

Office for
Students



Access and continuation data by ethnicity, provider tariff group and subject group

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Enquiries to official.statistics@officeforstudents.org.uk

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Background

1. This document summarises access and continuation data for full-time (or apprenticeship) UK-domiciled undergraduate entrants to English higher education providers between 2013-14 and 2018-19, split by ethnicity and provider tariff group. Continuation data is further split by subject group (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and non-STEM).
2. The analysis is divided into two parts: access data and continuation data. The access data presents counts and proportions of entrants, split by provider tariff group and ethnicity. The continuation data is split by ethnicity, provider tariff group and subject group. Details of the populations, methodology and definitions used in each section can be found at the end of this document. The associated datafiles for each of these sections are available alongside this report.¹
3. We combine data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) student record², HESA Student Alternative record³ and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) Individualised Learner Record (ILR)⁴ for the academic years 2013-14 to 2018-19.

¹ See www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/access-and-continuation-data-by-ethnicity-tariff-and-subject/.

² See <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c18051>

³ See <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c18054>

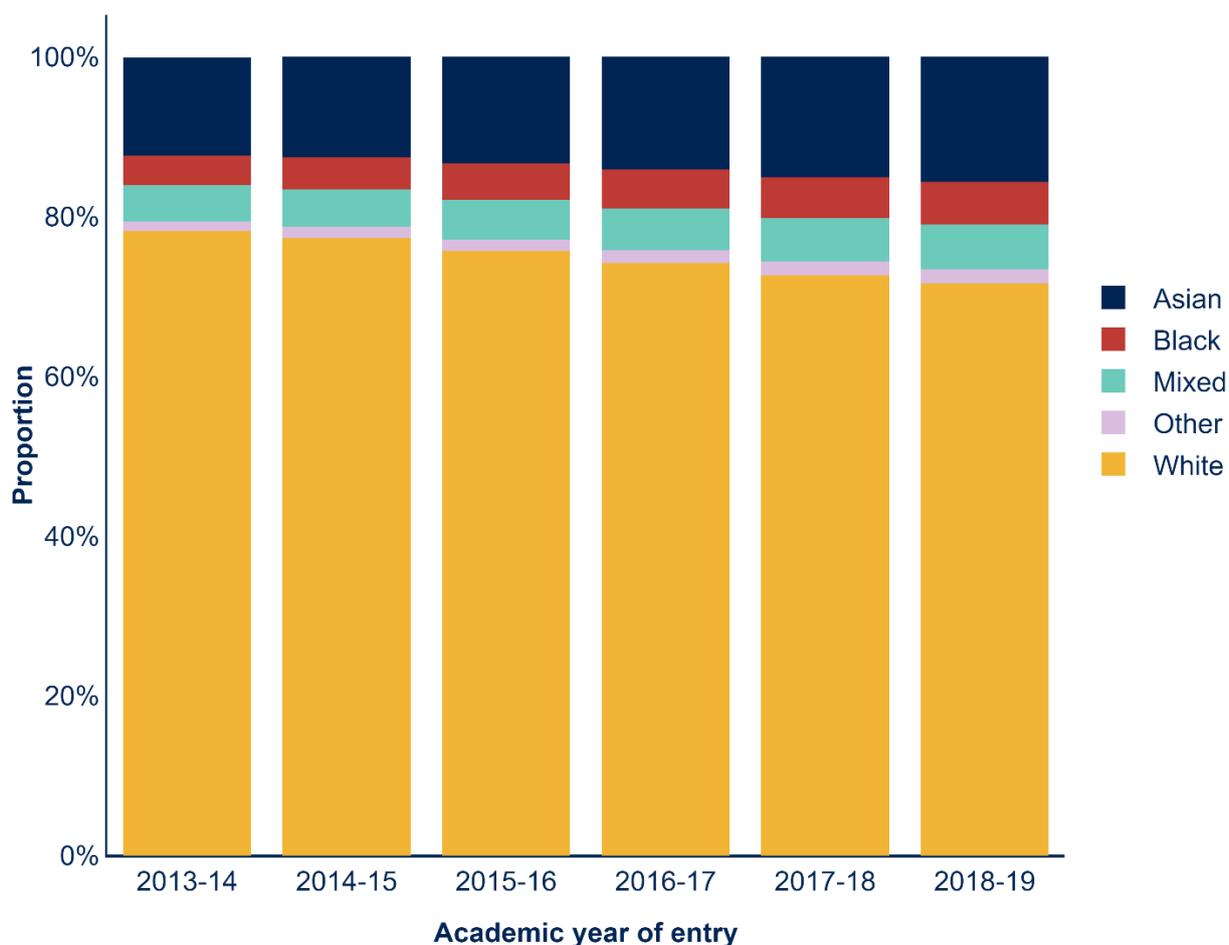
⁴ See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ilr-specification-validation-rules-and-appendices-2018-to-2019>.

Findings

Access data

- Figure 1 shows that the proportion of entrants to higher tariff providers who are from minority ethnic groups has been increasing year on year (6.7 percentage points between 2013-14 and 2018-19). There has also been an increase in the proportion of students from minority ethnic groups to other providers, but this change has been slightly smaller (an increase of 4.4 percentage points).
- There are a higher proportion of students from an Asian background at higher tariff providers (15.7 per cent in 2018-19) compared to other providers (13.3 per cent), and the same is true for entrants of mixed ethnicity (5.6 per cent compared to 4.6 per cent) and white entrants (71.6 per cent compared to 67.8 per cent).
- In 2018-19, only 5.3 per cent of entrants to higher tariff providers were black, compared with other providers, where 12.0 per cent of entrants were black.

Figure 1: Proportions of full-time (or apprenticeship) UK-domiciled undergraduate entrants to higher tariff providers by ethnicity



Continuation data

Provider tariff group

7. Entrants to higher tariff providers are more likely to continue into their second year of study compared to entrants to other providers, across all ethnicities and subject groups. In 2017-18, the continuation rate for white students at higher tariff providers was 96.1 per cent, 7.0 percentage points higher than white students at other providers (89.1 per cent). For students of colour, this difference was even larger: 8.2 percentage points for Asian entrants; 11.3 percentage points for black entrants; 9.7 percentage points for mixed ethnicity entrants; and 8.3 percentage points for entrants of other ethnicity.
8. Black entrants to non-higher tariff providers had the lowest continuation rates of any ethnic group in 2017-18 (83.0 per cent).
9. The gap in continuation rates between white and black students is wider in non-higher tariff providers (6.1 percentage points) than in higher tariff providers (1.8 percentage points).

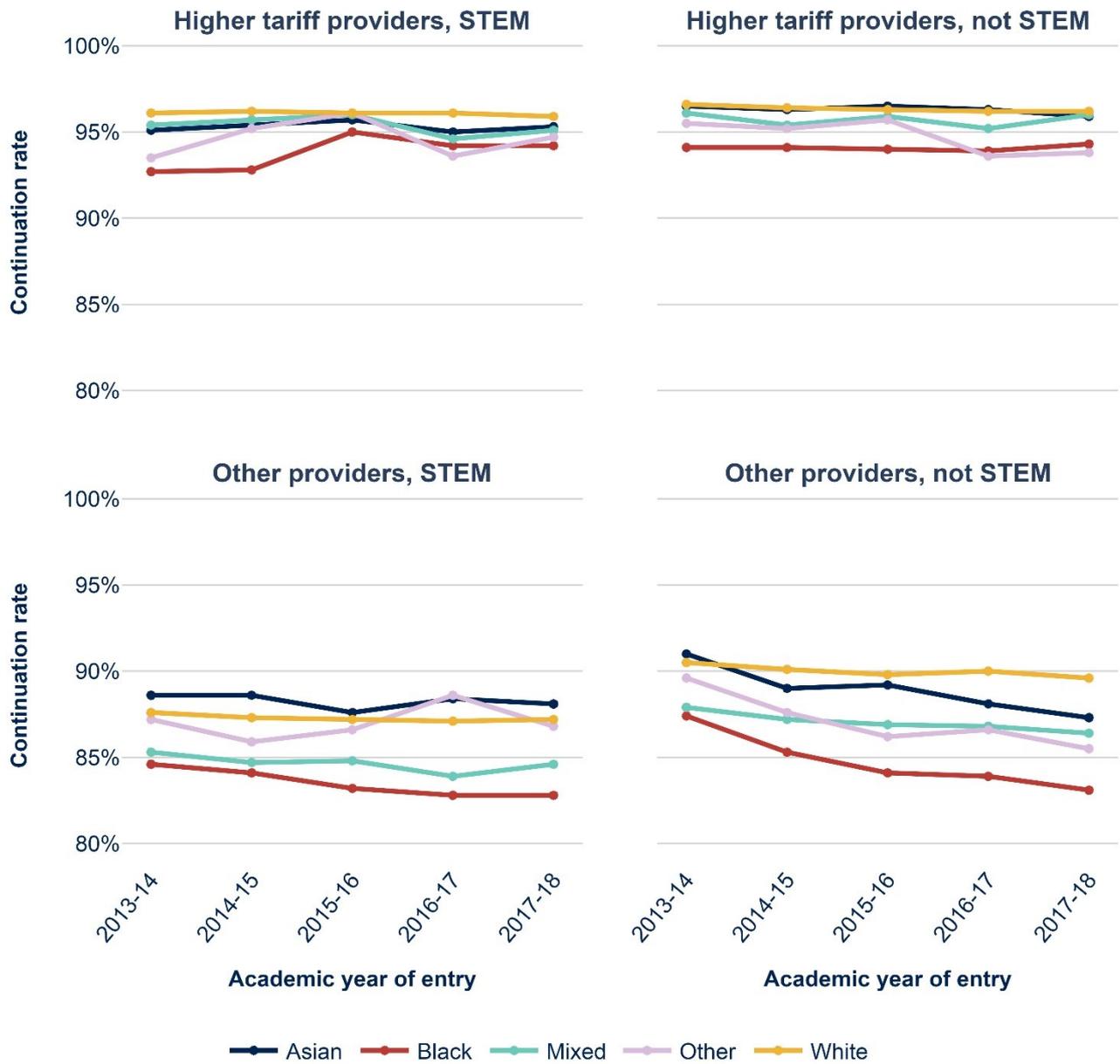
Subject group

10. Across all ethnic groups, continuation rates have fallen for entrants to non-STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) subjects. This decline has been most pronounced for black entrants to non-STEM subjects, falling 3.8 percentage points between 2013-14 (88.2 per cent) and 2017-18 (84.4 per cent). Meanwhile, continuation rates for STEM entrants have remained relatively stable across all ethnic groups.
11. In non-STEM subjects, white students have the highest continuation rates (91.3 per cent in 2017-18), while Asian students are most likely to continue in STEM subjects (90.8 per cent).
12. For both STEM and non-STEM entrants, in every academic year from 2013-14 to 2017-18, black students were least likely to continue into a second year of study.

Provider tariff group and subject group

13. Figure 2 shows that continuation rates are higher at higher tariff providers than other providers for both STEM and non-STEM subject groups. Continuation rates are also broadly higher amongst non-STEM entrants than those studying STEM subjects, for both provider tariff groups.
14. The decline in continuation rates amongst non-STEM entrants is more pronounced in non-higher tariff providers.
15. STEM entrants to non-higher tariff providers have the lowest continuation rates of any of these groups, with 82.8 per cent of black entrants in this group continuing into a second year of study in 2017-18. By contrast, white entrants to non-STEM subjects at higher tariff providers had the highest continuation rates in this year (96.2 per cent).

Figure 2: Continuation rates of full-time (or apprenticeship) UK-domiciled undergraduate entrants to English providers by ethnicity, provider tariff group and subject group



Population and methodology

Access data

16. The population under consideration for the access data is full-time (or apprenticeship) UK-domiciled undergraduate entrants to English higher education providers between 2013-14 and 2018-19.⁵ This is the same group of students analysed in the access pages of our access and participation dashboard.⁶ The total number of students equals the number of students in the access and participation population. It is split by provider tariff group and ethnicity.
17. For this data, counts have been rounded to the nearest five. Proportions are rounded to the nearest 0.1 per cent and are calculated from totals excluding students with unknown ethnicity.

Continuation data

18. The population under consideration for the continuation data is full-time (or apprenticeship) UK-domiciled undergraduate entrants to English higher education providers between 2013-14 and 2017-18. The most recent year available is 2017-18, due to the need for data one year and 14 days after entry to higher education.⁷ This is the same group of students analysed in the continuation pages of our access and participation dashboard.⁸
19. This data is split by provider tariff group, ethnicity and STEM subject group.
20. Before calculating continuation rates, we assign each student one of four continuation outcomes. These outcomes are considered hierarchical and defined below. Each student is assigned the first of these outcomes for which they qualify.
 - a. **Qualified:** Qualified with any formal higher education qualification from the original higher education provider within one year and 14 days of entry.
 - b. **Continuing:** Actively studying towards any formal higher education qualification at the original higher education provider one year and 14 days after entry.
 - c. **Transferred:** Found to be actively studying towards a formal higher education qualification at a different UK higher education provider within one year and 14 days of entry.
 - d. **Inactive:** None of the above.

⁵ See 'Regulatory indicators, methodology and rebuild instructions' at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/institutional-performance-measures/technical-documentation/.

⁶ Available at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/access-and-participation-data-dashboard/.

⁷ Available at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/institutional-performance-measures/technical-documentation/.

⁸ Available at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/access-and-participation-data-dashboard/.

21. For this analysis, we count 'qualified', 'continuing' and 'transferred' as positive outcomes when calculating the continuation rates. Only 'inactive' students are counted as having a negative outcome and included in non-continuation rates.
22. The underlying methodology used to calculate these continuation rates is described within technical documentation of the OfS's institutional performance measures.⁹ A description of the measure is included in the 'Regulatory indicators, methodology and rebuild instructions' document, with the full technical specification of the methodology available from the '2020 core algorithms' document.
23. For this data, counts have been rounded to the nearest 5 and continuation rates are rounded to the nearest 0.1 per cent.

Further definitions

Ethnicity

24. Ethnicity is reported by the student on entry to their higher education course. See 'IPETHNIC' in the OfS '2020 core algorithms' document for more detail.¹⁰

Provider tariff group

25. Providers are categorised according to their tariff group, using the same methodology as in our key performance measure (KPM) 2.¹¹ Higher tariff providers are the top third of English higher education providers (excluding specialist providers, previously funded by HEFCE) when ranked by average tariff score of UK domiciled undergraduate entrants. Tariff scores are defined using HESA data from academic years 2012-13 to 2014-15.

STEM subjects

26. STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) subjects are defined as courses in 'Natural and mathematical sciences' or 'Engineering, technology and computing', as per the subject groupings set out in our equality and diversity statistics methodology document.¹² This subject grouping is based on HESA's Common Aggregation Hierarchy 1 (CAH1) Version 1.3.¹³

⁹ Available at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/institutional-performance-measures/technical-documentation/.

¹⁰ Available at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/institutional-performance-measures/technical-documentation/.

¹¹ Available at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/about/measures-of-our-success/participation-performance-measures/gap-in-participation-at-higher-tariff-providers-between-the-most-and-least-represented-groups/.

¹² Available at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/equality-and-diversity-student-data/equality-and-diversity-data/.

¹³ See <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/innovation/hecos>.

Contact

27. If you have any questions or feedback on these pages, please contact Stanley Rudkin at official.statistics@officeforstudents.org.uk.



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