



Scottish Funding Council
Promoting further and higher education



Report on Widening Access 2017-18

SFC Statistical Publication

Report on Widening Access 2017-18: Executive Summary

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Summary: This report presents data towards 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.

FAO: Principals and Chairs of Scotland's colleges and universities, Scottish Government, students, parents, guardians and the general public

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Highlights

SFC Report on Widening Access 2017/18

15.6%

of Scottish domiciled full-time first degree entrants (4,650) to Scottish universities were from the 20% most deprived areas (SIMD20) in Scotland*, up 1.8% (685) from 16/17. **p.9**



42.9%

of entrants to full-time FE and HE courses at colleges and full-time first degree courses at university studying at HE level were from SIMD20 areas, compared to 74.2% of those from the least deprived 20% areas studying at HE level'. **p.17**



89.4%

The overall retention rate for Scottish domiciled, full-time first degree SIMD20 entrants completing year 1 and remaining in higher education, up 2.0% from 16/17. **p.22**



2,545

Care experienced entrants across further and higher education, up 475 from 2016/17. **p.42**



*COWA Recommendation 32:

By 2030, students from the 20% most deprived backgrounds should represent 20% of entrants to higher education.

Executive Summary

This is the third *SFC Report on Widening Access*, the successor 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 is presented, 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

- The Commission on Widening Access Recommendation 32 states that, by 2030, students from the 20% most deprived backgrounds should represent 20% of entrants to higher education. In 2017-18, 15.6% of Scottish domiciled full-time first degree **entrants** to Scottish universities were from the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland. This represents 4,650 learners – an increase of 685 from 2016-17.
- Students with **care-experienced** backgrounds accounted for 0.8% of **entrants** at full-time first degree level and of all entrants to undergraduate higher education. The latest Scottish Government statistics¹ indicate that 2% of children in Scotland were looked after or on the child protection register.
- The overall **retention** rate for Scottish domiciled full-time first degree entrants completing year 1 and remaining in higher education was 92.5% in 2017-18, compared with the 2016-17 figure of 91.8%.
- The overall **retention** rate for Scottish domiciled full-time first degree entrants completing year 1 and remaining in higher education for SIMD20 entrants was 89.4%, up on the 2016-17 figure of 87.4%. Meanwhile, 87.2% of entrants with care-experienced backgrounds remained in higher education, compared with 87.0% the previous year.
- In 2017-18, 13.4% of Scottish domiciled full-time first degree **qualifiers** from university were from the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland. This represents an increase from the previous year's figure of 13.1%.

¹ [Scottish Government Children's Social Work Statistics 2017-18](#)

Widening Access Update

- Combining the number of entrants to full-time FE and HE courses at college and full-time first degree courses at university; of those from the most deprived 20%, 42.9% are studying at HE level. Meanwhile, 74.2% of those from the least deprived 20% are studying at HE level.
- Across the levels of study shown in this report, the number of reported care-experienced entrants increased from 2,070 in 2016-17 to 2,545 in 2017-18.