Performance Indicators for Higher Education:

What are they and where are they going? – a UK perspective

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Topics

- What are the UK Performance Indicators?

- Where next?

- Associated research / developments

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What are the Performance Indicators?

- Range of statistical indicators reported at institutional level

- Designed to measure the performance in a number areas of the HE sector

- Not league tables

- Published by HESA on behalf of the four UK funding councils

- Formal Official Statistics cover only provision registered at HEIs

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Purpose / audience

- Provide reliable information on the nature and performance of the UK higher education sector

- Inform policy developments

- Contribute to greater public accountability by the higher education sector

- Allow comparison between individual institutions, where appropriate

- Enable institutions to benchmark their own performance

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Governance of the indicators

- Steering group established in 1998

    - Chair – HEFCE's Director of Regulation and Assurance

    - Including members from HESA, UUK, Guild HE, HEW, other funding bodies and others

    - Secretariat – HEFCE officers

- Technical group created in 2010

    - Chair – HESA's Director of Information and Analysis

Four main areas for which performance is measured

- Widening participation

- Retention

- Employment of graduates

- Research

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Widening participation

- Four indicators

  - Proportion from state schools

  - Proportion from NS-SEC 4-7

  - Proportion from Low Participation Neighbourhoods

  - Proportion in receipt of Disabled Student's Allowance

- Covers young, mature, full- and part- time, first degree and other undergraduate entrants (not all indicators)

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Retention indicators

- Two methods of calculating

  - Proportion of entrants still in higher education in the following year (full-time entrants) or in two years (part-time)

  - If a full-time student is not in higher education in the year following entry, do they resume study the year after that?

  - Projected outcomes – recent study patterns of full-time first degree students used to project eventual student outcomes for a cohort of entrants

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What do they look like? Non-continuation

|	Total full-time first degree young entrants	Number who continue or qualify at same HEI	Percent who continue or qualify at same HEI (%)	Adjusted sector continue or qualify (%)	Number who transfer to other UK HEI	Percent who transfer to other UK HEI (%)	Adjusted sector transfer to other UK HEI (%)	Number no longer in HE	Percent no longer in HE (%)	Bench-mark (%)	Standard deviation (%)	+/-
Total UK	288590	264655	91.7		5645	2.0		18285	6.3			
Total England	240835	221025	91.8		4885	2.0		14925	6.2			
HEI 1	2100	1865	88.7	88.3	40	1.9	2.3	200	9.4	9.4	0.57	
HEI 2	1480	1350	91.5	92.1	65	4.5	2.2	60	4.1	5.7	0.57	
HEI 3	1320	1225	92.7	91.7	20	1.4	1.9	80	5.9	6.5	0.65	
HEI 4	1860	1795	96.5	95.4	20	1.1	1.6	45	2.4	3.0	0.46	
HEI 5	2365	2055	86.8	86.8	75	3.1	2.2	240	10.1	11.1	0.51	
HEI 6	35	35	91.7	90.9	0	2.8	1.9	0	5.6	7.2	3.45	
HEI 7	2980	2695	90.4	89.0	80	2.6	2.3	210	7.0	8.7	0.45	
HEI 8	4350	4160	95.7	95.3	55	1.3	1.5	130	3.0	3.2	0.31	
HEI 9	430	375	87.1	88.0	10	2.6	1.8	45	10.3	10.1	1.29	
HEI 10	420	385	91.6	91.6	5	1.0	1.4	30	7.4	7.0	1.19	
HEI 11	650	540	83.3	87.1	10	1.9	2.7	95	14.8	10.3	1.15	-
HEI 12	540	500	93.1	89.8	10	1.7	1.8	30	5.2	8.4	0.98	+

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Benchmarks

- Each HEI has a benchmark associated with each PI

- Benchmarks take account of differences in students characteristics between HEIs and the rest of the sector in terms of:

  - Subject of study

  - Qualification on entry

  - Age on entry

- Benchmarks are a calculated weighted average, and are not targets

- Practically and statistical significant differences marked with either '+' or '-'

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Summaries provided

Chart 16 - Percentage of young full-time first degree entrants not continuing in HE after their first year 2010/11
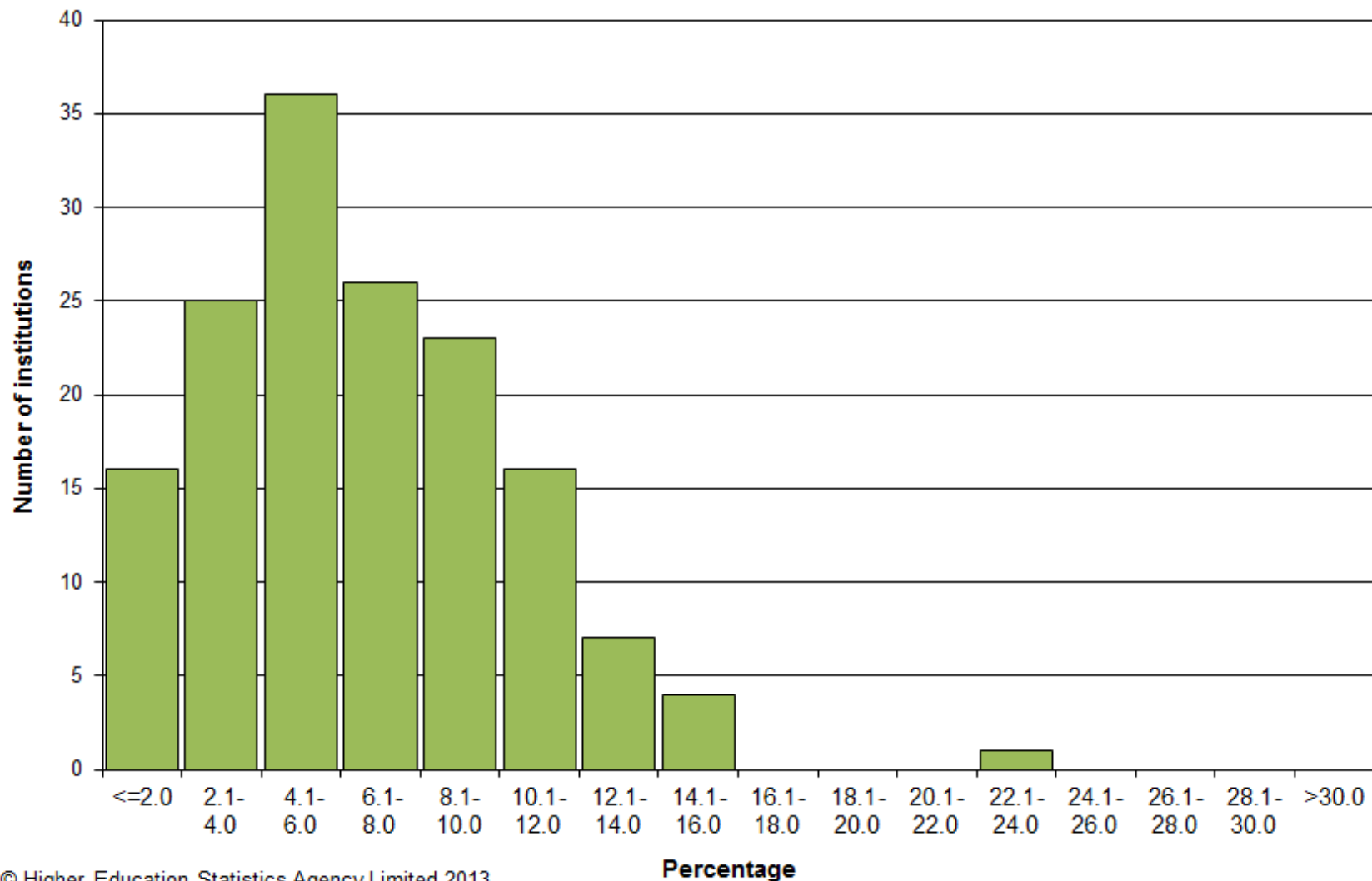
On-going review of the indicators

- Fundamental review carried out in 2013

- Values the indicators as a way to measure HE

- Identified the following issues:

  - Current set of indicators require some refinement

  - Scope to introduce a small number of additional indicators to take account the wider role of HE

  - Desire to broaden the populations and institutions covered

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Steering group recommendations (1)

- Indicators and benchmarks should be retained

- Continue to have UK-wide coverage

- Focus on UK-wide sector level priorities

- Examine feasibility of broadening into 5 new areas

- Further dialogue with sector if new or modified UKPIs introduced

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Steering group recommendations (2)

- Institution-level operational indicators that move beyond UK-wide sector priorities should be developed elsewhere

- Students should not be considered a direct audience

- Detail reviews required of current indicators regarding populations covered and sources of data

- Set of guiding principles should be established

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Guiding principles – Coverage and Scope

- Reflect totality of HE provision

- Reflecting core mission of a significant proportion of institutions

- Allow for comparison with other institutions in UK

- Public domain information that is not easily available elsewhere

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Guiding principles – Quality of data

- Produced by a credible and independent organisation

- Evidence-based and statistically robust

- Longevity and continuity, enabling time-series and longitudinal analysis

- Produced in a regular and timely fashion

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Guiding principles – Dissemination

- Free and available to all

- HEIs should have an opportunity to correct errors of fact

- Published with appropriate guidance and contextualisation to facilitate accurate intepretation

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Guiding principles – Benchmarking and enhancement

- Should be directorial and attributional measures

- Institutions should take note of their indicators and benchmarks

- Should not be presented in a way as to imply institutional ranking

- Benchmarks should take into account context and differing institutional characteristics

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Guiding principles – Burden and influence

- Where possible, existing data sources should be used to develop new and/or improve existing indicators

- Should not knowingly create perverse incentives

- Should comply with all relevant legislation and evolving good practice

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Review of specific indicators

- Beginning with Widening Participation indicators

- Initial technical group assessment taken place

- Historical issues being examined:

  - Data quality of the NS-SEC classification

  - Type of disadvantage POLAR measures and it's applicability to the whole of the UK

  - Population covered

- Engagement with expert groups and sector planned for late 2014

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Research indicators

- New research indicators need to be developed

- UKPISG to set up group/roundtable including RCUK, academic research experts, and institutional representation

- 2014 last year of research indicators in current form

- 2015 "One of the more convenient years for a gap" given REF and other measures available

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HEFCE development of other indicators

- HEFCE developing and publishing additional indicators

- English rather than UK-wide, therefore not official UK Performance Indicators

- Retention indicator(s) for postgraduate students

- Extensions to EU and non-EU populations

- Higher Education in Further Education:

  - Widening participation

  - Retention

  - Employment

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HE in further education colleges: POLAR3 comparisons

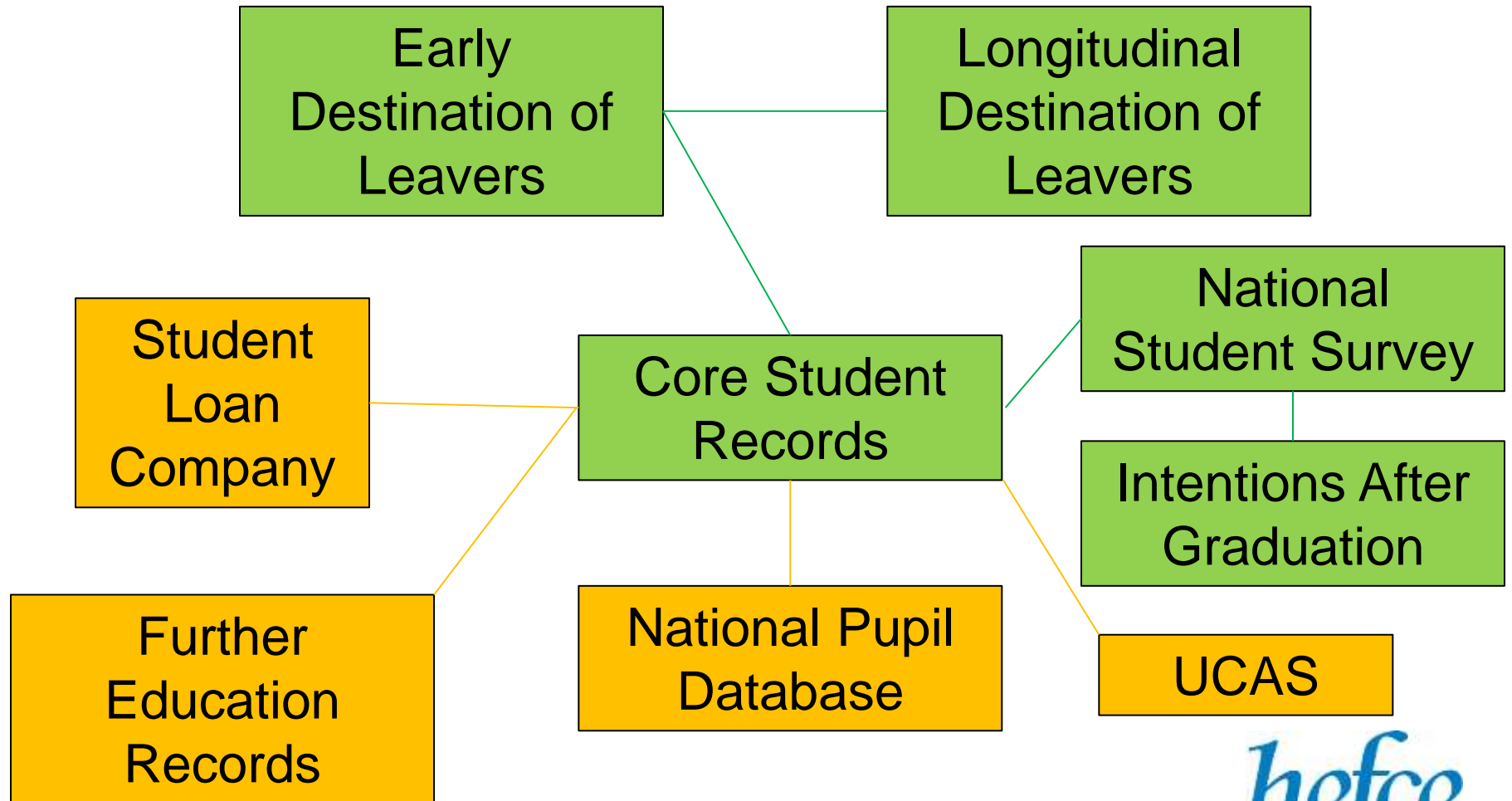| HE students		Young full-time entrants (%)		
		First degree	Other undergraduate	All undergraduate
Registered at HEIs	Indicator	10.0	15.5	10.4
	Sector-adjusted average	*10.1*	*16.7*	*10.6*
Registered at FECs	Indicator	19.7	22.7	21.7
	Sector-adjusted average	*14.5*	*19.0*	*16.0*
Taught at HEIs	Indicator	9.9	15.1	10.2
	Sector-adjusted average	*10.0*	*16.4*	*10.4*
Taught at FECs	Indicator	16.6	19.3	18.4
	Sector-adjusted average	*13.7*	*18.1*	*15.2*

Source: HEFCE 2013/18 Higher education indicators for further education colleges
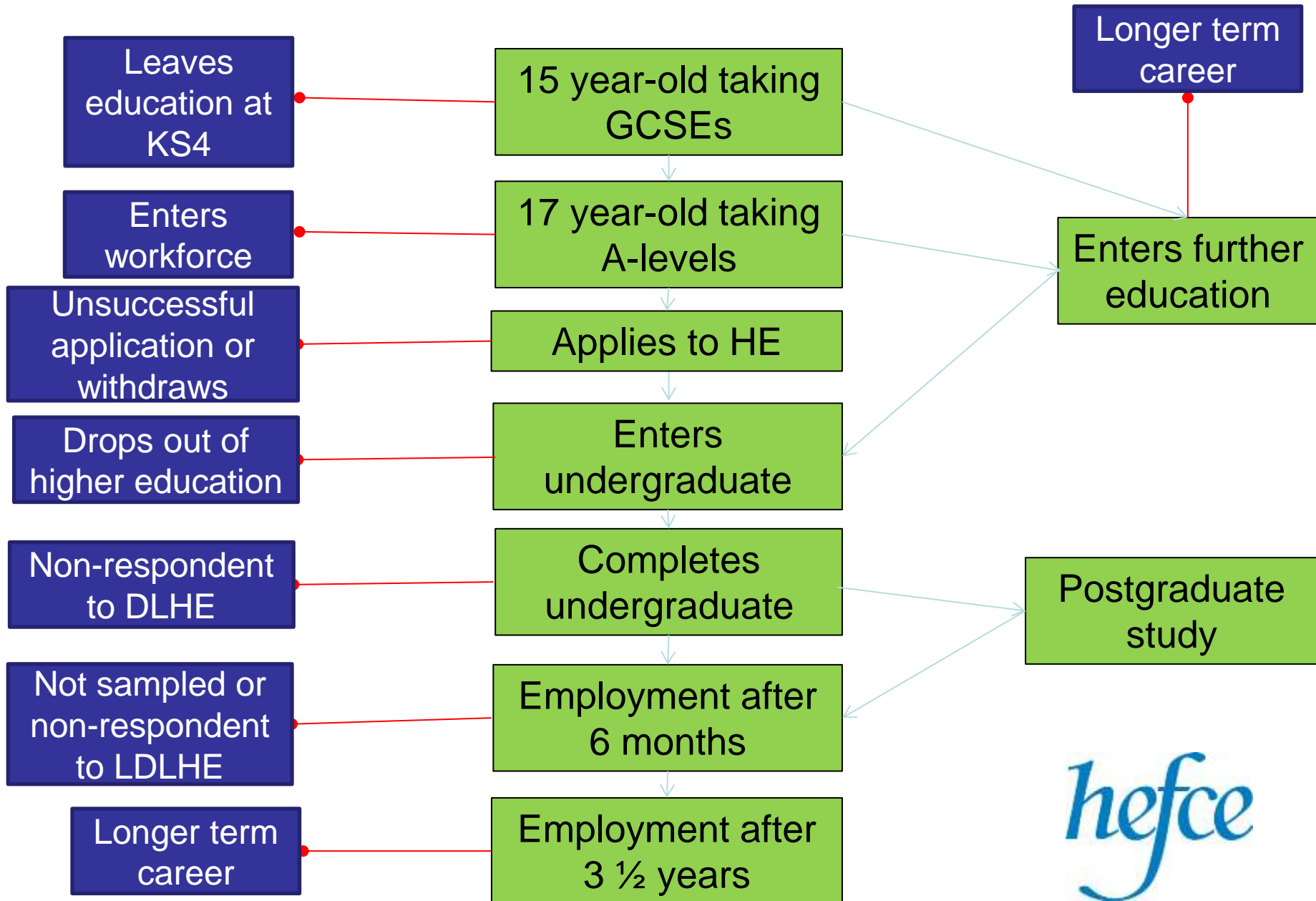
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Example of wider HEFCE research

- Potential future applicability to sector wide agenda

- And/or avenues for institutional level research

- Data principally from institutional data returns

- Examples:

  - HE participation and geography

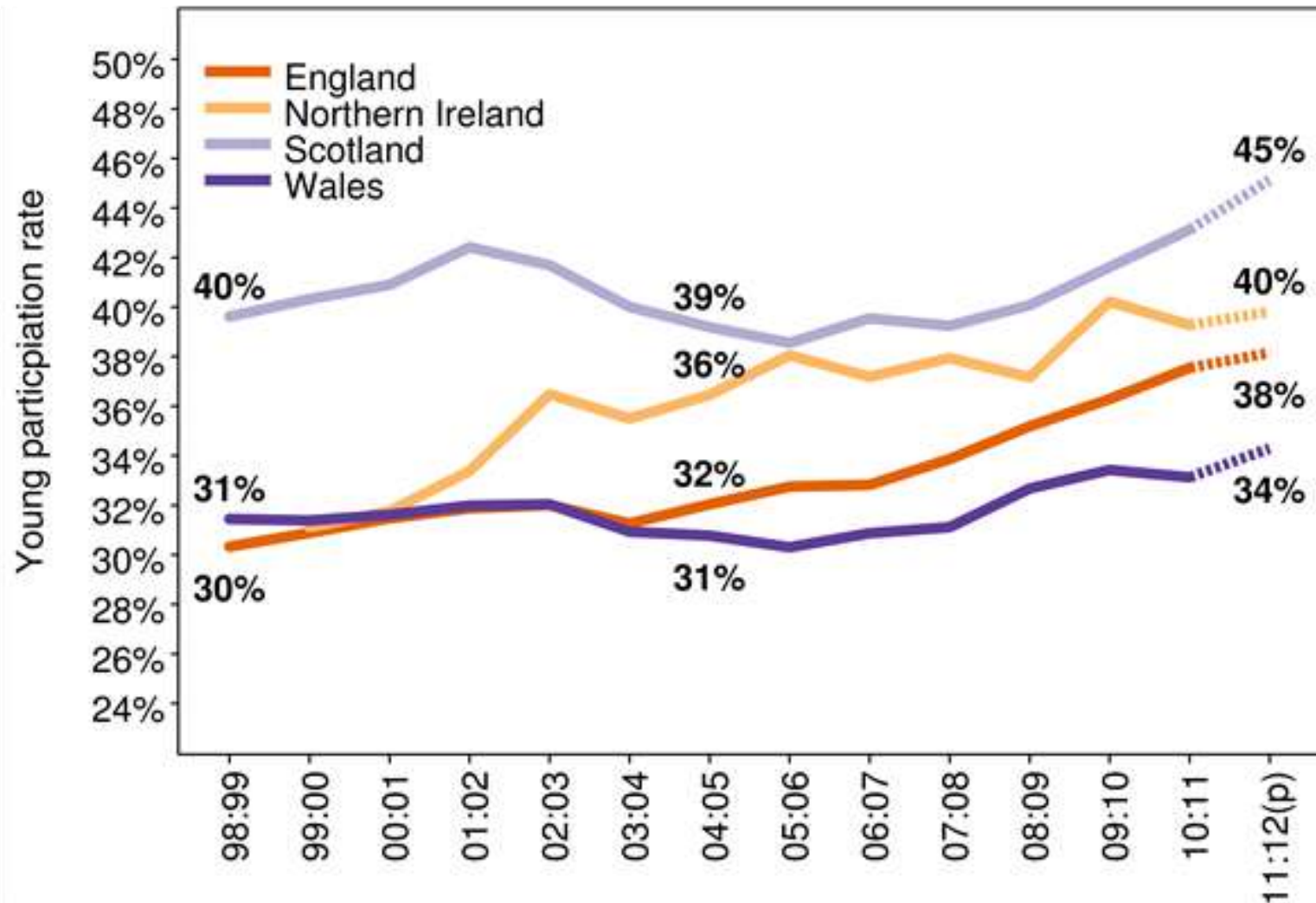 - Understanding outcomes/destinations

  - National Student Survey review

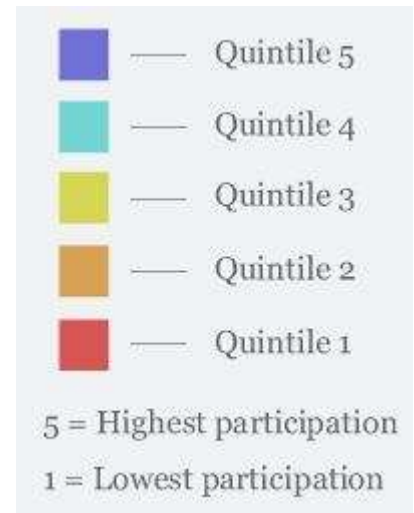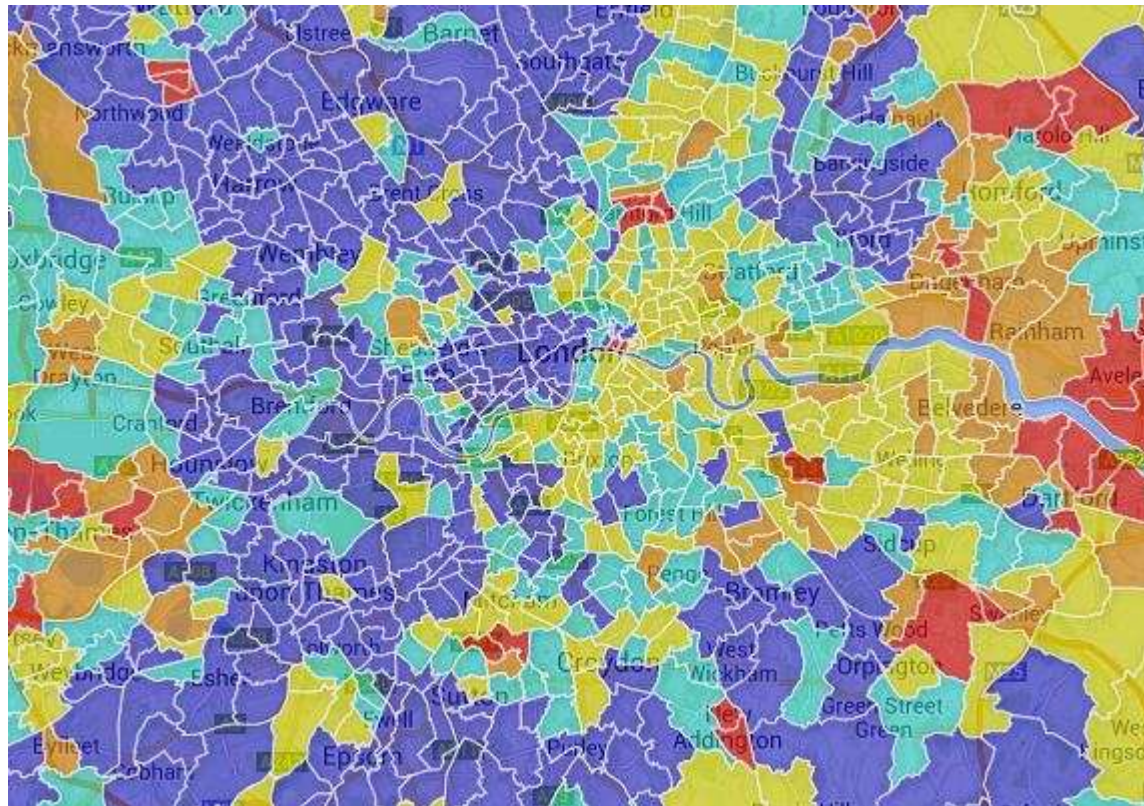*hefce*

Individualised data linking

Education: A trackable journey

Leaves education at KS4

Enters workforce

Unsuccessful application or withdraws

Drops out of higher education

Non-respondent to DLHE

Not sampled or non-respondent to LDLHE

Longer term career

15 year-old taking GCSEs

17 year-old taking A-levels

Applies to HE

Enters undergraduate

Completes undergraduate

Employment after 6 months

Employment after 3 ½ years

Longer term career

Enters further education

Postgraduate study

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Trends in young participation: UK

POLAR: map extract

Young participation in London

Quintile 5
Quintile 4
Quintile 3
Quintile 2
Quintile 1

5 = Highest participation
1 = Lowest participation

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Developing participation measures

- POLAR "raw rates" of participation

- Further understanding of geographical variations

- Participation after individual's GCSE attainment taken into account

- Low absolute participation areas with high relative participation after GCSEs accounted for

- Mapping published October 2014

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Understanding outcomes

- Examining degree outcomes for different equality groups

- Different types of destinations

- How employment develops

- Relationships with progression to PG study

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Examining degree outcomes

- All young A-level entrants to degree courses in 2007-08

- Over 130,000 entrants tracked – 80% of young entrants

- Entire cohort approach so eliminated sample biases

- Findings applicable to all HEIs

- Robust statistical methodologies used allowing for a range of factors to be accounted for

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Context

- Degree outcomes have risen for degree entrants between 2004 and 2007

- Students with better A-levels do better in higher education

- Independent school entrants enter HE with higher A-level achievement

- Students who are top of their class perform much better in their degree studies than those who aren't top of their class but have the same A-level profile

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Different ethnicities - different outcomes

Source: HEFCE 2014/03 Differences in degree outcomes
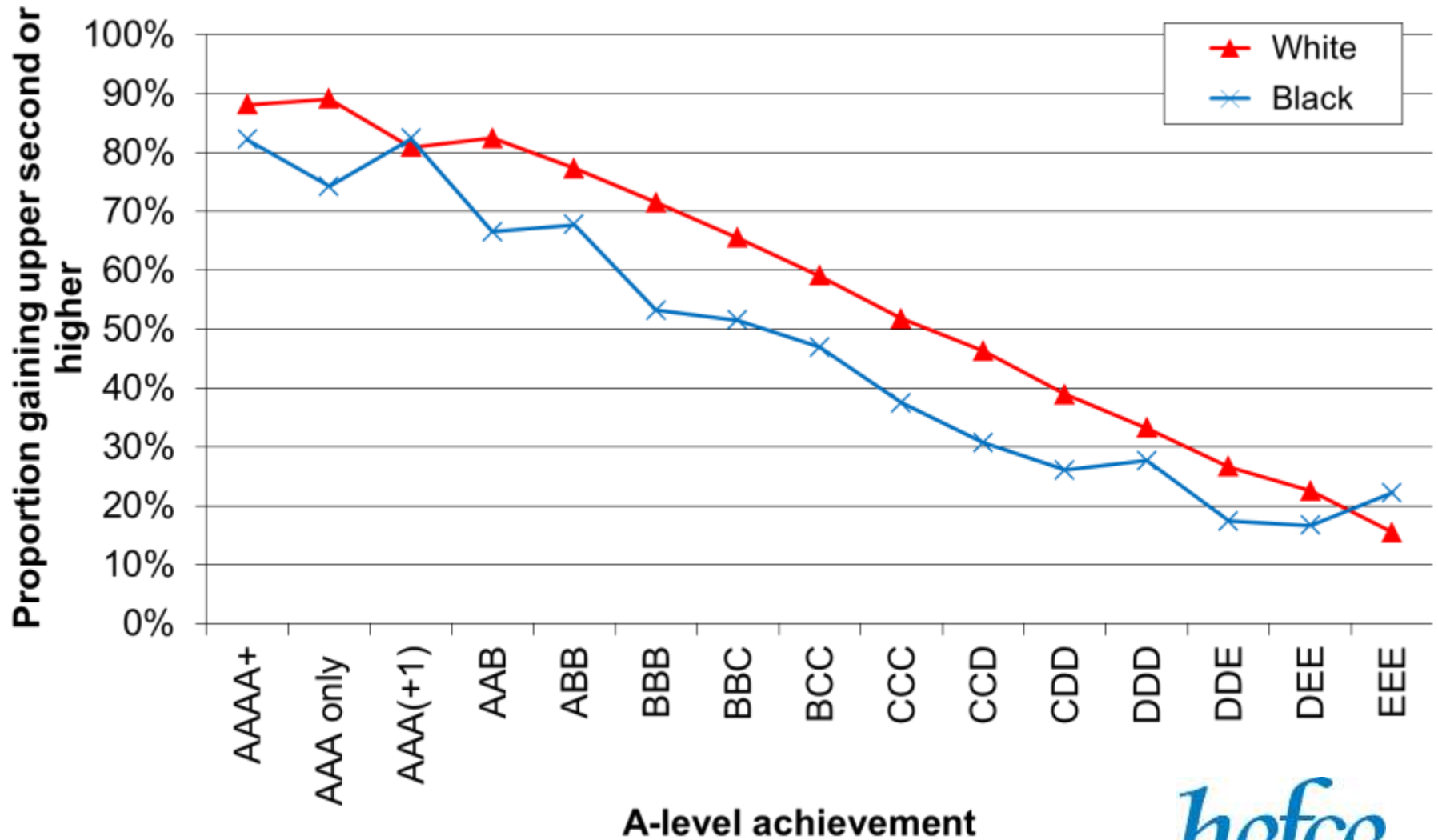
M/F differences in outcomes: First degree entrants

	Women	Men
Starting cohort	123,450	102,315
Degree-qualified	**84.9%**	**79.2%**
First or upper second	**57.0%**	**48.9%**
Degree & employed or studying	**75.4%**	**66.6%**
Degree & graduate job or study	**49.0%**	**46.4%**

Source: HEFCE 2013/15 Higher education and beyond

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Progression from degree to PG: One year transitions

		One-year transition rates			
Institutional grouping	**Total qualifying**	**PG research**	**Taught masters**	**Other PG**	**Total PG**
Specialist	12,650	0.2%	4.9%	2.7%	7.7%
HEIs with high average tariff scores	85,380	3.2%	9.6%	3.7%	16.5%
HEIs with medium average tariff scores	72,070	0.5%	6.1%	3.5%	10.1%
HEIs with low average tariff scores	58,210	0.3%	5.2%	2.9%	8.4%
Total	**228,390**	**1.4%**	**7.1%**	**3.4%**	**11.9%**

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National Student Survey review:
Trends in satisfaction for FT respondents

Modelling approach used: Characteristics accounted for

- Age
- Ethnicity
- Disability status
- Domicile
- Gender
- Subject (JACS level 2)
- Qualifications on entry
- Level of study

- Mode of study
- Method of response
- Days taken to respond after survey release
- POLAR3
- Franchised
- State/Independent school
- Institution

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Unexplained differences in satisfaction

- Black or Black British Caribbean – -4.2%
- Black or Black British African – 1.8%
- Declared disabled – -2.5%
- Veterinary sciences – 11.1%
- Other creative arts – -4.0%
- Non-EU domiciled – 3.2%
- Other EU domiciled – 1.7%
- Males – -0.2%

Source: HEFCE 2014/13 NSS results and trends analysis 2005-2013

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How to find out more

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