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Education Inclusion
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‘Disabled’ students in higher education

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Overview

- Increase in numbers and changes in categories – impact of DDA Part 4 and the Singleton Report (Report of the National Working Party on Dyslexia in Higher Education, 1999)
- Heterogeneous group – differences in *need*, *experiences and outcomes* but most statistical analysis compares disabled with non-disabled
- Recent Scottish legislation on access to higher education – includes ‘underrepresented’ groups but there is a lack of data and intersectional analyses

Increases and changes in categories (FT U-G) UK, HESA

Type of impairment	1994-95	2004-05	2013-14
Unseen disability	57.5	17.1	-
Dyslexia (<i>Specific learning difficulty</i>)	16.2	54.2	53.3
Other disability (<i>or medical condition</i>)	8.9	10.2	8.8
Deaf/hard of hearing	5.9	3.7	2.1
Wheelchair/mobility difficulties (<i>A physical impairment or mobility issues</i>)	2.9	2.6	3
Blind/partially sighted	3.9	2.4	0.2
Multiple disabilities (<i>Two or more conditions</i>)	3.3	4.8	5.3
Mental health difficulties	1.2	4.0	12.5
Personal care support	0.2	0.1	-
(<i>Social communication and</i>) Autistic spectrum disorder	-	0.9	4
Proportion of all F-T first degree students	3.6	7.1	11.3

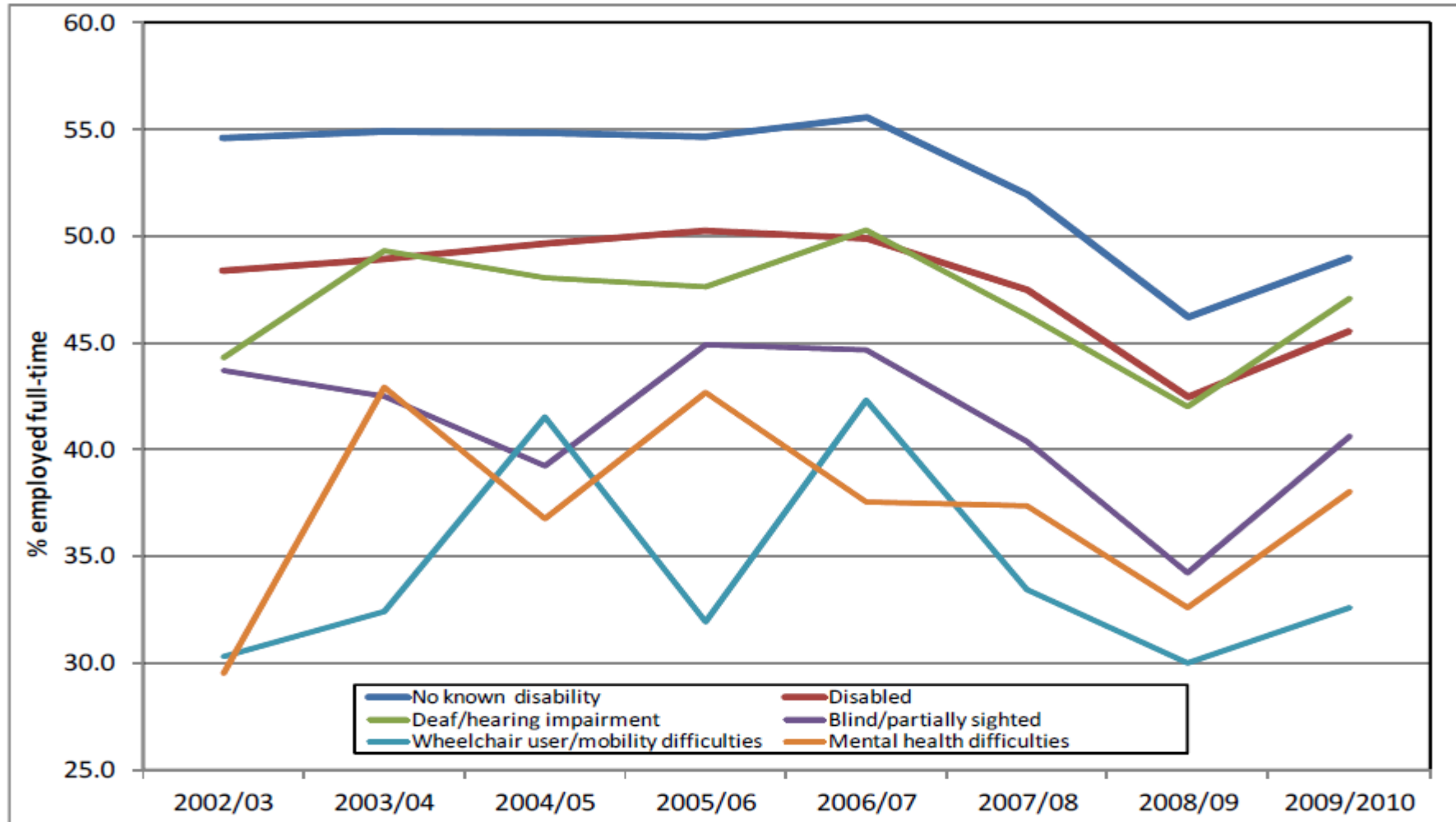
Different students – different needs – different outcomes (from Fuller, et al, 2009)

- I'm still having problems with **attendance** and stuff. But I've had another seizure as well which is a, a bit of a strange thing. I don't know what happened (Teresa - epilepsy); Outcome: non completion
- **Physical access** has a knock on effect on everything else, I would end up sitting right up at the back with a little table, completely cut off; I had a **note taker**; [with no] knowledge of Spanish language, [but] was the PA who was doing the note taking [and by 4th year the course was taught in Spanish] (Karrie – cerebral palsy/wheelchair user); Outcome: 3rd class Honours
- she would use a lot of **overheads** for things and **I would lose visual sight** of what my aim was for this workshop, and then she would just put overheads up ... and I found that so difficult. **Personal life** - university is geared to seventeen, eighteen year olds who don't have a life (Jean – mature student, dyslexia); Outcome: First class Honours
- it's like an ordinary radio mike that you've got on for the lecture and then I've just got the other end, the same sort of thing ... [it worked] but the **PE teachers wouldn't wear** it. (Lesley –hearing impairment); Outcome: Unknown



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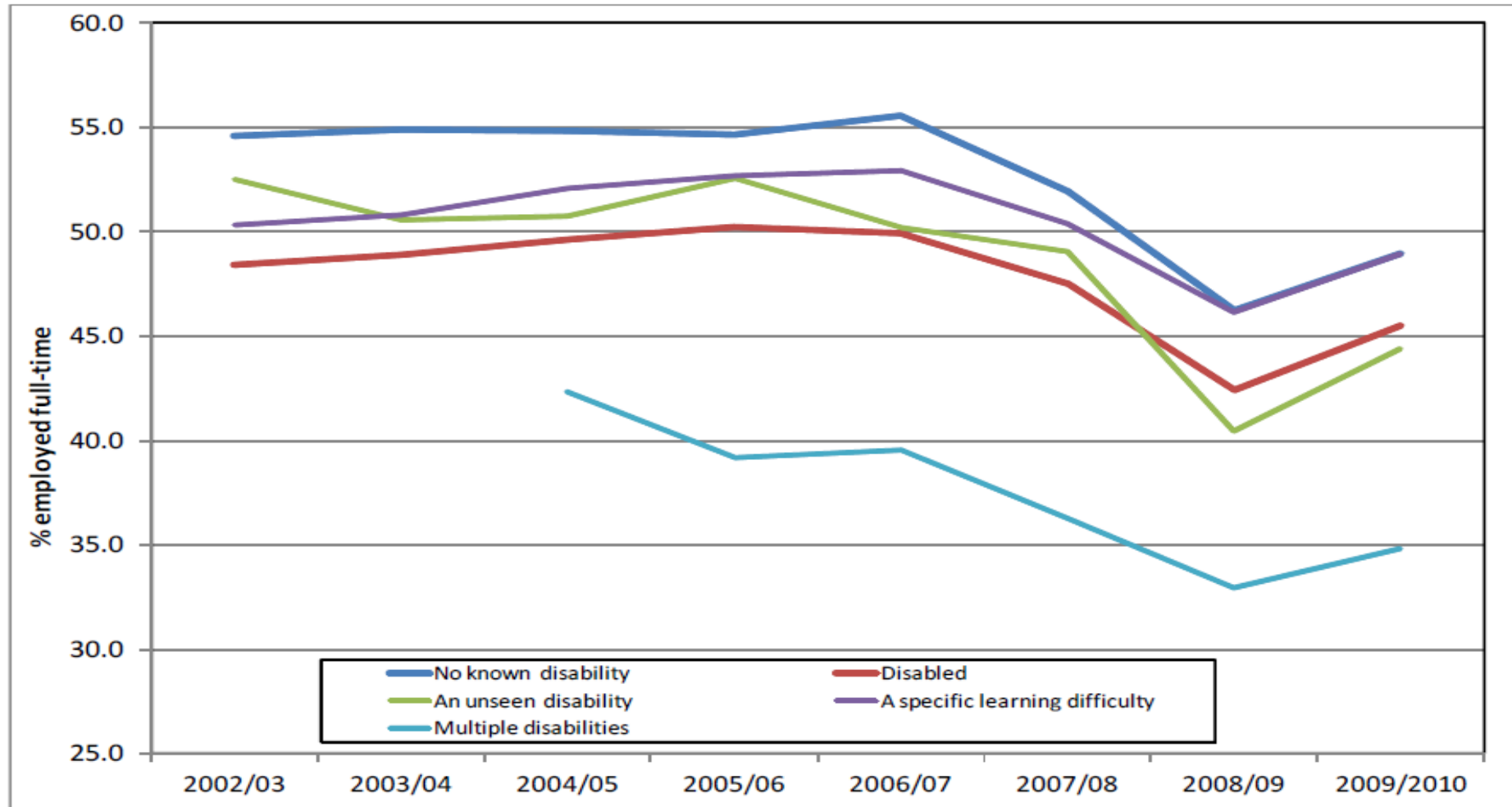
Outcomes: Employment rates (AGCAS, 2013)





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Outcomes: employment rates continued (AGCAS, 2013)



Outcome agreements, widening access and disabled students

The Post-16 Education (Scotland) Act 2013 places a number of statutory duties on SFC in relation to access to colleges and universities. These include provisions that mean institutions:

- must have regard for the desirability of widening access among under-represented socio-economic groups
- have a duty to define what under-represented means (SFC Key Priorities 2014-2017)
- [aim to] increase ... the proportion of Scottish-domiciled undergraduate entrants from the 40% most deprived postcodes (from SFC Guidance AY 2015-16)

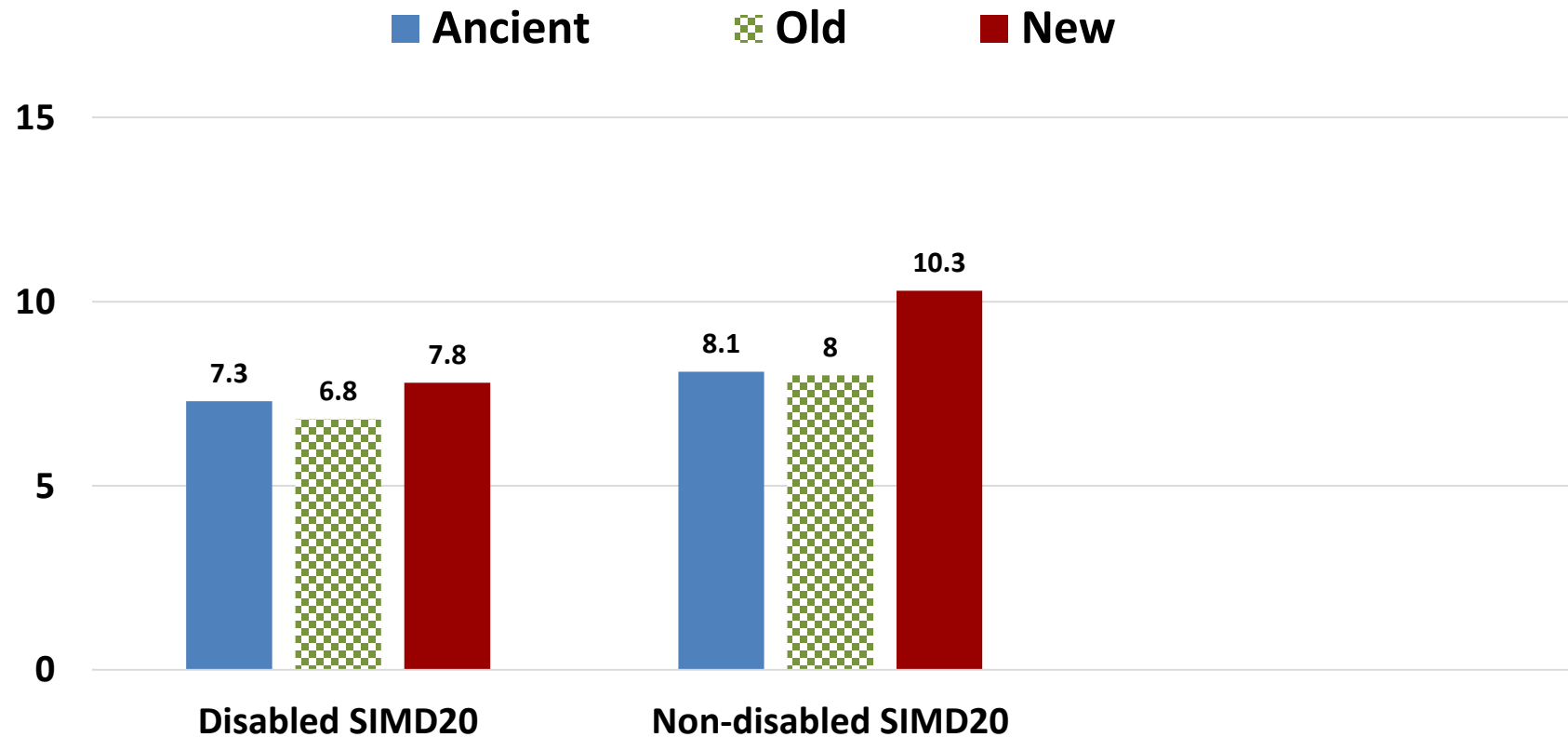
Underrepresentation – how do you define it? And how do you capture differences within a group?

- How do you know who is underrepresented?
 - Gender is not problematic – we know overall population
 - Disability – we don't know the population; LFS asks about health;
 - Little known about disabled students from low socioeconomic backgrounds
- How do you ensure that you capture differences within a group, e.g. disabled? Disabled group in higher education is skewed – numbers in some categories very high – in others very low



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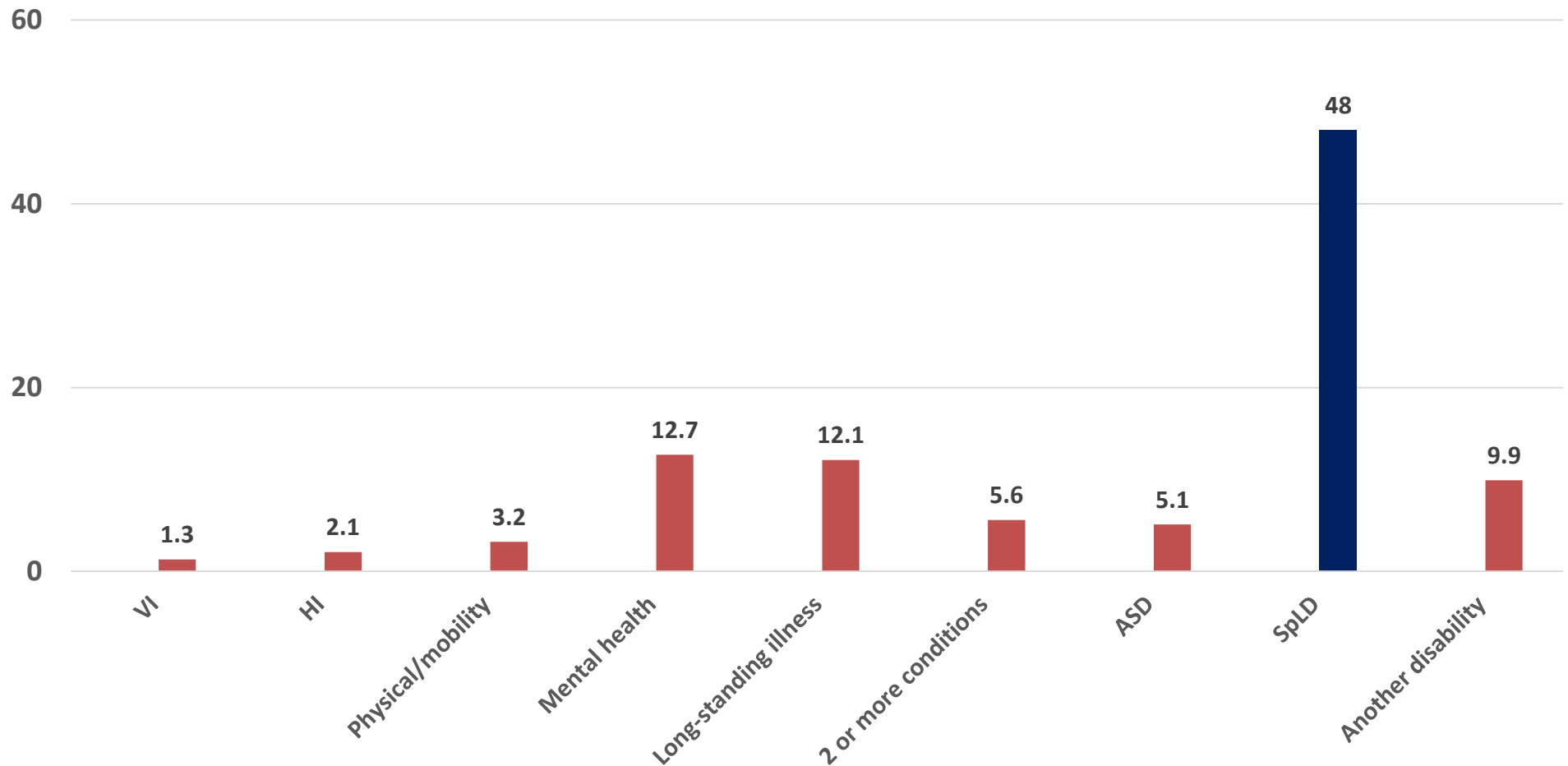
Access: disabled/non-disabled from the most disadvantaged backgrounds, HESA, 2015



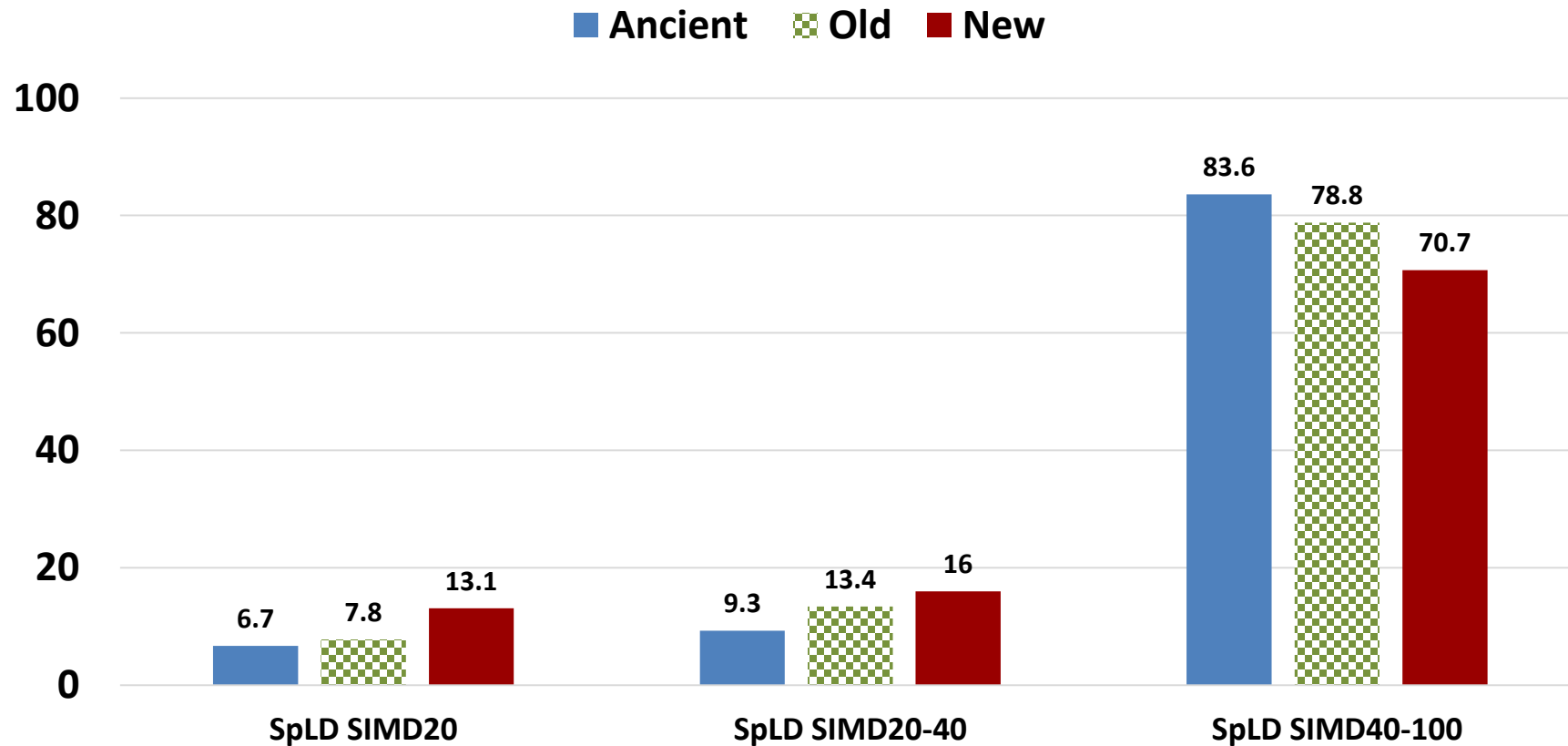


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Percentage of Scottish students by type of impairment, HESA, 2015



SpLD and socioeconomic background, HESA, 2015



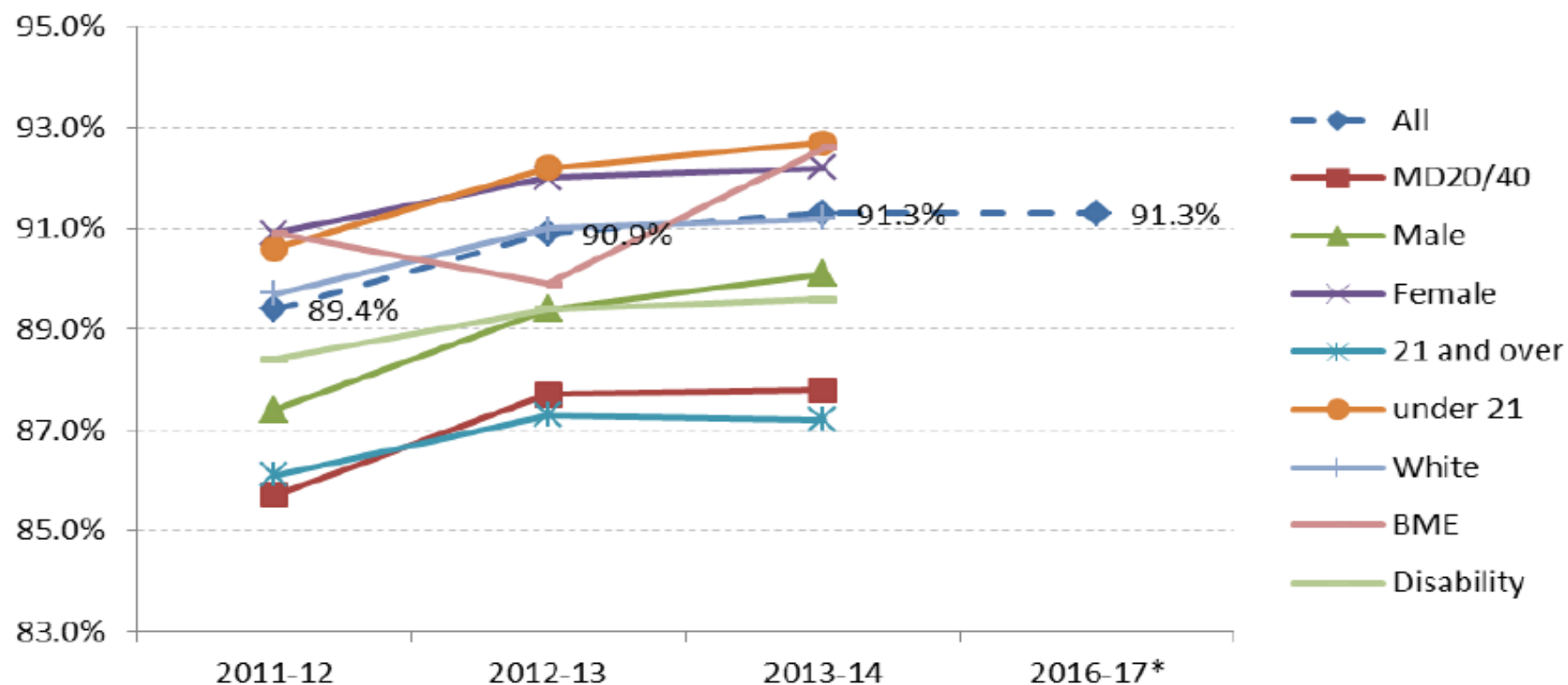


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Returning to study in year 2, SFC



The proportion of full-time first year Scottish-domiciled entrants from different protected characteristic groups returning to study in year two



Source: HESA



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A report on Deaf or Hard of Hearing 18-24 year olds noted that:



*‘the social networks and advocacy power of their parents were closely related to their **socio-economic status**. They played a significant role in shaping the young people’s experiences of school education, as well as their post-school journeys’ (Fordyce, et al, 2013, p.113)*

Three key messages

1. Disabled students are not a homogeneous group – they have:
 - different impairments
 - different needs
 - different outcomes
2. Disabled students from disadvantaged backgrounds are potentially doubly disadvantaged because:
 - they do not necessarily have access to social networks that can help them
 - they are probably at greater risk of dropping out
3. We need more fine-grained analysis of access to university, retention and outcomes for disabled students by type of impairment

References

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