



Association of Educational Psychologists

REPORT:

MEMBER SURVEY ON EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ISSUES

NOVEMBER 2021

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Foreword

We would like to thank everyone who took the time to contribute to this all-member survey, which has been a vital first step in gaining a picture of the Association's members and their experiences - and an insight into the profession as a whole. We appreciate your help in assisting us to move forward to proactively identify and tackle equality and diversity issues existing within the profession. The data collected will help to inform the best course of action and next steps including training, producing more accessible information, promoting the profession to wider audiences, ensuring maternity rights and reaching out to identified underrepresented groups.

The below report will give a detailed analysis of the information we collected from approximately 900 members. While this is a relatively small percentage of Educational Psychologists on the whole, we feel the sample is widely representative of the profession.

There are indications from the data that there is a positive shift in the diversity of those entering the Educational Psychology profession – though the sample size is too small to draw direct conclusions, the information offers a strong basis for comparison in the future. The data also highlights that there may still be an over-representation of males in senior positions and reinforces our commitment to work to remove barriers to women's progression and ensure maternity rights.

Introduction

The Association for Educational Psychologists (AEP) is committed to ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion issues are prioritised within the profession and within the AEP, and that unfair and unlawful practice is ended for all. The way in which this work is organised and undertaken has been considered at length by the General Secretary, members of the AEP staff, the NEC and of course members. The following points detail the focus of AEP work at the current time:

1. Access to the profession – do the numbers of educational psychologists from different protected characteristics reflect the makeup of our population?
2. If not, what is contributing to these barriers?
3. The incidence, type and effect of discriminatory behaviour experienced and witnessed by AEP members within the workplace and how to counter this.
4. The role of EPs in challenging discriminatory behaviour in workplaces and schools and supporting others in teaching and shaping anti-discrimination and inclusive practice.
5. The history of educational psychology and the current training of educational psychologists.

The current survey was designed to explore the first two objectives, through collecting more demographic information about members than the association has previously held, and through asking members to share their stories and experiences. The survey also asked members to think about the 'what next' to ensure that the way we move forward and progress our profession is undertaken in a collaborative and collective manner. Information from other sources has also been collected recently and will be referenced. This includes data from the 2020 HCPC survey, information collected on behalf of the DfE in relation to applications for initial training in England, and research produced by the Nuffield Trust about the progression of psychology undergraduates.

This work is also underpinned by the members' motion which was debated and passed at the AEP's AGM in November 2020 (this was further ratified by a postal ballot), in which the AEP was called upon on to:

- Survey members to better understand diversity issues within the profession.
- Collect the voices of members from diverse backgrounds to inform the approaches taken to promoting diversity and equality.
- Promote the expansion of grass roots groups supported by the NEC.
- Evaluate the roles and accountability of NEC members and consider whether changes need to be made to address issues of diversity and representation.

The AEP now collects diversity data, in accordance with its privacy policy, at the point of application for membership and may also seek to carry out further surveys of all members to provide updated information around protected and other characteristics. This information will continue to further inform our work on equalities, enable us to review the effectiveness of the actions we are taking, and support us when designing policies and processes. We ask then when information is sought you take the time to respond, and encourage colleagues to do the same.

Finally, we invite you to view the [resource bank](#) on our website that contains a number of links to a broad range of media and multiple voices to enrich understandings of equality and diversity concerns, facilitate inclusive practice and seek social justice within the EP profession.

Survey data

In June 2021 all members of the AEP were invited to complete the survey via an online Microsoft Form (NB: local reps from several regions had completed a pilot form of the questionnaire before it was published to all members). The deadline for completion was extended due to member request and was closed at the end of July. The survey was organised and evaluated by members of the AEP staff team and members of the National Executive Committee (NEC) during August 2021.

In total, 894 members completed the survey which is survey completion rate of approximately 25%¹. The following information should therefore be treated with some caution, because although it provides a useful picture of the membership of the AEP, the lower than hoped for response rate will influence the reliability of the data. It should be noted that a Freedom of Information request made to the HCPC in August 2021, detailed how there are currently 4,546 Educational Psychologists on the HCPC register, therefore the membership of the AEP accounts for 77.54% of the total EP population.

The most recent equality, diversity and inclusion data published by the HCPC had a lower response rate of 19% of practitioner psychologists, although this figure included the full range of practitioner psychologists, so it is not possible to make direct comparisons between groups of educational psychologists. Respondents to the AEP survey also included Assistant and Trainee EPs who are not registered with the HCPC but whose information provides valuable information on the expected demography of the future profession.

When considering the representativeness of the data, the respondents were compared to the AEP membership in line with information that is currently held by the association. As the table below shows, whilst the survey respondents broadly reflect wider membership, there was slight overrepresentation of 'full' members and underrepresentation of 'retired' members i.e., most respondents will be registered with the HCPC as qualified EPs.

Membership of the AEP and survey respondents by membership type

Membership type	AEP membership (%)	Survey respondents (%)
Full	2826 (80)	748 (84)
Affiliate	60 (2)	3 (0)
Assistant	31 (1)	19 (2)
Trainee	327 (9)	95 (11)
Retired	281 (8)	29 (3)

This also includes age of members. As shown in the table below survey respondents, when controlled for age, closely mirror the wider AEP membership.

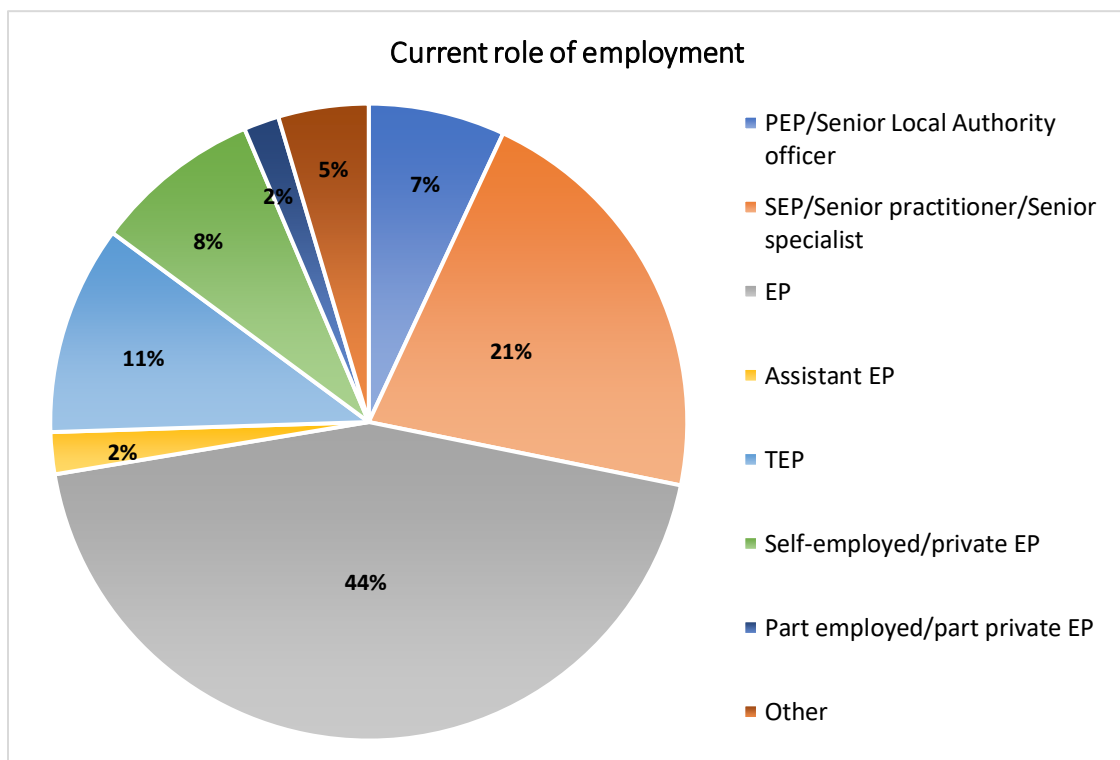
¹ At the time of analysis, the AEP had a total of 3,525 members.

Membership of the AEP and survey respondents by age

Age range	AEP membership (%)	Survey respondents (%)
25-34 years	662 (19)	185 (21)
35-44 years	922 (26)	242 (27)
45-54 years	849 (24)	216 (24)
55-64 years	614 (17)	166 (19)
65-74 years	387 (11)	71 (8)
75+ years	78 (2)	9 (1)
Prefer not to say	17 (>1)	4 (>1)

When reviewing the data by country of employment, 91% of respondents are working in England, 6% working in Wales, 2% working in Northern Ireland and 1% working in Scotland. There were a number of EPs working across different countries, including those outside of the United Kingdom, but in order to ensure anonymity these responses will not be listed. It should be noted that for some items of the questionnaire the number of respondents is fewer than ten, and for many of these responses a number has not been given in order to protect confidentiality and ensure that responses remain anonymous.

The current role of EPs who responded to the survey is displayed in the pie chart below, and shows that a range of professionals at different stages of their careers have contributed to the data available. With 7% of respondents working as PEP/Senior LA officers or Directors, and 21% working as Senior EPs or Senior practitioners it is anticipated that the data may be more over-representative of more senior practitioners, and this should be taken into account when reviewing the information.



The age profile of Trainee EPs and Assistant EPs was further explored and represented in the table below. In comparison to the data presented from the applications for initial training, the percentages are broadly in line for trainee EPs.

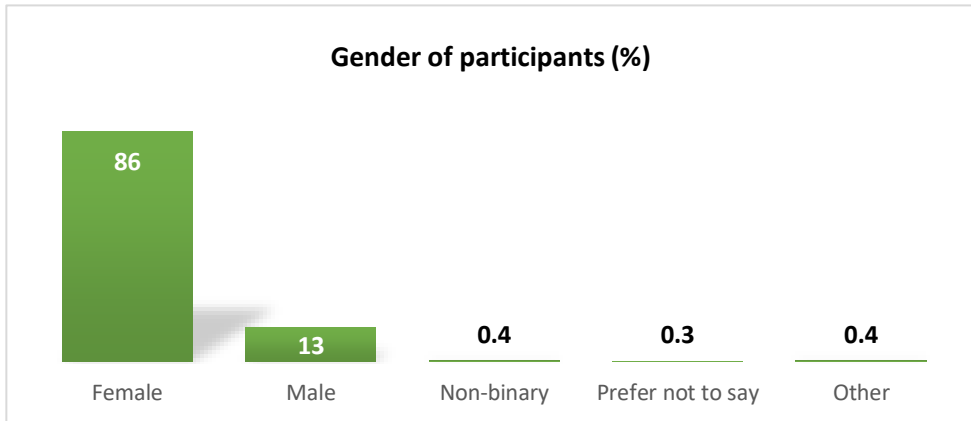
Age	Assistant EPs (%)	Trainee EPs (%)
25-34 years	79	68
35-44 years	5	24
45-54 years	16	6
55-64 years	n/a	1

The next part of this section reviews the survey data in a number of ways, with a focus on presenting demographic information and subsequently considering experiences of members who hold specific protected characteristics. The purpose of the following section is twofold: to consider the profile of the profession and whether this appears to have changed over time, and to identify incidence and frequency of perceived harassment. Analysis of qualitative information will be included in follow-up work.

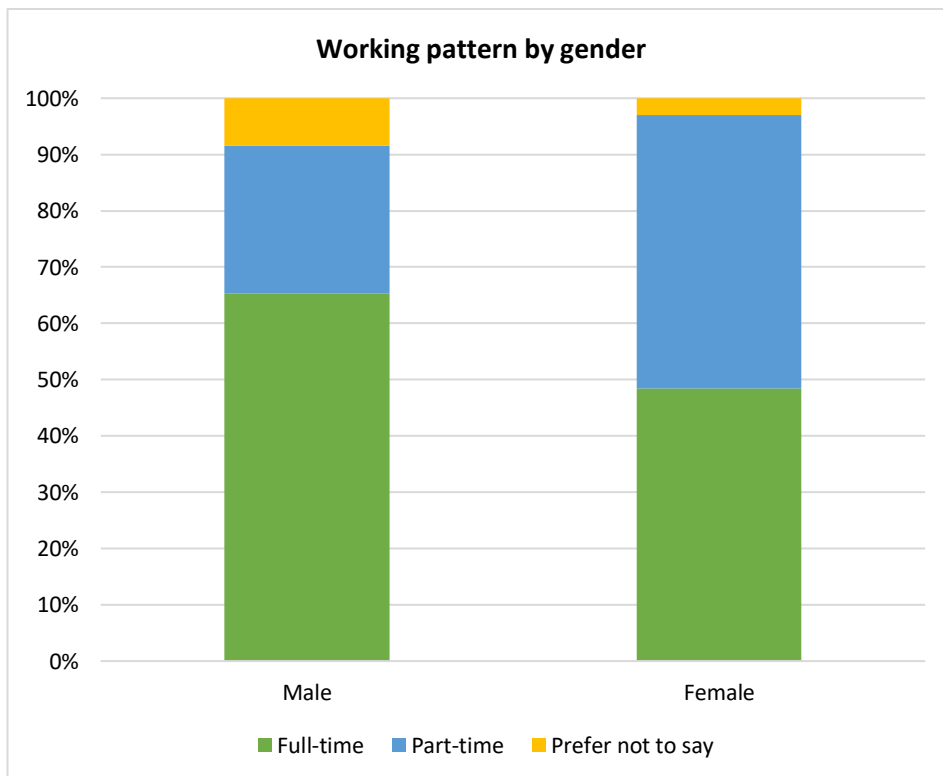
As noted above the relatively small sample size and potential over-representation of some groups needs to be taken into account when considering the wider implications of this data, but it is hoped that the information outlined below provides a useful starting point.

Gender data

Participants were asked to select the response which best describes their gender, with the response showing an overwhelming majority of respondents replying to say that they are female. At 86% this is slightly lower than the most recently reported statistics from the training applications data², in which around 90% of applications for EP training were from females. 13% of respondents were male, and no respondents said that they are transgender.



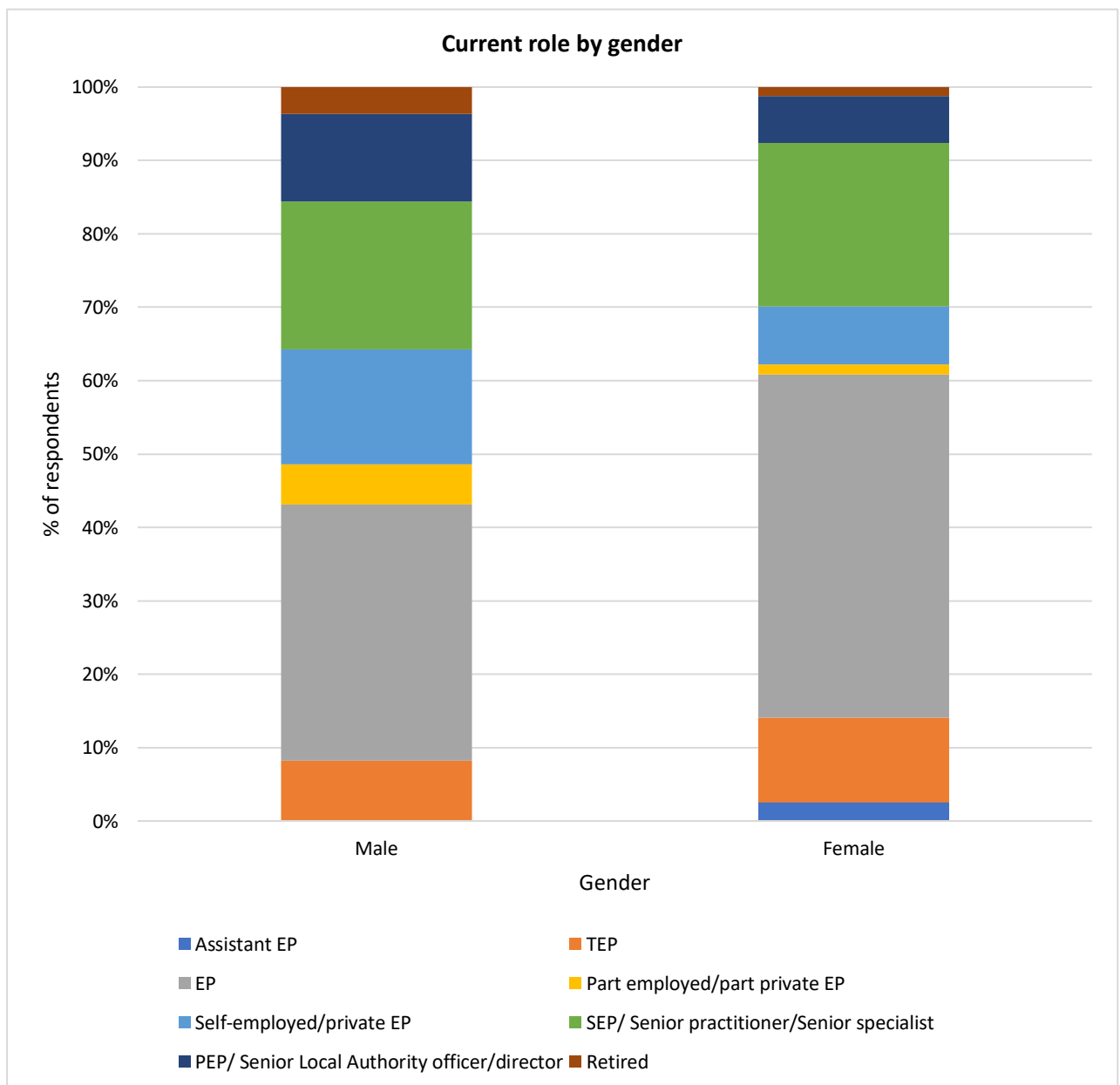
Working patterns of respondents were compared to gender and show that 65% of men and 48% women report that they are working full time. In total 50% of respondents answered that they hold a full-time post.



² Data taken from ‘Information on applications for initial training in England’. [Webpage here](#)

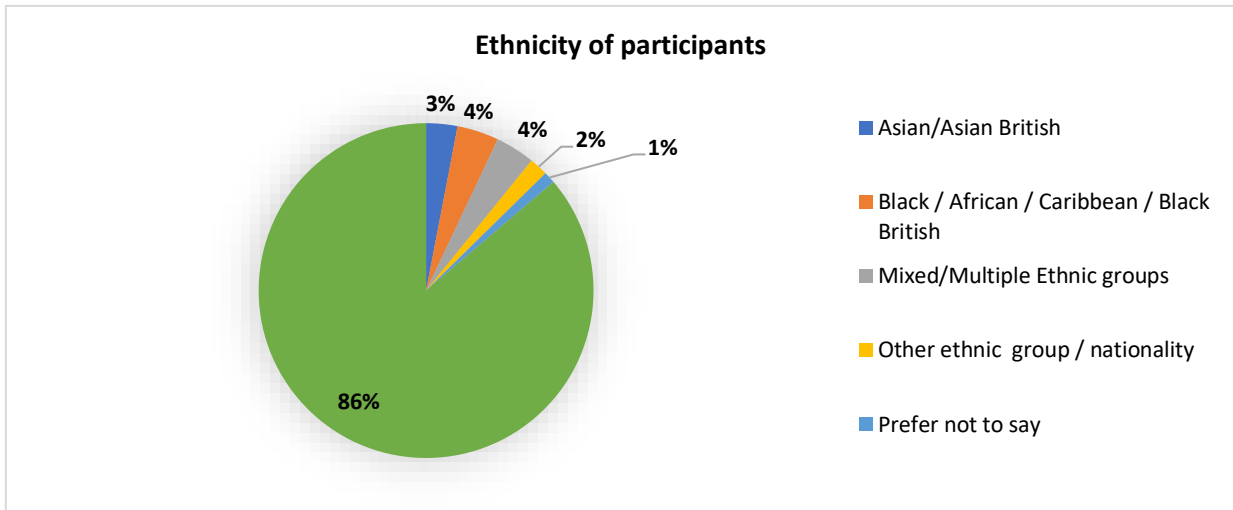
The current role of members was also compared by gender, and shows a higher proportion of men working in self-employment or partly privately, working as a PEP/Senior LA officer or Director or retired. In contrast a greater percentage of female respondents are working as maingrade EPs, as Assistant EPs and slightly more as Trainee EPs.

Evidence collected by the Nuffield Trust and published in their recent report ‘The right track: Participation and progression in psychology career paths’ identifies some trends that may also be reflective of the current data set. Their findings suggest that around 20% of registered psychologists are male, but a greater percentage are in more highly paid roles (Palmer et al, 2021). It should be noted that their conclusions are drawn mainly from practitioners working in NHS and clinical roles, but the comparison is useful to consider.

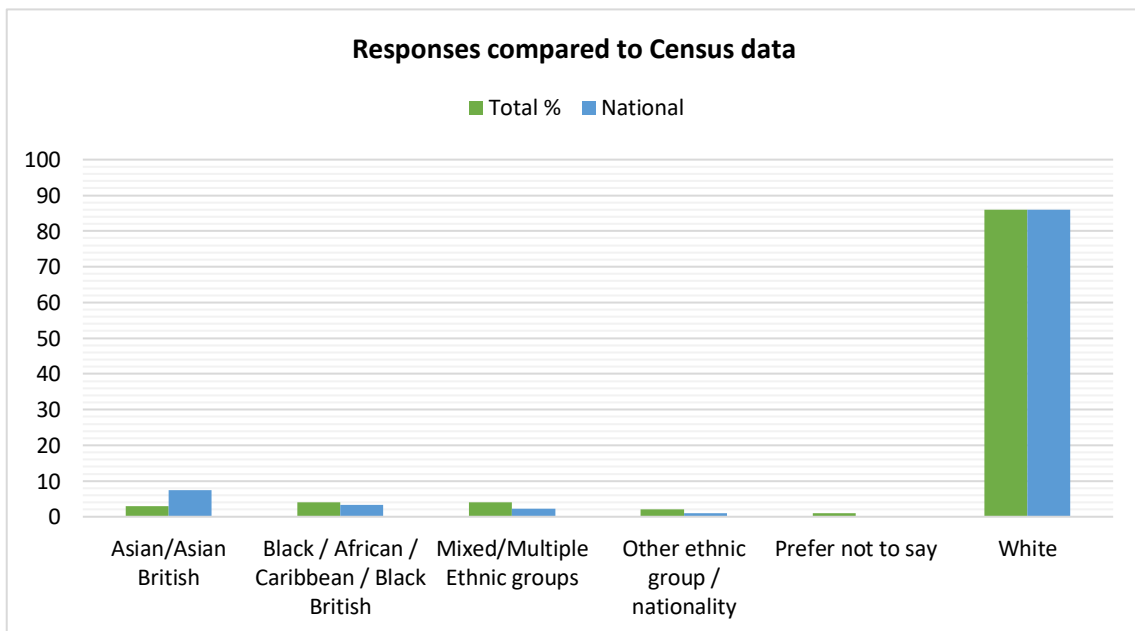


Ethnicity data

Participants were asked to select from a list, the category that they felt most accurately described their ethnicity. As the graph below shows, 86% of respondents replied identifying themselves as White, 4% identified themselves as Black/African/Caribbean/Black British, 4% as Mixed/Multiple Ethnic groups, 3% as Asian/Asian British, 2% as Other ethnic group/national and 1% selected Prefer not to say. These figures are slightly different to those obtained by the HCPC FOI which stated 83% of EPs registered as being White, 5% as Black/African/Caribbean/Black British, 4% as Mixed/Multiple Ethnic groups, 5% as Asian/Asian British, 2% as Other ethnic group/national and 1% selected Prefer not to say.



When compared to the most recent data available on the government website³ it can be seen that people of Asian/Asian British ethnicity are slightly underrepresented in the group of AEP members who responded to this survey, but other groups are more closely matched to the wider population.



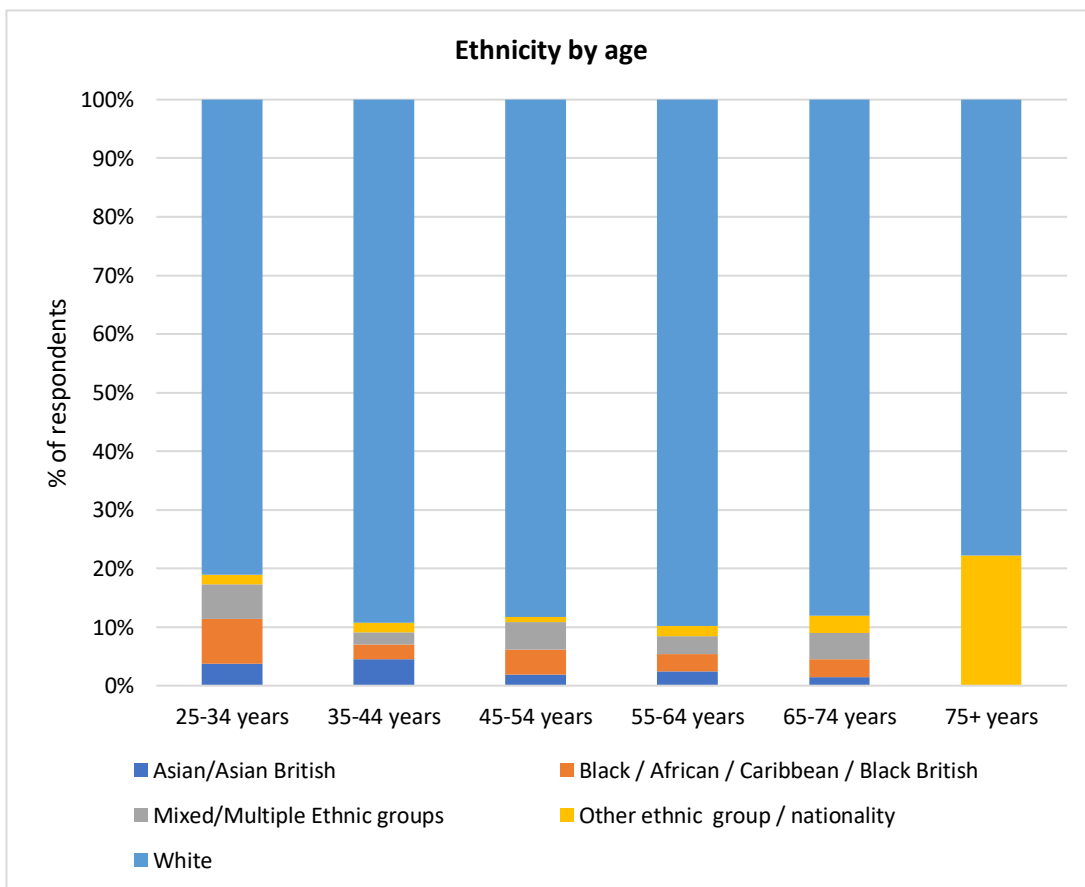
³ This data relates to the 2011 Census - following completion by 94% of households. Source: [Population of England and Wales - GOV.UK Ethnicity facts and figures \(ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.service.gov.uk/population-statistics/ethnicity-facts-figures)

Similarly, when the data for ethnicity is broken down further, there remains a high level of correspondence between ethnicity data on the population level, and the survey respondents.

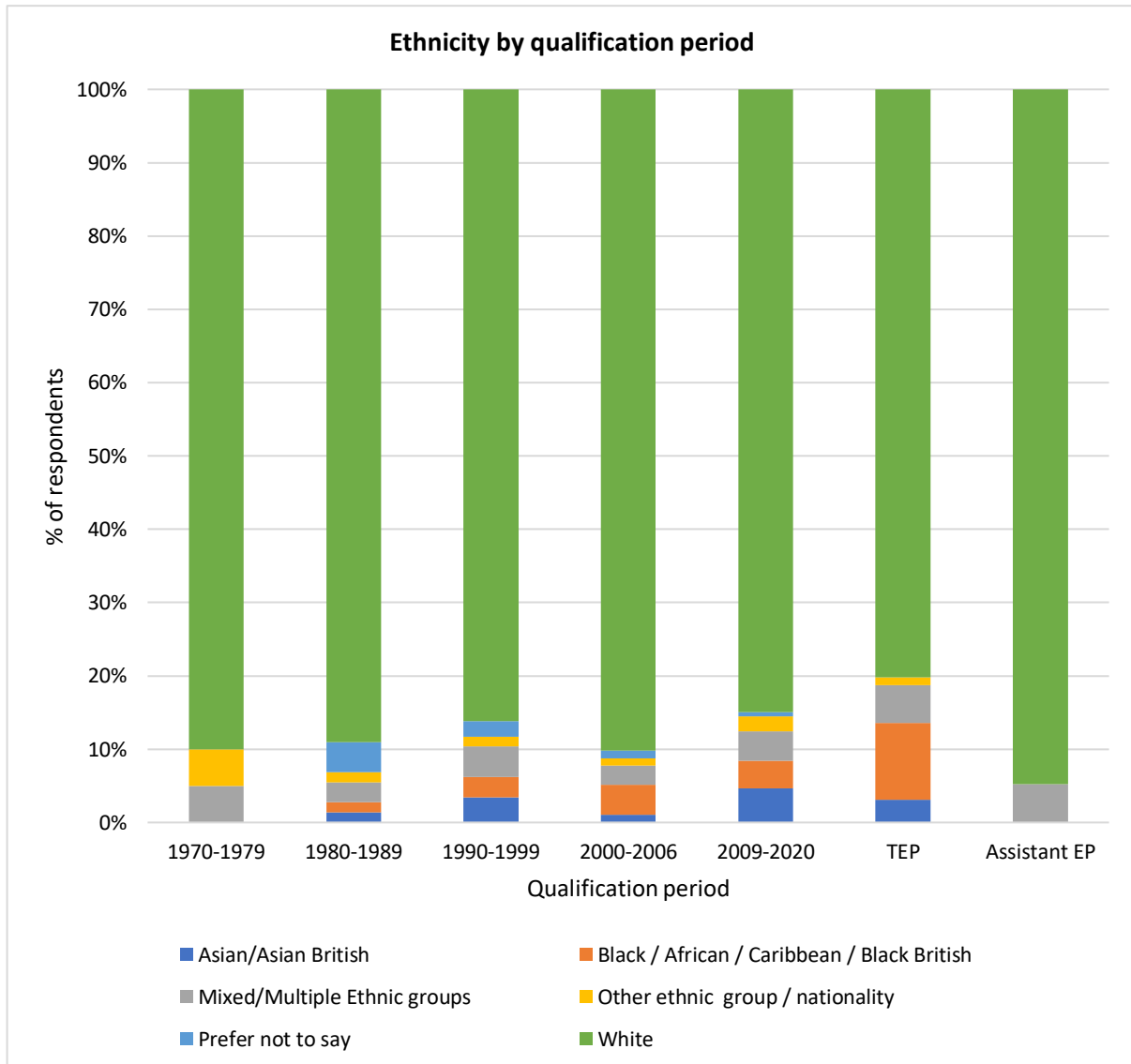
The most notable differences appear to be a slight underrepresentation of Asian 'other', Black African, Black Caribbean and White British members. For these groups there is at least a 1% difference between the AEP data and the wider population data.

The data from the current survey was also analysed to identify whether there appear to be any changes in the ethnicity of the membership based on age or period of qualification. The information gained from this survey would indicate that the membership is broadly more diverse amongst the youngest age group and the TEP population.

<i>Ethnicity</i>	<i>Population (%)</i>	<i>Respondents (%)</i>
Bangladeshi	0.8	0.1
Chinese	0.7	0.8
Indian	2.5	1.7
Pakistani	2	1.1
Asian other	1.5	0.3
Black African	1.8	0.8
Black Caribbean	1.1	3.2
Black other	0.5	0
Mixed White/Asian	0.6	1
Mixed White/Black African	0.3	0.6
Mixed White/Black Caribbean	0.8	1.3
Mixed other	0.5	0.9
White British	80.5	78
White Irish	0.9	3.4
White Gypsy/Traveller	0.1	0
White other	4.4	4.7
Other	1.6	1.8
Arab	0.4	0

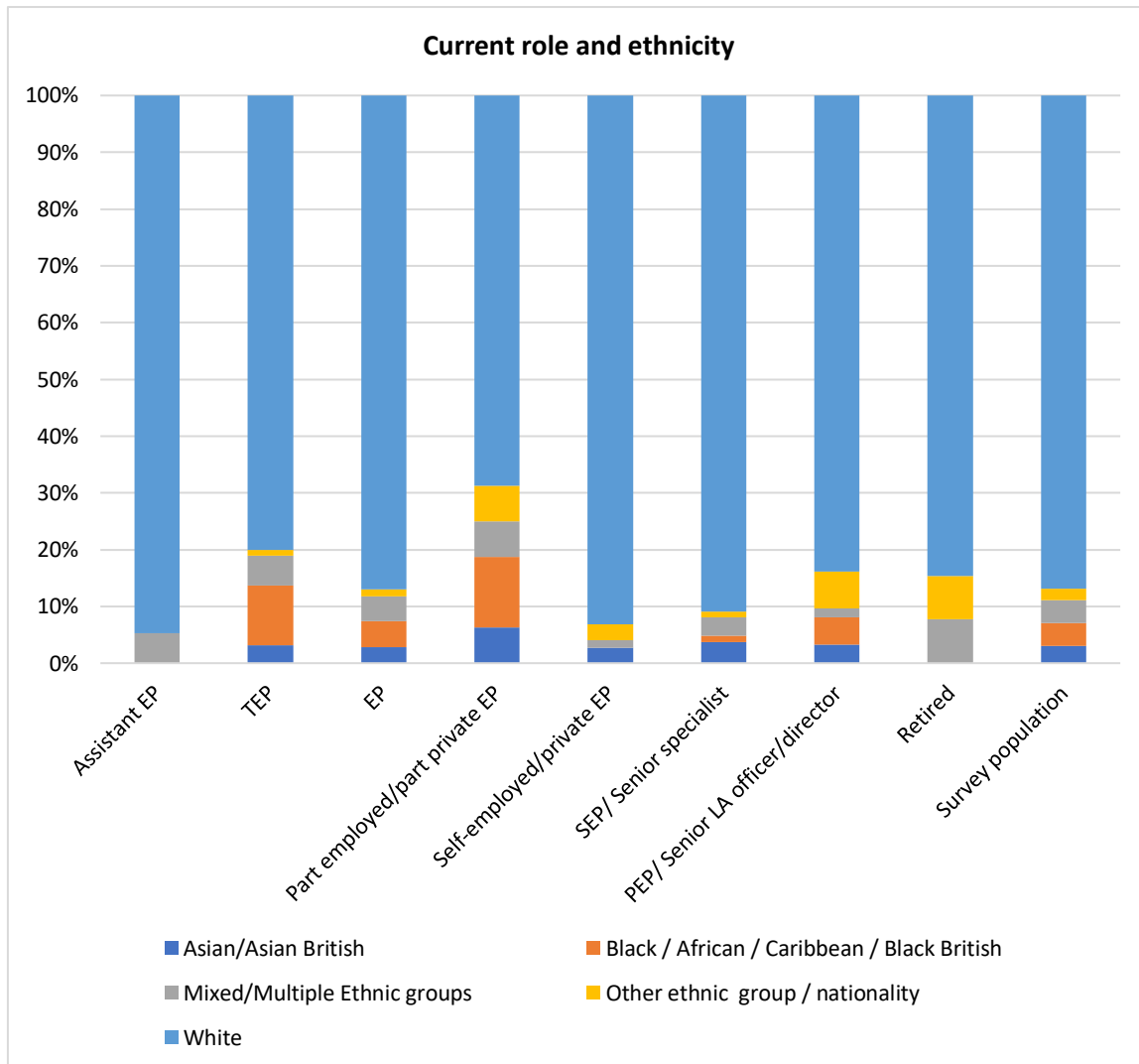


Data from applications for initial EP training shows that ‘compared to the national distribution, White and Asian ethnicities were slightly under-represented, and Black and Mixed ethnicities were slightly over-represented, within the applicant pool. There was no significant ethnicities difference between those who apply and those who are successful’. This data appears to be broadly in line with the chart below showing ethnicity by qualification period.



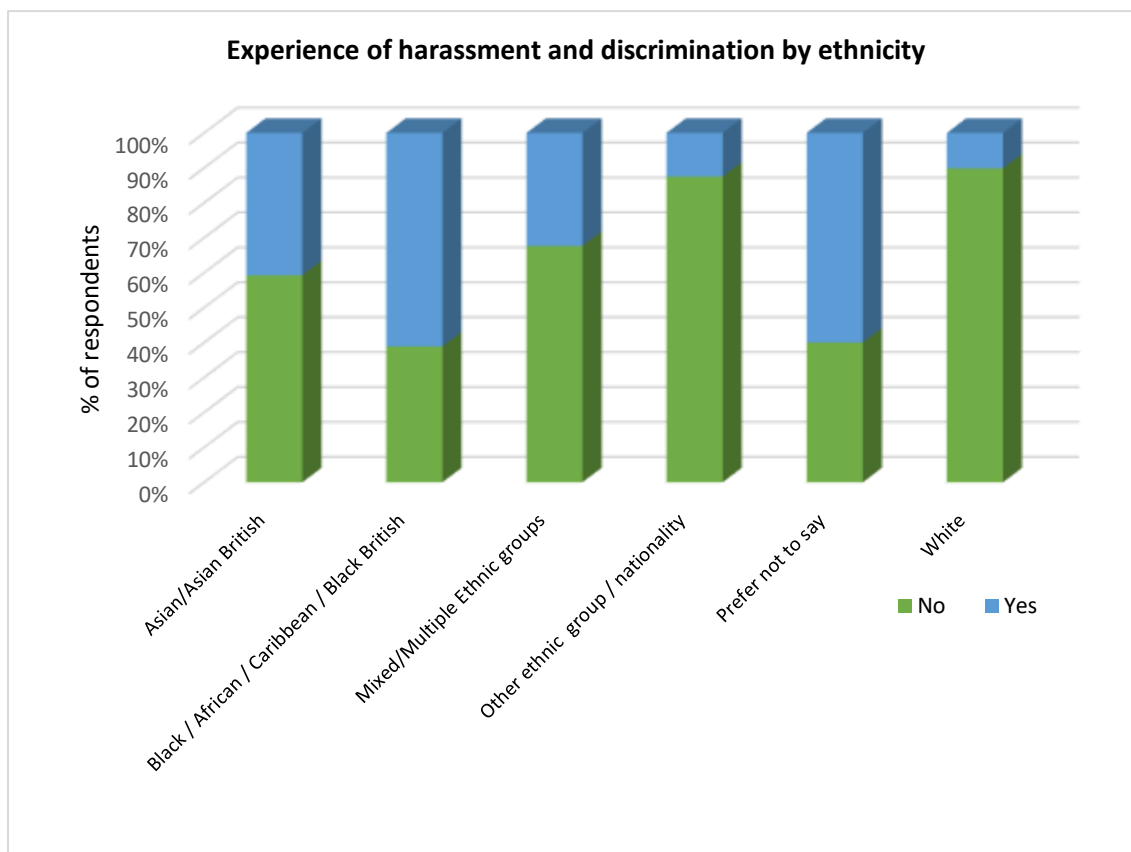
Data collected as part of the Nuffield Trust study is interesting to consider at this point, as there is a section of the report which focused on progression in psychology amongst different ethnic groups. The report details that ‘those with Black or Asian ethnicity going to university are similarly as likely as those with White ethnicity to study psychology and work in NHS psychological professions ... far less likely to be in more senior NHS roles and be accepted onto a clinical psychology training course’ (pg. 10 & 11).

The graph below considers the data collected through this survey around ethnicity and current employment. Each of the ‘main’ categories of ethnicity are reflected in the graph as well as a bar showing the percentages of ethnicity of the survey population so that a comparison can be made. There appears to be some variation across ethnicity in terms of representation within the TEP population, and the part employed/part private EP population which may be useful to investigate further.



Experiences of discrimination and harassment on the basis of race was also explored in this survey. When asked ‘do you believe that you have suffered discrimination or harassment on the grounds of any relevant protected characteristic at work or as a trainee EP at university?’ 130 respondents replied ‘yes’.

Further analysis indicates that 46 respondents of non-white ethnicity answered yes for this question, accounting for **40.7%** of the total number of non-white respondents. The response to this question was analysed taking into account each of the ‘main’ categories of ethnicity to produce the chart below.



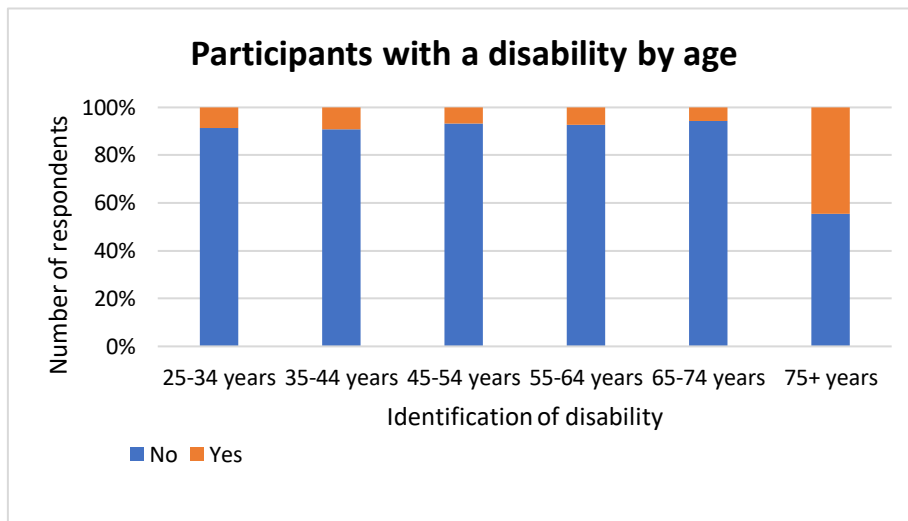
Analysis was also undertaken for each of the subsequent questions about impact of a protected characteristic on working life/studies, mental health, progression at work, evaluation at work, and SPA points. The percentage of respondents who felt that a protected characteristic, in specific race, did have an impact on these areas is reported below⁴.

(%)	Working life/studies	Mental health	Progression	Evaluation at work	SPA points
Asian/Asian British	55.5	59.0	55.6	44.4	25.9
Black/African/Caribbean/ Black British	66.7	44.4	50	38.9	11.1
Mixed/ Multiple ethnic groups	47.0	35.3	35.3	29.0	17.6
Other ethnic group/nationality	12.5	12.5	18.75	12.5	0
White	17.2	11.3	13.7	10.1	9.1
Prefer not to say	40.0	40.0	30.0	40.0	10

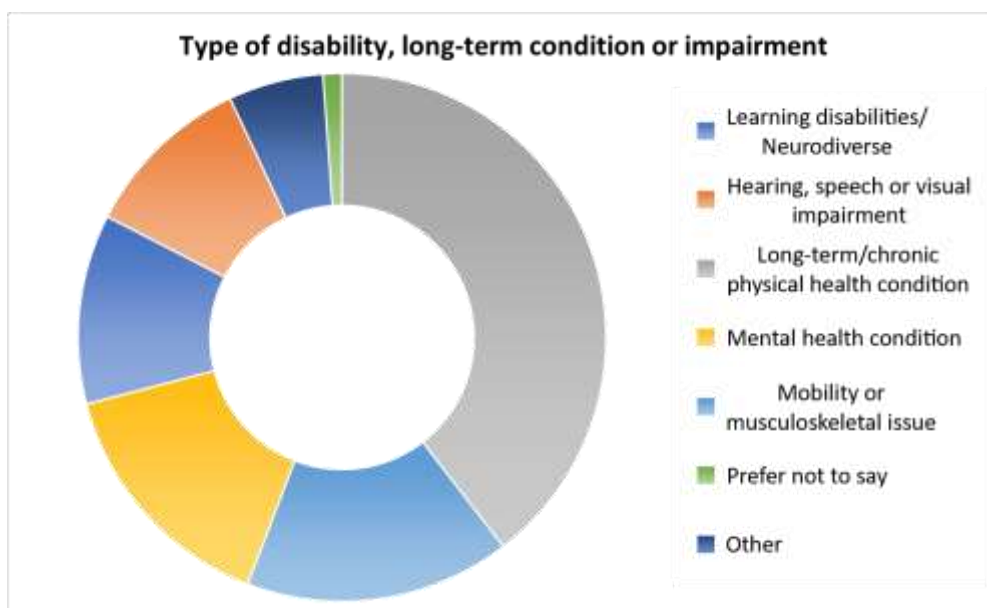
⁴ Respondents who identified under the category of ‘other’ have not been included due to small participant numbers

Disability data

Members who completed the questionnaire were asked whether or not they consider themselves to be disabled. In total 90% of respondents answered ‘no’ to this question, 8% responded ‘yes’ and 2% responded ‘prefer not say’. The chart below shows the responses to this question by age. These figures are broadly in line with course applications data in which just over 90% of successful and not successful applicants identified themselves as having a disability. In the context of course applications ‘Applicants who declared a disability were as likely as those who did not declare a disability, to be successful in their application’.

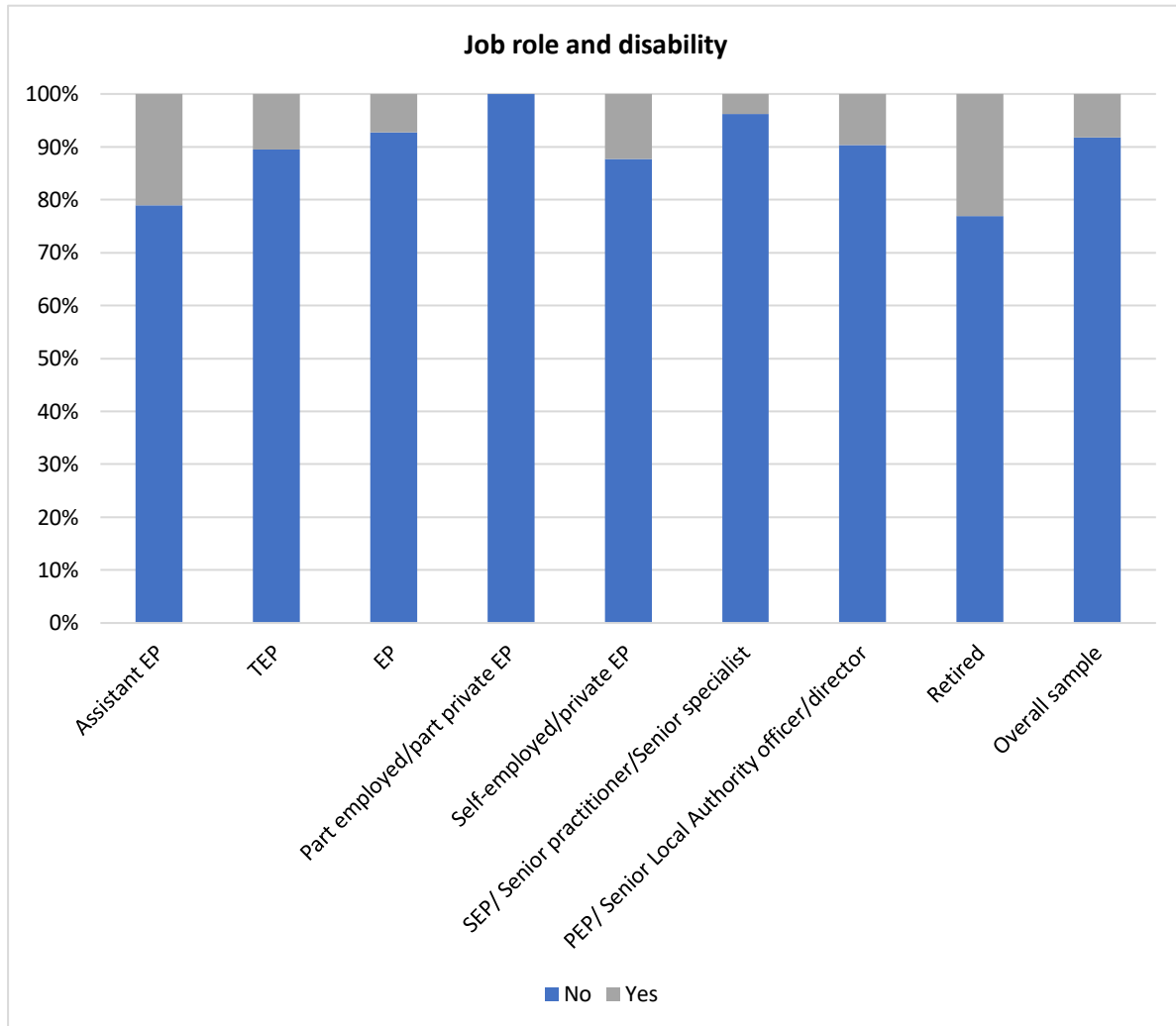


Respondents who replied ‘yes’ in the current survey were asked a further question about which type of disability, long-term condition or impairment they have. Respondents were able to select multiple answers to this question (it should be noted that some members were unhappy with the wording of these questions and their concerns and comments have been noted for future surveys). The chart below indicates the proportion of respondents who selected each category, but due to the small number of responses more detailed analysis cannot be provided.



A further analysis was undertaken to identify how many members have disabilities across the different job roles they hold. As the chart below displays there is a greater proportion of members who are Assistant EPs and those who are retired who have a disability, whereas there are no EP who work on a part-employed/part-private basis who do.

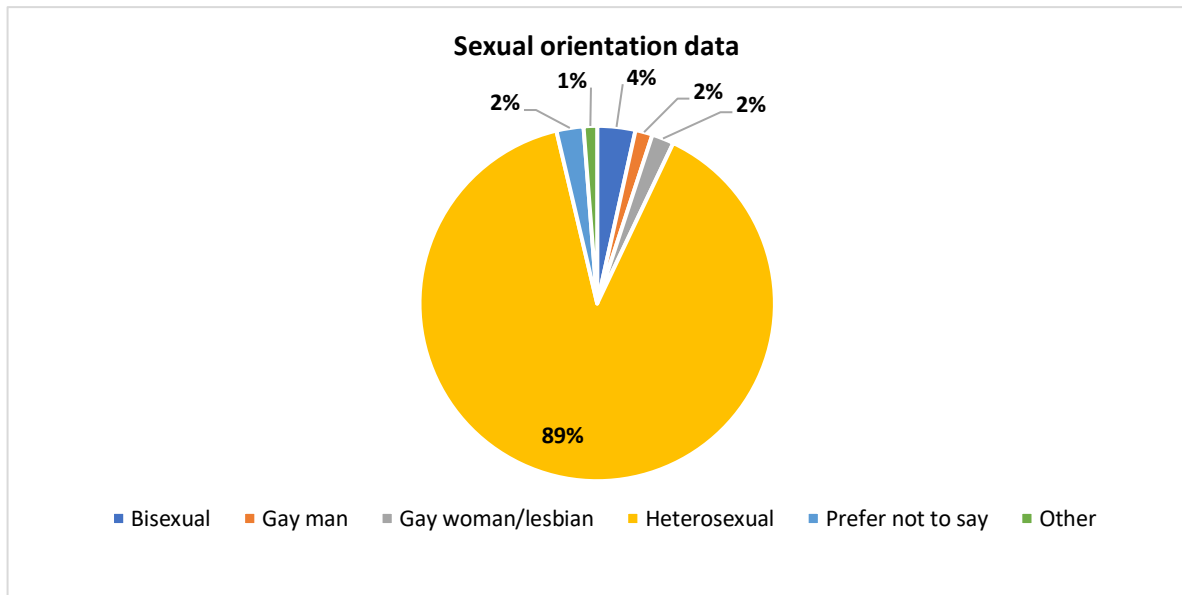
The research undertaken by the Nuffield Trust reports that ‘those in the NHS psychological workforce with a disability are almost half as likely to be in senior roles as those without a disability’. Our survey shows fewer EPs with a disability employed as a Senior EP when compared to the overall sample, but slightly more employed as Principal or other service leader role.



Additional analysis was undertaken to understand the experiences of discrimination and harassment of those with a disability. **56.5%** who reported that they have a disability identified that they have been discriminated against on the basis of disability. A number of others also agreed that they have been discriminated against on this basis.

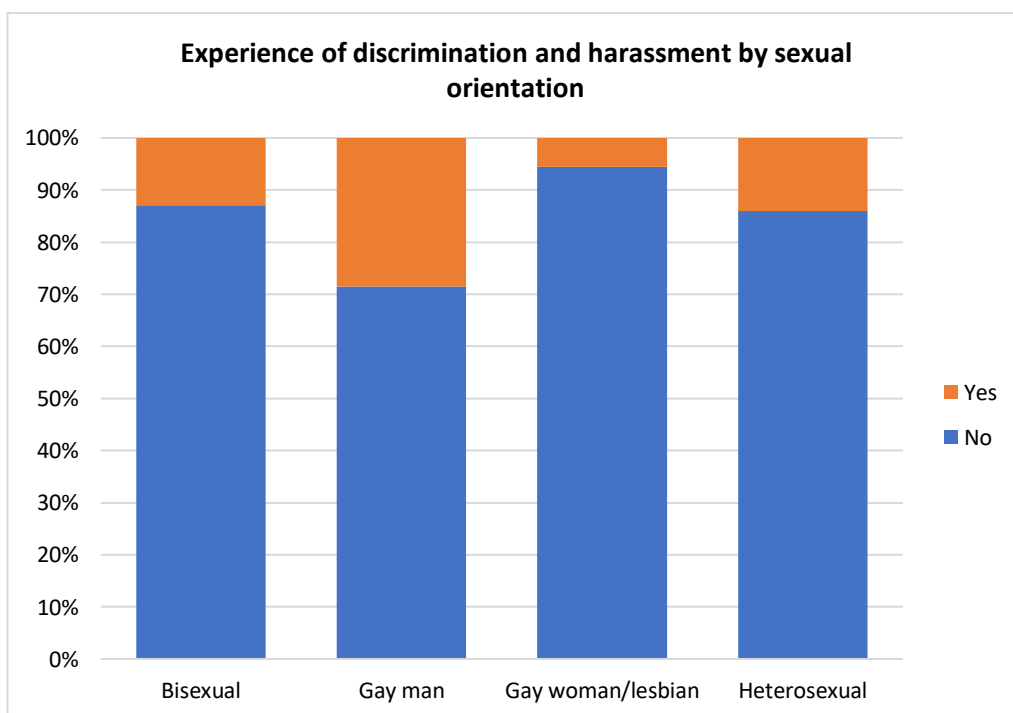
Sexual orientation data

Members who completed the survey were asked to describe their sexual orientation and could choose from a list of options as well as identify 'other' and provide an alternative response. As can be seen below the majority of respondents identified as heterosexual, with each of the other categories selected by a small number of participants.



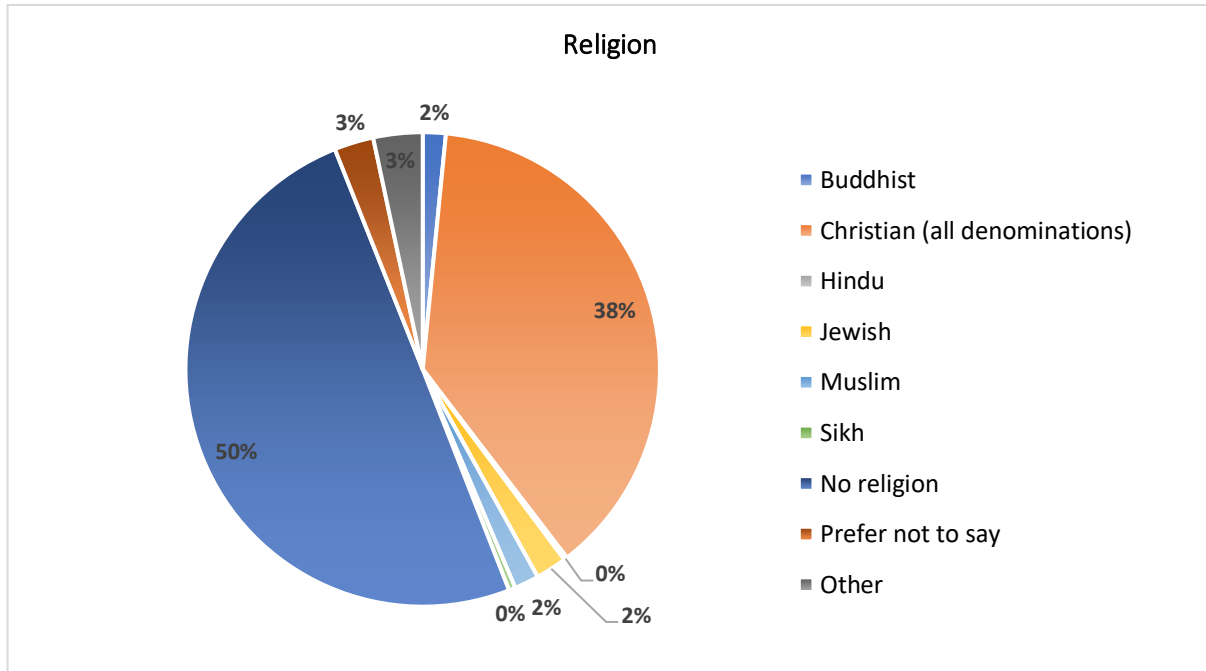
When comparing this data to that collected by the DfE through the initial applications process in England, it can be seen that slightly fewer applicants who have applied to the course between 2016 and 2020 identify as Heterosexual (94.5% vs. 89%).

The sexual orientation of respondents was also compared to the question asking about experiences of discrimination and harassment, as displayed in the chart below.



Religious beliefs data

The survey asked respondents about whether or not they hold any religious beliefs. The responses are presented below, although it should be noted that the category or 'other' was also available and although many respondents used this to enter a response, the small numbers of respondents for these mean that they cannot be reported.



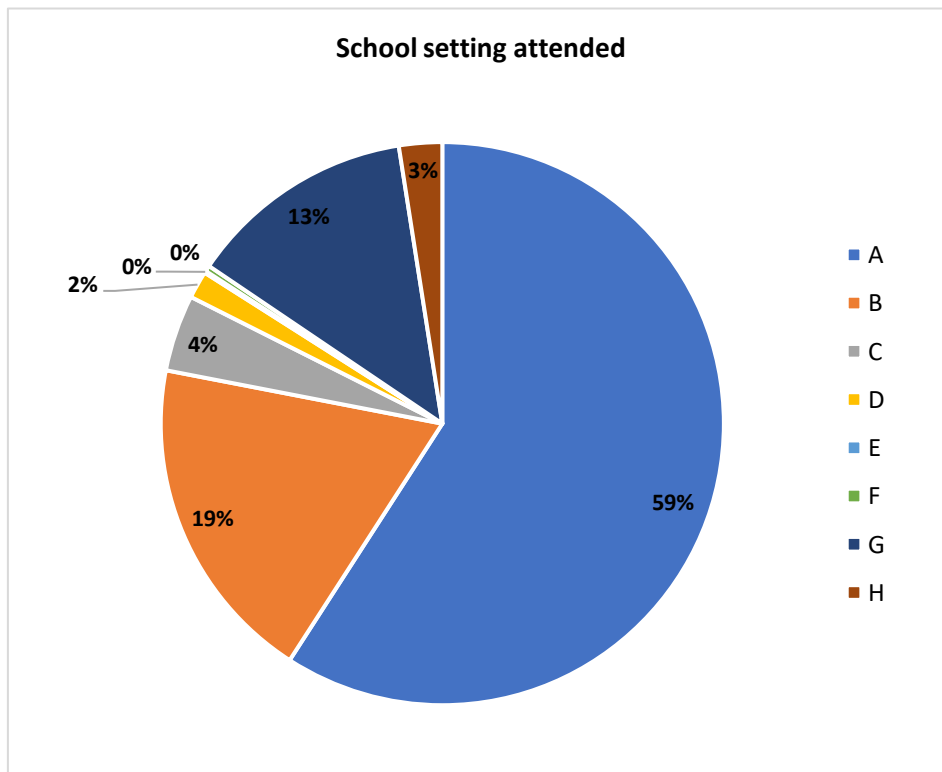
When asked about experiences of discrimination and harassment, 11 respondents identified that they have experienced this on the basis or religion or belief. However, due to the small number of responses for each category or religion or belief no further data can be provided.

Type of school/education setting attended data

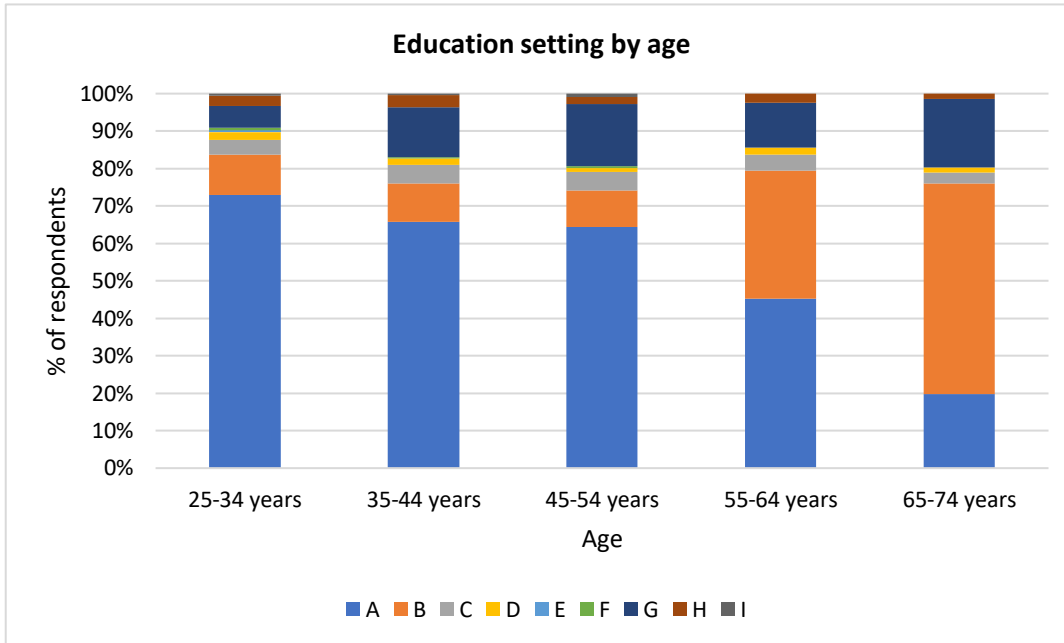
A measure of social economic status was sought through questioning respondents about the type of school they attended and whether or not they were eligible for Free School Meals (FSM). The types of school respondents were given the options of were:

- A state-run or state-funded school in the UK - Non-selective (A)
- A state-run or state-funded school in the UK - Selective on academic grounds (B)
- A state-run or state-funded school outside the UK - Non-selective (C)
- A state-run or state-funded school outside the UK - Selective on academic grounds (D)
- Home schooling (E)
- I don't know (F)
- Independent or fee-paying school in the UK (G)
- Independent or fee-paying school outside the UK (H)
- Prefer not to say (I)

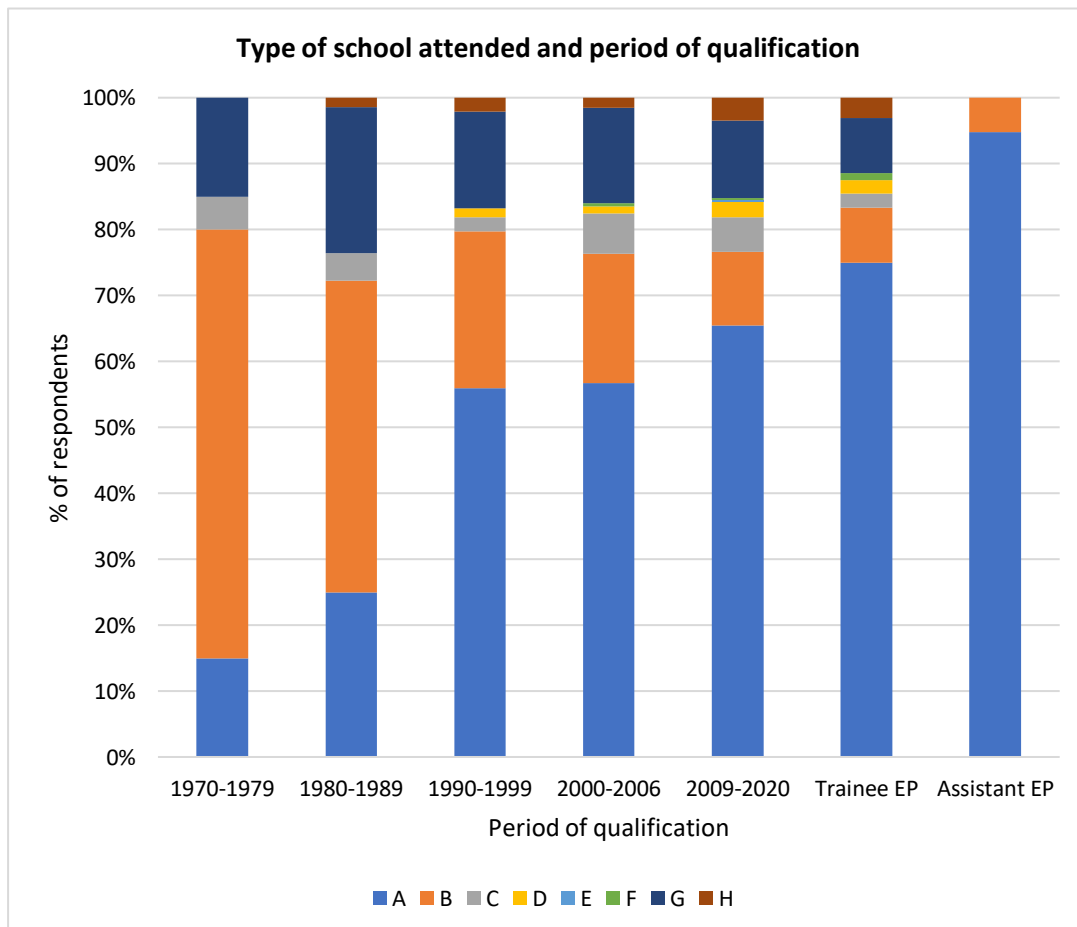
For brevity each type of setting has been assigned a letter – represented in brackets above. The greatest number of respondents attended a non-selective state school in the UK (A), accounting for 59% of respondents. The second most popular response was for selective state schools in the UK (B) which 19% participants identified. The third most common response selected by 13% of respondents was for an independent, fee-paying school in the UK (G). According to the government website approximately 6.4% of the current school population attend an Independent school, with a recent grammar school report suggesting that just over 5% of pupils attend these settings (Danechi, 2020).



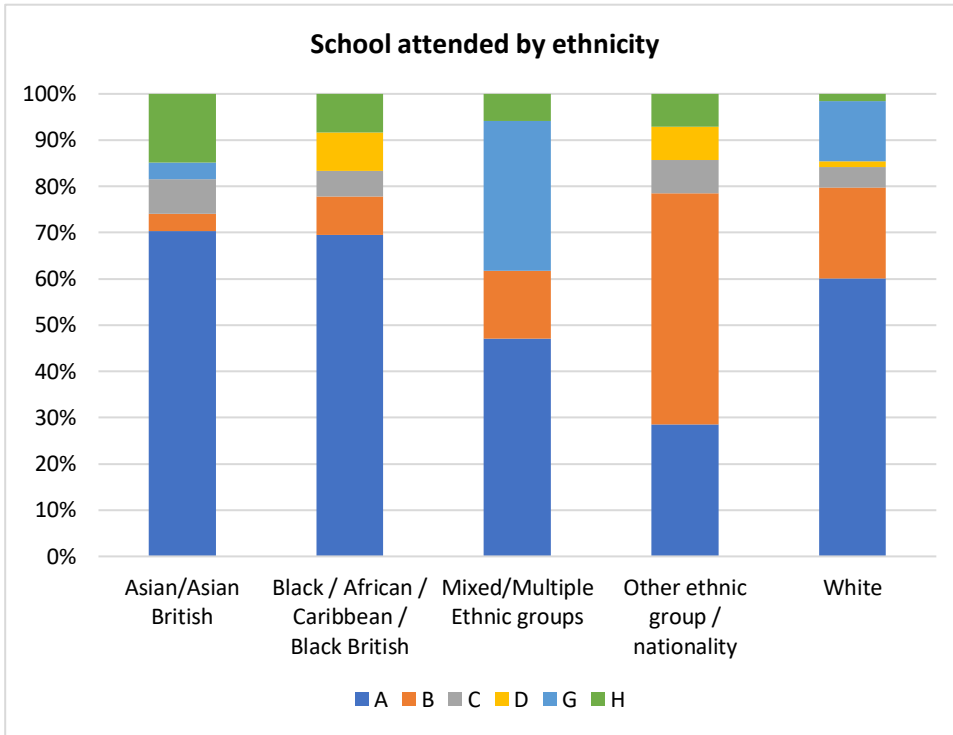
The two charts on this page show how the type of school attended has changed significantly over time. With EPs who are older, and those who qualified earlier, having been much more likely to have attended a selective school. It should be noted that context of the schooling system is likely to have contributed to this, as there was historically a much higher percentage of students attending a selective/grammar school.



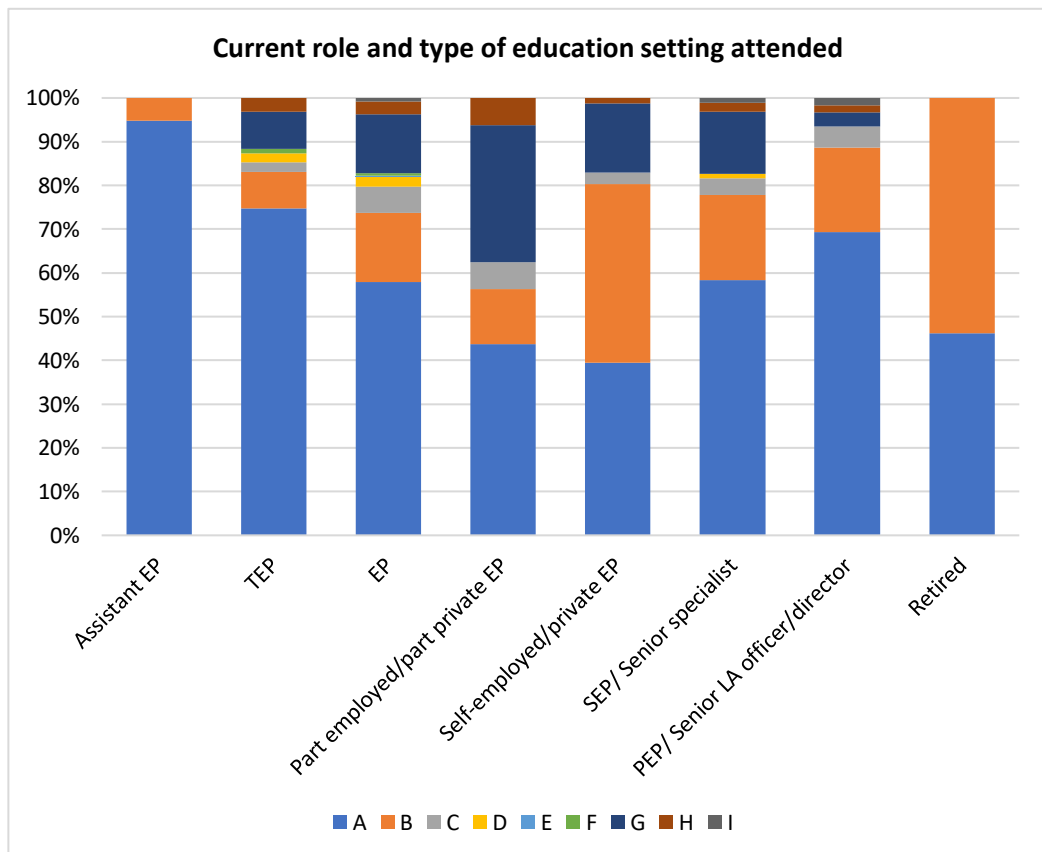
- Key**
- A** - A state-run or state-funded school in the UK - Non-selective
 - B** - A state-run or state-funded school in the UK - Selective on academic grounds
 - C** - A state-run or state-funded school outside the UK - Non-selective
 - D** - A state-run or state-funded school outside the UK - Selective on academic grounds
 - E** - Home schooling
 - F** - I don't know
 - G** - Independent or fee-paying school in the UK
 - H** - Independent or fee-paying school outside the UK
 - I** - Prefer not to say



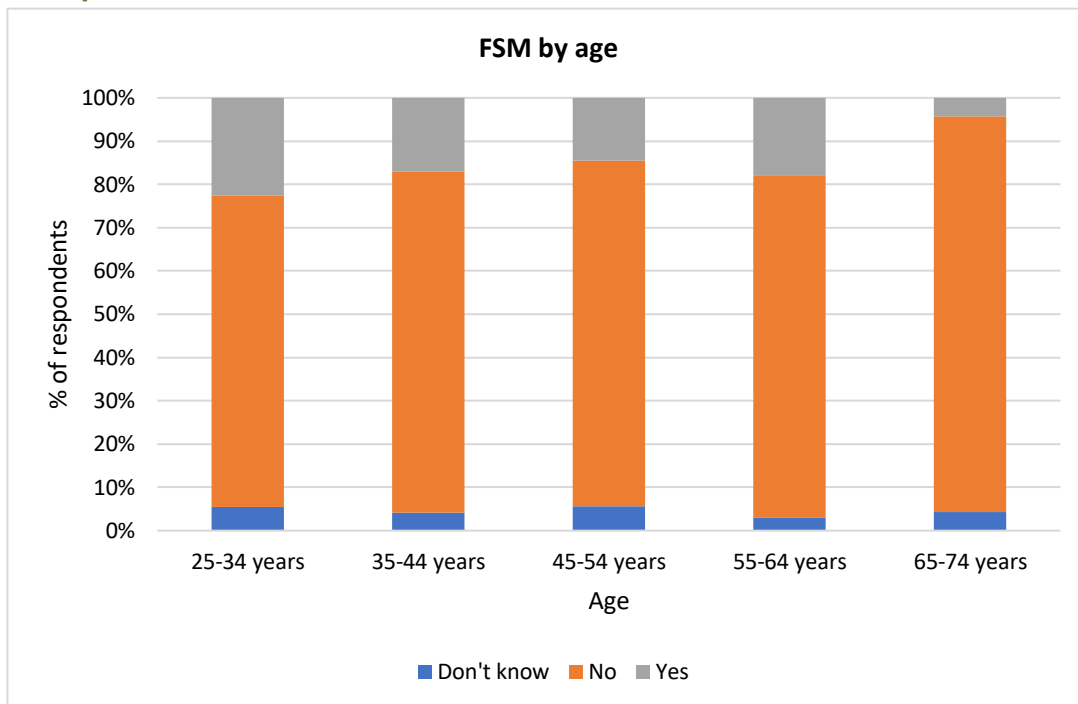
Information relating to type of school attended related to ethnicity and current job role was also sought, and the charts below display these results. As can be seen, there is a high level of variability between ethnicity and type of school attended, with selective schools and independent schools appearing to be more frequently attended for some groups.



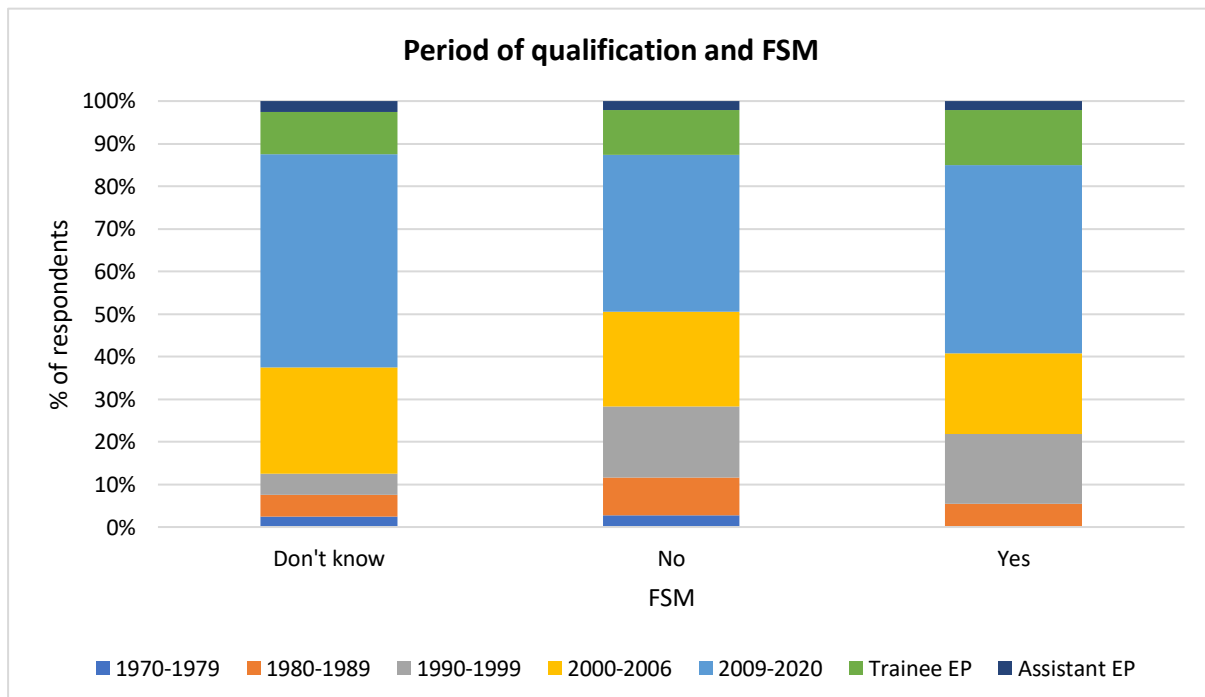
- Key**
- A** - A state-run or state-funded school in the UK - Non-selective
 - B** - A state-run or state-funded school in the UK - Selective on academic grounds
 - C** - A state-run or state-funded school outside the UK - Non-selective
 - D** - A state-run or state-funded school outside the UK - Selective on academic grounds
 - E** - Home schooling
 - F** - I don't know
 - G** - Independent or fee-paying school in the UK
 - H** - Independent or fee-paying school outside the UK
 - I** - Prefer not to say



Receipt of Free School Meals data



Respondents were also questioned about whether or not they had been eligible for FSM when at school. In total 16% of respondents replied 'yes' to this question. The following charts show this information comparing to age and the period of qualification data to ascertain whether there appear to have been any changes over time. At the current 20.8%⁵ of pupils are entitled to FSM.



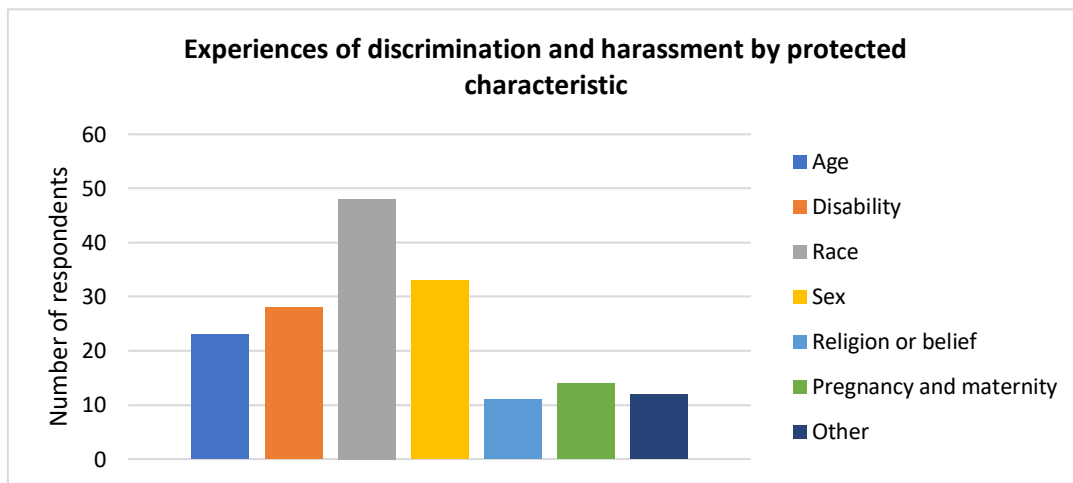
⁵ Source: [Schools, pupils and their characteristics, Academic Year 2020/21 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/explore-education-statistics)

Reported discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics

In line with the Equality Act 2010 it is illegal to discriminate against someone because of a ‘protected characteristic’. In total there are nine protected characteristics:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Age | 6. Race including colour, national, ethnic or national origin |
| 2. Gender reassignment | 7. Religion or belief |
| 3. Being married or in a civil partnership | 8. Sex |
| 4. Being pregnant or on maternity leave | 9. Sexual orientation |
| 5. Disability | |

Respondents were asked if they believed that they had suffered discrimination or harassment on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics (as listed above) at work or as a trainee. In total 130 members answered yes to this question which is 14.5% of respondents. Those who responded ‘yes’ were then asked to select which characteristic they possess which they felt was the target of this discrimination or harassment. As can be seen from the table below the protected characteristic most commonly identified was race, followed by sex and then disability.



Follow up questions were asked about specific examples of discrimination and the following was reported:

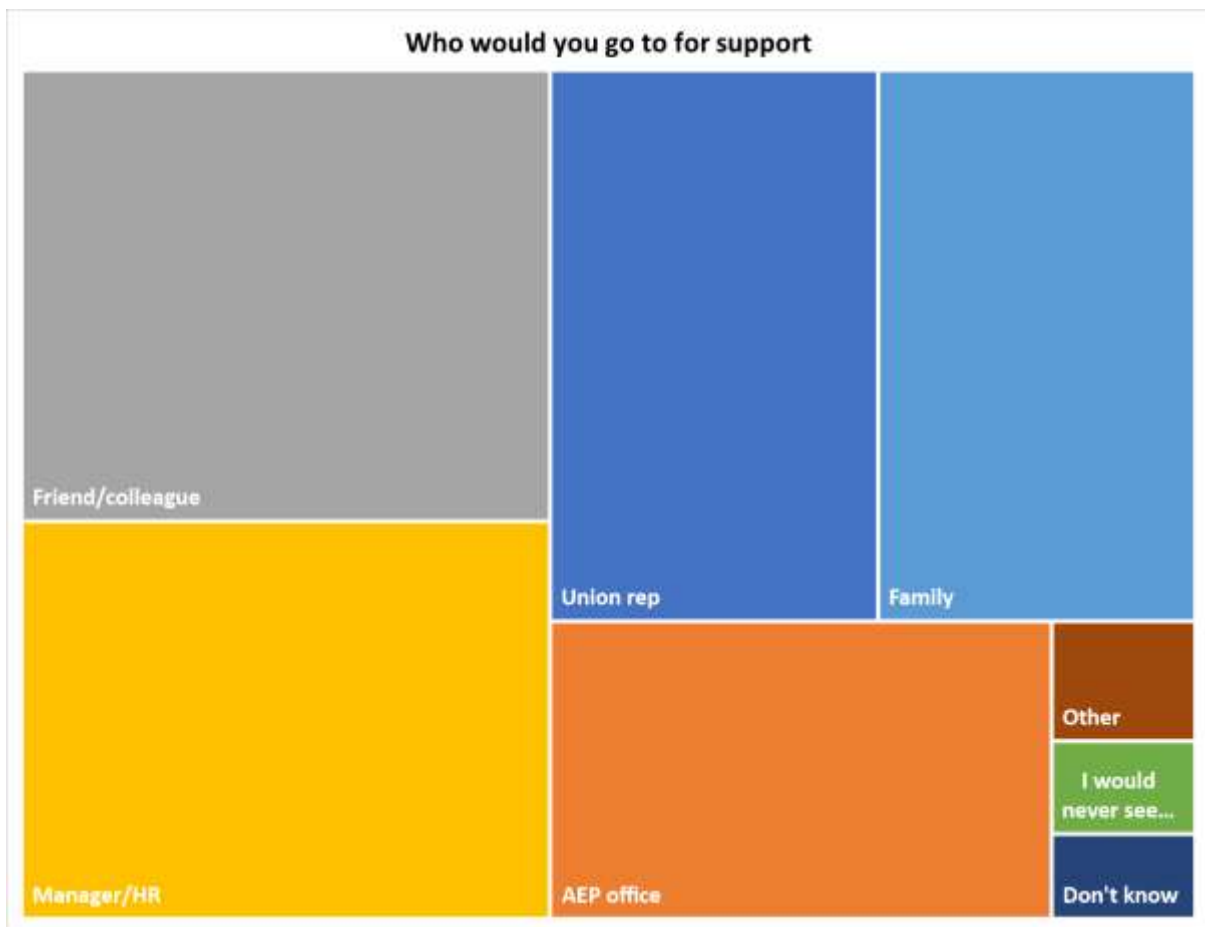
- **21.7%** of respondents answered ‘yes’ when asked if they believed that a protected characteristic had had an impact on their working life or studies.
- **15.3%** of respondents answered ‘yes’ when asked if they felt that the way they had been treated because of a protected characteristic had impacted on their mental health.
- **17.6%** of respondents answered ‘yes’ when asked if believed that a protected characteristic has stopped them from achieving progression in the workplace. Out of this group 69% identified that this had been in a previous role.
- **13.3%** of respondents answered ‘yes’ when asked if they believed that a protected characteristic had affected how they have been evaluated at work.
- **9.8%** of respondents answered ‘yes’ when asked if they believed that a protected characteristic had affected their pay (including SPA points) at work.

Survey respondents were also asked about how their protected characteristic is treated. 30% answered that it is treated positively, 27% said it is never discussed, 19% said there are policies and processes, but they are not used effectively (the remainder replied ‘other’).

Support for discrimination of harassment

Alongside demographic information, and information about experiences in the workplace, respondents were also asked about sources of support. When asked 'is there a network or support system in place in your workplace/university to support employees/students with protected characteristics/ from different backgrounds?' **54%** of respondents said, 'don't know', **16%** 'yes, it works well', **9%** 'yes, but it is not effective', and **21%** 'no'.

The following table depicts the frequency of response for each of the answers when participants were asked who they would go to for support regarding discrimination or harassment at work. Respondents were able to select multiple answers for this question.



Recommendations and next steps

The following are suggested recommendations and next steps, devised by the NEC's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion group, and agreed by the wider NEC :

- Plan a training and awareness raising programme for Local Reps which includes defining protected characteristics, reasonable adjustments for those who need them, challenging discrimination, and promoting the development of recruitment of and retention measures within EP services which promote a diverse workforce.
- Signpost and raise awareness of online TUC training: [TUC Education | TUC](#)
- Plan for focused time during Conference to explore themes arising from this survey
- Continue to encourage and support member engagement
- Collect information pertaining to protected characteristics and devise a process of annual review and reporting
- Continue to promote recruitment to the AEP across the profession to ensure the association is representative of the profession
- Provide easily accessible information about the role of EPs on social media to increase understanding and awareness of the profession to a wide range of groups
- Provide easy to read, accessible information for members about their rights in relation to discrimination and harassment
- Continue to develop the webinar programme to provide increased information for members
- Create a plan of training and information in relation to maternity rights
- Encourage members from different backgrounds to write blog posts, speak on podcasts, talks about the pathways they took to becoming an EP
- Focus on increasing the membership from populations that are currently underrepresented within the AEP, and promote members from different ethnicities to become local reps and members on the NEC.

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EPFT training data is available to view here : [AEP - Report](#)