

# Annual Monitoring Report

2022 / 2023

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## Introduction

This report highlights the main findings from the National Youth Agency's (NYA's) Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) Annual Monitoring survey, which HEIs are required to complete as a part of their Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) validation process.

The data collected provides a clear picture of the professional youth work training landscape in England and helps inform the NYA's workforce strategy, as well as enable HEIs to make informed decisions about the development of their youth work courses.

The report also provides insights for the Education and Training Standards Committee (ETS) in recognising trends in the higher education sector.

## Executive summary

The higher education landscape has fluctuated in parallel to the decline in local authority provision, due to austerity measures, for well over a decade, resulting in fewer opportunities for graduates. This has been reflected in the closure of some degree courses, however the range of routes into a degree-level qualification has widened with the introduction of the new youth worker Level 6 apprenticeship, offering an alternative route for entrants to the sector, particularly for those already working in the sector for whom a degree qualification was beyond reach.

A growing recognition of the value of youth workers within multi agency teams by policy makers and the publication of the updated Local Authority Statutory Duty under Section 507B of the Education Act, published in October 2023, provided clarity on what a 'sufficient' local offer looks like and there is now on an upward trajectory in the job market.

The NYA has a vision of attracting some 10,000 new professionally qualified youth workers to the sector by 2030 in order to meet the growing job market and is looking to work with its HEI partners and other training bodies to promote youth work as a career and the range of training routes into the sector, to meet the needs of employers.

In 2023 seven providers started their Level 6 degree apprenticeship programmes enrolling almost 150 learners (149). The availability of funding through its partnership with NatWest bank provides an opportunity for employers to build the skills of existing staff and grow their teams to meet the needs of young people in their area.

## Programmes

### The number of postgraduate programmes has increased

In 2022/23 there were 22 HEIs offering 30 programmes, of which all provided full data for this report.

The number of postgraduate programmes has risen steadily in the last four years from seven to 12 programmes, including a new programme in the East of England region where no youth work course has been available since 2018/19. The number of undergraduate programmes has remained stable at 18 courses during the same time period but is now at risk of decline as eight are paused or teaching-out. Apprenticeship degrees introduced in September 2023 will increase the number of courses represented in the data at undergraduate level next year.

## Recruitment and diversity

### Diversity has increased

Recruitment of new students has dropped to the lowest point since data collection began in 2003. 233 students were recruited in the past year. This is driven largely by reduced recruitment of undergraduates. Recruitment of undergraduate numbers has dropped from 182 to 117 between 2021/22 and 2022/23. Postgraduate recruitment has only dropped slightly, from 120 to 106 students.

There are positive trends in gender diversity. The proportion of new male students is 28 per cent, the highest it has been since 2013 -14. The proportion of people who identify as genders other than male or female is four per cent, substantially higher than the proportion of the English population which identified as other gender identities in the [2021 national Census](#).

The proportion of disabled students has increased by 10 per cent since last year, from 18 per cent to 28 per cent, although the proportion of students registered as disabled has stayed the same for the last three years at four per cent.

## Staffing

### Almost 70 per cent of HEI staff delivering youth work courses are JNC qualified

It is important that professionally qualified staff are delivering teaching in HEIs to ensure the quality of provision in line with NYA's standards and helping to build the identity of the sector.

The latest HEI data is encouraging in that the mean number of staff employed is 3.9 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff per programme, equating to 5.9 students for every member of staff. Of these 67 per cent are JNC qualified. Postgraduate courses have fewer students for each FTE staff member. The mean number of staff for undergraduate courses is 6.7 and the mean for postgraduate courses is 2.6.

## Placements

### Numbers of placement agencies per student has increased

The proportion of placement supervisors that are JNC qualified has dropped by 10 per cent between 2021/22 and 2022/23 to 66 per cent. The number of placement agencies and placement supervisors per student has risen substantially since last year. There are now 0.93 placement agencies per student compared to 0.78 in 2021/22, and 0.88 placement supervisors per student compared to 0.69 last year, suggesting some buoyancy in the jobs market.

## Outcomes

### Completion rates highest in past five years

Completion rates for full time Level 6 students are notably higher than they have been at any point in the last five years, rising from 75 per cent to 87 per cent since last year.

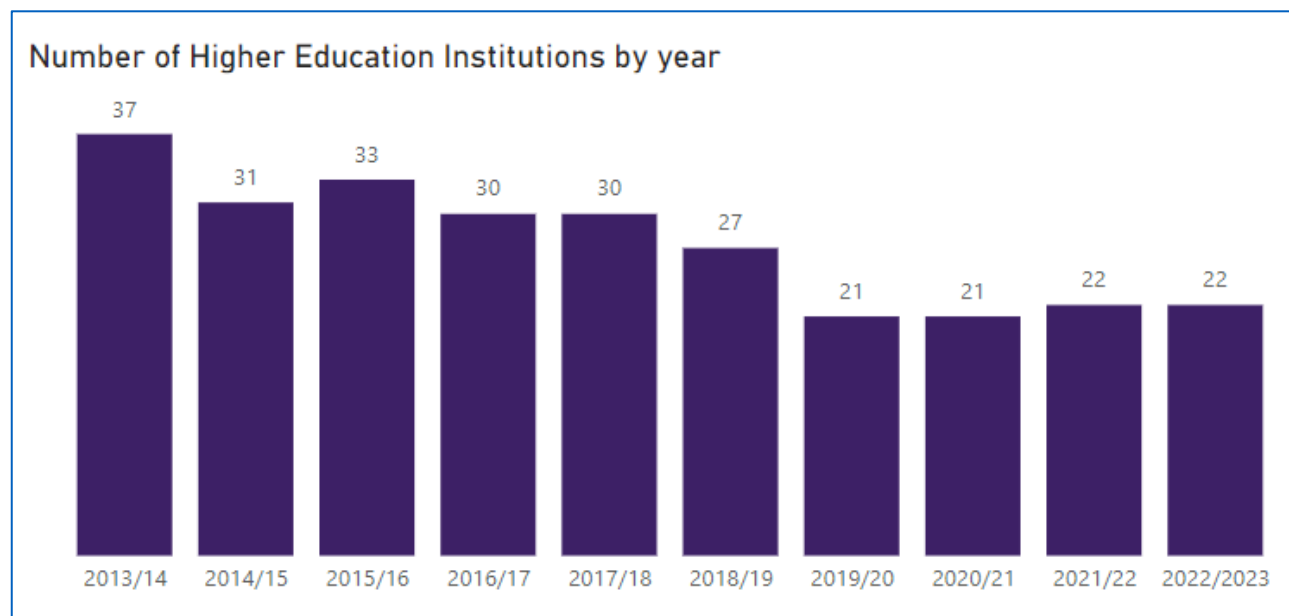
Of data that HEIs were able to collect, no graduates were unemployed in the last two years.

# Analysis

## HEIs and programmes

### The number of undergraduate courses has remained stable

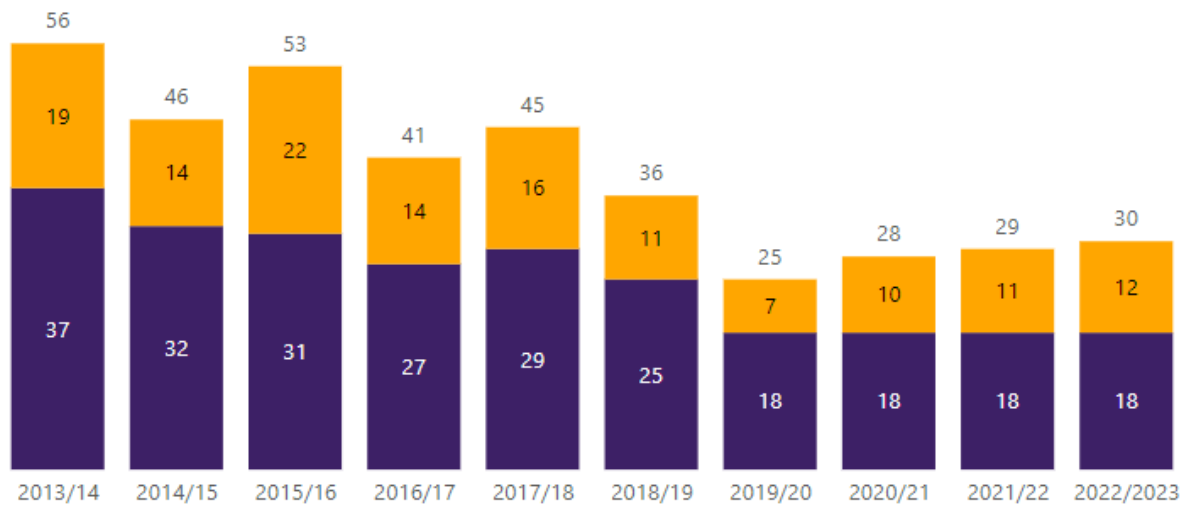
The number of HEIs providing data remains largely consistent over the last four years following a decline 2013/14 to 2019/20. In 2021/22 the number of HEIs increased by one, and the increase has been maintained in 2022/2023.



The number of courses mirrors this trajectory, falling from 2013/14 to 2019/20. The number of undergraduate courses has remained stable for the last four years, while the number of postgraduate courses has risen slightly to bring the total number of courses in 2022/23 to 30. However, only 21 of these are actively recruiting: three programmes are paused (all undergraduate courses), and six are teaching-out (five of these are undergraduate courses). This may mean the number of undergraduate courses on offer declines in future years. Apprenticeship degrees introduced in September 2023 will increase the number of courses represented in the data at undergraduate level next year.

## Number of courses by year and course level

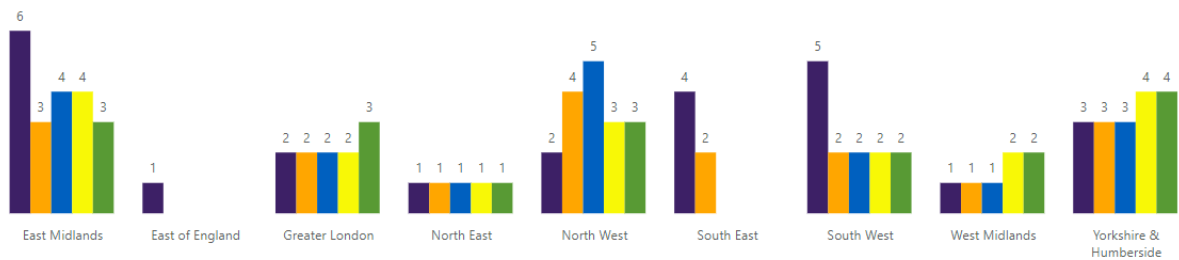
● Undergraduate ● Postgraduate



The number of courses per region is largely unchanged from last year, at both postgraduate and undergraduate level: East Midlands has lost one undergraduate course, Greater London has gained one undergraduate course, and the East of England has gained one postgraduate course. This is the first course in East of England since 2018/19.

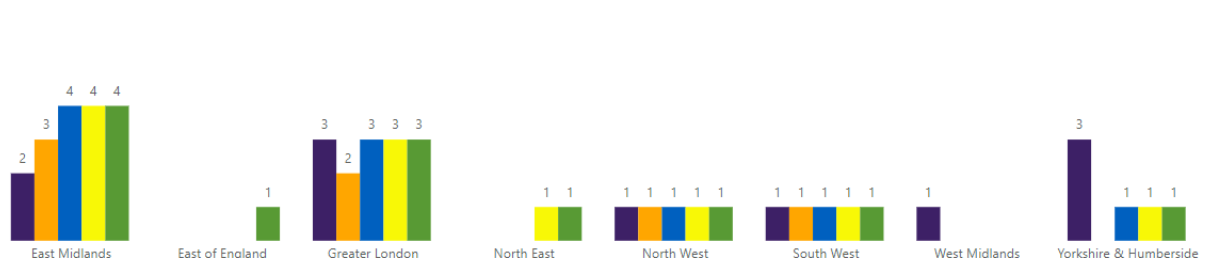
### Number of undergraduate courses by region

● 2018/19 ● 2019/20 ● 2020/21 ● 2021/22 ● 2022/2023



### Number of postgraduate courses by region

● 2018/19 ● 2019/20 ● 2020/21 ● 2021/22 ● 2022/2023



## Staffing

### 67 per cent of HEI teachers are JNC qualified

The average number of staff on each programme is similar across programmes and across course levels, with an overall mean of 3.9 FTE staff per programme. 67 per cent of these are JNC qualified. Undergraduate staff are more likely to be JNC qualified than postgraduate staff: 70 per cent undergraduate staff are JNC qualified compared to 42 per cent of postgraduate staff.

Postgraduate courses have fewer students for each FTE staff member. The mean for undergraduate courses is 6.7 and the mean for postgraduate courses is 2.6.

	Undergraduate	Postgraduate	Combined course levels
Mean staff on programme	3.6	5.0	3.9
Number of students for each staff member	6.7	2.6	5.9
Proportion of staff JNC qualified	70%	42%*	67%

\*54% with outlier removed, one HEI had an extreme ratio of JNC qualified to non-JNC staff

HEIs ensure that staff who are not JNC-qualified are suitable through a combination of relevant youth work experience, qualifications and research expertise. Non-JNC staff may have previous or current experience as youth workers. Many programmes use practicing researchers and staff who hold, or are working towards, PhDs in youth work and related fields. Some teaching staff qualifications relate to combined programmes such as Theology or Anthropology and Youth Work.

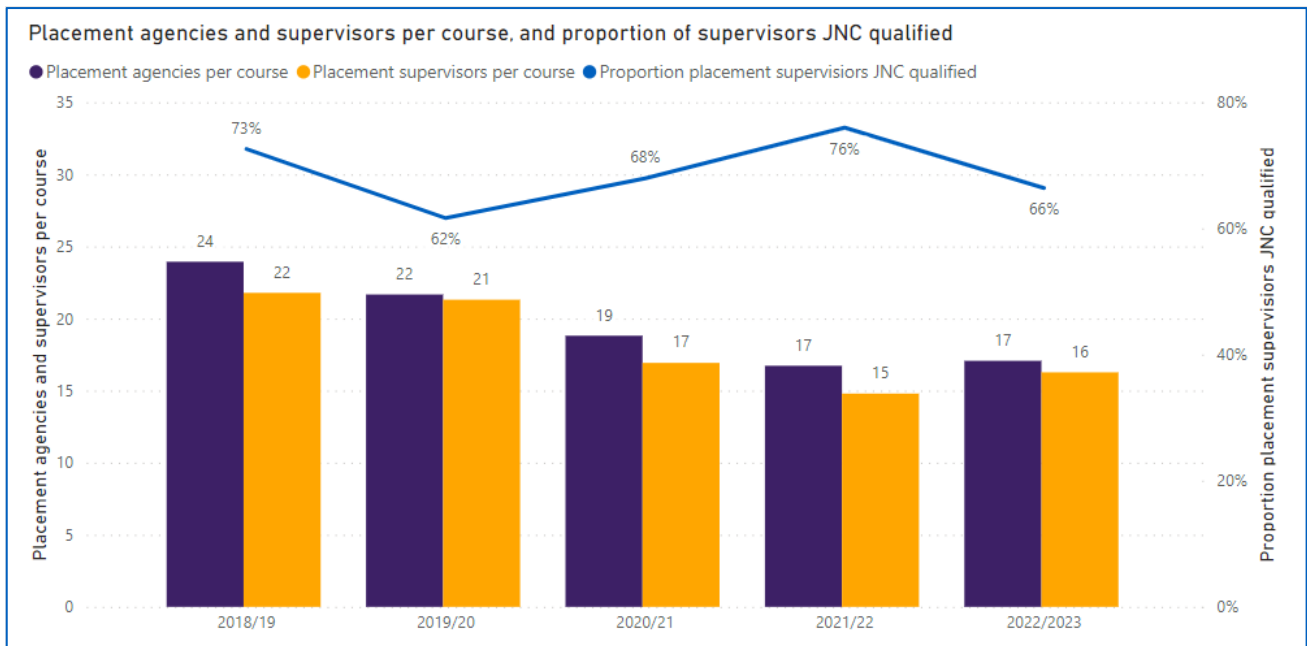
Data for staffing has been collected differently to previous years, so it is not comparable. Please see previous reports for analysis up to 2021/22. All staffing figures should refer to Full Time Equivalent (FTE). However, as the ratio of staff to students is very high, we suspect members of staff also teach students on other programmes or have other work responsibilities. Several of the HEIs offering courses at both undergraduate and postgraduate level supplied combined staffing figures. These have included in the figures where course levels are combined and removed from figures that are split by course level. Subsequently, the undergraduate and postgraduate figures may not fully represent staffing across HEIs.

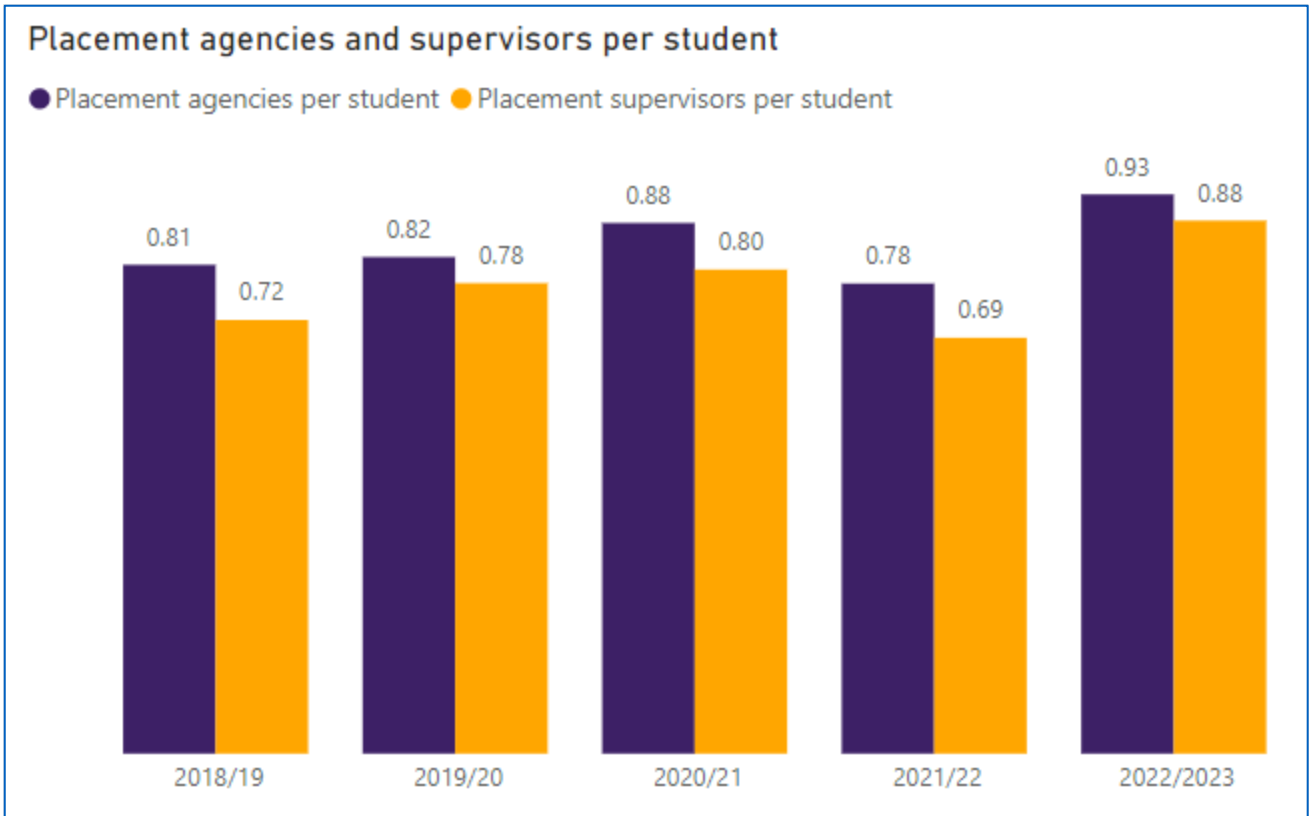
## Fieldwork placements

### The number of placement agencies has risen

The proportion of placement supervisors who are JNC qualified has dropped by 10 per cent between 2021/22 and 2022/23. HEIs ensure the quality of placement supervisors through experience and qualifications in related professions. This includes experience as placement supervisors, church leadership, teaching, social work, community work, coaching and mentoring and other allied sectors. Youth work experience is also cited as a factor. Access to JNC qualified members of staff is listed as an offering for a couple of courses where students do not have access to a JNC qualified supervisor while on placement.

While the mean number of placement agencies and supervisors per course was falling, this has now stabilised with the same number of placement agencies per course this year compared to last year, and one more placement supervisor per course on average. Nevertheless, the number of placement agencies and placement supervisors per student has risen substantially since last year. Both measures are the highest they have been in the data shown here from 2018/19.

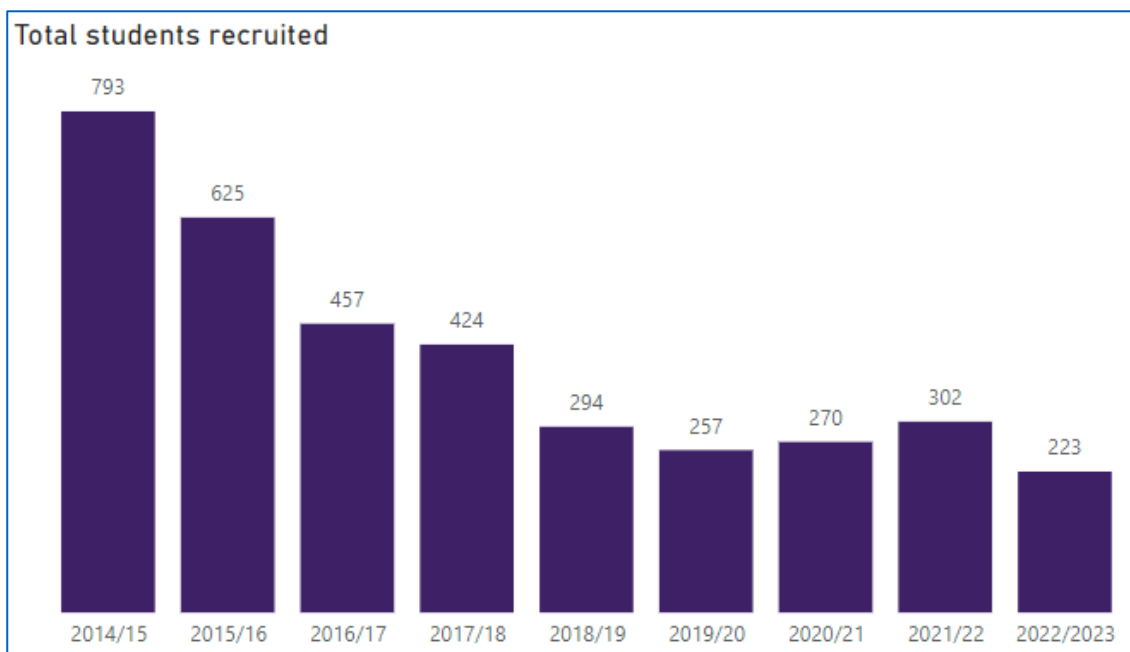


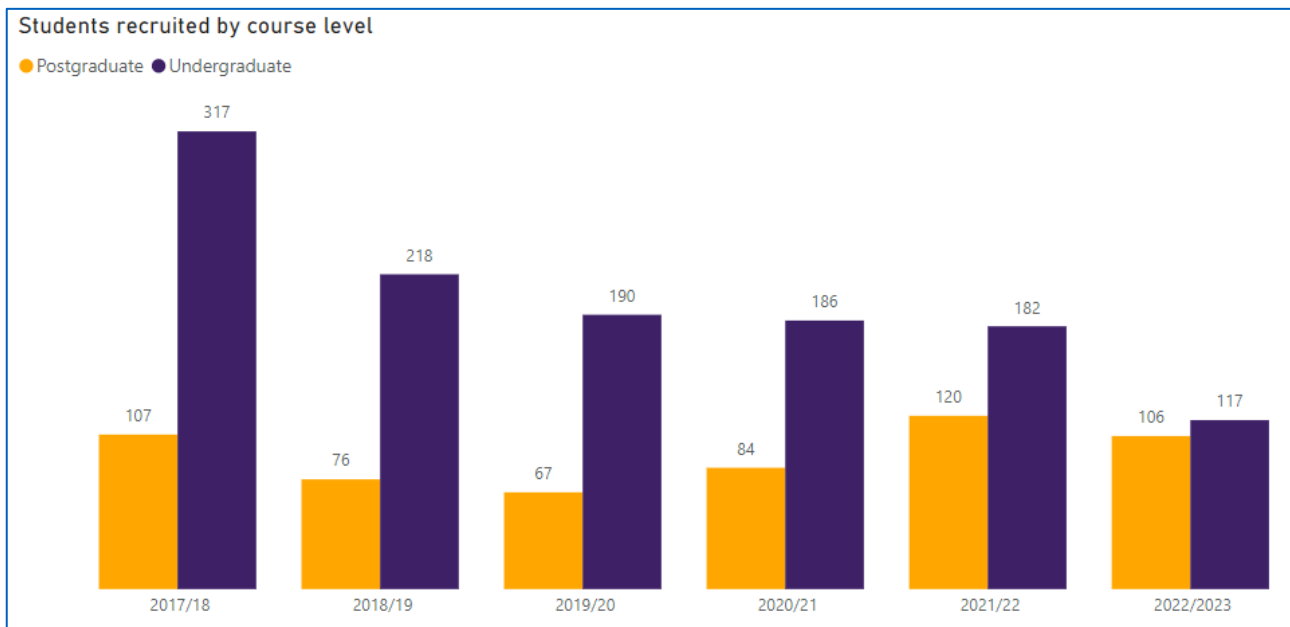


## Recruitment and student numbers

### Recruitment of new students has dipped

After a rise in student recruitment between 2019/20 and 2021/22 driven by increased postgraduate recruitment (the number of undergraduate students recruited stayed about the same), recruitment of new students has dropped again. This is mostly a drop in undergraduate numbers from 182 to 117. Postgraduate recruitment in 2022-23 has only dropped slightly, from 120 to 106.



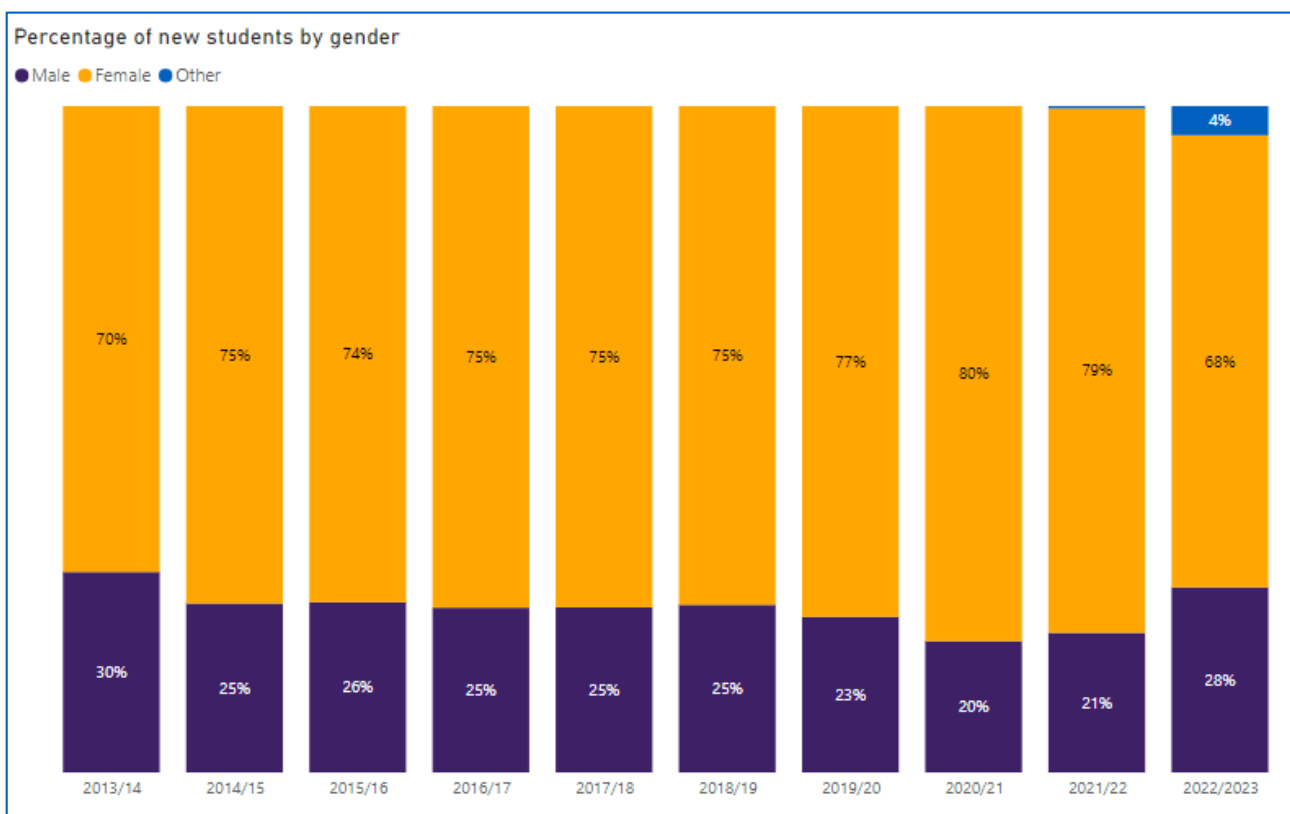


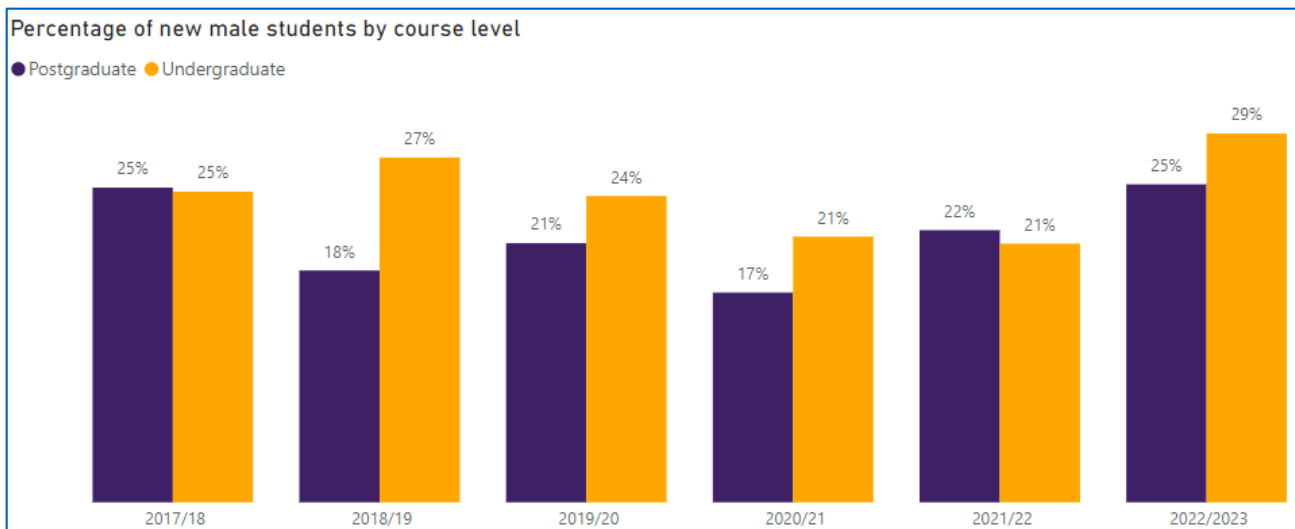
## New student demographics

The number of men studying youth work has increased

### Gender

Male representation in new students recruited has increased from 21 per cent to 28 per cent. Undergraduate courses have better male representation this year than postgraduate courses. Although it appears more students of other genders were recruited this year, this category was added to annual monitoring in 2021-22, and many HEIs may not have set up appropriate data collection to answer the survey question until 2022-23. The proportion of people recruited for courses is 4 per cent, substantially higher than the proportion of the English population who identified as other gender identities in the [2021 national Census](#).

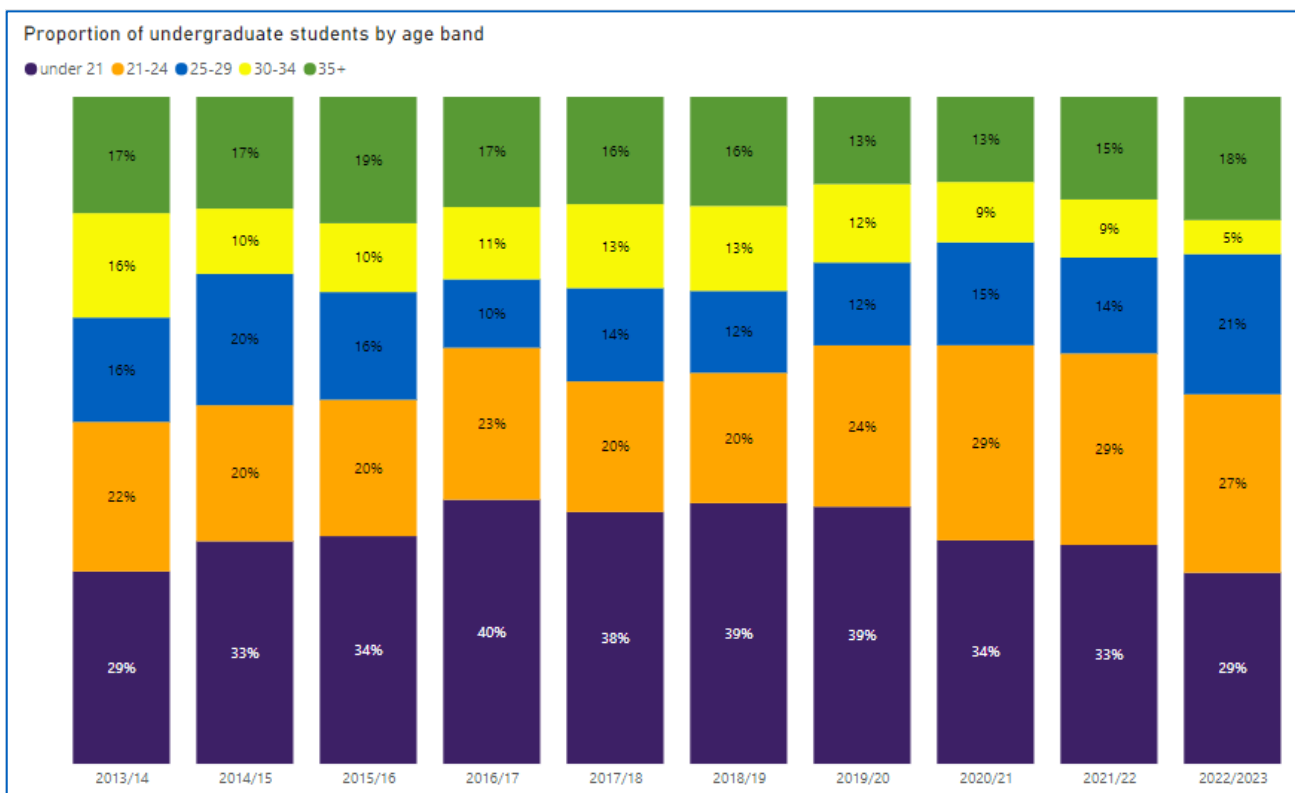




## Age

### The age of students on first degree courses are older than previously

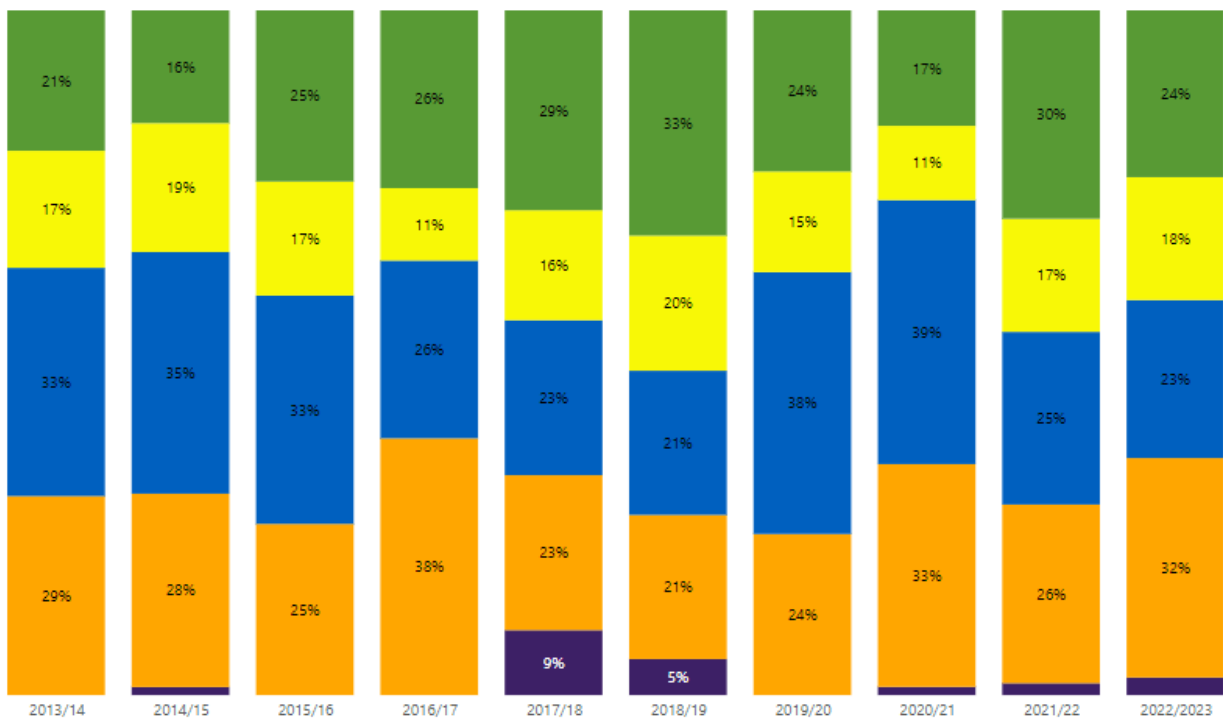
The age of undergraduate students has increased this year in comparison to previous years. 29 per cent of new students are under 21, the lowest since 2013-14 when it was also 29 per cent. The proportion of students aged 35 or more is the second highest shown in this dataset at 18 per cent.



New postgraduate students are younger overall than last year. Postgraduate students over 34 have dropped from 30 per cent to 24 per cent.

Proportion of postgraduate students by age band

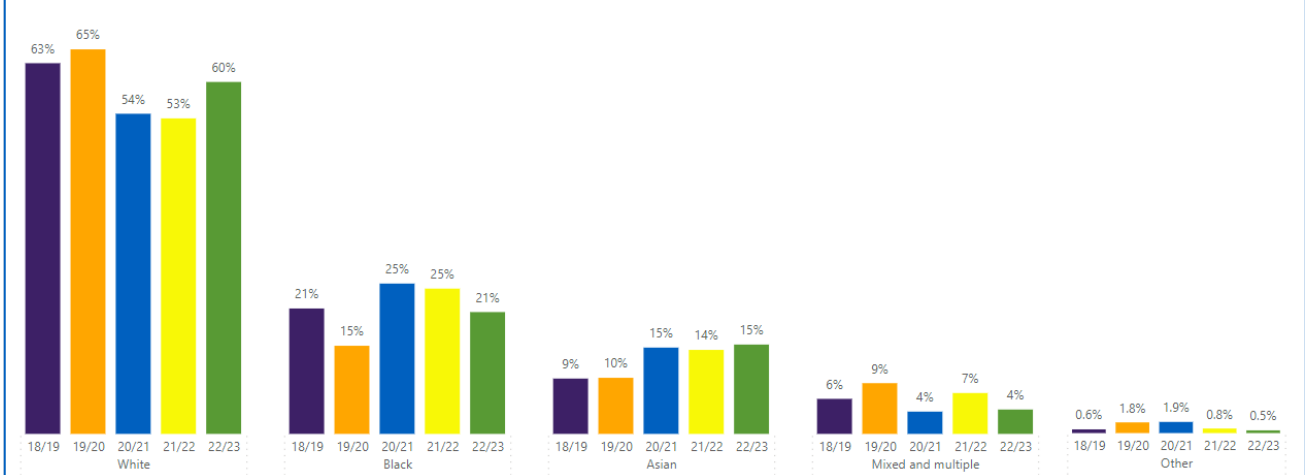
● under 21 ● 21-24 ● 25-29 ● 30-34 ● 35+



## Ethnicity

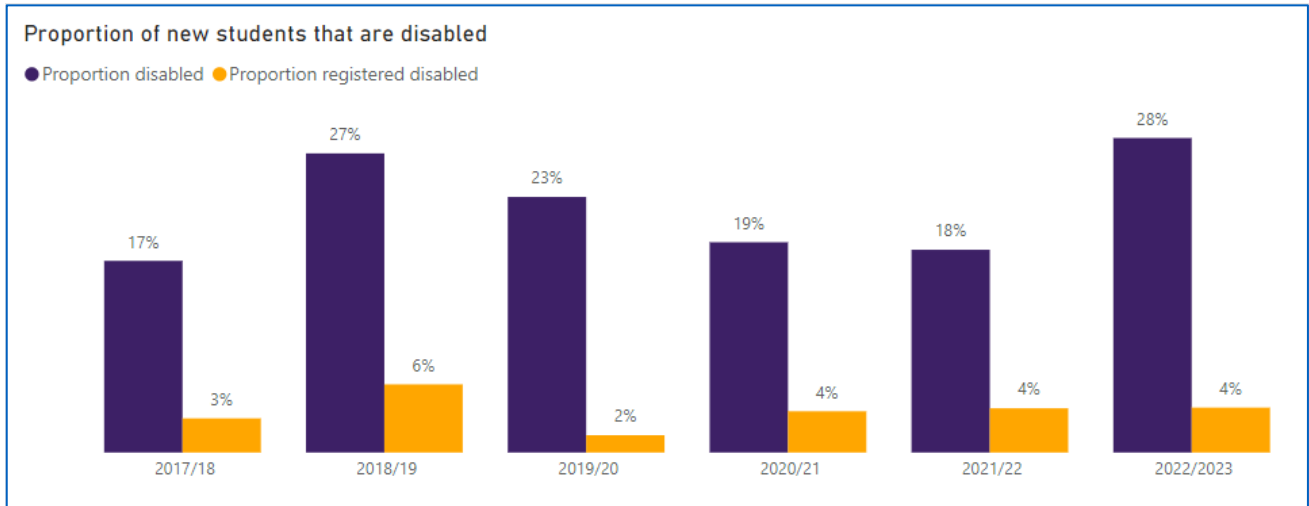
In the last three years, the proportion of white students has increased, the proportion of black and other ethnic groups has decreased, and the proportion of Asian students has stayed about the same.

Ethnic background of all new students



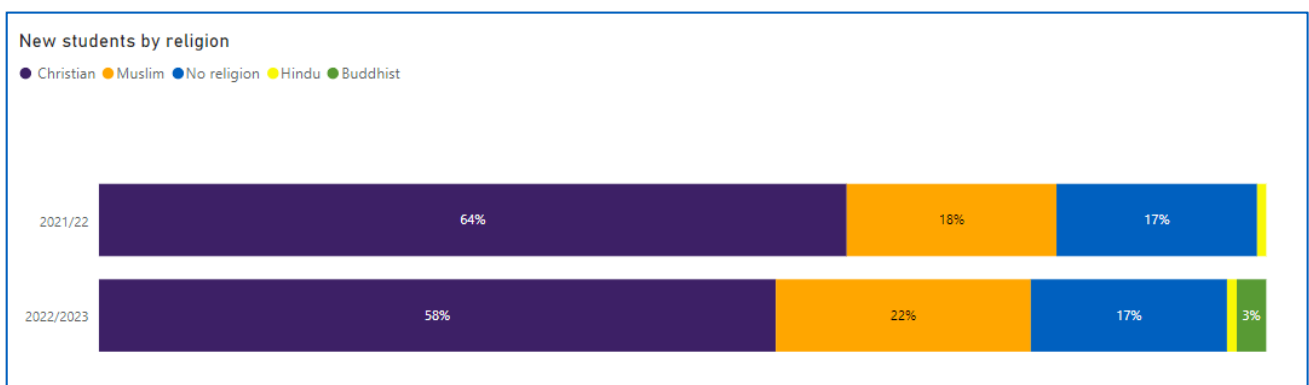
## Disability

The proportion of disabled students has increased by 10 per cent since last year from 18 per cent to 28 per cent, although the proportion of students registered disabled has stayed the same for the last 3 years at 4 per cent.



## Religion

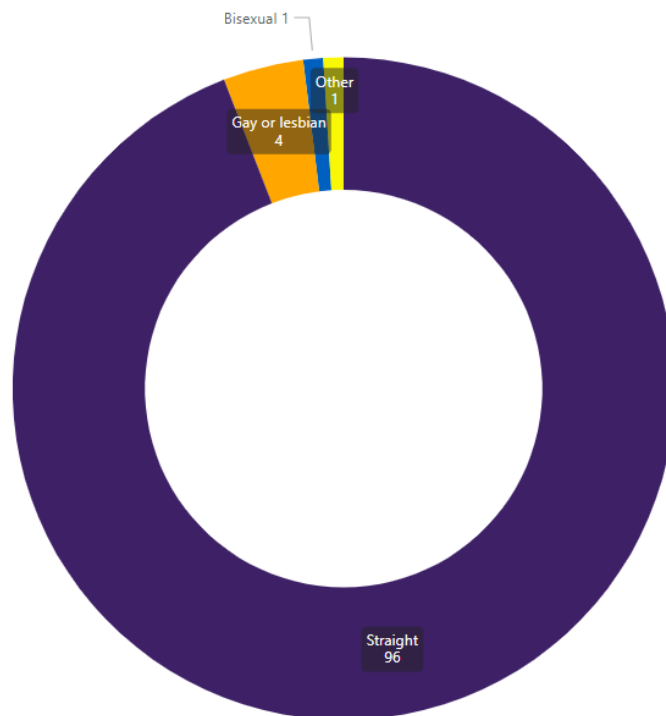
Where data has been collected for religion, Christianity was the most common religion, with sizeable minorities who are Muslim, or have no religion. A small number of Hindus and Buddhists were included in the intake. No other religions were represented in the data. While data on religion was supplied for 19 courses in 2021/22 and 15 in 2022/23, many of these HEIs did not know the religion of many of the new students, so this data may not be representative.



## Sexuality

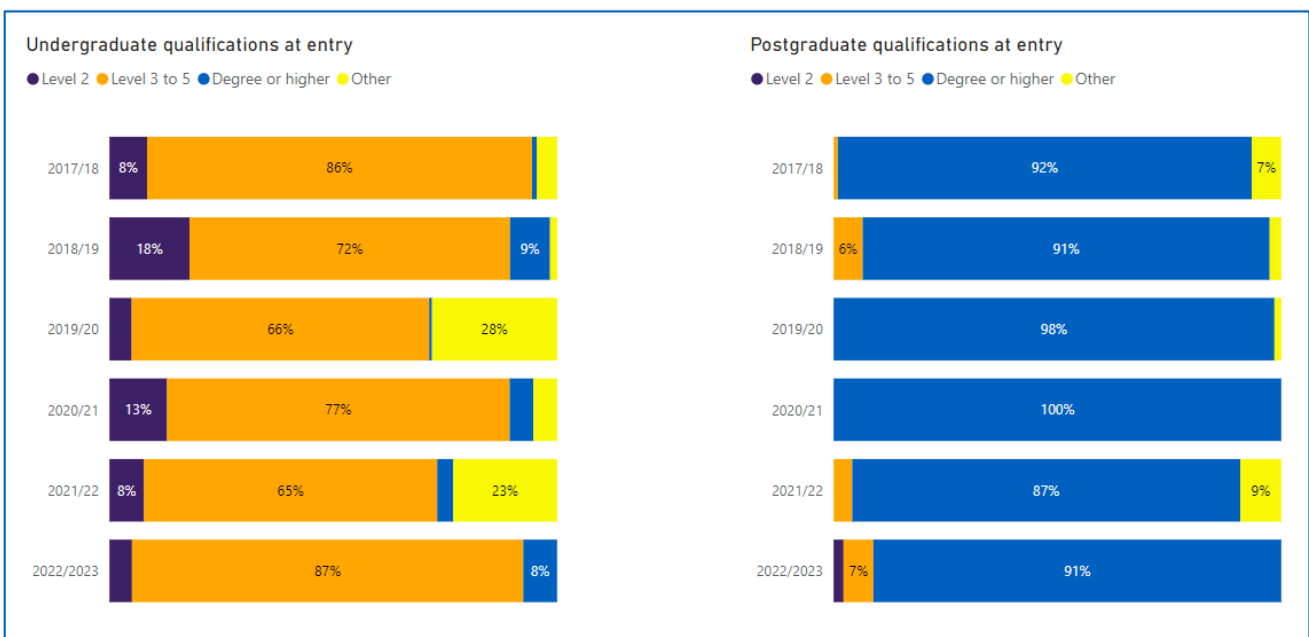
Data for sexuality was provided from only eight courses. Proportions are broadly in line with data from the 2021 Census.

New students by sexuality



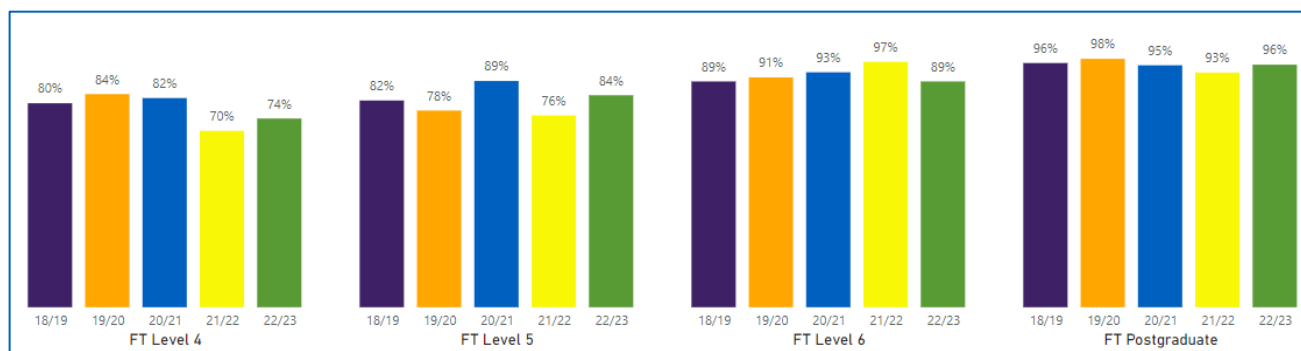
## Qualifications at entry

The majority of course entrants hold a qualification at the level that is appropriate for the qualification i.e. Level 3 to 5 for undergraduate courses, and a degree or higher for postgraduate courses. A small minority are qualified below this, beginning an undergraduate course with highest qualification at Level 2, or a postgraduate course qualified to Level 2 to 5. Other qualifications are absent from the data this year, compared to 23 per cent for undergraduate and nine per cent for postgraduate courses in 2022/2023.

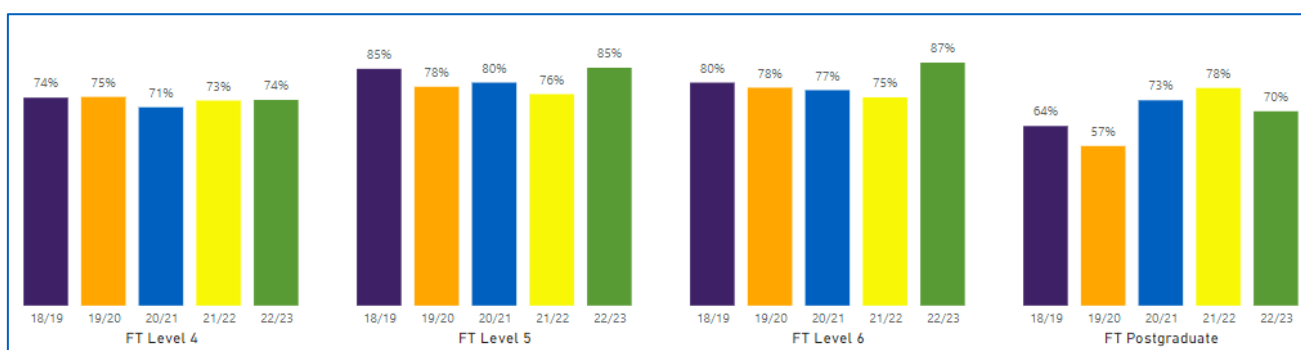


## Current students: Attendance and completion

Typically, the numbers of full-time students with at least 80 per cent attendance increases with level of study.



Completion rates for full time Level 4 students are very consistent, only varying between 71 per cent and 75 per cent in the last five years. Completion rates for full time Level 6 students are notably higher than they have been at any point in the last five years, rising from 75 per cent to 87 per cent since last year.



## Reasons for non-completion

Withdrawal is typically the most common reason for non-completion across study levels this year, although academic failure and deferral are equally as common at Level 4.

Level 4	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Academic failure	6%	8%	7%	4%	11%	7%
Deferral	4%	5%	3%	9%	3%	7%
Fieldwork failure	2%	2%	0%	3%	2%	4%
Transfer	3%	7%	5%	1%	6%	3%
Withdrawal	9%	8%	9%	11%	9%	7%

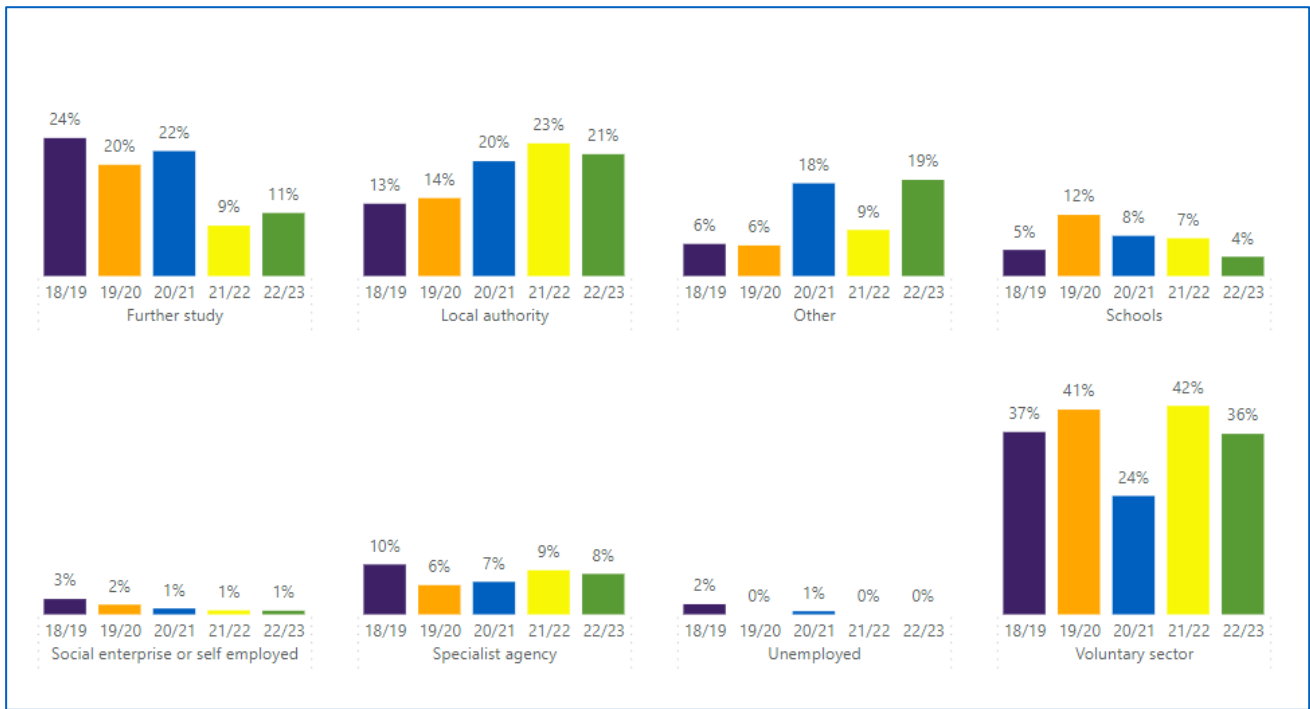
Level 5	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Academic failure	4%	11%	5%	2%	8%	1%
Deferral	5%	6%	2%	11%	7%	4%
Fieldwork failure	1%	4%	1%	2%	3%	1%
Transfer	1%	6%	5%	2%	4%	1%
Withdrawal	2%	9%	7%	5%	4%	8%

Level 6	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Academic failure	3%	10%	8%	5%	7%	3%
Deferral	7%	10%	13%	11%	10%	6%
Fieldwork failure	0%	5%	0%	2%	1%	2%
Transfer	0%	1%	2%	3%	0%	0%
Withdrawal	1%	3%	0%	2%	7%	7%

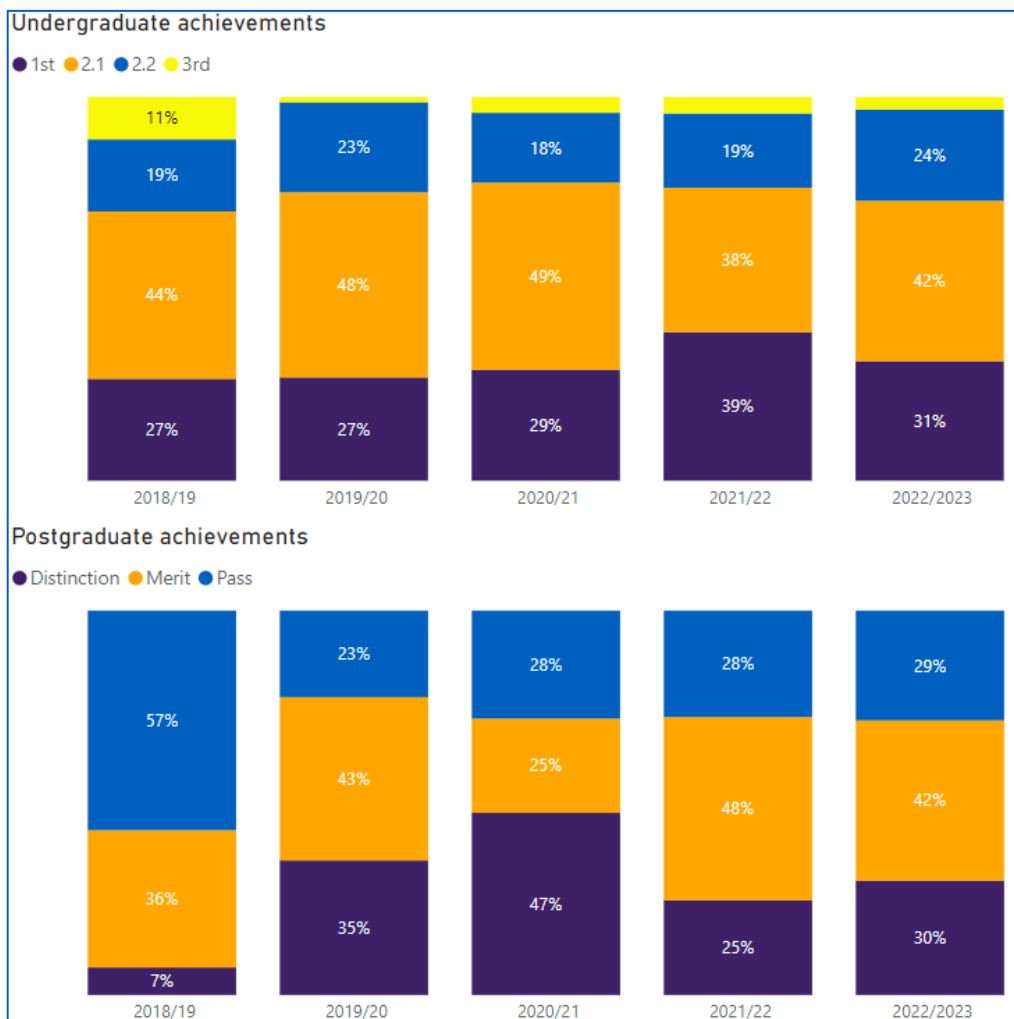
Postgraduate	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Academic failure	4%	8%	1%	4%	3%	5%
Deferral	11%	6%	20%	12%	36%	5%
Fieldwork failure	2%	3%	0%	1%	1%	0%
Transfer	5%	0%	3%	2%	2%	1%
Withdrawal	18%	8%	11%	13%	7%	6%

## Achievements and graduate destinations

Voluntary sector and local authority employers are typically the most common graduate destinations. Of data that HEIs were able to collect, no graduates were unemployed in the last two years. Very few graduates work for social enterprises or themselves.



2.1 Distinction and Merit are the most common grades for undergraduates and postgraduates respectively. Around 30 per cent achieved the highest possible grades this year.



## NYA's planned activities to support HEIs over the coming year:

1. Support the recruitment of students to Higher Education via a range of marketing activities, including attendance at Careers events (such as the National School and College Leaver Festival), the provision of communications assets to HEIs and promotion of youth work careers through appropriate platforms and channels.
2. To work with HEIs to celebrate graduate outcomes and career trajectories.
3. Update *Resourcing for the Programme* section of the Professional Requirements with a focus on the role and responsibilities of the staffing team.
4. To continue to support the Student Network.
5. Utilise the Youth Work One platform to list details of Youth Work degrees, placement opportunities and JNC supervisors.
6. Continue to promote the Youth Worker Register (hosted on Youth Work One) to students and graduates.

## Methodology

Results presented in this report are based on HEI submissions. Whilst every effort is made to check the accuracy of this data, we cannot account for incorrect data entry in returns.

There may be some minor data inconsistencies as there are differences in the ways in which courses are offered across HEIs. While data is presented here in an 'academic year' basis, some courses have multiple intake periods. In some instances, course lengths differ between distance learning and 'in-house' courses, and across part-time and full-time courses. Figures are also complicated by students opting to defer their completion and/or being required to take resits. Where these inconsistencies are known they are indicated.

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