INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the 2017 edition of *Higher education in facts and figures*. This annual publication provides an overview of UK higher education students, outcomes, staff and finances.

All data relates to UK higher education institutions unless stated otherwise. Further information on the sources used in this publication can be found on our website:

www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/facts-and-figures
14% of undergraduates, 38% of postgraduates and 29% of academic staff are from outside of the UK.

University applications from 18-year-olds in areas of England with lower higher education participation rates have increased to record levels.

In 2017, overall student satisfaction at UK higher education institutions was 84%.

Just under a quarter of total university income is from direct UK government sources.

16% of research income came from sources outside of the UK.

Employment rates and median salaries continue to be higher for graduates than for non-graduates.

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STUDENTS

With the UK attracting more students from overseas than any other country besides the United States, its student population is incredibly diverse. Overall, 14% of undergraduates and 38% of postgraduates were from outside of the UK.

The way that students complete their studies also varies. In 2015–16, 82% of undergraduates studied full time, whereas 43% of postgraduates studied part time.
STUDENTS BY COUNTRY OF PROVIDER, 2014–15 TO 2015–16

In 2015, the number of full-time students at UK higher education institutions increased in England and Scotland. All home nations showed decreases in numbers of part-time students.

Note: figures show numbers in 2015–16, and percentage changes between 2014–15 and 2015–16. The Open University has been distributed across each of the home nations.
Part-time students make up 75% of other undergraduate students and a quarter of postgraduate (research) students at UK higher education institutions. 89% of undergraduates undertaking a first degree are studying full time.
YOUNG UNIVERSITY APPLICATION RATES, 2006 TO 2017

18-year-olds from England were more likely to apply to full-time, undergraduate study in 2017 than in any previous year. From 2016 to 2017, the 18-year-old application rate decreased in Wales and Northern Ireland, and remained the same in Scotland.
APPLICATION RATES FROM THE MOST DISADVANTAGED 18-YEAR-OLDS, 2006 TO 2017

18-year-olds from the lowest areas of participation in England and Scotland are more likely than ever to apply to university.

Note: POLAR3 method is used for England, Wales and Northern Ireland, while SIMD is used for Scotland. Therefore, they are not directly comparable. Application rates reported for Scotland are lower, as a substantial section of Scottish providers do not use UCAS.
Undergraduate numbers at UK higher education institutions are highest for business, subjects allied to medicine, and biological sciences, while for postgraduates, the numbers are highest for business, education, and subjects allied to medicine.
14% of undergraduate students and 38% of postgraduate students at UK higher education institutions are from outside of the UK.
### Top 20 Home Countries of Non-UK Students, 2015–16

In 2015–16, the top six home countries of non-UK students were China – accounting for 21% of non-UK students – Malaysia, the United States, India, Hong Kong and Nigeria (accounting for 4% each).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>91,215</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>17,405</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>17,115</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>16,745</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>16,745</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>16,100</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>13,425</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>12,525</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>12,135</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>10,245</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>9,790</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td>9,140</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>8,570</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>7,840</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>7,540</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>7,200</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>6,195</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>6,095</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>5,980</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>5,655</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In 2014–15, the percentage of UK-domiciled, full-time, first degree entrants not continuing in higher education after their first year was below the level seen in 2006–07.
OUTCOMES

The 2017 National Student Survey showed that student satisfaction was 84% overall, and there is a growing public and policy interest in the student experience and graduate outcomes.

Salaries and employment rates continue to be higher for both undergraduates and postgraduates when compared to non-graduates, while more than 90% of UK-domiciled undergraduates and postgraduates were working and/or pursuing further study six months after graduation.
QUALIFICATIONS AWARDED BY MODE OF STUDY, 2015–16

In 2015–16, 54% of all qualifications awarded by UK higher education institutions were first degrees, 11% were for other types of undergraduate degrees (including foundation degrees) and 35% were for postgraduate degrees.
In 2015–16, 74% of qualifications awarded to UK students were undergraduate degrees, while 62% of qualifications awarded to non-UK students were postgraduate degrees.
Six months after graduation, 93% of postgraduates and 90% of undergraduates were working and/or pursuing further study.
DESTINATIONS OF UK- AND OTHER EU-DOMICILED LEAVERS, 2011–12 AND 2015–16

The percentage of leavers in work or further study has increased from 89% in 2011–12 to 92% in 2015–16.
UNEMPLOYMENT RATES AND MEDIAN SALARIES IN THE UK, 2016

Median salaries and employment rates continue to be higher for both undergraduates and postgraduates when compared to non-graduates.
In 2017, overall student satisfaction at UK higher education institutions was 84%. Satisfaction with teaching on the course was 85%, learning opportunities scored 84%, and academic support 80%.

Note: due to changes in the questions asked, the 2017 National Student Survey results cannot be compared to previous years.
29% of the UK’s academic staff are from overseas, with 17% from other EU countries. Nearly a quarter of senior lecturers and 18% of professors working at UK higher education institutions are non-UK nationals. Females make up 45% of the academic workforce.
24% of senior lecturers at UK higher education institutions are non-UK nationals. 18% of professors and 7% of senior management are also from overseas.

Note: each column contains a number of job titles, which can be found in the online version of this publication.
ACADEMIC STAFF, 2015–16

29% of academic staff at UK higher education institutions are from outside of the UK. A third of academic staff are employed on a part-time basis.
STAFF SALARIES BY SEX 2015–16

54% of the entire workforce at UK higher education institutions is female. Females make up 45% of the academic workforce and 66% of staff earning £24,057 or less. Males make up 58% of staff earning £43,325 or more.
Higher education institutions raise income from a wide range of sources. In 2015–16, 54% of income was from sources other than tuition fees, while 24% of income was from direct UK government sources. 16% of research income came from non-UK sources. 55% of spending at UK higher education institutions was related to teaching and research activities, which includes spending on academic and support staff working in academic departments. Additional spending also contributes to the student experience, including spending on libraries, accommodation and IT.
In 2015–16, nearly two-thirds of UK higher education institutions had an income of more than £100 million. Just over a quarter of institutions had over 20,000 students.
54% of income was from sources other than tuition fees. Just under a quarter of income was from direct UK government sources.
In 2015–16, UK higher education institutions received a total of £19.1 billion in teaching income. Institutions also received £7.8 billion in research income, of which 16% came from non-UK sources.
OPERATING EXPENDITURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS, 2015–16

55% of spending by higher education institutions was related to teaching and research activities, which includes spending on academic and support staff working in academic departments.
**SOURCES**

**p.7** HESA Student Record [2015–16]*

**p.8** HESA Student Record [2015–16]*

**p.9** UCAS, 2017

**p.10** UCAS, 2017

**p.11** HESA Student Record [2015–16]*

**p.12** HESA Student Record [2015–16]*

**p.13** HESA Student Record [2015–16]*

**p.14** HESA UK Performance Indicators [2015–16]

**p.16** HESA Student Record [2015–16]*

**p.17** HESA (2017), Statistical First Release 242

**p.18** HESA Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) [2015–16]

**p.19** HESA (2017), Statistical First Release 245

**p.20** Department for Education (2017), Graduate Labour Market Statistics 2016

**p.21** National Student Survey (NSS) 2017

**p.23** HESA Staff Record [2015–16]*

**p.24** HESA Staff Record [2015–16]*

**p.25** HESA Staff Record [2015–16]*

**p.27** HESA Finance Record and Student Record [multiple years]*

**p.28** UUK analysis of HESA Finance Plus 2015–16

**p.29** UUK analysis of HESA Finance Plus 2015–16

**p.30** UUK analysis of HESA Finance Plus 2015–16

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GLOSSARY

**Application rate**
The number of applicants divided by the estimated base population.

**DLHE**
The Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey asks leavers from higher education what they are doing six months after graduation. About three-quarters of leavers complete the survey.

**Domicile**
A student’s permanent country of residence.

**EEA**
The European Economic Area (EEA) is the 28 EU countries plus Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein.

**First degree**
A three- or four-year undergraduate higher education course taken after finishing further education, generally resulting in a bachelor’s degree.

**Higher education institutions**
In 2015–16, there were 162 higher education institutions in the UK in receipt of public funding via one of the UK funding councils. This report features aggregated data from all 162, plus the University of Buckingham, largely based on institutional returns to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). On page 7, students from The Open University have been split across each UK nation to better reflect the number of students in each part of the UK.

Unless explicitly stated otherwise, the analysis in this report therefore excludes other higher education providers, including alternative providers or further education colleges that currently do not return consistent and full data to HESA.

**HEFCE**

**HESA**
Higher Education Statistics Agency.
**High-skill employment (ONS definition)**
Occupations at this level are generally termed ‘professional’ or ‘managerial’ positions, and are found in corporate enterprises or governments. Examples include senior government officials; financial managers; scientists; engineers; medical doctors; teachers; and accountants.

**Mode of study**
Whether a student studies full or part time.

**Non-continuation rate**
For this publication, the non-continuation rate is the percentage of full-time, first degree entrants not continuing in higher education after their first year.

**NSS**
National Student Survey.

**Other undergraduate**
Undergraduate degrees which are not first degrees, including foundation degrees and Higher National Diplomas.

**POLAR3**
Participation of Local Areas (POLAR) is a widening participation measure which classifies local areas or ‘wards’ into five groups, based on the proportion of 18-year-olds who enter higher education aged 18 or 19 years old. These groups range from quintile 1 areas, with the lowest young participation (most disadvantaged), up to quintile 5 areas with the highest rates (most advantaged).

**SIMD**
The Scottish index of multiple deprivation (SIMD) ranks small geographical areas in Scotland by their relative level of deprivation across a range of measures. Data used in this publication refers to 18-year-olds from the most disadvantaged SIMD quintile.
NOTES ON DATA

All percentages have been calculated using raw figures and rounded, and therefore rounded figures may not sum precisely.

Full data and further information on sources can be found on our website:

www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/facts-and-figures
Universities UK is the representative organisation for the UK’s universities. Founded in 1918, our mission is to be the voice of universities in the UK, providing high quality leadership and support to our members to promote a successful and diverse higher education sector. With 136 members and offices in London, Cardiff (Universities Wales) and Edinburgh (Universities Scotland), we promote the strength and success of UK universities nationally and internationally.

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October 2017