

Performance Indicators in Higher Education: Student Retention

Non-continuation following year of entry: full-time 2013/14 entrants and part-time 2012/13 entrants

For this indicator a value lower than the benchmark indicates that an institution is performing better than the sector average.

(a) Percentage of full-time first degree entrants, failing to continue in HE in 2014/15, following entry in 2013/14 (Table 1, Figure 1).

The Open University (OU) (NI campuses) did not have a percentage for this indicator, as all entrants during 2013/14 were part-time.

Young Entrants

NI HEIs were performing slightly worse than the UK average of 6.0%, with 6.3% of young full-time first degree students no longer in HE in 2014/15 following entry in 2013/14.

Stranmillis – 1.4% (benchmark – 4.1%) and QUB – 3.5% (benchmark – 3.7%) were performing better than their benchmarks, but not significantly.

UU – 9.0% (benchmark – 6.7%) and St. Mary’s – 6.7% (benchmark – 4.4%) were performing below their benchmarks, but not significantly.

Table 1: Percentage of full-time first degree entrants failing to continue in HE in 2014/15 following entry in 2013/14

	Young Entrants		Mature Entrants		All Entrants	
	No longer in HE (%)	Bench-mark	No longer in HE (%)	Bench-mark	No longer in HE (%)	Bench-mark
UK	6.0	-	11.8	-	7.2	-
NI	6.3	-	11.2	-	7.3	-
QUB	3.5	3.7	9.2	10.5	4.5	4.9
St Mary’s	6.7	4.4	..	..	6.3	4.6
Stranmillis	1.4	4.1	3.1	8.6	1.6	4.7
UU	9.0	6.7	12.7	12.7	9.9	8.1
OU (in NI)	..	..	..	..	..	..

Note: Percentages are not subject to rounding, but those calculated on populations which contain fewer than 22.5 individuals are suppressed and represented as ‘..’

+/- shows that the indicator is significantly better/worse than its benchmark.

Mature¹ Entrants

NI HEIs were performing better than the UK average of 11.8%, with 11.2% of mature full-time first degree students no longer in HE in 2014/15 following entry in 2013/14.

Both QUB and Stranmillis were performing better than their benchmarks, but not significantly so. The figures were QUB – 9.2% (benchmark – 10.5%) and Stranmillis – 3.1% (benchmark – 8.6%).

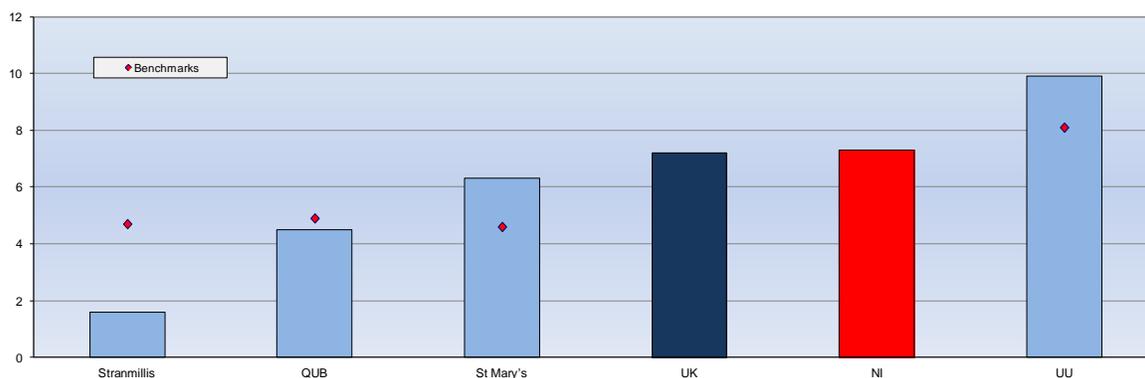
UU was performing the same as their benchmark, with 12.7% of mature full-time first degree students no longer in HE in 2014/15 following entry in 2013/14. Due to small numbers this measure was not produced for St Mary's.

All Entrants

For all full-time first degree entrants to NI HEIs, 7.3% of students were no longer in HE in 2014/15 following entry in 2013/14, compared to the UK average of 7.2%.

QUB and Stranmillis were performing better than their benchmarks, but not significantly. QUB had 4.5% (benchmark – 4.9%) of full-time first degree entrants failing to continue in 2014/15 following entry in 2013/14 and Stranmillis had 1.6% (benchmark – 4.7%). UU and St. Mary's were performing below their benchmark, but again, not significantly so. UU had 9.9% (benchmark – 8.1%) and St. Mary's had 6.3% (benchmark – 4.6%).

Figure 1: Percentage of all full-time first degree entrants failing to continue in HE in 2014/15 following entry in 2013/14



¹ See Definitions point 3.

(b) Percentage of young full-time first degree entrants failing to continue in HE in 2014/15 following entry in 2013/14 from low participation neighbourhoods.

This indicator looks at the percentage of entrants who come from low participation neighbourhoods...This indicator is not applicable in NI due to the methodological issues around the calculation of low participation areas at the NI institutional level (further information on this is available in the 'Contextual Information' document, which is published alongside this factsheet on the DEL website).

(c) Percentage of mature full-time first degree entrants failing to continue in HE in 2014/15 following entry in 2013/14 (Table 2).

This section disaggregates mature full-time first degree entrants into those (i) with a previous HE qualification and those (ii) with no previous HE qualification.

The Open University (OU) (NI campuses) did not have a percentage for this indicator, as all entrants during 2013/14 were part-time.

(i) Mature Full-time First Degree Entrants with previous HE qualification

For students with a previous HE qualification, NI HEIs were performing better than the UK average of 10.7%, with 10.0% of mature full-time first degree entrants no longer in HE in 2014/15 following entry in 2013/14.

QUB – 7.5% and Stranmillis – 12.0% were performing better, but not significantly better, than their benchmarks of 9.8% and 12.3% respectively. Due to small numbers this measure was not produced for St Mary's and Stranmillis.

(ii) Mature Full-time First Degree Entrants with no previous HE qualification

For students with no previous HE qualification, NI HEIs were performing slightly better than the UK average of 12.5%, with 12.2% of mature full-time first degree entrants no longer in HE in 2014/15 following entry in 2013/14.

QUB – 10.5% was performing better but not significantly better than their benchmark of 11.0%. UU – 13.4% was performing below, but not significantly below, their benchmark of 12.6%. Again due to small numbers this measure was not produced for St Mary's and Stranmillis.

Table 2: Percentage of mature full-time first degree entrants failing to continue in HE in 2014/15 following entry in 2013/14

	Previous HE		No previous HE	
	No longer in HE (%)	Benchmark	No longer in HE (%)	Benchmark
UK	10.7	-	12.5	-
NI	10.0	-	12.2	-
QUB	7.5	9.8	10.5	11.0
St Mary's	..	..	..	..
Stranmillis	..	..	..	..
UU	12.0	12.3	13.4	12.6
OU (in NI)	..	..	..	..

Note: Percentages are not subject to rounding, but those calculated on populations which contain fewer than 22.5 individuals are suppressed and represented as '..'

+/- shows that the indicator is significantly better/worse than its benchmark.

(d) Percentage of full-time other undergraduate entrants failing to continue in HE in 2014/15 following entry in 2013/14

NI HEIs were performing better than the UK average of 14.1%, with 13.0% of all full-time other undergraduate entrants no longer in HE in 2014/15 following entry in 2013/14. Stranmillis – 12.1% (benchmark – 13.0%) and UU – 8.3% (benchmark – 12.3%) both performed better than their benchmarks, but not significantly better. QUB – 16.7% performed below, but not significantly below, their benchmark of 11.1%. Due to small numbers this measure was not produced for St Mary's. The Open University (OU) (NI campuses) did not have a percentage for this indicator, as all entrants during 2013/14 were part-time.

(e) Percentage of part-time first degree entrants failing to continue in HE in 2014/15 following entry in 2012/13 (Table 3).

The part-time non-continuation indicator differs from the full-time indicators in that it looks at continuation two years following entry. It is further restricted to only include those students studying at least 30% of an FTE and excludes students who are recorded as being registered on multiple courses and those registered on a first degree programme the year before they entered.

Table 3: Percentage of part-time first degree entrants failing to continue in HE in 2014/15 following entry in 2012/13

	Aged 30 and under		Aged over 30		All Entrants	
	No longer in HE (%)	Benchmark	No longer in HE (%)	Benchmark	No longer in HE (%)	Benchmark
UK	38.4	-	34.3	-	36.4	-
NI	37.7	-	33.0	-	35.6	-
QUB	36.0	34.5	19.2	26.3	24.7	29.0
St Mary's	..	..	..	..	..	..
Stranmillis	4.2 +	30.5	..	..	7.3 +	27.5
UU	31.9	33.5	17.0 +	31.8	26.1 +	32.8
OU (in NI)	43.5	42.7	43.3	37.8	43.4	40.3

Note: Percentages are not subject to rounding, but those calculated on populations which contain fewer than 22.5 individuals are suppressed and represented as '..'

+/- shows that the indicator is significantly better/worse than its benchmark.

Entrants aged 30 and Under

NI HEIs were performing slightly better than the UK average of 38.4%, with 37.7% of part-time first degree entrants aged 30 and under, no longer in HE in 2014/15, following entry in 2012/13. Stranmillis – 4.2% was performing significantly better than their benchmark of 30.5%. UU – 31.9% was performing better than their benchmark of 33.5%, but not significantly. QUB and the OU (NI campuses) were performing below their benchmarks, but not significantly. The figures were: QUB – 36.0% (benchmark – 34.5%) and OU (NI campuses) – 43.5% (benchmark – 42.7%). Due to small numbers this measure was not produced for St Mary's.

Entrants aged over 30

At NI HEIs, 33.0% of part-time first degree entrants aged over 30 were no longer in HE in 2014/15 following entry in 2012/13, compared to the UK average of 34.3%. UU – 17.0% performed significantly better than their benchmark of 31.8%. QUB - 19.2% performed better, but not significantly better, than their benchmark of 26.3%. The OU (NI campuses) – 43.3% was performing below their benchmark of 37.8%, but not significantly. Due to small numbers this measure was not produced for St Mary's or Stranmillis.

All Entrants

NI HEIs were performing slightly better than the UK average (36.4%), in terms of part-time first degree entrants, with 35.6% no longer in HE in 2014/15, following entry in 2012/13. Both Stranmillis and UU were performing significantly better than their benchmarks. Stranmillis had 7.3% (benchmark – 27.5%) of part-time first degree entrants no longer in HE in 2014/15 following entry in 2012/13, and UU had 26.1% (benchmark – 32.8%). QUB – 24.7% was performing better, but not significantly

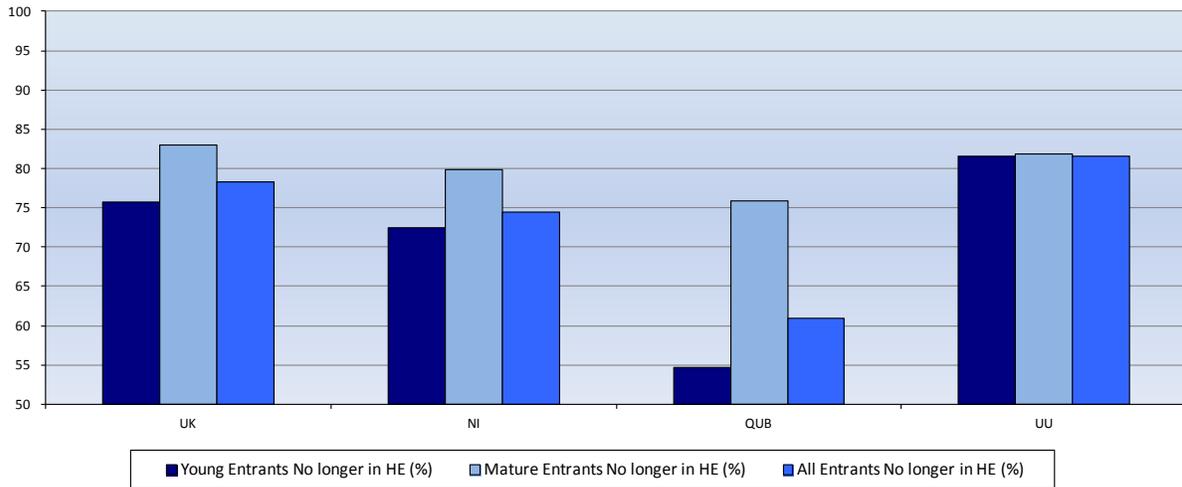
better, than their benchmark of 29.0%. The OU (NI campuses) – 43.4% was performing below their benchmark of 40.3%, but not significantly. Due to small numbers this measure was not produced for St Mary’s.

Resumption of study in 2014/15 after a year out in 2013/14 – 2012/13 entrants

There are no benchmarks associated with this indicator, as the student’s decision to return to study was not considered as an appropriate benchmark for comparing UK HEIs.

(a) Full-time first degree entrants (Table 4, Figure 2)

Figure 2 : Percentage of full-time first degree entrants in 2012/13, who took a year out in 2013/14, no longer in HE in 2014/15



The Open University (OU) (NI campuses) did not have a percentage for this indicator, as all entrants during 2012/13 were part-time.

Young Entrants

Of all young full-time first degree entrants to NI HEIs in 2012/13, who took a year out in 2013/14, 72.5% did not return to HE in 2014/15. This figure was lower than the UK average of 75.7%.

At QUB, 54.7% of all young full-time first degree entrants in 2012/13, who took a year out in 2013/14, did not return in 2014/15, compared to 81.6% at UU. Due to small numbers this measure was not produced for St Mary’s or Stranmillis.

Mature Entrants

At NI HEIs, 79.9% of all mature full-time first degree entrants in 2012/13, who took a year out in 2013/14, did not return to HE in 2014/15. This figure was lower than the UK average of 83.0%.

At QUB, 75.9% of all mature full-time first degree entrants in 2012/13, who took a year out in 2013/14, did not return in 2014/15, compared to 81.8% at UU. Due to small numbers this measure was not produced for St Mary's or Stranmillis.

All Entrants

Of all full-time first degree entrants to NI HEIs in 2012/13, who took a year out in 2013/14, 74.4% did not return to HE in 2014/15. This figure was slightly lower than the UK average of 78.3%.

At QUB, 60.9% of all full-time first degree entrants in 2012/13, who took a year out in 2013/14, did not return in 2014/15, compared to 81.6% at UU. Again due to small numbers this measure was not produced for St Mary's or Stranmillis.

Table 4: Percentage of full-time first degree entrants in 2012/13, who took a year out in 2013/14, no longer in HE in 2014/15.

	Young Entrants	Mature Entrants	All Entrants
UK	75.7	83.0	78.3
NI	72.5	79.9	74.4
QUB	54.7	75.9	60.9
St Mary's	..	..	..
Stranmillis	..	..	..
UU	81.6	81.8	81.6
OU (in NI)	..	..	..

Note: Percentages are not subject to rounding, but those calculated on populations which contain fewer than 22.5 individuals are suppressed and represented as '..'

+/- shows that the indicator is significantly better/worse than its benchmark.

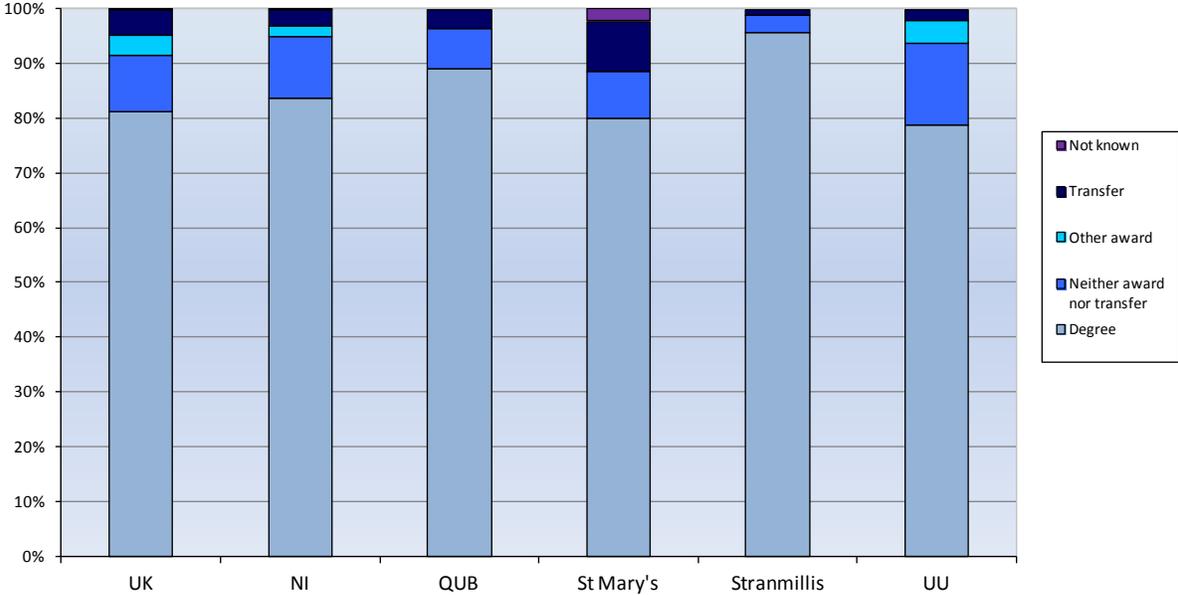
(b) Full-time other undergraduate entrants

The UK average, for all full-time other undergraduate entrants who did not resume study in 2014/15, after a year out of HE in 2013/14, was 85.7%. Due to small numbers this indicator was not been produced for NI.

Projected learning outcomes: Full-time first degree entrants – 2013/14

Another way to look at non-continuation rates is to use information on current movements of students to project what would happen in the long term. Thus, this indicator projects what proportion of students will eventually gain a degree, what proportion will leave their current university or college but transfer into higher education elsewhere, and what proportion will leave higher education altogether without any qualification.

Figure 3: Projected learning outcomes - Full-time first degree entrants - 2013/14



The Open University (OU) (NI campuses) did not have a percentage for this indicator, as all entrants during 2013/14 were part-time.

(a) Projected to attain a degree² (Table 6, Chart 4)

For this section a value higher than the benchmark indicates that an institution is projected to perform better than the sector average.

NI HEIs were projected to perform better than the UK average of 81.3%, with 83.7% of full-time students starting first degree courses in 2013/14 expected to gain a degree.

QUB – 89.1% and Stranmillis – 95.7%, were projected to perform above their benchmarks (86.3% and 88.0% respectively), but not significantly, for full-time first degree entrants expected to gain a degree. St Mary’s – 80.2% (benchmark - 86.2%)

² See notes point 3.

and UU – 78.8% (benchmark – 79.6%) were projected to perform below their benchmarks, but not significantly.

Table 5: Percentage of full-time first degree students expected to gain a degree or to gain no award nor transfer – 2013/14 entrants

	Obtain degree		No award nor transfer	
	Percentage	Benchmark	Percentage	Benchmark
UK	81.3	-	10.2	-
NI	83.7	-	11.2	-
QUB	89.1	86.3	7.4	7.0
St Mary's	80.2	86.2	8.5	6.8
Stranmillis	95.7	88.0	3.3	6.3
UU	78.8	79.6	14.8	11.4
OU (in NI)	..	..	..	..

Note: Percentages are not subject to rounding, but those calculated on populations which contain fewer than 22.5 individuals are suppressed and represented as '..'
 +/- shows that the indicator is significantly better/worse than its benchmark.

(b) Projected to finish without either gaining an award or transferring to another HEI (Table 6, Figure 4)

For this section a value lower than the benchmark indicates that an institution is projected to perform better than the sector average.

Overall, NI HEIs were projected to perform worse than the UK average of 10.2%, with 11.2% of full-time first degree entrants to NI HEIs in 2013/14 projected to finish without either gaining an award or transferring to another HEI.

Stranmillis with 3.3% were projected to perform better than its benchmark of 6.3%, but not significantly better.

With 7.4% and 8.5% of their full-time first degree entrants projected to neither gain an award nor transfer to another HEI, QUB and St Mary's were projected to perform worse than (but not significantly) their benchmarks of 7.0% and 6.8% respectively.

UU were projected to perform significantly below its benchmark of 11.4% with 14.8% of its full-time first degree entrants projected to neither gain an award nor transfer to another HEI.

A small proportion of full-time first degree entrants were projected to gain 'other awards' or transfer from NI HEIs.

Module completion rates – applicable to Welsh Institutions only

This indicator provides information about the pass rates of part-time students at Welsh institutions. Following consultation with stakeholders, which revealed very low usage levels of the module completion data, it was agreed by the Performance Indicators Steering Group (PISG) that from 2011/12 onwards this information will no longer be produced as part of the Performance Indicators.