

Performance Indicators Steering Group

Meeting summary of the Performance Indicators Steering Group held at 10.30am on Monday, 28 March 2011 at Centre Point, London. The meeting was chaired by Heather Fry, Director of Education and Participation, Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE).

Agenda

1. Introductions
2. Minutes of previous meeting (Paper)
3. Matters arising
 - (a) Publication of 1st Tranche
4. Terms of reference (PISG 11/01 - Paper)
5. Performance Indicators: Now and in the future (PISG 11/02 - PowerPoint)
6. Benchmarking: Entry qualifications (PISG 11/03 - Paper)
7. Items for report
 - (a) 2011 Publication date for 2nd Tranche
8. Date of next meetings
 - (a) Steering Group
 - (b) 1st Technical group meeting
9. Any other business

Matters arising

Tranche 1 of the UK Higher Education Performance Indicators (PIs) would be published on 31 March 2011 in accordance with National Statistics requirements. Tranche 2 would be published on 15 July 2011.

Terms of reference (PISG 11/01)

The group discussed their terms of reference and the final version would be agreed by correspondence. The terms of reference for PITG were considered. It was agreed that PITG could admit one additional member of PITG to jointly represent Universities UK, Universities Scotland, GuildHE and Higher Education Wales.

Performance Indicators: now and in the future (PISG 11/02 PPT)

The group discussed the history, present and future of the PIs, including their development and the uses that the PIs were put to by different stakeholders. Following an initial discussion, the next meeting of PISG would include further coverage of the role and relevance of PIs and PISG, and later meetings would further consider the currency of the existing indicators and their coverage.

Benchmarking: Entry qualifications (PISG 11/03)

Members of PISG discussed recent calls for improvements to be made to the benchmarks that accompany the PIs, in that they were criticised for not fully accounting for a student's qualifications on entry by considering the subject area of A levels taken. They noted that differences were already recognised by the benchmarks accounting for the HE subject area of study. It was recognised that the perception of the PIs by others was important and that the PISG needed to be equipped with the evidence required to respond appropriately and consistently to criticisms of this nature. The PISG agreed to seek evidence and expert advice from PITG to better understand this issue. Any future decisions would be made on the merits of the evidence

once given due consideration by PISG. Beyond this, a response by PISG to the recent criticisms was not felt either necessary or appropriate at this time.

Date of next meeting

It was agreed that PISG would meet three times in the first year following the change in governance arrangements. The group would meet again in July 2011. The PITG would meet before July 2011.

Any other business

The group discussed the potential to publish information regarding the items discussed by PISG. A brief summary of the discussion topics could be published alongside the PIs and associated content on HESA's website, following agreement of the summary by the PISG. Publication of the group's terms of reference and membership would be maintained.