



Scottish Funding Council  
Comhairle Maoinachaidh na h-Alba



# SFC STATISTICS

College Performance Indicators 2018-19  
Issue Date: 28 January 2020  
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## College Performance Indicators 2018-19

Issue date:	28 January 2020
Reference:	SFC/ST/02/2020
Summary:	Overview of college performance indicators from 2008-09 to 2018-19.
FAO:	Principals and Chairs of Scotland's colleges, students, parents, guardians and the general public
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The UK Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

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## Executive Summary

1. This report is an overview of college performance indicators from 2008-09 to 2018-19 and provides a broad coverage of college teaching activity and presents an analysis of student outcomes for those students enrolled on courses leading to recognised qualifications.
2. The sector exceeded its student number target for 2018-19 and in doing so delivered 118,242 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) SFC funded student places which is 1,973 FTE more than the 116,269 FTE target.
3. The key points from this report are:

The results for the 47,114 full-time **further education** (FE) students enrolled on recognised qualifications are as follows:

- FE full-time enrolments on recognised qualifications reduced by 4.6 percentage points (PP) (2,252) between 2017-18 and 2018-19.
- 65.2% of FE full-time students successfully completed their course which is 0.9 PP lower than 2017-18.
- A further 10.1% completed their course in 2018-19. Although these students did not achieve the qualification they were aiming for by the end of the academic year, some may gain their award at a later time.
- The remaining 24.7% of full-time FE students withdrew from their course and are accounted for by 8.7% of students withdrawing before the funding qualifying date (colleges are not funded for these students) and a further 16.0% between this point and the end of the course.
- In 2018-19, of the 26 colleges delivering full-time FE courses, nine had improved success rates in comparison to the previous year and 17 saw a decline in the proportion successfully completing their course.
- As a result of increases in student numbers and improving success rates 2,754 additional full-time FE students successfully completed their course in 2018-19 in comparison to 2008-09.
- For large colleges<sup>1</sup> success rates ranged from 56.0% to 71.7% in 2018-19 and for small colleges the success rates ranged from 62.7% up to 75.0%.
- SFC's national aspiration for full-time FE success is that by AY 2019-20 the percentage of enrolled (full-time) students successfully achieving a recognised qualification should increase to 73.2%. In 2018-19 only one small college exceeded the 2019-20 national aspiration of 73.2% success. The sector as a whole is currently sitting 8.0 PP below this target.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this publication the college categorisation of 'large' and 'small' is determined by the volume of credits delivered in the academic year. Colleges delivering above 25,000 credits are designated as 'large' and those below 'small'. For individual college categorisation refer to Annex A.



The results for the 32,860 full-time **higher education** (HE) students enrolled on recognised qualifications are as follows:

- The number of HE full-time student enrolments on recognised qualifications declined in 2018-19 by 2.8 PP (949) from the previous year.
- 69.8% of HE full-time students successfully completed their course which is a 1.5 PP reduction on the previous year.
- A further 11.7% completed their course in 2018-19, these students did not achieve the qualification they were aiming for by the end of the academic year but some may gain their award at a later time.
- The remaining 18.5% of full-time HE students are accounted for by 5.2% of students withdrawing before the funding qualifying date (colleges are not funded for these students) and a further 13.3% between this point and the end of the course.
- Of the 15 colleges delivering full-time HE courses in 2018-19 five had improved pass rates in comparison to the previous year and ten saw a decline in the proportion successfully completing their course.
- As a result of increases in student numbers and improving success rates 5,511 additional full-time HE students successfully completed their course in 2018-19, in comparison to 2008-09.
- Full-time HE success rates ranged from 64.9% to 75.0% in 2018-19.
- SFC's national aspiration for full-time HE success is that by AY 2019-20 the percentage of enrolled (full-time) students successfully achieving a recognised qualification should increase to 74.4%. In 2018-19 only one college exceeded the 2019-20 national aspiration of 74.4% success. The sector as a whole is currently sitting 4.6 PP below this target.

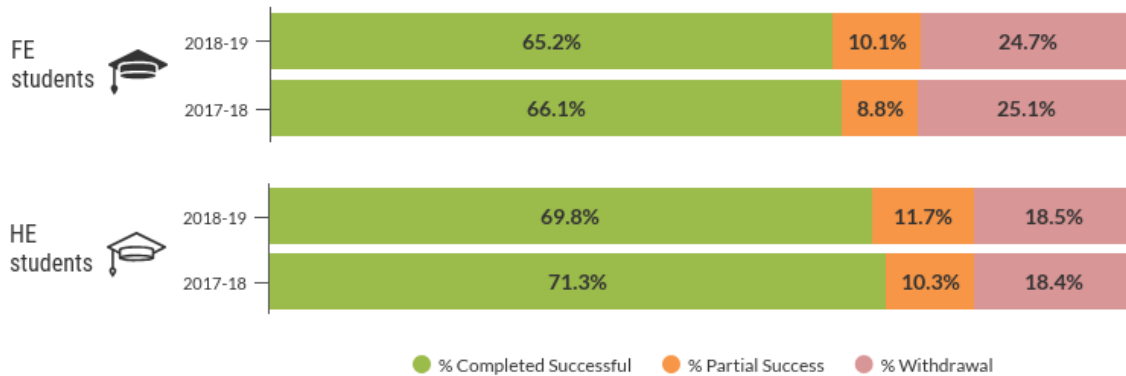
**Courses over 160 hours:**

- Success rates for FE full and part-time subject areas range from 52.6% for social subjects to 81.7% for nautical courses.
- For HE full and part-time courses success rates range from 64.5% for social subjects to 83.7% for nautical courses.
- The withdrawal rates for male and female students on HE programmes are very similar at around 17%. However, for FE programmes females are around 3 PP more likely to withdraw from their programme of study than male students.
- Male success rates are similar on both FE (69.4%) and HE (69.6%) programmes whereas for females the success rate is 3.7 PP lower than males on FE programmes and 3.4 PP higher than males on HE programmes.
- Care-experienced students are less likely to successfully complete and more likely to withdraw when compared to the other reported key interest groups, the success rate for care-experienced students increased by 3.7 PP between 2017-18 and 2018-19.

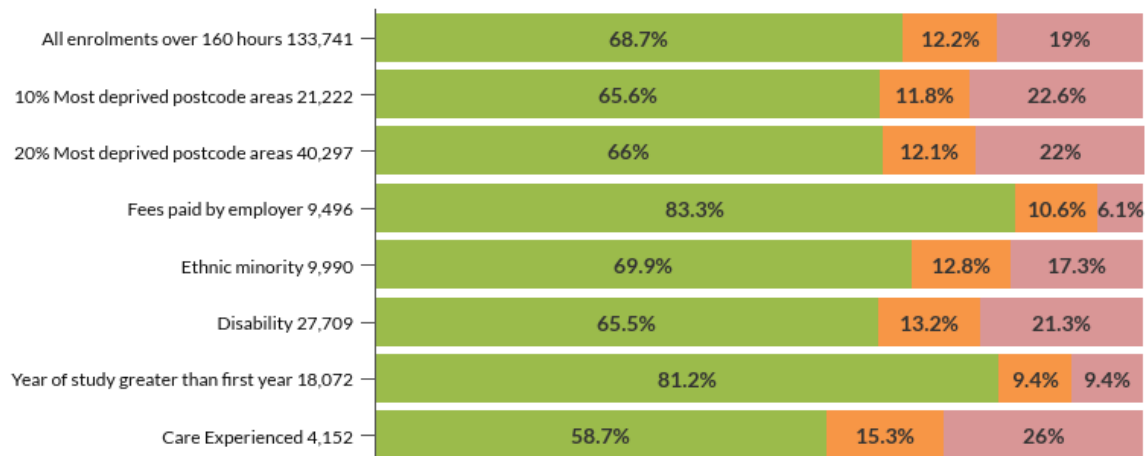
- All other reported key interest group success rates reduced by between 0.3 PP and 1.5 PP in 2018-19.
4. Links to individual College PIs and a more detailed explanation on and examples of how we calculate PIs can be found in separate Technical Appendices to this document.

## Performance Indicators 2018-19

### Outcomes on recognised qualifications (full-time)



### Outcomes by key group on courses lasting 160 hours or more



### Success and Gender





## Introduction

5. SFC has published PIs on college teaching activity for the past 17 years although PIs are not available on a consistent basis for all years. Links to previous publications going back to 2008-09 are provided and can be found on our website at: [College Performance Indicators](#).
6. The purpose of the indicators is to inform stakeholders about the performance of the sector. The reported PIs allow for the evaluation of performance of students by level of course and hours of study both over time and against other similar colleges. The PIs can be used, for example, to monitor and compare performance of groups of specific interest, such as disabled and care-experienced students, thereby supporting a wider improvement agenda within the sector. HE course qualifications are more likely to be standard across subjects and awards and results can be used more readily than FE courses for sector benchmarking.
7. Performance Indicators are available for colleges (further, tertiary, sixth-form) in other United Kingdom countries but due to the different cohort characteristics and performance indicator definitions these are not directly comparable with the Scottish college sector PIs.
8. The latest information available within the report is for academic year 2018-19. For full-time performance indicators results are shown over the period 2008-09 to 2018-19. For part-time courses results are shown from 2016-17 although earlier years are available from our website.
9. The Performance Indicators report provides a broad coverage of activity on recognised qualifications and includes, in addition to SFC funded student activity, Skills Development Scotland (SDS) funded Foundation Apprenticeship courses and college based university 'Associate' status students.
10. The Scottish college landscape has fundamentally changed since 2010 with the phased creation of larger colleges operating on a regional basis through merger. This has led to a reduction in the number of colleges from 45 in August 2010 to the 27<sup>2</sup> colleges today.
11. Students have a wide variety of personal motivations for studying at college and study across an extensive range of programmes, from literacy and numeracy

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<sup>2</sup> There are 27 colleges in Scotland and all 27 colleges report FE level student activity to the SFC. One college, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig (SMO), does not deliver any full-time FE programmes. Sixteen out of the 27 colleges also report their HE level student activity to the SFC and with the other eleven (University of Highlands and Islands (UHI) partner colleges and Scotland's Rural College (SRUC)) reporting their HE level student activity to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) therefore, their HE level activity performance is not accounted for in this publication. For individual college and regional categorisation refer to Annex A.

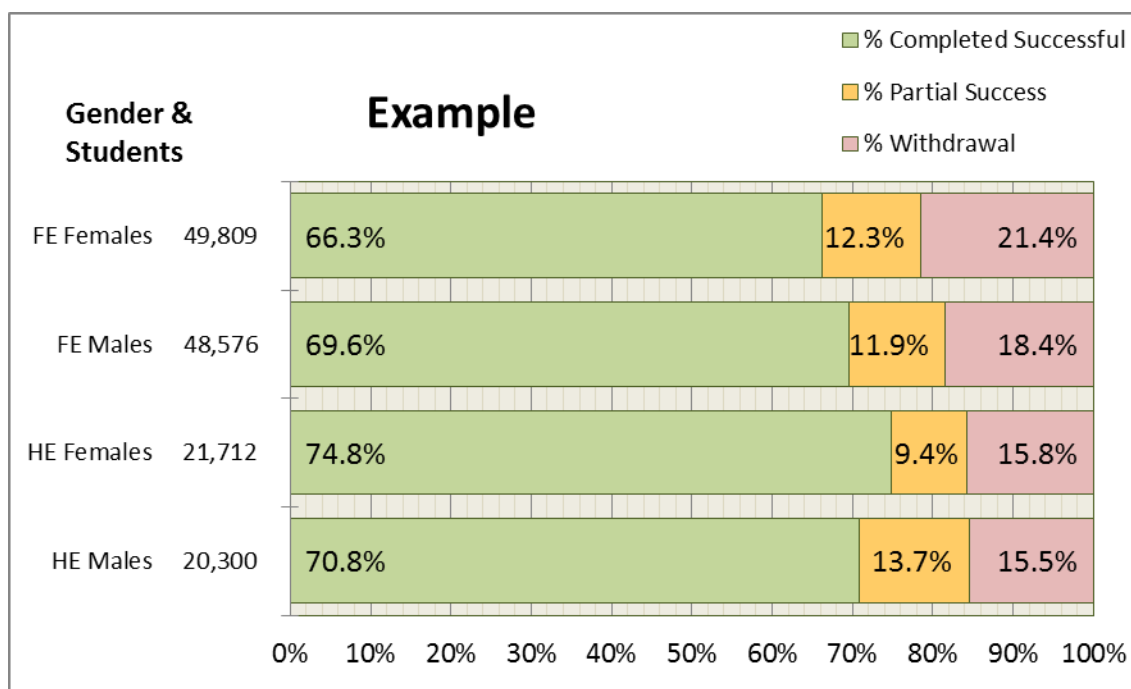
courses to engineering and agriculture, with awards ranging from courses not providing a recognised qualification to higher national certificates and diplomas or degrees in partnerships with universities.

12. Our method of presentation and breakdown of PIs by subject groups, duration of study, age groups and gender gives a comprehensive view of sector-wide provision and performance, enabling an informed comparison over time.
13. The PIs are based on student records submitted via the Further Education Statistics (FES) system. This is an automated data capture and record system which encompasses built-in iterative quality checks to ensure the data is correct and credible. Only when the data has passed will SFC permit the data to be used for PI purposes. In addition to our checks, every college Principal must also sign off the data as a true and accurate record for their college.
14. As an additional reassurance of consistency and quality, SFC contracts with Education Scotland (ES) to provide external assurance on quality and to support improvement in the college sector. ES publishes colleges' annual evaluative reports and enhancement plans together with a joint SFC/ES endorsement statement and these are available on [Education Scotland's website](#) under Further Education sector.
15. Our analytical team also conducts data quality visits to ensure the student records submitted by colleges are accurate and comparable across the sector.
16. Each of the charts in this publication contains three percentage figures: the first describes the percentage of students who successfully completed the course year; the second is the percentage that completed the course year irrespective of their result; and the third is the percentage of students that withdrew from the course. These values have been calculated as a percentage of all enrolments.
17. For the purpose of improving data quality, this publication now excludes, in the majority of charts presented, students with fewer than 160 hours of study which ensures that the PIs are focused less on short duration courses and more on longer, more vocational courses which are more likely to be formally assessed and accredited.
18. When viewing individual college level PI data, where the number of enrolments is less than 50 in a category the data has been suppressed and is not shown. This avoids spurious statistical accuracy in the published success rates and reduces the risk of incorrect conclusions being drawn from success rates based on small numbers.
19. Links to individual College PIs and a more detailed explanation on and examples of how we calculate PIs can be found in a separate Technical Appendix to this publication.

20. It is our aim to strive for continuing improvement and enhanced usability of this document. We welcome feedback from readers on matters of content and presentation.

## How our performance indicators are presented

21. Our college PIs, as exemplified below shows success, partial success and withdrawal proportions stacked and labelled to show the full cohort<sup>3</sup>.



22. The bar to the left (green) shows the percentage of students who have completed their course year successfully. This includes students who have progressed to a later year for multi-year courses.
23. Colleges must choose one of 13 student outcome options from our FES 2 guidance notes [Code List J](#) that best describes the student result. The following student outcomes for nationally recognised programmes are considered to have completed successfully:
- Completed programme / course, student assessed and successful.
  - Student has progressed to next year and has achieved 70% of the credits undertaken.
  - Student has achieved 70% of the credits undertaken but has chosen not to progress onto the next year.
  - Student completed first year of a Higher National Diploma (HND) but has chosen to leave with a Higher National Certificate (HNC).

<sup>3</sup> Chart proportions in this publication are rounded to one decimal place so total percentage may not always add up to 100%.

- Student is on an interim year of a multi-year VQ programme and is on track and is still participating in the college programme.
24. The middle bar (orange) shows the percentage of students who have completed their course year but are not considered to be fully successful. For example, the student may have failed to achieve one or more units required for the course. The following two student outcomes are considered to have completed (with partial success):
    - Completed programme / course, student assessed but not successful.
    - Student has progressed to next year but did not gain 70% of the credits undertaken.
  25. The combination of these two bars shows the total percentage to have completed the course. For example, the FE Females bars shows that 66.3% of students completed successfully and a further 12.3% irrespective of the result. Therefore 78.6% completed the course in total.
  26. The bar to the right (pink) represents those students who withdrew from their course after enrolment and for FE Females this shows that 21.4% of students withdrew from their course during the academic year.
  27. The number of students enrolled on these courses is shown for each academic year to the left of the bar chart.
  28. The Technical Annex B shows the breakdown of enrolments for nationally recognised programmes for further education and higher education full and part-time courses across each of the 13 possible student outcomes.

## Key Performance Indicators charts

### Outcomes for FE student enrolments on recognised qualifications

29. Figure 1 provides an overview of enrolments and success rates on full-time<sup>4</sup> recognised FE programmes from 2008-09 to 2018-19. The figures allow comparisons over a longer timeframe to reduce the risk of basing an assessment of performance on a snapshot of a single year when performance may vary over time.
30. In recent years the trend is for the number of full-time FE enrolments to show an overall decline. Over a five year period 2014-15 to 2018-19 the number of student enrolments has reduced by 3,810<sup>5</sup>.
31. This decline in full-time FE enrolments has been more marked over the past year where the number of enrolments between 2017-18 and 2018-19, reduced by 4.6 PP (2,252). This is likely the result of the reprioritisation of college activity to be more responsive to the need of learners and the economy, announced by Scottish Government in October 2017. This changed the focus to move away from full-time provision for 16-24s to provide more opportunities for part-time learners, learners over the age of 24 and those returning to learning for upskilling and re-skilling. The population of young people in Scotland has also been declining which in part could be contributing to the reduction in numbers enrolled at college.
32. In 2018-19, 65.2% of students on full-time programmes completed successfully whilst a further 10.1% completed irrespective of their final result. In total 75.3% of students completed their course. This is an increase of 0.4 PP of students completing their course from the previous year.
33. Focusing on the completed successful rate, Figure 1 shows that in 2008-09, 58.8% of students completed successfully. In 2017-18 the percentage of successfully completing students was the highest success rate over a 10 year period 2008-09 to 2017-18 at 66.1% however, the success rate in 2018-19 reduced by 0.9 PP to 65.2%.
34. Over the 11 years from 2008-09 this represents a 6.4 PP increase in the success rate and represents an extra 2,754 students who have successfully completed in 2018-19 compared to 27,972 in 2008-09, an increase of 9.8%.

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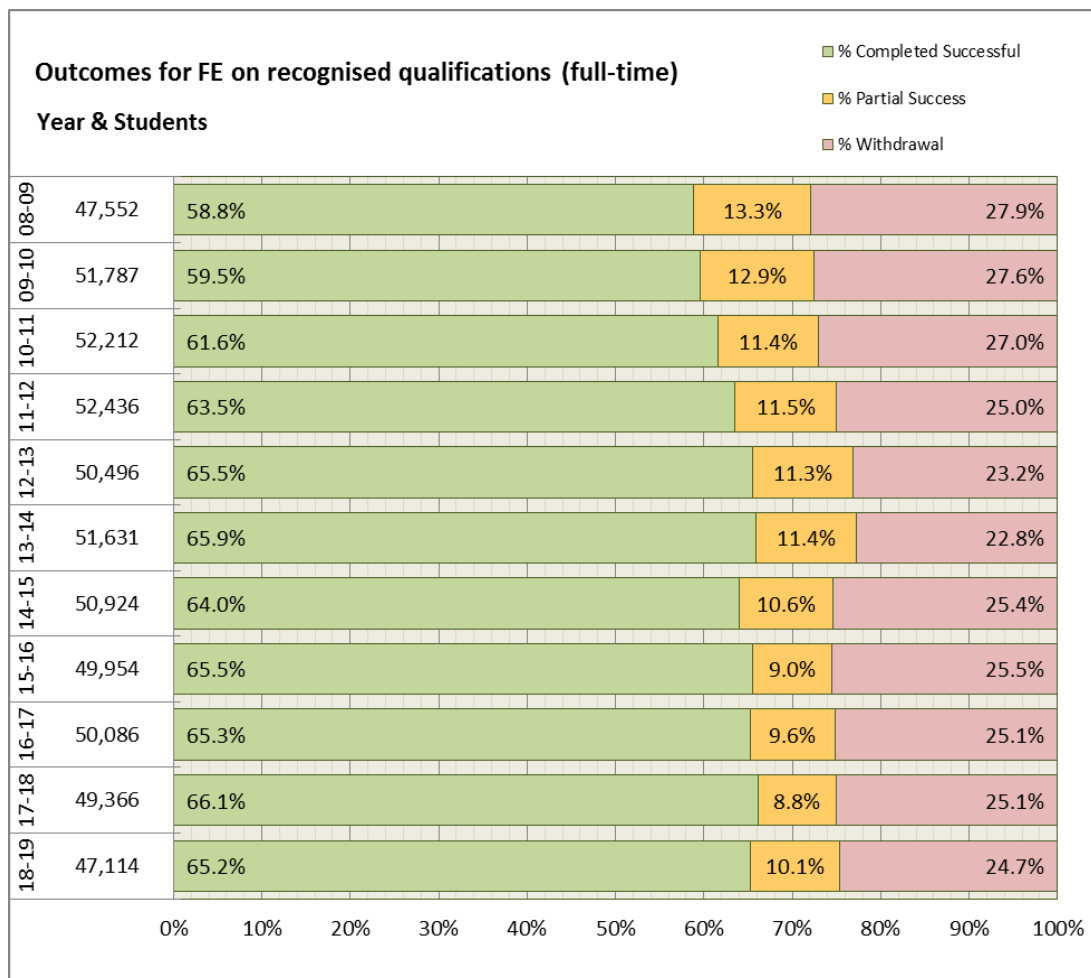
<sup>4</sup> FE full-time programmes of study contain greater than or equal to 600 nominal learning hours.

<sup>5</sup> The numbers in the College Statistics 2018-19 publication differ from the enrolment figures above because of methodology and coverage for example, the College Performance Indicators include students not meeting the funding qualifying date but these are excluded from the College Statistics publication.



35. SFC’s national aspiration for full-time FE success is that by AY 2019-20 the percentage of enrolled (full-time) students successfully achieving a recognised qualification on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework<sup>6</sup> (SCQF) should increase to 73.2%. In 2018-19 only one small college from 26 exceeded the 2019-20 national aspiration of 73.2% success and on comparison the sector is currently sitting 8.0 PP below this target. It will be extremely challenging, based on the current sector success rate trend, to realise this target within the next academic year.
36. FE full-time success rates for large colleges ranged from 56.0% to 71.7% in 2018-19 and for small colleges the success rates ranged from 62.7% up to 75.0%. We provide on our [website](#), alongside the publication, a separate Excel PI Tool. This tool provides an overview of individual college data together with multi-college regional and national data.

Figure 1: Outcomes for FE student enrolments on full-time recognised qualifications



<sup>6</sup> The [Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework](#) is the national credit transfer system for all levels of qualifications in Scotland.

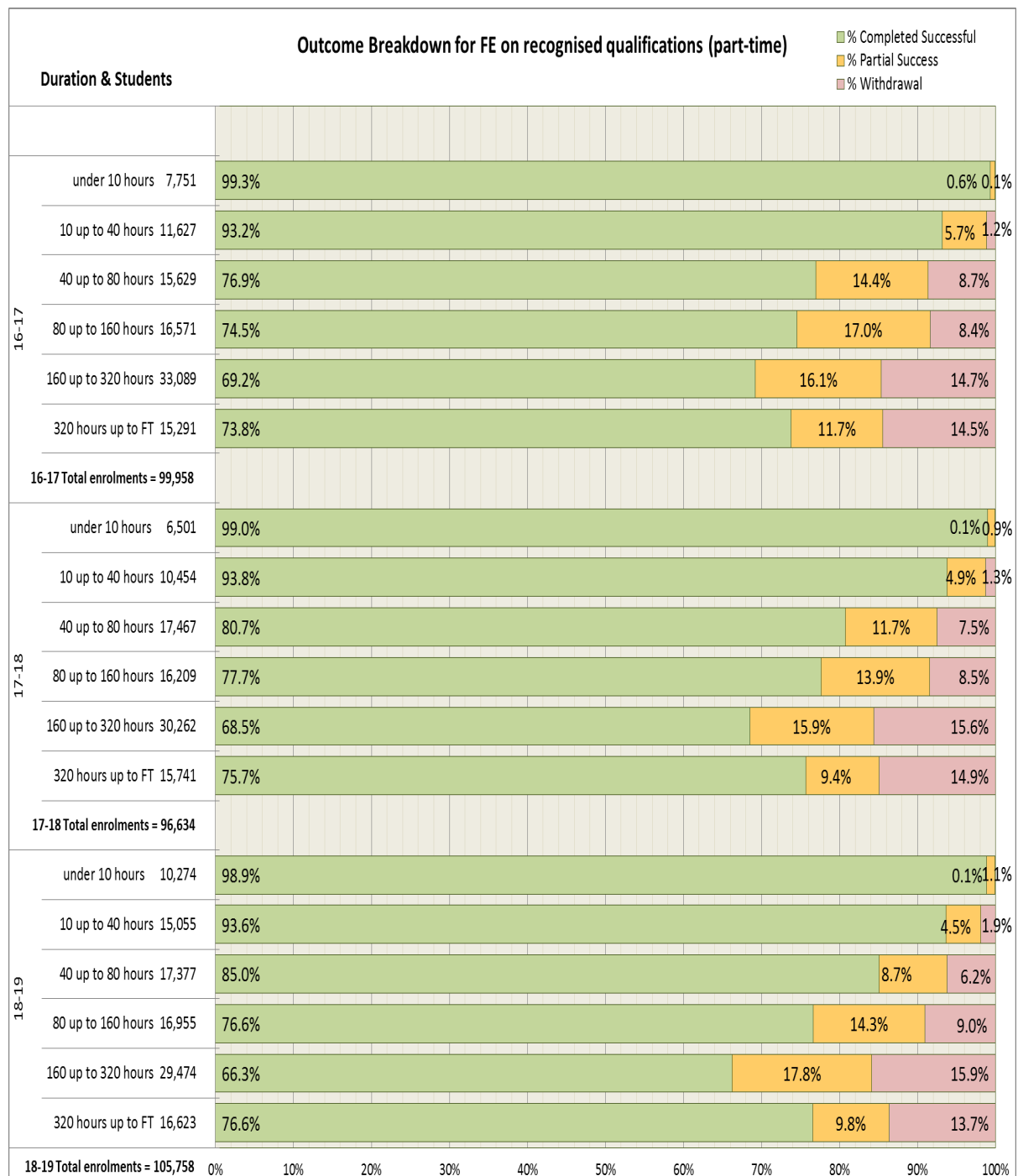
37. A decrease in the FE full-time success rate from 2017-18 to 2018-19 is not consistent across all colleges. Seventeen colleges show a decrease in success rates of between 0.5 PP and 13.3 PP, whilst nine colleges show an improvement in success rate of between 1.6 PP and 22.9 PP. Note: large percentage point deviation should be treated with caution as small student populations often produce large percentage point changes.
38. Figure 1 also shows that the withdrawal rate has reduced over the period from 27.9% to 24.7% (a 3.2 PP improvement). However, over the last four years this figure has remained at a similar level and shows that around a quarter of students drop out of their college course.
39. A further breakdown on the 24.7% of student withdrawals shows 8.7% of students withdrawing before the funding qualifying date (colleges are not funded for these students) and a further 16.0% between this point and the end of the course.
40. Colleges often report that students withdraw from their course early to take up employment opportunities as they arise. These opportunities are more likely to occur with a buoyant job market and the employment level in Scotland in 2019 remained close to record high levels. These conditions may see higher withdrawal rates leading to a reduction in the percentage of students successfully completing their studies. The resilience observed in the labour market during the past four years was also evident in the first half of 2019 and even though unemployment increased over the quarter May-July 2019 to 4%<sup>7</sup>, it has fallen over the past year and remains low by historical standards.
41. Figure 2 below presents the part-time FE course breakdown by hour category. This shows that the total number of FE students on part-time programmes of study has increased in 2018-19 from the previous year by 9.4 PP (9,124). This is a reversal of the decreasing trend in part-time student numbers observed in more recent years. This is a likely consequence of the reprioritisation of college activity after October 2017 (described above), where the focus moved away from full-time provision to provide more opportunities for part-time learners.
42. For '160 up to 320 hours' FE part-time category courses, the success rate is lower than all other 'hours' category courses across the three years (2016-17 to 2018-19). The success rate within this hour's category is on a declining trend dropping almost 3 PP across the three years and the withdrawal rate is consistently the highest of any FE part-time hour's category. SFC intends to investigate this group in more detail to determine what factors may be contributing towards the lower success and higher withdrawal rates.

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<sup>7</sup> [State of the economy: September 2019 - gov.scot/p5](https://gov.scot/p5)

43. The results do show that students enrolled on shorter programmes are more likely to complete their studies irrespective of the result. Intuitively this would be in line with our expectations, for example a student attending a course lasting for two hours over one study visit offers less opportunity for withdrawing before the end date than a course requiring attendance three afternoons per week over 36 weeks.

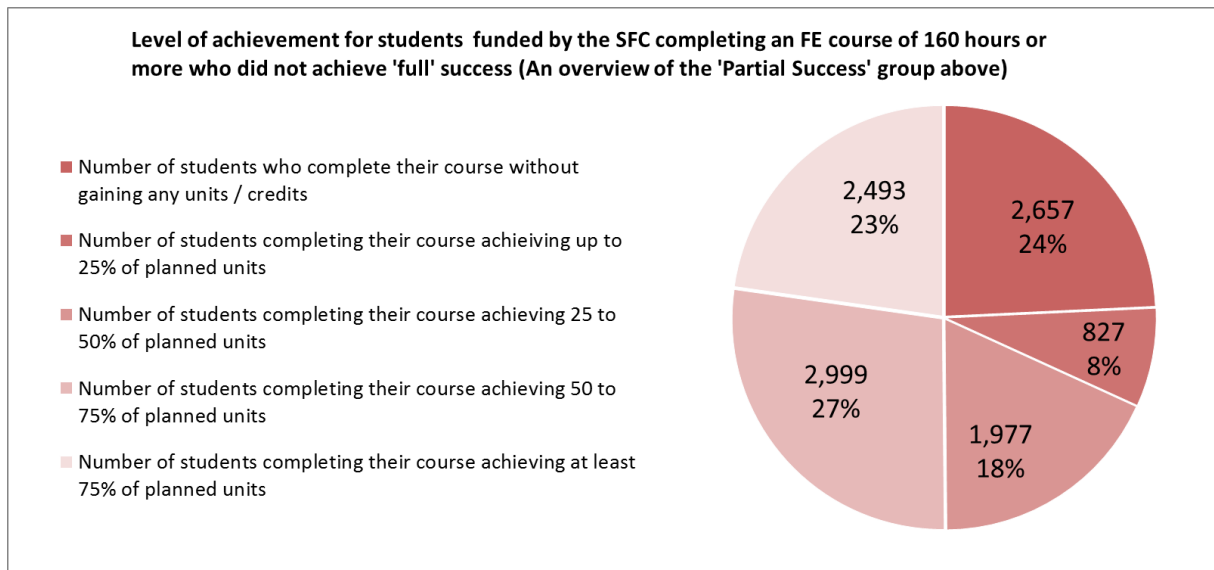
Figure 2: Outcomes for FE student enrolments on part-time recognised qualifications



### Students completing their FE course who did not achieve “full” success

44. Figure 3 below provides more detailed information for the students enrolled on FE programmes in 2018-19 who completed without “full” success (this includes both full-time FE and part-time students enrolled on programmes lasting for at least 160 hours).

Figure 3: Level of achievement for students completing an FE course of 160 hours or more who did not achieve ‘full’ success



45. There are 10,953 students enrolled on FE programmes in 2018-19 who completed without “full” success. This is a subset of part-time numbers from Figure 1 (full-time) and Figure 2 (part-time) and excludes students below 160 hours and those who were not funded by SFC that are included in the earlier charts. It shows that 23% (2,493) of these students gained at least 75% of the units on their programme and 50% (5,492) of those students who completed their course year but were not fully successful managed to pass over 50% of the units attempted. At the other end of the scale 24% (2,657) of these students failed to achieve any of the units for which they enrolled.

46. The percentage of students who failed to achieve any units for which they enrolled in 2018-19 increased by 4 PP from the 20% in session 2017-18.

47. Our previous investigations on partial success (zero unit achievement), covering both FE and HE students, revealed a number of underlying factors that colleges should pay particular attention to and that were relevant to the increase in partial success and more specifically for students who completed their course without gaining any units. These being:

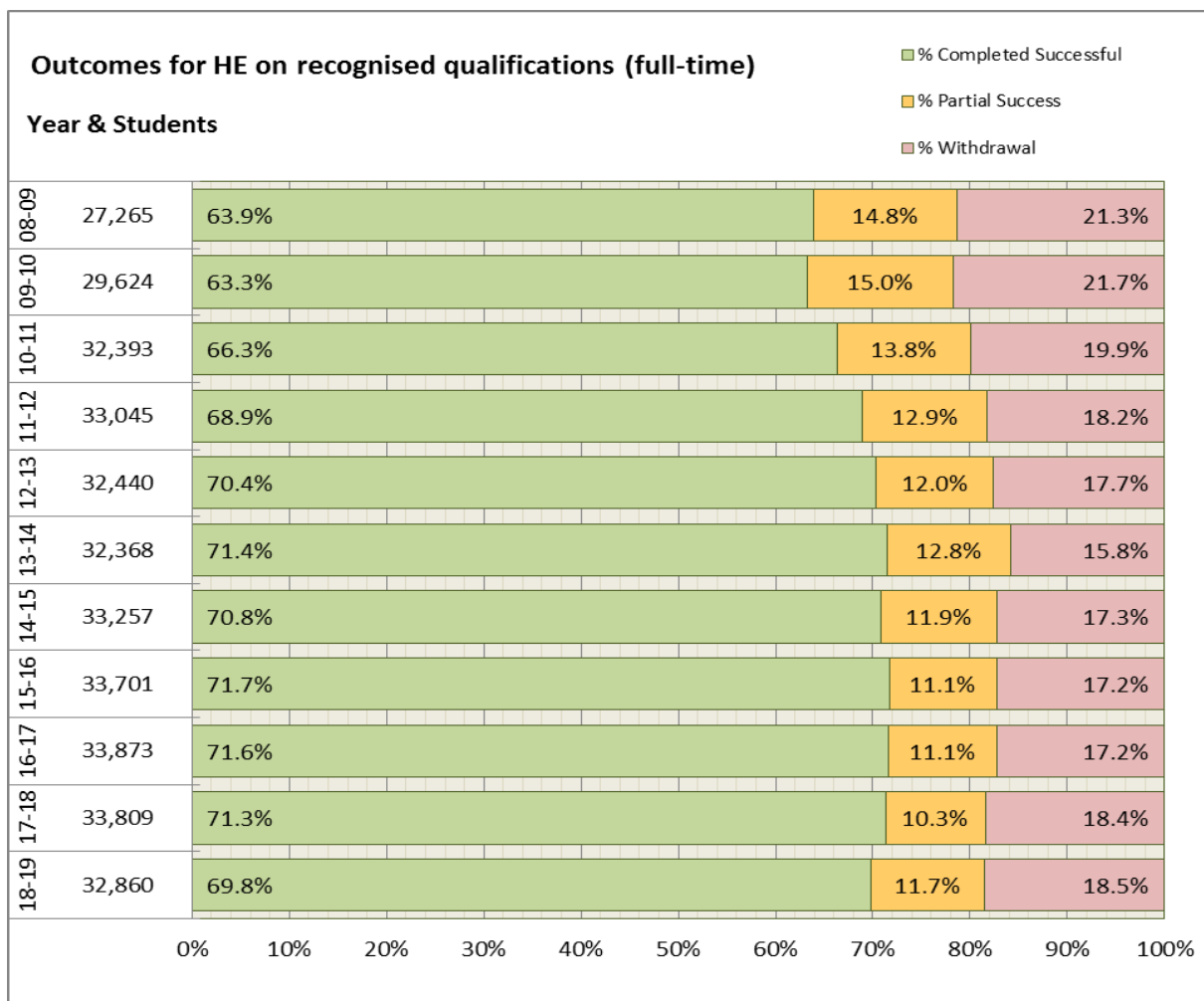
- Inconsistencies in how vocational work-based qualifications are structured and reported.

- School/college link programmes and a reluctance of schools to withdraw schools pupils that have poor attendance and attainment.
- Students left on course who were not in attendance and therefore should have been formally withdrawn.
- Students with health issues who had sporadic attendance, were, however, supported to stay on course but unfortunately failed to achieve any units.

### Outcomes for HE student enrolments on recognised qualifications

48. Figure 4 below gives an overview of success rates for full-time<sup>8</sup> recognised programmes at HE level for academic sessions 2008-09 to 2018-19.

Figure 4: Outcomes for HE student enrolments on full-time recognised qualifications



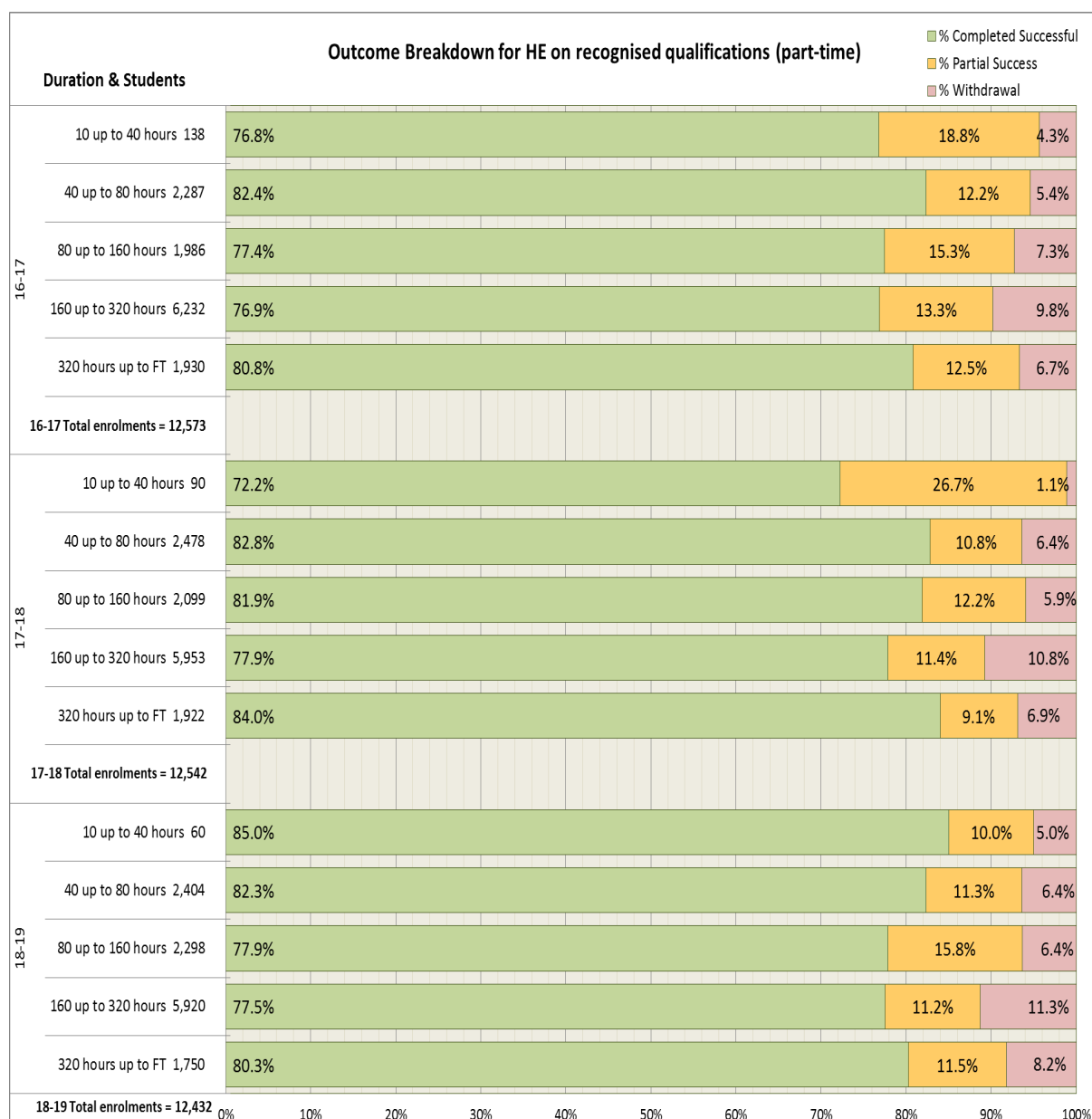
49. The number of HE full-time student enrolments on recognised qualifications declined in 2018-19 by 2.8 PP (949) from the previous year.

<sup>8</sup> HE full-time programmes of study contain greater than or equal to 480 nominal learning hours.

50. The success rates for HE programmes tend to be higher than FE programmes over the course year and this is reflected above with 69.8% of students on full-time programmes completing successfully and a total of 81.5% completing irrespective of their final result, compared with the values of 65.2% and 75.3% for FE programmes.
51. It should be noted that full-time HE programmes are more likely than FE courses to last longer than a year in duration. As a result this one year snapshot does not fully reflect the likely percentage of students who achieve the qualification for which they enrol.
52. Although the success rate for full-time HE students has fallen over the past three years and has reduced by 1.5% in 2018-19 from the previous year, this still shows an improvement in success over the previous ten years rising from 63.9% in 2008-09 to 69.8% in 2018-19 (+5.9 PP).
53. The combined effect of an improved success rate and a larger population means that an extra 5,511 students have successfully completed in 2018-19, in comparison to 2008-09 (+31.6%).
54. SFC's national aspiration for full-time HE success is that by AY 2019-20 the percentage of enrolled (full-time) students successfully achieving a recognised qualification on the SCQF should increase to 74.4%. In 2018-19 only one college from 15 exceeded the AY 2019-20 national aspiration of 74.4% success and on comparison the sector is currently sitting 4.6 PP below this target. It will be challenging, based on the current sector success rate trend, to realise this target within the next academic year.
55. HE full-time success rates for individual colleges with over 50 student enrolments ranged from 64.9% to 75.0% in 2018-19. We provide on our [website](#), alongside the publication, a separate Excel PI Tool. This tool provides an overview of individual college data together with multi-college regional and national data.
56. A decrease in the HE full-time success rate in 2018-19 is not consistent across all colleges. Ten colleges show a decrease in success rate of between 0.4 PP and 4.5 PP, whilst five colleges show an improvement in success rate of between 0.7 PP and 1.1 PP.
57. Figure 5 below presents the part-time HE course breakdown by hour category. This shows the total number of HE students on part-time programmes of study across the three year period has reduced, by just over 1 PP (141).
58. HE students normally have higher success rates than FE students however, when we look at the shorter duration programmes (under 160 hours) FE students tend to perform better.



Figure 5: Outcomes for HE student enrolments on part-time recognised qualifications<sup>9</sup>



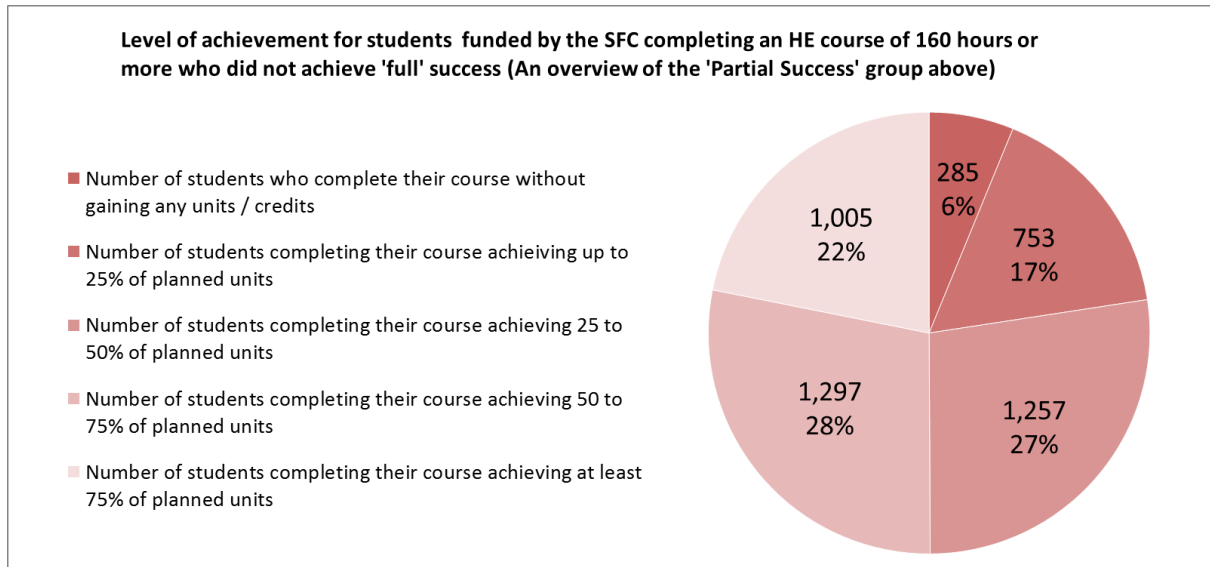
### Students completing their HE course who did not achieve “full” success

59. Figure 6 shows that there are 4,597 students enrolled on HE programmes in 2018-19 who completed without “full” success. This is a subset of numbers from Figure 4 (full-time) and Figure 5 (part-time) and excludes students below 160 hours and those who were not funded by SFC that are included in the earlier charts. It shows that 50% (2,302) of these students achieved at least 50% of the units they enrolled on, while 22% (1,005) of these students achieved at least 75% of the units on their programme. At the other end of the scale 6% (285) of

<sup>9</sup> Note that there is no HE part-time activity of less than 10 hours duration.

the students failed to gain any of the units for which they enrolled, a similar proportion to that seen in the previous year.

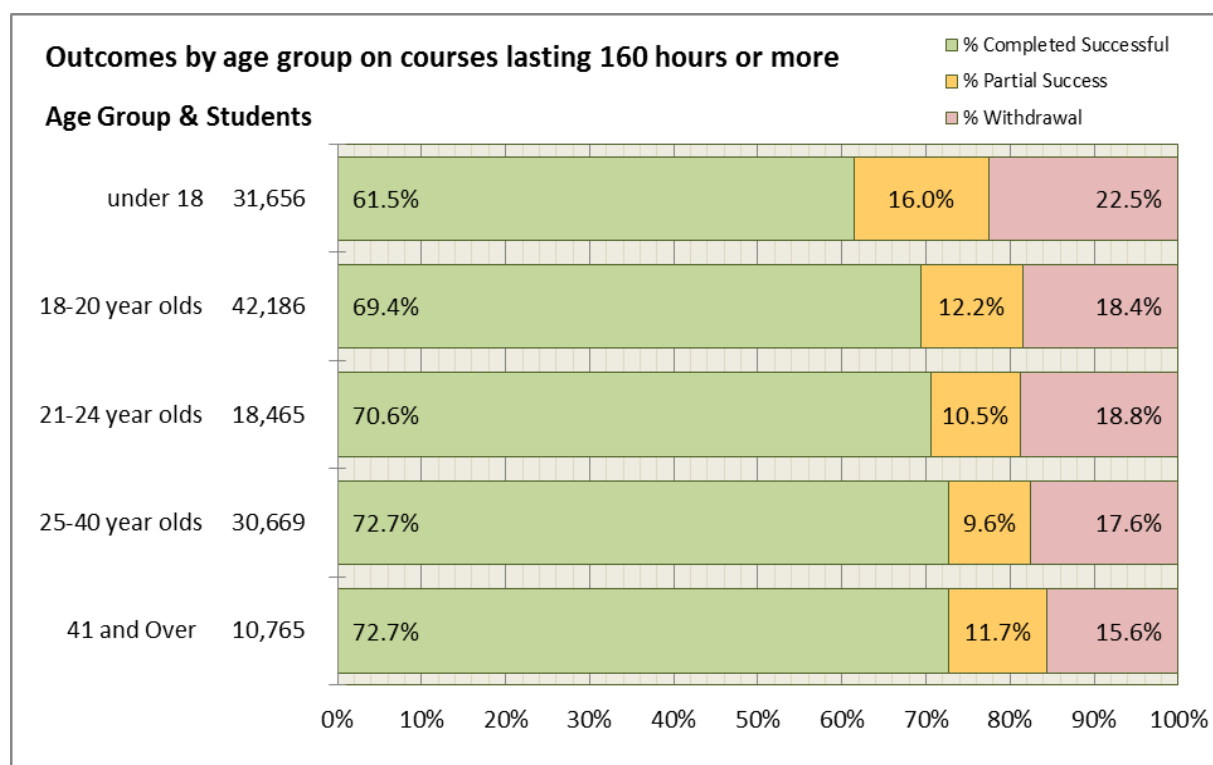
Figure 6: Level of achievement for students completing an HE course of 160 hours or more who did not achieve 'full' success



### Outcomes by age group (combined FE and HE courses)

60. Figure 7 below shows that students in the younger age groups are less likely to complete successfully than those in the older age groups: for example 61.5% of those under 18 compared to 72.7% of those aged over 41 complete successfully and similarly, 77.5% and 84.4% completing students when including those with partial success.
61. Younger students are more likely to enrol on full-time programmes which have a lower pass rate in comparison to part-time programmes and this may partly explain the lower pass rates for younger students.
62. Figure 7 allows for a more informed comparison of college activity, but should nevertheless take account of the specific environment in which each college operates.

Figure 7: Outcomes by age group for recognised courses lasting 160 hours or more

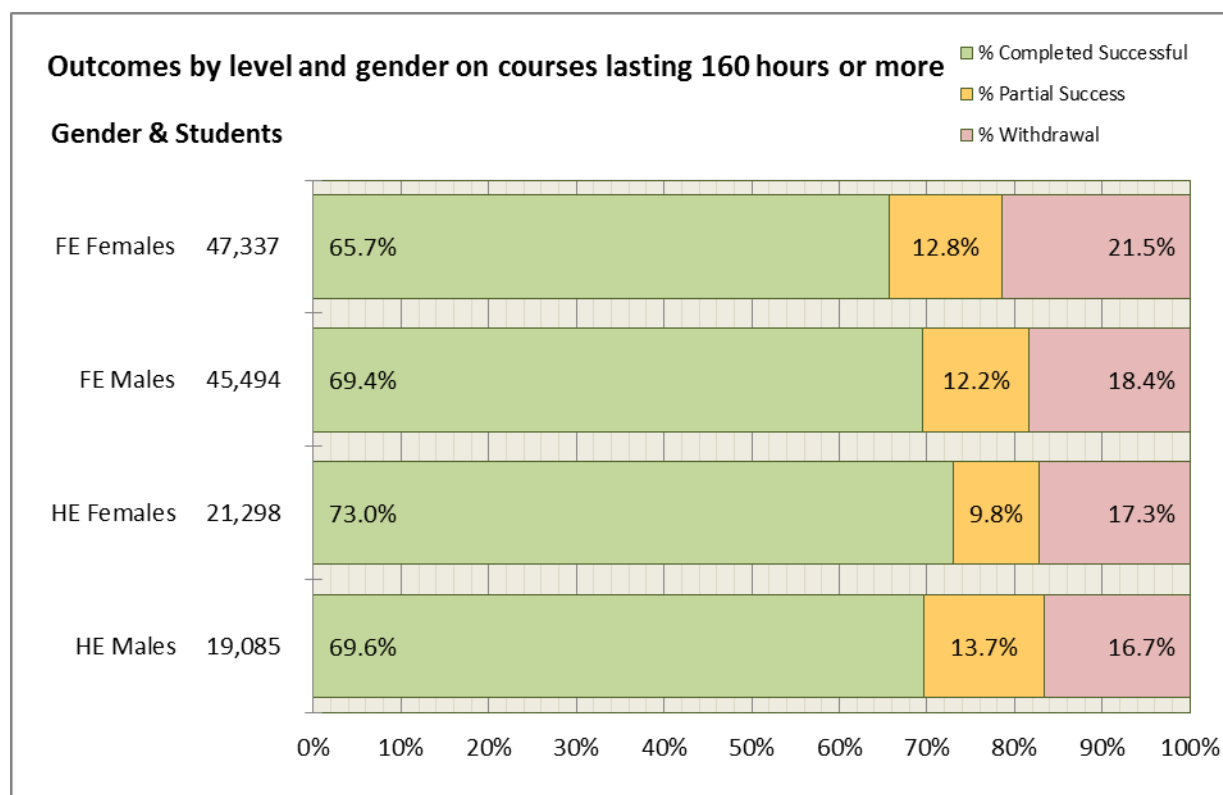


### Outcomes by gender and level (combined FE and HE courses)

63. Figure 8<sup>10</sup> below shows that in 2018-19 more than two thirds of enrolments relate to students studying FE level programmes. The subjects and modes of study are associated with different pass rates and the ‘mix’ of these may differ across genders and individual colleges.
64. This suggests that male students are 3.7 PP more likely to successfully complete their FE programmes than female students, while the situation is reversed for HE programmes with a 3.4 PP difference. The difference in success rate between male and female for both FE and HE has increased compared to last years (2017-18) publication when it was 2.7 PP and 3.3 PP respectively.
65. The withdrawal rates for male and female students on HE programmes are very similar at around 17%. However, for FE programmes females are around 3 PP more likely to withdraw from their programme of study than male students.

<sup>10</sup> The gender data excludes those identifying as ‘other’ or chose ‘prefer not to say’.

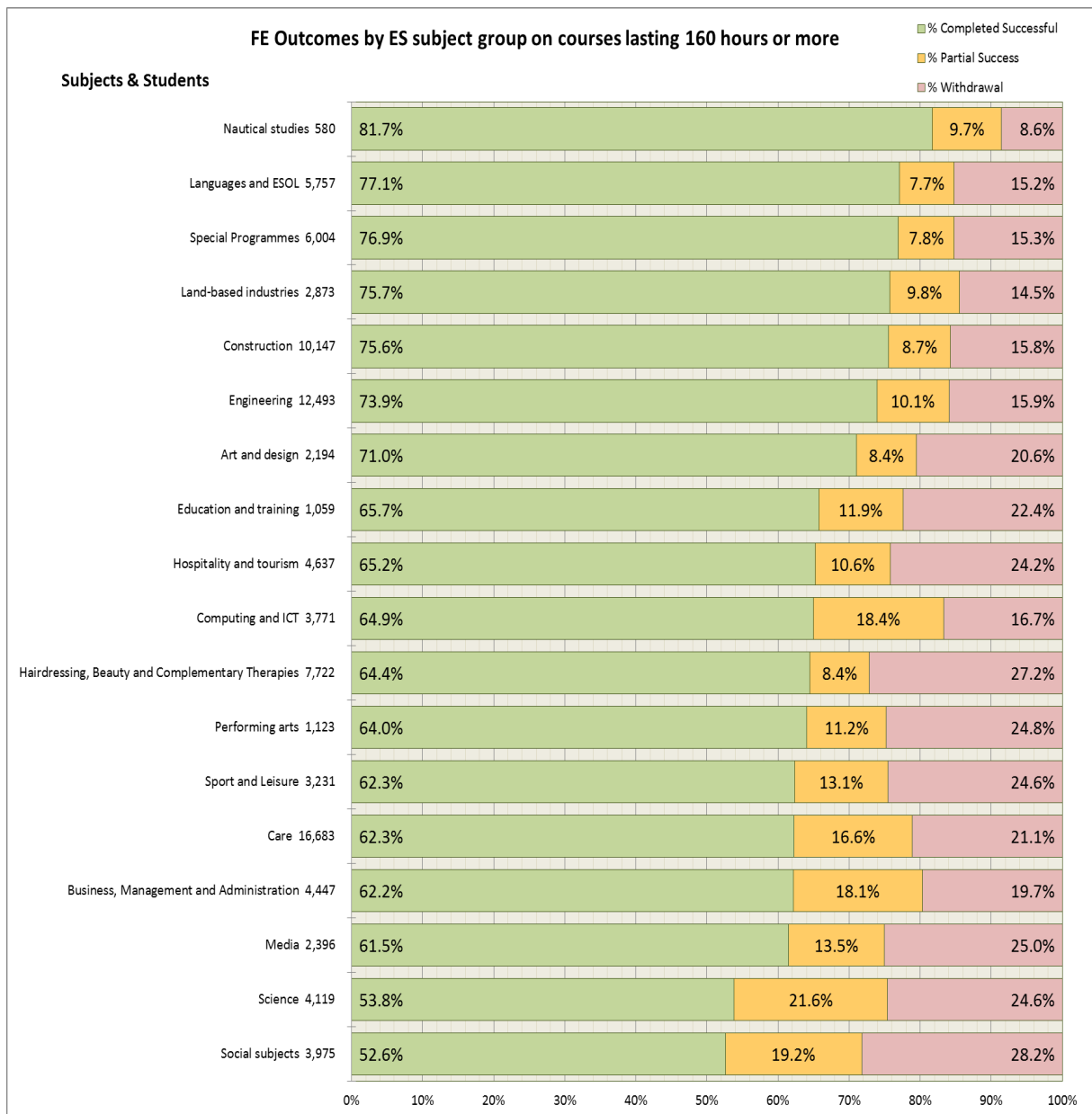
Figure 8: Outcomes by level and gender on recognised courses lasting 160 hours or more



### Outcomes by subject groupings on FE courses

66. The subject groupings are based on the subject classification for the course aggregated into areas considered similar by Education Scotland (ES). A subject mapping can be found in a separate technical appendix. There are two charts, one for FE level programmes and one for HE level programmes. Colleges offer a very wide ranging portfolio of courses and subject areas of study to potential students.
67. Figure 9 below for FE programmes clearly shows that some subjects have lower success rates than others. Social subjects and Science, for example, show a success rate of under 54% whilst Construction and Land-based Industries stands at just under 76%. Programmes such as Highers are also more likely to fall into the Social subjects and Science groups, where these pass rates can be influenced by changing priorities amongst students, for example, initially enrolling for a number of Highers but possibly dropping one or more as this may be sufficient to gain entry to a higher level college or university course.
68. We worked with the sector on improving the quality of subject group classification and for the period 2013-14 to 2018-19 when we have the more comparable data success rates have fallen for 12 subject areas and increased for the remaining six.

Figure 9: Outcomes by Education Scotland subject groupings on FE courses lasting 160 hours or more

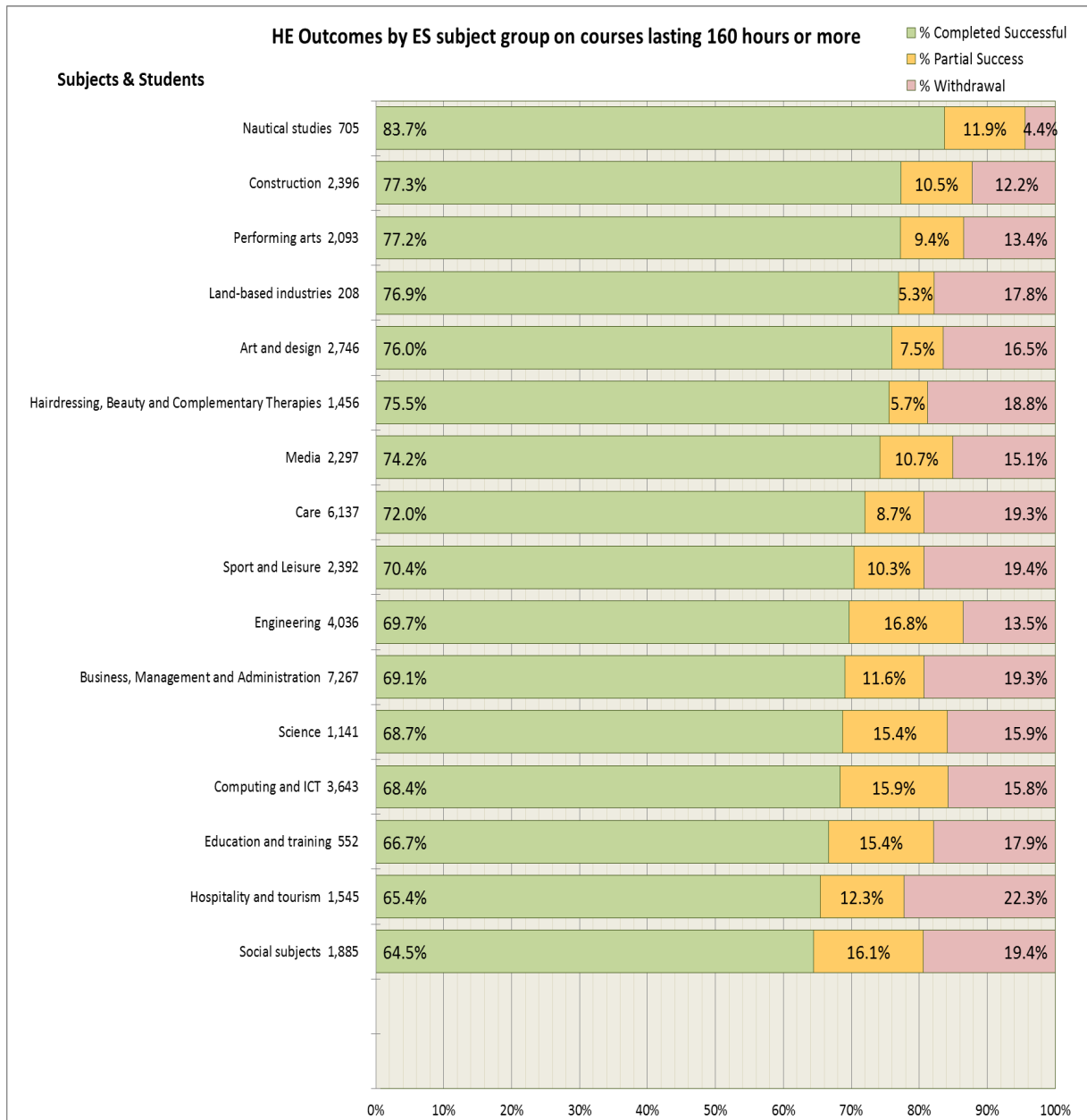


### Outcomes by subject groupings on HE courses

69. Figure 10 below shows that similar issues exist for HE programmes with some subjects being more likely to be made up of students studying on day release from their employer, in which case the student may have extra motivation to do well. Similarly, some of these courses will have a greater mix of full-time programmes or students from younger age groups. SFC has performed some analysis of the outcomes of students and has found that Nautical studies and Construction subjects have a much higher proportion of students who have their fees paid by their employers. This appears to have a bearing on their relatively high success rates.

70. We worked with the sector on improving the quality of subject group classification and for the period 2013-14 to 2018-19 when we have the more comparable data the success rates have fallen for eleven subject areas and increased for the remaining five.

Figure 10: Outcomes by Education Scotland subject groupings on HE courses lasting 160 hours or more



### Outcomes by key groups (combined FE and HE courses)

71. Figure 11 below highlights groups of interest to various stakeholders and helps identify factors that may affect the success rates for an individual college. For example, a college with a high proportion of students on day release from their employer or supported by their employer in some other way is likely to have a



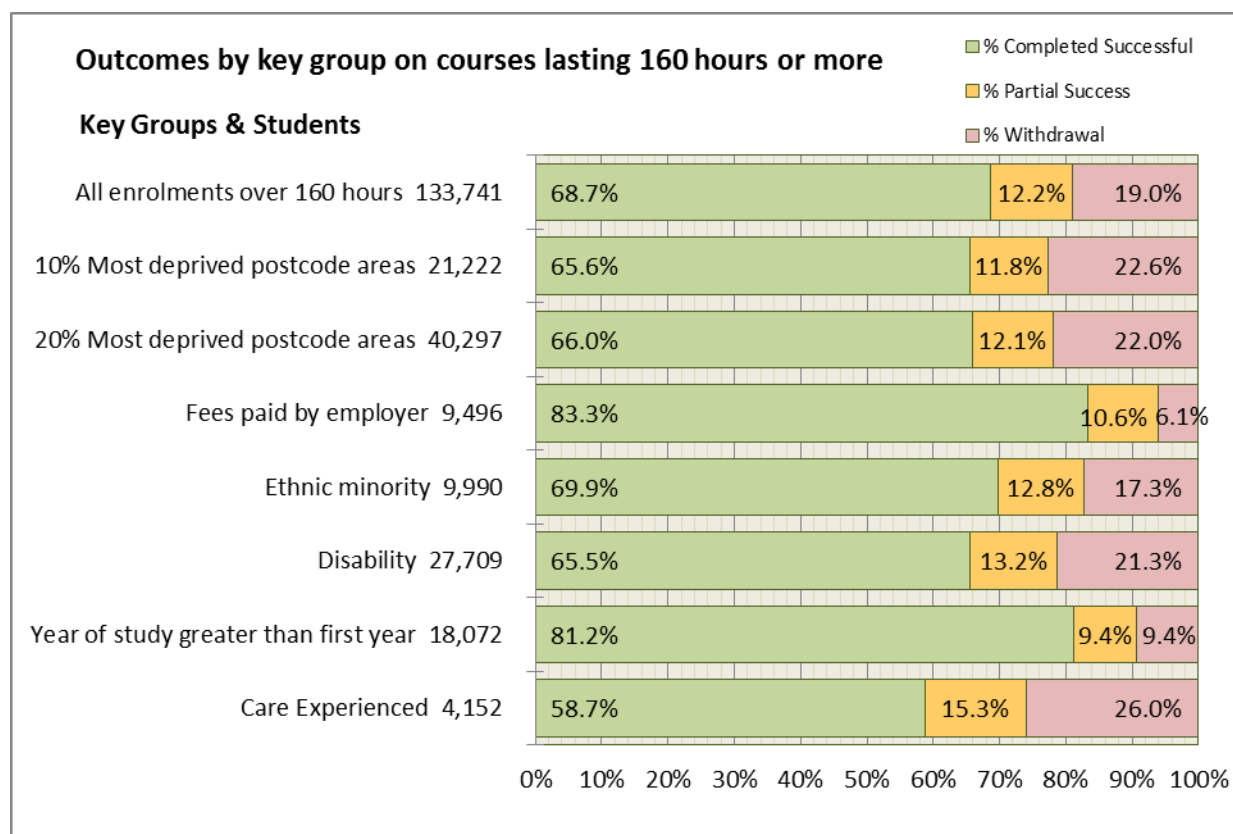
high success rate for these students and this may be enough to affect overall success rates.

72. Success rates on 160 hours plus courses for students from the 10% and 20% most deprived postcode areas<sup>11</sup> although similar, 65.6% and 66.0% respectively, fall below the comparator figure of 68.7% for all enrolments over 160 hours (FE and HE combined).
73. The overall sector figure indicates that those students from an ethnic minority (BME) background outperform the “all enrolments” comparator group and those with a disability underperform against the comparator group and have a similar success to those from the 10% most deprived postcode areas.
74. There is a national ambition ‘to increase the number of care-experienced learners enrolling and successfully completing at college’. This key group is reported below and it clearly shows from the overall sector figures that they are more likely to withdraw from their course and less likely to successfully complete than any of the other reported key interest groups.
75. In 2018-19 there is a much higher reporting rate for care-experienced students up 68% (1,675) from the previous year. In 2018-19 this includes for the first time 1,670 assessed care-experienced students, between the ages of 16 and 25, who received a higher rate of bursary.
76. Although care-experienced students are less likely to successfully complete and more likely to withdraw when compared to the other reported key interest groups, the success rate for care-experienced students increased by 3.7 PP and the withdrawal rate reduced by 6.3 PP between 2017-18 and 2018-19. All other reported key interest group success rates reduced by between 0.3 PP and 1.5 PP in 2018-19.
77. The higher reporting rate for care-experienced students seen in 2018-19 includes self-disclosed students and those students formally evidenced as care-experienced and in receipt of the care experience bursary. We continue to work with the sector to improve the quality of reporting for this key group of students.

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<sup>11</sup> Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2016: the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is the Scottish Government's official tool for identifying those places in Scotland suffering from deprivation, combining in a single index seven different domains (aspects) of deprivation.

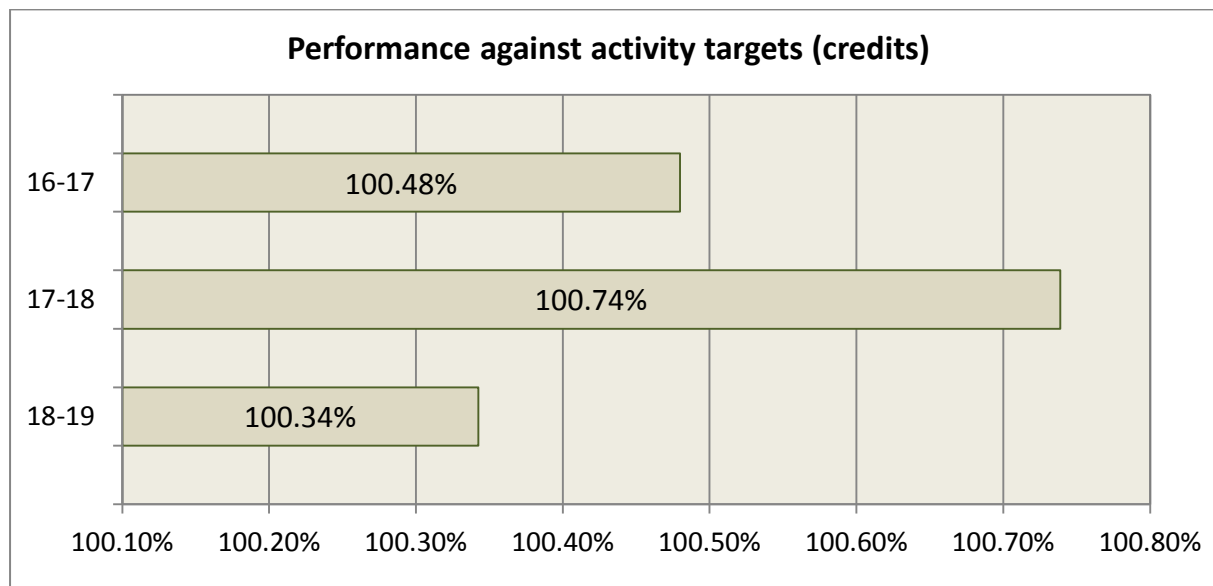
Figure 11: Outcomes for student enrolments by key groups on courses lasting 160 hours or more



### Performance against activity targets

78. Colleges receive funding from SFC to deliver a target number of hours of learning (credits). These can be related to college places and at the sector level we expect colleges to deliver 116,269 FTE places (1 FTE = 15 Credits). Colleges delivered in total 118,242 FTE, thereby exceeding the 116,269 places target by 1,973 FTE in 2018-19.
79. Colleges delivered in addition to the above an extra 3,534 FTE places through the SFC match-funded European Social Fund (ESF) programme: 'Developing Scotland's Workforce'.
80. The total number of funded FTE places delivered by colleges in 2018-19 is therefore 121,776.
81. Separately to the FTE targets above individual colleges are expected to deliver a minimum number of credits (1 credit equates to 40 notional hours of learning) and the sector exceeded the 2018-19 target of 1,747,356 credits, including for the ESF programmes (53,003 credits), by 0.34% (1,753,342 total credits), as outlined in Figure 12 below.

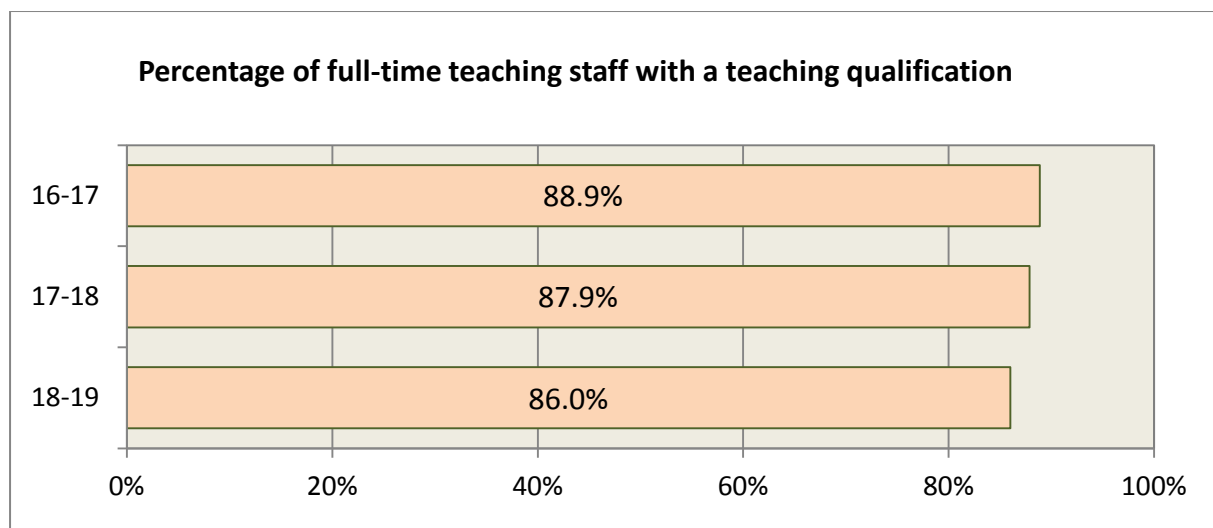
Figure 12: Performance against activity targets (credits)



### Qualified full-time teaching staff

82. Figure 13 below measures the percentage of full-time teaching staff with a teaching qualification recognised by the General Teaching Council for Scotland. This information is collected as part of the annual college staffing return.
83. In 2018-19, out of 3,713 full-time permanent teaching staff, 3,193 held a recognised teaching qualification (86.0%). This shows a 2.9 PP decrease in the proportion of teaching staff with a recognised qualification over the reported three academic years.

Figure 13: Percentage of full-time teaching staff with a recognised teaching qualification



## Further information

84. The performance indicators are of primary importance to Ministers, College Principals, Governing Boards and Scottish Government officials.
85. In order to bring the performance indicators to the widest possible audience we provide on our [website](#), alongside the publication, a separate Excel PI Tool. This tool provides an overview of individual college data together with multi-college regional and national data, thereby raising the profile of the figures and making them more useable. The PIs are also hosted by each college on their own website together with any contextual college statement.
86. Colleges will use the annual PI data on attainment and retention to inform assessment of performance as part of the [College Quality Arrangements](#)<sup>12</sup>. These revised arrangements integrate evaluation and reporting on [Outcome Agreements](#) with reporting on the quality of provision and services.
87. Student numbers may differ across SFC's publications as the reports are prepared for different purposes. For example, this PI report excludes students who begin courses in January and finish in December of the same year, as results will not be available for these students until the course ends. However, activity related to these students will be included in another SFC publication; the [College Statistics report for academic year 2018-19](#)
88. Additional information regarding student enrolments and courses is available via our interactive database. The [Infact database](#), available on our website, allows for more detailed analysis of provision within Scotland's colleges. Please note that figures on the database may differ from those presented here. The database includes figures for all students regardless of who provides the funding.
89. SFC additionally publishes outcomes from the annual [College Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey](#). Over 44,000 college students responded to the 2018-19 survey which is the fourth such survey to be carried out by SFC. Over time, the annual Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey will provide a consistent basis for Scotland's college regions to demonstrate the impact they have and the improvements they are making within their outcome agreements.
90. The latest College Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey shows that 93% of full-time students studying on further education courses were satisfied with their college experience. That figure climbs to 95% for part-time students. For

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<sup>12</sup> The Scottish Funding Council with Education Scotland introduced new arrangements for assuring and improving the quality of provision delivered by Scotland's colleges commencing in AY 2016-17.

college students on higher education courses 87% of respondents said they were satisfied with the figure rising to 89% for part-time students.

## Annex A: Colleges in Scotland

College	Region
North East Scotland College <a href="http://www.nescol.ac.uk">www.nescol.ac.uk</a>	Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire
Ayrshire College <a href="http://www.ayrshire.ac.uk">www.ayrshire.ac.uk</a>	Ayrshire
Borders College <a href="http://www.borderscollege.ac.uk">www.borderscollege.ac.uk</a>	Borders
Forth Valley College <a href="http://www.forthvalley.ac.uk">www.forthvalley.ac.uk</a>	Forth Valley
Dumfries & Galloway College <a href="http://www.dumgal.ac.uk">www.dumgal.ac.uk</a>	Dumfries and Galloway
Edinburgh College <a href="http://www.edinburghcollege.ac.uk">www.edinburghcollege.ac.uk</a>	Edinburgh and Lothians
Fife College <a href="http://www.fife.ac.uk">www.fife.ac.uk</a>	Fife
Glasgow Kelvin College <a href="http://www.glasgowkelvin.ac.uk">www.glasgowkelvin.ac.uk</a>	Glasgow
Glasgow Clyde College <a href="http://www.glasgowclyde.ac.uk">www.glasgowclyde.ac.uk</a>	
City of Glasgow College <a href="http://www.cityofglasgowcollege.ac.uk">www.cityofglasgowcollege.ac.uk</a>	
Argyll College UHI <a href="http://www.argyll.uhi.ac.uk">www.argyll.uhi.ac.uk</a>	Highlands and Islands
Inverness College UHI <a href="http://www.inverness.uhi.ac.uk">www.inverness.uhi.ac.uk</a>	
Lewis Castle College UHI <a href="http://www.lewis.uhi.ac.uk">www.lewis.uhi.ac.uk</a>	
Moray College UHI <a href="http://www.moray.ac.uk">www.moray.ac.uk</a>	
North Highland College UHI <a href="http://www.northhighland.uhi.ac.uk">www.northhighland.uhi.ac.uk</a>	
Orkney College UHI <a href="http://www.orkney.uhi.ac.uk">www.orkney.uhi.ac.uk</a>	
Perth College UHI <a href="http://www.perth.uhi.ac.uk">www.perth.uhi.ac.uk</a>	
Shetland College UHI <a href="http://www.shetland.uhi.ac.uk">www.shetland.uhi.ac.uk</a>	
West Highland College UHI <a href="http://www.whc.uhi.ac.uk">www.whc.uhi.ac.uk</a>	
South Lanarkshire College <a href="http://www.south-lanarkshire-college.ac.uk">www.south-lanarkshire-college.ac.uk</a>	
New College Lanarkshire <a href="http://www.nclanarkshire.ac.uk">www.nclanarkshire.ac.uk</a>	
Dundee and Angus College <a href="http://www.dundeeandangus.ac.uk">www.dundeeandangus.ac.uk</a>	Tayside
West College Scotland <a href="http://www.westcollegescotland.ac.uk">www.westcollegescotland.ac.uk</a>	West
West Lothian College <a href="http://www.west-lothian.ac.uk">www.west-lothian.ac.uk</a>	West Lothian
Sabhal Mòr Ostaig UHI <a href="http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk">www.smo.uhi.ac.uk</a>	
Newbattle Abbey College <a href="http://www.newbattleabbeycollege.ac.uk">www.newbattleabbeycollege.ac.uk</a>	
Scotland's Rural College <a href="http://www.sruc.ac.uk">www.sruc.ac.uk</a>	

Key:

Large college - delivering activity of greater than 25,000 credits

Small college - delivering activity of less than 25,000 credits

## Annex B: Technical Addendums

91. The PIs are based on student records submitted by colleges via the Further Education Statistics (FES) system. There are around 300,000<sup>13</sup> student records in our FES system (in any academic year) and we are constantly working to improve the underlying data quality.
92. The FES returns include the course / exam result for each student funded by SFC and SDS employability fund activity delivered by colleges. [Code List J](#) from our 2018-19 FES 2 guidance outlines the 13 different options to record the outcome for the student on a recognised qualification for the academic year period. This includes options for student withdrawals, transfers, success and failures and continuation to the next stage of the course.

Student Outcome	Enrolments			
	Full time		Part time	
	HE	FE	HE	FE
Transferred to another programme course within the college	15	63	2	46
Withdrawn from programme/course and commenced employment	881	1,870	99	590
Withdrawn from programme/course and now studying in an HEI	51	46	5	75
Withdrawn from programme/course and destination unknown	5,058	9,553	993	8,610
Withdrawn from programme/course and now studying elsewhere (not HEI)	65	98	15	544
Completed programme/course, student assessed but not successful	3,705	4,737	1,310	11,093
Student has progressed to next year but did not gain 70% of the assessed credits undertaken	145	21	194	524
Completed programme/course, student not assessed (student on a recognised qualification but outcome recorded as not assessed)	0	39	2	301
Completed programme/course, student assessed and successful	16,742	28,452	7,291	74,582
Student has progressed to next year and has achieved 70% of the assessed credits undertaken	5,055	1,519	2,105	3,640
Student has achieved 70% of the assessed credits undertaken but has chosen not to progress onto the next year	435	45	162	171
Student is on an interim year of a multi-year VQ programme and is on track and is still participating in the college programme	0	671	254	5,582
Student completed first year of an HND but has chosen to leave with an HNC	708	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>32,860</b>	<b>47,114</b>	<b>12,432</b>	<b>105,758</b>

<sup>13</sup> This number includes additional short and non-recognised qualification courses that are not reported in this performance indicator publication.

93. We collect a student record for each funded individual. SFC working with the college sector continues to improve protective characteristics data collection; disclosure; coverage; and quality.
94. Colleges submit their returns via our FES Online web tool which performs around 150 separate validations on each record. These validations are updated on an annual basis based on feedback from our statistical advisory and performance indicator groups.
95. As well as performing data validation, our FES Online system provides colleges with management reports which include performance indicators. These reports include the published Performance Indicators for the college which we ask the college to confirm as accurate.
96. Other reports include performance indicators for each course run by the college which enables colleges to evaluate the national PI values by confirming those at course level which are more closely managed by the relevant course teams. Colleges are able to submit files to FES Online as part of an iterative process until they are happy with their data quality and performance indicators. This enables course teams to examine the management reports and update the student records appropriately until they are happy that the results reflect the success rates for their course.
97. SFC consults with our statistical advisory groups and with the College Development Network to provide an annual set of [College Performance Indicators Guidance notes](#) to help ensure student results are coded consistently across the sector.
98. In addition to our FES and current PI guidance notes SFC also provides the performance indicator and student outcome datasets to Education Scotland for use within college evaluations and thematic reviews. This helps ensure the accuracy of our data and provides a richer context in which the results can be reviewed. Education Scotland publishes colleges' annual evaluative reports and enhancement plans together with a joint SFC/ES endorsement statement and these are available on [Education Scotland's website](#) under Further Education sector.
99. SFC conducted college data development visits and quality checks before the 2018-19 performance indicators were finalised. These visits and checks ensure the data quality of the 2018-19 student records to ensure our performance indicators continue to be based on accurate data.
100. SFC allocated £454 million in teaching and fee waiver grant to colleges to deliver learning activity and an additional £111 million to provide financial student support in 2018-19. This excludes additional funding for strategic projects and £13 million for ESF activity. As a result colleges undergo a significant audit of their student records to ensure these funds are being spent



in line with guidance. These audits include checking that student withdrawals are being properly managed and recorded and that the correct credits are being claimed for students. Our PIs are based on these same records and therefore the robust audit process helps ensure the accuracy of our student records.

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