



**Access to Higher Education
statistics summary
(2005-06)**

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Introduction

The information presented here summarises statistical data about the number and type of Access to Higher Education (HE) programmes and students in the academic year 2005-06. Figures are derived from data received from the authorised validating agencies (AVAs), the partnership organisations which are licensed by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) to recognise Access to HE programmes in England and Wales. There were 22 AVAs in 2005-06.

Where it is available, data for the last five years is presented. However, a number of new or revised categories were introduced in 2002-03, so a reliable time series is not available in all areas. Some changes also result from improved data collection or reporting, rather than real changes in the profile. Any assumptions about 'trends' should therefore be made with caution, especially where change is detected just between one year and another, or where numbers or percentage changes are relatively small.

Readers should note that learner data has been adjusted in line with QAA's rounding policy, according to which numbers which relate to learners are rounded to the nearest five. Rounded totals are calculated from the raw data: as a result, some of the totals given here are not equivalent to the sum of the rounded constituent elements.

1 Providers involved in delivering Access to HE programmes

- There were **380** providers of Access to HE programmes in 2005-06.
- Twenty three Access to HE providers were in Wales: 357 were in England.
- About **80 per cent** of Access to HE programmes were delivered in further education colleges (FECs).

There was a six per cent decrease in the number of participating providers recorded in 2005-06 compared to 2004-05 (from 405 to 380). The majority of the decrease in the number of providers was accounted for by the reduced number of providing FECs in England (from 309 to 288). The number of providing higher education institutions (HEIs) increased for the first time since 2002-03, and was the only category of providers to show an increase. The percentage of providers which are FECs continues to account for around 82 per cent of all providers.

Table 1: Providers offering Access to HE programmes

Providers	2001-02		2002-03		2003-04		2004-05		2005-06	
FECs	334	79%	330	79%	334	81%	332	82%	311	82%
HEIs	17	4%	20	5%	17	4%	13	3%	17	5%
Sixth form colleges	22	5%	17	4%	14	3%	15	4%	13	3%
Adult/community education	24	6%	23	6%	22	5%	26	6%	22	6%
Schools	2	0%	3	1%	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Other	22	5%	23	6%	22	5%	19	5%	17	4%
Total	421		416		410		405		380	

2 Access to HE programmes

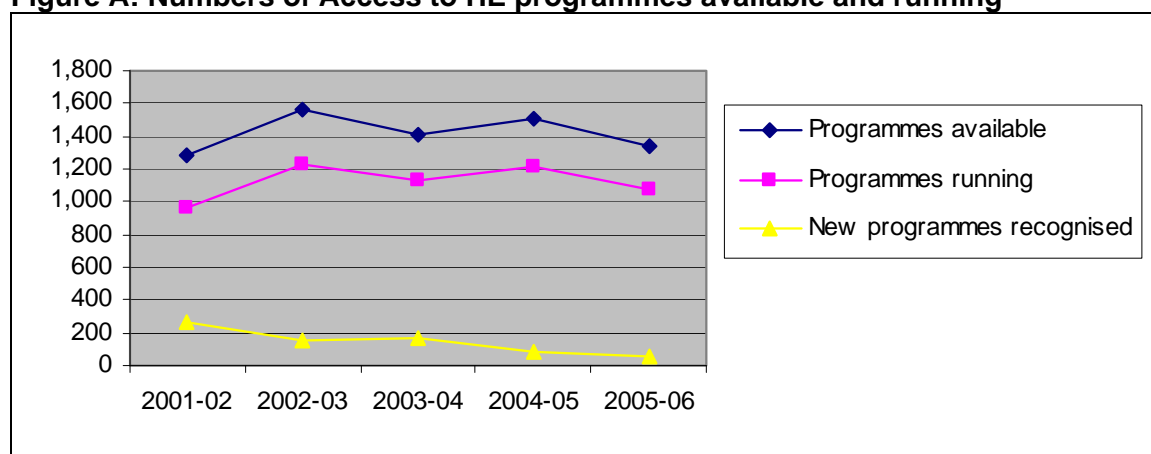
There were 1,079 Access to HE programmes running in 2005-06.

The number of programmes running has decreased since 2002-03 when there had been an exceptional and unexplained increase from the previous year, but has increased overall since 2001-02. The number of programmes available follows the same pattern. The number of new programmes has varied markedly in past years, but since 2003-04 has declined to less than a third (from 166 to 50). The lower number of new programmes (50) recorded in 2005-06 is less than in any previous year.

Table 2: Numbers of Access to HE programmes available and running

	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Programmes available	1,281	1,568	1,407	1,506	1,341
Programmes running	961	1,233	1,125	1,210	1,079
New programmes recognised	259	147	166	88	50

Figure A: Numbers of Access to HE programmes available and running



3 Access to HE awards available

The biggest decreases in awards available between 2004-05 and 2005-06 were for Access to HE programmes leading to:

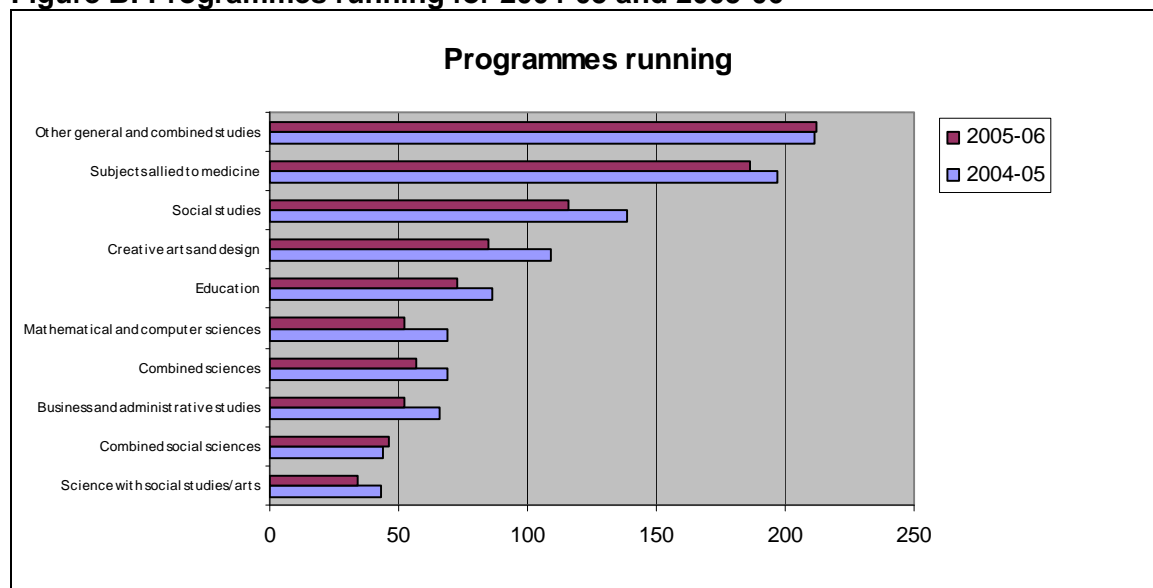
- **creative arts and design (-24)**
- **social studies (-23)**
- **mathematical and computer sciences (-17).**

Table 3 and Figure B present data about the 10 subject areas with 40 or more programmes available and running. The subject category with the highest number of programmes available and running in 2005-06 was 'other general and combined studies' (this category includes programmes which have a number of separate, subject-specific pathways). This was also the category with the highest number of programmes available and running in 2004-05, and was one of only two categories in 2005-06 that showed a small increase in the number of programmes running. Most other subject areas showed decreases in the number of subjects available and running, the biggest decreases between the two years being in creative arts and design, in social studies and in mathematical and computer sciences.

Table 3: Awards available and running (by designated progression route)

	Progs available		Progs running		% all progs running 2005-06
	2004-05	2005-06	2004-05	2005-06	
Other general and combined studies	243	241	211	212	20%
Subjects allied to medicine	217	199	197	186	17%
Social studies	175	146	139	116	11%
Creative arts and design	136	115	109	85	8%
Education	107	90	86	73	7%
Combined sciences	89	77	69	57	5%
Mathematical and computer sciences	98	76	69	52	5%
Business and administrative studies	101	78	66	52	5%
Combined social sciences	46	56	44	46	4%
Social studies with arts	57	58	54	54	5%

Figure B: Programmes running for 2004-05 and 2005-06



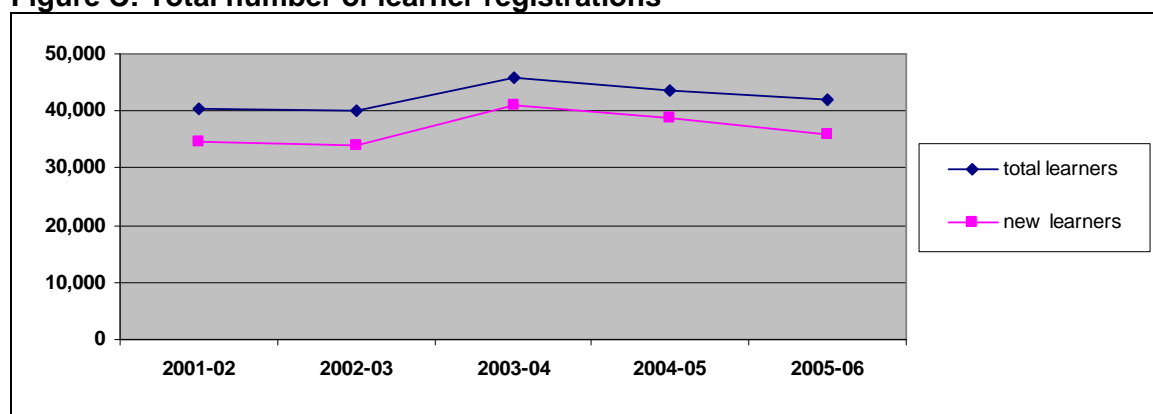
4 Learner registrations on Access to HE programmes

- 41,984 total learners registered on QAA-recognised Access to HE programmes in 2005-06.

Table 4a: Total number of learner registrations on Access to HE programmes

	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Total learner registrations	40,485	40,220	45,875	43,635	41,984
Total number of new learners registered	34,640	33,865	40,970	38,670	35,992

Figure C: Total number of learner registrations



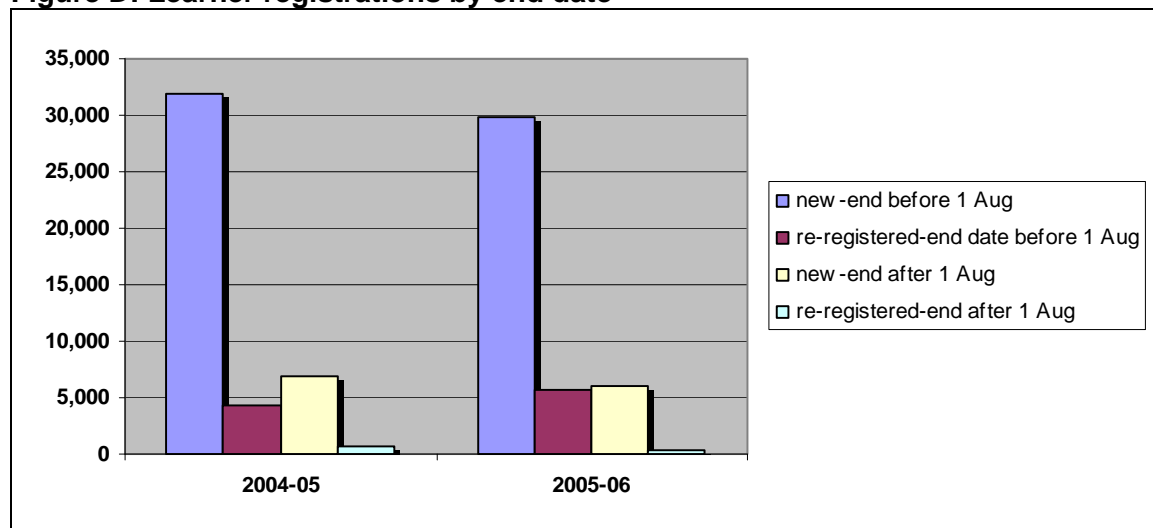
There was a decrease of four per cent in the number of Access to HE learner registrations in 2005-06 from the previous year. However, the number of Access to HE learners remained at a higher level than recorded in 2001-02 and 2002-03. There was a larger decrease in the number of new learner registrations, with a seven per cent fall from 2004-05 to 2005-06.

- **35,546 (85 per cent)** Access to HE learners in 2005-06 were registered to complete their programmes within the same academic year.

Table 4b: Learner registrations by end date

	2004-05	2005-06
New learners registered: expected end date before 1 Aug	31,860 (73%)	29,878 (71%)
Re-registered: expected end date before 1 Aug	4,345 (10%)	5,668 (14%)
New learners registered: expected end date on/after 1 Aug	6,811 (16%)	6,114 (15%)
Re-registered: expected end date after 1 Aug	618 (1%)	324 (1%)

Figure D: Learner registrations by end date



The fall in the total number of learners registered between 2004-05 and 2005-06 (see above) was reflected in the fall of new learners registered to complete within the same and the following academic year. The number of learners who re-registered to complete within the same academic year was the only category of learners which increased from 2004-05 to 2005-06.

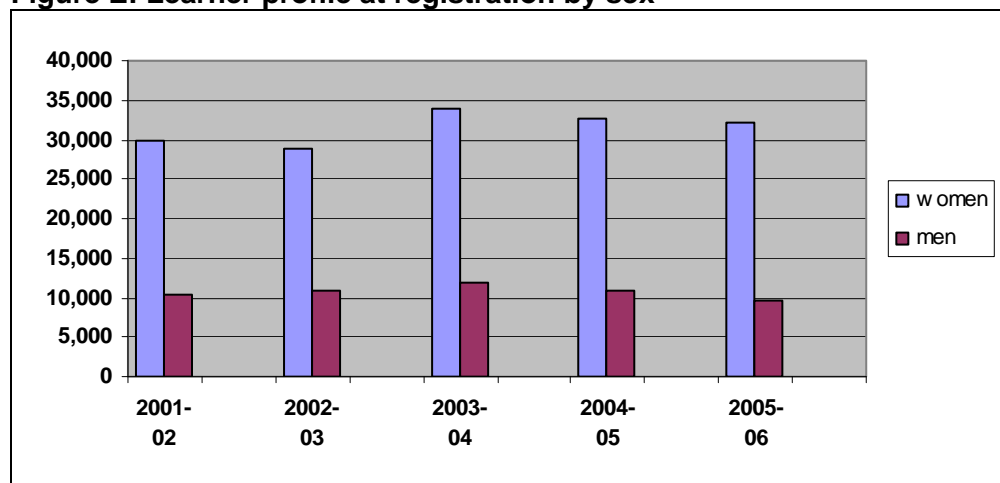
5 Learner profile at registration

- **Seventy-seven per cent of Access to HE learners in 2005-06 were women.**

Table 5a: Learner profile at registration (by sex)

	2001-02		2002-03		2003-04		2004-05		2005-06	
women	29,785	74%	29,280	73%	33,965	74%	32,680	75%	32,269	77%
men	10,450	26%	10,940	27%	11,910	26%	10,955	25%	9,715	23%

Figure E: Learner profile at registration by sex



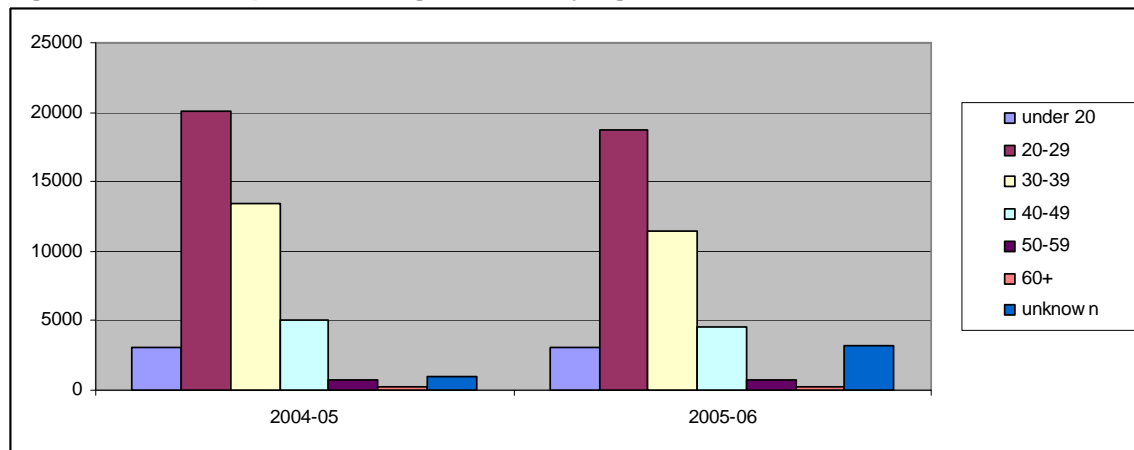
Since 2002-03 the proportion of women registered on Access to HE programmes has gradually increased (73% to 77%), with a corresponding fall in the proportion of men. The fall in the number of learners in 2005-06 compared to the previous year was accounted for mainly by a reduction in the number of male learners.

- **Fifty-two per cent** of Access to HE learners in 2005-06 **were under 30**.

Table 5b: Learner profile at registration (by age)

	2004-05 all learners (% of total)	2005-06 all learners (% of total)	2005-06 female learners (% female learners)	2005-06 male learners (% male learners)
Under 20	3,035 (7%)	3,070 (7%)	1,917 (6%)	1,153(12%)
20-29	20,035 (46%)	18,753 (45%)	13,848 (43%)	4,905(50%)
30-39	13,420 (31%)	11,440 (27%)	9,384(29%)	2,056(21%)
40-49	5,050 (12%)	4,600 (11%)	3,614 (11%)	986(10%)
50-59	775 (2%)	721 (2%)	475 (1%)	246(3%)
60 +	290 (1%)	220 (1%)	141 (0%)	79(1%)
Unknown	1,030 (2%)	3,180 (8%)	2,890(9%)	290(3%)
Total	43,635	41,984	32,269	9,715

Figure F: Learner profile at registration by age



The age group with the largest number of learners in 2005-06 was the 20-29 group. The number of learners aged under 20 increased from 3,035 to 3,070 between the two years, while the numbers in all other age groups decreased. The number of unknowns increased from 1,030 in 2004-05 to 3,180 in 2005-06. Male learners tend to be younger than female learners, with 62 per cent of male learners being under 30, compared to 49 per cent of female learners. Incomplete information from one AVA, in respect of 2,650 learners, caused the increase in the number of unknowns.

- **Twenty per cent** of Access to HE learners in 2005-06 were from **minority ethnic groups**.

Table 5c: Learner profile at registration (by ethnicity)

	2005-06 male learners	2005-06 female learners	2004-05 all learners (% of total)	2005-06 all learners (% of total)
Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi	73	97	310 (1%)	170 (0%)
Asian or Asian British: Indian	135	272	585 (1%)	407 (1%)
Asian or Asian British: Pakistani	243	331	790 (2%)	574 (1%)
Asian or Asian British: any other Asian	152	190	490 (1%)	342 (1%)
Black or Black British: African	830	1,778	3,565 (8%)	2,608 (6%)

Black or Black British: Caribbean	274	1,129	1,715 (4%)	1,403 (3%)
Black or Black British: any other	140	411	570 (1%)	551 (1%)
Chinese	176	322	265 (1%)	498 (1%)
Mixed: White and Asian	37	116	190 (0%)	153 (0%)
Mixed: White and black African	81	167	270 (1%)	248 (1%)
Mixed: White and black Caribbean	78	287	420 (1%)	365 (1%)
Mixed: any other	70	280	265 (1%)	350 (1%)
White: British	5,102	18,810	27,900 (64%)	23,912 (57%)
White: Irish	67	196	296 (1%)	263 (1%)
White: any other	250	637	1,080 (2%)	887 (2%)
Any other	289	461	860 (2%)	750 (2%)
Not known/not provided	1,718	6,785	4,070 (9%)	8,503 (20%)
Total	9,715	32,269	43,635	41,984

The proportions of learners across the ethnicity categories in 2005-06 remained similar to previous years, with 60 per cent of learners being from White ethnic groups; 10 per cent from Black and Black British groups; four per cent from Asian, Asian British and Chinese groups; two per cent from other groups; and 20 per cent for whom the ethnic background is unknown or not recorded

Table 5d: Learner profile at registration (by disadvantage)

	2004-05 total learners in category (% of total)	2005-06 total learners in category (% of total)
From deprived area: postcode on LSC file	11,505 (26%)	9,021 (21%)
From deprived area: postcode not on LSC file	195 (0%)	668 (2%)
Other LSC widening participation category (funding claimed)	875 (2%)	959 (2%)
No funding claimed against widening participation category/no information	31,060 (71%)	31,336 (75%)

The number of learners recorded as receiving LSC uplift funding fell between 2004-05 and 2005-06. However, the data presented here is based on incomplete AVA data and therefore may not be reliable.

5e Learner profile at registration: disability and learning difficulty

- **Seven per cent** of Access to HE learners in 2005-06 had a disability and/or learning difficulty.

Table 11: Learner profile at registration (by disability/learning difficulty)

	2004-05 total learners in category (% of total)	2005-06 total learners in category (% of total)
Disability/ies	1,115 (3%)	1,006 (2%)
Learning difficulty/ies	1,120 (3%)	1,242 (3%)
Disability and learning difficulty/ies	400 (1%)	701 (2%)
No disability or learning difficulty	28,695 (66%)	24,281 (58%)
No information provided	12,304 (28%)	14,754 (35%)

The percentage of Access to HE learners with disabilities and/or learning difficulties stayed the same in 2005-06 compared to 2004-05. The number for whom no information was provided increased significantly from the previous year, and represented 35 per cent of the total.

6 Learner completion and achievement

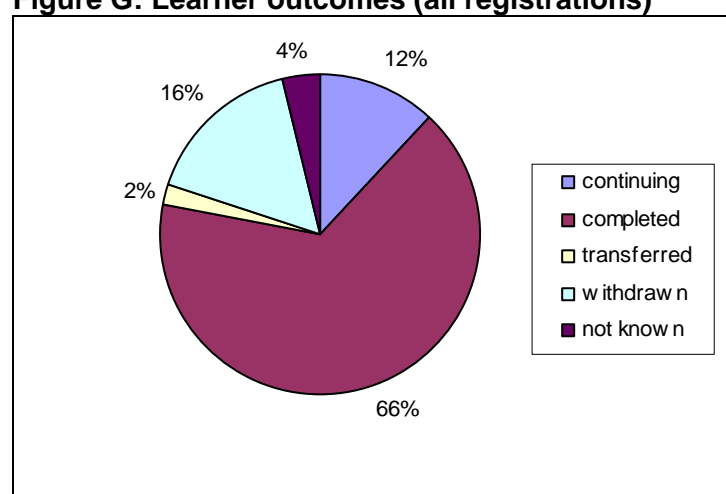
Learner completion: all registrations* (see table 6a, below)

- **Sixty six per cent** of all Access to HE students who registered on an Access to HE programme in 2005-06 completed it in that year.
- A further **12 per cent** were expected to continue their Access to HE studies in 2005-06.

Table 6a: Learner outcomes (all registrations)

	Study continuing	No achievement	Partial achievement	Access to HE cert awarded	Total learners (% of total in category)
Continuing	4,690	0	226	0	4,916 (12%)
Completed prog	0	3,402	4,141	20,103	27,646 (66%)
Transferred	5	615	29	0	649 (2%)
Withdrawn	48	6,406	415	71	6,940 (16%)
Not known	0	955	134	744	1,833 (4%)
Total	4,743	11,378	4,945	20,918	41,984

Figure G: Learner outcomes (all registrations)



Learner achievement: accreditation of withdrawals

Table 6b: Withdrawals

	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Withdrawn: partial accreditation	1,425 (4%)	1,000 (2%)	872 (2%)	415 (1%)
Withdrawn: no accreditation	6,780 (17%)	7,130 (16%)	6,700 (15%)	6,406 (15%)

The number and proportion of Access to HE learners who withdrew from their programme of study decreased over the period, with a reduction from 8,205 in 2002-03 to 6,821 in 2005-06, a fall of 17 per cent.

6c Learner achievement: award of Access to HE certificates

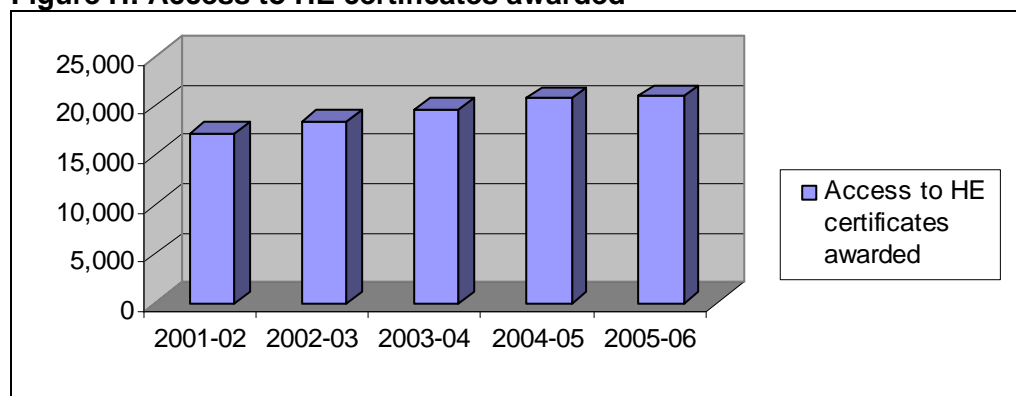
- Over **20,000 Access to HE certificates** were awarded in 2005-06.
- Of those completing the programme, **76 per cent were awarded Access to HE certificates**.
- Of those registered to complete the programme within the same academic year, **59 per cent were awarded the Access to HE certificate**.

Table 6c: Access to HE certificates awarded

	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Access to HE certificates awarded	17,085	18,395	19,605	20,690	20,918

The number of Access to HE certificates awarded continued to increase between 2004-05 and 2005-06. This is the highest number of Access to HE certificates awarded in one year ever recorded. Fifty nine per cent of the number who were expected to complete their Access to HE programme before 1 August 2006 were awarded an Access to HE certificate within that year.

Figure H: Access to HE certificates awarded



Learner registrations and awards by designated progression route (2004-05)

Table 6d: Learner registrations and awards by designated progression route

	Learner registrations	Access to HE certificate awarded
Other general and combined studies	13,769	6,799
Access to nursing	4,206	1,982
Science combined with social studies/arts	3,666	2,046
Access to health studies	3,222	1,592
Creative arts and design	2,099	1,076
Social studies combined with arts	2,242	1,087
Other subjects allied to medicine	1,812	891
Combined social sciences	1,549	657
Other social studies	1,510	701
Combined science	1,399	677

The table above provides the subject areas with more than 1,000 students registered as learners together with the number of Access to HE certificates awarded in those subject areas. Of the 29 subject areas for which data was provided, seven subjects had fewer

than 100 learners registered, 12 had between 100 and 1,000 learners registered and 10 had more than 1,000 registered learners. Thirteen of the subject areas had more than 50 per cent certificates awarded as a proportion of total learner registrations.

Learner progression: intended destination (of completers)

Table 6e: Learner progression: intended destination

	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Progressing to HE course	10,425	12,025	14,045	14,775	12,758
Progressing to FE course	2,625	1,380	1,010	1,050	852
Progressing to employment	1,130	1,820	1,250	1,395	1,399
Other	870	1,500	1,070	850	1,186
Unknown	12,445	18,785	23,820	12,110	13,888