



Changes to Unistats dataset 2020-21

As referenced in the Unistats publication notice of May 2020, changes are being made to the Unistats dataset. This follows roundtable consultation by the Office for Students (OfS) with key stakeholders. Changes have been collectively agreed by UK funders and regulators.

Summary

The changes to the Unistats dataset and Discover Uni website developments are as follows.

- The Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey is being replaced by the Graduate Outcomes survey from 2020. The Graduate Outcomes data to be included is equivalent to what is currently included from the DLHE survey: it will include graduate earnings and employment 15 months after graduation. There is also new data on graduate perceptions of work in terms of usefulness, meaningfulness, impact on future plans.
- The publication threshold for data items based on Graduate Outcomes survey results will be a headcount of 10 responses and a 50 per cent response rate to the survey. This is consistent with the thresholds used with the National Student Survey (NSS) and previously for salary response rates in the DLHE.
- The Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) data is being updated for those providers for which it is published to include data for the 2017-18 tax year. The LEO data is being extended to include graduate earnings data for three and five years after graduation (for the same cohort). LEO data will be published for courses in England, Wales and Scotland. See below for further information about the contextualisation of LEO and Graduate Outcomes earnings data by reflecting national and regional variations in salary.
- NSS data will be published as in previous years. The OfS, on behalf of the UK funding and regulatory bodies, undertook an assessment of whether the reliability of the 2020 NSS was affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The review concluded that the results could be published in full, and without any adjustment. The review did not find evidence that the reliability of the statistics had been affected by the pandemic, nor that the results had been strongly impacted by the pandemic to the extent that exceptional caveats or adjustments were needed.
- Development of the Discover Uni website is being undertaken following the release of the beta website and replacement of the Unistats website in 2019. User research and testing has been used to inform further development and enhancement of the presentation of the Unistats dataset on Discover Uni. This is to ensure that the data is easily understandable without being oversimplified.

- New designs for webpages and the presentation of the Unistats data are being applied to the website for autumn 2020 release. This release will be followed by the development of an improved course comparison function on the website in response to user testing and feedback.
- The Unistats widget will present the updated data and some enhancements to the widget are being made. The widget will continue to provide a direct link to data about the course from providers' course pages. Updated widget guidance will reflect any changes as appropriate and the release date for the updated widget will be communicated when confirmed.

Earnings data

The Graduate Outcomes and LEO earnings data to be included will comprise the following

At provider level

- Graduate earnings 15 months after graduation (from the Graduate Outcomes data). This is replacing the DLHE graduate earnings six months after graduation and reflects the later date at which the Graduate Outcomes survey is conducted.
- Graduate earnings three and five years after graduation (from LEO data). The data being used is for the same cohort. This decision is informed by user research and testing which indicated that a high proportion of users interpreted the LEO earnings data as showing the earnings trajectory of graduates. This makes it important to keep the Graduate Outcomes and LEO earnings data items as similar as possible, including aggregating them to the same level.
- As currently, LEO data will not be provided for courses in Northern Ireland. A message will be presented on these Discover Uni course pages accordingly.

At national and regional level

- Graduate earnings for three and five years after graduation (LEO) at UK, national and regional level if available. Regional LEO earnings data is being made available for England (North East, North West, East Midlands, West Midlands, East of England, Yorkshire and Humberside, South West, South East, London), Wales (Cardiff) and Scotland (Edinburgh, Glasgow). The decision to make this information available is to meet the need to contextualise earnings data by reflecting regional variations in salary. The regional earnings will show the median salary for graduates from the same subject area as the course, working in the region.
- Graduate earnings 15 months after graduation (Graduate Outcomes) will only be available at UK and national level.

Aggregation of Graduate Outcomes and LEO earnings data

- All Graduate Outcomes and LEO earnings data will be aggregated to the same level.
- This will be the most granular subject level that exists for all three time points and showing the maximum amount of data when fewer than three matching time points can be published.
- Self-assessment earnings data will continue to be excluded from earnings calculations based on the LEO data. To ensure comparability, self-employed graduates have been excluded from Graduate Outcomes salary data.

The Graduate Outcomes data will be unweighted

- For this year's publication of graduate outcomes metrics, the Graduate Outcomes data will be unweighted. This is consistent with HESA's approach and analysis has shown no strong evidence to support weighting.

Graduate employment and occupations 15 months after graduation

- Graduate Outcomes data will show the percentage of graduates who are working, working and studying, studying, and unemployed. The unemployed figure will be split into 'Unemployed – not employed since graduation' and 'Unemployed – previously working or studying'. This is to make clear that some of those who take the survey may be unemployed but have recently completed other courses.
- The common occupations of graduates will be shown in two categories ('highly skilled work' and 'other work') with occupation types shown across these two sets. The total percentage of graduates in 'unknown employment' will also be included. These three categories will be a percentage breakdown of the total number of graduates who have gone into employment.

Graduate perceptions

- The data on perceptions of work after graduating from the Graduate Outcomes survey will also be published on the Discover Uni course pages. This will show percentage of graduates and their perceptions of the usefulness of skills learnt, the meaningfulness of current work study, and the fit with future plans.