

**UNDERSTANDING THE EXPERIENCES OF
ETHNIC MINORITY STUDENTS AT
LOUGHBOROUGH UNIVERSITY**

Preliminary Report

CRSP 571

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CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	i
1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background	1
1.2 Ethnic Minority Students in UK Higher Education	2
1.2.1 Participation patterns	2
1.2.2 Academic performance	3
1.2.3 Destination of graduates	5
1.3 Aims and Objectives of the Loughborough Research	6
1.4 Research Design and Methods	7
1.4.1 Analysis of existing data	8
1.4.2 Data limitations	9
1.5 Structure of the Report	10
2 ETHNIC DIVERSITY OF UNDERGRADUATES STUDENTS AT LOUGHBOROUGH UNIVERSITY	12
2.1 Trends in Ethnic Composition of UK/EU Undergraduate Student Admissions	12
2.2 Ethnic Diversity by Background Characteristics	13
2.3 Ethnic Diversity by Subject Area	18
3 ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF ETHNIC MINORITY STUDENTS	21
3.1 Qualification Aim Achievement by Ethnicity	21
3.2 Academic Performance - Degree Class by Ethnicity	25
4 STUDENT SATISFACTION BY ETHNICITY	31
REFERENCES	35
ANNEX A	
DEGREE CLASS ATTAINMENT BY BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS	
ANNEX B	
AVERAGE STUDENT SATISFACTION SCORES AT LOUGHBOROUGH UNIVERSITY BY ETHNICITY (NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEYS)	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Aim and Objectives of the Research

The Centre for Research in Social Policy (CRSP) has been commissioned by Loughborough University to undertake research exploring the different views and perspectives of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) students at the University. The specific aims and objectives of the research are to:

- Identify the ethnic diversity among the student population of Loughborough University;
- Devise a research programme that recognises, as far as possible, this diversity and represents the different perspectives of the BME students of Loughborough;
- Explore their 'student experience' of the Loughborough Campus and the town, examining both the social and the structural context of being a student at Loughborough University e.g. course of study night time leisure, housing and accommodation;
- Examine the academic performance of BME students in comparison to their ethnically White counterparts; and
- Identify different teaching styles or curriculum structures to see if they impact on the student experience, and if so, whether they do so differentially for different BME groups.

Research Design and Methods

The research focuses on the experiences of UK/EU resident undergraduate students. It concentrates on existing cohorts (students' register 2006/07) although analysis of management data has provided an opportunity to examine trends and patterns of the BME experience and performance over a longer period of time. The methodological approach is both quantitative and qualitative, drawing upon existing data available through the University systems, as well as conducting a range of focus groups and one-to-one interviews with a wide range of key stakeholders, including students and relevant staff. This preliminary report focuses on ethnic diversity and academic performance of ethnic minority undergraduate students at

Loughborough University based on analysis of student management/administrative data. It includes an analysis of ethnic variations in student satisfaction at the University based on the National Student Surveys of 2005 and 2006.

Key Findings

Participation Patterns

Participation patterns show an increasing upward trend in the proportion of UK/EU undergraduate students from BME backgrounds admitted at Loughborough University. This being said the levels of participation of BME students at the University are generally lower than the average national HE Institutions in the UK, so that, although the rate of increase is notably higher it is from a lower base.

Diversity of Participation

An examination of ethnic diversity of current (2007) UK/EU undergraduate students registered for full-time courses at the University shows that:

- Students of Black ethnic origins are more likely to have attended FE/tertiary/adult colleges than other ethnic groups and tend not to have as many A or AS level qualifications.
- Students of Asian ethnic origin tend to have a less favourable socio-economic background (they were the least likely to have parents in managerial/professional/posts and most likely to have parents who were unemployed or in routine occupations).
- Mixed ethnic origin students are most likely to have attended independent (fee paying) schools or Grant Maintained Schools.
- Students of Black ethnic origin show a propensity towards studying Engineering while those of Asian origin gravitate towards Science to a greater extent compared to students from other ethnic backgrounds. On the other hand, White students are more likely to be located in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities than BME students.

- A significantly higher proportion of Black undergraduate students register as mature students aged 25 years or older (seven per cent), compared to students of White, Asian or Mixed ethnic backgrounds (one per cent).
- Black undergraduate students have a tendency to change Departments after admission.
- Female students seem under-represented among ethnic minority groups of Asian, and to a lesser extent, Black ethnic origin, but the differences are not statistically significant.

Diversity in Completion of Study

An examination of ethnic variations in completion of study show less favourable outcomes for BME students.

- Among non-continuing students admitted to the University since 1996/97, those of Black, mixed ethnic origin or of Bangladeshi, Pakistani or other Asian (besides Indian or Chinese) backgrounds were the least likely to have achieved their qualification aim.
- Among students of known ethnicity, those of mixed ethnic origin are the most likely to have failed and also the most likely to have withdrawn from their courses.
- Striking differences were observed between different Asian groups. Chinese students were the most likely to have achieved their qualification aim - they were twice as likely than White students and more than three times as likely to have done so compared to Bangladeshi/Pakistani or other Asians of similar characteristics within the same faculty.

Factors Impacting on Completion of Study

Factors that are associated with BME students having a reduced likelihood of achieving the qualification aim vary according to:

- the faculty they are in;
- the students' socio-economic group; and
- the highest qualification they achieved prior to registering at Loughborough University.

Students registered in the Science Faculty were less likely to achieve their study aim compared to those in Engineering, whereas students registered in Social Sciences and Humanities were more likely to achieve their aim than those in Engineering.

Background characteristics seem to be mediating the lower achievement among Black and Mixed ethnic groups. It is not clear from this analysis why students of Bangladeshi, Pakistani or other Asian (besides Indian or Chinese) backgrounds appear to be less likely to achieve their qualification aim than other ethnic groups. This being said those students whose parents worked in routine jobs or were unemployed were less likely to achieve their study aim compared to students whose parents worked in managerial or professional jobs.

Students who completed foundation courses or accredited access courses, had attained GSVQ's (including level 3 GSVQ's) or Btec certificates or diplomas were less likely to achieve their study aims compared to students with A levels, AS level or a mixture of the two.

Students from a mixed ethnic background were also more likely not to reach their study aim. This seemed to be influenced by the disproportion numbers who were educated at independent schools, since this generally was associated with a high risk of failure to meet study aims.

Diversity of Achievements Levels

The results for degree class attainment confirm lower achievement for BME students than their White counterparts. Among students who successfully completed their undergraduate course, ethnic minority groups were significantly (statistically) less likely to get a first class or an upper second degree. These trends are also reflected nationally in that across Higher Education BME students achievement levels lag behind that of their White counterparts. They are also less likely to achieve first and upper second class degrees. In Loughborough the following trends were identifiable:

- Although Chinese students were the most likely to achieve their qualification aim, they were, on the other hand, among the least likely to attain a higher degree class.

- Students of Black or Chinese ethnic origins were at most, half as likely to have achieved a First or an Upper Second Class honours than their White counterparts in the same faculty and of similar background characteristics.

Factors Impacting on Achievement Levels

Evidence from the analysis shows that after controlling for the majority of factors that would be expected to influence achievement i.e. prior attainment, subject of study, age, gender, deprivation etc, it was observed that being from an ethnic minority was more significant in explaining degree attainment. It should be noted that background characteristics explain the apparent lower achievement among Black and Mixed ethnic groups, as explained in the main text in the paragraph accompanying Table 3.2. This is supported by other studies. The data on which this analysis is based did not include the data base of entry scores as these (tariff scores) are not available in a form that allows detailed analysis at this time.

The National Students Survey Results

Overall Loughborough BME students rated their experience at Loughborough as positive with most scores being above the national average. The National Student Survey data show little variation in student satisfaction by ethnicity, although students of Black ethnic origin seemed to have slightly lower satisfaction in relation to teaching on their course or personal development. On the other hand, they had slightly higher satisfaction on items relating to learning resources, especially being able to access IT resources. In terms of overall satisfaction, Loughborough compared favourably with the national average. The average marks given by Loughborough students (Whites 4.3, Asians 4.2 and Blacks 4.2 - were considerably higher than the national average).

Preliminary Conclusions and Recommendations

Overall, the analysis of student administrative/management data has provided useful insights on ethnic diversity of Loughborough University students and ethnic variations in academic performance. The findings highlight the need to address lower achievement and academic performance of ethnic minority students. Such initiative could be informed by a better understanding of factors that contribute to the lower achievement of BME students. It is recognised that the University has other data bases that would help in this analysis and we would suggest that it would be useful for the University registry to find ways of being able to access and analysis this data in a way that would help monitor the BME experience of Loughborough University. It may also wish to consider collecting new data that would enhance our knowledge particularly around those students that do not achieve their study aims. The qualitative interviews in this study are expected to explore experiences of ethnic minority students and shed light on some of the factors that may explain the patterns observed.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The Race Relations Amendment Act (2000) places a number of general and specific duties on UK Higher Education (HE) institutions, including the positive promotion of good race relations between people of different racial groups and the monitoring of admissions and progress of students by racial group. Loughborough University has a responsibility to protect its staff and students from racial discrimination and harassment. In its Access Agreement, the University set targets for increasing the proportion of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) students as it currently admits slightly fewer than would be expected for its subject mix.

However, very little is known about whether ethnicity per se has a significant impact on the quality of the experience of students at Loughborough. The issue is complicated by whether a student is an International/overseas student and by the standard of their English or a UK/EU ethnic minority student. Within the UK/EU student population, the proportions of BME and White students vary considerably by programme, both nationally and at Loughborough. For the last three years, the Registry has been preparing data on the admission, progression and achievement of undergraduate and postgraduate taught students. The data have been broken down by a range of 'diversity' variables including ethnicity (White, BME, other or unknown), gender, disability, age on entry for undergraduates etc. The data analysed so far have highlighted two possible concerns with respect to BME undergraduate students:

- 1 Although UK/EU undergraduate applicants receive and accept offers at the same rate, fewer BME students are actually admitted. This appears to be a result of BME students being less likely to meet offers or the standard required for a concession to be made but there may be a link with subject of study; and
- 2 Undergraduate achievement data suggest that, generally, a slightly smaller proportion of UK/EU BME students complete their degree. Although the picture for degree classes is mixed, there are some signs of lower performance. In particular, data collated from 1997 entry year onwards shows that the failure

rate of BME students has consistently been higher than that of their White counterparts.

The above has led the Programme Development and Quality Team to support a research project exploring the performance and experiences of ethnic minority students at Loughborough University. To ensure that the scope was manageable, the research was confined to UK/EU resident (or possibly UK) undergraduates. The University is seeking to understand whether the data currently available are telling us anything about the experience of its applicants and students, and whether BME students are having less positive experiences at Loughborough than White students.

1.2 Ethnic Minority Students in UK Higher Education

Although academic research on the experiences of BME students in individual UK Universities is relatively scarce, there is a wealth of research evidence on ethnic differences in HE in the UK as a whole. Several studies for the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) have investigated ethnic differences in participation in HE among UK-domiciled students, their achievements and Labour Market Transitions (Bhattacharyya et al., 2003; Connor et al., 2004; Broecke and Nicholls, 2007). Moreover, the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) provides yearly data on the HE student population, both at institutional and aggregate levels, broken down by various background characteristics, such as domicile, gender, age, ethnicity, subject, level and length of study. Studies focussing on individual institutions include: a study at the University of Cambridge which examined differences in achievement of various ethnic minority groups among its undergraduate students, their experiences and factors affecting academic performance (Scales and Whitehead, 2006); and a case study of student experiences of diversity in a London-based University (Sims, 2007).

1.2.1 Participation patterns

Young people from BME backgrounds are disproportionately more likely to enter HE than their share of the UK population suggests. At the turn of the millennium, they were about twice as represented in HE as they were in the overall UK population (Bhattacharyya et al., 2003). Statistics from the Higher Education Statistics Agency

(HESA) showed that between 2000/01 and 2005/06, the share of the UK domiciled undergraduate full-time first year population of known ethnicity accounted for by BME's increased from 17 per cent to 19 per cent (2006). However, ethnic minority undergraduates are more likely to attend the new post-1992 Universities, which are mainly based in urban areas. The fact that there is a high concentration of BME communities in urban areas may partly explain the disproportionate numbers of ethnic minority students attending the new Universities (Connor et al., 2004; Tackey et al., 2006).

The number of full time UK-domiciled first year BME students has grown faster between 2000/01 and 2005/06 than the number of White new entrants. While the UK-domiciled full time first year undergraduate population of known ethnicity grew by 19 per cent and the White undergraduate population grew by 16 per cent over the five years, the comparable BME population grew by 37 per cent during the same period (HESA, 2006). The number of entrants to HE from Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Black Caribbean backgrounds increased most notably (HESA, 2006).

Similar to the student population as a whole, there are gender differences in participation among BME students. Minority ethnic students are generally less well-represented among female undergraduate students than among male undergraduate students, even though within most ethnic groups women outnumber men. However, there are wide differences in gender composition of undergraduates across ethnic groups. The percentage of women ranges from 44-45 per cent among Pakistani and Bangladeshi students to 70 per cent among students of Black Caribbean origin (Connor et al., 2004). Men are generally under-represented among Black and other students (Bhattacharyya et al., 2003).

1.2.2 Academic performance

While the increasing numbers of BME participants in HE is encouraging, their academic performance in HE lags behind that of White students. Ethnic minority students are less likely to achieve higher grade classifications (First and Upper Second Class) in their degree, while the opposite is true of lower degree classifications (Lower Second Class or Third) (Connor et al., 2004). In 2001/02,

three-fifths (60 per cent) of White graduates achieved at least an Upper Second Class degree, which was 18 per cent higher than among BME's overall. Indians (46 per cent) were the only non-White group more likely to achieve at least an Upper Second Class degree than the overall average for BME's (42 per cent). Two-fifths (40 per cent) of both Pakistanis and Bangladeshis achieved at least an Upper Second Class degree. Black Caribbean students (35 per cent) were the group least likely to achieve one of the top two degree classifications. The degree performance differential decreased, but did not disappear, when other background characteristics were controlled for (such as entry qualification and previous schooling).

Previous research also showed that BME undergraduates were more likely to report that they did not receive sufficient support and encouragement from staff, which in turn can affect academic performance adversely. Unlike other BME groups, Indian students did not report financial difficulties as their main problem. Instead, they were more likely than other BME students to find their academic work too difficult (Connor et al., 2004). This may at least partly explain why their degree outcomes lag behind that of their White counterparts and are only marginally better than that of Pakistanis, Bangladeshis and Black Caribbean students.

Racial discrimination did not appear to be a major factor affecting academic performance of BME students, since it was not very commonly reported (Connor et al., 2004). Universities are bound by a duty set out in the 2000 Race Relations Act to promote equality of opportunity, which may at least partly explain the low incidences of reported cases of racial discrimination. However, the low numbers of reported cases of racial discrimination may also reflect a lack of willingness by victims to report their experiences through official channels. Alternatively, it may arise because students are unaware of how to report such incidents, such that this may disguise the true extent of the problem.

The study of undergraduate experience among minority ethnic groups at the University of Cambridge suggested that ethnicity on its own does not determine academic performance at the University, where high levels of support are given to all students (Scales and Whitehead, 2006). Instead, the study found evidence of the following factors influencing academic performance: a strong intrinsic motivation and

long-term career focus, a feeling of fitting in and having a network of friends, and not having to worry about financial resources. However, as more students of BME groups lacked one or more of these characteristics, they were more likely to have weaker academic performance. According to examination results for the period 2001-2003, students of Black Caribbean, Pakistani and Bangladeshi origins were less likely to gain a First Class or an Upper-Second degree than White, Chinese, and Indian students.

1.2.3 Destination of graduates

According to HESA's First Destinations Survey in 2001/02, White graduates were more likely to enter paid work initially than BME graduates. Black Caribbean graduates were the only group to be more likely to be in paid work in the UK than White graduates. Despite their higher propensity to achieve better degree outcomes, Indians were less likely than Black Caribbean's to initially enter paid work. Pakistanis and Bangladeshis were the least likely of the BME groups under consideration to initially enter paid work (Connor et al., 2004). Not only are ethnic minority graduates less likely to initially find paid work, they are also more likely to be unemployed for longer periods than their White counterparts (Tackey et al., 2006).

The greater likelihood of White graduates initially entering paid work than their BME counterparts is not necessarily indicative of labour market disadvantage for the latter. This is because BME graduates were more likely than their White counterparts to undertake further education or study to improve their employability. There were no significant differences between Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi graduates in the likelihood of undertaking further study or training – all were at, or near, the BME overall average for initially undertaking further study or training. Only students of Black Caribbean origin were much less likely to study or train further. This could be at least partly due to their greater likelihood of initially entering paid work than their counterparts from other BME groups. However, research evidence suggests that ethnic minority students stay on longer in education not only due to expectations of higher lifetime earnings, but also because of lower perceived labour market opportunities in the short-term (Leslie and Drinkwater, 1999).

Ethnic minority graduates were around twice as likely to be initially unemployed as White graduates. This may be related to the tendency of ethnic minority students to graduate with lower degree classifications, but is not the only reason. Among White and BME graduates overall, those with higher degree classifications (First or Upper Second Class) were less likely to be initially unemployed. However, the difference in unemployment rates between those with higher degree classifications and all graduate degree classifications among White and BME graduates overall is small. Black Caribbean and Pakistani graduates seem to derive the greatest benefit from having higher degree classification, in terms of a reduction in unemployment – around two percentage points in each case. Perversely, Indians with a higher degree classification were slightly *more* likely to be unemployed than all Indian graduates. There was an even larger gap among Bangladeshis with higher degree classifications compared with Bangladeshi graduates overall (Connor et al., 2004).

The high likelihood of Black Caribbean graduates initially entering paid work may be linked to their older age profile compared to other ethnic groups. They were more likely to hold Access qualifications on entry to HE and less likely to have A-Level qualifications (Connor et al., 2004). Their older profile could suggest that Black Caribbean entrants to HE may also possess more extensive work experience compared to entrants from other ethnic backgrounds. This may have raised their employability and outweighed some disadvantages from being the ethnic group least likely to achieve higher degree classifications. Alternatively, they may also have had family responsibilities (which could have necessitated working) or undertaken further additional education or training.

1.3 Aims and Objectives of the Loughborough Research

The study reported here is part of a larger study whose specific objectives are to:

- 1 Identify the ethnic diversity among the student population of Loughborough University;
- 2 Devise a research programme that recognises, as far as possible, this diversity and represents the different perspectives of the ethnic minority students of Loughborough;

- 3 Explore their 'student experience' of the Loughborough Campus and the town, examining both the social and the structural context of being a student at Loughborough University i.e. night time leisure/housing and accommodation;
- 4 Examine the academic performance of BME students in comparison to their White counterparts; and
- 5 Identify different teaching styles or curriculum structures to see if they impact on the student experience.

The research focuses on the undergraduate experience of UK resident BME students. It concentrates on existing cohorts (students' register 2006-07), although analysis of management data on academic performance seeks to examine trends and patterns of the BME experience and performance over a longer period of time (i.e. students admitted since 1996/97).

1.4 Research Design and Methods

The study adopts a mixed method approach, combining quantitative and qualitative techniques. It draws upon existing data available through the University systems. In addition, there will be focus group discussions and one-to-one interviews with a range of key stakeholders, including students and relevant staff at the University.

The first component of the research, which is the focus of this preliminary report, is based on analysis of existing data from management/administrative records and the National Student Surveys of 2005 and 2006. It addresses Objectives (1) and (4), as well as contributes to Objective (5). Part of its key purpose is to help us understand the diversity and experiences of ethnic minority students with respect to academic performance and satisfaction with their courses.

The qualitative component (to be reported in the final study report in January/February 2008), will contribute to objectives (2), (3) and (5). It will adopt a holistic approach to exploring the student experience, i.e. study-specific factors; such as teaching styles; and external social factors such as housing and leisure. These objectives will best be met through the use of qualitative research methods in order to explore in depth:

- a The issues that matter most to the students themselves; and
- b To identify and explore relevant topics with key members of student support personnel and academic staff.

1.4.1 Analysis of existing data

The analysis of management/administrative data is based on information from the University Registry on progression and achievement of UK/EU full-time undergraduate students, broken down by a range of 'diversity' variables including ethnicity, gender, age of students at registration, etc. Most of the analysis use broad ethnic classifications due to the limitation in number of cases of BME students: Black - Caribbean/African; Asian - Indian/Pakistani/Bangladesh/Chinese; and mixed ethnic groups. Further breakdown of Asian ethnic origin into three groups of Chinese, Indian and Pakistani/Bangladeshi/other is used where number of cases permit - pooling data across years where appropriate to realise sufficient cases. All the individual-level data used in the analysis were anonymised, for Data Protection purposes. Individual-level data were used to facilitate modelling of the effect of ethnicity on student performance (qualification aim achievement and degree class attained), controlling for the effects of other important factors such as subject of study, age, gender, etc. The modelling introduced various control factors in successive stages to explore whether any of these factors may explain the observed ethnic variations in student performance. Furthermore, it considered interactions of ethnicity with key background factors to examine possible differences in the effect of ethnicity for different sub-groups of students.

The second part of the quantitative analysis uses data from the National Student Survey (NSS) of 2005 and 2006. The NSS asked final-year students to rate their satisfaction, out of a maximum score of five, in seven areas of their degree programmes - teaching, assessment and feedback, academic support, organisation and management, learning resources, personal development, and overall satisfaction. The NSS sample for Loughborough, pooled across the two years provides sufficient cases for analysis of ethnic differences in student satisfaction in the different areas.

1.4.2 Data limitations

Although it has been possible to obtain most of the management/administrative data required to address the main research objectives, the students' tariff scores are only available for students admitted in the last four years. Therefore the majority of students (66 per cent) for whom we have scores are still continuing their studies. As a result, the tariff scores could not be used in the analysis of study aim achievement or degree class attained. In addition, it has not been possible to access additional complementary information that would have been useful for a more comprehensive understanding of ethnic diversity at the University. For example, information on socio-economic background characteristics of students (e.g. family income or proxies, such as receipt of means-tested grants/bursary, region of residence, etc), applications/admission offers, or accommodation arrangements are either not available or in a format not readily accessible to enable inclusion of such factors in the study. Evidence elsewhere suggests, for instance, that students working during term-time or living off campus would not fully benefit from the social aspects of the University (Sims, 2007), which in turn may affect their academic performance. For effective monitoring of admissions and progress of ethnic minority students, the University registry may wish to consider compiling more detailed information on background characteristics of students, including pre-admission data. Such data would be invaluable in understanding ethnic diversity at the University and in explaining the contribution of various factors on any ethnic variations observed in academic performance.

With respect to NSS data, it has not been possible to explore the role of student individual background characteristics (gender, age on entry, declared disability, living arrangements, domicile, and entry qualifications) and course factors (mode of study, type of course, delivery of course, RAE score for subject of study, and subject of study) in ethnic differences in student satisfaction due to data limitations – it was only possible to access NSS data at the aggregate and not individual level. Also, it would have been desirable to explore how Loughborough compares with other UK HE institutions with respect to the experiences of BME students, but it was not possible to access data that would permit such analysis. Whilst the restriction on access of individual level data may be necessary for data protection purposes, it would be useful for the NSS queries procedure to allow more flexible comparative analysis

that would, for instance, enable comparison of ethnic variations in student satisfaction scores across individual, a select group, or all HE institutions covered in the NSS. Perhaps this is something the University may wish to discuss with the NSS administrators or data depositors to enhance usefulness of the dataset for participating institutions.

1.5 Structure of the Report

This preliminary report focuses on the quantitative component of the study based on analysis of student management/administrative data held by the University, and the National Student Surveys of 2005 and 2006. The analysis is presented in three sections: ethnic diversity of students; ethnic variations in academic performance; and student satisfaction by ethnicity.

Section two focuses on ethnic diversity of undergraduate students at Loughborough University based on student administrative/management data. It first presents trends in ethnic composition of UK/EU undergraduate students admitted to the University for full-time courses between 1996/97 and 2006/07. This is followed by an examination of background characteristics of current continuing (2006/07) students by ethnicity. Special attention is placed on ethnic diversity by subject area with respect to the three faculties at the University: Engineering; Science; and Social Sciences and Humanities.

Section three focuses on academic performance of ethnic minority students. The analysis of academic performance with respect to qualification aim achievement and degree class attainment of students who successfully completed their courses uses student management/administrative data pooled across years (1996/97 – 2006/07 admissions) to achieve sufficient cases of various ethnic minority students who experienced specific outcomes of interest. Descriptive bivariate analyses of ethnic variations in academic performance are followed by regression analyses that control for possible confounding factors, namely: year of admission, faculty, gender, age at registration, change of department, socio-economic status and type of previous school/college attended.

Section four, the final analysis section, examines student satisfaction on a range of items relating to their courses based on the 2005 and 2006 National Student Surveys data. It presents comparisons of average student satisfaction scores by ethnicity on various course-related items covered by the NSS.

2 ETHNIC DIVERSITY OF UNDERGRADUATES STUDENTS AT LOUGHBOROUGH UNIVERSITY

2.1 Trends in Ethnic Composition of UK/EU Undergraduate Student Admissions

The proportion of UK/EU undergraduate students from ethnic minority backgrounds (of Black, Asian or mixed race) admitted to Loughborough University during the past decade (1996/07-2006/07) has gradually increased, especially during the 2000's (Table 2.1). Whilst the share of UK/EU undergraduate student population of White origin declined from 89 per cent in 2000/01 to 81 per cent in 2006/07, that of students of Black ethnic origin increased from about one to two per cent; of Asian origin increased from about five to eight per cent; and of mixed race increased from zero to almost three per cent.

Table 2.1 Full-Time UK/EU Undergraduate Student Admissions at Loughborough University by Ethnicity: 1996/07 – 2006/07

Year of Admission	Ethnic Background						Row per cent	Cases
	White	Black	Asian	Mixed	Other	Unknown /missing		
1996/07	81.2	0.7	4.1	0.0	0.8	13.2	2,638	
1997/08	81.6	0.9	4.9	0.0	0.7	11.9	2,815	
1998/09	88.6	1.0	4.7	0.0	1.0	4.5	2,655	
1999/00	88.3	1.0	4.4	0.0	1.0	5.4	2,743	
2000/01	89.1	1.2	5.4	0.0	0.8	3.5	2,808	
2001/02	90.0	1.2	5.7	1.3	0.2	1.6	3,072	
2002/03	90.4	1.2	5.0	1.5	0.3	1.6	3,038	
2003/04	89.5	1.2	5.9	1.9	0.5	0.9	3,029	
2004/05	87.5	1.2	7.1	2.4	0.3	1.6	3,058	
2005/06	82.8	1.8	7.0	2.2	0.2	6.0	3,182	
2006/07	81.1	2.0	7.6	2.7	0.3	6.4	3,077	
All (1996/07–2006/07)	86.3	1.2	5.7	1.2	0.6	5.0	32,115	

Base: Full-Time UK/EU Undergraduate Students Admitted at Loughborough University in 1996/97 – 2006/07

The levels of participation of ethnic minority students at Loughborough University are generally lower than that of national HE institutions, but the rate of increase is notably higher. Statistics from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) suggest that between 2000/01 and 2005/06, the share of the UK domiciled undergraduate full-time first year population of known ethnicity accounted for by BME's increased from 17 per cent to 19 per cent (HESA, 2006). The corresponding share of UK/EU undergraduate full-time population of known ethnicity at Loughborough University accounted for by BME's increased from eight to 12 per cent during the same period. It has been pointed out that ethnic minority undergraduates are more likely to attend the new post-1992 Universities (mainly based in urban areas) - the high concentration of BME's in urban areas may partly explain the disproportionate numbers of ethnic minority students attending the new Universities (Connor et al., 2004; Tackey et al., 2006).

2.2 Ethnic Diversity by Background Characteristics

This section focuses on currently (2006/07) registered (i.e. continuing) students at Loughborough University, excluding those whose courses have been suspended. Table 2.2 presents status as of 2007 of UK/EU full-time undergraduate students admitted at the University between 1996/97 and 2006/07.

Table 2.2 Ethnic Variations in Current (2007) Status of UK/EU Full-Time Undergraduate Students Admitted to Loughborough University between 1996/07 and 2006/07

Ethnicity	Status					Cases
	Completed	Continuing	Failed	Suspension	Withdrawn	
White	58.5	30.2	3.6	0.7	7.1	26,988
Black	45.3	40.1	7.0	1.8	5.7	384
Asian	47.4	39.3	5.8	1.2	6.3	1,769
– Indian	46.3	41.0	5.1	1.4	6.1	1,129
– Chinese	49.8	44.6	2.6	0.4	2.6	231
– Bangladeshi/Pakistani/other	49.1	31.5	9.3	1.2	8.8	409
Mixed ethnic	26.4	63.1	2.5	2.5	5.5	363
Other	74.4	16.3	5.8	0.0	3.5	172
Unknown/missing	60.1	23.4	4.9	0.7	10.9	1,567
All	57.5	30.8	3.8	0.7	7.2	31,243

Base: UK/EU Full-Time Undergraduate Students (1996/97 – 2006/07)

The relatively low proportion of students of mixed ethnic origin who have completed their undergraduate courses (or failed), coupled with a notably higher proportion continuing mostly reflects the increasing trend in admission of students of mixed ethnic origin. Among students of known ethnicity, those of Asian ethnic origin other than Indian and Chinese (i.e. Pakistani, Bangladeshi and other) are the most likely to have failed and also the most likely to have withdrawn from their courses. The analysis of ethnic diversity of students presented here focuses on continuing students.

Table 2.3 shows characteristics of continuing full-time UK/EU undergraduate students at Loughborough University by ethnicity. All background characteristics included in the analysis (except gender and previous experience of HE) show strong associations ($p < 0.01$) with ethnicity. The data confirm an increasing trend in admission of ethnic minority students. For instance, a higher proportion of ethnic minority students currently registered at Loughborough University, especially of Black ethnic origin (73 per cent) were admitted within the last two years, compared to White (58 per cent) or all students (60 per cent).

There are ethnic variations by demographic characteristics of students, especially with respect to age at registration ($p < 0.01$). Students of Black ethnic origin tend to be older when they register for full-time undergraduate programmes. A significantly higher proportion of Black undergraduate students register as mature students aged 25 years or older (seven per cent), compared to students of White, Asian or Mixed ethnic backgrounds (one per cent). Female students seem under-represented among ethnic minority groups of Asian, and to a lesser extent, Black ethnic origin, but the differences are not significant.

Table 2.3 Characteristics of Current (2007) Full-Time UK/EU Undergraduate Student at Loughborough University by Ethnicity

Characteristic	Ethnic background				Column per cent
	White	Black	Asian	Mixed	All students ¹
Entry year**					
2006/07	29.3	37.7	31.9	34.5	30.5
2005/06	28.7	35.7	28.1	27.9	29.2
2004/05	27.4	16.9	25.0	25.3	26.2
2003/04 or earlier	14.7	9.7	15.0	12.2	14.1
Gender					
- Female	37.1	35.1	34.2	36.7	36.9
- Male	62.9	64.9	65.8	63.3	63.1
Age at registration**					
- under 20 years	91.7	81.8	88.8	91.7	91.2
- 20-24 years	7.2	11.0	10.4	7.4	7.6
- 25 +	1.1	7.1	0.9	0.9	1.2
Socio-economic group**					
- managerial/professional	40.2	30.5	21.9	37.1	38.0
- intermediate/technical	15.5	13.0	16.0	13.1	15.3
- routine/unemployed	7.2	6.5	16.5	7.0	7.8
- not classified/missing ²	37.1	50.0	45.6	42.8	38.9
Type of school**					
- sixth form/comprehensive	54.4	55.2	55.5	46.3	54.2
- grant maintained	19.0	18.8	18.8	26.2	19.0
- FE/HE/tertiary/adult college	9.8	14.3	12.9	9.2	10.3
- independent school	16.8	11.7	12.7	18.3	16.4
Faculty **					
- Engineering	24.9	31.2	22.7	24.0	24.6
- Science	23.1	30.5	39.9	26.6	24.6
- SS & Humanities	52.1	38.3	37.4	49.3	50.9
Department change**					
- No	93.2	88.3	90.8	91.3	93.0
- Yes	6.8	11.7	9.2	8.7	7.0
Previous Experience of HE³					
- No	96.6	96.8	95.7	95.6	96.6
- Yes	2.5	3.2	4.0	3.1	2.6
- Not Known	0.9	0.0	0.3	1.3	0.8

**Highest Qualification
Achieved before entry to
Loughborough⁴**

- GCE A Levels/AS levels/Mixed A levels and AS levels	88.7	83.1	89.1	89.5	88.4
- Overseas qualifications	1.6	4.5	0.6	2.2	1.6
- Foundation course/Accredited access course	1.2	4.5	2.7	1.7	1.4
- GSVQ/GSVQ level 3	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
- SCE Highers (with and without CSYS)	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.2
- BTec certificate/diploma	8.1	7.1	7.3	6.6	8.1
- Other qualifications	0.2	0.6	0.1	0.0	0.2
All Cases	8140	154	695	229	9613

Base: Undergraduate UK/EU Full-Time Continuing Students at Loughborough University in 2007

1 – Including Students of ‘Other’ or ‘Unknown/Missing’ Ethnicity.

2 - The overall percentage of students in the ‘not classified/missing’ category is high due to the parentage of continuing students with missing values for socio-economic group (30.8 per cent). The percentage of all continuing students who are not classified is 8.2per cent.

3 – The Chi square test was carried out after excluding the not known category, as including this category would have invalidated the test (too many cells would have had an expected value less than 5). No significant difference was found.

4 - The chi square test was carried out comparing GCE A Levels/AS levels/Mixed A and AS levels and BTec certificate/diploma. The other categories could not be included because they would have invalidated the Chi-square test (too many cells would have had an expected value less than 5). The test was significant at the one per cent level (i.e. Chi square $p < 0.01$)

* - significant at five per cent level (i.e. Chi square $p < 0.05$); ** - significant at one per cent level (i.e. Chi square $p < 0.01$)

There is some indication that ethnic minority students, especially of Asian origin have less favourable socio-economic background than their White counterparts. Students of Asian ethnic origin are the least likely to have parents in managerial/professional occupations and the most likely to have parents in routine/semi-routine occupations or unemployed. However, it is interesting to note that students of ‘mixed’ ethnic origin are the most likely to have attended independent (fee-paying) schools or grant maintained schools. The fact that students of Black ethnic origin are the most likely to have attended FE/HE/tertiary/adult colleges is consistent with the relatively older age at registration for this sub-group of students. As Black students are the most likely to have attended FE/HE/tertiary/adult colleges, where a wider variety of qualifications are offered compared to schools, this may explain why they are least likely to have A levels, AS levels or mixed A and AS levels as their highest qualification prior to registering at Loughborough University.

In terms of their distribution among different academic disciplines at Loughborough University, students of Black ethnic origin show a propensity towards studying Engineering, while those of Asian origin gravitate towards Science compared to students from other ethnic backgrounds; Asian and Black students are less likely to be studying Social Sciences and Humanities, compared to White or students of mixed ethnic origin. There is some indication that ethnic minority students, especially of Black origin, have a higher tendency to change their departments after admission.

2.3 Ethnic Diversity by Subject Area

Given the significant variations in background characteristics of students by ethnicity and across faculties (For example: female students are more likely to be in Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH), but less likely to be in Engineering than male counterparts; SSH has a higher proportion of older students aged 20 years or over than the other faculties; students in Engineering are more likely to change departments than the other two faculties), we use regression analysis (Table 2.4) to examine ethnic diversity across faculties, controlling for the effects of potential confounding factors. The regression analysis allows us to examine factors associated with a higher likelihood of admission into various faculties, while holding the other factors constant. Table 2.4 gives the relative odds of being admitted into Engineering or Science Faculties, relative to being admitted in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities (based on multinomial logistic regression). Relative odds greater than 1.00 imply that the factor is associated with a higher likelihood than the reference category, while values less than 1.00 imply a lower likelihood.

Table 2.4 Multinomial Logistic Regression Estimates of the Odds Ratios of Being Admitted in Different Faculties

Characteristic	Engineering vs SSH Faculty	Science vs SSH Faculty
Ethnic origin		
- Black	1.92*	1.81*
- Asian	1.24	2.41*
- Mixed	1.09	1.26
- Other/unknown	0.92	1.07
- White (reference)	1.00	1.00
Entry year		
- 2006/07	0.34*	0.63*
- 2005/06	0.37*	0.68*
- 2004/05	0.35*	0.59*
- 2003/04 or earlier (ref)	1.00	1.00
Gender		
- Female	0.14*	0.60*
- Male (reference)	1.00	1.00
Age at registration		
- Under 20 years	0.68	0.63
- 20-24 years	0.69	0.63
- 25 + (reference)	1.00	1.00
Socio-economic group		
- managerial/professional	0.89	0.84
- intermediate/technical	1.21	1.07
- routine/unemployed	1.32*	0.92
- not classified/missing (ref)	1.00	1.00
Type of school		
- sixth form/comprehensive	1.64*	1.66*
- grant maintained	1.28*	1.18
- FE/HE/tertiary/adult college	0.88	0.84
- independent school (ref)	1.00	1.00

Previous experience of HE		
- No previous experience	0.56*	0.62*
- Not known if previous experience	0.07*	0.11*
- Previous experience of HE (ref)	1.00	1.00
Highest qualification achieved before coming to Loughborough		
- BTec certificate/diploma	0.29*	0.16*
- Other qualifications	0.83	0.77
- A levels/As levels/ Mixes A and AS levels (ref)	1.00	1.00

* - Significant at five per cent Level ($p < 0.05$).

The results of the multinomial regression analysis in Table 2.4 confirm the earlier observed tendency for students of Black ethnic origin to be admitted to Engineering or Science Faculties and of Asian origin to be admitted in the Faculty of Science as opposed to the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities. After controlling for the effect of background characteristics, including year of admission, gender, socio-economic group, type of school attended, previous experience of HE and the highest qualification achieved before registering at Loughborough University, students of Black ethnic origin are about twice as likely to be admitted for Engineering or Science as opposed to Social Science and Humanities compared to White students. Those of Asian ethnic origin are more than twice as likely to be admitted to Science as opposed to Social Science and Humanities than their White counterparts.

3 ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF ETHNIC MINORITY STUDENTS

Initial analysis of undergraduate achievement data had suggested that, generally, a slightly smaller proportion of UK/EU BME students complete their degree. Although the picture for degree classes is mixed, there are some signs of lower performance. In particular, the failure rate of BME students has consistently been higher than that of their White counterparts (data collated from 1997 entry year onwards). This section explores ethnic variations in academic performance based on qualification aim achievement and degree class attainment.

3.1 Qualification Aim Achievement by Ethnicity

Among non-continuing students, those from ethnic minority backgrounds were generally less likely to have achieved their qualification aims than their White counterparts (Table 3.1). Students of mixed ethnic origin were the most likely to have not achieved their qualification aim (29 per cent). There were significant variations among students of Asian ethnic origin, with the Chinese students being the least likely not to have achieved their qualification aims (10 per cent), while those of Bangladeshi, Pakistani or other Asians (besides Indian or Chinese) were the most likely (28 per cent).

Table 3.1 Per Cent of Non-Continuing Students who did not Achieve their Qualification Aim by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Percent who did not Achieve Qualification Aim	Cases
White	16.2	18,848
Black	24.3	230
Asian	22.1	1,074
– Indian	21.8	666
– Chinese	10.2	128
– Bangladeshi/Pakistani/other	28.2	280
Mixed ethnic	29.1	134
Other	11.1	144
Unknown/missing	21.6	1,200
All	16.9	21,630

Base: UK/EU Full-Time Undergraduate Non-Continuing Students Admitted at LU during 1996/97 – 2006/07

Table 3.2 further explores ethnic variations in qualification aim achievement based on logistic regression analysis, controlling for the effects of potential confounding factors. The regression results suggest that students of Bangladeshi, Pakistani or other Asian (besides Chinese and Indian) ethnic origin are the least likely to achieve their qualification aim, when background characteristics are controlled for. They are about 60 per cent less likely to achieve their qualification aim than their White counterparts registered at the same faculty around the same time and of similar gender, age group, socio-economic status, type of school/college attended, previous experience of HE and highest previous qualification. On the other hand, Chinese students are the most likely to have achieved their qualification aim – they were about twice as likely to have achieved their qualification aim than White students and more than three times as likely to have done so compared to Bangladeshi/Pakistani/other Asians of similar characteristics.

Table 3.2 Logistic Regression Results of the Association between Ethnicity and Qualification Aim Achievement

Factor	Parameter estimate (s.e. in brackets)	Odds ratio
Ethnic origin		
- White (reference)	-	1.00
- Black	-0.15(0.167)	0.86
- Asian - Indian	-0.13(0.103)	0.88
- Asian - Chinese	0.83(0.312)*	2.30
- Asian - Bangladeshi/Pakistani/other	-0.38(0.150)*	0.68
- Mixed	-0.19(0.200)	0.83
- Other/Unknown	-0.39(0.093)*	0.68
Years since admission	0.23(0.008)*	1.26
Gender		
- Female (reference)	-	1.00
- Male	-0.43(0.044)*	0.65
Age at registration		
- Under 20 years (reference)	-	1.00
- 20-24 years	-0.09(0.068)	0.92
- 25 +	-0.36(0.118)*	0.70
Faculty		
- Engineering (reference)	-	1.00
- Science	-0.18(0.055)*	0.85
- Social Science and Humanities	0.42(0.053)*	1.53
Department change		
- no (reference)	-	1.00
- yes	-0.10(0.061)	0.91
Socio-economic group		
- managerial/professional (ref)	-	1.00
- intermediate/technical	-0.01(0.048)	0.99
- routine/unemployed	-0.27(0.078)*	0.76
- not classified/missing	-0.53(0.058)*	0.59
Type of school		
- sixth form/comprehensive (ref)	-	1.00
- grant maintained	0.09(0.058)	1.09
- FE/HE/tertiary/adult college	-0.07(0.061)	0.93
- independent school	-0.24(0.056)*	0.78
Previous Experience of HE		
- No (ref)	-	1.00
- Yes	-0.08(0.078)	0.93
- Not Known	1.21(0.213)*	3.35

Highest Qualification Achieved before entry to Loughborough

- GCE A Levels/AS levels/Mixed A and AS levels (ref)		1.00
- Overseas qualifications	0.12(0.157)	1.01
- Foundation course/Accredited access course	-0.96(0.166)*	0.38
- GSVQ/GSVQ level 3	-0.98(0.166)*	0.38
- SCE highers (with and without CSYS)	-0.30(0.251)	0.74
- Btec certificate/diploma	-0.62(0.083)*	0.54
- Other qualifications	0.36(0.182)*	1.44

Base: UK/EU Full-Time Undergraduate Non-Continuing Students Admitted at LU during 1996/97 – 2006/07

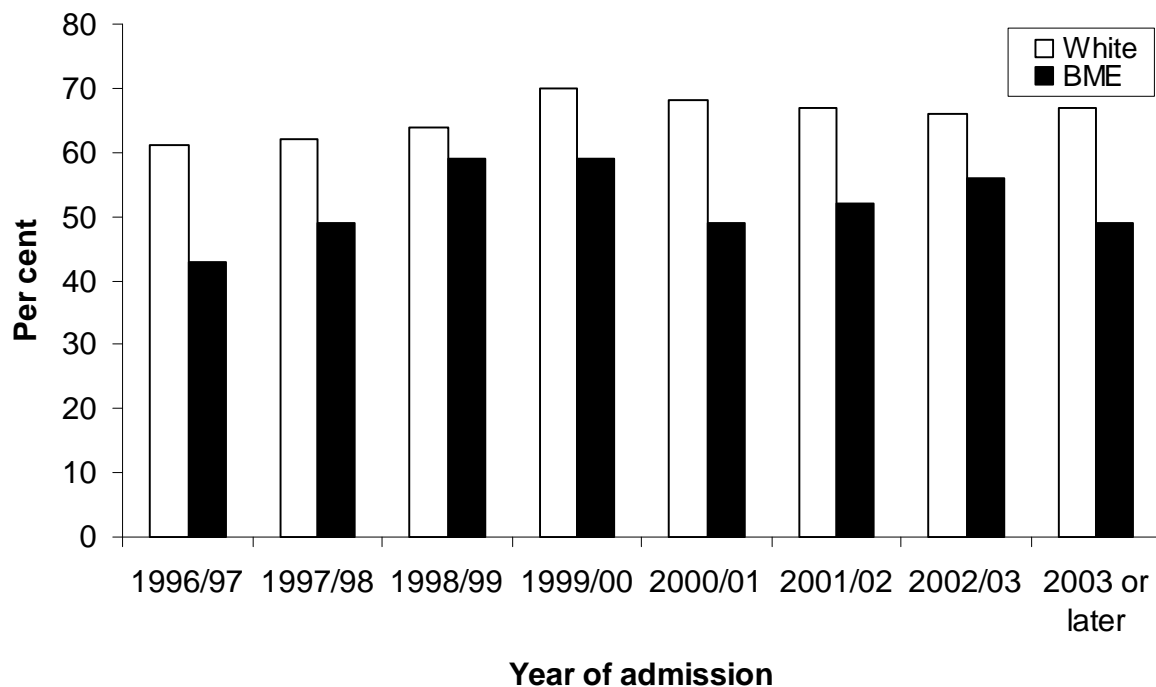
Although the bivariate analysis in Table 3.1 showed that students of Black or mixed ethnic origins were more likely not to have achieved their qualification aim (Black - 24 per cent; mixed – 29 per cent) than White students (16 per cent), the regression results shows no significant difference in qualification aim achievement between these groups when significant background characteristics are controlled for. The patterns suggest that the apparently lower qualification aim achievement among students of Black ethnic origin compared to their White counterparts is mainly attributable to their background characteristics: they are more likely to be over 25 years old when they register; more likely to register in Engineering rather than Social Sciences Faculty, less likely to be in higher socio-economic group, and more likely to have taken a foundation or accredited access course, factors all of which are associated with lower odds of qualification aim achievement. For students of mixed ethnic origin, the disproportionately higher proportion from independent schools may partly account for the seemingly higher non-achievement levels observed in the bivariate analysis, having studied in independent schools being generally associated with lower qualification aim achievement.

An examination of possible ethnic variations in qualification aim achievement across specific sub-groups by gender and faculty showed no evidence of significant interaction effects.

3.2 Academic Performance - Degree Class by Ethnicity

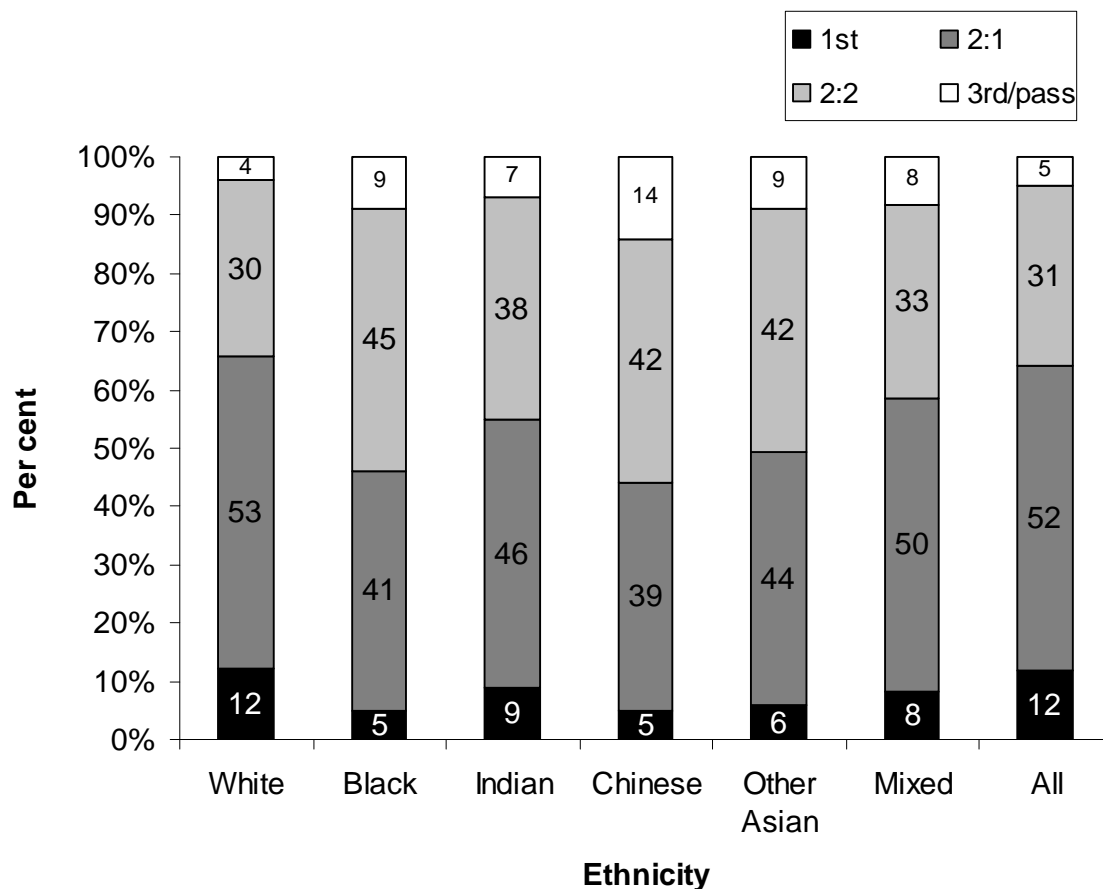
Among students who successfully completed their undergraduate courses, ethnic minority groups were significantly less likely to attain a first or an upper Second Class compared to White students, and there is no clear trend of the gap narrowing in more recent years (Figure 3.1). For instance, the gap is notably wider among the most recently admitted students (2003 or later) than it was at the end of 1990s.

Figure 3.1 Trends in the Proportion of White and BME Students Attaining a First or an Upper Second Class



A more detailed examination of degree class attainment by ethnicity reveals further important differences (Figure 3.2). About 12 per cent of White students who successfully completed their courses attained a first class degree, compared to only five per cent of Black or Chinese students. It is interesting to note that although Chinese students were the most likely to achieve their qualification aim, they were, on the other hand, among the least likely to attain a first or an Upper Second Class honours degree.

Figure 3.2 Degree Class Attainment by Ethnicity ¹



Further examination of ethnic variations in degree class attainment used logistic regression to control for the effects of potential confounding factors. It is important to establish, for instance, whether the lower class attainment observed among students of Black ethnic origin may be attributable to them being more likely to change departments, more likely to be in lower socio-economic status, more likely to have attended FE/HE/tertiary/adult colleges and more likely to have completed a foundation or accredited Access course, factors also associated with lower degree class attainment. The bivariate distributions of degree class attainment by the characteristics included in the regression analysis are provided in Table A3.1 in

¹ The explanation for the fact that the percentages for the white students are very similar to the overall percentages.

This appears because the overwhelming majority of students who have completed their course were white (87.9 per cent). The total percentage of all the BME students reported in figure 3.2 was 6.1 per cent, so they would have had a minimal effect on the overall figure. In particular, the effect of the Chinese students, who differ the most group consists of only 115 of the 17,975 students (or 0.6 per cent of the total number of students).

Annex A. The regression results confirm lower degree class attainment among ethnic minority students compared to White students (Table 3.3). In particular, the results confirm that students of Black or Chinese ethnic origins are, at most, half as likely to have attained a first or an Upper Second Class honours, compared to their White counterparts in the same faculty and of similar background characteristics. The lack of significant difference between students of mixed ethnic origins and White students is possibly due to the relatively small number of students of mixed ethnic origin, hence, lack of statistical power to detect significant differences.

Introducing the background control factors to the model did not seem to alter significantly the earlier observed ethnic variations in degree class achievement. Furthermore, interactions between ethnicity and key factors such as gender and faculty were considered but there was no evidence that the effect of ethnicity on degree class attainment varied significantly by various subgroups of students.

Table 3.3 Logistic Regression Results of Achievement of First or Upper Second Class

Factor	Parameter estimate (s.e. in brackets)	Odds ratio
Ethnic origin		
- White (reference)	-	1.00
- Black	-0.70(0.159)*	0.50
- Asian - Indian	-0.42(0.093)*	0.66
- Asian - Chinese	-0.81(0.194)*	0.44
- Asian - Bangladeshi/Pakistani/other	-0.56(0.147)*	0.57
- Mixed	-0.40(0.212)	0.67
- Other/unknown	-0.18(0.088)*	0.84
Years since admission	-0.02(0.008)*	0.98
Gender		
- Female (reference)	-	1.00
- Male	-0.66(0.035)*	0.52
Age at registration		
- Under 20 years (reference)	-	1.00
- 20-24 years	-0.02(0.061)	0.98
- 25 +	0.36(0.119)*	1.43
Faculty		
- Engineering (reference)	-	1.00
- Science	-0.37(0.051)*	0.69
- Social Science and Humanities	-0.08(0.06)	0.93
Department change		
- no (reference)	-	1.00
- yes	-0.17(0.054)*	0.84
Socio-economic group		
- managerial/professional (ref)	-	1.00
- intermediate/technical	0.04(0.039)	1.04
- routine/unemployed	-0.15(0.070)*	0.86
- not classified/missing	-0.12(0.055)*	0.89
Type of school		
- sixth form/comprehensive (ref)	-	1.00
- grant maintained	-0.12(0.047)*	0.89
- FE/HE/tertiary/adult college	-0.26(0.051)*	0.77
- independent school	-0.44(0.047)*	0.65
Previous experience of HE		
- No previous experience of HE (ref)	-	1.00
- Previous experience of HE	-0.26(0.066)*	0.77
- Not known if previous experience of HE	-0.28(0.149)	0.76

Highest Previous qualification

- GCE A Levels/AS levels/Mixed A levels and AS levels (ref)		1.00
- Overseas qualifications	-0.32(0.141)*	0.72
- Foundation course/Accredited access course	-1.04(0.199)*	0.36
GSVQ/GSVQ Level 3	-1.07(0.181)*	0.34
- SCE highers (with and without CSYS)	0.10(0.228)	1.10
- BTec certificate/diploma	-0.40(0.083)*	0.67
- Other Qualifications	0.05(0.168)	1.05

Base: UK/EU Full-Time Undergraduate Students Admitted at LU during 1996/97 – 2006/07 Who Successfully Completed their Courses

The patterns observed above with respect to degree class and ethnicities are consistent with broader patterns in UK Higher Education institutions (see, for example, Connor et al., 2004; Broecke and Nicholls 2007). After controlling for the majority of factors that would be expected to have an impact on attainment (e.g. prior attainment, subject of study, age, gender, disability, deprivation, type of HE attended, type of Level 3 qualifications, mode of study and term-time accommodation), Broecke and Nicholls (2007) observed that being from a minority ethnic community (except 'mixed' and 'other' groups) was statistically significant in explaining degree attainment among 65,000 English-domiciled undergraduate qualifiers from the 2004/05 HESA data. Students from Black or Chinese ethnic origins were the least likely to achieve a first or an Upper Second Class when important background factors were controlled for - consistent with patterns observed for Loughborough.

It is possible that the lower academic performance among students from ethnic minority groups observed in this study and in the UK as a whole may be attributable to lack of intrinsic motivation and long-term career focus, a feeling of fitting in and having a network of friends, and having to worry about financial resources – all of which are likely to affect academic performance. The study of undergraduate experience among minority ethnic groups at the University of Cambridge suggested that ethnicity on its own did not determine academic performance at the University, where high levels of support were given to all students (Scales and Whitehead, 2006). Instead, the study found evidence of the factors mentioned above mediated academic performance. The study noted that since more students of BME groups lacked one or more of these characteristics, they were more likely to display weaker academic performance. In the Cambridge study, examination results for the period

2001-2003 showed that students of Black Caribbean, Pakistani and Bangladeshi origins were less likely to gain a First Class or an Upper Second degree than White, Chinese, and Indian students, suggesting that the esteem/support factors mentioned above may be particularly important for students of Chinese and Indian ethnic origin. It will be important to explore these issues further in the qualitative component of the Loughborough study.

4 STUDENT SATISFACTION BY ETHNICITY

The assessment of ethnic variations in student satisfaction is based on the National Student Surveys (NSS) conducted in 2005 and 2006. The NSS target population comprised all undergraduates in their final year, or after a significant period of study in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The questionnaire contained 21 items clustered into six areas, and Question 22 measuring overall satisfaction with the course. For each of the items, the student was asked to tick a box corresponding to their level of agreement: 1 – definitely disagree; 2 – mostly disagree; 3 – neither agree nor disagree; 4 – mostly agree; 5 – definitely agree. Table 4.1 shows combined 2005/06 average student satisfaction scores at Loughborough University by ethnicity (corresponding data for the specific years are given in Tables B4.1 and B4.2 in Annex B).

Table 4.1 Average Student Satisfaction Scores at Loughborough University by Ethnicity (National Student Survey 2005/06)

Item	White	Asian	Black	Mixed /other	All non-White
The teaching on my course	4.2	4.1	4.0	4.2	4.1
- staff are good at explaining things	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2
- staff have made subject interesting	4.0	3.9	3.9	4.1	3.9
- staff are enthusiastic about teaching	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.4	4.2
- course is intellectually stimulating	4.3	4.1	4.0	4.3	4.1
Assessment and feedback	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.8	3.8
- marking criteria made clear in advance	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8
- assessment and marking have been fair	3.9	3.9	3.8	3.9	3.9
- prompt feedback	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.9	3.8
- received detailed comments on my work	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.7
- feedback helped clarify things	3.4	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.8
Academic support	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.0	4.1
- sufficient support and advice with studies	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.0
- able to contact staff when needed to	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.3	4.3
- good advice available when needed	3.9	4.0	4.0	3.8	4.0
Organisation and management	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.2
- timetable works efficiently for me	4.2	4.2	4.0	3.9	4.1
- any changes communicated efficiently	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.2
- course well organised and run smoothly	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.2
Learning Resources	4.3	4.3	4.4	4.4	4.3
- library resources are good for my needs	4.2	4.1	4.4	4.3	4.2
- able to access IT resources when needed	4.4	4.4	4.6	4.4	4.4
- able to access specialised equip/facilities	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.3	4.2
Personal development	4.1	4.1	3.9	4.1	4.1
- course help present myself with confidence	4.1	4.2	3.9	4.0	4.0
- my communication skills have improved	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.2
- confidence in tackling unfamiliar things	4.1	4.1	3.9	4.0	4.1
Overall, I'm satisfied with quality of course	4.3	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2
Number of cases (Responses)	3430	275	40	70	385
Sample	4715	405	70	115	585
Response rate (per cent)	72.7	67.9	57.1	60.9	65.8

Base: LU Respondents (Final Year Undergraduates) in 2005/06 NSS.

Overall, there is little variation in student satisfaction by ethnicity. The overall satisfaction score was 4.3 for White and 4.2 for non-White students, a difference

hardly significant. In 2006, the average overall satisfaction score was 4.2 for each of the different ethnic groups.

With respect to specific items, students of Black ethnic origin seemed to have slightly lower satisfaction relating to the teaching on their course than White students, especially in relation to the extent to which they felt the course was intellectually stimulating (Black – 4.0; White – 4.3). Students of Black ethnic origin also seemed to have slightly lower satisfaction in relation to personal development items (except for improved communication skills) than those of White or Asian ethnic origin. However, students of Black ethnic origin seem to have slightly higher satisfaction on items relating to learning resources, especially being able to access IT resources when needed (average score of 4.6), compared to students of White or Asian ethnic origin (average score of 4.4). It would have been useful to examine how ethnic differences in satisfaction vary across departments/faculties but this was hindered by insufficient number of cases of ethnic minority students across different departments/faculties.

Comparison between Loughborough and the national Student Survey is only possible at the general level. Sub group analysis differences exist between these two data sets. Scores in Loughborough are to one decimal place rather than two in the NSS and there is also a lack of information on the ethnic breakdown of the proportion of students who rated the University above 3 on any of the criteria.

Highest ratings at Loughborough were across all ethnic groups for learning resources. The lowest scores were given for assessment and feedback. These are consistent with the NSS results although there was a little more variation between ethnic groups in the NSS. Of the ethnic groups at Loughborough, Blacks gave the highest average marks for assessment and feedback (3.8). Whites gave an average of 3.7 for assessment and feedback, while Asians gave an average score of 3.6. In the 2005 NSS, the scores were as follows: whites (3.57); Asians (3.40); and Blacks (3.54) meaning that on all counts Loughborough were higher. The best average marks were given for learning resources – whites (4.3), Asians (4.2) and Blacks (4.6). The corresponding 2005 NSS results for the provision of learning resources

were as follows: whites (3.97); Asians (3.90); and Blacks (3.84). Again showing Loughborough was above average.

In terms of overall satisfaction, Loughborough compared favourably with the national average. The average marks given by Loughborough students – whites (4.3), Asians (4.3) and Blacks (4.3) - were considerably higher than the 2005 national average, which were as follows: whites (4.04); Asians (3.84); and Blacks (3.88).

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ANNEX A

DEGREE CLASS ATTAINMENT BY BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS

Table A3.1 Degree Class Attainment by Background Characteristics

Characteristic	Degree class attained				Cases
	1 st Class	Upper 2 nd	Lower 2 nd	3 rd /pass/other	
Ethnic origin**					
- White	12.4	53.4	30.1	4.1	15797
- Black	5.2	40.8	45.4	8.6	174
- Asian - Indian	8.8	45.7	38.4	7.1	523
- Asian - Chinese	5.2	39.1	41.7	13.9	115
- Asian – Bangladeshi/Pakistani/other	5.5	44.3	41.8	8.5	201
- Mixed	8.3	50.0	33.3	8.3	96
- Other/unknown	11.7	43.3	36.1	8.9	1069
Years of admission**					
- 1996/97	9.6	48.9	35.6	5.9	2208
- 1997/98	10.2	49.7	34.7	5.3	2361
- 1998/99	12.0	51.4	31.9	4.8	2206
- 1999/00	14.0	55.1	27.3	3.5	2345
- 2000/01	13.9	52.6	30.0	3.5	2387
- 2001/02	12.0	53.9	30.4	3.6	2592
- 2002/03	12.6	52.7	30.1	4.6	2365
- 2003 or later	11.4	53.9	28.1	6.5	1511
Gender**					
- Female	13.4	58.6	25.4	2.6	7637
- Male	11.0	47.5	35.3	6.1	10338
Age at registration**					
- under 20 years	11.8	53.1	30.8	4.3	15887
- 20-24 years	12.6	46.2	34.5	6.7	1624
- 25 +	16.9	46.1	30.7	6.3	462
Faculty**					
- Engineering	15.2	47.7	31.4	5.6	3502
- Science	12.5	46.2	34.1	7.2	3932
- Social Science & Humanities	10.8	56.0	29.9	3.3	10541
Department change**					
- no	12.0	52.8	30.6	4.5	16128
- yes	12.2	47.2	35.4	5.2	1847
Socio-economic group**					
- managerial/professional	11.8	53.7	30.5	3.9	9955
- intermediate/technical	12.8	53.0	29.8	4.4	4487
- routine/unemployed	11.1	49.7	33.7	5.5	1008
- not classified/missing	11.9	46.1	34.7	7.4	2525
Type of school**					
- sixth form/comprehensive	13.1	53.8	28.7	4.4	9867
- grant maintained	10.6	54.7	30.3	4.3	2783
- FE/HE/tertiary/adult college	13.5	46.3	35.0	5.1	2777
- independent school	7.7	50.3	36.9	5.3	2548
All	12.0	52.3	31.1	4.6	17975

Base: UK/EU Full-Time Undergraduate Students Admitted at Loughborough University during 1996/97 – 2006/07 Who Successfully Completed their Courses

** - Significant at one per cent level (i.e. Chi square $p < 0.01$)

Table A3.1 Degree Class Attainment by Background Characteristics (Cont)

Characteristic	Degree class attained				Cases
	1 st Class	Upper 2 nd	Lower 2 nd	3 rd /pass/other	
Previous Experience of HE**					
- No previous experience of HE	12.0	53.1	30.8	4.3	16079
- Previous experience of HE	12.7	45.7	35.0	6.6	1316
- Not known	12.6	37.6	38.7	11.0	444
Highest previous Qualification**					
- GCE A Levels/AS levels/Mixed A levels and AS levels	12.1	53.5	30.2	4.2	15829
- Overseas qualifications	13.4	45.2	35.1	6.3	239
- Foundation course/Accredited access course	6.7	37.3	44.8	11.2	134
- GSVQ/GSVQ level 3	6.3	31.7	54.9	7.0	142
- SCE highers (with or without CSYS)	8.4	61.1	28.4	2.1	95
- BTec certificate/diploma	11.7	43.1	37.9	7.3	1270
- Other Qualifications	15.5	49.2	25.7	9.6	187
All	12.0	52.3	31.1	4.6	17975

Base: UK/EU Full-Time Undergraduate Students Admitted at Loughborough University during 1996/97
 – 2006/07 Who Successfully Completed their Courses

** - Significant at one per cent level (i.e. Chi square $p < 0.01$)

ANNEX B

AVERAGE STUDENT SATISFACTION SCORES AT LOUGHBOROUGH UNIVERSITY BY ETHNICITY (NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEYS)

**Table B4.1 Average Student Satisfaction Scores at Loughborough University
by Ethnicity (National Student Survey 2005)**

Item	White	Asian	Black	Mixed/ other	All non- White
The teaching on my course	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.1
- staff are good at explaining things	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.2
- staff have made subject interesting	4.0	3.9	4.0	4.1	3.9
- staff are enthusiastic about teaching	4.2	4.1	4.3	4.3	4.2
- course is intellectually stimulating	4.3	4.2	4.0	4.3	4.2
Assessment and feedback	3.7	3.6	3.8	3.8	3.7
- marking criteria made clear in advance	3.8	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.7
- assessment and marking have been fair	3.9	3.8	4.0	3.9	3.8
- prompt feedback	3.7	3.7	3.5	3.9	3.7
- received detailed comments on my work	3.6	3.5	3.8	3.8	3.6
- feedback helped clarify things	3.4	3.6	3.9	3.8	3.7
Academic support	4.0	4.0	4.2	4.1	4.1
- sufficient support and advice with studies	4.0	4.0	4.4	4.1	4.1
- able to contact staff when needed to	4.3	4.2	4.4	4.3	4.3
- good advice available when needed	3.9	3.9	4.0	4.0	3.9
Organisation and management	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.1
- timetable works efficiently for me	4.2	4.1	4.1	3.9	4.1
- any changes communicated efficiently	4.1	4.0	4.2	4.2	4.0
- course well organised and run smoothly	4.1	4.1	4.2	3.9	4.1
Learning Resources	4.3	4.2	4.6	4.2	4.2
- library resources are good for my needs	4.2	4.1	4.6	4.1	4.2
- able to access IT resources when needed	4.4	4.4	4.8	4.3	4.4
- able to access specialised equip/facilities	4.2	4.1	4.4	4.1	4.1
Personal development	4.1	4.1	4.0	4.0	4.1
- course help present myself with confidence	4.1	4.1	4.0	4.0	4.1
- my communication skills have improved	4.2	4.2	3.9	4.0	4.1
- confidence in tackling unfamiliar things	4.1	4.1	4.1	3.9	4.1
Overall, I'm satisfied with quality of course	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.1	4.2
Number of cases (Responses)	1740	105	15	35	155
Sample	2335	160	30	45	235
Response rate (per cent)	74.5	65.6	50.0	77.8	66.0

Base: Loughborough University Respondents (Final Year Undergraduates) in 2005 NSS.

**Table B4.2 Average Student Satisfaction Scores at Loughborough University
by Ethnicity (National Student Survey 2006)**

Item	White	Asian	Black	Mixed /other	All non-white
The teaching on my course	4.1	4.1	4.0	4.2	4.1
- staff are good at explaining things	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.2
- staff have made subject interesting	4.0	3.9	3.9	4.1	3.9
- staff are enthusiastic about teaching	4.3	4.2	4.1	4.4	4.2
- course is intellectually stimulating	4.2	4.1	4.0	4.2	4.1
Assessment and feedback	3.7	3.9	3.7	3.7	3.9
- marking criteria made clear in advance	3.9	4.0	3.8	3.8	3.9
- assessment and marking have been fair	3.9	4.0	3.7	3.8	3.9
- prompt feedback	3.7	3.9	3.8	3.8	3.9
- received detailed comments on my work	3.5	3.8	3.8	3.6	3.7
- feedback helped clarify things	3.5	3.9	3.8	3.6	3.8
Academic support	4.1	4.2	4.0	3.8	4.1
- sufficient support and advice with studies	4.0	4.1	4.0	3.8	4.0
- able to contact staff when needed to	4.3	4.4	4.0	4.2	4.3
- good advice available when needed	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.5	4.0
Organisation and management	4.2	4.3	4.0	4.1	4.2
- timetable works efficiently for me	4.2	4.2	3.9	3.9	4.1
- any changes communicated efficiently	4.2	4.3	4.1	4.2	4.3
- course well organised and run smoothly	4.2	4.3	4.1	4.2	4.3
Learning Resources	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.5	4.3
- library resources are good for my needs	4.3	4.1	4.2	4.5	4.2
- able to access IT resources when needed	4.5	4.4	4.5	4.4	4.4
- able to access specialised equip/facilities	4.3	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.3
Personal development	4.1	4.1	3.9	4.1	4.1
- course help present myself with confidence	4.1	4.2	3.8	4.0	4.0
- my communication skills have improved	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.2
- confidence in tackling unfamiliar things	4.1	4.1	3.8	4.1	4.1
Overall, I'm satisfied with quality of course	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2
Number of cases (Responses)	1,690	170	25	35	230
Sample	2,380	245	40	70	350
Response rate (%)	71.0	69.4	62.5	50.0	65.7

Base: Loughborough University Respondents (Final Year Undergraduates) in 2006 NSS.