



Department  
for Education

**Widening Participation in Higher Education, England,  
2014/15 age cohort**

# Technical Note

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# 1. Progression to Higher Education by Free School Meal status

## The estimated percentages of state-funded and special school pupils aged 15, by free school meal status, who progressed to Higher Education by age 19

Covering Sections 1 and 2 of the release.

For the most recent data, the denominator used in this measure covers pupils aged 15 in 2010/11 in English state-funded schools and special schools (including non-maintained special schools). This denominator is broken down by free school meal (FSM) status.

The numerator is calculated by identifying pupils who progressed to UK Higher Education (HE) in either 2013/14 at age 18, or in 2014/15 at age 19. Alternative provision is not covered by this publication.

HE students are those on programmes of study for which the level of instruction is above that of level 3 of the National Qualifications Framework, e.g. courses leading to the Advanced Level of the General Certificate of Education (GCE A-levels), the Advanced Level of the Vocational Certificate of Education (VCE A-levels) or the Advanced Higher Grade and Higher Grade of the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Advanced Highers/Highers).

This measure is calculated using matched data. This matches the National Pupil Database to the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) Individualised Learner Record and the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Student Record. This allows pupils to be tracked from English schools at age 15 to higher education (HE) by age 19. The measure covers HE courses at both UK Higher Education Institutions and English Further Education Colleges. It must be noted, due to the matching procedures deployed, all figures in this publication should be treated as estimates, and may include a small amount of double counting where pupils attend more than one school. Further details of the matching procedure can be found in Section 4.

The following table helps to demonstrate how the cohort is tracked through to HE entry.

Academic Year	Age at start of academic year	Stage of Education
2010/11	15	GCSEs or equivalent (Key Stage 4)
2011/12	16	AS Levels or equivalent (Key Stage 5)
2012/13	17	A Levels or equivalent (Key Stage 5)
2013/14	18	Entry to HE
2014/15	19	Entry to HE (following a gap year)

Free school meals may be claimed if parents receive any of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income (as assessed by HM Revenue & Customs) that does not exceed £16,190
- Working Tax Credit 'run-on' - the payment someone may receive for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit

### **Caveats**

1. There may be pupils who are eligible for FSM but do not claim for a number of reasons. Such pupils will not be classified as in receipt of FSM for the purposes of this measure.
2. Pupils may have claimed FSM in earlier school years, but not when age 15. Such pupils will not be recorded as in receipt of FSM in this measure.
3. This measure only tracks entry to HE by age 19. A number of pupils may enter HE at a later age and are not included in this measure.
4. Prior attainment is not accounted for in this measure. Many pupils will not continue their education; therefore will not hold the qualifications to progress to HE.
5. Due to the matching procedures deployed, all figures in this measure should be treated as estimates.

Table A below gives the figures underlying the percentages given in Figure 1. Note that these figures are obtained from the matched data which has been produced for the purpose of calculating progression rates; other sources may give different pupil numbers.

The table shows that there were an estimated 79,305 pupils who were in receipt of Free Schools Meals at age 15 in 2010/11 who represented around 14% of all 15 year olds in state-funded and special schools on the matched dataset. It is estimated that around 9% of Higher Education entrants had received Free School Meals when they were aged 15. The table shows that the proportion of 15 year old pupils with Free School Meals has remained broadly steady at around 12% to 14% between 2004/05 and 2010/11. The estimated percentage of Higher Education entrants who received Free School Meals at the age of 15 was stable from 2008/09 to 2011/12 at 7% but has since risen to 8% in 2012/13 and 2013/14 and 9% in 2014/15.

**Table A: Estimated number and percentage of 15 year old pupils from state-funded schools by Free School Meal status who entered HE by age 19**

Academic Years 2008/09 to 2014/15

UK Higher Education Providers and English Further Education Colleges

	<b>Pupils aged 15<sup>[1]</sup></b>	<b>% of all<sup>[2]</sup></b>	<b>Estimated number who entered HE by age 19</b>	<b>% of all<sup>[2]</sup></b>
	<b>in 2004/05</b>		<b>in 2008/09</b>	
<b>FSM<sup>[3]</sup></b>	80,320	14%	13,770	7%
<b>Non-FSM<sup>[3]</sup></b>	503,125	86%	175,555	93%
<b>All</b>	583,445	100%	189,325	100%
	<b>in 2005/06</b>		<b>in 2009/10</b>	
<b>FSM<sup>[3]</sup></b>	78,350	13%	14,305	7%
<b>Non-FSM<sup>[3]</sup></b>	515,130	86%	186,170	93%
<b>Unrecorded FSM status<sup>[4]</sup></b>	8,460	1%	195	0%
<b>All</b>	601,940	100%	200,670	100%
	<b>in 2006/07</b>		<b>in 2010/11</b>	
<b>FSM<sup>[3]</sup></b>	77,125	13%	15,220	7%
<b>Non-FSM<sup>[3]</sup></b>	523,400	86%	196,505	93%
<b>Unrecorded FSM status<sup>[4]</sup></b>	7,325	1%	195	0%
<b>All</b>	607,850	100%	211,920	100%
	<b>in 2007/08</b>		<b>in 2011/12</b>	
<b>FSM<sup>[3]</sup></b>	74,955	12%	15,530	7%
<b>Non-FSM<sup>[3]</sup></b>	522,555	86%	202,820	93%
<b>Unrecorded FSM status<sup>[4]</sup></b>	7,350	1%	285	0%
<b>All</b>	604,860	100%	218,635	100%
	<b>in 2008/09</b>		<b>in 2012/13</b>	
<b>FSM<sup>[3]</sup></b>	74,215	13%	16,710	8%
<b>Non-FSM<sup>[3]</sup></b>	502,750	86%	200,220	92%
<b>Unrecorded FSM status<sup>[4]</sup></b>	4,780	1%	240	0%
<b>All</b>	581,745	100%	217,170	100%
	<b>in 2009/10</b>		<b>in 2013/14</b>	
<b>FSM<sup>[3]</sup></b>	77,430	13%	17,365	8%
<b>Non-FSM<sup>[3]</sup></b>	500,020	86%	196,135	92%
<b>Unrecorded FSM status<sup>[4]</sup></b>	6,635	1%	175	0%
<b>All</b>	584,085	100%	213,675	100%
	<b>in 2010/11</b>		<b>in 2014/15</b>	
<b>FSM<sup>[3]</sup></b>	79,305	14%	18,780	9%
<b>Non-FSM<sup>[3]</sup></b>	486,785	85%	201,365	91%
<b>Unrecorded FSM status<sup>[4]</sup></b>	6,530	1%	205	0%
<b>All</b>	572,625	100%	220,350	100%

[1] Numbers of pupils according to the matched data used to produce this table; figures may vary from other sources.

[2] Percentage figures are rounded and calculated from unrounded data; rounded figures may appear to have inconsistencies between totals and sums of constituent parts.

[3] FSM and Non-FSM refer to whether pupils were receiving Free School Meals or not.

[4] A small number of pupils had no FSM status recorded in the data used.

## 2. Progression to Higher Education/Most Selective Higher Education by school type

**The estimated percentages of A level and equivalent students, by school and college type, who progressed to higher education and the most selective higher education institutions by age 19**  
Covering Section 3 of the release.

For the most recent data, the denominator is defined as pupils aged 17 in 2012/13 who were entered for A levels or equivalent level 3 qualifications at English schools and colleges. This denominator is broken down by the school/college type: state, selective state or independent.

The numerator is calculated by identifying the pupils who progress to UK HE in 2013/14 at age 18, or in 2014/15 at age 19, and of those, which pupils progress to the most selective Higher Education Providers (HEPs). Alternative provision is not covered by this publication.

HE students are those students on programmes of study for which the level of instruction is above that of level 3 of the National Qualifications Framework, e.g. courses leading to the Advanced Level of the General Certificate of Education (GCE A-levels), the Advanced Level of the Vocational Certificate of Education (VCE A-levels) or the Advanced Higher Grade and Higher Grade of the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Advanced Highers/Highers). This measure only covers HE courses at UK Higher Education Institutions and excludes HE courses at English Further Education Colleges.

This measure is calculated using matched data. This matches the National Pupil Database to the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) Individualised Learner Record and the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Student Record. It must be noted, due to the matching procedures deployed, all figures in this measure should be treated as estimates. Further details of the matching procedure can be found in Section 4.

The following school types make up the state school/college group in this measure:

- Academy – Sponsor Led
- Community
- Voluntary aided
- Voluntary controlled
- Foundation
- City Technology College
- Community special
- Foundation special
- Further Education
- Academy – Special
- Academy – Converter
- Free School – mainstream
- Special Free School
- Converter Special Academy
- Free School – UTC
- Free School – Studio School
- Free School – 16-19

Independent schools include the following school types:

- Non-maintained special
- Independent School approved to take pupils with Special Educational Needs
- Independent
- Independent special

## Caveats

1. Prior attainment is not accounted for in this measure. Many pupils may not achieve the required Level 3 qualifications to progress to HE.
2. Due to the matching procedures deployed, all figures in this measure should be treated as estimates.

## **Most Selective HE**

The “most selective” Higher Education Providers (HEPs) are defined as the top third of HE providers when ranked by mean UCAS tariff score from the top three A level grades of entrants.

This measure is calculated using matched data from the DfE National Pupil Database, the Skills Funding Agency Individualised Learner Record and the Higher Education Statistics Agency Student Record. It uses pupils aged 17 studying A levels at schools and colleges in England, who have progressed to UK HEPs by age 19. It excludes HE courses at Further Education colleges. It takes the mean UCAS tariff score from the top three A levels of these entrants to each HEP. Students with no A level points recorded on the database are excluded from the calculations that identify the most selective group of HEPs. Providers with fewer than seven entrants are also excluded from the calculations.

This is a way of grouping HEPs for statistical purposes using available information. It does not cover all students and all qualifications and is not intended as a comprehensive measure of qualifications on entry to Higher Education. Users should be aware that the Higher Education sector has a diverse mix of institutions and courses, so any grouping of HEPs has limitations as an indicator of quality.

The HEPs included in this group change every year; although only a small number of HEPs move in or out of the top third group each year. The calculation is restricted to the top three A level attainment; pupils who study other qualifications at Key Stage 5 will be excluded.

Institutions with a considerable proportion of entrants who studied a combination of A levels and other qualifications may appear to have low scores. As the analysis covers students from schools and colleges in England, some institutions in other UK countries have scores based on small numbers of students. As this measure uses matched data, all figures should be treated as estimates.

The UCAS points used in the calculation of most selective HE are shown below:

A level Grade	UCAS points
A*	140
A	120
B	100
C	80
D	60
E	40

Note these relate to the pre-2017 UCAS tariff points.

More details on tariff points and the changes from September 2017 are available on the UCAS website:

[UCAS undergraduate tariff points](#)

For each Higher Education Institution, Table B shows the estimated mean tariff score of entrants and whether the institution is included in the most selective group.

**Table B: Estimated mean UCAS tariff score from the top three A-level grades of entrants to each Higher Education Provider (HEP) by age 19 in 2014/15<sup>[1]</sup>**  
**From schools and colleges in England**

Institution	Mean points	Most Selective group
Aberystwyth University	225.1	
Anglia Ruskin University	184.3	
Arts University Bournemouth	238.1	
Aston University	259.3	MS
Bangor University	218.2	
Bath Spa University	223.4	
Birkbeck College	189.3	
Birmingham City University	194.2	
Bishop Grosseteste University	195.1	
Bournemouth University	231.3	
Brunel University	248.9	
Buckinghamshire New University	173.0	
Canterbury Christ Church University	193.3	
Cardiff Metropolitan University	193.6	
Cardiff University	305.4	MS
Central School of Speech and Drama	261.9	MS
City University	264.8	MS
College of St Mark and St John	172.6	
Conservatoire for Dance and Drama	248.9	
Courtauld Institute of Art	340.7	MS
Coventry University	198.2	
De Montfort University	199.6	
Edge Hill University	202.8	
Edinburgh Napier University	232.6	
Falmouth University	237.4	
Glasgow Caledonian University	221.5	
Glasgow School of Art	326.4	MS
Glyndwr University	168.5	
Goldsmiths College	264.2	MS
Guildhall School of Music and Drama	265.0	MS
Harper Adams University College	219.4	
Heriot-Watt University	267.9	MS
Heythrop College	237.1	
Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine	385.6	MS
Institute of Education	160.7	
Kings College London	339.5	MS
Kingston University	201.6	
Leeds College of Art	245.1	
Leeds Metropolitan University	191.9	
Leeds Trinity University	193.7	



Institution	Mean points	Most Selective group
Liverpool Hope University	195.0	
Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts	231.8	
Liverpool John Moores University	208.5	
London Metropolitan University	160.6	
London School of Economics and Political Science	368.7	MS
London South Bank University	168.4	
Loughborough University	298.4	MS
Manchester Metropolitan University	218.2	
Middlesex University	177.4	
Newman University	194.7	
Norwich University of the Arts	234.0	
Nottingham Trent University	222.9	
Open University	199.7	
Oxford Brookes University	246.5	
Plymouth College of Art	180.8	
Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh	212.6	
Queen Mary and Westfield College	307.1	MS
Queens University of Belfast	299.6	MS
Ravensbourne	216.2	
Robert Gordon University	257.6	
Roehampton University	200.4	
Rose Bruford College	240.4	
Royal Academy of Music	275.0	MS
Royal Agricultural University	222.6	
Royal College of Music	267.4	MS
Royal Conservatoire of Scotland	282.5	MS
Royal Holloway and Bedford New College	293.9	MS
Royal Northern College of Music	257.7	
Royal Veterinary College	318.5	MS
School of Oriental and African Studies	303.3	MS
Sheffield Hallam University	215.3	
Southampton Solent University	175.7	
St Georges Hospital Medical School	315.2	MS
St Marys University College, Twickenham	204.1	
Staffordshire University	171.3	
Swansea University	240.3	
Teesside University	172.6	
Trinity Laban Conservatoire	254.4	
University Campus Suffolk	192.8	
University College Birmingham	154.7	
University College London	364.0	MS
University for the Creative Arts	200.6	
University of Aberdeen	278.4	MS
University of Abertay Dundee	244.3	

Institution	Mean points	Most Selective group
University of Bath	353.0	MS
University of Bedfordshire	143.8	
University of Birmingham	328.1	MS
University of Bolton	165.1	
University of Bradford	211.9	
University of Brighton	232.9	
University of Bristol	356.8	MS
University of Buckingham	242.4	
University of Cambridge	401.3	MS
University of Central Lancashire	205.2	
University of Chester	213.7	
University of Chichester	196.4	
University of Cumbria	179.9	
University of Derby	184.0	
University of Dundee	253.4	
University of Durham	365.0	MS
University of East Anglia	296.6	MS
University of East London	168.2	
University of Edinburgh	347.9	MS
University of Essex	232.6	
University of Exeter	337.6	MS
University of Glamorgan	213.6	
University of Glasgow	309.2	MS
University of Gloucestershire	207.0	
University of Greenwich	203.5	
University of Hertfordshire	204.4	
University of Huddersfield	205.3	
University of Hull	232.3	
University of Keele	257.2	
University of Kent	261.1	MS
University of Lancaster	323.7	MS
University of Leeds	326.2	MS
University of Leicester	292.0	MS
University of Lincoln	226.6	
University of Liverpool	302.8	MS
University of Manchester	321.4	MS
University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne	317.5	MS
University of Northampton	180.1	
University of Northumbria at Newcastle	231.2	
University of Nottingham	330.0	MS
University of Oxford	387.3	MS
University of Plymouth	219.3	
University of Portsmouth	216.0	
University of Reading	285.5	MS
University of Salford	214.0	

Institution	Mean points	Most Selective group
University of Sheffield	330.3	MS
University of Southampton	317.5	MS
University of St Andrews	361.4	MS
University of Stirling	242.2	
University of Strathclyde	281.2	MS
University of Sunderland	195.1	
University of Surrey	302.8	MS
University of Sussex	297.2	MS
University of the Arts, London	248.6	
University of the Highlands and Islands	164.4	
University of the West of England, Bristol	215.8	
University of the West of Scotland	203.6	
University of Ulster	233.0	
University of Wales, Trinity St David	184.5	
University of Warwick	351.8	MS
University of West London	168.8	
University of Westminster	219.1	
University of Winchester	215.7	
University of Wolverhampton	159.8	
University of Worcester	200.8	
University of York	326.6	MS
Writtle College	191.4	
York St John University	202.6	
University of Sheffield	330.3	MS

[1] Providers with fewer than 7 entrants are excluded from the calculations.

### 3. Graduate outcomes by social background

#### **Graduates in full-time employment six months after graduating: Estimated proportions of young graduates in different occupational classifications by social background on entry to Higher Education.**

Covers Section 4 in the release.

Figure 7 covers English domiciled first degree graduates who studied full-time, were aged 20 to 22 at the start of their last academic year in UK Higher Education Institutions and were in full-time employment (paid or unpaid) six months after graduating. Data is taken from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Student Record, and the Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey. Only those with Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) information in both sources are covered.

The Figure shows the SOC groups on entry to Higher Education and in employment, split two ways into the “top three” group and the others. The background SOC on entry to Higher Education will often reflect the occupation of the student’s parents, while the employment SOC will reflect the occupation of the graduate.

The table below gives the description of the SOC groups.

SOC Major Group	Description
1	Managers, directors and senior officials
2	Professional occupations
3	Associate professional and technical occupations
4	Administrative and secretarial occupations
5	Skilled trades occupations
6	Caring, leisure and other service occupations
7	Sales and customer service occupations
8	Process, plant and machine operatives
9	Elementary occupations

SOC Codes 1 to 3 are a widely used approximation of graduate level occupations.

The figures express the number of employed graduates in different occupation groups as a percentage of the total number of graduates who were in full-time employment and therefore depend on the number of leavers in each graduating cohort that were in full-time employment six months after graduation. The number of employed leavers from DLHE fluctuates year-on-year depending on the overall size of the graduating cohort, survey response rate, economic and other factors (Table C).

The 2014/15 graduating cohort was much smaller than the 2013/14 cohort, which is explained by there being fewer entrants in 2012/13 who would typically have finished their studies by 2014/15. The number of employed leavers in 2015/16 was relatively smaller than in previous years because the DLHE response rate was lower, and a larger share of graduates had entered further study (rather than employment) than in previous years.

**Table C: English domiciled full-time first degree graduates aged 20-22 by graduation year**

Year	Graduating cohort	DLHE employed leavers (full-time)
2011/12	192,060	77,175
2012/13	200,345	86,305
2013/14	213,460	95,725
2014/15	192,155	86,680
2015/16	198,485	84,035

Source: DfE analysis of the HESA Student Record and DLHE survey

## SOC on entry to Higher Education

SOC data on entry to Higher Education is collected by UCAS and appears on the HESA Student Record. It is therefore not available for students who did not apply via UCAS or did not provide this information on their UCAS application. Around 80% of young entrants have SOC details recorded.

The occupation question on the UCAS form was changed for entrants in 2008/09 and changed back in the following year. It previously asked: *if you are under 21, please give the occupation of your parent, step-parent or guardian who earns the most. If he or she is retired or unemployed, give the most recent occupation. If you are 21 or over, please give your own occupation.* For 2008/09 the age criteria was replaced with whether the applicant was in full-time education. Young entrants not in full-time education would therefore give their own occupation in 2008/09, but a parent's occupation in other years. This may have caused a shift from most advantaged to less advantaged SOC groups, distorting the trend. 2008/09 entrants completing 3 year courses graduated in 2010/11, those who deferred entry or completed 4 year courses graduated in 2011/12. For this reason figures on 2011/12 graduates are not comparable with other years.

For entrants in 2014/15 onwards, the SOC groups have been reported based on the SOC2010 rather than SOC2000 classification. The main change that distinguish SOC2010 from SOC2000 is a stricter definition of managers in SOC2010. The change implies that some managerial occupations that would have previously been included in SOC group 1 now fall in SOC group 4. This may cause a shift from most advantaged to less advantaged SOC groups going forward. However, at the moment the impact of this change is minimal because only a small number of students who entered higher education in 2014/15 and 2015/16 have already graduated by 2015/16.

## SOC in employment

The Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey, used to derive Standard Occupation Classification in employment, has a response rate of around 80%. The SOC groups in the DLHE are reported based on the SOC2010 classification.

Not all graduates will be settled into their career path six months after graduating. Figures should be treated as estimates and considered to be broadly indicative rather than precise measures, due to data limitations.

## 4. Details of the matching process

Sections 1, 2 and 3 use matched data from the DfE National Pupil Database, the HESA Student Record and the SFA ILR.

The National Pupil Database (NPD) contains administrative data on all pupils in schools in England, collected by the Department for Education. Key Stage 1 (KS1) to Key Stage 5 (KS5) data and Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) records were matched to the Higher Education Statistics Agency's (HESA) Student Record and the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) Individualised Learner Record (ILR).

The matching process allows for school pupils to be tracked through to Higher Education. Although it is not possible to know for certain - it is highly unlikely that matching errors would cause the estimate to vary by more than the level of rounding used. The match achieved is called a "fuzzy match" where we rely on names, postcodes, dates of birth, etc and there is some potential for minor errors in the matching process. For this reason, the figures are deemed estimates due to the reliability of the matching procedure used and are subsequently rounded to allow for a small margin of error that arises as result of the matching procedure deployed.

## 5. Changes from previous release

There have been a small number of changes since the previous release to improve the accuracy of the measures.

The changes are:

- Pupils who were previously excluded from the free school meals analysis due to missing school type are now included in the analysis
- A small number of schools have been reclassified as independent from selective state. The selective state grouping now relates to 163 grammar schools in England
- Students who attended both FE and HE institutions are now included in the school type analysis having previously been excluded
- The calculation of average tariff score has been amended to exclude pupils with zero tariff scores

These changes have had a limited impact on the measures.

Data has been revised for previous years to ensure consistency and comparability across years.



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