Post-school Transitions of People who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Mariela Fordyce, Sheila Riddell, Rachel O'Neill and Elisabet Weedon

Overview

- Study commissioned by the NDCS in 2012

- Aim - to investigate the post-school transition process of young people who are DHH in Scotland

  - Post-school destinations

  - Barriers

  - Support

  - Independent adulthood

Context of the research

- Recent economic crisis

- Scottish Government's efforts to reform post-school transition policies

- UK Government's reform of the welfare system

- Equality legislation

Methods

- Analysis of policy and legislation

- Analysis of official statistics

- Interviews with 30 young people aged 18-24
    - School background
    - Post-school transition planning
    - Experiences of post-16 education, training and employment
    - Personal background: identity and social networks

Findings

- School experiences

- Post-school transition planning

- Experiences of higher education

- Experiences of further education and training

- Experiences on the labour market

- Markers of adulthood

Interpreting the data

- Mixed-methods research
  - Broad patterns (quantitative data – official statistics)
 - Individual experiences (qualitative data – case studies)

- Representativeness

School experiences

- No official statistics about the total number of pupils who are DHH in Scottish schools

- Most participants went to mainstream schools, were educated orally and supported by ToDs

- BSL users changed schools more frequently

- Variation in support between schools/authorities

- Communication barriers

- Most common difficulties – not academic, but social

- Reluctance to 'stand out'
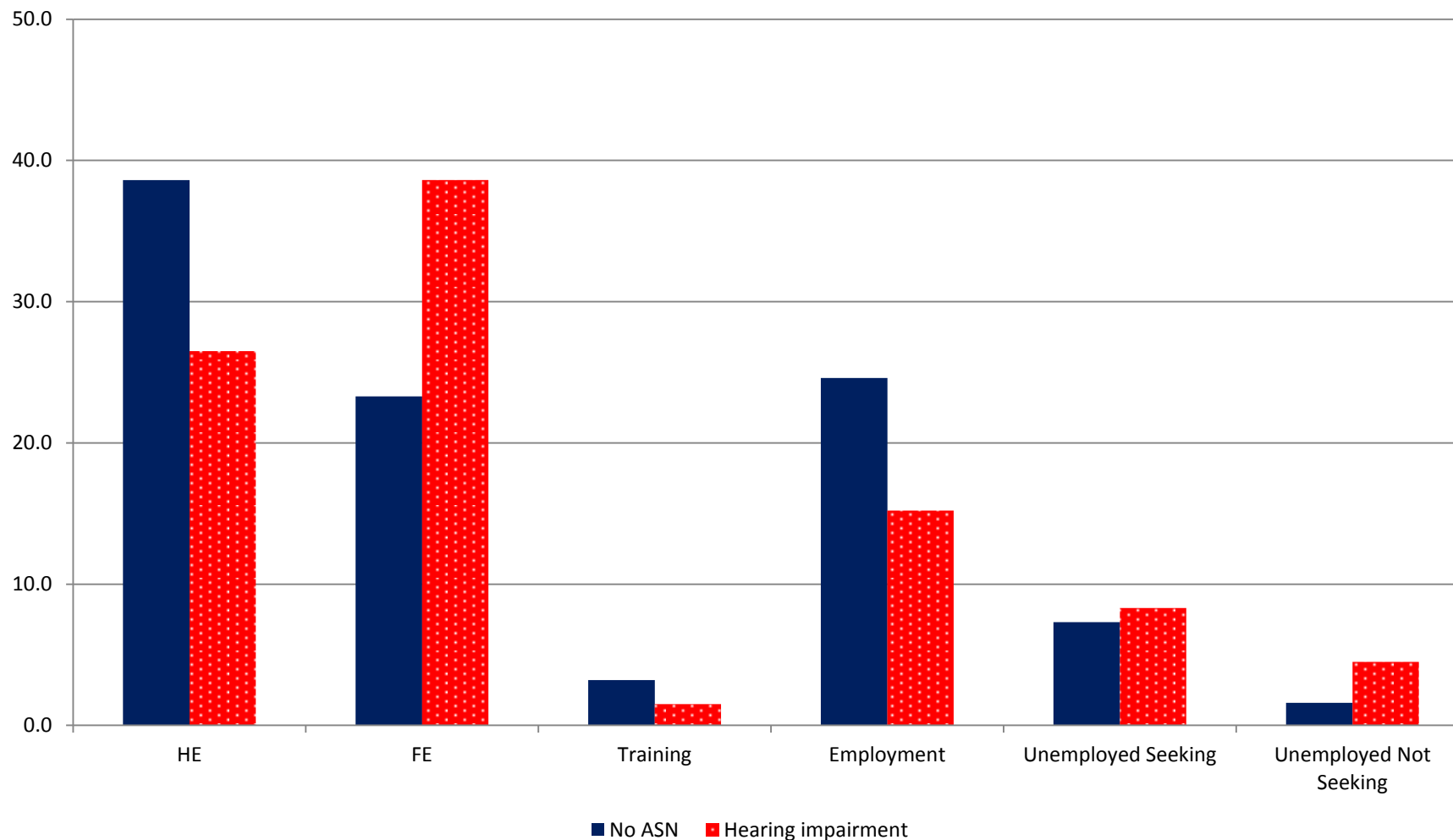
School leavers' attainment
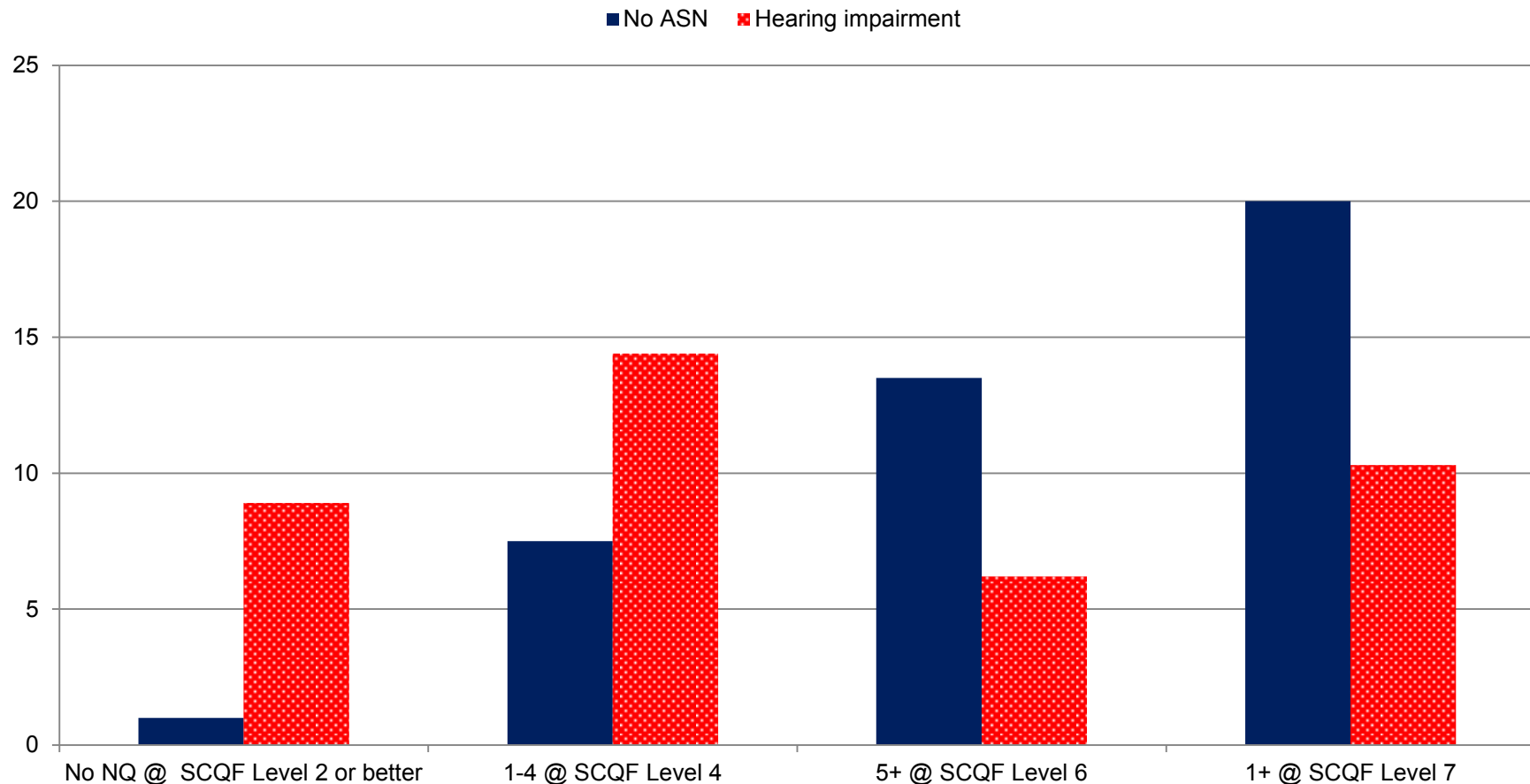
SOURCE: ATTAINMENT AND LEAVER DESTINATIONS, SUPPLEMENTARY DATA. SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT (2013)
Note. This figure shows a selection of all qualifications; therefore reported percentages do not add up to 100.

School leavers' destinations

SOURCE: ATTAINMENT AND LEAVER DESTINATIONS, SUPPLEMENTARY DATA. SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT (2013)

Post-school transition planning

- Most participants did not have post-school transition plans

- School leavers who aimed to go to university were better informed than school leavers with lower qualifications

- Young people from socially-advantaged backgrounds benefited from parental support

- Difficulties in the transition to adult social and health services

Experiences of higher education

- Good levels of support, e.g. equipment and communication support

- Some variation between institutions

- Communication barriers

- A need for:
  - good self-advocacy skills
  - pastoral support from disability advisors
  - parental involvement in negotiating support

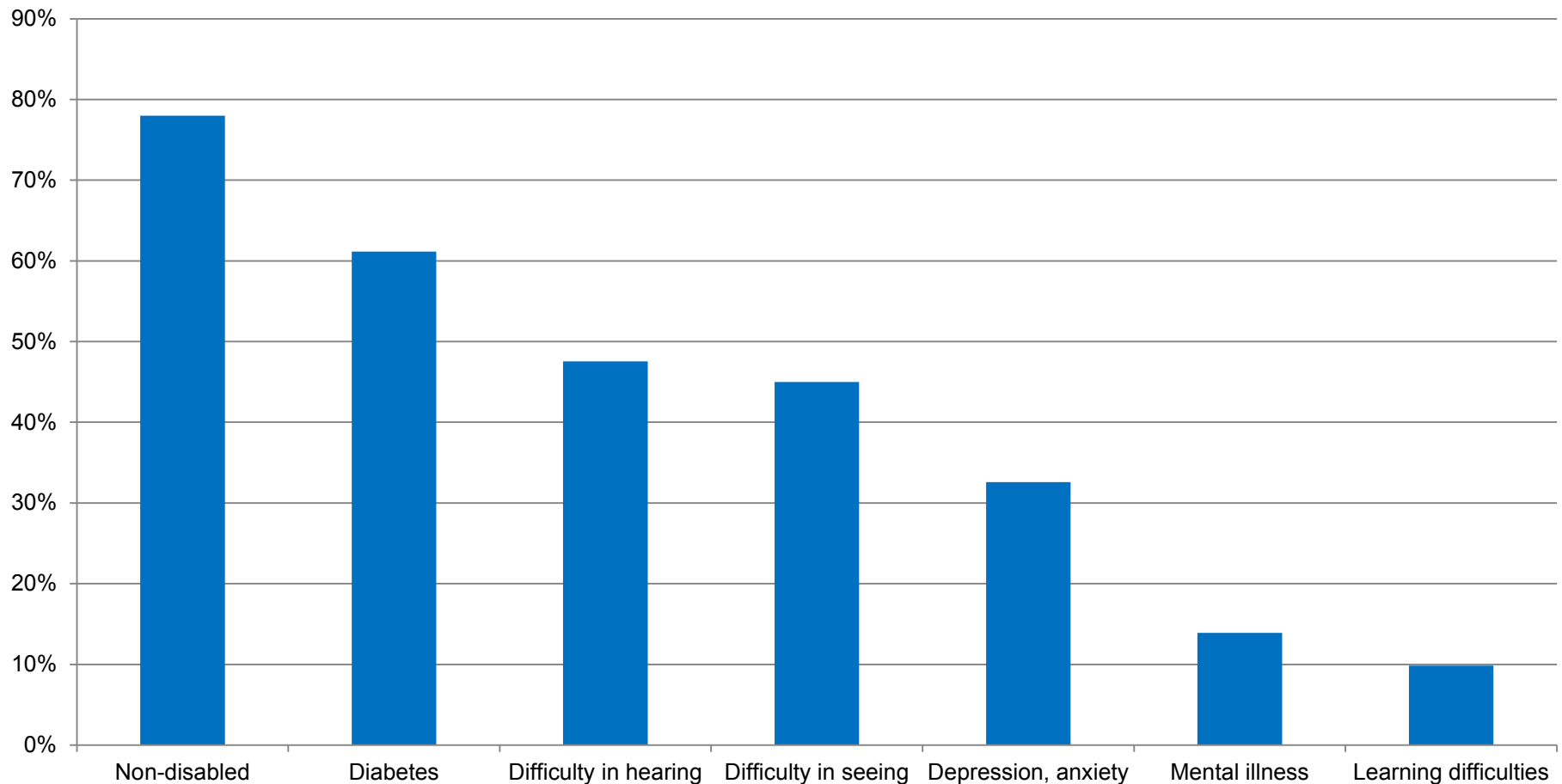- Students from disadvantaged backgrounds were more likely to drop out
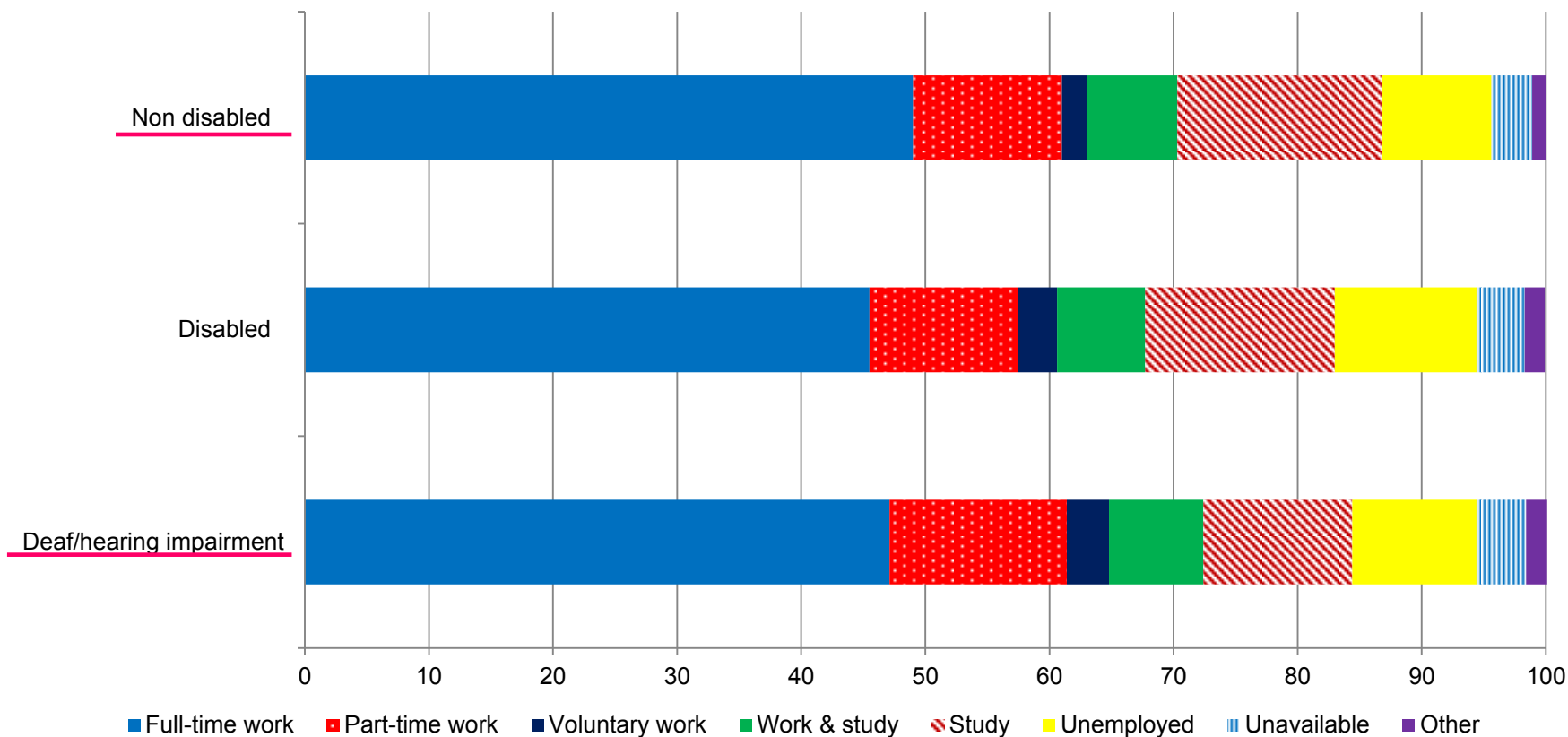
Further education and training

- Patchy support in further education

- Poor support on training programmes

- More reliance on informal support from peers

- More instances of discriminatory attitudes

- Fewer instances of self-advocacy and parental involvement

Destinations of graduates

SOURCE: WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? AGCAS DISABILITY TASK GROUP (2012)

Experiences on the labour market

- Marked differences between higher education graduates and people with lower qualifications:

| Graduates	Non-graduates
Lack of accessibility in applying for work	
Discrimination	
	Lack of work experience
	Limited social networks
	Lack of support in employment
Lack of deaf awareness	

Markers of adulthood

- Marked differences between higher education graduates and people with lower qualifications:

  - Independent living arrangements
  - Geographically mobile
  - Financial independence
  - Wider social networks
  - Career planning

Socio-economic status of university students
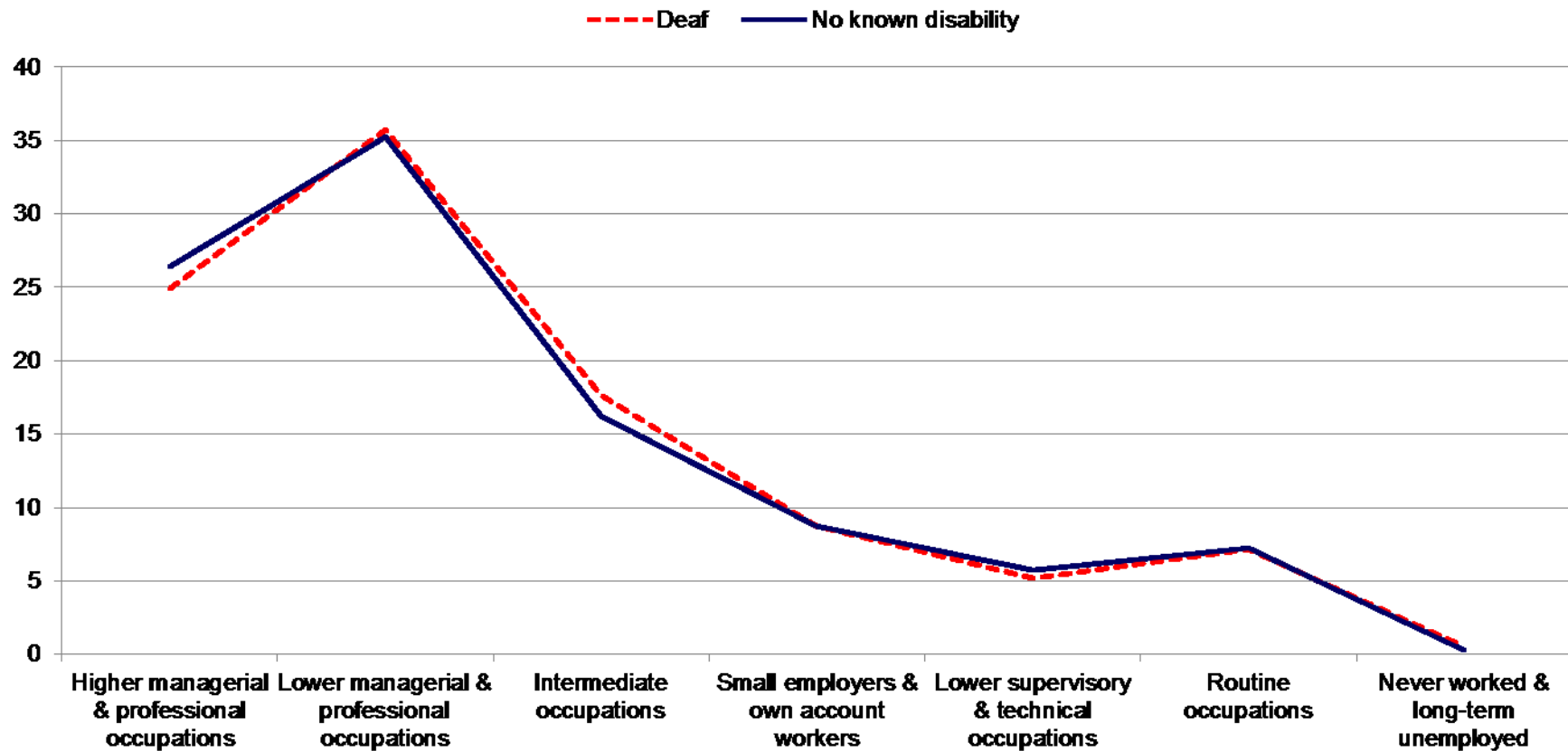
SOURCE: STUDENTS IN UK HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS 2011/12, HIGHER EDUCATION STATISTICS AGENCY

Socio-economic status and post-school outcomes

- Strong association between parental socio-economic status, attainment and employment outcomes:

High socio-economic status	Low socio-economic status
Parental support/advocacy	Less parental support/advocacy
Higher qualifications	Lower qualifications
Higher education	Further education and training
Better support	Less consistent support or no support
Work experience	Less work experience
Guaranteed interview schemes	More overt discrimination
Higher employment rates	Lower employment rates

Conclusions

- Young people who are DHH had poorer school and post-school outcomes than their hearing peers

- School qualifications, post-school destinations and outcomes were strongly associated with parental socio-economic status

- Those with higher education qualifications had good employment outcomes

- The most disadvantaged group were the young people who came from low socio-economic groups and left school with few or no qualifications

Limitations

- Young people with lower qualifications and from less socially-advantaged areas were underrepresented

- The study does not include the views of professionals