



Department for the
Economy

Statistical First Release

Destinations of Leavers from Northern Ireland Higher Education Institutions – 2015/16



Northern Ireland
Statistics and Research Agency

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This Statistical First Release (SFR), produced by the Department for the Economy (DfE), is based on an SFR produced by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) in collaboration with statisticians from the Department for Education, the Welsh Government the Scottish Government and DfE. It provides details of the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) who obtained qualifications at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in NI, during the academic year 2015/16. The survey was carried out approximately **6 months after graduation**. HESA's SFR will be published on the same date and time as the DfE SFR.

This SFR provides high-level figures and will be supported by a more detailed analysis due for publication on 24th August 2017.

In 2015/16, 10,540 UK and EU leavers from NI HEIs responded from the target population of 13,250; an overall response rate for NI domiciled leavers of around 79.5% (UK domiciled 80.2%; EU domiciled 68.3%).

Future Changes to the DLHE Survey

Between July 2015 and June 2017, HESA conducted a major review of destinations and outcomes data, referred to as the NewDLHE review, which drew on extensive collaboration with experts from the HE sector, Government departments and beyond.

As a result, HESA has designed a new model for collecting information about what higher education (HE) students do after graduation. This model will capture rich, robust and comprehensive data using a more efficient and future-proof methodology. Further details of the principles underpinning the model can be obtained on the HESA website.

In future, graduates will be surveyed by telephone or online approximately **15 months** after completing their studies. This timing gives graduates a more meaningful opportunity to progress in their post-graduation activities, while still being close enough to the point of completing their studies that high response rates should be achievable.

Following the completion of the review, HESA is now implementing the Graduate Outcomes collection to replace the current DLHE survey. The first wave of the new survey of graduates is planned to commence in December 2018, with the first data published in January 2020.

Destinations of Leavers from Northern Ireland Higher Education Institutions
Key Points - 2015/16

Destinations of all students from NI HEIs:

Of the 10,145 leavers from Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Northern Ireland (NI) whose destinations were known:

- 69.2% (7,020) were in UK employment, compared with 66.7% (262,860) for UK HEIs
- 6.1% (620) were in employment overseas (including Republic of Ireland), compared with 3.5% (13,845) for UK HEIs
- 5.3% (540) were in both work and further study, compared with 5.6% (22,105) for UK HEIs
- 10.4% (1,055) were in further study only, compared with 14.9% (58,825) for UK HEIs
- 3.8% (390) were engaged in other activities, compared with 4.4% (17,450) for UK HEIs; and
- 5.1% (520) were unemployed, compared with 4.9% (19,225) for UK HEIs

Destinations of All Leavers from NI HEIs - 2015/16



Destinations of full-time first degree leavers from NI HEIs:

Of the 6,455 full-time first degree leavers from HEIs in NI whose destinations were known:

- 68.6% (4,430) were in UK employment, compared with 65.2% (156,885) for UK HEIs
- 4.6% (300) were in employment overseas, compared with 2.4% (5,830) for UK HEIs
- 4.8% (315) were in both work and further study, compared with 5.2% (12,550) for UK HEIs
- 12.7% (820) were in further study only, compared with 17.4% (41,775) for UK HEIs
- 3.9% (250) were engaged in other activities, compared with 4.4% (10,590) for UK HEIs; and
- 5.3% (345) were unemployed, compared with 5.4% (13,095) for UK HEIs

STEM subject areas¹:

For Narrow STEM subject areas, 66.9% (1,160) of full-time first degree leavers from NI HEIs were in employment only (either in the UK or overseas, excluding those in both work and further study) and 7.9% (135) were unemployed; for Broad STEM subject areas, 76.1% (2,525) were in employment only (in the UK or overseas), and 5.0% (165) were unemployed.

Professional employment²:

In 2015/16, of the full-time first degree leavers from NI HEIs who were working in the UK (including those who were also doing further study), nearly three-quarters (72.3%; 3,420) were in posts classified as 'Professional Employment'.

Part-time leavers:

In 2015/16, of the 560 part-time first degree leavers from NI HEIs whose destinations were known, 69.1% (385) were in UK employment and 5.7% (30) were unemployed.

Level of study:

Of the 7,740 undergraduate leavers from NI HEIs whose destinations were known, 67.7% (5,240) were in UK employment and 4.5% (350) were employed overseas. Of the 2,400 postgraduate leavers from NI HEIs whose destinations were known, 74.0% (1,775) were in UK employment and 11.2% (270) were employed overseas.

Salary³:

In 2015/16, of those UK domiciled first degree leavers from NI HEIs reported as being in full-time paid employment in the UK, 63.6% disclosed their salary. The median salary reported (to the nearest £500) was £21,000, the lower quartile was £16,000 and the upper quartile £24,000. The mean salary was £21,000.

Location of employment:

Of the UK domiciled leavers from NI HEIs in 2015/16 whose destinations were known and reported being in employment in the UK, 92.0% (3,980) of full-time first degree leavers remained in NI to take up employment and 8.0% (345) took up employment in Great Britain. The majority (90.5%; 820) of full-time postgraduate leavers also remained in NI to take up employment, whilst 9.5% (85) went to Great Britain.

¹ See Notes and Definitions section – Points 8 & 9.

² See Notes and Definitions section – Points 10 & 11.

³ See Notes and Definitions section – Points 7 & 11.

Notes and Definitions:

Notes:

1. The statistics presented in this Statistical First Release (SFR) draw on the 2015/16 Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) record. The statistics are derived by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) from data collected from all publicly funded Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the UK (including The Open University).
2. In 2011/12, the DLHE survey was re-designed and consequently direct comparisons should not therefore be made with the figures presented before 2011/12.
3. The 2015/16 DLHE data include all those students whose study was full-time or part-time and who obtained relevant qualifications reported to HESA for the reporting period 1 August 2015 to 31 July 2016.
4. From the 2014/15 academic year onwards, DfE no longer counts Open University (OU) as a wholly English institution, but splits it between England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, depending on the location of the national centre.
5. All figures have been rounded by HESA to the nearest 5 students, in line with its rounding strategy, with 0, 1 and 2 rounded to 0.
6. The coverage of the HESA DLHE survey consists of all UK, EU and non-EU domiciled leavers for whom destinations data are expected and sought from UK HEIs in 2015/16. Non-EU leavers were added to the target population from 2011/12 and from 2013/14 a target response rate of 20% was set for inclusion in the SFR. However, further analysis is required to assess how accurate a representation these data are for the population of non-EU leavers as a whole; therefore, the data for the non-EU leavers are excluded from the SFR.
7. One change in the DLHE survey since 2013/14 relates to the questions asked to ascertain salary information from leavers. Whereas, previously leavers were asked for their annual salary, from 2014/15 they were able to report their salary in one of a variety of time frames (for example, annually, monthly, weekly, hourly). HESA use this information (alongside reported number of hours worked) to calculate an annual salary for each leaver. Although this is a positive change to the survey, allowing for greater accuracy for leavers who only know their hourly or weekly salary, data quality issues have been noticed. Investigations into the data reveal that some leavers have quite likely reported a salary against an incorrect time-frame. An example of this is a leaver reporting a true annual salary of £25,000, yet being paid in monthly blocks and inaccurately reporting this as a monthly salary. HESA would then multiply the £25,000 by 12 to report an inaccurate salary of £300,000. Instances of these types of inaccuracies are very low, and data investigations reveal the overall impact on average salary is low. The decision was therefore taken by HESA to include all responses within average salary calculations.

Definitions:

8. Broad STEM includes the following subject areas: Medicine & dentistry; Subjects allied to medicine; Biological sciences; Veterinary sciences; Agriculture & related subjects; Physical sciences; Mathematical sciences; Computer science; Engineering & technology; and Architecture, building & planning.
9. Narrow STEM is a subset of Broad STEM and includes the following subject areas: Biological sciences; Physical sciences; Mathematical sciences; Computer science; and Engineering & technology.
10. Professional occupations are defined as those falling into the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC 2010) major groups 1, 2 and 3; with non-professional occupations defined as all other known SOC major groups. The SOC 2010 major groups are outlined below:
 - i) Managers, directors and senior officials
 - ii) Professional occupations
 - iii) Associate professional and technical occupations
 - iv) Administrative and secretarial occupations
 - v) Skilled trades occupations
 - vi) Caring, leisure and other service occupations
 - vii) Sales and customer service occupations
 - viii) Process, plant and machine operatives
 - ix) Elementary occupations
11. Leavers reported as working in the UK include all students in the destination category *UK Work*, plus students from the destination category *Work and Further Study* who indicated that they were working full-time in the UK.

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