Applicants and entrants to higher education

- The total number of home applications via UCAS rose in each year between 1999 and 2005. There was a 4.1% drop in 2006, the first year of 'variable' fees.
- The drop in 2006 was greater than that seen in 1998 - the previous change to tuition fees. Both were preceded by relatively large increases in applications.
- There was a return to the upward trend in 2007; applicant and acceptance numbers reached new records which were exceeded in 2008, 2009 and 2011.
- Applicant numbers fell in 2012 with larger falls among those who faced fees of up to £9,000. The total was 7.6% down; accepted applicants were down by 5.5%.
- Home/EU applicant numbers bounced back somewhat in 2013 with a 3.4% rise. A record 495,000 home/overseas applicants were accepted in 2013; 6.6% above 2012.
- Applicant numbers rose again in 2014, but did not beat the 2011 level until 2015. Total acceptances reached new records in 2014 and 2015 as did the entry rates for young people overall and for those from the most 'disadvantaged' areas.
- The largest percentage increase in 2015 acceptances was among EU students at 11%. This could, in part, be connected to lifting the cap on student numbers.
- Applicants for 2016 by Mid-May were 700 (0.1%) down on the same point last year. Applicants from England fell by around 3,000, EU numbers were up by 2,700 (6%).
- These UCAS data cover full-time/sandwich undergraduate courses. As mature students are much more likely to study part-time, they are not as well covered by these data.