

Education and training

- The proportion of three and four-year-olds enrolled in all schools in the UK tripled from 21 per cent in 1970/71 to 64 per cent in 2005/06. (Figure 3.1)
- In 2005, 704,000 children were enrolled in full-day childcare settings in England compared with 539,000 in 2001. The number enrolled for part of the day has fallen, from 589,000 in 2001 to 390,000 in 2005. (Figure 3.2)
- The rate of permanent exclusion among school pupils in England has fallen by 23 per cent since 1997/98 to 12 in every 10,000 pupils of compulsory school age in 2004/05. (Page 29)
- At the end of 2005, a record 76 per cent of 16-year-olds were in full-time further education in England. (Page 29)
- In both 1996 and 2006, girls outperformed boys in teacher assessments in England, although there were improvements in the performance of both sexes at all Key Stages. (Table 3.11)
- There were 441,000 full-time teachers in mainstream schools in the UK in 2004/05, an overall fall of 10 per cent since 1981/82 despite rises since the late 1990s. (Page 38)

For increasing numbers of the population, education is no longer confined to compulsory schooling. Early learning and participation in pre-school education is seen as important for building a foundation for future learning, and most people continue in full-time education beyond school-leaving age. Qualifications attained at school are increasingly supplemented by further and higher education and other training, to equip people with the skills required by a modern labour market, and to keep these skills up to date.

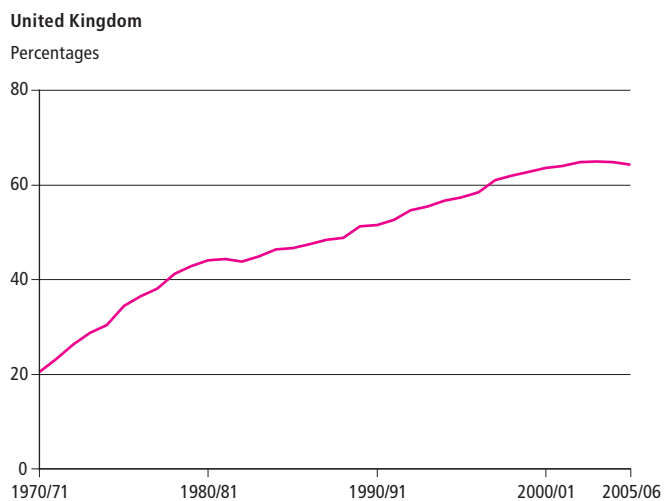
Early years education

Early years education aims to ensure that all children begin their compulsory education with a basic foundation in literacy and numeracy; and key skills such as listening, concentration and learning to work with others. The proportion of three and four-year-olds enrolled in all schools in the UK rose from 21 per cent in 1970/71 to 65 per cent in 2004/05, and then fell to 64 per cent in 2005/06 (Figure 3.1). This overall increase reflects both the growth in the number of places – there were over 3,300 state nursery schools in 2005/06, almost two and a half times the number in 1990/91 – and an overall fall in the number of three and four-year-olds in the population during the period 1971 to 2005. In January 2006, 35 per cent of three and four-year-olds attending early years education were enrolled in other non-school settings such as playgroups in the private and voluntary sectors, either instead of, or in addition to, their school place.

The pattern of participation in early years education varies regionally. The proportion of three and four-year-olds in maintained nursery and primary schools is generally higher in Wales and the north of England than in the south. In January 2006 around twice the proportion of three and four-year-olds attended maintained nursery and primary schools in the North East (84 per cent) and Wales (81 per cent) compared with the South East (42 per cent) and the South West of England (43 per cent). However, more children were enrolled with private and voluntary providers in the south than in other parts of the country (55 per cent in the South East and 59 per cent in the South West). It is worth noting that in England and Scotland a child may be enrolled with more than one type of provider and therefore may have been counted twice.

In 2005 the Department for Education and Skills carried out surveys of four Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education) registered childcare settings: full-day childcare, sessional childcare, out-of-school childcare, and childminders, to assess the provision of childcare in England. Full-day childcare settings are defined as facilities that provide day care for children under eight years old, for a continuous period of four hours or more in any day in non-domestic premises (for example, day nurseries). Sessional childcare settings are facilities that provide

Figure 3.1
Children under five in schools¹



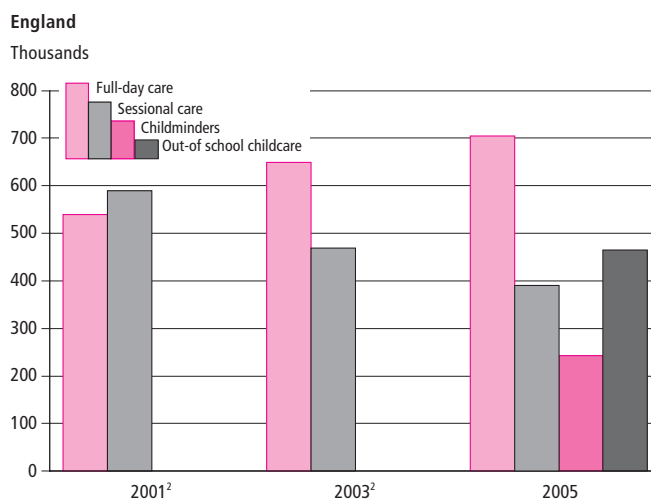
1 Pupils aged three and four at 31 December each year as a percentage of all three and four-year-olds. See Appendix, Part 3: Stages of education.

Source: Department for Education and Skills; Welsh Assembly Government; Scottish Executive; Northern Ireland Department of Education

similar day care for children under eight years old but for a session that is less than a continuous period of four hours in any day, and out-of-school childcare includes after school clubs, breakfast clubs and holiday clubs that are registered with Ofsted (see Appendix, Part 3: Stages of education).

The 2005 survey showed that there were a total of 21,800 full-day and sessional care providers in England and

Figure 3.2
Children enrolled with childcare settings: by type of setting¹



1 See Appendix, Part 3: Stages of education.
2 Data are not available for childminders and out-of-school childcare.

Source: Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey, Department for Education and Skills

that the number of full-day care providers has increased, reflecting a shift in preference away from sessional day care towards full-day care provision. The number of children enrolled in full-day childcare settings in England increased by 165,000 from 539,000 in 2001 to 704,000 in 2005, whereas the number of children enrolled in sessional care settings decreased by 199,000 to 390,000 (Figure 3.2). Over the period 2001 to 2005 the average number of children enrolled per full-day childcare provider declined from 69 in 2001 to 60 in 2005. This could be because there has been an increase in the number of full-day providers compared with a decrease in sessional providers. In 2001 there were 7,800 full-day care providers compared with 11,800 in 2005, whereas the number of sessional childcare providers fell from 14,000 to 10,000 (see also Chapter 8: Social protection).

Compulsory education

In 2005/06 there were around 34,000 schools in the UK, accommodating 9.9 million pupils (Table 3.3). Public sector schools (not including special schools) were attended by 9.1 million pupils (92 per cent), while 7 per cent of pupils attended one of the 2,500 non-maintained mainstream schools. These proportions have remained around this level since the 1970s. One per cent of pupils attended one of the 1,400 special schools in 2005/06, and there were around 480 pupil referral units (PRUs), catering for 16,000 pupils. PRUs provide suitable alternative education on a temporary basis for pupils who may not be able to attend a mainstream school. As well as pupils who have been excluded from mainstream schools and children with medical problems, PRUs may provide education for school-aged mothers and pregnant schoolgirls, school-phobics, and pupils awaiting placement in a maintained school.

Any maintained secondary school in England can apply to be designated as a specialist school. Specialist schools receive extra funding to establish curriculum centres of excellence. Although they focus on one or two chosen specialisms, these schools must still meet National Curriculum requirements and deliver a broad and balanced education to all pupils. By September 2006, 82 per cent of all secondary schools in England had become specialist schools. There were 2,610 designated specialist schools (which included 65 special schools), attended by around 2.5 million pupils in September 2006. This represents over two-thirds of all pupils in maintained secondary schools in England.

In 2005/06 the average class size in Great Britain was 25 pupils for Key Stage 1 (five to seven-year-olds) and 27 pupils for Key Stage 2 (seven to eleven-year-olds) (Table 3.4 overleaf). Key Stage 2 pupils were far more likely than Key Stage 1 pupils to be in classes of 31 or more pupils, (19 per cent compared with

2 per cent), although for both Key Stages the proportion of pupils in classes of this size has fallen since 2000/01 when 28 per cent of Key Stage 2 pupils, and 4 per cent of Key Stage 1, were in classes of 31 or more pupils. More than one in four Key Stage 2 classes in the East Midlands and the South West had 31 or more pupils in 2005/06 compared with less than one in ten classes in London, and an even smaller proportion in Northern Ireland and Wales. Northern Ireland had the smallest average number of pupils per class at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in 2005/06. Average class size in secondary schools in England was around 22 pupils and in Wales, 21 pupils, despite secondary schools usually having more pupils than primary schools. This smaller average class size is in part because students choose different subjects in preparation for formal exams taken towards the end of their compulsory secondary schooling.

In the British Social Attitudes survey 2005, adults aged 18 and over in Great Britain were shown a selection of possible improvements to education and, regarding primary and

Table 3.3
School pupils:¹ by type of school²

United Kingdom		Thousands				
		1970/71	1980/81	1990/91	2000/01	2005/06
Public sector schools³						
Nursery ⁴		50	89	105	152	151
Primary		5,902	5,171	4,955	5,298	4,975
Secondary ⁵						
Comprehensive		1,313	3,730	2,925	3,340	3,453
Grammar		673	149	156	205	218
Modern		1,164	233	94	112	102
Other		403	434	298	260	214
All public sector schools		9,507	9,806	8,533	9,367	9,113
Non-maintained schools		621	619	613	626	659
All special schools		103	148	114	113	106
Pupil referral units		.	.	.	10	16
All schools		10,230	10,572	9,260	10,116	9,894

1 Headcounts.

2 See Appendix, Part 3: Stages of education, and Main categories of educational establishments.

3 Excludes maintained special schools and pupil referral units.

4 Figures for Scotland before 1998/99 only include data for Local Authority (LA) pre-schools, data thereafter include partnership pre-schools. From 2005/06, figures refer to centres providing pre-school education at an LA centre, or in partnership with the LA only. Children are counted once for each centre they are registered with.

5 Excludes sixth form colleges from 1980/81.

Source: Department for Education and Skills; Welsh Assembly Government; Scottish Executive; Northern Ireland Department of Education

Table 3.4

Class sizes in schools:¹ by region, 2005/06

	Primary schools				Secondary schools	
	Key Stage 1 ²		Key Stage 2 ²		Average number in class	Percentage of classes with 31 or more pupils
	Average number in class	Percentage of classes with 31 or more pupils	Average number in class	Percentage of classes with 31 or more pupils		
Great Britain	25.4	2.2	26.9	18.9
England	25.7	2.3	27.3	20.7	21.5	7.7
North East	24.6	2.2	26.3	17.1	21.5	7.3
North West	25.3	2.3	27.4	24.8	21.4	8.3
Yorkshire and the Humber	25.5	3.8	27.4	23.7	21.3	7.7
East Midlands	24.8	2.8	27.3	25.8	21.6	7.4
West Midlands	25.6	2.2	27.3	19.0	21.5	8.1
East	25.5	2.7	27.4	19.6	21.6	7.9
London	27.1	1.7	27.2	8.6	21.6	5.6
South East	25.9	2.0	27.5	24.0	21.6	7.8
South West	25.4	1.7	27.3	25.7	21.7	9.5
Wales	24.4	2.3	25.0	3.5	20.6	9.3
Scotland	23.1	0.9	24.6	12.6
Northern Ireland	22.9	2.2	23.9	7.1

1 Maintained schools only. Figures relate to all classes, not just those taught by one teacher. In Northern Ireland a class is defined as a group of pupils normally under the control of one teacher.

2 Pupils in composite classes that overlap Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are not included. In Scotland primary P1 to P3 is interpreted to be Key Stage 1 and P4 to P7, Key Stage 2.

Source: Department for Education and Skills; Welsh Assembly Government; Scottish Executive; Northern Ireland Department of Education

secondary education separately, were asked 'Which do you think would be the most useful one for improving the education of children in primary and secondary schools?' Reducing class sizes was seen by respondents as the best way of improving both primary (37 per cent) and secondary (26 per cent) education. Other suggested improvements to primary and secondary education favoured by respondents included: better quality teachers (16 per cent for primary level and 19 per cent for secondary); greater emphasis on developing the child's skills and interests (15 per cent and 14 per cent); and more resources for buildings, books and equipment (14 per cent and 13 per cent respectively).

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) have either significantly greater difficulty in learning than other children of the same age, or a disability that makes it difficult for them to use normal educational facilities. When a school identifies a child with SEN it must try to meet the child's needs, in line with provisions in the SEN Code of Practice (or in Scotland, the Code of Practice on supporting children's learning). If

the initial attempts do not meet the child's needs then an education authority or board may determine the educational needs for a child with SEN, and draw up a formal statement of those needs (or from 2006 in Scotland, a Co-ordinated Support Plan) together with the action it intends to take to meet them. In 2005/06, 278,300 pupils (2.8 per cent) in the UK had these statements. This figure comprises 236,700 pupils in England, 15,800 in Wales, 13,800 in Scotland and 12,000 in Northern Ireland.

In England the number of pupils with statements of SEN increased from 194,500 in January 1994 (representing 2.5 per cent of pupils) to peak at 258,200 (3.1 per cent) in 2001. Numbers have since declined, with the total in January 2006 (236,700) representing 2.9 per cent of pupils. While the number of pupils in special schools and pupil referral units remained fairly constant in the 12 years to 2006, the number of pupils with statements of SEN in mainstream maintained schools increased – from 100,600 in 1994 to 158,000 in 2001, but has since declined by 19,000 to 139,000 in January 2006

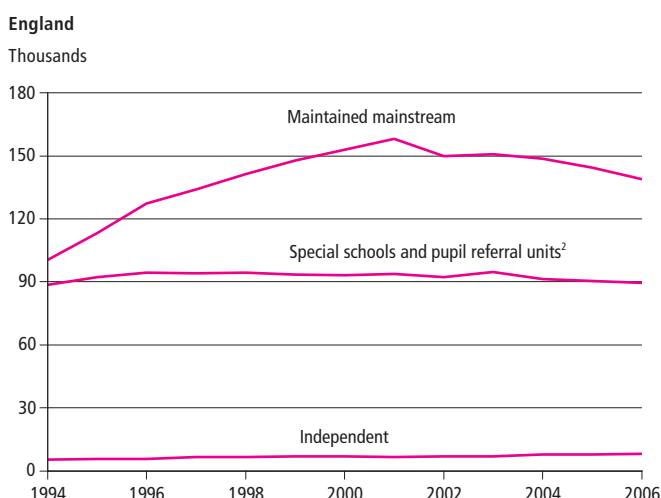
(Figure 3.5). For more information on these data see Appendix, Part 3: Special Educational Needs data.

In 2004/05 there were 9,440 permanent exclusions of pupils from primary, secondary and special schools in England, approximately 12 in every 10,000 pupils of compulsory school age. This figure is around 4 per cent less than 2003/04 and around 23 per cent less than 1997/98, when there were 12,300 permanent exclusions of pupils in England. These pupils are excluded from the school and their name removed from the school register. They are educated at another school or through some other form of provision.

In 2004/05 the permanent exclusion rate for boys was nearly four times higher than that for girls in England. The ratio of permanent exclusion between boys and girls has remained stable over the last five years with boys representing around 80 per cent of the total number of permanent exclusions each year. This ratio was similar in Wales, where there were 465 permanent exclusions from local authority schools in 2004/05. In Scotland, there were 271 permanent exclusions in 2004/05. Nearly all exclusions in Scotland were temporary and boys accounted for 79 per cent of all exclusions.

Exclusion rates vary by ethnic group of pupils. In 2004/05, rates ranged from 2 in every 10,000 Chinese pupils being permanently excluded from schools in England, to 41 in every 10,000 pupils of mixed White and Black Caribbean origin (Figure 3.6). Black African pupils were far less likely to be permanently excluded (14 in every 10,000), than Black

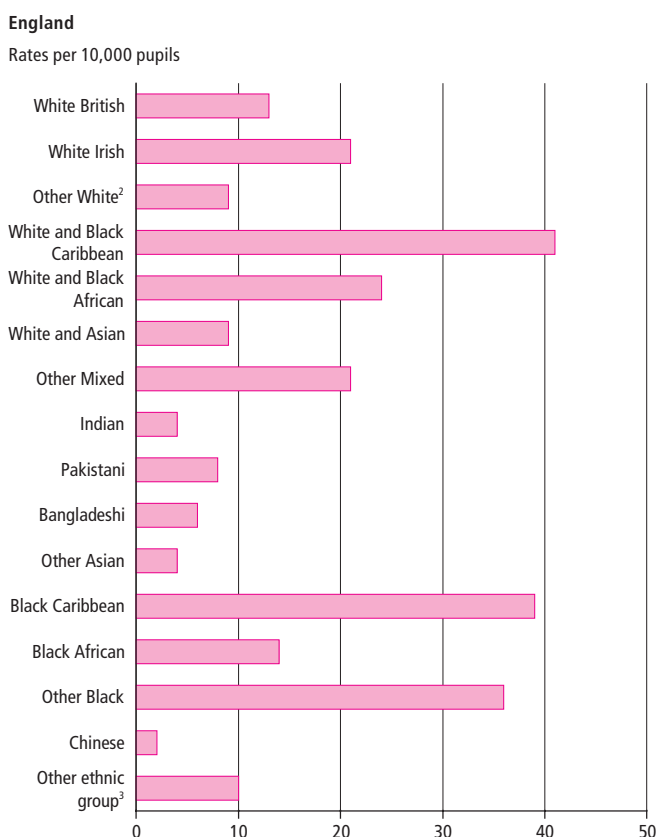
Figure 3.5
Pupils with statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN):¹ by type of school



1 Data are at January each year. Estimates were made for 2001 because the SEN data were known to be incomplete. See Appendix, Part 3: Special Educational Needs data.
2 Pupil referral units did not exist before 1995.

Source: Department for Education and Skills

Figure 3.6
Permanent exclusion rates:¹ by ethnic group, 2004/05



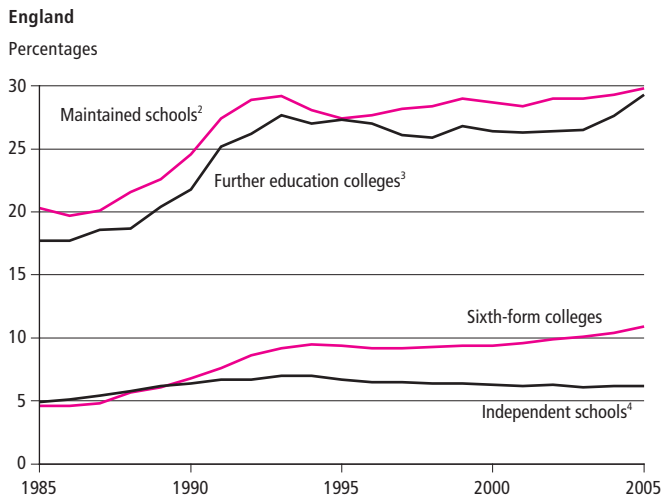
1 The number of permanent exclusions per 10,000 pupils of compulsory school age (headcount) in each ethnic group in primary, secondary and special schools (excluding dually registered pupils in special schools). Dual registration is when a pupil is registered at more than one school.
2 Excludes Travellers of Irish heritage and Gypsy/Roma.
3 Excludes unclassified pupils, pupils who were not asked to provide ethnic information, and those who refused to provide it.

Source: Department for Education and Skills

Caribbean pupils (39 in every 10,000) or those from any Other Black background (36 in every 10,000). Around 80 per cent of all permanent exclusions in 2004/05 were of White pupils.

Post-compulsory education

Following the end of compulsory education, young people aged 16 can choose whether to go on to further education. At the end of 2005, 500,000 students (76 per cent) in England who were 16 at the beginning of the academic year had gone on to full-time further education – the highest rate on record and an increase of 3 percentage points since the end of 2004. A higher proportion of females than males of this age were in full-time education (82 per cent compared with 72 per cent). Of the 16-year-olds who were not in further education (both male and female), 13 per cent were in work-based learning (for example apprenticeships), employer-funded training, or other education and training, and 11 per cent were not in education, employment or training.

Figure 3.7**Participation of 16-year-olds in full-time education: by institution type¹**

- 1 From 1994 there were changes in the source of further and higher education data. Participation estimates may be slightly underestimated for 16-year-olds between 1999 and 2000.
- 2 Includes all pupils in maintained schools and maintained special schools.
- 3 Includes general further education, tertiary and specialist colleges.
- 4 Includes all pupils in independent schools, non-maintained special schools, city technology colleges, academies and pupil referral units.

Source: Department for Education and Skills

Maintained schools and further education colleges have been the most common providers of full-time further education for 16-year-olds for the last 20 years. Between 1985 and 1993 there was a general rise in the proportion of 16-year-olds in England who were participating in full-time education in these institutions (Figure 3.7). Since then the proportions have remained fairly stable, with each type being attended by between 26 and 30 per cent of 16-year-olds between 1993 and 2005. There has also been an increase in the proportion of 16-year-olds in full-time education at sixth-form colleges, from 5 per cent in 1985 to 11 per cent in 2005.

In Wales, maintained schools and further education colleges are the main providers of full-time education for 16-year-olds. Between 1995/96 and 2004/05, 35 to 38 per cent of 16-year-olds in Wales were in full-time education in maintained schools and between 31 to 34 per cent were in full-time education in further education colleges.

In 2004/05 there were 5.0 million further education students in the UK, almost three times the number in 1970/71. There were around four times as many female further education students in 2004/05 as in 1970/71, and twice as many male students. In 1970/71 the majority (58 per cent) of further education students in the UK were men, 1 million compared with 725,000 women (Table 3.8). However, by 2004/05 the majority (59 per cent) of further education students were women, 3.0 million compared with 2.1 million men.

Table 3.8**Students in further and higher education:¹ by type of course and sex**

United Kingdom	Thousands							
	Men				Women			
	1970/71	1980/81	1990/91	2004/05	1970/71	1980/81	1990/91	2004/05
Further education								
Full-time	116	154	219	532	95	196	261	551
Part-time	891	697	768	1,534	630	624	986	2,429
All further education	1,007	851	986	2,066	725	820	1,247	2,981
Higher education								
Undergraduate								
Full-time	241	277	345	549	173	196	319	680
Part-time	127	176	148	267	19	71	106	458
Postgraduate								
Full-time	33	41	50	113	10	21	34	114
Part-time	15	32	46	139	3	13	33	172
All higher education ²	416	526	588	1,068	205	301	491	1,426

1 Home and overseas students. See Appendix, Part 3: Stages of education.

2 Figures for 2004/05 include a small number of higher education students for whom details are not available by level.

Source: Department for Education and Skills; Welsh Assembly Government; Scottish Executive; Northern Ireland Department for Employment and Learning; Higher Education Statistics Agency

Similar numbers of men and women study full time but the majority (79 per cent) of further education students studied part time in 2004/05. Women are more likely than men to study part time, 81 per cent and 74 per cent respectively of further education students. This contrasts to 1970/71 when a similar proportion of women (87 per cent) and men (88 per cent) studied part time.

There have also been substantial increases in the number of students in higher education in the UK (see Appendix, Part 3: Stages of education). In 2004/05 there were 2.5 million students in higher education compared with 0.6 million in 1970/71. During this period the proportion of female higher education students increased from 33 per cent to 57 per cent. The number of enrolments has increased for both sexes. For women, there were 1.4 million higher education enrolments in 2004/05, seven times as many as in 1970/71. For men, there were 1.1 million enrolments in 2004/05, an increase of two and a half times over the same period.

Data supplied by UK higher education institutions show the variety of courses studied by higher education students as well as the variations in subject choice by sex. When considering full-time and part-time, undergraduate and postgraduate, and home and overseas students, the most popular subjects in 2004/05 were subjects allied to medicine (for example nursing, pharmacology and physiology) and business and administrative studies (Table 3.9). Subjects within each of these subject groups were studied by 13 per cent of students. However, a higher proportion of women than men studied subjects allied to medicine, while a greater proportion of men than women studied business and administrative services. Women were also more likely than men to study subjects from the education group (11 per cent of female higher education students compared with 5 per cent of male students) (see also data on teachers on page 38). Higher proportions of men than women in higher education studied engineering and technology subjects and computer sciences. Similar proportions of men and women studied creative arts and design, historical and philosophical studies, law, and medicine and dentistry.

There has been an increase in the number of overseas domiciled students studying at UK higher education institutions in recent years, from 75,600 full-time students in 1980/81 to 240,300 in 2004/05. In 1980/81 students from Malaysia accounted for the largest proportion of the total number of overseas students, with 13,300 students (18 per cent). In 2004/05 there were 8,900 students from Malaysia, representing 4 per cent of all overseas students. The largest increase over the period has been in the number of students from China, which increased from around 200 in 1980/81 to over 45,000 in 2004/05.

Table 3.9

Students in higher education:¹ by subject² and sex, 2004/05

United Kingdom	Percentages		
	Men	Women	All
Subjects allied to medicine	5.3	19.0	13.1
Business & administrative studies	15.4	11.3	13.1
Education	5.3	11.4	8.8
Social studies	7.6	9.2	8.5
Biological sciences	5.5	7.3	6.5
Creative arts & design	6.0	6.9	6.5
Engineering & technology	11.9	1.6	6.0
Languages	4.4	7.0	5.9
Computer science	10.2	2.4	5.7
Historical & philosophical studies	4.5	4.2	4.3
Law	3.6	3.9	3.8
Physical sciences	4.7	2.5	3.4
Medicine & dentistry	2.4	2.5	2.4
Architecture, building & planning	3.5	1.2	2.2
Mass communications & documentation	1.9	2.1	2.0
Mathematical sciences	2.0	0.9	1.4
Agriculture & related subjects	0.6	0.7	0.7
Veterinary science	0.1	0.2	0.2
Combined	5.0	5.7	5.4
All subject areas (=100%) (thousands)	979	1,308	2,288

- 1 Full-time and part-time, undergraduate and postgraduate, and home and overseas students. See Appendix, Part 3: Stages of education.
- 2 Subject data are classified using the Joint Academic Coding System. See Appendix, Part 3: Joint Academic Coding System.

Source: Department for Education and Skills; Higher Education Statistics Agency

Not everyone working towards a qualification beyond the age of 16 has worked their way continuously through the various levels of education. Over two-fifths (45 per cent) of working-age people who were studying towards a qualification in the UK in spring 2006 were aged 25 or over and around one-fifth (19 per cent) were aged 40 or over (Table 3.10 overleaf). The age distribution varies according to the qualification being studied. Adults aged 25 and over comprised 27 per cent of those studying towards a GCSE or equivalent and 19 per cent of people of working age were studying towards a GCE A level or equivalent. Sixty per cent of working-age people were taking higher education qualifications below degree level (such as a Higher National Diploma or Higher National Certificate), and 41 per cent of those studying at degree level or higher, were in this age group.

Table 3.10**People working towards a qualification:¹ by age, 2006²**

United Kingdom							Percentages
	Degree or equivalent or higher	Higher education ³	GCE A level or equivalent	GCSE or equivalent	Other qualification ⁴	All studying	
16–19	16	20	72	67	13	35	
20–24	43	21	9	6	13	21	
25–29	13	13	4	4	15	10	
30–39	14	22	7	9	27	16	
40–49	11	17	6	9	20	12	
50–59/64 ⁵	4	8	2	5	13	6	
All aged 16–59/64 ⁵ (=100%) (millions)	1.9	0.5	1.4	0.9	1.8	6.4	

1 For those working towards more than one qualification, the highest is recorded. See Appendix, Part 3: Qualifications. Excludes those who did not answer.

2 At spring. Data are not seasonally adjusted. See Appendix, Part 4: Labour Force Survey.

3 Below degree level but including NVQ level 4.

4 Includes those who did not know the qualification they were working towards.

5 Men aged 16 to 64 and women aged 16 to 59.

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

Educational attainment

Assessment at Key Stages in England and Wales is an essential component of the National Curriculum, see Appendix, Part 3: The National Curriculum. Scotland and Northern Ireland each have their own guidelines for the curriculum. In the last ten years, although the proportion of girls reaching the required standard in each of the Key Stages by teacher assessment has generally been higher than that for boys, there have been improvements in the performance of both sexes (Table 3.11). At Key Stage 1 the proportion of boys who reached the required standard in reading by teacher assessment increased by 7 percentage points between 1996 and 2006, to 80 per cent, and for writing, there was an increase of 5 percentage points to 76 per cent. For girls the proportions also increased, by 6 percentage points and 5 percentage points respectively, to 89 per cent for reading and 87 per cent for writing. In English at Key Stage 2 there were more marked improvements. Boys' performance improved by 19 percentage points and that of girls improved by 14 percentage points. There was a similar pattern of improvement for both boys and girls in mathematics and science although in all three subjects the performance against expected standards for both sexes was lower at Key Stage 2 than Key Stage 1. Similarly, although there were improvements between 1996 and 2005 for both sexes at Key Stage 3 in all three assessed subjects, the proportion who achieved the expected standard at this stage was generally lower than at Key Stage 2.

In addition to teacher assessment, pupils' performance in England is assessed by National Curriculum tests at Key Stages

Table 3.11**Pupils reaching or exceeding expected standards through teacher assessment:¹ by Key Stage and sex**

England		Percentages			
		1996		2006 ²	
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Key Stage 1³					
English					
Reading		73	83	80	89
Writing		71	82	76	87
Mathematics		80	83	89	92
Science		83	85	88	91
Key Stage 2⁴					
English					
		53	68	72	82
Mathematics		58	62	78	78
Science		64	67	83	85
Key Stage 3⁵					
English					
		51	70	64	78
Mathematics		60	64	74	77
Science		59	61	70	73

1 See Appendix, Part 3: The National Curriculum.

2 Key Stage 3 data are for 2005.

3 Pupils achieving level 2 or above at Key Stage 1.

4 Pupils achieving level 4 or above at Key Stage 2.

5 Pupils achieving level 5 or above at Key Stage 3.

Source: Department for Education and Skills

2 and 3. These tests measure pupils' attainment against the levels set by the National Curriculum. They measure the extent to which pupils have the specific knowledge, skills and understanding which the National Curriculum expects pupils to have developed by the end of the Key Stage. There were improvements over the last ten years in tests although again, girls generally performed better than boys. For example in 1996, 50 per cent of boys and 65 per cent of girls reached the expected standard in English tests at Key Stage 2 and by 2006 these proportions had increased to 74 per cent and 85 per cent respectively. For mathematics and science the same was true although at Key Stage 2 the improvement of boys in mathematics was such that they performed better than girls in 2006, with 77 per cent achieving the expected standard compared with 75 per cent of girls.

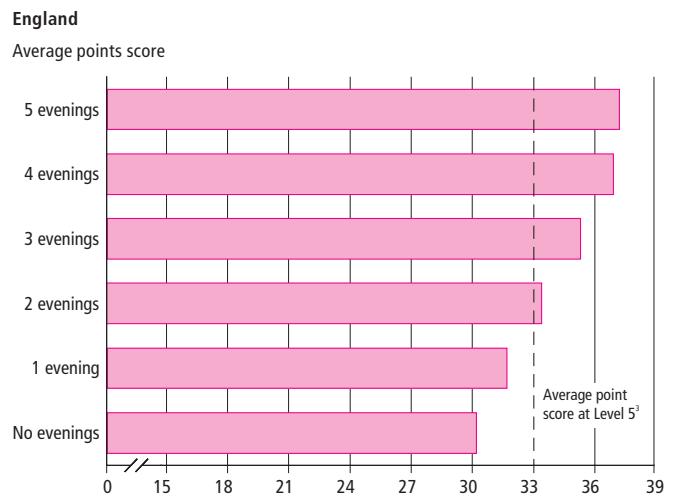
One of the factors contributing to pupil performance is homework. The Longitudinal Study of Young People in England (LSYPE) showed that in 2004 almost all (97 per cent) pupils aged 13 or 14 in England said they were given homework and of these, more than two-thirds (68 per cent) said they were given homework on most days. The survey results show that across all three subject areas (English, mathematics and science) the average point score in Key Stage 3 tests per pupil increases as the number of evenings spent doing homework increases (Figure 3.12). Higher proportions of pupils who spend four or five evenings a week doing homework achieved the expected standards of level 5 or above at Key Stage 3 than the pupils who said they didn't spend any evenings doing homework. The average score of pupils who were given homework but didn't spend any evenings doing it was 30.2 points. Those pupils who spent some time doing homework on five evenings a week scored, on average, 37.2 points. The survey also asked about parental involvement in homework. The majority (81 per cent) of pupils said that there was someone at home who would help them with their homework and 44 per cent said that someone at home made sure they did their homework.

In 2004/05, 57 per cent of pupils in their last year of compulsory education in the UK achieved five or more GCSE grades A* to C (or equivalent), compared with 46 per cent in 1995/96. A higher proportion of girls than boys achieved these grades in 2004/05, 62 per cent compared with 52 per cent. The proportion of pupils who did not receive any graded results (for example their results were ungraded, unclassified, pending or they were absent from the examination) fell from 7 per cent to 3 per cent over the period.

There are also variations in achievement by free school meal eligibility (a measure used as an indicator of low household income, deprivation and social class) (Table 3.13). Data from England show that pupils who were not eligible for free school

Figure 3.12

Key Stage 3 average points score:¹ by the number of evenings spent doing homework,² 2004



- 1 All pupils in receipt of homework.
- 2 Children aged 13 or 14 who said they spent any time doing homework were asked, 'During an average week (Monday to Friday) in term time, on how many evenings do you do any homework?'
- 3 Data are drawn from the average point size score of students at Key Stage 3.

Source: Longitudinal Study of Young People in England, Department for Education and Skills

Table 3.13

GCSE or equivalent attainment: by free school meal eligibility, 2005/06

England	Percentages		
	5 grades A* to C	5 grades A* to C including English and mathematics	Any passes
Boys			
Free school meals	28.3	16.6	92.5
Non-free school meals	55.8	43.2	97.4
All pupils ¹	52.2	39.7	96.8
Girls			
Free school meals	37.0	22.3	94.9
Non-free school meals	65.7	52.0	98.3
All pupils ¹	61.9	48.0	97.8
All			
Free school meals	32.6	19.5	93.7
Non-free school meals	60.7	47.5	97.8
All pupils ¹	56.9	43.8	97.3

1 Includes pupils where information was refused or not obtained.

Source: Department for Education and Skills

meals generally performed better than those who were eligible at each Key Stage, at GCSE and at post-16 level. For example, at GCSE and equivalent level, 61 per cent of pupils in England who were not eligible for free school meals achieved five or more GCSEs grade A* to C in 2005/06 compared with 33 per cent of pupils who were eligible. When English and mathematics are included in these five GCSEs the pattern is the same, although in both cases the proportions achieving grades A* to C were lower: 48 per cent of pupils who were not eligible for free school meals achieved grades A* to C compared with 20 per cent of those who were eligible.

GCE A level examinations are usually taken after two years post-GCSE study in a school sixth form, sixth-form college or further-education college, by those who stay in education full time beyond the age of 16. The proportion of young people aged 17 at the start of the academic year in England who gained two or more GCE A levels (or equivalent) increased from 25 per cent in 1993/94 to 34 per cent in 2005/06 (Figure 3.14). The proportion achieving three or more GCE A levels (or equivalent) increased from 18 per cent to 29 per cent over the same period. The proportion of students achieving at least three A grades in GCE A levels (or equivalent) increased from 1.9 per cent in 1993/94 to 3.9 per cent in 2005/06.

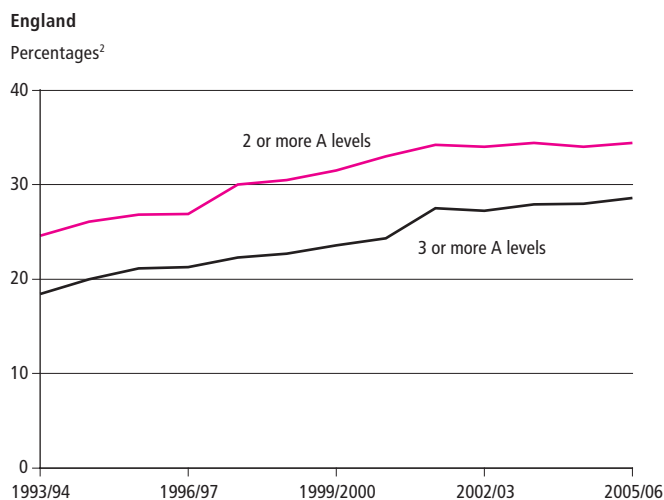
In 2004/05, 33 per cent of young men in England, Wales and Northern Ireland achieved two or more GCE A level (or equivalent) passes and 26 per cent achieved three or more passes. For young women these percentages were 41 per cent and 35 per cent respectively.

In 2004/05 there were around 306,000 first degrees obtained by UK and overseas domiciled students at higher education institutions in the UK. Of those first degrees, 11 per cent were graded first class with similar proportions of both men and women achieving this level. A higher proportion of women than men achieved upper second grades, 46 per cent compared with 39 per cent, while similar proportions of men and women achieved lower second class grades, 32 per cent compared with 29 per cent. Around 7 per cent of all first-degree students achieved a third class (or pass grade) and 9 per cent were unclassified.

In 2005 working-age people in Great Britain were more likely to be educated to at least degree level than to be without formal qualifications. Eighteen per cent of people held degrees or equivalent compared with 14 per cent with no qualifications. However, people were most likely to hold as their highest qualification, GCE A level or equivalent (24 per cent) or GCSE grades A* to C or equivalent level (23 per cent), compared with any other level of qualification or none at all. Differences emerged when attainment was analysed by sex. Working-age men were one and a half times more likely than working-age

Figure 3.14

Achievement of two or more GCE A levels¹ or equivalent



1 See Appendix, Part 3: Qualifications.

2 Young people aged 17 at the start of the academic year as a percentage of the 17-year-old population.

Source: Department for Education and Skills

women to have at least a GCE A level (or equivalent) as their highest qualification; 28 per cent of men, compared with 18 per cent of women (Table 3.15). The converse was true for those who held GCSE grades at A* to C (or equivalent) as their highest qualification: 27 per cent of women held these qualifications as their highest compared with 19 per cent of men. The sex differences became less pronounced between those educated to degree level or to another higher education qualification, those with other qualifications and those with no qualifications.

Historic social effects may have had an impact on the proportion of older working-age people with qualifications. For example, in 2005 men aged 50 to 64 were one and a half times more likely than women aged 50 to 59 to hold a degree or the equivalent. This is reflected in the higher proportion of men than women who were enrolled in higher education in the 1970s compared with more recent years (see Table 3.8). Among working-age women, those aged 50 and over were more likely than women in other age groups to hold no qualifications. Among working-age men there was a slightly different picture. Around one-fifth of working-age men aged 50 and over, and one-fifth of 16 to 19-year-olds held no qualifications; both higher proportions than men in other working-age groups.

Large differences in highest qualification levels can be found between ethnic groups. Among men in Great Britain, Chinese (34 per cent), Indian (32 per cent) and White Irish men (25 per cent) were most likely to have a degree (or equivalent

Table 3.15
Highest qualification held:¹ by sex and age, 2005²

Great Britain		Percentages						
	Degree or equivalent or higher	Higher education qualification ³	GCE A level or equivalent	GCSE grades A* to C or equivalent	Other qualification	No qualification	All	
Men								
16–19	-	1	27	43	9	20	100	
20–24	15	6	38	23	11	8	100	
25–29	29	7	23	19	13	9	100	
30–39	24	8	24	20	14	10	100	
40–49	21	9	28	17	13	12	100	
50–64	17	9	31	11	13	19	100	
All men	19	8	28	19	13	14	100	
Women								
16–19	-	1	31	45	7	16	100	
20–24	18	6	34	23	9	9	100	
25–29	30	8	20	22	11	9	100	
30–39	22	10	17	29	12	10	100	
40–49	18	11	14	29	12	15	100	
50–59	12	12	12	21	16	27	100	
All women	17	9	18	27	12	15	100	

1 Men aged 16 to 64, women aged 16 to 59.
 2 January to December. See Appendix, Part 4: Annual Population Survey.
 3 Below degree level.

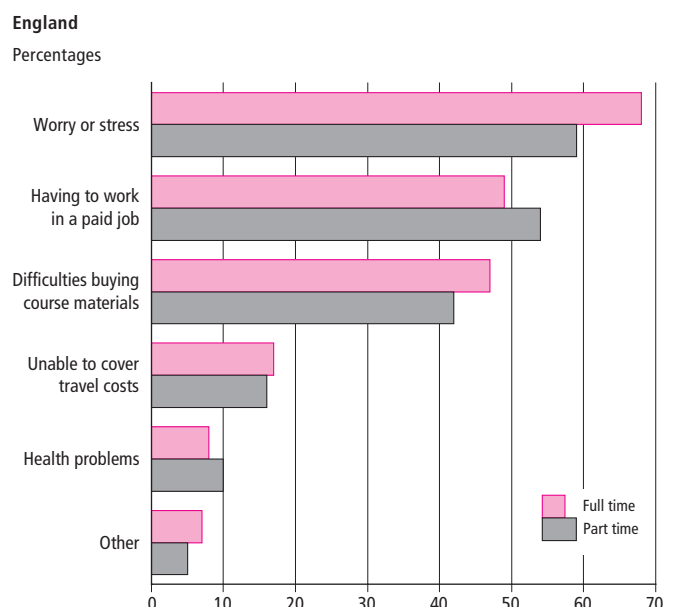
Source: Annual Population Survey, Office for National Statistics

or higher) in 2005 while Black Caribbean (9 per cent) and Bangladeshi men (13 per cent) were least likely. A similar pattern occurred among women as those most likely to hold degrees were Chinese (31 per cent), White Irish (25 per cent) and Indian women (23 per cent), while Bangladeshi (8 per cent) and Pakistani women (10 per cent) were least likely. To some extent this reflects differences in age structure of ethnic populations, length of stay in the UK and cultural differences.

In 2004/05 the Student Income and Expenditure Survey asked students in England whether they thought financial difficulties affected their academic performance. Full-time students were more likely than part-time students to feel that their finances had some form of detrimental effect on their studies – 60 per cent of full-time students compared with 40 per cent of part-time students.

When students were asked further about how their financial situation affected their studies, there was a variety of responses with a similar pattern for both full-time and part-time students (Figure 3.16). For both full-time and part-time students, the most common effect reported was worry and stress (68 per cent

Figure 3.16
Finance related problems cited as affecting academic performance:¹ by course type, 2004/05



1 Students domiciled in England who felt that their finances had some effect on their academic performance. Percentages do not add up to 100 per cent as respondents could give more than one answer.

Source: Student Income and Expenditure Survey, Department for Education and Skills

of full-time students and 59 per cent of part-time students), followed by having to take on paid work (49 per cent of full-time students and 54 per cent of part-time students). See also Chapter 5: Income and wealth.

An alternative to the more traditional academic qualifications are National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) and Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs), which were introduced in 1987, and since then there has been a general increase in the take up of these qualifications. Awards are given at levels 1 to 5 with level 1 being broadly equivalent to between one and four GCSE grades A* to C and level 5 being equivalent to a higher degree (see Appendix, Part 3: Qualifications). In 2004/05 around 574,000 NVQs and SVQs were awarded in the UK compared with around 153,000 in 1991/92. Awards at level 2 have been the most common over the period with 341,000 awards, accounting for 59 per cent of awards in 2004/05. Awards at level 1 have declined over the period from 31 per cent to 10 per cent. In 1991/92, 8 per cent of all awards were at level 3 compared with 26 per cent in 2004/05. Awards at level 4 and level 5 made up 5 per cent of all awards in 2004/05.

In 2005 the British Social Attitudes survey asked adults aged 18 and over in Great Britain their opinions on various aspects of vocational qualifications. The majority of respondents

(60 per cent) agreed that 'most people don't understand what vocational qualifications are' (Table 3.17). More than one-half (54 per cent) of respondents agreed with the statement 'employers don't respect vocational qualifications enough' compared with just over one-fifth (21 per cent) who disagreed. There also seemed to be a strong consensus that schools should do more to encourage young people to do vocational qualifications, 74 per cent of respondents agreed with this statement while 7 per cent disagreed. The survey also asked for attitudes regarding who should take vocational qualifications, and how vocational qualifications compared with academic qualifications. Nearly two-thirds (63 per cent) disagreed with the statement 'only people who can't do academic qualifications should do vocational ones' compared with one-fifth (20 per cent) of people who agreed with it. Nearly half of respondents disagreed with the statement 'vocational qualifications are easier than academic ones.'

Adult training and learning

Learning throughout working life is becoming increasingly necessary because of the pace of change within the labour market and the need to develop skills. There are also various education and training options available to young people who decide not to continue in full-time education, including a number of government-supported training initiatives. In England and Wales, the Work Based Learning for Young People initiative aims to ensure that all young people have access to post-compulsory education or training. Included in this initiative are apprenticeships that provide structured learning programmes for young people aged between 16 and 24, and combine work-based training with off-the-job learning. Apprenticeships offer training to NVQ level 2. Advanced Apprenticeships offer training to NVQ level 3, and are aimed at developing technical, supervisory and craft-level skills.

In 2005/06 there were 485,500 young people aged 16 to 24 on Work Based Learning schemes in England. The most common area of learning was engineering and manufacturing technologies with 92,000 young people receiving training in this. The majority (97 per cent) were men (Table 3.18). Men were also far more likely than women to be on schemes focused on construction, planning and the built environment (99 per cent). In contrast, women outnumbered men in being trained in health, public services and care (91 per cent) and business, administration and law (72 per cent).

The need for job-related training in the labour market is not exclusive to young people in Work Based Learning. In April to June 2006, 15 per cent of employees of working age in the UK had received some job-related training in the four weeks before

Table 3.17
Attitudes to vocational qualifications,¹ 2005

Great Britain	Percentages		
	Agree ²	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree ³
Only people who can't do academic qualifications should do vocational ones	20	17	63
Vocational qualifications are easier than academic qualifications	29	24	47
Most people don't understand what vocational qualifications are	60	21	20
Employers don't respect vocational qualifications enough	54	24	21
Schools should do more to encourage young people to do vocational qualifications	74	19	7

1 Adults aged 18 and over were shown the above list and asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statements. Excludes those who answered 'Don't know' or did not answer.

2 Those who said they either agreed or agreed strongly.

3 Those who said they either disagreed or disagreed strongly.

Source: British Social Attitudes Survey, National Centre for Social Research

Table 3.18

Young people¹ in Work Based Learning:² by sex and area of learning, 2005/06

England	Percentages		
	Men	Women	All (=100%) (thousands)
Engineering and manufacturing technologies	97	3	92.0
Retail and commercial enterprise	35	65	86.2
Business, administration and law	28	72	76.8
Construction, planning and the built environment	99	1	60.7
Health, public services and care	9	91	50.2
Information and communication technology	81	19	15.5
Leisure, travel and tourism	54	46	12.4
Agriculture, horticulture and animal care	51	49	9.6
Arts, media and publishing	91	9	1.1
Area unknown	62	38	70.8
All areas of learning ³	58	42	485.5

- 1 People aged 16 to 24. Data include a small number of people aged over 24 (around 2 per cent of the total).
- 2 Work Based Learning for young people comprises Advanced Apprenticeships at NVQ level 3, Apprenticeships at NVQ level 2, NVQ Learning, and Entry to Employment (E2E).
- 3 Includes all of the areas above plus preparation for life and work, education and training, science and mathematics, history, philosophy and theology, social sciences, and languages, literature and culture.

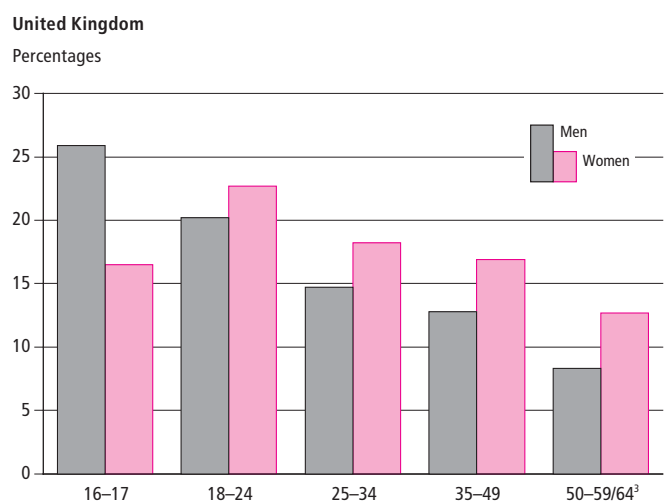
Source: Learning and Skills Council; Department for Education and Skills

they were interviewed in the Labour Force Survey: this was a similar proportion to each of the same periods since 1997. In general, greater proportions of women than men received job-related training, and the proportion was higher for younger than for older employees. Compared with other age groups, men aged 16 to 17 (26 per cent) and women aged 18 to 24 (23 per cent) were the most likely employees to have received job-related training between April and June 2006 (Figure 3.19).

In April to June 2006 the proportion of employees in the UK who received job-related training varied by occupation. Around one-quarter of employees in personal service occupations (24 per cent) and over one-fifth of employees in both professional (22 per cent) and associate professional and technical occupations (22 per cent) in the UK received job-related training in the four weeks before their Labour Force Survey interview. Employees who worked in process, plant and machine operation occupations, and elementary

Figure 3.19

Employees receiving job-related training:¹ by age and sex, 2006²



- 1 Employees (those in employment excluding the self-employed, unpaid family workers and those on government programmes) who received job-related training in the four weeks before interview.
- 2 Data are at Q2 and are not seasonally adjusted. See Appendix, Part 4: Labour Force Survey.
- 3 Men aged 50 to 64, women aged 50 to 59.

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

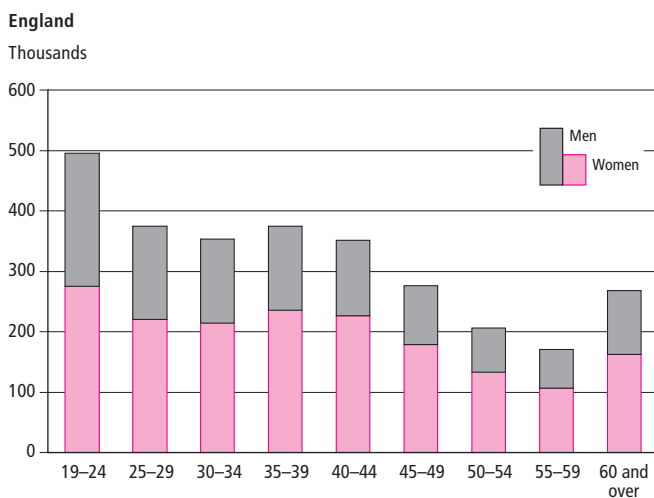
occupations (such as catering assistants, bar staff and shelf fillers) were the groups least likely to have received job-related training (7 per cent and 9 per cent respectively).

In 2005/06 there were 2.9 million adults (aged 19 and over) in Learning and Skills Council-funded further education in England, which represented around four out of five of all further education learners. This was an increase of 6 per cent in the number of these adult learners compared with 1996/97 when there were 2.7 million, but a decrease of 17 per cent since 2004/05 when there were 3.5 million adult learners in further education.

In 2005/06 there were more adult learners in further education (either full-time or part-time) in the 19 to 24 age group (495,000) than in any other age group (Figure 3.20 overleaf). The number of learners generally decreased by age although in the same year there were 375,000 learners aged 35 to 39, slightly higher than those aged 30 to 34 (354,000). Women made up a higher proportion of adult learners than men in all age groups, although these proportions differed between groups. For those aged 19 to 24 (the adult age group with the lowest proportion of women learners), around 56 per cent were women. This compares with those aged 45 to 49 (the age group with the highest proportion of women) where 65 per cent of learners were women.

Figure 3.20

Adult participation in further education:¹ by sex and age, 2005/06



¹ See Appendix, Part 3: Adult education.

Source: Learning and Skills Council; Department for Education and Skills

In 2005/06 there were 786,000 people on adult and community learning courses in England. Adult and community learning includes a wide range of community-based learning opportunities, primarily taking place through local authorities. The majority were of courses in arts, media and publishing (28 per cent); leisure, travel and tourism (18 per cent) or preparation for life and work (16 per cent). Preparation for life and work includes studies for skills that are key for personal development (for example, adult literacy, numeracy and communication) and studies for skills in preparing for working life (for example, employability and job-seeking skills).

Through the Lifelong Learning Wales Record, the Welsh Assembly Government also collects data on those aged 16 or over who are continuing learning at either further education institutions, community learning providers, or through Work Based Learning provision. In 2005/06 there were around 300,000 people aged 16 or over learning in Wales through these types of provision and of this total, 42 per cent of learners were men and 58 per cent were women. There were further variations by age. Of those aged 16 to 24, men slightly outnumbered women (52,000 compared with 51,000), however of those aged 25 or over there was a marked difference with a far higher number of women learners than men (122,000 compared with 71,400). In total around one-third (103,000) of all learners in Wales were aged 16 to 24 and around two-thirds were aged 25 or over (193,400). The most popular subjects for all learning activities were care, information technology, media, and health.

Educational resources

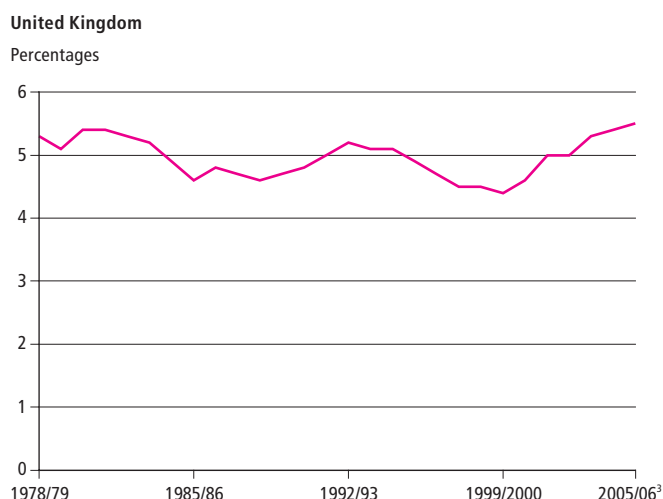
In the early 1980s the UK spent 5.4 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) on education but by 1988/89 this had fallen to 4.6 per cent. The proportion then increased slightly in the early 1990s before falling back to 4.4 per cent in 1999/2000. There then followed a steady rise to 2005/06 when an estimated 5.5 per cent of GDP (amounting to £67.9 billion) was spent on education in the UK (Figure 3.21).

The number of support staff in maintained schools in England who provide additional learning resources within the classroom increased by two and a half times between 1996 and 2006, to 225,000. There was an increase in the number of support staff in all types of school, but the largest increase was in secondary schools, where the number more than tripled from 23,000 in 1996 to 71,000 in 2006. Most support staff were in primary schools, accounting for 55 per cent of all support staff in 2006. Teaching assistants providing special needs support accounted for just under one-third (31 per cent) of all teaching assistants in 2006.

The number of full-time qualified teachers in public sector mainstream schools in the UK decreased by around 52,000 to 441,000 between 1981/82 and 2004/05, although it has generally been rising since the late 1990s. The number of

Figure 3.21

UK education spending as a proportion of gross domestic product^{1,2}



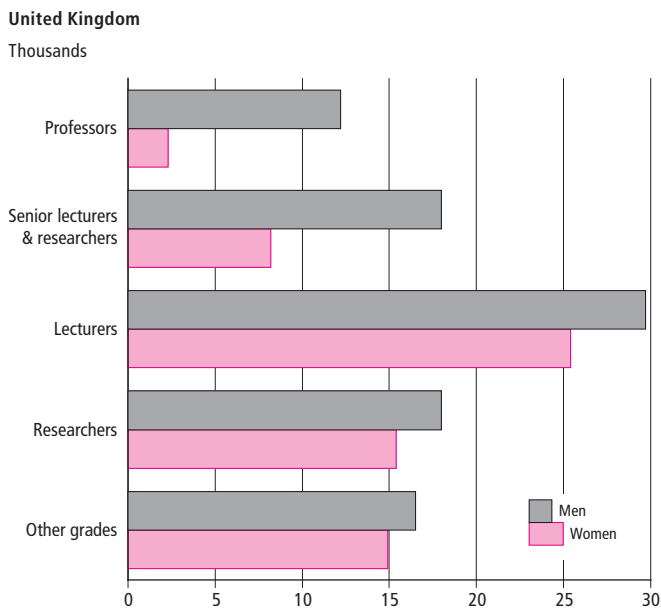
¹ Data up to and including 1983/84 are on a general government expenditure basis, those from 1984/85 are on a total managed expenditure basis.

² The effects of transfer and classification changes have been imputed prior to 1995/96.

³ Data are based on estimated outturn.

Source: HM Treasury; Department for Education and Skills

Figure 3.22
Academic staff in higher education institutions:
by sex, 2004/05



Source: Department for Education and Skills

full-time female teachers in these schools increased by 5 per cent to 308,000 over the period 1981/82 to 2004/05, while the number of male teachers fell by 33 per cent to 133,000. The majority of full-time teachers in nursery, primary and secondary schools were female. In nursery and primary schools, 85 per cent of full-time teachers were female in 2004/05, whereas in secondary schools the difference between the sexes was less marked, with females comprising 56 per cent of full-time teachers.

There are also variations in the proportions of men and women who work as academic staff in higher education institutions. In 2004/05 there were 161,000 academic staff in higher education institutions in the UK and 59 per cent were men. More than one-third (55,000) of the total academic staff were lecturers and 54 per cent of lecturers were men (Figure 3.22). The proportion of academic staff in higher education institutions

who were women declined with seniority – 46 per cent of both lecturers and researchers (and 47 per cent of other grades) were women, compared with 31 per cent of senior lecturers and researchers, and 16 per cent of professors.

The increase in the use of computers as an educational resource is reflected in the decrease in the average number of pupils per computer (used mainly for teaching and learning) in maintained schools. The largest improvement in the ratio of computers to pupils was in primary schools. In 1994 there was one computer for every 23 primary school pupils compared with one for every seven pupils in 2005. In secondary schools, there was one computer for every ten pupils in 1994 compared with one for every four in 2005. Special schools had the lowest ratio in 2005: one computer for every two pupils.

The proportion of primary and secondary teachers with access to information and communication technology (ICT) resources in lessons has risen since 2002. In particular, higher numbers of teachers reported having access to dedicated subject resources as opposed to having to share. These trends reflect the patterns of increased ICT resources in schools. Around two-fifths (39 per cent) of primary level teachers had access to dedicated desktop computers for their subject in 2005. This was a rise from 2002 when 31 per cent had dedicated desktop computers. Dedicated subject laptops were available to around one-quarter (26 per cent) of primary level teachers, an increase from 6 per cent in 2002. The biggest increase was seen in access to interactive whiteboards. In 2005 nearly one-half of primary level teachers (49 per cent) had use of dedicated interactive whiteboards compared with 6 per cent in 2002. For secondary level teachers there was no change in the proportion who had access to dedicated desktop computers for their subject between 2002 and 2005 (39 per cent). However the proportions with dedicated access to laptops and interactive whiteboards increased and followed a similar pattern to that for primary teachers. In 2005, 36 per cent of secondary level teachers had dedicated access to laptops compared with 18 per cent in 2002, and 52 per cent had dedicated access to interactive whiteboards compared with 12 per cent in 2002.

