



The All-Party Parliamentary  
**University Group**

**12 April 2016**



## **Agenda**

**The subject of the meeting of the All-Party Parliamentary University Group is Flexible pathways: part-time, adult education and life-long learning.**

**8.30am**      **Lord Norton of Louth**, Co-Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary University Group, welcome and introductions.

**8.35am**      **Peter Horrocks**, Vice-Chancellor, The Open University

**c8.45am**      **Martin Doel**, Chief Executive, Association of Colleges

**c8.55am**      **Ruth Spellman**, Chief Executive, Workers' Educational Association

**c9.05am**      **Rt Hon Lord Willetts**, Former Minister of State for Universities and Science, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

**c9.15am**      Questions, comments, and discussion with university leaders, MPs and Peers.

**10.00am**      Speaker meeting concludes.

## Speaker biographies



### **Peter Horrocks**

Peter took up the post of the sixth Vice-Chancellor of The Open University in May 2015. He also serves as Chairman of the Board for FutureLearn.

Peter arrived at the OU after a career with the BBC. As Director of the BBC World Service Group, he was responsible for leading the BBC's international news services across radio, television and online. In June 2015 Peter was awarded a CBE for Services to Broadcasting in the Queen's Birthday Honours.

Peter is also a member of the BIS International Education Council which champions the UK International Education Strategy and the Education UK brand. He is also a member of Universities UK's Social Mobility Advisory Group, which supports the delivery of the Prime Minister's goals to widen participation from disadvantaged and BME communities.

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### **Martin Doel**

Martin Doel took up his appointment as Chief Executive in 2008, after a successful career in the Royal Air Force. Martin's previous role was Director of Training and Education for all three Armed Services, working in the Ministry of Defence, the largest employer of apprentices in the UK. Prior to this he filled several operational support, personnel and training posts in the RAF, including service as the equivalent of a Director of Studies at the Joint Services Command and Staff College providing post-graduate level education to officers. He was appointed OBE in 1998 for his work in support of operations in the Balkans and for his contribution to Anglo-German relations. He holds a Master's Degree with Distinction from King's College, London and a First Class Honours Degree in Education from King Alfred's College Winchester. He was appointed a CBE in the 2016 New Year Honours for his work in education.



From April this year Martin was appointed as the first Further Education Trust for Leadership Professor of Further Education and Skills at University College London (Institute of Education) initially combining this with his role at AoC, but moving fully into the role from 1 September when he will stand down as AoC Chief Executive.



### **Ruth Spellman**

For the first time in its 108 year history, the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) has appointed a woman as its new Chief Executive. Ruth's career is marked by a commitment to lifelong learning – she was awarded an OBE in 2007 for services to workplace learning and an Honorary Doctorate from Cranfield in 2010.

Ruth's early experience was in the public sector, but she then developed her influencing and consulting skills through leading the HR consulting practice at Coopers and Lybrand. After undertaking voluntary work with the NSPCC she became HR Director, playing a key role in modernising the organisation and leading it through change, winning the Employer of the Year Award in 1996. From the NSPCC Ruth went to Investors in People where she established IIP as a leading brand, setting new standards of best practice in people development in the UK. She went on to become the first female chief Executive of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers taking it through a strategic review and increasing the membership, before moving to the Chartered Management Institute (CMI) in 2008.

The WEA is in Ruth's genes. Both her grandfather and father lectured for the WEA in the 1930's and 1950's, and she, too, was a part-time lecturer for the WEA in the 1970's.

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### **David Willetts**

The Rt Hon. Lord David Willetts is the Executive Chair of the Resolution Foundation. He served as the Member of Parliament for Havant (1992-2015), as Minister for Universities and Science (2010-2014) and previously worked at HM Treasury and the Number 10 Policy Unit.

Lord Willetts is a visiting Professor at King's College London, Governor of the Ditchley Foundation, Chair of the British Science Association and a member of the Council of the Institute for Fiscal Studies.



Lord Willetts has written widely on economic and social policy. His book 'The Pinch' was published by Atlantic Books in 2010.

# **Briefing – Flexible pathways: part-time, adult education and life-long learning**

**Prepared for members of the All-Party Parliamentary University Group**

This is not an official publication of the House of Commons or the House of Lords. It has not been approved by either House or its committees. All-Party Groups are informal groups of Members of both Houses with a common interest in particular issues.

This briefing document has been produced by Universities UK which provides the Secretariat for the University APPG.

The number of part-time students has seen a continuing decline. The NUS figures put this at a 38 percent drop in the last five years. They also suggest that the number of adult learners in further education has also dropped by 1.3 million<sup>1</sup>. In 2014 Universities UK held interviews with selected institutions to discuss the factors responsible for the recent decline in part-time undergraduate student recruitment.

Based on this exercise, the factors identified as influencing students' decisions to study part-time include:

- Reforms to undergraduate funding,
- The economic downturn, including increased unemployment and reduced employer funding, and
- Reductions in public funding, including reductions in public sector employment<sup>2</sup>.

The flexibility of part-time study is of particular significance for widening participation in that it facilitates a second chance for adult learners who had not progressed to higher education at 18, with these students more likely to be affected by any loss in earning while studying part-time and having greater costs in, for example, travel or childcare<sup>3</sup>.

When looking at mature entrant numbers, there has, historically, been a relatively high concentration of enrolments within the Open University where a continued decline in entrants pulls down the overall figures, even in 2013-14. In 2012-13 and 2013-14, mature entrants to the Open University fell by 25% and further 26% respectively. Outside of this institution, while it is the case that student number fell by around the same percentage in 2012-13 (27%), there was actually a very minor increase in the latest available data (2013-14)<sup>4</sup>.

The Chancellor announced in Budget 2016 that in order to promote retraining and prepare people for the future labour market, the government will review the gaps in support for lifetime learning, including for flexible and part-time study. This was linked to bringing together information about the wages of graduates of different courses and the financial support available across further and higher education, to enable applicants to make informed decisions about which courses are appropriate to their needs.

### Part-time study

Between 2010-11 and 2013-14, part-time study at HEIs in England (UK domiciled students only) dropped by 30% or 194,704. In 2010-11 there were 1.7 million UK domiciled students at HEIs in England, 1.1 million of these students studied full-time

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.independent.co.uk/student/news/conservatives-repeated-attacks-on-higher-education-see-hugely-concerning-decline-in-student-numbers-a6923346.html>

<sup>2</sup> Universities UK (2015) *Student Funding Panel* report, page 21

<sup>3</sup> Universities UK (2015) *Student Funding Panel* report, page 70

<sup>4</sup> Universities UK (2015) *Student Funding Panel* report, page 20

and 666,544 studied part-time. By 2013-14 the number of the number of part-time students declined 18% (194,704).<sup>[1]</sup>

74 courses experienced an absolute decline in the number of part-time students, with 204,812 fewer students in 2013-14 than in 2010-11, whereas 34 exhibited an increase, with 10,108 more part-time students in 2013-14. Focusing on the 74 courses that experienced a decrease in part-time study, we see that the decline was dominated by a small number of courses, with just 10 courses accounting for over 75% of the total decline in part-time study.

The table below shows that this drop in part-time study, within HEIs, occurred mainly in courses that have non-traditional aims (e.g. diplomas, certificates and awards as opposed to first degrees) and across a wide range of subjects, including combined studies, business, education, subjects allied to medicine, languages and social work. It is also worth highlighting the large decline in education-related Masters degrees, which experienced a 60% drop between 2010-11 and 2013-14.

In just one type of course – first degrees in subjects allied to medicine – was the requisite increase in full-time students large enough to offset the decline in part-time study; in all others the fall in part-time students resulted in a decline in the total number of students studying for those courses. This is likely to have had a detrimental effect on continuing professional development and the ability for individuals and businesses to upskill.

<i>Change in mode of study, 2010-11 to 2013/14, 10 courses with largest decline</i>	Part-time: Difference	Full-time: Difference	% of Total part-time decline
Other: 'Others/Combined	-44,399	-47	21.7%
Other: 'Business, administration, retail and leisure	-24,776	-1,156	12.1%
Masters: 'Education and training	-22,172	234	10.8%
Other: 'Education and training	-20,686	106	10.1%
Other: 'Subjects allied to medicine	-11,074	2,809	5.4%
Other: 'Languages and Area Studies	-8,883	-24	4.3%
Other: 'Social work and care	-6,759	64	3.3%
Other: 'Sciences: biological, physical and technologies	-6,063	-548	3.0%
First degree: 'Subjects allied to medicine	-5,222	26,488	2.5%
Foundation degree:' Education and training	-5,106	-1,475	2.5%

<sup>[1]</sup> The number of full-time students declined by 0.4% (4,573).



## HE Provision in England

The following figures look at HE-level study across HEIs and FECs with a specific focus on:

- qualification aims,
- links between FE and HE,
- routes of entry to first degree courses (at HEIs only),
- mode of study, and
- CPD.

The figures are for 2013/14 and relate to England only.

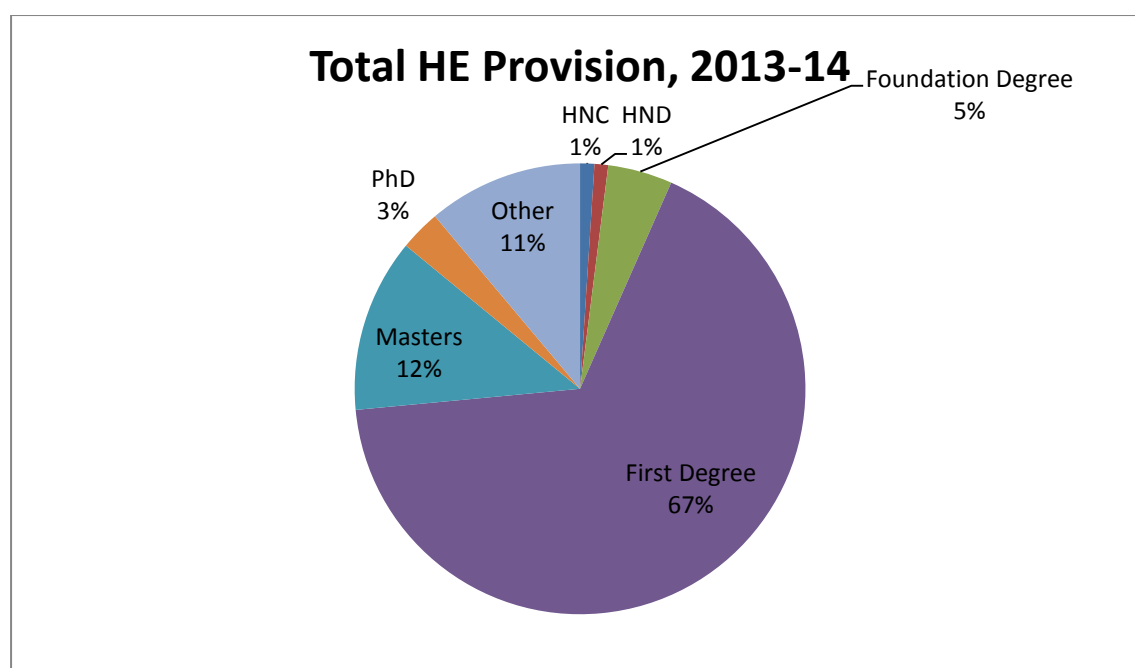
### **Qualification aims across HEIs and FECs**

There are 1.6 million HE students during 2013-14, 95% of which at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and 5% at Further Education Colleges (FECs).

Both HEIs and FECs provide:

- Higher National Certificates (HNCs), 1 year, which are equivalent to QCF 4;
- Higher National Diplomas (HNDs), 2 years, equivalent to QCF 5; students can add a third 'top up' year and earn a First/Honours degree
- Foundation Degrees (QCF 5); 2 years, students can add a third 'top up' year and earn a First/Honours degree
- First/Honours Degrees (QCF 6),
- Masters Degrees (QCF 7),
- PhDs (QCF 8), and
- Other qualification aims: awards and certificates that may not constitute a qualification but are provided at any of the QCF Levels between 4 and 8.

Total HE provision (including HEIs and FECs) is dominated by first degree provision.



However, when we separate out FEC and HEI provision, we see that first degrees dominate HE provision at HEIs while Level 4 and 5 qualifications, such as foundation degrees, HNC and HNDs combine to form a majority of undergraduate provision at FECs.

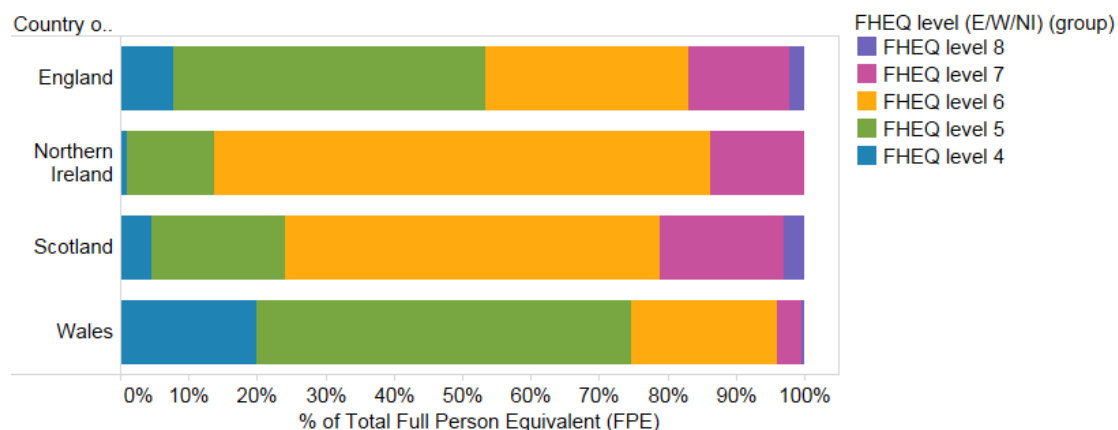
	HEIs	FECs
HNC	0.3%	15%
HND	0.3%	14%
Foundation Degree	3.0%	37%
First Degree	68.9%	27%
Masters	13.0%	1%
PhD	3.1%	0%
Other	11.5%	5%

### ***Linkages between HE provision at HEIs and FECs***

Students registered on higher education course at a higher education institution can be taught at the HEI or a partner organisation, including further education colleges and other private or public bodies in the UK. Commonly this involves a relationship between the higher education institution and a further education college where a student may be registered at the HEI but their teaching is delivered, either fully or a proportion, at an FEC.

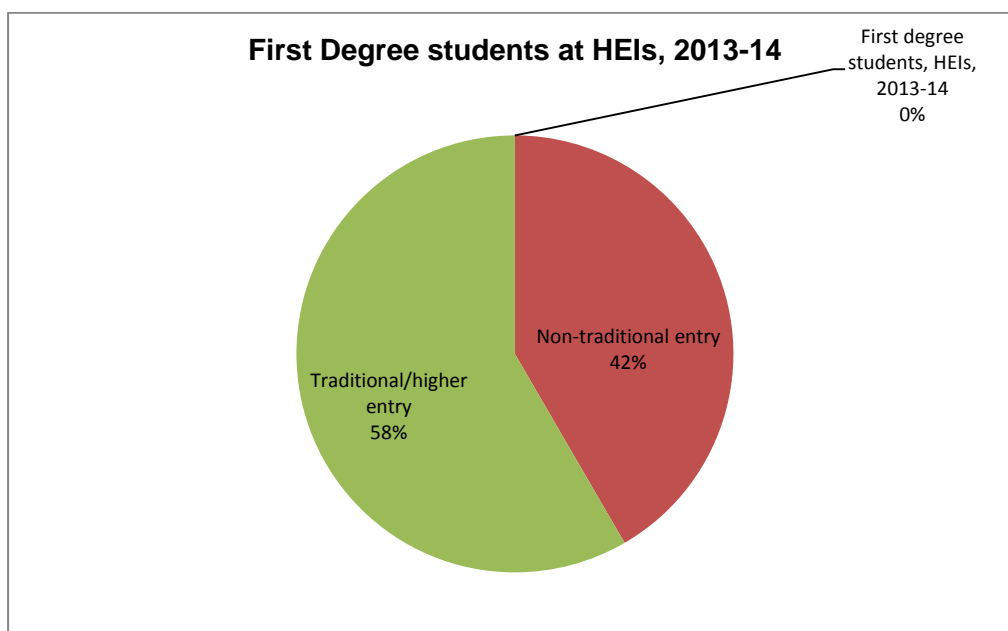
This type of arrangement is found across the UK. In England 3.2% of HE provision registered at HEIs is delivered in this way, compared to 5.2% in Northern Ireland, 1.3% in Scotland and 4.6% in Wales.

The chart below shows that in England level 4 and 5 accounts for 53% of all franchised provision. This compares to 24% in Scotland (where level 6 accounts for the bulk of franchised provision), 14% in Northern Ireland and 75% in Wales.



**Progression: Non-traditional entry routes to First degrees, in HEIs only<sup>5</sup>**

- In 2013/14 there were 1.04 million UK domiciled students studying for first degrees in England; of these, 604,441 (58%) entered HE through traditional routes (or already held HE level qualifications), such as A/AS Levels whereas 42% entered through non-traditional routes, including Foundation Degrees, HNCs, Higher apprenticeships, etc.



On average, First degree students with non-traditional entry routes are older than those with traditional entry routes; for example 64% of all students with traditional entry pathways are between the ages of 18 and 20, as compared to just 44% of those with non-traditional entry rates.

Age	Traditional entry	Non-traditional entry
18-20	64%	44%
21-29	26%	37%
30-39	5%	11%
40+	5%	9%

The proportion of traditional-entry first degree students with a BME background is only slightly lower (four percentage points) than the proportion of non-traditional entry students.

<sup>5</sup> We do not have data on the highest qualifications held by students on HE level courses (or more specifically, first degree courses) at Further Education Colleges (different dataset), so this analysis specifically refers to the number and type of students who are currently (2013-14) on first degree courses but entered these courses through a non-traditional (e.g. non A/AS Level, IBAC, etc.) route.

Ethnicity	Traditional entry	Non-traditional entry
BME	22%	26%
Unknown	1%	1%
White	76%	73%

A larger proportion of traditional entry first degree students (10 percentage points) have parents who attended university than non-traditional students.

Parental education	Traditional entry	Non-traditional entry
Don't know/refused	20%	25%
No	35%	41%
Yes	44%	34%

A higher proportion of non-traditional entry first degree students study on a part-time basis: 20% of non-traditional entry as compared to just 13% of traditional entry students.

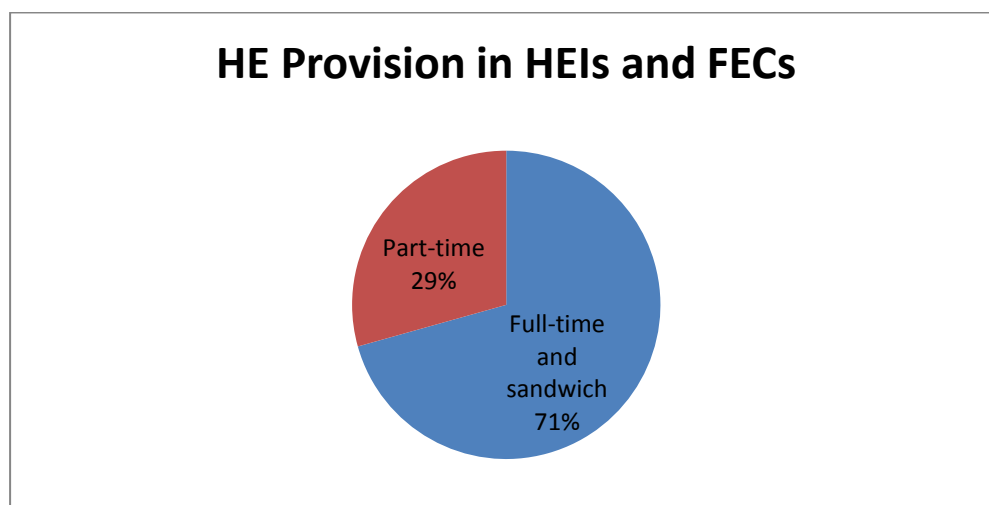
The subjects that traditional and non-traditional students choose are largely similar, even amongst mature students; however, there are larger proportion of non-traditional entry first degree students are on arts and communication courses:

	Non-traditional	Traditional
Arts and Communication	16%	11%
Sciences: biological, physical and technologies	15%	17%
Business, administration, retail and leisure	12%	11%
Subjects allied to medicine	11%	9%
Computer Science and ICT	6%	3%
Social Sciences	6%	10%
Education and Training	6%	4%
Languages and Area Studies	4%	9%
Engineering	4%	3%
Social work and care	4%	1%

Law and Legal Studies	3%	5%
History and Philosophy	3%	7%
Other/Combined Studies	3%	2%
Architecture, building, planning, construction	2%	2%
Medicine and dentistry	1%	4%
Mathematics	1%	3%
Veterinary services, agriculture, conservation	1%	1%

### **Mode of Study**

Across HEIs and FECs, 71% of HE-level provision is full-time whereas 29% in part-time<sup>6</sup>; the differences between HEIs and FECs are not significantly large; with part-time provision about 3 percentage points larger in FECs than in HEIs.<sup>7</sup>



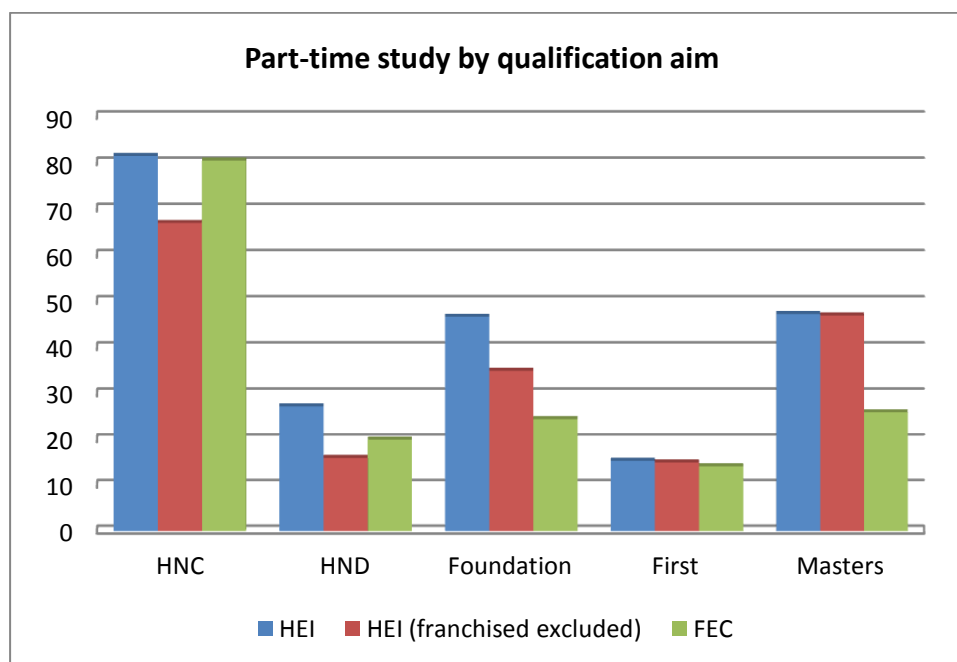
	FEC	HEI
Full-time and sandwich	67.8% (53,868)	70.8% (1,082,775)
Part-time	32.2% (25,361) <sup>8</sup>	29.2% (446,654)

<sup>6</sup> FEC HE provision classified as null in the ILR is, here, counted as part-time.

<sup>7</sup> However it should be noted, that of the 446,654 part-time HE students, 23,952 (5%) are HE students on courses that are at least partially franchised to FECs (642 between 0 and 50% franchised, 539 on courses between 50% and 100% franchised and 22,771 fully franchised).

Despite the recent decline in part-time study, the proportion of part-time students studying for HNDs, Foundation Degrees and Masters at HEIs is larger than the proportion studying for those qualifications on a part-time basis at FECs.

However, it should be noted that 48% of part-time HND students at HEI's are on courses that are at least partially franchised to FECs, as are 54% of those HEI students studying part-time for HNCs and 38% of those studying at HEIs on a part-time basis for Foundation Degrees.



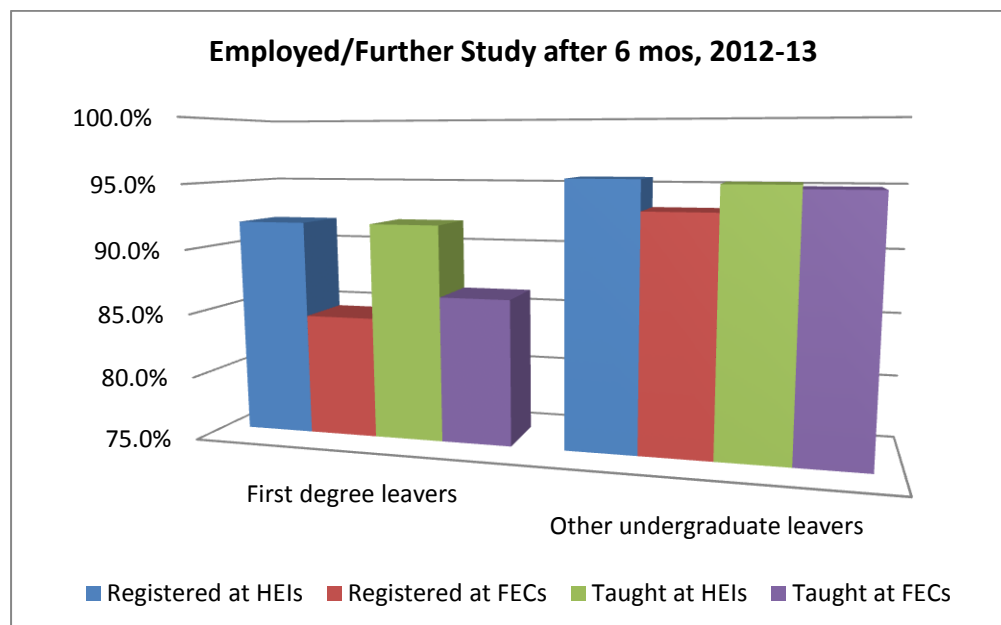
Within HEIs, part-time students for all qualifications, tend to be older than full-time students. (We do not have corresponding data on the age of students studying for HE level qualifications at FECs). The difference in the proportion of mature students is particularly large when comparing full versus part time for first/honours degrees and HNDs:

(HEIs only)	Masters	First/Honours	Foundation	HND	HNC	Other
% of full-time that are mature	64.58%	35.85%	52.81%	39.13%	31.37%	96.34%
% of part-time, that are mature	99.70%	92.95%	88.21%	85.66%	69.03%	96.34%

<sup>8</sup> Students listed as "Null" or "Not in Early Statistics" (of which there are 3,088 in total) are counted as part-time. If left as a separate null category, the proportions would be 68.5% full-time, 28.7% part-time and 4% null.

### **Employment outcomes: HE in FECs vs. HEIs**

HEFCE analysis comparing the proportion of leavers in employment or further study within six months of graduation indicates that while outcomes are roughly similar for other undergraduate leavers from both HEIs and FECs, FEC first degree graduates perform considerably worse than their HEI counterparts. Unfortunately this data cannot be broken down into separate work and further study categories, or by subject.



### **Lifelong learning/CPD (HE qualifications only)<sup>9</sup>**

Across both HEIs and FECs 11% of all HE level study results in non-specific qualification (e.g. not a first degree, Masters, etc.).

'Other' qualification aims are larger at HEIs than at FECs, in both relative and absolute terms: this comprises 13% of study (194,498 students) at HEIs as compared to 5% of HE level study (3,822 students) at FECs.

Much of this study is for short-cycle awards or certificates and some of it appears to be students taking individual modules. We can, however, break this 'other' study down according to subject and equivalent level at which the study is classified (e.g. 4, which is HNC level or 7 which is Masters, etc.).

It is difficult to disaggregate this study according to level because 34% of 'Other' HE-level qualifications taken at FECs are unclassified. It does appear, however, Level 7 study (equivalent to Masters level) is larger at HEIs.

<sup>9</sup> This specifically refers to study on courses that are classified as HE-level (QCF4+) and while this may include general interest studies, such as arts and languages, it will exclude many courses at FECs that are not strictly academic (e.g. 'equine care,' etc).

Levels	FECs	HEIs
4	10%	17%
5	12%	12%
6	10%	22%
7	35%	50%
(Unclassified)	34%	0%

When we break down these ‘other’ qualifications according to subject, it becomes clear that the majority of provision is work-related CPD; subjects allied to medicine and education comprise 62% of all other qualification aims at HEIs whilst education and training courses comprise 71% of this type of study at FECs.

Other qualification aims by subject	HEIs	FECs
Subjects allied to medicine	34.98%	NA
Education and Training	27.39%	71.14%
Business, administration, retail and leisure	7.65%	6.93%
Other/combined studies	5.70%	0.26%
Social work and care	5.21%	6.96%
Sciences: biological, physical and technologies	3.50%	2.62%
Law and Legal Studies	2.99%	0.10%
Languages and Area Studies	2.27%	0.31%
Architecture, building, planning, construction	2.07%	0.13%
Medicine and dentistry	1.59%	NA
History and Philosophy	1.54%	NA
Veterinary services, agriculture, conservation	1.41%	2.22%
Social Sciences	1.02%	2.56%
Arts and Communication	0.78%	4.89%
Computer Science and ICT	0.59%	0.03%
Mathematics	0.33%	NA

We do not have data on the background of students studying for ‘other’ qualification aims at FECs. However, at HEIs the proportion of students over the age of 30 is significantly larger for ‘Other’ qualification students than for any other type:

Qualification aim	% of students 30 and over
Other	60%
PhD	50%
Masters	39%
Foundation	36%
HNC	22%
HND	16%
First Degree	14%



## Recent policy changes

Since 2011 there have been a variety of policy changes with regards to the provision of loans. At the most recent Spending Review, the government confirmed its commitment to providing loans of up to £10,000 for English-domiciled (and other EU) postgraduate Masters students from 2016-17. Distance learning courses are in scope of this policy change, although these loans are restricted to students with at least 50% intensity of study. At Budget 2016, the Chancellor announced that the eligibility of Masters loans will be extended to include three-year part-time courses where no full time equivalent exists.

Until recently the only loan funding available was for full-time undergraduate students, now there a variety of options, these are set out below:

### *First degree beginning in 2016/17 academic year*

The Government has announced a consultation for the extension of maintenance loans to part-time students; this has not yet been published.

	<b>Tuition Loan</b>	<b>Maintenance Loan</b>
<b>Full-time</b>	<p>Maximum £9,000</p> <p>Maximum (at a private institution) £6,000</p>	<p>Living away from home, outside London £8,200</p> <p>Living at home £6,904</p> <p>Living away from home, in London £10,702</p> <p>Spending a year of a UK course studying abroad £9,391</p>
<b>Part-time (loan is dependent on course intensity of 25%)</b>	<p>Maximum £6,750</p> <p>Maximum (at a private institution) £4,500</p>	Due to be under consultation

***Study of a second undergraduate degree beginning in 2016/17 academic year***

The funding below is restricted to those studying STEM subjects. For students with an existing undergraduate degree financial support is for tuition only.

	<b>Tuition Loan</b>	<b>Maintenance Loan</b>
<b>Full-time</b>	Maximum £9,000  Maximum (at a private institution) £6,000	None
<b>Part-time (loan is dependent on course intensity of 25%)</b>	Maximum £6,750  Maximum (at a private institution) £4,500	None

***Post-graduate loan for Masters degrees 2016/17***

Available from the 2016/17 academic year, applicants must be under 60 to be eligible, live in England and not have a Masters degree or higher qualification. There will be a loan available for up to £10,000 to go towards fees and/or living costs.

This will not depend on personal or family income and applies to both part-time and full time students, although part-time students must be studying at a minimum course intensity of 50% or studying a three year part-time degree of which there is no full-time equivalent.





# The All-Party Parliamentary **University Group**

## **Future meetings**

### **25 May 2016**

Students as consumers in their education: where student fees go and how universities explain their financial decisions to students, the public and government  
*6-7.30pm, Committee Room 2a, followed by dinner*  
Speakers to be confirmed

### **28 June 2016**

University APPG Summer Reception  
*6-8pm, Churchill Room*

For more information about the group please email [appug@universitiesuk.ac.uk](mailto:appug@universitiesuk.ac.uk) or visit [www.universityappg.co.uk](http://www.universityappg.co.uk)