

NS Quality Review of Higher Education Student Statistics – Response from the Education & Training Theme Working Group

The review of higher education student statistics was published in November 2002. This document summarises the response from the Education and Training Theme Working Group to the recommendations contained in the review report.

Review Recommendation	Response
<p>1. This review recommends that the Information Management Taskforce (IMT) monitors and, if necessary, intervenes in the work being undertaken by HESA and UCAS in order to improve the data flow between the various stakeholders. The review also recommends that the IMT monitors and, if necessary, intervenes in the discussions on data interaction between the SLC and HE institutions. (Analysis of Current Mechanisms, paragraph 23)</p>	<p>UCAS are now supplying data to HE institutions in a format that can be directly incorporated into the data submission to HESA. UCAS and HESA continue to work closely to improve the quality of this data and to support and further develop issues like the subject coding system used by both organisations. IMT have been kept informed of these developments.</p> <p>The issues identified in the review regarding the data flows from the SLC were focused on the HESA December student return. This return was abolished in 2002.</p> <p>Closed</p>
<p>2. HESA is encouraged to further engage with systems specialists and with data providers in HEIs to ensure that reporting requirements are fully understood by HEI staff and to improve HESA's understanding of the returns that are submitted. (Analysis of Current Mechanisms, paragraph 25)</p>	<p>HESA (Robin Sibson and Andy Youell) and UCAS (Anthony McClaran, Jill Johnson, and Janine Green) delivered a briefing forum for technical staff within HE institutions and the software suppliers involved in HE student data systems under UCISA auspices at the University of Leicester on 24 May 2004. Engagement with UCISA will continue.</p> <p>Closed</p>
<p>3. The review recommends that the Education and Training Theme Working Group sets out how HE will be defined for the production of National Statistics after the QCA accreditation process is complete in 2003. (Analysis of Current Mechanisms, paragraph 34)</p>	<p>The definition of Higher Education level programmes will take into account the results of the QCA accreditation process. This work is currently on-going by QCA.</p> <p>On-going. QCA work is largely complete but there are some loose ends still being dealt with.</p>
<p>4. This review recommends that HESA and the four FE data collection bodies review data definitions and the arrangements for the collection and processing of data about HE students in FEIs with a view to achieving more coherence in the data available across the UK. The review recommends that the outcomes of these discussions should be reported to the Education and Training Theme Working</p>	<p>Data transfer arrangements between the FE data collection bodies and HESA have been simplified to reduce unnecessary processing. In England, the DFES are leading a review of the data collection requirements for HE students in FE institutions. A great deal of standardisation work is being taken forward under the MIAP umbrella,</p>

Group. (Analysis of Current Mechanisms, paragraph 47)	and there is no further need for action from TWG. Closed
5. Whilst recognising that there are specific, and clearly defined, requirements on some of the published analyses, the review team recommends that the various producers of National Statistics products agree on the use of standard populations and definitions for all the products covered by this review. The outcomes of these discussions, and the timetable for implementation should be reported to the Education and Training Theme Working Group. (National Statistics Products, paragraph 28)	A set of standard definitions has been agreed. Closed
6. The new methods of counting students, move away from the concept of a census counts, to one capturing provision through the whole year. In the light of this development the continuing requirement for the following publications, in their current form, should be assessed by the Education and Training Theme Working Group:- - Student Enrolments on Higher Education Courses at Publicly Funded Higher Education Institutions in the United Kingdom - Student Enrolments on Higher Education Courses : Northern Ireland (provisional) (National Statistics Products, paragraph 29)	Both of the products mentioned in this recommendation have ceased following the abolition of the HESA December return. Closed
7. The review team recommend that the National Statistics Quality Assurance Programme Board should consider to what extent the work of a third party can be quality assured by the publisher of a National Statistics product. The review team also suggests that the Office for National Statistics should review other areas of National Statistics output to find out what proportion of the logo-carrying publications are sourced from organisations that currently fall beyond the scope of the National Statistics framework. (National Statistics Products, paragraph 30)	The Theme Working Group have passed this issue to the Quality and Methods Programme Board for consideration at their meeting on 26 November. Closed
8. The review recommends that outputs that are not currently within the scope of National Statistics should be considered once the Code of Practice has been published. (National Statistics Products, paragraph 34)	The Theme Working Group considered this issue at their meeting in March 2004 and agreed that no change should be made to the <i>status quo</i> at this time. Closed
9. The review recommends that the Education and Training Theme Working Group	A consultancy project is being set up.

<p>sponsors an investigation to identify what data could be collected and what statistics could be published about HE programmes provided by private institutions. (National Statistics Products, paragraph 35)</p>	<p>On-going. The TWG will monitor progress of the project and receive its report in due course.</p>
<p>10. The review team recommends that the Education & Training Theme Working Group considers the creation of a regular UK-wide consultation process with users of Higher Education statistics. The review team also recommends that the Theme Working Group considers the creation of a UK-wide HE statistics user group and identifies a sponsor for this. (User Views, paragraph 10)</p>	<p>The TWG agreed at its meeting in June 2004 that existing consultation mechanisms largely met the need, and that it would not be cost-effective to introduce any new mechanisms. However, there might be benefit in also making contact with the already established Education Statistics Users Group, through Brian Clegg.</p> <p>On-going. Closure anticipated when Malcolm Britton reports back on contacts with Brian Clegg.</p>
<p>11. The review team recommends that the Education & Training Theme Working Group identifies a locus of responsibility for the creation of an index of HE statistics that details the different data sources, their coverage and availability. (User Views, paragraph 15)</p>	<p>The TWG agreed at its meeting in June 2004 that this requirement can be met most cost-effectively by the inclusion of additional links and references on the HESA web site.</p> <p>On-going. Closure anticipated when HESA reports back on actions taken.</p>
<p>12. The review team recommends that producers of statistics about Higher Education should engage with the HE Statistics Users Group to identify specific ways in which the usability and cost/benefit of statistics about Higher Education can be improved through, for example, the extension of National Statistics and the exploitation of web based electronic publication methods. (User Views, paragraph 19)</p>	<p>Subsumed under follow-up actions for Recommendation 10</p> <p>Closed</p>

Updated to 30 June 2004