
HIGHER EDUCATION IN
FACTS AND FIGURES

2019



Universities UK

HIGHLIGHTS

In 2018, the UK 18-year-old entry rate to university was at a record level.



In 2017–18, 14.4% of undergraduate students and 35.8% of postgraduate students were from outside the UK.



In 2018, median graduate salaries were £10,000 higher in England than non-graduate salaries.

In 2017–18, 30.8% of academic staff had a non-UK nationality, including 44.5% of academic staff in engineering and technology.



In 2017–18, overseas sources provided 17.7% (£1.5 billion) of research income.



In 2017–18, more than half of total expenditure was spent directly on teaching and research activities.

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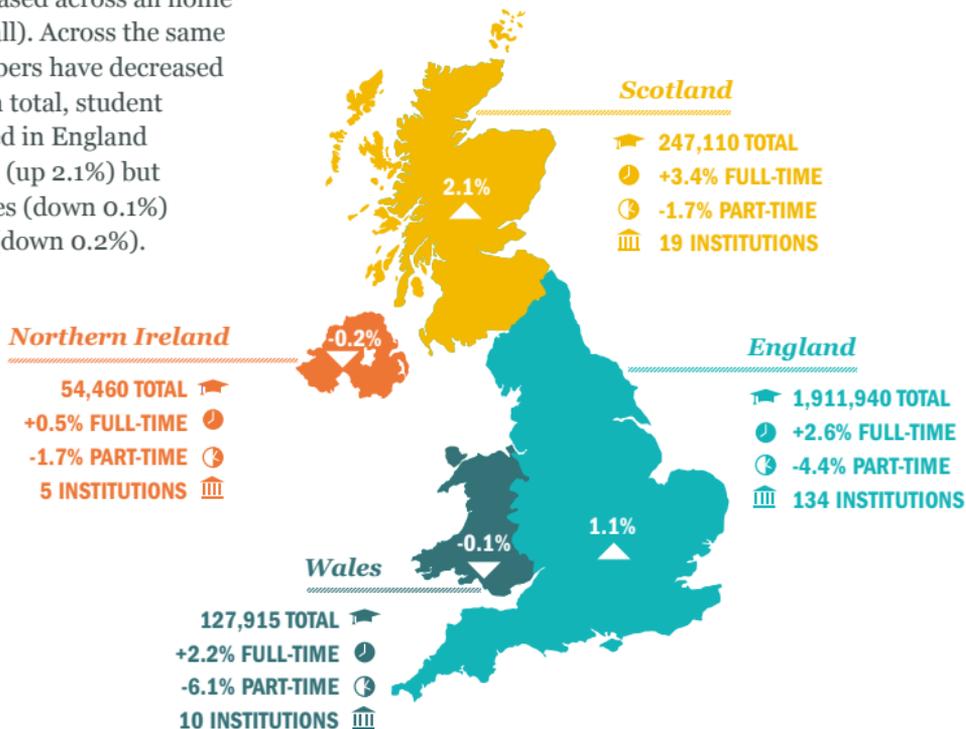
STUDENTS

In 2017–18, there were 2,341,425 students at UK higher education institutions; an increase of 1.1% compared to 2016–17. Of these students:

- 1,022,055 were entrants
- 78.8% studied full time
- 75.8% were undergraduates
- 5.9% were from other EU countries
- 13.6% were from non-EU countries
- 56.9% were females
- 58.7% were mature students (aged 21 and over)

STUDENTS BY MODE OF STUDY AND COUNTRY OF INSTITUTION, 2016–17 TO 2017–18

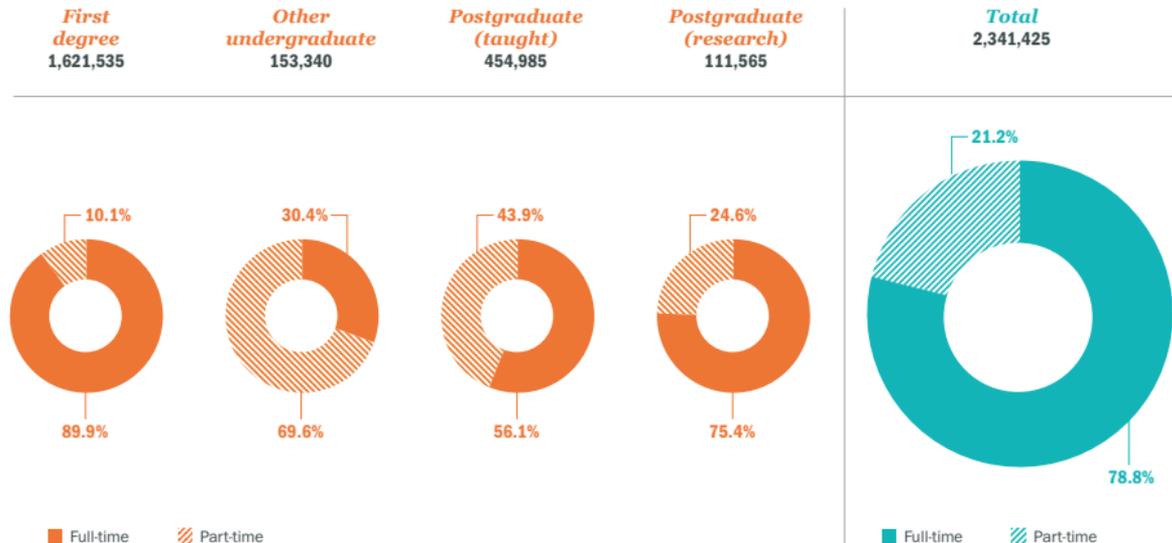
Between 2016–17 and 2017–18, full-time student numbers increased across all home nations (up 2.6% overall). Across the same period, part-time numbers have decreased (down 4.1% overall). In total, student numbers have increased in England (up 1.1%) and Scotland (up 2.1%) but have decreased in Wales (down 0.1%) and Northern Ireland (down 0.2%).



Source: HESA Student record 2016–17 and 2017–18

STUDENTS BY LEVEL AND MODE OF STUDY, 2017–18

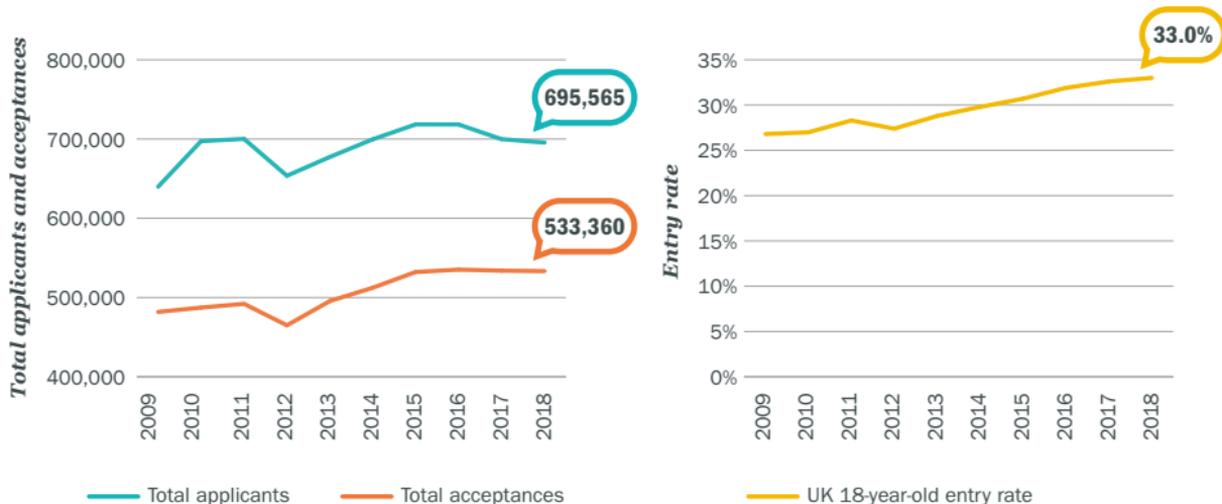
Full-time student numbers at UK higher education institutions have increased every year since 2012–13. However, this trend is reversed for part-time students. In 2017–18, part-time students accounted for 69.6% of 'other' undergraduates and 43.9% of postgraduate (taught) students.



Source: HESA Student record 2017–18

APPLICANTS, ACCEPTANCES AND UK 18-YEAR-OLD ENTRY RATES, 2009 TO 2018

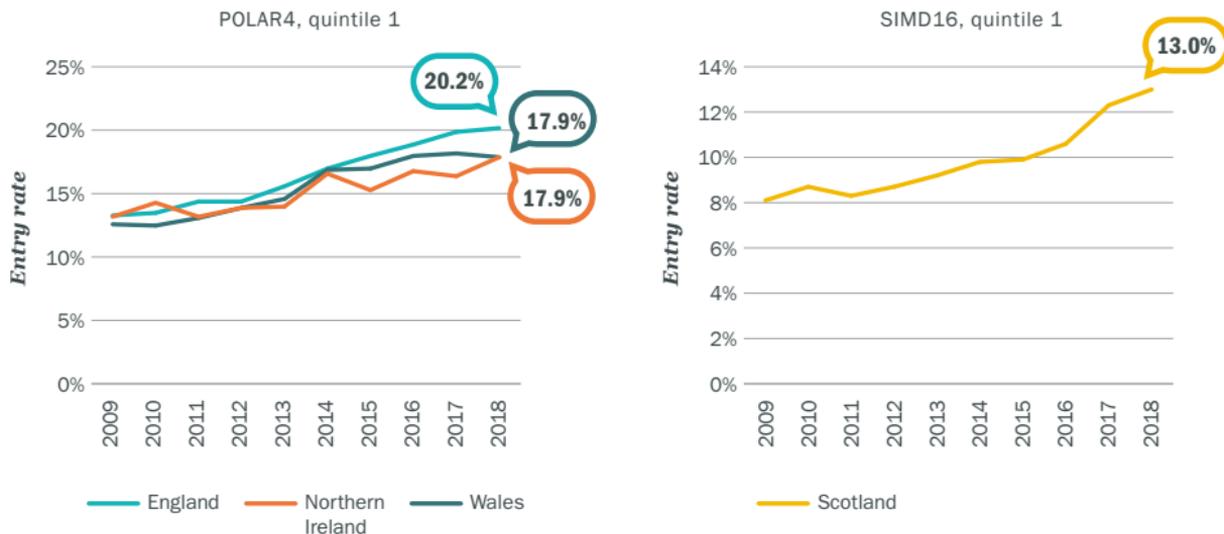
For the 2018 cycle, total applicant numbers decreased 0.6% on 2017, while total acceptances decreased by 0.1%. The UK 18-year-old population has fallen 3.6% over the past two years, and in 2018 the entry rate of this group was at a record high of 33.0%.



Source: UCAS End of Cycle Report 2018

ENTRY RATES FROM THE MOST DISADVANTAGED 18-YEAR-OLDS BY DOMICILE, 2009 TO 2018

In England, Northern Ireland and Scotland, 18-year-olds from the most disadvantaged backgrounds* have never been more likely to go to university.

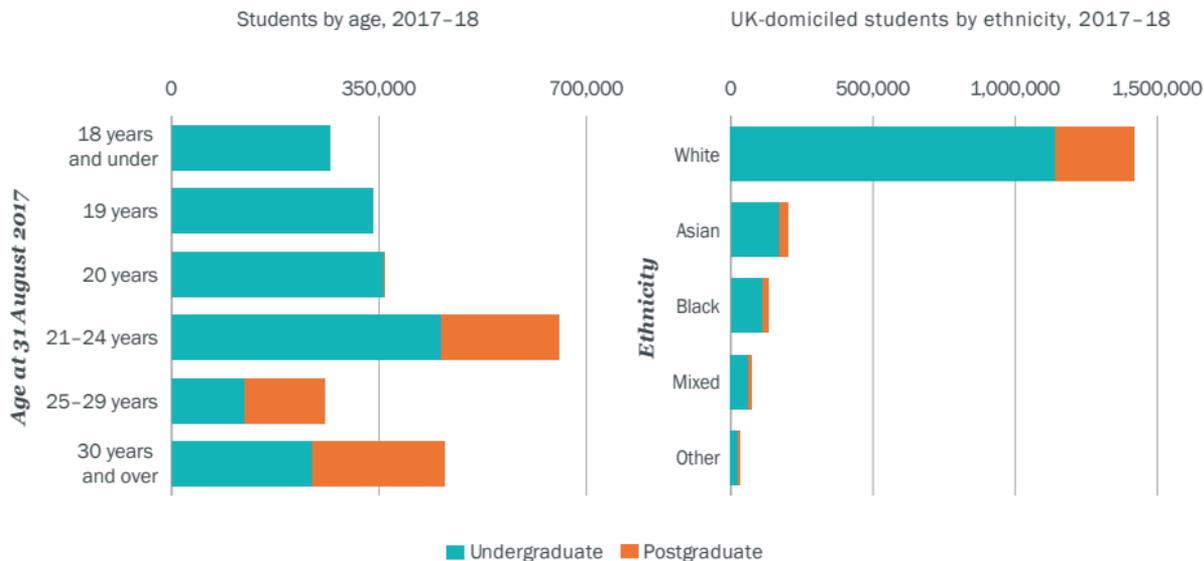


Note: *POLAR4 method is used for England, Wales and Northern Ireland, while SIMD is used for Scotland. Therefore, they are not directly comparable. Application rates reported for Scotland are lower, as a substantial section of Scottish higher education providers do not use UCAS.

Source: UCAS End of Cycle Report 2018

STUDENTS BY AGE AND ETHNICITY, 2017–18

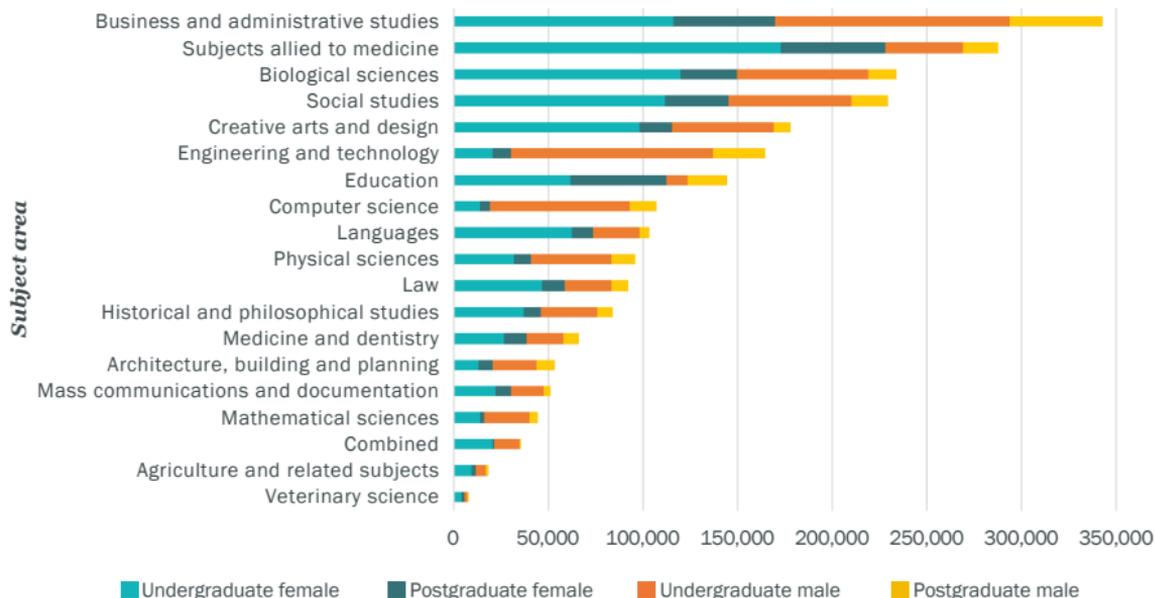
In 2017–18, mature students (aged 21 and over) accounted for 26.7% of first degree entrants, compared to 33.3% in 2009–10. In the same year, Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) students accounted for 23.6% of the UK-domiciled student population, compared to 18.1% in 2009–10.



Source: HESA Student record 2017–18

STUDENTS BY SEX, SUBJECT AREA AND LEVEL OF STUDY, 2017–18

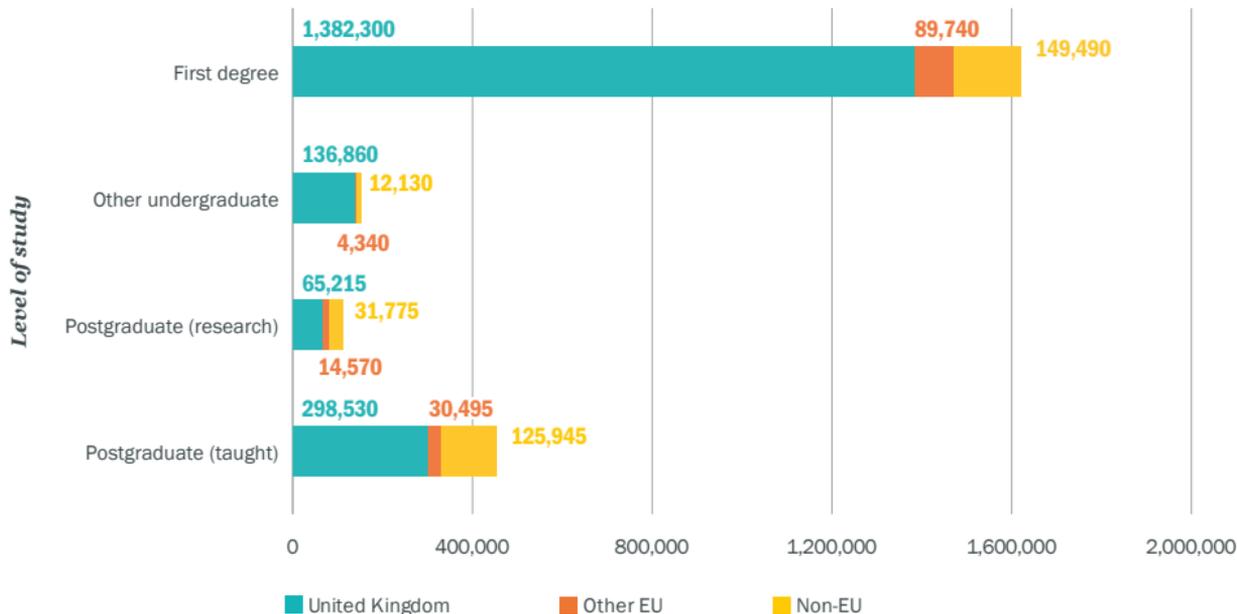
In 2017–18, undergraduate student numbers were highest in the subjects of business, subjects allied to medicine and biological sciences. Postgraduate numbers were highest for business, education and subjects allied to medicine. Overall, for subjects allied to medicine, 79.1% of students were female, compared to 18.2% of engineering and technology students.



Source: HESA Student record 2017–18

STUDENTS BY DOMICILE AND LEVEL OF STUDY, 2017–18

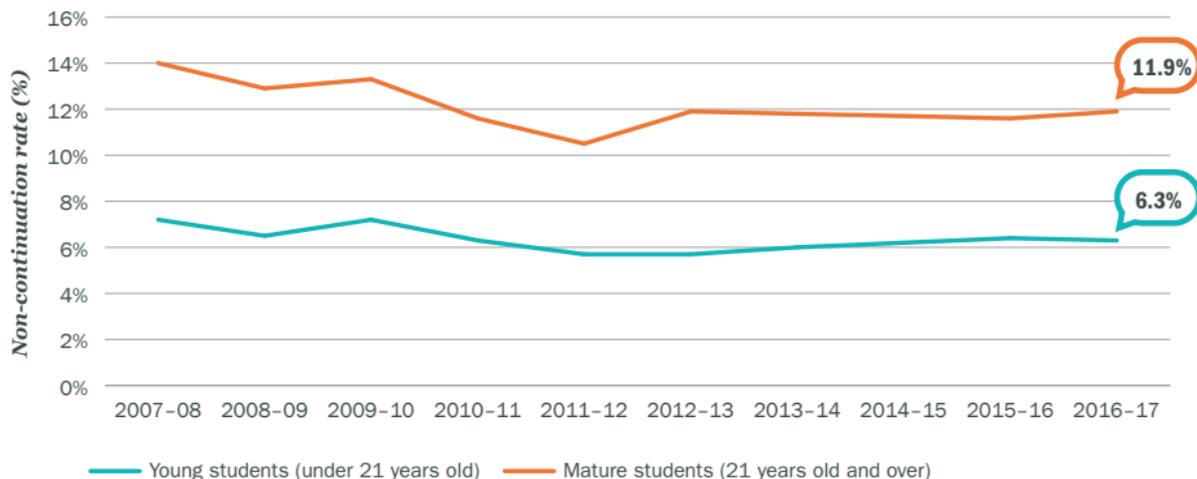
In 2017–18, 5.3% of undergraduates were from other EU countries, while 9.1% were from outside the EU. Percentages for postgraduates were 8.0% and 27.8% respectively. Between 2013–14 and 2017–18, EU student numbers increased 11.0%, while non-EU student numbers increased 3.0%.



Source: HESA Student record 2017–18

NON-CONTINUATION RATES OF UK-DOMICILED, FULL-TIME, FIRST DEGREE ENTRANTS AFTER THEIR FIRST YEAR, 2007-08 TO 2017-18

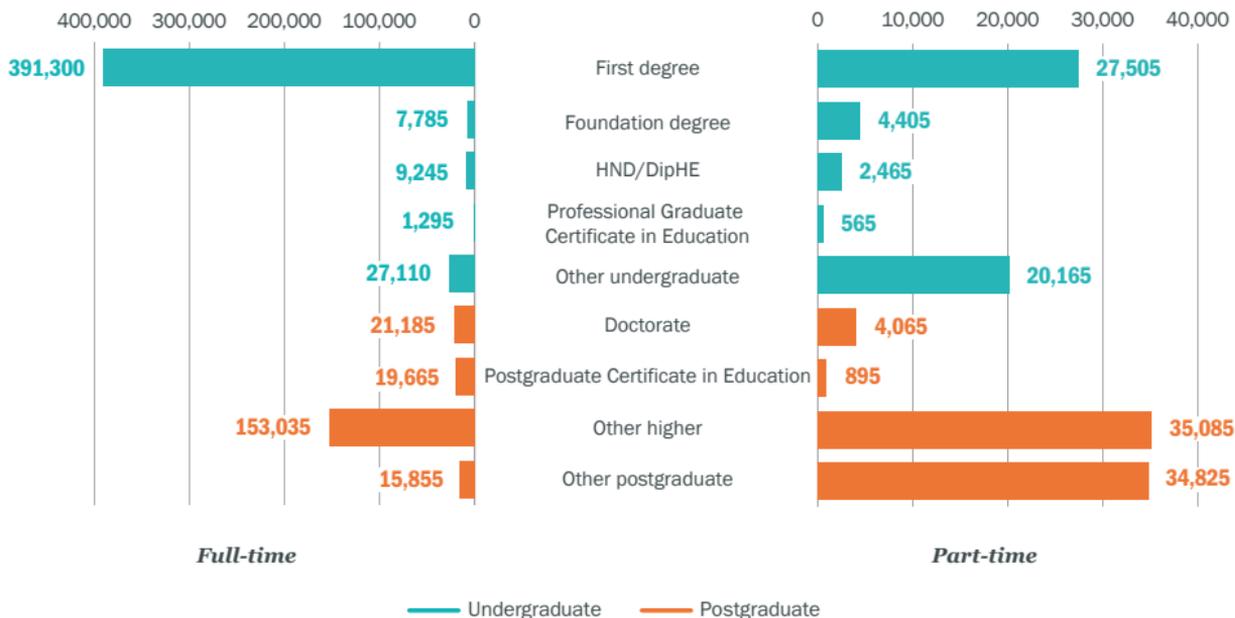
Non-continuation rates for both young (aged under 21) and mature (aged 21 and over) students have improved since 2007-08, but have been relatively stable since 2013-14.



Source: HESA UK Performance Indicators 2017-18

QUALIFICATIONS AWARDED BY MODE AND LEVEL OF STUDY, 2017–18

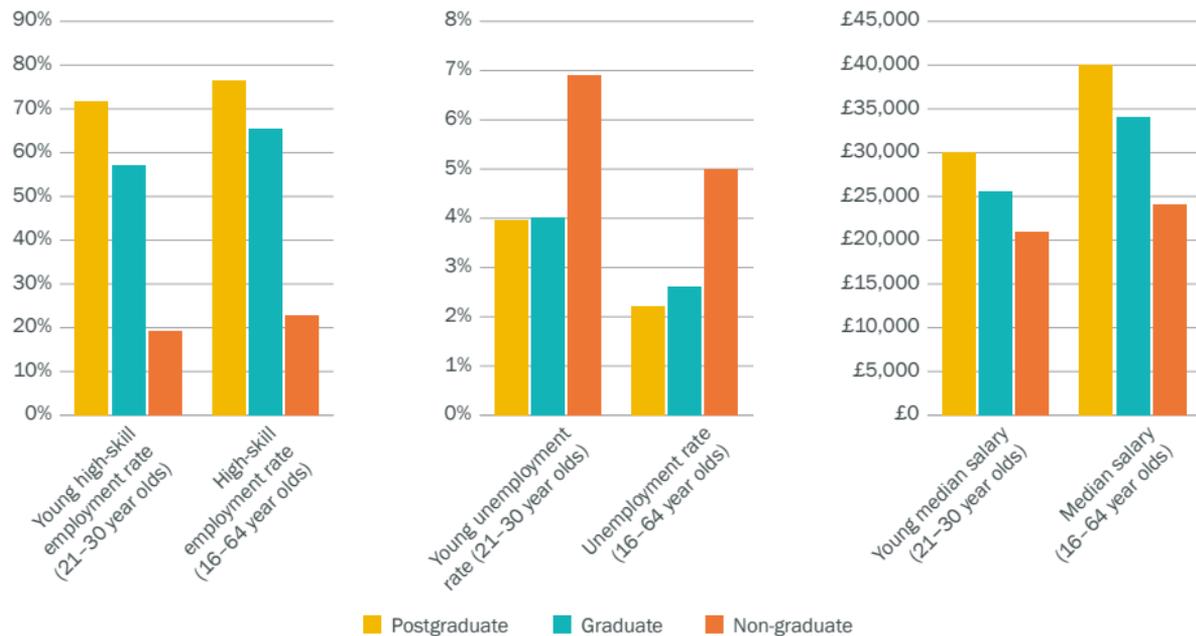
In 2017–18, more than half (53.9%) of qualifications awarded by UK higher education institutions were first degrees.
83.3% of qualifications awarded were for full-time study.



Source: HESA Student record 2017–18

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES AND MEDIAN SALARIES IN ENGLAND, 2018

In 2018, median salaries for England-domiciled graduates were £10,000 higher than non-graduate salaries. The graduate unemployment rate was 2.6%, compared to 5.0% for non-graduates, while the high-skill employment rate was 53.6 percentage points higher for postgraduates than non-graduates.



Source: Department for Education Graduate labour market statistics 2018

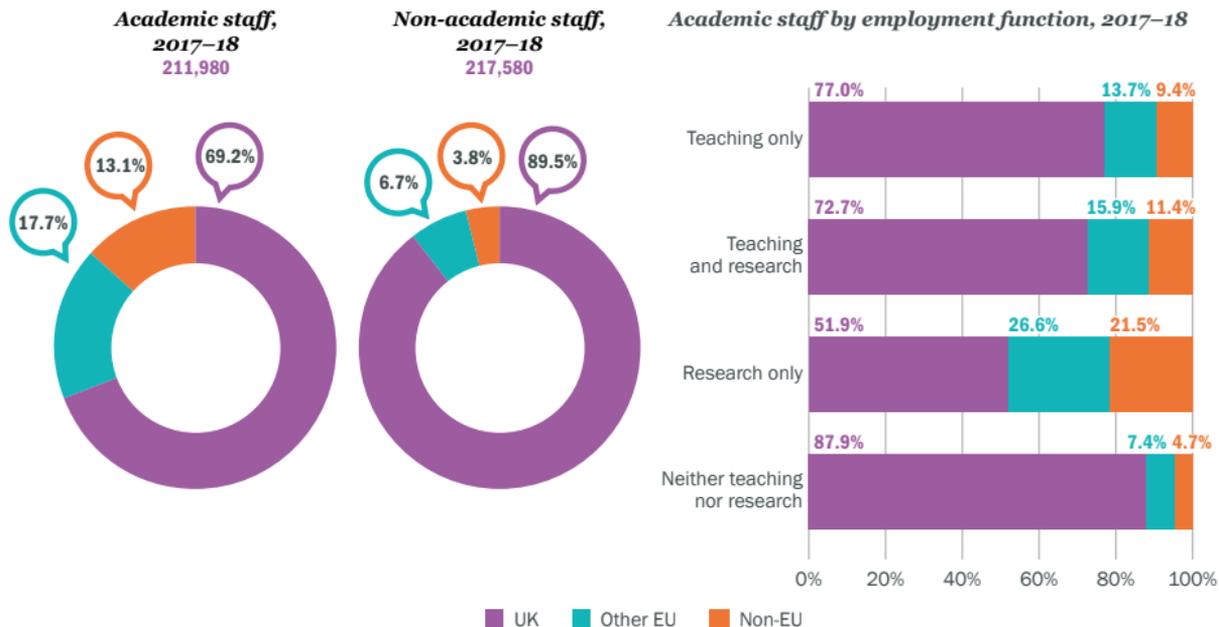
STAFF

In 2017–18, there were 429,560 staff at UK higher education institutions; an increase of 2.3% compared to 2016–17. Of these staff:

- 12.1% were from other EU countries
- 8.4% were from non-EU countries
- 54.4% were female
- 28.1% were aged 34 years and under
- 13.7% were Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff

STAFF BY NATIONALITY AND EMPLOYMENT FUNCTION, 2017–18

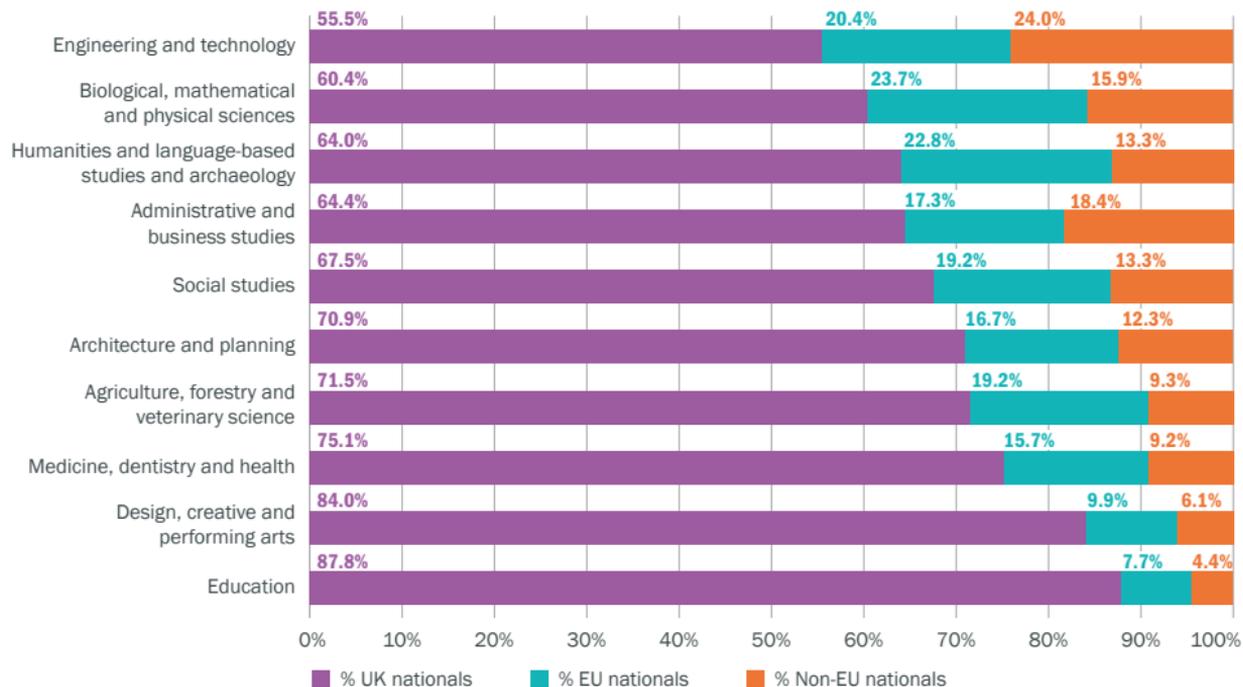
In 2017–18, around a fifth (20.5%) of staff at UK higher education institutions had a non-UK nationality. Since 2013–14, the number of 'other EU' staff has increased by 30.1%, while the number of non-EU staff has increased by 19.0%. Just under half (48.1%) of academic staff with a 'research only' function had a non-UK nationality.



Source: HESA Staff record 2017–18

ACADEMIC STAFF BY NATIONALITY AND COST CENTRE, 2017–18

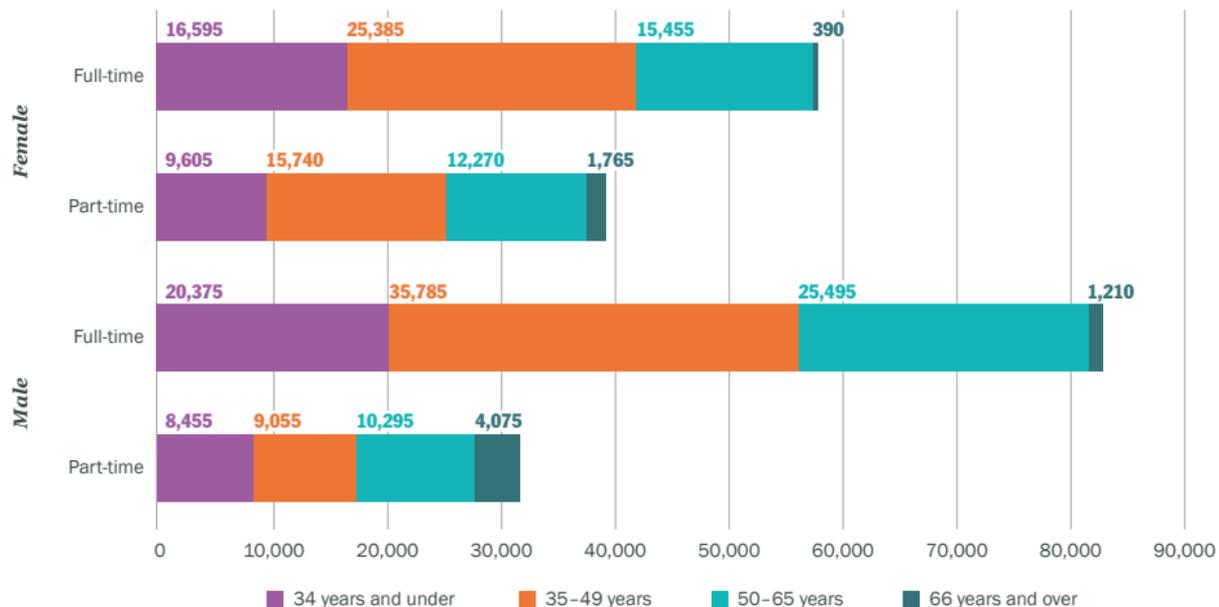
In 2017–18, non-EU staff accounted for nearly a quarter (24.0%) of academic staff in engineering and technology. Other EU staff accounted for 23.7% of academic staff in biological, mathematical and physical sciences. Since 2013–14, the number of non-UK academic staff has increased by more than a quarter (26.3%).



Source: HESA Staff record 2016–17

ACADEMIC STAFF BY SEX, MODE OF EMPLOYMENT AND AGE, 2017–18

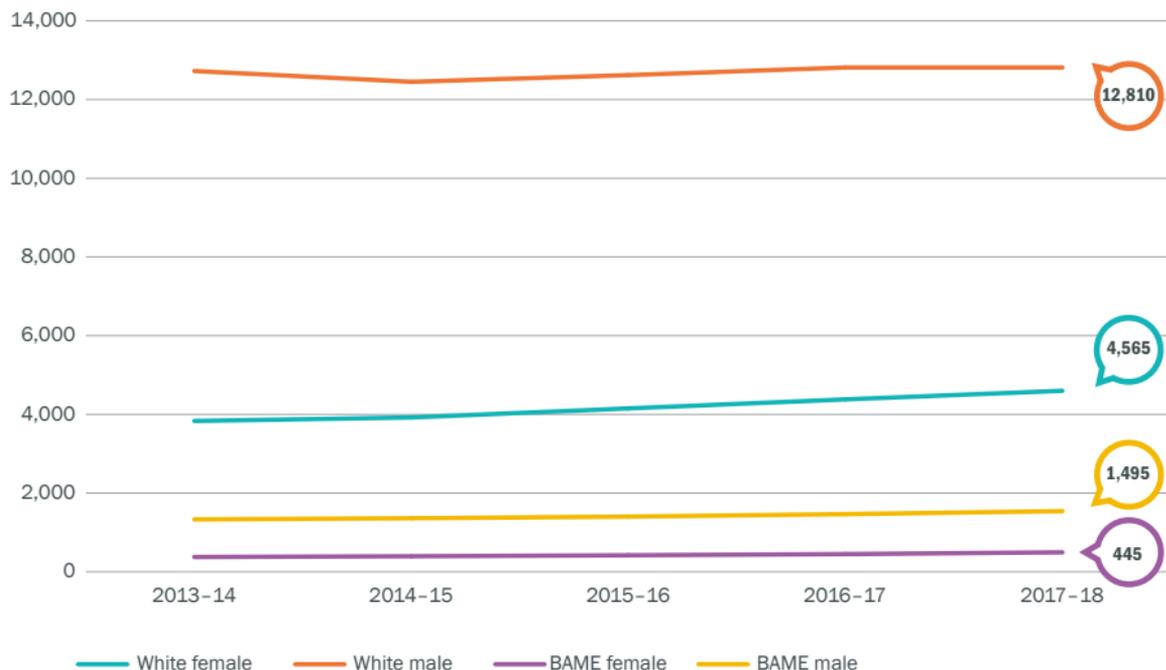
In 2017–18, 45.9% of academic staff were female, while around a third (33.6%) were working part time. About a quarter (26.0%) were aged 34 years and under.



Source: HESA Staff record 2017–18

ACADEMIC PROFESSORIAL STAFF BY SEX AND ETHNICITY, 2013-14 TO 2017-18

Although the number of BAME, academic professorial staff has increased by 19.8% since 2013-14, they only account for 10.0% of professorial staff in 2017-18. Around two-thirds (66.3%) of academic professorial staff were white males.



Source: HESA Staff record 2013-14 to 2017-18

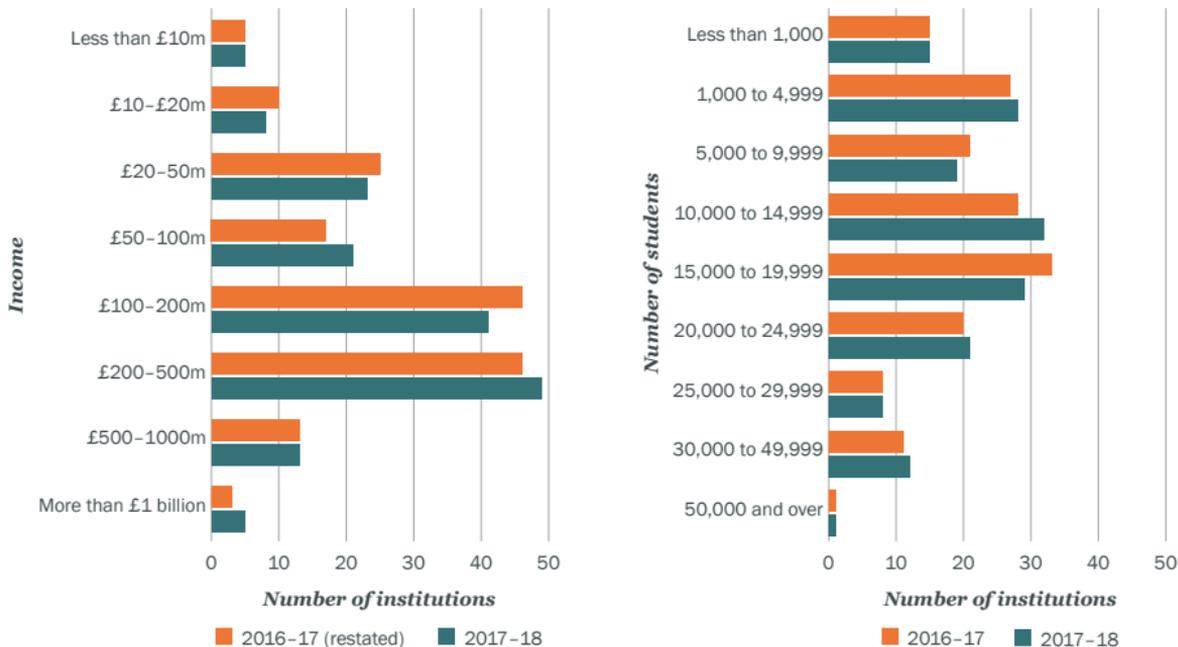
FINANCE

In 2017–18, the total reported income of UK higher education institutions was £38.2 billion. £21.1 billion of this was related to teaching activities (fees and grants from government), while £4.5 billion came from knowledge and exchange activities.

The total operating expenditure was £37.2 billion. This includes £20 billion spent on direct teaching and research activity, and £3.4 billion spent on libraries, IT and museums.

INCOME AND SIZE OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS, 2016–17 TO 2017–18

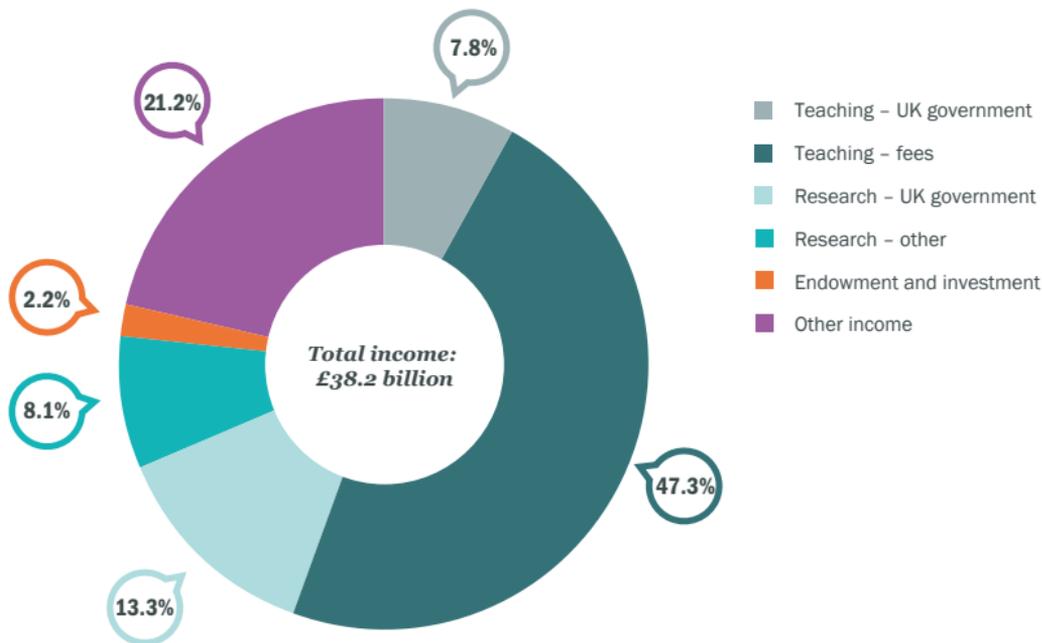
In 2017–18, around two-thirds (65.5%) of UK higher education institutions had an annual income of £100 million or more. More than a fifth (21.8%) of institutions had an income of less than £50 million. About a quarter (25.5%) of institutions had 20,000 students or more.



Source: HESA Finance record 2016–17 and 2017–18, HESA Student record 2016–17 and 2017–18

INCOME BY SOURCE, 2017-18

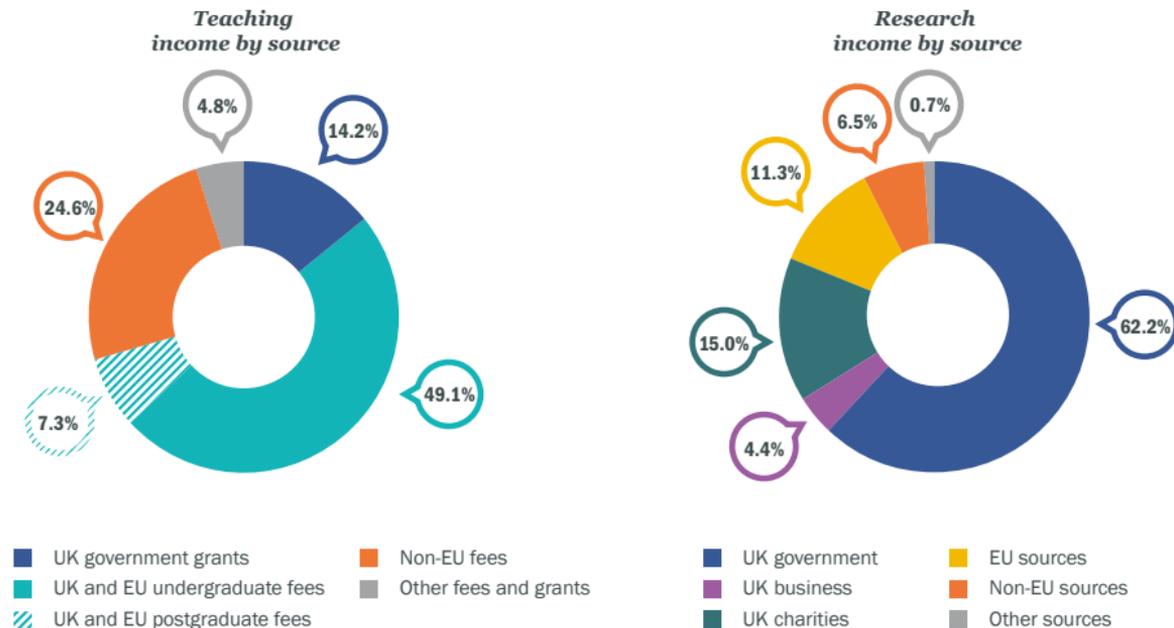
In 2017-18, the total reported income of UK higher education institutions was £38.2 billion. Less than half (£18.1 billion) of this income was sourced through tuition fees.



Source: HESA Finance record 2017-18

TEACHING AND RESEARCH INCOME, 2017–18

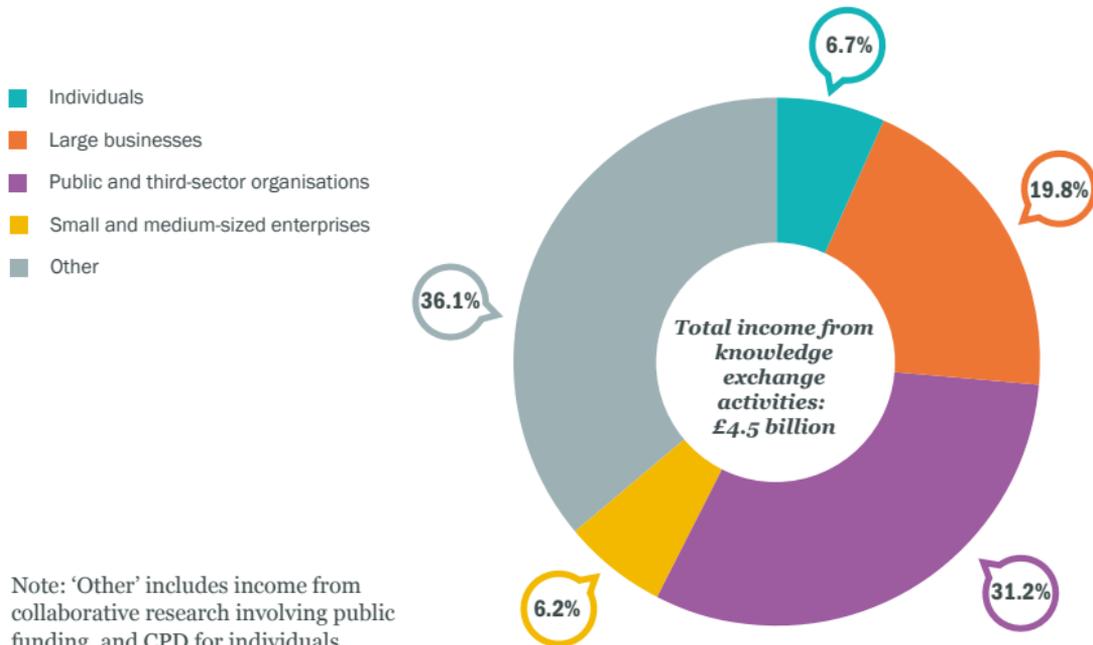
In 2017–18, about a fifth (19.0%) of teaching income was sourced through the UK government and grants. Overseas sources provided 17.7% of research income (11.3% from EU sources).



Source: HESA Finance record 2017–18

INCOME FROM KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE ACTIVITIES BY PARTNER, 2017–18

In 2017–18, nearly a fifth (19.8%) of knowledge exchange income was sourced from large businesses, while 31.2% was sourced from public and third-sector organisations. Knowledge-exchange activities include the provision of continuing professional development (CPD), consultancy services, facilities and equipment-related services, and intellectual property.

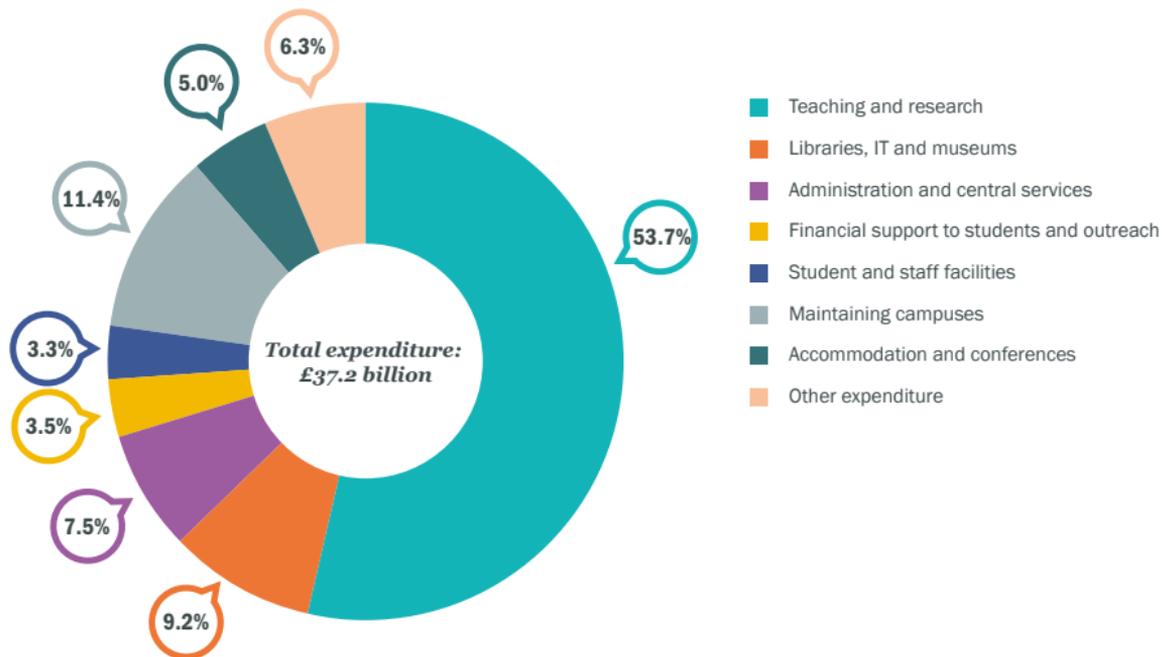


Note: 'Other' includes income from collaborative research involving public funding, and CPD for individuals.

Source: HESA HE BCI record 2017–18

OPERATING EXPENDITURE OF UK HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS, 2017–18

In 2017–18, the total reported operating expenditure of UK higher education institutions was £37.2 billion. More than half of this was spent directly on teaching and research activities.



GLOSSARY

Academic employment function

A HESA field that relates to staff with academic contracts. Categories are divided according to whether the contract is ‘teaching only’, ‘research only’ (no more than six hours of teaching per week), ‘teaching and research’, and neither teaching nor research. For more information see: www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c17025/a/acempfun

Cost centre

Cost centre is a financial concept which groups staff members to specific related cost centres, which enables analysis between the student, staff and finance streams. The cost centre groups are separate to the JACS/HESA codes due to the groupings and are therefore non-comparable. The reason for the incomparability and the breadth of the elements in this field is to replicate the way in which resources (including staff) can be split over a variety of similar courses and the differences in the way individual higher education providers allocate them. For more information see: www.hesa.ac.uk/support/definitions/staff

Domicile

A student’s permanent country of residence. This differs from nationality (see below).

Entry rate

The number of university entrants divided by the estimated base population.

HESA

The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) is the designated data body for English higher education.

High-skill employment

Occupations at this level are generally termed ‘professional’ or ‘managerial’ positions and are found in corporate enterprises or governments. Occupations include senior government officials, financial managers, scientists, engineers, medical doctors, teachers and accountants.

Knowledge exchange activities

Activities that bring together academic staff, users of research and wider groups and communities to exchange ideas, evidence and expertise.

Information on knowledge exchange activities is collected by HESA through their Higher Education Business and Community Interaction (HEBCI) survey. For more information see: www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/business-community

Level of study

Whether a student studies at undergraduate or postgraduate level. With these groupings, there are other levels such as ‘first degree’, ‘other undergraduate’, ‘postgraduate (research)’ and ‘postgraduate (taught)’. For more information see: www.hesa.ac.uk/support/definitions/students

Mode of study

Whether a student studies full or part time.

Nationality

A HESA field that records the legal nationality of staff. For more information see: www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c17025/a/nation

Non-continuation rate

For this publication, the non-continuation rate is the percentage of full-time, first degree entrants not continuing in higher education after their first year.

POLAR4

Participation of Local Areas (POLAR) is a widening participation measure which classifies local areas or ‘wards’ into five groups, based on the proportion of 18-year-olds who enter higher education aged 18 or 19 years old. These groups range from quintile 1 areas, with the lowest young participation (most disadvantaged), up to quintile 5 areas with the highest rates (most advantaged).

Professorial staff

HESA codes each staff contract. Note that professor level is defined as ‘senior academic appointments which may carry the title of professor, but which do not have departmental line management responsibilities’. Other senior contracts include leadership and management responsibilities. These contracts may also be held by people who hold the title of professor. It is likely that the methodology undercounts the number of professors because many will fall into more senior levels, eg heads of department.

ABOUT THE DATA

HESA Standard Rounding Methodology

We have applied HESA's Standard Rounding Methodology to all analysis of HESA data:

- Counts of people are rounded to the nearest multiple of five.
- Percentages are not published if they are fractions of a small group of people (fewer than 22.5).

We have applied the methodology after making calculations, which sometimes means numbers in tables may not sum up to indicated totals. For more information see: www.hesa.ac.uk/about/regulation/data-protection/rounding-and-suppression-anonymise-statistics

UK higher education institutions

HESA data in this report includes data from publicly funded higher education institutions plus the University of Buckingham. HESA also publishes data on higher education level students at further education colleges in Wales, and students at alternative providers, but this is not included in the report. For more information see: www.hesa.ac.uk/support/providers

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Our mission is to create the conditions for UK universities to be the best in the world; maximising their positive impact locally, nationally and globally.

Universities UK acts on behalf of universities, represented by their heads of institution.

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