

## **National Assembly for Wales**

### **In Figures: Higher Education Research Paper**

June 2009

This paper provides a statistical overview of the higher education sector in Wales.

It includes information on Welsh domiciled students, students studying in Wales and Welsh higher education institutions.

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# **National Assembly for Wales**

## **In Figures: Higher Education Research Paper**

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## **Executive Summary**

This paper is intended to provide a statistical overview of the higher education sector in Wales and focuses on Welsh domiciled students studying at higher education institutions throughout the UK as well as students at higher education institutions in Wales.

### ***Summary of results***

In 2007/08 there were 125,540 higher education enrolments at Welsh higher education institutions. Of these, 63,835 were first year enrolments.

In 2007/08, there were 101,965 Welsh domiciled higher education enrolments at higher education institutions throughout the UK (including the Open University). Of these, 49,975 were first year enrolments.

Wales is a net importer of students. In 2007/08, 19,110 Welsh students were at UK higher education institutions outside of Wales whilst 28,005 students from the UK outside of Wales studied in Wales.

For young full-time first-degree entrants to Welsh HEIs in 2006/07, 9 per cent did not continue beyond their first year.

In 2007/08, 35,185 higher education qualifications were obtained at Welsh higher education institutions.

In 2007/08, 25,730 higher education qualifications were obtained by Welsh domiciled students in higher education institutions throughout the UK.

For the 2006/07 academic year, at six months after graduation, over 75 per cent of both Welsh domiciled qualifiers and qualifiers from Welsh higher education institutions had entered work of some kind.

In 2007/08, the number of student support scheme students receiving support in Wales was 50,600. 25,300 Welsh domiciled students and EU Students studying in Wales took out a Tuition Fee Loan. 24,100 students qualified for the new tuition fee grant.

In 2007/08, the average anticipated debt for those graduating from full-time courses was £7,187 and £586 for those graduating from part-time ones.

It was estimated by the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales that in 2006/07, there was a funding gap of approximately £55-£66 million in the Welsh higher education sector compared with England.





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# In Figures: Higher Education

## 1 Introduction

This paper is part of the *In Figures* series, which aims to provide a statistical portrait of a number of key social and economic issues. This particular issue focuses on statistics relating to higher education students (HE students) at Welsh higher education institutions (HEIs) as well as Welsh domiciled students enrolled at HEIs throughout the UK.

Higher education (HE) students are those students on programmes of study for which the level of instruction is above that of level 3 of the National Qualifications Framework, i.e. courses leading to the Advanced Level of the General Certificate of Education (GCE A-levels), the Advanced Level of the Vocational Certificate of Education (VCE A-levels) or the Advanced Higher Grade and Higher Grade of the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Advanced Highers/Highers). Information is presented for both postgraduate and undergraduate students<sup>1</sup>.

An electronic version of the paper is available on the Members' Research Service pages of the National Assembly for Wales' web-site at:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-guide-docs-pub/bus-assembly-publications-research.htm#papers>

## 2 Numbers of students in higher education

This section provides information about higher education students enrolled at Welsh higher education institutions (HEIs) and Welsh domiciled students enrolled at HEIs throughout the UK.

The data are taken from the [Higher Education Statistics Agency's \(HESA\) Student Record](#) and are rounded to the nearest five. HESA collects data from publicly funded HEIs in the UK on behalf of funding bodies and government departments.

Unless otherwise stated all data are based on the HESA standard registration population, which includes all student enrolments throughout the year.

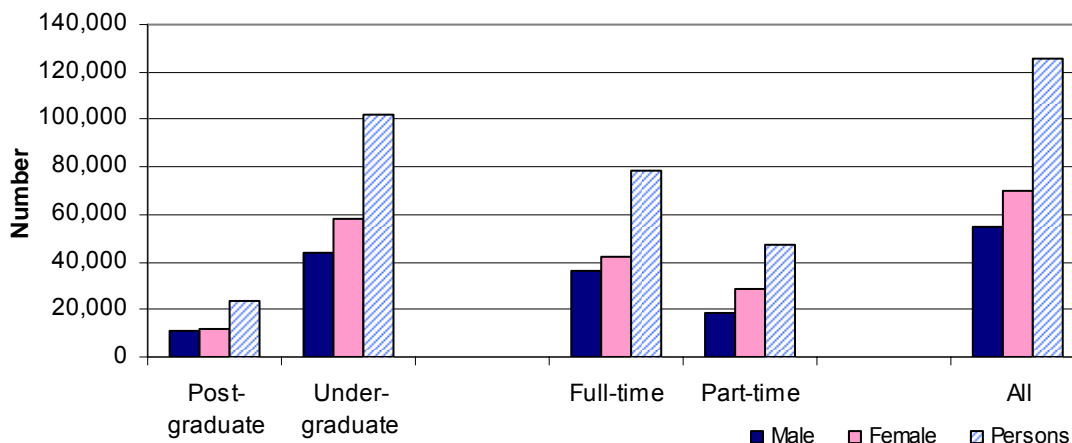
### ***Student numbers at Welsh HEIs***

In 2007/08 there were 125,540 higher education enrolments at Welsh HEIs. Part-time enrolments accounted for 38 per cent of the total HE enrolments. Females accounted for more than half of all HE enrolments (around 56 per cent).

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<sup>1</sup> See Annex A for definitions.

**Chart 1: Enrolments at Welsh HEIs by level, mode and gender, 2007/08**

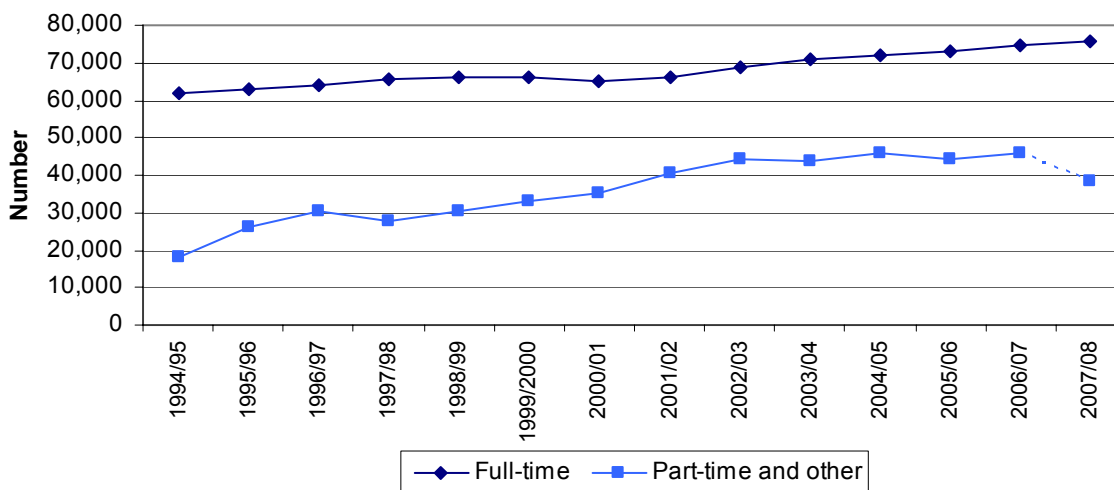


Source: [StatsWales \[007293\]](#)

Chart 2 shows that the number of full-time and part-time enrolments has increased since 1994/95. Since 1994/95 full-time enrolments have increased by approximately 22 per cent and part-time by 109 per cent.

From 2007/08, the definition of the HE registration population does not include writing-up or sabbatical students, where previously they were included under ‘part-time and other’. For this reason there is a discontinuity between 2006/07 and 2007/08, shown in the time series below. The number of part-time enrolments was lower in 2007/08 than in 2006/07. This decrease is partly due to the change in definition.

**Chart 2: Higher Education enrolments at Welsh HEIs, by mode as at 1<sup>st</sup> December of academic year, 1994/95 to 2007/08**



Source: StatsWales[002402] and [Students in Higher Education Institutions, 2007/08 - Revised](#)

In 2007/08, Cardiff University was the institution with the greatest number of enrolments (26,585). Trinity College, Carmarthen had the least number of enrolments (2,225). Cardiff University, the University of Glamorgan and Swansea University were the three institutions with the highest enrolment and accounted for around half of all enrolments in Welsh HEIs.

**Table 1: Enrolments at Welsh HEIs by institution and mode of study, 2007/08<sup>2</sup>**

	<i>Enrolments</i>		
	Full-time	Part-time	All
University of Wales, Newport	3,785	5,335	9,120
Glyndwr University (a)	2,755	4,505	7,265
University of Wales Institute, Cardiff	7,870	2,035	9,900
University of Glamorgan (b)	12,815	9,895	22,710
Swansea Metropolitan University (c)	3,555	2,035	5,595
Trinity College, Carmarthen (d)	1,285	940	2,225
The University of Wales, Lampeter	1,475	6,410	7,885
Aberystwyth University	6,795	3,070	9,865
Bangor University	8,020	2,495	10,515
Cardiff University	19,480	7,105	26,585
Swansea University	10,380	3,495	13,875
All Welsh HEIs (Excludes the OU)	78,215	47,325	125,540
The Open University	5	7,100	7,105
<b>Total (Welsh HEIs and the OU)</b>	<b>78,220</b>	<b>54,430</b>	<b>132,645</b>

Source: StatsWales [\[007296\]](#)

(a) Glyndwr University Wrexham was created in 2008 out of the North East Wales Institute of Higher Education.

(b) In May 2006, Merthyr Tydfil College of Further Education was integrated into the University of Glamorgan. In January 2007, the University established a strategic alliance with the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama whereby the college became a wholly owned subsidiary of the University.

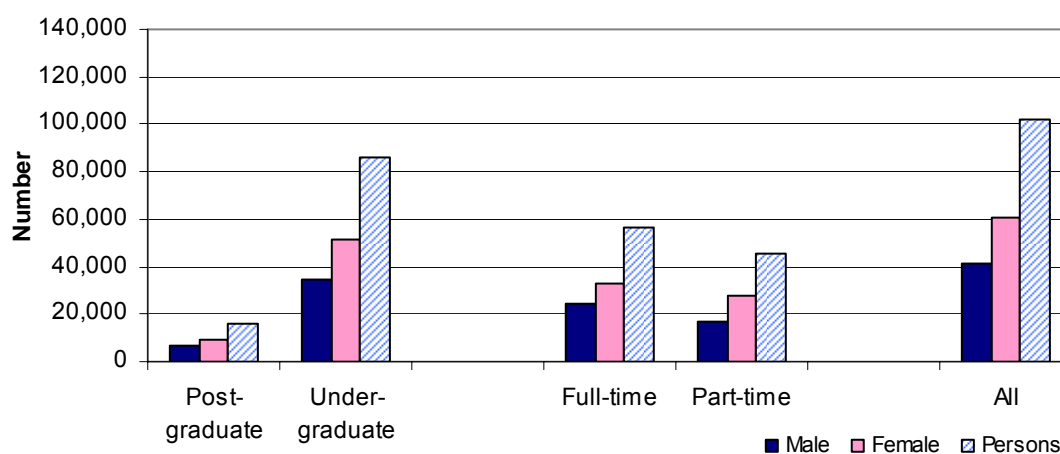
(c) Swansea Metropolitan University received its university title in January 2008. It was formerly known as Swansea Institute of Higher Education.

(d) Trinity College was awarded taught degree awarding powers by the Privy Council in December 2008. This allows Trinity University College to award its own degrees as well as those of the University of Wales.

### **Welsh domiciled students at UK HEIs**

In 2007/08, there were 101,965 Welsh domiciled higher education enrolments at HEIs throughout the UK (including the Open University). Part-time enrolments accounted for 44 per cent of the total HE enrolments. Females accounted for around 60 per cent of Welsh domiciled enrolments.

**Chart 3: Enrolments of Welsh domiciled students in UK HEIs, by level, mode and gender, 2007/08**



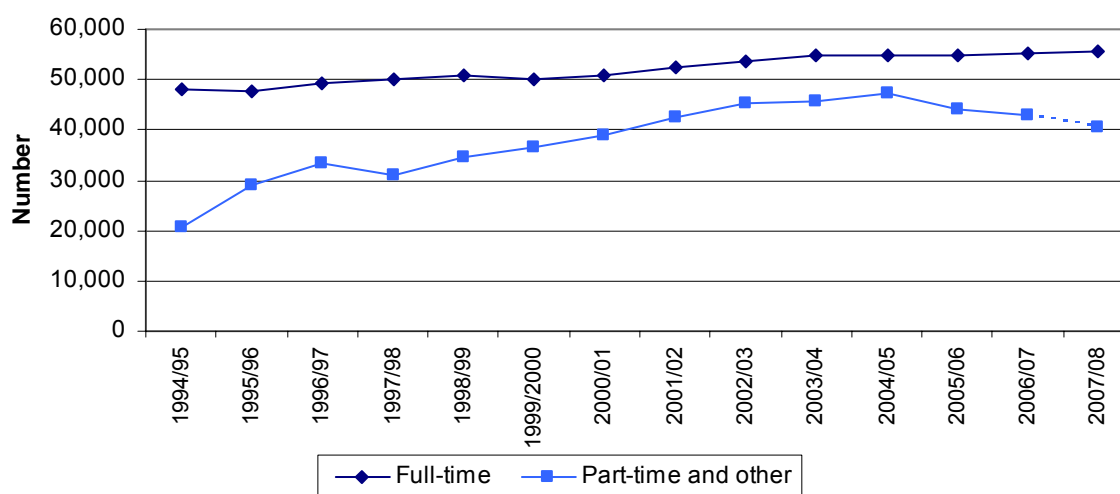
Source: StatsWales [\[007305\]](#)

<sup>2</sup> See Annex A for information about the reconfiguration of higher education in Wales.

Chart 4 shows that the number of full-time and part-time enrolments of Welsh domiciled students has increased since 1994/95. Since 1994/95 full-time enrolments have increased by approximately 15 per cent and part-time by 97 per cent.

From 2007/08, the definition of the HE registration population does not include writing-up or sabbatical students, where previously they were included under 'part-time and other'. For this reason there is a discontinuity between 2006/07 and 2007/08, shown in the time series below. The number of part-time enrolments was lower in 2007/08 compared with 2006/07. This decrease is partly due to the change in definition.

**Chart 4: Welsh domiciled Higher Education enrolments at UK HEIs, by mode as at 1<sup>st</sup> December of academic year, 1994/95 to 2007/08**



Source: StatsWales [002403] and [Students in Higher Education Institutions, 2007/08 - Revised](#)

### ***First year higher education students***

Of the 125,540 higher education enrolments at Welsh HEIs, 63,835 were first year enrolments. Of these, 49,470 were entrants at undergraduate level. Females accounted for 55 per cent of first year enrolments and part-time students accounted for 46 per cent of first year enrolments at Welsh HEIs.

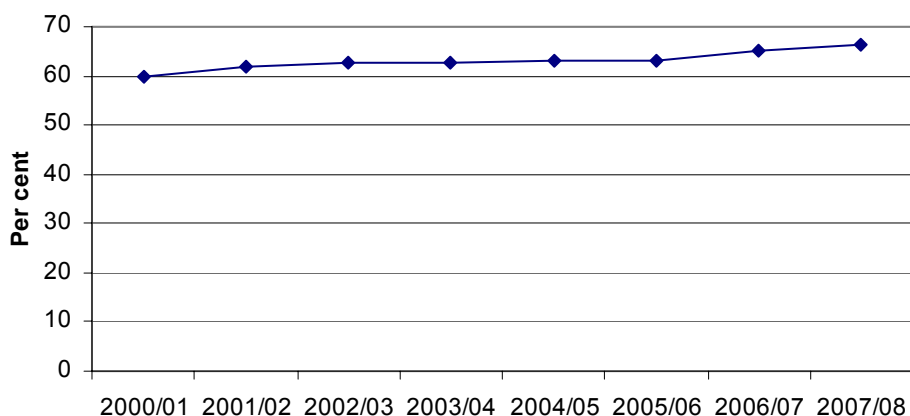
Of the 101,965 Welsh domiciled higher education enrolments at HEIs throughout the UK, 49,975 were first year enrolments. Of these, 41,375 were entrants at undergraduate level. Females accounted for 60 per cent of Welsh domiciled first year enrolments at UK HEIs. Part-time students accounted for 54 per cent of Welsh domiciled first year enrolments at UK HEIs.

### **Cross border flows**

Wales is a net importer of students. In 2007/08, 19,110 Welsh students were at UK HEIs outside of Wales whilst 28,005 students from the UK outside of Wales studied in Wales.

Since 2000/01 the proportion of Welsh domiciled students studying in Wales has increased from 60 per cent to 66 per cent. However, the proportion of students studying in their home country is lower in Wales than in the other countries of the UK. In England around 95 per cent of students remain in their home country to study.

**Chart 5: Percentage of Welsh domiciles studying in Wales, 2000/01 to 2007/08**



Source: [Students in Higher Education Institutions, 2007/08 - Revised](#)

### 3 Participation

Information on widening participation (that is, the proportion of entrants who come from various under-represented groups) and the proportion of students who do not continue at an institution beyond their first year there is taken from data on higher education performance indicators, which are published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). The performance indicators are designed to provide reliable information on the nature and performance of the higher education sector in the UK and a consistent set of measures of this performance.

The Performance Indicators Steering Group (PISG) led the development of these indicators. Members are drawn from the four higher education funding bodies for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, government departments, the Higher Education Statistics Agency, and the universities and colleges through their representative bodies (Universities UK and SCOP).

The indicators broadly cover widening participation, non-continuation rates and outcomes.

Many of the indicators are split between young and mature students, defined as follows:

- Young students are those who are under 21 at 30 September of the academic year in which they are recorded as entering the institution - for students recorded as entering an institution in 2006/07, young students are those born after 30 September 1986.
- Mature students are those who are 21 or over, also at 30 September of the academic year in which they are recorded as entering the institution.

#### ***Entrants to higher education from under-represented groups***

In 2007/08, the percentage of young full-time first degree entrants to Welsh HEIs from state schools or colleges was 93 per cent, the same as in the previous year. The UK comparable figure was 88 per cent.

In 2007/08, 30 per cent of young full-time first-degree entrants to Welsh HEIs were from National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC) Classes 4 - 7<sup>3</sup>, slightly higher than the UK comparable figure (29.5 per cent).

In 2007/08, 9 per cent of young full-time first degree entrants and 12.5 per cent of mature full-time first degree entrants at Welsh HEIs came from low participation neighbourhoods. Welsh HEIs have the highest rate of all UK countries for mature entrants.

In 2007/08, 9 per cent of young part-time undergraduate entrants and 6 per cent of mature part-time undergraduate entrants at Welsh HEIs came from low participation neighbourhoods. The UK has corresponding figures of 12 per cent for young entrants and 7 per cent for mature entrants.

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<sup>3</sup> See Annex A for definitions.

In 2007/08, 6 per cent of full-time first degree students (the highest rate in the UK) and 1 per cent of part-time undergraduate students in Welsh HEIs were in receipt of a disabled students' allowance<sup>3</sup>.

### ***Students not completing their courses***

In 2006/07, 9 per cent of young full-time first-degree entrants to Welsh HEIs did not continue beyond their first year and 17 per cent of mature full-time first degree entrants to Welsh HEIs did not continue beyond their first year. Both figures were higher than the comparable UK figures (7 per cent and 15 per cent respectively).

For full-time students starting first degree courses in Welsh HEIs in 2006/07, 75 per cent were expected to gain a first degree, 2 percentage points lower than last year. For the same period, 17 per cent of full-time students starting a first degree course in Welsh HEIs were not expected to obtain an award or to transfer to another institution. This is 3 percentage points higher than the UK.

## **4 Qualifications**

In 2007/08, 35,185 higher education qualifications were obtained at Welsh HEIs; of these 10,750 were at postgraduate level, 18,815 were at first degree level and 5,620 were at other undergraduate level.

In 2007/08, 25,730 higher education qualifications were obtained by Welsh domiciled students in HEIs throughout the UK; of these 5,770 were at postgraduate level, 14,015 were at first degree level and 5,945 were at other undergraduate level.



## 5 Destination of students gaining qualifications from HEIs

Information on the destinations of students gaining higher education qualifications is taken from data collected by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). The data provide information on the activities of students after leaving a higher education institution in the UK and are collected through a survey carried out approximately six months after students leave an HEI. Throughout this section, students gaining a higher education qualification are referred to as *qualifiers*.

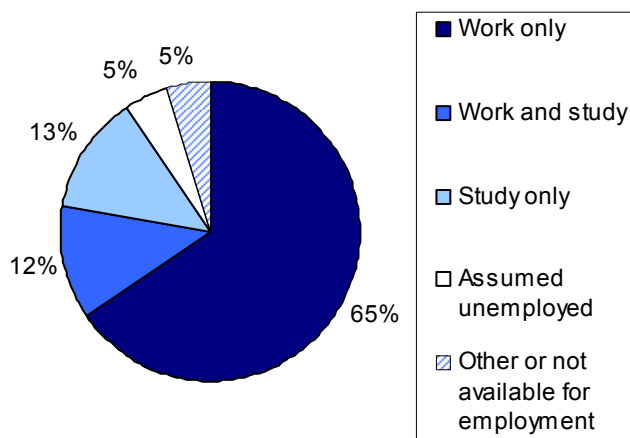
The information presented in this section is taken from the Welsh Government's publication [Destinations of Students Gaining Qualifications from Higher Education Institutions 2006/07](#) and focuses on Welsh qualifiers and UK domiciled qualifiers from Welsh institutions for the 2006/07 academic year.

### **Activity of graduates from HEIs**

At six months after graduation, over 75 per cent of both Welsh domiciled qualifiers and qualifiers from Welsh HEIs had entered work of some kind. 5 per cent were assumed to be unemployed, with the majority of the remainder entering study only.

Part-time qualifiers were more likely to enter work than full-time qualifiers.

**Chart 6: Main activity of Welsh domiciled qualifiers, 2006/07**

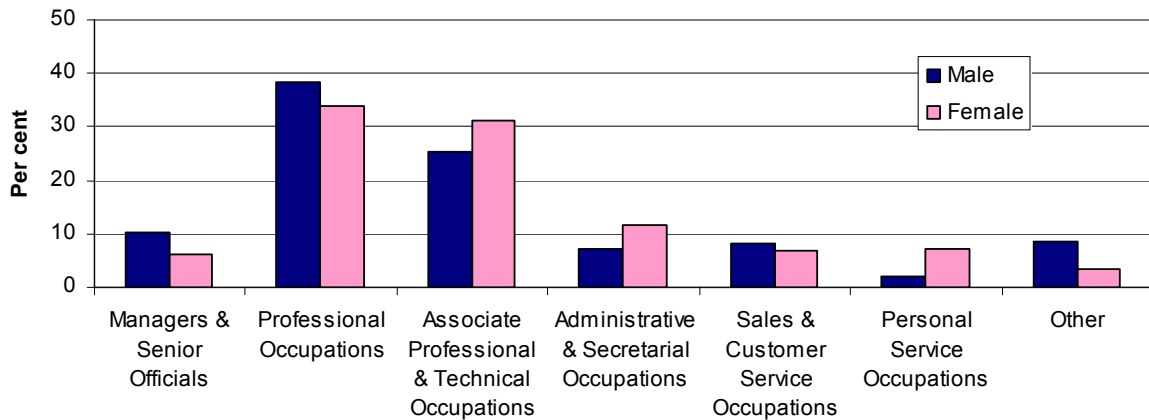


Source: StatsWales [\[002594\]](#)

### **Occupation of those employed**

Of Welsh domiciled qualifiers employed six months after graduation, 8 per cent were managers and senior officials, 36 per cent were in professional occupations and 29 per cent in associate professional and technical occupations and 10 per cent in administrative and secretarial occupations.

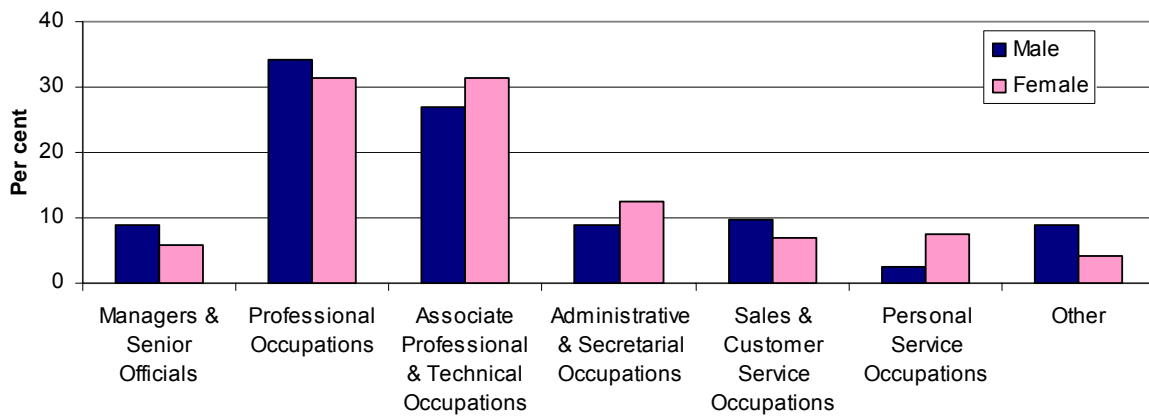
**Chart 7: Occupation of employed Welsh domiciled qualifiers, 2006/07**



Source: StatsWales [\[002599\]](#)

For qualifiers from Welsh HEIs employed six months after graduation, 7 per cent were managers and senior officials, 33 per cent were in professional occupations and 29 per cent in associate professional and technical occupations and 11 per cent were in administrative and secretarial occupations.

**Chart 8: Occupation of employed qualifiers from Welsh HEIs, 2006/07**



Source: StatsWales [\[002600\]](#)

## Salary

Information is also collected on the salaries of UK domiciled first degree qualifiers in full time paid employment based in the UK. The salary information is collected to the nearest £1,000 and is presented as the median salaries.

The median salary for Welsh qualifiers, from full-time first degree programs, who were employed in the UK was £19,000. The median salary for qualifiers from Welsh HEIs was £18,000. For all groups the male median salaries tend to be slightly higher than the equivalent female.

Salary levels were the same for Welsh and UK qualifiers; however salary levels for those who qualified or work in Wales were slightly lower. The median salary for UK domiciled first degree qualifiers employed in Wales was £18,000.

**Table 2: Median salaries of UK domicile first degree qualifiers in full-time employment in the UK, 2006/07**

Mode of study		£s			
		Welsh domicile	Qualifiers from Welsh HEIs	Qualifiers employed in Wales	UK qualifiers
Full-time	Male	19,000	18,000	17,500	20,000
	Female	18,000	17,000	17,000	18,000
	Persons	18,000	18,000	17,000	19,000
Part-time	Male	27,000	28,000	28,000	27,000
	Female	23,000	23,000	23,000	24,000
	Persons	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
All	Male	20,000	19,000	19,000	20,000
	Female	18,000	18,000	17,500	19,000
	Persons	19,000	18,000	18,000	19,000

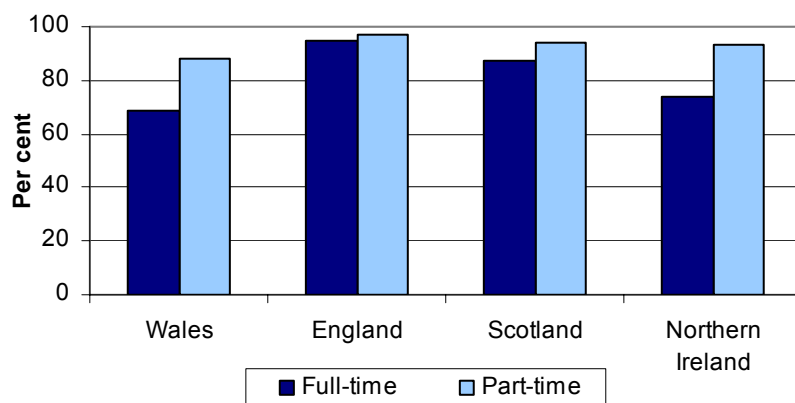
Source: [Destinations of Students Gaining Qualifications from Higher Education Institutions 2006/07](#)

## Location of employment

Chart 9 shows the proportion of qualifiers entering employment in the country in which they were originally domiciled. Both Welsh qualifiers and qualifiers from Welsh HEIs were less likely to remain or return to Wales than the equivalent 'retention' figure for other UK countries. Of Welsh qualifiers employed six months after graduation, 73 per cent were employed in Wales. For those not employed in Wales, the main destination was England. In comparison, 96 per cent of English qualifiers in employment were working in England.

Welsh part-time qualifiers were more likely to return to or remain in Wales for employment than full-time qualifiers (88 per cent compared with 68 per cent). Females were more likely to return to or remain in Wales than males (76 per cent compared with 69 per cent).

**Chart 9: Proportion of qualifiers entering employment in country of original domicile, 2006/07**



Source: StatsWales [\[002603\]](#)

In relation to full-time undergraduates entering employment, there has been a net flow of graduates out of Wales over the years. In 2006/07, 395 more Welsh graduates were employed outside of Wales than other UK graduates employed in Wales.

**Table 3: Flows to and from Wales (within UK) of full-time undergraduates entering employment only, 2002/03 to 2006/07**

	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07
'Welsh' graduates in Wales	3,885	4,165	4,430	4,030	4,225
'Welsh' graduates outside Wales	1,700	1,660	1,685	1,695	1,660
'Non-Welsh' graduates in Wales	1,280	1,250	1,305	1,125	1,260
Net flow of graduates	-420	-415	-385	-570	-395

Source: [Destinations of Students Gaining Qualifications from Higher Education Institutions, 2006/07](#)

## 6 Student support

The Welsh Government took full responsibility for student support in Wales from 2006/07, when higher education student finance was devolved to the National Assembly for Wales from Westminster. This was under section 44 of the *Higher Education Act 2004*<sup>4</sup>, which transferred the functions to Welsh Ministers. This meant the Welsh Government now has the duty to provide statutory financial support to help students fund undergraduate degrees.

[Student Finance Wales](#) was set up by the Welsh Government to provide a unified service for the delivery of financial support to students who normally live in Wales.

The Student Finance Wales Contact Centre advises on general questions such as:

- what financial help is available
- the application process and timetable
- questions in relation to the online services available through their site
- the progress of applications
- repayment of loans

The [Student Loans Company](#) (SLC) is a non-departmental public body of the United Kingdom government. It was established to provide financial services, in terms of loans and grants, to students in colleges and universities across the four education systems of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Another key responsibility is the administration of the collection of repayments, from graduates.

The student loan is now divided into two parts, the maintenance loan and the tuition fee loan. Both these loans are income contingent loans, or income based loans which is so called because repayments are dependent on the scale of earnings.

From 1 September 2008, responsibility for the provision of information, advice and guidance to prospective higher education entrants transferred from local authorities to the Student Loans Company.

The transfer of responsibilities for student finance to the Welsh Government in 2006/07 has resulted in a changed support package for Welsh domiciled students (and those EU students studying in Wales). Some of the key changes include:

### 2006/07 academic year

New entrants in academic year 2006/07 were eligible for the new [Assembly Learning Grant](#) (ALG), a non-repayable grant of up to £2,700 dependent on household income.

These entrants were subject to fee charges of £1,200 if they attended a HE institution in Wales, which could be deferred through taking out a loan. Students attending a HE institution outside Wales could be subject immediately to a variable fee of up to £3,000.

### 2007/08 academic year

From 2007/08, Welsh institutions were able to charge variable tuition fees of up to £3,070. Welsh domiciles (and EU students) studying in Wales were able to receive the non means-tested [Tuition Fee Grant](#) of up to £1,845 towards their tuition fee. The grant

<sup>4</sup> [The Higher Education Act 2004 \(\(chapter 8\), \(part 4, section 44\)\)](#) [accessed 25 June 2009]

effectively limited the fee charge to this group of students to a maximum of £1,225 in 2007/08.

New entrants continued to be eligible for a maintenance loan, which remains largely unchanged, although receipt of an ALG affects the overall loan available.

The table below shows the support package for Welsh domiciled students in 2007/08 where they entered HE in academic year 2006/07 or 2007/08.

**Table 4: Student Maintenance Package 2007/08 for Welsh domiciled students entering HE from 2006/07**

Residual Income Amount	Amount of fee grant available - students at Welsh institutions (a)	Amount of fee loan available - students at Welsh institutions	Amount of fee loan available - students at other institutions (a)	Amount of Assembly Learning Grant available	Amount of maintenance loan available (b)
Up to £17,920	£1,845	£1,225	£3,070	£2,765	£3,285 (c)
Between £17,921 & £27,160	£1,845	£1,225	£3,070	£1,225 to £2,764 (d)	£3,285 (c)
Between £27,161 & £38,325	£1,845	£1,225	£3,070	£50 to £1,224 (e)	£3,286 to £4,460 (f)
Between £38,326 & £38,810	£1,845	£1,225	£3,070	Nil	£4,510 (g)
Between £38,811 & £49,498	£1,845	£1,225	£3,070	Nil	£3,385 to £4,509 (h)
Over £49,498	£1,845	£1,225	£3,070	Nil	£3,385 (h)

Source: [Student Loans Company](#)

(a) The amount of Tuition Fee Loan available is equivalent to the tuition fees charged, up to a maximum of £3,070. HE institutions in Wales could only charge £1,200 for tuition fees in 2006/07 but were able to charge up to £3,070 in 2007/08.

(b) Based on the 'Elsewhere' rate of loan.

(c) Students in lower-income households will have part of their maintenance needs met through a non-repayable Assembly Learning Grant (ALG). Their entitlement to repayable support through a Student Loan for Maintenance will therefore be reduced to reflect this. In practice, this means that the amount of maintenance loan a student can receive will be reduced by £1 for every £1 of ALG entitlement up to £1,225.

(d) Reduced by £1 for every £6 of income above £17,920.

(e) Reduced by £1 for every £9.50 of income above £27,160.

(f) The maintenance Loan is reduced by between £50 and £1,225 depending on the amount of ALG received.

(g) The full 'Elsewhere' rate of maintenance loan.

(h) All students are entitled to 75% of the appropriate student loan, but the remaining 25% is subject to means-testing.

Student support scheme results, published by the SLC, for 2007/08 are shown below.

- The number of students receiving support in Wales was 50,600.
- 25,300 Welsh domiciled students and EU Students studying in Wales, applying under the 2006/07 entry regulations, took out a tuition fee loan at an average of £1,740 per student. The average was £1,190 for those studying in Wales and £2,930 for those studying in England.
- 24,100 students qualified under the 2006/07 regulations for the new tuition fee grant, at an average of £1,780 per student.
- The average income contingent maintenance loan was £3,430. The average loan for those who entered in 2006/07 or 2007/08 was £3,300. This was lower than the average for those who entered prior to 2006/07 (£3,670).

- In 2007/08, the proportion of HE students who were assessed to receive full fee support was 39 per cent; in addition, 13 per cent received partial fee support, and 48 per cent (including those who opted out of income-assessment) received nil fee support.

In 2006/07:

- 81 per cent of eligible students took out a maintenance loan.

## 7 Student income and expenditure

This section presents some summary results for Welsh domiciled students from the 2007/08 [Student Income and Expenditure Survey \(SIES\)](#).

The 2007/08 survey was jointly commissioned by the Welsh Government and the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills and was conducted in partnership by the National Centre for Social Research and the Institute for Employment Studies.

The survey covered both full-time and part-time students at HEIs participating in undergraduate courses during the 2007/08 academic year. Ten HEIs in Wales participated in the study, plus the Open University.

### ***Income***

The average total income for full-time students during the 2007/08 academic year was £10,065. Part-time students received around 16 per cent more, on average, at £11,710, mainly attributable to their higher earnings from paid work during the academic year. Full-time students relied much more heavily on income from the sources of student funding support.

Maintenance loans and tuition fee loans were the most important source of income for full-time students, contributing 34 per cent of total average income. However, it should be noted that income from tuition fee loans is paid direct to the institutions rather than to the individual student.

The Assembly Learning Grant (ALG) was an important source of student support in Wales, although levels, thresholds and eligibility differ between students under the old and new systems.

Just over half of all full-time students did some form of paid work during term-time (52 per cent). Working was most common among students who lived at home with their parents during term-time, and women.

### ***Expenditure***

The average (mean) total expenditure of full-time Welsh-domiciled students in 2007/08 was £12,430. The average total expenditure of part-time students was £14,644, 18 per cent higher than their full-time counterparts.

Living costs constituted the largest category of expenditure (55 per cent of expenditure for full-time students and 64 per cent for part-time students).

Life stage had a strong influence on expenditure for both full- and part-time students, with spending highest amongst students in families with children. Full-time students under the new system of student finance arrangements (including 'top up' fees) had higher participation costs, and higher spending overall, although once other factors such as family type were taken into account, the difference was not significant. Whether they



started their course before or after 2006/07 was not associated with differences in expenditure for part-time students.

Eight per cent of full-time students and 33 per cent of part-time students were parents who lived with their children; among these, full-time students spent £2,415 and part-time students spent £1,693 on child related costs.

### ***Borrowing***

Levels of borrowing among full-time students were approximately two and a half times higher than among part-time students, averaging £8,222. Full-time students were considerably more likely to borrow money (91 per cent had some form of borrowing compared with 57 per cent of part-time students). Full-time students' borrowing was predominantly made up of student loans (£7,206 out of £8,284). However, some full-time students had borrowed from commercial or 'higher cost' sources such as commercial credit companies (20 per cent) and via bank overdrafts (42 per cent), and where students had made use of these sources, the average amounts involved were substantial (£2,771 and £955 respectively).

It is possible to estimate graduate debt by deducting predicted year-end savings from predicted year-end borrowings (for final year students only). This results in average anticipated debt of £7,187 for those graduating from full-time courses and £586 for those graduating from part-time ones. Thus net debt levels of full-time graduates are much higher than part-time graduates.

Approximately 3 in 10 students had considered dropping out of their university course at some point (29 per cent of full-timers and 33 per cent of part-timers). Among full-time students the most common reason for considering leaving was financial difficulties. Despite concerns over finance, the vast majority (92 per cent for both full-time and part-time) of students had not fallen into arrears on any key payments such as credit card bills, utility bills or rent.

## 8 Staffing and financing of Welsh HEIs

Information about the financing and staffing of HEIs are collected by HESA from each higher education institution throughout the UK. This section focuses on the financing and staffing of higher education institutions in Wales. Data are taken from [Staff and Finance of Welsh Higher Education Institutions, 2007/08](#).

### **Staffing at higher education institutions**

Results for 2007/08:

- There were 19,315 staff at Welsh HEIs. Less than half were recorded as academic professionals. There were 10,475 non-academic staff employed by Welsh HEIs including library assistants, clerks or general administrative assistants, secretaries, typists, receptionists and non-academic professionals.
- Cardiff University employed most staff (5,880), more than double the next largest - the University of Glamorgan (2,855). Section 2 of this paper shows that these two universities also had the largest number of students.
- Just over a half of all staff were female. However, in academic posts only 4 in 10 were female compared with 6 in 10 of non-academic staff. Furthermore, around two thirds of part-time staff were female.

### **Financing of higher education institutions**

Higher education institutions receive income from a number of sources. These include central funding council grants, tuition fees, research grants, contracts and other operating income, for example, European overseas sources and endowment income.

In Wales, the funding grant is administered by the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW). The Welsh Government provides HEFCW with an overall annual budget which consists of recurrent funding, capital funding and exceptional funding (e.g. [Reaching Higher](#) funds). The majority of HEFCW funding is allocated by formulae and distributed as block grants to higher education institutions.

In 2007/08, the total income of Welsh HEIs was £1,090 million. *Funding council grants* accounted for 38 per cent of income (£419m), 26 per cent came from *tuition fees and education grants and contracts* (£287m) and *other income* (£224m) accounted for 21 per cent of HEI income. *Other income* includes the income not accounted for in other categories, for example income in respect of services rendered to outside bodies.

Total expenditure by Welsh HEIs was £1,061 million, around £85 million more than in 2006/07. Staff costs accounted for 60 per cent of expenditure (£633m).

## 9 Quality of academic research

The quality of research taking place in HEIs across the UK is assessed periodically through the [Research Assessment Exercise](#) (RAE). The exercise is conducted jointly by the UK funding bodies in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The four funding bodies use the RAE results when deciding how to allocate over £1.5 billion in the UK for research purposes. The most recent RAE was carried out in 2008.

Any HEI in the UK that is eligible to receive research funding from one of the funding bodies was eligible to participate in the 2008 RAE.

The RAE was carried out through a process of peer review by panels of experts mainly from the academic community, but also including representatives of industry and commerce, covering different subject areas. Research was allocated to one of a number of units of assessment (UoA), which are discipline based (e.g. Philosophy, Chemistry, History). HEIs were invited to submit research outputs and other material for assessment in 67 units of assessment.

The panels awarded a quality rating according to the level to which they judged that the research reached defined quality levels, shown below.

- 4\* – Quality that is world-leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
- 3\* – Quality that is internationally excellent in terms of originality, significance and rigour, but which nevertheless falls short of the highest standards of excellence.
- 2\* – Quality that is recognised internationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
- 1\* - Quality that is recognised nationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
- Unclassified – Quality that falls below the standard of nationally recognised work. Or work which does not meet the published definition of research for the assessment.

The 2008 RAE results show that 14 per cent of all research activity submitted by Welsh institutions was judged to be ‘world-leading’, with a further 35 per cent assessed as ‘internationally excellent’. For the UK as a whole, the equivalent figures were 17 per cent and 37 per cent. This is shown in table 5.

**Table 5: Overall quality profiles for the UK and constituent countries, 2008 RAE**

Quality level	Percentage of research activity				
	Wales	England	Scotland	Northern Ireland	UK
4*	14	18	15	14	17
3*	35	37	37	36	37
2*	36	32	34	37	33
1*	14	11	13	12	11
Unclassified	1	1	2	1	1

Source: [HEFCW](#)

## 10 Comparison of funding in Wales and England

In recent years the Welsh Government has asked the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) to consider how the funding of the higher education sector in Wales compares with the funding received by comparable institutions in the rest of the UK. Consequently, HEFCW have published reports which aim to provide an estimate of the shortfall in funding that is believed to exist for Wales, in comparison with England.

In their reports HEFCW acknowledge that calculating the extent of a funding gap is a complex issue and they are not able to provide a single estimate of the amount of the shortfall, with many caveats accompanying the calculations. For example, HEFCW use numbers of fundable full-time equivalents (FTEs) for the analysis. Calculating numbers of FTEs which are comparable across different countries of the UK is not straight forward and requires some estimation. Quite small errors in the numbers of FTEs can have a large impact on the estimates of the shortfall in funding.

Some of the findings from the 2006/07 report<sup>5</sup> include:

- It is estimated the funding gap with England for 2006/07 was £55-£66 million. This is a slight decrease compared with the gap estimated for 2005/06 (estimated to be £70million).
- There was an increase in the grant in aid (GIA) per fundable full-time equivalent in Wales compared to England. To close the gap with England, at this rate of change, would take at least 10 years.
- Around a half (51 per cent) of the funding gap with England related to capital. This has increased from academic year 2005/06 when it accounted for 40 per cent of the funding gap.
- In 2006/07, the HE sector in Wales continued to have lower income on the measures monitored (HE grant, teaching grant, all grant plus fees and all income) than England and Scotland.

In 2008 the Welsh Affairs Committee published a report on the cross-border provision of further and higher education in Wales<sup>6</sup> which suggested there was an investment gap, between Welsh and English colleges, of £61m in the year ending in 2006.

In response to this report a spokesperson for the Welsh Government commented<sup>7</sup>:

Evidence suggests that we spend a comparable amount per head of population as in England.

In 2008-09, we made £449m available to higher education institutions via the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales.

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<sup>5</sup> [Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, \*The Funding Gap 2006/07\*](#) [accessed 25 June 2009]

<sup>6</sup> [Welsh Affairs Committee, \*First Report of session 2008-09: Cross-border provision of public services for Wales: Further and higher education\*, HC 57, 16 January 2009, \(section 3, paragraph 62\)](#) [accessed 25 June 2009]

<sup>7</sup> ['Worries over college fund 'gap', BBC news, 16 January 2009](#) [accessed 25 June 2009]

We have also introduced a number of initiatives to increase the opportunities for funding available to higher education institutions in Wales, such as a new scheme to encourage Welsh universities to increase and expand their fundraising capacity.

## 11 Useful links and further information

The statistics presented in this paper have been taken from a number of data sources. The links below provide further information about the data sources and also contain links to further statistics and information about the higher education sector in Wales.

[Higher Education Funding Council for Wales](#)

[Higher education statistics](#) published by the Welsh Government

[Higher Education Statistics Agency](#) (HESA)

[Research Assessment Exercise](#) (RAE)

[Student Finance Wales](#)

[Student Loans Company](#) (SLC)

[Student Income and Expenditure Survey \(SIES\)](#)

List of Welsh higher education institutions (HEIs):

[Aberystwyth University](#)

[Bangor University](#)

[Cardiff University](#)

[Glyndŵr University](#)

[Swansea Metropolitan University](#)

[Swansea University](#)

[Trinity University College](#)

[University of Glamorgan](#) (incorporating [Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama](#))

[University of Wales Institute, Cardiff](#)

[University of Wales, Lampeter](#)

[University of Wales, Newport](#)

[Open University in Wales](#)

## **Annex A: Definitions**

### ***Postgraduate***

Postgraduate programmes of study are those leading to higher degrees, diplomas and certificates (including Postgraduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) and professional qualifications) and usually require that entrants are already qualified to degree level (i.e. already qualified at level 3 of the National Qualifications Framework). Higher degrees include doctorates, masters degrees and higher bachelors degrees.

### ***Undergraduate***

Undergraduate programmes of study are first degrees with or without eligibility to register to practice with a Health or Social Care or Veterinary statutory regulatory body, first degrees with qualified teacher status (QTS)/registration with the General Teaching Council (GTC), enhanced first degrees, first degrees obtained concurrently with a diploma and intercalated first degrees, Foundation Degrees, diplomas in HE with eligibility to register to practice with a Health or Social Care regulatory body, Higher National Diploma (HND), Higher National Certificate (HNC), Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE), Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE), foundation courses at HE level, NVQ/SVQ levels 4 and 5, post-degree diplomas and certificates at undergraduate level, professional qualifications at undergraduate level and other undergraduate diplomas and certificates including post-registration health and social care courses. Entrants to these programmes of study do not usually require an HE qualification.

### ***Reconfiguration of higher education institutions***

Merger of the University of Glamorgan and Merthyr College:

The merger of Merthyr College with the University of Glamorgan was finalised on the 18<sup>th</sup> May 2006. This was the first merger between a college of further education and a higher education institute in Wales, with an aim for the College to benefit from the expertise and resources of the University. The aims for the merger were the joint development of quality provision of services and facilitate a smooth transition from further education to higher education for students.

Strategic alliance between Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and the University of Glamorgan:

January 2007 saw a strategic alliance formed between the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama (RWCMD) and the University of Glamorgan. The alliance has been awarded almost £13 million Reaching Higher funding to invest in performance and rehearsal facilities and is intended to ensure a long term financial sustainability for RWCMD.

University status for North East Wales Institute:

Glyndŵr University in Wrexham gained university status in 2008. The North East Wales Institute (NEWI) became a full member of the University of Wales in 2004 and built on this to gain its own university status as Glyndŵr University.

Swansea Metropolitan University:

Swansea Metropolitan University received its university title in January 2008. It was formerly known as Swansea Institute of Higher Education.

Trinity College:

Trinity College was awarded taught degree awarding powers by the Privy Council in December 2008. This allows Trinity University College to award its own degrees as well as those of the University of Wales.

### ***National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC)***

The information on Socio-Economic Classification (SEC) is taken from the National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC). The classifications used are:

NS-SEC 1: Higher managerial and professional occupations

NS-SEC 2: Lower managerial and professional occupations

NS-SEC 3: Intermediate occupations

NS-SEC 4: Small employers and own account workers

NS-SEC 5: Lower supervisory and technical occupations

NS-SEC 6: Semi-routine occupations

NS-SEC 7: Routine occupations

### ***Disabled students***

The indicator used is the percentage of all undergraduate students who are recorded as being in receipt of disabled students' allowance (DSA). However, it should be noted that not all students who are disabled will apply for, or be eligible for, this allowance.









