

# Evaluation of Active Colleges

*Summary findings from the Active  
Colleges Leisure Survey, May 2014*

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## 01. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In October 2012 Sport England commissioned CFE Research to undertake an evaluation of the Active Colleges investment in the following three areas:

- *To measure the impact of Active Colleges on the number and proportion of FE college students regularly participating in sport (at least once a week for at least 30 minutes);*
- *To find out what works, how, in what context and for whom; and*
- *To communicate the evidence effectively to optimise its influence on policy and practice.*

In March 2014 the second Active Colleges ‘Leisure Survey’ was circulated to students via the College Sport Maker at all funded colleges. Just over 26,000 students from 153 colleges responded to the survey. Key findings from the survey show that:

- *80.9% of respondents took part in 1x30 minutes of sport or physical activity in the past week, representing an increase in participation of 4.3% from the baseline a year ago.*
- *28% of students took part in sport or physical activity on 1 or 2 days in the past week and 52% took part on 3 or more days in the past week.*
- *There was an increase in participation across all student groups: – males/females, all ethnic groups, whether part-time or full-time students, whether working or not and for those studying all types of qualifications.*
- *The increase in participation was greatest for disabled students (up 9%), those from Black, Asian or other minority ethnic groups (up 9%) and those who were studying a non-sports related qualification (up 6%). Thus, the gap in participation rates for these groups of students has been narrowed.*
- *19% of respondents had not taken part in 1x30 minutes of sport or physical activity in the past week. Of these students, 40% were latent participants (had taken part in sport or physical activity at some point in the past 18 months) and 60% were non-participants (had not taken part in any sport or physical activity in the previous 18 months).*
- *67% of latent participants and 48% of non-participants stated that they would be interested in either re-engaging or engaging in sport or physical activity.*
- *A higher proportion of female students reported that they had started participating in sport regularly in the last 18 months (53%) compared with male students (40%).*
- *Having a sport that is affordable at their college, encouragement from family and relatives, encouragement from friends outside college, and that sport/ physical activity at local community clubs/gyms match their interests were the most commonly cited motivations for students participating in sport or physical activity.*
- *More students participate in sport or physical activity at home (51%), a gym or leisure centre not at their college (44%), a public park, field or space (37%) than at their college (29%). Only 6% of students taking part in sport or physical activity do so only at their college and nowhere else.*
- *Of those students not in their first year at college, 44% stated that the college now offers more sport and physical activity than in the previous year, 16% stated that the college offers the same amount and 4% stated they now offer less (36% were unsure).*

- *Over three-quarters (79%) of students (active and latent participants) stated that “sport improves their mental well-being”. Over two-fifths (44%) of students reported that sport had helped them to develop employability skills and a similar proportion (43%) agreed or strongly agreed that doing sport “helps them with their college work”.*
- *Around a quarter of all students (24%) stated that the sport opportunities on offer at the college were influential in their decision to apply to that college.*

## 02. INTRODUCTION

In October 2012 Sport England commissioned CFE Research to undertake an evaluation of the Active Colleges programme, and to assess and report on its impact. The evaluation focuses on three main objectives:

- *To measure the impact of Active Colleges on the number and proportion of FE college learners regularly participating in sport (at least once a week for at least 30 minutes);*
- *To find out what works, how, in what context and for whom; and*
- *To communicate the evidence effectively to optimise its influence on policy and practice.*

In March 2014 the second wave of the Active Colleges Leisure Survey was circulated to colleges with a College Sport Maker. The survey provides information on past and present sport and physical activity undertaken by students currently enrolled at participating colleges. The survey was developed by CFE Research and Sport England, and was administered by colleges with a College Sport Maker.

A baseline survey was disseminated at two sampling points in 2013 depending on when the College Sport Maker had started their role (April 2013 or October 2013). This provided baseline data for sports participation across Colleges (with either a College Sport Maker and/or in receipt of the Further Education Activation Fund) as they were starting to set up their activities.

Just over 26,000 students responded to the latest survey (March 2014) from 153 colleges. The survey data was then weighted on key variables to ensure that it is more representative of the student population of all those colleges funded through the Active Colleges initiative. Some survey responses were removed to enable the data to be weighted<sup>1</sup> and the profile of the remaining respondents (24,681 - unweighted) is described as follows:

- *51% of respondents were male and 49% were female;*
- *17% of respondents were aged 16 years or younger; 37% were aged 17; 25% were aged 18; 9% were aged 19; and 12% were aged 20 or over;*
- *The ethnicity of students responding to the survey was similar to national population estimates with 76% classifying their ethnicity as 'White British', compared with the national population estimate of 83%<sup>2</sup>;*
- *8% of respondents had a self-reported disability;*
- *91% of respondents were studying full-time, while 21% were undertaking a sport-related course or qualification;*
- *Over half (51%) of all students were undertaking paid or unpaid work alongside their studies.*

**Please note: The analysis which follows is based on weighted data.**

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<sup>1</sup> If responses did not include the relevant data required to apply the weighting (e.g. age or gender) then they were removed.

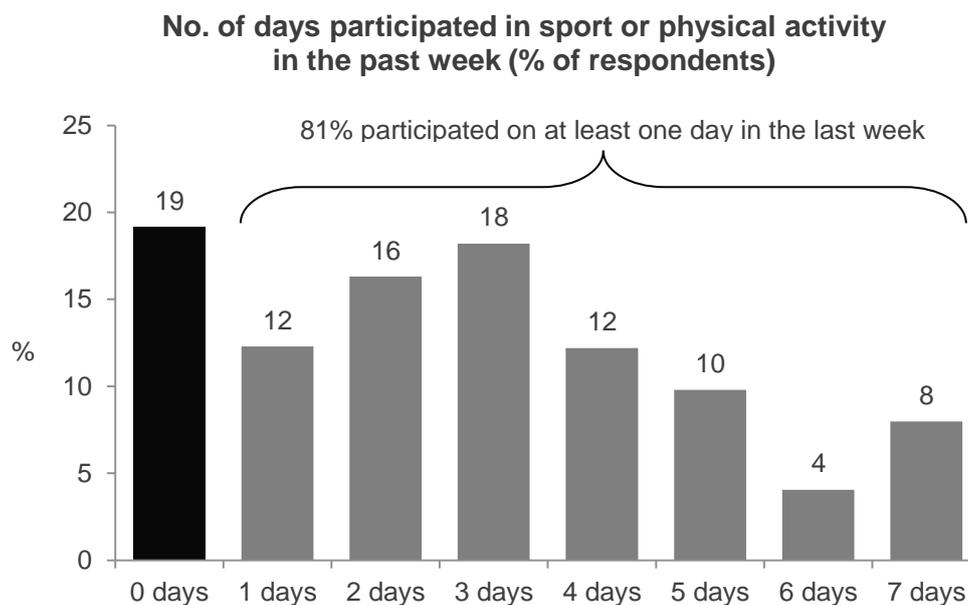
<sup>2</sup> Comparator is ONS Population Estimates by Ethnic Group mid-2009 (experimental) for the 15-19 age group. Available here: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/taxonomy/index.html?nscl=Population+Estimates+by+Ethnic+Group#tab-data-tables> last accessed, July 2013.

### 03. CURRENT PARTICIPATION RATES IN SPORT OR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN ACTIVE COLLEGES

#### Key participation figures

Students were asked on how many days in the past week they had done **1x30 minutes** or more of sport or physical activity, which was enough to raise their breathing rate. Figure 1 shows the responses that students gave. The key findings are:

- 80.9% of college students took part in at least 1x30 minutes of sport or physical activity in the past week (these are described as **active participants**).
- 19.1% did not take part in 1x30 minutes of sport or physical activity in the past week. Of these respondents:
  - 40% had taken part in 1x30 minutes of sport or physical activity per week at some point in the last 18 months, but not in the last week. These are described as **latent participants** and account for 7.6% of the total student population.
  - 60% had not participated in 1x30 minutes of sport or physical activity per week in the last 18 months. These are described as **non-participants** and account for 11.4% of the total student population.



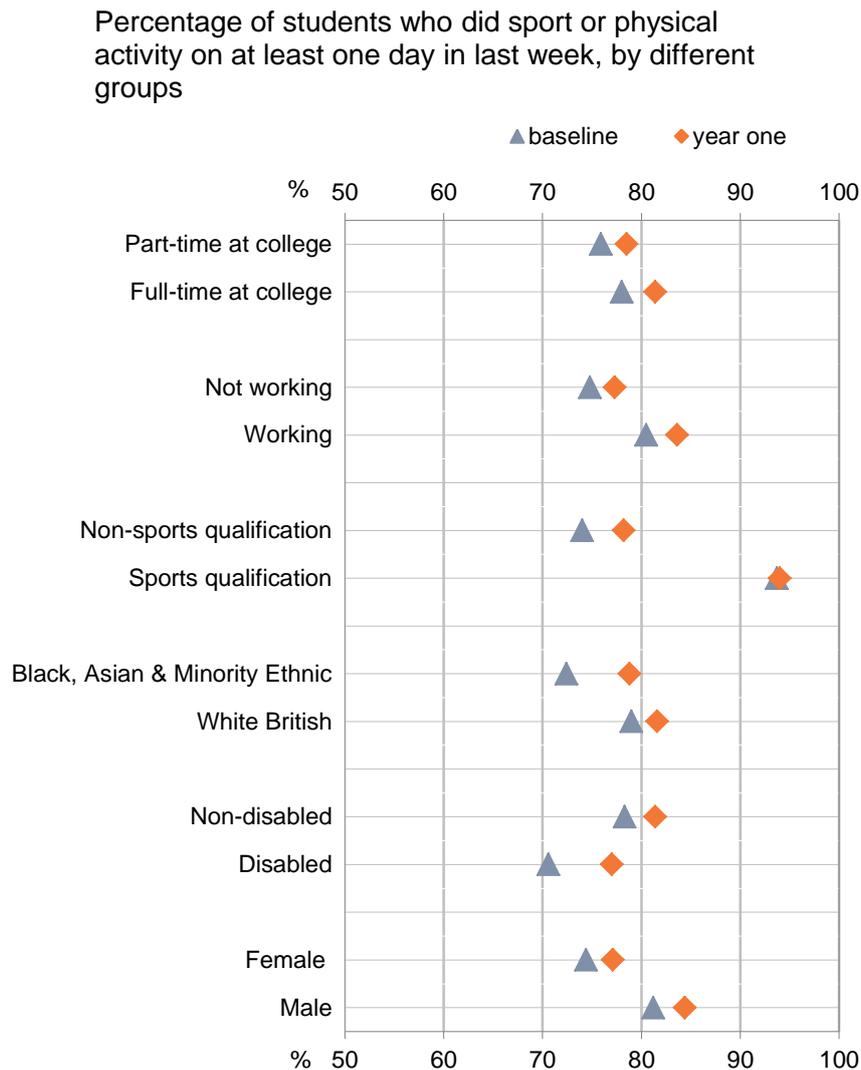
**Figure 1: Number of days respondents stated they participated in sport or physical activity in the past week which raised their breathing rate; base=24,681.**

#### Comparison to baseline

Overall, there has been an increase in the proportion of college students undertaking at least 1x30 minutes of sport a week from 77.5% reported in the baseline report (2013) to 80.9% in 2014. This represents a 4.3% increase in the participation rate.

## Analysis by different groups of respondents

Further analysis was undertaken to examine if participation levels varied for different groups of students responding to the survey. Figure 2, below, shows the percentage of students who took part in sport or physical activity on at least one day in the last week, by different groups. This shows that there has been an increase in participation rates across every category: namely, for males and females, all ethnic groups, whether part-time or full-time students, whether working or not and whether or not students were studying for a sports qualification.



**Figure 2: Respondents who stated that they did sport or physical activity on at least one day in the past week, by different groups; base=variable. BAME=Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic**

Whilst all groups of students showed an increase in participation in sport or physical activity, the size of the increase varied and needs to be understood in relation to where the baseline figure was set. As shown in Figure 2, the increase in participation was greatest for disabled students (an increase of 9%), those who described their ethnicity as Black, Asian or other minority ethnic group (an increase of 9%) and those who were studying a non-sports related qualification (an increase of 6%).

## **Gender**

Female students were less likely to be involved in sport or physical activity, with 77% reporting that they had participated in sport or physical activity at least once in the past week, compared with 84% of male students. Furthermore, fewer female students took part in sport or physical activity on 3 or more days in the past week compared to male students (44% and 60% respectively).

## **Disability**

Whilst the participation figures for disabled students at colleges are much higher than for disabled people in the general population<sup>3</sup>, disabled students are still less likely to be involved in sport than non-disabled students. Around 77% of disabled students had participated in sport or physical activity on at least one day in the past week, compared to 81% of non-disabled students. Although both disabled and non-disabled students report an increase in participation, the rate of increase for disabled students is more than twice that of non-disabled students; up by 9% for disabled students and 4% for non-disabled students. Thus, the gap in participation between disabled and non-disabled students has narrowed. Indeed, the participation rate reported by disabled students in the year one survey (77%, 2014) is very close to the participation rate reported by non-disabled students in the baseline survey (78%, 2013).

## **Ethnicity**

Whilst participation has increased across all ethnic groups, White British students still report a higher participation rate (82%) than those from Black, Asian and minority ethnic – BAME – groups (79%). Although this disparity was apparent at the baseline, it is evident that the gap has narrowed with a much higher rate of increase for BAME students (up by 9%) than for White British students (up 3%).

## **Sports qualifications**

Students studying for a sports qualification report the smallest change across all of these groups, in participation on at least one day in the last week, albeit based on a very high baseline; up by just 0.3% to 94%. This compares to 78% of students who were not studying for a sports qualification and took part in sport or physical activity on at least one day in the last week. The ‘non-sports qualification’ figure represents a 6% increase in participation on the baseline (74%) which shows that the gap in participation between ‘sports students’ and ‘non-sports students’ has narrowed. Those taking a sports qualification also have a much higher rate of participation in sport or physical activity in the past week on 3 or more days (75%) than those not taking a sports qualification (48%).

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<sup>3</sup> Active People Survey 7, October 2012–October 2013 found that 18.5% of people with a long-term limiting illness or disability played sport once a week. Although the figures are not directly comparable – for example, the age ranges are different and the methodology of data collection is different – the size of the disparity suggests that participation rates may be higher for disabled people at colleges.

## **Employment**

Students in employment (84%) are more likely to participate in sport or physical activity than those not working (77%) and the rate of increase was broadly comparable across both groups. Those in employment were also more likely to participate in sport or physical activity on 3 or more days in the past week, compared to those not in employment (55% and 49% respectively).

## **Full-time and part-time students**

The participation rate for full-time students (81%) was slightly higher than for part-time students (79%) in the year one survey (2014) with both groups increasing at a broadly similar rate from the baseline figure (2013).

## 04. ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN SPORT OR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

### Typical sport or physical activity

As highlighted in Section 3, 81% of students participated in 1x30 minutes of sport or physical activity in the past week. These **active participants** were asked whether or not this was typical of the level of sport they did last year. Just over a third of students (35%) reported that this was approximately the same amount they did last year, 42% reported that they now do more sport/physical activity than a year ago; and 24% reported that they now do less.

Active participants were also asked how long ago they had started regularly participating in sport or physical activity. Just under half (46%) reported that they had started regularly participating in sport/physical activity in the last 18 months, whilst 55%<sup>4</sup> stated that they had started regularly participating more than 18 months ago. A higher proportion of female students reported that they had started participating in sport **regularly in the last 18 months** (53%) compared with male students (40%). Other key differences include a higher proportion of BAME students (51%) reporting participating **regularly in the last 18 months** compared with White British students (43%) and those **not studying a sports related qualification** (49%) compared with those who are (36%).

### Motivations to participate in sport or physical activity

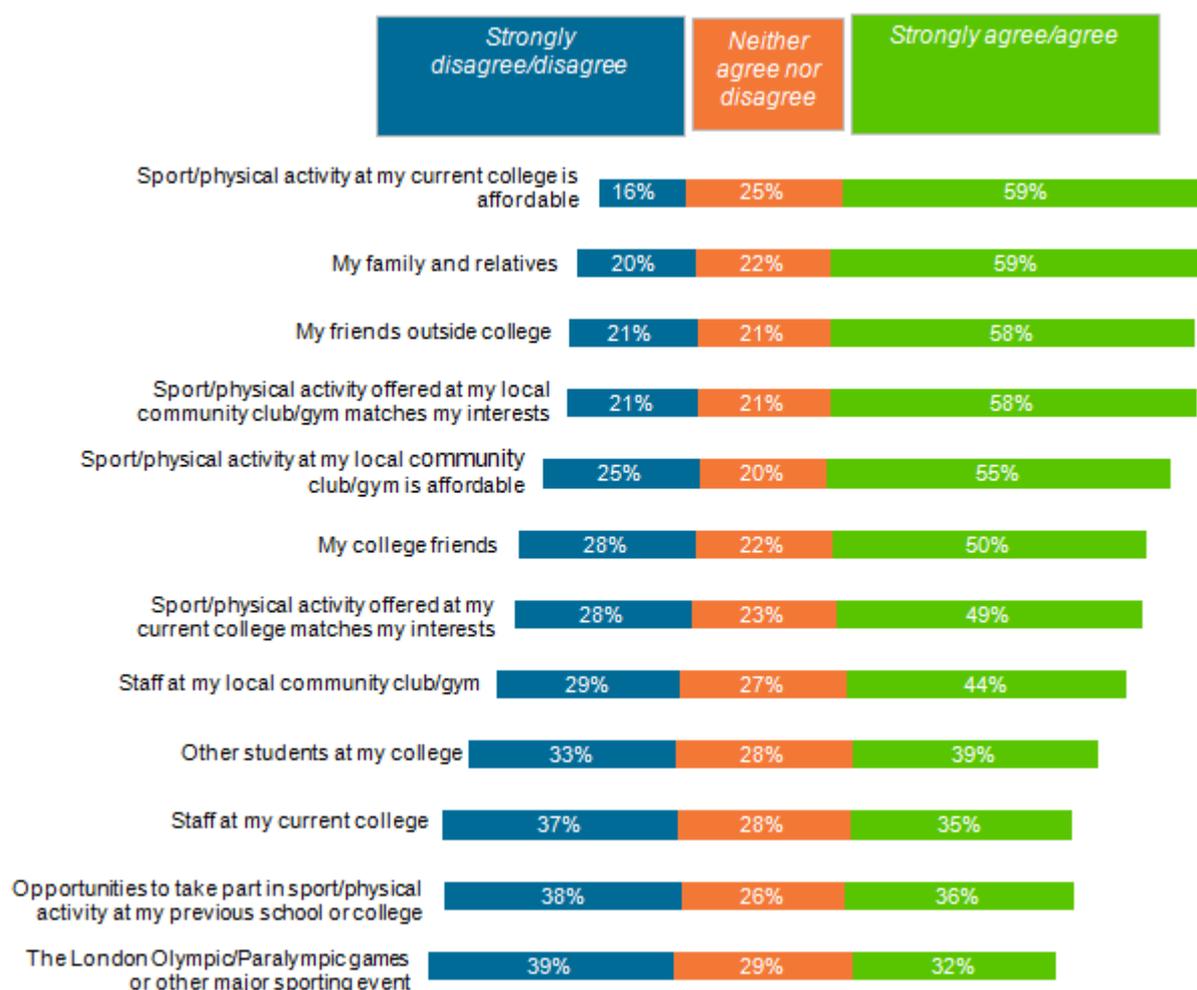
Active participants who had regularly started participating in sport in **the last 18 months** were asked to what extent they agreed with a range of factors that were important in their decision to start sport or physical activity (Figure 3). The factors that were most commonly agreed with were:

- Sport/physical activity at my **current college is affordable**
- My **family and relatives**
- My **friends outside college**
- Sport/physical activity at my **local community club/gym matches my interests**

Although not one of the most commonly reported reasons, one-third (34%) strongly agreed or agreed that they regularly started participating in sport in the last 18 months was because of the **staff at their current college**.

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<sup>4</sup> Figures do not add up to 100% due to rounding



**Figure 3: To what extent students agreed or disagreed that the following factors were important in them starting to do sport/physical activities; base=variable**

Table 1 overleaf shows the proportion of active participants who strongly agreed or agreed with factors that were important in them starting to do sport/physical activity by key characteristics. The following key points emerge from this data:

- *Those doing a sports qualification generally report higher levels of motivation across all the motivating factors.*
- *The motivation of **family and relatives** (57-61%) and **friends outside college** (56-60%) is a consistently high motivating factor across all characteristics (demographics, course studied) but less so for those students with a disability (52% and 45% respectively).*
- *Female students were less motivated than male students across all factors, except for family and relatives (61% compared to 57%).*
- *Among those undertaking a sports qualification, 72% of respondents stated that **affordability** of sport at their college motivated them to start undertaking sport compared to those who were not undertaking a qualification (56%).*
- *A higher proportion of male students (57%) reported that their **college friends** motivated them compared with female students (44%). Furthermore, a higher proportion of those students undertaking a sports qualification (64%) reported that this factor motivated them, compared to those not undertaking a sports qualification (47%).*

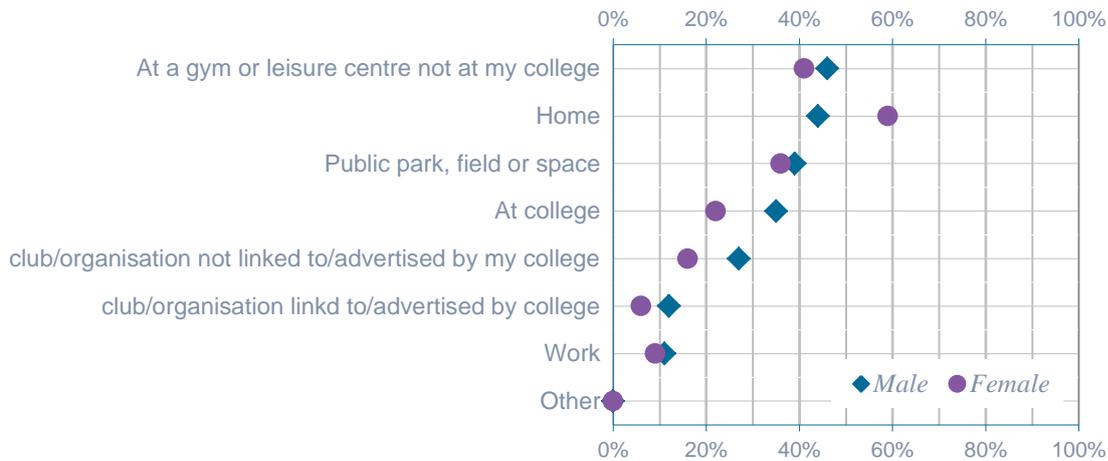
I was motivated to start sport or physical activity because	Male (%)	Female (%)	White British (%)	BAME (%)	Sports qualification (%)	Non sports qualification (%)	Disability (%)	No disability (%)
...the sport/physical activity at my current college is affordable	63	54	56	65	72	56	61	58
...of my family and relatives	57	61	59	59	59	59	52	59
...of my friends outside college	59	57	58	56	60	57	45	59
...the sport/physical activity offered at my local community club/gym matches my interests	61	56	57	61	63	57	51	59
...the sport/physical activity at my local community club/gym is affordable	59	50	53	59	61	53	45	56
...of my college friends	57	44	49	53	64	47	52	50
...the sport/physical activity offered at my current college matches my interests	56	42	46	56	69	44	56	48
...of the staff at my local community club/gym	48	41	43	47	53	42	37	45
...of other students at my college	45	33	37	44	53	36	46	38
...of the staff at my current college	42	28	34	37	59	30	48	34
...of opportunities to take part in sport/physical activity at my previous school or college	45	29	32	46	57	32	57	32
...of the London Olympic/Paralympic games or other major sporting event	35	30	31	36	43	30	43	30

**Table 1: Proportion of respondents that strongly agreed or agreed to the following factors; base=variable, darker shading indicates higher percentage**

## Location of sport activity

All active participants were asked where they participated in sport and physical activity. The most common place reported is at **home** (51%), followed by at a **gym or leisure centre not at my college** (44%), **public park/field or space** (37%) and at their **college** (29%). Other respondents stated that they took part **at a sports club/organisation not linked or advertised by my college** (22%), at **work** (10%) and at a **sports club/organisation linked to/advertised by my college** (9%). Less than 1% of respondents stated other places at which they took part in sport. Out of the 29% of students who participated in sport at college, just 6% of them only took part at their college, with the remaining 94% participating in a range of other locations. This is down slightly from the baseline figures of 33% and 10% respectively.

As seen in Figure 4, female students are more likely to take part in sport at home (59%) compared with male students (44%). A higher proportion of male students reported taking part in sport in all other locations, including at college with 35% compared with 22%.



**Figure 4 - Where students normally take part in sport or physical activity by gender; base male-10,454, female - 9,021.**

A lower proportion of White British students (28%) reported taking part in sport at college compared with BAME students (33%). A higher proportion of disabled students reported taking part in sport at college (40%) compared with non-disabled students (28%) and three-fifths (60%) of students undertaking a sports qualification took part in college sport compared with 22% of all other students.

A higher proportion of those undertaking a sport qualification also stated that they took part in sport through more formal sports opportunities such as through a sports club, whilst a lower proportion stated they did so at home (38% compared with 54% of all other students).

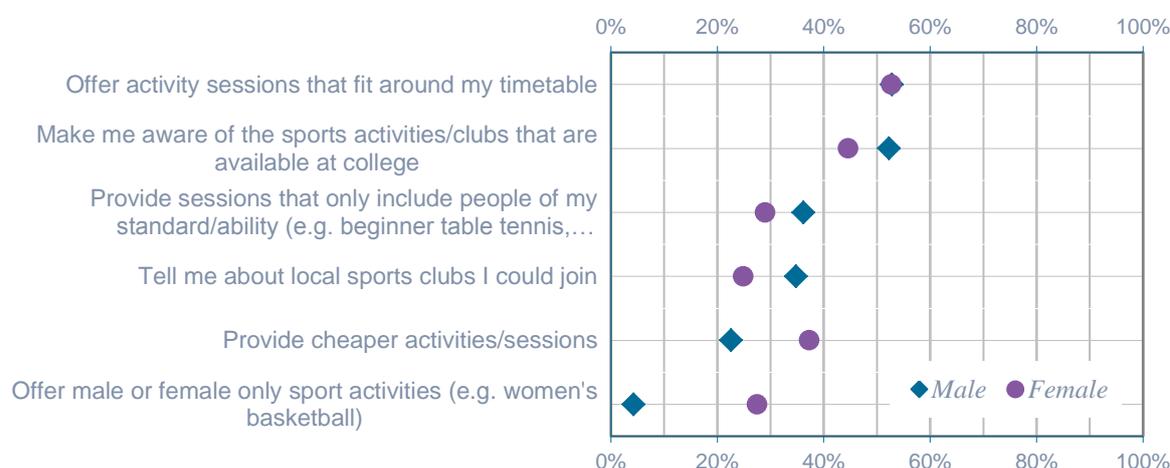
## 05. RE-ENGAGING WITH SPORT OR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

### Re-engagement

19% of students responding to the survey stated that they had not taken part in sport or physical activity during the previous week. However, two-fifths (40%) of these students had done so regularly at some time in the past 18 months. This means that approximately 8% of all students are *latent participants*. For these latent participants, **67%** reported that they would be **interested in re-engaging in sport and physical activity**.

60% of students not taking part in sport or physical activity in the previous week had **not regularly undertaken sport or physical activity** in the last 18 months. This means that approximately 11% of all students are *non-participants*. Of these just under half (48%) stated they would be **interested in participating in sport or physical activity**.

Both latent and non-participant students were asked to select up to three ways in which their college could help them to engage or re-engage with sport. The most frequent response was for the college to **offer sessions that fit around their timetable**. This indicates that timetabling issues may be a factor preventing students from taking part in sport, although **awareness** was also reported by just under half of all students. Responses to most statements were similar across latent and non-participants with the exception of **providing cheaper activities/sessions** with a higher proportion of **non-participants** stating this and a lower proportion stating sessions that include **people of their standard/ability**.



**Figure 5 - Ways for colleges to help male and female students to engage or re-engage with sport and physical activity; base=1,217 – latent participants, 1,295 for non-participants**

Figure 5 shows the male/female split for different ways in which colleges could help them engage/re-engage in sport or physical activity. There was no difference at all for the more common response, with 53% of both male and female students choosing this option.

**Offering male or female only sporting activities** was the option where there was the biggest disparity between male and female students with 25% of females compared to 4% of males choosing this as one of the top three ways in which colleges could help them to engage/re-engage. This may indicate that females are more self-conscious about taking

part in mixed sex sport sessions. A higher percentage of female students also felt that cost was a factor as 37% stated that providing cheaper activities/sessions would encourage them to take part, compared to 23% of male students.

**Sessions that only include people of my standard and ability** was stated by a higher proportion of White British students (29%) compared with BAME students (20%), by disabled people (32%) compared with those students without a disability (25%), and those studying a sports qualification (33%) compared with those not studying for a sports qualification (26%).

**Providing cheaper activities/sessions** at college was reported by a higher proportion of students not undertaking a sports qualification (38% compared with 19% of those undertaking a sports qualification). Sports qualification students may be able to access more sport due to the nature of their studies and may also appreciate the value for money of college sport to a greater extent than students not studying a sport qualification.

## 06. SPORT IN COLLEGE

### Participating in sport or physical activity at college

Active participants who took part in sport at their college were asked to state which activities or events they had been involved in that **were run by their college**. The most frequently reported activity was attending the college **gym** stated by over half (57%) of all students who took part in college sport. Two-fifths (42%) of students report attending **regular sessions or clubs** at their college with **inter-college competitions** being the third most common answer given by over a quarter (26%) of students.

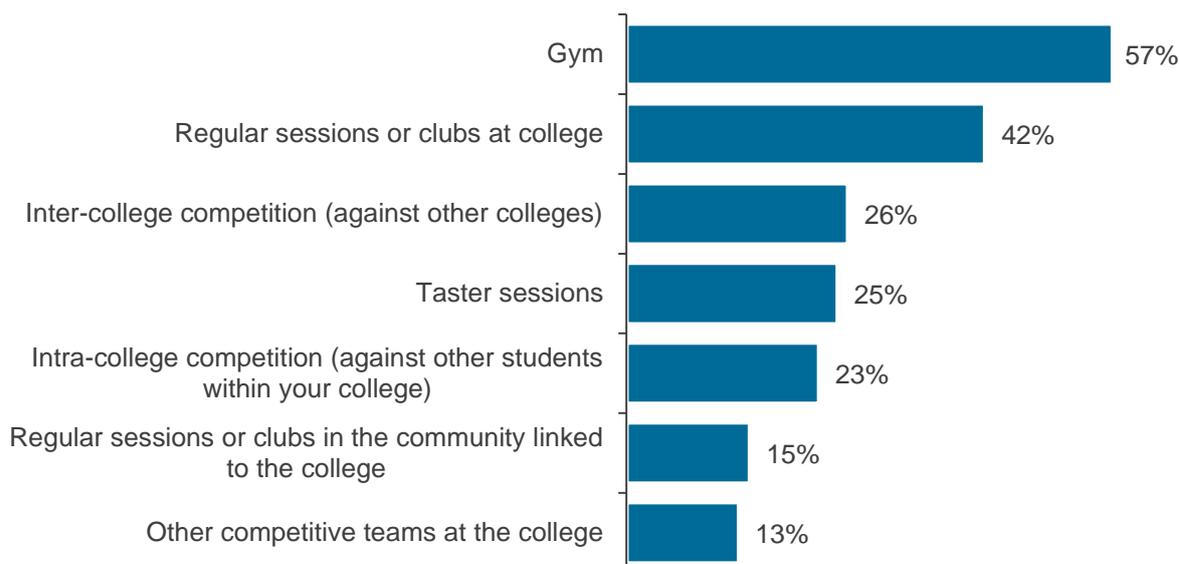


Figure 6: Sports opportunities students have taken part in run by their college; base=5,114

### Gender

A higher proportion of male students report **undertaking competitive sport at college** with 29% undertaking inter-college competitions (compared with 21% of female students), 26% intra-college competitions (compared with 17%) and 15% stating other competitive teams at college (compared with 11%). A higher proportion of female students (28%) reported attending taster sessions compared with male students (23%).

### Disabled

A lower proportion of disabled students stated that they took part in competitive sport with 16% of disabled students stating they took part in inter-college competitions (compared with 28% of non-disabled students) and 15% taking part in intra-college competitions (compared with 24%). As with female students, a higher proportion of disabled students reported taking part in taster sessions (32%) compared with non-disabled students (24%).

### Sports Qualification

As may be expected competitive sport was also more common amongst students who are undertaking a sports qualification at college compared with those who were not. Over one-third (38%) of students undertaking a sports qualification at college took part in inter-college competitions (compared with 18% of all other students). Just under one-third

(31%) reported taking part in intra-college competitions (compared with 17%) and 17% reported other competitive teams (compared with 11%).

### Students’ opinion of the sport or physical activity opportunities on offer at their colleges

Students who were not in their first year at college were asked to state if opportunities to take part in sport and physical activity at their college had changed in the last year. 44% of students stated that the college now offers more sport and physical activities, 16% stated that the college offers the same amount and 4% stated they now offer less. Over one-third (36%) of all students were unsure if college sport had changed over the last year.

Those students who were in their first year, and therefore unable to report on how college sport had changed, were asked about the current opportunities available to them. Just over half of all students (57%) thought that their college **“offers a wide variety of sport and physical activities for them to take part in”**. This represents an increase of around 10% from the equivalent baseline figure (52%). Over a quarter (27%) of first year students thought there were **“limited number of opportunities available to them”**; and 16% thought that there were **“no sport or physical activities on offer”** to them or **“none that they wanted to take part in”** (both broadly comparable to those reported for the baseline survey – 30% and 17% respectively).

All students were asked further about certain aspects of college sport with students reporting mixed views on the sport offer available at their college. Over half (57%) stated that they either strongly agree or agree that the college provides information on local clubs and activities, whilst 12% either strongly disagreed or disagreed. Over half (56%) also strongly agreed or agreed that they know who to contact about sport opportunities at the college, with 14% reporting that they strongly disagree or disagree. Sessions and activities that fit round their timetable was the area less students strongly agreed and agreed with, 40% stated this and a further 27% either strongly disagreed or disagreed.

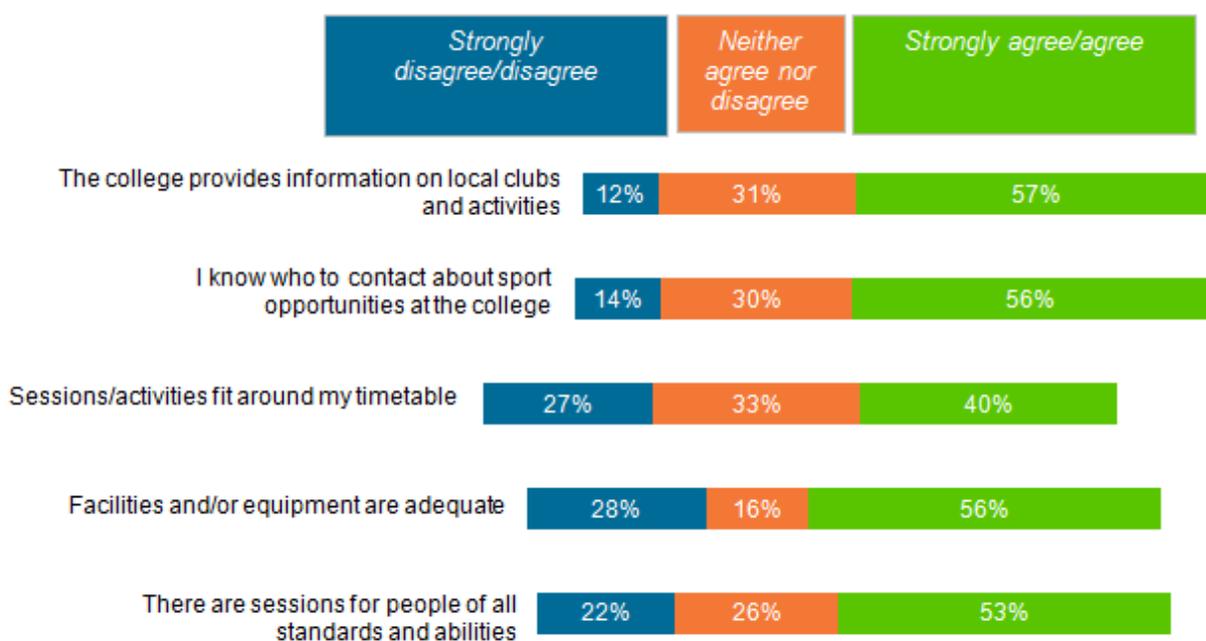


Figure 7 – Students’ opinion of the sport or physical activity opportunities on offer at their colleges; base=variable

## Sports clubs, community complexes and gyms

As highlighted in Section 4, only 6% of students who are active participants take part in activities **only** within their college.

Those active participants who take part in sport or physical activity at sports clubs and/or community leisure complexes or gyms instead of, or as well as, their college were asked to compare their experience at these locations with the college offer:

- *Just under two-thirds (61%) strongly agreed or agreed that local sports clubs, community leisure complexes or gyms **have sessions that fit around my timetable better.***
- *58% either strongly agreed or agreed that local sports clubs, community leisure complexes or gyms **have better facilities/equipment.***
- *Relatively few (29%) stated that sessions at local sports clubs, community leisure centres or gyms **have sessions that are cheaper than those offered at college.***

This suggests that for those students taking part in sport outside of college, convenience is more important to them than cost. With students who do participate at college having raised concerns over timetable flexibility, this would seem to be an important factor in student sports participation at college.

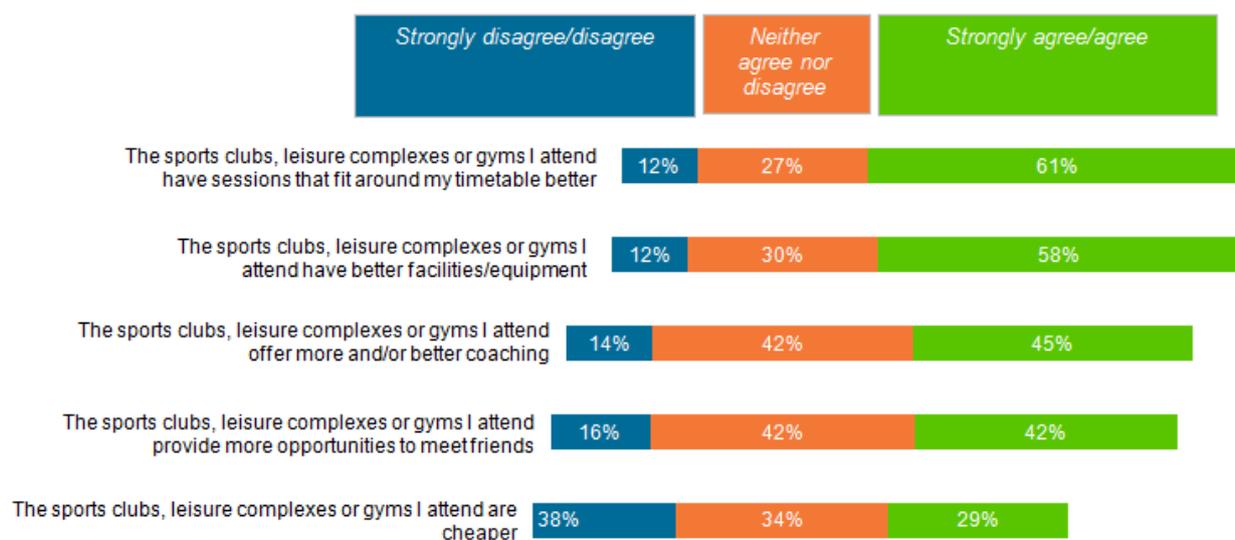


Figure 8 - The extent to which students agree with the above statements; base=variable

## Volunteering

Just over **one-in-ten students** (13%) report supporting events or activities run for other college students as a **volunteer at their college**. This represents a marginal increase from the baseline figure of 12%. Key differences by student groups include:

- 32% of students undertaking a sports qualification compared with 9% of all other students
- 17% male students volunteer compared with 8% of female students
- 18% of BAME groups compared to 11% of White British students
- 16% of disabled students compared with 12% of non-disabled students

It is interesting to note that for both BAME students and disabled students the percentage volunteering is higher despite reporting lower participation rates. For those who do not currently volunteer only one-quarter (27%) stated that they were aware of opportunities to volunteer in their college.

## 07. THE BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATING IN SPORT OR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

### The benefits of participating in sport or physical activity for students

Nearly a quarter of all students (24%) either strongly agreed or agreed that the “**sport opportunities on offer at the college were influential in their decision to apply**” to that college. As may be expected this was much higher for those students who were undertaking a sports qualification (54%) but even for those students *not* undertaking a sports-related course, the sports offer at college was an influential factor in the decision as to which college to apply for (18%).

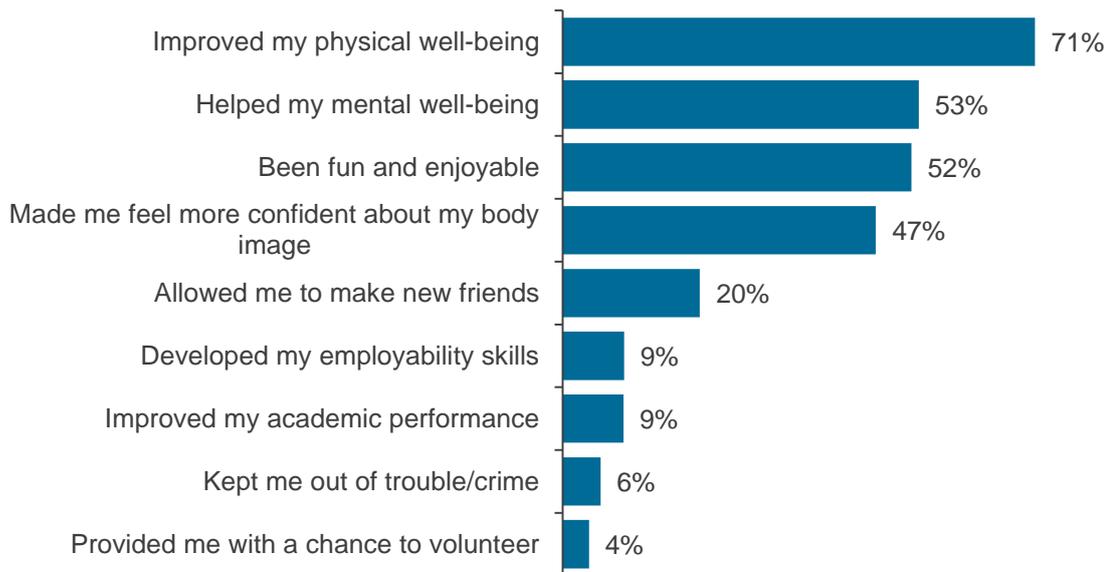
Over three-quarters (79%) of students, who were participating in sport, either strongly agreed or agreed that “**sport improves their mental well-being**”. Over two-fifths (44%) of those participating in sport also strongly agreed/agreed that sport had helped them to develop **employability skills** and a similar proportion (43%) strongly agreed or agreed that doing so “**helps them with their college work**”.

Almost three-quarters (73%) of students participating in sport at college state that this has **enhanced the student experience** and just over a half (52%) reported that “**being involved in college sport means I attend college more than I would do otherwise**”. This emphasises the added-value that sport participation can contribute to wider college outcomes.

### The top three main benefits of active participation

Students responding to the survey who were **active participants** in sport or physical activity and had started participating regularly in the last 18 months were also asked to state what they thought were the three main benefits of participating in sport (Figure 9). The top three benefits reported were:

1. **Improved my physical well-being** (71%);
2. **Improved my mental well-being** (53%)
3. **Been fun and enjoyable** (52 %);



**Figure 9 - The frequency of the benefits of participation in sport or physical activity for active students, reported as being in their “top three”; base=6,535**

### Analysis by different groups of respondents

A higher proportion of students who were **not undertaking a sports qualification** (74%) reported improvements in **their physical well-being** compared with those who were undertaking a sports qualification (55%). A higher proportion also stated it helped their **mental well-being** (56%) compared to those undertaking a sports qualification (39%).

A higher proportion of **female** students (61%) stated it was **fun and enjoyable** compared with male students (45%) and that it made them **feel more confident about their body image** (56% compared with 37%). A higher proportion of students **not undertaking a sports qualification** also stated this (51%) compared with those undertaking a sports qualification (30%).

More than double the proportion of **disabled students** stated that it had allowed them to **make new friends** (39%) compared with non-disabled students (18%). Although reported by a lower proportion of students **improved academic performance** was reported more frequently by **male** students (12%) compared with female students (6%). A higher proportion of **male** students (9%) reported that it **kept them out of trouble/crime** compared with female students (2%).

	Male (%)	Female (%)	White British (%)	BAME (%)	Sports Qualification (%)	Non sports qualification (%)	Disability (%)	No disability (%)
Improved my physical well-being (e.g. better fitness levels)	66	75	73	65	55	74	57	72
Helped my mental well-being (e.g. reduced stress)	56	48	55	49	39	56	41	55
Been fun and enjoyable	45	61	54	47	53	52	57	52
Made me feel more confident about my body image	37	56	47	45	30	51	33	48
Allowed me to make new friends	27	14	19	24	33	18	39	18
Developed my employability skills	13	6	8	11	21	7	9	9
Improved my academic performance	12	6	8	13	18	7	10	9
Kept me out of trouble/crime	9	2	5	8	11	5	9	5
Provided me with a chance to volunteer	5	3	4	4	10	3	6	4

**Table 2: Proportion of respondents that strongly agreed or agreed to the following benefits of participating in sport or physical activity; base=variable, darker shading indicates higher percentage**

## 08. CONCLUSIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

With over 25,000 responses, the latest Active Colleges Leisure Survey reinforces the significant effort that Active Colleges are making in order to generate valuable insight at both a strategic level and for college-specific use. With a similar number of responses to the baseline survey (2013), and future waves of the survey scheduled, this represents the most comprehensive data source ever collected into sports participation amongst young people in Further Education in England.

The second Active Colleges Leisure Survey shows that, similar to the baseline survey carried out in 2013, participation rates are very high amongst college students, with 80.9% taking part in sport or physical activity for at least 30 minutes on at least one occasion in the last week. This represents a 4.3% increase in participation from the baseline figure of 77.5% in 2013.

Groups of students with lower rates of participation were females, Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) students, disabled students and those studying for a non-sports qualification. However, since 2013, an increase in participation rates for all different student groups has taken place. This increase was highest for BAME students, disabled students and those students not studying for a sports qualification and has resulted in a narrowing of the gap in participation rates between these groups. The increase in participation rates for female students was very similar to the increase for male students. The participation gap between working and non-working students, full- and part-time students is also similar to that in 2013 (Appendix 1 outlines the changes in participation between the baseline survey in 2013 and the latest data).

Of those students participating, around a third participate more now (2014) than when the baseline survey was conducted (2013) while 46% state that they have started to regularly participate in the last 18 months. In other words, some of those students who were not previously participating in sport now are, and those who were already participating are doing more. These timelines map broadly against Active Colleges funding, and it will be important to identify other factors, which may also be drivers of change.

There is also interest from latent- and non-participants in engaging, or re-engaging, in sport or physical activity. Of the 19% of students who did not participate in sport or physical activity in the last week, 67% of *latent participants* and 48% of *non-participants* stated that they would be interested in re-engaging or engaging in sport or physical activity in the future. This suggests further increases in sports participation could be achieved in the future.

Suggested ways of engaging/re-engaging those who were not active participants included; more flexible sporting activities around college timetabling, improved communications regarding activities on offer and cheaper sessions. There are, however, significant challenges in considering how to engage those students not currently participating, and supporting those students most at risk of dropping out of sport altogether.

Responses regarding the opportunities on offer at colleges demonstrate the impact College Sport Makers are having, with 44% of students, who were not in their first year at college, stating that their college now offers more sport and physical activities than it did a year ago. Furthermore, 57% of first year students thought that their college offered a wide

variety of sport and physical activities for them to take part in – up by around 9% on the equivalent figure a year ago (52%). Over half of all students agreed or strongly agreed that their college provides information on local clubs and activities (57%), that they know who to contact about sport opportunities at the college (56%) and that facilities and/or equipment were adequate (56%) with sessions for people of all standards and abilities (53%).

The second Active Colleges Leisure Survey shows that participation is increasing across all groups of students in Active Colleges. This indicates that the programme may be positively influencing both the views students have of the value of engaging in sport or physical activity and their active participation, helping students to develop a sporting habit for life. An increased number of respondents – including those from groups with traditionally low participation rates – also state that colleges offer more sporting opportunities now than was the case in the baseline survey, with greater variety and improved access. There are still challenges: despite increases in participation, disabled students, BAME students and female students still undertake 1x30 minutes of sport or physical activity per week less than their counterparts do. College Sport Makers will need to ensure that the momentum evident during the first year of the programme and the corresponding high participation rates are maintained.

## APPENDIX 1: COMPARISON OF KEY STATISTICS FROM THE BASELINE AND YEAR 1 ACTIVE COLLEGES LEISURE SURVEY

The table below outlines the changes in participation among Active College students between the Baseline Active Colleges Leisure Survey, administered in 2013, and Year 1, administered in 2014.

	Baseline (%)	Year 1 (%)	Percentage change (%)
<b>Overall change in participation (1x30 mins)</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>4.4</b>
Male	81	84	3.9
Female	74	77	3.6
Disabled	71	77	9.1
Non-disabled	78	81	4.0
White British	79	82	3.3
BAME	72	79	8.8
Sports qualification	94	94	0.3
Non-sports qualification	74	78	5.7
Working	81	84	3.9
Not working	75	77	3.3
Full-time at college	78	81	4.4
Part-time at college	76	79	3.4
College offers wide variety of sport and physical activity	52	57	9.2
Participate in sport or physical activity in college, and elsewhere	33	29	-13.8
Participate in sport or physical activity only in college	10	6	-66.7

**Table 3: Changes in key statistics between the baseline Active Colleges Leisure Survey (2013) and year 1 (2014).**