

Higher Education Statistical Fact Sheet 5: Enrolments at UK Higher Education Institutions by country of institution and subject area – 2019/20

Of the 59,075 students enrolled at Northern Ireland Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in 2019/20:

- 14,830 (25.1%) were enrolled on Narrow STEM related courses. The equivalent percentages for English, Scottish and Welsh HEIs were higher, at 27.0%, 29.3% and 30.2% respectively.
- 31,480 (53.3%) were enrolled on Broad STEM related courses. The equivalent percentages for English, Scottish and Welsh HEIs were lower, at 45.1%, 49.1% and 47.2% respectively.
- The three most popular subject areas studied in NI HEIs were 'Subjects allied to medicine' (21.2%), 'Business and management' (14.2%) and 'Social sciences' (8.9%).

Enrolments at UK HEIs by subject area and country of institution – 2019/20

Subject Area	Country of Institution			
	England	NI	Scotland	Wales
Biological and sports sciences	88,960	1,910	12,160	9,935
Psychology	97,830	1,870	10,855	7,060
Physical sciences	57,175	1,000	8,460	3,820
Mathematical sciences	39,180	615	5,360	1,605
Engineering and technology	137,305	3,885	21,180	9,590
Computing	102,025	4,800	15,515	7,735
Geographical and environmental studies (natural sciences)	18,180	750	2,720	1,410
Total Narrow STEM¹ related subjects	540,655	14,830	76,250	41,155
Medicine and dentistry	56,475	2,090	8,185	3,540
Subjects allied to medicine	233,520	12,520	31,525	15,825
Veterinary Science	8,395	5	2,105	145
Agriculture, food and related studies	12,395	380	2,425	1,195
General and others in sciences	4,970	65	1,120	195
Architecture, building and planning	46,450	1,595	6,340	2,315
Total Broad STEM² related subjects	902,860	31,480	127,945	64,375
Geographical and environmental studies (social sciences)	9,975	90	1,090	810
Humanities and liberal arts (non-specific)	6,185	405	1,815	280
Social sciences	212,805	5,260	23,410	14,200
Law	86,700	2,100	9,265	5,750
Business and management	326,950	8,395	34,570	19,045
Communications and media	38,725	810	3,810	2,365
Language and area studies	79,695	1,620	13,255	7,180
Historical, philosophical and religious studies	61,300	990	10,840	3,745
Creative arts and design	154,060	2,135	11,750	7,585
Education and teaching	100,500	4,770	16,350	7,125
Combined and general studies	20,405	1,015	6,385	3,895
All subject Areas	2,000,150	59,075	260,490	136,355
% Narrow STEM related subject	27.0%	25.1%	29.3%	30.2%
% Broad STEM related subject	45.1%	53.3%	49.1%	47.2%

Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

Notes:

1. 2019/20 saw the introduction of a new subject coding system, the Higher Education Classification of Subjects (HECoS). This replaced the previous subject coding system, the Joint Academic Coding System (JACS). In addition to HECoS, a Common Aggregation Hierarchy (CAH) was introduced this year to provide a standardised hierarchical aggregation of HECoS codes suitable for the majority of users. The CAH has been developed to provide standard groupings that can be applied to both HECoS and JACS allowing for consistent analysis across coding frames. It is important to remember though that these are two distinct coding frames. For more information, refer to HESA's webpage on [HECOS and CAH](#). Information on subject area provided in this fact sheet is based on CAH level 1, comprising 23 groups; for the purposes of STEM analysis though Geographical and environmental studies have been split into natural sciences and social sciences.
2. The STEM groupings used in this fact sheet are based on the approach developed by HESA to categorise subjects into science/non-science subjects. Their science grouping is an aggregation of relevant CAH level 1 subject codes (derived from HECoS), with the exception of CAH12 (Geographical and environmental studies), which has been split into natural sciences and social sciences. The natural science element is categorised into the science grouping and the social sciences element into the non-science grouping. The same approach has been taken when categorising CAH level 1 subject codes into STEM groupings, and maps well to the previous JACS coding of STEM subjects.
3. Narrow STEM related subject areas include: Biological and sports sciences; Psychology; Physical sciences; Mathematical sciences; Engineering and technology; Computing; and Geographical and environmental studies (natural sciences).
4. Broad STEM related subject areas: Medicine and dentistry; Subjects allied to medicine; Biological and sports sciences; Psychology; Veterinary sciences; Agriculture, food and related studies; Physical Sciences; General and others in sciences; Mathematical sciences; Engineering and technology; Computing; Geographical and environmental studies (natural sciences); and Architecture, building and planning.
5. To prevent the identification of individuals, figures have been rounded to the nearest 5, in line with HESA rounding strategy, with 0, 1 and 2 rounded to 0.
6. Due to rounding, the sum of rows or columns may not match the totals shown.
7. Percentages are based on unrounded figures.

Links:

Data from this fact sheet are available in open data format at the following link:
<https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/articles/higher-education-statistical-fact-sheets>

More Higher Education statistics are available from:
[Higher Education Statistics and Research](#)