

Higher Education Statistical Fact Sheet 4: Enrolments at NI Higher Education Institutions by available equality categories: 2015/16 to 2019/20

- In 2019/20, 12.2% of students enrolled at NI HEIs self-reported as having a disability; an increase from 11.2% in 2018/19.
- In 2019/20, of those NI domiciled students enrolled at NI HEIs who were asked to provide the religion they were brought up in, 31.5% of students stated 'Protestant', 50.7% stated 'Roman Catholic' and the remainder were categorised as 'Other' (1.2%), 'No Religion' (9.6%) or 'Unknown' (7.0%).

Disability Status ⁽¹⁾	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Known disability	5,115	5,220	5,610	6,165	7,215
No known disability	49,820	48,975	48,410	49,120	51,860
Total	54,940	54,195	54,020	55,290	59,075

Religion ^{(2) (3) (4)}	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Protestant	13,025	12,810	12,525	12,960	13,145
Roman Catholic	20,435	20,340	20,210	20,640	21,180
Other	5,615	3,570	2,190	1,105	510
Unknown	4,045	3,670	3,605	3,355	2,910
No Religion	-	1,745	2,800	3,650	4,010
Total	43,120	42,140	41,325	41,705	41,755

Age	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
20 and under	19,600	19,125	18,875	18,810	19,135
21 to 24	15,135	15,305	15,745	16,280	16,840
25 and over	20,200	19,765	19,405	20,195	23,100
Unknown	0	0	0	0	5
Total	54,940	54,195	54,020	55,290	59,075

Sex	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Male	23,760	23,440	23,085	23,160	24,350
Female	31,180	30,750	30,935	32,130	34,725
Total	54,940	54,195	54,020	55,290	59,075

Ethnicity ⁽¹⁾	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
White	49,275	48,260	47,610	48,250	47,390
Irish Traveller	10	15	10	15	10
Black	360	370	340	430	435
Indian	300	295	275	355	480
Pakistani	195	185	150	180	185
Bangladeshi	115	115	55	60	50
Chinese	350	355	370	375	345
Other Asian	295	300	280	340	375
Mixed	340	375	405	440	460
Other	220	235	200	235	265
Unknown	3,480	3,690	4,325	4,615	9,080
Total	54,940	54,195	54,020	55,290	59,075

Marital Status ⁽²⁾	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Single (never married or never in civil partnership)	36,245	35,580	34,160	34,460	34,490
Married or in civil partnership	4,340	4,095	3,850	4,065	4,350
Separated (but still legally married or in civil partnership)	260	245	230	240	270
Divorced or civil partnership dissolved	260	225	215	220	260
Widowed	55	45	40	40	80
Co-habiting	700	680	650	710	875
Unknown	1,260	1,265	2,180	1,975	1,430
Total	43,120	42,140	41,325	41,705	41,755

Dependants ⁽²⁾	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Young people/children (YP/C)	4,295	4,100	3,930	4,095	4,185
Other relative/friends (OR/F)	310	285	280	290	340
Both YP/C and OR/F	460	400	370	400	450
No dependants	36,715	36,010	35,365	35,605	34,935
Unknown	1,340	1,345	1,380	1,310	1,840
Total	43,120	42,140	41,325	41,705	41,755

Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

Notes:

1. Information on disability and ethnicity is collected on the basis of a student's self assessment.
2. Information on religion, marital status and dependants is only collected for NI domiciled students studying at NI HE institutions.
3. Religious affiliation is not a mandatory question and therefore can have a high non-response rate.
4. A new coding framework was added to the HESA data collection for the Religion question in 2016/17, which includes an additional category for 'No Religion'. More information can be found at: [HESA Religion](#)
5. From the 2014/15 academic year onwards, within DfE publications, Open University students are counted within the country where the national centre is located. Figures for the previous academic years have been updated to reflect this change.
6. Enrolments at the OU (where the national centre is located in NI) have been removed from the figures for religion, marital status and dependants due to high levels of unknowns.
7. To avoid a duplication of foundation year figures across HE institutions and Further Education Colleges, Queen's University Belfast and Stranmillis University College changed their return to HESA during 2019/20 and no longer report on foundation degrees that are offered as part of a validated collaborative arrangement with Further Education Colleges. Historical figures in this fact sheet have been backdated to reflect this change.
8. To prevent the identification of individuals, figures in the attached table are rounded to the nearest 5, with 0, 1 and 2 rounded to 0. Due to rounding, the sum of numbers in each row or column may not match the total shown.
9. Percentages are based on unrounded figures.

Links

Data from this fact sheet are available in open data format at the following link:

[Higher Education Statistical Factsheets](#)

More Higher Education statistics are available from:

[Higher Education Statistics and Research](#)