Introduction

This publication is one of four reference volumes from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), which present statistics about the publicly-funded higher education institutions (HEIs) of the United Kingdom (UK).

This volume draws on HESA's collection of data about students in HEIs in the academic year ending 31 July 1998, and it covers data supplied by 174 institutions.

The other reference volumes published by HESA are:

Resources of Higher Education Institutions - which draws on HESA's collection of data about finance and staff of HEIs. Tabulations are included which record and analyse the income and expenditure of universities and colleges (with data shown at institution level) and also about the characteristics of academic staff.

First Destinations of Students Leaving Higher Education Institutions - which includes statistics about the first destinations of graduates including employment rates, participation in further study and training, etc. A summary tabulation at institution level is included.

Higher Education Statistics for the United Kingdom - which is published in conjunction with the Government Statistical Service and which presents an overview of higher education (HE) from a statistical perspective, including statistics about applications, participation, institutional finance, staffing, student awards and loans.

The Agency also makes available a number of other related products, including an electronic source 'HE Planning Plus', available on CD ROM, which contains a significant amount of data about student characteristics and courses of study. A series of Research Datapacks provides in depth coverage of items of special interest. More information about HESA's other publications is set out at the end of this volume.

While HESA publishes and commissions others to publish extensively from the data it collects, it is recognised that specific requirements by some interested parties may not be addressed. Therefore, the Agency undertakes to provide a service to answer enquiries about the data collected, for which a charge will normally be levied.

Students in UK Higher Education Institutions, 1997/98

In 1998 HESA collected student data from all publicly-funded UK HEIs for the academic year 1997/98 (i.e. the period 1 August 1997 to 31 July 1998). This information was collected uniformly from all of the universities and HE colleges in the UK.

This commentary summarises and analyses the data contained within the main tables and presents summary statistics and key points. Please note that in the commentary tables some of the totals do not add up to those shown due to rounding.

Summary of Key Points

- 1,800,064 students were recorded as following HE programmes on 1 December 1997.
- A further 42,268 students were following courses at further education (FE) level.
- Of the 1,800,064 HE students recorded, 64.8% were following full-time or sandwich programmes and 78.5% were studying at undergraduate level.
- Full-time first degree students made up 49.9% of the recorded HE student population.
- Women made up 53.1% of the student population and 54.9% of UK domiciled undergraduates.
- Students from countries other than the UK numbered 213,264 and represented 11.8% of the total student body.
- Overseas students made up 36.1% of all full-time postgraduates.

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- Women were a significant majority in subjects allied to medicine, and were also very strongly represented among students of biological sciences, veterinary science, social, economic & political studies, librarianship & information science, languages and education.

- Men were a significant majority in engineering & technology, in computer science and in architecture, building & planning and strongly represented in physical and mathematical sciences.

- Students from outside the UK were well-represented in agriculture & related subjects, architecture, building & planning, languages, engineering & technology, law and business & administrative studies.

- Ethnic minorities constituted 13.3% of all first year UK domiciled students.

- 53.7% of students who obtained a classified first degree were awarded first or upper second class honours, with 8.2% being awarded a first.

Student Population

On 1 December 1997 there were over 1.8 million students who were studying for qualifications or credit in the 174 HEIs of the UK.

Of these, 42,268 (2.3%) were studying at FE level: these students are included for completeness in Table A below and in the first two of the main tables in this volume, but are not routinely included within the more specific analyses.

Table A - All Students by Level and Mode of Study 1997/98

	Full-time	% of FT HE students	Part-time	% of PT HE students	**Total**	% of HE students
Higher degree (research)	48268	*4.1%*	52540	*8.3%*	**100808**	*5.6%*
Higher degree (taught)	58092	*5.0%*	100255	*15.8%*	**158347**	*8.8%*
Other postgraduate	37161	*3.2%*	90685	*14.3%*	**127846**	*7.1%*
Total postgraduate	**143521**	***12.3%***	**243480**	***38.4%***	**387001**	***21.5%***
First degree	899719	*77.2%*	89670	*14.1%*	**989389**	*55.0%*
Other undergraduate	122887	*10.5%*	300787	*47.4%*	**423674**	*23.5%*
Total undergraduate	**1022606**	***87.7%***	**390457**	***61.6%***	**1413063**	***78.5%***
Total HE students	**1166127**	***100.0%***	**633937**	***100.0%***	**1800064**	***100.0%***
Total FE students	**12582**		**29686**		**42268**	
Total	**1178709**		**663623**		**1842332**	

Derived from 0a, 1a, 1c, 1e and 1g.

Of the 1,800,064 HE students recorded, 64.8% were following full-time or sandwich programmes (unchanged from 1996/97) and 78.5% were studying at undergraduate level (1996/97: 79.3%).

Of the 387,001 postgraduate students, 100,808 (26.0%) were enrolled on higher research degrees (1996/97: 27.5%), 158,347 on taught higher degrees and the remaining 33.0% on other postgraduate programmes.

Of the 1,413,063 undergraduates, 70.0% of students were studying for a first degree, (1996/97: 76.3%) with the remaining 30.0% (1996/97: 23.7%) following other undergraduate courses (e.g. DipHE, HND, and other undergraduate diplomas and certificates).

As in 1996/97, full-time first degree students made up almost half of the recorded HE student population (49.9%).

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Derived from Tables 1a, 1c, 1e and 1g.

Domicile and Gender

Table B provides a summary of students by domicile and gender.

Table B - All Students by Gender, Mode and Domicile 1997/98

	Full-time			Part-time			All Students			
	Total	Female	Male	**Total**	Female	Male	**Total**	% by domicile	Female	Male
United Kingdom	**993811**	524635	469176	**592989**	331570	261419	**1586800**	*88.2%*	856205	730595
Other European Union	**82360**	40955	41405	**14064**	6712	7352	**96424**	*5.4%*	47667	48757
Other overseas	**89956**	40170	49786	**26884**	11296	15588	**116840**	*6.5%*	51466	65374
Non-UK sub-total	**172316**	**81125**	**91191**	**40948**	**18008**	**22940**	**213264**	***11.8%***	**99133**	**114131**
Total	**1166127**	**605760**	**560367**	**633937**	**349578**	**284359**	**1800064**	***100.0%***	**955338**	**844726**

Derived from Tables 1a,1c,1e and 1g.

Students from countries other than the UK numbered 213,264 and represented 11.8% of the total student body.

Overall, women made up 53.1% of the student population. They were in a majority among both full-time and part-time students, although they were slightly more predominant among part-time students. The proportion of female students did however vary according to domicile, with 46.5% of overseas students being female, compared with 54.0% of UK domiciled students.

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Some 38.4% of all overseas students were following postgraduate level programmes. Table C provides a more detailed breakdown:

Table C - Postgraduates by Gender, Mode and Domicile 1997/98

	Full-time			Part-time			All Students			
	Total	Female	Male	**Total**	Female	Male	**Total**	% by domicile	Female	Male
Research for a higher degree										
United Kingdom	**29630**	12053	17577	**39851**	16450	23401	**69481**	*68.9%*	28503	40978
Other European Union	**5423**	2269	3154	**3698**	1563	2135	**9121**	*9.0%*	3832	5289
Other overseas	**13215**	4369	8846	**8991**	2952	6039	**22206**	*22.0%*	7321	14885
Taught course for a higher degree										
United Kingdom	**30052**	13894	16158	**86618**	43602	43016	**116670**	*73.7%*	57496	59174
Other European Union	**10218**	4496	5722	**4549**	1899	2650	**14767**	*9.3%*	6395	8372
Other overseas	**17822**	7825	9997	**9088**	3719	5369	**26910**	*17.0%*	11544	15366
Other postgraduate										
United Kingdom	**31959**	19357	12602	**86959**	46680	40279	**118918**	*93.0%*	66037	52881
Other European Union	**2285**	1290	995	**1229**	667	562	**3514**	*2.7%*	1957	1557
Other overseas	**2917**	1394	1523	**2497**	1121	1376	**5414**	*4.2%*	2515	2899
All postgraduates										
United Kingdom	**91641**	45304	46337	**213428**	106732	106696	**305069**	*78.8%*	152036	153033
Other European Union	**17926**	8055	9871	**9476**	4129	5347	**27402**	*7.1%*	12184	15218
Other overseas	**33954**	13588	20366	**20576**	7792	12784	**54530**	*14.1%*	21380	33150
Non-UK sub-total	**51880**	**21643**	**30237**	**30052**	**11921**	**18131**	**81932**	***21.2%***	**33564**	**48368**
Total	**143521**	**66947**	**76574**	**243480**	**118653**	**124827**	**387001**	**-**	**185600**	**201401**

Derived from Tables 1c and 1g.

It will be seen that overseas students made up over a fifth of the postgraduate student population in the UK, and just over 36% of all full-time postgraduates. Two thirds of all postgraduate overseas students came from outside the European Union (EU). Non-UK students were particularly prominent on higher degree programmes, making up 38.6% of full-time research higher degree students and 48.3% of students on full-time taught higher degree courses.

Overall, 47.9% of all postgraduates and 49.8% of those domiciled in the UK were female, but there were considerable differences between the different types of programme and different areas of domicile. Female students were in a significant majority in non-degree level postgraduate programmes (which are dominated by Postgraduate Certificates in Education (PGCEs)), but made up just under half of the students on taught higher degree courses, and only 39.4% of all research students. Whereas 41.1% of research students from the UK and the EU were women, only 33.0% of research students from other overseas countries were female.

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Chart 2 illustrates these differences.

Derived from Tables 1c and 1g.

A different pattern may be observed at undergraduate level, as is shown in Table D:

Table D - Undergraduates by Gender, Mode and Domicile 1997/98

	Full-time			Part-time			All Students			
	Total	Female	Male	**Total**	Female	Male	**Total**	% by domicile	Female	Male
First degree										
United Kingdom	**805671**	420866	384805	**85197**	49534	35663	**890868**	*90.0%*	470400	420468
Other European Union	**47799**	22759	25040	**1496**	718	778	**49295**	*5.0%*	23477	25818
Other overseas	**46249**	20910	25339	**2977**	1482	1495	**49226**	*5.0%*	22392	26834
Other undergraduate										
United Kingdom	**96499**	58465	38034	**294364**	175304	119060	**390863**	*92.3%*	233769	157094
Other European Union	**16635**	10141	6494	**3092**	1865	1227	**19727**	*4.7%*	12006	7721
Other overseas	**9753**	5672	4081	**3331**	2022	1309	**13084**	*3.1%*	7694	5390
All undergraduates										
United Kingdom	**902170**	479331	422839	**379561**	224838	154723	**1281731**	*90.7%*	704169	577562
Other European Union	**64434**	32900	31534	**4588**	2583	2005	**69022**	*4.9%*	35483	33539
Other overseas	**56002**	26582	29420	**6308**	3504	2804	**62310**	*4.4%*	30086	32224
Total	**1022606**	**538813**	**483793**	**390457**	**230925**	**159532**	**1413063**	**-**	**769738**	**643325**

Derived from Tables 1a and 1e.

Overseas students made up 9.3% of the total undergraduate population, with students from the EU being more likely to undertake non-degree level study than students from other overseas countries.

Overall, the gender balance shows women in a majority: just under 55% of UK domiciled undergraduates were women, compared with 51.4% of other EU students and 48.3% of students from other countries. Women were particularly prominent among students of non-degree courses, on which they represented almost 60% of the total: subject considerations are influential here - as shown in the following section.

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Subject of Study

Table E shows the percentage of students at different levels who were following programmes of study in each subject area.

Table E - All Students by Subject Area, Level and Mode 1997/98

Percentages

	First Degree			Other UG			Higher Degree (Research)			Higher Degree (Taught)			Other PG		
	Total	Full-time	Part-time	**Total**	Full-time	Part-time	**Total**	Full-time	Part-time	**Total**	Full-time	Part-time	**Total**	Full-time	Part-time
Medicine & dentistry	**2.9**	3.2	0.1	**0.0**	0.2	0.0	**7.8**	6.1	9.3	**2.5**	2.4	2.7	**1.1**	0.9	1.2
Subjects allied to medicine	**6.8**	5.1	23.8	**18.5**	37.1	10.9	**4.5**	4.2	4.8	**5.9**	2.5	7.8	**4.1**	2.1	4.9
Biological sciences	**6.7**	7.0	3.2	**0.9**	1.9	0.5	**11.7**	13.6	9.9	**3.6**	4.2	3.3	**0.5**	0.5	0.5
Veterinary science	**0.3**	0.3	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	**0.5**	0.5	0.5	**0.0**	0.1	0.0	**0.1**	0.2	0.1
Agriculture & related subjects	**0.8**	0.8	0.2	**1.1**	3.1	0.2	**1.6**	1.9	1.4	**0.7**	1.3	0.4	**0.1**	0.2	0.1
Physical sciences	**5.1**	5.4	2.4	**0.8**	1.2	0.6	**12.9**	16.8	9.4	**2.9**	4.3	2.1	**0.5**	0.6	0.4
Mathematical sciences	**1.6**	1.8	0.3	**0.2**	0.5	0.0	**2.3**	3.0	1.6	**0.7**	0.8	0.7	**0.2**	0.2	0.2
Computer science	**4.8**	4.9	4.6	**3.7**	7.0	2.4	**3.2**	3.4	3.0	**5.8**	7.7	4.7	**1.5**	2.9	1.0
Engineering & technology	**8.8**	8.8	8.3	**3.7**	6.5	2.5	**13.9**	15.7	12.3	**7.5**	10.2	5.9	**1.9**	1.9	1.8
Architecture, building & planning	**2.9**	2.6	6.0	**1.4**	2.3	1.0	**1.7**	1.4	2.0	**3.0**	2.9	3.0	**3.5**	6.6	2.3
Social, economic & political studies	**7.8**	8.0	5.9	**4.4**	4.7	4.2	**10.2**	9.4	10.9	**11.4**	14.0	9.9	**4.9**	5.0	4.9
Law	**4.1**	3.7	7.7	**0.7**	1.3	0.4	**1.8**	1.8	1.7	**3.4**	4.8	2.6	**5.3**	10.5	3.1
Business & administrative studies	**11.4**	11.3	12.2	**10.5**	15.2	8.6	**4.4**	3.5	5.2	**24.8**	22.2	26.2	**17.2**	4.9	22.2
Librarianship & information science	**1.4**	1.5	0.8	**0.3**	0.4	0.3	**0.6**	0.5	0.6	**2.3**	3.0	1.9	**1.0**	1.9	0.6
Languages	**6.4**	6.7	3.5	**3.7**	2.3	4.2	**6.7**	6.3	7.0	**3.7**	4.8	3.1	**0.6**	1.0	0.4
Humanities	**3.7**	3.7	3.0	**2.6**	0.5	3.5	**7.4**	6.5	8.2	**3.6**	3.5	3.7	**0.6**	0.7	0.6
Creative arts & design	**7.4**	7.9	3.2	**2.5**	4.9	1.5	**1.9**	1.4	2.4	**4.0**	5.9	3.0	**1.0**	2.4	0.4
Education	**5.2**	5.3	4.4	**3.4**	0.9	4.5	**5.2**	2.3	7.8	**11.9**	3.1	17.0	**35.2**	56.7	26.4
Combined	**11.9**	12.0	10.2	**41.7**	9.9	54.7	**1.9**	1.6	2.0	**2.3**	2.5	2.1	**20.6**	0.7	28.7

Derived from Table 2.

The significant proportion of students who were following other undergraduate programmes and also part-time first degree programmes in subjects allied to medicine (which include nursing) is notable. Other subject areas which were popular at other undergraduate level (i.e. mostly diplomas and certificates) were social, economic & political studies, computer science, engineering & technology and languages. However, at this level and also among first degree students, the most popular specific subject area was business & administrative studies. The large proportion following part-time programmes in combined studies is significantly influenced by The Open University, whose students are enrolled on a combined programme of study. The sciences and engineering & technology had significant numbers of research students, but taught postgraduate courses were dominated by students of business & administrative studies and education. The different patterns of subject participation according to gender and domicile are shown in Table F.

Table F - Distribution by Subject Area, Gender and non-UK Domicile 1997/98

Percentages

	% female	% non-UK	% non-EU
Medicine & dentistry	51.2	12.6	9.8
Subjects allied to medicine	82.4	6.8	3.3
Biological sciences	59.7	9.9	4.3
Veterinary science	63.9	14.5	11.4
Agriculture & related subjects	47.6	15.1	7.5
Physical sciences	36.0	10.6	4.6
Mathematical sciences	36.6	13.0	6.9
Computer science	21.7	10.4	5.8
Engineering & technology	14.0	24.3	13.8
Architecture, building & planning	25.8	14.9	8.2
Social, economic & political studies	59.7	13.9	7.8
Law	54.2	18.8	12.6
Business & administrative studies	48.3	16.9	10.0
Librarianship & information science	61.5	12.3	6.3
Languages	68.5	15.0	5.9
Humanities	54.4	8.9	5.4
Creative arts & design	57.7	10.3	5.6
Education	71.7	6.7	4.6
Combined	54.8	6.5	3.0
Total - All subject areas	**53.1**	**11.8**	**6.5**

Derived from Table 2e.

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The table shows that women were a significant majority in subjects allied to medicine, and were also very strongly represented among students of biological sciences, veterinary science, social, economic & political studies, librarianship & information science, languages and education. Men were a significant majority in engineering & technology, computer science, architecture, building & planning, and strongly represented in physical and mathematical sciences. Students from outside the UK were well-represented in agriculture & related subjects, languages, architecture, building & planning, engineering & technology, law and business & administrative studies.

Expected Length of Study

Table G shows the expected length of the study programme reported for full-time students who commenced studying on programmes leading to first degrees in the academic year 1997/98.

Table G - First Year Full-time First Degree Students by Subject Area and Expected Length of Course 1997/98

	Expected Length of Course							
	<=3 years		>3 years & <= 4 years		>4 years & <= 5 years		>5 years	
Medicine & dentistry	1733	*24.8%*	101	*1.4%*	4671	*66.9%*	482	*6.9%*
Subjects allied to medicine	10661	*62.9%*	5957	*35.2%*	307	*1.8%*	17	*0.1%*
Biological sciences	18111	*77.5%*	5118	*21.9%*	125	*0.5%*	5	*0.0%*
Veterinary science	75	*12.5%*	0	*0.0%*	467	*77.6%*	60	*10.0%*
Agriculture & related subjects	1494	*52.7%*	1336	*47.1%*	6	*0.2%*	0	*0.0%*
Physical sciences	10214	*60.1%*	6400	*37.7%*	376	*2.2%*	2	*0.0%*
Mathematical sciences	3071	*54.6%*	2521	*44.8%*	33	*0.6%*	0	*0.0%*
Computer science	7856	*44.5%*	9407	*53.3%*	394	*2.2%*	3	*0.0%*
Engineering & technology	12623	*42.9%*	13414	*45.6%*	3367	*11.4%*	30	*0.1%*
Architecture, building & planning	4378	*53.2%*	3131	*38.0%*	544	*6.6%*	179	*2.2%*
Social, economic & political studies	23179	*86.9%*	3480	*13.0%*	24	*0.1%*	1	*0.0%*
Law	10789	*88.3%*	1406	*11.5%*	19	*0.2%*	3	*0.0%*
Business & administrative studies	21674	*53.5%*	18559	*45.8%*	300	*0.7%*	7	*0.0%*
Librarianship & information science	4095	*82.7%*	855	*17.3%*	0	*0.0%*	1	*0.0%*
Languages	10562	*54.7%*	8655	*44.8%*	75	*0.4%*	6	*0.0%*
Humanities	10122	*90.7%*	1027	*9.2%*	7	*0.1%*	4	*0.0%*
Creative arts & design	23729	*86.9%*	3550	*13.0%*	41	*0.2%*	0	*0.0%*
Education	6208	*43.4%*	7984	*55.8%*	123	*0.9%*	1	*0.0%*
Combined	32826	*77.2%*	9263	*21.8%*	425	*1.0%*	5	*0.0%*
Total - All subject areas	**213400**	***65.1%***	**102164**	***31.2%***	**11304**	***3.4%***	**806**	***0.2%***

Derived from Table 3a.

Note: Percentages were calculated against the total number of students whose expected length of study was known.

Overall, 65.1% of new students were following programmes of up to three years duration; 31.2% were on programmes expected to last up to four years; and 3.7% were following programmes expected to last over four years. There were, predictably, significant differences by subject area. Over 50% of computer science and education students were expected to study for four years, as well as over 40% of students in agriculture & related subjects, mathematical sciences, engineering & technology, business & administrative studies and languages. Programmes of five or more years were the norm for students of clinical subjects, and also for some students of engineering & technology and architecture, building & planning. It is relevant to consider these figures alongside information about work placements, and therefore the following section looks at sandwich study.

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Sandwich Students

In most of the tables of this volume, sandwich students are included within the full-time category. It is however of interest to note that students on sandwich programmes constitute almost 9% of all undergraduates, and they are considerably more prominent within some disciplines.

The following table provides a breakdown by qualification aim and subject area:

Table H - Undergraduate Sandwich Students 1997/98

	First degree	Other UG	Sandwich students as a percentage of all undergraduates
Medicine & dentistry	0	0	*0.0%*
Subjects allied to medicine	5112	1177	*4.3%*
Biological sciences	6397	6	*9.2%*
Veterinary science	0	0	*0.0%*
Agriculture & related subjects	2641	1694	*35.3%*
Physical sciences	4288	96	*8.1%*
Mathematical sciences	1872	18	*11.3%*
Computer science	18352	1294	*30.9%*
Engineering & technology	18184	931	*18.6%*
Architecture, building & planning	7701	557	*24.2%*
Social, economic & political studies	2268	232	*2.6%*
Law	754	0	*1.7%*
Business & administrative studies	36163	1802	*24.1%*
Librarianship & information science	531	0	*3.5%*
Languages	1925	15	*2.5%*
Humanities	4	0	*0.0%*
Creative arts & design	3446	13	*4.1%*
Education	178	2	*0.3%*
Combined	5927	222	*2.1%*
Total - All subject areas	**115743**	**8059**	***8.8%***

Derived from Table 7.

As the table indicates, sandwich study is particularly common in the areas of computer science, agriculture & related subjects, architecture, building & planning and business & administrative studies.

Age of Students

The growth in the participation of mature students in HE is well-documented. Table Ii shows the percentage of students within age groups among first year undergraduates.

Table Ii - Age Distribution of First Year UK Domiciled Undergraduates(1) by Mode of Study 1997/98

Percentages

	First Degree			Other Undergraduate		
	Total	Full-time	Part-time	**Total**	Full-time	Part-time
18 & under	***43.6***	*47.9*	*1.1*	***8.5***	*25.4*	*1.6*
19	***18.4***	*20.1*	*1.6*	***6.2***	*17.5*	*1.6*
20	***6.9***	*7.3*	*2.6*	***4.0***	*9.7*	*1.7*
21-24	***11.7***	*11.2*	*16.3*	***13.3***	*18.6*	*11.1*
25-29	***6.8***	*5.4*	*21.3*	***15.4***	*10.3*	*17.4*
30 & over	***12.6***	*8.2*	*57.1*	***52.7***	*18.5*	*66.7*
Total	***100.0***	***100.0***	***100.0***	***100.0***	***100.0***	***100.0***

(1) Those whose age is known.

Derived from Tables 1b and 1f.

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24.8% of new students on full-time degree courses were aged 21 and over (1996/97: 26.8%); 47.4% of new students on full-time other undergraduate courses were also 21 or over (1996/97: 47.7%). 57.1% of part-time first degree entrants were 30 or over (1996/97: 63.6%).

Table Iii presents equivalent information for postgraduates.

Table Iii - Age Distribution of First Year UK Domiciled Postgraduates(1) by Mode of Study 1997/98

Percentages

	Total	Full-time	Part-time
Under 21	**0.6**	1.0	0.2
21-24	**29.6**	53.8	9.9
25-29	**21.0**	21.4	20.7
30 & over	**48.9**	23.9	69.2
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	100.0

(1) Those whose age is known.

Derived from Tables 1d and 1h.

Ethnicity

HESA receives from institutions information about the ethnicity of students where this is known. The collection process began in 1994/95 and is therefore now in its fourth year. Ethnicity is known for 88.5% of new undergraduates and 77.6% of new postgraduates. In respect of all students (including continuing students), the information is available for 88.5% of undergraduates and 71.9% of postgraduates. Although HESA presents in Table 10b ethnicity information for the student population as a whole, the Agency advises caution in analysis at postgraduate level.

In any case, the latest trend in relation to ethnic minority participation is best judged by considering first year students only: Table J shows the participation rate of ethnic minority students among new undergraduate and postgraduate students.

Table J - Ethnic Minority Students as a Percentage of UK Domiciled First Year Students of Known Ethnicity 1997/98

Percentages

Research for a higher degree	**9.5**
Full-time	9.8
Part-time	9.0
Taught course for a higher degree	**15.4**
Full-time	19.1
Part-time	12.5
Other postgraduate	**8.7**
Full-time	9.0
Part-time	8.4
First degree	**14.7**
Full-time	14.8
Part-time	13.6
Other undergraduate	**11.6**
Full-time	20.6
Part-time	8.0

Derived from Table 10a.

Overall, ethnic minorities constituted 13.3% of all first year UK domiciled students whose ethnicity was known, and were more strongly represented among full-time undergraduates and taught postgraduates. They were less strongly represented among research students, and among part-time students generally.

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Within the ethnic minority student population there are significant differences in gender participation. The following chart shows, for ethnic minorities among all undergraduates, the gender balance by ethnic group.

Derived from Table 10b.

Qualifications Obtained

In the 1997/98 academic year, a total of 437,128 qualifications were awarded at HE level (compared with 427,070 in the previous year). Of these awards, just under 60% were first degrees, with other undergraduate qualifications (including HND/DipHE) making up nearly 15%. Postgraduate level qualifications accounted for just over 26% of the total.

Table K gives more detail.

Table K - Qualifications Obtained by Level of Qualification, Mode and Domicile 1997/98

	All qualifications	First degree	HND/DipHE	Other UG quals	Doctorates	Other higher degrees	PGCE	Other PG quals
Full-time								
All students	**322861**	**233610**	**24575**	**8913**	**2031**	**25991**	**17882**	**9859**
UK domiciled	**275141**	206389	23004	7183	1159	12409	17307	7690
Overseas domiciled	**47720**	27221	1571	1730	872	13582	575	2169
Part-time								
All students	**114267**	**25143**	**3942**	**26409**	**8962**	**27984**	**1061**	**20766**
UK domiciled	**101429**	24275	3709	25385	5959	21423	1055	19623
Overseas domiciled	**12838**	868	233	1024	3003	6561	6	1143
All students	**437128**	**258753**	**28517**	**35322**	**10993**	**53975**	**18943**	**30625**
Percentage of all qualifications	***100.0%***	*59.2%*	*6.5%*	*8.1%*	*2.5%*	*12.3%*	*4.3%*	*7.0%*
UK domiciled	**376570**	230664	26713	32568	7118	33832	18362	27313
Overseas domiciled	**60558**	28089	1804	2754	3875	20143	581	3312

Derived from Table 14a.

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Table L presents a summary of the classification of first degrees awarded and shows the percentage awarded in each classification, by mode of study, domicile and gender.

Table L - First Degree Classifications by Mode, Domicile and Gender 1997/98

	Total first degree(1)	First class	Upper second class	Lower second	Third class/ Pass	Unclassified
Total full-time	**233610**	**17579**	**100789**	**82303**	**18544**	**12729**
Percentage of classified degrees	-	*8.0%*	*46.0%*	*37.5%*	*8.5%*	-
UK domiciled	**206389**	**15196**	**91330**	**72097**	**15048**	**11253**
Female	**110369**	7491	53407	37616	5698	5385
Male	**96020**	7705	37923	34481	9350	5868
Overseas domiciled	**27221**	**2383**	**9459**	**10206**	**3496**	**1476**
Female	**12089**	892	4694	4580	1191	627
Male	**15132**	1491	4765	5626	2305	849
Total part-time	**25143**	**1893**	**7799**	**7188**	**2661**	**5429**
Percentage of classified degrees	-	*9.7%*	*39.9%*	*36.8%*	*13.6%*	-
UK domiciled	**24275**	**1876**	**7660**	**6881**	**2335**	**5357**
Female	**13594**	999	4496	3917	1121	2976
Male	**10681**	877	3164	2964	1214	2381
Overseas domiciled	**868**	**17**	**139**	**307**	**326**	**72**
Female	**411**	13	90	126	142	35
Male	**457**	4	49	181	184	37
All students	**258753**	**19472**	**108588**	**89491**	**21205**	**18158**
Percentage of classified degrees	-	*8.2%*	*45.5%*	*37.5%*	*8.9%*	-
UK domiciled	**230664**	**17072**	**98990**	**78978**	**17383**	**16610**
Percentage of classified degrees	-	*8.0%*	*46.6%*	*37.2%*	*8.2%*	-
Female	**123963**	8490	57903	41533	6819	8361
Male	**106701**	8582	41087	37445	10564	8249
Overseas domiciled	**28089**	**2400**	**9598**	**10513**	**3822**	**1548**
Percentage of classified degrees	-	*9.1%*	*36.4%*	*39.9%*	*14.5%*	-
Female	**12500**	905	4784	4706	1333	662
Male	**15589**	1495	4814	5807	2489	886
All domiciles	**258753**	**19472**	**108588**	**89491**	**21205**	**18158**
Female	**136463**	**9395**	**62687**	**46239**	**8152**	**9023**
Percentage of classified degrees	-	*7.4%*	*49.6%*	*36.6%*	*6.4%*	-
Male	**122290**	**10077**	**45901**	**43252**	**13053**	**9135**
Percentage of classified degrees	-	*9.0%*	*40.9%*	*38.5%*	*11.6%*	-

(1) Includes unknown classification of degree. Derived from Table 14a.

Overall, just under 54% of students of known classification who obtained a classified first degree were awarded first or upper second class honours, with 8.2% being awarded a first. A slightly higher percentage of part-time students than full-time students obtained a first class degree and just over 6% more obtained an upper second classification. Overseas students obtained a higher proportion of first class degrees but a markedly lower proportion of upper seconds.

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The opposite observation is true of female students, with fewer obtaining firsts than male students but a markedly greater proportion obtaining upper seconds, as is shown in the following chart.

Derived from Table 14a.

All of these observations should however be considered in the context of the subject of study. The following table shows the percentage of students obtaining a first or upper second class award in each of the non-clinical subject groups (degrees in clinical subjects are predominantly awarded without classification).

Table M - First Degree Graduates in Non-clinical Subjects Awarded First or Upper Second Class Honours as a Percentage of Classified Degrees 1997/98

Percentages

	First class	Upper second	First or upper second
Subjects allied to medicine	*8.7*	*49.5*	*58.3*
Biological sciences	*8.3*	*50.5*	*58.9*
Agriculture & related subjects	*6.5*	*48.3*	*54.7*
Physical sciences	*12.1*	*38.6*	*50.7*
Mathematical sciences	*22*	*30.0*	*52.0*
Computer science	*9.9*	*36.6*	*46.4*
Engineering & technology	*12.6*	*35.4*	*48.0*
Architecture, building & planning	*6*	*40.7*	*46.7*
Social, economic & political studies	*5.4*	*49.9*	*55.3*
Law	*3.9*	*48.3*	*52.2*
Business & administrative studies	*4.5*	*42.1*	*46.6*
Librarianship & information science	*5.1*	*52.3*	*57.5*
Languages	*9.2*	*57.3*	*66.5*
Humanities	*7.4*	*57.5*	*64.9*
Creative arts & design	*9*	*46.9*	*55.9*
Education	*5.4*	*45.7*	*51.1*
Combined	*8.2*	*45.0*	*53.1*
Total - Non-clinical subjects	***8.1***	***45.7***	***53.8***

Derived from Table 14a.

Table M reveals that a considerably greater proportion of first class degrees was awarded in mathematical sciences, engineering & technology and physical sciences - subjects in which we have noted a significant majority of male students (see Table F).

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