



Department  
for Business  
Innovation & Skills

**Mid Term report on Actions arising  
from the HE Statistics: User  
Engagement Event**

Event was held on 30 January 2014

**AUGUST 2014**

## **DASHBOARD OF PROGRESS ON ACTIONS FROM THE STATISTICS OF HIGHER EDUCATION: USER ENGAGEMENT EVENT**

*Date of Conference: 30 January 2014 at BIS Conference Centre, Victoria Street, London*

BIS held an HE Statistics Event on the 30 January to raise the profile of, and seek feedback on a range of Higher Education Statistics and products. This table highlights the progress made in achieving some of the action points described in the release on 20 May 2014 which presents the findings from the user engagement event. These findings are accessible at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/higher-education-statistics-user-engagement-event-findings>

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CRITERION	COMPONENTS	ATTRIBUTES	PROGRESS (Traffic light)
<b>THEME 1: STUDENT NUMBERS AND OUTCOMES</b>			
<b>Enrolments and Qualifications</b>	<p>There was user interest in including additional breakdowns of participation statistics in January's Statistical First Release. Examples given were entry qualifications, age, participation background (POLAR) and types of post-graduate study (Doctorate/Masters).</p>	<p>HESA plans to review the content of the January Statistical First Release in Summer 2014 and will take note of these suggestions. Some of the characteristics discussed are published at institution-level in the <i>Performance indicators for Higher Education</i>; the Widening Participation measures are currently under review.</p>	<p>Arrangements have been made to review content in the annual <i>Enrolments and Qualifications</i> publication between organisations [BIS, HESA, and the Devolved Administrations] and we will notify users of any changes planned for January 2015.</p> <p>Having determined via a 2013 fundamental review of the UK Performance Indicators (UKPIs) that the current sets of UKPIs require some refinement, the UKPI Steering Group discussed an in-depth review of the widening participation UKPIs in February 2014, and work in this area continues.</p> <p>The UKPI Steering Group has welcomed a proposal to establish a series of expert groups or roundtables to provide access to the level, depth and breadth of specialist knowledge that will be required to advance any in-depth review process. They plan to hold such a discussion of the Widening Participation measures in late 2014.</p> <p>Further details of this review and its outcomes will be published at such a time as it has been appropriately defined and progressed by the groups governing the UKPIs.</p>
	<p>Users commented that more timely information on</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> HESA enrolments data is collected on</p>	<p>Information on progress with HEDIIP can be found at the link: <a href="http://www.hediip.ac.uk/">http://www.hediip.ac.uk/</a></p>

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	<p>participation in Higher Education would be of greater use to users.</p>	<p>completion of the academic year so as to minimise the burden on institutions, and is published in early January once time has been allowed for processing and quality assurance. The Higher Education Data and Information Improvement Programme (HEDIIP) is reviewing the mechanics of data collection on Higher Education.</p>	<p>Current projects include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of data collections to identify opportunities and barriers to a more rationalised and standardised information landscape</li> <li>• Creating a vision and blueprint for the HE data and information landscape</li> <li>• developing a new subject coding scheme for UK higher education (consultation on this closes shortly <a href="http://subjectcoding.wordpress.com/">http://subjectcoding.wordpress.com/</a> )</li> <li>• identifying an adoption plan for the Unique Learner Number (ULN) in Higher Education</li> </ul>
	<p>Delegates expressed interest in improving the narrative for the SFR so that it gives more policy context and signposts other data sources that might give more timely indications of trends.</p>	<p>As mentioned above HESA plans to review the content of the January SFR in Summer 2014. The Consultation team are considering the optimal location for a webpage describing the HE data cycle, i.e. from application, to enrolment, to qualifying, to employment.</p>	<p>As above, arrangements have been made to review content in the annual <i>Enrolments and Qualifications</i> publication between organisations [BIS, HESA, and the Devolved Administrations] and we will notify users of any changes planned for January 2015.</p>

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<b>Employment Outcomes of Leavers in Higher Education</b>	Delegates queried the usefulness of measuring employment outcomes only 6 months after graduation.	Destinations data are collected after 6 months to maximise the response rate to the survey. HESA also collects a biennial follow-up survey for a structured sample of leavers 3.5 years after graduation. BIS is investigating whether this information can be supplemented with further longitudinal employment data collected via the UK tax system.	<p>Legislation is planned to allow the use of tax records to measure the earnings of higher education graduates using HMRC data. It is hoped that the legislation is enacted into law next spring. The following links provide further detail.</p> <p><u>Webpages</u></p> <p>The Bill website on gov.uk (where all the factsheets and Impact Assessments can be found):</p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/small-business-enterprise-and-employment-bill">https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/small-business-enterprise-and-employment-bill</a></p> <p>The Bill Parliament webpage (where the Bill itself and Explanatory Notes can be found, along with amendments at later stages):</p> <p><a href="http://services.parliament.uk/bills/">http://services.parliament.uk/bills/</a></p>
	They also wanted to find out more about the outcomes for international students .	Institutions collected information on the outcomes overseas (non-EU) students as a pilot in 2011/12 and will do so again in 2012/13. The release of this information depends on improving response rates. HESA is working with HE institutions to improve response rates for International Students.	<p>HESA have introduced more challenging response targets for HEIs and if progress is made towards these data from future surveys may be suitable to make available to users.</p>
<b>Higher</b>	Delegates expressed an	Improvements will be made	There is improved narrative in this year's

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<b>Education Initial Participation Rate (HEIPR)</b>	<p>interest in seeing clearer guidance in the publication on how the measure is derived and calculated, and explanation of how it differs from other participation rates (including similar rates calculated and used in international comparisons by the OECD, and qualification rates of the population.</p>	<p>to the BIS publication in 2014 to take account of the feedback.</p>	<p>publication on the 28<sup>th</sup> August to explain how the HEIPR measure is compiled.</p> <p>A new analysis of the impact on the measure if (i) students at alternative providers and (ii) students overseas were included has also been included, updating Professor Ramsden's assumptions made in 2004.</p> <p>The publication also signposts readers to other participation rates, for example those published by the OECD which enable comparisons of entry rates in the UK with other countries..</p>
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## THEME 2: DESTINATIONS MEASURES AND WIDENING PARTICIPATION DATA

	<p>There was a great deal of interest in the potential for using employment and earnings information collected by other Government Departments (HMRC, DWP) data to improve destination measures from education.</p>	<p>A high priority in the Department for Education and work is underway to pursue this, although it will require amendments to existing legislation.</p>	<p>As mentioned earlier, legislation is planned to allow the use of tax records to measure the earnings of higher education graduates using HMRC data. This legislation will extend to school leavers.</p>
<b>School Destinations</b>	<p>Users also focused on the issue of comparisons with other measures.</p>	<p>DFE identified a requirement to include further editorial guidance in the technical note of the Statistical Release explaining how the measures relate to other participation measures, and make the headline figures on education, employment</p>	<p><b>Links to other publications</b></p> <p>Related publications have been mentioned in the SFR, along with sections on the other measures at the end of the technical note. Included are the BIS widening participation measure, BIS FE choices learner destination measures and the DFE participation, training and employment SFR.</p>

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		<p>and training more prominent within the publication. Charts of trends over time cannot be included as yet as there is insufficient historical data to establish these trends</p>	<p>The editorial guidance in the technical note will be further reviewed as part of the development plan for the 2015 destination measures and all identified improvements will be included in that publication.</p> <p><b>Prior attainment</b></p> <p>Work on reflecting prior attainment is currently on-going and findings should be released in September.</p>
<p><b>Performance Indicators in Higher Education</b></p>	<p>Delegates expressed a general lack of awareness about the derivation of the benchmarks.</p>	<p>These comments will be passed onto the United Kingdom Performance Indicator Steering group (UKPISG)</p>	<p>The 2013 fundamental review of the UK Performance Indicators also found that “the sophisticated but complex methodology” underpinning the UKPI benchmarks was “prone to a lack of understanding leading to potential misuse of the data”.</p> <p>The UK Performance Indicators Steering Group accepted the findings and recommendations of that fundamental review in late 2013 and have now begun the process of reviewing the current sets of UKPIs in depth.</p> <p>The benchmarks are also to be included in further review work: the UK Performance Indicators Technical Group (UKPITG) discussed a review of the benchmarking approach at their March 2014 meeting (see paper at <a href="https://www.hesa.ac.uk/pis/PISG">https://www.hesa.ac.uk/pis/PISG</a> ). The UKPISG have since agreed that the UKPITG should begin a review of the benchmarking approach at the earliest opportunity, and this work</p>

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			<p>will commence before the end of 2014.</p> <p>Communication of the methodology and facilitating users' interpretation of the benchmarks will feature within these reviews.</p>
<b>Widening Participation in Higher Education</b>	There was interest in new breakdowns of statistics, specifically showing widening participation levels by Regional Area	Production of tables by Regions to enhance existing data by Local Authority Area.	The table by Local Authority (LA) Area in the publication "Widening Participation in HE" was amended. It now shows LAs alphabetically grouped within regions. The publication also includes regional figures for the first time.
<b>THEME 3: STUDENT FINANCE</b>			
<b>SLC Web-Site</b>	Delegates observed that it is not always easy to navigate the Student Loans Company web-site when searching for statistics.	There is work in hand at the SLC to improve the organisation of their statistical releases on the website. The changes are expected to take effect by mid- year 2014.	<p>Changes to the SLC statistics pages have been applied and SLC advised all the identified users of the SLC statistics on 6th June 2014.</p> <p>Previously on the SLC statistics webpages you would search for the required statistics by either 'National' or 'Official' Statistics, we have now changed this taking into consideration the users requirements and interaction with the website and the search commences on the name of the publication then drills down to the domicile of interest.</p> <p>The archive has also been transformed into a catalogue of all publications we have delivered split by each domicile, this will our users to find each publication of interest regardless of which academic year each user is looking for.</p>
	Delegates expressed interest in seeing the Student Support statistics presented in a	Improvements will be made to SLC's outputs over the coming year taking account	As part of the rejuvenation of the SLC statistic webpage, some breakdowns of UK statistics have also been provided. These changes include the



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	<p>holistic way that highlighted 'the whole student journey'. There was interest in new breakdowns of statistics showing the characteristics of student applicants, for example their age, if they have a disability, and whether they continue their studies past the first year of study. It was also suggested that users' interpretation could be assisted if statistics were described from the perspective of the student.</p>	<p>of the full range of feedback from their own user surveys, this event, and the UK Statistics Authority Assessment of their statistical outputs. This will include more information comparing the UK administrations, and changes to the web-site to reflect how users have different requirements from the data, e.g. those users who need technical data and those users who require more mainstream and topical narrative</p>	<p>'Average amount of maintenance loan paid by country' and this can be located under 'Financial Support Awarded'.</p> <p>SLC have also provided UK comparisons under 'Student Loans debt and repayment' which includes 'Student Loans debt outstanding by Government Administration within the UK', 'Average debt on entry into repayment by Government Administration within the UK' and 'Average repayment via HMRC per year by Government Administration within the UK'.</p>
<p><b>Presentation of SLC statistics</b></p>	<p>Delegates expressed interest in seeing the Student Support statistics presented in a holistic way that highlighted 'the whole student journey'. There was interest in new breakdowns of statistics showing the characteristics of student applicants, for example their age, if they have a disability, and whether they continue their studies past the first year of study. It was also suggested that users' interpretation could be assisted if statistics were</p>	<p>Improvements will be made to SLC's outputs over the coming year taking account of the full range of feedback from their own user surveys, this event, and the UK Statistics Authority Assessment of their statistical outputs. This will include more information comparing the UK administrations, and changes to the web-site to reflect how users have different requirements from the data, e.g. those users</p>	<p>SLC have included information in their recent reports that shows the differences between UK administrations.</p> <p>Changes to the web-site to reflect how users have different requirements from the data, e.g. those users who need technical data and those users who require more mainstream and topical narrative</p>

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