

## Overall student profile, 2011-12

- In 2011-12 the University had a total of 27,230 students.

The majority (63.2%) of students are studying for their first degree, where the highest proportion (21.3%) of this cohort is studying under the Business and Administrative studies subject area. Of the remaining undergraduate students, the highest proportion of these students study in subjects allied to medicine, which is also the subject area with the highest proportion of part-time students at undergraduate level (12.8%).

**Figure 1 Student profile by mode, level and subject area 2011/12<sup>1</sup>**

2011/12 Subject Area	Full-time and Sandwich				Part-time				Total	%
	PGR	PGT	First degree	OUG	PGR	PGT	First degree	OUG		
Medicine & dentistry	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	
Subjects allied to medicine	18.0	143.0	2,520.5	748.0	80.0	1,074.0	371.5	958.0	5,913.0	22%
Biological sciences	80.0	156.0	1,293.0	97.0	37.0	103.0	77.0	164.0	2,007.0	7%
Veterinary science	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0%
Agriculture & related subjects	0.0	0.0	0.0	27.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.0	30.0	0%
Physical sciences	32.0	24.0	286.0	0.0	6.0	50.0	20.0	0.0	418.0	2%
Mathematical sciences	1.0	6.0	244.0	0.0	3.0	0.0	13.0	0.0	267.0	1%
Computer science	30.0	196.0	875.5	217.5	13.0	53.0	131.0	51.5	1,567.5	6%
Engineering & technology	31.0	191.0	1,322.0	0.0	25.0	29.0	120.0	80.0	1,798.0	7%
Architecture, building & planning	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.0	36.0	52.0	94.0	0%
Social studies	0.0	133.0	447.5	14.0	8.0	110.0	21.5	19.0	753.0	3%
Law	0.0	179.0	1,057.0	9.0	0.0	22.0	83.0	149.0	1,499.0	6%
Business & administrative studies	13.0	1,079.0	3,416.0	217.5	42.0	445.0	259.0	111.5	5,583.0	21%
Mass communications & documentation	0.0	19.0	78.0	0.0	1.0	5.0	2.0	0.0	105.0	0%
Languages	7.0	7.0	326.0	38.0	11.0	3.0	0.0	349.0	741.0	3%
Historical & philosophical studies	9.0	0.0	218.8	0.0	17.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	244.8	1%
Creative arts & design	2.0	53.0	2,169.5	299.0	19.0	66.0	144.0	154.0	2,906.5	11%
Education	3.0	211.0	518.0	0.0	54.0	668.0	103.0	512.0	2,069.0	8%
Combined	0.0	1.0	989.2	108.0	0.0	18.0	70.0	47.0	1,233.2	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>226.0</b>	<b>2,400.0</b>	<b>15,761.0</b>	<b>1,775.0</b>	<b>316.0</b>	<b>2,651.0</b>	<b>1,451.0</b>	<b>2,650.0</b>	<b>27,230.0</b>	<b>100%</b>

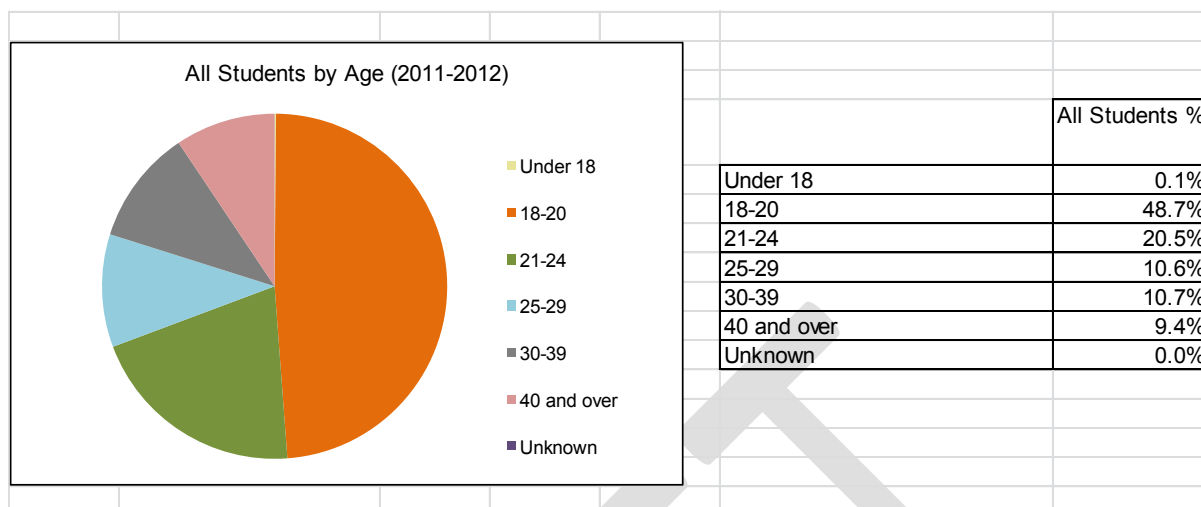
## Student Profile by Age

The majority (48.7%) of our students are aged 18-20 years, which is comparable to the higher education sector in the UK that has a profile of 51.3% for students of 21 years and under<sup>2</sup>. The latter is an increase on the previous year, however for the University of Hertfordshire the numbers of students aged 18-20 has declined slightly by 2.3% from last year, although overall the University has seen a considerable growth (54.1%) in students of this age category over the past decade. Where the University has seen an even bigger growth over the past decade is the numbers of students aged 21-24, where numbers have increased by 95% since 2001/2. This cohort of students has been consistently increasing since this time and numbers are now at a record high of 5,577 in 2011/12. Similarly, students aged 25-29 have increased by 49.9% since 2011/2, however their numbers have declined by 1% from last year 2011/12. A more worrying trend has been the consistent decline in the numbers of students aged over 30. Over the past decade their numbers have dropped by 3.2% for students aged 30-39 and, although not statistically significant at the moment, 1.5% for students aged over 40 years.

<sup>1</sup> OUG in the table stands for Other Undergraduate

<sup>2</sup> Equality Challenge Unit, *Equality in higher education statistical report 2013, Part 2 Students:138*

Figure 2 Student profile by age 2011/12



Of the students studying at undergraduate level 61.2% are aged 18-20. The majority of students studying full-time are also aged 18-20 (61.2%). Conversely, from the students that study part-time, the highest proportion are aged 40 and over (27.9%) followed by students aged 30-39 (24.9%). This profile of part-time students might indicate that students aged over 30 years have other responsibilities or commitments outside of their studies, where part-time study might be more convenient. Additionally, the financial burden of study may be affecting take up from older students. Either way, it might be beneficial to understand what draws or deters students of this age group to study at the University and whether their decline in numbers over the past decade is linked to the University's part-time course offer or if they are deterred by the cost of higher education.

In relation to postgraduate programmes, the highest proportion of students studying in postgraduate taught programmes are aged 21-24 (28%), closely followed by students aged 25-29 (27.5%). This profile changes quite drastically at postgraduate research level, where the highest proportion of students (34.5%) are aged 40 and over, followed by students aged 25-29 (25.5%).

### Attainment according to Age

Overall, high proportions of our students across all age groups demonstrate good rates of success in qualifying. The age group that showed the highest proportion achieving a qualification of 2:1 and above were those students aged 50-59 (76% of this cohort). In contrast, 53% of students aged 25-29 achieved a 2:1 or above (the lowest proportion of all the age groups) and because of this differential of 23% it may be necessary to undertake further analysis to understand why older students are proportionately more likely to achieve a 'good degree' than their younger peers. Although the attainment gap might be similar across the rest of the sector, it is important that the University can close the attainment gap between its students of different age groups.

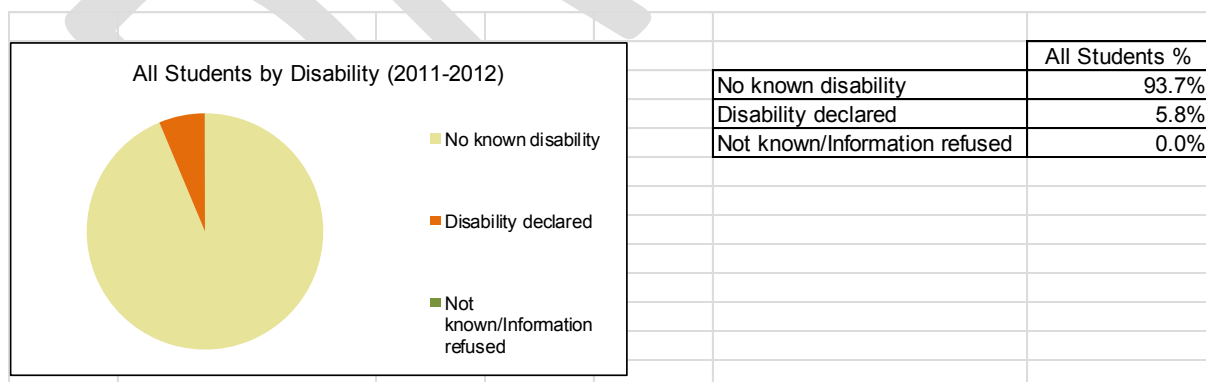
Figure 3 Student attainment profile by age 2011/12

	1st		2:1		2:2		3rd		Total	%
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%		
18 and under	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	100%
19-20 years	30	21%	70	50%	40	29%	0	0%	140	100%
21-24 years	710	19%	1,670	44%	1,085	29%	330	9%	3795	100%
25-29 years	100	20%	165	33%	125	25%	115	23%	505	100%
30-39 years	60	23%	90	34%	60	23%	55	21%	265	100%
40-49 years	40	26%	55	35%	30	19%	30	19%	155	100%
50 & over	15	38%	15	38%	5	13%	5	13%	40	100%
60 & over	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	100%
Total	955	19%	2065	42%	1345	27%	535	11%	4900	100%

### Student Profile by Disability

A lower proportion of students at the University declare a disability than across the higher education sector in the UK, where 8.6% of all students declared a disability in 2011/12<sup>3</sup>. At undergraduate level a slightly higher proportion (6.1%) declared a disability; however the proportions of declared disabled students dropped to 4.7% in postgraduate taught and rose considerably to 7.2% for students in postgraduate research programmes respectively.

Figure 4 Student profile by disability 2011/12



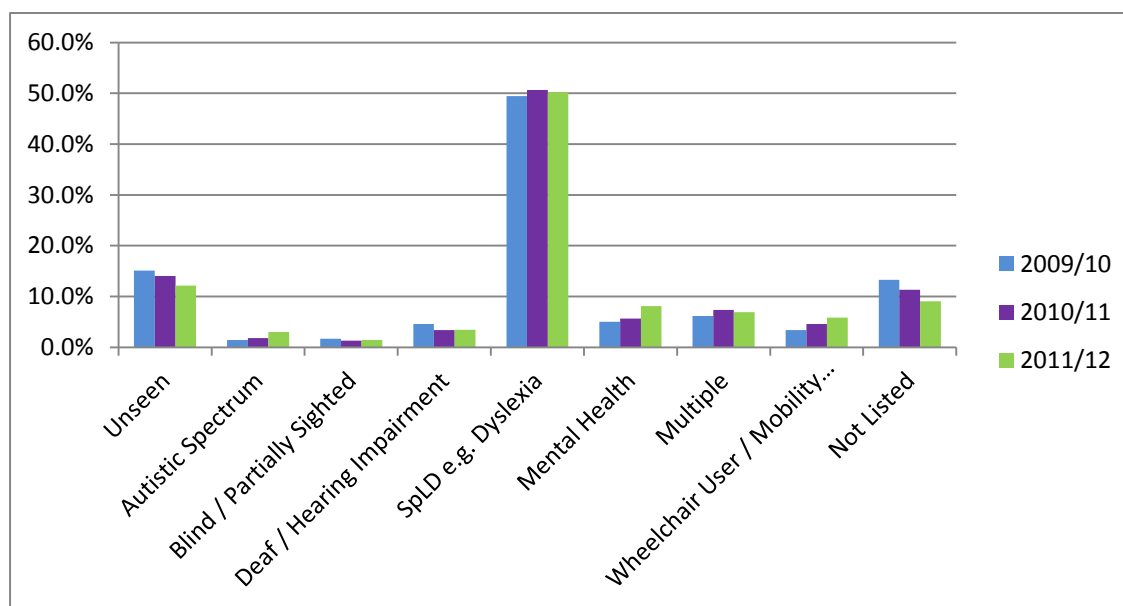
There has been a slight reduction in the proportion of students declaring a disability since last year, where it was reported that 6.7% of our students declared a disability. This is against a trend in the wider higher education sector, where the proportions of disabled students increase year on year. It is not clear whether this is a true reflection of the proportion of students that declare a disability within their first year of study, and further investigation will be required to understand whether

<sup>3</sup> Equality Challenge Unit, *Equality in higher education statistical report 2013, Part 2 Students*: 96

there is a difference in disability declaration rates at application and how they compare to the numbers of students with Study Needs Agreements in place.

When analysing the types of impairments/long-term health conditions declared by students there has been a marked increase in the proportion of students declaring a mental health condition over the past three years. Also, from the students who did declare a disability to us, 50.2% have a specific learning difficulty, e.g. dyslexia, where the proportion of students decreased by 0.5% since 2010/11.

**Figure 5 Profile of students that have declared a disability 2011/12**



### Attainment according to disability

Following analysis of the attainment rates of our disabled and non-disabled students, there is a very small difference between both groups. 63% of disabled students qualified with a 2:1 or above compared to 62% of non-disabled students; a gap of only -1%. Across the rest of the higher education sector in the UK, the attainment gap between disabled and non-disabled students is higher at 2.2%<sup>4</sup>, so the University compares very well here. The outcomes for disabled students in 2011/12 are broadly similar to what was reported last year, where the attainment gap between disabled and non-disabled students was -0.5%.

**Figure 6 Student attainment profile by disability status 2011/12**

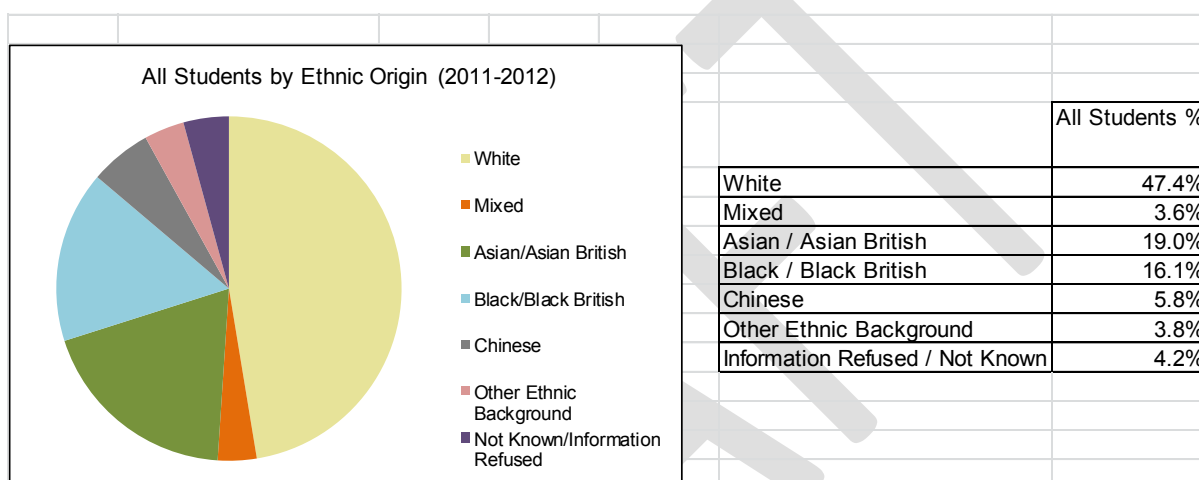
	1st		2:1		2:2		3rd		Total	%
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%		
Disability declared	40	19%	95	44%	55	26%	25	12%	215	100%
No known disability	920	20%	1,970	42%	1,295	28%	510	11%	4695	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>960</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>2065</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>1350</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>535</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>4910</b>	<b>100%</b>

<sup>4</sup> Equality Challenge Unit, *Equality in higher education statistical report 2013, Part 2 Students:127*

### Student profile by Ethnicity

The University has a very ethnically diverse student population, with 48.3% identifying as being from a Black and Minority Ethnic (BME)<sup>5</sup> background. The University’s geographical location attracts students from London and its surrounding areas, and has the highest proportion of BME overseas students amongst its population. As a result, it is therefore more appropriate to compare the ethnic profile of our students against other institutions in London, where Hertfordshire compares favourably against the recorded 45.4% BME student population in London’s higher education institutions.

Figure 7 Student profile by ethnicity 2011/12



Although it appears that the proportion of BME students has decreased since last year 2010/11 from 49.8%, this has not been as a result of a great shift in the proportions across each ethnic grouping, but an increase in the number of students that have not declared their ethnicity.

The ethnic profile of our students changes according to study, with virtually the same profile of 48.5% BME students studying at undergraduate level. This increases slightly to 49.7% for those BME students studying postgraduate taught programmes, yet representation declines significantly to just 27.5% studying in postgraduate research programmes. Further analysis is required to understand why BME student representation is much lower in postgraduate research programmes.

### Attainment according to ethnicity

The proportion of White students achieving what the higher education sector term as a ‘good degree’ at the University decreased slightly from the previous year from 75.9% to 72.9%, whereas the proportion of BME students achieving the same rose from 52.1% to 55.3. The University has implemented a programme to address BME student success and demonstrated that it has made progress in closing the gap identified in last year’s report. There still is an attainment gap between White and BME students; however the gap is now 17.6%, representing a closure of 6.2%. The

<sup>5</sup> Black and minority ethnic includes Black/Black British, Asian/Asian British, Chinese, Mixed heritage and Other ethnic background

University compares favourably against the reported attainment gap figures across the higher education sector in England, which currently stands at 18.5%<sup>6</sup>.

Further analysis is required to identify where attainment is lowest amongst the different ethnic groups and across different study areas. The University’s BME Success Project is working comprehensively across the institution to ensure that barriers are reduced for all its students and is committed to meeting the target set in our equality objectives to reduce the differential in student attainment by 10 percentage points by 2015.

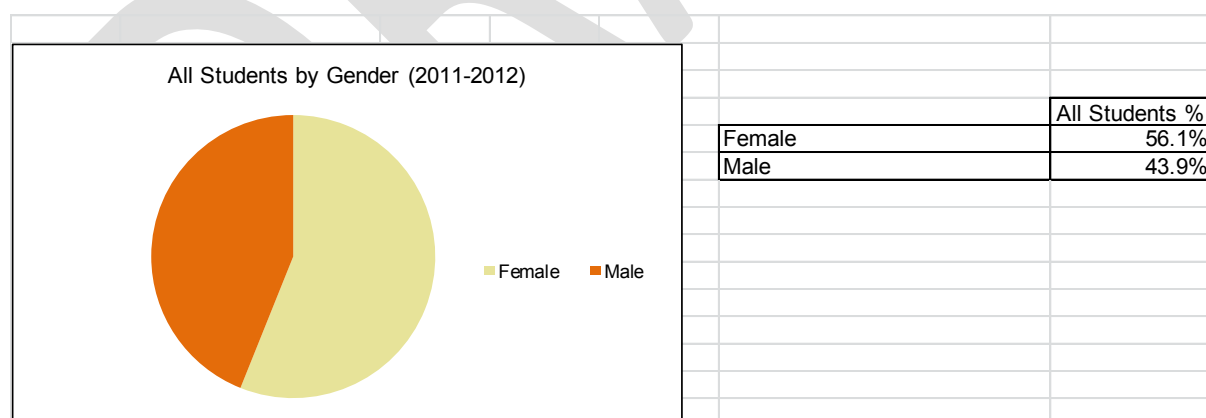
**Figure 8 Student attainment profile by ethnicity 2011/12**

	1st		2:1		2:2		3rd		Total	%
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%		
White	545	27%	935	46%	420	21%	130	6%	2,030	100%
BME	240	13%	805	43%	640	34%	205	11%	1,890	100%
Ethnicity not known	15	25%	20	33%	20	33%	5	8%	60	100%
Total	800	20%	1760	44%	1080	27%	340	9%	3,980	100%

### Student Profile by Gender

Our student gender profile is broadly comparable to that reported across the higher education sector in the UK, where 57.7% are female and 42.3% are male<sup>7</sup>. Further analysis is required to identify the study areas men and women are studying in to identify issues related to under-representation for women, e.g. science, engineering and technology (STEMM) for women and education and nursing for men. The proportions of male students has remained steady over the past three years, however this will continue to be monitored to ensure that levels do not fall.

**Figure 9 Student profile by gender 2011/12**



The gender profile of undergraduate students varies very slightly from the overall University gender profile detailed table above with 55.5% female and 44.5% male. However, the profile begins to change in postgraduate taught programmes with 59.4% female and 40.6% male representation; representing a reduction in the proportion of men of 3.1% since the previous year. In postgraduate research programmes the gender profile shifts considerably towards a higher proportion of men

<sup>6</sup> Equality Challenge Unit, *Equality in higher education statistical report 2013, Part 2 Students*: 80

<sup>7</sup> Equality Challenge Unit, *Equality in higher education statistical report 2012, Part 2 Students*: 32

than women; with 45.3% female to 53.7% male representation studying in these programmes. The proportion of men studying at postgraduate research level has increased by 1% since the previous year.

As reported last year, a higher proportion of our part-time students are female (65.7% of this cohort), a representation that is similar to the wider higher education sector in the UK, where females make up 60.8% of part-time students at all levels<sup>8</sup>.

### Attainment according to gender

The proportion of women achieving a ‘good degree’ (classification of 2:1 or above) was 63.9%, whereas the proportion of male students achieving the same was 58.9%. Resulting in a negative attainment gap between male and female students of -5%. This negative attainment gap has grown from -3.9% in 2010/11. The gap across the higher education sector in England was -4.7%<sup>9</sup>, so outcomes for both male and female students are comparable.

Proportionately, it is important to ensure that the gap between male and female qualifiers remains low, and as such the outcomes for student attainment according to gender will continue to be monitored regularly by the University.

**Figure 10 Student attainment profile by gender 2011/12**

	1st		2:1		2:2		3rd		Total	%
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%		
Female	540	20%	1,160	44%	680	26%	280	11%	2,660	100%
Male	420	19%	905	40%	670	30%	255	11%	2,250	100%
Total	960	20%	2065	42%	1350	27%	535	11%	4910	100%

<sup>8</sup> Equality Challenge Unit, *Equality in higher education statistical report 2012, Part 2 Students:35*

<sup>9</sup> Equality Challenge Unit, *Equality in higher education statistical report 2012, Part 2 Students:49*