

# Summary Statistics for Further Education Institutions

England 2000/2001



Learning+Skills Council

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## Introduction

This document contains analysis and interpretation of Summary Statistics and key results for 2000/01 and comparison with 1999/2000 and 1998/99. The statistics are based on data for 407 further education (FE) and sixth form colleges in England plus similar data and comment for 202 LEA maintained and independent external institutions. This data, along with all the information contained in this document, can be viewed on the Learning and Skills Council's summary statistics website at [http://www.lscdata.gov.uk/summary\\_statistics](http://www.lscdata.gov.uk/summary_statistics).

It is the second year that summary statistics have been produced by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) for further education institutions. The summary statistics are calculated primarily from the individualised student record (ISR) and are directly analogous to the performance indicators published by the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC).

## Key Results for 2000/01 and Comparison with 1999/2000 and 1998/99 for colleges

The five statistics have been calculated from information provided by institutions as part of the annual cycle of student and financial data returns to the Council. All of the statistics except SS 5 (attainment of NVQs or equivalent) relate to provision funded wholly or partly by the Council. The five summary statistics published are unchanged from the FEFC performance indicators shown in 1998/99. These are explained in more detail in the definitions section.

Key Skills qualifications have not been included due to inconsistencies in how they were recorded on the ISR.

Analysis of the summary statistics shows that:

### SS 1: Achievement of funding target

#### Colleges

- the median college achieved 99% of its funding target. The 1999/2000 equivalent was also 99%, and 100% in 1998/99. The middle 50% of colleges achieved between 93% and 101% of their funding unit target. These figures reflect the challenge faced by colleges in achieving their funding targets.

#### External institutions

- the range of results are much wider for external institutions than for sector colleges and the middle 50% achieved between 93% and 112% of their funding unit target. The median institution achieved 103% of its funding target, against 102% in 1999/2000.

### SS 2: Percentage change in student numbers

#### Colleges

- the change in full-time student numbers between 1999/2000 and 2000/01 for the median sector college was a decrease of 3%, compared with an increase of 1% in the previous year.
- the change in part-time student numbers for the median sector college between 1999/2000 and 2000/01 was an increase of 7%. This compares with an increase of 3% in 1999/2000.
- part-time student number increases in colleges account for the student number increase in council funded provision in colleges. The overall increase in Council-Funded student numbers in colleges stands at 4.1% (Statistical First Release 22/ISR22, June 2002)

#### External institutions

- the change in part-time student numbers between 1999/2000 and 2000/01 for the median institution was an increase of 12%. As with sector colleges, the percentage change varied significantly between institutions.

### SS 3: In-year retention rate

#### Colleges

- the in-year retention rate for the median sector college in 2000/01 was 88% for full-time students and 85% for part-time students. These medians represent an increase of one percentage point over those recorded in 1999/2000 and 1998/99
- the middle 50% of sector colleges had a full-time in-year retention rate of between 84% and 91%. The range for the previous year was between 83% and 90%.

- for part-time students, the range for 2000/01 is between 80% and 88% in 2000/01. The ranges for the previous two years were between 79% and 88%
- for part-time students, the median sector college in-year retention rate continued to be lowest in sixth form colleges, at 80%. This figure has increased by one percentage point over the previous year. Sixth form colleges often have small numbers of part-time students

#### **External institutions**

- the great majority of provision within external institutions is part-time and the in-year retention rate for the median institution was 81%, an increase of one percentage point on 1999/2000. The middle 50% of institutions had a part-time in-year retention rate of between 76% and 86%, in 1999/2000 the range was between 74% and 85%.

### **SS 4: Achievement rates**

#### **Colleges**

- overall achievement rates have increased over the past three years
- the achievement rate for all qualifications for the median sector college in 2000/01 was 80%, three percentage points higher than 1999/2000, and four percentage points higher than in 1998/99
- the median sector college achievement rate for long qualifications remained unchanged in 2000/01 from the previous year at 81%.
- the median achievement rate for medium length qualifications in general further education and tertiary colleges was 74% - an increase of 4 percentage points from 1999/2000, and by seven percentage points from 1998/99
- there continues to be a wide range of achievement rates in colleges. This has reduced since 1998/99 as colleges with the lowest achievement rates make significant improvements. For example, in 1999/2000 a quarter of sector colleges had an overall achievement rate below 70%. The equivalent figure in 2000/01 was 74%
- the median achievement rate continues to vary by type of college; for example, in 2000/01 the median achievement rate for all qualifications ranged from 87% in sixth form colleges and 83% in specialist art, design and performing arts colleges and agriculture and horticulture colleges, to 78% in general further education and tertiary colleges

#### **External institutions**

- the median external institution achievement rate for all qualifications was 81%, which represents a five point increase from the value recorded in 1999/2000
- the median achievement rate for external institutions is highest for long qualifications at 83% in 2000/01, with the median value for short and medium length qualifications being 81% and 80%, respectively.
- there is a wide range of achievement rates across external institutions with the middle 50% having an achievement rate across all qualifications of between 67% and 93% in 2000/01, compared with 63% to 90% in 1999/2000.

### **SS 5: Contribution to the national learning targets**

SS 5 shows the volume of an institution's contribution to the national targets and covers all provision at institutions. SS 5 is designed to provide useful feedback at college level. It is recognized that national targets cover a wider spectrum and that SS 5 shows only the college's achievements that can contribute to part of this spectrum.

## Background to Summary Statistics publication

In June 1992 the secretary of state for education asked the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) to work with colleges to develop performance indicators, as part of the requirement under section 50 of the *Further and Higher Education Act 1992*, that institutions publish information about their financial and other resources and use made of such resources. The Learning and Skills Council was established by the *Learning and Skills Act 2000* and will continue to publish information on the effective and efficient use of resources. The LSC corporate plan 'Strategic framework to 2004' sets out the Council's key objectives and processes are being established for developing performance indicators across the full range of learning under the Council's remit.

In 1999 the External Institutions Review Group was set up by the FEFC to advise on funding arrangement for external institutions. The group were also asked to look at the contribution of external institutions to the lifelong learning agenda and at the areas of quality improvement and accountability. The group recommended that accountability requirements for external institutions should be as rigorous as for sector colleges and should be measured and reported accordingly.

A variety of information is already published about institutions' activities including:

- examination achievements of 16 to 18 year-olds, published annually by the [DFES](#) as part of the comparative tables of school and college performance
- college publications such as the college's charter and disability statement, annual college accounts and detailed information on the qualifications achieved by students each year
- [OfSTED](#) and [ALI](#) inspection reports.

### Purpose

This publication contains summary statistics, analysis and interpretation for 407 further education (FE) and sixth form colleges in England plus similar data and comment for 202 LEA maintained and independent external institutions. The statistics for individual institutions relate to the 2000/01 and 1999/2000 teaching years with trends since 1998/99 included in the section on analysis and interpretation.

It is the second year that summary statistics have been produced by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) for FE institutions. The summary statistics are calculated primarily from the individualised student record (ISR) and are directly analogous to the performance indicators published by the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC).

Five summary statistics are shown for each institution, focusing on key areas of activity. The summary statistics have been developed to complement existing published information and have three main purposes:

- to enable institutions to compare their performance with those of equivalent organisations
- to enable institutions to set targets for improving their performance which are both realistic and challenging
- to provide information to the Department for Education and Skills (DFES) and the general public as part of the accountability for spending public funds
- to enable institutions and the Council to monitor changes in performance at each institution over time.
- to inform the provider review process undertaken by the LSC

## Approach

Diversity of provision is one of the distinguishing features of the further education sector. To attempt to capture this diversity in full using numerical measures would run the risk of increasing the volume of data to unmanageable levels, so reducing the impact and value of the statistics. The approach adopted by the FEFC and supported by the Learning and Skills Council for the 2000/01 Summary Statistics is to publish a limited number of statistics which satisfy the following criteria:

- they should be clearly defined so that a reliable comparison between institutions is possible
- the data required to calculate them should be collected as part of institutions' other activities. There should be no special data collection needed
- they should be seen as relating to key areas of activity.

The key areas of activity of interest to the LSC are:

- the recruitment of students and the learning programmes they follow
- students' commitment to their learning programmes
- the achievement of students' primary learning goals and, in particular, achievement which contributes to the national learning targets
- the value for money of provision.

## Summary Statistics: A Brief Description

- SS 1 Achievement of funding target; a measure of the degree to which an institution has achieved its funding target
- SS 2 Change in student numbers; a measure of the level of change in student enrolments at an institution
- SS 3 In-year retention rates; a measure of the effectiveness of an institution's teaching, and guidance and support process, as measured by the retention of students on their learning programmes
- SS 4 Achievement rates; a measure of the effectiveness of an institution in enabling students to attain their learning goals
- SS 5 Contribution to the national targets; a measure of the number of students attaining one of the national learning targets by achieving an NVQ or equivalent at the appropriate level

## Interpreting the statistics

There are a number of key points to bear in mind when interpreting the summary statistics for an individual institution:

- a. the statistics should be viewed as part of a range of information which institutions and others publish about their activities and should also be considered in relation to the institution's strategic plan and mission;
- b. the summary statistics give summary information about each institution. The statistics can only provide a starting point for institutions to compare their performance with institutions similar to their own. The reasons for differential performance can then be explored, separating differences arising from unique features of an institution, from those where changes in practice can lead to improved performance;

- c. all the summary statistics except SS 5 relate to Council-funded provision in institutions. Where achievement rates or other measures are published this is often on a different basis from the figures presented here and great caution should be exercised in making comparisons. For example, the performance tables for schools and colleges published each November by the DfES, relate to 16 to 18 year olds studying particular qualifications while the summary statistics in this publication relate to all students and their qualifications. Almost four in five students in the further education sector are aged over 18.

For colleges, broad comparisons can be made between the in-year retention and achievement rates shown respectively in SS 3 and SS 4 and the results shown in *Benchmarking Data 1998/99 to 2000/01: Retention and achievement rates in further education colleges in England*. Institutions wishing to compare their summary statistics with the results published in benchmarking data should note the definitional differences between the results shown in the two publications:

**Table 1. Calculation of retention**

<b>Benchmarking Data: retention</b>	<b>Summary Statistics: retention</b>
Qualification level	Student level
Retention over the whole programme	In-year retention
Shown by notional level, age group and expected length of qualification	Shown by mode of attendance
Can include non Council-funded students where they are in a cohort with Council-funded students	Council-funded students only

**Table 2. Calculation of achievement**

<b>Benchmarking Data: achievement</b>	<b>Summary Statistics: achievement</b>
Qualification level	Qualification level
Completed qualifications with known outcomes as base	Completed qualifications with known outcomes as base
Excludes partial achievement	Includes partial achievement as half
Shown by notional level, age group and expected length of qualification	Shown by three lengths of qualification, according to guided learning hours
Can include non Council-funded students where they are in a cohort with Council-funded students	Council-funded students only

*Benchmarking Data 1998/99 to 2000/01*

## Notes to Tables - Mergers and Transfers

Summary statistics are shown separately for the following college and external institution which merged during the 2000/01 teaching year:

- Bolton Community Education Service and Bolton College, merged to form Bolton Community College

Summary statistics for the following colleges and external institutions which merged during the 2000/01 teaching year have been calculated for 1999/2000 and 2000/01 from combined data:

- Abingdon College and West Oxfordshire College merged to form Abingdon and Whitney College
- Cannock Adult Education Consortium merged with Cannock Chase Technical College, with the institution taking the latter's name
- East Staffordshire Adult Education Consortium merged with Burton College, with the institution taking the latter's name
- Hendon College merged with Barnet College, with the institution taking the latter's name
- Kingsway College and Westminster College, merged to form Westminster Kingsway College
- Moorlands Adult Education Consortium merged with Leek College of Further Education and School of Art, with the institution taking the latter's name
- Nene Valley Adult Community College, South Northants Adults Education and Uplands AE merged with Northampton LEA - Lifelong Learning Services, with the institution taking the latter's name
- Newcastle-Under-Lyme Adult Education Consortium merged with Newcastle-under-Lyme College, with the institution taking the latter's name
- North Shropshire College and Walford College, Shropshire, merged to form Walford and North Shropshire College
- North Somerset Community Education merged with Weston College, with the institution taking the latter's name
- The Rutland Group and Tresham Institute, merged to form Tresham Institute
- Trowbridge College, Chippenham College and Lackham College, merged to form Wiltshire College

Summary statistics are shown separately for the following colleges and external institutions which merged on or after 1 August 2001:

- Basildon College and Thurrock College, merged to form Thurrock and Basildon College
- Derby City Council (Derby East) and Derby City Council (Derby West), merged to form Derby AES
- Broomfield College, Mackworth College Derby and Derby Tertiary College, Wilmorton merged to form Derby College

- Eastbourne College of Arts and Technology and Lewes Tertiary College merged to form Sussex Downs College
- Hammersmith and West London College and Ealing Tertiary College, merged to form Ealing, Hammersmith & West London College
- Rowley Regis College merged with Dudley College of Technology, with the institution taking the latter's name
- Shena Simon College merged with City College Manchester, with the institution taking the latter's name
- Soundwell College merged with City of Bristol College, with the institution taking the latter's name
- Tile Hill College and the Coventry Technical College, merged to form City College, Coventry
- Brinsbury College and Chichester College of Arts, Science and Technology merged to form Chichester College
- Teesside Tertiary College and Middlesbrough College merged to form Middlesbrough College
- Leicester City Consortium and Leicester Adult Education merged, with the institution taking the latter's name
- Carlton Boiling User Group and CALTEC merged, with the institution taking the latter's name
- Putteridge Community College and Stopsley Community College merged to form Putteridge Community College
- Adult Community College, Colchester 01 and Adult Community College Colchester 02 merged to form Adult Community College Colchester
- St Austell College merged with Cornwall College, with the institution taking the latter's name
- Brune Park Community College has merged with St Vincent College, with the institution taking the latter's name
- East Yorkshire College of Further Education and Beverley College of Further Education merged to form East Riding College

Summary statistics for the following colleges which merged on or after 1 August 2001 have been calculated for 2000/01 from combined data:

- College of Care & Early Education merged with City of Bristol College, with the institution taking the latter's name
- Phoenix College and Merton College merged, with the institution taking the latter's name
- Brooksby College and Melton Mowbray College merged to form Brooksby Melton College
- Buckingham County Council (Aylesbury) merged with Buckingham County Council, with the institution taking the latter's name

## Analysis and Interpretation of Summary Statistics

This section contains analysis and interpretation for each of the five summary statistics for 2000/01 together with a comparison with the results for 1998/99 and 1999/2000. The following information is shown for each statistic:

- purpose of the statistic
- description of the statistic
- results and interpretation including sector medians, medians and ranges by college type and regional medians.

### SS 1: Achievement of Funding Target

#### Purpose

To indicate the degree to which an institution has achieved its funding target, by measuring the difference between an institution's provision of education and training programmes and that which an institution agreed to provide in return for Council funds. The statistic relates to provision wholly or partly funded by the Council.

#### Description

The number of Council-funded units of activity, that is, funding units, generated by an institution for the teaching year (1 August to 31 July), as a percentage of its target funding units for that year.

The funding agreement between the Council and an institution takes account of the entire range of an institution's activities including student recruitment, attendance and achievement as well as the different patterns of student attendance and the varied learning programmes they follow.

The statistics show an institution's success in setting and achieving targets. A result of close to 100% is an indication of accurate planning.

#### Results and Interpretation

The results are summarised in table 1. Across sector colleges, the median college value for the achievement of the 2000/01 funding target was 99% the same as in 1999/2000. One-quarter of sector colleges achieved a target of 101% or higher in 2000/01 (see also figures 1a and 2). The median value for external institutions was 103% (see also figures 1b and 2).

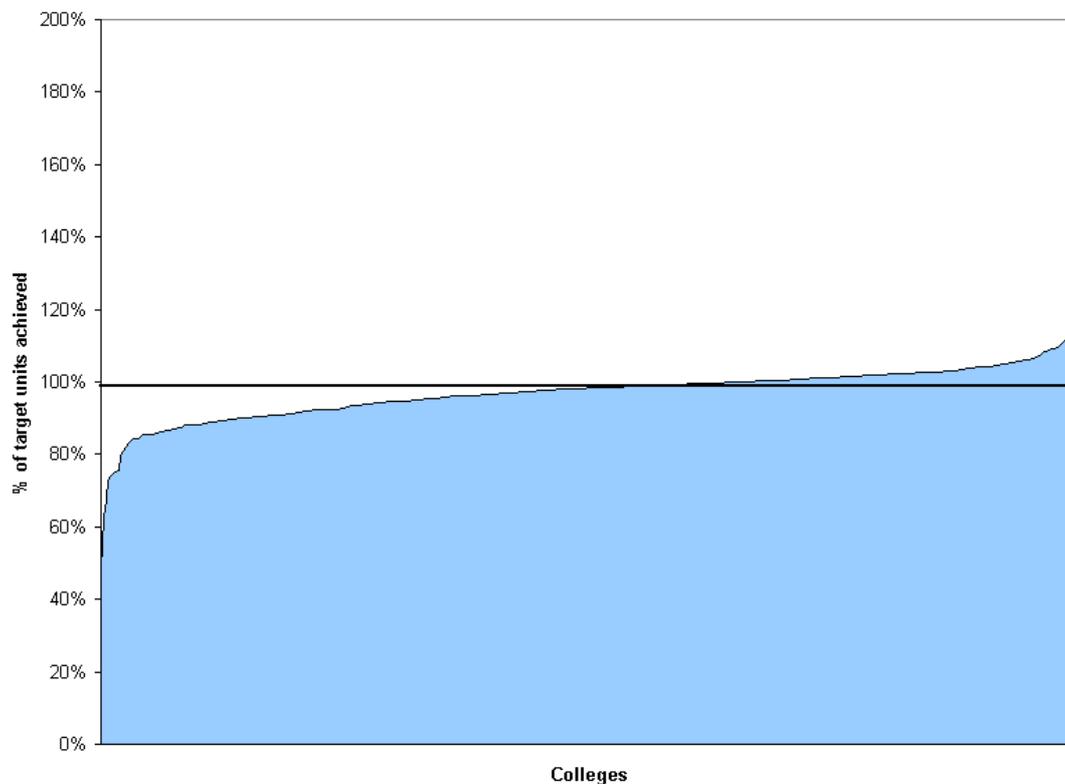
The middle 50% of sector colleges in 2000/01 achieved between 93% and 101% of their funding target; this was a similar range to 1999/2000. The middle 50% of external institutions in 2000/01 achieved between 93% and 112%, which represents a further narrowing of the range compared with 1999/2000 and 1998/1999. The median specialist college value for the 2000/01 funding target fell for the third year running whilst the median general further education and tertiary college fell for the second year running.

**Table 1. SS 1: Achievement of funding target  
Ranges for 1998/99 to 2000/01 and by institution type 2000/01**

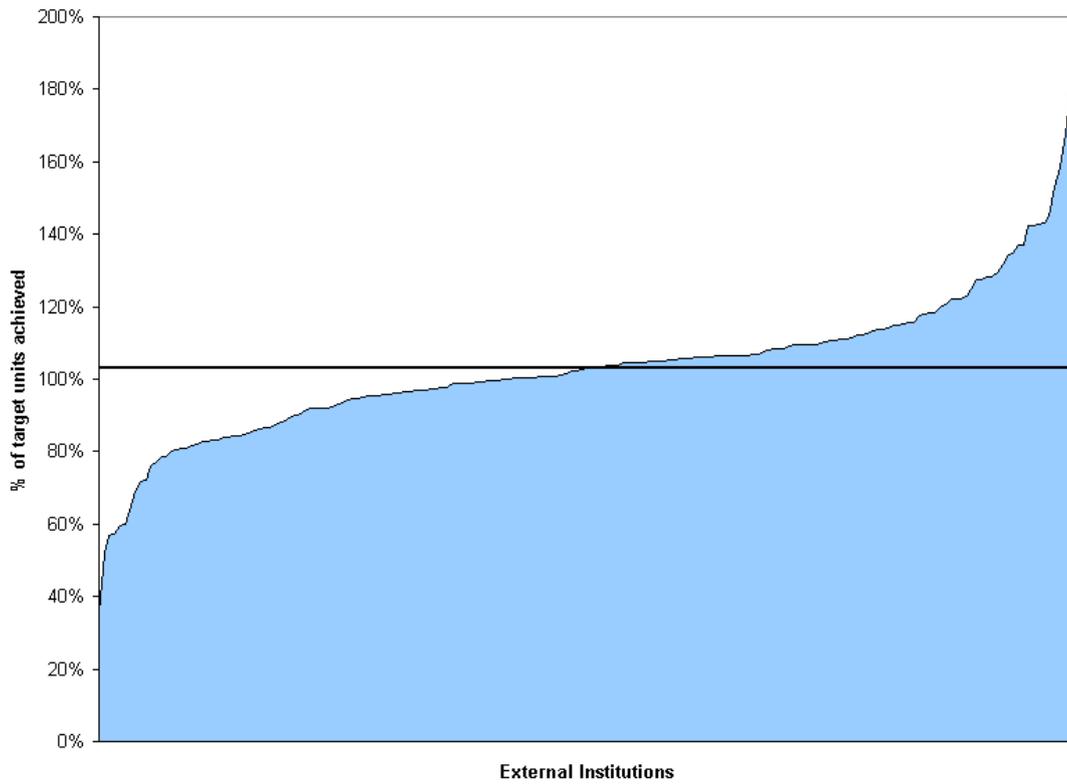
	Institutions No.	10th percentile %	25th percentile %	Median Institution %	75th percentile %	90th percentile %
All sector colleges: 2000/01 1999/00 1998/99	394	88 90 94	93 95 97	99 99 100	101 101 103	104 104 108
Specialist colleges	28	87	91	97	101	104
General FE / tertiary colleges	259	87	92	97	100	103
Sixth form colleges	102	92	98	100	103	106
External institutions	193	81	93	103	112	129

*Note: 'specialist colleges' includes agriculture and horticulture colleges and art, design and performing arts colleges. Number of colleges of each type may not add to total because specialist designated colleges are not shown as a separate category*

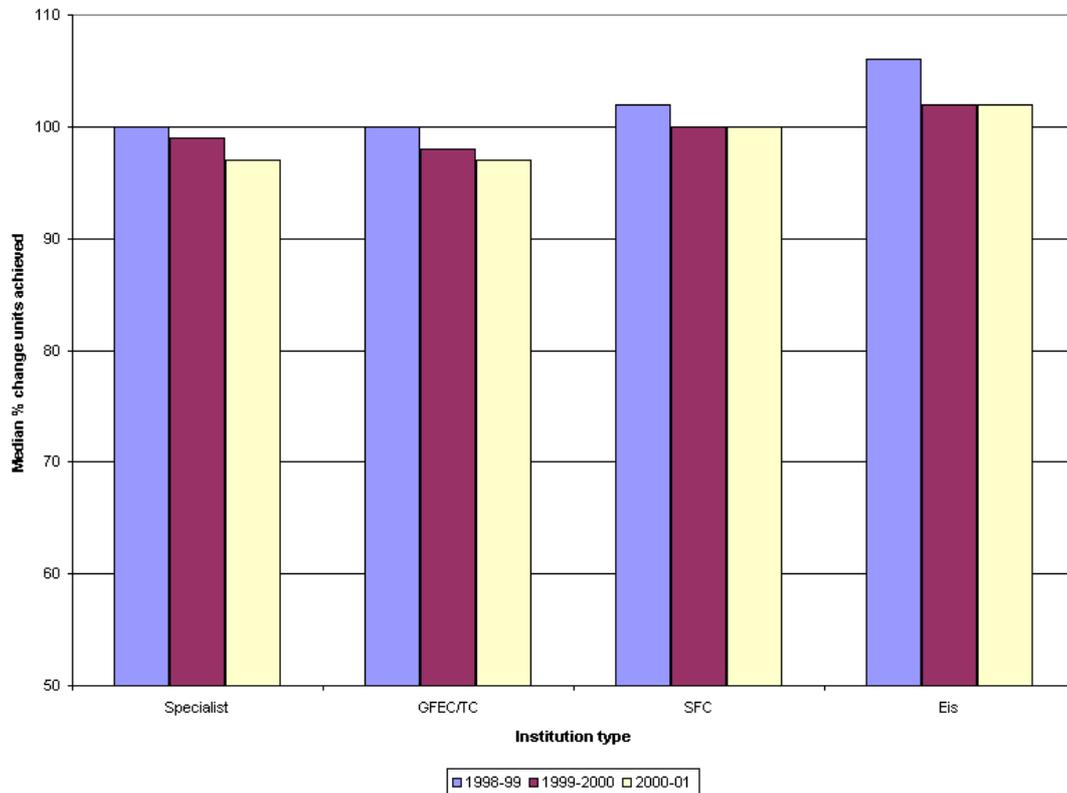
**Figure 1a. SS 1: Achievement of funding target 2000/01. Range of college results**



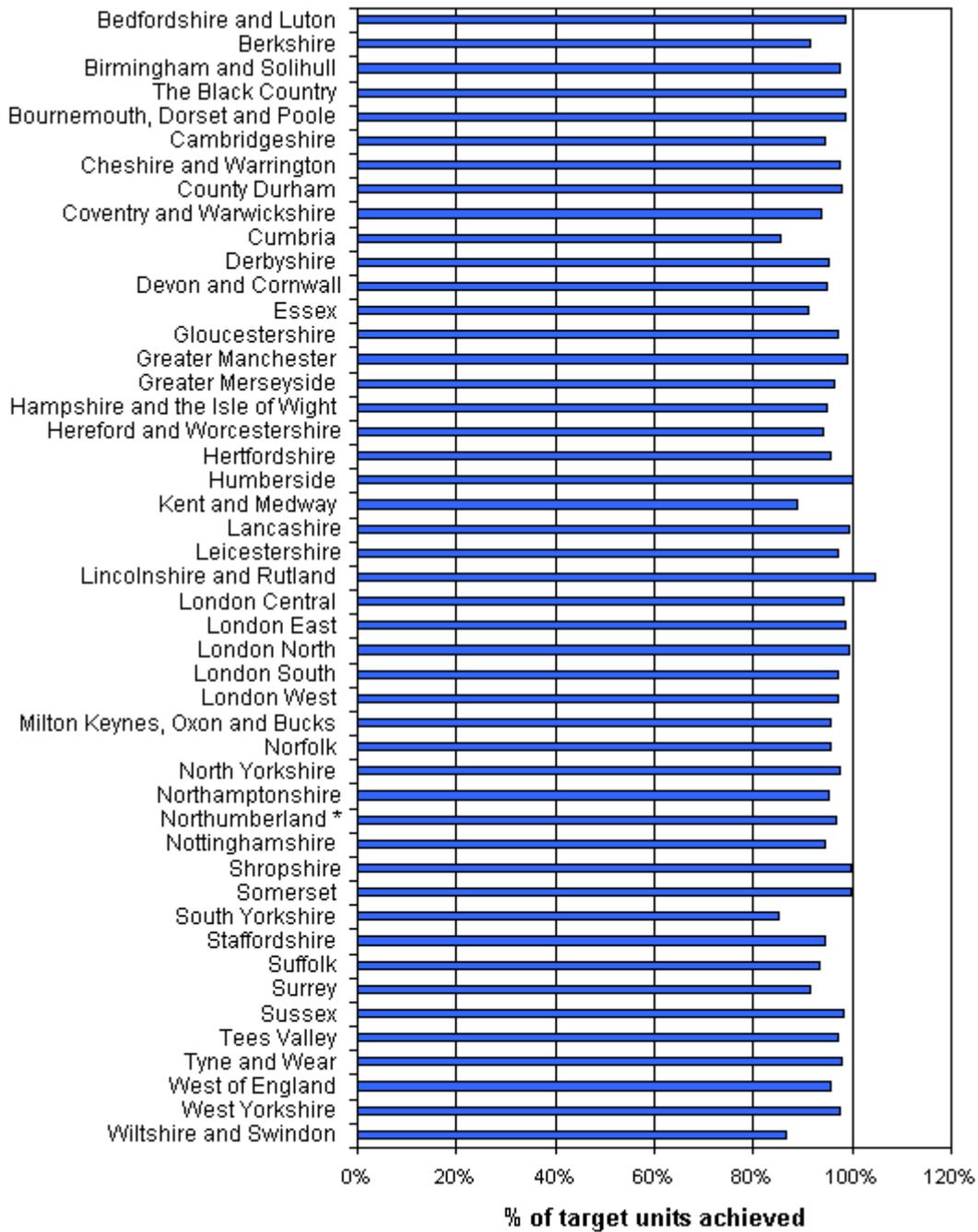
**Figure 1b. SS 1: Achievement of funding target 2000/01. Range of external institution results**



**Figure 2. SS 1: Achievement of funding target 2000/01. Median values by institution**



**Figure 3. SS 1: Achievement of funding target 2000/2001.  
Weighted average of sector colleges by local LSC**



\* mean calculated from fewer than four colleges

## **SS 2: Change in Student Numbers**

### **Purpose**

To indicate the level of change in student enrolments at an institution.

### **Description**

The percentage change in student numbers year on year. Separate information is shown for two broad modes of attendance: full-time which includes students studying on a full-time full-year basis; and part-time which includes students studying on a full-time part-year basis and part-time students. Student numbers at institutions in 2000/01 are also shown for full-time and part-time attendance to provide a context for this statistic and the other statistics. The statistic relates to provision wholly or partly funded by the Council.

### **Results and Interpretation**

#### **Full-time Students**

Full-time student numbers in sector colleges decreased by 3% between 1999/2000 and 2000/01 in the median college. The change in full-time student numbers varied substantially between colleges in all three years. In 2000/01, full-time numbers declined by more than 9% at a quarter of colleges, but increased by more than 3% at another quarter (see also figure 4); the range in performance is similar to that obtained in the previous two years.

The 3% median decrease in full-time numbers masks some variations between college types (see also figure 5). In 2000/01 the median change in full-time numbers was an increase of 2% in sixth form colleges, whereas the median general further education and tertiary college was a decrease of 6% and the median specialist agriculture and horticulture and art and design colleges had less than 1% change in full-time numbers.

No full-time student figures are shown for external institutions due to this group comprising less than 3,000 students. The relatively few full-time students at external institutions causes wide variations in the change in student numbers between institutions with over half of external institutions having no full time students.

#### **Part-time Students**

The change in part-time student numbers for the median sector college between 1999/2000 and 2000/01 was an increase of 7%. There was a 12% increase in part-time numbers for the median external institution. All institution types showed an increase in part-time student numbers for the second year running.

The part-time numbers include those students studying on very short full-time courses, for example students studying a computer literacy and information technology course full-time for one week.

Growth rates varied between institutions in a similar manner to last year, see also figures 7a and 7b, which show the range of results for colleges and external institutions respectively. In a quarter of sector colleges part-time numbers declined by over 5%, while in another quarter part-time numbers increased by over 23%.

Care should be taken in interpreting the weighted averages of sector colleges, particularly for SS 2 as shown in figure 6. The variability between institutions, coupled with an average calculated from a small number of colleges has resulted in some local LSCs showing results which are significantly different from the general pattern.

**Table 2. SS 2: Student number trends**  
**Ranges for 1998/99 to 2000/01 and by institution type 2000/01**

**Full-time students**

	Institutions	10th percentile	25th percentile	Median	75th percentile	90th percentile
	No.	%	%	%	%	%
All sector colleges:						
2000/01	392	-14	-9	-3	3	7
1999/00		-11	-4	1	6	10
1998/99		-12	-7	-2	3	8
Specialist colleges	28	-13	-9	0	6	11
General FE / tertiary colleges	259	-15	-10	-6	0	5
Sixth form colleges	102	-6	-3	2	6	9
External institutions	-	-	-	-	-	-

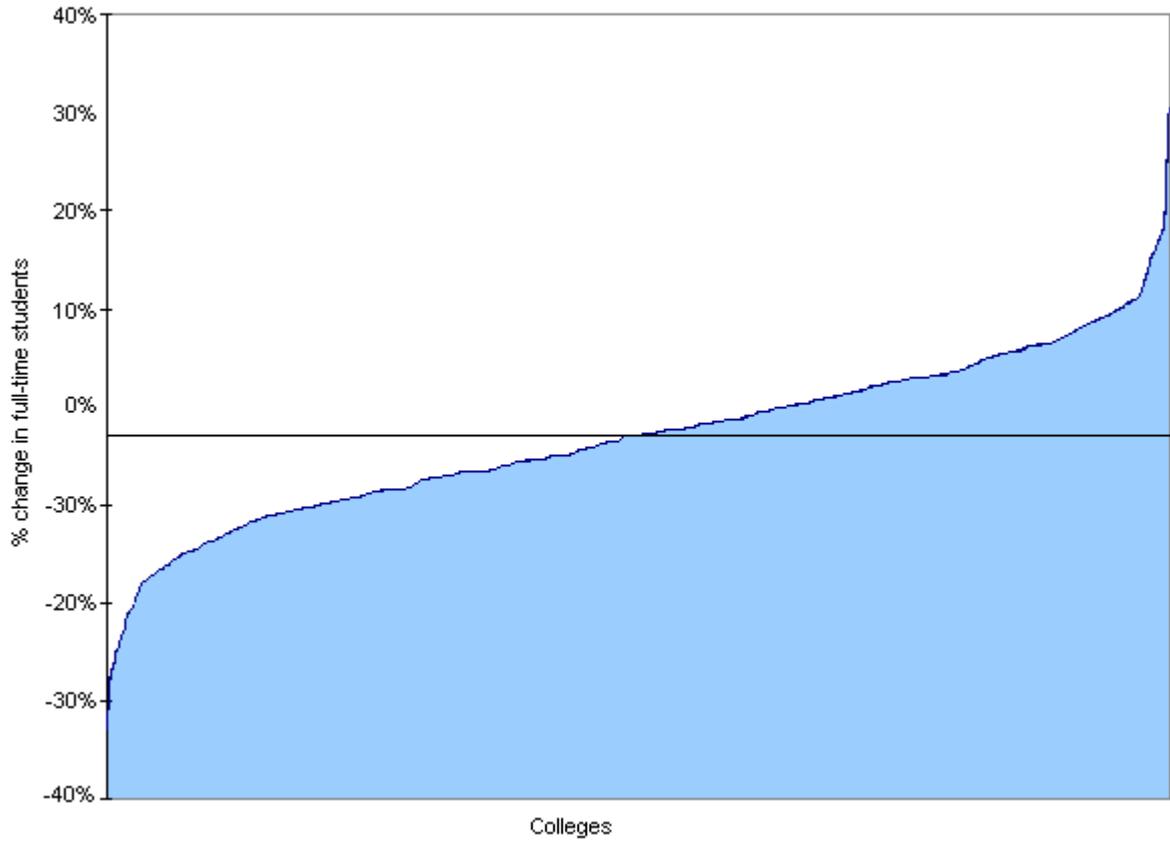
*Note: External institutions are not shown as there are fewer than 3,000 students in the group*

**Part-time students**

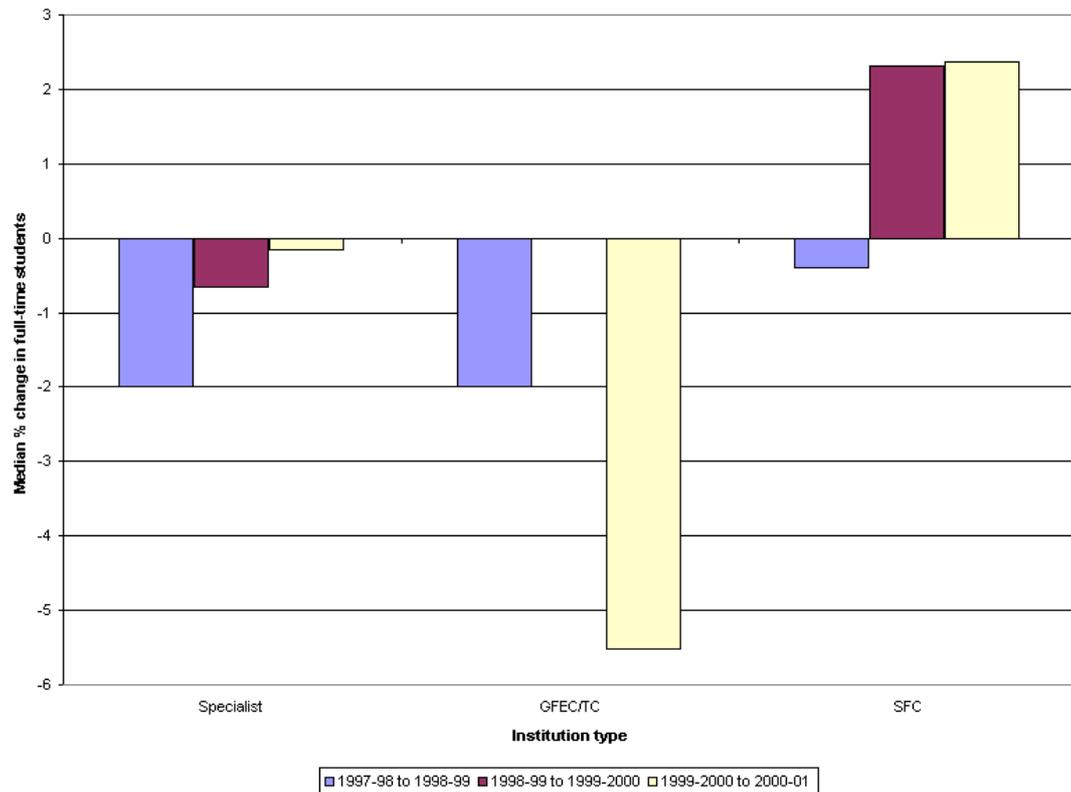
	Institutions	10th percentile	25th percentile	Median	75th percentile	90th percentile
	No.	%	%	%	%	%
All sector colleges:						
2000/01	392	-21	-5	7	23	41
1999/00		-24	-9	3	17	39
1998/99		-29	-13	-1	14	33
Specialist colleges	28	-12	0	12	26	49
General FE / tertiary colleges	259	-13	-3	7	18	34
Sixth form colleges	100	-46	-13	6	35	65
External institutions	187	-11	-1	12	27	50

*Note: specialist colleges includes agriculture and horticulture colleges and art, design and performing arts colleges*  
*Number of colleges of each type may not add to total because specialist designated colleges are not shown as a separate category*

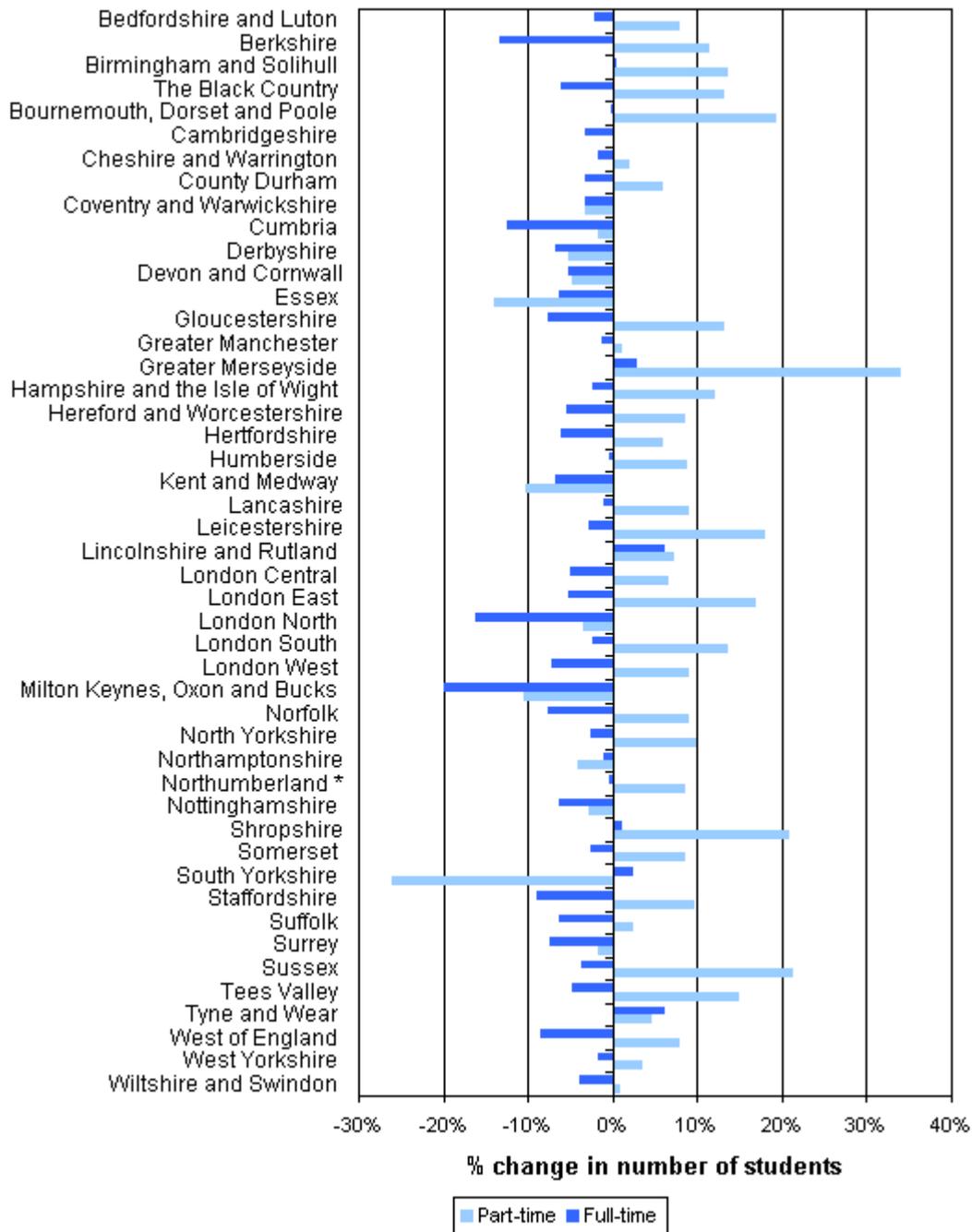
**Figure 4. SS 2: Change in full-time students 1999/2000 to 2000/01. Range of college results**



**Figure 5. SS 2: Change in full-time students 1999/2000 to 2000/01. Median value by institution type**

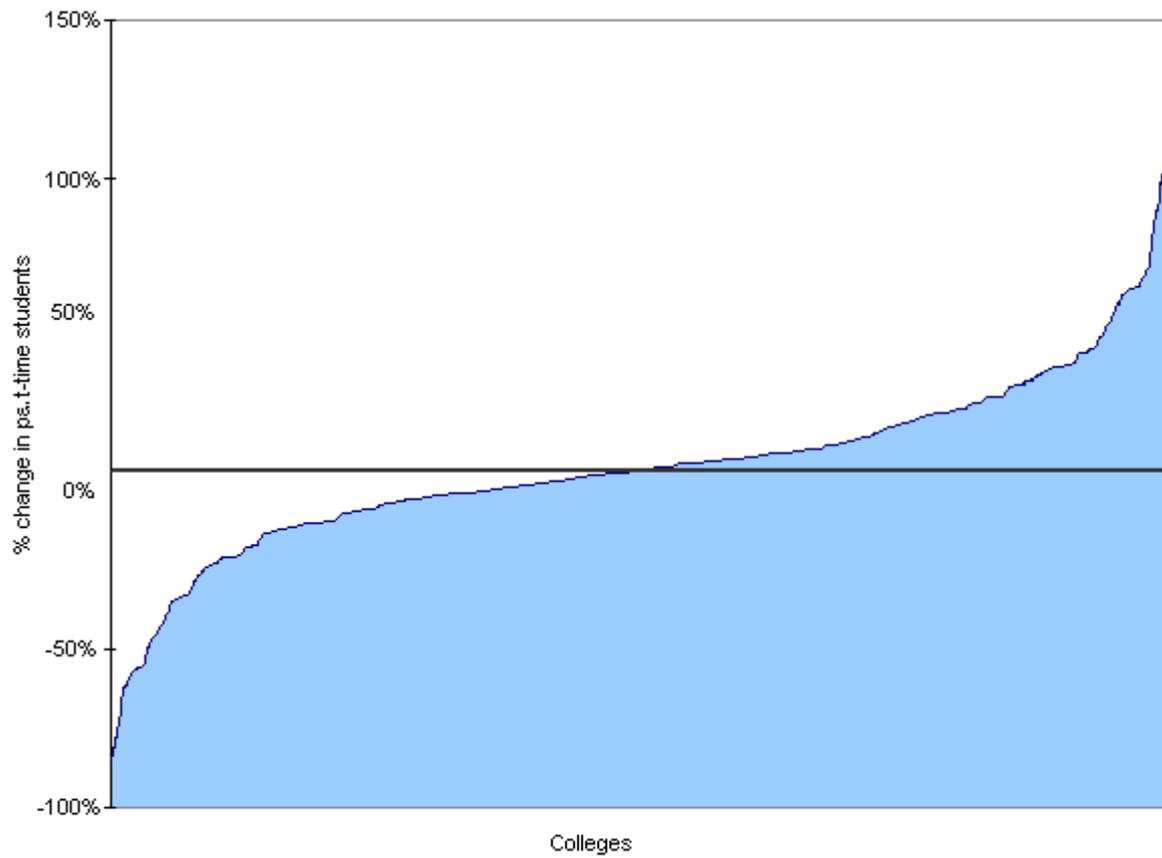


**Figure 6. SS 2: Change in number of students 1999/2000 to 2000/01**  
**Weighted average of sector colleges by local LSC**



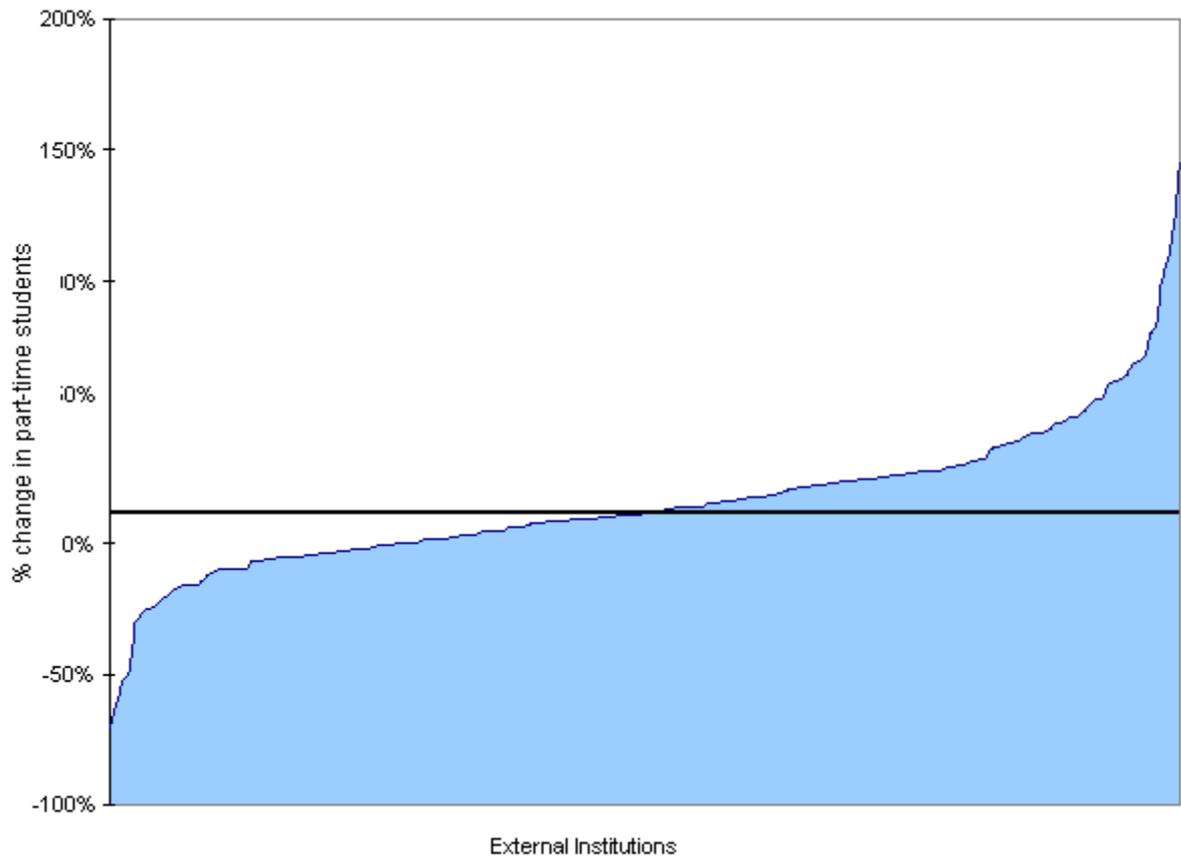
\* mean calculated from fewer than four colleges

Figure 7a. SS 2: Change in part-time students 1999/2000 to 2000/01. Range of college results



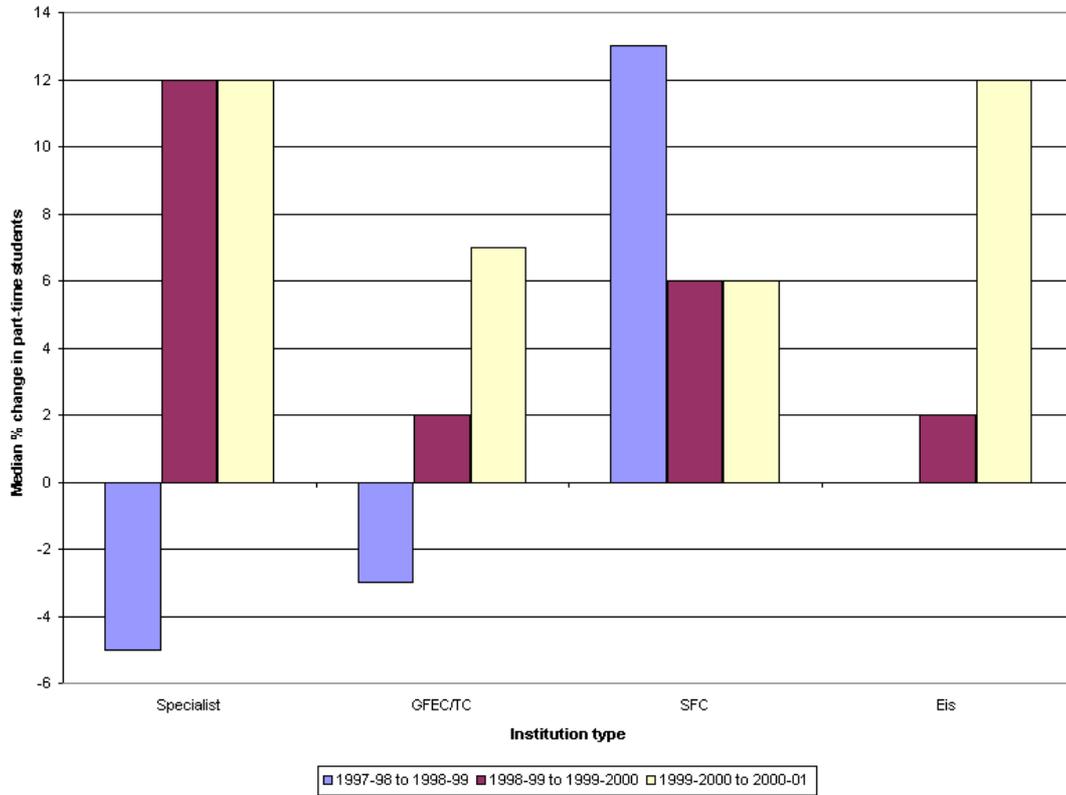
Note: 3 colleges are excluded as their change in part-time student numbers between 1999/2000 and 2000/01 was over 200%. These were mainly sixth form colleges with a relatively small number of part-time students resulting in a large percentage change between the two years.

**Figure 7b. SS 2: Change in part-time students 1999/2000 to 2000/01. Range of external institution results**



Note: 1 institution is excluded as its change in part-time student numbers between 1999/2000 and 2000/01 was over 200%.

**Figure 8. SS 2: Change in part-time students 1999/2000 to 2000/01. Median value by institution type**



## SS 3: In-year Retention Rates

### Purpose

To provide an indication of the effectiveness of an institution's teaching, and guidance and support process, as measured by the retention of students on their learning programmes.

### Description

The percentage of those students who, having enrolled on a learning programme of at least 12 weeks duration, continue to attend at the end of the qualification or the end of the teaching year (31 July), whichever is sooner. Separate information is shown for full-time full-year (described as full-time), and full-time part-year and part-time students (jointly described as part-time). The statistic relates to provision funded wholly or partly by the Council.

Where a student transfers from one qualification to another within the institution during the teaching year, the qualification the student has transferred from is ignored for the purpose of calculating the student's retention status.

The calculated in-year retention rate takes account of the number of students withdrawing from all their qualifications within any one teaching year, rather than over the whole programme where students are studying on a programme longer than one year.

### Results and Interpretation

The results for SS 3 are summarised in table 3. The median sector college in-year retention rate in 2000/01 was 88% for full-time students and 85% for part-time students. In both cases the median retention rate has increased by one percentage point compared to that recorded since 1998/99. The median external institution retention rate was 96% for full-time students and 81% for part-time students; the median full-time retention rate is strongly influenced by the low numbers of full-time students.

In 2000/01 the range of sector college in-year retention rates was very similar to previous years with the middle 50% of colleges having a full-time in-year retention rate of between 84% and 91% and a part-time in-year retention rate of between 80% and 88%. The retention rates for the middle 50% of external institutions ranged between 81% and 100% for full-time students and between 76% and 86% for part-time students.

Rates continue to vary by type of institution. Full-time in-year retention rates remain slightly lower in general further education and tertiary colleges than in other institutions. For part-time students, the median college in-year retention rate continues to be lower in sixth form colleges, at 80%, than in other types of colleges (see also figures 10 and 13). This figure has shown an increase of one percentage point from 1999/2000.

Sector colleges with the lowest retention rates in 1999/2000 have continued to improve the retention rates of their students. In 1999/2000 a quarter of colleges had an in-year retention rate for their part-time students of less than 79%. Typically, this group of colleges who formed the bottom quartile in 1999/2000 have improved their retention rate for part time students in 2000/01 by three percentage points.

**Table 3. SS 3: In-year retention rates**  
**Ranges for 1998/99 to 2000/01 and by institution type 2000/01**

**Full-time students**

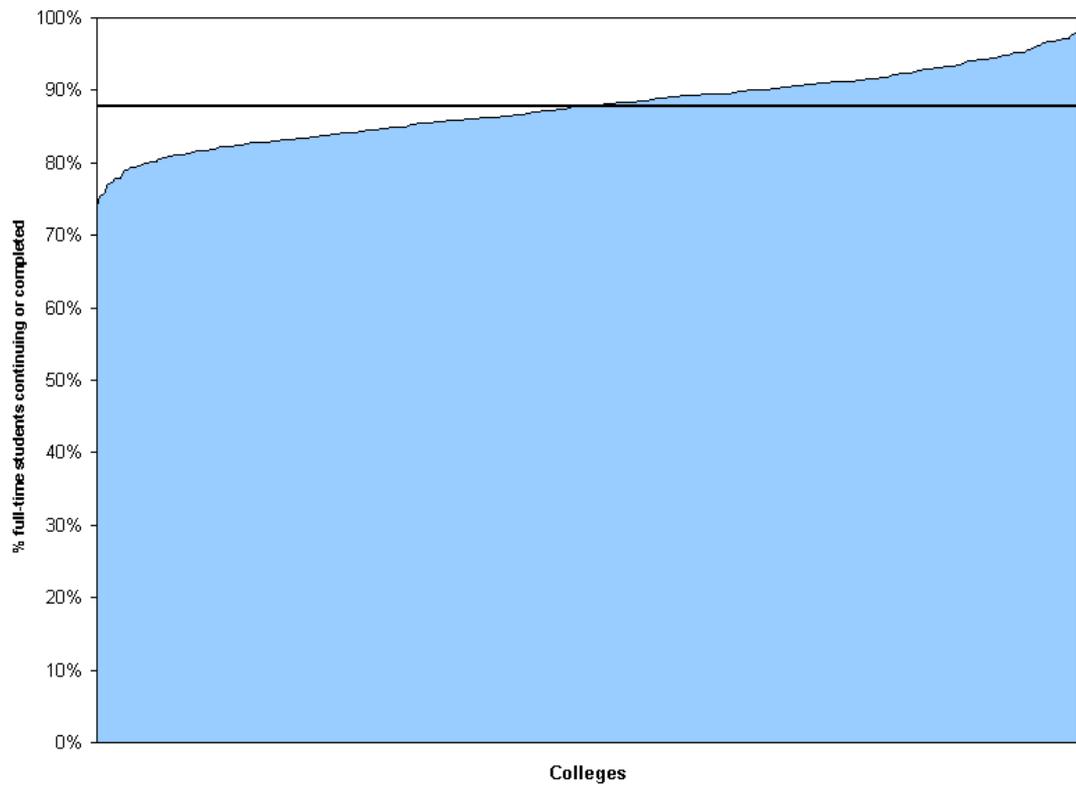
	Institutions	10th percentile	25th percentile	Median	75th percentile	90th percentile
	No.	%	%	%	%	%
All sector colleges:						
2000/01	390	82	84	88	91	94
1999/00		80	83	87	90	94
1998/99		81	84	87	91	94
Specialist colleges	27	83	86	88	90	91
General FE / tertiary colleges	260	81	83	86	89	91
Sixth form colleges	99	89	91	93	95	97
External institutions	83	65	81	96	100	100

**Part-time students**

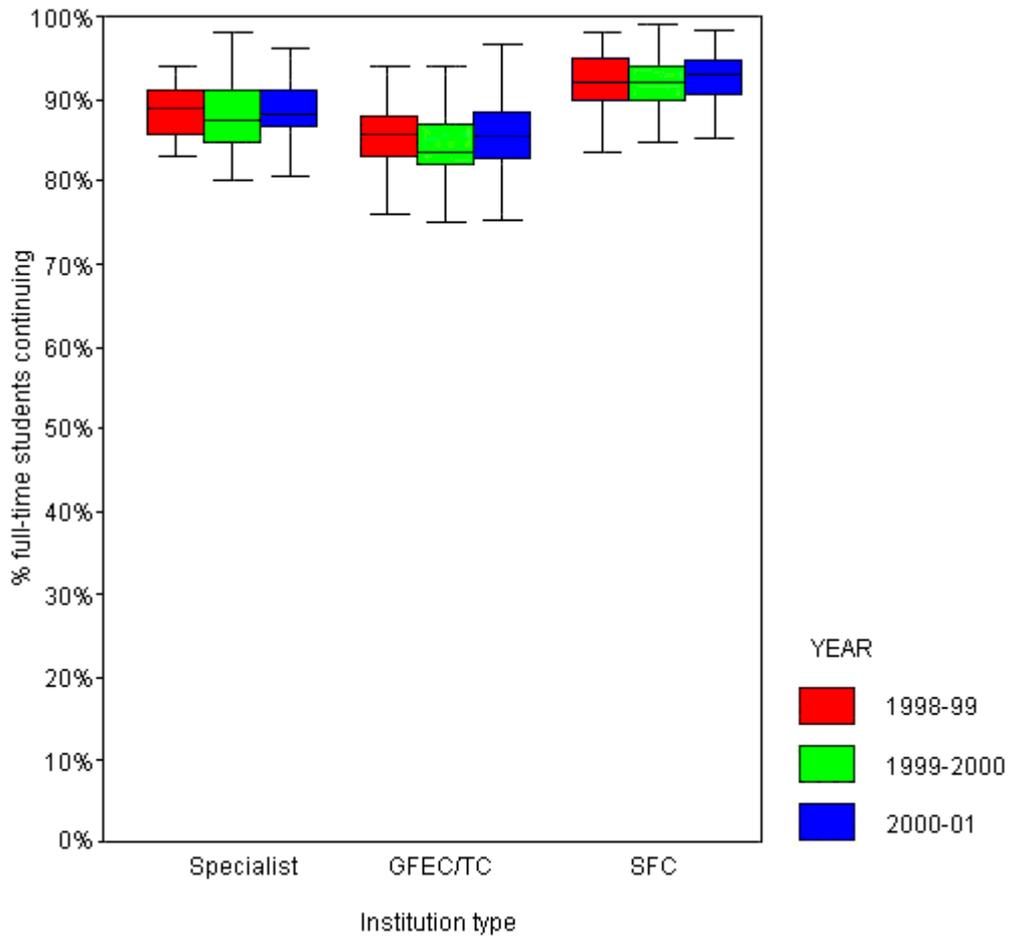
	Institutions	10th percentile	25th percentile	Median	75th percentile	90th percentile
	No.	%	%	%	%	%
All sector colleges:						
2000/01	393	75	80	85	88	92
1999/00		74	79	84	88	92
1998/99		72	79	84	88	91
Specialist colleges	28	66	83	87	92	94
General FE / tertiary colleges	260	78	81	85	88	91
Sixth form colleges	100	65	73	80	88	93
External institutions	188	70	76	81	86	92

*Note: specialist colleges includes agriculture and horticulture colleges and art, design and performing arts colleges  
Number of colleges of each type may not add to total because specialist designated colleges are not shown as a separate category*

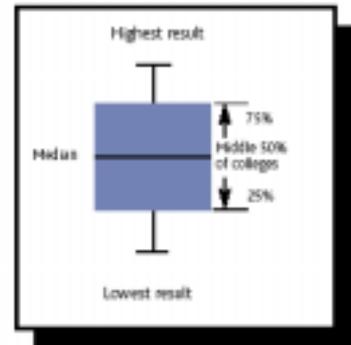
**Figure 9. SS 3: Full-time student in-year retention rate 2000/01. Range of college results**



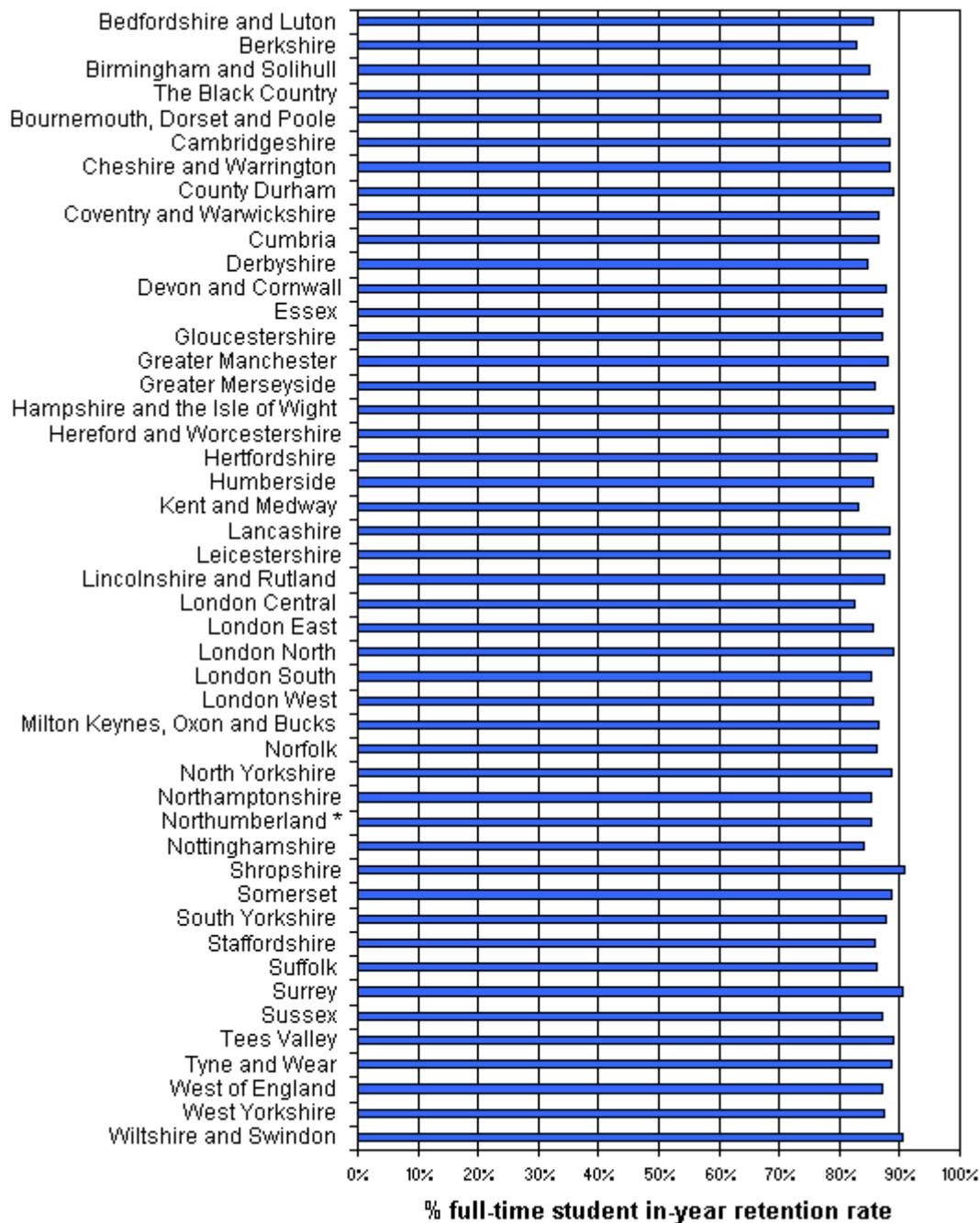
**Figure 10. SS 3: Full-time student in-year retention rate 2000/01 by institution type**



Note: interpretation of figure 10 is as follows, taking sixth form college in-year retention rates in 2000/01 as an example. The median sixth form college in-year retention rate was 93%, that is half of sixth form colleges had an in-year retention rate for full-time students of 93% or more. The middle 50% of sixth form colleges had a full-time in-year retention rate within the range 91 to 95%. The highest and lowest in-year retention rates were 100% and 83% respectively.

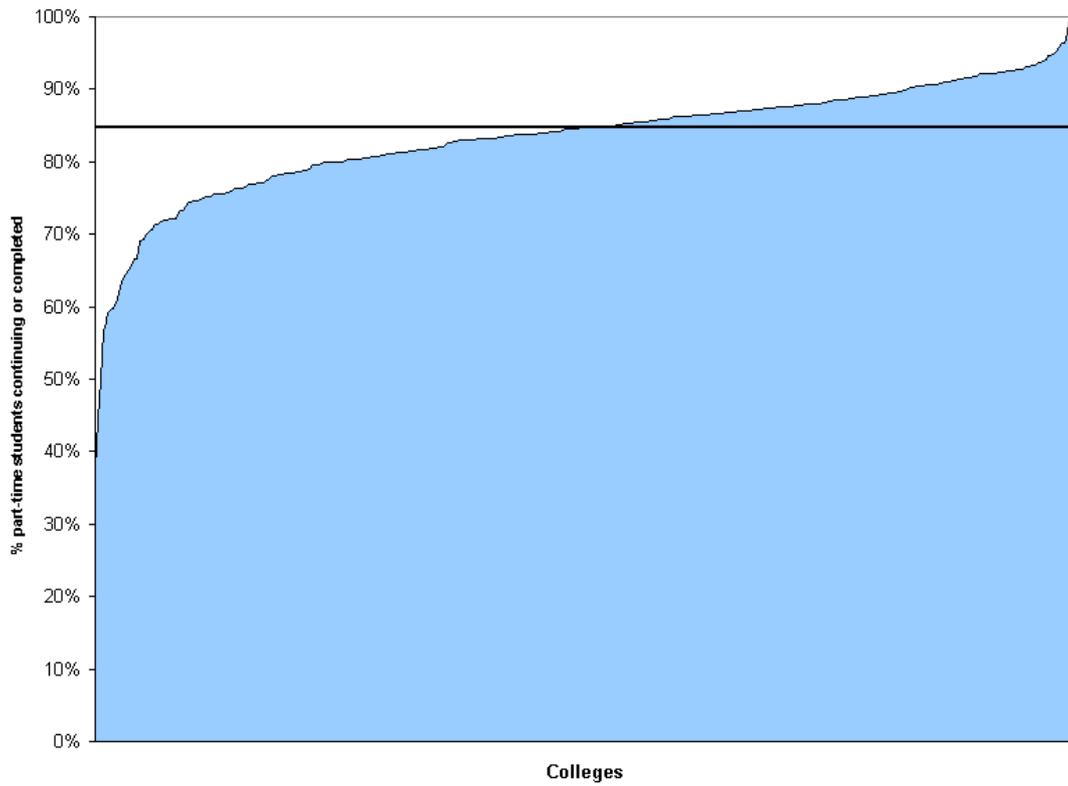


**Figure 11. SS 3: Full-time student in-year retention rate 2000/01**  
**Weighted average of sector colleges by local LSC**



\* mean calculated from fewer than four colleges

**Figure 12a. SS 3: Part-time student in-year retention rate 2000/01. Range of college results**



**Figure 12b. SS 3: Part-time student in-year retention rate 2000/01. Range of external institution results**

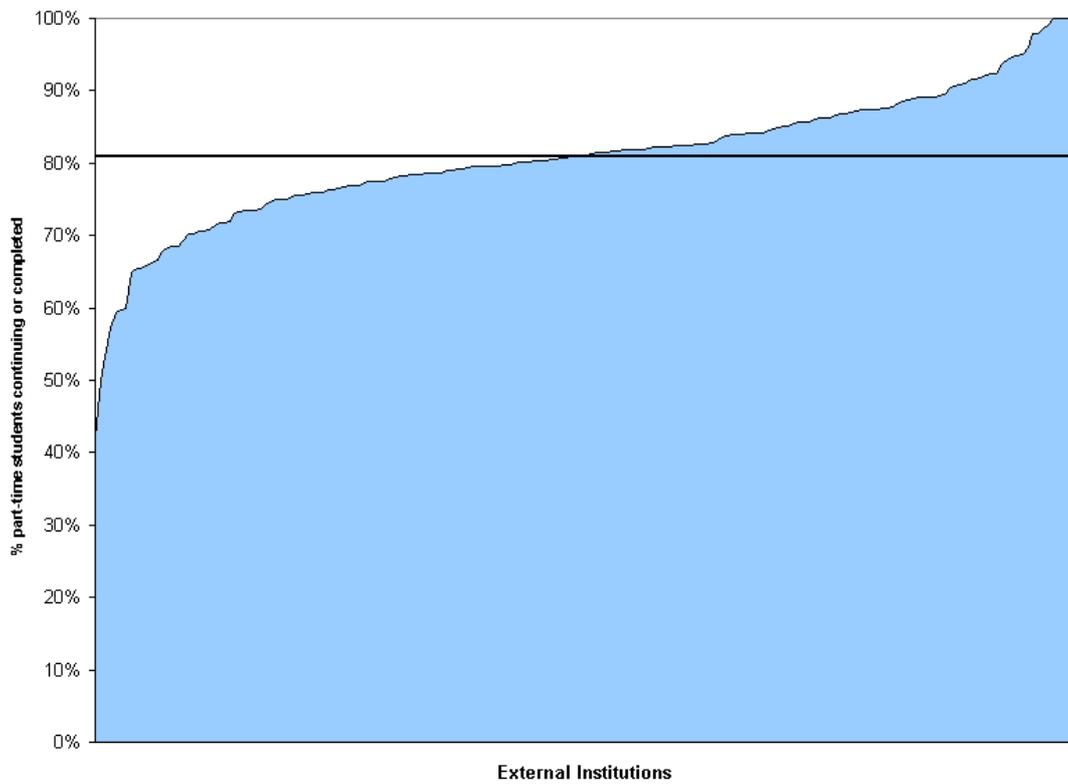
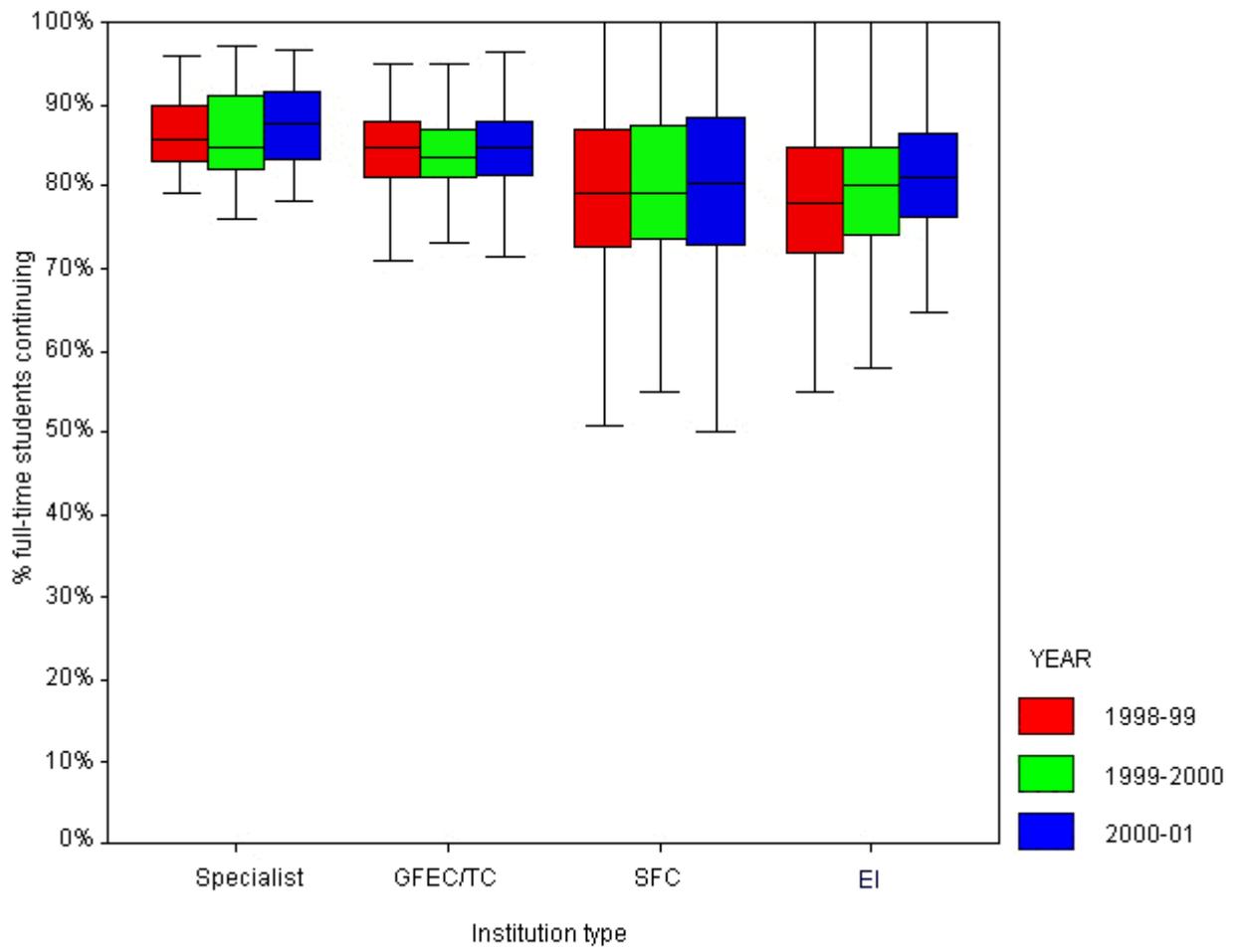
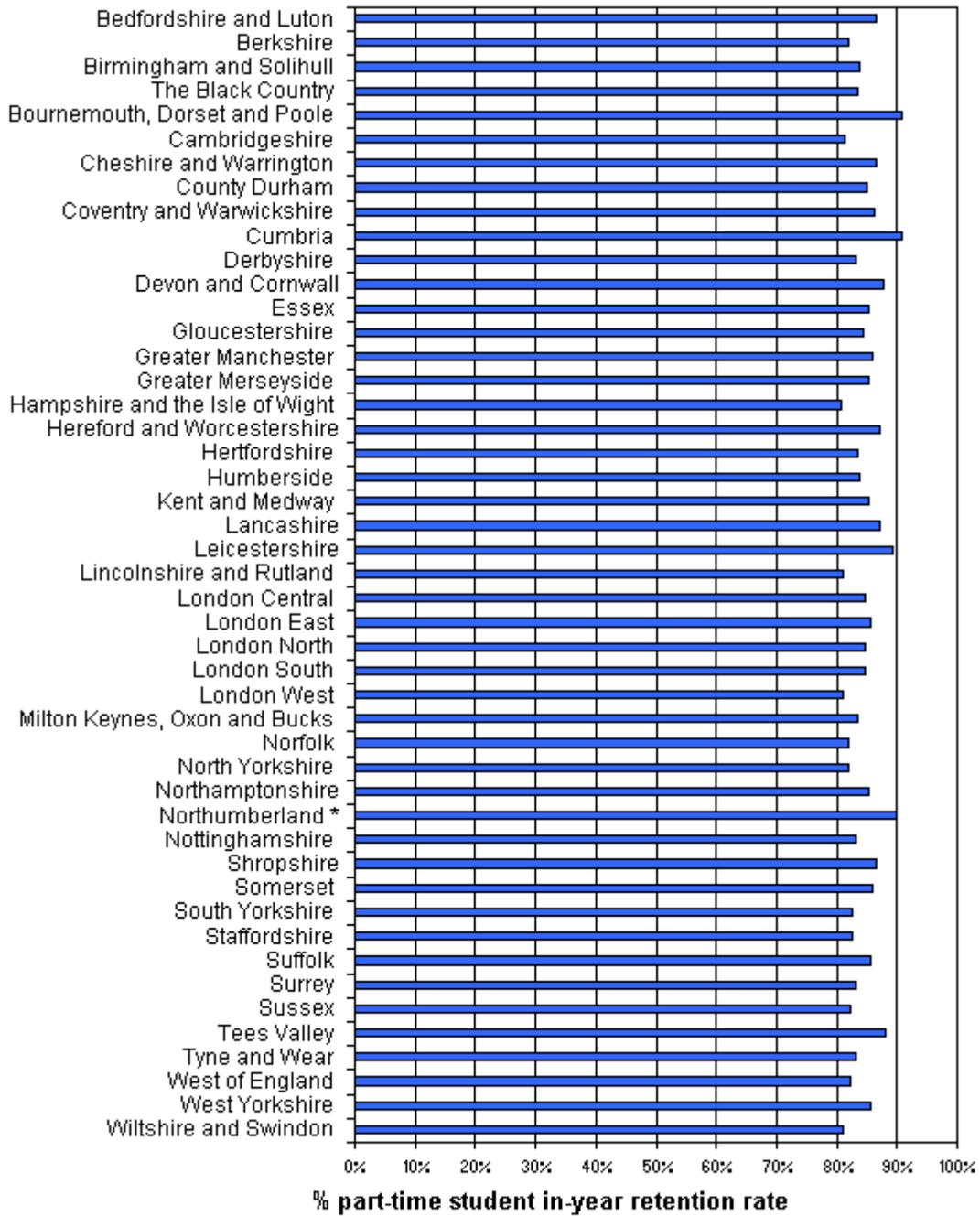


Figure 13. Part-time student in-year retention rate by institution type



**Figure 14. SS 3: Part-time student in-year retention rate 2000/01**  
**Weighted average of sector colleges by local LSC**



\* mean calculated from fewer than four colleges

## **SS 4: Achievement Rates**

### **Purpose**

To provide an indication of the effectiveness of an institution in enabling students to attain their learning goals. SS 4 shows the achievements of students at the completion of their learning programmes. Achievement is measured in relation to qualification aims.

### **Description**

The total number of qualification aims achieved, expressed as a percentage of the total number of qualification aims for which students have completed the learning programmes. Results are shown by three categories determined by the total guided learning hours (glh) of the qualification: 9-59 glh (short), 60-119 glh (medium), and 120 or more glh (long). The statistic relates to provision funded wholly or partly by the Council.

Key Skills qualifications have not been included owing to inconsistencies in how they were recorded in the ISR; consequently, Key Skills are not included in the calculation of SS 4. The council intends to include Key Skills in the calculation of success rates when the current data issues have been resolved.

### **Interpretation**

Where a student has achieved at least half the credits or modules towards a qualification aim, this is counted as a half achievement in calculating the total number of qualification aims achieved.

If a student completes more than one qualification then each qualification counts as a separate achievement in this statistic. For example, a student who completed three GCE A levels would count three times in this statistic, with the achievement of each A level shown separately. A student completing two units of a GNVQ and continuing with their studies would not be included in this statistic until they had completed their whole qualification.

All completed qualifications with a known outcome are included in the calculation. The statistic is not, therefore, comparable with the national performance tables published by the DfES each year, which relate to a specific set of qualifications such as GCE 'A' levels, GCSEs and advanced GNVQs, for 16 to 18 year olds students.

In some institutions the nature of their provision means that there are a number of completed qualifications where the outcome is not known until some time after the course end date. For example, students studying NVQs may continue to demonstrate their competencies and submit their portfolios after the course end date, and actually achieve the qualification after the returns on which the achievement rates are calculated have been made by the institution. These qualifications are excluded from the calculation of achievement rate.

Examples of short qualifications commonly offered by institutions, that is those of between 9 and 59 glh in length, are First Aid at Work Certificate, Basic Food Hygiene Certificate and Computer Literacy and Information Technology. Popular qualifications of medium length, that is those of between 60 and 119 glh in length, are word processing qualifications and foundation level IT qualifications. Longer qualifications, that is those of more than 120 glh in length, include most GCE AS and A levels, advanced GNVQs and level 3 NVQs and other level 3 qualifications, and many level 2 qualifications.

### **Results**

The results are summarised in table 4. The upward trend in achievement rates has been maintained in 2000/01. The qualification achievement rate for the median sector college in 2000/01 for all qualifications was 80%, three percentage points higher than 1999/2000. The median achievement rate for external institutions was 81%.

The median achievement rate for sector colleges is highest for long and short qualifications at 81% in 2000/01, and lowest for medium length qualifications, at 76% in 2000/01. For external institutions the median achievement rate is highest for long courses at 83% in 2000/01 and is lowest for medium courses at 80%.

The increases registered by individual sector colleges reflect a mixture of factors including improvements in achievement rates, improved recording of achievements, and a change in the mix of qualifications. There continues to be a wide range of college achievement rates although this has reduced since 1998/99 as colleges with the lowest achievement rates make significant improvements. For example, in 1998/99 a quarter of colleges had an achievement rate for all qualifications below 70%. This had improved to an achievement rate of 74% in 2000/01.

The median achievement rate continues to vary significantly by type of college as well as between qualifications of different lengths although this difference is also reducing particularly for general further education and tertiary colleges (see also figures 16, 19, 22 and 24). In 2000/01 the median achievement rate for all qualifications ranged from 87% in sixth form colleges, and 83% in specialist art and design and performing arts colleges and agriculture and horticulture colleges to 81% in external institutions and 78% in general further education and tertiary colleges.

Research carried out for the FEFC's widening participation committee showed that achievement rates for colleges recruiting a very high percentage of their students from areas with high levels of deprivation are significantly lower than for other colleges. Supporting information is shown, therefore, in the institution level data, to indicate by broad band the proportion of students recruited by each institution from deprived areas.

The range of achievement rates in colleges for qualifications of different lengths is also narrowing (see also figure 27). This is likely to be due, at least in part, to colleges improving their recording of achievements for short and medium length qualifications.

**Table 4. SS 4: Achievement rates**  
**Ranges for 1998/99 to 2000/01 and by institution type 2000/01**

**Short qualifications**

	Institutions	10th percentile	25th percentile	Median	75th percentile	90th percentile
	No.	%	%	%	%	%
All sector colleges: 2000/01 1999/00 1998/99	368	61 56 53	72 68 65	81 77 77	87 85 86	92 91 92
Specialist colleges	25	51	69	79	91	95
General FE / tertiary colleges	255	63	72	80	86	90
Sixth form colleges	85	52	72	83	93	98
External institutions	157	51	67	81	94	100

**Medium qualifications**

	Institutions	10th percentile	25th percentile	Median	75th percentile	90th percentile
	No.	%	%	%	%	%
All sector colleges: 2000/01 1999/00 1998/99	378	60 55 52	68 65 60	76 73 70	84 81 80	90 88 90
Specialist colleges	28	51	59	80	86	96
General FE / tertiary colleges	252	62	67	74	81	85
Sixth form colleges	94	63	72	85	90	93
External institutions	156	54	70	80	92	100

### Long qualifications

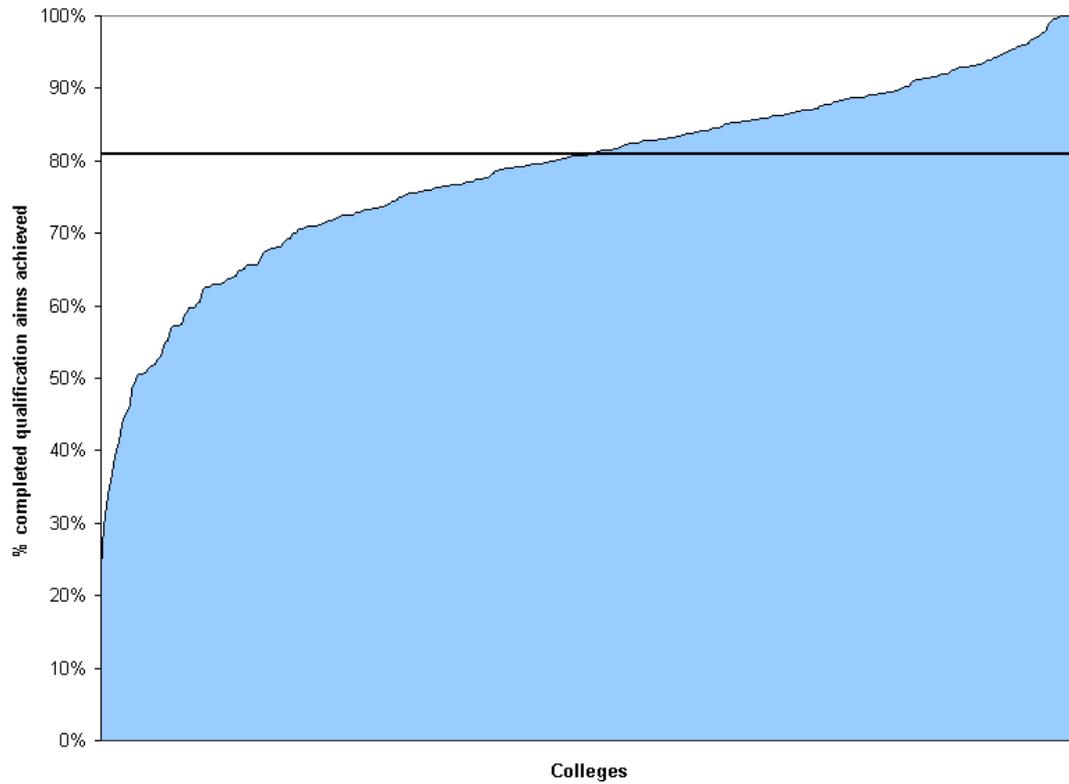
	Institutions	10th percentile	25th percentile	Median	75th percentile	90th percentile
	No.	%	%	%	%	%
All sector colleges:						
2000/01	388	69	74	81	87	91
1999/00		65	74	81	87	91
1998/99		62	70	78	86	91
Specialist colleges	28	70	80	84	88	90
General FE / tertiary colleges	259	67	72	78	83	86
Sixth form colleges	97	79	84	89	92	93
External institutions	141	57	73	83	96	100

### All qualifications

	Institutions	10th percentile	25th percentile	Median	75th percentile	90th percentile
	No.	%	%	%	%	%
All sector colleges:						
2000/01	386	67	74	80	86	90
1999/00		63	70	77	84	89
1998/99		60	68	76	84	90
Specialist colleges	28	65	74	83	87	91
General FE / tertiary colleges	255	66	73	78	83	87
Sixth form colleges	99	77	83	87	90	93
External institutions	168	54	67	81	93	99

*Note: specialist colleges includes agriculture and horticulture colleges and art, design and performing arts colleges  
Number of colleges of each type may not add to total because specialist designated colleges are not shown as a separate category*

**Figure 15a. SS4: Achievement rates: short qualifications 2000/01. Range of college results**



**Figure 15b. SS4: Achievement rates: short qualifications 2000/01. Range of external institution results**

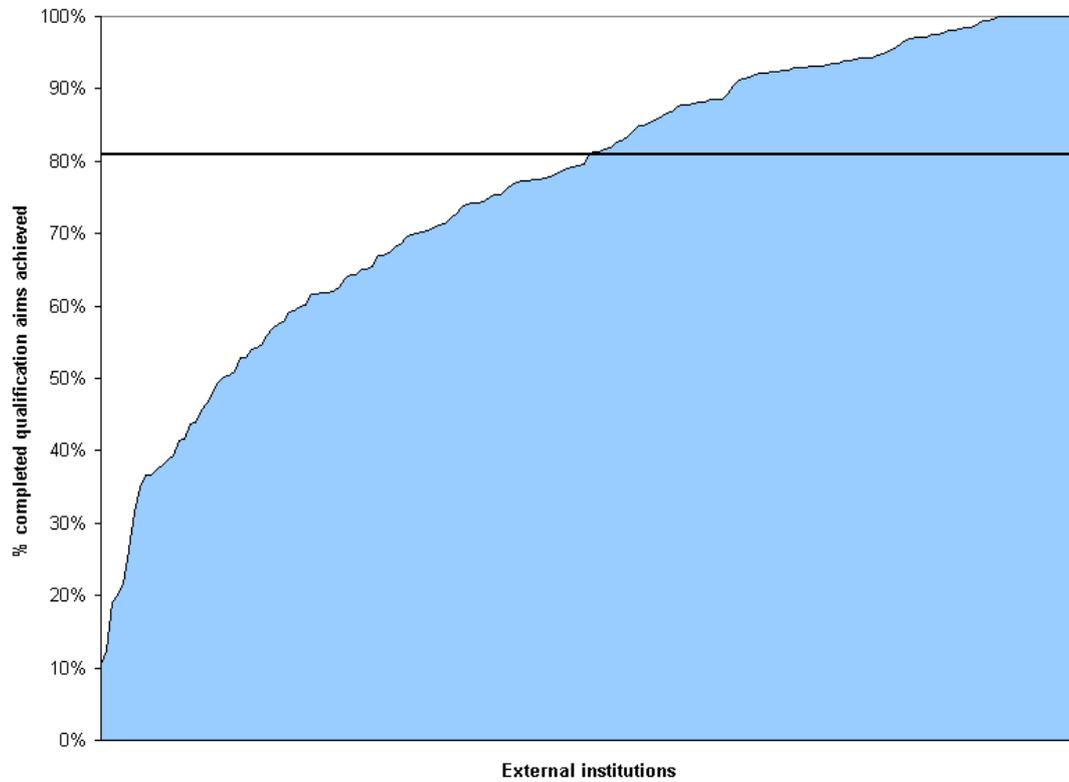
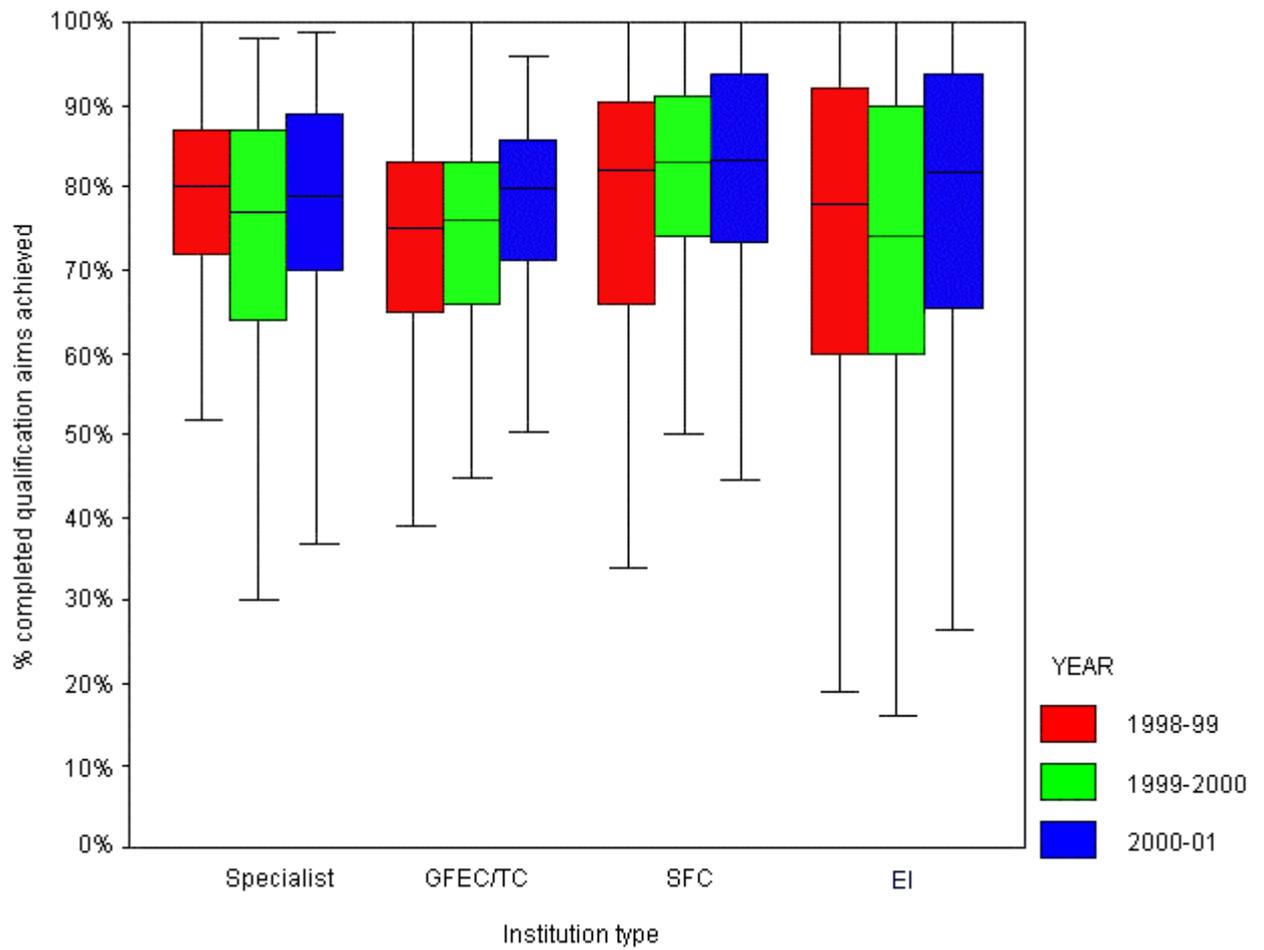
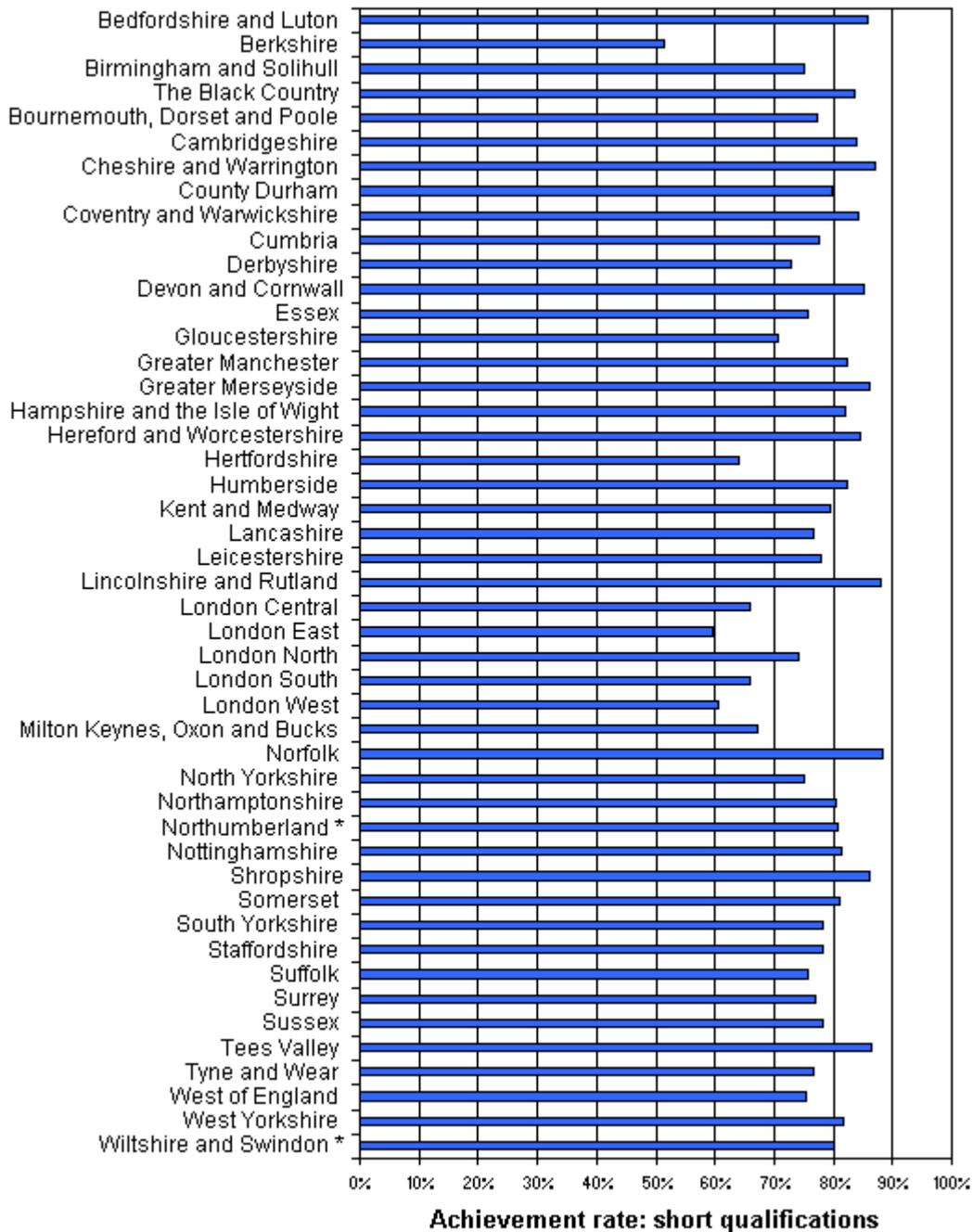


Figure 16. SS4: Achievement rates: short qualifications by institution 2000/01

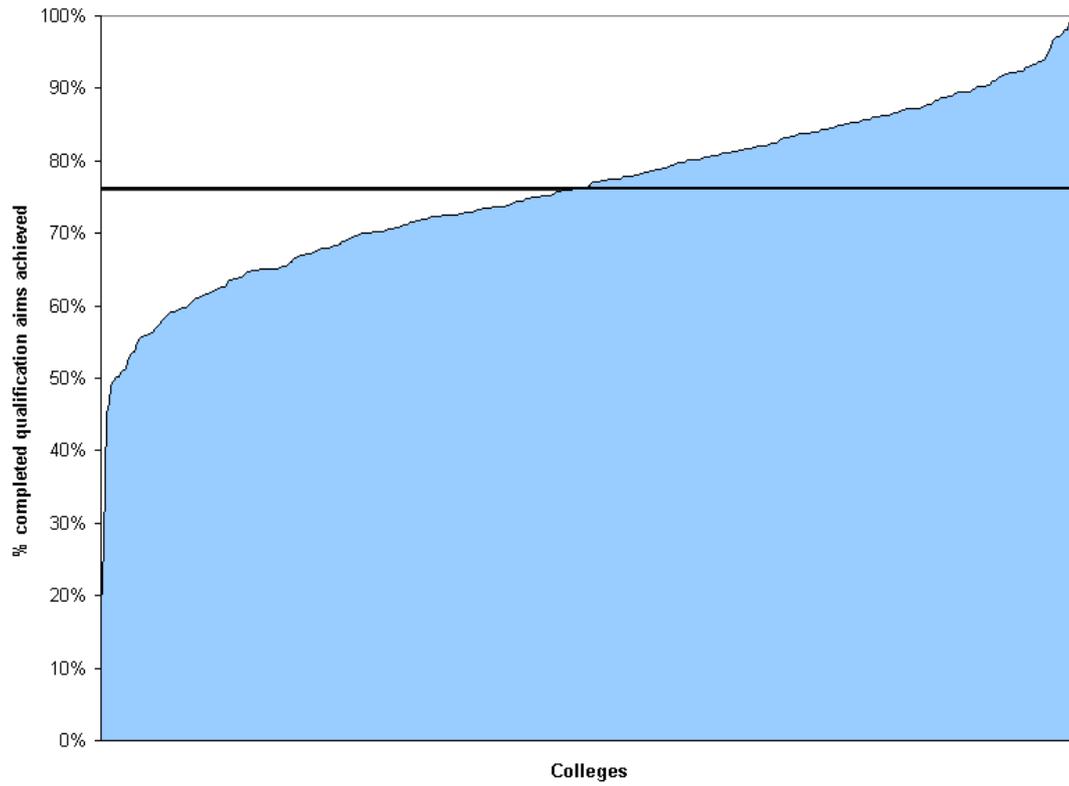


**Figure 17. SS 4: Achievement rate: short qualifications 2000/01**  
**Weighted average of sector colleges by local LSC**



\* mean calculated from fewer than four colleges

**Figure 18a. SS4: Achievement rates: medium qualifications 2000/01. Range of college results**



**Figure 18b. SS4: Achievement rates: medium qualifications 2000/01. Range of external institution results**

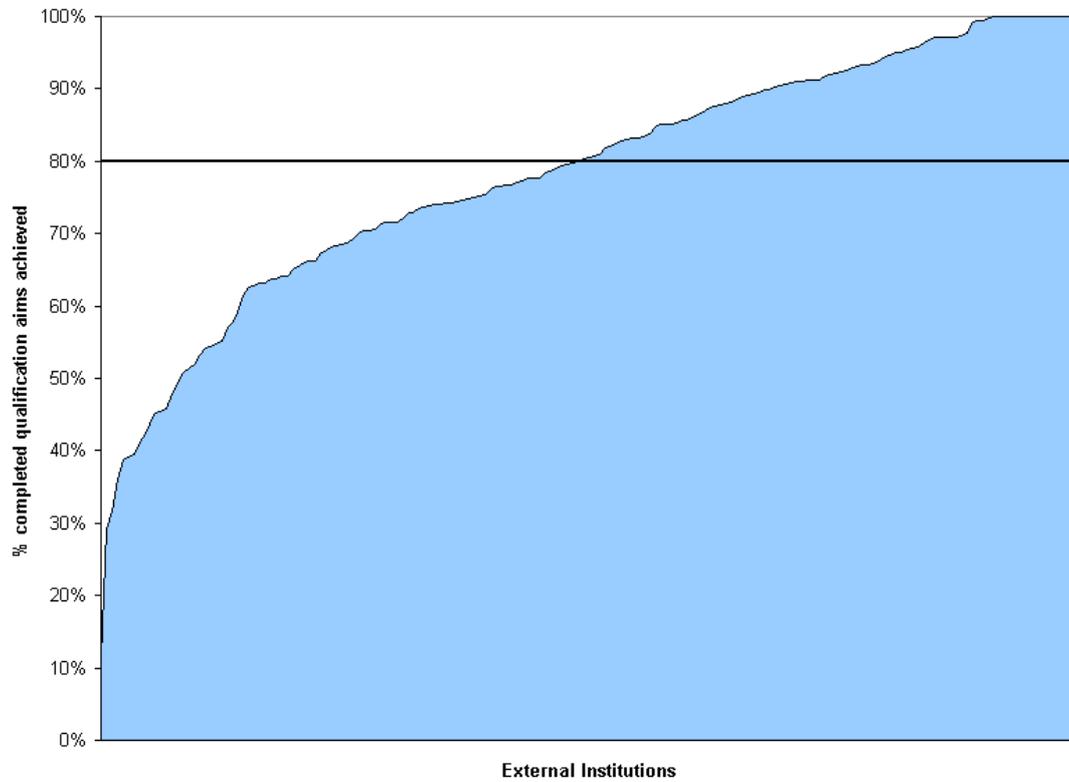
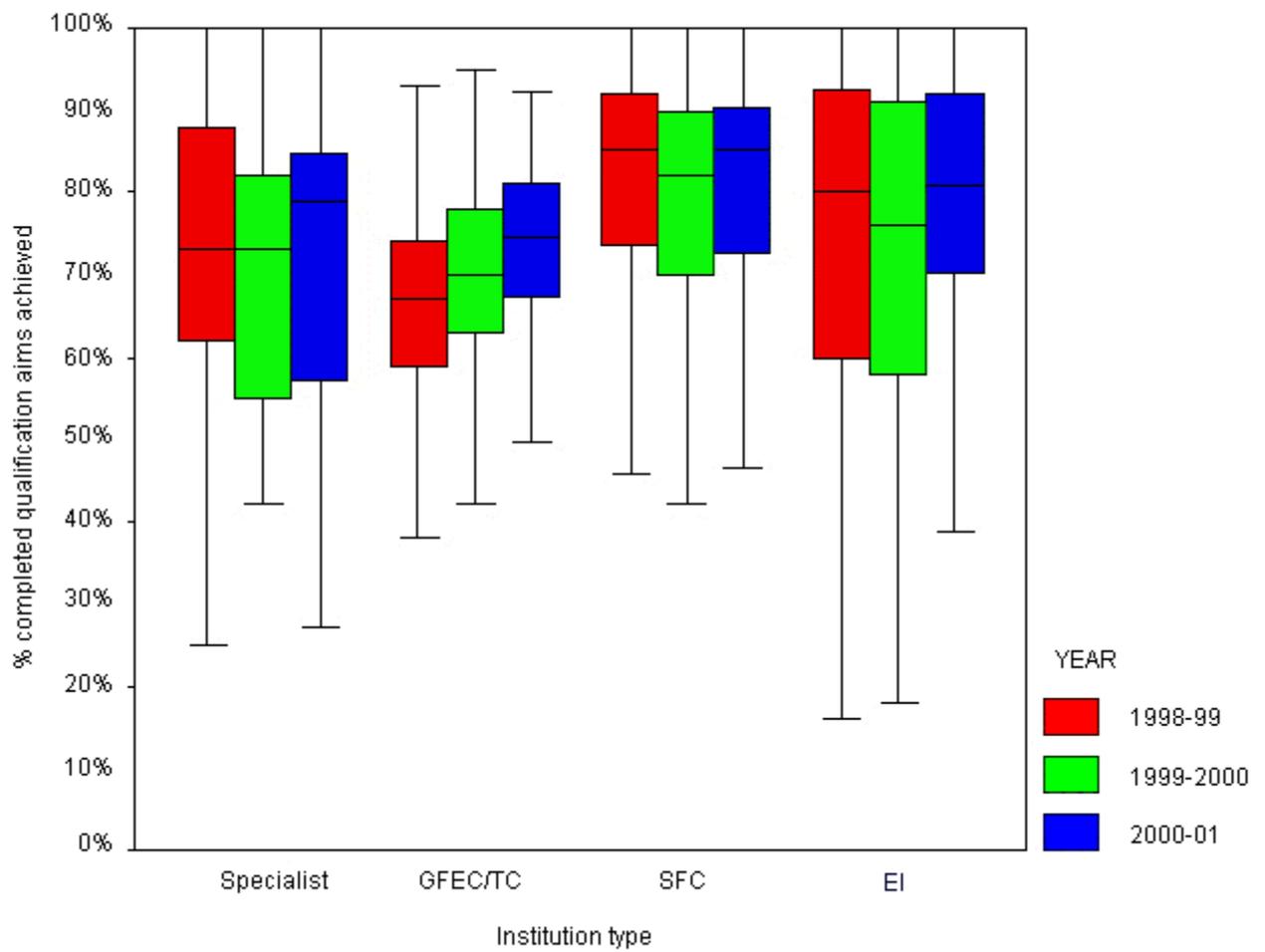
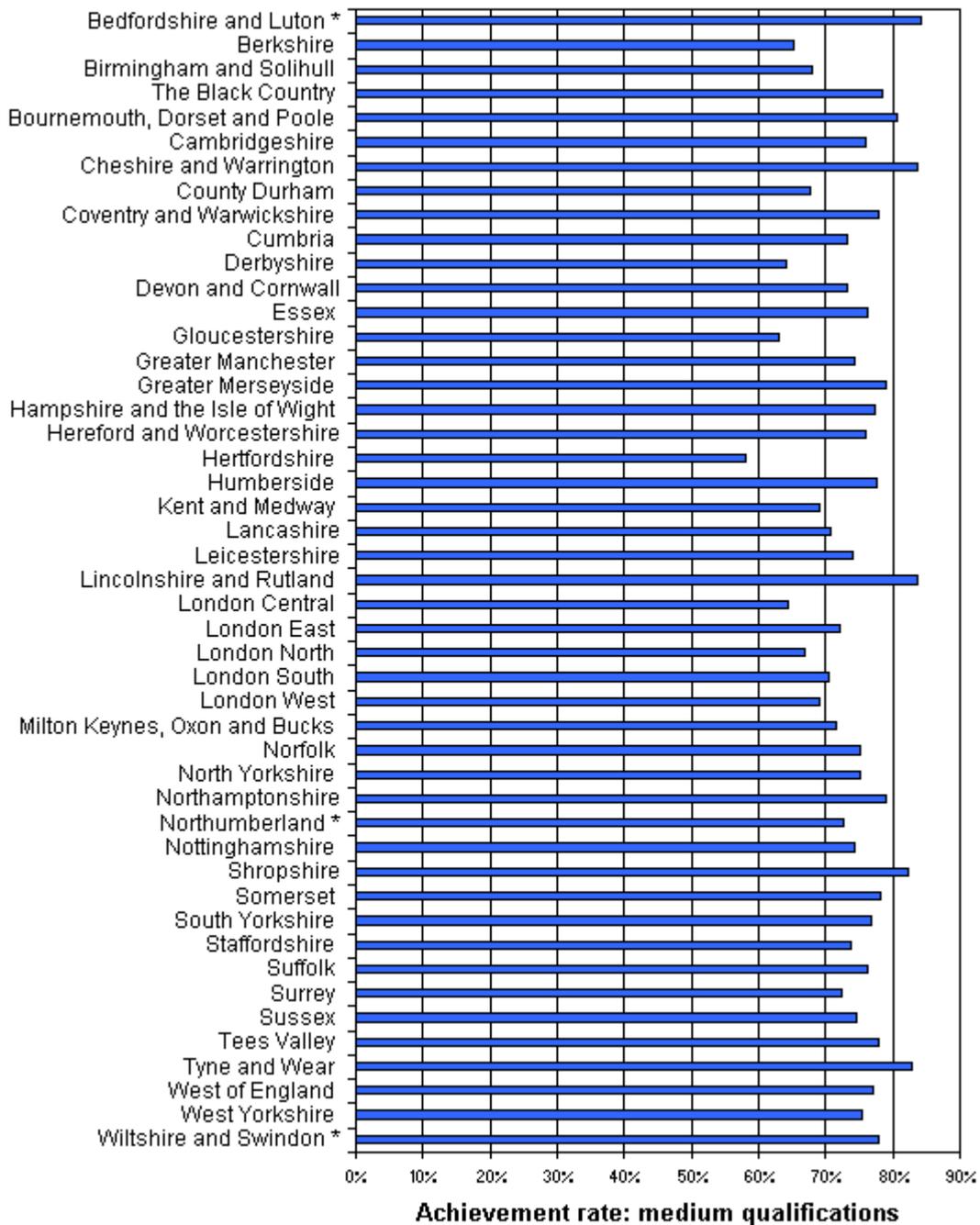


Figure 19. SS4: Achievement rates: medium qualifications by institution 2000/01

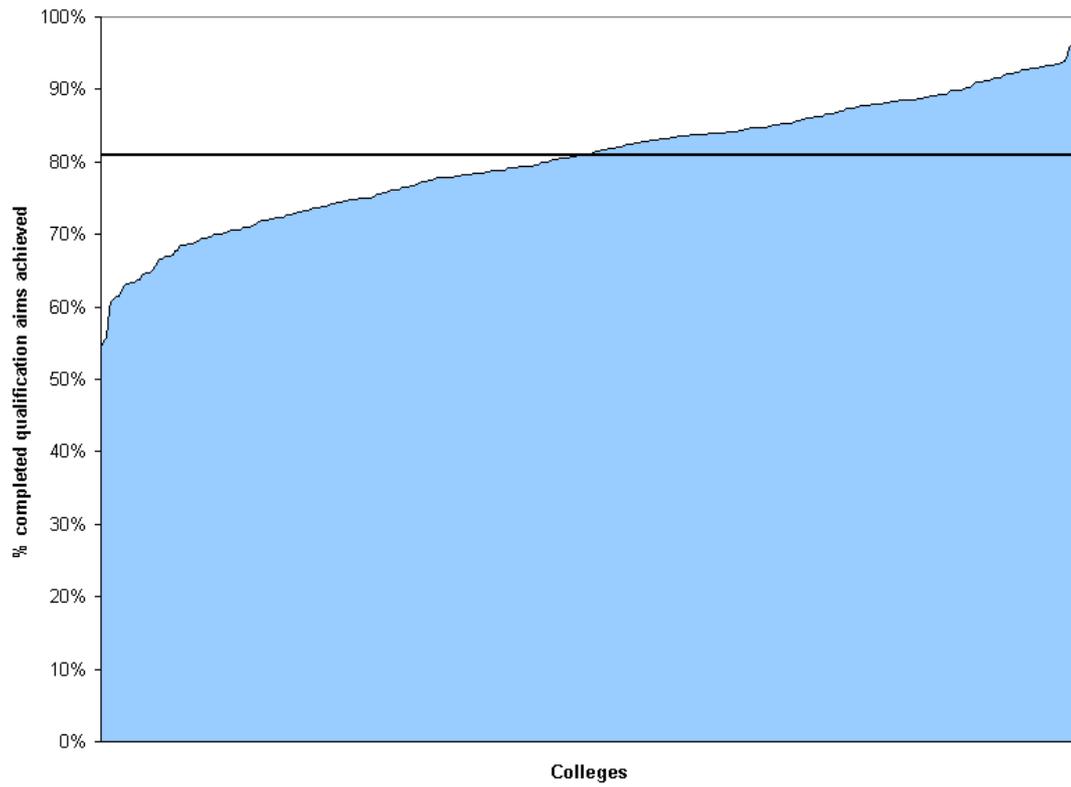


**Figure 20. SS 4: Achievement rate: medium qualifications 2000/01**  
**Weighted average of sector colleges by local LSC**



\* mean calculated from fewer than four colleges

**Figure 21a. SS4: Achievement rates: long qualifications. Range of college results**



**Figure 21b. SS4: Achievement rates: long qualifications. Range of external institution results**

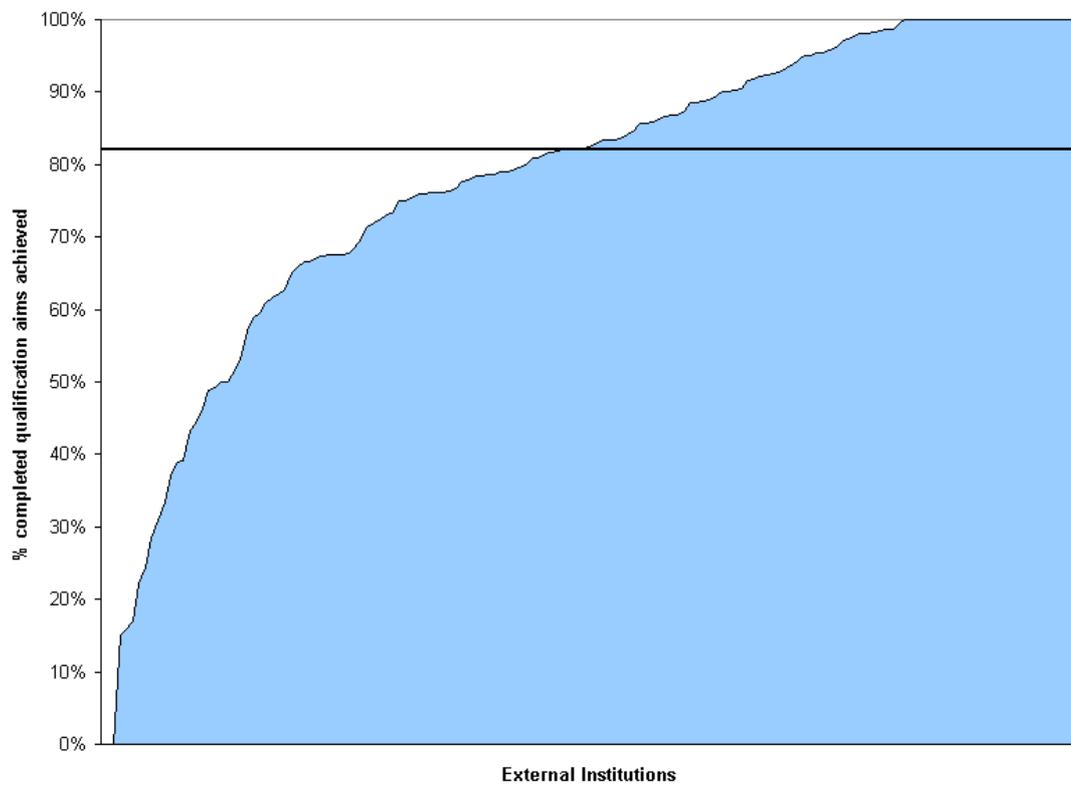
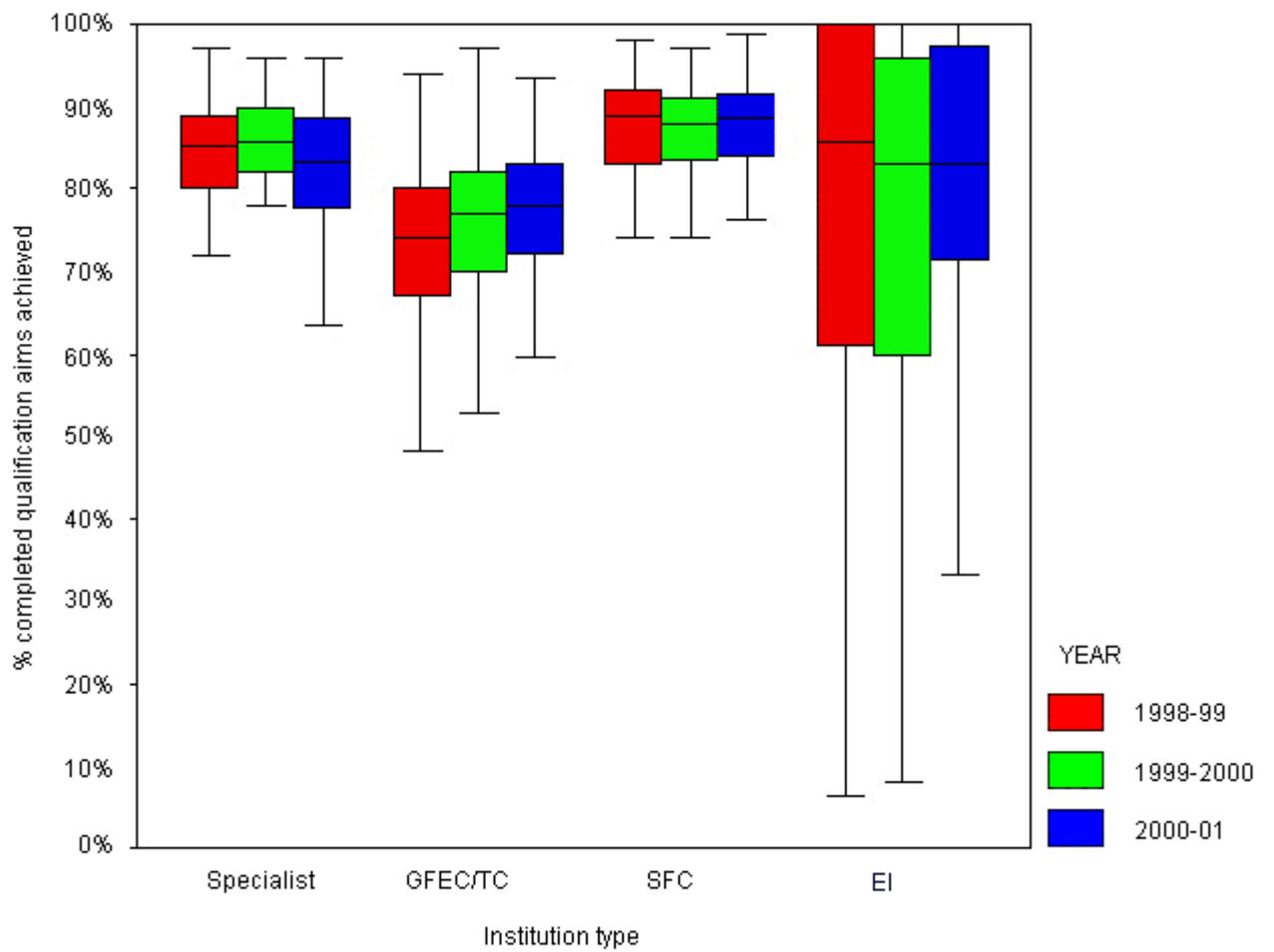
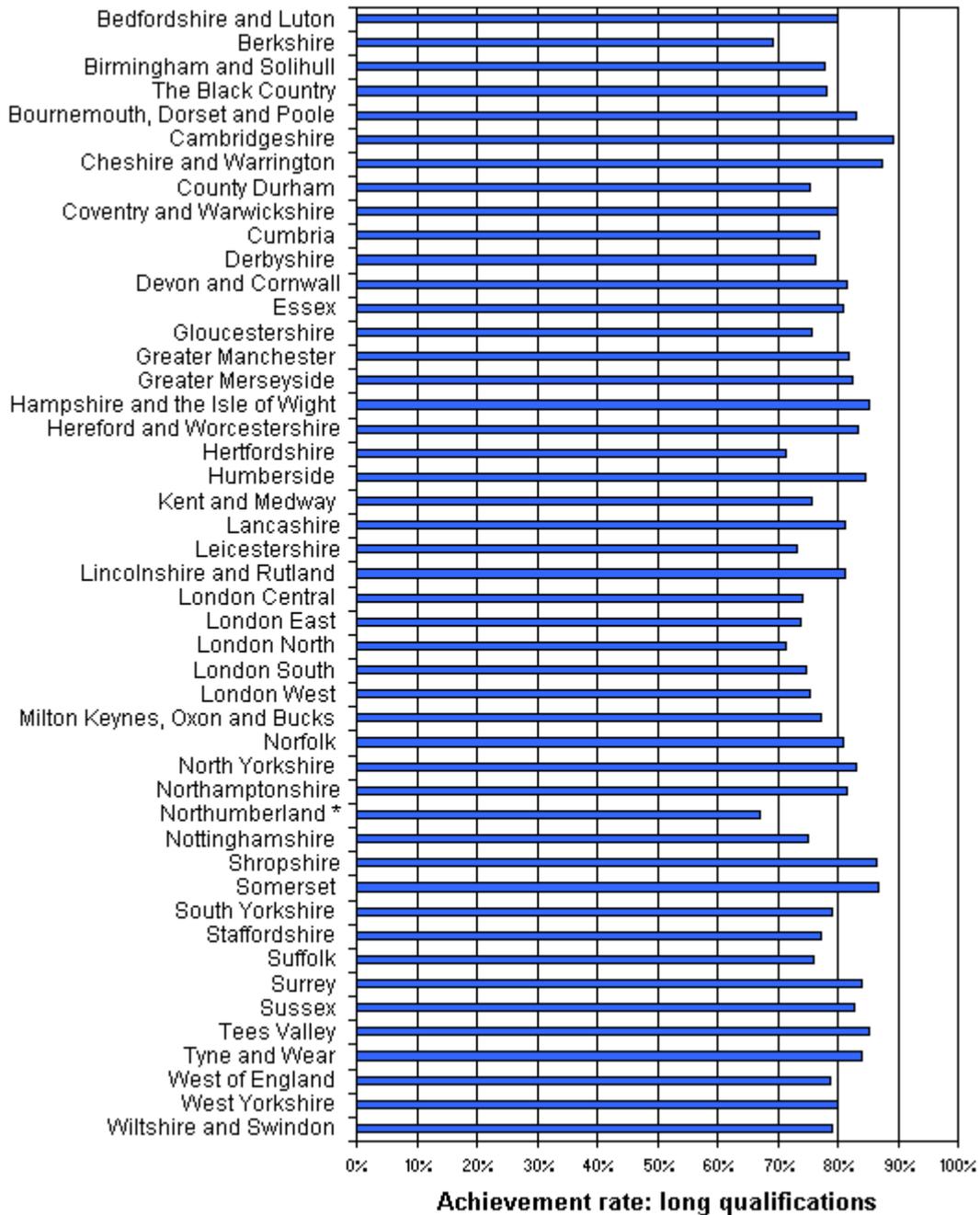


Figure 22. SS4: Achievement rates: long qualifications by institution

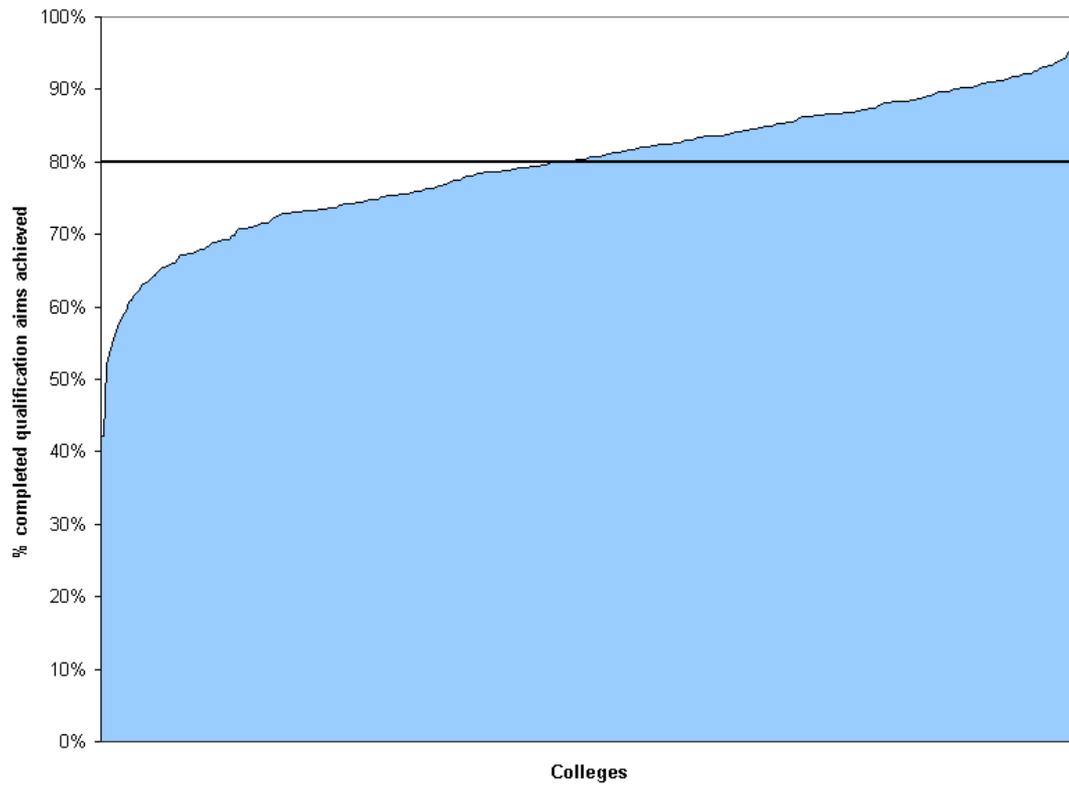


**Figure 23. SS 4: Achievement rate: long qualifications 2000/01**  
**Weighted average of sector colleges by local LSC**



\* mean calculated from fewer than four colleges

**Figure 24a. SS4: Achievement rates: all qualifications. Range of college results**



**Figure 24b. SS4: Achievement rates: all qualifications. Range of external institution results**

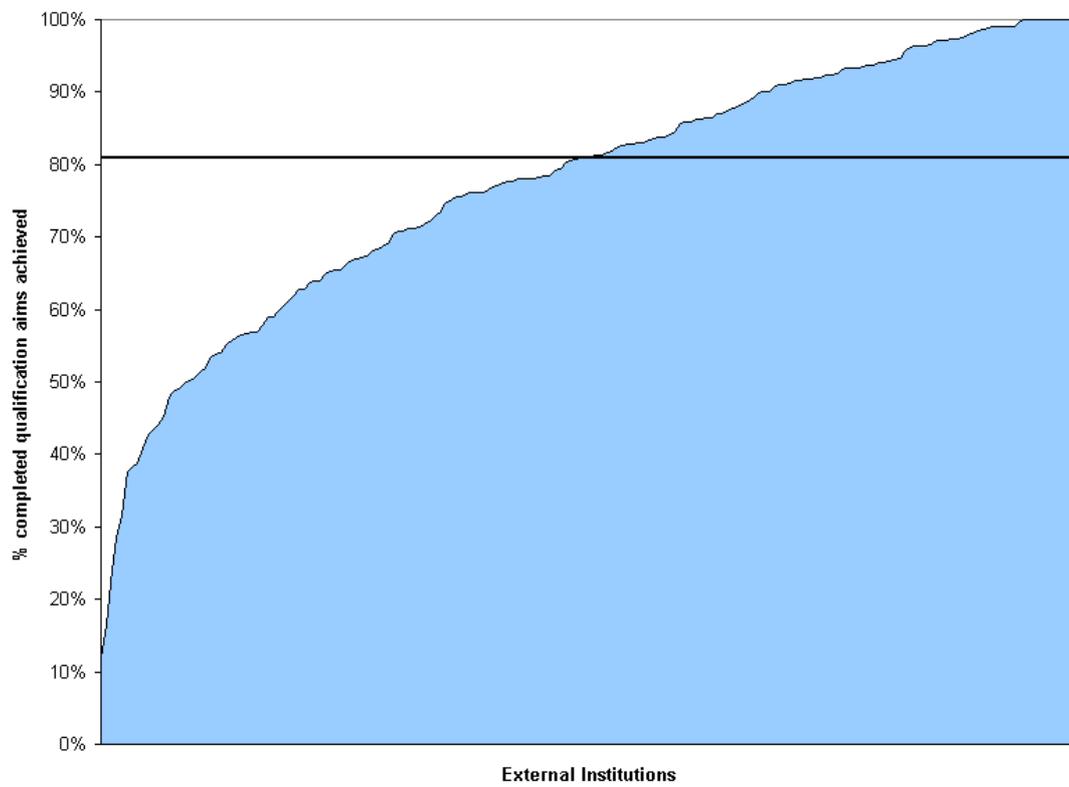
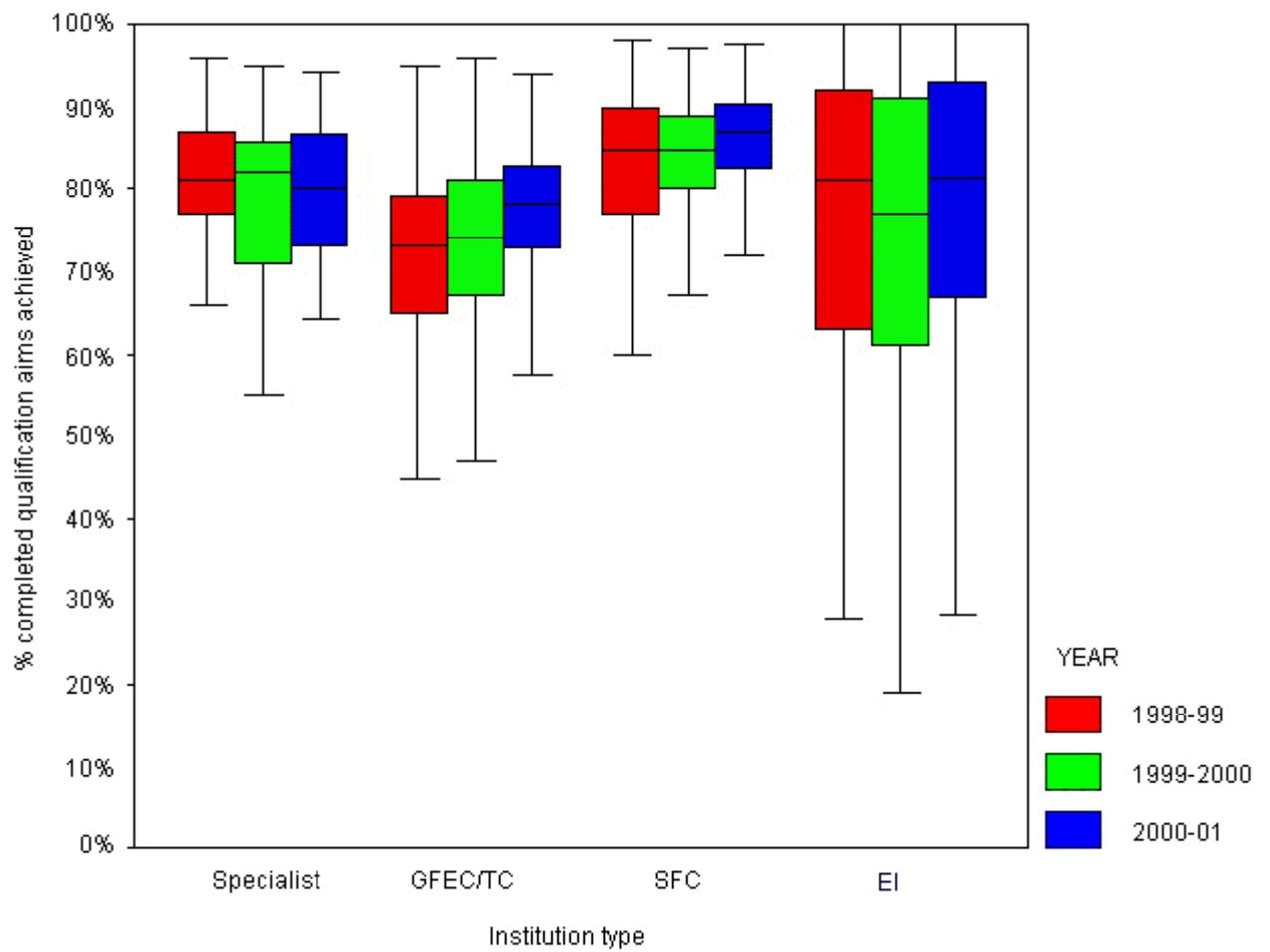
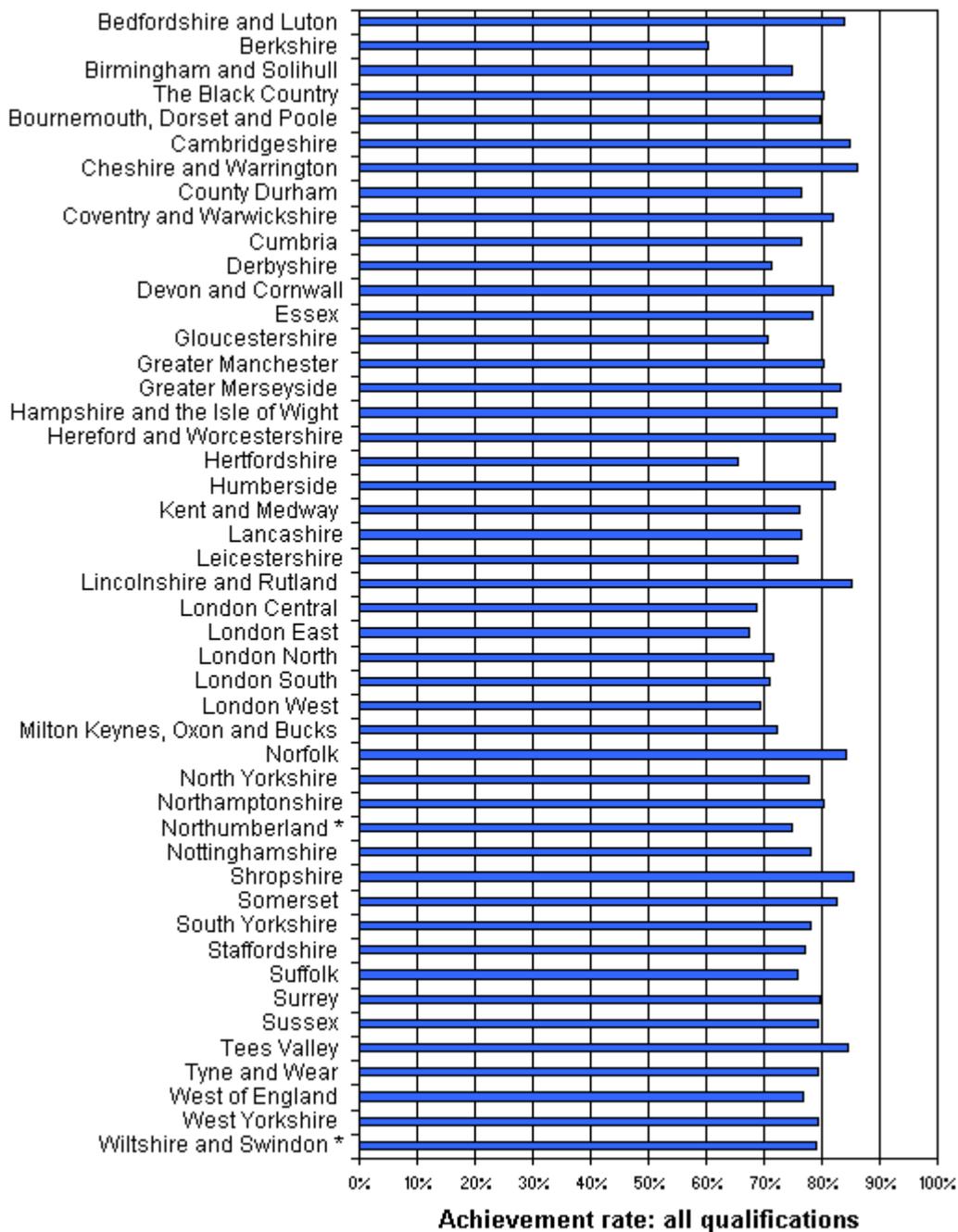


Figure 25. SS4: Achievement rates: all qualifications by institution

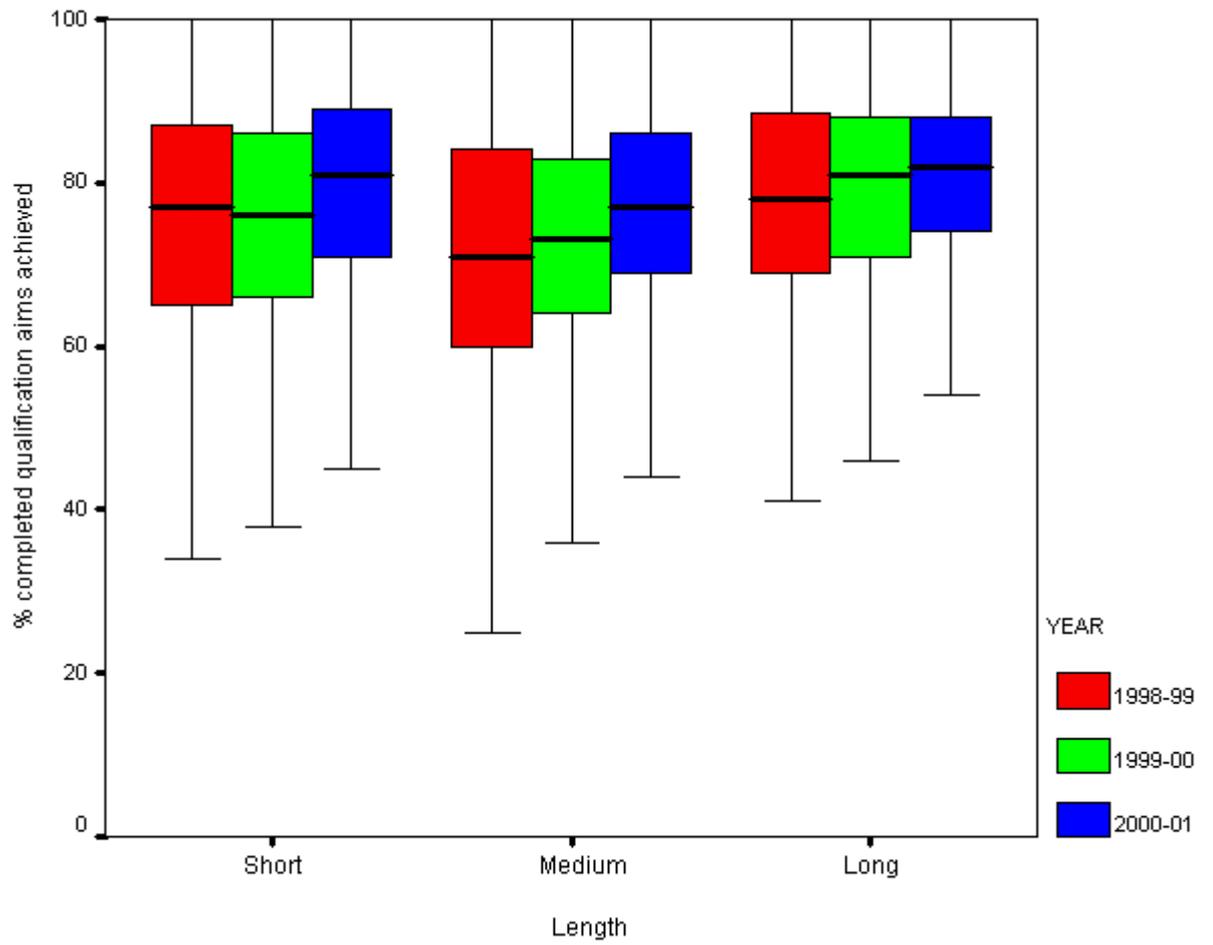


**Figure 26. SS 4: Achievement rate: all qualifications 2000/01**  
**Weighted average of sector colleges by local LSC**



\* mean calculated from fewer than four colleges

Figure 27. SS4: Achievement rates: college summary by length of qualification



## SS 5: Contribution to the National Learning Targets

### Purpose

To provide a measure of the number of students attaining one of the national learning targets by achieving an NVQ or equivalent at the appropriate level.

SS 5 is designed to provide useful feedback at college level. It is recognized that national targets cover a wider spectrum and that SS 5 shows only the college's achievements that can contribute to part of this spectrum.

### Description

SS 5 is made up of four elements:

- a. targets for young people: the number of 16 to 18 year olds achieving a level 2 qualification (NVQ 2 or equivalent) in the teaching year;
- b. targets for young people: the number of 16 to 18 year olds achieving a level 3 qualification (NVQ 3 or equivalent) in the teaching year;
- c. targets for adults: the number of adults achieving a level 2 qualification (NVQ 2 or equivalent) in the teaching year;
- d. targets for adults: the number of adults achieving a level 3 or level 4 qualification (NVQ 3 or equivalent, or qualifications at higher level) in the teaching year.

The statistic relates to all provision at the institution.

### Results and Interpretation

SS 5 provides a measure of the volume of activity at each institution which directly contributes to the national targets for education and training.

The number of students of a particular age-group qualified to NVQ level 2 or 3 or equivalent varies between institutions, according to their size and the nature of their provision. For example, many general further education colleges and external institutions provide programmes for students at or below NVQ level 1 or equivalent or below, such as basic skills training in numeracy and literacy. This kind of provision does not count directly towards the national learning targets.

The calculation takes into account students' prior qualifications, where these are available. For example, where a young person has previously achieved two GCSEs at grades A-C and achieves another three at the college, then this will only count towards part (a) of the statistic, that is foundation target 1, if the students' prior qualifications have been recorded.

The median achievement contribution to the national targets by sector colleges rose significantly for 16 to 18s achieving NVQ level 2 or equivalent and NVQ level 3 or equivalent. The middle 50% of sector colleges recorded a slightly narrower range of results for 16 to 18s achieving NVQ level 2 or equivalent however this range widened for 16 to 18s achieving NVQ level 3 or equivalent.

The median achievement contribution to the national targets fell for 19s and over achieving NVQ level 2 or equivalent and NVQ level 3 or equivalent. The middle 50% of sector colleges recorded a slightly narrower range of results for 19s and over achieving NVQ level 3 or equivalent however this range widened for 19s and over achieving NVQ level 2 or equivalent, mainly due to the increasing achievement of the top 25% of colleges.

## Definitions and Sources

For each of the five summary statistics and supporting information, a detailed description, list of sources and method of calculation for 1999/2000 and 2000/01 is shown below. The 1998/99 summary statistics described in this publication have been calculated by the same method using similar sources. All the summary statistics except SS 5 (contribution to the national targets) relate to provision at the institution which is funded or partly funded by the Council. SS 5 relates to all provision at the institution. Council-funded provision includes part-funded youth training and European Social Fund provision.

### Definition of institutions

The following terms have specific meanings within this publication:

- Colleges - sometimes described as sector colleges and include agriculture and horticulture colleges; art, design and performing arts colleges; specialist designated institutions; general further education colleges; tertiary colleges and sixth form colleges
- External Institutions - local education authority (LEA) maintained and independently-funded external institutions that were funded by the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC)
- Institutions - refers to both colleges and external institutions

### Contextual information for each institution

To complement the data of summary statistics 1 to 5, the following contextual information is shown for each institution:

- the number of full-time and part-time students at the institution in 2000/01 on Council-funded provision, to assist with the interpretation of SS 2 (change in student numbers) in particular, but also to place in context the other statistics. For example, this shows that in some sixth form colleges the number of part-time students is small, also that the number of full-time students in external institutions can be very small leading to very high rates of retention or achievement
- the proportion of students the institution recruits from areas of deprivation which attract additional funding from the Council for widening participation.
- the average level of funding (ALF) the institution received from the council in 2000/01.

On each page, comparative information of the median for each of the statistics is shown for the sector as a whole, for each of the three broad types of college and for external institutions

For the majority of colleges and external institutions, all five summary statistics are shown.

## SS 1: Achievement of Funding Target

### Description

The number of Council-funded units of activity, that is, funding units, earned by an institution in the teaching year, as a percentage of its target funding units for the year, including New Deal funding and basic skills summer schools (BSSS), where separate funding agreements were agreed.

## Sources

Funding units generated in the year:

the institution's final funding unit claim for the year. In most cases this information has been verified by the institution's external auditors.

Target funding units:

the target funding units for the year as set out in the funding agreement between the institution and the Council.

## Calculation

$(\text{funding units generated} / \text{target funding units}) \times 100$

## SS 2: Change in Student Numbers

### Description

The percentage change in student numbers between the current and previous year. Student numbers for 2000/01 are also shown to provide a context for this and other statistics.

Student numbers are divided between two modes of attendance full-time, which relates to full-time full-year students, and part-time, which includes full-time part-year and part-time students.

### Sources

2000/01, 1999/2000 and 1998/99 student numbers:

December 2001, December 2000 and December 1999 individualised student record (ISR) returns respectively.

### Calculation

Full-time full-year, full-time part-year and part-time student numbers are defined according to the number of guided learning hours the student is studying in the teaching year for all their qualifications. A student is considered to be full-time full-year for statistical purposes if they are studying 450 or more guided learning hours (glh) a year. Those students who are not full-time full-year who are enrolled on programmes of at least 150 glh per tri-annual period (term), or more than 16 glh per week for shorter courses lasting only one period are defined as full-time part-year. All other students are defined as part-time.

Students are classified as Council-funded if they are enrolled on Council-funded provision for all of their qualifications or if they are enrolled on a mixture of Council-funded and non-Council funded qualifications, and the Council-funded qualifications have glh greater than or equal to the glh of the non-Council-funded qualifications. All other students are classified as non-Council-funded. All complementary studies qualifications are assumed to be Council-funded.

## SS 3: In-year Retention Rates

### Description

The percentage of those students who, having enrolled on a learning programme of at least 12 weeks duration, continue to attend at the end of the qualification or the end of the teaching year (31 July), whichever is sooner. Separate information is shown for full-time full-year and part-time (including full-time part-year) students.

Where a student transfers from one qualification to another within the institution during the teaching year, the qualification the student has transferred from is ignored for the purpose of calculating the students' retention status.

### **Source**

2000/01: December 2001 ISR

1999/2000: December 2000 ISR

### **Calculation**

At institution level, SS 3:

full-time in-year retention rate =

$$\frac{\text{(total retained full-time students on programmes of at least 12 weeks)}}{\text{total full-time students on programmes of at least 12 weeks}} \times 100$$

part-time in-year retention rate =

$$\frac{\text{(total retained part-time students on programmes of at least 12 weeks)}}{\text{total part-time students on programmes of at least 12 weeks}} \times 100$$

Full-time full-year, full-time part-year and part-time student numbers are defined according to the number of guided learning hours the student is studying in the teaching year. A student is considered to be full-time full-year for statistical purposes if they are studying 450 or more guided learning hours (glh) a year. Those students who are not full-time full-year who are enrolled on programmes of at least 150 glh per tri-annual period (term), or more than 16 glh per week for shorter courses lasting only one period are defined as full-time part-year. All other students are defined as part-time.

In-year retention rates are calculated for students on programmes of at least 12 weeks duration. Students studying more than one qualification are included where at least one qualification is of 12 weeks or more duration. Students studying a number of consecutive short courses which are each of length less than 12 weeks duration are excluded from the calculation. Qualifications which the student has transferred out of are excluded from the calculation of the student's retention status.

The retention status of each qualification is calculated from the completion status field in the ISR. Where a student is studying one qualification aim, their in-year retention rate status is determined by the continuation status of the qualification. If the student is continuing or completed the student is retained.

Where a student is studying more than one qualification, their in-year retention rate is determined by the continuation status of all their qualifications. Where the student withdrew from all their qualifications then the student is not retained. Similarly, if the student was continuing or has completed all their qualifications then they are counted as retained. Where the student withdrew from some of their qualifications, but is continuing at least one qualification of more than one week's duration, the student is counted as retained. If the student has completed one or more qualifications of more than one week's duration, but withdrew from their other qualifications then the following calculation is carried out. The student is counted as retained if the latest withdrawal date falls on or before the latest completion date or no more than two months after the latest completion date.

### **Explanation**

Qualifications of up to one week's duration are excluded from the calculation so that retention rates are not distorted in cases where a student withdraws from all of their qualifications except those which are very short.

Two examples are shown below to demonstrate how a student's retention is calculated when they withdraw from some qualifications, but complete others.

Example 1: a student is enrolled on four qualifications each of more than 12 weeks in length, of which three are GCE A levels. The student completes their three A levels in June, and then withdraws from their fourth qualification before the end of the teaching year. Comparing the latest withdrawal date with the latest completion date shows that less than two months has elapsed, so the student is counted as retained

Example 2: a student is enrolled on three qualifications each of more than 12 weeks in length, and one short qualification of just over one week's duration. The student completes the short qualification in December, and then withdraws from all their remaining qualifications in March. Comparing the latest withdrawal date with the latest completion date shows that more than two months has elapsed, so the student is counted as withdrawn.

## SS 4 Achievement Rates

### Description

The total number of qualification aims achieved, expressed as a percentage of the total number of qualification aims for which students have completed the learning programmes. Where a student has achieved at least half the credits or modules towards a qualification aim, this is counted as a half achievement in calculating the total number of qualification aims achieved. Results are shown by three categories determined by the total guided learning hours (glh) of the qualification: 9-59 glh, 60-119 glh, and 120 or more glh.

### Source

2000/01: December 2001 ISR

1999/2000: December 2000 ISR

### Calculation

At institution level, SS 4:

percentage of qualification aims achieved =

$$\frac{(\text{number of fully achieved qualifications} + \frac{1}{2} \text{ number of partially achieved qualifications})}{\text{number of completed qualifications with a known outcome}} \times 100$$

for each of the three glh bands of qualifications described above, and for all qualifications together.

SS 4 is calculated at the qualification aim level, in contrast to SS 2 and SS 3 which are calculated at the student level. For each completed qualification, the ISR is analysed to calculate whether the qualification was fully achieved or partially achieved. Partially achieved qualifications are counted as half an achieved qualification. In some cases qualifications can be fully achieved even though achievement funding is not available under the Council's funding methodology. These cases are included.

The coverage of SS 4 is as follows:

Qualifications which are complementary studies are excluded;

Qualifications which were completed before the expected end date are included, while those which extend beyond the expected end date and are not yet completed are excluded;

Qualifications for which the outcome is not known are excluded from the calculation. This can be either because the exam has been taken but the result is not yet known, and there is an intention to take the exam or because the exam has not yet been taken.

## **SS 5: Contribution to the National Targets**

### **Description**

SS 5 is made up of four elements:

- targets for young people: the number of 16 to 18 year olds achieving a level 2 qualification (NVQ 2 or equivalent) in the teaching year;
- targets for young people: the number of 16 to 18 year olds achieving a level 3 qualifications (NVQ 3 or equivalent) in the teaching year;
- targets for adults: the number of adults achieving a level 2 qualifications (NVQ 2 or equivalent) in the teaching year;
- targets for adults: the number of adults achieving a level 3 or level 4 qualification (NVQ 3 or equivalent or qualifications at higher education level) in the teaching year.

The statistic relates to all provision at the institution.

### **Source**

2000/01: December 2001 ISR

1999/2000: December 2000 ISR

### **Calculation**

SS 5 shows the aggregate number of leavers who achieve the stated NVQ level, or the equivalent percentage, by age group. Where available, the qualifications on entry of the student are taken into consideration to determine the attainment level of the student at the start of their qualification. The student's achievements in the relevant teaching year are added to their attainment level on entry, where this is available. Where a student has achieved level 2 or level 3 or equivalent, and had not done so on entry, then the student has achieved the relevant national target. Higher level (levels 4 and 5) qualifications achieved are included in part (d) of the statistic where the student was previously at a lower level.

All qualifications which are equivalent to the relevant NVQ level are included in the calculation by using the notional NVQ level of qualifications which are not NVQs or GNVQs. Notional levels were assigned to qualifications through a joint project between the Further Education Funding Council, the former National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) for the purpose of measuring national targets.

The age of each student is calculated as at 31 August of the teaching year from the student's date of birth. The age groups for each of the statistics are interpreted as aged 16 to 18 at the start of the teaching year for parts (a) and (b) and as aged 19 and over at the start of the teaching year for parts (c) and (d).

So, for example, a student entering the institution with three GCSEs at grades A-C is calculated as being 60% towards a level 2 qualification, because five GCSEs at grades A-C are equivalent to an NVQ at level 2. The student then achieves three GCSEs at the institution during 1999/2000, and so attains a level 2 qualification.

### **Supporting Data: Widening Participation**

The proportion of students the institution recruits from areas of deprivation which attract additional funding from the Council for widening participation is shown as supporting data to assist with the interpretation of the summary statistics. The Council provides additional funding in recognition of the additional resources required to recruit and retain students living in areas with high levels of deprivation. Institutions have been categorised into four broad groups:

- a. institutions recruiting a relatively low percentage of their students from deprived areas (less than 15% of their students)
- b. institutions recruiting around the average for the further education sector (between 15% and 35% of their students)
- c. institutions recruiting a relatively high percentage of their students from deprived areas (between 35% and 50% of their students)
- d. institutions recruiting a very high percentage of their students from deprived areas (over 50% of their students).

As recommended by the widening participation committee, this is a proxy for students likely to have low levels of prior attainment and to live in economically and socially disadvantaged areas.

The banding for each institution is calculated from the information provided by institutions about the home addresses of their students in 2000/01. The home postcode of each student is allocated to a local authority ward and all students living in an area with a high deprivation according to the former Department of the Environment Transport and the Regions (DETR) 1998 index of local conditions are eligible for a funding uplift.

### **Supporting Data: Funded Average Level of Funding (ALF)**

The funded ALF is not within the control of an institution. Accordingly, funded ALF for the institution's main allocation for 2000/01 is shown as supporting information. This is an institution's main recurrent funding allocation from the Council for the teaching year divided by the target number of funding units to be generated by the institution in respect of Council-funded activity in the teaching year.

### **Credibility Checks**

Each year the Council carries out a series of credibility checks on each institution's summary statistics. Most of the checks are on the summary statistics relating to retention and achievement. They include checks on whether the level of retention and achievement is exceptionally high or low, the change in retention and achievement rates from the previous year, the number of partial achievements and the number of qualifications where the outcome is not known. Where necessary credibility queries are raised with institutions prior to publication to determine whether there are particular reasons why the statistic for the institution lies outside the range of most other institutions of a similar type.