

# COHORT B MIDPOINT REVIEW

C17071 2017/18

APRIL 2019

HESA



**Graduate Outcomes**

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## SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in the Graduate Outcomes survey and welcome to our cohort B midpoint review. We are now in week 7 of cohort B.

## SECTION 2 – RESPONSE RATES

As at 17 April, the overall cohort B response rate is **27.5%** which is broken down into target groups in the table below:

Main target group	Response rate target	Current response rate
UK domiciled, full-time	60%	30.4%
UK domiciled, part-time	60%	31.9%
Research funded	65%	36.9%
EU domiciled	45%	28.8%
Non-EU domiciled	25%	17.9%

We are pleased to report that the overall response rate is higher than the midpoint cohort A response rate (22.1%) and we believe it would have been higher had we not experienced the issue outlined in the next section.

## SECTION 3 - OUR MIDPOINT COHORT B FINDINGS

The [end of cohort A review](#) outlined some of the changes we've implemented into cohort B. This section provides an update and some additional issues we're working to address within this cohort.

### EMAIL BLACKLISTING

We've always known that, as with any mass email marketing, we must adhere to email best practice to ensure our invitations are not blocked by spam filters<sup>1</sup>. However, upon release of our first batch of cohort B email invitations, we were alerted to an issue with a number of email providers that has impacted the delivery rate. Our dedicated IP address has triggered some spam filters and resulted in emails sent from Graduate Outcomes being black-listed across these particular email providers.

We have therefore implemented a number of small changes to the email formatting, coding and distribution frequency with the aim to avoid triggering spam filters. However, these change regularly as professional "spammers" adapt and trial new techniques so this will be an ongoing process for HESA. Therefore, the SMTP status reports for the delivery of emails from Conformat will be monitored closely.

HESA is working with the Conformat technical team to determine the underlying cause of the email delivery problems, we are also looking at various solutions for the process of sending emails which can mitigate against a re-occurrence. It is our absolute priority to ensure this issue is fully identified and rectified by cohort D.

<sup>1</sup> A spam filter detects unsolicited and unwanted email and prevent those messages from getting to a user's inbox

## IMPROVEMENTS TO THE CALL QUEUE MANAGEMENT

We have been working with IFF and Confirmit to implement an improved call queue management process. Using pre-determined rules, this will continue to ensure that the time between calls to each graduate is appropriately spaced out and that all graduates receive a similar number of call attempts, unless we are deliberately attempting to boost the response rate of a sub group that is under represented.

## SECTION 4 – COHORT A ADJUSTMENTS

Following ongoing work to quality assure cohort A survey data, we have highlighted a small number of surveys previously recorded as incomplete (partial completion) which have actually met the minimum response threshold and therefore should be recorded as complete. Over the next few weeks we will be rectifying this within the provider portal. As a result, for a number of providers, you will notice that the progress bar will change accordingly. This will also marginally improve the published response rates for cohort A.

It's also useful to note here that all results published in the provider portal are provisional due to the nature of the live data feed and we are carrying out continual quality assurance. It is provided for your information and for internal engagement.

## NEXT STEPS

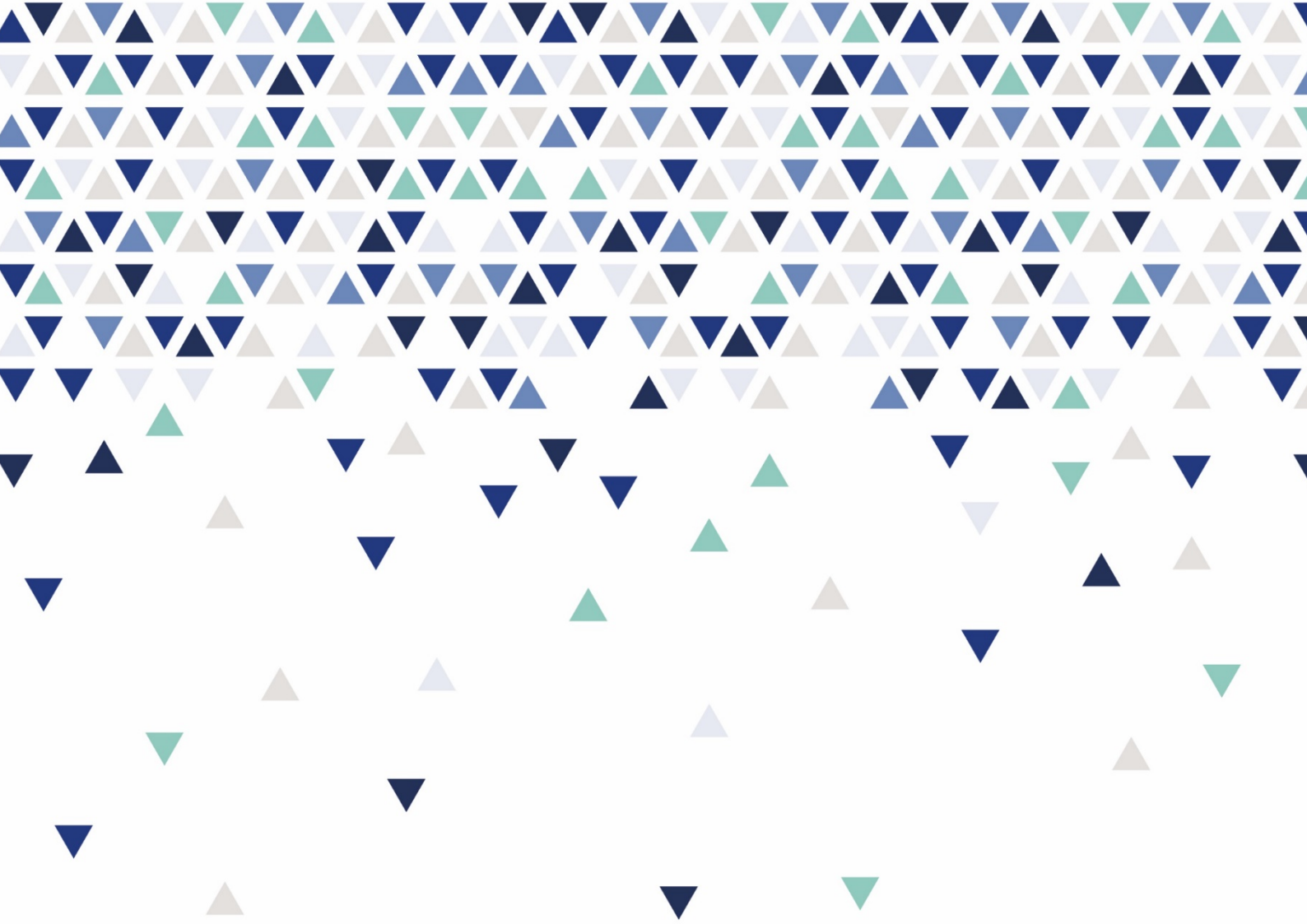
Providers are also reminded that the provider portal is open for submission of contact details for cohort C. English FECs do not need to submit contact details, but they should use the provider portal to review the contact details imported from their ILR record and amend them if necessary.

The deadline for approval / amending cohort C contact details is 17 May 2019 and full details of the deadlines can be found in the [data collection schedule](#). For guidance on the submission of accurate contact data, please visit the [data specification](#).

## FIND OUT MORE ABOUT GRADUATE OUTCOMES

Website: [www.hesa.ac.uk/innovation/outcomes](http://www.hesa.ac.uk/innovation/outcomes)  
Graduate website: [www.graduateoutcomes.ac.uk](http://www.graduateoutcomes.ac.uk)  
Twitter: [https://twitter.com/grad\\_outcomes](https://twitter.com/grad_outcomes)  
LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/graduate-outcomes>

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