

Cylchlythyr | Circular

Higher Education Students Early Statistics Survey 2023/24

Date: 5 December 2023
Reference: W23/31HE
To: Heads of higher education institutions in Wales
Principals of directly-funded further education institutions in Wales
Response by: 22 February 2024 (whole survey)
11 January 2024 (Tables 2a to 2c)
Contact: Name: James Morgan
Telephone: 029 2085 9724
Email: hestats@hefcw.ac.uk

This circular requests higher education providers to return aggregated student data to enable HEFCW to have early indications of student numbers; monitor recruitment of students covered by the fee and access plans; and enable Welsh Government to monitor and plan the intake to Initial Teacher Education Partnerships.

If you require this document in an alternative accessible format, please email info@hefcw.ac.uk.



Noddir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Sponsored by
Welsh Government

Introduction

1. This circular requests higher education institutions and further education institutions with higher education provision (known collectively as higher education (HE) providers) that are funded directly by the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) to return aggregated student data to enable HEFCW to:
 - a) Have early indications of the number of students in the academic year 2023/24;
 - b) Monitor recruitment of full-time (FT) undergraduate (UG) and postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) students covered by the fee and access plans;
 - c) Provide Welsh Government with data to monitor and plan the intake to Initial Teacher Education (ITE) Partnerships.

Main changes for 2023/24

2. The main changes made since the HESES 2022 survey are:
 - a) The survey dates are later than in 2022/23 to accommodate the later than usual return of the HESA student record data;
 - b) References to cost groups have been removed as they were not implemented as a result of the teaching funding review;
 - c) This year will be the last year that Tables 2a to 2c will be collected;
 - d) Annex J has been updated to reflect the mapping that is being used in the extraction of data for end of year monitoring for 2022/23. However, it should be noted that a review of the mapping will take place as part of the review of the end of year monitoring exercise planned for 2024.

Survey data

4. HE providers that are directly funded by HEFCW are requested to return numbers of HE students. These are students registered on prescribed HE courses leading to recognised HE qualifications (see Annex B).

Contents

5. This circular provides:
 - a) Guidance and definitions for the various categories used to classify students;
 - b) Rules for counting registrations;

- c) Details of the criteria we will use to extract data from the HESA student record for end of year monitoring and to get information collected on previous HESES surveys;
- d) Copies of the survey tables which will be distributed in Excel 2016 workbooks for providers to complete and return.

6. The contents of the annexes are as follows:

Annex		Page number
Annex A	Summary guide to the HESES 2023/24 survey	5
Annex B	Definition of a recognised HE qualification	13
Annex C	Distance learning, campuses, subsidiaries, franchises and other collaborative arrangements	14
Annex D	Definition of residential and funding status	21
Annex E	Definition of ASCs and ITE (QTS) specialist subjects	25
Annex F	Definition of mode of study	27
Annex G	Definition of level of study	30
Annex H	Rules for counting registrations	32
Annex I	Table and column descriptions	40
Annex J	HESA/HESES mappings and end of year monitoring data extraction criteria	44
Annex K	Workbook notes	56
Annex L	Validation checks	58
Annex M	Usage of data by HEFCW	60
Annex N	Funding status reference grid	61
Annex O	Sample copies of tables for completion by all providers directly funded by HEFCW	62

Return of data

7. Providers are required to notify HEFCW of student registrations for the whole year, apart from on Table 2a, which collects ITE (QTS) registrations between 1 August 2023 and 1 November 2023 inclusive for full-time registrations at HE providers who are part of ITE Partnerships; and Tables 2b and 2c which collect ITE (QTS) registrations between 1 August 2023 and 1 November 2023 inclusive for part-time and part-time employment based registrations at the Open University in Wales.
8. Completed ITE (QTS) tables (Table 2a to 2c) should be returned by email to James Morgan at hestats@hefcw.ac.uk no later than **11 January 2024**. Completed workbooks for the whole survey, should be returned by email to James Morgan at hestats@hefcw.ac.uk no later than **22 February 2024**.
9. On Tables 2a to 2c, providers with ITE (QTS) provision should return provision delivered at their institution only. Providers that do not have ITE (QTS) new entrants in 2023/24 are not required to return Tables 2a to 2c by 11 January 2024.

10. Providers are encouraged to begin to prepare their returns well before the return date so that only final adjustments need to be made before dispatch of the completed returns.
11. We will pass the ITE (QTS) tables to Welsh Government and EWC. It is important that they are returned on time so that information can be used by Welsh Government to monitor and inform planning for teacher education provision.
12. It is important that the whole survey return is made on time so that early indications of numbers of students for 2023/24 are available, and to ensure that HEFCW has sufficient time to complete the checking process prior to sending out verifications for sign off.
13. We request that providers **let us know as soon as possible**, and before the return dates of 11 January 2024 for ITE (QTS) information or 22 February 2024 for the whole survey, **if they envisage that they will have difficulty returning the required information or if they will have difficulty meeting the timetable** given in paragraph 14. This includes ensuring that the authorised signatory, or the alternative authorised signatory, is available to sign off the verifications by the due dates. **HEFCW reserves the right to enter its own estimates of student registrations for providers which fail to return the survey or sign off the data on time, or where data are considered to be of insufficient quality.**
14. When data are returned, we carry out a validation and credibility checking process. Once any subsequent queries have been resolved, data are sent out to authorised signatories at providers for verification. The process will follow the timetable outlined below.

Tables 2a to 2c:

11 January 2024	Return deadline
15 January 2024	Verifications sent to providers
19 January 2024	Verifications return deadline

All HESES tables:

22 February 2024	Return deadline
29 February 2024	Verifications sent to providers
18 March 2024	Verifications return deadline

15. In the event of a deadline being missed without prior agreement, we will contact the HESES data contact and/or authorised signatory to request an explanation. If a deadline is missed by more than three working days, without prior agreement, we will email the head of the provider, reminding them that HEFCW reserves the right to enter its own estimates of student registrations for providers which fail to return the survey on time and indicating that HEFCW intends to do this if immediate action is not taken. Failure to return the data or verification report within two working days of the email will result in a letter from the Chief Executive of HEFCW to the head of the provider stating the figures that will be used in place of the provider's own data.

16. We do not require a hard copy of the signed verifications. Signed verifications should be returned by emailing them to James Morgan at hestats@hefcw.ac.uk. Prior to returning the signed verifications to HEFCW, providers must have undertaken sufficient checks to be satisfied that the returned data are accurate. Data anomalies queried by HEFCW must have been corrected or, if genuine, must have an associated explanation. Any changes that are made to the verification before signing and returning, that are not already made to the Excel format, should also be submitted in an Excel format.
17. Each subsequent deadline should be met regardless of any delay in meeting the preceding deadline.
18. Data extracted and signed off as part of the 2022/23 Information Reporting Interface Service (IRIS) process¹ when providers make a submission to HESA, will be used in funding allocations. Providers should note that the data extractions at IRIS may need to be supplemented with additional data extractions once the methods for teaching funding for 2024/25 are finalised. If this is the case, we will contact providers about the sign off process for any additional data needed, not already signed off as part of the IRIS data extraction process.
19. Data extracted from the HESA student record for other funding purposes, such as for the calculation of allocations relating to the part-time fee waiver scheme or research funding related to postgraduate research students, will also be verified as part of the IRIS data extraction. Further details are provided in [the 2022/23 EYM circular](#) and the [data requirements circular](#) for 2023/24.
20. Providers are reminded that data returned to HEFCW on the HESES survey, including methods used to calculate any estimates included in the returned figures, may be subject to an external audit carried out by HEFCW or by contractors working on HEFCW's behalf. The systems and processes used to generate HESES data are in the scope of providers' internal audits.

Future developments

21. The [Statistics and Data area](#) of the HEFCW website provides information about data collection. If providers have suggestions of anything additional they would like to see included, they should contact HEFCW at hestats@hefcw.ac.uk.

Further information

22. Any queries should be directed to James Morgan (telephone 029 2085 9724, email hestats@hefcw.ac.uk).

¹ www.hefcw.ac.uk/en/statistics-and-data/hesa-information-reporting-interface-service-iris/