This report presents data relating to the Commission on Widening Access targets, and on Scottish-domiciled entrants to higher and further education in Scotland by socio-economic deprivation, gender, ethnicity, disability, care experience and age.

Principals and Chairs of Scotland’s colleges and universities, Scottish Government, Protected Characteristic Governance Groups, students, parents, guardians and the general public.

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Executive Summary

This is the fourth SFC Report on Widening Access, the successor to SFC’s Learning for All publication and discusses data relating to the Scottish Government access targets, further access data that reflects SFC Outcome Agreement measures and the evidence base used in SFC’s Gender Action Plan (GAP) work and GAP Progression report, with a focus on socio-economic status and protected characteristics such as gender, disability and ethnicity. The key points from this report are:

- In 2018-19, 15.9% of Scottish-domiciled FTFD entrants (4,900) to Scottish universities were from the 20% most deprived areas (SIMD0-20) in Scotland\(^1\), up from 15.6% (4,650 entrants) in 2017-18.
- There were 8,960 SDUE at college from the 20% SIMD0-20 areas in Scotland in 2018-19, representing 24.8% of all SDUEs at college and up from 24.3% in 2017-18.
- In 2018-19 there were 320 Care-experienced entrants to FTFD level study compared to 255 in 2017-18.
- 91.1% of Scottish-domiciled FTFD entrants completed year 1 and remained in higher education in 2018-19 compared to a retention rate of 92.5% in 2017-18.
- 86.8% of Scottish-domiciled FTFD entrants were retained in higher education in 2018-19 from the 20% most deprived areas, compared to 89.4% in 2017-18.
- 13.9% of Scottish-domiciled FTFD qualifiers were from the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland in 2018-19, up from 13.4% in 2017-18.
- In 2018-19, 21.9% of Scottish-domiciled undergraduate qualifiers from college were from the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland, down from 24.0% in 2017-18.

Key Definitions

1. The Commission on Widening Access Recommendation 32 states that, by 2030, students from the 20% most deprived areas should represent 20% of entrants to higher education.
Report on Widening Access 2018–19

Entrants

15.9% of Scottish-domiciled first degree** entrants (4,900) to Scottish universities were from the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland***

↑ 0.2pp* on 2017-18

24.8% of Scottish-domiciled undergraduate entrants (8,960) to Scottish colleges were from the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland***

↑ 0.5pp* on 2017-18

320 care-experienced entrants to first degree** level study in 2018-19.

Compared to 255 on 2017-18

Retention

91.9% of Scottish-domiciled first degree** entrants completed year 1 and remained in higher education in 2018-19.

↓ 1.4pp* on 2017-18

86.8% of Scottish-domiciled first degree** entrants from 20% most deprived areas completed year 1 and remained in higher education in 2018-19

↓ 2.7pp* on 2017-18

Qualifiers

13.9% of Scottish-domiciled first degree** qualifiers were from the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland in 2018-19.

↑ 0.5pp* on 2017-18

21.9% of Scottish-domiciled undergraduate higher education qualifiers from college were from the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland.

↓ 2.1pp* on 2017-18

* Percentage points.
** All first degree figures here refer to full-time student.
*** CoWA Recommendation 32: By 2030, students from the 20% most deprived backgrounds should represent 20% of entrants to higher education.