

University Outcome Agreements

Summary of Progress and Ambitions report 2019

Photo Credit: Strathclyde University



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Scottish Funding Council
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Universities: Progress & Ambitions

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Introduction

The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) is the national, strategic body for funding teaching and learning, research, innovation and other activities in Scotland's 26 colleges, 17 universities and two specialist institutions. Our main statutory duties and powers come from the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 2005.

Our ambition is for Scotland to be the best place in the world to learn, educate, research and innovate, so that all of our nation can flourish. Through our investment of £1.8bn in our colleges and universities, we are supporting and sustaining a world-leading system of tertiary education, research and innovation that changes lives for the better, enriches society and our wellbeing, and supports sustainable and inclusive growth.

SFC's [Strategic Framework](#)¹ outlines our four core objectives: to invest in education that is accessible to learners from all backgrounds; to invest in excellent research and innovation; to ensure colleges, universities and specialist institutions form part of a successful, world-leading, coherent and sustainable system; and to be an excellent, outcome-focused public body.

Outcome Agreements form one of the ways in which we manage our relationship with institutions. Outcome Agreements articulate how institutions provide an education that best meets the changing social and economic needs of their regions, reflecting a changing and increasingly diverse profile of students. They are an important part of the framework in which we ensure that institutions make best use of public funds and exercise good governance.

The aim of this report is to highlight the progress universities have made, their ambitions in the coming years, and to analyse their contribution to SFC's aim to make Scotland the best place in the world to learn, to educate, to research and to innovate. As we work to develop and refine the Outcome Agreement process, this will be the last year we report in this way and we look forward to developing a new reporting method in future.

¹ [SFC Strategic Framework](#)

Summary of Progress

Working in partnership with colleges, universities, schools, employers, our agency partners and others, SFC has made significant progress across all four of its core objectives. The combined work of the Commissioner for Widening Access, the commitment and vision from the Scottish Government and our support and scrutiny have helped in our efforts to deliver a level playing field, while universities have continued to build closer working relationships with colleges, developing more efficient pathways for learners. Scotland's universities continue to lead the UK in securing research funding and as a result of our support of Interface, the Innovation Voucher Scheme and the Innovation Centre programme, collaboration with the business community is going from strength to strength.

It is clear, however, that challenges remain and so we have asked universities to set ambitious targets for the coming years to deliver an excellent education for their students, working in alignment with agency partners, to provide opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish through the delivery of sustainable economic growth.

Note on data: SFC has used the most recent available data to assess progress in this report. In most cases this is HESA data for academic year 2017-18. The data draws on the measures of progress identified in SFC's *University Outcome Agreement Guidance for AY 2019-20*². A full explanation of these measures can be found in the technical annex of the guidance (Annex B). **Sector figures have been calculated for 2019-20 onwards by maintaining 2017-18 figures for some measures for some institutions, where these figures were not provided.**

² [Technical Guidance on SFC's measures of progress](#)

Access to learning

Improving access to university for people from deprived areas and under-represented groups is a key priority for the Scottish Government. The Government has asked that SFC use the Outcome Agreement process to drive forward improvement towards fairer access, securing progress with the challenging targets set out in the final report of the Commission on Widening Access (CoWA)

Undergraduate entrants from deprived areas

The CoWA recommendations were published and accepted by the Scottish Government in May 2016, toward the end of the 2016-17 undergraduate admissions cycle. Data for 2017-18 gives us the first clear indication of the impact made by the CoWA recommendations, with the proportion of full-time, first degree UG entrants from SIMD20 datazones increasing from 13.8% in 2016-17 to 15.6% in 2017-18; all institutions showing progress towards equalised access to HE by 2030; and all institutions aiming to have reached, or exceeded, the CoWA recommendation of 10% of entrants from MD20 datazones by 2020.

Outcome Agreements to 2021-22 set out institutions' commitment to increase the number of UG entrants from deprived backgrounds, setting targets that recognise their own particular context, challenges, and progress thus far. As a minimum we expect each institution to ensure that 10% of its full-time, first degree Scotland-domiciled entrants are from MD20 datazones by 2020-21, and to be on a trajectory to ensure that 20% of UG entrants are from these areas by 2030 – in line with the recommendations from CoWA (recommendation 32).

CoWA recommendation 32: Proportion of full-time first degree Scotland-domiciled UG entrants from the 20% most deprived SIMD areas

	Performance to date			OA targets to 2019-22		
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Aberdeen	4.3%	5.1%	6.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%
Abertay	16.7%	15.1%	19.1%	19.0%	19.0%	19.0%
Dundee	14.3%	15.5%	15.8%	15.5%	15.8%	16.5%
Napier	10.7%	10.7%	10.9%	13.0%	14.0%	14.9%
Edinburgh	5.6%	6.4%	8.1%	11.2%	11.4%	11.6%
GCU	22.6%	20.9%	23.5%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%
GSA	14.6%	21.1%	13.9%	15.1%	15.6%	16.1%
Glasgow	12.1%	12.3%	12.3%	13.2%	13.8%	14.0%
HWU	9.8%	8.5%	11.2%	12.6%	13.7%	14.8%
UHI	8.0%	7.3%	8.3%	9.0%	9.5%	10.0%
QMU	9.1%	9.1%	9.9%	15.0%	15.0%	15.9%
RGU	6.7%	6.4%	6.5%	7.5%	10.0%	10.0%
RCS	13.1%	13.3%	13.2%	15.9%	16.6%	17.2%
SRUC	8.3%	7.5%	10.4%	14.2%	14.9%	15.9%
St Andrews	5.1%	5.5%	7.5%	10.0%	10.0%	11.0%
Stirling	12.3%	12.0%	15.9%	14.9%	15.0%	15.5%
Strathclyde	13.7%	14.5%	16.6%	14.8%	16.3%	17.0%
UWS	27.5%	27.5%	29.4%	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%
TOTAL	14.0%	13.8%	15.6%	15.3%	15.9%	16.2%

Source: HESA/SFC

Targets to 2021-22 show continued improvement from most institutions, with the sector total increasing to 16.2% by 2021-22, up from 15.6% in 2017-18. This ambition is reflected in institutions' commitments to increase the proportion of all entrants from MD20 areas from 15.1% in 2017-18 to 16.0% by 2021-22.

Case study: Supporting students from deprived backgrounds into Medicine

The University of Dundee's School of Medicine has made significant progress with its widening access programme over the past few years, including the development of contextualised admissions policy, a Gateway to Medicine programme and, more recently, a summer school. As part of the contextualised admissions process applicants are given scores for adverse circumstances affecting their performance at school, with those who have experienced high adversity more likely to be invited to interview.

The School recognised that this specific group of students needs additional support to 'learn how to learn', and has introduced specific interventions including the summer school, the formative assessment in semester 1 and a series of extra sessions to support this student group in their learning. This approach provides an example of how additional support can be provided to students from areas of multiple deprivation using an evidenced-based approach. Students with high adversity scores who enter the programme through the Gateway to Medicine programme (which provides a substantial amount of study skills and confidence building work) do not struggle in the first year.

OA Measure 2: Proportion of Scotland-domiciled UG entrants from the 20% most deprived SIMD areas

	Progress to date			OA targets to 2020-21		
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Aberdeen	4.6%	5.4%	6.2%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%
Abertay	17.2%	15.6%	19.1%	19.0%	19.0%	19.0%
Dundee	15.0%	16.1%	15.6%	15.9%	16.0%	16.0%
Napier	11.3%	11.7%	11.0%	13.0%	14.0%	14.9%
Edinburgh	6.1%	7.4%	8.2%	11.2%	11.2%	11.5%
GCU	22.7%	21.1%	22.0%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%
GSA	14.9%	22.2%	13.8%	24.2%	26.9%	26.9%
Glasgow	13.3%	13.4%	13.5%	13.5%	13.8%	14.0%
HWU	10.5%	9.3%	11.1%	12.6%	13.7%	14.8%
UHI	8.4%	8.7%	7.9%	8.8%	9.1%	9.5%
Open	*	*	17.0%*	19.0%*	19.0%*	19.0%*
QMU	9.3%	10.8%	9.9%	14.9%	14.9%	16.0%
RGU	7.6%	7.0%	6.8%	8.0%	10.0%	10.0%
RCS	13.8%	15.3%	13.3%	15.9%	16.6%	17.2%
SRUC	11.9%	12.4%	13.4%	13.9%	14.9%	15.4%
St Andrews	5.2%	5.6%	7.6%	10.0%	10.0%	11.0%
Stirling	12.7%	12.6%	15.4%	15.0%	15.5%	16.0%
Strathclyde	14.8%	15.3%	16.8%	16.1%	17.7%	18.5%
UWS	27.6%	26.0%	27.6%	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%
TOTAL	14.4%	14.3%	15.1%	15.3%	15.7%	16.0%

Source: SFC/HESA

* The Open University in Scotland uses a bespoke measure and is not therefore included in the sector total.

While our focus has been on improvement in entrants from SIMD20, we will work with institutions to ensure more equalised provision across all deprivation quintiles. The proportion of entrants from the two most deprived quintiles (SIMD 0 to 40) has remained broadly static in the past three years at c31%, with institutional variations ranging from 17.2% (Aberdeen) to 49.4% (UWS) in 2017-18 against a sector average of 31.6%. Institutions' commitments would see this remain largely unchanged at 31.8 by 2021-22.

OA Measure 2: Proportion of Scotland-domiciled UG entrants from the 40% most deprived areas

	Performance to date			OA targets to 2020-21		
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Aberdeen	15.4%	15.6%	17.2%	17.0%	18.0%	18.0%
Abertay	38.0%	34.2%	33.2%	35.0%	35.0%	35.0%
Dundee	35.4%	36.6%	31.7%	31.6%	31.7%	31.7%
Napier	27.3%	28.6%	27.6%	28.0%	28.5%	29.0%
Edinburgh	17.3%	18.0%	19.2%	18.5%	18.5%	18.5%
GCU	42.0%	39.8%	39.5%	40.0%	40.0%	40.0%
GSA	30.9%	41.1%	31.0%	41.4%	43.0%	43.0%
Glasgow	29.4%	27.8%	28.0%	27.5%	27.5%	28.0%
HWU	26.4%	24.6%	24.8%	27.4%	28.5%	29.6%
UHI	27.9%	26.5%	24.1%	25.7%	26.7%	27.5%
Open	n/a	38.2%	38.1%*	39.0%*	39.0%*	39.0%*
QMU	25.1%	28.3%	29.1%	27.9%	27.9%	27.9%
RGU	18.5%	19.2%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%
RCS	33.8%	28.7%	28.1%	30.3%	31.0%	31.0%
SRUC	28.8%	29.8%	28.0%	30.3%	31.4%	32.0%
St Andrews	16.1%	17.1%	19.8%	15.0%	15.0%	15.0%
Stirling	32.2%	33.0%	37.1%	37.0%	38.0%	38.5%
Strathclyde	29.1%	31.9%	34.5%	32.3%	35.5%	37.1%
UWS	49.1%	47.9%	49.4%	45.0%	45.0%	45.0%
TOTAL	31.4%	31.2%	31.6%	30.9%	31.4%	31.8%

Source: SFC/HESA

Case Study: widening access to nursing in Grampian

The Open University in Scotland is working with North East Scotland College and NHS Grampian to help health and social care workers upskill and become nurses in Grampian, establishing new routes to FE and HE study. Students on the programme will have support to enhance their literacy and numeracy skills, with those successfully completing the programme being able to articulate to the OU's nursing degree programme.

Nurses play a critical role in our society and it's important that they reflect and understand the communities they serve. The project, funded with support from the Scottish Government, will help to widen access to nursing as a profession, making background no barrier to a career as a nurse.

Articulation

SFC redeveloped the National Articulation Database (NAD) during 2018-19 to better understand the articulation landscape. Thanks to the NAD we now have a more complete understanding of the movement of students across the sector and the prior academic credit they attain. The NAD shows that for 2017-18:

- 51.4% of university entrants from college articulated with advanced standing (full recognition of prior learning) (OA Measure 7).
- 26.1% of Scotland-domiciled first degree entrants into universities arrived via the HNC/HND college route.
- 41.8% of Scotland-domiciled first degree entrants from the most deprived SIMD quintile (MD 20) arrived via the HNC/HND college route.
- There was better representation of under-represented groups amongst entrants with advanced standing than amongst all entrants to university, with 9.2% BME; 15.3% reporting a disability; and 1.1% with care-experience.

Data for OA Measure 1 shows growth of 379 students entering undergraduate programmes via a college route in 2017-18 compared to the previous year, bringing the sector's total to 7,826 students. Institutions have given their commitment to increase this to 7,931 by 2021-22. However, we believe there is significant room for greater progress, and we will be seeking institutions' commitment to the Commissioner for Fair Access call for a 'step change' in the sector's articulation performance.

OA Measure 1: Number Scotland-domiciled UG entrants from college

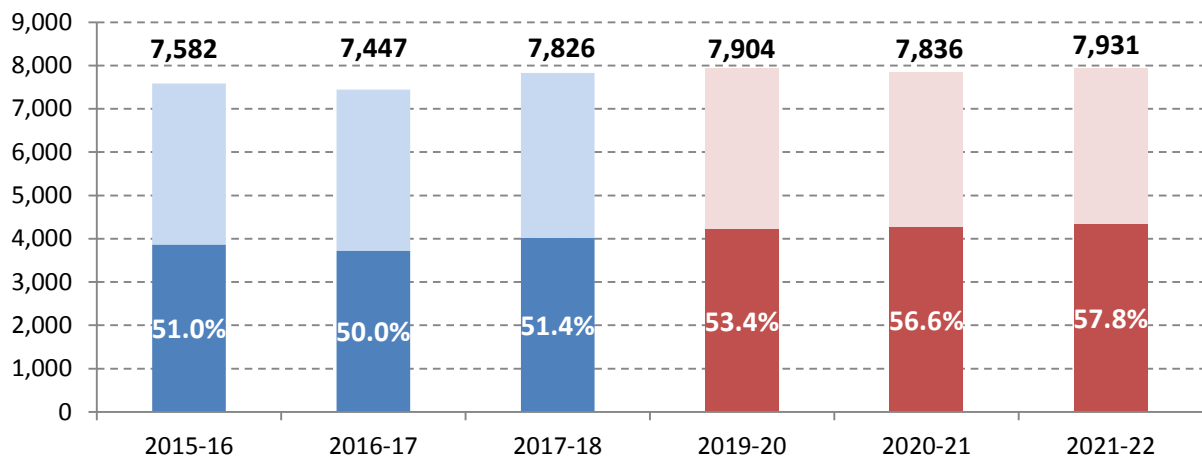
	Performance to date			OA targets to 2021-22		
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Aberdeen	134	189	207	255	248	256
Abertay	481	451	480	410	420	420
Dundee	334	353	332	450	450	450
Napier	854	880	743	902	902	902
Edinburgh	81	79	93	85	85	85
GCU	1,382	1,487	1,509	1,490	1,490	1,490
GSA	59	62	63	82	84	84
Glasgow	139	145	128	128*	128*	128*
HWU	306	330	294	335	340	350
UHI	115	93	108	190	195	200
Open	104	83	100	no target submitted		
QMU	199	206	247	299	299	299
RGU	660	734	786	675	675	675
RCS	22	22	17	25	26	27
SRUC	49	26	41	50	50	55
St Andrews	7	3	4	20	20	20
Stirling	278	248	353	552	478	544
Strathclyde	409	266	366	366*	366*	366*
UWS	1,969	1,790	1,954	2,000	2,000	2,000
TOTAL	7,582	7,447	7,826	7,904*	7,836*	7,931*

Source: SFC

* Sector OA targets for 2019-20 to 2021-22 have been calculated by maintaining 2017-18 figures for the universities of Glasgow and Strathclyde who did not provide this information.

Just over half of entrants from college to UG programmes articulate with advanced standing into years 2 and 3 of their degree programme. The sector is committed to increase this proportion to 54.8% by 2021-22, in line with the Commissioner's and the Scottish Government's expectations.

OA Measure 1: Number of Scotland-domiciled HE entrants from college, and proportion articulating with Advanced Standing, (performance in blue, OA targets in red)



Source: SFC

Institutions continue to work with colleges to develop the necessary infrastructure for articulation, including smoother admissions and transitions processes, and joint curriculum planning, to increase the number and effectiveness of articulation pathways.

For some institutions articulation is at the core of their access strategies, e.g. UWS and GCU. Other institutions have found a broader approach, including direct engagement with schools and local authorities, to be more effective. RCS and the University of St Andrews have found that the intense and collaborative nature of their programmes has not been the ideal environment for students to succeed on entering into years 2 and 3. Nevertheless, we expect all institutions to ensure better alignment with college provision and to enhance the range and diversity of articulation pathways for students as a core aspect of their access activities.

OA Measure 1: Proportion of Scotland-domiciled UG entrants from college articulating with advanced standing

	Performance to date			OA targets to 2020-21		
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Aberdeen	9.0%	12.2%	15.5%	25.0%	35.0%	45.0%
Abertay	66.1%	65.0%	61.7%	65.0%	65.0%	65.0%
Dundee	12.9%	17.0%	18.4%	17.8%	17.8%	17.8%
Napier	65.5%	64.5%	70.0%	75.4%	76.5%	77.6%
Edinburgh	12.3%	20.3%	16.1%	27.1%	27.1%	27.1%
GCU	68.5%	63.3%	62.8%	67.4%	67.4%	67.4%
GSA	20.3%	41.9%	34.9%	51.2%	52.4%	52.4%
Glasgow	5.0%	5.5%	7.8%	7.8%*	7.8%*	7.8%*
HWU	43.5%	43.3%	38.1%	46.3%	50.0%	51.4%
UHI	72.2%	64.5%	54.6%	80.0%	81.0%	81.5%
QMU	47.7%	54.9%	48.2%	60.9%	61.9%	61.9%
RGU	62.9%	69.8%	66.0%	73.3%	73.3%	73.3%
RCS	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
SRUC	59.2%	96.2%	85.4%	90.0%	90.0%	90.9%
St Andrews	42.9%	0.0%	25.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%
Stirling	5.4%	6.9%	7.6%	11.1%	11.9%	13.1%
Strathclyde	7.3%	8.6%	6.0%	6.0%*	6.0%*	6.0%*
UWS	58.9%	49.9%	62.6%	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%
TOTAL	51.0%	50.0%	51.4%	53.4%	54.5%*	54.8%*

Source: SFC

* Sector OA targets for 2019-20 to 2021-22 have been calculated by maintaining 2017-18 figures the universities of Glasgow and Strathclyde who did not provided this information.

The Open University in Scotland is not included in the data but offers its own unique model of flexible, part-time higher education where articulating students can apply for credit transfer before commencing their OU studies or at any time during their degree.

Case study: Partnership to open up pathways to the creative disciplines for those in rural and remote communities

Following the experience of developing Associate Student Schemes with two partner colleges, GSA is now using its partnership with Dumfries and Galloway College to explore further opportunities to allow young people in Dumfries to undertake learning opportunities at degree level in the creative disciplines. The aim is to develop a curriculum that will ensure a smooth learner journey from HND learning in creative subjects articulating into the 3rd year of a degree programme, and that can be flexible enough that it can be accessed by multiple participants as forms of CPD, short courses and summer schools. It is hoped that this will provide opportunities for

practitioners within creative businesses in the area as well as teachers and other educational professionals.

Recognising the difficulties of accessing GSA outreach activities after school, the Art School also offers portfolio development classes through the College, linking the pre-entry activities with the College's current offer, including its provision for those involved in creative enterprises. As a sign of their commitment GSA and the College have signed a Memorandum of Understanding as part of an enhanced partnership to deliver pathways in creative education in the South West of Scotland.

Case study: Open University in Scotland articulation partnership

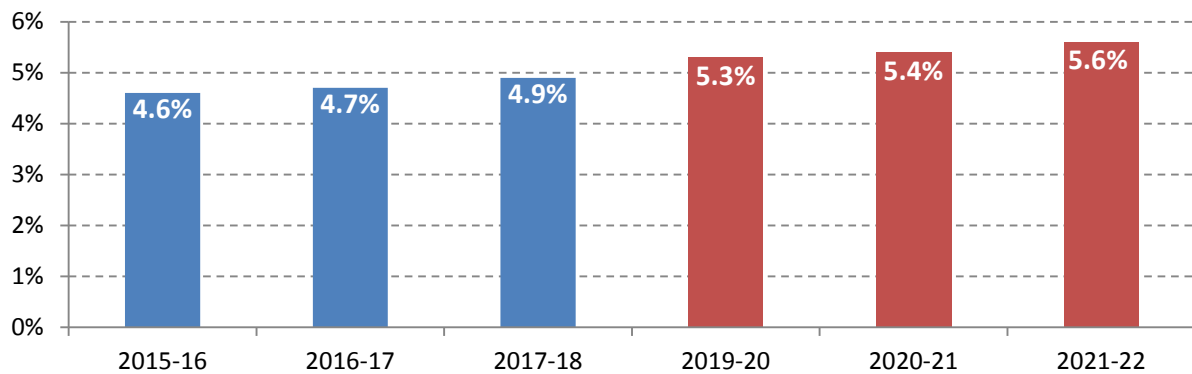
The Open University in Scotland is committed to strengthening links with Scotland's colleges and exploring opportunities for innovative partnership working. Examples of such partnerships include the development of campus-based teaching models which allow cohorts of HN students to progress seamlessly to OU study at their existing college campus. The University currently delivers campus-based social sciences curriculum at Ayrshire College, North East Scotland College and City of Glasgow College. In 2019-20, they will be piloting a new social work pathway with Ayrshire College.

Engagement with schools

The proportion of Scotland-domiciled undergraduate entrants from low-progression schools taking part in the Schools for Higher Education Programme (SHEP)³ provides a useful measure that, taken with SIMD data and other evidence, gives a more rounded understanding of institutions' progress in reducing barriers to higher education. Since 2015-16 there has been steady incremental improvement in the numbers of students from SHEP schools, with 1,787 entrants in 2017-18.

³ Schools in the SHEP programme typically have rates of progression to higher education that are significantly below the national average.

OA Measure 3: Scotland-domiciled UG entrants from SHEP schools, (performance in blue, OA targets in red)



Source: SFC/HESA

Institutional data captures the particular success of institutions that have targeted their access and outreach activities on engagement with students from this group of schools. The University of Edinburgh continues to have the standout performance of the sector at 8% of their entrants from SHEP schools in 2017-18, with plans for further improvement. SFC is developing a schools engagement framework to ensure a more integrated approach to secure greater impact across our school engagement activities, aligning more effectively with the recommendations of CoWA and the Scottish Government's Youth Employment Strategy⁴.

⁴ [Developing the Young Workforce - Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy](#)

OA Measure 3: Proportion Scotland-domiciled UG entrants from SHEP schools

	Performance to date			OA targets to 2020-21		
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Aberdeen	4.8%	4.7%	3.9%	6.5%	6.5%	6.5%
Abertay	5.3%	3.5%	4.8%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%
Dundee	5.8%	8.0%	5.6%	7.2%	7.2%	7.2%
Napier	4.7%	5.5%	4.5%	4.5%	4.5%	4.5%
Edinburgh	7.9%	7.6%	8.0%	9.5%	9.5%	9.5%
GCU	3.8%	4.3%	3.5%	4.4%	4.5%	4.5%
GSA	4.8%	3.9%	3.9%	6.5%	7.5%	7.5%
Glasgow	4.6%	5.0%	5.2%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%
HWU	4.2%	4.5%	6.1%	6.3%	6.7%	7.0%
UHI	4.7%	4.4%	4.6%	4.9%	5.0%	5.1%
QMU	5.7%	6.4%	5.4%	9.2%	9.2%	9.2%
RGU	3.8%	4.1%	4.1%	4.4%	4.4%	4.6%
RCS	5.5%	5.3%	5.1%	6.9%	6.9%	6.9%
SRUC	3.0%	1.4%	2.0%	4.6%	4.8%	5.1%
St Andrews	5.2%	6.1%	5.1%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%
Stirling	6.0%	4.3%	6.2%	6.0%	6.5%	7.5%
Strathclyde	5.3%	5.2%	5.9%	6.3%	6.7%	7.0%
UWS	2.7%	2.8%	4.3%	2.7%	3.1%	3.5%
TOTAL	4.6%	4.7%	4.9%	5.3%	5.4%	5.6%

Source: SFC/HESA

* Sector total does not include the University of Glasgow who did not submit this information, and the Open University in Scotland has its own bespoke range of measures.

Case study: Access to the professions for students from low-progression schools

The University of Edinburgh works with the Lothians Equal Access Programme for Schools (LEAPS), an outreach programme that aims to raise awareness of opportunities in higher education. The University and LEAPS collaborate on the SFC funded Access to High Demand Professions project for students from low progressions schools in the South-East of Scotland who are interested in studying law, medicine or veterinary medicine at university – subjects with very competitive application processes and reputations for being socially exclusive. Access to High Demand Professions gives encouragement and detailed advice about these careers to promising students, as well as guidance on school course choices and all aspects of the UCAS application process, developing confidence and understanding of what working in these professions entails.

Protected characteristic groups

Students under-21 make up the majority of undergraduate entrants, with older students representing around a third of the total. There is also a strong intake of ethnic minority groups and students declaring a disability compared to the Scottish population as a whole, although SFC continues to explore under-representation within some categories of disability and ethnic minority groups.

OA Measure 4: Proportion Scotland-domiciled UG entrants from protected characteristic groups and care-experienced, 2013-14 to 2017-18

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
SIMD 0-20	14%	14.1%	14.4%	14.3%	15.1%
SIMD 0-40	30%	30.8%	31.4%	31.2%	31.6%
Male	43.1%	42.3%	41.2%	41.4%	40.5%
Female	56.9%	57.7%	58.7%	58.6%	59.4%
21 and over	33.6%	33.3%	34.8%	33.5%	34.8%
Under 21	66.4%	66.7%	65.2%	66.5%	65.2%
White	92.2%	92.5%	91.7%	91.8%	90.8%
BME	6.8%	6.4%	7.1%	7.1%	7.6%
Disabled	10.3%	10.8%	11.7%	12.2%	12.8%
Care-experienced	0.5%	0.6%	0.6%	0.7%	0.9%

Source: SFC/HESA

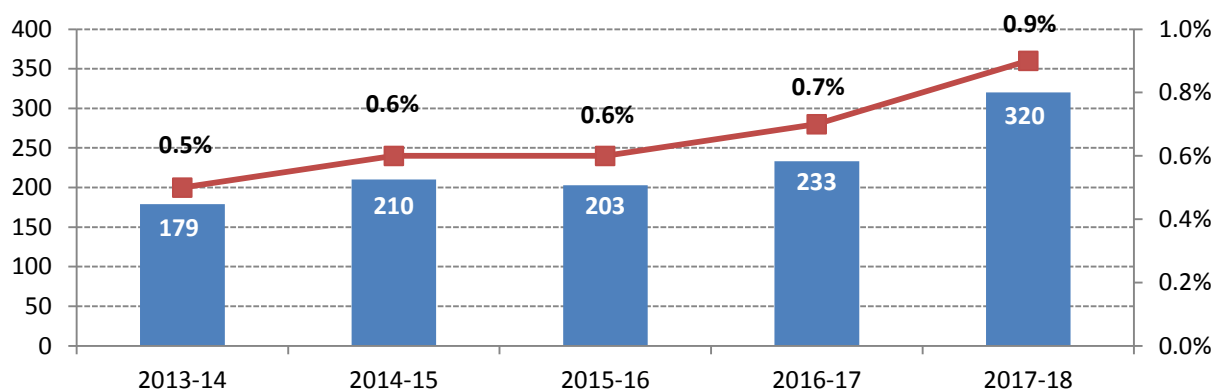
Care-experienced

SFC uses the term ‘care-experienced’ to refer to anyone who has been or is currently in care or from a looked-after background at any stage of their life, no matter how short.

Care-experienced young people and adults are amongst the most disadvantaged in our society and have some of the worst educational outcomes. Currently, only 4% of looked-after children go from school to higher education compared to 41% of school leavers as a whole in 2017-18, although 45% of those with care-experience go from school to further education study, (27% for all school leavers)⁵. Nevertheless, there has been excellent progress in recent years, with the number of UG entrants from care-experienced backgrounds increasing from 179 entrants (0.5% of all entrants) in 2013-14 to 320 (0.9% of entrants) in 2017-18.

⁵ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/education-outcomes-looked-children-2017-18/>

OA Measure 4: Number and proportion of Scotland-domiciled UG entrants who are care-experienced



Source: SFC/HESA

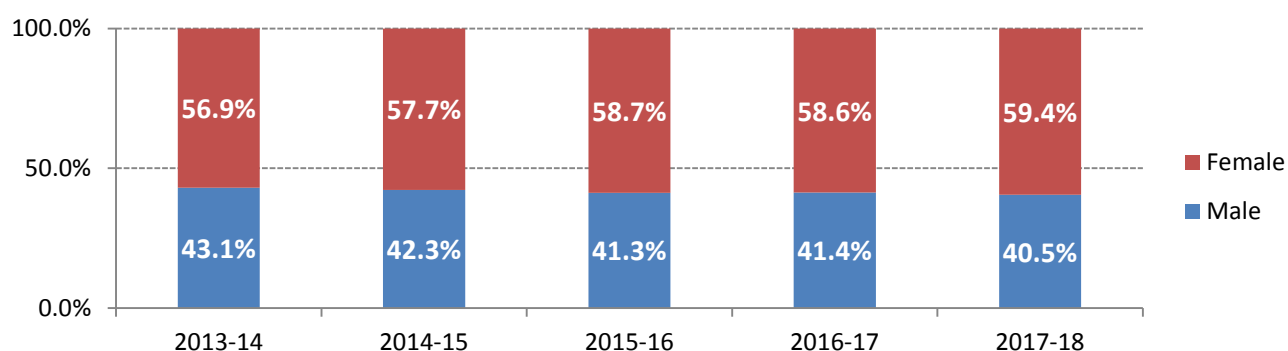
Note: Sector totals do not include the Open University in Scotland which has its own bespoke range of OA measures. In 2017-18 the OU Scotland had 40 UG entrants with care-experience.

All HEIs have published their Corporate Parenting Plan, and from 2019 have agreed to guarantee offers to care-experienced applicants who meet the minimum entry requirements for their respective programmes – in line with CoWA recommendation 21.

Gender imbalances

Many subject areas from school, college and university are heavily ‘gendered’ – that is, they tend to have high concentrations of either men or women. At university level such courses are often those most closely related to particular occupations, such as nursing, engineering, computing or teaching, and therefore have a significant impact on students’ future careers.

OA Measure 4: Scotland-domiciled undergraduate entrants by gender



Source: SFC/HESA

SFC's Gender Action Plan⁶ (GAP) sets out our ambition that by 2030 the gap between male and female participation in HEIs will be reduced to 5%, and that no college or university subject will have an imbalance of greater than 75% of one gender. In their OAs we have asked institutions to identify subject areas with significant gender imbalances (i.e. >75%), and to set out their plans for improvement.

Our data shows that the gender balance in our universities has deteriorated in recent years. In 2017-18, 40.5% of Scotland-domiciled UG entrants were male and 59.4% female, a gap of 18.9%. In 2013-14 the gap was 13.8%. SFC believes that greater progress is possible and we will consider ways of working with the sector to incentivise change and promote gender specific interventions in the most unbalanced subjects.

Gender balance of UG entrants by subject area (headcount) 2015-16 to 2017-18

Subject area	Male			Female		
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Subjects allied to Medicine (inc. nursing)	14%	15%	15%	86%	85%	85%
Education (inc. teaching)	17%	20%	18%	83%	80%	82%
European Languages, Literature and related	23%	20%	21%	77%	80%	79%
Combined	41%	22%	21%	59%	78%	79%
Social studies	29%	29%	26%	71%	71%	74%
Linguistics, Classics	28%	31%	26%	72%	69%	74%
Vet Sciences, Agriculture	32%	32%	28%	68%	68%	72%
Law	35%	34%	34%	65%	66%	66%
Creative Arts and Design	39%	35%	36%	61%	65%	64%
Medicine and Dentistry	33%	37%	35%	67%	63%	65%
Historical and Philosophical studies	40%	40%	40%	60%	60%	60%
Biological Sciences	37%	40%	38%	63%	60%	62%
Business and Admin	39%	41%	40%	61%	59%	60%
Languages (non-European)	50%	42%	38%	50%	58%	62%
Mass Communications	40%	44%	44%	60%	55%	56%
Physical Sciences	59%	57%	56%	41%	43%	44%
Maths and Computer Sciences	63%	63%	63%	37%	37%	37%
Architecture, Building and Planning	69%	71%	72%	31%	29%	28%
Technologies	79%	85%	92%	21%	14%	8%
Computer Science	84%	85%	85%	16%	15%	15%
Engineering	87%	85%	86%	13%	15%	14%
Gender balance colour key	>75%	60-75%	40-60%			

Source: SFC/HESA

⁶ [SFC Gender Action Plan](#)

At a more granular level, subject level data shows no progress, with gender imbalances becoming more entrenched. On current trends it is likely that Social Studies, Linguistics, Veterinary Science, and Architecture may join those subject with significant imbalances of greater than 75% within the next few years.

Improved outcomes for students from disadvantaged groups

Through the OA process SFC asks institutions to outline their strategies, activities and commitments for ensuring that students receive the necessary support to progress, and secure the skills and aptitude they need to succeed.

Retention rates for students from MD20 backgrounds were 89% in 2017-18, closing the gap on the retention for all students (91.6%). Retention rates for those from care-experienced backgrounds are also increasing, to 85.6% in 2017-18 but from a much lower base.

OA Measure 5: Retention rates for Scotland-domiciled UG entrants from protected characteristic groups and care-experienced

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
All	91.3%	90.5%	90.6%	91.0%	91.6%
SIMD 0-20	87.7%	87.5%	86.7%	87.2%	89.0%
SIMD 0-40	87.8%	88.1%	87.7%	88.5%	89.3%
Male	90.1%	88.8%	88.9%	89.4%	90.1%
Female	92.2%	91.8%	92.0%	92.2%	92.7%
Minority ethnic	92.6%	90.7%	92.0%	92.0%	93.3%
White	91.2%	90.5%	90.6%	90.9%	91.5%
Disability	89.6%	89.3%	89.4%	89.4%	90.5%
under 21	92.7%	91.8%	91.9%	92.2%	92.6%
21 and over	87.2%	87.1%	87.3%	88.0%	88.9%
Care-experience	n/a	82.7%	84.3%	83.7%	85.6%

Source: SFC/HESA

Individual institution data for 2017-18 shows a wide range of retention outcomes, highlighting the particular challenges faced by some institutions which are more successful in attracting students from under-represented backgrounds who often have complex needs requiring additional support. Institutions that are able to select entrants from a large number of applicants, e.g. Edinburgh, RCS and St Andrews, have higher than average retention rates. Nevertheless, OA targets to 2021-22, show a commitment to sustained improvement from across the sector taking the sector average to 91.4% by 2021-22.

OA Measure 5: Retention rates for Scotland-domiciled UG entrants from the 20% most deprived datazones

	Performance to date			OA targets to 2021-22		
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Aberdeen	85.7%	94.7%	89.5%	95.4%	95.0%	94.9%
Abertay	84.2%	74.3%	86.3%	84.9%	84.8%	84.6%
Dundee	89.8%	89.6%	89.0%	92.6%	92.6%	92.6%
Napier	83.7%	85.6%	84.6%	90.9%	90.9%	90.9%
Edinburgh	91.9%	88.8%	95.0%	93.7%	93.7%	93.7%
GCU	89.1%	92.4%	91.0%	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%
GSA	95.2%	92.6%	97.4%	95.2%	95.2%	95.2%
Glasgow	89.2%	90.3%	91.2%	91.0%	92.0%	92.0%
Heriot-Watt	85.0%	85.7%	86.2%	89.2%	90.4%	91.2%
UHI	81.5%	84.9%	82.7%	85.2%	85.5%	86.6%
QMU	75.9%	91.0%	81.6%	92.0%	92.0%	92.0%
RGU	89.4%	89.7%	89.2%	93.1%	93.1%	93.1%
RCS	91.7%	95.0%	100.0%	95.7%	95.7%	95.8%
SRUC	75.0%	78.7%	74.2%	78.7%	79.2%	79.6%
St Andrews	91.7%	100.0%	96.8%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%
Stirling	91.7%	86.0%	91.0%	80.2%	89.9%	94.1%
Strathclyde	89.6%	85.9%	91.6%	92.0%	92.0%	92.0%
UWS	83.3%	84.9%	88.9%	87.0%	88.9%	90.0%
Scotland	86.7%	87.2%	89.0%	91.0%	91.2%	91.4%

Source: SFC/HESA

* Sector total does not include the University of Glasgow who did not submit complete information for this measure, and the Open University in Scotland who have their own bespoke measure.

Success in learning

Quality enhancement

SFC has a statutory responsibility to ensure the quality of HE provision in Scotland. We do this by working closely with QAA Scotland, institutions, sqarqs and student representative bodies to develop and implement an enhancement-led approach to quality assurance through the Quality Enhancement Framework (QEF). The QEF supports institutions to manage the quality of the student learning experience and to provide public confidence in the quality and standards of higher education.

The last cycle of Enhancement-led Institutional Reviews (ELIRs) conducted by QAA Scotland concluded that all of Scotland's HEIs had in place effective systems for managing academic standards and enhancing the student learning experience (individual institution reports are available from the QAA website⁷). An analysis carried out by QAA Scotland, on behalf of SFC, of institution-led reviews (ILRs) of institutions' quality assurance processes during 2017-18 concluded that there is clear evidence of a dynamic, fast moving sector which is undertaking high volumes of change, frequently in response to student feedback. Institutions show a real desire to deliver an excellent student experience and there is an increasing emphasis across the sector of a need to effectively respond to the student voice.

Retention

The proportion of students returning to study in year two of their UG programme remains high across the sector, averaging 91.6% in 2017-18, with institutional performances ranging from 80.7% for SRUC to 97.1% for GSA. As a specialist tertiary institution SRUC students often leave at the end of year one with an HN qualification, even if degree registered. Their retention rates therefore sit significantly below those for the sector as a whole. A focus on ambitious access commitments has moderated some institutions' retention ambitions, with students from deprived backgrounds facing greater challenges in successfully completing their programmes of study.

⁷ [Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education](#)

OA Measure 6: Retention rates for all Scotland-domiciled UG entrants

	Performance to date			OA targets to 2021-22		
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Aberdeen	93.7%	94.8%	95.1%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%
Abertay	88.9%	86.0%	87.9%	85.1%	85.0%	85.0%
Dundee	94.6%	94.2%	94.4%	94.0%	94.0%	94.0%
Napier	88.9%	88.4%	90.3%	91.0%	91.0%	91.0%
Edinburgh	93.7%	94.3%	96.0%	94.0%	93.8%	93.8%
GCU	91.3%	93.5%	91.7%	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%
GSA	96.1%	96.8%	97.1%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%
Glasgow	94.1%	94.2%	94.6%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%
Heriot-Watt	91.0%	89.8%	92.2%	92.0%	92.5%	93.0%
UHI	85.3%	84.8%	83.5%	85.0%	85.5%	86.5%
QMU	85.9%	89.5%	90.0%	93.0%	93.0%	93.0%
RGU	92.7%	92.9%	93.4%	93.0%	93.0%	93.0%
RCS	93.2%	97.2%	96.0%	95.2%	95.2%	95.2%
SRUC	83.0%	80.5%	80.7%	80.1%	80.3%	80.4%
St Andrews	96.6%	96.2%	96.7%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%
Stirling	92.6%	91.5%	91.9%	92.0%	94.0%	94.0%
Strathclyde	92.5%	92.3%	93.3%	92.0%	92.0%	92.0%
UWS	84.5%	88.0%	89.3%	88.0%	89.0%	90.0%
Scotland	90.6%	91.0%	91.6%	91.0%	91.2%	91.4%

Source: SFC/HESA

As the table shows, there is a degree of volatility in retention rates, affected by factors such as the availability of maintenance support or high employment demand which influences target setting.

Student satisfaction

The outcome of the 2019 National Student Survey (NSS) of over 330,000 students across the UK has shown that quality of the learner experience in Scotland has marginally improved over the last year, with 84% of students at Scottish institutions satisfied with the overall quality of their programme of study – the same as the UK average and an increase of 1% on the previous year.

OA Measure 7: Proportion of students satisfied with the overall quality of their course in the National Student Survey

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
England	86	85	84	83	83
N. Ireland	89	89	85	84	85
Scotland	86	86	85	83	84
Wales	85	86	84	85	85
UK	86	86	84	83	84

Source: Office for Students

The institutional picture is one of overall improvement with 11 institutions increasing their NSS results over the past year, five institutions declining and three staying the same. Abertay was the most improved institution over the year, increasing its student satisfaction levels by eight points from 2018, followed by Napier (up five points) and Heriot Watt (up four). Each institution in the NSS is given a benchmark to make comparisons more reliable. The 2019 results show that 11 institutions were on or above their benchmark, while eight institutions sat below.

The University of St Andrews was again first in Scotland – and the UK – for the quality of its learner experience with 95% of its students satisfied with the quality of their programmes, +9 points above its benchmark figure. Dundee, with 90% satisfaction (+6 above its benchmark) is also regularly amongst the best in the UK for the quality of the learner experience, with Abertay, at 87% (+4) another notable success.

OA Measure 7: Proportion of students satisfied with the overall quality of their course in the NSS (and variance +/- from benchmark)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Aberdeen	87 (=)	88 (+1)	87 (+1)	86 (+1)	87 (+2)
Abertay	86 (+1)	88 (+3)	84 (=)	79 (-4)	87 (+4)
Dundee	90 (+4)	91 (+5)	90 (+4)	88 (+4)	90 (+6)
Edinburgh	84 (-3)	80 (-7)	83 (-3)	77 (-8)	78 (-7)
Napier	84 (-1)	84 (=)	80 (-3)	74 (-9)	79 (-3)
Glasgow	90 (+3)	89 (+2)	89 (+3)	88 (+3)	86 (+1)
Glasgow Caledonian	85 (=)	83 (-1)	81 (-2)	81 (-2)	81 (-1)
Glasgow School of Art	80 (-1)	74 (-9)	71 (-11)	67 (-13)	69 (-11)
Heriot-Watt	89 (+4)	89 (+4)	83 (-2)	81 (-3)	85 (+2)
UHI	80 (-4)	81 (-3)	79 (-4)	85 (+2)	84 (=)
Queen Margaret	85 (=)	86 (+2)	77 (-6)	82 (-1)	82 (-1)
Open University*	89	89	86 (=)	87 (+1)	87 (+1)
Robert Gordon	86 (+1)	85 (+1)	86 (+3)	85 (+2)	89 (+6)
RCS	79 (-2)	83 (+1)	n/a**	77 (-4)	73 (-7)
SRUC	81 (-5)	76 (-9)	77 (-7)	70 (-14)	72 (-12)
St Andrews	89 (+1)	94 (+6)	94 (+7)	94 (+8)	95 (+9)
Stirling	86 (-)	89 (+3)	86 (+1)	84 (=)	83 (-1)
Strathclyde	87 (+1)	87 (+1)	87 (+2)	84 (=)	86 (+2)
UWS	86 (+2)	87 (+2)	83 (=)	85 (+2)	84 (+1)
Sector	86	86	85	83	84

Source: Office for Students

* NSS data for the Open University is for all its students across the UK. It is not included in the Scotland total. Open University data was not benchmarked in 2015 and 2016.

** RCS did not meet the publication threshold of returns in 2017 and therefore does not feature in that year's survey

Some institutions have consistently performed below our – and their own – expectations. Scotland's largest HEI, the University of Edinburgh, set a target of 83% satisfaction for 2019 in last year's OA, but has fallen short of this by five points. The three small specialist institutions, SRUC, GSA and SRUC, too have struggled to reach their 2019 targets for improvement, falling short by seven, four and 17 points respectively. We will be exploring with them the reasons for their persistent underperformance against this measure, and asking them to share with us their plans for ambitious but realistic improvement as part of the OA process.

OA Measure 7: Proportion of students satisfied with the overall quality of their course in the NSS

	Performance to date			OA targets to 2021-22		
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Aberdeen	87%	86%	87%	89%	89.5%	89.5%
Abertay	84%	79%	87%	83%	89%	89%
Dundee	90%	88%	90%	90%	90%	90%
Napier	80%	74%	79%	86%	87%	88%
Edinburgh	83%	77%	78%	84%	86%	86%
GCU	81%	81%	81%	86%	86%	86%
GSA	71%	67%	69%	79%	84%	85%
Glasgow	89%	88%	86%	91%	91%	91%
Heriot Watt	83%	81%	85%	85%	86%	86%
UHI	79%	85%	84%	83%	83%	85%
Open	86%	87%	87%	90%	90%	90%
Queen Margaret	77%	82%	82%	84%	84%	84%
Robert Gordon	86%	85%	89%	86%	87%	88%
RCS	n/a	77%	73%	88%	89%	90%
SRUC	77%	70%	72%	75%	80%	84%
St Andrews	94%	94%	95%	90%	90%	90%
Stirling	86%	84%	83%	91%	91%	91%
Strathclyde	87%	84%	86%	*	*	*
West of Scotland	83%	85%	84%	92%	95%	95%

Source: SFC/Office for Students

* Strathclyde have not set a numerical target for this measure but have made a commitment to remain in the top quartile threshold of the NSS

Student health and wellbeing

Universities have responded positively to the Scottish Government’s Equally Safe strategy⁸ to prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls in Scotland. Almost all institutions have outlined their work in relation to GBV within their OAs. The majority of those also referenced the Equally Safe in Higher Education Toolkit and how this had been or would be implemented within their organisation.

Institutions have access to a range of information and resources to expand and develop their response to GBV. The Equally Safe Toolkit is a free resource developed by the University of Strathclyde to support institutions to prevent gender-based violence on their campuses. The Toolkit covers research, policy, response, primary prevention, intervention, curriculum and knowledge exchange.

⁸ [Scottish Government Equally Safe National Strategy](#)

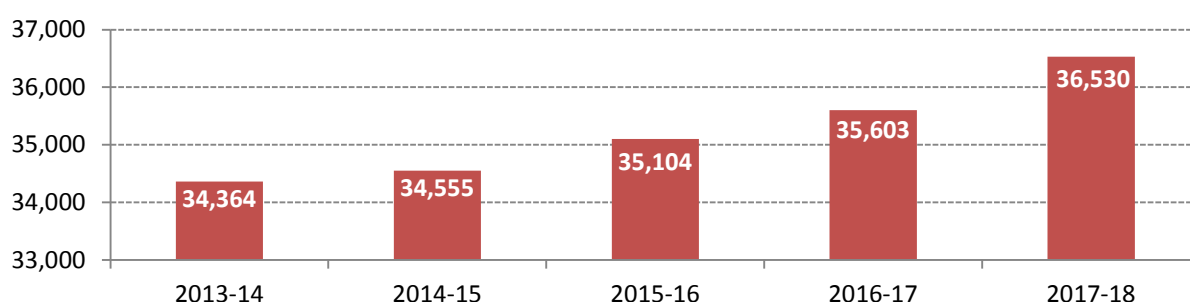
Some institutions, have developed their own approaches based on the toolkit, including the Robert Gordon University's *Speak Up, Speak Out* initiative, run in partnership with Equally Safe, Glasgow and Clyde Rape Crisis and Rape Crisis Grampian, and the University of Edinburgh's *Fearless Edinburgh* initiative, a regional partnership with the other HEIs in Edinburgh, Police Scotland, NHS Lothian, National Union of Students Scotland, the City of Edinburgh Council and Rape Crisis.

We will be working with institutions to improve data capture arrangements in this important area and improve the sharing of information and best practice to address gender-based violence for students and staff.

Meeting the needs of the economy

SFC has a statutory duty to ensure coherent provision across Scotland. We discharge this duty by providing funded places to institutions for high quality HE programmes, working closely with institutions and employers to ensure that gaps in provision and the skills needs of industry are identified and addressed. The number of Scotland-domiciled undergraduate entrants to Scottish HEIs has grown by from 34,364 in 2013-14 to 36,530 in 2017-18, the highest on record.

Scotland-domiciled undergraduate entrants into Scottish higher education institutions



Source: SFC/HESA

Heriot-Watt University has one of the largest and fastest growing shares of Graduate Apprenticeship programmes so far awarded by SDS with 160 apprentices across seven programmes in 2018/19: Engineering, IT, Business, Financial and Built Environment.. These programmes are delivered in partnership with over 70 employers. For 2019-20 SDS has awarded Heriot-Watt over 200 places for the continuation of its existing GA programmes, and programmes including Process Engineering and Data Science. These GA programmes are delivering new models of intensive work-based learning for the student-apprentices and opportunities for local employer engagement enabling increased work-related content and experience across the wider curriculum.

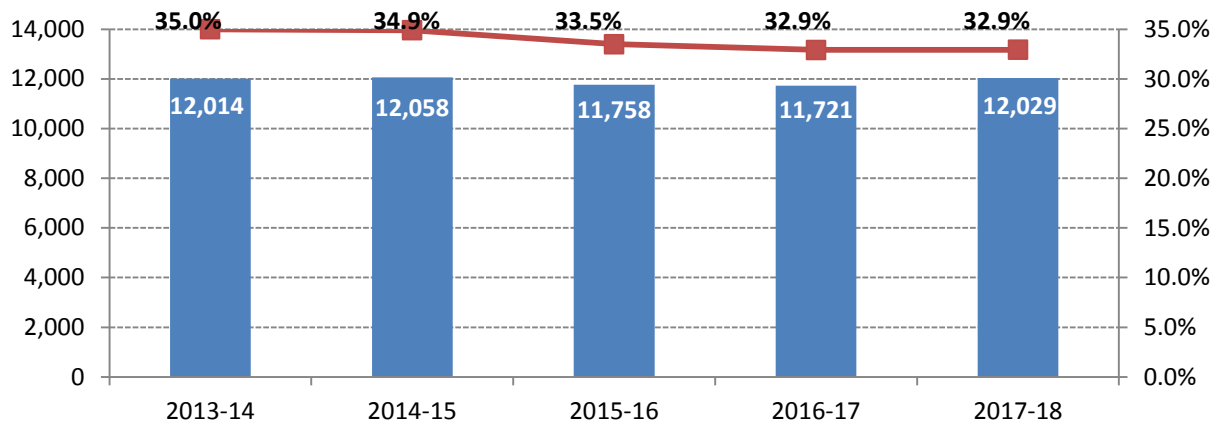
Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM)

The Scottish Government's 2017 STEM Education and Training strategy⁹, sets out its vision of a Scotland where everyone is encouraged and supported to develop their STEM capability. In their OAs institutions have demonstrated alignment with the strategy's key themes of excellence, equity, inspiration and connecting in the delivery of STEM provision, in their research activity and in their responsiveness to the needs of industry for STEM skills.

Our data shows that the number of UG entrants to STEM programmes has remained steady over the past five years at around 12,000 students, but that the proportion of all students has diminished.

⁹ [Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics Education and Training Strategy for Scotland](#)

OA Measure 8: Number and proportion of Scotland-domiciled UG entrants on STEM programmes



Source: SFC/HESA

The sector has committed to significant increases to 39.4% in the number of STEM entrants by 2020-21. It remains to be seen whether the increase in STEM entrants in 2017-18 following the publication of the Scottish Government’s strategy is part of an upward trend.

University of the Highlands and Islands: The University is developing a closer relationship with key inward investors and linked stakeholders including Boeing, Lockheed Martin, and Liberty. The developing relationship with Boeing is an example of how local authorities, enterprise companies, academia and other key stakeholders are working together through the Moray Growth Deal to make Moray a ‘high skills hub’. Working closely with colleagues at RAF Lossiemouth and making use of capacity in the wider university, Moray College UHI is developing capacity to meet the needs of Boeing for trained maintenance personnel and to develop the aerospace capacity to meet their future requirements.

OA Measure 8: Proportion of Scotland-domiciled UG entrants on STEM programmes

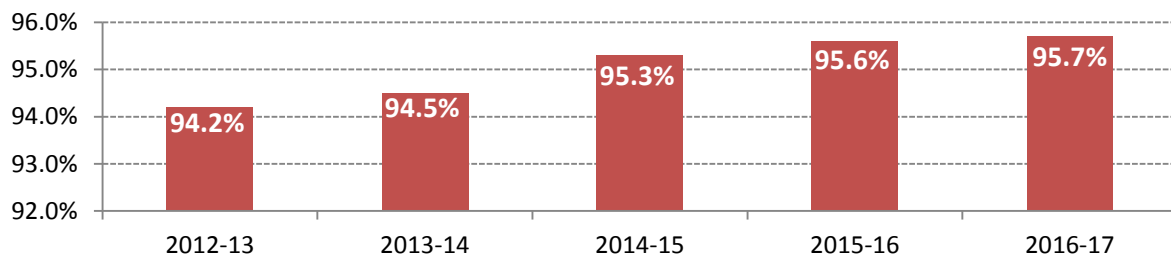
	Performance to date			OA targets to 2020-21		
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Aberdeen	40.4%	34.8%	31.3%	35.0%	37.0%	40.0%
Abertay	51.3%	57.0%	55.7%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Dundee	22.0%	20.6%	20.2%	22.5%	23.0%	23.5%
Napier	38.5%	34.7%	35.9%	36.1%	39.6%	40.0%
Edinburgh	35.2%	34.5%	34.0%	36.0%	36.0%	36.0%
GCU	26.5%	29.4%	29.8%	29.0%	29.5%	30.0%
GSA	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Glasgow	39.6%	36.3%	35.7%	39.5%	39.5%	39.5%
HWU	56.2%	54.2%	53.6%	55.0%	55.0%	55.0%
UHI	28.6%	30.1%	26.8%	30.0%	32.0%	33.0%
QMU	15.5%	13.8%	16.1%	13.2%	13.2%	13.2%
RGU	19.0%	20.7%	21.7%	22.0%	22.0%	22.0%
RCS	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
SRUC	75.3%	80.8%	81.3%	81.7%	81.7%	81.7%
St Andrews	44.9%	44.5%	49.0%	49.0%	49.0%	49.0%
Stirling	32.8%	26.0%	30.3%	38.5%	38.5%	38.5%
Strathclyde	47.9%	46.0%	47.5%	45.0%	45.0%	45.0%
UWS	22.1%	22.9%	23.4%	22.1%	22.1%	22.1%
TOTAL	33.5%	32.9%	32.9%	38.9%	39.0%	39.4%

Highly skilled graduates

Institutions are committed to increasing the proportion of students entering graduate-level occupations, enhancing skills for the work place and developing students for a competitive international labour market.

Longitudinal data on graduates entering positive destinations show a sustained year-on-year increase in those leaving university for employment or further study, from 93.5% in 2011-12 to 95.7% in 2016-17.

OA Measure 9A: Proportion of Scotland-domiciled graduates entering positive destinations



Source: HESA Destinations of Leavers in Higher Education (DLHE) survey

The Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey was discontinued during 2018 with the last collection in 2016-17. SFC used data from this collection for OA measures 9A (graduates entering positive destination) and 9B (graduates entering professional occupations) to assess how effectively universities prepared their graduates for work. A HESA review of the effectiveness of DLHE has identified a new model to capture rich, robust and innovative data with the first survey of graduates. The first data from this collection, the Graduate Outcomes Survey is due to be published in the Spring of 2020 and we will consider an appropriate OA measure to assess institutions' progress with and commitment to preparing graduates for employment.

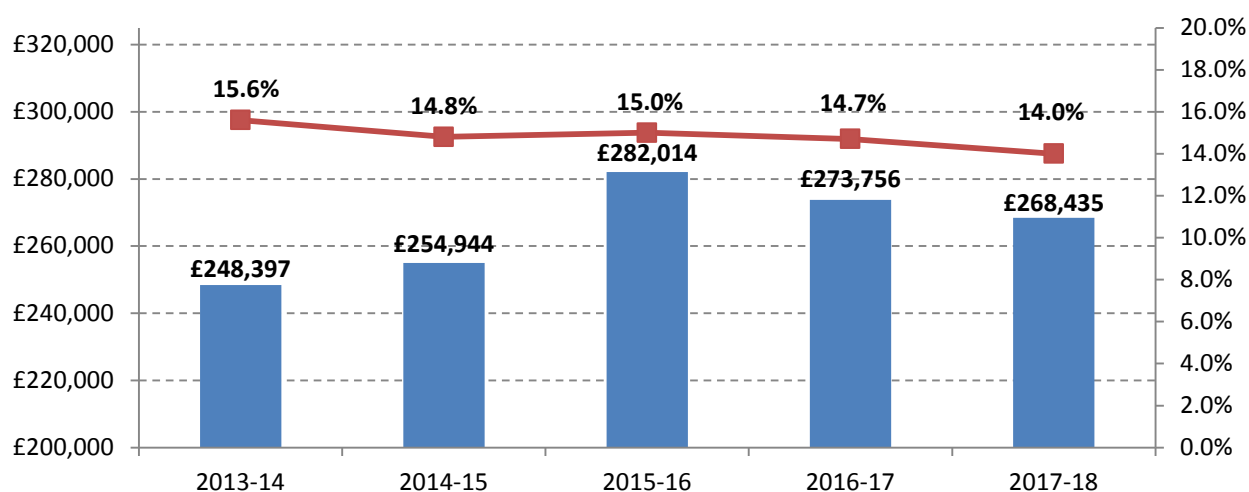
Research excellence

The outcome of the Research Excellence Framework (REF2014¹⁰) demonstrates the strength and depth of research activity across Scottish HEIs with 4* (world-leading) research carried out in all of Scotland's 19 HEIs. Seventy-seven per cent of submissions from Scottish universities were judged to be either 4* or 3* (internationally excellent), compared to 54% in 2008. REF2014 was the first exercise to assess the impact of research on the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life. Eighty-six per cent of research submitted by Scottish universities was found to have 'very considerable' or 'outstanding' impact, outperforming the UK as a whole and demonstrating universities' commitment to seeing the potential of their research realised to the benefit of the whole country.

Research income

The sector's total research income of £797m in 2017-18 included £268m in UK research council funding, 14% of the UK total, but representing a 1.98% fall (£5.3m) on the previous year. While the small falls seen in the sector's total research and research council income during 2016-17 are not themselves significant, representing the normal flow of large research grants, there is uncertainty ahead, with the UK's departure from the EU and changes to the research landscape in the UK cited alongside other factors.

OA Measure 11: Amount and percentage UK share of income from UK Research Councils (£'000s)



Source: SFC/HESA

¹⁰ The REF is conducted jointly by the four UK HE funding bodies (SFC, HEFCE, HEFCW and DELNI) and is the process for assessing the quality of research in higher education institutions in the UK, replacing the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), last conducted in 2008.

The data shows a trend towards greater concentration of research income at Edinburgh and Glasgow universities, Scotland's largest, multi-faculty research intensive institutions. Together they account for 57.8% of all research income in Scotland, up from 51.4% in 2013-14. Other institutions too have achieved significant growth in income, notably Strathclyde, which has seen its research income grow by 32% since 2013-14. .

OA Measure 12: Total research income from all sources 2012-13 to 2015-16 (£'000s)¹¹

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Aberdeen	66,045	63,316	63,999	60,974	56,079
Abertay	1,245	1,099	909	1,158	1,316
Dundee	78,977	82,369	72,865	76,158	74,018
Napier	4,513	4,654	4,607	4,693	4,218
Edinburgh	215,934	247,391	272,895	265,252	279,704
GCU	5,178	5,780	5,914	6,034	5,972
GSA	2,325	3,959	4,069	3,916	2,793
Glasgow	133,618	172,982	177,790	179,497	180,818
Heriot-Watt	27,104	29,556	33,209	27,107	31,424
QMU	3,113	3,170	1,759	1,601	1,954
RGU	2,629	2,298	2,421	2,093	2,198
RCS	82	162	143	72	59
St Andrews	39,230	40,468	45,054	37,969	41,274
SRUC	18,000	16,298	17,015	13,713	13,103
Stirling	10,973	11,555	11,492	10,227	11,466
Strathclyde	52,184	65,473	59,921	65,624	68,898
UHI	15,204	14,858	12,738	14,431	18,029
UWS	3,151	3,825	4,128	4,235	4,140
Total sector income	679,505	769,213	790,928	774,754	797,463
Annual increase	40,280	89,708	21,715	-16,174	22,709
% annual increase	6.30%	13.20%	2.75%	-2.09%	2.85%

Source: SFC/HESA.

¹¹ Not including SFC core Research Excellence Grant allocations.

Research post-graduates

Research post-graduate students are the world-leading researchers of tomorrow and their numbers are a good indication of the health and vitality of research activity of institutions and the sector, bringing new insights, innovation and dynamism. The number of research postgraduate students has risen to 11,651 in 2017-18, above the historic high achieved in 2015-16, with the universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow accounting for 26%, and 21%, of this total respectively, but all our HEIs – including the small specialist institutions – support postgraduate research, and have committed to sustained growth to 2020-21 to 13,652 RPG students.

OA Measure 10: Research postgraduate students (FTE)

	Progress to date			OA targets to 2020-21		
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Aberdeen	887	872	860	1,032	1,105	1,161
Abertay	87	99	87	90	90	90
Dundee	572	554	495	480	490	500
Napier	271	225	189	200	210	220
Edinburgh	2,913	2,958	3,032	3,087	3,227	3,227
GCU	420	325	319	330	340	360
GSA	31	41	46	54	56	66
Glasgow	2,246	2,312	2,439	2,450	2,500	2,550
HWU	827	768	725	800	800	800
UHI	49	73	108	110	104	105
QMU	87	84	85	100	100	100
RGU	157	164	171	195	200	205
RCS	12	14	15	23	24	26
SRUC	*	*	*	110	115	120
St Andrews	917	891	886	885	890	895
Stirling	350	354	370	891	1,054	1,050
Strathclyde	1,440	1,486	1,466	1,628	1,750	1,750
UWS	339	352	358	427	427	427
TOTAL	11,605	11,572	11,651	12,892	13,482	13,652

Source: SFC/HESA

* SRUC RPG degrees are currently validated by other HEIs. SRUC had an outturn of 95 RPG students in 2017-18 with plans to increase this number to 110 by 2019-20.

Case study: using data and analytics to improve people's lives

The University of Edinburgh's Bayes Centre opened in October 2018 to develop and apply data science and artificial intelligence – drawing meaningful insights from vast amounts of information – for the benefit of society. The Centre will be used by experts from research and industry who will make use of large datasets and high-speed analytics facilities to improve people's lives. This might include identifying trends from healthcare data to improve disease management, analysing traffic data to improve transport, or enabling businesses to improve products or services.

The £45 million Centre houses around 600 researchers, students and entrepreneurs. Its architecture, featuring open spaces, and central atrium and open terraces is designed to foster collaboration among its occupants. It is the first of five data-driven innovation hubs being created as part of the Edinburgh City Deal. The new hubs will help businesses and public sector organisations improve products and services through collaboration with researchers and data analysts.

Innovation and enterprise

Scotland's universities are a key part of the innovation system because of the skills that their graduates bring to the economy, the quality of their research and their ability to generate new ideas, products and processes, all of which have the potential to support business growth and competitiveness.

SFC allocated £13.5m to universities during 2018-19 through the University Innovation Fund (UIF) to incentivise collaborative work to exploit their research activity to improve Scotland's economy. Alongside their OA for 2018-19, institutions have submitted plans for the use of UIF allocations in support of seven nationally agreed outcomes, collectively identified and agreed to by the sector, where they will demonstrate progress, individually and in collaboration, during the period 2017-20¹².

In their UIF submissions a number of common themes have emerged around institutions' activities in support of the national outcomes including enhanced engagement with intermediary bodies such as local economic partnerships, and chambers of commerce to secure collaborative projects with SMEs, dedicated business engagement and innovation posts, to secure and manage closer relations with businesses, and enhanced support for students and staff starting their own businesses.

Supporting small and medium-sized (SME) companies

Scotland's SMEs account for 55% of private sector employment and 40% of private sector turnover, providing an estimated 1.2 million jobs¹³. SFC has sought to facilitate engagement between SMEs and universities to support sustained economic growth. One such initiative is the Innovation Voucher Programme funded by SFC and administered through Interface¹⁴. The £5k vouchers provide an opportunity for SMEs to access academic experts to help solve problems and help them grow – applying our universities' world leading know-how to support companies that may not have the scale or resources to undertake their own research and development activities.

While the total number of vouchers reflects the funding made available by SFC, there is a good spread of awards across the sector, with those institutions with strong regional focus and engagement with local SMEs, notably Napier and Strathclyde universities, proving particularly successful.

¹² [National agreed UIF outcomes, 2017-20](#)

¹³ Data for 2017 from [Scottish Government](#)

¹⁴ [Interface](#)

OA Measure 13: Innovation Vouchers (including IVs, follow-on IVs, and H2020 IVs)

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Total
Aberdeen	4	5	3	4	6	22
Abertay	14	20	13	15	3	65
Dundee	4	20	7	8	4	43
Napier	45	32	21	14	10	122
Edinburgh	12	12	9	18	18	70
GCU	11	14	8	4	3	40
GSA	8	8	2	4	3	25
Glasgow	5	8	2	3	3	22
HWU	9	10	5	11	9	44
UHI	9	11	0	4	5	29
QMU	8	11	14	11	4	49
RGU	2	0	0	7	12	21
RCS	0	1	0	0	0	1
SRUC	6	10	4	4	8	32
St Andrews	5	4	6	7	3	25
Stirling	4	2	2	1	1	10
Strathclyde	9	11	14	15	15	67
UWS	18	14	13	33	14	92
OUS	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total	174	193	123	163	121	780

Source: SFC

Good governance and sustainable institutions

All institutions have taken necessary measures to ensure alignment with the provisions of the HE Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 within the required timeframe ensuring staff representation on Boards and Courts, and have either achieved, or are on track to ensure gender parity bodies as required by the Gender Balance on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018.

Gender equality

The Athena SWAN Charter encourages and recognises institutions' commitment to advancing gender equality. Originally focused on enhancing opportunities for women employed in delivering STEM subjects – recognising their significant underrepresentation particularly with respect to senior posts – the Charter has expanded to recognise work undertaken in non-STEM subjects. It now recognises work to address gender equality more broadly, and not only barriers to progression that affect women.

In 2019, 14 Scottish universities and 87 individual academic departments held awards, up from 13 and 73 respectively in 2016. All institutions involved in the Charter process in Scotland that have renewed or upgraded their Athena SWAN award have reported significant increases in their proportion of female professors

In 2019, 14 (13 Bronze, 1 Silver) Scottish universities and 97 individual academic departments held awards (77 Bronze, 18 Silver and 2 Gold). In the most recent round of submissions (November 2018) the overall success rate was 67% for Scottish awards against a UK success rate 66%. All institutions involved in the Charter process in Scotland that have renewed or upgraded their Athena SWAN award have reported significant increases in their proportion of female professors.

Environmental sustainability

All institutions in the sector now have Carbon Management Plans under the Universities and Colleges Climate Commitment for Scotland (UCCCfS). The commitment is a public declaration that institutions acknowledge the Scottish Government targets to reduce carbon emissions (80% by 2050), and will address the challenges of climate change and reduce their carbon footprints.

The sector has made good progress in reducing its impact on the environment with a reduction in its carbon footprint of 8.4% from 2015-16 to 2017-18. Not surprisingly Edinburgh and Glasgow's emissions account for 44.5% of the sector's total, reflecting the volume of research activity and infrastructure of both institutions (see above). SFC is disappointed with the sector's patchy response in setting out their commitments against this important measure. We will be working with UCCCfS and

institutions to refine their data collection processes in response and we expect more robust and comprehensive commitments in future OA cycles.

OA Measure 15: Gross carbon footprint, total of scope 1, 2 and 3 carbon emissions (tonnes CO2e)

	Progress to date			OA targets to 2020-21		
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Aberdeen	31,355	27,989	24,455	26,477	25,216	24,015
Abertay	2,981	2,554	2,289	No target submitted		
Dundee	27,248	29,268	30,539	28,556	27,746	26,988
Napier	9,592	8,362	7,370	No target submitted		
Edinburgh	103,685	105,767	100,651	No target submitted		
GCU	25,410	23,217	24,717	22,755	22,528	22,302
GSA	3,534	2,946	2,151	3,630	3,400	3,200
Glasgow	69,591	64,109	61,484	No target submitted		
Heriot-Watt	20,415	20,060	18,789	18,346	17,100	17,050
OU Scotland	128	114	96	No target submitted		
QMU	2,452	1,918	2,075	No target submitted		
Robert Gordon	8,924	7,135	6,516	6,117	5,812	5,521
RCS	1,096	914	927	878.8	834.8	793
St Andrews	31,119	25,854	22,789	21,907	21,055	19,717
SRUC	8,330	7,331	7,178	5,559	5,450	5,340
Stirling	12,197	11,525	11,314	10,300	9,890	9,494
Strathclyde	30,268	31,659	32,178	No target submitted		
UHI	291	298	572	No target submitted		
UWS	9,403	8,995	8,513	8,860	8,860	n/a
Scotland	398,017	380,014	364,602	n/a	n/a	n/a

Source: SFC/Keep Scotland Beautiful

Case study: Whole institution approach to becoming a more socially responsible and sustainable university

The University of Edinburgh was named the UK's Sustainability Institution of the year at the 2018 Green Gown Awards. Along with the establishment of the Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability in 2014, the University has made significant progress in adopting a whole institution approach to becoming a more socially responsible and sustainable university.

Recent achievements include: Commitment to become a net zero carbon university by 2040; commitment to complete its transition out of fossil fuel investments by 2021; first University to adopt a formal Conflict Minerals Policy; launched 'Edinburgh Local' community engagement strategy; moved £60 million of its endowment funds to support the transition to a low carbon economy; £1.5 million investment in Big Issue Invest, largest financial investment in social enterprise ever made by a UK university; and communicated with 15,000 staff and students in 2017/18 through online or face-to-face engagement.

Fair Work

SFC is keen to ensure that the University sector shows leadership in ensuring employees have respect, fulfilment and security of employment and income, and have an effective voice.

Our OA guidance calls on institutions to seek to become validated Living Wage Employers. Six out of 19 institutions have become accredited living wage employers¹⁵, while a number of others have confirmed that they pay the living wage to all employees. We also welcome a significant reduction in the total number of zero hours contracts in use in Scotland's universities from 8,400 in 2013 to 606 in 2018, with eight institutions having eliminated their use entirely in this period. We will continue to work with institutions to ensure full living wage accreditation across the sector and fair pay for all employees.

¹⁵ Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Glasgow Caledonian, Queen Margaret and Strathclyde universities.