

03.4.2025

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**Title**

Widening access or differentiation and stratification in higher education in Scotland

**Publication year**

2007

**Source/Footnote**

In: Higher education quarterly. - 60 (2006) 4, S. 349 - 369

**Inventory number**

22379

**Keywords**

Ausland : Großbritannien : einzelne Hochschulen ; Ausland : Großbritannien : Studium, Studenten, Lehre ; Hochschule und Staat : allgemein

**Abstract**

Widening access to higher education (HE) has been an important policy objective in Scotland over the last twenty years. While there is evidence that high levels of participation have been achieved, and some evidence of reduction in inequalities in participation rates among young people entering higher education, there is also evidence of persisting inequalities, and of patterns of differentiation and stratification. As a result there is evidence that, with the development of mass higher education in Scotland, a stratified system of higher education has emerged. Furthermore there is evidence that these patterns of stratification are being maintained over time, despite the policies which are designed to widen access. This paper will review the evidence regarding the nature and extent of these patterns of stratification, and briefly consider the policies which are designed to tackle this issue. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)