Key Statistics 2023-24

This key statistics document demonstrates the continued success of the Access to HE Diploma in enabling adults to enter and succeed in higher education, and to support local and national skills needs.

The Access to HE Diploma is a widely recognised Level 3 qualification that provides opportunities for adults to transition to enter higher education. It also offers chances for adults wishing to retrain for a second graduate-entry profession by delivering locally-devised, flexible courses across the UK.

In this document we have used only AVA registration data submitted to QAA to show the number of individuals studying an Access to HE Diploma.

Numbers have been rounded throughout this document, in accordance with rounding policies. This means the sum of numbers may not correspond exactly to the totals within the document.

In 2023-24:

18,320
Access to HE students entering higher education in September 2023
2022-23: 20,990

Source: HESA/Jisc

36,185
Students registered on an Access to HE Diploma
2022-23: 34,635

18,285
Access to HE students applying to higher education who were accepted for September 2024 entry
2022-23: 19,320

Source: UCAS

16,570 Registered to complete in one academic year
2022-23: 20,100

19,610 Registered to complete in more than one academic year
2022-23: 14,535

Source: AVAs

Students entering higher education in September 2023 with an Access to HE Diploma



Source: HESA/Jisc

What do they study in higher education?

	Entrants with an Access to HE Diploma	% of Access to HE Diploma entrants by subject
Subjects allied to medicine[1]	9,885	10.1%
Social sciences	1,775	2.2%
Business and management	1,260	0.8%
Psychology	1,000	2.9%
Computing	615	1.3%

1 including all forms of nursing

Source: HESA/Jisc

Where do they study in higher education?

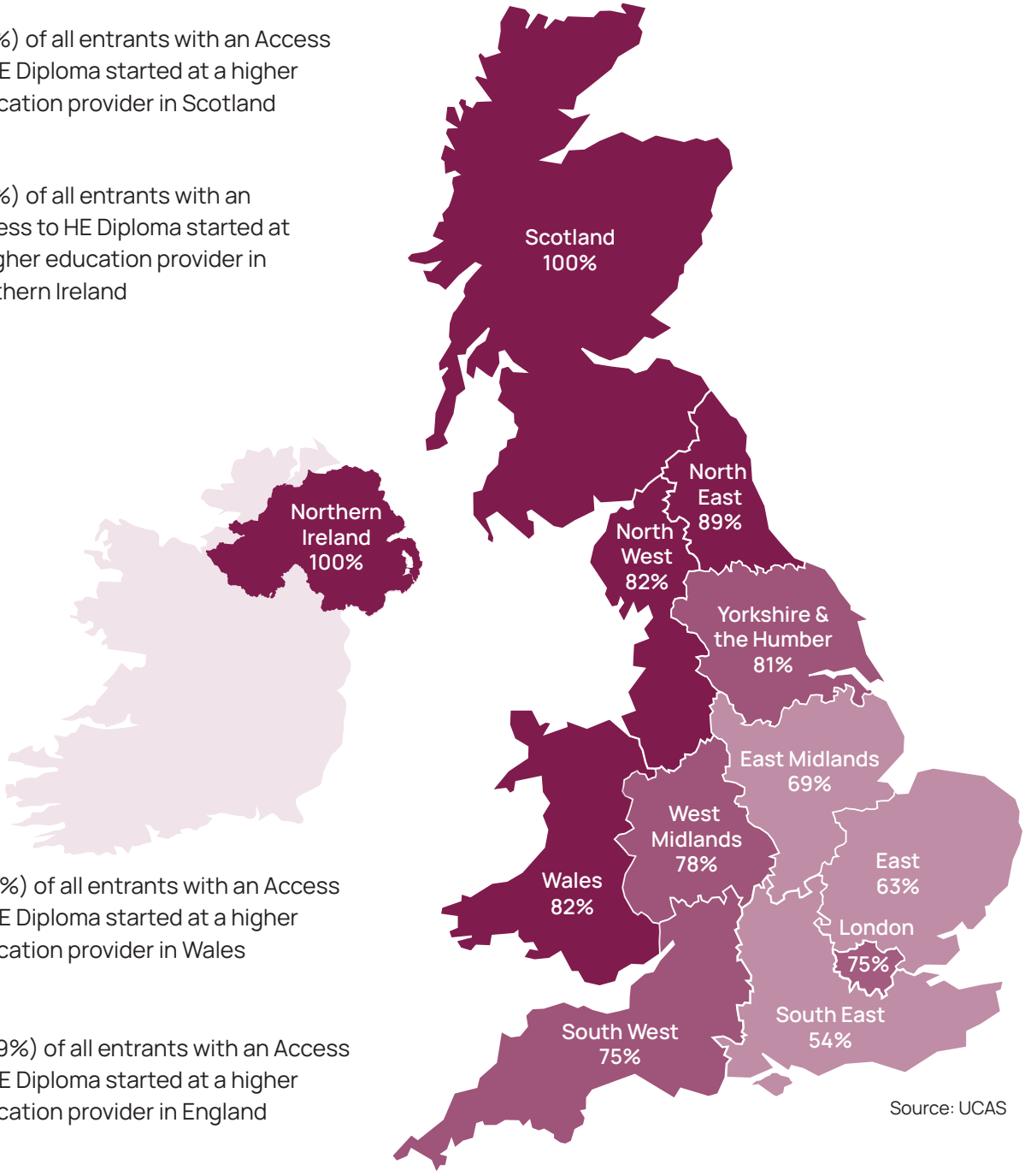
75%
of Access to HE students stayed in their local area to study in higher education

The Scottish Wider Access Programme runs the access to HE scheme in Scotland. The map shows individuals resident in Scotland who studied a QAA-recognised Access to HE Diploma and were accepted to a higher education provider in Scotland.

Source: UCAS

760 (4.1%) of all entrants with an Access to HE Diploma started at a higher education provider in Scotland

380 (2.1%) of all entrants with an Access to HE Diploma started at a higher education provider in Northern Ireland



Source: UCAS

1,080 (5.9%) of all entrants with an Access to HE Diploma started at a higher education provider in Wales

16,100 (87.9%) of all entrants with an Access to HE Diploma started at a higher education provider in England

Source: HESA

16%
of students domiciled in the South East are accepted at higher education providers in London.

Read Amy's story

Source: UCAS

How well are they retained in higher education?

	Access to HE Diploma students as a percentage of all students with an Access to HE Diploma	Students with other Level 3 qualifications as a percentage of all students with other Level 3 qualifications
Continue or qualify at same HE provider	87.0%	87.1%
No longer in HE	10.7%	9.8%
Transfer to another HE provider	2.4%	3.1%

Source: HESA

Students with an Access to HE Diploma are as likely to continue or qualify at the same HE provider as students with other qualifications. However, they are more likely to leave their studies than move to another HE provider.

Students registered to study on an Access to HE Diploma in 2023-24

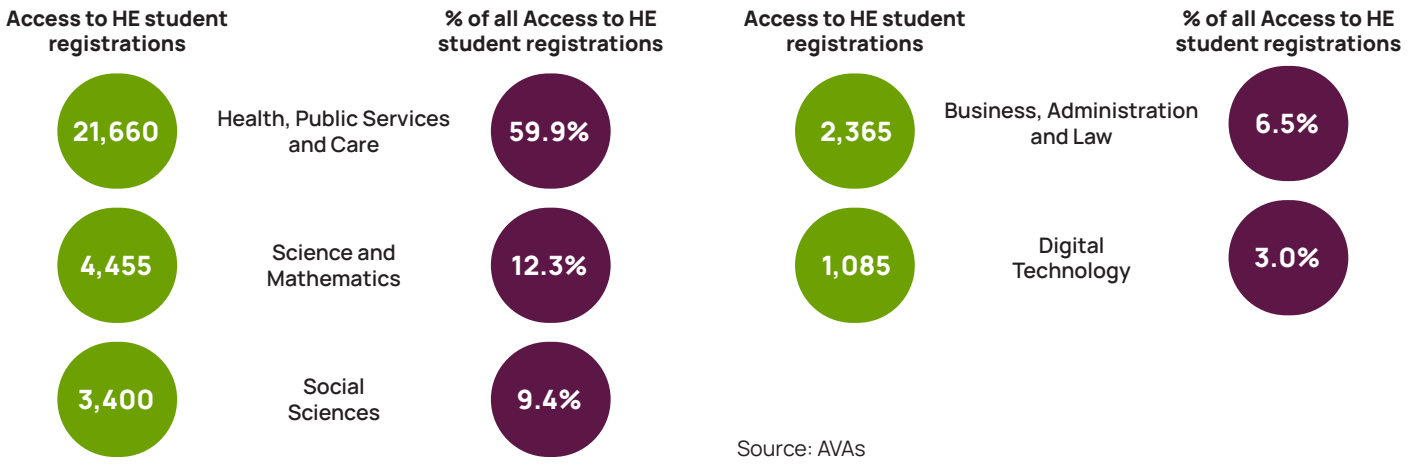


Source: AVAs

What do they study as their Access to HE Diploma?

In 2023-24 students studied on **150** different Diploma titles

Take a look at our course search



Source: AVAs

59.9% were in subjects in Health, Public Services and Care

Read Sheree's story

Where do they study their Access to HE Diploma?

34,640 Access to HE students (95.7% of all registrations) are studying at providers based in England

1,485 Access to HE students (4.1% of all registrations) are studying at providers based in Wales

55 Access to HE students (0.2% of all registrations) are studying at providers based in Northern Ireland, Channel Islands and Isle of Man

62.8% study within a further education college

34.6% study within a private training provider or other education provider

2.6% study within a higher education provider

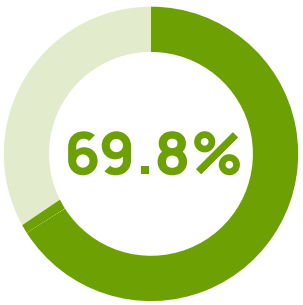
Source: AVAs

What results did they get?



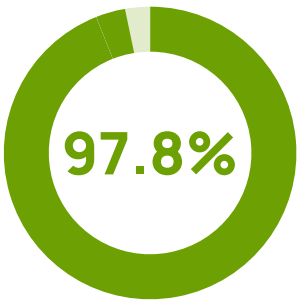
Students registered to start and complete their Diploma within the reporting academic year (Full time students)

Source: AVAs



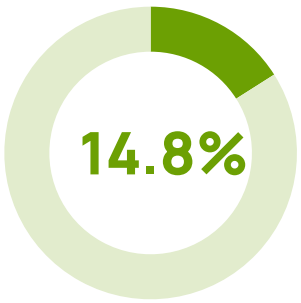
Full time students certificated as a percentage of full time students starting in the academic year (achievement rate)

Source: AVAs



Full time students certificated as a percentage of full time students who completed in the academic year (pass rate)

Source: AVAs



All Distinction grade profile

Source: AVAs

How well are they retained on their Access to HE Diploma?

71.4%
full time students who completed their Diploma as a percentage of full time students starting a Diploma (Retention rate)

Source: AVAs

Full-time students are those registered to start their Diploma on or after 1 August 2023 and to finish by 31 July 2024

Making sense of the figures

The data used in this publication is provided from a variety of sources, as detailed below.

HESA - students entering undergraduate programmes who took an Access to HE course. The data includes full and part-time students registered on the first year of undergraduate courses but excludes those enrolled on directly-funded HE courses in FE institutions. Data relates to students who took an Access to HE course before 2023-24 – a different cohort from that reported elsewhere. (Copyright Jisc 2026.)

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QAA - full and part-time students on QAA-recognised Access to HE Diplomas in England and Wales. Data is provided by the AVAs that award the Diploma. Data relates to the 2023-24 academic year.

UCAS – applicants and accepted applicants to full-time HE courses. It includes applicants to HE courses provided by FE institutions but does not include applicants to part-time HE courses. Data relates to the September 2024 entry cycle.

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