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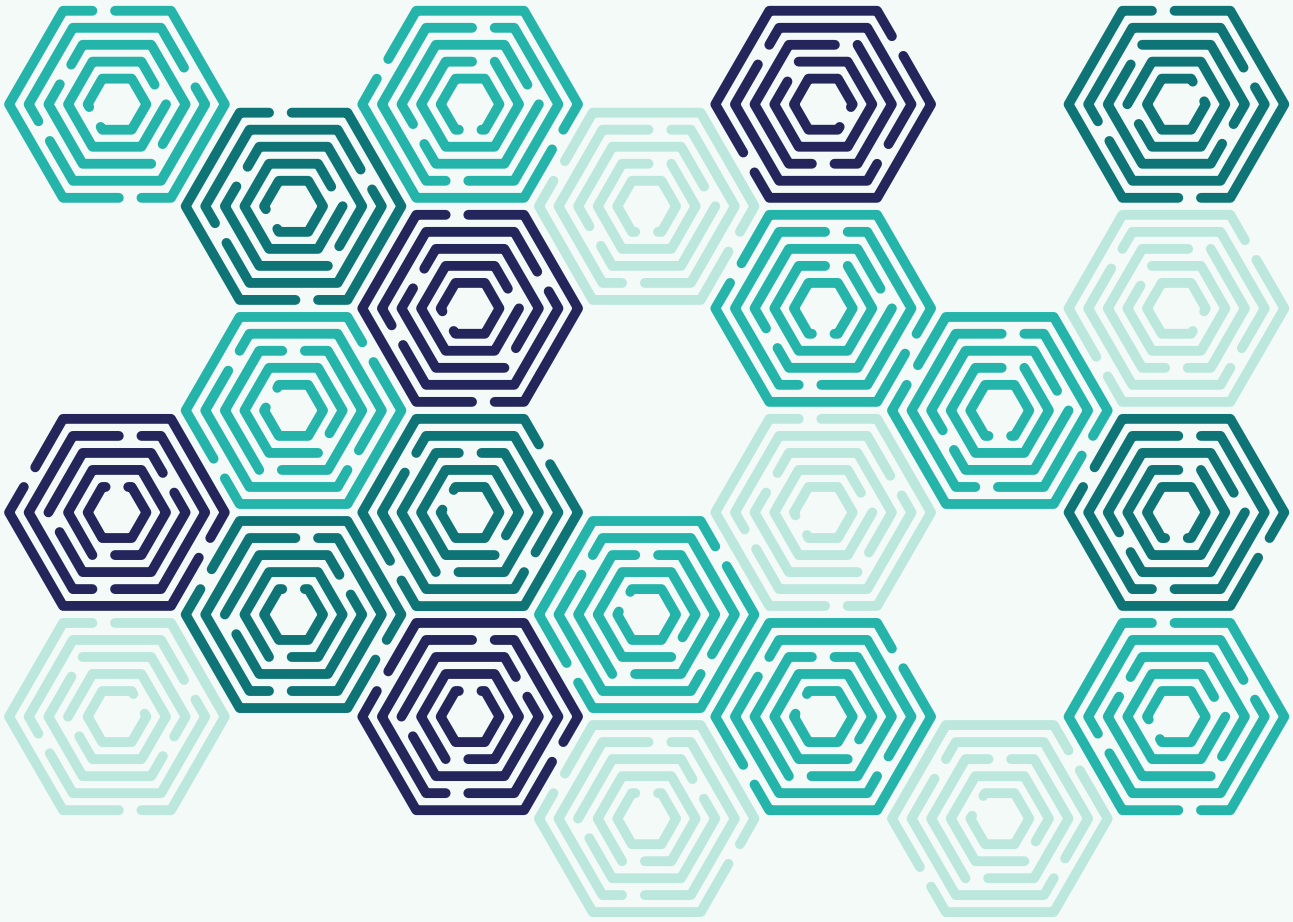

ENGINEERING AND TECH IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Contents

Summary

This report features our analysis of the most up-to-date data for engineering and technology students in higher education, including their characteristics and what they are doing after graduating. These results confirm that engineering and technology remain popular subjects of choice for students in the UK.

Despite this, women continue to be underrepresented in these subjects, making up only 1 in 5 undergraduates. In addition, whilst UK minority ethnic (UKME) groups are frequently overrepresented in engineering and technology, there are differences between these groups. Black Caribbean and Caribbean British students, for example, are consistently underrepresented throughout the higher education pathway for engineering and technology.

Engineering and technology subjects continued to struggle to attract disabled students, compared to other subjects. In addition, engineering and technology was more likely to attract students from higher socioeconomic statuses and/or whose parents also have a higher education qualification. This reinforces what we already know regarding the importance of social mobility and higher education. These barriers, however, seem to be accentuated for engineering and technology with more needing to be done to attract and support these students.

Compared to other subjects and regardless of ethnicity or gender, engineering and technology qualifiers were consistently more likely to achieve a first class honours degree. And women in engineering and technology were also more likely to achieve a first class honours compared to men. White students were the most likely to obtain a first, with Black students significantly less likely than students from all other ethnic groups.

It is encouraging to see 7 in 10 engineering and technology graduates in paid work for an employer 15 months after graduating. There were differences by ethnicity though, with white engineering and technology graduates more likely to be in work compared to UKME groups.

Fewer graduates, however, were going on to work in engineering and technology occupations compared to previous years. When we looked in more detail, this was lower for computing graduates than for graduates from other engineering and technology degrees. We surmise this may be due, in part, to a reduction in entry-level jobs following the advancement and adoption of AI. This is also predicted to disproportionately impact the finance and IT sectors, explaining why some computing graduates are findings occupations outside of engineering and technology.

The majority of graduates working in engineering and technology, both men and women, also find engineering and technology to be a meaningful career. This was also the case across ethnic groups, but white graduates were the most likely to strongly agree.

Our results provide a valuable snapshot of higher education for the academic year 2023/24. It does appear further support is needed to ensure engineering and technology is accessible to all young people, and they are supported through their degrees. But with good academic outcomes for those in engineering and technology, working on this accessibility is a great way to ensure the sector has the diverse workforce to ensure it thrives and supports the UK's economic growth.

Key findings

Engineering and technology overall

- Computing and 'engineering and technology' (as defined by HESA) were the top 4th and 5th most popular subjects across all levels of study
    - Across all levels 70,845 students started an 'engineering and technology' course and a further 85,875 started a computing course
    - 80,350 students started a first undergraduate degree across all engineering and technology – 43,080 in computing and 37,270 in 'engineering and technology'
    - Engineering and technology was the most popular subject for postgraduate research students
- The percentage of students studying engineering and technology has remained consistent for the last 5 academic years
- Engineering and technology first degree qualifiers were consistently more likely to achieve a first class honours degree (38.5%) compared to other subjects (27.7%)

Engineering and technology student characteristics

Gender

- Women were consistently underrepresented in engineering and technology compared to other subjects
    - Only 1 in 5 undergraduate engineering and technology students were women
    - The proportion of women was highest for postgraduate taught engineering and technology degrees (32.0%), but still underrepresented compared to other subjects (62.3%)
- Women were more likely to achieve a first class honours degree in engineering and technology (42.4%) compared to both men in engineering and technology (37.5%) and to women in other subjects (29.5%)

Ethnicity

- For undergraduate first degrees, 41.0% of engineering and technology students were from a UK minority ethnic (UKME) group, which was significantly higher than other subjects at 32.1%
- Students from UKME groups were more likely to obtain a first class honours in engineering and technology, compared to UKME groups in other subjects
    - White engineering and technology qualifiers were the most likely ethnic group to obtain a first class honours (44.4%)
    - Black engineering and technology qualifiers were least likely to obtain a first class honours (23.2%)

- Black Caribbean or Caribbean British students (across all degree levels) and graduates were the only consistently underrepresented UK minority ethnic group in engineering and technology

Gender and ethnicity

- Nearly half of women in first degrees in engineering and technology were from a UK minority ethnic group (44.8%), compared to 40.1% of men
- White women were the most likely group to obtain a first class honours in engineering and technology at 47.2% (compared to 43.8% of white men)
- Black engineering and technology graduates were the least likely to obtain a first class honours, but with percentages slightly higher for women (26.1%) compared to men (22.3%)
- A third of women in postgraduate research engineering and technology degrees were from a UKME group (33.3%), compared to 31.1% of men
- For postgraduate taught degree though, there was a higher percentage of men from UKME groups at 38.0% compared to 37.0% of women

Disability

- Engineering and technology students were less likely to report a disability across degree types:
    - Undergraduate first degrees: 15.3% compared to 19.2% in other subjects
    - Postgraduate taught degrees: 5.7% compared to 10.8% for other subjects
- Learning differences such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or ADHD were the most frequently reported disability

Parental education

- Engineering and technology first degree students were more likely to say their parent(s) had higher education qualifications (52.8% compared to 46.6% for other subjects)
- Engineering and technology qualifiers with parents with a higher education qualification were more likely to get a first class honours (41.9% compared to 37.9% without)
- Having a parent with higher education didn't seem to impact the percentage of engineering and technology graduates who were employed, with 74.7% of those with parents with higher education in work, compared to 74.3% for those without

Socioeconomic status

- First degree engineering and technology students were less likely to be from the least advantaged areas of the country and more likely to come from the most advantaged compared to other subjects
- Engineering and technology students studying other undergraduate courses, on the other hand, were less likely to come from the most advantaged areas of the country (19.4%) compared to other subjects (23.5%)

- Qualifiers from the most advantaged parts of the UK were more likely to achieve a first class honours, regardless of degree subject

Place of residence

- Across all levels of study, international students were overrepresented in engineering and technology compared to other subjects
    - In first degrees, 22.6% of engineering and technology students were from outside the EU and UK, compared to 13.6% of other subjects
    - For postgraduate research students in engineering and technology this figure was over half (52.2%) compared to 34.2% for other subjects
    - 75.3% of students studying a postgraduate taught engineering and technology degree were from outside the UK and EU
- Qualifiers from the EU were most likely to obtain a first class honours in engineering and technology (50.3%), with qualifiers from the Rest of the World (RoW) being the least likely (31.3%)
- UK-based engineering and technology graduates are more likely to be in work (76.1%) than those from the EU (70.6%) or the RoW (70.5%)

Higher education apprenticeships

- A small percentage of students in higher education did apprenticeships but for engineering and technology students this percentage was higher
    - 4.6% of first degree engineering undergraduate students (level 6) were doing an apprenticeship, compared to 2.6% in other subjects
- Engineering and technology apprentices were significantly more likely to obtain a first class honours at 6 out of 10, compared to 39.9% for all other subjects combined

Graduate Outcomes

- 70.7% of engineering and technology graduates were in paid work for an employer 15 months after graduating, compared to 68.9% of other subjects
- Fewer than 1 in 10 engineering and technology graduates said they were unemployed (9.1%), but this was higher than all other subjects combined at 6.1%
- Over half of engineering and technology graduates who entered work went on to work in engineering and technology occupations (59.7%)
    - Computing graduates specifically (55.9%) were less likely to go into engineering and technology occupations than those in other engineering and technology degrees (62.7%)
    - The most popular occupation for engineering and technology graduates was ‘programmers and software development professionals’ at 17.1%
- 38.9% of those working in engineering and technology occupations (regardless of their qualification) said the job they had required both the level and subject of qualification as a formal requirement compared to 33.7% of those working in other occupations

- Graduates working in engineering and technology tend to earn more than graduates working in other occupations
    - A higher percentage of engineering and technology employees were earning £30,001-£35,000 (22.9%) compared to all other occupations combined (16.8%)
- Graduates in engineering and technology occupations were significantly more likely to work full time (97.6%) compared to all other subjects (85.7%)
- Graduates working in engineering and technology were more likely to agree their current activity is meaningful (87.4%) compared to other occupations (85.4%)
- When asked if they felt their current activity was on track with their future plans, graduates working in engineering and technology were more likely to say yes (85.5%) than those in other occupations (76.3%)
- 7 in 10 graduates agreed that in their role their skills are used, with slightly higher agreement for engineering and technology (70.7%) compared to other roles (68.8%)

Introduction

There are many different and equally important routes into engineering and technology. These routes range across academic, vocational, and technical education. This report focuses on higher education – predominantly academic, with additional focus on degree apprenticeships.

The UK remains an important hub for providing engineering and technology degrees, hosting 3 of the top 20 universities in the world for studying engineering[1]. We know the UK is a popular destination for international students with 723,285 overseas students studying at UK higher education providers (equivalent to 23% of the total student population) in 2023/24[2]. As mentioned in this report, engineering and technology is particularly popular for international students.

This report features the latest data for students studying engineering and technology subjects in the UK. This includes the demographic characteristics of gender, ethnicity, disability, socioeconomic status and parental education. We also compare engineering and technology with other subjects to provide meaningful context for these characteristics. Where appropriate, we will also look at the interplay between these characteristics as understanding the intersectionality between them is crucial for ensuring engineering and technology has the diverse workforce it needs to thrive.

We know from our own research women remain severely underrepresented in the engineering workforce at only 16.9%[3], having only increased by 6.4 percentage points (pp) since 2010. UK minority ethnic groups are also underrepresented in the engineering and technology workforce (13.7% compared to 17.5% for other occupations), with similar findings for disability (14.5% compared to 18.9%).

We also report on students who graduated with engineering and technology degrees in 2022/23. This uses the Graduate Outcomes survey to look at where graduates are and what they are doing, 15 months after graduating. This includes numbers of engineering and technology graduates in employment and their subjective opinions of their careers (such as whether they feel their career is on track and their activity meaningful).

[1] Times Higher Education. (n.d.) *World University Rankings 2025 by subject: engineering.* Available at: https://www.timeshighereducation.com/
[2] House of Comms Library. (2025). International students in UK higher education. Available at: International students in UK higher education - House of Commons Library
[3] https://www.engineeringuk.com/research-and-insights/our-research-and-evaluation-reports/engineering-and-technology-workforce-may-2025-update/

Notes about the data

Defining engineering and technology subjects

In our previous 'Engineering in Higher Education' reports, we used HESA's Common Aggregation Hierarchy (CAH) definition to define engineering and technology (CAH10) degrees. In last year's 'Graduate Outcomes – Engineering and technology' report, however, we added computing graduates (CAH11) to our definition of engineering and technology for 2 reasons:

1. HESA's CAH definition of engineering and technology (CAH10) did not adequately match our definition of engineering and technology in the workforce as outlined in our engineering footprint[4]
2. Because of the inclusion of computer science / software engineering jobs in the footprint, our previous results showed a similar percentage of computing graduates went on to work in engineering and technology occupations as those who studied engineering and technology (using the CAH definition)

Throughout this report 'engineering and technology degrees/students/subjects' will refer to engineering, technology *and* computing. This is unless we specifically mention possible differences between 'engineering and technology' and computing. As we have updated our definition of engineering and technology degrees, our previous higher education results will no longer be comparable. Therefore, for a number of variables we have provided year-on-year comparisons using our new definition.

Significant differences

Throughout this report, to understand the outcomes of engineering and technology students, we compare these students to all other subjects combined, as well as comparing demographic groups. Differences mentioned throughout the report are significant unless otherwise specified.

[4] https://www.engineeringuk.com/research-and-insights/our-research-and-evaluation-reports/engineering-footprint-methodology/

Engineering and technology subjects in higher education

Student numbers

For the latest academic year available (2023/24), computing and 'engineering and technology' were the top 4th and 5th most popular subjects respectively for entrants[5] (table 1). A total of 70,845 students studied engineering and technology and a further 85,875[6] studied computing. Combined, this puts engineering and technology as the third most popular higher education subject. This is also the only section where we'll be looking at 'engineering and technology' and computing separately, to get a good idea of their relative numbers. After this section, as we move on to qualifiers, we will be looking at engineering, technology *and* computing.

Table 1: Top 10 subjects studied by entrants in 2023/24

Rank	Subject	%
1	Business and management	22.8%
2	Subjects allied to medicine	13.2%
3	Social sciences	9.9%
4	Computing	6.9%
5	Engineering and technology	5.7%
6	Design, and creative and performing arts	5.6%
7	Education and training	5.4%
8	Psychology	4.5%
9	Law	3.9%
10	Biology and sport sciences	3.5%

The popularity of 'engineering and technology' and computing differed by the level of study (i.e. undergraduate or postgraduate). Amongst postgraduate research students, engineering and technology was the most popular subject type, whereas computing was 7th. For first degree[7] undergraduate students, computing was 5th with 43,080 young people. Engineering and technology was 6th with 37,270 entrants (table 2).

[5] Entrants refers to learnings at the beginning of their specific educational path and includes first degree undergraduates, other undergraduates, postgraduate (research) and postgraduate (taught) degrees

[6] Consistent with HESA's terms and conditions for reporting student data, all figures presented in the report are rounded to the nearest 5

[7] A first degree is more commonly known as a bachelor's degree and officially includes (including eligibility to register to practice with a health or social care or veterinary statutory regulatory body), first degrees with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)/registration with a General Teaching Council (GTC), postgraduate bachelor's degree at level H, enhanced first degrees (including those leading towards obtaining eligibility to register to practice with a health or social care or veterinary statutory regulatory body), first degrees obtained concurrently with a diploma, and intercalated first degrees. Specifically, this includes integrated master's degrees, which are particularly common in engineering and technology subjects. For more information, visit: Definitions and data standards | HESA

Table 2: Number of entrants in the top 10 most popular subjects, by level of study

Subject	Undergraduate		Postgraduate		Total
	First degree	Other undergraduate	Research	Taught	
Business and management	130,670	17,540	2,040	133,405	283,655
Subjects allied to medicine	76,550	20,635	2,725	646,45	164,555
Social sciences	65,675	10,940	2,510	44,330	123,460
Design, and creative and performing arts	47,020	3,930	890	18,160	70,000
Computing	43,080 (5th)	3,295 (6th)	1,890 (7th)	37,610 (4th)	85,875
Engineering and technology	37,270 (6th)	4,375 (4th)	4,325 (1st)	24,880 (5th)	70,845
Psychology	31,820	1,330	2,495	19,900	55,545
Law	30,465	1,930	590	15,235	48,220
Biological and sport sciences	29,610	2,010	3,305	8,330	43,255
Historical	18,500	1,415	1,640	6,940	28,495

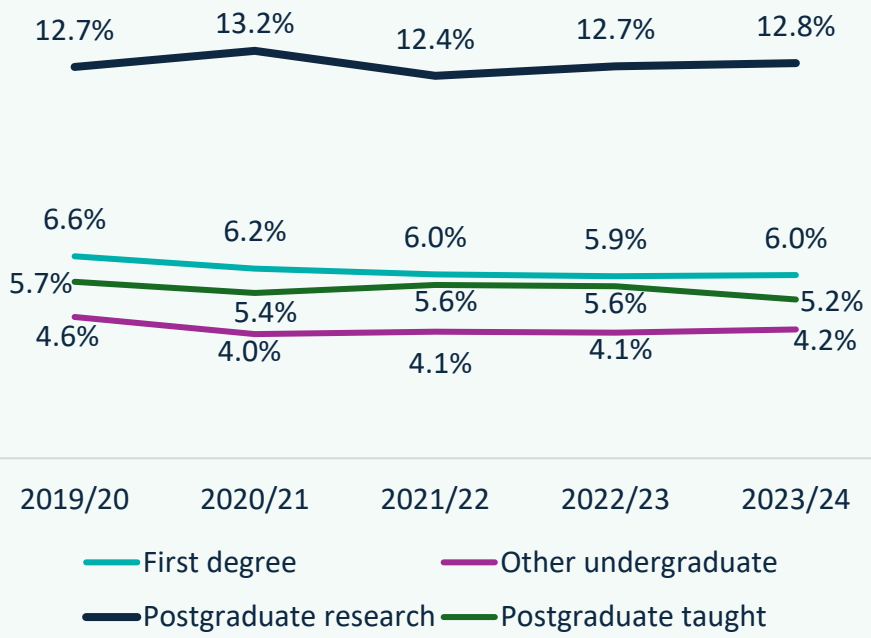
The popularity of engineering and technology subjects, across the different levels of study, has remained largely consistent for the last 5 academic years. For example, there was only an increase of 0.1 pp since 2019/20 for postgraduate research, where engineering and technology is the most popular subject (12.7%) (figure 1).

For first degrees, there was a slight downward trend from 6.6% in 2019/20 to 6.0% in 2023/24. This was similarly the case for other undergraduate courses[8], with a reduction of 0.5pp from 5.7% in 2019/20 to 5.2% in 2023/24. This does not necessarily mean, however, engineering and technology is dropping in popularity. The latest clearing data for 2025 showed a 13% increase in the number of accepted undergraduate applicants compared to 2024[9].

[8] These are degrees with qualification aims equivalent to and below first degree level and can include Higher National Diplomas (HND), foundation courses at higher education level, National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs)/Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) at NQF levels 4 and 5, professional qualifications at undergraduate level and non-formal undergraduate qualifications. Click here to view HESA's full definition: Definitions and data standards | HESA

[9] UCAS. (n.d.). *Statistical releases – daily Clearing analysis 2025*. Available at: Statistical releases – daily Clearing analysis 2025 | UCAS

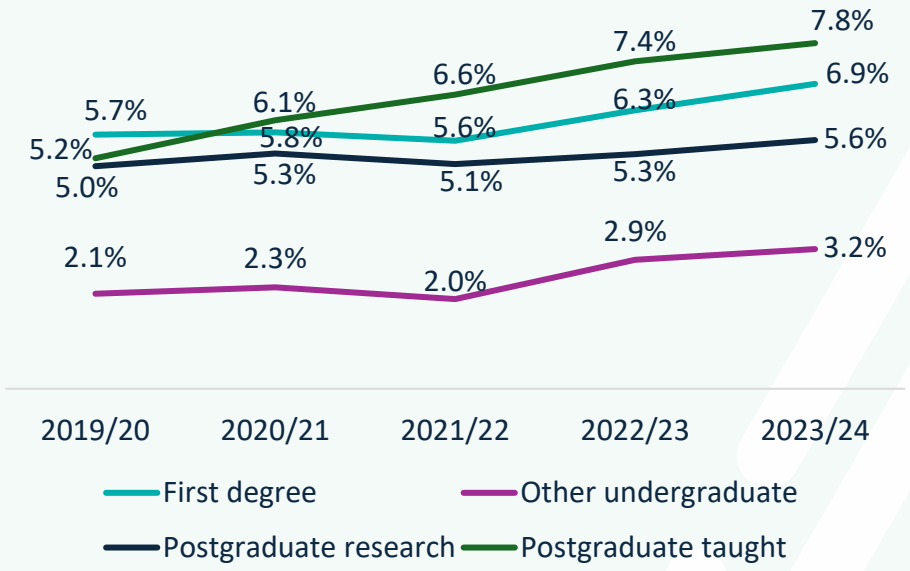
Figure 1: Engineering and technology entrants between 2019/20 to 2023/24 by level of degree



On the other hand, for computing there has been more of a reliable upward trend. This was most noticeable for postgraduate taught, where computing increased 2.6 pp from 5.2% in 2019/20 to 7.8% in 2023/24.

When we look at first degree undergraduates, there was also an increase of 1.2 pp from 5.7% up to 6.9% for the latest academic year (figure 2). UCAS clearing data, however, has also shown a decline of 7% for computing accepted applicants between 2024 to 2025. This dip may represent a levelling out for first degree undergraduates in computing.

Figure 2: Computing entrants between 2019/20 to 2023/24 by level of degree



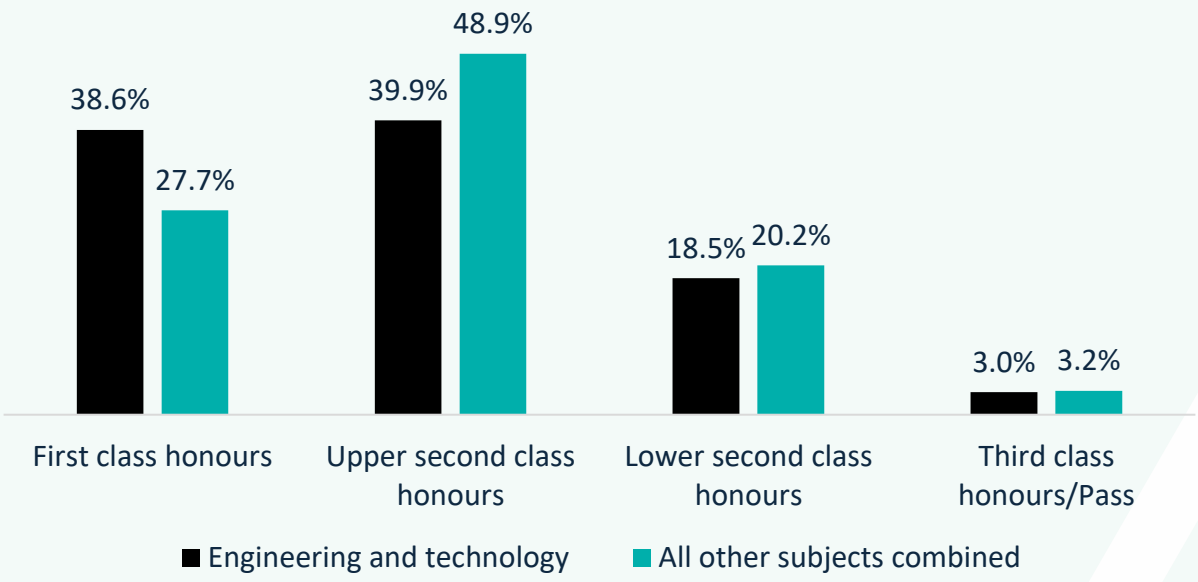
Qualifiers

Because not all students who enter a degree necessarily complete it, we also look at those who obtained a qualification. This gives us a better understanding of who might actually go on to work in engineering and technology in the future. This data, however, is only available for first degree undergraduates.

There were 27,430 engineering and technology and 24,565 computing qualifiers in the most recent data. From this point onwards, when we talk about engineering and technology, this will also include computing.

Engineering and technology students were more likely to receive a first class honours (38.6%) compared to all other subjects combined (27.7%). This was offset by fewer engineering and technology qualifiers obtaining an upper second class degree (39.9%), compared to other subject qualifiers (48.9%). For lower second class and third class honours, there was little difference between the 2 groups (figure 3)[10].

Figure 3: First degree qualifier results, by subject



Graduates

The final group we will look at are graduates. Collected in HESA's Graduate Outcomes survey, this dataset captures graduates 15 months after graduating. This covers people who graduated in 2022/23, who were most likely surveyed in 2024. For this group, we found 7 out of 10 engineering

[10] It is worth noting there are also a number of qualification types such as 'ordinary (non-honours) first degrees' not featured in figure 3. These have not been included as they do not result in a first, second or third qualification type.

and technology graduates (70.7%) were in paid work for an employer (table 3). This compares to 68.9% of graduates across all other subjects combined.

Table 3: Main activity of graduates 15 months after graduating, by subject

Main activity	Engineering and technology	All other subjects combined
Paid work for an employer	70.7%	68.9%
Unemployed or looking for work	9.1%	6.1%
Engaged in a course of study, training or research	8.1%	9.7%
Developing creative, artistic or professional portfolio	3.0%	2.4%
Self-employment / freelancing	2.2%	3.5%
Doing something else	2.1%	2.7%
Running my own business	1.8%	2.0%
Taking time out to travel (this does not include short-term holidays)	1.3%	1.4%
Caring for someone (unpaid)	0.8%	1.8%
Voluntary / unpaid work for an employer	0.7%	1.2%
Retired	0.2%	0.3%

Unfortunately, a higher percentage of engineering and technology graduates reported being unemployed or looking for work (9.1%) compared to all other subjects combined (6.1%). This is a trend we have seen in previous years also. As more engineering and technology graduates are in work, this higher unemployment (and looking for work) figure is driven by lower numbers in further study, self-employment, or voluntary/unpaid work.

These unemployment figures (for both engineering and technology and all other subjects combined) have increased from last year (7.6% and 5.4% respectively), which is likely reflective of a rise in unemployment in the UK more widely and not specific to any role or subject type[11].

Engineering and technology roles are central to the success of the government's industrial strategy. With a quarter of all job adverts in the UK for engineering and technology roles, we know the engineering industry is crucial for the government's plan for a thriving economy and to combat climate change. Moreover, the Climate Change Committee has suggested between 135,000 and 725,000 net new jobs could be created by 2030 in low-carbon sectors, such as building retrofit, renewable energy generation and the manufacture of electric vehicles. Further support may be needed, however, to support graduates into these critical roles[12].

In the upcoming sections, we will explore how these figures differ by demographic characteristics.

[11] House of Commons Library. (2026) UK labour market statistics. Available at: https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9366/
[12] net-zero-workforce-engineeringuk-may-2025.pdf

Characteristics of engineering and technology students

In this section, we provide information on each demographic characteristic and the intersectionality between them (where appropriate and possible). For each characteristic, we will first look at undergraduates (including first degree and other undergraduates), then undergraduate first degree qualifiers, postgraduates (research and taught) and finally graduates.

Gender

We already know women are largely underrepresented in the engineering and technology workforce – making up only 16.9% compared to 56.2% for all other occupations combined. The percentage of women working in engineering and technology has also only increased at a slow pace. Up from 10.5% in 2010, this is a difference of only 6.4pp in 14 years[13].

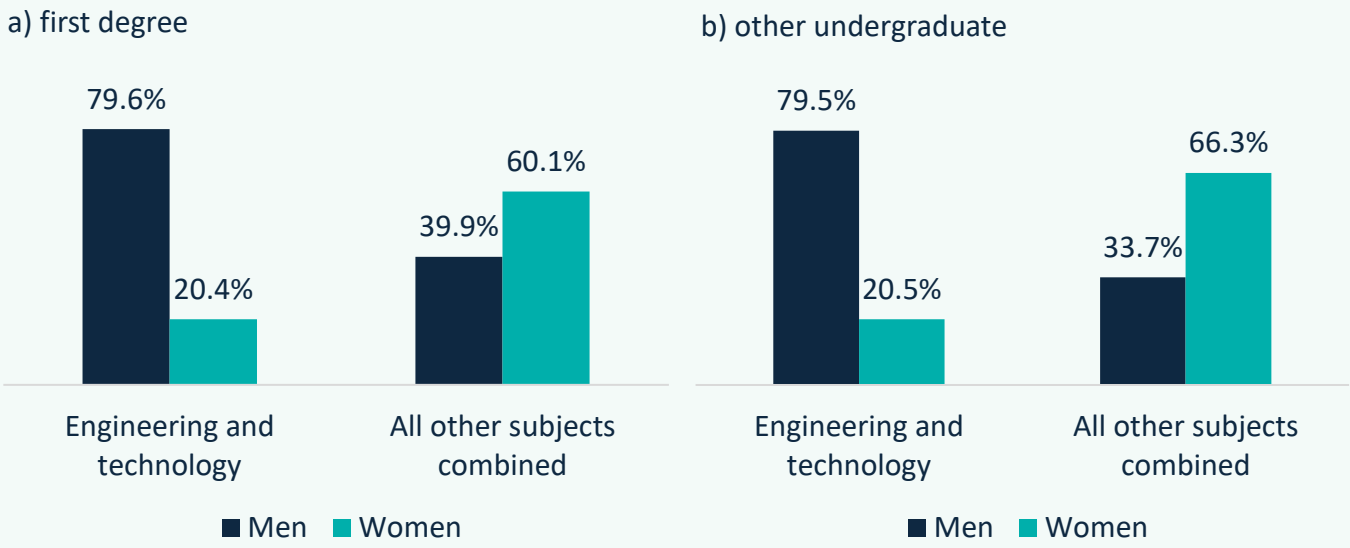
We also know from our own research, girls are less likely to say science is for them. In addition, only 16% of girls thought engineering was suitable for them in our Science Education Tracker[14]. Therefore, it remains important to monitor the proportion of women throughout educational pathways, including higher education. By doing so, we can better ensure this increase continues to a point where we have a more diverse engineering and technology workforce.

Undergraduates by gender

Regardless of the level of study (undergraduate or postgraduate), women were consistently underrepresented in engineering and technology (figure 4). This difference was most noticeable for first degrees and other undergraduates where only 1 in 5 students were women (20.4% and 20.5% respectively). In comparison, students in all other undergraduate subjects combined were more likely to be women (60.1% and 66.3%).

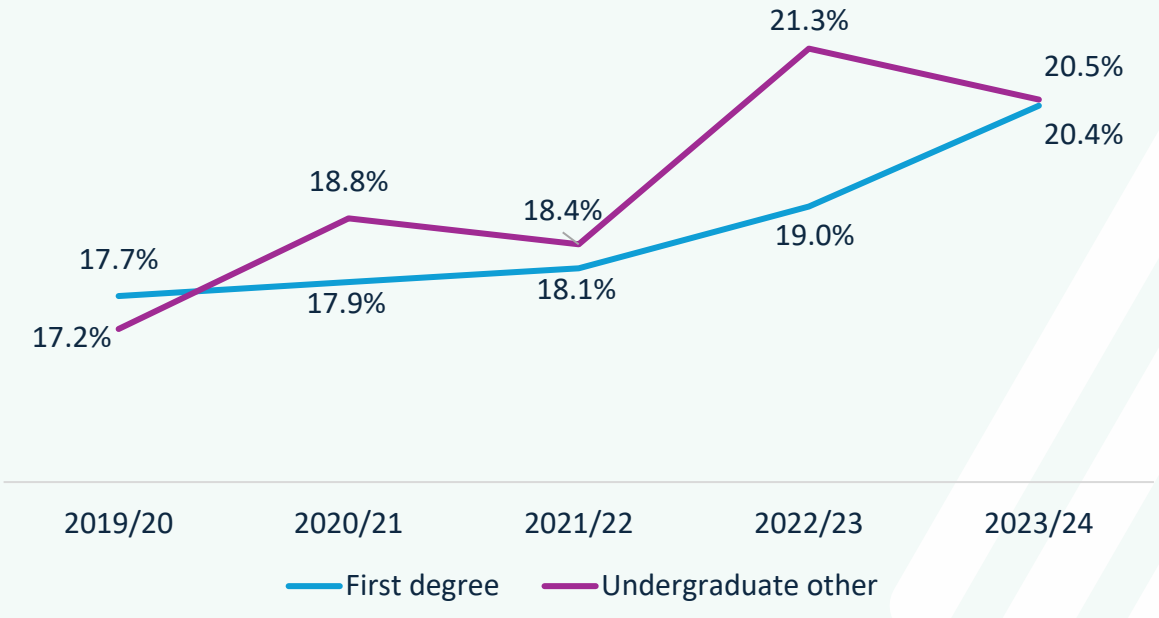
[13] Our last workforce update used the Labour Force Survey from 2024 - https://www.engineeringuk.com/media/vjzowjeq/the-engineering-and-technology-workforce-update-engineeringuk-may-2025.pdf
[14] www.engineeringuk.com/set

Figure 4: Gender of undergraduate entrants by subject



The percentage of women in engineering and technology has only seen a small increase since 2019/20, but an increase, nevertheless. In 2019/20, 17.7% of first degree undergraduates were women, as were 17.2% of other undergraduates. Whilst the percentage of women in first degree engineering and technology subjects has seen a steady increase across these 5 academic years, the trend was less smooth for other undergraduate courses. This is due to a sharp increase in 2022/23 of 545 people before dropping back down to 20.5% in the latest academic year (figure 5).

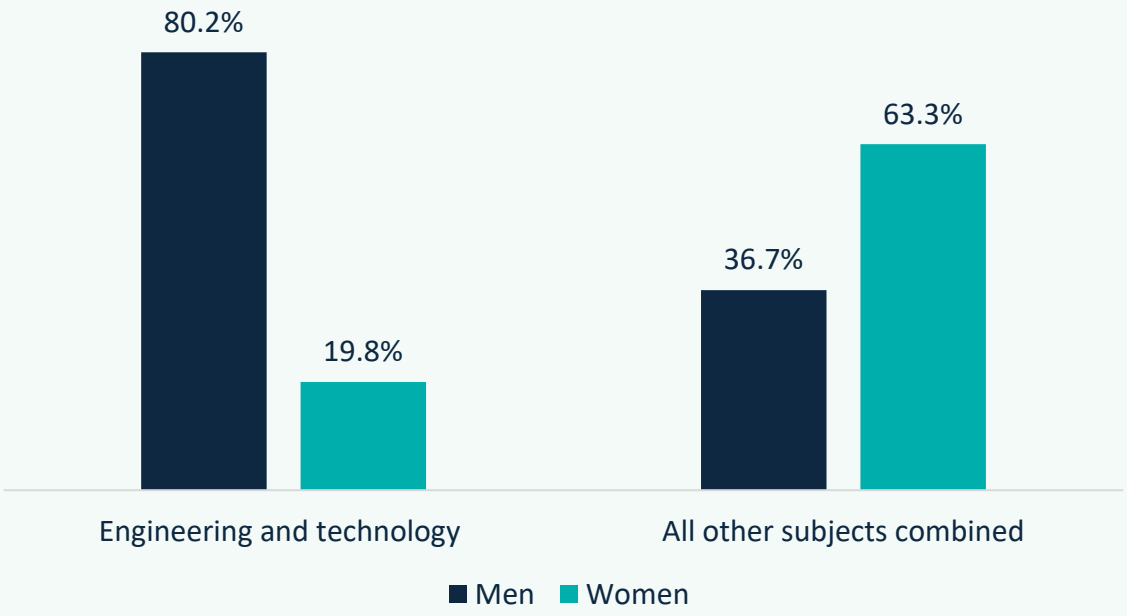
Figure 5: Female undergraduate entrants in engineering and technology between 2019/20 and 2023/24



Undergraduate qualifiers by gender

Between entering and qualifying, the percentage of women in engineering and technology undergraduate first degrees seems to have increased slightly. Given they would likely have been entrants in 2020/21 (17.9%) and 2021/22 (18.1%), a figure of 19.8% suggests they may be more likely to complete their courses compared to men (figure 6). This is promising, even with the major underrepresentation of women in engineering and technology courses. The figure of 19.8% is still in stark contrast to nearly two-thirds (63.3%) of women for all other subjects combined, however (figure 6).

Figure 6: Undergraduate first degree qualifiers by gender and subject

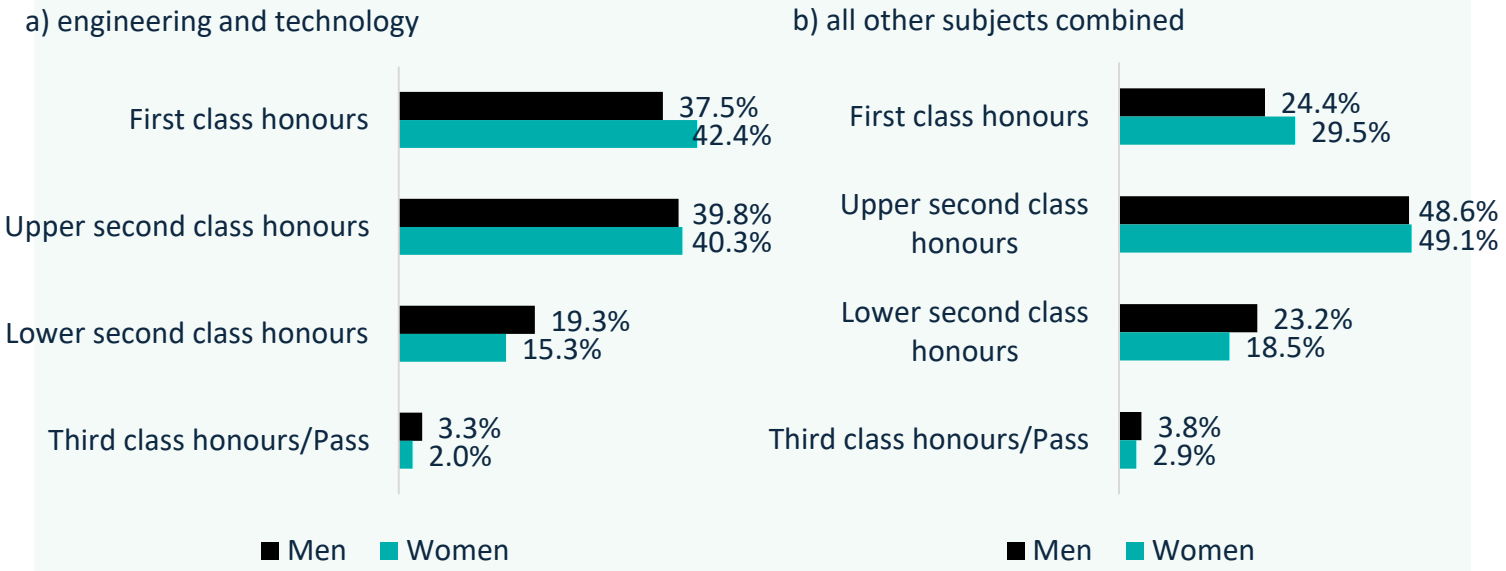


Women achieved better academic results than men, regardless of subject. In engineering and technology, women were more likely to qualify with a first class honours (42.4%) compared to men (37.5%). Men were more likely to score a lower second class honours (19.3%) compared to women (15.3%) (figure 7).

For all other subjects combined, women were also more like to obtain a first class honours compared to men (29.5% and 24.4% respectively). Qualifiers, however, were more likely to achieve a first class honours in engineering and technology, regardless of their gender (37.5% vs. 24.4% for men; 42.4% vs. 29.5% for women).

Therefore, we can see engineering and technology qualifiers were more likely to achieve a first class honours compared to all other subjects combined. This effect, however, was stronger for women than men. Qualifiers from all other subjects combined were more likely to achieve an upper second class honours.

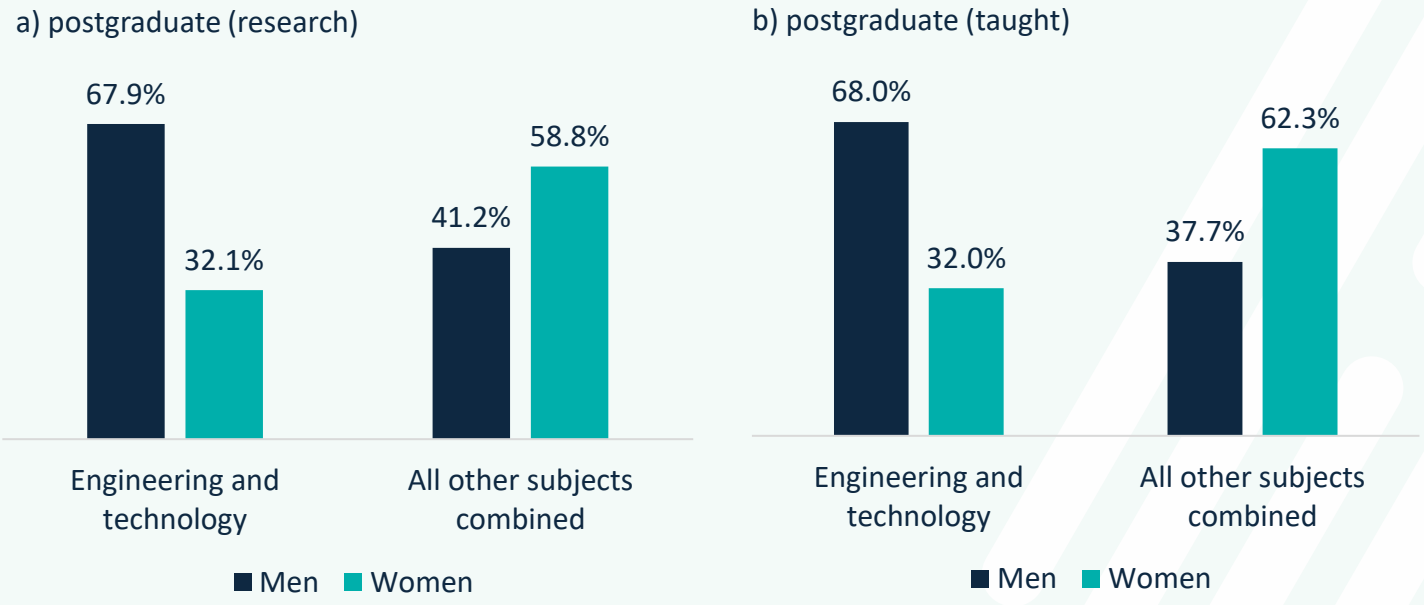
Figure 7: Degree class achieved by first degree undergraduate qualifiers by gender and subject



Postgraduates by gender

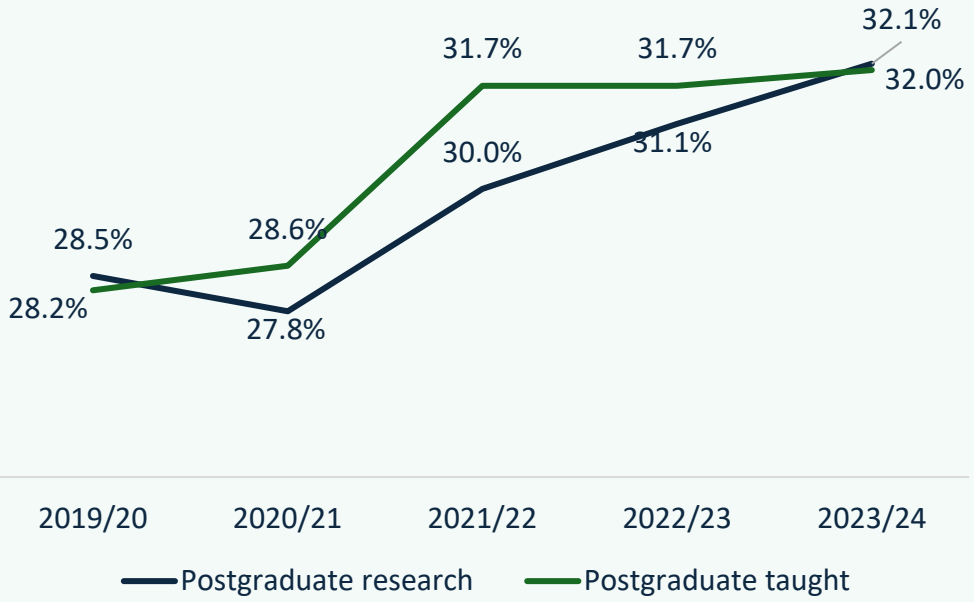
As mentioned at the beginning of this section on gender, there was a higher proportion of women studying postgraduate level engineering and technology compared to undergraduate. Nearly a third of postgraduate research students (32.1%) and postgraduate taught students (32.0%) were women. Whilst these figures are higher compared to undergraduate degrees, they are still significantly smaller than all other subjects combined. For this group, over half of postgraduate research (58.8%) and 62.3% of postgraduate taught students were women (figure 8).

Figure 8: Postgraduate entrants by subject and gender



As with undergraduates, the percentage of women studying postgraduate engineering and technology has increased over time. Compared to the academic year 2019/20, women in postgraduate research increased from 28.5% to 32.1% and figures for taught degrees were nearly identical, up from 28.2% to 32.0% (figure 9).

Figure 9: Percentage of female engineering and technology postgraduate entrants from 2019/20 to 2023/24



Graduate activity by gender

Engineering and technology graduates were more likely to be in paid work than graduates from other subjects, regardless of their gender. Women were more likely to be in work than their male counterparts in their subject. For example, female engineering and technology graduates were more likely to be in paid employment (71.2%) compared to males (70.6%).

Female engineering and technology graduates were also slightly more likely to be in paid work than women from all other subjects combined (70.4%). The gap is larger for men though – 7 in 10 male engineering and technology graduates were in paid work compared to two-thirds of men from all other subjects combined (66.2%).

A higher percentage of engineering and technology graduate women were also engaged in further study, at 9.1% compared to only 7.9% of men. However, both of these were lower than for graduates of other subjects (table 4). Compared to men (2.0%), engineering and technology graduate women were also more likely to be doing something (2.6%) and less likely to be self-employed (1.5% for men and 2.4% for women).

Table 4: Main activity of graduates 15 months after graduation, by gender and subject area

Main activity	Engineering and technology		All other subjects combined	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Paid work for an employer	70.4%	71.2%	66.2%	70.4%
Unemployed or looking for work	9.2%	8.6%	6.8%	5.7%
Engaged in a course of study, training or research	7.9%	9.1%	10.0%	9.5%
Developing creative, artistic or professional portfolio	3.2%	2.6%	3.1%	2.0%
Self-employment / freelancing	2.4%	1.5%	4.4%	3.0%
Doing something else	2.0%	2.6%	2.3%	2.9%
Running my own business	2.0%	1.0%	2.9%	1.4%
Taking time out to travel (this does not include short-term holidays)	1.3%	1.5%	1.6%	1.4%
Caring for someone (unpaid)	0.2%	0.1%	0.5%	0.2%
Voluntary / unpaid work for an employer	0.7%	0.7%	1.3%	1.1%
Retired	0.2%	0.1%	0.5%	0.2%

As we touched on earlier, engineering and technology graduates were more likely to be unemployed and looking for work. Men in engineering and technology were the most likely to be unemployed (9.2%) compared to women in engineering and technology (8.6%), and men (6.8%) and women (5.7%) in other subjects. They were also significantly less likely to be engaged in further study or self-employed compared to other subjects.

Whilst this may feel conflicting, given that a slightly higher percentage of both men and women in engineering and technology reported being in paid work for an employer, this figure is offset by fewer in other activities listed above, such as being self-employed or engaged in further education compared to graduates in other subjects.

Ethnicity

We already know from our workforce updates that UK minority ethnic groups are underrepresented in engineering and technology occupations (13.7%), compared to all other occupations combined (17.5%). We know, however, that for engineering and technology to thrive and to drive economic prosperity, improve sustainability and achieve net zero, a diverse workforce is needed.

Across all entrants, 3 out of 10 were from a UKME group (30.5%). Whilst underrepresented in the workforce, UKME groups are overrepresented in engineering and technology in higher education at 38.6% compared to 29.8% all other subjects combined. This figure, however, differed across levels of study and varies by different ethnicities. It is also worth noting, ethnicity figures are only

available for UK residents. As such, we are unable to comment on the ethnicity of EU or RoW students.

Overall, in the 18-24 UK population, white people make up about 81% and UKME 19%[15]. Therefore, we see that UKME students are generally more likely to go to university and are therefore overrepresented here compared to the wider population. They are even more overrepresented in engineering and technology subjects within HE. In this section, therefore, when we talk about over- and underrepresentation between subjects, it should be noted that overall, UKME students are overrepresented across all subjects.

Undergraduates by ethnicity

For first degree undergraduates, 4 in 10 engineering and technology entrants were from a UKME group, compared to less than a third (32.1%) for all other subjects combined.

All UKME groups were overrepresented in engineering and technology apart from 2: Black Caribbean and Caribbean British (1.2%) and any other Black British (0.4%), compared to other subjects (1.6% and 0.6% respectively) (table 5). We will also see throughout this report that across the engineering and technology higher education pathway, Black Caribbean and Caribbean British students were consistently underrepresented.

The UKME group with the highest percentage in engineering and technology was Black African or African British at 9.1% compared to 7.5% for all other subjects combined. Asian students, however, were greatly overrepresented in engineering and technology first degree students overall at 1 in 5, compared to only 14.2% for all other subjects combined.

The largest Asian group was Asian Pakistani or Pakistani British at 6.5% (compared to 5.0% of all other subjects combined). The greatest difference between the 2 subject groups was for Asian Indian or Indian British, with a difference of 2.4pp between engineering and technology (6.0%) and all other subjects combined (3.6%).

Students from a UKME group are more likely to be taking a first degree than another undergraduate course, no matter the subject. For other engineering and technology undergraduate courses, UKME groups were underrepresented at 1 in 5, compared to nearly a quarter (24.8%) for all other subjects combined. This is because across nearly all UKME groups, a smaller proportion were studying engineering and technology compared to all other subjects combined. This is apart from Asian Chinese or Chinese British (0.7% compared to 0.5%) and any other ethnic background (2.0% compared to 1.8% for all other subjects combined). In both these cases, however, the pp difference was small. For ‘any other Black background’ the percentage of engineering and technology students and all other subjects combined was the same (0.6%).

[15] Office of National Statistics: (2018). Young people by ethnicity in England and UK. Available at: Young people by ethnicity in England and UK - Office for National Statistics

Table 5: Undergraduate entrants by ethnicity and subject

Ethnicity	First degree		Other undergraduate		National average (16–24-year-olds) in the UK[16]
	Engineering and technology	All other subjects combined	Engineering and technology	All other subjects combined	
Asian - Bangladeshi or Bangladeshi British	2.9%	2.2%	0.7%	1.3%	1.3%
Asian - Chinese or Chinese British	1.6%	0.8%	0.7%	0.5%	1.1%
Asian - Indian or Indian British	6.0%	3.6%	2.2%	2.8%	2.5%
Asian - Pakistani or Pakistani British	6.5%	5.0%	2.8%	3.7%	2.9%
Any other Asian background	4.3%	2.7%	1.7%	3.2%	1.5%
Black - African or African British	9.1%	7.5%	6.0%	6.3%	3.6%
Black - Caribbean or Caribbean British	1.2%	1.6%	0.9%	1.5%	
Any other Black background	0.4%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	
Mixed or multiple ethnic background	5.7%	5.6%	2.7%	3.1%	2.6%
Other ethnic background	3.4%	2.6%	2.0%	1.8%	1.9%
White	59.0%	67.9%	79.9%	75.2%	80.7%

Undergraduate qualifiers by ethnicity

Unfortunately, due to small numbers we were unable to look at the class of degree by the 11 categories of ethnicity. As we saw earlier, engineering and technology qualifiers were more likely to achieve a first than qualifiers in other subjects. This is true across all UK ethnic groups (figure 10).

However, white qualifiers were significantly more likely to achieve a first class honours compared to UKME groups. Over 4 in 10 (44.4%) white engineering and technology qualifiers obtained a first class honours. This was a difference of 6.9pp between them and the next highest performing UKME group: mixed or multiple ethnic groups at 37.5%.

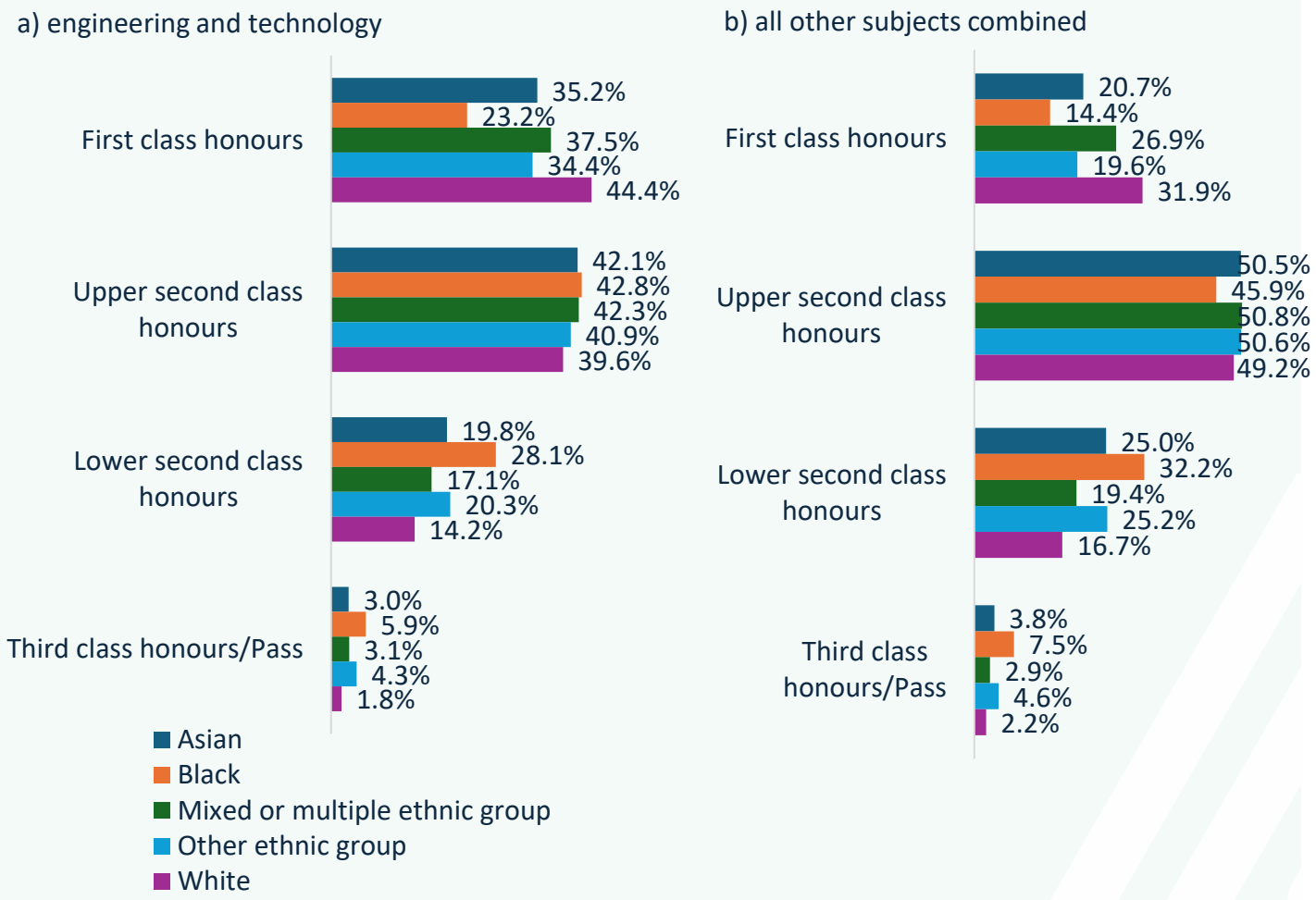
The overrepresentation of white qualifiers for first class honours was also evident in all other subjects combined. This effect, however, was less strong at 31.9% for white qualifiers and 26.9%

[16] Office of National Statistics: (2018). Young people by ethnicity in England and UK. Available at: Young people by ethnicity in England and UK - Office for National Statistics

(5.0pp) for mixed or multiple ethnic group qualifiers (also the 2nd highest performing ethnic group for other subjects combined).

Regardless of the subject type, Black qualifiers were the least likely to achieve a first class honours and significantly more likely to obtain a lower second class honours compared to other ethnicities. While more Black engineering qualifiers achieved firsts than Black qualifiers in other subjects, the difference compared to other ethnicities was particularly stark for engineering and technology qualifiers.

Figure 10: Class of degree achieved by qualifiers, by ethnicity and subject studied



Postgraduates by ethnicity

Moving on to postgraduate entrants, 31.6% of postgraduates research entrants were from a UKME group compared to 22.9% for all other subjects combined (table 6).

Only one UKME group was underrepresented in postgraduate engineering and technology compared to all other subjects combined - Black Caribbean or Caribbean British (0.3% compared to 1.1% respectively).

The UKME group with the strongest overrepresentation in engineering and technology compared to all other subjects combined was Asian Indian or Indian British (5.1% and 3.1% respectively).

Asian students netted were particularly overrepresented in engineering and technology in postgraduate research degrees at 16.7% compared to only 1 in 10 of other subjects (10.0%).

Finally, when looking at postgraduate taught entrants, over a third (37.5%) studied engineering and technology compared to approximately one-fifth for all other subjects combined (26.8%).

For taught postgraduate degrees, 1 in 10 engineering and technology entrants were Black African or African Black, nearly double the proportion in other subjects (6.6%). The second most frequent UKME group was Indian or Indian British at 5.1%. In total, 17.6% of postgraduate taught engineering and technology students were Asian, compared to 12.4% for other subjects and 11.7% in engineering and technology who were Black.

Once again, Black Caribbean or Caribbean British were underrepresented in engineering and technology compared to all other subjects, but the percentage difference was small at on 0.3pp.

Table 6: Postgraduate entrants by ethnicity and subject

Ethnicity	Postgraduate (research)		Postgraduate (taught)	
	Engineering and technology	All other subjects combined	Engineering and technology	All other subjects combined
Asian - Bangladeshi or Bangladeshi British	0.7%	0.7%	1.7%	1.0%
Asian - Chinese or Chinese British	5.2%	2.4%	2.6%	1.6%
Asian - Indian or Indian British	5.1%	3.1%	5.1%	4.2%
Asian - Pakistani or Pakistani British	2.5%	1.7%	4.1%	2.9%
Any other Asian background	3.2%	2.2%	4.0%	2.7%
Black - African or African British	5.2%	4.0%	10.0%	6.6%
Black - Caribbean or Caribbean British	0.3%	1.1%	1.0%	1.3%
Any other Black background	0.2%	0.2%	0.8%	0.4%
Mixed or multiple ethnic background	4.8%	4.9%	4.5%	4.0%
Other ethnic background	4.3%	2.6%	3.7%	2.1%
White	68.4%	77.1%	62.5%	73.2%

Graduate activity by ethnicity

In this section we have seen UKME groups are overrepresented in engineering and technology degrees (apart from other undergraduate courses). This does raise the question of why UKME groups are underrepresented in the engineering and technology workforce, if they are overrepresented in higher education.

There are a number of reasons why this could be the case. Firstly, we know that despite having a relevant degree, some engineering and technology graduates may choose to work in other roles. We also know, this is particularly the case for those from UKME groups compared to white.

Moreover, we know higher education isn't the only route into engineering. Whilst this one route might be overrepresented, we know UKME groups are underrepresented in other routes, such as vocational routes, impacting overall workforce numbers. This is something EngineeringUK hopes to investigate in the future using the Longitudinal Educational Outcomes (LEO) dataset.

We also looked at the main activity of graduates 15-months later and whether this differed by ethnicity. Unfortunately, we were unable to look at this using 11 categories of ethnicity, or with every possible activity listed. Therefore, we have used 5 categories of ethnicity and 4 main categories of activity: whether they were working, unemployed, in further study, or doing something else. Please see the methodology section for more details.

White engineering and technology graduates were the most likely to report they were in employment at nearly four-fifths (79.3%). White engineering and technology graduates were also more likely to be employment compared to white graduates from all other subjects combined (77.3%).

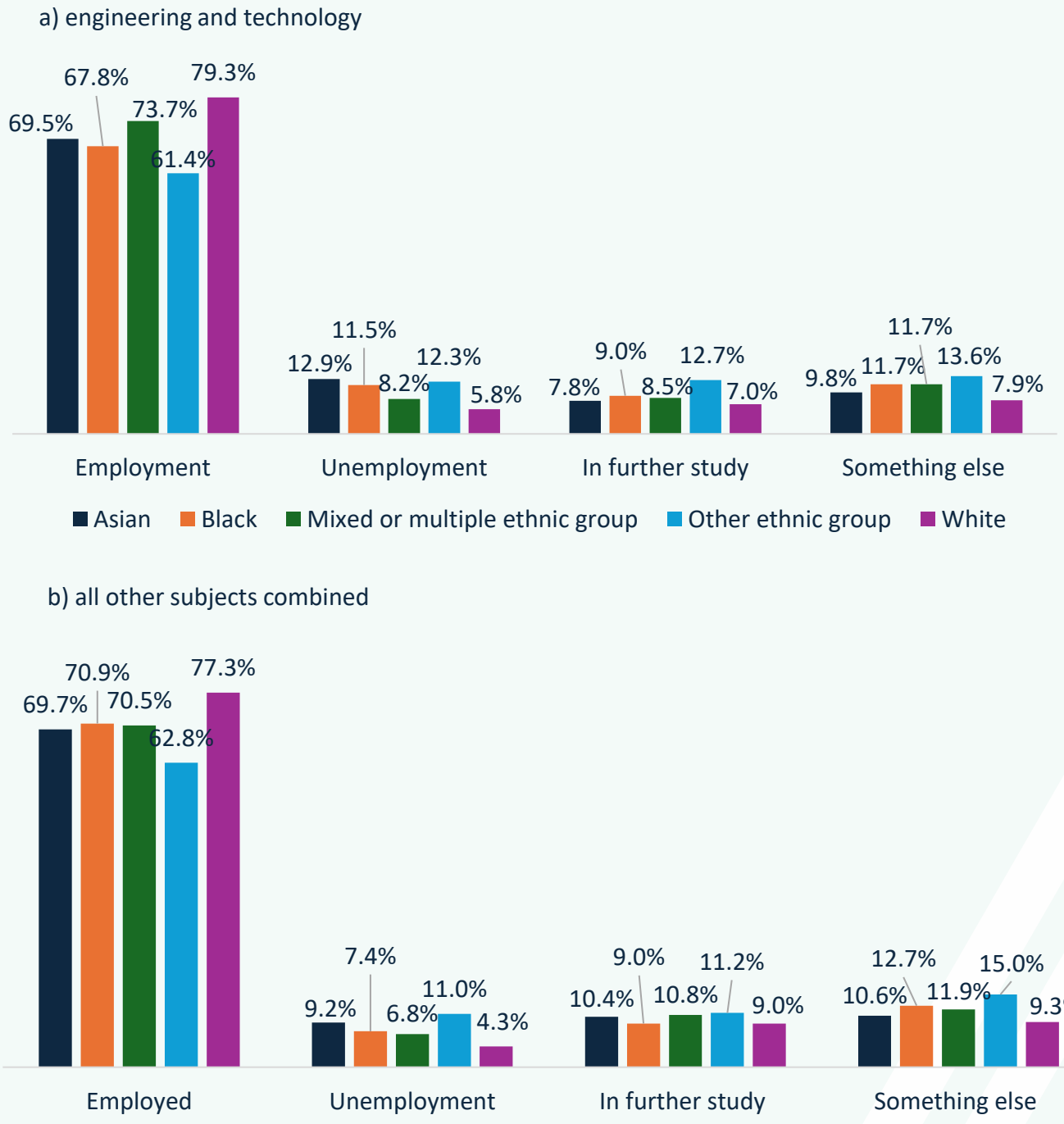
The second most likely ethnic group to be in employment amongst engineering and technology graduates was mixed or multiple ethnic groups (73.7%) followed by Asian graduates (69.5%) (figure 11). There was a higher proportion of mixed or multiple ethnic groups in employment compared to all other subjects combined (70.5%) but this was not the case for Asian graduates (69.7%).

Black and 'other' ethnic group engineering and technology graduates bucked the trend of being more likely to be employed than their counterparts in other subjects. Black (67.8%), and particularly other (61.4%), engineering and technology graduates were much less likely than white graduates (79.3%), but also less likely than Black (70.9%) and other (62.8%) graduates in other subjects.

We have already reported engineering and technology graduates were more likely to be unemployed compared to graduates from all other subjects combined, and this is true for all ethnicities. However, within engineering and technology there are differences by ethnicity. Asian engineering and technology graduates were the ethnic group with the highest unemployment figures at 12.9%, followed by other ethnic group (12.3%) and Black graduates (11.5%). Only 5.8% of white engineering and technology graduates were unemployed.

We can also see, graduates from other ethnic groups are more likely to be in further study (12.7%) compared to other ethnic groups in engineering and technology. They are also more likely to be doing something else (13.6%), which could include volunteering, caring for someone (unpaid) or taking time out to travel.

Figure 11: Main activity of graduates, by ethnicity and subject



Gender and ethnicity

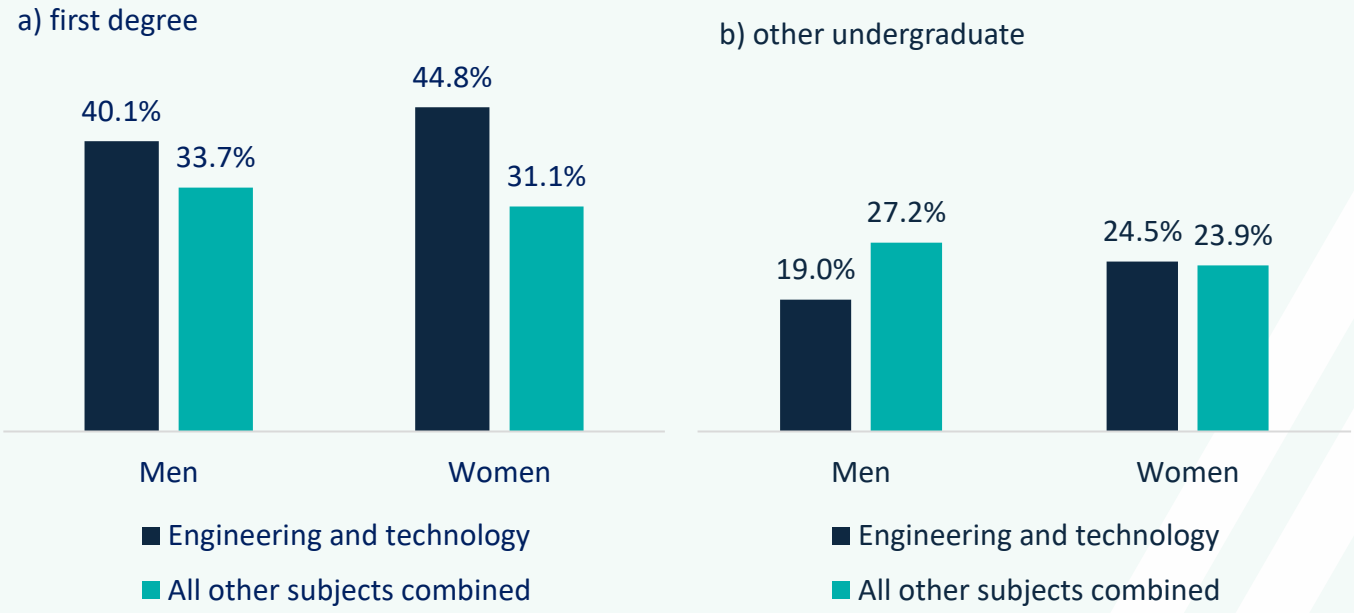
Whilst the above 2 sections on ethnicity and gender have revealed valuable insights it is equally important to investigate the intersectionality between them. This is because we know from previous research there can be important differences in ethnicity by gender and vice versa.

Undergraduates by gender and ethnicity

For first degree engineering and technology entrants, more women were from a UKMEgroup (44.8%), compared to men (40.1%). Fewer than a third of female entrants across all other subjects were from a UKME group (31.1%) representing a difference of 13.7pp. For men in all other subjects combined, the pattern was reversed with a higher percentage of men from a UKME group (33.7%) compared to women (figure 12).

We can also see from figure 12 that UKME students are more likely to be studying a first degree than other undergraduate courses. But this is particularly clear for engineering and technology, and especially for men. In fact, men studying other undergraduate courses is the only group where we see a higher percentage of UKME for other subjects (27.2%) compared to engineering and technology (19.0%).

Figure 12: Undergraduate entrants from a UK minority ethnic group by subject type and gender



When we look at UK minority ethnic groups in turn, we can see from table 7, that all UKME ethnicities are overrepresented compared to other subjects for both genders, except for Black Caribbean or Caribbean British and any other Black background. Already highlighted in our section on ethnicity, Black Caribbean or Caribbean British is consistently underrepresented at an undergraduate level regardless of gender.

There is a higher proportion of all UKME groups among female engineering and technology students than male students, except for Bangladeshi. The largest UKME group for women was

Black African (10%), and the largest gap for men is Indian (7% vs. 5.7%). The picture is more nuanced for other subjects (table 7).

Table 7: Ethnicity of first degree entrants by subject type and gender

Ethnicity	Engineering and technology		All other subjects combined	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Asian - Bangladeshi or Bangladeshi British	2.9%	2.5%	2.5%	2.0%
Asian - Chinese or Chinese British	1.5%	1.9%	0.8%	0.7%
Asian - Indian or Indian British	5.7%	7.0%	3.9%	3.4%
Asian - Pakistani or Pakistani British	6.4%	7.0%	5.4%	4.7%
Any other Asian background	4.2%	4.9%	2.9%	2.6%
Black - African or African British	8.9%	10.0%	7.4%	7.6%
Black - Caribbean or Caribbean British	1.1%	1.4%	1.5%	1.6%
Any other Black background	0.4%	0.3%	0.6%	0.6%
Mixed or multiple ethnic background	5.5%	6.2%	5.7%	5.5%
Other ethnic background	3.4%	3.6%	2.9%	2.5%
White	66.3%	59.9%	66.3%	68.9%

As with first degrees, we see a higher proportion of female students from an UKME background in engineering and technology other undergraduate courses compared to men. Just under a quarter of women in engineering and technology were from a UKME group (24.5%), compared to fewer than a fifth (19.0%) of men (table 8).

Black African or African British other undergraduates had the highest representation of UKME groups for both men and women (5.9% and 6.3% respectively) in engineering and technology. This was also the case, however, for all other subjects combined with 6.7% for men and 6.2% for women.

Women in engineering and technology once again had higher UKME representation across nearly all groups compared to men. Bangladeshi is the only exception, with 0.7% of both male and female graduates.

Table 8: Ethnicity of other undergraduate entrants by gender and subject type

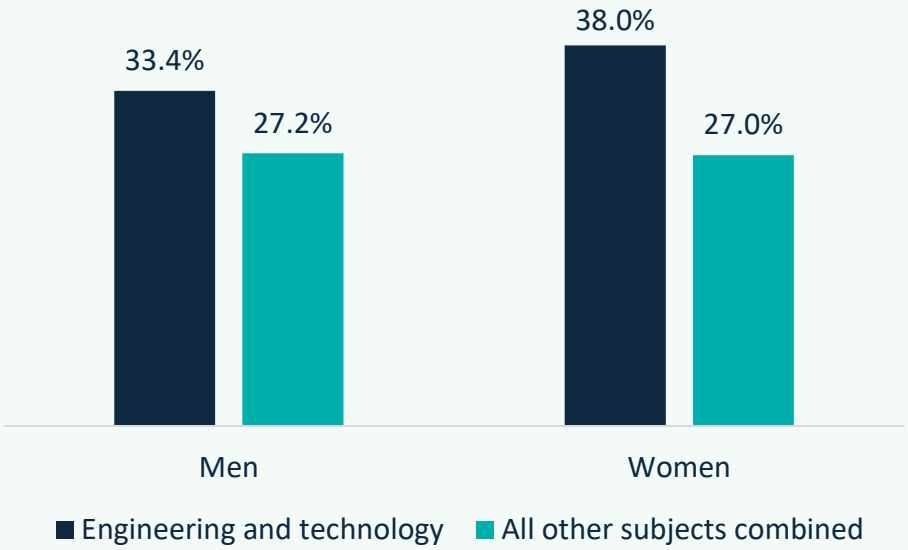
Ethnicity	Engineering and technology		All other subjects combined	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Asian - Bangladeshi or Bangladeshi British	0.7%	0.7%	2.0%	1.0%
Asian - Chinese or Chinese British	0.5%	1.3%	0.5%	0.5%
Asian - Indian or Indian British	2.1%	2.5%	2.6%	2.9%
Asian - Pakistani or Pakistani British	2.5%	3.7%	4.6%	3.3%
Any other Asian background	1.6%	1.8%	3.0%	3.3%
Black - African or African British	5.9%	6.3%	6.7%	6.2%
Black - Caribbean or Caribbean British	0.9%	1.2%	1.4%	1.6%
Any other Black background	0.5%	0.8%	0.7%	0.6%
Mixed or multiple ethnic background	2.6%	3.0%	3.2%	3.1%
Other ethnic background	1.7%	3.1%	2.6%	1.5%
White	81.0%	75.5%	72.8%	76.1%

Undergraduate qualifiers by gender and ethnicity

As with current undergraduate students, UK minority ethnic groups were overrepresented in engineering and technology qualifiers, regardless of their gender. The percentage of men from UK minority groups remained consistent from the time they would likely have been entrants (c.3 years prior) to qualifying. The percentage of women from UK minority ethnic groups in engineering and technology, on the other hand, increased. From the time they were entrants to qualifying, there was an approximate 2.2pp increase in women from UKME. This suggests that women from UK minority ethnic groups are less likely to drop out of their courses.

In engineering and technology, a third of male engineering and technology qualifiers were from a UK minority ethnic group (33.4%). This figure was also nearly 4 in 10 for women in engineering and technology (38.0%) (figure 13).

Figure 13: Percentage of UK minority ethnic group first degree qualifiers by subject and gender



For both men and women, the UKME group with the highest percentage of engineering and technology qualifiers was Black African or African British at 6.1% and 7.3%. In both cases, this group was also overrepresented compared to all other subjects combined with 6.3% for women and 5.4% for men.

A large proportion of engineering and technology qualifiers, however, were Asian at 19.3% for men and 21.0% for women. This proportion of Asian men and women going on to qualify in engineering and technology also increased from the time in which they were likely entrants (c.3 years prior). Therefore, this group are very unlikely to drop out during their time studying.

Asian Indian or Indian British were particularly overrepresented in engineering and technology compared to all other subjects at 7.1% for women (compared to 3.4%) and 5.9% for men (compared to 4.2%). Whilst there was little difference between women for mixed or multiple ethnic background (5.1% compared to 4.9% for all other subjects combined), men were underrepresented. For men, qualifiers in engineering and technology were less likely to be from a mixed or multiple ethnic background (4.4%) compared to all other subjects combined (4.9%). There was also little difference between the percentage of men and women from mixed or multiple ethnic backgrounds when they were entrants, suggesting this group are not likely to drop out during their studies.

There was little effect of gender or ethnicity amongst qualifiers from any other Black background, with percentages fluctuating by only 0.1pp. We did find, however, that the percentage of men from Black backgrounds decreased slightly from the time they were likely entrants to the point of qualifying, suggesting a percentage of this group may be dropping out. We did not find similar results, however, for Black women studying engineering and technology (table 9).

Table 9: Ethnicity of first degree qualifiers by subject type and gender

Ethnicity	Engineering and technology		All other subjects combined	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Asian - Bangladeshi or Bangladeshi British	2.6%	2.6%	2.2%	1.9%
Asian - Chinese or Chinese British	1.4%	2.3%	0.8%	0.7%
Asian - Indian or Indian British	5.9%	7.1%	4.2%	3.4%
Asian - Pakistani or Pakistani British	5.5%	5.0%	4.1%	3.9%
Any other Asian background	3.9%	4.0%	2.5%	2.3%
Black - African or African British	6.1%	7.3%	5.4%	6.3%
Black - Caribbean or Caribbean British	0.7%	1.2%	0.9%	1.4%
Any other Black background	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%	0.4%
Mixed or multiple ethnic background	4.4%	5.1%	4.9%	4.9%
Other ethnic background	2.6%	3.0%	1.9%	1.8%
White	66.6%	62.0%	72.8%	73.0%

We've already seen that despite being underrepresented in engineering and technology, female qualifiers are more likely to achieve a first compared to men. But women in engineering and technology are also more likely to achieve a first compared to women in all other subjects combined. We saw this pattern again when looking at the intersectionality of gender and ethnicity. Women, regardless of their ethnicity were more likely to achieve a first class honours compared to men, and women in engineering and technology were more likely than women in other subjects.

White women were most likely to receive a first class honours in engineering technology at nearly half (47.2%), compared to 43.8% of white men and a third of white woman studying all other subjects combined (33.7%) (figure 14 and 15).

The second most likely ethnic group to achieve a first class honours in engineering and technology were from a mixed or multiple ethnic group at 44.6%, compared to 35.6% of men and 28.8% of women from all other subjects combined.

When looking at male qualifiers in engineering and technology, white men were the most likely to achieve a first degree at 43.8%, compared to just over a quarter of all other subjects combined (28.6%). Despite women being generally more likely to achieve a first in engineering and technology, white men were more likely to achieve a first compared to women from an Asian (42.7%), Black (26.1%) or other ethnic background (41.5%).

The UK minority ethnic group least likely to receive a first class honours in engineering and technology was Black for both men (22.3%) and women (26.1%). Instead, men and women from a Black background were more likely to achieve a lower second class honours (29.8% and 22.5% respectively) in engineering and technology.

Figure 14: Engineering and technology class of degree by ethnicity and gender

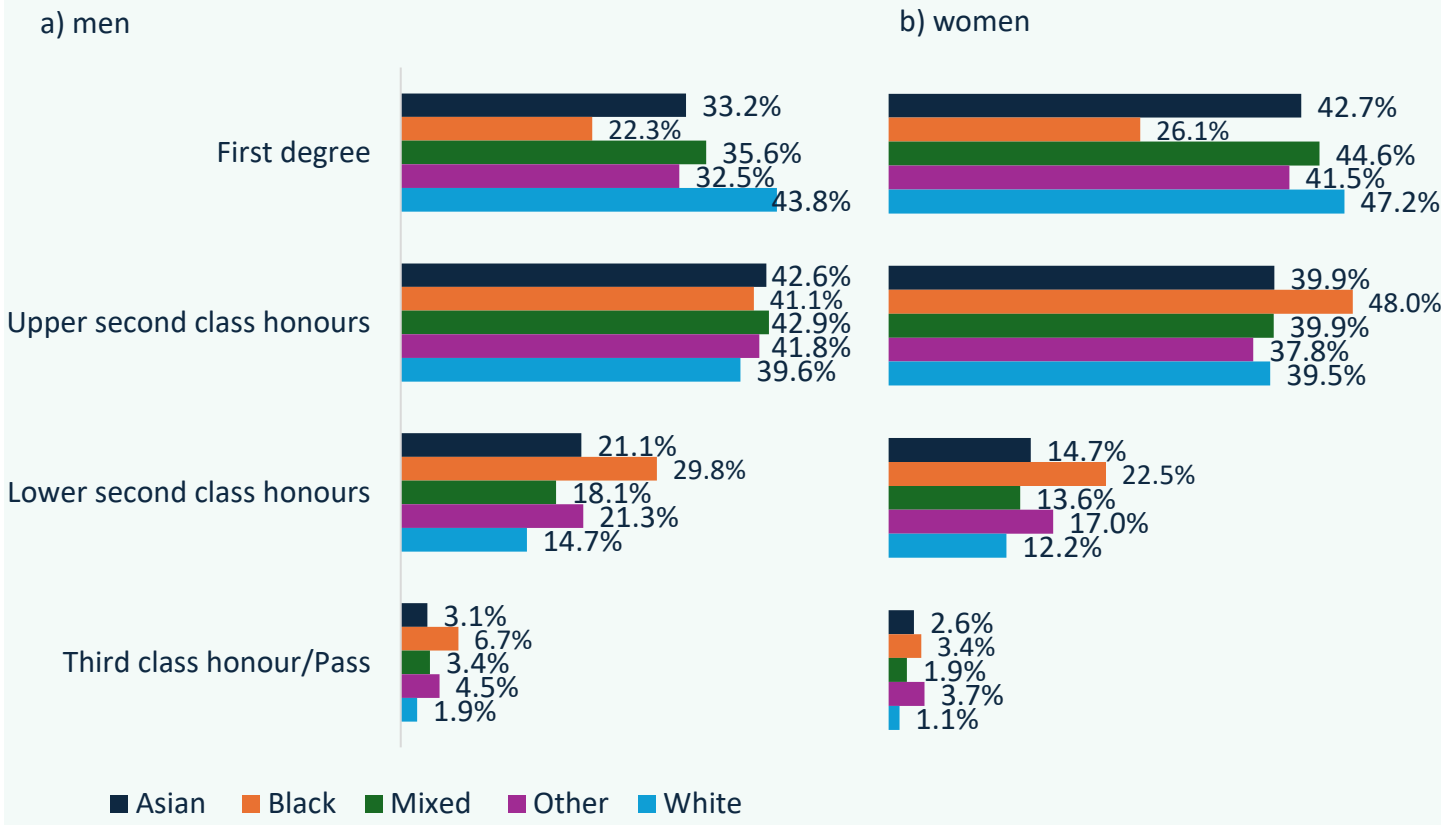
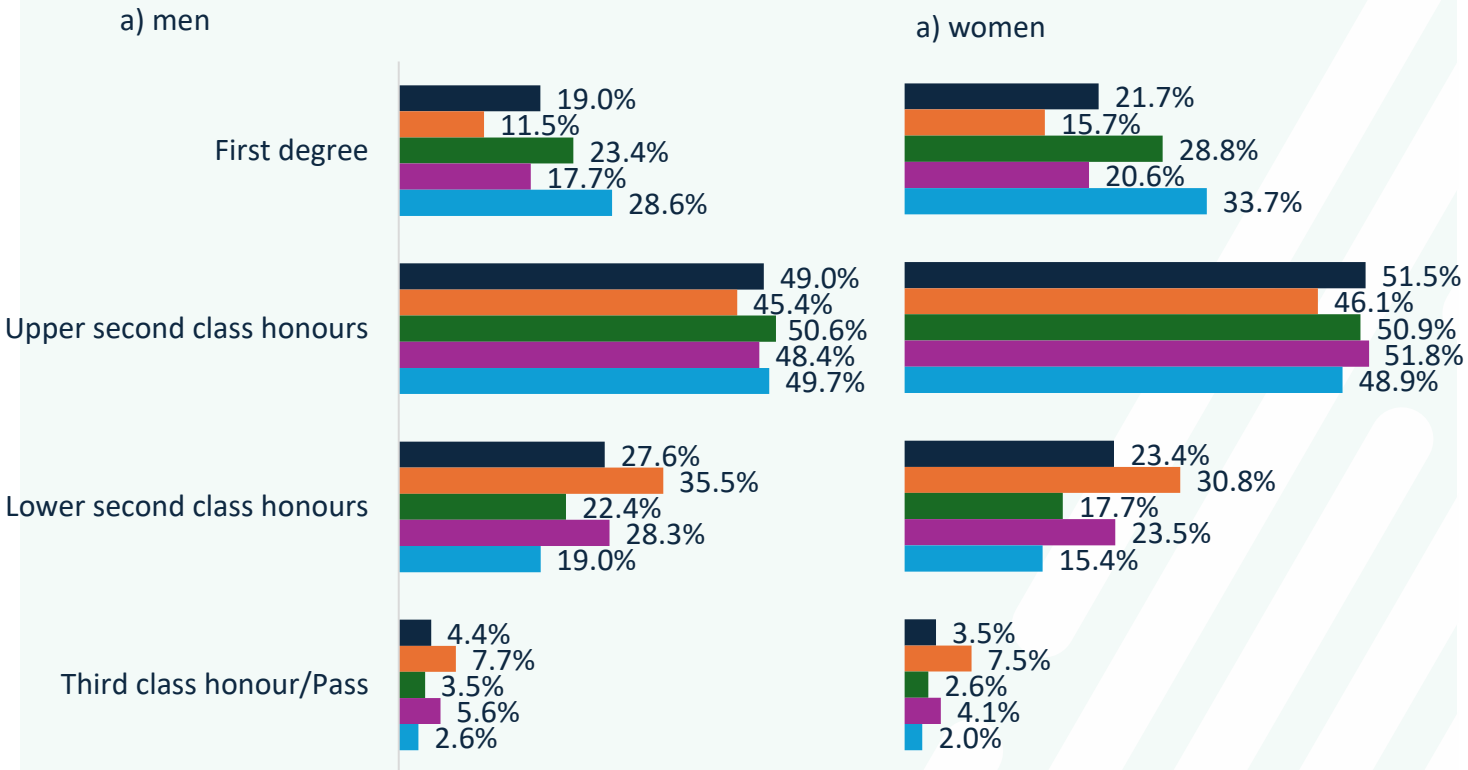


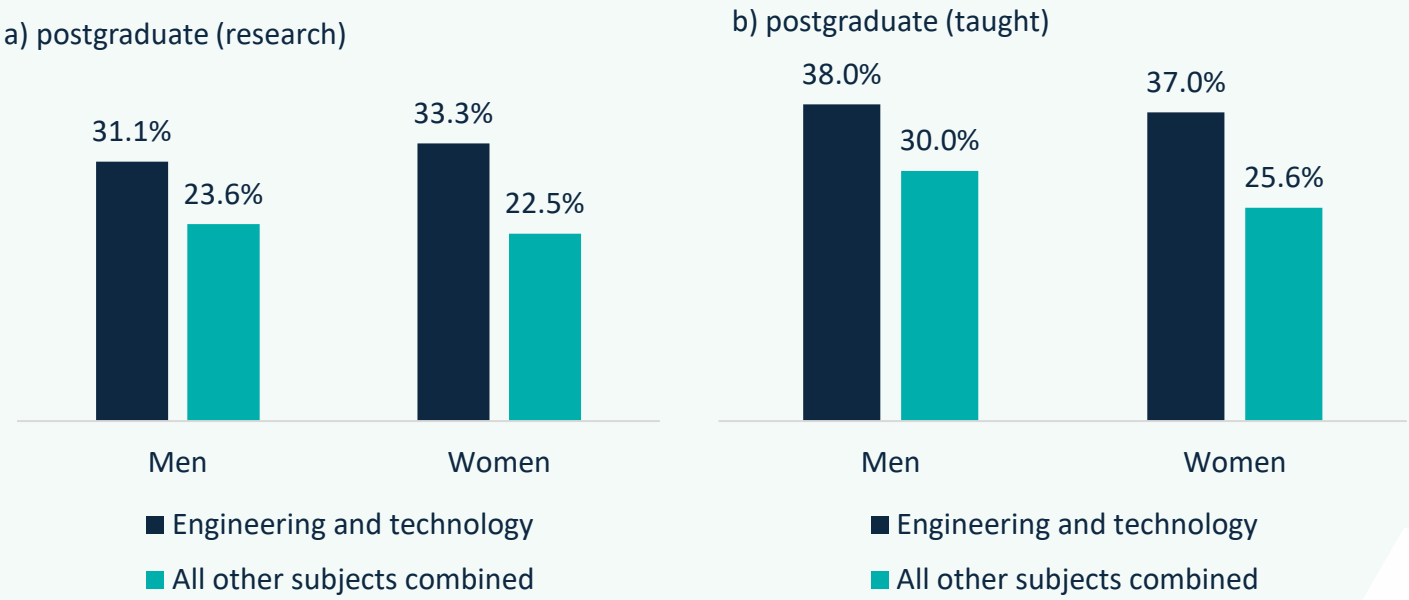
Figure 15: All other subjects class of degree by ethnicity and gender



Postgraduates by gender and ethnicity

UKME groups were overrepresented in postgraduate degrees for both men and women and for both research and taught degrees. For the former, there was a higher percentage of women from UKME groups (33.3%) compared to men (31.1%). For postgraduate taught degrees, there was a higher percentage of men (38.0%) compared to women (37.0%). These percentages in engineering and technology, however, are still high, regardless of gender (figure 16).

Figure 16: Percentage of UKME groups in postgraduate degrees by gender and subject type



Unfortunately for postgraduate research degrees, the numbers were too small to look at ethnicity by 11 categories. We can see from 5 categories, however, Asian women were more likely to study engineering and technology (as a percentage), compared to men and women in all other subjects combined. This percentage was nearly double with 18.5% of postgraduate researchers studying engineering and technology from Asian backgrounds compared to 9.7% across all other subjects combined. This pattern was also present for men, albeit slightly smaller. Whilst 16.0% of men studying engineering and technology were Asian, this figure was only 10.6% for all other subjects combined (table 10).

Women from mixed or multiple ethnic groups were underrepresented in engineering and technology compared to men (4.3% compared to 5.0%). There was also little difference between the 2 subject groups for Black women, though Black women in engineering and technology were underrepresented (5.2%) compared to men (6.1%).

Men from any other ethnic background were particularly overrepresented in engineering and technology at 4.0% compared to 2.6%.

Table 10: Postgraduate research entrants by ethnicity, gender and subject type

Ethnicity	Engineering and technology		All other subjects combined	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Asian	16.0%	18.5%	10.6%	9.7%
Black	6.1%	5.2%	5.6%	5.1%
Mixed or multiple ethnic background	5.1%	4.3%	4.7%	5.0%
Other ethnic background	4.0%	5.2%	2.6%	2.6%
White	68.9%	66.7%	76.4%	77.5%

As with other levels of study, UKME groups are generally overrepresented in engineering and technology compared to other subjects across both genders, with the exception of Black Caribbean/Caribbean British. However, there is a more nuanced picture within engineering and technology. Chinese, Caribbean and Black other are all higher for women in engineering and technology, while all other UKME groups are higher for men.

The UKME group most frequent in engineering and technology was Black African or African British with 1 in 10 for men and 9.2% for women, though it should be noted that at the netted 5 ethnicity level, Asian is the highest (18.2% of men and 16.6% of women) (table 11).

Table 11: Postgraduate taught entrants by ethnicity, gender and subject type

Ethnicity	Engineering and technology		All other subjects combined	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Asian - Bangladeshi or Bangladeshi British	1.8%	1.3%	1.2%	0.9%
Asian - Chinese or Chinese British	2.5%	3.1%	1.9%	1.4%
Asian - Indian or Indian British	5.3%	4.9%	4.8%	3.9%
Asian - Pakistani or Pakistani British	4.4%	3.7%	3.4%	2.8%
Any other Asian background	4.2%	3.6%	2.9%	2.6%
Black - African or African British	10.5%	9.2%	7.5%	6.3%
Black - Caribbean or Caribbean British	0.8%	1.3%	0.8%	1.5%
Any other Black background	0.6%	1.1%	0.4%	0.4%
Mixed or multiple ethnic background	4.1%	5.1%	4.3%	3.9%
Other ethnic background	3.8%	3.7%	2.8%	1.8%
White	62.0%	63.0%	70.0%	74.4%

Graduate activity by gender and ethnicity

For the first time, we have looked at the main activity of graduates by *both* gender and ethnicity. There was a lot of information and there was no significant difference between engineering and technology, and all other subjects combined for: Black women, men from mixed or multiple ethnic groups, white women, and for any other ethnic group.

We did find though that Asian women qualifiers in engineering and technology were less likely to be in further studies following graduation (7.8%) compared to Asian women in all other subjects

combined (10.8%). There was also a strong effect of ethnicity and gender for Asian men in employment. Asian male engineering and technology graduates were less likely to be in employment (69.2%) compared to Asian men from all other subjects combined (71.3%) (table 12).

When looking at the differences within engineering and between ethnic groups, women from other ethnic groups were the least likely to be in work at only 57.9%. This is a 12.4pp below other ethnic groups and Asian, 12.5 pp below Black graduate women, 15.9 pp below mixed or multiple ethnic groups and a staggering 21.00 pp below white women in employment. This group were the least likely to be employed and most likely to be in further study across all ethnicities, genders, and subjects (tables 12 and 13).

Table 12: Main activity of graduate women by ethnic and subject type

Ethnicity	Subject type	Employed	Unemployment	In further study	Something else
Asian	Engineering and technology	70.3%	12.1%	7.8%	9.8%
	All other subjects combined	68.7%	9.7%	10.8%	10.8%
Black	Engineering and technology	70.4%	9.6%	8.7%	11.3%
	All other subjects combined	71.1%	7.3%	8.8%	12.9%
Mixed or multiple ethnic group	Engineering and technology	73.8%	9.8%	7.3%	9.1%
	All other subjects combined	71.0%	6.0%	10.8%	12.2%
Other ethnic group	Engineering and technology	57.9%	12.0%	17.3%	12.8%
	All other subjects combined	60.8%	11.6%	11.6%	15.8%
White	Engineering and technology	78.9%	4.4%	8.5%	8.2%
	All other subjects combined	78.3%	3.8%	8.7%	9.2%

White male engineering and technology graduates were also significantly more likely to be employed at nearly 8 in 10 (79.5%) compared to white men who graduated from all other subjects combined (75.7%). White men with engineering and technology degrees were therefore also less likely to be in further study (6.6%) or doing something else (7.7%) compared to white men who graduated from all other subjects combined (9.6% and 9.6% respectively).

On the other hand, Black men who graduated from engineering and technology were underrepresented in employment compared Black men from all other subjects combined. Whilst 7 in 10 Black men from all other subjects combined reported being in employment, this was only the case for just over two-thirds (67.0%) of Black men from engineering and technology degrees (table 13).

When looking at differences between ethnicities for engineering and technology graduates, (similarly to women) men from other ethnic groups were less likely to be in work at only 62.4%. This is 4.6pp below Black engineering and technology graduates, 6.8pp below Asian graduates, 11.4 pp below mixed or multiple ethic groups and 17.1pp below white male graduates. For engineering and technology graduates this figure of 62.4% for men from other ethnic groups might be offset by a slightly higher proportion either doing something else (13.7%) or continuing with further studies (11.7%) compared to other ethnic groups.

Table 13: Main activity of graduate men by ethnicity and subject type

Ethnicity	Subject type	Employed	Unemployment	In further study	Something else
Asian	Engineering and technology	69.2%	13.2%	7.8%	9.8%
	All other subjects combined	71.3%	8.5%	9.9%	10.3%
Black	Engineering and technology	67.0%	12.1%	9.1%	11.9%
	All other subjects combined	71.3%	7.7%	9.5%	12.3%
Mixed or multiple ethnic group	Engineering and technology	73.8%	7.7%	8.9%	9.6%
	All other subjects combined	69.5%	8.2%	10.8%	11.5%
Other ethnic group	Engineering and technology	62.4%	12.2%	11.7%	13.7%
	All other subjects combined	66.0%	10.0%	10.3%	13.7%
White	Engineering and technology	79.5%	6.1%	6.6%	7.7%
	All other subjects combined	75.7%	5.2%	9.6%	9.6%

Disability

According to the latest census data, approximately 11.3% of young people aged 15-19 years old have a disability in England and Wales. This figure rises to 13.2% for those aged 20 to 24 years before dropping back down to 11.8% for 25- to 29-year-olds[17]. We also know every year, over 100,000 disabled students apply to go to university through UCAS in the UK[18]. Disabilities can range from mental health, learning differences, physical disabilities and long-term health conditions.

Our results showed, across all entrants, approximately 15.2% of students reported a disability[19]. There were differences across the different levels of study though. First degree undergraduates were the most likely to report a disability at 18.8%, whereas this was only the case for 15.7% of other undergraduates. A total of 16.9% of postgraduate research students said they had a disability, followed by only 1 in 10 of postgraduate taught students (10.2%). This indicates higher participation in higher education for disabled young people compared to the wider population.

Undergraduates by disability

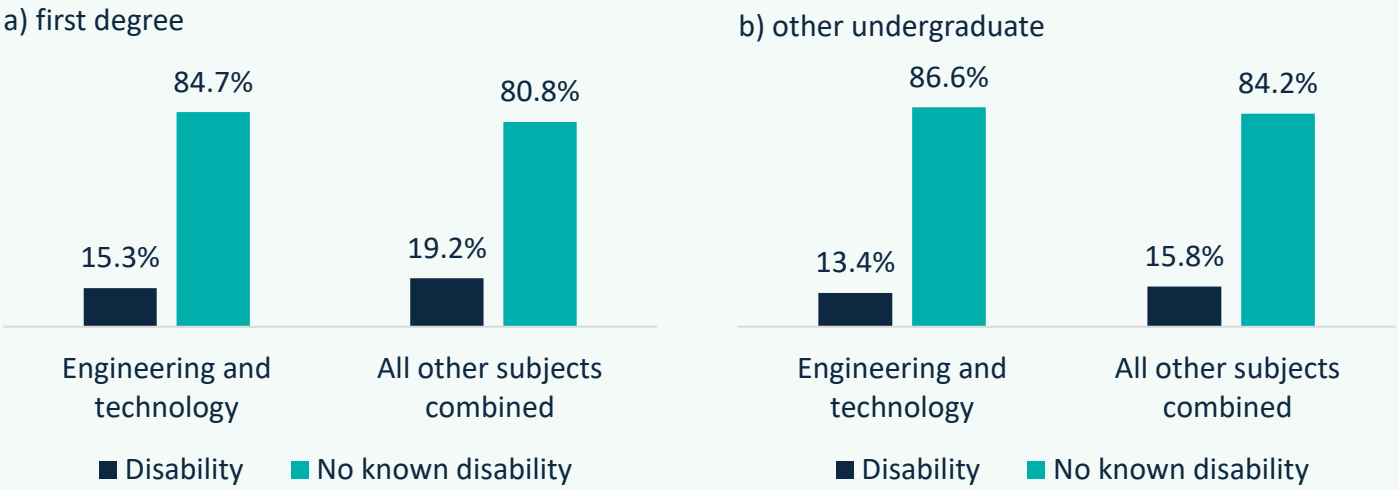
Undergraduates in engineering and technology were less likely to report a disability compared to all other subjects combined. For first degree engineering and technology students only 15.4% reported a disability, compared to nearly a fifth for all other subjects combined (19.2%). This figure, however, is higher than population disability figures where 11.8% of young people aged 20-24 reported a disability. This suggests whilst disability figures may appear low compared to all other subjects combined, in the wider context they are quite representative. Engineering and technology undergraduates were slightly less likely to report a disability if they studied an 'other undergraduate' course (13.4%) compared to all other subjects combined (15.8%) (figure 17).

[17] Office of National Statistics. (2023). Disability in England and Wales, 2021. Available at: https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/disability/datasets/disabilityinenglandandwales2021

[18] UCAS. (n.d.). Disabled students. Available at: https://www.ucas.com/applying/applying-to-university/students-with-individual-needs/disabled-students

[19] As HESA's disability marker is self-reported and students have the option to report if they had a disability or not, the percentage of students with a disability may actually be higher (please see methodology section for more detail).

Figure 17: Undergraduate entrants by disability status, subject and degree type

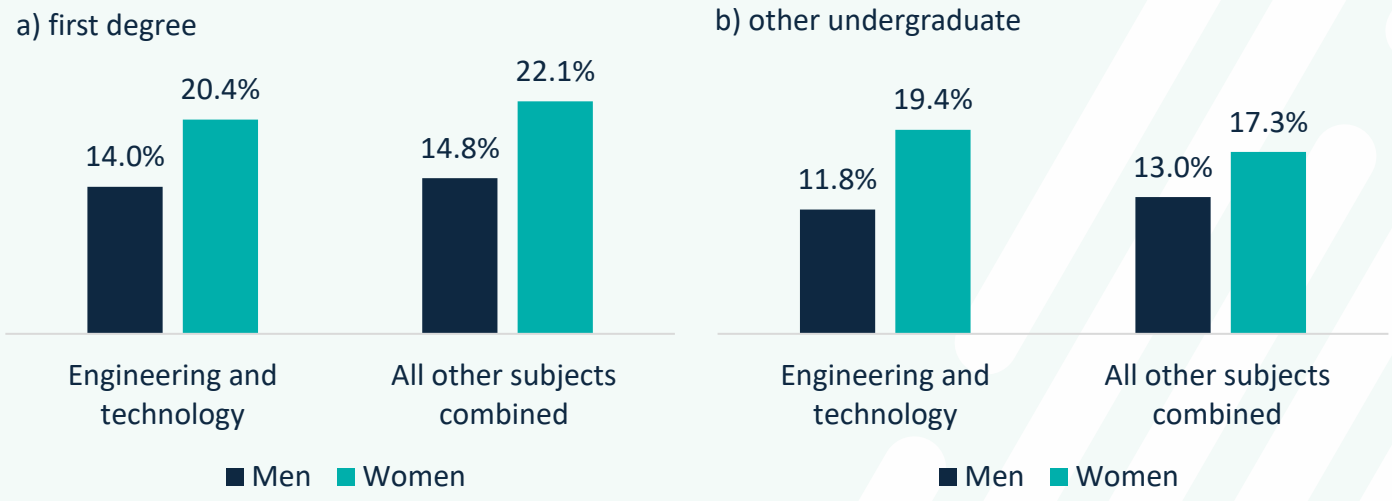


Undergraduates were more likely to report a disability, however, if they were women. This was also the case for all subjects combined. For first degree engineering and technology this was a fifth (20.4%) though still a smaller percentage than women in all other subjects combined (22.1%). Compared to population figures, however, these figures perform better as 15.1% of women between the ages of 20-24 years have a disability. As such, it would not be accurate to claim engineering and technology has underrepresentation of disabled young people in the wider context.

For men, the type of subject had less of impact with only a 0.8 pp difference between engineering and technology (14.0%) and all other subjects combined (14.8%). This is also still higher than national population data for England and Wales with 11.2% of men reporting a disability for the ages 20-24 years.

For other undergraduate courses there was a 7.6pp difference between men (11.8%) and women (19.4%) studying engineering and technology. This was compared to only a 4.3pp difference for all other subjects combined at 13.0% for men and 17.3% for women (figure 18).

Figure 18: Undergraduate entrants with a known disability by degree type and gender



The most frequently reported disability across subject groups was a 'learning differences such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or ADHD' (table 14). There were differences by undergraduate degree type for the second most frequent disability, with first degree undergraduates stating mental health conditions and other undergraduate entrants saying multiple impairments.

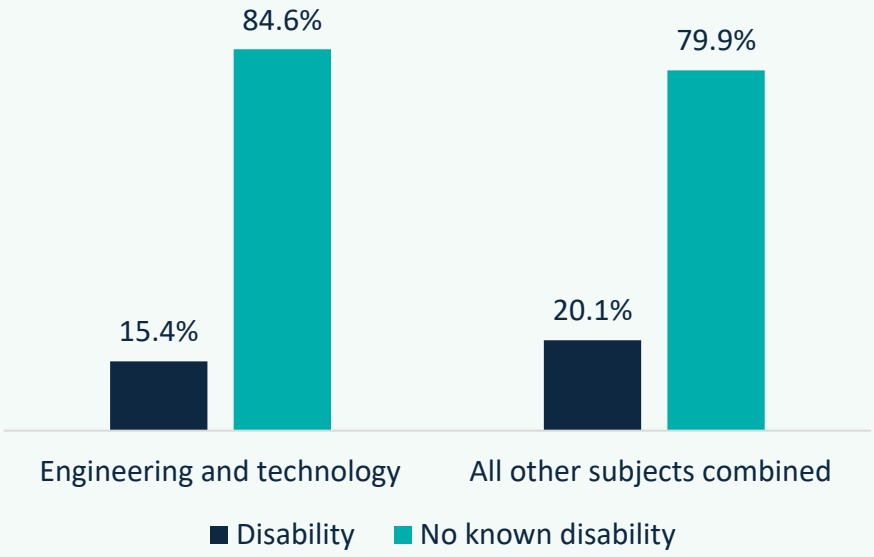
Table 14: Types of disabilities for undergraduate entrants, by subject and degree type

Disability	First degree		Other undergraduate	
	Engineering and technology	All other subjects combined	Engineering and technology	All other subjects combined
Learning differences such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or ADHD	4.7%	5.5%	4.6%	5.0%
Mental health condition	3.1%	5.5%	2.4%	3.7%
Multiple impairments	3.0%	3.8%	2.9%	3.1%
Social/communication conditions or autism spectrum disorder	1.8%	1.0%	1.2%	0.8%
Long-term illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV or diabetes	1.2%	1.5%	0.8%	1.4%
Blind or visual impairment	0.3%	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%
Deafness or hearing impairment	0.3%	0.3%	0.1%	0.4%
Physical impairment	0.3%	0.5%	0.4%	0.6%
Developmental condition	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%
Other disability	1.1%	1.3%	0.9%	1.3%

Undergraduate qualifiers by disability

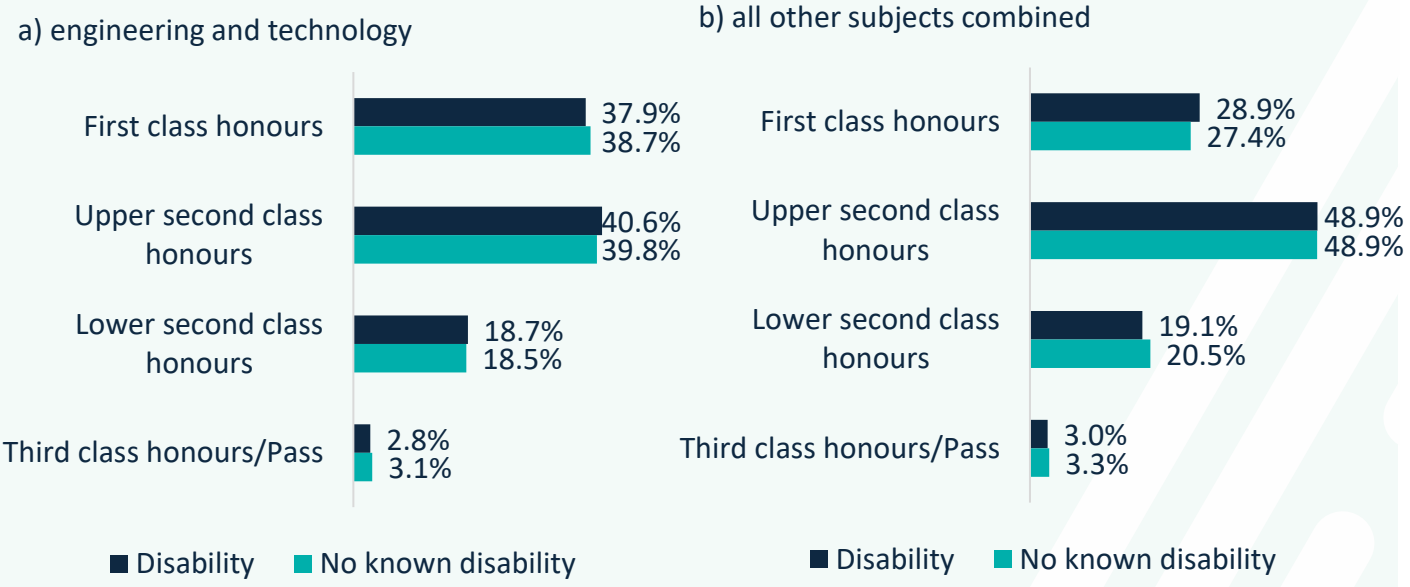
As qualifiers, engineering and technology students were also less likely to report a disability compared to all other subjects combined. Whilst 15.4% of engineering and technology qualifiers reported a disability, a fifth of qualifiers from all other subjects combined (20.1%) said they did (figure 19). Though the percentage of engineering and technology qualifiers is lower than all other subjects, it remained consistent between entrants and qualifiers, indicating that disabled students were supported to remain in the course and obtain their degree.

Figure 19: Undergraduate qualifiers who reported a disability by subject type



Whether students had a disability didn't seem to impact which grade they achieved either. 38.7% of engineering and technology qualifiers without a known disability and 37.9% of disabled qualifiers achieved a first class honours. This pattern was very similar for all other subjects combined as well, with a similar percentage of disabled qualifiers (28.9%) achieving a first class honours as those without disabilities (27.4%) (figure 20).

Figure 20: Class of degree achieved, by disability and subject



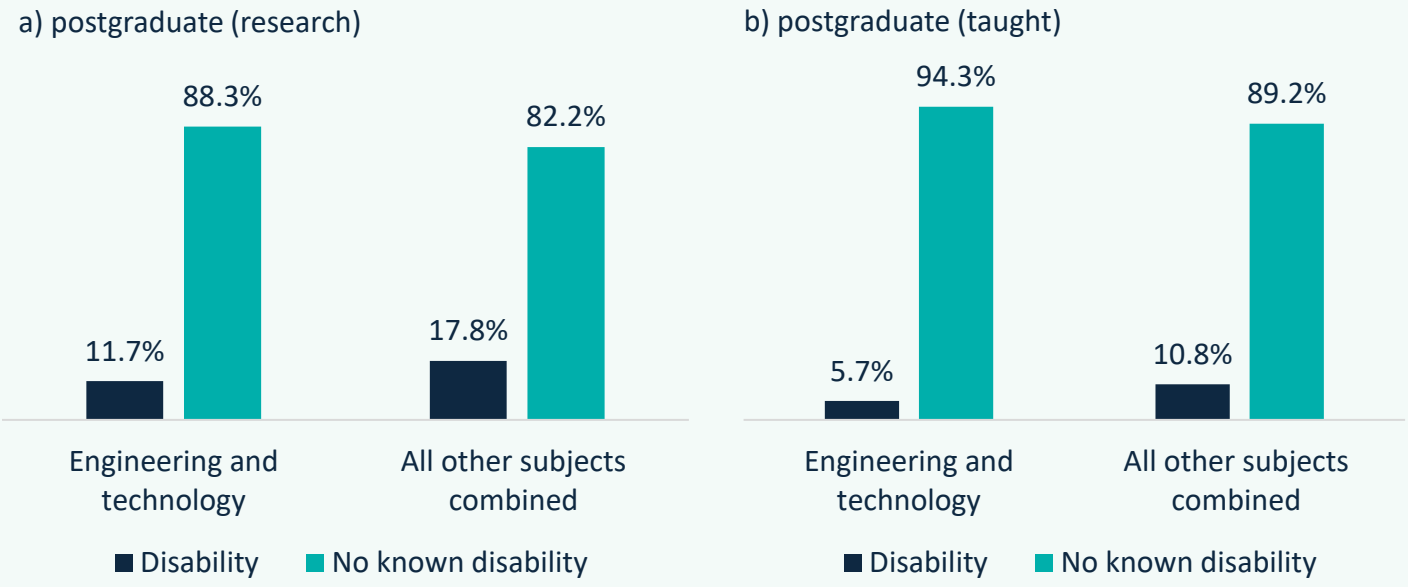
Postgraduates by disability

Postgraduate entrants were less likely than undergraduates to report a disability. This was particularly stark for engineering and technology graduates, however. Just over 1 in 10

postgraduate research students in engineering and technology said they had a disability (11.7%) compared to 17.8% for all other subjects combined.

In postgraduate taught engineering and technology degrees, only 5.7% of students said they had a disability. This was approximately half of all other subjects combined (10.8%). This makes a 6.1pp difference for postgraduate research graduates and a 5.1pp difference for postgraduate taught (figure 21).

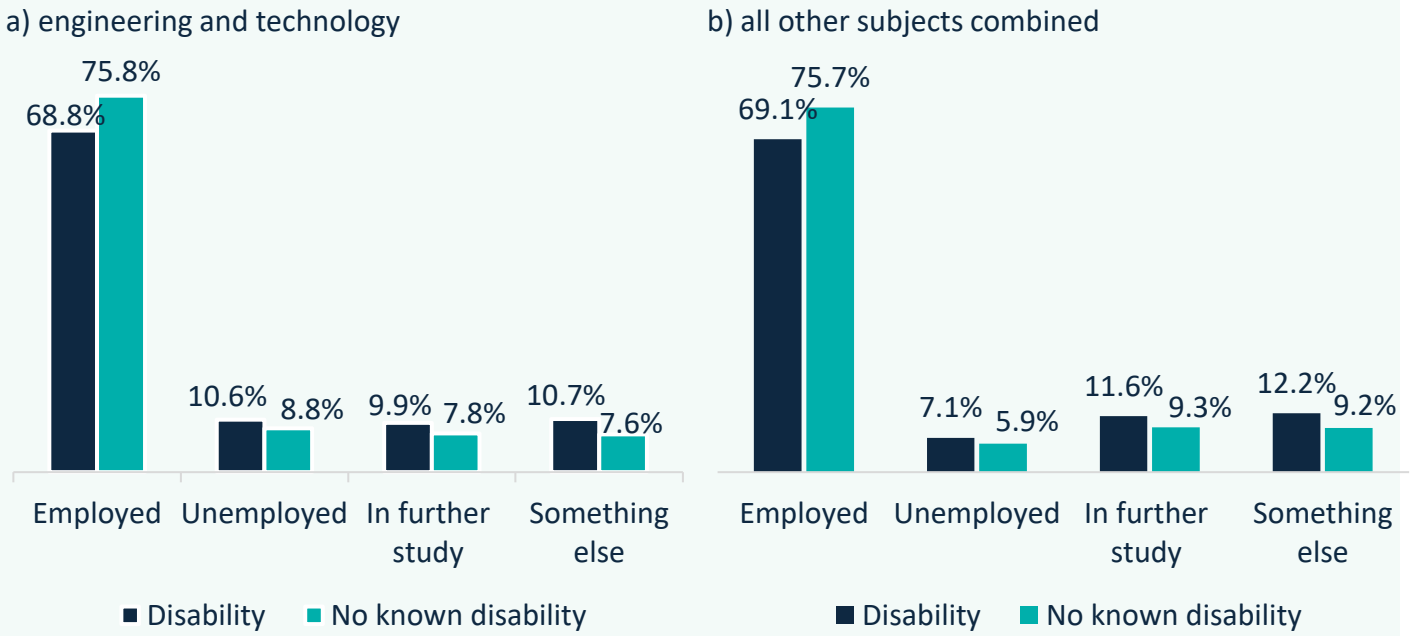
Figure 21: Postgraduate entrants by disability status and subject



Graduate activity by disability

Disabled engineering and technology graduates were significantly less likely to be in work (68.8%) compared to those with no reported disability (75.8%) (figure 22). This was also the case, however, for all other subjects combined and not specific to engineering and technology graduates. Disabled graduates are instead more likely to be unemployed, in further study, or doing something else such as volunteering or a caring role.

Figure 22: Main activity of graduates by disability status and subject



Parental education

Research into social mobility has already shown students are more likely to go into higher education, if their parent(s) also have higher education qualifications[20].

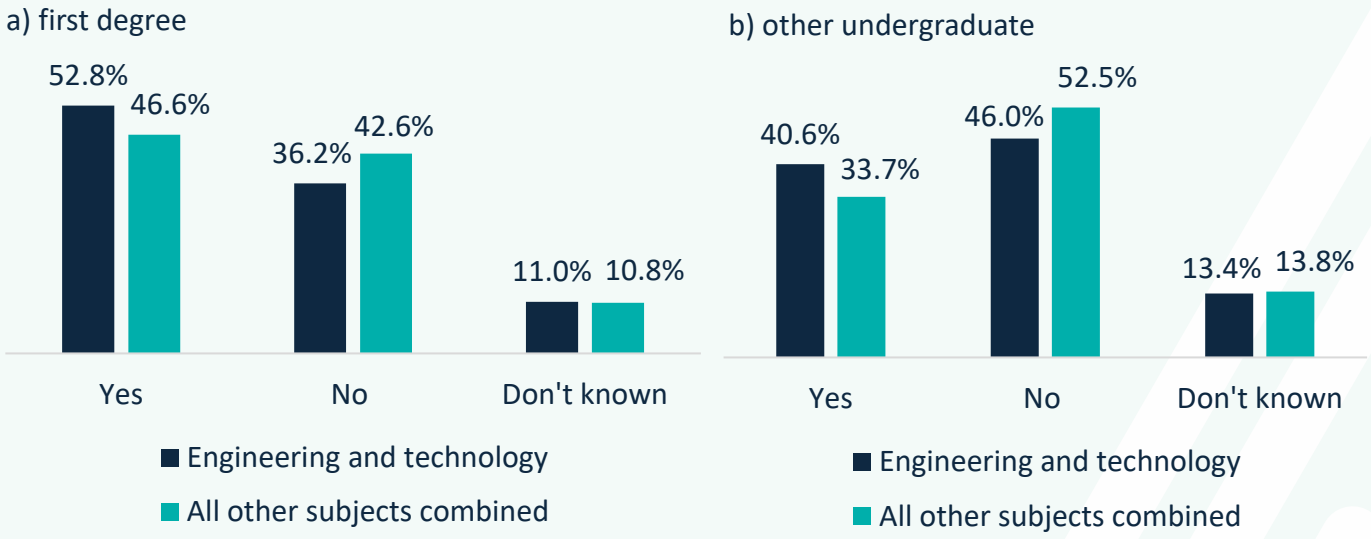
We also know the importance of parents from our Science Education Tracker, which showed parents were the most reported influential source for students seeking guidance about careers. In addition, stronger family science connections were linked to higher access to informal science learning (such as going to science museums), participation in extra-curricular science activities and taking-up triple science. Having many family connections was also highly correlated with a university-educated parent. Moreover, overall interest in science (for years 7-9) was linked to a range of factors including students who had a parent who had been to university. All of which may impact their likelihood of considering higher education and which subject to take[21].

Unfortunately, there was no data available for postgraduates as this question was exclusive to undergraduates.

Undergraduates by parental education

Engineering and technology first degree undergraduates were more likely to say they had a parent(s) with a higher education qualification (52.8%) compared to all other subjects combined (46.6%) (figure 23). This was also consistent across the academic years between 2019/20 to 2023/24.

Figure 23: Undergraduate entrants with parents with a higher education qualification



Entrants studying other undergraduate courses in engineering and technology were also more likely to say their parent(s) had higher education compared to all other subjects combined, but to a

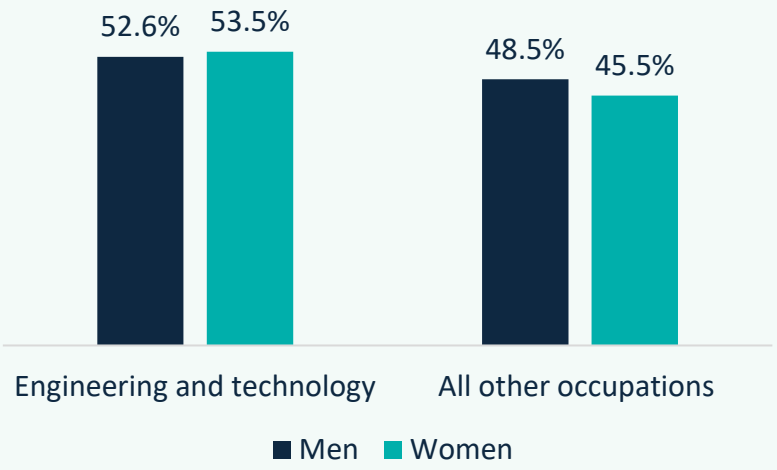
[20] Ander, J., and Jerrin, J. (2014). *The socio-economic gradient in educational attainment and labour market outcomes: a cross-national comparison*. London Institute of Education. Available at: Pathways to Adulthood.indd

[21] www.engineeringuk.com/set

lesser extent. Whilst over half of first degree engineering and technology students said 'yes' (52.8%), only 40.6% studying another undergraduate courses said the same.

We also looked at possible gender differences. Data was only available for undergraduate students and there were no significant gender differences for engineering and technology other undergraduate courses. Women in first degrees, however, were significantly more likely to have a parent with higher education (53.5%) compared to men (52.6%) in engineering and technology (figure 24).

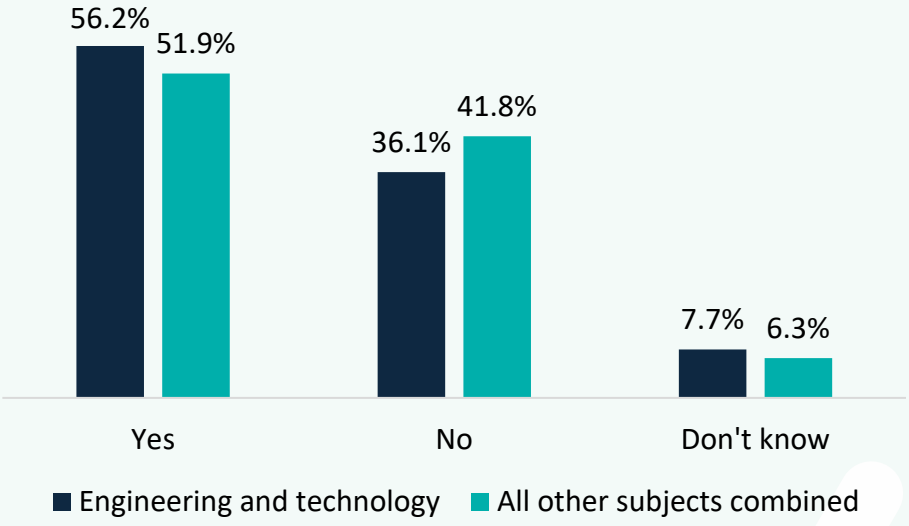
Figure 24: First degree undergraduate entrants with a parent with a higher education qualification, by gender



Undergraduate qualifiers by parental education

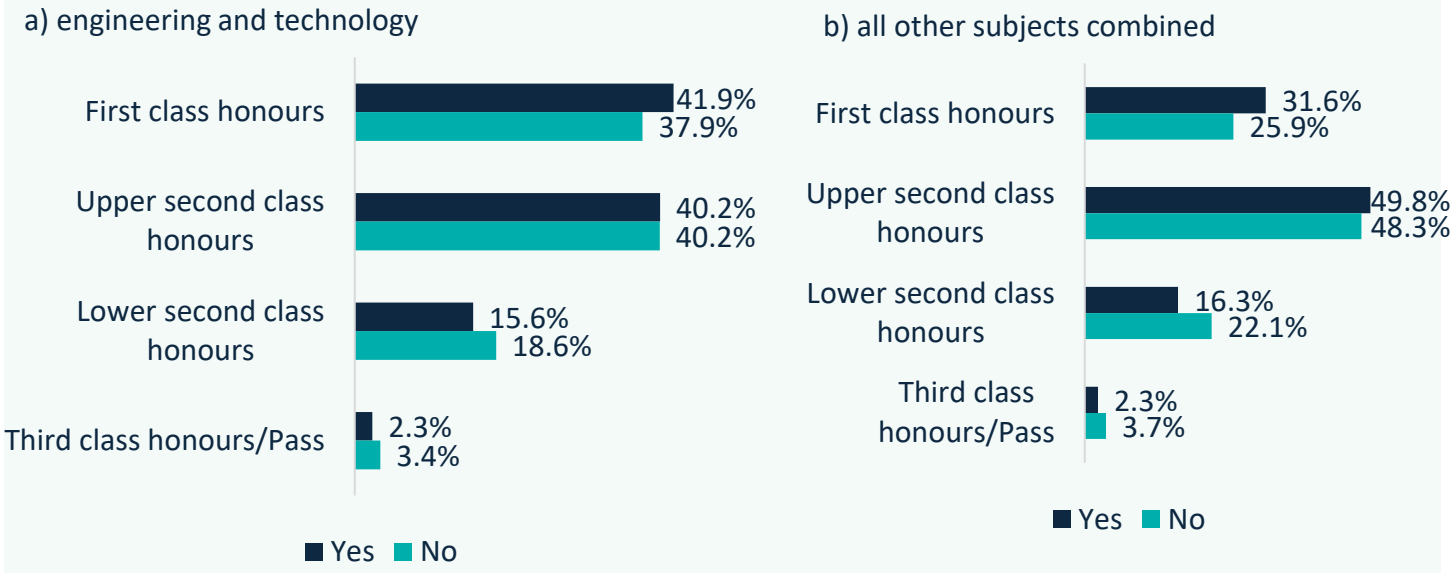
Nearly 6 in 10 qualifiers (56.2%) of engineering and technology qualifiers had a parent with higher education, whereas this was only the case for approximately half for all other subjects combined (51.9%) (figure 25). This figure rose from the time students were entrants, suggesting those with parents with higher education were more likely to complete their degree for both subject groups.

Figure 25: Undergraduate first degree qualifiers whose parents had higher education, by subject type



Engineering and technology qualifiers with highly educated parents were more likely to get a first class honours (41.9%) compared to those without (37.9%). Those without were more likely to achieve a lower second class honours (18.6%) compared those with (15.6%) (figure 26).

Figure 26: Class of degree achieved, by subject and parental education

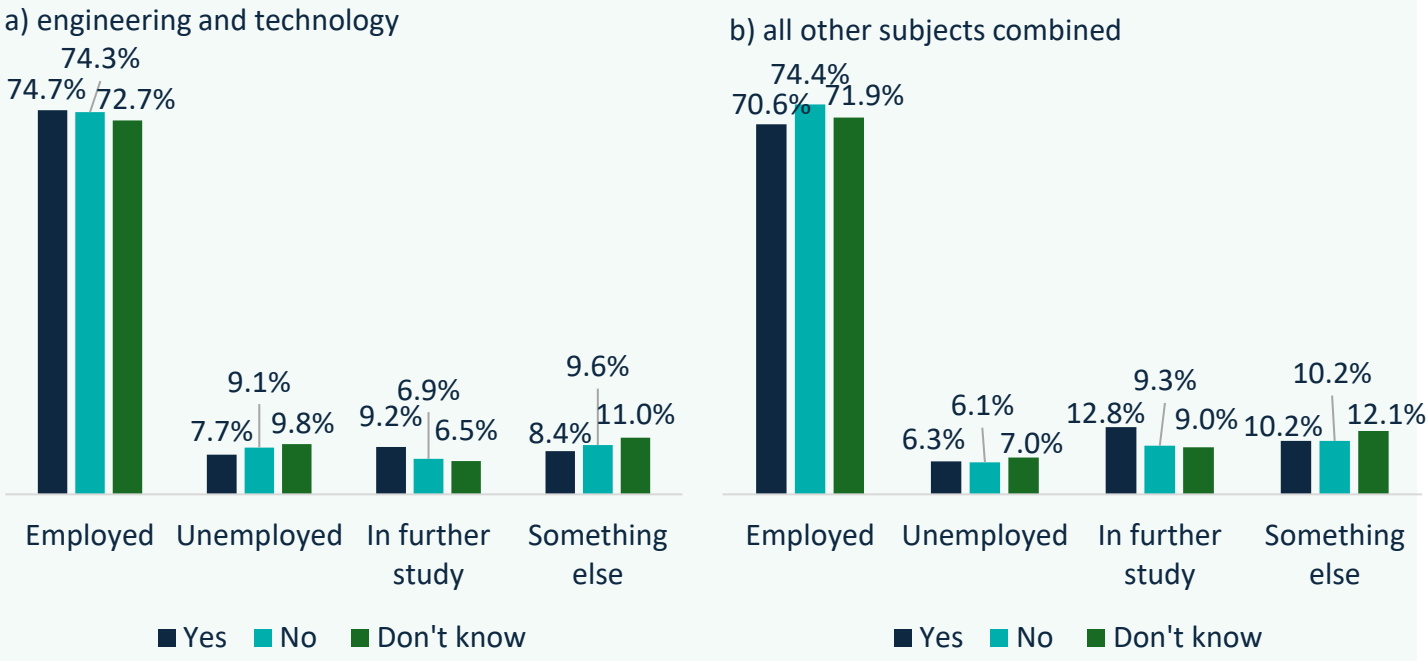


Graduate activity by parental education

As we have seen previously, engineering and technology graduates are more likely to be in employment than other graduates. This is the case for those with parents with higher education qualifications, but those without are equally likely to be in work, whether they studied engineering and technology or not.

For engineering and technology, parental education made little difference to employment levels (74.7% and 74.3%). However, parental education does impact on unemployment and further study, with those with parents with a higher education qualification being less likely to be unemployed (7.7% compared to 9.1%) and more likely to be in further study (9.2% compared to 6.9%). These figures are still lower, though, than for other subjects, with these graduates particularly likely to be in further study (figure 27).

Figure 27: Main activity of graduates by parental higher education and subject



Socioeconomic status

An index created by the Office of National Statistics, the POLAR4 identifies how likely young people are to participate in higher education across the UK based on where they live. If participation in higher education was equal for all, then each quintile would contain 20% of the student population. While this is not a perfect comparison, we have used POLAR4 in this report as a proxy for socioeconomic background, as this is the best data available. Quintile 1 represents the lowest rate of participation ("most disadvantaged"), whilst quintile 5 shows the highest rate of participation ("most advantaged").

This data is also only collected for UK residents; therefore, we cannot present the equivalent statistics for engineering and technology graduates whose normal place of residence is the EU or the RoW.

We already know being from a lower socioeconomic background is a barrier for some to enter higher education with the likelihood increasing as we move up from quintile 1 to quintile 5. Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are also more likely to drop out of university[22].

Undergraduates by socioeconomic status

When we looked at first degrees, engineering and technology students were less likely to be from the lower quintiles (quintiles 1 and 2), and more likely to be from the higher quintiles (quintile 4

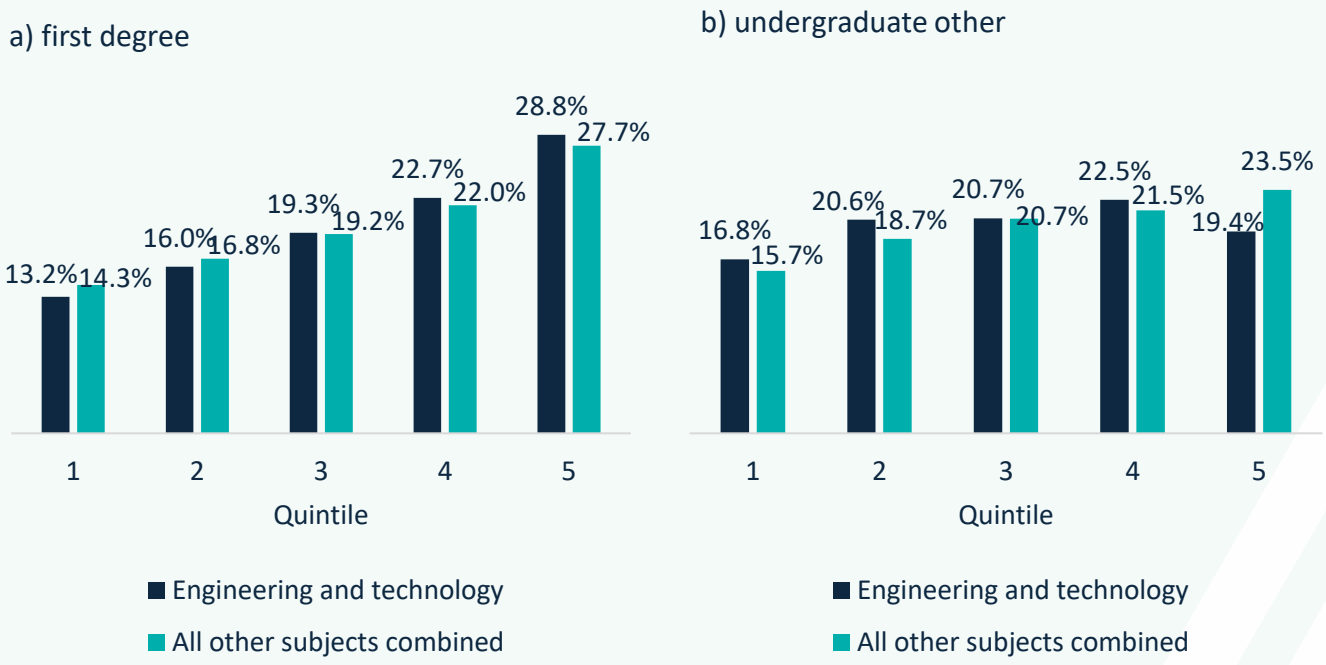
[22] House of Commons Library. (2025). *Equality of access and outcomes in higher education in England*. Available at: https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9195/

and 5) (figure 28). This is consistent with previous years, and with what we know about barriers to higher education more broadly.

Engineering and technology first degree undergraduates were overrepresented in quintiles 4 and 5, compared to all other subjects combined. Nearly 3 in 10 (28.8%) of engineering and technology undergraduates were from the most advantaged areas of the UK (quintile 5), compared to 27.7% of all other subjects combined. Only 13.2% of engineering and technology first degree undergraduates were from quintile 1, compared to 14.3% for all other subjects combined. There was little to no difference, however, for quintile 3.

It is worth noting that there were fewer students from the lower quintiles regardless of the subject group. This suggests higher education is struggling to attract lower socioeconomic groups in general, but this pattern was more noticeable for engineering and technology.

Figure 28: Undergraduate students by POLAR4 and subject



For other undergraduate courses, there is still a skew towards the higher quintiles, but it is less extreme than for first degrees. For quintile 5, engineering and technology undergraduates were underrepresented compared to all other subjects combined. This was at fewer than a fifth (19.4%), compared to nearly a quarter (23.5%) for all other subjects combined (figure 28).

For quintile 3, the percentages were where we would expect them to be, at 20% a piece. There was a slightly higher percentage of engineering and technology undergraduates from quintiles 1 and 2, however, at 16.8% and 20.6% respectively. This is compared to 15.7% and 18.7% for other subjects. This indicates that, opposite to first degrees, engineering and tech entrants on other undergraduate courses are more evenly spread across socioeconomic groups compared to other undergraduates.

We also looked at possible gender differences and found for engineering and technology (first degrees) a higher percentage of women from quintile 5 (29.8%) compared to men (28.5%). This

seems to suggest engineering and technology is more likely to attract women from higher socioeconomic statuses. There was no such affect for other undergraduates, with a nearly equal percentage of men and women from quintile 5 (19.3% and 19.4% respectively) (table 15).

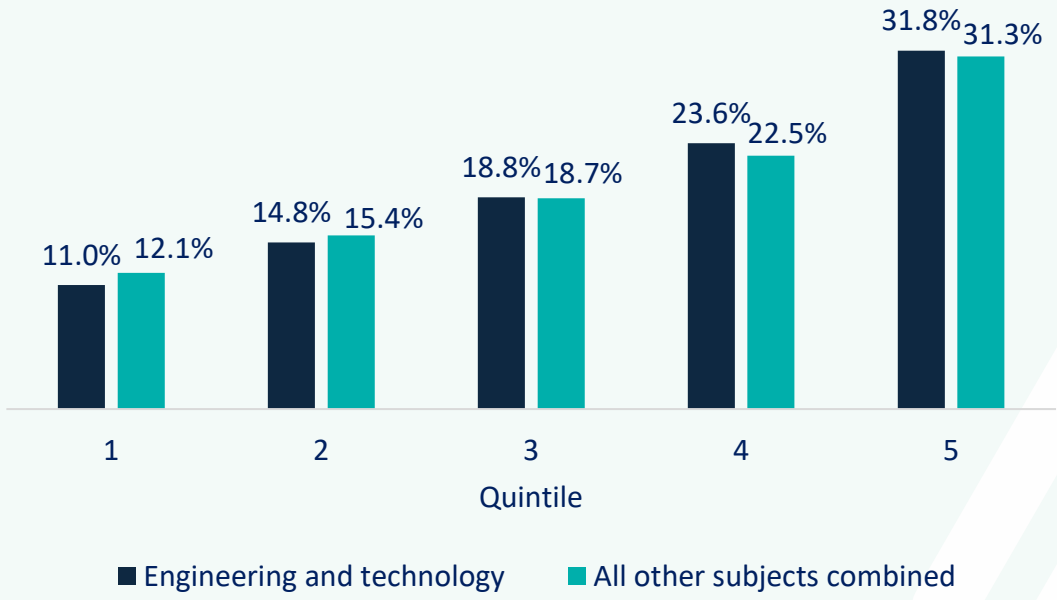
Table 15: Undergraduate entrants by POLAR4, gender and subject

	First degree				Other undergraduate			
	Engineering and technology		All other subjects combined		Engineering and technology		All other subjects combined	
Quintile	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
1	13.2%	12.9%	13.1%	15.0%	16.9%	16.6%	14.5%	16.3%
2	16.1%	15.7%	16.0%	17.4%	20.2%	21.9%	18.1%	19.1%
3	19.4%	19.2%	18.7%	19.5%	20.8%	20.7%	20.6%	20.7%
4	22.7%	22.5%	22.5%	21.7%	22.7%	21.5%	22.1%	21.1%
5	28.5%	29.8%	29.7%	26.5%	19.4%	19.3%	24.6%	22.7%

Undergraduate qualifiers by socioeconomic status

Despite the overrepresentation of engineering and technology first degree undergraduates in quintile 5, by the time they qualify there is no real difference between them and all other subjects combined. This may be due to fewer engineering and technology qualifiers from quintiles 1 and 2 completing their degree. Only 11.0% of undergraduate engineering and technology qualifiers were from quintile 1, and only 12.1% in all other subjects combined (figure 29).

Figure 29: Undergraduate qualifiers by subject and POLAR4



When looking at which grade first degree engineering and technology qualifiers obtained and whether this was impacted by their socioeconomic background, we will look at the quintiles in 2 groups rather than 5: low (quintiles 1 -3) and high (quintiles 4-5)[23].

As we've seen in the previous sections, engineering and technology qualifiers are more likely to achieve a first class honours compared to all other subjects combined. It does appear, however, that being from a lower quintile does reduce the likelihood of achieving a first class honours. This is not necessarily unexpected as those from higher quintile may be more likely to access higher quality education, support, or have better access to extra-curriculum STEM activities all of which could benefit them in their learning.

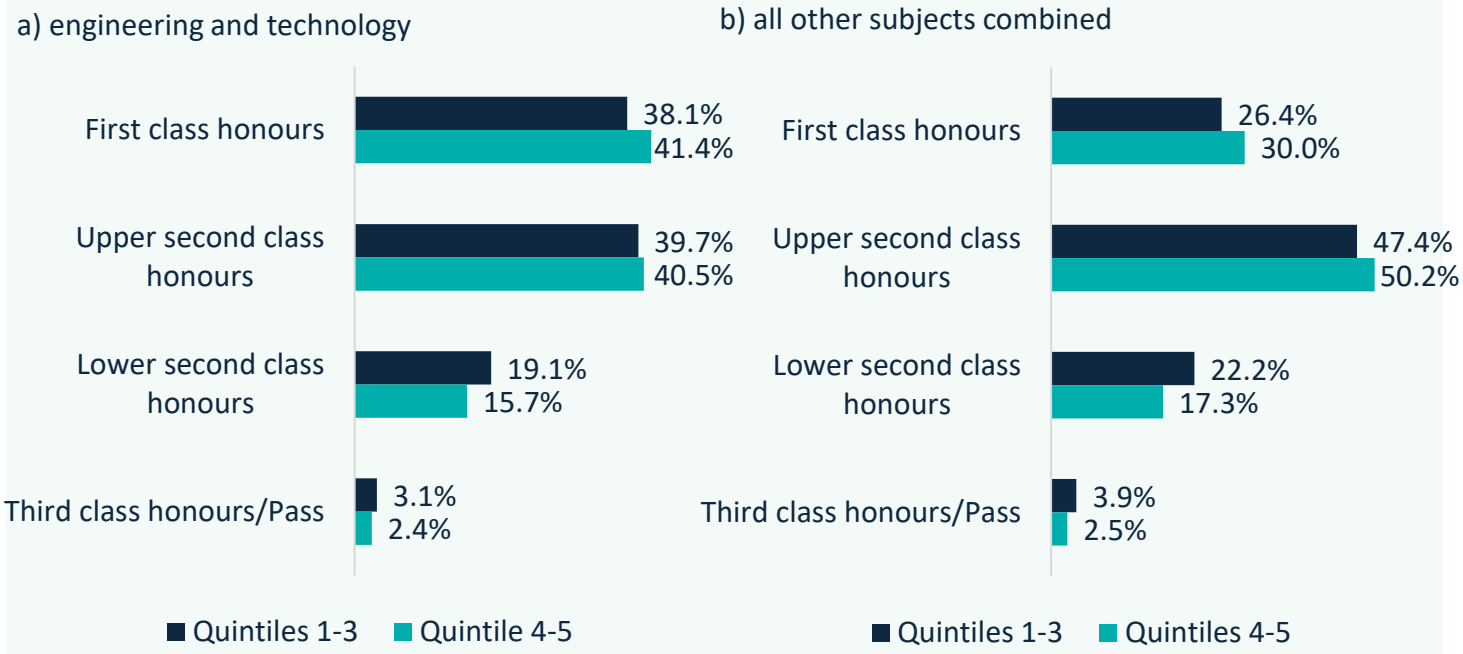
For engineering and technology qualifiers, those from the more advantaged parts of the UK (quintiles 4 and 5) were more likely to achieve a first class honours and less likely to achieve a lower second class qualification. 4 out of 10 engineering and technology qualifiers from quintiles 4 and 5 achieved a first class honours (41.4%) compared to 38.1% from quintiles 1-3 (figure 30). There was a similar pattern for all other subjects combined, further demonstrating just how influential socioeconomic status can be. It also shows the importance of ensuring engineering and technology is accessible to young people from all backgrounds and that they are supported throughout their time in higher education.

Our outreach programmes continue to target and engage schools which are likely to have the highest proportion of young people from groups underrepresented in STEM. This includes schools with a higher proportion of students not only eligible for free school meals (one way we can measure socioeconomic status), but also disability, girls and UK minority ethnic groups. EngineeringUK uses these criteria in targeting promotion and additional support, such as bursaries[24].

[23] We have made this decision to help us interpret where possible differences may be between the 2 group and increase the likelihood of our statistical models picking up on accurate and reliable significances

[24] EngineeringUK EDI Criteria - Tomorrow's Engineers

Figure 30: Class of first degree achieved by qualifiers, by POLAR4 and subject



Women were significantly more likely to obtain a first class honours in engineering and technology if they were from the higher quintiles (4 and 5) at 45.3%. This is compared to both women from lower quintiles (41.0%) and men from both higher and lower quintiles (40.4% and 37.4% respectively).

Men from the lower quintiles in engineering and technology were more likely to obtain a lower second class honours at nearly 1 in 5 (19.7%) compared to men from higher socioeconomic statuses (16.4%) and women from the same quintiles (16.5%) (table 16).

Table 16: Class of first degree achieved by qualifiers, by subject, POLAR4 and gender

	Engineering and technology				All other subjects combined			
	Lower (1-3) quintiles		Higher (4-5) quintiles		Lower (1-3) quintiles		Higher (4-5) quintiles	
Class of degree	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
First class honours	37.4%	41.0%	40.4%	45.3%	23.8%	27.7%	26.8%	32.0%
Upper second class honours	39.7%	40.0%	40.6%	40.2%	47.2%	47.5%	50.3%	50.1%
Lower second class honours	19.7%	16.5%	16.4%	13.0%	24.7%	21.0%	19.9%	15.7%
Third class honours/Pass	3.3%	2.6%	2.6%	1.6%	4.3%	3.7%	3.0%	2.2%

Postgraduates by socioeconomic status

Similarly, to undergraduate degrees, participation in postgraduate degrees was more likely amongst those from the most advantaged areas. For postgraduate research students there was a small effect size with engineering and technology students underrepresented in quintile 5 (35.8%) compared to all other subjects combined (36.7%). They were still significantly more engineering and technology graduates from quintile 5, however, compared to quintile 1 (10.4%), a difference of 26.3pp.

When looking at postgraduate taught students the pattern was similar, with more students from the highest quintiles across all subjects. Similar to undergraduates, those from the highest quintile were overrepresented in engineering and technology (33.3%), compared to all other subjects combined (31.0%).

Figure 28: Postgraduate students by socioeconomic status and subject

When we looked at gender differences, there remained significant overrepresentation of quintile 5, no matter the subject or gender. There was a slightly higher percentage of women from quintile 5 studying engineering and technology postgraduate research degrees (36.3%) compared to men (35.6%). This reflects our findings for first degree undergraduates, with a slightly higher percentage of women from higher socioeconomic statuses attracted to engineering and technology compared to men and women from all other subjects combined.

Women were less likely to come from the least advantaged areas (quintile 1) in engineering and technology at fewer than 1 in 10 (9.3%) compared to men (10.8%).

For postgraduate taught degrees there was a similar percentage of men and women from quintile 5 studying engineering and technology (33.4% and 33.1% respectively). The gap between women in other subjects was larger (29.7%), though this remains a significant overrepresentation compared to lower quintiles (table 17).

Table 17: Postgraduate entrants by POLAR4 and gender

	Postgraduate research				Postgraduate taught			
	Engineering and technology		All other subjects combined		Engineering and technology		All other subjects combined	
Quintile	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
1	10.8%	9.3%	9.3%	9.3%	11.3%	10.8%	10.8%	12.2%
2	12.7%	12.0%	13.7%	13.0%	14.6%	15.1%	14.4%	16.1%
3	18.6%	20.6%	17.2%	17.0%	18.1%	18.0%	17.9%	19.2%
4	22.3%	21.8%	23.1%	24.0%	22.6%	23.0%	23.1%	22.8%
5	35.6%	36.3%	36.8%	36.7%	33.4%	33.1%	33.9%	29.7%

Graduate activity by socioeconomic status

We also found interesting, but perhaps unsurprising, results for graduate activity by socioeconomic status. Graduates from engineering and technology were more likely to be employed when they

came from the higher quintiles, compared to lower quintiles. Whilst nearly a three-quarters of engineering and technology graduates from quintile 1 were in employment (74.3%), this was 77.6% for quintile 5. This does suggest that those from a higher socioeconomic status are more likely to be employed following graduation for those in engineering and technology (figure 31).

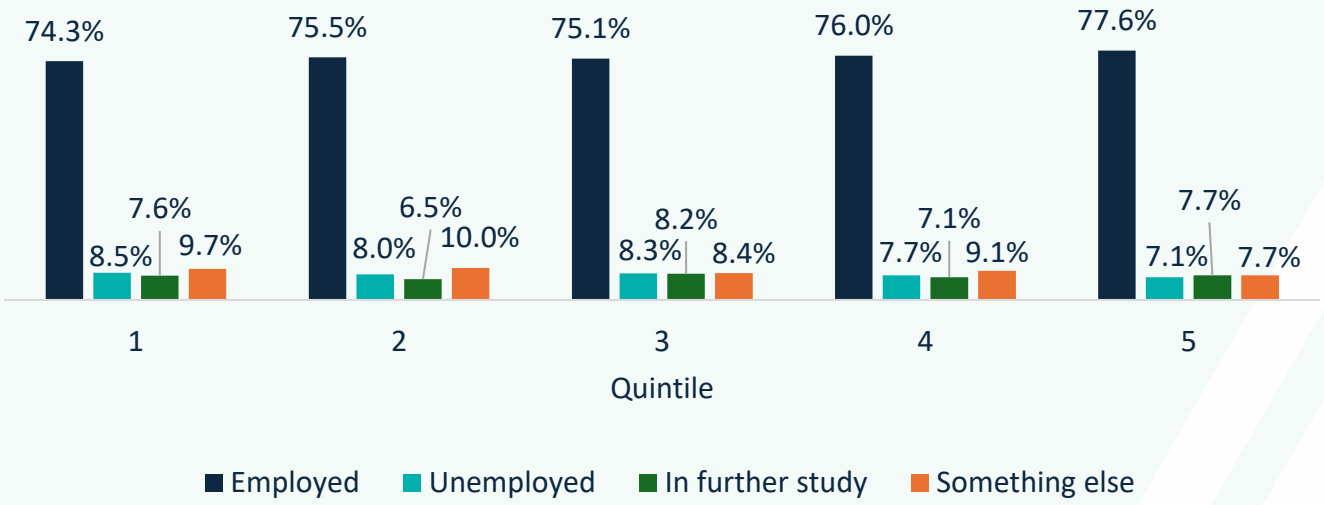
Additionally, engineering and technology graduates were more likely to be unemployed, regardless of which quintile they were from compared to all other subjects combined. There was a higher percentage of engineering and technology graduates in unemployment, however, from quintile 1 (8.5%) compared to quintile 5 (7.1%).

There was a slightly different story for graduates from other subjects, where those from the lower quintiles were more likely to be in work. But, there is roughly equal unemployment, and it is further study where the higher quintiles are overrepresented.

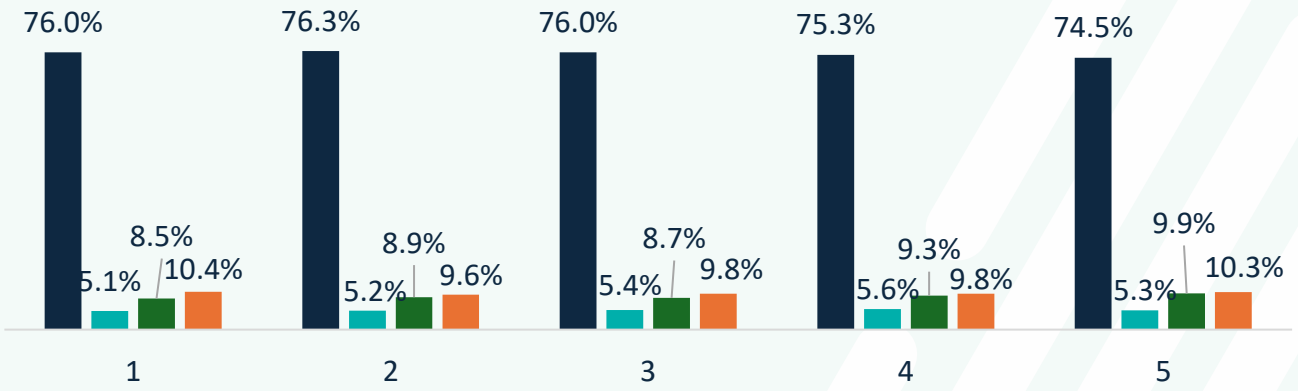
This all combines to suggest that graduates from lower socioeconomic groups are struggling to gain employment in engineering and technology in a way we are not seeing for other subjects to the same extent.

Figure 31: Main activity of graduates by POLAR4 and subject type

a) engineering and technology



b) all other subjects combined



Place of residence

Higher education in the UK isn't just for those who live here, but an option for students all around the world. With many high-ranking universities in the UK, we see a substantial number of international students choosing to study here.

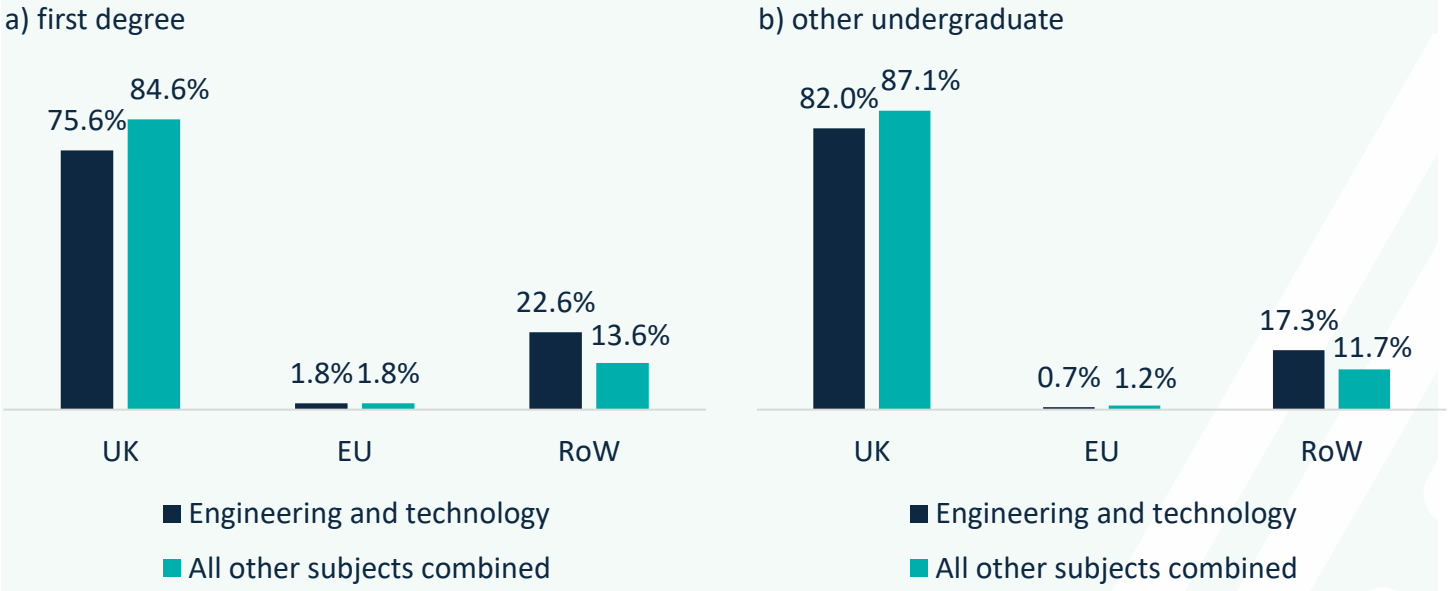
Across all levels of study, international students were overrepresented in engineering and technology subjects compared to all other subjects combined. UK students were consistently underrepresented, and the percentage of EU students was both small and stable.

Undergraduates by place of residence

Compared to all other subjects combined, engineering and technology students doing an undergraduate degree are more likely to be international, but UK students are still the clear majority. Over three quarters of engineering and technology first degree undergraduates (75.6%) were from the UK and this was the case for 4 in 5 students studying another undergraduate courses (82.0%).

Whilst the percentage of EU students was relatively stable, there were more international students from the RoW in engineering and technology at 22.6% for first degrees and 17.3% for other undergraduate courses compared to 13.6% and 11.7% of all other subjects combined (figure 32).

Figure 32: Undergraduate entrants by place of residence and subject



Undergraduate qualifiers by place of residence

As we have already seen, engineering and technology qualifiers are more likely to achieve a first class honours, while qualifiers in other subjects are more likely to achieve an upper second class honours. This is the case no matter the usual place of residence (table 18).

EU qualifiers performed best across both engineering and technology and other subjects, being most likely to achieve a first class honours by some way. For engineering and technology, half (50.3%) achieved a first – a 10.3pp difference compared to UK qualifiers who obtained a first

(40.0%) and 19.0pp compared to the RoW (31.3%). UK qualifiers in engineering and technology were equally likely to obtain a first class honours as an upper second class honours at 40.0% and 40.1% respectively.

RoW qualifiers performed worst, being the least likely to achieve a first class honours, and around 3 in 10 achieving a lower second or third class degree across engineering and technology (28.4%) and other subjects (29.3%). This shows that despite these courses being popular with international (RoW) students, they are performing worse than UK students.

Table 18: Class of degree achieved by qualifiers, by place of residence and subject

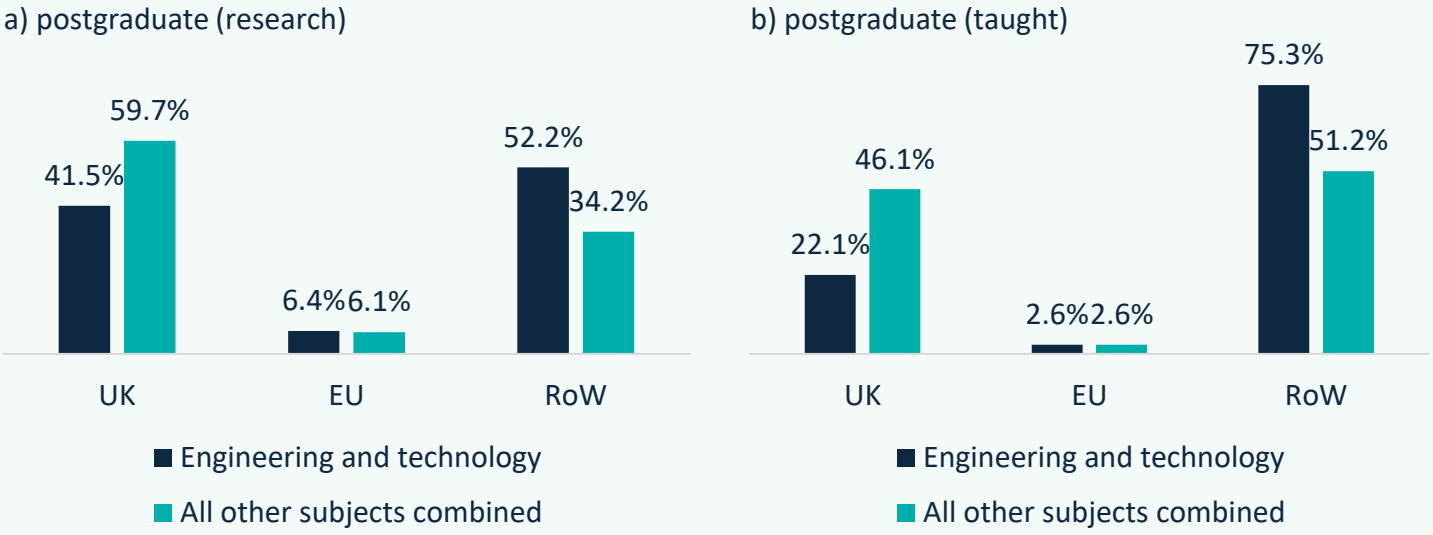
	Engineering and technology			All other subjects combined		
Class of first degree	**UK**	**EU**	**RoW**	**UK**	**EU**	**RoW**
First class honours	40.0%	50.3%	31.3%	28.4%	35.8%	20.9%
Upper second class honours	40.1%	35.9%	40.3%	48.9%	46.3%	49.8%
Lower second class honours	17.2%	11.7%	24.1%	19.6%	15.5%	25.5%
Third class honours/ Pass	2.7%	2.1%	4.3%	3.2%	2.4%	3.8%

Postgraduates by place of residence

Postgraduate courses have more international students than undergraduate, regardless of the subject. But, engineering and technology postgraduate courses still have a higher international cohort than other subjects. Engineering and technology research postgraduates are predominantly from the RoW (52.2%), whereas for all other subjects there were a higher proportion of students from the UK (59.7%). In contrast, for engineering and technology research postgraduates only 41.5% were from the UK.

The strongest effect we saw was for postgraduate taught students, with more students from outside the UK and the EU compared to any other level of engineering and technology at 75.3%, equivalent to 47,055 students. This is compared to 13,790 from the UK and 1635 from the EU. This has also increased since 2019/20, with RoW students increasing by 11.0 pp since 2019/20 in postgraduate taught degrees and (to a lesser extent), 2.9 pp in postgraduate research degrees for engineering and technology. Three-quarters of students studying engineering and technology taught postgraduate courses were from outside the UK and EU (75.3%) compared to (a still high) half for all other subjects combined (51.2%) (figure 33).

Figure 33: Place of residence of postgraduate entrants by subject type



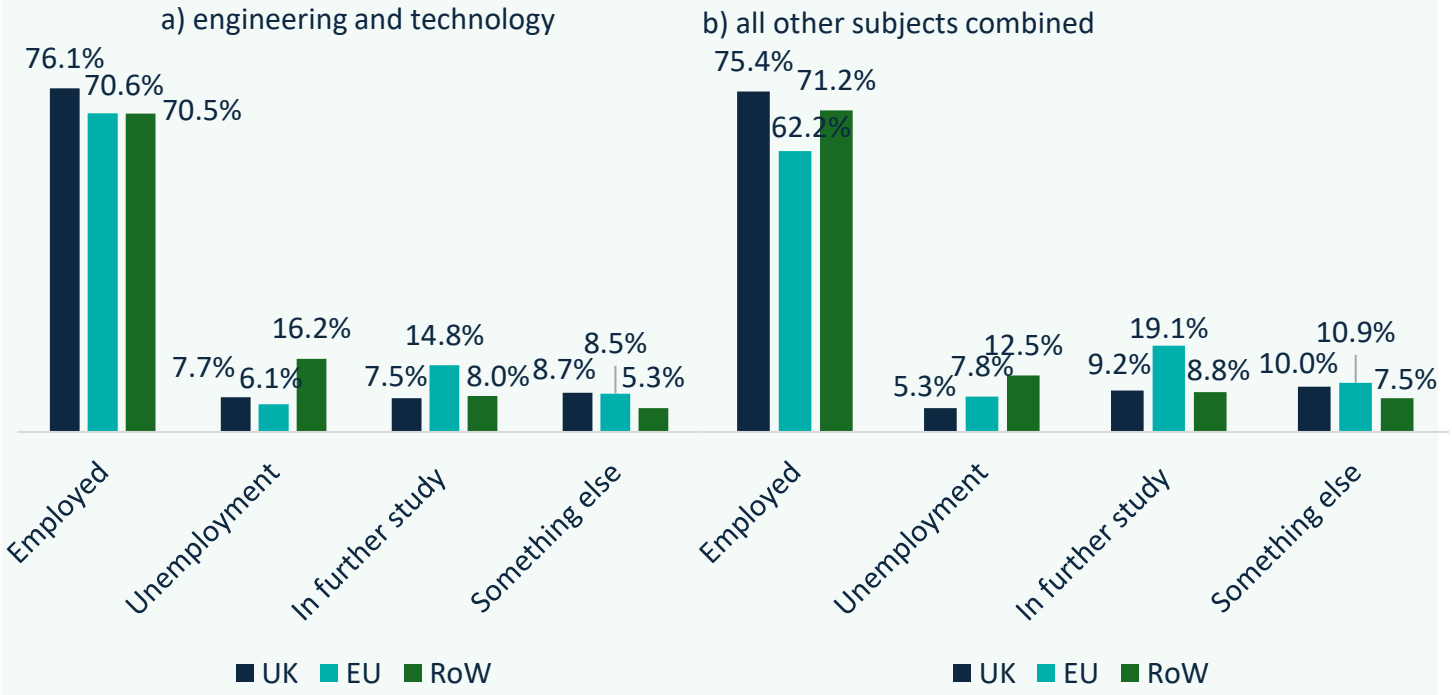
Graduate activity by place of residence

In our final section on the characteristics of graduates, we look at graduate activity comparing those living permanently in the UK, EU and RoW. It is worth noting the Graduate Outcomes survey is administered to graduates outside the UK, but the response rate for non-EU international graduates is low (at approximately 10% of the sample) so may not be representative of the group.

UK graduates are the most likely to be in employment, regardless of the subject studied. For both UK graduates in engineering and technology and all other subjects combined, approximately three-quarters were in employment (76.1% and 75.4% respectively).

Graduates from the RoW were more likely to report being unemployed for both subject groups. This was more likely for engineering and technology graduates from the RoW at 16.2% compared to 12.5% for all other subjects combined. Whilst we have already reported engineering and technology graduates are more likely to be unemployed compared to all other subjects combined, this was not the case for EU graduates. Engineering and technology graduates were less likely to say they were unemployed if they were from the EU at 6.1% compared to engineering and technology graduates from the UK (7.7%) and RoW (16.2%), but also all other subjects combined (7.8%). This is because of the much lower employment level for EU graduates from other subjects (62.2%). EU graduates are also particularly likely to be in further study across both engineering and technology (14.8%) and other subjects (19.1%).

Figure 34: Main activity of graduates by their permanent address and subject type



Apprenticeships

For the first time, we will also look at apprenticeships obtained in higher education. At EngineeringUK we already know there is an urgent need to grow the number of engineering and technology apprentices to ensure numbers are where they need to be. As these figures only cover those studying at a higher education provider who submits student data to HESA, these apprenticeship figures do not include all apprentices who studied in the UK for 2023/24.

Historically, we measured engineering and technology apprenticeships within the vocational education system as opposed to higher education. Degree apprenticeships were introduced in 2015, allowing students to achieve a bachelor's or master's level degree alongside gaining workplace experience. These are the apprenticeships covered in this section.

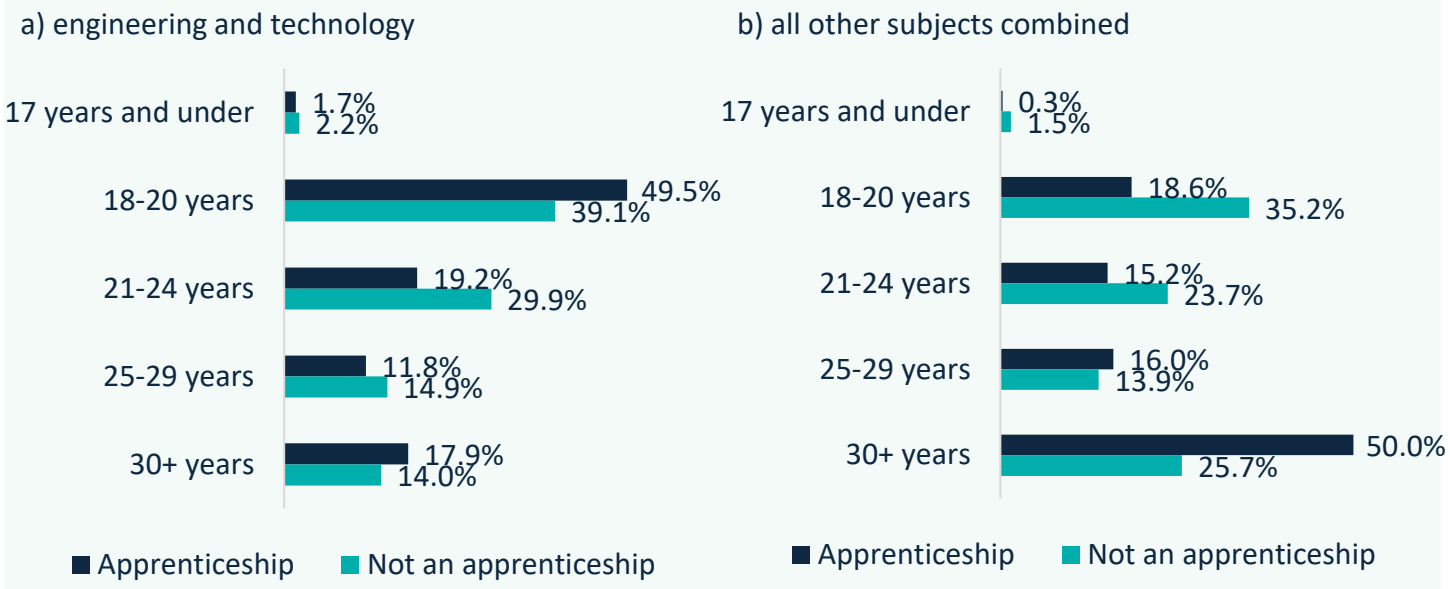
The number of students taking apprenticeships in higher education, regardless of the level, is small. This is likely because higher education isn't the main route for young people taking apprenticeships. Nevertheless, we know from our annual apprenticeship reports, the percentage of level 6 apprenticeship starts (equivalent to a bachelor's degree) has increased by 6.5% between 2023/24 and 2024/25. They have also increased for level 7 apprenticeship starts (equivalent to a masters) by 50% during the same timeframe. Together, there were 8,580 apprenticeship starts in levels 6 and 7 in 2024/25, up from 8,060. This is compared, however, to 50,220 apprenticeship starts in level 2, 21,820 in level 3 and 18,740 in level 4[25].

There were also no apprenticeships available for postgraduate research degrees. Whether students are apprentices or not is also not information included in the Graduate Outcomes survey.

As we have not previously looked at apprenticeships in higher education, we looked at the age of apprentices and found engineering and technology apprentices were significantly more likely to be younger compared to all other subjects combined. Half of engineering and technology apprentices in higher education were aged 18-20 (49.5%), compared to only 18.6% for all other subjects combined. The majority of apprentices studying all other subjects combined were aged 30+ years (50.0%) compared to only 17.9% of engineering and technology apprentices (figure 35). We know that level 7 apprenticeships are more common in non-engineering and technology subjects, which is likely driving this different age cohort.

[25] https://www.engineeringuk.com/research-and-insights/our-research-and-evaluation-reports/apprenticeships-data-202425/

Figure 35: Entrants across level of study by apprenticeship status, age and subject type



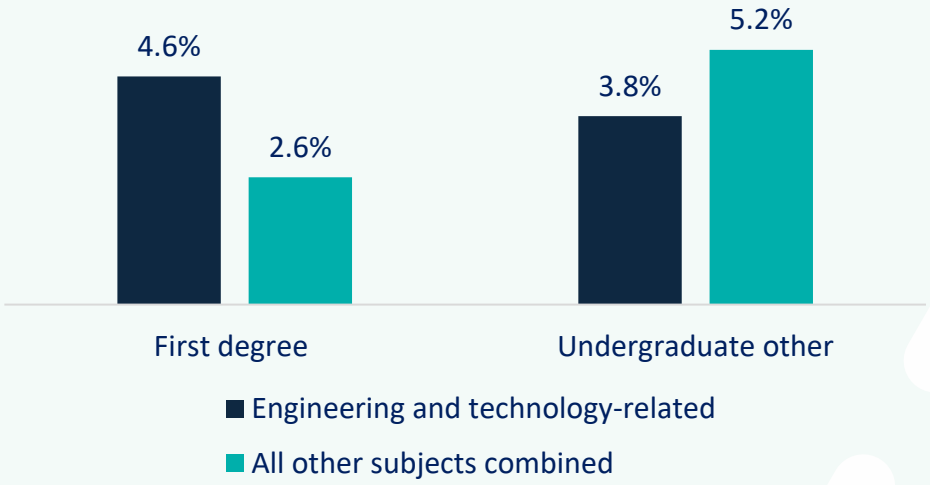
Undergraduate apprentices

Engineering and technology apprenticeships were more common amongst first degree undergraduates compared to all other subjects combined.

For 2023/24, 3,730 people did a (engineering and technology) level 6 apprenticeship which was classed as a first undergraduate degree, equivalent to 4.6% of that year's first degree student population. In comparison, only 2.6% of first degrees for all other subjects combined were apprenticeships (though this was a larger number of people - 14,145) (figure 36).

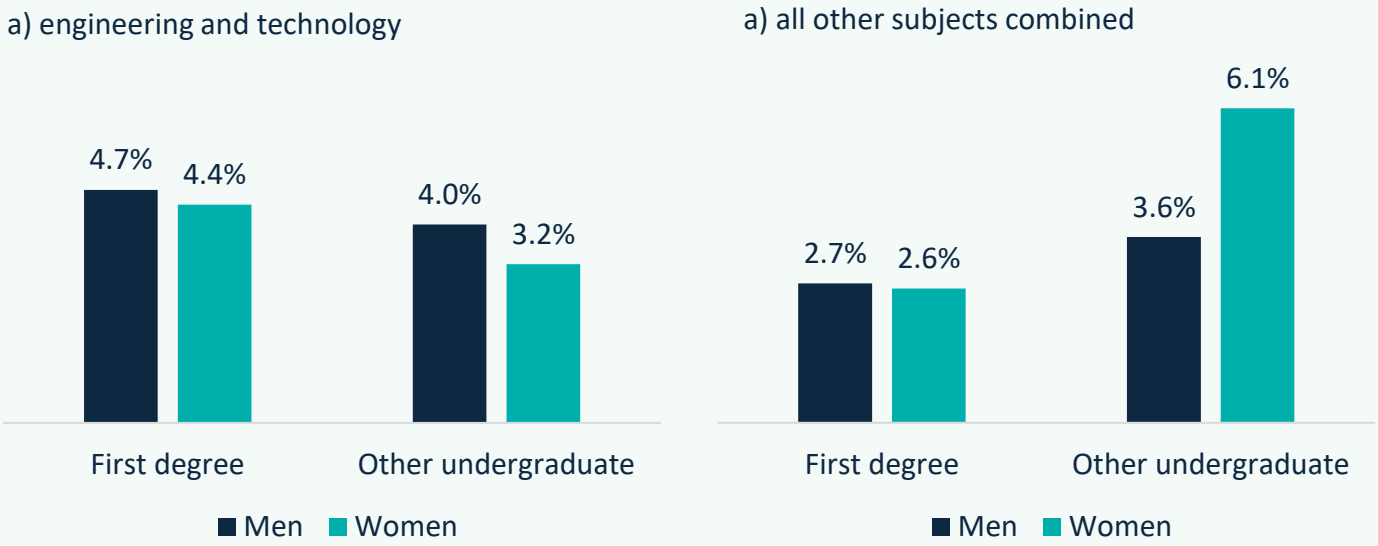
For other undergraduate courses, however, the reverse was evident. There was a higher percentage of apprenticeships for all other subjects combined (5.2%) compared to engineering and technology (3.8%). Other undergraduates in comparisons were predominantly doing level 4 and 5 apprenticeships rather than level 6.

Figure 36: Undergraduate entrants who did an apprenticeship by subject



Men in engineering and technology were more likely to study an apprenticeship compared to women for both first degree (4.7% compared to 4.4%) and other undergraduate courses (4.0% compared to 3.2%). In all other subjects combined, though we see the opposite with a higher proportion of women studying other undergraduate courses (6.1% compared to 3.6%) and a similar number studying first degrees (2.6% compared to 2.7%) (figure 37).

Figure 37: Apprentices by gender and subject type

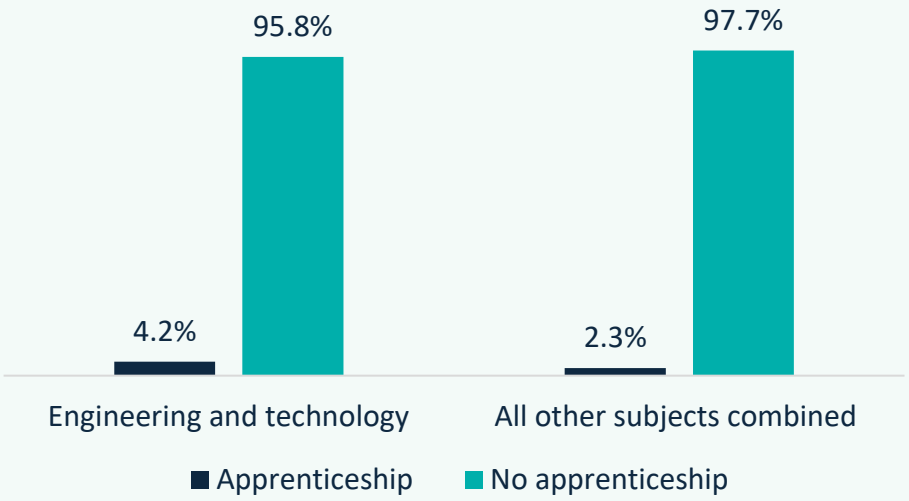


Undergraduate qualifiers

As with first degree undergraduate entrants, there was a higher percentage of apprenticeships for engineering and technology qualifiers, compared to all other subjects combined (figure 38). Whilst only 2.3% of all other subject qualifiers did an apprenticeship, this was higher amongst engineering and technology at 4.2%. This is still slightly lower than entrant level. This could be because of some apprentices dropping off their course but is likely an effect of the growing popularity in higher apprenticeships[26].

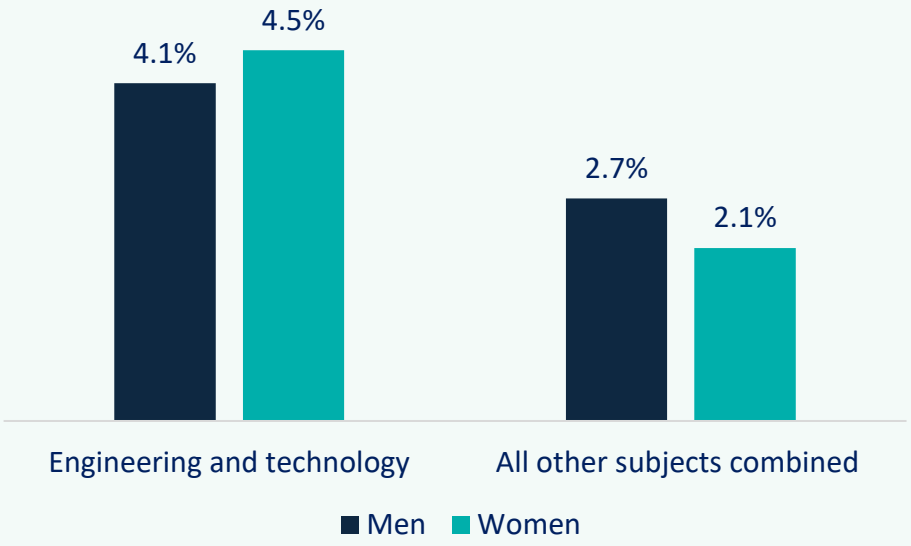
[26] https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/apprenticeships/2024-25

Figure 38: Undergraduate apprenticeship qualifiers by subject



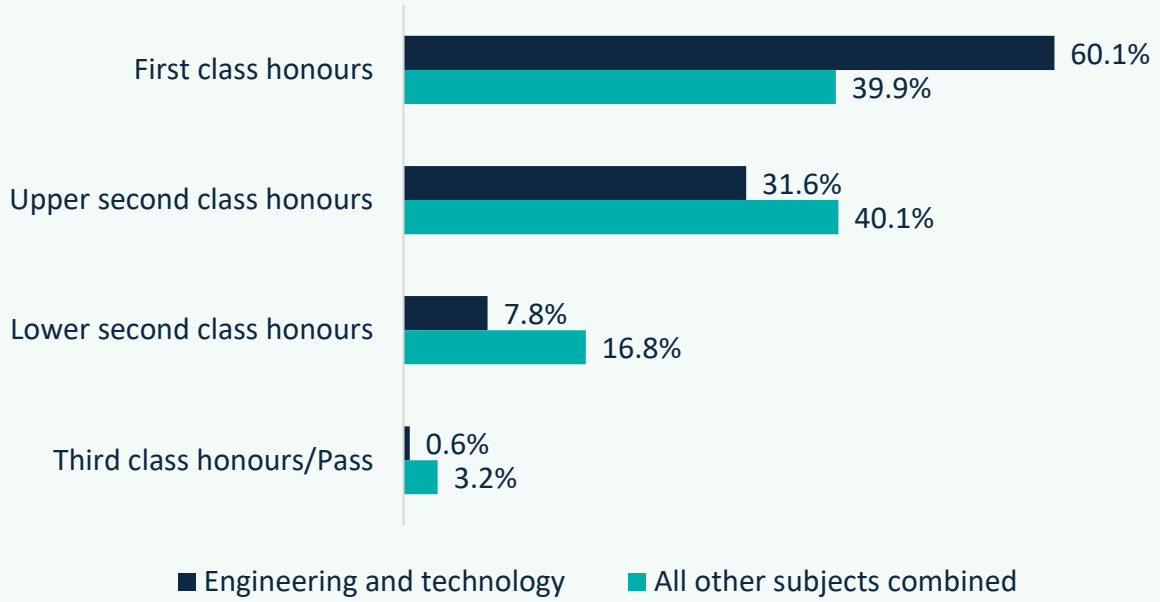
At entrant level, we saw that a higher percentage of men were studying an engineering and technology apprenticeship (first degree) compared to women. We can see, however, that by the time they qualify there is a higher percentage of women from engineering and technology at 4.5% compared to 4.1% of men (figure 39). This suggests that men are dropping out of engineering and technology apprentices, whereas women were not. This echoes the pattern we saw for all undergraduate qualifiers, so likely is not a result of the apprenticeship itself.

Figure 39: First degree qualifiers who did an apprenticeship by gender and subject type



In terms of which class of degree qualifiers achieved, engineering and technology apprentices were significantly more likely to obtain a first class honours in stark contrast to all other subjects combined. A total of 6 in 10 engineering and technology apprentices obtained a first class honours compared to 39.9% of all other subject combined apprentices. This a difference of 20.2pp. Apprentices from all other subjects combined were more likely to achieve all other grades (figure 40).

Figure 40: Class of degree obtained by apprentices, by subject



Postgraduates and apprenticeships

There were no apprenticeships reported for postgraduate researchers, but for engineering and technology postgraduate taught degrees, only 0.8% were level 7 apprenticeships. This was equivalent to only 495 people out of 62,490. For all other subjects combined, 1.6% were apprenticeships, double the percentage of engineering and technology (6,920 out of 412,275).

Graduate Outcomes

Whilst we have explored the main activity of graduates in the above sections, we will now look at what they are doing 15 months after graduating in more detail.

Graduates working in engineering and technology

Engineering and technology occupations

Nearly 6 in 10 engineering and technology graduates in work went on to work in engineering and technology roles (59.7%). The majority also went on to work in core engineering and technology roles (53.8%), as defined using our engineering footprint[27]. A further 5.9% were working in related engineering and technology occupations.

Only 6.9% of graduates from all other subjects combined went on to work in engineering and technology. There was a more even split, however, between the percentage working in core (3.9%) and related engineering and technology occupations (3.0%) (table 19). The types of non-engineering and technology subjects these graduates studied included: architecture, building, landscape design and planning (urban, rural and regional).

Table 19: Graduates working in engineering and technology, by subject

Engineering footprint	Engineering and technology	All other subjects combined
All other occupations	40.3%	93.1%
Core engineering	53.8%	3.9%
Related engineering	5.9%	3.0%

This year's figure of 59.7% represents a dip from the 63.2% we reported last year. Therefore, we looked separately at computing and other engineering and technology subjects, finding that among computing graduates just 55.9% were working in engineering and technology, compared to 62.7% for other engineering and technology graduates. This seems to suggest that a significant proportion of computing graduates are choosing occupations outside engineering and technology, which explains most, but not all, of the drop.

Some of this decline might be explained by the rapid advancement and adoption of AI by the labour market. With AI increasingly being used to complete tasks that would otherwise be done by junior staff, such as entry-level graduates, there has been a noticeable drop in UK entry-level job postings. This impact on the job market is also not universal across all sectors, with some more disproportionately affected than others such as finance and IT. The graduates in our data (the latest data) were mostly surveyed in 2024, and we expect this might fall further in the coming years based on existing vacancy data.

[27] https://www.engineeringuk.com/media/bnmp5v4i/the-engineering-footprint-update-engineeringuk-mar-24.pdf

However, some employers have reported amending the nature of entry-level jobs to support graduates, such as hiring graduates to more advanced roles or redesigning junior positions[28]. These might mitigate the trend in these results.

The most popular engineering and technology occupation for those who graduated with an engineering and technology degree was 'programmers and software development professionals' at 17.1%. This was also the case for both men (17.9%) and women (14.1%) (table 20).

Table 20: Most popular engineering and technology occupations for engineering and technology graduates by gender

Rank	Occupation	Total	Men	Women
1	Programmers and software development professionals	17.1%	17.9%	14.1%
2	Engineering professionals (not elsewhere classified)	6.2%	6.3%	5.9%
3	Civil engineers	6.1%	5.9%	7.0%
4	Mechanical engineers	5.4%	6.0%	3.4%
5	IT business analysts, architects and systems designers	3.7%	3.8%	3.7%
6	Production and process engineers	2.5%	2.4%	2.9%
7	Cyber security professionals	2.3%	2.5%	1.8%
8	IT user support technicians	2.2%	2.4%	1.4%
9	Electrical engineers	2.0%	2.3%	1.2%
10	Engineering project managers and project engineers	1.9%	1.9%	1.7%

We have seen that not all engineering and technology graduates go on to work in engineering and technology. For these graduates, the most popular non-engineering occupation (though there was a wide spread resulting in small percentages) was sales and retail assistants (1.8%), followed by management consultants and business analysts (1.5%) and data analysts (1.4%).

Of the small percentage of graduates from other subjects who went on to work in engineering and technology, the leading occupation was programmers and software development professionals (0.6%). The second and third occupations were more akin to the architecture industry: CAD, drawing and architectural technicians (0.5%) and quantity surveyors (0.5%).

Salary

For the following sections we will look at graduates working in engineering and technology occupations, regardless of the subject in which they graduated.

Consistent with previous years, those working in engineering and technology were more likely to be in a higher salary band compared to the average across all other occupations combined. For all occupation types, the highest percentage of graduates earned between £25,001-£30,000. This was slightly higher for all other occupations combined at 29.6%, compared to a quarter of those in

[28] TechUK. (2025). What's actually happening with entry-level and graduate jobs. Available at: https://www.techuk.org/resource/what-s-actually-happening-with-entry-level-and-graduate-jobs.html

engineering and technology (25.1%). This was offset, however, by a higher percentage of engineering and technology employees earning £30,001-£35,000 (22.9%) compared to all other occupations combined (16.8%).

A smaller percentage of engineering and technology workers (1.1%, 10.6%) reported earning within the lowest salary bands of (£15,001-£20,000 and £20,001-£25,000) compared to all other occupations combined (4.2%, 19.9%) (table 21). This perhaps indicates a higher proportion of those in non-engineering and technology are earning the minimum wage in their role. This is also partially explained by the higher proportion working part time (figure 41).

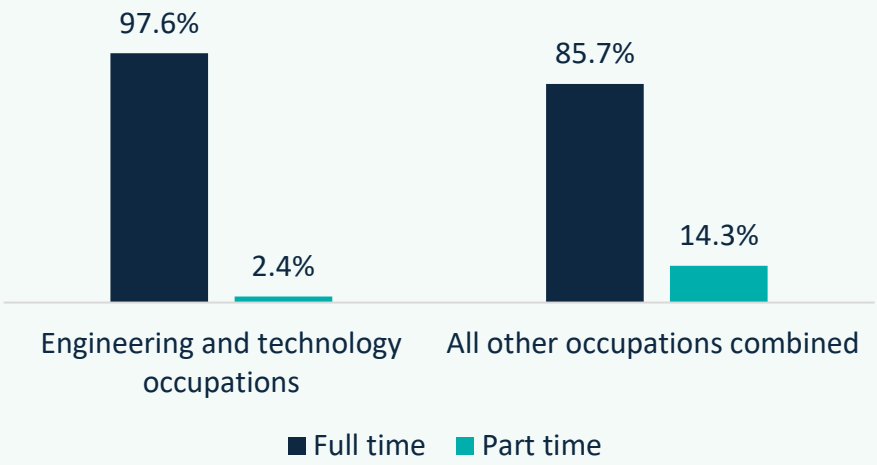
Table 21: Salary of graduates by occupation group

Salary	Engineering and technology occupations	All other occupations combined
£15,001 - £20,000	1.1%	4.2%
£20,001 - £25,000	10.6%	19.9%
£25,001 - £30,000	25.1%	29.6%
£30,001 - £35,000	22.9%	16.8%
£35,001 - £40,000	14.4%	11.1%
£40,001 - £45,000	7.5%	5.6%
£45,001 - £50,000	5.3%	4.2%
£50,001 - £55,000	3.0%	2.4%
£55,001 - £60,000	2.6%	1.7%
£60,001 - £65,000	1.5%	0.9%
£65,001 - £70,000	1.2%	0.8%
£70,001 - £245,000	4.7%	2.7%

Working hours

Engineering and technology workers were also significantly more likely to work full time compared to all other occupations combined. Whilst 14.3% of people in all other occupations combined were working part time this was only the case for 2.4% of those in engineering and technology occupation (equivalent to only 775 graduates) (figure 41).

Figure 41: Graduate working hours by occupation type



Main reason for taking their current job

The majority of graduates (regardless of their job type) said the main reason for taking their current job was because "it fitted into [their] career plan/ it was exactly the type of work [they] wanted". This percentage was slightly higher for those working in engineering and technology (50.9%), compared to non-engineering and technology occupations (46.8%). In contrast, graduates working in other occupations were more likely to say it was "in order to earn a living" at 1 in 10, compared to only 4.4% of engineering and technology occupations (table 21).

Table 21: Main reason for taking current job by occupation group

Main reason for taking job	Engineering and technology occupations	All other occupations combined
It fitted into my career plan/it was exactly the type of work I wanted	50.9%	46.8%
It was the best job offer I received	11.9%	7.3%
To gain and broaden my experience in order to get the type of job I really want	11.4%	12.4%
It was an opportunity to progress in the organisation	9.8%	10.8%
To see if I would like the type of work it involved	4.4%	4.1%
In order to earn a living	4.4%	10.4%
The job was well paid	3.6%	2.8%
It was the right location	2.6%	4.0%
To work in my family business	0.7%	0.8%
In order to pay off debts	0.2%	0.5%

Qualification requirement

Those in engineering and technology occupations were more likely to say their role formally requires both the level and subject of their qualification. These findings are consistent with previous years, with fewer graduates in engineering and technology reporting that no qualification was required for their role (table 22).

Whilst a third of graduates working in all other occupations combined (33.7%) said that both the level and the subject of their qualification was a formal requirement for their current activity, this percentage was 5.2pp higher for engineering and technology occupations (38.9%). In addition, over a quarter of all other occupations said that the qualification was not required for their current activity (26.9%) compared to only 15.3% of engineering and technology.

Table 22: Whether qualification is a requirement of graduate's role, by occupation group

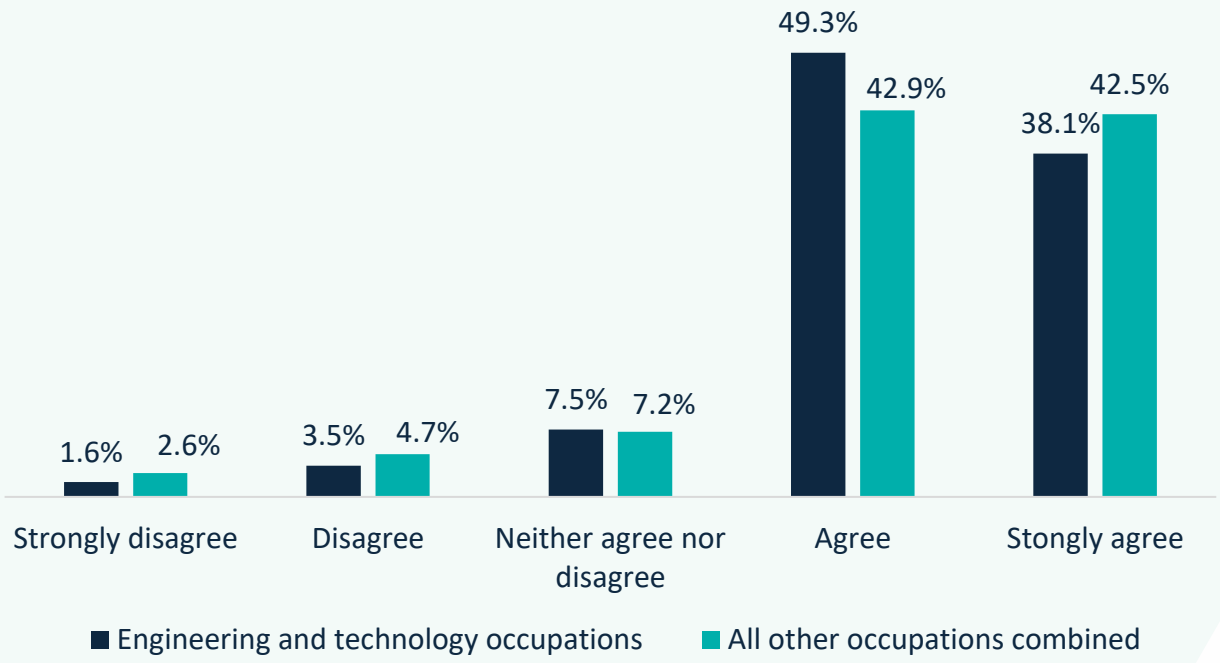
Was a qualification required	Engineering and technology occupations	All other occupations combined
Yes: both the level and subject of qualification was a formal requirement	38.9%	33.7%
Yes: the level of qualification was a formal requirement	10.4%	10.2%
Yes: the subject of the qualification was a formal requirement	7.4%	3.9%
Yes: while the qualification was not a formal requirement it did give me an advantage	26.6%	24.1%
No: the qualification was not required	15.3%	26.9%
Do not know	1.4%	1.2%

Activity is meaningful

The Graduate Outcomes survey asks graduates a number of subjective questions, including whether they feel their current activity is meaningful, on track with their future plans, and utilises their skills.

Overall, those working in engineering and technology were more likely to agree their activity is meaningful (87.4% vs. 85.4% of other roles). However, the strength of feeling was higher for those in other occupations, with them being more likely to strongly agree (figure 42).

Figure 42: Perception of activity as meaningful, by occupation group

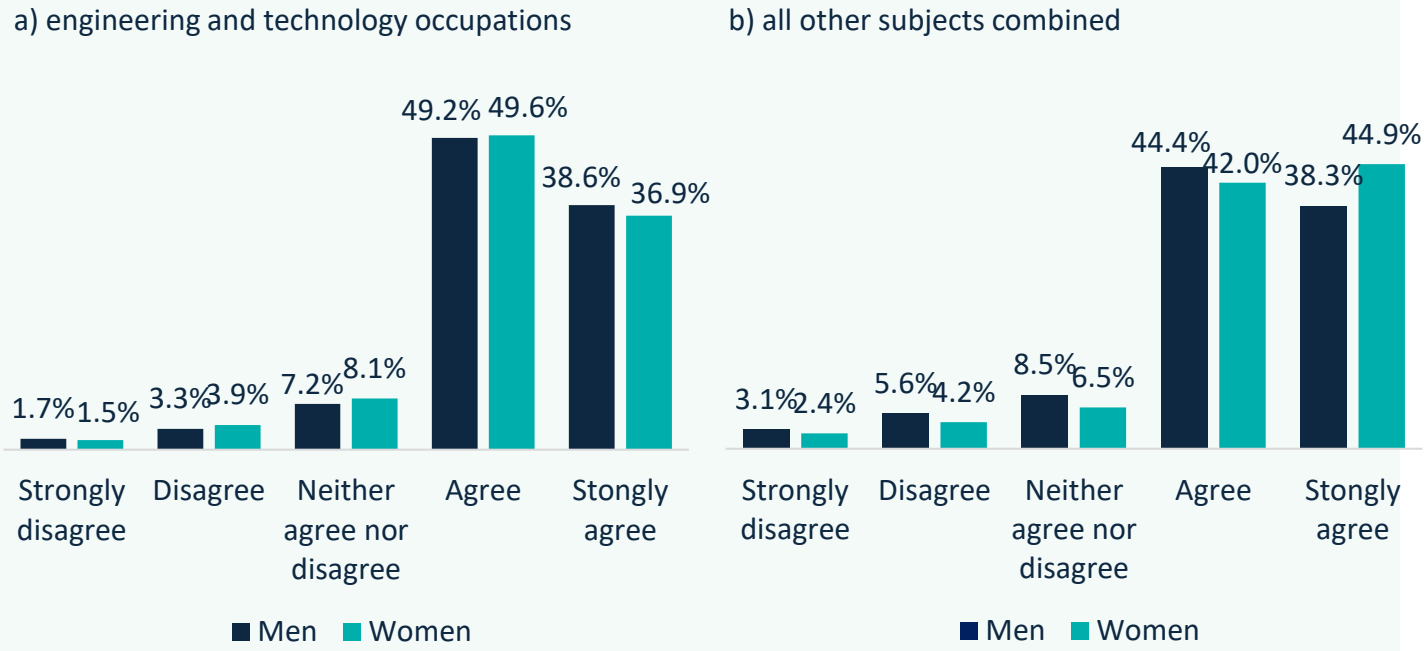


Activity is meaningful - by gender

We also looked at possible gender differences in perceptions of meaningfulness. While over 80% of all groups thought that their role was meaningful, we did see some differences.

Women in engineering and technology were slightly less likely to find their role meaningful (86.7% vs. 87.8% of men). Women in other roles felt similarly (86.9%), but men in non-engineering and technology roles were the least likely to agree (82.7%).

Figure 43: Perception of activity as meaningful, by occupation group and gender



Activity is meaningful - by ethnicity

In our 2025 report, due to a smaller sample size we were only able to report on UKME groups combined, compared to white graduates. This year, however, we will look at these subjective measures by 5 ethnic groups: Asian, Black, mixed multiple ethnic groups, white and other (please see the methodology section for more details).

For all ethnicities, those working in engineering and technology were more likely to agree their activity was meaningful compared to those in other roles (table 23).

White graduates were more likely (compared to UKME groups) to strongly agree working in engineering and technology was meaningful (39.0%). White graduates from all occupations combined, however, was even more likely to strongly agree though at nearly half (45.5%). Asian graduates working in engineering and technology were the least likely to strongly agree their activity is meaningful at a third (33.3%). This was also compared to Asian graduates working in all other occupations combined (36.6%).

The type of occupation did not impact graduates from other ethnic groups, with 35.2% strongly agreeing across both groups. Those in engineering and technology roles though were more likely to agree at over half (51.6%) compared to all other subjects combined (47.4%).

Table 23: Perception of activity as meaningful, by occupation group and ethnicity

Occupation type	Ethnicity	Activity is meaningful				
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Engineering and technology occupations	Asian	1.5%	2.7%	8.1%	54.5%	33.3%
	Black	1.7%	3.3%	6.7%	52.1%	36.2%
	Mixed or multiple ethnic group	1.1%	4.3%	7.8%	51.1%	35.7%
	Other ethnicity	1.6%	4.7%	7.0%	51.6%	35.2%
	White	1.4%	3.5%	7.2%	49.0%	39.0%
All other occupations combined	Asian	2.1%	4.2%	7.5%	49.6%	36.6%
	Black	3.0%	4.5%	6.7%	48.5%	37.4%
	Mixed or multiple ethnic group	3.0%	6.1%	7.8%	42.7%	40.4%
	Other ethnicity	2.8%	5.9%	8.7%	47.4%	35.2%
	White	2.5%	4.7%	6.6%	40.8%	45.5%

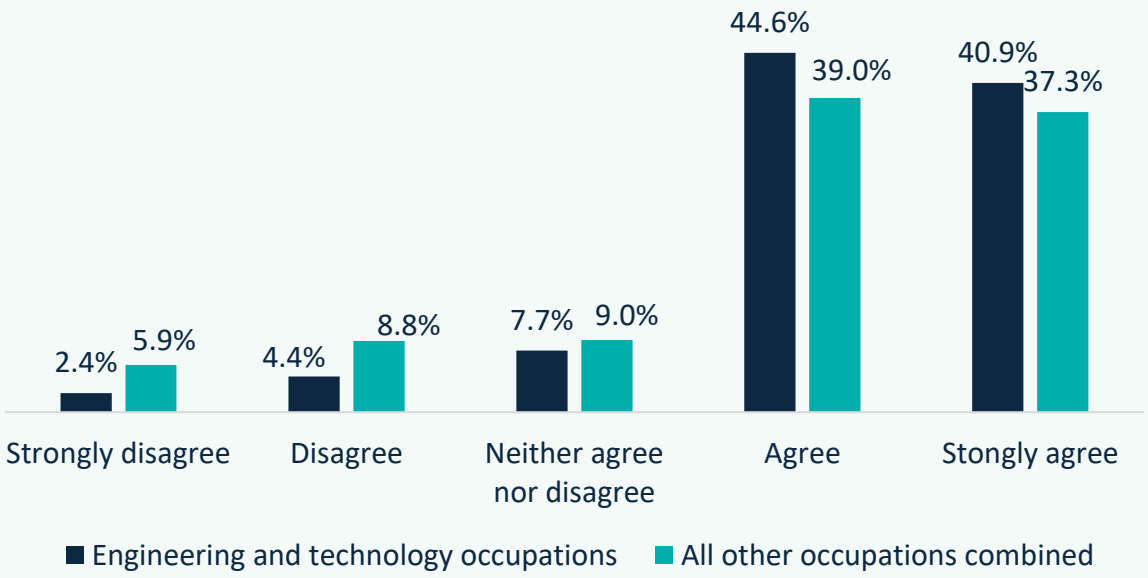
Activity is on track

Graduates were also asked if they felt their current activity was on track (with their future plans).

Responses from graduates working in engineering and technology showed less disagreement and more agreement. Only 6.8% of engineers and technologists disagreed compared to 14.7% of all other occupations combined (figure 44).

It is encouraging to see engineering and technology graduates were more likely to rate their activity as on track at 85.5%, though still just over three-quarters of all other subjects combined (76.3%) also agreed with this statement.

Figure 44: View that activity is on track with their future plans, by occupation group



Activity is on track - by gender

For gender, the results for both men and women were more positive in engineering and technology compared to all other occupations combined. Within engineering and technology, men were slightly more likely to agree that their activity is on track (86.0%), compared to women (84.5%) (figure 45).

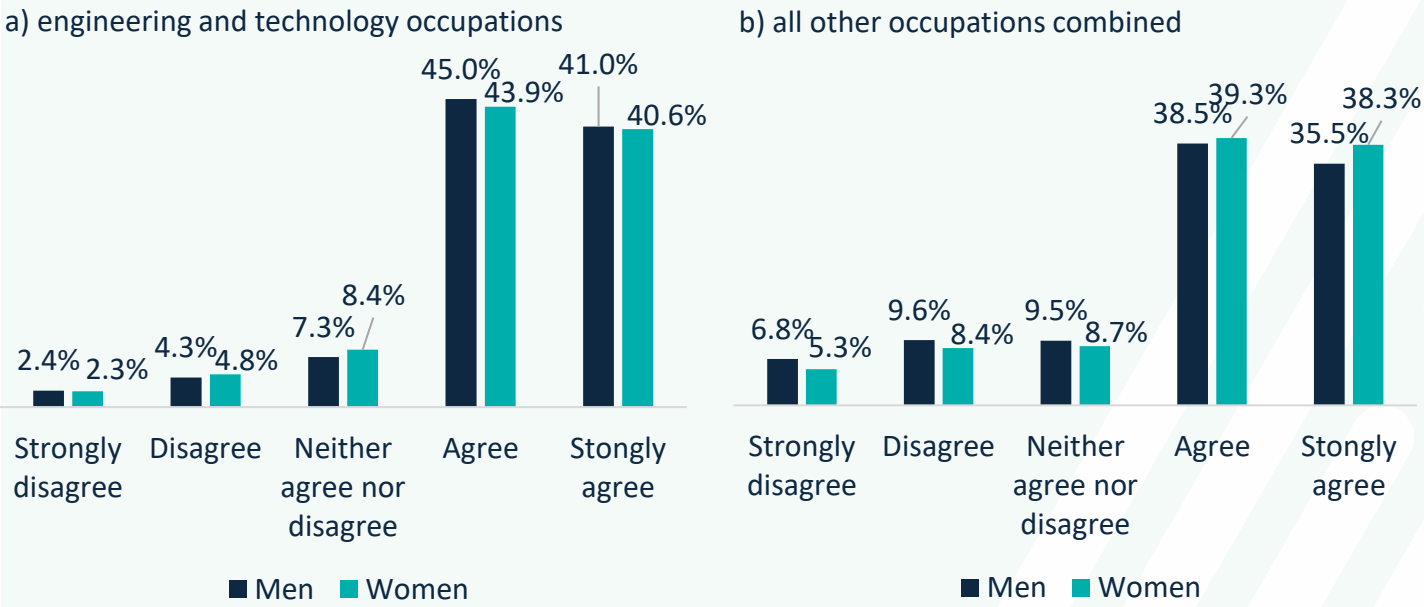


Figure 45: View that activity is on track with their future plans, by occupation group and gender

Activity is on track - by ethnicity

Engineering and technology once again has higher agreement than all other occupations combined across all ethnic groups (table 24).

White graduates were more likely to agree they were on track in both occupation groupings, though the differences were larger in non-engineering and technology roles. For example, there was a 4.6 pp difference between white graduates in non-engineering and technology roles (40.0%) and the next most frequent ethnic group (mixed or multiple ethnic group) (35.4%). This difference was only 2.9 pp for engineering and technology occupations (43.2% for white and 40.3% for mixed or multiple ethnic groups).

Amongst graduates working in engineering and technology, those from other ethnic groups were the least likely to strongly agree at just over a third (33.9%) and white graduates were the most likely strongly agree at 43.2%.

Table 24: View that activity is on track with their future plans, by occupation group and ethnicity

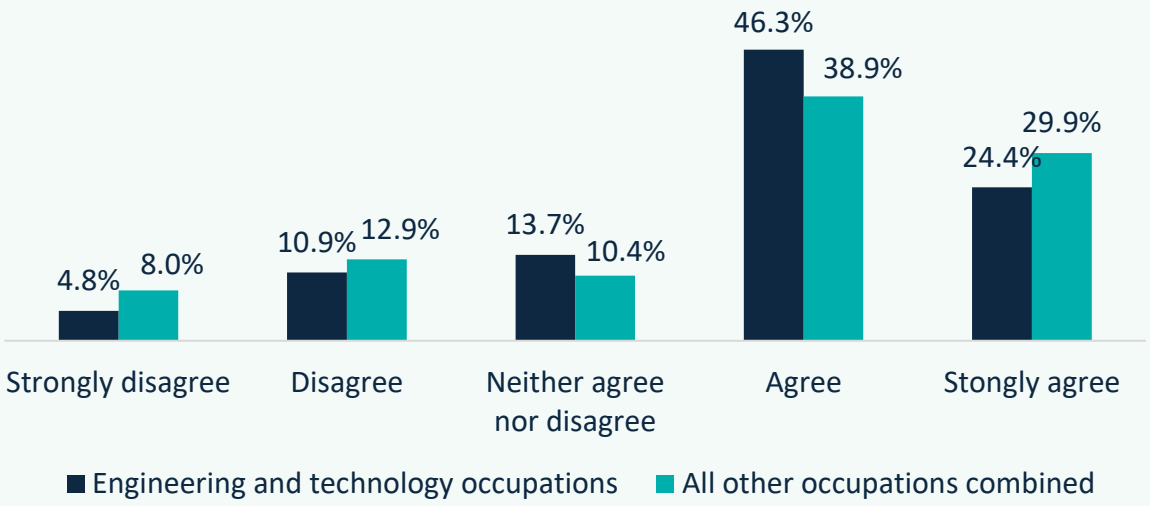
Occupation type	Ethnicity	Activity is on track				
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Engineering and technology occupations	Asian	2.1%	4.3%	8.3%	49.8%	35.6%
	Black	2.6%	5.5%	8.6%	44.5%	38.8%
	Mixed or multiple ethnic group	2.3%	4.6%	7.6%	45.2%	40.3%
	Other ethnicity	3.3%	4.9%	7.5%	50.4%	33.9%
	White	2.1%	4.3%	6.7%	43.7%	43.2%
All other occupations combined	Asian	5.9%	9.3%	9.9%	42.4%	32.5%
	Black	7.3%	11.8%	9.8%	41.4%	29.8%
	Mixed or multiple ethnic group	7.1%	10.0%	9.9%	37.6%	35.4%
	Other ethnicity	6.8%	10.7%	10.5%	40.5%	31.6%
	White	5.5%	8.3%	8.0%	38.1%	40.0%

Activity utilises skills

Compared to the above 2 questions on meaningfulness and whether their activity was subjectively on track, more graduates are feeling their current work isn't utilising their skills as much as they would like, but this is slightly less the case for engineers and technicians. Graduates though (regardless of subject type) were more negative in their responses.

Around 7 in 10 graduates agreed their skills are used in their role, with slightly higher agreement for engineering and technology (70.7%) compared to other roles (68.8%). However, the strength of feeling was higher for those in other roles, with higher "strongly agree" responses (29.9% vs. 24.4% in engineering and technology) (figure 46).

Figure 46: View that activity utilises skills, by occupation group



Activity utilises skills - by gender

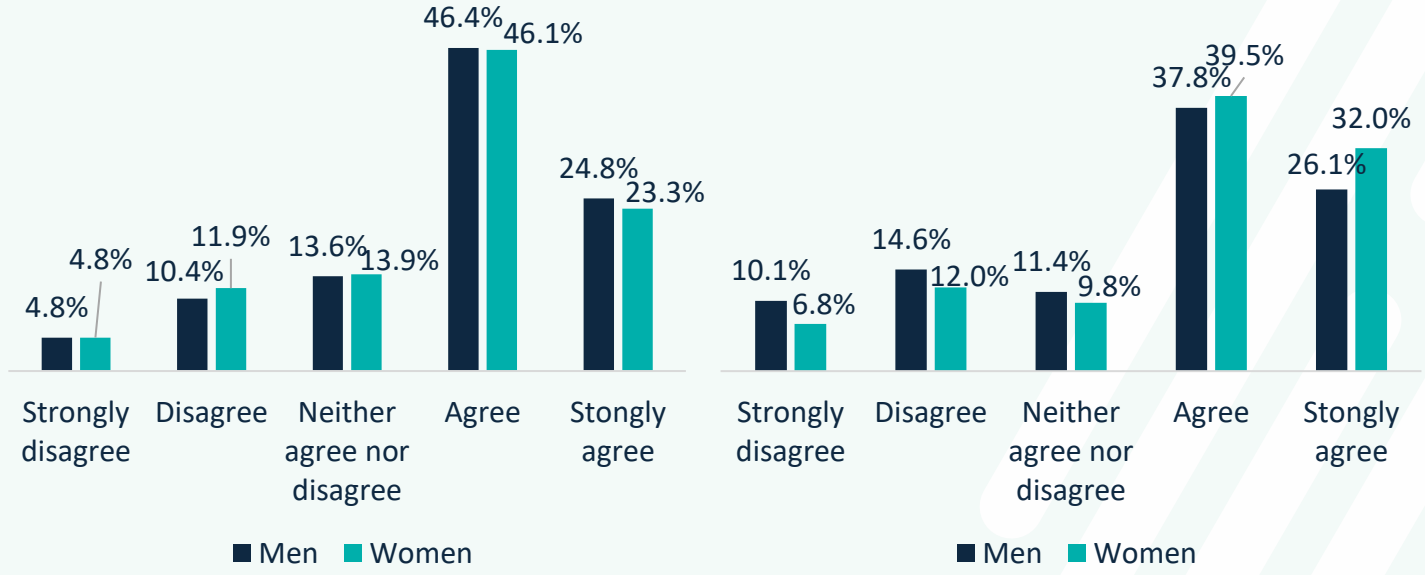
Men working in engineering and technology were slightly more likely to agree and slightly less likely to disagree that their role uses their skills than women in engineering and technology. However, there were bigger differences between type of role. Women in other roles were more likely to both agree and disagree that their jobs use their skills, indicating a wider range of roles and satisfaction (figure 47).

Men in all other occupations combined were more negative. They were significantly more likely to disagree (24.7% vs. 15.2%) than men in engineering and technology, and less likely to agree. They were also more negative than women in non-engineering and technology roles.

Figure 47: View that activity utilises skills, by occupation group and gender

a) engineering and technology occupations

b) all other occupations combined



Activity utilises skills - by ethnicity

Finally, there were some interesting results when it came to whether graduates felt their current activity or job was utilising their skills as engineers or technicians by ethnicity.

Graduates from other ethnic groups were most likely to feel strongly their skills were being utilised at 72.6%, followed by 71.8% of white graduates and 71.0% of graduates from a mixed or multiple ethnicity (table 25).

For all 3 groups, agreement was higher for those in engineering and technology than those in other roles. Asian (66.2%) and Black (68.8%) graduates working in engineering and technology felt less like their skills were being used – both than other ethnicities in engineering and technology and compared to the same ethnic groups in other occupations. However, for all 5 ethnic groups, disagreement was stronger among those in non-engineering and technology roles, indicating a wider spread of roles outside of engineering and technology.

Table 25: View that activity utilises skills, by occupation group and ethnicity

Occupation type	Ethnicity	Activity is meaningful				
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Engineering and technology occupations	Asian	5.2%	12.1%	16.4%	47.8%	18.4%
	Black	6.0%	11.9%	13.3%	45.0%	23.8%
	Mixed or multiple ethnic group	5.3%	11.3%	12.4%	44.8%	26.2%
	Other ethnicity	3.7%	11.2%	12.5%	49.1%	23.5%
	White	4.6%	10.7%	12.9%	46.7%	25.1%
All other occupations combined	Asian	7.5%	13.9%	11.3%	41.5%	25.7%
	Black	7.9%	12.7%	8.9%	40.0%	30.5%
	Mixed or multiple ethnic group	9.7%	15.6%	10.7%	37.1%	26.9%
	Other ethnicity	9.5%	14.4%	11.3%	39.3%	25.4%
	White	8.0%	12.8%	9.6%	38.2%	31.5%

Methodology

The data featured in this report was obtained from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

Definition of engineering and technology related qualifications

In previous years, we only used CAH10 to define engineering and technology. In 2025, however, we noticed a high percentage of computing graduates were also going on to work in engineering and technology occupations. On top of this, a number of occupations featured in our engineering footprint have explicit links to computing, such as programmers and software development managers, IT network professionals and IT project managers.

Following a series of analyses, results showed a similar percentage of computing (62.3%) went on to work in engineering and technology 15 months after graduating compared to engineering and technology graduates (62.4%).

Therefore, following on from our Graduate Outcomes (2025) report, we use CAH10 and CAH11 codes to identify engineering and technology degrees. Within these codes there are 10 separate engineering, 7 technology and 8 computing subjects (table 26).

Table 26: CAH10 and CAH11 degrees which contribute to our definition of engineering and technology related subjects

Engineering	Technology	Computing
• (CAH10-01-01) engineering (non-specific) • (CAH10-01-02) mechanical engineering • (CAH10-01-03) production and manufacturing engineering • (CAH10-01-04) aeronautical and aerospace engineering • (CAH10-01-05) naval architecture • (CAH10-01-06) bioengineering, medical and	• (CAH10-03-01) minerals technology • (CAH10-03-02) materials technology • (CAH10-03-03) polymers and textiles • (CAH10-03-04) maritime technology • (CAH10-03-05) Biotechnology • (CAH10-03-06) others in technology	• (CAH11-01-01) Computer Science • (CAH11-01-02) Information Technology • (CAH11-01-03) Information Systems • (CAH11-01-04) Software Engineering • (CAH11-01-05) Artificial Intelligence • (CAH11-01-06) Computer Games and Animation • (CAH11-01-07) Business Computing • (CAH11-01-08) Others in Computing

biomedical engineering • (CAH10-01-07) civil engineering • (CAH10-01-08) electrical and electronic engineering • (CAH10-01-09) chemical, process and energy engineering • (CAH10-01-10) others in engineering		

Student data

For undergraduate, undergraduate qualifiers and postgraduate students, we used student data from HESA for students in the academic year 2023/24. There are different cohorts of students in the HESA:

- Entrants – those students who commenced their programme within the reporting period, based on the HESA standard registration population
- Students – all students, regardless of their commencement date, based on the HESA standard registration population
- Qualifiers – students awarded a higher education qualification during the HESA reporting period, including qualifications awarded from dormant, writing-up and sabbatical status

In this report we mainly focus on entrants because this gives the most up-to-date view of the HE landscape and allows comparisons between the overall population of students and engineering and technology entrants.

We also look at qualifiers as not all students who enter higher education will complete their degree. Drop-out rates vary between groups, so the composition of qualifiers differs from that of entrants. Additionally, we explore levels of study. Students were classified as studying at one of four levels:

- First degree undergraduate - students participating in their first programmes of study in a subject leading to qualifications at first or foundation degree level. A **'first degree'** is more commonly known as a bachelor's degree.
- Other undergraduate - includes qualification aims equivalent to and below first degree level, including, but not limited to, foundation degrees, diplomas in higher education, Higher National Diploma (HND), Higher National Certificate (HNC) and foundation courses at higher education level. For more information on the difference between first degree and other undergraduates, visit: Definitions and data standards | HESA

- Postgraduate (research) – this includes doctorate (incorporating New Route PhD), masters degrees and postgraduate diplomas or certificates (not Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) at level M) studied primarily through research
- Postgraduate (taught) - doctorate and master's degrees, postgraduate bachelors degrees and postgraduate diplomas or certificates not studied primarily through research

Graduate outcomes data

For graduates, we use the HESA Graduate Outcomes Survey. The survey contacts all graduates from higher education reported to HESA with qualifications obtained during the reporting period (1 August to 31 July), 15 months after they finish their studies.

For one of the Graduate Outcome variables, main activity where we were unable to look across all the possible activities listed due to small sample sizes we split this variable into 4 groups:

- Employment – including paid work for an employer, self-employed/freelancing or running my own business
- Unemployment
- In further study – engaged in a course of study, training or research
- Something else – 'developing a creative, artistic or professional portfolio', voluntary/unpaid work for an employer, taking time out to travel, caring for someone (unpaid), doing something else, retired

Demographic data

In the above report we looked at various demographic characteristics for students, qualifiers and graduates. We looked at possible differences between engineering and technology compared to all other subjects combined. Demographic characteristics included:

Gender

The data collected by HESA records the sex of students as opposed to the gender they identify with. There are three categories in the dataset: male, female and other (for students whose sex aligns with terms such as intersex, androgyne, intergender, ambigender, gender fluid, polygender and gender queer). However, due to small numbers, in this report we are only able to display results for male and female students and graduates. We also refer to male and female as men and women respectively.

Ethnicity

Ethnicity data is only possible for students whose permanent address is in England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Guernsey, Jersey and the Isle of Man. We are therefore unable to comment on ethnicity of students outside these areas. Due to small numbers when looking at some variables, for the purpose of this report, ethnicity was grouped as follows:

- Asian – this includes Asian or Asian British – Indian, Asian or Asian British – Pakistani, Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi, and any other Asian background

- Black – this includes Black or Black British – African, Black or Black British – Caribbean and another other Black background
- Mixed or multiple ethnic group – this includes mixed – white and Black Caribbean, mixed – white and Black African , mixed – White and Asian, and any other mixed ethnic background
- Other – this includes Arab and any other ethnic background
- White – this includes white, white – Scottish, Irish Traveller, Gypsy or Traveller and any other White background

Those recorded as 'unknown/not applicable' are not included in our analysis. This is used not only to denote those who do not have a permanent address in the UK, but also for those whose permanent address is unknown (2014/15 onwards), those who have refused to give ethnic information or whose ethnicity is unknown.

Disability

Students are not required to report a disability should they not wish to do so, and therefore in the report we categorise disability into 'disability' and 'no known disability'. HESA specifies disabilities to include: a specific learning difficulty, blind or a serious visual impairment, deaf or a serious hearing impairment, a physical impairment or mobility issues, personal care support, mental health condition, social communication/autistic spectrum disorder or a long-standing illness or health condition.

Parental education

This includes information about whether an entrant's parents had higher education qualifications, such as degree, diploma or certificate or higher education. It covers England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Students can respond with yes, no, don't know and can refuse to provide information. Data was only available for undergraduate students.

Low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR4)

To help assess UK students attending HE courses from disadvantaged areas, the POLAR4 classification was formed to identify where participation in higher education is usually low. Areas were ranked based on the combined participation rates of those who entered HE between the academic years 2009-10 and 2013-14, if they entered aged 18, or between 2010-11 and 2014-15 if they entered aged 19.

Five groups were then formed, each representing 20% of the UK young cohort, with quintile 1 having the lowest young participation (most disadvantaged), up to quintile 5 which are the areas with the highest participation (most advantaged). Students were allocated to the neighbourhoods on the basis of their postcode and those whose postcode falls within middle layer super output areas with the lowest participation (quintile 1) are denoted as being from a low participation neighbourhood.

Place of usual residence

A student's place of usual residence is based on their permanent home address - where they normally lived for non-educational purposes before starting their course. This is sometimes also referred to as their domicile. It is important to look at this as international students pay different fees for HE courses in the UK depending on their usual place of residence. In our report, students are grouped into one of the following:

- United Kingdom (UK) – England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales and also includes Guernsey, Jersey and the Isle of Man
- European Union (EU) – includes all countries in the EU on 1st December of the reporting period
- Rest of the World (RoW) – includes any other country not in the UK or EU

Apprenticeships

For this first time, we included an apprenticeship marker to see if students were taking part in an apprenticeship programme. These will include students studying on higher and degree apprenticeships and as apprenticeships include work-based learning, these students also fall into the Individualized Learner Record (ILR).

Analysis

Results displayed are for full time equivalent (FTE) students, which takes into account that some students are studying part time. For example, a student on a full time, full year course would be counted as 1.0 FTE, whereas a student on a part time course that is 50% of a full time course would be counted as 0.5. Counts displayed throughout the report are rounded to the nearest 5, as required by HESA, to avoid any potential disclosure issues. However, percentages are calculated based on unrounded data.

Who are we

Established in 2001, EngineeringUK is a not-for profit organisation, funded predominantly via the professional registration fees of individual engineers, as well as the support of a range of businesses, trusts and foundations, and a corporate membership scheme. Our ambition is to enable more young people from all backgrounds to be informed, inspired and progress into engineering and technology.

Working in partnership to inspire more young people from a greater range of backgrounds to pursue the exciting career opportunities in modern engineering and technology is at the heart of EngineeringUK's purpose. Collaboration is essential to reach our long-term vision: for the UK to have the diverse workforce needed for engineering and technology to thrive and to drive economic prosperity, improve sustainability and achieve net zero.

Driven by data

Our work is rooted in our understanding of the current and future needs of the engineering and technology workforce. We complement that understanding by establishing which activities help increase the number and diversity of young people choosing engineering, technology and technician careers, especially those in sustainability and net zero.

We base everything we do on evidence and we share our analysis and insight widely. We publish comprehensive data on all aspects of engineering and technology in the UK – providing a detailed examination of the economic contribution, the workforce composition, as well as the extent to which workforce supply through education and training is likely to meet future demand for engineering and technology skills.

We evaluate all our activity to help ensure our engagements with young people are as effective as possible. It is through evaluation that we can identify the extent to which our programmes are winning the hearts and minds of young people, increasing their understanding of engineering and technology, and changing their perceptions of a career in it as something they'd consider for themselves, regardless of background and gender.