

# Access, success and progression in the new HE environment

Chris Millward

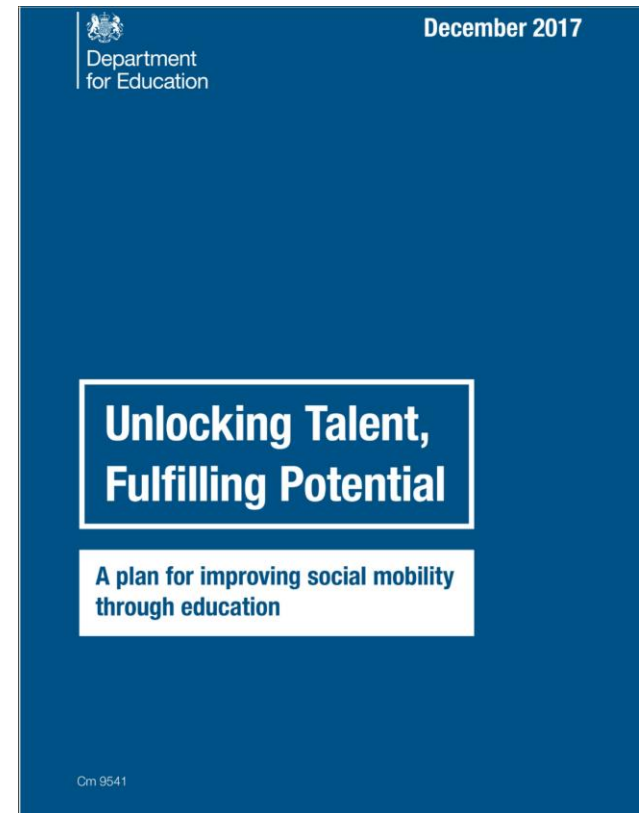
Director for Fair Access and Participation, OfS

# Social Mobility Action Plan

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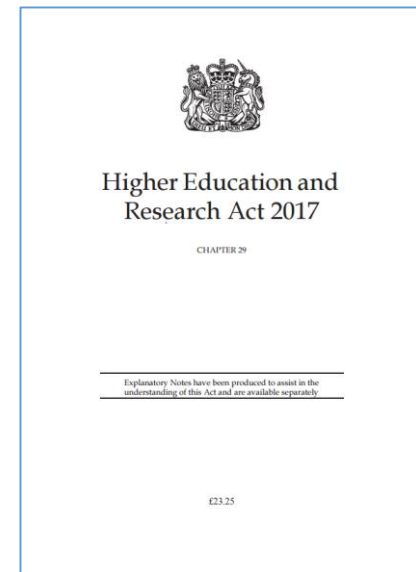
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‘In our country today, where you start still all too often determines where you finish. And while talent is spread evenly across the country, opportunity is not. None of us should accept this. Everyone deserves a fair shot in life and a chance to go as far as their hard work and talent can take them.’



# OfS duties: HERA 2017

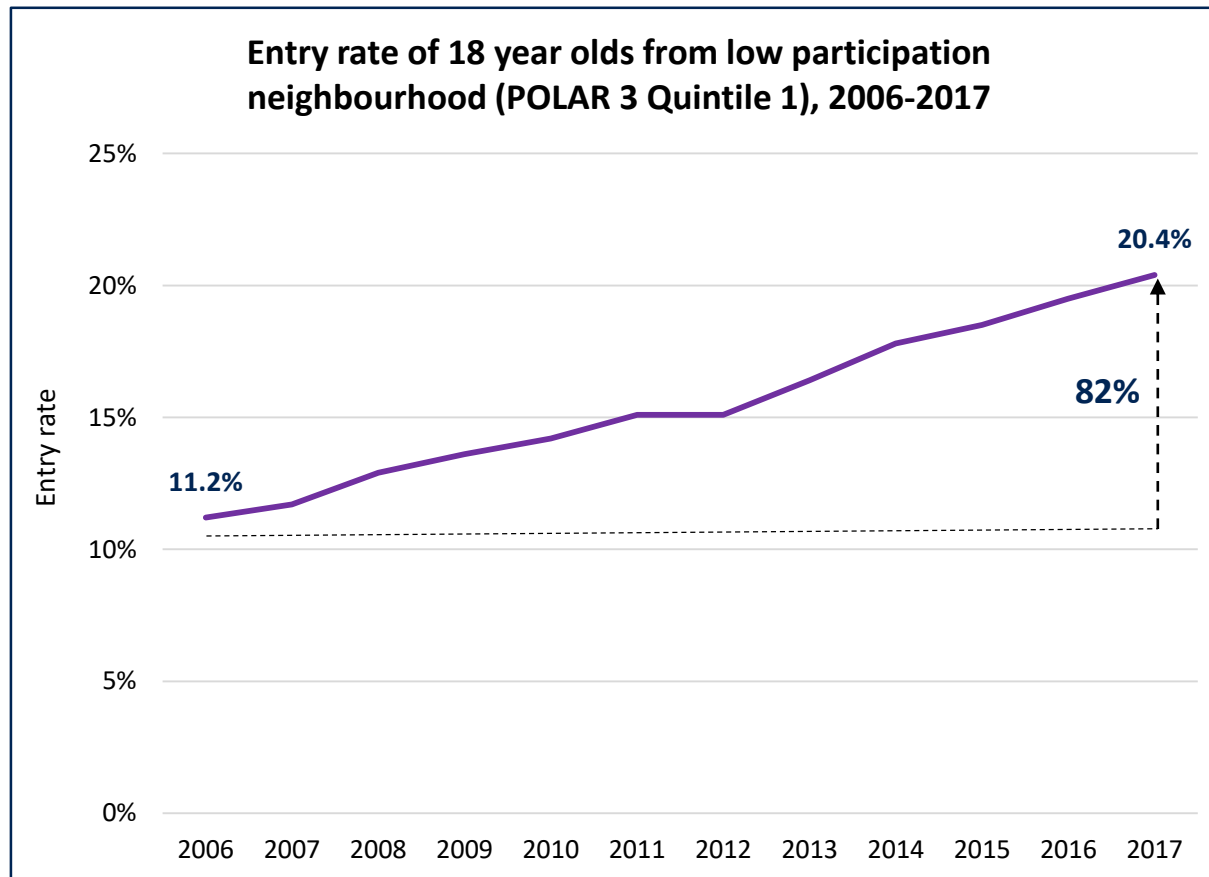
- a) protect the institutional autonomy of English HE providers
- b) promote quality, and greater choice and opportunities for students, in the provision of HE
- c) encourage competition between English HE providers in connection with the provision of HE where that competition is in the interests of students and employers, while also having regard to the benefits for students and employers resulting from collaboration between such providers
- d) promote value for money in the provision of HE
- e) promote equality of opportunity in connection with access to and participation in HE
- f) use the OfS's resources in an efficient, effective and economic way
- g) regulatory activities should be—
  - (i) transparent, accountable, proportionate and consistent, and
  - (ii) targeted only at cases in which action is needed.



# Access to HE - POLAR

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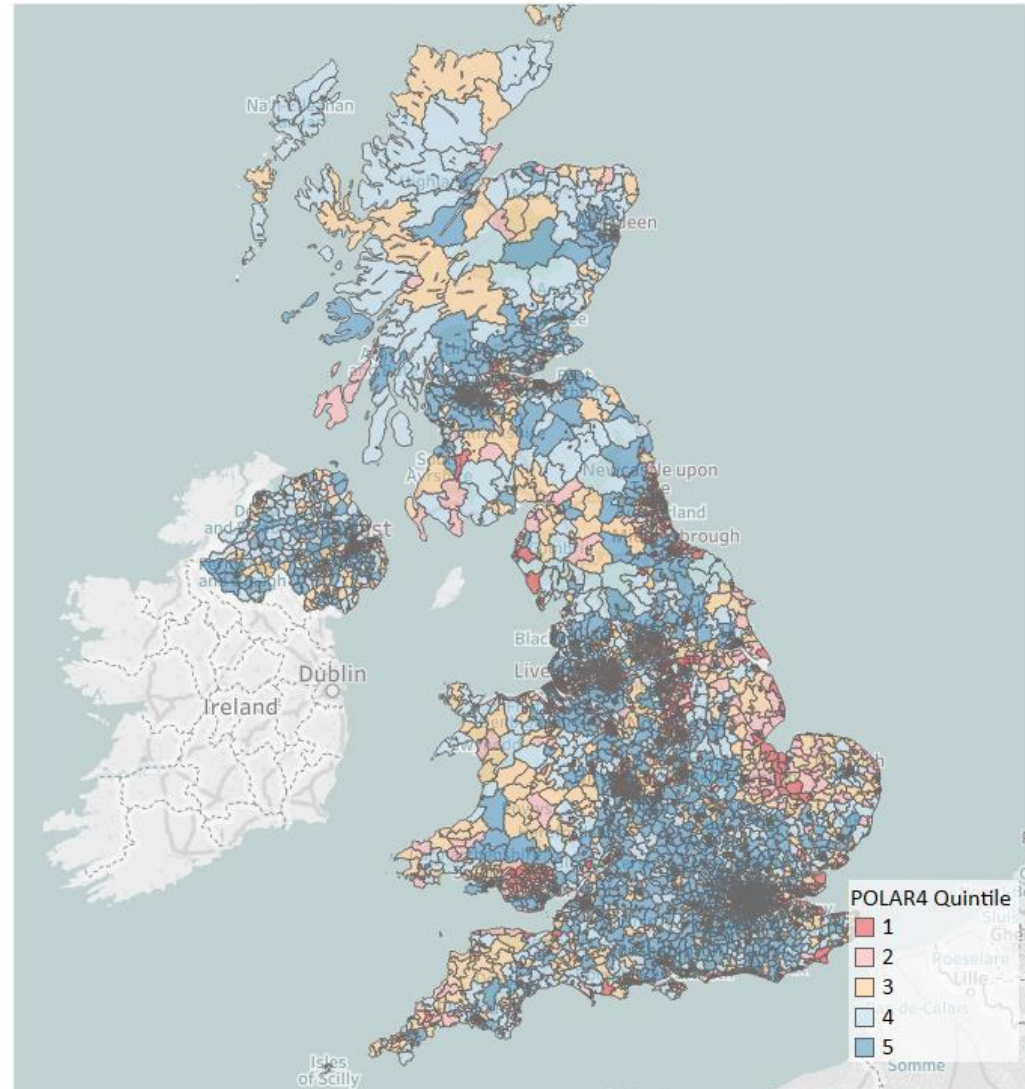
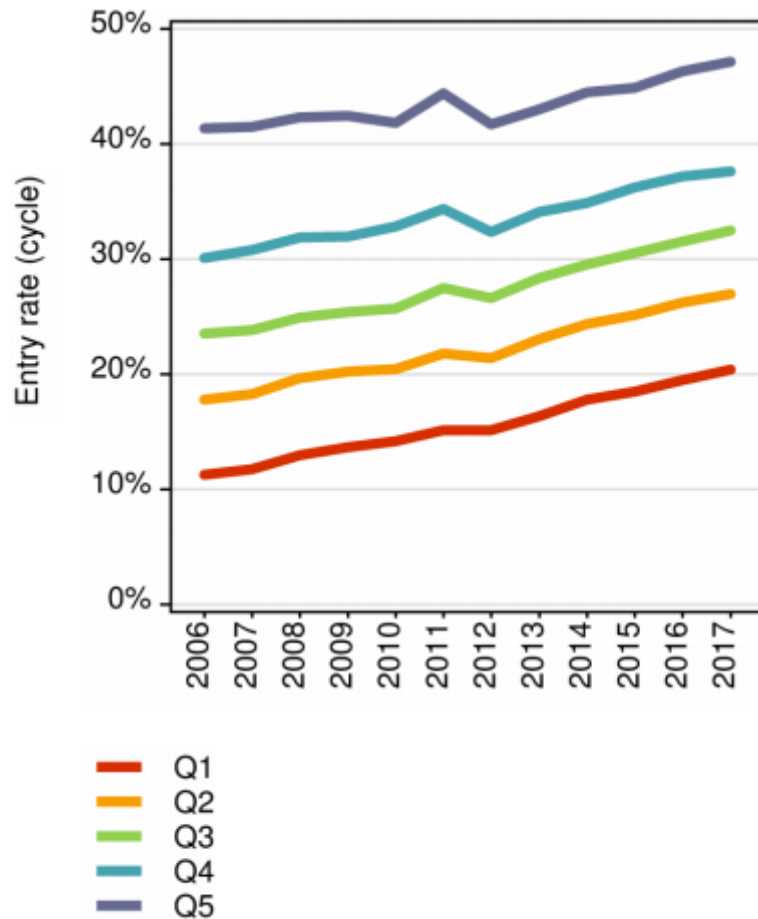


Source: UCAS (End of cycle 2017)

# Young participation: overall

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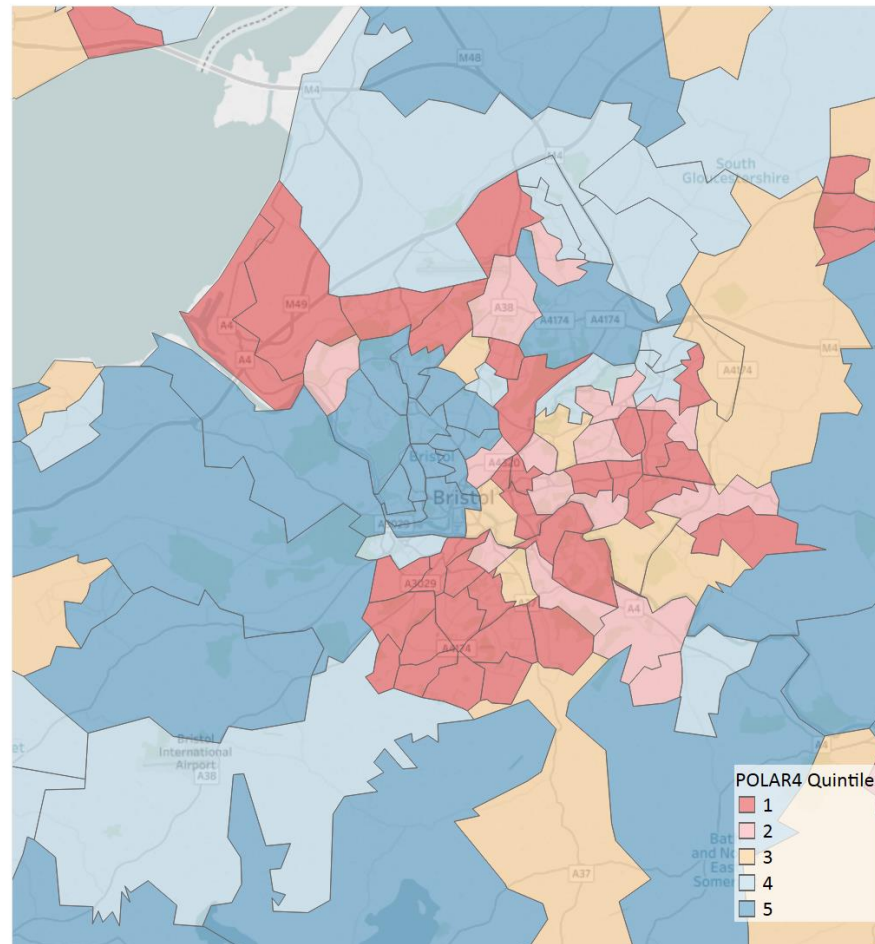
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# Young participation: place

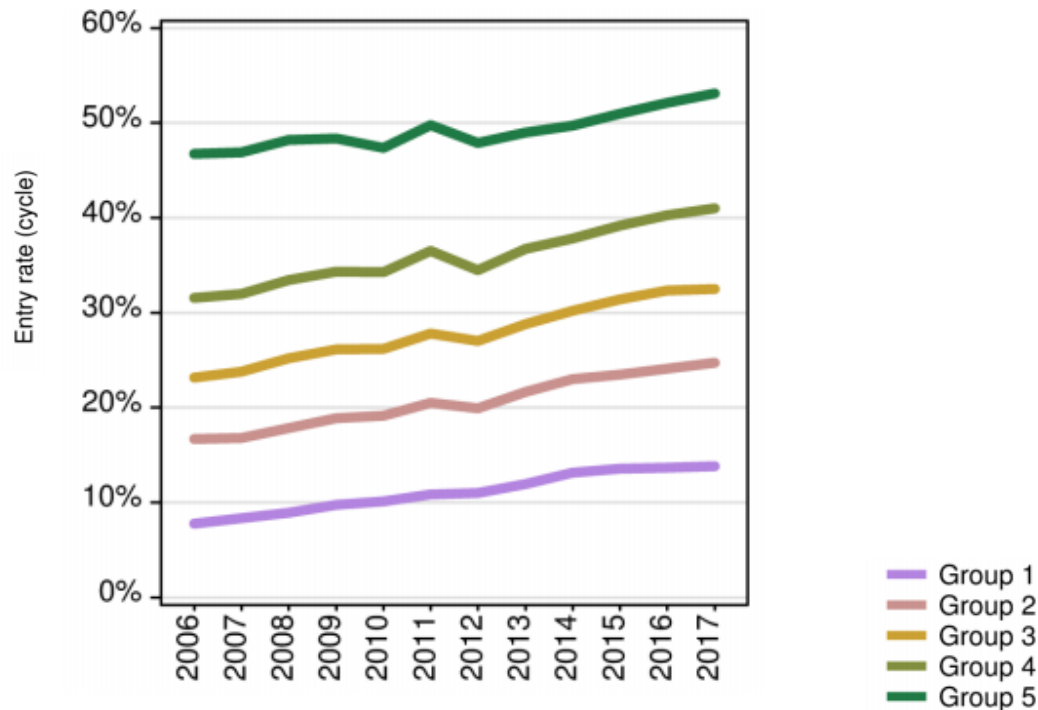
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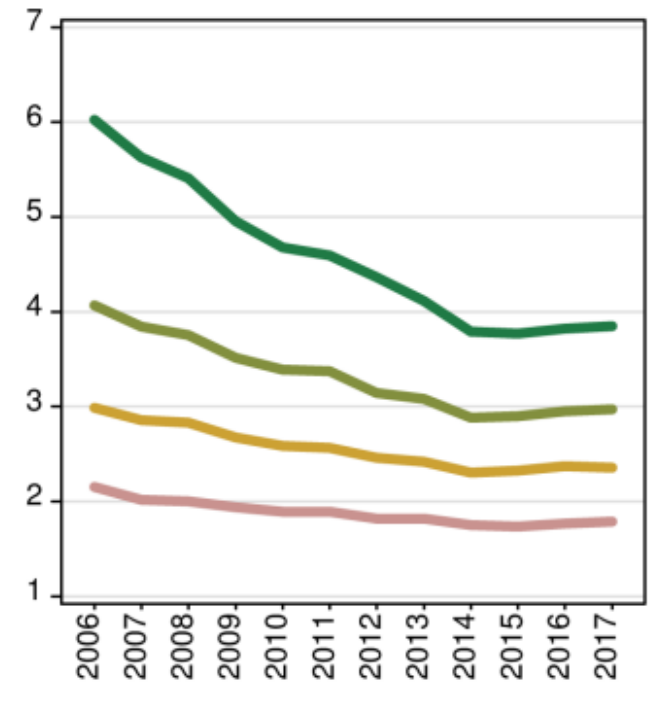


# Young participation: MEM

Entry rates for English 18 year old by  
multiple equality measure groups

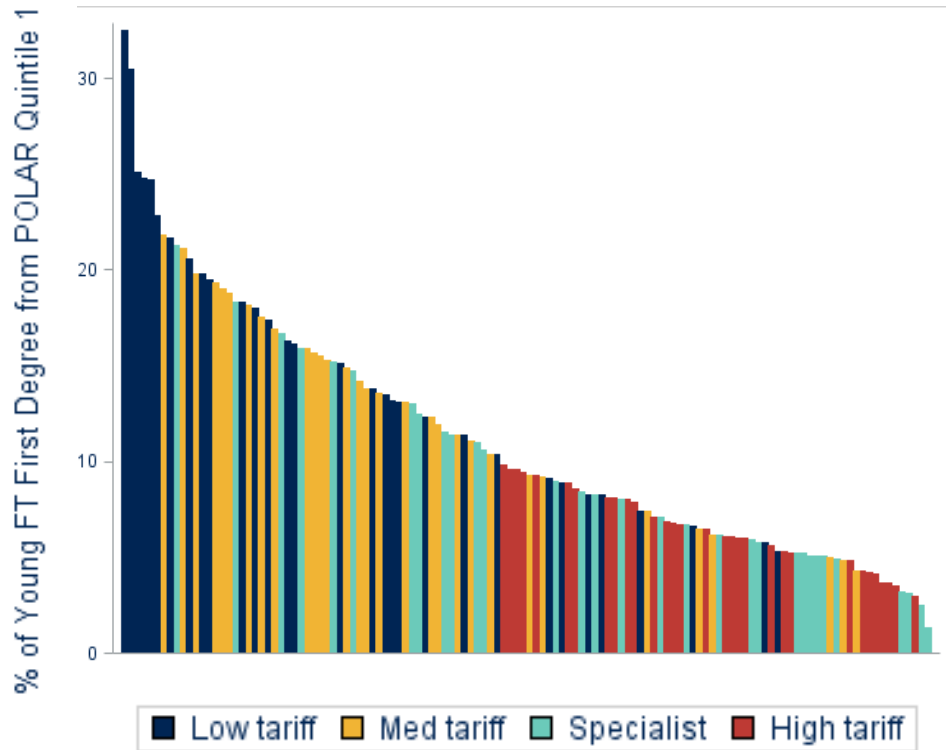


Ratio of 18 year old entry rate for MEM  
groups to 2 to 5 vs MEM group 1



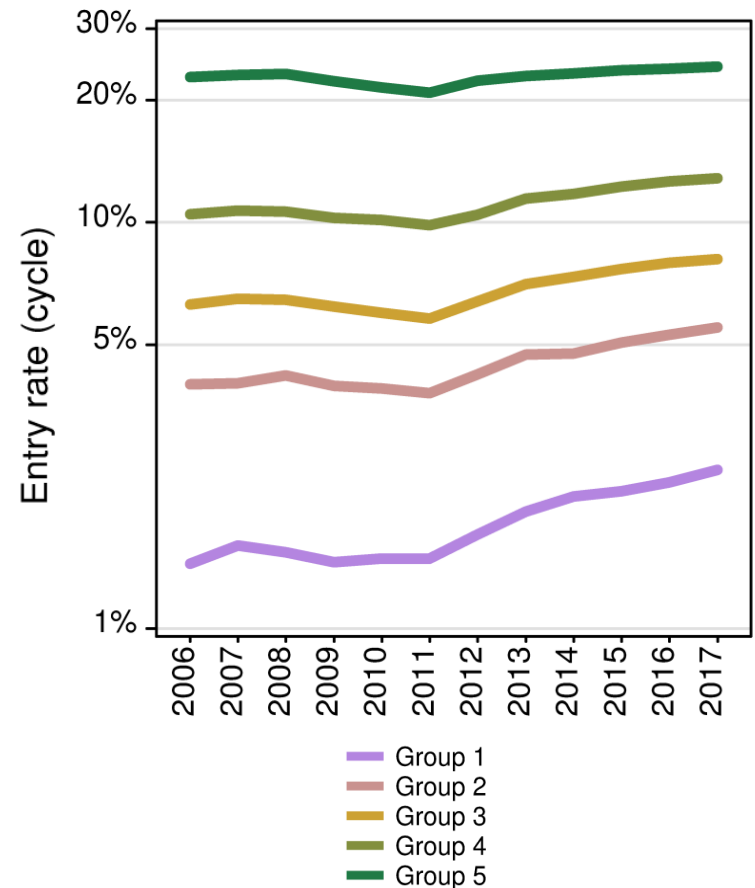
(group 5 = most likely to enter to HE)

# Young participation: tariff



Source: Internal OfS(DFA) analysis of HESA Performance Indicators 2016-17

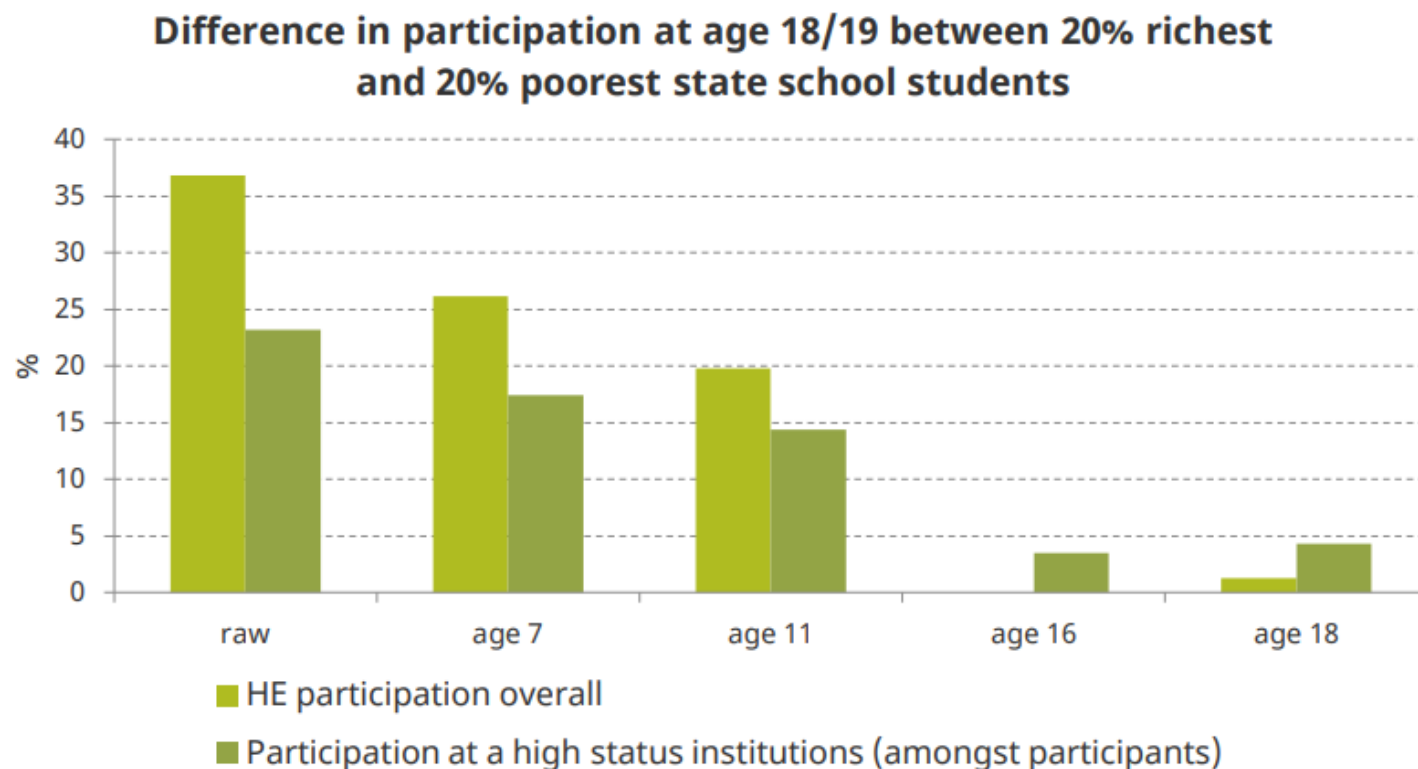
## Entry rates for English 18 year old MEM groups to higher tariff providers





# Pre-HE attainment

How important is attainment at different ages in explaining SES gaps in HE participation?

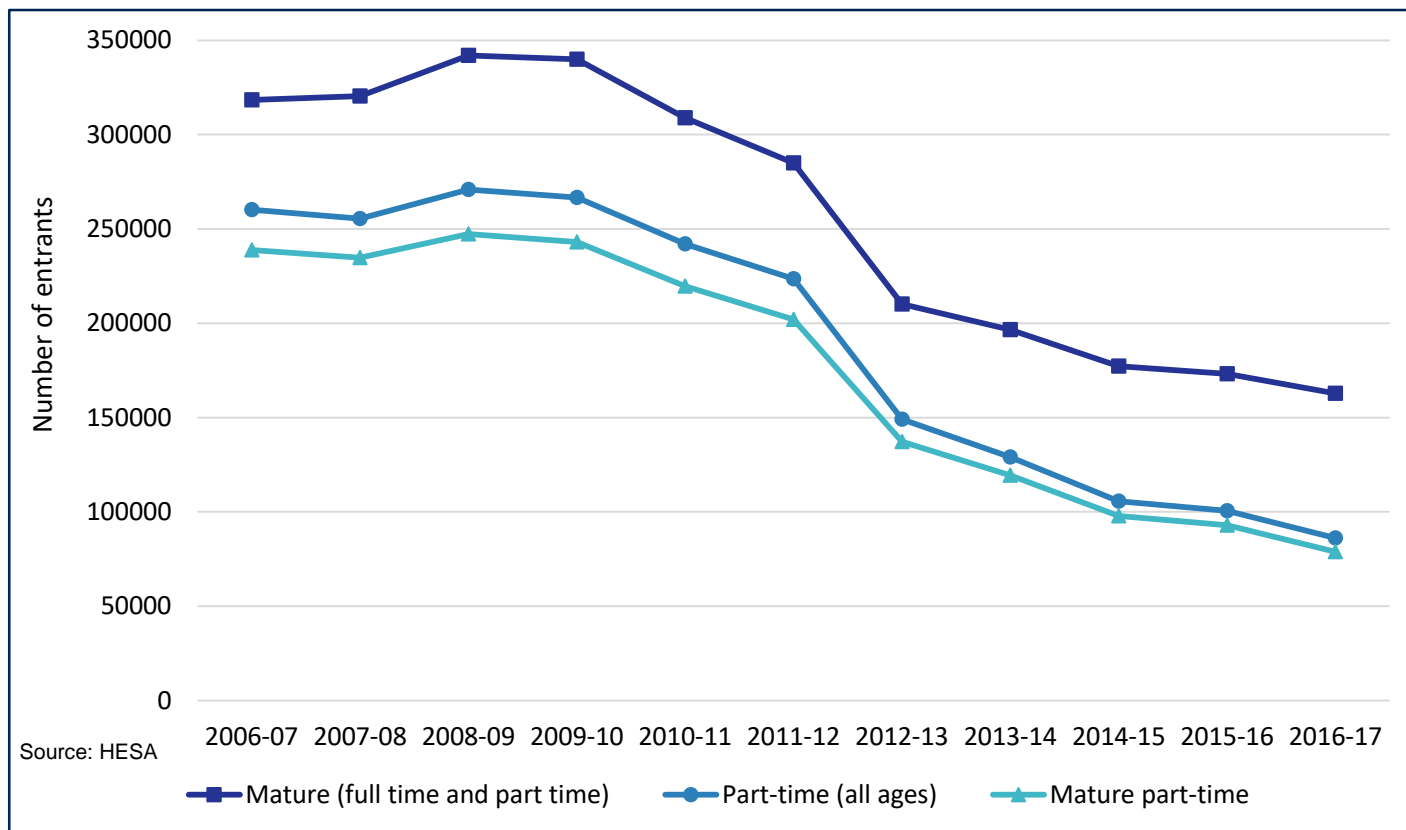


Source: Figure 5.1 of Crawford et al. (2017)

# Mature students

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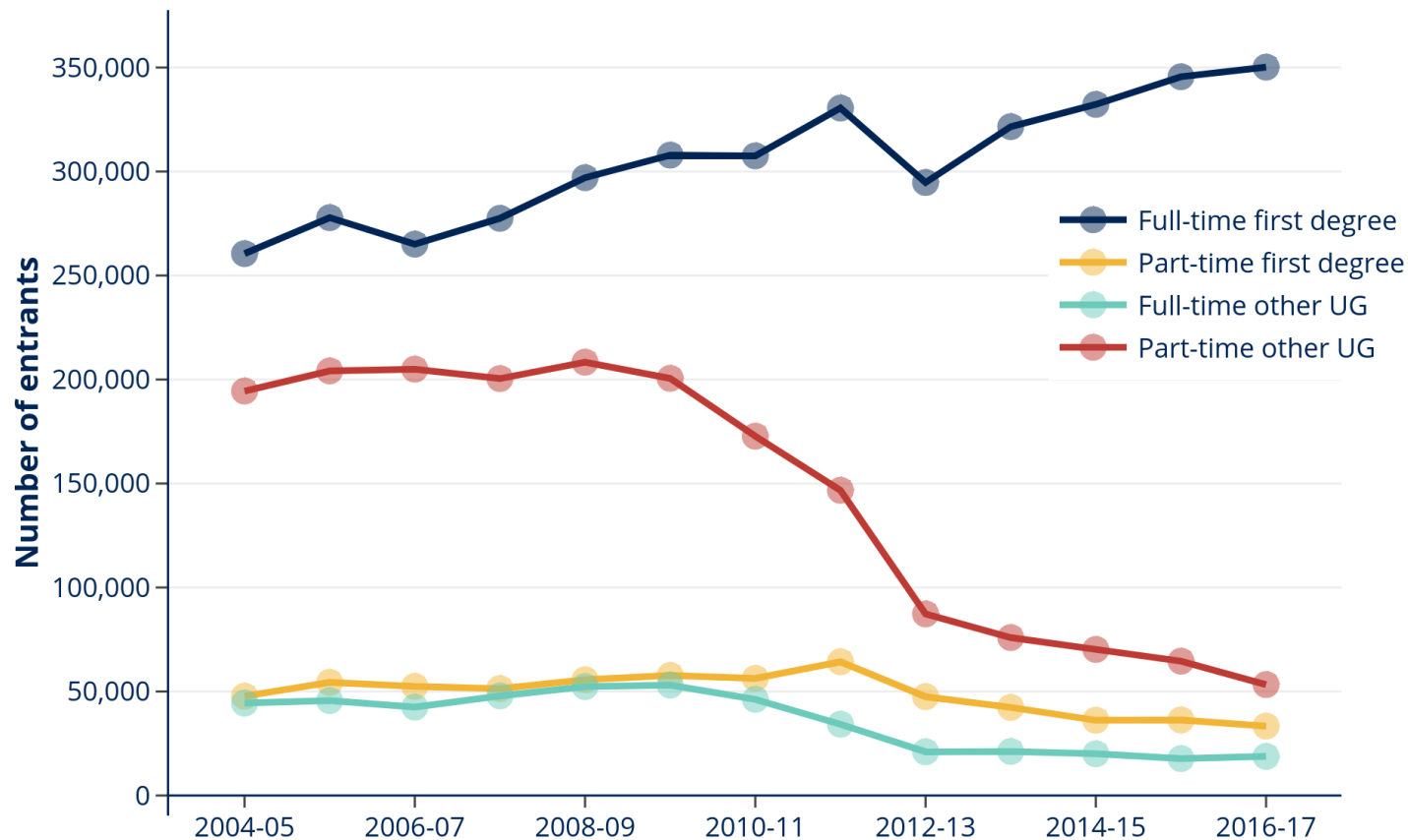


# HE participation: level

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Entrants by level and mode of study



Academic year

Source: HESA student record.  
UK-domiciled students at English institutions only.

# Choices and pathways

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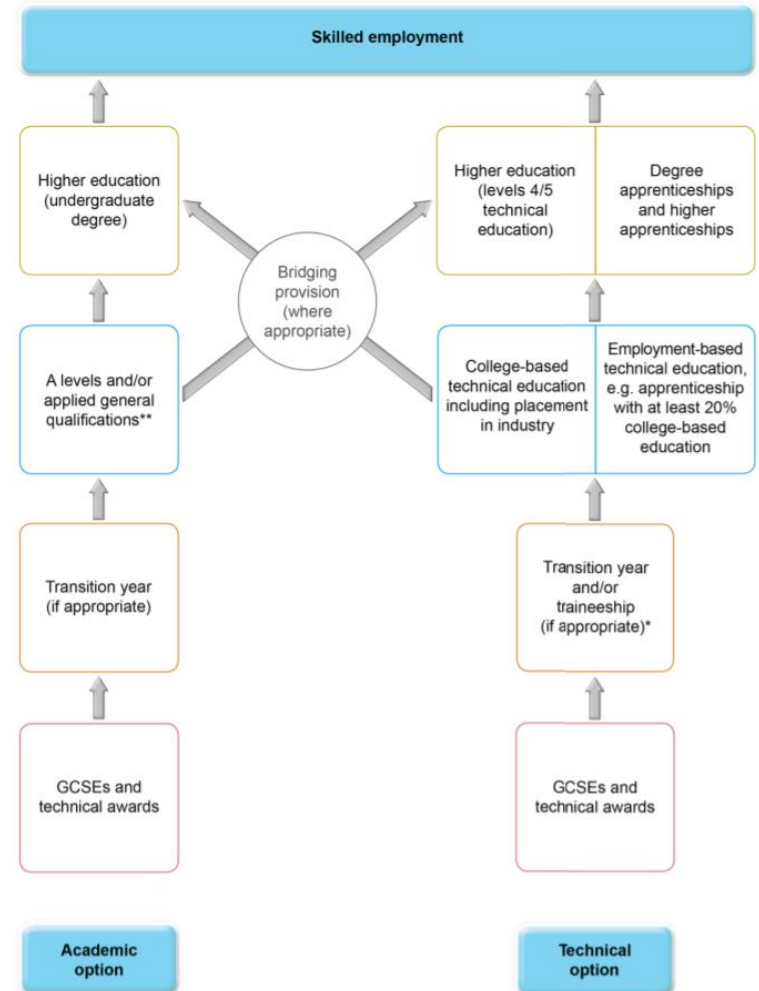


National Apprenticeship Service

UNISTATS

UCAS

THE  
BEHAVIOURAL  
INSIGHTS TEAM



\* Where a student does both, the traineeship will follow the transition year. Students doing both the transition year and a traineeship may progress directly to employment.

# Attainment and admissions

‘In England there is a closer link between prior attainment and university admission...it is clear that universities are more academically selective and students are admitted more on the basis of their prior achievement than on the basis of other factors, such as their social background...the socio-economic gap in prior achievement is very large in England...so social background matters more for university admission’.

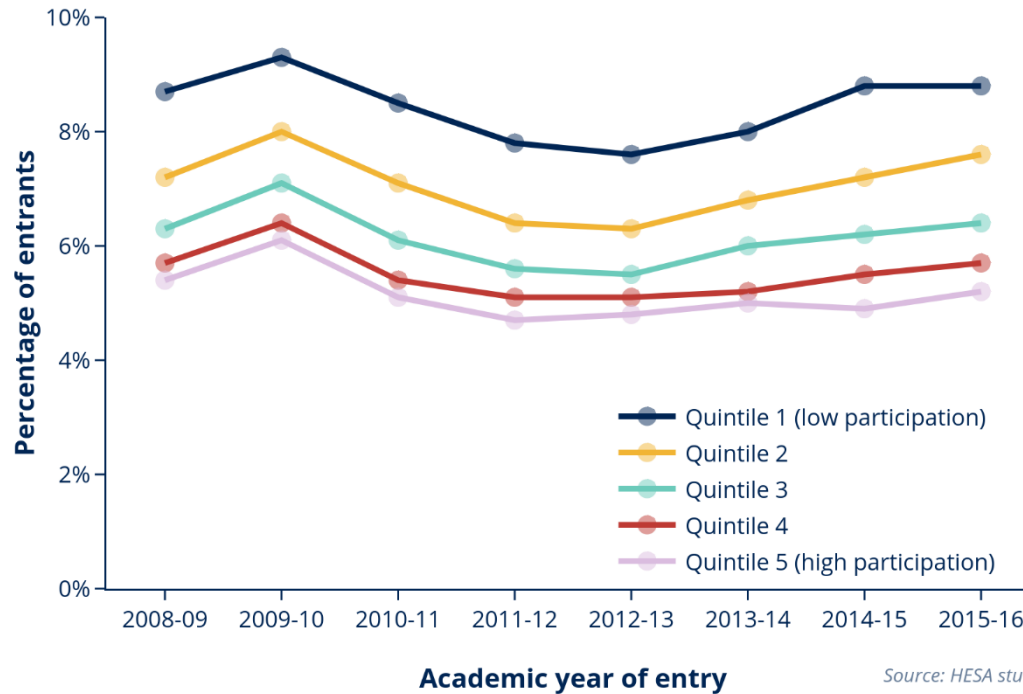
(Crawford, Dearden, Micklewright and Vignoles 2017)

‘A-level grades are not a measure of ability, and not an entirely objective measure of attainment, but can serve as an indicator of potential when judged with reference to the socio-economic context in which they were achieved...many universities now ask for A-level grades which far exceed the minimum required to do well at degree level’.

(Boliver, Gorard and Siddiqui 2017)

# Non-continuation: POLAR

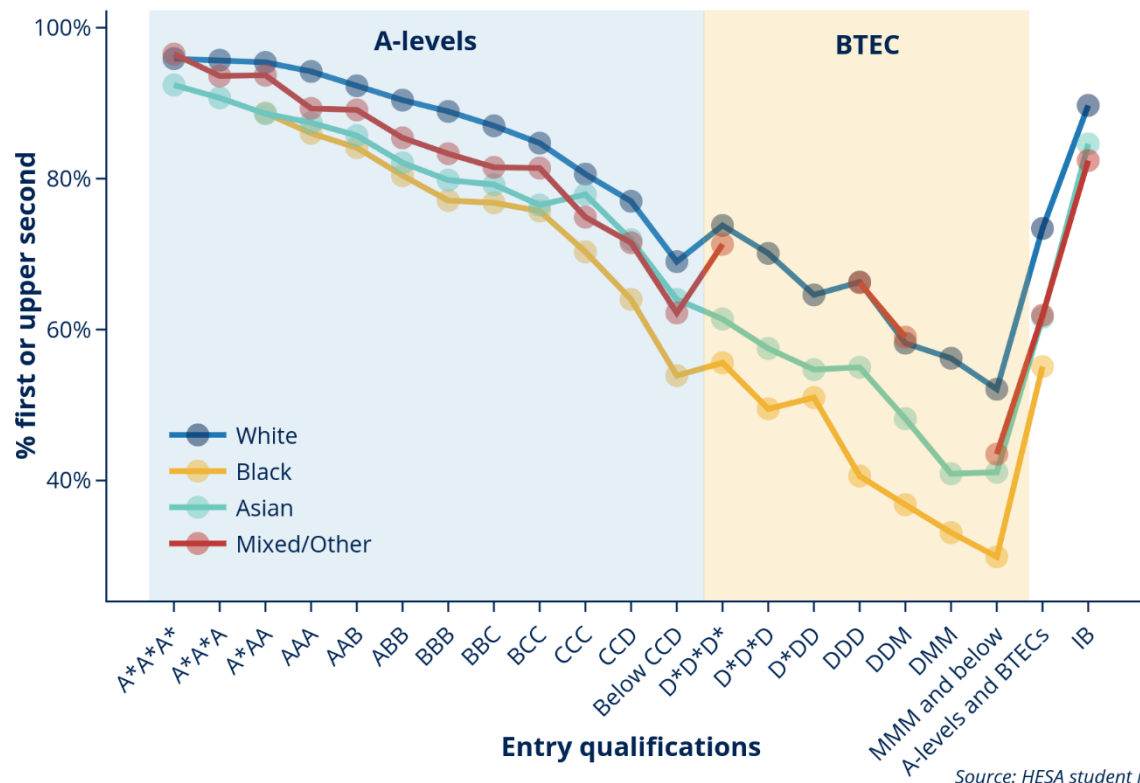
Non continuation rate by young participation



Source: HESA student record.

# Attainment: Ethnicity

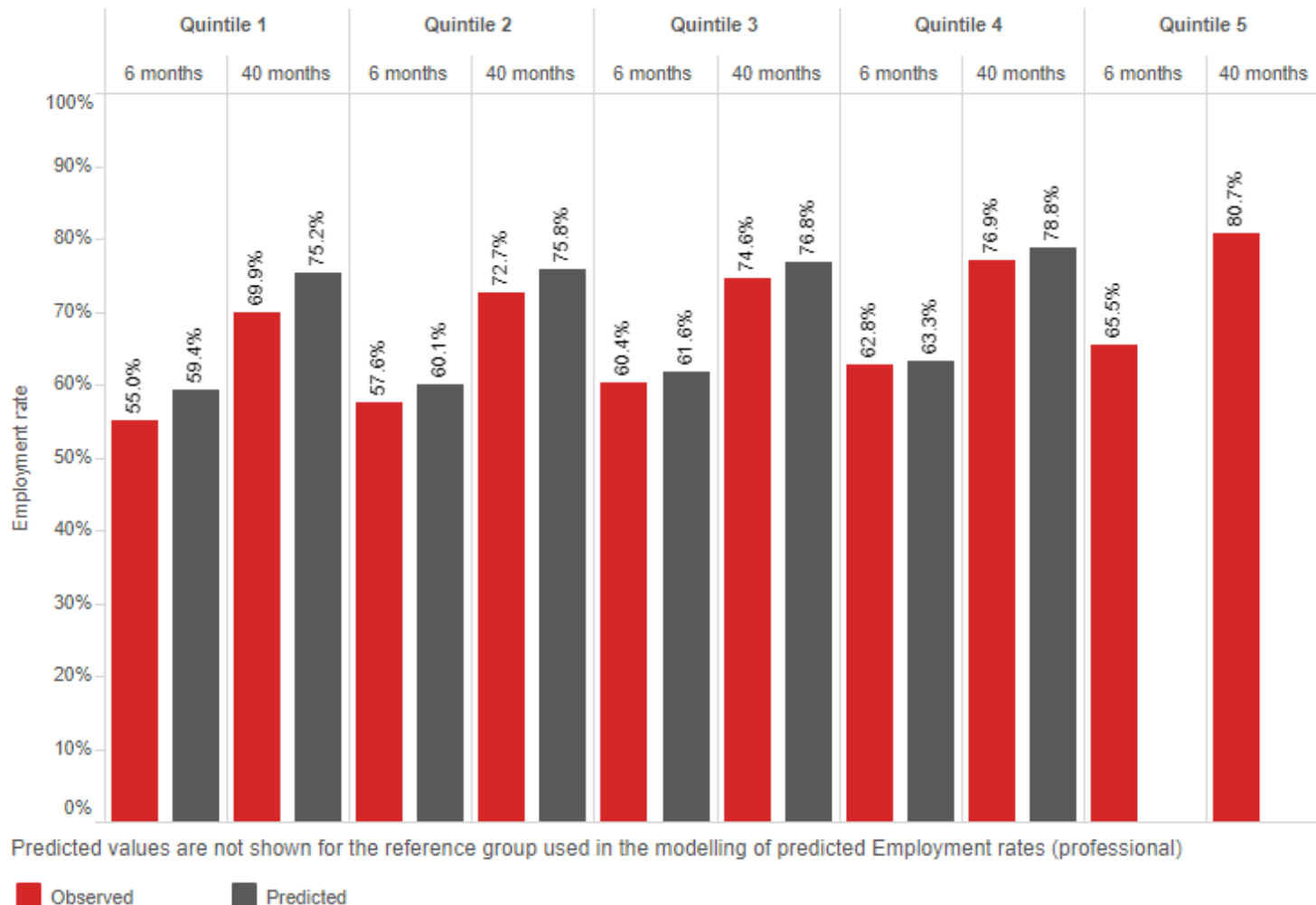
Graduate attainment by entry qualification and ethnicity



Source: HESA student record

# Progression

Comparison of observed professional employment rate with predicted professional employment rate, by POLAR3 quintile





# Causes of differential outcomes

- **Curricula and learning**, including teaching and assessment practices. Different student groups indicate varying degrees of satisfaction with the higher education curricula, and with the user-friendliness of learning, teaching and assessment practices.
- **Relationships between staff and students** and among students. A sense of 'belonging' emerged as a key determinant of student outcomes.
- **Social, cultural and economic capital**. Recurring differences in how students experience higher education, how they network and how they draw on external support were noted. Students' financial situations also affect their student experience and their engagement with learning.
- **Psychosocial and identity factors**. The extent to which students feel supported and encouraged in their daily interactions within their institutions and with staff members was found to be a key variable. Such interactions can both facilitate and limit students' learning and attainment.

# OfS Regulatory Framework objectives

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All students, from all backgrounds, and with the ability and desire to undertake higher education:

- are supported to access, succeed in, and progress from, higher education;
- receive a high quality academic experience, and their interests are protected while they study or in the event of provider, campus or course closure;
- are able to progress into employment or further study, and their qualifications hold their value over time;
- receive value for money



# Access and participation priorities

## Access

- To increase the entry rates of students from underrepresented groups to higher education, in particular reducing the participation gaps for those from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds and at higher tariff providers, where they are widest.
- To reverse the decline in higher education participation by mature students from underrepresented groups.

## Success

- To improve the non-continuation rates of students from underrepresented groups, particularly those from minority ethnic groups and those with disabilities, and to reduce the gaps between these groups and other students.
- To reduce the attainment gaps between students from underrepresented groups, particularly those from minority ethnic groups and those with disabilities, and those from other groups.

## Progression

- To improve the rates of progression of students from underrepresented groups, particularly those from minority ethnic groups and those with disabilities, into graduate-level employment or further study, and to reduce the gaps between these groups and other students

# Pressure on individual providers

- To demonstrate continuous, year-on-year improvement through access and participation plans to:
  - Reduce the gaps in access, success and progression for underrepresented groups among their own students
  - Improve practice, including through better evaluation and sustained engagement with schools from early years and with employers.
- A risk and outcomes based approach:
  - OfS can apply conditions where it identifies a higher level of risk to breach of this condition and it can refuse a plan

# Sector-wide support

- Removing barriers to new providers and flexible provision
- Improving information, advice and guidance
- Availability and use of more common and rigorous data and evidence
- Collaborative working between higher education providers and with schools and employers
- Development and sharing of innovative and effective practice.

# Our challenge

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‘Our regulatory framework enables the Director for Fair Access and Participation to develop a bold new approach to supporting social mobility, and equality and diversity, through higher education. ...We will be radical and ambitious to make sure we deliver on the promise of higher education as an engine for social mobility, and a gateway to a better life for those who undertake it.’



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