



Differences in student outcomes: further characteristics

The impacts of care experience, free school meal eligibility, parental higher education, sexual orientation and socio-economic background on outcomes in higher education

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Abbreviations

| | |
|--------|---|
| DfE | Department for Education |
| ESFA | Education and Skills Funding Agency |
| HESA | Higher Education Statistics Authority |
| ILR | Individualised Learner Record |
| LGB | lesbian, gay and bisexual |
| NS-SEC | National Statistics socio-economic classification |
| OfS | Office for Students |
| ONS | Office for National Statistics |
| POLAR | Participation of local areas (an area-based measure of participation of young people in higher education) |

Summary

This ad hoc statistical report is a new and experimental release by the Office for Students (OfS). Any feedback related to this work is actively encouraged and can be sent to William Rimington at official.statistics@officeforstudents.org.uk.

1. It is well known that there are distinct patterns between successful outcomes in higher education and certain groups of students. Here we report the differences in continuation rates, rates of achieving a first or upper-second class degree (attainment rate) and rates of progression into highly skilled employment or further study at a higher level (progression rate) by care experience, free school meal eligibility, parental higher education, sexual orientation and socio-economic background. This report looks at raw, unadjusted rates of continuation, attainment and progression between different student groups. It does not look to determine the effect of different characteristics on students' outcomes after taking other factors into account.

Care experience

2. Students who are care experienced have lower continuation and attainment rates than students who were not in care. The continuation rate of care experienced entrants in 2017-18 was 5.6 percentage points lower than the continuation rate of students who have not been in care. The attainment rate of care experienced qualifiers in 2018-19 was 12.1 percentage points lower than students who were not in care. However, the progression rates of care experienced qualifiers in 2016-17 was 0.4 percentage points higher than students who were not in care.

Free school meal eligibility

3. Students who were eligible for free meals when at school have lower continuation, attainment and progression rates than students who were not. The continuation rate of entrants in 2017-18 who were eligible for free school meals was 5.4 percentage points lower than entrants who were not. The attainment rate of qualifiers in 2018-19 who were eligible for free school meals was 13.0 percentage points lower than those who were not eligible. The progression rate of qualifiers in 2016-17 who were eligible for free school meals was 4.8 percentage points lower than that of students who were not eligible.

Parental higher education

4. Continuation, attainment and progression rates are all lower for students whose parents do not have a higher education qualification. The continuation rate of entrants in 2017-18 was 3.1 percentage points lower for students whose parents do not have a higher education qualification compared to those whose parents do. The attainment rate of qualifiers in 2018-19 whose parents do not have a higher education qualification was 5.7 percentage points lower than students whose parents do. Furthermore the progression rate of qualifiers in 2016-17 whose parents do not have a higher education qualification was 2.6 percentage points lower than students whose parents do.

Sexual orientation

5. There are differences in continuation and attainment rates by different sexual orientations. The continuation rate of lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) entrants in 2017-18 was 1.1 percentage points lower than heterosexual students. The continuation rate of students who are not heterosexual or LGB was 5.6 percentage points lower than heterosexual students. The attainment rate of LGB qualifiers in 2018-19 was 2.4 percentage points higher than heterosexual students. The attainment rate of students who are not heterosexual or LGB was 6.9 percentage points lower than heterosexual students.

Socio-economic background

6. Continuation and attainment rates reduce with socio-economic background. The continuation rate of entrants in 2017-18 whose parents work in intermediate occupations¹ was 2.0 percentage points lower than students whose parents work in higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations. The attainment rate of qualifiers in 2018-19 whose parents work in intermediate occupations was 5.2 percentage points lower than students whose parents work in higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations. These differences are even larger for students whose parents work in routine and manual occupations or have never worked or are long-term unemployed.

¹ See the National Statistics Socio-economic classification for more details at www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/classificationsandstandards/otherclassifications/thenationalstatistics socioeconomicclassificationnssecbasedonsoc2010

Introduction

7. Every student has a unique experience when in higher education. However, distinct patterns and differences in outcomes exist for certain groups of students, as can be seen in our key performance measures.² For example, in 2018-19 the rate of achieving a first or upper-second class degree was 22.1 percentage points lower for black students compared to white students.³
8. The OfS reports sector-level differences in outcomes by a number of characteristics including age, disability and ethnicity.⁴ Furthermore, differences in outcomes by certain characteristics at a provider level can be seen in our access and participation data dashboard.⁵
9. This report includes differences in student outcomes by five additional characteristics not included in our access and participation sector-level summary⁶: care experience, free school meal eligibility, parental higher education, sexual orientation and socio-economic background (NS-SEC)⁷.
10. There are a number of ways of measuring student outcomes in higher education. These measures usually involve assessing the extent to which students continue their studies and how well they do in those studies. As in our access and participation data dashboard, this report includes three measures of successful outcomes in higher education:
 - **Continuation rate** – the proportion of entrants that continue their studies
 - **Attainment rate** – the proportion of qualifiers that achieve a first or upper-second class degree
 - **Progression rate** – the proportion of qualifiers that enter highly skilled employment or further higher education at a higher level approximately six months after leaving.
11. The statistics included in this report are raw continuation, attainment and progression rates as observed in the available data. We have not used weighting or statistical modelling in their calculation to account for other student characteristics that can impact these rates.

² See our participation performance measures: www.officeforstudents.org.uk/about/measures-of-our-success/participation-performance-measures/.

³ See our key performance measure 4: www.officeforstudents.org.uk/about/measures-of-our-success/participation-performance-measures/gap-in-degree-outcomes-1sts-or-21s-between-white-students-and-black-students/.

⁴ See our report 'Access and participation resources. Findings from the data: sector summary', at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/access-and-participation-data-dashboard/guide-to-the-data-and-its-findings/findings-from-the-data/.

⁵ See www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/access-and-participation-data-dashboard/.

⁶ See footnote 4.

⁷ For full details of the National Statistics Socio-economic classification see www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/classificationsandstandards/otherclassifications/thenationalstatistics socioeconomicclassificationnssecbasedonsoc2010

12. Throughout this report we have included rates and differences in rates rounded to 1 decimal place. Some of these characteristics apply to small populations and we have not performed significance or sensitivity analysis on the raw rates included here. Small differences in rates may not represent statistically significant differences in outcomes for students with those characteristics. Also note the differences in rates were calculated using unrounded rates. As such, the value of the differences can be 0.1 percentage point higher or lower than the difference between the rounded rates included in this report.
13. Identifying differences in outcomes is a key part of the OfS approach to access and participation and allows the OfS and higher education providers to make targeted decisions to reduce and remove these differences.⁸
14. This investigation of differences in outcomes by these further characteristics allows us to develop a greater understanding of the student experience. In the future we plan to include additional student characteristics in our investigations and to use statistical modelling to determine how these different characteristics interact to impact a student's time in higher education.

⁸ See the report 'Transforming opportunity in higher education' at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/transforming-opportunity-in-higher-education/.

Differences in student outcomes: further characteristics

15. This report includes the differences in continuation and attainment rates by the following student characteristics:
- Care experience** – whether a student was in care prior to entering higher education.⁹
 - Free school meal eligibility** – whether a student was ever recorded as eligible for free school meals in the six years prior to key stage 4.¹⁰
 - Parental higher education** – whether one or more of a student’s parents have a higher education qualification.¹¹ Attending higher education when your parents did not is sometimes referred to as being the ‘first in family’.
 - Sexual orientation** – a student’s sexual orientation, based on their own self-assessment.¹²
 - Socio-economic background** – the background of a student, based on the occupation of their parent, step-parent or guardian who earns the most, which is used to assign them to a National Statistics socio-economic classification (NS-SEC) group.¹³
16. Differences in progression rates are also included for care experience, free school meal eligibility and parental higher education but these are not included for sexual orientation and socio-economic background due to data availability.
17. Our judgement about the suitability of this data for publication has been informed by a data quality framework that we have developed to aid decision-making regarding the quality of student characteristic data. The framework combines quantitative and qualitative methods, full details of which can be found in Annex A.¹⁴
18. Details of how the data quality framework is applied, as well as more detail of the student populations and the differences calculated can be found in the annexes associated with each

⁹ Data reported by HESA – see <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c19051/a/careleaver>.

¹⁰ Data produced by the DfE as part of the National Pupil Database (NPD) – see <https://find-npd-data.education.gov.uk/en/concepts/d7f8e8e0-6fa7-4aa2-a963-265267c2bed4>. The DfE does not accept responsibility for any inferences or conclusions derived from the NPD data by third parties.

¹¹ Data reported by HESA – see <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c19051/a/pared>.

¹² Data reported by HESA – see <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c19051/a/sexort>.

¹³ Data reported by HESA – see <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c19051/a/sec>.

¹⁴ Annex A: Data quality framework – a method for assessing the quality of student characteristic data. Available alongside this report at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/differences-in-student-outcomes-further-characteristics/.

characteristic.¹⁵ The data file associated with this release contains the counts, rates and differences calculated for the characteristics and the data used to produce the charts found throughout this report.

19. In addition to the five characteristics included in this report, we investigated data on gender identity¹⁶ and religion or belief.¹⁷ However, these two characteristics did not meet the standards in the data quality framework and differences in outcomes by these characteristics are not included in this report.
20. With the exception of free school meal eligibility, the statistics in this report apply to UK-domiciled, full-time, undergraduate students. The free school meal eligibility statistics apply to England-domiciled, full-time, undergraduate students. Further detail of student populations used to calculate these statistics can be found in Annexes B-F.
21. The data on free school meal eligibility is produced by the Department for Education (DfE) as part of the National Pupil Database and was linked onto data from the Education and Skills Funding Agency's (ESFA's) Individualised Learner Record (ILR) and the Higher Education Statistics Authority's (HESA's) student record and student alternative record. The other characteristics included in this report all relate to students found on the HESA student record.
22. Student outcome populations and outcome definitions follow our access and participation data algorithms.¹⁸
23. Throughout this report attainment and progression rates are included for students three years after the year of entrance for which the data is usable; for example, if our framework determines data is usable for 2014-15 entrants then we include attainment and progression rates for students who qualified in 2016-17. However, it is worth noting that the first year of attainment and progression data does not include students that completed their qualification in four years. Given that undergraduate with postgraduate component qualifications typically take four years to complete and have a much higher attainment rate than first degrees¹⁹, any difference recorded between the first and second year of data will in part result from these additional students being included in the population. See Annexes B-F for more details.
24. We will be investigating data that is available on student estrangement, household residual income and children from military families in the near future.

¹⁵ Annexes B-F: each of the five characteristics has a detailed annex detailing the differences in outcomes, how they were calculated and how the data quality was assessed. Available alongside this report at <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/differences-in-student-outcomes-further-characteristics/>.

¹⁶ Data reported by HESA – see <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c19051/a/genderid>.

¹⁷ Data reported by HESA – see <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c19051/a/relblf>.

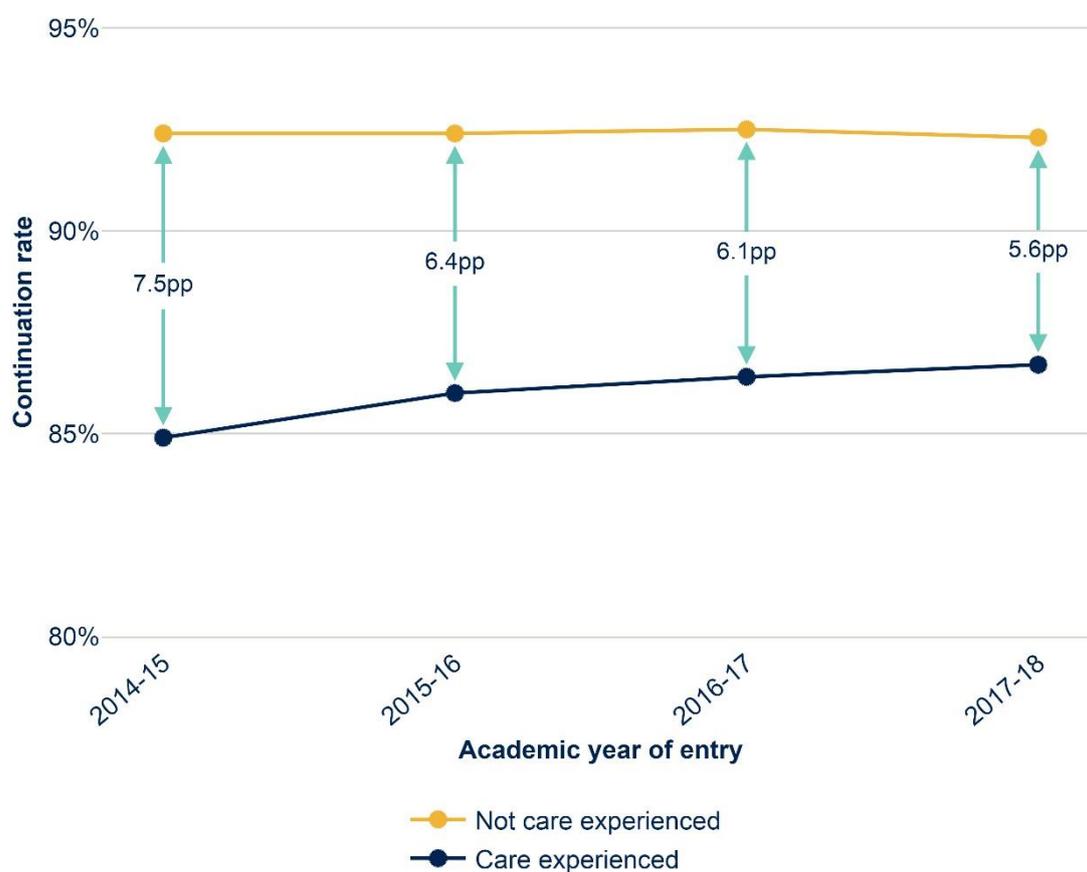
¹⁸ See our document 'Technical algorithms for institutional performance measures. Regulatory indicators, methodology and rebuild descriptions' at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/institutional-performance-measures/technical-documentation/.

¹⁹ See www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/access-and-participation-data-dashboard/.

Care experience

25. A recent DfE report shows that access to higher education is much lower for young people who have been in care. In 2017-18 only 12 per cent of pupils who were looked after continuously for 12 months or more entered higher education compared to 42 per cent of all other pupils.²⁰
26. Not only do students who have been in care prior to entering higher education have reduced access, they also have lower outcomes. The data presented here shows continuation and attainment rates are both considerably reduced for students who were in care prior to entering higher education compared to those who were not.
27. Care experienced entrants in 2017-18 had a continuation rate 5.6 percentage points lower than the continuation rate of students who have not been in care (see Figure 1). The continuation rates of students who have not been in care have changed little between 2014-15 and 2017-18 but during this time the continuation rates of care experienced students increased. This means the difference in continuation rates has been shrinking.

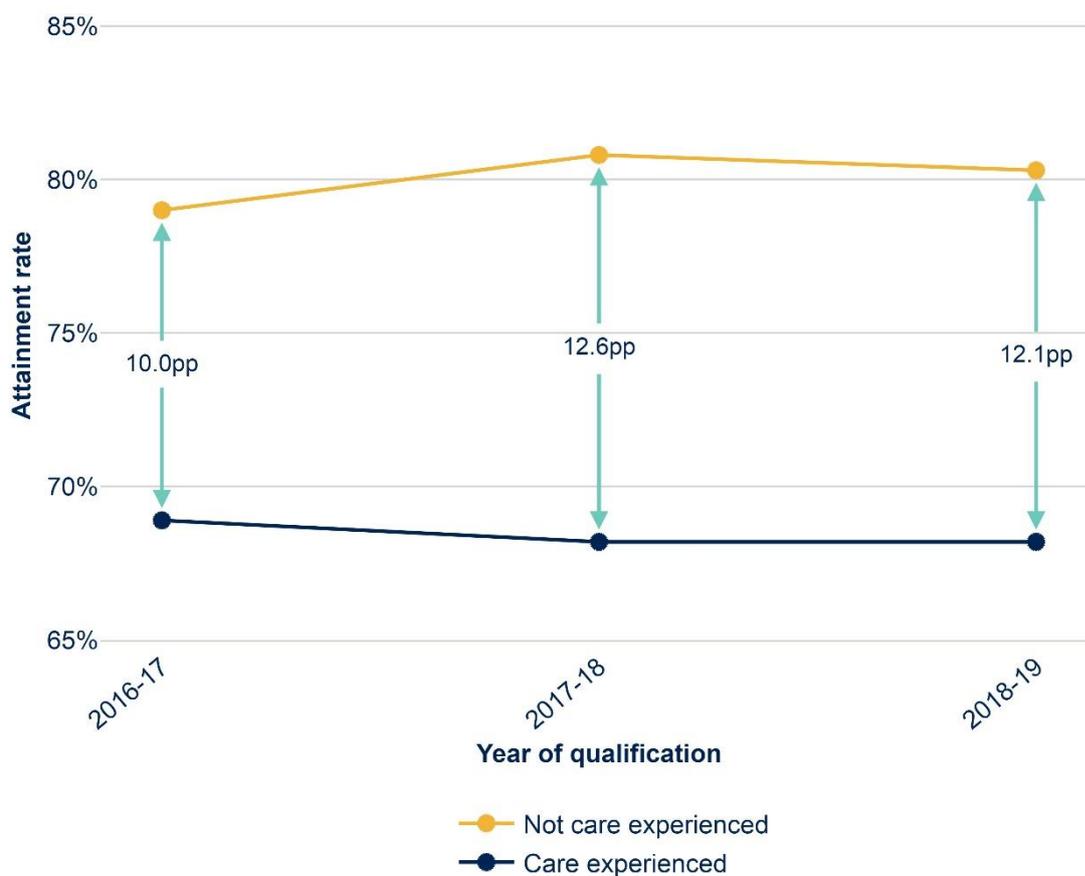
Figure 1: The differences in continuation rate by care experience for full-time, UK-domiciled, undergraduate students



²⁰ See DfE report 'Widening participation in higher education: 2019' at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/widening-participation-in-higher-education-2019>.

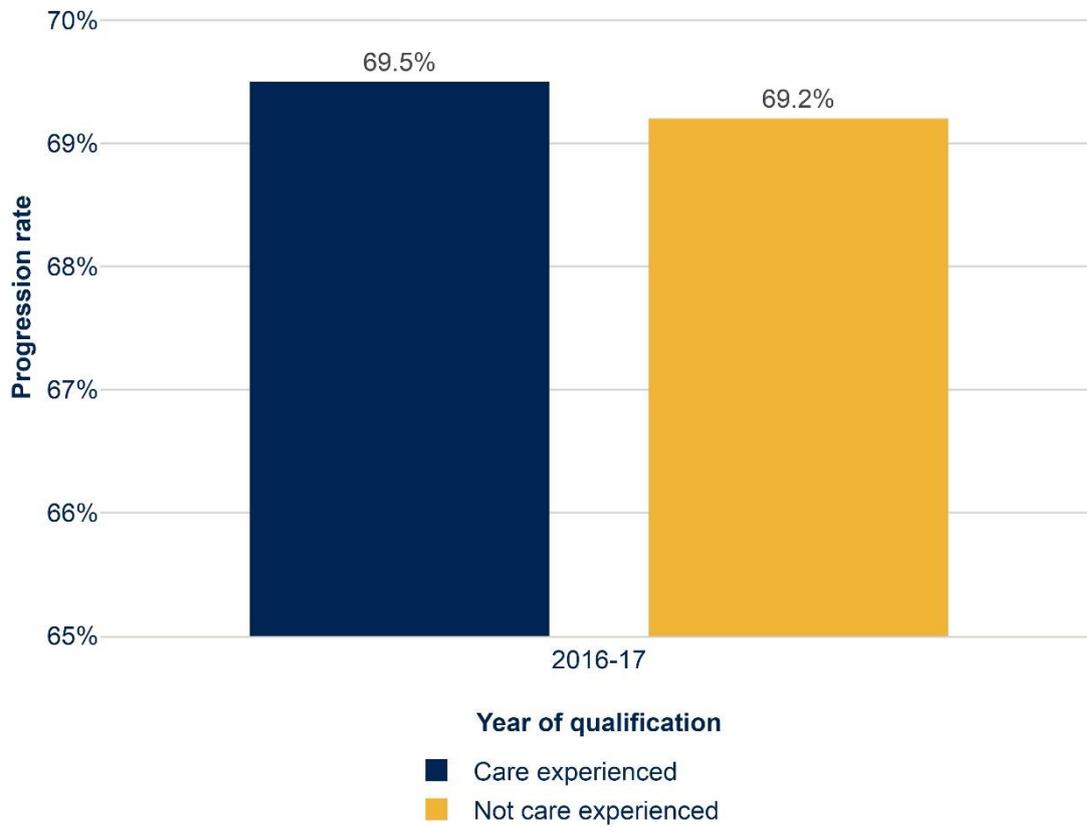
28. Care experienced students have a lower rate of achieving a first or upper-second class degree when compared to students who have not been in care (see Figure 2). The attainment rate of care experienced qualifiers in 2018-19 was 12.1 percentage points lower than the attainment rate of students who have not been in care. Attainment rates between 2017-18 and 2018-19 remained the same for care experienced students but dropped slightly for students who were not in care. As such the difference in attainment reduced slightly.

Figure 2: The differences in rates of achieving a first or upper-second class degree by care experience for full-time, UK-domiciled, first degree and undergraduate with postgraduate components students



29. The rate of progression into highly skilled employment or further study at a higher level was 0.4 percentage points higher for care experienced qualifiers in 2016-17 compared to students that were not in care (see Figure 3). Further investigation is required to determine the extent to which this reflects progression rates for care experienced students; the caveats associated with this progression data can be found in Annex B.

Figure 3: The difference in students progressing into highly skilled employment or further study at a higher level by care experience for full-time, UK-domiciled, undergraduate qualifiers



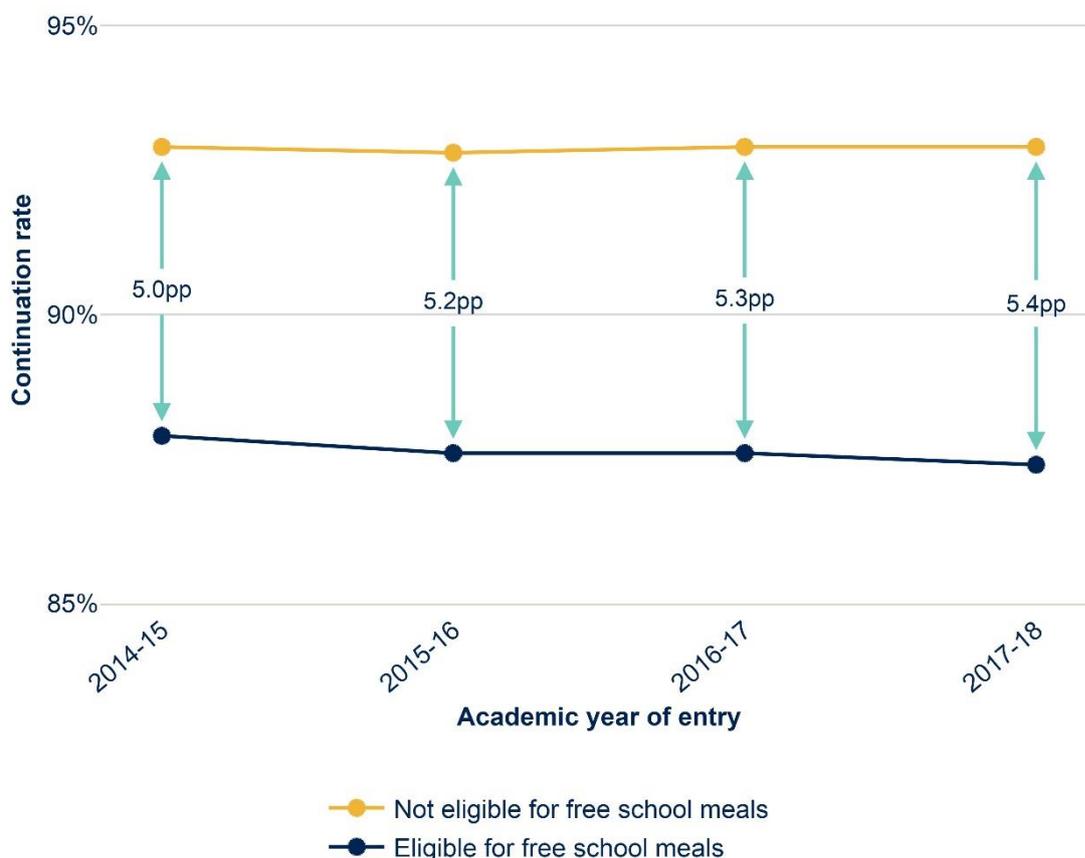
Free school meal eligibility

30. Students who received free meals when at school are less likely to enter higher education than students that did not. The DfE has reported that only 26.3 per cent of state-funded and special school pupils who received free school meals at age 15 entered higher education by age 19 by 2017-18 compared to 44.9 per cent of students who did not receive free school meals.²¹
31. Free school meal eligibility is highly correlated with other measures of disadvantage. For example, 3 in 10 pupils who are eligible to receive free school meals live in a POLAR4 quintile 1 neighbourhood whereas 1 in 10 live in a POLAR4 quintile 5 neighbourhood²².
32. Students who were eligible for free meals when at school have worse outcomes in higher education than students who were not eligible. The data presented here shows continuation, attainment and progression rates are all lower for students that were eligible to receive free school meals.
33. Unlike the rest of the characteristics in this report, these free school meal eligibility statistics apply to England-domiciled students rather than UK-domiciled. This is because the National Pupil Database (where this data was obtained) only contains data on schools in England. These statistics also apply to students who attended a state-funded mainstream school and were under 21 when they began their qualification. Furthermore it should be noted that this data is a record of students' free meal eligibility when they were at school and does not rely on students self-declaring their eligibility.
34. The continuation rate of entrants in 2017-18 who were eligible to receive free meals whilst at school was 5.4 percentage points lower than those who were not (see Figure 4). Between 2014-15 and 2017-18, this difference in continuation has grown – this is as a result of the continuation rates of students eligible to receive free school meals dropping, while the continuation rates of students who were not eligible have been stable.

²¹See DfE report 'Widening participation in higher education: 2019' at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/widening-participation-in-higher-education-2019>.

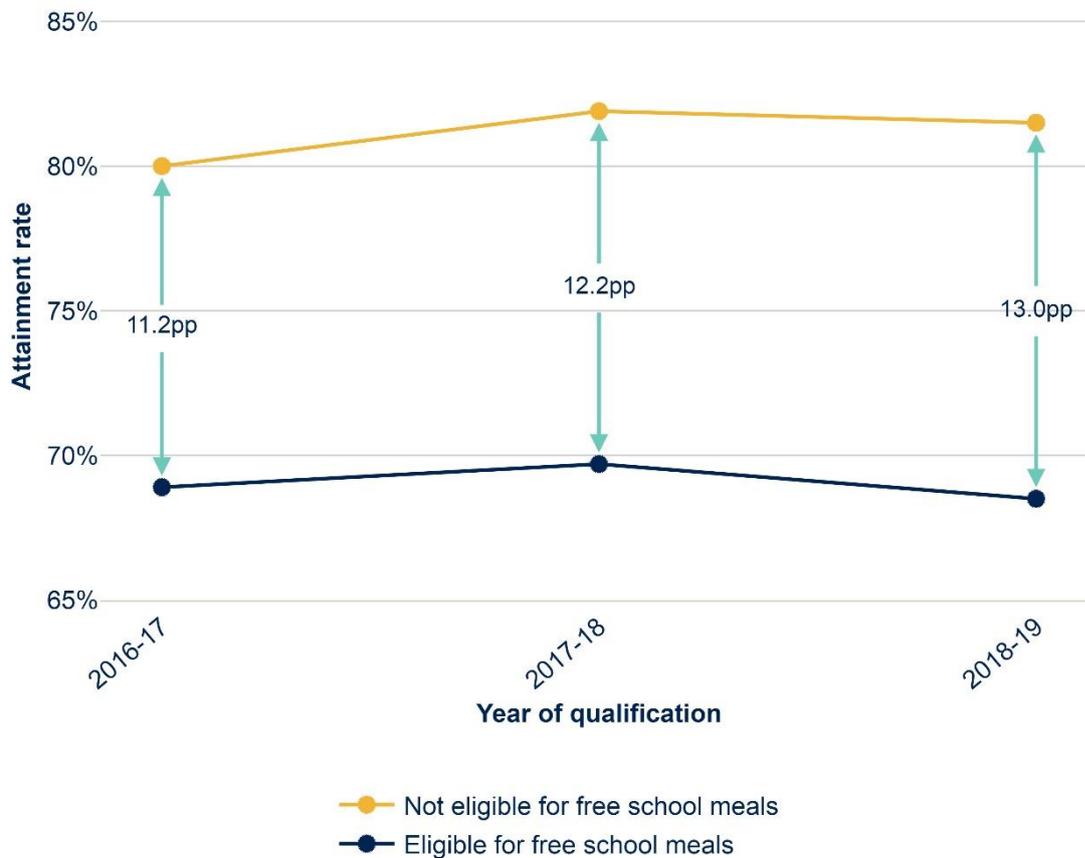
²² POLAR4 is an area-based measure of young participation in higher education. Quintile 1 represents the lowest level of participation; quintile 5 the highest. See www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/young-participation-by-area/about-the-data/.

Figure 4: The differences in continuation rate by free school meal eligibility for full-time, England-domiciled, undergraduate students



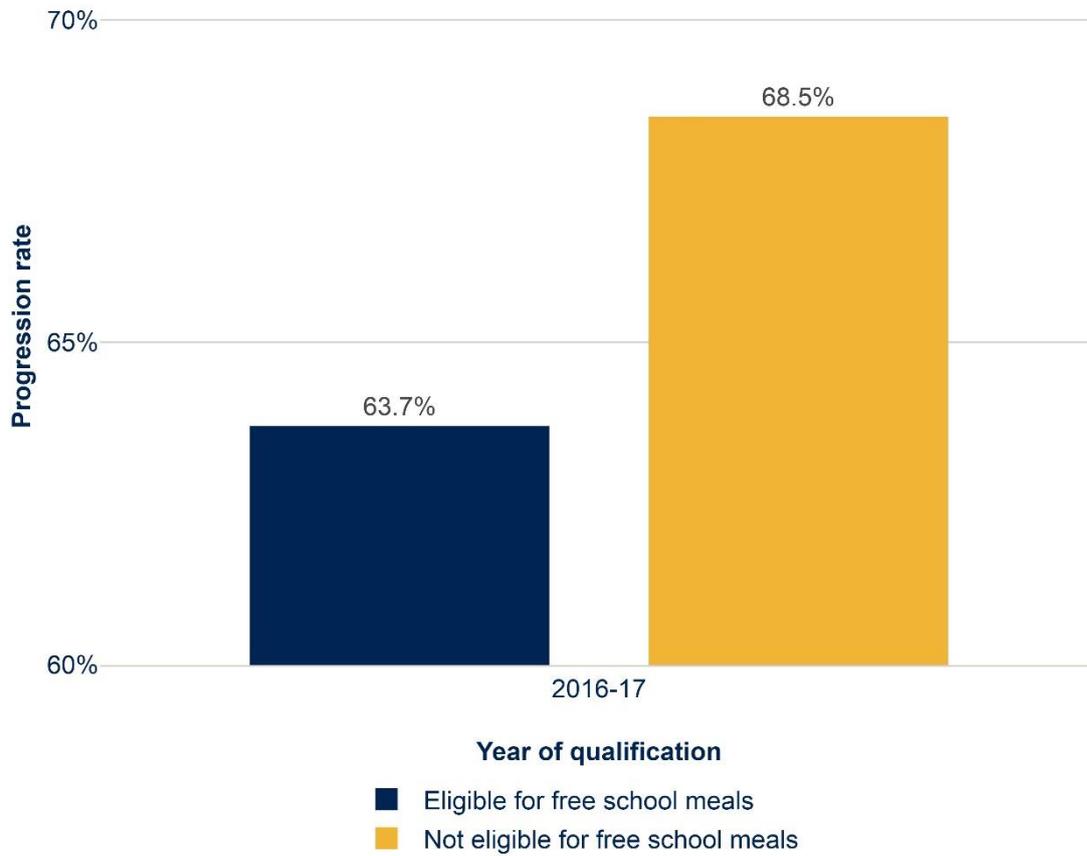
35. Students who were eligible to receive free meals when at school have a lower rate of achieving a first or upper-second class degree than students who were not eligible (see Figure 5). The attainment rate of qualifiers in 2018-19 who were eligible to receive free school meals was 13.0 percentage points lower than those who were not. Attainment rates dropped between 2017-18 and 2018-19 regardless of free school meal eligibility but the attainment rate of students who were eligible dropped by a greater extent. As such, the difference in attainment increased by 0.8 percentage points during this time.

Figure 5: The differences in rates of achieving a first or upper-second class degree by free school meal eligibility for full-time, England-domiciled, first degree and undergraduate with postgraduate components students



36. For qualifiers in 2016-17 the rate of progression into highly skilled employment or further study at a higher level was 4.8 percentage points lower for students who were eligible to receive free school meals compared to students who were not eligible (see Figure 6). Further investigation is required to determine the extent to which this reflects differences in progression by free school meal eligibility; the caveats associated with this progression data can be found in Annex C.

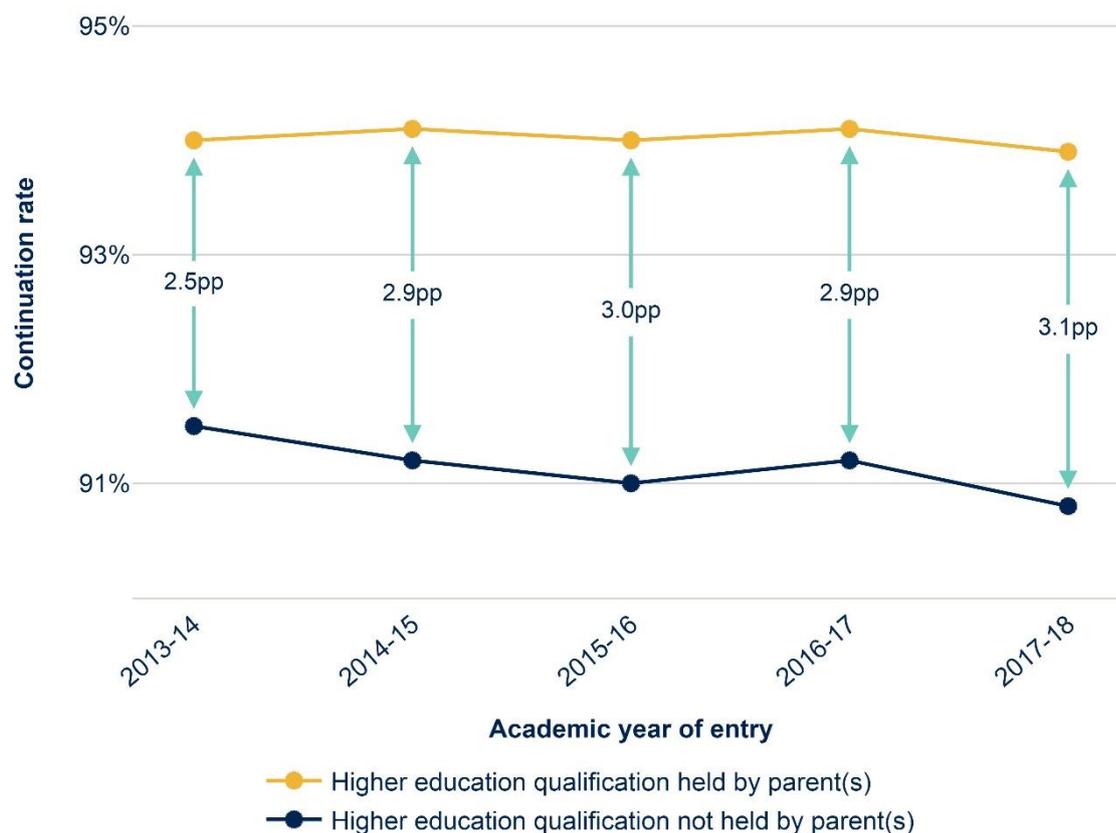
Figure 6: The difference in students progressing into highly skilled employment or further study at a higher level by free school meal eligibility for full-time, England-domiciled, undergraduate qualifiers



Parental higher education

37. Attending higher education when your parents did not is seen as a marker of social mobility and improved access and participation.²³ The proportion of full-time, UK-domiciled, undergraduate entrants who have a parent with a higher education qualification (45.1 per cent in 2018-19) is similar to the proportion who do not (44.7 per cent in 2018-19).²⁴
38. Continuation, attainment and progression rates are all lower for students whose parents do not have a higher education qualification compared to students whose parents do.
39. The continuation rate of entrants in 2017-18 whose parents do not have a higher education qualification was 3.1 percentage points lower than the continuation rate of students whose parents have a higher education qualification (see Figure 7). The continuation rates of students whose parents do not have a higher education qualification dropped between 2013-14 and 2017-18, whereas the continuation rate of students whose parents have a higher education qualification remained stable during this time. As such this difference in continuation has slowly increased.

Figure 7: The differences in continuation rate by parental higher education for full-time, UK-domiciled, undergraduate students

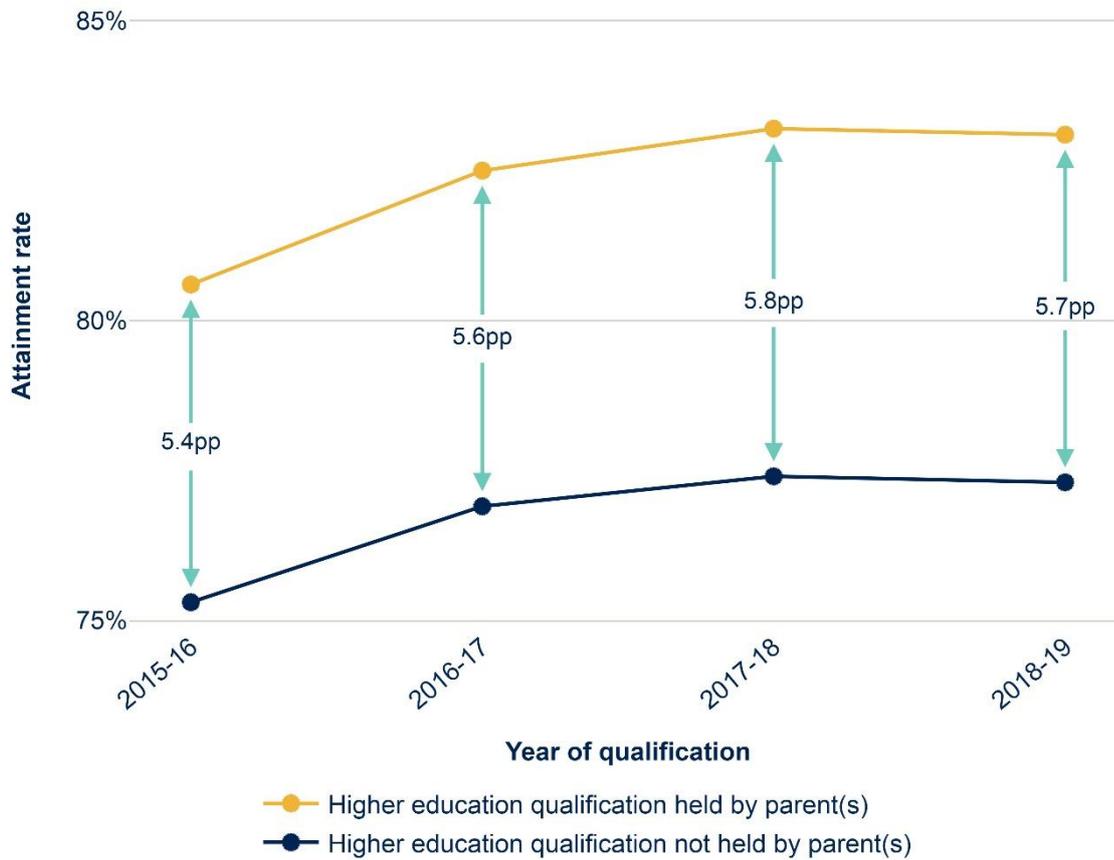


²³ See report 'Unlocking talent, fulfilling potential. A plan for improving social mobility through education' at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/improving-social-mobility-through-education>.

²⁴ These values can be found on our equality and diversity webpages at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/equality-and-diversity/.

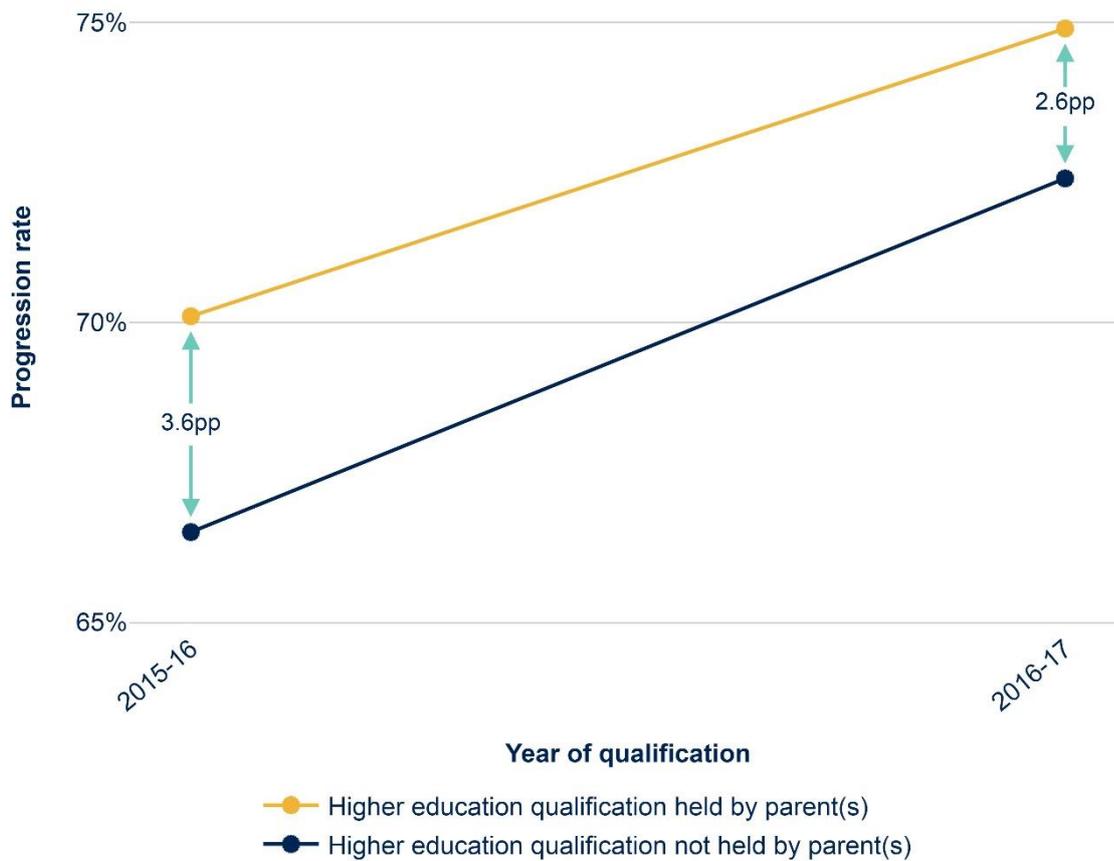
40. Students whose parents do not have a higher education qualification have a lower rate of achieving a first or upper-second class degree than students whose parents do (see Figure 8). The attainment rate of qualifiers in 2018-19 whose parents do not have higher education qualification was 5.7 percentage points lower than that of students whose parents have a higher education qualification. This difference in attainment rate has been relatively stable.

Figure 8: The differences in rates of achieving a first or upper-second class degree by parental higher education for full-time, UK-domiciled, first degree and undergraduate with postgraduate components students



41. Students whose parents do not have a higher education qualification have a lower rate of progressing into highly skilled employment or further study at a higher level when compared to students whose parents do (see Figure 9). The progression rate of qualifiers in 2016-17 whose parents do not have higher education qualification was 2.6 percentage points lower than students whose parents do. The data for 2016-17 qualifiers is more representative of the student population than the data for 2015-16 and this data should not be interpreted as showing that this gap is rapidly reducing. Further details can be found in Annex D.

Figure 9: The differences in students progressing into highly skilled employment or further study at a higher level by parental higher education for full-time, UK-domiciled, undergraduate qualifiers



Sexual orientation

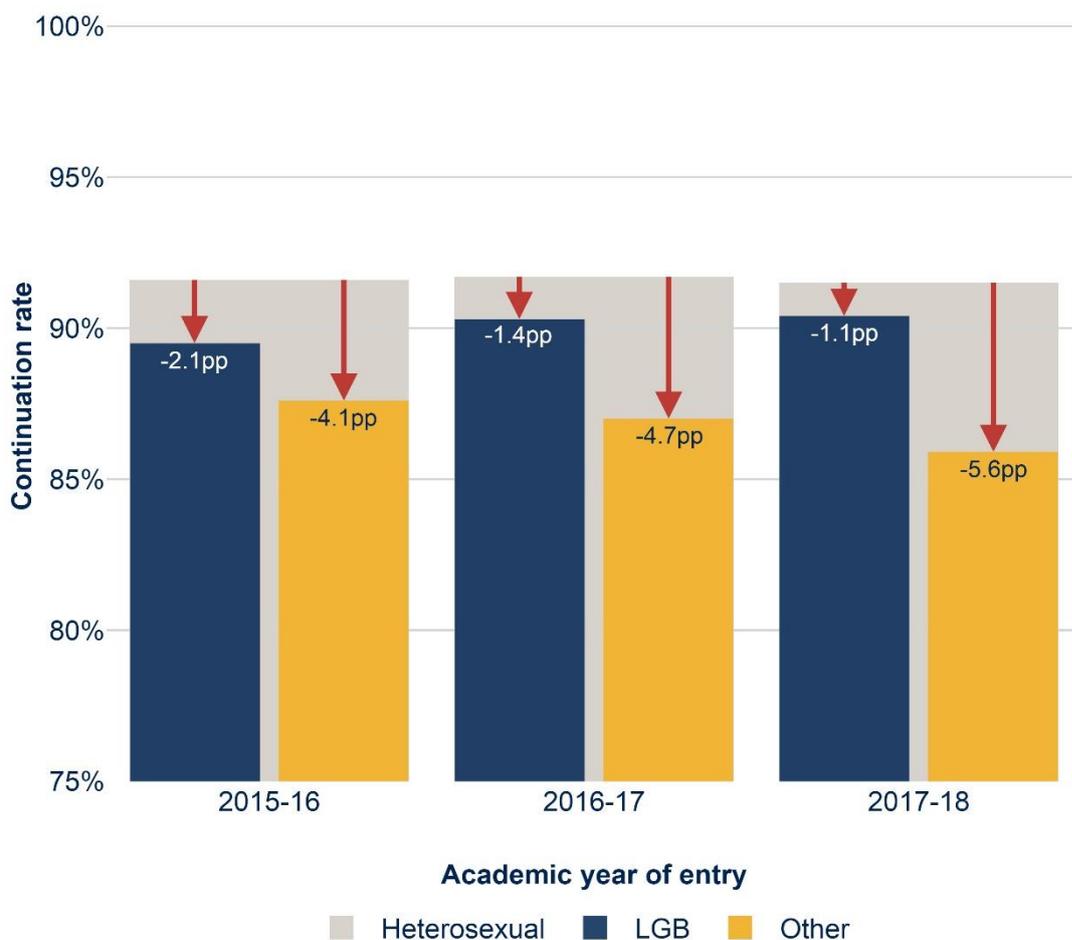
42. The proportion of students who report as being lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB)²⁵ has been increasing. In 2018-19, 6.2 per cent of full-time, UK-domiciled, undergraduate entrants reported that they are LGB. In the same year, 85.3 per cent of students reported as being heterosexual.²⁶
43. Successful outcomes in higher education vary depending on sexual orientation. The data presented here shows that continuation rates for LGB students are lower than heterosexual students but attainment rates are higher. Continuation and attainment rates for students who are not heterosexual or LGB are lower than heterosexual and LGB students (Figures 10 and 11²⁷).
44. To allow us to more effectively communicate sector-level trends we have combined data for students recorded as bisexual, gay man and gay woman/lesbian into a single group called LGB. Continuation and attainment rates of bisexual, gay man and gay woman/lesbian students can be found as separate groups in the datafile associated with this release.
45. LGB entrants in 2017-18 had a continuation rate that was 1.1 percentage points lower than heterosexual students, while students who are not heterosexual or LGB had a continuation rate that was 5.6 percentage points lower than that of heterosexual students (see Figure 10). Between 2015-16 and 2017-18 the continuation rates of heterosexual students remained stable while the continuation rates of LGB students increased and rates for students who are not heterosexual or LGB dropped. As such, the difference in continuation rates between heterosexual students and LGB students has been shrinking while the difference between heterosexual students and students who are not heterosexual or LGB has been growing.

²⁵ Trans students are not included in this group because student gender identity data is collected separately to this sexual orientation data.

²⁶ See our equality and diversity webpages at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/equality-and-diversity/.

²⁷ The style of these charts is different from the care experience, free school meal eligibility and parental higher education charts because sexual orientation has three categories rather than two.

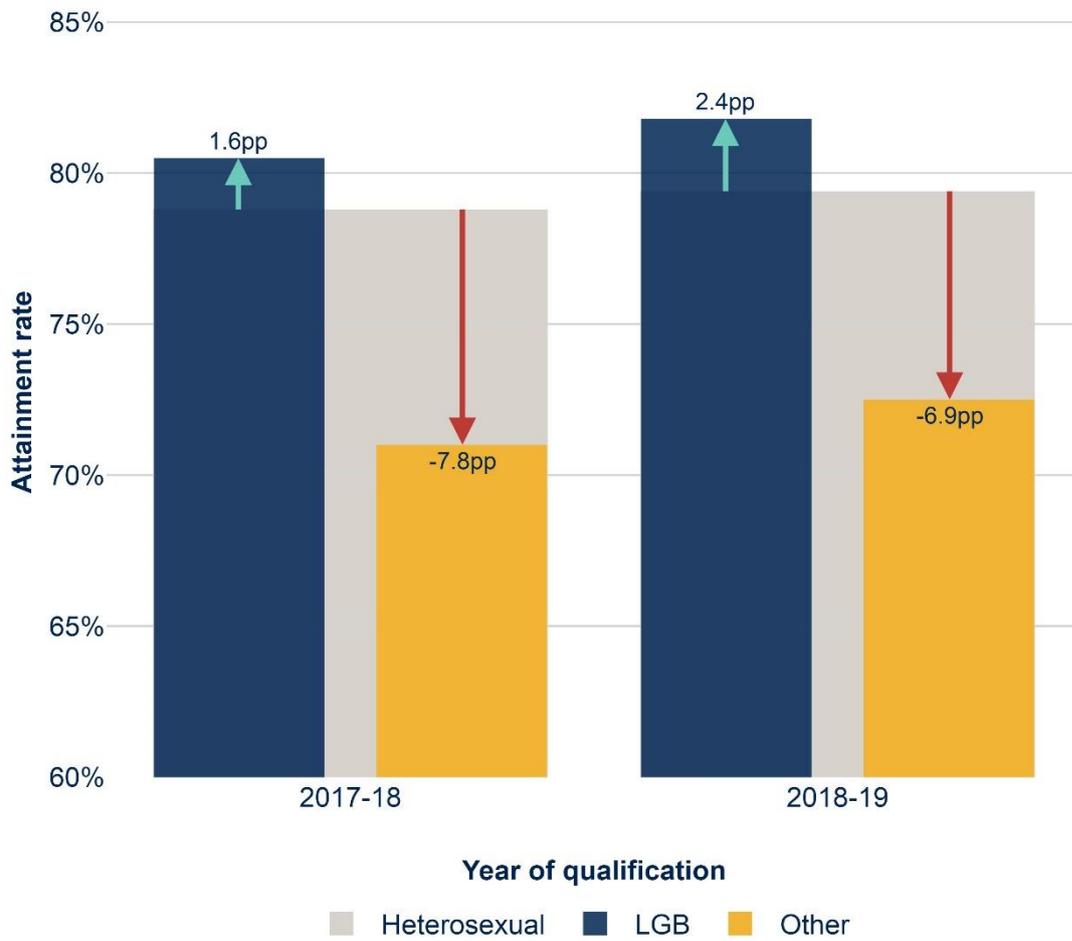
Figure 10: The differences in continuation rate by sexual orientation for full-time, UK-domiciled, undergraduate students



46. LGB students have a higher rate of achieving a first or upper-second class degree than heterosexual students (see Figure 11). However, students who are not heterosexual or LGB have a lower attainment rate when compared to heterosexual or LGB students. The attainment rate of LGB qualifiers in 2018-19 was 2.4 percentage points higher than of heterosexual students; whereas the attainment rate of students who are not heterosexual or LGB was 6.9 percentage points lower than of heterosexual students. The data for qualifiers in 2018-19 is more representative of attainment for this population of students than the data for 2017-18. The caveats associated with this data are detailed in Annex E.

47. There is insufficient data to calculate differences in progression rates by sexual orientation. This is because progression rates are based on responses to the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education survey which has been discontinued and the final year of data available relates to qualifiers in 2016-17. Robust data on qualifiers by sexual orientation is only available from 2017-18 and later. We will investigate differences in progression by sexual orientation when the HESA Graduate Outcomes survey data is available.

Figure 11: The differences in rates of achieving a first or upper-second class degree by sexual orientation for full-time, UK-domiciled, first degree and undergraduate with postgraduate components students



National Statistics socio-economic classification (socio-economic background)

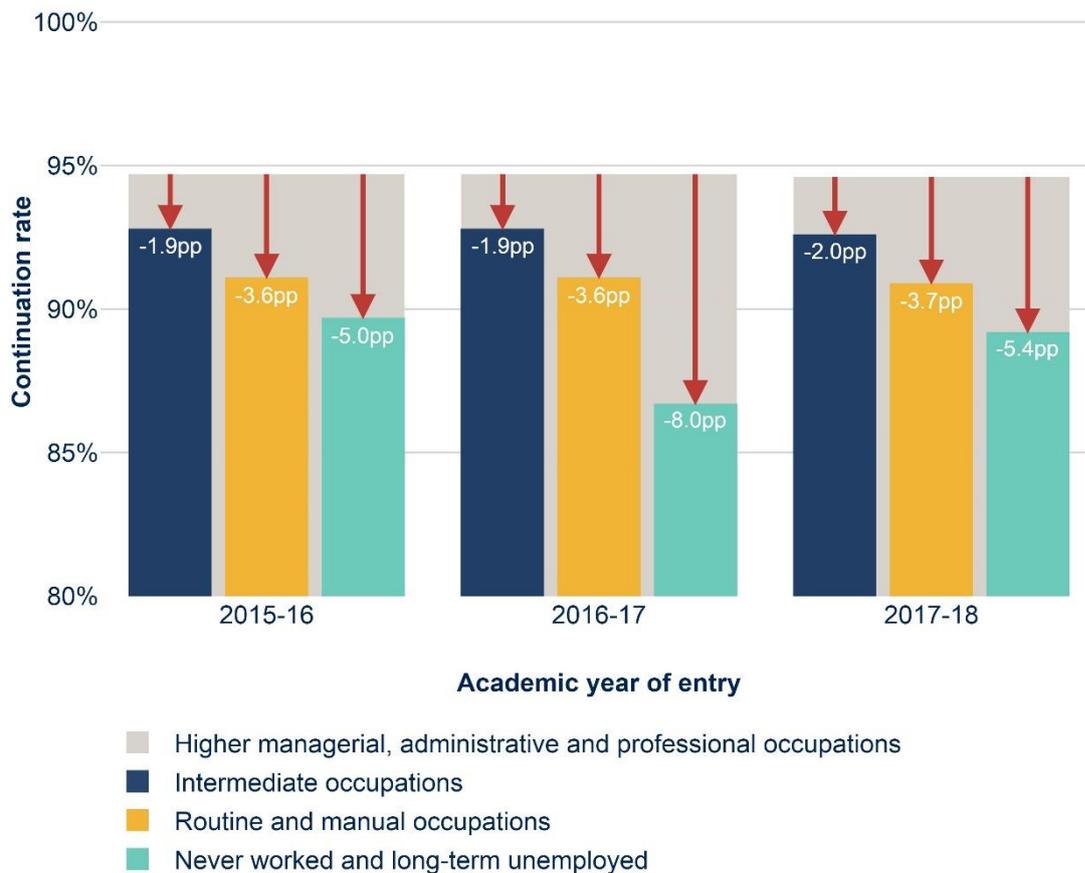
48. Access to higher education varies considerably with socio-economic background.²⁸ There are many methods of classifying socio-economic background, including the National Statistics socio-economic classification (NS-SEC) which assigns occupations to different socio-economic groups.²⁹
49. Students whose parents work in higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations consistently have the highest continuation and attainment rates, followed by students whose parents work in intermediate occupations, then students whose parents work in routine and manual occupations. Students whose parents have never worked or are long-term unemployed have the lowest rates (see Figures 12 and 13³⁰). These statistics apply to students who were under 21 when they began their qualification.
50. Entrants in 2017-18 whose parents work in intermediate occupations had a continuation rate 2.0 percentage points lower than students whose parents work in higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations. Students whose parents work in routine and manual occupations had a continuation rate that was 3.7 percentage points lower than students whose parents work in higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations. Students whose parents have never worked or are long-term unemployed had a continuation rate 5.4 percentage points lower than students whose parents work in higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations.
51. Continuation rates dropped slightly between 2015-16 and 2017-18 for all socio-economic backgrounds but this drop was larger for students whose parents do not work in higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations. As such, the differences in continuation grew between 2015-16 and 2017-18.

²⁸ See our effective practice webpage 'Low higher education participation, household income and socio-economic status': www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/evaluation-and-effective-practice/low-higher-education-participation-household-income-and-socio-economic-status/.

²⁹ See the Office for National Statistics (ONS) website for details of how NS-SEC is assigned: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/classificationsandstandards/otherclassifications/thenationalstatisticsocioeconomicclassificationnssecrebasedonsoc2010>.

³⁰ The style of these charts is different from the care experience, free school meal eligibility and parental higher education charts because socio-economic background has four categories rather than two.

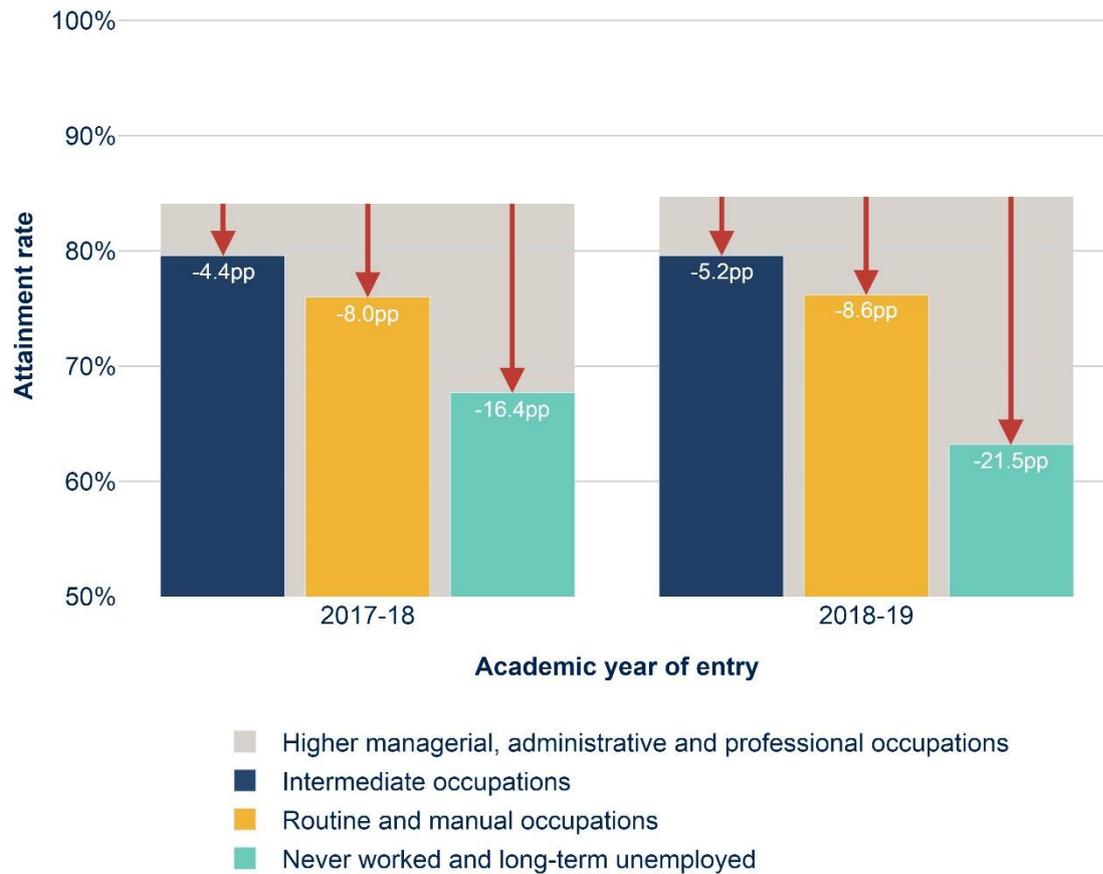
Figure 12: The differences in continuation rate by socio-economic background (NS-SEC) for full-time, UK-domiciled, undergraduate students



52. Qualifiers in 2018-19 whose parents work in intermediate occupations had an attainment rate 5.2 percentage points lower than students whose parents work in higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations. Students whose parents work in routine and manual occupations had an attainment rates that was 8.6 percentage points lower than students whose parents work in higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations. Students whose parents have never worked or are long-term unemployed had an attainment rate 21.5 percentage points lower than students whose parents work in higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations. The data for qualifiers in 2018-19 is more representative of attainment for this population of students than the data for 2017-18. The caveats associated with this NS-SEC data can be found in Annex F.

53. There is insufficient data to calculate differences in progression rates by socio-economic background. This is because progression rates are based on responses to the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education survey which has been discontinued and the final year of data available relates to qualifiers in 2016-17. Robust data on qualifiers by socio-economic background is only available from 2017-18 and later. We will investigate differences in progression by socio-economic background when the HESA Graduate Outcomes survey data is available.

Figure 13: The differences in rates of achieving a first or upper-second class degree by socio-economic background (NS-SEC) for full-time, UK-domiciled, first degree and undergraduate with postgraduate components students





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