Chapter 10: Education
Summary

A wealth of evidence shows that education is a key determinant of life chances. As well as being a right in itself, education is an enabling right, allowing individuals to develop the skills, capacity and confidence to secure other rights and economic opportunities.

Educational attainment has been transformed in recent years. Around half of young people are now getting good qualifications at 16 (5+ A*-C GCSEs or equivalent including English and Maths), and in 2008/09, 2.4 million students enrolled in higher education in the UK – a considerable change from a time when educational opportunities were only available to a minority of young people. The indicators examined in this chapter demonstrate this success, but also show that there remain a number of areas where further progress needs to be made.

The evidence from these indicators shows that educational attainment continues to be strongly associated with socio-economic background, despite some signs that social differences in examination results may have started to reduce. At the same time, the gap in attainment between ethnic groups has narrowed more clearly, with some previously low-performing groups catching up with the average. Whereas a generation ago almost all the students on the university campus were White British, today 1 in 5 are from ethnic minority groups and an increasing number of disabled students are also attending. Women are now ahead of men in many aspects of educational success.

However, in terms of both subjects studied, and in the obtaining of good degrees, differences persist. Women remain less likely than men to study Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) subjects, making up 48% of first degree students in STEM despite comprising 55% of first degree students overall. Gender differences in first degree subject choice appear to be declining over time, but extremely high gender segregation in vocational training remains. The proportion of Black students getting first or upper second class degrees is still only at two-thirds of the level of White students.

This chapter also notes that some groups are still not getting a fair deal out of the education system. Young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN) account for 7 in 10 permanent exclusions from school in England, and continue to have low educational attainment. A growing number of disabled students are going to university, but this group is still not achieving its potential. Calls to helpline related to disability and education also indicate that this is an area of concern.

For lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) and transgender young people, attainment trends are harder to measure, but there are signs that they are being penalised by unfair treatment and bullying in the education system, at school and beyond.
Education-related inequalities have an impact over the life-span, not just in childhood. Differences in participation in education persist throughout life. Adults with more prior education are much more likely to access learning opportunities in later life. Tools such as the internet are used to varying degrees by different groups to access information and other resources.

Introduction

The right to education is recognised in domestic law and international convention. Education has intrinsic value, helping people grow and develop as individuals. It can also give them the skills and confidence to take up economic opportunities, to improve their standard of living, and to influence the world around them.

Since the Second World War, access to the British education system has gradually widened. Over the past decade, the government has explicitly sought to increase participation rates in formal education or training among young people. The proportion of young people attaining formal academic qualifications at age 16 has grown: today, around half obtain 5 or more GCSEs at grades A* to C including English and Maths, or equivalent. Increasing numbers stay on at school after the age of 16 and increasing numbers enrol every year at university on first degree courses.

Historically, there were lower cultural expectations of what some groups, including women, could or should aspire to in education. This was reflected in admission rates to university: as recently as 1980, less than two-fifths of degrees were awarded to women.¹ Today, these notions are by and large long gone, and women, and many other groups who traditionally performed relatively poorly in formal education, have begun to catch up with the average and in some cases surpass it. However, there remain significant disparities between different groups’ experiences of formal education.

Finally, the internet has become an increasingly important means of accessing education and training (as well as of acquiring other goods and services, and participating in civic life), and we consider different groups’ access to the internet in this chapter.

**Indicators**

1. Level of development at age 5
2. Permanent exclusion from school
3. Bullying, respect and support at school
4. Educational attainment at age 16
5. Participation in higher education
6. Adult skills and qualifications
7. Adult learning
8. Use of the internet

For **level of development at age 5**, we give the percentage of children achieving a good level of development according to the Early Years Foundation Stage profile.

Under **permanent exclusion from school**, we give the percentage of children permanently excluded from primary, secondary and special schools (and pupil referral units in Wales).

For **bullying, respect and support at school**, we give the percentage of pupils reporting experiencing direct bullying.

For **educational attainment at age 16**, we give the percentage of children getting 5+ grade A*-C GCSEs including English (or Welsh) and Maths or equivalent. The equivalent measure for Scotland is Standard Grade awards at levels 1-3, Intermediate 2 at grades A-C, and Intermediate 1 at grade A.

For **participation in higher education**, we give the percentage of different groups studying on a first degree course.

For **adult skills and qualifications**, we look at 3 specific measures: the percentage of people of working-age achieving functional literacy and numeracy skills; the percentage of adults with no educational qualifications, and the percentage of adults with a first degree level qualification.

Under **adult learning**, we give the percentage of adults aged over 18 who participated in formal or informal learning in the last year.

Under **use of the internet**, we give the percentage who have had access to the internet within the last 3 months.

As in the rest of Part II, this chapter explores what we know about these indicators and what the evidence tells us about the experiences of different groups.
10.1 What we know about level of development at age 5

Measure:
Percentage of children achieving a good level of development according to the Early Years Foundation Stage profile

How this measure works:
The data for this measure come from the Early Years Foundation Stage profile 2008/09. This measure is only relevant to England; no national assessment data are collected in Wales, although measures are in development. No comparable data are collected in Scotland although Early Years Indicators are in development.

The Early Years Foundation Stage profile covers six areas of learning spanning children's physical, intellectual, emotional and social development. This measure looks at the percentage of children who are reaching a good level of development. Data are available for gender, socio-economic groups, disability and ethnicity. There is very limited related literature for this measure for groups defined by religion or belief, sexual orientation and transgender, therefore they are not covered in this section.

Special Educational Needs (SEN) is used in this chapter as a way of measuring disability (disaggregated by impairment types where possible). In England and Wales pupils with SEN are those who require special support as a result of a learning difficulty or disability. There are three levels of SEN that can be assessed. Pupils with the most significant needs requiring high levels of multidisciplinary input are issued with Statements of Need. Pupils requiring some degree of multi-disciplinary support are placed on School Action Plus programmes and pupils requiring additional support from within school resources are placed on School Action programmes. Disabled pupils represent a sub-set of all pupils with SEN.

Overview

By the age of five, girls’ development is more advanced in 11 of 13 assessment scales on the Early Years Foundation Stage profile in social and emotional as well as cognitive areas of development. The gap is greatest in writing, in which nearly three-quarters (72%) of girls but only just over half (53%) of boys, reach the expected level.

The role of socio-economic factors in this indicator is an important issue in passing on disadvantage or advantage from generation to generation. Only 35% of pupils known to be eligible for FSMs achieved a good level of development compared to over half (55%) of pupils not eligible for FSM.

Being from certain ethnic groups is associated with disadvantage in this indicator. A higher proportion of pupils from Asian, Indian, Irish, Mixed White and White British ethnic backgrounds achieved a good level of development when compared to all pupils, but pupils from Black and Pakistani ethnic groups did not perform so well.

What we know about the overall situation

In 2008/09, 52% of children achieved a good level of development at age 5, compared to 49% in 2007/08 and 46% in 2006/07.

What we know about the situation for different groups

Gender

Girls outperformed boys on this measure. In 11 of the 13 scales of the Early Years Foundation Stage profile girls scored higher; boys outperformed girls in the categories of problem solving, reasoning and numeracy (calculating) and in knowledge and understanding of the world.3

In the 7 key scales of Personal, Social and Emotional development (PSE) and Communication, Language and Literacy (CLL), 61% of girls achieved 6 or more points in each of the scales, compared to only 43% of boys.4

One quarter (25%) of boys are classified as being the lowest achieving 20% of pupils (based on all 13 scales in Early Years Foundation Stage profile) compared to 15% for girls.5

**Socio-economic groups**

Pupils not eligible for FSM are more likely to achieve a good level of development at age 5 than those who are eligible for FSM.

- 55% of pupils not eligible for FSM achieved a good level of development in 2008/09, compared to 35% for pupils known to be eligible for FSM.
- 78% of pupils not eligible for FSM achieved 78 or more points across all scales, compared to 58% for pupils known to be eligible for FSMs.
- 55% of pupils not eligible for FSM achieved 7 key scales of PSE and CLL, compared to 35% for pupils known to be eligible for FSM.

Of those pupils known to be eligible for FSM, there are variations in achievement by gender and ethnic group. For example, as shown in Figure 10.1.1, boys eligible for FSM do worse than girls eligible for FSM, for each ethnic group.6 Only 25% of White British and Bangladeshi boys and 27% of Black Caribbean boys eligible for FSM achieved a good level of development in 2008/09, compared to 42% of White British and 40% of Pakistani girls eligible for FSM.7 Figure 10.1.1 shows the variation in the percentage of pupils who achieve a good level of development in writing by ethnic group, gender and FSM eligibility.

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4 DCSF 2010a.
5 DCSF 2010a.
6 DCSF 2010a.
7 DCSF 2010a.
There is also a relationship between the socio-economic wellbeing of an area and the percentage of pupils achieving a good level of development. Using the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Indices (IDACI) 2007, 39% of pupils in the most deprived 10% of areas in England achieved a good level of development at Early Years Foundation Stage profile compared to 67% in the least deprived 10% of areas.  

Figure 10.1.1 Percentage of pupils achieving a good level of development by ethnicity, FSM eligibility and gender in England, 2009


There is also a relationship between the socio-economic wellbeing of an area and the percentage of pupils achieving a good level of development. Using the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Indices (IDACI) 2007, 39% of pupils in the most deprived 10% of areas in England achieved a good level of development at Early Years Foundation Stage profile compared to 67% in the least deprived 10% of areas.  

8 DCSF 2010a.
9 DCSF 2010a.
Disability
A higher percentage of pupils without any identified SEN achieved a good level of development in 2008/09. For pupils with SEN (both without a statement and those with a statement of SEN), 15% achieved a good level of development compared to 56% for those pupils with no identified SEN.

As would be expected, pupils with a statement of SEN have lower achievement than those pupils who have SEN without a statement. Of this group only 4% achieved a good level of development, compared to 17% of pupils who have SEN but without a statement.

Where a pupil has a statement of SEN or is School Action Plus, their primary need is recorded. Children whose primary need was visual impairment were around half as likely to achieve a good level of development (29%) compared to pupils with no identified SEN. This dropped to just over 1 in 6 (16%) of pupils whose primary need was speech, language and communication.\(^\text{10}\)

Ethnicity
The proportion of pupils achieving a good level of development in the Early Years Foundation Stage profile varies between different ethnic groups. Irish pupils, Indian pupils, White British pupils and pupils from a Mixed White and Asian background achieved above the national average for a good level of development in 2008/09, but pupils from Black and Pakistani ethnic groups did not perform so well. For all ethnic groups girls significantly outperformed boys.\(^\text{11}\)

\(^\text{10}\) DSCF 2010a.
\(^\text{11}\) DCSF 2010a.
Figure 10.1.2 below shows the variation in the percentage of pupils who achieved a good level of development by ethnic group.

![Figure 10.1.2 Percentage achieving good level of development by ethnicity in England, 2009](image)

Source: Early Years Foundation Stage profile Achievement by Pupil Characteristics, England 2008/09.

Achievement is higher for those pupils whose first language is English when compared to pupils who have English as an additional language. 54% of pupils whose first language is English achieve a good level of development compared to 42% of pupils for whom English is an additional language.13

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12 DCSF 2010a.
13 DCSF 2010a.
10.2 What we know about permanent exclusion from school

Measure:
Percentage of children permanently excluded from primary, secondary and special schools (and pupil referral units in Wales)

How this measure works:
We are able to report on England, Scotland and Wales for this measure. The England 2008/09 data are available from the Statistical First Release, Permanent and fixed period exclusions from schools and exclusion appeals in England, 2008/09. The data for Scotland are for the number of children who have been permanently removed from the register. The data are available from the Statistics Publication Notice: Education Series, Exclusions from school 2008/09. Data for Wales are available from the Statistical First Release, Exclusions from Schools in Wales 2008/09.

This measure only looks at permanent exclusions, which are a tiny proportion of all exclusions in England, Scotland and Wales. For all data presented in this section, but especially for data relating to Scotland and Wales, care should be taken in interpreting the figures due to the small number of pupils involved.

Data are available by gender, ethnicity, socio-economic differences, and disability where socio-economic differences are measured by Free School Meal eligibility (FSM), and disability is measured by Special Education Needs status (SEN) in England and Wales, and Additional Support Needs (ASN) in Scotland. Disabled pupils represent a sub-set of all pupils with SEN/ASN.

It should also be noted that most of the data refer to cases of exclusion, rather than the number of pupils excluded, as some pupils were excluded more than once during the year. There is very limited related literature for this measure for groups defined by religion or belief, sexual orientation and transgender, therefore they are not covered in this section.

Overview

While schools aim to provide equal opportunities for all children, in practice different groups have varying experiences of the system that affect their chances. Most fundamental is being able to attend school itself. In 2008 the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child expressed concern at the number of temporary and permanent school exclusions, especially for children from ethnic minorities. The Committee also raised the issue of the lack of statutory education for some children deprived of their liberty.\footnote{United Nations 2008. Committee On The Rights Of The Child. Forty-ninth session. UN document: CRC/C/GBR/CO/4. 20 October 2008.}

For most groups the majority of children attend school; however some groups are much more at risk of permanent exclusion than others. Boys account for the majority of permanent exclusions in all three nations, and in England and Wales pupils with SEN are disproportionately represented. Permanent exclusion appears to be strongly associated with multiple deprivation in Scotland and FSM eligibility in England and Wales. White pupils comprise the majority of permanent exclusions in Scotland and Wales; in England the rates for White and non-White pupils are very similar though there are clear differences between different ethnic minority groups.

Some groups, notably those who are geographically mobile and/or are in institutions have greater risk of non-attendance, partly due to higher rates of permanent exclusion within these groups. Gypsy and Traveller children, children in custody, children in immigration detention, refugees and children of asylum seekers lack access to education or to a full curriculum.\footnote{Anderson, K. et al. 2008. The Right to Education in England. Alternative Report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. The Children’s Legal Centre. Available at: http://www.right-to-education.org/sites/r2e.gn.apc.org/files/THE%20RIGHT%20TO%20EDUCATION%20IN%20ENGLAND%20FINAL(1).pdf. Accessed 18/08/2010.}
What we know about the overall situation and trends

The number of children permanently excluded from primary, secondary and special schools (including pupil referral units in Wales) in 2008/09 was 6,550 in England, 87 in Scotland and 213 in Wales as Table 10.2.1 below shows. In 2008/09 there were considerable falls in permanent exclusion rates compared to 2007/08 in all three nations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nation</th>
<th>Exclusions</th>
<th>% change in 2008/09 from 2007/08</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>8,130</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


What we know about the situation for different groups

Gender

In 2008/09, the permanent exclusion rate for boys in England was over 3.5 times higher than that for girls. Nearly 4 out of 5 (78%) of the total permanent exclusions were received by boys. This relative permanent exclusion rate remained unchanged on the previous year’s data despite the decline in the absolute level. The situation in Wales was very similar, with boys accounting for 77% of permanent exclusions (down from 83% in 2007/08). Due to the way that data are recorded in Scotland we do not know the gender difference in terms of permanent exclusions, however, the data do show that boys account for 78% of all exclusions.

19 DCSF 2009.  
22 DSCF 2009; Scottish Government 2010a; Wales Assembly Government 2010a.
Age
In all three nations, boys are more likely to be excluded at a younger age than girls. The most common point for both boys and girls to be excluded is at ages 13 and 14 (equivalent to year groups 9 and 10 in England and Wales and Stage 4 in Scotland); In England, around 54% of all permanent exclusions were of pupils from these age groups.

Socio-economic groups
Pupils in England eligible for FSM were over twice as likely to be permanently excluded than the average, accounting for 38% of permanent exclusions. In Scotland, 41% of permanent exclusions were among pupils from the 20% of areas with the highest levels of multiple deprivation in 2006 compared to just 3% among pupils from the 20% of areas associated with the lowest levels of multiple deprivation.

Disability
Nearly three-quarters (71%) of permanent exclusions in England involved pupils with some form of SEN. The likelihood of permanent exclusion was particularly high for those pupils without a statement, who made up 64% of all exclusions in 2008/09. The data for 2008/09 show that 24 out of every 10,000 pupils with statements of SEN are excluded and 30 out of every 10,000 pupils with SEN without a statement are excluded. This compares with 3 in every 10,000 pupils with no SEN. In Wales, 53% of permanent exclusions involved pupils with some form of SEN.

For those for whom the data were available in Scotland, 23% of permanent exclusions were among pupils with some form of Additional Support Need (ASN).

Ethnicity
In 2008/09, 77% of exclusions in England related to White pupils. However in terms of the permanent exclusion rate per 10,000 pupils, pupils from non-White British backgrounds were as likely to be permanently excluded (10 per 10,000 pupils) as pupils overall. However, more detailed analysis of the permanent exclusion data show large differences between ethnic minority groups:

- The lowest permanent exclusion rates were found among members of the Asian community (5 per 10,000 pupils) and children with one White/one Asian parent or from ‘Other White’ backgrounds (both groups had a rate of 8 per 10,000 pupils).
- The permanent exclusion rate for White British pupils (9 per 10,000 pupils) was similar to the overall rate. Other pupils with average permanent exclusion rates were those from Black African, Irish, Mixed White/Black African and other Mixed. Ethnic backgrounds (all had permanent exclusion rates of 10-11 per 10,000 pupils). These rates were just above that for White pupils showing

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23 DCSF 2009.
a large drop from 2007/08 data.

- Mixed White/Black Caribbean pupils were 2.5 times more likely to be excluded than average, with a permanent exclusion rate of 25 per 10,000 pupils. Pupils from Other Black households were twice as likely to be permanently excluded, with a rate of 20 per 10,000 pupils.

- The highest rates of permanent exclusions among ethnic minority groups were found among Black Caribbean pupils (30 per 10,000 pupils), pupils from Irish Traveller backgrounds (30 per 10,000 pupils) and Gypsy/Roma pupils (who had the highest rate at 38 per 10,000 pupils). Taken together these rates are between 3-4 times the overall exclusion rate, although caution is needed in using these estimates due to the possible under-recording of pupils from the Gypsy/Roma and Irish Traveller groups, and the small population sizes.

In Scotland, 78% of permanent exclusions related to pupils from White ethnic backgrounds, and 97% of exclusions were among children with English as their first language (or where they were assessed as being fluent in English). Where data were available in Wales, 93% of permanent exclusions involved pupils from White ethnic backgrounds.

**Box 10.2.1 Related issue: The educational experience of the most disadvantaged groups**

Some groups of children not only under-achieve in school, but are also among the most likely to be permanently excluded.

**Irish Traveller and Gypsy/Roma children** are the most likely to be permanently excluded from school in England, and are the only ethnic groups whose performance has deteriorated sharply in recent years, dropping from 42% and 23% of pupils respectively getting 5 GCSEs A*-C in 2003, to just 16% and 14% in 2007. In England, qualitative research indicates that Gypsy and Traveller children have the lowest attendance rate of any ethnic minority group, at around 75%. In Scotland, it has been estimated that only 20% of Gypsy and Traveller children of secondary age regularly attend school and this percentage may be even lower in more remote areas. Even those who attend school experience unequal access to an appropriate curriculum, teacher expectations and cultural support.

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Box 10.2.1 Continued

**Looked-after children** in England have a similarly low educational performance, with just 15% getting 5 GCSEs A*-C. Looked-after children remain 4 times as likely to be permanently excluded from school as their peers; twice as likely to be convicted or subject to a final warning or reprimand from the police; 4 times as likely to be unemployed at the end of Year 11; and 10 times as likely to have a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN). In Scotland, pupils with 

**Children with SEN/disabilities** are generally recognised as being particularly disadvantaged within the education system. Almost three-quarters (71%) of permanent exclusions in England involved pupils with some form of SEN in 2008/09. Educational performance is also low with only 17% of children with SEN achieving 5 GCSEs A*-C including English and Maths, dropping to 6% of those with a statement. When SEN is combined with pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM), outcomes drop even further with only 10% of girls and 8% of boys reaching this level.

**Asylum-seeking children** are at risk of not receiving an adequate education. Research indicates that despite the requirement of early access to education, wider policies of dispersal and the residential instability experienced by many asylum seekers means that for many children this does not happen. For example, the UK National Children’s Bureau reported in 2005 that the majority of asylum-seeking children present themselves in the middle of school terms and, in practice ‘it can take weeks or months to find a school place and then often only in the lowest performing schools.’ Another study of local authority and schools’ responses to asylum-seeking and refugee children concluded that asylum seekers and refugees with families could be dispersed to areas where there may not be any school placement for their children, or where the schools

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Box 10.2.1 Continued

may not have adequate resources to meet their needs.\textsuperscript{32} Finally, evidence on school performance indicates that refugee children experience significant problems in schools underperforming in national tests.\textsuperscript{33}

\textsuperscript{33} Aspinall, P. and Watters, C. 2010. Pages 42-44.
10.3 What we know about bullying, respect and support at school

**Measure:**
Percentage of pupils reporting experiencing direct bullying.

**How this measure works:**
We are able to report on this measure for England using the Youth Cohort Study and the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England: The Activities and Experiences of 16-year-olds. The combined results from the 2007 surveys provide data on the extent to which some groups experienced bullying during the three year period 2004-06. These data have been drawn on for this measure alongside evidence collected from various surveys and reviews for England and as far as possible for Scotland and Wales, though data for these nations cannot be disaggregated by equality characteristics.

The data in the Youth Cohort Study and the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England are collected by gender, parental occupation, young person’s ethnic group, Special Education Needs (SEN) status, disability status and Free School Meal (FSM) eligibility. We are using data from 2007 because the Youth Cohort Study and the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England carried out in 2008 did not cover this specific subject.

To supplement these surveys, a survey of 1,750 practicing teachers from 1,201 schools in the maintained sector in England was commissioned for this review as part of the NFER Teacher Voice Omnibus February 2010 survey. The questions explored teachers’ perceptions of the levels of bullying experienced, and support received by different groups of pupils including boys, girls, disabled pupils, those from different ethnic minority groups, those practicing different religions, and LGBT pupils (in secondary schools only). The survey was conducted online. The panel included teachers from the full range of roles in primary and secondary schools from head-teachers to newly-qualified teachers. Of the respondents, 52% (N=916) were teaching in primary schools and 48% (N=842) were teaching in secondary schools. There was an under-representation of schools in the highest quintile in terms of eligibility for FSM in both the sample of primary schools and the sample of secondary schools. The sample of secondary schools also had an over-representation of schools with low eligibility for FSM. To address this, weights were calculated using FSM factors to create a more balanced sample.
The Equality Measurement Framework recommended a measure that looks at levels of dignity and respect within the education system. However the data available for this measure are very limited, therefore reported levels of bullying is being used as a proxy measure for this indicator.

The data do not show the frequency of the bullying, only whether or not a pupil has been bullied in a given time period. Large-scale surveys do not collect data on religion or belief, sexual orientation or transgender. Other literature has been drawn on for these groups and findings are indicative only of the issues that these groups may face.

Special Educational Needs (SEN) is used to measure disability (disaggregated by impairment types where possible). In England and Wales, pupils with SEN are those who require special support as a result of a learning difficulty or disability; disabled pupils represent a sub-set of all pupils with SEN.

Free School Meal (FSM) eligibility is used as a measure for parental low income and social class. The Census occupational categories are used as a means to report on socio-economic differences.

Overview

Many young people have to navigate the educational system while being treated unfairly. In 2008 the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child expressed concern at the extent of bullying in schools. Some surveys indicate between a third and a half of children in the UK think that bullying is a problem in their school.

Disabled students, lesbian, gay and transgender students and those from lower socio-economic groups are all more likely to report experiencing high levels of bullying. Surveys suggest that of those sampled, learning disabled and LGBT young people stand out as groups where the majority have experienced bullying. Cyberbullying is now estimated to affect around in 1 in 3 of secondary age young people and may begin to change the pattern of groups most affected by bullying, though further research is required.

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34 For discussion about the relationship between Free School Meal eligibility, parental income and social class see Hills, J. et al. 2010. Page 88.
Students who are bullied at school have worse exam results and are more likely to end up not in education, employment or training. They are also less likely to stay in full-time education after the age of 16. (This is covered in more detail in Chapter 11: Employment.)

What we know about the overall situation

The extent to which education systems recognise and address bullying is a sign of their commitment to ensuring that all children at school get equal respect. Nearly half of children say bullying occurs in their school. When asked if bullying was a problem in their school, 48% of pupils in England, 43% in Scotland and 32% in Wales said ‘yes’. In the same survey, 11% of English, 10% of Welsh and 10% of Scottish school children reported that they had directly experienced bullying in the previous three months.

The Youth Cohort Study and the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England asked pupils in Year 9, Year 10 and Year 11 about their experiences of bullying (between 2004 and 2006) and compared outcomes for those young people who reported and those who did not report having been bullied during the 3 years.

The proportion of young people who reported having been bullied declined from nearly a half in Year 9 (47%) to less than a third in Year 11 (29%). Very nearly two-thirds (66%) of young people reported having been bullied at some point between 2004 and 2006. On average, those who reported having been bullied did worse in their GCSE exams than those who did not (with a difference of 15 percentage points). They were also twice as likely not to be in employment, education and training (NEET) at age 16 (10% of those who had been bullied in the last 3 years were NEET in 2007 compared to 5% of those who had not).

41 DCSF 2008. Section 3: Stay Safe.
A UNICEF report looking at the wellbeing of children in 21 countries found that there was a large variation in the number of children reporting bullying, from about 15% in Sweden and the Czech Republic to more than 40% in Switzerland, Austria, and Portugal. About a third of young people in the countries surveyed report being bullied at least once during the two months prior to the survey. The UK does not perform well in this study, ranking 15th out of 21.42

What we know about the situation for different groups

Teachers responding to the NFER Teacher Voice Omnibus survey indicated different levels of bullying in their respective schools.43 Table 10.3.1 presents the findings from this survey. Response sizes were very small for LGBT students as many teachers did not know whether or not they taught LGBT young people. However, the experiences of these groups at secondary school stand out as particularly problematic as they are identified as a clear target for bullying, yet at the same time teachers do not feel that respect for them is promoted at school, or that as a group they are supported.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Primary school teachers views of group</th>
<th>(A) Target for bullying</th>
<th>(B) School is very actively promoting respect for</th>
<th>(C) Seen by teachers as feeling supported at school</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boy</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>54</td>
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<td>Girl</td>
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Continued...

44 NFER 2010.
Table 10.3.1 Continued

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Secondary school teachers views of group</th>
<th>(A) Target for bullying</th>
<th>(B) School is actively promoting respect for</th>
<th>(C) Seen by teachers as feeling supported at school</th>
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</tbody>
</table>


Results from the same survey show that teachers also vary in their views of who is likely to underachieve. Boys are identified as the most likely to underachieve in primary and secondary school. Further investigation is needed to ascertain whether these views entrench disadvantage by limiting teacher expectations of some groups, or are a helpful assessment of risk that leads to more support.45

**Gender**

The Youth Cohort Study and the Longitudinal Study of Young People show no difference in the proportions of boys and girls reporting having been bullied in 2004-06: two-thirds (66%) of both boys and girls said that this was the case.46

**Socio-economic groups**

There appears to be a relationship between parents’ socio-economic category, and the degree to which young people report being bullied at school. The Youth Cohort Study and the Longitudinal Study of Young People data show that 64% of pupils with parents in higher professional occupations reported being bullied in 2004-06, compared to 70% of those with parents in routine occupations. When FSM eligibility is used to measure socio-economic differences, the data also show differences in reported bullying levels with 65% of pupils who were eligible for FSM reporting having been bullied, compared to 69% of those not eligible.47

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45 NFER 2010.
46 DCSF 2008. Section 3: Stay Safe.
47 DCSF 2008. Section 3: Stay Safe. Table 3.1.2.
Disability
Young people with a disability or SEN were most at risk of being bullied. More than four-fifths of young people with a statement of SEN (83%) or a disability that affected their schooling (81%) reported having been bullied in 2004-06, compared to under two-thirds (65%) of young people with no SEN or no disability.48

According to qualitative research with 507 children and young people in England and Wales, young people with learning disabilities are particularly at risk with 82% of those sampled reporting having being bullied.49 Of those, 8 out of 10 children and young people had experienced bullying at school and 3 out of 10 were bullied out on the street, at the park or on the bus.50

However, survey evidence from teachers suggests while a quarter of secondary school teachers (and 17% of all teachers) recognise that pupils with disabilities are bullied by other pupils, overall, teachers feel that students with SEN are the most supported group in school.51

Ethnicity
According to the Youth Cohort Study and the Longitudinal Study of Young People, White pupils were most likely to report being bullied, with around two-thirds (67%) of White pupils reporting being bullied between 2004-06. Mixed Race pupils (66%), Black African (62%) and Black Caribbean pupils (61%) also reported relatively high rates of bullying compared to Pakistani (58%), Bangladeshi (52%) and Indian pupils (49%).52

Religion or belief
The school experiences of pupils of different religions and beliefs are not reflected in large-scale datasets, and there is limited evidence available on bullying from this perspective. However, one survey of over 1,000 pupils in 2007 suggests that it is an issue. The survey found that 23% of young people sampled, who practiced any religion in England, reported being bullied because of their faith.53

49 Mencap 2006. Bullying wrecks lives: the experiences of children and young people with a learning disability. Page 3. Available at: http://www.mencap.org.uk/displaypagedoc.asp?id=164 Qualitative research with 507 children and young people with a learning disability aged between 8 and 19 years. 60% of respondents were boys and 6% were from Black or ethnic minority backgrounds.
51 NFER 2010.
52 DCSF 2008. Section 3: Stay Safe.
53 Interfaith report 2008. Beat Bullying. London: Interfaith. Page 5. Based on responses from over 1,000 young people either to a surveyor or through focus groups.
**Sexual orientation**

Although the school experiences of LGB students are not captured in large-scale datasets, a number of pieces of research have been dedicated to understanding the degree of bullying to which this group is subjected. Research indicates that it is a serious problem. For example, one survey of over 1,000 students in British schools in 2007 showed that almost two-thirds (65%) of LGB young people have experienced direct bullying, rising to three-quarters (75%) in faith schools.\(^{54}\) According to the same survey, almost all (97%) LGB young people surveyed reported regularly hearing homophobic language in school. They were subject to verbal and physical attack, and astonishingly almost 1 in 5 had suffered death threats. Of those bullied:

- 92% had been subjected to verbal homophobic bullying
- 41% had experienced physical bullying
- 17% had suffered death threats\(^{55}\)

The NFER Teacher Voice Omnibus survey found that around half (46%) of secondary school teachers in England acknowledge that bullying of pupils seen as LGB is common, but fewer than 1 in 6 (14%) said that they felt this group was supported by their school. Only 16% of teachers said that their school was ‘very active’ in promoting equality and respect for LGB pupils.\(^{56}\)

**Transgender**

In the same survey, transgender students were identified as the group who secondary teachers think are least supported in school (with only 7% of secondary teachers saying that this is the case). Also, only 7% of secondary teachers say that their school is ‘very active’ in promoting equality and respect for transgender pupils.\(^{57}\) However, it may be that many teachers have not had any experience in teaching transgender pupils or had any at school that they know about.

The experiences of transgender pupils are least likely to be reflected in data and research. However, one piece of local qualitative research with 24 transgender young people suggests that young transgender people appear to be more likely to experience harassment and bullying than LGB pupils, and the problem appears worse for female-to-male than male-to-female people.\(^{58}\)

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\(^{56}\) NFER 2010.

\(^{57}\) NFER 2010.

### Box 10.3.1 Related issue: Stereotyping in schools

Stereotyping in schools particularly affects girls, disabled young people, children from lower socio-economic backgrounds and those from some ethnic minority groups. Stereotypical information and guidance can limit young people’s options and aspirations at an early age. Careers advice often reinforces traditional choices and young people have no information on the pay advantages of non-traditional routes. Nearly 1 in 5 (18%) of young people say that they have not had enough information to make choices for their future. This rises to 23% of disabled young people.

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10.4 What we know about educational attainment at age 16

**Measure:**
Percentage of children getting 5+ grade A*-C GCSEs including English (or Welsh) and Maths or equivalent. The equivalent measure for Scotland is Standard Grade awards at levels 1-3, Intermediate 2 at grades A-C, and Intermediate 1 at grade A. The measure is referred to in the text as 5+ good GCSEs or equivalent including Maths and English.

**How this measure works:**
There are difficulties comparing educational attainment in England, Scotland and Wales.

In England, data are for pupils in the maintained sector only as information is also held on their characteristics (gender, Special Educational Needs (SEN) status, ethnicity, Free School Meal (FSM) eligibility).

In Scotland, data refer to publically funded schools. Data are collected by gender. There are no data available specifically for this measure for pupils from different ethnic minority groups, or by Additional Support Needs (ASN) although general attainment data are collected, which is reflected here.

In Wales, data are for all schools. Data are available for this measure by gender, FSM eligibility, and SEN status. Data are not available for ethnicity.

There are no data collected for religion or belief, LGB and transgender groups. As there is very limited related data for this measure for these groups, they are not covered in this section.

SEN (England and Wales) and ASN (Scotland) are used as a way to measure disability (disaggregated by impairment types where possible). In England and Wales, pupils with SEN are those who require special support as a result of a learning difficulty or disability. There are three levels of SEN that can be assessed – ‘School Action,’ ‘School Action Plus,’ or SEN with a statement – the third implying the greatest level of special needs. In Scotland, pupils with ASN include those who have additional learning difficulties for any reason including learning difficulties, being disabled, and because of wider social factors such as poverty or being looked after by a local authority. In England, Scotland and Wales disabled pupils represent a sub-set of all pupils with SEN/ASN.
In England and Wales, FSM eligibility is used as a measure for parental low income and social class.\textsuperscript{63} FSM data are not collected for this measure in Scotland.

**Overview**

Over recent years, there has been a steady improvement in the proportion of students getting good qualifications at age 16 (5+ GCSEs at A* to C or equivalent in Scotland including English/Welsh and Maths). Girls are ahead of boys in all three nations, a reversal of the situation for most of the post-war period. This better performance of girls relative to boys is evident in nearly all groups.

Ethnic differences in GCSE results have narrowed in England. The gap between White British and Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Black African and Black Caribbean children has narrowed. By 2008, the proportions gaining 5+ good GCSEs including English and Maths were very similar for Bangladeshi and Black children and for White children. Indian and Chinese children remained well ahead of other groups. At the other end of the scale the proportion of Irish Traveller and Gypsy/Roma children with good GCSE results fell even further behind that of other groups. In 2008 the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child expressed concern at the significant disparities in terms of school performance and dropout rates between pupils of ethnic, religious and national minorities, in particular Gypsies and Travellers, and also commented on the degree that bullying impacts on educational performance for this group.\textsuperscript{64}

The gap between students from different socio-economic backgrounds remains wide, with students eligible for FSM only half as likely to have good GCSE results as those who are not. The combination of being eligible for FSM and being part of another group with a lower probability of obtaining good qualifications (for example boys, those with an identified SEN and certain ethnic minority groups) leads to extremely low results.

\textsuperscript{63} For discussion about the relationship between Free School Meal eligibility, parental income and social class see Hills, J. et al. 2010. Page 88.

\textsuperscript{64} United Nations 2008.
The overall attainment gap between those eligible for FSMs and those who are not appears to have narrowed since 2006, but evidence of a trend in this direction remains tentative.\textsuperscript{65}

**Only 17\% of children with special educational needs get five good GCSEs including English and Maths in England**, compared to 61\% of children without identified special needs. This does not just apply to people with learning disabilities: only 33\% of children whose primary need related to visual impairment attained this level.

The differences in performance at age 16 partly reflect the fact that some of the educational inequalities observed in early years continue to widen in the course of their schooling. In particular, children from deprived backgrounds become more likely to have low relative performance as they get older, even those who start out well. Results at age 16 are therefore influenced both by how well each group is doing early on in their schooling and how well they progress.

**What we know about the overall situation and trends**

In 2008/09, 51\% of pupils in maintained schools in England achieved 5+ good GCSEs or equivalent including English/Welsh and Maths,\textsuperscript{66} as did 48\% of those in publicly funded schools in Scotland,\textsuperscript{67} and 47\% of those in all schools in Wales.\textsuperscript{68}

\textsuperscript{65} Hills, J. \textit{et al.} 2010. Footnote 72 states that “These data need to be treated with some caution because of the change in socio-economic classification and the fact that parental occupational data are reported by young people rather than by parents. There is year-on-year fluctuation and it is impossible to know whether the narrowing of the gap in 2006 represents ‘noise’ in the data or a longer-term trend. Nevertheless, the data show a modest improvement over the period for those from routine/unskilled manual backgrounds that has had the effect of reducing inequality to some extent.”


\textsuperscript{67} Equality and Human Rights Commission analysis of data provided by the Scottish Government.

Chapter 10: Education

Table 10.4.1 Percentage of pupils achieving 5 GCSE grade A* to C (including English/Welsh and Maths) or equivalent for all pupils in each nation, 2006/09

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England¹</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland²</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales³</td>
<td>Data are not available</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources:
1. Data from DCSF Statistical First Release, Key Stage 4 Attainment by Pupil Characteristics, in England 2008/09, Time Series of GCSE achievements by pupil characteristics, for maintained schools only.
3. Data tables from the Welsh Government, for all schools.

Analysis of the different factors associated with GCSE performance in England was conducted by the Department for Children, Schools and Families in 2007. It looked at the factors that affect performance between 11 and 16. It showed how well a child had done at primary school was a better predictor of their secondary school success than any other single factor. It also showed that there were further negative associations with gender (for boys), receiving FSM, being in care, living in a deprived neighbourhood, having SEN and recent movement between schools. Children affected by these factors all do worse at age 16 than one would predict given their 11-year-old test scores, while girls, in particular do better than expected. Bangladeshi students also make good progress in secondary school – while they are the worst-performing large ethnic minority group when they arrive at school at age 5, by age 16 they are close to the average in their GCSE performance.

What we know about the situation for different groups

Gender
Across all three nations girls out-perform boys. In 2009 54% of girls achieved 5+ good GCSEs including Maths and English, compared to 47% of boys in England.

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¹ English data are from DCSF 2010b. Scottish data are from Scottish Government. Welsh data are from Equality and Human Rights Commission analysis of data provided by the Welsh Government.
² Hills, J. et al. 2010. Figure 11.11, page 342.
Girls are furthest ahead of boys in Wales (achievement rates of 51% compared to 43%), and have the narrowest lead in Scotland where 50% of girls achieved this level compared to 46% of boys.

Table 10.4.2 Percentage of pupils achieving 5 GCSE A* to C GCSEs, including English and Maths, or equivalent for boys and girls in England, Scotland and Wales, 2006-09

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>Data are not available</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source:
2. In Scotland, Standard Grades awards at levels 1-3 / intermediate 2 at grades A-C / Intermediate 1 at grade A, for publicly funded secondary schools.
3. Data tables from the Welsh Government.

Socio-economic groups

FSM eligibility reveals one of the starkest differences in achievement at age 16. Being eligible for FSM is associated with a much lower probability of achieving 5+ good GCSEs including English and Maths. In 2009 only 27% of students eligible for FSM achieved this compared to 54% for those not eligible.

Figure 10.4.1 below shows that inequalities in England vary considerably within different ethnic groups when combined with eligibility for FSM. It reveals, for example, that while both Chinese and Indian students do very well overall, performance of the latter varies much more by socio-economic status. So whereas Indian boys from low income families perform significantly below the overall average, their Chinese counterparts are well above average.

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71 Welsh Assembly Government 2010b.
72 Data from DCSF 2010b. Data tables from Scottish Government and Welsh Assembly Government.
73 DCSF 2010b.
When analysing how ethnicity, gender and FSM eligibility affect GCSE performance, the National Equality Panel found that the FSM effect was larger than any of the other associations shown, with the exception of the higher performance of Chinese pupils, and the lower performance of Gypsy and Traveller children.\textsuperscript{74}

Pupils entitled to FSM in Wales are less than half as likely to achieve 5+ good GCSEs as those not entitled to FSM – 20% compared to 52%. This compares to 47% of all pupils in Wales.\textsuperscript{75}

\textbf{Figure 10.4.1} Percentage of pupils achieving 5 A*-C GCSEs including English and Maths 2009 by gender, FSM status and ethnic group in England, 2008-09\textsuperscript{75}

Source: Key Stage 4 attainment by Pupil Characteristics, in England 2008/09.

\textsuperscript{74} Hills, J. \textit{et al.} 2010. Figure 11.14, page 349.
\textsuperscript{75} DSCF 2010b.
\textsuperscript{76} Equality and Human Rights Commission analysis of Key stage 4 attainment data provided by the Welsh Assembly Government.
Disability
Pupils with SEN perform less well than pupils with no identified SEN at age 16. For all pupils with SEN in England, 17% achieved 5+ good GCSEs or equivalent including English and Maths compared to 61% of pupils with no identified SEN. Students without a statement performed better than those with a statement. The percentage of pupils who achieved 5+ good GCSEs or equivalent including English and Maths was:
- 21% for pupils at School Action
- 13% for pupils at School Action Plus
- 6% for pupils with a statement of SEN

Achievement varies by impairment. In England in 2009, 1 in 5 (20%) pupils whose primary need was autistic spectrum disorder achieved 5+ good GCSEs including English and Maths, dropping to only 11% of those with behavioural/emotional/social needs. Pupils whose primary need was visual impairment were still only half as likely to achieve 5+ good GCSEs or equivalent including English and Maths compared to those with no identified SEN (33% compared to 61% of pupils with no identified SEN).  

As Table 10.4.3 shows, when eligibility for FSM is combined with a SEN, it leads to extremely low levels of attainment.

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77 DCSF 2010b.
### Table 10.4.3: Percentage of pupils achieving 5+ GCSEs at A*-C including English and Maths by impairment type and FSM status in England, 2008/09

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impairment Type</th>
<th>Number of Pupils</th>
<th>Total Girls</th>
<th>Total Boys</th>
<th>Percentage of pupils achieving 5+ GCSEs at A*-C (inc English and Maths)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Not eligible for FSM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No identified SEN</td>
<td>441,568</td>
<td>231,187</td>
<td>210,381</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual impairment</td>
<td>653</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing impairment</td>
<td>1,193</td>
<td>588</td>
<td>605</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical disability</td>
<td>1,946</td>
<td>805</td>
<td>1,140</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other difficulty/disability</td>
<td>3,673</td>
<td>1,673</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autistic spectrum disorder</td>
<td>3,547</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>3,032</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioural difficulties</td>
<td>21,873</td>
<td>7,530</td>
<td>14,353</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications needs</td>
<td>3,115</td>
<td>963</td>
<td>2,152</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific learning difficulty</td>
<td>7,896</td>
<td>2,286</td>
<td>5,610</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate learning difficulty</td>
<td>14,602</td>
<td>5,536</td>
<td>9,066</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severe learning difficulty</td>
<td>2,201</td>
<td>812</td>
<td>1389</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profound learning difficulty</td>
<td>505</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All SEN pupils</td>
<td>137,228</td>
<td>52,850</td>
<td>84,378</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Data tables provided by the DCSF.
1. Includes speech and language needs.
2. Includes emotional and social difficulties.
3. Also includes 62 people with multi-sensory impairment.

In Wales, young people with SEN also perform less well than those with no identified SEN. Of the total pupils on the SEN register, 13% achieved 5+ good GCSEs or equivalent including English/Welsh and Maths. When broken down by levels of support, young people with a statement were least likely to achieve this...
with only 8% doing so in 2009. These figures are an improvement on 2007 and 2008 when 11% and 9% of pupils on the SEN register achieved 5+ good GCSEs including English/Welsh and Maths respectively.\(^{79}\)

In Scotland, data are not collected for this measure for pupils with ASN. However using a different measure (5 or more qualifications at Scottish Credits and Qualification Framework (SCQF) level 3 or above) it is possible to see that within Scotland pupils with ASN perform significantly less well than those with no identified support needs:

- In 2009, almost half (48%) of leavers from publicly-funded secondary and special schools with ASN achieved 5 or more qualifications at SCQF level 3 or above, compared to 92% of those with no ASN.\(^{81}\)
- One in 5 (22%) of those with ASN had no qualifications at SCQF level 2 or above compared to 2.8% of those without ASN, while just over 8% had at least one qualification at SCQF level 6 or above, compared to just over 49% of those with no ASN.\(^{82}\)

These data show the difference in performance between pupils with and without ASN in Scotland, but cannot be used to draw comparisons to the performance of pupils with SEN between England, Scotland and Wales as the measures are different.

**Ethnicity**

In England, there is a large difference in the percentage of pupils achieving 5+ good GCSEs including English and Maths between ethnic minority groups:

- A high proportion of Chinese (72%) and Indian (67%) pupils achieved 5+ good GCSEs in 2009.
- The proportion of Bangladeshi, Black African and White British pupils was close to the average (of 51%).
- Black Caribbean and Pakistani students fell below the average at 39% and 43% respectively (see Figure 10.4.2. below).

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\(^{79}\) Equality and Human Rights Commission analysis of data provided by the Welsh Government (Table 1: Key Stage 4 by Special Educational Need, 2007-2009).

\(^{80}\) Equality and Human Rights Commission analysis of data provided by the Welsh Government (Table 1: Key Stage 4 by Special Educational Need, 2007-2009).


\(^{82}\) Scottish Government 2010b.
Most worryingly, Gypsy and Traveller children are well below the average with only 9% of children from these groups achieving this level. Differences between ethnic minority groups have narrowed overall since 2002, but Gypsy and Travellers have got further behind. However, care should be taken when making comparisons between groups due to the low number of eligible Gypsy and Traveller pupils.

Girls outperformed boys in all ethnic minority groups for this measure. The largest differences were seen in Other Asian and Chinese pupils where there was a gender gap of 14 percentage points and in Black Caribbean pupils where there was a gender gap of 13 percentage points.

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83 http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000448/index.shtml (Note that data are not directly comparable as 2002 data are only available for 5 A*-C, are only available for some groups, and refer to 15-year-olds on 31/08/2001.
84 DCSF 2010b.
85 DSCF 2010b.
In Wales, data are not collected by this measure and ethnicity. However they are collected for attainment of the Core Subject Indicator (CSI) at age 16. This relates to the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level or above in English or Welsh (first language), Maths and Science in combination. Data presented here are a combined three-year average for 2007, 2008 and 2009 to enable more robust conclusions. In 2007-09, 44% of all pupils achieved CSI, but there was considerable variation by ethnicity. Chinese pupils performed considerably above the national average with 68% achieving CSI, and pupils from a Black ethnic background performed below the national average with 31% achieving CSI. These data show the relative difference by main ethnic groups in Wales, but cannot be used to draw comparisons of the performance of different groups between nations as the measure is different.

86 DSCF 2010b.
In Scotland, data are not collected for this measure for pupils from different ethnic minority groups. However using a different measure (average tariff scores at S4) it is possible to see the relative performance of different ethnic minority groups within Scotland. On this measure, Chinese, Indian, Bangladeshi and Mixed Race pupils perform well attaining the highest average tariff scores. However it is important to note that these data cannot be used to draw comparisons of the performance of different groups between nations.\(^8^9\)

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Religion or belief

Data are not collected for this measure by religion or belief. However, analysis completed for the National Equality Panel indicated that there is a relationship between religious affiliation and educational outcomes. Results should be treated with caution as sample sizes are very small.

The research shows that, in all measures of GCSE attainment, Hindu boys and girls perform most highly on average: Hindu girls achieve almost 2 GCSE grades A*-C more than Christian girls, and over 2 GCSE grades A*-C more than Muslim girls. Girls tend to do better than boys for all religious groups, and the gender gap is similar across religious groups.

Figure 10.4.4 Three year average tariff score of S4 pupils by ethnic background and gender in Scotland, 2006/07-2008/09


90 Scottish Government 2010b. Table 8.
An analysis of the average number of GCSE/GNVQ passes at grades A*-C by ethnicity, religious affiliation and gender in England 2003-04 shows that with 8 passes each, Indian Hindu and Indian Sikh girls have one more pass at A*-C than Indian Muslim girls, and two more than Pakistani Muslim girls (who achieve 6 passes). This difference is slightly more pronounced in the case of boys. Within Christians, it is Black African girls who have the highest number of GCSE/GNVQ passes at A*-C on average (7 passes) while, for boys, it is White Christians who outperform others with 6 passes.93

**Box 10.4.1 Related issue: Vocational training**

While the main indicator used in this section is GCSE attainment, patterns of participation in vocational education and training strongly influence individuals’ outcomes. There are differences in the routes taken by boys and girls. For example, in 2008/09 half of all apprenticeships in England were taken by women. However, they comprised over 9 in 10 apprenticeships in the children’s care, business administration and hairdressing sectors, but less than 1 in 30 of those in construction or engineering. The Scottish data follow very similar patterns; due to different sector framework groupings the data in Wales are not directly comparable but still demonstrate gender segregation. These choices to some extent feed into occupational segregation (discussed in Chapter 11: Employment).

Some groups are much less likely than average to undertake apprenticeships at all. Fewer than 10% of apprentices have a disability.95 In England, we can see from the data that there are significant differences by impairment group. For example, in customer service and business administration, people with visual impairments or other medical conditions are significantly more likely to start an apprenticeship than any other group listed.96

The proportion participating from ethnic minority groups in England has risen, from 7% of new apprentices in 2003/04 to 13% in 2008/09. However, this is still lower than would be expected given their population size. The proportion of non-White participation is highest in female-dominated sectors such as early years care, health and social care and business planning, and lowest in male-dominated sectors such as engineering, plumbing and construction.97 In Scotland and Wales the participation of ethnic minority groups is very low, and has not changed significantly in the last 5 years.98

94 Fuller, A. 2010. *EHRC Triennial Review: Education (Apprenticeship).* University of Southampton. This paper is available on the Equality and Human Rights Commission’s Triennial Review web pages.
10.5 What we know about participation in higher education

Measure:
Percentage of each group studying on a first degree course

How this measure works:
We are able to report on the UK only for this measure and not by individual nation. The Higher Education Statistics Agency’s collection of data about students in Higher Education Institutes during the academic year 2008/09 covers data supplied by 165 Higher Education Institutes (131 in England, 19 in Scotland, 11 in Wales and 4 in Northern Ireland). The data collection procedure is uniform across all institutions, regardless of size, nature and location; the range of data fields collected is administration-dependent to a limited extent. The Higher Education Statistics Authority does not collect data from Further Education Colleges.

These data are supplemented with data from the Equality Challenge Unit’s report, *A statistical overview of the equality challenges facing higher education* which is based mainly on analysis of data for the 2007/08 academic year relating to gender, ethnicity, disability and age. The disability categories indicate the type of disability that a student has on the basis of their own self-assessment. Students are not obliged to report a disability; therefore figures reported in analyses are derived from a subset which may not be representative of the total student population.

There are no data by religion or belief, sexual orientation or transgender. As far as possible, other literature has been drawn on for sexual orientation and transgender, although due to small sample sizes, issues raised are indicative only of possible issues facing these groups. There is very limited related literature for this measure for religion or belief, therefore this group is not covered in this section.

Overview

There has been an increase in the proportion of young people entering higher education and graduating since the mid 1990s. Among most groups, girls are more likely to attend university than boys. They accounted for 59% of all students in 2009, broadly unchanged since 2003/04.

The proportion of university places taken by ethnic minority students increased, from 13% of students in 1994/95 to 23% in 2008/09, a figure broadly proportionate to their size in the young population. Moreover,
all main ethnic groups have increased their share. The proportion of students declaring a disability increased from 5.5% to 7.3% between 2003/04 and 2008/09. This is attributed to the number of students declaring a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia.

Some groups are not doing so well in terms of obtaining good level degrees. In terms of good level degrees, Black students are less than two-thirds as likely to get an upper second or first as White students; and women are more likely to do so than men. Students with a disability are as likely to receive a good degree as those not known to have a disability.

There is continued subject segregation – in 2008/09 women made up 48% of first degree students studying Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) subjects despite comprising over half (55%) of first degree students overall. Gender differences in first degree subject choice appear to be declining over time, but there remains extremely high gender segregation in vocational training as discussed in Box 10.4.1, Indicator 4.

What we know about the overall situation and trends

In 2008/09, 2.4 million students enrolled in higher education in the UK. The undergraduate population has been growing rapidly over the past 12 years. In 1996/97 there were 1,392,000 undergraduates. By 2008/09 this had reached 1,796,000. The majority (85%) of those studying for a first degree were attending university full-time, with the remaining 15% studying part-time. A large majority of first degree students (89%) were domiciled in the UK.99

What we know about the situation for different groups

Gender

Women make up a higher proportion of those students studying for their first degree in the UK. The proportion of women students rose steadily to 58% in 2005/06 and has remained roughly at this level reaching 59% of UK domiciled undergraduates in 2008/09.100 Women dominate part-time study, with two-thirds (61%) of all part-time students being women.101

100 HESA 2010.
In 2007/08, subject areas with a high proportion of women included subjects allied to medicine (80%), veterinary science (76%), education (76%) and languages (68%). Subject areas with a high proportion of men included engineering and technology (84%), computer science (81%) and architecture, building and planning (69%).

Women and men have different experiences and outcomes when studying for their first degree:

- In 2008/09 women made up 48% of first degree students studying STEM subjects despite making up over half (55%) of first degree students overall.
- Of first degree qualifiers in 2008/09, more women than men obtained first or upper second class degrees (64%) compared to men (59%).

**Age**

In 2008/09 two-fifths (41%) of students in the first year of their first undergraduate degree were 18 years and under. Almost the same number were 19-24-years-old (38%), 7% were aged 25-29 and the remainder (14%) were over 30.

Older students (25 years and over) studying in the first year of their first degree made up a large proportion of those studying part-time (77%) compared to those under 25 (23%). One in 5 (21%) of UK domiciled entrants on full-time first degree courses, and 59% on other full-time undergraduate courses were aged 21 and over. 58% of part-time first degree entrants were aged 30 or over.

**Socio-economic groups**

Data for this specific measure are not available by socio-economic status. However, we do know from other sources that the proportion of young people entering higher education from lower socio-economic groups has risen over the past few years. However, it still remains substantially below that of those from professional backgrounds.

**Disability**

In 2008/09 1 in 10 students studying for a first degree in the UK were known to be disabled.

---

103 HESA. Student Record 2008/09 supplied by the Department for Education.
104 HESA. Student Record 2008/09 supplied by the Department for Education.
105 HESA 2010.
107 ECU 2009. Table B8.
Table 10.5.1 Percentage of UK domiciled students studying for first degree by disability and mode of study in the UK, 2008/09

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% doing a first degree</th>
<th>Not known to be disabled</th>
<th>Known to be disabled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Higher Education Statistics Authority (HESA) Student Record. Excludes students with unknown disability status.

During the past 5 years the proportion of students who did not disclose their disability status has dropped from 9% in 2004/05 to 8% in 2008/09. Excluding those with missing data, the proportion of students known to have a disability within the entire student population increased from 6.5% in 2004/05 to 8.0% in 2008/09. This rise was entirely due to a rise in the number with “specific learning disabilities” such as dyslexia. An analysis of HESA data in 2005 showed that this group of students was significantly more likely to be male and from middle-class backgrounds compared to non-disabled students. Students with physical and sensory disabilities have remained at just 0.5% and 0.25% of the entire student population, respectively. Figure 10.5.1 below shows they are also the smallest proportion of the undergraduate population.

108 ECU 2009.
109 HESA. Student Record 2008/09. supplied by the Department for Education.
Students with a disability are as likely to receive a good degree as those not known to have a disability. This varies little among students with different impairment types. For example, as Table 10.5.2 below shows, in 2008/09 61% of those who were blind or partially sighted achieved a first or upper second class degree, compared to 65% of those with mental health difficulties and 58% of those with a specific learning difficulty.\(^{14}\)

\[13\] ECU 2009, Table B9.

\[14\] HESA Student Record 2008/09, supplied by the Department for Education.
Table 10.5.2 First degree qualifiers by class of first degree and disability status in the UK, 2008/09

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disability</th>
<th>First and upper second class honours</th>
<th>Lower second and third class honours/pass</th>
<th>All number (100%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>184,165</td>
<td>113,975</td>
<td>298,140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No known disability</td>
<td>169,025</td>
<td>103,585</td>
<td>272,605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blind/partially sighted</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaf/hearing impairment</td>
<td>510</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheelchair user/mobility difficulties</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>655</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal care support</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health difficulties</td>
<td>735</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>1,130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An unseen disability e.g. diabetes, epilepsy, asthma</td>
<td>2,460</td>
<td>1,455</td>
<td>3,915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple disabilities</td>
<td>620</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>1,090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autistic spectrum disorder</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A specific learning difficulty, e.g. dyslexia</td>
<td>8,420</td>
<td>6,195</td>
<td>14,615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A disability not listed above</td>
<td>1,580</td>
<td>1,015</td>
<td>2,590</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Higher Education Statistics Authority (HESA) Student Record. Excludes students with unknown disability status.

Box 10.5.1 Related issue: Variation in the university experience of different groups

The London School of Economics conducted some analysis into the university experiences of different groups, for the National Equality Panel (2010). Using data on university students who graduated in 2002/03, the analysis considers the likelihood of different groups attending a Russell Group university.

The research found that:

- A higher proportion of women attended Higher Educational Establishments (non-vocational intuitions that have yet to be awarded university status), whilst men were more likely to attend a Russell Group university.
- Comparing across parental social backgrounds, 44% of children from professional family backgrounds attended a Russell Group University, compared to 23% of those from an unskilled family background.

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115 HESA Student Record 2008/09. supplied by the Department for Education.
117 List of establishments can be found in Machin, S. et al. 2009, Appendix 1.
Box 10.5.1 Continued

- Black, Indian and Pakistani/Bangladeshi groups all had at least 44% of their graduates coming from a former Polytechnic, whilst the average for the other ethnic groups was around 34%. Black students were least likely to attend a Russell Group university, with only 8%, compared to 24% of White people attending and 29% of Other Asians.
- Disabled students are also less likely to be attending a Russell Group university than non-disabled students. Out of the disability groupings those with dyslexia were the least likely to attend (16%). But generally students registered with a disability had similar attendance rates to the non-disabled students.

Ethnicity

The recording of ethnicity data is compulsory only for UK-domiciled students, so this section is restricted to students domiciled in the UK. In 2008/09, ethnicity data were known for 95% of UK domiciled first-year undergraduates.\footnote{HESA 2010.}

The proportion of students from ethnic minority groups has been rising fairly steadily over the last 12 years. In 2008/09 ethnic minorities constituted 20% of all first-year UK domiciled students of known ethnicity studying for their first undergraduate degree.\footnote{HESA 2010. Page 19.} According to analysis conducted for the National Equality Panel, all ethnic minority groups have seen a rise in their share, with the largest increase being among Black students who increased their share of the undergraduate population from 3.6% in 1995 to 5.7% in 2007.\footnote{Machin, S. \textit{et al.} 2009.}

Students from different ethnic minority groups have different outcomes when studying for their first degree, with students from some ethnic minority groups far less likely to leave university with a first or upper second class degree than others. As Table 10.5.3 shows, in 2008/09 White students were most likely to achieve this level with nearly 7 in 10 (67%) White students leaving with a first or upper second class degree, compared to just under 4 in 10 Black students (38%).

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \footnote{HESA 2010.}
\item \footnote{HESA 2010. Page 19.}
\item \footnote{Machin, S. \textit{et al.} 2009.}
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
Table 10.5.3 Percentage of UK-domiciled first degree qualifiers by class of first degree and ethnicity in the UK, 2008/09

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>First class honours (%)</th>
<th>Upper second class honours (%)</th>
<th>Lower second class honours (%)</th>
<th>Third class honours/ pass (%)</th>
<th>All: number (100%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>211,350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12,425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>24,570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6,635</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2,400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Higher Education Statistics Authority (HESA) Student Record. Excludes students with unknown ethnicity status.

Sexual orientation and transgender
The Higher Education Statistics Authority does not collect data on sexual orientation or transgender status and no robust statistics are collected from other sources. Little research has been conducted into the experiences of LGBT students in higher education.

One research project, based on an analysis of 2,704 online responses of LGBT students in Higher Education Institutions in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, 12 focus groups with LGB staff and students and 18 individual interviews found that LGBT students report being treated negatively on the grounds of their sexual orientation or gender status by fellow students and to a lesser degree by tutors, lecturers and other staff. In the same study, transgender students reported encountering higher levels of negative treatment than LGB students.\(^\text{122}\)

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\(^{121}\) HESA. Student Record 2008/09. supplied by the Department for Education.

10.6 What we know about adult skills and qualifications

**Measures:**

**Basic skills** – Percentage of people of working-age achieving functional literacy and numeracy skills. Functional literacy and numeracy are defined as reaching level one literacy or numeracy or above

**Qualifications** – Percentage of adults with no educational qualifications and percentage of adults with a first degree level qualification

**How these measures work:**

**Basic skills**

Data are available for this measure for England and Wales using the England Skills for Life Survey 2002/03 and the Wales Basic Skills Survey 2004; the surveys were designed to be comparable. The last survey for Scotland was conducted in 1996. The 2009 survey for Scotland has been undertaken but results are not yet published. Data are available for England and Wales for age, gender, socio-economic groups, disability, ethnicity and religion or belief. There is very limited related literature for this measure for groups defined by sexual orientation and transgender, therefore they are not covered in this section.

Working age is defined as 16-64 for men, and 16-59 for women.

**Qualifications**

Data are available for this measure for England, Scotland and Wales using the National Equality Panel’s analysis of Labour Force Survey data (2006-08). Data are available for age, gender, socio-economic groups, disability, ethnicity and religion or belief. Data for LGB people are limited to those self-reporting as same-sex couples. There are no data for this measure for transgender groups, therefore they are not covered in this section.

**Overview**

*Skills and qualifications in the adult population remain highly polarised,* with some groups far more likely to have a degree level qualification, and others more likely to have no qualifications. For example 1 in 5 of the British population has a first degree level qualification, but 1 in 6 has no qualifications and lacks basic functional literacy. **Black Caribbean people stand out as having lower levels of functional literacy** even among those for whom English is a first language. For other ethnic groups, the level of basic skills is similar for those that have English as a first language.

**Women are far less qualified in the older part of the population** than men, but are more or less equally qualified below the age of 35. In some ethnic
and religious groups there are large numbers of women without any qualifications: Among Black Caribbean women, Mixed Race women and Muslim women between a quarter and a third have no qualifications compared to 1 in 8 White women. Large groups of Pakistani and Bangladeshi men have no qualifications. Nearly 1 in 3 Bangladeshi men and 1 in 4 Pakistani men are in this situation compared to 1 in 8 White men.

The level of adult skills and qualifications is influenced by an individual’s educational patterns as well as the degree to which they have been able to pick up skills and education in adult life. In the case of migrants, this also includes education and training received in other countries, so does not only reflect attainment rates in Britain. **Those without basic skills are less likely to participate in adult learning, reinforcing disadvantage** that has already occurred for these individuals.

What we know about the overall situation and trends

**Basic skills**

Around half of the English and Welsh working-age population lack functional numeracy skills, and 1 in 6 adults lack functional literacy as Table 10.6.1 shows.\textsuperscript{123} People in Wales are also more likely to lack functional literacy (25%), which is higher than in any English region. The national differences in numeracy are not as marked with 47% of the working-age population lacking functional numeracy skills in England, and 53% doing so in Wales. Although literacy and numeracy are two different skills, numeracy is strongly correlated with literacy.\textsuperscript{124}

**Qualifications**

Across all three nations there has been an increase in the proportion of people getting qualifications over the past couple of decades. The extent to which the older part of the population has fewer qualifications than the younger part is therefore very striking. Today, 1 in 5 people between 25-34 years have degrees, compared to less than 1 in 10 aged between 55-64, and even fewer in the 65+ age group.\textsuperscript{125} However, it is still the case that around 15% of men and women have no qualifications with people in Wales slightly more likely to have no qualifications than those in England and Scotland.\textsuperscript{126}

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\textsuperscript{123} Equality and Human Rights Commission analysis of England Skills for Life Survey data provided by Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

\textsuperscript{124} Equality and Human Rights Commission analysis of Basic Skills Survey data provided by Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.


\textsuperscript{126} Hills, J. et al. 2010. Figure 3.15 (i) and 3.15 (b). Page 107.
Britain as a whole is more educationally polarised than most other countries. About a third of working-age adults have university degrees and other ‘tertiary’ qualifications, and a third do not have an upper secondary qualification. This compares to about a quarter in each of these categories in other European countries in the OECD.  

Table 10.6.1 Data showing regional and national differences in basic skills and qualifications ranked by basic literacy for working-age population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of population</th>
<th>Lack functional numeracy</th>
<th>Lack functional literacy</th>
<th>No qualifications</th>
<th>5+ GCSE grades A*-C or equivalent</th>
<th>Degree level qualification*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England¹</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Midlands</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North West</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Midlands</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yorks and Humb</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales²</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland³</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source:
Note: *Degree level qualification excludes higher degrees.

What we know about the situation for different groups

**Gender and age**

**Basic skills**
The data show no difference in the proportion of men and women in England achieving functional literacy. However, women are less likely to achieve functional numeracy. Just under half (48%) of women aged 16-24 in England achieve functional numeracy, compared to 53% of men of the same age. However the gender gap has narrowed significantly over time. For those aged 55-65 only 37% of women achieved functional numeracy compared to 57% of men.\(^\text{129}\) The patterns in the Welsh data are also very similar. In Wales, there is no gender difference for literacy, but men are more likely than women to achieve functional numeracy (54% compared to 39%).\(^\text{130}\)

**Qualifications**
Long-term rises in qualification rates mean that more old than young adults lack any qualifications as shown in Table 10.6.2 below. Overall, people aged 44 and under do better than those aged 45 and over on every qualification measure. Changes over time are closing the gender gap: while nearly 1 in 4 women in their 50s have no qualifications, compared to only 1 in 6 men, for 25-44-year-olds the numbers are about equal, and for younger age groups women have the advantage.

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\(^{130}\) Equality and Human Rights Commission analysis of Basic Skills Survey data provided by Welsh Assembly Government.
Table 10.6.2 Percentage of the population with each qualification level by age and gender in the UK, 2006/08\textsuperscript{31}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>GCSE grades A*-C or equivalent</th>
<th>No qualification</th>
<th>Difference men compared to women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-19</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-44</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-49</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-54</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-59</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-69</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70+</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Labour Force Survey.
Note: Working-age population (men 16-64, women 16-59).

Socio-economic groups

Basic skills

Respondents to the English Skills for Life survey in higher socio-economic categories were more likely to achieve functional literacy and numeracy than those in lower ones. Over 9 in 10 respondents in managerial, professional (93%) and intermediate occupational (94%) households reached functional literacy compared to 84% of all respondents, and 67% of respondents in working class households. The gap was larger for numeracy. Just over 7 in 10 (71%) managerial and professional respondents reached functional numeracy, compared to 53% of all respondents, and 31% of those in working class households.\textsuperscript{32}

As in England, socio-economic category influences basic skills outcomes in Wales. Only 13% of those in managerial and professional occupations failed to achieve functional literacy, compared to 36% of those in working class occupations. The pattern was similar for numeracy with 36% of those in managerial and

\textsuperscript{31} National Equality Panel analysis of LFS (2006-08).
\textsuperscript{32} DfES 2003. Tables 3.27 and 3.29, pages 57-59.
professional occupations failing to achieve functional numeracy, compared to 60% of those in working class occupations. However, when broken down by age, a cohort effect is apparent with 33% of 16-25-year olds in working class occupations lacking functional literacy, compared to 44% of 45-65 year olds, with similar differences for numeracy.

**Qualifications**

Fewer than 5% of men and women in managerial and professional occupations have no qualifications compared to around 25% of men and 30% of women in routine occupations, as shown in Table 10.6.3. Among those who have never worked or are unemployed, similarly high proportions have no qualifications. The same pattern is evident in reverse with around a third of higher managerial and professional people having degrees compared to less than 5% of those in semi-routine or routine occupations.133

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 10.6.3 Percentage of working-age population with each qualification level by social class in the UK, 2006/08134</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage with qualification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher managerial and professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower managerial and professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate occupations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small employers and own account workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower supervisory and technical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-routine occupations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Routine occupations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never worked, unemployed, and NEC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Labour Force Survey.

Note: Working-age population (men 16-64, women 16-59).

Household income is another way of measuring economic differences. As Table 10.6.4 shows, across Britain, about a fifth of people in the top 20% of households (in income terms) has a degree level qualification, compared to less than 7% in the bottom 20% of households in terms of income.135

The extent to which those with low income have no qualifications is stark and indicative of the strong relationship between this and the chances of being in poverty. About a quarter of people in households who are in the bottom 20% of the income distribution does not have any qualifications. Less than 10% of those in the top 20% of households have no qualifications.\textsuperscript{136}

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
 & \textbf{England} & & \textbf{Wales} & & \textbf{Scotland} & \\
 & Male & Female & Male & Female & Male & Female \\
\hline
Lowest tenth & 6 & 6 & 6 & 4 & 3 & 5 \\
9th tenth & 8 & 8 & 3 & 6 & 5 & 7 \\
8th tenth & 11 & 11 & 9 & 8 & 9 & 9 \\
7th tenth & 11 & 12 & 6 & 9 & 9 & 9 \\
6th tenth & 12 & 13 & 8 & 10 & 10 & 11 \\
5th tenth & 13 & 15 & 11 & 12 & 14 & 14 \\
4th tenth & 16 & 15 & 14 & 14 & 14 & 15 \\
3rd tenth & 16 & 17 & 13 & 14 & 17 & 19 \\
2nd tenth & 18 & 17 & 17 & 18 & 18 & 20 \\
Highest tenth & 21 & 19 & 21 & 22 & 24 & 24 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Percentage of the working-age population with degree level qualification by household income in the UK, 2006/08\textsuperscript{137}}
\end{table}

Source: Labour Force Survey.
Note: Working-age population (men 16-64, women 16-59).

\textbf{Disability}

\textit{Basic skills}

The English Skills for Life Survey asks respondents whether they have a longstanding illness or disability. Respondents who answered yes were less likely to achieve functional literacy (77% compared to 85% of respondents without a longstanding illness or disability) and less likely to achieve functional numeracy (44% compared to 47% of respondents without a longstanding illness or disability).\textsuperscript{138}

In total, 5% of respondents claimed to have a learning disability of some kind. Respondents with a learning difficulty were less likely to reach functional literacy than those without a learning difficulty (57% compared to 85%) and considerably less likely to reach functional numeracy (24% compared to 54%).\textsuperscript{139} The patterns are similar in Wales – those with a learning difficulty were less likely to achieve

\textsuperscript{136} National Equality Panel analysis of LFS (2006-08).
\textsuperscript{137} National Equality Panel analysis of LFS (2006-08).
functional literacy, and significantly less likely to achieve functional numeracy, than those not identified as having a learning difficulty (21% compared to 48%).\textsuperscript{140}

**Qualifications**
In 2008, 11% of working-age disabled people held degree-level qualifications, compared to 22% of working-age non-disabled people.\textsuperscript{141}

Disabled people across the UK are three times as likely to have no qualifications as non-disabled people (33% of Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) disabled and work-limiting disabled people have no qualifications compared to 11% of non-disabled people).\textsuperscript{142} The difference for those who are work-limiting disabled only or DDA disabled only, is much smaller with 18% and 13% having no qualifications respectively. It is important to note that this will be in part an age effect as older people are both more likely to be disabled and to have no qualifications.

The same pattern is evident in reverse for degree level qualifications. Only 6% of DDA disabled and work-limiting disabled people have a degree level qualification compared to 15% of non-disabled people. The difference for those who were work-limiting disabled only, or were DDA disabled only is much smaller with 10% and 12% having a degree level qualification respectively.\textsuperscript{143}

**Ethnicity**

**Basic skills**
Differences in basic skills by ethnic group largely disappear if those whose second language is English are excluded (see Figure 10.6.1 below). The low level of the wholly English-speaking Black African/Caribbean population is the main exception to this.\textsuperscript{144} Overall, therefore, ethnic differences are partly, but not wholly related to the significant number of people in ethnic minority groups who speak English as a second language.\textsuperscript{145}

\textsuperscript{140} Equality and Human Rights Commission analysis of Basic Skills Survey data provided by Welsh Assembly Government.


\textsuperscript{142} National Equality Panel analysis of LFS (2006-08).

\textsuperscript{143} National Equality Panel analysis of LFS (2006-08).

 Equality and Human Rights Commission analysis of Skills for Life Survey data provided by Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

\[146\] Equality and Human Rights Commission analysis of Skills for Life Survey data provided by Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

Equality and Human Rights Commission analysis of Skills for Life Survey data provided by Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.
When education levels and English as a first language are controlled for, some differences remain by ethnicity. Being in a Black or Asian ethnic group is strongly correlated with poorer literacy skills, in particular for women. Black men are more likely to lack basic numeracy skills than any other ethnic groups, or those with a learning disability.\textsuperscript{148}

Gender and ethnic differences in literacy levels are related to age as Figure 10.6.3 demonstrates. With the exception of Black Caribbean/Black African women, ethnic minority people over the age of 45 appear less likely to reach functional literacy.

\textbf{Figure 10.6.3} Percentage not reaching functional literacy by gender, ethnicity and age in England, 2003\textsuperscript{149}

Source: Data tables provided by Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

A study in 2004 into the literacy of Gypsies and Travellers found that 21\% of men and 9\% of women could not read at all, and 14\% of men and women could not write anything. As with the rest of the population, there was a cohort effect, and younger men and women were more likely to be able to read and write.\textsuperscript{150}

Almost twice as many ethnic minority respondents in Wales failed to achieve functional literacy, compared to White respondents (41\% compared to 24\%).\textsuperscript{151}


\textsuperscript{149} Equality and Human Rights Commission analysis of Skills for Life survey data provided by Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

\textsuperscript{150} Cemlyn, S. \textit{et al.} 2009.

\textsuperscript{151} Equality and Human Rights Commission analysis of Basic Skills Survey data provided by the Welsh Assembly Government.
(Due to small sample sizes the data cannot be disaggregated further). A smaller yet still significant gap appears for numeracy with 69% of ethnic minority respondents failing to achieve functional numeracy compared to 53% of White respondents. However, once country of birth is taken into account this gap narrows, leaving those born outside Wales most likely to lack basic literacy skills.\textsuperscript{152}

**Qualifications**

In most ethnic minority groups women are more likely to have no qualifications than men. Substantial groups of Black Caribbean and Mixed White women (over 30%) have no qualifications. Other Mixed groups also have large groups of women without qualifications – between 25 and 30%.\textsuperscript{153}

Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities stand out in terms of lower levels of qualifications. Far higher proportions of men in these groups have no qualifications compared to men in all other ethnic groups (30% and 25% respectively, and nearly a quarter of women have no qualifications.\textsuperscript{154}

In most ethnic groups there is little difference between the proportions of men and women who have degrees, the main exceptions being that Bangladeshi women are only half as likely as Bangladeshi men to have them, whilst Black Caribbean men are half as likely as Black Caribbean women to have them. The Chinese population stand out as being the best qualified at this level with nearly a quarter of both Chinese men and women having degrees. Bangladeshi women and Black Caribbean men are much less likely to have a degree than White British people as shown in Figures 10.6.4 and 10.6.5 below.\textsuperscript{155}

\textsuperscript{152} Equality and Human Rights Commission analysis of Basic Skills Survey data provided by the Welsh Assembly Government.

\textsuperscript{153} National Equality Panel analysis of LFS (2006-08).

\textsuperscript{154} National Equality Panel analysis of LFS (2006-08).

\textsuperscript{155} National Equality Panel analysis of LFS (2006-08).
Figure 10.6.4 Percentage of the men in the working age population with each qualification level by ethnic group in the UK, 2006/08\textsuperscript{156}

Source: Labour Force Survey.
Note: Table refers to working-age population (men 16-64).

\textsuperscript{156} National Equality Panel analysis of LFS (2006-08).
Religion or belief
As with ethnicity, an analysis of qualification levels by religion or belief shows a great degree of polarisation between groups as Figure 10.6.6 illustrates. At one end of the spectrum, 33% of Muslim women (of working-age) have no qualifications, and only 9% have a degree. Conversely, only 4% of Jewish women have no qualifications and 21% have a degree.

Amongst men, Muslim men are also most likely not to have any qualifications (24%) and again, least likely to have a degree (11%). 158 A fifth of Sikh men also have no qualifications. However, these low numbers could hide qualifications gained outside the UK and qualifications not listed in the survey question, especially for older age groups. 159

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158 Hills. J. et al. 2010. Figure 3.10, page 102.
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**Figure 10.6.6** Data showing percentage of men in the working-age population with each qualification level by religion or belief in the UK, 2006/08\(^{160}\)

- No religion at all
- Any other religion
- Sikh
- Muslim
- Jewish
- Hindu
- Buddhist
- Christian

Source: Labour Force Survey.
Note: Table refers to working-age population (men 16-64).

**Figure 10.6.7** Data showing percentage of women in the working-age population with each qualification level by religion or belief in the UK, 2006/08\(^{161}\)

- No religion at all
- Any other religion
- Sikh
- Muslim
- Jewish
- Hindu
- Buddhist
- Christian

Source: Labour Force Survey.
Note: Table refers to working-age population (women 16-59).

\(^{161}\) National Equality Panel analysis of LFS (2006-08).
Sexual orientation

There are no available data on basic skills and qualification level by sexual orientation. Figures on people living together in same-sex couples available from the Labour Force Survey have a low level of reliability as it is a very small sample and does not reflect the experiences of gay men and lesbian women overall. However, these data show that those declaring that they live in same-sex couples appear to have a higher level of educational qualifications than those not living in same-sex couples. (see table 10.6.5 below)

Table 10.6.5 Percentage of the working-age population with each qualification level by same-sex couple in the UK, 2006/08\(^\text{162}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>GCSE grades A*-C or equivalent</th>
<th>No qualifications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Living in a same sex couple</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living in same sex couple</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Labour Force Survey.
Note: Table refers to working-age population (men 16-64, women 16-59).

Box 10.6.1 Related issue: Prisoners and basic skills

Among groups in society with particularly low levels of skill and attainment, 82% of prisoners are at or below the writing level of an 11-year-old and only 1 in 5 people in prison are able to complete a job application form.\(^\text{163}\)

\(^{162}\) National Equality Panel analysis of LFS (2006-08).
10.7 What we know about adult learning

**Measure:**
Percentage of adults aged over 18 who participated in formal or informal learning in the last year

**How this measure works:**
We are able to report on Britain, Scotland and Wales for this measure using the Labour Force Survey (2006-08).

Data are collected for gender, age, socio-economic groups and ethnicity. Limited information is available for disability, as information about impairment type is not collected. Limited data are available for religion or belief, and transgender people are not covered by the dataset. Sexual orientation was not covered by the dataset in 2006-08 which is used here, though it is now as it is part of the Integrated Household Survey.

This measure does not measure the extent to which groups are satisfied with the outcomes of their learning.

Additional information has been drawn from a variety of sources including the Adult Learning Survey (England) conducted by the National Institute for Adult and Continuing Education 2009. However due to small sample sizes it is not possible to break these data down by all equality groups.

There is very limited related literature for this measure for groups defined by sexual orientation and transgender, therefore they are not covered in this section.

**Overview**

4 in 10 adults participate in some kind of adult learning each year. However, those with low prior educational achievement are least likely to participate. People in older age groups are also less likely than younger adults to participate yet are more likely to have missed out on educational opportunities, thus entrenching existing patterns of educational disadvantage.

People in higher socio-economic groups are more than twice as likely to have participated in adult learning than people in routine occupations or those who have never worked. In Scotland, where overall participation is similar to the rest of Britain, adult learning is even more skewed towards professional workers.
What we know about the overall situation

More than a third of the EU population aged 25-64 years participate in formal or non-formal education and training. Participation rates differ by age. People aged 25-34 are twice as likely to participate (45%) in formal or non-formal education and training than those aged 55-64 (22%). People in the UK at all ages are more likely to be engaged in adult learning than on the average across the EU, having the second highest rate following Sweden.164

What we know about the situation for different groups

Gender

Men and women participate in adult learning at broadly similar rates across Britain as a whole, and Scotland.

Initial analysis of the Labour Force Survey conducted as part of the development of the Equality Measurement Framework suggests that slightly more men than women participate in Wales as Table 10.7.1 shows.

| Table 10.7.1 Percentage participating in Adult Learning in Britain, Scotland and Wales, 2006/08165 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Britain | Scotland | Wales |
| Men | 41% | 43% | 37% |
| Women | 41% | 42% | 40%* |

Source: Labour Force Survey
Note: * Indicates statistically significant difference

The Adult Learning Survey confirms this picture of broad parity between women and men. As Figure 10.7.1 below shows, the parity continues across different categories of learning.

165 Alkire, S. et al. 2009. Developing the Equality Measurement Framework: selecting the indicators. Research Report 31. Manchester: Equality and Human Rights Commission. In the development of the Equality Measurement Framework indicators, the technical phase was to check sample size rather than generate final data analysis tables, so these are preliminary results for group means and the significance of the variations in group means, as well as a report on sample size. Significance tests are reported at the 95 per cent level. A series of cross-checks are required at the next stage of the development of the Equality Measurement Framework before final data tables can be produced.
Age
According to initial analysis undertaken as part of the development of the Equality Measurement Framework, as age increases, the number of people that report engaging in adult learning decreases, from nearly 70% aged 18-24 to less than 10% aged 75+.

Figure 10.7.1 Participation in adult learning by gender and category of learning in England, 2009

Source: Adult Learning Survey.

Socio-economic groups
Participation in adult learning is influenced by socio-economic group as Figure 10.7.3 illustrates. According to initial analysis conducted as part of the development of the Equality Measurement Framework, those who are self-employed or working for small firms, those employed in routine occupations and the long-term unemployed participate in adult learning at less than half the rate of professional and higher managerial groups.\footnote{Alkire, S. \textit{et al}. 2009. See footnote 165 for information on the development of the Equality Measurement Framework Indicators.} Public sector employment is a significant factor in increasing opportunities for adult learning particularly for women and disabled people (in 2008 the public sector employed 24\% more disabled women and 11\% more disabled men than in 1998).\footnote{Jones, P. 2010a. Page 4.}
The Adult Learning Survey shows that there is a relationship between prior educational achievement and participation in adult learning (using terminal age of education as shown in Figure 10.7.4 below). Those who leave formal education earliest are least likely to participate in adult learning; it is those with higher education who are most likely to participate in adult learning.

Figure 10.7.3 Participation in Adult Learning by socio-economic group in Britain, Scotland and Wales, 2006/08

Source: Labour Force Survey.

The Adult Learning Survey shows that there is a relationship between prior educational achievement and participation in adult learning (using terminal age of education as shown in Figure 10.7.4 below). Those who leave formal education earliest are least likely to participate in adult learning; it is those with higher education who are most likely to participate in adult learning.

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Early school leaving is a major barrier to adult learning. Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups feel the participation penalty of leaving school at 16 most keenly. Of those who leave school at 16, Bangladeshi and Pakistani 16-year-old school leavers are half as likely to participate in adult learning as their White counterparts (29% and 34% compared to 63%).

Disability
Participation of disabled people in adult learning reveals a stark picture of inequality, as disabled people participate at half the rate of non-disabled people. Across Britain 46% of non-disabled people participate in adult learning, compared to only 23% of disabled people.

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**Figure 10.7.4** Participation in Adult Learning and Terminal Age of Education in England, 2009

Source: Adult Learning Survey.

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\(^{171}\) Jones, P. 2010a, Figure 9, page 17.

\(^{172}\) Jones, P. 2010a. Page 17.

\(^{173}\) Jones, P. 2010a.
Ethnicity
Initial analysis conducted as part of the development of the Equality Measurement framework indicates that in 2006-08, ethnic minority groups participated in adult learning at higher rates than the White population, with the noticeable exception of the Pakistani/Bangladeshi community.

Figure 10.7.5 Participation in Adult Learning by ethnicity in Britain, Scotland and Wales, 2006/08

Source: Labour Force Survey.

174 Alkire, S. et al. 2009. In the development of the Equality Measurement Framework indicators, the technical phase was to check sample size rather than generate final data analysis tables, so these are preliminary results for group means and the significance of the variations in group means, as well as a report on sample size. Significance tests are reported at the 95 per cent level. A series of cross-checks are required at the next stage of the development of the Equality Measurement Framework before final data tables can be produced.
A 2008 study by National Institute of Adult and Continuing Education confirms these findings, showing that within the working-age population, overall ethnic minority groups are more likely to participate in adult learning than the White population.\textsuperscript{175} The sharpest contrast is between the lower participation rates of Bangladeshi and Pakistani groups, and the rest.\textsuperscript{176} The study also found significant patterns in terms of the mode of learning by ethnicity. Groups with higher rates of participation in adult learning (Black and Mixed ethnic origin) are more likely to be benefiting from taught learning, and learning towards a qualification. Black African people who are economically inactive are also more likely than other groups to participate in adult learning (54\% compared to 34\% of economically inactive White people).\textsuperscript{177}

Those groups less likely to participate (particularly Bangladeshi people) tended to be involved in self-directed learning, and are also least likely to be working towards a qualification, and least likely to be participating in job-related training.\textsuperscript{178}

Disaggregation by ethnicity and gender reveals some interesting patterns. Men in Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities have higher participation rates relative to women, perhaps reflecting the employment rates of women in those ethnic minority groups.\textsuperscript{179}

**Religion or belief**

According to initial analysis as part of the development of the Equality Measurement Framework, data indicate that across Britain Christian groups stand out as having relatively low participation rates compared to those of no religion and other religious groups at 39\% in Britain and Scotland and 36\% in Wales compared to 48\%, 51\% and 44\% of those of no religion. However, the small size of the relevant populations in the survey means that these results should be treated with caution.\textsuperscript{180}

\textsuperscript{175} Jones, P. 2010a. Page 17.
\textsuperscript{176} Jones, P. 2010a. Page 17.
\textsuperscript{177} Jones, P. 2010a. Pages 19–21.
\textsuperscript{178} Jones, P. 2010a. Pages 19–21.
\textsuperscript{179} Jones, P. 2010a. Pages 19–21.
\textsuperscript{180} Alkire. S. \textit{et al.} 2009. In the development of the Equality Measurement Framework indicators, the technical phase was to check sample size rather than generate final data analysis tables, so these are preliminary results for group means and the significance of the variations in group means, as well as a report on sample size. Significance tests are reported at the 95\% per cent level. A series of cross-checks are required at the next stage of the development of the Equality Measurement Framework before final data tables can be produced.
10.8 What we know about use of the internet

**Measure:**
Percentage who have had access to the internet within the last 3 months

**How this measure works:**
Data for this measure are available for the UK from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Opinions Survey (2009).

The Office for National Statistics Opinions Survey provides data on age, gender and socio-economic groups. Data are not available for disability and ethnicity, but general literature has been drawn on to indicate some possible issues that these groups may face. Very limited related literature for this measure is available by religion or belief, sexual orientation or transgender, therefore these groups are not covered in this section. The measure recommended by the Equality Measurement Framework focused on use of the internet. However, as available data for use were limited, internet access is being used as a proxy for this measure.

**Overview**

30% of the UK population are unable to access the internet in their homes.\(^{181}\) Almost all adults (95%) aged under 70 who had a degree or equivalent qualification were estimated to live in a household with internet access. Those who had no formal qualifications were least likely to have an internet connection, at 52%.

Access to the internet varies dramatically with age, from 96% of 16-24-year-olds to just 30% of over-65s.\(^{182}\) Although older age groups are at the centre of the recent growth in internet access, they are also most at risk of non-usage.

There are no large differences in internet use by ethnic group. Among Indian, Pakistani and Black African groups, those with lower socio-economic status use the internet more than other ethnic groups in those socio-economic categories.

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\(^{182}\) ONS 2009.
Only a minority of people with physical and sensory disabilities have broadband access – 42% of people with visual impairments, 32% of people with hearing impairments and 35% of people with mobility impairments have broadband access. Many websites still remain inaccessible for many groups.

What we know about the overall situation

In 2009, the proportion of households able to access the internet varied between UK regions, and across nations. The region with the highest level of internet access was London at 80%. In terms of national differences, Scotland had the lowest proportion of households with internet access at 62%.\(^{183}\)

**Figure 10.8.1** Percentage of the population with access to the internet and using it in the last 3 months in England, Scotland and Wales, 2007/09\(^{184}\)

![Percentage of the population with access to the internet and using it in the last 3 months](chart)

Source: Internet Access Households and Individual.
Note: Household internet access.

\(^{183}\) ONS 2009. This indicator uses the ONS Opinions Survey for consistency across all three nations, however it is important to note that the Scottish Household Survey (which has a larger sample size for Scotland) found that in 2009 67% of households had internet access.

Across the UK, 37.4 million adults (76% of the adult population) accessed the internet in the 3 months prior to interview. This was an increase of 10% (3.5 million adults) from 2008. Subsequently, the number of adults who had never used the internet fell to 10.2 million adults (21%) in 2009.\textsuperscript{185}

What we know about the situation for different groups

Gender and age

In 2009, men were more likely to have accessed the internet in the last 3 months than women (80% compared to 72%). Of those who used the internet, there were small differences in frequency with men slightly more likely than women to use the internet on a daily, weekly or monthly basis.\textsuperscript{186}

In 2009, the proportion of adults who accessed the internet every day or almost every day was 73%. The 16-24 age group accessed the internet the most, with 86% using it every day or almost every day. The 65+ age group used it the least with 52% using it every day or almost every day as Figure 10.8.2 shows.\textsuperscript{187}

There has been growth in internet access by all age groups between 2008 and 2009. Although the youngest age group (those aged 16-24) had the highest level of access, at 96%, the largest increase in the proportion of those using the internet was in the oldest age group (those over 65 years). Access by those aged over 65 years increased proportionally by 15%, compared with an increase of 3 percentage points for the 16-24 age group.\textsuperscript{188}

\textsuperscript{185} ONS 2009.
\textsuperscript{186} ONS 2009.
\textsuperscript{187} ONS 2009.
\textsuperscript{188} ONS 2009.
Socio-economic groups

Almost all adults (95%) aged under 70 who had a degree or equivalent qualification were estimated to live in a household with internet access. Those who had no formal qualifications were least likely to have an internet connection, at 52%.

In terms of access, low income interacts with a range of issues relating to the financing of access. For example, those with incomes over £40,000 per annum are more than twice as likely to be online compared to those earning less than £12,500.

Those who are working are more likely than those who are unemployed to use the internet regularly (62% of people who are working use the internet regularly, compared to 46% of the unemployed).

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189 Jones, P. 2010b. Figure 4, page 9.
190 ONS 2009.
Disability
There is no information by internet access and disability in the major data sets. However, we do know from the Digital Britain Report 2009 that internet access for disabled people is limited with only 42% of people with visual impairments, 32% of those people with hearing impairments and 35% of those people with mobility impairments having broadband access at home compared to around 60% of the general population.\textsuperscript{193} Even for those with internet access, many websites still remain inaccessible for those that do not use a mouse, or who use screen-reading technology or voice recognition software. In addition, many of these tools do not work on a mobile platform, so anyone using a handheld device may be similarly prevented from achieving full access.\textsuperscript{194}

Ethnicity
There is no information by internet access and ethnicity in the major data sets; however smaller-scale surveys have found that overall ethnic minority groups access and use the internet at a higher rate than the total UK population. As with the population as a whole, use by ethnic minority group varies by age and socio-economic group; those under the age of 45 appear to access and use the internet at similar rates, whereas in the 45+ age group the high use by Indians stands out as shown in Figure 10.8.3.\textsuperscript{195}

\textsuperscript{193} Jones, P. 2010b. Page 14.
\textsuperscript{195} Jones, P. 2010b. Figure 8, page 13.
Figure 10.8.3 Percentage with access to the internet and using in the last 3 months by ethnicity and age in the UK, 2009\textsuperscript{196}


Bibliography


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