

Cylchlythyr | Circular

Unistats 2021: Timetable and arrangements for the submission and publication of data

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To: Governing bodies and heads of regulated and/or directly funded institutions in Wales
Other parties with an interest in public information
Response by: No response required
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This publication outlines arrangements for the 2021 Unistats data collection. It also provides an update on the further development of the Discover Uni resource.

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



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Introduction

1. This publication outlines arrangements for the 2021 Unistats data collection. It also provides an update on the further development of the Discover Uni resource.
2. While we are in the process of further developing the Discover Uni website, the data collection will continue to be known in 2021 as 'the Unistats collection' and the resulting dataset as 'the Unistats dataset'. Please note, the dates and deadlines set out here may be subject to change in response to the current COVID-19 pandemic.
3. The Unistats data collection process and Discover Uni website are managed by the Office for Students (OfS) on behalf of the UK funding and regulatory bodies – the Department for the Economy (Northern Ireland), the Scottish Funding Council and the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales. The Discover Uni website provides information for prospective students about higher education courses delivered by providers in the UK.
4. We expect to issue information on the arrangements for the publication of data for the National Student Survey 2021 later in May/June 2021.
5. Due to the changes to the application and admissions arrangements for 2021, we may also provide an appropriate and clear message on course results pages on the [Discover Uni website](#). These pages signpost applicants and potential applicants to providers' websites and course pages to check for any changes to the course before applying or accepting offers.

Arrangements for Unistats 2021

6. The following higher education providers are required to return Unistats data:
 - HEFCW regulated and/or directly funded providers in Wales
 - publicly funded providers in Scotland and Northern Ireland
 - providers in England that are registered with the Office for Students (OfS).
7. All HEFCW regulated and/or HEFCW directly funded providers in Wales are required to submit this information to HESA for their provision, to include data for any eligible courses delivered by another provider on their behalf through a sub-contractual arrangement. The Unistats return should be submitted by the registering provider. Eligible courses are defined in the coverage of the Unistats record on the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) [website](#).
8. For cross-border arrangements in 2021, the provider submitting the data may differ in the C21061 return compared to previous years. Full guidance

can be found in HESA's sub-contractual and collaborative provision document for the C21061 collection, which is due to be released shortly.

Process for submission and signoff of data

9. All providers should return their Unistats data to HESA. Detailed guidance on the data required is available on the HESA [website](#).
10. The timetable for submission of Unistats data for courses running in 2021/22 is shown in the table below. To ensure that data remains accurate, it is possible to re-submit data to reflect changes to course details or website links throughout the year. These will be incorporated via regular updates after the initial publication.
11. Data must pass a series of system validation checks before they can be submitted and signed off as accurate. Unless all stages of the process, including sign-off, have been completed, the data will not be considered to have been received and will be unable to be published.
12. The dataset should initially be signed off by the provider's accountable officer (usually the head of the institution), but formal responsibility for signing off any subsequent updates may be delegated to another member of the senior management team. If the accountable officer is unable to sign off the initial return, this should be done by the individual acting in this capacity at the time, and the accountable officer should notify HESA in advance.

Timetable – key dates

13. The table below outlines the key dates in relation to the Unistats data collection and publication of data. These dates may be subject to change.

Date	Activity	Notes
By 31 May 2021	C21061 data collection system opens	
Anticipated by 31 July 2021	NSS and Graduate Outcomes data added	NSS and Graduate Outcomes data will be added to the data collection systems and will be visible in the reports. We will confirm the intended publication date.
20 July 2021	Deadline for submission of valid data set	Providers are required to have submitted a dataset which has passed validation and contains the majority of their courses.
20 July 2021	Nil return confirmation	Providers are required to submit a Nil return form to indicate that their provider has no courses which meet the eligibility criteria for the Unistats record, as specified in the coverage of the record.
Noon, 17 August 2021	Sign-off	Providers are required to have signed off as accurate a dataset as possible which has passed system validation and is suitable for publication.
Anticipated by October 2021	Official Statistics publication of 2021 Unistats dataset on the HESA website	We will confirm the intended publication date for the 2021 dataset in July 2021.
Anticipated by 7 October 2021	Update of Discover Uni website with 2021 dataset	We will confirm the intended publication date for the 2021 dataset in July 2021.
End November 2021	Deadline for up-to-date widgets on providers' websites	We will confirm the deadline for up-to-date widgets on providers' websites in July 2021.

Further development of the Discover Uni website

14. We are continuing to develop the Discover Uni website, following updates to the home page, course pages and content in 2020. New designs for a course comparison function to present the Unistats data for multiple courses are now in development. We are also making improvements to the search/filter facility on the website in response to user testing and feedback. We anticipate these updates will be released to the website by the end of July 2021.

Unistats widget

15. In 2020, significant development work was undertaken to the Discover Uni widget to support changes to the Unistats dataset and enhance its design and function. No further changes are planned for the widget in 2021.
16. The widget will continue to provide a direct link to data about the course from providers' course pages. Providers should update their widgets to reflect their Unistats 2021 data and present them on their course pages by the end of November 2021. We will confirm this deadline in July 2021.

Further information / responses to

17. For further queries about publication of the NSS within the Unistats dataset, contact the Discover Uni team at the OfS, email discoveruni@officeforstudents.org.uk.
18. For any other queries, contact Nicola Hunt (029 2085 9735; nicola.hunt@hefcw.ac.uk)