



SFC Statistical publication

Scottish Funding Council Report on Widening Access 2016-17

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Summary: This is the second release of the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) Report on Widening Access. This report presents data towards the Scottish Government access targets, and on the wider access measures for Scottish-domiciled entrants to higher and further education in Scotland. These wider measures cover socio-economic deprivation, gender, ethnicity, disability, care experience and age.

FAO: Scottish Government, Principals and Directors of Scotland's colleges and universities, all other interested parties.

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Executive Summary

This is the second *SFC Report on Widening Access*, the successor publication to SFC's *Learning for All* publication. This publication presents data in two separate ways; firstly data specifically relating to the Scottish Government access targets, followed by further access data that is more in line with SFC Outcome Agreement measures. These focus on socio-economic status and protected characteristics such as gender, disability and race. The key points from this report are:

Scottish Government Targets and Related Measures

- In 2016-17, 13.8% of Scottish domiciled full-time first degree entrants to Scottish universities were from the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland.
- Students with care experience backgrounds accounted for 0.6% of entrants at full-time first degree level and of all entrants to undergraduate higher education.
- The overall retention rate for Scottish domiciled full-time first degree entrants was 91.8% in 2016-17, compared to 87.4% for SIMD20 entrants and 87.0% for entrants with care experience backgrounds.
- In 2016-17, 13.1% of Scottish domiciled full-time first degree qualifiers from university were from the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland.

Widening Access Update

- There were 28,945 full-time Scottish domiciled first degree entrants to universities in Scotland in 2016-17 with a further 2,645 full-time entrants to sub-degree programmes. There were an additional 22,285 full-time Scottish-domiciled entrants to HE level courses at colleges, contributing to a total 53,875 full-time HE undergraduate student entrants.
- Combining the number of entrants to full-time FE and HE courses at college and full-time first degree courses at university, there were 25,490 total entrants from the most deprived 20%, and 15,635 from the least deprived 20%. This means that those from the most deprived 20% have the highest total number of entrants across these full-time levels of study. However, of those from the most deprived 20%, 41.1% are studying at HE level compared to 73.6% of those from the least deprived 20%.
- In 2016-17, females had a higher proportion of entrants at all levels, other than at part-time HE in colleges where males accounted for 57.0% of entrants. The highest proportion of females was at first degree level where they

accounted for 64.1% of part-time entrants and 58.1% of full-time entrants at this level.

- The highest proportion of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) students were in part-time FE study at college, followed by full-time first degree level at university, where 8.1% of entrants in 2016-17 were from a BME background.
- The highest proportion of students with a declared disability in each of the last four academic years was at full-time FE level in colleges where, in 2016-17, 20.3% of entrants had a declared disability.
- Across the levels of study shown in this report, the number of reported care experienced entrants increased from 1,500 in 2015-16 to 2,070 in 2016-17. However, there was a performance difference of 7.4 percentage points for retention at university between students with care experienced backgrounds and those without. The largest gap was in successful completion of full-time FE courses at college, where the gap was 13.1 percentage points in 2016-17.

Section 1: Introduction

1. This is the second SFC Report on Widening Access, showing statistics on the equality and diversity of the student population across both the college and university sectors. This report was produced considering the [final report](#) of the Scottish Government's Commission on Widening Access (CoWA) and the recommendation that "the Scottish Funding Council and the Scottish Government should enhance the analyses and publication of data on fair access". This is in line with further SFC efforts to improve consistency around reporting of data relating to access to higher and further education.
2. After the first [SFC Report on Widening Access](#) was published in September 2017 a consultation was held on the content, structure and other aspects of the report. This consultation was concluded in January 2018 and the results have fed into this second update. The development of the report will continue, with possible future additions including data on subject choice and on graduate outcomes and destinations, and more extensive data included within the background tables.
3. It was planned that this report would include the data from the new National Articulation Database that has recently been reworked by SFC. This work has advanced the data coverage of the students and pathways involved in articulation but is currently still being finalised. Therefore, it has not been possible to include the data within this publication this year.
4. This report shows data for Scottish-domiciled students only and focuses on undergraduate provision at colleges and universities.
5. Further breakdowns and wider data are available from SFC by contacting datarequests@sfc.ac.uk.

Section 2: Scottish Government Targets and Related Measures

6. As last year, this report has two separate strands; the first on the key Scottish Government (SG) targets and related measures included within this section, and the second presenting a wider analysis of access to further and higher education. These two strands overlap in the areas of socio-economic deprivation and care experienced learners, meaning the data for these two areas is presented twice in this report. The data presented in each of these strands currently differ due to the data specification and focus used. However, changes have been implemented to ensure that the data specification of these strands is aligned from 2017-18 entrants and onwards when both will use the new [SIMD2016](#) file for socio-economic analysis.
7. This section presents data for the SG access targets as recommended in the [Final Report](#) of the Commission on Widening Access. It should be noted that the Commission's final report was published, and the targets accepted by SG, late during the 2016-17 admissions cycle. This means the initial impact of the Commission's recommendations and targets is unlikely to be apparent in entrant data until 2017-18. The data in the following tables should be viewed as a baseline for the access targets.

CoWA Recommendation 32

8. Recommendation 32 states that:
 - By 2030, students from the 20% most deprived backgrounds should represent 20% of entrants to higher education. Equality of access should be seen in both the college and university sector.
9. And that to drive progress towards this goal:
 - By 2021, students from the 20% most deprived backgrounds should represent, at least, 16% of full-time first degree entrants to Scottish universities as a whole.
 - By 2026, students from the 20% most deprived backgrounds should represent, at least, 18% of full-time first degree entrants to Scottish universities as a whole.
10. Relating to the CoWA target for individual universities:
 - By 2021, students from the 20% most deprived backgrounds should represent, at least, 10% of full-time first degree entrants to every individual Scottish university.

11. The following tables show national performance on these measures using the latest four years of data. For the CoWA targets, “all undergraduate HE” includes all entrants to undergraduate HE courses at college and university. The background tables online show these figure broken down by institution.

Key Indicators

12. Table 1 shows the key indicators for entrants to full-time first degree study and all undergraduate HE study at Scottish institutions. In 2016-17, 13.8% of Scottish domiciled full-time first degree entrants to Scottish universities were from the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland. This is a decrease of 0.2 percentage points, or 50 students, from 2015-16. This means that an increase of 2.2 percentage points is required to meet the interim target of 16% by 2021. As noted above, the SG targets and resulting activity were established during the 2016-17 admissions cycle meaning that the effects of this work will first be seen in the 2017-18 data.

13. For entrants to undergraduate (UG) higher education as a whole, the representation of people from the 20% most deprived areas was higher than at first degree, at 17.7% in 2016-17. This is due to the relatively higher percentage of entrants from deprived areas to HE courses at colleges, as shown in [Table 5](#).

14. The Commission also highlighted the challenges faced by people with a care experience (CE) in accessing higher education. Data on entrants who identified as care experienced are also included in Table 1. For context, [Scottish Government statistics](#) show that 2% of children were looked after or on the child protection register between August 2015 and July 2016. Further details on the care experience definition used in these tables can be found in the [Care Experienced Learners Section](#).

Table 1: Scottish Domiciled Entrants, Full-time First Degree at University and All Undergraduate HE, by 20% Most Deprived (MD20) Areas and Care Experience (CE), 2013-14 to 2016-17

COWA Key Indicator - Entrants	2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17	
	FT First Degree	All UG HE						
Total Entrants	28,285	86,650	28,640	84,175	28,770	84,600	28,885	86,360
Entrants from MD20	3,850	14,730	3,965	14,440	4,015	14,740	3,965	14,920
% MD20 entrants	13.7%	17.2%	13.9%	17.5%	14.0%	17.7%	13.8%	17.7%
CE Entrants	145	265	170	325	160	445	170	525
% CE entrants	0.5%	0.3%	0.6%	0.4%	0.6%	0.5%	0.6%	0.6%

SIMD data used the unweighted SIMD2012 file in all years. Proportions are derived excluding those with unknown postcodes/SIMD rank.

15. Retention rates are a measure of full-time students completing Year 1 and remaining in higher education. Table 2 shows the retention rates for full-time first degree students from the most deprived SIMD quintile and for care experienced students compared to the overall retention rate for the sector. Caution should be used when comparing the retention rates of care experienced students due to the comparatively small numbers in the population.

16. The overall retention rate for Scottish domiciled full-time first degree entrants was 91.8% in 2016-17, compared to 87.4% for SIMD20 entrants and 87.0% for entrants with care experience backgrounds.

Table 2: Scottish Domiciled Full-time First Degree Entrants Returning to Study in Year 2 by 20% Most Deprived Areas (MD20), 2013-14 to 2016-17

COWA Key Indicator - Retention	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Overall Retention Rate	91.7%	91.4%	91.3%	91.8%
Retention for MD20	87.8%	88.2%	87.1%	87.4%
# MD20	3,455	3,785	3,900	3,455
Retention Rate for CE	n/a	85.5%	85.2%	87.0%
# CE	n/a	140	170	155

SIMD data is based on the unweighted SIMD2012 file in all years. Proportions are derived excluding those with unknown postcodes/SIMD rank.

17. Table 3 shows the percentage of qualifiers from deprived areas. The coverage matches that of Table 1, but qualifiers in 2016-17 are reflective of entrants in previous years rather than the 2016-17 population. In 2016-17, 13.1% of Scottish domiciled full-time first degree qualifiers from university were from the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland.

Table 3: Scottish Domiciled Qualifiers, Full-time First Degree at University and All Undergraduate HE, by 20% Most Deprived Areas (MD20), 2013-14 to 2016-17

COWA Key Indicator - Qualifiers	2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17	
	FT First Degree	All UG HE						
Total Qualifiers	22,515	57,935	22,145	57,060	22,970	58,240	23,475	58,925
Qualifiers from MD20	2,620	9,325	2,650	9,450	2,820	9,755	3,055	10,170
% MD20 qualifiers	11.7%	16.1%	12.0%	16.6%	12.3%	16.8%	13.1%	17.4%

SIMD data is based on the unweighted SIMD2012 file in all years. Proportions are derived excluding those with unknown postcodes/SIMD rank.

18. The data in Tables 1 to 3 is available by institution in the background tables online.

Section 3: Report Content

19. The remaining sections of this report each focus on one of the following access areas: socio-economic status, gender, ethnicity, disability and care experience. Other characteristics, namely, age and degree related factors such as subject studied and institution attended, are intersected with relevant characteristics throughout the chapters. The [Equality Act 2010](#) extended the number of protected characteristics to cover further areas including religion and belief and sexual orientation. However, data coverage in these areas is still developing and is, therefore, not included within this report. This report is accompanied by an Excel document of more detailed tables, from which the tables in this report are drawn.
20. The data in the remaining sections is presented on a similar basis to the data used for Outcome Agreements, in line with previous SFC reports on widening access. Table 4, below, shows the overall numbers of Scottish-domiciled entrants in each of the modes and levels of undergraduate¹ study that are included in this report, measured by enrolments. Further details on the makeup and coverage of these populations can be found in [Annex A](#). Broadly 'Sub-degree' provision shows only specific qualifications comparable to HE study at colleges, and activity at college is restricted to only those studying for greater than 160 hours, in line with the SFC [College Performance Indicators](#) National Statistics publication. This is consistent throughout the rest of the report. This table is repeated in each of the following chapters, showing the relevant proportions for that characteristic.
21. The table shows data back to academic year 2003-04. However, the main analysis in this report focuses on 2016-17 to give a deeper understanding of the makeup of entrants, to further and higher education, in the most recent academic year for which data is available. The full-time series from 2002-03 is available in the background tables online, with only a selection of the more historical data shown in the main report.

¹ Postgraduate data is not currently included in this report. For published information on the postgraduate population at Scottish HEIs please see SFC's [Higher Education Students and Qualifiers](#) publication.

Table 4: Scottish-domiciled Entrants to Higher and Further Education in Scotland by Mode, Level and Sector²

	University				College			
	First Degree		Sub-degree		HE		FE	
	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time
2016-17	28,945	6,295	2,645	1,795	22,285	5,425	44,295	43,730
2015-16	28,860	5,850	2,715	1,605	22,185	5,915	44,435	41,725
2014-15	28,735	5,040	3,000	1,540	21,935	5,645	45,775	41,825
2013-14	28,400	5,280	2,845	1,455	21,680	5,480	46,415	39,495
2012-13	27,195	5,955	2,120	1,210	21,795	5,465	44,120	37,640
2009-10	29,490	6,105	3,040	1,830	20,120	7,550	45,910	50,560
2006-07	25,735	5,555	5,105	2,815	17,780	8,920	39,640	57,210
2003-04	26,980	7,190	5,515	1,825	18,540	10,315	43,045	55,235

22. Table 4 shows that there were 28,945 full-time Scottish domiciled first degree entrants to universities in Scotland in 2016-17 with a further 2,645 full-time entrants to sub-degree programmes. There were an additional 22,285 full-time Scottish-domiciled entrants to HE level courses at colleges, contributing to a total 53,875 full-time HE undergraduate student entrants³.

23. Of this group, 58.6% of full-time HE entrants in 2016-17 were to university and 41.4% were to college.

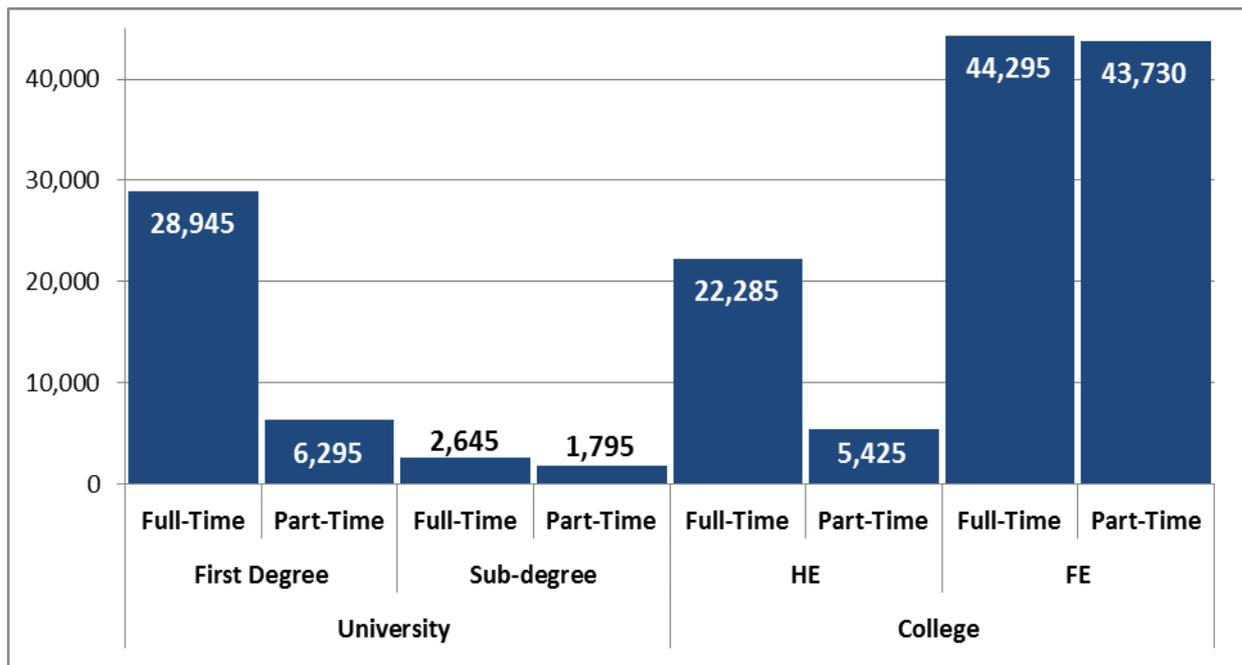
24. SFC's [HE Students and Qualifiers](#), 2016-17, publication reported a similar breakdown for the total number of HE entrants to Scottish institutions. Of all HE entrants, 36.9% were at colleges and this rises to over 41% when looking at the Scottish-domiciled population.

25. Chart 1 below shows the breakdown between level and mode of study at university and college in 2016-17. The chart shows the varying number of student entrants at each level, with FE entrants at college accounting for 56.6% of all entrants shown. Full-time first degree entrants at university accounted for 18.6% of the total, and 43.0% of the total HE entrants.

² Specifically this is entrants to substantive higher and further education, referring to the qualification aims and duration of study included within the sub-degree and college populations. Full details of the coverage can be found in [Annex A](#).

³ Associate students counted in both sectors (numbers from HES&Q and more info in Annex).

Chart 1: Entrants by Level and Mode of Study, 2016-17



26. Many of the tables in this report focus on the three largest student groups shown in Chart 1 above, excluding part-time FE provision. Part-time FE provision is not included as a group of focus due to the nature of the provision and the fact that entrants are measured in this report by enrolments. Students studying part-time FE provision are the most likely to have multiple enrolments, meaning students in this group are likely counted more than once and the volume of activity is less comparable with the other groups. Further detail on this can be found in SFC's [College Statistics publication](#).

Section 4: Socio-Economic Status

27. In this section, and the remaining sections of this report, socio-economic status is measured by SFC population weighted SIMD, meaning it is calculated using a different methodology than those in Section 2. The method used in this section and the rest of this report is in line with SFC's Outcome Agreement Guidance and other SFC work on access that were in place before the Commission on Widening Access (CoWA) reported. For 2017-18 entrants and onwards, the standard SIMD2016 file will be used across both measures. Further details on the differences are given in Annex A.

28. Entrants from the most deprived quintile (the most deprived 20%) are the focus throughout this section. However, various tables in this chapter show the data across all five quintiles in order to show patterns across the whole student population.

29. Table 5, below, shows the proportion of the students from [Table 4](#) that are from the most deprived SIMD quintile. The actual numbers of students, along with the complete time series, are shown in the background tables online.

Table 5: Percentage of Scottish-domiciled Entrants from the Most Deprived SIMD Quintile by Mode, Level and Sector

	Proportion of Total Entrants by Level and Mode of Study							
	University				College			
	First Degree		Sub-degree		HE		FE	
	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time
2016-17	14.6%	17.4%	10.5%	12.3%	28.2%	20.9%	33.9%	30.9%
2015-16	14.8%	17.5%	10.0%	12.1%	27.7%	20.9%	33.6%	30.3%
2014-15	14.7%	15.6%	10.3%	13.7%	27.4%	18.9%	33.5%	31.4%
2013-14	14.4%	17.0%	11.0%	10.6%	26.5%	20.0%	33.3%	30.5%
2012-13	13.6%	16.7%	9.7%	12.3%	25.9%	21.3%	32.3%	29.3%
2009-10	11.6%	15.0%	16.2%	9.5%	25.9%	22.1%	32.3%	29.8%
2006-07	11.4%	14.1%	16.0%	13.7%	25.3%	20.7%	30.8%	29.0%
2003-04	11.1%	13.8%	15.6%	8.6%	24.6%	19.3%	29.0%	23.2%

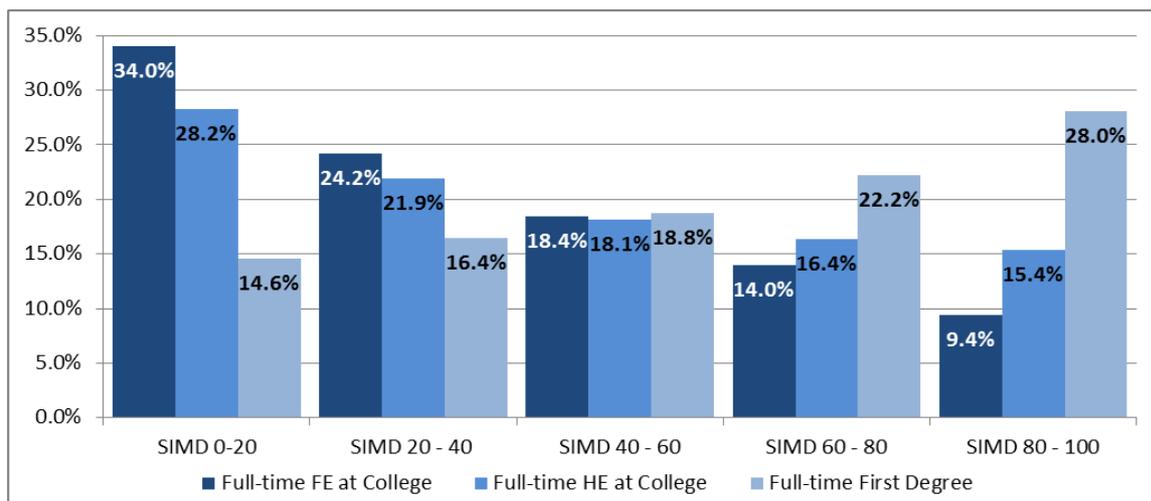
30. More than 20% of entrants to FE and HE college courses at this level are from the most deprived 20%, and the percentage has been increasing over the time period shown. However, the proportion across both levels and both modes of study at university are lower. In 2016-17, the proportion from the most deprived 20% at full-time first degree level was 14.6%, a decrease of 0.2 percentage points from 2015-16.

31. Table 5 also shows a reduction in the proportion of students from the most deprived 20% at full-time sub-degree level. The percentage decreased from 15.6% to 10.5% between 2003-04 and 2016-17. [Table 4](#) shows that the number of students at this level also decreased over this period, from 5,515 to 2,645.
32. The Outcome Agreement (OA) framework, introduced in academic year 2012-13 for both the college and university sectors, enable SFC to set and monitor clear national ambitions, several of which relate to widening access. Important for this report are those focusing on increasing the intake of students from the most deprived areas and from protected characteristic backgrounds. Further details on the [OA measures](#) can be found on our website.

Socio-economic Status and Level of Study

33. Chart 2, below, shows the variation in specific levels of study across all five SIMD quintiles, focusing on the three largest student groups, excluding part-time FE provision as described above.

Chart 2: Percentage of Full-time Scottish-domiciled entrants at Each Level of Study by SIMD Quintile, 2016-17

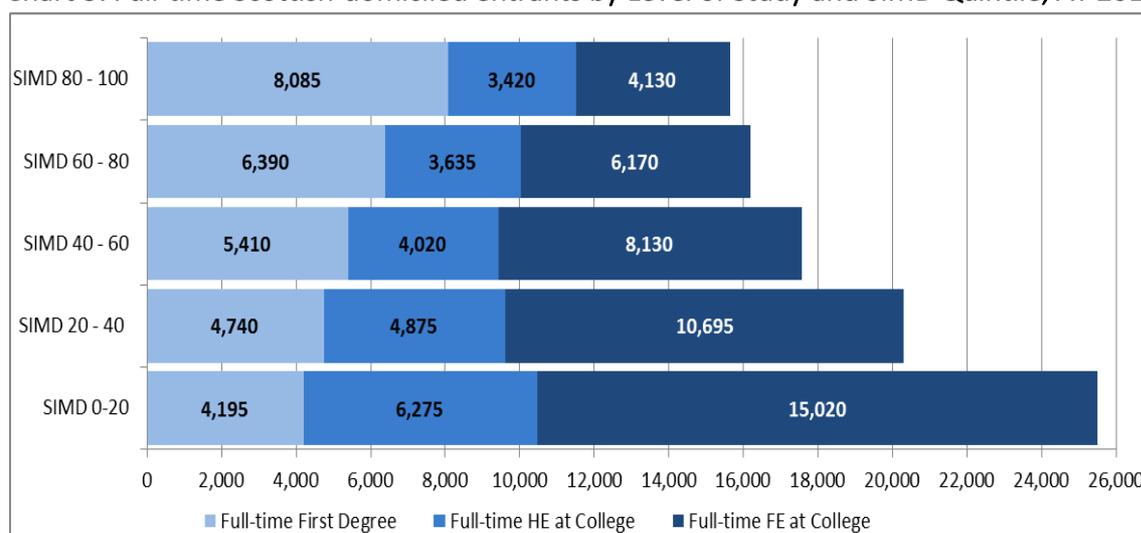


34. Chart 2 shows that those from the most deprived 20% and those from the least deprived 20% have opposing trends in the proportion of entrants at each level of study. Those from the two most deprived quintiles (SIMD 0-20 and SIMD 20-40) have the highest proportion of entrants to full-time FE at college and the lowest proportion of entrants to full-time first degree level at university. The opposite is true for those from the two least deprived quintiles (SIMD 60-80 and SIMD 80-100) with those from the third quintile (SIMD 40-60) almost proportional across each level of study.
35. Chart 3, below, shows that those from the most deprived 20% have the highest number of total entrants across all levels of study. Of the three full-time levels of

study shown, there were 25,490 total entrants from the most deprived 20%, and 15,635 from the least deprived 20%.

36. Those from the most deprived 20% have higher numbers at full-time HE than all the other SIMD groups, with the exception of the least deprived 20%. This is shown in the two lighter blue bars in Chart 3 below. However, the combined proportion of full-time HE at college and full-time first degree study varies across the SIMD groups. For those from the most deprived 20%, 41.1% are studying at HE level compared to 73.6% of those from the least deprived 20%.

Chart 3: Full-time Scottish-domiciled entrants by Level of Study and SIMD Quintile, AY 2016-17



Socio-economic Status and Age

37. The [Higher Education Statistics Agency \(HESA\)](#) produces [Performance Indicators \(PIs\)](#) for Widening Access for all institutions across the UK, and shows the proportion of entrants from POLAR3⁴ backgrounds for English institutions. The equivalent figures for Scottish institutions, using SIMD rather than POLAR3, are shown in the background tables online. These show the proportion of entrants from the most deprived 20% for the 'young' age group (under 21) and for those aged 21 and over. At sector level, a higher proportion of those aged 21 and over are from the most deprived 20% with 24.0% compared to 10.4% for under 21s.

38. Table 6, below, provides an overview of full-time enrolments in 2016-17 by level of study, age and by the proportion of that age from the 20% most deprived areas. The data is presented by single year age to identify the progression from school to college and university and to examine how the likely school leaver population compares with the older age groups.

⁴ POLAR3 is an access measure based on participation in HE, rather than socio-economic deprivation.

Table 6: Scottish-domiciled Entrants by Level of Study, Age and the Proportion from the Most Deprived SIMD Quintile, AY 2016-17

	University		College			
	Full-time First Degree		Full-time Higher Education		Full-time Further Education	
	Number of students	% from most deprived quintile (SIMD 0-20)	Number of students	% from most deprived quintile (SIMD 0-20)	Number of students	% from most deprived quintile (SIMD 0-20)
Under 16	5	n/a	5	n/a	1,445	36.2%
16	105	19.2%	360	18.5%	5,235	29.8%
17	5,950	10.7%	3,370	19.6%	7,995	29.2%
18	10,040	8.9%	4,960	22.7%	7,330	31.1%
19	3,035	12.1%	3,055	27.9%	3,905	33.3%
20	2,135	16.8%	1,720	28.6%	2,285	34.3%
21	1,350	20.6%	1,105	29.5%	1,625	36.5%
22	1,000	20.1%	855	31.4%	1,395	37.8%
23	720	21.9%	685	31.3%	1,270	40.2%
24	595	26.0%	625	33.4%	1,110	36.9%
25	480	25.2%	540	36.5%	970	39.7%
26	370	29.0%	460	34.8%	835	35.7%
27	335	28.2%	405	34.5%	780	41.9%
28	315	28.3%	405	37.9%	745	39.0%
29	270	26.4%	345	38.8%	640	41.3%
30	220	36.1%	320	37.2%	630	38.9%
Over 30	2,015	28.8%	3,055	37.5%	6,095	39.1%
All ages	28,940	14.6%	22,285	28.2%	44,295	33.9%

39. Those aged between the ages of 16 to 18 are highlighted because, although not all will have entered straight from school, they are the likely school leaving cohort and make up 46.4% of full-time FE entrants, 39.0% of full-time HE entrants at college, and 55.6% of full-time first degree entrants, making them a key group to understand. It also shows that between approximately 45% and 60% of entrants at each level of study are not within the likely school leavers' cohort.

40. The SG [*Summary Statistics for Attainment, Leaver Destinations and Healthy Living*](#) publication gives detailed information on the destinations of school leavers. This publication shows that for 2015-16 school leavers, the 2016-17 college and university entrants, 20,080 went on to higher education and 13,915 went on to further education. The number of 16 to 18 year olds above is higher than these figures, meaning that not all 16 to 18 year olds in the table above entered straight from school.

41. The SG publication for 2014-15 provided a breakdown of leavers to HE by whether or not they went on to HE at university or college. This breakdown is no longer published but if the proportion from 2014-15 is applied to the 2016-17 leavers, around 13,500 of the Scottish domiciled full-time first degree entrants could be assumed to be school leavers. This is equivalent to almost half of the total full-time first degree entrants.

42. Table 6 shows that at full-time first degree level, those aged 17 and 18 have a lower proportion of entrants from the most deprived quintile, with the proportion as low as 8.9% for 18-year-old full-time first degree entrants.

43. Table 7, below, shows those from the most deprived SIMD quintile intersected with key protected characteristics over the time series from 2003-04. Full-time series data is available in the background tables online.

Table 7: Scottish-domiciled Full-time first degree university entrants from the Most Deprived SIMD Quintile

	2003-04	2006-07	2009-10	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Male	10.7%	10.5%	11.0%	12.7%	13.2%	13.6%	13.7%	13.3%
Female	11.6%	12.1%	12.0%	14.3%	15.2%	15.4%	15.6%	15.5%
Declared disability	15.8%	16.3%	12.3%	12.0%	13.8%	14.3%	14.8%	13.6%
No Known Disability	11.0%	11.3%	11.4%	13.8%	14.4%	14.7%	14.8%	14.7%
BME	14.7%	16.2%	20.2%	23.6%	24.2%	24.6%	24.9%	25.4%
Non-BME	10.8%	10.9%	10.8%	12.8%	13.5%	13.9%	13.9%	13.5%

44. The trend across all groups has been an increase in the proportion of entrants from the most deprived SIMD quintile. For comparison, Table 5 shows that in 2016-17 14.6% of the total full-time first degree entrants were from the most deprived areas.

45. The gap between males and females from SIMD20 communities has increased from 1.9 percentage points in 2015-16 to 2.2 percentage points in 2016-17. The proportion of male entrants from SIMD20 decreased from 13.7% to 13.3% between 2015-16 and 2016-17. The gap between BME and non-BME entrants from SIMD20 is larger than any other group, at 11.9 percentage points in 2016-17. In 2016-17, a lower proportion of Scottish-domiciled full-time first degree entrants with a declared disability were from SIMD20 area than those without a declared disability.

College Success and University Retention

46. This report looks at measures of success in the sector, as well as the entrant population. Due to the differing nature and duration of courses between the college and university sectors, this is shown by a different method in each sector. In the college sector, success is measured as the proportion of entrants who successfully complete their course, and in the university sector this is measured as the proportion of entrants who return to study in Year 2. For the purpose of this report, measures of success in the college sector follow the [College Performance Indicators](#) (PIs) methodology and are shown for full-time students only and in the university sector, measures of retention follow the [Outcome Agreement methodology](#) which, by definition, includes only full-time students.

This methodology includes full-time first degree and the sub-degree provision included in the entrant tables above.

47. Table 8, below, shows successful completion rates for full-time enrolments by level of study and SIMD decile. SIMD deciles (10%) are used here in line with the College PIs. Only the two most deprived and two least deprived deciles are shown here but the full breakdown is available in the background tables online.

48. Table 8 shows the varying gap in attainment between those from the most deprived SIMD deciles and those from the least deprived SIMD deciles. In 2016-17 there was a 7.4 percentage point difference at FE and a 7.7 percentage point difference at HE level between those in the most and least deprived deciles.

Table 8: Full-time Successful Completion Rates (PI definition) by Level of Study and SIMD Decile – College Sector⁵

Level	AY	SIMD0-10	SIMD10-20	SIMD80-90	SIMD90-100
Full-time further Education	2016-17	62.0%	63.7%	70.7%	69.4%
	2015-16	63.4%	62.4%	70.1%	70.4%
	2014-15	60.9%	61.2%	68.1%	67.9%
	2013-14	63.3%	64.1%	68.2%	68.9%
	2012-13	63.2%	63.1%	68.8%	68.4%
	2011-12	60.6%	61.5%	65.8%	65.4%
Full-time Higher Education	2016-17	68.5%	68.6%	74.9%	76.2%
	2015-16	67.3%	67.4%	74.7%	76.1%
	2014-15	66.7%	66.6%	74.8%	74.8%
	2013-14	68.4%	67.8%	75.5%	75.9%
	2012-13	66.3%	67.0%	73.6%	74.1%
	2011-12	65.1%	65.1%	73.0%	72.6%

49. Table 9, below, shows retention rates for university undergraduate students by level of study and SIMD quintile.

50. The university retention data shows a similar gap between SIMD quintiles that was evident in Table 8 above on successful completion in colleges. In 2016-17, there was a 6.4 percentage point gap in retention between those from the most deprived SIMD quintile and those from the least deprived quintile.

Table 9: Full-time Retention Rates for Scottish-domiciled Undergraduate Entrants by Level of Study and SIMD Quintiles – University Sector

Level	AY	SIMD0-20	SIMD20-40	SIMD40-60	SIMD60-80	SIMD80-100
Full-time Undergraduate Entrants	2016-17	87.2%	89.6%	90.4%	92.3%	93.6%
	2015-16	86.7%	88.6%	90.4%	92.0%	93.1%
	2014-15	87.5%	88.6%	90.5%	91.9%	92.2%
	2013-14	87.7%	87.9%	91.0%	92.8%	93.7%
	2012-13	87.2%	88.1%	90.2%	92.2%	93.4%
	2011-12	84.6%	86.6%	88.6%	91.4%	92.1%

⁵ PI data for 2014-15 and 2015-16 has been updated and does not match what was published in last year's Report on Widening Access. This is as a result of a data improvement process and further details can be found in the [PI publication](#).

Section 5: Gender

51. The data collection of sex and gender was updated from 2012-13, so that data on students' sex is now returned with the possible options of male, female and other. In 2016-17, there were 15 students in the HESA population and 65 in the college data reported in this publication that identified their sex as 'other'. Due to the small numbers, these students are not included in the analysis in this section.
52. Table 10, below, shows the proportion of the students in [Table 4](#) that are female. The online tables show the actual figures and proportions for both male and female students.

Table 10: Proportion of Overall Scottish-domiciled Entrants that are Female

	University				Colleges			
	First Degree		Sub-degree		HE		FE	
	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time
2016-17	58.1%	64.1%	52.5%	57.4%	56.8%	43.0%	52.7%	52.6%
2015-16	58.3%	63.8%	52.2%	59.5%	55.5%	40.1%	53.6%	51.7%
2014-15	57.9%	58.4%	52.2%	57.9%	56.9%	41.6%	54.4%	49.3%
2013-14	56.9%	59.3%	50.4%	58.5%	55.2%	41.7%	53.8%	50.7%
2012-13	57.5%	60.1%	47.9%	56.6%	54.1%	46.2%	54.2%	48.7%
2009-10	57.1%	62.7%	53.8%	66.4%	54.7%	45.6%	55.6%	53.1%
2006-07	55.2%	65.4%	69.6%	58.3%	56.0%	49.8%	55.4%	55.3%
2003-04	54.9%	67.3%	67.9%	56.5%	53.5%	56.0%	51.6%	57.6%

53. Table 10 shows that in 2016-17, females had a higher proportion of entrants at all levels, other than at part-time HE in colleges where males accounted for 57.1% of entrants. The highest proportion of females was at first degree level where females accounted for 64.1% of part-time students and 58.1% of full-time entrants at this level.
54. There was a 0.2 percentage point decrease in the proportion of females at full-time first degree level between 2015-16 and 2016-17 but the imbalance at first degree level has been increasing since 2003-04.
55. In August 2016 SFC published its [Gender Action Plan \(GAP\)](#) which set the target that, by 2030, the gap between male and female participation, across the total of the four levels and modes of study shown in Table 7, will be reduced to 5%. The data in the background tables online shows that in 2016-17, the overall gap was 17.2%. However, the gap varies across levels of study, from 16.2 percentage points at full-time first degree to 13.6 percentage points at full-time HE level, and 5.4 percentage points at full-time FE level.

56. The gender gap is largest at part-time first degree level, at 28.2 percentage points in 2016-17. Males make up a higher proportion of entrants to part-time HE study at college with the gap at 14.0 percentage points. The gender balance at both part-time and full-time FE has remained relatively stable and balanced over the time period shown.

Gender and Age

57. Table 11, below, shows the proportion of males and females by level of study and a detailed age breakdown.

Table 11: Scottish-domiciled Entrants by Level of Study, Age and Gender, AY 2016-17⁶

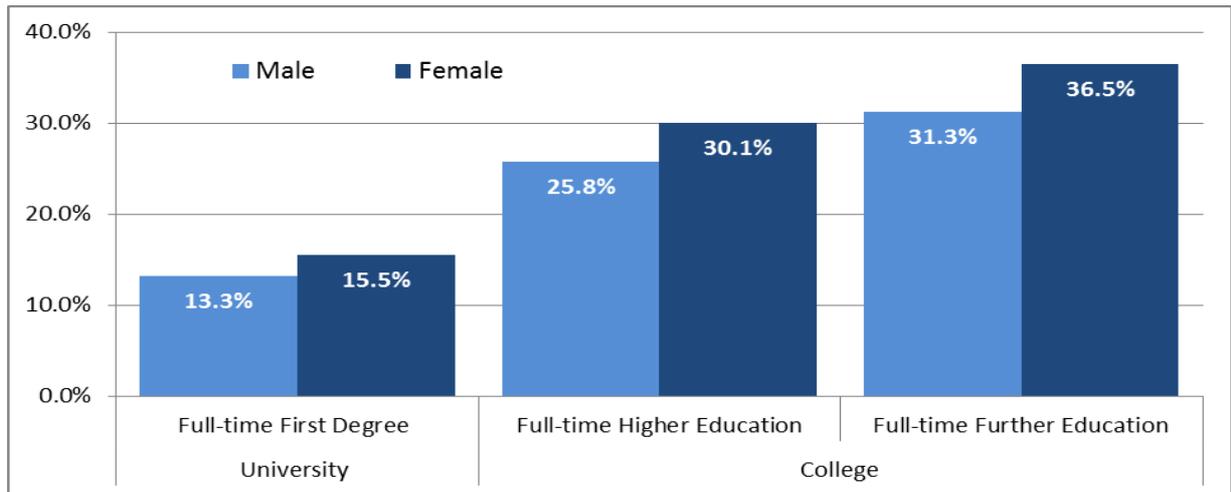
	University			College					
	Full-time First Degree			Full-time Higher Education			Full-time Further Education		
	Number of students	Proportion Male	Proportion Female	Number of students	Proportion Male	Proportion Female	Number of students	Proportion Male	Proportion Female
under 16	5	0.0%	100.0%	5	25.0%	75.0%	1,445	53.6%	46.2%
16	105	43.8%	56.2%	360	40.9%	59.1%	5,235	54.0%	45.9%
17	5,950	40.1%	59.9%	3,370	45.7%	54.2%	7,995	53.7%	46.2%
18	10,040	42.9%	57.1%	4,960	47.0%	53.0%	7,330	54.1%	45.8%
19	3,035	40.9%	59.1%	3,055	46.8%	53.1%	3,905	52.7%	47.2%
20	2,135	45.6%	54.4%	1,720	47.1%	52.9%	2,285	49.5%	50.4%
21	1,350	48.9%	51.1%	1,105	49.8%	50.0%	1,625	46.4%	53.6%
22	1,000	46.2%	53.8%	855	46.8%	53.2%	1,395	45.6%	54.2%
23	720	47.6%	52.4%	685	45.7%	54.1%	1,270	41.4%	58.6%
24	595	43.8%	56.2%	625	40.3%	59.6%	1,110	44.9%	55.0%
25	480	41.3%	58.7%	540	40.4%	59.6%	970	42.9%	57.0%
26	370	40.9%	59.1%	460	41.1%	58.9%	835	37.5%	62.5%
27	335	41.0%	59.0%	405	36.0%	64.0%	780	34.1%	65.7%
28	315	41.6%	58.4%	405	34.5%	65.3%	745	36.7%	63.2%
29	270	31.9%	68.1%	345	36.2%	63.8%	640	33.9%	66.0%
30	220	40.7%	59.3%	320	34.7%	65.3%	630	30.4%	69.3%
over 30	2,015	32.3%	67.7%	3,055	30.0%	70.0%	6,095	29.4%	70.5%
All ages	28,940	41.9%	58.1%	22,285	43.2%	56.7%	44,295	47.3%	52.6%

58. Table 11 shows that the gender imbalances across each level of study vary by age. The proportion of females reaches over 67% at all levels for entrants aged over 30. For 18 year old entrants to both full-time HE and FE at college and full-time first degree study, there is a higher proportion of males at this age group compared to the proportion of males at all ages. The opposite is true for students aged over 30 years old, where the proportion of females in this age group is higher than the proportion of females of all ages.

59. Chart 4, below, shows the proportion of entrants by level of study and gender for those from the most deprived quintile.

⁶ Proportions do not always add up to 100% as students of other gender are included in the number of students column, but not within the male / female proportions.

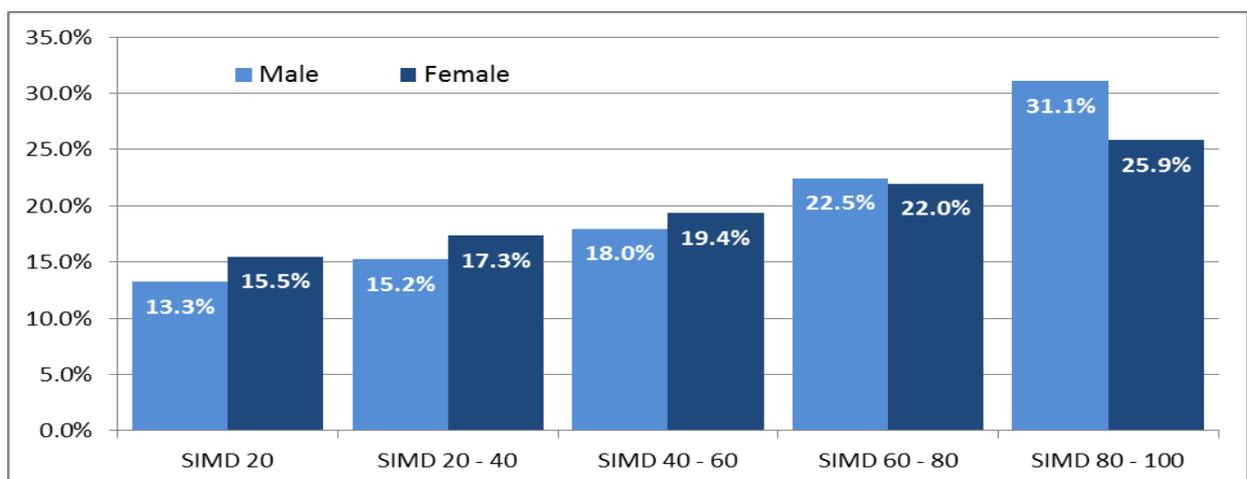
Chart 4: Proportion of Scottish-domiciled Entrants from the Most Deprived 20% by Level of Study and Gender, AY 2016-17



60. [Chart 2](#) showed that overall those from the most deprived quintile accounted for 14.6% of full-time first degree entrants. Chart 4 shows that this proportion is higher for females (15.5%) and lower for males (13.3%). This suggests that males from the most deprived quintile are more under-represented at this level of study compared to females. Chart 5, below, draws this out further, showing the number and proportion of full-time first degree entrants across each SIMD quintile by gender.

61. Chart 5 shows that the proportion of males is lower than females in the three quintiles that are most deprived. Males have a higher proportion of entrants from the two least deprived quintiles and 31.1% of males at full-time first degree level are from the least deprived quintile. This is the largest gap between males and females across all quintiles.

Chart 5: Proportion of Scottish-domiciled Full-time First Degree Entrants by SIMD Quintile and Gender, AY 2016-17



Gender and Subject

62. Underlying the differences at sector level between males and females, strong imbalances in subjects studied also exist. SFC's [Gender Action Plan](#) (GAP) also set subject level targets, specifically, that by 2030 no college or university subject will have an imbalance greater than 75% of one gender. The GAP analysis focuses on the 10 most imbalanced subject groupings in each sector, shown in Table 10B in the background tables online.

College Success and University Retention

63. Table 12, below, shows the successful completion rates for full-time college students from the most and least deprived SIMD quintiles by their level of study and gender.

64. Females have higher successful completion at both levels, but the difference is greater for HE students. In 2016-17 there was a 1.2 percentage point gap between successful completion of males and females from the most deprived quintile and a 2.1 percentage point gap for males and females from the least deprived quintile at full-time FE level. The respective gaps at full-time HE level were 7.8 and 8.5 percentage points.

65. At full-time HE level, females from the most deprived quintile had a higher proportion of successful completion than males from the least deprived quintile.

Table 12: Full-time Successful Completion Rates (PI definition) by Level of Study, Selected SIMD Quintiles and Gender – College Sector ⁷

Level	AY	Males		Females	
		SIMD 0 -20	SIMD 80 - 100	SIMD 0 -20	SIMD 80 -100
Full-time further Education	2016-17	62.1%	69.2%	63.3%	71.3%
	2015-16	62.4%	69.3%	63.3%	71.3%
	2014-15	59.8%	67.7%	61.9%	68.4%
	2013-14	62.7%	67.1%	64.4%	70.1%
	2012-13	62.8%	68.5%	63.5%	68.8%
	2011-12	62.7%	67.1%	64.4%	70.1%
Full-time Higher Education	2016-17	64.0%	71.3%	71.8%	79.8%
	2015-16	61.7%	71.2%	71.3%	79.8%
	2014-15	61.4%	69.8%	70.4%	79.6%
	2013-14	62.6%	71.3%	72.4%	80.2%
	2012-13	61.5%	69.4%	70.7%	78.5%
	2011-12	62.6%	71.3%	72.4%	80.2%

⁷ PI data for 2014-15 and 2015-16 has been updated and does not match what was published in last year's Report on Widening Access. This is as a result of a data improvement process and further details can be found in the [PI publication](#).

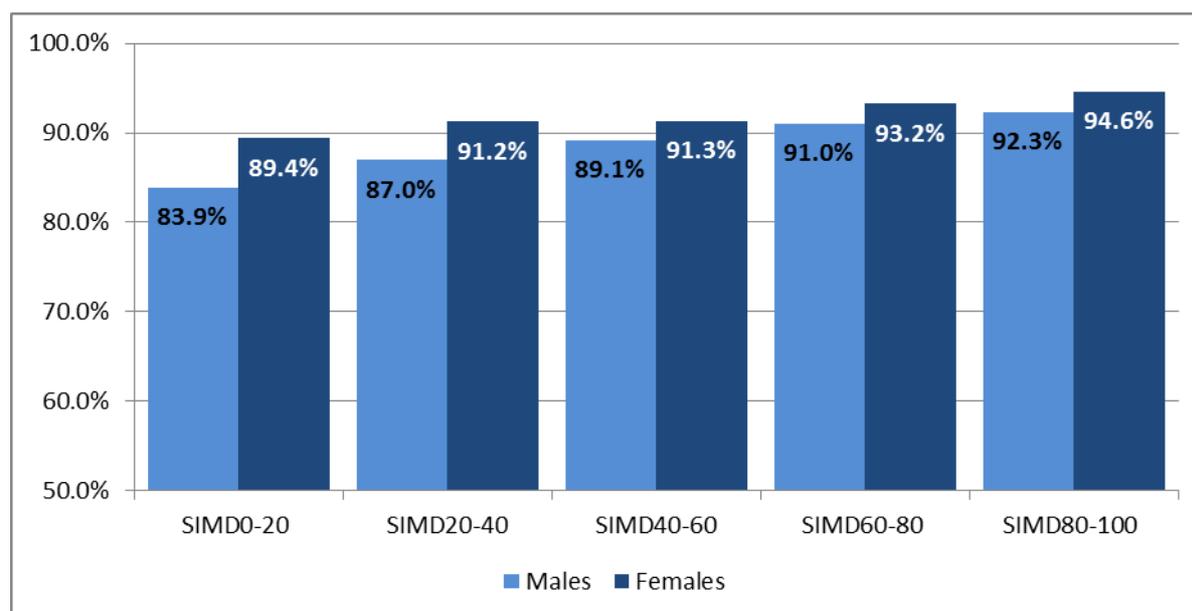
66. Table 13, below, shows retention rates for university undergraduate students from the most and least deprived quintiles by level of study and gender. The table shows that females have higher rates of retention at full-time undergraduate level in universities, most noticeable in those from the most deprived SIMD quintile. The gender gap between males from the most deprived quintile and females from the least deprived quintile is 10.7 percentage points.

Table 13: Scottish-domiciled Full-time Retention Rates for Undergraduate Entrants, by Selected SIMD Quintiles and Gender – University Sector

Level	AY	Males		Females	
		SIMD0-20	SIMD80-100	SIMD0-20	SIMD80-100
Full-time Undergraduate Entrants	2016-17	83.9%	92.3%	89.4%	94.6%
	2015-16	84.7%	91.3%	87.9%	94.6%
	2014-15	84.9%	90.4%	89.3%	93.7%
	2013-14	86.5%	92.9%	88.5%	94.4%
	2012-13	84.9%	91.9%	88.6%	94.7%
	2011-12	81.0%	90.8%	86.9%	93.4%

67. Chart 6 shows this data by each quintile for 2016-17. There is a gender gap in retention of 2.2 percentage points in the three least deprived quintiles (2.3 percentage points for SIMD80-100). The gender gap is much wider for the two most deprived quintiles, at 5.5 percentage points for SIMD0-20 and 4.2 percentage points for SIMD20-40 in 2016-17. This gap has varied over the time period shown and was as low as 2 percentage points in 2013-14, as shown in Table 13.

Chart 6: Scottish-domiciled Full-time Retention Rates for Undergraduate Entrants, by SIMD Quintile and Gender, 2016-17



Section 6: Ethnicity

Black and Minority Ethnic (BME)

68. BME is widely recognised as an appropriate way to report and analyse ethnicity, and is the method used in this section. However, there are limitations to this definition, particularly the assumption that minority ethnic students are a homogeneous group. Where possible, this section presents data disaggregated by the more detailed ethnic groups as outlined in the [2011 Census](#).

69. Table 14, below, shows the proportion of the students in [Table 4](#) from a BME background. The online tables show the actual figures and proportions over the full-time series.

Table 14: Proportion of overall Scottish-domiciled Entrants from a BME Background

	Proportion of Entrants from a BME background							
	First Degree		Sub-degree		HE		FE	
	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time
2016-17	8.1%	3.9%	3.4%	3.1%	6.2%	3.6%	5.1%	10.7%
2015-16	8.0%	4.6%	3.1%	4.2%	6.2%	3.1%	4.8%	10.2%
2014-15	7.1%	4.6%	2.6%	3.6%	5.9%	3.0%	4.5%	9.4%
2013-14	7.6%	4.1%	3.0%	2.4%	5.3%	2.9%	4.3%	8.9%
2012-13	7.1%	4.5%	4.3%	3.4%	5.1%	3.5%	4.1%	8.6%
2009-10	6.1%	4.5%	3.5%	2.1%	4.9%	4.2%	4.1%	7.3%
2006-07	5.9%	2.7%	2.9%	4.1%	5.0%	3.9%	3.9%	7.8%
2003-04	5.1%	2.4%	2.2%	1.3%	3.7%	2.8%	3.4%	5.4%

70. Table 14 shows that the proportions vary across mode and level of study and, in general, have been increasing over the time period since 2003-04. The highest proportion of BME students, at 10.7%, is at part-time FE study at college, followed by full-time first degree level, where 8.1% of entrants in 2016-17 were from a BME background. In the [2011 Census](#), the BME population in [Scotland](#) was 4%, an increase from 2% from the [2001 Census](#), which can be used as a relevant comparison for the time series shown.

BME breakdown and Socio-economic Status

71. Table 15, below, shows the number of entrants to each of the Census BME categories and the proportion of entrants from each group from the most deprived SIMD quintile across the three full-time levels of study of focus.

Table 15: Scottish-domiciled Entrants by BME Background, Level of Study and the Proportion from the Most Deprived SIMD Quintile, AY 2016-17

Ethnicity	University				College							
	First Degree				Higher Education				Further Education			
	Full time students	Proportion all students	SIMD 0 -20	Proportion Female	Full time students	Proportion all students	SIMD 0 -20	Proportion Female	Full time students	Proportion all students	SIMD 0 -20	Proportion Female
White	26,365	91.9%	13.5%	58.7%	20,850	93.8%	27.6%	57.2%	41,865	94.9%	33.7%	52.8%
Black	375	1.3%	62.1%	54.4%	345	1.6%	65.2%	49.6%	635	1.4%	60.3%	51.3%
Asian	1,140	4.0%	19.6%	49.9%	645	2.9%	24.8%	48.3%	960	2.2%	28.9%	49.9%
Chinese	195	0.7%	17.7%	56.3%	70	0.3%	28.6%	53.5%	130	0.3%	30.8%	57.7%
Mixed	505	1.8%	13.7%	56.3%	185	0.8%	27.0%	57.3%	245	0.6%	28.6%	58.4%
Other	95	0.3%	25.8%	48.4%	125	0.6%	45.7%	62.4%	290	0.7%	43.4%	49.3%
Total BME	2,310	8.1%	25.3%	52.5%	1,370	6.2%	37.3%	51.4%	2,260	5.1%	39.9%	51.6%
Total Students	28,675	99.1%	14.6%	58.1%	22,220	99.7%	33.9%	56.7%	44,125	99.6%	28.2%	52.6%

72. Across all levels of study shown, there is a higher proportion of BME entrants from the most deprived SIMD 20% compared to entrants from a White ethnic background, but as Table 15 also shows, there is significant variation between the BME groups. Asian entrants have the highest number of entrants within the BME groups, at all levels of study, with the highest proportion (4.0%) at full-time first degree level. Black entrants have a higher proportion of entrants from the most deprived SIMD 20%, with over 60% of Black entrants coming from this quintile at all levels of study. The gender balance for students from BME backgrounds is more even compared to that for all students, for example, females make up 52.5% of entrants to full-time first degree level study that are from a BME background compared to 58.7% of entrants at this level from a white background.

73. The [SFC Triennial Review on Widening Access](#) shows, in Figure 3, the proportion of the people of living in Scotland’s 20% most deprived SIMD datazones by ethnicity using data from the 2011 Census. This data shows that almost 45% of those with African ethnicity lived in the 20% most deprived datazones. This data is necessary to understand the significant variation between the BME groups in the proportion of the student population from the most deprived SIMD quintile.

College Success and University Retention

74. Table 16, below, shows the successful completion rates for full-time college students from a BME background and the proportions from the most and least deprived SIMD quintiles by level of study.

75. Table 16 shows that BME students from the most deprived quintile have higher successful completion than the overall sector, higher by 3.9 percentage points at full-time FE level and by 0.2 percentage points at full-time HE level in 2016-17. The opposite is true for those from the least deprived quintile where the proportion of successful completion is lower by 3.9 percentage points at full-time FE level and 1.9 percentage points at full-time HE level.

Table 16: Full-time Successful Completion Rates (PI definition) by Level of Study and Selected SIMD Quintiles for BME Students – College Sector⁸

Level	AY	BME		Difference to Sector	
		SIMD 0 -20	SIMD 80 - 100	SIMD 0 -20	SIMD 80 -100
Full-time further Education	2016-17	66.7%	66.3%	3.9%	-3.9%
	2015-16	67.9%	72.4%	5.0%	2.2%
	2014-15	67.7%	63.4%	6.7%	-4.6%
	2013-14	68.0%	64.4%	4.3%	-4.1%
	2012-13	67.3%	63.2%	4.1%	-5.4%
	2011-12	61.7%	66.2%	0.7%	0.5%
Full-time Higher Education	2016-17	68.7%	73.6%	0.2%	-1.9%
	2015-16	68.9%	69.3%	1.5%	-6.0%
	2014-15	70.0%	73.6%	3.4%	-1.1%
	2013-14	68.1%	75.0%	0.0%	-0.7%
	2012-13	65.7%	70.8%	-0.9%	-3.1%
	2011-12	62.5%	71.9%	-2.6%	-1.0%

76. Table 17, below, shows retention rates for university undergraduate students by ethnicity group, showing the proportions for the total population and for those from the most deprived SIMD 20%.

77. The BME group generally has higher retention at both the total and SIMD20 breakdowns. In 2016-17 retention for BME students was 1.1 percentage points higher than White students, and for BME students from SIMD20 areas retention was 3.6 percentage points higher.

⁸ PI data for 2014-15 and 2015-16 has been updated and does not match what was published in last year's Report on Widening Access. This is as a result of a data improvement process and further details can be found in the [PI publication](#).

78. The BME grouping has fewer students than the White grouping shown in the table below, and this may contribute to the fluctuations across the BME data. For context, there were 570 students in the BME SIMD 20 retention population in 2016-17 and as few as 330 in 2011-12. There were also 2,340 in the BME total retention population and as few as 1,760 in 2011-12.

Table 17: Scottish-domiciled Full-time Retention Rates for Undergraduate Entrants by Selected SIMD Quintiles for BME Students – University Sector

Level	AY	BME		White	
		Total	SIMD0-20	Total	SIMD0-20
Full-time Undergraduate Entrants	2016-17	92.0%	90.3%	90.9%	86.7%
	2015-16	92.0%	88.8%	90.6%	86.5%
	2014-15	90.7%	91.6%	90.5%	87.0%
	2013-14	92.6%	90.1%	91.2%	87.3%
	2012-13	89.9%	90.4%	91.0%	86.9%
	2011-12	90.9%	91.5%	89.7%	84.5%

79. It is important to note that retention and successful completion rates can vary across the different ethnicity groups within the BME category. This information is available from SFC on request.

Section 7: Disability

80. Table 18, below, shows the proportion of students with a declared disability at each level of study from the totals shown in [Table 4](#), excluding those with unknown disability status. This is only relevant in the earlier years of the time series as HESA and FES reporting on disabilities changed from 2010-11 so that students had to return disability information, and from 2011-12 the coding frame changed.

Table 18: Proportion of overall Scottish-domiciled entrants with a declared disability

	University				College			
	First Degree		Sub-degree		HE		FE	
	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time
2016-17	12.3%	14.1%	17.3%	16.8%	12.6%	7.5%	20.3%	16.5%
2015-16	11.5%	14.2%	17.3%	17.2%	12.0%	6.4%	20.1%	16.4%
2014-15	10.6%	14.6%	14.5%	14.3%	10.9%	6.5%	19.3%	15.5%
2013-14	10.1%	12.6%	13.6%	11.0%	10.2%	7.5%	17.5%	16.2%
2012-13	9.0%	14.8%	13.2%	13.2%	10.3%	7.1%	16.9%	17.3%
2009-10	8.3%	10.0%	9.6%	12.3%	8.5%	7.4%	14.6%	17.2%
2006-07	3.2%	7.8%	3.7%	4.6%	8.7%	6.2%	13.8%	14.3%
2003-04	2.6%	3.0%	3.9%	4.0%	5.7%	3.6%	9.5%	10.1%

81. The highest proportion of students with a declared disability in 2016-17, and in each of the last four academic years, was at full-time FE level in colleges where 20.3% of entrants had a declared disability. At each level, other than at full-time first degree level, there was a higher proportion of students with a declared disability studying full-time compared to part-time.

82. The increased reporting and improved collection of data on disabilities is contributing to the large increases shown in Table 18 from 2003-04, and the earlier years. Comparisons across the shorter time series are more appropriate in this section.

83. Over the shorter time series, there is still the trend of increasing rates of disclosed disability. Across all full-time modes of study, the proportion of entrants with a declared disability has increased between 2012-13 and 2016-17. However, for part-time study at first degree level at university and FE level at college the rates have decreased over the same period, from 14.8% to 14.1% at part-time first degree level, and from 17.3% to 16.5% of part-time FE level.

Disability Breakdown, Age and Socio-economic Status

84. Table 19 shows disability type by level of study, alongside the proportion from the most deprived SIMD quintile and the proportion aged 16 to 24 years old. Annex 1 of [SFC's Triennial Review](#) shows the proportion of college and university students that have a declared disability by age compared to the proportion of the Scottish population which is extremely relevant context for the table below.

Table 19: Scottish-domiciled Entrants by Disability, Level of Study, Age and the Proportion from the Most Deprived SIMD Quintile, AY 2016-17

Type of Disability	University				College							
	First Degree				Higher Education				Further Education			
	Full time students	Proportion	SIMD 0 -20	Proportion Aged 16 -24	Full time students	Proportion	SIMD 0 -20	Proportion Aged 16 -24	Full time students	Proportion	SIMD 0 -20	Proportion Aged 16 -24
A long standing illness or health condition	375	1.3%	15.4%	77.1%	225	1.0%	34.1%	65.5%	485	1.1%	31.3%	66.8%
A mental health condition	745	2.6%	17.2%	73.3%	585	2.6%	30.3%	68.1%	1,515	3.4%	34.0%	69.1%
A physical impairment or mobility issues	115	0.4%	20.9%	68.7%	90	0.4%	27.5%	61.1%	180	0.4%	39.2%	66.3%
A social/communication impairment	175	0.6%	9.2%	93.7%	0	0.0%	n/a	n/a	0	0.0%	n/a	n/a
A specific learning difficulty	1,540	5.3%	10.5%	85.5%	915	4.1%	23.0%	81.8%	3,080	7.0%	31.2%	83.0%
Blind/serious visual impairment uncorrected by glasses	40	0.1%	21.6%	80.0%	45	0.2%	25.6%	80.6%	100	0.2%	38.1%	78.8%
Deaf/serious hearing impairment	70	0.2%	21.1%	82.9%	70	0.3%	19.1%	59.8%	175	0.4%	35.3%	61.0%
A disability, impairment/medical condition not listed above	295	1.0%	12.6%	76.9%	355	1.6%	29.9%	79.4%	1,210	2.7%	30.7%	85.2%
Two or more impairments/disabling medical conditions	210	0.7%	18.1%	67.1%	530	2.4%	31.6%	64.7%	2,215	5.0%	32.7%	78.5%
Total Disabilities	3,565	12.3%	13.6%	80.0%	2,820	12.7%	28.1%	73.3%	8,985	20.3%	32.3%	77.8%
No known disability	25,380	87.7%	14.7%	86.8%	19,465	87.3%	28.2%	75.5%	35,310	79.7%	34.5%	71.4%
Total Students	28,945	100%	14.6%	86.0%	22,285	100%	28.2%	75.1%	44,295	100%	33.9%	72.6%

Further details of the specific disabilities within each group are given in [Annex A](#)

85. The most prevalent disability type at all levels was a specific learning difficulty, such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D. The age profile of entrants with a specific learning difficulty was also low compared to the average proportion for students with a disability, shown by higher numbers between the ages of 16 and 24.

College Success and University Retention

86. Table 20, below, shows the successful completion rates for full-time college students with a declared disability with the proportions from the most and least deprived SIMD quintiles by level of study.

87. Table 20 shows that students with a declared disability have lower rates of successful completion compared to the overall sector rate, and this difference is more pronounced at HE level. At HE level, the difference for students with a declared disability and the sector is much greater for students from the most deprived SIMD quintile, at 7.8 percentage points in 2016-17.

Table 20: Full-time Successful Completion Rates (PI definition) by Level of Study & Selected SIMD Quintiles for Students with a Declared Disability – College Sector⁹

Level	AY	Declared Disability		Difference to Sector	
		SIMD 0-20	SIMD 80-100	SIMD 0-20	SIMD 80-100
Full-time further Education	2016-17	61.6%	69.6%	-1.2%	-0.5%
	2015-16	61.2%	68.5%	-1.7%	-1.7%
	2014-15	60.3%	68.1%	-0.7%	0.0%
	2013-14	63.5%	70.4%	-0.2%	1.9%
	2012-13	63.6%	68.9%	0.4%	0.2%
	2011-12	60.7%	67.1%	-0.3%	1.5%
Full-time Higher Education	2016-17	60.8%	72.3%	-7.8%	-3.2%
	2015-16	62.1%	71.7%	-5.2%	-3.6%
	2014-15	59.7%	74.4%	-7.0%	-0.3%
	2013-14	62.0%	74.9%	-6.2%	-0.7%
	2012-13	62.7%	75.2%	-3.9%	1.4%
	2011-12	61.5%	73.0%	-3.5%	0.2%

88. Table 21, below, shows retention rates for university undergraduate students by disability status, showing the proportions for the total population and for those from the most deprived SIMD 20%.

89. In 2016-17, the retention of students with a declared disability was 1.8 percentage points lower than students with no known disability. For students with a declared disability from SIMD20 areas, there was a gap of only 0.7 percentage points from students with no known disability from SIMD20 areas.

⁹ PI data for 2014-15 and 2015-16 has been updated and does not match what was published in last year's Report on Widening Access. This is as a result of a data improvement process and further details can be found in the [PI publication](#).

Table 21: Scottish-domiciled Full-time Retention Rates for Undergraduate Entrants by Selected SIMD Quintiles for Students with a Declared Disability – University Sector

Level	AY	Declared disability		No Known Disability	
		Total	SIMD0-20	Total	SIMD0-20
Full-time Undergraduate Entrants	2016-17	89.4%	86.6%	91.2%	87.3%
	2015-16	89.4%	85.8%	90.8%	86.8%
	2014-15	89.3%	86.4%	90.7%	87.6%
	2013-14	89.6%	85.6%	91.5%	87.9%
	2012-13	89.4%	84.2%	91.0%	87.4%
	2011-12	88.4%	84.0%	89.5%	84.6%

90. It is important to note that retention and successful completion rates can vary across the different disability groups within the total population with a declared disability. This information is available from SFC on request.

Section 8: Care Experienced Learners

91. SFC and HESA began collecting data on care experienced learners at colleges and universities in academic year 2013-14 meaning there are three available years of data for this section.
92. In the initial years of collection it was expected that the data under-represented the numbers of care experienced (CE) students in colleges. This has been substantiated by a large increase in numbers between academic years, especially in the college sector. Further years of data are required before the figures can be considered robust and trend analysis is possible. SFC teams continue to work with institutions to improve data quality and reporting in this area, which will enable better informed analysis of the participation and attainment of students from a care experienced background at college to be carried out. The national ambition for care experienced learners is provided in SFC’s [Outcome Agreement Guidance](#).
93. Table 22, below, shows the proportion of entrants to each level and mode of study with declared care experience. The [Scottish Government statistics](#) show that 2% of children were looked after or on the child protection register between August 2015 and July 2016. The figures shown here include anyone who has been in care or is from a looked after background, and young people in care. This includes people who have been in foster care, kinship care, and those who are looked after at home with a supervision requirement. This means that the figures shown below, reaching 2.4% of students at full-time FE level, use a wider definition than the Scottish Government social work statistics of 2%.

Table 22: Proportion of Overall Scottish-domiciled Entrants with Care Experience

	University				College			
	First Degree		Sub-degree		HE		FE	
	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time
2016-17	0.6%	0.7%	1.4%	1.0%	0.7%	0.6%	2.4%	1.3%
2015-16	0.6%	0.5%	0.9%	1.1%	0.6%	0.3%	1.6%	0.9%
2014-15	0.6%	0.6%	0.8%	1.0%	0.2%	0.1%	0.4%	0.3%
2013-14	0.5%	0.6%	0.8%	0.5%	0.1%	0.1%	0.4%	0.4%

94. Table 22 shows that the proportions of care experience students across both sectors are small, but generally increasing. Table 23 shows the actual numbers of care experience students included within these entrant populations, in order to provide a greater understanding of the improvements in reporting.

Table 23: Scottish-domiciled Entrants with Care Experience

	University				College			
	First Degree		Sub-degree		HE		FE	
	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time
2016-17	170	40	35	20	165	30	1045	565
2015-16	160	30	25	20	140	20	715	390
2014-15	170	30	25	15	40	5	175	105
2013-14	145	30	25	10	20	5	165	160

95. Table 23 shows large increases in the numbers of care experienced entrants, particularly in the college sector. Across all levels of study shown the number of care experienced entrants increased from 1,500 in 2015-16 to 2,070 in 2016-17. Table 23 also highlights the small numbers across the levels of study that make further breakdowns difficult for data protection reasons. However, despite the small numbers, the comparatively poor success and completion rates are apparent across all years of available data.

College Success and University Retention

96. Table 24 below shows college success and university retention for care experienced students compared to students who are not care experienced. At all levels, care experienced students have lower success rates. There is a performance difference of 7.4 percentage points for retention at university, and the largest gap is in successful completion of full-time FE courses at college where the gap is 13.1 percentage points.

Table 24: University Retention and College Successful Completion for Care Experienced Students, AY 2016-17

	CE Students	Non-CE Students	Performance Gap
Retention - Full-time Undergraduate Entrants	83.7%	91.1%	7.4%
Successful Completion - Full-time HE	65.4%	71.7%	6.3%
Successful Completion - Full-time FE	52.5%	65.6%	13.1%

97. The Scottish Government has accepted the CoWA recommendation that, by 2017, those with care experience who meet the access threshold should be entitled to the offer of a place at a Scottish university; and it has committed to provide these students with a full bursary for the duration of their programme of study. Further statistics on care experience students are shown in the [CoWA Key Indicators](#) section.

Section 9: Feedback and Future Publications

98. There is a feedback form available on the publication page on the SFC website where users can continue to feedback on the coverage of this report. We welcome comments on how we can increase and improve access to data in this area.

99. If you have any questions or comments please contact:

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Annex A: Report Content and Coverage

University entrants – Section 3 onwards

1. The Commission on Widening Access covers all higher education but pays specific attention to Scottish domiciled full-time first degree (FTFD) entrants to university. In 2016-17, this group made up 73% of the entrants to university shown in [Table 4](#), and is the main group of university students of focus in this report.
2. There is, of course, a variety of additional activity provided by universities to students outwith this group. Part-time activity at first degree level at university accounted for 18% of all first degree activity at universities in 2016-17 and this route is an important one for many. Also of importance is the sub-degree level provision at university shown in [Table 4](#). Further detail on these groups, where not shown in this report, is available in the background tables online or by request. “Sub-degree” for this purpose includes the following qualifications:
 - Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE).
 - Higher National Certificate (HNC).
 - Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)¹⁰.
 - Higher National Diploma (HND).
3. The tables in Section 3 onwards, therefore, do not include the other sub-degree level activity in universities, which is made up mostly of professional qualifications and courses not leading to a qualification. The full definition can be found on the [HESA website](#). This definition of sub-degree provision is used here in line with the provision included in the [SFC Outcome Agreement definition](#) of students. However, as this report covers all activity in the sector the numbers will vary from the reported [OA figures](#) as the data in this report includes the Open University whereas the OA measures do not.

College entrants – Section 3 onwards

4. College student activity can be measured in a number of different ways, and a full explanation of these measurements can be found in Section 2 of SFC’s [Baseline Report for 2014-15](#). College data here is shown only in enrolments. The college data within this report includes only Scottish domiciled entrants, and is shown by full and part-time activity at Higher Education (HE) and Further Education (FE) level.

¹⁰ Including Diploma Higher Education (DipHE) leading towards obtaining eligibility to register to practice with a health or social care or veterinary statutory regulatory body.

5. In line with the definition used in the SFC [College Performance Indicators](#) National Statistics publication the college entrants shown include only those students who completed 4 or more Credits.¹¹ This is an important addition on the college data when measuring entrant activity in enrolments as otherwise very short courses, of often only a few hours, are counted in the same way as courses with much longer durations.

University Retention

6. University retention measures whether a student, studying at first degree or the sub-degree level university provision included in this publication, stays in higher education after their first year of study. The full definition can be found in the [OA Technical Guidance](#).

College Success

7. College success is reported in SFC's [College Performance Indicators](#) (PI) publication. The College PIs for 2015-16 were published in January 2017 and contain data on successful completion for students from a range of access criteria including age, gender and disability. The intention of this publication is not to reproduce this data but key success indicators are provided and further breakdowns are provided.

Articulation

8. Articulation is a key route for Access to education. SFC is currently rebuilding the National Articulation Database (NAD) on a more advanced statistical platform meaning current data is not available to publish at this time. The new platform will enable more analysis of this data, and we expect to include this more detailed analysis in future SFC Reports on Widening Access along with further analysis and reporting on progress and transitions across both sectors.

Data Specifics

9. All counts of students have been rounded to the nearest five, to protect the confidentiality of individuals, in accordance with SFC policy in line with HESA. Totals are based on unrounded values. Percentages are based on students who have known data for the characteristic reported. Percentages based on a population of 22.5 or fewer students have been suppressed to protect against over interpretation of small numbers.
10. When a college and Higher Education Institution (HEI) share responsibility for students, for example, when an HEI acts as the awarding body for a course that is partly delivered at college, these students appears in both the HEI and college

¹¹ 1 credit equates to 40 notional hours of learning.

data and are known as Associate Students. There were 1,450 Associate Students in 2016-17 who have been reported on in both sectors in this publication, following the practice of treating them in this way decided in SFC's [HE Students and Qualifiers publication](#).

11. The SIMD files are updated periodically to reflect changing levels of deprivation in areas and the SIMD date series in this report use the SIMD2006, SIMD2009 and SIMD2012 files. For academic years (AY) 2002-03 to 2006-07 the SIMD2006 file is used. For AY 2007-08 to 2010-11, SIMD 2009 and for AY 2011-12 to 2015-16, SIMD 2012 is used.
12. Section 2 uses the standard SIMD files, all three years based on SIMD2012. Section 3 onwards uses the SFC weighted SIMD files, consistent with all other analysis conducted by SFC on socio-economic status. Once the recently updated SIMD2016 file is brought into use, methodologies across the analysis in both sections will be consistent.
13. The disability categories in [Table 20](#) are shown under shortened titles. The full disability titles, giving examples of the specific conditions in each group are below:
 - A long standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy.
 - A mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder.
 - A physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using arms or using a wheelchair or crutches.
 - A social / communication impairment such as Asperger's syndrome / other autistic spectrum disorder.
 - A specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D.
 - Blind or a serious visual impairment uncorrected by glasses.
 - Deaf or a serious hearing impairment.
 - Personal care support.
 - A disability, impairment or medical condition that is not listed above.
 - Two or more impairments and / or disabling medical conditions.
14. Students at the former land-based colleges of Barony, Elmwood and Oatridge, which merged with the Scottish Agricultural College (SAC) to form SRUC in October 2012, were still recorded through the college reporting until 2012-13. They are included in the figures for colleges for 2012-13 but are included with the SRUC and HEI related figures from 2013-14.
15. A number of institution mergers happened across the university and college sectors over the time period shown in this publication. Full details of these are described in [Annex A: HE Students and Qualifiers 2014-15](#).