

Annex H Counting student activity

1. This annex gives the definition of a year of programme of study and explains how to count them in HEIFES, which differs between Table 6 and all other tables. This includes the criteria for being able to count a year of programme of study in HEIFES, the definition of standard and non-standard years of programme of study and guidance on counting some short courses that are sometimes known as 'summer schools'.

What is a year of programme of study?

2. Students study towards qualifications over a period of time. This period can be split into one or more years of programme of study. The first year begins when the student starts studying towards the qualification; the second and subsequent years start on or near the anniversary of this date (to allow for minor variations in term dates).

3. A student may only be returned on HEIFES once for each year of programme of study they undertake. This is referred to as counting years of programme of study. When a student becomes countable on HEIFES depends on how their activity falls within each year of programme of study.

Further notes on years of programme of study

4. Exceptionally, a student may be on two courses aiming for two independent recognised HE qualifications at the same time. If this is the case, the student should be treated as if they were two students, each aiming for one of the qualifications.

5. Where students complete a foundation degree and then undertake a foundation degree bridging course to enable them to join the final year of an honours degree, the foundation degree bridging course should be treated as an independent course which will generate its own year of programme of study. See paragraphs 39 to 40 of this annex.

Counting years of programme of study

6. To be counted, a student within the HEIFES11 student population must also meet all the following criteria:

- a. A tuition fee is charged for the year of programme of study. Exceptionally, this fee may be waived for individual students based on their particular circumstances. It should not be waived for all students on a course, and the criteria which determine whether fees may be waived should not be tantamount to waiving the fee for all students.
- b. The FTE for the year of programme of study is at least 0.03.
- c. The student is not writing up a thesis or similar piece of work for the whole of the year of programme of study. Students are writing up where they have completed their research work and will not undertake any significant additional research. It is common practice for such students to receive a small amount of

supervision, and they may still have access to other facilities at the institution. However, such students should still be treated as writing up.

7. In some cases a fee may not be charged in the current year because a fee for the activity has already been paid in a previous year. This would not be treated as a fee waiver. Rather the student should be treated as having been charged a fee for the year.

Audit issue

Written evidence of fee waivers

8. Where the fee has been waived for a student, written evidence of this must be retained.

Students incorrectly recorded more than once on the HEIFES return

9. The student record system should be reviewed before data are extracted for the return, to check for duplicate records. This should be normal practice throughout the year, particularly when new student records are being set up on the system. There may, exceptionally, be genuine reasons why a student has two records, and these reasons need to be established. Where it is not correct for a student to have two records, the student record system should be amended at the earliest opportunity.

How to count years of programme of study in Tables 1 to 5 and 7

10. The guidance in paragraphs 11 to 17 of this annex applies to Tables 1 to 5 and 7 **only**. For guidance on how to count years of programme of study in Table 6, see paragraphs 19 to 29.

11. If the student has withdrawn from their year of programme of study on or before 1 November 2011, their year of programme of study should not be returned.

12. For students within the HEIFES11 student population, there are two types of year of programme of study: standard and non-standard.

a. A standard year is one where all activity for the year of programme of study is entirely within one academic year (1 August to 31 July). Most undergraduate students are on standard years of programme of study.

b. A non-standard year is one where all activity for the year of programme of study is **not** entirely within one academic year – that is, the activity for the year of programme of study crosses from one academic year into the next.

Students whose years of programme of study are normally standard but in one year undertake a period of work experience should not be treated as non-standard solely because the work experience spans academic years.

13. In both cases, students become countable at the start of each year of programme of study. The FTE returned should be the FTE for the whole year of programme of study:

- a. For students on standard years of programme of study, the FTE for the whole year of programme of study will be the same as the FTE for the academic year.
- b. For students on non-standard years of programme of study, the FTE for the whole year of programme of study will not necessarily be the same as the FTE for the academic year. The final academic year during which the student is active will not usually generate a countable year of programme of study. It will do so, however, if a student undertakes a short period of activity after the anniversary of their commencement date and that activity ends in the same academic year.

Example 1

14. A student starts a degree programme on 21 September 2011, with each year of the course finishing at the end of June. The student becomes countable on 21 September 2011 and, depending on when the activity for the year starts, on or around the anniversary of this date each year.

Example 2

15. A full-time student starts a degree programme in January 2012 and the first year of the course finishes in November 2012. This student would be included in Column 2 of Tables 1 and 4 in HEIFES11 for their first year of programme of study.

Example 3

16. A full-time HND course starts on 5 October 2011 and runs from 5 October to 30 June each year. A student starts the HND programme late, on 7 November 2011, but intends to catch up with the rest of the students on the course and follow the same pattern of activity as them. That student's year of programme of study starts on 7 November 2011 and on the anniversary of that date in subsequent years. The student should be included in Column 2 of Tables 1 and 4.

Example 4

17. A full-time student starts in September 2011 intending to study eight modules before June 2012. At the end of the first semester in February 2012 they interrupt the course having completed four modules and return 12 months later to complete the remaining four modules by June 2013. The first year of programme of study becomes countable in September 2011 and is therefore returned in Column 1 of Table 1 of HEIFES11. The data entered in Column 3 of Table 1 of HEIFES11 should reflect a forecast of such students entered in Column 1 or 2 who will intermit (and therefore non-complete) after 1 November 2011. The second year of programme of study becomes countable at the start of the year of programme of study in September 2012 (and not in February 2013 when the student returns) and is therefore returned in Column 1 of Table 3 of HEIFES12 (because the activity in this second year of programme of study does not meet the criteria to be classed as full-time as set out in paragraph 2 of Annex M).

How to count years of programme of study in Table 6

18. The guidance in paragraphs 19 to 29 of this annex applies to Table 6 **only**. For guidance on how to count years of programme of study in other tables, see paragraphs 11 to 17 of this annex.

19. Table 6 collects information on a subset of the years of programmes of study in the HEIFES11 population (as described in Annex F paragraphs 2 to 4). The subset counted in Table 6 differs from the subset counted in the other tables. Years of programme of study meeting the following criteria count towards the student number control that we have set for 2011-12, and should be included in Table 6:

- a. Either:
 - i. They are for HEFCE-fundable or employer co-funded, full-time, undergraduate students active in the academic year 1 August 2011 to 31 July 2012.

And

The students have not been HEFCE-fundable or employer co-funded or 'model 2' Lifelong Learning Network (LLN) full-time undergraduate students in either of the preceding two academic years (that is, between 1 August 2009 and 31 July 2011) as students of the same institution. These categories include students who have not completed their year of programme of study, nevertheless meet the criteria in HEIFES11 Annex K paragraphs 7 to 9 to be HEFCE-fundable.

Or:

- ii. They are for HEFCE-fundable or employer co-funded full-time students aiming for a PGCE (whether a Postgraduate or Professional Graduate Certificate in Education) commencing a programme of study in the academic year 1 August 2011 to 31 July 2012.
- b. The students have not withdrawn from their programme of study within two weeks of starting: that is, they have undertaken sufficient activity to be required to be included in the ILR.

20. Terms used in the definition of the student number control are:

- a. **Employer co-funded:** This applies to years of programme of study that are HEFCE non-fundable on the basis that they are to count towards the delivery of HEFCE allocations of student numbers co-funded with employers (see paragraph 9b of Annex K). This may include years of programme of study where students are aiming for an ELQ and who, were they not co-funded, would not be exempt from the ELQ policy as defined in Annex K paragraphs 11 to 19.
- b. **'Model 2' LLN students:** those who have counted towards the delivery of LLN allocations that have been funded through a lead institution outside the mainstream HEFCE teaching grant up to 2009-10. All LLNs have reverted to the mainstream 'model 1' route by 2010-11 and therefore students at all LLNs will

generally be included within the definition of HEFCE-fundable in 2010-11; but some students at LLNs may have counted towards 'model 2' allocations in 2009-10.

c. **Students who have not been full-time undergraduates in the two preceding academic years:** students who, during each academic year 2009-10 and 2010-11, have not undertaken full-time undergraduate study; or if they have, withdrew (on each occasion) within two weeks of starting the programme of study; or were otherwise 'dormant' during that period. In this context, full-time relates to study that, had it been finished, would have been full-time.

d. **The same institution:** This refers to the 'registering' institution responsible for reporting the student in the HESA student record or the Data Service ILR. Where teaching has been franchised out, the associated (year of) programme of study is attributable to the franchiser, not the franchisee.

Example 5

21. A HEFCE-fundable student studied full-time for a foundation degree at an FEC in the academic years 2009-10 and 2010-11 and then topped up to a full-time bachelors degree at an HEI in 2011-12.

a. If the foundation degree was delivered by the FEC under a franchise arrangement from that HEI, then the student would be considered to be studying at the same institution (the HEI) throughout the period 2009-10 to 2011-12: they should not be included in Table 6 in either the HEI's HESES11 return, or the FEC's HEIFES11 return.

b. If the foundation degree was not delivered under a franchise arrangement, but was funded directly at the FEC, then the student would be considered to be a student of the FEC for 2009-10 and 2010-11 and the HEI in 2011-12: because the study is not at the same institution, the top-up to the bachelors degree in 2011-12 should be included in Table 6 in the HEI's HESES11 return, but not the FEC's HEIFES11 return. To the extent that these top-ups occurred in 2008-09, the limits that we have set for 2011-12 include them and therefore allow them to continue.

Example 6

22. A student commenced a HEFCE-fundable full-time undergraduate course in September 2010, having never been registered at the college before. However due to illness the student withdrew from the course in December 2010 and returned in September 2011 to re-start the course.

a. The first year of programme of study (where the student withdrew) **will have counted** towards the 2010-11 student number control limit because the student was a full-time HEFCE-fundable student in academic year 2010-11 (even though they studied for less than 24 weeks) and therefore should have been included in Table 6 of HEIFES10.

b. The second year of programme of study **will not count** towards the 2011-12 student number control limit, because the student was a full-time student in the

academic year preceding 2011-12, and therefore should not be returned in Table 6 of HEIFES11.

Example 7

23. A student commenced a HEFCE-fundable, full-time, undergraduate bachelors degree course in September 2008 which concluded in June 2011. The student then commences a HEFCE-fundable, full-time PGCE at the same institution in September 2011. The year of programme of study commencing in September 2011 **will count** towards the 2011-12 student number control (regardless of any previous study at the same institution) because the student is commencing a HEFCE-fundable, full-time, PGCE in the 2011-12 academic year, and should therefore be returned in Table 6 of HEIFES11.

How years of programme of study counted on Table 6 differ from other tables

24. Table 6 counts years of programme of study differently to the other tables. This means that some years of programme of study counted in Table 6 in HEIFES11 may not be counted on the other tables. This can occur where students withdraw from their year of programme of study before 1 November 2011.

25. If a student commences a year of programme of study that meets the criteria to be included in Table 6 of HEIFES11 (as set out in paragraph 19 of this annex) but switches to part-time study during this year of programme of study then, unless the mode switch occurred within two weeks of their year of programme of study's commencement, this year of programme of study **will count** towards the 2011-12 student number control limit and therefore it should be included in Table 6 of HEIFES11.

26. If, instead, a student commences a part-time year of programme of study that, if it were full-time, would meet the criteria to be included in Table 6 of HEIFES11 (as set out in paragraph 19 of this annex) and the student switches to full-time study during this year of programme of study, then:

- a. If the switch to full-time study has not occurred early enough in the year for the whole year of programme of study to meet the definition of full-time (as per the definition in Annex M), this year of programme of study **will not count** towards the 2011-12 student number control limit and therefore it should be excluded from Table 6 of HEIFES11. However, if the student continues their full-time study into 2012-13, they may then count towards the 2012-13 student number control limit and be included in Table 6 of HEIFES12 (because their study in the previous academic year will have been treated as part-time).
- b. If the switch to full-time study occurred early enough in the year of programme of study for it to be instead classed as full-time for the entire year of programme of study (as per the definition in Annex M), this year of programme of study **will count** towards the 2011-12 student number control limit and therefore it should be included in Table 6 of HEIFES11.

27. Not all students included in the limit will be 'entrants' to the college (as defined in Annex D paragraph 30). This will include: students who have previously studied part-time; students on programmes of study that were not fundable by HEFCE, such as those funded by the NHS or the TDA; and students who have previously studied full-time but have taken two or more years out.

Example 8

28. A student commenced a HEFCE-fundable full-time undergraduate bachelors degree course in September 2010, having never been registered at the college before. For the first year of programme of study, the student is classed as non-fundable because they are aiming for an ELQ and are not exempt from the ELQ policy. At the start of the second year of programme of study in September 2011 they change their stated qualification aim solely to a foundation degree (having decided not to study for the bachelors degree). They are therefore exempt from the ELQ policy, and as a result now classed as HEFCE-fundable. The second year of programme of study **will count** towards the 2011-12 student number control limit because the student was not classed as HEFCE-fundable in the 2010-11 academic year, and therefore it should be included in Table 6 of HEIFES11.

Example 9

29. A student commenced a HEFCE-fundable part-time undergraduate course in September 2010, having never been registered at the college before. However at the beginning of the second year of programme of study in September 2011 they switched to studying this course full-time. The second year of programme of study **will count** towards the 2011-12 student number control limit because the student was not studying full-time in the 2010-11 academic year and therefore it should be included in Table 6 of HEIFES11.

Summer schools

30. Four types of short course are sometimes referred to as 'summer schools'. They are described in more detail below.

Summer schools for potential HE students

31. These are intended for potential HE students to experience a short period of study in an HE environment normally in the summer vacation. Such students are not included in the HEIFES population because the provision is not HE level.

Access provision

32. In some cases, institutions offer short preparatory or access courses for individual students to facilitate progression to an initial HE qualification. These courses are taken immediately before the start of their HE qualification. Where such provision is an integral part of an HE-level course, the students are included in the HEIFES population. See paragraphs 6 and 7 of Annex G for when such provision is considered integrated. The short access course and the first year of the HE course will typically count as one

year of programme of study. This may result in the year of programme of study being counted as long, as defined in Annex O.

33. For the access course to be integrated we require that the student is registered at the same institution for the access course and HE-level course.

34. If the access provision is not an integrated part of the HE-level course, it is not HE level and the students are not part of the HEIFES population.

Within-course periods of study in vacation time

35. These are within-course short periods of study which generally take place in vacation time, and are normally for students to catch up with others on the course. They are usually between the normal periods of activity for years of programme of study but within a course. They are counted as part of the preceding year of programme of study and may result in that year of programme of study being counted as long, as defined in Annex O.

36. Where the short period of study occurs during the summer vacation, this may cause students who would normally be following standard years of programme of study to generate a non-standard year for the year that includes the short period. However, for data collection purposes they should be treated as standard years of programme of study.

Example 10

37. A student studies full-time for a degree over three years, with activity for each year of programme of study running from October to July. Between the second and third years, a short period of study, running from 25 July to 5 September, is undertaken to bring the student up to the standard of others on the course. This short period of study counts as part of the second year of the degree, and the second year of programme of study counts as a standard year of programme of study. The year of programme of study would only be counted as long if it fitted the criteria to be long, given in Annex O.

38. Such short periods of study should be returned on the ILR in the same way they are returned on HEIFES. That is, they should be included as part of the year of programme of study preceding the short period of study.

Foundation degree bridging courses

39. These are courses that come after a foundation degree has been completed, but before the final year of an honours degree course. They are short courses that are not an integral part of the course from which they are bridging. Progression is assured from successful completion of a foundation degree bridging course to the final year of an honours degree. For the purposes of HEIFES, such a course is counted as a separate year of programme of study and is returned as part-time with an FTE of 0.3. If the bridging course spans two academic years, it should be recorded in the academic year in which the bridging course begins.

40. Any foundation degree bridging courses should be returned as a separate record in the ILR 2011-12 return with:

- student load returned as 30 (Student Instance FTE = 030.0), except where the course spans two academic years, when the load should be proportionally split between them
- mode returned as part-time (Mode of Study = 03)
- a link to a learner aim on the Data Service's LARA with a learner aim type code of 9113, institutional undergraduate credit (it may be necessary to request a specific learner aim for the bridging course)
- a learner aim with appropriate Learndirect information on the Data Service's LARA
- a separate student instance (Student Instance Identifier).