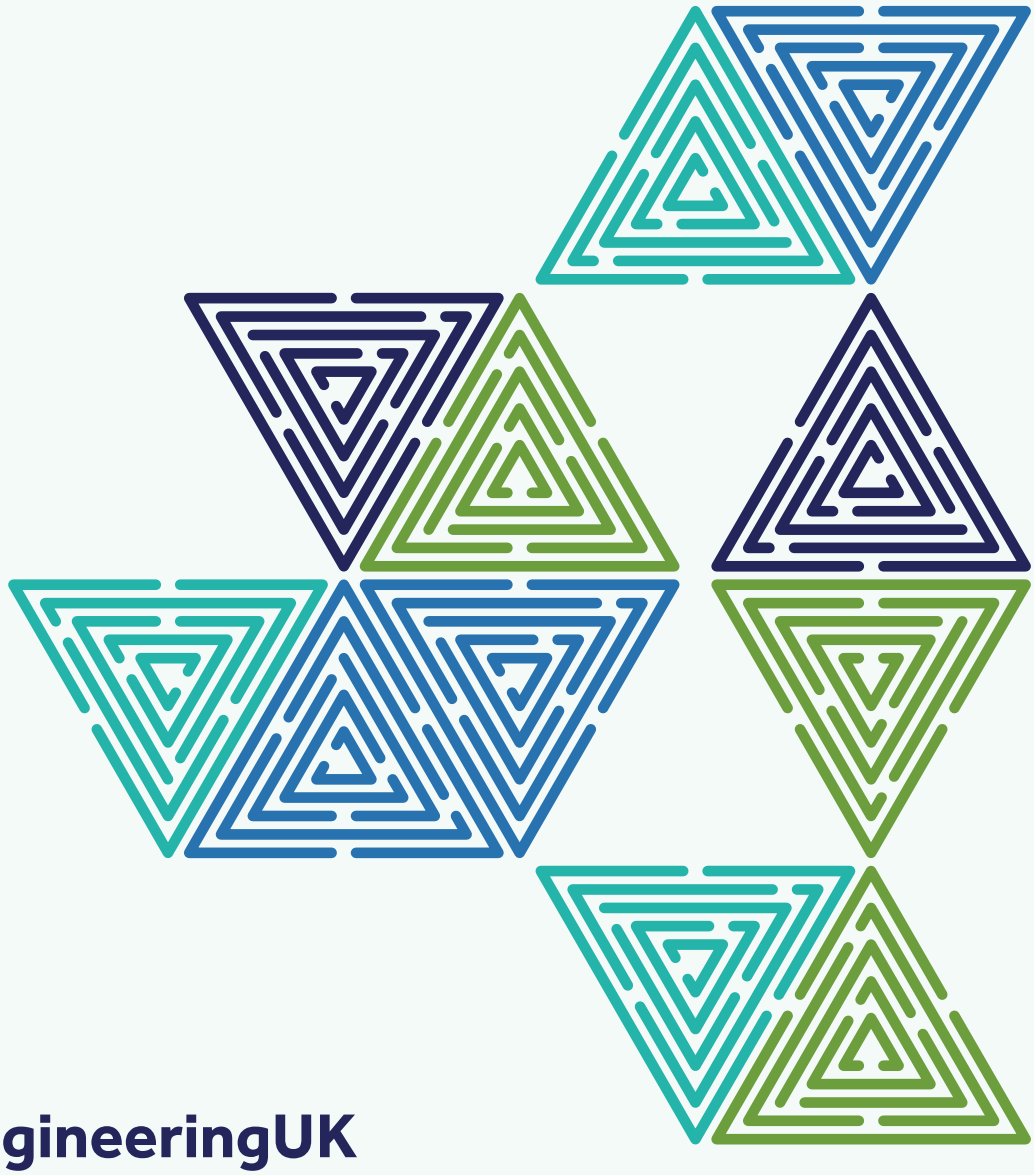
ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Mechanical engineering



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INSPIRING FUTURES TOGETHER

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In 2023/24, there were 11,610 entrants studying mechanical engineering degrees in higher education[1]. This was made up of 8,270 first degree and 450 other undergraduate students, and only 2,890 postgraduate students (taught and research).

Undergraduate first degree entrants

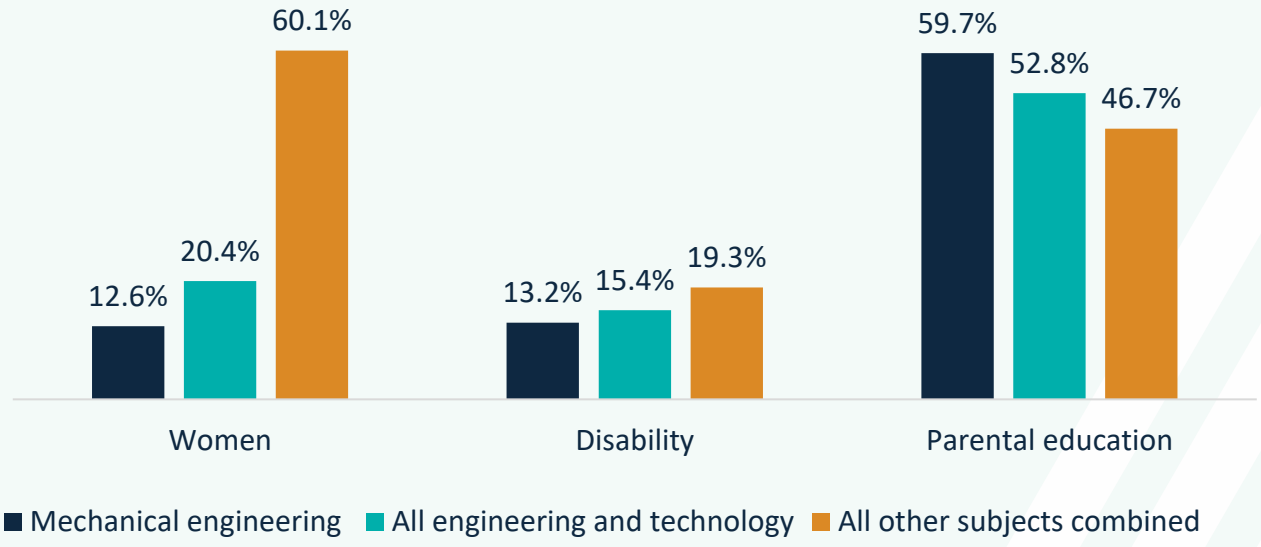
The number of mechanical engineering first degree entrants has remained relatively stable since 2019/20. There was only a slight decrease from 8,450 in 2019/20 down to 8,270 in 2023/24. Mechanical engineering degrees were the 2nd most popular engineering and technology subject for first degree undergraduate entrants in 2023/24. For undergraduates this was equivalent to 10.3% of all engineering and technology entrants at this level. Of these:

- 12.6% were women
- 38.1% were from a UK minority ethnic (UKME) group
- 13.2% had a known disability
- 11.2% were from low higher education participation areas (POLAR4 quintile 1)
- 76.6% were from the UK, 2.3% from the EU and 21.1% were from the rest of the world

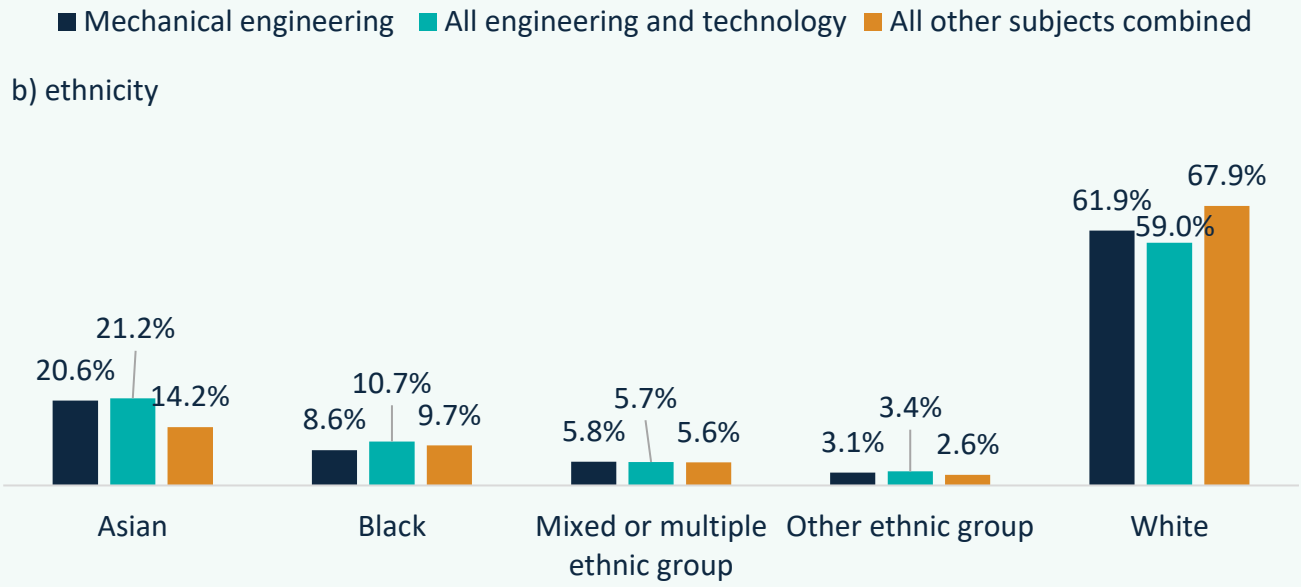
Mechanical engineering had the lowest percentage of women at just over 1 in 10. This was 7.8 pp below the average for all engineering and technology first degrees (figure 1).

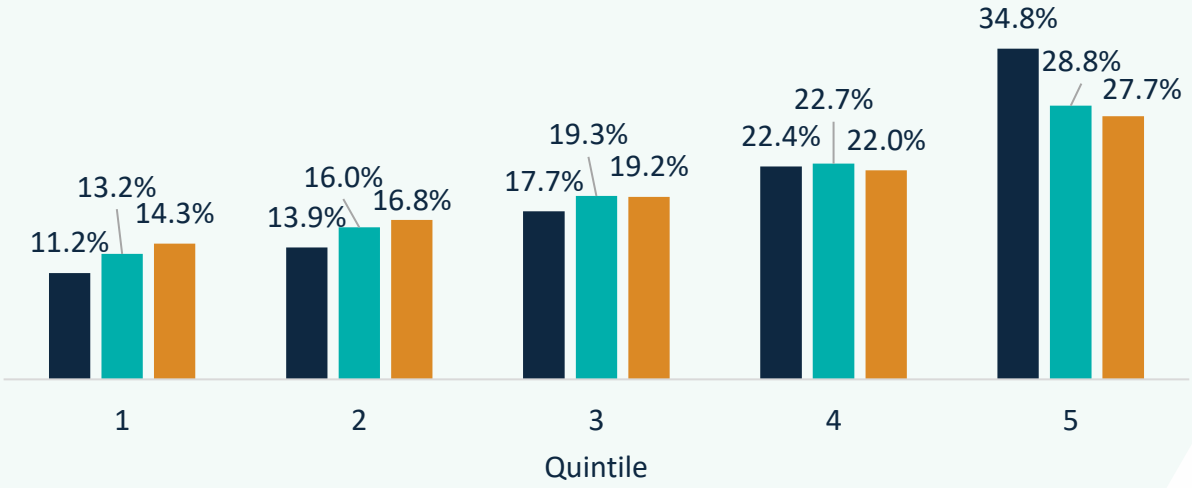
Figure 1: Characteristics of undergraduate entrants

a) gender, disability and parent with higher education qualification



[1] Please see our 'Engineering and tech in Higher Education' report for more details on our methodology and definitions.


Mechanical engineering
All engineering and technology
All other subjects combined
b) ethnicity
20.6%
21.2%
14.2%
8.6%
10.7%
9.7%
5.8%
5.7%
5.6%
3.1%
3.4%
2.6%
61.9%
59.0%
67.9%
Asian
Black
Mixed or multiple ethnic group
Other ethnic group
White


c) socioeconomic status (POLAR4)
11.2%
13.2%
14.3%
13.9%
16.0%
16.8%
17.7%
19.3%
19.2%
22.4%
22.7%
22.0%
34.8%
28.8%
27.7%
1
2
3
4
5
Quintile


d) permanent address
76.6%
78.8%
85.9%
2.3%
1.3%
1.5%
21.1%
20.0%
12.7%
UK
EU
RoW

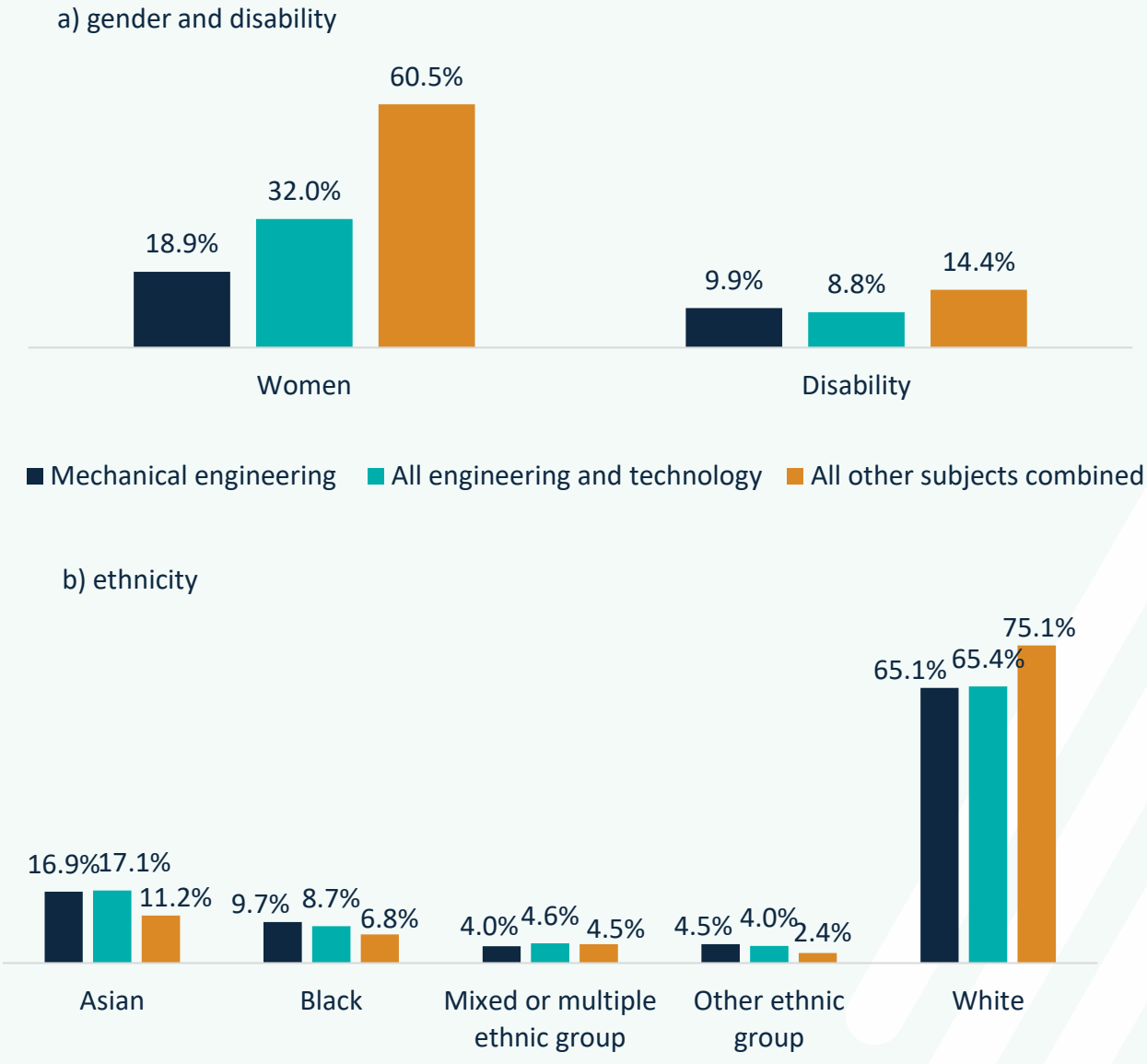
Postgraduate degree entrants

The number of mechanical engineering postgraduates entrants also remained stable since 2019/20 (2,905 entrants). Mechanical engineering was the 7th most popular engineering and technology subject amongst graduates in 2023/24, equivalent to 5.7%. Of these:

- 18.9% were women
- 9.9% had a known disability
- 35.0% were from a UKME group

As with undergraduate first degrees, at postgraduate level mechanical engineering still had the smallest percentage of women at fewer than 1 in 5 (18.9%). This is 13.1 pp below the average for all engineering and technology subjects at 32.0% (figure 2).

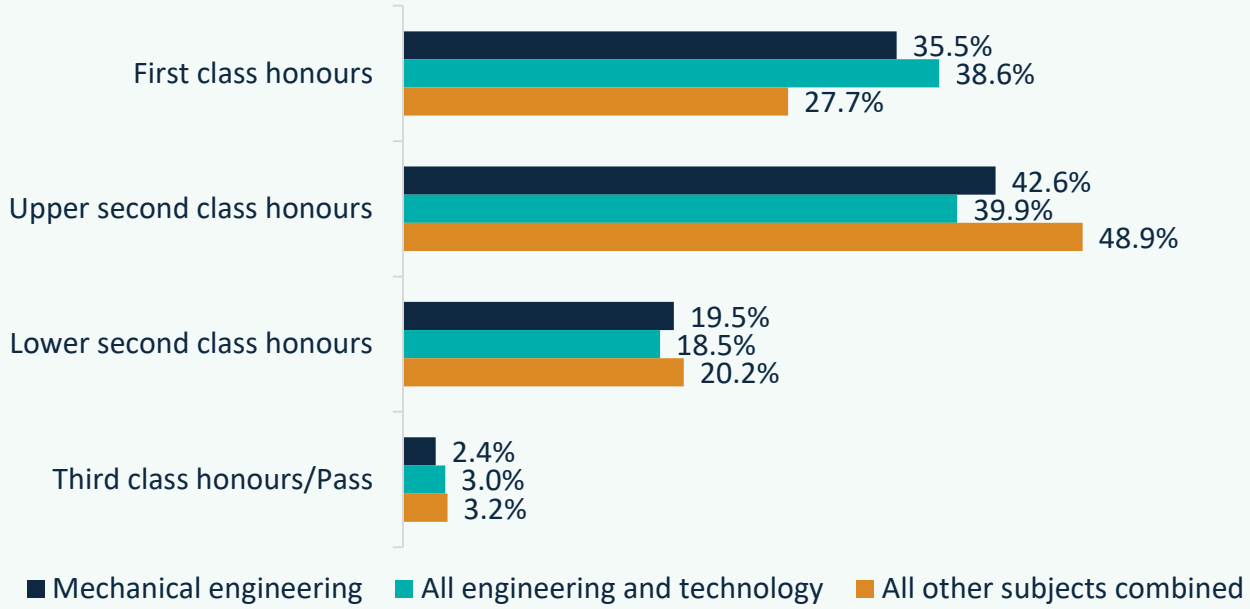
Figure 2: Characteristic of postgraduate degree entrants



Undergraduate first degree qualifiers

The majority of mechanical engineering first degree qualifiers obtained an upper second class honours at over 4 in 10 (42.6%). Over a third achieved a first class honour (35.5%) and nearly a fifth obtained a lower second class honours (19.5%) (figure 3).

Figure 3: Mechanical engineering results, 2023/24



Graduate outcomes

Three-quarters of mechanical engineering graduates were in paid work 15 months after graduating (75.6%). Of those, nearly 7 in 10 were working in engineering and technology occupations (69.0%) which is above average compared to all engineering and technology subjects (59.7%). 9.3% were doing further studies and 8.1% were unemployed (figure 4).

Figure 4: Outcomes for mechanical engineering graduates