

## Students Entering Higher Education Institutions with Access Qualifications 2004/05

By Andy Youell, HESA



### Introduction

The following analyses are taken from the HESA Student Record for the academic year ending 31 July 2005. 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 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 2004/05 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 2004/05 10,725 students entered an undergraduate programme with a QAA-recognised Access to HE certificate (2003/04: 11,830). Table 1 breaks these down by mode and level of qualification.

**Table 1: Entrants to Undergraduate HE Programmes with Access Entry Qualifications 2004/05**

	Full-time	Part-time	Total
First Degree	6340	540	6880
Other UG	3170	670	3845
Total	9515	1210	10725

Undergraduate entrants with Access qualifications represent 1.8% of all undergraduate entrants (2003/04: 2.0%). 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 2004/05**

	Full-time	Part-time	Total
First Degree	2.0%	1.1%	1.9%
Other UG	6.6%	0.4%	1.6%
Total	2.6%	0.5%	1.8%

*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 2004/05**

	<b>Access (QAA recognised)</b>	<b>Access (other)</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Unknown</b>	<b>Total</b>
Medicine & dentistry	5	0	145	15	165
Subjects allied to medicine	2795	280	16430	3180	22680
Biological sciences	10	5	1735	80	1835
Veterinary science	0	0	0	0	0
Agriculture & related subjects	25	0	1170	45	1240
Physical sciences	5	0	450	20	475
Mathematical sciences	0	0	230	15	250
Computer science	40	25	3045	285	3395
Engineering & technology	30	5	2495	320	2850
Architecture, building & planning	0	5	795	75	875
Social studies	30	25	1365	150	1570
Law	5	0	950	35	990
Business & administrative studies	85	25	5775	795	6680
Mass communications & documentation	10	5	765	50	830
Languages	5	5	1495	280	1790
Historical and philosophical studies	5	0	270	155	435
Creative arts & design	90	15	4485	710	5300
Education	20	5	1625	225	1875
Combined	0	0	915	245	1160
<b>Total</b>	<b>3170</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>44135</b>	<b>6675</b>	<b>54390</b>

Table 4 summarises the subjects studied by all Access entrants.

**Table 4: Entrants with Access Qualification by Mode, Level and Subject Area 2004/05**

Level Mode	First Degree		Other UG		Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	
Medicine & dentistry	20	0	5	0	25
Subjects allied to medicine	1565	155	2795	110	4630
Biological sciences	630	55	10	10	705
Veterinary science	0	0	0	0	0
Agriculture & related subjects	35	0	25	0	60
Physical sciences	130	5	5	5	145
Mathematical sciences	50	5	0	0	55
Computer science	300	15	40	80	435
Engineering & technology	110	0	30	10	150
Architecture, building & planning	45	5	0	15	65
Social studies	1030	70	30	80	1210
Law	280	55	5	5	340
Business & administrative studies	455	35	85	65	645
Mass communications & documentation	120	5	10	5	145
Languages	350	25	5	35	145
Historical & philosophical studies	260	35	5	40	345
Creative arts & design	335	40	90	30	495
Education	565	20	20	170	775
Combined	60	15	0	20	90
<b>Total</b>	<b>6340</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>3170</b>	<b>670</b>	<b>10725</b>

Access entrants to undergraduate programmes during 2004/05 were concentrated in the post-1992 universities. Table 5 shows the institutions that recruited more than 200 students with an Access qualification.

**Table 5: Access entrants by Mode and Institution 2004/05**  
(Number of entrants and percentage of entrants with known qualification on entry)

	Full-time		Part-time		Total		% unknown qualification on entry
Thames Valley University	370	13.3%	60	1.1%	430	5.2%	30%
University of Central England in Birmingham	340	6.7%	15	0.4%	355	4.0%	5%
The Manchester Metropolitan University	295	3.7%	25	1.5%	320	3.3%	4%
Kingston University	280	4.9%	5	0.8%	285	4.5%	1%
The University of Teesside	220	6.5%	65	1.0%	285	2.9%	5%
The University of Wolverhampton	245	4.4%	40	1.1%	280	3.1%	0%
University of the West of England, Bristol	245	4.2%	20	0.7%	265	3.1%	5%
University of Hertfordshire	245	3.7%	15	1.0%	260	3.2%	4%
University of Chester	210	7.9%	25	1.5%	235	5.5%	7%
Anglia Ruskin University	190	4.5%	35	0.4%	225	1.7%	0%
London South Bank University	185	4.9%	40	1.5%	220	3.6%	19%
Coventry University	205	4.9%	10	0.3%	220	2.7%	0%
The University of East London	175	5.2%	35	3.0%	205	4.7%	6%
De Montfort University	185	3.1%	15	0.8%	205	2.5%	2%

## Access Entrants – Student Characteristics

Table 6 shows the gender split for entrants to undergraduate programmes in 2004/05.

**Table 6: Entrants to Undergraduate Programmes by Level, Entry Qualification and Gender 2004/05**

Level Entry Qualification	First-degree			Other UG			Total
	Access	Other	% Access	Access	Other	% Access	
Female	4870	197585	2.4%	3280	151590	2.1%	357325
Male	2010	163065	1.2%	560	80630	0.7%	246265
<b>Total</b>	<b>6880</b>	<b>360650</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>3845</b>	<b>232220</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>603595</b>

*Excludes unknown qualification on entry*

The table shows that there are more females than males entering undergraduate programmes in 2004/05 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	5	0	3695	4220	7925
18 to 20	570	30	256160	13775	270535
21 to 24	2205	110	50210	30890	83415
25 to 29	1910	195	17740	35805	55650
30 and over	4820	875	27340	150765	183800
Unknown	5	0	135	2130	2270
<b>Total</b>	<b>9515</b>	<b>1210</b>	<b>355285</b>	<b>237585</b>	<b>603595</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 similar 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.

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 2004/05**

Level Entry Qualification	First-degree		Other UG		Total
	Access	Other	Access	Other	
White	4605	245285	2410	171610	423905
Black or Black British - Caribbean	315	4980	190	3705	9190
Black or Black British - African	630	10310	720	6980	18640
Other Black background	70	1315	50	885	2320
Asian or Asian British - Indian	115	14245	25	4310	18695
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	155	8210	40	2650	11060
Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi	65	3220	10	920	4215
Chinese	25	3410	5	1160	4605
Other Asian background	105	4025	35	3115	7280
Other	310	10490	125	4400	15325
Not known	260	11865	140	15440	27700
<b>Total</b>	<b>6650</b>	<b>317355</b>	<b>3750</b>	<b>215180</b>	<b>542935</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 2004/05. Entrants with Access qualifications are proportionately twice as likely to report dyslexia than entrants with other qualifications, though the relatively high proportion of "not known" records in the Other category might be masking a different pattern.

**Table 9: Entrants to Undergraduate Programmes by Level, Entry Qualification and Disability 2004/05**

Level Entry Qualification	First-degree		Other UG		Total
	Access	Other	Access	Other	
No known disability	6070	316105	3495	191195	516865
Dyslexia	380	11690	155	3510	15730
Blind/Partially sighted	20	540	5	360	925
Deaf/Hearing impairment	30	855	15	965	1870
Wheelchair user/Mobility difficulties	35	610	10	790	1445
Personal care support	5	30	0	35	70
Mental health difficulties	50	1020	10	625	1705
An unseen disability (*)	120	3870	60	2285	6335
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	5	155	0	40	200
Multiple disabilities	75	1655	10	1155	2895
A disability not listed above	80	2385	35	1485	3985
Not known	15	21735	45	29765	51565
<b>Total</b>	<b>6880</b>	<b>360650</b>	<b>3845</b>	<b>232220</b>	<b>603595</b>

*Excludes unknown qualification on entry*

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

## Access Students - Qualifications Awarded

Note: Since this section is likely to include 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 2004/05, 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 2004/05 to students who entered HE with an Access Qualification**

	First-degree	Other UG	Total
Medicine & dentistry	5	0	5
Subjects allied to medicine	1160	1930	3090
Biological sciences	480	40	525
Agriculture & related subjects	20	10	30
Physical sciences	125	5	130
Mathematical sciences	25	5	30
Computer science	335	70	400
Engineering & technology	80	30	110
Architecture, building & planning	20	5	25
Social studies	680	170	855
Law	190	25	215
Business & administrative studies	265	65	330
Mass communications and documentation	95	25	115
Languages	410	30	435
Historical and philosophical studies	340	20	360
Creative arts & design	345	80	425
Education	505	80	585
Combined	55	5	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>5135</b>	<b>2595</b>	<b>7730</b>

Table 11 shows the number 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 2004/05**

	Access	Other	Total
First class	460	27585	28045
Upper second class	2185	112980	115170
Lower second class	1840	77870	79710
Third class / Pass	490	17745	18235
Unclassified	160	13300	13460
<b>Total</b>	<b>5135</b>	<b>249480</b>	<b>254620</b>

*Excludes unknown qualification on entry*