

Summary of Scottish PGR population data on the basis of sex, disability, ethnicity, age and religion

- Female students make up the majority of Scottish undergraduate students (59%¹), and a higher percentage of Scottish postgraduate taught students (61%). However, the percentage of female students drops markedly at postgraduate research level in Scotland to 48%, with 51% of PGR students in Scotland students being male.
- 47% of full time PGR students in Scotland are female, but 54% of part time PGR students in Scotland are female.
- These data suggest that women face additional barriers to PGR study compared to their male counterparts.
- We are aware that, historically, STEMM subjects have not attracted as many female PGR students as male PGR students. For instance, the recent EPSRC Review of Doctoral Education Support gives a figure of around 30% for female UK Engineering and Physical Sciences students.² Most STEMM subjects receive a higher subject weighting than non-STEMM subjects, suggesting that on average universities have received more funding per male PGR student under the RPG formula.
- Research conducted by Stonewall highlights that people in younger age groups are less likely to identify with binary genders, and are more likely to describe themselves in another way compared to people belonging to older age groups. Available data suggests that with the Scottish PGR student population a small, but increasing number of students no longer identify as male or female. (Figures from AY 2015/16 to 2019/20 show a steady increase over time in the number of first year Scottish PGR students not identifying as male or female, from 5 in 2015/16 to 30 in 2019/20.
- 11% of UK PGR students and 9% of Scottish PGR students have a known disability. At undergraduate level the percentage of students with a known disability is 16% for both Scotland and the UK.
- 87% of UK domiciled PGR students in Scotland list their ethnicity as white, compared with 81% of UK domiciled PGR students in the whole of the UK.
- Part time PGR students are on average older than full time students, with around 80% of part time Scottish PGR students being aged 30 or over,

¹ Note that HESA percentages for sex, used in this analysis, exclude “other” category.

² <https://www.ukri.org/publications/review-of-epsrc-funded-doctoral-education/>

compared with 40% of all Scottish PGR students.

- 54% of PGR students in Scotland do not report following or belonging to an organized religion. 28% of the Scottish PGR student population identify as belonging to a Christian faith and 11% identify as belonging to a Muslim faith. This contrasts with the Scottish undergraduate population, of which 64% do not report belonging to an organised faith or religion group, 30% as Christian and 2% as Muslim. The available figures show that representation of religion in the Scottish PGR community is generally consistent with percentage figures for the whole of the UK at PGR level (52% do not identify as belonging to an organised faith or religion group, 28% as Christian and 12% as Muslim).
- In contrast, 40% of part time PGR students in Scotland identify as Christian, with 6% identifying as Muslim.