WHAT WE DO

OUR AIMS:

1. Upgrade the UK HE data infrastructure
2. Increase the usefulness of the data we collect
3. Enhance insight through analysis and dissemination
4. Operate efficiently

VISION

Our aim is to be the analytical powerhouse for the UK higher education (HE) sector, and the trusted source of national HE statistics and public information.

We seek to provide flexible, efficient high quality data, information, and analytical services to meet user needs, to support better decision-making in higher education, to promote public trust and confidence, and to enhance the competitive strength of the UK HE sector.

The UK HE sector is in a process of change and transformation and HESA, which operates for and on behalf of the sector, is changing with it. In April, HESA became the designated data body for HE in England.

Our vision centres on our role as the trusted source of national HE data and public information. It is our overarching commitment to collect and assure high-quality data for our customers, across higher education and statutory and funding bodies.

In this past year we have worked to maintain the high standards of our day-to-day activity while going through the process to become the designated data body for England.

Over the past year there has been a period of focussed activity to put in place the governance and organisational structure we require to support us in operating effectively as the designated data body from August 2019.

We will use our revised governance structure and processes to give a voice to evolving requirements while maintaining and enhancing our current standards to support, collect and assure high quality data.
DATA COLLECTIONS, OPEN DATA AND ANALYSIS

Our collections span the UK HE sector. We have worked to minimise change across our collections as we move into transition and delivery in our largest transformation programmes.

MAINTAINING AND SUPPORTING COLLECTIONS

We continue to manage ongoing collections to deliver high-quality robust data in line with statutory and funding requirements for 264 providers across 10 collections, collecting and assuring data on c.2.3million students.

During this time, our training team have continued to support providers, with bespoke visits, seminar and webinars, training over 3,500 delegates.

Alongside the uses of data spanning our providers and statutory customers, we also contribute to:

- ONS statistics
- OECD and Eurostats reports
- League tables
- Data underpinning media reports
- Data in policy developments and parliamentary activity
- Reports by sector bodies, including lobbying activity

OPEN DATA

We have delivered on our commitment to publish as much of the information we hold as open data as we can by 2021.

HE Student data was released as open data in February 2018 and all statistical first releases (SFRs), UK performance indicators (UKPIs), Higher Education Business and Community Interaction (HE-BCI), and Estates collections have also been released in the new interactive open format during 2018.

HE student enrolments by subject of study and domicile 2016/17 (which makes freely available - for the first time ever - student enrolments by 4-digit JACS code) and HE student enrolments by domicile and region...
of HE provider 2016/17 have recorded over 7,500 interactions since launch.

We have worked to refine and create more user-focused journeys. This has resulted in extensive improvements to page layouts, including the introduction of an HE Student data portal and the introduction of new interactive tables.

The Student Open Data landing page has been viewed 72,000 times since its launch. Most popular sections were ‘Who’s studying in HE’ with over 18,000 views and ‘Where do they come from’ receiving 13,000 views. Estates Management Record for Higher Education Providers Open Data has had 2,700 views since May; HE-BCI Open Data 3,000 views since April.

Analytics are showing high levels of engagement with the interactive tables (far higher than the number of downloads of our previous releases).

ANALYSIS AND BESPOKE DATA PROVISION

Our analysis team delivered 13 bespoke data reports, including the ongoing Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT) project; by linking HESA datasets we have worked with our clients to improve and inform research and decision-making activities for clients in higher education, the public sector and funding bodies.

We have processed 123 million records for 264 providers.

HESA training have delivered: 37 bespoke visits, 4 consultancies, 61 seminars, 54 webinars.

72,000 views (and counting) of free online statistics published in February 2018: ‘Who’s studying in HE’ the most popular, accruing over 18,000 views.

HESA data quoted in 65 answers to parliamentary questions and 5 debates.

Over 39,000 email conversations through the Stakeholder Liaison in-box.

13 complex analysis queries, including HESA’s first piece of collaborative research for the Office for Fair Access (OFFA).

498,000 website visits: an increase of 18%, with over 100,000 generated by our open data publications.
DATA FUTURES

The Data Futures programme has built in velocity with the publication of the detailed design specification in October 2017 and the launch of the system build for the HESA data platform.

We are working with 14 HE providers during the Alpha phase to provide proof of concept prototypes of the submission and collection solution. We worked to ensure we have a representative mix of participants with consideration including institution type, software systems used and location.

We have been working with Alpha participants, Statutory Customers and software houses throughout the design and build phases to ensure that the roadmap for the system continues to deliver the improvements that matter most to our customers.

Our Data Futures preparation assessment was launched in April to support practitioners to deliver key messages about Data Futures within their individual organisations, to build internal awareness and promotion. It was downloaded 191 times in the first two weeks it was available.

In response to feedback in the Data Futures readiness survey, we have continued to create additional resources, including data scenarios and FAQs. This is aimed at operational contacts to support communicating with senior colleagues, further promoting internal impact and possible changes.

As we moved towards delivering the stable specification ahead of Beta launching, we delivered student 2019/20 specification workshops in June and July in England and Scotland and over 400 delegates attended across a range of providers.
GRADUATE OUTCOMES

The Graduate Outcomes survey reflects the changing career landscape and priorities of graduates.

The survey will be delivered by HESA on behalf of higher education providers and will reach c.735,000 graduates. It is estimated as being the largest annual social survey in the UK.

When the sign-off deadline for the final ever Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) collection closed in Spring 2018, Graduate Outcomes activity was well underway, finalising the contract with providers and preparing the user-facing Graduate Outcomes website ready for the first cohort of the survey to open in December 2018.

We launched the provider portal, including personalising options for providers and in line with HESA’s stringent procurement activity we have progressed towards securing supplier relationships to manage the contact management system, call centre and SIC and SOC coding.

The Graduate Outcomes conferences in Manchester and London hosted 300 delegates; following the conference, we published the 150 questions asked on our website.

The updated census point and additional, more in-depth questioning provide careers offices, recruiters and organisations with a clearer view of the graduate perspective. This will support an essential part of successful recruitment and retention.

The biggest UK annual social survey

@ grad_outcomes

GRADUATE OUTCOMES
THE YEAR IN REVIEW
AND NEXT STEPS

We have continued to deliver our existing collections to the high standards of quality and timeliness, in line with our confirmed appointment as the designated data body for England.

We have demonstrated our commitment to increasing the usefulness of the data we collect with the publication of our first machine-readable open data publication.

As part of our innovation and change programmes we moved into implementation and transition in the Data Futures programme, and the Graduate Outcomes survey held a conference and finalised the provider portal ahead of the first cohort opening in December 2018.

We are dedicated to maintaining contact and dialogue across the sector and have pursued active engagement with membership organisations and professional bodies. HESA colleagues have presented, participated in panels and attended external conferences and meetings, including Graduate Employability Conference, AGCAS Heads of Service and AGCAS Wales conference and NIER Symposium Japan. HESA has also provided expert input to the 5th digit SOC stakeholder group and SOC revision steering group.

Since its formation in March 2016, the M5 partnership continues to build on opportunities to ensure effective support for the Higher Education sector. Recent achievements include the joint Data Matters conference, and a shared IT helpdesk across the organisations.

These are exciting times for HESA, as they are for all organisations in the UK HE sector. The pace of change feels faster than ever, while the social, economic and political importance of higher education has never been higher. HESA continues to seek to respond to these changes on an agile basis, and has sought to adapt its services for the future, while continuing to deliver value for money through our core activities. Our commitment extends UK-wide, providing data services and expertise to all our statutory and HE funding bodies, including devolved administrations. In order to prepare for becoming the designated data body for English higher education, HESA has been working to review its governance, operational and funding models. We are confident that the planned developments will ensure that HESA continues to operate as a UK sector agency fit for the future, supporting the strength and competitiveness of the UK higher education sector.

We will continue to deliver on our aims and overarching vision to be the analytical powerhouse for the UK HE sector and the trusted source of national HE statistics and public information.
STAY IN TOUCH

To keep up-to-date with news from HESA please visit us at

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