



Scottish Funding Council
Comhairle Maoineachaidh na h-Alba

SFC STATISTICS

Report on Widening Access 2019-20

Issue Date: 30 June 2021

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Summary: 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.

FAO: 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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Adverse Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic was declared in March 2020 by the World Health Organisation, part way through the 2019-20 academic session. The pandemic did not have any notable impact on student enrolment figures for 2019-20, however it did impact on students who were studying at the time and their ability to complete their qualification as planned.

Numerous issues impacted students' ability to complete their qualification, such as:

- Students may have been medically affected by the pandemic either directly or via their families and/or dependants.
- Students who have childcare or caring responsibilities were also impacted by the pandemic, and this may have made it more difficult for these students to complete their course as originally intended.
- Colleges and universities did act quickly to move provision online where possible, however, students on courses containing a practical element or a work placement may not have been able to complete their course as intended, and therefore had to defer receiving their qualification to the following academic year.
- The entire student population was also affected by the 'softer' impacts of the pandemic on their education, such as losing access to peer support and in-person lecturer support. While institutions took steps to address digital poverty, supported by additional funding, in the immediate aftermath of lockdown some students did not have readily-available access to the necessary equipment to immediately start learning online.

In spite of the challenges faced by the two sectors and their students, 54,765 students successfully achieved an undergraduate-level Higher Education (HE) qualification in 2019-20 from Scotland's colleges and universities.

Other students who may initially have expected to graduate in 2019-20 but were impacted by the pandemic are instead expected to obtain their awards in future years.

In this report, qualifier data for 2019-20 is separated in tables by a grey column indicating a break in the time-series.

Executive Summary

This is the fifth SFC Report on Widening Access, the successor to SFC's Learning for All publication. The report discusses data relating to the Scottish Government access targets and further access data that reflects SFC Outcome Agreement measures, with a focus on socio-economic status and protected characteristics such as gender, disability and ethnicity. The key points from this report are:



That's up from 15.9% in 2018-19, and represents an additional 70 students.



This means that one of the interim Commission for Widening Access target of 16% of all Scottish-domiciled full-time first degree university entrants being from the 20% most deprived areas by 2021-22 has been met

TWO YEARS AHEAD OF SCHEDULE



In 2019-20 42.5% of full-time first degree entrants from the 20% most deprived areas progressed from a college course



This indicates that, at tertiary level in Scotland, equality of access is being achieved – although at sector and institutional level there is variance in levels of representation.

Scotland's colleges made a substantive contribution to that tertiary level delivery, as they recruited

25.3% of their Scottish-domiciled entrants to Higher Education courses from the



20% MOST DEPRIVED AREAS.



That's up from 1.2% in 2018-19 and represents an increase of 425 students.

In Scotland, 1.4% of children under 18 were looked-after in 2017-18.



90.9%

of Scottish-domiciled full-time first degree university entrants in 2018-19 returned to study in year 2. This is broadly in line with the previous years figure of 91.1%.



Retention rates were lower for care-experienced (87.0%) and students from the 20% most deprived areas (87.5%).

In 2019-20, **9.8%** of Scottish-domiciled entrants to full-time first degree courses at university were of **NON-WHITE ETHNICITY**,



up 0.5pp from the 2018-19 figure of 9.3%.

In Scotland, 4% of the population are of non-white ethnicity.



Of the 7,365 students entering university first degree courses in 2019-20 with an HNC/D qualification achieved in the last three years, **4,280 (58.1%) RECEIVED APPROPRIATE CREDIT FOR THEIR PRIOR LEARNING.** That means that those with an HNC entered **UNIVERSITY STRAIGHT INTO YEAR 2**, and those with an HND entered in year 3. This is known as Articulation with Advanced Standing (AS).



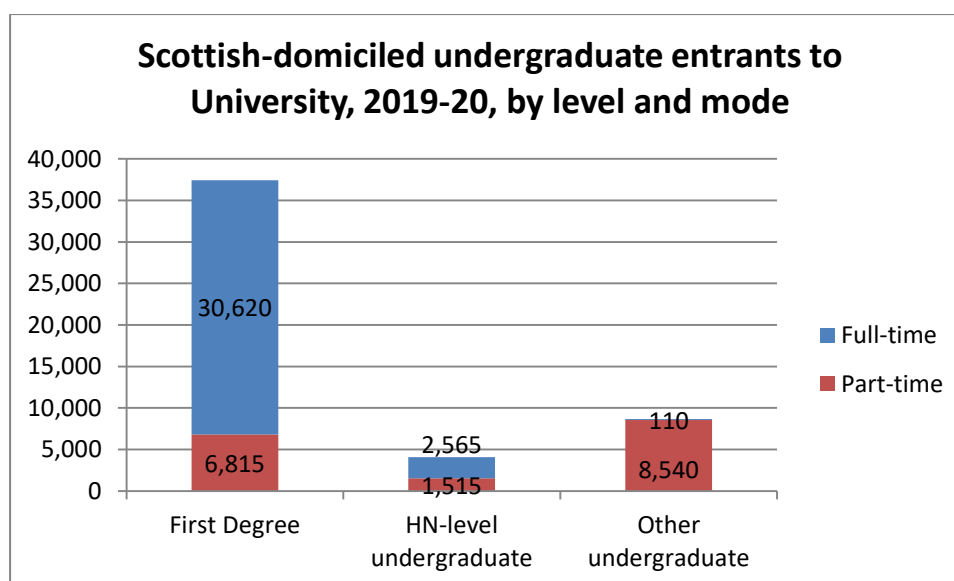
Section 1: Introduction

1. This is the fifth SFC Report on Widening Access (RoWA), providing updated statistics relating to equality and diversity of the student population across Scotland's colleges and universities for 2019-20. This report was first produced in consideration of the Scottish Government's (SG's) [A Blueprint for Fairness, The Final report of the Commission on Widening Access \(CoWA\)](#). Recommendation 32 of CoWA states "...the Scottish Funding Council and the Scottish Government should enhance the analysis and publication of data on fair access". This publication is both in line with said recommendation and with further SFC efforts to improve consistency of reporting data relating to many aspects of higher and further education, including access.
2. After the first RoWA 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, along with further user feedback received since, have fed into subsequent updates.
3. This iteration of the publication covers more stages of the learner journey than previous editions, considering entrants, articulation pathways, university retention and qualifiers, as well as, college completion rates. Information on college completion rates can be found in the background tables. There is more information in the accompanying background tables covering each of these areas in more detail, along with data relating to college leavers' destinations (CLD), university graduate outcomes, attainment at university and university staffing data.
4. As with previous iterations, this report has separate strands. The first, in Section 2, relates to the key SG targets and related measures considering Full-Time First Degree (FTFD) students (at university) and all undergraduate Higher education entrants (at both universities and colleges). The second considers a broader analysis of access to further and higher education.
5. With regard to university figures, following user feedback, the main report focuses on Scottish-domiciled FTFD entrants. Scotland's universities do of course offer substantial provision on a part-time basis and at other levels of undergraduate study aside from first-degree. This includes vital courses such as childcare and community development, which learners complete whilst working.
6. As such, this report is published alongside a suite of background tables which enable users to view university figures for (i) the Scottish-domiciled FTFD

entrant cohort and (ii) the Scottish-domiciled undergraduate entrant (SDUE) cohort. The latter includes part-time provision and also other undergraduate sub-degree provision at HN-level¹. In the CoWA table 1, other undergraduate provision (i.e. out-with first degree and HN-level) is also reported on.

7. The below Context table shows the different cohorts in scope of this report.

Context: Scottish-domiciled undergraduate entrants to University, 2019-20, by level and mode of study



8. College performance indicators data for 2019-20 are not included in this report. They will be published in the [SFC College Performance Indicators](#) report in July 2021. We do however include prior years' college performance indicators in the background tables (tables 5 and 6) for reference.
9. A progress update on the Gender Action Plan will be included in the 2020-21 Report on Widening Access (March 2022). The 2019-20 (and 2020-21) college performance indicators can be incorporated into this reporting.
10. Users are encouraged to provide feedback on the content and format of the report to the author via the contact details on the front page. Further breakdowns and other related data are available on request from SFC by contacting datarequests@sfc.ac.uk.

¹ HN-level provision includes the following qualifications:

- Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE).
- Higher National Certificate (HNC).
- Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE).
- Higher National Diploma (HND).

Section 2: Scottish Government (SG) Targets and Related Measures

11. 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 not published, and the targets accepted by SG, until later during the 2016-17 admission cycle. This means the initial impact of the Commission's recommendations and targets were not apparent in entrant data until 2017-18 and so that academic year was the first in which the impact of this work can be observed. Data from academic years prior to 2017-18 should be viewed as baselines for access targets.

CoWA Recommendation 32

12. 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 the college and university sectors.

13. 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.

14. 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.

15. The following tables show national performance of these measures using the latest seven 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 figures broken down by institution.

Key Indicators

16. Table 1 shows the key indicators for entrants to FTFD study and all undergraduate HE study at Scottish institutions (both universities and colleges).

Table 1: Scottish²-domiciled Full-time First Degree at University and All Undergraduate HE (universities and colleges), by 20% Most Deprived (SIMD0-20) Areas and Care Experience (CE), 2013-14 to 2019-20

COWA Key Indicator - Entrants	2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20	
	FT First Degree	All UG HE	FT First Degree	All UG HE	FT First Degree	All UG HE	FT First Degree	All UG HE	FT First Degree	All UG HE	FT First Degree	All UG HE	FT First Degree	All UG HE
Total Entrants	28,285	86,650	28,640	84,175	28,770	84,600	28,885	86,360	29,880	86,000	31,065	86,205	30,620	84,610
Entrants from MD20	3,850	14,730	3,965	14,440	4,015	14,740	3,965	14,920	4,650	15,995	4,900	16,500	4,970	16,410
% MD20 entrants	13.7%	17.2%	13.9%	17.5%	14.0%	17.7%	13.8%	17.7%	15.6%	18.9%	15.9%	19.4%	16.4%	19.6%
CE Entrants	145	265	170	325	160	445	170	525	255	680	320	1,045	370	1,470
% CE entrants	0.5%	0.3%	0.6%	0.4%	0.6%	0.5%	0.6%	0.6%	0.8%	0.8%	1.0%	1.2%	1.2%	1.7%

² Please note that 2019-20 Scottish-domiciled full-time first degree figures may differ slightly to those published by HESA due to differences in methodology applied in identifying student domicile. SFC uses the XDOMHM01 field to identify domicile, whilst HESA use the XDOMGR01 field.

Figure 1: The proportion of Scottish-domiciled full-time first degree entrants, college entrants and all undergraduate HE entrants from SIMD0-20 areas, 2013-14 to 2019-20.

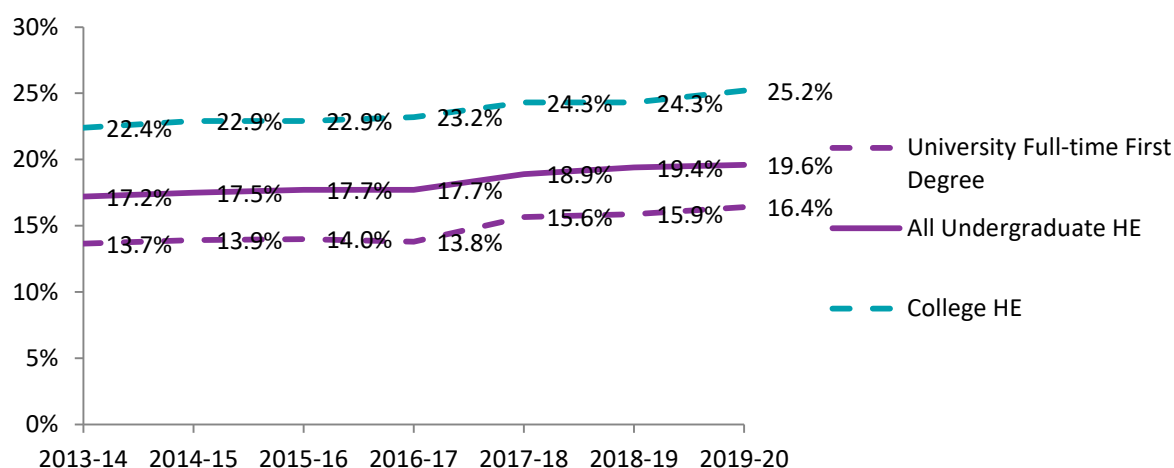
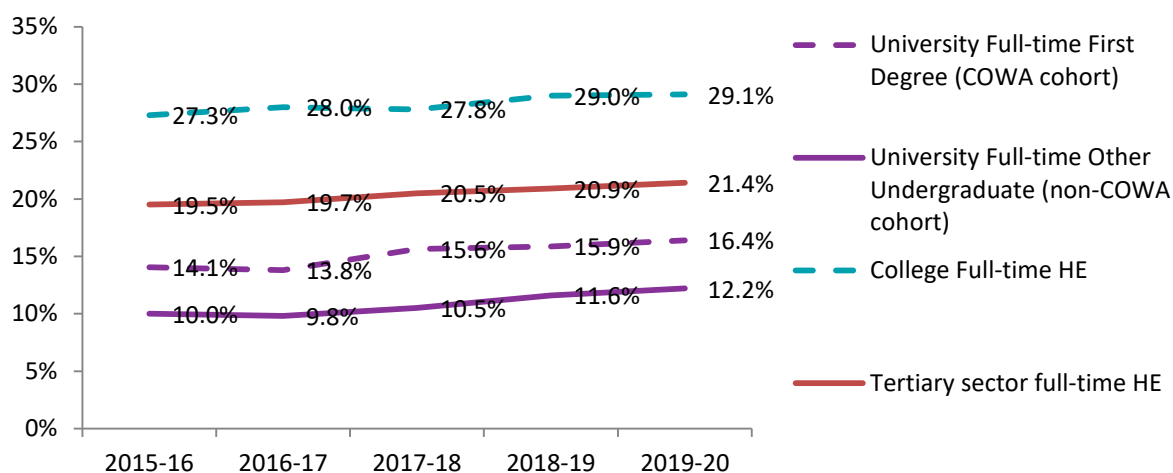


Figure 1b: The proportion of Scottish-domiciled full-time entrants by level and sector of study from SIMD0-20 areas, 2014-15 to 2019-20.



17. In 2019-20, 16.4% of all Scottish-domiciled full-time first degree entrants were from the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland. That's up from 15.9% in 2018-19, and represents an additional 70 students.

18. This means that the interim target of 16% by 2021 has been met ahead of schedule by the university sector.

19. When combining all undergraduate HE provision at Scotland's universities and

colleges, 19.6% of entrants were from the most deprived areas.

20. Care-experienced students represented 1.7% of Scottish-domiciled entrants to undergraduate courses at Scotland's colleges and universities. That's up from 1.2% in 2018-19 and represents an increase of 425 students. When interpreting figures relating to care-experienced students it is important to note that students self-report their status, so it is possible that not all care-experienced students choose to report themselves as such. The reporting of students from care-experienced backgrounds has been given more focus in recent years, with increased efforts made to encourage students to declare themselves as being care-experienced.
22. Figure 1 shows that the proportion of all undergraduate entrants from SIMD 0-20 areas to the college and university sectors combined was 19.6% in 2019-20. It also shows that Scotland's colleges recruited 25.2% of their Scottish-domiciled entrants to Higher Education courses from the 20% most deprived areas.
23. When we focus on full-time entrants only, as we do in Figure 1b, we see that 21.4% of Scottish-domiciled full-time entrants to courses in Scotland's tertiary sector were from the 20% most deprived areas in 2019-20. This has been increasing in the last four academic years, and increased by a further 0.5 pp between 2018-19 and 2019-20.
24. As the number of entrants of Scottish-domicile to full-time first degree courses from the 20% most deprived areas continues to increase, the proportion from the 20% to 40% most deprived areas has fallen 0.8pp between 2018-19 and 2019-20, from 16.1% to 15.3%.
25. The proportion of entrants to full-time HE in the college sector from the 20% most deprived areas has always been higher than in the university sector but both remained broadly constant between 2018-19 and 2019-20. Meanwhile, the university sector has seen an increase in entrants from the most deprived areas to full-time HE from the same time period. The universities and colleges are, in some cases, recruiting from the same 'pool' of prospective students.

Table 2: Scottish Domiciled Full-time First Degree Entrants Returning to Study in Year 2 by 20% Most Deprived Areas (SIMD0-20), 2013-14 to 2019-20

COWA Key Indicator - Retention	2012-13 into 2013-14	2013-14 into 2014-15	2014-15 into 2015-16	2015-16 into 2016-17	2016-17 into 2017-18	2017-18 into 2018-19	2018-19 into 2019-20
Overall Retention Rate	91.7%	91.4%	91.3%	91.8%	92.5%	91.1%	90.9%
Retention for MD20	87.8%	88.2%	87.1%	87.4%	89.4%	86.8%	87.5%
# MD20	3,455	3,785	3,900	3,945	3,975	4,615	4,860
Retention Rate for CE	n/a	85.5%	85.2%	87.0%	87.2%	92.8%	87.0%
# CE	n/a	140	170	155	165	250	320

26. Of the 2018-19 entrants, 90.9% of Scottish-domiciled full-time first degree entrants returned to study in year 2. This is broadly in line with the previous year's figure of 91.1%.

27. Table 2 shows that retention rates were lower for students from the 20% most deprived areas (87.5%) although they did increase from the previous year's figure of 86.8%. The increase in entrants from the 20% most deprived areas from 2017-18 has, in part, contributed to the overall retention rate falling from 92.5% the year before (2016-17) to 91.1% in 2017-18, and 90.9% in 2018-19 - this cohort have historically had lower retention rates.

28. Care-experienced students also had a lower retention rate at 87.0%. Due to the smaller number of care-experienced students, retention rates are more susceptible to volatility over time and so should be interpreted with caution.

Table 3: Scottish-domiciled Full-time First Degree at University and All Undergraduate HE, by 20% Most Deprived Areas (SIMD 0-20), 2013-14 to 2019-20

COWA Key Indicator - Qualifiers	2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17		2017-18		2018-19			2019-20	
	FT First Degree	All UG HE	FT First Degree	All UG HE	FT First Degree	All UG HE	FT First Degree	All UG HE	FT First Degree	All UG HE	FT First Degree	All UG HE		FT First Degree	All UG HE
Total Qualifiers	22,515	57,935	22,145	57,060	22,970	58,240	23,475	58,925	23,640	59,605	23,570	59,765		22,565	54,765
Qualifiers from MD20	2,620	9,325	2,650	9,450	2,820	9,755	3,055	10,170	3,150	10,745	3,270	11,040		2,930	10,335
% MD20 qualifiers	11.7%	16.1%	12.0%	16.6%	12.3%	16.8%	13.1%	17.4%	13.4%	18.0%	13.9%	18.5%		13.0%	19.0%

Please note: Qualifier figures in 2019-20 were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and are not directly comparable with past academic years.

29. In spite of the challenges faced by the two sectors and their students as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, 54,765 students successfully achieved an undergraduate-level Higher Education (HE) qualification in 2019-20 from Scotland's colleges and universities. Of those achieving qualifications 19.0% were from the 20% most deprived areas.

30. Other college and university students who may initially have expected to graduate in 2019-20 but were impacted by the pandemic are instead expected to obtain their awards in future academic years.

Section 2: Sex

31. In 2019-20, 59.0% of Scottish-domiciled full-time first degree entrants to universities were female, broadly in line with the previous year's figure of 58.8%.
32. Of the 2018-19 cohort of Scottish-domiciled full-time first degree entrants to universities, 91.9% of females continued their studies into year 2, whilst the male proportion was slightly lower at 89.4%.
33. In the college sector, 57.5% of enrolments to full-time HE level courses were female, and 51.7% of enrolments to full-time FE level courses were female.
34. In 2019-20, 60.4% of Scottish-domiciled qualifiers from full-time first degree courses were female.
35. 97.1% of Scottish-domiciled female graduates from full-time first degree courses at university with a known destination were in work or further study 15 months after completing their course. The male proportion was slightly lower at 95.6%.
36. In 2018-19 95.5% of male leavers and 94.4% of female leavers from full-time HE college courses with known destinations were in work or further study 3-6 months after qualifying.

Section 3: Ethnicity

37. In 2019-20, 9.8% of Scottish-domiciled entrants to full-time first degree courses at university were of non-white ethnicity), up slightly from the 2018-19 figure of 9.3%. In Scotland, 4%³ of the population are of non-white ethnicity.
38. Of the 2018-19 cohort of Scottish-domiciled full-time first degree entrants to universities, 92.2% of non-white entrants continued their studies into year 2, compared with 90.7% of white entrants. That represents a gap of 1.5 pp which has remained broadly consistent over the past five years.
39. In the college sector, 7.6% of enrolments to full-time HE level courses were by non-white students, and 7.4% of enrolments to full-time FE level courses were from non-white students. Many college students of non-white ethnicity were enrolled on Language courses, such as ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages).
40. In 2019-20, 8.1% of Scottish-domiciled qualifiers from full-time first degree courses were of non-white ethnicity.
41. In the university sector, 96.8% of white Scottish-domiciled graduates from full-time first degree courses with a known destination were in work or further study 15 months after completing their course. The proportion of non-white graduates was slightly lower at 93.1%.
42. In the college sector, 94.2% of HE qualifiers of non-white ethnicity were in positive destinations 3-6 months after qualifying. That's broadly in line with the figure for white HE qualifiers of 94.9%. At FE level, meanwhile, 95.2% of qualifiers of non-white ethnicity were in positive destinations 3-6 months after qualifying. That's the same as the figure for those of white ethnicity.

³ Scotland's Census: <https://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/census-results/at-a-glance/ethnicity/>

Section 4: Disability

43. In 2019-20, 15.0% of Scottish-domiciled entrants to full-time first degree courses at university had a declared disability. That's a 4.9 pp increase on the 2013-14 figure of 10.1%, and this has in part been driven by an increase in those with a declared mental health condition. In Scotland, around 6% of young people (aged 16 to 24) declared a disability according to the 2011 Census⁴.
44. Of the 2018-19 cohort of Scottish-domiciled full-time first degree entrants to universities, 89.7% of students declaring a disability continued their studies into year 2, whilst 91.1% of entrants with no known disability continued their studies.
45. In the college sector, 18.4% of enrolments to full-time HE level courses were by students with a declared disability, and 26.6% of enrolments to full-time FE level courses were from students declaring a disability.
46. Figure 3, below, shows the disability type declared by selected students in both sectors, in 2019-20.

⁴ Scotland's Census 2011: <https://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/>

Figure 3: Disability Types, College and University enrolments 2019-20

	Scottish domiciled full-time first degree university entrants	College (160 hours+)
A long standing illness or health condition	1.3%	1.0%
A mental health condition	3.9%	3.8%
A physical impairment or mobility issues	0.3%	0.9%
A social/communication impairment	0.9%	1.4%
A specific learning difficulty	5.5%	5.0%
Blind/serious visual impairment uncorrected by glasses	0.1%	0.2%
Deaf/serious hearing impairment	0.3%	0.4%
A disability, impairment/medical condition not listed above	1.3%	1.8%
Two or more impairments/disabling medical conditions	1.3%	5.1%
Total Disability	15.0%	19.8%
Total No Known Disability	85.0%	80.2%

47. In 2019-20, 15.5% of Scottish-domiciled qualifiers from full-time first degree courses had a declared disability.
48. In the university sector, 95.0% of Scottish-domiciled graduates from full-time first degree courses declaring a disability were in work or further study 15 months after completing their course. The proportion of graduates with no known disability in positive destinations was slightly higher at 96.8%.
49. In the college sector, 93.4% of HE qualifiers with a declared disability were in positive destinations 3-6 months after qualifying. That's below the figure for HE qualifiers with no known disability of 95.1%. At FE level, meanwhile, 95.1% of qualifiers with a declared disability were in positive destinations 3-6 months after qualifying. That's lower than the figure for those with no known disability of 95.9%.

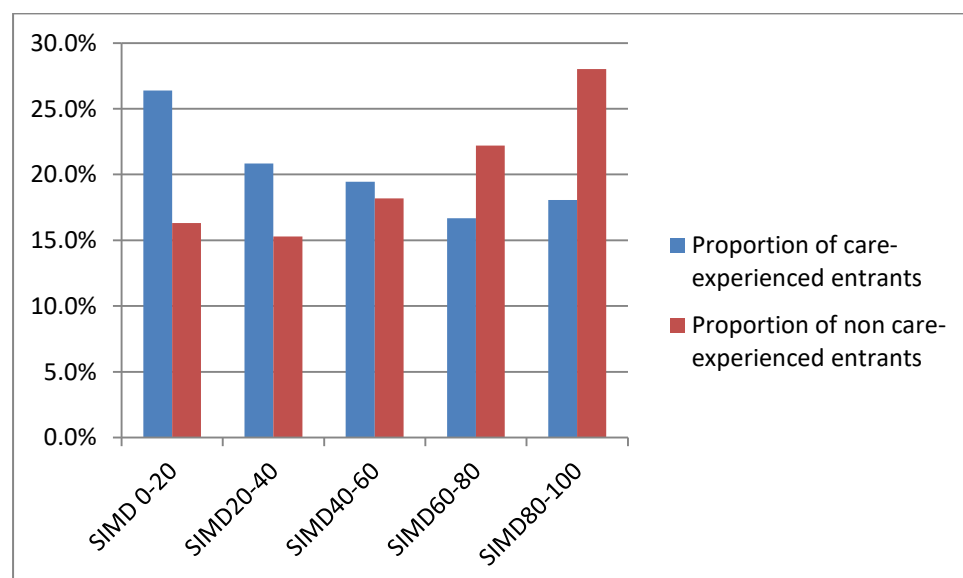
Section 5: Care-Experienced Learners

50. According to Scottish Government's [Children's social work statistics](#) 2017-2018 there were an estimated 14,738 children and young people who were looked-after in Scotland at 31st July 2018. SFC considers a wider group of individuals than the legal definitions of 'looked-after' and 'care leaver' when referring to care-experience for data collection purposes in order to capture all age groups, all nationalities, and all those who have been in care or looked-after during their childhood even if it were for a short period of time. SFC defines 'care-experienced' as 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, including adopted children who were previously looked-after. This care may have been provided in one of many different settings, such as in residential care, foster care, kinship care or through being looked after at home with a supervision requirement. SFC has a national ambition for care experienced students to have equal outcomes with their peers by 2030. More information can be found in SFC's [National Ambition for Care Experience Students](#) report.

51. In 2019-20, 1.2% of Scottish-domiciled full-time first degree entrants were care-experienced. That represents 370 entrants, up 50 from the 2018-19 figure.

52. As shown in Figure 4, 26.4% of Scottish-domiciled care-experienced entrants to full-time first degree courses were from the 20% most deprived areas. 16.3% of non-care experienced entrants to these courses were from the 20% most deprived areas in 2019-20.

Figure 4: Proportion of Scottish-domiciled full-time first degree entrants to University, 2019-20, by care-experience status and SIMD quintile



53. In 2019-2020, 1.7% of Scottish-domiciled entrants to undergraduate courses at Scotland's colleges and universities were care-experienced. That's up from 1.2% in 2018-19 and represents an increase of 425 students. The reporting of students from care-experienced backgrounds has been given more focus in recent years, with increased efforts made to encourage students to declare themselves as being care-experienced.
54. A higher rate of support⁵ has been made available to care-experienced students in Scotland at HE and FE level since 2017-18 and 2018-19 respectively.
55. In the college sector, 3.5% of enrolments to full-time HE and 8.7% of enrolments to full-time FE courses in 2019-20 were from care-experienced students. That's up from 2.3% (full-time HE) and 5.5% (full-time FE) in 2018-19.
56. In the university sector, 87.0% of Scottish-domiciled entrants to full-time first degree courses with experience of care continued their studies into year 2. This is lower than the overall retention rate of 90.9%.
57. In 2017-18, 94.5% of Scottish-domiciled care-experienced graduates from full-time first degree courses at university were in work or further study 15 months after completing their course. The proportion of graduates not declaring themselves as care-experienced in positive destinations was slightly higher at 96.5%.
58. In 2018-19, 90.7% of care-experienced leavers from full-time HE college courses and 94.8% from full-time FE courses with known destinations were in work or further study 3-6 months after qualifying. For those not declaring themselves as care-experienced, 94.9% of leavers from full-time HE courses and 95.2% of leavers from full-time FE courses were in these positive destinations 3-6 months after qualifying.

⁵ Scottish Funding Council: Care-experienced bursaries: <http://www.sfc.ac.uk/access-inclusion/equality-diversity/care-experienced/care-experienced.aspx>

Section 6: Age

59. In 2019-20, 69.5% of Scottish-domiciled full-time first degree entrants to university were aged 16 to 20. A further 13.1% were in the 21 to 24 age group, with 17.4% aged 25 and over.
60. In the college sector, 58.9% of full-time FE enrolments were by 16 to 20 year olds. 26.1% were by those aged 25 or above. On full-time HE courses, 28.2% of enrolments were by those aged 25 or above.
61. At part-time level in the college sector, there is greater still representation of learners aged 25 and above, with 57.8% of enrolments at part-time HE courses and 35.6% of enrolments to part-time FE courses being in that age group.
62. This illustrates that the two sectors are attractive propositions with regard to lifelong learning. Changes to the job market mean that more frequent reskilling or upskilling will be required, and the availability of more flexible part-time courses can help facilitate that.
63. In the university sector, 92% of Scottish-domiciled full-time first degree entrants under 21 years of age continued into year 2 of their course, whilst 88.1% of those aged 21 and over continued into year 2 of their course.

Section 7: Progression from College to University (Articulation)

64. In 2019-20, 10,090 students enrolled at a university on a first degree course in Scotland having previously achieved an HNC or HND qualification at college. Of that cohort, 7,365 students entered university within three years of achieving their college qualification.
65. Of the 7,365 students entering university first degree courses in 2019-20 with an HNC/D qualification in the last three years, 4,280 (58.1%) received full credit for their prior learning. That means that those with an HNC entered university straight into year 2, and those with an HND entered in year 3. This is known as Articulation with Advanced Standing (AS). It is not a mandatory pathway – some students can still choose to start in an earlier year of university despite having the option to Articulate with Advanced Standing.
66. That proportion is an increase on the 2018-19 figure of 55.5% although the number of students articulating with Advanced Standing (AS) fell from 4,470 to 4,290. The overall number of entrants to university first degree courses with HNC/D qualifications fell from 8,060 in 2018-19 to 7,365 in 2019-20. Following the implementation of the CoWA recommendations, we have seen more students from the 20% most deprived areas enrol directly in universities from 2017-18 and this may help explain the reduction in absolute numbers articulating in recent years.
67. Students achieving an HNC/D in the most recent 3 academic years account for 19.7% of all Scottish-domiciled degree entrants to University in 2019-20.
68. Levels of articulation are calculated based on the college qualification and the year of the university programme into which the college student moves. The following tripartite classification of prior learning is used:
- Advanced Standing (AS) - full academic credit for prior study.
 - Advanced Progression (AP) - partial credit for prior study.
 - Progression (P) - no credit for prior learning [or Flexible Progression via the Open University].

Table 4: Scottish domiciled entrants to University in 2019-20 at first degree level obtaining an HNC/D in the last 3 years.

Year	Advanced Standing	Advanced Progression	Progression	All	% Advanced Standing
2014-15	4,020	805	2,710	7,540	53.3%
2015-16	4,220	800	2,425	7,445	56.7%
2016-17	4,250	650	2,735	7,635	55.7%
2017-18	4,655	760	2,985	8,400	55.4%
2018-19	4,470	755	2,835	8,060	55.4%
2019-20	4,280	625	2,460	7,365	58.1%

69. Looking at the characteristics of students articulating with Advanced Standing in 2019-20:

- 23.5% of students articulating with Advanced Standing were from the 20% most deprived areas.
- 18.8% of students articulating with Advanced Standing in 2019-20 had a declared disability.
- 10.7% of students articulating with Advanced Standing in 2019-20 were of non-white ethnicity.
- 1.3% of students articulating with Advanced Standing in 2019-20 were care-experienced.

70. Of the 4,970 Scottish-domiciled full-time first degree entrants from the 20% most deprived areas, 42.5% (2,110) progressed from college.

71. Articulation occurs across most Scottish universities, although to varying degrees. Priorities and entry requirements of different institutions vary and it is not always possible or appropriate to articulate into the later years of a university programme, nor might student preference or curriculum matches allow for this to happen. There are also more informal routes that a student may take, for example, they may achieve an HN-level qualification at college and then some years later return to university on a 'lifelong learning' basis.

72. In Table 4, above, figures for the SFC 'Main Articulation Measure' are provided. In Background Table 14a, the 'Wider Articulation Measure' is also presented. It covers all qualifications at SCQF 7 & 8 transitioning to first

degree (HNC/HND/HE Diploma/Degree and Associate Students⁶), including internal movement⁷ from UHI and SRUC⁸. The Main Articulation Measure (MAM) is a subgroup of the above and is concerned only with HNC and HND qualifications (and excluding internal movement). Sections, tables and charts concerned with this group are marked with the term Main Articulation Measure.

73. Further information on Articulation and the methodology deployed in the redevelopment of the National Articulation Dashboard can be found in this supplement.

⁶ The term 'Associate Student' describes the situation where a college and an HEI share responsibility for a student, with the HEI acting as the awarding body for a course that is delivered partly by a college and partly by a HEI. Classes in the earlier years may be delivered at the college while the later years may be delivered at the HEI. See also http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Statistics/Associated_Students_HESQ.pdf.

⁷ Internal movement is where a student studying and HNC/HND in an integrated college moves on to a degree course within the umbrella university.

⁸ Note: HE-level study is collected by HESA and not FES for UHI and SRUC.

Annex A: Report Content and Coverage

University entrants

74. The Commission on Widening Access covers all higher education but pays specific attention to Scottish domiciled full-time first degree (FTFD) entrants to university and is the main group of university students of focus in this report.
75. There is, of course, a variety of additional activity provided by universities to students out-with this group. Further detail on these groups, where not shown in this report, is available in the background tables online or by request. 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.
76. “Sub-degree” for this purpose includes the following qualifications:
- Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE).
 - Higher National Certificate (HNC).
 - Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)⁹.
 - Higher National Diploma (HND).

College entrants

77. College student activity can be measured in a number of different ways, and a full explanation of these measurements can be found in SFC’s [College Statistics Report for 2019-20](#). 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 HE and FE level.
78. 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.¹⁰ 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.

⁹ Including Diploma Higher Education (DipHE) leading towards obtaining eligibility to register to practice with a health or social care or veterinary statutory regulatory body.

¹⁰ 1 credit equates to 40 notional hours of learning.

University Retention

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

College Success

80. College success is reported in SFC's [College Performance Indicators](#) (PI) publication. The College PIs for 2018-19 were published in January 2020 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 and further breakdowns are provided.
81. Performance indicators for 2019-20 are not available at the time of this publication but will be released in the 2019-20 College PI report, due for release in July 2021. These will be incorporated in the Report on Widening Access 2020-21.

University Qualifiers

82. Figures relating to qualifiers from universities count those students successfully achieving a qualification at the stated level. It should be noted that the qualification achieved can differ from the initial level of study. It can take varying lengths of time for students to achieve a qualification, depending on length of course and individual circumstances. Qualifier figures for 2019-20 are not comparable with prior years due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Articulation

83. In [A Blueprint for Fairness](#) the Commission on Widening Access made recommendations relating to articulation and these pathways are also a focus in outcome agreement work. SFC has a commitment to articulation policy as part of a ten year strategy. The definition of articulation for the purposes of this report includes students articulating from college with advanced standing via a Higher National (HN) route achieved in the three years prior to articulating. This is consistent with the approach taken in compiling SFC's National Articulation Database (NAD).
84. Articulation is a key route for access to education. Working with representatives of the universities and college sectors, SFC has recently rebuilt the National Articulation Database (NAD) on a more advanced statistical platform. The new platform enables more analysis of this data, and those affiliated to universities and colleges can interact with this data by contacting

SFC and registering for the National Articulation Database, on completion of a Data Sharing Agreement.

- 85. Summary statistics are provided in the background tables to this report, and also are available on request from SFC.
- 86. Information on the methodology applied in the building of the National Articulation Database can be found in the accompanying annex to this report.

University Graduate Outcomes

- 87. This section analyses the number and proportion of Scottish-domiciled full-time first degree qualifiers in positive destinations 15 months after graduation, where they responded to the [HESA Graduate Outcomes](#) survey. Those unemployed are treated as being in negative destinations, and those in other or not known destinations (e.g. travelling, caring or retired) are excluded.
- 88. Those in employment include those employed in locations outside of Scotland.

Data Specifics

- 89. All counts of students have been rounded to the nearest five, to protect the confidentiality of individuals, in accordance with SFC policy and 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.
- 90. When a college and HEI share responsibility for students, for example, when a HEI acts as the awarding body for a course that is partly delivered at college, these students appear in both the HEI and college data and are known as Associate Students. There were 1,465 Associate Students in 2019-20 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](#).
- 91. The SIMD files are updated periodically to reflect changing levels of deprivation in areas and the SIMD data 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, SIMD2009 and for AY 2011-12 to 2016-17, SIMD2012 is used. For 2017-18 to 2019-20, SIMD2016 is used.
- 92. The disability categories in [Figure 3 and in all relevant background tables](#) 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.

93. 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 onwards.

94. 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 2019-20](#).

Other protected characteristics

88. For the first time, SFC are publishing information on enrolments to Colleges and Universities split by the following protected characteristics:

- Gender Identity.
- Marital Status (for the College sector only – this information is not held for the University Sector).
- Pregnancy/Maternity (for the College sector only – this information is not held for the University Sector).
- Religion or belief.
- Sexual Orientation.

89. This information can be found in background tables 16 and 17.

Metadata

Metadata Indicator	Description
Publication Title	Report on Widening Access, 2019-20
Description	Includes up to eight academic years of data on Higher Education students, entrants and qualifiers in Scottish Higher Education Institutions and Colleges presented as time series, covering selected periods between 2011-12 to 2019-20 (as appropriate)
Theme	Further and Higher Education, Widening Access
Topic	Student Information
Format	PDF and Excel Tables
Data Source(s)	This publication contains information on students from both colleges and higher education institutions (HEIs) who are attending Higher Education courses in Scotland. These statistics are collected by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) from HEIs and by SFC from further education colleges (colleges).
Date that data are acquired	University Graduate Outcome data: July 2020 College statistics: October 2020 HEI student data: November 2020 College leaver destinations data: November 2020 HEI retention data: February 2021 HEI staffing data: March 2021 Articulation data: April 2021
Release date	30/06/2020
Frequency	Annual
Timeframe of data and timeliness	Trend data are presented over various time periods between 2011-12 and 2019-20, as appropriate.
Continuity of data	<p>This report has separate strands. The first, relates to the key Scottish Government (SG) targets and related measures considering Full-time First Degree students (at university) and all Undergraduate Higher education entrants (at both universities and colleges), the second consider broader analysis of access to further and higher education. These two strands overlap for some measures and, therefore, these areas are presented twice in this report in some cases. This edition also contains a third strand (Section 8) which relates specifically to the evidence base of SFC's Gender Action Plan.</p> <p>The data presented in each of these strands currently differ due to the data specification and focus used. However, changes have been implemented to</p>

	<p>ensure that the data specification of these strands is more aligned from 2017-18 entrants and onwards where both use the new SIMD2016 file¹¹ for socio-economic analysis.</p> <p>Data from Scottish colleges continues to exclude those students who do not complete the first 25% of their course (the point at which they become eligible for funding).</p>
Revisions statement	None
Revisions relevant to this publication	None
Relevance and key uses of these statistics	HESA is the official UK agency for the collection, analysis and dissemination of quantitative information about higher education at higher education institutions. SFC collects data on provision at colleges in Scotland through the Further Education Statistics (FES) data collection.
Accuracy	The procedures followed by HESA to ensure quality of the data are provided on the HESA website. The guidance issued by SFC for the submission of the Scottish college records is on the SFC website.
Comparability	HESA collects student enrolment data from all publicly funded UK HEIs, so comparison with other countries within the UK is possible. The Statistical First Release Higher Education Student Enrolments and Qualifications Obtained at Higher Education Institutions in the UK provides information on this topic although not all tables in this report are directly comparable, due to differences in student populations used.
Accessibility	SFC has a style guideline which sets out options to make all publications as accessible to potential readers as possible. More information relating to accessibility of the website .
Coherence and clarity	This statistical publication is pre-announced and then published on the SFC website. It is accompanied by more detailed tables available in Excel format on the website only which is a freely available resource.
Value type and unity of measurement	Number, percentage, percentage points
Disclosure	In all tables in this release, figures have been rounded to the nearest 5, and 0, 1 and 2 have been rounded to 0. Unknown values are not displayed individually in tables but are included in totals. Figures may not sum to

¹¹ Please note that SIMD figures can differ slightly from other sources, depending on when SIMD lookup files are created. New postcodes periodically come into existence (e.g. when new housing developments are created). As such the number of students to whom we are able to match to a SIMD ranking can vary from other sources, depending on timing.

	totals due to rounding and the inclusion of unknown values. Figures and percentages in the text and charts are calculated from rounded values. This is to mitigate the risk of identification of individuals.
Official Statistics designation	Official Statistics
UK Statistics Authority Assessment	This publication has not been assessed by the UK Statistics Authority. However other Scottish Funding Council publications were assessed as part of the Assessment of compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics undertaken in 2013 by UK Statistics Authority, as part of Assessment Report 255.
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Help email	datarequests@sfc.ac.uk
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