

October 2014/24

**Core funding/operations**

**Request for data**

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Returns should be uploaded to the HEFCE extranet by **noon on Thursday 13 November 2014**

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This document asks further education colleges to complete the annual survey of students on recognised higher education courses. The data will: enable us to review teaching funding and monitor recruitment against the student number control for 2014-15; give an early indication of the number of students on recognised higher education courses at further education colleges in 2014-15; and, with data supplied to the Skills Funding Agency, inform our allocation of teaching funds for 2015-16.

# HEIFES14

## Higher Education in Further Education: Students survey 2014-15

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**The appendices contain detailed technical information and will be available with this document once HEIFES14 workbooks have been released at [www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/)**

Appendix 1 Validation of HEIFES data

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Appendix 3 Guidance on the student number control grant adjustment table

Appendix 4 Guidance on the indicative funding worksheets

## HEIFES14: Higher Education in Further Education: Students survey 2014-15

To	Heads of further education colleges directly funded by HEFCE in 2014-15
Of interest to those responsible for	Student data, Funding
Reference	2014/24
Publication date	October 2014
Enquiries to	<a href="mailto:heifes@hefce.ac.uk">heifes@hefce.ac.uk</a>

### Executive summary

#### Purpose

1. This document asks further education colleges (FECs) to complete the annual survey of students on recognised higher education courses.

#### Key points

2. The data will:
  - enable us to review teaching funding and monitor recruitment against the student number control for the academic year 2014-15
  - together with the individualised learner record supplied to the Skills Funding Agency, inform our allocation of teaching funds for the academic year 2015-16
  - give an early indication, for purposes including government planning, of the number of higher education students studying in the academic year 2014-15.
3. This document provides the following.
  - a. An introduction to the Higher Education in Further Education: Students survey 2014-15 (HEIFES14) and how we use it to inform our funding allocations and monitor recruitment against the student number control.
  - b. Guidance notes for completing the HEIFES14 survey.
  - c. Definitions used in the HEIFES14 survey.
  - d. Examples of the survey tables. The actual tables for completion will be available to download from the HEFCE extranet in November 2014.
  - e. A summary of changes since HEIFES13 ([Annex B](#)).

#### Action required

4. HEIFES14 should be completed by all FECs receiving HEFCE recurrent funds for teaching. Returns must be uploaded to the HEFCE extranet by **noon on Thursday 13 November 2014**. Workbooks will be available to colleges in November 2014.
5. A provisional timetable for the HEIFES14 return and 2015-16 funding round is given in [Annex A](#).

## The HEIFES14 survey and data used for funding purposes

### Introduction

6. The HEIFES survey provides early data that inform our allocations of formula-based recurrent teaching funding for further education colleges (FECs). Full details of how HEFCE allocates funding and controls student numbers are set out in 'Guide to funding and student number controls 2013-14 and 2014-15' ([HEFCE 2014/06](#)). HEIFES collects aggregate information on students who are counted for funding or student number control (SNC) purposes, as well as other students who are studying for recognised higher education (HE) qualifications. The list of recognised HE qualifications in HEIFES reflects what we are empowered to fund directly at FECs.

### Formula funding and SNCs

7. Our recurrent grants to institutions are almost entirely allocated by formula. This ensures we are fair, transparent and efficient in how we distribute grants to institutions.

8. HEFCE has a fixed budget which we distribute between institutions according to the activities that they report. We also monitor the number of students at each institution starting full-time undergraduate study or a postgraduate initial teacher training course who may count for funding purposes ('HEFCE-fundable'), to reduce the risk of over-recruitment that results in unplanned student finance costs to Government.

9. Changes to the finance arrangements for HE from 2012-13 require significant reductions to HEFCE's teaching grant. These are being phased in as successive cohorts of students enter HE under the new tuition fee regime. HEFCE's grant each year needs to reflect the changing balance of student numbers between those recruited before the fee regime changed (in respect of whom we pay higher rates of grant) and those recruited afterwards (where grant rates are much lower). However, we also need to pay grant from the beginning of the academic year, before we can be certain about the student numbers involved. This requires an iterative process of refining allocations as we become more certain of these student numbers.

10. We have therefore adopted a three-stage process for the years 2012-13 to 2014-15 to calculate and review allocations to each institution. For 2014-15, this process comprises the following stages.

a. **Stage 1: An initial allocation in March 2014**, using funding rates derived from the final 2011-12 individualised learner record (ILR) data reported to the Data Service, and forecast 2014-15 student full-time equivalents (FTEs) submitted by colleges in HEIFES13.

b. **Stage 2: An adjusted allocation in March 2015**, using updated 2014-15 student FTEs submitted by institutions in HEIFES14.

c. **Stage 3: A final allocation in 2016**, using final student numbers from 2014-15 ILR data.

11. This iterative approach will not apply for our funding for 2015-16. Instead, funding for that year will be largely based on the 2014-15 student FTEs submitted by institutions in HEIFES14. This is to simplify our approach to teaching funding, recognising that the

transition to the new finance arrangements will be complete for the large majority of students. Further information about this approach is set out in 'Recurrent teaching grant from 2015-16: Confirmation of arrangements' (HEFCE Circular letter 29/2014).

### **Data returns used to inform funding and monitor student numbers**

12. We use two main data returns to inform our teaching grant and monitor recruitment against SNC allocations for FECs.

a. **The HEIFES survey.** This return is submitted directly to us by FECs via the extranet and provides aggregate information on numbers of students. It is submitted by colleges in November each year and reports on the student numbers in the current academic year. We will use the numbers to review and adjust the funding we have previously announced for 2014-15 (stage 2 of our three-stage process, using HEIFES Tables 1 to 3) and to monitor recruitment against the SNC (using HEIFES Table 6). We will also use the data in Tables 1 to 4 to inform our teaching funding for 2015-16.

b. **The ILR.** This is returned to the Skills Funding Agency at the end of the academic year, so we receive it approximately 12 months after the equivalent HEIFES data. We will use these data to review and finalise allocations of teaching grant for 2014-15 for all institutions after the year end (stage 3 of our three-stage process). We also use ILR data to gain information about student characteristics that are used in our funding allocations, such as for student opportunity, and to reconcile with the HEIFES return. Information about the ILR is available from <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/individualised-learner-record-ilr>.

13. Higher education institutions make equivalent data returns. These are the Higher Education Students Early Statistics (HESES) survey (the equivalent of HEIFES) and the individualised student record, which is submitted to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and is the equivalent of the ILR.

14. Some alternative providers also make HE data returns. These are the Higher Education in Alternative Providers Early Statistics (HEAPES) survey and the Alternative provider student record, which is submitted to HESA.

15. Although the HEIFES survey is primarily intended to collect information on students counted for funding purposes, it also collects information on other students aiming for recognised HE qualifications, such as those from overseas, or funded by other public bodies. This helps to provide a more complete picture of colleges' HE activities, supporting our understanding of their circumstances and student population, for purposes including audits and reconciliations with ILR data, and informing government planning.

16. This publication defines a student population covered by the HEIFES return. Within that population, we need to ensure that activity for a given student on a given programme of study is counted once and once only. The activity is broken down into separate years of programme of study, and the guidance in this publication defines whether such a year is countable in HEIFES14 or whether it is countable in the return for a different year. These years of programme of study are further disaggregated according to the following factors.

- a. **Residential and funding status.** Residential status is broken down between Home and European Union (EU) students and overseas students. The funding status of Home and EU students is broken down between HEFCE-fundable and non-fundable.
- b. **Categorisation as old- or new-regime.** 'Old-regime' relates to students treated as commencing their programme of study prior to 1 September 2012, while 'new-regime' relates to students treated as commencing on or after that date.
- c. **Mode of study.** The three modes identified in HEIFES are full-time, sandwich year-out and part-time. Our funding method distinguishes between these modes of study because we need to reflect the intensity of study and the tuition fee regime which the Government has designed to support HE teaching together with HEFCE grant.
- d. **Level of study.** The main HEIFES tables require a disaggregation between undergraduate and postgraduate levels of study. Tables 1 to 3 require a further disaggregation of postgraduate numbers between those on courses subject to regulated undergraduate tuition fees and others. Table 5 requires a further disaggregation of undergraduate numbers.
- e. **Subject-related price group.** Price groups are groupings of subjects which exhibit similar cost structures. For HEIFES14 there are seven price groups used for funding purposes (A, B, C1, C2, D, Media studies, Sports science & leisure studies). The HEIFES survey no longer collects information separately on initial teacher training leading to qualified teacher status (QTS), and in-service education and training (INSET) for those holding QTS. Students who in previous years would have been included in these former price groups should instead be reported in price group C2 and, if they are Home and EU students, are non-fundable. The National College for Teaching & Leadership, rather than HEFCE, has the funding responsibility for these students.
- f. **Length of study in the year.** Years of programme of study are classified as either standard length or long, depending generally on the number of weeks of study in the year.
- g. **Completion status.** The main volume measure in our teaching funding method relates to students who complete their year of programme of study. This is because we want to emphasise the importance of this, and to encourage institutions to support students in completing their study intentions for the year, for which they will have paid a tuition fee. Further information about the reason for our approach can be found at [www.hefce.ac.uk/whatwedo/lt/howfund/studentcompletion/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/whatwedo/lt/howfund/studentcompletion/).

## Content of the HEIFES survey

17. The HEIFES14 survey contains six tables for completion by FECs that we are funding directly for 2014-15.

- **Table 1:** Full-time counts of years of programme of study
- **Table 2:** Sandwich year-out counts of years of programme of study

## Content of the HEIFES survey

- **Table 3:** Part-time counts of years of programme of study and FTEs
  - **Table 4:** Home and EU undergraduate whole years abroad
  - **Table 5:** Further student breakdowns for planning purposes
  - **Table 6:** Counts of years of programme of study monitored for student number control purposes.
18. In addition, the workbook incorporates a number of worksheets which provide summary data derived from Tables 1 to 6 and other sources. These are provided to:
- show indicative grant adjustments arising from recruitment against the SNC.
  - help institutions model funding allocations for 2013-14 to 2015-16.
  - enable data comparisons, which inform credibility checks.
19. Annexes to the HEIFES14 publications provide definitions and guidance on completion of the tables.
- a. **Annex A** provides an outline timetable for the HEIFES14 return and process for the 2015-16 funding round.
  - b. **Annex B** summarises changes and clarifications to HEIFES since last year.
  - c. **Annexes C and D** contain a sample of the tables, and a description of those tables.
  - d. **Annex E** explains what should be done when the tables have been completed, including a description of the data verification process.
  - e. **Annexes F and G** define the HEIFES population and recognised HE courses.
  - f. **Annexes H and I** define when activity by students in the HEIFES population should be counted, and whether a student should be recorded as a completion or non-completion.
  - g. **Annex J** describes how to determine the full-time equivalence of part-time students.
  - h. **Annexes K to O** explain how to record different categories of activity and include the definitions of residential and funding status, price group, mode, level and length of study in the year.
  - i. **Annex P** contains guidance on assigning undergraduate whole years abroad to the appropriate category in Table 4.
  - j. **Annex Q** contains guidance on how to identify 'old-regime' and 'new-regime' students.
  - k. **Annex R** contains a list of questions to check before submitting the HEIFES14 return.
  - l. **Annex S** contains a list of abbreviations used in this publication.
  - m. **Annex T** contains the index of frequently used terms.

## Content of the HEIFES survey

20. We recommend that those unfamiliar with completing the HEIFES survey begin with Annexes D and E, to understand the tables and the steps for completing, submitting, and verifying their institution's data.

21. Those who are familiar with completing the HEIFES survey should begin with Annex B, which summarises changes since HEIFES13.

22. Throughout the annexes there are many 'example' boxes, and shaded boxes titled 'Good practice', which contain common issues found by our auditors and good practice tips.

23. The appendices to the HEIFES14 survey contain detailed technical information related to the HEIFES14 survey tables for completion, and will be available once HEIFES14 workbooks are released.

a. **Appendix 1** describes a series of validation checks within the HEIFES14 survey tables, which help to ensure incorrect data are not submitted.

b. **Appendix 2** describes a series of credibility checks, contained within the HEIFES14 survey tables (in the form of first-stage credibility warnings on Tables 1 to 6 and automatic check highlighting on the comparison tables), to help institutions check data credibility prior to submission to HEFCE.

c. **Appendix 3** describes the additional worksheet relating to the calculation of estimated grant adjustments arising from recruitment against the SNC.

d. **Appendix 4** describes three additional worksheets that enable institutions to model indicative final funding for 2013-14, adjusted funding for 2014-15, and indicative funding for 2015-16.

24. All activity that meets the criteria set out in Annexes E to H should be reported, even if it will not be used directly to allocate funds. For example, HEFCE will not count for funding purposes students ordinarily resident outside the EU or specified overseas territories, but these students should still be included in the 'Island and overseas' column in the tables.

25. In addition to their primary purpose of collecting data to inform initial funding allocations, Tables 1 to 4 of HEIFES14 provide us with information about colleges as a whole, including HE activity that we do not count for funding. Data returned in Table 5 are collected for planning and monitoring purposes, including those of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and the Home Office. Data returned in Table 6 will be used to monitor the SNC for 2014-15.

26. For funding allocation and other purposes we source various kinds of information from the Skills Funding Agency's July individualised student data. The algorithms we expect to use are shown in the 'ILR funding and monitoring data 2013-14: web facility' technical documentation, which is available on the HEFCE web-site at [www.hefce.ac.uk/data/famd/lateststatistics/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/data/famd/lateststatistics/). This information includes:

- re-creations of HEFCE funding returns (including a HEIFES13 re-creation)
- funding and monitoring data outputs likely to inform HEFCE funding (including an indicative 2015-16 allocation for student opportunity)

## Queries and further information

- data summaries for verification by colleges.

Colleges should note that incomplete or incorrect records may adversely affect funding allocations, and that we may not increase allocations where they are understated due to incomplete or incorrect data.

### **Reporting the activity of ‘connected undertakings’**

27. In counting the students to be included within a college’s SNC allocation and for its reporting obligations relating to students set out in its funding agreement with us, students registered at the college’s **connected undertakings** must be included with the students registered at the college, except where those connected undertakings are subject to a separate funding agreement directly with HEFCE. We will regard an undertaking as connected with the college if it falls within one or more of the categories specified in paragraphs 6 and 7 of [Annex F](#).

### **Colleges with no HEFCE-fundable students in 2014-15**

28. Colleges that enter into a direct funding relationship with HEFCE must continue to recruit and teach HEFCE-fundable students in order for them to maintain a funding agreement with us: ordinarily, we will not continue to fund a college that does not have any such students in an academic year. From 2014-15, colleges’ automatic designation for student support is dependent on their being funded by HEFCE, so if a college reports no HEFCE-fundable students in the year, it will lose its automatic designation for student support. However, should a college be able to demonstrate an exceptional circumstance, HEFCE may choose to fund a college for a further year in order for it to remain automatically designated for student support.

29. Colleges that record zero students in HEIFES for 2014-15 are liable to have all HEFCE funding for that year withdrawn. However, if they wish to remain HEFCE-funded for 2015-16 they will be required to notify us of this formally in writing in November 2014. This must include an explanation of why they do not have any HEFCE-fundable students at their institution in 2014-15 and a forecast of the number of students they wish to recruit in 2015-16, together with a full explanation, with supporting evidence, of why that forecast is realistic and achievable. HEFCE will then decide whether it will allocate funding to the college for 2015-16. If we agree to do so, but the college fails again to recruit any HEFCE-fundable students, HEFCE will withdraw all funding. Should the college wish to offer higher education in future, it will then be required to re-apply formally to become directly funded again. Any college reporting no HEFCE-fundable students in HEIFES14 and not notifying us in November that they wish to remain directly funded in 2015-16 will no longer be HEFCE-funded and will lose automatic designation for student support.

### **Queries and further information**

30. Queries about this survey should be e-mailed to [heifes@hefce.ac.uk](mailto:heifes@hefce.ac.uk). In addition, the HEFCE web-site has a page with answers to frequently asked questions. It can be found at [www.hefce.ac.uk/data/datacollection/heifes/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/data/datacollection/heifes/) under ‘Frequently asked questions’. The page will also contain any amendments or clarifications that need to be made after the publication and workbook are available. Colleges are expected to look there for

## Queries and further information

guidance before and during completion of their HEIFES return. We will use an e-mail list of HEIFES contacts to notify colleges of any significant changes or updates.

### **HEIFES contacts at colleges**

31. Each college has sent us details of contacts for the HEIFES survey, who should be available during the HEIFES process. If colleges wish to check or change their HEIFES contact details, they should contact their HEFCE higher education policy adviser. Contact details for the HE policy adviser for each college can be found at [www.hefce.ac.uk/contact/contactsforinstitutions/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/contact/contactsforinstitutions/).

## Annex A: Outline timetable for HEIFES14 return and 2015-16 funding round

1. The provisional timetable for HEIFES14 is summarised below.

Early November 2014	Extranet keys issued to colleges (heads of institution and HEIFES contacts).  HEIFES workbooks available to colleges via the extranet.
13 November 2014	12 noon deadline to return HEIFES data.
Mid-November 2014	Validation and credibility checks by HEFCE. HEIFES contacts asked to verify, and answer any questions about, the data. Contacts will have up to <b>five working days</b> to respond.  Colleges notified of provisional formulaic grant adjustments arising from recruitment against their student number control allocation (SNC), and invited to submit appeals.
19 December 2014	Each college's Accountable Officer must have signed off its HEIFES data as being correct as at 1 November 2014.
15 January 2015	Deadline for submission of appeals against grant adjustments.
13 February 2015	Colleges notified of final grant adjustments arising from recruitment against their SNC allocation, including the outcome of appeals.
27 March 2015	Recurrent teaching grant: Colleges notified of allocations for 2015-16, adjusted allocations for 2014-15, and final allocations for 2013-14.
31 March 2015	Recurrent teaching grant: Publication for all institutions of allocations for 2015-16, adjusted allocations for 2014-15, and final allocations for 2013-14.
June 2015	Colleges should ensure that all 2014-15 learning aims are registered on the Skills Funding Agency's learning aims search
Late July 2015	Colleges receive their funding agreements for 2015-16.
31 July 2015	Deadline for institutions to request transfers of provision and other amendments which affect funding allocations.
Late October 2015	Recurrent teaching grant: Colleges notified of any amendments to allocations for 2015-16, adjusted allocations for 2014-15, and final allocations for 2013-14.

2. For the purposes of the HEIFES14 return, colleges must adhere to deadlines, particularly during the data verification process. Where a college fails to return data on time, or the returned data are not credible, we may base the allocation of funds on our

## Annex A: Outline timetable for HEIFES14 return and 2015-16 funding round

own estimation of student activity. Colleges that do not submit credible data on time are more likely to be audited.

3. 2014-15 funding allocations informed by HEIFES14 will be recalculated in 2016 using the 2014-15 Individualised Learner Record (ILR) data and amended accordingly.

4. If we find, either through reconciliations with ILR data or through any data audit, that erroneous data have resulted in colleges receiving incorrect funding or SNC allocations, we will adjust their allocations accordingly for all relevant years (subject to any appeals process and the availability of our funds).

## Annex B: Summary of changes and clarifications since HEIFES13

This annex lists changes made between HEIFES14 and its 2013-14 iteration (HEIFES13).

### Changes to tables

#### Tables 1 to 3

1. Old-regime students are now split according to the same price group structure as new-regime students. Tables 1 and 3 therefore include the higher-cost price group C1 and lower-cost price group C2 for old-regime students. Table 2 specifies the use of price group C2 for both old- and new-regime sandwich year-out students.
2. Tables 1 and 3 include two new price groups, for Media studies and for Sports science and leisure studies.
3. The new disaggregation in Tables 1 and 3 will ensure we are able to count students appropriately for the 2014-15 allocations for old- and new-regime students, and for the 2015-16 teaching allocations. These changes were announced in 'Recurrent teaching grant from 2015-16: Confirmation of arrangements' ([HEFCE Circular letter 29/2014](#)). Additionally, these tables no longer include separate price groups for initial teacher training courses leading to, and in-service education and training (INSET) courses for those with, qualified teacher status. Students who in previous years would have been included in these price groups should instead be reported in price group C2 and, if they are Home and European Union (EU) students, continue to be non-fundable.
4. [Annex L](#) assigns academic cost centres to price groups for old- and new-regime students, to reflect the split of price group C into C1 and C2 for old-regime students and the changes to the assignment of price groups for Media studies and for Sports science and leisure studies. [Annex L](#) also provides details on how to determine price groups for students on initial teacher training and INSET courses.

#### Table 4

5. Table 4 collects years of programme of study for Home and EU undergraduates that are treated as years abroad for HEIFES and student support purposes. These are categorised by the type of year abroad rather than by fee level. The worksheet is now titled 'YA' rather than 'FEE' to reflect this change.
6. The categories that apply to years abroad for 2014-15 are:
  - outgoing Erasmus+ year abroad
  - outgoing students taking a year abroad outside the Erasmus+ programme.

These categories reflect changes to the Erasmus programme for 2014-15 and align more closely with student support regulation definitions. [Annex P](#) provides guidance on assigning years of programme of study to the appropriate year abroad category.

### **Table 5**

7. The column headings used in Table 5 have been changed to reflect the guidance in [Annex K](#) paragraph 5. Years of programme of study are disaggregated between 'UK-domiciled' and 'Other Home and EU' (rather than between 'Home' and 'Other EU' as in HEIFES13), as well as 'Island and overseas'.

8. Table 5 will no longer be used for National Scholarship Programme purposes, caused by the end of the programme in 2015-16.

### **Table 6**

9. We are no longer counting years of programme of study for employer co-funded students on Table 6. [Annex H](#) paragraph 21 provides guidance on recording years of programme of study in this table.

### **Table 7**

10. We are no longer collecting Table 7 in HEIFES. This is because our teaching funding allocations for 2015-16 will not be subject to the three-stage process that has applied from 2012-13 to 2014-15, and therefore no forecast is required to inform initial grant allocations for 2015-16. Instead, allocations will be informed by student numbers in 2014-15 (as reported in Tables 1 to 4). This change was announced in 'Recurrent teaching grant from 2015-16: Confirmation of arrangements' ([HEFCE Circular letter 29/2014](#)).

### **Comparison tables**

11. There have been significant changes to the comparison tables in the HEIFES workbook that are used during the data verification process. These tables should be used alongside the indicative funding worksheets as part of the data quality checking process before submission of the workbook to HEFCE. Details of these tables are provided in Appendices 2 and 4.

## **Changes to and clarifications of definitions**

### **Franchise arrangements**

12. We have provided new guidance on years of programme of study that are taught under a partnership arrangement by an alternative provider (one that is not in direct receipt of public funding) on behalf of a HEFCE-funded institution. These years of programme of study will be treated as franchised only where the HEFCE-funded institution (the franchiser) retains overall control of the programme's content, delivery, assessment and quality assurance arrangements, according to the requirements listed in [Annex F](#) paragraph 10.

13. [Annex F](#) paragraphs 13-17 provide further guidance on ensuring that students taught under any partnership or collaborative arrangement are returned correctly.

### **Counting years of programme of study in the HEIFES population**

14. The criteria for including years of programme of study in the HEIFES population (see paragraph 5 of [Annex H](#)) have been revised to include the requirement that the

student has not withdrawn, and is not forecast to withdraw, within two weeks of starting their programme of study.

### **Home and EU undergraduate years abroad**

15. As described in paragraphs 5 and 6 of this annex, Home and EU undergraduate years abroad are now disaggregated between outgoing years abroad either within or outside the Erasmus+ scheme. [Annex P](#) defines these years abroad for the purposes of HEIFES. Regulated fee limits for new-regime students taking years abroad have changed as of 1 September 2014. These new limits are also outlined in [Annex P](#).

### **Diploma for Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector**

16. References to the Diploma for Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (DTLLS) have been updated to refer to the Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training, which has replaced the DTLLS.

### **Other changes**

#### **Checklist**

17. For reference, we have included the 'HEIFES14 self-check questions' checklist as [Annex R](#). This is described in [Annex E](#) paragraph 24 and will also be issued as part of the release of the HEIFES14 workbook.

#### **Good practice**

18. The shaded grey sections throughout the document, previously called 'Audit issues', now provide updated guidance on good practice.

## **Annex C: Sample tables (Excel files)**

This annex shows samples of the tables which must be completed by colleges: it is available to download as an Excel file on the HEFCE web-site alongside this publication at [www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs). The workbook containing the actual tables to be completed will be made available via the HEFCE extranet in November 2014.

## Annex D: Getting started – table, column and row descriptions

This annex describes the tables that must be completed in HEIFES14 and the columns and rows within them. It outlines the structure of the survey and indicates where guidance and definitions can be found in subsequent annexes.

We recommend reading this annex alongside the sample tables in Annex C.

### Which students are counted in HEIFES?

1. This guidance defines a student population covered by the HEIFES return. Within that population, we need to ensure that activity for a given student on a given programme of study is counted once and once only. This activity is broken down into separate years of programme of study, and the HEIFES guidance defines whether such a year is countable in HEIFES14, or whether it is countable in the return for a different year. HEIFES14 therefore records counts of years of programme of study aiming for a recognised higher education (HE) qualification. Further information on recognised HE qualifications is available in [Annex G](#).
2. A programme of study may be split into one or more 'years of programme of study' (see [Annex H](#) paragraph 1). To be counted in HEIFES14 a year of programme of study must be generated by a student in the HEIFES14 population. Paragraph 3 of [Annex F](#) defines criteria that years of programme of study must meet to be included in the population. Paragraph 4 of [Annex F](#) also identifies particular cases that are excluded from the population.
3. Not all students in the HEIFES14 student population will generate a year of programme of study that is countable in HEIFES14. Paragraph 5 of [Annex H](#) provides additional criteria that a year of programme of study must meet to be counted in the HEIFES14 population, relating to the need to charge a tuition fee, the minimum amount of activity and the requirement that the student is not writing up a thesis (or similar) for the whole year of programme of study. Some years of programme of study may be generated by students who are in the HEIFES14 population and meet the criteria in paragraph 5 of [Annex H](#), but may instead have been counted in a previous HEIFES survey rather than HEIFES14. See paragraphs 9 to 48 of [Annex H](#) for guidance on how to count years of programme of study.

#### Things to note

4. Care should be taken if the college is involved in a collaborative arrangement with another institution to ensure years of programme of study are not being counted twice (collaborative arrangements, excluding those solely for validation, are treated as franchises for HEIFES purposes). See paragraphs 8 to 17 of [Annex F](#) for guidance on returning franchised activity in HEIFES.
5. [Annex H](#) paragraph 3 contains guidance on how to treat students who are studying towards two or more independent recognised HE qualifications at the same time.

6. Annex H paragraphs 40 to 48 explain whether, and if so how, to return the following kinds of summer school in HEIFES:

- summer schools for potential HE students
- access provision
- within-course periods of study in vacation time
- foundation degree bridging courses.

### Table and column descriptions

7. All numbers returned in all tables should be counts of years of programme of study **apart from** where full-time equivalents (FTEs) are required in Columns 4a and 5a in Table 3.

8. The HEIFES14 workbook contains six tables for completion by colleges that we are funding for 2014-15, which this annex describes in detail:

<b>Name of worksheet</b>	<b>HEIFES14 tables</b>
FTS	Table 1: Full-time counts of years of programme of study
OUT	Table 2: Sandwich year-out counts of years of programme of study
PT	Table 3: Part-time counts of years of programme of study and FTE
YA	Table 4: Home and European Union (EU) undergraduate years abroad
HEC	Table 5: Further student breakdowns for planning purposes
SNC	Table 6: Counts of years of programme of study monitored for student number control purposes

### Tables 1, 2 and 3: Student counts and FTE

9. Tables 1, 2 and 3 correspond to the three modes of study (full-time, sandwich year-out and part-time respectively) defined in Annex M. These tables are mutually exclusive, and taken together should sum to the total years of programme of study countable for the academic year.

#### Things to note

10. Occasionally a student's mode of study changes, either between years or mid-year. See paragraphs 9 to 11 of Annex M for guidance on how to return such years of programme of study.

11. For the purposes of meeting the attendance definition for a full-time course, full-time study can include learning in the workplace, where this is a course requirement. Paragraphs 12 to 15 of Annex M provide guidance on this.

### **What should be included in each column in Tables 1, 2 and 3?**

#### Columns 1 and 2

12. Column 1: Number of years of programme of study countable between 1 August 2014 and 1 November 2014 inclusive. If the student has withdrawn from their year of programme of study on or before 1 November 2014, their year of programme of study should not be returned.

13. Column 2: Number of years of programme of study expected to become countable between 2 November 2014 and 31 July 2015 inclusive. Colleges should make sure that estimates included in this column are made on a reasonable basis, and that supporting evidence for the assumptions is kept for audit purposes. Column 2 should include those years of programme of study (including non-standard years) expected to start after 1 November 2014. Guidance on when years of programme of study become countable is given in [Annex H](#).

14. Columns 1 and 2 are mutually exclusive. Whether a year of programme of study should be recorded in Column 1 or 2 depends on when it becomes countable and this in turn depends on the start date for the student's first year of programme of study. The flow chart in Figure H1 of [Annex H](#) will help determine whether a year of programme of study should be returned in HEIFES14 Tables 1 to 5, and whether it should be returned in Column 1 or 2 of Tables 1 to 3.

#### Column 3 (students who will not complete their year of programme of study)

15. Column 3: Number of years of programme of study included in Columns 1 and 2 who will not complete their year of programme of study. Students who intermit or are known to have non-completed on or before 1 November 2014, but who have not withdrawn by that date, should still be included in Column 1 and in Column 3 as appropriate. Numbers of non-completions should be entered as negative values in the workbook. Colleges should ensure that these estimates are supported by historical data.

16. The main volume measure in our teaching funding methods relates to students who complete their year of programme of study. This is because we want to emphasise the importance of this, and to encourage institutions to support students in completing their study intentions for the year, for which they will have paid a tuition fee. [Annex I](#) provides the definition of completion and non-completion.

#### Columns 4 and 4a (estimated countable years and FTEs)

17. Column 4: Estimated completed years of programme of study. This is the sum of the first three columns; the addition will be carried out automatically in the workbook. This is an estimate of the number of students whose activity is countable in the academic year and who will complete the year of programme of study.

18. Column 4a (Table 3 only): Estimated FTE for the academic year. This is the sum of the FTE for the whole year of programme of study for the students returned in Column 4 and not the numbers in Column 1. [Annex J](#) gives further guidance on determining FTE for part-time programmes of study.

19. The HEFCE-fundable data in Column 4 of Tables 1 and 2 and Column 4a of Table 3 are used in our teaching funding calculations. They will primarily be used to calculate the adjusted allocations for 2014-15 and allocations for 2015-16.

#### Things to note

20. Care should be taken when determining the FTE of a student who has changed their mode of study mid-year, or who is exempt from part of a course due to, for example, accredited prior learning. See paragraphs 4 and 7 of [Annex J](#).

#### Columns 5 and 5a (employer co-funded students)

21. Column 5: This is a subset of the non-fundable years of programme of study recorded in Column 4, and relates only to students who are employer co-funded. These are students who are aiming for the same qualification at the same institution on programmes of study that prior to 2012-13 were reported as employer co-funded. Any students who are non-fundable for any reason other than their being on an employer co-funded course should not be included in Column 5 unless the only other reason they are non-fundable is that they are aiming for an equivalent or lower qualification (ELQ) (see [Annex K](#)),

22. Column 5a (Table 3 only): Estimated total FTE for the completed years of programme of study returned in Column 5. Column 5a is a subset of the non-fundable estimated FTE recorded in Column 4a.

23. Column 5 of Tables 1 and 2 and Column 5a of Table 3 will be used primarily to calculate the adjusted allocation for 2014-15 for employer co-funded old-regime years of programme of study.

#### **Good practice**

##### Forecast of countable years (Column 2)

24. Where forecast Column 2 figures are included in the return, they should be compared with the outturn, and reasons established for any differences. This information should be used to inform the following year's forecast.

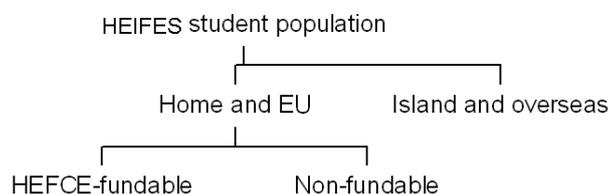
25. It is important that the compiler of the return is informed of all courses that are coming online during the year, so they can determine whether these forecasts need to be included in the return.

##### FTEs in Column 4a of the part-time table, Table 3

26. The FTEs returned in Column 4a should relate to the part-time numbers included in Column 4 (estimated total completions for the year), and not the numbers in Column 1 (years of programme of study countable between 1 August and 1 November inclusive).

## Fundability status

27. There are three fundability statuses collected in HEIFES: HEFCE-fundable, non-fundable, and Island and overseas. Students in the HEIFES population are disaggregated as follows:



28. [Annex K](#) paragraphs 1 to 6 explain how to distinguish between Home and EU students and Island and overseas students.

29. [Annex K](#) paragraphs 7 and 8 explain how to determine which Home and EU students are HEFCE-fundable, and which are non-fundable. Home and EU students aiming for an ELQ are classed as non-fundable (unless they are exempt from this policy). Paragraphs 10 to 38 of [Annex K](#) contain guidance on assessing a student's ELQ status and the exemptions that apply for our funding purposes.

## Old-regime and new-regime

30. In Columns 1 to 4 of Tables 1 to 3, HEFCE-fundable years of programme of study are disaggregated between old-regime and new-regime. [Annex Q](#) explains how to determine which are old-regime and which are new-regime.

### Things to note

31. For old-regime students funded by another EU public source, years of programme of study will typically need to be reported as non-fundable, depending in part on whether the level of contribution from that other source is at the HEFCE standard rate or higher. [Annex K](#) paragraphs 39 to 46 contain examples of how to determine the number of old-regime students supported from other EU public funds (and therefore to be reported as non-fundable), where the available money is not enough to cover the HEFCE standard rate for all relevant students. There is an Excel template on the HEFCE web-site at [www.hefce.ac.uk/data/datacollection/heifes/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/data/datacollection/heifes/) under 'Frequently asked questions' that will calculate the number of students who are non-fundable in individual cases.

32. The guidance in paragraph 31 does not apply to new-regime years of programme of study. These years of programme of study will be HEFCE-fundable unless they are non-fundable by virtue of sub-paragraphs 9d, 9e, 9f, 9g or 9j of [Annex K](#).

## Price groups

33. These reflect the broad relative costs of provision in different subject areas (price group A applies to higher education institutions only). The price group under which a student is returned depends on the Learn Direct Classification System codes of the course they are on. See [Annex L](#) for further information.

Things to note

34. Annex L contains particular guidance on how to treat sandwich years-out and education, when assigning activity in these areas to price groups.

**Long years of programme of study**

35. Years of programme of study are classified as either standard length or long. Whether full-time years of programme of study are treated as long depends on the number of weeks' study in the year; for part-time years of programme of study, it depends on the length of each year for an equivalent full-time course. Annex O paragraphs 1 to 3 define 'long' for full-time courses, and Annex O paragraph 7 defines 'long' for part-time courses.

Things to note

36. Periods of work-based study should not be taken into account when determining whether a year of programme of study is long – see paragraphs 3 and 4 of Annex O.

**Level**

37. Annex N describes how to determine whether a student should be classed as an undergraduate or postgraduate student.

Things to note

38. Postgraduate students who are subject to regulated undergraduate fees are recorded separately within Tables 1 to 3 – see paragraph 6 of Annex N.

**Table 4: Home and EU undergraduate years abroad**

39. The data returned in Table 4 are a subset of the Home and EU undergraduate years of programme of study included within Columns 1 and 2 of Tables 1 and 2: those undergraduates taking a year abroad in 2014-15 as part of their year of programme of study. The data collected are disaggregated in terms of whether or not the year abroad incorporates at least one period of study or work placement in 2014-15 where the student is participating in the EU Erasmus+ programme.

40. Further information on the definition of a year abroad and how to record years of programme of study for them in the appropriate fee level category, can be found in Annex P.

**What should be included in each column in Table 4?**

41. Column 1: Countable years of programme of study between 1 August 2014 and 1 November 2014 inclusive. The column is broken down by mode of study and fundability status.

42. Column 2: Forecast of countable years of programme of study between 2 November 2014 and 31 July 2015 inclusive. The column is broken down by mode of study and fundability status.

**Mode of study**

43. The full-time, sandwich year-out and part-time column headings are consistent with those in Tables 1 and 2 and are defined in Annex M.

### **Fundability status**

44. [Annex K](#) contains guidance on how to determine fundability status. Island and overseas years of programme of study are not included in Table 4.

### **Type of year abroad (whether or not under the Erasmus+ programme)**

45. Guidance on how to record years of programme of study in the appropriate category can be found in [Annex P](#).

46. Data returned in Table 4 will be used to determine allocations to support colleges' participation in Erasmus+ and other higher education student mobility programmes for 2015-16.

### **Table 5: Further student breakdowns for planning purposes**

47. Table 5 contains the number of years of programme of study for all modes, split between UK-domiciled students, others entitled to pay Home and EU fees, and Island and overseas students. UK-domiciled students are defined in paragraph 5 of [Annex K](#).

48. The levels of qualification are grouped differently in this table compared to the other tables. Those on foundation degree bridging courses should be included in 'Other UG degree'. Sub-degree qualifications exclude Higher National Diplomas (HNDs) and include Higher National Certificates (HNCs), Diplomas of Higher Education (DipHEs), Certificates in Education (CertEds) and Level 5 Diplomas in Education and Training.

49. The full-time, sandwich year-out and part-time column headings are consistent with those in Tables 1, 2 and 3. These modes of study are defined in [Annex M](#), but full-time and sandwich year-out are aggregated in Table 5.

### **What should be included in each column in Table 5?**

50. Column 1: Years of programme of study countable between 1 August 2014 and 31 July 2015 inclusive. These data are split by mode, then between UK-domiciled students, others entitled to pay Home and EU fees, and Island and overseas students. In total, these data are the same as the total data returned in Columns 1 and 2 of Tables 1, 2 and 3. The sum of 'UK-domiciled' and 'Other Home and EU' should give the totals of all Home and EU students returned in Columns 1 and 2 of Tables 1, 2 and 3. Similarly the totals for 'Island and overseas' should match.

51. Column 2: New entrants included in Column 1 of this table, defined as the first countable year for the programme of study (paragraph 17 of [Annex H](#) contains further guidance on identifying new entrants). These data are split by mode, then between UK-domiciled students, others entitled to pay Home and EU fees, and Island and overseas students.

52. Column 3: Countable years franchised out included in Column 1 of this table, broken down by the type of institution involved. Where the student is partially franchised out the countable years of programme of study, and not the proportion of the year of study franchised, should be returned. 'Other institution' applies to provision that is franchised out to an organisation that is not a higher education institution or further education college supported from public funds.

53. When determining whether a student is franchised out, the franchise arrangement for the year of programme of study and not the whole course should be used. For example, a student on a two-year course that is franchised out only for the whole of the first year would be returned as wholly franchised out in the first year, and not included in the franchised-out column in the second year.

54. See [Annex F](#), paragraphs 8 to 17, for more guidance on collaborative arrangements treated as franchises for HEIFES purposes.

55. Table 5 data are collected for planning and monitoring purposes, including those of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and the Home Office.

### **Table 6: Counts of years of programme of study monitored for student number control purposes**

56. Table 6 collects information to monitor the student number control for 2014-15 and applies largely to full-time years of programme of study (as defined in [Annex M](#)), plus, depending on circumstances, others who switch mode to or from full-time during the year of programme of study. For the purposes of defining the coverage of Table 6, part-time students in receipt of full-time student support (as defined in [Annex M](#), paragraphs 7 and 8) should be treated as if they were full-time. Paragraphs 20 to 38 of [Annex H](#) contain guidance on how to count years of programme of study in Table 6, including the definition of the population to be included in the table and the categories within it.

57. Table 6 should contain all years of programme of study that count against the 2014-15 student number control allocation plus others that do not count because they are covered by an exemption (for example, for students with ABB+ equivalent entry qualifications). Notwithstanding the exemption policy we need to monitor this broader population at the sector level. All such years of programme of study where the student has actively studied for two weeks or more should be included. This may require minor adjustments for estimates of the following:

- those who are subsequently found to have withdrawn within two weeks
- those who are subsequently found to have withdrawn before 1 November 2014.

58. The information collected in this table is for a subset of the years of programmes of study in the HEIFES14 population (as defined in [Annex F](#)). The subset collected on Table 6 differs from that collected on Tables 1 to 5. The criteria for including students in Table 6 are given in paragraph 20-38 of [Annex H](#). Depending on the college concerned, some or all will count against the student number control allocation that we have set for 2014-15.

### **What should be included in each column in Table 6?**

59. Column 1: Number of years of programme of study that commenced between 1 August 2014 and 1 November 2014 inclusive, except for those where the student withdrew from the programme of study within two weeks. This column is further disaggregated between the following categories.

## Annex D: Getting started – table, column and row descriptions

a. Column 1(a): Estimated years of programme of study where the student is known to have withdrawn on or before 1 November 2014 (after being active for two weeks of study or more).

b. Column 1(b): Estimated years of programme of study where the student was still active on 1 November 2014. The number reported should be reduced to take account of students who, although thought to be active on 1 November 2014, are subsequently found to have withdrawn within two weeks of starting the year of programme of study.

60. Column 2: Number of years of programme of study that are forecast to commence after 1 November 2014 and before 1 August 2015. These should be adjusted to exclude the forecast numbers of students who will withdraw from the programme of study within two weeks of starting.

61. Data returned in Table 6 will be used to monitor the student number control allocation for 2014-15.

62. Column 3: This is calculated automatically in the workbook as the sum of Columns 1(a), 1(b) and 2.

### Things to note

63. Years of programme of study are counted in Table 6 in a slightly different way from the other tables. Treatment differs between Table 6 and the other tables where students withdraw from their year of programme of study in the 2014-15 academic year or change mode of study during the year. Guidance on this is provided in paragraphs 25 and 36 of Annex H.

64. Not all years of programme of study counted in Table 6 will be for 'entrants' to the college (as defined in Annex H paragraph 17). This may be the case when, for example, students have previously studied part-time, or on programmes of study that were not fundable by HEFCE. Paragraphs 35 to 39 of Annex H provide guidance on this.

### Exempt population

65. 'Exempt population' applies to those who fall within the categories included on the 'exemptions list' for 2014-15, available at [www.hefce.ac.uk/data/year/2013/sncexempt1415](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/data/year/2013/sncexempt1415). These exemptions vary for certain specialist colleges in the performing and creative arts – see paragraph 28 of Annex H.

### **Level**

66. 'UG' should contain undergraduates as defined in Annex N. 'PG ITT' should contain students starting on a postgraduate initial teacher training qualification such as a Postgraduate or Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) or a Postgraduate Diploma in Education.

## Annex E: Submission and quality assurance of HEIFES14

Completed workbooks for HEIFES14 must be uploaded to the HEFCE extranet no later than **noon on Thursday 13 November 2014**.

This annex explains the data checks that each college must undertake before uploading its completed workbook to the HEFCE extranet, and many of the data checks that HEFCE staff will carry out as part of the data verification process once we have received the completed workbook.

### Data preparation and submission

1. An Excel workbook with spreadsheet versions of the tables in Annex C will be available in November 2014 on the HEFCE extranet, <https://data.hefce.ac.uk/>. Heads of colleges and HEIFES contacts will be issued with a key (unique to their college and the HEIFES14 survey) to enable access to this workbook via the HEFCE extranet. Colleges will need to upload the completed workbook to the same web-site. In addition to the extranet keys, heads of colleges and HEIFES contacts will be issued with guidance on how to use the extranet and a checklist (also available in [Annex R](#)) for use before submission of the completed workbook.
2. Returns must be uploaded to the HEFCE extranet no later than **noon on Thursday 13 November 2014**. We will not give extensions to this deadline.
3. The data do not need to be formally signed off by the Accountable Officer of the college at this stage. However, it is good practice for someone independent of the compiler of the return to review it carefully to ensure that the figures (including indicative funding implications) make sense in relation to the supporting data, and that basic inputting errors have not occurred. A senior member of the college should also agree the return prior to submission.
4. Where a college fails to return data on time, or the returned data are not credible, we may allocate funds and monitor student numbers based on our own estimate of student activity. Colleges that do not submit credible data on time are more likely to be audited. Colleges should note that incomplete or incorrect records may adversely affect funding allocations, and that we may not increase allocations where initial allocations are understated due to incomplete or incorrect data.
5. Good practice guidance for preparing the HEIFES return can be found in the shaded boxes in paragraphs 31 to 45 of this annex and throughout this publication.

### Data verification and sign-off of HEIFES14 data

6. A number of validation and credibility checks are carried out automatically within the workbook (detailed in paragraphs 13 to 17 below, and in Appendices 1 and 2):
  - **Validation checks** ensure numerical consistency within the return (for example that particular figures on a table match related figures on another).

- **Credibility checks.** Some of these are built into the HEIFES Excel workbooks and will generate warning messages if certain thresholds are breached. In addition, HEFCE staff check the credibility of all data returns and will question colleges about them. Credibility checks will relate to data values or changes that, while possible, appear unexpected or unlikely.

7. The workbook contains a worksheet showing the estimated student number control grant adjustments for 2014-15 (detailed in Appendix 3). Other worksheets are included which will enable institutions to model their indicative funding allocations for 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16 (described in Appendix 4). The appendices are available to download alongside this document at [www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs).

8. Where credibility warnings are present in the submitted workbook (either in the form of first-stage credibility warnings in Tables 1 to 6 or automatic check highlighting on the comparison tables, as described in paragraphs 17 to 19 of this annex), institutions must inform us of the reasons why the data are credible. An e-mail detailing these reasons should be sent to [dataverification@hefce.ac.uk](mailto:dataverification@hefce.ac.uk) by 13 November 2014. Such explanations will inform the subsequent data verification process as detailed below.

9. When we receive the HEIFES14 returns, we will review the data and e-mailed explanations for outstanding credibility warnings. During November and December, we will e-mail colleges, attaching their HEIFES data and the comparison and grant adjustment reports generated from them. Colleges will be asked to:

- verify that the data are accurate, or make corrections
- answer any questions we may have about the data and the explanations already provided
- submit any appeals against student number control grant adjustments.

The timetable for this is tight: if corrections to data are made, we will then reissue the data for re-verification by colleges and may ask further questions as appropriate. We expect colleges to answer any questions about data within five working days. We may refuse to revise allocations once data have been verified.

10. Verification checks will be carried out by a small team of data verification specialists at HEFCE. Any questions throughout the data verification process should be e-mailed to [dataverification@hefce.ac.uk](mailto:dataverification@hefce.ac.uk). This e-mail inbox will be checked frequently by the data verification team. To discuss any queries we raise, or your college's data, contact the individual named in the initial e-mail that details our queries.

11. By **19 December 2014**, all colleges must have signed off their HEIFES data as correct as at 1 November 2014. Given its significance to the college's funding, we require the Accountable Officer (normally the principal) to sign off the finalised HEIFES return. This requires them to have an understanding of our data collection requirements, to ensure that the college has systems capable of producing an accurate, complete return and that the preparer of the return has compiled it competently. If it is anticipated that the Accountable Officer will be unavailable to sign off the data during the data verification period, colleges should e-mail [dataverification@hefce.ac.uk](mailto:dataverification@hefce.ac.uk) to agree interim arrangements. We will expect the Accountable Officer to sign off the data on their return.

12. If a college fails to meet the deadline for signing off data, or we believe the data to be inaccurate, we reserve the right to use our own estimates of data to inform funding and monitor student numbers (see paragraph 20 of HEFCE's 2014-15 'Funding agreement with further education colleges', available at [www.hefce.ac.uk/whatwedo/invest/institns/annalocns/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/whatwedo/invest/institns/annalocns/) under 'For institutions' and 'July 2014 announcement'). We cannot guarantee to increase allocations to reflect any amendments to data after **19 December 2014**.

### **Validation checks on Tables 1 to 6**

13. Each worksheet contains a number of validation checks which help to ensure that incorrect data are not submitted. If an error or inconsistency is detected in a completed worksheet, a message reading **Validation: Failure (see below table)** will appear above the column where there is a validation failure, and the values in the cells which are causing the error will turn red. Below the table, the error will be described in more detail. These errors **must be corrected** before submitting the completed workbook: we will not accept workbooks that contain validation failures. If the source of the error cannot be identified, colleges should e-mail us for advice at [heifes@hefce.ac.uk](mailto:heifes@hefce.ac.uk). The validation checks themselves are described in more detail in Appendix 1.

### **Credibility checks**

14. The HEIFES14 workbook contains a series of credibility checks in the form of first stage credibility warnings on Tables 1 to 6 and automatic check highlighting on the comparison tables, to help colleges check data credibility prior to submission. Where first stage credibility warnings or automatic check highlighting are shown, colleges should check that the data they have entered are correct and meet the guidance and definitions set out in the relevant section of this publication.

15. The automatic checks that are included in the workbook are not exhaustive. Colleges are expected to conduct their own credibility checks to ensure the data are reasonable prior to submission.

16. Once the data have been submitted, we will use these checks and tables to assess whether they are reasonable. Colleges will be asked to explain any apparent anomalies, or to correct data, before signing off the data as correct. This data verification process is described in more detail in paragraphs 8 to 10 of this annex.

### **First-stage credibility warnings on Tables 1 to 6**

17. The worksheets contain a number of first stage credibility warnings. These checks are intended to warn colleges that they have entered data which may be (but are not necessarily) erroneous. If potentially erroneous data are detected in a completed worksheet, a message reading **First stage credibility: Warnings (see below table)** will appear above the column containing them. Below the table, the warning will be described in more detail. Completed workbooks with first-stage credibility warnings may be submitted, but colleges must inform us of the reasons why the data are credible as described in paragraph 8 of this annex. If the source of the warning cannot be identified, colleges should e-mail us for advice at [heifes@hefce.ac.uk](mailto:heifes@hefce.ac.uk). The first stage credibility warnings are described in more detail in Appendix 2.

### **Automatic check highlighting on the comparison tables**

18. The workbook also incorporates a series of comparison tables within the 'Funding' and Comparison 1 to 4 worksheets. These tables contain comparisons of:

- funding allocations between different years and stages of the three-stage recalculation process
- the data submitted in HEIFES14 with data submitted in HEIFES13 and other sources.

This information is provided to allow identification of any material changes in data which may indicate errors in the submission. The tables on the 'Funding' worksheet will be used to identify differences at a high level; the tables on the four comparison sheets will then be used to look at the differences in more detail.

19. Automatic check highlighting will highlight (in yellow) data which may be (but are not necessarily) anomalous or represent a significant year-on-year change. Completed workbooks that have automatic check highlighting present may be submitted, but colleges must inform us of the reasons why the data in the Comparison 1 and 2 worksheets are credible as described in paragraph 8 of this annex. If the reason for the highlighting cannot be identified, colleges should e-mail us for advice at [heifes@hefce.ac.uk](mailto:heifes@hefce.ac.uk). The automatic check highlighting and the comparison tables are described in more detail in Appendix 2. As well as the automatic check highlighting we may also query other significant changes in the data.

20. The Comparison 3 and 4 worksheets are provided for institutional use only. Colleges need not provide explanations for any automatic check highlighting on these sheets. The comparison tables in them will not routinely be questioned during the data verification process, but we may query any large differences.

### **Grant adjustments worksheet**

21. In addition to the tables which must be completed in the HEIFES14 workbook (Tables 1 to 6, as described in [Annex D](#)), there is a worksheet called 'HBK' which contains the estimated student number control grant adjustments for 2014-15.

22. Colleges should check the figures shown on this worksheet before uploading the completed workbook to the extranet to ensure that any estimated grant adjustments are not the result of data error. Any queries about estimated grant adjustments should be addressed to the relevant HEFCE higher education policy adviser in the first instance (contact details for policy advisers, searchable by college, are available at [www.hefce.ac.uk/contact/contactsforinstitutions/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/contact/contactsforinstitutions/)). The worksheet is described in more detail in Appendix 3.

### **Indicative funding for 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16 worksheets**

23. A further three worksheets contain tables that will enable institutions to model the following indicative funding:

- final funding for 2013-14
- adjusted funding for 2014-15

- funding for 2015-16.

These worksheets do not incorporate any new scaling factors, which will be confirmed in early 2015. They contain cells that colleges need to populate, and are described in more detail in Appendix 4. Colleges should use these worksheets before uploading the completed workbook to the extranet to ensure that any estimated funding implications are not the result of data error.

### **Checklist**

24. In November 2014, we will issue

- a letter to heads of colleges and HEIFES contacts containing the key to access the survey
- a checklist for use before submission of the completed workbook.

The checklist will contain a series of self-check questions to which a college must be able to answer 'yes' before uploading the completed workbook to the extranet. We also recommend that this checklist is reviewed when final checks are carried out before the data are signed off. The checklist can also be found in Annex R.

### **Data assurance**

25. We will continue to consider aspects of the HEIFES return for audit activity on a risk basis, and review aspects of the data used for funding and student number purposes. Colleges should therefore keep an adequate audit trail recording how the data have been derived. This is especially important when colleges are including estimates or forecasts, or making judgements. Colleges must ensure that estimates and forecasts are reasonable and have sufficient supporting data. Evidence of enrolment should be available for inspection. Where appropriate, our auditors will also seek to rely on any relevant internal audit work that has been carried out on the student record system or the method for compiling the HEIFES return.

26. We no longer audit the HEIFES return on a cyclical basis, but audit particular areas of data related to the return on a risk basis. The data audits that we carry out test colleges' systems and processes in preparing the aspect of the data return under review. This may involve desk-based audit work, and visits to institutions for the following purposes.

- a. To review their management information systems.
- b. To review the documentation that provides an audit trail showing how the return was produced.
- c. To test the values reported on the return and the assumptions underpinning it. This will involve selecting samples (or whole populations) of students and testing how they have been reported in the return.

The audits often include a review of the outturn position of students at the end of the academic year, to assess the reasonableness of how they have been included in the HEIFES return.

27. Data reconciliation occurs in the following academic year. We use the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) data submitted by the college to the Skills Funding Agency to reconstruct what the original HEIFES return for the college would have looked like. Where differences between the original and re-created HEIFES return result in significant funding discrepancies, the college is selected to go through a funding and monitoring data reconciliation exercise. This involves explaining the reasons for data differences and, if necessary, submitting amendments to the ILR data. At the end of the process, we will treat the final (amended) ILR data as superseding the original HEIFES return, and will implement any consequential funding and student number adjustments for all relevant years (subject to an appeals process where appropriate).

28. As part of our audit and reconciliation processes we also compare ILR data with a variety of other data, most notably individualised data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency student record, the National Pupil Database and the Student Loans Company as these become available. Details of how we expect to compare HEIFES with ILR data are given in 'ILR funding and monitoring data (FAMD) 2013-14: web facility', ([HEFCE Circular letter 27/2014](#)).

29. Previous audits of HEIFES data have identified a number of areas where some colleges were incorrectly interpreting the HEIFES definitions, or where internal institutional systems and practices did not facilitate the production of the HEIFES return. These have included:

- inadequate recording of entry qualifications
- incorrect application of the rules on student completion, particularly those around the requirement for submission of the final assessment in all modules intended to be studied in the year
- inadequate recording of submission dates of final assessments, for the purpose of determining completion status
- failure to identify students' study intentions for the year for the purpose of determining completion status
- lack of robustness in estimating non-completions and forecasting countable years
- incorrect calculation of full-time equivalence
- incorrect assignment of activity to price groups
- incorrect identification of mode of study
- incorrect classification of students as old- or new-regime
- weak management and poor communication within collaborative arrangements
- inadequate audit trail between the student record system and the HEIFES return
- lack of systems notes for recording data on student activity and for the HEIFES preparation process

- lack of analytical review of figures in the return to identify anomalies and ensure that the data make sense
- lack of reconciliation between HEIFES and ILR returns before submission to the Skills Funding Agency.

30. To assist with future compliance, we strongly recommend that all colleges undertake a formal review of existing arrangements, taking into account the shaded 'Good practice' sections in this and other annexes. As new areas of risk arise we need to gain assurance over these areas, so our data assurance activity is continuously developing. Colleges should give particular attention to any new developments within HEIFES14 and ensure they have assurance over all aspects of the return in case of audit activity. As we develop audit programmes we will publish them on our web-site at [www.hefce.ac.uk/whatwedo/invest/institns/da/dataaudit/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/whatwedo/invest/institns/da/dataaudit/).

### **Good practice**

#### Audit trail

31. An adequate audit trail between student record systems and the HEIFES return should be retained for at least five years. This should include a record of the basis for making estimates of non-completions and forecast students, along with any relevant electronically stored data, printouts and working papers used in completing the return. Source documents such as registration forms should also be retained, including information on students' detailed study intentions for the academic year and their qualifications on entry.

32. There should be an audit trail to individual figures in the return for all Column 1 figures in Tables 1 to 4 and 6, identifying individual students within those figures. During audit we ask for a sample of these figures to be rebuilt. In the case of the estimates and forecasts (that is, Columns 2 and 3 in Tables 1 to 4 and 6 and all of Table 5), there must be a clear rationale for the figures, and back-up data justifying what is being returned.

33. Where the college is involved in franchise or other collaborative arrangements, the audit trail must include evidence for the inclusion or exclusion of franchise students, and forecasts relating to such students.

#### Knowledge management and staff training

34. At many colleges, the knowledge required to prepare the HEIFES return is undocumented and sometimes lies with only one person. This creates a risk that in that person's absence, particularly at crucial times of the year, the college may not be able to prepare the return on time and to the appropriate standard. A good audit trail helps to reduce this risk, but we also consider it good practice for all colleges to manage this risk by ensuring that at least two people can produce the information for the return and prepare the return itself.

35. In addition, colleges should ensure that the relevant processes are adequately documented and that this documentation is kept up to date.

36. There are, quite reasonably, differences between academic regulations of colleges and the rules relating to the counting of students for funding purposes. It is essential that

individuals involved in completing student data fields which are used for funding purposes fully understand the fields they are completing in the student record. For these fields, student activity should be reported with regard to funding rules and not in accordance with the college's own academic regulations and progression rules. This is discussed in more detail in Annex I.

37. All relevant staff, including experienced staff, should consider the HEIFES guidance each year and make any necessary changes to their systems.

38. Although colleges have academic regulations and procedures for managing student data in the student record system, there can be inconsistent practice within colleges.

39. In general, institutional practices for collecting and recording data should be applied consistently across all departments where data requirements are the same. However, some departments (for example, health studies) also have additional requirements which they will also have to meet.

40. Data quality will be improved if staff who input data into, manage and maintain the student record system understand the requirements of users of those data. Many instances have been found where staff responsible for completing key fields required for funding purposes had no training on the funding rules governing their completion. In many cases the data required to complete those fields correctly were not recorded on the main student record system, so robust centralised systems could not be implemented, and reliance was placed on inadequately trained staff. All users should be trained in the college's data requirements, with reference to any differences between academic regulation requirements and funding rule requirements, so that they understand why they are asked to perform particular tasks.

#### Incorrect identification of student status on student record systems

41. Poor recording of student status on colleges' student record systems has led to incorrect returns for students funded by the Skills Funding Agency, and for franchised students where the colleges concerned were not the lead institution. This highlights the importance of careful data inputting to the student record system, and proper identification of prescribed courses of higher education, to ensure that all eligible students – and only eligible students – are included in the return.

#### Analytical reviews and data reconciliations

42. A reconciliation between HEIFES14 and 2014-15 ILR R14 returns should be made before the ILR data are submitted. Differences should be examined as part of the process for identifying possible data error, and amendments made to the ILR data if necessary. This will be useful preparation for the ILR-HEIFES funding and monitoring data reconciliation exercise if differences are substantial. It should also help to eliminate inconsistencies in students' treatment in the two returns for future reference, and reduce systems problems with the way students are returned in ILR data before submission. In summer 2015 we will give colleges access to a web facility that will be able to re-create an institution's HEIFES14 data from its 2014-15 ILR R14 return. An equivalent exercise

carried out on the previous year's return during summer 2014 may highlight errors in HEIFES13 that can be avoided in HEIFES14.

Implementing new student record systems

43. Implementing a new student record system is a major undertaking. It is essential that colleges manage this process carefully to ensure that the system does not fall into disrepute before the process is complete.

44. One problem with new systems (even proprietary systems) can be the lack of ability to draw out management information and basic reports from the system (see also paragraph 45). As part of the overall implementation project, it is essential to include the requirements both for everyday reports needed by academic and administrative staff and for top-level management reports, and to make arrangements to ensure that they are delivered. In gaining assurance we do not ask for any reports that could not reasonably be expected to be used in everyday activity. However, some colleges have great difficulty in extracting these standard data from the student record system, and many do not even hold the required data. Data that cannot be extracted and reported on are of limited value.

45. Developing exception reporting, and using it to highlight data issues for review and subsequent amendment, will help to ensure that high-quality data are returned. Data quality is also enhanced by data management reviews carried out by those with a good understanding of the data.

## Annex F: The HEIFES14 student population

This annex explains which students should, or should not, be included in HEIFES14 student population. (Annex H contains guidance on how to count students in the HEIFES14 population.) This annex also explains how to treat provision delivered through connected undertakings and collaborative arrangements in HEIFES14.

1. HEIFES14 records counts of students (regardless of age and whether or not the year of programme of study is being repeated) aiming for recognised higher education (HE) qualifications (defined in Annex G). These students are called the 'HEIFES14 student population', and this includes students who are repeating a year of programme of study. Paragraphs 3 and 4 of this annex define which students should be included in the HEIFES14 student population. Some students within this population may not be countable within HEIFES14, as their activity will be counted in a previous or future HEIFES survey (see Annex H for when to count activity). All students counted in HEIFES14 must be in this population. How and when students are counted varies between the tables (see Annex H).
2. For the purposes of HEIFES, 'college' means the college including its connected undertakings as defined in paragraphs 6 and 7, unless such connected undertakings are subject to a separate funding agreement directly with HEFCE.
3. Students meeting **all** the following criteria should be included in the HEIFES14 student population.
  - a. They are registered and actively pursuing studies with the college for at least part of the academic year (1 August 2014 to 31 July 2015). This includes outgoing, but not incoming, exchange students.
  - b. They are studying towards a recognised HE qualification, as defined in Annex G.
  - c. They are not being returned on any other institution's HEIFES, Higher Education Students Early Statistics (HESES) or Higher Education in Alternative Providers Early Statistics (HEAPES) survey return for that year of programme of study.
4. Students in **any** of the following categories should **not** be included in the HEIFES14 student population.
  - a. Students not studying towards a recognised HE qualification as defined in Annex G.
  - b. Students whose sole qualification aim is a National Vocational Qualification. However, students should be included if their programme of study leads to both a recognised HE qualification (as defined in Annex G) and a National Vocational Qualification.
  - c. Incoming exchange students.

## Annex F: The HEIFES14 student population

- d. Students franchised in from another institution. See paragraphs 8 to 17 of this annex.
- e. Students spending more than half their active study time for the whole programme of study outside the UK (including distance learners outside the UK), unless any of the following apply:
  - i. There is a clear academic reason for studying abroad rather than in the UK. Even where such a reason exists, we must specifically sanction the course as eligible.
  - ii. The student is temporarily and unavoidably abroad and remains liable to UK tax on their earnings, or is a dependant of such a person. This includes members of HM Forces and their dependants.
  - iii. The student is in receipt of UK student support from the Student Loans Company (SLC) for the year.

Sandwich students working abroad and language students on a year abroad should normally be included in the HEIFES14 student population, as the year abroad will not constitute most of their programme of study.

- f. Students who do not actively pursue studies with the college in the academic year 2014-15.
  - g. Students who are on school-centred initial teacher training programmes.
  - h. Students who are being returned on any other institution's HEIFES, HESES or HEAPES return, for that programme of study.
5. All students included in the HEIFES14 student population must be included in the college's individualised learner record (ILR), even if this is not normally compulsory under the coverage of the record.

### **Connected undertakings**

6. An 'undertaking' includes a body corporate, a partnership, an unincorporated association or a trust. An undertaking will be regarded as a connected undertaking of the college if:
- a. The college controls that undertaking.
  - b. The college and another undertaking or other undertakings connected with the college together control that undertaking.
  - c. Another undertaking or other undertakings connected with the college control that undertaking.
  - d. That undertaking is recognised by us as a connected institution as defined by section 27 of the Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998. Or
  - e. We consider that the sole purpose, or one of the main purposes, of registering students at that undertaking is to avoid those students being included within the college's student number control allocation.

7. For the purpose of paragraph 6, an undertaking is under the 'control' of another if any of the following apply:
- a. That other holds a majority of the shares in the undertaking.
  - b. That other holds a majority of the voting rights in the undertaking<sup>1</sup>.
  - c. That other has the right to appoint or remove a majority of the board of directors<sup>1</sup> or other governing body of the undertaking.
  - d. That other has the right to exercise dominant influence<sup>1</sup> over the undertaking by virtue of provisions contained in the undertaking's articles of association or any other constitution, control contract<sup>1</sup>, memorandum of understanding or other document regulating the undertaking or any other undertaking.
  - e. That other has the right to a share of more than half the assets, or of more than half the income, of the undertaking.
  - f. Both are managed on a uniform basis.
  - g. That other has the power, by any other means, to secure that the affairs of the undertaking are conducted in accordance with its wishes.

### **Students taught under partnership, collaborative or similar arrangements**

8. Colleges should note that a student is considered to be 'registered' on the student record at the college that collects the fee for the student.
9. Many students are taught under a variety of collaborative arrangements. For the purposes of HEIFES14, a year of programme of study that is taught under a partnership arrangement by a publicly funded institution other than the one the student is registered with is treated as franchised. Such franchise arrangements are different from validation-only arrangements:
- a. Under a validation-only arrangement, a higher education institution (HEI) provides assurance about the standards of an HE qualification or award, but the student is, for all purposes, a student of the institution that provides the teaching and with whom they will be registered. The teaching institution, rather than the validating institution, is responsible for the quality of the teaching and for including the student as appropriate in data returns, including HEIFES.
  - b. Under a franchise arrangement, a student is taught under a sub-contractual arrangement by an institution other than the one they are registered with. Often, the franchiser will also be the validating institution, but this may not always be the case: for example, where one further education college (FEC) franchises provision to another, but where the validating body is a university or Pearson Education Ltd. Irrespective of which organisation is the validating body, under a franchise arrangement, the student is treated as a student of the registering institution (the

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<sup>1</sup> The expressions 'voting rights in an undertaking', 'right to appoint or remove a majority of the directors', 'right to exercise a dominant influence' and 'control contract' have the meanings given in schedule 7 to the Companies Act 2006.

## Annex F: The HEIFES14 student population

franchiser), rather than the teaching institution, and the franchiser is responsible for teaching quality and any data returns relating to the student. Industrial placements, work experience and language years abroad should not normally be regarded as franchised out for the purposes of HEIFES.

10. For the purposes of HEIFES14, years of programme of study that are taught under a partnership arrangement by an alternative provider (one that is not in direct receipt of public funding) on behalf of a HEFCE-funded institution will be treated as franchised only where the HEFCE-funded institution (the franchiser) retains overall control of the programme's content, delivery, assessment and quality assurance arrangements. To qualify as franchised provision, all the following conditions must be met<sup>2</sup>.

- a. A legally binding written agreement is in place between the franchiser and the provider which sets out the terms of the franchising agreement.
- b. Where the course is registered on the SLC HEI course database, this is in the name of the franchiser and the fee loan is paid to the franchiser.
- c. The student is a student of the franchiser, is included within its HEIFES, ILR and other data returns and, where appropriate, counts against that institution's student number control allocation.
- d. The student has a contractual relationship with the franchiser for delivering the course;
- e. The terms of the franchise agreement meet the expectations set out in the UK Quality Code for Higher Education in respect of managing higher education provision with others.

11. Colleges must ensure that no student is included on more than one institution's return to HEFCE for a single programme of study. Where a partnership arrangement (other than a validation-only arrangement) includes an HEI, the students are usually returned to us by the HEI. Such students should also be returned on the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) return of the HEI and not on the college's ILR returns. Where a franchise involves two FECs, only the college that returns the student on its HEIFES return should include the student on its ILR return.

12. Paragraphs 13 to 17 of this annex explain who should return franchised activity to us. The 'HEFCE survey' referred to will be either:

- HEIFES14 for FECs
- HESES14 for HEIs, or
- HEAPES14 for alternative providers.

13. Where one institution collects a tuition fee for a student, but the student undertakes all or part of their study at another institution, only the institution that receives the fee

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<sup>2</sup> In line with 'Alternative providers: specific course designation – Guidance for providers: Supplementary guidance to criteria and conditions' paragraph 18, available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/alternative-higher-education-providers-specific-course-designation-criteria-and-conditions>

## Annex F: The HEIFES14 student population

should include the student in its HEFCE survey student population. This will mean that all students on courses which an institution has informed the SLC are being run on its behalf will be included in its HEFCE survey student population and, where appropriate, will count against its student number control. Such a student is regarded as franchised out by the institution collecting the fee.

14. If a course is run jointly by more than one institution, only the institution that receives the fee should include the student in its HEFCE survey student population.

15. If two institutions receive a fee from a student for a given year of a programme of study, the institution that receives the largest portion should include the student in its HEFCE survey student population. If both institutions receive the same amount, the institutions must ensure that only one of them includes the student in its HEFCE survey student population.

16. In some collaborative arrangements between publicly funded institutions, the institution teaching the student may collect the fee on behalf of another institution. In such cases, if the fee is transferred directly to another institution, the latter should include the student in its HEFCE survey student population. If the fee itself is not transferred but is used to offset payments between two institutions in respect of the student, then this should be treated as if the fee had been transferred.

17. In each of the above cases, the student is a student of the franchiser. Where a college includes the student in its HEIFES14 student population it must also return a record on the ILR. Its Key Information Set and quality assessments will take account of activity relating to that student as appropriate.

### **Good practice**

#### Franchise arrangements

18. It is the responsibility of the registering institution to ensure the quality of all the data it returns, including those relating to activity at its franchise partner institutions.

19. It is essential that exchanges of information and communications between partners are frequent, timely, open and effective. In particular, we highlight the importance of a registering institution being told promptly by its partner institutions about any withdrawing students. This may require clear protocols among franchise partner institutions regarding the exchange of information.

20. The different roles of each partner in collecting and managing data will vary. The principle applied at audit is that student data should be managed with equal professionalism at all partner institutions. When entering into franchise partnership arrangements, the systems in operation and the exchange of information should form part of the negotiations and final agreement.

21. It is also important that students are returned on the HEFCE survey and the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) student record or the ILR by the registering institution only. A registering institution's student record system may contain all franchised students' records in the same way as it does its 'own' students. However, institutions' student record systems should clearly identify the students registered by them, and should ensure that those not eligible are excluded from the HEFCE survey.

This will help to ensure that franchised students are correctly returned in HEIFES, and that an audit trail for such students is available.

22. Use of the registering institution's standard processes by partner colleges is strongly encouraged – for example for enrolment, module registration, interruption of studies, change of module, change of programme and withdrawal. This helps to identify clearly which institution a student belongs to, and is especially important where an institution deals with more than one partner college. It also ensures that the registering institution is collecting all the data it requires for its own purposes.

#### Registration of students by the census date

23. Students who have not fully registered, and of whose activity there is no evidence by the census date, should not be included in Column 1 of Tables 1 to 3 of the return. Students who have not fully registered by the census date, but of whose activity there is evidence, may be included in Column 1 Tables 1 to 3 of the return. However, efforts should be made to ensure that all eligible students are fully registered by the census date.

#### Completion of enrolment forms and agreements by students to pay tuition fees

24. Current standard practice for colleges involves enrolment forms and (either included within the enrolment form or separately) agreements to pay tuition fees. This may change in the light of technological developments, but as long as this remains the standard basis for contracts between colleges and students, it is important to keep accurate and completed forms for all students, signed by the student and preferably also by a representative of the college. This means that should a dispute emerge in the future, a document signed by both parties is available.

## Annex G: Recognised higher education courses

This annex defines recognised higher education courses on which students must be studying if they are to be included in HEIFES14. It also details the treatment of students on Higher or Advanced Apprenticeships which include both higher and further education elements.

1. HEFCE is responsible for funding only some higher education (HE) courses in further education colleges (FECs). These courses are defined as 'recognised' in this document. Only students studying on recognised HE courses should be included in the HEIFES14 student population.
2. Within HEIFES14, recognised HE courses are those where, on successful completion, the student is awarded by a relevant recognised body, one of the following qualifications:
  - a higher degree, such as a PhD, MPhil, MSc, MA, MBA
  - a postgraduate diploma
  - a postgraduate initial teacher training qualification, such as a Postgraduate or Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)
  - a first degree, such as a foundation degree, BSc, BA, or Bachelor of Education (BEd)
  - a foundation degree bridging course, where these are integrated into the final years of a first degree
  - a Higher National Diploma (HND)
  - a Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)
  - a Higher National Certificate (HNC)
  - a Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (DTLLS) or a Level 5 120-credit point Diploma in Education and Training
  - a Certificate in Education (CertEd).
3. Relevant recognised bodies are:
  - any UK institution with the power to award degrees
  - for foundation degrees (but not for foundation degree bridging courses), any further education college in England with the power to award such degrees
  - for HNDs and HNCs, Pearson Education Ltd and the Scottish Qualifications Authority.
4. The Skills Funding Agency's Information Management Hub includes a learning aims search (<https://hub.imservices.org.uk/Learning%20Aims/Pages/default.aspx>). This returns the awarding body and qualification type for a particular learning aim. If a college believes that a qualification has been incorrectly classified in the learning aims search, it

## Annex G: Recognised higher education courses

should e-mail [heifes@hefce.ac.uk](mailto:heifes@hefce.ac.uk) as soon as possible (ideally as soon as the course has been added to the Hub), providing the learning aim reference, learning aim title, awarding body and learning aim type **as displayed on the learning aims search**, together with the suggested amendments. We shall then liaise with the Skills Funding Agency on the college's behalf.

5. Courses leading to professional or similar qualifications will not normally be recognised. For example, a course leading to a Certificate in Management awarded by the Institute of Management is not a recognised HE course for the purposes of HEIFES. However, if these courses also meet the definition given in paragraph 2 of this annex, they will be recognised.
6. Foundation years, access provision and other provision commonly referred to as 'Level 0', will be classed as part of a 'recognised HE course' only if they are an integrated part of a recognised HE qualification, such that both of the following apply.
  - a. Students are already registered for the recognised HE qualification at the same institution.
  - b. Progression to the recognised HE qualification is guaranteed, subject to satisfactory completion of the foundation year.
7. Free-standing foundation years and other free-standing Level 0 provision are not recognised HE courses. The requirement that students are already registered for the recognised HE qualification at the same institution means that, where the foundation year is taught by a different institution, this will be treated as integrated – and therefore within the HEIFES population – only if it is done under a franchise arrangement from the institution offering the recognised HE qualification.

### **Funding for Higher and Advanced Apprenticeships**

8. Higher Apprenticeships (also known as Higher Level Apprenticeships) and some Advanced Apprenticeships that include HE-level elements may receive support from public funds through a variety of sources:
  - HEFCE teaching grant for those elements that meet the definition of recognised HE courses in paragraph 2
  - funding from the Skills Funding Agency for study towards other qualifications within apprenticeships
  - tuition fees that may be supported through publicly funded loans from the Student Loans Company.
9. Only the activity within a Higher or Advanced Apprenticeship that meets the definition of recognised HE courses given in this annex should be included. This means that a student who has commenced a Higher or Advanced Apprenticeship but is not undertaking the recognised HE part of that apprenticeship during the year of programme of study should not be included in HEIFES.
10. Students studying full-time towards a recognised HE qualification as part of a Higher or Advanced Apprenticeship should be included in Table 6 when they commence

## Annex G: Recognised higher education courses

their full-time study towards such undergraduate qualifications, and where they also meet the other criteria for inclusion.

11. Where colleges or franchise partners provide other elements of training as part of a Higher or Advanced Apprenticeship, for each student on the apprenticeship they should report two learning delivery entities for the programme of study on the ILR:

- one relating to study towards the qualifications, or credits, that meet the definition of recognised HE courses in this annex and which may be HEFCE-fundable
- the other relating to study towards any other qualifications, which may be funded by the Skills Funding Agency.

12. This is necessary to ensure clarity in our respective funding responsibilities.

## Annex H: Counting student activity

This annex gives the definition of a year of programme of study and explains how to count them in HEIFES14. The way years of programme of study are counted differs between Table 6 (for student number control purposes) and all other tables. This annex includes the criteria for being able to count a year of programme of study in HEIFES14, the definition of standard and non-standard years of programme of study, a flow chart to aid with determining how years of programme of study should be counted, and guidance on counting some short courses that are sometimes known as 'summer schools'.

### What is a year of programme of study?

1. 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 (allowing for minor variations in term dates).
2. 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

3. Exceptionally, a student may be on two courses at the same time, aiming for two independent recognised HE qualifications. If this is the case, the student should be treated as if they were two students, each aiming for one of the qualifications.
4. Where a student completes a foundation degree and then undertakes 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 as explained in paragraphs 47 and 48 of this annex.

### Counting years of programme of study

5. To be counted, a student within the HEIFES14 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 the fees may be waived should not be tantamount to waiving them for all students.
  - b. The full-time equivalence (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.

d. The student has not withdrawn, and is not forecast to withdraw, within two weeks of starting their programme of study.

6. 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 should not be treated as a fee waiver; rather, the student should be treated as having been charged a fee for the year.

### **Good practice**

#### Written evidence of fee waivers

7. Where the fee has been waived for an individual student, evidence of the reason for this waiver must be retained.

#### Removing duplicate records

8. Data held on the student record system should be reviewed before they 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. Exceptionally, there may be genuine reasons why a student has two records, and these will 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**

9. The guidance in paragraphs 10 to 16 of this annex applies to Tables 1 to 5 **only**. For guidance on how to count years of programme of study in Table 6, see paragraphs 21 to 38.

10. If a student has withdrawn from their year of programme of study on or before 1 November 2014, their year of programme of study should not be returned.

11. For students in the HEIFES14 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, where 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 who in one year undertake a period of work experience should not be treated as non-standard solely because the work experience spans academic years.

12. In both standard and non-standard years of programme of study, 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.

## Annex H: Counting student activity

- a. For students on standard years of programme of study, the FTE for the whole year of programme of study will usually 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.

The flow diagram in Figure H1 can be used to determine whether or not a year of programme of study should be counted in HESES14 Tables 1 to 5, and if so, whether it should be returned in Column 1 or 2 of Tables 1 to 3.

### Example 1

13. A student starts a degree programme on 22 September 2014, with each year of the course finishing at the end of June. The student becomes countable on 22 September 2014 and, depending on when the activity for the year starts, on or around the anniversary of this date each subsequent year.

### Example 2

14. A full-time student starts a degree programme in January 2015 and the first year of the course finishes in November 2015. This student would be included in Column 2 of Table 1 in HESES14 for their first year of programme of study, and similarly in Column 2 of subsequent HESES returns as they continue their studies.

### Example 3

15. A full-time Higher National Diploma (HND) course starts on 6 October 2014 and runs from 6 October to 30 June each year. A student starts the HND programme late, on 3 November 2014, 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 3 November 2014 and on the anniversary of that date in subsequent years. The student should be included in Column 2 of Table 1 in each year.

Example 4

16. A full-time student starts in September 2014 intending to study eight modules before June 2015. At the end of the first semester in February 2015, having completed four modules, they interrupt the course and return 12 months later to complete the remaining four modules by June 2016. The first year of programme of study becomes countable in September 2014 and is therefore returned in Column 1 of Table 1 of HEIFES14. The data entered in Column 3 of Table 1 of HEIFES14 should reflect a forecast of such students entered in Column 1 or 2 who will intermit (and therefore non-complete) after 1 November 2014. The second year of programme of study becomes countable at the start of the year of programme of study in September 2015 (and not in February 2016 when the student returns), and is therefore returned in Column 1 of Table 3 of HEIFES15 (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 1 of Annex M).

**New entrants**

17. For Table 5, students should be classed as new entrants when they first generate a countable year for the programme of study and have not been active at the same broad level (undergraduate or postgraduate) at the institution in either of the two previous academic years. Students repeating the first year of a course should not therefore be included as new entrants, whereas those entering directly into the second or later year of a course could be. The definition of new entrants in Table 5 differs from the definition of the population counted in Table 6.

Example 5

18. A HEFCE-fundable student studies full-time for a foundation degree at a further education college (FEC) in the academic years 2012-13 and 2013-14, then tops up to a full-time bachelors degree directly funded at the college in 2014-15.

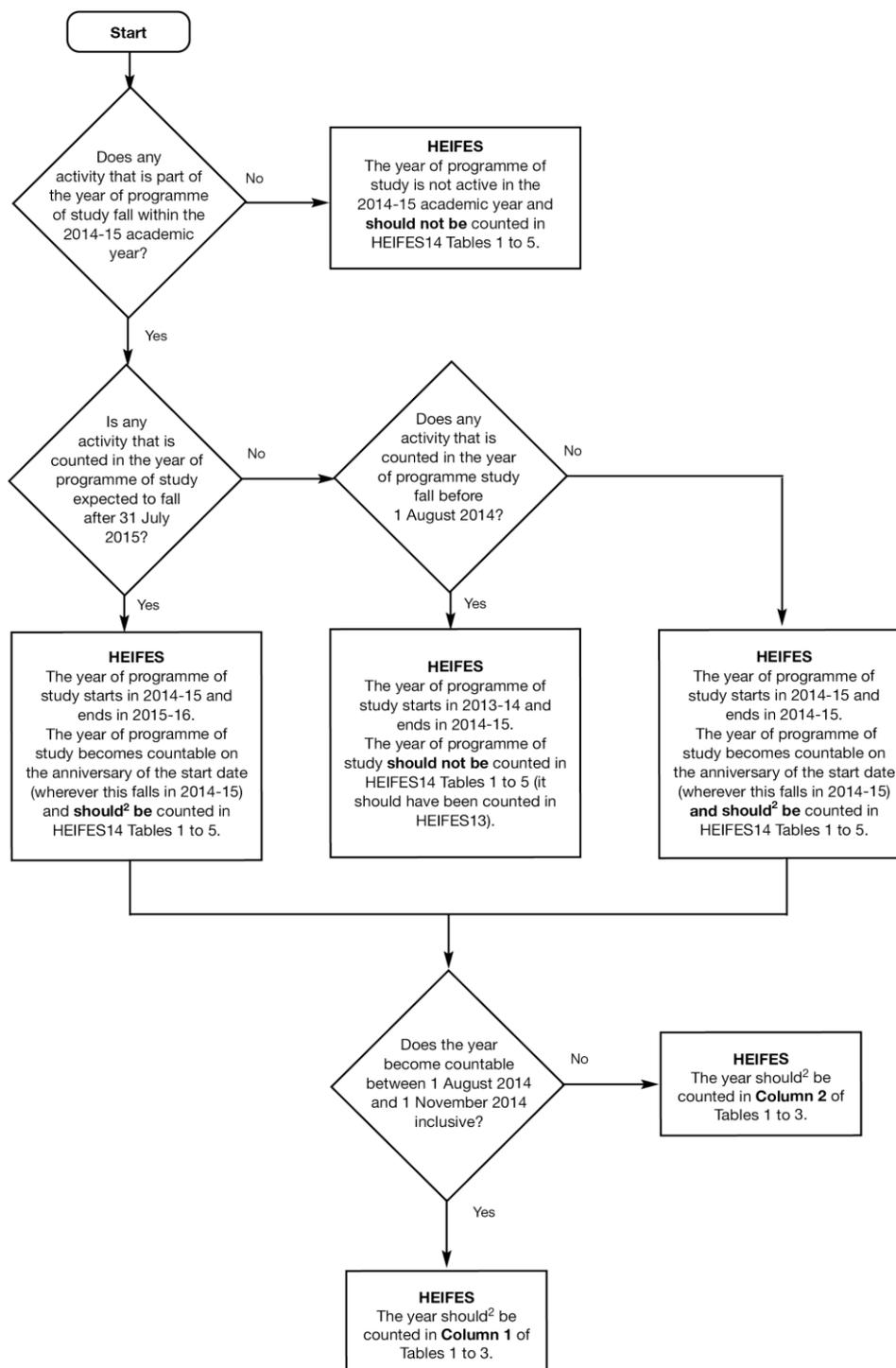
a. If the foundation degree was delivered by the FEC under a franchise arrangement from a higher education institution (HEI), then the student would be considered to be a student of that HEI for 2012-13 and 2013-14 and the FEC in 2014-15. Because the study is not at the same institution, the student should be reported as a new entrant on Table 5 when they top-up to a bachelors degree in 2014-15.

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 studying at the same institution (the FEC) and at the same broad level throughout the period 2012-13 to 2014-15. Therefore they should **not** be reported as a new entrant for 2014-15 in Table 5.

Example 6

19. A student commenced studying towards an HND on a part-time basis in 2012-13. In 2014-15 they switch to full-time study. The student is considered to be studying at the same institution and at the same broad level throughout the period 2012-13 to 2014-15. They should not therefore be reported as a new entrant for 2013-14 in Table 5, although they may be recorded as such on Table 6 (see paragraphs 21 to 38 of this annex).

**Figure H1: Flow chart for determining whether a year of programme of study should be returned in Tables 1 to 5 of HEIFES14 and whether Column 1 or 2 in Tables 1 to 3**



**Notes**

<sup>1</sup> For this purpose, periods of work experience that would cause the year of programme of study to span academic years should be ignored.

<sup>2</sup> Subject to meeting the other conditions required to be counted in HEIFES.

## **2014-15 student number control population and how to count years of programme of study in Table 6**

20. The guidance in paragraphs 21 to 38 of this annex applies to Table 6 **only**. For guidance on how to count years of programme of study in other tables, see paragraphs 10 to 16 of this annex.

21. Table 6 collects information on a subset of the years of programmes of study in the HEIFES14 population (as described in [Annex F](#) paragraphs 1 to 4). The subset counted in Table 6 differs from the subset counted in the other tables. Years of programme of study meeting the criteria in paragraphs 22 and 23 define the students who we are monitoring at the sector level for student number control purposes. All of these years of programme of study should be reported on Table 6, but for most institutions only a subset will count against the student number control allocation.

### **Full-time undergraduate students, and part-time undergraduate students in receipt of full-time student support**

22. Years of programme of study which meet all the following criteria should be included in Table 6.

- a. They are for HEFCE-fundable undergraduate students active in the academic year 1 August 2014 to 31 July 2015.
- b. They are for students who are either full-time, or part-time but in receipt of full-time student support (as defined in [Annex M](#) paragraphs 7 and 9).
- c. They are for students who have not been HEFCE-fundable or employer co-funded undergraduate students, either full-time or part-time in receipt of full-time student support, at the same college in either of the preceding two academic years (that is, between 1 August 2012 and 31 July 2014)<sup>3</sup>.
- d. They are for students who have not withdrawn from their year of programme of study within two weeks of starting.

### **Full-time students, and part-time students in receipt of full-time student support, aiming for a postgraduate initial teacher training qualification, such as a PGCE**

23. Years of programme of study which meet all the following criteria count against the 2014-15 student number control allocation.

- a. They are for HEFCE-fundable students aiming for a postgraduate initial teacher training qualification such as a PGCE (whether a Postgraduate or Professional Graduate Certificate in Education) or a Postgraduate Diploma in Education commencing a programme of study in the academic year 1 August 2014 to 31 July 2015.

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<sup>3</sup> Students from countries which accede to the European Union (EU) who were studying as full-time undergraduates at the institution while meeting the definition of overseas students in either of the previous two academic years will not be counted against the 2014-15 student number control allocation when their residential status changes to Home and EU following accession. For 2014-15 this may apply to students from Croatia, which acceded to the EU on 1 July 2013.

## Annex H: Counting student activity

- b. They are for students who are either full-time or who are part-time but in receipt of full-time student support (as defined in [Annex M](#) paragraphs 7 and 8).
- b. They are for students who have not withdrawn from their programme of study within two weeks of starting.
24. The terms used in paragraphs 22 and 23 are defined as follows.
- a. **Part-time students in receipt of full-time student support.** To fall into this category, a student must be eligible both for a full-time tuition fee loan and for grant or loan support for maintenance, and must be in receipt of at least one of them during the year. Students who are on 'full-time distance learning' courses, and who are therefore not eligible for maintenance support, should not be counted in this category. A student may be in receipt of full-time student support without meeting the HEIFES requirement for full-time attendance. Such cases include (but are not restricted to):
- students on a designated full-time course who are returning after intermission, where the year of programme of study when they return does not involve attendance of 24 weeks or more;
  - students on a designated full-time course who are repeating part of it on a part-time basis for a year of programme of study, or who are otherwise temporarily switching to part-time study while still claiming full-time student support;
  - students attending the final year of a designated full-time course which is ordinarily completed in less than 24 weeks.

We do not expect many of these to count towards the student number control allocation, because such students will commonly have undertaken full-time study in the previous two years.

b. **Students who have not been HEFCE-fundable or employer co-funded full-time undergraduate students (or part-time undergraduate students in receipt of full-time student support) in either of the preceding two academic years.** These are students who, during each academic year 2012-13 and 2013-14, have undertaken neither full-time undergraduate study nor part-time undergraduate study during which they were in receipt of full-time student support; or who, if they have, withdrew (on each occasion) within two weeks of starting the programme of study; or who were otherwise 'dormant' during that period. In this context, 'full-time' study includes study that, had it been finished, would have been full-time.

c. **The same institution.** This refers to the 'registering' institution responsible for reporting the student in the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) student record or Skills Funding Agency individualised learner record (ILR). Where teaching has been franchised out, the associated year of instance or programme of study is attributable to the franchiser, not the franchisee.

25. For the purposes of determining mode for Table 6, the following apply.
- a. If a student begins studying full-time but switches to part-time study during the year of programme of study then, unless the mode switch occurred within two weeks of the year of programme of study's commencement, they should be treated as full-time.
  - b. If instead, a student commences a part-time year of programme of study but switches to full-time study during this year of programme of study, then the following apply.
    - i. 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 (according to the definition in Annex M), this year of programme of study should be treated as part-time and excluded from Table 6.
    - ii. 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 (according to the definition in Annex M), this year of programme of study should be treated as full-time.
26. Students studying full-time on a recognised HE course as part of a Higher or Advanced Apprenticeship should be included in Table 6 when they commence their full-time study on that HE course and where they also meet the other criteria for inclusion.
27. Within Table 6, students should be disaggregated between:
- a. Those who are HEFCE-fundable. This category should be further disaggregated between:
    - undergraduates in the exempt population
    - undergraduates not in the exempt population
    - students aiming for a postgraduate initial teacher training qualification such as a PGCE.
28. For most institutions, students are in the exempt population if they are in categories defined in the 2014-15 'exemptions list' on our web-site at [www.hefce.ac.uk/data/year/2013/snccexempt1415](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/data/year/2013/snccexempt1415). For one specialist institution in the performing and creative arts (Hereford College of Arts), the only category of exemptions that applies is for students topping up from a foundation degree or HND to an honours degree programme not exceeding 1.3 years of full-time study, who have been full-time students (or part-time students in receipt of full-time student support) at any institution in either of the preceding two academic years. For this institution, all other students should be treated as not in the exempt population.
29. In determining whether a student comes within the exempt population, colleges should disregard any duplication of the same qualification type in the same subject, such as AS-levels and A-levels, or where students re-take A-levels. In disregarding such duplication, colleges should ignore the qualification with the lower tariff points. For these purposes, A-levels in both Maths and Further Maths should not be treated as duplicates. Further guidance on the treatment of duplicate qualifications is provided on the HEIFES

frequently asked questions web page at [www.hefce.ac.uk/data/datacollection/heifes/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/data/datacollection/heifes/) under 'Frequently asked questions'.

### **Good practice**

#### Entry qualifications

30. Colleges should take reasonable steps to test the accuracy of the entry qualifications reported by their students, taking into account the availability of other sources of information such as data from UCAS, the Learning Records Service, application forms and students' certificates. This does not require a college to test the qualifications achieved by all its students. For many students, the data provided by UCAS through the awarding body linking will be sufficient. However, this will not apply in some cases, such as students who achieved their Level 3 qualifications some time ago, or whose qualification types are not included. In these circumstances we expect colleges to verify entry qualifications using the Learning Records Service. Otherwise, colleges should use a random sample to test the overall accuracy of their entry qualifications data, plus selective samples where doubts may exist about the entry qualifications reported by individual students.

31. Where entry qualifications are unknown, undergraduate students should be recorded on Table 6 as **not** in the exempt population. Where colleges know the entry qualifications of students forecast to start after 1 November 2014, they should use them to determine whether or not students are in the exempt population. When colleges do not know the entry qualifications of students, typically because the students have not yet been recruited, they should use evidence to estimate the number of students who will be in the exempt population. In all cases, evidence should be kept for audit purposes for five years.

#### Example 7

32. A HEFCE-fundable student studies full-time for a foundation degree at an FEC in the academic years 2012-13 and 2013-14, then tops up to a full-time bachelors degree directly funded at the college in 2014-15.

a. If the foundation degree was delivered by the FEC under a franchise arrangement from an HEI, the student would be considered to be a student of the HEI for 2011-12 and 2012-13 and the FEC in 2013-14. Because the study is not at the same institution, the top-up to the bachelors degree in 2013-14 should be included in Table 6 in the FEC's HEIFES13 return. However, as the foundation degree was completed in the last two years, the student should be included in the exempt population, on the basis of the exemptions list.

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 studying at the same institution (the FEC) throughout the period 2011-12 to 2013-14. They should therefore not be included in Table 6 when they top up to the bachelors degree.

Example 8

33. A student commences a HEFCE-fundable full-time undergraduate course in September 2013, having never been registered at the college before. However due to illness the student withdraws from the course in December 2013, and returns in September 2014 to re-start the course.

a. The first year of programme of study (where the student withdrew) **will have counted** against the 2013-14 student number control allocation because the student was full-time and HEFCE-fundable in the academic year 2013-14 (even though they studied for less than 24 weeks) and therefore should have been included in Table 6 of HEIFES13.

b. The second year of programme of study **will not count** against the 2014-15 student number control allocation, because the student was a full-time HEFCE fundable student in the academic year preceding 2014-15, and therefore should not be returned in Table 6 of HEIFES14.

Example 9

34. A student commences a HEFCE-fundable full-time undergraduate bachelors degree course in September 2011 which concludes in June 2014. The student then commences a HEFCE-fundable, full-time PGCE at the same institution in September 2014. The year of programme of study commencing in September 2014 **will count** against the 2014-15 student number control allocation (regardless of any previous study at the same institution) because the student is commencing a HEFCE-fundable full-time PGCE in the 2014-15 academic year, and should therefore be returned in Table 6 of HEIFES14.

35. Table 6 counts years of programme of study differently from the other tables. This means that some years of programme of study counted in Table 6 in HEIFES14 may not be counted on the other tables. This can occur where students withdraw from their year of programme of study before 1 November 2014.

36. Not all students included in Table 6 will be 'entrants' to the college (as defined in paragraph 17). Exceptions will include students who have previously studied part-time, and students previously on programmes of study that were not fundable by HEFCE, such as those funded by the NHS or the National College for Teaching and Leadership.

Example 10

37. A student commenced a full-time undergraduate bachelors degree course in September 2013, having never been registered at the college before. For the first year of programme of study, as the student is aiming for an equivalent or lower qualification (ELQ) and is not exempt from the ELQ policy, the student is classed as non-fundable. They decide not to study for the bachelors degree, so in September 2014, at the start of the second year of programme of study, they change their stated qualification aim to a foundation degree. They are therefore exempt from the ELQ policy, and as a result are now classed as HEFCE-fundable. The second year of programme of study should be included in Table 6 of HEIFES14 because the student was not classed as HEFCE-fundable in the 2013-14 academic year.

**Example 11**

38. A HEFCE-fundable student commences a part-time undergraduate course in September 2013, having never been registered at the college before. At the beginning of the second year of programme of study in September 2014 they switched to studying this course full-time. The second year of programme of study should be included in Table 6 of HEIFES14, because the student was not studying full-time in the 2013-14 academic year.

**Summer schools**

39. 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**

40. 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 at HE level.

**Access provision**

41. 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 a recognised HE 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](#).

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

**Within-course periods of study in vacation time**

43. These are short periods of study within a course 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](#).

44. 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 these should be treated as standard years of programme of study.

Example 12

45. 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.

46. 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**

47. These are short courses that come after a foundation degree has been completed, but before the final year of an honours degree course. They 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.

48. Any foundation degree bridging courses should be returned as a separate record in the ILR 2014-15 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 Skills Funding Agency's learning aims search with a 'learner aim type' code of 6001, 'Foundation degree bridging course' (it may be necessary to request a specific learner aim for the bridging course)
- a learner aim with appropriate Learndirect information on the Skills Funding Agency's learning aims search
- a separate Student Instance Identifier (NUMHUS).

## Annex I: Completion and non-completion

This annex explains how to determine the completion status of a year of programme of study in HEIFES14.

1. Completion is defined in terms of modular programmes of study. It applies to all further education colleges, including those that may not consider their programmes to be modular. For the purposes of HEIFES14, a 'module' is taken to mean a discrete component within a programme of study, sometimes referred to as a 'unit', 'course' or 'option'. Where a student is studying a number of modules that can all count towards the same qualification, this should be treated as a single programme of study.
2. Where a student has a clear intention of completing a specified activity within the year of programme of study, completion is measured against this intention. Therefore colleges should collect information on students' study intentions for the year so that completion status can be assessed appropriately. A student who fails to complete any module counted in the year of programme of study is to be returned as a non-completion for all activity in that year. Thus, if a student starts the year intending to follow a certain pattern of activity but does not complete all of it, then that student would be a non-completion. However, the following considerations apply.
  - a. If a student formally switches mode from full-time to part-time as defined in paragraph 10 of [Annex M](#), their completion status should be determined with reference to their revised study intentions.
  - b. If the pattern of activity within the year is not specified, then, provided the student completes all activity countable in the year, they would be considered as completing.
  - c. An exception is allowed for full-time students where the module is in addition to the standard requirements for full-time study. In this case, a student who completes the number of modules normally required in the year for full-time study may be treated as a completion for the year of programme of study, even if they fail to complete other modules in the year that are in addition to the standard requirement.
3. Within overall study intentions students may substitute modules without affecting their completion status. For these to be counted as substitute modules, the following must be true.
  - a. The total number of credit points in the substituted module(s) would need to be greater than or equal to that of the original module(s)  
and
  - b. Either the fees charged will need to remain the same (this will commonly be the case for full-time students), or the entire fee for the original module(s) would need to be refunded and a separate fee charged for the substitute module(s).

## Annex I: Completion and non-completion

4. To be counted as a completion (and thus be included in Column 4 of Tables 1, 2 or 3), a student must complete all the modules they intended to complete in the year of programme of study within 13 calendar months of the start of the year of programme of study: that is to say within 13 calendar months of the anniversary of their commencement date that defines the start of the year of programme of study. To complete a module, the student must do one of the following.

- a. Undergo the final assessment of the module (this refers to the activity of the student in sitting an exam or submitting coursework rather than the activity of an assessment board in assessing the achievement of the student).
- b. Pass the module, where this can be achieved without undergoing the final assessment (because they already have enough marks in that module to be awarded credit for it). In some cases, institutional regulations allow credit to be given because of the level attained in other modules: this would not be treated as completion for funding purposes, even though the college may allow the student to progress.

### Example 1

5. A standard year of programme of study commences on 29 September 2014. Final assessment for a particular module counted within the year of programme of study takes place in June 2015, with an opportunity to resit or resubmit in September 2015. The student does not take the assessment in June 2015, but does so for the first time at the resit or resubmission opportunity in September 2015. The module is treated as completed, because the assessment was taken within 13 calendar months of 29 September 2014, the start of the year of programme of study.

### Example 2

6. A standard year of programme of study commences on 29 September 2014. Final assessment for a particular module counted during the year of programme of study takes place only in June each year. The student does not take the assessment in June 2015 and has not otherwise passed the module, but does take the assessment at the next opportunity in June 2016. The module is treated as not completed, because the assessment was not taken within 13 calendar months of 29 September 2014, the start of the year of programme of study. This would be the case whether or not the student had been given permission to defer their assessment for a year.

Example 3

7. A student studies for eight modules during a year of programme of study. They undergo the final assessments in seven modules, but do not undergo the final assessment in one, on the basis that they know that they have already passed the module, based on the marks already achieved in that module. In this case, the student is treated as a completion, because they underwent the final assessments in seven modules and passed the remaining module, where it was possible to pass without undergoing the final assessment.

Example 4

8. A student studies for eight modules during a year of programme of study. They undergo the final assessments for all modules, but in one module their performance is insufficient to meet the academic standards required to pass that module. In this case, the student would be treated as a completion, because they underwent the final assessments in all modules.

Example 5

9. A student studies for eight modules during a year of programme of study. They undergo the final assessments for seven modules, but not the eighth, with the consequence that they do not have enough marks in that module to be awarded credit for it. Whether or not the college's academic regulations relating to progression allow credit to be awarded for the one incomplete module on the basis of the student's overall performance across all modules studied in the year, the student is treated as a non-completion for funding purposes for all activity in the year, because they did not undergo the final assessment in a module. The fact that credit was awarded for the module under the college's academic regulations on the basis of the student's overall performance across the year of programme of study is not sufficient to meet the completion definition.

Example 6

10. A full-time student has a clear intention of studying for eight modules during a year of programme of study. Their intention initially was to include one particular module (A), but although they started the module they decide to switch to a different module (B) of equal value. The completion status for the year of programme of study then depends on completion of module B (rather than module A), together with the other seven modules taken by the student.

Example 7

11. A full-time student starts in September intending to study eight modules during a year of programme of study. At the end of the first semester they interrupt the course having completed four modules and return 12 months later to complete the remaining four modules. The student is a full-time non-completion for the first year of programme of study, because they did not complete four of the modules that they intended to take within the year of programme of study. They will be a completion for the second year of programme of study – though normally this will be part-time because they will not meet the attendance requirements to be full-time.

12. For the purposes of determining completion, the final assessment is the one that has its first occurrence on the latest normal due date: that is, the timing of resits and coursework extensions should be disregarded. Whether an assessment is considered to be the final assessment does not depend on the weight associated with it. For example, if a module is assessed by an exam which accounts for 90 per cent of the marks and the remainder via coursework, with the coursework due after the exam (and not solely by virtue of an extension having been granted), completion should be determined by submission of the coursework rather than attendance at the exam. Where the last two assessments for the module fall due on the same day, undergoing either constitutes completion. Where the final assessments for a module comprise an assessment at a fixed date for all students (such as an exam) and another assessment at a variable date (such as a performance or presentation) which may be timetabled for individual students either before or after the fixed assessment, then the fixed assessment should be treated as the final assessment when determining completion.

13. In some cases, a year of programme of study which counts towards a qualification taken over several years may not contain any formal assessment, for example where assessment will take place at the end of a later year. In this case, where there is no such assessment opportunity within 13 calendar months of the start of the year of programme of study, continued attendance throughout the year of programme of study constitutes completion. Colleges should therefore ensure that adequate evidence of attendance exists, such as class registers.

14. In some cases a student may undertake a module more than once within a year of programme of study. In determining completion status, colleges must ensure that the module is counted only once. Where the module has been completed on one or more occasions and has also been taken but not completed, the completion should be counted for determining completion status and full-time equivalence, and the non-completion of the module ignored. Exceptionally a student may take a module in two years of programme of study and complete the module for the second year of programme of study within 13 months of the start of the first year of programme of study. In this case the college may count the module in either but not both of the years.

Example 8

15. A part-time student on a standard year of programme of study begins a module in October, but withdraws from it after undertaking some activity and before completing the final assessment. The following February (within the same year of programme of study) the student retakes the module and completes it. The first attempt at the module from October would not be reported at all in HEIFES, and should be disregarded in determining the completion status for the year of programme of study.

Example 9

16. A full-time student on a standard year of programme of study has a clear intention of completing eight modules within the year. One particular module that they start in the first semester is not completed, but the student retakes it in the second semester in place of another one, and completes it. Overall, in the first semester, the student completed three modules and began a fourth, which was not completed, and would not be reported in HEIFES and which is disregarded for the purposes of determining completion status; in the second semester, the student completed four modules, one of which was a second attempt at the module that was not completed in the first semester. In this case, the year of programme of study would be a non-completion, because the student completed only seven modules, rather than their overall study intention of eight.

17. In completing the individualised learner record (ILR), it should be noted that some students may still have opportunities after 31 July to undergo the final assessment within 13 months of the start of their year of programme of study. Wherever possible, the college should seek to update its ILR to reflect the latest known completion status of the student. In doing so, colleges will need to have due regard to the Skills Funding Agency's data collection timescales and the need to ensure high-quality returns. We will seek further information from colleges that have high numbers of students with undetermined completion status. Students should be recorded with undetermined completion status only where an opportunity still exists for the student to undergo the final assessment within 13 months. They should not be treated as undetermined completion status simply because the 13 months have not fully elapsed.

**Estimates of non-completions and historical data**

18. Colleges should ensure that estimates of non-completion are supported by historical data. Any historical data used in this way should not be skewed by exceptional circumstances, such as industrial action affecting exams. Where such exceptional circumstances occur, colleges should ensure that the completion status of students on the ILR accurately reflects their actual completion status.

**Good practice**

Estimation of non-completions

19. There has been a misconception that withdrawals notified from an academic department are the sole source of data for that department's non-completion estimate.

Estimates of the number of non-completions for a particular year of a course should normally be based on the equivalent non-completion rates for previous academic year. There should be a clear rationale for any alternative methods used or adjustments made. Where the non-completion rate used in the return differs significantly from past data, there should be a clear rationale for the change.

20. The completion status of a student should not be determined by the college's individual academic regulations and rules on student progression, but should be in accordance with HEFCE's funding rules for assessment of a student's completion status.

21. In using the previous year's non-completion rate for a course as the basis of the current year's estimate, it is important to make sure that the non-completion rate for the previous year is accurately known. Continuation of study to the following year should not be taken as evidence of, or a proxy for, completion in the previous year. In addition, if a student has not formally withdrawn from the college by the year end, this does not in itself qualify as a completion.

22. Colleges may find it useful to demonstrate the validity of their non-completion estimates by analysing the non-completion rates for different courses over, say, three to five years. This would help to identify trends, and years where the result is atypical compared with the trend.

23. A review of the outturn compared with the estimate should be made at the year end, and reasons sought for any discrepancies. This knowledge can then be used to inform the estimate for the following year.

24. Non-completion status should be established in a timely fashion, and the student record system updated to reflect the student's change in status. Systems should be in place throughout the year to identify students who are missing from or struggling with courses, and steps taken to try to retain them at the college. Often registers are maintained to assist with this. The information obtained from these registers should be used to follow up missing students. Reconciliations should be made with the student record system, to ensure that it is up to date and accurately reflects what is being reported in the registers.

25. Use of a central database, rather than separate records held locally at departmental, school or faculty level, will help to ensure that the main student record is up to date and useful as a management tool.

26. Sufficient data should be recorded at the module level on the main student record system to allow accurate assessment of a student's completion status. This should include, but not necessarily be limited to, identifying the final assessment and the student's submission to it, and the overall outcome for the module. Coding should distinguish between non-submission to an assessment and a very low mark for poor academic performance or misconduct. This level of detail should be readily available to ensure accurate reporting of a student's completion status.

## Annex J: Full-time equivalence for part-time students

This annex explains how full-time equivalence (FTE) for part-time students should be calculated in HEIFES14. This includes guidance on how to treat students who are exempt from part of a course and full-time students who change mode within a year of programme of study to become part-time students.

1. Full-time equivalence (FTE) for part-time students is defined with reference to an equivalent full-time course. When determining FTE, the number of guided learning hours the student undertakes is irrelevant. In general, the comparison with an equivalent full-time course should be based on the number of years or terms taken to achieve the qualification compared with a student studying full-time. Where such a full-time course does not exist, a reasonable academic judgement of FTE should be made through comparison with other qualifications in similar subjects and at the same level. In this case, evidence of the courses used and the reasoning behind the judgement should be kept by the college for audit purposes.

2. The table below shows the FTE per year for most recognised types of higher education courses, depending on the number of years over which the course is taken. It also shows the total FTE for the course. For a part-time course, the FTE summed over the whole course should be equal to that shown in the table below.

Qualification aim	Total FTE	Duration in years									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Degree	3		1.00	0.75	0.60	0.50	0.43	0.38	0.33	0.30	
Foundation degree	2	1.00	0.67	0.50	0.40	0.33	0.29	0.25	0.22	0.20	
HND	2	1.00	0.67	0.50	0.40	0.33	0.29	0.25	0.22	0.20	
DipHE	2	1.00	0.67	0.50	0.40	0.33	0.29	0.25	0.22	0.20	
HNC	1	1.00	0.50	0.33	0.25	0.20	0.17	0.14	0.13	0.11	0.10
CertEd/Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training	1	1.00	0.50	0.33	0.25	0.20	0.17	0.14	0.13	0.11	0.10
Taught masters	1	1.00	0.50	0.33	0.25	0.20	0.17	0.14	0.13	0.11	0.10
HNC to HND top-up	1	1.00	0.50	0.33	0.25	0.20	0.17	0.14	0.13	0.11	0.10

Note: 'HND' = 'Higher National Diploma'; 'DipHE' = 'Diploma of Higher Education'; 'HNC' = 'Higher National Certificate'; 'CertEd' = 'Certificate in Education'; 'HNC' = 'Higher National Certificate'.

3. The FTE for a foundation degree bridging course is 0.3, as defined in [Annex H](#) paragraphs 47 and 48.

## Annex J: Full-time equivalence for part-time students

4. The table above may not be appropriate where the qualification offered differs significantly from the norm for qualifications with that title. Where colleges believe that the FTE should be different from that listed above, they should obtain our agreement before recording it as such and must keep a record of how it has been derived. We would not expect the FTE for a part-time degree to be calculated with reference to a four-year programme.

5. Where a student repeats a year or enters the second, or later, year of the course directly, the total FTE returned for that student should be increased or decreased to reflect this (see examples 2 and 3 (paragraphs 9 and 10) in this annex).

6. Where a student does not complete a year of programme of study, their FTE should not be recorded on HEIFES. This is not consistent with the FTE returned on the ILR student record. When comparing the ILR student record with HEIFES, we will make adjustments to the FTE returned on the ILR to reflect years not completed.

7. Where students change mode within a year of programme of study to become part-time students (see [Annex M](#), paragraph 10), their FTE should be calculated in the usual way, by comparison with the equivalent full-time course.

### Example 1

8. A student studies for a degree over five years. The FTE returned each time the student becomes countable is 0.60; the student becomes countable five times, so the total FTE returned over all years is  $5 \times 0.60 = 3$  (returned on more than one year's HEIFES).

### Example 2

9. As in example 1, but the student resits year two. The FTE returned each time the student becomes countable is still 0.60; the student becomes countable six times, so the total FTE returned over all years is  $6 \times 0.60 = 3.6$  (returned on more than one year's HEIFES).

### Example 3

10. As in example 1, but the student has accredited prior learning and enters directly onto year two. The FTE returned each time the student becomes countable is still 0.60; the student becomes countable four times, so the total FTE returned over all years is  $4 \times 0.60 = 2.4$  (returned on more than one year's HEIFES).

Example 4

11. A student starts off as full-time but changes to part-time in the second term of the year of programme of study, studying at the same rate as a part-time student with an FTE of 0.5 per year of programme of study. They should be returned in the part-time table with an FTE of 0.67. This is made up of 0.33 for the first term and  $0.5 \div 3 = 0.17$  for each of the second and third terms, totalling 0.67 for the year of programme of study.

**Good practice**

Student FTE

12. The table above containing FTE per year should be used to determine the FTE of a part-time course. The sum of the total FTE allocated to a part-time student should be equivalent, over the duration of the course, to that allocated to a full-time student.

## Annex K: Residential and funding status

This annex provides guidance on identifying the residential and fundability status of a student for the purposes of HEIFES14. It includes guidance on:

- which students should be classified as Home and European Union (EU), and which are Island and overseas
- attributing of Home and EU students between the fundability categories of HEFCE-fundable and non-fundable
- how to determine the fundability status of students aiming for equivalent or lower qualifications (ELQ), and of those students supported from other EU public sources.

### Home and EU students

1. Students are classified as Home and EU if they can be regarded as eligible students as defined in Schedule 1 of the Education (Fees and Awards) (England) Regulations 2007 (SI 2007 No. 779), as amended. These regulations can be found on the web-site [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk) by entering the year and number for the statutory instruments in the section 'Search All Legislation'. Students from specified overseas territories may be classified as Home and EU if they meet the criteria set out in these regulations. A list of these overseas territories and countries is available on the HEFCE web-site at [www.hefce.ac.uk/data/datacollection/heifes/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/data/datacollection/heifes/) under 'Frequently asked questions'. Students from Gibraltar should be treated as if they were from a country in the EU. Turkish Cypriots who are recognised by the Government of the Republic of Cyprus as being Cypriot nationals will be eligible to be treated as EU nationals irrespective of where they live in Cyprus. Therefore, providing they hold a Republic of Cyprus passport and meet the residency requirements, they will be considered as Home and EU students.
2. Where a country accedes to the EU during the academic year, years of programme of study for students from that country should be treated as overseas if they commence before the date of accession, and as Home and EU if they commence on or after the date of accession.
3. Students from those countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway) that are in the European Economic Area but not the EU will only be considered in the same way as Home and EU students if they meet the criteria laid down in the above regulations. Students from Switzerland should be treated as if they were from a country that is in the European Economic Area but not the EU.
4. Student Finance England provides a student support helpline to provide advice and guidance on the fees and awards regulations (including eligibility). Where colleges are unsure whether an individual student meets the eligibility requirements as set out in paragraphs 1 to 3 of this annex, they should phone the student support helpline on 0300 100 0618. If Student Finance England says that the student is eligible, this means that the student is also regarded as 'Home and EU' for HEIFES purposes.

5. For the purposes of Table 5, UK-domiciled students are those entitled to pay Home and EU fees and whose 'Country of domicile' field on the ILR student record is coded as XF, XG, XH, XI or XK for England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales or UK not otherwise specified, respectively).

### **Island and overseas students**

6. All students who fall outside the definition of Home and EU in paragraphs 1 to 3 of this annex should be recorded as 'Island and overseas'. This will include students usually resident in the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.

### **HEFCE-fundable students**

7. Home and EU students are eligible to be counted towards HEFCE recurrent funds for teaching (HEFCE-fundable) if they are in the HEIFES population, as defined in Annex E, and are not excluded by virtue of paragraph 9 of this annex.

8. Where a source other than an EU public source is paying the fee, the level of the fee paid does not affect the eligibility of the student to count as HEFCE-fundable.

### **HEFCE non-fundable students**

9. Home and EU students meeting any of the following criteria should be recorded as HEFCE non-fundable (sub-paragraphs a and h do not apply to new-regime students).

a. Old-regime students (as defined in Annex Q) on courses which would otherwise be HEFCE-fundable, but whose places are funded at the standard HEFCE rate or higher from another EU public source, such as the European Social Fund, Department of Health, NHS or the Home Office. In some cases an EU public source may provide funding that is in addition to the mandatory or recommended fees, pro rata for part-time students, but which falls significantly short of the HEFCE standard rate per student. In this situation, the total funds received in respect of old-regime students in addition to the fees should be used to calculate the number of old-regime students who (for funding purposes) are assumed to be fully supported from other EU public sources. The remaining students are then eligible for HEFCE recurrent funding (paragraphs 39 to 46 of this annex provide more details on how to calculate the numbers of students who are HEFCE-fundable and non-fundable).

b. Students aiming for the same qualification at the same institution on programmes of study that prior to 2012-13 counted towards the delivery of funding or student number targets relating to student numbers co-funded with employers.

c. Postgraduate research students. These are students whose qualification aim is a research-based higher degree, such as a PhD or MPhil. A research degree is a postgraduate programme comprising a research component (including a requirement to produce original work) which is larger than any accompanying taught component when measured by student effort.

d. Students on initial teacher training (ITT) courses leading to qualified teacher status (QTS), and all students holding QTS who are on an in-service education and training (INSET) course. This will include students transferring from courses where

funding has been provided for the whole year by the National College for Teaching and Leadership.

e. Students on pre-registration nursing or midwifery courses, and courses (including postgraduate courses) leading to a recognised professional qualification in dietetics, speech and language therapy, chiropody, podiatry or prosthetics and orthotics. Also, new-regime students on courses provided under a contract with an NHS organisation and which lead to professional registration as a dental hygienist, dental therapist, occupational therapist, operating department practitioner, orthoptist, physiotherapist, radiographer or radiotherapist.

f. New-regime students on courses commissioned and funded by an NHS organisation, where the tuition fee charged to the student is zero, because an NHS organisation is meeting the tuition costs of the course. A course is commissioned by an NHS organisation if there is a contractual agreement with it that the institution will provide a certain number of places on the course. Other new-regime students on the same course who are not funded by an NHS organisation should be returned as fundable where they meet all other relevant criteria.

g. New-regime postgraduate students on a course, other than an ITT course, funded by another EU public source, where the tuition fee charged to the student is zero because that source is meeting the tuition costs.

h. Unless specific approval has been given, old-regime students (as defined in [Annex Q](#)) on programmes franchised to an institution that is neither of the following:

- a higher education institution supported from public funds
- a further education college supported from public funds.

Colleges must ensure that all franchises to other organisations have been specifically approved by HEFCE before old-regime students are returned as HEFCE-fundable on HEIFES.

i. Students on closed courses. These are courses that are not generally available to **any** suitably qualified candidate, but only to employees of particular companies or organisations that are meeting the costs of students' studies. This being the case, few students on such courses will be claiming student support. Closed courses will not commonly be marketed or advertised in general prospectuses or in course searches on an institution's main web-site, because enrolment on them is not open to the general public. The content of such courses will also commonly be tailored towards the needs of the employers concerned.

j. Students who are aiming for an ELQ, unless they are exempt from the ELQ policy as defined in paragraphs 10 to 28 of this annex.

k. Students at FECs that we did not fund directly in 2011-12, who are continuing on courses that they commenced at the college prior to 2012-13, unless we have implemented a formal transfer of the places in our allocations. This includes instances where earlier years of the programme of study were supported indirectly through a franchise arrangement from a lead institution that we funded

directly, because we expect to continue to provide funding in respect of such students through the institution they registered with when they started their course. Where a student supported through a franchise-in arrangement ends their course in 2011-12, and then starts a new course to be directly funded at the college from 2012-13 onwards (for example a top-up programme to an honours degree), they may be included as HEFCE-fundable for the new course, assuming they meet the other criteria for that status.

### **Students aiming for ELQs**

10. Students are considered to be aiming for an ELQ where they are aiming for a qualification that is no higher than one they have already achieved. Therefore, the two key considerations in determining whether a student is aiming for an ELQ are: the academic levels of the qualifications already awarded to the student; and the academic level(s) of the qualification(s) that the student has stated they are aiming for.

11. In general, if the qualifications already achieved are not known the student should be treated as if aiming for an ELQ. However, this does not apply for new-regime students who are either full-time undergraduates or part-time undergraduates in receipt of full-time student support: such students with unknown entry qualifications should be treated as if they are **not** aiming for an ELQ and may therefore be HEFCE-fundable and counted on Table 6. However, if such students were similarly active in the 2012-13 academic year and reported as non-fundable in that year solely on the basis that unknown entry qualifications meant they were assumed to be aiming for an ELQ, they should not be included on Table 6 as a result of their change in fundability status.

12. As explained in [Annex N](#), where students have currently stated multiple higher education qualification aims as part of the same programme of study, they should be recorded against the lower aim. Where the student's currently stated qualification aim for that programme of study is at a higher level than their highest existing higher education (HE) qualification, then none of the study for the year of programme of study should be treated as study towards an ELQ. Study for a given year of programme of study which is at the same or lower level than a qualification already achieved, but which is being pursued solely as an integral part of a qualification aim that is higher than the one already achieved, should not be treated as study towards an ELQ.

13. The ELQ policy applies regardless of where a student's previous qualifications were obtained, or how they were financed.

#### Example 1

14. A student with a stated aim of both a Higher National Diploma (HND) and a degree as part of the same programme of study should be treated as aiming for an HND for ELQ purposes.

#### Example 2

15. A student aiming for a first degree has a higher national certificate (HNC) as their highest HE qualification already achieved. The student will be awarded an undergraduate

certificate if they successfully complete their first year, but this is not a stated aim of the student. The student should not be treated as aiming for an ELQ for any of their years of programme of study (including the first), because the undergraduate certificate that they will acquire is not a stated qualification aim of the student.

### Example 3

16. A student enters with a foundation degree as their highest qualification already achieved, and has a stated qualification aim of an honours degree. The student should not be treated as aiming for an ELQ. This would apply whether the student is aiming for the honours degree through, for example, a one-year top-up from the foundation degree, or the honours degree involves three years of full-time study.

17. In some instances, a student may not be formally awarded a qualification which they have stated as their aim and to which they are entitled, having completed all of the necessary work for that qualification. This may occur, for example, because, while the student has been assessed as eligible for the award, they have not completed the formal process of receiving it. In such cases, the student should be treated for ELQ purposes as if they had been awarded the qualification. The achievement and award of credit should not be treated as a qualification for these purposes.

### **Students exempt from ELQ policy for HEFCE funding purposes**

18. Students falling into one of the following categories are exempt from the ELQ policy.

- a. They are in receipt of the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) for at least some of their year of programme of study reported in the HEIFES return. Colleges should make estimates for HEIFES purposes of the numbers of students whose receipt of the DSA for the year of programme of study will be confirmed after 1 November 2014.
- b. They have stated that their qualification aim is a foundation degree.
- c. They are on a course of initial or in-service teacher training (in any mode or level of study). In-service teacher training courses are defined as courses for which the primary (but not necessarily the only) purpose is to improve the effectiveness of teachers, lecturers or trainers.
- d. They are on a year of course (in any mode or level of study) for which an NHS bursary is payable. More information on NHS bursaries can be found at [www.hefce.ac.uk/data/datacollection/heifes/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/data/datacollection/heifes/) under 'Frequently asked questions'.
- e. They are on an undergraduate course (in any mode of study) which leads to a first registrable qualification with one of the following.
  - i. General Medical Council.
  - ii. General Dental Council.

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- iii. Nursing and Midwifery Council.
  - iv. Health and Care Professions Council for the professions of:
    - chiropodist or podiatrist
    - dietician
    - occupational therapist
    - orthoptist
    - paramedic
    - physiotherapist
    - prosthetist or orthotist
    - radiographer
    - social worker
    - speech and language therapist.
  - v. Scottish Social Services Council.
  - vi. Care Council for Wales.
  - vii. Northern Ireland Social Care Council.
  - viii. Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons.
- f. They are on an undergraduate course (in any mode of study) for which the primary (but not necessarily the only) purpose is to improve the effectiveness of practitioners registered with one of the professional bodies listed in sub-paragraph 18e. In the case of the Health and Care Professions Council, this must additionally relate to practitioners in the professions listed in sub-paragraph 18e.iv.
- g. They are on an undergraduate course (in any mode of study) which leads to a professional qualification that has been professionally validated by the National Youth Agency or the Youth Council for Northern Ireland. These are courses leading to qualification to practise as a youth and community worker.
- h. They are on an undergraduate course (in any mode of study) for which the primary (but not necessarily the only) purpose is to improve the effectiveness of professionally qualified youth and community workers.
- i. They are on a full-time course (for student support purposes) which leads towards registration with the Architects Registration Board.

Example 4

19. A student enters with an honours degree and intends to study for a foundation degree over two years and then top up to an honours degree in one year. If they have a stated qualification aim of both a foundation degree and an honours degree as part of the same programme of study, then the student is exempt from the ELQ policy in the first two years when studying for the foundation degree. However, when topping up to an honours degree in the final year, the student will be treated as aiming for an ELQ.

**Determining level of qualification**

20. It is not possible for HEFCE to provide a full hierarchical list of the qualifications that are awarded in the UK, or indeed elsewhere. In most cases, whether or not a student will be aiming for an ELQ will be clear. However, in a minority of cases, institutions will need to make a reasonable academic judgement about whether or not a student's qualification aim is at a higher level than their existing highest qualification achieved. Institutions should bear in mind the guidance in paragraphs 21 to 33 of this annex.

Frameworks for HE qualifications

21. The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (second edition published in August 2008) and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in Scotland (both available at [www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/qualifications](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/qualifications)) should generally be used to determine a basic hierarchy of qualifications. Any revisions to those frameworks should be reflected as they are introduced. Further guidance on the use of those frameworks is provided below.

22. In general, institutions should treat qualifications that fall within the same level in these frameworks as being equivalent. However, it may be appropriate in certain circumstances to consider a hierarchy of qualifications within a single level, especially where students are progressing through a succession of qualifications. In particular:

- a. Within Level 7 of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, it may be appropriate to consider a masters qualification to be at a higher level than a postgraduate diploma, which in turn may be at a higher level than a postgraduate certificate. However, this may not apply in all cases and will depend on the nomenclature adopted by different awarding bodies.
- b. Within Level 6 of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, it will normally be appropriate to consider a bachelors degree with honours to be at a higher level than a bachelors degree without honours.
- c. Within Level 5 of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, it will normally be appropriate to consider a foundation degree bridging course (which gives access to the final year of an honours degree) to be at a higher level than a foundation degree.

23. For a student who already holds an honours degree, their classification in HEIFES as either undergraduate or postgraduate should not in itself determine whether or not they are aiming for an ELQ. The ELQ policy is about the academic level of qualifications, so the level of the final qualification for which the student is aiming will determine their ELQ status. By contrast, whether or not a student is recorded as postgraduate in HEIFES is determined by whether or not a degree is a normal condition of entry to their course, and is not necessarily an indication of the academic level of their study or final qualification aim. In particular, the following considerations will apply to any student whose highest qualification already achieved is an honours degree.

a. Where they are undertaking a graduate conversion course, they should be recorded as a postgraduate student, but should also be considered as aiming for an ELQ. In this context, a graduate conversion course is one for which a normal condition of entry is an honours degree, but whose academic level is no higher than Level 6 in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Some such courses may be designed to give access to postgraduate courses for those whose first degree was in a different subject area.

b. Where they are undertaking an integrated masters programme (such as a four-year Master of Engineering (MEng), Master of Physics (MPhys) or Master of Chemistry (MChem)), they should be recorded at undergraduate level in HEIFES, because a degree is not a normal entry requirement for such study. However, with the exception of the Master of Pharmacy (MPharm) (see paragraph 25), they should not be treated as aiming for an ELQ, because the academic level of the final qualification of the integrated masters programme is at Level 7 of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. This also means that (again with the exception of students who hold an MPharm) a student who holds an integrated masters qualification and who wishes to enrol on a taught postgraduate masters qualification (such as a Master of Arts (MA) or Master of Business Administration (MBA)) should be treated as aiming for an ELQ.

24. As is stated in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, MAs granted by the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge are not academic qualifications. Students holding such awards should be treated as holding a Level 6 qualification, reflecting also whether they are with honours for the purpose of the guidance at sub-paragraph 23b of this annex. A number of universities in Scotland also have a tradition of awarding MAs as opposed to Bachelors of Art (BAs) at undergraduate degree level. These should also be treated in the same way as bachelors degrees, reflecting also whether they are with honours.

#### Exceptions to the framework for HE qualifications

25. The MPharm should be treated as a Level 6 qualification for ELQ purposes. This means that the following hold true.

a. A student whose highest qualification already achieved is a bachelors degree with honours and who is studying for an MPharm should be treated as aiming for an ELQ.

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- b. A student who holds an MPharm as their highest qualification already achieved and is now studying for a taught postgraduate masters qualification at Level 7 (such as an MA or MBA) should not be treated as aiming for an ELQ.

26. All postgraduate initial teacher training courses, such as PGCEs (whether Postgraduate Certificates in Education or Professional Graduate Certificates in Education) should be treated, for the purpose of the ELQ policy only, as being equivalent to Level 6. This means that a student whose highest qualification already achieved is a PGCE, and who has no other postgraduate qualification, would not be treated as aiming for an ELQ if they enrolled on a postgraduate masters qualification. Students aiming for a PGCE of either type are exempt from the ELQ policy, as explained in sub-paragraph 18c of this annex.

27. Institutions may wish to take advice from the National Recognition Information Centre for the UK (UK NARIC, <http://ecctis.co.uk/naric/>) about the relative level of professional qualifications and those awarded abroad. UK NARIC is the national agency responsible for providing information, advice and expert opinion on vocational, academic and professional skills and qualifications from over 180 countries worldwide.

28. There may be cases where UK NARIC advises, for example, that the academic level of a degree awarded in another country is below that of a degree in the UK. In such a case, it is acceptable to treat a student whose highest HE qualification is a degree from that other country, and who is studying for a degree in the UK, as not aiming for an ELQ. Other sources of information that may help in determining the academic level of qualifications can be found at [www.hefce.ac.uk/data/datacollection/heifes/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/data/datacollection/heifes/) under 'Frequently asked questions'.

### **Reviewing ELQ status**

29. In general, whether or not a student is aiming for an ELQ should be reviewed annually, at the start of each year of programme of study. This is necessary to take account of changing student circumstances, such as where a student:

- while following two separate programmes of study receives a qualification for one before the other is complete
- changes their qualification aim
- begins to receive the DSA.

In general, and subject to the guidance in sub-paragraph 18a, we would not expect institutions to change the ELQ status of their students within a year of programme of study.

**Example 5**

30. A student with no previous HE qualifications is concurrently aiming for a first degree and a part-time two-year HNC. The student completes the degree when they are mid-way through the first year of the HNC. In this example, the student should not be treated as aiming for an ELQ for the first year of the HNC: although they will be awarded a degree partway through the year, they did not have this qualification when they commenced the first year of programme of study for the HNC. However, the student should be treated as aiming for an ELQ in their second year of programme of study for the HNC, because their ELQ status should be reviewed annually to take account of any newly achieved HE qualifications.

**Relationship to fee regulations**

31. The Student Fees (Qualifying Courses and Persons) (England) Regulations (statutory instrument 2007 No. 778, as amended in particular by statutory instrument 2008 No. 1640) define which categories of students and courses are covered by the regulated undergraduate fee regime – that is, those for whom institutions cannot charge a fee that exceeds prescribed limits, including the limits stated in their access agreement with the Office for Fair Access.

32. The Education (Student Support) Regulations 2011 (statutory instrument 2011 No. 1986), as amended, define entitlements to student support. In particular, amendments to those regulations in the Education (Student Support and European University Institute) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 (statutory instrument 2013 No. 1728) define entitlement to student support for 2014-15. Statutory instrument 2011 No. 1986 contains a definition of ELQs.

33. There are some differences in the treatment of students between whether they may be recorded as HEFCE-fundable following the guidance in HEIFES; and whether or not they are liable to regulated tuition fees or are eligible for student support. In particular, there will be cases where a student can be treated as exempt from the ELQ policy for HEFCE funding purposes, but where they are not covered by the Student Fees (Qualifying Courses and Persons) Regulations – thus they can, if the institution chooses, be charged a non-regulated tuition fee. We do not, however, expect there to be cases where a student is non-fundable by HEFCE because of their ELQ status, but where the institution is still restricted to charging a regulated tuition fee. Any questions about these statutory instruments should be raised with the Student Finance England helpline on 0845 602 0583.

**Good practice**

**Collecting qualification data from students**

34. Colleges should ask students to confirm annually that they have not achieved any new qualifications since they last enrolled.

35. Colleges should ensure that their data protection notices allow them, the Government or their respective agents to check the accuracy of personal information

provided by students against external data sources, including the Student Loans Company (SLC) and Learning Records Service. For example, they should permit the college to test whether the student has been reported on earlier Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) or ILR returns of other institutions, and to contact these other institutions to confirm any qualifications obtained.

#### Keeping records of how students aiming for ELQs have been identified

36. In all cases, colleges should keep records for audit purposes of how they are identifying students as aiming for an ELQ. This should set out the broad approach adopted by the college. Where there may be uncertainty as to whether an individual student is aiming for an ELQ, the college should also keep a record of how it has determined their ELQ status.

37. Colleges should take reasonable steps to test the accuracy of the qualifications achieved reported by their students, reflecting the availability of other sources of information, such as data from HESA, ILR, UCAS, the SLC or the Learning Records Service. This does not require a college to test the qualifications achieved of all its students. However, we recommend that colleges use a random sample to test the overall accuracy of their data on qualifications achieved plus selective samples where doubts may exist about the entry qualifications reported by individual students or where there is a higher possibility that the student is aiming for an ELQ.

#### Recording of non-exempt students aiming for an ELQ

38. Home and EU students aiming for an ELQ and not covered by an exemption should be clearly identified on the student record system, and returned in the 'non-fundable' columns.

### **Determining the number of old-regime students supported from other EU public funds**

39. As mentioned in sub-paragraph 9a of this annex, for old-regime students whose places are funded by another EU public source, years of programme of study may need to be reported as non-fundable (depending on the level of contribution from that source). This section explains how to determine the numbers that should be reported as non-fundable.

40. The public funding should first be used to offset any shortfall between the fees charged and the assumed fees that applied under our teaching funding method up to 2011-12. Once this offset has taken place, any remaining public funding should be divided by the standard funding per student and rounded up to the nearest whole number to find how many old-regime students are non-fundable; the remainder are then fundable.

- a. For colleges that we funded directly in 2011-12, the standard funding per full-time equivalent (FTE) student is the appropriate rate of grant for the institution, and category of student (by price group, mode and level) shown in the forthcoming file 'Rates of funding for October 2014 and March 2015 allocations', available on the HEFCE web-site at [www.hefce.ac.uk/whatwedo/invest/institns/annallocns/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/whatwedo/invest/institns/annallocns/) by selecting 'For institutions', then 'October 2014 announcement'. The rates to be used are shown in column L of the 'Rates\_mainstream' worksheet.

## Annex K: Residential and funding status

- b. For colleges that we did not fund directly in 2011-12, the standard funding per undergraduate student is:
- £2,189 for students in price group D
  - £3,226 for students in price groups C1 and C2
  - £4,608 for students in price group B.
- c. The assumed fee per FTE is as follows.
- £1,380 for students on full-time and sandwich undergraduate courses (where the student is not on their year-out) and full-time postgraduate ITT courses.
  - £1,360 for undergraduates following sandwich courses who are on their sandwich year-out; students on a non-Erasmus, study-related year abroad; students continuing on part-time ITT courses that commenced prior to 1 September 2010; and students on the final year of a full-time undergraduate programme which is normally required to be completed after less than 15 weeks' attendance.
  - £1,380 for other part-time undergraduates.
  - £3,670 for other postgraduate students.

41. There is an Excel template on the HEFCE web-site, under Question 7 of the 'Frequently asked questions' available at [www.hefce.ac.uk/data/datacollection/heifes/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/data/datacollection/heifes/) that will calculate the number of students who are non-fundable in individual cases.

### Example 6

42. There are 10 full-time old-regime undergraduate students supported by £13,800 from an EU public source. The students are not charged a separate fee and there is no other income. The assumed fees are £1,380 per student, so the public money only covers the fees and all students are fundable.

### Example 7

43. There are 10 full-time old-regime undergraduates, all in price group C1. The fees for each year are £1,380 paid by the SLC, the student, or a mixture of the two. In addition, a public source puts in £1,000 per student. The assumed fees are fully met by the fees charged, so there is no offset. The standard funding per FTE for such students at this particular institution is £3,500.

Remaining public money	$= 10 \times \text{£}1,000$	$= \text{£}10,000$
Non-fundable students	$= \text{£}10,000 \div \text{£}3,500$	$= 2.9$

Therefore three students are non-fundable, and the remaining seven are fundable.

Example 8

44. There are 50 part-time old-regime undergraduates in price group C1, each with an FTE of 0.5, who pay £100 a year tuition fee. There is £50,000 of funding from a public source. The standard funding per FTE for such students at this particular institution is £3,226.

Assumed fee per student	$0.5 \times \text{£}1,380$	= £690
Standard funding per student	<u><math>= 0.5 \times \text{£}3,226</math></u>	<u>= £1,613</u>
Shortfall between fees charged and assumed fees	$\text{£}690 - \text{£}100$	= £590
Remaining public money	<u><math>= \text{£}50,000 - (50 \times \text{£}590)</math></u>	<u>= £20,500</u>
Non-fundable students	<u><math>= \text{£}20,500 \div \text{£}1,613</math></u>	<u>= 12.7</u>

Therefore 13 students are non-fundable, and 37 are fundable.

Example 9

45. As in example 8, but the fees are £690 a year, wholly paid by the student. Each student pays a tuition fee equal to the assumed fee, so there are no tuition fees to make up using the public money. There is £50,000 public money and the standard funding per student is £1,613. Therefore 31 students ( $\text{£}50,000 \div \text{£}1,613 = 31.0$ ) are non-fundable, and 19 are fundable.

Example 10

46. There are 10 full-time old-regime postgraduates entirely in price group C2. The fees for the year are £4,000; a public body pays half of the fee and the student pays the other half. The assumed fees are £3,670, which leaves £330 ( $\text{£}4,000 - \text{£}3,670$ ) of public money per student. The standard funding per FTE for such students at this particular institution is £1,037:

Assumed fee per student		= £3,670
Standard funding per student		<u>= £1,037</u>
Remaining public money	<u><math>10 \times (\text{£}4,000 - \text{£}3,670)</math></u>	<u>= £3,300</u>
Non-fundable students	<u><math>= \text{£}3,300 \div \text{£}1,037</math></u>	<u>= 3.2</u>

Therefore four students are non-fundable, and the remaining six are fundable.

## Annex L: Price groups

This annex explains how years of programme of study should be mapped to price groups for the purposes of HEIFES14, including guidance on the special cases of education and sandwich years-out.

1. For higher education institutions, the department or departments in which a student undertakes activity defines the cost of the activity. This means, for example, that a student on a science degree who is taught by both the science and business studies departments will be funded at a composite rate somewhere between the science and business studies rates. The rate depends on the balance of activity in each department. Data at this level are not available for further education colleges. For colleges, we use the mapping between Learning Directory Classification System (LDCS) codes and price groups shown in the tables below. A full list of LDCS codes and associated subject descriptions is available at [www.hefce.ac.uk/data/datacollection/heifes/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/data/datacollection/heifes/) under 'Frequently asked questions'.

<b>LDCS codes (including all sub-levels of the hierarchy)</b>	<b>Price group(s)</b>
A	D
B	D
C (except CE)	C1
CE	Media studies
D (except DC)	D
DC	C1
E	D
F (except FN.1, FN.3, FN.4, FN.5, FN.7, FN.8, FN.9)	D
FN.1, FN.3, FN.4, FN.5, FN.7, FN.8, FN.9	C2
G*	C2 or D
H	D
J (except JA.22, JA.23, JA.32, JA.33, JA.34, JA.5, JA.7, JA.8, JD, JE)	C1
JA.22, JA.23, JA.32, JA.33, JA.34, JA.5, JA.7, JA.8, JD, JE	D
K (except KB, KC)	Media studies
KB, KC	D
L (except LF, LG)	C1
LF, LG	D

Annex L: Price groups

<b>LDCS codes (including all sub-levels of the hierarchy)</b>	<b>Price group(s)</b>
M	Sports science and leisure studies
N (except NG, NK, NL, NM, NN)	C2
NG, NK, NN	D
NL, NM	Sports science and leisure studies
P (except PA, PB, PC.1, PC.5, PE.6, PE.7, PF.1, PF.2, PG.1, PG.2)	C2
PB, PC.1, PC.5, PE.6, PE.7, PF.1, PF.2, PG.1, PG.2	B
PA	D
Q (except QA.3, QB, QH, QJ)	C2
QA.3, QH.6	B
QB, QH.1, QH.2, QH.3, QH.4, QH.5, QH.7, QH.8, QH.9, QJ	D
R (except RA.3, RA.5, RA.6, RB, RF.4, RG)	B
RA.3, RA.5, RA.6, RB, RF.4, RG	C2
S (except SE, SJ.5, SM, SN.3, SN.4, SN.6, SP, SQ)	B
SE	C1
SN.3, SN.4, SN.6, SQ	C2
SJ.5, SM, SP	D
T (except TC.44, TC.5, TC.6, TF, TK, TL, TM)	C2
TK, TL, TM	B
TC.44, TC.5, TC.6, TF	D
U	D
V (except VE, VF.1, VF.2, VF.3, VF.4, VF.5, VF.6, VG)	D
VE, VF.4, VG	B
VF.1, VF.2, VF.3, VF.5, VF.6	C1
W (except WA, WB, WC, WD, WE, WG, WM)	C1
WA, WB, WC, WD, WE, WG	B
WM	C2
X (except XA.13, XA.32, XN, XS)	B
XA.13, XA.32, XN, XS	C2

## Annex L: Price groups

<b>LDCS codes (including all sub-levels of the hierarchy)</b>	<b>Price group(s)</b>
Y	B
Z (except ZX.3, ZX.4, ZX.5)	C2
ZX.3, ZX.4, ZX.5	D

\* LDCS code G (education) can, depending on the course, be in either price group C2 or D (see paragraphs 5 to 8 of this annex).

<b>Price group</b>	<b>Learning Directory Classification System codes (including all sub-levels of the hierarchy)</b>
B	PB, PC.1, PC.5, PE.6, PE.7, PF.1, PF.2, PG.1, PG.2, QA.3, QH.6, R (except RA.3, RA.5, RA.6, RB, RF.4, RG), S (except SE, SJ.5, SM, SN.3, SN.4, SN.6, SP, SQ), TK, TL, TM, VE, VF.4, VG, WA, WB, WC, WD, WE, WG, X (except XA.13, XA.32, XN, XS), Y
C1	C (except CE), DC, J (except JA.22, JA.23, JA.32, JA.33, JA.34, JA.5, JA.7, JA.8, JD, JE), L (except LF, LG), SE, VF.1, VF.2, VF.3, VF.5, VF.6, W (except WA, WB, WC, WD, WE, WG, WM)
C2	FN.1, FN.3, FN.4, FN.5, FN.7, FN.8, FN.9, G*, N (except NG, NK, NL, NM, NN), P (except PA, PB, PC.1, PC.5, PE.6, PE.7, PF.1, PF.2, PG.1, PG.2), Q (except QA.3, QB, QH, QJ), RA.3, RA.5, RA.6, RB, RF.4, RG, SN.3, SN.4, SN.6, SQ, T (except TC.44, TC.5, TC.6, TF, TK, TL, TM), WM, XA.13, XA.32, XN, XS, Z (except ZX.3, ZX.4, ZX.5)
D	A, B, D (except DC), E, F (except FN.1, FN.3, FN.4, FN.5, FN.7, FN.8, FN.9), G*, H, JA.22, JA.23, JA.32, JA.33, JA.34, JA.5, JA.7, JA.8, JD, JE, KB, KC, LF, LG, NG, NK, NN, PA, QB, QH.1, QH.2, QH.3, QH.4, QH.5, QH.7, QH.8, QH.9, QJ, SJ.5, SM, SP, TC.44, TC.5, TC.6, TF, U, V (except VE, VF.1, VF.2, VF.3, VF.4, VF.5, VF.6, VG), ZX.3, ZX.4, ZX.5
Media studies	CE, K (except KB, KC),
Sports science and leisure studies	M, NL, NM

\* LDCS code G (education) can, depending on the course, be in either price group C2 or D (see paragraphs 5 to 8 of this annex).

2. The Skills Funding Agency's learning aims search facility on the Information Management Hub (<https://hub.imservices.org.uk/Learning%20Aims/Pages/default.aspx>) returns up to three LDCS codes under the 'Other information' tab 'Shared information' section for each learning aim. If there is no LDCS code for a particular course, or the college thinks that the wrong LDCS code has been assigned, the college should e-mail

[heifes@hefce.ac.uk](mailto:heifes@hefce.ac.uk) as soon as possible (ideally as soon as the course has been added to the Hub), providing us with the learning aim reference, learning aim title, awarding body, LDCS codes as displayed on the learning aims search (where present) and up to three main subject areas of the course in question. We will then liaise with the Skills Funding Agency on the college's behalf.

3. Some qualifications contain study in two distinct subject areas, for example a chemistry and business course. Where the qualification has more than one LDCS code on the Skills Funding Agency's learning aims search, the student should be split between the relevant price groups in proportion to the split between each subject for the course as a whole.

### **Special cases**

#### **Sandwich years-out**

4. Regardless of the LDCS code of the course, students on a sandwich year-out should be recorded in price group C2.

#### **ITT, INSET and other education students**

5. Students on initial teacher training (ITT) courses, whether or not leading to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), should be entirely attributed to price group C2, irrespective of the subject of their qualification aim. All home and European Union (EU) students on ITT courses leading to QTS should be reported as non-fundable.

6. INSET courses are defined as courses for which the primary (but not necessarily the only) purpose is to improve the effectiveness of teachers, lecturers or trainers. Students who do not hold QTS but are studying for an ITT qualification via an INSET course should be recorded in price group C2. Other students on INSET courses should be attributed to a price group according to the subject of qualification aim. Home and EU students holding QTS on INSET courses should be returned as non-fundable.

7. Students studying for a foundation degree to become a teaching assistant should be returned in price group C2.

8. All other activity with LDCS code G should be returned in price group D.

## Annex M: Mode of study

This annex explains how to determine for the purposes of HEIFES14 the mode of study for a year of programme of study (full-time, sandwich year-out or part-time), including guidance on how to treat learning in the workplace and work experience when determining mode of study. In general, all students on a given course with a broadly similar pattern of activity, for a given year of programme of study, should be recorded as having the same mode.

### Full-time

1. A year of programme of study is counted as full-time if it meets **all** of the following criteria:
  - a. The student is normally required to attend the college, or elsewhere, for periods amounting to at least 24 weeks within the year of programme of study; and during that time they are normally expected to undertake periods of study, tuition, learning in the workplace or sandwich work placement that does not meet the criteria to be sandwich year-out, which amount to an average of at least 21 hours per week. (Guided learning hours should not be used in isolation to determine how many hours each week a student spends studying. All guided learning hours count towards this total, but it is expected that higher education students will spend a significant amount of time each week in self-led individual learning, and an estimate of this time should also be included.)
  - b. Full-time fees are chargeable for the course for the year. These include the following.
    - i. Regulated fees of up to £9,000 (or £6,000 for colleges without a relevant access agreement with the Office for Fair Access (OFFA) for undergraduates and postgraduate initial teacher training students who are '2012 cohort students'.
    - ii. Regulated fees of up to £3,465 (£1,380 for institutions without a relevant OFFA access agreement or students treated as starting prior to 2006-07) for undergraduates and postgraduate initial teacher training students who are not '2012 cohort students'.
    - iii. Regulated fees of up to £1,725 (£680 for institutions without a relevant OFFA access agreement or students treated as starting prior to 2006-07) for undergraduates on courses provided in conjunction with overseas institutions that are not taken under the Erasmus+ programme, where study at the home college is for less than 10 weeks, and who are not '2012 cohort students'.
    - iv. Regulated £0 for undergraduates on outgoing Erasmus+ years abroad who are not '2012 cohort students'.
    - v. Regulated fees of up to £1,350 (£900 for institutions without a relevant OFFA access agreement) for undergraduates who are '2012 cohort students'

on courses provided with overseas institutions (whether or not taken under the Erasmus+ programme) where study at the home institution is for less than 10 weeks.

For the purposes of these criteria, a full-time year abroad and Erasmus+ years are defined in Annex P. '2012 cohort students' is defined in the Education (Student Support) Regulations 2011 (SI 2011 No. 1986) as amended. In broad terms, '2012 cohort students' are those who entered from 2012-13.

2. Exceptionally, all or part of the fee may be waived for individual students based on their particular personal rather than course-related circumstances. This does not include cases where fees are reduced because students are studying less intensively than is normally expected for a full-time student. It should not be waived for all students on a course, and the criteria that determine whether fees may be waived should not be tantamount to waiving the fee for all students.
3. The full-time category includes all full-time, sandwich and year-abroad students, other than those falling within the definition of 'sandwich year-out' given below.

### **Sandwich year-out**

4. A year of programme of study is counted as sandwich year-out if the programme of study includes a period of work-based experience and meets the following criteria.
  - a. The course falls within the definition of a 'sandwich' course in Regulation 2 (10) of the Education (Student Support) Regulations 2011 (SI 2011 No. 1986), as amended or is an Erasmus+ year abroad spent working.
  - b. It is a year of programme of study:
    - i. During which any periods of full-time study are in aggregate less than 10 weeks; or
    - ii. For which, in respect of that year of programme of study and any previous year(s) of programme of study, the aggregate of any one or more periods of attendance which are not periods of full-time study at the institution (disregarding intervening vacations) exceeds 30 weeks.
  - c. A reduced fee is chargeable for the course for the year, compared with what would be chargeable if the student were studying full-time in the year. For undergraduate students subject to regulated tuition fees, these reduced fees are as follows.
    - i. Regulated £0, for undergraduates on outgoing Erasmus+ years abroad who are not '2012 cohort students'.
    - ii. Regulated fees of up to £1,800 (£1,200 for institutions without a relevant OFFA access agreement) for undergraduates who are '2012 cohort students' on sandwich years-out that are not Erasmus+ whole years abroad.
    - iii. Regulated fees of up to £1,350 (£900 for institutions without a relevant OFFA access agreement) for undergraduates who are '2012 cohort students' and are on outgoing Erasmus+ years abroad.

- iv. Regulated fees of up to £1,725 (£680 for institutions without a relevant OFFA access agreement or students treated as starting prior to 2006-07) for undergraduates on sandwich years-out that are not Erasmus+ years abroad and who are not '2012 cohort students'.

For the purposes of these criteria, a sandwich year-out year abroad and Erasmus+ years are defined in [Annex P](#). '2012 cohort students' is defined in the Education (Student Support) Regulations 2011 (SI 2011 No. 1986) as amended and in broad terms means students who entered from 2012-13 onwards.

5. Students spending a full year abroad working, including under the Erasmus scheme, should be returned as sandwich year-out. This includes students under the British Council's Language Assistant scheme.

### **Part-time**

6. A student is counted as part-time if the year of programme of study does not meet the requirements to be either full-time or a sandwich year-out. This includes Higher National Certificate (HNC) students who are expected to complete in one year, but whose course is not subject to full-time regulated fees and student support.

### **Part-time students in receipt of full-time student support**

7. Within the part-time category, there is a sub-category, 'part-time students in receipt of full-time student support'. In this context, full-time student support refers to eligibility for both a full-time tuition fee loan and grant or loan support for maintenance. The sub-category does not, therefore, apply to students on full-time distance learning courses who, under the Education (Student Support) Regulations 2011 (SI 2011 No. 1986), as amended, are not eligible for maintenance support. For HEIFES Tables 1 to 5, this sub-category should be reported in exactly the same way as all other part-time students. However, this sub-category should be included in HEIFES Table 6 alongside full-time students, when they meet the criteria for inclusion in that table. They should not be included if they were studying for at least two weeks as HEFCE-fundable or employer co-funded full-time undergraduates of the college in either 2012-13 or 2013-14.

8. Part-time students may receive full-time student support when a year of programme of study does not meet the HEIFES attendance requirement to be full-time, but the student is nevertheless still subject to full-time regulated fees and maintenance loans or grants, because of the following circumstances.

- a. They are on a designated full-time course and are returning after intermission, where their year of programme of study does not involve attendance of 24 weeks or more. Such students should not, however, be included in Table 6 if they were studying for at least two weeks as HEFCE-fundable or employer co-funded full-time undergraduates of the college in either 2012-13 or 2013-14 (before their intermission). Where a full-time student intermits after the commencement of a year of programme of study, their mode of study for that year will still be full-time (but they will commonly be a non-completion, depending on whether, despite the intermission, they have undergone all the final assessments for the year in accordance with the completion definition in [Annex I](#)).

b. They are on a designated full-time course and are repeating part of it on a part-time basis for a year of programme of study, or are otherwise temporarily switching to part-time study while still claiming full-time student support. Such students should not be included in Table 6 if they were studying for at least two weeks as HEFCE-fundable or employer co-funded full-time undergraduates of the college in either 2012-13 or 2013-14.

c. They are attending the final year of a designated full-time course which is ordinarily completed in less than 24 weeks. Such students should not be included in Table 6, if they were studying as HEFCE-fundable or employer co-funded full-time undergraduates of the college in either 2012-13 or 2013-14.

d. They do not meet the HEIFES attendance requirement to be full-time given in paragraph 1a, but are treated as full-time for student support purposes, reflecting the fact that there are some differences between the HEIFES definition and the student support guidance on full-time status. Any such undergraduate students should be included in Table 6 **only** if they were not students of the college in either 2012-13 or 2013-14 studying for at least two weeks as HEFCE-fundable or employer co-funded full-time undergraduates, or as part-time undergraduates in receipt of full-time student support.

### **Additional guidance on mode of study**

9. In some cases a student's mode of study changes between years. For example, the mode of a student on a full-time 18-month course would change from full-time in year one to part-time in year two, if the second year does not have 24 weeks of study.

### **Students who change from full-time to part-time within a year of programme of study**

10. Where full-time students change mode within a year of programme of study to become part-time, the year of programme of study should be recorded as part-time only. This applies only when the student continues to study actively on their year of programme of study, where there is a formal process for agreeing the change in mode, including confirmation by the student and a recalculation of their tuition fee to reflect their part-time status. It may also result in the student losing entitlement to full-time student support. Their full-time equivalence (FTE) should be calculated in the usual way, by comparison with the equivalent full-time course. Students should not be excluded from Table 6 solely on the basis that they have changed from full-time to part-time (see [Annex H](#), paragraph 25 and [Annex I](#), paragraph 2a).

**Example 1**

11. A student starts off as full-time but changes to part-time in the second term of a year of programme of study, studying at the same rate as a part-time student with an FTE of 0.5 per year of programme of study. They should be returned in the part-time table with an FTE of 0.67. This is made up of 0.33 for the first term and  $0.5 \div 3 = 0.17$  for each of the second and third terms, equalling 0.67 in total for the year of programme of study. More guidance on assigning FTE for part-time years of programme of study is given in [Annex J](#). Depending on the circumstances, particularly if this was the first year of programme of study on an undergraduate programme, the year of programme of study may still need to be included on Table 6, because more than two weeks of full-time study were completed.

**Treatment of learning in the workplace and work experience for the purposes of determining mode of study**

12. For the purposes of meeting the attendance definition for a full-time course, full-time study can include learning in the workplace, where this is a course requirement. Such learning is frequently a feature of foundation degrees and may also occur in other programmes. Learning in the workplace is a structured academic programme, controlled by the higher or further education institution, and delivered in the workplace by academic staff of the college, staff of the employer, or both.

13. Unlike work experience, which is one element of a course such as a sandwich placement (whether for all or part of a year), learning in the workplace is at the heart of a student's learning programme and must be subject to the same level of academic supervision and rigour as any other form of assessed learning. It includes:

- the imparting of relevant knowledge and skills to students
- opportunities for students to discuss knowledge and skills with their tutors
- assessment of students' acquisition of knowledge and skills by the institution's academic staff, perhaps jointly with an employer.

14. Learning in the workplace should be regarded as substituting for learning that under other circumstances would normally take place within the institution. The inclusion of an element of learning in the workplace should not, therefore, extend the normal duration of a course.

15. Institutions should note paragraph 3 of [Annex O](#), which states that if the year of programme of study is 45 weeks or more in length because of a period of work-based study, then the year of programme of study is not counted as long. This applies to learning in the workplace and work experience. Sandwich years-out cannot therefore be recorded as long, nor would we generally expect foundation degrees to be recorded as long.

**Good practice**

Recording the mode of attendance if a student is only active for part of a year

16. In general, where a student plans to study at a full-time rate for a portion of the year – for example only for the first semester – they will be part-time, even though they are ‘full-time’ for that period of study. The mode of attendance must be established with reference to the intended activity for the whole year of programme of study.

17. Students who are on a full-time programme, but because of accredited prior learning are studying at a part-time rate, should be returned as part-time.

## Annex N: Level of study

This annex explains how to determine a student's level of study (undergraduate or postgraduate) for the purposes of HEIFES14. It also explains how the undergraduate data on Table 5 are split.

### Undergraduate

1. Undergraduates are students studying towards a first degree (including foundation degree), foundation degree bridging course, Higher National Diploma (HND), Higher National Certificate (HNC), Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE), Certificate in Education (CertEd) or Diploma for Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (DTLLS) or Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training.
2. The undergraduate data in Table 5 are split between:
  - students on HND courses
  - students on sub-degree level courses excluding HND (those aiming for an HNC, DipHE, CertEd, DTLLS or Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training)
  - students on foundation degree courses
  - students on another undergraduate degree (excluding foundation degrees but including foundation degree bridging courses).
3. Where students have stated multiple qualification aims as part of the same programme of study, they should be recorded against the lower aim. For example, a student registered for an HND and a degree should be recorded as HND.

### Postgraduate

4. Postgraduate students are registered for courses where a normal condition of entry is that entrants are already qualified to degree level: that is, they are already qualified at Level 6 of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, published by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.
5. Postgraduates include those on graduate conversion courses and all on postgraduate initial teacher training courses such as Postgraduate or Professional Graduate Certificates in Education (PGCEs).
6. We disaggregate postgraduate students between those who are eligible under the undergraduate student support regime and all others. The former applies only to students aiming for a postgraduate initial teacher training qualification and some students studying architecture.

## Annex O: Long years of programme of study

This annex explains how to determine whether a full-time or part-time year of programme of study should be classed as 'long' for the purposes of HEIFES14. It also contains guidance on how to treat learning in the workplace and work experience when determining the length of a year of programme of study, as well as examples of how to treat mixed-length courses.

### Full-time students

1. For full-time courses, students will be classified as being on 'long' years of programme of study if one of the following applies.
  - a. They are normally required to attend for 45 weeks or more within the year of programme of study.
  - b. The year of programme of study includes a within-course short period of study, awarded as a summer school through a bidding exercise for additional student numbers and explicitly notified by HEFCE.
2. When determining length, students are deemed to be attending the college if they are actively pursuing full-time studies towards the qualification. Years of programme of study that are not long are referred to as standard length.
3. If the year of programme of study is 45 weeks or more in length because of a period of work-based study, then the year of programme of study is not counted as long. This applies to both learning in the workplace and work experience. Sandwich years-out cannot therefore be recorded as long, nor would we generally expect foundation degrees to be recorded as long.

#### Example 1

4. A full-time student on a foundation degree studies for 47 weeks in the year of programme of study, 10 of which are work-based study. The year of programme of study is not counted as long, because without the work-based study the number of weeks studied within the year of programme of study is 37. Similarly, a full-time student on a foundation degree studies for 47 weeks in the year of programme of study entirely in the workplace. The year of programme of study is not counted as long.

5. For undergraduate students, long courses will typically be accelerated programmes where the qualification is achieved in a much shorter time than is normal for that qualification. The number of credit points studied in the year is not a criterion in defining a long year of study.
6. For postgraduate students, most long courses will be for higher degrees.

## Part-time students

7. For part-time courses, the distinction will depend on the length of each year for an equivalent full-time course. The number of weeks attended within the year of programme of study for part-time students is irrelevant in determining whether the year of programme of study is long. The equivalent full-time course used should be the same as that used in calculating the full-time equivalence (FTE) (see paragraphs 1 and 2 of [Annex J](#)).

### Example 2

8. A full-time, one-year course has a 30-week year of programme of study; the equivalent part-time course lasts for two years, each with a 45-week year of programme of study. The part-time course would not be long. Conversely, if each year of the part-time course lasted for 30 weeks, but the year of programme of study for the full-time course was 45 weeks, then the part-time course would be classified as long. The FTE for the part-time course would be 0.5 in both cases.

### Example 3

9. A student completes a two-year, full-time foundation degree, then chooses to undertake a foundation degree bridging course over the summer in order to enrol full-time on the third year of an honours degree. In this case, both years of the foundation degree and the third year of the honours degree should be recorded as standard length, and the foundation degree bridging course should be recorded separately as a standalone, part-time course with an FTE of 0.3.

## Mixed-length courses

10. In some cases a full-time course may have one or more years of programme of study which are long, with one or more standard-length years. When determining which FTE to return as long for the equivalent part-time course, the following two principles should be applied.

- a. The FTE over the entire course should be identical to that of the full-time course.
- b. The proportion of the FTE recorded as long should be the same on both the full-time and part-time programmes.

### Example 4

11. A two-year, full-time course has year one long and year two standard length. The equivalent part-time course runs over four years. The first two years of the part-time course should be recorded as long, with the remaining two recorded as standard length. The FTE would be 0.5 in each of the four years.

## Annex P: Year abroad categories in Table 4

This annex provides guidance on how to assign years of programme of study to the appropriate year abroad category in Table 4 of HEIFES14.

1. Table 4 collects information about a subset of Home and European Union (EU) undergraduate students included within Columns 1 and 2 of Tables 1 and 2: those undergraduates taking a year abroad in 2014-15 as part of their year of programme of study.
2. A full-time year abroad is a year of programme of study which is provided in conjunction with an overseas educational institution and:
  - a. During which any periods of full-time study at the institution in the United Kingdom are in aggregate less than 10 weeks; or
  - b. For which, in respect of that academic year and any previous academic year(s) of the course the aggregate of any one or more periods of attendance which are not periods of full-time study at the institution in the United Kingdom (disregarding intervening vacations) exceeds 30 weeks.
3. A sandwich year-out year abroad is a year of programme of study that meets the definition of a sandwich year-out and to which one of the following applies.
  - a. All periods of attendance that are not full-time study are spent outside the United Kingdom.
  - b. At least one period of attendance in the year of programme of study that is not full-time study is taken under the Erasmus+ programme.
4. Some years abroad may comprise a combination of work experience and full-time study at an institution outside the United Kingdom. Where the period of work experience is not sufficient for the year of programme of study to meet the definition of sandwich year-out, it should be categorised as a full-time year abroad.
5. The data collected are to be disaggregated between years abroad taken under the Erasmus+ programme and other years abroad<sup>4</sup>. If a year abroad comprises more than one period of study or work placement abroad, not all of which are taken under the Erasmus+ scheme, the year of programme of study should be recorded as follows.
  - a. As an Erasmus+ year abroad if at least one study or work placement is taken under the Erasmus+ programme during the current year of programme of study.
  - b. As a non-Erasmus+ year abroad otherwise. This may include cases where an Erasmus+ study or work placement, which counts towards categorising the

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<sup>4</sup> Erasmus+ is the European Union programme for education, training, youth and sport for the period from 2014 to 2020. Further information about it can be found at: [www.erasmusplus.org.uk/](http://www.erasmusplus.org.uk/) and the Erasmus+ programme guide, available online at <https://www.erasmusplus.org.uk/news/erasmus-call-and-programme-guide-published>.

Annex P: Year abroad categories in Table 4

current year of programme of study as a year abroad, was taken in a previous year of programme of study, but not in the current one.

6. Regulated fee limits for new-regime students taking a year abroad are changing with effect from 1 September 2014. In general the regulated fee limits that apply to new-regime students in the categories collected in Table 4 are as follows:

- a. The basic amount is £900 and the higher amount is £1,350 for:
  - i. An Erasmus+ year.
  - ii. An academic year of a course provided in conjunction with an overseas institution which is not an Erasmus+ year.
- b. The basic amount is £1,200 and the higher amount is £1,800 for an academic year of a sandwich course (which is not an Erasmus+ year):
  - i. Either during which any periods of full-time study are in aggregate less than 10 weeks.
  - ii. Or if in respect of that academic year and any previous academic years of the course the aggregate of any one or more periods of attendance which are not periods of full-time study at the institution (disregarding intervening vacations) exceeds 30 weeks.

7. We will use the information on Table 4 to determine allocations of funding for 2015-16 to support colleges' participation in Erasmus+ and other higher education student mobility programmes.

Example 1

8. A new-regime student studies a four-year full-time undergraduate course from September 2012 to June 2016. The student spends a year abroad studying at an overseas institution for the calendar year 2014, which incorporates parts of the student's second and third years of programme of study. The second year of programme of study does not meet the definition of a year abroad, because the student has spent at least 10 weeks studying at their UK institution between September and December 2013, and they have not yet spent over 30 weeks, excluding intervening vacations, studying abroad by the end of the year of programme of study. The third year of programme of study does meet the definition of a year abroad, because (including the time abroad during their second year of programme of study) the student will have spent over 30 weeks, excluding intervening vacations, studying abroad by the end of that year. An eligible student will be subject to a reduced regulated fee limit of £1,350 for such a year of programme of study. If the year abroad is taken under the Erasmus+ programme, the year of programme of study should be identified as a full-time Erasmus+ year abroad.

Example 2

9. A new-regime student studies a four-year full-time undergraduate course from September 2012 to June 2016. The student spends a year abroad between September 2014 and June 2015, contained entirely within their third year of programme of study. The year abroad comprises one semester which is a 15-week work placement not taken under the Erasmus+ programme and another semester which is a 15-week study placement at an overseas university which is taken under the Erasmus+ programme. The work placement is not in itself sufficient for the year of programme of study to count as a sandwich year-out. Because at least one study or work placement is taken under the Erasmus+ programme in the current year of programme of study, the year is categorised as a full-time Erasmus+ year abroad.

Example 3

10. As in Example 1, but the calendar year abroad comprises: one 16-week semester (taken at the end of the second year of programme of study) which is a work placement abroad not taken under the Erasmus+ programme; and another 16-week semester (at the start of the third year of programme of study) which is a study period at an overseas institution taken under the Erasmus+ programme. The third year of programme of study still meets the definition of a year abroad. The work placement is not in itself sufficient for any year of programme of study to count as a sandwich year-out. Because at least one period of study or work placement in the current year of programme of study is taken under the Erasmus+ programme, that year counts as a full-time Erasmus+ year abroad.

Example 4

11. As in Example 3, but the semesters are reversed: the calendar year abroad comprises one 16-week semester (taken at the end of the second year of programme of study) which is a study period at an overseas institution taken under the Erasmus+ programme, and another 16-week semester (at the start of the third year of programme of study) which is a work placement abroad not taken under the Erasmus+ programme. The third year of programme of study still meets the definition of a year abroad. The work placement is not in itself sufficient for the year of programme of study to count as a sandwich year-out. No study or work placement in the current year of programme of study is taken under the Erasmus+ programme (even though one was in the previous year of programme of study). Therefore the third year of programme of study counts as a full-time non-Erasmus+ year abroad.

## **Annex Q: Identification of old-regime and new-regime students**

This annex provides guidance and flow charts on how to determine the fee and funding regime that applies for the purposes of HEIFES14.

### **Definitions**

1. Any student who is charged regulated fees for a year of programme of study under the fees regime introduced in September 2012 must be recorded as a new-regime student for that year of programme of study. In this context, a part-time student is treated as being charged regulated fees under the fees regime introduced in September 2012 if they are eligible to apply for a tuition fee loan under the Education (Student Support) Regulations 2011 (SI 2011 No. 1986, as amended). A student who commenced study in 2011-12, but intermitted within two weeks of starting and then returned to study in or after 2012-13, should be treated for the purposes of HEIFES as having deferred entry until that later year. They must therefore be recorded as new-regime in HEIFES14.
2. A year of programme of study should be recorded as old-regime if the student fulfils either of the following conditions.
  - a. They are in receipt of student support for the year, which reflects the entitlements that apply to students who commenced their studies prior to 1 September 2012 and did not commence their study in 2011-12 and intermit within two weeks of starting, before returning to study in or after 2012-13; or
  - b. They are not being charged regulated fees for the year of programme of study under the fees regime introduced in September 2012, and are one of the following:
    - i. 'Continuing'.
    - ii. On an 'end-on course', where the previous/original course (to which the current course is an end-on course) commenced before 1 September 2012.
    - iii. 'Transferring'.
3. Solely for the purpose of determining whether a student is continuing, transferring or on an end-on course (as defined below), where there is a requirement for the student's mode of study not to change the student should be treated as if they were studying full-time if they are:
  - a. On a sandwich year-out.
  - b. Repeating part of their full-time course on a part-time basis at the same college and retaining their previous entitlement to full-time student support.
  - c. On the final year of a full-time course that is completed in less than 24 weeks, so that their mode of study in HEIFES changes from full-time to part-time.

## Annex Q: Identification of old-regime and new-regime students

4. A year of programme of study should be recorded as coming under the new regime if either of the following applies.
  - a. The student is being charged regulated fees for the year of programme of study under the fees regime introduced in September 2012.
  - b. The year of programme of study does not meet the definition for coming under the old regime as defined in paragraph 2 of this annex.
5. Students should not be recorded as old-regime students just because they are not eligible for student support and regulated fees (for example because they are postgraduate, aiming for an equivalent or lower qualification, or on a part-time undergraduate course studying at a full-time equivalence of less than 0.25).

### Continuing

6. The definition of 'continuing' is relevant only to those students who do not meet the criteria in paragraph 2a of this annex.
7. For HEFCE funding purposes, continuing means that without any breaks, save for normal vacations and as allowed for under the rules on intermissions below, the student is aiming for the same qualification aim in the same subject and mode of study as they were before 1 September 2012.
8. For the purposes of HEIFES only, where a student intermits before resuming study on or after 1 September 2012 they may be treated as continuing only if one of the following two circumstances applies.
  - a. The intermission is for no more than 12 months plus any normal vacation period.
  - b. The intermission does not exceed 24 months plus any normal vacation period, and **all** of the following apply.
    - i. The student is studying on a course leading on successful completion towards registration with the Architects Registration Board.
    - ii. The intermission is between Part 1 and Part 2 (where both parts are pursued in the same mode of study, but may be taken at the same or different colleges).
    - iii. The period of professional experience required at the end of Part 1 is not being taken as a sandwich year-out.
9. Where the student intermits for no more than 12 months (plus any normal vacation period), but returns to study for a different qualification aim or in a different subject, they are not continuing. They may be treated as transferring, subject to meeting the conditions in paragraph 18.
10. This guidance on when students can be treated as continuing under the old fee and funding regime is solely for the purpose of completing data returns used for HEFCE funding. Where colleges have questions for their own fee charging policies about the application of the student support and fee regulations, they should seek advice from Student Finance England.

### End-on course

11. The definition of an 'end-on course' is relevant only to those students who do not meet the criteria in paragraph 2a of this annex.

12. An end-on course means a first degree with honours taken (disregarding any normal intervening vacation) immediately after successful completion of one of the following qualifications, where the two courses are studied in the same mode of study (either both full-time or both part-time):

- Higher National Certificate (HNC)
- Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE)
- Higher National Diploma (HND)
- Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)
- foundation degree
- first degree without honours

In most cases, the successful completion of the lower-level qualification counts towards the first degree with honours.

13. In this context, successful completion means that the student has achieved in assessment the necessary academic standards to be awarded the qualification. There is no requirement for an end-on course to be studied at the same institution as the previous course. End-on courses do not include any other combinations of courses (such as where students with an HNC top up to an HND, or postgraduate taught students progress from a postgraduate certificate to a postgraduate diploma and then to a masters qualification).

#### Example 1

14. A student studies part-time at a further education college towards an HNC during the 2011-12 academic year. After successfully completing the HNC, they progress at the college to a part-time HND starting in September 2012. After successfully completing the HND in July 2014, the student progresses to a part-time first degree with honours at a higher education institution in the 2014-15 academic year. In this case, the HND **cannot** be treated as an end-on course to the HNC, so the student will be treated as subject to the new regime in 2012-13 and each subsequent year.

Example 2

15. A student studies part-time at a further education college towards an HND during the 2011-12 to 2013-14 academic years. After successfully completing the HND, they progress to a part-time first degree with honours at a higher education institution in the 2014-15 academic year. The student is a continuing student in 2012-13 and 2013-14, because they are following the same qualification aim in the same subject and mode of study as they were before 1 September 2012 and there has been no intermission of more than 12 months plus any normal vacation period. As the student progresses to the part-time first degree with honours in 2014-15, they are treated as being on an end-on course, because the original HND commenced before 1 September 2012 and the mode of study has not changed. The student will therefore be treated for HEFCE funding purposes as subject to the old regime throughout their study towards the HND and first degree with honours. The change of institution in 2014-15 is not relevant to their fee and funding regime status.

Example 3

16. A student studies full-time over two years for a foundation degree, achieving the qualification at the end of the 2012-13 academic year. They do not study during 2012-13, but decide to top up, full-time, to a first degree with honours in the 2014-15 academic year. Because the top-up to the first degree with honours has not followed immediately (disregarding any normal intervening vacation) after successful completion of the foundation degree, it cannot be treated as an end-on course. The year of programme of study should therefore be recorded as new-regime.

**Transferring**

17. The definition of 'transferring' is relevant only to those students who do not meet the criteria in paragraph 2a of this annex.

18. For HEFCE funding purposes, 'transferring' means that, on the recommendation of the academic authority, a student ceases one course before its completion and starts another in the same mode of study (that is, either both the discontinued course and the new course are full-time and sandwich year-out, or both are part-time) and at the same level (either both undergraduate or both postgraduate). To be treated as transferring, the course from which the student is transferring needs to have started before 1 September 2012. The course to which the student transfers need not be in the same subject, have the same qualification aim or be at the same institution as the discontinued course. However, the requirement that the transfer is on the recommendation of the academic authority means that it was agreed by either:

- the institution, where the transfer is between courses at the same institution
- both institutions, where the student changes institution.

19. Unlike an end-on course, it is possible for a transfer to include a break in study (beyond normal vacation periods) between ceasing the uncompleted course and

## Annex Q: Identification of old-regime and new-regime students

commencing the new one. However, for HEIFES purposes, this break in study should not exceed 12 months plus any normal vacation period.

### Example 4

20. A full-time student commences study in 2011-12 for a BSc in mathematics, but on the recommendation of the academic authority changes to study full-time from 2013-14 for an MEng (integrated masters) at the same institution instead. The student would be treated as transferring and is therefore treated as old-regime.

### Example 5

21. A full-time student commences study for a BA in French in 2011-12, but decides (for whatever reason) that they no longer wish to continue the course and so they withdraw. The student subsequently decides to commence study for a BA in history at another institution from 2013-14. Because withdrawal from the French degree and commencement of the history degree was not agreed by both institutions, the student is not treated as transferring and is therefore treated as new-regime.

## **Good practice**

### Assigning old- and new-regime status to students eligible for student support

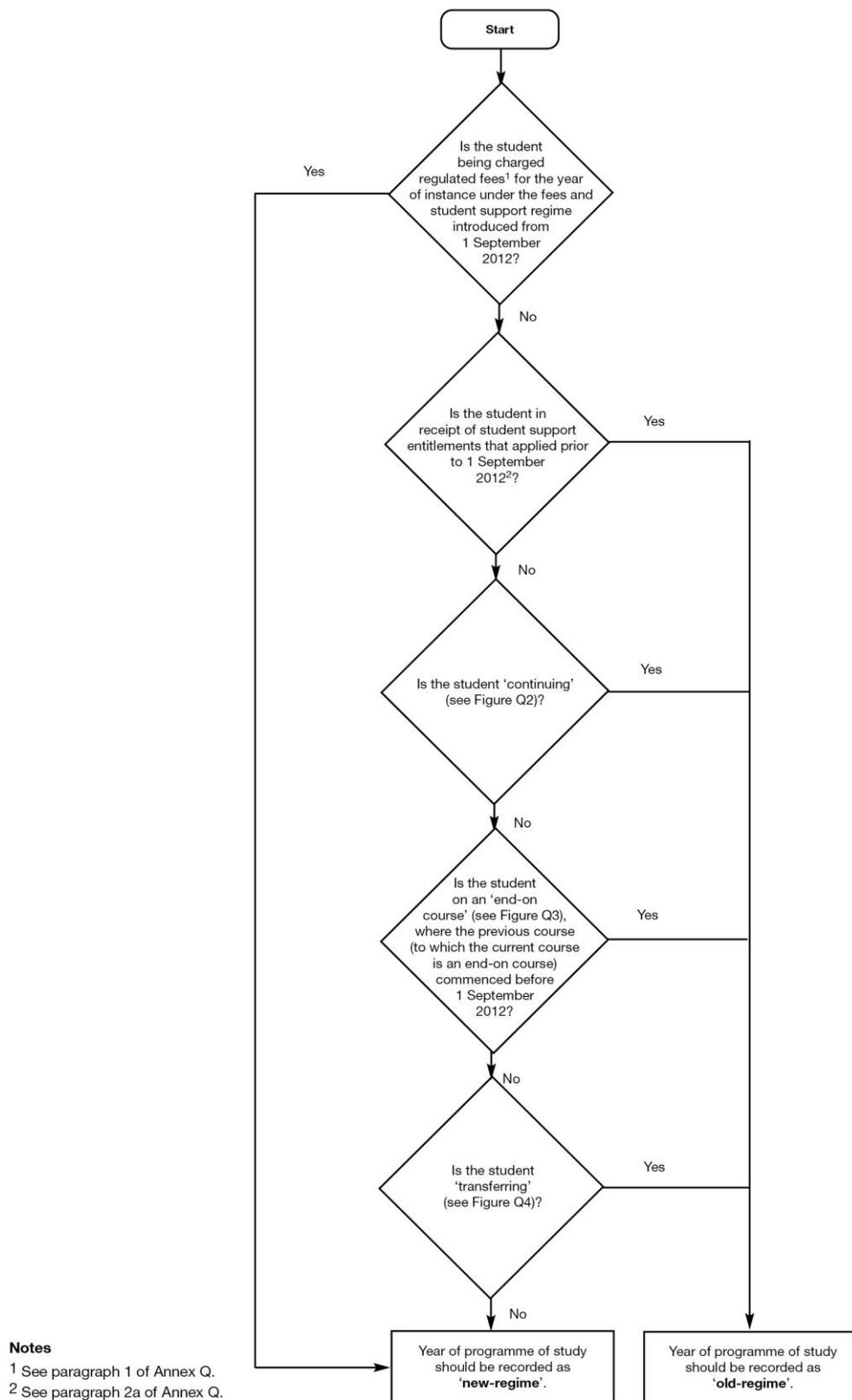
22. Colleges should seek guidance from Student Finance England on applying the student support and fee regulations to the fees that may be charged and fee loans provided for eligible students on designated courses.

23. Institutions should ensure that where students are in receipt of a tuition fee loan from the Student Loans Company their categorisation as either old-regime or new-regime is consistent with the amount of loan awarded. In particular, full-time students who are awarded a loan that is higher than the relevant fee limit for students who were studying in 2011-12 (commonly £3,465) should be categorised as new-regime. Part-time students receiving tuition fee loans should generally be categorised as new-regime, as tuition fee loans are not usually available for part-time old-regime students.

## **Flow charts**

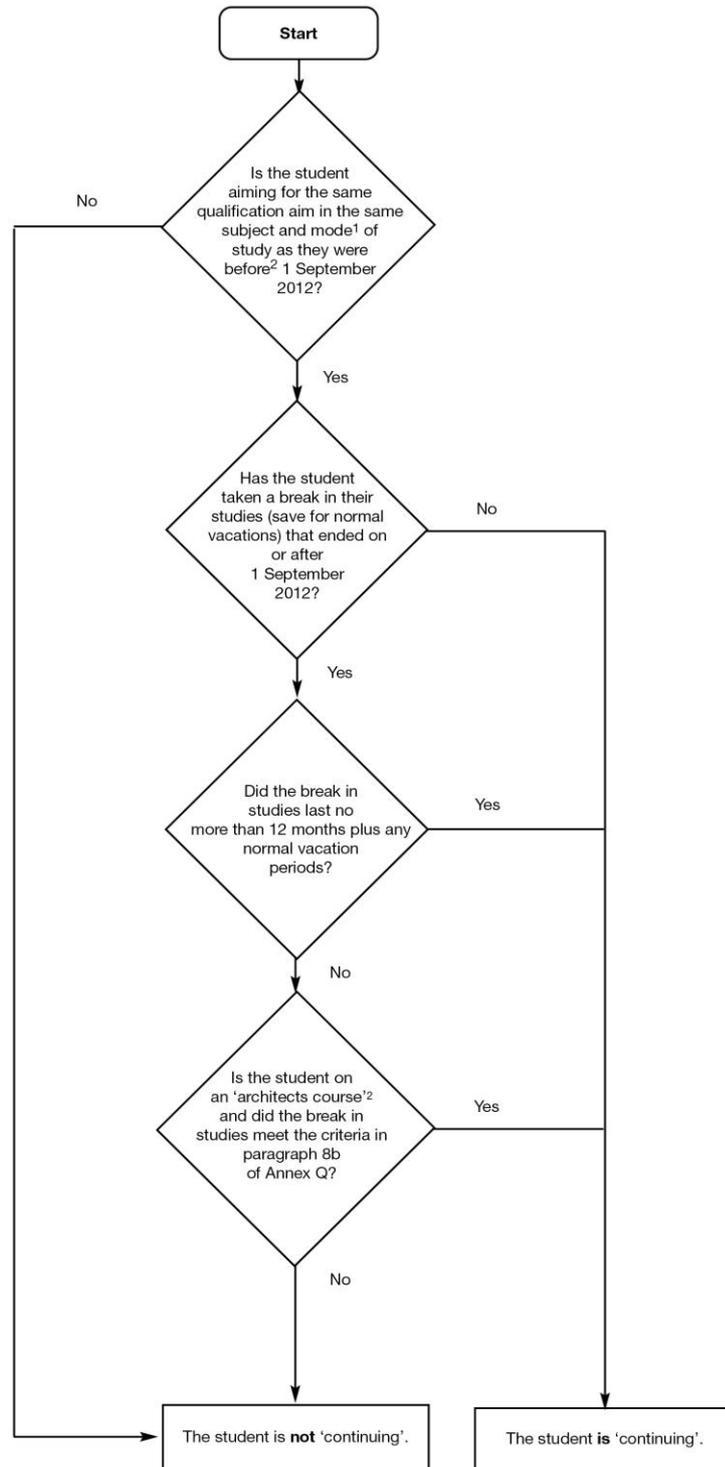
24. The flow charts at Figures Q1 to Q4 are intended to help colleges determine whether a year of programme of study should be reported as subject to the old regime or the new regime, including whether the student is 'continuing', 'transferring' or on an 'end-on course'.

**Figure Q1: Flow chart for establishing a student's fee and funding regime type (according to HEIFES definitions)**



**Figure Q2: Flow chart for establishing whether a student is 'continuing' (according to HEIFES definitions for establishing fee and funding regime type)**

Note: This flow chart should only be used where paragraph 2a does not apply.

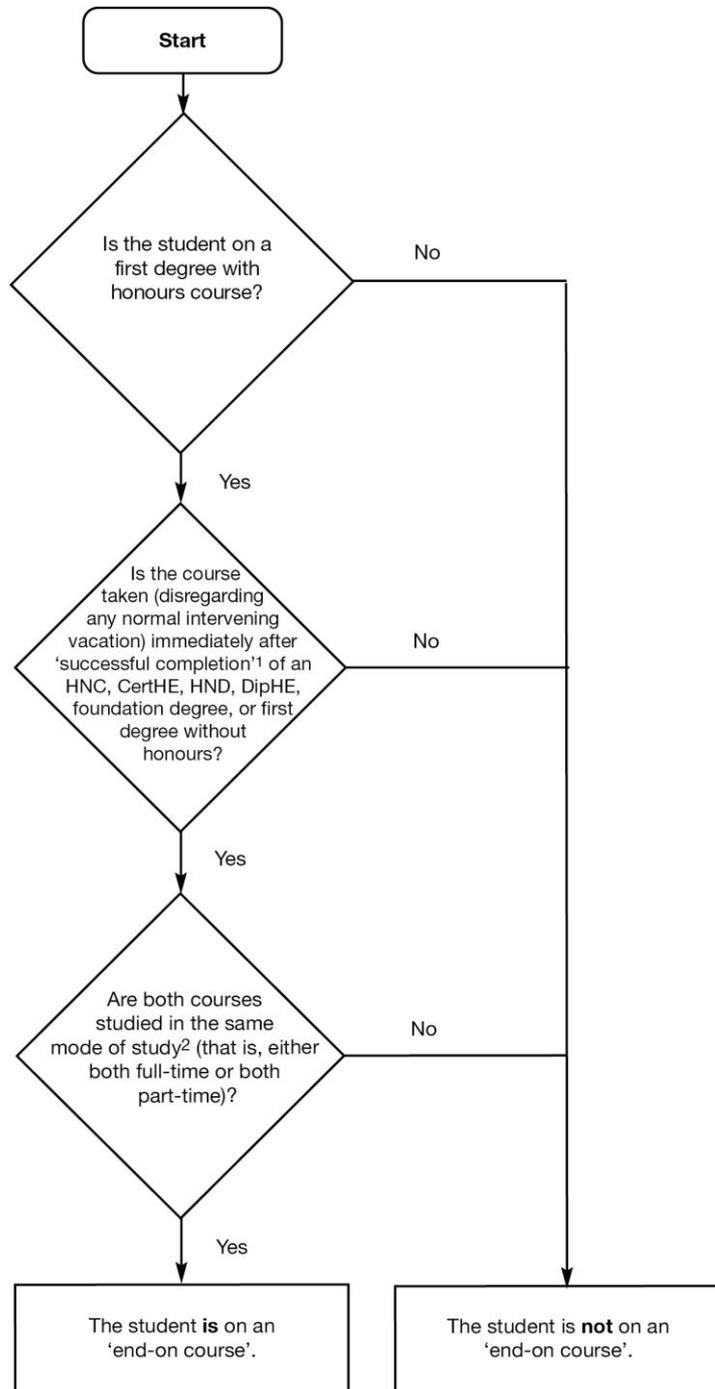


**Notes**

- 1 See paragraph 3 of Annex Q.
- 2 See paragraph 1 of Annex Q.
- 3 See paragraph 8b of Annex Q.

**Figure Q3: Flow chart for establishing whether a student is on an 'end-on course' (according to HEIFES definitions for establishing fee and funding regime type)**

Note: This flow chart should only be used where paragraph 2a does not apply.



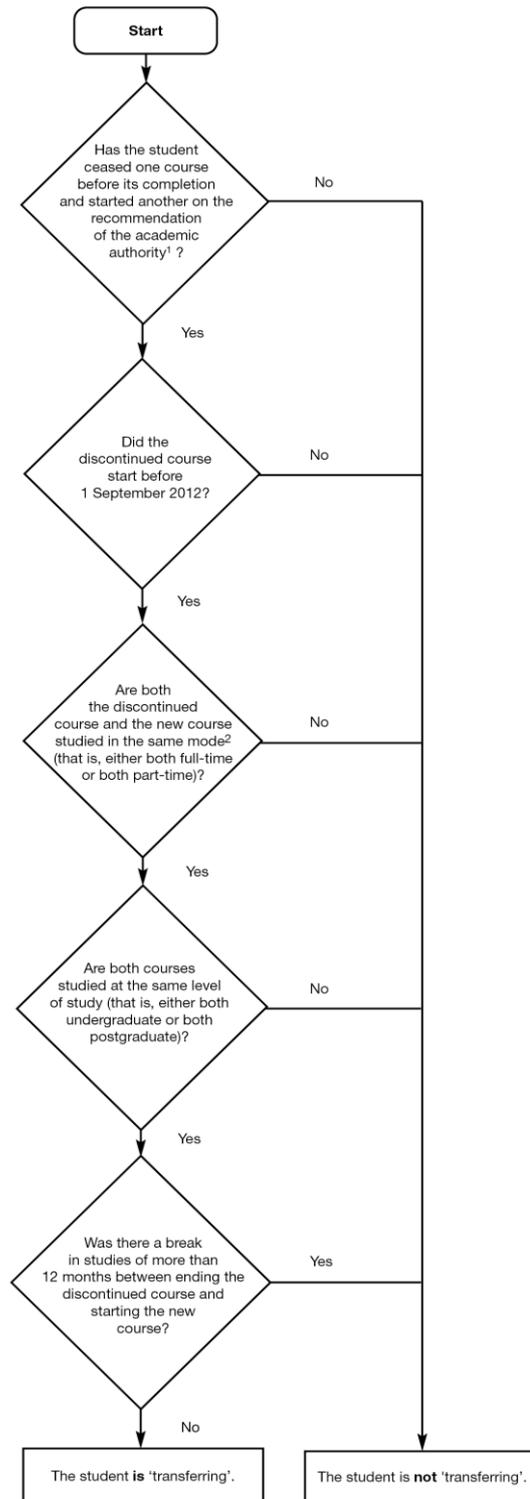
**Notes**

1 See paragraph 12 of Annex Q.

2 See paragraph 3 of Annex Q.

**Figure Q4: Flow chart for establishing whether a student is ‘transferring’ (according to HEIFES definitions for establishing fee and funding regime type)**

Note: This flowchart should only be used where paragraph 2a does not apply.



**Notes**

- 1 See paragraph 18 of Annex Q.
- 2 See paragraph 3 of Annex Q.

## Annex R: Self-check questions

**Please ensure that you can answer yes to all these questions before signing off the completed HEIFES14 return to HEFCE.**

### General questions

1. Are you assured that the college is compliant with the funding rules set out in this publication?
2. Has the college considered the good practice tips, available in detail throughout this publication?
3. Is there an effective audit trail to the student records system and is the system capturing and recording student information in accordance with HEFCE's funding rules?
4. Have all validation checks on each of the tables been passed? (See Appendix 1 for further information on the validation checks that are carried out in the workbook.)
5. Where credibility warnings are shown or automatic check highlighting has been generated on the comparison tables, have the entered data been checked to ensure that they are correct and meet the guidance and definitions set out in the relevant section of this publication? Have you submitted an explanation to HEFCE, setting out why the data are credible? (See Appendix 2 for further information on the credibility warnings and the automatic check highlighting in the comparison tables, and [Annex E](#) for further information on the data verification process.)

### Specific questions

6. Has the college reviewed its compliance with the definition of non-completions?
7. Are you assured that the forecast components of the HEIFES return are grounded in robust and accurate past performance, and that this is auditable?
8. If you have included any forecast years of programme of study in Column 2 of the tables, do they meet the criteria to be included in Column 2? (See [Annex H](#) for guidance on when to count years of programme of study, and [Annex D](#) for further guidance on what activity may be recorded in Column 2.)
9. Have you excluded years of programme of study which are franchised-in? (See paragraphs 8-17 of [Annex F](#) for more information on collaborative arrangements treated as franchises for HEFCE purposes.)
10. Has the final list of exempt students (students outside the student number control allocation in 2014-15) and grade combinations been used when completing Table 6? The final list can be found on our web-site at [www.hefce.ac.uk/whatwedo/lt/howfund/studentgrades/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/whatwedo/lt/howfund/studentgrades/).

## **Annex S: List of abbreviations**

<b>CertEd</b>	Certificate in Education
<b>DipHE</b>	Diploma of Higher Education
<b>DSA</b>	Disabled Students' Allowance
<b>DTLLS</b>	Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector
<b>ELQ</b>	Equivalent or lower qualification
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FEC</b>	Further education college
<b>FTE</b>	Full-time equivalent or full-time equivalence, depending on context
<b>HE</b>	Higher education
<b>HEAPES</b>	Higher Education in Alternative Providers Early Statistics survey
<b>HEFCE</b>	Higher Education Funding Council for England
<b>HEI</b>	Higher education institution
<b>HEIFES</b>	Higher Education in Further Education: Students survey
<b>HESA</b>	Higher Education Statistics Agency
<b>HESES</b>	Higher Education Students Early Statistics survey
<b>HNC</b>	Higher National Certificate
<b>HND</b>	Higher National Diploma
<b>ILR</b>	Individualised learner record
<b>INSET</b>	In-service education and training
<b>ITT</b>	Initial teacher training
<b>LDCS</b>	Learning Directory Classification System
<b>OFFA</b>	Office for Fair Access
<b>PG</b>	Postgraduate
<b>PGCE</b>	Postgraduate or Professional Graduate Certificate in Education
<b>PG ITT</b>	Postgraduate initial teacher training
<b>QAA</b>	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
<b>QTS</b>	Qualified teacher status
<b>SI</b>	Statutory instrument
<b>SLC</b>	Student Loans Company
<b>SNC</b>	Student number control
<b>UCAS</b>	The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service
<b>UG</b>	Undergraduate
<b>UK NARIC</b>	UK National Recognition Information Centre

## Annex T: Index

Paragraph references are to paragraph numbers in the main text, or to the annex letter and paragraph numbers of annexes.

Note that some words and phrases are defined in the list of abbreviations at [Annex S](#).

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Annex / paragraph</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>A</b>		
Access provision	G6, H41-42	42, 55
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Audit	A2, A4, E25-45	11-12, 12, 30-34
<b>C</b>		
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