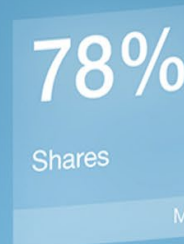


HE DATA LANDSCAPE
STEERING GROUP
ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18





CTMX		0.45	▲	+0.45
FTR		-0.23	▼	-2.34%
CSCO		-1.01	▼	-1.89%
CHK		0.02	▲	+0.21
AAPL		+2.58		
PRTO		-0.12		
AMZN		-0.15		
TSLA		-0.18		
AVGO		-0.67		
SIRI		-0.65		



FOREWORD



▲ **PROFESSOR SIMON GASKELL**
Chair

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and strokes, representing the name Simon Gaskell.

For many years the HE sector has wrestled with the problems of data; duplicate data collections, inconsistent data definitions and the challenges of managing ever-increasing volumes of complex data in systems. In 2018 the expectations around data are rapidly increasing as funders and regulators look to drive ever more utility from data and as students expect levels of user-experience that can only be achieved with highly integrated and professionally managed data flows.

The HE Data Landscape Steering Group pursues the twin agendas of standardising and rationalising data flows across HE and the broader aim of increasing capabilities in the management and governance of data across the landscape. The group is made up of leaders from a broad range of perspectives and backgrounds across the data landscape and they work collaboratively and constructively in pursuit of these goals.

This report summarises the areas that the group has focussed on in the past year and sets out the next steps on this journey towards a more efficient and effective HE data landscape.

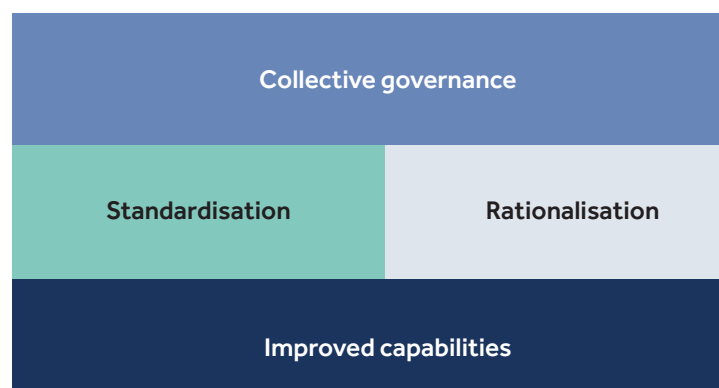
AIMS OF THE DATA LANDSCAPE STEERING GROUP

The HE Data Landscape Steering Group (DLSG) provides oversight and leadership to the data landscape. It was established to fulfil the collective and consensual governance function that was defined as a key element of the architecture for the data landscape by the Higher Education Data & Information Improvement Programme (HEDIIP)¹.



¹ www.hediip.ac.uk/new-landscape/

HEDIIP ARCHITECTURE FOR THE HE DATA LANDSCAPE



DLSG TERMS OF REFERENCE

The HE Data Landscape Steering Group will:

- Work to reduce the burden of data collection and improve the quality, timeliness and accessibility of information about HE
- Oversee, and promote the use of, standard data definitions in order to reduce the burden of collections and to increase opportunities for data sharing
- Work to rationalise the number of different data collections
- Promote high standards in the collection and handling of data

- Foster a stronger sense of collaboration and cooperation amongst the data collectors
- Foster a stronger sense of collaboration and cooperation between the data collectors and the HE providers
- Publish an annual report that measures progress against its core aims.

The group is supported by an Advisory Panel which is made up of representatives from all the major HE data collectors and nominations from a broad range of HE providers and sector professional groups.

The DLSG is supported by a secretariat and executive function at HESA.

MAIN AREAS OF WORK

STANDARDISATION OF DATA FLOWS

The Higher Education Classification of Subject (HECoS) and the HE data language were developed by the HEDIIP programme. DLSG has been supporting the implementation of these through the development of implementation guides and a variety of communications and coordinating activities.

The implementation of HECoS for the academic year 2019/20 is being coordinated and supported at HESA, the Student Loans Company, UCAS and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). Joint communications activities have been undertaken by HESA and UCAS and a working group has been engaged with the

FCO to establish an approach to adopting HECoS in the Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS). In England the Department for Education is using the HECoS Common Aggregation Hierarchy as the basis for the subject-level Teaching Excellent Framework (TEF).

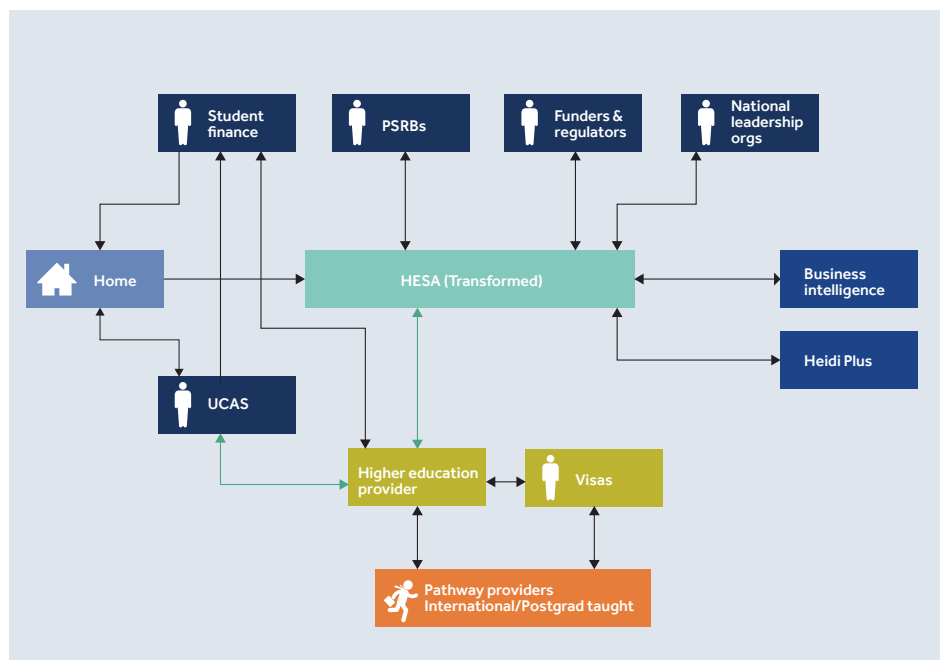
The DLSG Advisory Panel has been working through the details of the on-going management and governance that is required for HECoS and for the broader HE data language.

The DLSG secretariat continues to engage with other relevant data standards initiatives, including the Department for Education Information Standards Board and the Health Education England Workforce Information Strategy Group.

RATIONALISATION OF DATA FLOWS

Research undertaken by HEDIIP identified a large number of data collections operating across the sector, with significant duplication amongst them. The rationalisation of data flows through a more timely central student data collection is a key element in the HEDIIP architecture.

The model of rationalised data flows that was set out in the HEDIIP architecture (opposite) has a transformed HESA data collection process at its centre. The HESA Data Futures programme is creating a more timely data collection process that will meet the needs of a greater number of organisations than currently use HESA data. Data Futures goes live in the academic year 2019/20.



MAIN AREAS OF WORK

IMPROVED DATA CAPABILITIES

Data management and governance capabilities are key to the delivery of a more rationalised and standardised landscape. HEDIIP developed a Data Capability toolkit in 2015 and undertook a range of training and promotional activities. The toolkit included an on-line self-assessment process which provides an analysis of capabilities against a standard 5-level Capability Maturity Model. In January 2016 HEDIIP published a report that analysed 114 sets of self-assessment data from 103 institutions.

In early 2018 institutions were invited to re-run their self-assessment and a summary analysis has provided an indication of the progress on this agenda over the intervening two years. This analysis is presented in Appendix 2.

CODES OF PRACTICE FOR HE DATA COLLECTIONS

Central to the objectives of DLSG is the need to change behaviours in HE data collection. Working with the HESA Data Futures programme, DLSG has developed and published new codes of practice for HE data collections that aim to improve the operation and consistency of data collections, enhance the management and governance of collections and build a better understanding of – and ultimately reduce – the burden placed on HE providers. There are two complementary codes of practice; one for the demand-side (data collectors) and one for the supply-side (HE providers). A burden assessment methodology has been developed to support the operation of the codes and to improve the broader

understanding of burden and its causes.

The code of practice for data collectors places an onus on data collectors to provide a strong rationale for the use of any non-standard definitions or the duplication of any existing data collection.

The development of the codes of practice involved extensive engagement with stakeholders across the sector, detailed reviews undertaken by a dedicated sub-group of the Advisory Panel and a sector-wide consultation. The codes of practice were launched in the Autumn of 2017 and have been promoted through a number of channels including sector conferences and events and HE media.

- The code of practice logo can be used by organisations that adhere to the code.



DLSG FORWARD LOOK



- ▶ The group will continue to support and, as necessary, advise the HESA Data Futures programme.
- ▶ The group will drive the standardisation and rationalisation of the data landscape through the on-going promotion of the codes of practice and through the monitoring of their take-up and the consistency of implementation.
- ▶ The group will continue to support the implementation of the various elements of the common HE data language, including the HECoS subject coding system.
- ▶ The group will steer and support the data capability agenda, including engagement with other relevant bodies and initiatives across the sector.

APPENDIX 1 – THE MEMBERS OF THE DATA LANDSCAPE STEERING GROUP

- ▶ **Professor Simon Gaskell** (Chair)
- ▶ **Vikki Goddard**, Director of Faculty Operations (Humanities), The University of Manchester
- ▶ **Eileen Schofield**, University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer, University of Stirling
- ▶ **Gordon Sweeney**, Director of Strategy & Innovation, The Academy of Contemporary Music
- ▶ **Jane Fawkes**, Deputy CEO, University College of Estate Management
- ▶ **Nick Leake**, Chief Information Officer, King's College London
- ▶ **Giles Carden**, Chief of Staff & Director of Strategic Projects, Lancaster University
- ▶ **Richard Puttock**, Head of Data, Foresight and Analysis, Office for Students
- ▶ **Helen Thorne**, Director of External Relations, UCAS
- ▶ **Paul Clark**, Chief Executive, HESA
- ▶ **Helen Mansfield**, Head of Information Development (Data & Standards), Health Education England
- ▶ **Paul Smith**, Head of Partner Services, Student Loans Company
- ▶ **Sarah Wingrove**, Executive Directorate, UKRI
- ▶ **Kevin Mundy**, Director of Planning & Governance and University Secretary, Bangor University
- ▶ **Michael Glover**, Director of Planning, Resource Allocation and Council Secretariat, University of Oxford
- ▶ **Chair of the DLSG Advisory Panel:**
Wendy Appleby, Registrar and Head of Student & Registry Services, University College London
- ▶ **DLSG Convenor:**
Andy Youell, Director of Data Policy & Governance, HESA

APPENDIX 2 – DATA CAPABILITIES IN 2018



One of the key themes to come out of the HEDIIP programme was the work to improve standards of data management and governance (also known as Data Capability) across the sector.

HEDIIP developed a Data Capability toolkit in 2015 and undertook a broad range of training and promotional activities. The toolkit included an on-line self-assessment process which provides an analysis of capabilities against a standard 5-level capability maturity model (CMM).

The data capability toolkit presents an overall CMM assessment and a score for each of the following dimensions:

- ▶ People and culture
- ▶ Data activities
- ▶ Business processes
- ▶ Technology

Although self-assessment data like this carries some fairly major caveats, it can provide a picture of the state of data capabilities across the sector. In January 2016 HEDIIP published a report that analysed 114 sets of self-assessment data from 103 institutions. The report was called "A call to action" and it set out an analysis that showed

the sector to be consistently Reactive (level 2) in the CMM scale.

Supporting the data capability agenda is now part of the terms of reference for the Data Landscape Steering Group ("Promote high standards in the collection and handling of data").

In January 2018 institutions were invited to re-run their self-assessment. It is two years since the original HEDIIP analysis was published and with GDPR and Data Futures on the horizon, the time is ripe for an update on this analysis.

APPENDIX 2 – DATA CAPABILITIES IN 2018

RESULTS

In the 2018 update 44 self-assessments were undertaken, covering 37 institutions. 23 institutions appeared in both the 2016 and 2018 datasets.

DISCUSSION

The data suggests that standards of data management and governance capability are improving. This increase is reflected across the four dimensions of the analysis.

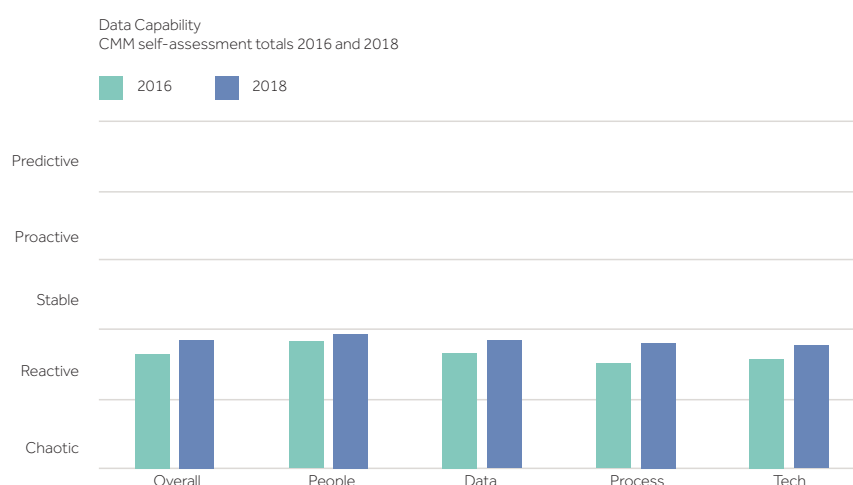
The amount of progress since 2016 does not appear to be large and this needs to be seen in context. Specifically:

1. As a rule of thumb, an organisation can, with a fairly concerted effort, move up one CMM level in around 18 to 24 months.
2. Progress is not always linear – when investments are made it takes time for these to be processed into a change in culture and practice. This analysis does not reflect what providers have invested so far, only what they have achieved to date.

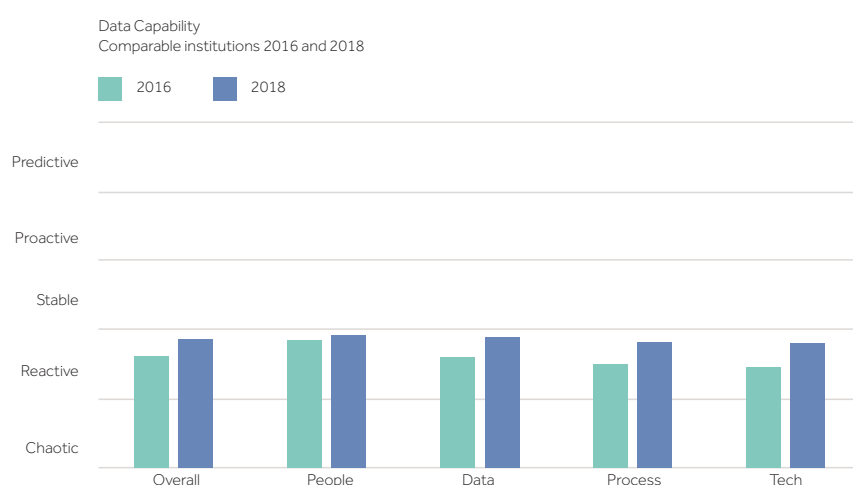
DLSG recognises that in order for real progress to be made in this area, senior buy-in and support needs to be achieved.

We could define a “target point” for the sector somewhere around high-stable/ low-proactive; the law of diminishing returns arguably makes anything higher than this a poor investment for most providers.

The first chart shows the average scores for all assessments in 2016 and 2018.



The second chart shows the average scores for institutions that took part in both years.



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