

## Students Entering Higher Education Institutions with Access Qualifications 2003/04

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### Introduction

The following analyses are taken from the HESA Student Record for the academic year ending 31 July 2004. These analyses include registrations on undergraduate HE programmes at HE institutions in England and Wales. Figures for both full-time and part-time programmes are shown.

The HESA Student Record for 2003/04 collects 'Highest qualification on entry' for every student. The highest qualification on entry is not necessarily the qualification *for* entry to that specific programme of study, though this distinction is not felt to be statistically significant in the following analyses.

The HESA data for 2003/04 does distinguish between QAA-recognised Access to HE certificates and other "access" certificates. This distinction is only made for students who began their current programme of study on or after 1 August 2002. Analyses of students that began their current programme before 1 August 2002 do not make this distinction.

In line with the Agency's rounding strategy, all numbers shown in this paper are rounded to the nearest five.

### Access Entrants to Higher Education

In the year 2003/04 11830 students entered an undergraduate programme with a QAA-recognised Access to HE certificate. Table 1 breaks these down by mode and level of qualification.

**Table 1: Entrants to Undergraduate HE Programmes with Access Entry Qualifications 2003/04**

	Full-time	Part-time	Total
First Degree	7330	540	7870
Other UG	3245	715	3960
Total	10575	1255	11830

Undergraduate entrants with Access qualifications represent a relatively small proportion of all undergraduate entrants; Table 2 shows the proportion in each of the categories in Table 1.

**Table 2: Proportion of Entrants to HE Programmes with Access Entry Qualifications 2003/04**

	Full-time	Part-time	Total
First Degree	2.4%	1.0%	2.2%
Other UG	6.8%	0.4%	1.7%
Total	3.0%	0.5%	2.0%

*Excludes unknown qualification on entry*

The full-time other undergraduate area has the most significant proportion of entrants with an Access qualification. Analysis of this category by subject (Table 3) reveals that 88% of these students with an Access qualification are studying in the area of "Subjects allied to medicine".

**Table 3: Full-time Other Undergraduate Entrants by Subject Area and Entry Qualification 2003/04**

	<b>Access (QAA recognised)</b>	<b>Access (other)</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Unknown</b>	<b>Total</b>
Medicine & dentistry	5	0	80	25	110
Subjects allied to medicine	2850	320	16255	2860	22285
Biological sciences	15	5	1385	170	1570
Veterinary science	0	0	20	0	20
Agriculture & related subjects	15	0	985	185	1185
Physical sciences	5	0	280	85	370
Mathematical sciences	0	0	200	35	240
Computer science	65	5	3555	395	4020
Engineering & technology	20	10	2335	245	2610
Architecture, building & planning	0	0	720	115	840
Social studies	65	10	1565	435	2080
Law	0	0	630	75	710
Business & administrative studies	60	10	5825	920	6815
Mass communications & documentation	10	0	805	95	910
Languages	10	0	1965	970	2945
Historical and philosophical studies	0	0	450	50	500
Creative arts & design	100	5	3725	560	4390
Education	15	0	1770	380	2165
Combined	5	0	1395	30	1425
<b>Total</b>	<b>3245</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>43960</b>	<b>7630</b>	<b>55205</b>

Table 4 summarises the subjects studied by all Access entrants.

**Table 4: Entrants with Access Qualification by Mode, Level and Subject Area 2003/04**

Level Mode	First Degree		Other UG		Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	
Medicine & dentistry	35	0	5	0	40
Subjects allied to medicine	1500	115	2850	165	4625
Biological sciences	750	50	15	10	825
Veterinary science	0	0	0	0	0
Agriculture & related subjects	30	0	15	0	45
Physical sciences	140	10	5	0	160
Mathematical sciences	60	5	0	0	65
Computer science	450	15	65	40	565
Engineering & technology	120	5	20	10	155
Architecture, building & planning	55	0	0	15	75
Social studies	1115	55	65	75	1315
Law	340	50	0	5	395
Business & administrative studies	475	25	60	65	625
Mass communications & documentation	145	10	10	10	170
Languages	475	35	10	45	570
Historical & philosophical studies	345	35	0	60	440
Creative arts & design	385	70	100	25	575
Education	770	30	15	165	985
Combined	135	30	5	35	200
<b>Total</b>	<b>7330</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>3245</b>	<b>715</b>	<b>11830</b>

Access entrants to undergraduate programmes during 2003/04 were concentrated in the post-1992 universities. Table 5 shows the institutions that recruited more than 250 students with an Access qualification.

**Table 5: Access entrants by Mode and Institution 2003/04**  
(Number of entrants and percentage of entrants with known qualification on entry)

	Full-time		Part-time		Total	
The University of Wolverhampton	330	6.2%	95	2.4%	420	4.6%
Thames Valley University	325	11.0%	45	0.9%	370	4.7%
The Manchester Metropolitan University	310	3.9%	25	1.2%	335	3.4%
Sheffield Hallam University	310	5.0%	25	1.0%	335	3.9%
London South Bank University	285	8.1%	40	1.3%	325	5.0%
University of Central England in Birmingham	300	6.8%	15	0.4%	315	3.8%
The University of Greenwich	280	5.9%	30	1.4%	310	4.6%
Anglia Polytechnic University	250	6.3%	35	0.6%	285	2.9%
University of Hertfordshire	245	3.8%	35	2.0%	280	3.4%

## Access Entrants – Student Characteristics

Table 6 shows the gender split for entrants to undergraduate programmes in 2003/04.

**Table 6: Entrants to Undergraduate Programmes by Level, Entry Qualification and Gender 2003/04**

Level Entry Qualification	First-degree			Other UG			Total
	Access	Other	% Access	Access	Other	% Access	
Female	5545	191190	2.8%	3355	148655	2.2%	348745
Male	2325	160745	1.4%	600	76470	0.8%	240140
<b>Total</b>	<b>7870</b>	<b>351935</b>	<b>2.2%</b>	<b>3960</b>	<b>225125</b>	<b>1.7%</b>	<b>588885</b>

*Excludes unknown qualification on entry*

The table shows that there are more females than males entering undergraduate programmes in 2003/04 and proportionately more females than males entering with an Access qualification. The difference is especially stark at the Other undergraduate level though the proportions at this level are skewed heavily by the relative dominance of nursing in the Access category.

**Table 7: Entrants to Undergraduate Programmes by Entry Qualification, Mode and Age 2003/04**

Entry Qualification Mode	Access		Other		Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	
Under 18	10	0	3490	3015	6515
18 to 20	360	20	249630	12130	262135
21 to 24	2295	115	49270	30380	82065
25 to 29	2135	205	16475	35185	54005
30 and over	5765	910	26015	149085	181775
Unknown	10	5	280	2105	2400
<b>Total</b>	<b>10575</b>	<b>1255</b>	<b>345155</b>	<b>231900</b>	<b>588885</b>

*Excludes unknown qualification on entry*

Table 7 analyses the age of entrants to undergraduate programmes. Access entrants to full-time programmes are most prominent in the 30 and over category, with roughly equal numbers in the early and late twenties. Access entrants to part-time programmes are skewed further towards the 30 and over category, at the expense of the under 25 categories. Table 1 showed that the part-time access entrant numbers are relatively low.

By comparison, the other entry qualifications show a more 'traditional' profile of ages. Three quarters of entrants to full-time undergraduate programmes are under 21 and almost two thirds of the entrants to part-time programmes are 30 and over (the latter category being skewed by 'continuing education' registrations).

Table 8 shows that the entrants with access qualifications have a higher representation from ethnic minority groups than entrants with other qualifications, though there are interesting differences between the various ethnic categories. Ethnicity data in the HESA student record is only collected for UK domiciled students.

**Table 8: Entrants to Undergraduate Programmes by Level, Entry Qualification and Ethnicity 2003/04**

Level	First-degree		Other UG		Total
	Access	Other	Access	Other	
White	5435	240575	2515	162665	411190
Black or Black British - Caribbean	320	4490	200	3265	8270
Black or Black British - African	615	8890	700	6180	16385
Other Black background	80	1500	45	1115	2740
Asian or Asian British - Indian	110	14035	35	3990	18175
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	140	7880	35	2415	10470
Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi	50	2555	10	680	3295
Chinese	25	3255	5	1100	4385
Other Asian background	120	3875	35	3085	7110
Other	290	9255	115	4080	13740
Not known	445	15235	170	20085	35935
<b>Total</b>	<b>7630</b>	<b>311535</b>	<b>3865</b>	<b>208660</b>	<b>531690</b>

*Excludes unknown qualification on entry  
Data only covers UK domiciled students*

Care should be taken when analysing ethnic groupings due to the relatively high proportion of 'not known' values. The 'not known' category includes cases where the student has refused to supply the information.

Table 9 below shows disability for undergraduate entrants in 2003/04. Although the figures within each of the disability categories are low the relatively high proportion of access entrants with dyslexia is worthy of note.

**Table 9: Entrants to Undergraduate Programmes by Level, Entry Qualification and Disability 2003/04**

Level	First-degree		Other UG		Total
	Access	Other	Access	Other	
No known disability	7025	330360	3640	211965	552990
Dyslexia	340	10180	150	2995	13670
Blind/Partially sighted	20	505	5	315	845
Deaf/Hearing impairment	40	790	15	805	1650
Wheelchair user/Mobility difficulties	65	585	10	640	1300
Personal care support	5	25	0	35	65
Mental health difficulties	65	820	5	625	1515
An unseen disability (*)	135	3640	60	2070	5905
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	0	55	0	15	70
Multiple disabilities	60	1600	10	1150	2820
A disability not listed above	100	2245	30	1395	3770
Not known	15	1130	35	3115	4295
<b>Total</b>	<b>7870</b>	<b>351935</b>	<b>3960</b>	<b>225125</b>	<b>588885</b>

*Excludes unknown qualification on entry*

(\* = e.g. diabetes, epilepsy, asthma)



## Access Students - Qualifications Awarded

Note: Since this section covers students who began their HE programme before 1 August 2002, it includes all types of "Access" entry qualification except those specifically identified as not being QAA recognised.

In 2003/04, qualifications were awarded to undergraduate students for whom an Access qualification was their highest qualification on entry. A breakdown of these awards is shown below.

**Table 10: Qualifications Awarded in 2003/04 to students who entered HE with an Access Qualification**

	First-degree	Other UG	Total
Medicine & dentistry	5	0	5
Subjects allied to medicine	1035	1875	2910
Biological sciences	550	50	595
Agriculture & related subjects	25	10	35
Physical sciences	130	15	145
Mathematical sciences	40	0	40
Computer science	445	95	540
Engineering & technology	115	20	140
Architecture, building & planning	30	15	45
Social studies	840	290	1130
Law	230	30	260
Business & administrative studies	350	85	440
Mass communications and documentation	115	20	135
Languages	410	25	430
Historical and philosophical studies	410	30	435
Creative arts & design	410	65	475
Education	435	60	500
Combined	95	20	110
<b>Total</b>	<b>5675</b>	<b>2700</b>	<b>8375</b>

Table 11 shows the proportion of first-degrees awarded by classification and qualification on entry. It shows that proportionately fewer first and upper-second class degrees are awarded to students who enter with an access qualification.

**Table 11: Classification of First-degree by Entry Qualification 2003/04**

	Access	Other	Total
First class	460	25765	26225
Upper second class	2425	108985	111410
Lower second class	2070	76635	78705
Third class / Pass	525	16830	17355
Unclassified	185	10885	11075
<b>Total</b>	<b>5675</b>	<b>239100</b>	<b>244770</b>

*Excludes unknown qualification on entry*