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Guidance

This document sets out the information we need from institutions for the monitoring of access agreements, Student Opportunity allocation and end-of-year monitoring of the National Scholarship Programme (NSP) for 2013-14.

The deadline to submit your monitoring return is noon on Wednesday 14 January 2015.

How to complete your 2013-14 monitoring return

**Access agreements, Student
Opportunity allocation and the
National Scholarship Programme**

Alternative formats

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How to complete your 2013-14 monitoring return

Access agreements, Student Opportunity allocation and the National Scholarship Programme

To	Heads of higher education institutions in England Heads of further education colleges in England
Of interest to those responsible for	Implementation of access agreements, widening participation, National Scholarship Programme, Heads of Finance
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Introduction

What this document is about

1. This document sets out the information that the Office for Fair Access (OFFA) and Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) need from institutions for monitoring of access agreements, Student Opportunity allocation and the National Scholarship Programme (NSP) for 2013-14.
2. Institutions that had an OFFA-approved access agreement **and** NSP funding in 2013-14 should follow **all** the guidance in this document about what to submit and how to do so. Other institutions need only submit **some** of this information. HEFCE will contact them separately with detailed instructions.

Deadline for action

3. All monitoring returns must be submitted via the HEFCE extranet at <https://data.hefce.ac.uk> by noon on **Wednesday 14 January 2015**.

Why do we ask you to do this?

4. There is a statutory requirement for institutions with access agreements to report to OFFA on the extent to which they have met the obligations set out in those agreements, and on the progress they have made against their milestones and targets.
5. OFFA and HEFCE need to know about your overall investment in widening participation (WP) activity, and how much of this was funded from your OFFA access agreement and how much from the HEFCE Student Opportunity allocation in 2013-14. Setting out your total expenditure on access, student success and progression enables you to demonstrate the breadth of your work in these areas, and helps us to understand how your access agreement expenditure and Student Opportunity allocation fit within your overall WP investment.
6. Information about the NSP is required by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). It helps the Department to report on the NSP to the Secretary of State and other Ministers. HEFCE uses the return to gain assurance that funds are being used appropriately, and to collect information from participating institutions on their NSP schemes and recipients.

7. OFFA will use your return to:
 - assess whether you have broadly met the commitments set out in your agreement. Where you have not done so, OFFA will expect to see a reasonable explanation and/or appropriate review and re-adjustment of plans
 - improve its understanding of trends in access agreement expenditure and outcomes across the sector
 - look at the progress you've made towards your targets and milestones, with a greater focus on trends rather than single data points. If the trend indicated by your monitoring return shows that you are making limited progress or regressing, OFFA may wish to talk to you about this further, if we are not already in dialogue
 - take into account your current performance, and whether your access agreement plans are sufficiently addressing any areas of concern, when considering your next access agreement.
8. OFFA will use qualitative data analysis software to assist with our analysis of your returns. This will enable us to gain a more meaningful understanding of the work being done across the sector, and to provide more in-depth analysis on institutional approaches.
9. OFFA and HEFCE will use your return to improve our understanding of:
 - institutional expenditure on WP activity, including how institutions bring diverse groups of students into higher education and support them through their study to achieve successful outcomes, what this expenditure is achieving, the totality of institutional evaluative activity, and the evidence available on the impact of WP activity and funding. This will help us continue to build our evidence base demonstrating what this expenditure is achieving
 - how your OFFA-countable expenditure and HEFCE Student Opportunity allocation fit within the wider context of your total spend.

10. HEFCE will use the WP activity expenditure data to understand the activity institutions are engaged in, the cost of this activity and how the Student Opportunity allocation is used towards funding these activities.

11. The individualised NSP data returned by institutions will be linked with Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and Individualised Learner Record (ILR) data. This will allow HEFCE to analyse the characteristics of NSP recipients compared to the wider student population.

12. It will also inform the formative evaluation of the NSP which, as well as considering the programme's operation and impact, is helping to build a picture of the broader financial aid packages provided by institutions.

13. OFFA and HEFCE will also use information from monitoring returns to inform continuing dialogue with institutions and discussions during institutional visits.

What has changed since the previous monitoring return?

14. We have made some changes to our process and return this year that reflect strategic priorities and improve our data collection and analysis. We have limited these changes to ensure greater consistency in the process and in the data collected, and we have worked with institutional contacts to ensure that burdens are minimised.

Access agreement monitoring

15. We have restructured the reporting on WP activity to reflect the whole student lifecycle, so expenditure relating to progression is now collected separately from wider student success spend.

16. We have restructured some sections of the return so that we can more effectively analyse the information you provide, but without asking for more information overall.

NSP monitoring

17. The following changes have been made to the end-of-year monitoring template since the 2012-13 end-of-year collection.

- a. The tables have been reordered. Please complete them in the order they appear in the template, as some data from earlier tables are used to populate later tables. For example, the total amount of funds spent in 2013-14 in Table 14 ('Summary of allocation and funding spent') is now calculated from the data entered in Table 13 ('Individualised data for the 2013-14 cohort').
- b. Table 12 ('National and institutional criteria') now requests the 'Institutional criterion description' column (Column F) to be completed for the 'Income' criterion. This is to ensure that institutions that have used the national criterion for household income (less than £25,000) do not select income as an institutional criterion. This option should only be selected if you use a lower income threshold than the national criteria.
- c. Tables 13 and 19 (individualised data) now include a column for NUMHUS¹. Further guidance on this can be found in paragraphs 157-158 of this guidance.
- d. Table 14 ('Summary of allocation and funds spent') has been transposed to make plans for underspending easier to monitor.
- e. Table 15 ('Explanation for underspend') now only requires completion if an institution has underspent its government allocation. Plans for underspending will now be entered in Table 14.
- f. The drop-down options in Table 18 ('Delivery of awards') have been altered to remove the 'Other' category. Institutions should select one of the options provided. Institutions should contact HEFCE if the new options mean they are unsure how to complete this table.

¹ NUMHUS (or the Student Instance Number) complements the HESA Unique Student Identifier (HUSID) to identify the separate courses that individuals take. (https://www.hesa.ac.uk/component/studrec/show_file/10051/E%5E_%5ENUMHUS.html)

- g. The 2013-14 end-of-year return includes four extra tables (Tables 19-22) to capture information on students from the 2012-13 cohort who received NSP awards in 2013-14. Institutions that awarded NSP awards to the 2012-13 cohort in the first year of study only do not need to complete these tables.

What is the future for NSP monitoring returns?

18. As set out in 'National Scholarship Programme update for participating institutions' (HEFCE Circular letter 24/2013), the NSP will cease after 2014-15 and the funding will be repurposed from 2015-16 to provide support for postgraduate study. HEFCE monitoring for the NSP will conclude in January 2016 with the final end-of-year monitoring return for 2014-15. However, institutions funding NSP recipients in subsequent years are asked to honour their commitments and should continue to fund NSP students for subsequent years as outlined in their original funding agreements. In order to reduce burden for institutions, HEFCE will not request in-year monitoring returns for the 2014-15 academic year.

Timetable for NSP monitoring returns

Year of NSP	In-year monitoring submission	End-of-year monitoring submission
2012-13	January 2013 (completed)	January 2014 (completed)
2013-14	January 2014 (completed)	January 2015
2014-15	Not required	January 2016

Getting started

Do you need to complete a monitoring return?

19. All higher education institutions (HEIs) and further education colleges (FECs) that had an access agreement **and** NSP funding in 2013-14 must follow this guidance and complete a **full** monitoring return.

20. If your institution did not have an access agreement for 2013-14 but had more than 100 full-time equivalent (FTE) directly HEFCE-funded student numbers and/or received an NSP allocation, you need only complete **some** sections of the monitoring return. HEFCE will contact you separately to advise about this.

Where are the monitoring return tables and how do I fill them in?

21. The tables for you to fill in will be available to download from the HEFCE extranet at <https://data.hefce.ac.uk> from mid-November. For instructions on accessing these tables, see paragraphs 197-200, 'How to submit your monitoring return'.

22. For your reference, PDF copies of the monitoring return tables are available to download alongside this document at www.offa.org.uk/publications.

23. Detailed guidance on filling in the return is given in this document. There are also prompts on the tables themselves.

24. Complete all relevant parts of your monitoring return, checking it carefully against this guidance. If in doubt, ask us for clarification (for contact details, see the front of this document).

How to complete your access agreement and Student Opportunity allocation monitoring return for 2013-14

Table 1

Full-time courses: fee limits and student numbers

Action

25. Please tell us the fees you charged to full-time students in 2013-14 and how many students were charged this fee, broken down by year of entry. Include all course fees, whether or not these are above or below the basic levels. Please record gross fees charged – that is, before any financial support, such as waivers, is taken into account. Do not account for any fee waivers that you gave to students because this will be recorded in Table 4.

26. Include all regulated home/EU full-time undergraduates studying at your institution in 2013-14, including initial teacher training (ITT) and undergraduate social work students – i.e. a ‘snapshot’ of your student population.

27. Where you have different fee levels for different courses, set these out at each different fee level – for example, by degree type where you have different charges for first degrees and sub-degrees, or by subject or faculty groupings.

28. Franchiser institutions are responsible for reporting on their franchised courses. For franchised courses, please select the name and UK Provider Reference Number (UKPRN) of the franchise partner from the drop-down list, or alternatively please type the UKPRN of the provider. If you are an FEC that has courses franchised from an HEI, do not include these courses in your return as these will be recorded in the HEI’s return.

Explanatory notes for Table 1

29. The ‘fee income above the basic fee per student’ column in Table 1 is calculated for you automatically when you enter fee levels, and is equal to the higher fee charged minus the basic fee (£6,000 in 2013-14 for new system students and £1,380 for old system students). For example, if you charged the maximum fee of £9,000 for new system students in 2013-14, the ‘fee income above the basic fee per student’ is £3,000 (£9,000-£6,000). Table 2 provides totals for the number of full-time students and fee income above the basic fee, using the information you have recorded in Table 1.

30. There were lower fee limits for: students on sandwich courses; courses provided in conjunction with an overseas institution; and others on the final academic year of a course, where their academic year is less than 15 weeks’ attendance. For old system students on these courses, the maximum fee in 2013-14 was £1,725 and the basic fee was £680. For new system students on these courses, the maximum fee in 2013-14 was £4,500 and the basic fee was £3,000².

31. The following should **not** be recorded in Table 1:

- fee income from courses and persons **not** covered under the Higher Education Act 2004, such as students not eligible for student support on the basis that they are eligible to apply for a healthcare bursary
- students studying a course which leads to a qualification equivalent to or lower than one they already hold
- students who were no longer studying in 2013-14
- students studying part-time.

² See The Student Fees (Amounts) (England) Regulations 2004 SI2004/1932, Regulation 5 (a), (b), and (d).

32. Table 1 represents a 'snapshot' of the students still paying a fee in the 2013-14 academic year, so should not normally include large numbers of students on courses which started before 2011-12 (unless you have substantial numbers on four- or five-year courses). Where students have not completed their courses and not paid full fees, please use Table 2b to record any negative adjustments to fee income above the basic level.

Table 2

Student numbers and fee income

Action

33. In Table 2a, please tell us the number of fee-regulated part-time students you had at your institution in 2013-14, and how many of these students were charged a fee above the basic rate of £4,500.

34. In Table 2b, please tell us the amount of higher fee income received from part-time students who were charged over the basic fee in 2013-14. For example, if a student paid £5,000 in 2013-14, the higher fee income is £500 (i.e. £5,000-£4,500).

35. Where the formulas in Table 1 mean that the figures provided in Table 2b are not an accurate reflection of your total higher fee income – for example, where some of your students have withdrawn from their courses or intercalated and not paid the full fee – you should make any negative adjustments to higher fee income in Table 2b. You should also briefly explain this adjustment in the commentary box in Table 2c. For example, where a student paying the maximum fee of £9,000 withdrew and paid fees of £8,000, you would include them in your student count in Table 1 but also record a negative adjustment in Table 2b of £1,000.

36. Where students withdrew and paid fees below the basic rate (e.g. new system full-time students paying fees below £6,000 in 2013-14) do not record these students in Table 1 or Table 2b.

37. In Table 2c, please select a statement which describes whether the total number of students (full- and part-time) charged above the basic fee has substantially changed from the 2013-14 revised predictions made in your 2014-15 access agreement resource plan. Where the number of students charged above the basic fee is more than 20 per cent above or below your predictions, please provide an explanation in the commentary box.

Explanatory notes for Table 2

38. Most of the information in Table 2 is populated automatically using the information you have recorded in Table 1.

39. Fees for the following students are not regulated, and should not be included:

- pre-2012 part-time students
- students studying at an intensity of less than 25 per cent FTE
- students studying a course which leads to a qualification equivalent or lower than one they already hold.

40. If you have provided fee waivers to students, please record this expenditure in Table 4. Do not use the negative adjustments in Table 2c to account for fee waivers.

Table 3

WP activity expenditure

Action

41. In Table 3a, please tell us about your total institutional expenditure on access, student success and progression activity in 2013-14 from all funding sources.

42. Do not include your institutional expenditure on financial support; you should tell us about this in Table 4.

43. Please also indicate how much of your access, student success and progression

activity expenditure was funded from your access agreement and from the HEFCE Student Opportunity allocation in 2013-14. The OFFA-countable totals for access, student success and progression will be used to calculate your overall access agreement expenditure in Table 5a and OFFA will compare the total stated here against the 2013-14 revised predictions made in your 2014-15 access agreement resource plan.

44. In Table 3b, please report on all expenditure on WP activity that was delivered collaboratively. By collaborative activity, we do not just mean collaboration between providers of higher education. We would normally expect collaborative activity to include many stakeholders rather than be between a single HEI and schools, colleges or other stakeholders receiving outreach, but collaboration could be formed in a number of ways, for example between one HEI and several FECs, other higher education providers, employers, third sector organisations, schools, colleges, training providers, local authorities and so on.

Explanatory notes for Table 3a

45. The expenditure you report on OFFA-countable access, student success, and progression should only relate to funds committed from higher fee income and other new and additional (post-2006) sources of funding. It should relate to WP activities that started after the introduction of variable fees in 2006 ('additional' activities), or a continuation of activities where previous funding may have been reduced or discontinued. This may include relevant staffing and overhead costs.

46. If your access agreement did not include a commitment to spend part of your higher fee income on WP activity, but additional expenditure has been made, you should report on this.

47. Table 3a asks you to report on total expenditure on WP in 2013-14 by category. Using these categories enables us to collect consistent

information across the sector to assess and understand the areas in which investment in WP is being made, across the three stages of the student lifecycle (access, student success, and progression). Against each category, report expenditure from all funding sources. Of the total expenditure, identify the amount of OFFA-countable access agreement spend (if applicable) and HEFCE Student Opportunity allocation used to support your total expenditure on each activity.

48. We are aware that access, student success and progression are embedded in the core activities of many institutions, so it may be difficult to disaggregate WP expenditure against the categories and apportion spend against your access agreement and the Student Opportunity allocation. We appreciate that you may need to use estimates; if you do so, please ensure they are as accurate as possible.

49. You should aggregate your WP activities at an appropriate level, depending on the information available and the degree of reliability with which you can assign expenditure to each area.

50. While most institutions will be undertaking activity covering all of the categories, we understand that some institutions, in particular smaller ones, may not carry out work that falls under every category.

51. Examples of activities that would belong in each category include (but are not limited to):

Access activity

a. **Outreach work with schools and/or young people**

Mentoring programmes with schools/young people; summer schools, campus visits, taster days and masterclasses; compact programmes and progression agreements with schools/colleges; formal agreements with/sponsorship of schools/academies/colleges; work with looked-after children/care leavers.

b. **Outreach work with communities/adults**

Taster days/visits for adults; community projects; progression agreements aimed at adults progressing from further education; work with employers.

c. **Outreach work with disabled students**

Mentoring programmes with disabled students; summer schools, campus visits, taster days and masterclasses; compact programmes and progression agreements aimed at disabled students progressing from further education.

d. **WP staffing and administration (outreach activity)**

Staffing costs for WP units that cannot be allocated to directly delivering an outreach activity, such as monitoring costs; partnership support costs in relation to outreach activities.

Student success activity

a. **Support for current students (academic and pastoral)**

Activity to improve retention and equality of outcomes for different groups; induction and transition programmes; provision of study skills; student services expenditure on WP target groups (e.g. financial or mental health advisers); peer mentoring programmes; developing inclusive curricula and learning resources.

b. **Support for disabled students**

Provision of advice and support to disabled students; developing accessible learning resources and inclusive learning and teaching environments.

c. **WP staffing and administration (student success activity)**

Staffing costs for WP units that cannot be allocated to directly delivering a student success activity, such as monitoring costs; partnership support costs in relation to student success activities.

Progression activity

a. **Support for progression from higher education into employment or postgraduate study**

Support with internships for students from WP target groups; mentoring programmes designed to facilitate entry into employment or postgraduate study.

b. **Support for progression of disabled students**

Provision of advice and support to help disabled students into employment or postgraduate study.

c. **WP staffing and administration (progression activity)**

Staffing costs for WP units that cannot be allocated to directly delivering progression activity, such as monitoring costs; partnership support costs in relation to progression activities.

52. Examples of expenditure under 'WP staffing and administration' include (but are not limited to):

- non-staffing costs of running central WP units/departments
- staff development for staff in such units/departments
- costs related to supporting collaborative partnerships
- costs of evaluation and monitoring activity.

53. Where possible, record expenditure on staff working directly on a particular access, student success, or progression activity against the appropriate category. You should only record expenditure under WP staffing and administration where the activity cannot be allocated to other categories.

54. This may mean that costs for some members of staff are split between different categories, where some but not all of their work involves directly delivering particular activities. In these circumstances, please make a judgement of the percentage of staff time allocated to activities.

55. We would normally expect all institutions to report expenditure to enhance provision for disabled students. If this work is delivered separately from other WP work in your institution, in terms of staffing and infrastructure, please collect the relevant information for this monitoring return. This will enable us to gain a full picture of all WP expenditure.

56. If you have undertaken activities that could fall under more than one of the pre-determined

categories (e.g. an outreach programme that targets both young people and adults), please make a judgement on which category is most appropriate and ensure that the activity is consistently placed under this category in future monitoring returns. The activity must not be double-counted.

57. The expenditure provided in Table 3a will be used to populate the OFFA financial outcomes summary in Table 5a. We will report on progress against these commitments in our monitoring outcomes report.

Table 4

Expenditure on financial support

Actions

58. Please see below for individual guidance on Tables 4a-g.

Explanatory notes for Table 4

59. The data you provide in this table will help us to monitor that you have met your commitments to individual students.

60. We will publish the number of 'OFFA-countable' beneficiaries at individual institutions in our monitoring outcomes report, alongside the proportion of higher fee-paying students this number represents. It is therefore important to base your estimates on a reasonable rationale. OFFA may need to contact you if a rationale is not provided or is unclear. We may indicate in the monitoring outcomes report where figures are based on estimates rather than known.

We will give you data to help you complete Table 4

61. As in previous years, we will send you Student Loans Company (SLC) income distribution data for your institution to help you complete Table 4. This data will be available via the HEFCE extranet from mid-November. This will set out the numbers/proportions of old and new system students (UK-domiciled) at your institution who applied for state finance in 2013-14, broken down by household

income bands as set out in paragraph 65 for new system students and paragraphs 80-82 for old system students.

62. If your institution subscribes to the full administrative service offered by the Higher Education Bursary and Scholarship Scheme (HEBSS), we will also tell you how many bursary holders your institution has paid through HEBSS, and your overall HEBSS expenditure. Again, this will be broken down by household income bands.

Table 4a

Expenditure on financial support for new system students from under-represented groups

Actions

63. Please state your actual expenditure between 1 August 2013 and 31 July 2014 on financial support for new system students from the under-represented groups listed in the glossary at the back of this guidance. Include all NSP expenditure (Government and institutional contributions).

64. Record your expenditure by the following types:

- i. Bursaries, scholarships and 'in-kind' support (for example, discounts on accommodation or other institutional services such as providing laptops for students).
- ii. Fee waivers (including free/discounted foundation years).

65. Split your expenditure into the student categories listed in the return, and only record expenditure on financial support for these students:

- i. Students in receipt of full state support (those with a residual household income of up to £25,000).
- ii. Other students in receipt of partial state support – in 2013-14 this was students with residual household incomes up to £42,611.

- iii. Students from other under-represented groups, i.e. where either:
- household income is unknown and you can't make estimates, or
 - household income is above £42,611.

66. Please also state how much of your Government NSP allocation was spent on financial support in 2013-14, for full-time and part-time students. Record **only the Government NSP expenditure**, not what your allocation was, and do not include spending from the match funding provided by your institution. Please cross-refer to Table 14 to ensure that the information provided is consistent.

Explanatory notes for Table 4a

67. Wherever possible, please record financial support expenditure by the income group of the beneficiary, rather than as 'students from other under-represented groups'.

68. Where figures are based on estimates, declare this in your monitoring return and briefly explain your calculations.

69. Please record expenditure as follows:

- Where you know the household income of the beneficiary – whether it relates to a means-tested payment or a non-means tested payment – you should allocate expenditure to the relevant income bracket.
- If you do not know the beneficiary's household income; if your institution provides financial support awarded on other measures of under-representation that are countable by OFFA; or if you award financial support regardless of a student's income, you may still be able to calculate estimated expenditure. Use the SLC income distribution data to work out the proportion of students who are likely to fall into each income group. For example, if you award financial support to students who are care leavers, you may not have information on household income, but you may still be able to

estimate expenditure for each income group. You may need to apply a weighting if your experience indicates that beneficiaries are unlikely to be evenly distributed across income groups.

- Expenditure should only be listed under 'students from other under-represented groups' where you know that the students are from an under-represented group but household income is unknown and you cannot make reasonably confident estimates. There should be very few entries in this category: in 2012-13, only around 1 per cent of students who received financial support were recorded in this category.

70. The following areas should not be included in Table 4a:

- expenditure on financial support for students above a household income of £42,611 who are not from an under-represented group
- any payments reported to OFFA in previous monitoring returns – you should only count expenditure in the year in which the benefit was received
- expenditure that is not awarded directly to students with a financial benefit, for example expenditure on the overall improvement of services for students and broader retention measures
- ring-fenced funding received from the Government (e.g. Access to Learning Fund awards)
- expenditure on historical bursaries and scholarships where funding was established before the introduction of variable fees and has continued and which are not funded through higher fee income or institution's own fundraising
- expenditure to students not covered under the Higher Education Act 2004, such as students not eligible for student support on the basis that they are eligible to apply for a healthcare bursary.

71. Franchiser institutions should include financial support for students on their franchised courses.

Table 4b

Number of new system students receiving financial support, by under-represented group

Actions

72. Please record the number of new system students from the under-represented groups set out in the glossary at the end of this guidance who received financial support in 2013-14.

73. In the same way that you recorded expenditure, allocate students to household income brackets, using estimates where necessary in the same way as set out in paragraph 69.

74. In some cases, a student's circumstances may have changed after they received an award: e.g. their residual household income may have been reassessed during the academic year, or they did not complete a full year or programme of study. You should include these students in your return based on their household income at the time they were originally assessed for financial support.

75. Please report the number of beneficiaries rather than the number of awards, so if you give a student more than one award, you should only count them once.

76. Where a student receives an award based on income plus a non income-related award, you should record them only once based on their income-related award.

Table 4c

Student choice expenditure for 2013-14 entrants

Action

77. Please indicate where you gave 2013-14 entrants a choice about the type of financial support that they received.

Explanatory notes for Table 4c

78. A number of institutions offer students a choice about the form in which they receive financial support, particularly through the NSP – for example, between a fee waiver and a cash bursary. OFFA may contact you to find out more about the choices that students made.

Table 4d

Expenditure on financial support for old system students

Action

79. Please state your actual expenditure between 1 August 2013 and 31 July 2014 on financial support for full-time, old system students from the under-represented groups listed in the glossary at the back of this guidance.

80. Split your expenditure into the student categories listed in the return, and only record expenditure on financial support for these students:

- students in receipt of full state support
- other students with residual household incomes up to £50,706
- students from other under-represented groups, i.e. where either:
 - household income is unknown and you can't make estimates, or
 - household income is above £50,706.

81. The income threshold for full state support varies according to year of entry, so you should provide information as follows:

- for entrants in 2006-07 and 2007-08, those with a residual household income in 2013-14 of up to £18,360
- for entrants from 2008-09 onwards, those with a residual household income in 2013-14 of up to £25,000.

82. The threshold for students in receipt of partial state support also varies according to year of entry. However, for this return, please report on residual household income up to the 2013-14 threshold of £50,706. This will enable us to make comparisons with expenditure in previous years. Please therefore provide information on financial support as follows:

- for entrants in 2006-07 and 2007-08, those with a residual household income in 2013-14 of between £18,361 and £50,706
- for entrants from 2008-09 onwards, those with a residual household income in 2013-14 of between £25,001 and £50,706.

83. When recording expenditure on old system students, please follow the same guidance as for new system students as described in paragraphs 67-71.

Table 4e

Number of old system students receiving financial support, by under-represented group

Action

84. Please indicate how many of your full-time old system students received financial support in 2013-14, disaggregated by year of entry.

85. Please follow the guidance in paragraphs 72-76 as it applies to how you should record the number of new and old system students in receipt of financial support.

Tables 4f and 4g

Action

86. These tables calculate automatically, using the data you've provided in Tables 4d and 4e. They show your expenditure on financial support for old system students, as a proportion of higher fee income and the proportion of your old system students in receipt of financial support. Please check that the figures shown are in line with your expectations.

Table 5

Access agreement expenditure summary

Action

89. Tables 5a, c and d populate automatically, based on the data you've provided in Tables 1-4. They show the institutional-level data that we will include in our monitoring outcomes report for institutions with access agreements. Please check that the figures shown are in line with your expectations.

90. In Table 5b, please record whether or not your expenditure on access and student success/progression is in line with your prediction for 2013-14 from your 2014-15 access agreement. If it is more than 10 per cent below or 20 per cent above your prediction, explain the broad reasons for this difference in the text boxes provided (e.g. you should provide this explanation if your prediction was £100,000 and your actual spend was lower than £90,000 or higher than £120,000). Some examples of reasons might be that your higher fee income was substantially less than forecast, or you met your access agreement aims at a lower cost.

Table 6

Overall investment in widening participation activity and financial support

Action

91. Table 6 populates automatically, based on the data you have provided in previous tables. It summarises your institutional-level expenditure on WP activity and financial support, including through OFFA-approved access agreements and the HEFCE Student Opportunity allocation. Please check that the figures shown are in line with your expectations.

Table 7

HESA performance indicators

Action

92. For HEIs, Table 7 will be pre-populated with your institution's HESA performance indicator (PI) data³. HEIs may wish to check these figures.

93. No trend data is currently available for FECs⁴, so there will be no data in the tables. No action is required of FECs.

Explanatory notes for Table 7 (for HEIs only)

94. For HEIs, we have provided data from the following HESA tables to give a context for your institution's overall performance on access and student success:

- HESA Table 1b – the percentage of young, full-time undergraduate entrants from state school, from National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC) 4-7 and from low participation neighbourhoods (LPNs)
- HESA Table 2b – the percentage of all part-time entrants from low participation neighbourhoods
- HESA Table 3a – the percentage of all entrants no longer in higher education following year of entry
- HESA Table 3b – the percentage of entrants from low participation neighbourhoods no longer in higher education following year of entry.

³ More information about the HESA PIs is available at www.hesa.ac.uk/pi.

⁴ FECs may wish to see 'Higher education indicators for further education colleges: Overview of trends for the widening participation, non-continuation and employment indicators' (HEFCE 2013/18) which shows the profile of students from low participation neighbourhoods for young full-time higher education entrants registered at FECs in 2010-11 and the non-continuation indicators for FECs in 2009-10. This publication is available at www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/.

95. Please note that the 2013-14 data for entrants and 2012-13 data for non-continuation is not given, because it will not have been finalised before the submission deadline for the returns.

96. For HEIs, we have included the location-adjusted benchmark, and a '+' or '-' marker to establish how well an HEI is performing in the higher education sector. This is the same marker that is used in the published HESA PI tables.

Table 8

Access agreement milestones and targets

Action

97. Please report on progress against the targets and milestones set out in your 2013-14 access agreement, or targets that have been added to subsequent agreements:

- statistical milestones/targets relating to your applicants, entrants or student body – for example, those based on HESA, UCAS or similar data that you use to measure the outcomes of your WP work
- other milestones and targets, e.g. those relating to outreach activity, lifelong learning, or institutional management and mission. Where there are a number that are similar, you may amalgamate these for your monitoring return.

Alongside applicant and entrant targets, we encourage you to provide targets around your outreach work (including collaborative outreach work where appropriate) or other initiatives to illustrate your progress towards increasing access. These should be measurable outcomes-based targets and should focus on the number of pupils reached by a particular activity/programme, or number of schools worked with, and what the outcomes were, rather than simply recording the nature/number of activities.

98. For each of your statistical milestones/targets, you should:

- provide milestone figures showing your progress against the target for 2013-14. If it is not possible to record a figure for 2013-14 (e.g. if HESA PI data has not yet been published), please include performance data prior to this wherever possible, e.g. for academic years 2009-10 to 2012-13
- indicate if it is a collaborative target or not. By collaborative targets, we do not just mean those shared between providers of higher education. We would normally expect collaborative targets to include many stakeholders rather than be between a single HEI and schools, colleges or other stakeholders receiving outreach, but collaboration could be formed in a number of ways, for example between one HEI and several FECs, other higher education providers, employers, third sector organisations, schools, colleges, training providers, local authorities and so on
- select a statement that clearly reflects your actual progress against each milestone, from the available classifications:
 - i. Overall target met/exceeded (please only use this category where you **have reached the target year** and have met or exceeded the target)
 - ii. Yearly milestone met – on course to meet overall target (please use this category if the target relates to a future year and you are on course to meet the target)
 - iii. Progress made – but less than anticipated
 - iv. No progress made against baseline data to date

- v. Long term trend shows negative performance
- vi. N/A (use this category for prefilled targets that are not applicable).

99. For your convenience, Tables 8a and b are pre-populated with the milestones and targets you reported against in last year's monitoring return, including your yearly milestones data. Where the prefilled targets have been revised, select 'N/A' and enter the revised targets on a separate row of the table. Do not delete any of the prefilled data in order to enter a revised target and do not add a revised target over the top of a removed target, even if it is similar.

100. If you added new targets to your 2013-14 access agreement, please add these on separate rows of the table and ensure all columns are completed for these new targets. Do not delete any of the prefilled data in order to remove a target and do not add a new target over the top of a removed target, even if it is similar.

101. If you have updated your 2013-14 access agreement milestones and targets in a more recent access agreement, you may wish to refer to this in Table 8. However, you must still report on the milestones and targets relating to your 2013-14 access agreement.

Explanatory notes for Table 8

102. This is a self-assessment of your institution's progress against its targets and milestones. The classifications provided should clearly reflect your actual position for each target.

103. OFFA recognises that you might meet all your financial commitments and access plans under your access agreement but not achieve your targets and milestones. When it is analysing your progress, OFFA will consider whether you have met your commitments and if you have made progress towards your milestones. It will also take into

account any contextual information you provide in Table 9, as well as the position of the higher education sector as a whole.

104. OFFA asks for yearly milestones back to 2009-10 because it is interested in long-term trends. However, we recognise that you may not be able to populate all of these if you do not have data for those years.

Table 9

Commentary on progress against access agreement targets and milestones

Action

105. Please use Table 9 to:

- comment on your overall progress made against the targets
- set your progress in some context, for example to explain how it may have been influenced by external factors
- comment on the key factors that have led to successful outcomes
- provide any explanations where you have not met targets or where progress has been less than anticipated, and where appropriate, set out the action you have taken to improve in these areas.

Please limit this commentary to a maximum of 1,000 words.

106. OFFA may wish to contact you to gain a better understanding of the situation if the information you give us is not sufficient to allow us to gauge your progress.

107. As in previous years, OFFA will publish your commentary on its website, alongside the data in Tables 7 and 8. You can see what was published last year at www.offa.org.uk/institutions-self-assessments-and-commentaries.

Table 10

Evaluation, evidence and impact

Action

108. Please use Table 10 to provide a brief commentary on your evaluation activities for 2013-14, including:

- an assessment of your approach to evaluating your access, student success and progression activities and programmes over the past year (Table 10a)
- an assessment of the types of activities that formed your approach to evaluation in 2013-14, using Kirkpatrick's evaluation model (Table 10b)
- your key findings from the evaluation of your activities and programmes (Table 10c)
- an assessment of your approach to evaluating the financial support you offered over the past year and your key findings from the evaluation of your financial support (Table 10d).

Explanatory notes for Table 10

109. In your access agreement for 2013-14, you included an overview of how you would evaluate the measures in your agreement, following OFFA's guidance that well-designed evaluation is crucial to ensuring long-term value for money. Table 10 provides you with an opportunity to set out the work you have done in this area.

110. We are keen to understand the types of activities that form your approach to evaluation. We are interested in hearing about both your successes and any challenges that you faced in 2013-14, and encourage you to reflect on your evaluative work and improvements that could be/are being made.

111. We understand that different institutions' evaluation strategies will be at different stages. The information provided in Table 10a will help us to understand more about this at a sector-wide level, and how we can offer further support.

112. The information you provide in Table 10b will give us a clearer picture of the levels of impact institutions are gaining from their evaluation work. We use Kirkpatrick's evaluation model as a framework for this. For more information on Kirkpatrick's model, and other useful information on evaluation methods, we recommend the series of toolkits available from www.heacademy.ac.uk/retention-archives. They draw on the best resources created by Aimhigher and the Lifelong Learning Networks and re-contextualise the materials for the current climate. The toolkits were commissioned by HEFCE and created by the International Centre for Guidance Studies at the University of Derby and The Progression Trust.

113. Table 10c provides an opportunity for you to highlight your best examples of evaluation of access agreement activities over the past year, across the student lifecycle, and to set out the key findings. We are keen to understand more at a sector level how institutions are using evaluation to help meet their WP objectives. We are particularly interested in:

- what methodologies you used. Your description does not need to be detailed; however, we hope to use some of the examples institutions provide to identify and disseminate examples of good practice, and to inform our policy in this area
- your key findings
- how the outcomes of your evaluation have helped you meet your WP aims and objectives, develop your institutional approaches and make improvements. For example, they might:
 - demonstrate the most effective activities and thus inform your priorities and resourcing, e.g. extending one scheme in preference to another
 - help you to improve activities and initiatives to better meet your objectives, e.g. by extending an initiative to a wider target group
 - help you to ensure that activities are appropriately targeted for the greatest impact and value for money.

114. You might also point to instances where you have decided to undertake a particular activity as a result of evidence from evaluation collected elsewhere or at a national level.

115. When discussing findings from evaluation, please do not extensively describe the activities, numbers of events and/or numbers of participants; rather, concentrate on evidence of **impact** from the work.

116. When reporting on findings from evaluation, please concentrate on providing evidence of long-term impact, such as:

- the improved attainment of participants
- evidence of long-term impact on attitudes and aspirations
- the tracking of participants to higher education.

For example, you might include evidence of the impact on learner attitude of outreach programmes in partner schools; evidence of progression of learners from participation in outreach programmes to enrolment at an institution; evidence of how retention rates for students from disadvantaged backgrounds compare to rates for all students at an institution, or how retention rates for students taking part in a particular scheme compare to rates for the student body as a whole.

117. Please note that although evidence from pre- and post-event questionnaires is essential for institutions in planning, its use is more limited in demonstrating impact, particularly when used for one-off events.

118. If you do not yet have such evidence of longer-term impact, you should briefly discuss how you plan to put in place processes to collect it in future.

119. We understand that institutions undertake work that does not have a direct impact on recruitment to their own institution. We would not wish institutions to base their work only on that which can be measured most easily, and expect you will use a range of evaluative methods, both qualitative and quantitative, to demonstrate the impact of such work. Evidence might include improved academic attainment in partner schools, or increased applications to higher education in general from such schools.

120. Some of the strongest evidence of impact presented in the previous two monitoring returns came from nationally funded programmes or research by external partners, often involving collaboration between institutions. We encourage institutions to include any evidence resulting from collaborative work.

121. In Table 10d, we are keen to understand more about the impact of the financial support you have provided. A very high proportion of the sector's access agreement expenditure is currently spent on financial support, so OFFA is focusing on analysing, understanding and sharing evidence around its impact. Your monitoring return will contribute to the evidence base in this area. When answering this question, we are particularly interested in your methodology, the findings of your evaluation and how your findings are impacting on your policies and practice, as discussed in paragraph 113.

Evaluation in FECs

122. We understand that for many FECs, WP is based more on internal progression than on specific activities, so they may place less emphasis on evaluation. However, we are interested in understanding the specific contribution that FECs make to WP and how you most successfully support internal progression; we would like any information or evidence that you have on the impact of your WP work, including from the perspective of internal progression. Other appropriate evidence of the impact of your work could include, for example, progression and retention rates for groups of students who have received extra support for the transition from further to higher education, or the improvement in progression and retention rates over time after such support has been put in place. You should also include brief details of plans to put into place more extensive evaluation processes, where these are not currently in place.

Table 11

Equality and diversity activity

Action

123. Please provide a brief commentary (no more than 500 words) on your equality and diversity activities for 2013-14, including:

- a statement which describes the extent to which you evaluated the impact of the activities and programmes in your access agreement by protected characteristics in 2013-14
- a description of how you have assessed the impact of your access, student success and progression work on groups of students with protected characteristics in 2013-14, and your key findings from this evaluation across the student lifecycle.

Explanatory notes for Table 11

124. We are interested to understand whether you have evaluated the impact of your activities and programmes in your access agreement by protected characteristics in 2013-14, and if so how. For example, this might include work to identify where there may be differences in outcomes, and where some people with particular protected characteristics may benefit from a different approach.

125. Table 11 provides an opportunity for you to set out the key findings of your evaluation by protected characteristics across the student lifecycle. This will help to inform our policy and enable us to highlight good practice in this area.

126. We are particularly interested in:

- your methodology
- your key findings, across different stages of the student lifecycle
- how your findings will/have informed your institutional approaches.

To assist us in our analysis of your responses, please use subheadings where appropriate, for example, to identify different stages of the student lifecycle.

How to complete the NSP final monitoring return for 2013-14

127. If you received an NSP allocation in 2013-14, you should submit information for your institution on:

- institutional criteria used to select NSP recipients, in addition to the national criteria
- individualised data on NSP recipients
- final NSP spending against in-year monitoring predictions
- the breakdown of NSP expenditure
- how many 2013-14 entrants received awards
- delivery of your NSP awards.

128. You are asked to fill in all the yellow-shaded cells. The white cells either are pre-filled with data from your 2013-14 in-year NSP monitoring return, or will calculate automatically from the information you provide.

129. Before uploading your return, you should check the validation sheet to ensure that the validation checks have been passed and the tables have been completed correctly. If you have a legitimate reason for failing validation, **give an explanation in the box provided at the bottom of the validation page.**

130. It is possible for your workbook to be verified with some validation errors, provided you have recorded a reason. This may necessitate further discussions with institutions.

131. You will also need to check your return after submission, to ensure that the validation checks made during the upload process have been passed.

132. You will not be able to upload the NSP section of the monitoring return before mid-December 2014. This is because the 2013-14 end-of-year individualised return is linked to HESA and ILR data, which HEFCE needs to process before this submission. HEFCE will contact institutions to inform them when the monitoring return can be uploaded. The deadline for submission is noon on **Wednesday 14 January 2015.**

Table 12

National and institutional criteria

Action

133. From the list provided in Table 12, choose the criteria that your institution has used to select eligible students for an NSP award, in addition to the national criteria. You can do this by selecting 'Yes' in Column C ('Did you use this criterion at your institution? If not, please leave blank'). These criteria groupings have been pre-determined based on what you told us in the 2013-14 in-year monitoring. For the description of criteria groups see Annex A.

134. Please state whether each criterion was mandatory (Column D) by selecting either 'Yes' or 'No' from the drop-down list in each cell.

135. If your institution prioritised one criterion over another, state the order in which they were ranked using the drop-down menu in Column E (with number 1 the most important).

136. If a criterion you have used is not listed, use the last three rows of the table (30-32) to enter such criteria. Please ensure your criteria do not fall into one of the listed categories before using this option (refer to Annex A).

137. If you would like to provide a description of these criteria, complete Column F.

Explanatory notes for Table 12

138. The information in Table 12 will provide us with a comprehensive view of the type of criteria used to select students under the programme.

139. If you are only using the national criteria to select NSP recipients, you do not need to complete this table.

140. We are keen to understand how institutions used their chosen criteria, so please only select

criteria that you used when deciding allocations. For example, if a student awarded the NSP receives other benefits, but this was not on your list of institutional criteria, do not select 'Other benefits' as one of the criteria used. Conversely, if you were using 'Other benefits' as one of your criteria, but not 'Carer', a student who was in receipt of the Adult Dependent Grant should be reported as meeting the criterion 'Other benefits' rather than that of 'Carer'.

141. The national eligibility criteria threshold for household income is £25,000. Do not select this criterion if you used the national threshold for your NSP scheme. Only select this criterion if your eligibility threshold fell below £25,000, and then select one of the options in Column F to provide further information.

Table 13

Individualised data

Action

142. **Please ensure that this table is completed before subsequent tables in the workbook, as data from this table will automatically populate further tables in the return.**

143. Please state whether all students met national and mandatory institutional criteria by answering the two questions at the top of the table. HEFCE will need to discuss with institutions who answer 'no' to these questions the nature and reasons for any variation.

144. Please provide individualised data for students who received an award, ensuring that all mandatory yellow cells in the table are completed. This table should only include the individualised data for those students who entered higher education and began their study in 2013-14.

Column A

145. In Column A you may provide an institutional student identifier for your own reference, although this is optional.

Column B

146. Higher education institutions should provide the HESA Unique Student Identifier (HUSID) for each student in Column B. Further education colleges should provide the Learner Reference Number (LRN). This will allow us to link the information with HESA and ILR data. Please see paragraphs 153-156 for more information.

Column C

147. Please record the NUMHUS for the course for which a student received an NSP award in Column C. This field complements the HUSID/LRN field to identify the separate courses that individuals take. The NUMHUS requested for this return is the same as that returned in your HESA student record or ILR. Please see paragraphs 157-158 for more information.

Column D

148. Please enter the academic year of entry for each student in Column D.

Columns E to G

149. Please specify the amount of the award that was given from the government allocation in Column E, from your institution's minimum matched funding in Column F and from any additional matched funding in Column G. This should not include matched funding delivered in subsequent years (2014-15 onwards).

Columns H - K

150. Please specify how an award was allocated to each student, by entering the amount spent in each of the categories:

- fee waivers or discounts (Column H)
- discounted accommodation or other similar institutional services (Column I)
- financial scholarships or bursaries (Column J)
- free or discounted foundation year (Column K).

If you did not make an award against a category, enter a zero in the relevant cell.

Columns L to AQ

151. In the last part of the table (Columns L to AQ), indicate which institutional criteria each student met. This part of the table includes all the criteria groups. However, only the institutional criteria which you

marked as used but not mandatory in Table 12 will be highlighted and open for modification.

Explanatory notes for Table 13

152. The data from this table will be linked with your HESA and ILR data return, which will allow us to analyse the characteristics of NSP recipients and compare them with the rest of the higher education population. It also enables us to gain assurance that public funds are being correctly allocated to eligible students.

HUSID and ILR

For higher education institutions

153. The HUSID number requested for the monitoring return is the same as that returned to HESA. All undergraduate students entering institutions via UCAS will already have been assigned a HUSID on entry by UCAS. If a student is unable to recall their HUSID number, your registrar or Management Information System team should be able to provide you with this information. HESA also operates a HUSID look-up service which you can use to obtain the number. The monitoring return will contain a validation check to ensure that the HUSID is valid; HEFCE may also ask for an explanation where no match can be made between a student and the HESA student record.

154. More information on the student identifier is available from the HESA website at https://www.hesa.ac.uk/index.php?option=com_studrec&task=show_file&mnl=13051&href=a^_HUSID.html

For further education colleges

155. Please record the student's LRN. This is the unique student identifier used on the ILR that your institution returns to the Skills Funding Agency. Your registrar or Management Information System team should be able to provide you with this number. The LRN is a maximum of 12 digits long.

156. More information on the LRN is available on page 32 of the 2013-14 ILR specification on the Information Authority's website at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/283338/ILRSpecification2013_14v4_July2013__2_.pdf

157. Higher education institutions can find further information in the NUMHUS on the HESA website at https://www.hesa.ac.uk/index.php?option=com_studrec&task=show_file&mnl=13051&href=a^_NUMHUS.html

158. Further education colleges can find further information in the NUMHUS on page 143 of the 2013-14 ILR specification on the Information Authority's website at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/283338/ILRSpecification2013_14v4_July2013__2_.pdf

Table 14

Summary of allocation and funding spent

Action

159. If relevant, record any funds that were carried forward from underspending on the 2012-13 cohort in subsequent years. This includes any funds that were planned to be spent on the 2012-13 cohort in 2013-14 but were not, being subsequently used instead for the 2013-14 cohort. The total amount in this row (row 17 of the NSP_overview_1314 tab) should match the 'Funds to be reallocated to 2013-14 cohort' row in Table 20 (row 17 of the NSP_overview_1213 tab).

160. Please record how much funding you wish to carry over to use on the 2013-14 cohort in subsequent years. This should be broken down between the government allocation, the minimum required matched funding and any additional matched funding.

161. Please also indicate how much of the 2013-14 funding you would like to carry forward to the following year to spend on the 2014-15 cohort. You should provide details on the government allocation, the minimum required matched funding and any additional matched funding you wish to be carried over. The government allocation can be carried over up to a maximum of £50,000.

Explanatory notes for Table 14

162. Table 14 will automatically calculate the total spend and underspend for NSP 2013-14, as well as the amount to be reclaimed by HEFCE through grant adjustment (if applicable). If necessary, the grant adjustment will be processed in April 2015.

163. Table 14 is largely pre-populated with information from your institution's 2013-14 in-year NSP monitoring return and the individualised data you input in Table 13.

164. Figures for the funds you have spent in 2013-14 on the 2013-14 cohort, including the government allocation, minimum required matched funding and any additional matched funding, will be automatically recorded based on the information you have provided in Table 13 (individualised data).

165. If your institution has an access agreement with OFFA, you are permitted to redirect your additional matched funding underspend for the NSP to outreach and retention activities. If you intend to do this, please indicate in the table how much of your additional matched funding will be redirected in this way.

Table 15

Explanation of underspending

Action

166. If you report underspending from your government allocation for 2013-14, you should fill in Table 15 to describe the reason for this.

Explanatory notes for Table 15

Government underspending

167. Institutions should be aware of the possibility to roll forward up to £50,000 of government allocation into the next academic year to ensure the maximum opportunity for students to benefit from the programme. This will be the final opportunity to roll government allocation underspending over, as the scheme will cease at the end of the 2014-15 academic year. Institutions should therefore aim to

distribute their full government allocation in the year for which it is given.

Matched funding underspending

168. You may choose to spend the matched funding underspend either on 'topping up' existing awards for the 2013-14 cohort in subsequent years, or by providing additional funding for the 2014-15 cohort, or a combination of the two. Whichever option you choose should be in accordance with the government rules for the programme, your own institutional criteria and the information you have provided to students. You should also ensure that allocating the underspend in a particular way does not disadvantage students from one cohort compared with another.

169. There is more flexibility in how the additional matched funding underspend is used. It may be spent on the NSP (either topping up awards for the 2013-14 cohort, or further funding for the 2014-15 cohort), outreach and retention activity (OFFA monitored activity), or a combination of the two. If you do not have an access agreement with OFFA (because you charge less than £6,000 tuition fees), we expect you to spend all the additional matched funding you commit on the NSP.

Table 16

Breakdown of NSP expenditure

Action

170. Where the matched funding for the 2013-14 cohort is being delivered in subsequent years (2014-15 onwards), you should report this in column F, broken down across the menu of five options.

Explanatory notes for Table 16

171. The information you submit in Table 16 will help us understand how the sector has allocated the NSP.

172. The first two columns of white cells in Table 16 are pre-populated with your planned breakdown of the 2013-14 NSP allocation. This information is

taken from your 2013-14 in-year monitoring return.

173. Actual expenditure for 2013-14 will automatically be calculated from the information you provide in Table 13 (individualised data), broken down across the menu of four options for the combined government NSP allocation and institutional matched funding.

174. For the purposes of the 2013-14 in-year monitoring, institutions allowing their students to decide how they wanted the NSP to be delivered were asked to report this expenditure under the 'student choice' category. This was because the actual choices of the students were not yet known. The timing of the 2013-14 end-of-year monitoring allows us to establish the final position of this expenditure under the 'student choice' category. We will now expect you to report it according to how these funds were actually drawn down by students. However, you should continue to use the 'student choice' category for predicted expenditure for funding yet to be delivered in subsequent years.

Table 17

Number of 2013-14 entrants receiving awards

Action

175. Please provide the actual headcount of full-time and part-time students, and the FTE number of students, who received an award in 2013-14. If any students interrupted their studies during the academic year, record their FTE as if they had completed the year (for example a full-time student should be recorded as 1 FTE, even if they did not complete the year).

Explanatory notes for Table 17

176. In the 2013-14 in-year monitoring return, we asked you to provide the headcount and full-time equivalent (FTE) numbers of students who were predicted to receive NSP awards. We are now asking you to provide the actual headcount of full-time and part-time NSP recipients for the 2013-14 cohort.

177. The white cells in this table are pre-populated with planned figures from your 2013-14 in-year monitoring return.

Table 18

Delivery of your NSP awards

Action

178. Please indicate how you have delivered your 2013-14 NSP awards by selecting one of the predetermined categories from the drop-down menu in each yellow cell. An additional information box is available if you wish to provide further details on your delivery of awards (for instance, if you are delivering different schemes at two campuses).

Explanatory notes for Table 18

179. We have predetermined categories for each question, to provide comparable information about how the NSP is being delivered across the sector.

180. The white cells in this table are pre-populated with planned delivery information from your 2013-14 in-year monitoring return.

Table 19

Individualised data for the 2012-13 cohort

Action

181. **Please ensure that this table is completed before Table 20 in the workbook, as data from this table will automatically populate Table 20.**

182. Please provide individualised data for the 2012-13 entrants who received a subsequent year award in 2013-14, ensuring that all mandatory yellow cells in the table are completed.

183. Optionally, for your own records, you may provide an institutional student identifier in Column A.

184. Please provide the HUSID or LRN for each student in Column B. This will allow us to link the information with HESA and ILR data. (See paragraphs 153-156 for guidance on how to locate these numbers).

185. Please record the NUMHUS for the course for which a student received an NSP award in Column C. This field complements the HUSID/LRN field to identify the separate courses that individuals take. The NUMHUS requested for this return is the same as that returned in your HESA student record ILR. (Please see paragraphs 157-158 for guidance on how to locate these numbers).

186. Add the year of entry for each student in Column D.

187. Specify the amount of award that was given in 2013-14 in Column E.

188. Specify how an award was allocated to each student, by entering the amount spent in each of the categories:

- Fee waivers or discounts (Column F)
- Discounted accommodation or other similar institutional services (Column G)
- Financial scholarships or bursaries (Column H).

189. If you did not make an award against a category, enter a zero in that cell.

Explanatory notes for Table 19

190. For the first year, HEFCE is collecting data on expenditure in subsequent years relating to the previous (2012-13) cohort of students. If you have awarded payments of the NSP to 2012-13 entrants in 2013-14, fill in the tables contained within the tabs entitled 'NSP Individualised 2012-13' and 'NSP overview 2012-13' in your workbook (pink and yellow tables). If you only awarded the NSP to 2012-13 entrants in the first year (2012-13), you are not required to complete these tables.

Table 20

Summary of allocation and funding spent

Action

191. Please record the amount of funding planned to be spent on the 2012-13 cohort after the 2013-14 academic year. Provide details if you plan to re-allocate any of this funding to the 2013-14 and 2014-15 cohorts respectively.

Explanatory notes for Table 20

192. The white cells in this table are pre-populated with the planned spending from your 2012-13 end-of-year monitoring return, and the information provided in Table 19 of the individualised returns.

Table 21

Breakdown of NSP expenditure for subsequent years

Action

193. If there are 2012-13 cohort students who are continuing their studies after 2013-14 and will continue to receive the NSP in 2014-15 or beyond, record this information in Column E, broken down by the four options available.

Explanatory notes for Table 21

194. The white cells in Column C are pre-populated with planned subsequent year spending for the 2012-13 cohort. This information is taken from Table 14 of your 2012-13 end-of-year monitoring return.

195. Actual expenditure for 2013-14 will automatically be calculated from the information you provide in Table 19, broken down across the menu of three options for the combined government NSP allocation and institutional matched funding.

Table 22

Number of 2012-13 entrants receiving awards

Action

196. Please provide the actual headcount of full-time and part-time students, and the FTE number of 2012-13 entrants, who received a subsequent year award in 2013-14.

How to submit your return

Where to find your return

197. The tables for you to fill in will be available to download from the HEFCE extranet at <https://data.hefce.ac.uk> from mid-November. In the meantime, sample tables are available for information only alongside this document at www.offa.org.uk/publications.

198. In order to download the tables, you will need one or more 'group keys' (codes that ensure you access only the tables specific to your institution). OFFA and HEFCE will send your group keys to you directly in mid-November, once the tables are available to download.

199. At that time, we will also send step by step instructions on using the extranet. If you have any technical queries relating to the use of the extranet, please contact Adam Powell for OFFA queries (email: adam.powell@offa.org.uk, tel: 0117 931 7020) or Chris Nicholls for NSP/Student Opportunity queries (email: c.nicholls@hefce.ac.uk, tel: 0117 931 7278).

200. We will use the extranet to give you further information to help you complete your monitoring return (see paragraphs 61-62).

Assuring your monitoring return

201. Each completed part of this year's monitoring return must be approved by an appropriate senior manager before submission, to ensure that the information is validated independently by someone other than the person responsible for compiling the return. For example, approval could be received from your Vice-Chancellor/Principal, Deputy or Pro Vice-Chancellor or Finance Director. Please state who has approved this monitoring return in the final sheet of each workbook.

202. It is up to each institution to determine its own process for checking the accuracy of the information it provides. This could be through internal audit, a report to the head of the institution, a governors' group or a steering committee. All information is subject to audit (see paragraphs 215-216) and you should ensure that the way you validate your information meets your own internal audit requirements.

203. We do not require you to submit a signed paper copy.

Submitting your return

204. Submit your completed monitoring return via the HEFCE extranet <https://data.hefce.ac.uk> by noon on **Wednesday 14 January 2015**.

205. If you have any technical queries relating to the use of the HEFCE extranet please see paragraph 199.

Returning your monitoring templates on time

Your access agreement and Student Opportunity allocation monitoring return

206. Please note that it is a statutory obligation to report on progress with your access agreement and it is important to submit your return by the deadline. If your return is late we cannot guarantee that we will be able to include your data in the monitoring outcomes report. Providing accurate data to report on progress against your access agreement is a statutory requirement, and the Director of Fair Access to Higher Education can impose sanctions where these requirements have not been met.

207. If your access agreement monitoring return needs to be approved at a meeting of your governing body or other relevant committee after the deadline of 14 January 2015 you may submit a draft electronic copy of your monitoring return with a request for a limited extension to the deadline for your final version.

208. Tables 3a and 3b of this return will collect the monitoring information HEFCE needs and completion of these tables by the deadline date will fulfil your obligation for the receipt of Student Opportunity allocation under the Memorandum of assurance and accountability between HEFCE and institutions (formerly the Financial Memorandum).

Your NSP monitoring return

209. HEFCE requests a monitoring return from every participating institution, so that we and BIS can ensure that funds are being appropriately used, and so we can conduct sector-level analysis. This

information is reported to BIS. You should plan appropriately to ensure that any approvals from your governing body or a relevant committee are obtained before the deadline.

210. **It is a condition of NSP funding that institutions provide the requested information by the deadline date.** As set out in the Memorandum of assurance and accountability, HEFCE may withhold funding where an institution fails to meet the deadline for the 2013-14 end-of-year monitoring return.

What happens once you have submitted your form

How to tell your return has been submitted successfully

211. When you have successfully uploaded your return, you will see an automated message on the extranet confirming that your return has uploaded successfully.

We will collect and share some information centrally

212. In order to inform our monitoring, OFFA will ask the SLC for information on the number of students from lower-income backgrounds at each institution. We will also use sector data from HESA, UCAS and others to monitor progress across the sector and identify any emerging patterns over time.

213. OFFA and HEFCE will work together closely in assessing returns and, where relevant, may share information with other partners, such as BIS.

We may need to contact you for further information

214. We may need to ask you for further information about your return if, for example, some of the information or data:

- is unclear
- does not seem to make sense from our knowledge of your access agreement, Student Opportunity allocation, NSP allocation and institution
- is inconsistent with centrally collected data.

We may audit your monitoring return

215. OFFA reserves the right to audit the access agreement element of your monitoring return and how you are implementing your commitments. If, before taking this step, it identifies significant concerns with delivery or progress towards milestones, it will invite you to discuss any emerging issues and, where necessary, ask you to provide further information.

216. Similarly, HEFCE reserves the right to audit participating institutions in respect of the National Scholarship Programme.

Some of the results of the monitoring process will be published

217. OFFA and HEFCE will publish a report on the outcomes of access agreements and NSP monitoring by mid-2015. This will include the amount spent on access, student success and progression, the proportions of fee income spent on institutional financial support to OFFA-countable students, and the proportion of students receiving an award at each institution.

218. OFFA will publish your institution's report on your progress against targets and milestones on its website.

219. Individualised NSP data will be anonymised and may be published by HEFCE and BIS. Information provided to BIS and Ministers in relation to the NSP may be published in various ways by BIS.

How the Freedom of Information Act affects monitoring returns

220. OFFA and HEFCE are subject to the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000, which gives the public a right of access to any information we hold. We have a responsibility to decide whether the information in individual monitoring returns should be disclosed on request, or treated as confidential. We can refuse to disclose information only in exceptional circumstances. The exemptions are outlined in the legislation.

221. This means individual monitoring returns are unlikely to be treated as confidential except in very

particular circumstances. If you consider any part of your return to be confidential, please alert us to this and the reasons why.

222. HEFCE does not share individualised student data, as these are covered by the Data Protection Act.

223. Where we consider it to be appropriate and practicable, we will seek the institution's views before disclosing information in response to an FOI request.

224. Further information about the Freedom of Information Act is available at www.ico.gov.uk.

Annex A

National Scholarship Programme – Institutional criteria groupings

The following are definitions and examples of what we understand by the institutional criteria used in Table 12. These criteria groupings are based on our analysis of the information that institutions provided in the 2013-14 in-year monitoring.

Care Leaver	For example, the student was a looked-after child, or spent time in a foster family or in care.
Income related	Any further income-related restrictions below the national threshold of £25,000, for example the lowest income.
Achievement	Related to the academic excellence or potential of the student, either pre-university or during the studies (for example achievement of a particular qualification or grade, or in the top 25 per cent of entrants).
Disability	For example, a student who declared a disability or is in receipt of Disabled Students' Allowance or incapacity benefit.
Polar/LPN⁵	Students from low participation neighbourhoods, for example POLAR3 quintiles 1 and 2.
Other Benefits	Students receiving or having previously received other benefits, for example Education Maintenance Allowance, free school meals, Maintenance Grant or living in social housing.
School/college	Students who attended a particular school or college, for example a low achieving school or selected partner schools in the local area.
Carer	Students with dependants, for example a student who is a single parent, receives a childcare grant or an Adult Dependants' Grant, or cares for a disabled relative.
Tuition Fee	Students paying a particular fee, for example £6,000 and over.
Course based	Students who chose a particular area of study or qualification, for example science, technology, engineering and maths subjects, or a Foundation Degree.
Firm Choice	Students who made the institution their firm choice upon application.
First Generation HE	For example a student with no parental history of higher education (HE), or who is the first in their family to undertake HE.
Refugee	Students who hold refugee status.
Full-time/part-time	A criterion based on mode of study, for example that students must be full-time, or studying with at least 50 per cent full-time equivalence.
Proximity/location	For example a student who lives in a local area postcode.

⁵ 'POLAR' (Participation of Local Areas) is a classification of small areas across the UK demonstrating the participation of young people in higher education for geographical areas ranging from regions to wards. An 'LPN' is a low-participation neighbourhood, as classified by the POLAR data.

Ethnic minority group	Students from ethnic minorities
Travellers	For example Gypsy Roma or Irish Travellers.
Socio-economic group	This covers broader socio-economic background, for example students from NS-SEC 4-7 ⁶ , or low socio-economic backgrounds.
Age	For example a mature student, a student over 25 years old.
Resident in England	For example a student who was resident in England at the time of application, a student with 'home' status (rather than EU students who are also eligible).
Accommodation	Students residing in university or college accommodation.
Access to HE	Students who have completed an Access to HE course.
Written Assessment	An assessment based on a personal statement or written application, for example 'Write 300 words explaining why the scholarship would benefit you.'
'Good' Ambassador	Students who demonstrate commitment to working in a community or representing the institution, for example evidence of commitment to college values, or potential to be a student ambassador.
Timely application	For example students who applied to the institution on time, applied for student finance on time, or enrolled on time.
Progression at institution	Students progressing from within the same institution.
Financial need	Students demonstrating further financial need, for example requiring additional support for living, accommodation or other reasons, or who require additional help to meet the high costs of materials.
Commitment to study	Students demonstrating commitment to study, for example a student with minimum 90 per cent attendance, or excellent punctuality.
Engagement in outreach activity	Criterion based on students' links with the institution through outreach, for example a student who took part in at least two outreach activities, or is progressing through an access programme.

⁶ National Statistics Socio-economic Classifications: (<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/classifications/current-standard-classifications/soc2010/soc2010-volume-3-ns-sec--rebased-on-soc2010--user-manual/index.html>)

Glossary

Basic level of fee	The level of tuition fee up to which an access agreement is not required. For new system students in 2013-14, this was £6,000 for full-time students and £4,500 for part-time students. For old system students, the basic level of fee was £1,380.
BIS	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
Collaborative activity	By collaborative activity, we do not just mean collaboration between providers of higher education. While we would normally expect collaborative outreach to include many stakeholders rather than be between a single HEI and schools, colleges or other stakeholders receiving outreach, collaboration could be formed in a number of ways, for example between one HEI and further education colleges, other higher education providers, employers, third sector organisations, schools, colleges, training providers, local authorities and so on.
Entrants/year of entry	When we refer to entrants, or year of entry, we mean the academic year in which students started their courses, including students who deferred their entry to subsequent years. For example, students who deferred their entry from 2012-13 to 2013-14 should be classed as 2013-14 entrants. The definition of academic year is covered in the Education (Student Support) Regulations 2011 (SI 2011/1986) within regulation 2.
FEC	Further education college
FOI Act	Freedom of Information Act
FTE	Full-time equivalent
HEBSS	Higher Education Bursary and Scholarship Scheme
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
HEI	Higher education institution
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency
Higher fee income	Any fee income above the basic level of fee (see definition above). Where institutions charged the maximum fee of £9,000 to new-system full-time undergraduates in 2013-14, the 'higher fee income per student' was £3,000 (£9,000 – £6,000). For some 'specified' courses, including sandwich courses, courses provided in conjunction with an overseas institution, and other courses described in paragraph 30, the maximum fee for 2013-14 was £4,500 and the basic fee was £3,000. Further details are at www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2004/1932/contents/made and www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2011/432/made . Where institutions have charged the maximum fee for 'specified' courses, the 'higher fee income per student' is therefore £1,500.
ILR	Individualised Learner Record
ITT	Initial teacher training
LPN	Low participation neighbourhood

NSP	National Scholarship Programme
NS-SEC	National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification
New system student	Any student who is charged regulated fees for a year of instance under the fees regime introduced in September 2012. 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 returns to study in 2012-13, should be treated as having deferred entry until 2012-13. They should therefore be treated as a new system student.
OFFA	Office for Fair Access
Old system students	For the purposes of this monitoring, old system students are those who started their course in September 2006 or later, and before the introduction of the new fee regime from September 2012. In 2013-14, old-system students could be charged higher fees of up to £3,465.
Outreach	OFFA defines outreach as any activity that involves raising aspirations and attainment among potential applicants from under-represented groups and encouraging them to apply to higher education. This includes outreach directed at young or mature students aspiring to full- or part-time study. We particularly encourage sustained, co-ordinated activities that work with pupils and other potential applicants over a number of years. For the purposes of access agreement monitoring, you should only report on outreach expenditure related to funds committed from higher fee income and other new and additional (post-2006) sources of funding. This might include funding specific new outreach activities, or enhancing and growing existing programmes, and may include relevant staffing and overhead costs. You should not include ring-fenced funding expenditure from Government and HEFCE-funded programmes (such as the Access to Learning Fund) when you are reporting on access agreement expenditure. If you are unsure as to whether expenditure can be included in your access agreement monitoring return, please contact OFFA for advice.
PIs	Performance indicators. For more information see www.hesa.ac.uk/pi .
Progression	In this guidance, we generally refer to 'progression' in relation to progression from higher education into employment or postgraduate study. Occasionally it is used to refer to students progressing onto an HE course from an FE-level course; however, where this definition is used, it is clearly signposted.
Protected characteristics	Under the Equality Act 2010 the following personal characteristics are protected by the law: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
SLC	Student Loans Company
Student success	Work to retain and support students from disadvantaged backgrounds through their studies and on to successful outcomes in work or further study work, e.g. induction programmes, study skills support and mentoring of students by people working in the professions.

UKPRN

UK Provider Reference Number

Under-represented groups/OFFA-countable groups

Both these terms normally mean groups that are currently under-represented in higher education at the national level rather than at a particular institution or course, including (but not limited to):

- people from lower socio-economic groups or from neighbourhoods where higher education participation is low
- people from low income backgrounds
- some ethnic groups or sub-groups
- disabled people
- people who have been in care.

WP

Widening participation

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