

# Summary of equality and diversity experimental data

## Background

1. This data release contains equality and diversity data for students in higher education at English higher education providers. The data sources are the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) student record.
2. The experimental data shows the number of students in higher education by gender identity, sexual orientation, religion and belief and parental education. This data is reported for a subset of higher education provision defined by the reported coverage of these fields. This data constitutes Experimental Statistics.
3. This information is published as part of a broader approach to equality and diversity which includes OfS policies and action plans.

## Populations and methodology

4. This release includes students in higher education in the academic years 2015-16 to 2016-17. The student numbers are available for UK domiciled entrants to higher education (first year of study).
5. The equality and diversity characteristics included in the experimental data are reported for students attending providers that return data to the HESA student return, have data returned for a sufficient proportion of their students and have data of a good quality. For more details please see the Experimental Statistics methodology note.

## Findings

### Undergraduate students

6. In 2016-17, 0.9 per cent of UK undergraduate entrants reported identifying as a different gender from the one assigned at birth. This is a much smaller proportion than in the 2015-16 academic year (3.3 per cent).
7. There were 6.4 per cent of UK undergraduate entrants who actively chose to not share their religion or belief, a further 45.6 per cent reported having no religion or belief, 31.9 per cent were Christian and 9.1 per cent were Muslim. These proportions are similar to the entrants in the 2015-16 academic year.
8. With sexual orientation, 7.3 per cent refused to report their sexual orientation, this was 0.4 percentage points lower than in 2015-16. In 2016-17, 86.7 per cent of undergraduates entering higher education from the UK reported being heterosexual, 2.8 per cent reported being bisexual, 1.2 per cent were gay men, and 0.8 per cent were gay women.
9. For parental education, 40.4 per cent of UK undergraduate entrants reported that their parents had a higher education level qualification and an equal proportion (45.8 per cent) reported that

they did not, 8.1 per cent reported not knowing, and 5.7 per cent refused to answer the question.

## **Postgraduate students**

10. In 2016-17, 0.7 per cent of UK postgraduate entrants reported identifying as a different gender from the one assigned at birth.
11. There were 10.8 per cent of UK postgraduate entrants who actively chose to not share their religion or belief, a further 41.3 per cent reported having no religion or belief, 34.7 per cent were Christian and 5.7 per cent were Muslim.
12. Amongst UK entrants to postgraduate courses 11.3 per cent refused to report their sexual orientation, this was 1.4 percentage points lower than in 2015-16. In 2016-17, 82.7 per cent of postgraduates entering higher education reported being heterosexual, 2.2 per cent reported being bisexual, 2.2 per cent were gay men, and 1.0 per cent were gay women.
13. A higher proportion of postgraduate entrants than undergraduate entrants refused to answer this question, with 26.2 per cent actively not responding. Another 8.6 per cent reported not knowing, 32.3 per cent reported that their parents had a higher education level qualification and 32.9 per cent that they did not.

## **Feedback**

14. If you have any feedback on these statistics, please email Maggie Smart at [gapt@officeforstudents.org.uk](mailto:gapt@officeforstudents.org.uk).