

# Student Financial Support Reflective report

## Support in 2022/23

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## Background

Financial support includes grants, bursaries, scholarships and fee-waivers. When offered to prospective students, financial support is designed to help overcome the perceived or actual cost of applying and/or going to higher education. When offered after entry to higher education, it is designed to help students succeed on-course by alleviating the financial costs of studying.

## Sources of financial support

### Reading Bursary Scheme (RBS)

- For students joining the University in 2018/19 onwards, and who have a household income assessed by the relevant Student Finance Authority of below **£27,000**, the Reading Bursary consists of **£1,100** for every year that the student remains eligible and is non-repayable support.
- If a student began their studies before 2018/19 and have an assessed household income by relevant Student Finance Authority of below **£25,000**, the Reading Bursary amount will remain as **£1,000** per year and is non-repayable support.

### Care Experienced, Foyer students and Estranged students bursary

As part of our ongoing commitment to care-experienced and estranged students and in recognition of the specific needs of these groups of students, we supplement the standard RBS provision by offering additional financial support. In addition to the other awards listed, these students will be eligible for cash bursaries of £1,000 in each year of study.

### Pre-entry travel bursary provision

To promote fair access to our on-campus outreach programme and ensure that students from under-represented backgrounds are well represented at all outreach events, we have introduced a Widening Participation and Access Travel bursary scheme. The scheme allows us to cover the costs of travelling to on-campus events for those from under-represented groups. Currently the bursary provides a contribution towards travel costs at a rate of 45p per mile (up to a max of £300).

### Pre-application bursary provision

This covers the costs of travelling to on-campus events of up to £500 for disabled applicants. Currently the bursary provides a contribution towards travel costs at a rate of 45p per mile.

## Work and Study Placement bursary

This covers expenses such as travel, accommodation and/or childcare. Students from households with assessed annual incomes of less than £45k may apply to receive a bursary of between £200 and £1,000 dependant on the cost of undertaking the placement.

Following a light touch review in 2022/23, the above bursary eligibility was added to, to target automated support to Part 2 and Part 3 MPharm students who are undertaking mandatory placements throughout the academic year so that they receive an award based on the following criteria:

- Assessed household income of less than £25,000: £300
- Assessed household income of between £25,001 - £45,000: £200

## Digital Support Funds

The Digital Support Fund is a support fund to help students with the associated costs of hybrid learning and study. There are limited grants of £400 per student, designed to provide financial support towards internet connectivity, specialist software as well as IT related study equipment costs. The £400 can be used as a contribution to buying a laptop and peripherals (mouse, keyboard, extra monitor, router, dongle etc.) or for paying broadband bills.

The eligibility for this fund is targeted and students must:

- Be a first year or a returning student on any undergraduate course; and
- Be a permanent resident of the UK; and
- Live in an area with low participation in Higher Education (defined as Polar4 Quintile 1, 2 or 3); and
- Be assessed by your Student Finance Authority as eligible for financial support and have an assessed household taxable income of below £27,000.

The Funds are made up from various sources such as Alumni and Supporter Engagement, Gifts and Donations to the University and **£16,000** is provided from Access and Participation.

## Student Support Funds

The Student Support Funds are provided to the Student Financial Support Team in order to provide financial assistance to students experiencing unexpected financial hardship. The Funds are made up from various sources such as Alumni and Supporter Engagement, Gifts and Donations to the University and **£34,000** is provided from Access and Participation. The maximum awards that can be made to support students with living costs are:

- Single student - £1,500

- Couple - £2,000
- Families (students with dependants) - £3,000
- Final year students who apply after the end of term 2 - £1,000

## Other Financial Support

### Diagnostic Testing

The University provides financial support towards the costs of diagnostic tests for students from households with assessed household incomes of less than £27k who have been recommended by the Disability Advisory Service for Dyslexia or Asperger's diagnostic testing to confirm disability.

### Foundation Degree Fee Waivers

Students entering the University Foundation Degree in Children's Development and Learning or progressing onto our BA Children's Development and Learning programme will receive a 50% fee waiver; this waiver applies to both years of the Foundation Degree.

### Undergraduate University of Reading Sanctuary Scholarships

Funds 4 bursary payments of £5,000 for each year of study for new applicants to undergraduate courses with refugee or humanitarian protection status.

## 2022/23 data and spend

### Reading Bursary Scheme (RBS)

For the academic year 2022/23 the University paid £2,734,600 in awards to 2544 students from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2022 to 17<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

- 2477 students have received the maximum bursary of £1,100.
- 0 students received £1,000 as they started their course before 2018/19.
- 67 students undertaking a Postgraduate ITT course received £550 as a Reading bursary, total spend to date is £35,200.

*Table 1 – Total number of students awarded the RBS with total spend in a financial year (1<sup>st</sup> August to 31<sup>st</sup> July)*

Financial year	Number of students	Total spend
2018/19	2334	£2,332,725
2019/20	2392	£2,462,525
2020/21	2494	£2,652,400

2021/22	2570	£2,740,450
2022/23*	2567	£2,761,000

\*Information taken from HEBSS on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

### **Care Experienced, Foyer students and Estranged students bursary**

Spend for 2022/23 Care Experienced and Estrangement Student bursary (up to 21<sup>st</sup> February 2023) is £77,000 at present as a decision was made to backdate some of the awards for estranged students who were identified by the Student Loans Company. Currently 60 students are in receipt of this bursary.

### **Pre-entry travel bursary provision**

This bursary is administered and assessed by the Student Financial Support Team.

Out of 108 applications received up to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, 80 applicants received the bursary, the total spend for 2022/23 is currently £6,921.90. The mean average award amount is £86.52, and no applicant received the highest award available of £300.

### **Pre-application bursary provision**

For the academic year 2022/23, 0 applications have been received to date.

### **Work and Study Placement bursary**

For the academic year 2022/23 the Student Financial Support Team received 21 bursary applications and approved 3 applications with a total spend of £1,700. A further 90 targeted automated awards were made with a total spend of £24,800.

Automated awards information:

- 44 x Part 2 MPharm students - £12,200
- 46 x Part 3 MPharm students - £12,600

### **Digital Support Funds**

The £16,000 provided from Access and Participation has been used to fund the following:

- 40 Digital Support Fund awards totalling £16,000
- Total spend on the Digital Support Fund to 28<sup>th</sup> April 2023 is £21,600

### **Student Support Funds**

The £34,000 provided from Access and Participation has been used to fund the following:

- 31 Student Support Fund awards totalling £35,510
- Total spend on the Student Support Fund to [16<sup>th</sup> May 2023] is £504,960.34

- Out of the 499 awards made to date, 146 awards (£137,667.74) were made to students in receipt of the Reading bursary, this is equivalent to over 5% of Reading bursary recipients. We currently have 31 applications to the Student Support Fund awaiting assessment by the team on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023.
- We have started to record instances where students are disclosing in their applications for support that their mental health is suffering as a result of financial difficulties with over 50% of students awarded from the fund stating this is the case.

Table 2 – showing number of Reading Bursary recipients receiving additional financial support from the Student Support Funds

Academic Year	% of overall RBS population receiving SSF award	Total spend from SSF
2021/22	4.0%	£91,334.20
2020/21	5.9%	£186,177.00

## Reading Bursary Survey Results

### Key findings 2021/22

- Increase in students eligible up by 207, reflective of the impact of Covid on employment, we are continuing to see a higher number of eligible students
- Small increase in responses to the survey up by 6
- The highest proportion of students who replied to the survey were in part 1 – the same as in the previous report
- The main source of personal funding for university was earnings accrued whilst working during vacation periods at 61.6% an increase of 9% from the previous report. Other main personal sources of funding were from earnings accrued during term-time and personal savings, at 49.2% and 47.3% respectively – this is the same as the previous report
- The main other sources of funding were a maintenance loan provided by the Student Finance Authorities (82.2%), followed by Bursaries or Scholarships from the University (81.4%).
- For those students employed during their studies, 54.9% worked during term-time and throughout vacation periods. For those that worked during term-time, 36.6% worked more than 8 hours per week which is an increase by 2.4% from the previous report.

- The main reason for undertaking paid work was to pay for essential living costs such as rent, bills etc... with 82.8% an increase by 6.9% from the previous report. The second highest results were earnings to pay for books, study materials etc, and to have a more comfortable life while studying, both with 51.7% and 52.2% respectively, these are the same highest rated reasons than the previous report.
- There is still a high percentage of students who aren't aware that they would be eligible for a bursary before they commenced their studies – 40.7%
- 56.5% of students stated that receiving the bursary was very important in supporting their continued studies.
- 38% of students received £500 - £1000 and 42.9% students received £1001 - £1500 of support, there was an increase in higher levels of support £1001 - £1,500 by 6.8%
- 89 students who were in receipt of the Reading Bursary also received additional financial support, primarily in the form of the Student Support Fund but also the Summer Fund, Short-term loan and Digital Support fund.
- 56.5% of students stated that receiving the Reading Bursary was “very important” and enabled them to financially continue with their studies

### Comments:

“Allowed me to have enough money to eat, I was not eating well due to financial situation I was also awarded a catering package for a month which really helped I was not aware that they were able to this. Appreciated it a lot”.

“Grateful for the support I have received. It's more or less the money that helps me with food and bills. So without the bursary I wouldn't be eating properly and not focusing on self-care and health”.

“Allows me to study full time during term-time critical as I have a learning disability”.

“If it weren't for the funds, I would've been worried about expenses for my commute to and from uni. The funds are very important for that purpose”.

“Purchase placement uniforms, in particular wipe clean comfortable shoes”.

“Wouldn't be able to afford living, literally! I live off of my maintenance loan throughout the year, the bursary is a godsend”.

### Notes

This report has been adapted from a larger financial report, to provide some reflective evaluation on the student financial support that has been provided. Future evaluations will include more detailed survey results as well as focus groups.

## Appendix

The below report is the statistical analysis of the financial support packages on student retention and outcomes.

# Financial Support Evaluation

**Reviewing the impact of the University’s financial support offering on student retention and outcomes**

## Background

In August 2022, the University received the latest data release from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) for use with the OfS financial support evaluation toolkit. The purpose of these data is to help providers evaluate their financial support offering to students and to understand the impact of these investments on the retention and success of their students.

The HESA data release contains:

- Full-time, first degree entrants for each cohort.
- Sandwich students.
- English-domiciled students.
- OfS-funded students (including Initial Teacher Training).

The HESA data release excludes:

- Students on degree courses over five years in length.
- Students who qualified with a first degree in their year of entry.
- Students who left their course prior to 1 December.
- Students whose reason for leaving the course was serious illness or death.

The data provided are derived from the University’s HESA Student Record reporting, split into two separate files:

- Retention for the 2019/20 cohort
- Degree and graduate outcomes for the 2016/17 cohort

This latest data release has been combined with previous data releases to create a three-year dataset for both retention and degree outcomes.



## Methodology

The Planning and Strategy Office (PSO) conducted binary logistic regression analyses on the following variables:

- **Retention of students into their second year of study** – This relates to the 2017/18, 2018/19, and 2019/20 cohorts. Students who continue at a level of study below first degree are classified as not being retained.
- **Degree completion within five years** – This relates to the 2014/15, 2015/16, and 2016/17 cohorts. Students who obtained a lesser award or were still studying are classified as non-completions.
- **Achieved a good degree** (First or Upper Second class) – This relates to the 2014/15, 2015/16, and 2016/17 cohorts.

Whilst graduate outcomes information is included as part of the data release, it has not been considered as part of this evaluation. This is due to changes in the outcomes survey in recent years, and the availability of data. Students from the earliest cohort in the dataset (2014/15) completed the six-month Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey, whilst students from the later cohorts (2015/16 and 2016/17) completed the fifteen-month Graduate Outcomes survey. The additional lead time involved in the collection of the Graduate Outcomes data meant that no progression data was included for the 2015/16 cohort, and any students who completed their studies in 2020/21 or later will not have been surveyed prior to the release of these data.

The declared household income data for the students were obtained from the Student Financial Support team and mapped into the HESA data release using the Student Support Numbers. The retention data use only the household income data for the student's year of entry, whereas the degree outcomes data use up to three years of household income data to provide the highest percentage of known values.

The household income data were coded into four groups to provide a basis for the analysis:

1. **Students with a household income between £25,001 (£27,001 for the 2019/20 cohort) and £42,737** (the maximum household income to be eligible for a maintenance loan) – This is the reference group for the analysis.
2. **Students with a household income of £25,000 (£27,000 for the 2019/20 cohort) and below** – This is the group eligible to receive the Reading student bursary.
3. **Students with a household income over £42,737** – This is the group with a household income over the threshold for University or maintenance loan support.
4. **Students with an unknown or missing (assumed high) household income** – This is the group for whom the University does not hold household income information, and it is assumed to be high.

The number of students within each household income group (applying the [HESA Standard Rounding Methodology](#)) for each cohort were:

**Continuation:**

Household Income Group	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
1: HHI between £25,001 and £42,737	390	295	305
2: HHI £25,000 and below	755	635	655
3: HHI over £42,737	510	475	500
4: HHI unknown/missing (assumed high)	1455	1385	1170

**Degree Completion/Good Degree:**

Household Income Group	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
1: HHI between £25,001 and £42,737	375	385	390
2: HHI £25,000 and below	630	595	620
3: HHI over £42,737	440	510	540
4: HHI unknown/missing (assumed high)	825	990	1180

The regression analysis compares the outcomes of students in household income groups 2, 3, and 4 against group 1 to predict if students in these groups are more or less likely to achieve the outcome of interest, and the odds of this happening.

Alongside the household income data, a range of independent control variables were included in the analysis. The majority of these were included in the HESA data release, with additional variables mapped in by PSO. These control variables were:

- HESA-provided
  - Gender/Sex
  - Nationality
  - Age on entry
  - Ethnicity
  - Declared disability and Disabled Students Allowance (DSA)
  - Main subject of degree
  - Tariff score

- POLAR4 Quintile
- Term-time accommodation type (retention only)
- Distance travelled from home address to university in kilometres (retention only)
- Degree size (retention only)
- University-sourced
  - NSS overall satisfaction score
  - IMD2019 Quintile
  - Entered through Clearing

The NSS overall satisfaction scores for the students were mapped in from the results data made available to the University following each survey edition. Results were mapped in as follows:

- For the retention cohorts, results from the survey edition in their year of entry were used (e.g. 2017/18 uses the 2018 NSS).
- For the degree outcomes cohorts, results from the third year of study (i.e. the expected end date for a three-year course) were used (e.g. 2016/17 uses the 2019 NSS).

As no individual student results are made available, aggregated course data was mapped in for each student. Where no course-level result was available Department/School-level results were used.

Whilst the primary focus of the analysis was on the impact of the University's financial support offering on the above variables, significant differences within the control variable categories were also noted.

## Analysis

The binary logistic regression analyses were undertaken using SPSS, with all independent control variables included. The outputs of these analyses were then reviewed to distinguish any variables (or categories within variables) that displayed a statistical significance. This significance was identified where the *Sig* value (or p-value) was <0.05, indicating that there was a less than 5% chance that the variable occurred randomly. Additionally, results with a *Sig* value between 0.05 and 0.1 were interpreted as indicating a likelihood of correlation, but not necessarily of statistical significance. Results with a *Sig* value >0.1 were interpreted as indicating no statistically significant difference.

Where a result was identified as being of statistical significance or likely correlation, the *B* value (or co-efficient) was used to determine if the result was positive (greater than 0) or negative (less than 0) in comparison to the reference group. The *exp(B)* value (or odds ratio) was then used to calculate the relative likelihood of this result occurring. This likelihood is presented as a percentage difference to the percentage of the comparison group achieving this result. The methodology used to calculate the relative likelihood is a

formula proposed by Zhang and Yu (1998)<sup>1</sup>: “Relative likelihood =  $OR / ((1-P) + (P * OR))$ ”, where OR is the odds ratio ( $exp(B)$ ) and P is the proportion of students in the reference group achieving the outcome being analysed (e.g. retained into their second year of study). The relative likelihood values are presented within a 75% confidence interval, calculated by moving 1.15 standard deviations from the mean. The 75% confidence interval is used due to the wide ranges for 95% confidence.

The guidance supplied by the OfS alongside the analysis toolkit provides an insight into how the results can be interpreted:

Result	What this means
Financial support recipients have <b>significantly better outcomes</b> than the comparison group.	Indicates that financial support is effective at improving outcomes (and possibly unfairly so with respect to the comparison group).
Financial support recipients have the <b>same outcomes</b> as the comparison group (i.e. no significant differences).	Indicates that financial support is effective (or there is actually no impact of financial disadvantage on educational outcomes).
Financial support recipients have <b>significantly worse outcomes</b> than the comparison group.	Indicates that financial support is either ineffective or insufficient to overcome the underlying effects of financial disadvantage.

## Household Income Analysis 1

### Retention

With all else being equal, there was no evidence of a statistically significant difference in retention into the second year of the course between students with a household income <£25,000 and those in the reference group (household income between £25,001 and £42,737) for the 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 cohorts. This indicates that the financial support provided by the University is effective in retaining students into their second year, or that financial disadvantage does not have an impact on retention.

The only statistically significant result was seen in 2017/18, where it can be inferred that the unknown/missing group had a greater likelihood of being retained into the second year with an odds ratio over one and a half (1.67) times greater than the reference group. This translates to them being 2.2% to 5.9% more likely to be retained.

The below tables show the output of the analysis for the household income groups:

<sup>1</sup> Zhang, J. and. Yu. K. (1998) 'What's the relative risk? A method of correcting the odds ratio in cohort studies of common outcomes', *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 280(19), pp. 1690-1.

2017/18:

Household Income Group	B	Sig	exp(B)	Relative likelihood
<b>1: HHI between £25,001 and £42,737</b>				
<b>2: HHI £25,000 and below</b>	-0.156	0.513	0.856	N/A
<b>3: HHI over £42,737</b>	0.148	0.591	1.160	N/A
<b>4: HHI unknown/missing (assumed high)</b>	0.144	0.537	1.155	N/A

2018/19:

Household Income Group	B	Sig	exp(B)	Relative likelihood
<b>1: HHI between £25,001 and £42,737</b>				
<b>2: HHI £25,000 and below</b>	0.264	0.294	1.302	N/A
<b>3: HHI over £42,737</b>	0.434	0.129	1.543	N/A
<b>4: HHI unknown/missing (assumed high)</b>	0.513	0.034	1.670	2.2% to 5.9% more likely to be retained

2019/20:

Household Income Group	B	Sig	exp(B)	Relative likelihood
<b>1: HHI between £27,001 and £42,737</b>				
<b>2: HHI £27,000 and below</b>	-0.649	0.140	0.522	N/A
<b>3: HHI over £42,737</b>	-0.319	0.505	0.727	N/A
<b>4: HHI unknown/missing (assumed high)</b>	-0.438	0.306	0.645	N/A

## Degree completion within five years

With all else being equal, there was a statistically significant difference in completion of the degree within five years between students with a household income <£25,000 and those in the reference group for the 2014/15 cohort. It can be inferred that those with a lower household income had a lesser likelihood of completing their degree within five years with an odds ratio of approximately two thirds (0.634) that of the reference group. This translates to them being 3.2% to 11.2% less likely to be retained. This same comparison, however, was not statistically significant for either the 2015/16 or 2016/17 cohorts. This could be interpreted as the financial support provided by the University becoming more effective over time at supporting students to complete their studies within five years.

No statistically significant results were observed in the other household income groups.

The below tables show the output of the analysis for the household income groups:

### 2014/15:

Household Income Group	B	Sig	exp(B)	Relative likelihood
<b>1: HHI between £25,001 and £42,737</b>				
<b>2: HHI £25,000 and below</b>	-0.456	0.022	0.634	3.2% to 11.2% less likely to complete
<b>3: HHI over £42,737</b>	0.172	0.469	1.188	N/A
<b>4: HHI unknown/missing (assumed high)</b>	0.066	0.753	1.068	N/A

### 2015/16:

Household Income Group	B	Sig	exp(B)	Relative likelihood
<b>1: HHI between £25,001 and £42,737</b>				
<b>2: HHI £25,000 and below</b>	-0.219	0.315	0.804	N/A
<b>3: HHI over £42,737</b>	-0.163	0.478	0.850	N/A
<b>4: HHI unknown/missing (assumed high)</b>	-0.061	0.774	0.941	N/A

### 2016/17:

Household Income Group	B	Sig	exp(B)	Relative likelihood
<b>1: HHI between £25,001 and £42,737</b>				
<b>2: HHI £25,000 and below</b>	-0.169	0.402	0.844	N/A
<b>3: HHI over £42,737</b>	0.153	0.497	1.165	N/A
<b>4: HHI unknown/missing (assumed high)</b>	-0.052	0.789	0.950	N/A

### Good degree

With all else being equal, there was a statistically significant difference in the chances of achieving a good degree (First or Upper Second class) between students with a household income <£25,000 and those in the reference group for the 2015/16 cohort. It can be inferred that those with a lower household income had a lesser likelihood of achieving a good degree with an odds ratio just over half (0.574) that of the reference group. This translates to them being 7.5% to 17.3% less likely to achieve a good degree. A similar result was observed for the 2016/17 cohort, where those with a lower household income with an odds ratio approximately three quarters (0.744) that of the reference group (translating to 2.8% to 12.9% less likely) to achieve a good degree. This result, however, was above the *Sig* value to be classed as statistically significant (0.06), so can only be seen as indicative of a correlation.

These results could be indication that the financial support provided by the University is ineffective or insufficient in overcoming the impact of financial disadvantage with regards to achieving a good degree. There are, however, additional factors relating to these cohorts which were not included in this analysis but may have impacted the results. These include:

- Industrial action
- Renovation of the library
- COVID-19 pandemic

Whilst these factors would also have affected those in the other household income categories, the impact may have been disproportionate on those with existing financial disadvantage.

Statistically significant results were also observed for the 2015/16 cohort for those students with a household income >£42,737 and those with a missing/unknown household income. Both groups can be inferred to have had a lesser likelihood of achieving a good degree, with odds ratios of 0.599 (translating to 6.4% to 16.4% less likely) and 0.620 (translating to 6% to 15.1% less likely) respectively.

The below tables show the output of the analysis for the household income groups:

2014/15:

Household Income Group	B	Sig	exp(B)	Relative likelihood
<b>1: HHI between £25,001 and £42,737</b>				
<b>2: HHI £25,000 and below</b>	-0.168	0.274	0.846	N/A
<b>3: HHI over £42,737</b>	0.179	0.296	1.196	N/A
<b>4: HHI unknown/missing (assumed high)</b>	0.217	0.163	1.242	N/A

2015/16:

Household Income Group	B	Sig	exp(B)	Relative likelihood
<b>1: HHI between £25,001 and £42,737</b>				
<b>2: HHI £25,000 and below</b>	-0.554	0.001	0.574	7.5% to 17.3% less likely for good degree
<b>3: HHI over £42,737</b>	-0.512	0.004	0.599	6.4% to 16.4% less likely for good degree
<b>4: HHI unknown/missing (assumed high)</b>	-0.477	0.003	0.620	6% to 15.1% less likely for good degree

2016/17:

Household Income Group	B	Sig	exp(B)	Relative likelihood
<b>1: HHI between £25,001 and £42,737</b>				
<b>2: HHI £25,000 and below</b>	-0.296	0.064	0.744	2.8% to 12.9% less likely for good degree
<b>3: HHI over £42,737</b>	0.041	0.809	1.042	



Household Income Group	B	Sig	exp(B)	Relative likelihood
4: HHI unknown/missing (assumed high)	-0.170	0.260	0.844	

## House Income Analysis 2

A second set of regression analyses were conducted with an amended reference group, comprising students with a household income up to £5,000 above the threshold to be eligible for the Reading Bursary (£25,001 to £30,000 for the 2014/15 to 2018/19 cohorts, and £27,001 to £32,000 for the 2019/20 cohort).

This second set of analyses yielded no statistically significant results between those with a household income below £25,000/£27,000 and those in the reference group for any of the metrics. Only one result of potential correlation between the two groups was observed, for the 2015/16 cohort for Good Degree. It can be inferred that those with a household income of <£25,000 were 3.4% to 19.4% less likely to achieve a good degree. These results could indicate that the University's financial support offerings are effecting in reducing the impact of financial detriment compared to those with a slightly higher household income, or that financial detriment is not a primary factor within these metrics.

Statistically significant results were seen for two household income groups (the additional £30,000 to £42,737 group and those with an unknown/missing household income) for the 2017/18 cohort for Continuation. Students with a household income between £30,000 and £42,737 were 8.7% to 14.3% more likely than those in the reference group to continue into the second year, whilst those with an unknown/missing household income were 6.8% to 12.5% more likely to continue into the second year.

## Other variables

Statistically significant results were observed within several of the control variables. A summary of these is provided below.

### Retention

#### *Gender*

Female students can be inferred to have been more likely than males to be retained into the second year of their course for both the 2017/18 (2.4% to 4.7% more likely) and 2018/19 (2.2% to 5.9% more likely) cohorts.

No statistically significant results were observed for the 2019/20 cohort.

### ***Ethnicity***

Students from three ethnic groups can be inferred to have been less likely than White students to be retained into the second year of the course for the 2017/18 cohort. These are Black African (4.7% to 12.7% less likely), Indian (4.2% to 11.7% less likely), and Pakistani (2.7% to 10.9% less likely).

No statistically significant results were observed for any ethnic groups in the 2018/19 or 2019/20 cohorts.

### ***Declared disability***

Students with a declared disability but not claiming DSA can be inferred to have been 3.7% to 9.5% less likely to be retained into the second year of the course than students with no declared disability in the 2017/18 cohort. This significance was not seen in the other cohorts.

No statistically significant results were observed for students with a declared disability and claiming DSA.

### ***POLAR4 and IMD2019***

Students from POLAR4 quintile 3 can be inferred to have been 2.5% to 14.4% less likely to be retained into the second year of the course than students from quintile 1 in the 2018/19 cohort. No other statistically significant results were seen within POLAR4.

Conversely, statistically significant results were observed within IMD2019 for all cohorts:

- Students from IMD2019 quintile 3 can be inferred to have been more likely to be retained into the second year of the course than students from quintile 1 in 2017/18 (3.8% to 10.8% more likely), 2018/19 (5.6% to 12.1% more likely), and 2019/20 (1.8% to 4.9% more likely).
- Students from IMD2019 quintile 4 can be inferred to have been more likely to be retained into the second year of the course than students from quintile 1 in 2017/18 (4.7% to 11.5% more likely), 2018/19 (9% to 14.2% more likely), and 2019/20 (1.9% to 5.0% more likely).
- Students from IMD2019 quintile 5 can be inferred to have been more likely to be retained into the second year of the course than students from quintile 1 in 2017/18 (6.4% to 12.6% more likely), 2018/19 (8% to 13.7% more likely), and 2019/20 (2.6% to 5.3% more likely).

### ***Term-time accommodation***

Statistically significant results were observed for two categories within term-time accommodation across all cohorts:

- Students who were living in their parental home can be inferred to have been less likely to be retained into the second year of the course than students living in

university accommodation in 2017/18 (2.4% to 6.4% less likely), 2018/19 (1.6% to 5.9% less likely), and 2019/20 (0.8% to 4.1% less likely).

## **Degree completion within five years**

### ***Gender***

Female students can be inferred to have been more likely than males to complete their degree within five years across all cohorts: 2014/15 (4.9% to 8.7% more likely), 2015/16 (1.3% to 5.3% more likely), 2016/17 (2% to 5.8% more likely).

### ***Ethnicity***

Statistically significant results were observed for three ethnic groups:

- Students of Black African descent can be inferred to have been less likely than White students to complete their degree within five years for the 2014/15 (7.7% to 24.6% less likely) and 2016/17 (4.3% to 16.6% less likely) cohorts.
- Students of Mixed descent can be inferred to have been 7.2% to 16.9% less likely than White students to complete their degree within five years for the 2016/17 cohort.
- Students of another (not elsewhere specified) descent can be inferred to have been less likely than White students to complete their degree within five years for the 2015/16 (3.2% to 16.1% less likely) and 2016/17 (4.3% to 14.8% less likely) cohorts.

### ***Declared disability***

Students with a declared disability but not claiming DSA can be inferred to have been 5.1% to 13.2% less likely complete their degree within five years than students with no declared disability in the 2015/16 cohort. This significance was not seen in the other cohorts.

No statistically significant results were observed for students with a declared disability and claiming DSA.

### ***POLAR4 and IMD2019***

No statistically significant results were observed for the POLAR4 quintiles.

Statistically significant results were observed for three IMD2019 quintiles:

- Students from IMD2019 quintile 2 can be inferred to have been 7.7% to 19.1% more likely to complete their degree within five years than students from quintile 1 for the 2016/17 cohort.
- Students from IMD2019 quintile 3 can be inferred to have been 7.2% to 18.7% more likely to complete their degree within five years than students from quintile 1 for the 2016/17 cohort.

- Students from IMD2019 quintile 5 can be inferred to have been more likely to complete their degree within five years than students from quintile 1 for the 2014/15 (7% to 18.9% more likely), and 2016/17 (9.8% to 20.6% more likely) cohorts.

### **Clearing**

Students who entered through Clearing can be inferred to have been 1.9% to 8.1% less likely to be retained into the second year of the course than students who entered through main cycle in the 2016/17 cohort. This significance was not seen in the other cohorts.

### **Good degree**

#### **Gender**

Female students can be inferred to have been more likely than males to achieve a good degree across all cohorts: 2014/15 (14.4% to 21.1% more likely), 2015/16 (10.6% to 16.7% more likely), 2016/17 (16.6% to 22.1% more likely).

#### **Ethnicity**

Statistically significant results were observed for six ethnic groups:

- Students of Black African descent can be inferred to have been less likely than White students to achieve a good degree for the 2014/15 (30.8% to 54.6% less likely), 2015/16 (7.8% to 27.3% less likely), and 2016/17 (20.9% to 39.9% less likely) cohorts.
- Students of Mixed descent can be inferred to have been less likely than White students to achieve a good degree for the 2015/16 (4.5% to 18.9% less likely), and 2016/17 (12.2% to 25.4% less likely) cohorts.
- Students of another (not elsewhere specified) descent can be inferred to have been less likely than White students to achieve a good degree for the 2014/15 (9.8% to 27.4% less likely), 2015/16 (11.7% to 30% less likely), and 2016/17 (14.8% to 30.2% less likely) cohorts.

#### **Declared disability**

Students with a declared disability but not claiming DSA can be inferred to have been less likely than students with no declared disability to achieve a good degree across all cohorts: 2014/15 (6.3% to 19.2% less likely), 2015/16 (6.6% to 17.6% less likely), 2016/17 (4.9% to 18.1% less likely).

No statistically significant results were observed for students with a declared disability and claiming DSA.

### ***POLAR4 and IMD2019***

No statistically significant results were observed for the POLAR4 quintiles.

Statistically significant results were observed for three IMD2019 quintiles:

- Students from IMD2019 quintile 3 can be inferred to have been 9.6% to 29% more likely to achieve a good degree than students from quintile 1 for the 2016/17 cohort.
- Students from IMD2019 quintile 4 can be inferred to have been 9% to 29% more likely to complete their degree within five years than students from quintile 1 for the 2015/16 cohort.
- Students from IMD2019 quintile 5 can be inferred to have been 12.1% to 31.2% more likely to achieve a good degree than students from quintile 1 for the 2016/17 cohort.

### ***Clearing***

Students who entered through Clearing can be inferred to have been 1.9% to 8.1% less likely to achieve a good degree than students who entered through main cycle in the 2016/17 cohort. This significance was not seen in the other cohorts.

## **Next steps**

The next data release (containing retention for the 2020/21 cohort and degree/graduate outcomes for the 2017/18 cohort) is expected to be received from HESA in Summer 2023. Once this has been received, an updated evaluation will be conducted. If these data releases continue on an annual basis, the evaluation will become a BAU activity.

**Chris Tye, Planning and Strategy Office**