



Scottish Funding Council  
Comhairle Maoinachaidh na h-Alba

## College Leaver Destinations 2018-19

**SFC Statistics**

Issue Date: 10 November 2020

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## College Leaver Destinations 2018-19 – Sector Leavers

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Summary: To inform stakeholders of the publication of the 2018-19 College Leaver Destinations measurements.

FAO: Principals and Directors of Scotland's colleges, students and parents.

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## Section 2: Sector Leavers

### Total qualifiers and confirmed destinations

1. In 2018-19 there were 48,624 student qualifiers from full time courses (a decrease of 2,186 from 2017-18<sup>1</sup>). As a result of data matching exercises and supplementary surveys undertaken by the colleges, confirmed destinations account for 43,290 (89.0%) of these qualifiers which exceeds our 80% target for confirmed destinations.
2. Table 1 provides an overview of the number of student qualifiers and confirmed destinations over the period 2013-14 to 2018-19.

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<sup>1</sup> The [Performance Indicators for academic year 2018-19](#) show FE full-time success decreased by 0.9% from the previous year which, along with a 2.5% reduction in the criteria required for a student to appear in the CLD, accounts for the reduced number of qualifiers reported in this publication.

Table 1: Student qualifiers and confirmed destinations 2013-14 to 2018-19

	CLD 2013-14	CLD 2014-15	CLD 2015-16	CLD 2016-17	CLD 2017-18	CLD 2018-19
<b>Student Qualifiers</b>	52,556	50,198	50,682	50,298	50,810	48,624
<b>Confirmed Destinations</b>	45,144	43,387	44,183	44,716	45,520	43,290
<b>% Confirmed Destinations</b>	85.9%	86.4%	87.2%	88.9%	89.6%	89.0%

- The consistently high proportions of confirmed destinations strengthen the validity of the findings in this report.

### College Courses and Sector Leavers

- The CLD is concerned with successful full-time qualifiers from college courses. Full-time college courses are most commonly confined to a single academic year and are designed to allow students to progress from lower level courses to more advanced courses via learning pathways. Course literature commonly signposts that 'course A' will enable progression to 'course B' and steer the student towards employment in a particular area after completion of a number of progressing courses.
- It is likely therefore that a student who enrolls at college after 4th year at school will have to study for a few years at college before they can expect to achieve a qualification at SCQF level 7 or 8. The journey varies dependant on the point of entry and qualifications achieved prior to enrolment.
- In light of this, the qualifiers are divided into those who will continue studies within college following this successfully completed course and those who have completed the college component of their learner journey: the Sector Leavers.
- Sector Leavers are defined as those who do not stay in the college sector after qualifying and instead have moved into post-college destinations: work, study at university, or negative destinations such as unemployment after qualifying.

Table 2: 2018-19 Full-Time Qualifiers and Sector Leavers

	CLD Qualifiers 2018-19	Confirmed Destinations	Unconfirmed	Continuing College Study	Sector Leavers
<b>SCQF 1-6</b>	30,855	27,698 89.8%	3,157 10.2%	21,044 68.2%	<b>6,654</b> <b>21.6%</b>
<b>SCQF 7+</b>	17,769	15,592 87.7%	2,177 12.3%	4,762 26.8%	<b>10,830</b> <b>60.9%</b>
<b>Total</b>	48,624	43,290 89.0%	5,334 11.0%	25,806 53.1%	<b>17,484</b> <b>36.0%</b>

- Table 2 shows the total qualifiers, confirmed destinations and Sector Leaver numbers by SCQF level split for the 2018-19 CLD. The majority of SCQF 1-6 qualifiers stay on at college: 68.2% compared to 21.6% who left the sector. At SCQF 7+ the inverse is observable: the majority of qualifiers left the sector: 60.9% compared to 26.8% continuing at college.
- Chart A shows changes in the proportion of Sector Leavers from all levels from the confirmed destinations since 2015-16 (the period from which data is of an appropriate quality for analysis of the Sector Leavers). The trend for these leavers has been to more positive destinations over the period 2015-16 to 2017-18. Positive destinations in 2018-19 decreased for Sector Leavers to 87.8%.

Chart A: Sector Leaver Positive versus Negative Destinations

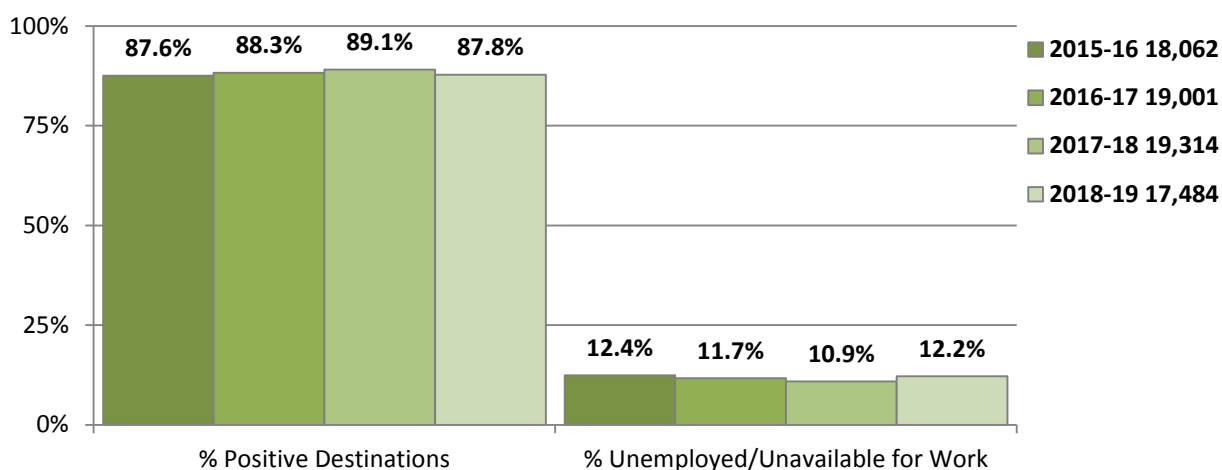


Table 3 Sector Leaver Comparison 2017-18 to 2018-19

External Destination	2017-18 Sector Leavers	% Sector Leavers	2018-19 Sector Leavers	% Sector Leavers		
<b>Qualifiers Leaving College Sector</b>	<b>19,314 / 45,520</b>	<b>42.4%</b>	<b>17,484 / 43,290</b>	<b>40.4%</b>		▼
FE to University	1,267	6.6%	1,162	6.6%		▲
HE to University	6,415	33.2%	<b>5,817</b>	33.3%	<b>87.8%</b>	▼
FE/HE into work	9,519	49.3%	8,373	47.9%		▼
Unemployed	1,305	6.8%	<b>1,298</b>	7.4%	<b>12.2%</b>	▲
Unavailable for work	808	4.2%	834	4.8%		▲
			100%			100%

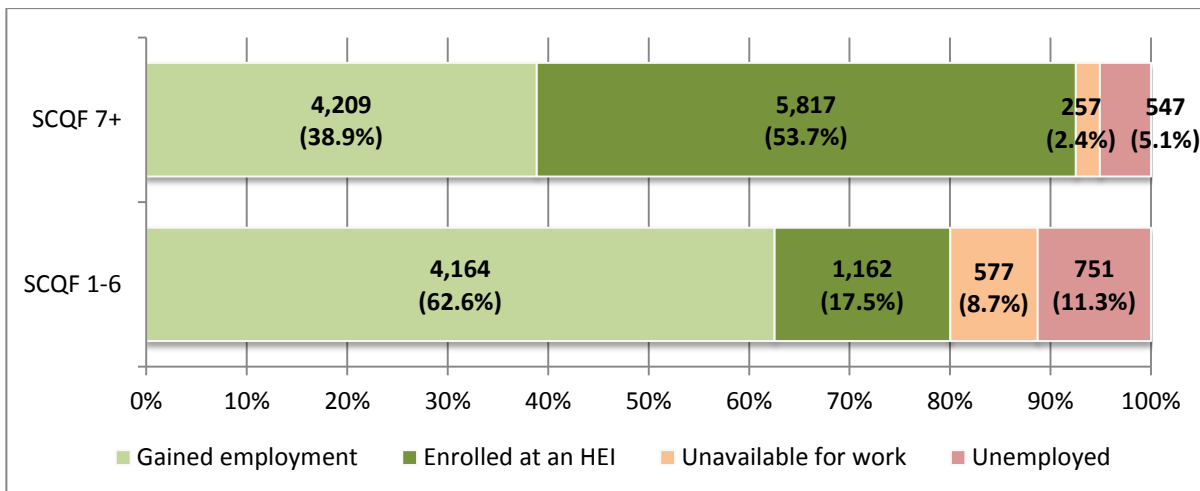
- Table 3 provides destination proportions for students with confirmed destinations who left the sector comparing 2017-18 with 2018-19. This session 17,484 qualifiers left the sector, a decrease of 1,830. For these Sector Leavers, positive destinations account for 87.8% (a decrease of 1.3pp). This decrease

comes from the 1.4 percentage point decrease in FE/HE qualifiers moving to work compared to the previous year, 47.9% from 49.3%. Negative destinations increased from 10.9% in the previous year to 12.2% this year.

### Sector Leaver Analysis

- Chart B provides a more detailed overview of destination proportions for those leaving college from SCQF 1-6 compared to SCQF 7+<sup>2</sup>.

Chart B: Confirmed destination of Sector Leavers by level, 2018-19



- When looking at leavers by level, it is evident that those completing SCQF 1-6 courses show greater unemployment than at SCQF 7+. The proportions for SCQF 1-6 remained mainly the same as last session at 11.3% while SCQF 7+ has an increase from 3.7% to 5.1%. Both groups also saw an increase in those unavailable for work: SCQF 1-6 increasing from 7.2% last session to 8.7% and SCQF 7+ increasing from 2.1% last session to 2.4%.
- Combining the totals of those gaining employment or enrolling at an HEI shows 80.0% of leavers who studied at the SCQF 1-6 level moved to a positive destination, compared to 81.7% last session. For SCQF 7+ level students 92.6% went on to further study or employment, compared to 94.2% last session.
- The main difference between the destinations for those studying at SCQF 1-6

<sup>2</sup> The apparent ease of movement into employment of qualifiers from SCQF 1-6 compared to SCQF 7+ (62.6% versus 38.9%) can be seen as counterintuitive since we would perhaps expect those better qualified to have greater success in finding work. If we remove those students who have gone on to study, we get a clearer indication of which group of qualifiers is more successful moving into work and unemployment. At SCQF 1-6 we have 5,492 non-studying leavers, of which those employed account for 75.8% (4,164) and those unemployed for 13.7% (751). At SCQF 7+ we have 5,013 non-studying leavers, with those employed accounting for 84.0% (4,209) and those unemployed for 10.9% (547). So excluding those continuing studies, we find those at SCQF 7+ show greater movement to work and a less-marked difference between both groups for unemployment.

versus SCQF 7+ students at college is the difference between the proportions of the groups who enrol at an HEI. It is evident that a student completing an SCQF 7+ course *in a college* will be better qualified to progress to an HEI than someone at SCQF 1-6<sup>3</sup>.

15. For employment destinations, SCQF 1-6 students proportionally move into work more than SCQF 7+ leavers, with 62.6% of leavers from SCQF 1-6 level courses gaining employment within 3 to 6 months of leaving college, a decrease from last session's 65.7%. By contrast, the SCQF 7+ qualifiers moving into work has grown slightly for a second year with 38.9% moving into work, a 1.0pp increase from last session.
16. Examining the division of Sector Leavers by gender<sup>4</sup>, we find females account for 57.3%: 3,495 from SCQF 1-6 and 6,519 from SCQF 7+, totalling 10,014 female Sector Leavers. Males account for 43.3% (compared to 42.4% last session): 3,131 from SCQF 1-6 and 4,289 from SCQF 7+, totalling 7,420 male Sector Leavers. Table 4 gives a more detailed breakdown of the post-college destinations for males and females by SCQF level.

Table 4: Sector Leaver Destinations by Gender

		Total	HEI%	Work %	(Positive %: HEI+Work)	Unemployed %	Unavailable %
SCQF 1-6	Male	3,131	9.3%	71.7%	81.0%	13.3%	5.7%
	Female	3,495	24.8%	54.4%	79.2%	9.4%	11.3%
SCQF 7+	Male	4,289	56.7%	36.7%	93.4%	5.2%	1.5%
	Female	6,519	51.7%	40.4%	92.1%	5.0%	3.0%

17. We can see that at SCQF 1-6 males move into positive destinations 1.8pp more than females: 81.0% and 79.2% respectively. For males, the underlying breakdown for these positive destinations is 9.3 % to HEIs/71.7% to work. For females the movement to HEIs is over two and a half times the male proportion (24.8%) with females moving into work at 54.5%. Males have greater levels of unemployment at 13.3% compared to 9.4% for females, while again this session we see more than twice as many females unavailable for work compared to males: 11.3% female to 5.7% male.
18. At SCQF 7+, the distribution of destinations is less marked. Positive destinations are 93.4% for males and 92.1% for females, with breakdowns for males being 56.7% moving to HEIs and 36.7% moving to work, and for females 51.7% to HEI

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<sup>3</sup> See SFC's 2019 [Articulation publication](#) for details on movement from Scottish colleges to Scottish Universities.

<sup>4</sup> Other genders are not included in the analysis as numbers are too small.

and 40.4% to work. Unemployment differs only by 0.2pp: 5.2% male and 5.0% female; and although there is less unavailability for work at SCQF 7+, females still have double the proportions to males: 3.90% to the male 1.5%.

Table 5a: SCQF 1-6 Sector Leaver Destinations by SIMD<sup>5</sup> 2016

		SCQF 1-6					
		Total	HEI%	Work %	(Positive %: HEI+Work)	Unemployed %	Unavailable %
Most Deprived	1	918	16.2%	55.0%	71.2%	16.4%	12.3%
	2	1,001	15.8%	60.1%	75.9%	13.3%	10.8%
	3	840	15.8%	63.5%	79.3%	12.3%	8.5%
	4	749	17.9%	63.8%	81.7%	11.2%	7.1%
	5	708	16.2%	63.6%	79.8%	10.7%	9.5%
	6	592	19.1%	63.3%	82.4%	9.8%	7.8%
Least Deprived	7	561	16.6%	67.9%	84.5%	9.1%	6.4%
	8	471	19.7%	66.5%	86.2%	7.4%	6.4%
	9	481	19.3%	68.0%	87.3%	7.1%	5.6%
	10	307	25.7%	60.3%	86.0%	7.8%	6.2%
		6,628 <sup>6</sup>	17.5%	62.6%	80.1%	11.3%	8.6%

Table 5b: SCQF 7+ Sector Leaver Destinations by SIMD 2016

		SCQF 7+					
		Total	HEI%	Work%	(Positive %: HEI+Work)	Unemployed %	Unavailable %
Most Deprived	1	1,444	51.9%	38.2%	90.0%	6.4%	3.6%
	2	1,371	52.4%	38.0%	90.4%	6.4%	3.1%
	3	1,140	53.5%	39.9%	93.4%	4.8%	1.8%
	4	1,029	53.5%	38.6%	92.1%	5.3%	2.5%
	5	1,032	52.3%	40.3%	92.6%	4.9%	2.4%
	6	1,023	50.8%	43.3%	94.1%	3.9%	2.0%
Least Deprived	7	903	54.0%	38.3%	92.4%	5.5%	2.1%
	8	936	58.3%	36.3%	94.7%	3.7%	1.6%
	9	1,003	55.6%	38.7%	94.3%	4.2%	1.5%
	10	820	63.4%	30.9%	94.3%	3.2%	2.6%
		10,701	54.2%	38.4%	92.6%	5.0%	2.4%

19. Tables 5a and 5b show an interesting interplay between the SCQF bandings in combination with the deprivation deciles when we look at those who are unemployed. The unemployed range runs from 16.4% at SCQF 1-6/decile one to

<sup>5</sup> [Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2016](#): the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is The Scottish Government's official tool to identify areas of multiple deprivation in Scotland.

<sup>6</sup> Note: the figures in this table and Table 5b have a smaller number compared to Chart B as these tables only include those where we had a valid postcode for the student.



3.2% at SCQF 7+/decile 10. What is of interest is the impact of the higher-level qualifications on unemployment prospects. We do not see an overlap of proportions of unemployment over the two tables and instead we see a near-uninterrupted continuum of declining unemployment as we move from the top of Table 5a to the bottom of Table 5b. The SCQF 1-6/decile 10 (lower qualified/least deprived) qualifiers have greater unemployment (7.8%) than the SCQF 7+/decile one (higher qualified/most deprived) qualifiers (6.4%) highlighting the role of education for these more deprived students as an escape from negative destinations. So although those from the least qualified and most deprived group are over five times as likely to be unemployed post-college than those least deprived from higher qualifications, education improves the chances of gaining employment.

20. Examining the positive destinations (combining those moving to work and study), we see those in SCQF 1-6/decile one have 71.2% moving to positive destinations compared to 90.0% for those at the SCQF 7+/decile one (an 18.8pp difference). Although this is clearly a positive observation of the impact of education on opportunity, of greater interest is to again examine the two tables together.
21. For positive destinations, we again observe no overlap in positive destinations in Table 5a and 5b; instead, those from SCQF 7+/decile one enter positive destinations 90.0% of the time, 4.0pp more than those at SCQF 1-6/decile 10 (the least deprived) at 86.0%.
22. For positive destinations at the extremes of Table 5a (SQCF 1-6) we have 71.2% at decile one and 86.0% at decile ten – a 14.8pp differential in positive destinations. By comparison at SCQF 7+ we see the impact of education in reducing the gap over the deprivation levels, with decile one having 90.0% positive destinations compared to 94.3% in decile 10, a differential of 4.3pp.
23. Table 6 below provides destination proportions by subject groupings. It is worth pointing out that some percentages are based on small numbers, which make some percentages less robust than others.
24. Positive destinations for subject groupings at SCQF 1-6 for Sector Leavers range from 62.6% (*Computing and ICT*) to 93.1% (*Science*)<sup>7</sup>. At SCQF 7+, the range is 79.4% (*Land-based industries*) to 97.0% (*Science*). The impact of the higher qualifications on positive destinations is clear, with SCQF 1-6 averaging 80.0% compared to 92.6% at SCQF 7+, highlighting the benefit of staying in college to HE-level as the benefits to destinations are clear across the table.

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<sup>7</sup> Excluding *Special Programmes*.

Table 6: Sector Leavers by Subject Area

	SCQF 1-6						SCQF 7+					
	Total	HEI%	Work %	(Positive %: HEI+Work)	Unemployed %	Unavailable %	Total	HEI %	Work %	(Positive %: HEI+Work)	Unemployed %	Unavailable %
Art and design Arts and Crafts	212	40.1%	41.5%	81.6%	10.4%	8.0%	708	61.3%	30.8%	92.1%	4.9%	3.0%
Business, management and administration	194	3.6%	71.6%	75.3%	14.9%	9.8%	1,861	64.2%	29.8%	94.0%	3.4%	2.5%
Care	1,006	46.1%	39.0%	85.1%	6.4%	8.5%	2,227	49.8%	43.2%	93.1%	4.6%	2.3%
Computing and ICT	115	4.3%	58.3%	62.6%	27.0%	10.4%	880	66.1%	25.3%	91.5%	6.5%	2.0%
Construction	659	0.6%	78.3%	78.9%	15.9%	5.2%	333	65.2%	29.1%	94.3%	4.2%	1.5%
Education and training	98	14.3%	65.3%	79.6%	10.2%	10.2%	117	24.8%	65.8%	90.6%	0.9%	8.5%
Engineering	1,146	1.9%	87.3%	89.3%	8.9%	1.8%	737	40.7%	52.0%	92.7%	6.6%	0.7%
Hairdressing, beauty and complementary therapies	768	1.3%	76.8%	78.1%	10.7%	11.2%	449	4.7%	78.8%	83.5%	9.8%	6.7%
Hospitality and Tourism	446	0.9%	75.8%	76.7%	15.2%	8.1%	409	40.1%	48.9%	89.0%	7.6%	3.4%
Land-based industries	248	0.8%	77.8%	78.6%	12.9%	8.5%	34	2.9%	76.5%	79.4%	17.6% <sup>8</sup>	2.9%
Languages and ESOL	312	3.2%	60.3%	63.5%	13.1%	23.4%	-	-	-	-	-	-
Media	69	10.1%	56.5%	66.7%	23.2%	10.1%	597	43.7%	45.2%	88.9%	8.2%	2.8%
Nautical studies	52	0.0%	96.2%	96.2%	0.0%	3.8%	182	0.0%	91.2%	91.2%	8.8%	0.0%
Performing arts	49	20.4%	67.3%	87.8%	12.2%	0.0%	521	35.7%	54.5%	90.2%	6.9%	2.9%
Science	332	70.2%	22.9%	93.1%	1.5%	5.4%	428	79.9%	17.1%	97.0%	2.1%	0.9%
Social subjects	414	65.0%	20.8%	85.7%	7.2%	7.0%	688	87.6%	8.9%	96.5%	2.0%	1.5%
Special Programmes	269	0.0%	43.1%	43.1%	22.3%	34.6%	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sport and leisure	265	6.0%	70.9%	77.0%	18.1%	4.9%	659	56.4%	39.3%	95.8%	3.0%	1.2%
All	6,654	17.5%	62.6%	80.0%	11.3%	8.7%	10,830	53.7%	38.9%	92.6%	5.1%	2.4%

<sup>8</sup> Note: small numbers can produce misleadingly large percentages.

25. Movement of Sector Leavers to an HEI from SCQF 1-6 is less than a third of that found at SCQF 7+. One of the more striking examples is *Engineering* where at SCQF 1-6, only 1.9% of qualifiers go into HEI compared to 40.7% at SCQF 7+. Both SCQF grouping for *Engineering* do have high positive destinations in general at 89.3% and 92.7%, but almost nine out of 10 qualifiers at the lower levels moves into work, despite only half of them being on Modern Apprenticeships who are in work during and after their course. The majority qualified from SCQF 5, but for all the lower levels employment was clearly the preferred option.
26. The same pattern exists for *Construction* – although unemployment is higher at 15.9% of SCQF 1-6. Of those moving into positive destination, again at SCQF 1-6 (from SCQF 5 mainly) the movement into work is the preferred path 78.3% to 0.6% moving to HEI. *Care*, by contrast has one of the highest levels of HEI entry at 46.1%.
27. At SCQF 1-6 in *Computing and ICT* we again see the propensity of SCQF 1-6 to move into employment (58.3% compared to 25.3% at SCQF 7+). This lower-qualified group also shows the highest levels of unemployment at 27.0%, where at SCQF 7+ the proportion is 6.5% for the subject. Examining the underlying data this unemployment affects the north east and west of Scotland more than other areas.
28. Qualifiers from SCQF 1-6 *Special Programmes*, which are generally designed for students with additional support needs for learning, saw the lowest levels of positive destinations at 43.1% (down from 51.1%) and 56.9% negative destinations. The year-on-year decline for this group does need further investigation.

### Course relationship to work destinations

29. Of those Sector Leavers who moved into work (8,373 qualifiers), 6,558 gave information on the relationship between their studies and their work. This was 78.3% of this group (the same proportion as last session). Table 7 shows two-thirds of Sector Leavers who answered this question found work related to their course of study.

Table 7: Course Relationship to work

Overall Cohort:		
Work related to course	4,344	66.2%
Work not related to course	2,214	33.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,558</b>	

30. Table 8 shows work relationship to course by subject groupings. Figures were far better this year in establishing work to study relationships, but we still find some strange anomalies in this data. The proportions where the relationship is

unknown vary from 1.8% to 49.3% unknown in comparison to last session's 3.2% to 54.3%. But again it is unlikely that only 32.0% of those studying engineering are obtaining jobs related to their studies with current STEM priorities. Examining those with the highest relationship between course and work, there continues to be a correlation between those subjects which are industry driven and those which include work placements that is worthy of observation.

31. The shaded column shows the values for work that is related to study if we exclude the unknowns, highlighting subject areas which need to be more diligent in providing this information to improve accuracy.

Table 8: Course Relationship to Work by Subject Grouping

	Totals	Work related to course (% of known only)		Work related to course		Work not related to course		Work relationship unknown	
Art and design Arts and Crafts	306	125	50.0%	125	40.8%	125	40.8%	56	18.3%
Business, management and administration	694	413	67.0%	413	59.5%	203	29.3%	78	11.2%
Care	1,355	1018	82.7%	1018	75.1%	213	15.7%	124	9.2%
Computing and ICT	290	130	52.6%	130	44.8%	117	40.3%	43	14.8%
Construction	613	217	60.6%	217	35.4%	141	23.0%	255	41.6%
Education and training	141	97	75.2%	97	68.8%	32	22.7%	12	8.5%
Engineering	1,384	443	70.0%	443	32.0%	190	13.7%	751	54.3%
Hairdressing, beauty and complementary therapies	944	596	72.2%	596	63.1%	230	24.4%	118	12.5%
Hospitality and Tourism	538	293	65.5%	293	54.5%	154	28.6%	91	16.9%
Land-based industries	219	118	67.4%	118	53.9%	57	26.0%	44	20.1%
Languages and ESOL	188	72	39.6%	72	38.3%	110	58.5%	6	3.2%
Media	309	129	45.7%	129	41.7%	153	49.5%	27	8.7%
Nautical studies	216	192	97.5%	192	88.9%	5	2.3%	19	8.8%
Performing arts	317	132	44.3%	132	41.6%	166	52.4%	19	6.0%
Science	149	77	59.2%	77	51.7%	53	35.6%	19	12.8%
Social subjects	147	36	29.8%	36	24.5%	85	57.8%	26	17.7%
Special Programmes	116	67	77.0%	67	57.8%	20	17.2%	29	25.0%
Sport and leisure	447	189	54.2%	189	42.3%	160	35.8%	98	21.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,373</b>	<b>4,344</b>	<b>66.2%</b>	<b>4,344</b>	<b>51.9%</b>	<b>2,214</b>	<b>26.4%</b>	<b>1,815</b>	<b>21.7%</b>