



Higher National Certifications and the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (2009–10 to 2021–22)

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Introduction

Higher National (HN) courses allow learners from across Scotland to achieve a higher education qualification. HN courses provide learners with a way into employment or on to a university course. Learners entering a university course in first year are said to ‘articulate’, whereas learners who enter the course in second or third year from their HNs have ‘advanced standing’.

Roughly 90% of SQA HN entries are through further education (FE) colleges. There are several initiatives across Scotland’s colleges that are aimed at tackling poverty and inequality (College Development Network, 2022). From 2008–09 to 2013–14, roughly 1 in 5 articulating students were from the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland (Scottish Government, 2018). In 2021–22, a quarter (23.7%) of students with advanced standing were from the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland (SFC, 2023).

Previous SQA research looked at learners with HN certifications from 2009–10 to 2014–15 by their Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) quintiles (SQA, 2015). There were several key findings from this research:

- 1 There appeared to be a trend towards a smaller proportion of HN certifications from the least deprived quintile and a higher proportion of HN certifications from the most deprived quintile. This was true for both Higher National Certifications (HNCs) and Higher National Diplomas (HNDs).
- 2 There were consistently more female HN certifications than male (especially for courses in the Hair & Beauty, Health & Social Care, Hospitality, and Travel & Tourism sectors).
- 3 Male certifications were generally even across quintiles, while female certifications were much more skewed towards the more deprived quintiles.
- 4 Learners in less deprived quintiles were more likely to study subjects in the Computing, Software & IT and Finance & Accounting sectors.

Since the last report on HN certification by SIMD, SQA has revalidated, revisited, or newly developed HN courses. The pandemic also had a detrimental impact on

student outcomes in colleges (Audit Scotland, 2022), particularly for socially disadvantaged and vulnerable students. Few SQA qualifications have seen uptake surpass pre-pandemic levels. SQA is reviewing the longer-term impact of the pandemic on the quality of data for HN certifications, separately from this report. This report aims to investigate the long-term trends (2009–2021) in how HN certification varies by deprivation.

Methodology

HN certifications

The data in this report covers records of HN certifications only. Certifications provide a more robust year on year comparison than entries as entrants may withdraw at any point. Only records from Scottish centres in the period between 2009–2010 and 2021–2022 were extracted for this report.

SQA does not hold data on candidate destinations, nor are our HN courses grouped into progression routes.

Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation

The SIMD is the Scottish Government's official tool for identifying relative deprivation across Scotland. It incorporates several different aspects of deprivation (employment, income, health, education, access to services, crime, and housing), combining them into a single index.

The SIMD divides Scotland into small areas, called data zones, each containing around 800 people on average. Deprivation is expressed in terms of quintiles (five groups of 20%), and each data zone is given a relative ranking. Quintile 1 is the most deprived 20% of data zones, and quintile 5 the least deprived 20%. This is updated every three or four years.

For this research, the learners' postcodes were matched with the SIMD version that corresponded with the year of certification as follows:

- SIMD 2009: 2009–10
- SIMD 2012: 2010–11, 2011–12, 2012–13
- SIMD 2016: 2013–14, 2014–15, 2015–16, 2016–17
- SIMD 2020: 2017–18, 2018–19, 2019–20, 2020–21, 2021–22

Age

Candidate age was calculated using candidates' date of birth and the date of entry to HN. The age categories were set as: 'below 18', '18–21', '22–29', '30–39', '40–49' and 'above 50'.

Sex

SQA has adopted the International Organization for Standardisation (ISO), and Information Standards Board for Education, Skills and Children's Services (ISB) categories for legal sex type. These standards allow the use of the following values: male, female, not known (U), and not applicable (N).

Sector

HN certifications were split into 24 sectors:

- 1 Business Skills
- 2 Computing, Software & IT
- 3 Construction
- 4 Creative & Cultural
- 5 Engineering
- 6 Fashion & Textiles
- 7 Finance & Accounting
- 8 Food & Drink
- 9 Hair & Beauty

- 10 Health & Social Care
- 11 Hospitality, Travel & Tour
- 12 Justice & Legal
- 13 Land Based & Environmental
- 14 Learning & Teaching
- 15 Manufacturing Engineering
- 16 Maritime
- 17 Oil & Gas
- 18 Retail
- 19 Science & Maths
- 20 Social Sciences
- 21 Sport & Leisure
- 22 Supply Chain & Logistics
- 23 Utilities
- 24 Waste

Analysis

Records were removed if a centre's or employer's postcode was used instead of a candidate's or if the candidate's postcode was invalid. Each year, between 95% to 98% of HN certifications have a postcode attached to it.

Candidates with missing values for SIMD were removed from the analysis completely.

If any of the remaining candidates had missing values for other characteristics (age, sex, sector), they were removed for each analysis individually.

This approach maximised the number of candidates included in the analyses but means that a slightly different cohort were included for each of these characteristics.

Findings

SIMD and HN certifications

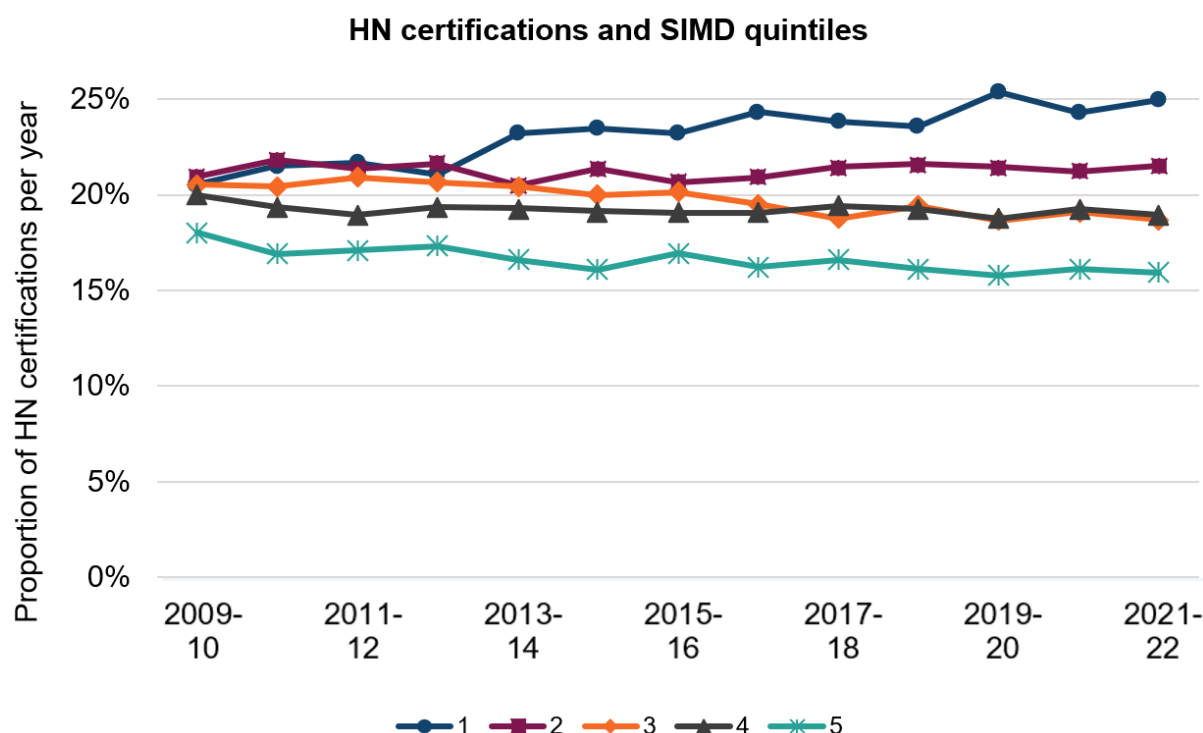
Between 2009–10 and 2021–22, there were 22,400 HN certifications on average each year. Since 2017–18, there has been a decline in the number of certifications.

Table 1: Number of HN certifications over time

Year	Total number of HN certifications	Percent of HN certifications with SIMD data
2009–10	20,465	95%
2010–11	21,029	95%
2011–12	23,434	95%
2012–13	22,589	95%
2013–14	22,182	96%
2014–15	23,362	96%
2015–16	23,115	97%
2016–17	23,983	97%
2017–18	24,239	98%
2018–19	22,616	98%
2019–20	22,727	97%
2020–21	21,489	97%
2021–22	20,341	97%

Figure 1 shows the proportion of SIMD quintiles every year between 2009–10 and 2021–22, where the SIMD is known. In the last few years, there has been an increase in the proportion of learners from the most deprived areas (quintile 1).

Figure 1: HN certifications by SIMD from 2009–10 to 2021–22



The gap in the proportion of HN certifications achieved by learners from the most and least deprived quintiles has increased. The difference between the most and least deprived quintiles peaked at 9.6% in 2019–20, with the most deprived quintile having a higher proportion of certification. HN certifications in the least deprived quintile (quintile 5) have decreased 11.5% between 2009–10 and 2021–22, while HN certifications in the most deprived quintile (quintile 1) have increased 21.5%. This suggests that in general, SQA's HN certifications have been serving Scotland's most deprived communities well.

Figure 2: Difference in proportions of the most deprived (quintile 1) and least deprived (quintile 5) areas

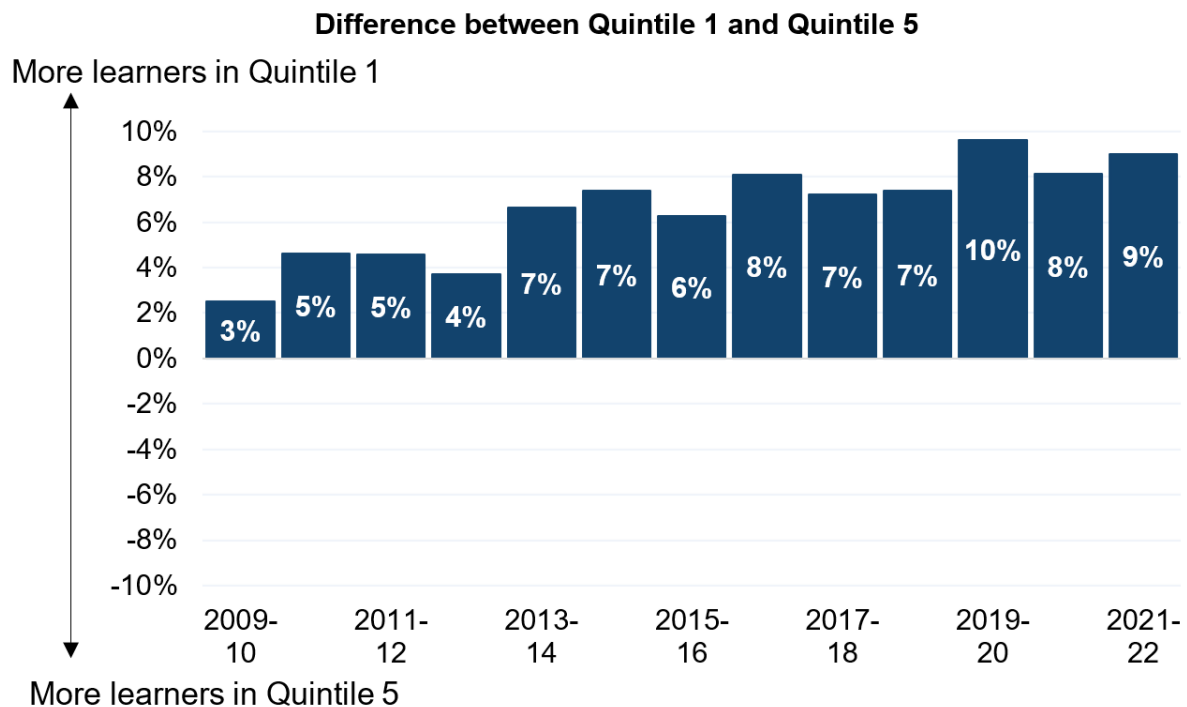


Figure 2 shows the difference in HN certifications between the most deprived areas and the least deprived areas. Where the average difference is positive, there were more HN certifications from the most deprived areas; whereas a negative difference would mean more HN certifications from the least deprived areas. Figure 2 demonstrates that every year between 2009–10 and 2021–22, there was a greater number of HN certifications from the most deprived areas. Over this time period, the size of the gap between quintiles has also increased.

Age and HN certifications by SIMD

Table 2: Distribution of age ranges in HN certification by SIMD quintile (2010–22)

SIMD quintile	Under 18	18–21	22–29	30–39	40–49	50+	Total
1	4.60%	44.36%	26.49%	16.40%	6.47%	1.69%	100.0%
2	5.88%	47.55%	24.37%	14.00%	6.24%	1.95%	100.0%
3	7.51%	51.29%	21.58%	11.42%	6.06%	2.14%	100.0%
4	8.67%	54.33%	18.85%	10.11%	5.87%	2.16%	100.0%
5	8.72%	57.16%	17.64%	8.46%	5.70%	2.31%	100.0%
Total	6.85%	50.25%	22.43%	12.45%	6.04%	1.99%	100.0%

Table 2 shows the distribution of age in HN certifications by each SIMD quintile between 2009–10 and 2021–22.

Between 2009–10 and 2021–22, across both quintiles:

- The 18–21 age range had the most HN certifications.
- The 22–29 age range had the second most certifications.
- The 50+ age range had the fewest certifications.

However, the distribution of ages changed with SIMD quintile. HN certifications from the least deprived areas tended to be younger, with 65.9% of learners aged 21 and under; compared to 49.0% from the most deprived areas. This was consistent over time.

Compared to all other quintiles, the most deprived areas had the most HN certifications aged 22 and up. The overall HN certification ages from the most deprived areas became older over time, peaking in 2021–22.

Sex and HN certifications by SIMD

Figure 3: Distribution of sex in HN certification by SIMD quintile (2009–10 to 2021–22)

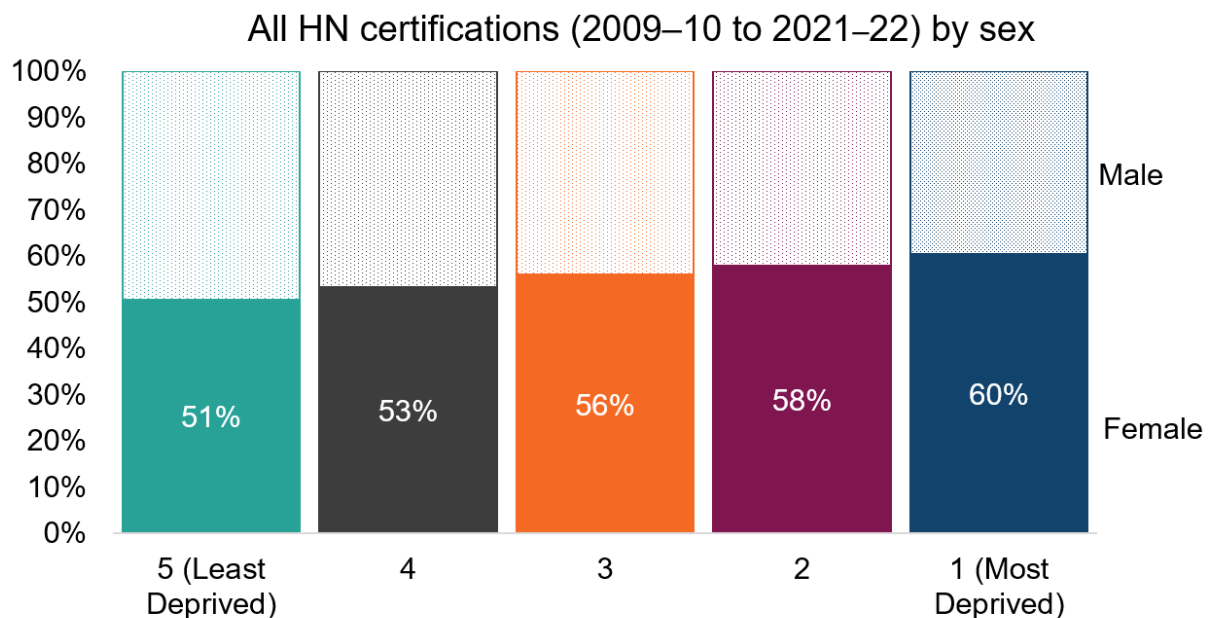


Figure 3 shows the distribution of sex in HN certifications between 2009–10 and 2021–22 by SIMD quintile. In total, 55.5% of HN certifications were female and 45.5% were male. Broken down by SIMD, out of all HN certifications between 2009–10 and 2021–22, 60.5% of HN certifications from the most deprived areas were female, compared to 50.6% of HN certifications in the least deprived areas. Overall, the difference in male and female HN certifications becomes smaller for less deprived quintiles.

Figure 4 : Distribution of sex in HN certifications in SIMD quintile 1 over time

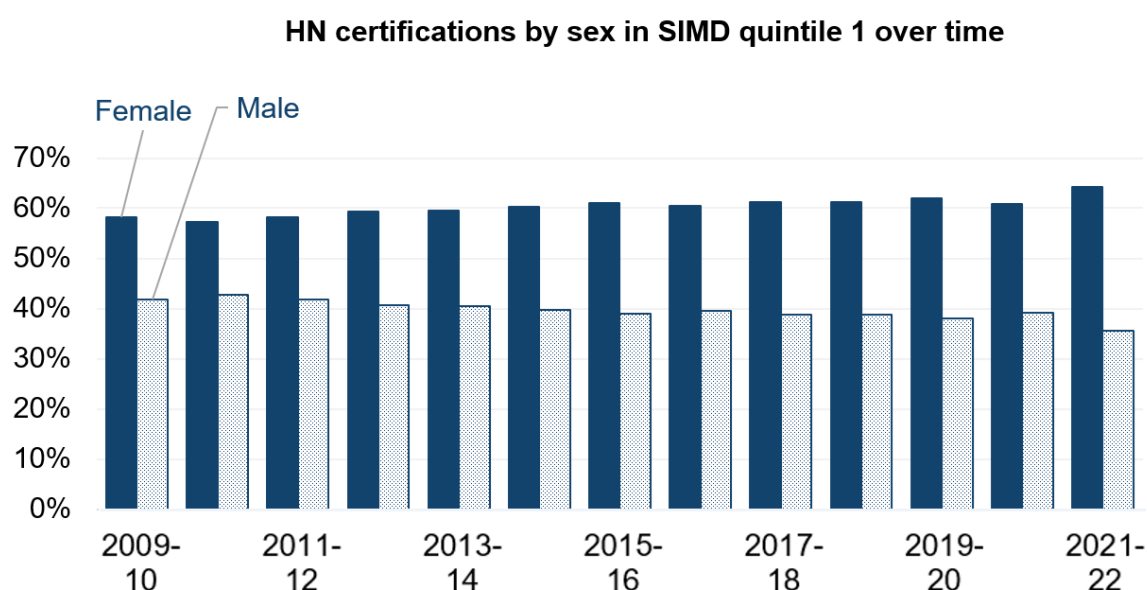
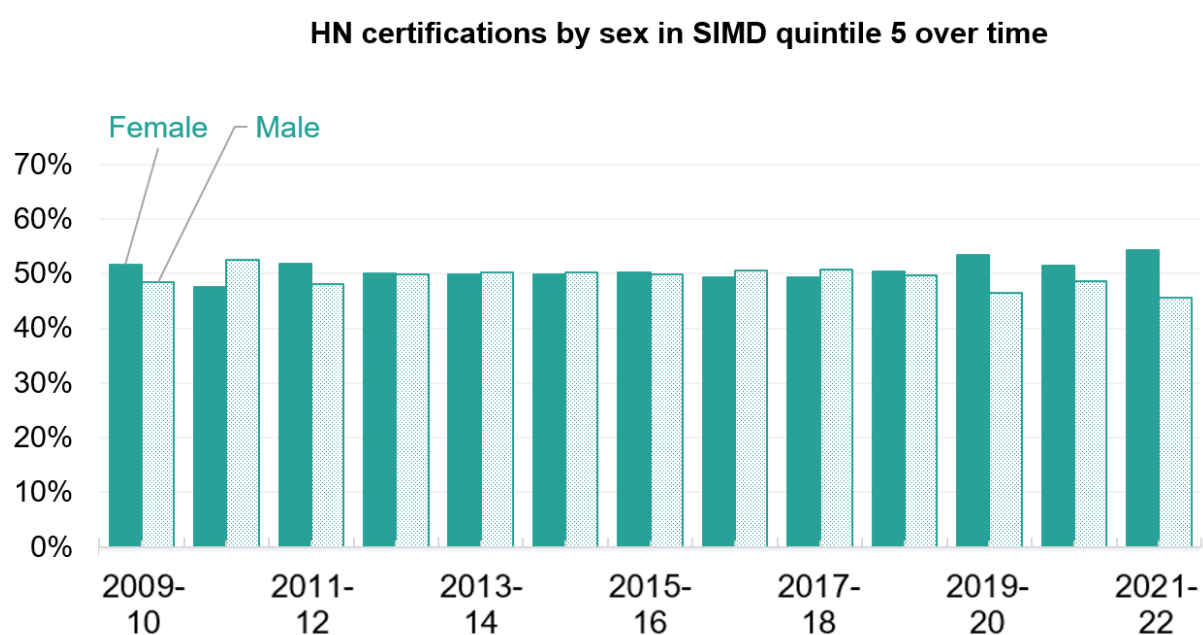


Figure 5: Distribution of sex in HN certifications in SIMD quintile 5 over time



Figures 4 and 5 show the difference in proportion of female and male HN certifications over time, in the most and least deprived areas. In the most deprived areas, the proportion of male HN certifications has been decreasing over time, while female HN certifications have been increasing. On the other hand, the least deprived areas were more likely to have equal proportions of males and females with HN certifications.

SIMD and HN certification sectors

Figure 6: Average difference between most deprived (quintile 1) and least deprived (quintile 5) areas by sector, all HN courses 2009–10 to 2022

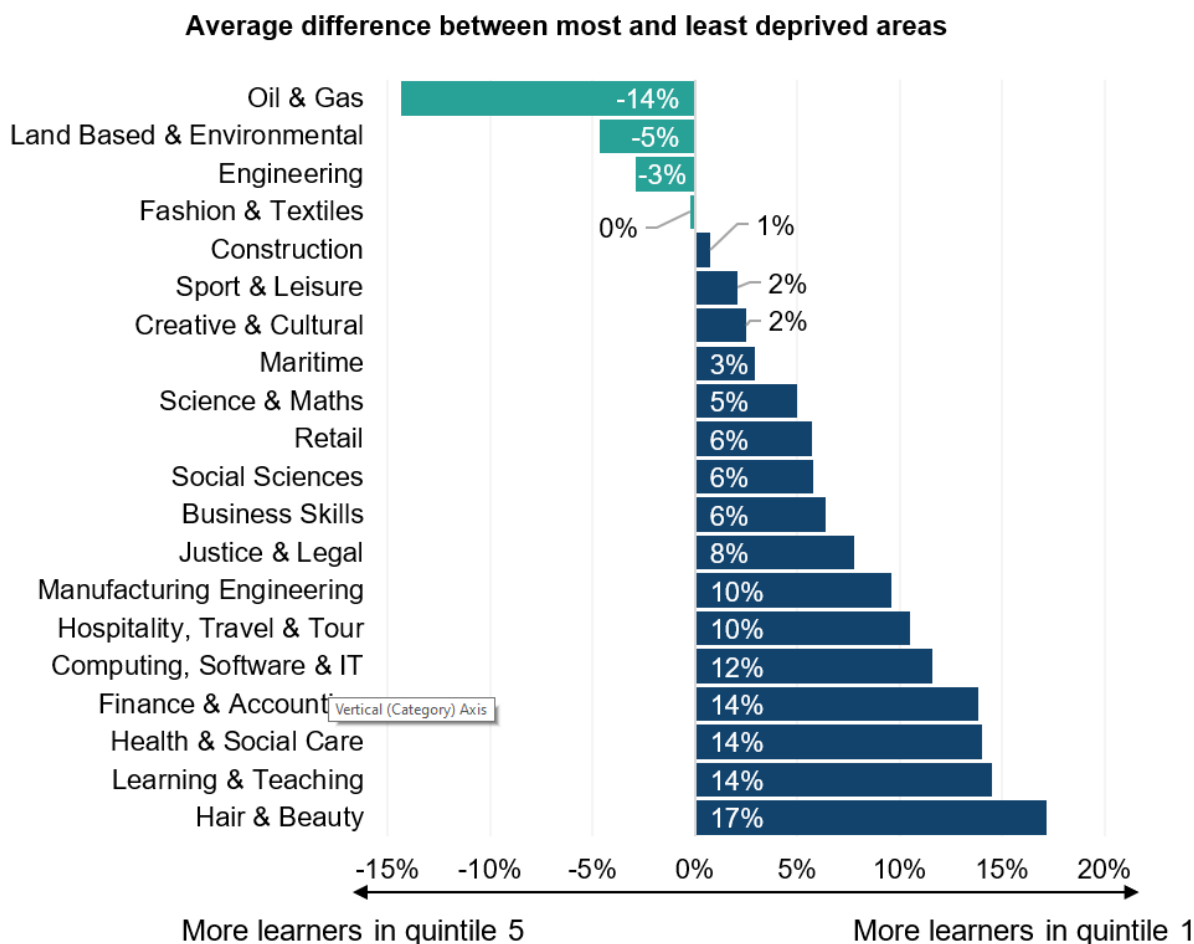


Figure 6 shows the average difference in HN certifications between the most and least deprived areas by sector. Where the average difference is positive, there were more the learners with certifications from the most deprived areas; where the difference is negative, there were more learners with certifications from the least deprived areas.

Some sectors cannot be analysed in terms of SIMD quintile due to small numbers of data where not all SIMD quintiles were represented: Utilities; Food & Drink; Waste; and Supply Chain & Logistics.

Across all HNs, on average there was a difference of 6.6% between the most and least deprived quintiles. Hair & Beauty had the greatest average difference (17.1%) between the most and least deprived areas, and Fashion & Textiles the least (-0.2%).

The dumbbell plots in the following subsections (Figures 9–28) demonstrate the difference between the most and least deprived quintiles for each sector over time. In addition, they demonstrate deviation from the Scottish population where the wider the dumbbell, the more deviation there is from the general SIMD population.

Dumbbell plots are shown in order from the sector with the highest total number of HN certifications, to the sector with the lowest total number of HN certifications (Table 3).

Table 3: Sector rankings in the most and least deprived quintile, all HN courses 2009–10 to 2021–22

Sector	Number in Quintile 1	Quintile 1 Ranking	Number in Quintile 5	Quintile 5 Ranking
Creative & Cultural	10,190	2	8,976	1
Health & Social Care	12,400	1	5,967	2
Engineering	4,733	5	5,615	3
Business Skills	6,217	3	4,551	4
Computing, Software & IT	5,793	4	3,243	6
Sport & Leisure	3,711	8	3,295	5
Hair & Beauty	4,221	6	1,717	10
Finance & Accounting	3,986	7	1,996	9
Hospitality, Travel & Tour	3,417	9	2,066	8
Social Sciences	2,974	10	2,218	7
Construction	1,782	11	1,713	11
Land Based & Environmental	1,034	13	1,465	12
Science & Maths	1,388	12	1,141	13
Justice & Legal	986	14	667	14
Fashion & Textiles	646	15	650	15

Sector	Number in Quintile 1	Quintile 1 Ranking	Number in Quintile 5	Quintile 5 Ranking
Maritime	505	16	421	16
Learning & Teaching	484	17	230	17
Manufacturing Engineering	265	18	165	20
Retail	246	19	195	18
Oil & Gas	68	20	174	19
Supply Chain & Logistics	33	22	68	21
Utilities	33	21	32	22
Waste	5	24	13	23
Food & Drink	6	23	6	24

Creative & Cultural

The sector with the most HN certifications overall was Creative & Cultural. It was the most common sector for certifications in quintile 5 between 2009–10 and 2021–22.

Figure 7: Proportion of HN certifications in the Creative & Cultural sector in the most and least deprived areas by year

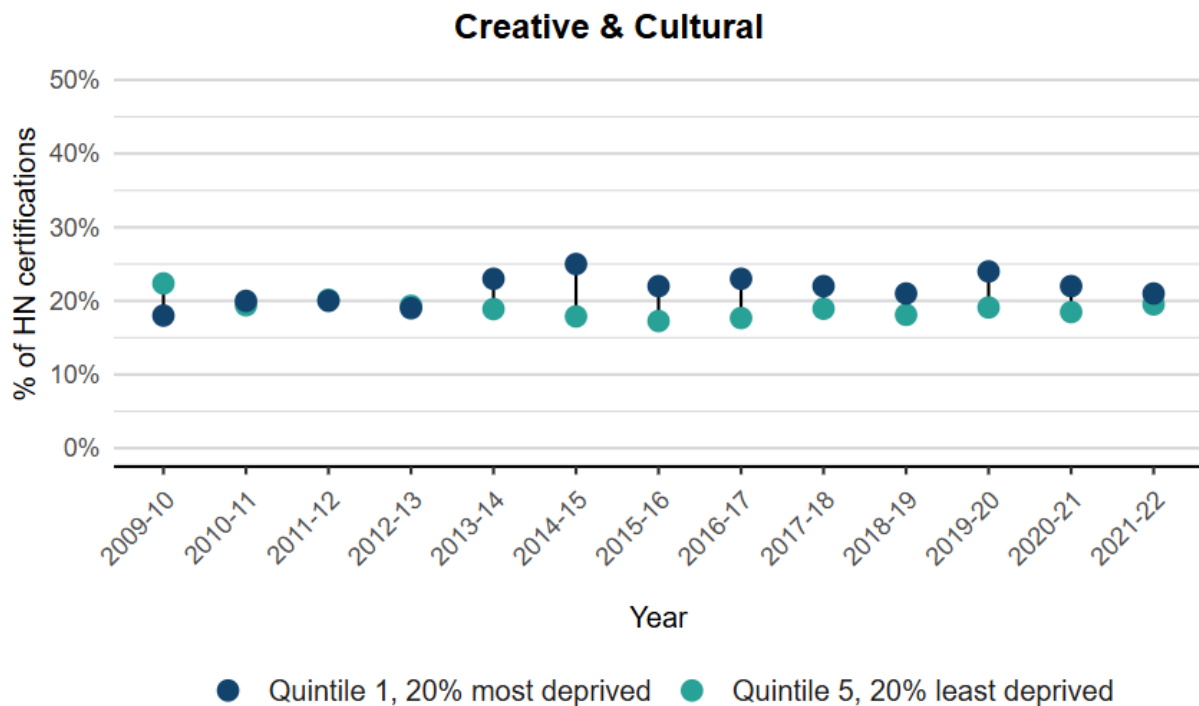


Figure 7 shows that the difference between HN certifications in the most and least deprived quintiles over time varied. In 2021–22, 21.5% of HN certifications in this sector were from the most deprived areas, and 19.2% from the least deprived areas.

Health & Social Care

Health & Social Care was the sector with the most HN certifications in the most deprived quintile every year between 2009–10 and 2021–22. This sector has made up between 16.9% and 22.2% of all HN certifications in the most deprived quintile each year.

This is different from the least deprived quintile, where Health & Social Care ranked either second or third every year (tied with Engineering).

Figure 8: Proportion of HN certifications in Health & Social Care in the most and least deprived areas by year

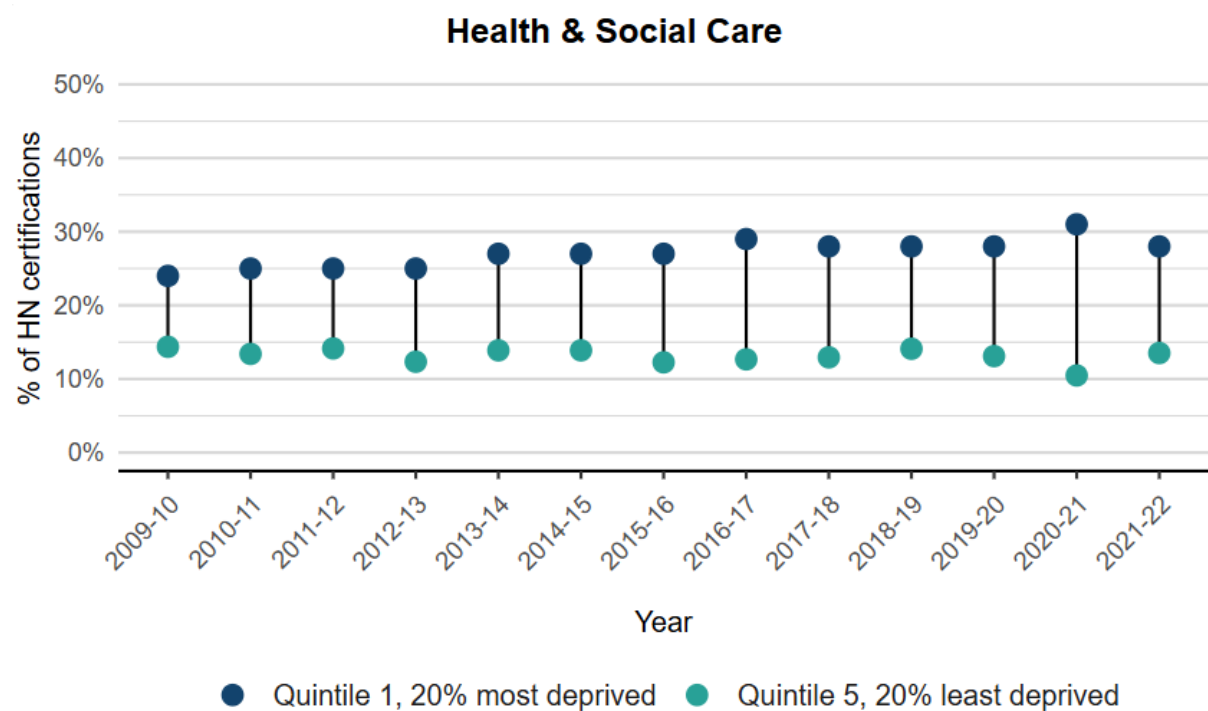


Figure 8 shows that the gap between HN certifications in the most and least deprived quintiles in this sector has been increasing over time; in 2021–22, over one in four HN certifications were in the most deprived quintile (28.3%) compared to one in eight in the least deprived quintile (13.1%).

Engineering

Engineering had the third most HN certifications overall. It ranked fifth in the most deprived quintile and third in the least deprived quintile.

Figure 9: Proportion of HN certifications in Engineering in the most and least deprived areas by year

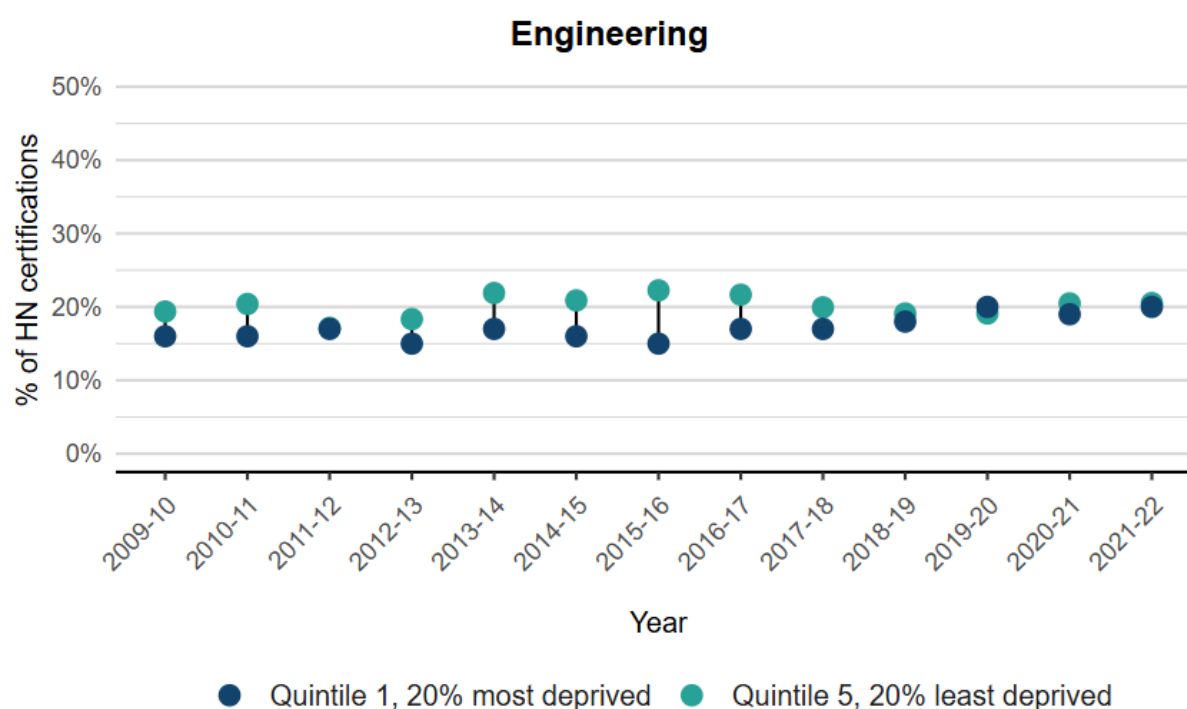
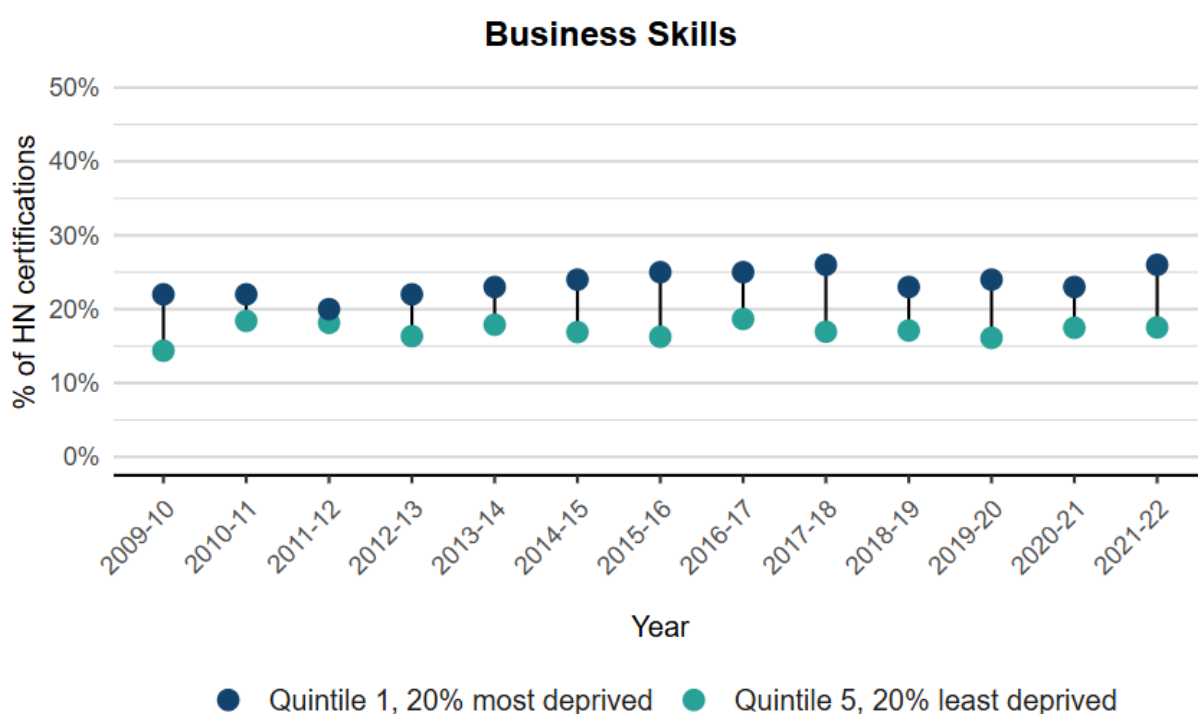


Figure 9 shows that Engineering tended to have a higher portion of HN certifications in the least deprived quintile. The gap was widest in 2015–16, where 23.3% of Engineering HN certifications were from the least deprived areas, compared to just 15.0% from the most deprived areas. However, in 2021–22, this sector was more representative of the Scottish population overall, where both the most and least deprived quintiles represented roughly 20% of this sector (19.5% in the most deprived quintile and 19.8% in the least deprived quintile).

Business Skills

Between 2009–10 and 2021–22, HN certifications in Business Skills were the third most popular in the most deprived quintile, and the fourth most popular in the least deprived. This sector tended to lean slightly towards the most deprived quintile, with an overall average difference of 6% between the most and least deprived quintiles (Figure 10).

Figure 10: Proportion of HN certifications in Business Skills in the most and least deprived areas by year

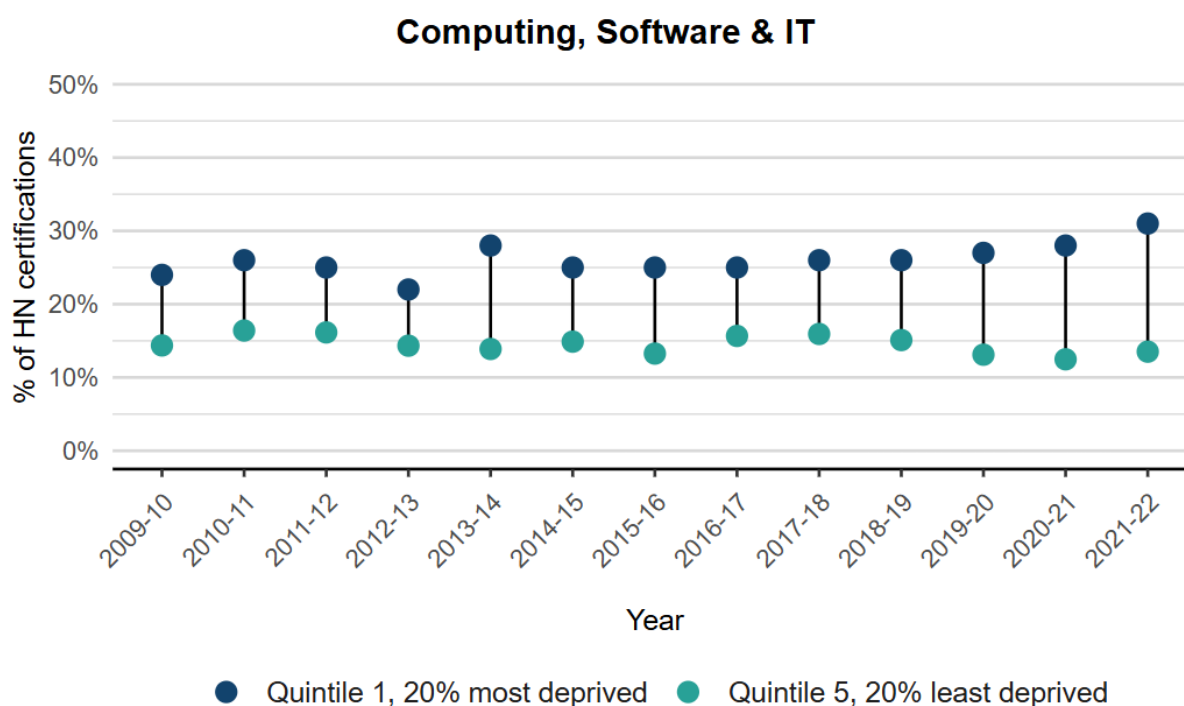


Across all years, the most deprived quintile made up between 19.9% to 25.9% of Business Skills HN certifications. Before 2014, Business Skills certifications in the most and least deprived quintiles were closer in proportion, with only a 1.5% difference between the most and least deprived areas in 2011–12.

Computing, Software & IT

Computing, Software & IT had the fifth most HN certifications between 2009–10 and 2021–22. It had the fourth most in the most deprived quintile, compared to the sixth most in the least deprived.

Figure 11: Proportion of HN certifications in Computing, Software & IT in the most and least deprived areas by year



The proportion of Computing, Software & IT certifications increased in the most deprived quintile over time (Figure 11). This sector was the sixth most disproportionate in terms of SIMD (Figure 6), with an average difference in terms of HN certifications of 11.6% between the most and least deprived quintiles.

Sport & Leisure

Sport & Leisure was the sector with the sixth most HN certifications overall. It had the fifth most certifications in the least deprived quintile, and the eighth most in the most deprived.

Figure 12: Proportion of HN certifications in Sport & Leisure in the most and least deprived areas by year

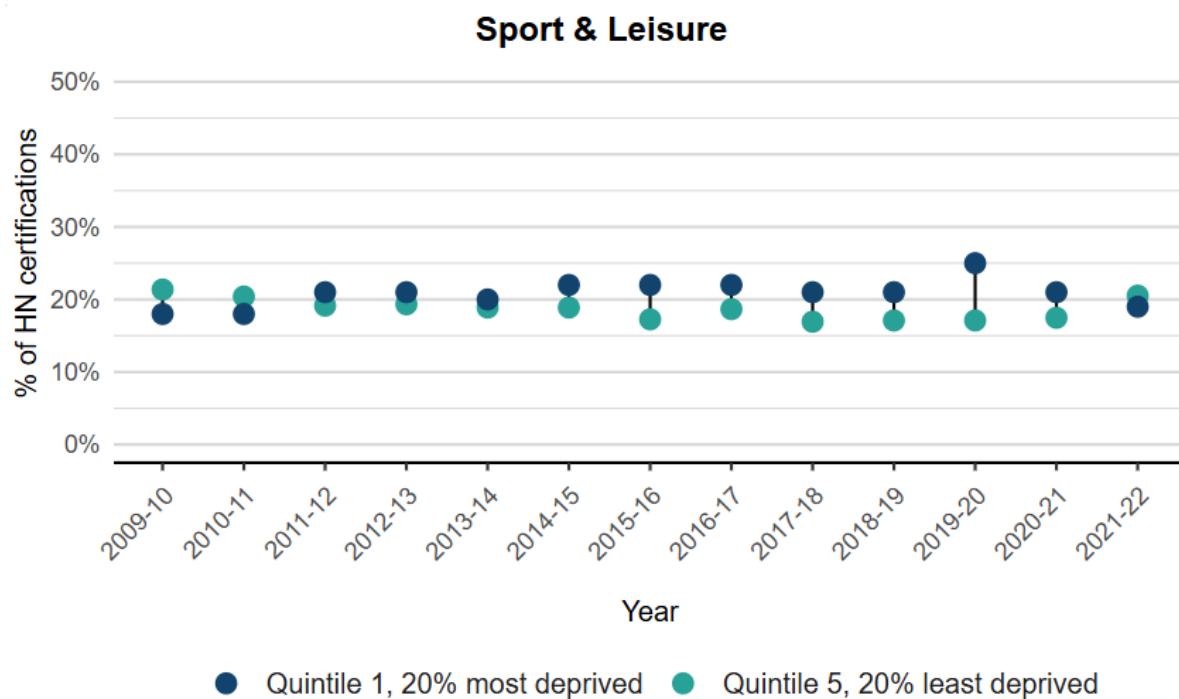
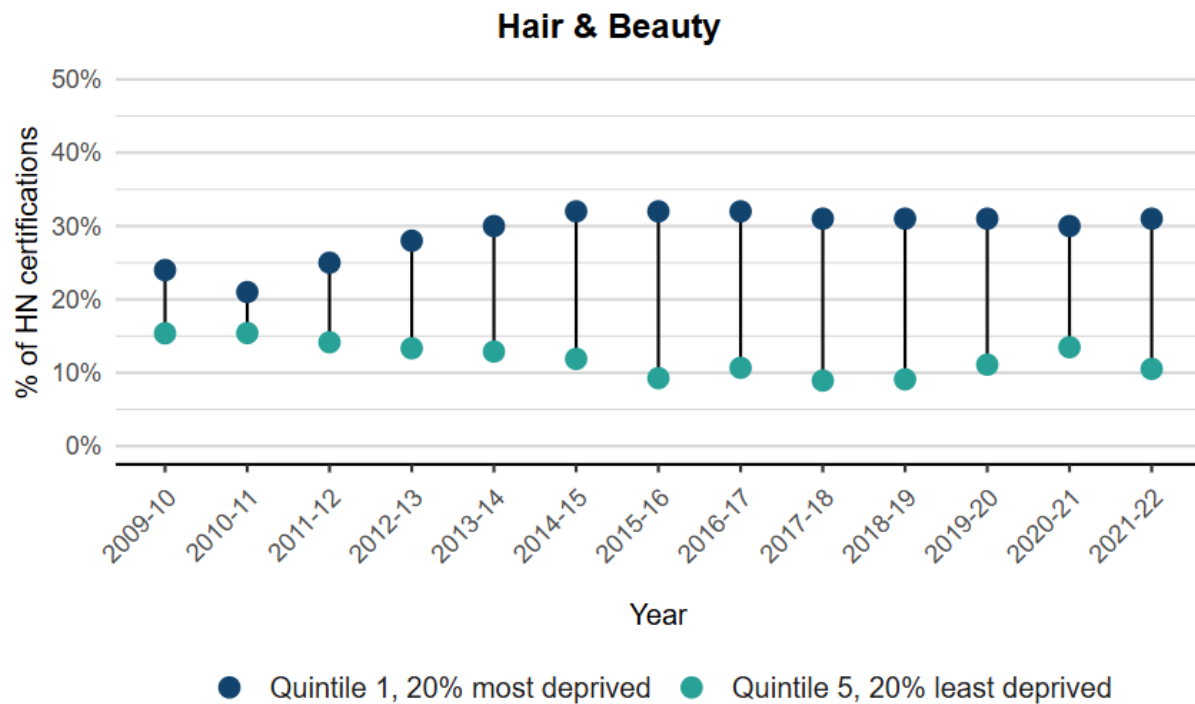


Figure 12 shows that Sport & Leisure certifications were less consistent in terms of SIMD over time. The year 2019–20 was the most disproportionate for the sector, when 24.7% of HN certifications were from the most deprived quintile, and 17.1% from the least deprived.

Hair & Beauty

Hair & Beauty had the sixth most HN certifications in the most deprived quintile, compared to the tenth most in the least deprived quintile.

Figure 13: Proportion of HN certifications in Hair & Beauty in the most and least deprived areas by year

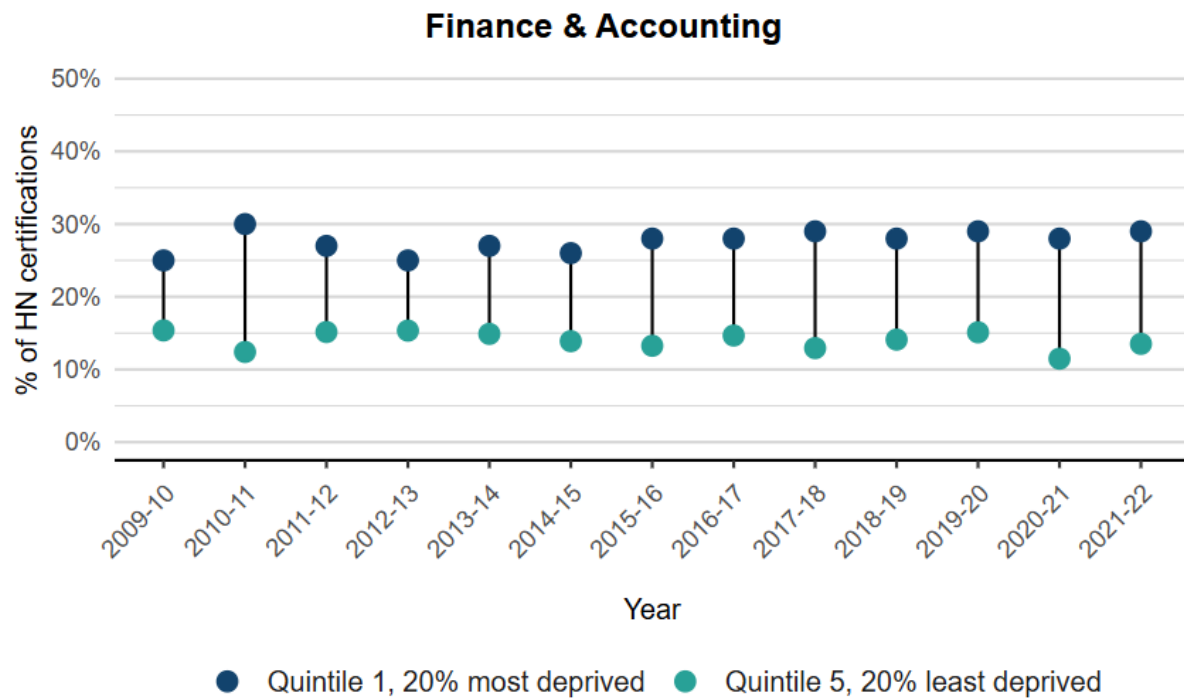


Hair & Beauty was the sector that was the most disproportionate between the most and least deprived quintiles, at an average difference of 17.1% between the two quintiles (Figure 13). From 2013–14 onwards, at least 30.0% of HN certifications in this sector were from the most deprived quintile every year.

Finance & Accounting

Finance & Accounting HN certifications ranked within the top 10 by sector. There was a higher proportion of certifications in the most deprived areas.

Figure 14: Proportion of HN certifications in Finance & Accounting in the most and least deprived areas by year



The difference between the most and least deprived quintiles was, on average, 13.8% (Figure 14).

Hospitality, Travel & Tourism

The Hospitality, Travel & Tourism sector HN certifications ranked within the top 10 in both the most deprived and least deprived quintiles.

Figure 15: Proportion of HN certifications in Hospitality, Travel & Tour in the most and least deprived areas by year

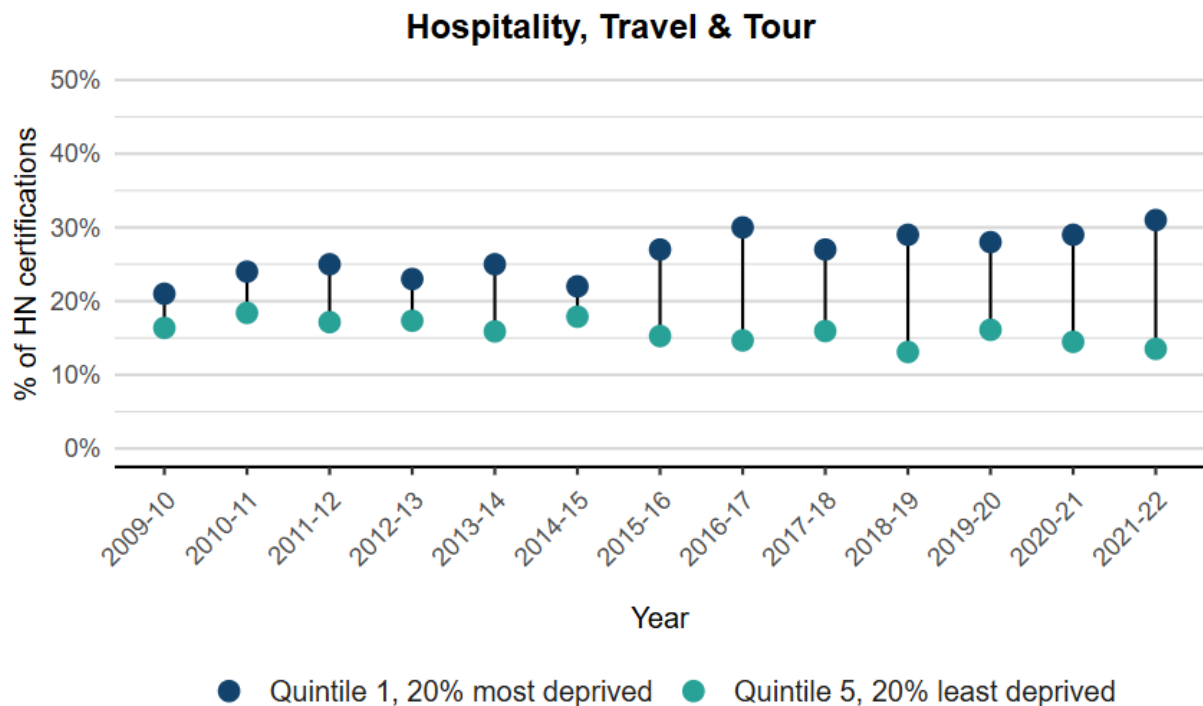
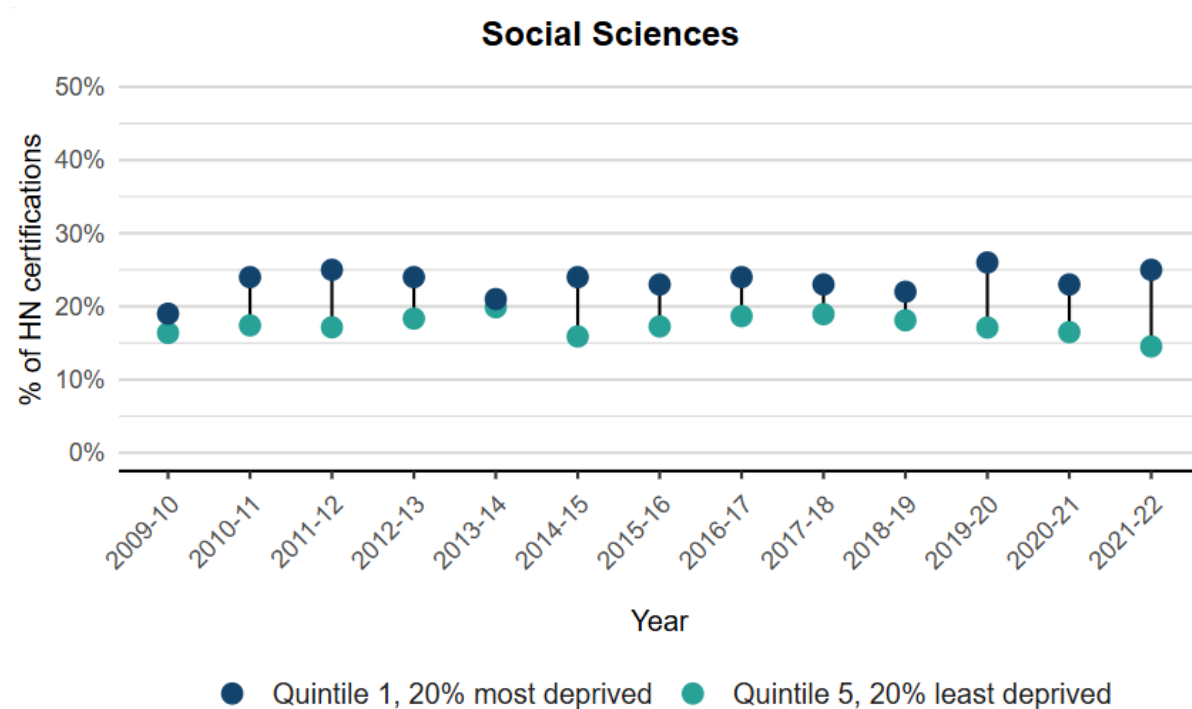


Figure 15 shows that the difference between the most and least deprived quintiles in this sector has been increasing over time; in 2009–10, 21.3% of certifications in this sector were from the most deprived quintile, compared to 31.0% in 2021–22.

Social Sciences

Social Sciences had the tenth most HN certifications overall, and differed slightly in terms of ranking between the most deprived quintile (tenth) and least deprived quintile (seventh).

Figure 16: Proportion of HN certifications in Social Sciences in the most and least deprived areas by year

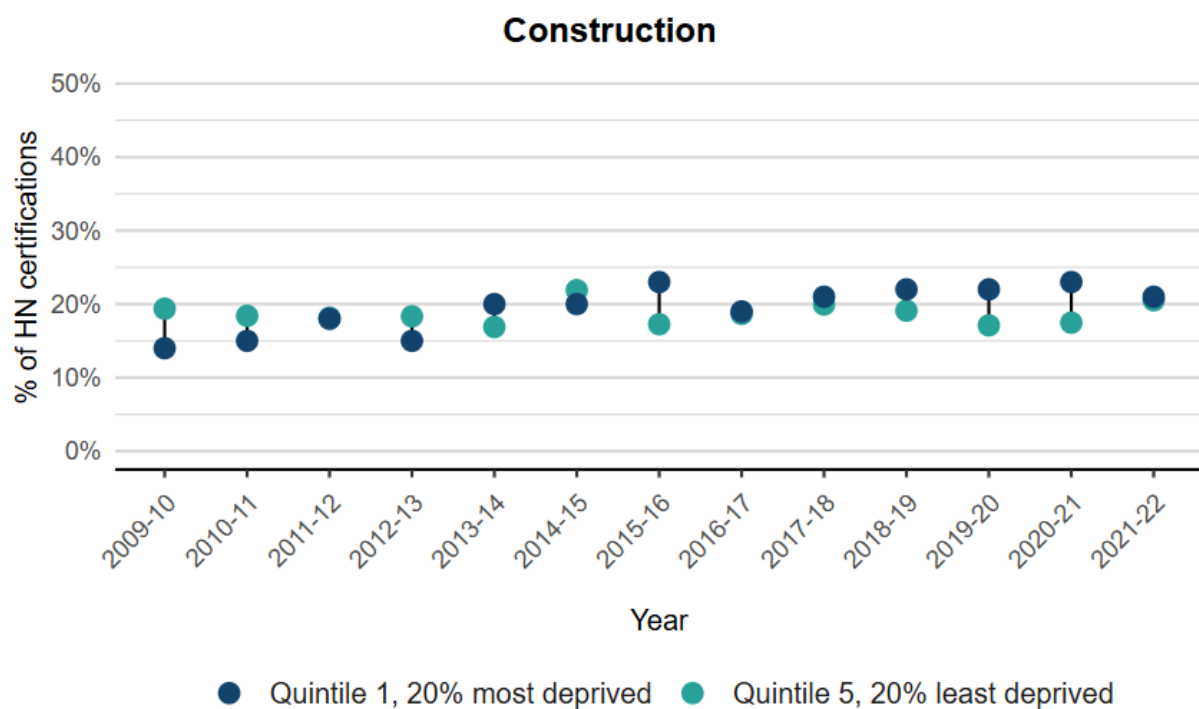


Despite having a higher ranking in the least deprived quintile, this sector was still made up of more HN certifications from the most deprived quintile (Figure 16).

Construction

HN certifications in Construction were not in the top 10. On average, there was just a 0.8% difference in the proportion of HN certifications between the most and least deprived quintile (Figure 17).

Figure 17: Proportion of HN certifications in Construction in the most and least deprived areas by year

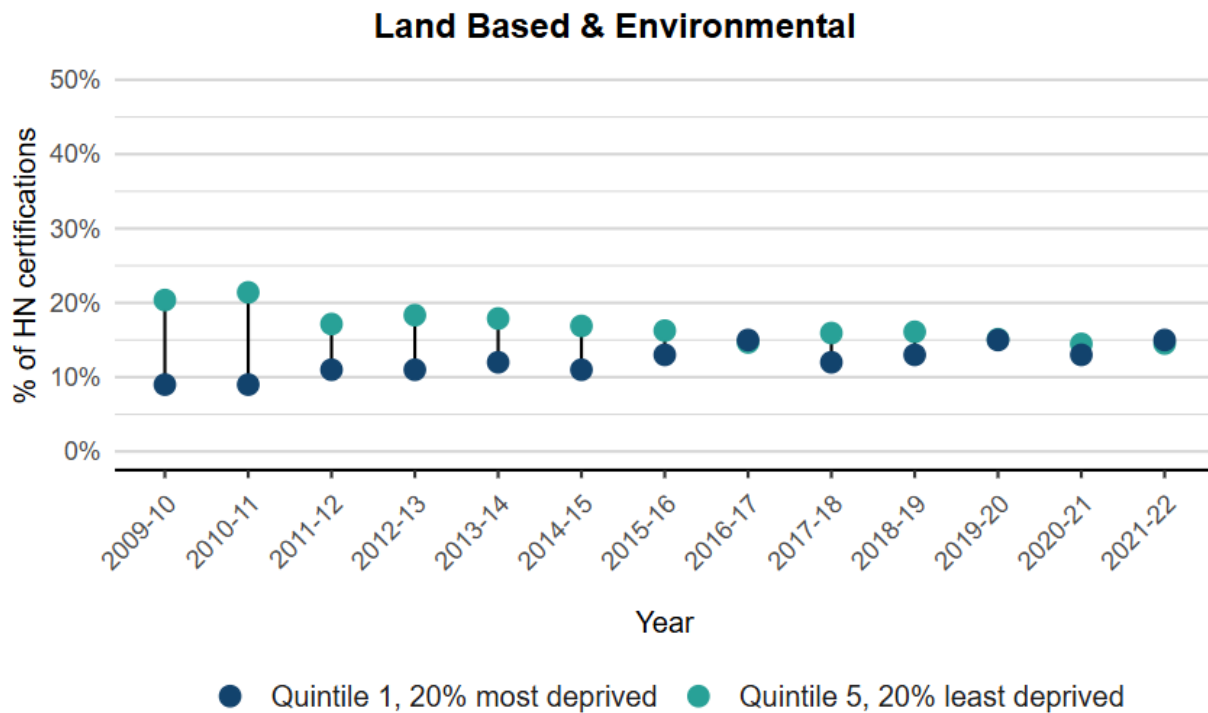


Although this sector is more equal in terms of SIMD compared to other sectors, in terms of sex, an average of 4 in 5 (84.4%) in the sector are male. However, in 2021–22 this sector peaked in terms of female certifications, at 21.0%.

Land Based & Environmental

Land Based & Environment HN certifications ranked one place higher in the most deprived areas than the least deprived areas in terms of number of certifications.

Figure 18: Proportion of HN certifications in the Land Based & Environmental sector in the most and least deprived areas by year



The difference between the most and least deprived quintiles has been decreasing over time (Figure 18). Land Based HNs are likely to be offered by colleges in less deprived areas, such as Aberdeen.

Science & Maths

Science & Maths ranked similarly in terms of number of HN certifications in the most and least deprived quintiles.

Figure 19: Proportion of HN certifications in Science & Maths in the most and least deprived areas by year

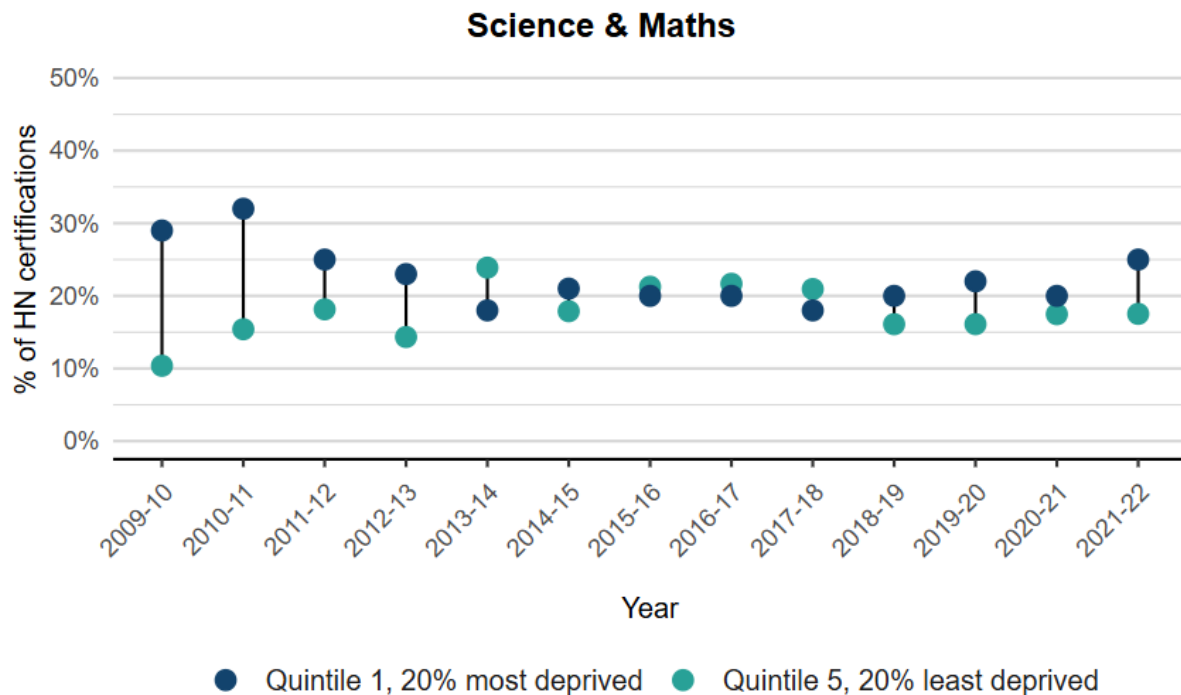
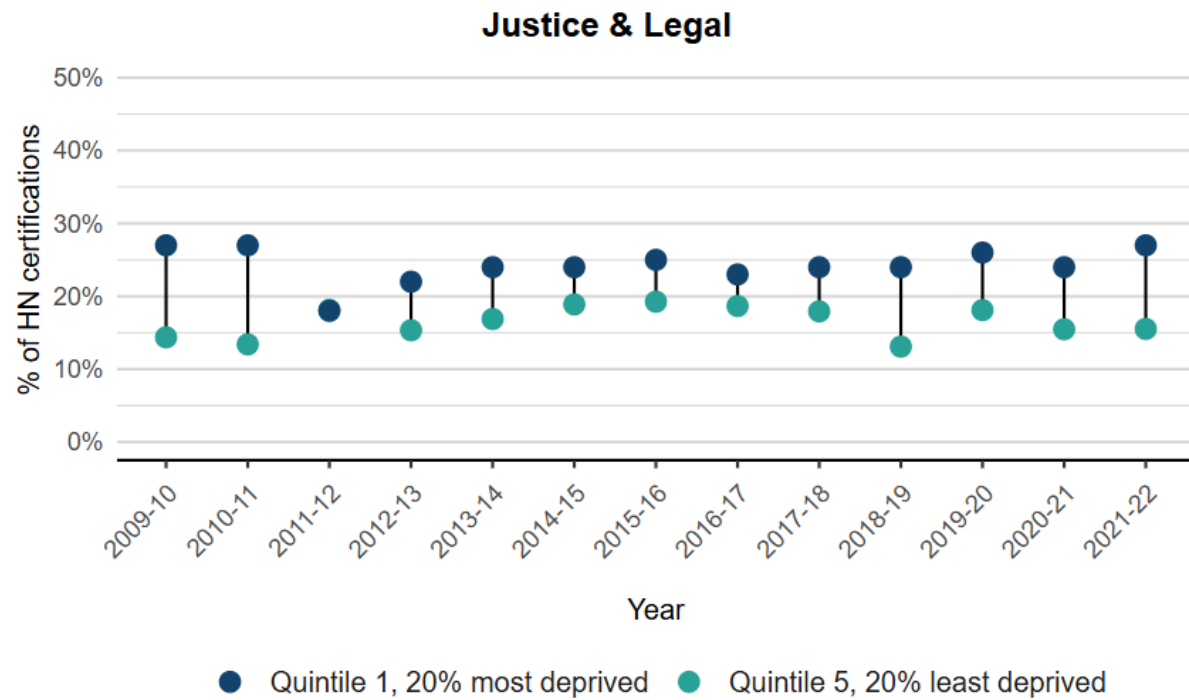


Figure 19 shows that Science & Maths varied in terms of the proportion of HN certifications in the most and least deprived quintiles. However, from 2018–19 onwards, the sector was slightly more represented by the most deprived quintile, with 1 in 4 certifications in 2021–22 coming from the most deprived quintile.

Justice & Legal

Justice & Legal ranked similarly in terms of number of HN certifications between the most and least deprived quintiles.

Figure 20: Proportion of HN certifications in Justice & Legal in the most and least deprived areas by year



The Justice & Legal sector leaned towards the most deprived areas between 2009–10 and 2021–22.

Fashion & Textiles

Fashion & Textiles ranked similarly in terms of HN certification frequency and number between the most and least deprived quintiles.

Figure 21: Proportion of HN certifications in Fashion & Textiles in the most and least deprived areas by year

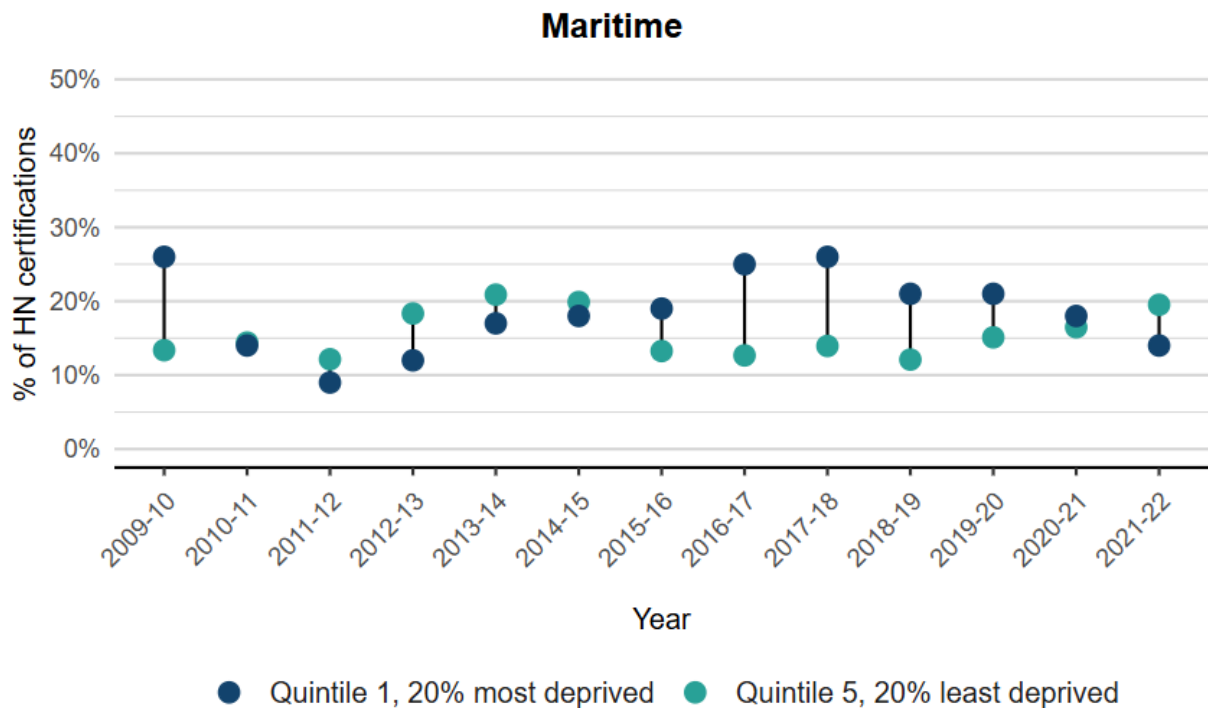


Fashion & Textiles was the sector with the least amount of difference in SIMD, and on average there was a -0.2% difference between the most and least deprived quintiles (Figure 6). There were more certifications in the least deprived quintile in some years (such as 2009–10 and 2010–11) and more certifications in the most deprived quintile in other years (such as 2011–12 and 2016–17).

Maritime

The Maritime sector ranked similarly in terms of number of HN certifications in the most and least deprived quintiles.

Figure 22: Proportion of HN certifications in Maritime in the most and least deprived areas by year

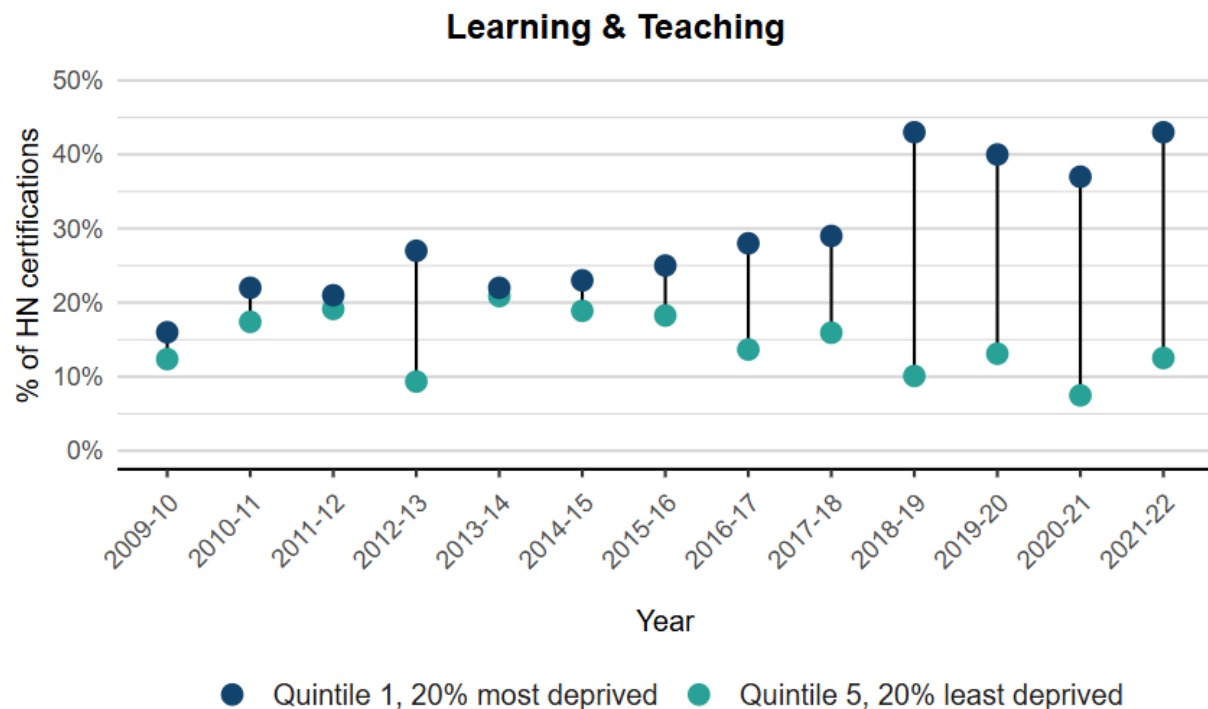


Maritime was mixed in terms of SIMD (Figure 22). On a year-to-year basis, Maritime fluctuated between a higher, lower, or similar proportion of most or least deprived certifications. However, overall this sector was dominated by quintiles 3 and 4. The only years this was not the case were 2016–17 and 2017–18 where the most deprived quintile made up the largest proportion of Maritime certifications.

Learning & Teaching

The Learning & Teaching sector ranked similarly in terms of number of HN certifications in the most and least deprived quintiles.

Figure 23: Proportion of HN certifications in Learning & Teaching in the most and least deprived areas by year



The proportion of HN certifications from the most deprived quintile has been increasing over time, from 16.1% in 2009–10 to 42.9% in 2021–22.

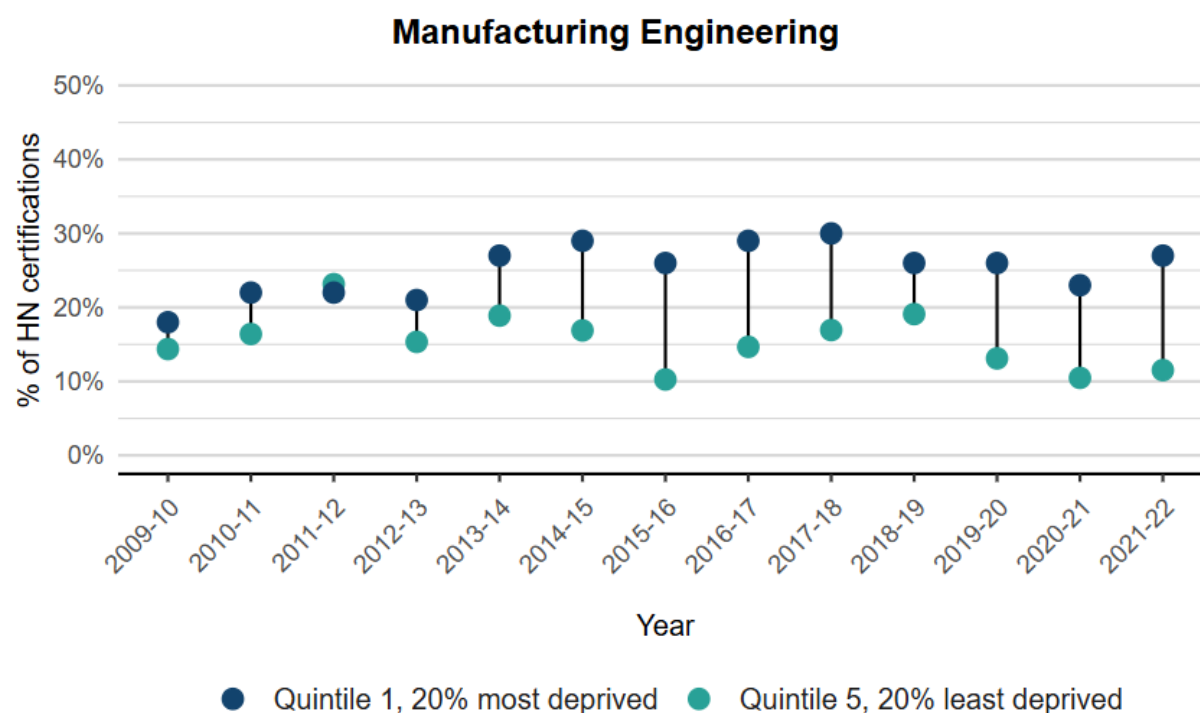
This sector has the highest proportion of HN certifications from the most deprived quintile in a single year (42.96% in 2018–19), and overall tied with Hair & Beauty with the highest average proportion from the most deprived quintile (29.2% in Hair & Beauty and 29.8% in Learning & Teaching).

Other sectors

It is worth noting that the following sectors saw on average less than 100 HN certifications per year between 2009–10 and 2021–22. As mentioned above, some sectors cannot be analysed in terms of SIMD quintile due to small numbers of data where not all SIMD quintiles were represented: Utilities; Food & Drink; Waste; and Supply Chain & Logistics.

Manufacturing Engineering

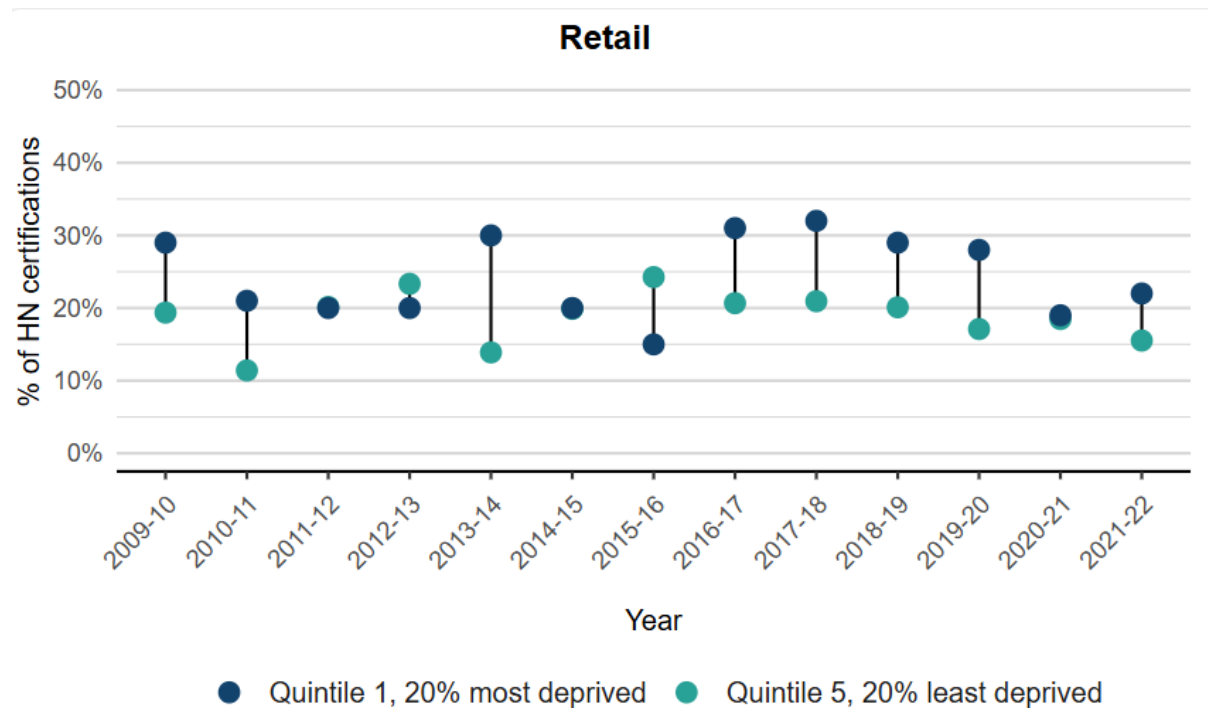
Figure 24: Proportion of HN certifications in Manufacturing Engineering in the most and least deprived areas by year



Manufacturing Engineering had an average of 79 HN certifications each year and leaned towards the most deprived quintile (Figure 24). There was a 9.5% difference between the most and least deprived quintiles.

Retail

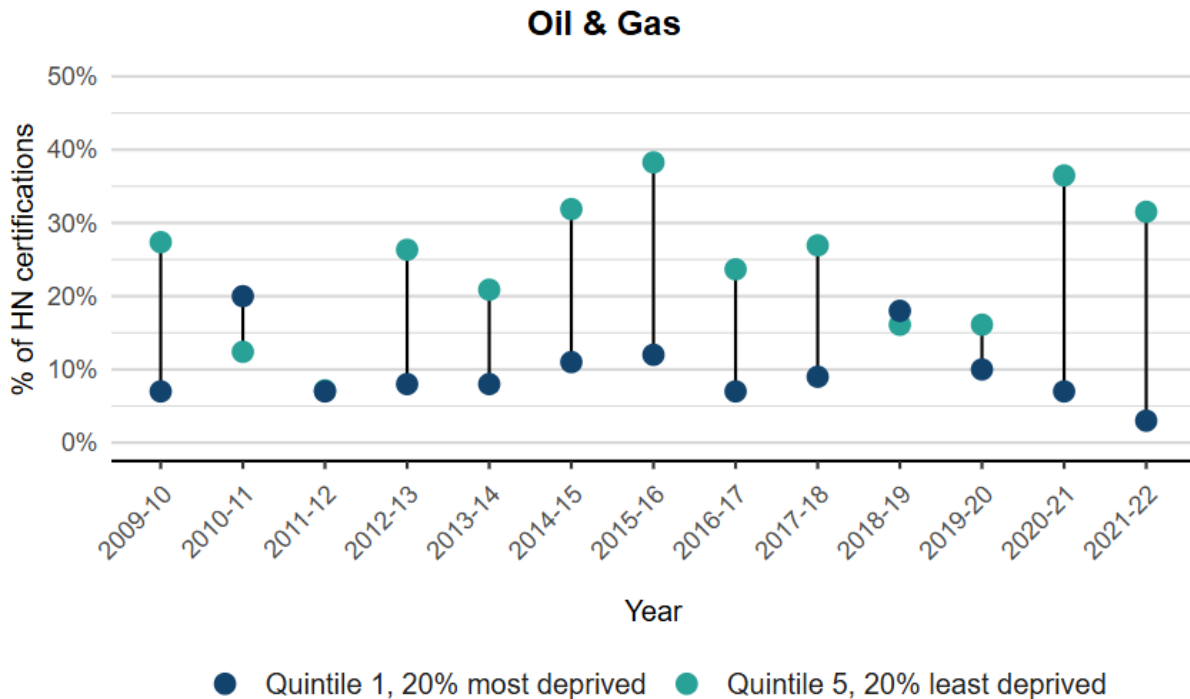
Figure 25: Proportion of HN certifications in Retail in the most and least deprived areas by year



HN certifications in retail were varied in terms of the proportion of least and most deprived quintiles (Figure 25). However this sector in general leaned towards the most deprived (Figure 6).

Oil & Gas

Figure 26: Proportion of HN certifications in Oil & Gas in the most and least deprived areas by year



The Oil & Gas sector ranked similarly in the number of HN certifications in the most and least deprived quintiles. However, Oil & Gas only saw an average of 50 HN certifications per year. The sector leaned towards the least deprived quintile, with an average difference of -14.3% between the most and least deprived quintiles (Figure 6). This peaked in 2015–16 where the least deprived areas represented 39.1% of Oil & Gas HN certifications. Oil & Gas HNs are likely to be offered by colleges in less deprived areas, such as Aberdeen.

Discussion

By examining HN qualifications by SIMD between 2009–10 and 2021–22, there are clear differences between the most and least deprived quintiles:

- 1 More females from the 20% most deprived areas achieve HN certifications than males.
- 2 There is a higher proportion of under 18 year olds with HN certifications in the 20% least deprived areas than the 20% most deprived areas.
- 3 There are more HN certifications from the 20% least deprived areas than the 20% most deprived areas in Engineering; Land Based & Environmental; Fashion & Textiles; and Oil & Gas.

There may be several interacting factors that explain these differences.

From 2009–10 to 2019–20, the least deprived quintile was more likely to be represented by both males and females equally. Between 2019–20 and 2021–22, there was a higher proportion of female HN certifications in the least deprived quintile.

Sector choices are likely to contribute to some of the difference in male to female HN certifications by deprivation quintile. Across all quintiles, roughly 3 in 5 of all female HN certifications were in Health & Social Care; Creative & Cultural; Business Skills; and Hair & Beauty. Additionally, across all quintiles, the ranking of these sectors remained the same. However, for male HN certifications, the top three sectors (Computing, Software & IT; Creative & Cultural; Engineering) ranked differently in the most deprived quintiles compared to all other quintiles.

Age differences between the most and least deprived quintiles may be influenced by sector as well. For example, the sectors Health & Social Care, Finance & Accounting, and Learning & Teaching tend to have older learners, as well as more learners from deprived quintiles.

It is worth adding that there may be different relevant pathways for learners following different HN qualifications. For example, HN qualifications relating to Social Sciences may open up pathways primarily to university, while Health & Social Care may open

pathways to either university or alternatives to university, such as employment. Pathway destinations may influence learner sector choices and may explain why some HN courses are more prevalent in the most deprived quintile than the least deprived one.

Thinking about ‘choice’ or ‘attraction’ towards HN sectors may help to understand some of the SIMD trends demonstrated. However, making that connection and understanding the relationship would require other forms of evidence, such as that from universities, colleges, and learners themselves.

When considering the data from a learner’s perspective, it must be noted again that SIMD is a representation of postcodes, not individual people. This means that learners from the most deprived areas are not necessarily experiencing deprivation as individuals; likewise, learners from the least deprived areas may be experiencing deprivation as individuals.

According to the Scottish Funding Council (2023), 27.8% of Scottish university first-degree entrants came from a college route in 2021–22. Our research suggests that HN certifications can increase access to positive destinations for learners in the most deprived quintiles. However, university data continues to show that undergraduate learners from the most deprived quintile are proportionally underrepresented (HESA, 2023). This demonstrates that the relationship between deprivation and pathways is complex and highlights the need for more data on the destinations of learners with HN certificates.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Raw counts of HN certifications by SIMD between 2009–10 and 2021–22

Year	1	2	3	4	5	SIMD Unknown	Grand Total
2009–10	3,985	4,065	3,986	3,879	3,497	1,053	20,465
2010–11	4,309	4,366	4,089	3,878	3,384	1,003	21,029
2011–12	4,809	4,738	4,638	4,206	3,790	1,253	23,434
2012–13	4,505	4,631	4,420	4,147	3,710	1,176	22,589
2013–14	4,947	4,360	4,353	4,108	3,532	882	22,182
2014–15	5,280	4,807	4,495	4,305	3,619	856	23,362
2015–16	5,181	4,608	4,494	4,253	3,783	796	23,115
2016–17	5,667	4,864	4,549	4,441	3,778	684	23,983
2017–18	5,643	5,082	4,445	4,606	3,929	534	24,239
2018–19	5,207	4,779	4,295	4,260	3,570	505	22,616
2019–20	5,615	4,747	4,131	4,149	3,490	595	22,727
2020–21	5,058	4,419	3,978	4,009	3,361	664	21,489
2021–22	4,917	4,238	3,679	3,732	3,141	634	20,341

Appendix B: Quintile 1 by age, as a proportion of all quintile 1 HN certifications

Year	18-21	22-29	30-39	40-49	50+	Under 18
2009–10	43.4%	26.1%	15.4%	8.2%	1.4%	5.5%
2010–11	42.7%	26.8%	15.8%	7.9%	1.4%	5.4%
2011–12	45.4%	26.6%	14.8%	7.3%	1.4%	4.5%
2012–13	47.2%	26.1%	14.8%	6.0%	1.8%	4.1%
2013–14	48.2%	26.4%	13.7%	5.7%	1.4%	4.5%
2014–15	48.2%	26.3%	14.3%	5.9%	1.5%	3.7%
2015–16	46.3%	26.6%	15.7%	5.6%	1.8%	4.1%
2016–17	44.9%	26.6%	16.9%	5.2%	1.5%	4.9%

Year	18-21	22-29	30-39	40-49	50+	Under 18
2017–18	44.8%	25.5%	17.3%	5.8%	1.8%	4.8%
2018–19	42.8%	27.0%	18.1%	5.7%	1.9%	4.5%
2019–20	43.1%	25.8%	17.4%	7.0%	1.9%	4.8%
2020–21	40.7%	27.6%	18.3%	7.0%	1.8%	4.5%
2021–22	40.8%	26.9%	18.8%	7.2%	2.1%	4.2%

Appendix C: Quintile 5 by age, as a proportion of all quintile 5 HN certifications

Year	18-21	22-29	30-39	40-49	50+	Under 18
2009–10	52.3%	17.8%	9.1%	9.8%	2.8%	8.2%
2010–11	54.3%	18.1%	8.8%	7.5%	2.8%	8.5%
2011–12	57.4%	17.3%	8.9%	6.5%	2.5%	7.4%
2012–13	60.8%	17.1%	7.5%	5.3%	1.9%	7.3%
2013–14	59.7%	18.3%	7.4%	5.3%	2.1%	7.3%
2014–15	61.3%	17.7%	7.2%	4.6%	2.0%	7.3%
2015–16	60.5%	17.2%	7.7%	4.9%	1.7%	8.0%
2016–17	59.7%	16.9%	7.6%	4.5%	1.9%	9.5%
2017–18	58.1%	18.3%	7.8%	4.4%	2.0%	9.4%
2018–19	55.6%	18.0%	9.4%	5.9%	2.6%	8.6%
2019–20	55.4%	17.9%	8.7%	5.6%	2.6%	9.9%
2020–21	55.3%	17.5%	9.1%	5.1%	2.9%	10.1%
2021–22	53.8%	17.4%	10.8%	5.3%	2.6%	10.0%