

66803
OFF VENUE ACTIVITY
SUMMARY OF RESPONSES



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SUMMARY OF 66803 OFF VENUE ACTIVITY CONSULTATION RESPONSES

The consultation considering the proposals for changes to the off venue activity entity opened on 3 March 2020 and closed on 17 March 2020. In total we received 67 responses to the consultation, 64 from providers and 3 from other organisations. This paper summarises the responses we received and where relevant makes HESA's recommendations based on the results.

The table below shows a breakdown of the responses received, providers split by country and also other organisations.

Country	Responses (%)
England	76%
Scotland	12%
Wales	6%
Northern Ireland	1%
Sector group / body	0%
Other organisation	5%

PROPOSAL TO REMOVE STATUTORY CLINICAL PLACEMENTS FROM THE COVERAGE OF DATA FUTURES

QUESTION 5: DO YOU SUPPORT THE PROPOSAL TO EXCLUDE STATUTORY CLINICAL PLACEMENTS FROM THE COVERAGE OF OFF VENUE ACTIVITY?

Responses	% of total responses
Yes	88%
No	2%
Undecided	10%

QUESTION 6: UNDER THE PROPOSED COVERAGE, MEDICAL ELECTIVES WHO DECIDE TO DO THEIR PLACEMENT ABROAD WOULD ALSO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE COVERAGE IF IT IS NOT A PLACEMENT AS PART OF A SANDWICH COURSE. DO YOU SUPPORT THIS?

Responses	% of total responses
Yes	75%
No	6%
Undecided	19%

QUESTION 7: DO YOU HAVE ANY FURTHER COMMENTS TO SUPPORT YOUR ANSWERS?

The majority of respondents welcomed the removal of statutory clinical placements and medical electives which are taken abroad, stating that this would simplify their return and lighten the workload. Many stated they were envisaging manual work arounds, as their systems would not join up automatically at this point in time and was managed by different teams.

There were clarifications requested on the exact definitions of these, to cater for all the specific examples that providers deliver.

A couple of respondents requested that the overseas electives remain in the coverage, and perhaps even on an optional basis, if international experiences are to be used as a performance indicator. But other respondents suggested that it wasn't sensible to treat clinical placements differently just because they are taken in the UK or overseas.

A number of respondents mentioned existing collections that HEE are running, some with concerns about having two ways of collecting placement data. Others welcomed the commitment from HESA and HEE (and other health organisations, such as GMC) to work together to provide a consistent way of reporting placements in the future. There was one comment asking about the lack of any requirements for clinical placement data from providers in Scotland.

Respondents who wanted to keep medical placement in coverage, expressed a wish for this to be recorded with other placement data, so that they can be compared and analysed with others in the sector.

Recommendations:

To exclude statutory clinical placements and medical electives who decide to do their placement abroad from the coverage of the Off Venue Activity entity.

CHANGES TO ACTIVITY TYPE IDENTIFIER (ACTYPEID)

QUESTION 8: HAS THIS PROPOSAL MADE THE RETURN OF PLACEMENT ACTIVITY DATA CLEARER THAN WHAT IS ON THE CURRENT DATA FUTURES SPECIFICATION?

Responses	% of total responses
Yes	84%
No	3%
Undecided	13%

QUESTION 9: ARE THERE ANY EXAMPLES OF PLACEMENTS YOU WOULD EXPECT TO RETURN WHICH DO NOT ADHERE TO THE PROPOSED VALID ENTRIES AND GUIDANCE?

The majority of respondents were happy that most of their courses were covered. The examples given were:

- Nursing placements
- Paramedic placements
- Medical rotations
- Apprenticeship activities which happen off venue
- Postgraduate research activity e.g. conferences, data gathering outside of an organisation for a period of time
- Nursing Degree apprenticeships
- Student employability schemes, where activity is extra-curricular

Some respondents asked for more guidance, particularly around ITT placements. A specific example was given of teacher-training placements for students on courses which do not enable trainees to achieve Qualified Teacher Status or registration with a General Teaching Council.

QUESTION 10: DO YOU HAVE ANY FURTHER COMMENTS TO SUPPORT YOUR ANSWERS?

Clarification of what placements fall into each of the 'paid', 'unpaid' and 'study' placement categories was requested. In particular, providers may not know whether the work is paid or unpaid, and what about cases where it starts unpaid but turns into paid work later, or vice versa.

One respondent asked for clarification on what the Off Venue Activity entity is trying to achieve now. In the Student collection the mobility entity had a clear purpose of recording placements and study abroad. As currently specified, Data Futures will collect many more varied types of off-venue activities which may or may not be essential towards course outcomes or gaining awards.

Respondents welcomed the simplifications suggested here, as it removes duplication and will improve data quality and consistency as the categories are easy to understand.

One respondent asked whether providers in Scotland would be able to return placements as 'teacher training placements' as similar to the Student collection now.

Recommendations:

To simplify the Activity Type Indicator field as suggested and address the guidance questions raised.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO OFF VENUE ACTIVITY AND OFF VENUE ACTIVITY LOCATION ENTITY

QUESTION 11: DO YOU SUPPORT THE REMOVAL OF 'POSTCODE' FROM THE OFF VENUE ACTIVITY LOCATION ENTITY?

Responses	% of total responses
Yes	97%
No	1.5%
Undecided	1.5%

QUESTION 12: WOULD YOU RATHER HAVE 'COUNTRY' AND 'POSTCODE' (IF 'POSTCODE' IS KEPT) ABSORBED INTO OFF VENUE ACTIVITY, OR REMAIN AS A SEPARATE SUB-ENTITY?

Responses	% of total responses
Absorbed into off venue activity	78%
Keep off venue activity location as a separate sub-entity	3%
No preference	19%

QUESTION 13: DO YOU HAVE ANY FURTHER COMMENTS TO SUPPORT YOUR ANSWERS?

The majority of respondents welcomed the simplifications proposed in questions 11 and 12. Many stated that it was often difficult to get this data and would present challenges for data collection and validation.

Many agreed that absorbing country and postcode into the Off Venue Activity entity would make sense, but some acknowledged that it wouldn't have a big impact on them if they were kept separate. One respondent proposed that perhaps postcode could remain as an optional field.

The providers who responded 'No' to question 11, stated that "Post code is required to be collected for UKVI reporting for off venue activity therefore should already exist within placement records".

One provider who wanted to keep the Off Venue Activity Location entity specified that this was only if the post code field was kept.

Recommendations:

To remove the Post code field. To absorb the Country field into the Off Venue Activity entity (therefore removing the Off Venue Activity Location entity).

QUESTION 14: DO YOU SUPPORT THE REMOVAL OF WORK PLACEMENTS FROM THE COVERAGE OF HOSTIDTYPE?

Responses	% of total responses
Yes	94%
No	1.5%
Undecided	4.5%

QUESTION 15: DO YOU SUPPORT THE REMOVAL OF VALID ENTRIES '03 – COMPANIES HOUSE NUMBER' AND '04 – NHS ID' FROM HOSTIDTYPE?

Responses	% of total responses
Yes	95%
No	0%
Undecided	5%

QUESTION 16: DO YOU HAVE ANY FURTHER COMMENTS TO SUPPORT YOUR ANSWERS?

Respondents agreed that the maintenance of Companies House data would be burdensome to populate and therefore these proposals were welcomed.

A couple of questions were raised over exactly what was now being returned for UK placements – was the HESA ID field still required? Was the HOSTNAME field still required?

Recommendations:

To remove work placements from the coverage of the Host ID Type field.

To remove the Companies House Number and NHS ID from the Host ID Type field.

RETURNING PLACEMENT ACTIVITY THAT IS UNDER 20 DAYS

QUESTION 17: DOES THE ABOVE APPROACH CAUSE YOU ANY CONCERNS?

32 respondents stated that they didn't have any concerns with the suggested approach whereas 7 stated that they did have concerns (the rest didn't explicitly indicate a preference).

A number of respondents were concerned that the burden would be increased if they had to calculate whether the threshold had been met before they returned the data and then track what has or has not been returned to HESA. This is more manageable now as the calculating can be done at the end of the year, however in Data Futures this will need to be done three times a year. Some expressed a wish to send all their placement data, regardless of whether or not the 20 days had been reached. However, many agreed that the 5-day threshold was sensible and easy to calculate given it was only looking at one individual placement.

Questions were raised about whether this was 20 working days or 20 calendar days? One provider asked what 'professionally relevant' days meant. One provider asked about their Student into Schools programme and the guidance given currently that a few hours would still count as one day – which means these placements would probably need to be returned now. Another provider asked about previous guidance given by UUKi for returning all placement activity of 1 week or above and whether this position has now changed.

A couple of providers mentioned improvements they would like to make to their system or processes or collecting placement data, which would make this easier for them.

Providers requested justification for the collection of this data, in particular for returning it three times a year. A couple of respondents queried whether it would be possible to send all placement data in reference period three of a Student Course Session – though one provider said this would have implications on some fields such as PLACEMENT and STUDYABROAD.

QUESTION 18: AN EXAMPLE HAS BEEN GIVEN USING FIVE DAYS AS THE MINIMUM TOLERANCE. ARE YOU LIKELY TO HAVE OCCASIONS WHEN A STUDENT WITHIN THE SAME STUDENT COURSE SESSION WILL DO MULTIPLE OFF VENUE ACTIVITIES THAT ADD UP TO 20 DAYS OR MORE, OF WHICH AT LEAST ONE IS LESS THAN FIVE DAYS IN LENGTH?

Responses	% of total responses
Yes	43%
No	57%

QUESTION 19: IF YES, ON AVERAGE HOW MANY STUDENTS WOULD YOU EXPECT PER YEAR?

Of those respondents who were able to quantify their answer:

Responses	Number of responses
'small numbers'	3
1-15	6
50-100	3
100-500	4
500+	1

Other respondents weren't able to give an exact number as they don't currently collect this level of granularity, or some found it impossible to predict, but gave examples of when this might happen, such as nursing students working three days on, four days off etc.

QUESTION 20: DO YOU HAVE ANY FURTHER COMMENTS TO SUPPORT YOUR ANSWERS?

Respondents reiterated previous points on wanting to return placements of less than 20 days in total, wanting more guidance around activity to be returned and the justification behind wanting this to be returned three times a year. Providers asked to return this in the third reference period of a Student Course Session or for an increase in the minimum threshold (back to the current 20 day guidance in the Student record, or 10 days were suggested). Others thought the five day threshold was sensible.

Recommendations:

To continue with the definition of requiring off venue activities that total up to 20 days or more. A minimum threshold of 5 days for each individual off venue activity will also be included. This is referring to calendar days. However, providers can optionally send shorter total periods or shorter individual off venue activities if they wish.

ALLOW FOR PLACEMENT DATA UP TO 20 DAYS TO BE RETURNED EITHER SIDE OF THE STUDENT COURSE SESSION

QUESTION 21: DO YOU SUPPORT THE REPLICATION OF GUIDANCE FROM THE LEGACY COLLECTION IN DATA FUTURES?

Responses	% of total responses
Yes	75%
No	10%
Undecided	15%

QUESTION 22: DO YOU HAVE ANY FURTHER COMMENTS TO SUPPORT YOUR ANSWERS?

Many respondents who supported this indicated this was because existing systems are currently set up this way, which makes it easier to implement. One provider stated that many cases of needing to split activity over the reporting boundary was due to the HESA reporting year, and the change to the Student Course Session may reduce the number crossing boundaries.

One provider suggested that Off Venue Activities could be sent when they finish instead.

Respondents who did not support this stated that this would increase the complexity for them, and some would prefer the activity to be reported when it happened. One provider asked for a 30-day leeway instead.

One respondent asked for the 4-week definition to be retained, rather than 20 days.

Recommendations:

To continue to allow placements to be returned just outside of the Student Course Session boundaries (if that is less than 20 days).

QUESTION 23: DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER GENERAL COMMENTS TO MAKE ON THE CONTENT DISCUSSED IN THIS CONSULTATION?

Respondents generally welcomed simplification and reduction of data items in this consultation. One provider acknowledged that this was hard to review without the full data model. Another asked for notification of changes as soon as possible so that software and business process changes could be made.

A few asked specific questions relating to these proposals:

- What is the requirement of the activity duration type, if start and end dates exist?
- Does 20 days mean 20 working days, or 20 consecutive days?
- Could we have guidance around PGR mobility data?
- Could 'host name' also be removed from the Off Venue Activity entity?
- Would 5 days be a better threshold, so then all placement activity would be captured and reported at the relevant reference point?
- Are actual placement details returned, or the planned details?

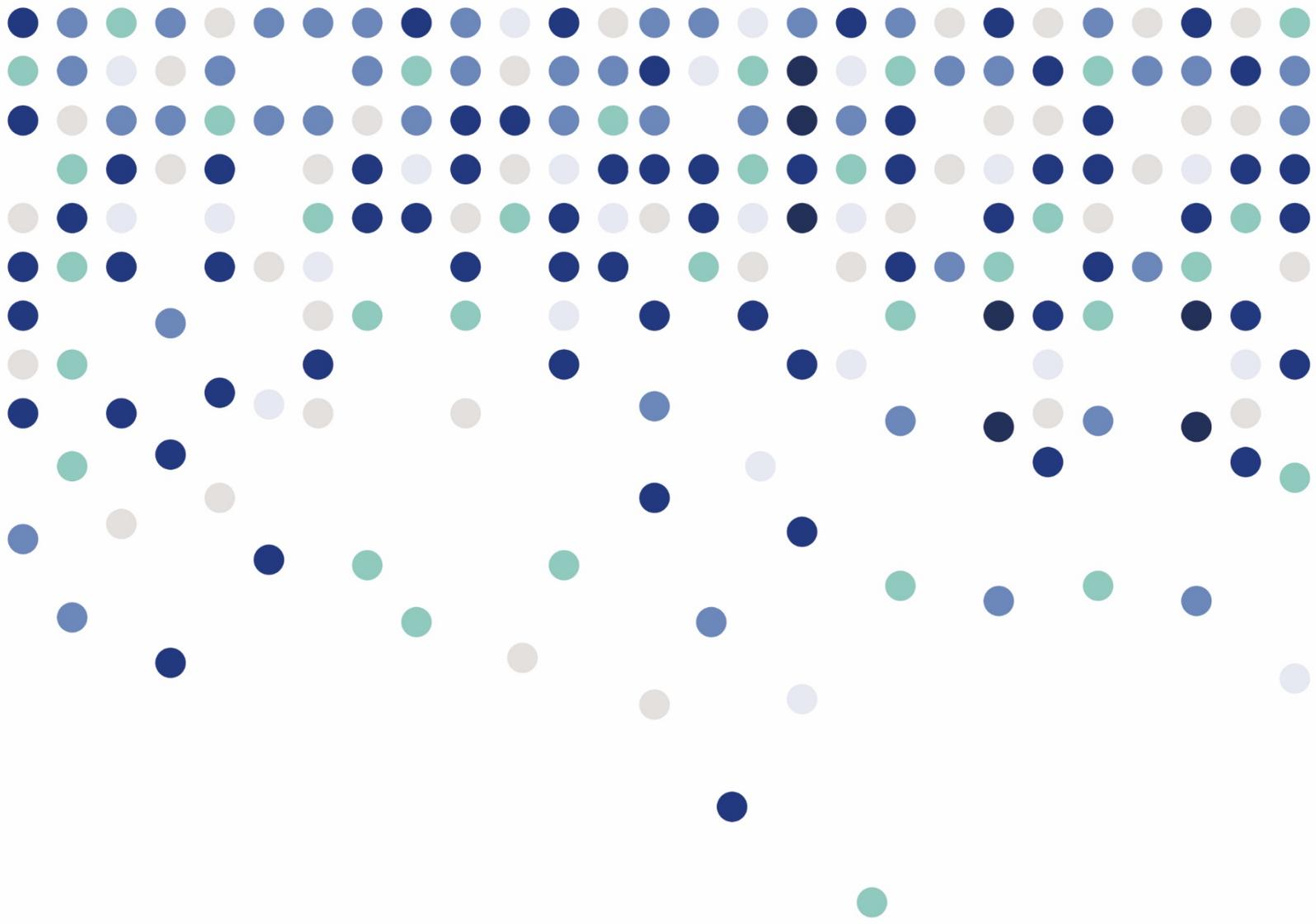
One provider indicated that they don't currently collect local placements in the central record. Others stating that they wanted to make improvements in the way this is collected at their provider.

One provider expressed concerns around the original aim of Data Futures to consolidate and reduce data burden for provider and these proposals going against that position, although they did support the proposals.

Some providers stated that they would be returning shorter placements, if they were allowed to do so optionally, either because it was easier to return it that way, or because their provider had a particular desire to do so.

Recommendations:

Consider the questions raised with Statutory Customers and address in the guidance.



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