

Annex N Level of study

1. This annex explains how to determine a student's level of study (foundation degree, other undergraduate or postgraduate). It also explains how the undergraduate data on Table 5 are split, and how to disaggregate postgraduate students between postgraduate taught and postgraduate research.

Undergraduate

2. Undergraduates are students studying towards a first degree (including foundation degree), HE certificate, HE diploma or equivalent (or registered for an institutional HE-level credit that can be counted towards one of these qualifications). In Tables 1a, 2 and 3, undergraduate data are split between 'FD' (foundation degree) and 'UG (excl. FD)' (undergraduate excluding foundation degree). A foundation degree is a two-year, full-time HE course, or the part-time equivalent, which has been validated as a 'foundation degree' and which is expected to incorporate the core features set out in the foundation degree prospectus, HEFCE 00/27. Foundation degree bridging courses should be returned as 'UG (excl. FD)' in Table 3.

3. The undergraduate data in Table 5 are split between:

- students on HND courses
- students on sub-degree level courses excluding HNDs (such as those aiming for an HNC, DipHE or CertEd)
- students on foundation degree courses
- students on another undergraduate degree (excluding foundation degrees but including foundation degree bridging courses).

4. Where a student registers for credits (including Ufi courses) without stating a qualification aim, and where those credits may count towards either an undergraduate degree or a sub-degree qualification level, they should be counted as sub-degree level.

5. Where students have stated multiple qualification aims as part of the same instance, they should be recorded against the lower aim. For example, a student registered for an HND and a degree should be recorded as HND.

Postgraduate

6. Postgraduate students are registered for courses or credits where a normal condition of entry is that entrants are already qualified to degree level: that is, already qualified at Level 6 of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, published by the Quality Assurance Agency for HE (QAA). There are two groups: research and taught.

- a. Postgraduate research students are students whose qualification aim is a research-based higher degree. A research-based higher degree is a postgraduate programme comprising a research component (including a requirement to produce original work) which is larger than any accompanying taught component

when measured by student effort. The arrangements for assuring and maintaining the academic standards and enhancing the quality of these programmes should be fully compliant with section 1 of the QAA's code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education (postgraduate research programmes).

b. Postgraduate taught students are those who are postgraduates but do not meet the requirements to be a research student.

7. Postgraduates include those on graduate conversion courses and all PGCEs (whether Postgraduate or Professional Graduate Certificate in Education).