



HESA student data 2014-15: Annual audit letter

Outcome requested	Audit and Risk Committee is asked to note the outcome of the HEFCE exercise.
Executive Summary	HEFCE wrote to QMUL on 9 th May 2016 with the outcome of the funding data reconciliation exercise of student returns made to HESA and HEFCE for 2014-15. HEFCE confirmed that QMUL was not selected to make a response as it had not exceeded the threshold criteria.
QMUL Strategy: Strategic aim reference and sub-strategies [e.g., SA1.1]	Strategic Aim 6: To achieve and sustain financial strength to enable our academic ambitions, through a balanced portfolio of activities.
Strategic Risks	Risk 11 – Sustainable income streams for activities
Equality Impact Assessment:	Not required
Subject to prior and onward consideration by:	QMSE
Confidential paper under FOIA/DPA	No
Timing	Annual report to Audit & Risk Committee
Author	David Marks, Deputy Director of Strategic Planning Monique Arthur, Senior Planning Officer
Date	12th May 2016
Senior Management/External Sponsor	Dean Curtis, Chief Strategy Officer

Background

1. Higher education institutions make an annual return of student data to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). This return is submitted in October each year and HEFCE compares the results with the previous December's Higher Education Students Early Statistics Survey (HESES) funding return. HEFCE inform institutions the following May if a formal response to any significant data reconciliation differences between the HESA student data and the HESES return is required.

Outcome of the 2014-15 HEFCE monitoring of student data

2. QMUL submitted the 2014-15 student return to HESA in October 2015 and in May 2016 was informed that **QMUL did not meet any of the selection criteria to undergo a data reconciliation exercise for the 2014-15 return so a response would not be required** (see Appendix A). The selection criteria comprised threshold changes in grant amounts and/or student numbers in the comparison of HESES 14 (December 2014) and the HESES recreation file based on the HESA return (October 2015). For the 2014-15 exercise two criteria were used. Institutions which met one or more criteria were selected in the exercise.

Work undertaken at QMUL to submit student data to HESA and HEFCE

3. Activity on the HESA student return takes place across the whole academic cycle with the Strategic Planning Office (SPO) working with Professional Service Directorates and Schools/Institutes to clear validation errors using tools provided by HESA. In the lead up to the return, the SPO checks all HESA check documentation and HEFCE reconciliation files to address any data quality issues and resolve these prior to submission.
4. As part of the checks prior to submission, the HESA and HEFCE outputs are discussed with the Chief Strategy Officer at weekly meetings or more frequently if required during October. Following submission the return is signed off by the Principal. A similar process is undertaken for the HESES return in early December each year. A recent internal audit by KPMG of HESES15 provided significant assurance. The audit report is due to be circulated at the June 2016 Audit & Risk Committee.

ANNEX A - Outcome of the 2014-15 HEFCE monitoring of student data exercise

Professor Simon Gaskell
Principal
Queen Mary University of London
327 Mile End Road
London
E1 4NS

9 May 2016

Dear Professor Gaskell

HESA funding and monitoring data (FAMD) 2014-15: Funding data reconciliation exercise

I am writing to inform you of the outcome of the HESA funding and monitoring data 2014-15: funding data reconciliation exercise. This exercise compares the data returned to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) with Higher Education Students Early Statistics (HESES) data submitted to HEFCE.

We have given details of the release of this exercise in Circular Letter 10/2016 'HESA funding and monitoring data (FAMD) 2014-15: Funding data reconciliation exercise' (<http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/year/2016/CL,102016/>). The comparison of data shows that your institution does not meet the selection criteria, so you will not be required to submit a formal response to the exercise.

If we find, either through reconciliations with HESA or other organisations' data, or any data audit, that erroneous data have resulted in institutions receiving incorrect funding allocations, we will adjust their funding accordingly (subject to any appeals process that may apply and the availability of our funds).

An overview of this exercise is available at <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/data/famd/latest/>.

The set of tables that accompany this exercise can be downloaded from the 'HESA funding and monitoring data (FAMD) 2014-15: Outputs' location on the HEFCE Extranet (<https://data.hefce.ac.uk/>). The relevant group key was posted to you on 19 April 2016 (this accompanied the release of Circular Letter 07/2016 'HESA funding and monitoring data (FAMD) 2014-15: Funding summaries and request for updates to completion status data').

We encourage you to review the reconciliation outputs that accompany this exercise as it is an essential element of all institutions' data quality processes. The outputs will help institutions to:

- identify discrepancies between forecasts in 2014-15 HESES data (HESES14) and the outturn position for 2014-15
- identify errors in HESES14.

Yours sincerely

Anthea C. Beresford


Anthea Beresford
Data Assurance Consultant

cc: Mr Dean Curtis HESES contact