



# SFC Statistical publication

## College Performance Indicators 2012-13

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Summary: To inform stakeholders of the publication of the 2012-13 College Performance Indicators.

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[Separate Appendices: College PIs and Technical Appendix](#)

## 1 Executive Summary

1. This is the eleventh annual publication of Performance Indicators (PIs) for Scotland's colleges and covers the 2012-13 academic year.
2. The main results for the college sector as a whole in 2012-13 are as follows:
  - For full-time further education (FE) students enrolled on recognised qualifications:
    - i 76.7% of 48,754 completed their studies irrespective of the result (including partial success) and 65.4% successfully completed;
    - ii the remaining 23.3% of students are accounted for by 8.7% of students withdrawing before the funding qualifying date (colleges are not funded for these students) and a further 14.6% between this point and the end of the course;
  - For full-time higher education (HE) students enrolled on recognised qualifications:
    - i 82.1% of a total of 31,656 students completed their studies irrespective of the result and 70.4% successfully completed;
    - ii the remaining 17.9% of students are accounted for by 5.7% of students withdrawing before the funding qualifying date and a further 12.2% between this point and the end of the course;
  - In terms of staff qualifications 93% had a formal teaching qualification in 2011-12 which is unchanged from 2010-11.
3. This report shows sector-level performance indicators only, for individual college-level performance indicators, use the website links to the relevant colleges, the links are found on the SFC website.
4. It is our aim to strive for continuing improvement and enhanced usability of this document. We welcome feedback from readers on matters of content and presentation. Please pass any comments to:

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## 2 Introduction

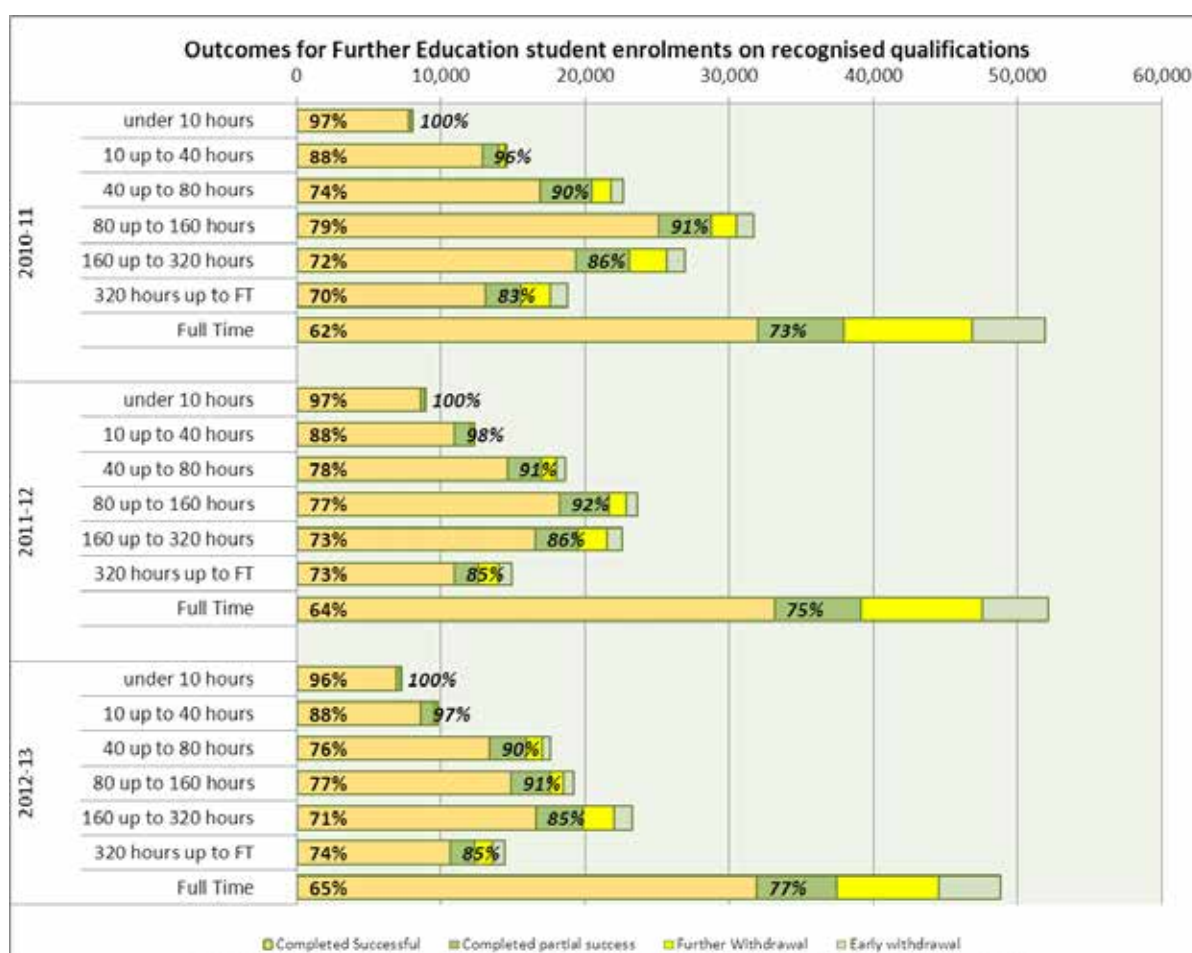
1. SFC has published PIs on college teaching activity for the past 11 years. The purposes of the indicators are to inform stakeholders about the performance of the sector, and to help colleges evaluate their own performance both over time and against other similar colleges thereby supporting a wider quality improvement agenda.
2. Students have a wide variety of personal motivations for studying at college and study across an extensive range of programmes, from literacy and numeracy courses to engineering and agriculture, with awards ranging from courses not providing a recognised qualification to higher national certificates and diplomas or degrees in partnerships with universities.
3. Our method of presentation and breakdown of PIs by subject groups, duration of study, age groups and gender gives a comprehensive view of sector-wide provision and performance, enabling a more informed comparison across years.
4. SFC has a contract with Education Scotland (previously HMIE) to perform external quality reviews of college performance. Education Scotland reports are available online at:  
<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/index.asp>
5. Each of these charts contains two percentage figures; the first describes the percentage of students who successfully completed the course year and the second is the percentage that completed the course year irrespective of their result. Both these values have been calculated as a percentage of all enrolments. Where the number of enrolments is less than 50, the bar that describes the activity levels will be shown but the successfully completed and completion rates will not. This avoids spurious statistical accuracy in the published pass rates and reduces the risk of incorrect conclusions being drawn from pass rates based on small numbers. Examples of these calculations can be found in a separate technical appendix.

### 3 Key Performance Indicators Charts

#### Outcomes for FE student enrolments on recognised qualifications

1. Chart 1 below provides an overview of success rates on FE recognised programmes from 2010-11 to 2012-13. The figures allow comparisons over time and to reduce the risk of basing an assessment of performance on a snapshot of a single year when performance may vary over time.
2. In 2012-13, 65% of students on full-time programmes completed successfully whilst a total of 77% completed irrespective of their final result. This means that 12% completed with partial success. The sector's performance has improved over the three year period.

Chart 1

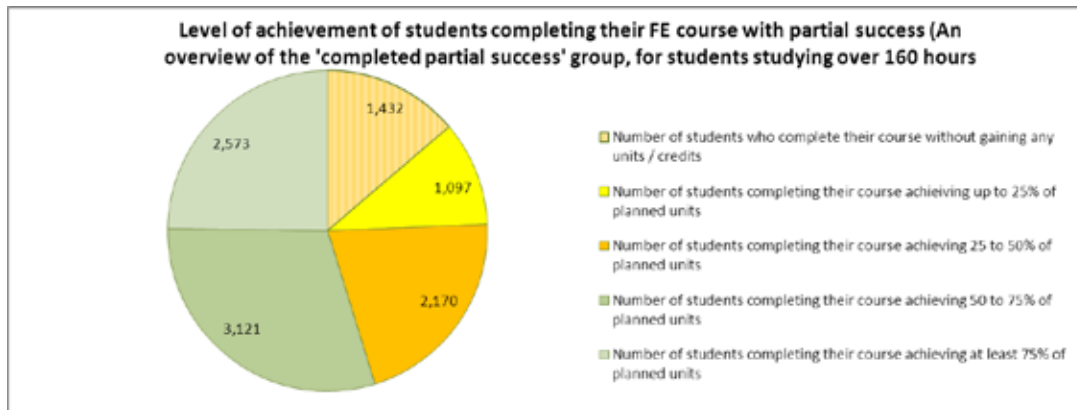


#### Students completing their FE course with partial success

3. Chart 2 below provides more detailed information for the 10,393 students enrolled on FE programmes in 2012-13 who completed with partial success (as shown in the previous chart). For the purpose of improving data quality it excludes students with fewer than 160 hours of study.

- It shows that almost 25% (2,573) of these students gained at least 75% of the units on their programme. At the other end of the scale 1,432 or 14% of these students failed to gain any of the units for which they enrolled.

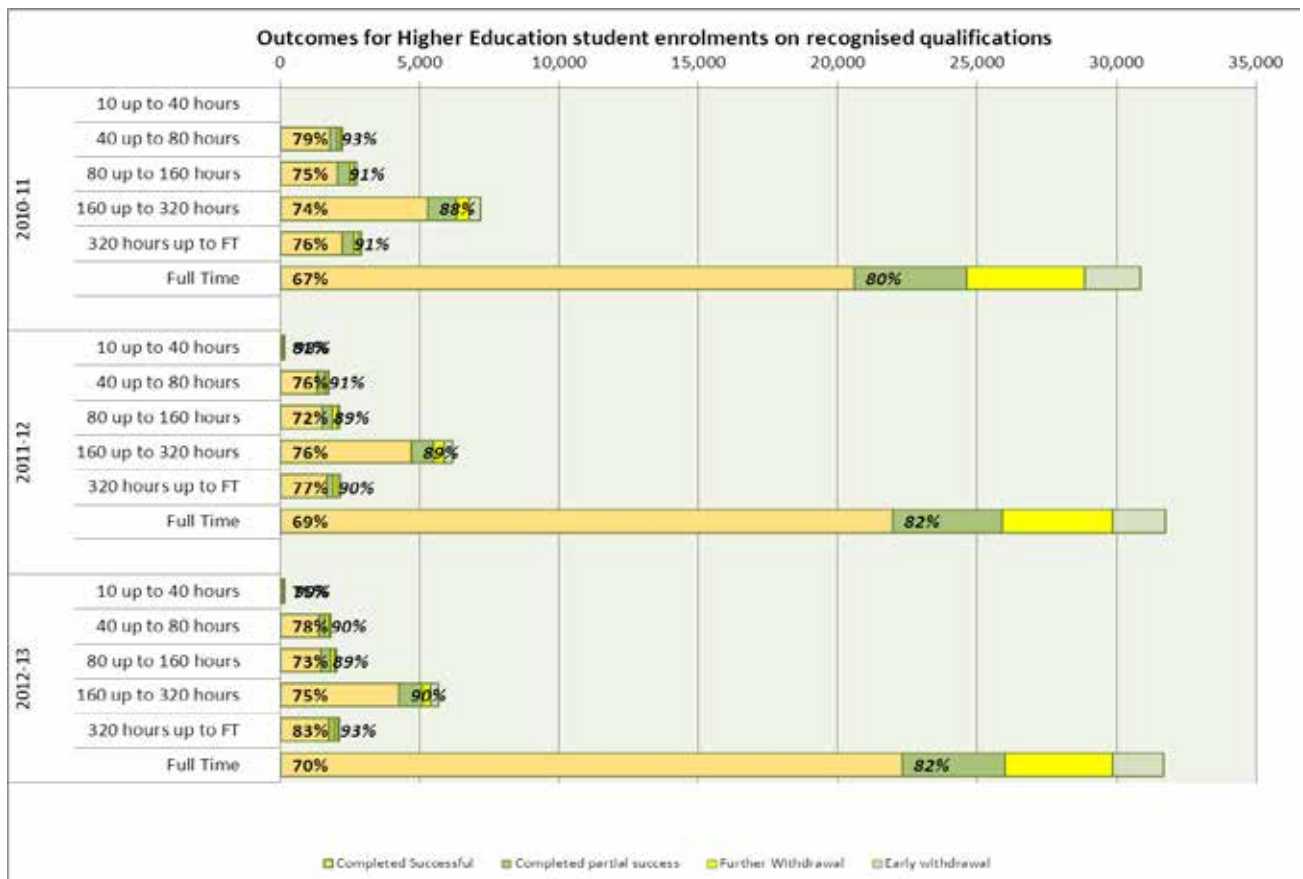
**Chart 2**



### Outcomes for HE student enrolments on recognised qualifications

- In terms of recognised programmes at HE level, the chart below provides an overview of success rates for academic sessions 2010-11 to 2012-13.

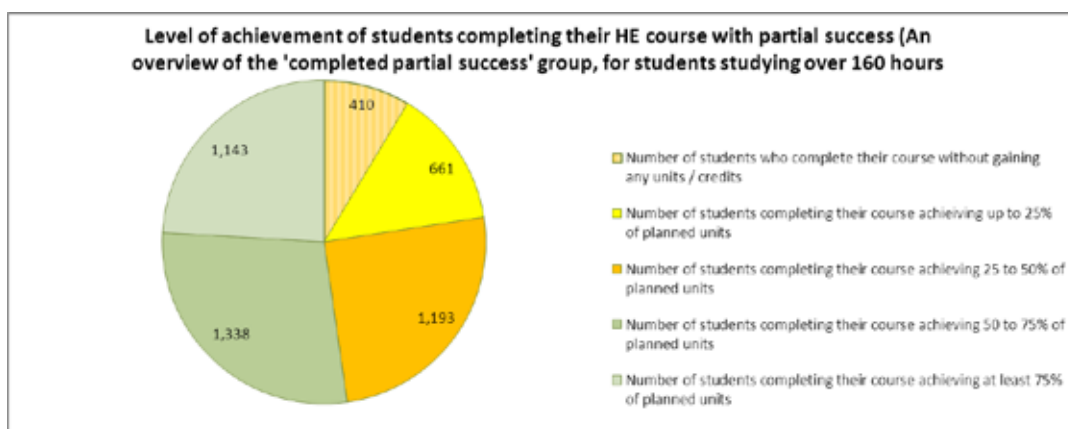
**Chart 3**



- The pass rates for HE programmes tend to be higher than FE programmes over the course year and this is reflected above with 70% of students on full-time programmes completing successfully and a total of 82% completing irrespective of their final result. These figures are comparable with the values of 65% and 77% for FE programmes but it should be noted that full-time HE programmes tend to be longer than a year in duration. Rates of success for full-time students have clearly improved over the previous three years; with 67% to 70% completing successfully and 80% to 82% completing with partial success.

### Students completing their HE course with partial success

*Chart 4*



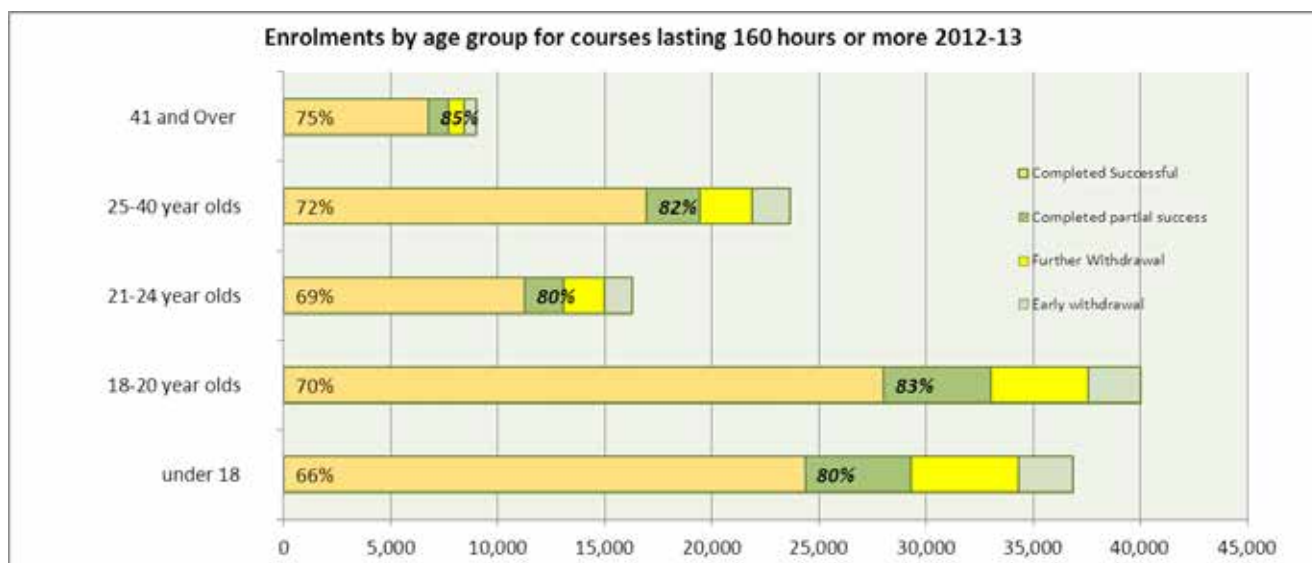
- The chart above provides more detailed information for the 4,745 students enrolled on HE programmes in 2012-13 who completed with partial success (as shown in the previous chart). It excludes students with fewer than 160 hours of study. It shows that 52% (2,481) of these students gained at least 50% of the units they enrolled on, while around 24% (1,143) of these students gained at least 75% of the units on their programme.

### Outcomes by age group

- The chart below shows that students in the younger age groups are less likely to complete successfully than those in the older age groups. Younger students are more likely to enrol on full-time programmes which have a lower pass rate in comparison to part-time programmes. They may also enrol on subjects that have lower pass rates or to withdraw from college because they have managed to get a place at university a month or so after their college course began. The chart allows for a more informed comparison of college activity, but should nevertheless take account of the specific environment in which each college operates.



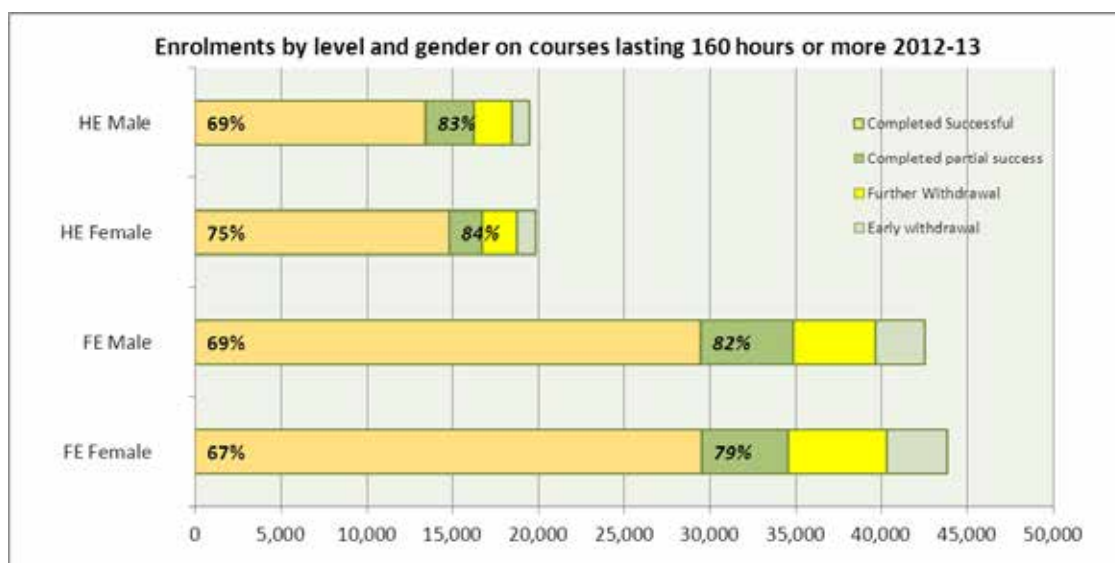
Chart 5



### Outcomes by gender and level

9. The chart below shows that in 2012-13, more than two thirds of enrolments relate to students studying FE level programmes. The success rates are different across these groups and provide a more rounded picture of college performance. The chart below suggests that male students are more likely to successfully complete their FE programmes than female students. Subjects and modes of study are associated with different pass rates and the 'mix' of these may differ across genders and individual colleges.

Chart 6

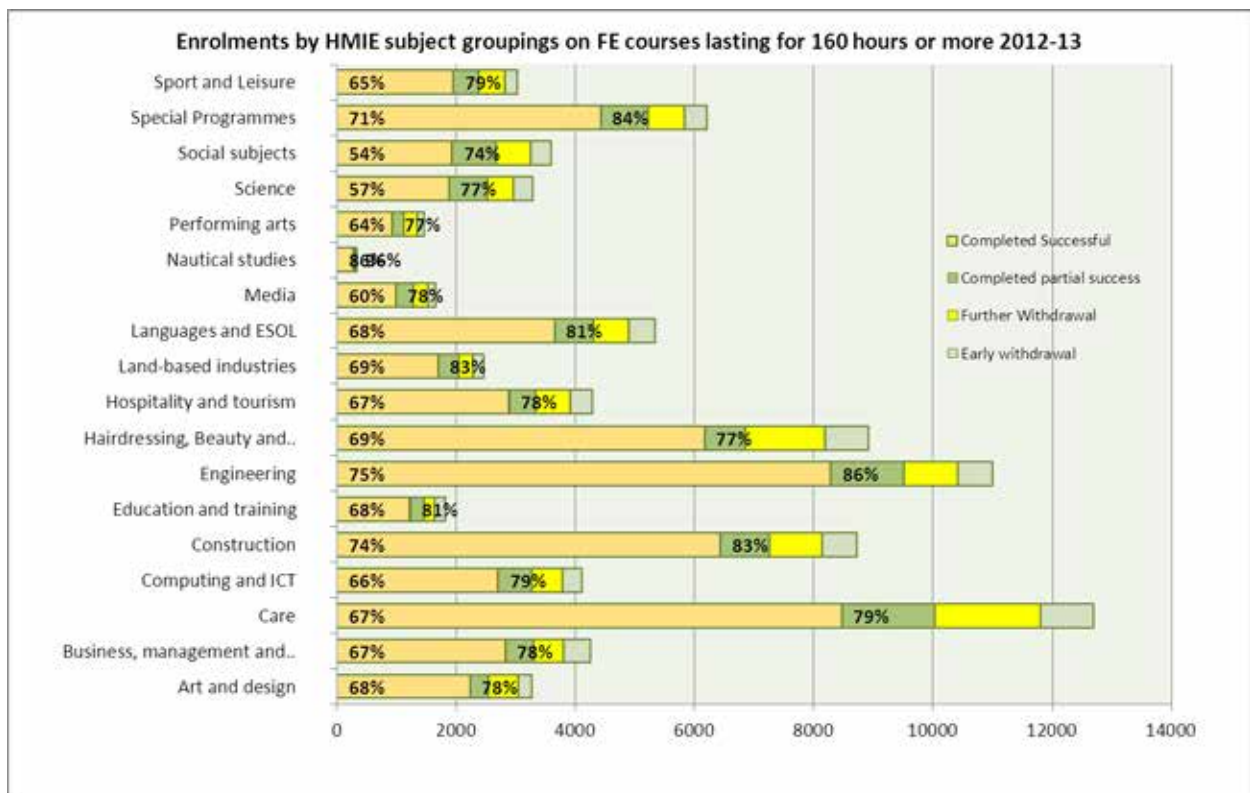




## Outcomes by subject groupings on FE courses

10. The subject groupings are based on the subject classification for the course aggregated into areas considered similar by Education Scotland. A subject mapping can be found in a separate technical appendix. There are two charts, one for FE level programmes and one for HE level programmes. Colleges offer a very wide ranging portfolio of courses and subject areas of study to potential students.
11. The chart below for FE programmes clearly shows that some subjects have lower success rates than others. Science, for example, shows a 57% success rate whilst engineering stands at 75%. This may be explained by many of the engineering students studying on day release from their jobs which can make them more motivated whilst those in the science group are more likely to be studying full-time which in itself has a lower pass rate. Programmes of Highers are also more likely to fall into the science group, these pass rates can be influenced by changing priorities amongst students, for example, initially enrolling for four Highers but only completing two as this is sufficient to gain entry to university.

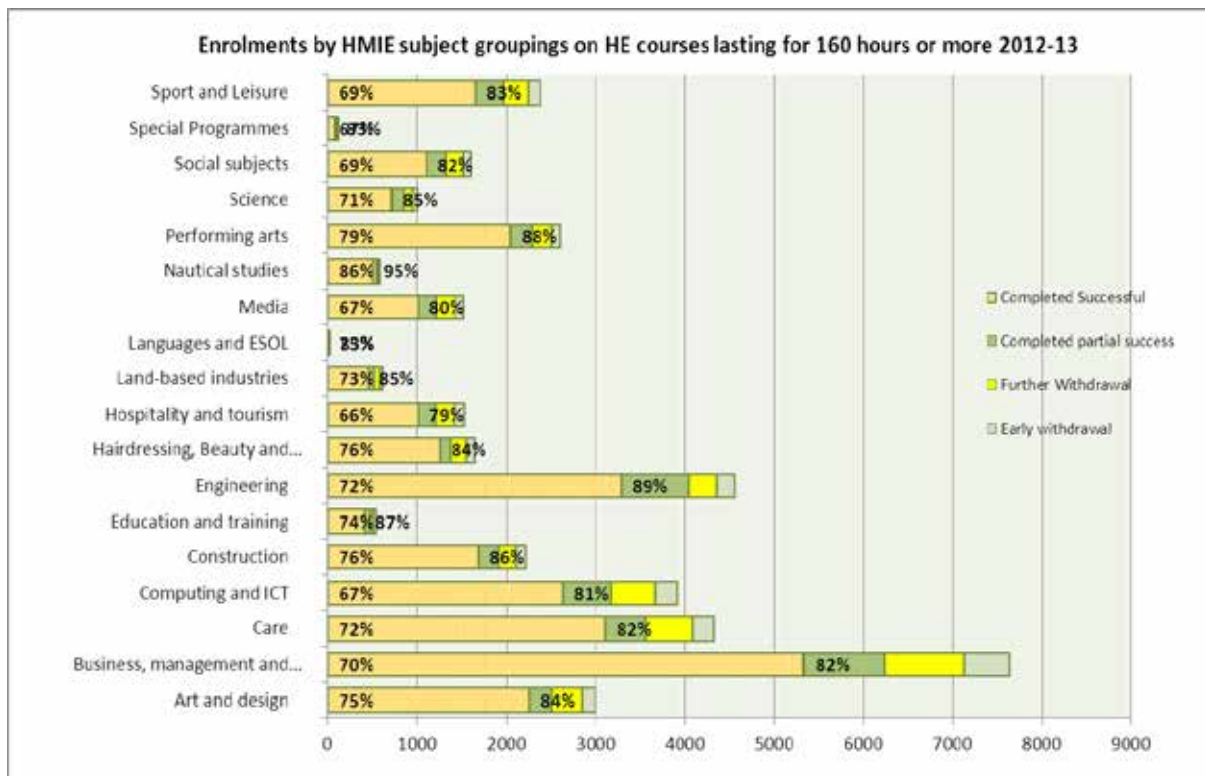
**Chart 7**



## Outcomes by subject groupings on HE courses

12. Similar issues exist for HE programmes with some subjects being more likely to be made up of students studying on day release from their employer, in which case the student may have extra motivation to do well. Similarly, some of these courses will have a greater mix of full-time programmes or students from younger age groups.

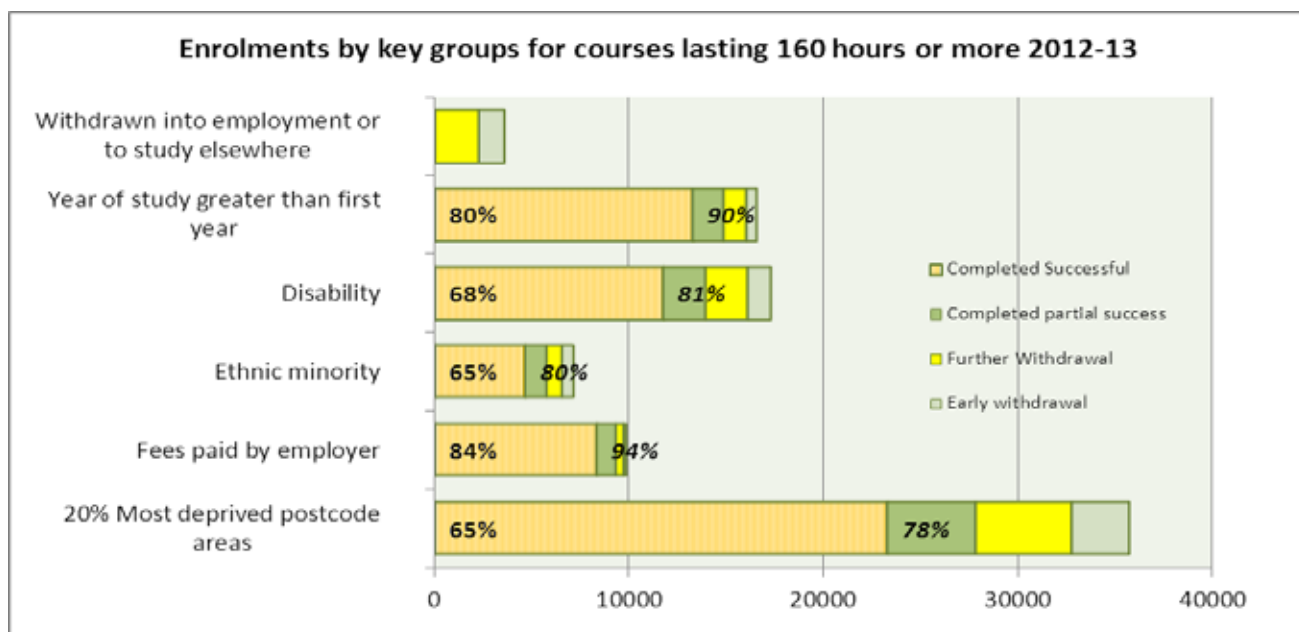
**Chart 8**



## Outcomes by key groups

13. The chart below highlights groups of interest to various stakeholders and helps identify factors that may affect the success rates for an individual college. For example, a college with a high proportion of students on day release from their employer or supported by their employer in some other way is likely to have a high pass rate for these students and this may be enough to affect overall pass rates. Similarly, students who receive student support are more likely to be successful than those who do not and this may also have an effect on pass rates.
14. It should be noted that the chart also shows the volume of students who withdraw from their studies for positive reasons such as to study at a university or to commence employment.

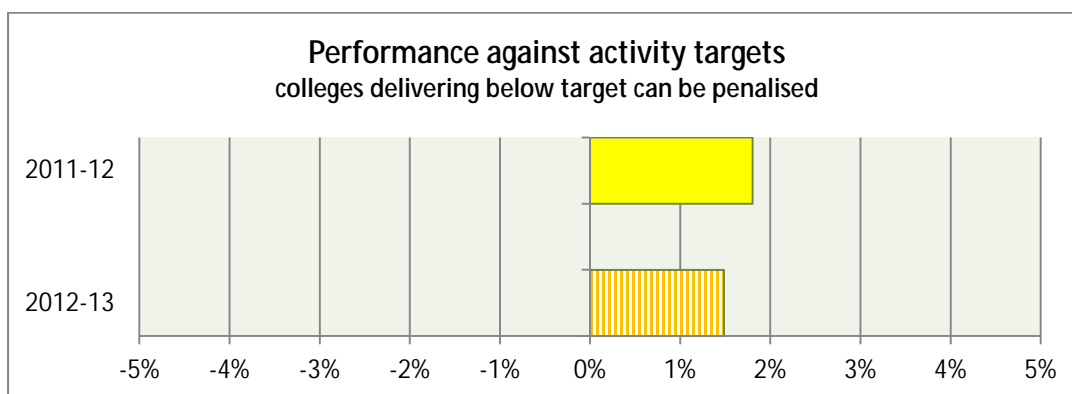
Chart 9



### Performance against activity targets

15. Colleges receive funding from SFC to deliver a target number of hours of learning. These hours of learning are weighted by the cost of teaching in different subject areas. For example, engineering courses tend to require specialist equipment and therefore have a higher weight than business courses that are more likely to be classroom based.
16. The activity targets are those as published by SFC and include additional targets associated with European Social Fund (ESF) and Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE) projects. The activity delivered is also all inclusive, encompassing the ESF and PACE figures. Note that the figures also includes HE activity now transferred to Scotland's Rural College. The overall effect is that the sector is shown as exceeding their target by 1.5% in 2012-13.

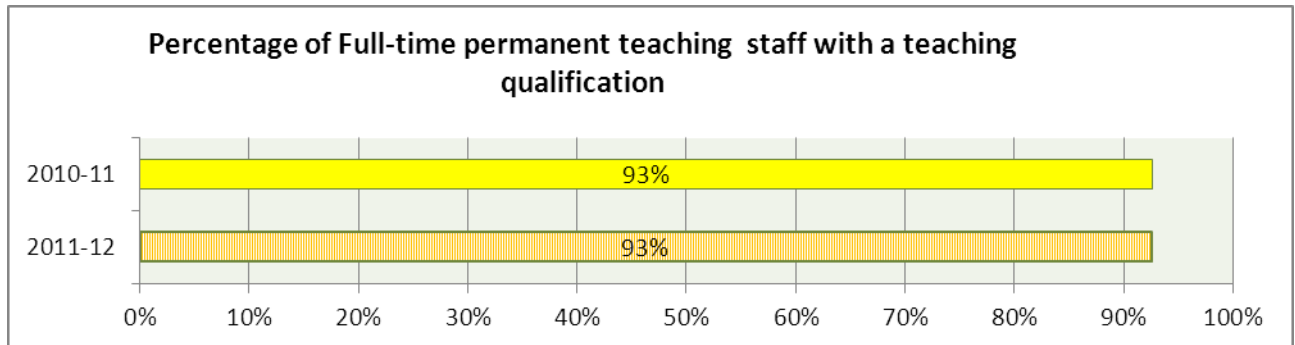
Chart 10



## Staff in Scotland's colleges

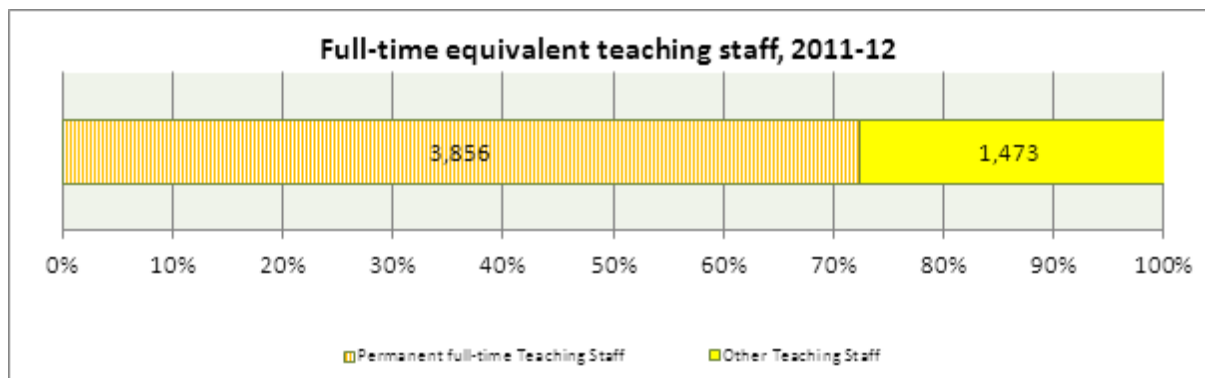
This chart measures the percentage of full-time teaching staff with a teaching qualification recognised by the General Teaching Council.

**Chart 11**



The chart below illustrates the percentage of full-time equivalent teaching staff in FE colleges in 2011-12. Just over 70% of teaching staff in Scotland's colleges are permanent full-time.

**Chart 12**



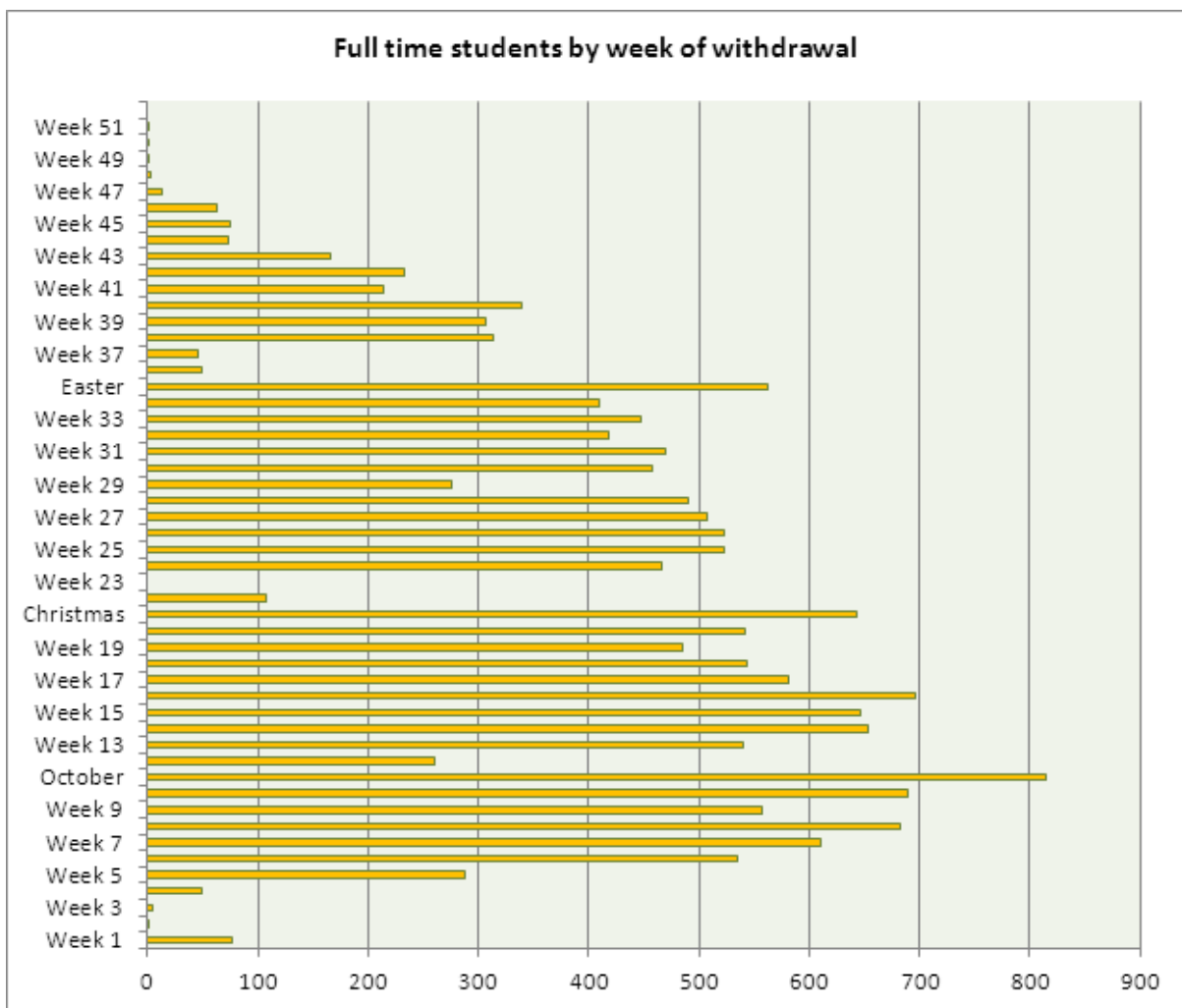
## 4 An analysis of student withdrawal

1. The college sector has undergone considerable change in recent years. Between 2005-06 and 2011-12 there has been a steady increase in full-time students especially at HE level.
2. Colleges are delivering fewer part-time programmes, particularly courses of a duration of less than 40 hours where activity has decreased significantly in 2012-13 as it did in the previous year.
3. SFC asked colleges to prioritise additional places for those aged 16 to 24 who were not in employment, education or training.
4. The increase in full-time students may have had an impact on overall success

rates as full-time students are less likely to complete their programmes. These programmes require commitment over a longer period of time and pass rates can be lower as students are required to achieve more units/credits than those enrolled on short part-time courses.

- Following on from the above statements, to expand on this and determine exactly at which point in time full-time students withdraw from their courses, a brief analysis shows distinct peaks in withdrawals following the main holiday periods of the October week, Christmas and Easter, as can be seen in the chart below.

**Chart 13**



## 5 Further information

1. The performance indicators are of primary importance to Ministers, College Principals, Governing Boards and Scottish Government officials.
2. In order to bring the performance indicators to the widest possible audience of employers, staff, students and parents, the format has been improved for this publication; the individual college PIs are now hosted by each college on their own website, thereby raising the profile of the figures and making them more useable.
3. Further information from SFC on Scotland's colleges is available here:  
<http://www.sfc.ac.uk/reportspublications/reportspublications.aspx>
4. Student numbers may differ across these publications as the reports are prepared for different purposes. For example, the PI report excludes students who begin courses in January and finish in December of the same year, as results will not be available for these students until the course ends. However, activity related to these students will be included in the [Baseline Report](#).

Full copies of Education Scotland subject and college reviews, and overviews of provision are available from this website:

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/>

5. Additional information regarding student enrolments and courses is available via the SFC Infact interactive database:  
[http://www.sfc.ac.uk/statistics/further\\_education\\_statistics/infact\\_database/infact\\_database.aspx](http://www.sfc.ac.uk/statistics/further_education_statistics/infact_database/infact_database.aspx)