

## Higher Education Statistical Fact Sheet 5: Enrolments at UK Higher Education Institutions by country of institution and subject area – 2021/22

Of the 69,565 students enrolled at Northern Ireland Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in 2021/22:

- 15,760 (23%) were enrolled on Narrow STEM related courses, lower than the equivalent percentages for English, Scottish and Welsh HEIs, at 26%, 29% and 31% respectively.
- 36,260 (52%) were enrolled on Broad STEM related courses, higher than the equivalent percentages for English, Scottish and Welsh HEIs, at 45%, 49% and 48% respectively.
- The three most popular subject areas studied in NI HEIs were 'Subjects allied to medicine' (23%), 'Business and management' (18%) and 'Social sciences' (9%).

### Enrolments at UK HEIs by subject area and country of institution – 2021/22

Subject Area	Country of Institution			
	England	NI	Scotland	Wales
Biological and sports sciences	91,560	1,960	13,370	10,615
Psychology	116,480	2,205	13,025	8,720
Physical sciences	54,310	1,075	8,805	3,015
Mathematical sciences	38,875	635	5,970	1,665
Engineering and technology	149,605	4,075	22,035	10,010
Computing	131,065	5,045	18,355	9,795
Geographical and environmental studies (natural sciences)	25,085	765	5,240	2,125
<b>Total Narrow STEM<sup>1</sup> related subjects</b>	<b>606,980</b>	<b>15,760</b>	<b>86,795</b>	<b>45,945</b>
Medicine and dentistry	64,770	2,500	10,655	3,740
Subjects allied to medicine	296,050	15,790	36,370	18,005
Veterinary Science	9,750	0	2,275	120
Agriculture, food and related studies	15,215	440	2,805	1,200
Architecture, building and planning	52,110	1,765	7,230	2,500
<b>Total Broad STEM<sup>2</sup> related subjects</b>	<b>1,044,870</b>	<b>36,260</b>	<b>146,130</b>	<b>71,505</b>
Geographical and environmental studies (social sciences)	10,190	140	1,170	725
Social sciences	238,175	5,955	27,060	15,140
Law	120,935	2,325	10,230	8,835
Business and management	450,120	12,610	45,020	22,710
Language and area studies	68,300	1,525	12,825	5,150
Historical, philosophical and religious studies	65,845	980	12,410	3,845
Education and teaching	107,505	2,885	17,870	7,700
Combined and general studies	29,010	3,820	10,880	3,935
Media, journalism and communications	39,900	960	4,610	2,670
Design, and creative and performing arts	167,920	2,115	13,025	6,830
<b>All subject Areas</b>	<b>2,342,775</b>	<b>69,565</b>	<b>301,230</b>	<b>149,045</b>
<b>% Narrow STEM related subject</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>31%</b>
<b>% Broad STEM related subject</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>48%</b>

Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

#### Notes:

1. A change to the data coverage in this fact sheet was made in 2020/21, as Alternative Provider (AP) data from the HESA Student Alternative record was combined for the first time with the usual HESA Student Record data submitted by HEI providers. An AP is any provider of higher education courses: not in direct receipt of recurrent funding from UK funding bodies; not a Further Education college; and not registered as 'approved (fee cap)' on the Office for Students (OfS) register. They consist solely of English providers, such as The University of Law, BIMM Limited and BPP University. Historical figures in the online open data tables have been produced back to, and including, 2017/18, using this new methodology.
2. 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.
3. This change in subject coding systems has an impact on the STEM groupings presented in this fact sheet. The STEM groupings presented for the years 2017/18 to 2018/19 are based on the JACS coding system. Narrow STEM related courses include: Biological Sciences; Physical Sciences; Mathematical Sciences; Computer Science; and Engineering and Technology. Broad STEM related courses include all those in Narrow STEM along with the following: Medicine and Dentistry; Subjects allied to Medicine; Veterinary Sciences; Agriculture and related subjects; and Architecture, Building and Planning.
4. The STEM groupings presented for 2019/20 onwards use the CAH 1.3.4 subject groups. STEM definitions 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 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.
5. Based on CAH subject groupings, narrow STEM related courses include: Biological and sports sciences; Psychology; Physical sciences; Mathematical sciences; Engineering and technology; Computing; and Geographical and environmental studies (natural sciences). Broad STEM related subjects include all those in Narrow STEM along with the following: Medicine and dentistry; Subjects allied to medicine; Veterinary sciences; Agriculture, food and related studies; and Architecture, building and planning.
6. 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.
7. Due to rounding, the sum of rows or columns may not match the totals shown.
8. Percentages are based on rounded figures and rounded to the nearest integer.

#### 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](#)