

## 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 2003/04**

Entry qualifications	Number of entrants	Non-continuation rates (%)
Access course (QAA recognised)*	6825	14.2
Other access courses and foundation courses	4930	15.0
A-levels / Scottish Highers with zero or unknown tariff score	8745	18.6
A-levels / AS levels / Scottish Highers, with up to 160 tariff score or Baccalaureate	5160	11.9
A-levels / AS levels / Scottish Highers, with over 160 and up to 200 tariff score	1525	11.8
A-levels / AS levels / Scottish Highers, with over 200 and up to 230 tariff score	895	11.0
A-levels / AS levels / Scottish Highers, with over 230 and up to 290 tariff score	2040	10.8
A-levels / AS levels / Scottish Highers, with over 290 tariff score	3025	9.2
BTEC or VCE or GNVQ and no A-levels / AS levels / Scottish Highers	3485	16.3
Higher education qualification	21880	14.2
Other or unknown qualification	13635	20.9
<b>All entry qualifications total</b>	<b>72145</b>	<b>15.6</b>

\* Includes any students coded as qualent2 = 48

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 2003/04**

Subject of study	All entrants		Access course (QAA recognised)* entrants	
	Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)
Subjects allied to medicine	11840	12.5	1480	10.9
Biological sciences	5220	17.5	695	15.6
Computer sciences	5900	19.0	410	19.3
Social studies	7780	14.3	1060	11.7
Law	2470	17.7	315	21.5
Business & administrative studies	8175	19.2	380	19.5
Languages	3175	15.7	440	15.1
Historical & philosophical studies	2495	15.8	330	17.3
Creative arts & design	8220	14.4	335	13.5
Education	3775	11.8	735	11.4
All other subjects (grouped)	13110	16.0	640	15.3
<b>All subjects total</b>	<b>72145</b>	<b>15.6</b>	<b>6825</b>	<b>14.2</b>

\* Includes any students coded as qualent2 = 48

Note: The category "all other subjects (grouped)" includes all subjects with less than 300 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 2004/05. Table C breaks the numbers down by entry qualification and Table D focuses on subject of study.

**Table C – Employment rates (including further study) for those who entered HE as mature students by entry qualifications 2004/05**

Entry qualifications	Number in base population	Employment rates (including further study) (%)
Access course (QAA recognised)*	3315	89.0
Other access courses and foundation courses	1435	87.0
A-levels / Scottish Highers with zero or unknown point score	4580	91.8
A-levels / AS levels / Scottish Highers, with up to 8 points or 160 tariff score or Baccalaureate	2350	90.7
A-levels / AS levels / Scottish Highers, with 9 to 12 points or over 160 and up to 200 tariff score	765	92.0
A-levels / AS levels / Scottish Highers, with 13 to 18 points or over 200 and up to 230 tariff score	640	93.9
A-levels / AS levels / Scottish Highers, with 19 to 24 points or over 230 and up to 290 tariff score	920	93.5
A-levels / AS levels / Scottish Highers, with 25 to 30 points or over 290 tariff score	1075	95.5

BTEC or VCE or GNVQ and no A-levels / AS levels / Scottish Highers	1670	87.2
Higher education qualification	10420	92.0
Other or unknown qualification	4045	90.5
<b>All entry qualifications total</b>	<b>31210</b>	<b>91.1</b>

\* Includes any students coded as qualent2 = 48

**Table D – Employment rates (including further study) for those who entered HE as mature students by subject of study 2004/05**

Subject of study	All graduates who entered HE as mature students		Graduates with access course (QAA recognised)* entry qualifications	
	Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)
Subjects allied to medicine	5810	96.7	800	94.9
Biological sciences	2185	90.8	315	87.3
Social studies	2670	90.8	430	84.9
Education	2170	95.7	430	95.2
All other subjects (grouped)	18375	88.8	1340	85.2
<b>All subjects total</b>	<b>31210</b>	<b>91.1</b>	<b>3315</b>	<b>89.0</b>

\* includes any students coded as qualent2 = 48

Note: The category "all other subjects (grouped)" includes all subjects with less than 300 Access students