Unistats 2019

Timetable and arrangements for the submission and publication of data

This publication is for:

- registered higher education providers in England

- higher education institutions in Northern Ireland.

The Higher Education Funding Council for Wales and the Scottish Funding Council will write separately to providers in Wales and Scotland respectively.

Arrangements for Unistats 2019

1. This publication outlines arrangements for the 2019 Unistats data collection. It also provides an update on the development of a new information resource that will replace the Unistats website.

2. While we are in the process of replacing the Unistats website, the data collection will continue to be known in 2019 as 'the Unistats collection' and the resulting dataset as 'the Unistats dataset'.

Providers required to return Unistats data

3. The following higher education providers are required to return Unistats data:

- providers in England that are registered with the Office for Students (OfS)[1].

- publicly funded providers in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

4. Data should be returned for eligible courses delivered by the provider itself or by other providers on its behalf through a subcontractual agreement. Eligible courses are defined in the coverage of the Unistats record on the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) website[2].

Arrangements for returns for subcontracted provision

Registering providers should include in their return any eligible courses delivered by another provider on their behalf through a subcontractual agreement.

The exception to this is where a teaching provider delivers its own regulated provision (or funded provision in the case of Northern Ireland), and provision on behalf of another regulated or funded provider. In this case, the teaching provider should return the data for all of its eligible courses. Registering providers remain responsible for ensuring the return is made for their courses.

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[1] The OfS will shortly issue regulatory notices to registered providers to notify them formally of this requirement.

[2] See https://www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c19061/coverage

Process for submission and signoff of data

5. Further education colleges in England should return their Unistats data to the OfS. All other providers should return data to HESA. Detailed guidance on the data required is available on the HESA website[3].

6. The timetable for submission of Unistats data for courses running in 2019-20 is in Table 1. To ensure that data remains accurate, it is possible to resubmit data to reflect changes to course details or website links throughout the year. We will publish an updated dataset every Wednesday after the initial publication.

7. Data must pass a series of system validation checks before it can be submitted and signed off as accurate. Unless all stages of the process, including signoff, have been completed, we will not consider the data to have been received and will be unable to publish it.

8. The dataset should initially be signed off by the provider's accountable officer, but formal responsibility for signing off any subsequent updates may be delegated to another member of the senior management team. If the accountable officer (usually the head of provider) is unable to sign off the initial return, this should be done by the individual acting in this capacity at the time, and the accountable officer should notify the OfS or HESA in advance.

Information for further education colleges in England

9. Further education colleges in England submit data through the OfS extranet. The OfS will write to them when the collection opens with details of how to access the extranet. For assistance with the submission process, contact unistats@officeforstudents.org.uk.

Information for other providers

10. Access to the HESA data collection system is managed through the HESA Identity System[4]. For assistance with the submission process, contact liaison@hesa.ac.uk.

DLHE and NSS data

11. We will continue to use data from the Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey in the 2019 dataset, but will be developing a solution for its replacement from 2020, when we expect to begin publishing data from the Graduate Outcomes Survey. The DLHE data that we use in 2019 will be that used in the 2018 dataset. It will be available in the system and visible in reports from the point when the collection systems open.

12. The OfS will be applying the Code of Practice for Statistics to the publication of Unistats data. National Student Survey (NSS) and DLHE data will therefore be limited to the numbers of students and the aggregation level associated with each course. NSS data will be added to collection systems on **Wednesday 10 July**.

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[3] See https://www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c19061

[4] See https://www.hesa.ac.uk/support/user-guides/ids-guide

Timetable

Table 1: Key dates

Date	Activity	Notes
24 May 2019	Collection systems open	
10 July 2019	Addition of NSS data	NSS data will be added to the data collection systems and will be visible in reports.
25 July 2019	Deadline for submission of a valid dataset	Providers are required to have submitted a dataset which passes validation and contains the majority of their courses.
16 August 2019	Sign off deadline	Providers are required to have signed off as accurate a dataset which has passed system validation and is suitable for publication.

13. We will confirm the intended publication date for the 2019 dataset in July 2019.

Changes to the collection and data updates

14. We have identified a need for prospective students to have easier access to information, not only about tuition fees, but also about any additional costs that they might incur in connection with their programme. We would prefer to meet this need by providing direct links to this information on providers' webpages, as providers should already be publishing it to meet their obligations under consumer law. We have therefore added a new URL field (and space for a Welsh-language equivalent)[5] to the return this year, to collect links to information about course costs on providers' webpages.

15. In June we will update Unistats with Year 4 Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) ratings for participating providers.

16. We will also update Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) data for those providers for which we publish it, to include data for the 2016-17 tax year. We expect to begin to publish updated LEO data in June. The OfS will confirm the date in its statistical release schedule[6].

Development of a new information resource

Development of a replacement for the Unistats website

17. We have been working on a UK-wide basis to develop a replacement for the Unistats website and now have agreement to progress to the beta stage of the project. We will be carrying out a programme of user research, development and testing with the intention of releasing a beta

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[5] Data items CRSECSTURL and CRSECSTURLW.

[6] See https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/producing-statistics/

version of the new website in September 2019, on which the 2019 Unistats data will be published.

18. The new website will have a particular focus for those who are less well supported with information, advice and guidance. By helping prospective students to understand more about higher education and encouraging them to reflect on what is important to them, we can point them to relevant information and support them to make informed decisions about whether to go on to higher education, and what and where to study.

19. We do not plan to make extensive changes to data outputs for 2019, but we will be carrying out user research to develop presentations of our existing datasets that are easily understandable without oversimplifying the data. This research will inform changes to the outputs for 2020, when we may depart more significantly from our current approach. We will inform providers of any changes we intend to make for 2019 in July.

Changes to the Unistats widget

20. We will be developing a replacement for the Unistats widget to coincide with the replacement of the website, and will issue guidance on its implementation at the beginning of July 2019. Like the current widget, it will provide a direct link to data about the course from providers' course pages. The deadline for its implementation, and removal of the current widget, will be **Friday 27 September 2019**.

List of abbreviations

DLHE Destination of Leavers from Higher Education

HESA Higher Education Statistics Agency

LEO Longitudinal Education Outcomes

NSS National Student Survey

OfS Office for Students

TEF Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Survey