

Official statistics

Staff at higher education institutions: August 2024 to July 2025

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Summary: Statistics on the staff employed at higher education institutions in Wales

Theme: Higher Education

Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Staff Record



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Main points

This publication provides information about staff employed at higher education (HE) institutions in Wales for the academic year 2024/25, as collected in the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Staff Record.

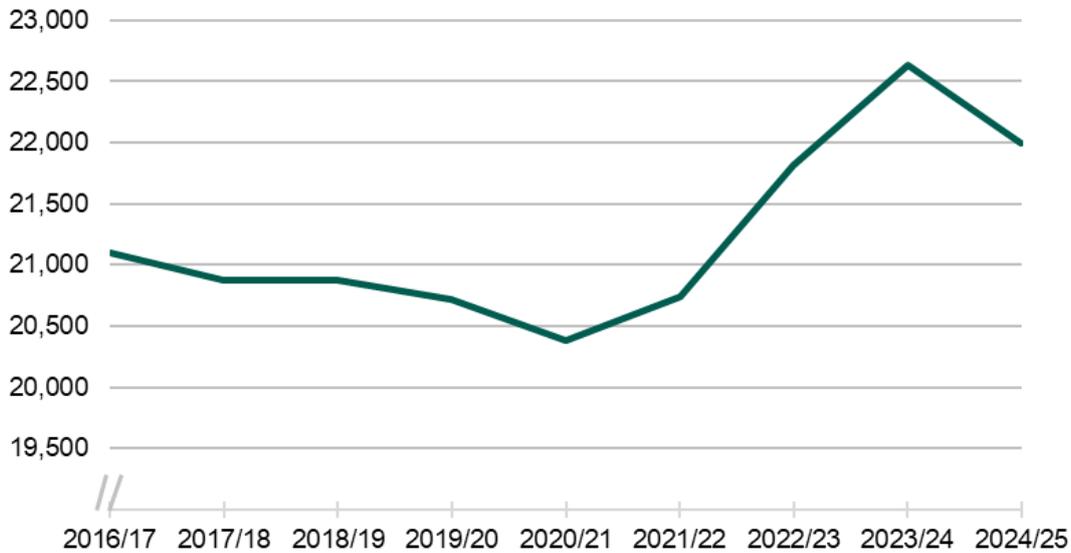
Staff numbers are calculated using the full-person equivalent for staff at 1 December of the reporting year, for example 1 December 2024 for 2024/25. Staff on atypical contracts are not included in this report as they are not comparable to those on other contract types. In 2024/25 there were 1,170 staff employed by Welsh HE institutions on atypical contracts. More detail can be found in the [definitions](#) section.

- There were 21,995 staff employed at Welsh HE institutions in 2024/25. This represents a 2.8% decrease from the 22,635 staff recorded in 2023/24.
- 2024/25 was the first academic year since 2020/21 where a decrease in total staff numbers occurred.
- In 2024/25, full-time staff accounted for 67.3% of all staff (14,815), while part-time staff accounted for 32.7% (7,180) of all staff.
- In 2024/25, academic and non-academic staff each accounted for 50% of total staff. There were 11,085 staff on academic contracts and 10,910 staff on non-academic contracts.
- In 2024/25, 56% of staff were female (12,325) and 44% (9,610) were male.
- In 2024/25, of staff with a known ethnic background, 86.7% were from a White background, 7.4% were from an Asian background, 2.1% were from a Black background, 1.9% were from a Mixed background and 2.0% were from Other backgrounds.
- In 2024/25, 9.3% of staff were recorded as having at least one known disability.
- The largest age group of staff in 2024/25 was the aged 36 to 45 category, which accounted for 28.3% of all staff. The smallest age group was the aged 66 and over category, which accounted for 2.9% of all staff.

Overall staff counts between 2016/17 and 2024/25

Total staff numbers declined for the first academic year since 2020/21, following several years of steady increases

Chart 1: Total staff at Welsh HE institutions, 2016/17 to 2024/25 (excludes atypical contracts)



Data in Table 1 of the accompanying spreadsheet.

In 2024/25, there were 21,995 staff recorded as working at Welsh HE institutions. This number reflects a 2.8% decrease (640 fewer staff) from the previous academic year, when there were 22,635 staff recorded.

2024/25 was the first academic year since 2020/21, a year which coincided with the Covid-19 pandemic, where there had been a decline in the number of staff. Between 2020/21 and 2023/24, there was a steady increase in staff numbers every year.

Staff numbers slightly declined across nearly all Welsh HE institutions in 2024/25

Table 1: Staff by institution, 2016/17 and 2024/25 (excludes atypical contracts)

Institution name	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Aberystwyth University	2,210	1,980	1,935	1,870	1,830	1,800	1,860	1,780	1,770
Bangor University	2,205	2,060	2,050	2,010	1,980	1,985	2,090	1,930	1,920
Cardiff Metropolitan University	1,535	1,380	1,395	1,470	1,500	1,625	1,805	1,895	1,865
Cardiff University	6,855	7,070	6,805	6,900	6,915	6,935	7,075	7,760	7,510
Swansea University	3,150	3,525	3,820	3,820	3,660	3,700	3,860	3,825	3,685
University of South Wales	2,915	2,775	2,780	2,740	2,665	2,725	2,930	3,055	2,855
University of Wales Trinity Saint David	1,710	1,615	1,610	1,435	1,340	1,470	1,660	1,805	1,765
Wrexham University	515	470	480	465	495	500	535	585	630
Total	21,095	20,870	20,875	20,720	20,385	20,740	21,815	22,635	21,995

Data in Table 1 of the accompanying spreadsheet. Figures for the University of Wales Trinity Saint David include the University of Wales.¹

Staff numbers at most Welsh HE institutions declined in 2024/25: the sector had 640 fewer staff than 2023/24. The exception was Wrexham University, which experienced an 8.4% increase in its staff numbers (50 more staff).

The University of South Wales experienced the largest percentage fall in its staff numbers out of all the Welsh HE institutions, employing 6.6% fewer staff in 2024/25 than the previous academic year.

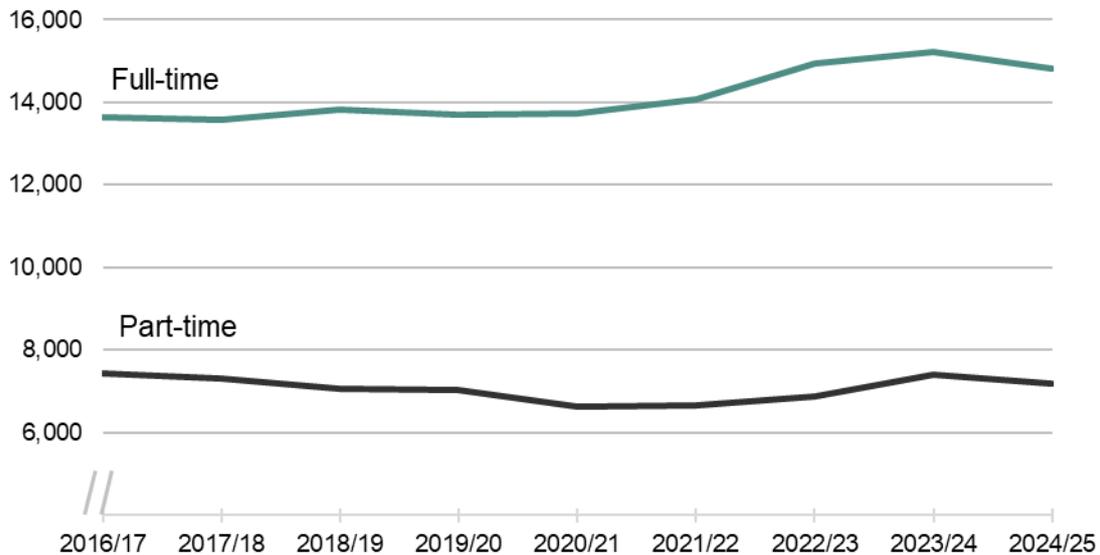
Despite the decreases in staff numbers across most institutions, Cardiff University continued to account for the largest share of staff at Welsh HE institutions in 2024/25 (34.1%), followed by Swansea University (16.8%). Wrexham University accounted for 2.9% of all staff in 2024/25, the smallest proportion.

¹ For further information, please refer to the [Data source and coverage](#) section

Staff by contract mode

The decline in overall staff numbers in 2024/25 was shared relatively evenly between both full-time and part-time contracts

Chart 2: Staff by contract mode, 2016/17 to 2024/25, all providers (excludes atypical contracts)



Data in Table 2 of the accompanying spreadsheet.

There were a total of 14,815 staff on full-time contracts and 7,180 staff on part-time contracts at Welsh universities in 2024/25. Full-time staff accounted for the majority of staff (67.3%) while part-time staff accounted for the remaining 32.7%.

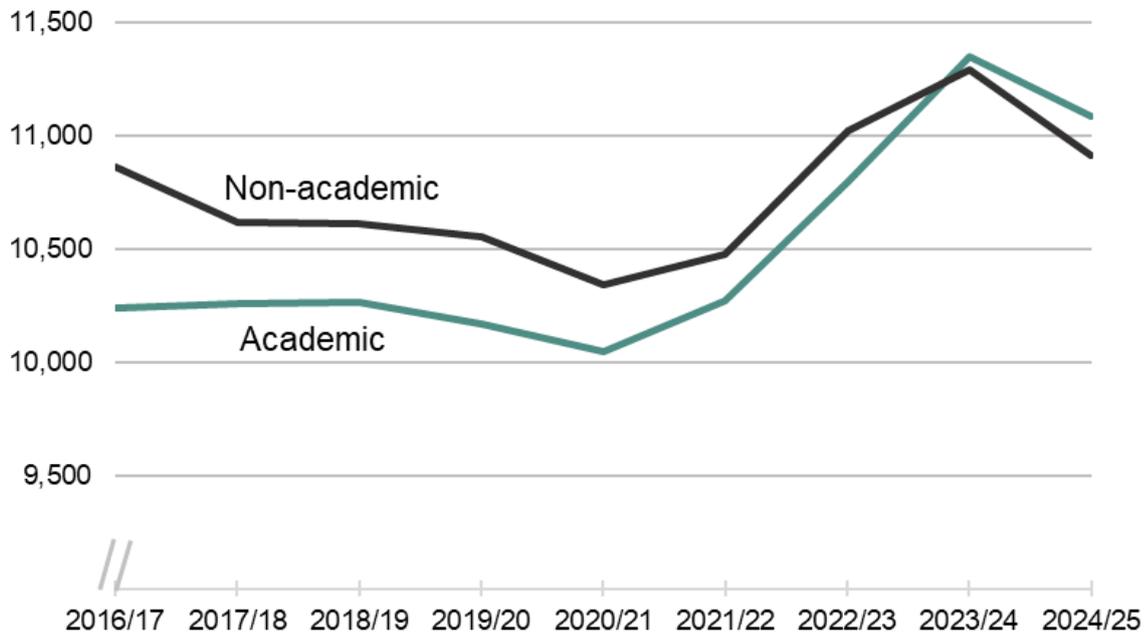
Both contract modes saw a decline in their numbers compared to the previous academic year 2023/24. Full-time staff numbers fell by 2.7% and part-time staff numbers fell by 3.2%.

The number of staff on part-time contracts has remained relatively constant since 2016/17, when there were 7,450 part-time staff. This number declined gradually between 2016/17 and 2020/21 but recovered back to similar levels to 2016/17 by 2023/24. Meanwhile, the number of staff on full-time contracts remained constant at around 14,000 between 2016/17 and 2021/22, then increased to stabilise at around 15,000 each year thereafter.

Staff by contract type

The number of staff on academic contracts was higher than the number of staff on non-academic contracts for the second year in a row

Chart 3: Staff by contract type, 2016/17 to 2024/25, all providers (excludes atypical contracts)



Data in Table 2 of the accompanying spreadsheet.

Historically, there have been more staff employed on non-academic contracts than academic contracts in the Welsh HE sector. However, in 2023/24 this trend reversed and the number of staff on academic contracts surpassed those on non-academic contracts. The number of staff on academic contracts remained above those on non-academic contracts in 2024/25.

The decline seen in 2024/25 was relatively evenly distributed between academic and non-academic contracts, with academic contracts decreasing by 2.3% and non-academic contracts decreasing by 3.4%.

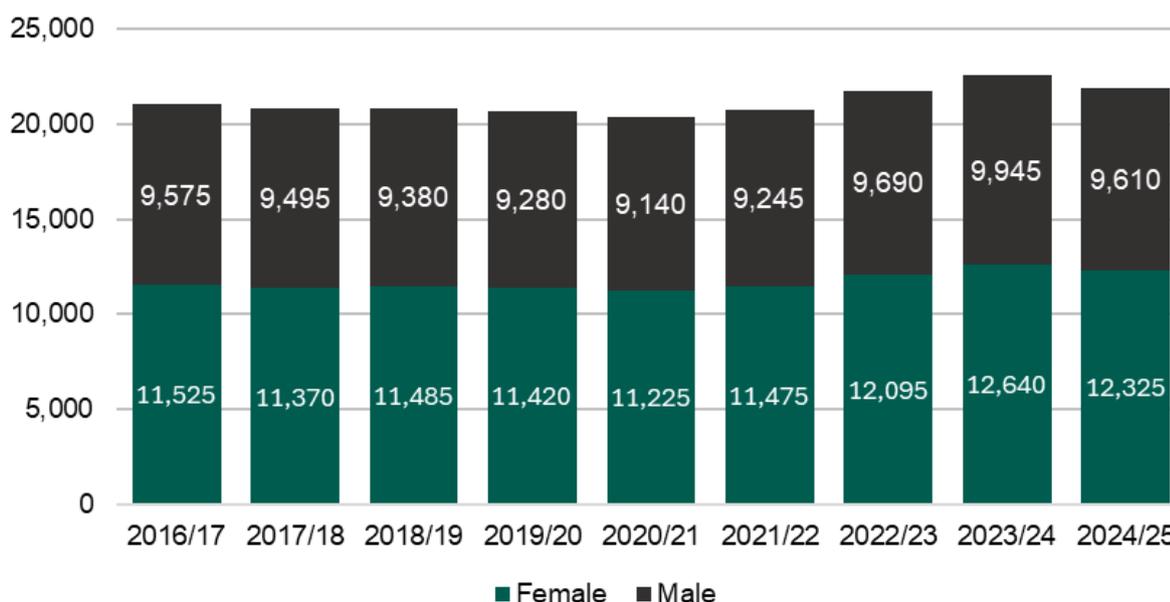
Of those on non-academic contracts in 2024/25, 9% were managers, directors and senior officials, 46% worked in professional and associate professional occupations and 44% worked under clerical and manual occupations. The definitions of these occupation groups come from the nine Major Groups of the [Standard Occupational Classification \(SOC\) 2020](#).

Staff by sex

In this section, staff who either didn't provide their sex or categorised themselves as 'Other' have been excluded from the analysis and calculations of percentages. These groups made up a very small number of the total responses, with those providing no answer accounting for 0.1% (20) of respondents and those responding as 'Other' accounting for 0.2% (45) of respondents.

Female staff in the sector continued to outnumber male staff in 2024/25, reflecting a consistent trend in recent years

Chart 4: Staff by sex, 2016/17 to 2024/25 (excludes atypical contracts)



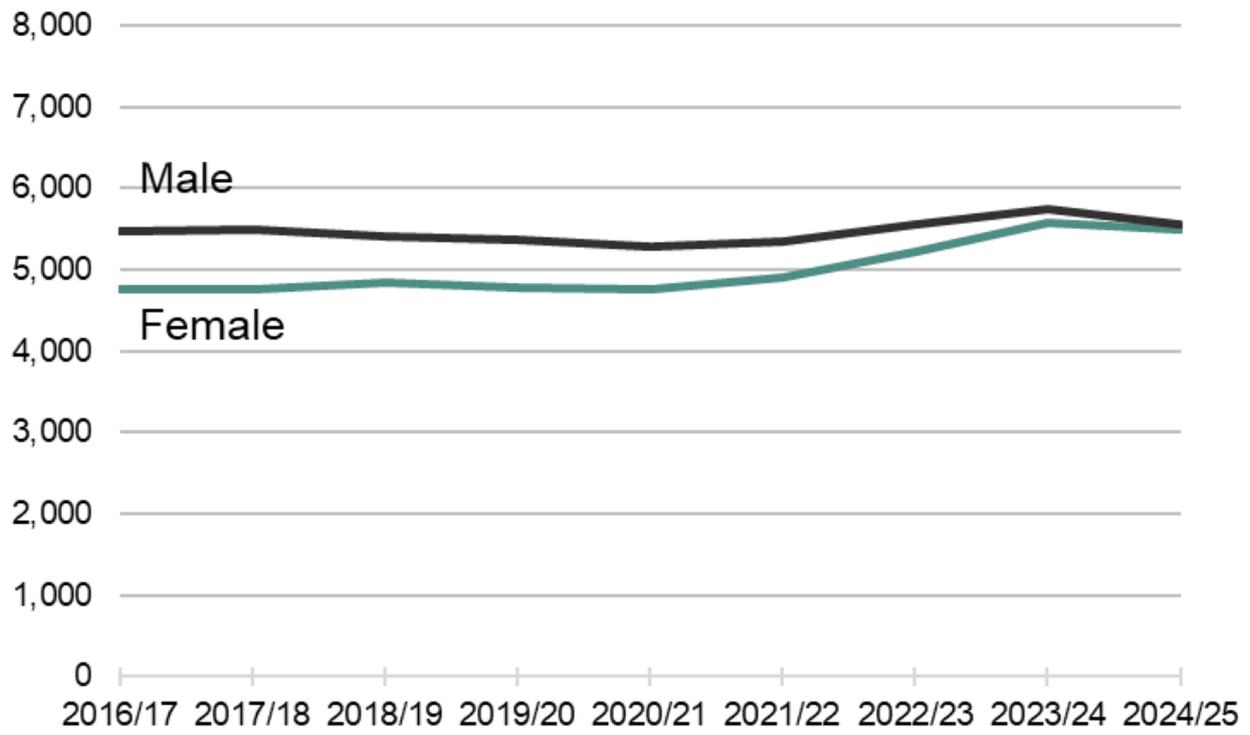
Data in Table 3a of the accompanying spreadsheet.

For the academic year 2024/25, 56% of Welsh HE staff were female (12,325) and 44% (9,610) were as male. This is a continuation of the trend seen in the Welsh HE sector since 2016/17 (and years prior to that), where the proportion of staff that are female has been higher than the proportion of staff that are male.

The decline in overall staff numbers for 2024/25 was relatively evenly distributed between male and female staff. The number of male staff in the sector fell by 3.4%, while the number of female staff fell by 2.5%.

The difference in the number of males and females employed on academic contracts has fallen

Chart 5: Staff on academic contracts by sex, 2016/17 to 2024/25 (excludes atypical contracts)

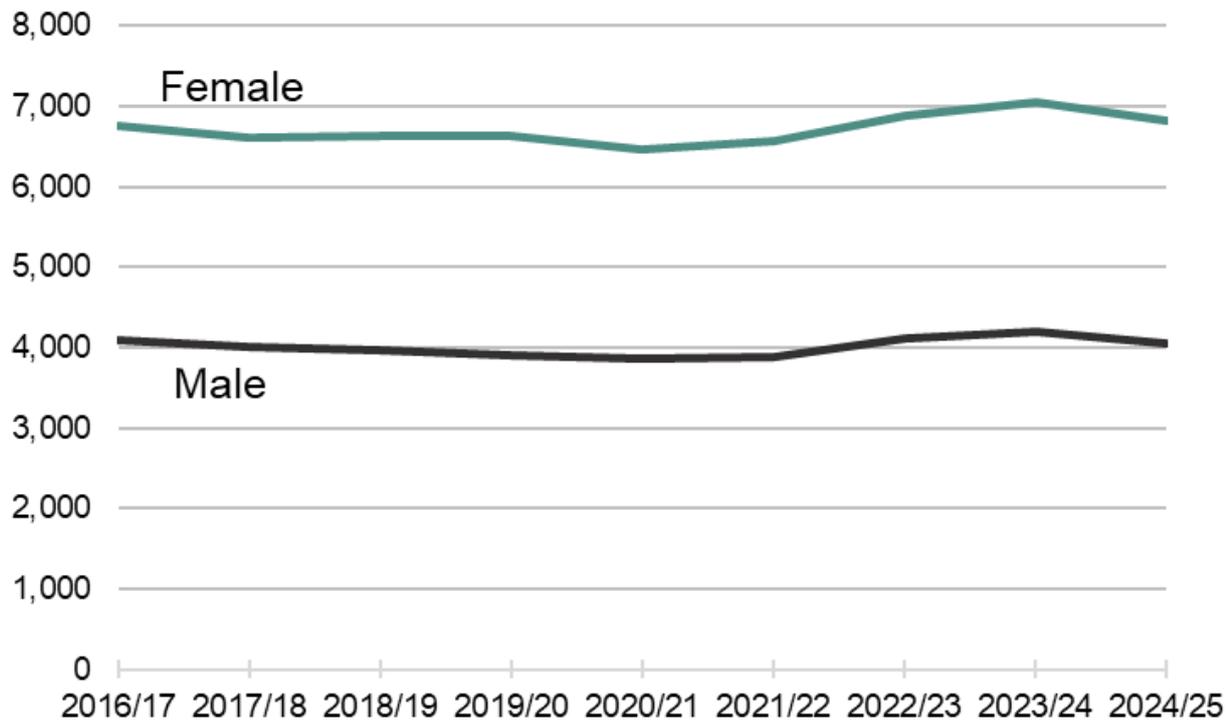


Data in Table 3a of the accompanying spreadsheet.

The proportion of academic staff who are female has gradually increased over the period shown in Chart 5. In 2016/17, 46.5% of academic staff were female and by 2024/25, this increased to 49.7%.

The difference in the number of males and females employed on non-academic contracts has remained consistent for several years

Chart 6: Staff on non-academic contracts by sex, 2016/17 to 2024/25 (excludes atypical contracts)



Data in Table 3a of the accompanying spreadsheet.

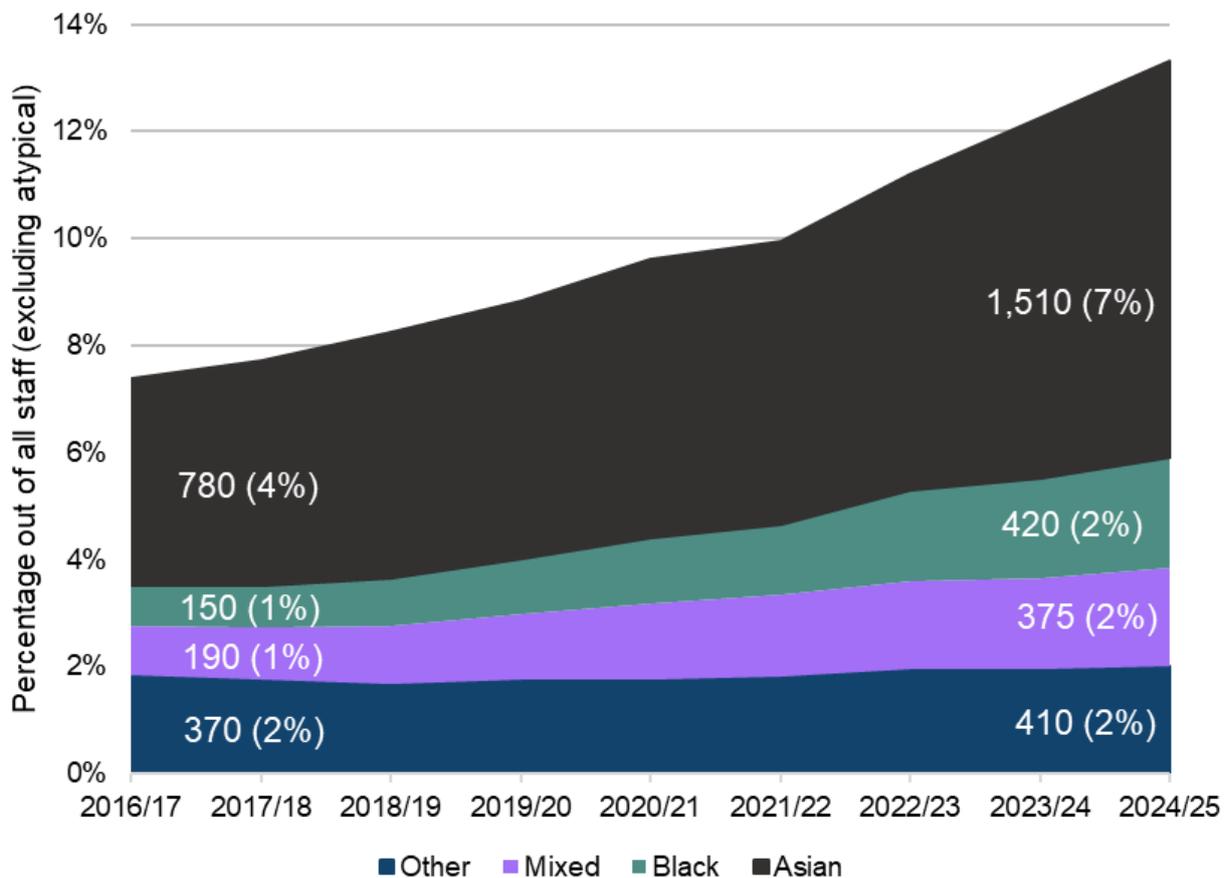
For non-academic contracts, the trends for both male and female staff have remained fairly stable between academic years 2016/17 and 2024/25. Female staff have accounted for the majority of non-academic contracts throughout these years, with levels varying between 62% and 63%. Meanwhile, male staff have consistently accounted for between 37% and 38% of non-academic contracts.

Staff by ethnicity

In this section, staff whose ethnic background is unknown have been excluded from the analysis and calculations of percentages. The proportion of total staff whose ethnic background was unknown in the 2024/25 data was 7.4%.

Staff from an Asian ethnic background have continued to account for the largest ethnic minority grouping in 2024/25

Chart 7: Staff from an ethnic minority background (Asian, Black, Mixed and Other), 2016/17 to 2024/25 (excludes atypical contracts)



Data in Table 4b of the accompanying spreadsheet. Further data on White staff can also be found in this table.

Staff numbers for all ethnic minority backgrounds have shown a noticeable increase between 2016/17 and 2024/25. The proportion of staff from ethnic minority backgrounds increased even more steeply from 2021/22, primarily for staff from Black and Asian backgrounds.

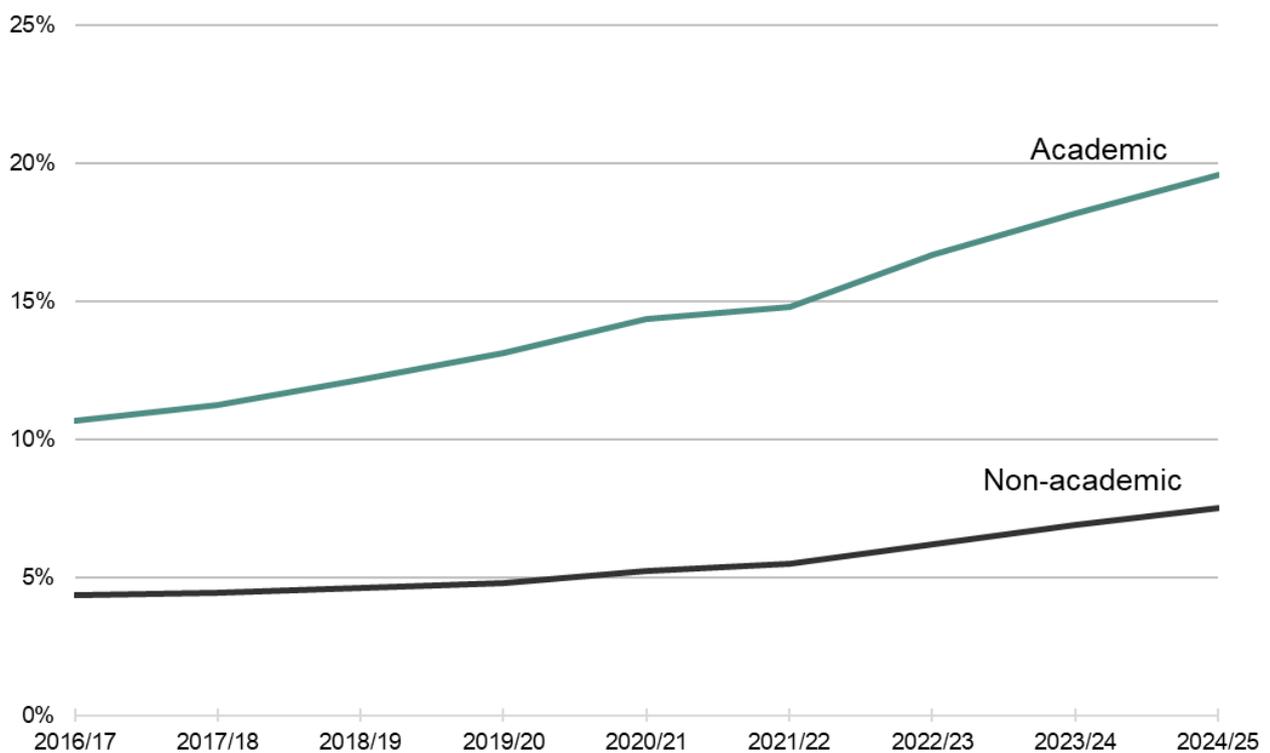
Staff from an Asian ethnic background have continued to make up the majority of ethnic minority staff: in 2024/25, 7.4% of all staff came from an Asian background.

The number of staff from a Black ethnic background has experienced the largest percentage increase since 2016/17, more than doubling from 150 in 2016/17 to 420 in

2024/25. Staff from Mixed and Asian ethnic backgrounds also experienced high percentage increases between these years, with Mixed staff growing by 99.5% and Asian staff growing by 93.7%. The number of staff from Other ethnic backgrounds grew by 9.7% between these years.

The proportion of academic staff from an ethnic minority background has been increasing at just over double the rate of non-academic staff from these groups since 2021/22

Chart 8: Percentage of staff from an ethnic minority background (combined) by contract type, 2016/17 to 2024/25 (excludes atypical contracts)



Data in Table 4b of the accompanying spreadsheet. Further breakdowns for individual ethnic minority groupings/White staff can be found in Tables 4a and 4b.

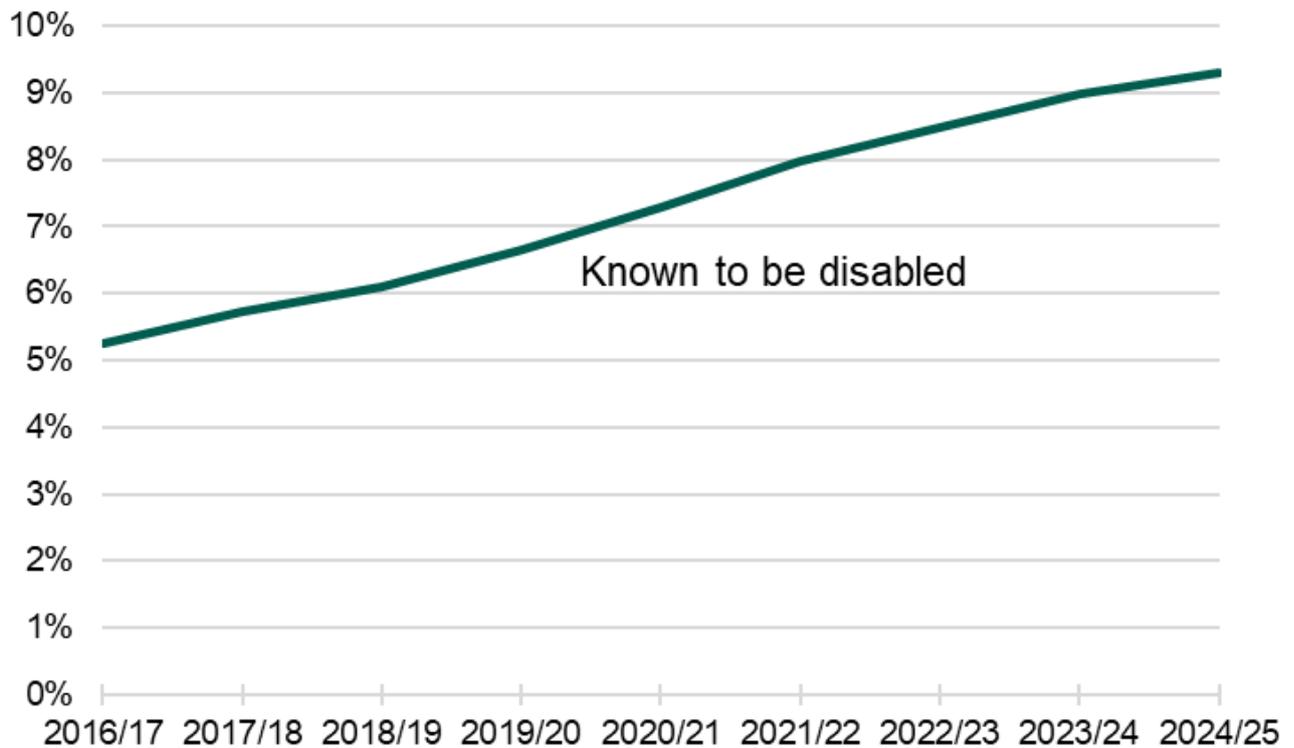
In Chart 8, the staff included as being from an ethnic minority background are the individual ethnic minority categories shown in Chart 7 (Black, Asian, Mixed and Other) summed together.

In 2024/25, 19.6% of academic staff came from an ethnic minority background while for non-academic staff, this was 7.5%. Between 2021/22 and 2024/25, the proportion of academic staff who were from ethnic minority backgrounds increased at just over double the rate of non-academic staff. The proportion of academic staff from ethnic minority backgrounds rose by 4.8 percentage points between these years whereas the proportion of non-academic staff from ethnic minority backgrounds increased by 2.3 percentage points between these years.

Staff by disability

Nearly one in ten of staff working at Welsh HE institutions (9.3%) report having at least one known disability

Chart 9: Percentage of staff known to be disabled, 2016/17 to 2024/25 (excludes atypical contracts)

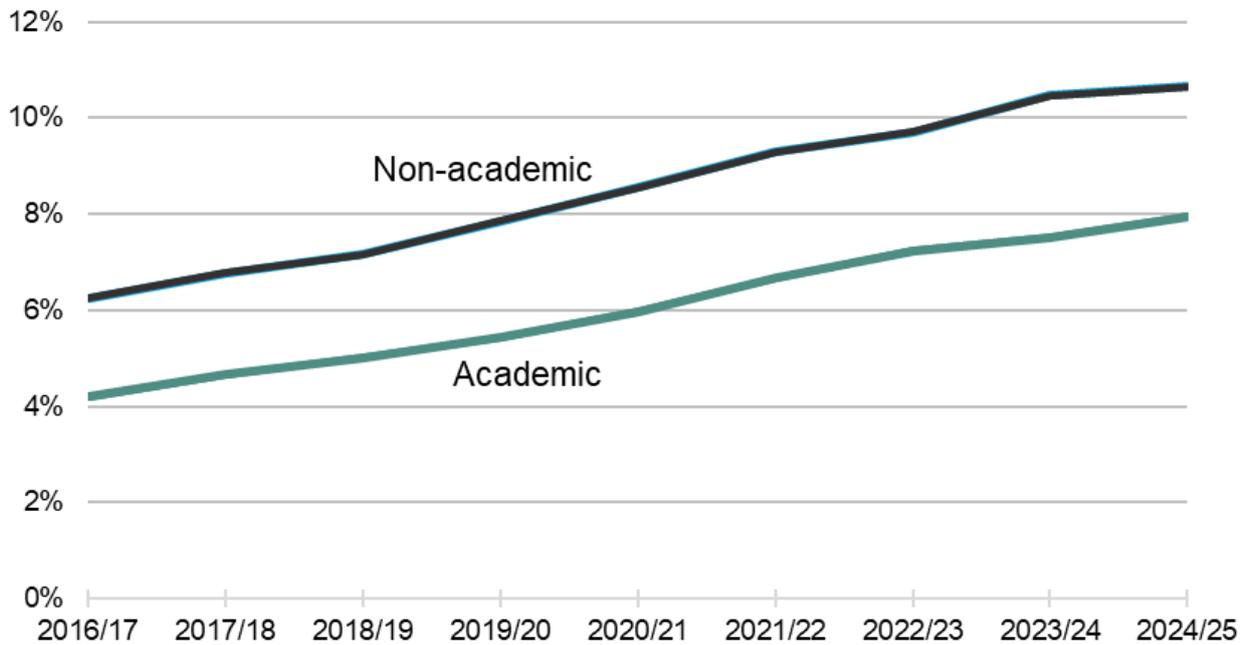


Data in Table 5b of the accompanying spreadsheet.

The proportion of staff in Welsh HE institutions with at least one known disability has risen steadily over time by 4 percentage points, from 5.3% of all staff in 2016/17 to 9.3% in 2024/25 (or from 1,110 to 2,045 staff).

The number of staff with at least one disability is increasing across both academic and non-academic contract types

Chart 10: Percentages of staff with at least one known disability by contract type, 2016/17 to 2024/25 (excludes atypical contracts)



Data in Table 5b of the accompanying spreadsheet.

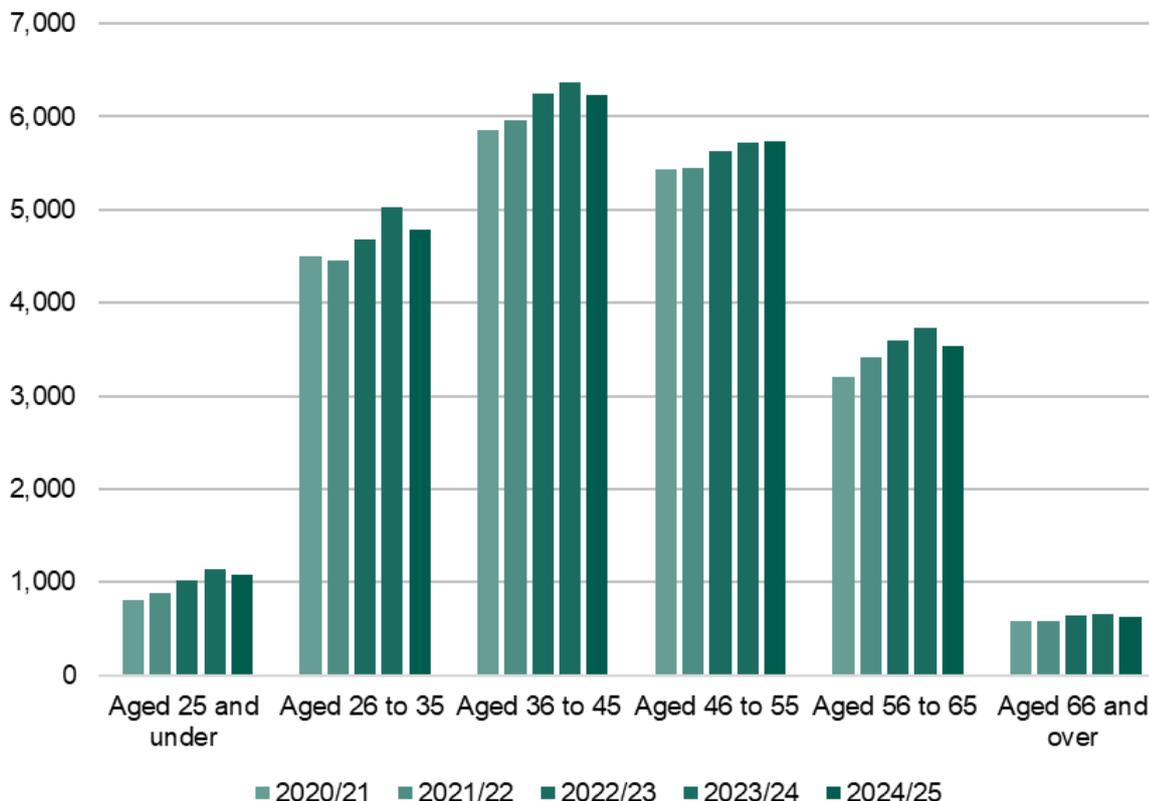
The proportions of staff with at least one known disability on both academic and non-academic contracts have steadily increased between 2016/17 and 2024/25.

Staff with at least one known disability accounted for 4.2% of academic staff in 2016/17 but by 2024/25 this proportion had nearly doubled, increasing to 7.9%. Similarly for non-academic staff, the proportion with at least one known disability accounted for 6.2% in 2016/17 and grew to 10.7% by 2024/25.

Staff by age

Staff numbers in nearly all age categories saw a slight decline in 2024/25

Chart 11: Staff by age group, 2020/21 to 2024/25 (excludes atypical contracts)



Data in Table 6 of the accompanying spreadsheet.

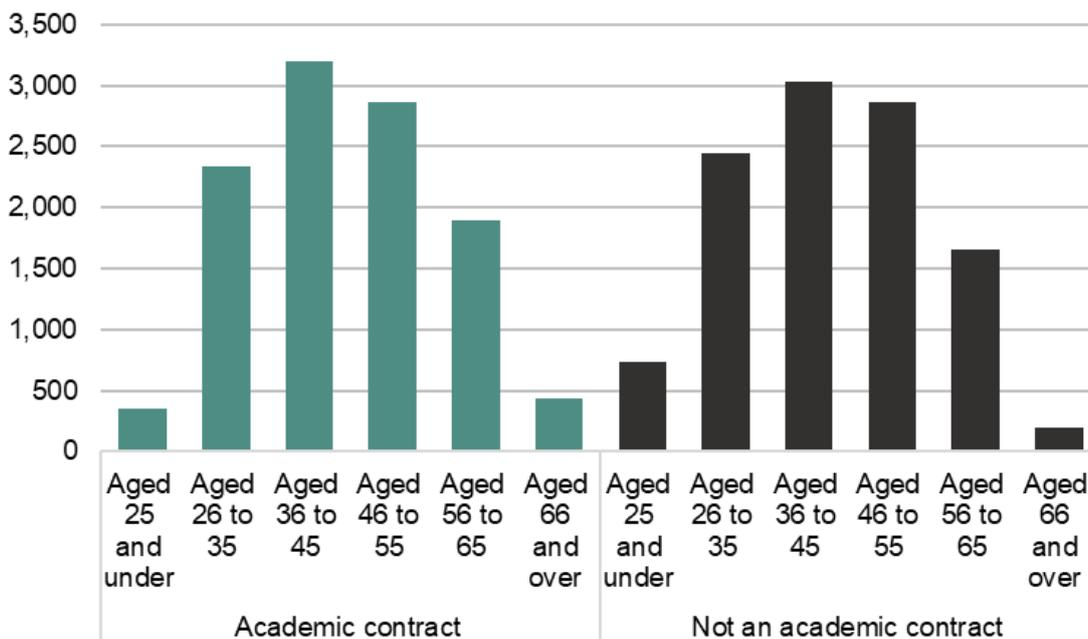
Almost all age groups saw a slight drop in the number of staff in the academic year 2024/25. The aged 26 to 35, aged 56 to 65 and aged 66 and over categories saw the largest relative declines between 2023/24 and 2024/25; the first two categories falling by 5.0% while the latter fell by 5.1%. This was closely followed by the aged 25 and under category, which saw a decline of 4.6%.

The aged 46 to 55 group was the only category which increased: its numbers increased by 0.3% between 2023/24 and 2024/25.

The aged 36 to 45 category continued to be the largest age group in 2024/25, accounting for 28.3% of the total Welsh HE staff population. The smallest age groups were the aged 25 and under and aged 66 and over categories, accounting for 4.9% and 2.9% of staff for 2024/25 respectively.

The age distribution of academic and non-academic staff is broadly similar, except for those aged under 25 and over 66

Chart 12: Staff in Wales by contract type and age group, 2024/25 (excludes atypical contract)



Data in Table 6 of the accompanying spreadsheet. Further historical data can also be found in this table.

Chart 12 only shows data for 2024/25 to improve readability as the distribution has remained broadly stable each year between 2020/21 and 2024/25, with only small year-to-year fluctuations. Data for earlier years can be found in Table 6 of the accompanying workbook.

The age distribution of academic and non-academic staff was broadly similar in 2024/25. Notable differences only occurred at the extreme ends of the age groupings: those under 25 accounted for 6.7% of non-academic contracts compared to 3.2% of academic contracts in 2024/25. The opposite was true for those aged 66 and over, who accounted for 3.9% of all staff with academic contracts and 1.8% of all staff with non-academic contracts in 2024/25.

The 26 to 35 age group comprised 21.1% of academic staff and 22.3% of non-academic staff. The largest share came from those aged 36 to 45, at 28.9% and 27.8%, respectively. Staff aged 46 to 55 accounted for around a quarter of both groups (25.9% of academic and 26.2% of non-academic staff), while the 56 to 65 group made up 17.0% and 15.1%, respectively.

Data

The data for the charts in this report can be found in the accompanying spreadsheet on medr.cymru.

The data, including more detailed breakdowns such as provider level information for Welsh HE providers, can be found on StatsWales:

- [Higher education staff in Wales by personal characteristics and standard occupational classification](#);
- [Higher education staff in Wales by cost centre, whether contracted to teach and nationality](#).

Additional data can be found on the HESA [Open Data](#) website.

Quality and methodology information

Data source and coverage

The source of the data in this publication is the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Staff record.

The HESA Staff record provides data in respect of the characteristics of staff employed under a contract of employment at a reporting HE institutions in the UK. For Wales, this includes all publicly funded HE institutions.

Figures for the University of Wales Trinity Saint David include the University of Wales. In August 2017, the University of Wales and the University of Wales Trinity Saint David approved a deed of union.

The population used is the HESA staff contract population which includes members of staff who had an active contract on 1 December in the relevant academic year, excluding staff on atypical contracts. Staff are counted as a full-person equivalent, meaning that each member of staff is only counted once even if they have more than one contract. See the definition for [full-person equivalent](#) for more detail.

Definitions

Academic year

An academic year is from 1 August to 31 July, so 2024/25 is 1 August 2024 to 31 July 2025.

Age

Age as at 31 August in the reporting year, e.g. 31 August 2024 for 2024/25.

Atypical staff

Staff on atypical contracts are excluded from the figures. Atypical staff are those whose contracts involve working arrangements that are not permanent, involve complex employment relationships and/or involve work away from the supervision of the normal work provider.

Contract type

Academic contract staff are defined as professionals holding a contract for planning, directing and undertaking academic teaching and research within HE institutions. Examples of such contracts include those for vice-chancellors, medical practitioners, dentists, veterinarians and other health care professionals who undertake lecturing or research activities.

Non-academic contract staff are defined as members of staff who are not holders of an academic contract, including managers, non-academic professionals, student welfare workers, secretaries, caretakers and cleaners.

Disability

Disability information is collected based on a staff member's self-assessment and they are not obliged to report any disabilities they have.

Ethnicity

Ethnicity information is collected based on a staff member's self-assessment and they are not obliged to report their ethnicity.

Full-person equivalent

Individuals can hold more than one contract with a provider and each contract may involve more than one activity. In analyses staff counts have been divided amongst the activities in proportion to the declared full-time equivalent for each activity. This results in counts of full person equivalents (FPE). Staff FPE counts are calculated on the basis of contract activities that were active on 1 December of the reporting period.

For example, if a member of staff has an academic contract to work 3 days a week and a non-academic contract to work 1 day a week would be counted as 0.75 members of staff with an academic contract and 0.25 members of staff with a non-academic contract.

Sex

This is the sex of the member of staff, as opposed to the gender with which they identify.

From 2022/23, additional guidance was included to providers to say sex should be based on what is recorded in the person's legal documents such as their birth certificate, Gender Recognition Certificate, or passport. The Other category should only be used only for a third sex that is legally recognised by another country. Options to return staff as 'Information refused' or 'Not available' were also introduced in 2022/23.

Prior to 2022/23 the sex field was based on a person's choice of sex and the Other category included those whose sex aligns with terms such as intersex, androgyne, intergender, ambigender, gender fluid, polygender and gender queer.

Rounding

Figures are rounded to the nearest 5. Totals are calculated on unrounded figures and then rounded to the nearest 5 so may not equal the sum of the constituent parts.

Percentages are calculated using the unrounded figures. This may mean the percentages may not match what would be calculated using rounded figures.

Statement of compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics

Our statistical practice is regulated by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR). OSR sets the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#) that all producers of official statistics should adhere to.

All of our statistics are produced and published in accordance with a number of statements and protocols to enhance trustworthiness, quality and value. These are set out in Medr's [Statement of Compliance](#) with the Code of Practice for Statistics.

These official statistics demonstrate the standards expected around trustworthiness, quality and value in the following ways.

Trustworthiness

These statistics have been published according to Medr's [Statement of Compliance](#) and [pre-release access to official statistics policy](#).

Quality

The data source is the HESA Staff Record which collects data from higher education providers across the UK.

When the data is submitted it is checked against various quality rules with further quality checks undertaken by analysts at HESA and Medr.

Value

These statistics provide information on the staff working at higher education institutions in Wales, and makes it easier for users to find information specifically about staff at Welsh providers.

Related statistics

Links to previous releases in this series can be found on gov.wales.

Information about the Welsh teaching ability of staff at higher education institutions in Wales is included in Medr's [Welsh Language in Higher Education](#) publication. Data from the 2024/25 academic year will be published in the summer of 2026.

The Education Workforce Council (EWC) publish statistics about staff in the:

- Maintained school sector
- Further education sector
- Adult learning sector
- Qualified youth sector
- Independent sector

These can be found on the [EWC website](#).

Contact information

We welcome any feedback on any aspect of these statistics.

Feedback, questions, and requests for further data can be directed by email to:
hestats@medr.cymru

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