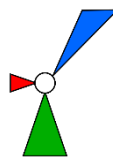


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<p><496/c></p>  <p>Key: Footprint ConEn1 Footprint ConEn2 Footprint ConEn3</p>	<p><bncdoc> The Performance of Students with Non-traditional Qualifications In Higher Education Introduction The growing emphasis at both a national and institutional level on policies designed to widen and increase access to higher education has led to increased interest in recent years in the relative performance of students with non-traditional qualifications in higher education. A number of research projects have now examined this question, and a number of conclusions have begun to emerge. However, the limited extent of this research, combined with the different questions explored by different methods, leave a substantial number of issues on which it is difficult to make definitive statements. Furthermore there has been little research which has dealt specifically with Scotland. In this report we provide</p> <p>a summary of the major research undertaken in recent years in Britain</p> <p>, and draw conclusions, insofar as this can be done. 2 Definitions An initial problem in investigating this issue is that there is no generally agreed definition of the terms 'non-standard' or 'non-traditional' student. Indeed in recent years the CNAA have suggested that the term 'non-standard' should no longer be used, since this implies a standard from which other students are deviating; instead we should be considering a range of qualifications, all of which may be suitable as preparations for entry to higher education. A number of definitions have been used both by the institutions and by researchers. In the polytechnic and college sector Bournier and Hamed(1987) have followed Evans (1984) in defining non-standard entry as 'referring to students not holding the normal minimum entry qualifications for admission to a first degree or DipHE course set out in regulation 8.13 of CNAA's Principles and Regulations (1979) or equivalent qualifications'. On this basis 'non-standard entrants' are operationally defined by Bournier and Hamed as those entering on the basis of: City and Guilds or REB equivalent; O-levels or one A-level; 'exceptional admissions'. Molloy and Carroll (1992) adopt an approach which is designed to assist comparison with Bournier and Hamed's study, although their operational definition is somewhat different in that they include the following categories: no formal qualifications; other non standard entrants (this is a range of qualifications which includes professional, nursing, technical and secretarial); O-levels or one A-level; one OU credit; Access. In the university sector a number of definitions have been used. The Scottish Universities Council for Entry (SUCE) has defined non-standard qualifications as UK qualifications other than SCE/GCE (but excluding graduates). Roderick et al (1982) have studied 'unqualified mature entrants', defined as those who do not have 2 A-levels or similar qualifications. Smithers and Griffin (1986) have concentrated on mature students entering through the Joint Matriculation Board (JMB) special entry scheme. Under these arrangements most students take special mature matriculation examinations, although a few are admitted on the basis of</p>
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	<p><u>long experience in their field or professional qualifications. Walker's study of students at the University of Warwick is concerned with all mature students, however within this he distinguishes two groups, one in which the students did meet the university's General Entrance Requirements (GER) and the second in which they did not (Walker 1975). An additional factor in considering the question of definition is that by far the majority of non-traditional entrants are also mature entrants. Indeed in one of the few Scottish studies McDonald (1991) defines 'non-traditional' students</u></p>
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