



SFC Guidance

Scottish Funding Council Early Access Return 2016-17: Notes of Guidance

Issue date: 6 September 2016

Summary: These notes of guidance explain the information to be collected in the Early Access Statistics Return 2016-17

FAO: Principals and directors of Scotland's universities

Further information: **Contact:** Michelle McNeill
Job title: Policy/Analysis Officer
Department: Funding Policy
Tel: 0131 313 6662
Email: mmcneill@sfc.ac.uk

SFC Early Access Return 2016-17 Notes of Guidance

Introduction

1. These notes of guidance describe the early in-year information on Scottish-domiciled undergraduates from the 20 and 40 per cent most deprived areas that SFC is requesting from higher education institutions for 2016-17.

Requirement for Early Access Information

2. The Post-16 Education (Scotland) Act placed three duties on the Council in relation to access, namely:
 - The widening access elements of Outcome Agreements were placed onto a statutory footing.
 - A duty on the Council to have 'regard for the desirability' of access across the FE and HE sectors.
 - A duty on the Council to hold Triennial Reviews that not only monitor access but also make recommendations for what could improve the HE and FE sectors' access records.
3. These duties make it more important for the Council to get more timely information on progress with widening access so that the Council not only knows what is happening but can react more quickly to what is happening.
4. The Council and the higher education institutions agree access targets for the Outcome Agreements through negotiations that take place between September and the following January. These access targets will be for the following session and beyond. However, at the time the OA negotiations take place the Council does not have information on recruitment for the current session. The institutions submit in-year information through their Early Statistics returns but these do not cover recruitment in relation to access (except for use of additional funded places) and are not collected until mid-December, too late to be able to inform the OA negotiations. Thus, the information used to inform the OA negotiations is at least two years behind the first session which the OAs relate to.
5. The Council wishes to continue to collect in-year information on recruitment for the current session so that the Council can react more quickly to what is happening in terms of widening access and so that the access targets in the OAs reflect current progress on access.
6. The importance of using more up to date information is to inform OAs and to allow SFC to work with the sectors to make more effective use of 'in year' data

to track progress more effectively.

7. The Council's executive discussed the practicality of collecting earlier in-year information on access and retention with its higher education statistical advisory group, the Institutional Group on Statistics for SFC (IGS). The group contains representatives from the higher education institutions and from Universities Scotland. The group advised that it would be possible for institutions to provide earlier information on recruitment from the most deprived areas. The group also expressed a preference for returning this information at the same time as they provide the Council with a progress report on their Outcome Agreements.

Early Access Return

8. Institutions are asked to provide the actual and forecast numbers of Scottish-domiciled undergraduate entrants from the 20% and 40% most deprived areas in 2016-17, split by:
 - Deprivation Status (20 per cent most deprived, 20 to 40 per cent most deprived).
 - Mode of Study (Full-time, Part-time).

Spreadsheet for Early Access Return

9. Institutions are asked to return this information in the accompanying spreadsheet table.
10. Select the name of your institution from the drop-down menu. Enter the relevant numbers of Scottish-domiciled undergraduate entrants from the 20% and 40% most deprived areas in the cells with a white background. It is not possible to enter information in any cell that does not have a white background. Totals will be calculated automatically from the figures that are entered.

Definitions

11. The definitions to be used for this return are:

Actual and Forecast Student Numbers

12. Institutions are asked to return the expected numbers of Scottish-domiciled students from the 20 and 40 per cent most deprived areas starting undergraduate courses in 2016-17.
13. Any student who is already in attendance at the institution is to be classified as an **actual** enrolment and counted in either column (1) or column (4) of the table depending on their mode of study.

14. Institutions should count under **forecast** enrolments the numbers of Scottish-domiciled entrants from the 20 and 40 per cent most deprived areas expected to start undergraduate courses later in the session. Forecast enrolments should be entered in either column (2) or column (5) of the electronic table depending on the mode of study.
15. These estimates will obviously be subject to some uncertainty. Institutions might base these on levels of recruitment in previous years adjusted to take account of any changes in recruitment up to this point of the session and the likely success of any initiatives to increase the numbers of students from the most deprived areas.
16. Associate students starting their studies at a further education college and whose places are supported by the additional funded places provided by the Council for articulation should be included. These students will be returned in the institution's Individual Student returns to HESA under code '5' for the Articulation field (ARTICLN).

Entrant

17. An entrant is someone who started on their current programme of studies during the session. The 'Date of Commencement' field (COMDATE) in the HESA Individual Student returns will be recorded as being 1 August 2016 or later for entrants.

Undergraduate

18. For this return the definition of an undergraduate is the same as used for the Outcome Agreement measures, that is a student aiming for either a first degree or an HNC/HND/Diploma/Certificate of Higher Education.
19. In terms of the 'Course Aim' field (COURSEAIM) in the HESA Individual Student Record, an undergraduate would have one of the following COURSEAIM codes:

C20, C30,
H00, H11, H16, H18, H22, H23, H50,
I00, I11, I16,
J20, J26, J30
M22, M26, M28

Deprivation Status

20. The deprivation status is again the same as used for the Outcome Agreement measures and therefore based on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 2012. The postcode of a Scottish-domiciled student should be matched to a datazone and then to a SIMD rank.

21. SFC divides the SIMD ranks into quintiles using a population weighting so that each quintile contains 20% of the population. The most deprived quintile is defined to be MD20, while MD40 is defined to be the areas covered by the two most deprived quintiles.
22. The following table details the SIMD 2012 ranks contained in each SFC quintile:

SFC Deprivation Quintile	SIMD 2012 Datazone Rank	
	From	To
1 - 20% most deprived (MD20)	1	1,367
2	1,368	2,704
3	2,705	3,992
4	3,993	5,237
5 - 20% least deprived	5,238	6,505
1 and 2 - 40% most deprived (MD40)	1	2,704

23. Institutions should return the numbers of their undergraduate entrants from SFC quintiles 1 and 2 in the electronic table. The numbers of students from the 40% most deprived areas is then calculated automatically.

Mode of Study

24. Institutions are asked to split their Scottish-domiciled undergraduate entrants from the 20 and 40 per cent most deprived areas into those studying full-time and those studying part-time. This is so that the Council can monitor how these students are accessing higher education.
25. A full-time course involves the student in an average of at least 21 hours study a week, including private study, for periods of more than 24 weeks per year or, in the final year, for 24 weeks or less if the earlier years met the definition of full-time. A short full-time course with an overall course length of 24 weeks or less is classed as being part-time. Any course that does not satisfy the definition for being full-time is classified as being part-time.
26. Institutions should record their numbers of actual full-time students in column (1) and their forecast numbers of full-time students in column (2) of the electronic table. Similarly, institutions should record their numbers of actual

part-time students in column (4) and their forecast numbers of part-time students in column (5).

Return Date

27. The completed table should be emailed to mmcneill@sfc.ac.uk on or before **Friday 28 October 2016**.

Further information

28. Please contact Michelle McNeill, Policy/Analysis Officer, Funding Policy, for further information tel: 0131 313 6662, email: mmcneill@sfc.ac.uk