

Office for
Students



Changes to 2024 student data surveys to inform funding

Notification of changes

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Summary

1. To inform the calculation of Office for Students (OfS) grants, all higher education providers that are registered with the OfS in the Approved (fee cap) category must complete one of the data surveys that will inform recurrent funding for the 2025-26 academic year. These are:
 - For a provider that has students registered with it in the 2024-25 academic year, the **2024 Higher Education Students Early Statistics (HESES24) survey**.¹
 - For a provider that does not have students registered with it in the 2024-25 academic year, the **Higher Education Students Forecast 2025-26 (HESF25) survey**.²
2. This document provides notification of the changes from last year that we intend to make to these surveys, but does not contain the full technical specification of our data requirements and definitions; we will confirm these when we publish the full HESES24 guidance in autumn 2024.
3. In addition to informing recurrent funding for the 2025-26 academic year, we will use the HESES24 survey to inform the allocations of recurrent funding for Level 4 and 5 provision for the 2024-25 academic year. We will confirm these allocations in March 2025 following sign-off of the HESES24 data.

Please email any questions to heses@officeforstudents.org.uk.

¹ For information, last year's guidance for the 2023 Higher Education Students Early Statistics (HESES23) survey can be found at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/heses23/.

² For information, last year's guidance for the Higher Education Students Forecast 2024-25 (HESF24) survey can be found at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/hesf24/.

Changes to 2024 student data surveys to inform funding (HESES24 and HESF25)

The HESES24 data collection process

4. All higher education providers that are registered in the Approved (fee cap) category, and that will have students registered with them in the 2024-25 academic year (1 August 2024 to 31 July 2025), are required to complete the HESES24 data survey. This includes further education and sixth form colleges and academies, but there are some differences in the data reporting requirements for this type of provider.
5. The HESES24 data return will use the following key dates:
 - a. **Further education and sixth form colleges and academies** will use a census date of 1 November 2024 and must submit their data by noon on Wednesday 13 November 2024.
 - b. **All other providers** will use a census date of 1 December 2024 and must submit their data by noon on Wednesday 11 December 2024.

All providers must have their data signed off by their accountable officer by **Friday 31 January 2025**.

6. This timeline is similar to last year's funding data collection timetable.

Overview of changes to HESES24 definitions and funding calculations

7. Providers that return individualised student data to the designated data body (DDB) are required to do so through the Student record.³ Further education and sixth form colleges and academies will continue to return data to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) through the Individualised Learner Record (ILR).
8. There are some differences between the data model used in the Student record and the previous definitions used to return HESES. For the 2023-24 HESES return, we introduced changes to address these differences while minimising the regulatory burden of data reporting on all providers and provide consistency in the way we allocate funding.
9. HESES24 definitions and processes will follow the same approach as HESES23.⁴
10. In the 2023-24 academic year we removed the requirement for providers to return full-time equivalents and non-completion forecasts. We instead applied multiplication factors derived from HESES22 data and ran a representations process to allow providers to inform us of any

³ As of 4 October 2022, Jisc acts as the DDB and performs the information duties in sections 64 and 65 of the Higher Education and Research Act 2017. HESA was the DDB before this and has now merged with Jisc. See www.officeforstudents.org.uk/news-blog-and-events/press-and-media/designation-of-jisc-as-the-new-data-body/.

⁴ See 'Changes to 2023 student data surveys to inform funding' (OfS 2023.33): www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/changes-to-2023-student-data-surveys-to-inform-funding-notification-of-changes/.

significant changes in their provision which meant the factors calculated by the OfS were no longer appropriate.⁵

11. We intend to run the multiplication factors representations processes in parallel with the HESES24 process. For convenience, the HESES24 workbook will also contain the representations worksheets, but it should be noted that providers will only need to engage with the representations worksheet if there has been significant changes to their provision since 2023-24, and they believe that the multiplication factors determined by the OfS should be adjusted accordingly.
12. The representations process is not compulsory and is not included in the F3 notice issued to providers.

Changes to legislation impacting fundability in 2024-25

13. The definitions used for HESES to determine fundability status are not changing for HESES24 and HESF25. However, amendments made to the student support regulations for the 2024-25 academic year will mean that some students may change fundability status under the HESES definitions. We would recommend providers review these changes in advance of the HESES24 return.⁶
14. As a result of the amendments, students can change fundability status if they gain settled status part way through their course. Although we do not anticipate this having an impact on large numbers of students, providers should be aware of the change in legislation and review the fundability status of their students to determine how years of engagement are returned in HESES24.

Change to the HESES workbook

15. There are no planned changes to the core tables of the HESES workbook. The following tables remain the same as in HESES23:
 - Table 1: Full-time
 - Table 2: Sandwich year out
 - Table 3: Part-time
 - Table 4: Years abroad
 - Table 5: Planning
 - Table 6a: Full-time (Nursing, midwifery and allied health courses)
 - Table 6c: Part-time (Nursing, midwifery and allied health courses).
16. We are intending to combine the HESES24 and multiplication factors representations workbooks together to reduce the number of documents providers should engage with in the process used to determining the fundable FTEs for the 2024-25 academic year. Combining the

⁵ See www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/data-collection/multiplication-factors/.

⁶ For the full legislative amendments see www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2024/85/contents/made. A summary of the changes has been published by Student Finance England (01/24 Information note on the 2024/25 HE Student Finance Regulations). See www.practitioners.slc.co.uk/policy/.

documents will also allow the multiplication factors to be applied to the HESES24 data that is submitted.

Multiplication factors

17. The initial multiplication factors applied will be the factors used to determine fundable FTEs for the 2023-24 academic year; these were agreed with providers in June 2024 following the conclusion of the representations process for that year. For further details on how multiplication factors were calculated and agreed, please see the main multiplications factors guidance for 2023-24.⁷ These will be displayed on new worksheets contained within the HESES24 and HESF25 workbooks.
18. These multiplication factors reflect the non-completion rates, and the intensity of study for sandwich year out and part-time students. Wherever possible, these have been derived using a provider's own historic data for the relevant student category concerned, or an approved representation from 2023-24 academic year.
19. Where a provider does not have sufficient relevant or accurate historic data for a particular student category, we will use relevant average figures for an aggregation of categories for the provider to inform the multiplication factor, for example by aggregating all price groups together. This may occur where a provider is recording new provision in HESES24, or where the numbers reported for a student category in HESES22 were very small.
20. Where we have been unable to determine a relevant provider average figure for a particular student category using the provider's own data, we used relevant sector average data for each category to inform the multiplication factor. This may have occurred where a provider was new, or because the comparable relevant data for the provider was insignificant for averaging purposes.

Representations on multiplication factors

21. We are aware that provision at higher education providers can change from year to year. Significant changes to provision in 2024-25 may mean the 2023-24 multiplication factors may no longer be appropriate for determining the total FTE at a provider. To account for year-to-year changes, providers are able to submit representations about the OfS-calculated multiplication factors.
22. Providers should review the proposed multiplication factors which will be displayed within the multiplication factors worksheets in the HESES24 workbook. If they are considered to be an appropriate representation of a provider's provision for the 2024-25 academic year, then no action is required.
23. If a provider believes that one or more of the multiplication factors may no longer be appropriate, then representations can be submitted to the OfS for consideration.
24. The deadline to submit representations for inclusion in the spring grant announcement for 2025-26 will be **noon on 14 February 2025**, after the HESES24 sign-off deadline. Providers

⁷ See 'Multiplication factors process guidance' (OfS 2024.14): www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/heses23-multiplication-factors-representations-process-guidance/.

will be able to submit representations when they upload HESES24 data and will also be able to upload representations following the HESES24 sign-off. Providers will be able to submit updated versions of the representations up until the deadline on 14 February 2025. The latest version of the representations that the OfS has received by the deadline will be assessed.

25. We reserve the right to use our own estimates of the data if we consider the data returned by a provider to be inaccurate. Where multiplication factors are based on sector averages, rather than a provider's own data, we will not make adverse changes to funding allocations for the provider if those sector averages change.
26. Further detailed guidance on the multiplication factors and the representations process for 2024-25 will be made available to providers in the autumn of 2024.

Guidance on returning FUNDCOMP in 2024-25

27. We will not use FUNDCOMP data submitted in 2024-25 individualised data returns for funding or data assurance purposes. This is a continuation of the approach set out for previous years.
 - a. **For further education and sixth form colleges and academies**, we may use FUNDCOMP to identify records that are specifically excluded from the HESES population. Colleges should return FUNDCOMP in a way that minimises burden and may wish to return FUNDCOMP=3 for all or some students if this approach achieves this. FUNDCOMP=9 should not be returned except to identify students to be excluded from the HESES recreation.
 - b. **For other providers**, we do not require FUNDCOMP to be returned in your Student record for 2024-25 and will not use any values returned.

Guidance on mapping learning aim reference numbers to price groups

28. It is the OfS's understanding that from 2024-25 academic year the ESFA will be working to replace the Learn Direct Classification System (LDCS) codes associated with course learning aims with HECoS codes. These codes are used to designate the subject(s) of a course within an associated learning aim, as recorded in the ESFA's 'Find a Learning Aim' (FaLA) service ILR+. This is a change from previous years where the ESFA collected LDCS codes and recorded them against learning aims.⁸
29. This change will not have a significant impact on how providers returning data to the ESFA need to complete HESES24 or HESF25, but such providers should be aware of this change. The mapping of HECoS codes to OfS price groups has not changed and we do not intend to adjust this mapping for the 2024-25 academic year. The latest mapping of HECoS codes can be found on the OfS website.⁹

⁸ Details of the new specification for the ILR have been published by the ESFA online. These can be found in the 'LARS table and field definitions' versions 9 and 10. See www.gov.uk/government/publications/individualised-learner-record-ilr-sources-of-data.

⁹ 'Annex A: Mapping of LDCS and HECoS codes'. See www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/data-collection-feedback-response/.

30. The Courses table in the HESES24 workbook will be updated to draw price group information from the relevant LDCS or HECoS codes as appropriate.

Changes to the HESES workbook

31. We will not be making changes to the tables that need to be completed in HESES24. However, additional tables will be added to allow the multiplication factors representation tables to be included within the return. These tables will only need completing where providers believe a multiplication factor is no longer appropriate. Further guidance on this process will be published alongside the main HESES24 guidance.

32. We may make minor adjustments to the comparison tables used for reference during the data verification process to reflect the data changes described above. We will also look to adjust the comparison tables to improve the verification process and reduce burden where possible. Full details of the comparison tables and thresholds will be published alongside the main HESES24 guidance.

Multiplication factors representations tables

33. We are intending to include tables in the HESES24 workbook to display multiplication factors and allow providers to submit representations. The additional tables will follow the same format as those included in the HESES23_FTE workbooks:

- Table 1: Full-time
- Table 2: Sandwich year out
- Table 3: Part-time
- Table 6a: Full-time (Nursing, midwifery and allied health courses)
- Table 6c: Part-time (Nursing, midwifery and allied health courses).

The HESF25 data collection process

34. All providers registered in the Approved (fee cap) category that do not have students registered with them in the 2024-25 academic year, but that will offer higher education provision recognised for OfS funding purposes in 2025-26, are required to complete the HESF25 data survey.

35. The HESF25 survey will use the definitions set out in the HESES24 guidance document. Providers should consult this document when completing their HESF25 survey.

36. As it is a forecast of student numbers in the 2025-26 academic year, no census date applies to HESF25. We will specify the deadline for submission when we notify any providers that they are required to complete the survey. To be included in the main 2025 grant announcement, we would commonly use the same submission and sign-off deadlines as for HESES24.

Changes to the HESF25 workbook

37. There are no planned changes to the core structure of the HESF25 workbook. However, as with the HESES24 workbook, we will be adding a worksheet to allow providers to submit representations on multiplication factors.

Seminars and training on HESES24

38. We intend to offer a programme of webinars in late September 2024. Information on these webinars will be emailed to nominated student data contacts, released on the OfS website and announced through the OfS email alert system in mid-August.¹⁰
39. More information will be available in due course at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/heses/.

¹⁰ See OfS events at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/news-blog-and-events/events/.
Sign up for OfS email alerts at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/sign-up-for-email-alerts/.



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