



Scottish Funding Council
Comhairle Maoineachaidh na h-Alba

Unistats 2020: Timetable and arrangements for the submission and publication of data

SFC Guidance

Issue Date: 14 May 2020

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Summary: This guidance outlines arrangements for the 2020 Unistats data collection. It also provides an update on the further development of the Discover Uni resource that replaced the Unistats website in 2019.

FAO: Principals of Scotland's universities

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Unistats 2020: Timetable and arrangements for the submission and publication of data

Arrangements for Unistats 2020

1. This publication outlines arrangements for the 2020 Unistats data collection. It also provides an update on the further development of the Discover Uni resource that replaced the Unistats website in 2019.
2. While we are in the process of further developing the Discover Uni website, the data collection will continue to be known in 2020 as ‘the Unistats collection’ and the resulting dataset as ‘the Unistats dataset’. The name of the Unistats collections may be changed in the future to give reference to Discover Uni.

Please note: the dates and deadlines set out below may be subject to change in response to the current coronavirus pandemic.

Providers required to return Unistats data

3. The following higher education providers are required to return Unistats data:
 - Publicly funded providers in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.
 - Providers in England that are registered with the Office for Students (OfS).
4. Data should be returned for eligible courses delivered by the provider itself or by other providers on its behalf through a sub-contractual agreement. Eligible courses are defined in the coverage of the Unistats record on the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) website.¹

Arrangements for returns for subcontracted provision

5. Providers should include in their return any eligible courses delivered by another provider on their behalf through a sub-contractual agreement.
6. The exception to this is where a teaching provider delivers its own regulated provision, and provision on behalf of another regulated or funded provider. In this case, the teaching provider should return the data for all of its eligible courses. Providers remain responsible for ensuring the return is made for their courses.

¹ See <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c18061/coverage>.

Process for submission and sign-off of data

7. All providers should return their Unistats data to HESA. Detailed guidance on the data required is available on the HESA website.
8. The timetable for submission of Unistats data for courses running in 2020-21 is in the table below. To ensure that data remains accurate, it is possible to resubmit data to reflect changes to course details or website links throughout the year. We will incorporate every Wednesday after the initial publication.
9. Data must pass a series of system validation checks before it can be submitted and signed off as accurate. Unless all stages of the process, including sign-off, have been completed, we will not consider the data to have been received and will be unable to publish it.
10. The dataset should initially be signed off by the provider's accountable officer, but formal responsibility for signing off any subsequent updates may be delegated to another member of the senior management team. If the accountable officer (usually the head of provider) is unable to sign off the initial return, this should be done by the individual acting in this capacity at the time, and the accountable officer should notify HESA in advance.

Timetable of key dates

Please note: these dates may be subject to change in response to the current coronavirus pandemic.

Date	Activity	Notes
29 May 2020	C20061 Data Collection system opens	
Mid-July 2020	NSS and Graduate Outcomes data added	NSS and Graduate Outcomes data will be added to the data collection systems and will be visible in the reports.
28 July 2020, noon	Deadline for submission of valid data set	Providers are required to have submitted a dataset which passes validation and contains the majority of their courses.
28 July 2020, noon	Nil return confirmation	Providers are required to submit a Nil return form to indicate that their provider has no courses which meet the eligibility criteria for the Unistats record as specified in the coverage of the record.

Date	Activity	Notes
18 August 2020, noon	Sign-off	Providers are required to have signed off as accurate a dataset as possible which has passed system validation and is suitable for publication.
September 2020	Official Statistics publication of 2020 Unistats dataset on the HESA website	<i>We will confirm the intended publication date for the 2020 dataset in July 2020.</i>
September 2020	Update of Discover Uni website with 2020 dataset	<i>We will confirm the intended publication date for the 2020 dataset in July 2020.</i>
September 2020	Deadline for up-to-date widgets on providers' websites	<i>We will confirm the deadline for up-to-date widgets on providers' websites in July 2020.</i>

Please note: Due to the ongoing changes to the application and admissions arrangements for 2020, we will also provide an appropriate and clear message on course results pages on the Discover Uni website. These pages signpost applicants and potential applicants to check providers' websites and course pages for any changes to the course before applying or accepting offers.

Changes to the collection and data updates

11. The Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey is being replaced by the Graduate Outcomes survey. We are working with the other funders and regulators to develop a solution to replace DLHE data on Discover Uni for 2020 with data from the Graduate Outcomes survey. NSS data will continue to be used as in 2019.
12. We will also update Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) data for those providers for which we publish it, to include data for the 2017-18 tax year. Following input from key stakeholders, and user testing, it has been collectively agreed by UK funders and regulators that from September 2020 the LEO data will include graduate earnings data for three years after graduation and five years after graduation (for the same cohort).

Further development of the Discover Uni website

13. Following the release of the Discover Uni beta website, including the replacement of Unistats, in November 2019, user research and testing is being used to inform plans for further development and enhancement of the presentation of the Unistats datasets. This is to ensure that they are easily understandable without oversimplifying the data. New designs for webpages and the presentation of the Unistats data will be applied to the website for

September 2020 release. This will be followed by the development of an improved course comparison function and search facility on the website in response to user testing and feedback.

Unistats widget

14. Data presentation and design changes made to the Discover Uni website will also be implemented on the Unistats widget. The widget will continue to provide a direct link to data about the course from providers' course pages. The deadline for its implementation will be confirmed in July 2020.