

# FROM MATRIC INTO AND THROUGH UNIVERSITY

## Higher Education access and outcomes in South Africa

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Research Colloquium on Skills Planning  
*How do we plan to meet South Africa's skills needs?*  
29 - 30 September 2016  
Birchwood Conference Centre



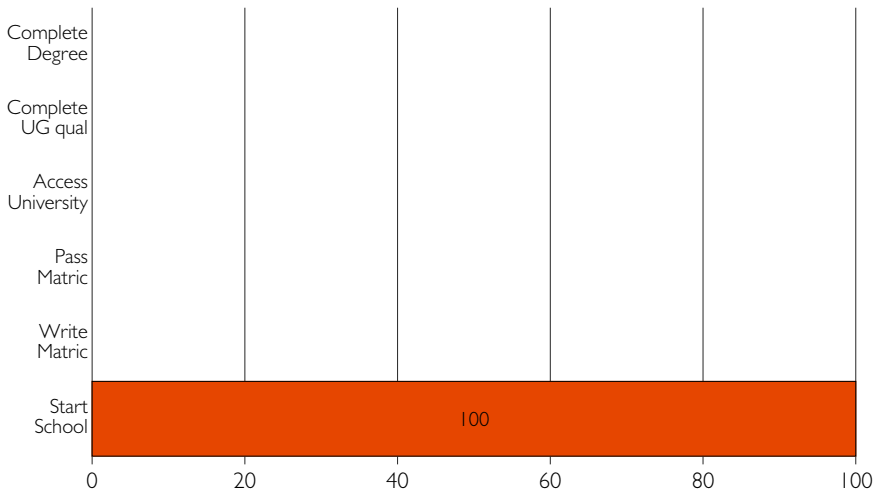
# Project background

## Outputs, data, and research focus

- ▶ **Working papers available:** <http://www.lmip.org.za/lmippublications> and <http://www.ekon.sun.ac.za/wpapers/>
- ▶ **Acknowledgements:** DBE and DHET (Kirsten Barth) for the data linking, anonymisation, and provision
- ▶ Links **2008 - 2013 NSC** and **2009 - 2014 HEMIS**
- ▶ For the first time allows **detailed, nationally representative quantitative analysis** of
  - ▶ transitions from school to university (access),
  - ▶ how matric results, demographics, and school background influence university outcomes, and
  - ▶ how students progress through the public university system
- ▶ Focus mainly on the **2008 matric cohort**

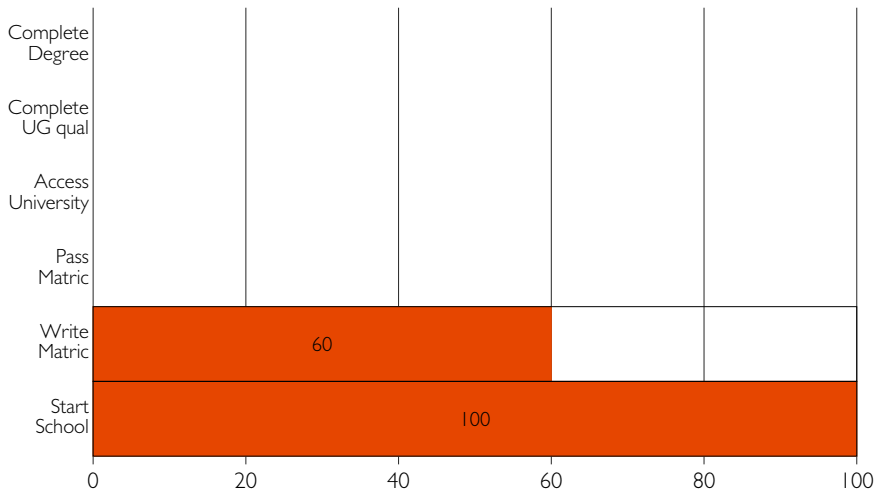
# The qualifications hierarchy

How many reach the top of the pyramid?



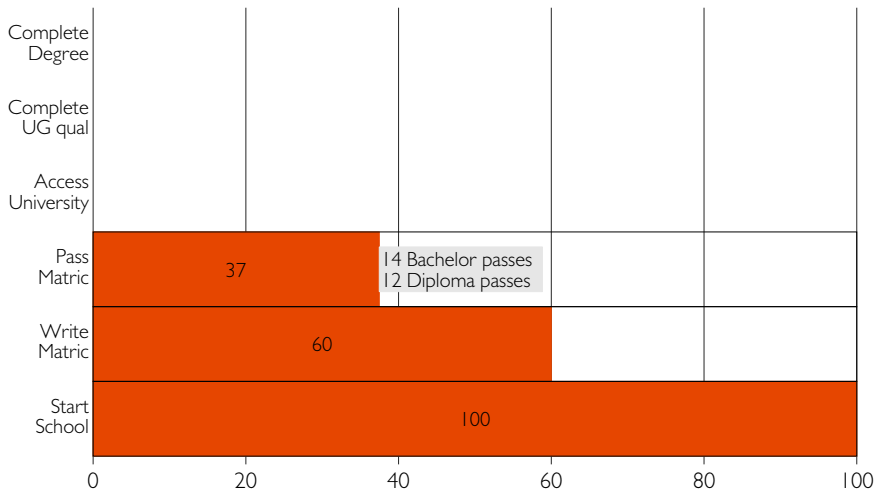
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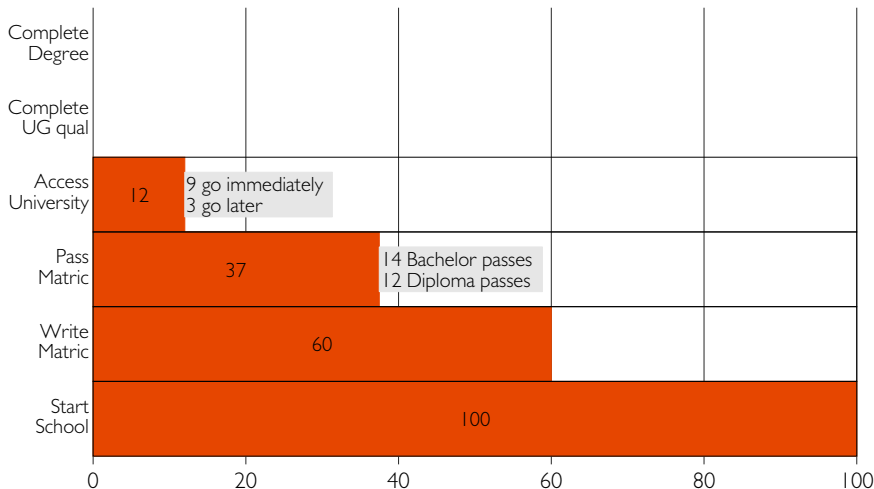
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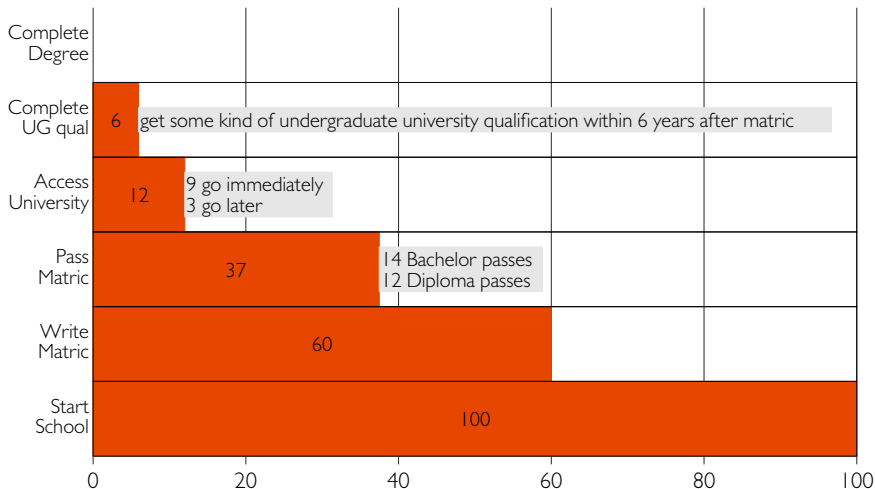
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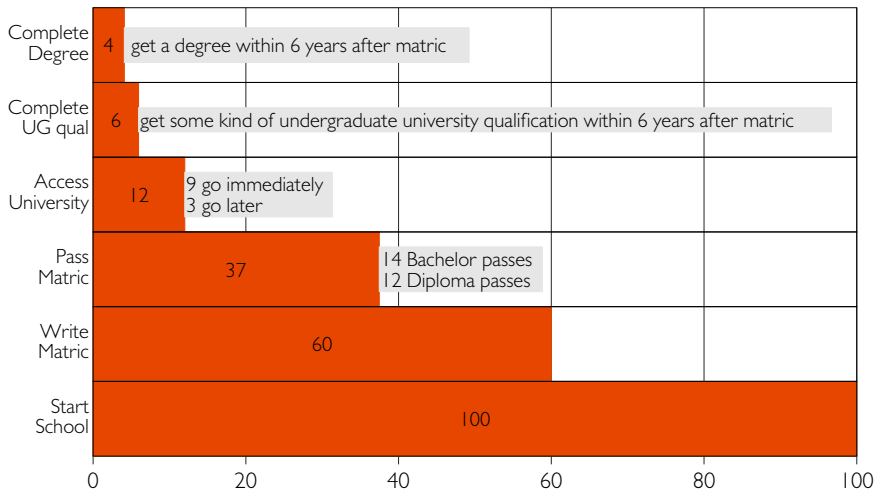
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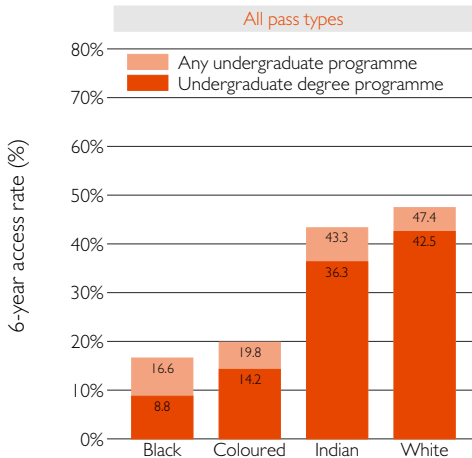
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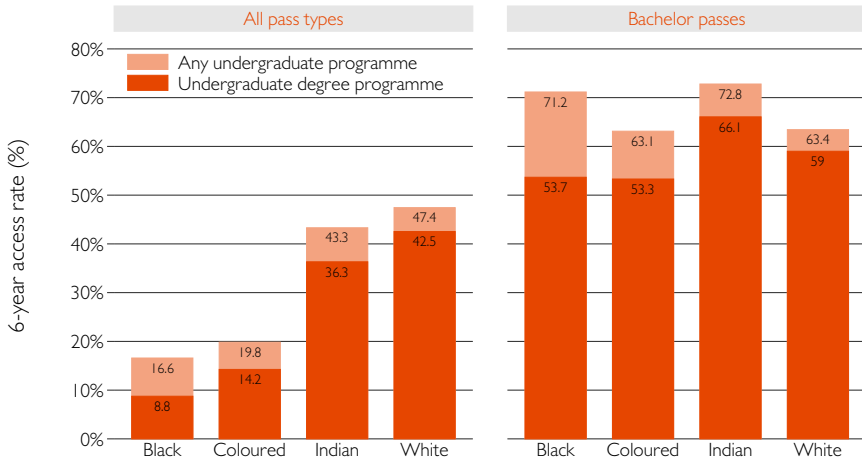
# Inequalities across race groups

## University access rates by race group - all candidates



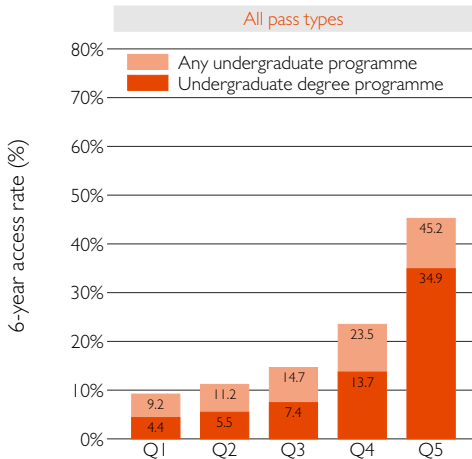
# Inequalities across race groups

University access rates by race group - all candidates vs Bachelor pass candidates



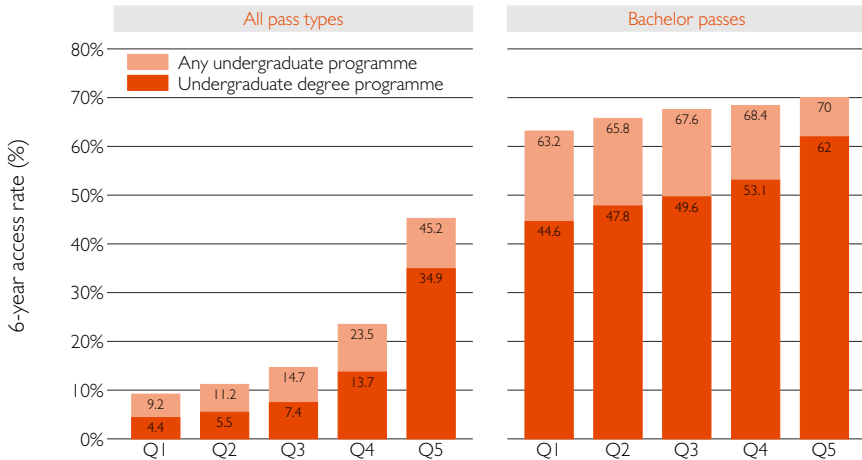
# Inequalities across school quintiles

University access rates by school quintile - all candidates



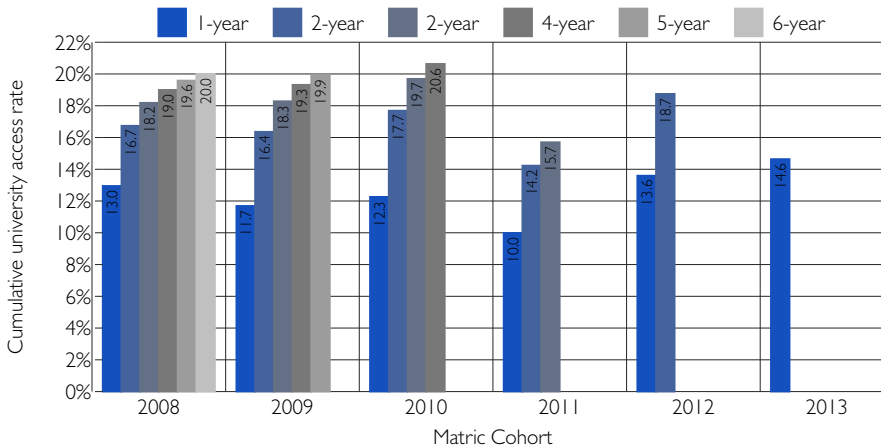
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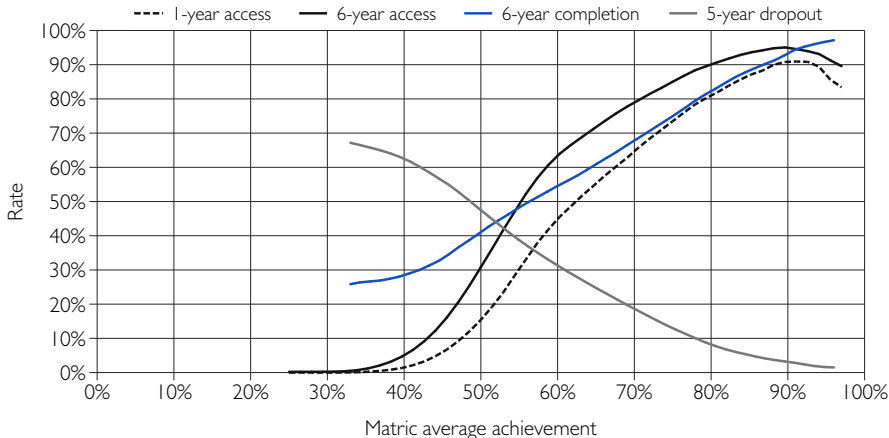
# Delayed university entry is significant and persistent

One to six year access rates for the 2008 to 2013 matric cohorts



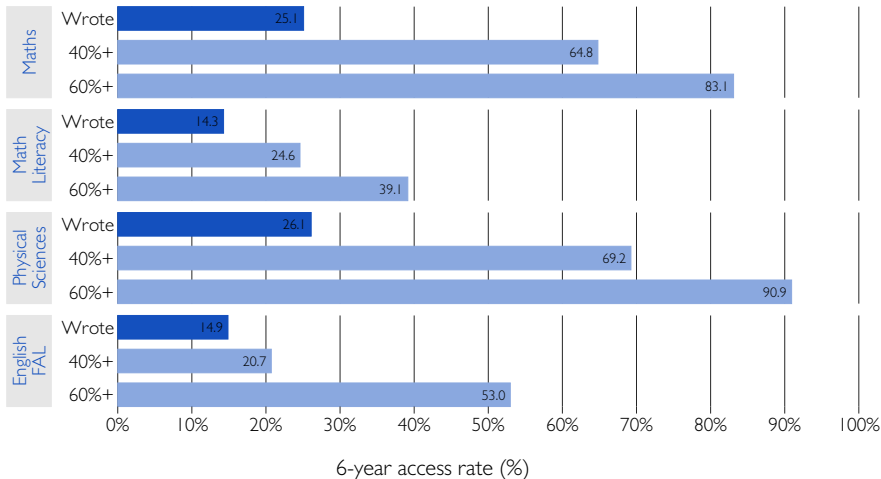
# Matric performance really matters for university outcomes

Matric average and university access, completion, and dropout



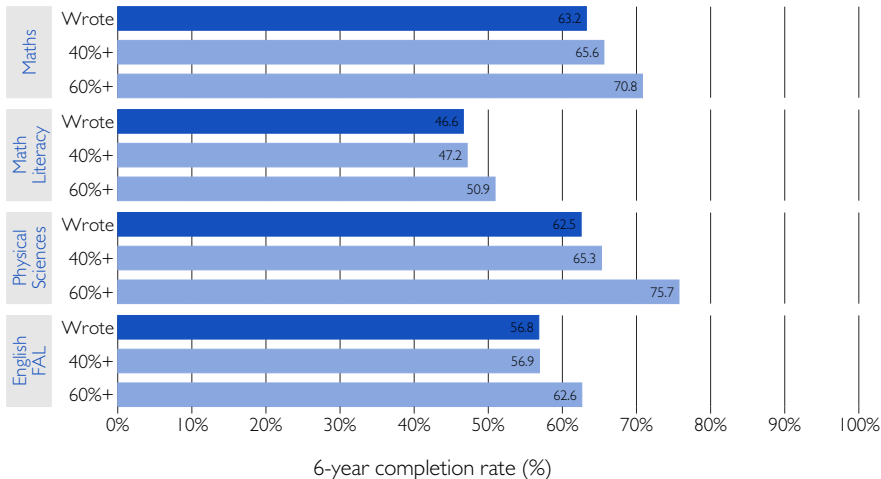
# Gateway subjects really matter for university access

Gateway subject participation and performance vs university access



# Gateway subjects also matter for programme completion

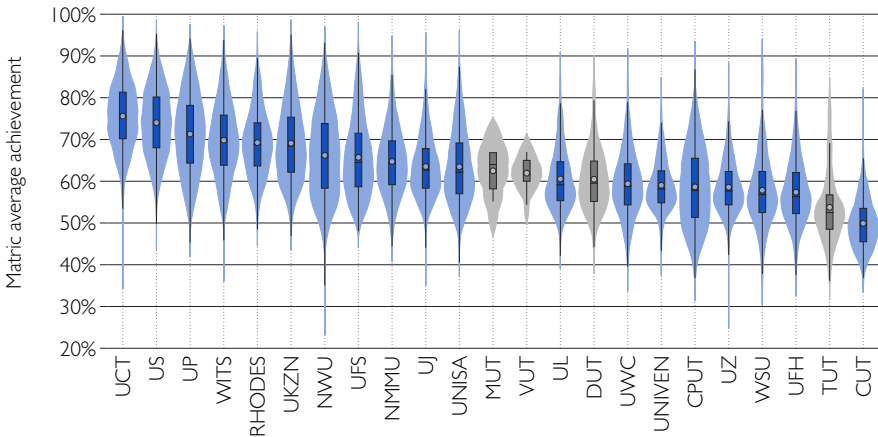
Gateway subject participation and performance vs university completion





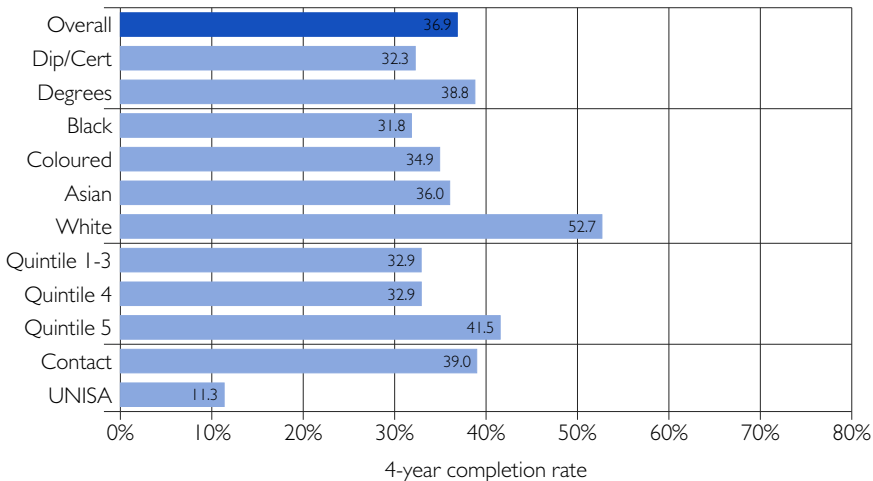
# Huge differences in matric performance across universities

Matric average achievement distributions for the 2008 matric cohort, by university (2009 FTEN degrees)



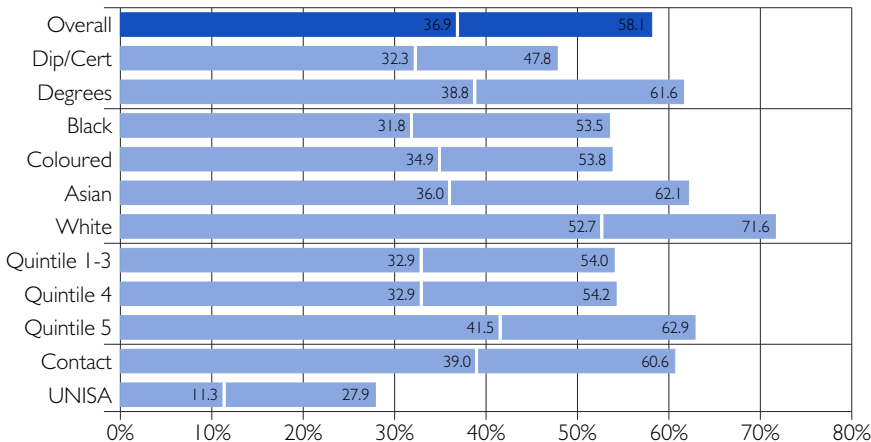
# Students take long to graduate - if at all

4 vs 6-year completion rates for the 2008 matric cohort



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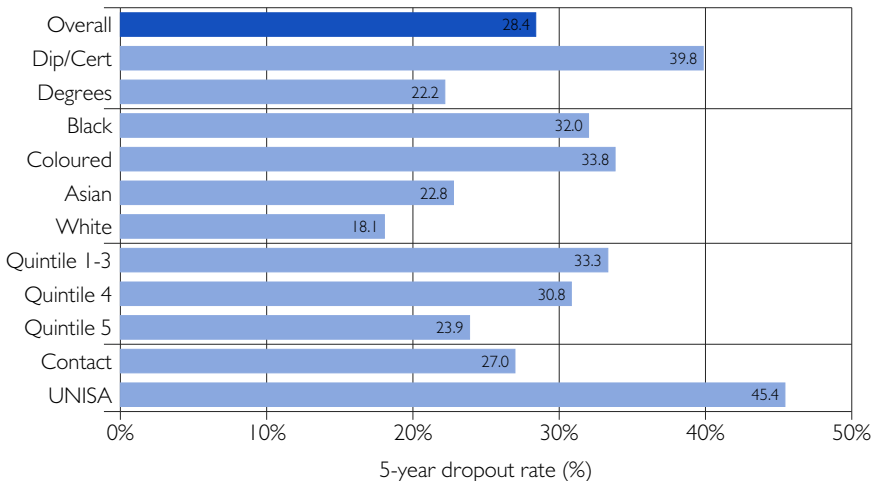
4 vs 6-year completion rates for the 2008 matric cohort



4-year vs 6-year completion rate

# University dropout is high, but not as high as often claimed

5-year dropout rates for the 2008 matric cohort



# Conclusion: 8 Main insights

## Important new or reaffirmed findings

1. Very few matriculants obtain university qualifications. Even fewer obtain degrees.
2. Nearly  $\frac{1}{3}$  of *Bachelor passers* never go to university
3. Among *Bachelor passers*, university access is not skewed against black students, and is less skewed against students from poorer schools than commonly believed. Yet, large differences in access to undergraduate degree programmes remain evident
4. Many matrics who go to university only do so two or more years after finishing school
5. Matric performance overall and in 'gateway subjects' are good indicators of university access and, to a lesser extent, also of university success
6. There are extremely large differences in the matric performance levels of student intakes across universities
7. Many students take a long time to complete university qualifications
8. University dropout, though high, is not as high as is often reported