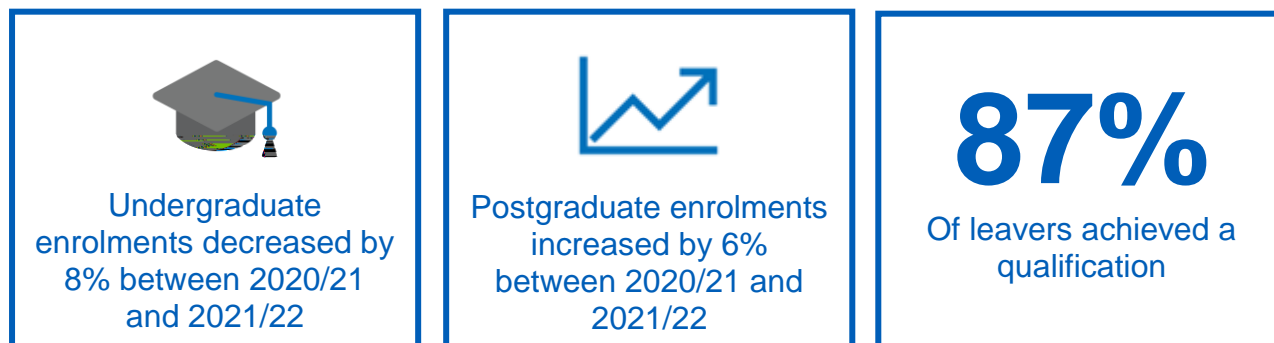




This report presents information about social work education enrolments and qualifiers.

Summary of key findings



Enrolments

5,580 students enrolled onto social work courses in 2021/22. The number of enrolments has decreased by 2% in the last academic year.

Postgraduate enrolments (making up 46% of enrolments) increased by 6% in 2021/22.

Undergraduate enrolments (making up 54% of enrolments) decreased by 8% in 2021/22.

The average age of a social work undergraduate student was 27 years old and postgraduate was 31 years old. This was younger than other higher education students, at an average age of 30 for undergraduates and 32 for postgraduates.

Around 35% of enrolments were individuals identifying as having a Black, Asian and other minority ethnic background; 21% were Black, 7% Asian, and 6% other minority ethnic background.

The majority of enrolments were people with British nationality (86%). Around 4% of enrolments had an EU nationality and 11% had a non-EU nationality.

Qualifiers

In 2021/22 there were 4,430 leavers from social work courses. Of these leavers, 3,860 (87%) achieved a qualification. This is a decrease of 1 percentage point from the previous academic year.

The decrease in qualifiers in 2021/22 and 2020/21 was likely to be a result of the lower number of enrolments in 2018/19 and 2019/20. Skills for Care modelling suggests that the number of leavers could be higher in the next three years, due to the increase in enrolments from 2020/21 onwards.

The number of qualifying graduates has decreased by 18% from 4,700 in 2012/13 to 3,860 in 2021/22.

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Introduction

01

1. Introduction

The Graduate Outcomes survey replaced the Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey which ended after collecting data from the 2016/17 graduating cohort. In previous reports, the destinations of social work graduates were analysed using the DLHE. This survey

Think Ahead (156 starts in 2022): A two-year programme for graduates to become social

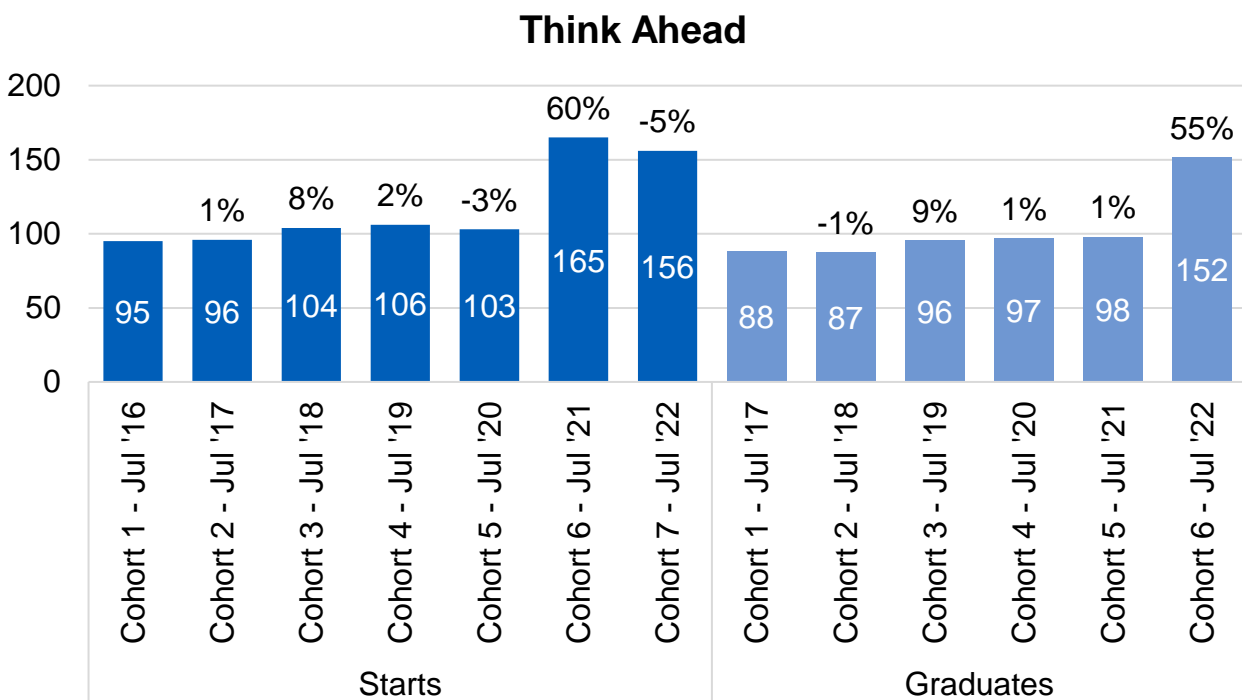
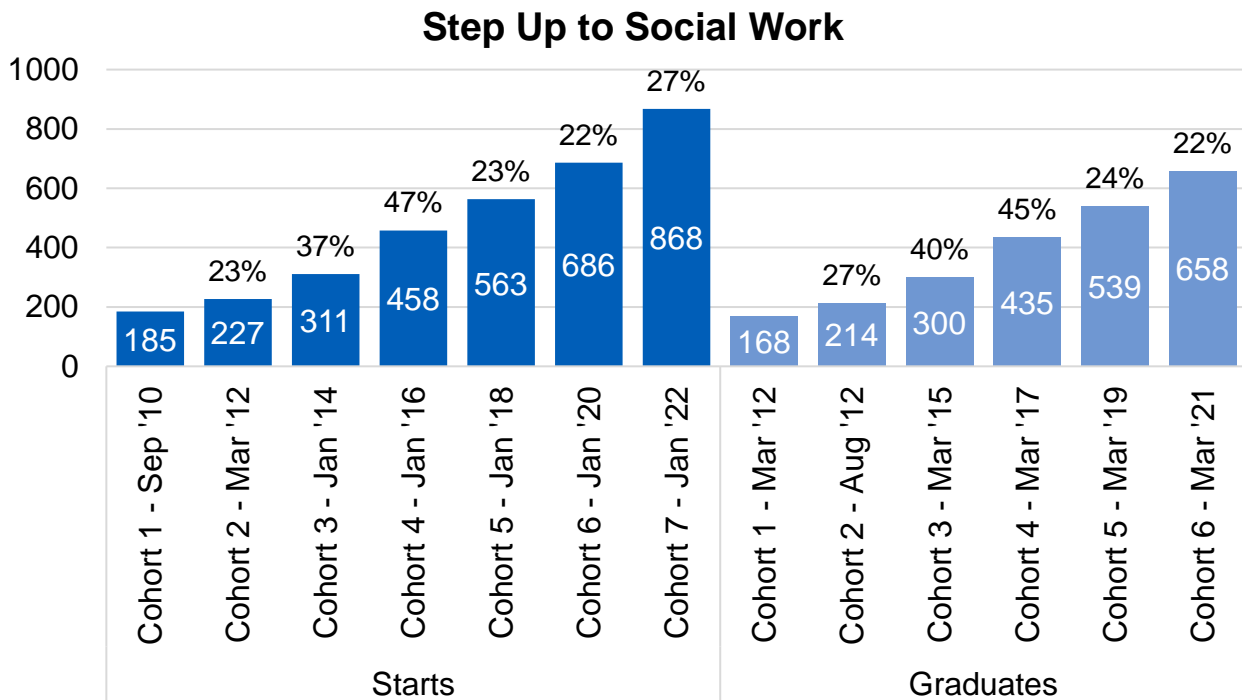


Chart 2 below shows the proportion of graduate scheme starts out of all postgraduate enrolments. The number of graduate scheme enrolments, provided by each organisation, were subtracted from the number of postgraduate enrolments shown in the HESA student record, and it is assumed all graduate scheme enrolments were in the HESA student record.

Frontline and Think Ahead entrants begin their initial residential training in July then continue onto their placement and therefore entrants to cohort 1 of these programmes were included in academic year 2014/15 in the chart below.

Entrants into the Step Up to Social Work programme began in September 2010, then March 2012 for cohort 2, then in January for each subsequent cohort.

Please note that the Frontline and Step Up to Social Work graduate schemes undertake placements settings only. The university postgraduate data refers to generic university-based programmes.

Entrants to the Step Up to Social Work programme accounted for around 34% of postgraduate social work enrolments in the academic year 2021/22 (intake is every two years). The Think Ahead programme accounted for 6% of enrolments whilst Frontline accounted for 15%.

Chart 2. Proportion of postgraduate and graduate scheme enrolments, 2010/11 to 2021/22

Source: Department for Education, Think Ahead and HESA student record

Funding

On the Frontline graduate scheme¹ trainees will, in their first year, receive a tax and NI exempt bursary which is paid monthly. In London the Bursary is £20,000 and other regions the Bursary is £18,000. In Year 2 trainees will earn the salary of a newly-



Chart 6. Comparison of enrolments to adult social worker filled posts by home region, 2021/22

Source: HESA student record, Skills for Care workforce estimates 2021/22

There was a strong correlation

Chart 7. Enrolments by age group and degree level, 2021/22

Source: HESA student record

Most people enrolling on social work courses in 2021/22 identified as female (87%) and the proportion has been steadily increasing over time from 84% in 2009/10. This was in

Social work enrolments had a greater proportion of people from Black, Asian and Minority ethnic background (35%) than the average across all higher education (26%) as well as social workers across the adult social care workforce (29%).

Chart 9. Enrolments by ethnic group compared to all higher education and adult social care workforce, 2021/22

Source: HESA student record, Skills for Care workforce estimates 2021/22

In 2021/22, 20% of people enrolling in a social worker course considered themselves to have a disability and this proportion has risen from 12% of enrolments in 2009/10. In contrast, only 11% of all higher education enrolments in 2021/22 considered themselves to have a disability.

Of enrolments on social work courses in 2021/22, 86% of students had a British nationality, 4% had an EU nationality and 11% had a nationality outside of the EU. These proportions have changed very little over time although there were variations found between regions. The highest proportion of enrolments by people with non-British

Chart 10. Enrolments by nationality and higher education institute region

Source: HESA student record

On the 1st January 2021, the UK introduced a new points-

Qualifiers from social work education courses

03

3. Qualifiers from social work education courses

This section presents the attainments and course outcomes of social work higher education students. Total numbers and types of qualifications achieved by leaving

2020/21, with 12% of leavers not obtaining a qualification, and continued to 13% in 2021/22. This trend is likely due to the effects of the pandemic on higher education.

Undergraduates have made up a decreasing proportion of qualifiers whereas postgraduates have accounted for more. Chart 12 highlights these changes. This trend is a result of the decreasing enrolment numbers observed in Section two of this report.

Chart 12. Course leavers by qualification obtained, 2012/13 to 2021/22

Source: HESA student record

Chart 13 below shows the proportion of leavers that achieved their course aim (the type of course they started) between 2012/1

Chart 13. Achievement rate of leavers by course aim, 2012/13 to 2021/22

Source: HESA student record

Chart 14 shows the proportion of leavers that achieved their course aim by age group. Those aged 30 years and over were more likely to leave higher education with a qualification than those in younger age groups. In 2021/22, 25% of qualifying leavers were aged under 25 compared to 22% aged 25 to 29 and 53% of those aged 30 and above. Since 2012/13, there has been little variation in the proportion of leavers that achieved a qualification by age group. The average age of an undergraduate qualifier was 32 years old and 34 years old for postgraduate qualifiers.

Chart 14. Proportion of qualifying leavers by age group, 2021/22

Source: HESA student record

The qualification rate of leavers varied little by gender. In 2021/22, students identifying as female had a slightly higher qualification rate (82%) than males (80%). The overall percentage of male qualifiers had decreased from 14% in 2009/10 to 12% in 2019/20 and has remained at 12% each year since. The overall proportion of female qualifiers is much higher but has remained at a similarly consistent level. 86% of qualifiers in 2009/10 were female, rising to a peak at 88% in 2020/21, then decreasing to 87% in 2021/22.

Chart 15 shows that the qualification rates of students had little variation between nationality groups.

qualification. The qualification rate of British students decreased from 94% in 2019/20 to 87% in 2020/21 and 2021/22, whereas the qualification rate of non-British students showed more variability over time. Please note that 87% of leavers were British, 4% had an EU nationality and 9% had a non-EU nationality.

Chart 15. Proportion of qualifying leavers by nationality, 2012/13 to 2021/22

Source: HESA student record

Chart 16 shows the classification of degree achieved by qualifying leavers from undergraduate social work courses. The majority of qualifiers in 2021/22 had achieved an upper second-class honours degree (44%), followed by those having achieved a first-class degree (31%) and those achieving a lower second-class honours degree (22%). Undergraduate social worker students were slightly less likely to achieve a first/upper second class compared to undergraduates overall.

Chart 16. Undergraduate qualifiers by classification of degree, 2021/22

Source: HESA student record

Chart 17 shows that the higher degree classifications achieved for social work

4. Destination of social work qualifiers

The following section presents analysis of the Graduate Outcomes survey collected by HESA. The survey collected information from student that graduated in **2019/20**, 15 months after leaving higher education. As the survey is non-mandatory, not all leavers respond, therefore some of the data presented in this section has been weighted to represent all leavers as opposed to just those who had responded.



Previous publications of this report presented information from Destination of Leavers from Higher Education survey (DLHE) between 2011/12 and 2016/17. This survey ended in 2016/17 and was replaced by the Graduate Outcomes survey. Due to differences in the point of collection (DLHE was at six months after graduation) and the method of collection (Graduate Outcomes is distributed and collected centrally by HESA) these two surveys are not comparable.

The Graduate Outcomes survey is not mandatory. Out of around 3,430 qualifying social work graduates from 2019/20, we found a survey response rate of 56% for their general activity after studying. A higher response rate means the survey results will more accurately reflect the target population. Skills for Care has weighted the responses to ensure that the survey is as representative of all leavers from higher education courses in social work as possible.

Chart 18 shows the occupation of graduates from social work courses 15 months after leaving education. In 2019/20, 83% of graduates went on to become social workers, and 3% went into another role in social care. A further 1% obtained other roles in the health sector and the remaining 13% moved into a role outside of health and social care or were not in employment when surveyed.

Chart 18. Occupation of social work graduates 15 months after graduating, 2019/20
Source: HESA student record and Graduate Outcomes survey

Chart 19. Number of graduates and proportion working as social workers 15 months after graduation by HEI region, 2019/20

Chart 20. Comparison of employment between social worker and all higher education graduates, 2019/20

Source: HESA Graduate Outcomes survey



As discussed above, the conversion rate from social work graduates to employed social workers varied by region. Chart 21 below compares the proportion of graduates that became social workers and those that found general employment between regions.

Chart 21. Proportion of social worker graduates in employment 15 months after graduation by HEI region, 2019/20

Source: HESA Graduate Outcomes survey

Other than regional effects, a number of factors have been identified that can affect the -qualifying employment. One such factor is the level of the qualification obtained, shown in Table 2 below.

Of the 1,340 postgraduate qualifiers in 2019/20, around 86% were employed as social workers 15 months after graduating. This compares to 81% of the 2,110 undergraduates. These figures demonstrate that postgraduate qualifiers have a slightly higher employability than undergraduates.

Table 2. Occupation (category of role) of social worker graduates 15 months after graduation by qualification level, 2019/20

Source: HESA Graduate Outcomes survey

	Undergraduate	Postgraduate
All qualifiers	2,110	1,340
Social workers	81%	86%
Social care /		

Social worker filled posts and ASYE

05

5. Social worker filled posts and ASYE

This section presents information on the number of working social workers, qualifying graduates, and registrations on the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE).

Table 3 below shows the estimated number of social worker filled posts by sector between 2013/14 and 2021/22. The number of social workers employed by local authorities has increased by 20% over the period from 42,510 in 2013/14 to 50,990 in 2021/22. Those working in adult social services increased by 10 services

Chart 23. Qualifying graduates and ASYE registrationst.tl72 36.72 ref*pan A/D 0/Lang (enGBC

Further resources

We provide outstanding workforce intelligence which the Government, strategic bodies, employers, and individuals rely upon to help them make decisions that will improve outcomes for the people who use care services. The ASC Workforce Data Set (ASC-WDS) is recognised as the leading source of workforce intelligence for adult social care. This chapter provides an overview of some of the reports and resources published by our Workforce Intelligence team.

Workforce intelligence publications

Key topic areas

The Workforce Intelligence website includes information on the following popular topic areas. Each topic includes a summary of the workforce information available, and signposts to the latest publications and relevant resources. Many of the topic

analysis and sector expertise

channel any money we earn straight back into the sector

All our analysts are certified statisticians, meaning we work to the standard of the

creating outputs, we always adhere to statistical disclosure controls.

The Skills for Care Workforce Intelligence team are committed to the three pillars of trustworthiness, quality and value, and principles of the Code of Practice for Statistics. To learn more about our values and read our full statement please visit www.skillsforcare.org.uk/WI-values.

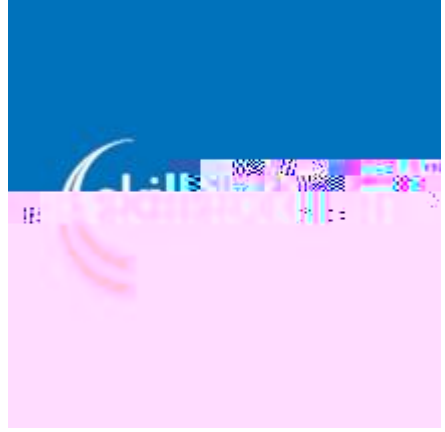
Keeping informed



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