

UNIVERSITY OF EXETER

Strategic Planning and Change

2009/10 HESA Performance Indicators (31st March 2011)

A summary of Exeter's and the Top 10 Group's median performance in the HESA Performance Indicators is provided below (tranche 1). Time-series and performance against the benchmark is provided. Analyses of the Research (R1) and Employment (E1) indicators (tranche 2) will follow on the 15th July.

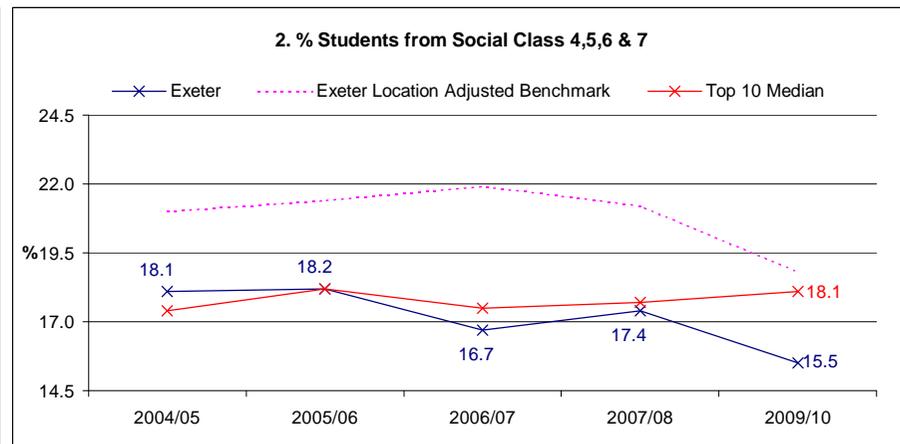
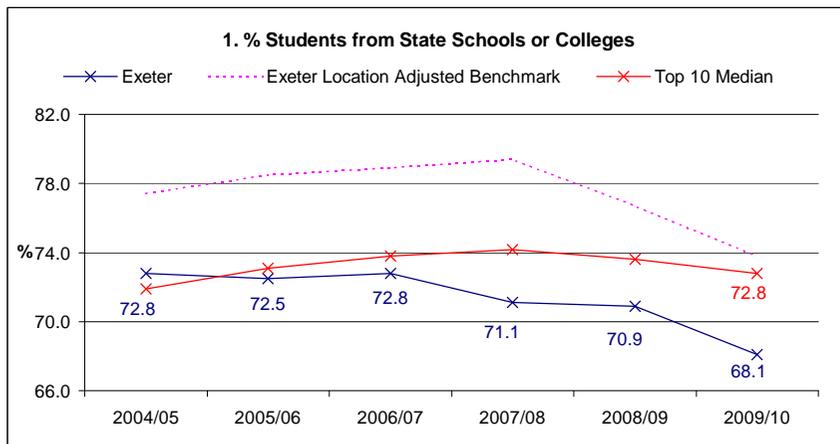
The main HESA PI tables cover the following information:

- T1 - Participation of under-represented groups in higher education (State School, Social Class, Low Participation Neighbourhood).
- T2 - Participation of under-represented groups in higher education (Young / Mature students)
- T3 - Non-Continuation
- T4 - Resumption of study after year out of HE
- T5 - Projected learning outcomes and efficiencies
- T7 - Participation of students in HE who are in receipt of Disabled Students' Allowance

The University has only part coverage in some aspects of the tables (e.g. part-time entrants) so this analysis will focus on a select set of PI data most important to the University's strategic direction.

Widening Participation (T1 and T7)

The widening participation information provided graphically below is based on young, full-time, first degree entrants.



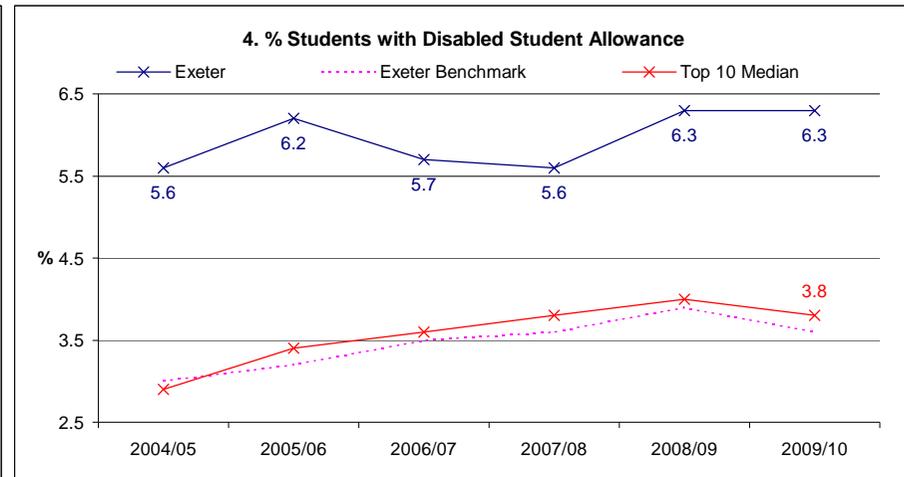
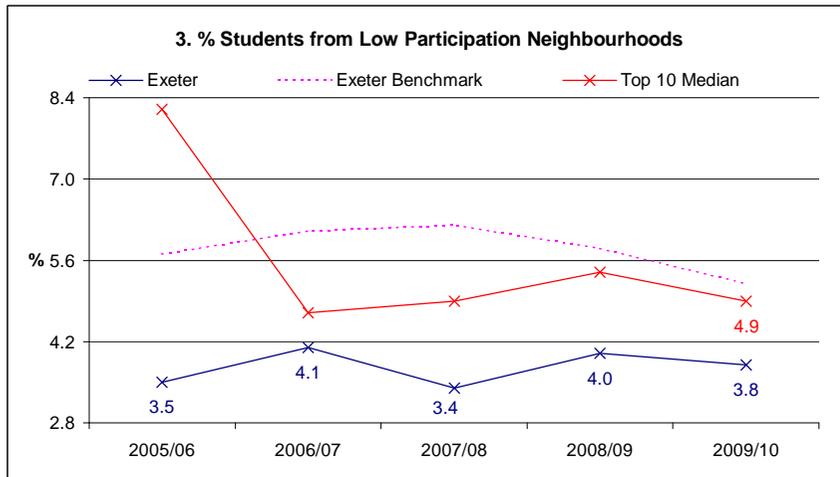


Chart 1. The % of students from State Schools has continued to decline and is currently at 68.1% for Exeter. Since 2008/09 the benchmark definition changed and it is now based on subject, qualification (type and level attained) and region of domicile and is derived from the WP characteristics of all students studying similar subjects, with similar qualifications etc. As Exeter's entry standards are towards the top end of the sector, this means that Exeter's comparative data used to determine the benchmark score is derived from these higher performing institutions that tend to have lower WP characteristics. This has meant that the benchmark has decreased in line with the rise in entry standards in recent years and has resulted in Exeter narrowing the gap to the benchmark. Exeter's performance has closed on its location adjusted benchmark and is now 5.7% adrift despite a fall of 2.8% in performance.

The Top 10 competitor group median score has also continued to decline although this is at a far slower rate than Exeter and so has widened the gap from a 2.7 percentage point difference in 2008/09 to a 4.7 percentage point gap in 2009/10. Within the sector (156 institutions with data), Exeter ranks 145th, the Top 10 Competitor group median rank is 137th.

Chart 2. Last year UCAS changed the question that informs the NS-SEC, this year the question was reverted back to the original wording as per 2007/08 and previous. This means the data from 2008/09 (using a differently worded question) is not comparable to other years and so is not included in the chart.

The latest data for Exeter shows a score of 15.5% which is a reduction on the previous year, but considering the adjustments to the benchmark owing to improved entry standards, the distance from the benchmark is now only 3.3 percentage points adrift (was 5.7 percentage points in 2007/08).

Exeter has previously outperformed the Top 10 median, however after the large drop in score the Top 10 median is now above Exeter by over 2.5 percentage points with at 18.1%. Within the sector (152 institutions with data), Exeter ranks 144th, the Top 10 Competitor group median rank is 138th.

Chart 3. Data on the proportion of students from low participation neighbourhoods is only available from 2005/06 onwards due to a change in the methodology HESA use for calculating this. Exeter currently has 3.8% of its young, full-time, first degree entrants from low participation neighbourhoods (a drop of 0.2 percentage points from last year). This measure has remained relatively consistent with little fluctuation over the 5 years. Due to the change in the benchmark definition for 2008/09 as previously mentioned, the gap has narrowed considerably with Exeter 1.4 percentage point below the benchmark compared to almost three percentage points below in the previous year.

The Top 10 median performance over the last four years has also remained fairly consistent and has always stayed slightly above Exeter. Within the sector (137 institutions with data), Exeter ranks 129th, the Top 10 Competitor group median rank is 117th.

Chart 4. The percentage of students receiving disability allowance (DSA) has remained at 6.3%, 2.7 percentage points above the benchmark. Over the last six years there has been a very slight general rise in the proportion of students entering with DSA.

The Top 10 median has seen a more linear increase in the percentage of students with DSA over the six years of data, although the current year is the first in that period to see a drop in score compared with the previous year (0.2 percentage points). The Top 10 median score in 2009/10 is 3.8% which is 2.5 percentage points below Exeter. Within the sector (157 institutions with data), Exeter ranks 41st, the Top 10 Competitor group median rank is 106th.

Conclusion: Clearly Exeter's increased entry standards are having an impact on the benchmarks. Essentially Exeter is 'keeping company' with higher performing institutions and these tend to have lower WP Performance. It is interesting to note that the Exeter benchmarks and Top10 median performance are converging. It might be anticipated that as Exeter's entry profile continues to increase the benchmarks may drop a little further.

Progression (T5)

The data provided below is based on full-time students starting first degree courses.

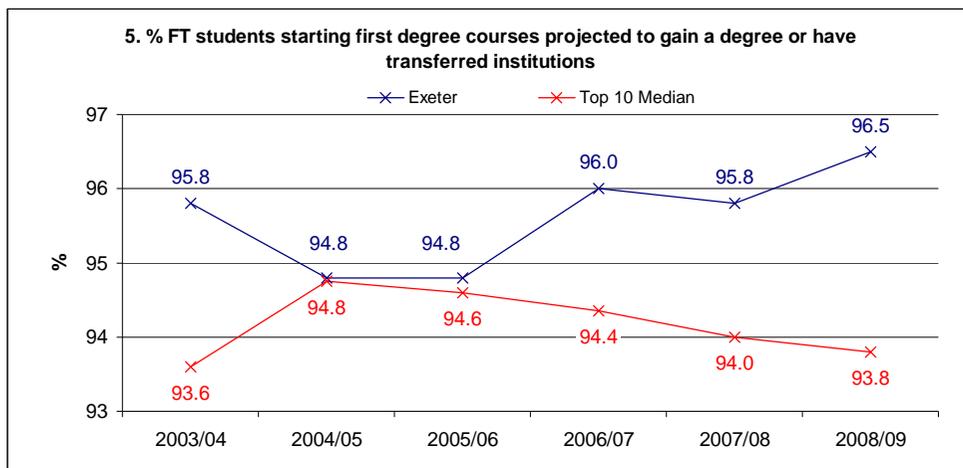
Exeter has always performed well above the benchmark remained for % students projected to gain a degree and 2008/09 data is no exception (Table 1). Despite a substantial rise of the benchmark (2.8 percentage points) Exeter remained 5.6 percentage points above this. The proportion projected to gain a degree at Exeter in 2008/09 has equalled the best ever performance seen in 2006/07 at 92.6% (a 0.6 percentage point increase from the previous year). The proportion of students projected to transfer at 3.9% has also improved slightly (0.1 percentage point up on the previous year).

The last five years data for the Top 10 group median has been steady at or just below 90% projected to gain a degree. Similarly, the percentage projected to transfer institutions for the Top 10 group has remained steady (~one percentage point higher than for Exeter).

Table 1. Progression		2004/05		2005/06		2006/07		2007/08		2008/09	
		Progression	Bench-mark								
% Projected to gain a degree	Exeter	87.7	84.5	91.5	86.1	92.6	85.9	92.0	84.2	92.6	87.0
	Top 10 Group Median	90.0	87.6	90.0	88.1	89.8	88.2	89.5	84.6	89.1	87.7
% Projected to transfer institutions	Exeter	7.1	-	3.3	-	3.4	-	3.8	-	3.9	-
	Top 10 Group Median	4.8	-	4.6	-	4.6	-	4.5	-	4.8	-

Data is a % of known information - this was negligible in 2004/05, 2005/06, 2007/08, although in 2006/07 there were 0.1% of students with missing data.

The HEFCE PI for progression is also used in a number of externally published league tables:



In the Times GUG the percentage of students projected to complete (gain a degree) is added to the total projected to transfer to another HE institution. Exeter ranked 4th in the Times GUG 2011 for the 'Completion' measure (based on 2007/08 data; 95.8%). The comparative score for the Times 2012 is 96.5% which is a strong score and is expected to be one of the best in the sector.

The Top 10 median has seen a decline in performance in this measure over the last five years. Within the sector, Exeter ranks 5th for 'Completion' based on 2008/09 data whilst the Top 10 Competitor group has a median rank of 19th. Chart 5 (left) illustrates the trend in students projected to complete.

The Sunday Times league table also uses the HEFCE PIs to measure drop out rates by calculating the difference between the projected percentage drop out rate and the benchmark drop out rate. Exeter ranked 14th in this measure as used by the Sunday Times league table published in 2010, and with little change in the drop-out rate, Exeter is expected to maintain a similar position in this measure in the 2011 publication which uses the 2008/09 data. Exeter might also make gains on the Top 10 competitor group in this indicator.