or be recorded as actively studying for a higher education qualification in the relevant HESA or ILR datasets. Students who qualify at any level of higher education study on or before the census date, or are still studying for a higher education qualification at the same provider on the census date, are deemed to have continued.
38. For data returned to the ILR, students who partially complete their qualification, or whose results are not known, are counted as continuing (since their qualification outcome may not be subsequently reported as is expected for HESA data).
39. Students who transfer to a higher education qualification at a different provider (on or before the census date) are treated neutrally and are not included in the population of the continuation indicator unless the transfer was identified as being part of a collaborative arrangement.
40. Students who transfer (either within the same provider or different) to credit-based provision are counted as non-continuers.
41. Postgraduate research students who are engaged in sequential collaborative provision are included in the entrant cohort of each provider that they register with, counting as an entrant at the point at which their registration with that provider commences rather than at their point

of entry to higher education overall. A transfer to a new provider under such a collaborative arrangement is counted as a positive outcome for the indicator of the original provider.

Coverage of the continuation measures

42. To align with the census date periods of one year and 15 days (for full-time and apprenticeship continuation measures) and two years and 15 days (for part-time continuation), an entrant year cohort is defined based on those students starting courses between 17 July and the following 16 July. This allows the activity of all students in this cohort on their census date to be determined in the following data reporting period.
43. The continuation measures are reported as separate indicators for entrants at each mode and level of study. When informing regulation of student outcomes and the TEF, the continuation indicators aim to show outcomes for all UK and non-UK students who are registered as an entrant on a higher education qualification studying mainly or wholly in the UK. When informing access and participation, the continuation indicators are limited to UK-domiciled students to align with our regulatory remit for access and participation.
44. The full-time continuation and apprenticeship continuation measures cover students entering higher education:
 - between 17 July 2015 and 16 July 2016 (defines Year 1 of the time series)
 - between 17 July 2016 and 16 July 2017 (Year 2)
 - between 17 July 2017 and 16 July 2018 (Year 3)
 - between 17 July 2018 and 16 July 2019 (Year 4).
45. The part-time continuation measure covers students entering higher education:
 - between 17 July 2014 and 16 July 2015 (defines Year 1 of the time series)
 - between 17 July 2015 and 16 July 2016 (Year 2)
 - between 17 July 2016 and 16 July 2017 (Year 3)
 - between 17 July 2017 and 16 July 2018 (Year 4).

Exclusions of the continuation measure

46. The following exclusions apply:
 - Students not active for at least 15 days from their commencement date
 - Students recorded in another provider's HESA or ILR data for the same activity
 - Incoming visiting and exchange students
 - Students on a subject knowledge enhancement (SKE) course
 - Students registered at a UK provider who are studying mainly abroad

- Students mainly in the UK who were aiming for credit or individual modules rather than a higher education qualification
- Students mainly in the UK and aiming for a qualification but are dormant or on sabbatical
- Students who did not start their study in the relevant year
- Records for students who had another record at the same provider at the same broad level of study in the previous 365 days.

Presentation of the continuation measure

47. Paragraphs 26 to 29 explain the rounding and suppression that has been applied in the presentation of continuation indicators.

Completion measures: cohort tracking

48. Completion outcomes constructed using the cohort-tracking method are measured by identifying a cohort of entrants to higher education qualifications at the provider and following them through subsequent years of their course to track how many are still in active study, or qualify, by a given census date. The measure is based on the individualised student data captured in the HESA and ILR student records. The methodology is consistent with the definition of the continuation indicator but based on different census points.
49. The cohort-tracking measure tracks students from the date they enter a higher education provider and considers their completion outcomes at a census date.
- a. For full-time completion outcomes, and apprenticeship completion outcomes, the cohort-tracking census date is four years and 15 days after their commencement date.
 - b. For part-time completion outcomes, the cohort-tracking census date is six years and 15 days after their commencement date.
50. To be counted as completing, a student must either have qualified or be recorded as actively studying on a higher education qualification in the relevant HESA or ILR datasets. Students who qualify at any level of higher education study on or before the census date, or are still studying for a higher education qualification at the same provider on the census date, are deemed to have completed.
51. For data returned to the ILR, students who partially complete their qualification or whose results are not known are counted as continuing (since their qualification outcome may not be subsequently reported as is expected for HESA data).
52. Students who transfer to a higher education qualification at a different provider (on or before the census date) are treated neutrally and are not included in the population of the cohort-tracking indicator, unless the transfer was identified as being part of a collaborative arrangement.
53. Students who transfer (either within the same provider or different) to credit-based provision are counted as non-completions.

54. Postgraduate research students who are engaged in sequential collaborative provision are included in the entrant cohort of each provider that they register with, counting as an entrant at the point at which their registration with that provider commences rather than at their point of entry to higher education overall. A transfer to a new provider under such a collaborative arrangement is counted as a positive outcome for the indicator of the original provider.

Coverage of the cohort-tracking measure

55. To align with the census date periods of four years and 15 days (for full-time and apprenticeship completion outcomes) and six years and 15 days (for part-time completion), an entrant year cohort is defined based on those students starting courses between 17 July and the following 16 July. This allows the activity of all students in this cohort on their census date to be determined in the following data reporting period.
56. The completion outcomes are reported as separate cohort-tracking indicators for entrants at each mode and level of study. When informing the regulation of student outcomes and TEF, the cohort-tracking indicators aim to show outcomes for all UK and non-UK students who are registered as an entrant on a higher education qualification studying mainly or wholly in the UK.
57. The full-time completion and apprenticeship cohort-tracking indicators cover students entering higher education in the following years and track their activity four years after the date which they commenced their studies:
- between 17 July 2012 and 16 July 2013 (defines Year 1 of the time series)
 - between 17 July 2013 and 16 July 2014 (Year 2)
 - between 17 July 2014 and 16 July 2015 (Year 3)
 - between 17 July 2015 and 16 July 2016 (Year 4).
58. The part-time cohort-tracking indicator covers students entering higher education in the following years and tracks their activity six years after the date which they commenced their studies:
- between 17 July 2010 and 16 July 2011 (defines Year 1 of the time series)
 - between 17 July 2011 and 16 July 2012 (Year 2)
 - between 17 July 2012 and 16 July 2013 (Year 3)
 - between 17 July 2013 and 16 July 2014 (Year 4).

Exclusions of the cohort-tracking measure

59. The following exclusions apply:
- Students not active for at least 15 days from their commencement date
 - Students recorded in another provider's HESA or ILR data for the same activity
 - Incoming visiting and exchange students

- Students on a subject knowledge enhancement (SKE) course
- Students registered at a UK provider who are studying mainly abroad
- Students mainly in the UK who were aiming for credit or modular provision rather than a qualification
- Students mainly in the UK and aiming for a qualification but are dormant or on sabbatical
- Students who did not start their study in the relevant year
- Records for students who had another record at the same provider with the same broad level of study in the previous 365 days.

Presentation of the cohort-tracking measure

60. Paragraphs 26 to 29 explain the rounding and suppression that has been applied in the presentation of cohort-tracking indicators.

Completion measures: compound indicator

61. Completion outcomes constructed using the compound indicator method use withdrawal proportions in a particular academic year to inform the measure, looking at withdrawals from different stages of study. The measure establishes the proportion of students likely to complete the qualification they started.
62. A student is considered to have withdrawn in a given year if either of the following applies:
 - a. They are recorded in the HESA or ILR student records with a date of leaving the programme of study that falls within that academic year and all of the following are true:
 - They have not qualified at any higher education level
 - They have not changed to another engagement at the same provider with a different broad level of study
 - They have not transferred to study a higher education qualification at another provider.
 - b. It is the second consecutive year in which the student has been recorded as dormant.
63. The compound indicator is created for a given year by:
 - a. Identifying all of the students who withdraw from higher education study at the provider in question in that year.
 - b. Dividing this group of withdrawing students into six entry cohorts, each defined by the year in which they started their programme of study. The indicator uses six entry cohorts, meaning it will include the cohort that started in the same year in which we have identified the withdrawals, and in the five previous years.
 - c. Identifying the number of students who started a relevant higher education qualification in each of the six possible entry years.
 - d. Calculating cohort withdrawal proportions as the number of withdrawing students in each entry cohort, divided by the number of students who started in the corresponding entry year.
 - e. Totalling the cohort withdrawal proportions across all six entry cohorts, and subtracting this total from 100 per cent to give the compound indicator.⁹

⁹ There may be occasions on which totalling the six successive cohort withdrawal proportions may overstate the likelihood of students leaving their course. This can occur when one or more of the six entry cohorts experiences a markedly higher proportions of students withdrawing from study in the year for which we are calculating the indicator than has previously been the case, and which may not be repeated in future. In extreme cases, this might occasionally lead to the calculated value of the compound indicator being reported as a negative number, when an anomalous withdrawal proportion is high enough to result in the sum of the six cohort withdrawal proportions exceeding 100 per cent. Our approach to rounding and guards against a disproportionate impact of small cohort sizes on the calculation of this measure, in some cases large withdrawal proportions that result from a small cohort can contribute to the measure reporting a negative value.

Coverage of the compound measure

64. The compound indicator covers higher education entrants, with outcomes reported separately for entrants at each mode and level of study. When informing regulation of student outcomes and the TEF, the compound indicator aims to show completion outcomes for all UK and non-UK students who study mainly or wholly in the UK.
65. A student's mode and level of study is determined from the HESA or ILR dataset for the academic year in which they commenced their programme of study. The compound indicator includes students on higher education qualifications at all levels.
66. The completion indicator covers students withdrawing from higher education in academic years 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20. For each year of the indicator, student data returns from the six previous academic years are used in the calculation. For example, calculation of the completion indicator for 2016-17 uses data from the period 2011-12 to 2016-17, whereas calculation of the indicator for 2019-20 uses data from 2014-15 to 2019-20.
67. Table 2 shows the six entry cohort years used to calculate the compound indicators for each of the most recent four years of available data. The year the indicator refers to is the column heading, and the year of withdrawal. The entry cohort years referred to in the row labels work back from the year of withdrawal in increments of one. This creates a matrix, within which each cell represents the cohort withdrawal proportion to be calculated. For instance, for the 2016-17 compound indicator, the entry cohort year four of six refers to higher education entry in 2013-14. The cohort withdrawal proportion for this (highlighted) cell is calculated as the rate at which students who started courses as 2013-14 entrants withdraw from study in 2016-17. All of the other cells in the matrix can be interpreted in the same way, to give the six cohort withdrawal proportions required for each of the four separate compound indicators.

Table 2: Entry cohort years relevant to calculation of the six cohort withdrawal proportions required to construct the compound indicator for each withdrawal year 2016-17 to 2019-20

| | 2016-17 withdrawal year, basis for the 2016-17 compound indicator | 2017-18 withdrawal year, basis for the 2017-18 compound indicator | 2018-19 withdrawal year, basis for the 2018-19 compound indicator | 2019-20 withdrawal year, basis for the 2019-20 compound indicator |
|-------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Entry cohort year one | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 |
| Entry cohort year two | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 |
| Entry cohort year three | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 |
| Entry cohort year four | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2016-17 |
| Entry cohort year five | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Entry cohort year six | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 |

| | 2016-17 withdrawal year, basis for the 2016-17 compound indicator | 2017-18 withdrawal year, basis for the 2017-18 compound indicator | 2018-19 withdrawal year, basis for the 2018-19 compound indicator | 2019-20 withdrawal year, basis for the 2019-20 compound indicator |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| Compound indicator for the given year | 100% - sum of this column |

68. A compound indicator is created for the aggregate of the most recent four years in the same way as the single year indicator, but the six entry cohort points (e.g. entry cohort year one in Table 2) each combine students who contribute to the calculations across the four single years. For each cohort entry point the withdrawal population is calculated by following these steps:
- Sum the number of students who contribute to the four-year compound indicator as withdrawing from study, having started at the cohort entry point in question.
 - Sum the number of students who contribute to the four-year compound indicator as starting their study at the cohort entry point in question.
 - Calculate the cohort withdrawal proportion for the cohort entry point in question as (a) divided by (b).
69. The all years aggregate compound indicator is calculated by summing the cohort withdrawal proportions across all six cohort entry points, and subtracting this total from 100 per cent to give the compound completion indicator. This is further illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3: Calculating cohort entry year withdrawal proportions for the purposes of constructing the compound indicator for the aggregate of the most recent four years

| Withdrawing students by entry cohort year (step a) | Entry cohort year entrants (step b) | Entry cohort year withdrawal proportion (step a, divided by step b) |
|---|--|---|
| 2016-17 entrants who withdrew in 2016-17 + 2017-18 entrants who withdrew in 2017-18 + 2018-19 entrants who withdrew in 2018-19 + 2019-20 entrants who withdrew in 2019-20 = entry cohort year one numerator | 2016-17 entrants + 2017-18 entrants + 2018-19 entrants + 2019-20 entrants = entry cohort year one denominator | Entry cohort year one numerator / Entry cohort year one denominator |
| 2015-16 entrants who withdrew in 2016-17 + 2016-17 entrants who withdrew in 2017-18 + 2017-18 entrants who withdrew in 2018-19 + 2018-19 entrants who withdrew in 2019-20 = entry cohort year two numerator | 2015-16 entrants + 2016-17 entrants + 2017-18 entrants + 2018-19 entrants = entry cohort year two denominator | Entry cohort year two numerator / Entry cohort year two denominator |

| Withdrawing students by entry cohort year (step a) | Entry cohort year entrants (step b) | Entry cohort year withdrawal proportion (step a, divided by step b) |
|--|--|---|
| 2014-15 entrants who withdrew in 2016-17 + 2015-16 entrants who withdrew in 2017-18 + 2016-17 entrants who withdrew in 2018-19 + 2017-18 entrants who withdrew in 2019-20 = entry cohort year three numerator | 2014-15 entrants + 2015-16 entrants + 2016-17 entrants + 2017-18 entrants = entry cohort year three denominator | Entry cohort year three numerator / Entry cohort year three denominator |
| 2013-14 entrants who withdrew in 2016-17 + 2014-15 entrants who withdrew in 2017-18 + 2015-16 entrants who withdrew in 2018-19 + 2016-17 entrants who withdrew in 2019-20 = entry cohort year four numerator | 2013-14 entrants + 2014-15 entrants + 2015-16 entrants + 2016-17 entrants = entry cohort year four denominator | Entry cohort year four numerator / Entry cohort year four denominator |
| 2012-13 entrants who withdrew in 2016-17 + 2013-14 entrants who withdrew in 2017-18 + 2014-15 entrants who withdrew in 2018-19 + 2015-16 entrants who withdrew in 2019-20 = entry cohort year five numerator | 2012-13 entrants + 2013-14 entrants + 2014-15 entrants + 2015-16 entrants = entry cohort year five denominator | Entry cohort year five numerator / Entry cohort year five denominator |
| 2011-12 entrants who withdrew in 2016-17 + 2012-13 entrants who withdrew in 2017-18 + 2013-14 entrants who withdrew in 2018-19 + 2014-15 entrants who withdrew in 2019-20 = entry cohort year six numerator | 2011-12 entrants + 2012-13 entrants + 2013-14 entrants + 2014-15 entrants = entry cohort year six denominator | Entry cohort year six numerator / Entry cohort year six denominator |
| All years aggregate compound indicator | | 100% - sum of this column |

70. A worked example of the compound indicator calculation is shown below.

Worked example of the compound measure

In this simple example, assume that a provider only delivers full-time first degree qualifications, and that it has 351 students whose student records indicate that they have withdrawn from the higher education qualifications they were studying during the 2019-20 academic year.

Those 351 withdrawing students can be separated into their entry cohorts between 2014-15 and 2019-20, as shown in Table 4 below.

The number of students from each entry cohort who withdrew in 2019-20 is divided by the total number of entrants in that entry cohort. That is, the number of 2014-15 starters who withdrew in 2019-20 is divided by the total number of 2014-15 entrants; the number of 2015-16 starters who withdrew in 2019-20 is divided by the total number of 2015-16 entrants, and so on. The resulting cohort withdrawal proportions calculated are shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Worked example of the compound measure

| | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Breakdown of the 351 students withdrawing in 2019-20 by year they started | 10 | 20 | 26 | 30 | 70 | 195 |
| Total entrants in each year | 2,500 | 2,500 | 2,000 | 2,000 | 2,000 | 2,500 |
| Cohort withdrawal proportion | 0.4% (=10 / 2,500) | 0.8% (=20 / 2,500) | 1.3% (=26 / 2,000) | 1.5% (=30 / 2,000) | 3.5% (=70 / 2,000) | 7.8% (=195 / 2,500) |

Totalling these cohort withdrawal proportions gives a figure of 15.3% (0.4% + 0.8% + 1.3% + 1.5% + 3.5% + 7.8%).

Subtracting this total from 100 per cent gives the 2019-20 compound indicator value of 84.7% (=100% - 15.3%).

Exclusions of the compound measure

71. The following exclusions apply:

- Students whose programme of study ended less than 15 days after it commenced
- Students recorded in another provider's HESA or ILR data for the same activity
- Incoming visiting and exchange students
- Students on a subject knowledge enhancement (SKE) course
- Students registered at a UK provider who are studying mainly abroad
- Students mainly in the UK who were aiming for credit or modular provision rather than a qualification
- Students mainly in the UK and aiming for a qualification but are dormant or on sabbatical
- Students who did not start their study in the relevant year
- Records for students who had another record at the same provider with the same broad level of study in the previous 365 days.

Presentation of the compound measure

72. Paragraphs 26 to 29 explain the rounding and suppression that has been applied in the presentation of compound indicators.
73. In addition to this, in the calculation of the compound indicator, if the denominator in either entry cohort year one, entry cohort year two or entry cohort year three have fewer than 23 student entrants, then the indicator is suppressed.

Progression measures

74. Progression measures are constructed from data reported through the Graduate Outcomes survey.¹⁰ The measures describe the proportion of qualifiers from higher education qualifications who have progressed to professional or managerial employment or any type of further study, 15 months after completing their course. Progression outcomes are reported separately for qualifiers at each mode and level of study. The level of study reflects the qualification level that the student initially started at.
75. Whether informing regulation of student outcomes, the TEF or access and participation, the progression indicators aim to show outcomes for all UK-domiciled qualifiers who had studied mainly or wholly in the UK.

Coverage of progression measures

76. Qualifiers in the 2017-18 and 2018-19 academic year have been linked to their responses to the Graduate Outcomes survey. Graduates are surveyed roughly 15 months after they were awarded a higher education qualification.
77. The data is based on UK-domiciled students who qualified in 2017-18 (defines Year 1 of the time series) or 2018-19 (Year 2). These students were in the target population for the Graduate Outcomes survey and they had to either fully or partially complete the survey for their responses to be included in our indicator calculations.

Activities

78. In the Graduate Outcomes survey, respondents were asked which of 11 possible activities they had been doing during the census week. They could respond that they were undertaking multiple activities. Table 5 shows the 11 possible activities and whether they are counted positively in the progression indicator calculation if they were undertaking just this one activity. Where a student reported that they were undertaking multiple activities, the student's outcome is counted positively if any of the activities are counted as positive (as shown in Table 5).
79. Students who report they are travelling, caring for someone else or retired count as a positive outcome. Students who report they are 'doing something else' count as a positive outcome only if this is reported in combination with another activity that counts as a positive outcome (e.g. professional employment or further study).

¹⁰ See <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/innovation/outcomes>.

Table 5: Possible activities reported by students in the Graduate Outcomes survey

| Activity | Counted positively in progression indicator |
|---|--|
| Paid work for an employer | Yes, if professional employment |
| Self-employment/freelancing | Yes, if professional employment |
| Running own business | Yes, if professional employment |
| Developing a creative, artistic or professional portfolio | Yes, if professional employment |
| Voluntary/unpaid work for an employer | Yes, if professional employment |
| Engaged in a course of study, training or research | Yes |
| Taking time out to travel – this does not include short-term holidays | Yes |
| Caring for someone (unpaid) | Yes |
| Retired | Yes |
| Unemployed and looking for work | No |
| Doing something else | No |

Employment

80. Whether a respondent in employment is in professional employment or not is based on the job details they have provided. Within the Graduate Outcomes data, jobs are mapped to the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC 2020) and these codes are then grouped into 10 major groupings. Table 6 shows which of these major groups are classified as being professional employment and which have been classified as non-professional employment.

Table 6: SOC 2020 groupings counted as professional employment

| XEMP2020SOC/ XBUS2020SOC code | XEMP2020SOC/ XBUS2020SOC label | Counted as professional employment |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| 1 | Managers, directors and senior officials | Yes |
| 2 | Professional occupations | Yes |
| 3 | Associate professional and technical occupations | Yes |
| 4 | Administrative and secretarial occupations | No |
| 5 | Skilled trade occupations | No |
| 6 | Caring, leisure and other service occupations | No |
| 7 | Sales and customer service occupations | No |
| 8 | Process, plant and machinery operatives | No |
| 9 | Elementary occupations | No |

81. There are some cases where the graduate was in employment, but not engaged in any of the other activities that count positively (see Table 6), and the details of the graduate's job have

not been provided or cannot be mapped to a SOC code. In these cases, the response is apportioned between professional and non-professional employment in the same ratio between professional and non-professional employment that has been derived for that provider, mode of study and broad level of study.

82. For example, a provider, mode, and broad level of study has 100 respondents that are in employment (with known SOC codes): 35 of these are in professional employment and the remaining 65 are in non-professional employment. They are undertaking no other activities that count as positive outcomes. In this provider, mode, and broad level of study, there are also 10 respondents that are in employment with no other activities that count as a positive outcome, but the associated SOC codes are not known. In this case, each of the 10 responses are individually weighted so that each one contributes 0.35 towards the number in professional employment for that provider and 0.65 towards the number in non-professional employment.
83. Graduates who are working in a voluntary or unpaid capacity are treated in the same way as those in paid employment.
84. The survey includes a question as to whether the respondent has undertaken any employment in the interim 15-month period between qualifying and the census week. This has not been used in the calculation of progression indicators.
85. Similarly, the survey includes a question as to whether the respondent is due to start any employment in the next month. This information has not been considered in the calculation of progression indicators.

Further study

86. Any further study is counted as a positive outcome, even if it is at the same or lower level that the qualification the graduate recently obtained.
87. The survey includes a question as to whether the respondent has undertaken any further study in the interim 15-month period between qualifying and census week. This has not been used in the calculation of progression indicators.
88. Similarly, the survey includes a question as to whether the respondent is due to start any study in the next month. This information has not been considered in the calculation of progression indicators.

Exclusions of progression indicators

89. The following exclusions apply:
 - The student was not eligible to be surveyed for the Graduate Outcomes survey
 - The student was not UK-domiciled prior to starting their course
 - The student was registered at a UK provider but mainly studying abroad.

Presentation of progression indicators

90. Paragraphs 26 to 29 explain the rounding and suppression that has been applied in the presentation of progression indicators.

Student experience measures

91. Paragraphs 91 to 100 provide a description of the indicators calculated for use in the TEF. The indicators are based on responses to the National Student Survey (NSS). The coverage and exclusions (described in paragraphs 97 to 99) are applicable to all indicators derived using NSS responses.
92. The NSS asks a range of individual questions which are organised into different sets. These are known as NSS question scales, with each representing a different theme. In responding to an individual NSS question, students indicate their agreement within each statement on a five-point scale. Across the questions that make up a given scale, total agreement by each student is calculated as the percentage of responses that are 'Agree' or 'Strongly agree'. Questions marked with N/A or not answered are ignored.
93. The total percentage agreement for the provider is the sum of the percentage agreement for each student divided by the number of students. Each student is equally weighted in the calculation of the total percentage agreement for the provider.
94. Table 7 shows a worked example of how the total percentage agreement is calculated. The total percentage agreement for the provider would be 70 per cent (the sum of the percentages divided by the number of students: $(75+100+75+50+50=350) / 5 = 70$).

Table 7: Worked example

| Student | Question 1 | Question 2 | Question 3 | Question 4 | Percentage agreement |
|---------|----------------|----------------|------------|------------|----------------------|
| A | Strongly agree | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither | 75 |
| B | Strongly agree | Strongly agree | Agree | N/A | 100 |
| C | Strongly agree | Agree | Agree | Disagree | 75 |
| D | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Disagree | 50 |
| E | Agree | Disagree | N/A | N/A | 50 |

95. When informing the TEF, the student experience indicators aim to show responses of all students who are studying mainly or wholly in the UK.

Student experience indicators that are calculated

96. Table 8 below describes the student experience indicators calculated and the NSS question responses used in deriving the percentage agreement. A full list of the NSS questions is available on the OfS website.¹¹

¹¹ See <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/703530d2-1c8f-48fc-a62d-23b278b8b799/nss-2021-core-questionnaire-optional-banks.pdf> [PDF].

Table 8: NSS questions used in the calculation of student experience indicators

| Student experience Indicator | NSS questions used |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| The teaching on my course | Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4 |
| Learning opportunities | Q5, Q6, Q7 |
| Assessment and feedback | Q8, Q9, Q10, Q11 |
| Academic support | Q12, Q13, Q14 |
| Organisation and management | Q15, Q16, Q17 |
| Learning resources | Q18, Q19, Q20 |
| Learning community | Q21, Q22 |
| Student voice | Q23, Q24, Q25 Note: Q26 has been excluded when calculating this indicator |

Coverage

97. The NSS is targeted at all final year undergraduates. Non-final year students on flexible provision or who change their study plans may also be included by participating providers.
98. The NSS-based indicators cover students surveyed during the spring of:
 - 2018 (defines Year 1 of the time series)
 - 2019 (Year 2)
 - 2020 (Year 3)
 - 2021 (Year 4)

Exclusions

99. The following exclusions apply:
 - a. Students who did not reach the final year of their course in any of the four most recent years.
 - b. Students not aiming for an undergraduate level qualification or aiming for a qualification of 1 FTE or lower.
 - c. Students who did not respond to the NSS.
 - d. The student was registered at a UK provider but mainly studying abroad.
 - e. Students whose NSS responses have been suppressed.

Presentation of student experience indicators

100. Paragraphs 26 to 29 explain the rounding and suppression that has been applied in the presentation of student experience indicators.

Access to higher education measures

101. Access to higher education measures are constructed from individualised student data captured in the HESA and ILR student records, to express the number of entrants with a particular attribute as a percentage of all entrants, referenced where possible to the UK population of 18-year-olds who possess the same attribute. The measures are calculated in the same way for full-time, part-time and apprenticeship entrant cohorts.

Coverage of the access measures

102. The access measures cover UK-domiciled entrants registered at the higher education provider in question, and are reported separately for entrants at each of the following levels:

- First degree
- Other undergraduate
- Undergraduate with postgraduate components
- All undergraduates (the total of the three levels listed above).

103. The measures cover students entering higher education:

- between 1 August 2016 and 31 July 2017 (defines Year 1 of the time series)
- between 1 August 2017 and 31 July 2018 (Year 2)
- between 1 August 2018 and 31 July 2019 (Year 3)
- between 1 August 2019 and 31 July 2020 (Year 4).

Presentation of the access measures

104. In addition to representing the profile of higher education entrants in proportional terms, as described in paragraph 101 above, the access measures also report indicators which are referenced to the UK population for the characteristics of ethnicity and sex. The characteristic of English IMD quintile is similarly referenced to the English population. The indicators are referenced in the following ways:

- Gap, for the attribute in question, between the provider's distribution of 18-year-olds and the population distribution of 18-year-olds
- The upper and lower limits of a 95 per cent confidence interval for this gap
- Ratio, for the attribute in question, of the provider's distribution of 18-year-olds to the population distribution of 18-year-olds.

Exclusions from the access measures

105. The following exclusions apply:

- Non-UK students

- Students not active for at least 15 days from their commencement date
- Students recorded in another provider's HESA or ILR data for the same activity
- Students on a subject knowledge enhancement (SKE) course
- Students on a course which is taught primarily outside the UK.

Sources

106. The UK population of 18-year-olds in each year from 2016 to 2019 is required for each of the population-referenced access indicators. The population estimates are publicly available and sourced from the various statistical bodies in each devolved nation:
 - a. England and Wales: Sourced from ONS. Population estimates are published by single year of age, at Lower Super Output Area (LSOA 2011) geography.
 - b. Northern Ireland: Sourced from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency. Population estimates are published by single year of age at parliamentary constituency level, and by broad age band at Super Output Area (SOA 2011) level. This geography level is broadly equivalent to LSOA in England and Wales.
 - c. Scotland: Sourced from National Records of Scotland. Population estimates are published by single year of age at Data Zone 2011 level for the years 2001 to present.
 - d. All UK: ONS population estimates by sex cover all UK nations.
107. The populations of 18-year-olds living in each IMD quintile in England have been derived, for each year, from 2015 to 2019. Only England is considered, as the other devolved nations' IMDs are not exactly equivalent to the English IMD.
108. The IMD is published at LSOA 2011 level, so can be linked by area code with population estimates to find the total number of 18-year-olds in each quintile.
109. To derive the population estimates for ethnicity, 2011 census data is used to estimate the ethnic population breakdowns of each nation. These proportions are then applied to population estimates of 18-year-olds in each year. This method assumes that the relative proportions of each ethnicity have not changed since 2011.
110. Population estimates by sex are published for the UK overall by the ONS; no further processing is required.
111. The processes described in paragraphs 106 to 110 result in the population estimates shown in Annex B.

Degree outcomes measure

112. Paragraphs 113 to 116 provide a description of this measure, which is based on the individualised student data returned in the HESA and ILR student records. The descriptions here apply equally to full-time, part-time and apprenticeship qualifying cohorts.
113. The measure expresses the number of leavers from Level 6+ undergraduate degrees who were awarded 'first' or 'upper second' (2:1) degree classifications as a percentage of all those leavers from Level 6+ undergraduate degrees who were awarded classified degrees. Level 6+ degrees awarded without an honours classification are excluded from the denominator for calculation of this indicator.

Coverage of the degree outcomes measure

114. This measure includes all leavers who are included in the relevant HESA and ILR datasets and have been awarded Level 6+ undergraduate degree qualifications within the honours classification. It considers all leavers who were registered at the higher education provider in question, whether or not that provider was using its own degree awarding powers, and includes UK and non-UK students.
115. The indicators we calculate cover students leaving higher education in academic year:
- between 1 August 2016 and 31 July 2017 (defines Year 1 of the time series)
 - between 1 August 2017 and 31 July 2018 (Year 2)
 - between 1 August 2018 and 31 July 2019 (Year 3)
 - between 1 August 2019 and 31 July 2020 (Year 4).

Exclusions of the degree outcomes indicator

116. The following exclusions apply:
- Non-UK domiciled students
 - Students who were not awarded an undergraduate Level 6+ degree qualification
 - Students who are recorded in another provider's HESA or ILR data for the same activity.

Data about the size and shape of higher education provision

117. The indicators are supported by a set of data¹² which shows, in broad terms, the size and shape of the provider's student population. A number of charts and data tables are provided as part of the data resources, and these are described in more detail in the paragraphs that follow:

- Student numbers
- Partnership arrangements
- Size and shape of provision.

Student numbers

118. This table in the data output provides data on full-time, part-time and apprenticeship student numbers (headcounts) broken down by mode and level of study, plus numbers of those studying for credit or modules, or unspecified qualification aims. The student population is based on the taught or registered (TorR) view of the provider and considers students who are mainly studying in the UK and are actively studying on a qualification aim or aiming for credit or modular provision. This excludes students who are dormant, taking a sabbatical or writing up. Headcounts of entrants, qualifiers and total student numbers for the most recent four year (2016-17 to 2019-20) are provided. Apprenticeship student numbers are only broken down into broad levels of study (undergraduate and postgraduate).

119. The second half of the table in the data output provides data on offshore transnational education. This is students who are registered at a UK provider but are mainly studying abroad. Only total student numbers are shown for this population and only a breakdown by level of study is provided.

120. The final section of the table in the data output provides data on Students mainly abroad. This data is sourced from the HESA Aggregate Offshore Record (AOR). Only the total number of students is shown with a breakdown by level of study.

Partnership arrangements

121. This table in the data output provides a summary of headcount student numbers shown for different types of partnership. Numbers are shown separately for each mode and broad level of study. Headcounts of entrants, qualifiers and total student numbers for the most recent four year (2016-17 to 2019-20) are provided.

122. The types of partnership arrangements presented are:

- All students registered or taught by this provider (TorR population)
- All students registered and taught by this provider
- Only students registered by this provider (subcontracted out from this provider)

¹² Available at: www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/student-outcomes-and-experiences-data-dashboards/

- Only students taught by this provider (subcontracted in to this provider)
- Only students validated by this provider.

Size and shape of provision

123. This table in the data output provides a summary of headcount student numbers shown separately for undergraduate and postgraduate population for each mode of study and then further broken down by student or course characteristics. Some of the characteristics are only available for particular cohorts within the student population. The characteristics considered and any restrictions on coverage are explained below:

a. Study characteristics:

- Course length – classification of student based on the number of years that the qualification they are studying for is expected to last
- Course type – Full-time first degree students with integrated foundation year
- Subject of study – classification using Common Aggregation Hierarchy Level 2)
- Year of study type – Students on courses that have the option of a sandwich placement.

b. Student characteristics:

- Age on entry
- Disability type
- Ethnicity – only available for UK-domiciled students
- Sex
- Sexual orientation – only available for providers that submit data to the HESA student record
- ABCS quintile for continuation – only available UK-domiciled undergraduate entrants who are registered with English providers
- Deprivation quintile (IMD) – only available for UK-domiciled students
- Domicile
- Eligibility for free school meals
- Entry qualifications – only available for undergraduate students aged under 21 years on entry who were found in the NPD KS4 data in 2009-10 or later
- Geography of employment quintile – only available for qualifying undergraduate student cohorts who responded to the Graduate Outcomes survey

- Socio-economic background - only available for providers that submit data to the HESA student record and for UK-domiciled undergraduate students
- Study location
- Tracking underrepresentation by MSOA (TUNDRA MSOA) – only available for England domiciled undergraduate students.

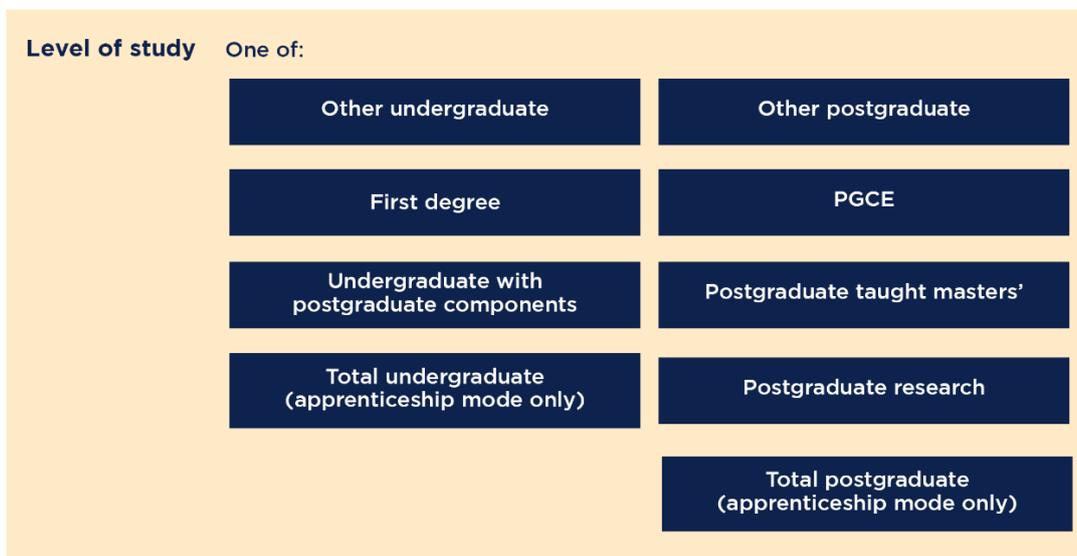
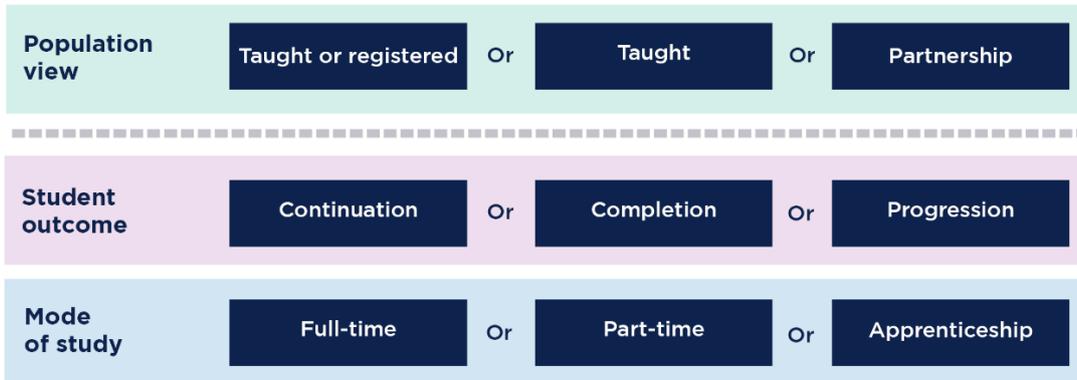
124. The student population is based on the taught or registered view of the provider and considers students who are mainly studying in the UK and are actively studying on a qualification aim. This excludes students who are dormant, sabbatical or writing up. Headcounts of entrants, qualifiers, and total student numbers for the most recent four year (2016-17 to 2019-20) are provided.

Presentation of the data on the overall size and shape of provision

125. Paragraphs 26 to 29 explain the rounding and suppression that has been applied in the presentation of data on the overall size and shape of provision.

Annex A: Reporting structure for indicators and split indicators

Figure A1: Reporting structure for indicators and split indicators used in the regulation of student outcomes



Indicator = Student outcome + Mode + Level

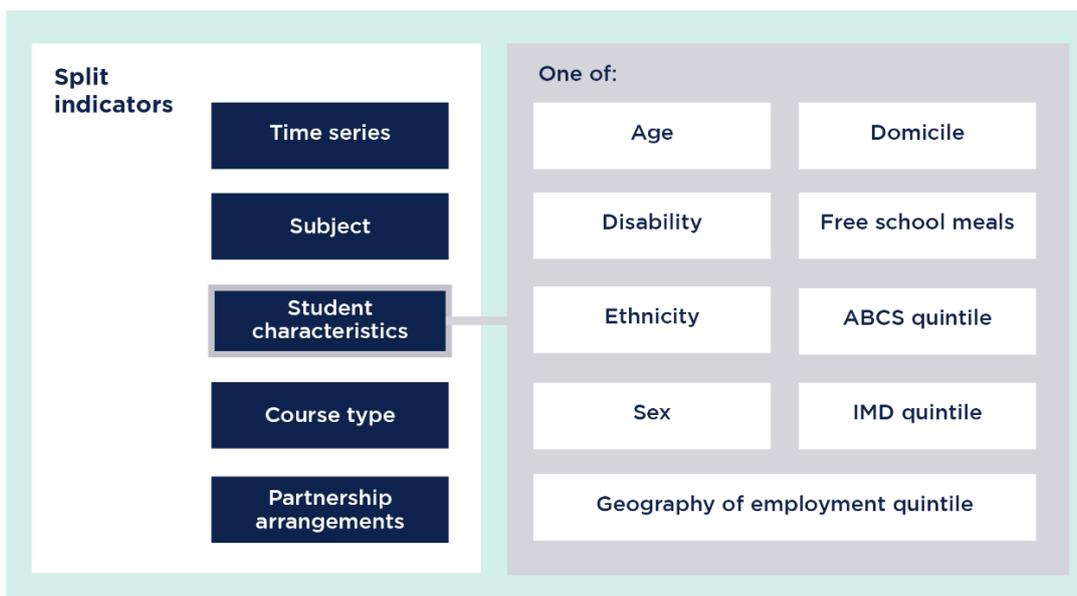


Figure A2: Reporting structure for indicators and split indicators used in TEF assessment

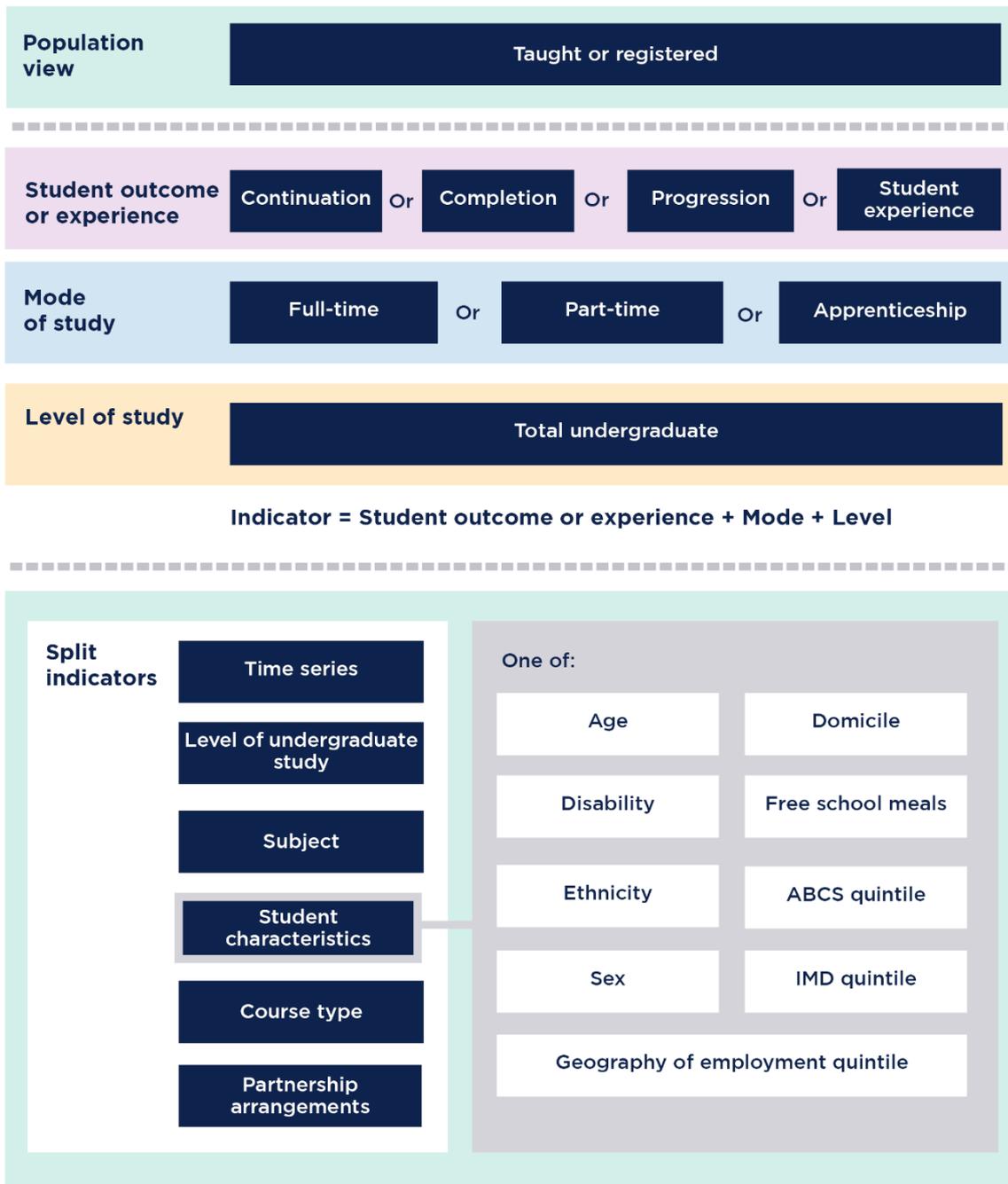
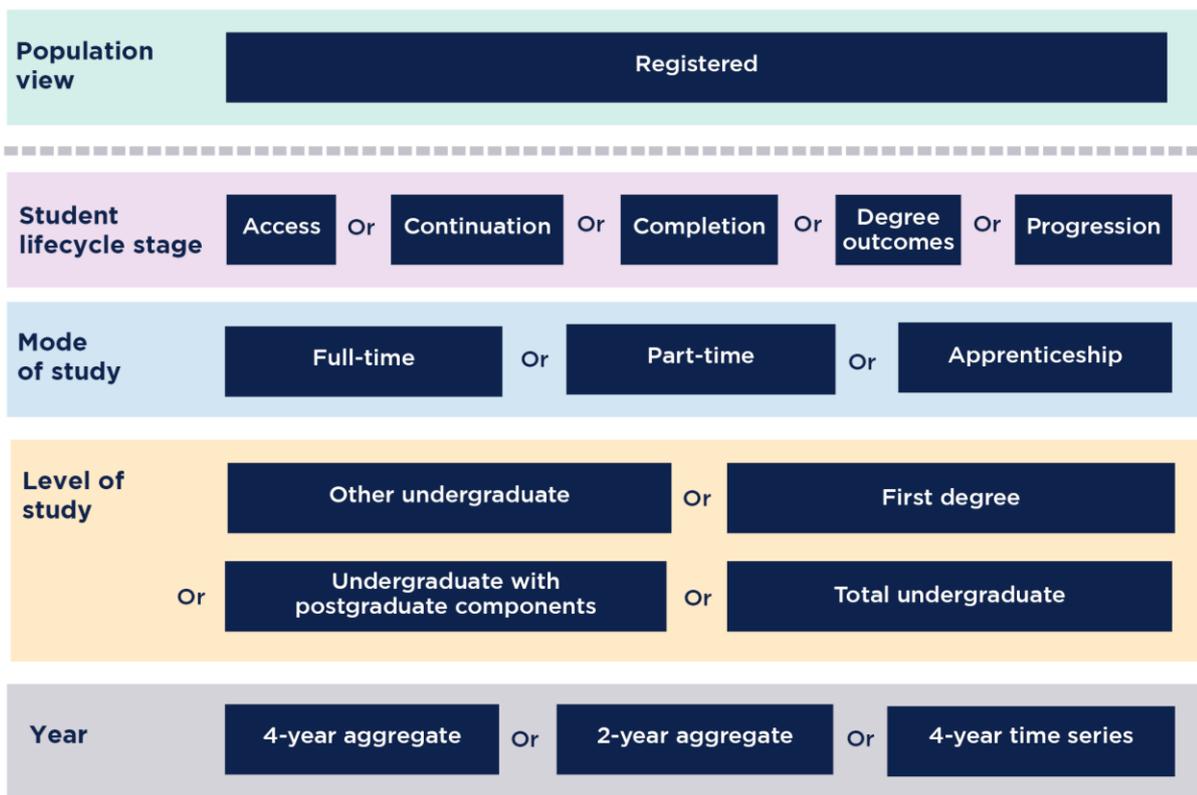
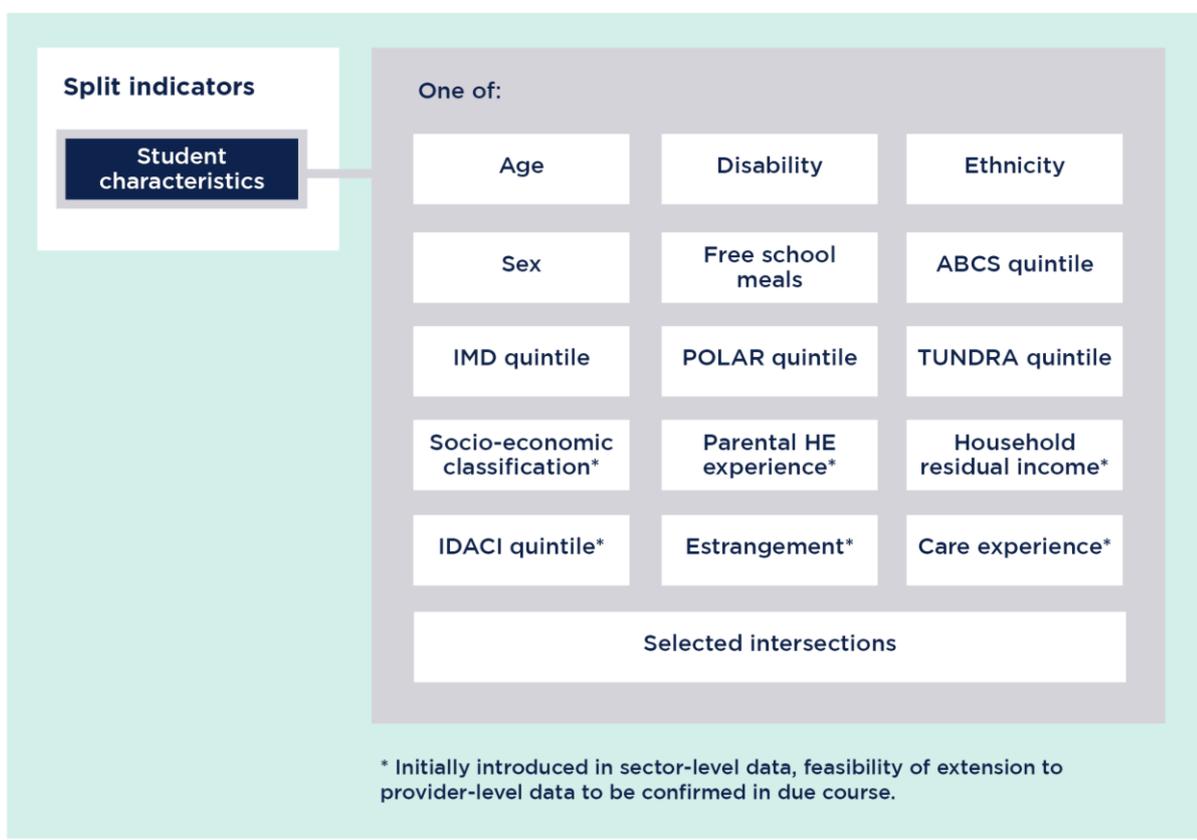


Figure A3: Reporting structure for indicators and split indicators used in the access and participation data dashboard



Indicator = Student lifecycle stage + Mode + Level + Year



Annex B: Definitions of levels of study

| Level of study | Definition |
|--|--|
| First degree | First degree courses mostly consist of study for qualifications such as honours or ordinary degrees, including Bachelor of Arts (BA) and Bachelor of Science (BSc) degrees. |
| Other undergraduate | Other undergraduate courses are credit-bearing courses such as foundation degrees, diplomas and certificates of higher education, Higher National Diploma (HND) and Higher National Certificate (HNC). |
| Undergraduate with postgraduate components | Examples of undergraduate course with postgraduate elements include: integrated undergraduate-postgraduate taught masters' degrees on the enhanced or extended pattern; pre-registration medical degrees regulated by the General Medical Council; and pre-registration dentistry degrees regulated by the General Dental Council. |
| Other postgraduate | Examples of other postgraduate courses include: graduate or postgraduate diplomas, certificates or degrees at Levels 5 and 6 where a Level 5 or 6 qualification is a pre-requisite for course entry; postgraduate certificates and diplomas; diplomas in teaching in the lifelong learning sector at Level 7; post-registration health and social care qualifications at Level 7; and taught qualifications at Level 7 leading towards obtaining eligibility to register to practice with a health or social care or veterinary statutory regulatory body. |
| PGCE | A PGCE is a higher education programme providing both professional training leading to qualified teacher status (QTS) and a course of academic study leading to an academic qualification. The title Postgraduate Certificate in Education is reserved for those PGCE qualifications that are set at Level 7. The title Professional Graduate Certificates in Education is used for those PGCE qualifications that are set Level 6. |
| Postgraduate taught masters' | Examples of postgraduate taught masters' courses include masters' degrees (such as MA, MSc). |
| Postgraduate research | Examples of postgraduate research courses include: doctoral degrees (such as PhD/DPhil, EdD); masters' degrees by research (such as MPhil, MRes). |

Annex C: Population estimate data

1. Table A1 details the population estimates used as contextual information in the access and participation data.

Table A1: 18-year-old population estimates by characteristic

| Characteristic (country) | Split | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 |
|--------------------------|------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| POLAR4 (UK) | Quintile 1 | 145,198 | 140,273 | 138,862 | 134,211 | 131,036 |
| | Quintile 2 | 150,667 | 146,516 | 144,330 | 140,442 | 137,522 |
| | Quintile 3 | 155,331 | 152,195 | 150,672 | 146,707 | 143,354 |
| | Quintile 4 | 156,191 | 153,765 | 153,187 | 149,707 | 147,582 |
| | Quintile 5 | 179,990 | 178,923 | 178,794 | 175,929 | 173,573 |
| IMD2015 (England) | Quintile 1 | 146,743 | 142,757 | 142,718 | 140,511 | 139,026 |
| | Quintile 2 | 134,143 | 132,023 | 130,722 | 127,375 | 125,369 |
| | Quintile 3 | 125,141 | 122,938 | 121,115 | 117,999 | 114,970 |
| | Quintile 4 | 124,242 | 122,773 | 122,045 | 118,917 | 116,085 |
| | Quintile 5 | 130,762 | 128,427 | 128,533 | 125,434 | 123,423 |
| IMD2019 (England) | Quintile 1 | 144,598 | 140,591 | 140,333 | 137,321 | 135,726 |
| | Quintile 2 | 134,285 | 131,958 | 130,791 | 127,430 | 125,430 |
| | Quintile 3 | 127,163 | 125,072 | 123,036 | 120,379 | 117,609 |
| | Quintile 4 | 124,639 | 123,109 | 122,352 | 119,427 | 116,584 |
| | Quintile 5 | 130,346 | 128,188 | 128,621 | 125,679 | 123,524 |
| Ethnic group (UK) | Asian | 64,756 | 63,533 | 63,122 | 61,639 | 60,523 |
| | Black | 28,077 | 27,553 | 27,383 | 26,744 | 26,262 |
| | Mixed | 24,885 | 24,412 | 24,256 | 23,687 | 23,258 |
| | Other | 8,320 | 8,161 | 8,108 | 7,917 | 7,774 |
| | White | 661,339 | 648,013 | 642,976 | 627,008 | 615,250 |
| Sex (UK) | Female | 383,393 | 375,458 | 372,465 | 362,219 | 357,128 |
| | Male | 403,985 | 396,213 | 393,380 | 384,777 | 375,939 |

2. The data tabulated in Table A1 has been visualised in Figures A1 to A5.

Figure A1: Proportions of UK 18-year-olds living in POLAR4 quintile areas

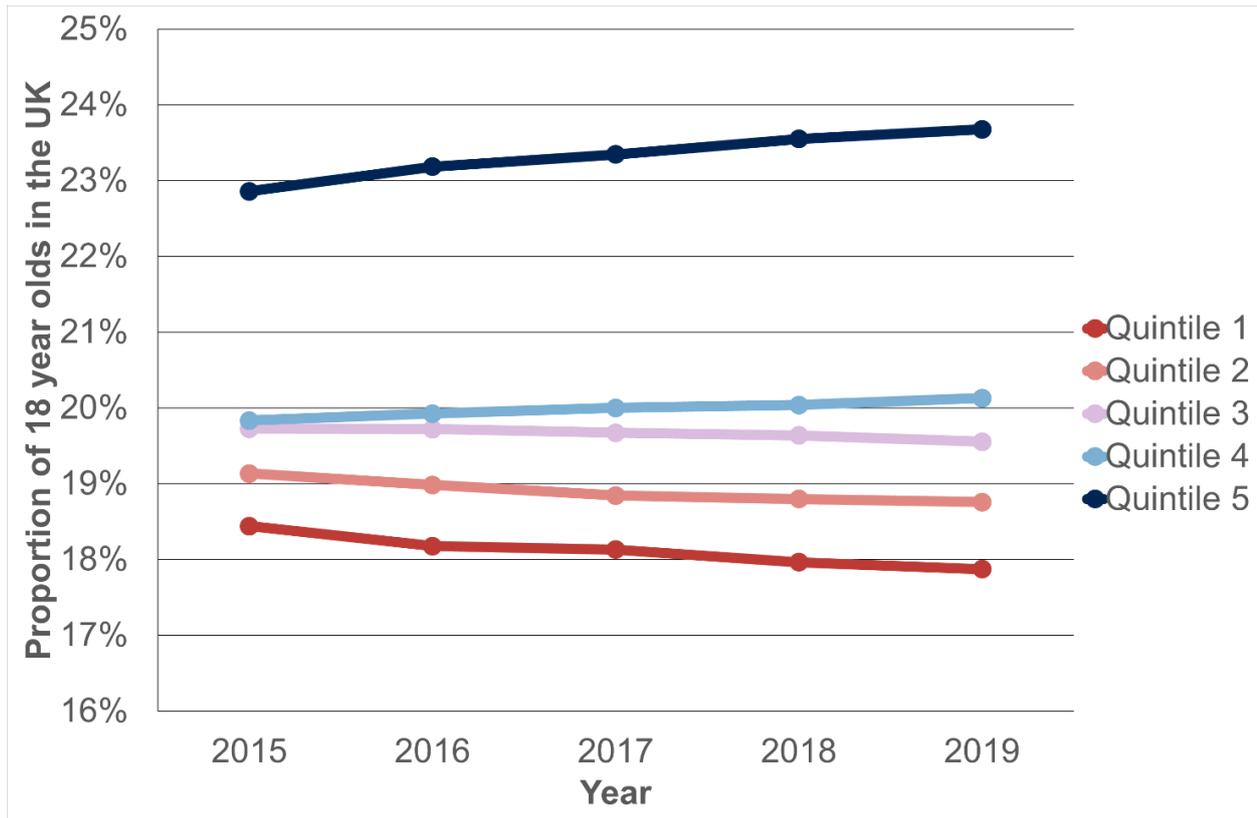


Figure A2: Proportions of 18-year-olds in England living in IMD2015 quintile areas

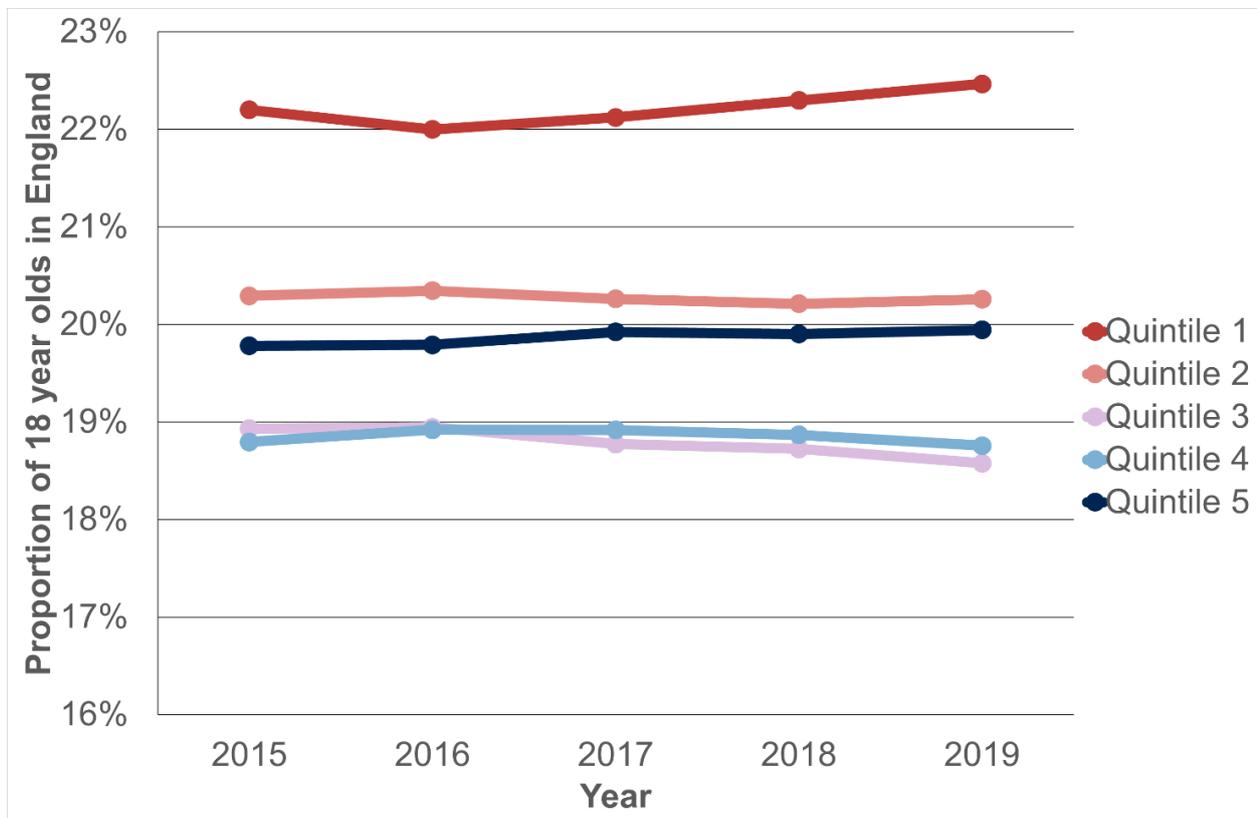


Figure A3: Proportions of 18-year-olds in England living in IMD2019 quintile areas

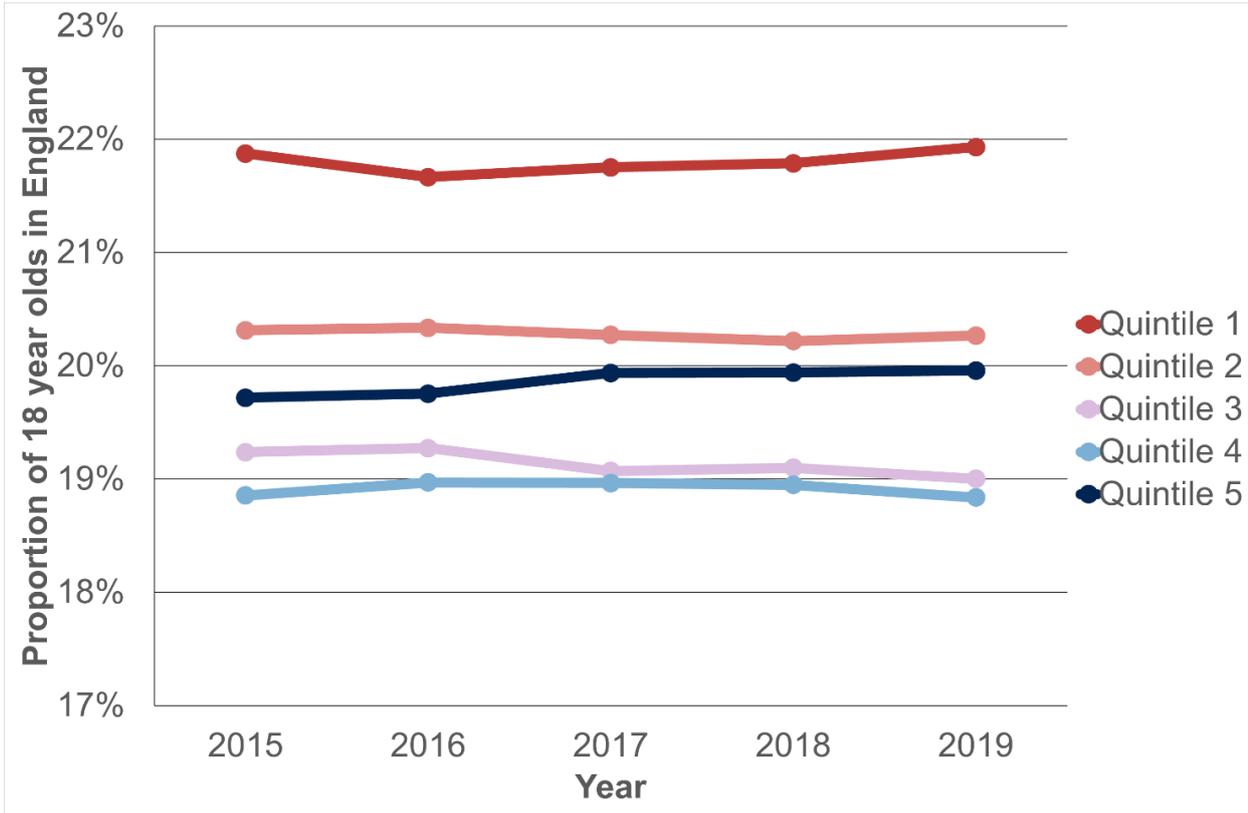


Figure A4: Proportion of UK 18-year-olds from different ethnic groups

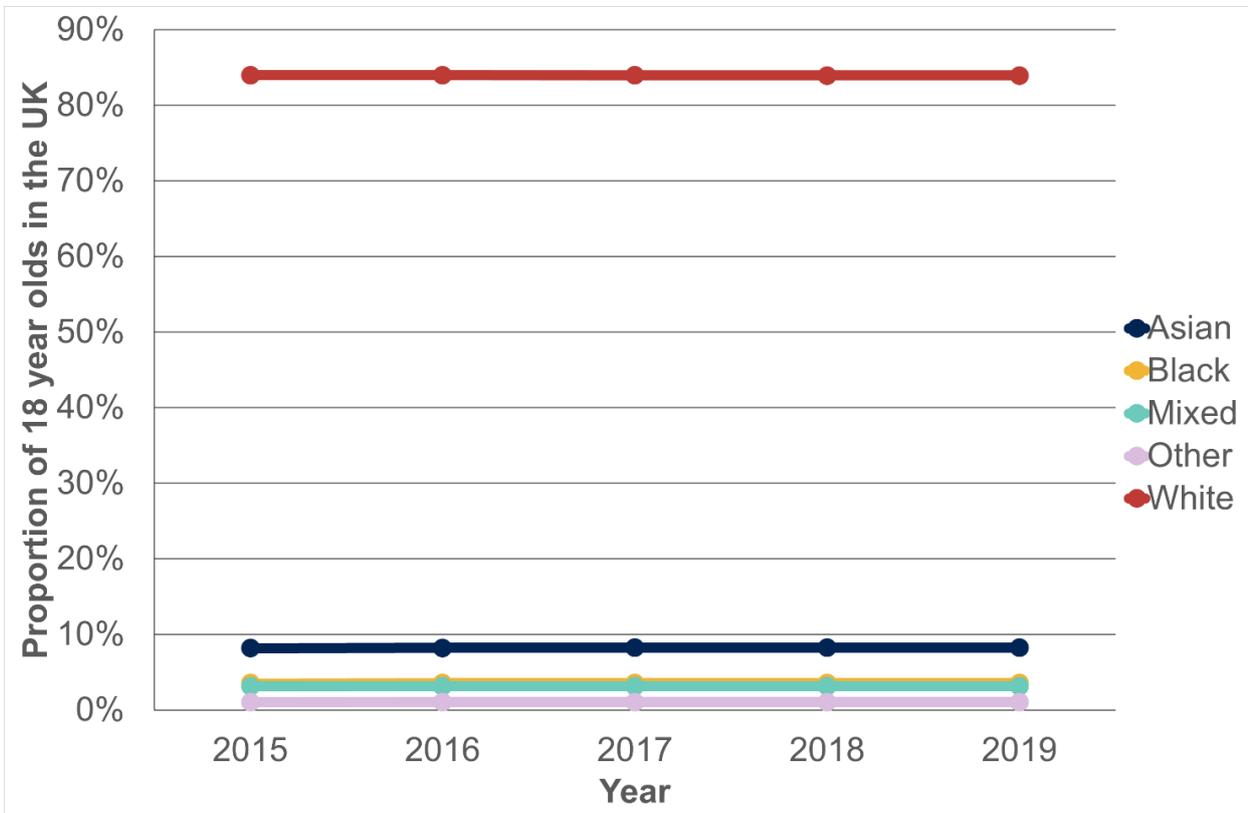
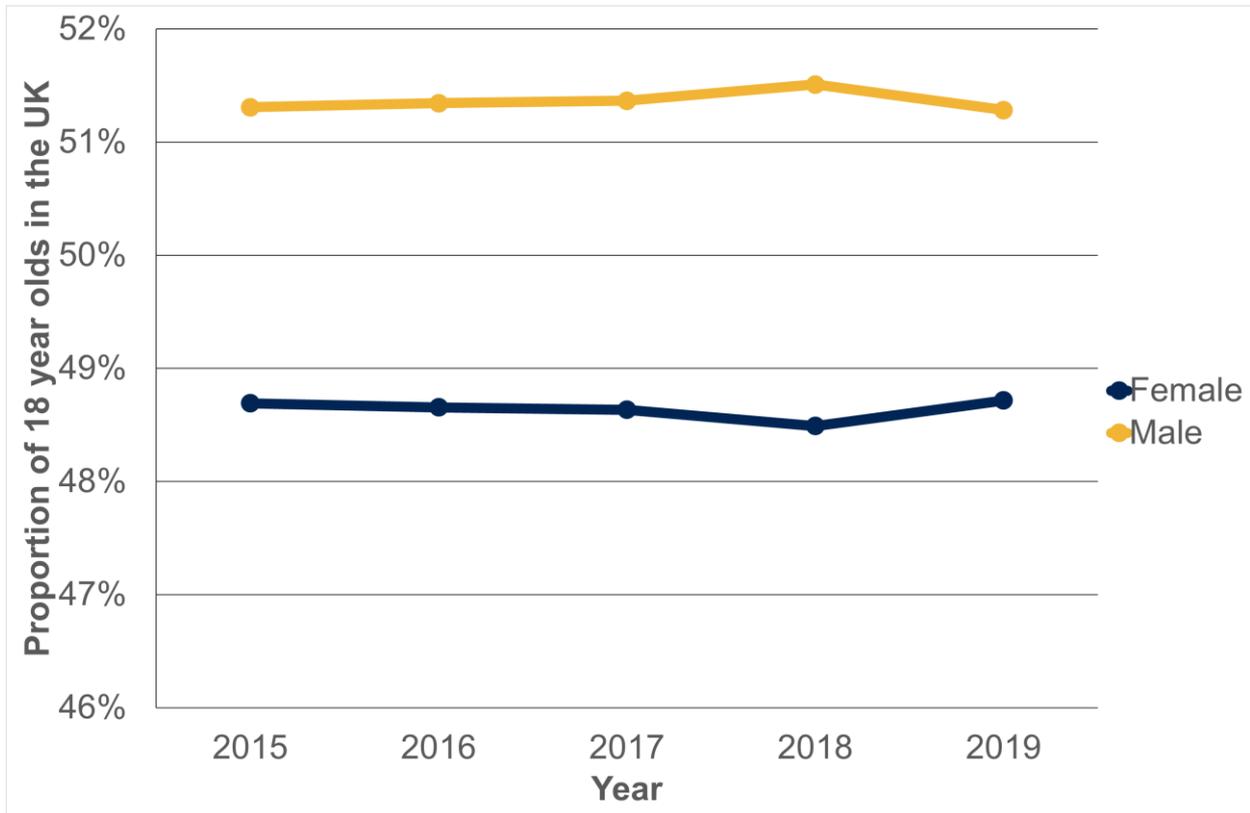


Figure A5: Proportion of UK 18-year-olds by sex



List of abbreviations

| Abbreviation | Meaning |
|---------------|--|
| ABCS | Associations between characteristics of students |
| ESFA | Education and Skills Funding Agency |
| FPE | Full-person equivalent |
| FSM | Free school meals |
| GO | Graduate Outcomes (survey) |
| HESA | Higher Education Statistics Agency |
| ILR | Individualised Learner Record |
| IMD | Index of Multiple Deprivation |
| KS4 | Key stage 4 |
| LSOA | Lower layer super output area |
| MSOA | Middle layer super output area |
| NPD | National Pupil Database |
| NSS | National Student Survey |
| OfS | Office for Students |
| ONS | Office for National Statistics |
| PGCE | Postgraduate Certificate in Education |
| POLAR | Participation of Local Areas (measure) |
| SKE | Subject knowledge enhancement |
| SOA | Super output area |
| SOC | Standard Occupational Classification |
| TEF | Teaching Excellence Framework |
| TorR | Taught or registered (view of provider) |
| TTWA | Travel to work area |
| TUNDRA | Tracking underrepresentation (a measure by area) |



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