NATIONAL RESEARCH UNIVERSITY HIGHER SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

THAT'S SO HSE

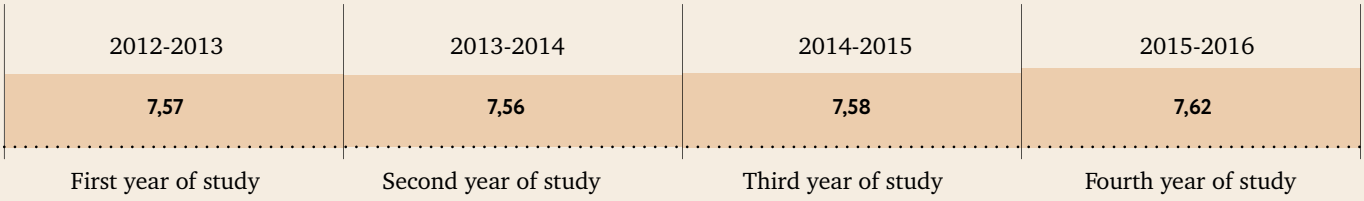
HSE Center for Institutional Research Newsletter №7 (29), 2017

The latest issue of That's So HSE is dedicated to a cause of great excitement, sleepless nights, and good, or not so good, news—to students' academic performance. In this issue, we try to answer the following questions:
How does academic performance change year-on-year?
Is it easy to retain a lead position after completing one's first year of studies?
Is it possible to move from being a "laggard" to a leader?
How does the academic performance of male and female students, state-funded and fee-paying students change in the course of their studies?

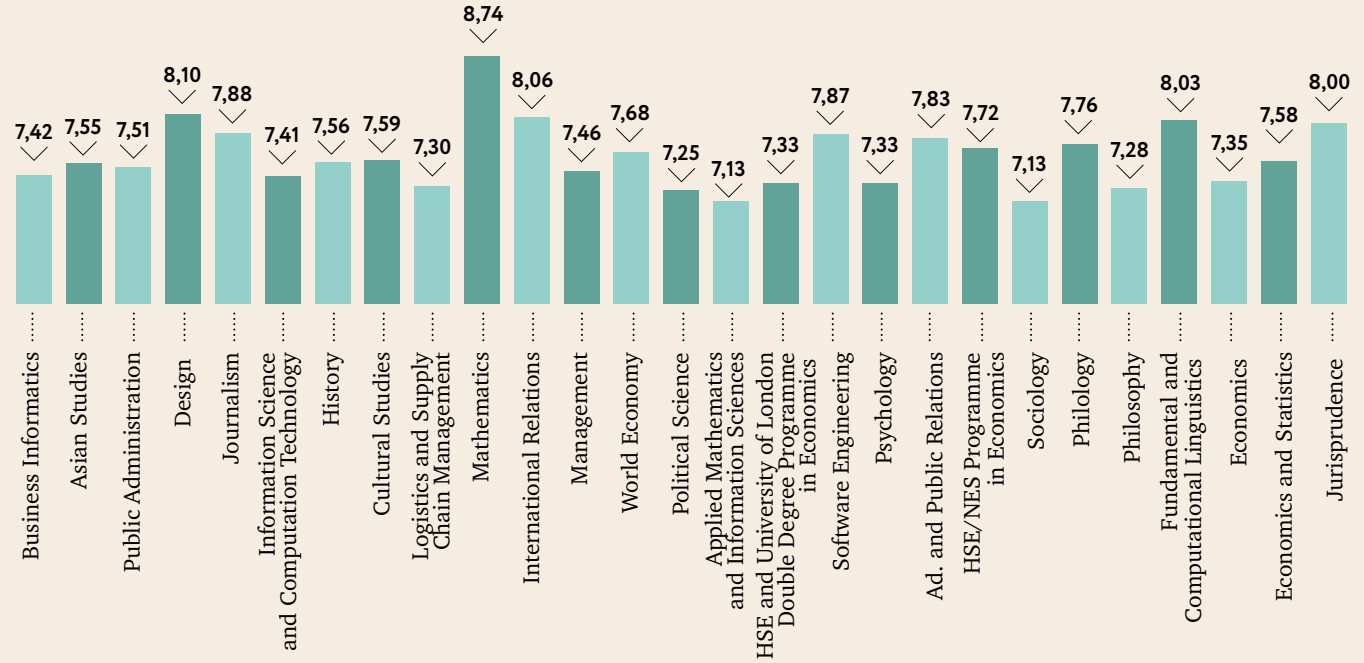
We attempted to answer these questions as applicable to a cohort of students who were enrolled in HSE undergraduate programmes in 2012 and graduated in 2016. The dynamics of their average grades over four years of study, as well as differences in the average grades between HSE educational programmes, are presented on the first page.
The next two pages describe the progress of students who fit into different categories, based their academic performance at the end of their first year of studies, and show what happened afterwards.
Finally, the fourth page is dedicated to changes in academic performance among various groups of students.

Contents:

AVERAGE GRADE YEAR-ON-YEAR DYNAMIC FOR 2012 UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS COHORT [1, 2]



AVERAGE GRADES THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE PERIOD OF STUDY (2012-2016) IN THE FOLLOWING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES: [3]



1 This analysis does not include students who matriculated in 2012 but were dismissed later for any reason, or took an exceptional leave of absence.
2 The comparative analysis of educational programmes does not include programmes involving less than 15 students of the cohort under consideration. These include Information Systems and Technologies, Applied Information Science, Info-communication Technologies and Systems, Fundamental Information Science and Information Technologies, Applied Mathematics and Information Science, Quality Management, Applied Mathematics, Nanotechnologies and Microsystems Engineering, Electronics and Nanoelectronics, Design and Technology of Electronic Means, and Technical Systems Administration.
3 Grades for Physical Education and student internships have not been included in the academic performance assessment. Grades given for theses and at the final state certification stage were taken into account during academic performance assessments. Source: ASAV, N=2115.

HOW STUDENTS' POSITIONS IN ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE CATEGORIES MAY CHANGE IN THE COURSE OF THEIR STUDIES

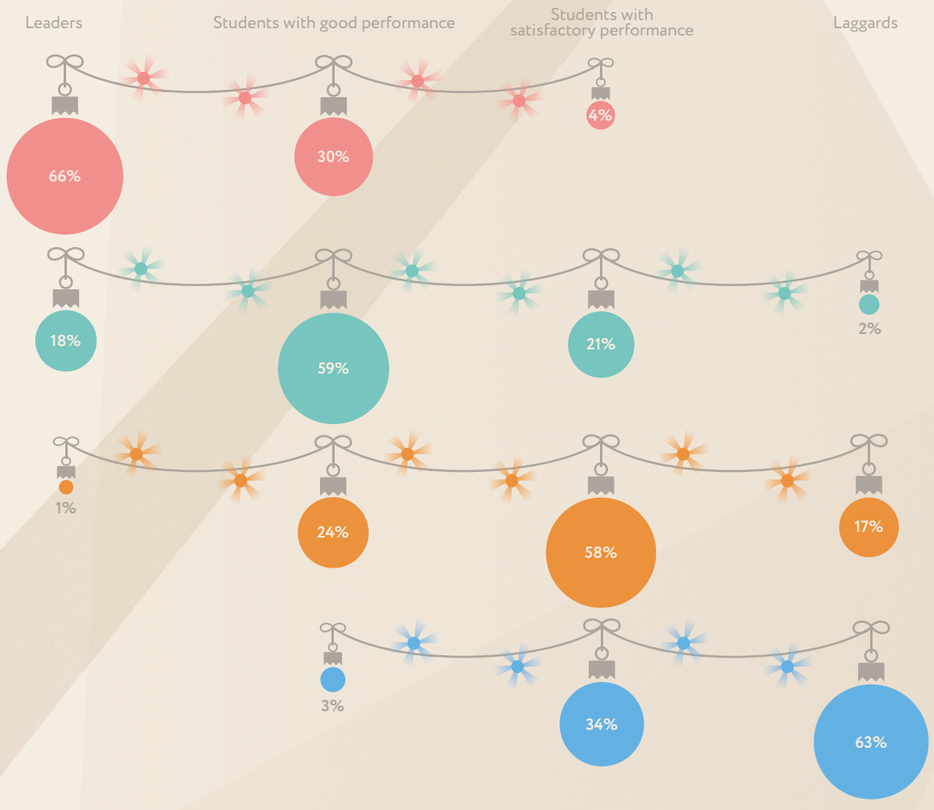
We analysed the academic performance of undergraduate students in 2012 - 2016. Based on the results for each academic year, we have classified students into four categories, depending on their relative performance: leaders (18%); students with good performance (32%); students with satisfactory performance (32%); and laggards (18%).
Do students retain the positions achieved after completing their first year of study over the subsequent years? Or, are students who have managed to take a leading position at risk of losing it?
The following is presented as an illustration of this issue. It shows what happens over the subsequent years of study with those students who used to be a leader, good or satisfactory performer, or a laggard upon completion of their first year of study. The results are as such:

- Success and academic performance are volatile. For example, 10% of students who were leaders after their first year of study shifted two positions downwards to become students with satisfactory performance after their third year;
- Students who did not show very high performance results after the first year of study have an opportunity to improve their positions in future. For instance, 14% of students who lagged behind after their first year of study shifted to become good performers in the fourth year;
- Leaders are comparatively most stable. For instance, over 50% of students who became leaders upon completion of their first year retain their positions by the fourth year.

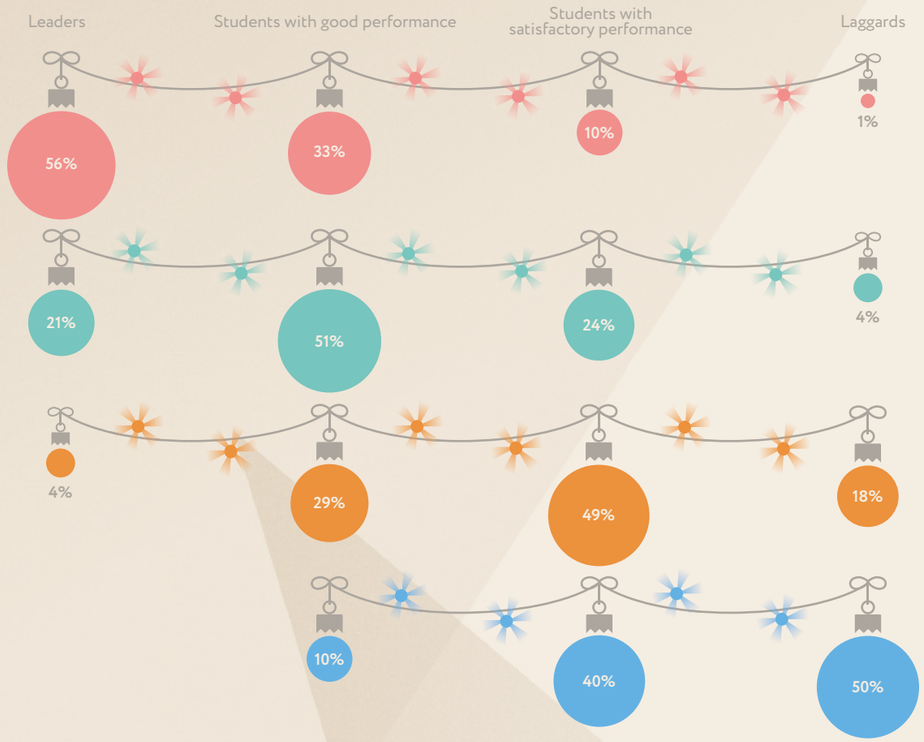
CATEGORIES OF STUDENTS BASED ON THEIR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, UPON COMPLETION OF THEIR FIRST YEAR OF STUDY

Leaders · Students with good performance · Students with satisfactory performance · Laggards

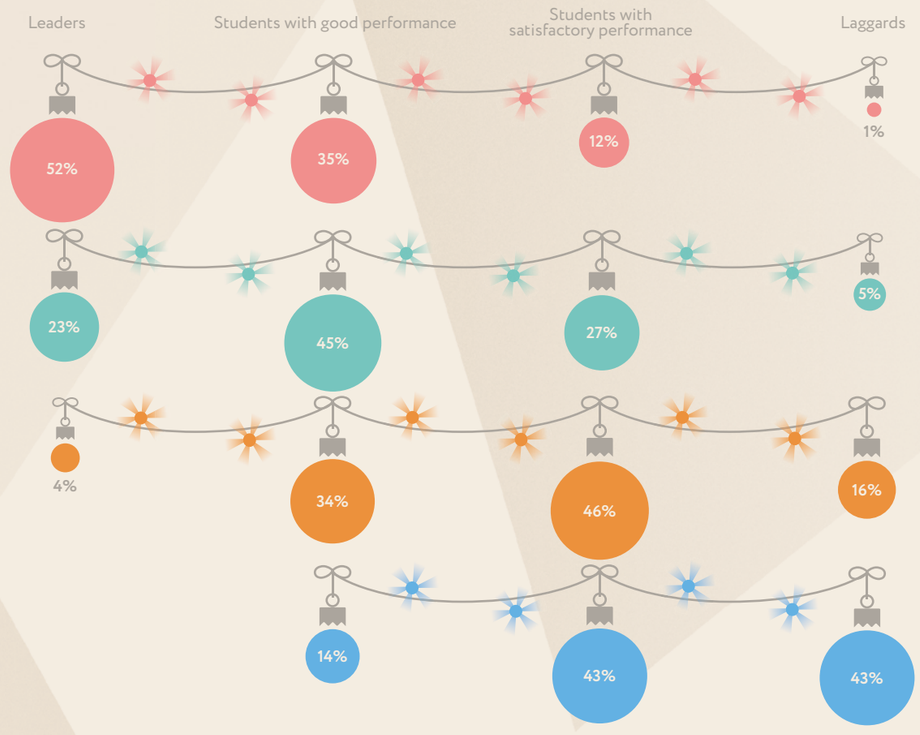
UPON COMPLETION OF THEIR SECOND YEAR OF STUDY, REMAINED IN THE GROUP OF



UPON COMPLETION OF THIRD YEAR OF STUDIES, REMAINED IN THE GROUP OF



UPON COMPLETION OF FOURTH YEAR OF STUDIES, REMAINED IN THE GROUP OF



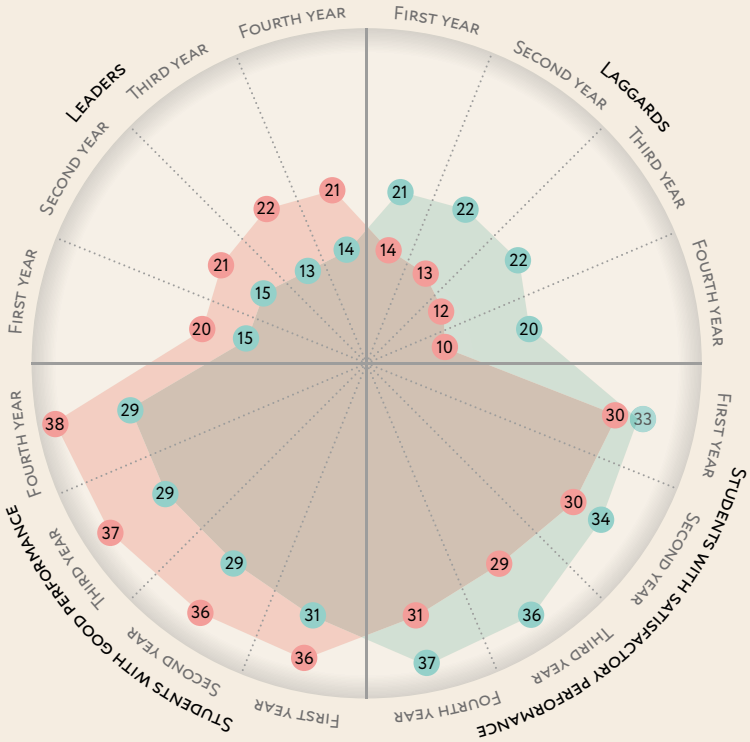
1 These categories are based on the average academic performance within each educational programme, with due consideration of standard fluctuations. Leaders tend to be students with an average annual grade exceeding the "average for the programme plus a standard fluctuation". Good performers are students with an average annual grade exceeding the average for the programme, but lower than "the average for the programme plus a standard fluctuation". Satisfactorily performing students have an average annual grade lower than the average for the programme, but higher than "the average for the programme minus a standard fluctuation". Laggards are students with an average annual grade lower than the "average for the programme minus a standard fluctuation". Please note that this analysis does not include students who matriculated in 2012 but were later dismissed, or who took an exceptional leave of absence.

Source: Assessment of 2012 Undergraduate Students Cohort, N=2115.

The proportional breakdown of the categories considered among all students comes to 18%/32%/32%/18%, respectively (from leaders to laggards). What is the variance in the academic performance of male and female students and those studying on state-funded and fee-paying places?

These pictures illustrate the percentage of leaders, students with good and satisfactory performance, and laggards in different student groups. This information highlights the dynamics between the first and fourth years of studies.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND GENDER



Female students

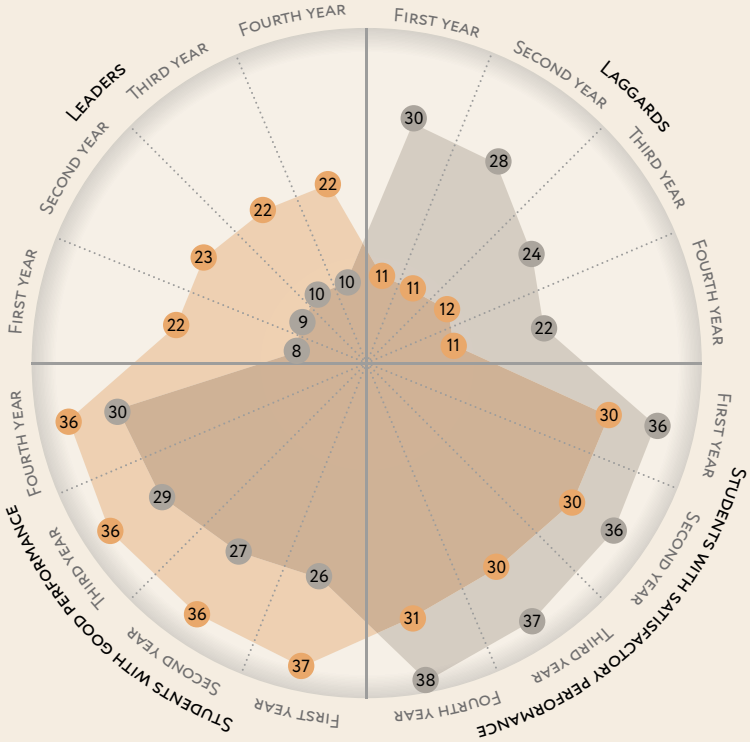
Male students

Dynamics of relative performance over four years of study[1]

Obviously positive	4% / 2%
Moderately positive	27% / 24%
Unchanged	46% / 47%
Moderately negative	20% / 22%
Obviously negative	3% / 5%

Boys should work harder if they want to show better academic results than girls in the same year of study! There are more leaders and fewer laggards among female students. At the same time, male students are more likely to shift downwards to categories with lower academic performance.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND MODE OF STUDY



State-funded students

Fee-paying students

Dynamics of relative performance over four years of study[1]

Obviously positive	3% / 5%
Moderately positive	24% / 28%
Unchanged	46% / 48%
Moderately negative	22% / 16%
Obviously negative	5% / 3%

Although leaders and good performers are not numerous among fee-paying students as compared with students studying on state-funded places, they nevertheless show positive dynamics over four years of study. For instance, the share of laggards among them generally decreases, as they appear among students with better academic performance.

1 The progress analysis considers shifts between the categories in terms of students' academic performance by the end of their fourth year of studies, as compared with where they stood at the end of the first year. Positive dynamics: a student has gained two or three positions, for example, if he/she has shifted from being a "laggard" to the category of well performing students or leaders; Moderately positive dynamics: a student has gained one position, for example, if he/she has shifted from the category of well performing students to leaders; Unchanged: a student's position remains unchanged; Moderately negative dynamics: a student has lost one position; Obviously negative dynamics: a student has lost two or three positions. Source: Assessment of the 2012 Undergraduate Students Cohort, N=2115.

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