



**TRACKING THE PROGRESSION OF
LEVEL 3 VOCATIONAL LEARNERS
INTO HIGHER EDUCATION WITHIN
HEREFORDSHIRE & WORCESTERSHIRE**

**A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF
2005/6 AND 2006/7
REGISTRATIONS**

July 2008

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Tracking the Progression of Level 3 Vocational Learners into Higher Education within Herefordshire & Worcestershire : A Comparative Study of 2005/6 and 2006/7 Registrations

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July 2008

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

The purpose of this research is to establish some baseline data from which to measure the impact of the LLN for Herefordshire & Worcestershire. The research primarily looks at the number of vocational learners that are progressing on to HE courses within the two counties.

The research does not incorporate registrations on to all HE courses in Herefordshire & Worcestershire, it is focussed more specifically on Undergraduate (UG) courses that fall within one of the subject areas of this LLN's curriculum themes which are:

- Health & Social Care
- Leadership & Management
- Sport, Tourism, Heritage, Culture & Media

OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH REPORT

The research is based on data collected from 5 Higher Education (HE) providers in Herefordshire & Worcestershire. Although data has been collected from 5 institutions, one institution was unable to provide all of the data required therefore only Table 1 and Chart 1 contains data on all 5 institutions to give an overview of the total number of students registering.

DATA COLLECTION

Data sets were obtained from each of the following institutions in Herefordshire & Worcestershire:

- Hereford College of Arts (HCA)
- Herefordshire College of Technology (HCT)
- North East Worcestershire College (NEWC)
- University of Worcester (UW)
- Worcester College of Technology (WCT)

Information regarding Level 3 completions in the previous academic years has been requested from the Learning & Skills Council however this information has not been received to date.

CONSTRAINTS & LIMITATIONS

A number of difficulties were encountered in the collation of data for this research:

- We were advised not to use HESA data as it had been purchased previously by another organisation who reported that it was inappropriate for this purpose.
- UCAS data did not include vital information such as highest entry qualification and mode of study, plus data was only available for full-time students and not part-time.
- HE and FE providers do not collect the same data from their HE students.
- The original plan was to look at all HE courses however, the sample size was too large for University of Worcester making it unmanageable to manually check the number of student files

required. The sample size was therefore scaled down to focus on just those students who were 1) registering for an Undergraduate course and 2) registering on a HE course within the subject area of one of the LLN's curriculum themes.

- A number of the FE colleges were unable to provide data at student level which showed each individual's highest entry qualification. A summary was therefore provided by 3 of the FE colleges to show the number of students registered on each HE course with each type of entry qualification which limited the amount of analysis that could be undertaken. One FE college was unable to provide any information regarding highest entry qualifications as they did not have access to this information and therefore provided information on the total number of students registered on each HE course.
- Data has been requested from the LSC to establish how many Level 3 learners qualified in 2005/6 and 2006/7. We are currently awaiting this data.
- It was not possible to obtain information regarding Highest Entry Qualification for the majority of the non-prescribed HE courses.

POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE YEARS

Scale down the sample size further to allow for a deeper understanding of the results. This could be achieved by:

- Focussing specifically on LLN designated or part-funded courses, rather than global curriculum areas, in order to identify the actual impact that the LLN has made.
- Track the success, year-on-year, of those students on an LLN designated or part-funded course.

MAIN FINDINGS

The main findings of the research were that:

The total number of students registering on HE courses at the 5 sampled institutions in H&W and within one of the LLN's curriculum themes was:

- 2,156 students in 2005/6
- 2,144 students in 2006/7

The proportion of students that registered on HE courses at HCA, HCT, UW & WCT (within one of the LLN's curriculum themes) with a Level 3 vocational qualification as their highest entry qualification was:

- 30% in 2005/6 (compared with 18% that entered with A Levels)
- 32% in 2006/7 (compared with 16% that entered with A Levels)

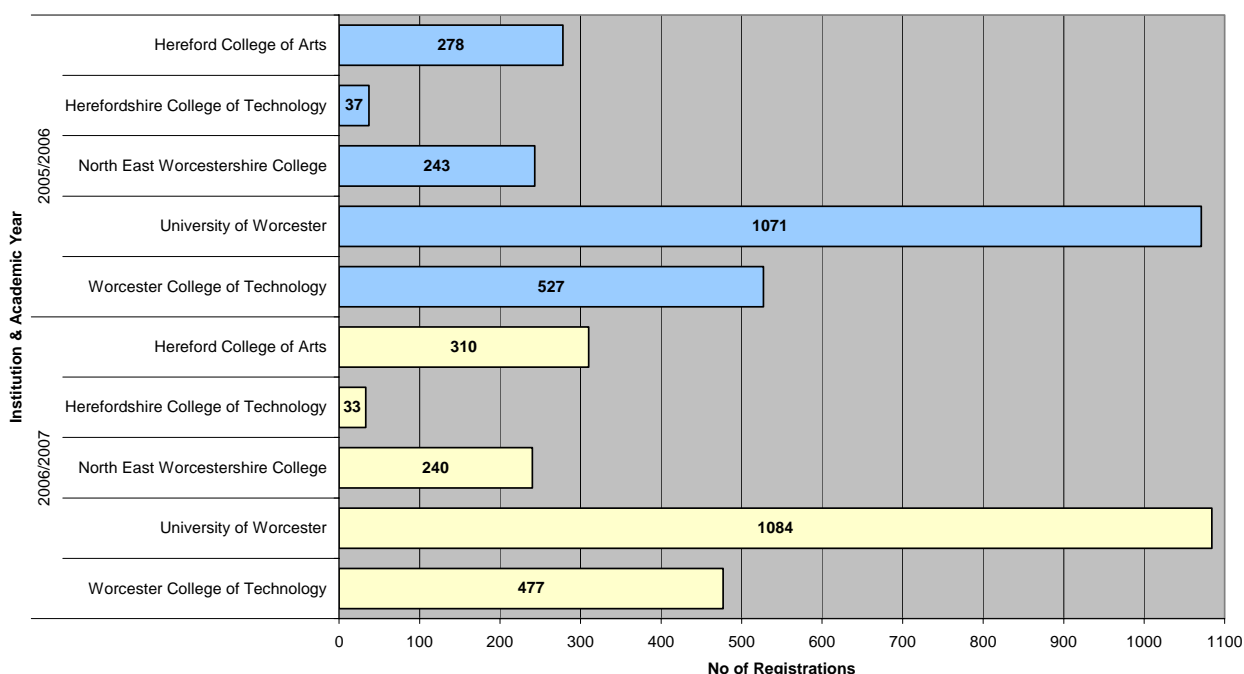
SECTION 1*

HOW MANY STUDENTS REGISTERED ON A HE COURSE IN HEREFORDSHIRE & WORCESTERSHIRE IN 2005/6 & 2006/7?

Table 1 – Number of Registrations at Each Institution, shown by Highest Entry Qualification, in Academic Years 2005/6 & 2006/7

Academic Year	Name of Institution	APL/APEL/No Formal Qual	Level 2 Qualification	Level 3 Vocational Qual	Level 3 A/AS Level	Level 4 or Above Qualification	Not Known	Total
2005/2006	Hereford College of Arts	28	7	105	0	100	38	278
	Herefordshire College of Technology	1	1	5	0	16	14	37
	North East Worcestershire College	0	0	0	0	0	243	243
	University of Worcester	80	6	384	297	246	58	1071
	Worcester College of Technology	21	5	73	47	6	375	527
Total Registrations for 2005/06		130	19	567	344	368	728	2156
2006/2007	Hereford College of Arts	35	6	184	2	73	10	310
	Herefordshire College of Technology	1	2	0	0	17	13	33
	North East Worcestershire College	0	0	0	0	0	240	240
	University of Worcester	77	9	359	245	271	123	1084
	Worcester College of Technology	5	7	63	52	21	329	477
Total Registrations for 2006/07		118	24	606	299	382	715	2144

Chart 1 – Total Number of Registrations on to Undergraduate Courses in Herefordshire & Worcestershire within the H&W LLN's Curriculum Themes



In 2005/6 there were a total of 2,156 students registering on HE courses in Herefordshire & Worcestershire compared with 2,144 students in 2006/7.

* Includes data collected from HCA, HCT, NEWC, UW & WCT on students registered on those courses that fall within one of the LLN's curriculum themes of Health & Social Care, Leadership & Management and Sport, Tourism, Heritage, Culture & Media

SECTION 2[†]

OVERALL WHAT PROPORTION OF STUDENTS REGISTERING FOR HE COURSES IN H&W WERE ENTERING WITH A LEVEL 3 VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATION?

Chart 2a – Overall Number of Registrations in 2005/2006 shown by Highest Entry Qualification

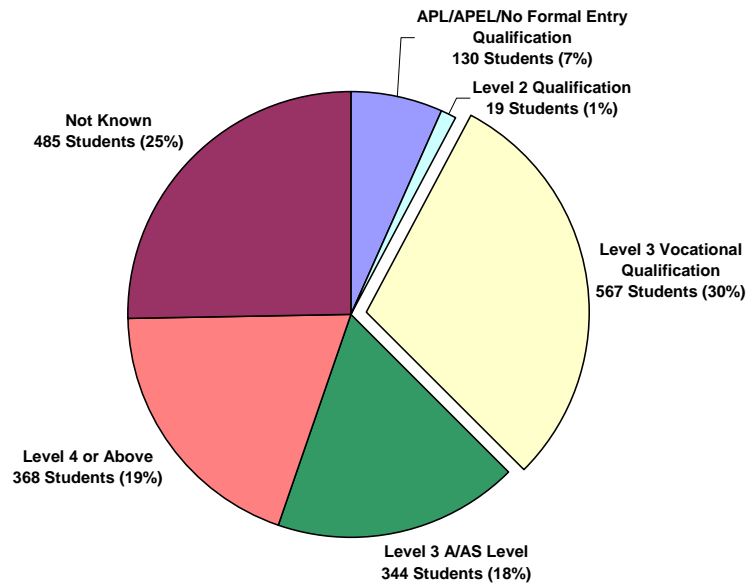
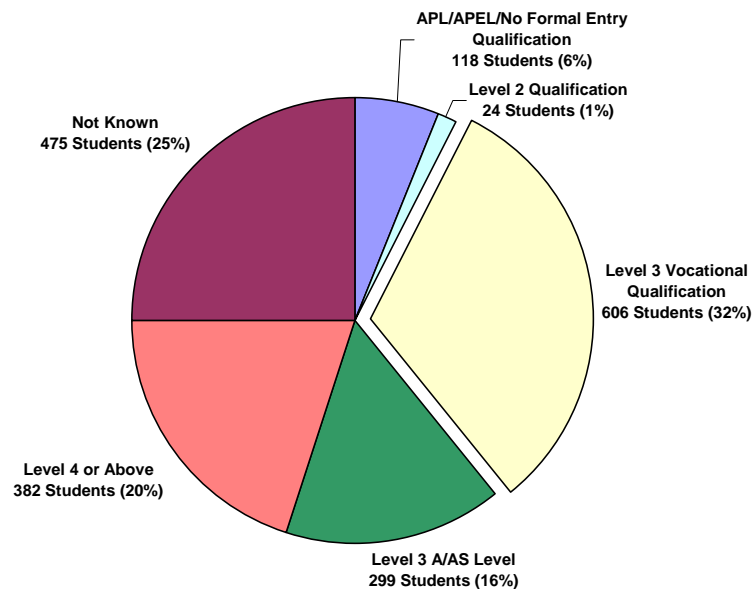


Chart 2b – Overall Number of Registrations in 2006/2007 shown by Highest Entry Qualification



The proportion of students registering on HE courses with a Level 3 Vocational Qualification or A Level remained consistent from 2005/6 to 2006/6. On average, 31% of students were entering with a Level 3 Vocational Qualification as their highest level qualification compared with 17% entering with A/AS Levels.

[†] Includes data collected from HCA, HCT, UW & WCT on students registered on those courses that fall within one of the LLN's curriculum themes of Health & Social Care, Leadership & Management and Sport, Tourism, Heritage, Culture & Media

SECTION 3[‡]

WHAT PROPORTION OF STUDENTS REGISTERING FOR HE COURSES AT EACH INSTITUTION WERE ENTERING WITH A LEVEL 3 VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATION?

Chart 3a – Number of Registrations at Hereford College of Arts in 2005/2006 shown by Highest Entry Qualification

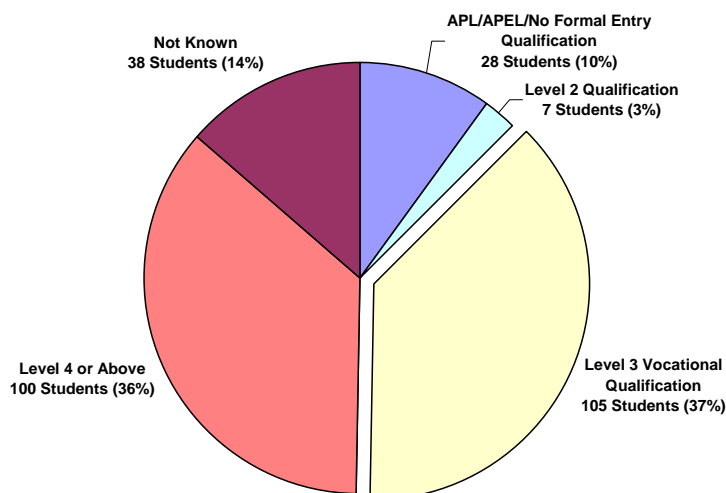
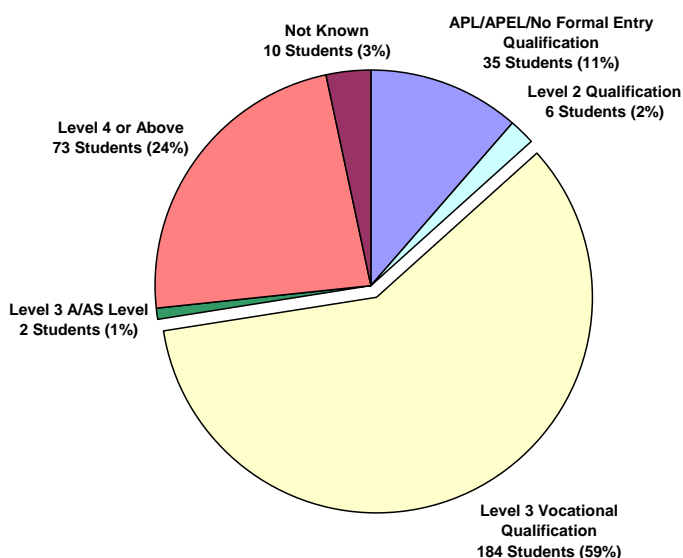


Chart 3b – Number of Registrations at Hereford College of Arts in 2006/2007 shown by Highest Entry Qualification



A significant amount of HCA's students entered with a Level 3 Vocational Qualification as their highest entry qualification (37% in 2005/6 which increased to 59% in 2006/7). There were no students entering with A/AS Levels in 2005/6 and only 1% (2 students) in 2006/7.

[‡] Includes data collected from HCA, HCT, UW & WCT on students registered on those courses that fall within one of the LLN's curriculum themes of Health & Social Care, Leadership & Management and Sport, Tourism, Heritage, Culture & Media

Chart 3c – Number of Registrations at Herefordshire College of Technology in 2005/2006 shown by Highest Entry Qualification

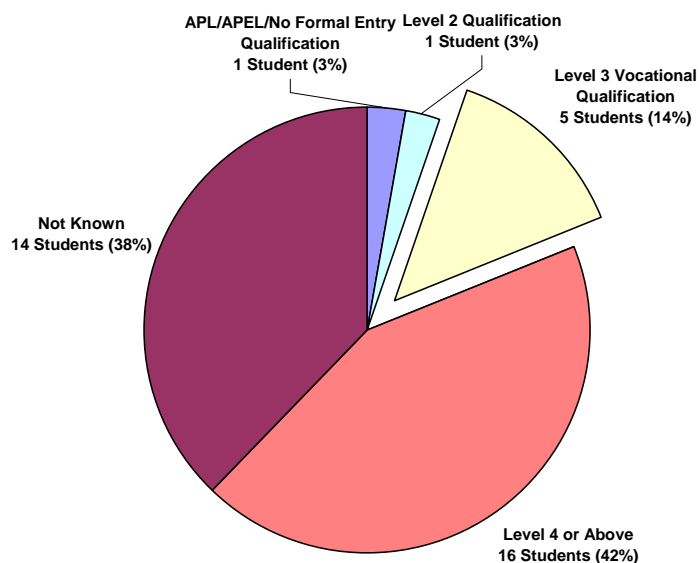
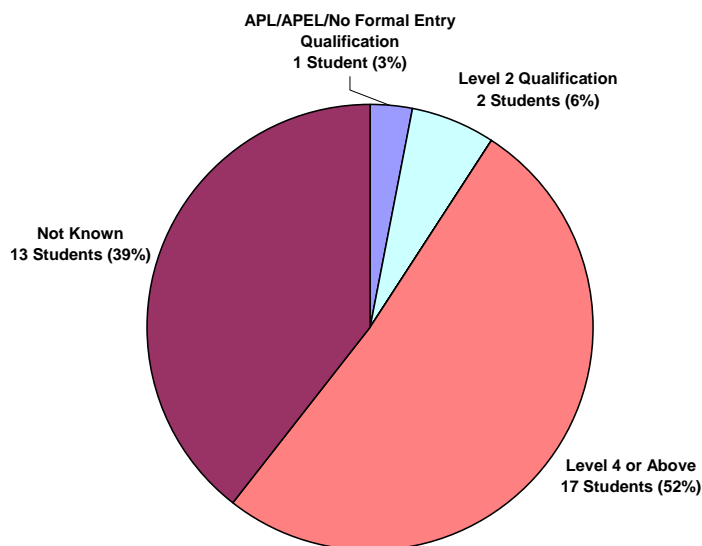


Chart 3d – Number of Registrations at Herefordshire College of Technology in 2006/2007 shown by Highest Entry Qualification



Due to the nature of the HE courses offered by HCT, a number of the entry qualifications were unknown as the majority of courses are non-prescribed HE. However, of those entry qualifications that are known there were only 14% (5 students) entering with a Level 3 Vocational Qualification in 2005/6. In 2006/7 there were no students entering with a Level 3 qualification as their highest entry qualification.

Chart 3e – Number of Registrations at the University of Worcester in 2005/2006 shown by Highest Entry Qualification

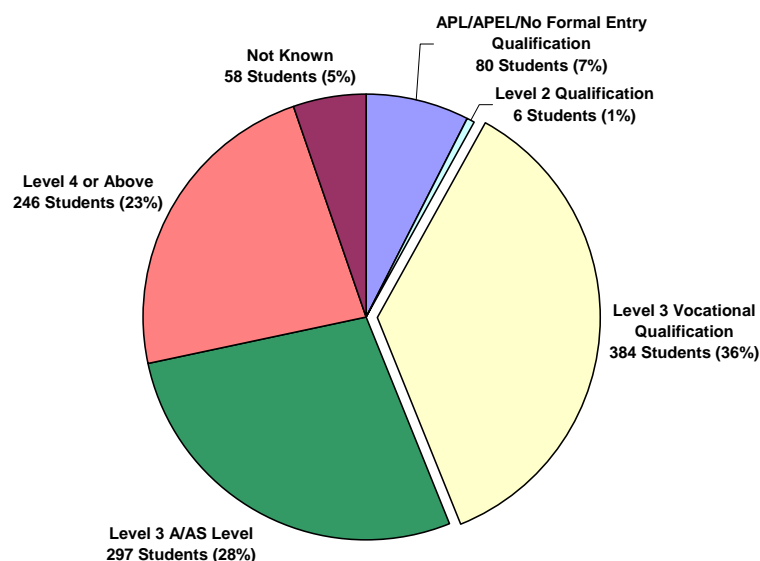
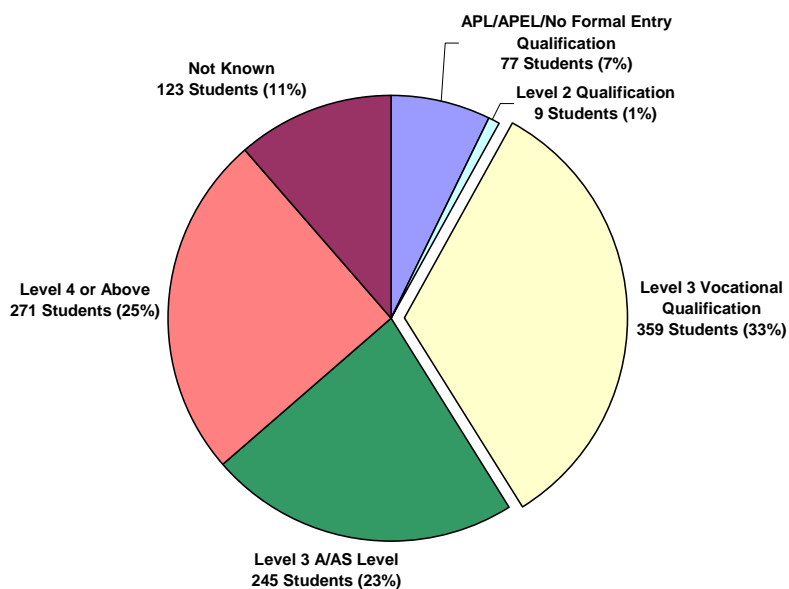


Chart 3f – Number of Registrations at the University of Worcester in 2006/2007 shown by Highest Entry Qualification



The split of Level 3 entrants was consistent year on year at UW with an average of 34.5% of students entering with a Level 3 vocational qualification compared with an average of 25.5% of students entering with A/AS Levels.

Chart 3g – Number of Registrations at Worcester College of Technology in 2005/2006 shown by Highest Entry Qualification

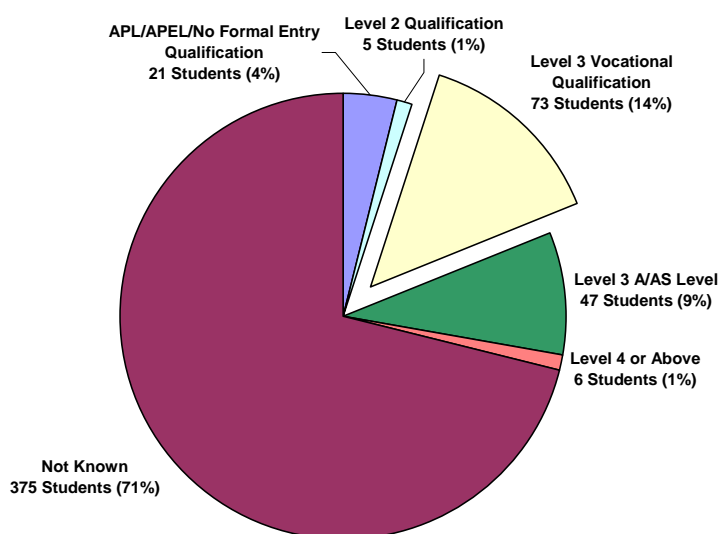
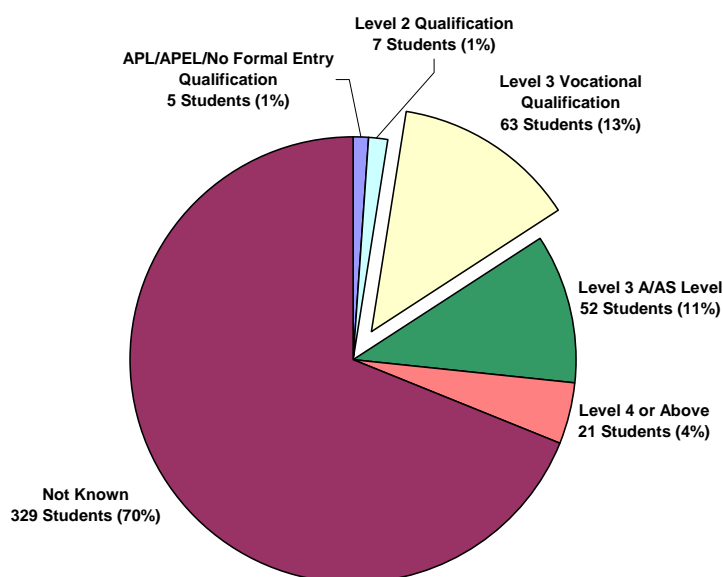


Chart 3h – Number of Registrations at Worcester College of Technology in 2006/2007 shown by Highest Entry Qualification



Due to the nature of the HE courses offered by WCT, a number of the entry qualifications were unknown as a number of the courses on offer are non-prescribed HE. However, their split of Level 3 entrants has remained consistent and of those entry qualifications that are known there were on average 13.5% entering with a Level 3 Vocational Qualification compared with an average of 10% entering with A/AS Levels.

Overall, Hereford College of Arts recruited the largest proportion of students with Level 3 Vocational Qualifications with 37% in 2005/6 and 59% in 2006/7.

SECTION 4[§]

WHAT NUMBER AND PROPORTION OF THE STUDENTS REGISTERING WERE ENTERING WITH A LEVEL 3 VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATION?

Chart 4a – Number of Registrations within each Curriculum Theme shown by Highest Entry Qualification

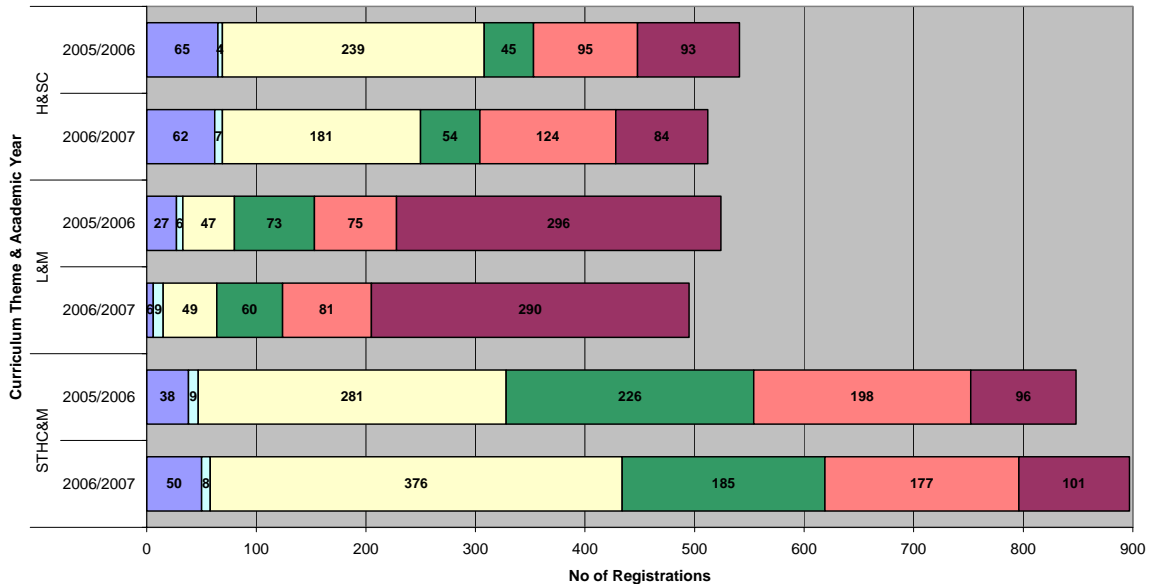
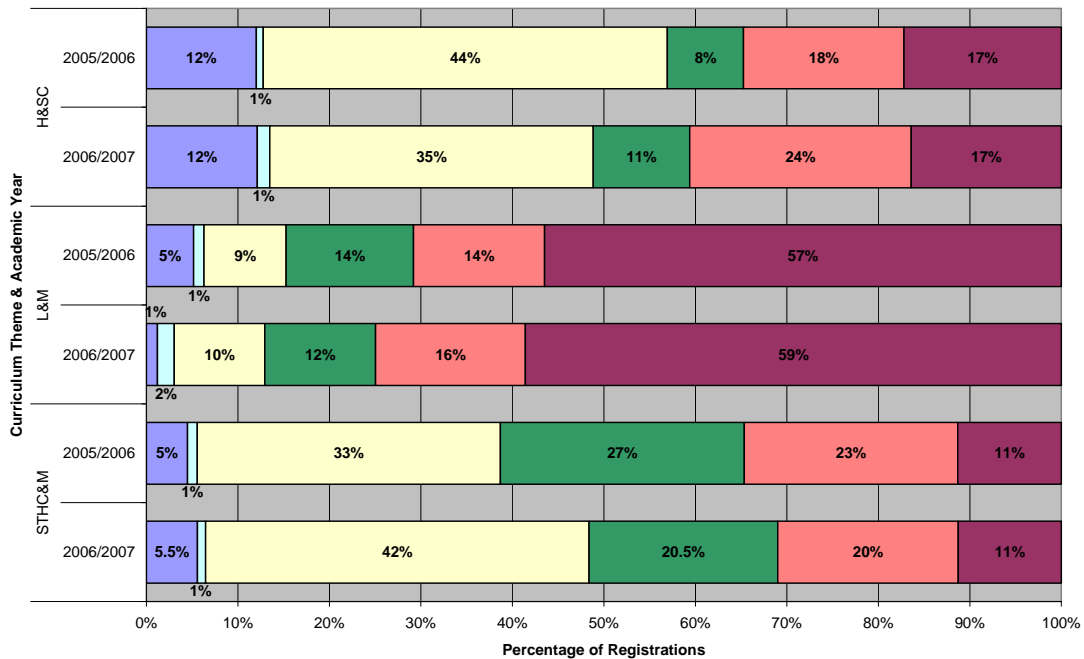


Chart 4b – Percentage of Registrations within each Curriculum Theme shown by Highest Entry Qualification



Key:

APL/APEL/No Formal Qualification	Level 2 Qualification	Level 3 Vocational Qualification
Level 3 A/AS Level	Level 4 or Above	Not Known

The curriculum theme of STHC&M had the highest number of entrants entering with a Level 3 Vocational Qualification as their highest entry qualification. The curriculum themes of H&SC and STHC&M had similar proportions of students entering with a Level 3 Vocational Qualification as their highest entry qualification.

[§] Includes data collected from HCA, HCT, UW & WCT on students registered on those courses that fall within one of the LLN's curriculum themes of Health & Social Care, Leadership & Management and Sport, Tourism, Heritage, Culture & Media

SECTION 5**

WHERE WERE THE UNIVERSITY OF WORCESTER'S UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS PROGRESSING FROM WITH THEIR LEVEL 3 VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATION?

Chart 5a – Number & Percentage of Students Registering at the University of Worcester in 2005/2006 with a Level 3 Vocational Qualification, from a local FE College, as their Highest Entry Qualification

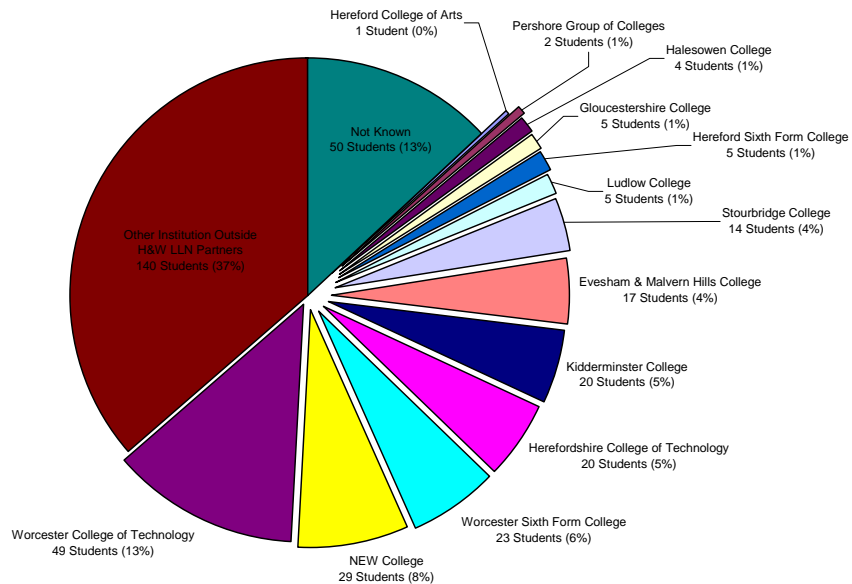
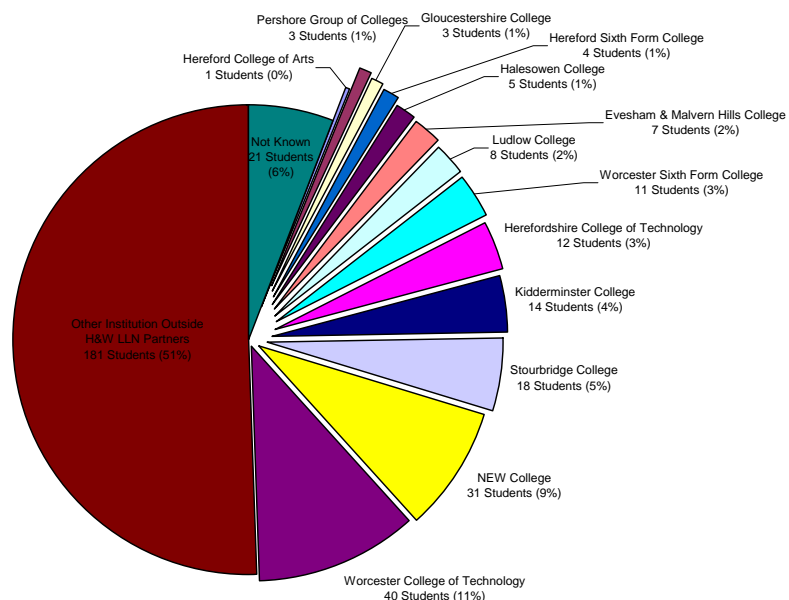


Chart 5b – Number & Percentage of Students Registering at the University of Worcester in 2006/2007 with a Level 3 Vocational Qualification, from a local FE College, as their Highest Entry Qualification



In 2005/6 51% of the total Level 3 Vocational students registered were progressing from FE Colleges within Herefordshire & Worcestershire, this decreased to 44% in 2006/7.

In both 2005/6 and 2006/7, the 2 institutions from which the most students were progressing onto HE at UW were Worcestershire College of Technology and North East Worcestershire College.

** Includes data collected from UW only on students registered on those courses that fall within one of the LLN's curriculum themes of Health & Social Care, Leadership & Management and Sport, Tourism, Heritage, Culture & Media

SECTION 6^{††}

WHERE WERE THE MAJORITY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WORCESTER'S LOCAL LEVEL 3 VOCATIONAL STUDENTS PROGRESSING FROM IN 2005/6 & 2006/7 WITHIN EACH CURRICULUM THEME?

Chart 6a – Number & Percentage of Level 3 Vocational Students Progressing from a Local FE College on to an Undergraduate Course at the University of Worcester in 2005/6 & 2006/7 within Health & Social Care

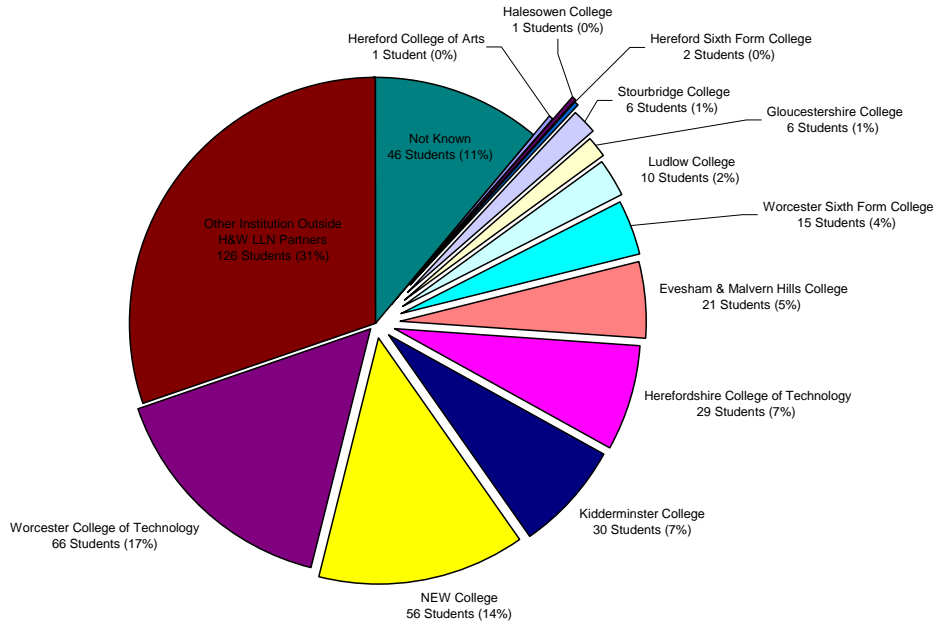
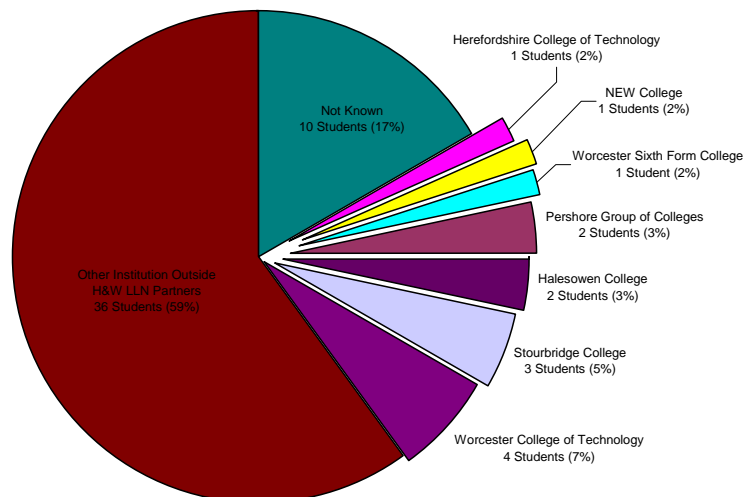
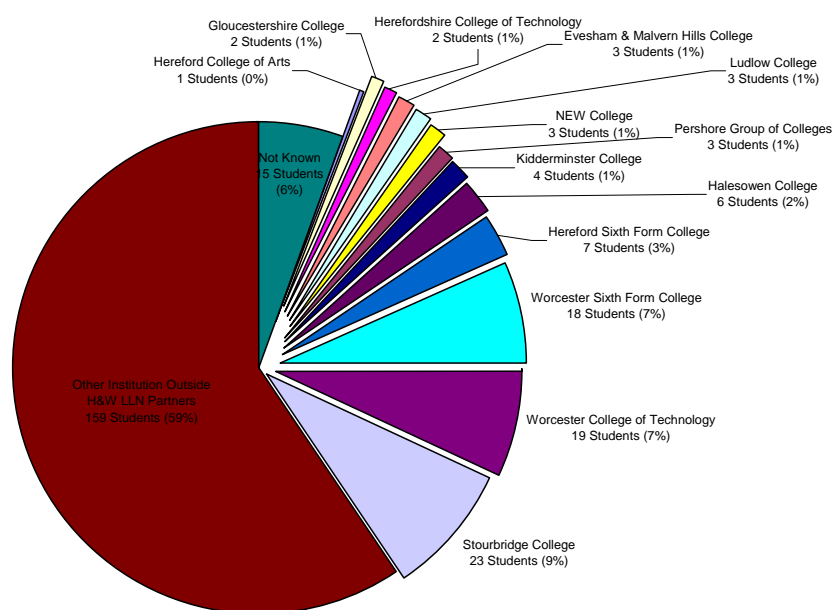


Chart 6b – Number & Percentage of Level 3 Vocational Students Progressing from a Local FE College on to an Undergraduate Course at the University of Worcester in 2005/6 & 2006/7 within Leadership & Management



^{††} Includes data collected from UW only on students registered on those courses that fall within one of the LLN's curriculum themes of Health & Social Care, Leadership & Management and Sport, Tourism, Heritage, Culture & Media

Chart 6c – Number & Percentage of Level 3 Vocational Students Progressing from a Local FE College on to an Undergraduate Course at the University of Worcester in 2005/6 & 2006/7 within Sport, Tourism, Heritage, Culture & Media



Over the two years of registrations, the subject area with the highest number and proportion of local Level 3 Vocational students was Health & Social Care.

59% of Health & Social Care students progressed from local colleges, the institution with the highest number of students progressing to UW was Worcester College of Technology.

35% of the Sport, Tourism, Heritage, Culture & Media students progressed from local colleges, the institution with the highest number of students progressing to UW was Stourbridge College.

23% of Leadership & Management students progressed from local colleges, the institutions with the highest number of students progressing were Worcester College of Technology and Stourbridge College.

IMPLICATIONS OF THIS RESEARCH

For institutions:

- The collection of data relating to highest qualifications should be reviewed in institutions who consider that it is helpful to know feeder qualifications. In particular, data relating to non-prescribed HE courses should be collected.
- Over the two years of registrations, 248 students entered HE either by APL/APEL or with no formal qualifications. Institutions need to promote APL/APEL to people in work and make it as transparent as possible.
- The biggest groups of students in Health & Social Care and Sport, Tourism, Heritage, Culture & Media are those with vocational qualifications. The marketing of these courses might wish to take this into account when describing entry requirements.
- There is a small proportion of students with vocational qualifications taking leadership and management courses (although there are a lot of unknowns for the non-HEFCE funded courses, for the HEFCE-funded provision the proportion of students with A levels is greater than those with vocational qualifications). Institutions might wish to place greater emphasis on recruiting students with vocational courses.

For the HWLLN:

- There are significant numbers of students progressing from colleges to UW at both Level 4 and Level 6. The LLN should continue with its work to establish progression agreements to enhance progression routes into and within HE wherever it is delivered.
- For UW, the curriculum theme that had the highest number of local students progressing with a Level 3 Vocational Qualification as their highest entry qualification, were Health & Social Care students with 59% progressing from a local FE College. Establishing firmer links between staff teams may help to encourage and support students making this transition.

NOTES

- Where a UW student has a Vocational and A Level qualification, the vocational qualification has been recorded
- Access courses have been classified as Level 3 vocational qualifications
- The UW data does not include students studying individual Health modules or the Return to Practice course
- Only looks at entry on to undergraduate courses in the H&W LLN's Curriculum Theme areas:
 - Health & Social Care
 - Leadership & Management
 - Sport, Tourism, Heritage, Culture & Media
- WCT only collect entry qualification data for HEFCE funded students