

# Choice cuts



How choice has declined in higher education

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The University and College Union (UCU) is the largest trade union and professional association for academics, lecturers, trainers, researchers and academic-related staff working in further and higher education throughout the UK. It has more than 120,000 members.

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## Summary

- The aim of this report is to investigate the provision of full-time undergraduate degree courses in the UK, and in particular a sample of principal, or single subject, degree courses in the UK between 2006 and 2012 to see if there was any marked change in provision following widespread public funding cuts.
- There has been a sharp reduction in the total number of full-time degree courses provided in the UK. Between 2006 and 2012, the number of full-time undergraduate courses decreased by 27%, with courses in England falling by 31%, contrasted with Scotland, which only had a reduction of 3%.
- Over the period there was a reduction of 14% in the provision of all principal subject degree courses in the UK, although the number rose slightly in 2012.
- The number of principal subject courses provided in England, where tuition fees of up to £9,000 are being introduced in 2012, showed a similar pattern, with an overall drop of 14%, but slight rise in provision in 2012. There was a slightly bigger fall for STEM and arts and humanities courses, compared with social science courses.
- There was a decline of almost one quarter in the number of principal subjects provided in Wales between 2006 and 2012, with the falls slightly sharper in social sciences (25%) and arts and humanities (25%) than in STEM (22%).
- The fall in principal subjects provided in Scotland, of 8% overall between 2006 and 2012, was around half the rate of decrease in England, and three times less than in Wales.
- Northern Ireland, like Scotland, showed only a relatively small decline in the provision of principal subjects.
- There was wide variety in the reduction of provision of principal subjects in the regions of England. Although all regions had an overall decrease, the range was relatively small (less than 10% reduction in the North East, and Yorks & Humber) to significant, with nearly 30% in Eastern region, and nearly one quarter in the West Midlands.
- In terms of the balance of provision, in 2012 around 44% of principal subjects provided in England are in the STEM group, while one quarter are social sciences, and just over 30% are arts and humanities. The pattern broken down by English region is fairly similar. The other countries of the UK have a greater proportion of STEM provision than England, with 47% of principal subjects being in the STEM group in Wales, 51% in Northern Ireland and 52% in Scotland.
- In the sample of STEM principal subjects provided in England, some single subject provision was cut between 2006 and 2012, particularly in biology, physical geographical sciences and computer science.
- In the sample of social studies principal subjects provided in England, there was some reduction in provision between 2006 and 2012 in some subjects, particularly human and social geography, and sociology.
- In the sample of arts and humanities principal subjects provided in England, there was a reduction in the number of institutions providing some single subject courses, particularly French studies, German studies, and history by topic. Some of these subjects were not provided in some English regions in 2012, with Eastern England and South West England particularly affected by non-provision of single subjects.
- The report also features commentary from four leading academics:



**Sir Richard Roberts:** chief scientific officer at the New England Biolabs and Nobel Laureate for Medicine or Physiology

**James Ladyman:** professor of philosophy and head of the department of philosophy at the University of Bristol

**Donald Braben:** honorary professor in life sciences at University College London (UCL)

**Philip Schofield:** professor of the history of legal and political thought and director of the Bentham Project at University College London (UCL).

- UCU general secretary, Sally Hunt, said: ‘Although students in England are expected to pay up to £9,000 a year to study, there is much less choice for them. We fear that shifting the burden of funding from the state to the student means nervous universities will look to axe even more courses that they worry won’t make a profit.’

‘However, we simply cannot have areas of the country where local students do not have access to the courses they want to study. The increasing cost of university means many students will consider studying closer to home. How have we allowed a situation to develop where potential bright students cannot realise their full potential because they cannot afford to, or are unable to, move to another part of the country?’

## Introduction

### Degree courses provision between 2006 and 2012

The aim of this report is to investigate the provision of full-time undergraduate degree courses in the UK, and in particular a sample of principal, or single subject, degree courses in the UK between 2006 and 2012 to see if there was any marked change in provision following widespread public funding cuts. The report provides an overview of course provision in the UK, and then focuses on the provision of a sample of principal degree courses in the base year, 2006 – the earliest year for which Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) data were available – and in 2010, 2011 and 2012. The sample of

subjects is from the STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics); social studies; and arts and humanities subject groupings. Data on provision of these subjects was provided by UCAS; further analysis was by University and College Union.

Clinical subjects, subjects allied to medicine, and education in England were not investigated in the principal subject sample because provision is regulated to a lesser or greater extent. The unit of measurement is the UCAS principal subject, which includes single honours degree courses, as well as Foundation degrees and Higher National Diploma/Certificate courses.

## Overview

### All full-time undergraduate courses: UK

There has been a sharp reduction in the number of full-time undergraduate degree courses provided in the UK. The total numbers of full-time undergraduate courses in the UK offered via UCAS are shown in the table below, which shows that between 2006 and 2012, the number of these courses decreased by -27%. While the reduction has been sharpest in England (-31%) and Northern Ireland (-24%), it is much lower in Wales (-11%) and Scotland (-3%). While tuition fees for full-time undergraduates from the UK at HEIs in England will be up to £9,000 a year in 2012-13, Northern Ireland-domiciled students studying in Northern Ireland will only have to pay £3,465, Welsh-domiciled undergraduates studying throughout the UK will only have to pay £3,465, and Scottish-domiciled undergraduates studying in Scotland will not have to pay any fees. So England, the country with the highest rates of tuition fees, is facing the biggest reduction in the number of undergraduate courses, and the country with the most benign fee regime – Scotland – has much the lowest level of course cutting.

Nevertheless, within the regions England there is a wide range in the extent of course cutting. Nearly half (-47%) of undergraduate courses are being cut in the South West, but only -1% of courses are being cut in the East Midlands.



## PROVISION OF FULL-TIME UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE COURSES, UK

	2006	2010	2011	2012	Change: 2006 to 2012
England	59,068	51,099	45,230	41,060	-30.5%
- North East	2,809	2,774	2,630	2,463	-12.3%
- North West	10,953	8,427	7,406	6,587	-39.9%
- Greater London	10,762	8,826	7,821	7,222	-32.9%
- Eastern	4,053	3,035	2,635	2,397	-40.9%
- East Midlands	4,505	5,533	5,082	4,442	-1.4%
- West Midlands	6,778	6,444	5,011	4,570	-32.6%
- South East	9,367	8,027	7,391	6,562	-29.9%
- South West	5,585	3,656	3,248	2,956	-47.1%
- Yorkshire & Humberside	4,256	4,377	4,006	3,861	-9.3%
Wales	4,673	4,765	4,540	4,184	-10.5%
Scotland	5,143	5,553	5,108	4,981	-3.1%
Northern Ireland	1,168	1,042	1,016	891	-23.7%
UK	70,052	62,459	55,894	51,116	-27.0%

Source: UCAS; % calculation by UCU

**All principal subjects: UK**

In 2006, UK higher education institutions and further education colleges provided 7,002 principal subject degree courses, across 141 subjects from A100 Pre-Clinical Medicine, to X900 Others in Education. This number fell to 6,182 courses in 2010, a reduction of 11.7%, then to 5,968 in 2011, before rising slightly to 6,024 in 2012. In all, between 2006 and 2012, there was a 14.0% reduction in provision of these single subject degree courses. While single subject STEM degree courses fell by 14.6%, there were slightly lower reductions in social sciences (12.8%) and arts & humanities (14.0%). Although student numbers continued to rise through this period, the prospect and implementation of public spending cuts from the financial crisis of 2008 onwards, will have had a significant impact on single subject course provision, as HEIs and further education colleges providing higher education sought to reduce costs.

## PROVISION OF FULL-TIME UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE COURSES, UK

UK	2006	2010	2011	2012	Change: 2006 to 2012
STEM	3,194	2,796	2,694	2,729	-14.6%
Social science	1,661	1,460	1,417	1,448	-12.8%
Arts & humanities	2,147	1,926	1,857	1,847	-14.0%
Total	7,002	6,182	5,968	6,024	-14.0%

Source: UCAS; % calculation by UCU

**All principal subjects: England**

Over the period 2006 to 2012 a very similar pattern of single subject (or principal subject) degree provision was seen in England, with an overall 14.0% drop, but with provision picking up slightly between 2011 and 2012. There was a slightly bigger fall for STEM and arts and humanities courses, compared with social science courses.



## PROVISION OF PRINCIPAL SUBJECT DEGREE COURSES IN ENGLAND

England	2006	2010	2011	2012	Change: 2006 to 2012
STEM	2,548	2,173	2,126	2,172	-14.8%
Social science	1,368	1,184	1,169	1,203	-12.1%
Arts & humanities	1,798	1,570	1,526	1,541	-14.3%
Total	5,714	4,927	4,821	4,916	-14.0%

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)  
Source: UCAS; % calculation by UCU

### All principal subjects: Wales

There was a decline of almost one quarter in the number of principal subjects provided in Wales between 2006 and 2012, with the falls slightly sharper in social sciences (25%) and arts and humanities (25%) than in STEM (22%). There was a particularly sharp fall in the total number of principal subjects provided between 2010 and 2011, with a reduction of nearly 60.

## PROVISION OF PRINCIPAL SUBJECT DEGREE COURSES IN WALES

Wales	2006	2010	2011	2012	Change: 2006 to 2012
STEM	239	223	194	187	-21.8%
Social science	126	108	94	94	-25.4%
Arts & humanities	154	152	136	115	-25.3%
Total	519	483	424	396	-23.7%

STEM = science, technology, engineering and mathematics  
Source: UCAS; % calculation by UCU

### All principal subjects: Scotland

The fall in principal subjects provided in Scotland, of 8% overall between 2006 and 2012, was around half the rate of decrease in England, and more than three times less than in Wales. While STEM and social science subjects were reduced by 9% each, arts and humanities subjects only fell by 2%.

## PROVISION OF PRINCIPAL SUBJECT DEGREE COURSES IN SCOTLAND

Scotland	2006	2010	2011	2012	Change: 2006 to 2012
STEM	346	342	317	314	-9.2%
Social science	139	143	129	126	-9.4%
Arts & humanities	165	175	166	161	-2.4%
Total	650	660	612	601	-7.5%

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)  
Source: UCAS; % calculation by UCU



### All principal subjects: Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland, like Scotland, showed only a relatively small decline in the provision of principal subjects. This may be linked to the small number of HE institutions in Northern Ireland, and a sense that, because of the greater separation of the province from the rest of the UK, its HEIs have an obligation to maintain a breadth in provision for home students.

### PROVISION OF PRINCIPAL SUBJECT DEGREE COURSES IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Northern Ireland	2006	2010	2011	2012	Change: 2006 to 2012
STEM	61	58	57	56	-8.2%
Social science	28	25	25	25	-10.7%
Arts & humanities	30	29	29	30	0.0%
Total	119	112	111	111	-6.7%

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)  
Source: UCAS; % calculation by UCU

### All principal subjects: English regions

There was wide variety in the reduction of provision of principal subjects in the regions of England. Although all regions had an overall reduction, the range was relatively small (less than 10% in the North East, and Yorks & Humber) to significant, with nearly 30% in Eastern region, and nearly one quarter in the West Midlands. There was a considerable range in the extent to which subject groups were affected, with STEM falling by 25% in Eastern and 26% in West Midlands, compared with less than 10% in North East and Yorks & Humber; social science provision only fell by 1% in London, but by 26% in Eastern and 22% in West Midlands; arts and humanities provision fell by more than one third in Eastern, but only 4% in North East, South East, and Yorks & Humber.

### PROVISION OF PRINCIPAL SUBJECT DEGREE COURSES IN ENGLISH REGIONS

Principal subject degree course provision	2006	2010	2011	2012	Change 2006 to 2012
<b>East Midlands</b>					
STEM	218	199	193	192	-11.9%
Social science	122	101	101	103	-15.6%
Arts & humanities	145	138	124	124	-14.5%
Total	485	438	418	419	-13.6%
<b>Eastern</b>					
STEM	203	144	144	153	-24.6%
Social science	119	85	84	88	-26.1%
Arts & humanities	188	120	118	119	-36.7%
Total	510	349	346	360	-29.4%



Principal subject degree course provision	2006	2010	2011	2012	Change 2006 to 2012
<b>London</b>					
STEM	395	353	353	351	-11.1%
Social science	229	221	222	226	-1.3%
Arts & humanities	305	270	262	253	-17.0%
Total	929	844	837	830	-10.7%
<b>North East</b>					
STEM	135	124	125	122	-9.6%
Social science	76	69	70	69	-9.2%
Arts & humanities	82	77	83	79	-3.7%
Total	293	270	278	270	-7.8%
<b>North West</b>					
STEM	397	339	333	346	-12.8%
Social science	206	186	173	176	-14.6%
Arts & humanities	268	227	230	234	-12.7%
Total	871	752	736	756	-13.2%
<b>South East</b>					
STEM	342	287	276	301	-12.0%
Social science	176	139	138	150	-14.8%
Arts & humanities	242	215	211	233	-3.7%
Total	760	641	625	684	-10.0%
<b>South West</b>					
STEM	267	219	219	221	-17.2%
Social science	125	103	109	120	-4.0%
Arts & humanities	185	166	157	159	-14.1%
Total	577	488	485	500	-13.3%
<b>West Midlands</b>					
STEM	294	245	222	218	-25.9%
Social science	151	134	124	118	-21.9%
Arts & humanities	175	153	141	141	-19.4%
Total	620	532	487	477	-23.1%
<b>Yorks &amp; The Humber</b>					
STEM	297	263	261	268	-9.8%
Social science	164	146	147	153	-6.7%
Arts & humanities	208	204	200	199	-4.3%
Total	669	613	608	620	-7.3%

STEM = science, technology, engineering and mathematics  
Source: UCAS; % calculation by UCU





### Balance of provision

In general terms, in 2012 around 44% of principal subjects provided in England are in the STEM group, while one quarter are social sciences, and just over 30% are arts and humanities. The pattern broken down by English regions is fairly similar. The other countries of the UK have a greater proportion of STEM provision than England, with 47% of principal subjects being in the STEM group in Wales, 51% in Northern Ireland and 52% in Scotland. These three countries have proportionately less provision in social science principal subjects. In the English regions, provision in 2012 was relatively similar, with small variations; for example, STEM subjects were 46% of provision in East Midlands, West Midlands and North West, but 42% in London. Over the period 2006 to 2012, the pattern of principal subject provision was fairly stable, with perhaps the largest changes in the Eastern region of England, with an increase in STEM from 40% to 43%, and a decrease in arts and humanities from 37% to 33%.

### THE BALANCE OF PRINCIPAL SUBJECT PROVISION IN THE UK

Principal subject degree course: balance of provision	2006	2010	2011	2012
<b>East Midlands</b>				
STEM	44.9%	45.4%	46.2%	45.8%
Social science	25.2%	23.1%	24.2%	24.6%
Arts & humanities	29.9%	31.5%	29.7%	29.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Eastern</b>				
STEM	39.8%	41.3%	41.6%	42.5%
Social science	23.3%	24.4%	24.3%	24.4%
Arts & humanities	36.9%	34.4%	34.1%	33.1%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>London</b>				
STEM	42.5%	41.8%	42.2%	42.3%
Social science	24.7%	26.2%	26.5%	27.2%
Arts & humanities	32.8%	32.0%	31.3%	30.5%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>North East</b>				
STEM	46.1%	45.9%	45.0%	45.2%
Social science	25.9%	25.6%	25.2%	25.6%
Arts & humanities	28.0%	28.5%	29.9%	29.3%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>North West</b>				
STEM	45.6%	45.1%	45.2%	45.8%
Social science	23.7%	24.7%	23.5%	23.3%
Arts & humanities	30.8%	30.2%	31.3%	31.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%



Principal subject degree course: balance of provision	2006	2010	2011	2012
<b>South East</b>				
STEM	45.0%	44.8%	44.2%	44.0%
Social science	23.2%	21.7%	22.1%	21.9%
Arts & humanities	31.8%	33.5%	33.8%	34.1%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>South West</b>				
STEM	46.3%	44.9%	45.2%	44.2%
Social science	21.7%	21.1%	22.5%	24.0%
Arts & humanities	32.1%	34.0%	32.4%	31.8%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>West Midlands</b>				
STEM	47.4%	46.1%	45.6%	45.7%
Social science	24.4%	25.2%	25.5%	24.7%
Arts & humanities	28.2%	28.8%	29.0%	29.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Yorks &amp; The Humber</b>				
STEM	44.4%	42.9%	42.9%	43.2%
Social science	24.5%	23.8%	24.2%	24.7%
Arts & humanities	31.1%	33.3%	32.9%	32.1%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>England</b>				
STEM	44.6%	44.1%	44.1%	44.2%
Social science	23.9%	24.0%	24.2%	24.5%
Arts & humanities	31.5%	31.9%	31.7%	31.3%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Wales</b>				
STEM	46.1%	46.2%	45.8%	47.2%
Social science	24.3%	22.4%	22.2%	23.7%
Arts & humanities	29.7%	31.5%	32.1%	29.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Scotland</b>				
STEM	53.2%	51.8%	51.8%	52.2%
Social science	21.4%	21.7%	21.1%	21.0%
Arts & humanities	25.4%	26.5%	27.1%	26.8%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%



Principal subject degree course: balance of provision	2006	2010	2011	2012
<b>Northern Ireland</b>				
STEM	51.3%	51.8%	51.4%	50.5%
Social science	23.5%	22.3%	22.5%	22.5%
Arts & humanities	25.2%	25.9%	26.1%	27.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>UK</b>				
STEM	45.6%	45.2%	45.1%	45.3%
Social science	23.7%	23.6%	23.7%	24.0%
Arts & humanities	30.7%	31.2%	31.1%	30.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

STEM = science, technology, engineering and mathematics  
Source: UCAS; % calculation by UCU

## Principal subject sample: data analysis

### Summary

#### STEM

In the sample studied, some principal or single subject provision was cut between 2006 and 2012, particularly in biology, physical geographical sciences and computer science.

#### SOCIAL SCIENCES

In the sample studied, there was some reduction in provision between 2006 and 2012 in some subjects in England, particularly human and social geography and sociology.

#### ARTS AND HUMANITIES

In the sample studied, there was a reduction in the number of institutions providing some single subject courses in England, particularly French studies, German studies and history by topic. Some of these subjects were not provided in some English regions in 2012, with Eastern and South West England particularly affected by non-provision of single subjects.



## **STEM subjects**

### **Biology**

C100 Biology	2006	2010	2011	2012
East Midlands	5	6	7	7
Eastern	5	4	4	5
London	14	8	8	7
North East	4	4	4	4
North West	12	11	11	12
Northern Ireland	2	2	2	2
Scotland	14	11	10	10
South East	11	9	9	10
South West	10	9	10	10
Wales	6	5	5	5
West Midlands	9	9	8	8
Yorks & The Humber	7	7	8	8
Total	99	85	86	88
England	77	67	69	71

### **Chemistry**

F100 Chemistry	2006	2010	2011	2012
East Midlands	5	4	5	5
Eastern	2	1	1	1
London	8	7	7	7
North East	4	5	6	6
North West	8	6	7	8
Northern Ireland	1	1	1	1
Scotland	8	8	8	8
South East	8	6	6	6
South West	3	3	3	3
Wales	3	3	3	3
West Midlands	6	4	4	4
Yorks & The Humber	6	6	7	7
Total	62	54	58	59
England	50	42	46	47

### **Physics**

F300 Physics	2006	2010	2011	2012
East Midlands	4	4	4	5
Eastern	1	1	1	1

## *Degree course provision in the UK 2006-2012*

London	5	5	5	4
North East	1	1	2	2
North West	5	5	5	6
Northern Ireland	1	1	1	1
Scotland	8	8	8	8
South East	6	6	6	7
South West	3	3	3	3
Wales	3	3	3	3
West Midlands	3	4	3	3
Yorks & The Humber	4	4	4	4
Total	44	45	45	47
England	32	33	33	35

## **Physical geographical sciences**

F800 Physical geographical sciences	2006	2010	2011	2012
East Midlands	6	6	6	6
Eastern	2	1	2	2
London	9	8	8	8
North East	3	3	3	3
North West	12	9	9	9
Northern Ireland	2	2	2	2
Scotland	9	7	6	6
South East	8	7	7	8
South West	8	6	6	6
Wales	10	6	5	5
West Midlands	8	6	5	5
Yorks & The Humber	9	5	5	5
Total	86	66	64	65
England	65	51	51	52

## **Mathematics**

G100 Mathematics	2006	2010	2011	2012
East Midlands	5	5	5	5
Eastern	4	4	4	4
London	10	10	10	9
North East	3	3	3	3
North West	9	9	8	8
Northern Ireland	1	1	1	1
Scotland	11	8	8	8
South East	9	9	9	10
South West	5	5	5	5

*Degree course provision in the UK 2006-2012*

Wales	5	4	4	4
West Midlands	8	8	7	7
Yorks & The Humber	5	4	4	4
Total	75	70	68	68
England	58	57	55	55

### **Computer science**

I100 Computer science	2006	2010	2011	2012
East Midlands	13	11	9	9
Eastern	15	11	11	11
London	30	25	25	22
North East	7	8	8	9
North West	26	22	21	24
Northern Ireland	2	2	2	2
Scotland	15	15	14	14
South East	23	19	17	19
South West	17	14	12	13
Wales	14	15	13	13
West Midlands	22	19	19	17
Yorks & The Humber	23	18	16	16
Total	207	179	167	169
England	176	147	138	140

### **Civil engineering**

H200 Civil engineering	2006	2010	2011	2012
East Midlands	5	6	6	6
Eastern	3	4	3	3
London	7	9	10	10
North East	4	5	5	4
North West	9	9	8	9
Northern Ireland	2	2	2	2
Scotland	11	12	11	11
South East	7	6	6	6
South West	7	6	6	6
Wales	6	6	5	5
West Midlands	5	5	5	4
Yorks & The Humber	5	7	7	7
Total	71	77	74	73
England	52	57	56	55

## **Social sciences**

### **Economics**

L100 Economics	2006	2010	2011	2012
East Midlands	5	5	5	6
Eastern	5	5	5	5
London	15	14	15	14
North East	4	2	2	2
North West	7	5	5	5
Northern Ireland	2	2	2	2
Scotland	13	10	10	8
South East	8	7	7	8
South West	5	5	6	6
Wales	5	5	5	5
West Midlands	4	4	3	3
Yorks & The Humber	7	7	7	7
Total	80	71	72	71
England	60	54	55	56

### **Politics**

L200 Politics	2006	2010	2011	2012
East Midlands	7	7	7	7
Eastern	2	3	3	3
London	16	18	16	15
North East	3	3	3	3
North West	8	9	9	9
Northern Ireland	2	2	2	2
Scotland	6	7	7	7
South East	9	9	9	10
South West	7	4	4	4
Wales	6	4	4	3
West Midlands	7	7	7	6
Yorks & The Humber	8	9	10	10
Total	81	82	81	79
England	67	69	68	67

### **Sociology**

L300 Sociology	2006	2010	2011	2012
East Midlands	8	8	8	8
Eastern	7	6	5	6

### *Degree course provision in the UK 2006-2012*

London	15	14	15	15
North East	5	5	5	5
North West	15	13	11	11
Northern Ireland	2	2	2	2
Scotland	11	10	10	9
South East	10	7	7	7
South West	6	8	8	8
Wales	8	5	3	3
West Midlands	9	9	9	9
Yorks & The Humber	10	9	9	9
Total	106	96	92	92
England	85	79	77	78

### **Human & social geography**

L700 Human & social geography	2006	2010	2011	2012
East Midlands	5	3	3	3
Eastern	2	1	1	1
London	8	7	7	6
North East	4	4	3	3
North West	9	7	7	7
Northern Ireland	1	0	0	0
Scotland	5	6	6	5
South East	6	6	6	7
South West	5	4	3	3
Wales	5	4	4	5
West Midlands	6	5	5	5
Yorks & The Humber	7	5	5	5
Total	63	52	50	50
England	52	42	40	40

### **Law by area**

M100 Law by area	2006	2010	2011	2012
East Midlands	8	8	8	8
Eastern	7	6	6	6
London	20	20	20	21
North East	5	5	5	5
North West	14	13	12	12
Northern Ireland	2	2	2	2
Scotland	12	12	11	10
South East	13	14	14	15
South West	5	6	6	6



*Degree course provision in the UK 2006-2012*

Wales	5	5	6	6
West Midlands	9	9	8	8
Yorks & The Humber	9	11	11	11
Total	109	111	109	110
England	90	92	90	92

**Law by topic**

M200 Law by topic	2006	2010	2011	2012
East Midlands	1	3	4	4
Eastern	2	1	2	2
London	6	5	6	6
North East	1	2	2	2
North West	5	6	5	5
Northern Ireland	0	0	0	0
Scotland	3	3	3	3
South East	3	2	1	1
South West	6	5	5	4
Wales	4	3	1	2
West Midlands	6	2	3	2
Yorks & The Humber	5	4	4	4
Total	42	36	36	35
England	35	30	32	30

## Arts and humanities

### Business studies

N100 Business studies	2006	2010	2011	2012
East Midlands	11	10	9	10
Eastern	14	10	10	10
London	24	25	27	30
North East	7	8	8	8
North West	23	14	14	14
Northern Ireland	1	1	1	1
Scotland	12	14	12	13
South East	20	15	17	17
South West	12	12	13	14
Wales	10	12	11	10
West Midlands	15	13	11	11
Yorks & The Humber	13	15	14	13
Total	162	149	147	151
England	139	122	123	127

### English studies

Q300 English studies	2006	2010	2011	2012
East Midlands	9	9	9	9
Eastern	9	8	8	8
London	16	14	14	14
North East	5	5	5	5
North West	14	14	13	13
Northern Ireland	2	2	2	2
Scotland	6	10	8	9
South East	12	13	13	15
South West	8	9	9	11
Wales	11	10	9	8
West Midlands	8	9	10	10
Yorks & The Humber	12	12	12	12
Total	112	115	112	116
England	93	93	93	97

### Latin studies

Q600 Latin studies	2006	2010	2011	2012
East Midlands	1	1	1	1
Eastern	0	0	0	0

*Degree course provision in the UK 2006-2012*

London	1	1	1	0
North East	0	0	0	0
North West	1	1	1	1
Northern Ireland	0	0	0	0
Scotland	3	3	3	3
South East	1	0	0	1
South West	1	1	0	0
Wales	1	1	2	1
West Midlands	0	0	0	0
Yorks & The Humber	1	1	1	1
Total	10	9	9	8
England	6	5	4	4

### Classical Greek studies

Q700 Classical Greek studies	2006	2010	2011	2012
East Midlands	1	1	1	1
Eastern	0	0	0	0
London	1	1	1	0
North East	0	0	0	0
North West	1	1	1	1
Northern Ireland	0	0	0	0
Scotland	3	3	3	3
South East	0	1	1	2
South West	0	0	0	0
Wales	0	0	0	0
West Midlands	0	0	0	0
Yorks & The Humber	1	1	1	1
Total	7	8	8	8
England	4	5	5	5

### French studies

R100 French studies	2006	2010	2011	2012
East Midlands	2	3	2	2
Eastern	1	0	0	0
London	9	5	5	4
North East*	1	1	1	0
North West	6	6	6	6

\*It has subsequently come to UCU's attention that, contrary to the UCAS data, students at the Universities of Newcastle and Durham have the option to study French and German as single subjects as part of an undergraduate course called Modern Languages. We are happy to set the record straight and confirm that this means single subject study is available in the North East.

*Degree course provision in the UK 2006-2012*

Northern Ireland	2	2	2	2
Scotland	6	6	6	6
South East	5	7	6	6
South West	3	3	2	1
Wales	4	3	3	3
West Midlands	4	4	4	4
Yorks & The Humber	4	3	3	3
Total	47	43	40	37
England	35	32	29	26

## German studies

R200 German studies	2006	2010	2011	2012
East Midlands	1	2	1	1
Eastern	1	0	0	0
London	5	4	4	3
North East*	1	1	1	0
North West	5	5	4	4
Northern Ireland	1	0	0	0
Scotland	5	5	5	5
South East	5	5	5	6
South West	2	2	1	1
Wales	4	4	4	4
West Midlands	3	3	3	3
Yorks & The Humber	3	3	3	3
Total	36	34	31	30
England	26	25	22	21

## Chinese studies

T100 Chinese studies	2006	2010	2011	2012
East Midlands	1	2	1	1
Eastern	0	0	0	0
London	2	2	2	2
North East	0	0	1	1
North West	2	1	1	1
Northern Ireland	0	0	0	0
Scotland	1	1	1	1
South East	1	1	1	1

\*It has subsequently come to UCU's attention that, contrary to the UCAS data, students at the Universities of Newcastle and Durham have the option to study French and German as single subjects as part of an undergraduate course called Modern Languages. We are happy to set the record straight and confirm that this means single subject study is available in the North East.

## *Degree course provision in the UK 2006-2012*

South West	0	0	0	0
Wales	0	1	2	1
West Midlands	0	0	0	0
Yorks & The Humber	2	2	2	2
Total	9	10	11	10
England	8	8	8	8

### **History by period**

V100 History by period	2006	2010	2011	2012
East Midlands	8	8	8	8
Eastern	7	6	6	6
London	17	16	16	15
North East	5	5	5	5
North West	11	10	9	9
Northern Ireland	2	2	2	2
Scotland	5	7	7	6
South East	11	11	11	12
South West	6	6	6	6
Wales	8	9	9	8
West Midlands	6	7	8	8
Yorks & The Humber	9	9	9	9
Total	95	96	96	94
England	80	78	78	78

### **History by area**

V200 History by area	2006	2010	2011	2012
East Midlands	0	0	0	0
Eastern	2	2	1	1
London	2	1	1	1
North East	0	0	1	1
North West	0	1	1	3
Northern Ireland	1	1	1	1
Scotland	7	6	6	5
South East	2	1	1	1
South West	0	0	0	0
Wales	2	2	2	2
West Midlands	2	1	0	0
Yorks & The Humber	0	0	0	0
Total	18	15	14	15
England	8	6	5	7

## History by topic

V300 History by topic	2006	2010	2011	2012
East Midlands	3	2	2	2
Eastern	6	4	3	3
London	10	6	6	7
North East	0	0	1	0
North West	4	3	4	4
Northern Ireland	0	0	0	0
Scotland	4	4	4	4
South East	7	6	6	6
South West	4	3	3	3
Wales	3	2	1	1
West Midlands	3	2	2	2
Yorks & The Humber	3	2	2	2
Total	47	34	34	34
England	40	28	29	29

## Philosophy

V500 Philosophy	2006	2010	2011	2012
East Midlands	1	3	2	1
Eastern	5	5	5	5
London	8	8	7	7
North East	1	1	1	1
North West	7	5	5	5
Northern Ireland	1	1	1	1
Scotland	6	6	6	6
South East	4	5	5	5
South West	3	3	3	3
Wales	4	3	4	3
West Midlands	3	3	4	4
Yorks & The Humber	5	5	5	4
Total	48	48	48	45
England	37	38	37	35

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## Restriction of choice and the impact on UK higher education

**Professor Donald Braben, honorary professor in life sciences at University College London (UCL):**

*I fear that we are going backwards. Universities exist to challenge what we think we know and offer well-argued and coherent alternatives. They are unique in these respects. However, if we limit their scope and oblige them to concentrate on short-term practical problems their advice might be indistinguishable from that provided by many other sources. Meanwhile, the big problems would continue unresolved.*

*All major developments in the last century were unpredicted. Take the internet: were the universities being urged to offer lessons on the internet in the 70s and 80s? Industrial opinion notoriously changes with their balance sheets. If we gear institutions solely to what we perceive students and employers want then that is precisely what we will get. Stagnation will follow. But who was asking for the internet, for example, in the 70s or 80s?*

**Professor Philip Schofield, professor of the history of legal and political thought, and director of the Bentham Project at University College London (UCL):**

*The importance, and dare I say it the usefulness, of a course is not a function of the number of students who are prepared to take it. It is just as imperative at university as it is at primary school that the curriculum is not based simply on allowing students to take those topics that they think they will like. This is to give the less well informed control over the better informed on the very question of what they need to be informed about. If this sounds like nonsense, it is.*

*My own specialism attracts very few students, but deals with a philosopher of outstanding historical importance and contemporary significance. We may not need very many specialist philosophers, but we do need some.*

*Moreover, limiting the number of courses will diminish the student experience by curtailing their choice of subjects. It will adversely affect new and innovative research by taking away the opportunities for researchers to present their latest findings and discussing their latest theories to a receptive and inquisitive audience of students. It will close off sources of knowledge. To sum up, it will make UK universities a much less attractive proposition for both home and international students, who value the depth and diversity of our research and teaching.*

**Professor James Ladyman, professor of philosophy and head of the department of philosophy at the University of Bristol:**

*I am really concerned that under the new funding environment universities will look at concentrating their resources on courses which they believe will deliver the highest financial return. The loss of the block grant has taken away an important measure of financial security that allowed institutions to plan for the future.*

*Provision shouldn't be decided on the basis of short-term popularity contests but when you introduce a market that is what happens.*

*Institutions need to be able to offer a wide breadth of courses, especially with more students likely to study closer to home in the future. It is very easy to undermine capacity quickly but takes years to rebuild these knowledge bases. The intellectual culture of a university is massively enhanced by having students studying a range of disciplines living and studying together.*



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**Sir Richard Roberts, chief scientific officer at the New England Biolabs and Nobel Laureate for Medicine or Physiology:**

*When I was much younger the opportunities for further education after leaving school at 18 or so were fairly limited. A small percentage of kids went on to university while many more went on to some sort of technical training either on the job at a company or to a specialist technical or a teacher training college.*

*A key difference between a university education and these other forms of further education was that universities were not focused on technical training, but rather sought to educate the mind so that a graduate could tackle many different kinds of jobs. This was ensured by providing a very broad range of subjects covering a broad swath from specialist subjects such as chemistry to the wider range exemplified by the humanities.*

*Good students would thus encounter many different disciplines and be challenged to think critically on a wide front. These days it seems the universities are increasingly being treated as technical colleges from which graduates will emerge with some very specialised skills. This is a huge mistake.*

*As the Chief Scientific Officer of a small Biotech company I am not looking for someone to hire who has specialist skills, those they will acquire on the job. Rather I am looking for someone with good problem solving abilities, good critical thinking skills and an enthusiasm to learn more. Such skills are developed by exposure to many different topics during a university education, not by focusing in a single area.*

*The decisions currently being undertaken by many universities and encouraged by the British government seem completely contrary to the idea of providing a broad and balanced education for university students.*

*For instance, I notice that some universities have been closing chemistry departments where one of the key subject areas for understanding biology is taught. This just makes no sense. Others close humanities departments presumably because they are not viewed as profitable. In my mind such decisions need much greater thought than appears to be undertaken at present. Chemistry and the humanities need to be taught if students are to develop critical thinking skills and to acquire a broad knowledge about the world we live in.*

*One of the most outstanding scientists I know was trained in Russia when it was still the USSR. He probably knows English literature better than I do and has a very broad intellectual knowledge in many areas reflecting the educational prerogatives of the Soviet system. That he now studies molecular evolution, but with an incredibly broad perspective is due to his early training in Russia. We are no longer producing scholars of his ilk and are unlikely to do so until we realise and value the importance of broad educational opportunities.*

*One of the hallmarks of a British education in my earlier years was the very breadth of subject matter that could be studied and that our policies are now seeking to restrict. While this may make economic sense it is almost guaranteed to lead to the deterioration of the human mind and its opportunities for innovation.*

*Money should not be the national religion where the high priests are those with more money than anyone else. Money does not bring happiness unless it is used wisely and it is certainly not necessary for happiness. It is high time we considered the health of the mind as being more important than the opulence of the surroundings in which we live.*





## Appendix

### SAMPLE OF PRINCIPAL SUBJECT DEGREE COURSES IN THE STUDY

Subject	JACS principal subject code*	JACS principal subject description	Type of subject
Biology	C100	A broadly based scientific study of living organisms, both animal and vegetable. Includes their structure, functions, evolution, distribution and interrelationships.	STEM
Chemistry	F100	The study of individual atoms and molecules and the way they react together naturally and synthetically.	STEM
Physics	F300	The study of the properties of matter and energy and the relationships between them, making extensive use of mathematical techniques and models. May include mechanics, optics, electricity, magnetism and acoustics. May also include atomic, nuclear, particle and solid state studies.	STEM
Geography	F800	<b>Physical and Terrestrial Geographical and Environmental Sciences:</b> The study of the natural features of the earth's surface and environmental interactions including topology, climate, soil and vegetation.	STEM
Maths	G100	The rigorous analysis of quantities, magnitudes, forms and their relationships, using symbolic logic and language, both in its own right and as applied to other disciplines.	STEM
Computer science	G400	The study of the design and application of electronic computer systems, including computer architectures, software and systems design.	STEM
Civil engineering	H200	The study of the principles of engineering as they apply to the designing and construction of public works, eg buildings, bridges, pipelines etc. Involves the study and application of specialist mathematics.	STEM
Economics	L100	The systematic study of the production, conservation and allocation of resources in conditions of scarcity, together with the organisational frameworks related to these processes.	Social science
Politics	L200	The study of activities related to the institution of the state and the machinery of government or the method through which social conflict is expressed and attempts to resolve conflict are made.	Social science
Sociology	L300	The systematic study of human social institutions and social relationships.	Social science
Geography	L700	<b>Human and Social Geography:</b> The systematic study of the spatial distribution and inter-relationships of people, natural resources, plant and animal life.	Social science
Law	M100	<b>Law by area:</b> The study of the law as defined in particular geographic regions.	Social science



Subject	JACS principal subject code*	JACS principal subject description	Type of subject
Law	M200	<b>Law by topic:</b> The study of particular aspects of law.	Social science
Business studies	N100	The study of organisations and the environment in which they operate.	Social science
English	Q300	The study of the English language and literature originally written in English using the techniques of literary analysis and interpretation. May involve studying the structure of the language, its history, grammar and use.	Arts & humanities
Latin	Q600	<b>Latin studies:</b> The study of Latin, its structure, history, grammar and use. May involve investigation into its relationship with modern day speech and language. May also involve the study of literature texts using the techniques of literary analysis and interpretation.	Arts & humanities
Greek	Q700	<b>Classical Greek studies:</b> The study of Classical Greek, its structure, history, grammar and use. May involve investigation into its relationship with modern day speech and language. May also involve the study of language texts using the techniques of literary analysis and interpretation.	Arts & humanities
French	R100	The study of the French Language, its structure, history, grammar and use. May include study of French culture and literature using the techniques of literary analysis and interpretation.	Arts & humanities
German	R200	The study of the German language, its structure, history, grammar and use. May include study of German culture and literature using the techniques of literary analysis and interpretation.	Arts & humanities
Chinese	T100	The study of Chinese languages, their structure, history, grammar and use. May include study of Chinese culture and literature using the techniques of literary analysis and interpretation.	Arts & humanities
History	V100	<b>History by period:</b> Recording and interpreting past events and social and political developments chronologically.	Arts & humanities
History	V200	<b>History by area:</b> Recording and interpreting past events and social and political developments geographically.	Arts & humanities
History	V300	<b>History by topic:</b> The study of recording, interpreting and comparing developments of particular skills, artefacts, cultures or other areas of interest.	Arts & humanities
Philosophy	V500	The critical examination of fundamental beliefs about meaning, truth and reality, right and wrong.	Arts & humanities

\*[http://www.hesa.ac.uk/dox/jacs/JACS\\_complete.pdf](http://www.hesa.ac.uk/dox/jacs/JACS_complete.pdf)