

Initial indication of the feasibility of using linked historical data within the PIs

PITG 13/07

Issue

1. Pre-higher education administrative data sources (such as the National Pupil Database, or Pupil Attainment Data) could be used in the Performance Indicators methodology to enhance the information reported on the HESA student record.

Discussion

2. Over recent years, more and more individualised administrative data has been collected and made available. This has been particularly prevalent in the school sectors. The availability of individualised data means that HESA student records can potentially be linked to the pre-higher education administrative to enhance the information reported by institutions.

3. For existing Performance Indicators, information that could be enhanced include: Qualifications on entry (for benchmarking); and school type at 18 (for Table 1). The linked information may also be able to provide development opportunities for new or modified Performance Indicators such as: school type at 16; alternative school characteristics; and more detailed benchmarking approaches.

4. There are a number of issues that need to be considered and discussed in order to establish if such linking is feasible and appropriate for the Performance Indicators. These include:

- a. The applicability of such an approach across the four devolved administrations of the UK in terms of data availability;
- b. The role that institutions would have in data that has not been provided and "signed-off" by institutions;
- c. Data use and protection issues;
- d. The logistical difficulties of incorporating such an approach into the existing Performance Indicators processes.

5. For information, for English HEIs in Table 1a of the 2010-11 Performance Indicators, around 9,500 young entrants have unknown school type. Using pre-HE administrative data, the school type of around two thirds of these students could be determined.

Outcomes

6. The Performance Indicators Technical Group to have an initial discussion on the benefits and difficulties in using pre-higher education administrative data to enhance the Performance Indicators.

Further information

18. For further information contact Mark Gittoes (Phone: 0117 931 7052; e-mail: m.gittoes@hefce.ac.uk).