

Office for
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Unistats 2023

**Timetable and arrangements for the
submission and publication of data**

Reference OfS 2023.16

Enquiries to unistats@officeforstudents.org.uk

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This publication is for:

- registered higher education providers in England
- higher education institutions in Northern Ireland.

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

Summary

This publication describes arrangements for the 2023-24 Unistats data collection for providers registered with the Office for Students (OfS) and higher education providers in Northern Ireland. It sets out:

- changes to the dataset for 2023
- which providers need to submit data
- arrangements for submission of subcontracted provision
- links to Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) guidance on what data is required and the data validation and submission process
- a provisional timetable.

Providers must submit their data to HESA by **19 July 2023**.

Guidance for providers is available on the HESA website:

- Data requirements: <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c23061>
- Data validation and submission process:
<https://www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c23061/support-guides>
- Sub-contractual and collaborative provision data returns:
https://www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c23061/download/subcontractual_collaborative_provision.pdf

For queries about this publication, please contact unistats@discoveruni.org.uk.

For enquiries about submitting your Unistats return, please contact liaison@hesa.ac.uk.

Introduction

This publication outlines arrangements for the 2023 Unistats data collection (also referred to by the HESA definition of C23061). It is for:

- registered higher education providers in England
- higher education providers in Northern Ireland.

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

Please note: the dates and deadlines set out below may be subject to change.

The Unistats record is collected to help prospective higher education students decide what and where to study. The record covers undergraduate courses that are open to entrants in the next academic year.

The Unistats record collects data about full and part-time undergraduate courses. This is then joined to other datasets, such as National Student Survey and Graduate Outcomes, to generate a range of course information. This is published by HESA as open data and included on the [Discover Uni](#) website, which is run by the OfS on behalf of the Department for the Economy Northern Ireland (DfENI), HEFCW and SFC.

The Unistats data is collected prospectively. The 2023-24 (C23061) record includes courses beginning in the 2024-25 academic year. Providers submit data to HESA through its data collection system.

Changes to Unistats 2023

Dataset name change

1. The name of the Unistats dataset is to be changed to 'The Discover Uni dataset'.
2. The change will be applied to the dataset in September 2023 and will be reflected on the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) website where the dataset is published and through which providers submit their Unistats data returns. It will also be updated in publications associated with Unistats.
3. Please note:
 - the only change in September 2023 is to the name of the dataset. (The name of the Unistats collection will be changed to 'The Discover Uni collection' for the 2024-25 collection.)
 - no changes to the dataset fieldnames or schema are anticipated as a result, nor any changes which will affect providers' collection and submission of their course data.
4. We are asking that all references to the 'Unistats' dataset on websites and in publications are updated to read as 'The Discover Uni dataset (formerly Unistats)'. We are requesting that updates to reflect this dataset name change are completed by 31 December 2023. Organisations do not need to make changes to the naming or labelling conventions used within their systems unless they choose to do so.

Data changes

5. It is anticipated that the C23061 dataset will include:
 - The new NSS 2023 data – this will reflect the new NSS survey questions and student responses (subject to consultation)¹
 - The new TEF 2023 provider ratings for participating providers
 - Data changes set out in HESA's C23061 coding manual and notification log (see <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c23061/notifications>).

¹ For more information, see [National Student Survey - NSS - Office for Students](#).

Arrangements for collection of data

Providers required to return Unistats data

6. The following higher education providers are required to return Unistats data:
 - providers in England that are registered with the Office for Students (OfS)
 - publicly funded providers in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.
7. 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 HESA website.

Providers that are expecting to join the OfS Register

For the attention of English providers that expect to register with the OfS

8. The deadline to have submitted and signed off a valid Unistats return is midday two months after your date of registration, or the next working day if that is a weekend.
9. Providers that register with the OfS before 23 June 2023 are expected to submit C22061 data. Providers that register on or after 23 June 2023 are expected to submit only C23061 data (the Discover Uni dataset). For more information, please contact discoveruni@officeforstudents.org.uk or liaison@hesa.ac.uk.

Arrangements for the return of subcontracted provision

10. The Unistats return needs to be submitted by the registering provider, including any eligible courses delivered by another provider on their behalf through a subcontractual agreement.²

Process for submission and sign-off of data

11. All providers, including further education colleges in England, should return their Unistats data to HESA. Detailed guidance on the data required is available on the HESA website.³
12. The timetable for submission of Unistats data for courses running in 2023-24 is shown in the table below. 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 incorporate these updates every Wednesday after the initial publication.
13. 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 sign-off, have been completed, we will not consider the data to have been received and will be unable to publish it.

² Guidance to providers for the return of subcontractual and collaborative provision can be found at: https://www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c23061/download/subcontractual_collaborative_provision.pdf

³ See [Unistats record 2023/24 | HESA](#).

14. 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 HESA (liaison@hesa.ac.uk) in advance.

Information for further education colleges in England

15. Further education colleges (FECs) in England are required to submit data using the HESA data collection system which is managed through the HESA Identity system.

16. For assistance with the submission process, contact liaison@hesa.ac.uk. The HESA website has an e-learning module at: <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/services/e-learning/unistats-training>.

Timetable of key dates

Please note: these dates may be subject to change. Further information on the deadlines, including specific dates, will be announced once confirmed and the schedule will be updated.

Date	Activity	Notes
By 31 May 2023	C23061 data collection system opens	
19 July 2023	Deadline for submission of valid dataset	Providers are required to have submitted a dataset which passes validation and contains the majority of their courses.
19 July 2023	Nil return confirmation	Providers are required to submit a Nil return form to indicate that their provider has no courses which meet the eligibility criteria for the Unistats record, as specified in the coverage of the record.
Anticipated by 7 August 2023	NSS* and Graduate Outcomes data added	NSS and Graduate Outcomes data will be added to the data collection systems and will be visible in the reports. We will confirm the anticipated date in July 2023.
23 August 2023	Sign-off	Providers are required to have signed off as accurate a dataset as possible which has passed system validation and is suitable for publication.
Anticipated by 30 September 2023	Official Statistics publication of the Discover Uni dataset 2023 (C23061) (formerly known as	We will confirm the intended publication date for the 2023 dataset in July 2023.

Date	Activity	Notes
	Unistats) dataset on the HESA website	
Anticipated by 30 September 2023	Update of Discover Uni website with 2023 dataset	We will confirm the intended publication date for the 2023 dataset in July 2023.
November 2023	Deadline for up-to-date widgets on providers' websites	We will confirm the deadline for up-to-date widgets on providers' websites in July 2023.

*subject to consultation



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