



Student Equalities Report 2014/5

March 2015, Shokoufeh Rafighi

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Purpose

Like the previous year's (April 2014), this report examines student data, to identify any potential issues or areas of concern for students experience in terms of the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010. It will examine the student population data and how the institution has changed over the last three years (five year data is available on request, however, in order to make the charts presented usable within this document the data are restricted to three years). It will look at the data for progression and awards, and also of withdrawal. It will also examine the data relating to the usage of University services. This report builds on the work undertaken in previous years and is intended to discharge the specific duties of the Equality Act 2010 to publish accessible information relating to student equalities as well as target areas of action to improve the opportunities for all students.

For the purposes of this report the characteristics recorded are gender, race, disability and religion. Whilst the protected characteristics also include age and sexual orientation, these are either not collected or are not complete sets of data. Aston University undertook actions to enable reporting on age of entry to the University in this report.

This report is intended for both an internal and external audience. It is intended that it will be published annually and in a comparable format enabling audiences to compare and track the University's success in progressing student equality. This report should be read alongside the University's Equality Scheme.

Sources of Data

It is important to note the sources of the data used in this report, in order to ensure that we can use comparative data. The data used in this report have been provided by either the department or team responsible for the service on which it is reporting, or by Registry using the student management software to report on the student population and progression/awards. The creation of the "Student Equalities Report" in Business Objects will ensure future years' data can draw on the same parameters. The data presented in this report will vary when compared to data used in HESA returns and other reports generated by the Planning team.

Where data is presented in the report at University level, School level data can also be provided upon request.

For the purposes of clarity on charts presented in this document, the four Asian or Asian British ethnicity categories (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Other) have been merged into one overarching category, as with Black or Black British (Caribbean, African and Other) and Mixed Background (White & Asian, White & Caribbean, White & African and Other Mixed). Full details on expanded categories are available on request.

Where possible, data from 2014/5 is included, however, for data on progression/classification the latest data presented is 2013/4 as the 2014/5 academic year has not yet closed.

The following services are included in the report: The Hub* (including Action Zone, Counselling, Disability Team), Registry*, CLIPP Quality Unit* and Employability (including Placements and Careers Service)*.

- * These services produce an annual report, the data provided within this report is a snapshot and the reader is referred to the full report in order to understand the full picture.

Student Population

The student population at Aston University continues to change every year. The following tables focus on the protected characteristics of the Equality Act. The following charts illustrate the breakdown of the student population (during the academic year 2014/5) by Gender, Ethnicity, Religion and Disability. The data is then further separated by School.

Aston Totals

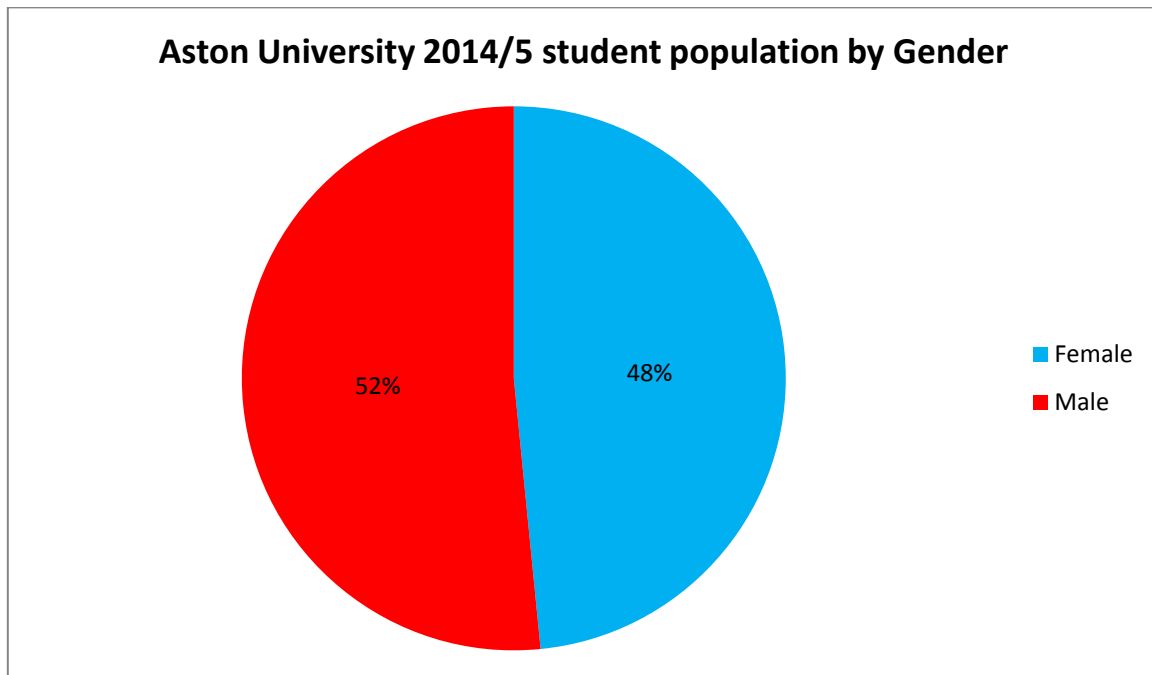


Chart 1- Aston University Population by Gender

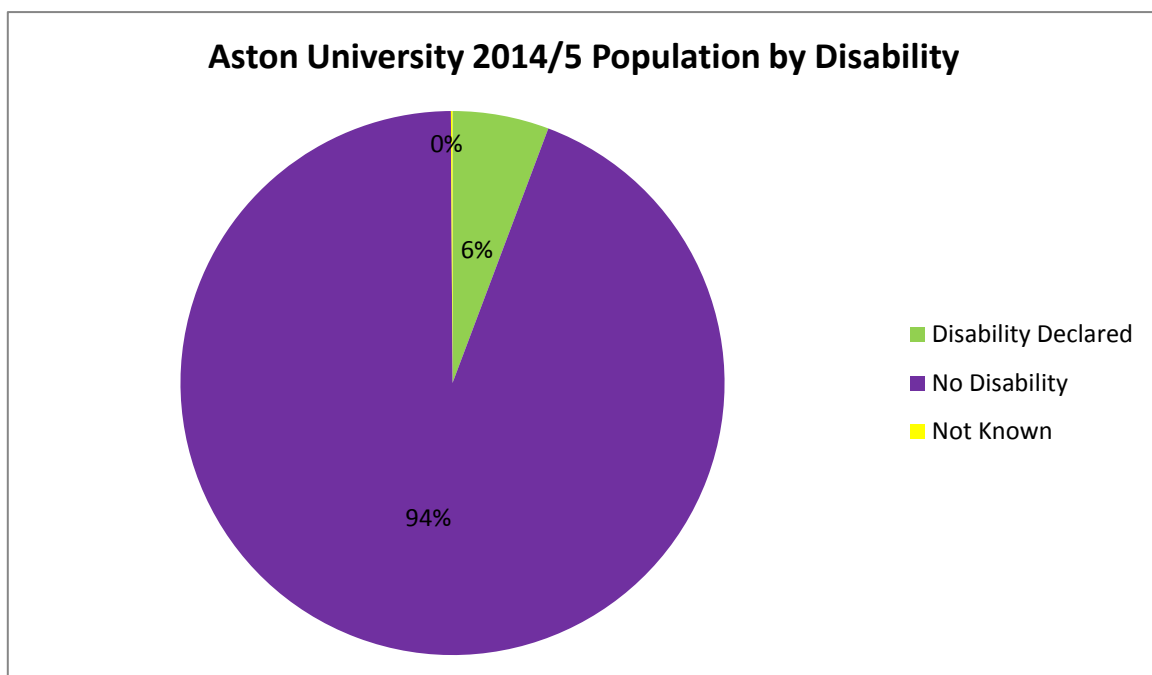


Chart 2- Aston Student Population by Disability

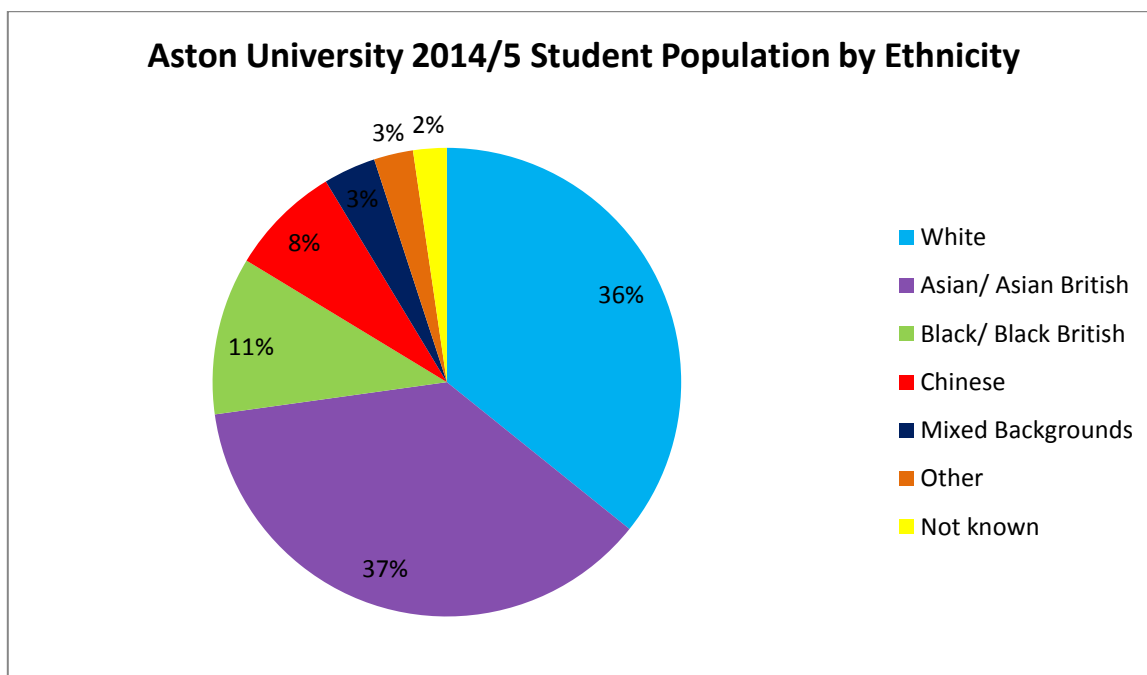


Chart 3- Aston Student Population by Ethnicity

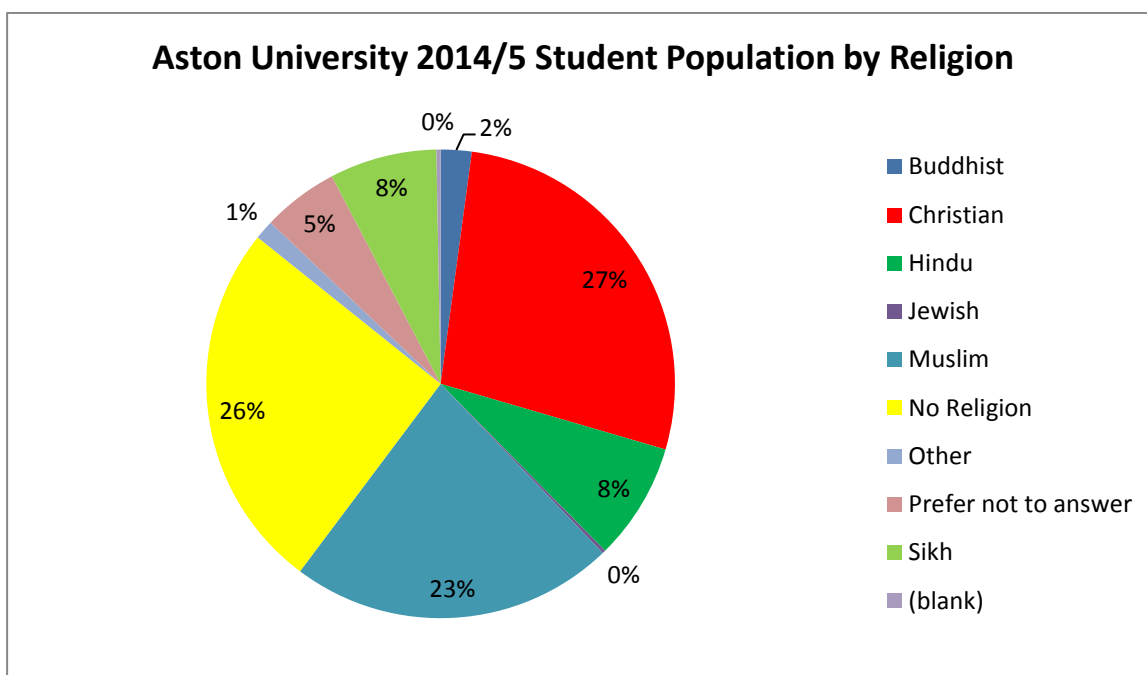


Chart 4- Aston University Population by Belief

The data included in the above charts includes students of all levels within the University (Foundation Degree, Undergraduates, Taught Postgraduates and Research Postgraduates (MRes only)) as well as Home and Overseas students during the 2014/5 academic year. The gender split shows that there are slightly more male students than female, however, as can be seen in chart 5, this has remained constant over the last three years, showing very little change.

The number of students declaring their disability has gradually increased compared the two years before, as shown in chart 6. Almost 6% of Aston student population declared disability during the academic year 2014/5.

The predominant ethnicities at Aston University are White (British, Other), Asian (Chinese, Indian, Pakistani, Other) as well as Black or Black British (African) in the academic year 2014/5 as shown on chart 3. During the academic years 2012/3 and 2013/4, Aston University sustained its diversity stature by the rise in number of students from variety of backgrounds. The rise included students who classified themselves as Asian (Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Indian), White (British and Scottish), Black (African and African), with Mixed background (all groups) and Other ethnicities. Among these groups, however, Chinese, Black or British-Caribbean as well as White others were lower in population.

In terms of religion, 3,479 students identify themselves as Christian, 3,239 students as having no religion, 2,846 students as Muslims and respectively 1,028 and 939 students identified themselves as Hindu and Sikh.

Aston totals 2012/3, 2013/4 & 2014/5

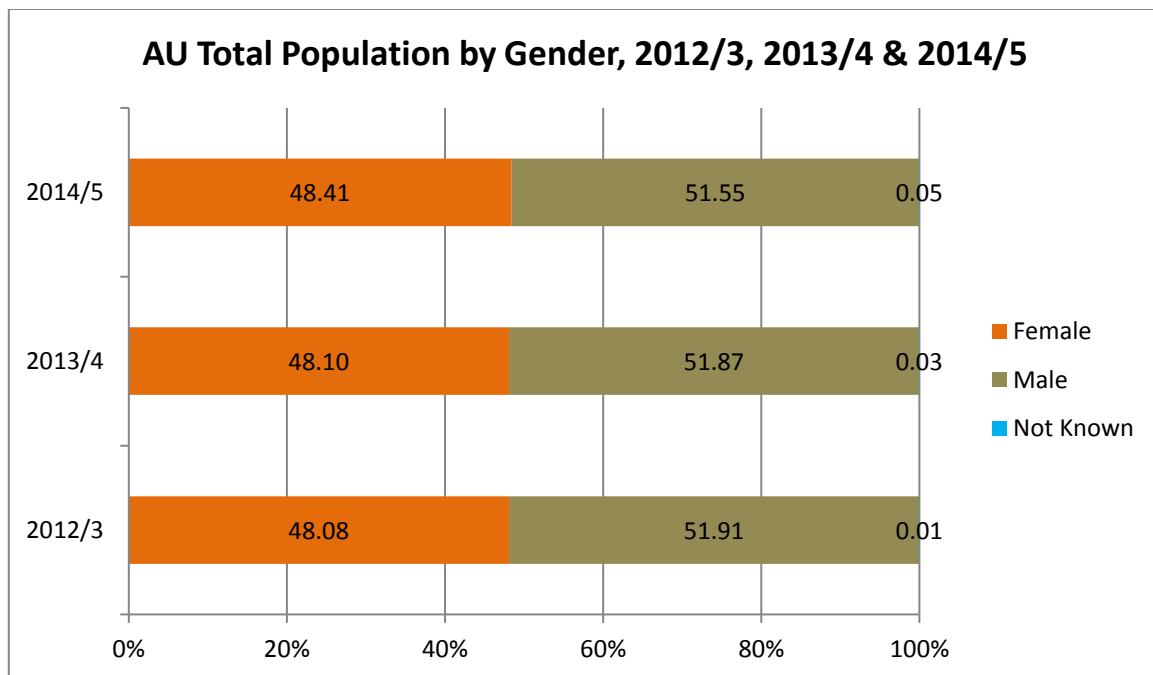


Chart 5- Aston University Population by Gender- 3yr

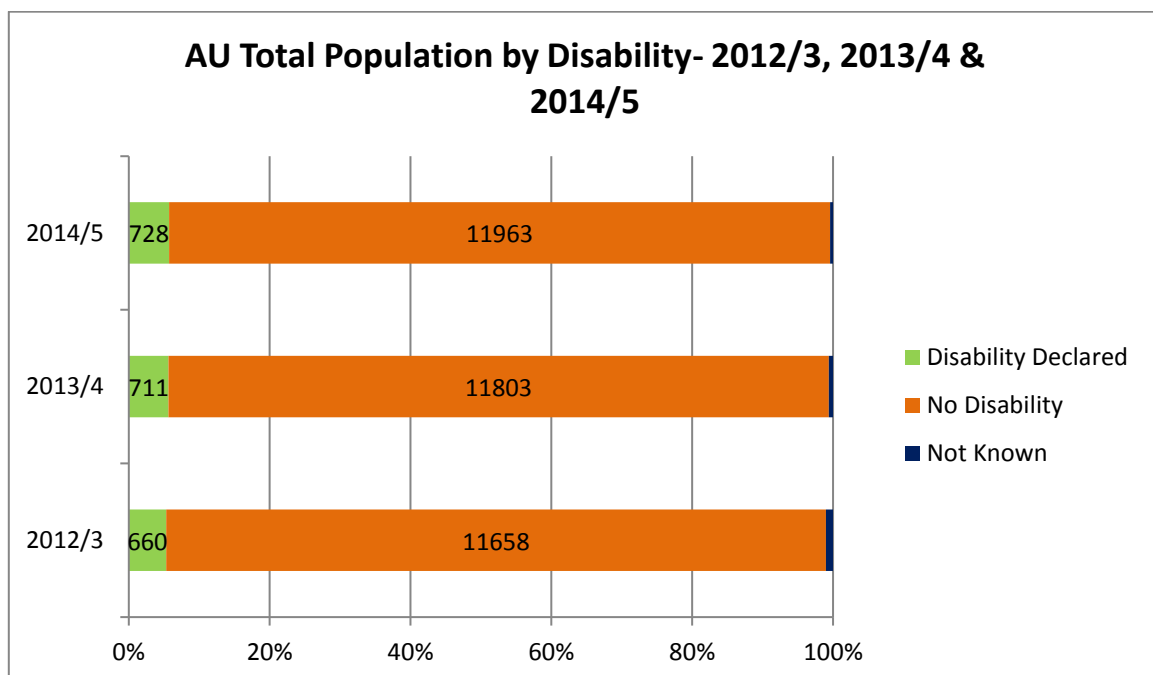


Chart 6- Aston Student Population by Disability- 3yr

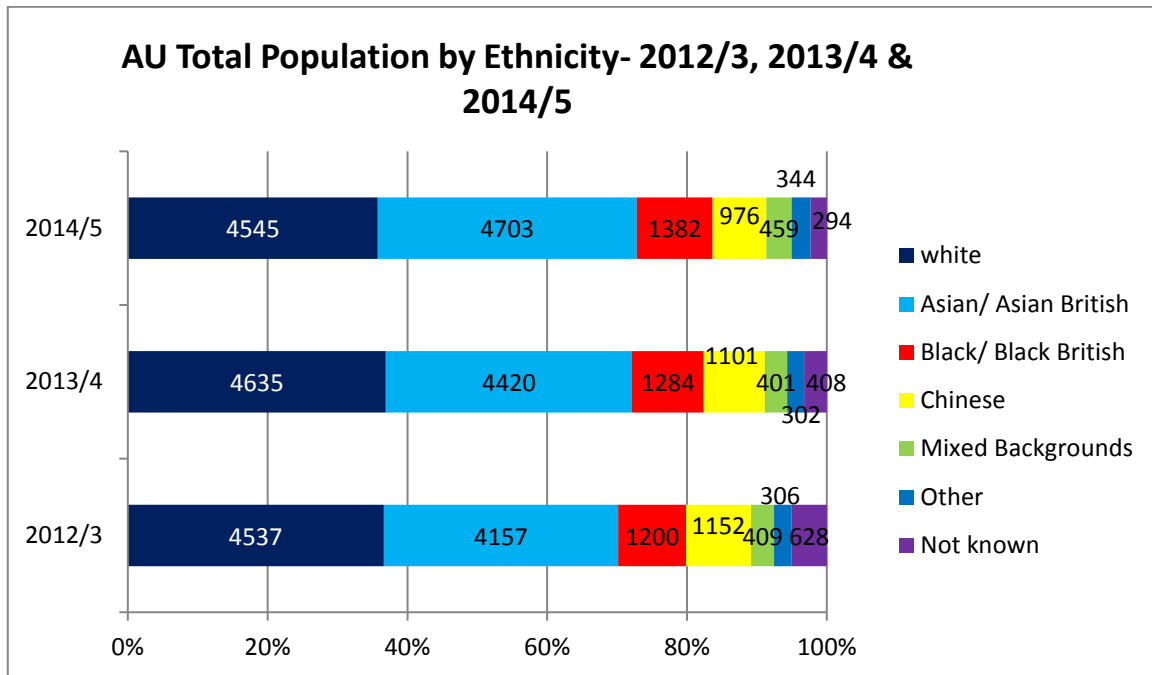


Chart 7- Aston Student Population by Ethnicity- 3yr

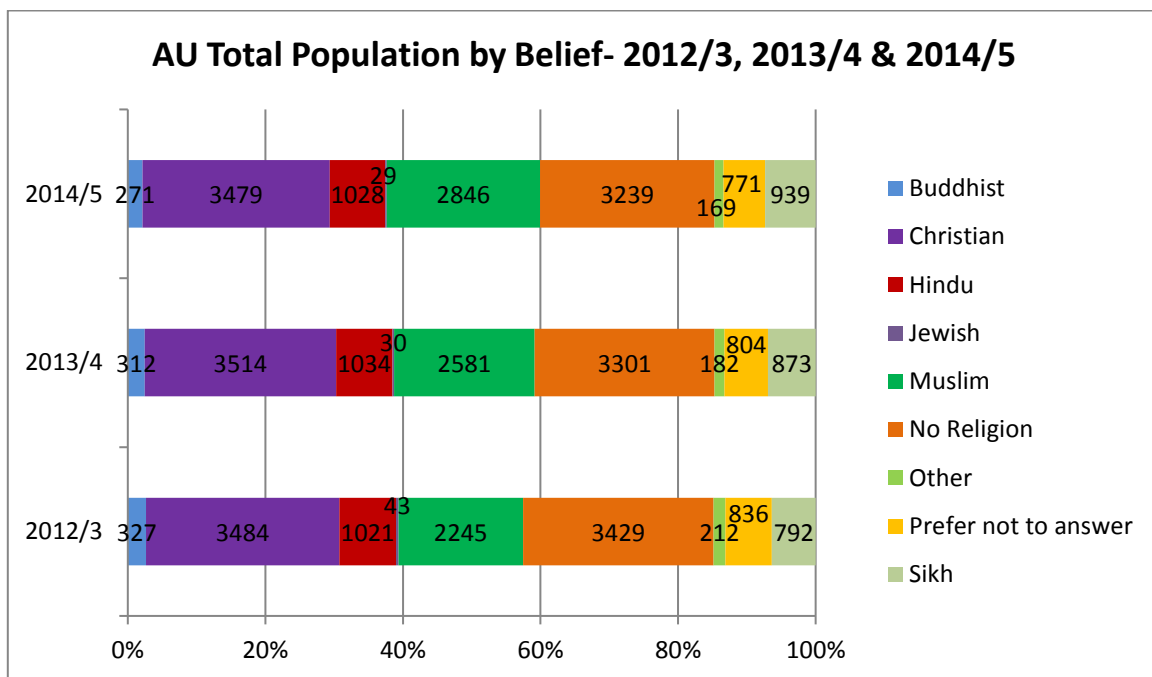


Chart 8- Aston Student Population by Religion- 3yr

Aston University has continued to have relatively higher number of male students during the period shown on the graph below. The gap between number of students from each gender became smaller, however, by almost 1% for the academic year 2013/4 and 2014/5.

Aston University succeeded in increasing the number of disability declarations by almost 10% during the academic year 2011/2 to 2013/4. This number increased further during the next academic year to 728 claims. Aston University is trying to raise awareness about the positive

faces of disability in order to help students feel more comfortable with declaring their disabilities and be able to take advantage of a fairer educational experience.

Aston University has continuously sustained its diversity during the period shown. There have been a rise in all the ethnicities at Aston University except for Chinese which has gradually shrunk in number during the period depicted in chart 7.

Aston University's population has three predominant beliefs of Christianity, Islam and No Religion. During the past three academic years, there has been a considerable rise in the Muslim and Sikh population at Aston University, which is up to almost 27% and 19% respectively, compared to the figures in 2012/3 academic year. On the other hand, the number of students with Buddhism, No Religion and Other Religion has fallen during the period, as shown on chart 8. In the meantime, Hinduism, Judaism and Christianity have had a constant population at Aston University.

There has been a fall in the number of Unknown figures in Disability, Ethnicity and Religion characteristics over the three year period, as a result of improvement in data collection by a considerable proportions to 83%, 53% and 15% respectively, compared to the relevant figures in the year 2012/3.

Aston Totals by School

In order fully to understand the make-up of the University, the following charts separate the data into the five Schools. As there remain students on Combined Honours programmes, CHS is included in these charts. The data for CHS, therefore, only relates to those students who have not yet finished their programme and do not include the new Joint Honours programmes (which are included in the lead School data) as per the previous report.

Gender by School

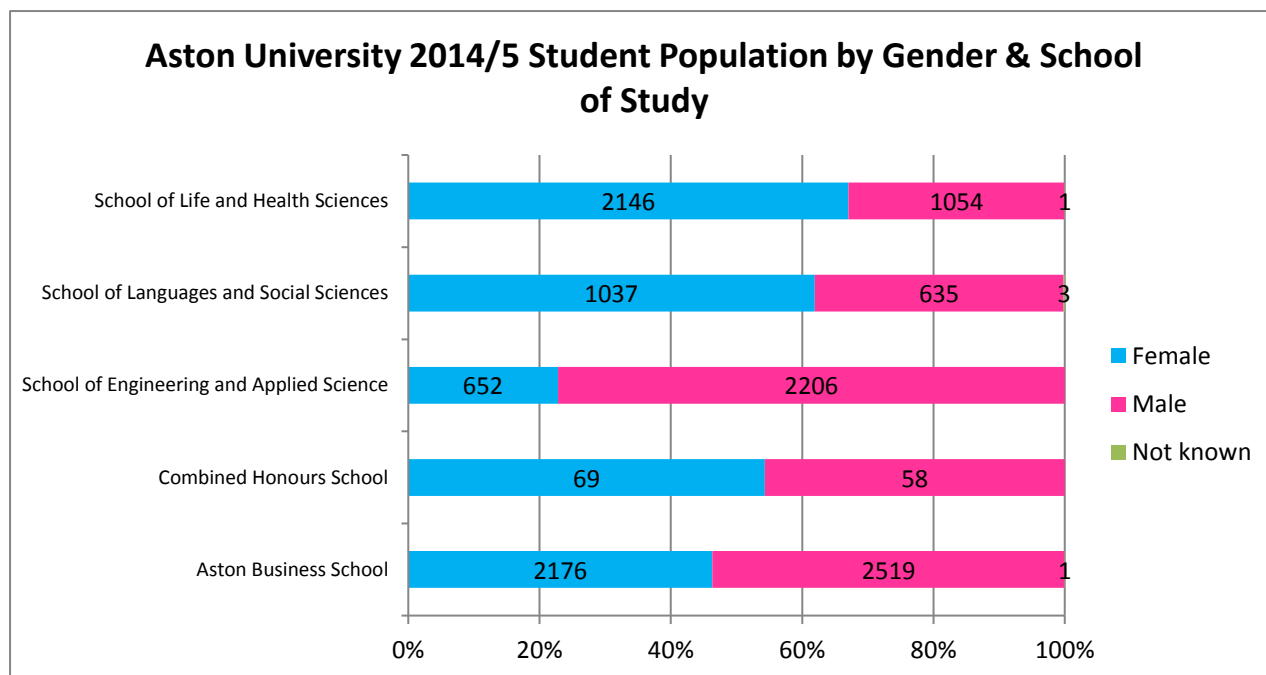


Chart 9a- Aston Population by Gender and School

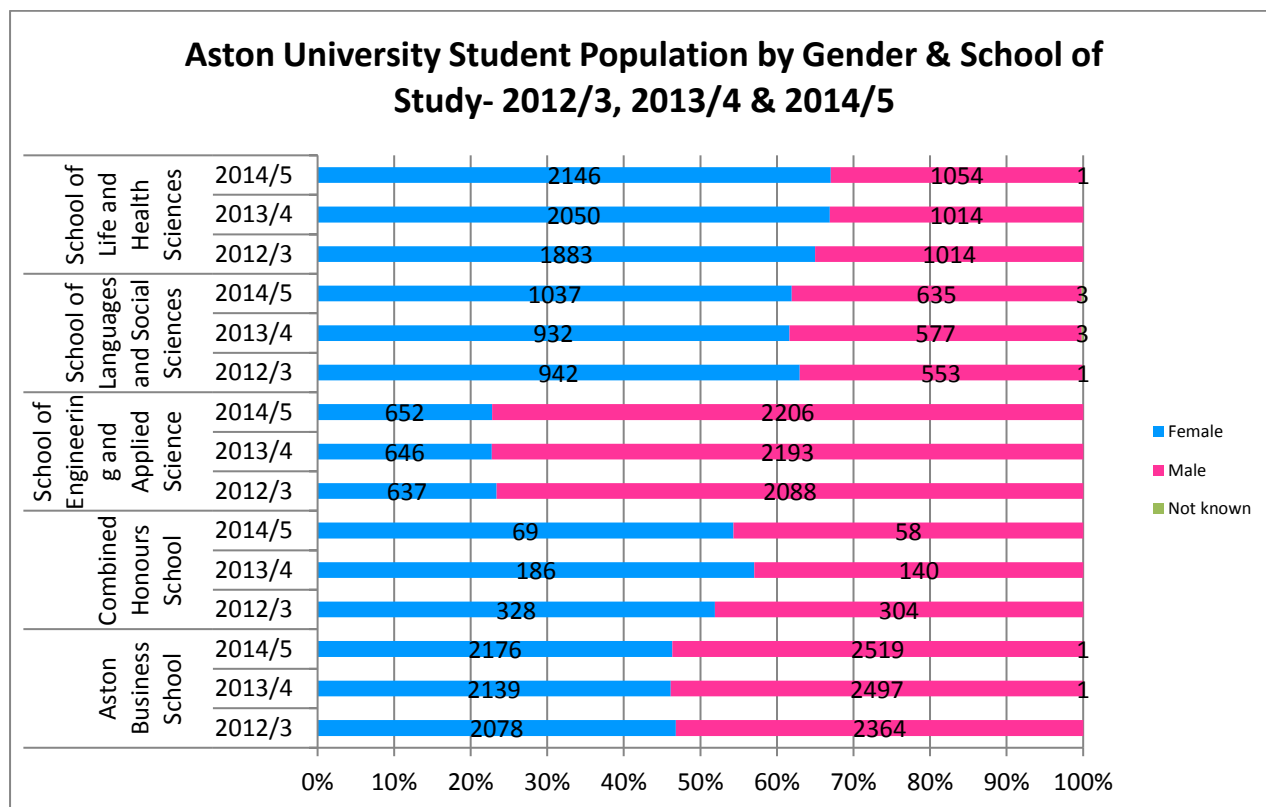


Chart 9b- Aston University Population by Gender and School

There was an inconsistent pattern between genders across different schools. Life and Health Sciences and Languages and Social Sciences have a predominantly female population as opposed to Engineering and Applied Science and Aston Business School. Combined Honours has the most homogeneous populations with regards to gender.

During the 2014/5 academic year, the gap between the number of students of each gender increased even further in all Schools except for Combined Honours School and Aston Business School.

Disability by School

The Charts below show the number of students who have registered a disability with the University by School. The number of students whose disability status was Not Known decreased from 71 cases in 2012/3 to 12 cases during the year 2014/5.

As shown on the graph below, the number of claims from Combined Honours dropped. The rate of fall in the number of claims in the Combined Honours School was lower than the descent in population of the School.

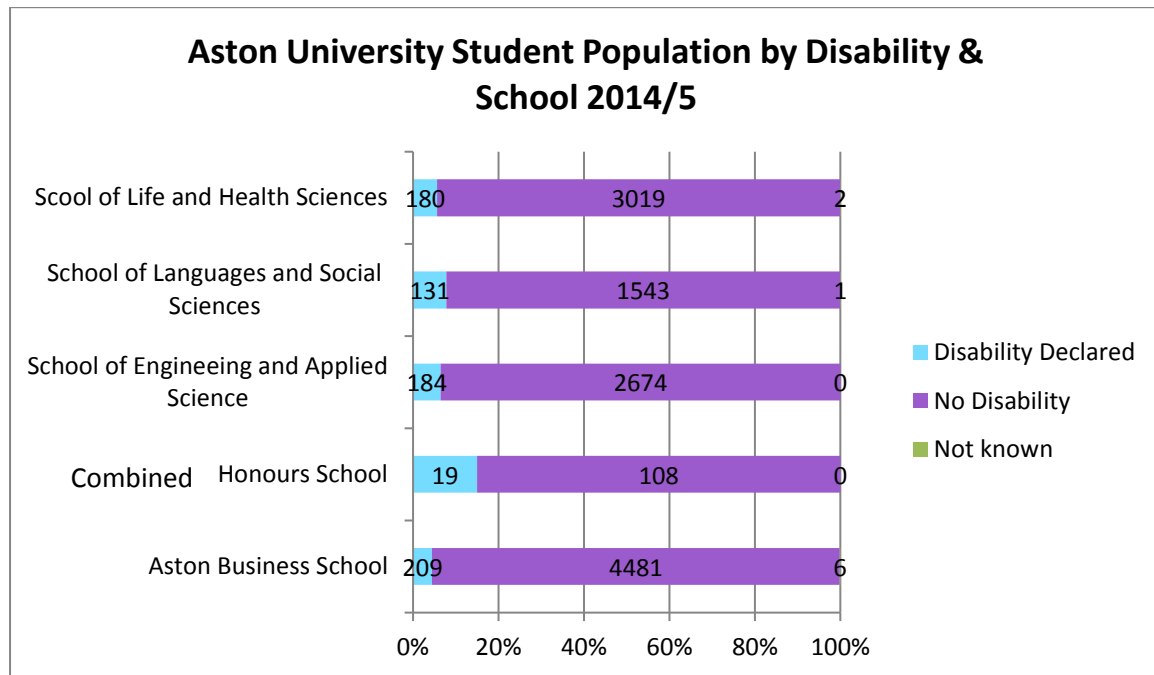


Chart 10a- Aston University Population by Disability and School

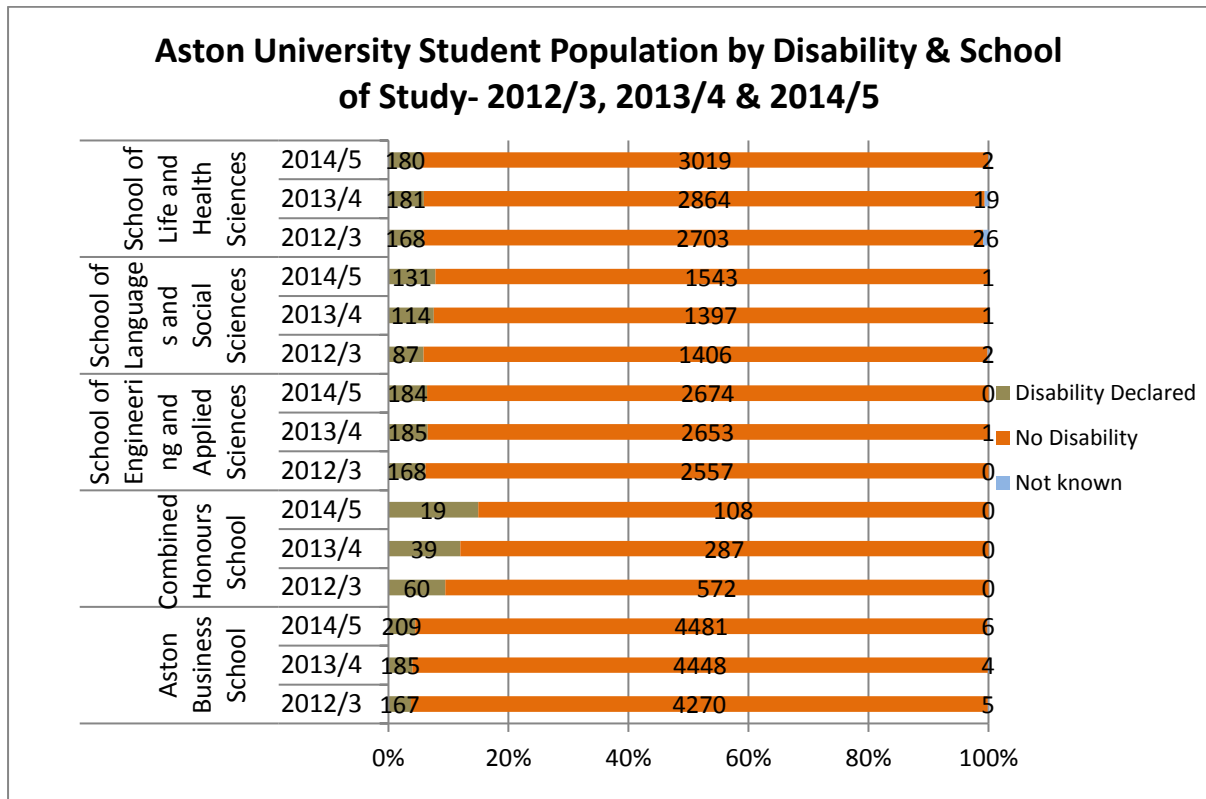


Chart 10b- Aston Student Population by Disability and School

The chart below shows the split of the kind of disabilities declared at Aston University. The most significant disability at Aston University is related to Specific Learning Difference which comprised over 45% of the cases recognised in the University during the academic years between 2011 and 2014. The other significant conditions recognised were related to disabilities categorised as 'Other' and 'Unseen/Long Standing Illnesses' with 12% and 10% respectively.

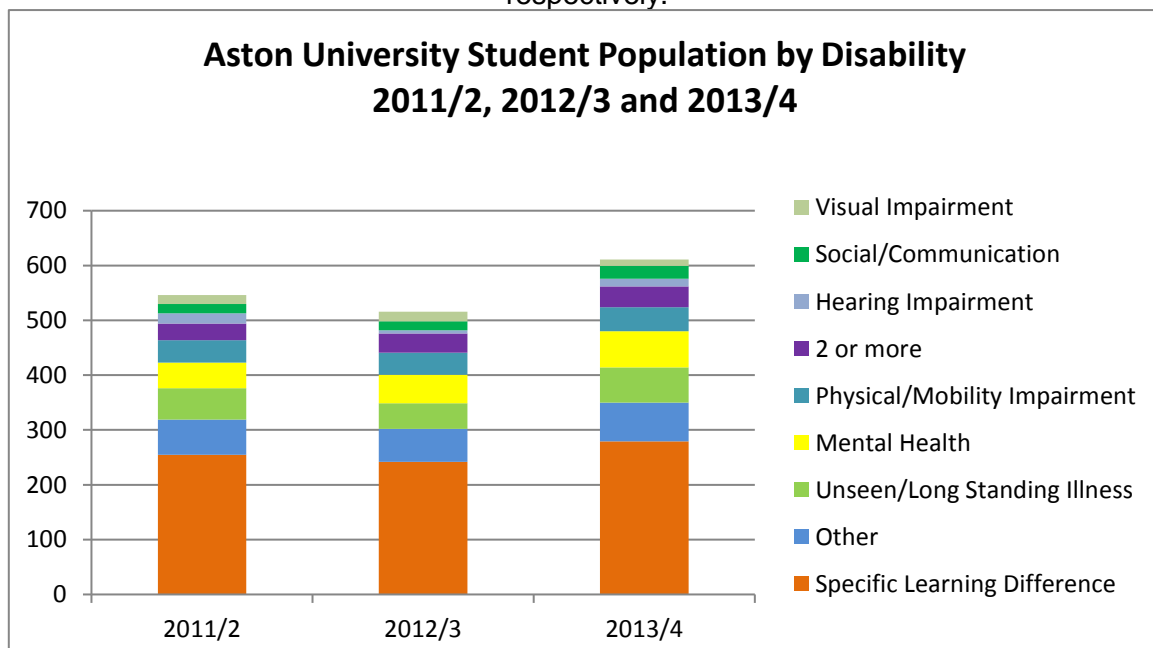


Chart 11- Aston University Disability by Type

Ethnicity by School

Again, as with the Gender and Disability charts, the ethnic breakdown of the student population varies in each School. As in the academic year 2013/4, the highest population of White students are in the School of Languages & Social Sciences, and the highest number of Asian or Asian British students are in the School of Life & Health Sciences. Again this can be attributed to the degree subjects offered by the Schools. Pharmacy, Optometry and Biology programmes attract students from Asian or Asian British backgrounds more than in School of Languages & Social Sciences programmes. The School of Life & Health Sciences has the lowest proportion of White students of any of the five Schools. The majority of Chinese students are attracted to Aston Business School.

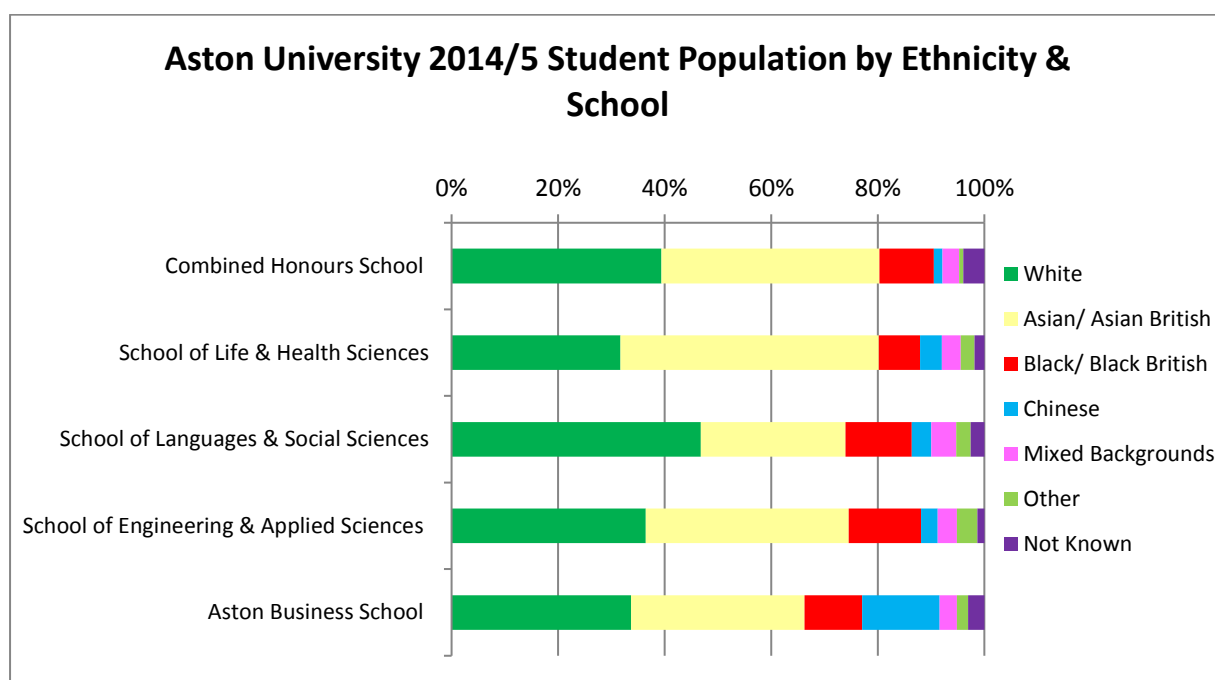


Chart 12a- Aston Student Population by Ethnicity and School

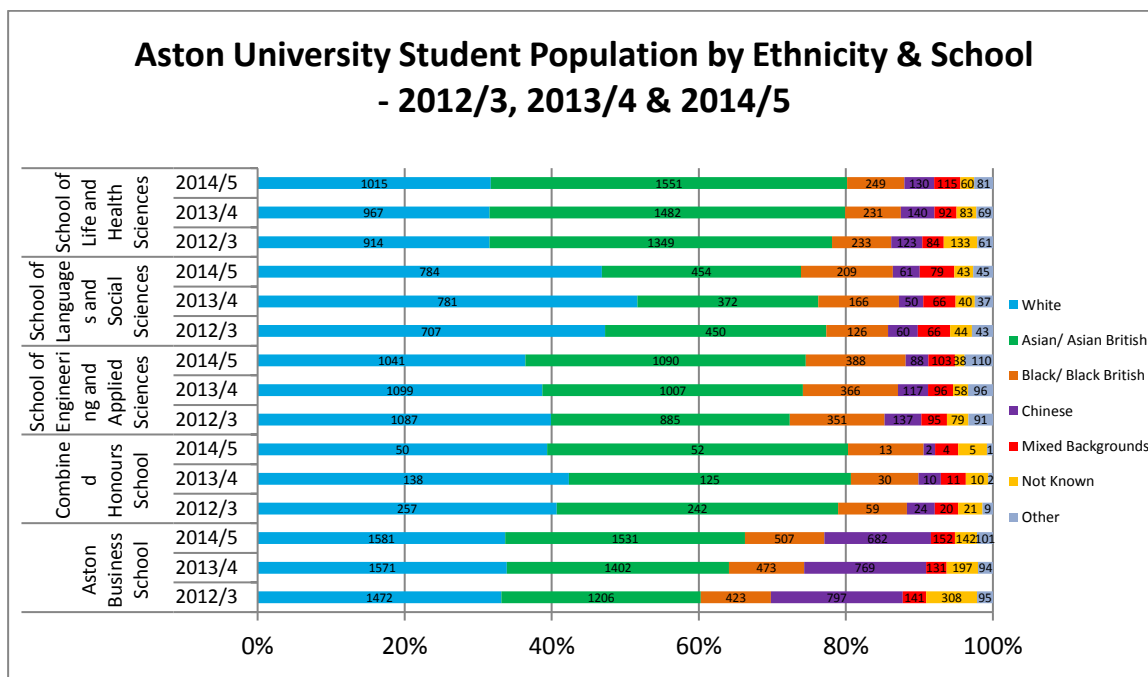


Chart 12b- Aston Student Population by Ethnicity and School

Chart 12b shows the ethnicity breakdown by School over a three-year period. This shows a year on year variation of students from all ethnicity groups with no clear trend emerging. As with last year’s report, whilst degree programme subject can account for some of the variance between Schools, it is important to monitor the data in future years to ensure students from all groups are encouraged to become a student in the subjects offered at the University.

Aston Totals by School, Level and Home/Overseas Status

Whilst Home/Overseas status is not one of the protected characteristics, it is included in this report in order to understand better the nature of the student body at Aston. In 2013/4 there were 143 nationalities at Aston University. The top ten countries in 2013/4 are (in order) British, Chinese, Nigerian, Indian, German, French, Bulgarian, Thai, Dutch and Saudi Arabian. Aston University admitted students from Laos, Chile, Sierra Leone and Israel in the year 2014/5.

The chart below shows the number of students by School over the three academic years and their Home/Overseas status (as defined by fee status).

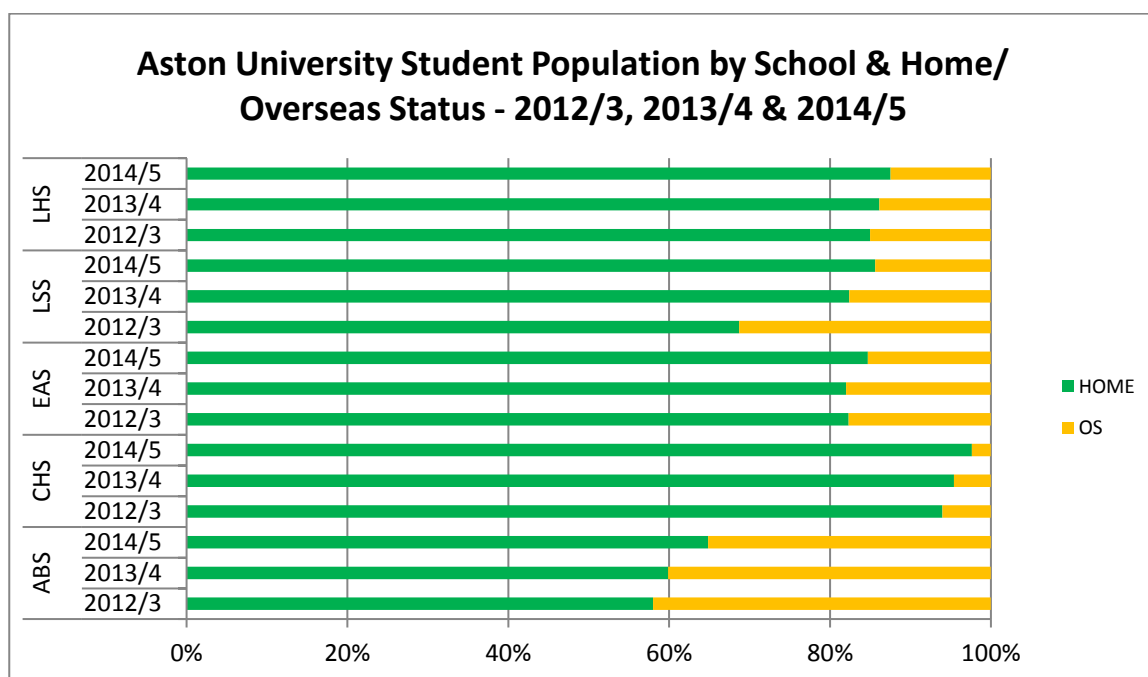


Chart 13- Aston University Total Population by School & Home/Overseas Status

The following charts show the student Home/Overseas status by Level of study (Foundation Degree, Undergraduate and Postgraduate). Data from the Foundation Degree student population has not shown any Overseas students since 2011/2. There are no students within the School of Languages and Social Sciences at Foundation level.

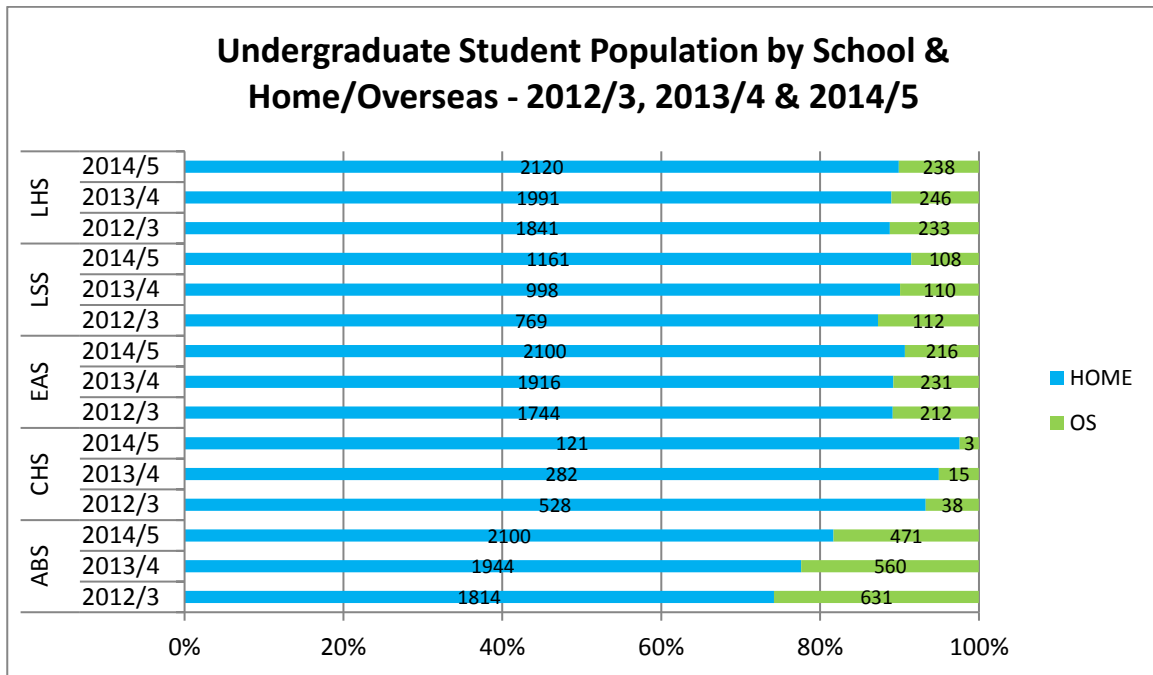


Chart14- Undergraduate Population by School & Home/Overseas Status

The chart above shows the number of students at Undergraduate level by Home/Overseas status. This shows that over the last three years there has been a steady decrease in the number of Overseas students across all Schools. ABS continues to have the highest number of overseas students at this level.

Finally, the chart below shows the number of students at Postgraduate level, including both Postgraduate Taught and Postgraduate Research.

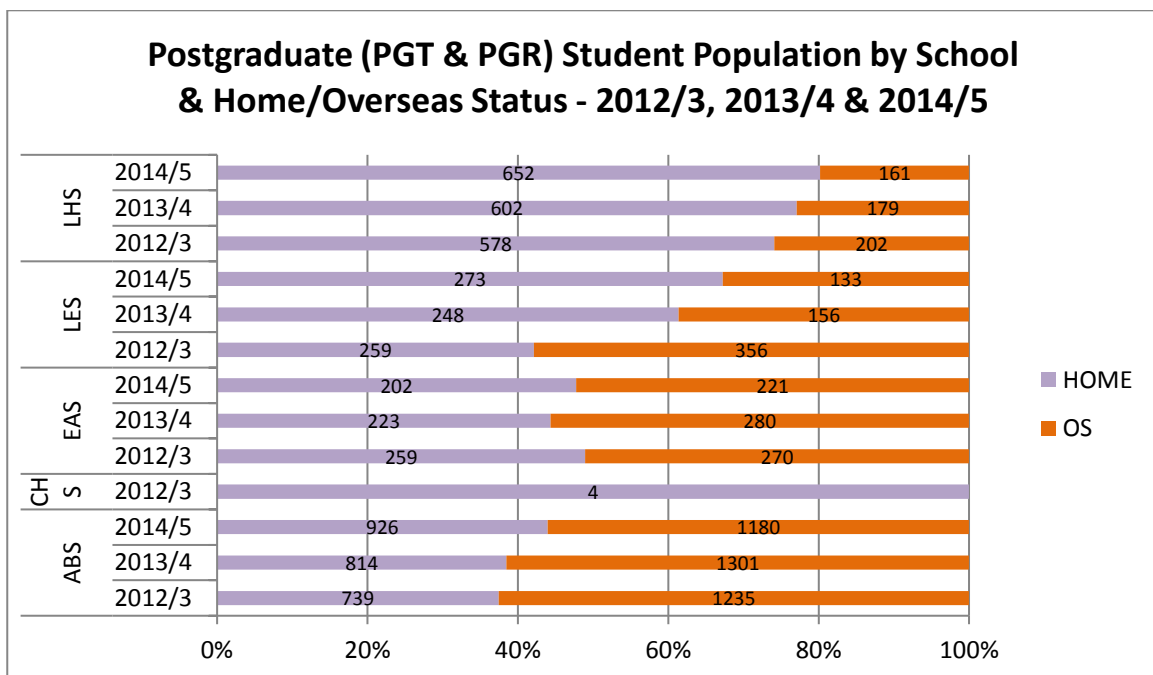


Chart 15- Postgraduate (PGT& PGR) Population by School and Home/Overseas Status

It is clear from this chart that it is at the Postgraduate level where most of the Overseas students are studying. ABS has had the biggest Overseas students population during the period shown on Chart 15, with 1,180 students. Overall there has been a fall in number of overseas students in the current academic year. The Postgraduates in EAS and ABS include more than 50% Overseas students.

Gender

In terms of Gender, the split between the genders at each level of study has slightly changed in the past three years (2012/3, 2013/4 & 2014/5). At all levels except for Postgraduate Research and Taught there was a slightly higher ratio of male students. The gap between the number of male and female students continues to be highest for Foundation Degree with 122 male students as opposed to only 49 female students. The chart below (chart 16) shows the gender split over the three years.

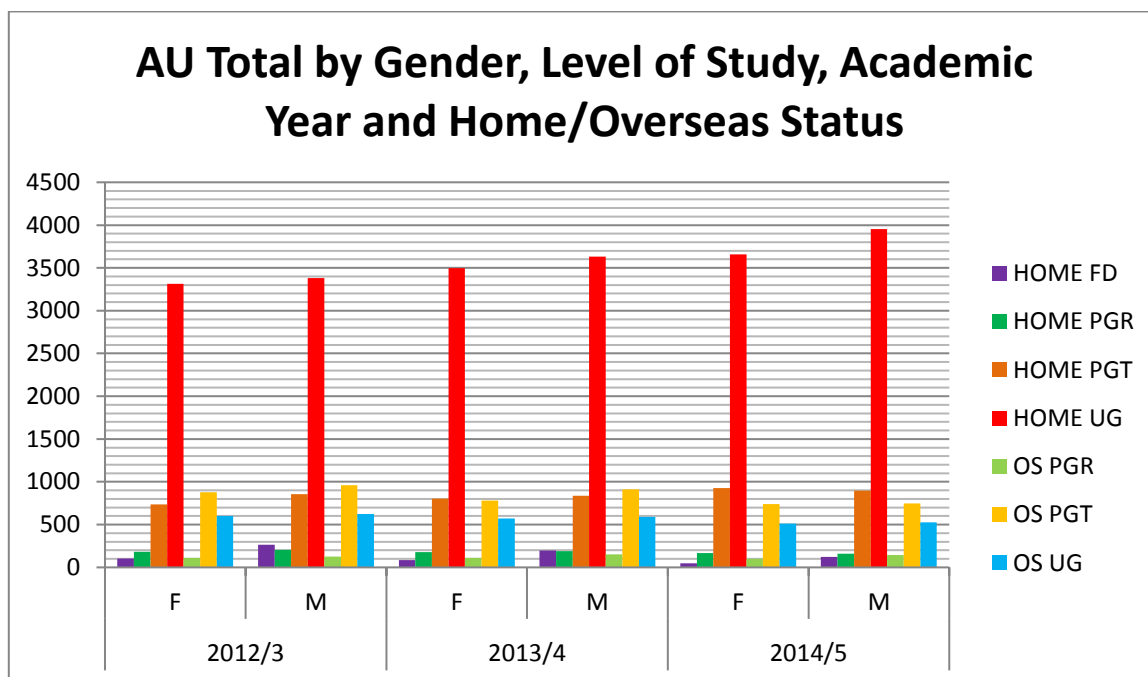


Chart 16- Total Population by Gender

Gender & Progression

The chart below shows the progression status of students at all levels in the University by Gender. The number of students withdrawing from their programme dropped in 2013/4 compared to 2011/2 and 2012/3 for both non-academic and academic reasons. The number of male students on leave of absence, however, rose by 24 students in 2013/4 compared to 2012/3. There was a significant rise in the number of students proceeding to next stage in 2013/4 for both genders. The number of students repeating was also higher in 2013/4 compared to 2012/3.

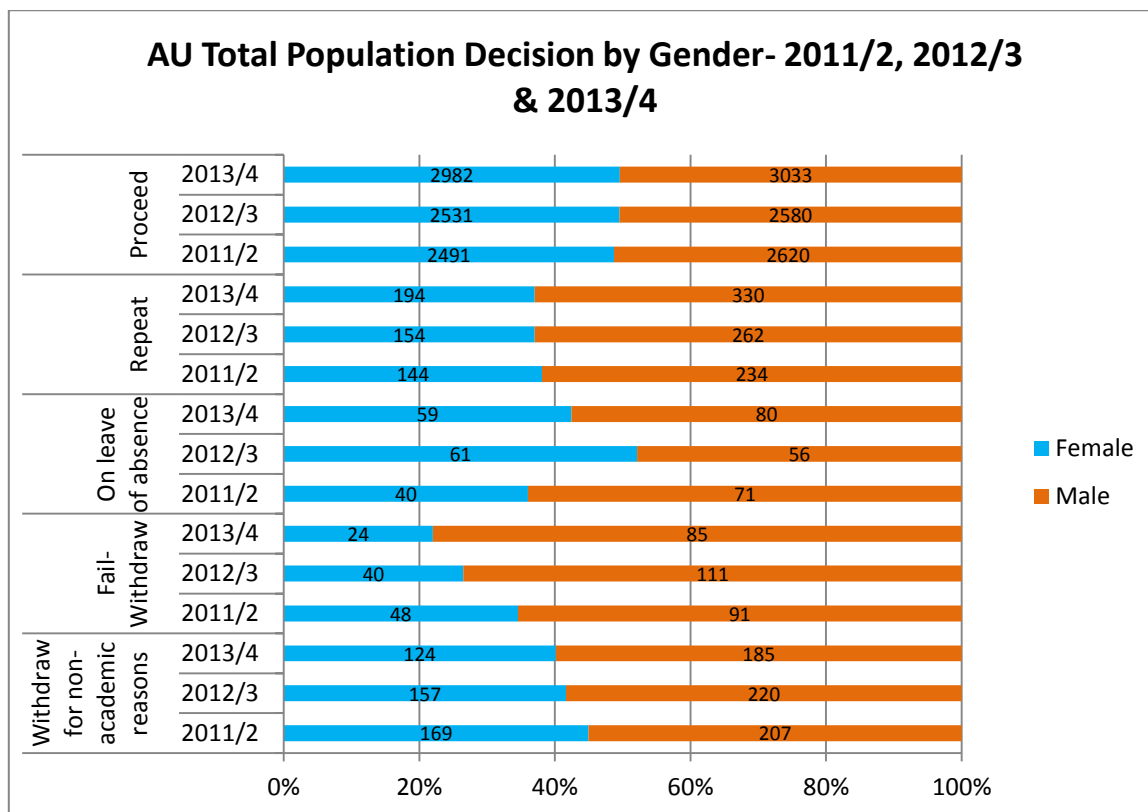


Chart 17- Gender & Progression

Gender & Award/ Classification

The following charts show the award profile at each level of study by gender.

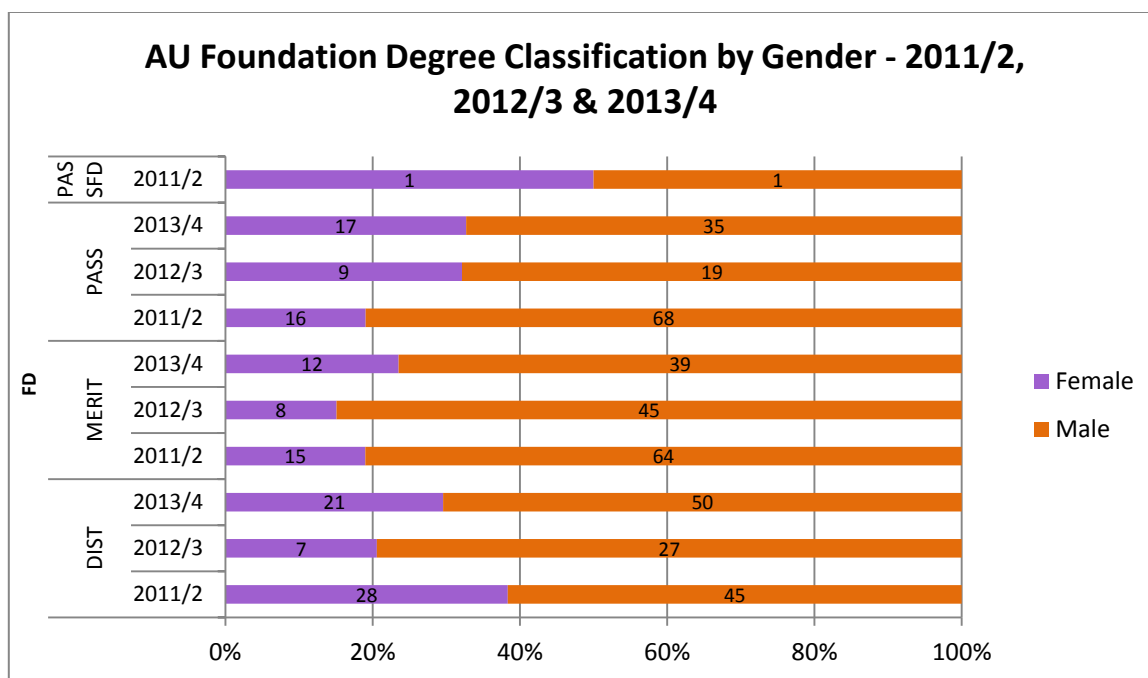


Chart 18- Gender and Award/Classification –Foundation Degree

Chart 18 above shows the degree classification for Foundation Degree (FD) Programmes. The number of female and male students receiving distinction saw a significant rise of about 300% and 200% respectively in 2013/4. An action was identified for the previous report to monitor the outcomes of female FD students in future years to ensure the numbers do not reduce again. Monitoring the Foundation Degree student body showed that there has been a rise in number of female students in 2013/4.

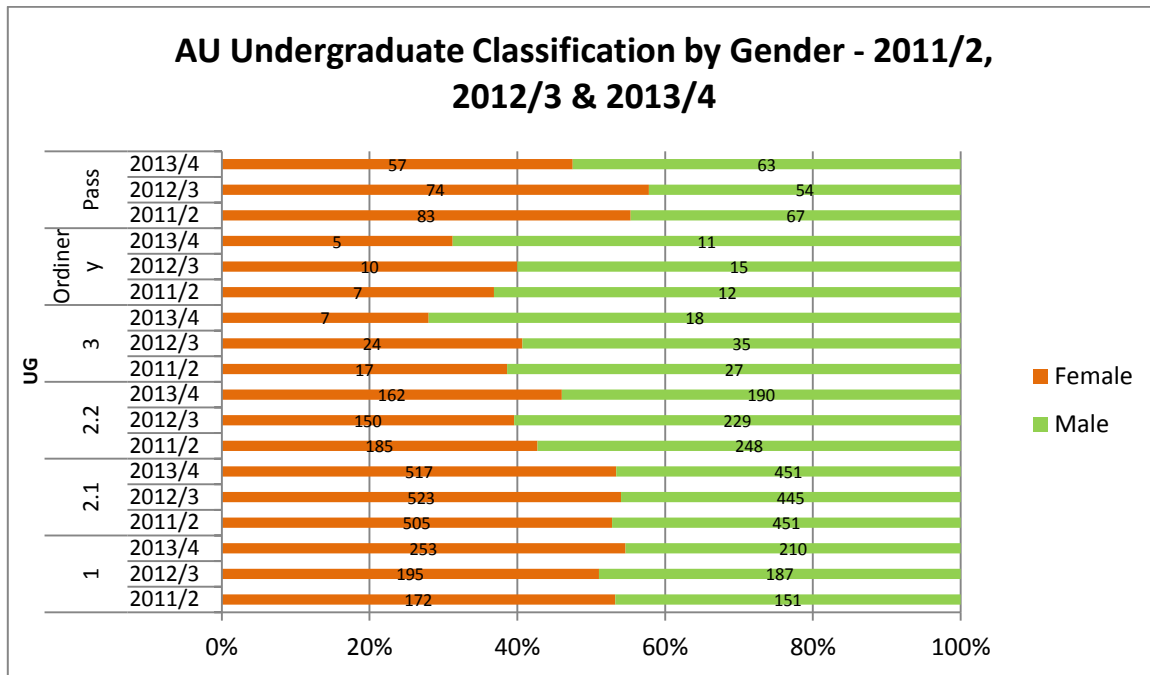


Chart 19- Gender & Award/Classification – Undergraduate Programmes

Chart 19 shows the award classifications for Undergraduate Programmes in 2011/2, 2012/3 & 2013/4. The majority of students from both genders received a 2.1 classifications during the period shown and there was a rise in the number of 1st class classifications in 2013/4 which was more significant among female students. Furthermore, the number of students receiving a 3rd classification and ordinary degree fell significantly in 2013/4. Whilst male students are more likely than female students to receive an Ordinary degree, the numbers in this group became even smaller than of last year (16 in 2013/4).

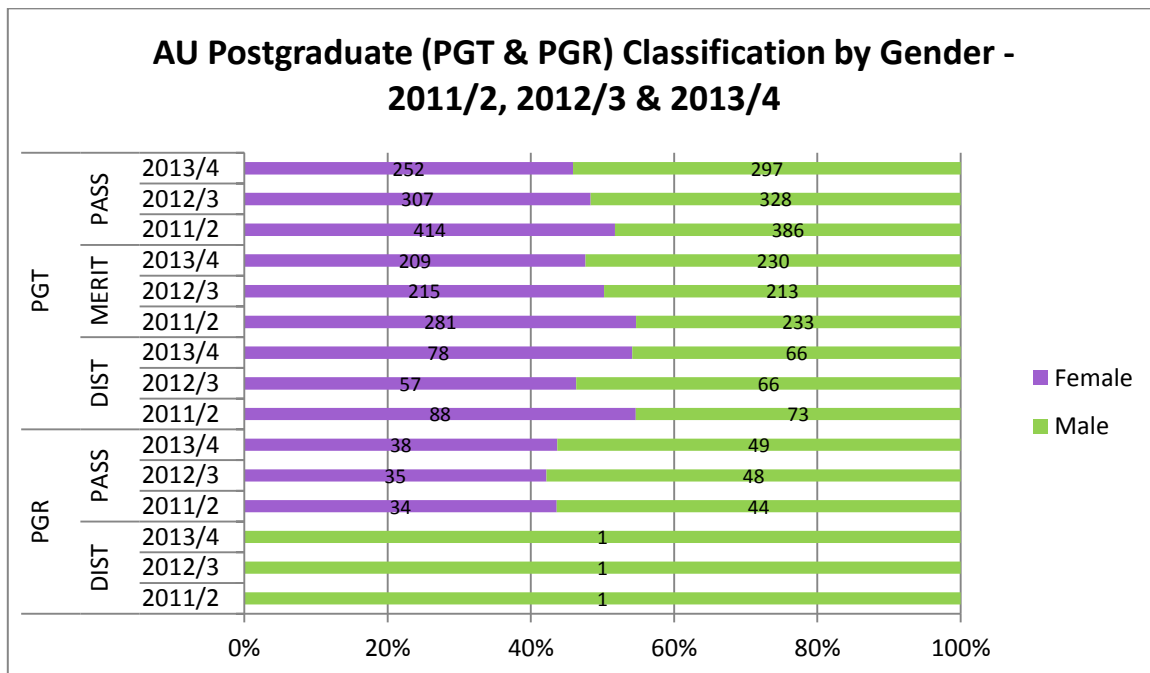


Chart 20- Gender and Award/Classification – Postgraduate Programmes

Finally, postgraduate programmes are examined in the chart above. For Postgraduate Taught programmes (PGT) female students were more likely to have a distinction for their studies compared to their male cohorts in 2013/4. Only one male student managed to achieve a distinction for their Postgraduate Research programme studies (MSc by Research) during the period shown on chart-20. As there are no other award categories for PGR, it is not possible to draw any conclusions based on gender.

Gender & Withdrawal

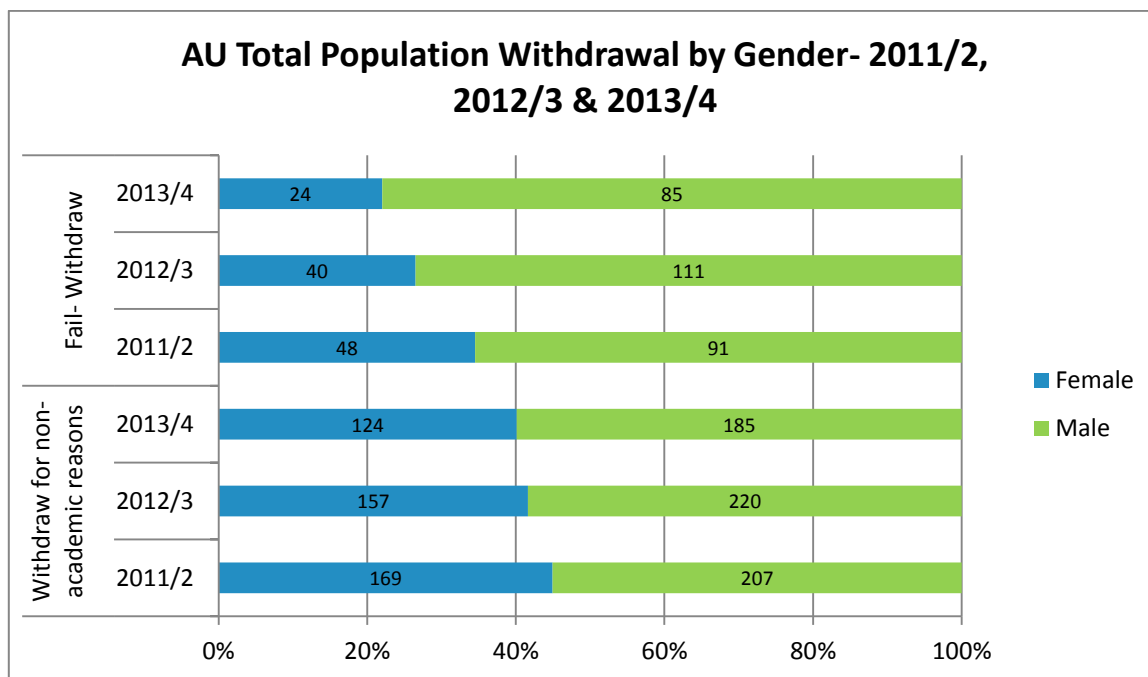


Chart 21- Gender & Withdrawal

Finally, the chart above shows the withdrawal data for the three academic years by gender. Consistently over the three years, male students are more likely to withdraw from their students because of both academic failure and non-academic reasons. There was a fall in withdrawal of both academic reasons and non-academic reason for both genders in 2013/4 compared to 2011/2 & 2012/3.

Disability

This section of the report will look at disability data in terms of population, progression, award and withdrawal.

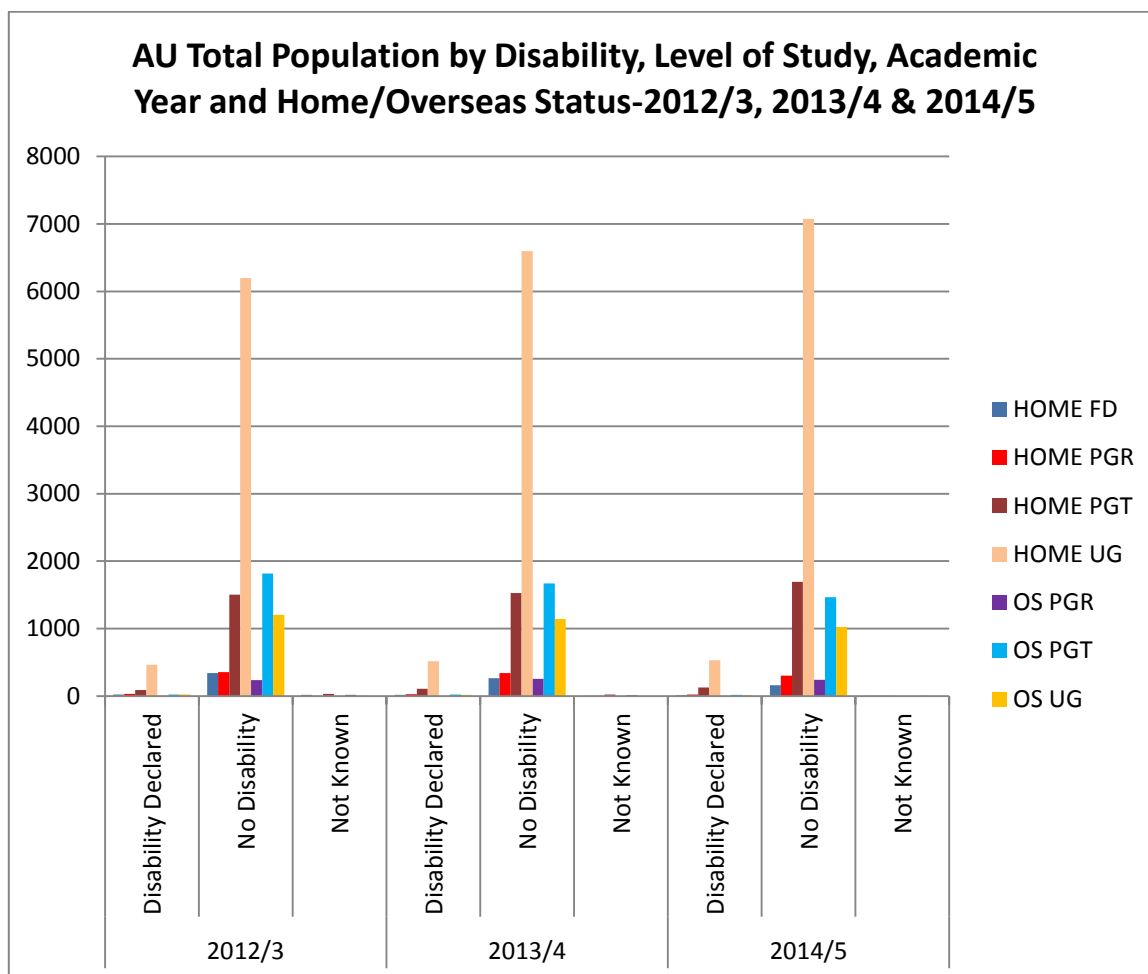


Chart22- Disability Status, Level of Study, Academic Year and Home/Overseas status

In 2013/4 there are 728 students who declared their disability to the University (not all students choose to do so). This represents 5.7% of total student body in 2014/5 compared to 5.2% in 2013/4.

It is worth noting, as in last year’s report, that there remain issues in terms of the accuracy of recording students’ disability status. The notes from the HESA table state “The indicator is the percentage of students who are in receipt of the Disabled Students’ Allowance. This is less than the percentage who are recorded as disabled, but should prove to be more robust. A number of people have noted that students do not have to inform their institution that they are in receipt of DSA, and so potentially there could be a substantial undercount of the numbers involved. This does not appear to be a major problem”.

Disability & Progression

The chart below shows the progression status for 2011/2, 2012/3 & 2013/4. It is clear that students who have declared a disability to the University are more likely, as a percentage of cohort, to be on a Leave of Absence (LOA) from their studies than students who have no disability. Furthermore, this number increased by almost 50% in the year 2013/4 (from 18 in 2012/3 to 30 in 2013/4). Whilst the LOA may or may not be result of their disability, it is important to ensure their successful transition back to University life. Students who take time away from the University during their studies will change their cohort and peer networks, making it harder to settle and perform successfully. An additional action point is to monitor the number of students on Leave of Absence who have declared a disability.

2013/4 also shows that more students who have declared a disability repeated their studies than in previous years. This number increased, however, by 107 for students with No Disability.

The number of students who have failed their course for both academic and non-academic reason has dropped considerably in the year 2013/4 compared to 2012/3 and 2011/2 academic years.

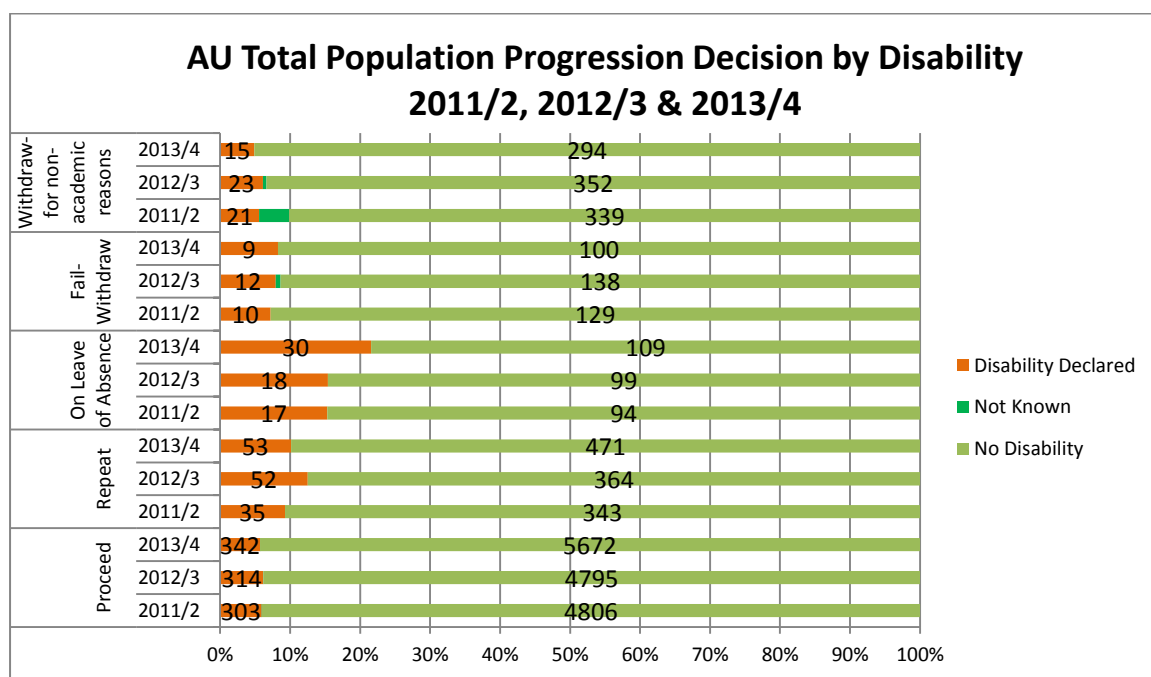


Chart 23- Disability & Progression

Disability & Award

The charts below follow the same format as the Gender section, and present the award classification by Level of study. The first is for Foundation Degree programmes. As the total number of students on these programmes is low, it is difficult to draw conclusion from the data shown in the chart, however, there is a higher percentage of students achieving Distinction in 2013/4.

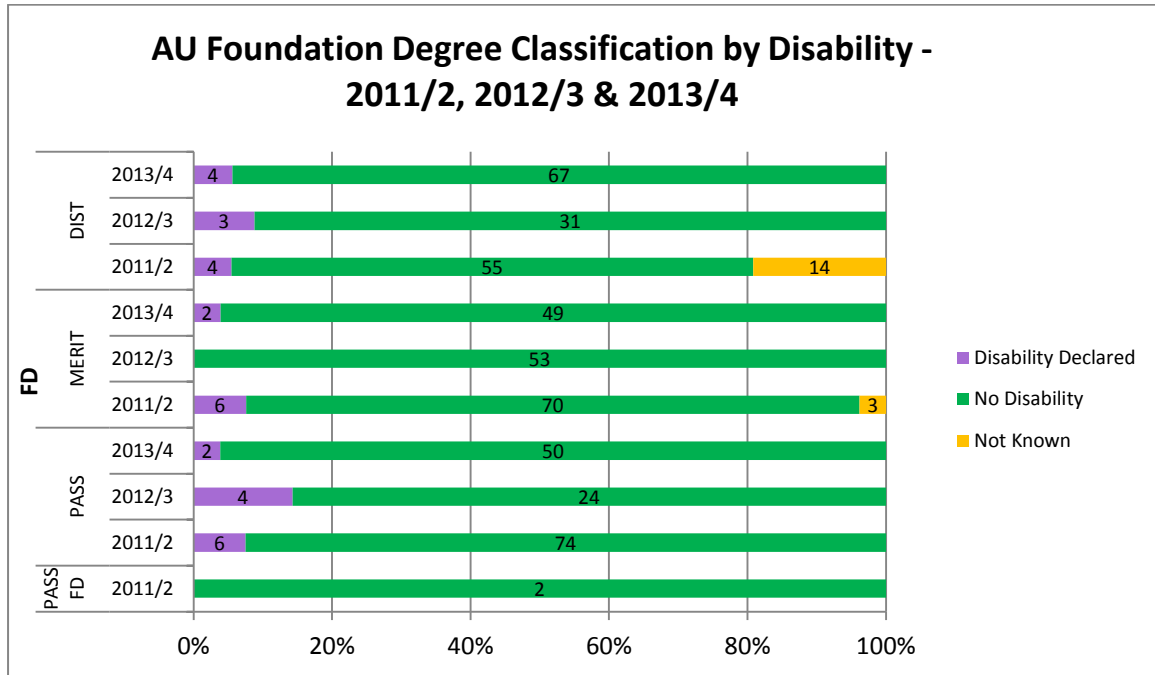


Chart 24 – Disability & Award/ Classification – Foundation Degrees

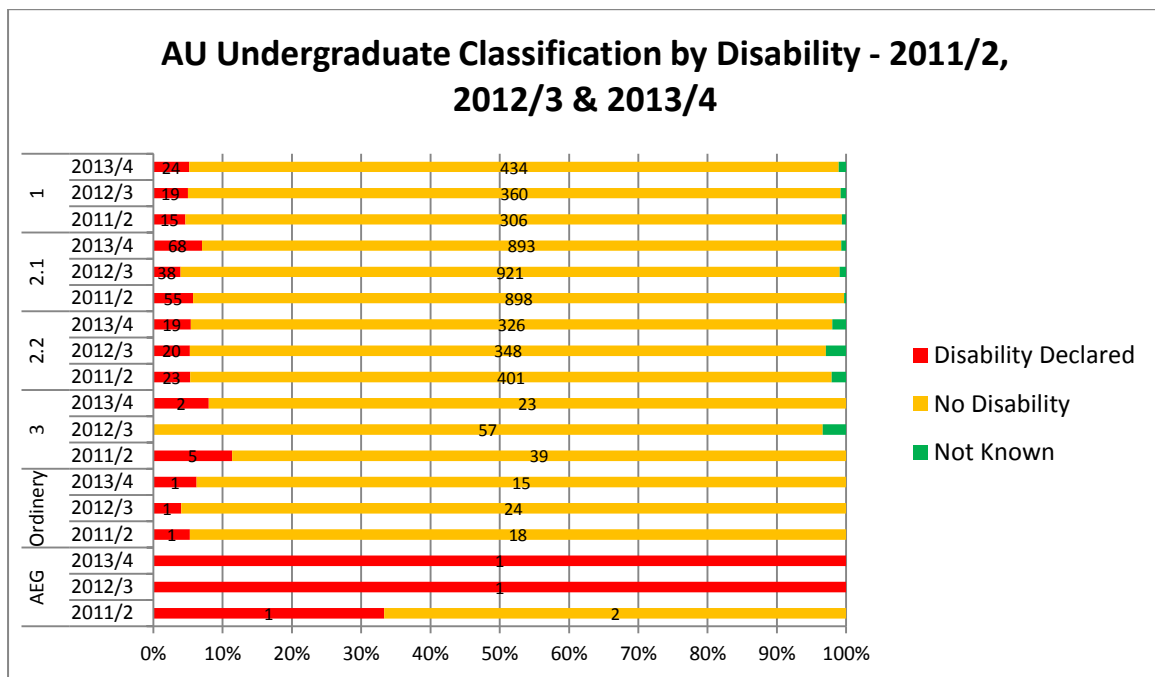


Chart 25- Disability & Award/ Classification – Undergraduate Programmes

The chart above shows the Undergraduate Programme award Classifications. As with Foundation Degree programmes, there is little cause for concern in terms of students who have declared a disability and their award class. Whilst there is an increase in the number of disabled students receiving a third class degree in 2013/4 this represents only two individual students and could be due to other reasons. This should be monitored, however, to avoid further increase in number of students with a third class degree.

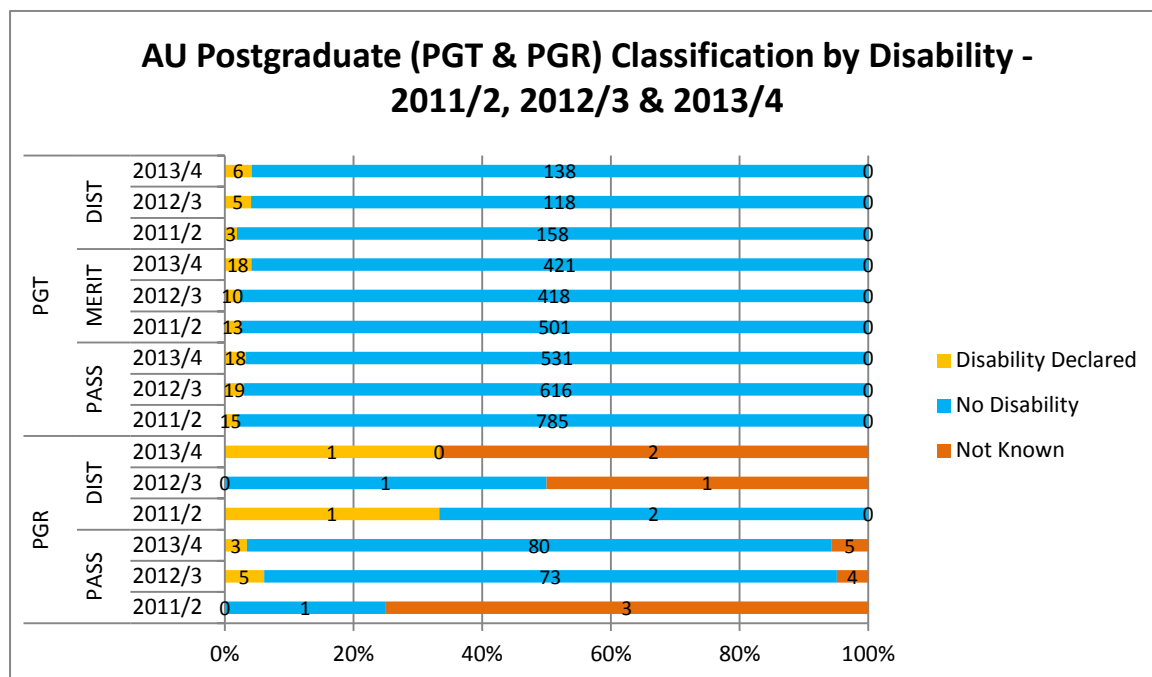


Chart 26- Disability and Award/Classification – Postgraduate Programmes

The final chart for award classification is for Postgraduate Programmes. As with Gender, this is split into PGT and PGR programmes. The overall number of students on these programmes having declared a disability remains very low. For PGT there is very little difference, proportionally, through the years or award classifications, of students with and without a disability. The only major difference in 2013/4 is an almost 80% increase in number of students with a disability who achieved Merit. In terms of PGR programmes, only 4 students declared a disability in 2013/4, compared to 5 in 2012/3, so conclusions are hard to draw from this data. One consideration for the future is to look at other factors that could give more of a picture to the student experience in PGR for disabled students.

Disability & Withdrawal

The final Table in this section is withdrawal data by disability. Students who have declared a disability are not over-represented in the data when compared to the total population, either for academic or non-academic reasons.

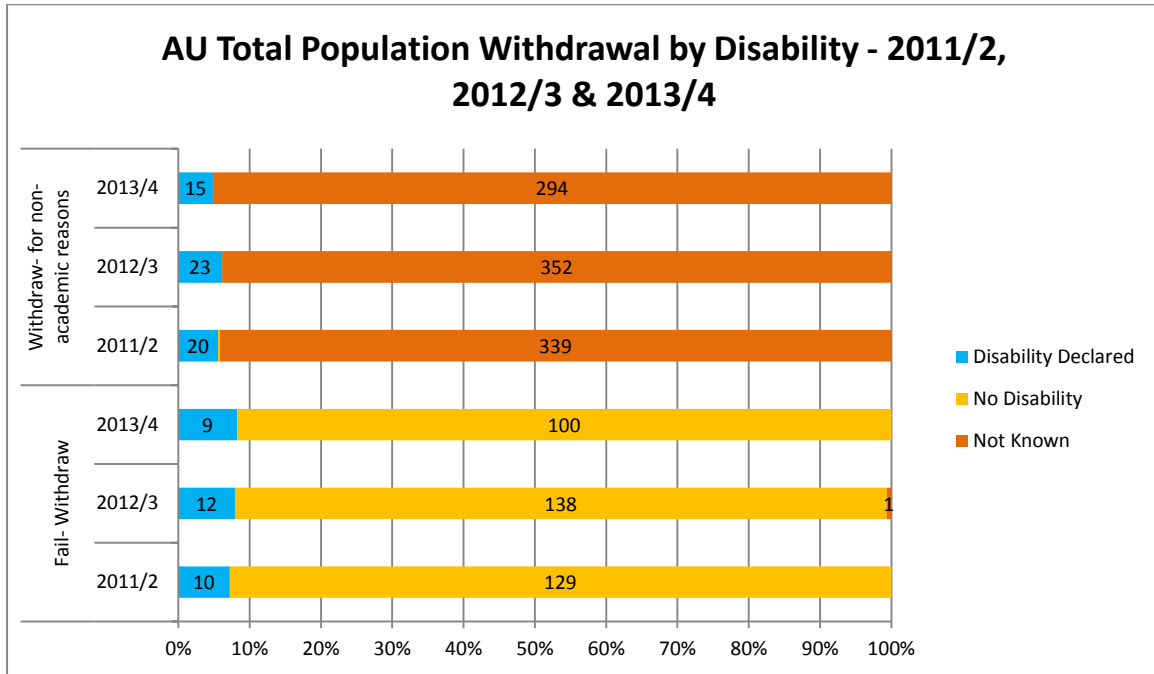


Chart 27 – Disability & Withdrawal

Ethnicity

As the number of ethnicity categories in use in SITS is large, for purposes of ease of reporting these have been amalgamated into the following groups:

White	White
White - British	
White - Irish	
White - Scottish	
White Other	
Bangladeshi	Asian/ Asian British
Indian	
Pakistani	
Asian Other	
Black or Black British - African	Black/ Black British
Black or Black British - Caribbean	
Black Other	
Chinese	Chinese
Other Mixed Background	Mixed Backgrounds
White & Asian	
White & Black African	
White & Black Caribbean	
Other	Other
Not Known	Not Known
Not Known (UCAS code)	
(blank)	

Full data is available on request.

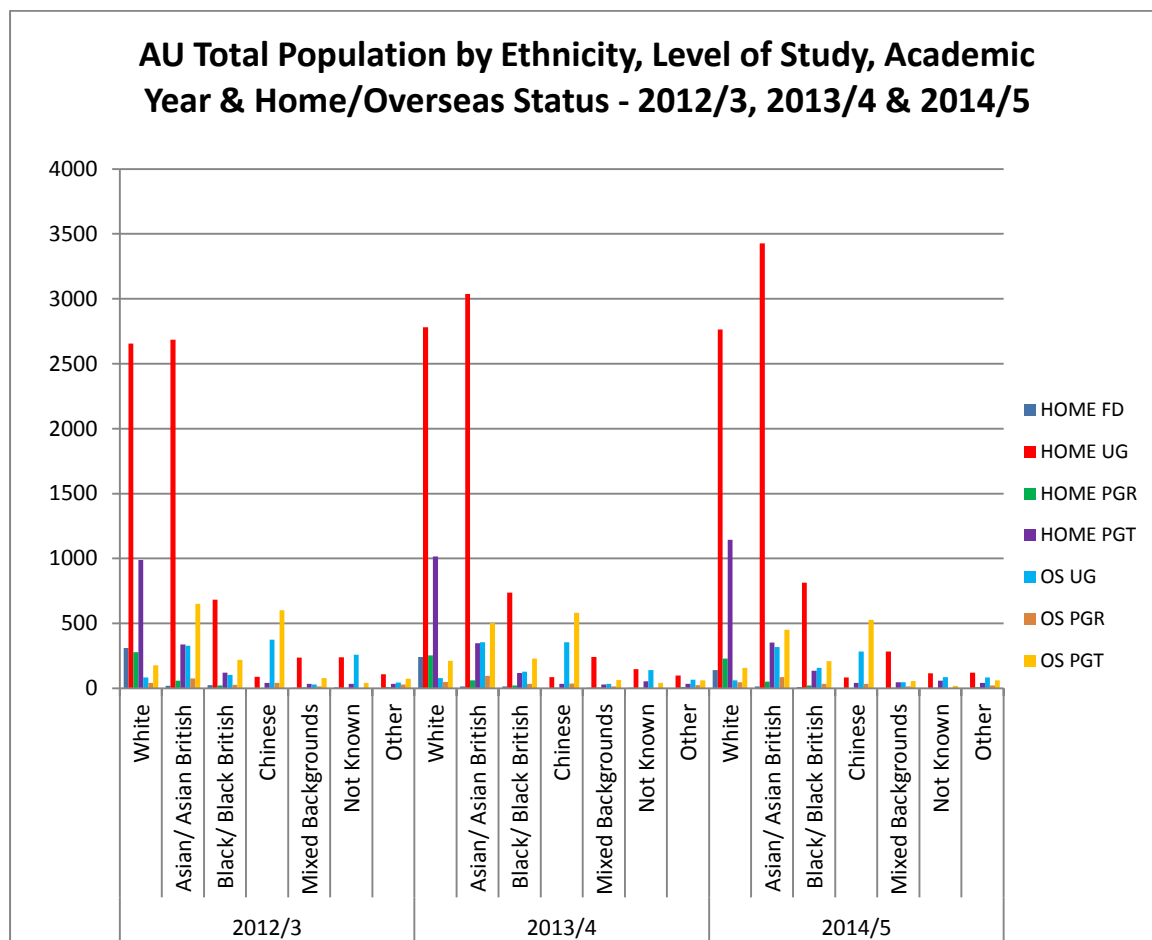


Chart 28 – Ethnicity, Level of Study, Academic Year & Home/Overseas Status

The chart above shows the ethnic background for each level of study (FD, UG, PGR & PGT) by Home/Overseas status. The predominant ethnicities at Aston University are White, Asian as well as Black or Black British (African). Whilst the decline in the number of white students on UG programmes is clear, as is the increase in the number of Asian or Asian British students at the UG level, the remaining categories remain relatively consistent with only small variations. In 2014/5, Aston University sustained its diversity stature by the rise in number of students from a variety of backgrounds, which is both due to its location and the programmes offered.

As the first chart in this section is difficult to examine easily, the four levels of study have been extracted to produce the chart above and the following three charts.

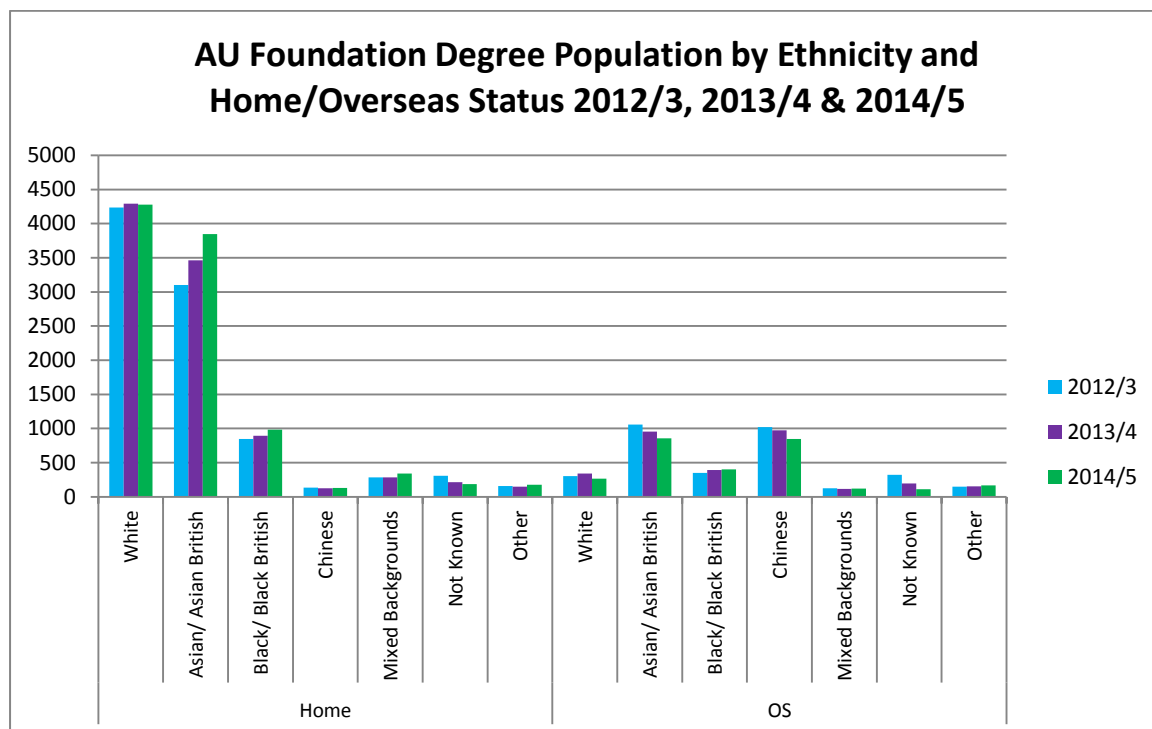


Chart 29- Ethnicity, Level of Study, Academic Year and Home/Overseas Status- Foundation Programmes

Chart 29 above shows the ethnicity breakdown for the FD programmes. In line with last year’s report, the reduction in overall numbers over the last two years on FD programmes is clear but the overall proportion remains consistent with the exception of a higher ratio of students from Asian backgrounds. White ethnicity continues to have the highest populations amongst FD students.

The chart below shows the breakdown for UG programmes.

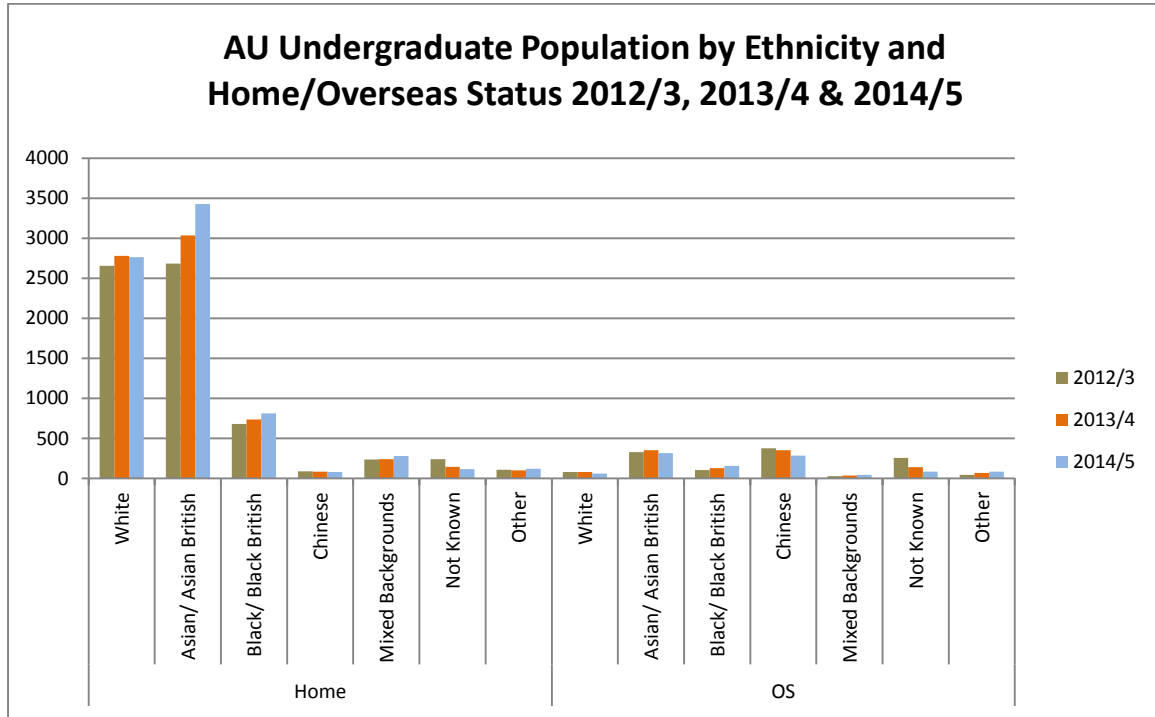


Chart 30 – Ethnicity, Level of Study and Home/Overseas Status – Undergraduate Programmes

In contrast to FD programmes, the diversity of UG programmes is clear from this chart, however, the proportions of Overseas students became smaller in 2014/5 as opposed to a significant rise in number of Home Asian and Black ethnicity students.

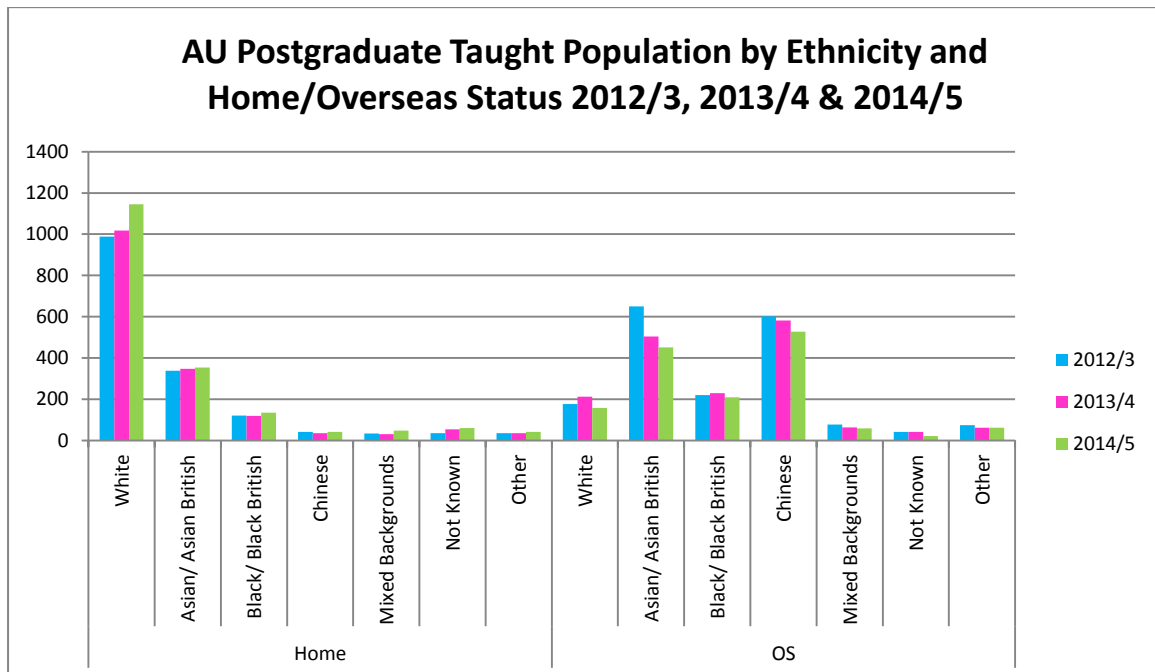


Chart 31- Ethnicity, Level of Study, Academic Year and Home/Overseas Status- PGT Programmes

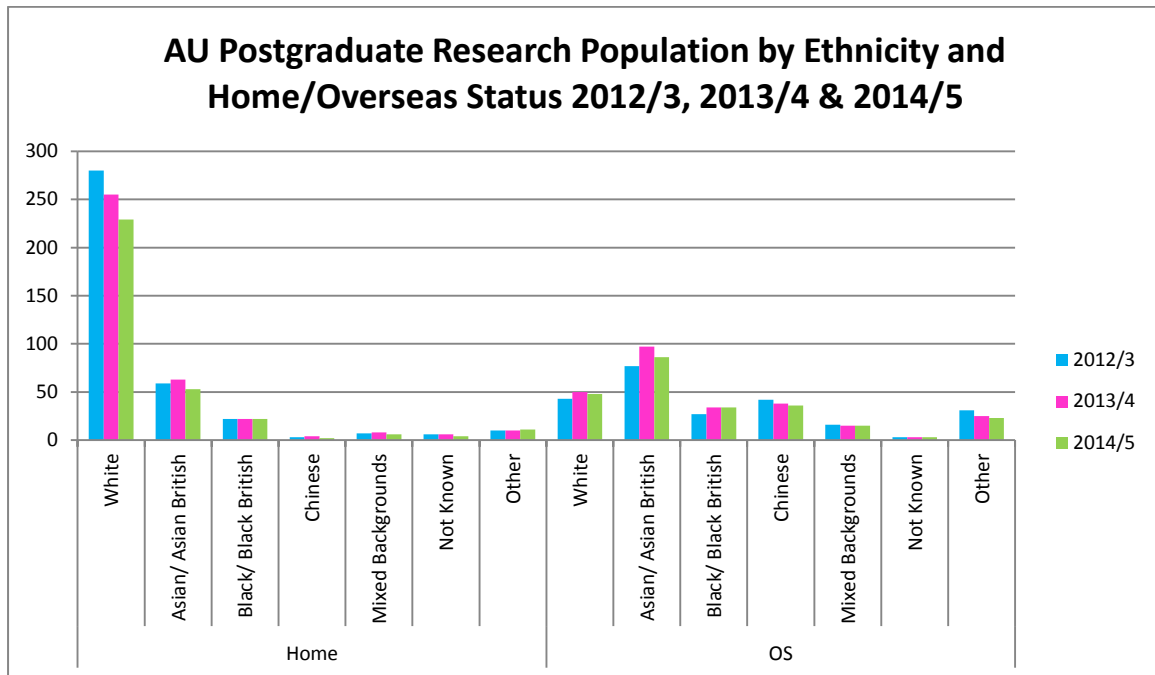


Chart 32- Ethnicity, Level of Study, Academic Year and Home/Overseas Status- PGR Programmes

The final two charts show the ethnicity breakdown for PG breakdown for PG programmes over the last three years. It is clear that the number of PG students has reduced in 2014/5, with small reductions seen in almost all other Home and Overseas student groups (with the exception of White Ethnicity group amongst PGT).

Ethnicity & Progression

The next chart shows the progression profile by Ethnicity.

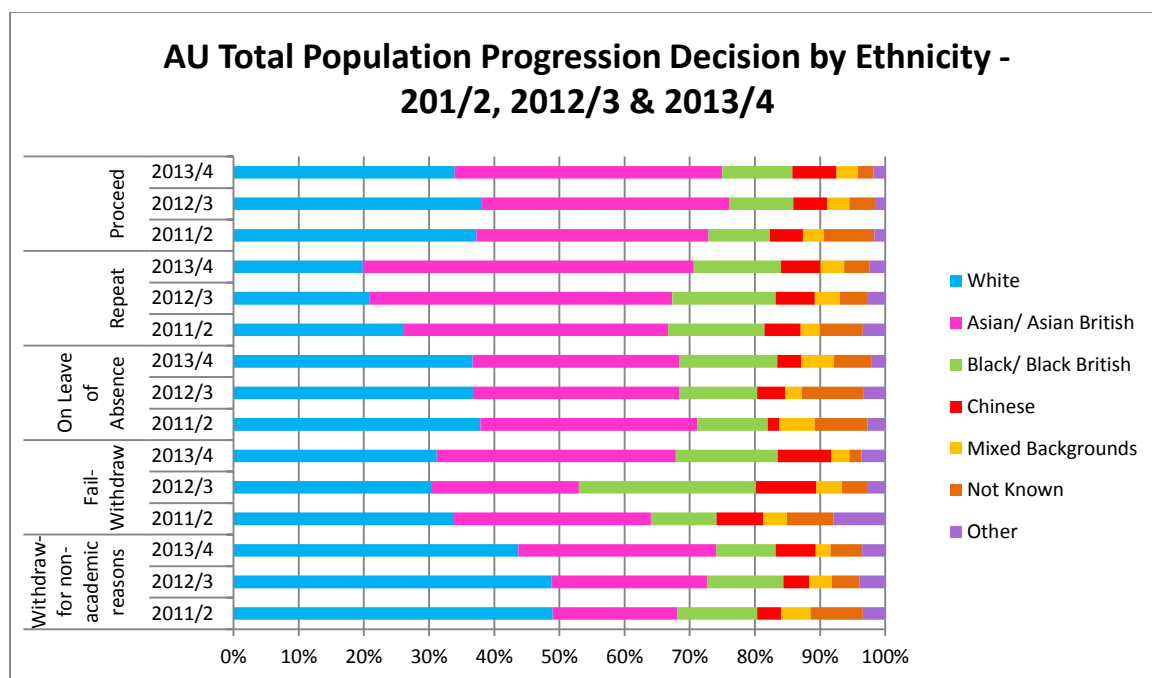


Chart 33- Ethnicity & Progression

For those who proceed to the next year of their studies, the proportion of students by ethnicity correlates to the proportion of the total population. There is, however, a clear difference in terms of repeat, with more Asian or Asian British students repeating their studies, go on Leave of Absence and withdrawing from their course for non- Academic reasons. The number of White and Black or Black British students withdrawing from their course for both academic and non-academic reasons has dropped since 2012/3.

It is worth investigating the reasons behind increasing number of students who repeated their studies which was common amongst all ethnicities at Aston during the year 2013/4. In addition, White students are more likely to withdraw for non-academic reasons than their peers even though this number has fallen. It is recommended to continue monitoring this in order to ensure the decreasing trend.

Ethnicity & Classification

As with the two sections above (Gender and Disability) the award classifications data is separated into the four levels of study. The chart below shows the award classification for FD programmes by ethnicity. Again, as the overall cohort number is relatively small for FD Programmes, variation year to year is to be expected. The number of white students achieving a distinction doubled in 2013/4 for Foundation Degree but the numbers are very small. Other figures are relatively consistent.

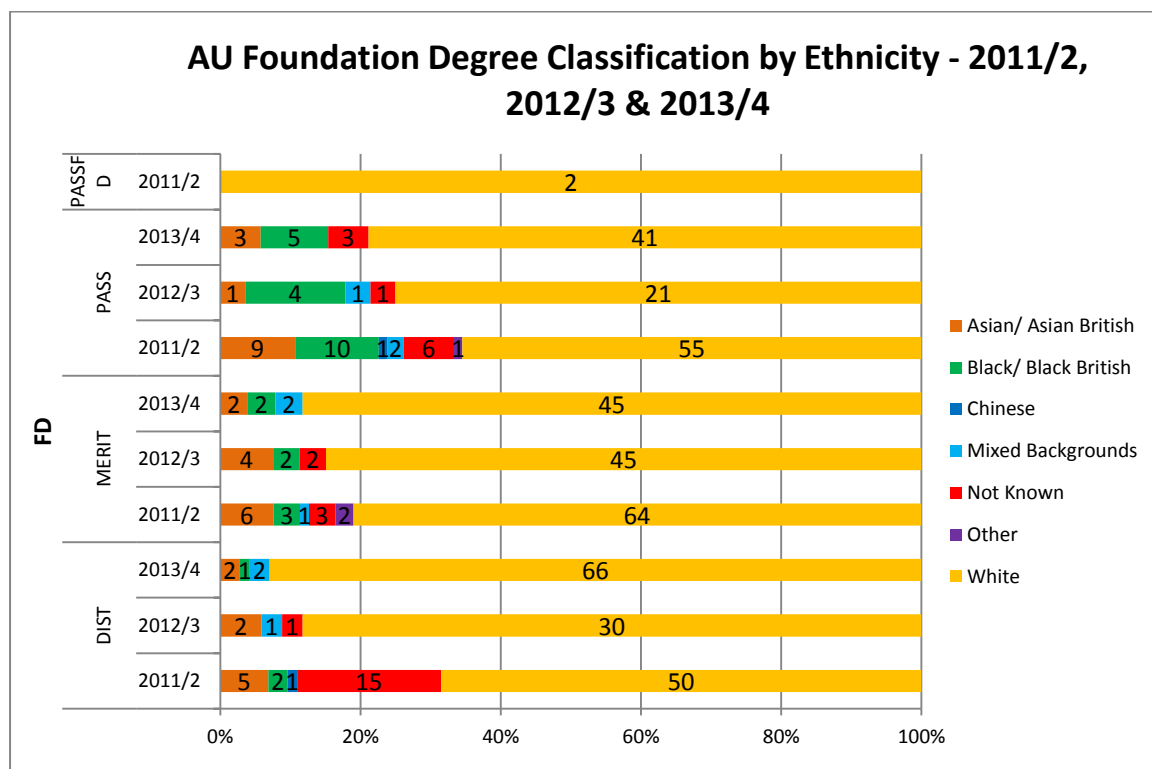


Chart 34- Ethnicity & Award Classification – Foundation Programmes

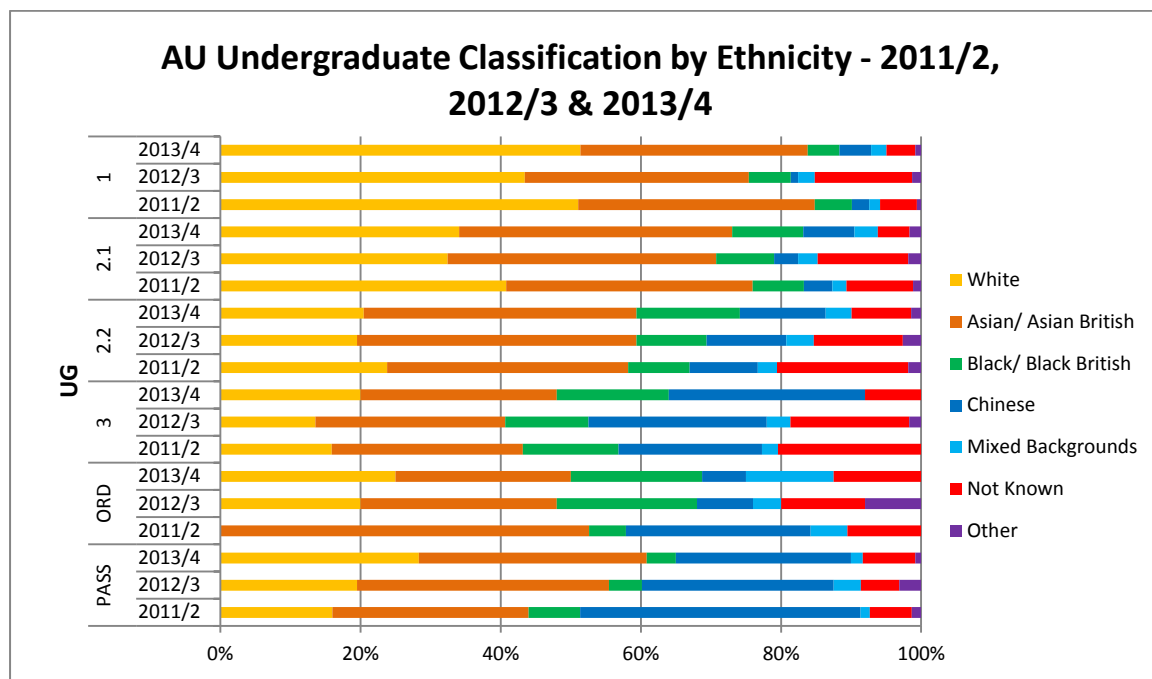


Chart 35- Ethnicity & Award/Classification – Undergraduate Programmes

The chart above shows the ethnicity breakdown for award classification for Undergraduate Programmes. A number of students remain whose ethnicity is not recorded/not known, however, this number has shrunk since 2012/3. This impacts on the ability to report clearly on student performance by ethnicity.

Compared to last year’s report, there has been a rise in overall number of students of all ethnicity groups achieving a 1st and 2.1. Furthermore, the number of Chinese students receiving First and Upper Second Class results was considerably higher in 2013/4 compared to 2012/3 and 2011/2. Moreover, the number of Chinese students receiving a 3rd Class degree fell by half in 2013/4 compared to 2011/2. The number of students receiving a Third Class and Ordinary Degree is very low and that makes the data difficult to analyse.

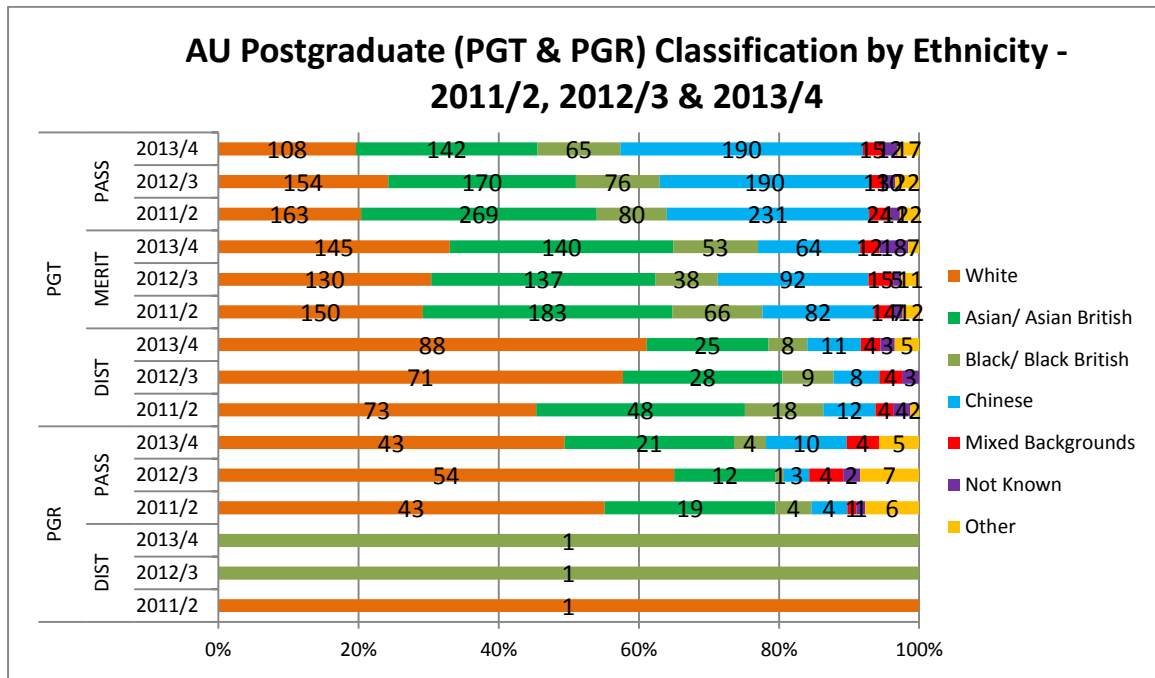


Chart 36- Ethnicity & Award/Classification – Postgraduate Programmes

The final chart is for Postgraduate Programmes. As with the UG Programmes profile, the award classification are consistent over the three academic years, however, it remains more likely that a white student will achieve a Distinction than non-White students and Chinese students are more likely to achieve a Pass level classification than their counter parts. As with UG Programmes, it is important to ensure that all students irrelevant of their ethnicity, have the opportunity to learn and perform and we must ensure that our structure and process do not discriminate directly or indirectly on particular groups. As with previous awards charts for gender and disability, due to the structure of PGR programmes (where either a pass or fail classification) no comparison can be drawn.

Ethnicity & Withdrawal

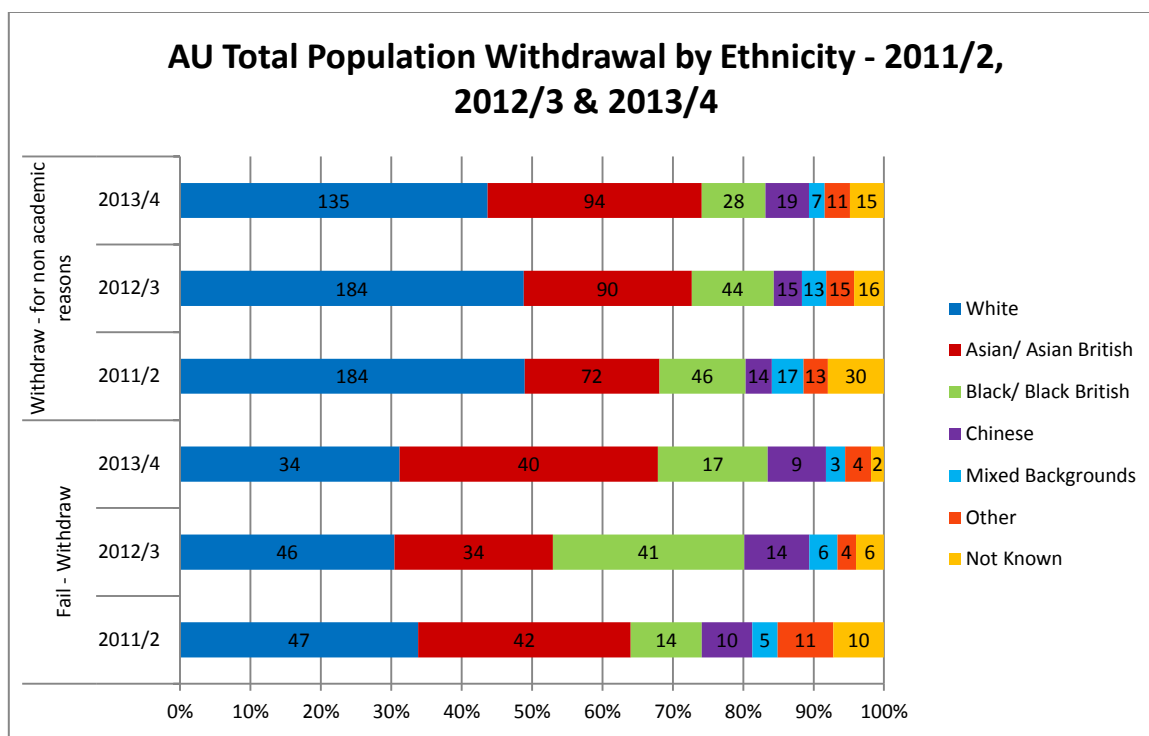


Chart 37 – Ethnicity & Withdrawal

The above chart shows the withdrawal data for three years by ethnicity. The data shows that there has been a fall in number of student withdrawals over the 2013/4 academic year with slightly more Asian or Asian British students withdrawing from their course for both academic and non-academic reasons.

There was a significant fall in the number of White and Black or Black British students withdrawing for non-academic reasons over the past three years. Further monitoring of Black or Black British students’ progression is recommended in order to ensure the decreasing pattern to the withdrawal rates. Furthermore, it is worth investigating the reasons behind the increasing number of withdrawal for Asian or Asian British students.

Religion

The following Charts show the student population by Religion. Religion data is captured through a MAP task and is entered by the students themselves.

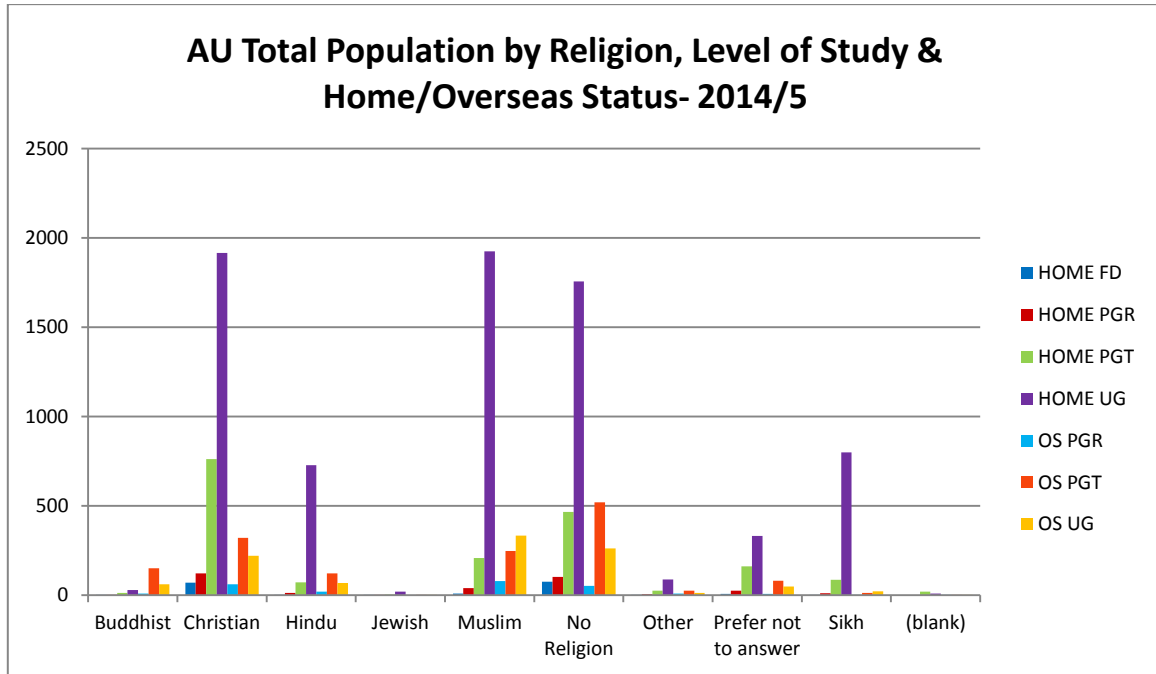


Chart 38- Religion, Level of Study, Academic Year and Home/Overseas Status

The chart above shows the religious breakdown for each level of study (FD, UG, PGR & PGT) by Home/Overseas status. Students are encouraged to complete their religion on their student record, however, it is a voluntary field.

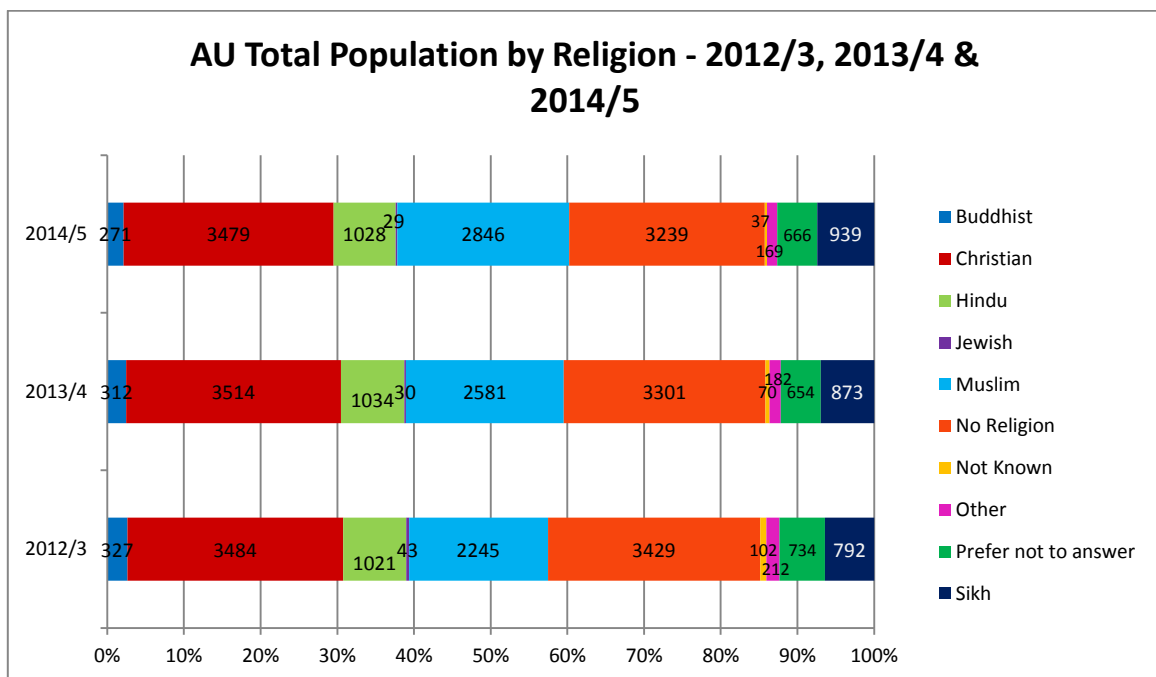


Chart 39- Religion & Academic Year

As can be seen in this chart, the breakdown of religion remains relatively stable over the three years of the report, with only minor fluctuations year on year except for the increase in students declaring as 'Muslim'. This also ties in with the increase in Asian/Asian British students as identified in ethnicity tables above, worth noting that consistently over the last three years, the second highest category of belief is 'No Religion', after Christianity and before Islam.

In order not to identify students, the breakdown of religion by level of study is presented by grouping Foundation Degree with Undergraduate students and Postgraduate Taught and Postgraduate Research students (as most students included in the data are still studying at the University).

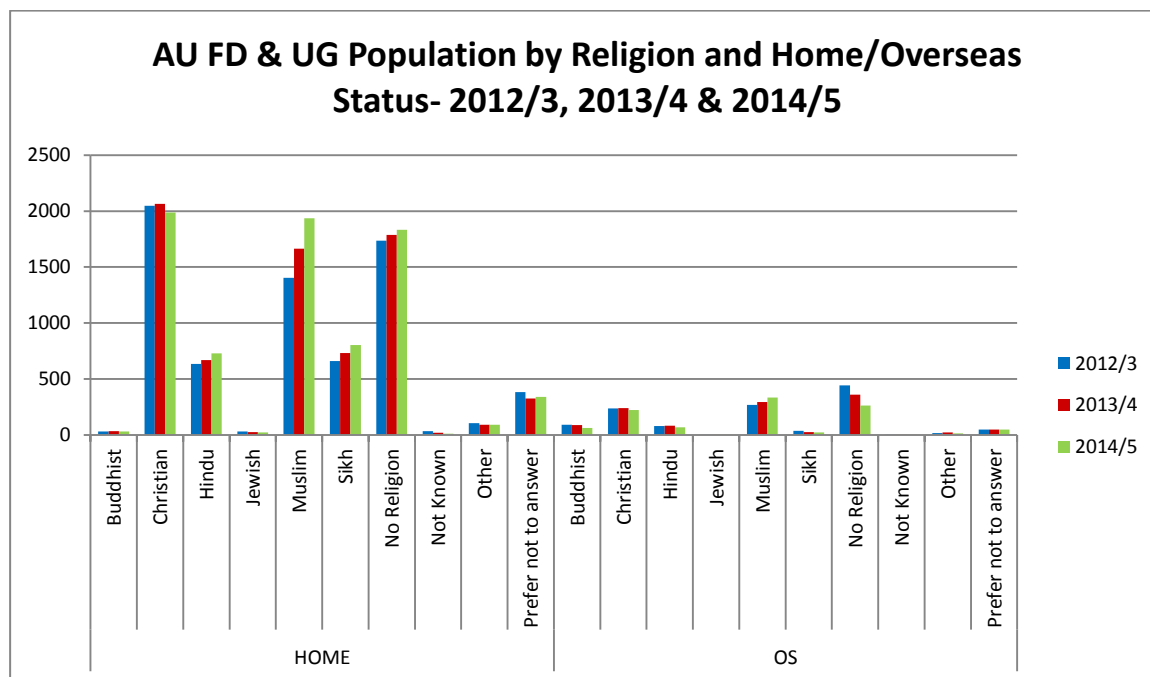


Chart 40 – Religion, Level of Study, Academic Year and Home/Overseas Status – FD & UG

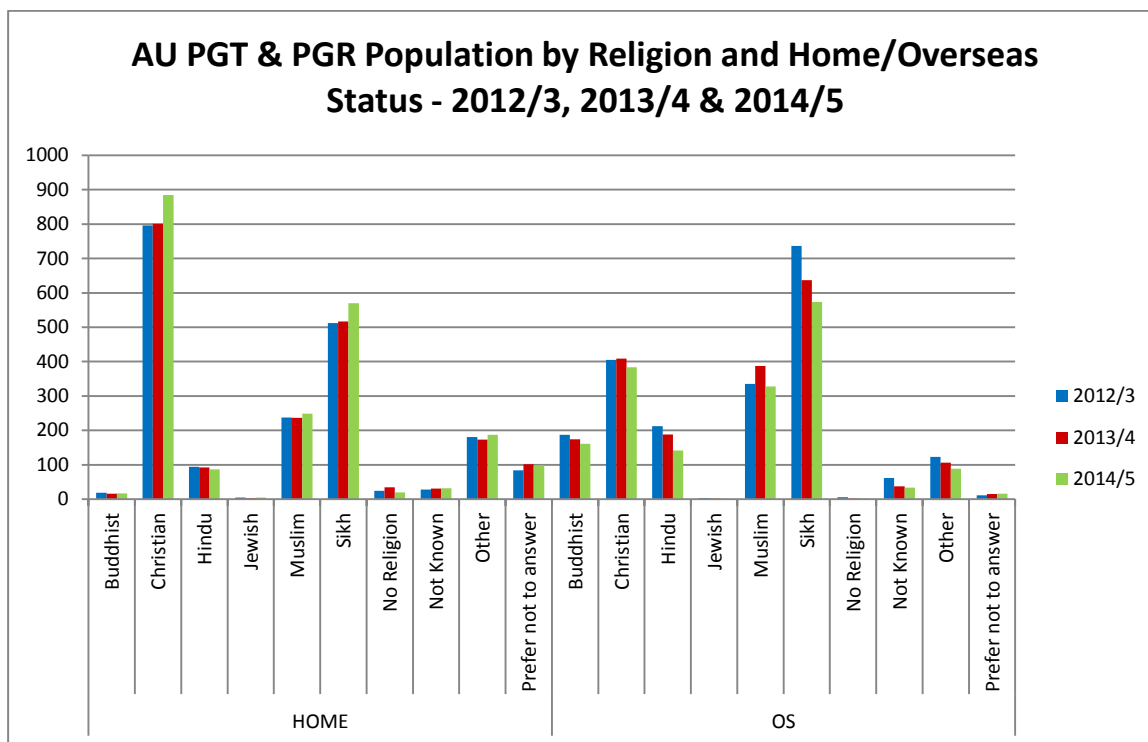


Chart 41- Religion, Level of Study, Academic Year and Home/ Overseas Status – PGT & PGR

The charts above show that over the three years, at the Foundation and Undergraduate Degree level, the number of Home Christian students dropped in 2014/5. There was however, a rise in all the other religions’ population. For PGT and PGR level, the number of home students declaring themselves to be Christian, Sikh, Muslim and Other rose. The fall in number of Overseas student is also reflected on the Religion chart with lower figure for all the religions with exception of slight increase in number of Overseas Muslim Undergraduate and FD students in 2014/5 (chart 40). Furthermore, there is a rise in number of students who did not say their religion.

Religion and Progression

The next chart shows the progression profile by Religion.

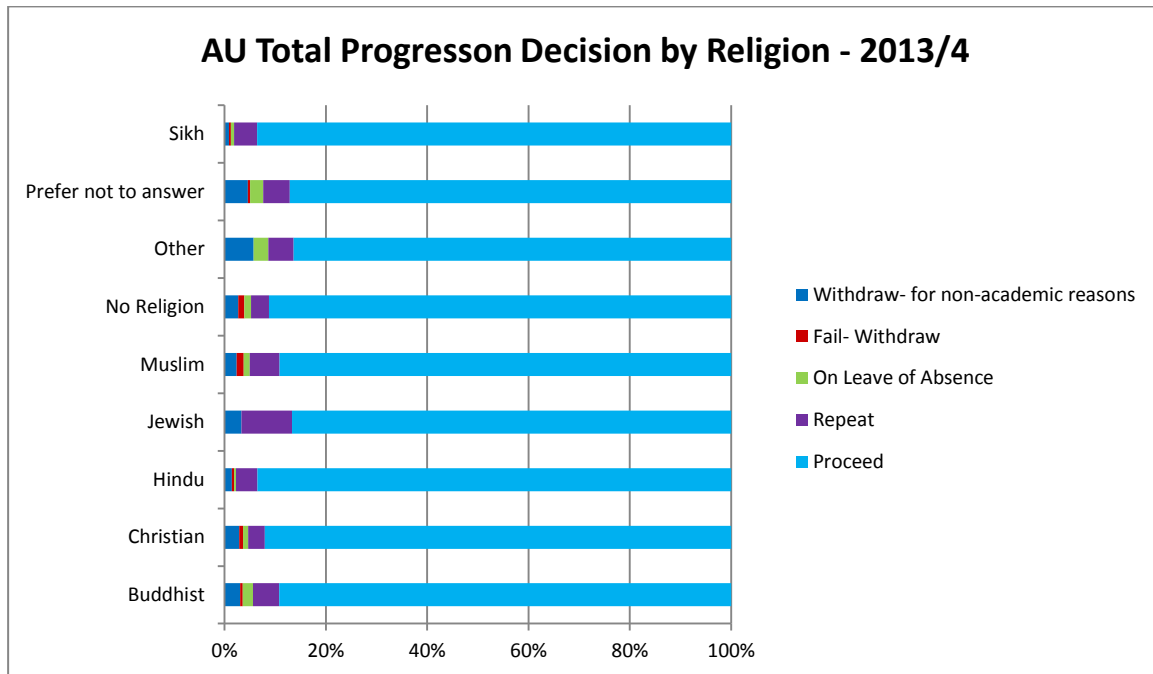


Chart 42- Religion & Progression

The chart above shows the progression decision by religion for 2013/4. Due to the number of religions included, it is not possible to show the three-year progression as with the other protected characteristics. This information is available on request.

As it is clear from this chart, there are variations in the progression pattern by religion but some of this can be due to the number of students who have declared that religion, for example the chart above shows more Jewish students repeating, however, the total number of students who are Jewish is small (n=30).

Religion & Classification

As with the sections above, the award classifications data is separated into four levels of study. The chart below shows the award classification for FD programmes by religion. Again as the overall cohort the number is relatively small for FD programmes, variations year on year is to be expected. The number of students with Distinction and Pass almost doubled, whereas the number of students with Merit was stable in 2013/4. In contrast to the previous year, over 50% of students who achieved Distinction identified themselves as having no religion.

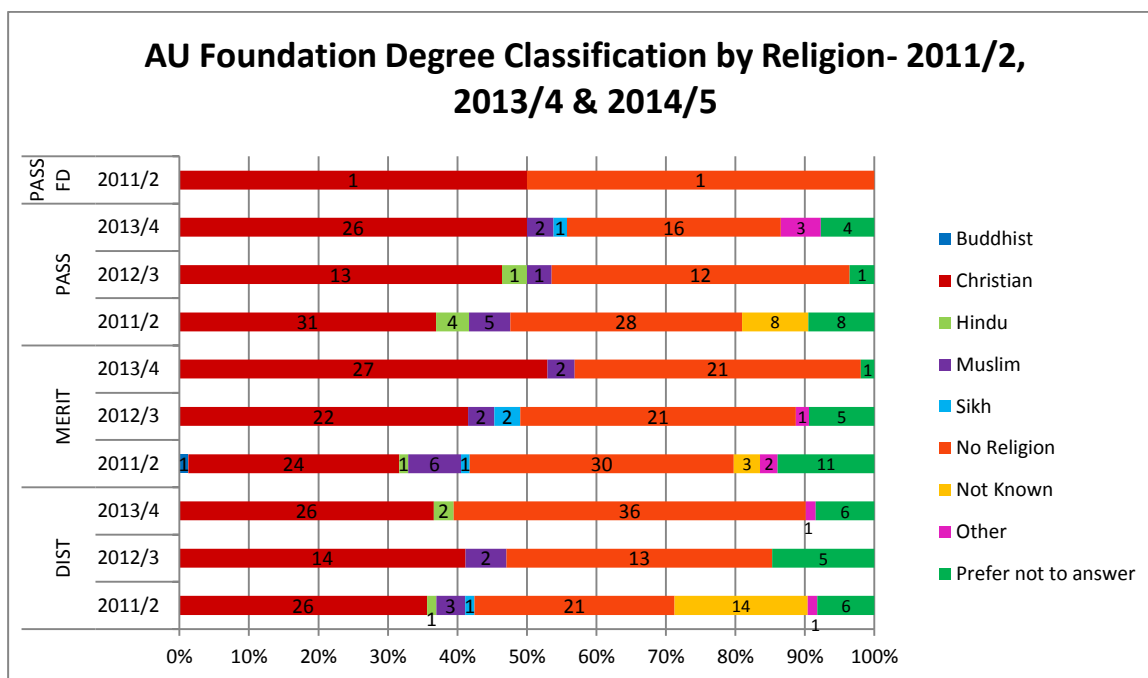


Chart 43 – Religion & Award/Classification – Foundation Programmes

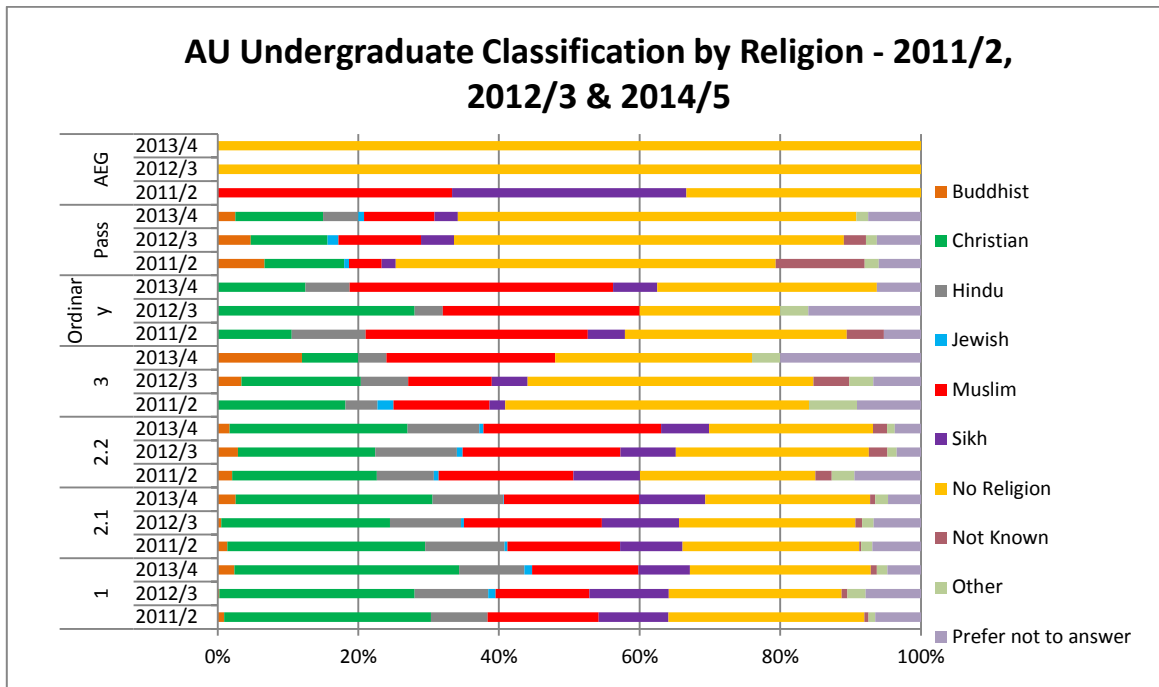


Chart 44- Religion & Award/Classification – Undergraduate Programmes

The chart above shows the religion breakdown for award classification for Undergraduate Programmes. From this chart there is some variation by religion in terms of degree class with students from No Religion category receiving less lower class degree compared to last year and improvements in terms of all religions receiving 1st Class Degree. Due to the small numbers involved with Pass/ Aegrotat degrees, the may be misrepresenting this groups of students.

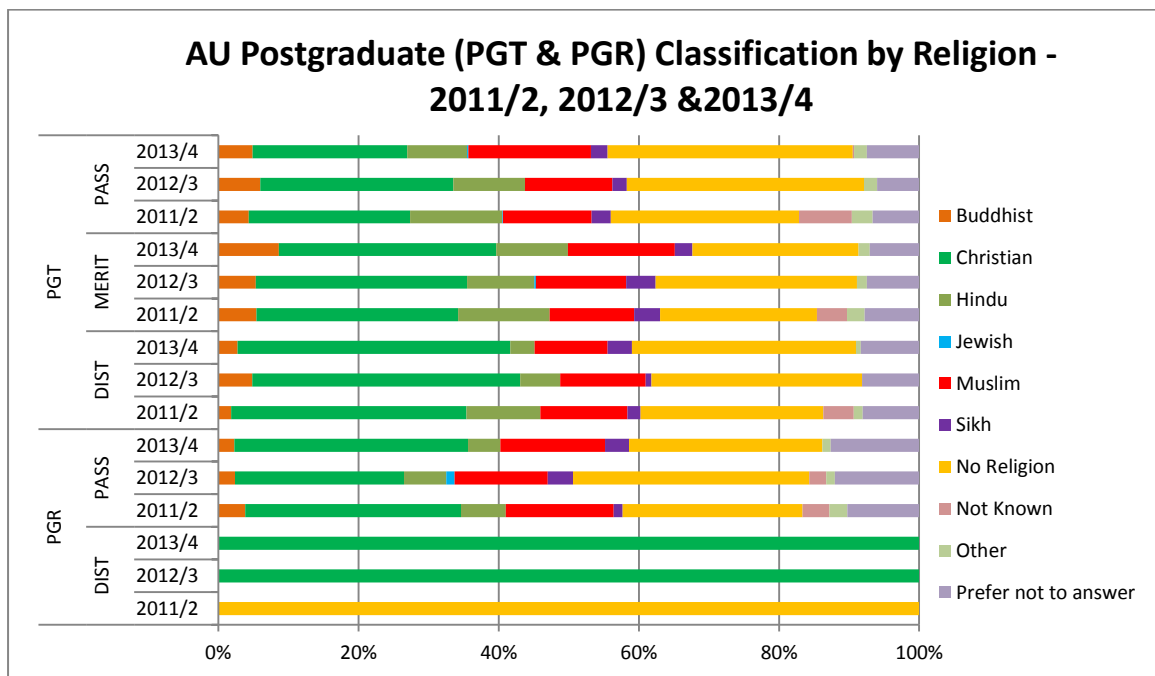


Chart 45 – Religion & Award/Classification – Postgraduate Programmes

The final Chart is for Postgraduate Programmes. As with the UG Programme profile, the award classifications are relatively consistent over the three academic years, however, it

remains more likely that a Christian student will achieve a Distinction than a non-Christian student, however, due to the number of students with no religion recorded, it is not possible to draw conclusions.

As with award charts for gender and disability, due to the structure if PGR programmes (and majority of students receiving a pass classification) no comparison can be drawn.

Religion & Withdrawal

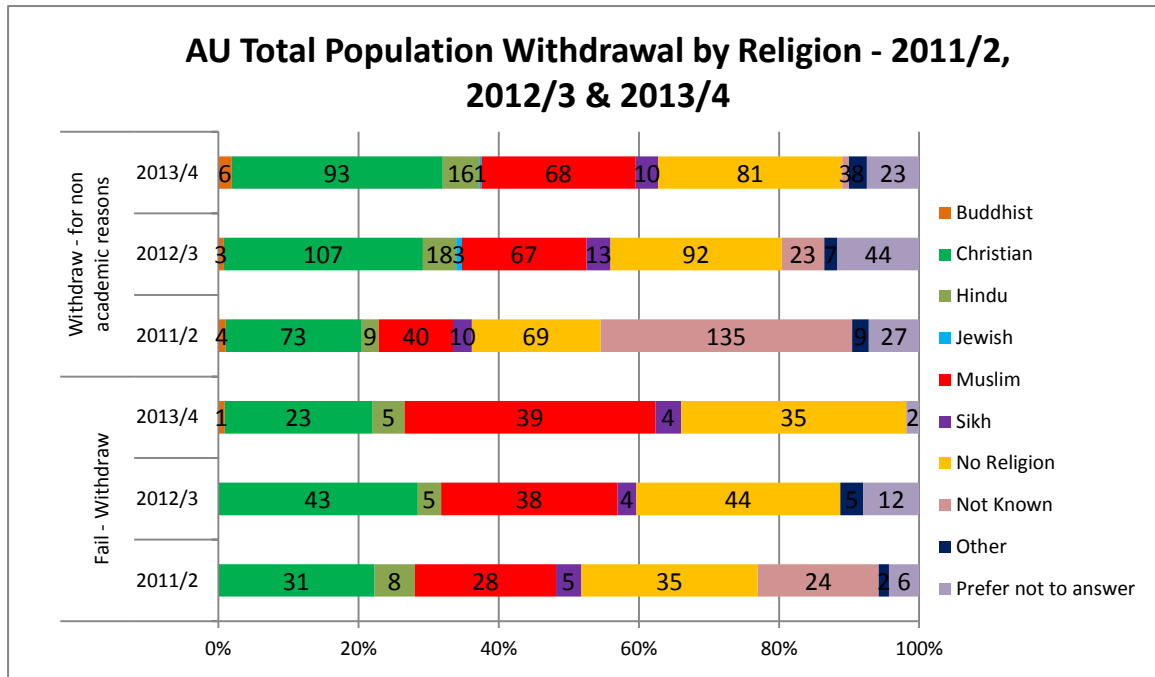


Chart 46 – Religion & Withdrawal

The chart above shows the withdrawal data for 2011/2, 2012/3 & 2013/4 by religion. The number of 'blank' answers for Religion dropped significantly compared to 2011/2. Christianity and 'No Religion' are overrepresented in Withdrawal for non-academic reasons and as for Fail-Withdrawal, Islam and 'No Religion' seem to make up the majority. However, the figures for Withdrawal for both reasons are lower than 2012/3.

Employability Team

Placement Year

The data shown in this section relates to the students who have undertaken a placement as part of their studies.

During 2014/5 more females were on placement with 526 females and 506 males being registered on their placement year. On the total on placement, 7% of those students had declared a disability to the University, compared to 5.2% in 2013/4.

As is shown in the chart below, the ethnicity breakdown of the students on placement mirrors that of the student population as a whole with a slightly fewer Asian/Asian British students on placement in 2014/5.

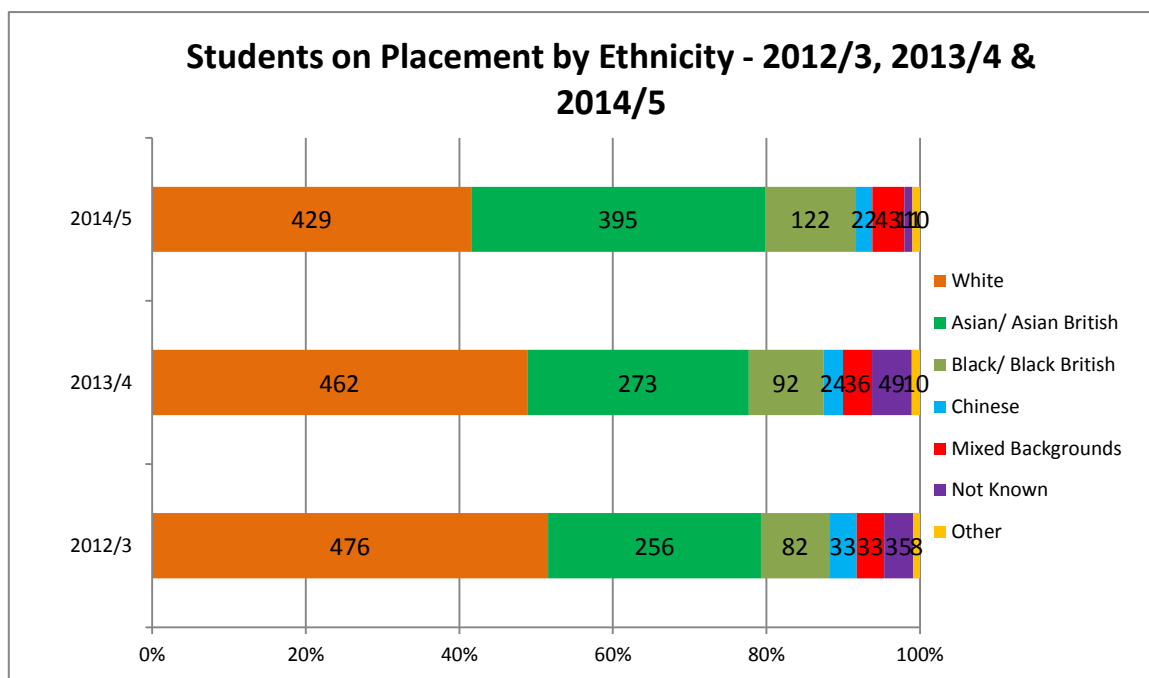


Chart 47 – Placement Students by Ethnicity

Careers, Placement & Employability Service Usage

The recording system in use by the Employability Team enables additional reporting to be undertaken including on the centre usage by students depending on the school of study.

The final chart shows the Schools breakdown of the students who have engaged with the Employability Centre. Again, as with the data for placement year, the breakdown of students reflects the overall University student body.

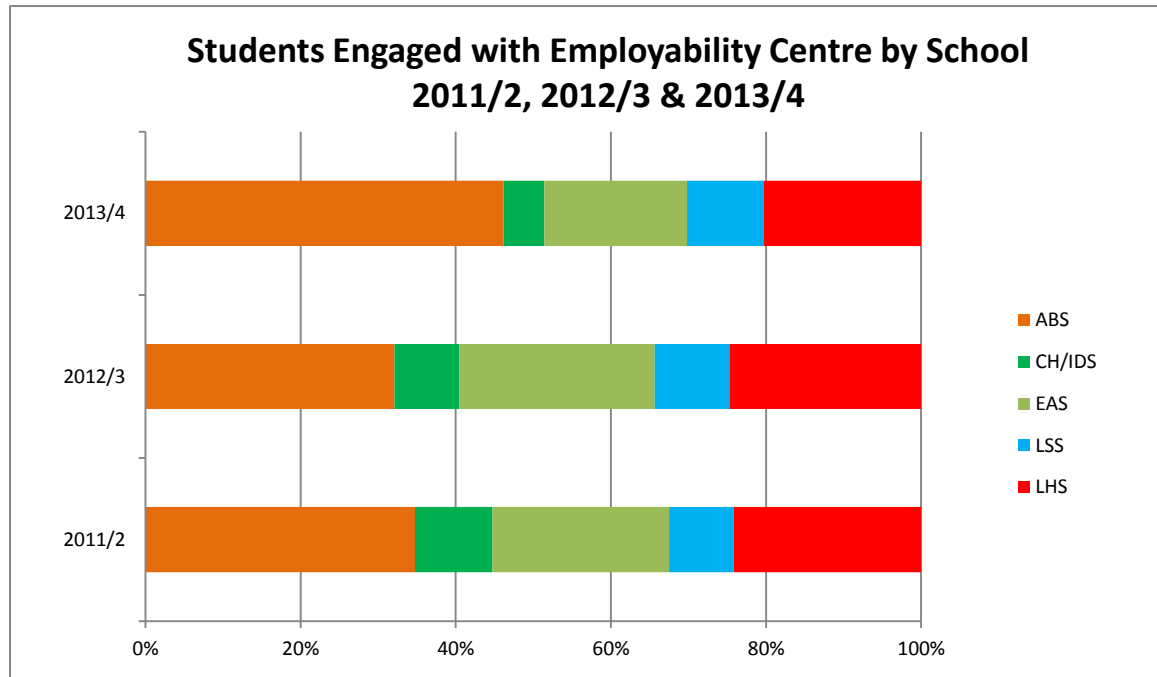


Chart 48 – Service Usage by School

Student Disciplinary Actions & Appeals

The following data looks at the number of student complaints and disciplinary actions by protected characteristics. Please note that disability is not noted as part of data recorded for disciplinary action.

Disciplinary

The following charts show the number of disciplinary actions by gender and ethnicity. The total number of disciplinary actions overall has increased from 268 in 2012/3 to 287 in 2013/4 (assessment and non-assessment).

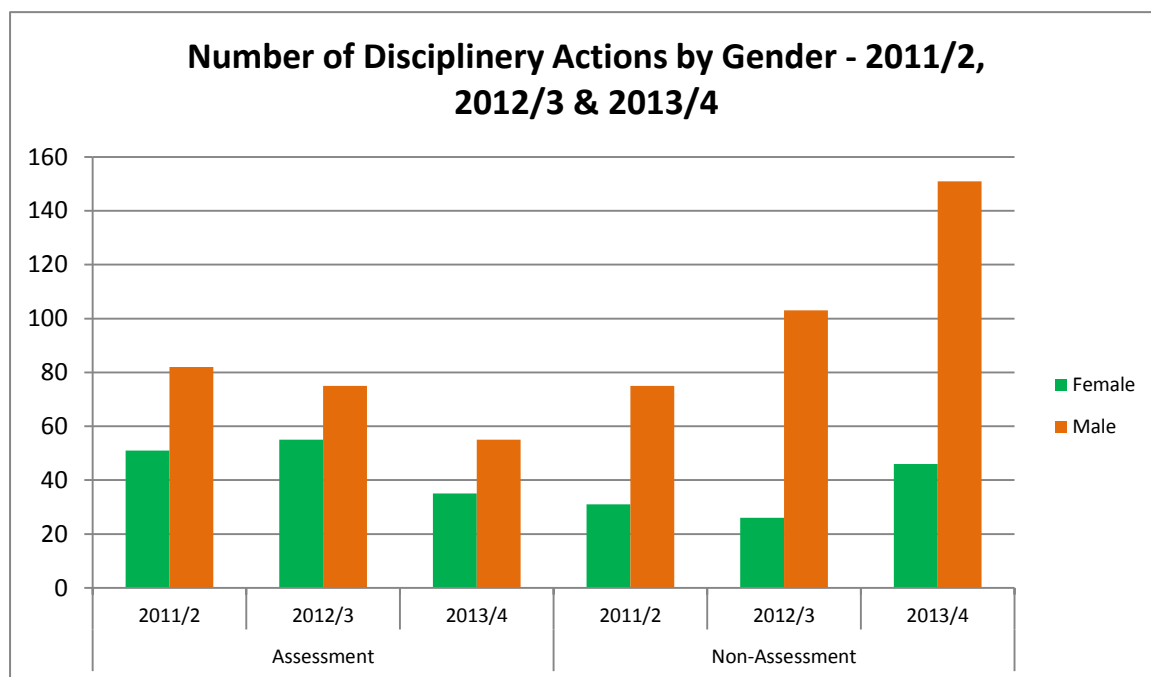


Chart 49 - Non-Assessment and Assessment related Disciplinary by Gender

In terms of Gender, in 2013/4 there has been an increase in the number of students being disciplined overall and this is mainly due to the rise in non-assessment offences among both genders. Assessment disciplinary actions fell considerably for both gender in 2013/4. More male students were disciplined for both assessment and non-assessment offences. This is consistent with previous years.

The chart below shows that the number of Asian/Asian British students being disciplined rocketing for non-assessment offences and slightly decreasing for assessment offences. Non-assessment offences increased amongst students with White, Black and Mixed backgrounds as well. Assessment offences, however, decreased for all ethnicities.

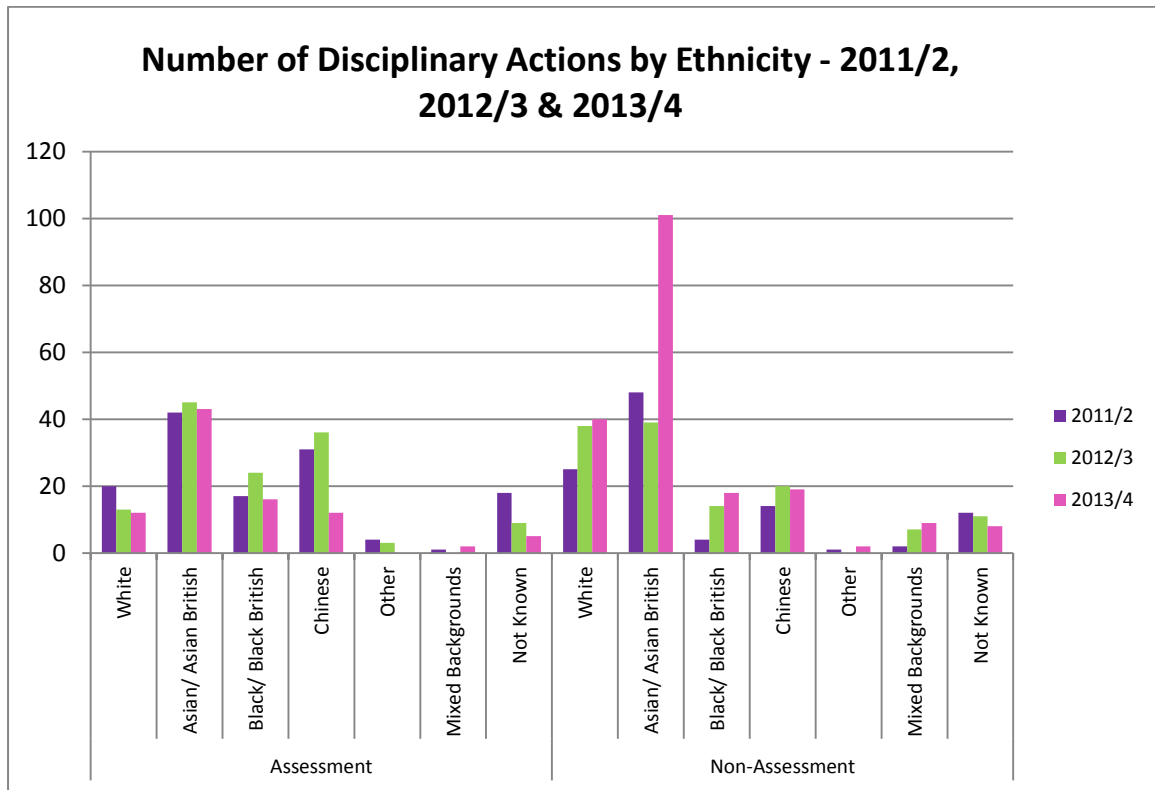


Chart 50- Non-Assessment and Assessment related Disciplinary by Ethnicity

Appeals

The following graphs relate to the number of appeals over the three years.

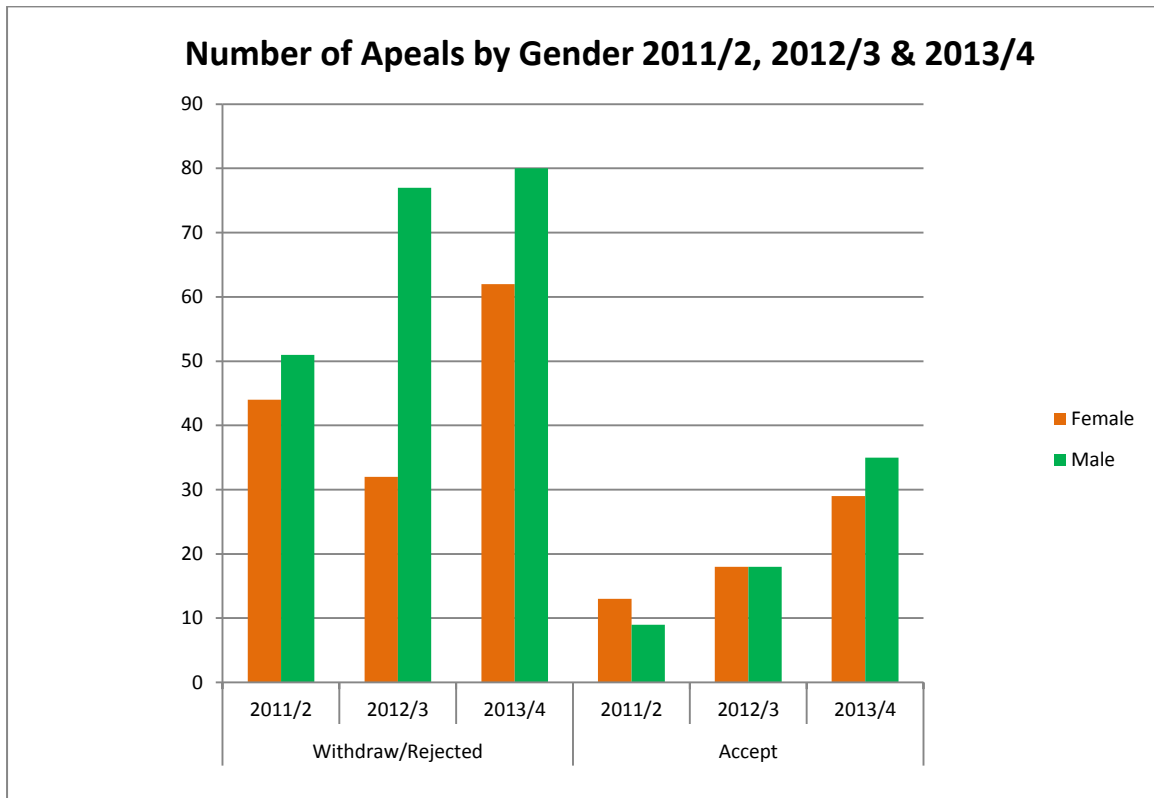


Chart 51- Appeals by Gender

The chart above shows the number of appeals withdrawn/rejected and accepted by Gender. There was a significant rise in number female students appealing (n=50 to n=91) in 2013/4, however, male students make the majority of appeals. As highlighted in the previous report, however, the overall numbers remains low, even though higher than previous year (n=206), making conclusions difficult to draw.

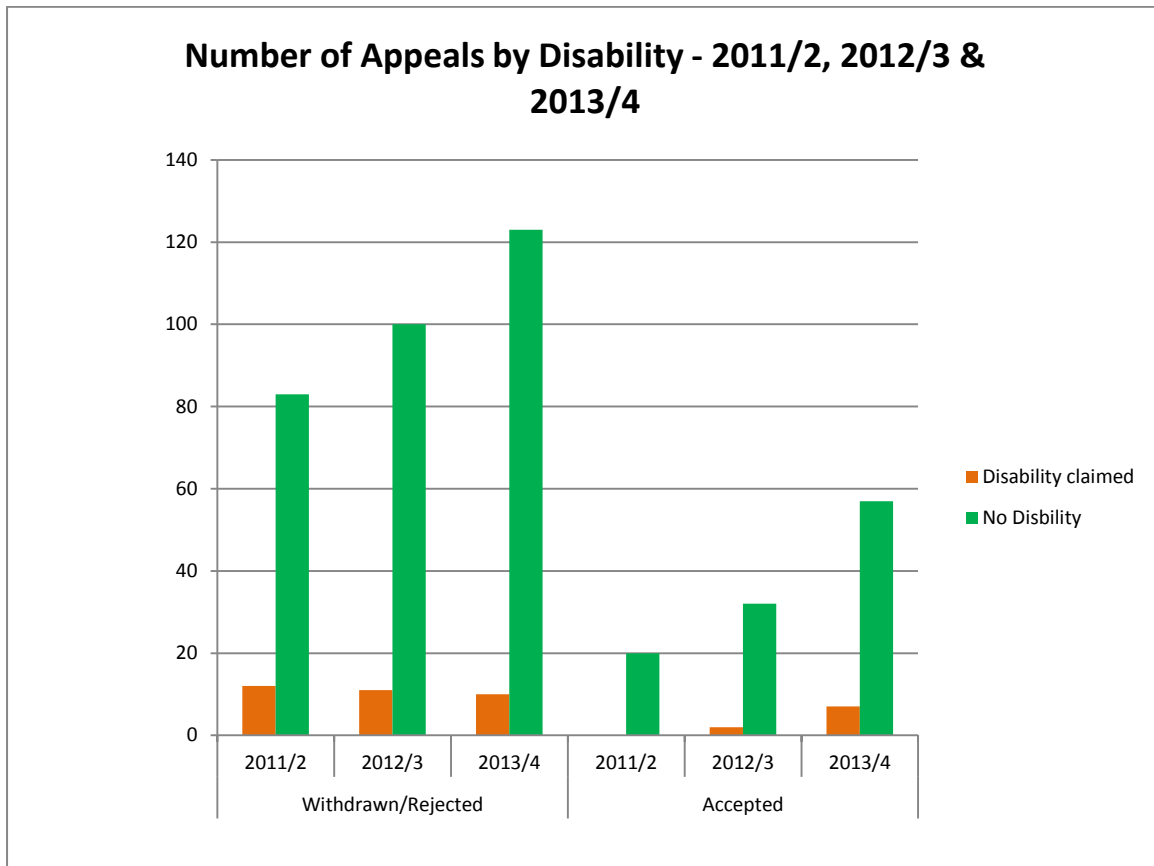


Chart 52- Number of Appeals by Disability

The chart above shows the number of appeals by Disability. The data suggests that students who have declared a disability continue to be overrepresented in the appeals data compared to proportion of cohort (except in the revised 2011/2 data in which no students who had declared a disability who had their appeal accepted). This must continue to be monitored and any potential areas of risk discussed with the Disability Team.

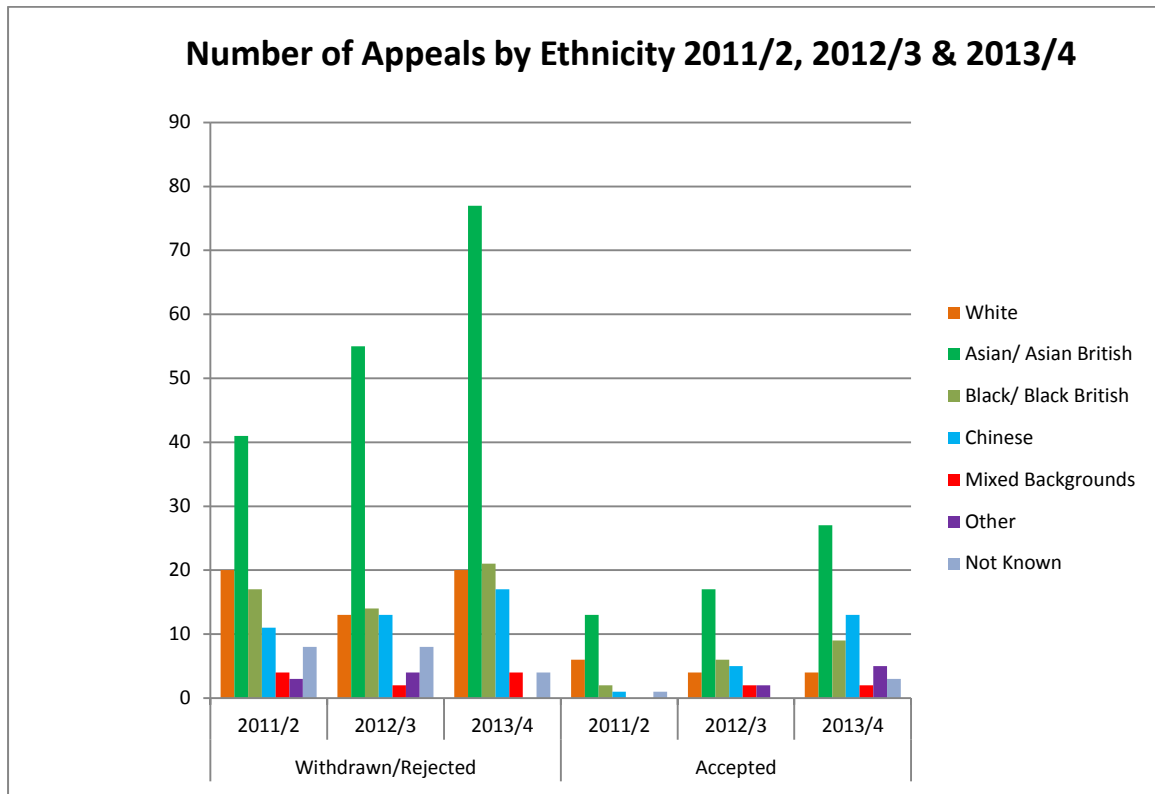


Chart 53 – Number of Appeals by Ethnicity

The final chart for Appeals shows the data by Ethnicity. 2013/4 shows, again, the greatest number of appeals is made by Asian or Asian British students. In addition, Black or Black British students and Chinese students are also overrepresented. As with the Disability status, it is important that this is monitored to ensure no students are discriminated against either directly or indirectly. See actions below.

The Hub

The Hub continues to support students in reaching to the Hub Reception and accessing the Advice Zone, Counselling Service, Disability Team and Visa Compliance.

Hub Reception

The Hub Reception dealt with 29,641 enquiries in the 2013/14 academic year. The chart below shows the comparison of this number to previous years.

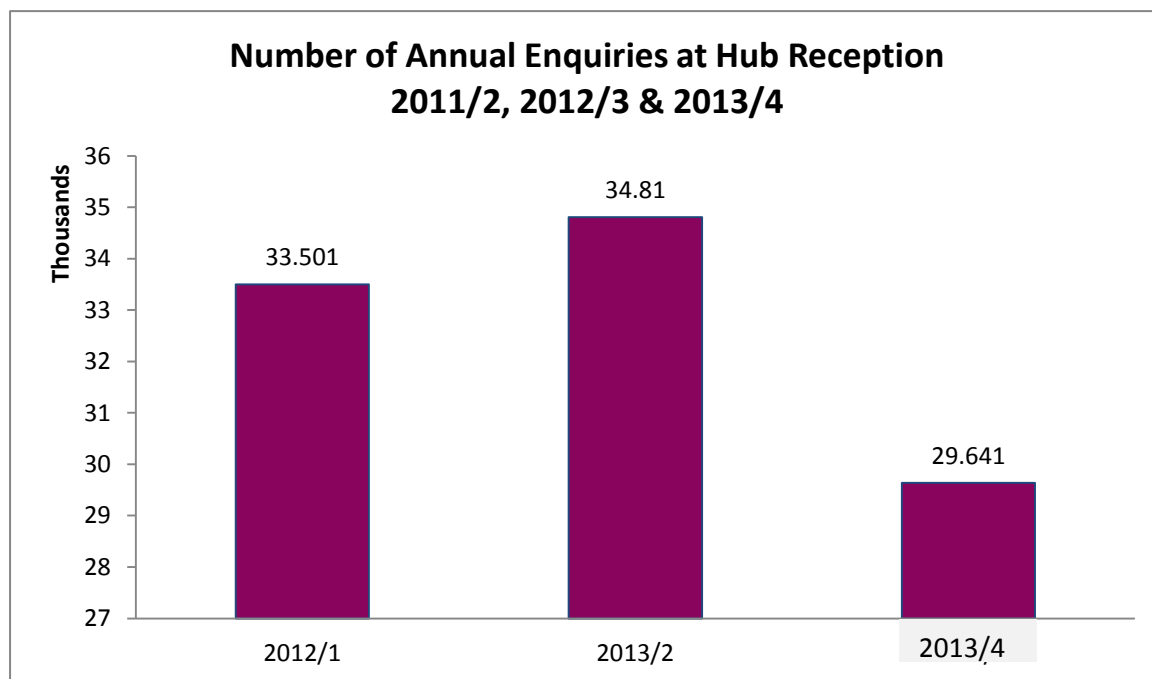


Chart 54- The Hub Reception Usage

The demographic of students served by the Hub Reception is not clear as it is understood that asking for details could be inconvenient for many students, leading to fewer students approaching. Furthermore, sessions would be considerably more timely and inefficient if students were asked for their detailed personal information.

Advice Zone

The Advice Zone is responsible for supporting students with their financial questions or difficulties, access to public services, as well as their immigration or visa queries etc. Appointments include face to face meetings, skype or telephone calls or via email.

Total Service Usage

Data recorded for the students' usage of the Hub during the 2011/2, 2012/3 and 2013/4 suggest a constant growth especially during the last two academic years.

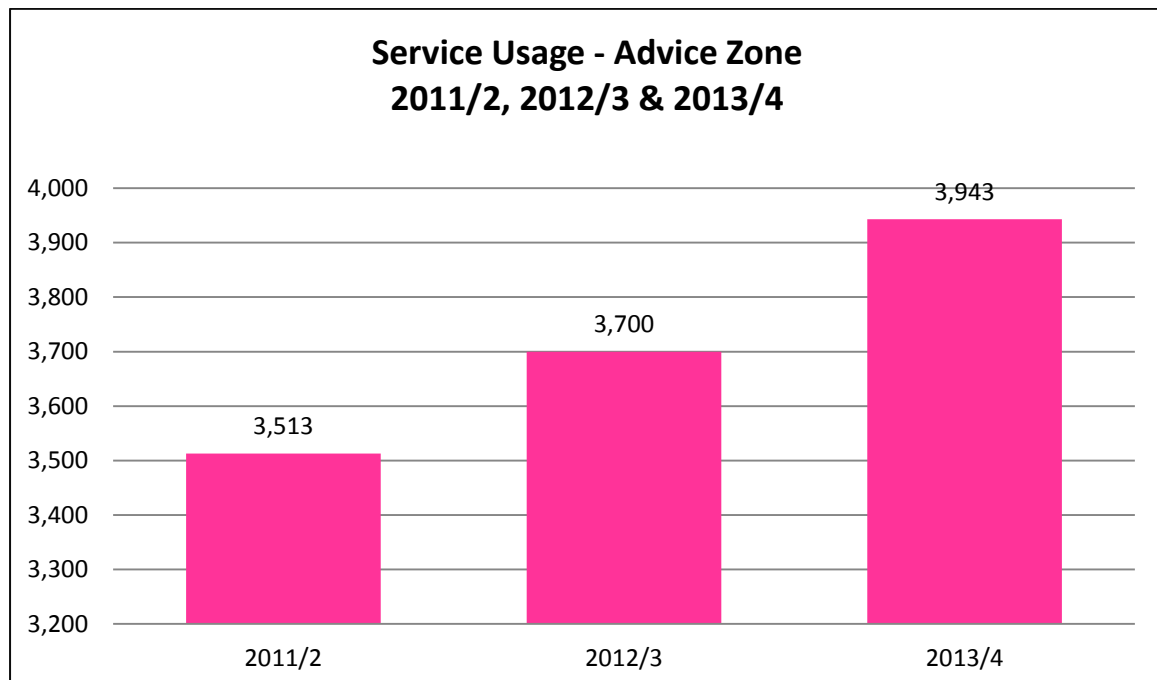


Chart 55a - Advice Zone- Total Service Usage

Service Usage by Level of Study

The graph below depicts the Study Level of students taking advantage of the Advice Zone facilities. The number of Postgraduate students accessing the Advice Zone showed a rapid and constant fall in number of Postgraduates seeking help from the Advice Zone during the period . On the other hand, Undergraduates (this figure includes Undergraduate and Foundation year students) were referring to the Advice Zone more frequently during this period.

Looking at the figures for the overall population at Aston University, there were a higher ratio of Postgraduate students referring to the Advice Zone compared to Undergraduates (average of 18% postgraduate students compared to 15% of Undergraduates).

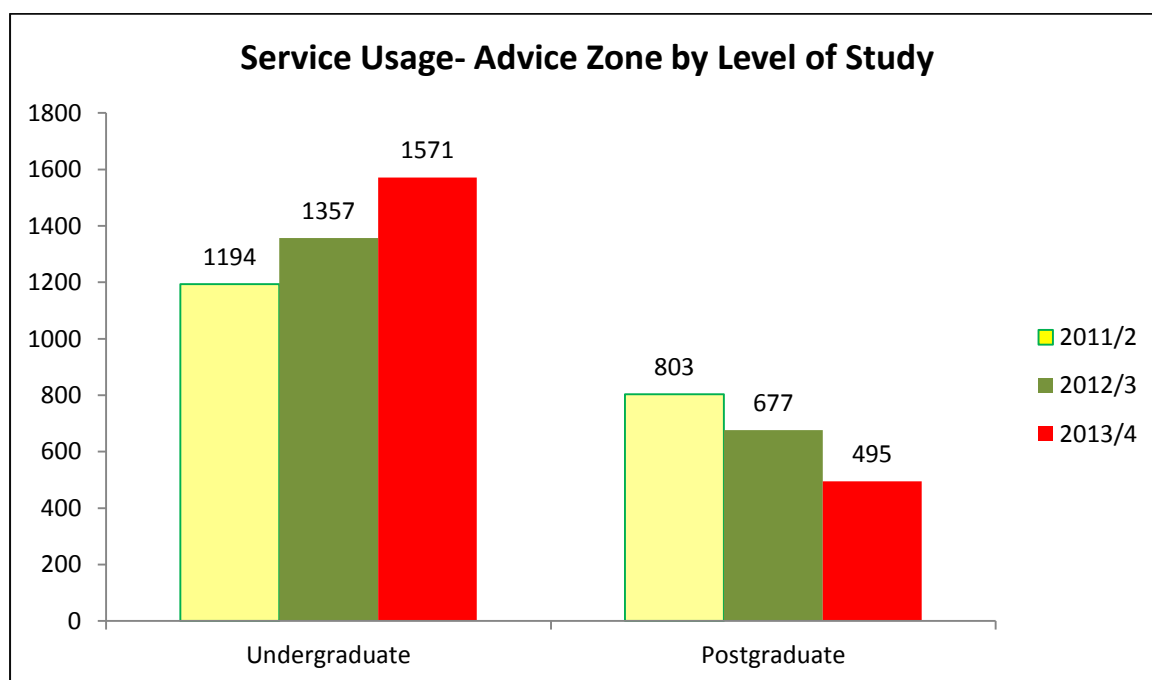


Chart 55b- Advice Zone- Total Service Usage by Level of Study

Service Usage by Gender

Male students continued to approach the Advice Zone more often than female students. This number, however, could be due to a slightly higher number of male students at Aston University. Data solely based on the figures from the Advice Zone would not reflect the number of students seeking advice as there are several other means to receive support such as personal tutors, and the Advice and Representation Centre (ARC).

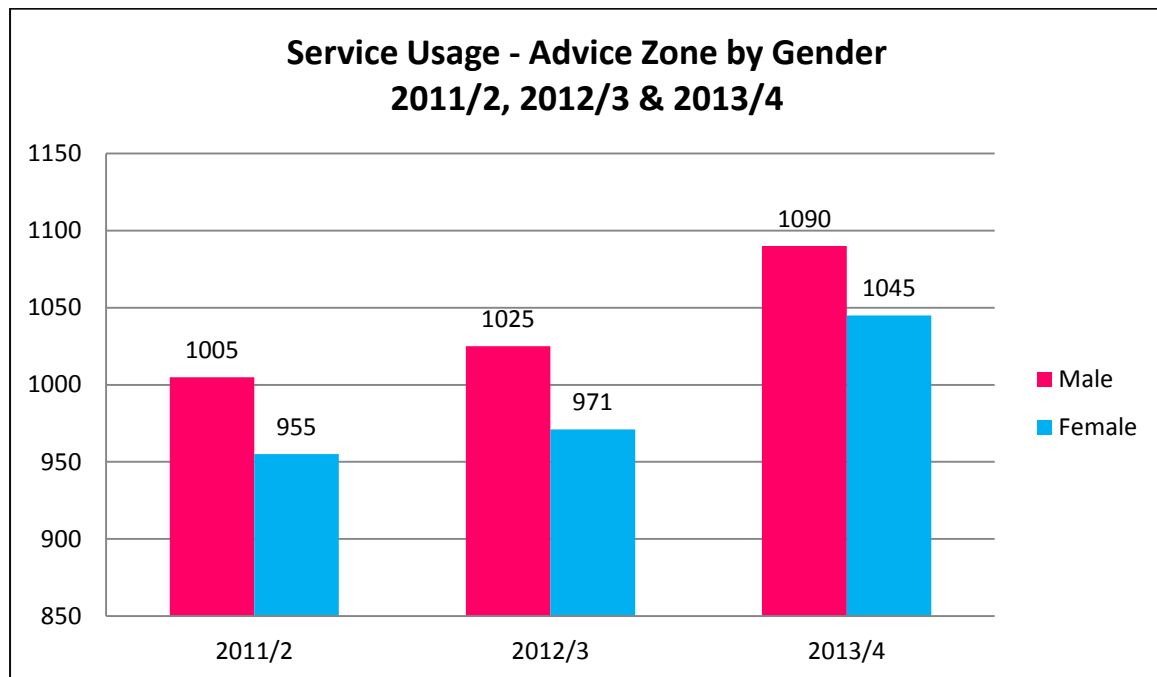


Chart 55c – Advice Zone- Total Service Usage by Gender

Service Usage by Ethnicity

Asian Ethnicity- (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Chinese) British and Other Asian Backgrounds – continued to be the main ethnic group to approach the Hub Advice Zone during the period between October 2011 and July 2014. Students with White, British, Irish and other White backgrounds were the next predominant ethnic group to seek help from the Advice Zone. The number of students who did not declare their ethnicity has been fluctuating during this period.

The breakdown of students seeking help from the Advice Zone mirrors that of the student population in the period shown.

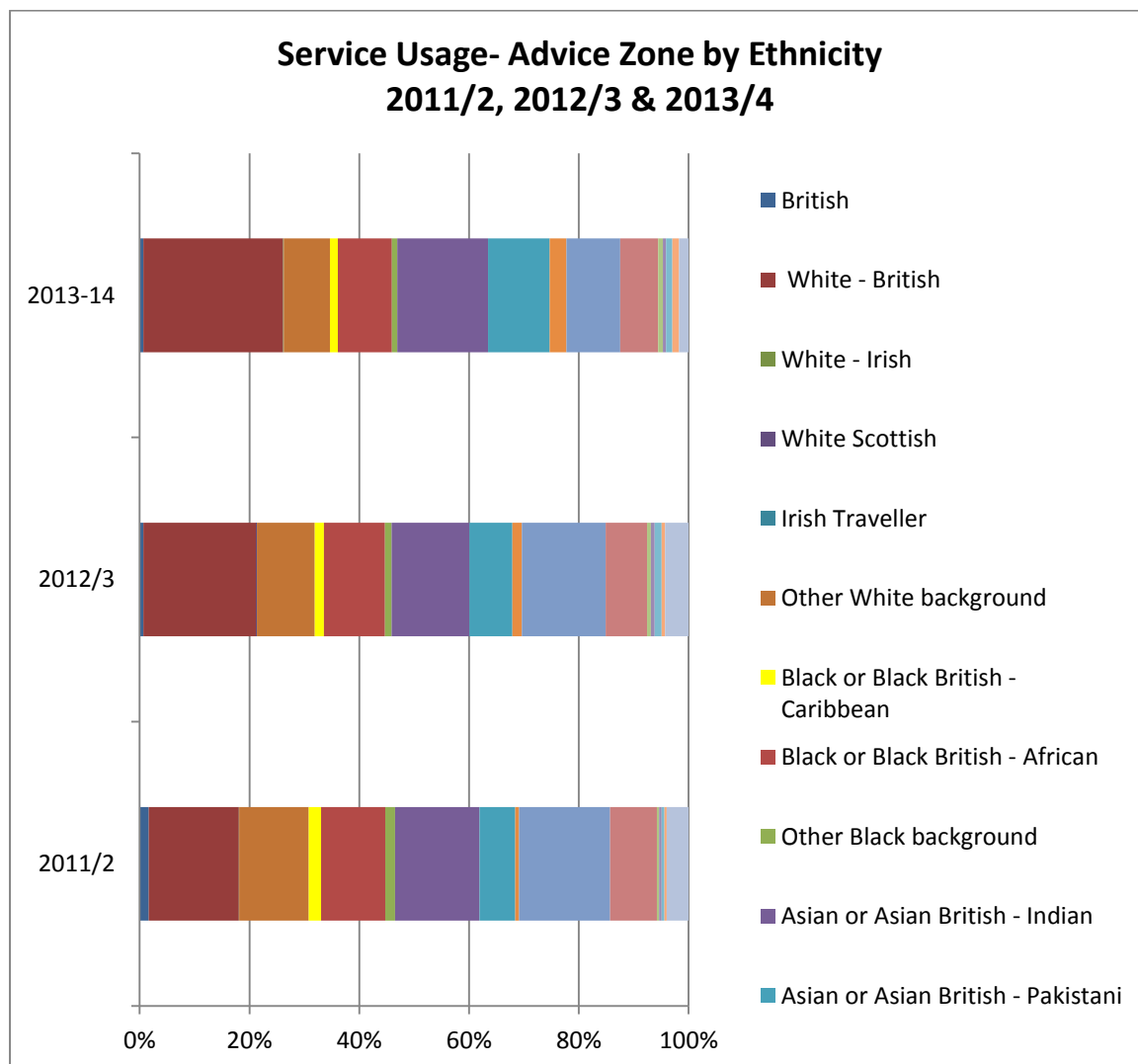


Chart 55d- Advice Zone – Total Service Usage by Ethnicity

Service Usage by Home/Overseas Status

There is a rising pattern in the number of Home and EU students contacting the Hub Advice Zone which could be due to there being more awareness to the services. The number of Overseas students, however, plummeted during this period which could be a result of an integrated Visa Compliances department under The Hub supervision.

The figures from Aston Population show similar trends in changes in counts of Home, EU or Overseas students and Aston University overall population.

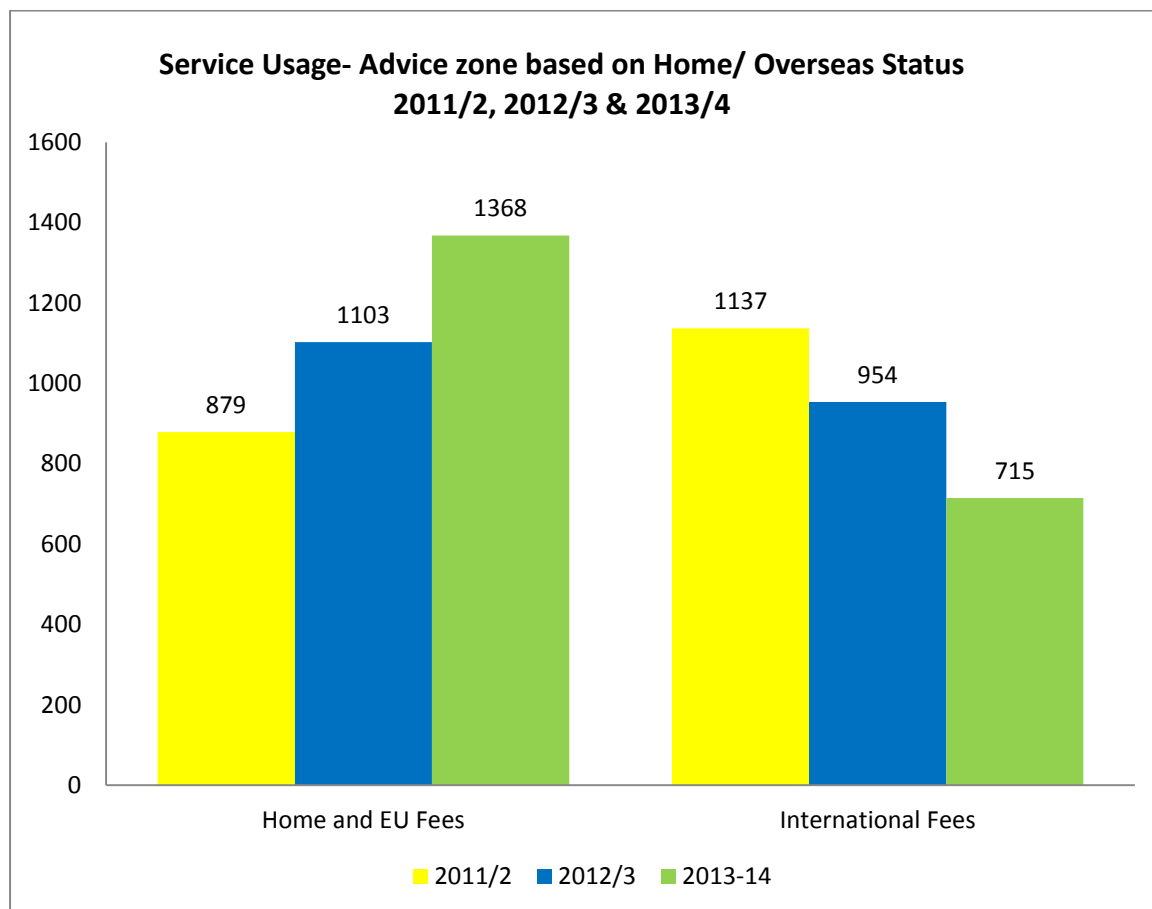


Chart 55e – Advice Zone- Total Usage by Home/Overseas Status

Service Usage by Age

The number of younger students who were supported by the Advice zone continuously rose during the period studied by 169 to 361 cases each year. The Advice Zone, however, seems to have lost its popularity with mature students. This could be a result of fewer Mature students coming to Aston University or higher numbers of mature students seeking help from other departments or people when required.

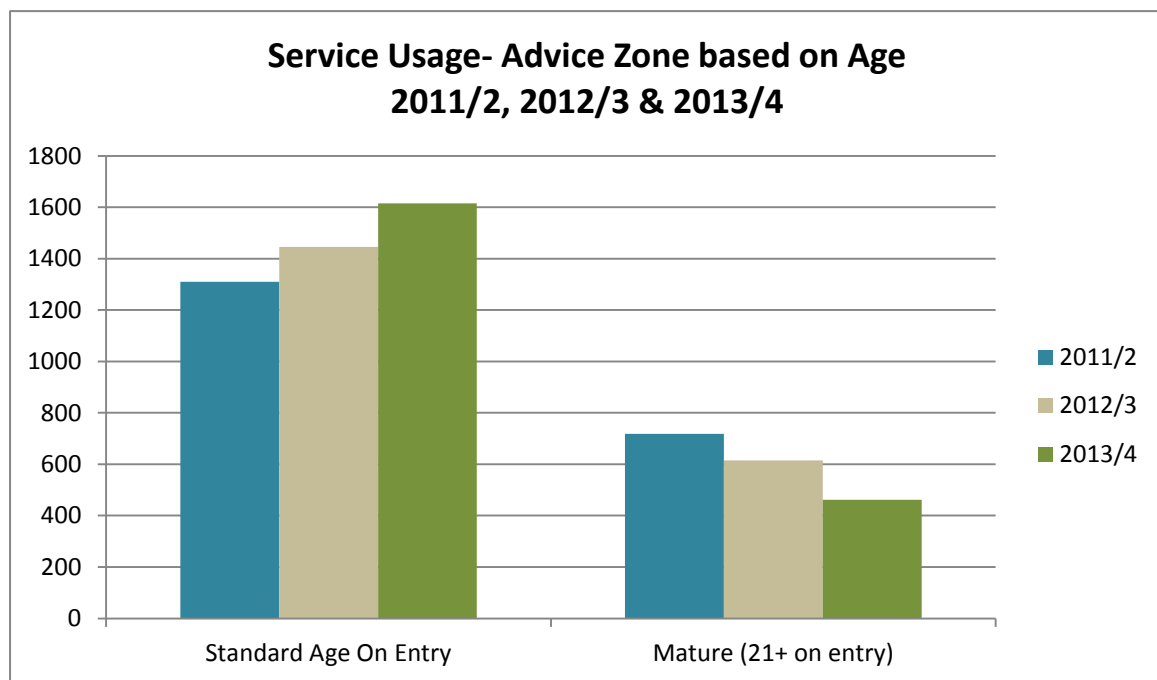


Chart 55f – Advice Zone- Total Service Usage by Age of Entry

Counselling

Total Service Usage

Counselling services continue to support students on a one to one basis as well as advising the staff on supporting students who are dealing with difficulties and concerns. The figures below illustrates the number of students contacting the Counselling services directly. There has been an increase in the number of students to who have reached the Counselling services for help during the past two years. Statistics show that about 3.5- 4.2 percent of students have reached out to Counselling at Aston University during the academic years 2011/2, 2012/3 and 2013/4.

It is known that 1:4 of the population is suffering from mental health problems and the most prevalent conditions are depression and anxiety (Mental Health Foundation, 2014). As reported by The Hub, the most common reason for visiting the Counselling Services was anxiety and depression during the period mentioned. However, the ratio of students visiting the Counselling services to the whole Aston University population peaked at maximum 1:25 during the academic year 2013/4.

Comparing the figures mentioned above would make the statistics below a success on supporting more of students in need of help.

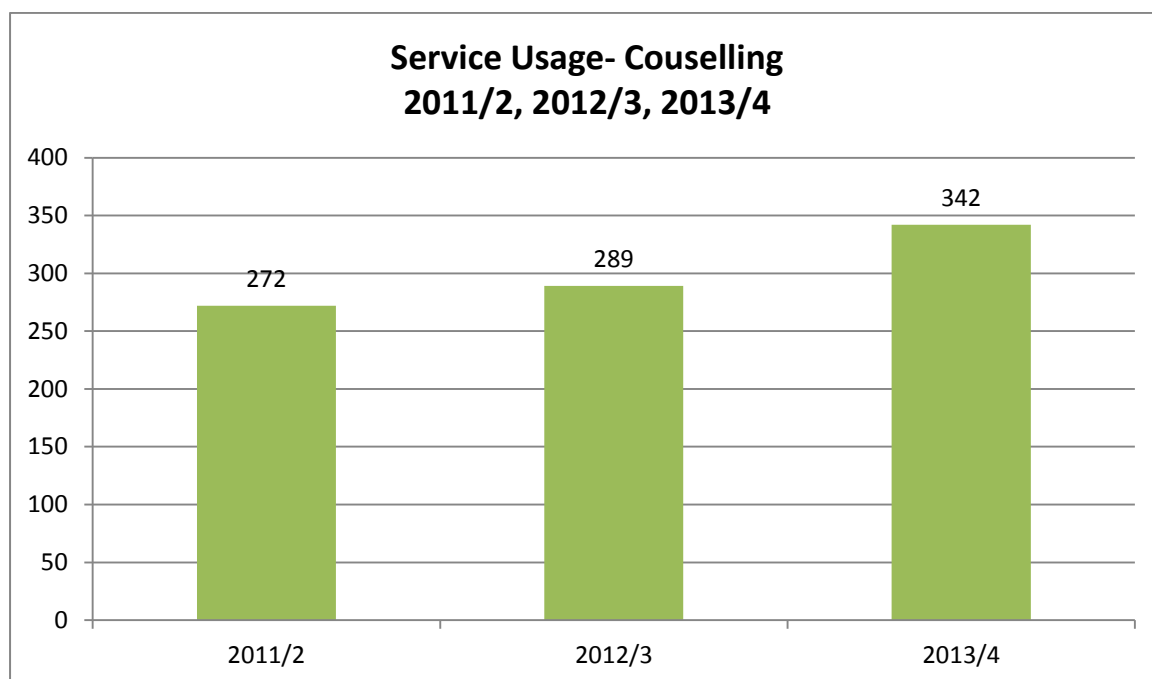


Chart 56 a- Counselling – Total Service Usage

Service Usage by Level of Study

Looking at data for students visiting the Counselling Services to receive support, it is noticeable that there were between almost 5 to 7 times more undergraduate students reaching out to Counselling than Postgraduates. These figures compared to the whole population of Aston University show that about 3% of Undergraduates were contacting the Counselling Services as opposed to 1% of Postgraduate students during the period shown on the graph below.

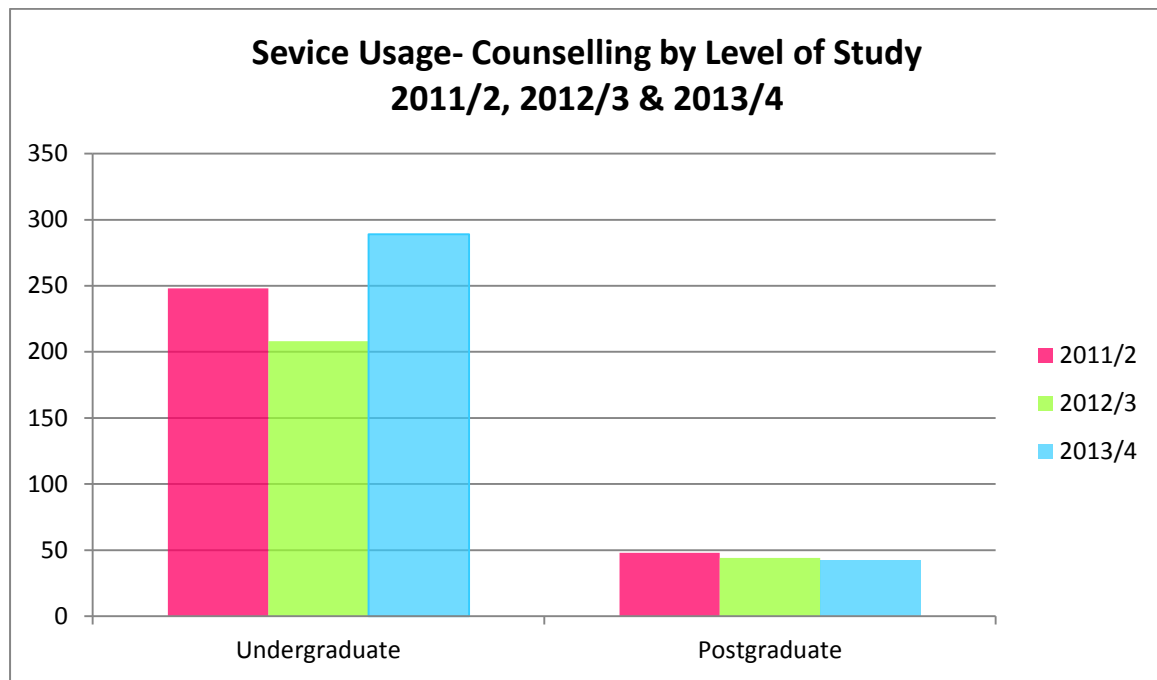


Chart 56b – Counselling- Total Service Usage by Level of Study

Service Usage by Gender

The graph below compares the number of students who received help from Aston University Counselling Services based on their gender during the academic years between October 2011 and July 2014. As opposed to the Advice Centre, Counselling Service faced a female predominant population of clients during this period.

Looking into Aston University demographics, figures show an almost evenly proportioned population in terms of gender with a slightly higher male presence. There could be several reasons to this uneven demand to the Counselling Service from which females being more prone to identify their mental health problems could be mentioned (Mental Health Foundation, 2003).

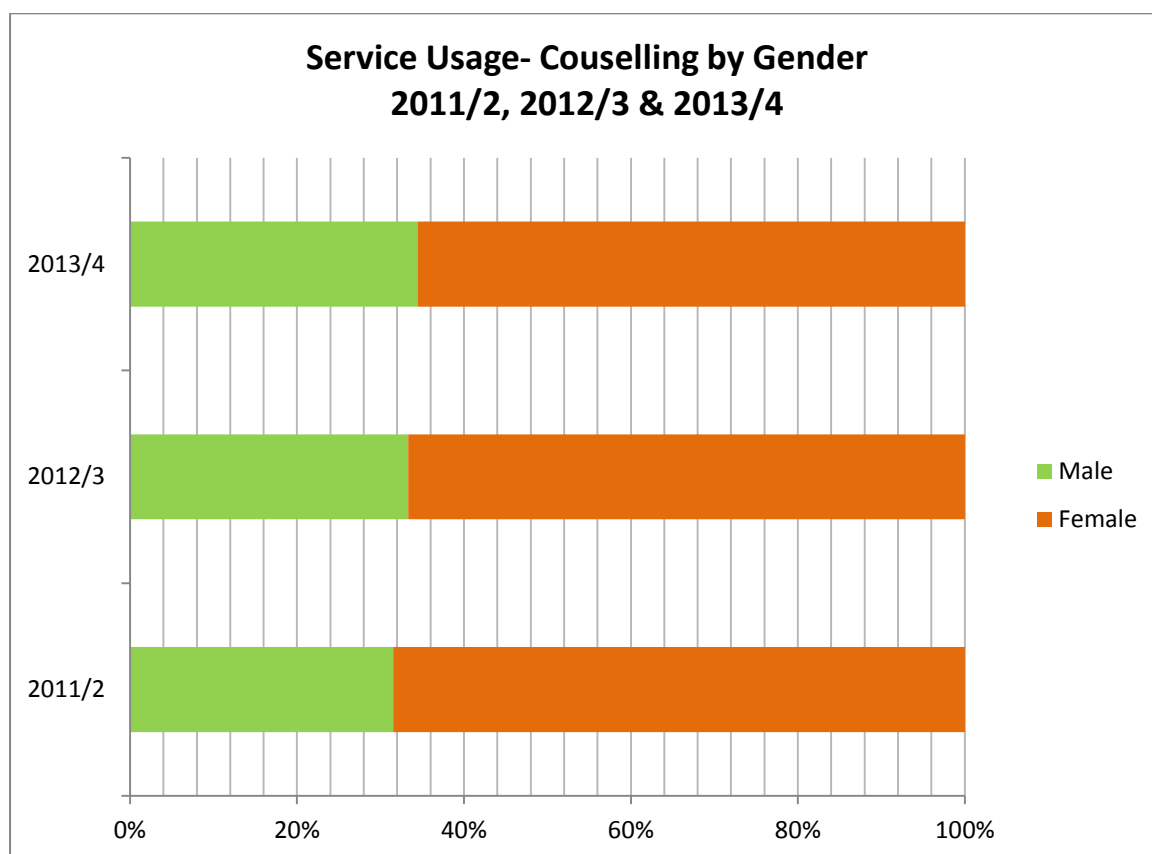


Chart 56c- Counselling – Total Usage by Gender

Service Usage by Ethnicity

Unlike the Advice Zone, Counselling had a majority of students with White background contacting them with their problems during the period between October 2011 and July 2014. Students with Black ethnicity are the second most predominant group to have been served by Counselling Services. Asian Ethnicity were by far the minority group in relation to contacting Counselling Services.

Figures for Aston University population show that the majority of students had Asian backgrounds with over 40% of the population during the period shown. However, they are the third biggest group to contact Counselling Service (about 13%). On the other hand, despite the figures showing that students with White ethnicity making 50% of Counselling Services visits, only an average 30% of Aston University students had white background during the period shown on the graph below.

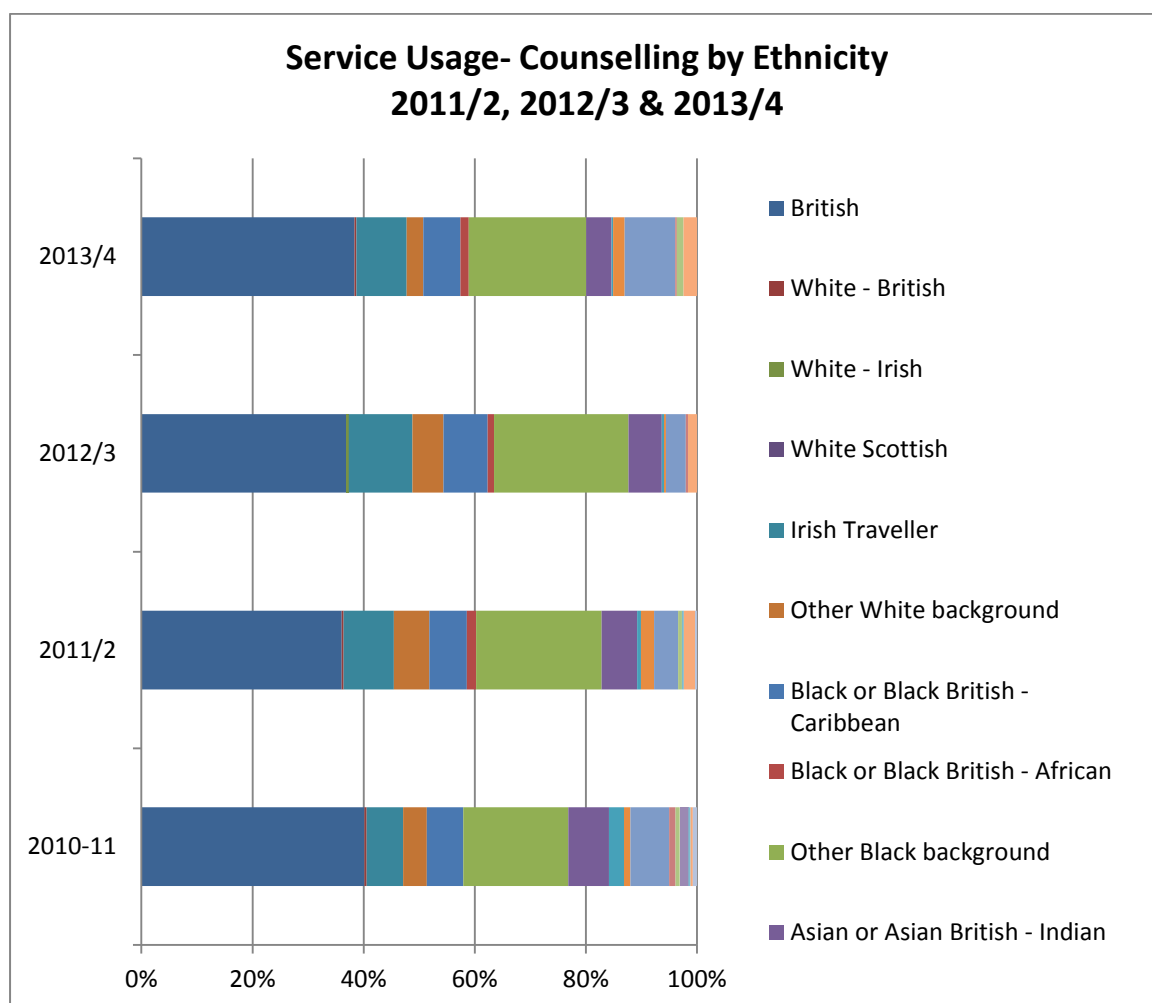


Chart 56d- Counselling – Total Service Usage by Ethnicity

Service Usage by Home/Overseas Status

Home and EU students sought help from Counselling Services at least four times more often than Overseas students during the academic years 2011/2, 2012/3 and 2013/4. This could reflect on lack of awareness about available Counselling Services, could also be a result of cultural views about seeking help for mental health. The ratio of Home and EU students contacting Counselling Services to their population was at least 1% higher than the relative figures for Overseas students during the academic years between 2011/2 and 2013/4.

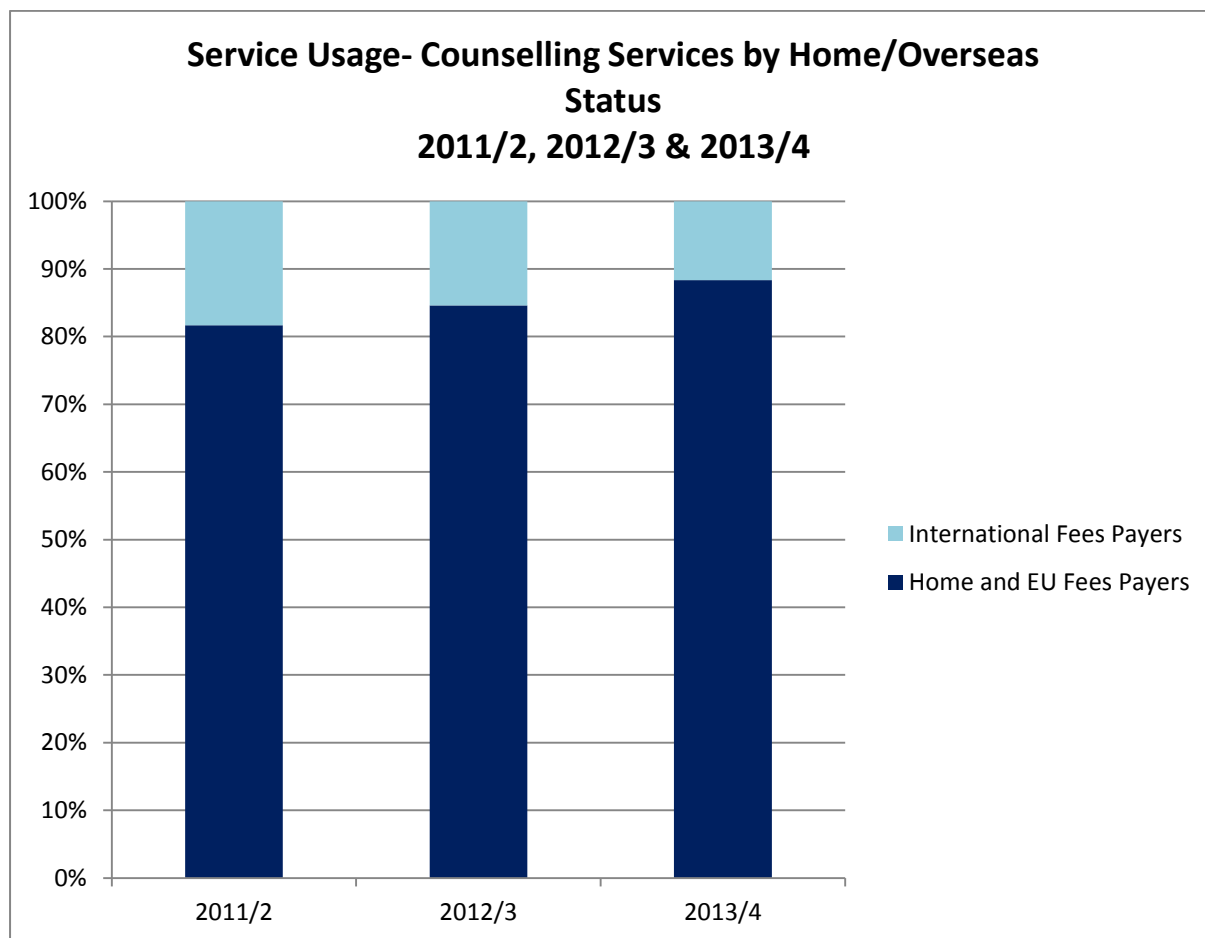


Chart 56e- Counselling – Total Service Usage by Home/Overseas Status

Service Usage by Age

The Counselling Services was by far more popular amongst younger students than mature students during the three years depicted on the graph below. However, the number of mature students contacting the Counselling Services shows a constant pattern unlike the data related to younger students which show significant fluctuations during this period.

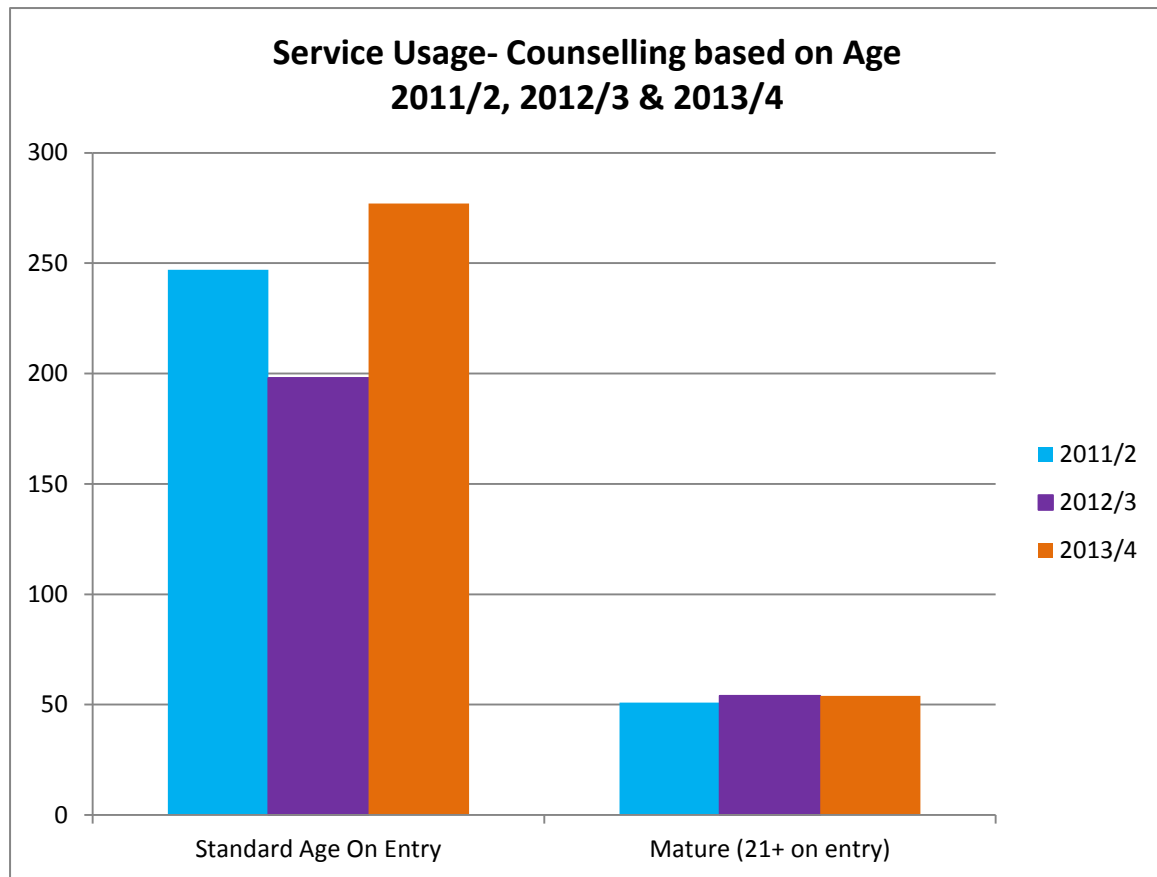


Chart 56f – Counselling – Total Service Usage by Age of Entry

Disability Team

Total Service Usage

About 8% of Aston University population claimed to have suffered from Disabilities during 2011/2, 2012/3 and 2013/4 academic years. There was 5.5 percent fall in the number of students contacting the Disability team during the 2012/3 academic year. This number rose however by 18% in the following year. About 10% of students contacting the Disability Team were known to have no disabilities.

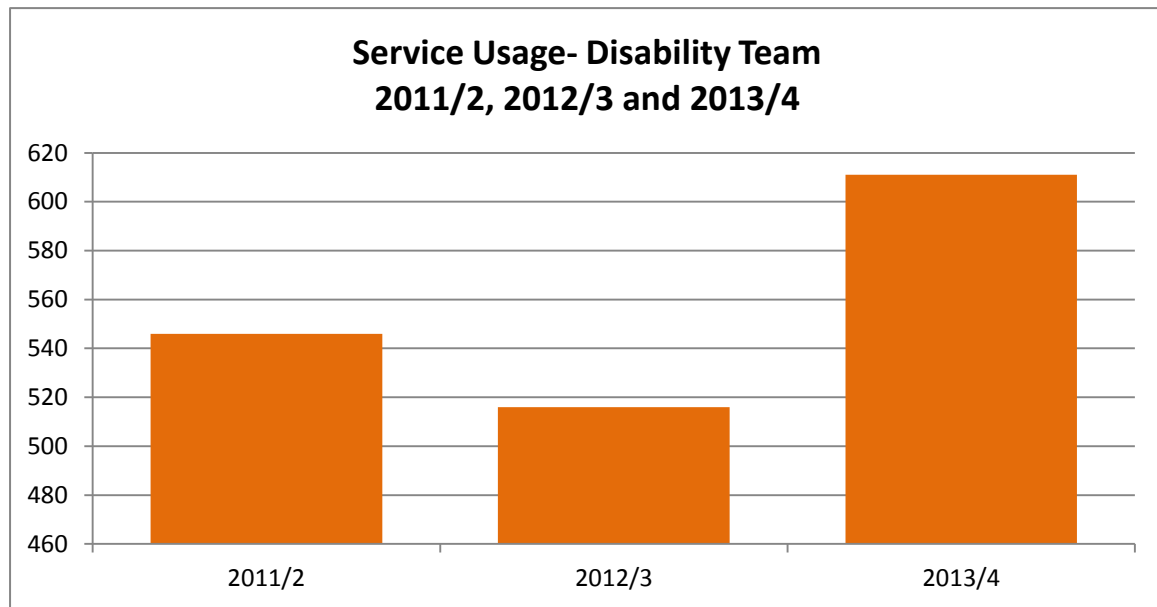


Chart 57a- Disability Team

About 6.9%- 7.5% of Aston University population were reported as having disabilities annually during the mentioned period. Learning Difficulties, above 40% of the claims, continued to be the predominant reason behind students' disability during the period mentioned.

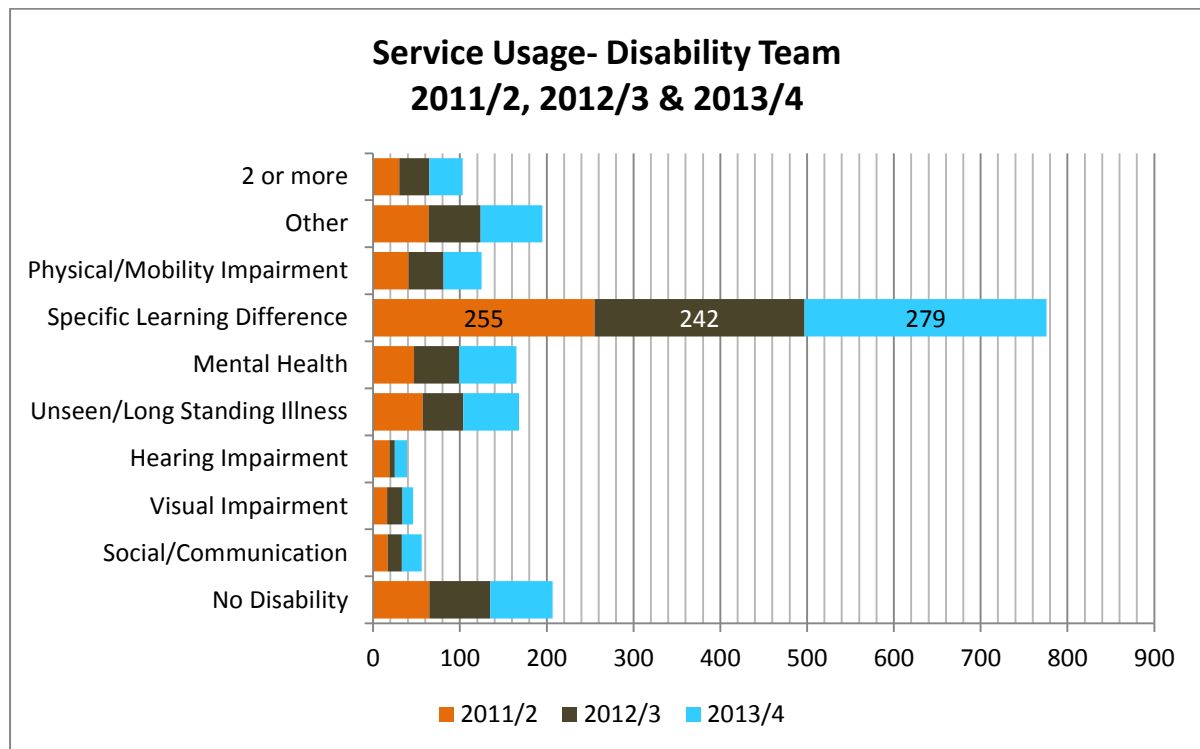


Chart 57b- Disability Team- Total Service Usage by kind

Service Usage by Home/Overseas Status

The Disability Unit consistently dealt with more Home and EU students than International students during the period between academic years 2011/2 and 2013/4. During the academic year 2013/4, there was a sharp rise of 12% in the number of visitors who held Home and EU status compared to the same group in the academic year 2012/3. On the other hand, the figures for International students went through a steady pattern during the period shown on the graph below.

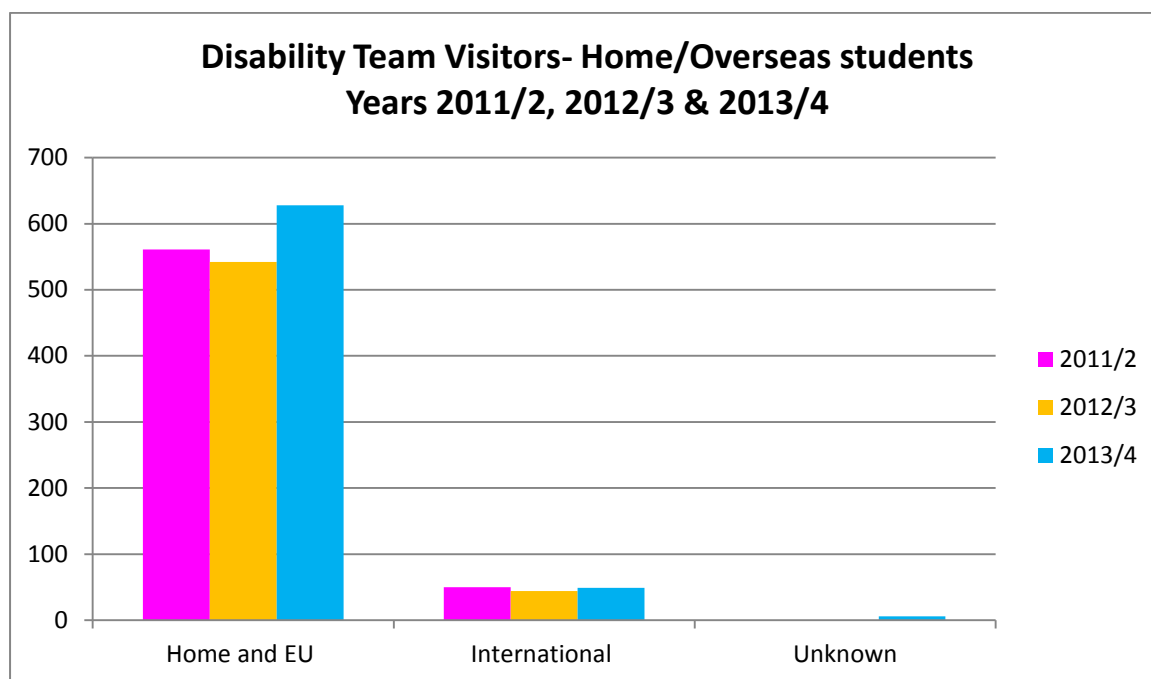


Chart 57c- Disability Team- Total Usage by Home/Overseas Status

Other demographics for Disability Team visitors at Aston University was not recorded. Hence, it was not possible to analyse their clients any further.

Actions

From the data presented in this report the following key areas have been identified as needing further monitoring/action. The first three actions require monitoring the action by the time of the next report, four require investigation during the current academic year and two require development before the next report.

1. Monitor - Degree classifications for Foundation Degree Programmes.

2011/2012/3 saw a decrease in the number of female students receiving a distinction for the FD studies which was followed by a rise in 2013/4 so this action remains to monitor FD performance by Gender to see if this decrease is sustained.

2. Monitor - Undergraduate Programme award classification by Disability.

The number of students who have declared a disability receiving third class degrees increased slightly in 2013/4. This needs to be monitored again next year to take immediate actions if this number increases.

3. Investigate – Number of students declaring a disability in ABS

The data presented in this report shows that ABS continues to have the lowest number of students declaring a disability compared to the other Schools.

4. Investigate – Male student Withdraw rates.

Previously a monitoring action, as data from the previous report indicated that male students are more likely to withdraw from their students because of academic failure compared to female students. This is moved to investigate as 2013/4 data shows the number of males withdrawing has increased further.

5. Investigate – Award Classification by Ethnicity

Whilst this is not a new issue at Aston, or in the Higher Education sector, there remains a significant difference in the award classification by student ethnicity. It is important to build on previous work undertaken in this area to ensure no student is directly or indirectly discriminated against, specifically for Chinese and Black/Black British students.

6. Investigate – Number of “Not Known” students by ethnicity

As highlighted in this report, there are a number of students for whom no data is recorded regarding their ethnicity. This number has decreased in 2013/4 however it is to be monitored to ensure the dropping pattern in the number Not Known figures in Ethnicity groups. Whilst this is an optional field for students to complete, it does impact on the ability to report accurately on student ethnicity.

7. Investigate - Number of appeals by Disability.

The data suggests that students who have declared a disability are over represented in the appeals data compared to proportion of cohort. This must be monitored next year and any potential areas of risk discussed with the Disability Team.

8. Investigate – Number of repeats by Disability

The 2012/3 report indicates an increasing number of students who are repeating their studies have declared a disability to the University. This increase is from 82 in 2012/3 to 87 in 2013/4.

9. Investigate – Number of withdrawals from Male students

Chart 21 indicates higher ratio of male students withdrawing from their course. In 2013/4 there were more than 4times male withdrawals than female students.

10. Investigate- Number of Appeals in 2013/4

There was a significant rise in number of appeals in 2012/3 & 2013/4.

11. Investigate- Asian students Leave of Absence, Withdrawal and Repeat

Number Asian students with withdrawals, LOA and Repeats increased in 2013/4.

12. Investigate- Higher ratio of white students achieving Distinction and higher number Chinese students receiving Pass in Taught Postgraduate courses.

Chinese students are overrepresented in students with Pass and white students achieve over three times more distinction than other ethnicities at PGT.

13. Investigate- Non-assessment Offences by Asian students

Chart 49 shows a high number of Asian students committing non-assessment offences.

14. Investigation- Achievement for PGT non-Christian students

Christian students were overrepresented among PGT students who achieved Distinction.

15. Investigate – Number of male and Asian students reaching out to the Counselling Services

There are lower proportions of male and Asian students reaching out to the Counselling Services

16. Develop – Ability to record the age on entry to a programme

In order to assess the experience of students by age, work will need to be undertaken to record the age of the student on entry to their programme. Whilst this field does exist, at the moment it is not reliable enough to run analysis on.

17. Develop – Inclusion of additional Protected Characteristics

Whilst 2013/14 saw the inclusion of sexual orientation on application (for UG students) as this only applies to first year students it is not possible to extract progression and award data for these characteristics. The inclusion of this data has been added to the Business Objects report used to generate the data for future years.

Student Equalities Action Plan

Recommendation		Action Taken	Action by Whom	Target Date
Monitor	Degree classifications for Foundation Degree Programmes			
	Undergraduate Programme award classification by Disability			
Investigate	Number of students declaring a disability in ABS			
	Male student Withdraw rates			
	Award Classification by Ethnicity			
	Number of "Not Known" students by ethnicity			
	Number of appeals by Disability			
	Number of repeats by disability			
	Higher ratio of white students achieving Distinction and higher number Chinese students receiving Pass in Taught Postgraduate courses.			
	Non-assessment Offences by Asian students.			
	Achievement for PGT non-Christian students			

	Asian students Leave of Absence, Withdrawal and Repeat			
	Number of male and Asian students reaching out to the Counselling Services			
	Number of withdrawals from Male students			
Develop	Ability to record the age on entry to a programme			
	Inclusion of additional Protected Characteristics			