

## Students Entering Higher Education Institutions with Access Qualifications – Non-continuation and Employment rates

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### Introduction

In 2004, HESA took over the calculation and publication of the performance indicators (PI) for higher education institutions (HEI). These PIs, published in previous years by HEFCE, include information about the progression of students at individual HEIs and their employment outcomes. The full PI publication can be found at [www.hesa.ac.uk/pi](http://www.hesa.ac.uk/pi).

The sector figures can be broken down by entry qualification and subject of study with certain caveats. The HESA student record provides the 'highest qualification on entry' of each student, one of the categories being 'access course'. Although it is possible to distinguish between 'QAA recognised' and 'other' access courses in the HESA student record from 2002/03 onwards, the employment indicator includes some students who entered before this date and therefore it is not possible to make a complete distinction in this case.

The following tables give values for mature students, i.e. those who were over 21 when they entered higher education. As the main interest here is in students from QAA recognised access courses, who are predominantly mature, this provides the most appropriate basis for comparison.

### Non-continuation rates

The non-continuation rate is the proportion of students who enter a full-time first-degree programme in a particular year who are no longer studying in HE the following year and have not obtained a qualification. Table A shows the results for all mature entrants on full-time first degree programmes and compares the non-continuation rates for those entering with QAA recognised access qualifications and those entering with other qualifications.

**Table A – Non-continuation rates of mature entrants by entry qualification 2002/03**

<b>Entry qualifications</b>	<b>Number of entrants</b>	<b>Non-continuation rates (%)</b>
Access course (QAA recognised)	7005	14.4
Other access courses and foundation courses	4355	13.3
A-levels / Scottish Highers with zero or unknown tariff score	12890	16.0
A-levels / AS levels / Scottish Highers, with up to 160 tariff score or Baccalaureate	3835	12.8
A-levels / AS levels / Scottish Highers, with over 160 and up to 200 tariff score	1015	12.8
A-levels / AS levels / Scottish Highers, with over 200 and up to 230 tariff score	550	10.2
A-levels / AS levels / Scottish Highers, with over 230 and up to 290 tariff score	1245	9.4
A-levels / AS levels / Scottish Highers, with over 290 tariff score	1710	10.6
BTEC or VCE or GNVQ and no A-levels / AS levels / Scottish Highers	3390	15.7
Higher education qualification	21070	13.6
Other or unknown qualification	12885	21.1
<b>All entry qualifications</b>	<b>69955</b>	<b>15.4</b>

Table B shows equivalent figures by subject of study, for subjects where there were at least 300 QAA recognised access entrants.

**Table B – Non-continuation rates of mature entrants by subject of study 2002/03**

Subject of study	All entrants		QAA access entrants	
	Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)
B Subjects allied to medicine	9620	11.8	1410	11.4
C Biological sciences and physical sciences	6885	17.7	910	16.7
E Mathematical sciences and computer sciences	7305	20.3	525	18.1
H Social studies and law	9325	15.4	1345	16.9
I Business and administrative studies and mass communications and documentation	10305	18.0	465	14.4
J Languages and humanities	6070	15.6	955	13.9
K Creative arts and design	8170	12.1	360	10.4
L Education	3770	10.1	715	11.2
All other subjects (grouped)*	8500	15.5	325	18.2
<b>All subjects of study</b>	<b>69955</b>	<b>15.4</b>	<b>7005</b>	<b>14.4</b>

\* Includes all subjects with less than 300 QAA recognised access students.

### Employment rates

Approximately six months after graduation from a full-time first degree programme, students are asked to complete a Destinations of Leavers from HE (DLHE) survey. This gathers information, where applicable, about employment, further study or training and other outcomes after graduation. The following tables show employment rates for those who entered their programme as mature students and who graduated in 2003/04. Table C breaks the numbers down by entry qualification and Table D focuses on subject of study.

**Table C – Employment rates of those who entered HE as mature students by entry qualifications 2003/04**

Entry qualifications	Number of respondents	Employment rates (%)
Access course (including QAA recognised)*	3670	89.5
Other access courses and foundation courses	1130	88.8
A-levels / Scottish Highers with zero or unknown point score	2535	92.2
A-levels / AS levels / Scottish Highers, with up to 8 points or 160 tariff score or Baccalaureate	2070	91.3
A-levels / AS levels / Scottish Highers, with 9 to 12 points or over 160 and up to 200 tariff score	1200	90.6
A-levels / AS levels / Scottish Highers, with 13 to 18 points or over 200 and up to 230 tariff score	1460	91.6
A-levels / AS levels / Scottish Highers, with 19 to 24 points or over 230 and up to 290 tariff score	1145	94.1
A-levels / AS levels / Scottish Highers, with 25 to 30 points or over 290 tariff score	760	93.0
BTEC or VCE or GNVQ and no A-levels / AS levels / Scottish Highers	1955	89.7
Higher education qualification	10275	92.3
Other or unknown qualification	4485	90.4
<b>All entry qualifications</b>	<b>30685</b>	<b>91.3</b>

\* Includes students with comdate before 01/09/2002 who are coded with qualent2 = 48

**Table D – Employment rates of those who entered HE as mature students by subject of study 2003/04**

Subject of study	All graduates who entered HE as mature students		Graduates with access* entry qualifications	
	Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)
02 Nursing, ophthalmics, medical technology	2895	98.8	440	98.9
03 Other subjects allied to medicine	2000	94.8	335	92.7
04 Biological science	2035	91.4	370	89.7
12 Other social studies, law	2550	91.3	400	87.0
15 Languages, humanities	2940	90.0	600	87.2
18 Education	1845	95.5	355	94.2
All other subjects (grouped)**	16420	89.4	1,170	85.7
<b>All subjects of study</b>	<b>30685</b>	<b>91.3</b>	<b>3670</b>	<b>89.5</b>

\* Includes students with comdate before 01/09/2002 who are coded with qualent2 = 48

\*\* Includes all subjects with less than 300 QAA recognised access students.