

What does social mobility mean (Scotland)?

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Key milestones

- 2013: First Minister's pledge (*20% of entrants from 20% most deprived communities by 2030*)
- 2014-16: Commission on Widening Access: report accepted by Scottish Government
- 2017: Commissioner for Fair Access appointed
- 2019: Minimum entry requirements published by university / course
- 2019: Framework for Fair Access established

National targets

- 2021 Interim target: 16% of FT FG entrants from 20% most deprived communities [SIMD - Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation]
- 2026 Interim target: 18% of FT FG entrants from SIMD20
- 2030: Final target: 20% of FT FG entrants from SIMD20
- At least 10% of FT FG entrants from SIMD20 in every institution

Institutional targets

- Measures chosen by institutions - but typically include:
 - SIMD20/40
 - Free School Meals
 - Care Experience
 - First-in-family
 - Low progression schools
 - Bridging programme participants...

Progress to date

- Record number of SIMD entrants - 5,850
- 16.7% of FT FG entrants from SIMD20
- 19.6% of all UG entrants, ie including colleges, from SIMD20
- Continuation rate gap between SIMD20 & all students cut by half over 5 years (90.2% - 93.5%)
- % of care-experienced students doubled, now 1650
- Institutional shares of SIMD20 entrants range from 7.8% (Aberdeen) to UWS (28.3%)

Anglo-Scottish differences 1

- 4-year degrees (compared with 3), 5 Higher (compared with 3 A-levels)
- Within university sector more 'pre-1992' universities and fewer 'post-1992' ones
- Less emphasis on 'mission groups' / greater solidarity among universities
- Much larger college presence - 27% (compared with 10%), HNC/Ds thriving
- SFC delivers block-grant funding (T&R), 'outcome agreements' with HEIs

Anglo-Scottish differences 2

- Free tuition (for Scottish students: rUK students pay fees)
- More college-university transfer: 40% of SIMD20 students come via college route
- Combination of national targets [SIMD] & institutional measures of access
- Greater use of 'contextual admissions', ie adjusted offers - MERs - alongside outreach work in schools

Policy choices & social mobility

- Criticism of SIMD as access measure (false-positives / negatives...), push to add FSMs

BUT not just a technical question, wider implications for definitions of social mobility:

- Social mobility: 'Getting poor kids into posh universities' - by addressing individual deficits OR
- Social justice: Tackling multiple deprivation, ie jobs, housing, health as well as education (requiring HE to change)