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This is the sixth in a series of higher education data releases from the Department for Education’s Longitudinal Education Outcomes dataset. It provides employment and earnings outcomes for postgraduate students for the first time. This summary document focuses on outcomes in the tax year 2015/16 for those who graduated with a Level 7 (masters) or Level 8 (doctoral) postgraduate degree one, three, five and ten years after graduation from an English higher education institution (HEI). Data is also presented for 23 subject areas split by sex and domicile.

Earnings for UK domiciled postgraduates one, three, five and ten years after graduation by level of study

The chart below presents the earnings for UK domiciled postgraduates, where the middle grey line indicates the median earnings figure and the boxes either side of the grey line indicate the interquartile range (the range between the upper and lower quartile values).

For Level 7 (taught), Level 7 (research) and Level 8 degrees, median earnings rose from one year after graduation to ten years after graduation. At each time point after graduation, Level 8 graduates had higher median earnings than Level 7 (research) graduates, who in turn had higher median earnings than Level 7 (taught) graduates. For example, 5 years after graduation, Level 8 graduates had average median earnings of £36,600 compared to £31,900 for Level 7 (research) graduates and £31,500 for Level 7 (taught) graduates.

Coverage: UK domiciled Level 7 (taught), Level 7 (research) and Level 8 graduates from English HEIs
Cohorts: 2004/05 (10 years after graduation), 2009/10 (5 years), 2011/12 (3 years), 2013/14 (1 year)
Tax year: 2015/16



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About this release

This experimental statistics publication provides employment and earnings outcomes from the Longitudinal Educational Outcomes (LEO) data for **postgraduates** for the first time. Previous releases included employment and earnings outcomes for first degree graduates only. The following characteristics are included:

Sex

Subject studied

Domicile

Level of study

The commentary and figures within this publication focus on outcomes and earnings in the 2015/16 tax year for the 2004/05, 2009/10, 2011/12 and 2013/14 cohorts ten, five, three and one years after graduation respectively. The release includes data from English Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) only. In line with the last LEO release, data on UK domiciled, EU domiciled and Overseas domiciled graduates has been included.

In this publication

The following tables are included in this release:

Main tables

- Table 1: Employment outcomes of Level 7 UK graduates by subject, domicile and sex one, three, five and ten years after graduation
- Table 2: Employment outcomes of Level 7 international graduates by subject, domicile and sex one, three, five and ten years after graduation
- Table 3: Earnings of Level 7 UK and international graduates by subject, domicile and sex one, three, five and ten years after graduation
- Table 4: Activity of top 20 Level 7 international graduate populations one, three, five and ten years after graduation
- Table 5: Employment outcomes of Level 8 UK graduates by subject, domicile and sex one, three, five and ten years after graduation
- Table 6: Employment outcomes of Level 8 international graduates by subject, domicile and sex one, three, five and ten years after graduation
- Table 7: Earnings of Level 8 UK and international graduates by subject, domicile and sex one, three, five and ten years after graduation

Underlying data

- CSV format (240518_underlying_data_UK.csv; 240518_underlying_data_international.csv)
- Metadata (240518_metadata.txt)

Feedback

As these statistics are currently experimental we welcome feedback on this release and the data presented within it. Contact details are provided in [section 8: Feedback](#).

1. Introduction

This is the sixth in a series of higher education data releases from the DfE's Longitudinal Educational Outcomes (LEO) dataset. This release:

- Includes postgraduate data for the first time, comparing those who graduated with a Level 7 (taught) degree, a Level 7 (research) degree or a Level 8 degree.
- Provides postgraduate outcomes data by domicile, comparing those who were UK domiciled prior to study, from another EU country (EU) or from another overseas country (Overseas).
- Includes an extension of subject level breakdowns for Level 7 (taught) graduates who completed Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) and Masters in Business Administration (MBA).

The release provides outcomes and earnings of UK, EU and Overseas domiciled graduates from the LEO data, split by the following characteristics:

- Sex
- Subject studied
- Level of study

This release focuses on graduate outcomes and earnings in the 2015/16 tax year for the 2004/05, 2009/10, 2011/12 and 2013/14 cohorts ten, five, three and one years after graduation respectively.

Data for graduate outcomes and earnings in the 2014/15 tax year for the 2003/04, 2008/09, 2010/11 and 2012/13 cohorts ten, five, three and one years after graduation respectively is also provided in the accompanying Excel tables.

In line with the last release, the earnings figures in this release are total earnings – that is the total of all earnings from paid employment, self-employment or a combination of both.

2. Background to the Longitudinal Educational Outcomes (LEO) dataset

The Small Business, Employment and Enterprise Act 2015 enabled government, for the first time, to link higher education and tax data together to chart the transition of graduates from higher education into the workplace¹. One of the advantages of linking data from existing administrative sources is that it provides a unique insight into the destinations of graduates without imposing any additional data collection burdens on universities, employers or members of the public. Compared to existing sources of graduate outcomes data, it is also based on a considerably larger sample, does not rely on survey methodology, and can track outcomes across time to a greater extent than was previously possible.

The LEO dataset links information about students, including

- personal characteristics such as sex, ethnic group and age
- education, including schools, colleges and higher education institution attended, courses taken and qualifications achieved
- employment and income
- benefits claimed

By combining these sources, we can look at the progress of higher education leavers into the labour market. Further information on the data included in the LEO dataset can be found in the [accompanying methodology note in our previous publication](#) on the 15th March 2018. This note also contains further information on the data quality, match rates and methodology.

¹ For more information on the legal powers governing the dataset please see section 78 of the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015 and sections 87-91 of the Education and Skills Act 2008.

Coverage

This publication looks at those who graduated with a postgraduate degree qualification from higher education institutions (HEIs) in England. We have looked at those classified as UK, EU or Overseas domiciled prior to entry to higher education. Figures are presented for all graduates and have not been split by full-time or part-time mode of study.

Designated alternative providers are not included in this publication as they were not required to return student level data to HESA prior to the 2015/16 academic year. The University of Buckingham has historically returned HESA data so is included in the publication.

All figures are based on UK tax, benefit and student records only, activity of those who move abroad to work or study after graduating is not reflected in the employment or further study figures. Instead, these individuals are categorised as 'activity not captured'. This has potentially important implications when looking at the outcomes of non-UK domiciled students.

Years after graduation

The time periods used in this publication are one, three, five and ten years after graduation, which refers to the first, third, fifth and tenth full tax year after graduation, respectively. For instance, for the 2013/14 graduation cohort, the figures one year after graduation refer to employment and earnings outcomes in the 2015/16 tax year. This time period was picked as graduates are unlikely to have been engaged in economic activity for the whole tax year that overlaps with the graduation date. This is displayed graphically in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Relationship between academic year, tax year and definitions of 'years after graduation' used in this publication

	Tax year										
	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
2003/04	1 year	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years	7 years	8 years	9 years	10 years	11 years
2004/05		1 year	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years	7 years	8 years	9 years	10 years
2005/06			1 year	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years	7 years	8 years	9 years
2006/07				1 year	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years	7 years	8 years
2007/08					1 year	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years	7 years
2008/09						1 year	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years
2009/10							1 year	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 years
2010/11								1 year	2 years	3 years	4 years
2011/12									1 year	2 years	3 years
2012/13										1 year	2 years
2013/14											1 year

Cohorts in **bold** are covered in this publication

Domicile categories

Domicile categories have been based upon graduate domicile prior to the start of their course, as recorded in the HESA Student Record for graduates from HEIs. Graduates have been grouped into three top level domicile categories; UK, EU (non-UK) and Overseas (non-EU).

Please note that country of domicile is not the same as nationality (as recorded in the HESA Student Record or ILR). For instance, in 2012/13, 91% of UK domiciled graduates were classified as UK nationals, 7% EU domiciled graduates were classified as UK nationals, and 4% of Overseas domiciled graduates were classified as UK nationals.

Degree level

Level of study categories have been based upon the qualification obtained by a given graduate, as recorded in the HESA Student record. Graduates were broadly grouped into Level 7 and Level 8, more commonly known as masters degrees and doctoral degrees respectively. Enhanced undergraduate courses (e.g. MMath, MEng) that give you a postgraduate-level qualification are not included in our Level 7

population. These degree courses are included in our first degree population as you do not need to have completed a Level 6 qualification to apply for these courses.

Level 7 data was also broken down into Level 7 (taught) for taught masters degrees and Level 7 (research) for research masters degrees. In addition, Postgraduate Certificate in Education and Masters in Business Administration were also split from the overall Level 7 (taught) numbers. For subject level breakdowns, these two courses were also split from the other 23 subject categories.

Employment outcomes for UK domiciled graduates

Outcomes for **UK domiciled** graduates are presented for graduates who have been **successfully matched** to the Department for Work and Pensions' Customer Information System (CIS) or matched to a further study instance on the HESA Student Record.

Graduates who have been matched are then placed in the following five outcome categories:

Activity not captured: graduates who have been successfully matched to CIS but do not have any employment, out-of-work benefits or further study records in the tax year in question. Reasons for appearing in this category include: moving out of the UK after graduation for either work or study or voluntarily leaving the labour force.

No sustained destination: graduates who have an employment or out-of-work benefits record for the tax year in question but were not classified as being 'in sustained employment' and do not have a further study record.

Sustained employment only: graduates are only considered to be in sustained employment if they were employed for at least one day for five out of the six months between October and March of the tax year in question or if they had a self-employment record in that tax year. To be in the sustained employment only category, graduates must not have a record of further study in the tax year in question.

Sustained employment with or without further study: includes all graduates with a record of sustained employment, regardless of whether they also have a record of further study. A graduate is defined as being in further study if they have a valid higher education study record at any UK HEI or on the HESA database in the relevant tax year. The further study does not have to be at postgraduate level to be counted. Further study undertaken at further education colleges is not reflected in these figures as this information is not collected by HESA.

Sustained employment, further study or both: includes all graduates with a record of sustained employment or further study. This category includes all graduates in the 'sustained employment with or without further study' category as well as those with a further study record only.

It is important to note that our definition of sustained employment does not distinguish between the different types of work that graduates are engaged in and so cannot provide an indication of the proportion of graduates who are employed in graduate occupations. Furthermore, we cannot distinguish between full-time and part-time employment.

Employment outcomes for international graduates

Outcomes for **international** graduates are presented for **all graduates** within the specific academic years (i.e. graduates that are 'unmatched' are included in the denominator).

Unmatched graduates are placed in a separate '**unmatched**' outcome category. For these populations, the match rates are much lower as international graduates are much more likely to leave the UK after graduation. Including these graduates in the calculations means we get a better indication of the proportion of graduates who have stayed in the UK to work or study after graduation, making it easier to compare countries with different match rates. For international domiciled graduates, the employment outcomes categories should not be used as an indication of success in finding employment after graduation. It is likely that the majority of graduates in the 'unmatched' or 'activity not captured' categories are employed outside of the UK.

Contextual Information

There are a number of factors that can influence the employment and earnings outcomes of graduates beyond the subject studied. The outcomes presented in this release are ‘raw’ outcomes, they **do not control for differences in the characteristics of students or university attended** that might influence graduate employment outcomes. This should be borne in mind when making comparisons between domiciles. In addition international domiciled graduates may be subject to minimum salary criteria before being granted a visa to work in the UK.

3. Results for UK postgraduates

This release looks for the first time at employment and earnings outcomes for UK postgraduates, comparing those with Level 7 (taught), Level 7 (research) and Level 8 degrees. Level 7 (taught) and Level 7 (research) degrees are commonly known as master’s degrees. Level 8 degrees are commonly known as doctoral degrees.

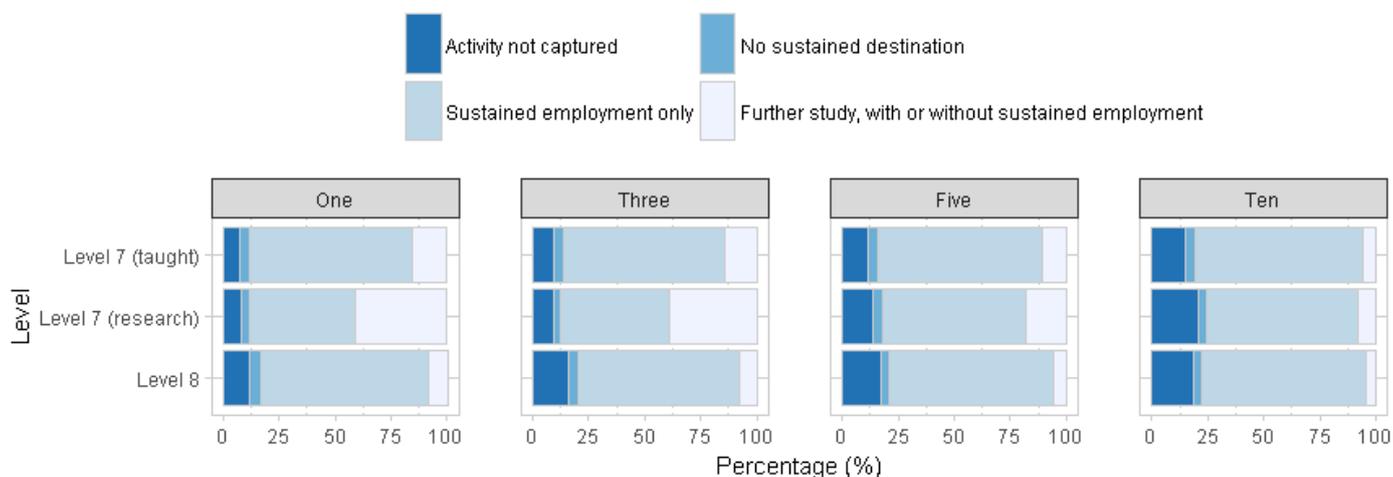
Employment outcomes for UK postgraduates

This section focuses on the employment and/or further study outcomes of UK postgraduates at one, three, five and ten years after graduation for the 2015/16 tax year. Employment and/or further study outcomes for UK postgraduates are calculated as a percentage of those matched to CIS or a HESA further study record.

Chart 1 shows the proportion of Level 7 (taught), Level 7 (research) and Level 8 graduates whose activity was not captured, who had no sustained destination, who were in sustained employment, or who were in further study (with or without sustained employment).

Chart 1: Activity of UK postgraduates one, three, five and ten years after graduation by level of study

Coverage: UK domiciled Level 7 (taught), Level 7 (research) and Level 8 graduates from English HEIs
 Cohorts: 2004/05 (10 years after graduation), 2009/10 (5 years), 2011/12 (3 years), 2013/14 (1 year)
 Tax year: 2015/16



At one and three years after graduation, the proportion of UK postgraduates in further study (with or without sustained employment) is particularly high for Level 7 (research) and to a lesser extent for Level 7 (taught). This proportion falls by ten years after graduation as the number in sustained employment increases, reflecting the movement of these Level 7 graduates from further study to employment. A small proportion of Level 8 graduates are also listed as being in further study.

At one, three and five years after graduation, the proportion of Level 8 graduates whose activity was not captured was higher than the Level 7 graduates. This may reflect the movement of these Level 8 graduates in seeking employment outside of the UK.

Regardless of the level of study, the proportion of graduates in sustained employment, further study or both was higher for females than for males (Table 2). This corresponding with a higher proportion of males whose activity was not captured for each level of study.

Table 2: Activity of UK postgraduates five years after graduation by level of study and sex

Coverage: UK domiciled Level 7 (taught), Level 7 (research) and Level 8 graduates from English HEIs
 Cohorts: 2009/10 (5 years after graduation)
 Tax year: 2015/16

Study level	Sex	Number of graduates	Activity not captured (%)	No sustained destination (%)	Sustained employment only (%)	Sustained employment, further study or both (%)
Level 7 (taught)	Female	57,200	10.7	4.1	73.9	85.3
	Male	38,815	13.1	4.0	72.8	82.8
Level 7 (research)	Female	775	12.6	4.0	63.3	83.4
	Male	740	15.4	4.2	63.6	80.3
Level 8	Female	4,165	16.0	3.4	74.2	80.7
	Male	4,415	18.5	3.4	72.4	78.1

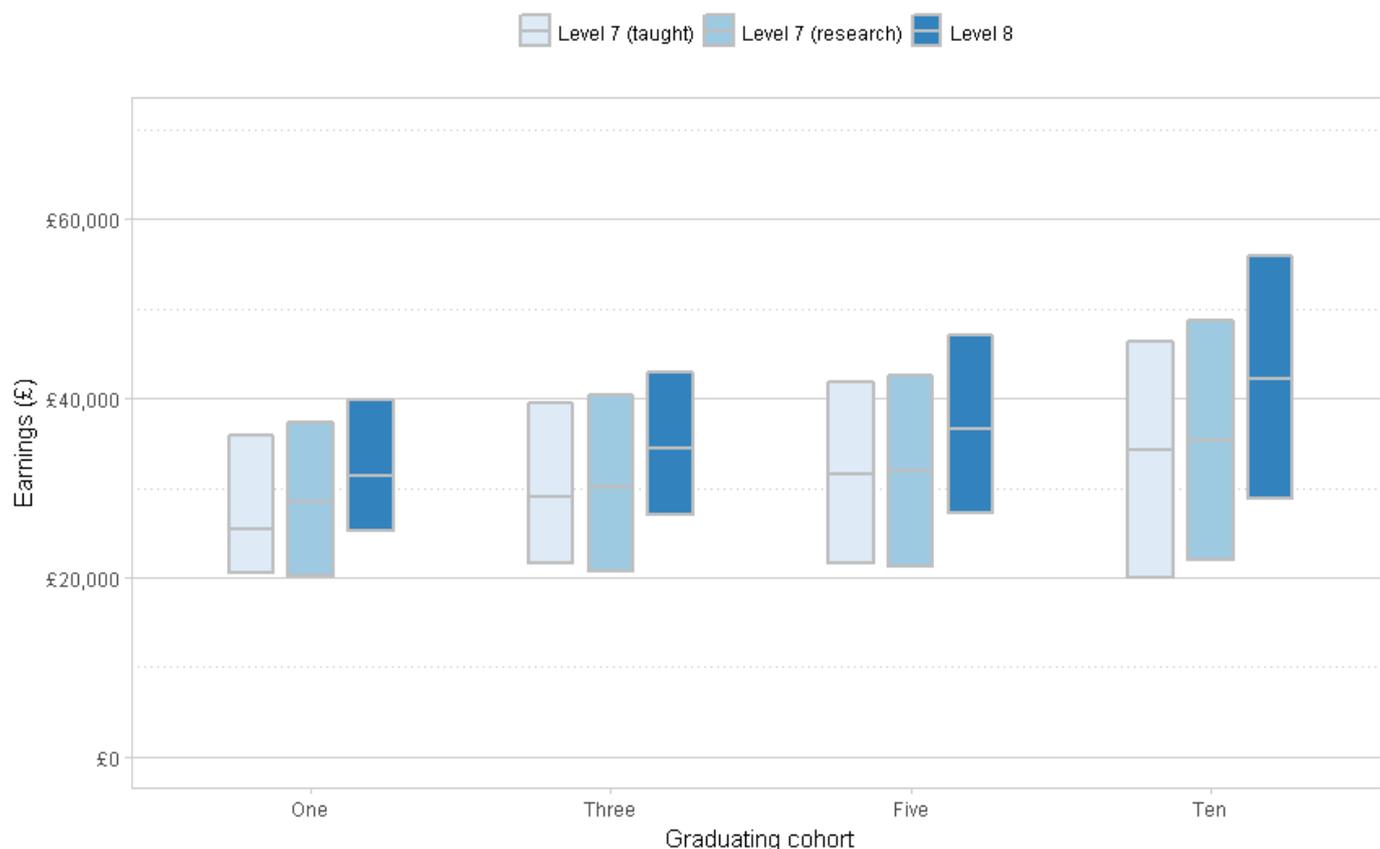
Earnings for UK postgraduates

This section focuses on the median earnings of UK postgraduates in sustained employment at one, three, five and ten years after graduation for the 2015/16 tax year.

Chart 2 shows the earnings of Level 7 (taught), Level 7 (research) and Level 8 graduates, where the middle grey line indicates the median earnings figure and the boxes either side of the grey line indicate the interquartile range (the range between the upper and lower quartile values).

Chart 2: Earnings of UK postgraduates one, three, five and ten years after graduation by level of study

Coverage: UK domiciled Level 7 (taught), Level 7 (research) and Level 8 graduates from English HEIs
 Cohorts: 2004/05 (10 years after graduation), 2009/10 (5 years), 2011/12 (3 years), 2013/14 (1 year)
 Tax year: 2015/16



For all levels of study, median earnings were higher ten years after graduation compared to one year after graduation. Level 7 (taught) earnings were £25,400 one year after graduation and £34,200 ten years after graduation. Level 7 (research) earnings were £28,500 one year after graduation and £35,400 ten years after graduation. Level 8 earnings were £31,400 one year after graduation and £42,200 ten years after graduation.

At each time point after graduation, Level 8 graduates had higher median earnings than Level 7 (research) graduates, who in turn had higher median earnings than Level 7 (taught) graduates. The gap between Level 8 and Level 7 (research) was £2,900 one year after graduation compared to £6,800 ten years after graduation. Meanwhile, the gap between Level 7 (taught) and Level 7 (research) was £3,100 one year after graduation compared to £1,200 ten years after graduation.

Regardless of the level of study, males had higher median earnings than females (Table 3). The difference between male and female earnings was relatively consistent between Level 7 (taught) (£5,700) and Level 8 (£5,600).

Table 3: Earnings of UK postgraduates five years after graduation by level of study and sex

Coverage: UK domiciled Level 7 (taught), Level 7 (research) and Level 8 graduates from English HEIs

Cohorts: 2009/10 (5 years after graduation)

Tax year: 2015/16

Study level	Sex	Number included in the earnings figures	Earnings - lower quartile (£)	Earnings - median (£)	Earnings - upper quartile (£)
Level 7 (taught)	Female	36,735	19,700	29,500	37,800
	Male	25,060	25,400	35,200	49,600
Level 7 (research)	Female	425	19,500	29,800	39,800
	Male	425	23,800	33,700	45,400
Level 8	Female	2,645	22,500	33,600	42,800
	Male	2,870	32,100	39,200	52,700

Subject level employment outcomes for UK postgraduates

This section focuses on the employment and/or further study outcomes of UK postgraduates five years after graduation for the 2015/16 tax year, split by subject.

Due to the small numbers taking Level 7 (research) degrees, these subject level breakdowns are not shown separately. Instead, outcomes for all Level 7 courses (i.e. Level 7 (taught) and Level 7 (research)) are combined for each subject. In addition, PGCE and MBA graduates have been separated out rather than including them in the relevant subject breakdowns.

Employment outcomes data on Level 8 graduates can be found in the tables accompanying this release. Data may be omitted in the chart due to the suppression of categories with low numbers of graduates.

Chart 3 shows the proportion of Level 7 graduates whose activity was not captured, who had no sustained destination, who were in sustained employment, or who were in further study (with or without sustained employment).

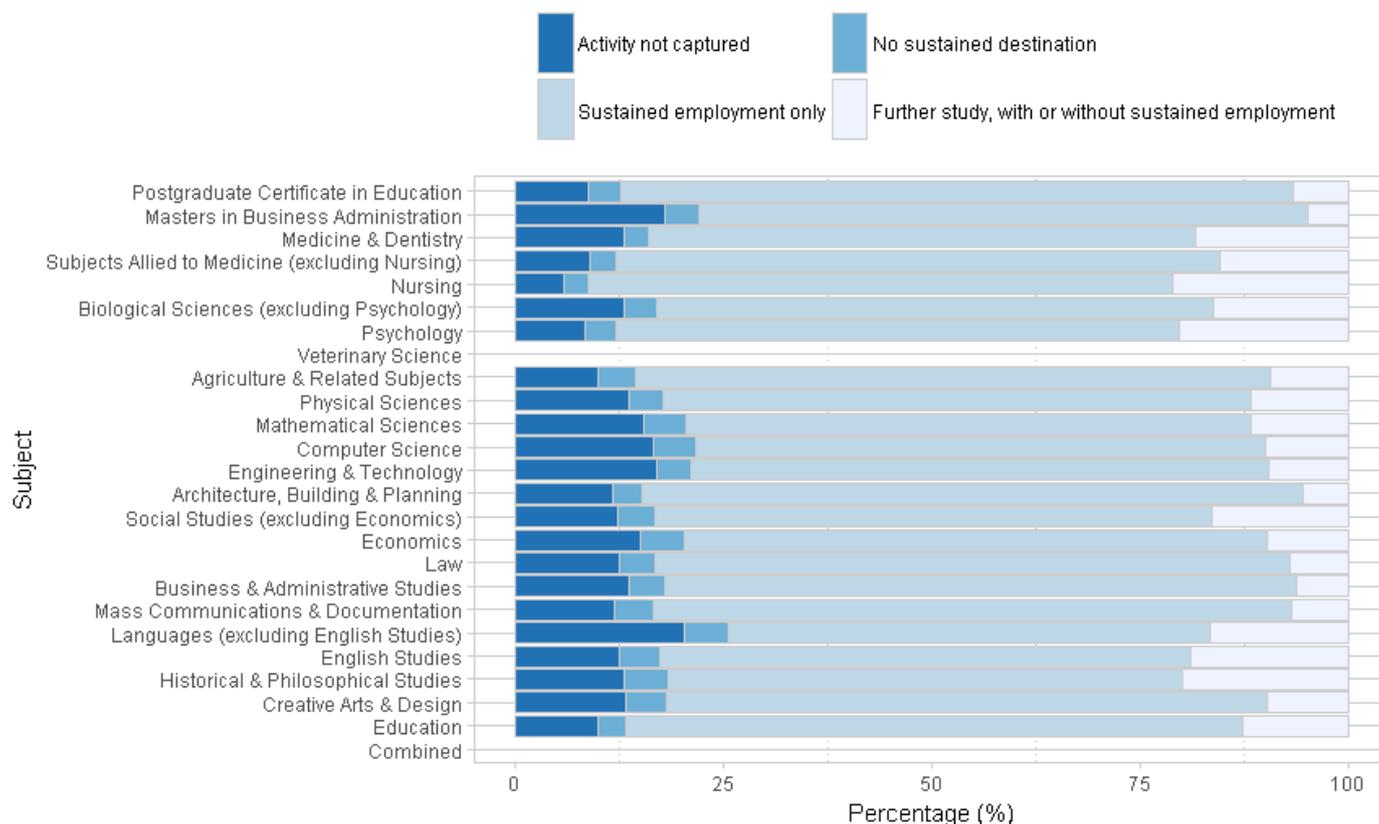
Chart 3: Activity of UK postgraduates five years after graduation by subject

Coverage: UK domiciled Level 7 graduates from English HEIs

Cohorts: 2009/10 (5 years after graduation)

Tax year: 2015/16

Data has been omitted from this chart due to the suppression of categories with low numbers of graduates



Graduates with a PGCE had the highest level of sustained employment only (80.9%), while graduates in Languages (excluding English Studies) had the lowest level of sustained employment only (57.9%). The low sustained employment rate was driven by the high proportion of Languages (excluding English Studies) graduates whose activity was not captured (20.4%). This is not surprising as, given the nature of their degrees, it is more likely that these graduates would seek employment overseas. Graduates with an MBA also had a high proportion classified as activity not captured (18%). Graduates in Nursing (5.7%) and Psychology (8.4%) had the lowest levels of activity not captured.

Graduates with an MBA (4.8%) or Architecture, Building & Planning (5.4%) had the lowest additional proportion of graduates in further study (with or without sustained employment), while graduates in Nursing (21%), Psychology (20.3%) or Historical & Philosophical Studies (19.9%) had the highest additional proportion of graduates in further study (with or without sustained employment).

Of the 20 subjects where comparison between females and males was possible, 9 subjects had a higher proportion of female graduates in sustained employment, further study or both and 11 subjects had a higher proportion of male graduates in sustained employment, further study or both (Table 4). The difference between females and males was small for subjects such as Psychology (0.1%) but larger for other subjects such as Economics (5.2%).

Table 4: Percentage of UK postgraduates five years after graduation in sustained employment, further study or both by sex

Coverage: UK domiciled Level 7 graduates from English HEIs

Cohorts: 2009/10 (5 years after graduation)

Tax year: 2015/16

Subject	Female		Male	
	Number of graduates	Sustained employment, further study or both (%)	Number of graduates	Sustained employment, further study or both (%)
Postgraduate Certificate in Education	12,110	87.5	5,010	87.1
Masters in Business Administration	930	78.7	2,100	77.5
Medicine & Dentistry	1,455	83.8	870	84.1
Subjects Allied to Medicine (excluding Nursing)	4,470	87.7	1,630	88.9
Nursing	2,285	91.7	430	89.5
Biological Sciences (excluding Psychology)	865	84.6	775	81.2
Psychology	2,510	88.0	770	88.1
Veterinary Science	45	80.0	15	86.1
Agriculture & Related Subjects	230	87.4	190	83.6
Physical Sciences	965	83.0	1,145	81.7
Mathematical Sciences	185	79.1	375	79.7
Computer Science	450	77.9	1,715	78.4
Engineering & Technology	715	78.5	2,545	79.0
Architecture, Building & Planning	1,610	84.5	2,685	84.9
Social Studies (excluding Economics)	4,685	84.9	2,765	80.4
Economics	215	76.1	460	81.3
Law	2,720	84.5	2,160	81.8
Business & Administrative Studies	6,755	83.2	6,010	80.7
Mass Communications & Documentation	1,445	83.6	850	83.4
Languages (excluding English Studies)	915	74.3	525	74.7
English Studies	810	82.0	360	83.7
Historical & Philosophical Studies	1,605	81.8	1,505	81.5
Creative Arts & Design	2,770	81.4	1,815	82.4
Education	7,170	86.6	2,795	86.9
Combined	70	87.9	45	82.6

Subject level earnings for UK postgraduates

This section focuses on the median earnings of UK postgraduates in sustained employment five years after graduation for the 2015/16 tax year, split by subject and sex.

As with the employment outcomes, these subject level breakdowns include all of the Level 7 data rather than splitting by taught or research. In addition, PGCE and MBA graduates have been highlighted rather than including them in the relevant subject breakdowns. Only Level 7 graduates have been included in this section.

Subject level earnings data for Level 8 graduates can be found in the tables accompanying this release. Data may be omitted in the chart due to the suppression of categories with low numbers of graduates.

Chart 4 shows the earnings of Level 7 graduates, where the middle grey line indicates the median earnings figure and the boxes either side of the grey line indicate the interquartile range (the range between the median and the upper/lower quartile values).

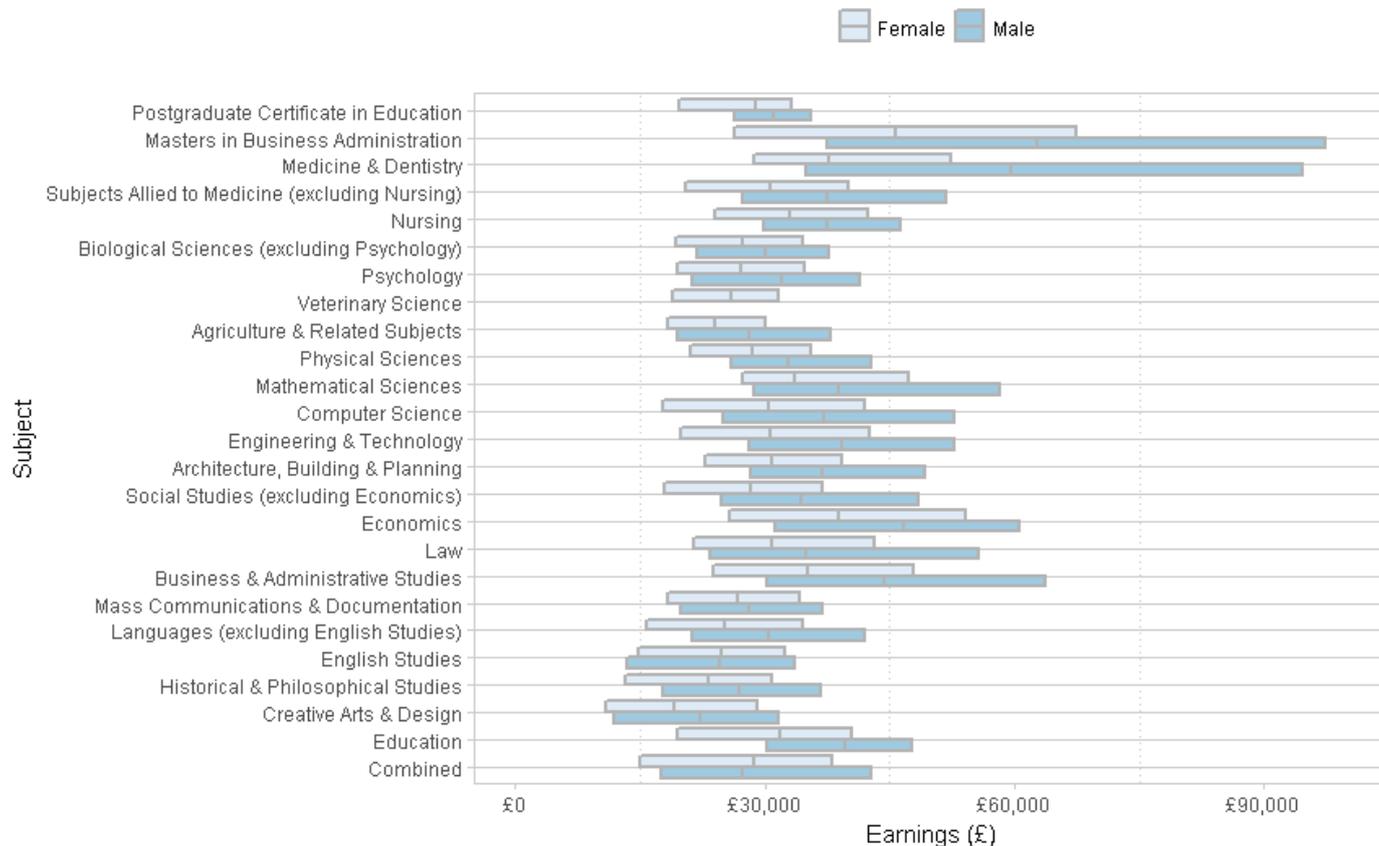
Chart 4: Earnings of UK postgraduates five years after graduation by subject and sex

Coverage: UK domiciled Level 7 graduates from English HEIs

Cohorts: 2009/10 (5 years after graduation)

Tax year: 2015/16

Data has been omitted from this chart due to the suppression of categories with low numbers of graduates



Median earnings were highest for those with a Masters in Business Administration (£57,400) and lowest for those who studied Creative Arts & Design (£20,400). Large variability in interquartile earnings can be seen from subject to subject. For example, graduates with a Masters in Business Administration had an interquartile range of £55,200. In contrast, graduates with a Postgraduate Certificate in Education had an interquartile range of £12,300.

Of the 24 subjects where comparison between females and males was possible, males had higher median earnings for 22 subjects. Females had higher median earnings in English Studies and Combined (Table 5). The difference between female and male earnings varied heavily between subjects. The smallest difference between female and male median earnings was for English Studies (£200) and the largest difference was for Medicine & Dentistry (£22,000).

Table 5: Earnings of UK postgraduates five years after graduation by sex

Coverage: UK domiciled Level 7 graduates from English HEIs

Cohorts: 2009/10 (5 years after graduation)

Tax year: 2015/16

Data has been omitted from this table due to the suppression of categories with low numbers of graduates

Subject	Female		Male	
	Number included in the earnings figures	Earnings - median (£)	Number included in the earnings figures	Earnings - median (£)
Postgraduate Certificate in Education	8,965	28,800	3,810	31,100
Masters in Business Administration	530	45,800	1,335	62,700
Medicine & Dentistry	785	37,600	470	59,600
Subjects Allied to Medicine (excluding Nursing)	2,745	30,600	1,040	37,500
Nursing	1,445	33,000	260	37,400
Biological Sciences (excluding Psychology)	520	27,400	460	30,100
Psychology	1,460	27,100	460	32,100
Veterinary Science	25	26,000	.	.
Agriculture & Related Subjects	155	24,000	125	28,100
Physical Sciences	605	28,500	730	32,900
Mathematical Sciences	115	33,500	225	38,900
Computer Science	250	30,500	1,020	37,100
Engineering & Technology	400	30,600	1,580	39,200
Architecture, Building & Planning	1,110	30,900	1,940	36,900
Social Studies (excluding Economics)	2,790	28,400	1,590	34,300
Economics	115	38,800	290	46,600
Law	1,820	30,800	1,430	35,000
Business & Administrative Studies	4,370	35,100	3,925	44,300
Mass Communications & Documentation	935	26,800	580	28,200
Languages (excluding English Studies)	435	25,200	250	30,500
English Studies	445	24,700	210	24,500
Historical & Philosophical Studies	820	23,300	800	27,000
Creative Arts & Design	1,575	19,200	1,075	22,200
Education	4,700	31,800	1,850	39,700
Combined	50	28,700	35	27,300

Comparison with first degree graduates

At first glance, the earnings for Level 7 graduates in certain subjects appear substantially higher than the [earnings of first degree graduates](#) in the same subjects. For example, first degree Computer Science graduates had median earnings of £27,800 five years after graduation compared to £36,000 for those who completed a Level 7 qualification in the same academic year (see table 6). Earnings for level 7 graduates were higher in all subject areas although there are subjects where the difference is much smaller. For example, Creative Arts & Design first degree graduates had median earnings of £20,200 five years after graduation compared to £20,400 for those who completed a Level 7 qualification in the same academic year. Table 6 highlights the subjects with the biggest and smallest differences between first degree and Level 7 earnings five years after graduation.

Table 6: Comparison of earnings for UK first degree and Level 7 graduates five years after graduation

Coverage: UK first degree and Level 7 graduates from English HEIs

Cohorts: 2009/10 (5 years after graduation)

Tax year: 2015/16

Subject	First degree earnings – median (£)	Level 7 earnings – median (£)
Business & Administrative Studies	26,800	38,900
Education	23,700	34,100
Computer Science	27,800	36,000
Creative Arts & Design	20,200	20,400
Languages (excluding English Studies)	27,400	27,600
Historical & Philosophical Studies	25,400	24,900

It must be noted that this difference cannot solely be attributed to the impact of having a postgraduate degree. The first degree graduates that go on to study at postgraduate level are a non-random subset of the first degree population, typically being the higher attaining graduates. This is exemplified in Table 7, showing that 20.4% of graduates who went on to Level 7 or Level 8 study obtained a first class degree compared to 12.5% of graduates who did not continue to Level 7 or Level 8.

Table 7: Comparison of those who went on to postgraduate study with those who did not

Coverage: UK first degree graduates from English HEIs

Cohorts: 2009/10 (5 years after graduation)

Tax year: 2015/16

Degree class	Went on to Level 7/8		Did not do Level 7/8	
	Number of graduates	Proportion	Number of graduates	Proportion
1 st	7,455	20.4%	26,465	12.5%
2:1	20,355	55.8%	95,985	45.3%
2:2	7,290	20.0%	60,930	28.8%
3 rd	545	1.5%	10,915	5.2%
Other	825	2.3%	17,460	8.2%
TOTAL:	36,470	100%	211,755	100%

Table 8 shows the median earnings by degree class for this cohort, highlighting the higher earnings for those with a higher degree class. The Department for Education has commissioned the Institute for Fiscal Studies to look into the earnings returns associated with postgraduate study after controlling for the different characteristics of those who continue to postgraduate level. This research will provide more insight into how much of the higher 'raw' earnings observed for Level 7 or Level 8 graduates can be explained by having a postgraduate qualification.

Table 8: Earnings of UK first degree graduates five years after graduation by degree class

Coverage: UK first degree graduates from English HEIs

Cohorts: 2009/10 (5 years after graduation)

Tax year: 2015/16

Degree class	Number of graduates	Number included in the earnings figures	Earnings – lower quartile (£)	Earnings – median (£)	Earnings – upper quartile (£)
1 st	33,920	22,250	21,600	29,800	40,100
2:1	116,340	82,375	19,400	26,600	34,500
2:2	68,220	48,345	16,600	23,200	30,100
3 rd	11,460	7,830	14,800	21,100	28,200
Other	18,290	12,280	18,300	29,400	46,200

4. Results for international postgraduates

Following the results for UK postgraduates, this release looks for the first time at employment and earnings outcomes for international postgraduates, comparing those with Level 7 (taught), Level 7 (research) and Level 8 degrees.

The [previous LEO release](#) introduced employment and earnings outcomes for international graduates for the first time. In that release, we highlighted the comparatively poor LEO coverage for international domiciled first degree graduates compared to UK domiciled first degree graduates. This is because LEO relies on graduates having been issued with a National Insurance number to match them to an employment record. However, international students who have no intention of working or claiming benefits in the UK are less likely to apply for a National Insurance number and so would not appear in the LEO data.

It is important to emphasise that the results presented in this release do not reflect the likelihood of an international graduate being in employment or achieving a certain level of earnings. Instead, they reflect the average outcome when an international graduate has remained in the UK.

Employment outcomes for international postgraduates

This section focuses on the employment and/or further study outcomes of international postgraduates at one, three, five and ten years after graduation for the 2015/16 tax year. Employment and/or further study outcomes for the UK postgraduates are calculated as a percentage of all graduates within the specified academic years. Data may be omitted in the chart due to the suppression of categories with low numbers of graduates.

Chart 5 shows the proportion of Level 7 (taught), Level 7 (research) and Level 8 graduates who were not matched to CIS or a further study record, whose activity was not captured, who had no sustained destination, who were in sustained employment, or who were in further study (with or without sustained employment).

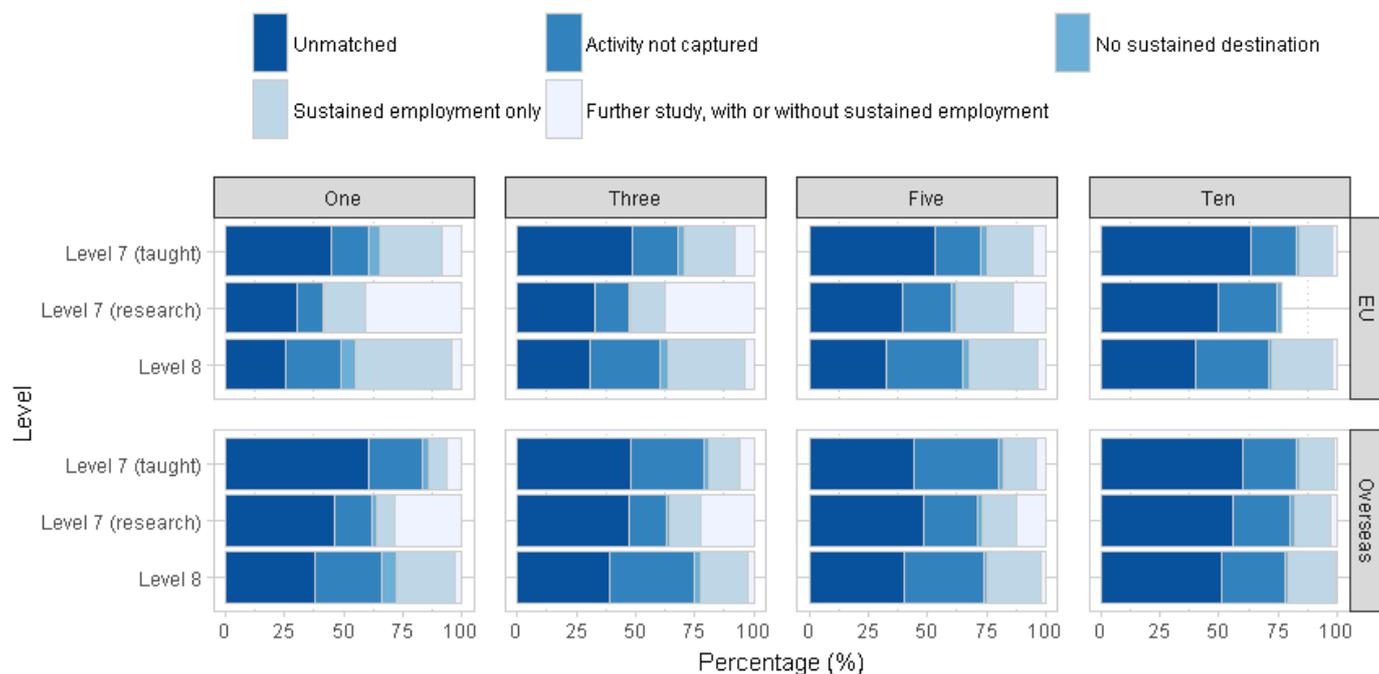
Chart 5: Activity of international postgraduates one, three, five and ten years after graduation by level of study

Coverage: EU and Overseas domiciled Level 7 (taught), Level 7 (research) and Level 8 graduates from English HEIs

Cohorts: 2004/05 (10 years after graduation), 2009/10 (5 years), 2011/12 (3 years), 2013/14 (1 year)

Tax year: 2015/16

Data has been omitted from this chart due to the suppression of categories with low numbers of graduates



Match rates for both EU and Overseas domiciled postgraduates were low ten years after graduation but improved for the cohorts who graduated one, three and five years ago. In line with the UK domiciled results, the proportion of EU and Overseas postgraduates in further study (with or without sustained employment) is particularly high for Level 7 (research). This proportion falls by ten years after graduation as the number in sustained employment increases, reflecting the movement of these Level 7 graduates from further study to employment.

For EU domiciled graduates, those who completed a Level 8 qualification were more likely to be in sustained employment and/or further study in the UK after graduation compared to those who completed a Level 7 (taught) qualification. For example, 45% of Level 8 graduates were in sustained employment and/or further study one year after graduation compared to 34.6% of Level 7 (taught) graduates. This pattern is also true for Overseas graduates where 27.5% of Level 8 graduates were in sustained employment and/or further study one year after graduation compared to 14% of Level 7 (taught) graduates.

Overall, Overseas domiciled graduates were less likely to be in sustained employment and/or further study in the UK than EU domiciled graduates. However, when looking at those who graduated with a Level 7 (taught) qualification ten years after graduation, the same proportion of EU and Overseas domiciled graduates were still working and/or studying in the UK (15.9%).

In line with the UK domiciled results, female EU domiciled graduates were more likely to be in sustained employment, further study or both than male EU domiciled graduates irrespective of the level of study (Table 9). However, for Overseas domiciled Level 7 (taught) and Level 8 graduates, males were more likely to be in sustained employment than females.

Table 9: Proportion of international postgraduates five years after graduation in sustained employment, further study or both by level of study and sex

Coverage: EU and Overseas domiciled Level 7 (taught), Level 7 (research) and Level 8 graduates from English HEIs

Cohorts: 2009/10 (5 years after graduation)

Tax year: 2015/16

Study level	Sex	EU		Overseas	
		Number of graduates	Sustained employment, further study or both (%)	Number of graduates	Sustained employment, further study or both (%)
Level 7 (taught)	Female	8,220	26.3	25,830	15.7
	Male	7,010	22.7	31,270	20.0
Level 7 (research)	Female	160	41.6	415	29.2
	Male	205	35.0	470	24.9
Level 8	Female	1,020	34.1	1,835	23.3
	Male	1,275	30.7	2,810	25.1

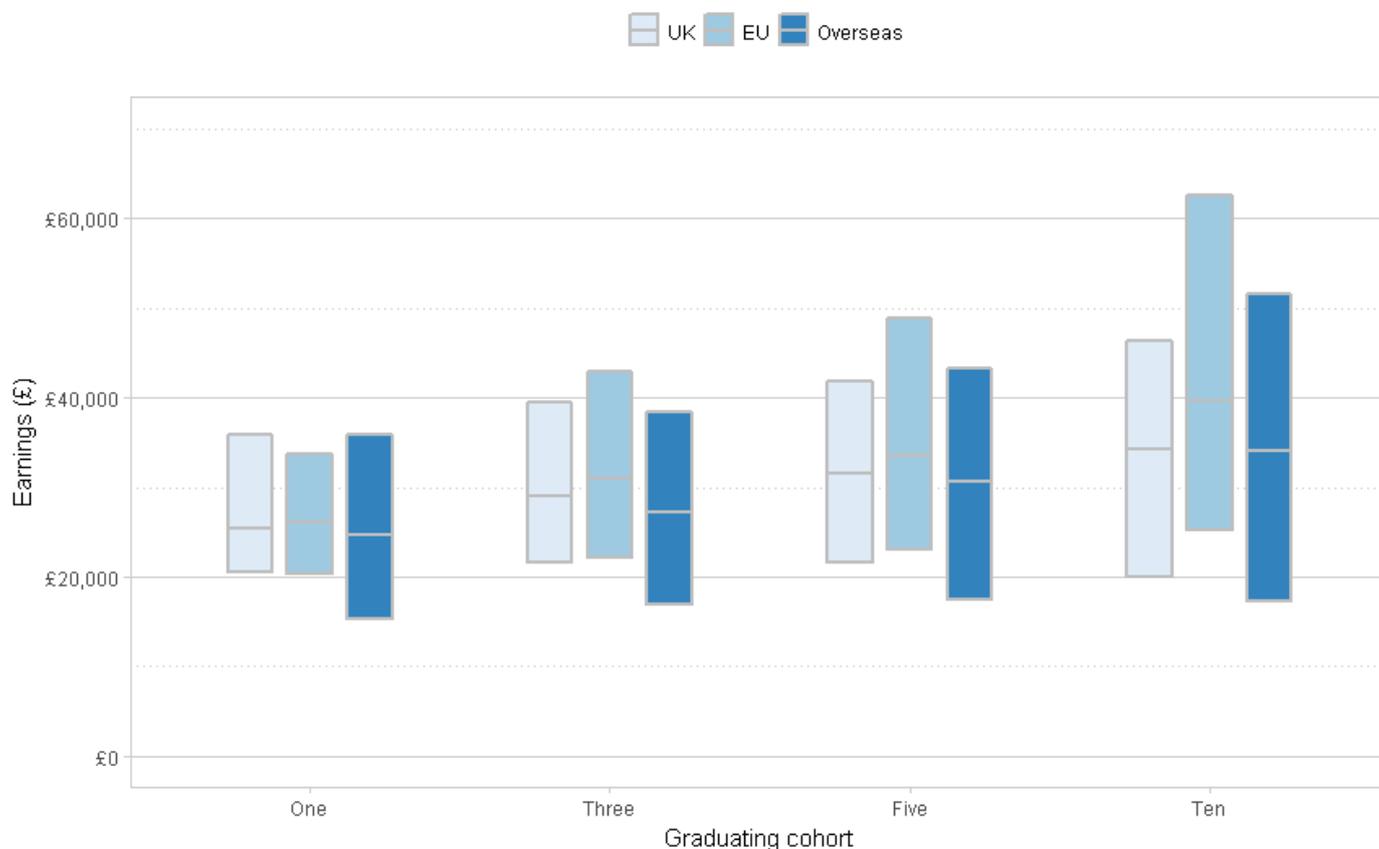
Earnings for international postgraduates

This section focuses on the median earnings of international postgraduates in sustained employment at one, three, five and ten years after graduation for the 2015/16 tax year.

Chart 6 shows the earnings of Level 7 (taught) graduates, where the middle grey line indicates the median earnings figure and the boxes either side of the grey line indicate the interquartile range (the range between the median and the upper/lower quartile values). Only Level 7 (taught) graduates have been included in this section. Earnings data for Level 7 (research) and Level 8 graduates can be found in the tables accompanying this release. UK graduates have also been included in the chart for comparison with international graduates.

Chart 6: Earnings of UK and international postgraduates one, three, five and ten years after graduation by level of study

Coverage: UK, EU and Overseas domiciled Level 7 (taught) from English HEIs
 Cohorts: 2004/05 (10 years after graduation), 2009/10 (5 years), 2011/12 (3 years), 2013/14 (1 year)
 Tax year: 2015/16



In line with the UK domiciled results, median earnings were higher for all levels of study ten years after graduation compared to one year after graduation. For UK graduates, Level 7 (taught) earnings were £25,400 one year after graduation and £34,200 ten years after graduation. For EU graduates, Level 7 (taught) earnings were £26,200 one year after graduation and £39,600 ten years after graduation. For Overseas graduates, Level 7 (taught) earnings were £24,700 one year after graduation and £34,000 ten years after graduation.

For EU and Overseas domiciled graduates, regardless of the level of study, males had higher median earnings than females (Table 10). The difference between female and male earnings was highest for EU domiciled Level 7 (taught) graduates (£8,900) and was lowest for Overseas domiciled Level 7 (taught) graduates (£2,400).

Table 10: Median earnings of international postgraduates five years after graduation by level of study and sex

Coverage: EU and Overseas domiciled Level 7 (taught), Level 7 (research) and Level 8 graduates from English HEIs

Cohorts: 2009/10 (5 years after graduation)

Tax year: 2015/16

Study level	Sex	EU		Overseas	
		Number included in the earnings figures	Earnings - median (£)	Number included in the earnings figures	Earnings - median (£)
Level 7 (taught)	Female	1,530	30,700	2,605	29,100
	Male	1,155	39,600	4,120	31,500
Level 7 (research)	Female	40	28,800	60	27,700
	Male	35	33,600	50	35,600
Level 8	Female	285	35,600	335	34,500
	Male	325	40,100	540	40,200

Employment outcomes by country

This section focuses on the employment and/or further study outcomes of international postgraduates five years after graduation for the 2015/16 tax year, concentrating specifically on the twenty countries² with the largest international graduate populations. This country level analysis was only performed on Level 7 graduates.

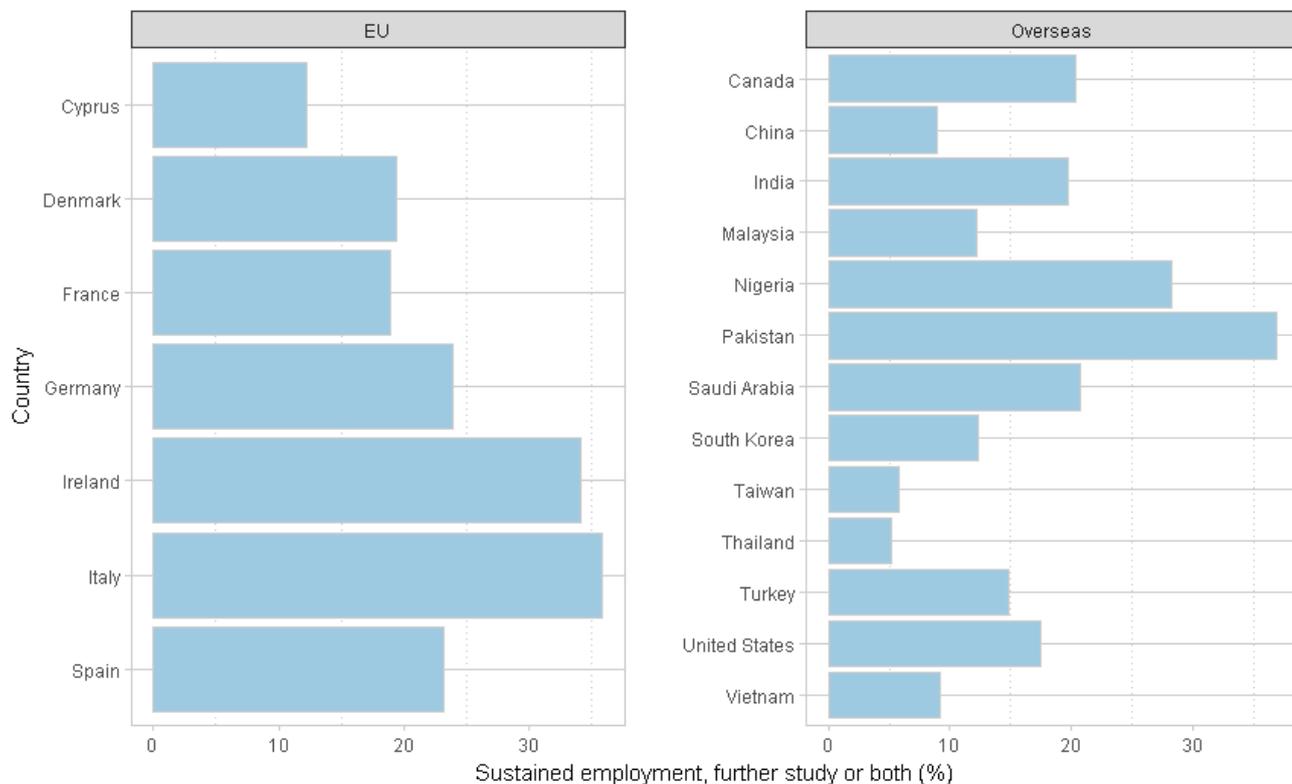
Chart 7 shows the proportion of Level 7 graduates who were not matched to CIS or a further study record, who were in sustained employment, further study or both.

Chart 7: Proportion of international postgraduates five years after graduation in sustained employment, further study or both by country

Coverage: EU and Overseas domiciled Level 7 graduates from English HEIs

Cohorts: 2009/10 (5 years after graduation)

Tax year: 2015/16



² The top twenty countries by graduate population were initially identified from the 2015/16 tax year, one year after graduation. These countries were then used for subsequent analysis to allow for comparison between the remaining tax and academic years.

Irrespective of domicile, the proportion of graduates in sustained employment, further study or both (%) varied considerably between country. Of the EU countries, Italy had the highest proportion in sustained employment, further study or both (35.9%) and Cyprus had the lowest proportion (12.2%). Of the Overseas countries, Pakistan had the highest proportion in sustained employment, further study or both (37%) and Thailand had the lowest proportion (5.2%).

Table 11: Activity of international postgraduates five years after graduation by country

Coverage: EU and Overseas domiciled Level 7 graduates from English HEIs

Cohorts: 2009/10 (5 years after graduation)

Tax year: 2015/16

Data has been omitted from this table due to the suppression of categories with low numbers of graduates

Country	Domicile	Number of graduates	Unmatched (%)	Activity not captured (%)	No sustained destination (%)	Sustained employment only (%)	Sustained employment, further study or both (%)
India	Overseas	12,160	18.2	60.1	2.0	18.0	19.7
China	Overseas	11,165	60.5	29.4	1.2	7.0	9.0
Nigeria	Overseas	4,030	22.3	46.9	2.6	21.5	28.3
United States	Overseas	3,265	56.6	24.1	1.8	12.6	17.5
Germany	EU	2,680	60.5	12.9	2.6	17.5	23.9
Pakistan	Overseas	2,640	18.1	41.4	3.5	32.9	37.0
Taiwan	Overseas	2,020	79.7	.	.	.	5.8
Denmark	EU	1,930	59.9	18.6	2.1	14.4	19.4
France	EU	1,830	57.2	21.9	1.9	17.3	19.0
Thailand	Overseas	1,745	69.6	.	.	3.1	5.2
Ireland	EU	1,490	38.1	24.4	3.3	28.7	34.2
Cyprus	EU	1,430	72.3	13.6	1.9	8.0	12.2
Canada	Overseas	1,160	52.7	24.8	2.0	14.3	20.4
Malaysia	Overseas	1,070	51.8	34.9	1.1	8.2	12.2
Italy	EU	1,060	36.0	24.1	4.0	27.6	35.9
Saudi Arabia	Overseas	995	72.2	.	.	.	20.7
South Korea	Overseas	865	67.9	.	.	.	12.4
Turkey	Overseas	845	58.1	25.9	1.2	.	14.9
Spain	EU	755	55.7	18.8	2.3	17.9	23.2
Vietnam	Overseas	450	54.7	.	.	.	9.2

Earnings by country

This section focuses on the median earnings of international postgraduates five years after graduation for the 2015/16 tax year, concentrating specifically on the twenty countries with the largest international graduate populations. This country level analysis was only performed on Level 7 graduates.

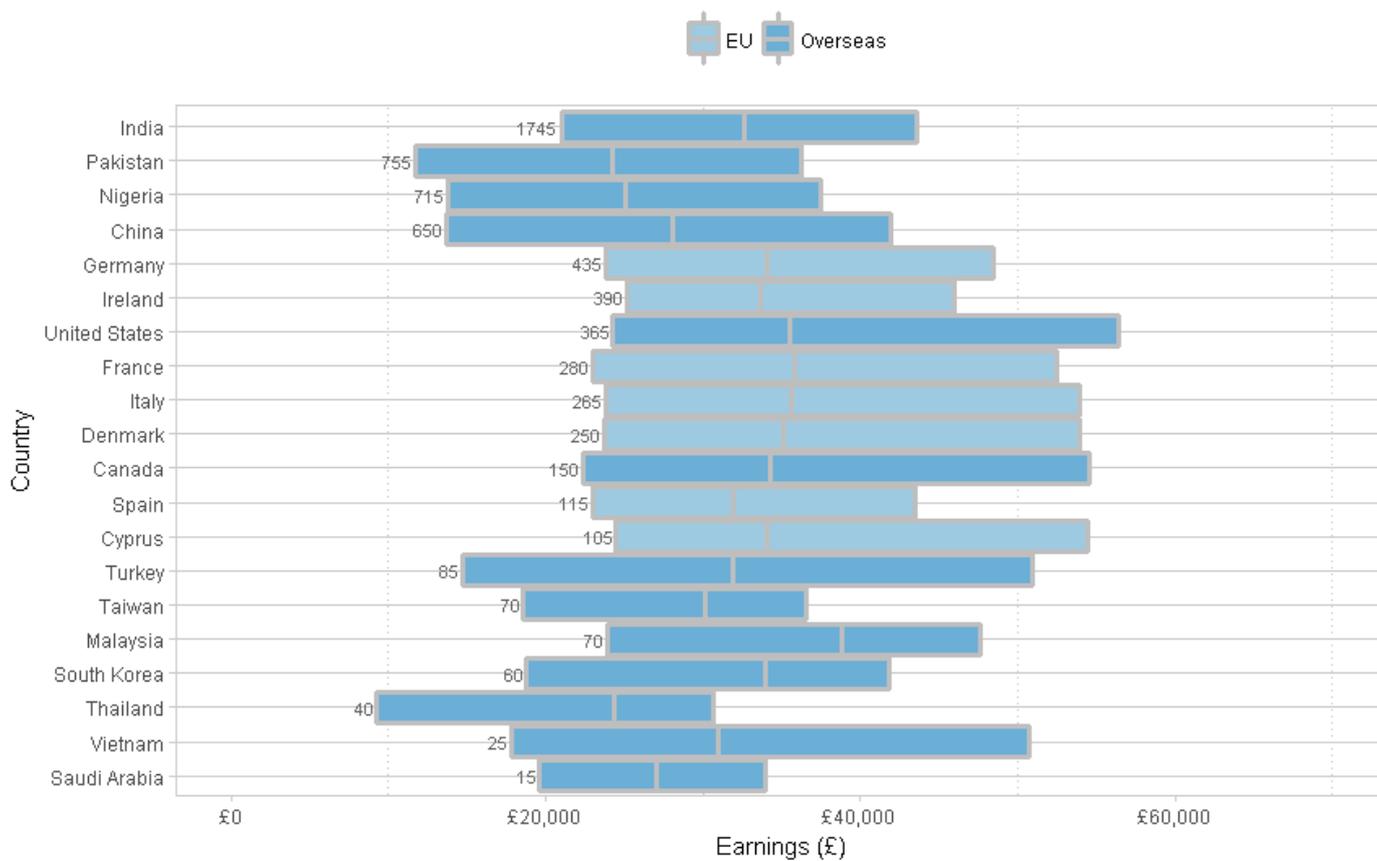
Chart 8 shows the earnings of Level 7 graduates, where the middle grey line indicates the median earnings figure and the boxes either side of the grey line indicate the interquartile range (the range between the upper and lower quartile values).

Chart 8: Earnings of international postgraduates five years after graduation by country

Coverage: EU and Overseas domiciled Level 7 graduates from English HEIs

Cohorts: 2009/10 (5 years after graduation)

Tax year: 2015/16



For the EU countries, there was only a small amount of variability in earnings with France having the highest median earnings (£35,800) and Spain having the lowest median earnings (£31,900). For the Overseas countries, there was a larger amount of variability in earnings with Malaysia having the highest median earnings (£38,800) and Pakistan having the lowest median earnings (£24,300). For comparison, UK domiciled Level 7 median earnings were £31,700 five years after graduation.

There was also variability in the interquartile range of earnings between countries (Table 12). Saudi Arabia had the smallest interquartile range (£14,400) while Turkey had the largest interquartile range (£36,200).

Table 12: Earnings of international postgraduates five years after graduation by country

Coverage: EU and Overseas domiciled Level 7 graduates from English HEIs

Cohorts: 2009/10 (5 years after graduation)

Tax year: 2015/16

Country	Domicile	Number of graduates	Number included in the earnings figures	Earnings - lower quartile (£)	Earnings - median (£)	Earnings - upper quartile (£)
India	Overseas	12,160	1,745	21,000	32,600	43,600
China	Overseas	11,165	650	13,700	28,100	41,900
Nigeria	Overseas	4,030	715	13,800	25,100	37,500
United States	Overseas	3,265	365	24,300	35,500	56,400
Germany	EU	2,680	435	23,800	34,100	48,400
Pakistan	Overseas	2,640	755	11,700	24,300	36,200
Taiwan	Overseas	2,020	70	18,600	30,100	36,600
Denmark	EU	1,930	250	23,700	35,100	53,900
France	EU	1,830	280	23,000	35,800	52,500
Thailand	Overseas	1,745	40	9,300	24,400	30,700
Ireland	EU	1,490	390	25,200	33,700	46,000
Cyprus	EU	1,430	105	24,500	34,100	54,500
Canada	Overseas	1,160	150	22,400	34,300	54,600
Malaysia	Overseas	1,070	70	23,900	38,800	47,600
Italy	EU	1,060	265	23,800	35,600	53,900
Saudi Arabia	Overseas	995	15	19,600	27,000	34,000
South Korea	Overseas	865	60	18,800	34,000	41,800
Turkey	Overseas	845	85	14,700	31,900	50,900
Spain	EU	755	115	23,000	31,900	43,500
Vietnam	Overseas	450	25	17,800	31,000	50,700

5. Accompanying tables

The following tables are available in Excel format on the department's statistics website

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-higher-education-graduate-employment-and-earnings>:

Main tables

Table 1: Employment outcomes of Level 7 UK graduates by subject, domicile and sex one, three, five and ten years after graduation

Table 2: Employment outcomes of Level 7 international graduates by subject, domicile and sex one, three, five and ten years after graduation

Table 3: Earnings of Level 7 UK and international graduates by subject, domicile and sex one, three, five and ten years after graduation

Table 4: Activity of top 20 Level 7 international graduate populations one, three, five and ten years after graduation

Table 5: Employment outcomes of Level 8 UK graduates by subject, domicile and sex one, three, five and ten years after graduation

Table 6: Employment outcomes of Level 8 international graduates by subject, domicile and sex one, three, five and ten years after graduation

Table 7: Earnings of Level 8 UK and international graduates by subject, domicile and sex one, three, five and ten years after graduation

Underlying data

CSV format (240518_underlying_data_UK.csv; 240518_underyling_data_international.csv)

Metadata (240518_metadata.txt)

6. Glossary

Academic year: Runs from 1 August to 31 July. For example, the 2013/14 academic year ran from 1 August 2013 to 31 July 2014.

Customer Information System (CIS): A computer system used by the Department for Work and Pensions that contains a record for all individuals that have been issued with a National Insurance (NINO) number. It contains basic identifying information such as name, address, date of birth and NINO.

Domicile: Indicates the domicile of a student from their **HESA** Student Record. Domicile records were taken from the year of graduation for each graduate. UK domicile indicates that the student was domiciled in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland prior to entry to the course. In line with HESA standard practice, students who were domiciled in the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man were not considered to be UK domiciled or EU domiciled in this publication. As such, they have been included in the Overseas category. EU domicile indicates that the student was domiciled in an EU country at the time of their graduation. This would include the latest wave of countries to join the EU such as Romania, Bulgaria and Croatia for 1, 3 and 5 years after graduation, but not for 10 years after graduation. Overseas domicile includes any other country that is not classified as either UK or EU.

Degree level: Describes the level of study that a given graduate has completed. Data on the level of study completed for each academic year was taken from the **HESA** Student Record. These were broadly grouped into Level 7 (masters degrees) and Level 8 (doctoral degrees). In some cases, Level 7 was split into Level 7 (taught) for taught masters degrees and Level 7 (research) for research masters degrees. In addition, Postgraduate Certificate in Education and Masters in Business Administration were also split out from the Level 7 (taught) category where appropriate.

Enhanced or integrated undergraduate courses (e.g. MMath, MEng) that give you a postgraduate-level qualification are not included in our Level 7 population. In accordance with HESA Standard Practice, these degree courses are included in our first degree population. This is because you do not need to have completed a Level 6 qualification to apply for these courses.

First degree qualification: This covers qualifications commonly known as bachelor's degrees and includes postgraduate bachelor's degrees at H level as well as integrated undergraduate/postgraduate taught master's degrees on the enhanced/extended pattern. Not all undergraduate courses are included: for example, the Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), foundation degrees and Higher National Diplomas (HND) are excluded. For further information on this classification, please refer to the Higher Education Statistics Agency at the link referenced below.³ Note that it does not necessarily mean that the degree is the first higher education qualification undertaken by the student.

Further study: The **HESA** Student Record is used to identify instances of further study in higher education. Students enrolled on further education courses, on some initial teacher training enhancement, booster and extension courses, whose study status is dormant, who were on sabbatical or who spent no more than 14 days on the course are excluded from this indicator. Each tax year spans two academic years; therefore, graduates will be flagged as being in further study if they have a HESA record in one of these two academic years.

HEI: Higher Education Institution.

³ Under 'Field Explanations': <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/support/definitions/students#level-study-qualification-obtained>

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA): collects data from universities, higher education colleges and other specialist providers of higher education. In this publication, we have used the HESA Student Record to identify graduates from Higher Education Institutions within our base population as well as higher education further study instances.

Individualised Learner Record (ILR): used by the further education (FE) and skills sector in England to collect data about learners in the system and the learning undertaken by each of them. In this publication, we have used the ILR to identify graduates from Further Education Colleges within our base population.

Joint Academic Coding System (JACS): a standardised way of classifying academic subjects and modules, maintained by HESA and the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS). In this publication, we group subjects using JACS high-level subject groupings. Previous research has shown that the earnings profile of economics graduates differs substantially from graduates of other social sciences; therefore, in this publication we have presented Nursing separately from other Subjects Allied to Medicine, Psychology separately from other Biological Sciences, economics separately from other social sciences, and English Studies separately from other Language.

JACS code	Subject
1	Medicine & Dentistry
2	Subjects Allied to Medicine (excluding Nursing)
B7	Nursing
3	Biological Sciences (excluding Psychology)
C8	Psychology
4	Veterinary Science
5	Agriculture & Related Subjects
6	Physical Sciences
7	Mathematical Sciences
8	Computer Science
9	Engineering & Technology
A	Architecture, Building & Planning
B	Social Studies (excluding Economics)
L1	Economics
C	Law
D	Business & Administrative Studies
E	Mass Communications & Documentation
F	Languages (excluding English Studies)
Q3	English Studies
G	Historical & Philosophical Studies
H	Creative Arts & Design
I	Education
J	Combined

National pupil database (NPD): contains information about pupils in schools and colleges in England. It includes information on test and exam results, prior attainment and pupil progress, as well as pupil characteristics such as sex, ethnicity and eligibility for free school meals.

Nominal earnings: Nominal earnings represent the cash amount an individual was paid. They are not adjusted for inflation (the general increase in the price of goods and services).

PAYE: HMRC's system to collect Income Tax and National Insurance from employment. The LEO project uses information from the **P45** to ascertain employment spell length and from the **P14 (P60)** to determine annual earnings. See the [accompanying methodology note from our previous publication](#) for a discussion of how PAYE data has been used in LEO.

Self-assessment: Self-assessment data captures the activity of individuals with income that is not taxed through PAYE, such as income from self-employment, savings and investments, property rental, and shares.

Sustained employment: A learner is counted in sustained employment if they were recorded as being employed in 5 out of the 6 months between October and March in the tax year, for example, 5 out of 6 months between October 2010 and March 2011 for the 2010/11 tax year. Additionally, graduates are counted in sustained employment if they have returned a Self Assessment tax return stating that they have received income from self-employment and their earnings from a Partnership or Sole-Trader enterprise are more than £0 (profit from self-employment).

Sustained annualised earnings: The calculated average daily wage across the tax year grossed up to the equivalent annual figure. This is only calculated where the learner was in sustained employment. Self-assessed earnings have not been annualised. Earnings figures in this publication are **nominal**.

Tax year: Runs from 6 April to 5 April the following year. For example, the reference period covered by the 2015/16 tax year runs from 6 April 2015 to 5 April 2016.

7. Experimental Statistics

Experimental statistics are new official statistics that are undergoing evaluation. These statistics are being published as experimental statistics in order to involve users and stakeholders in their development and as means to further improve the use of the data in the future.

The Department has a set of [statistical policies](#) in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

8. Feedback

We welcome feedback on this publication. Contact details can be found in [section 10: Get in touch](#).

9. Next steps

We welcome user feedback on the data contained in this release, and those wishing to provide comments should send them to HE.LEO@education.gov.uk. As we develop the LEO data further, we will look to publish further experimental statistical releases as well as establish a regular cycle of publications covering graduate outcomes to inform public understanding of the higher education system and improve the information available to students when deciding on higher education institutions and subjects.

10. Get in touch

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Department for Education

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download [hyperlink to web address](#)

Reference: Graduate Outcomes (LEO): Postgraduate Outcomes in 2015 to 2016



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