**Review of HE student outcomes and destinations data**

**Strategic group meeting**

**11.00 – 15.00 Monday 16 November 2015**

**The Boardroom, Woburn House, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9HQ**

**Present:**

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| Sarbani Banerjee  | Higher Education Funding Council for England   |
| Jenny Bermingham  | Higher Education Statistics Agency   |
| Claire Callender  | UCL Institute of Education and Birkbeck University  |
| Siobhan Carey  | Department of Business, Innovation and Skills  |
| Michael Clarke  | University of London, Careers Group  |
| Dan Cook  | Higher Education Statistics Agency  |
| Jackie Cresswell-Griffith  | Higher Education Funding Council for Wales   |
| Rosa Fernandez  | National Centre for Universities and Business  |
| Rachel Hewitt  | Higher Education Statistics Agency   |
| Lindsey Johnson  | Health Education England  |
| Denise Jones  | Higher Education Statistics Agency  |
| Kate Little  | National Union of Students  |
| Judith Shaw  | Department for Employment and Learning (Northern Ireland)   |
| Martin Smith  | Scottish Funding Council  |
| Patrick Spicer  | Health Education England  |
| Gary Sprules  | University of the Arts, London/Higher Education Strategic Planners Association  |
| Jonathan Waller  | Higher Education Statistics Agency  |
| Chris Williams  | Welsh Assembly Government  |
| Kim Williams  | National College for Teaching and Leadership  |
| Keith Zimmerman  | Open University |

**Apologies:**

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| Ryan Scott | Scottish Government  |
| Andrew Whitmore | University of Manchester/Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services  |

##  Action

1. **Welcome and introductions**

JW welcomed the group to the first meeting of the strategic group for the review of HE student outcomes and destinations data. All members of the group introduced themselves and their role within their organisation.

1. **Terms of reference (Paper 1)**

JW introduced paper one and invited comment from the group. Members of the group recommended a number of amendments:

* Terms of reference for the review - 1
	+ Be more explicit about which students we are covering under this review
* Terms of reference for the review - 1a
	+ Change ‘Ensure’ to ‘Inform’
	+ Add ‘and users’ alongside uses
* Terms of reference for the review - 3
	+ Specify who the business case will be presented to and who owns the business case
* Stakeholders
	+ Add academic teaching staff to bullet two
	+ Add employers/employers representatives as a separate group
1. **Background information (Paper 2)**

JW presented paper 2. Questions were raised regarding the SBEE Act, including to what level of detail this data would be available. It was clarified that SBEE Act data should be able to link lifetime tax information for students, including pre-HE, during and post-HE. Access to this data was also discussed, and it was explained that access to this data outside of BIS was currently being explored.

1. **To receive the current remit for the review (Paper 3)**

Paper 3 was presented for information, with the intention that the group would revisit the key questions after the discussions on paper 4 to see if these were still viewed as the most appropriate ones or whether additional questions needed to be added.

1. **Developing the remit for the review (Paper 4)**

Paper 4 was taken by group discussions on all tables. Responses to the questions posed were summarised as follows during plenary discussion:

***Telling the story: Public information needs:***

*What do students and their advisers want to know about HE destinations and outcomes? Do they have enough/the right information?*

*How are changes in the jobs market affecting appetites for data?*

*How can we better describe the many outcomes of higher education using data?*

* Student-centric questions – right balance?
* Social mobility – need more and better data
* Non-salary outcomes – family, satisfaction, health
* Discipline of study to field of work
* Job-hopping – can represent career progression, or be circumstantial
* Motivation for studying
* Graduate jobs/non-graduate jobs dichotomy – is it useful?
* Sector of employment not detailed enough – does not say what the job role is
* Gaps in data – change of job at same employer
* Alternative routes - #notgoingtouni
* Self-classification of value of degree – allow greater nuance
* Positive outcomes can result in lower salaries: accountant retraining as a maths teacher
* Technology – data capture and publication of individualised/personalised granular data
* Subject/disciplines will show more variation of outcomes than institution
* Outcomes - % become a manager in x years? % remaining in locality?
* Skills utilisation in job – and satisfaction with skills utilisation
* Link back to career preparation in programme of study
* Alternative Providers – level playing field
* EU and International students, emigrants – not in HMRC data
* What is a graduate job? What is a student?
* What is higher education: Degree Apprenticeships? Modules?
* Longitudinal data increasingly important – link back to NSS – think about timing
* What information is needed to hold institutions to account?
* How should we consult students as a part of this process?
* Take into account HEFCE research into use of Unistats

***Setting our ambitions: Research information needs:***

*What data are required to improve teaching, learning and curriculum development?*

*What data are needed to support research into higher education?*

*How can we improve the data we collect for performance measurement and other planning purposes?*

* Student opinions on relevance of curriculum to work – currently missing
* National datasets by subject and discipline: useful to improve teaching and learning
* Earnings not a great indicator – need trajectory rather than snapshot
* Satisfaction – reflective process post-experience
* Intentions Vs outcomes
* Wellbeing; environmental responsibility; citizenship; health
* Qualitative and quantitative measures
* Robust comparable portfolio of outcomes measured
* Will HMRC data improve on DLHE, or corroborate/be directly comparable?
* Student support and careers advice – little data available – not in NSS
* University investments in careers advice/industrial links – sometimes at department level
* Timescales and phasing – when will HMRC data be available and on what basis?
* Linked data – to see pathways through HE to similar outcomes?
* Something between 6 months and 3 years?
* Can we link-up with the HEAR data to find out more about extra-curricular impacts
* Institutions use data to compare earnings internally – use as KPIs
* What is the contract with students – route to a good job? Is this how institutions see it?
* Need to consider effects on mature, part-time students; protected characteristics.
* Aspiration for more longitudinal data
* Need to think about continuity with DLHE
* Institutions want qualitative data – social responsibility, well being, *etc*. in choosing a job
* Need to establish what will be published, and what shared only with institution
* Who should run this activity – independent organization?
* Align with other common question sets – and NSS

***Navigating the terrain: Legislative impacts:***

*How can this review best support the development of government initiatives, such as the Teaching Excellence Framework, Review of quality assessment, and the E-Star award?*

*How should we respond to the legal gateway to HMRC/DWP data created by the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015?*

* Credibility and Comparability
* Whole of UK – students cross borders
* Cause and effect: Good job ≠ good teaching
* Control for subject areas, prior academic attainment
* Code of practice/governance
* Consider how these data will likely be used in TEF – appropriateness, but…
* …Don’t be led by TEF, and use this review to feed into it
* Additional questions, benchmarking groups
* What are the valuable outcomes from HE
* Need to know more about HMRC data
* Need to know more about TEF requirements
* HMRC won’t capture everything: non-UK, non-working
* Availability of data and dissemination
* Look at Vignoles/Sheppherd work (and liaise re data)
* Apprenticeships – opportunity to evaluate against HE
* Benchmarking
* Governance

***Ensuring trust, confidence and efficiency: Methodological improvements:***

*How can we best source destinations information?*

*How can we avoid measures becoming targets?*

*What sources of good methodological practice should inspire us?*

*How can we use technology to reduce cost and burden, and to improve quality?*

* Enriched data: SLC, LinkedIN, Facebook
* Better use of technology
* Present data back to the respondent
* Data linking
* Who should do the data collection? HEPs? Issues around credibility. Independent body? Who pays?
* Hard to avoid indicators becoming targets – skewed data from regional labour market variations
* 80% response rates – necessary? Achievable if not a target?
* Do we need to do the same thing every year? Cohort approach/longitudinal approach? 3-year cycle?
* How do we make comparisons – between subjects/disciplines, or HEPs
* Differing views on online response rates – but generally good
* Interventions (usually telephone) needed to drive high response rates.
* Immaterial who makes telephone call
* Centralised system with economies of scale
* Student record portal – respondent maintains own records
* HEAR (HE Achievement Report) – could we build in these data – enrichment
* A more holistic approach – wellbeing and other data
* Governance/Code of Practice – appropriate use – Nat Stats COP
* How to incentivise – necessary? Survey effects?
* Conflicts between DLHE and HMRC – which to believe?
* Access to household income
* Beware ‘Yea-saying’
* Thoroughly pilot new questions – professional approach
* Need a measure of social capital gain – ONS work. Can’t rely on UCAS data

JW summarised the outcomes from the session as being characterised by the following themes:

Firstly the need to understand career paths better, for a wide range of students. This includes better understanding of the flexibility or volatility that attends early-stage careers in some industry sectors, and the impacts of part-time study on careers.

Secondly, a greater focus on self-assessment of value and satisfaction by the student, alongside other outcomes data. There is a desire to move away from a single definition of ‘success’ to a more nuanced one, which surfaces the range of outcomes from HE.

Thirdly, there is growing interest in the motivations behind careers choices.

Fourthly, a renewed focus is needed on international students, asking different and more relevant questions.

Fifthly, a focus on skills development and later use of these skills, and along with the other points above, considering novel ways to present these data to support students.

Sixthly and finally, a reinforcement of the UK-wide applicability of these data and the underpinning data collection processes. Students and HE providers cross borders, and the data should therefore be comparable and the processes consistent, UK-wide.

It was agreed that these themes would be reflected as new key questions in an updated version of paper 3, to be circulated to the group.

1. **Timescales and communications (Paper 5)**

Paper 5 was presented to the group. Members supported the proposed timeline. It was agreed that there was unlikely to be a need for more than two strategic group meetings, but that members of the strategic group would be kept in regular correspondence by mailings of all papers and the opportunity to respond via email at key points in the process, for example before the first consultation opens.

1. **Papers to be published following this meeting**

Members of the group agreed all revised papers and minutes could be published following the meeting.

1. **Date of next meeting**

It was agreed that dates for the next meeting would be canvassed for in early January 2016.

Action points from the Minutes

Separate list to be carried forward to next Agenda (with initials of person(s) responsible for the action recorded) and status marked i.e. in progress or completed).

##  Action

1. HESA to amend the terms of reference and circulate revised copy. HESA
2. HESA to use the feedback from group discussions for the first meeting of the working group HESA
3. HESA to canvass for dates of the next meeting in early 2016. HESA
4. HESA to publish papers and minutes. HESA
5. HESA to keep members of the Strategic group updated with the work of the working group HESA
6. HESA to update the key questions in the remit document HESA