

Higher Education Institutions

Annual Monitoring Report
2024/25

Contents

Introduction	3	Analysis	7
Executive summary	4	Methodology	7
Programmes	4	HEIs and programmes	7
Recruitment and diversity	4	Staffing	10
Staffing	5	Fieldwork placements	11
Placements	5	Recruitment and student numbers	12
Outcomes	5	New student demographics	13
NYA's planned activities to support HEIs over the coming year	6	Completion	17
		Reasons for non-completion	17
		Achievements and graduate destinations	18

Introduction

This report highlights the main findings from the National Youth Agency's (NYA) Annual Monitoring survey, which higher education institutions (HEIs) are required to complete, as detailed in the NYA's [Professional Validation Requirements](#).

The data collected helps the NYA's Education and Training Standards (ETS) Committee to maintain a clear picture of the professional youth work training landscape in England, supporting the development of its strategy. Data is also used by the NYA to inform its youth workforce strategy and by HEIs in the development of their own youth work courses.

Executive summary

Programmes

In 2024/25, there were 18 HEIs offering 30 youth work programmes. All 18 HEIs gave full data for the main survey, with responses for 22 programmes received for the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) survey. Fewer responses to the EDI survey may have been received as this is only relevant to new learners. In the previous year (2023/24) there were 35 programmes and the year before (2022/23) there were 30 programmes.

Since the introduction of the apprenticeship degree programme in September 2023 there have been seven new apprenticeship degree programmes, with all seven programmes still running in 2024/25.¹

Between 2023/24 and 2024/25, the number of postgraduate programmes reduced from 12 to 11, and the number of undergraduate programmes reduced from 16 to 12.

Recruitment and diversity

Despite the overall number of programmes dropping, the number of new students recruited to programmes increased by 16% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, from 263 to 303. This is the highest number of new students since 2017/18, when 424 new students were recruited.

This increase is predominantly driven by an increase of 34 students joining apprenticeship programmes. The numbers of students recruited to the traditional undergraduate and postgraduate courses was marginally higher in 2024/25 than in 2023/24, but remains lower than figures in the last decade.

There has been no considerable change in gender diversity, with seven out of ten students identifying as female; 12% of students do not identify as male or female, which is higher than seen before.

New students remain most likely to be Christian (61%), with 16% of new students Muslim. The numbers of students reporting no religion has dropped a further ten percentage points since 2023/24 to 13% in 2024/25.

White remains the most common ethnicity of new students in 2024/25 (68%), despite a drop from 74% in 2023/24. After a drop between 2022/23 and 2023/24, the proportion of new Black students remains low at just 12%.

The proportion of learners declaring a disability in 2024/25 was just under one-quarter (24%), which is a considerable drop from 37% in the previous year. The proportion of these with a registered disability remains very low, at 2%.

¹ Greater London and the North West both have two apprenticeships. The North East, South West and Yorkshire and Humberside all have one apprenticeship each.

Staffing

HEIs employ 106 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff across programmes, equating to 5.4 students for every FTE member of staff. Among these, 75% are professionally qualified youth workers, down slightly from 78% the previous year. Overall, the ratio of students to staff has increased marginally since 2023/24. For undergraduate courses and apprenticeships, the number of students per FTE staff member has increased from 5.6 to 6.8 in the last year. The number of postgraduate students per FTE staff member has conversely dropped considerably, from 4.4 to 2.5.

Placements

Two-thirds (68%) of placement supervisors were professionally qualified youth workers in 2024/25, the same figure as the previous year. The number of placement agencies per course almost doubled between 2023/24 and 2024/25, from 12 to 20, and the number of supervisors per course increased to 12 from 11. There is also now more than one placement agency per student (1.1), up from 0.8 the previous year.

Outcomes

Completion rates for full-time level 4 students continue to rise, as they have year-on-year since 2020/21, with 82% of full-time level 4 learners completing their course in 2024/25, up from 79% the previous year. Completion rates for full-time level 6 learners have also risen between 2023/24 and 2024/25, from 87% to 90%.

Full-time postgraduate completion rates continue to decline, from a high of 78% in 2021/22 to just over half (52%) in 2024/25. Completion rates for full-time level 5 learners also declined between 2023/24 and 2024/25, although only marginally, from 84% to 81%.

Local authority employment is now the most common destination for graduates on youth work programmes, which represents a change in trend, as previously the voluntary and community sector (VCS) was the most common destination. In 2024/25, over one-third (37%) of graduates moved into local authority roles, up from almost one-quarter (24%) in the previous year. Just 29% of graduates moved into VCS roles in 2024/25, down 13 percentage points on the previous year.

From data that HEIs were able to collect, 12% of graduates went on to 'schools' as a destination, and 7% went on to specialist agencies. Just 3% were unemployed following graduation.

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

Over the 2024/25 year, the National Workforce Officer visited eleven institutions in person and conducted online visits to speak to students about the work of the NYA, including the Youth Worker Register. In the coming year, the NYA will continue to visit institutions that offer a professionally validated youth work degree.

The ETS committee is working on updating the Professional Validation Requirements. This work is looking at streamlining the process to make it more concise and ensure that there is a substantial focus on assessing professional practice. The ETS committee has also recruited a new Chair and student rep. Both have been inducted and will continue to be supported in their role.

Analysis

The remainder of this report provides an analysis of the survey data. It starts by setting out the methodology, and then continues to discuss the different aspects surveyed.

Methodology

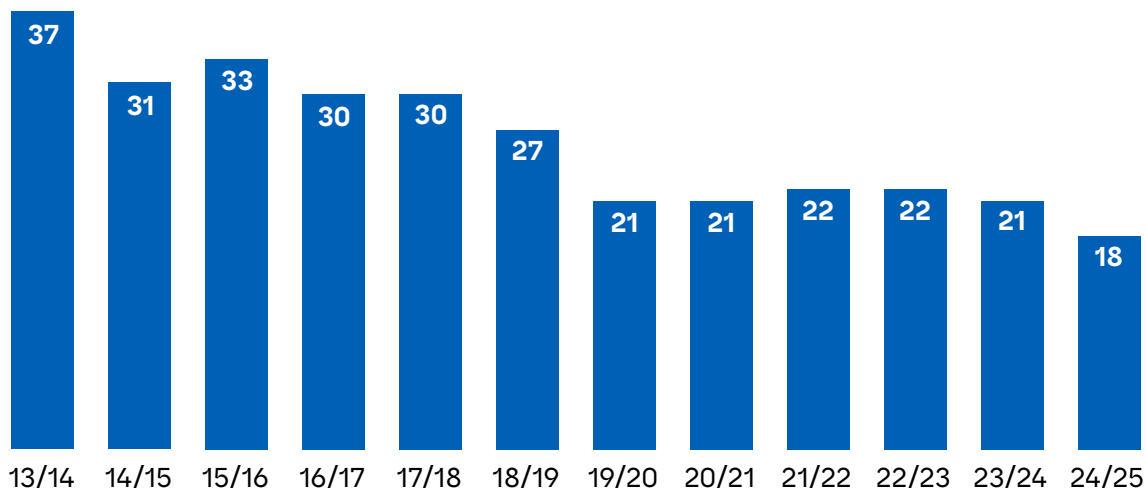
Results presented in this report are based on HEI submissions. The NYA team check the accuracy of data and have made occasional changes to 2024/25 data following consultation with relevant HEIs.

Despite these efforts there may be some minor data inconsistencies, particularly as there are differences in the ways in which courses are offered across HEIs. While the data is presented here in an 'academic year' basis, some courses have multiple intake periods. 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.

HEIs and programmes

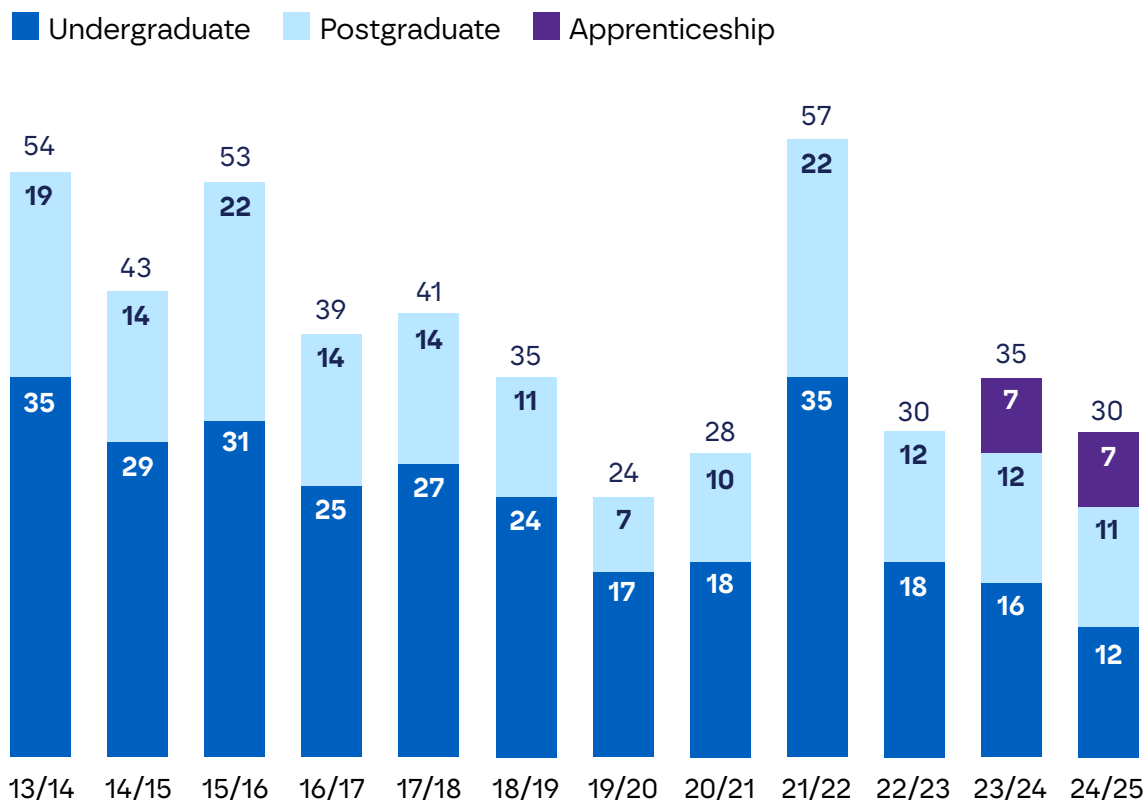
Between 2019/20 and 2023/24, the number of HEIs providing data remained steady at just above 20. That figure has now dropped to just 18 HEIs in 2024/25, the lowest in the last decade (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Number of higher education institutions, by year



The number of courses overall fell to a low of 24 in 2019/20. The number of undergraduate courses increased markedly in 2021/22, but dropped to a low of just 12 in 2024/25. Apprenticeship degrees were introduced in 2023/24 at seven HEIs, all of which are still going in 2024/25 (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Number of courses, by year and course level



Apprenticeship degrees were introduced in 2023/24 at seven HEIs, all of which are still going in 2024/25.

Between 2022/23 and 2023/24, the East Midlands was the only region to see a decline in undergraduate courses due to the introduction of apprenticeship courses. However, in 2024/25 four regions saw a decline in number of undergraduate and apprenticeship courses, with the East Midlands the only region to see an increase (Figure 3).

The number of postgraduate courses remained the same across all regions except the North East, which lost one course in 2024/25 (Figure 4).

Figure 3: Number of undergraduate and apprenticeship courses, by region and year

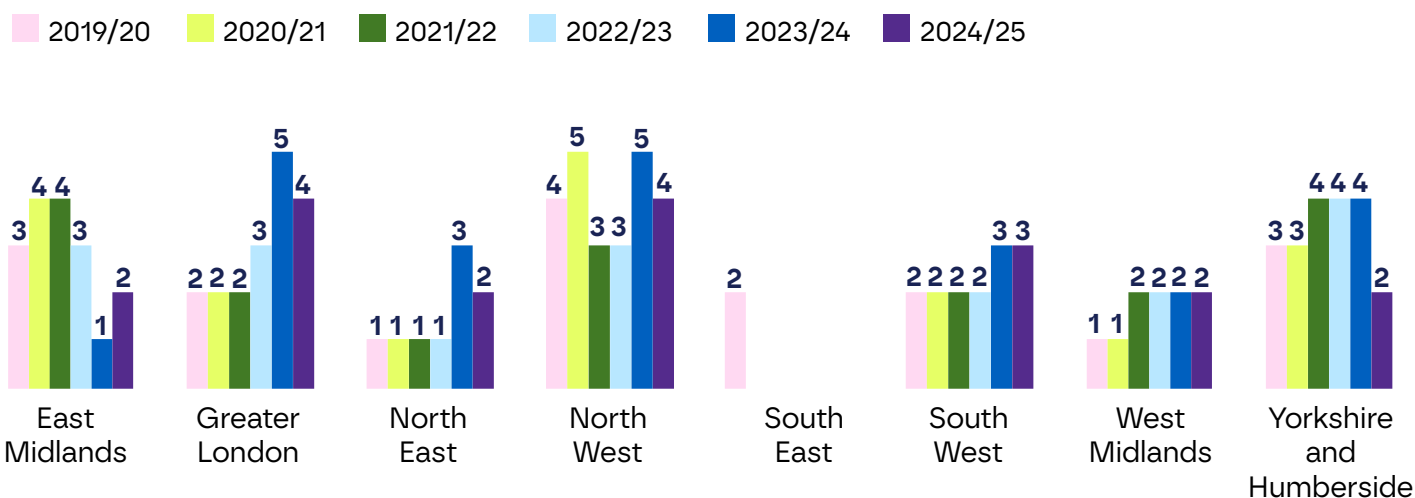
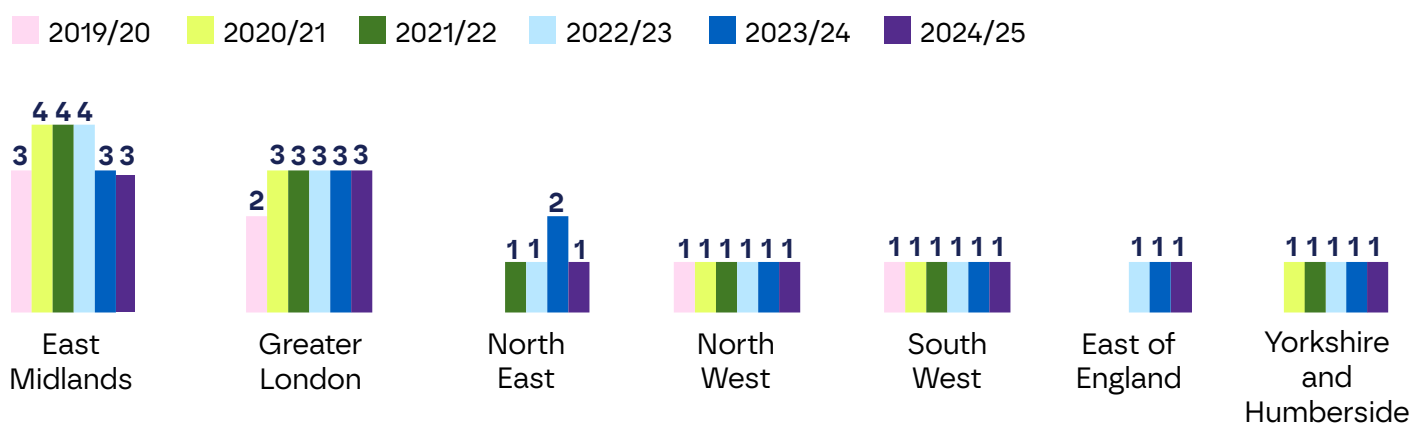


Figure 4: Number of postgraduate courses, by region and year



Staffing

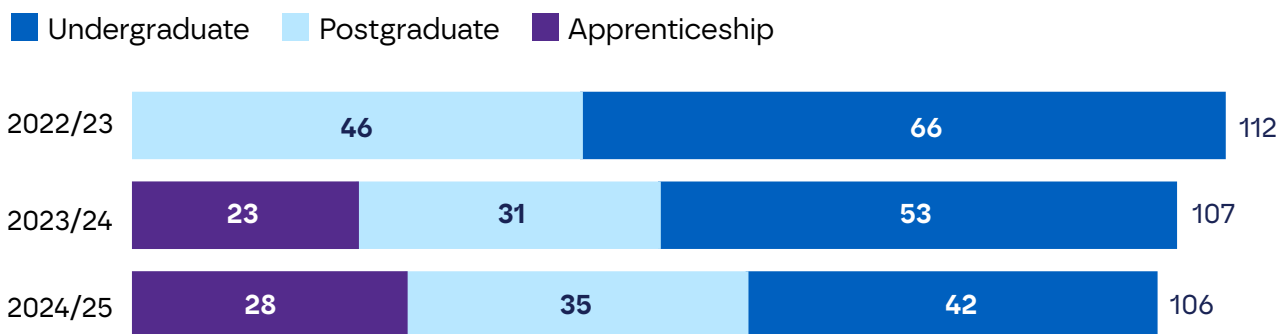
Overall, total numbers of FTE staff, and the proportion of students to staff, remained broadly similar, with only a minor overall drop over the two years since data collection began (Figure 5).

While the average number of students to staff varied little between 2023/24 and 2024/25 (5.3 and 5.4, respectively), this masks more pronounced differences across the different course types. There were 6.8 students per FTE undergraduate and apprenticeship staff member in 2024/25 and just 2.5 students per postgraduate staff member, down from 4.4 in the previous year.

Three-quarters of staff (75%) had a professional youth work qualification in 2024/25, slightly less than the previous year.

Staff teaching postgraduate courses are much less likely to be professionally qualified, with 54% holding a professional youth work qualification. Conversely, 86% of undergraduate and apprenticeship staff are professionally qualified youth workers.

Figure 5: Total FTE staff, by year



86% of undergraduate and apprenticeship staff are professionally qualified youth workers

Fieldwork placements

The proportion of placement supervisors who are professionally qualified youth workers has not changed since the previous year, at 68% in 2024/25. The mean number of placement supervisors per student is 0.65, slightly lower than in the previous year (0.7). However, the number of placement organisations/agencies per student rose considerably between 2023/24 and 2024/25, from 0.76 to 1.07 (Figure 6).

The number of agencies per course also markedly increased between 2024/24 and 2024/25, from 12 to 20, reflecting an increase in placement agencies per student (Figure 7).

Figure 6: Number of placement supervisors and organisations/agencies per student, by year

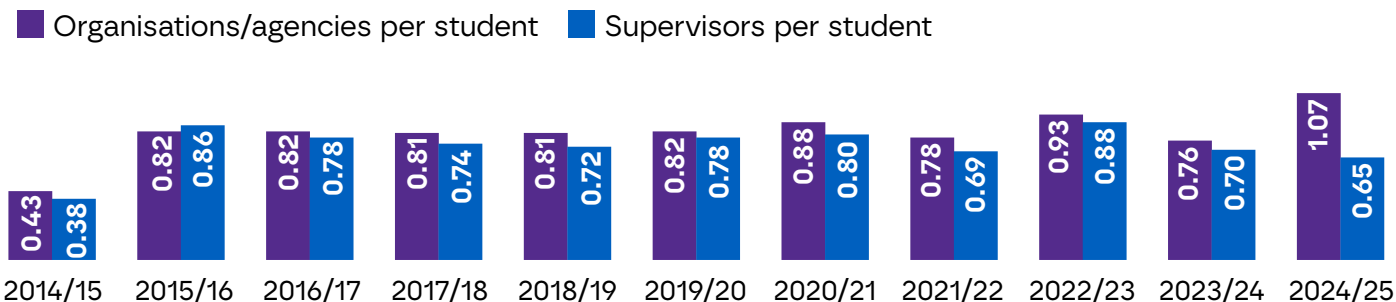
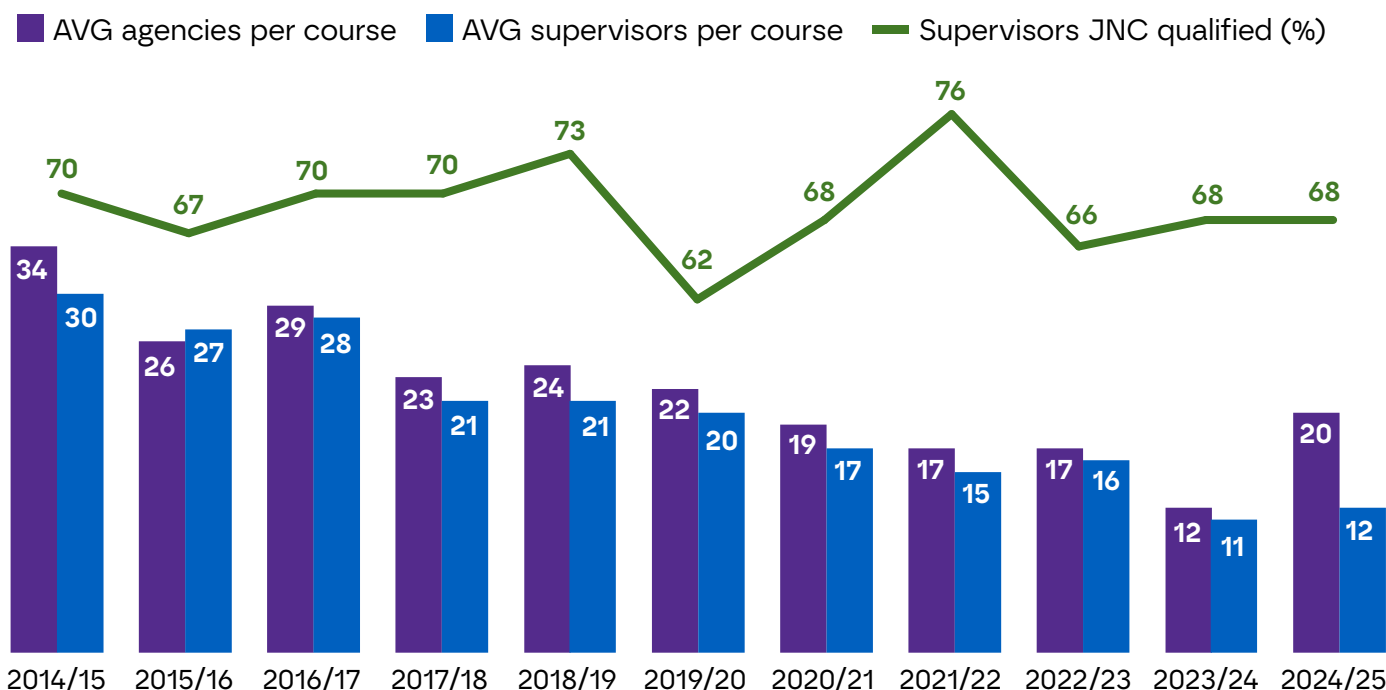


Figure 7: Number of placement supervisors and organisations/agencies per course, by year



Note: JNC = Joint Negotiating Committee.

Recruitment and student numbers

Between 2023/24 and 2024/25, the recruitment of new students increased by 15 percentage points, from 263 to 303 (Figure 8). This is likely due to the continued growth of the apprenticeship degree, which was introduced in 2023/24. This masks a continuing trend across undergraduate and postgraduate courses, both of which recruited far fewer students in 2024/25

and 2023/24 than in preceding years. For the last two years, apprenticeship students have outnumbered students on undergraduate and postgraduate combined. HEIs reported a total of 183 students recruited on apprenticeship programmes in 2024/25, up from 149 in 2023/24. In 2024/25 there were 65 other undergraduates and 55 postgraduates (Figure 9).

Figure 8: Total number of students recruited, by year

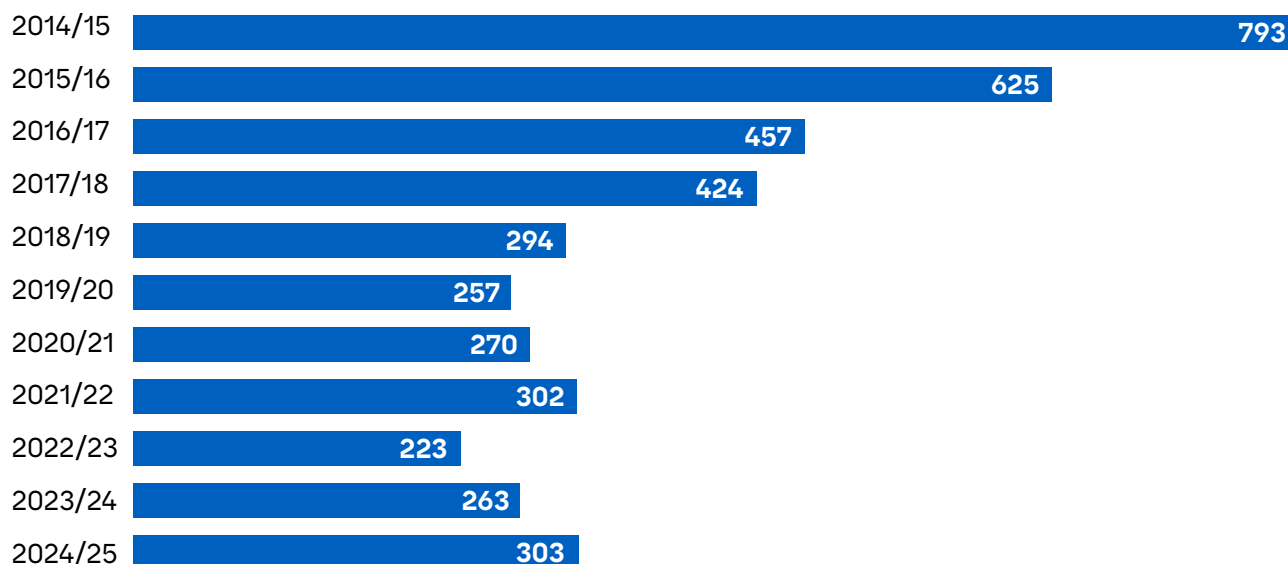
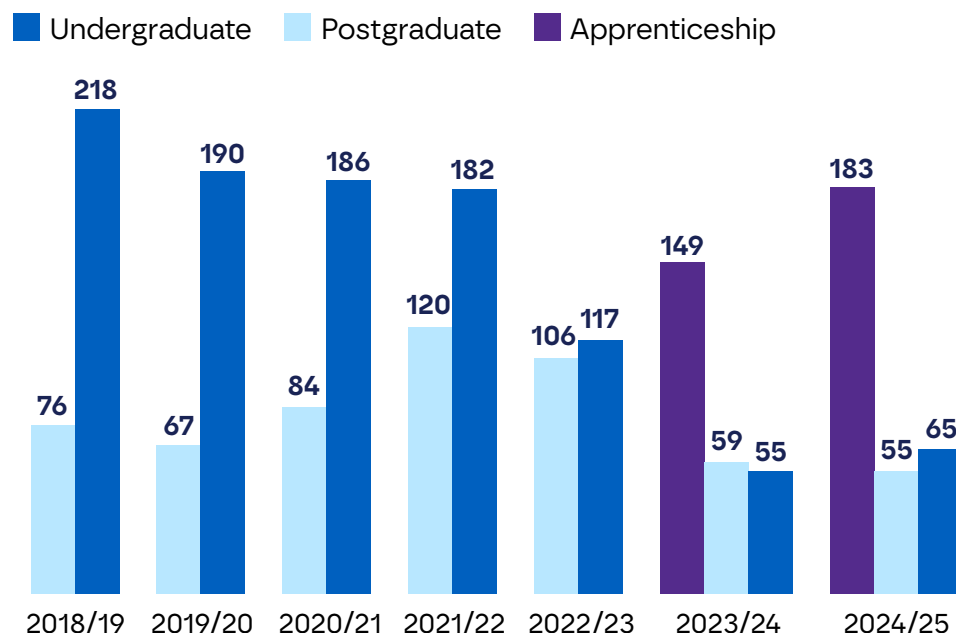


Figure 9: Total number of students recruited, by course type and year



New student demographics

Gender

The representation of males among new students recruited across all courses has remained almost unchanged, accounting for 30% of intake in 2024/25. Female representation dropped considerably between 2023/24 and 2024/25, from 73% to 59%. While no HEIs reported recruiting students of other genders

in 2023/24, some 12% of learners in 2024/25 identified as genders other than male or female (Figure 10).

Male students are least common across postgraduate courses, accounting for just 25% of total intake in 2024/25, compared with 33% at the undergraduate level. Males represented just under one-third (31%) of all participants on apprenticeship programmes (Figure 11).

Figure 10: Percentage of new students, by gender

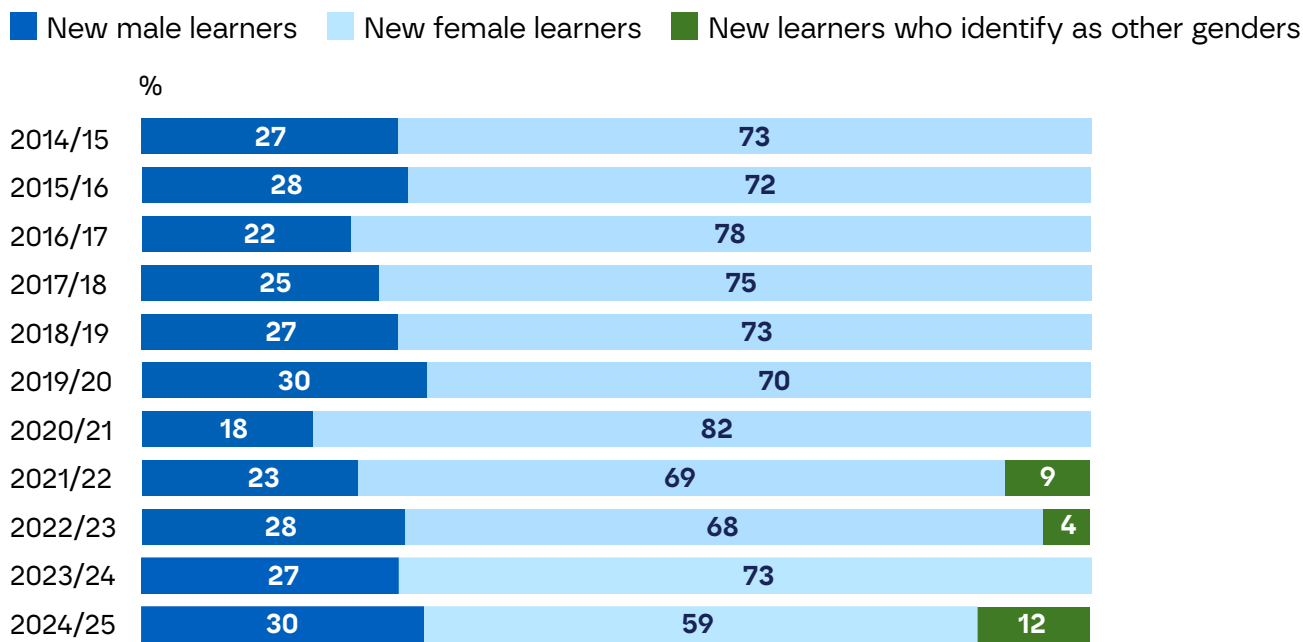
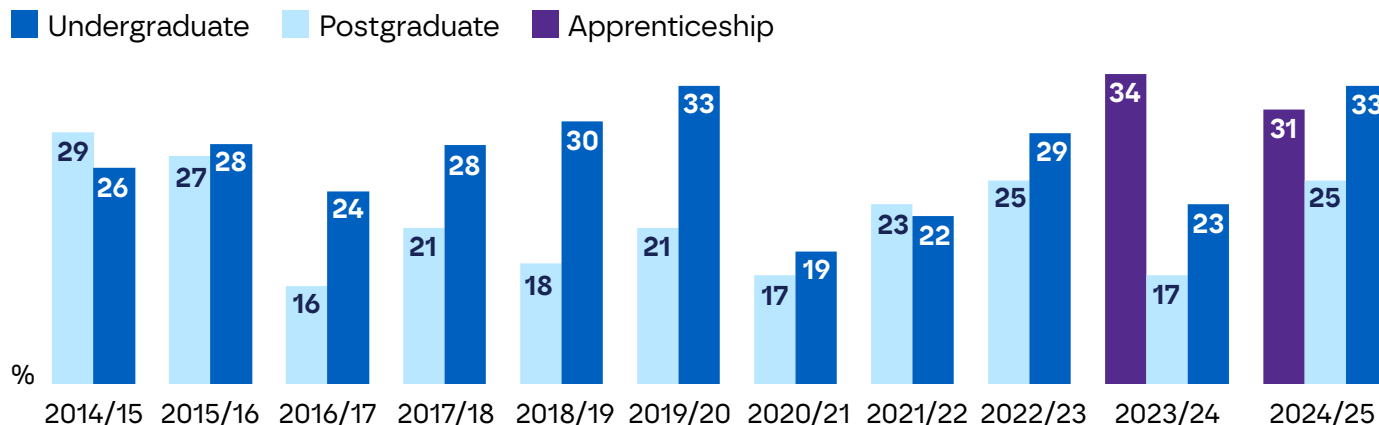


Figure 11: Percentage of new male students, by course level



Age

The age of undergraduate students increased to a peak in 2023/24, when almost one-third (32%) were aged over 34; in 2024/25, just under one-quarter (23%) were aged over 34, which although lower is still higher than seen in years preceding the introduction of apprenticeship programmes (Figure 12).

Although the number of over 34s joining postgraduate courses increased by one percentage point between 2023/24 and 2024/25, the proportion of students aged 25–29 almost doubled, from 26% to 50% (Figure 13).

Figure 12: Proportion of undergraduate students, by age

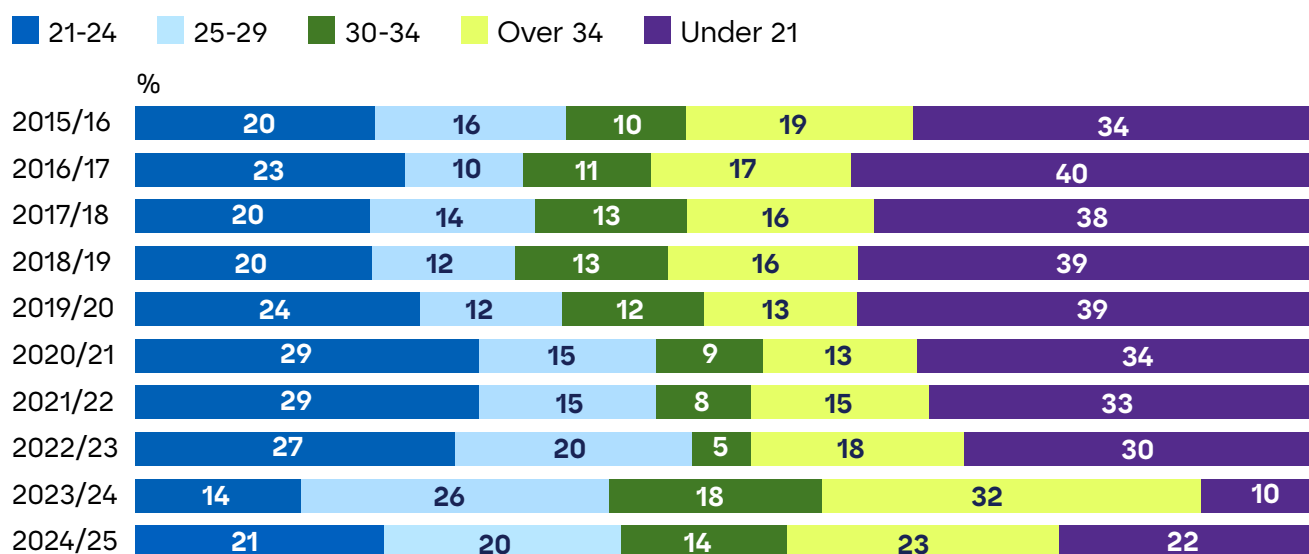
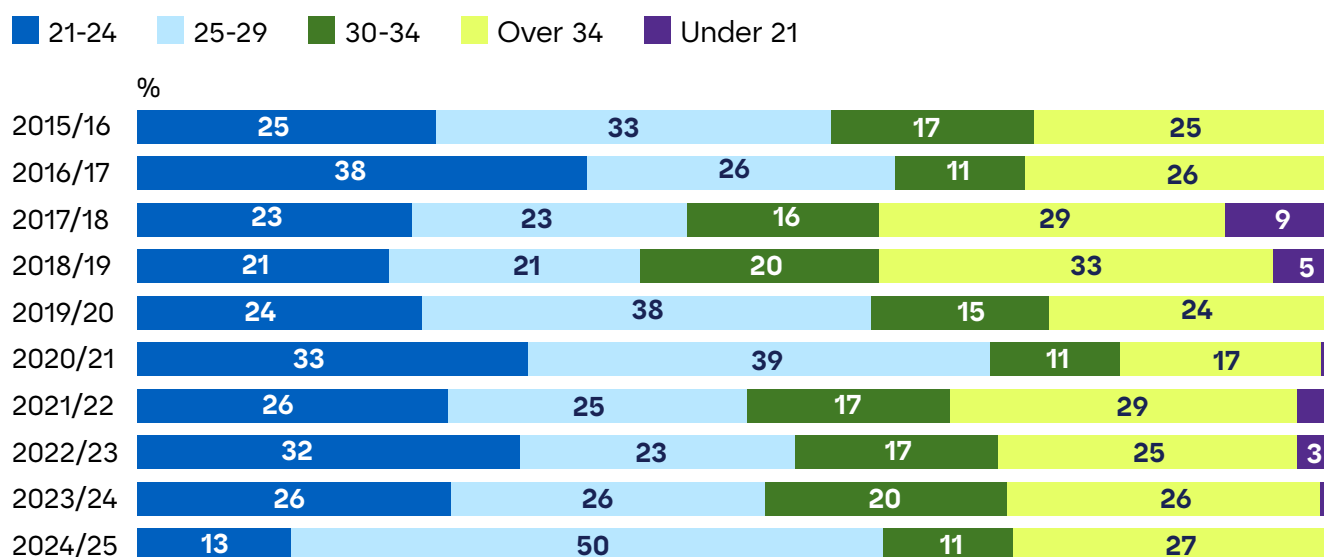


Figure 13: Proportion of postgraduate students, by age



Ethnicity

Students reporting to be white continue to make up the majority of students, representing 68% of new intakes in 2024/25. The proportion of new students reporting to be Black remains low at 12%, having almost halved between 2022/23 and 2023/24 (Figure 14).

Disability

The proportion of new students indicating that they have a disability in 2024/25 was just under one-quarter (24%), marking a considerable drop from 2023/24, when over one-third (37%) indicated they had a disability. The proportion of new youth work students registered disabled remained very low, at 2% (Figure 15).

Figure 14: Proportion of students, by year and ethnicity

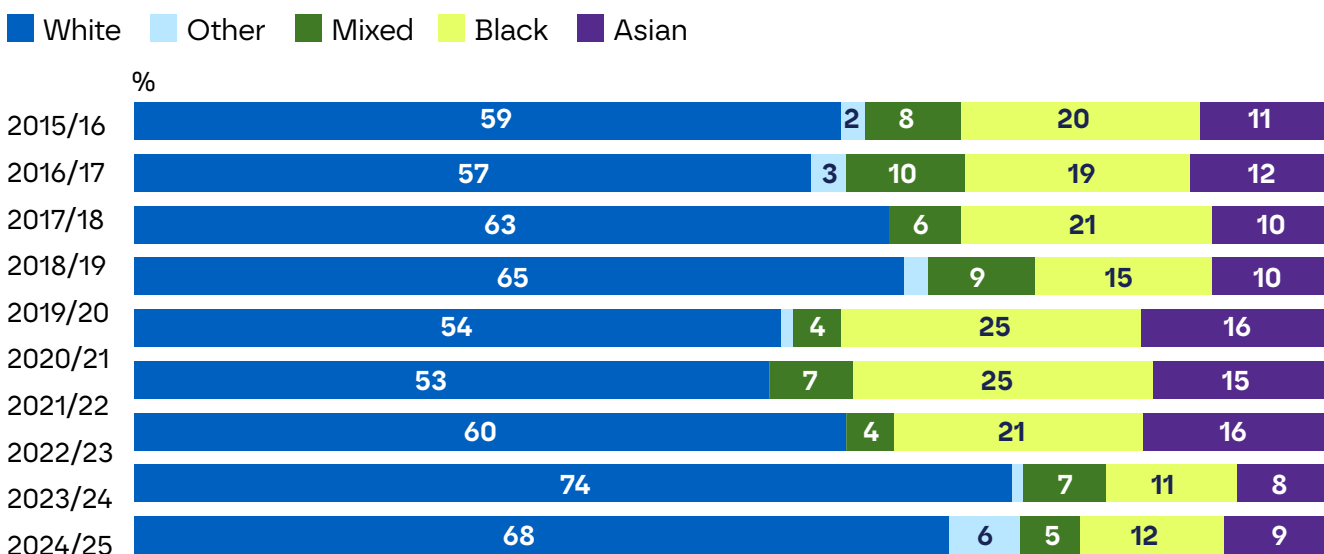
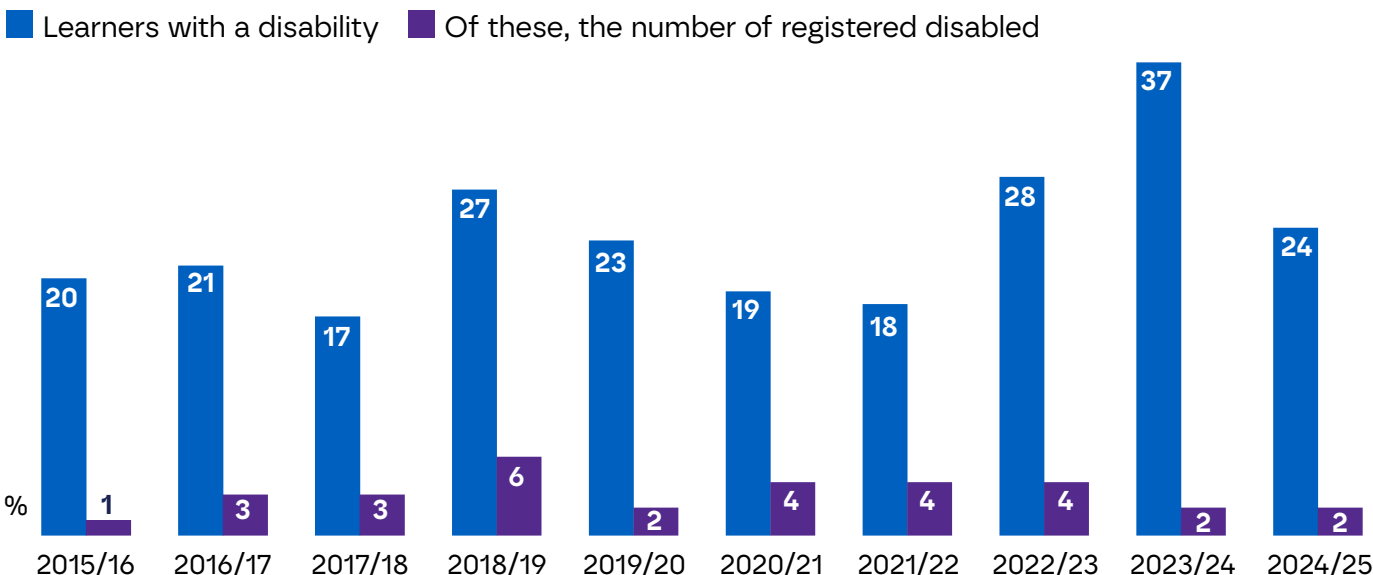


Figure 15: Percentage of new students with a disability, by year



Religion

Where data was collected for religion, new students remained most likely to be Christian, representing 61% of the sample. The number of students reporting no religion between 2023/24 and 2024/25 dropped from 23% to 13%. It should be noted that HEIs gave data on religion for only 70 of 303 new students (23%), so this data may not be entirely representative.

Sexuality

Data for sexuality was only received for 58 out of 303 new students (19%), so is unlikely to be representative.

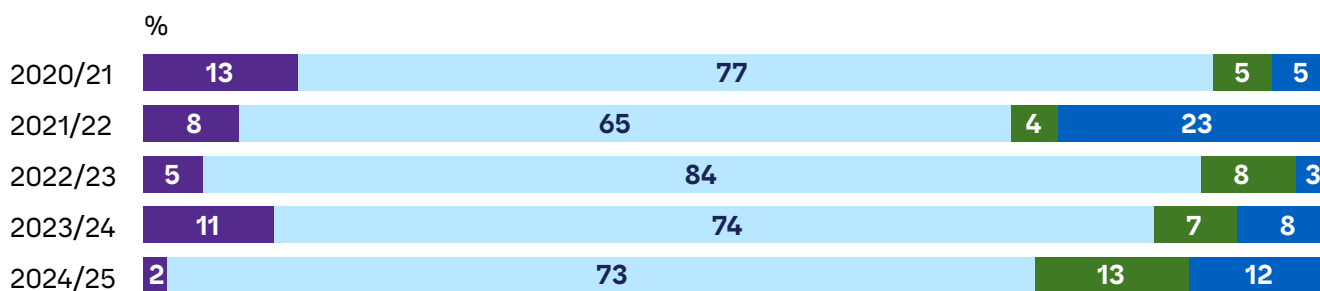
Qualifications at entry

In 2024/25, as in previous years, most course entrants held a qualification at the appropriate level for their course – i.e. levels 3 to 5 for undergraduate courses and a degree or higher for postgraduate courses. Just 3% of undergraduate and apprenticeship entrants had a level 2 qualification, and all but one postgraduate entrant had a degree or higher. Entrants to all courses had slightly higher qualifications than in 2023/24 (Figure 16).

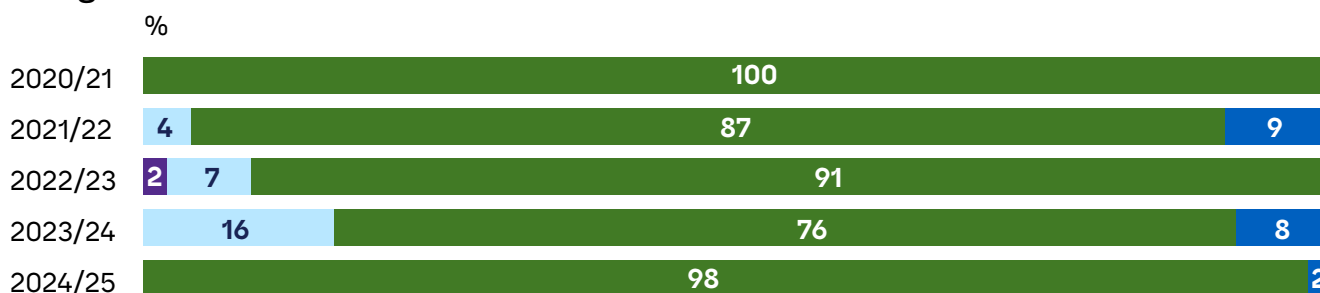
Figure 16: Qualifications at course entry, by level and year

■ Level 2 ■ Level 3-5 ■ Degree or higher ■ Other

Undergraduate and Apprenticeship



Postgraduate



Completion

Completion rates for full-time students reached a high of 87% in 2024/25, a considerable increase from 62% in the previous year. Part-time completion rates were much lower at just 33%, dropping slightly from 38% in 2023/24. It is worth noting that there were just 30 overall part-time students in this dataset.

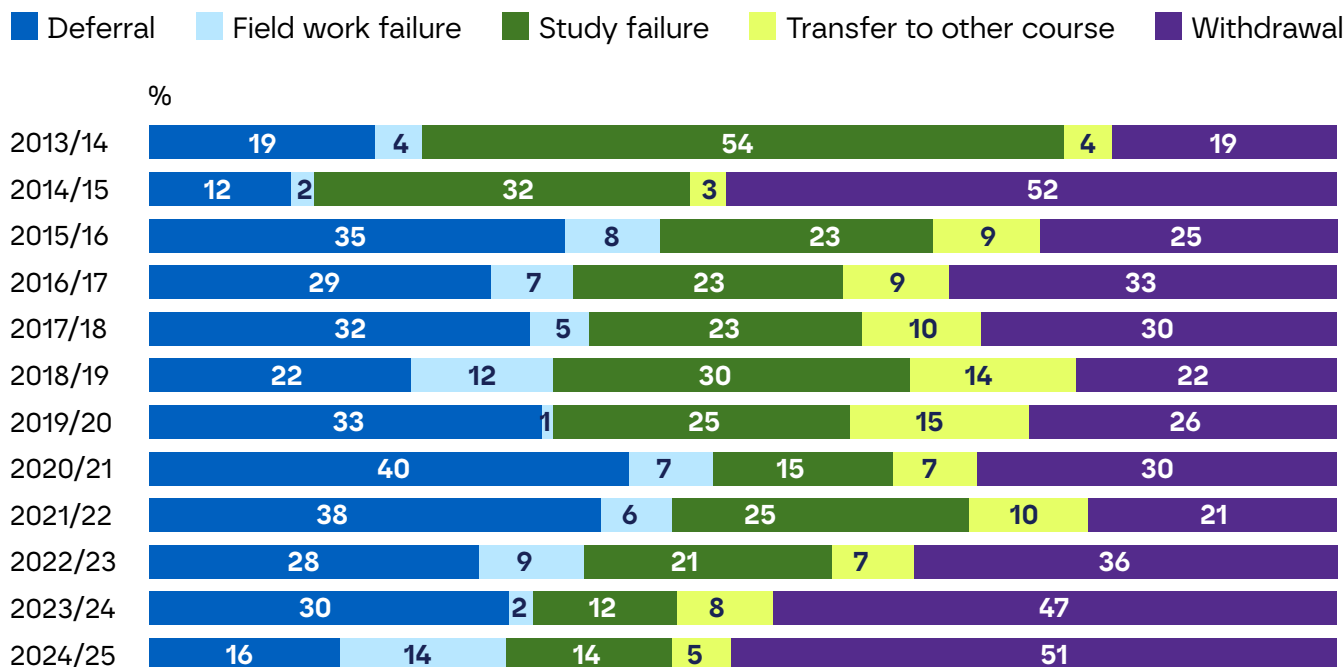
Completion rates for full-time students were lowest amongst postgraduates, with at least 90% of full-time students at levels 4, 5 and 6 completing their course. Just over half (52%) of full-time postgraduates completed their course in 2024/25. The completion rate for part-time postgraduates was also comparably low at just 26%. Low response numbers for part-time students limits the reliability of this data.

Reasons for non-completion

The most common reason for non-completion was withdrawal, with just over half (51%) of non-completers citing this reason. Fieldwork failure made up 14% of non-completions, which is considerably higher than in 2023/24. Deferrals almost halved proportionally in the last year, accounting for 16% of non-completions in 2024/25 (Figure 17).

HEIs gave less data on non-completions than in previous years, limiting the reliability of findings split by level. Data for just seven non-completions at the postgraduate level were available.

Figure 17: Reasons for non-completion of course, by year

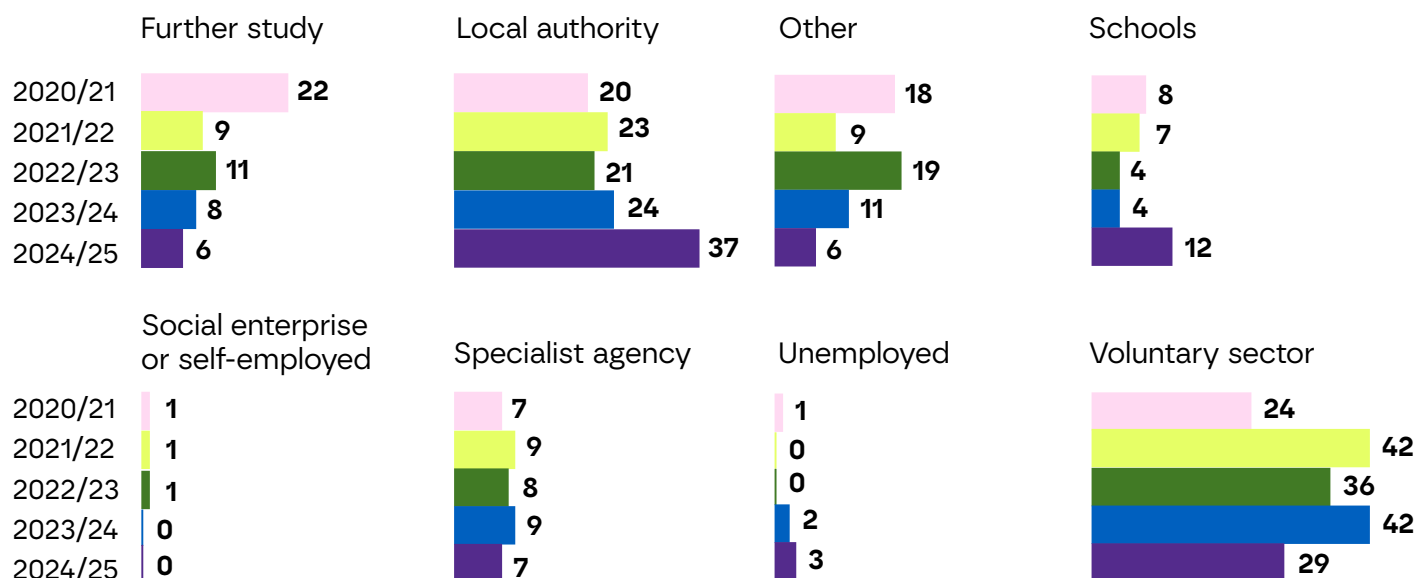


Achievements and graduate destinations

In 2024/25, local authority employers became the most common graduate destination, with 37% of graduates going to work in this area; however, voluntary sector employers remained a common destination for graduates, despite falling from 42% to 29% between 2023/24 and 2024/25. Of data that HEIs were

able to collect, schools were the third most common destination, accounting for 12% of leavers – three times more than in 2023/24. Unemployment remains uncommon for leavers, accounting for just 3% of destinations (Figure 18).

Figure 18: Graduate destinations, by year



Voluntary sector employers remained a common destination for graduates, despite falling from 42% to 29%

Achievement grades for qualifications remained largely unchanged at the undergraduate level. First- and third-class undergraduate grades dropped slightly, while second-class grades increased slightly. A 2:1 remains the most common grade, accounting for just under half (45%) of undergraduate achievements (Figure 19).

The proportion of postgraduate students achieving the highest grade increased by 11 percentage points in the last year, with just under half (46%) receiving a distinction in 2024/25 (Figure 20).

Figure 19: Undergraduate achievements, by year

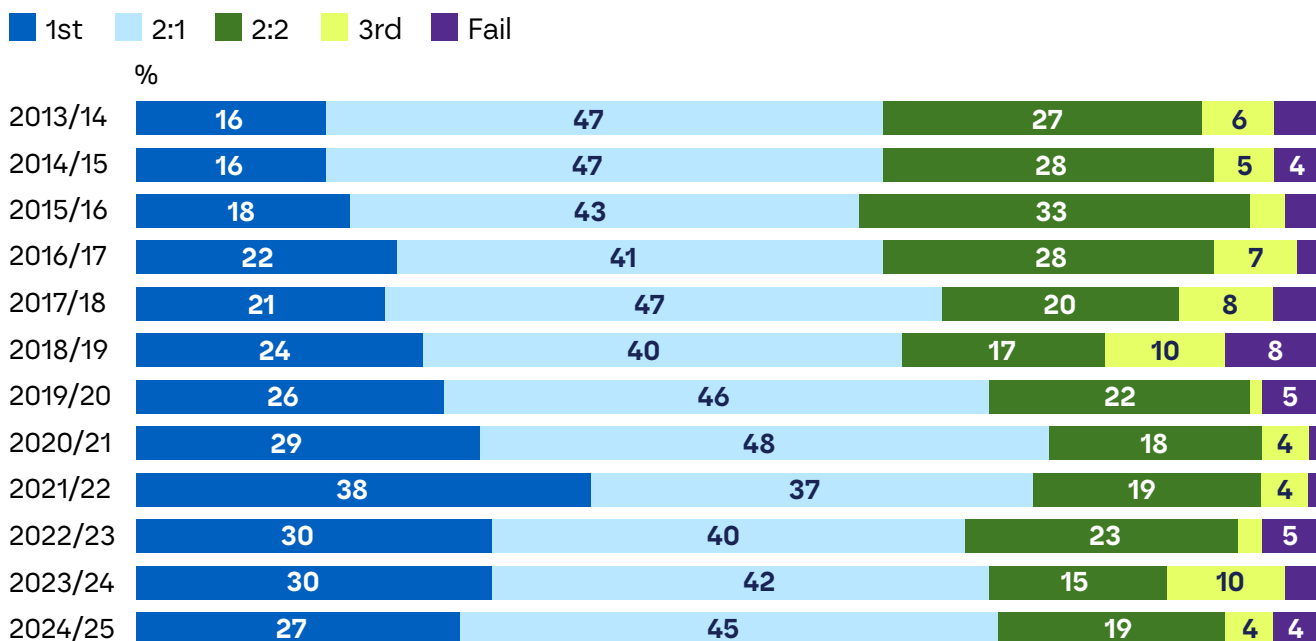
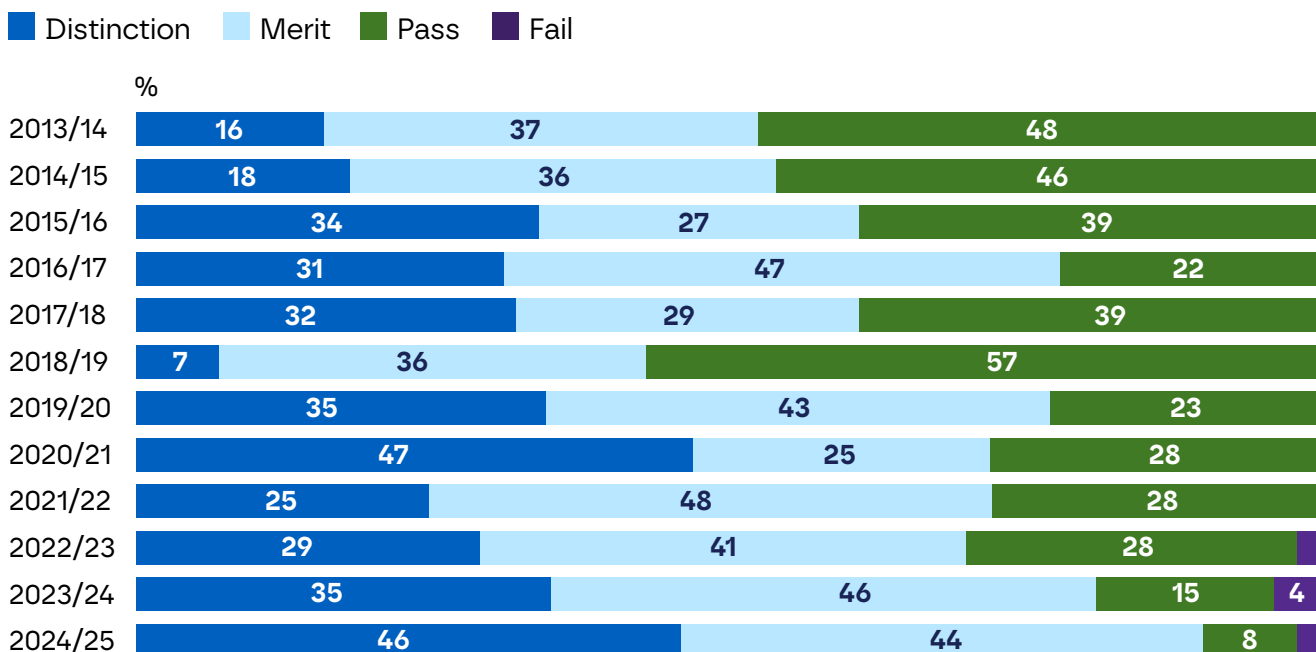


Figure 20: Postgraduate achievements, by year



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