

Higher Education Participation Rates for Bristol and the British Core Cities

Summary



According to the Higher Education Funding Council for England (*Hefce*) HE Participation rates^{1,2} in England & Wales³ increased from 34.1% in 2005-11 to 37.2% in 2009-15.



There is a strong link (correlation coefficient of >0.95) between HE participation and higher earnings – better off families are more likely to send their children to university.



While the trend in HE Participation in Bristol is for a more rapid increase than nationally, the participation rate for the city is well below the figure for England & Wales, at just 30.6% in 2009-15.



Of the 348 local authority areas of England & Wales, Bristol is ranked 258th and is the equal⁴ second⁵ worst performing of the Core Cities in England and Wales.



At the neighbourhood level, of the 55 neighbourhoods in Bristol 19 (over 1 in 3) are inside the worst performing 10% nationally and the three⁶ of the five worst performing neighbourhoods in England and Wales are in Bristol.



Ten contiguous neighbourhoods⁷ in West Bristol have participation rates in excess of 80%.



Without the contribution of those ten contiguous neighbourhoods, the participation rate for Bristol would be 22.7%, which would make Bristol the 6th worst performing local authority in Britain.

¹ See: <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/analysis/yp/POLAR/> POLAR 3 archive for 2005-11 and POLAR4 for 2009-15

² Rates were calculated using a 5 year cohort - see Appendix 1 for the details.

³ Scotland is not included because student fees are government funded.

⁴ with Liverpool that has an attendance rate of 30.5% which is not significantly different to the rate (30.6%) for Bristol

⁵ in front of Nottingham that has an attendance rate of 25.3%

⁶ these include the 2 worst performing neighbourhoods Withywood, Hartcliffe and the 4th worst performing Knowle

⁷ these include: Westbury Park, Henleaze, Westbury-on-Trym, Stoke Bishop, Cotham, Clifton East and Clifton Village

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The National and Regional Summary

The national and regional HE participation rates for England and Wales⁸ are shown in the table opposite. The participation rates for the period 2009 to 2015 are higher by varying amounts than those for 2005-11. Also shown in the table are the average mean total annual gross earnings for the periods 2005-09 and 2006-10. With a correlation coefficient in excess of 0.95, the regional HE participation rates are highly correlated with the mean earnings⁹. For regional geographies the children of better off

Area Name	Attendance Rates		Ave. Mean Annual Gross Earnings	
	2005-11	2009-15	2002-06	2006-10
East	33.8	36.4	23,841	27,084
East Midlands	32.1	33.5	20,342	23,536
London	43.1	50	31,681	36,825
North East	29.4	31.8	18,554	21,372
North West	32.5	36.1	20,537	23,273
South East	36.6	40.1	25,636	29,211
South West	32.1	34.5	20,312	23,179
West Midlands	32.2	34.9	20,277	22,881
Yorkshire & The Humber	30	32.4	19,802	22,673
England	34.2	37.5	22,987	26,345
Wales	31.7	33.4	19,001	21,697

parents are more likely to attend university. The data suggests that every additional £1,000 of earnings adds about 1 percentage point to the HE participation rate.

Local Authorities

At the local authority level attendance rates range from as low as 21.6% (Hull) to 93% (Kensington and Chelsea¹⁰). The attendance rate for Bristol is 30.6% that ranks it 258th out of 348 local authorities in England and Wales and the equal second¹¹ worst performing of the British Core Cities. The table opposite shows the data for the Core Cities of England and Wales. HE participation rates for all nine cities increased with the second largest increase in

Area Name	University Attendance Rates for the Years		Change (percentage points)
	2005-11	2009-15	
	Rate	Rate	
Bristol	25.2	30.6	5.4
Birmingham	30.9	35.1	4.2
Cardiff	34.1	38.8	4.7
Leeds	30.8	34.1	3.3
Liverpool	27.6	30.5	2.9
Manchester	26.4	32.3	5.9
Newcastle	31.2	35.1	3.8
Nottingham	21.1	25.3	4.1
Sheffield	30.1	31.2	1.1

Bristol. Comparing HE participation rates with earnings by local authority reveals the data to be correlated¹² but less well (0.82) than the regional data¹³. At local authority level the data suggests that every additional £1,000 of earnings adds about 1.7 percentage points to the HE participation rate.

⁸ Scotland is not included because of the difference in the way students are funded

⁹ See appendix 1 for more detail

¹⁰ City of London has an attendance rate of 100% but a cohort population of only 90 and cohort entrants of 99

¹¹ The difference between the attendance rates for Bristol and Liverpool is not statistically significant.

¹² See Appendix 3.

¹³ In Scotland where student fees are funded the correlation between earnings and attendance rate is even smaller.

The Picture for Bristol

The table below shows the HE participation rates for the 10 best and 10 worst performing areas (MSOAs) in Bristol. Also shown are the national percentiles. Five of the worst performing MSOAs in Bristol are in the worst 1 percent nationally and the others are in the worst 5%. All of the 10 best performing MSOAs are in the top 5% nationally. More broadly 19 of the 55 neighbourhoods in Bristol are ranked inside the worst 10% nationally.

Ten Best Performing MSOA		HE participation	National	Ten Worst Performing MSOA		HE participation	National
Local Name	Code	Rate	Percentile	Local Name	Code	Rate	Percentile
Redland	E02003031	80.7	96.6	Withywood	E02003062	5.6	0.012
Westbury Village	E02003017	83.4	97.0	Hartcliffe	E02003064	6.1	0.024
Hotwells	E02003045	85.5	97.2	Knowle	E02003055	7.2	0.047
Westbury Park	E02003028	96.0	98.2	Knowle West	E02003056	10.0	0.273
Henleaze	E02003022	97.3	98.4	Highridge	E02003061	10.1	0.285
Westbury-on-Trym	E02003020	100.0	98.6	Lawrence Weston	E02003014	13.4	1.494
Stoke Bishop	E02003026	100.0	98.6	Shirehampton	E02003019	15.5	3.166
Cotham	E02003033	100.0	98.6	Southmead	E02003013	15.7	3.367
Clifton East	E02003037	100.0	98.6	Headley Park	E02003059	15.7	3.379
Clifton Village	E02003041	100.0	98.6	Hengrove	E02003058	15.9	3.569

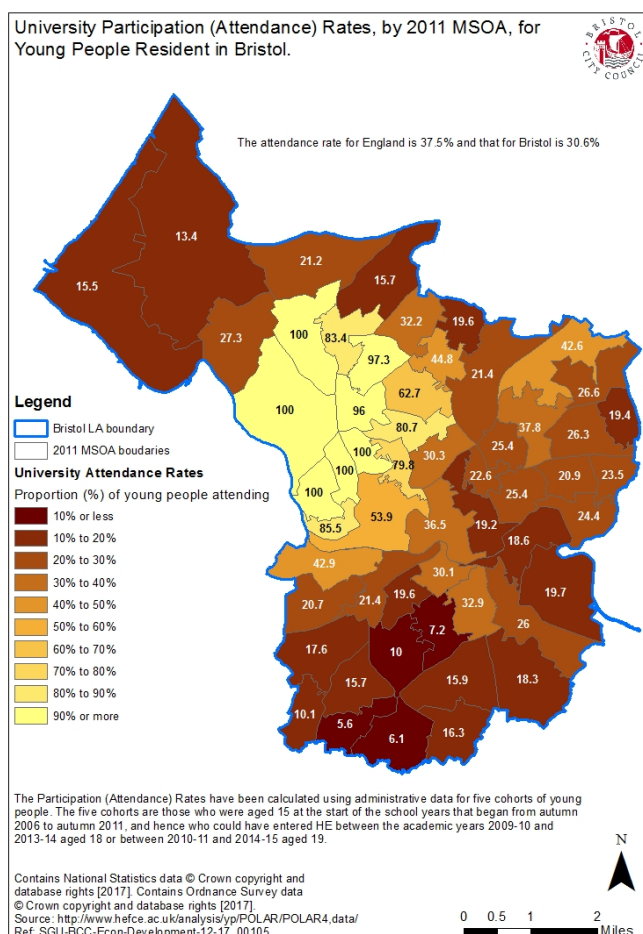
The map opposite shows the HE participation rate for the neighbourhoods of Bristol.

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Appendix 1

The Participation (Attendance) Rates have been calculated using administrative data for five cohorts of young people.

Cohorts for POLAR3

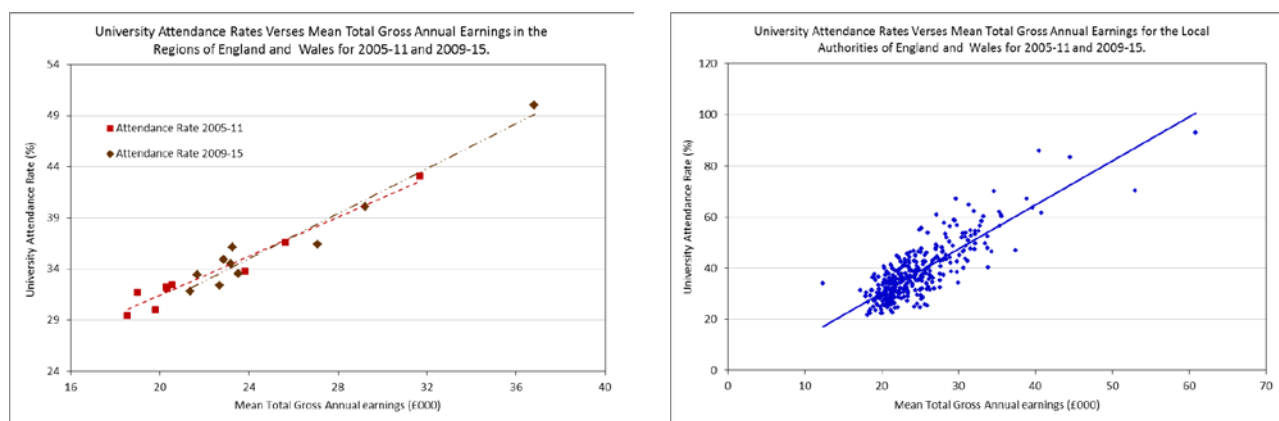
The five cohorts are those who were aged 15 at the start of the school years that began from autumn 2002 to autumn 2006, and hence who could have entered HE between the academic years 2005-06 and 2009-10 aged 18 or between 2006-07 and 2010-11 aged 19.

Cohorts for POLAR4

The five cohorts are those who were aged 15 at the start of the school years that began from autumn 2006 to autumn 2011, and hence who could have entered HE between the academic years 2009-10 and 2013-14 aged 18 or between 2010-11 and 2014-15 aged 19.

Appendix 2

The charts below show HE participation rates plotted against average total mean gross earnings for the regions and local authorities of England and Wales. The average earnings were calculated for the years that the cohorts were still at school i.e. 2002-06 and 2006-10 for 2005-11 and 2009-15 respectively. There is a clear correlation between HE



participation rate and earnings for both geographies. At the regional geography there is a definite¹⁴ trend such that every additional £1,000 of annual earnings adds about 1 percentage point to the HE participation rate. For local authorities the metric that represents the quality of the trend has a value of 0.68. Thus the link between HE participation rates and earnings is far less evident. This suggests that although earnings influences HE participation rates other factors¹⁵ that are more variable for smaller areas are also at work.

¹⁴ the values of the metric that represents the quality of the trend are 0.94 and 0.94. A value of 1 represents a certain (perfect) trend (fit)

¹⁵ for example parental attitudes are known to have variations amongst ethnic groups that are distributed less evenly at LA geographies