

End of Cycle report

2014

UCAS Analysis and Research
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Key findings

7,985 APPLIED TO UCAS CONSERVATOIRES IN 2014

7,985 people applied to courses in the UCAS Conservatoires scheme in 2014. This is the highest number of applicants to the scheme ever recorded; just over 500 more than in 2013 (+7 per cent increase). Of all who applied, 5,235 applied to undergraduate courses (around two thirds) and 2,860 applied to postgraduate courses, including just over 100 applicants who applied to both undergraduate and postgraduate courses.

ACCEPTANCES INCREASE BY 10 PER CENT TO 2,020

There were more applicants placed in 2014 than previous years, at both undergraduate and postgraduate courses. In total, there were 2,020 acceptances to the scheme; an increase of 180 (+ 10 per cent) compared to 2013. Of these acceptances, just over half (1,095) were to undergraduate courses and just under half (925) were to postgraduate courses.

THREE QUARTERS OF APPLICANTS TO UNDERGRADUATE COURSES AND OVER HALF OF APPLICANTS TO POSTGRADUATE COURSES ARE FROM THE UK

In 2014, there were 3,965 applicants to undergraduate courses from the UK, with the remaining applicants split approximately equally between the rest of the EU (610) and outside the EU (660).

There were more applicants from the UK to postgraduate courses in 2014 (1,530, 54 per cent of all postgraduate applicants) than from outside the UK. Across the reported period, there were more applicants from outside the EU (870 in 2014) than from the EU (465 in 2014).

MOST APPLICANTS TO UNDERGRADUATE COURSES ARE AGED 19 AND UNDER, AND TO POSTGRADUATE COURSES MOST ARE AGED BETWEEN 22 AND 29 YEARS

In 2014, 65 per cent of all applicants to undergraduate courses were aged 19 and under - 2,300 were aged 18 and 1,150 were aged 19. Generally, there were very few applicants to undergraduate courses aged 25 and over (255 in 2014).

The largest single age group that apply to postgraduate courses are those aged 22 (555 in 2014), and over three quarters of all applicants to postgraduate courses in each year are aged between 22 and 29 years. In 2014, the largest increase in applicants to postgraduate courses was from those aged between 25 and 29 years (810 applicants, + 95, +13 per cent).

MUSIC COURSES HAVE THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF APPLICANTS AND ACCEPTANCES

Music courses remain the largest subject area across the scheme. In 2014, there were 2,740 applicants to undergraduate music courses of which 34 per cent (925) were placed, compared with 38 per cent (860) placed in postgraduate music courses from 2,295 applicants.

Applicants and acceptances to music courses in 2013 and 2014 were greater than earlier years, coinciding with the Royal Academy of Music joining the scheme in 2013.

COURSES TO STUDY DRAMA ATTRACT HIGH NUMBERS OF APPLICANTS RELATIVE TO ACCEPTANCES

2014 was the third application year that dance and drama courses were offered through UCAS Conservatoires.

Drama courses have attracted particularly high numbers of applicants relative to the number of acceptances. There were 1,915 applicants to undergraduate drama courses in 2014, with an acceptance rate of 5 per cent (one acceptance for every 20 applicants) resulting in 105 acceptances. For postgraduate drama courses, 12 per cent (50) of the 410 applicants were placed by the end of the application cycle.

Dance courses remain a very small subject area in 2014, with only 80 applicants placed in undergraduate or postgraduate courses, and around 12 times as many applicants as acceptances.

MORE WOMEN APPLY THROUGH UCAS CONSERVATOIRES THAN MEN

The gap in the numbers of men and women applying to UCAS Conservatoires widened in 2014, with over 60 per cent more women applying than men. Applicant numbers for undergraduate courses were a similar level for men and women, until 2012 when dance and drama courses were offered in the scheme for the first time. In each year reported, there were more women applicants than men to postgraduate courses, and this difference has grown in recent years.

Amongst young people from the UK that were aged 18 years in 2013, women were 1.6 times more likely to have applied to an undergraduate course at least once by the age of 19 than men. This is a change from the pattern seen for the cohort that were 18 in 2009, where young men and women were equally likely to have applied by age 19.

MEN AND WOMEN ENTER UNDERGRADUATE COURSES IN ROUGHLY EQUAL NUMBERS

For undergraduate courses, men and women are accepted for entry in roughly equal numbers. In 2014, 570 women were accepted to undergraduate courses and 520 men were accepted. Men and women from the UK that were aged 18 years in 2013 were equally likely to enter a course through UCAS Conservatoires (nine men in every 10,000, and nine women in every 10,000 in the cohort) by age 19.

In each reported year, there were more women than men accepted to postgraduate courses. In 2014, 510 women were accepted to postgraduate courses and 410 men were accepted; 25 per cent more women than men.

YOUNG PEOPLE FROM MOST DISADVANTAGED BACKGROUNDS IN THE UK MORE LIKELY TO APPLY AND ENTER COMPARED TO FOUR YEARS AGO

Young people living in the most disadvantaged fifth of areas in the UK became more likely to apply to and enter undergraduate courses by the age of 19. The cohort that were 18 in 2013 were 250 per cent more likely to apply for undergraduate courses than the cohort that were 18 in 2009, but were only 40 per cent more likely to enter.

Cohort application and entry rates for young people living in the most advantaged fifth of areas have not increased by as much proportionally, but remain much higher than the rates from the most disadvantaged areas. Young people from the UK that were 18 in 2013 from the most advantaged areas were 4.6 times more likely to apply to undergraduate courses, and 6.2 times more likely to enter by age 19 than those from the most disadvantaged areas. Although still a considerable gap, these differences have reduced from 6.5 times more likely to apply and 7.8 times more likely to enter for the cohort aged 18 in 2009.

OVER HALF OF APPLICANTS TO UNDERGRADUATE COURSES THROUGH UCAS CONSERVATOIRES ALSO APPLIED TO UCAS UNDERGRADUATE

Of the 5,235 applicants to UCAS Conservatoires undergraduate courses, more than half (2,775, 53 per cent) also made an application to higher education through the UCAS Undergraduate scheme. UCAS Conservatoires undergraduate applicants from the UK are more likely to apply through UCAS Undergraduate (62 per cent). More than two thirds (70 per cent) of applicants to undergraduate drama courses through UCAS Conservatoires also make an application through UCAS Undergraduate, compared with 39 per cent of applicants to dance courses, and 46 per cent of applicants to music courses.

APPLYING TO BOTH SCHEMES INCREASES THE CHANCES OF BEING PLACED

The overall acceptance rate of applicants who apply through both schemes was 60 per cent in 2014, comprised of a 47 per cent acceptance rate to the UCAS Undergraduate scheme and a 13 per cent acceptance rate to UCAS Conservatoires. Applicants to both schemes have a higher overall acceptance rate than those who only applied through the UCAS Conservatoires scheme (30 per cent), but were less likely to be placed on a UCAS Conservatoires course.

A FIFTH OF APPLICANTS UNPLACED IN 2013 REAPPLIED THROUGH UCAS CONSERVATOIRES IN 2014

In 2014, 20 per cent of UCAS Conservatoires undergraduate applicants that were unplaced in 2013, in both the UCAS Conservatoires and the UCAS Undergraduate schemes, reapplied to the UCAS Conservatoires scheme. A similar proportion (21 per cent) applied to UCAS Undergraduate courses, and around half of these applied to both schemes. Overall, 30 per cent of unplaced UCAS Conservatoires applicants in 2013 continued to pursue a place in higher education in 2014.

Introduction

UCAS Conservatoires (formerly named CUKAS) is a small admissions scheme which processes applications to music, dance and drama courses at conservatoires in the UK. The scheme handles applications for eight conservatoires, and includes both undergraduate and postgraduate courses.

All eight conservatoires offer music courses, with two offering dance courses and two offering drama courses. The courses are mainly vocational, being performance and production based.

In this report, for the first time, selected characteristics of the applicants who apply through both the UCAS Conservatoires scheme and the UCAS Undergraduate scheme in the same cycle will be considered.

HOW THE SCHEME WORKS

Applicants can make up to six applications to courses available through the UCAS Conservatoires scheme. Applications are considered by conservatoires and a decision is made to either invite applicants to attend an audition, or to reject the application.

Following the audition process, successful applicants are made one of four different offers; a guaranteed unconditional offer, a guaranteed conditional offer, a reserve unconditional offer, or a reserve conditional offer. Guaranteed offers confirm that a place is available on the course, whereas a reserve offer indicates that the conservatoire is not able to make a guaranteed offer, but would like the opportunity to review its offer as the cycle progresses. Unconditional offers indicate that the applicant has met the entry requirements, whereas conditional offers include conditions that need to be met before a place is confirmed. Applications can be withdrawn by applicants at any point in the process.

Once the offers have been made by conservatoires, the applicant then replies to those offers. If an applicant selects a guaranteed offer (either unconditional or conditional) as their first choice, then all other offers must be declined. When the first choice is a reserve choice, the applicant may select another offer as their second choice, with remaining offers declined.

An application becomes an acceptance once it becomes a guaranteed unconditional first choice. Applicants may only hold a confirmed place in one of the UCAS schemes, and it is possible to apply through more than one scheme simultaneously. If a place is confirmed in more than one scheme, the applicant must accept a single offer, and withdraw their applications from the other schemes.

How to read this report

This report is split into four sections. The first provides a summary of key findings. The second gives an analytical overview of selected characteristics for undergraduate applicants. This is followed by an analytical overview of postgraduate applicants to the UCAS Conservatoires scheme. The report concludes with a series of reference tables.

The undergraduate analytical overview section begins with an overview of selected characteristics of the applicants and acceptances to the scheme. This is followed by a consideration of those UCAS Conservatoires applicants who simultaneously apply through the UCAS Undergraduate scheme. Trends in the acceptance rates of different groups of undergraduate applicants are then reported, followed by a look at application and entry rates where the population is taken into account.

The postgraduate analytical overview consists of two main sections, starting with applicants and acceptances. Following this, the acceptance rates for selected characteristics are examined.

An applicant can apply to courses at both undergraduate and postgraduate level in the same UCAS Conservatoires cycle. This means a small number of applicants are counted in both the undergraduate and postgraduate statistics.

Due to the small size of the scheme, changes in the composition of the scheme need to be noted as they can make large differences in the data from year to year, which can lead to difficulties when directly comparing years. In 2011, Leeds College of Music stopped offering undergraduate courses through UCAS Conservatoires, and moved to using the UCAS Undergraduate scheme instead. However, this conservatoire's postgraduate applications continue to be offered through the UCAS Conservatoires scheme. In 2012, there was an addition of new courses in the UCAS Conservatoires scheme, mainly dance and drama. In 2013, the Royal Academy of Music joined the scheme.

Due to a number of changes, in this report some of the statistics relating to earlier years may differ from those previously published. Record of Prior Acceptances (RPAs) have been excluded from the analysis in this report. In 2014, there were 10 acceptances to the scheme through the RPA route. There have also been changes to some of the classifications to bring them in line with UCAS Undergraduate reporting. For instance, applicants domiciled in the Channel Islands have been included in the 'not EU' domicile group in this report, where previously they were reported in the 'UK' domicile group.

Outline of the scheme

APPLICANTS AND ACCEPTANCES INCREASE IN 2014

Figure 1 shows the number of applicants and acceptances in the UCAS Conservatoires scheme over the last five years. There were 7,985 applicants in the 2014 cycle; the highest ever number, and an increase of 505 (+7 per cent) from the 2013 cycle. This continues the recent trend of increasing numbers of applicants, especially since 2012 when dance and drama courses were added to the scheme. Acceptances rose to 2,020 in the 2014 cycle, 180 (+10 per cent) more than in the 2013 cycle, which is also a new high.

CHANGES IN THE COMPOSITION OF THE SCHEME

Figure 2 shows how the number of applications has varied as the range of courses offered in the scheme has changed between cycles.

In 2011, Leeds College of Music stopped offering its undergraduate courses through UCAS Conservatoires, and instead used the UCAS Undergraduate scheme for these courses. This resulted in a small drop in applications between 2010 and 2011.

Then, in 2012, dance and drama courses were introduced to the scheme. This resulted in a large increase in the overall number of applications. However, there was little change in the number of applications for the courses that were not dance and drama.

The addition of a conservatoire in 2013, the Royal Academy of Music (RAM), introduced a further increase in applications.

Over the five years, the number of applications labelled as 'Other' (those that are not applications to Leeds (undergraduate), RAM, or dance and drama) has remained constant.

These changes to the composition of the scheme mean that 2014 was the first year across this reporting period where the courses offered between years were broadly the same as the previous year.

Figure 1 Applicants and acceptances

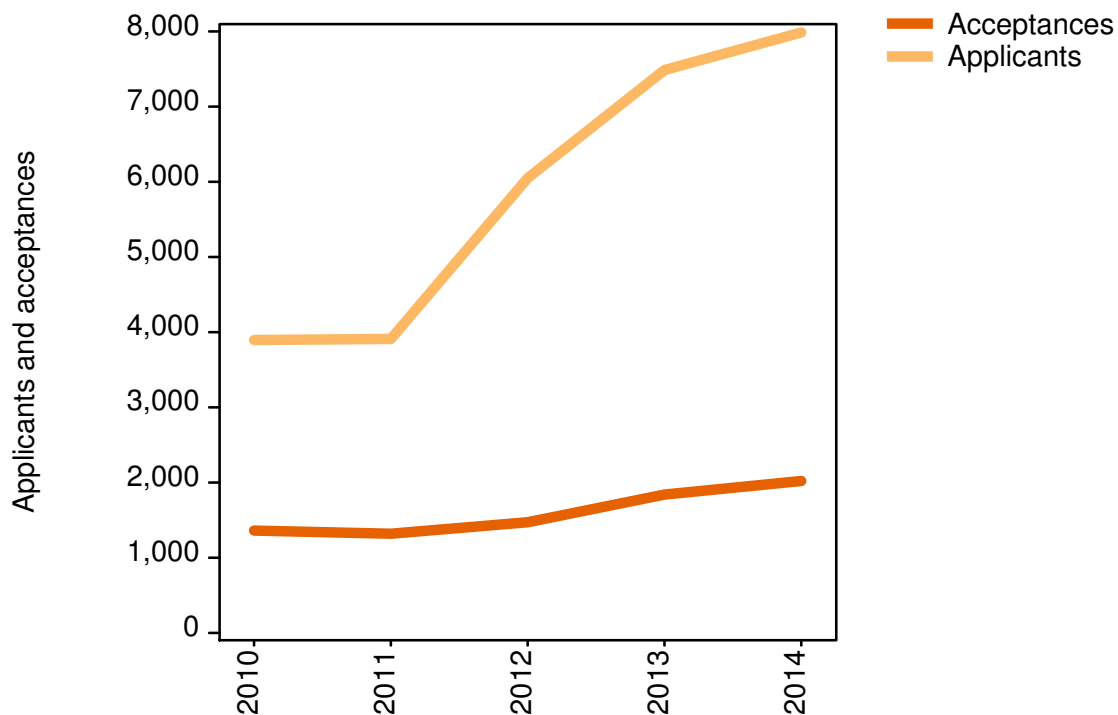
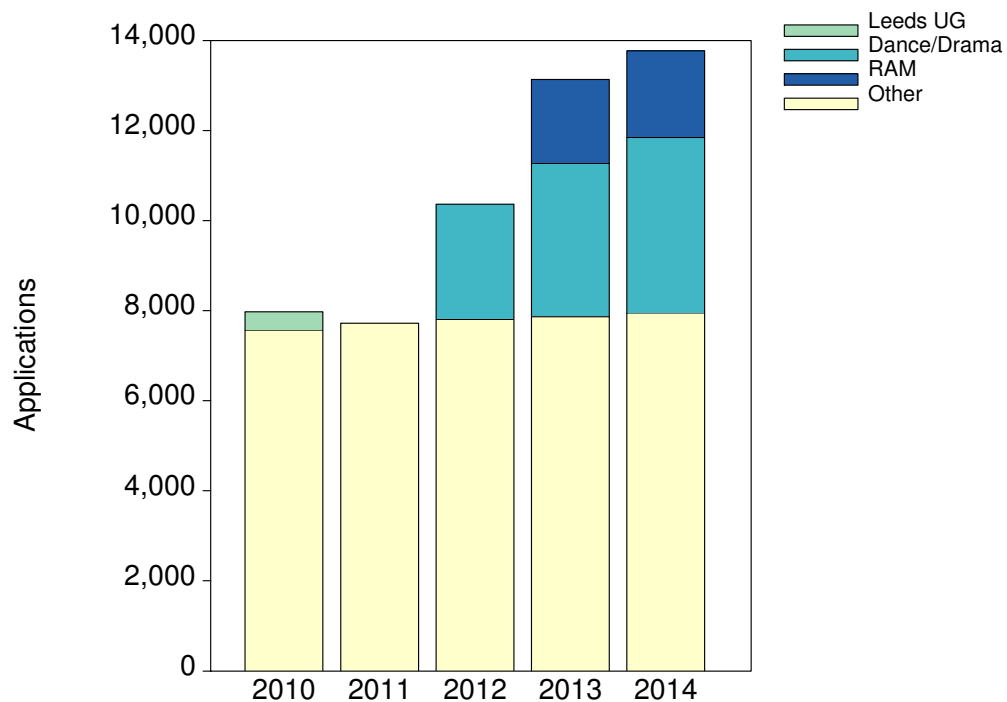


Figure 2 Changes in application numbers



Undergraduate

Applicants and acceptances

There were 5,235 applicants to undergraduate courses in the 2014 UCAS Conservatoires scheme; an increase of 330 (+7 per cent) from 2013. Undergraduate acceptances in 2014 increased by 55 (+5 per cent) to 1,095.

MORE UNDERGRADUATE APPLICANTS FROM ALL DOMICILES IN 2014

In 2014, the largest group of applicants were domiciled in the UK (3,965 applicants, 76 per cent of all undergraduate applicants). This was an increase of 250 (+7 per cent) in the number of applicants from the UK compared to 2013.

There were 610 applicants to undergraduate courses from the EU, which is broadly the same as 2013. The number of applicants from outside the EU increased slightly to 660. Although relatively small applicant groups, the number of applicants from both of these domicile groups have been steadily increasing over the time period shown.

UNDERGRADUATE ACCEPTANCES FROM THE UK HAVE RISEN, BUT HAVE FALLEN FOR OTHER DOMICILES

Figure 4 shows acceptances to undergraduate courses by domicile group. In 2014, there were 855 acceptances from the UK; 60 more than in 2013. UK domiciled applicants make up 78 per cent of undergraduate acceptances in 2014.

Acceptances from outside the UK remained broadly the same as 2013; 105 from the EU and 140 from outside of the EU.

Figure 3 Undergraduate applicants by domicile

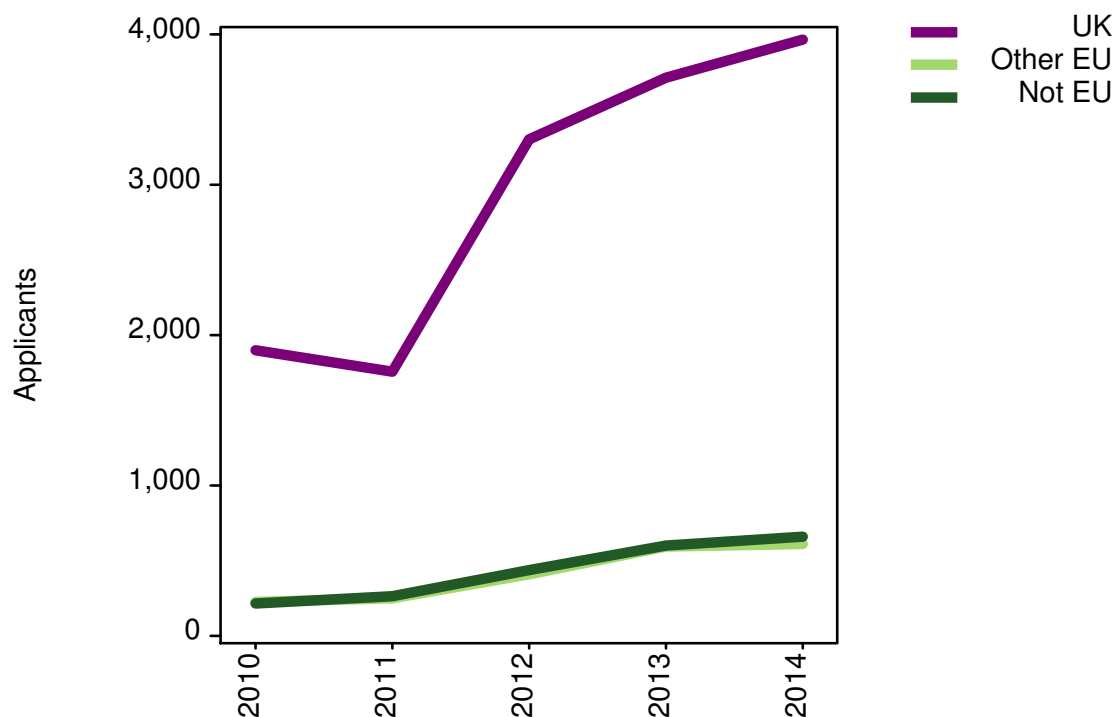
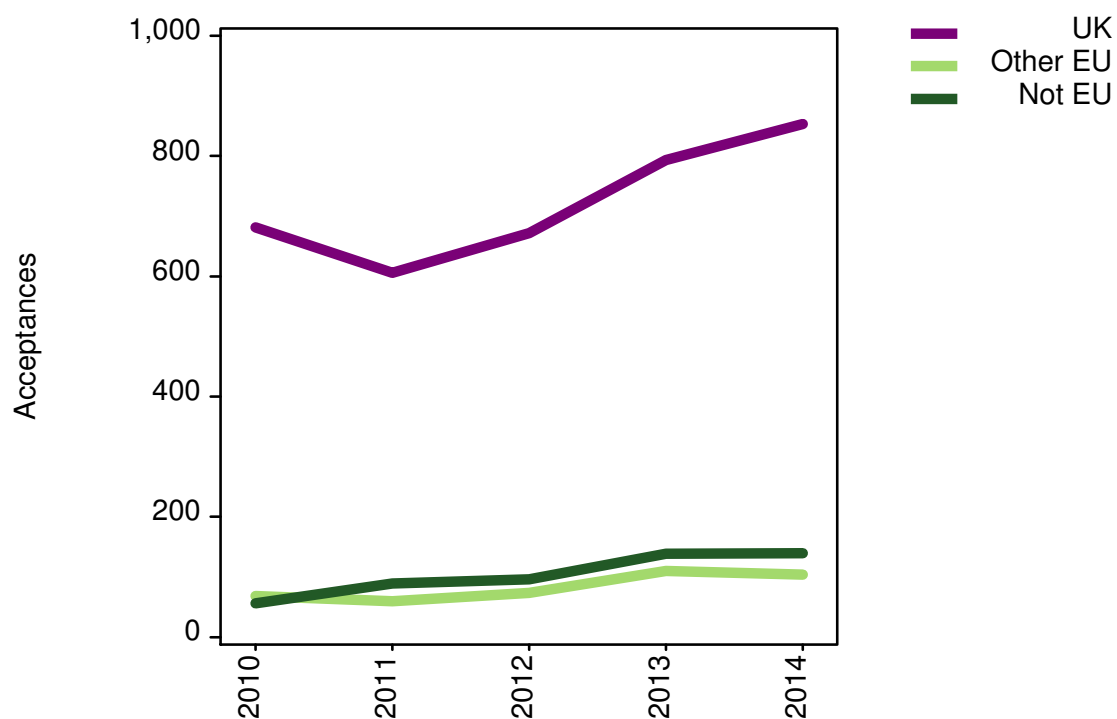


Figure 4 Undergraduate acceptances by domicile



UNDERGRADUATE APPLICANTS INCREASED ACROSS ALL AGE GROUPS TO NEW HIGHS

Around 45 per cent of all applicants to undergraduate courses are 18 years old. In 2014, there were 2,300 18 year old applicants (+175, +8 per cent), and 1,150 applicants aged 19 years, meaning that 65 per cent of all applicants are 19 or under. The second largest group of applicants was the 20 to 24 age group, with 1,405 applicants.

The 25 and over age group was the smallest, with only 5 per cent of 2014 applicants being in this age group. There were 255 applicants aged 25 and over, which is around the same level as 2012.

Since 2012, there have been year on year increases in the number of applicants from each of the younger age groups. The 25 and over age group has not shown the same pattern of increases in each year, and although there is a small increase in applicants from this age group, in 2014 they remain broadly the same as in 2012.

MOST OF THE INCREASE IN ACCEPTANCES OVER THE FIVE YEARS FOR 18 YEAR OLDS

Figure 6 shows that, as with numbers of applicants, there are more acceptances aged 18 years than any other age group. There was a large increase in acceptances from 18 year olds in 2013. In 2014, there were 560 acceptances from 18 year olds; broadly the same as 2013. Over the time period shown, this age group has accounted for most of the increases in acceptances.

Acceptances in 2014 from 19 year olds were also similar to 2013, at 255.

In 2014, there were 235 acceptances from those aged 20 to 24 years; an increase of 35 compared to 2013.

There were only 30 acceptances to undergraduate courses from applicants aged 25 and over in 2014.

Figure 5 Undergraduate applicants by selected age groups

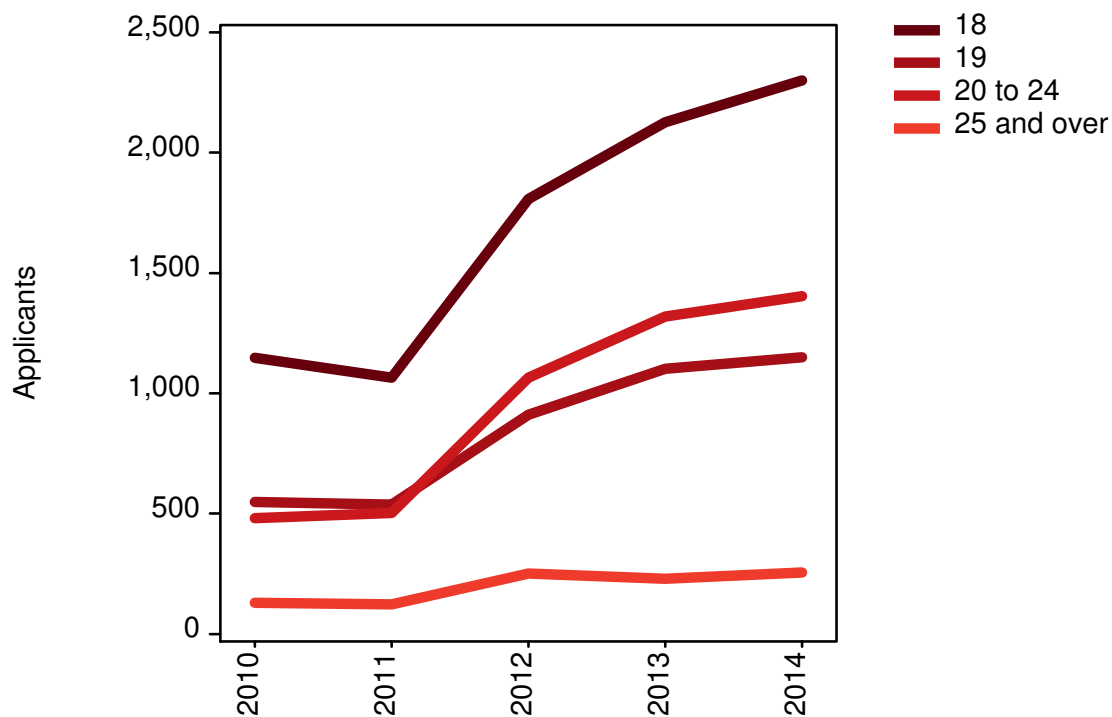
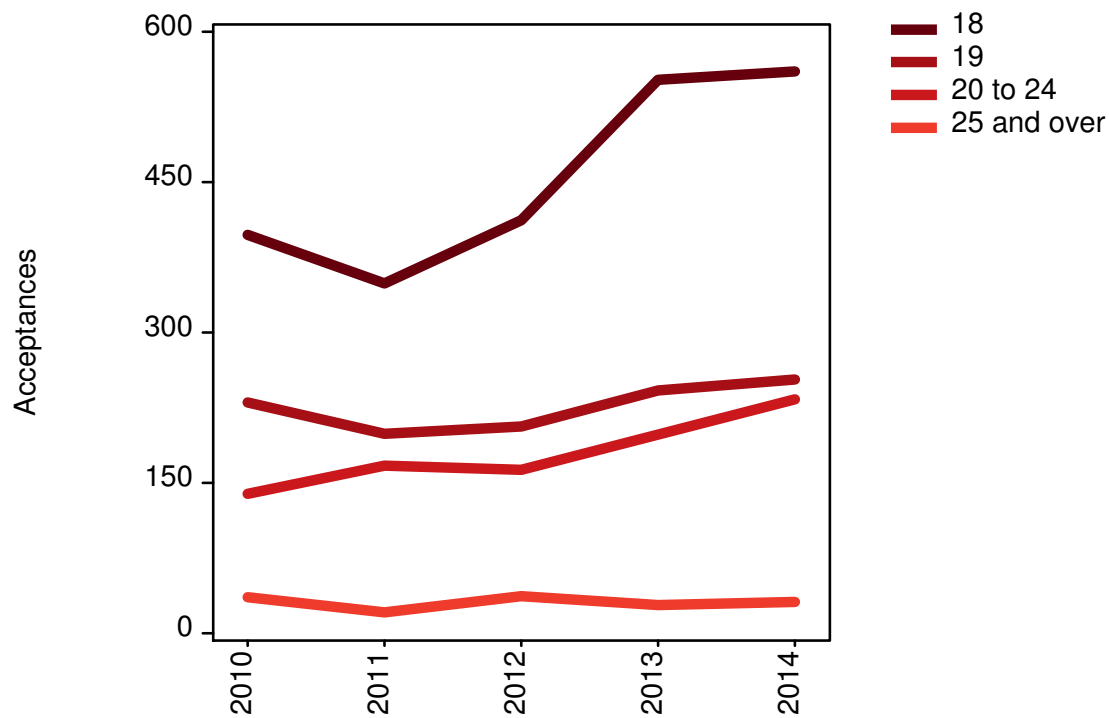


Figure 6 Undergraduate acceptances by selected age groups



SUBJECT GROUPS: DANCE, DRAMA, AND MUSIC

The courses in the UCAS Conservatoires scheme can be split into three subject groups, music, drama, and dance. Dance and drama courses were offered through UCAS Conservatoires from 2012. Applicants can apply to up to six courses, potentially spanning different subject groups. Therefore each applicant may be counted more than once, from 2012 onwards, when calculating applicants by subject group.

For the acceptances, the subject group is the subject of the course where the applicant was accepted. Each accepted applicant will therefore only appear in one of the three subject groups.

Considering applications by the three subject groups enables an assessment of the pattern of applications to music courses over the five years. Two conservatoires offer dance courses (Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance and Royal Conservatoire of Scotland) and two conservatoires offer drama courses (Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama).

APPLICANTS AND ACCEPTANCES INCREASED FOR UNDERGRADUATE MUSIC COURSES IN 2014

Music is the largest subject group in the scheme, representing more than half of all undergraduate applicants (51 per cent) and 84 per cent of all acceptances. In 2014, there was a small increase of 30 applicants to music, with a total of 2,740 applicants to music courses. This followed larger increases in 2012 and 2013 of around 220 per year. Acceptances to music courses increased by 50 in 2014 to 925 (+6 per cent).

THE NUMBER OF DRAMA APPLICANTS CONTINUES TO INCREASE

More than a third of applicants to undergraduate courses apply to study drama. In 2014, there were 1,915 applicants to drama courses; 170 more than 2013 (+10 per cent). There were around the same number of applicants to drama courses in 2013 as 2012.

In each of the three years that drama courses have been offered in the scheme, there have been around 100 accepted applicants at the end of the application cycle.

APPLICANTS TO DANCE COURSES INCREASE, WHILE ACCEPTANCES REMAIN AROUND THE SAME LEVEL

Dance courses have been included in the scheme since 2012. In the first year, there were a very small number of applicants (fewer than 100) and fewer than 20 acceptances. In 2013, there were 610 applicants and 70 acceptances. In 2014, the number of applicants to dance courses increased by 130 to 740, while the number of acceptances fell slightly to 65.

Figure 7 Undergraduate applicants by subject group

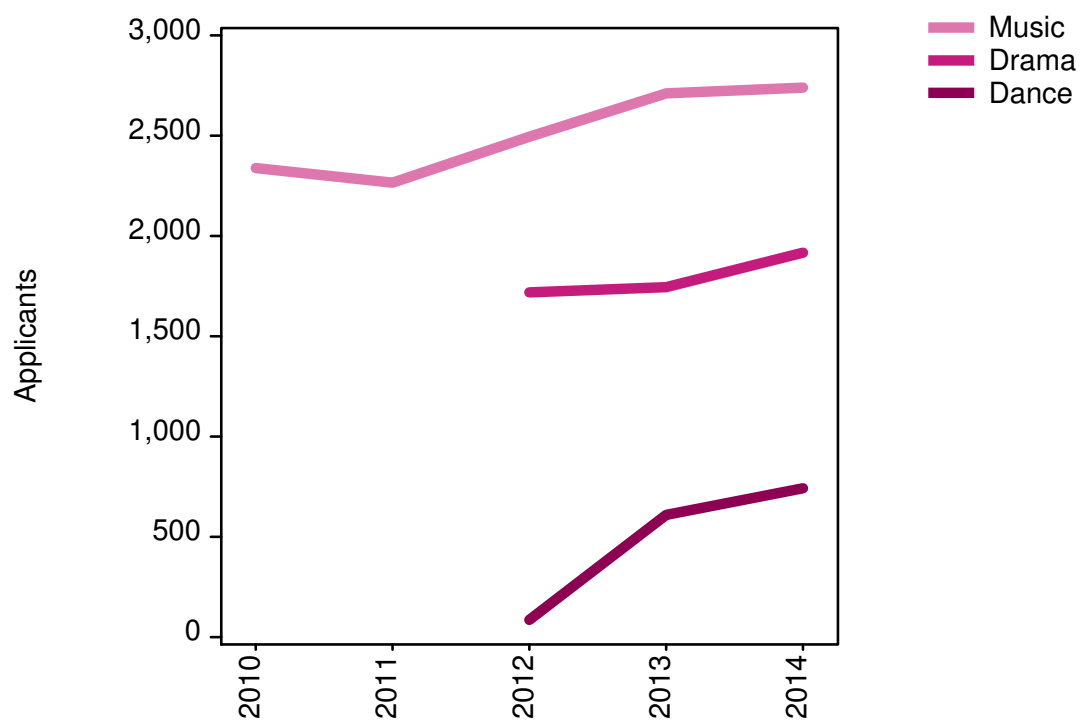
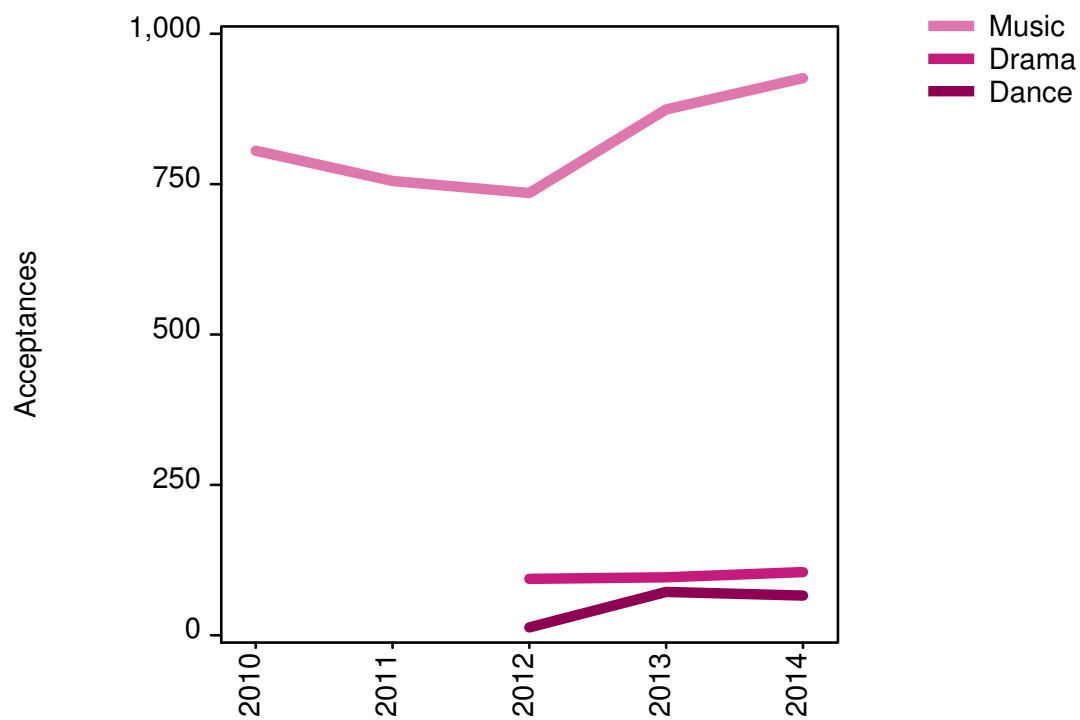


Figure 8 Undergraduate acceptances by subject group



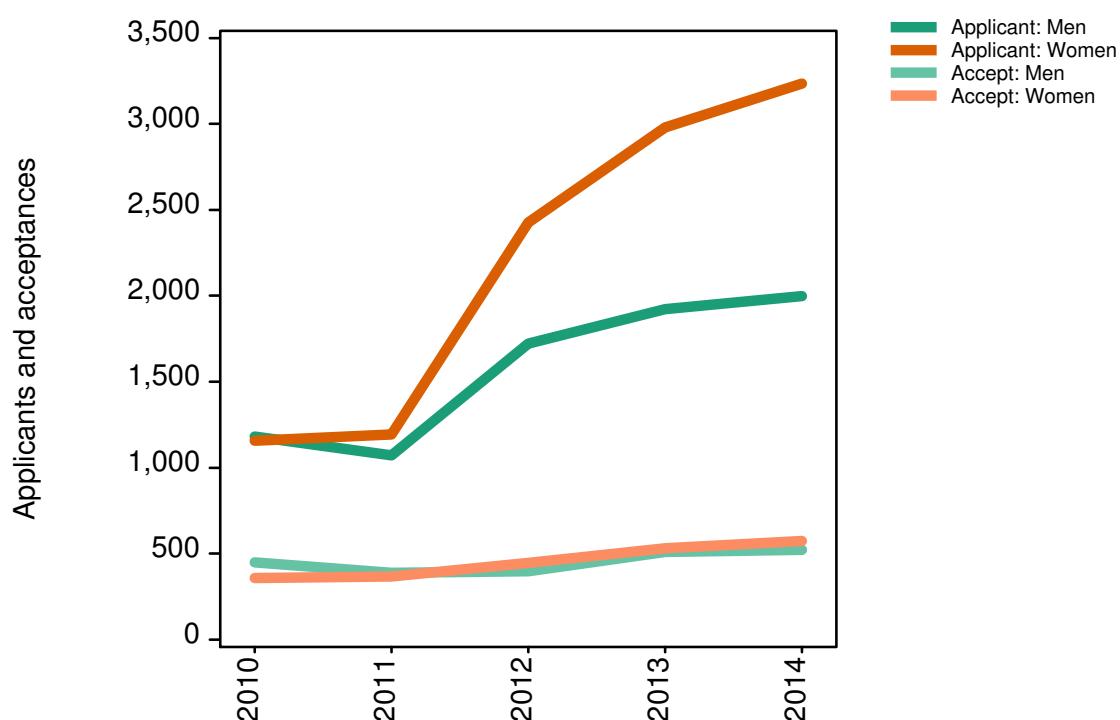
THE GAP BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN APPLYING FOR UNDERGRADUATE COURSES INCREASED

Figure 9 shows that the gap between the number of women and men applying for undergraduate courses widened in 2014. There was a 9 per cent increase in the number of women applying (3,235, +255), compared with a 4 per cent increase in the number of men applying (1,995, +75). This continues the trend over recent years where the proportional increase in the number of women applying has been greater than the proportional increase in the number of men. This has been particularly evident since 2012. In 2014, 60 per cent more women applied to undergraduate courses than men, or for every 10 men that applied for undergraduate courses through UCAS Conservatoires, there were 16 women applicants.

UNDERGRADUATE ACCEPTANCES FOR MEN AND WOMEN BROADLY THE SAME

The number of acceptances to undergraduate courses is broadly similar for men and women. In 2014, there were 525 men and 575 women accepted (Figure 9). The difference between men and women is much larger for undergraduate applicants than it is for undergraduate acceptances.

Figure 9 Undergraduate applicants and acceptances by sex



Applicants who apply through UCAS Conservatoires and UCAS Undergraduate in the same year

Applicants who apply through the UCAS Conservatoires scheme can also, in the same year, make an application through the UCAS Undergraduate scheme. When an applicant is placed in either scheme, they must then withdraw from any offers held in the other scheme. The overwhelming majority of those who apply simultaneously through both schemes apply to undergraduate UCAS Conservatoires courses. There have been fewer than 25 applicants, in any of the reported years, who apply through UCAS and exclusively to postgraduate courses through UCAS Conservatoires. Therefore, throughout this section, only those who apply to an undergraduate UCAS Conservatoires course are considered.

MORE APPLICANTS THAN EVER APPLY SIMULTANEOUSLY THROUGH BOTH SCHEMES

In 2014, there were 2,775 applicants who applied to undergraduate courses in both the UCAS Undergraduate and the UCAS Conservatoires schemes; an increase of 345 compared with 2013. More than half of the applicants to undergraduate UCAS Conservatoires courses also applied through UCAS.

UK DOMICILED APPLICANTS ARE MOST LIKELY TO HAVE APPLIED THROUGH BOTH SCHEMES

Figure 10 shows the proportion of UCAS Conservatoires applicants from each domicile who applied through the UCAS Undergraduate scheme. In 2014, 62 per cent of UCAS Conservatoires applicants who were domiciled in the UK also applied through the UCAS Undergraduate scheme. Across the time period, applicants from the UK are considerably more likely to have applied to the UCAS Undergraduate scheme than those from outside the UK.

For applicants domiciled in the EU, the proportion also applying to the UCAS Undergraduate scheme was 27 per cent, and for outside the EU it was 22 per cent.

Over the five years shown, the proportion of applicants to UCAS Conservatoires applying through both schemes has risen for all domiciles.

THE PROPORTION OF APPLICANTS WHO APPLY THROUGH BOTH SCHEMES DECREASES WITH AGE

The proportion of UCAS Conservatoires applicants who apply through the UCAS Undergraduate scheme is highest for 18 year olds, and decreases steadily for each subsequent older age group. In 2014, 63 per cent of 18 year old applicants to UCAS Conservatoires also apply through UCAS Undergraduate. This proportion falls to 55 per cent for 19 year olds, 43 per cent for the 20-24 year old age group, and 25 per cent for those aged 25 and over. Generally, there has been an increase in this proportion for each age group over the period.

Figure 10 Proportion of UCAS Conservatoires undergraduate applicants also applying through UCAS Undergraduate by domicile

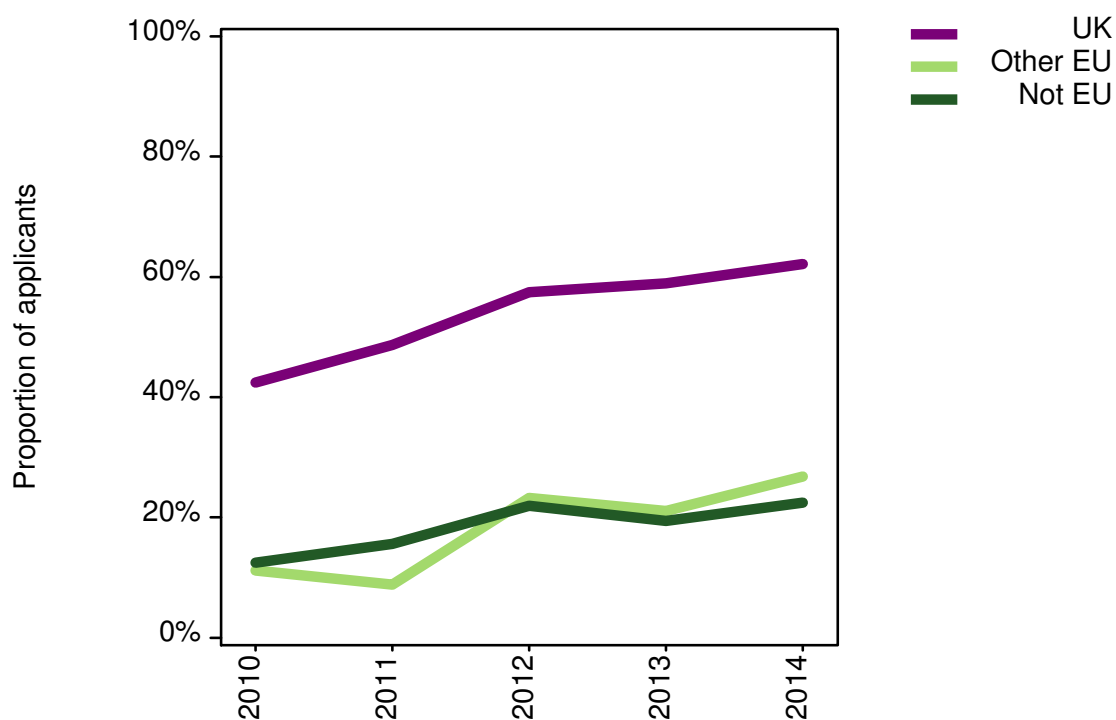
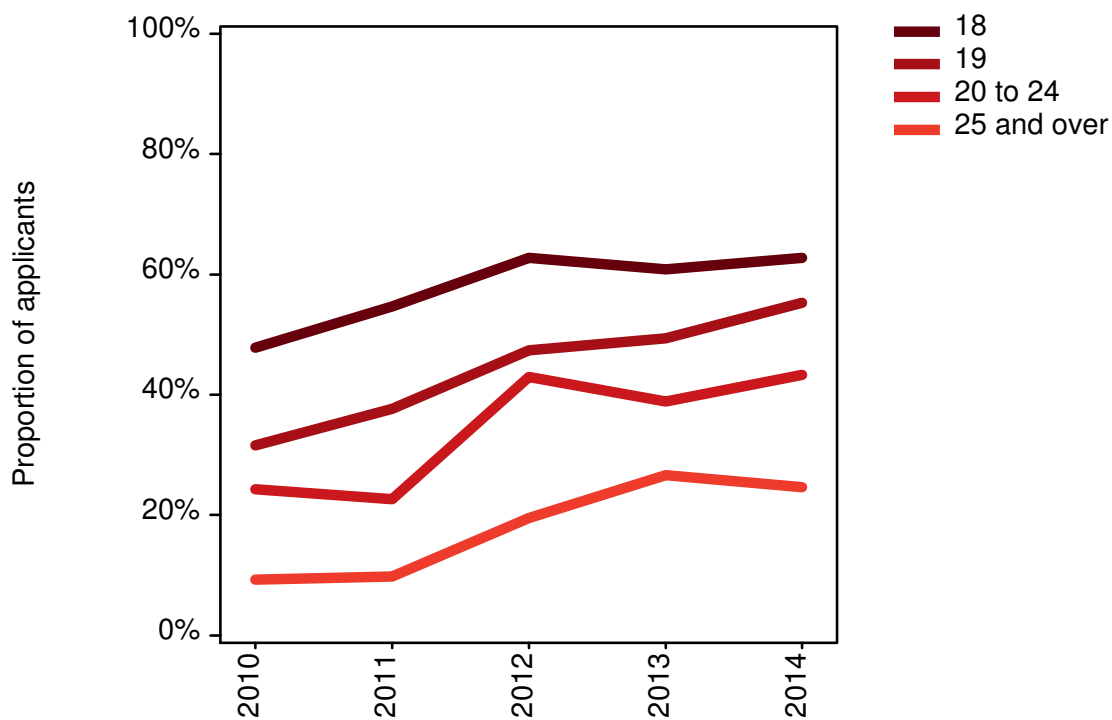


Figure 11 Proportion of UCAS Conservatoires undergraduate applicants also applying through UCAS Undergraduate by age group

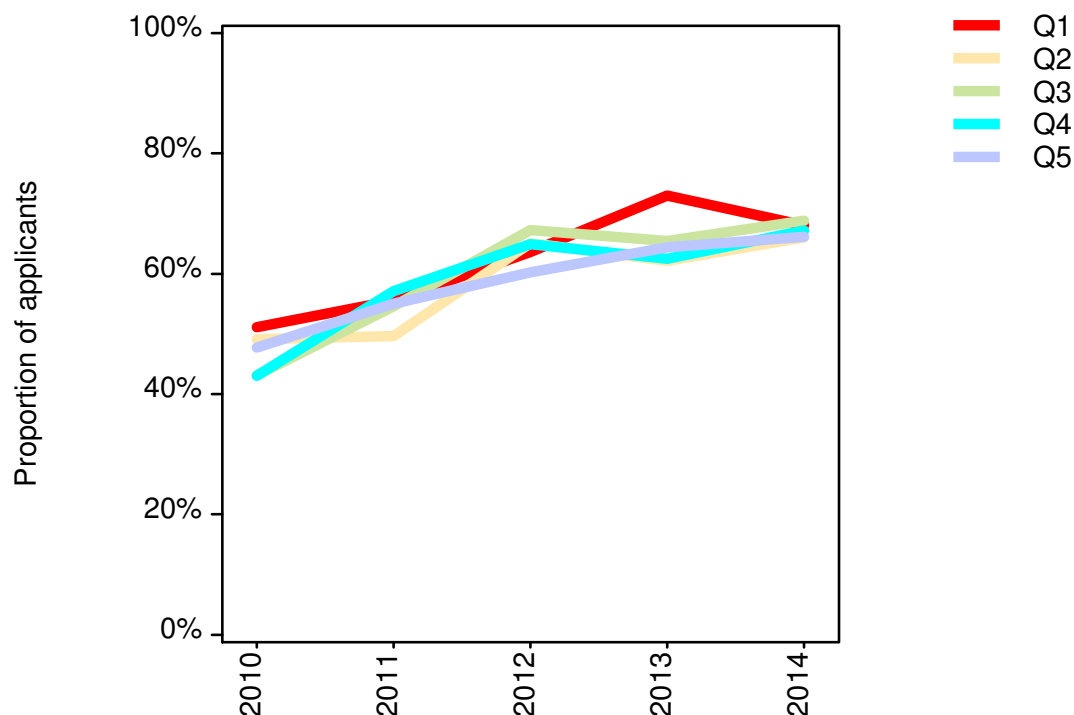


NO DIFFERENCE IN THE PROPORTION OF UCAS CONSERVATOIRES APPLICANTS APPLYING TO UCAS UNDERGRADUATE BY BACKGROUND

The POLAR classification developed by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) classifies small geographical areas across the UK into five groups according to their level of young participation in higher education. Each of these groups represents around a fifth of young people and are ranked from quintile 1 (areas with the lowest young participation rates, considered as the most disadvantaged) to quintile 5 (highest young participation rates, considered most advantaged).

Figure 12 shows the proportion of UCAS Conservatoires applicants who applied to UCAS Undergraduate simultaneously by POLAR2 quintiles. There is very little differentiation by background in this proportion, therefore those from the most disadvantaged backgrounds applying through UCAS Conservatoires are just as likely to also apply through the UCAS Undergraduate scheme as those from the most advantaged backgrounds who apply through UCAS Conservatoires.

Figure 12 Proportion of UCAS Conservatoires applicants also applying through UCAS Undergraduate by POLAR2 quintile

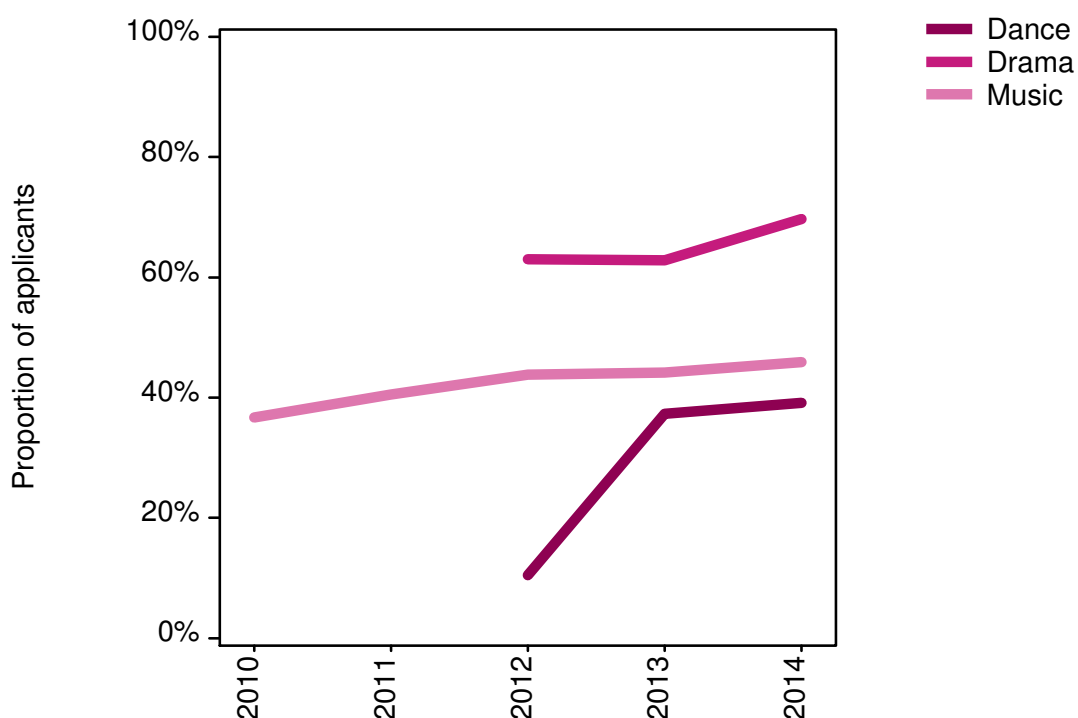


AROUND 70 PER CENT OF UCAS CONSERVATOIRES UNDERGRADUATE DRAMA APPLICANTS ALSO APPLY THROUGH UCAS

Figure 13 shows drama courses had the highest proportion of applicants also applying through the UCAS Undergraduate scheme in 2014, with 70 per cent of the UCAS Conservatoires applicants applying to both schemes. This was an increase from 63 per cent in 2013.

The proportion of applicants to music courses in UCAS Conservatoires applying through both schemes in 2014 was 46 per cent, and for dance was 39 per cent. Both of these subject groups increased by two percentage points between 2013 and 2014.

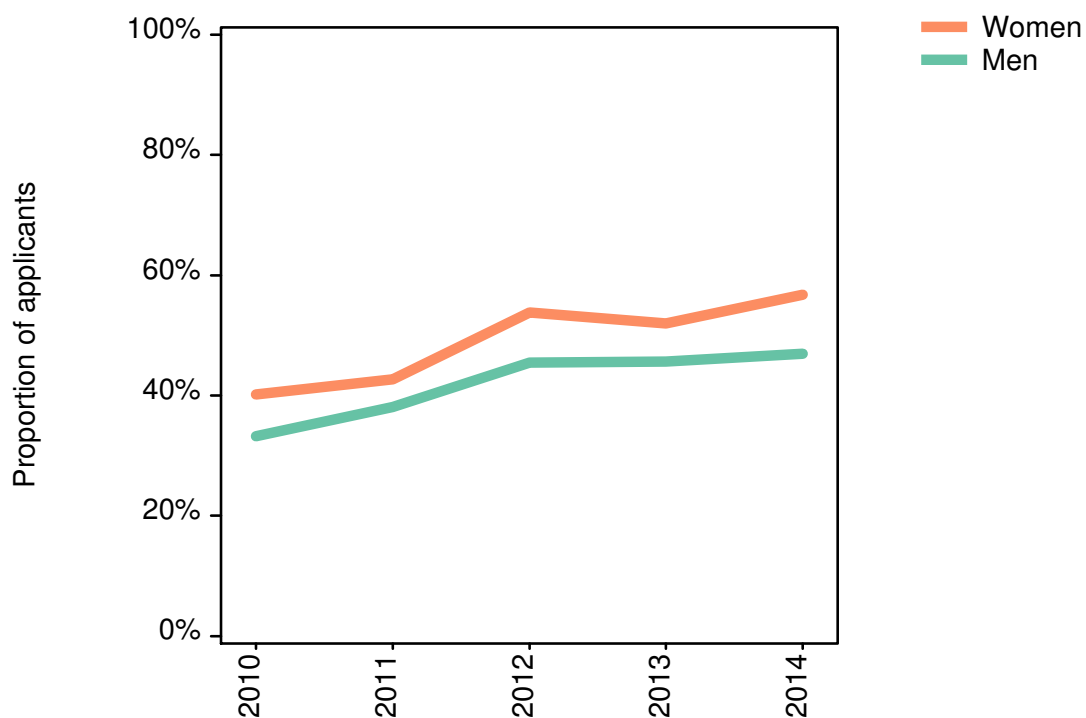
Figure 13 Proportion of UCAS Conservatoires applicants also applying through UCAS Undergraduate by subject group



A HIGHER PROPORTION OF WOMEN APPLICANTS ALSO APPLIED THROUGH UCAS UNDERGRADUATE THAN MEN

In 2014, 57 per cent of women applying to UCAS Conservatoires also applied through the UCAS Undergraduate scheme. This was a higher proportion than for men, which was 47 per cent. Throughout the time period shown, women applying through UCAS Conservatoires consistently have been more likely to apply through both schemes.

Figure 14 UCAS Conservatoires applicants also applying through UCAS Undergraduate by sex



Unplaced UCAS Conservatoires applicants who reapply

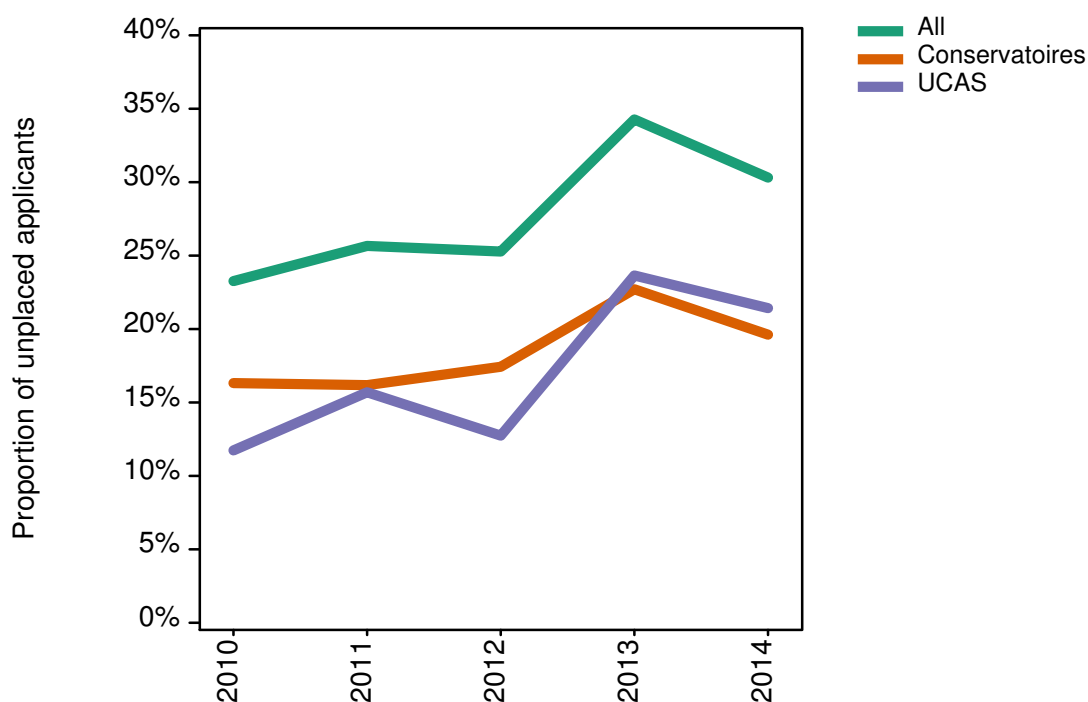
A FIFTH OF APPLICANTS UNPLACED IN 2013 REAPPLIED TO UCAS CONSERVATOIRES IN 2014

Figure 15 shows the proportion of unplaced UCAS Conservatoires applicants who reapply immediately (the following year) to higher education. If the applicant also applied to UCAS Undergraduate and was placed through that scheme, they are excluded from this analysis. The proportion reapplying through UCAS Conservatoires, through UCAS Undergraduate (regardless of whether they applied simultaneously in the previous year) or to either scheme are shown.

Just over 30 per cent of UCAS Conservatoires undergraduate applicants who were unplaced in 2013 applied to either UCAS Conservatoires or the UCAS Undergraduate scheme in 2014. The reapplication rate to UCAS Conservatoires was 20 per cent (a fifth) and to UCAS Undergraduate, 21 per cent, meaning that around a third of those that reapply make an application in both schemes.

The reapplication rate increased in 2013 following the introduction of dance and drama courses in 2012. This change also coincided with the first year in the period when unplaced applicants were more likely to reapply through UCAS Undergraduate than to UCAS Conservatoires.

Figure 15 Reapplication rate of unplaced UCAS Conservatoires applicants



Acceptance rates

The proportion of applicants who have a place at the end of the application cycle is termed the acceptance rate. It can be broadly interpreted as the ‘difficulty’ of gaining admission to conservatoires in a particular year. However, becoming accepted requires both a conservatoire to make an offer to the applicant, and the applicant to accept and meet the conditions of the offer. Therefore changes in the acceptance rate can also reflect differences in applicant choices, especially when they may also have applications in the UCAS Undergraduate scheme.

ONE IN FIVE APPLICANTS ACCEPTED IN RECENT YEARS

Figure 16 shows the number of undergraduate applicants, acceptances, and the acceptance rate. In 2014, the undergraduate acceptance rate was 21 per cent in 2014, which is unchanged since 2013. The acceptance rate has remained fairly steady in recent years following a large decrease in 2012 from 34 per cent in 2011. This coincided with the addition of dance and drama courses (acceptance rates by subject are shown later in Figure 19).

ACCEPTANCE RATE FOR MEN CONSISTENTLY HIGHER FOR THAN WOMEN

Figure 17 shows the acceptance rate for men and women since 2010. The acceptance rate for men has been consistently higher than that for women. In 2014, the acceptance rate for women was 18 per cent; unchanged since 2012. The acceptance rate for men in 2014 was 26 per cent, also broadly the same as in 2013, and three percentage points higher than in 2012.

The acceptance rate is higher for men because around the same number of men and women are accepted to undergraduate courses, but the number of men applying is much lower than the number of women applying, as was shown in Figure 9.

The sharp decrease in acceptance rate in 2012 that coincided with the addition of dance and drama courses, was observed for both sexes, and was of a similar size for both men and women.

Figure 16 Undergraduate applicants, acceptances and acceptance rate

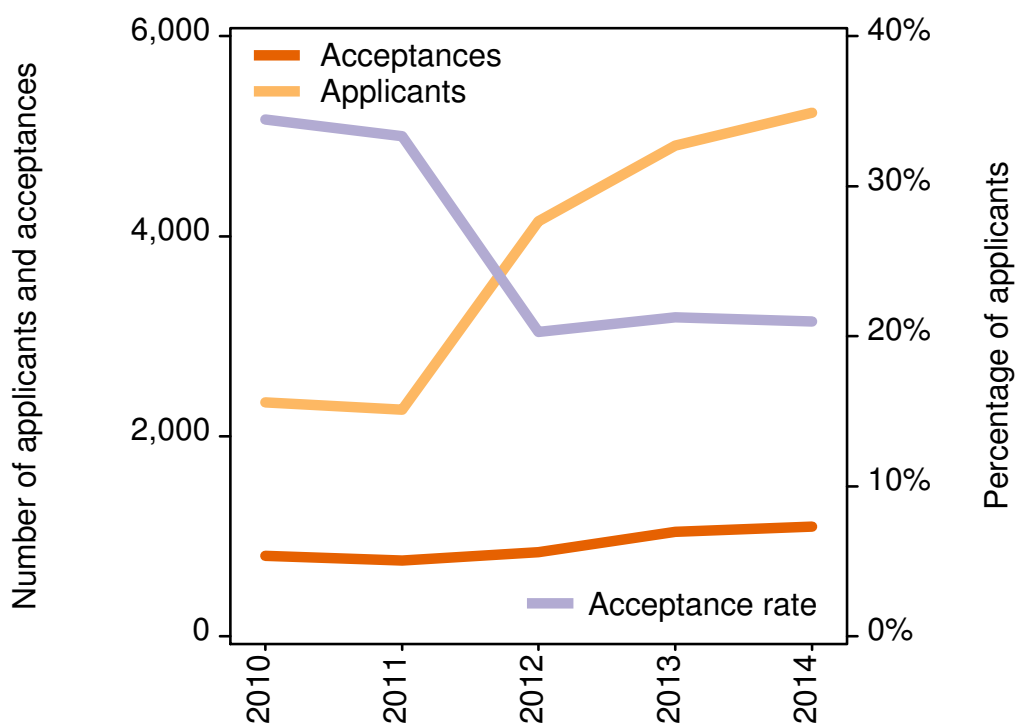
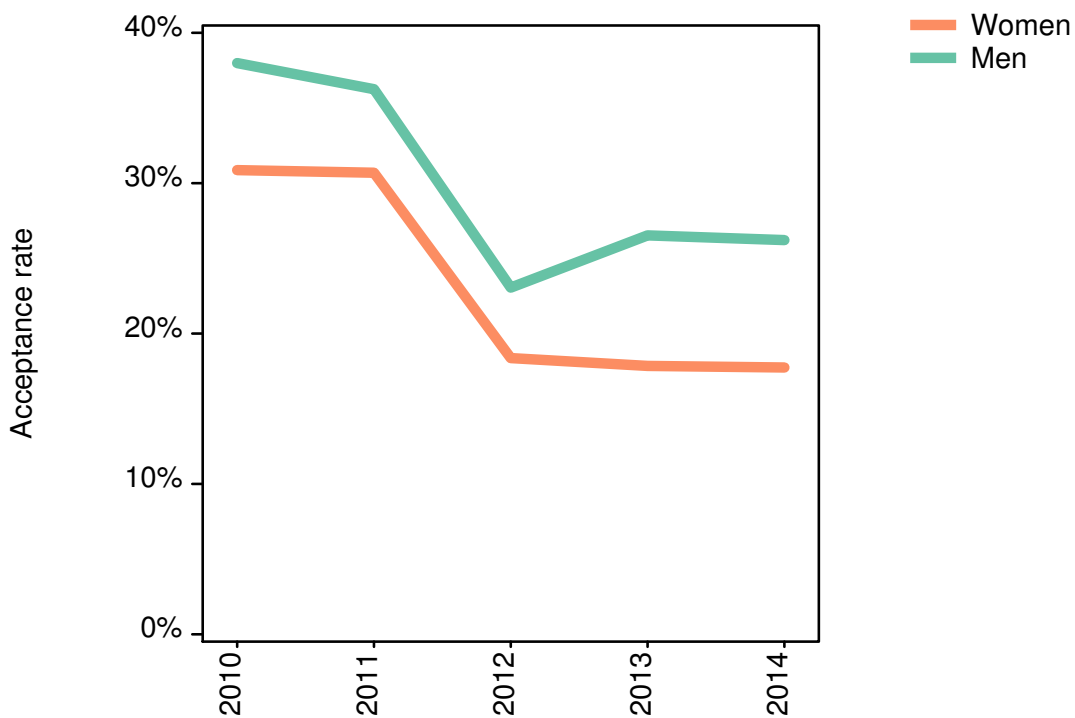


Figure 17 Undergraduate acceptance rate by sex



ACCEPTANCE RATES FOR UNDERGRADUATE UCAS CONSERVATOIRES LOWEST FOR THOSE ALSO APPLYING THROUGH UCAS UNDERGRADUATE

Figure 18 shows the differences in acceptance rates for UCAS Conservatoires applicants over the UCAS Undergraduate and UCAS Conservatoires schemes.

The highest acceptance rate across the period is for applicants who applied through both the schemes and were accepted through the UCAS Undergraduate scheme. In 2014, the acceptance rate through UCAS Undergraduate for these applicants was 47 per cent. Amongst the same group of applicants, 13 per cent were accepted to UCAS Conservatoires, resulting in 60 per cent being placed in either scheme. This is considerably lower than the acceptance rate for all applicants through the UCAS Undergraduate scheme (73 per cent in 2014).

In recent years, around 30 per cent of applicants to UCAS Conservatoires that did not apply simultaneously to UCAS were accepted. This is lower than the acceptance rate to either scheme (60 per cent) for those applicants that apply through both schemes, but higher than the acceptance rate to the UCAS Conservatoires scheme for those that apply through both.

DANCE AND DRAMA APPLICANTS HAVE LOWER ACCEPTANCE RATES THAN MUSIC APPLICANTS, EXPLAINING THE OVERALL DECREASE IN ACCEPTANCES RATES IN 2012

By looking at the acceptance rate by subject (Figure 19) it is clear to see the impact that the addition of dance and drama courses had on the overall acceptance rates. The acceptance rate for music applicants did decrease slightly in 2012, but has returned to 34 per cent (the rate in 2011) in 2014.

The acceptance rates for dance and drama applicants are very much lower, and are mainly responsible for the fall in overall undergraduate acceptance rates in 2012, when the courses were added to the scheme. The acceptance rate for drama applicants has remained at around 5 per cent, while the acceptance rate for dance applicants has been falling, reaching 9 per cent in 2014.

Figure 18 Undergraduate acceptance rates for the two schemes

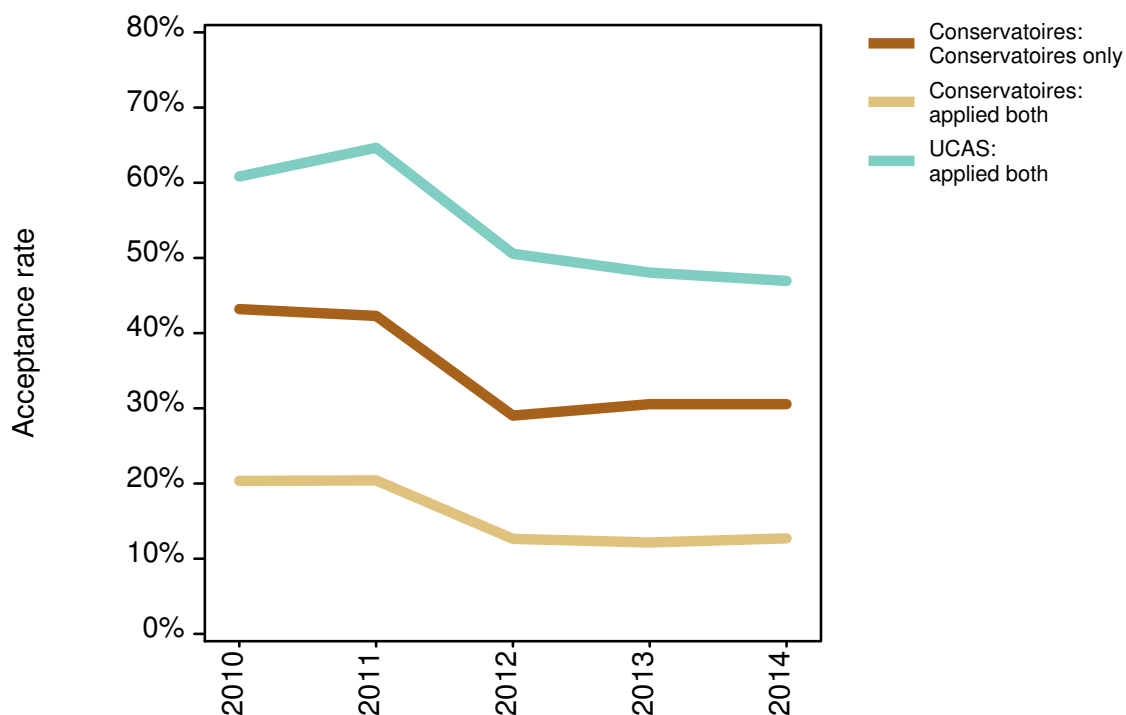
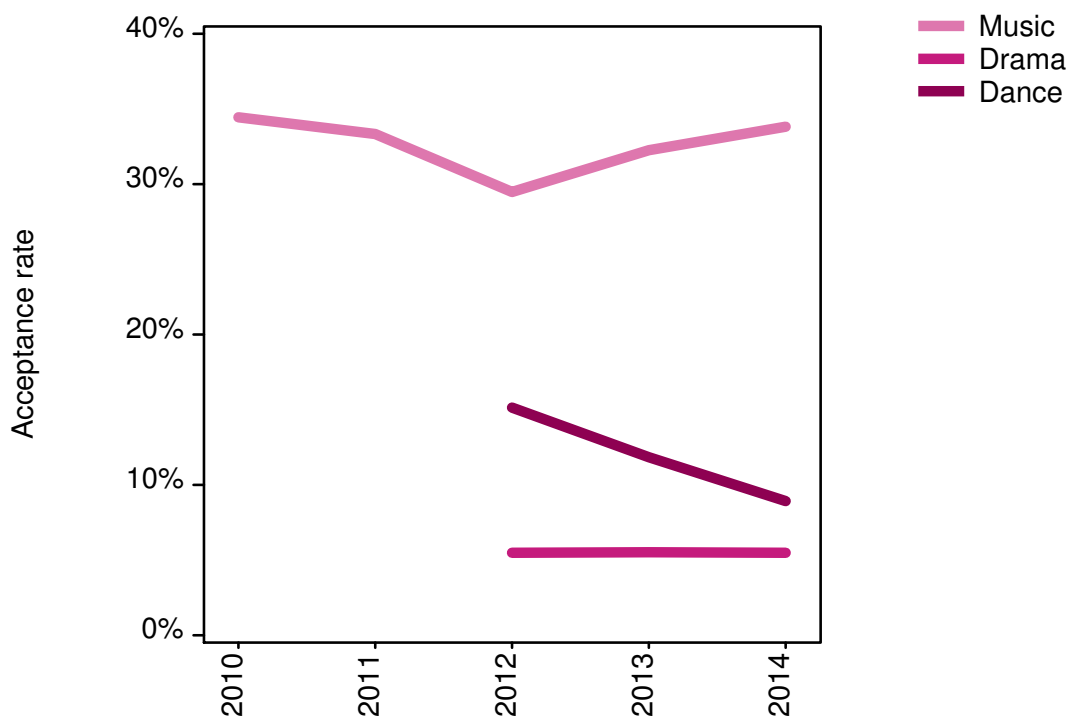


Figure 19 Undergraduate acceptance rate by subject group



Application and entry rates

The application rate is the proportion of the population who apply to undergraduate courses through UCAS Conservatoires. The entry rate is the proportion of the population accepted into undergraduate courses through UCAS Conservatoires. The application and entry rates use population estimates based on data published by ONS.

Application or entry rates for single age groups can be dependent on changes in overall entry rates from year to year and the demand for entry at different ages. One measure that is less influenced by changes in age of entry are cohort-based rates that combine application or entry at ages 18 and 19 for people born in the same year. It has the advantage that it is unaffected by changes in the choice to apply and be accepted for entry at ages 18 or 19. It has the disadvantage that it cannot yet report on a complete rate for the cohort that was aged 18 in 2014, since they are yet to have the opportunity to apply at age 19.

THE MOST ADVANTAGED 18 AND 19 YEAR OLDS ARE 4.6 TIMES MORE LIKELY TO APPLY THROUGH UCAS CONSERVATOIRES THAN THE MOST DISADVANTAGED

Figure 20 shows the cohort application rates by POLAR2 quintile. Across the period there is a progression in demand for courses, with young people in the most advantaged areas being at least five times more likely to apply through UCAS Conservatoires than young people from the most disadvantaged areas.

Application rates of young people from all backgrounds have increased across the period.

For those that were aged 18 in 2013, the cohort application rate from the most disadvantaged areas (quintile 1) increased to 0.14 per cent (14 in every 10,000). This is 2.5 times higher than the rate from the same areas for those aged 18 years in 2009, 0.06 per cent (6 in every 10,000).

For young people aged 18 in 2013 from the most advantaged areas (quintile 5), the cohort application rate increased to 0.66 per cent (66 in every 10,000), a 40 per cent increase compared with those from the same areas aged 18 in 2009, 0.37 per cent (37 in every 10,000).

These cohort rates mean that young people aged 18 in 2013 from the most advantaged areas were 4.6 times more likely to apply through UCAS Conservatoires than those from the most disadvantaged areas, compared to those aged 18 in 2009 where those from the most advantaged areas were 6.5 times more likely to apply than those from the most disadvantaged areas. Despite this fall, the percentage point difference in cohort application rates between the two areas has increased from 0.31 percentage points to 0.52 percentage points across the period.

ENTRY RATES INCREASE FOR ALL BACKGROUNDS, WITH THOSE FROM THE MOST ADVANTAGED AREAS SIX TIMES MORE LIKELY TO ENTER THAN FROM THE MOST DISADVANTAGED AREAS

Figure 21 shows the cohort entry rate by POLAR2 quintile. For those aged 18 in 2013, the cohort entry rate increased for all backgrounds compared to those aged 18 in 2012.

For the cohort aged 18 in 2013, those from the most disadvantaged areas (quintile 1) had an entry rate of 0.028 per cent (28 in every 100,000); while those from the most advantaged areas (quintile 5) had an entry rate of 0.175 per cent (175 in every 100,000).

The entry rates for recent cohorts has varied from year to year, particularly for those from the most advantaged areas. Despite this the cohort entry rates for those age 18 in 2013 were higher from most areas than the cohort entry rates for those aged 18 in 2009. For young people from the most disadvantaged areas, the cohort entry rate for those aged 18 in 2009 was 0.020 per cent (20 in every 10,000), and from the most advantaged areas was 0.158 per cent (158 in every 10,000).

These cohort rates mean that young people aged 18 in 2013 from the most advantaged areas were more than 6.2 times as likely to be accepted through UCAS Conservatoires as those from the most disadvantaged areas, compared with a ratio of nearly 7.8 times as likely for the cohort who were 18 in 2009.

Figure 20 UK young application rate (cohort) by POLAR2 quintile

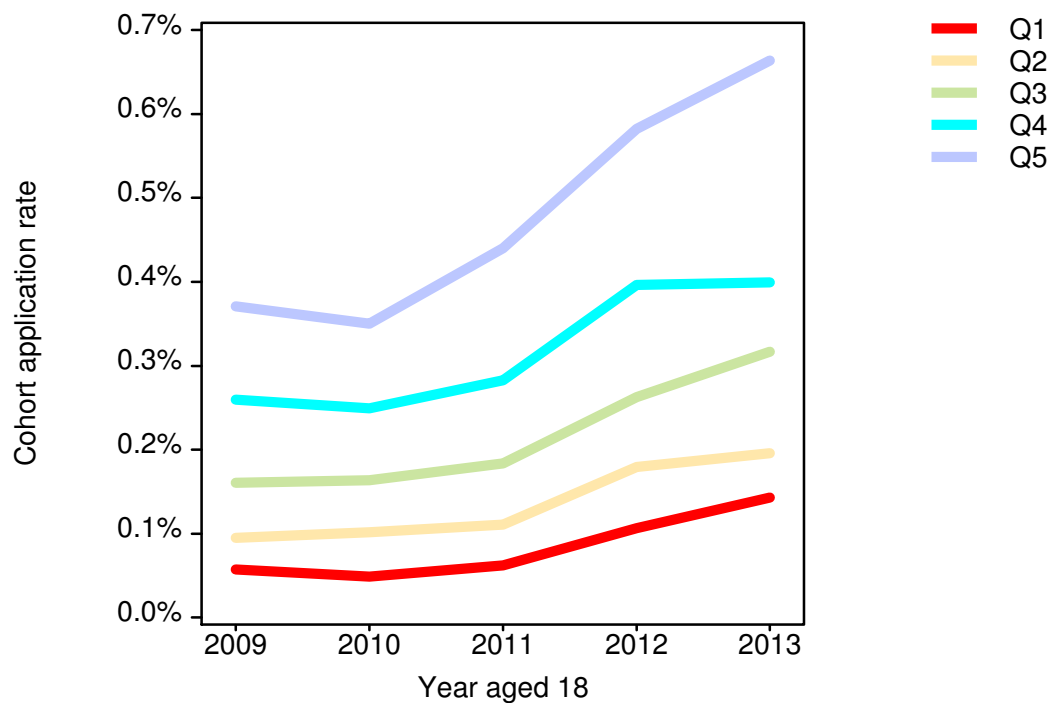
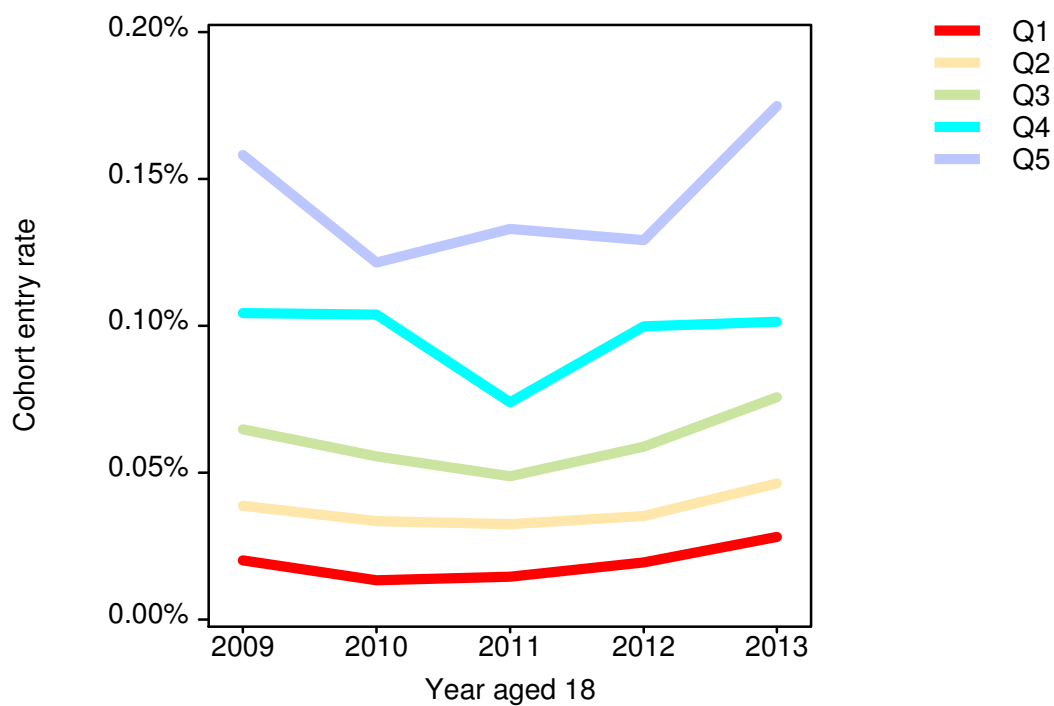


Figure 21 UK young entry rate (cohort) by POLAR2 quintile



THERE ARE LARGE DIFFERENCES IN COHORT APPLICATION RATES BETWEEN THE UK COUNTRIES

For the cohort aged 18 in 2013, the country of the UK with the highest cohort application rate was Scotland; 0.97 per cent (97 in every 10,000). This application rate was over three times larger than that from England or Northern Ireland. The application rate of young people in England has risen compared to the previous cohort by 0.05 percentage points to reach 0.28 per cent (28 in every 10,000). In Wales, the cohort application rate decreased slightly for this cohort to 0.66 per cent (66 in every 10,000). In Northern Ireland, the cohort rate for those aged 18 in 2013 decreased compared to the previous cohort to 0.19 per cent (19 in every 10,000).

Over the time period shown, application rates from Wales and Scotland have increased by more than application rates from England and Northern Ireland.

ENTRY RATES FOR SCOTLAND AND WALES REMAIN LARGER THAN ENGLAND AND NORTHERN IRELAND

Cohort entry rates vary by country, with young people from Scotland and Wales being over twice as likely to enter conservatoires in the scheme as young people from England and Northern Ireland. For the cohort aged 18 in 2013, the entry rate from Scotland was 0.17 per cent (17 in every 10,000); from Wales 0.16 per cent (16 in every 10,000); from England 0.08 per cent (eight in every 10,000); and Northern Ireland 0.03 per cent (three in every 10,000).

Figure 22 Young application rate (cohort) by country

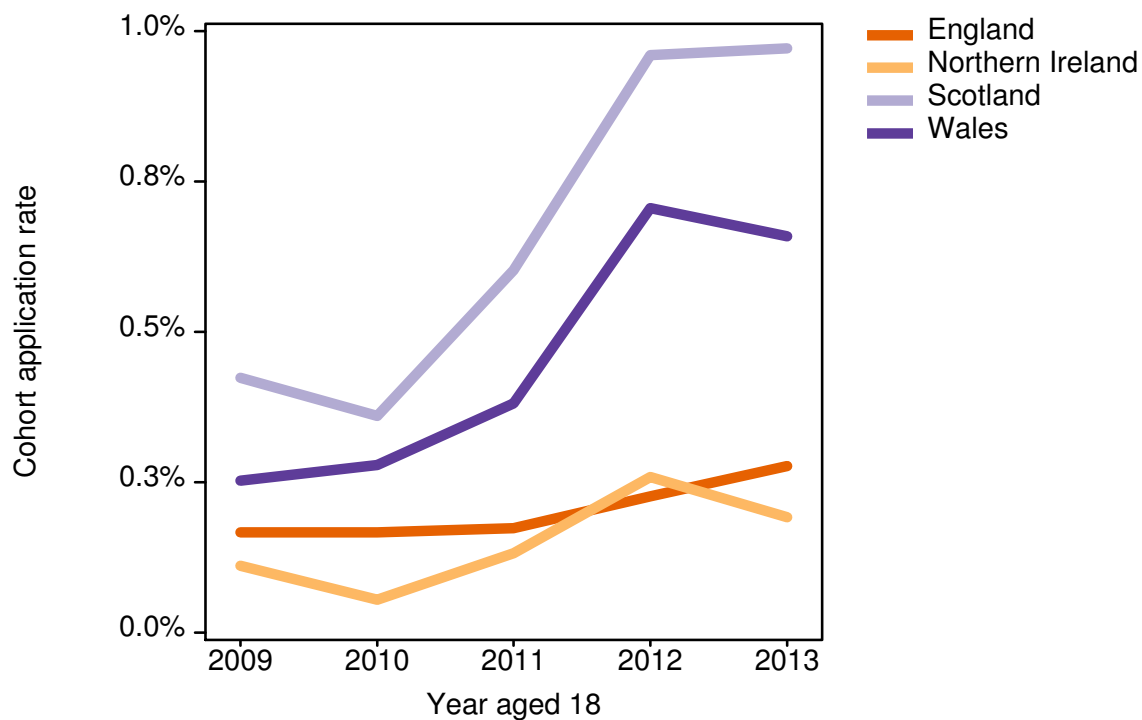
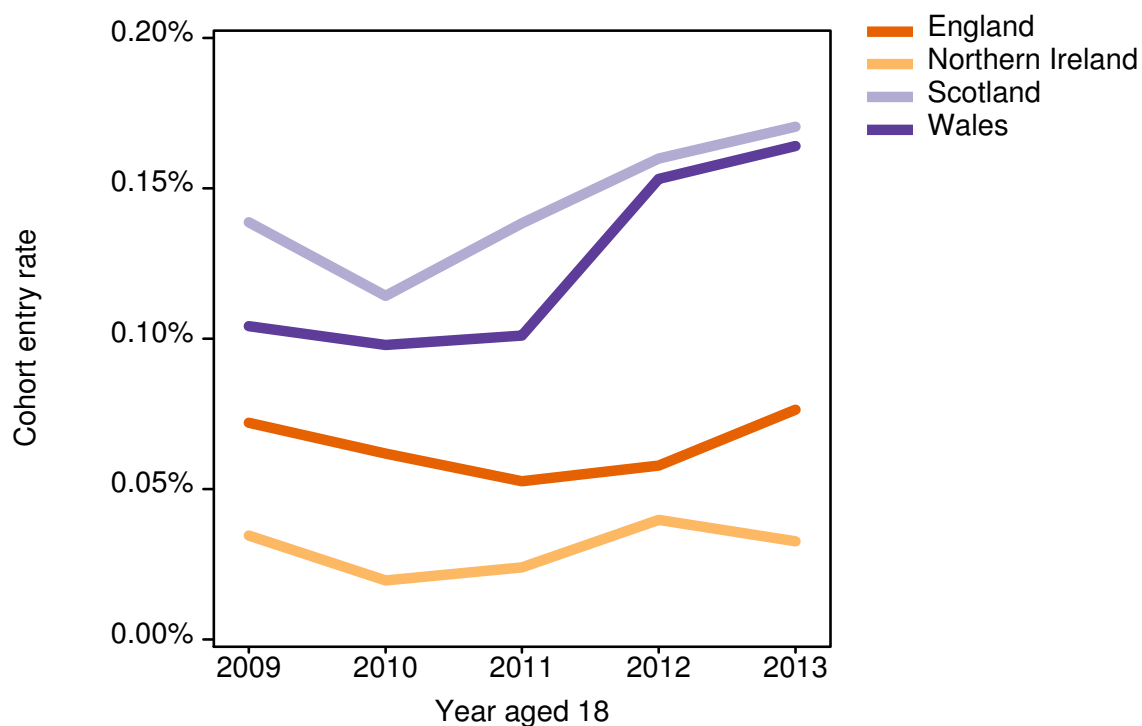


Figure 23 Young entry rate (cohort) by country



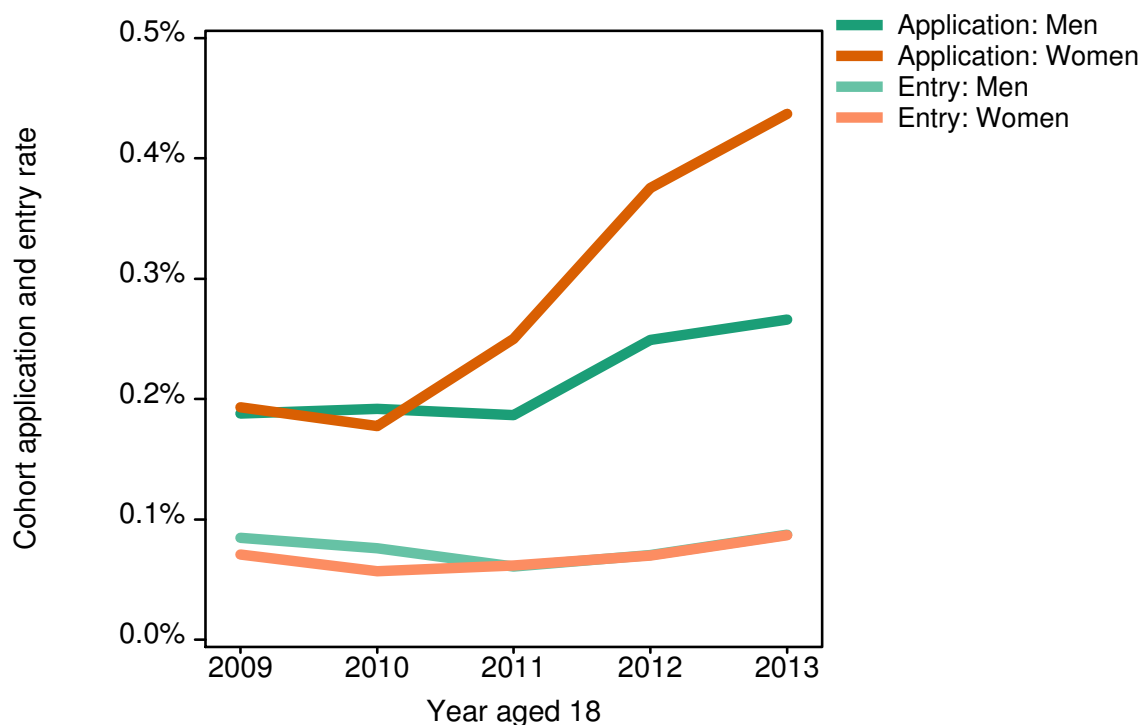
YOUNG WOMEN 1.6 TIMES MORE LIKELY TO APPLY THAN YOUNG MEN

The application rate for women in the cohort that was aged 18 in 2013, was 0.44 per cent (four in every 1,000), an increase on the previous cohort of 0.04 percentage points. For men it was 0.27 per cent (three in every 1,000) an increase of 0.02 percentage points, leading to an increase in the gap between the application rate of men and women. For the cohort aged 18 in 2013, women were 1.6 times more likely to apply through UCAS Conservatoires than men.

YOUNG MEN AND YOUNG WOMEN EQUALLY LIKELY TO BE PLACED ON COURSES

The entry rates for young men and women were the same for the cohort aged 18 in 2013, at 0.09 per cent (nine in every 10,000). This is an increase for both of 0.02 percentage points compared to the previous cohort, continuing the trend of increasing entry rates for both men and women.

Figure 24 Young entry and application rate (cohort) by sex



Postgraduate

Applicants and acceptances

In 2014, there were 2,860 applicants to postgraduate UCAS Conservatoires courses, which was 160 (+6 per cent) more than in 2013, and there were 925 postgraduate acceptances; 125 (+16 per cent) more than in 2013.

POSTGRADUATE APPLICANTS INCREASED TO NEW HIGHS FOR ALL DOMICILES

More than half of all applicants to postgraduate courses are from the UK (54 per cent in 2014). In 2014, there were 1,530 applicants from the UK, slightly more than in 2013, resulting in the highest number across the period.

Postgraduate applicants from the EU (465) and outside of the EU (870) are also slightly higher in 2014 compared to 2013, and the highest recorded.

POSTGRADUATE ACCEPTANCES INCREASED FOR ALL DOMICILES TO NEW HIGHS

Acceptances to postgraduate courses have increased in each year and for all domiciles for the second consecutive year, and are at the highest levels recorded.

In 2014, there were 490 postgraduate acceptances from the UK, 145 from the EU, and 290 from outside the EU.

Following a similar pattern to applicant numbers, more than half of acceptances (53 per cent) are from the UK.

Figure 25 Postgraduate applicants by domicile

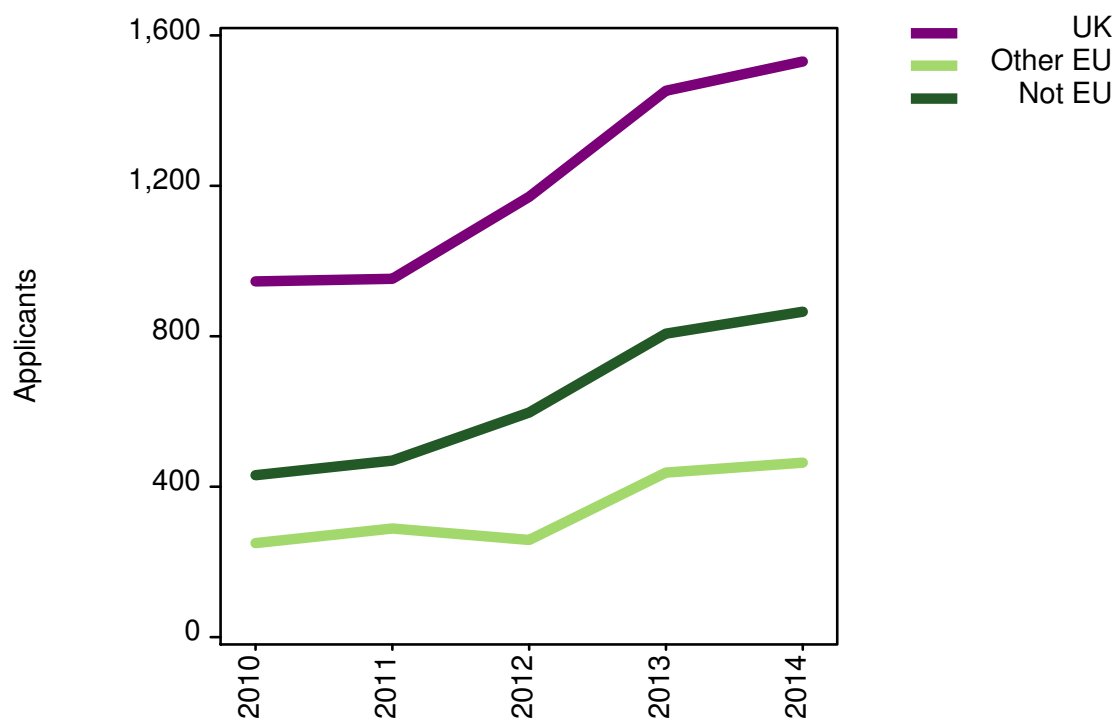
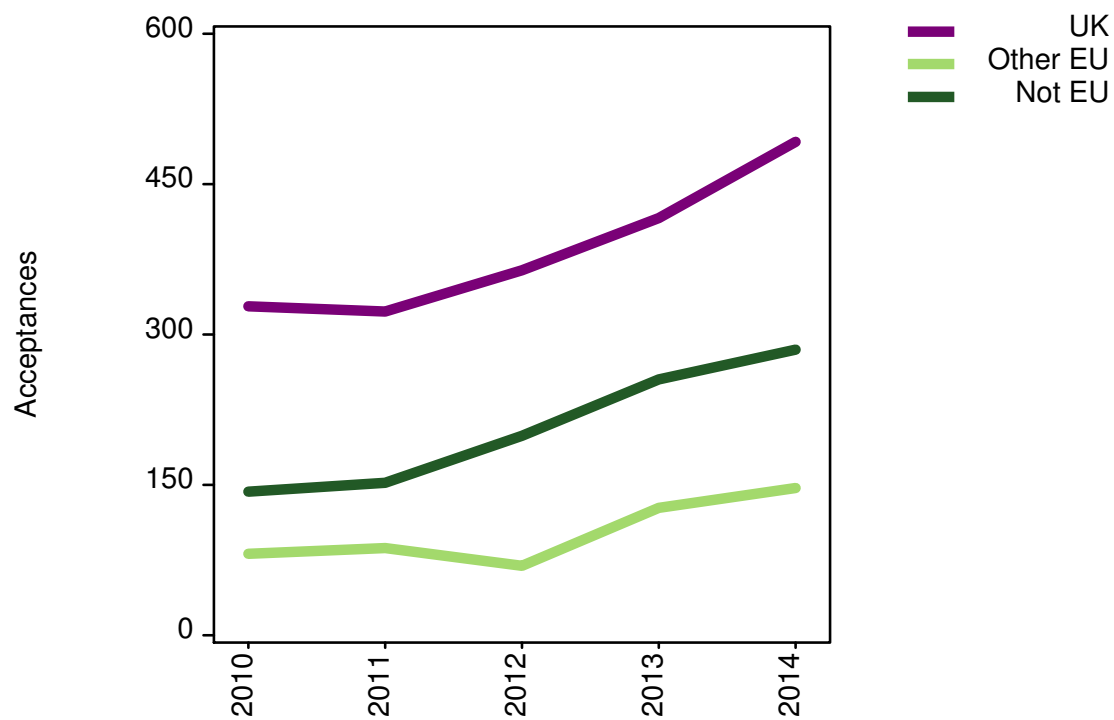


Figure 26 Postgraduate acceptances by domicile



APPLICANTS INCREASE FOR MOST AGE GROUPS

Figure 27 shows the number of applicants by selected age groups. Over three quarters of applicants to postgraduate courses are between the ages of 22 and 29, with the largest single age group aged 22 years (19 per cent), and the 25 to 29 year old age group representing over a quarter of applicants.

Across the time period, generally the number of applicants has increased each year in each age group. In 2014, the number of applicants aged 24 years has decreased slightly and those aged 22 has remained the same, while the number of applicants from all other age groups has increased. Notably, there were 810 applicants (around 100 more than in 2013) aged 25 to 29.

ACCEPTANCES INCREASED FOR ALL AGE GROUPS

Figure 28 shows the acceptances by age group. The largest age group for postgraduate acceptances in 2014 was the 25 to 29 year old age group, reaching 245 acceptances (+50). This was followed by 22 year olds with 205 acceptances (+10). The 23 year olds had 185 acceptances (+30), while the 24 year olds had 115 (+5) acceptances.

The two smallest age groups were the 21 and under, with 95 acceptances (+10), and the 30 and overs with 80 acceptances; an increase of 20.

Figure 27 Postgraduate applicants by age group

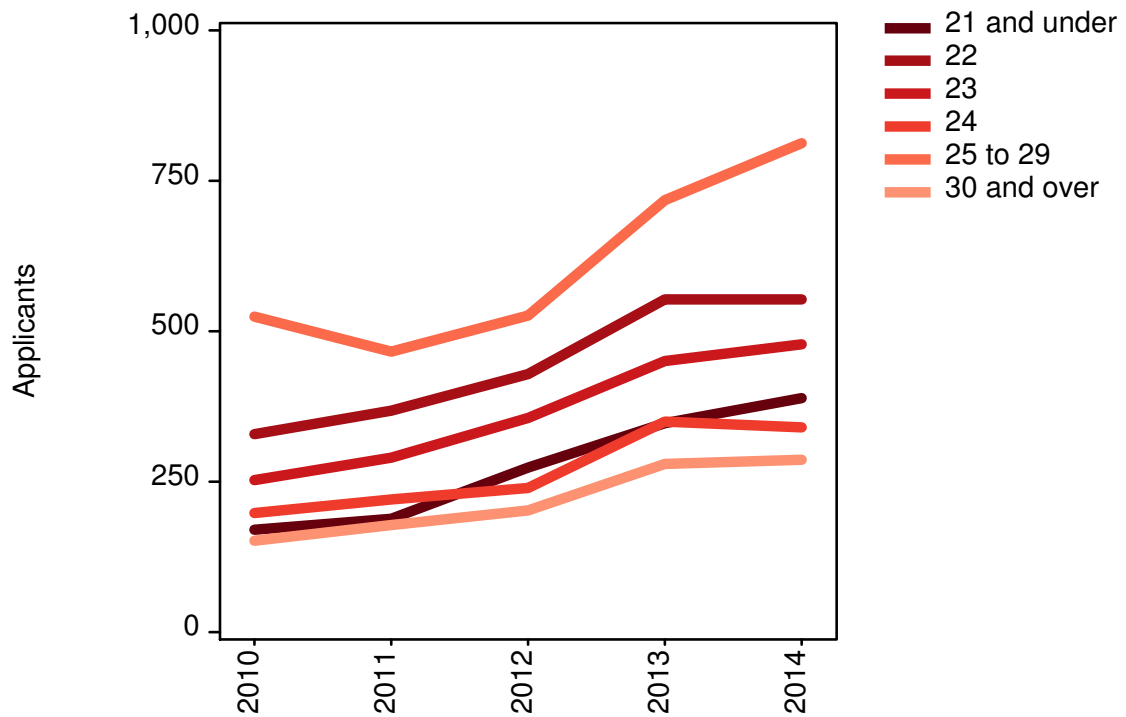
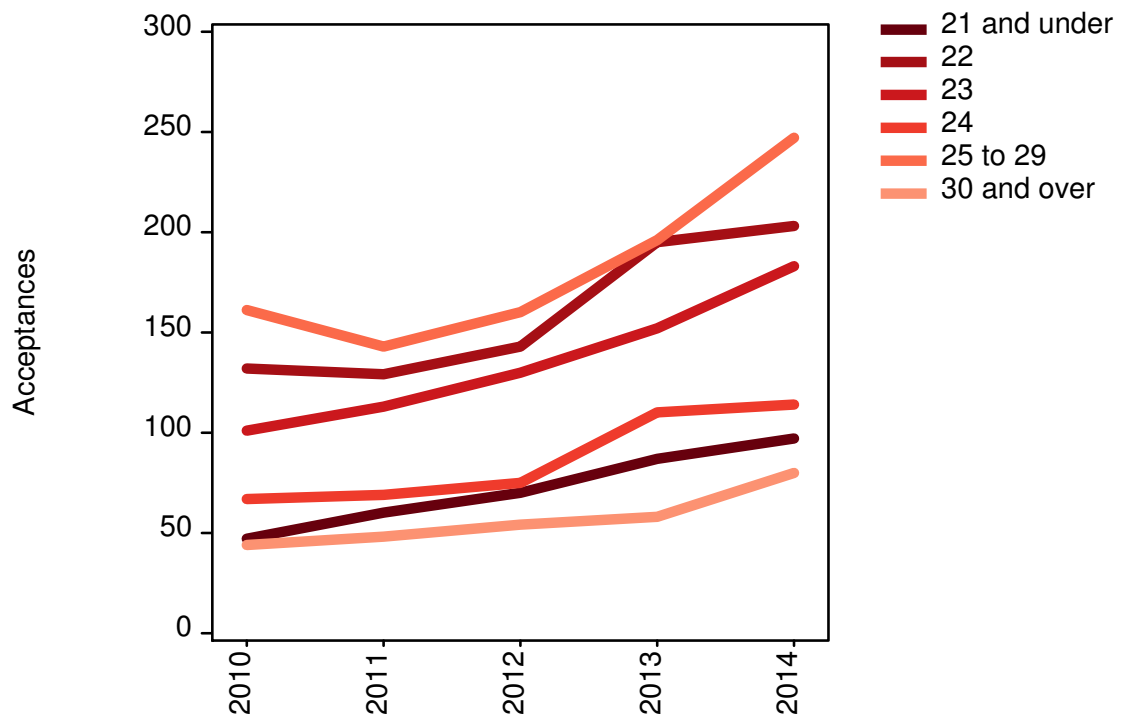


Figure 28 Postgraduate acceptances by age



APPLICANTS FOR MUSIC AND DRAMA INCREASE, DANCE STAYS THE SAME

Most applicants for postgraduate courses apply to study music, 80 per cent in 2014. Figure 29 shows the number of applicants by subject of study. There were just over 100 more postgraduate music applicants in 2014 compared to 2013, a total of 2,295 applicants. This continued the general trend of increasing numbers of applicants across the time period shown. The large increase in applicants in 2013 coincided with the Royal Academy of Music joining the UCAS Conservatoires scheme.

There were 410 applicants to study drama in 2014, an increase that continues the pattern of annual increases following the introduction of postgraduate drama courses to the scheme in 2012. Postgraduate dance courses attracted applicants in 2013 and 2014, and in both years there were 175 applicants to these courses.

POSTGRADUATE APPLICANTS AND ACCEPTANCES AT HIGHS FOR BOTH SEXES

For postgraduate courses, as with undergraduate courses, in each year there are more women applicants than men (in 2014, just over 60 per cent of applicants were women). In 2014, 1,760 women applied to postgraduate courses, 125 more than in 2013. The number of men applying to postgraduate courses in 2014 increased only slightly (1,095, +35) resulting in an increase in the gap between the number of men and women applying.

Across the period, there were also more women accepted to postgraduate courses. In 2014, there were 515 women accepted (+75) and 410 men accepted (+50). Although more women are accepted than men to postgraduate courses, they are a slightly smaller proportion (56 per cent) of all acceptances compared to the proportion of applicants.

Figure 29 Postgraduate applicants by subject

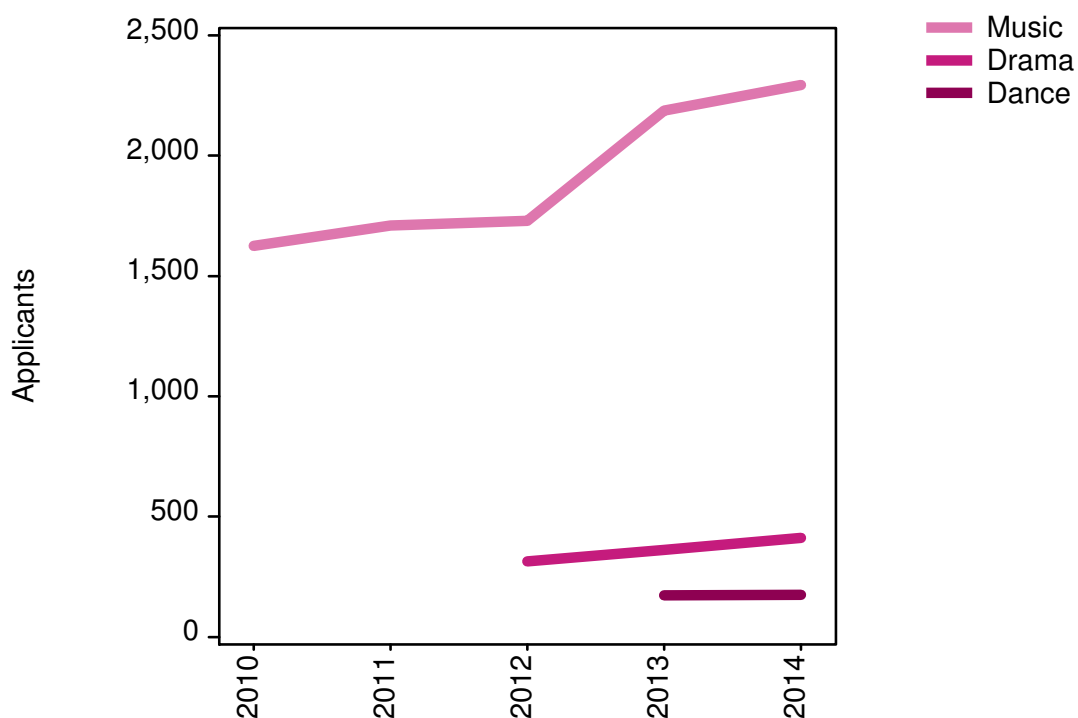
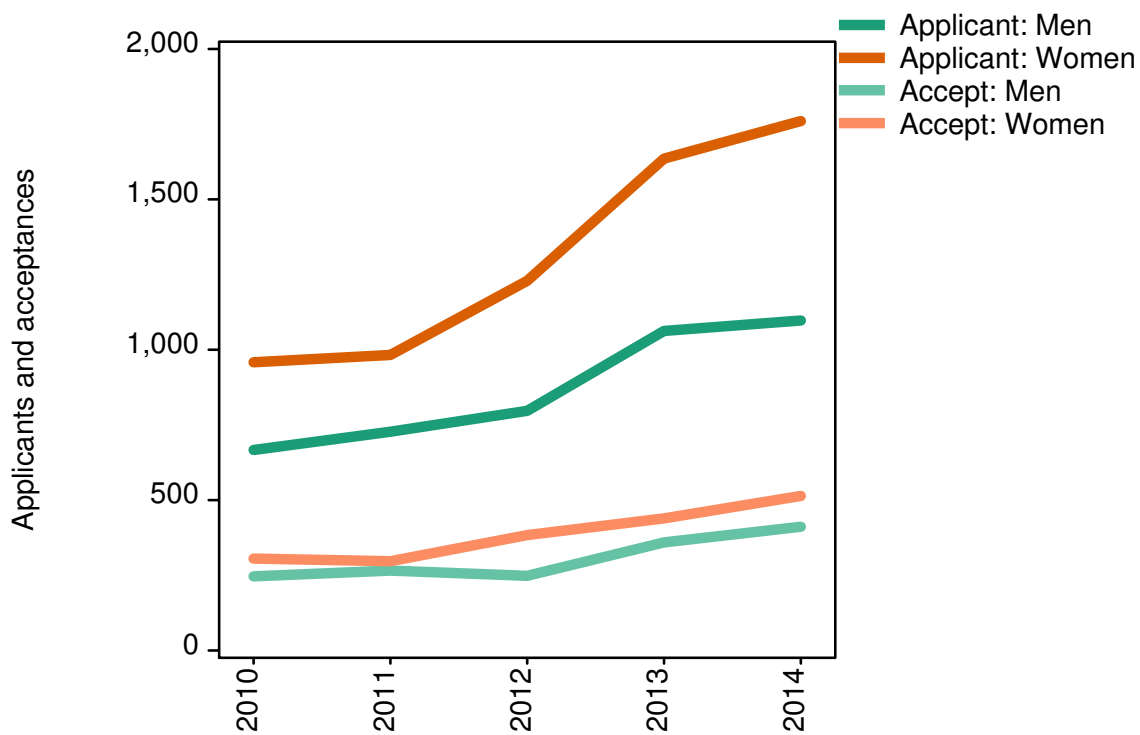


Figure 30 Postgraduate applicants and acceptances by sex



Acceptance rates

POSTGRADUATE ACCEPTANCE RATE INCREASED, FOLLOWING RECENT DECREASES

The overall acceptance rate to postgraduate courses was higher than the undergraduate acceptance rate in 2014, at 32.3 per cent (Figure 31). This was a 2.7 percentage point increase from the 2013 acceptance rate of 29.6 per cent, reversing the recent trend of a falling acceptance rate. This increased acceptance rate was driven by a greater proportional increase in acceptances (+15 per cent) compared to the proportional increase in applicants (+6 per cent).

ACCEPTANCE RATE TO MUSIC COURSES INCREASED

Figure 32 shows the acceptance rates by subject groups. The acceptance rate to postgraduate music courses increased to 38 per cent in 2014. As with undergraduate, dance and drama courses have much lower acceptance rates than music courses. In 2014, the acceptance rate to drama courses remained at 12 per cent. The acceptance rate to dance courses decreased from 17 per cent in 2013 to 7 per cent in 2014. There are very low numbers of applicants (175 in 2014) and acceptances (15 in 2014) for postgraduate dance courses, which would result in greater variability in the acceptance rate from year to year.

Figure 31 Postgraduate acceptance rate

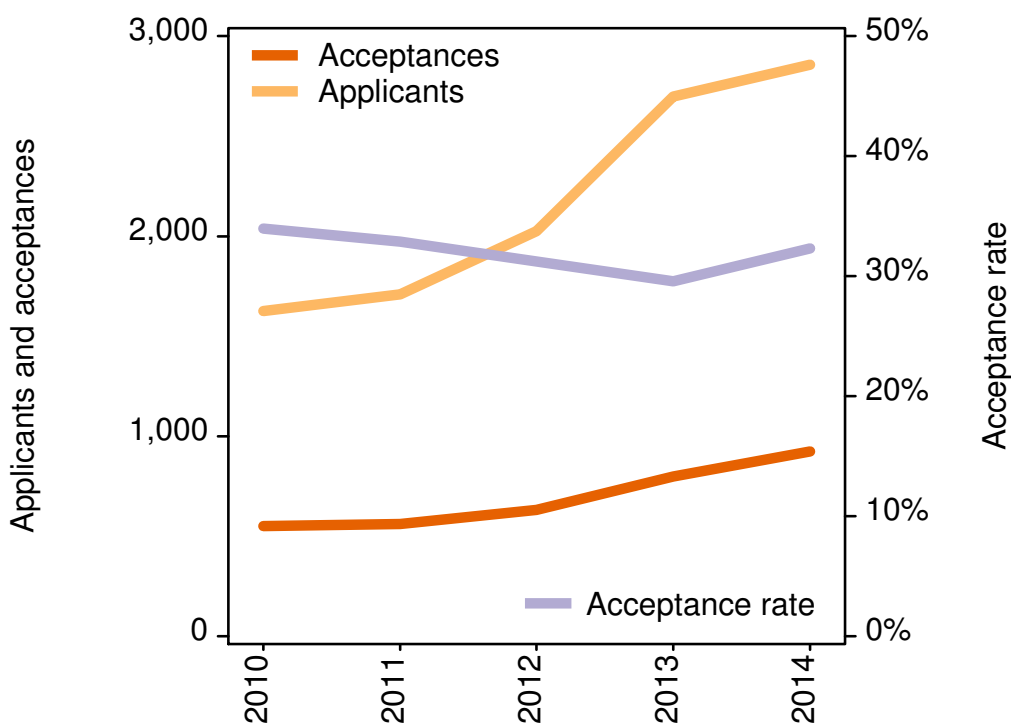
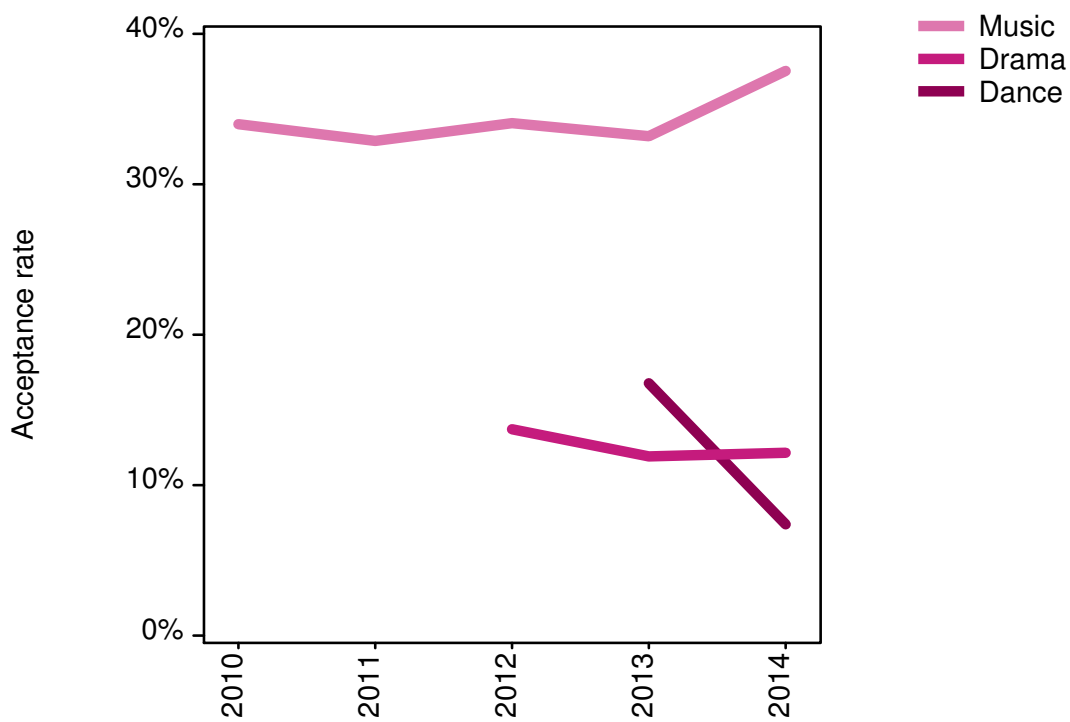


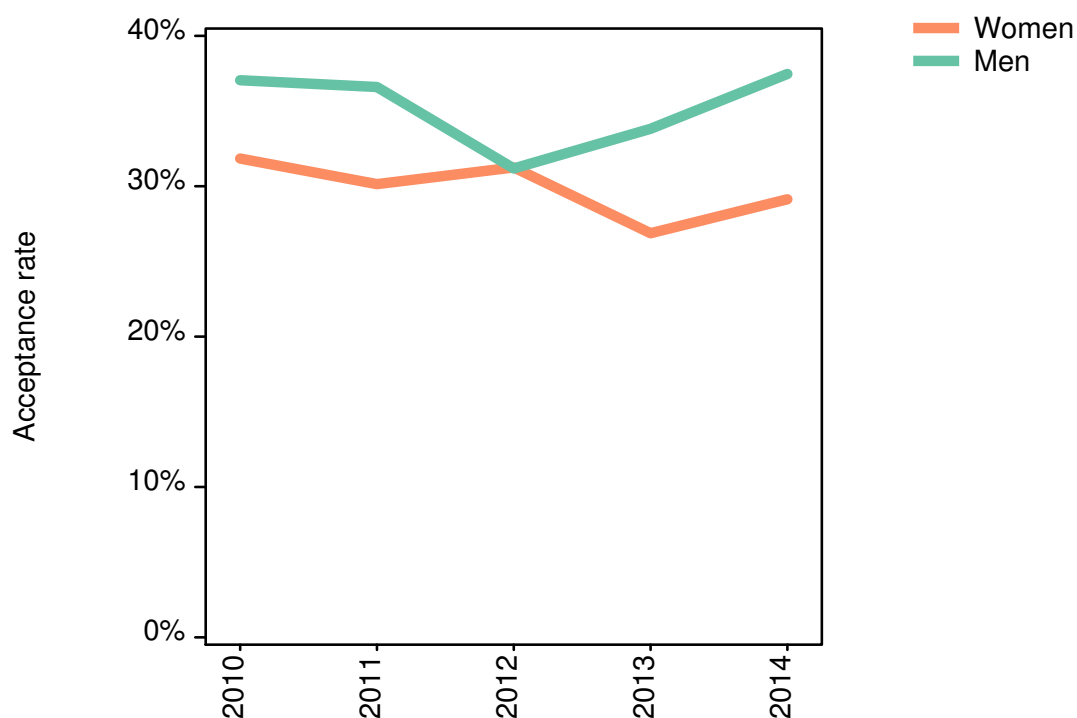
Figure 32 Postgraduate acceptance rate by subject



MEN HAVE A HIGHER ACCEPTANCE RATE THAN WOMEN

Figure 33 shows the acceptance rate by sex to postgraduate courses. In 2014, the acceptance rate for men was 37 per cent, whereas women had an acceptance rate of 29 per cent a difference of eight percentage points. In each year, apart from 2012, the acceptance rate for men is higher than the acceptance rate for women, with the largest percentage point difference in 2014. This arises because the difference in the number of men and women accepted to postgraduate courses (25 per cent more women than men) is much smaller than the difference in the number of men and women applicants (60 per cent more women than men).

Figure 33 Postgraduate acceptance rate by sex



Reference tables

Table 1:

Applicants and acceptances (2010-2014)

		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
UG	Applicants	2,335	2,265	4,150	4,905	5,235
	Acceptances	805	755	840	1,040	1,095
PG	Applicants	1,625	1,710	2,025	2,695	2,860
	Acceptances	550	560	630	800	925
All	Applicants	3,895	3,905	6,045	7,485	7,985
	Acceptances	1,355	1,315	1,475	1,840	2,020

UG – Undergraduate; PG - Postgraduate

Table 2:

Applicants who applied through UCAS Undergraduate scheme in the same year (2010-2014)

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Applied through UCAS	855	920	2,090	2,425	2,775
Total applicants	3,895	3,905	6,045	7,485	7,985

Table 3:

Conservatoire summary (2014)

		B34	L31	R53	R56	R57	R58			R59		T75	
		Music	Music	Music	Music	Music	Dance	Drama	Music	Drama	Music	Dance	Music
UG	Applicants	635	--	835	905	935	95	1,255	995	1,030	550	655	850
	Offered	285	--	185	255	380	20	105	275	40	250	260	320
	Placed	115	--	100	125	165	10	80	175	25	110	60	135
	Unplaced	490	--	680	735	720	80	1,155	800	985	410	585	680
	Withdrawn	25	--	50	50	50	5	30	40	20	30	15	40
PG	Applicants	285	60	1,060	1,010	420	--	185	405	300	345	175	315
	Offered	150	35	345	365	240	--	45	180	30	155	85	205
	Placed	80	20	200	195	115	--	30	95	20	85	15	75
	Unplaced	205	40	810	785	285	--	155	300	275	250	165	235
	Withdrawn	5	5	50	30	30	--	0	15	5	10	0	5

UG – Undergraduate; PG - Postgraduate

Conservatoire code	Conservatoire name
B34	Birmingham Conservatoire
L31	Leeds College of Music
R53	Royal Academy of Music
R56	Royal College of Music
R57	Royal Northern College of Music
R58	Royal Conservatoire of Scotland
R59	Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama
T75	Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance

Table 4:

Undergraduate applicants by POLAR2 quintile (UK domiciled and aged 18 or 19 only 2010-2014)

POLAR2 Quintile	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Not assigned	10	5	5	10	15	10
Q1	90	90	70	145	200	195
Q2	155	165	140	250	305	305
Q3	255	250	240	385	460	510
Q4	415	395	375	595	615	720
Q5	565	600	515	925	1,025	1,085

Table 5:

Undergraduate acceptances by POLAR2 quintile (UK domiciled and aged 18 or 19 only 2010-2014)

POLAR2 Quintile	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Not assigned	--	5	--	5	5	--
Q1	30	25	20	25	35	45
Q2	65	55	55	50	70	75
Q3	95	90	75	80	120	95
Q4	170	160	125	155	155	180
Q5	230	225	190	210	265	275

Glossary

Acceptance	An applicant who, by the end of the cycle has been placed for entry into a course.
Acceptance rate	The number of acceptances divided by the number of applicants.
Age	This analysis uses country-specific age definitions that align with the cut off points for school and college cohorts within the different administrations of the UK. For England and Wales, ages are defined on 31 August, for Northern Ireland on 1 July and for Scotland on 28 February the following year. Defining ages in this way matches the assignment of children to school cohorts. For applicants outside of the UK, the cohort cut off for England and Wales has been used.
Applicant	A person who has made an application in the UCAS Conservatoires scheme (formerly CUKAS).
Application rate	The number of applicants divided by the estimated base population.
Base population estimate	The population estimates are based on Office for National Statistics mid-year estimates and national population projections. For 16 to 20 year olds, the estimates are obtained by aging 15 year olds from the appropriate number of years earlier. This approach avoids the estimates being susceptible to changes in net migration (including overseas students) during these ages. Older ages are obtained from the mid-year estimates and national population projections without ageing. In both cases, the estimates are adjusted from age at mid-year to age on the country-specific reference dates using the monthly distribution of births.
Cohort	A group of the population all born in the same academic year, and are therefore, for example, all aged 18 on a particular reference date.
Domicile	Declared area of permanent residence.
Entry rate	The number of acceptances divided by the estimated base population.
Not EU	Countries outside the European Union. Includes the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.
Offer	A conservatoire's decision to grant a place to an applicant; may be subject to satisfying academic and/or other criteria.

ONS	Office for National Statistics.
POLAR2	Developed by HEFCE and classifies small areas across the UK into five groups according to their level of young participation in higher education. Each of these groups represents around 20 per cent of young people and is ranked from quintile 1 (areas with the lowest young participation rates, considered as the most disadvantaged) to quintile 5 (highest young participation rates, considered most advantaged). POLAR2 is used in preference to the newer POLAR3 to avoid any distortion of entry rate trends associated with the boundaries to the more recent period used to define POLAR3.
RPA	Record of Prior Acceptance, where an application is submitted to UCAS by a conservatoire.
UK	United Kingdom. Excludes the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.
Withdrawn	In this report, withdrawal refers to complete withdrawal, where the whole application has been removed from the scheme.

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