

Medr statistics

Race equality monitoring measures for higher education: August 2016 to July 2025

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Summary: This publication is based on data published by UCAS and collected by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), providing a specific focus on the ethnic backgrounds of those applying to higher education providers in Wales, studying at higher education providers in Wales and staff working at universities in Wales.

Theme: Higher Education

Source: UCAS end of cycle data and Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Student and Staff records

Contents

Main points	2
Introduction	1
Students – UCAS Data	2
Students – Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Data	10
Staff	15
Definitions and glossary	28
Data sources and methodology	30
Rounding	31
Key Quality Information	31
Related statistics	33
Contact information	35

Main points

Applicants, applications and offer rates

- The proportions of UK-domiciled UCAS [applicants](#) and [applications](#) to full-time undergraduate courses at Welsh Higher Education (HE) providers who were from an [ethnic minority background](#) have overall increased from 2016 to 2025. This was true for all of the ethnic minority background groups used in this report (Asian, Black, Mixed and Other).
- The percentage of applicants being made an [offer](#) has been consistently higher for those from a White or Mixed ethnic background than those from an Asian, Black or Other ethnic background. This was true for 18 year old applicants and applicants of all ages.
- The proportion of applicants who were [placed for entry](#) into higher education (accepted onto a course) who were from ethnic minority backgrounds has overall increased from 2016 to 2025.

Students

- The proportion of undergraduate [entrants](#) from ethnic minority backgrounds [domiciled](#) in the UK at Welsh HE providers has increased from 10.3% in 2016/17 to 19.8% in 2024/25. There is a general trend of an increasing proportion of entrants being from each of the Asian, Black, Mixed and Other ethnic background groupings, with the largest increases being amongst those from an Asian ethnic background.
- Between 2016/17 and 2024/25, students from a White ethnic background have consistently been more likely to be awarded a first class honours degree than students from any other ethnic background.
- Students from a Black ethnic background have consistently been more likely to be awarded a lower second class or third class degree than students from other ethnic backgrounds.

Staff

- The proportion of staff, academic and non-academic, from ethnic minority backgrounds has increased from 2016/17 to 2024/25. The largest increases have been amongst staff from Asian ethnic backgrounds.
- Academic staff from a White ethnic background have consistently been more likely to be on [permanent terms of employment](#) than staff from any other ethnic backgrounds.
- For non-academic staff, those from a White ethnic background have also been most likely to be on permanent terms of employment. However, in 2024/25 there was a rise in the proportions of staff from Other and Mixed ethnic backgrounds on permanent terms of employment and a decrease in the proportion from a White ethnic background, lessening the disparity.

- [Academic staff](#) from Black ethnic backgrounds have been more likely to be employed at a middle or lower grade compared to staff from other ethnic backgrounds. A higher proportion of academic staff from the White and Other ethnic background groupings were employed in the higher grades, compared to the other ethnic background groupings.
- Disparities between ethnic backgrounds in the proportion of [non-academic staff](#) employed at each grade have narrowed between 2016/17 and 2024/25.

Governors

- Although the number of governors in the Welsh higher education sector is low, the proportion who were from ethnic minority backgrounds increased from 3.0% in 2017/18 to 16.0% in 2024/25.

Introduction

This release contains information by ethnic background about:

- those applying to higher education via UCAS;
- the numbers of students at higher education providers in Wales, their retention rates and their degree outcomes;
- the numbers of staff at universities in Wales and their terms of employment.

This report is accompanied by a spreadsheet containing the full data that is described in this report, which can be found on the Medr website.

The measures were first published by HEFCW to meet an action in the Welsh Government's [Anti-racist Wales Action Plan: 2022](#). Publishing this updated version of the measures provides up-to-date information that can contribute to monitoring the progress of this plan.

Medr uses the data to inform our Strategic Equality Plan and as part of our monitoring for regulatory and funding purposes. Data and evidence inform our policy developments and contribute to our assessment of our contribution to the Welsh Government's Anti-racist Wales Action Plan. As Medr develops its regulatory and funding processes, we may use the data to inform our understanding of equality of opportunity, staff and student welfare, the learner experience, and performance and risk.

The measures also contribute to monitoring the goals of the [Well-being of Future Generations Act](#), and also to Medr's duties from the Tertiary Education and Research (Wales) Act (2022) and the Equality Act (2010).

Students – UCAS Data

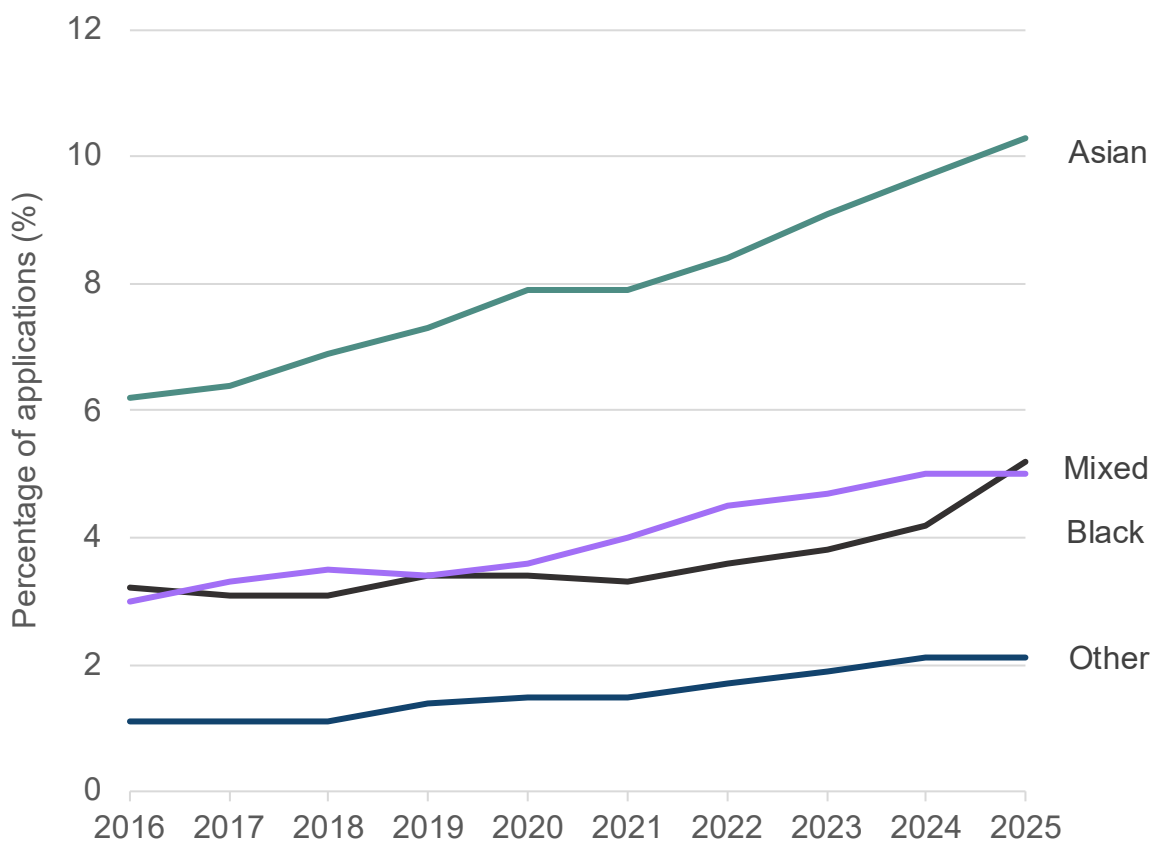
This section contains data published by UCAS about applicants and applications to full-time undergraduate higher education courses at Welsh providers in their [end of 2025 cycle data](#). The number of applications an applicant makes may vary, and not all of an applicant's applications are necessarily to Welsh HE providers.

UCAS is not a producer of Official Statistics; therefore, these data are not classified as Official Statistics. However, UCAS is a voluntary adopter of the Code of Practice for Statistics, which provides assurance that the data is of high quality and is trustworthy.

Applications

Applicants from an Asian ethnic background have accounted for a growing share of applications

Chart 1: Percentages of UCAS applications to full-time undergraduate courses at Welsh HE providers from UK-domiciled applicants from ethnic minority backgrounds, 2016 to 2025



Description: The proportion of UCAS applications made by applicants from each ethnic minority background group increased overall between 2016 and 2025.

Data in Table 1.1 of the accompanying workbook

For applications to higher education in Wales, both the number and the proportion of applications from applicants from each ethnic minority background group has increased in most years from 2016 to 2025.

The number of applications by applicants from a White ethnic background has fluctuated, while the proportion of applications has fallen each year (with the exception of a 0.1 percentage point increase between 2018 and 2019). From 2016 to 2025, the proportion of applications made by this group fell from 86.5% to 77.4% (or from 79,935 applications to 76,370). The number of applications made by this group in 2025 was the lowest recorded since 2020.

Applications from those with an Asian ethnic background has seen the largest increase in number and proportion of all applications since 2016. The number of applications from applicants from an Asian ethnic background rose from 5,735 in 2016 to 10,205 in 2025, and went from accounting for 6.2% of applications where the applicant's ethnic background was known, to 10.3%.

In 2025, applications from those with a Black ethnic background accounted for 5.2% of all applications where ethnic background was known. Notably, in 2025, the proportion of applications made by applicants from a Black ethnic background increased by 1.0 percentage point from 2024. This was the highest annual percentage point increase in share of applications observed for any ethnic group, for all the years shown.

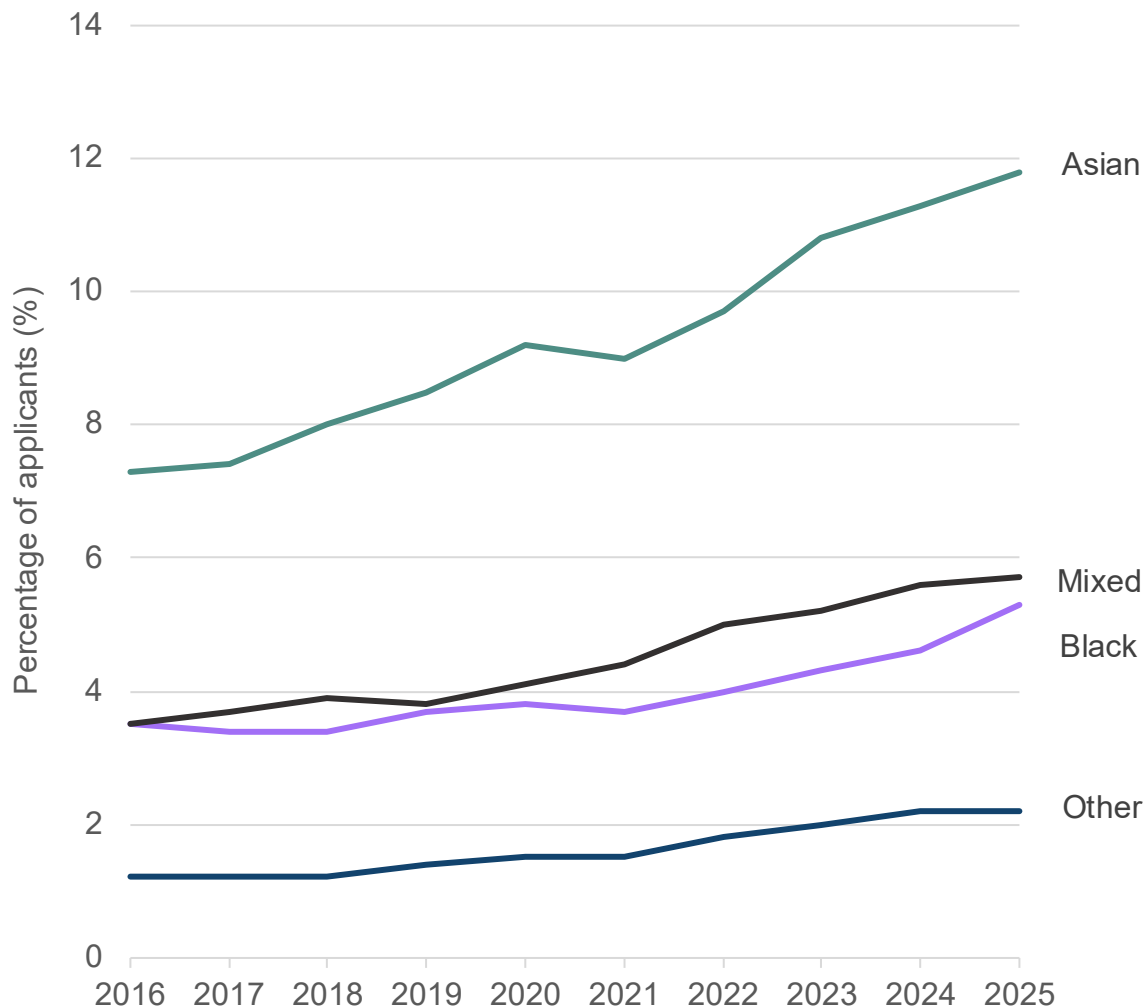
Between 2016 and 2025, the proportion of applications made by applicants from Black ethnic backgrounds and applicants from Mixed ethnic backgrounds have each increased by 2.0 percentage points. For applicants from a Black ethnic background, the number of applications increased from 2,975 to 5,105. For applicants from a Mixed ethnic background, applications went up from 2,780 to 4,970.

The proportion of applications by applicants from an Other ethnic background has gradually increased over time, from 1.1% in 2016 to 2.1% in 2025. There were 2,065 applications from this applicant group in 2025; in 2016, there were 1,020 applications.

Applicants

In 2025 the proportion of applicants from each ethnic minority background increased, except for those from an Other ethnic background

Chart 2: Percentages of UK-domiciled UCAS applicants to full-time undergraduate courses at Welsh HE providers from ethnic minority backgrounds, 2016 to 2025



Description: The proportion of UCAS applicants from each ethnic minority background group increased overall between 2016 and 2025.

Data in Table 1.2 of the accompanying workbook

The trend amongst applicants was the same as for applications, with the overall number and proportion of applicants from each ethnic background increasing between 2016 and 2025.

Again, the largest increases in numbers and proportion were amongst those with an Asian ethnic background (increasing from 4,720 to 8,065, and 7.3% to 11.8%) followed by those from a Mixed ethnic background (increasing from 2,260 to 3,875, and 3.5% to 5.7%).

One factor related to the increase in applicants and applications from those with ethnic minority backgrounds is an increasing proportion of applicants to Welsh HE providers

being English domiciled. As the population of England has a higher proportion from ethnic minority backgrounds than Wales, this change in where applicants are domiciled is also likely to be seen in the changes in proportions from the different ethnic backgrounds. In 2016, 69.1% of UK-domiciled applicants to Welsh HE providers were domiciled in England (55.2% of applications); by 2025, this had increased to 74.2% of UK-domiciled applicants (60.9% of applications).

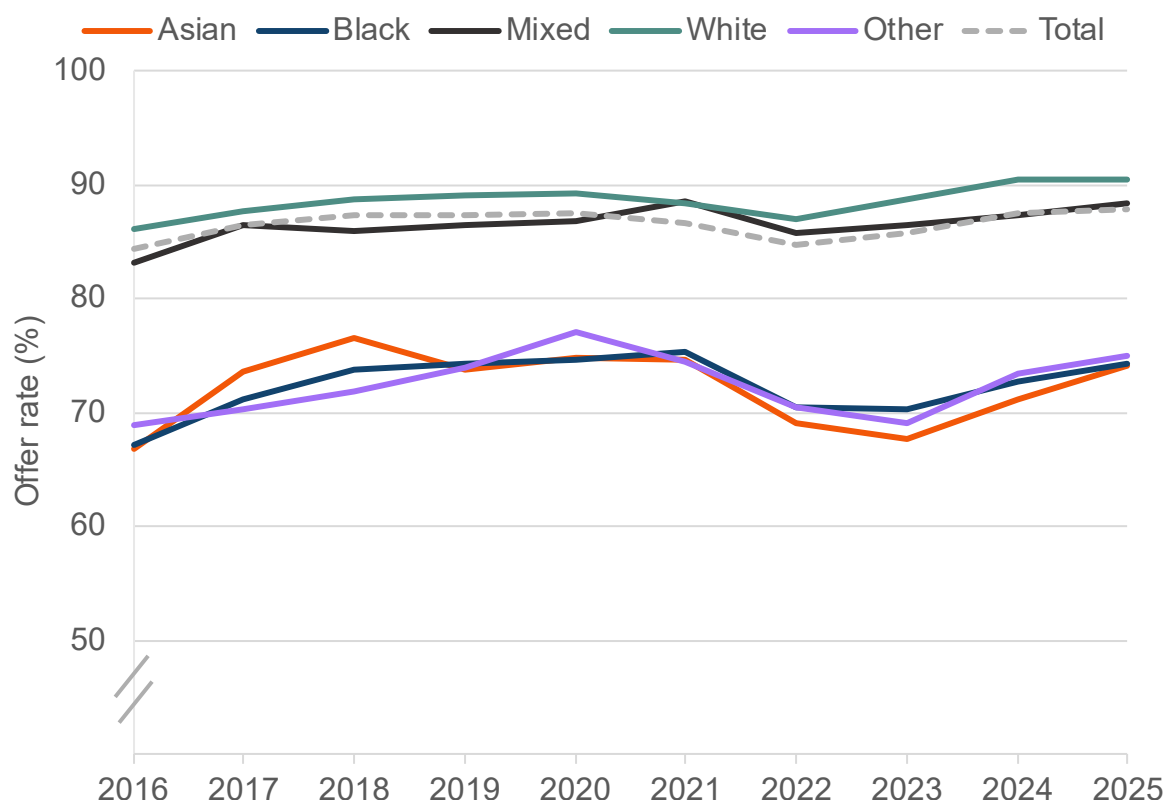
Offer rates

The percentage of applications receiving an offer, known as the offer rate, has been considerably lower for applicants from an Asian, Black, or Other ethnic background than the overall offer rate for all applicants each year from 2016 to 2025. This was true whether looking at the offer rate for 18 year old applicants, or applicants of all ages. However, this offer rate does not account for whether applicants with different ethnic backgrounds are applying to different types of courses or if predicted grades amongst applicants differs by ethnic background, which would affect the offer rate.

The offer rates have fluctuated throughout the years from 2016 to 2025, however there are some persistent trends:

The total offer rate for 18 year olds has increased overall but applicants from Asian, Black and Other backgrounds continued to have considerably lower offer rates

Chart 3: Offer rate for 18 year old UK-domiciled UCAS applicants to full-time undergraduate courses at Welsh HE providers by ethnic background, 2016 to 2025



Description: The total 18 year old offer rate for all ethnic groups has remained fairly stable since 2016, while offer rates for applicants from Asian, Black and Other backgrounds have fluctuated

Data in Table 1.3 of the accompanying workbook

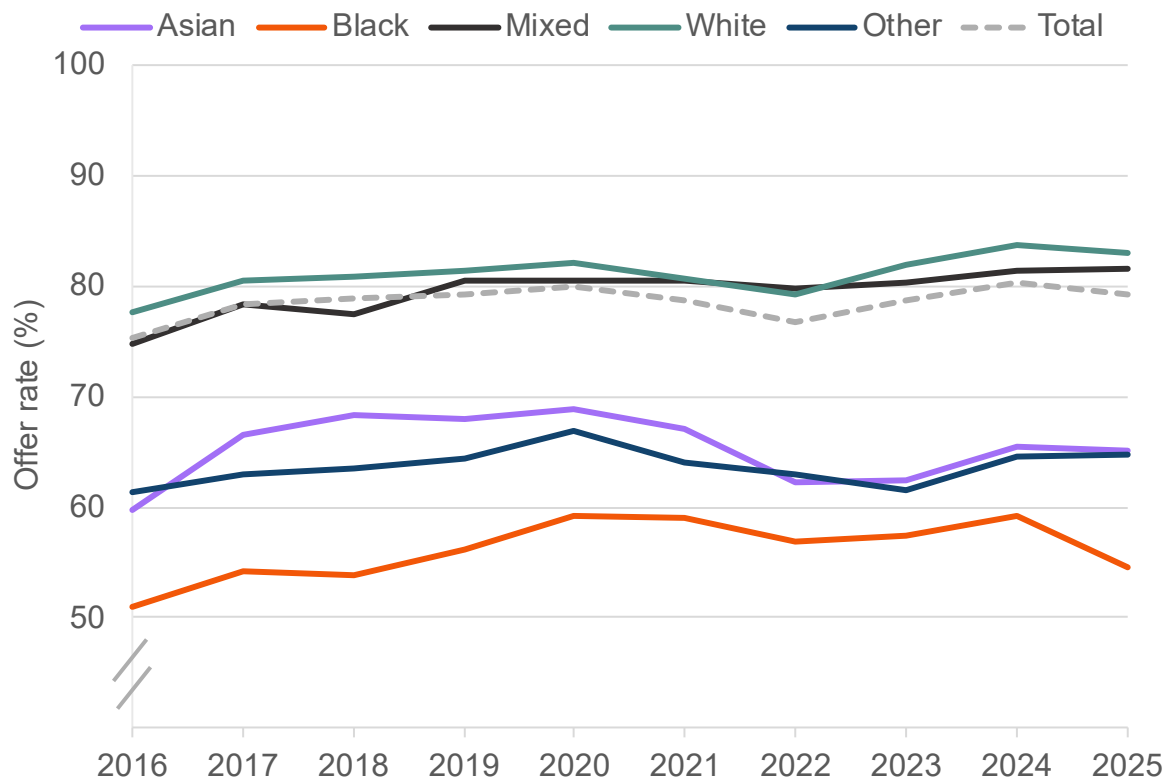
In 2025, the total offer rate for 18 year old applicants was 87.9%. The offer rates for applicants from a White ethnic background and applicants from a Mixed ethnic background (90.5% and 88.3% respectively) were the highest offer rates.

Amongst 18 year old applicants, those with an Asian ethnic background have had the lowest offer rate since 2022. In 2025, the offer rate for this group was 13.8 percentage points below the offer rate for all applications (74.1%).

The offer rates for 18 year olds with a Black ethnic background (74.3%) and Other ethnic background (74.9%) were 13.6 and 13.0 percentage points lower than the offer rate for all applications in 2025.

Ethnic differences in offer rates were consistently larger among applicants of all ages than among 18-year-old applicants

Chart 4: Offer rate for UK-domiciled UCAS applicants of all ages to full-time undergraduate courses at Welsh HE providers by ethnic background, 2016 to 2025



Description: The total offer rate for all ages in 2025 was 79.2% in 2025 and has increased since 2016, when it was 75.3%.

Data in Table 1.3 of the accompanying workbook

The offer rates for all ages were lower than the offer rates for 18 year olds across all ethnic backgrounds. with the largest difference amongst those from a Black ethnic background (74.3% versus 54.6%).

Once again, the offer rates for applicants from a White ethnic background or a Mixed ethnic background (83.0% and 81.6% respectively) were higher than the total offer rate (79.2%).

The offer rate for applicants with a Black ethnic background was lower than for any other ethnic background in every year. Between 2016 and 2024, the offer rate for applicants

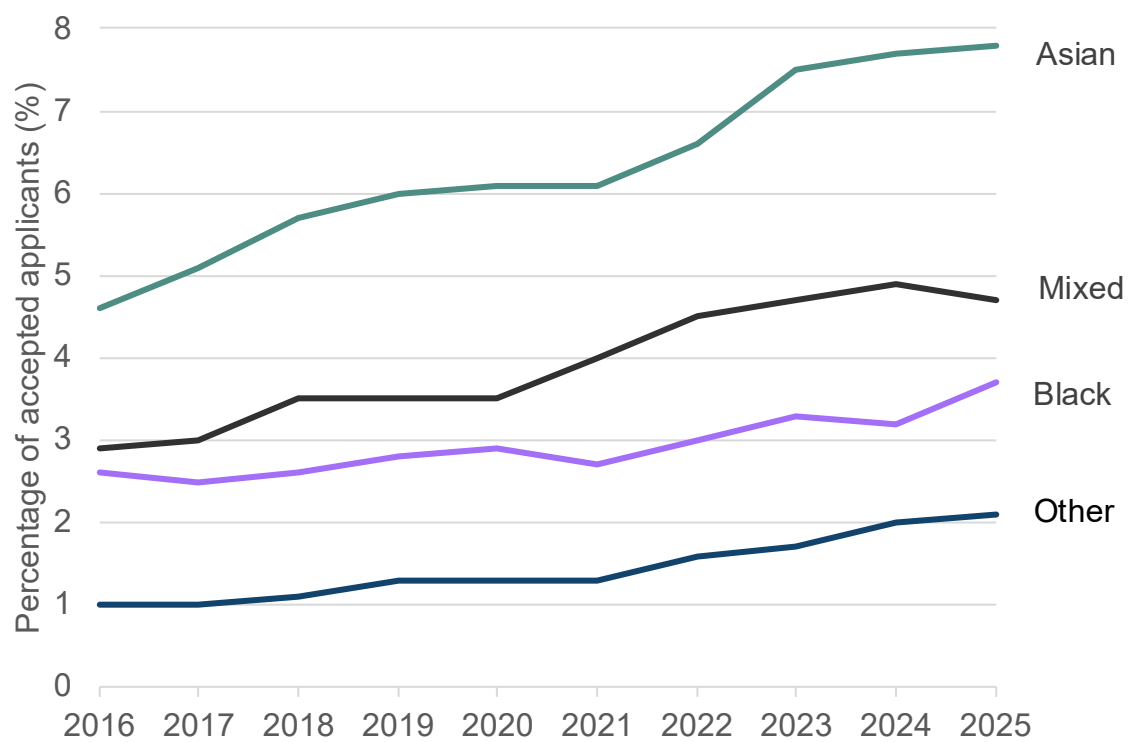
with a Black ethnic background had increased more than any other group, increasing by 8.2 percentage points from 51.0% to 59.2%. However, in 2025 the offer rate for this group dropped back to 54.6% - the lowest that it has been since 2018.

The offer rates for applicants from an Asian ethnic background (65.1%) and applicants from an Other ethnic background (64.7%) were very similar to each other in 2025 and have been similar since 2022.

Accepted applicants

The proportion of accepted applicants from an ethnic minority background has increased since 2016.

Chart 5: Percentages of accepted UK-domiciled UCAS applicants to full-time undergraduate courses at Welsh HE providers from ethnic minority backgrounds, 2016 to 2025



Description: Applicants from an Asian ethnic background have consistently made up for the highest proportion of accepted applicants for any ethnic minority background. The total acceptance rate for applicants from ethnic minority backgrounds was 18.3% in 2025.

Data in Table 1.4 of the accompanying workbook

An accepted applicant is an applicant who has been placed for entry into higher education.

The number and the proportion of accepted applicants from ethnic minority backgrounds has fluctuated but overall increased steadily between 2016 to 2025. In contrast, the proportion of accepted applicants from a White ethnic background has steadily declined since 2016, from 88.9% to 81.7% of accepted applicants with a known ethnic

background. The number of applicants in this group fell between 2016 and 2019, then rose until 2021, before falling every year since.

Applicants from an Asian ethnic background have consistently accounted for the highest proportion of accepted applicants from ethnic minority backgrounds where ethnic background is known; in 2025, this was 7.8%. The second highest proportion of accepted applicants were those from a Mixed ethnic background (4.7%), followed by applicants from a Black ethnic background (3.7%), then applicants from an Other ethnic background (2.1%).

The number and proportion increased most between 2016 and 2025 amongst applicants with an Asian ethnic background (from 1,065 to 1,700, or by 3.2 percentage points) followed by those with a Mixed ethnic background (from 675 to 1,025, or by 1.8 percentage points).

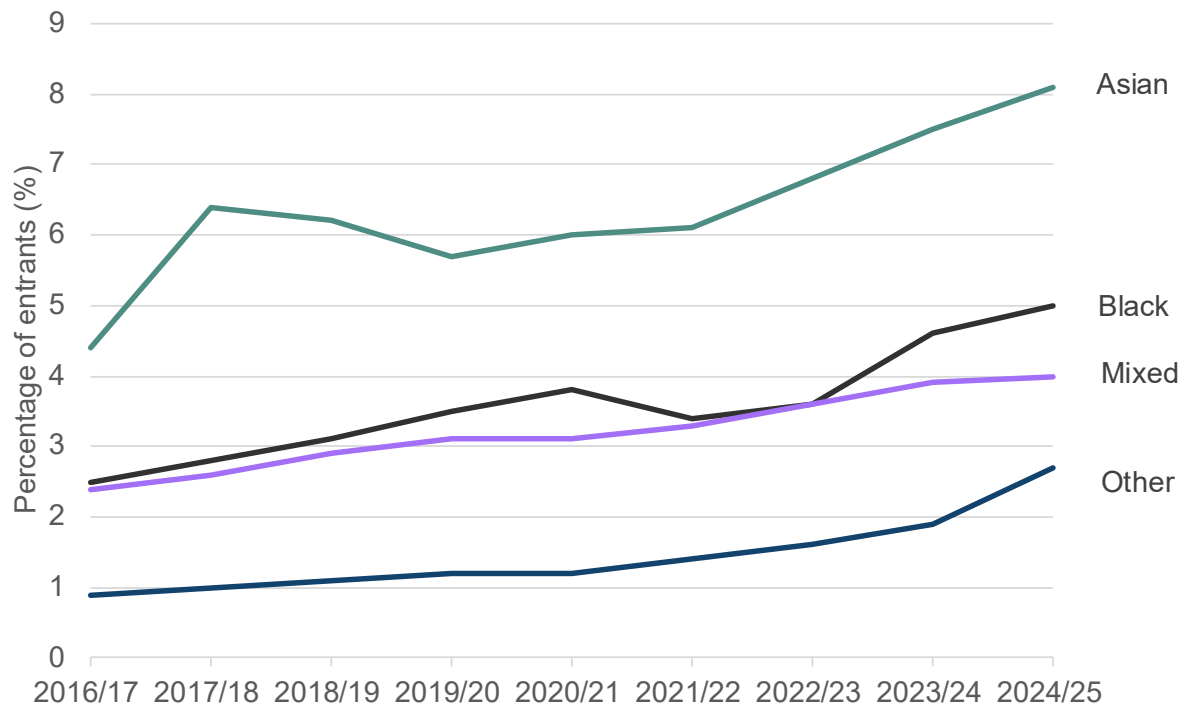
Students – Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Data

The data about students who are studying at higher education providers in Wales comes from the HESA student record and is published by HESA as official statistics.

Entrants

Nearly 1 in 5 of all entrants into Welsh higher education were from an ethnic minority background in 2024/25

Chart 6: Percentage of UK-domiciled entrants to undergraduate courses at Welsh providers from ethnic minority backgrounds, 2016/17 to 2024/25



Description: Entrants from an Asian ethnic background have consistently accounted for the highest proportion of entrants from any ethnic minority background.

Data in Table 1.5 of the accompanying workbook

The number and proportion of entrants who are from ethnic minority backgrounds to higher education at providers in Wales have overall increased from 2016/17 to 2024/25. The proportion of entrants from ethnic minority backgrounds has increased from 10.3% in 2016/17 to 19.8% in 2024/25.

The largest increases in the number of entrants and the proportion of all entrants were seen amongst entrants with an Asian ethnic background. The number of entrants with an Asian ethnic background went from 1,665 in 2016/17 to 3,335 in 2024/25. As a proportion of all entrants where ethnic background was known, entrants with an Asian ethnic background accounted for 4.4% of entrants in 2016/17 and 8.1% of entrants in 2024/25.

The second largest increase was amongst entrants with a Black ethnic background. There were 955 entrants with a Black ethnic background in 2016/17, compared to 2,030 in 2024/25. As a proportion of all entrants with a known ethnic background, entrants with

a Black ethnic background doubled from 2.5% in 2016/17 of all entrants to 5.0% in 2024/25.

Retention

The first release of Race Equality Monitoring measures included a measure of retention of undergraduate students. This measure used UK Higher Education Performance Indicators which were produced by HESA. HESA discontinued the UKPIs following the publication of the 2020/21 indicators.

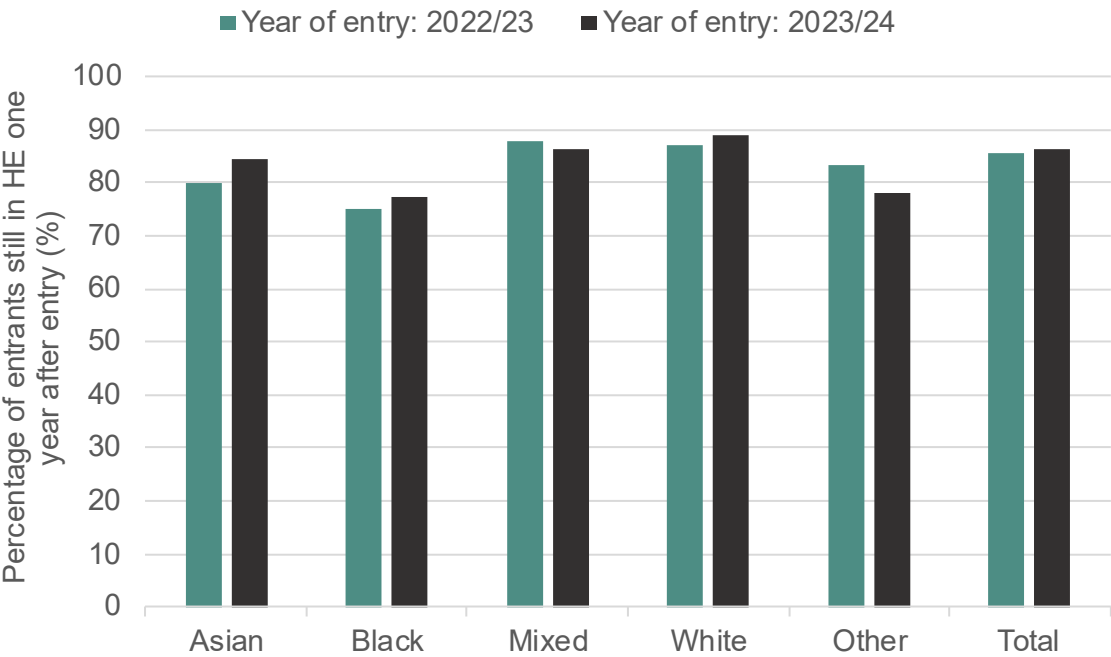
From 2022/23 onwards, HESA have continued to derive non-continuation data from HESA student record data, using a methodology based on the UKPIs approach originally owned by HEFCE (now the Office for Students). This approach is implemented within the newer Data Futures framework and uses a process of fuzzy matching to track students between academic years.

To ensure a consistent basis for comparison, only data from 2022/23 onwards which use HESA's Data Futures-derived continuation fields have been included in this publication.

For further information about the non-continuation data methodology, please refer to the [Data sources and methodology](#) section.

The proportion of entrants retained increased between 2022/23 and 2023/24 for entrants from Asian, Black and White ethnic backgrounds.

Chart 7: Percentage of full-time entrants to undergraduate courses at Welsh providers who remained in HE one year after entry, by ethnic background



Description: The retention rate for all 2023/24 entrants was at least 77.2% or above across known ethnic groups. Most ethnic groups saw an increase from the rates for 2022/23 entrants, except for those from a Mixed or Other background.

The proportion of 2023/24 entrants who were still in higher education a year after entry varied between 77.2% (entrants from a Black ethnic background) and 89.1% (entrants from a White ethnic background). Entrants from White and Mixed ethnic backgrounds saw the highest retention rates for both the years shown.

Most ethnic groups saw an improvement in their retention rates compared to 2022/23; there was a 4.6 percentage point increase in the proportion of entrants from an Asian background retained and a 2.1 percentage point increase in the proportion of entrants from a Black background retained.

However, there was still a notable percentage point difference between the retention rates for these groups and the total retention rate (including those with an unknown ethnicity) of 86.2% in 2023/24. The retention rate for 2023/24 entrants from a Black ethnic background was 9.0 percentage points lower than the total retention rate, while the retention rate for entrants from an Asian ethnic background was 1.7 percentage points lower.

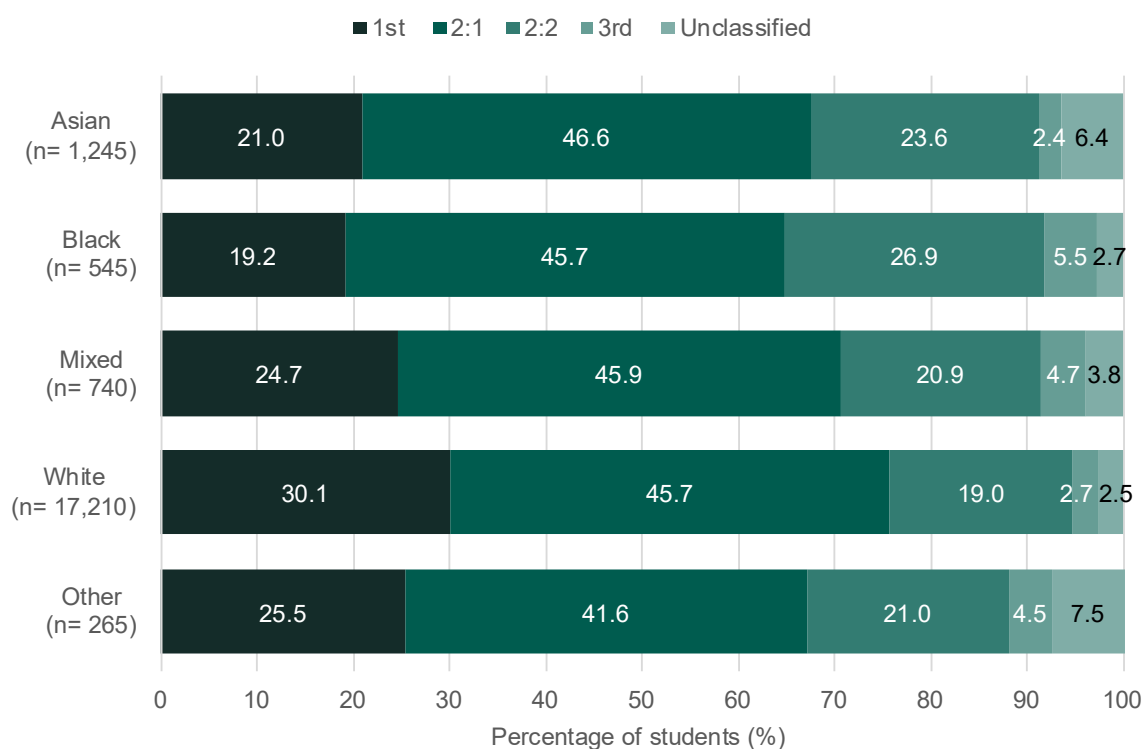
Degree classifications

This section looks at the degree classifications awarded to UK-domiciled students who were awarded a first degree by a Welsh provider. This includes those which are recorded as unclassified as certain qualifications are not subject to classification of award at first degree level. This includes medical degrees, general degrees and aegrotat qualifications.

Students with an unknown degree classification have been excluded from this analysis.

A higher proportion of students from a White ethnic background achieved a First class degree than students from ethnic minority backgrounds

Chart 8: Degree classifications for UK-domiciled students awarded a first degree at Welsh HE providers by ethnic background, 2024/25 Description: The majority of students in every ethnic



group achieved a 2:1 (ranging from 41.6% to 46.6%).

Data in Table 1.7 of the accompanying workbook

First class degree classification

Compared to 2023/24, the proportions of students were awarded a First class degree have increased for every ethnic background.

However, a higher proportion of graduates from a White ethnic background have been awarded a First class degree than graduates from any other ethnic background in every year from 2016/17 to 2024/25. In 2024/25, 30.1% of graduates with a White ethnic background received a first class degree.

In comparison, graduates from a Black ethnic background were awarded the lowest proportion of first class degrees in every year from 2016/17 to 2024/25. However, the proportion has increased since 2023/24, from 14.6% to 19.2%.

Upper second class degree classification

The proportion of students who achieved an upper second class degree was similar for most ethnic background groups. The proportions of students awarded an upper second class degree ranged from 45.7 % to 46.6% among Asian, Black, Mixed and White ethnic groups. Students from an Asian ethnic background achieved the highest proportion of upper second class degrees (46.6%).

By comparison, 41.6% of students from an Other ethnic background were awarded an upper second class degree, which was the lowest of any ethnic group.

Lower second class degree classification

There continued to be variation in the proportion of graduates who were awarded a lower second class degree, with students from Black, Asian and Other ethnic backgrounds historically receiving higher proportions of lower second class degrees. However, these proportions have declined. In 2016/17, 31.6% of students from a Black background, 28.0% of students from an Asian background and 27.6% from an Other background were awarded a lower second class degree. By 2024/25, these proportions were 26.1, 23.2% and 20.6% respectively.

Meanwhile, for students from Mixed and White ethnic backgrounds, 20.5% and 18.7% were awarded lower second class degrees respectively in 2024/25.

Third class degree classifications

A higher proportion of graduates with a Black ethnic background have been awarded third class degrees than graduates with any other ethnic background since 2016/17. However, once again, the gap between the proportions of students from a Black ethnic background versus other ethnic backgrounds who were awarded a third class degree qualification has been closing. In 2016/17, 10.0% of all degrees awarded to graduates from a Black ethnic background were third class degrees but by 2024/25, this was 5.5%.

In 2024/25, the proportion of third class degrees awarded to the other ethnic background groups were all between 2.4% and 4.7%.

Unclassified degrees

Graduates from an Other ethnic background received the highest proportion of unclassified degrees (7.5%), followed by graduates from an Asian ethnic background (6.4%).

Staff

The data about staff comes from the HESA Staff record and is published as Official Statistics. This section only includes Welsh universities as the HESA Staff record doesn't collect information from other higher education providers. Staff at the Open University are also not included as the Open University data in the Staff record covers staff across the whole of the UK and cannot be split into the UK nations.

Staff are grouped into academic and non-academic staff, not including those who are on an atypical contract. Atypical staff are those members of staff 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. Data for academic staff on atypical contracts has not been included in this analysis due to the high proportion of staff with unknown ethnic background in the HESA Staff record. We will continue to monitor this group of staff and will consider whether they can be included in this analysis in the future.

Ethnic background is returned on the HESA Staff record for all nationalities. This differs to the HESA Student Record where ethnic background is only returned for UK domiciled students. Non-academic staff are more likely to be a UK national than academic staff, which will have an impact on the diversity of ethnic backgrounds between the different staff types.

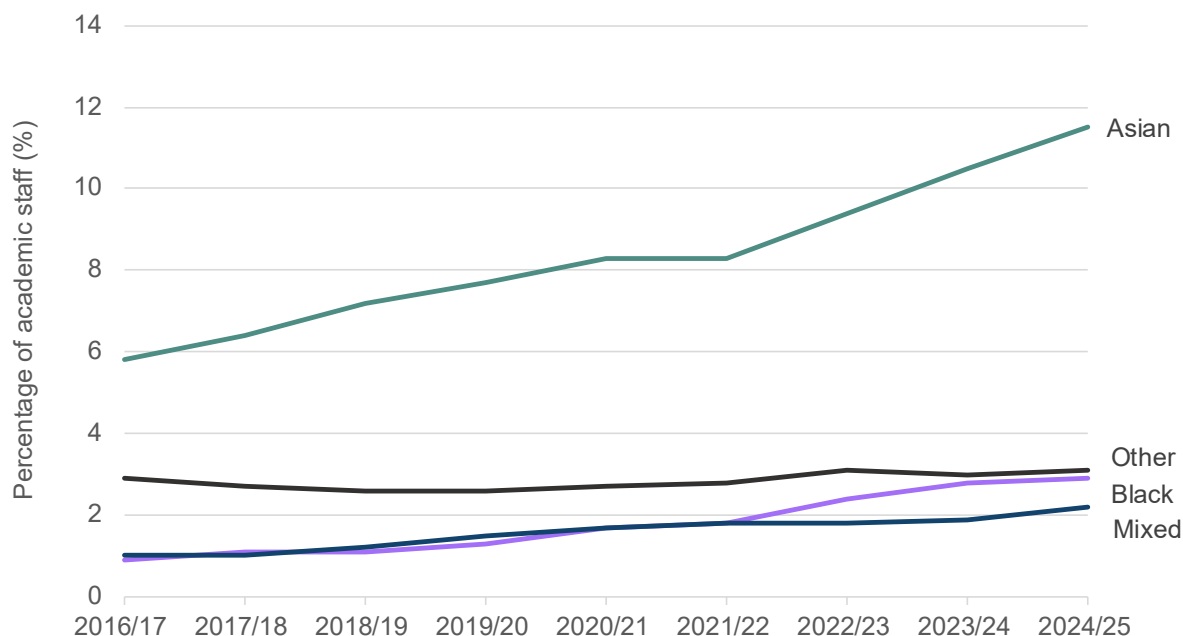
Amongst academic staff, the proportion of staff with an unknown ethnic background in the HESA Staff record has increased from 5.3% in 2016/17 to 11.3% in 2024/25. Ethnic background could be unknown if the staff member does not know their ethnicity, refuses to provide the information or the university does not know the information. For non-academic staff, the level of unknown ethnic backgrounds has been more stable and in 2024/25, 3.5% of non-academic staff were recorded as having an unknown ethnic background in the HESA Staff record. The proportions in this section for the number of staff with each ethnic background have been calculated excluding those with an unknown ethnic background.

Numbers of staff

Academic staff

The proportion of academic staff from an Asian ethnic background has notably increased since 2021/22

Chart 9: Percentage of academic staff (excluding atypical) at Welsh universities from ethnic minority backgrounds, 2016/17 to 2024/25



Description: Staff from an Asian background accounted for 11.5% of all academic staff in 2024/25, which was markedly higher than the proportions for other ethnic minority groups.

Data in Table 1.8 of the accompanying workbook

Between 2016/17 and 2024/25, the number and proportion of academic staff from ethnic minority backgrounds have overall increased. Both of these measures have been increasing annually amongst staff with Asian, Black and Mixed ethnic backgrounds, while the Other ethnic background group has remained fairly stable in number and proportion. The proportion of academic staff with any ethnic minority background has increased from 10.7% in 2016/17 to 19.6% in 2024/25.

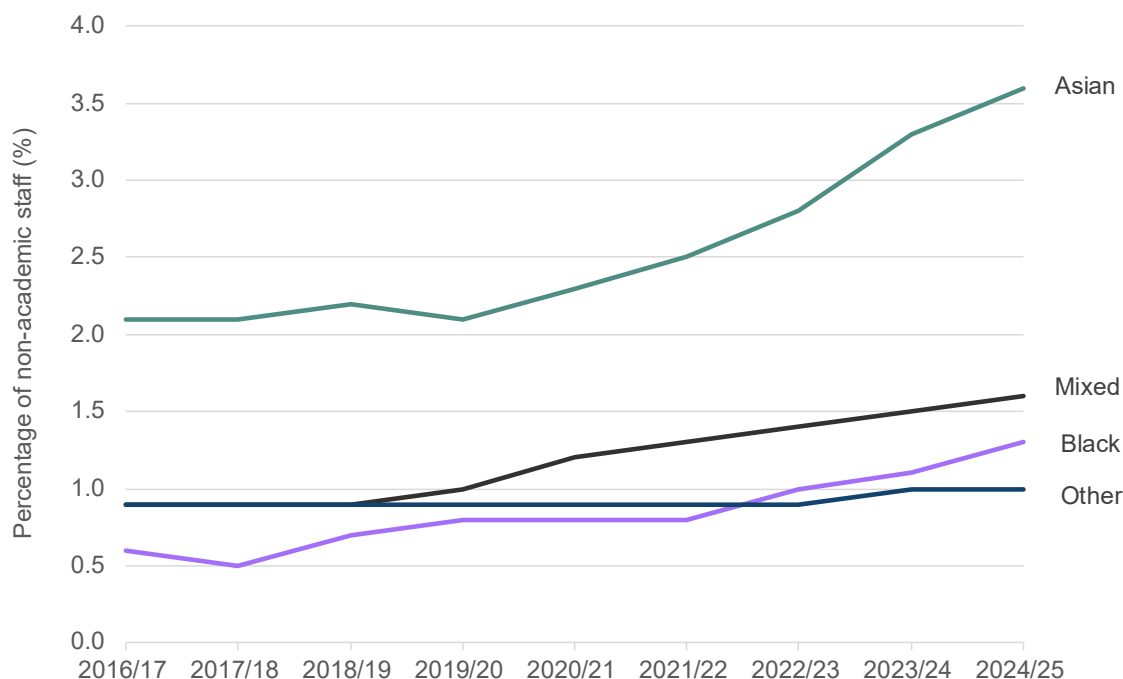
Staff from an Asian ethnic background increased the most during this period in number and proportion, going from 560 to 1,130, or from 5.8% to 11.5% of all academic staff with a known ethnic background.

In contrast, the number of academic staff from a White ethnic background has fallen for most years during this period (except for 2022/23 to 2023/24, when it temporarily rose to 8,110 for both years). It has since fallen to 7,910 in 2024/25. Despite the fluctuation in numbers, the proportion of academic staff from a White ethnic background as a total of all staff with a known ethnic background has consistently declined each year.

Non-academic staff

Similarly to academic staff, the proportion of non-academic staff from an Asian ethnic background has increased since 2019/20

Chart 10: Percentage of non-academic staff at Welsh universities from ethnic minority backgrounds, 2016/17 to 2024/25



Description: The proportion of non-academic staff from an Asian ethnic background has consistently been higher than other ethnic minority groups. In 2024/25, 3.6% of non-academic staff were from an Asian background.

Data in Table 1.8 of the accompanying workbook

As with academic staff, the number and proportion of non-academic staff from an ethnic minority background have increased annually from 2016/17 to 2024/25. However, while the total number of non-academic staff was similar to the number of academic staff (10,910 versus 11,085 in 2024/25), the proportion from an ethnic minority background was considerably lower. In 2016/17, 4.4% of non-academic staff were from an ethnic minority background, which rose to 7.5% in 2024/25.

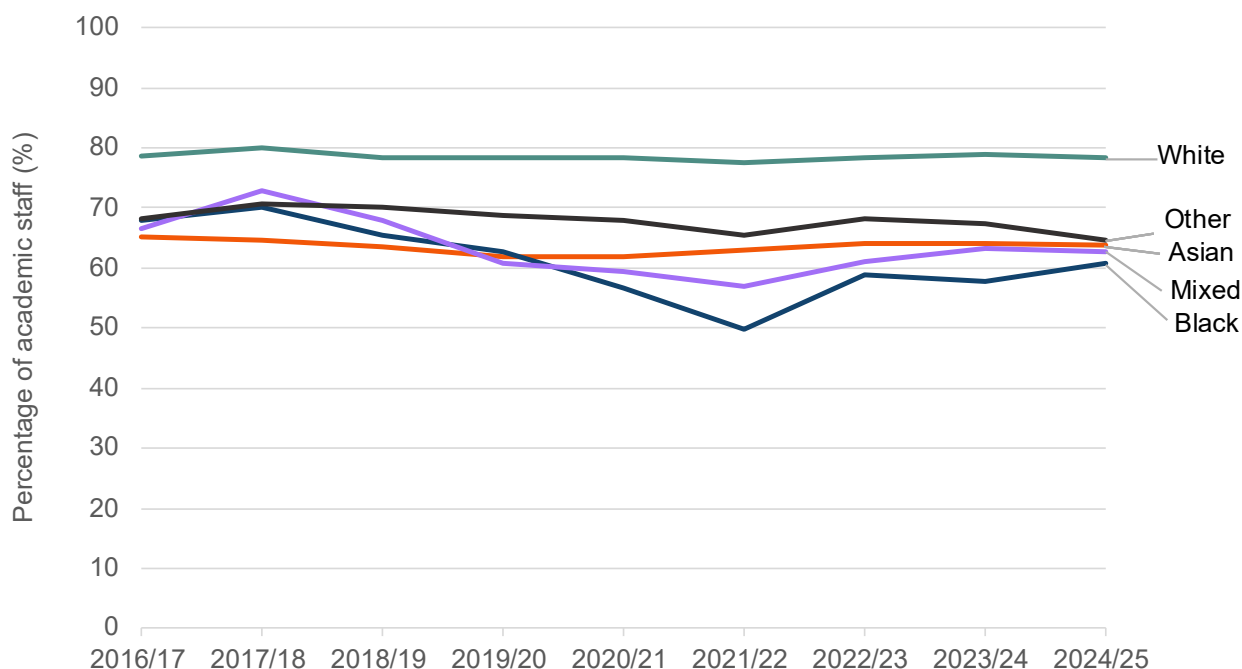
The increases in number and proportion have mostly been in the Asian, Black and Mixed ethnic background groups, while the Other ethnic background group has been relatively stable. The largest increases in both number and proportion were in staff with an Asian ethnic background, increasing from 220 staff in 2016/17 to 380 in 2024/25, or from 2.1% of non-academic staff to 3.6%.

Terms of employment

Academic staff

There has consistently been a higher proportion of academic staff from a White ethnic background working on a permanent contract, compared to staff from ethnic minority backgrounds

Chart 11: Percentage of academic staff (excluding atypical) at Welsh universities on permanent terms of employment by ethnic background, 2016/17 to 2024/25



Description: The proportions of academic staff on permanent contracts from Other, Asian, Mixed and Black backgrounds were quite similar in 2024/25 (ranging between 60.7% and 64.7%). The proportion from a White ethnic background was 78.3%.

Data in Table 1.9 of the accompanying workbook

There were differences between ethnic background groups in the proportions of academic staff on permanent terms of employment. Academic staff from a White ethnic background were considerably more likely to be on permanent terms of employment than those from ethnic minority backgrounds. In 2024/25, 78.3% of academic staff from a White ethnic background were on permanent terms of employment.

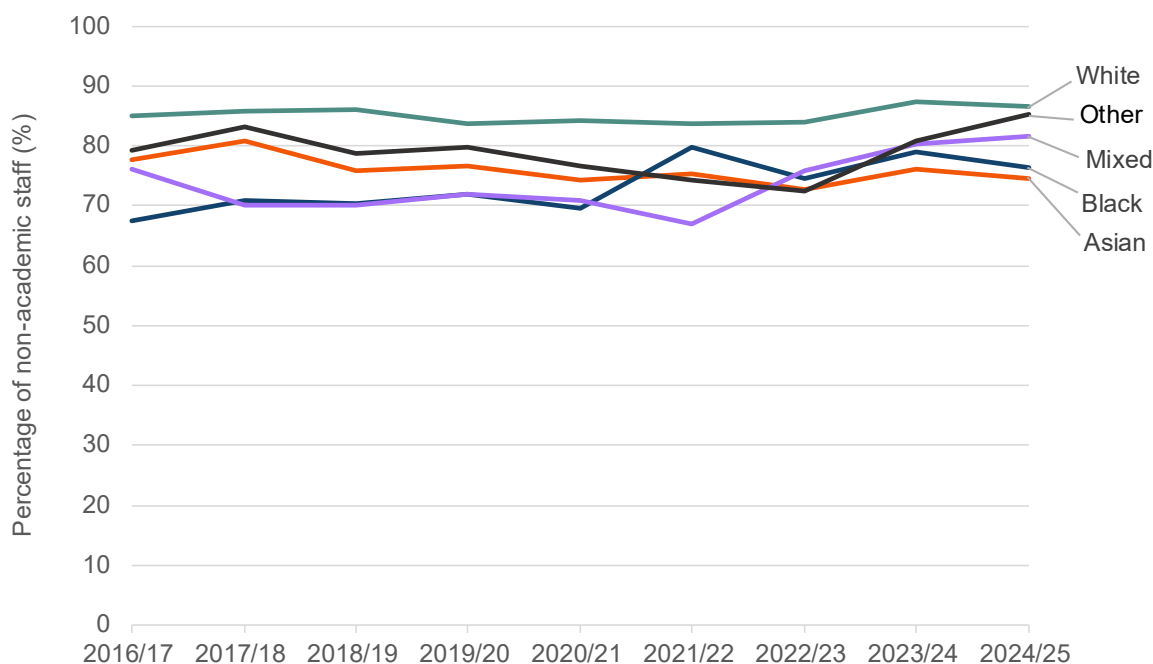
The proportions of academic staff from ethnic minority backgrounds on permanent contracts were all within the range of 60.7% and 64.7%. Staff from a Black ethnic background had the lowest proportion on permanent contracts, while staff from an Other ethnic group had the second highest proportion.

The difference between the proportion of staff from a White ethnic background and those from Black or Mixed ethnic backgrounds widened noticeably between 2016/17 to 2021/22. This difference has begun to narrow in the years since, after the proportions of those from Black and Mixed ethnic backgrounds on permanent terms has increased.

Non-academic staff

There was a higher proportion of non-academic staff from a White ethnic background on permanent contracts than other groups, but the gap was generally smaller than for academic staff

Chart 12: Percentage of non-academic staff at Welsh universities on permanent terms of employment by ethnic background, 2016/17 to 2024/25



Description: The gaps between the proportions of non-academic staff on permanent contracts across ethnic groups have narrowed since 2016/17. In 2024/25, the proportions for each ethnic group ranged from 74.6% (staff from an Asian background) to 86.5% (staff from a White background).

Data in Table 1.9 of the accompanying workbook

Similarly to academic staff, non-academic staff from a White ethnic background were the most likely to be on permanent terms of employment, with 86.5% of this group being on permanent terms in 2024/25. However, the disparity between the White ethnic group and ethnic minority groups was a lot smaller for non-academic staff. While for academic staff the percentage point gap between the White ethnic group and the Black ethnic group (the lowest proportion) was 17.6 percentage points, for non-academic staff the gap between the White ethnic group and the Asian ethnic group (the lowest proportion) was 11.9 percentage points.

The proportion of non-academic staff from a Black ethnic background on permanent terms of employment has overall increased considerably from 67.6% in 2016/17 to 76.3% in 2024/25. This has reduced the percentage point difference when compared to those from a White ethnic background.

Staff grade

In this analysis, the following grade groups are used:

- Group 1: Senior managers
- Group 2: Professors
- Group 3: Management/budget responsibility, experts
- Group 4: Staff responsibility, limited/no management responsibility, team budget/no budget responsibility
- Group 5: No staff or budget responsibility, little or no experience

These groups have then been aggregated differently for academic and non-academic staff based on the distribution of staff across grades for the two types of staff. For non-academic staff Group 2 is not relevant as it only applies to academic staff. The aggregations used are:

Table 1: Staff grade groupings for each staff type

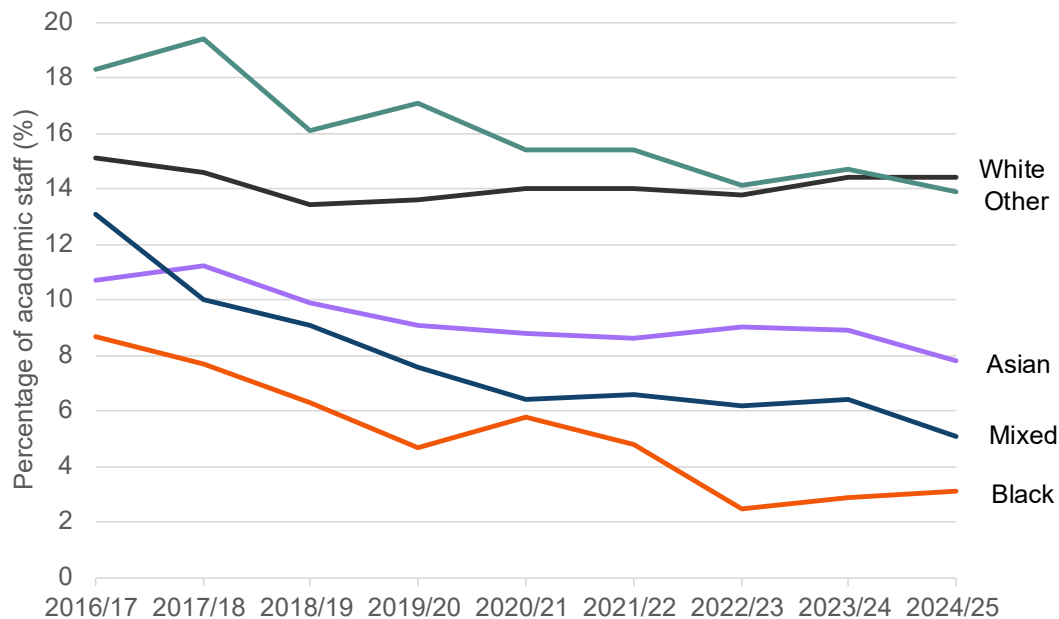
Staff type	Higher grades	Middle grades	Lower grades
Academic	Groups 1 & 2	Group 3	Groups 4 & 5
Non-academic	Groups 1 & 3 & 4		Group 5

Caution should be exercised when interpreting the graphs in this section; due to the small numbers within groups (particularly for ethnic minority staff), proportions may fluctuate heavily across years but not change greatly in number.

Academic staff

There has been higher proportions of staff from White and Other ethnic backgrounds in the higher grades group, compared to other backgrounds

Chart 13: Percentage of academic staff (excluding atypical) at Welsh universities in the higher grades group by ethnic background, 2016/17 to 2024/25



Description: The proportions of academic staff in the higher grades group have generally declined for each ethnic minority group since 2016. Meanwhile, the percentage of academic staff from a White ethnic background in this group has remained fairly stable since 2016.

Table 2: Number of academic staff (excluding atypical) at Welsh universities in the higher grades group by ethnic background, 2016/17 to 2024/25

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Asian	60	70	70	65	65	65	80	95	90
Black	10	10	5	5	10	10	5	10	10
Mixed	15	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
White	1,305	1,255	1,135	1,125	1,105	1,105	1,120	1,170	1,135
Other	50	50	40	45	40	40	40	45	40

Data in Table 1.10 of the accompanying workbook

In every year between 2016/17 and 2023/24, academic staff from an Other ethnic background were more likely to be in the higher grades group than those from any other ethnic background. However, this changed in 2024/25, with the proportion of staff from a White ethnic background (14.4%) narrowly surpassing the proportion of staff from an Other ethnic background (13.9%). Both these groups have had higher proportions of

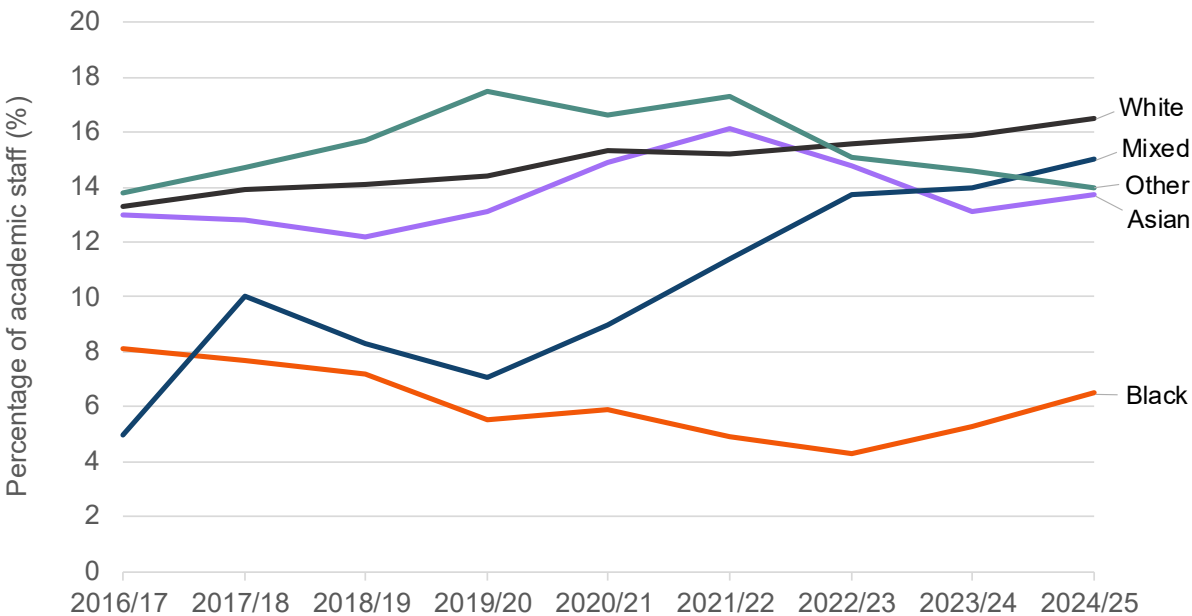
academic staff in the higher grades group than other ethnic groups for all the years shown.

The proportion of academic staff from an Asian ethnic background in the higher grades group has overall declined since 2016/17, from 10.7% to 7.8%.

The proportions of academic staff from Black and Mixed backgrounds in the higher grades group fell steeply between 2016/17 and 2024/25, with the first falling from 8.7% to 3.1% and the latter from 13.1% to 5.1%. The reason for this is that while the number of staff from these ethnic backgrounds has remained at the same level over these years, the number of staff employed in the middle and lower grades group has increased.

The proportion of staff from a Black ethnic background in the middle grade group has been increasing since 2022/23 but is still lower than other ethnic groups

Chart 14: Percentage of academic staff (excluding atypical) at Welsh universities in the middle grade group by ethnic background, 2016/17 to 2024/25



Description: The proportions of academic staff in the middle grade group have fluctuated across all ethnic groups since 2016/17

Table 3: Number of academic staff (excluding atypical) at Welsh universities in the middle grade group by ethnic background, 2016/17 to 2024/25

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Asian	75	80	85	95	115	125	135	135	155
Black	5	10	10	5	10	10	10	15	20
Mixed	5	10	10	10	15	20	25	25	30
White	1,150	1,195	1,195	1,190	1,205	1,195	1,270	1,285	1,305
Other	40	40	40	45	40	45	45	45	40

Data in Table 1.10 of the accompanying workbook

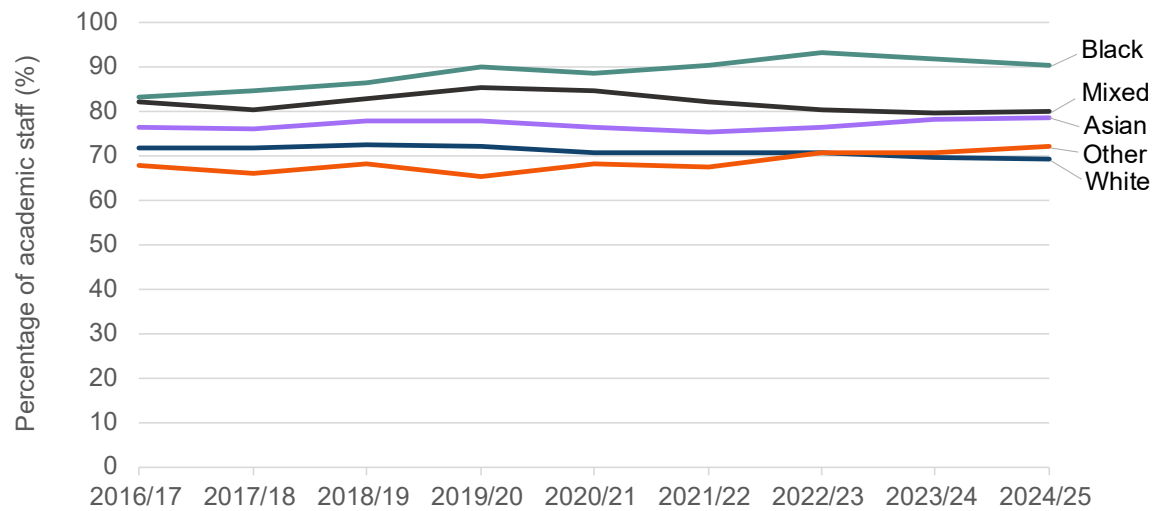
In 2024/25, the proportions of academic staff from each ethnic background in the middle grade group were relatively similar for most ethnic backgrounds, with the exception of staff from a Black ethnic background.

In 2024/25, between 13.7% and 16.5% of academic staff were employed in the middle grade group for each of the Asian, Mixed, Other and White ethnic background groups.

However, only 6.5% of academic staff with a Black ethnic background were employed in the middle grade group in 2024/25. Though, this was a 2.2 percentage point increase from 2022/23.

Academic staff from a Black ethnic background have been consistently more likely to be employed in the lower grades group

Chart 15: Percentage of academic staff (excluding atypical) at Welsh universities in the lower grades group by ethnic background, 2016/17 to 2024/25



Description: The proportions of non-academic staff in the lower grades group have remained fairly stable across most ethnic groups since 2016/17. The proportion of staff from a Black ethnic background in this group has seen a notable overall increase since 2016/17, from 83.2% to 90.3% in 2024/25.

Table 4: Number of academic staff (excluding atypical) at Welsh universities in the lower grades group by ethnic background, 2016/17 to 2024/25

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Asian	430	475	540	570	580	580	695	815	885
Black	75	90	95	115	140	150	220	250	255
Mixed	80	80	100	120	130	135	140	150	170
White	6,210	6,165	6,145	5,960	5,565	5,565	5,720	5,655	5,465
Other	190	175	170	165	170	175	210	210	220

Data in Table 1.10 of the accompanying workbook

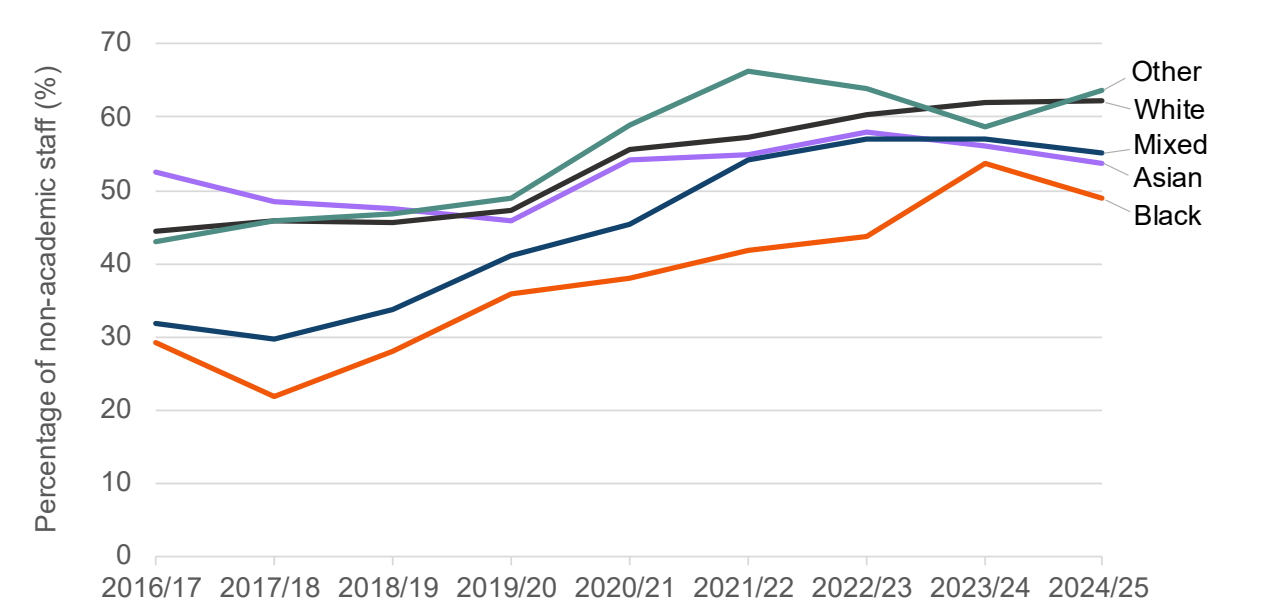
Academic staff with a Black ethnic background have continually been more likely to be employed in the lower grades group (90.3% in 2024/25) when compared against staff from other ethnic backgrounds. The difference between the proportion of staff from Black ethnic backgrounds versus all academic staff in the lower grades has increased from 10.7 percentage points in 2016/17 to 17.2 percentage points in 2024/25.

The proportions of staff from Asian or Mixed ethnic backgrounds in the lower grades group was also higher than the proportion for all academic staff in 2024/25 (78.5% and 79.8%, compared against the overall proportion of 73.1%).

Non-academic staff

The gaps between proportions of non-academic staff from different ethnic groups in the higher grades category overall have narrowed over time

Chart 16: Percentage of non-academic staff at Welsh universities in the higher grades group by ethnic background, 2016/17 to 2024/25



Description: The proportions of non-academic staff in the higher grades category have overall increased since 2016/17, for all ethnic groups.

Table 5: Number of non-academic staff at Welsh universities in the higher grades group by ethnic background, 2016/17 to 2024/25

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Asian	115	105	105	100	125	135	170	200	205
Black	20	10	20	30	30	35	50	65	70
Mixed	30	30	30	40	50	70	85	95	90
White	4,470	4,555	4,490	4,555	5,220	5,370	6,000	6,270	6,055
Other	40	40	40	45	55	55	65	65	65

Data in Table 1.10 of the accompanying workbook

For non-academic staff, the proportion of staff in the higher grades group has generally increased between 2016/17 and 2024/25; this has been the case for staff in each ethnic background group.

Non-academic staff from a Black ethnic background have been the least likely to be employed in the higher grades group in every year. In 2024/25, the proportion of non-academic staff from this background was 12.2 percentage points lower than the proportion for all non-academic staff. It was also the first year that the proportion of staff from a Black ethnic background had fallen since 2017/18.

The proportion of non-academic staff with a Mixed ethnic background employed in the higher grades group increased considerably from 31.9% in 2016/17 to 55.1% in 2024/25. The proportion for this group was 6.0 percentage points below the overall proportion in 2024/25, compared to 12.3 percentage points below in 2016/17.

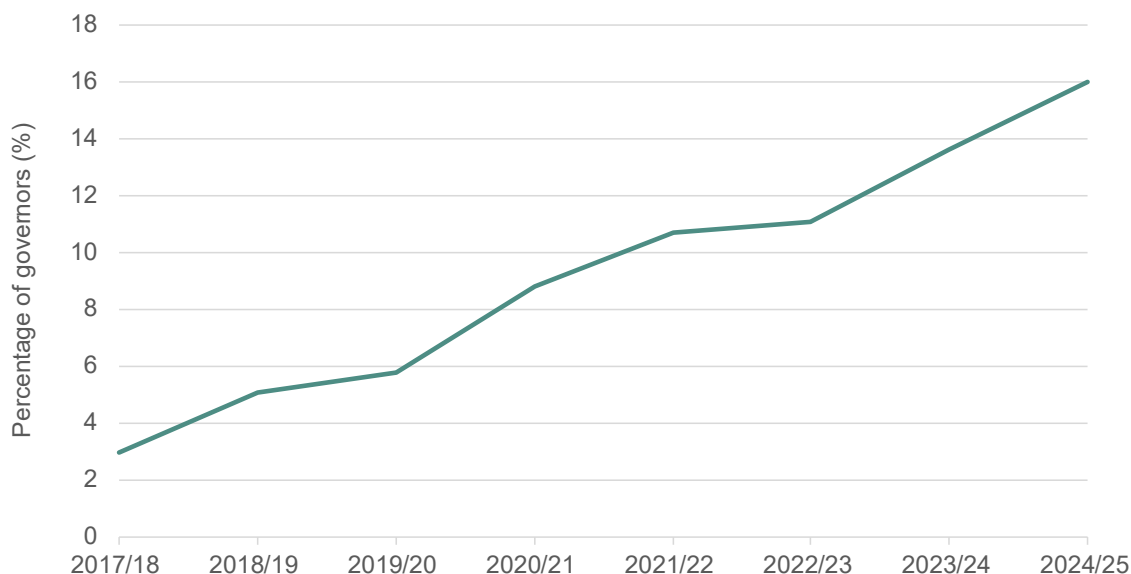
The proportion of non-academic staff from an Asian ethnic background in the higher grades group has fluctuated since 2016/17. In 2016/17, staff from an Asian ethnic background were the most likely to be employed at a higher grades, with a proportion of 52.4%; this was 8.2 percentage points above the overall proportion. In 2024/25 this proportion was 53.7%; this was 7.4 percentage points below the proportion for all non-academic staff.

As there are only two grade groups for non-academic staff (higher and lower), the patterns for those employed in the lower grades group were in the opposite direction of the higher grades group. There was an overall decline over time in the proportions of non-academic staff working at a lower grade for all ethnic groups and a similar narrowing of the differences between ethnic background groups.

Governors

The proportion of governors from an ethnic minority background have increased over time

Chart 17: Percentage of governors at Welsh universities from an ethnic minority background, 2017/18 to 2024/25



Description: There has been a generally upward trend in the percentage of governors from an ethnic minority background between 2017/18 and 2024/25. The percentage rose in most years, with the largest increase occurring between 2019/20 and 2020/21.

Data in Table 1.11b of the accompanying workbook

In 2024/25, 16.0% of governors were from an ethnic minority background, compared to 5.1% in 2018/19. In 2017/18, 3.0% of governors were from an ethnic minority background, but the number of governors with an unknown ethnic background was notably higher than in other years.

Though the proportion of governors from an ethnic minority background has risen over time, the underlying number of governors remained relatively small; there were 10 governors from an ethnic minority background in 2018/19, which rose to 25 in 2024/25.

Definitions and glossary

Definitions for terms related to the UCAS Undergraduate end of cycle data 2025 can be found [UCAS website](#), by viewing the 'Applicants, applications, acceptances and offers' dashboard under the Provider heading and entering the 'Help' option.

Further information on definitions for terms related to the HESA Student and Staff records can be found on the [HESA website](#).

Academic staff (HESA)

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

Applicant (UCAS)

A person who has made an application in the UCAS system during the cycle reported (including applications for deferred entry). Counts of applicants include those applying through the main scheme, applicants who apply directly to Clearing, and Records of Prior Acceptance (RPAs).

Application (UCAS)

An application to a course at a provider made by an applicant in the UCAS main scheme. Applicants may make up to five main scheme applications.

Domicile (HESA)

Refers to the student's country of permanent address on entry to their course. For example, a student who is Welsh-domiciled would have their home address as being in Wales on entry to their course.

Entrants (HESA)

An entrant is a student in HESA's standard registration population who started their course during the academic year recorded. For example, a 2024/25 entrant would have begun their course of study between 18 July 2024 and 17 July 2025.

Entrants who started their course in the academic year 2021/22 or earlier would have entered between 1 Aug and 31 July.

Governors (HESA)

A member of the governing body of a higher education provider.

Ethnic minority background

Where the term 'ethnic minority background' has been used in this publication, it refers collectively to the Asian, Black, Mixed and Other ethnic groups.

Non-academic staff (HESA)

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.

Offer (UCAS)

Provider decision to grant a place to an applicant. May be subject to the applicant satisfying academic and/or other criteria.

Permanent terms of employment (HESA)

Staff employed on a contract of employment that is permanent or open-ended. This includes term-time only staff employed on an open-ended contract.

Placed for entry (UCAS)

Refers to applicants who, at the end of the admissions cycle, have secured a place to enter higher education

Student (HESA)

A person attending a higher education course that leads to a higher education qualification or higher education-level credit.

Unclassified degree (HESA)

A first degree awarded without a standard honours classification. This includes qualifications that are not subject to classification of award, such as some medical and ordinary degrees.

Data sources and methodology

UCAS Undergraduate end of cycle data 2025

Contains information about applicants and applications to full-time undergraduate higher education courses via UCAS.

These data are not Official Statistics as UCAS are not a producer of Official Statistics. However, UCAS is a voluntary adopter of the Code of Practice for Statistics which helps to provide assurance that the data is of high quality and is trustworthy.

More information about this data source can be found on the [UCAS website](#).

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Student record

Contains information about students studying at higher education providers across the UK, although only the data of those studying at providers in Wales is used here.

The non-continuation data used in the Retention section has been derived from the HESA Student Record. HESA have used a process of fuzzy matching to track students between academic years. This fuzzy matching is based on a combination of student identifiers, names, date of birth, postcode, and other characteristics such as entry information and subject.

The non-continuation data is restricted to only include UK domiciled full-time entrants at UK providers who haven't left within 50 days of their commencement date. Only students who were originally entrants at Welsh providers are included in the data. When tracking between academic years, entrants may be found to have transferred to a provider anywhere in the UK but would still be considered in the Retention measure. Statistics based on this data source are Official Statistics.

More information about this data source can be found on the [HESA website](#).

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Staff record

Contains information about staff at higher education providers across the UK, although only the data of those studying at universities in Wales is used here. Staff at the Open University are not included as the Open University data covers staff across the whole of the UK rather than Wales individually.

Statistics based on this data source are Official Statistics.

More information about this data source can be found on the [HESA website](#).

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 unrounded figures and rounded to the nearest whole per cent. This may mean the percentages in this release may not match what you would calculate from the rounded figures. If a percentage is calculated where the denominator is less than 22.5 then the percentage is suppressed.

Key Quality Information

Relevance

The measures included in this report were first published by the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales to meet an action in the Welsh Government's [Anti-racist Wales Action Plan](#). Publishing this updated version of the measures provides up-to-date information that can contribute to monitoring the progress of this plan.

The measures also contribute to monitoring the goals of the [Well-being of Future Generations Act](#), and also to Medr's duties from the Tertiary Education and Research (Wales) Act (2022) and the Equality Act (2010).

Accuracy

For all of the data sources, information on ethnic background is self-declared. It is not mandatory for applicants, students or staff to provide this information so ethnic background is unknown for some of the population and these unknowns may be more likely to be individuals from particular ethnic backgrounds.

In the case of applicants to higher education, the UCAS data provides information about a considerable proportion of applicants to higher education. However, there are other paths to apply to higher education so the UCAS data does not comprehensively cover all applications.

Data collected about students in the HESA student record is comprehensive, however ethnic background data is only collected for students whose permanent address on entry is in the UK. This means the information is limited to that subset of the student population rather than the population in its entirety.

Data on staff includes those of all nationalities, but this report does not include analysis of those on an atypical contract.

A small number of individuals are governors at the University of Wales and University of Wales Trinity Saint David and have been counted twice as a result as this is consistent with how governors are counted in published HESA staff data.

Timeliness and punctuality

The data in this release covers applications for the 2016 to 2025 UCAS cycles, and for the 2016/17 to 2024/25 academic years for the HESA student and staff data. This is the latest data available at the time of publishing this release.

Accessibility and clarity

This statistical release is pre-announced and then published on the [Statistics section of the Medr website](#).

The report is published as a PDF with an accompanying workbook available in an open data format (ODS). Both the release and the workbook follow accessibility guidelines.

Comparability and coherence

There were changes to the ethnic background categories that students and staff can declare in the HESA student and staff records from 2022/23. However these changes do not affect the broader groupings used in this release.

The 2023/24 HESA student data includes six providers who submitted to the HESA student record for the first time and are therefore not included in the previous years. However, these providers returned relatively small numbers of students and have a minimal impact on comparing the year on year 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. The standards expected around trustworthiness, quality and public value have been demonstrated and improved in the following ways.

Trustworthiness

From the beginning the measures have been developed by professional statisticians according to the Medr's Statement of Compliance and pre-release access to official statistics policy. Release dates are pre-announced, protocols around data confidentiality are followed.

Occasionally, revisions can occur due to errors in our statistical processes or when a data supplier notifies Medr that they have submitted incorrect information. In these cases, a judgement is made as to whether the change is significant enough to publish a revised statistical release. Where changes are not deemed to be significant, figures will be corrected if they appear in future releases.

Quality

The data in this report comes from well established data sources.

While the UCAS data is not Official Statistics, UCAS are a voluntary adopter of the Code of Practice for Statistics showing their commitment to produce trustworthy data of high quality.

HESA publish their student data as Accredited Official Statistics and staff data as Official statistics, including information on ethnic background. This report uses the same data source which has gone through a high degree of quality assurance and provides a more detailed analysis of the figures for students and staff at Welsh higher education providers.

Value

The measures included in this report were first published by the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales to meet an action in the Welsh Government's [Anti-racist Wales Action Plan](#). Publishing this updated version of the measures provides up-to-date information that can contribute to monitoring the progress of this plan.

The measures also contribute to monitoring the goals of the [Well-being of Future Generations Act](#), and also to Medr's duties from the Tertiary Education and Research (Wales) Act (2022) and the Equality Act (2010).

Related statistics

The first release of the 'Higher Education race equality monitoring measures' which was published by HEFCW can be found on the Medr website. It consisted of a [written report](#) and a separate document containing [data tables and charts](#). The measures included were agreed following a consultation by HEFCW with the agreed measures being published in Annex C of the [W23/06HE](#) circular. An [update](#) to this was published by Medr in October 2025.

Further data from the data sources used in this release are available on the [UCAS End of Year Monitoring](#) web page and [HESA Open Data](#) website.

In 2022, the Welsh Government published the statistical article [Post-16 learning statistics by learners' ethnic group](#), which brought together similar statistics for learners in sixth forms, further education, work based learning and adult learning. The article aimed to provide baseline statistics in support of one of the goals in the [Anti-racist Wales Action Plan](#) to systematically monitor participation, outcomes, and progression for post-16 learners from different ethnic backgrounds.

The article included a commitment to incorporate this analysis into the regular statistical reports covering these parts of the tertiary education sector moving forwards. Medr is now responsible for most of these reports and provides a range of detailed statistics.

The statistical release [Further education, work-based learning and community learning](#) provides statistics on learners, programmes and activities being taken at colleges, work-based learning providers and in local authority community learning. Analysis by learners'

ethnic background is on page 16 of the latest report, with more granular statistics available in the accompanying tables (see 'secondary documents') and on [StatsWales](#).

More recent provisional statistics on apprenticeship starts by learners' ethnic background are available in our [interactive dashboard](#).

[Consistent performance measures for post-16 learning: achievement](#) provides statistics on the achievement of learning programmes and individual courses in sixth forms and further education. Analysis by ethnic background can be found on pages 24 to 26 of the main report and in the following accompanying tables:

- Tables 1.8a, 1.8b, 1.9a and 1.9b – general education programme outcomes by aggregated and detailed ethnic groups, and gender/sex
- Table 1.14 – general education programme outcomes by aggregated ethnic groups and eligibility for free school meals
- Tables 2.8 and 2.9 – vocational programme outcomes by aggregated and detailed ethnic groups, and English for Speakers of Other Languages status
- Tables 3.8 and 3.9 – Welsh Baccalaureate outcomes by aggregated and detailed ethnic groups
- Tables 4.4 and 5.7 – course measures by sector subject area and aggregated ethnic group.

[Learner outcome measures for apprenticeships and adult community learning](#) provides statistics on the success and completion of apprenticeships and adult community learning activities. Analysis on apprenticeship success rate by ethnic background is available on pages 11 to 12 of the main report and in the following accompanying tables:

- Worksheet 1.1a - Apprenticeship outcomes by sector, framework, programme and learner characteristics, August 2024 to July 2025 [r]
- Worksheet 1.1b - Apprenticeship outcomes by sector subject area, framework, programme and learner characteristics, August 2024 to July 2025 [r]
- Worksheet 1.4 - Apprenticeship outcomes by ethnic background, August 2024 to July 2025
- Worksheet 2.2 - Adult learning activity outcomes by ethnic background, August 2024 to July 2025

[Consistent performance measures for post-16 learning \(learner destinations\)](#) contains analysis on employment and learning destinations for further education, school sixth form and work-based learning learners in the year following their programme of study. These are official statistics in development. Analysis on learners' ethnic background is available on pages 13 to 15 of the main report and in the following accompanying tables:

- Table 9a to 9c - Destinations of post-16 learners by ethnicity and sector, 2021/22 & 2022/23

Statistics on [Progression from Year 11 to tertiary education](#) by learners' ethnic background are also available on page 11 of the main report and the accompanying tables.

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.

Medr

Y Comisiwn Addysg Drydyddol ac Ymchwil
Commission for Tertiary Education and Research

www.medr.cymru

2 Cwr y Ddinas
Stryd Tyndall
Caerdydd
CF10 4BZ

2 Capital Quarter
Tyndall Street
Cardiff
CF10 4BZ



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