

Higher Education Students Early Statistics – consultation on changes for 2024/25 collection of Degree Apprenticeship in-year data

Date: 9 October 2024

Reference: Medr/24/02

To: Heads of higher education institutions in Wales.
Principals of directly-funded further education
institutions in Wales

Respond by: 8 November 2024

More information:

Rachael Clifford | hestats@medr.cymru

This publication asks providers to review and comment on the changes proposed for the collection of in-year degree apprenticeship recruitment data via the Higher Education Early Students Statistics survey.



Introduction

1. This publication asks higher education providers (HEPs) to review and comment on the changes proposed for the 2024/25 Higher Education Students Early Statistics (HESES) survey relating to return of data for Medr funded Degree Apprenticeship (DA) programmes.

Background

2. Initially the funding of DAs by HEFCW using Welsh Government ringfenced funding was to be run as a three year pilot, with the potential for it to be rolled into HEFCW mainstream teaching funding in the future, so many of the data capture elements and guidance matched those used in HEFCW teaching funding as outlined in, for example [HESES and End of Year Monitoring \(EYM\)](#). The Welsh Government (WG) funding of the programme was not mainstreamed after this time, but continued on the basis of ringfenced grant funding. HEFCW is now part of the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research (Medr), and so any activity previously carried out by HEFCW will be referred to as Medr and Medr funded in this publication.
3. Degree Apprenticeship specific data was first collected by HEFCW for academic year 2018/19. There are currently three points at which data is collected in the academic year (AY) to assist in funding and monitoring DA programmes. The three data collection elements consisted of (using 2023/24 AY as an example):
 - 1) Bids and proposals [W23/04HE: Degree apprenticeships in Wales and Proposals for Funding 2023/24 and 2024/25 - HEFCW](#)
 - 2) In-year monitoring reports [W23/30HE: Degree Apprenticeships 2023/24 and 2024/25 monitoring report - HEFCW](#)
 - 3) HESA Information Reporting Interface Service (IRIS) end of year data extracts [HESA Information Reporting Interface Service \(IRIS\) - Medr](#)
4. The **bids and proposals collection** invites providers to submit proposals for funding of new and continuing degree apprenticeships against published frameworks based on realistic projected recruitment numbers. This data is used to set the DA budget for each provider.
5. The **monitoring reports** are returned for three reference periods through the academic year.

Reference Period (using 2023/24 as example)
One: 01/08/2023 to 15/11/2023
Two: 16/11/2023 to 31/03/2024

Three: 01/04/2024 to 31/07/2024

6. The dates of the data collection periods were initially set to align with data capture dates expected through the HESA student record collection under [Data Futures, collecting data three times a year](#). Since then, the plans have changed to a potential twice a year collection, and the implementation of the collection of in-year data for the HESA student record is currently on hold. This means that currently only retrospective full academic year data is available, and will be the only HESA student record data available at least in the medium term. The monitoring reports data collected is currently used for monitoring of student enrolments in year in the absence of in-year HESA student data, and to calculate funding, using assumed completed credit values for new starters since 2022/23 and using continuing student numbers for starters prior to 2022/23.
7. The **HESA IRIS end year extracts** for DA programmes are processed through the [HESA IRIS](#) system along with other funding extracts such as EYM, premium and per capita. This retrospective, full academic year data is used for monitoring DAs and to calculate any adjustment to funding and clawback against funding.

Issues to consider

8. Through the collection of three sets of data, it can mean up to five data returns during the academic year which is a large burden on providers and also for Medr staff in processing the data.
9. Data is often supplied from different departments within the HEP depending on the data collection, with differing processes and understanding of Medr funding data criteria being applied. As a result there is a risk of differences when trying to compare the different data collected, resulting in extra time spent by Medr staff to decipher issues of consistency and additional time spent by HEPs to help rectify the data.
10. Additionally, looking at recent years' recruitment patterns and in discussion with HEPs about future plans, recruitment for new starters tends to be concentrated in period 1 for the majority of providers and/or programmes.

Proposed Solution and consultation questions

11. We are proposing to stop the three in-year monitoring data collections carried out by Medr using degree apprenticeship monitoring templates from 2024/25

AY, and instead build early in-year specific degree apprenticeship table(s) into the HESES data collection managed by the Medr higher education statistics team. This would ensure the data would be returned in the same format and using the same data extraction and funding rules as other Medr funded data.

Question 1: Are you supportive of this proposal to replace the three in-year data collections, with one collection through table(s) added to the Medr HESES survey?

12. The proposed HESES table is included in Annex A. We have attempted to keep the structure similar to that previously collected via the monitoring reports, to not increase burden in redesigning the table structure, but still provide the information required for funding and monitoring purposes and to easily compare with HESA IRIS DA data guidance and extractions.
13. In Annex A, HESES Table 4 collects all required data in one table. The use of drop down lists is used to ensure correct information on, e.g. frameworks and pathways, is returned. The table splits the data required into three sections reflecting the data required for the particular funding method applied to starters in the particular AY. Continuing registrations in AY 2024/25 are required for starters prior to 2022/23. Continuing registrations in AY 2024/25 and associated credit values for modules started in 2024/25 are required for starters in 2022/23 and 2023/24 and for new starters in AY 2024/25 to the HESES survey date of 1 November 2024.

Question 2: Are you content with the structure of Annex A Table 4? Do you have any other issues, or comments on the structure of this table or data collected within it?

14. Having this one in-year HESES collection, along with the end year HESA extract of data would still enable the funding payments to be made to providers for DAs by Medr. As the majority of degree apprentices are enrolled by 1 November during period 1, the HEPs would ensure funding can be allocated shortly after the period end. The HEPs would then receive funding for the low number of apprenticeships that start after 1 November, using data extracted through the HESA IRIS DA output, in the following academic year with that year's starters. This is outlined further in the example in the table below and in paragraph 16.

Timeline	
Nov 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HESES 2024/25 recruitment data collected for starters to 1 November 2024 and continuing from previous years
Jan 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HESES 2024/25 recruitment data verified

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DA funding calculated for 2024/25 starters and continuing from previous years
Mar 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DA funding paid for 2024/25 starters and continuing from previous years
Nov 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HESES 2025/26 recruitment data collected for starters to 1 November 2025 and continuing from previous years • HESA Student record 2024/25 AY data received through HESA IRIS Degree Apprenticeship output
Jan 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HESES 2025/26 recruitment data verified • DA Funding calculated for 2025/26 starters and continuing from previous years • Adjustment to 2024/25 funding based on HESA data received through HESA IRIS Degree Apprenticeship output

Question 3: Are you supportive of this method of payment for starters to 1 November in AY, with later starters extracted from HESA IRIS outputs and paid for in the next AY?

- To enable prompt payment of DA funding in 2024-25 financial year, data will have to be returned to Medr earlier than the remaining HESES tables, and verified and signed off as final in January 2025.
- When data are returned, we carry out a validation and credibility checking process. Once any subsequent queries have been resolved, data are sent out to authorised signatories at providers for verification. We expect the process for Table 4 to follow the timetable outlined below.

1 November 2024	HESES survey date
November 2024	HESES publication issued
20 December 2024	Return deadline
20 December 2024 to 10 January 2025	Credibility checking
10 January 2025	Verifications sent to providers
24 January 2025	Verifications return deadline

- The information collected via HESES as in the proposed table in **Annex A** would include detail of the framework, pathways, course duration, student enrolments and assumed completed credit values, but would not include detail of personal characteristics which is currently extracted and analysed using the HESA IRIS DA outputs which includes full, end year data.

18. In particular, assumed completed credit values would be prepared using the guidance and mappings offered in HESES/EYM publications, which provide detailed information of how to estimate where module completion is not known due to spanning two academic years. HESES/EYM circular guidance currently contains detail of how this estimation should be managed but the publications will be further updated to directly reference requirements for DA data. Additionally HESES will be expanded to include guidance for module completion and return of associated assumed completed credit values.

Question 4: Are you content that the definitions currently included in Medr HESES and EYM guidance also apply to DA programmes? Do you have any particular structures of DA programmes that do not fit in to the Medr HESES/EYM guidance offered? (see also specific Qs in next section)

19. The bids/proposals process would continue with no changes.
20. The detailed information for monitoring purposes and end year position of student and module completion would continue as currently using the HESA IRIS end year extractions, which are reviewed and signed by HEPs.
21. Medr have also considered particular issues raised by HEPs in HE Student Review Group meetings, or directly relating to DA courses. These are outlined below and covered in questions 5, 6 and 7.
22. **Completions – enrolments and credit values**
2023/24 [HESES](#) guidance, Annex A, paragraph 17 states that for enrolments: “Completion status is determined on a year of study basis, not on a course basis. Completion status is defined as follows:
- Non-completions are where students do not complete their studies due to withdrawal or dropout, or fail to take part in required assessment procedures for the year.
 - Completions are all eligible students who are registered or expected to register within the academic year minus those who are expected to not complete. Any transfers between ASCs, modes or levels of study should be included.
 - Partial completions: some full-time and sandwich students on taught courses that are non-completions can be counted as 0.5 of a completion if they meet certain criteria. If the course is semesterised, this is that the first semester is completed and if the course is not semesterised, that the first four months are completed. “

2023/24 EYM guidance Annex A paragraph 19 states that for credit values extracted through the HESA IRIS process:

“Credit values relating to modules started in the year are counted along with

the number of non-completed credit values and the number of completed credit values is calculated.

Completion status is defined as follows:

- Non-completions are where not all of the assessment required for a module has been undertaken.
- Completions are where all assessment required for a module has been undertaken.
- Partial completions: for modules on full-time and sandwich taught courses only, credit values for non-completed modules can be counted as partially completed if they meet certain criteria: if the course is semesterised and all required assessments due for the module during the first semester have been undertaken then the credit values for the first semester can be counted as completed; if the course is not semesterised and all required assessments due in the first four months have been undertaken and there is auditable evidence that the student was still in attendance then half the credit values for the module can be counted as completed."

Question 5: HEPs are asked to review in particular the guidance that refers to completion of enrolments ([HESES 2023/24 Annex H, paragraph 15](#)) and completion of modules (EYM 2023/24 Annex I, paragraphs 14 to 18), and its suitability to match the DA specific structure in their provider and their ability to adhere to requirements under this guidance.

23. Non-standard academic year courses

2023/24 [HESES](#) guidance, Annex H, paragraph 4 states

"Non-standard academic years

Those students who are following programmes of study which do not coincide with the academic year (1 August to 31 July) should be counted once only for each period of up to 12 months of study. They should normally be counted in the year in which the first registration occurs and in the years including the anniversaries of the first registration. An exception to this is if they go beyond the anniversary of the start date by less than two weeks, in which case a further registration should not be returned."

24. For clarity, a degree apprentice who started a 3 year course on 1 Jan 2025, for the purpose of returning data to HESA would be included in the student record for AYs 2024/25, 2025/26, 2026/27 and 2027/28. As the student has started on 1 Jan 2025, they would not be picked up as a new starter in HESES 2024/25 as after 1 November survey date. This data would be extracted from the HESA IRIS degree apprenticeship output in 2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27. All associated modules would be counted in the AY in which the modules start during the whole period of their study, this is to avoid double counting of credit values for modules that span two academic years.

25. **Modules that span academic years, estimation of completion**

2023/24 EYM guidance Annex A, paragraph a 20 states the following:

“When the EYM data are extracted, the number of completed credit values for modules started in 2023/24 will mostly be known. There will be some circumstances where estimates have to be made, for example, where students are on a module which spans two academic years, or where a student is eligible to take part in further assessment for a module after the end of the year in order to complete the module. In general, where estimates are used to make amendments to the extracted data, they should be based on the proportion of non-completed credits for the module in the previous year or years, or for new modules, information about similar provision in the first year of delivery. However, other methods may be used if providers believe these would provide more accurate estimates.”

“Where providers make estimates of non-completions.....they should keep auditable evidence to show the basis of these calculations.”

26. Although this guidance refers specifically to HESA IRIS extractions, the same methods should be applied to all estimation involved with module completion.

Question 6: HEPs are asked to review in particular the guidance that refers to estimating module completion (EYM 2023/24 Annex I, paragraphs 14-18) and its suitability to match the DA specific structure in their provider and their ability to adhere to requirements under this guidance. We are proposing to add an additional DA specific example in this Annex, so welcome you sharing any structures with us that we could use in the guidance update.

27. We intend to carry out a modelling exercise looking at estimation rates of DA specific module non-completion, much like we supply in HESA IRIS EYM extracts for the wider HE population. We would present our findings to HEPs for comments and would eventually be provided through the 2024/25 HESA IRIS DA output to aid providers with their data returns in futures years and/or be a source of data to check assumptions made in calculating estimates in your provider.

Question 7: Do you support Medr carrying out this estimation through the HESA IRIS degree apprenticeship outputs and do you have any comments on the current EYM estimation method that would not work well with your DA population?

Question 8: In addition to the seven questions outlined above, we welcome any further comments relating to the data capture of Degree Apprenticeships for monitoring and funding uses in Medr.

Responses and next steps

28. We are asking for responses to this consultation by **8 November 2024**, to be sent to hestats@medr.cymru. We are holding a meeting of the Medr student record review group on 15 October 2024 where we will run through the consultation and we welcome any comments at that meeting also.
29. We are sharing this consultation with nominated student data contacts at HEPs in addition to degree apprenticeship contacts. We encourage a co-ordinated response to capture comments which are both policy and data specific. We are also happy to meet with providers if you would appreciate a one-on-one discussion.
30. Once we receive responses we will consider them further and all changes will be reflected in the HESES publication which will be published in November 2024.

Further information

31. Any queries should be directed to Rachael Clifford (email hestats@medr.cymru).

Medr

Y Comisiwn Addysg Drydyddol ac Ymchwil
Commission for Tertiary Education and Research

www.medr.cymru

2 Cwr y Ddinas
Stryd Tyndall
Caerdydd
CF10 4BZ

2 Capital Quarter
Tyndall Street
Cardiff
CF10 4BZ



Noddir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Sponsored by
Welsh Government

Table 4: Registrations and Credit Values on Medr funded Degree Apprenticeship Programmes

Mode: All modes

Provider:

Code:

Framework (from drop down list)	Pathway (from drop down list)	Qualification Title	Delivery Partner	New or Existing Employee	SME or not	SIC code (from drop down list)	Course Length (3, 4, or 5 years from drop down list)	Entry Point (AY Period 1, 2 or 3 from drop down list)	Starters in 2024/25		Starters in 2022/23 and 2023/24		Starters prior to 2022/23
									New starters between 1 August and 1 November in 2024/25		Continuing Students in 2024/25		Continuing Students in 2024/25
									Total Assumed Completed Registrations	Total Assumed Completed Credit Values for all modules started in 2024/25 (associated with starters in column j)	Total Assumed Completed Registrations	Total Assumed Completed Credit Values for all modules started in 2024/25 (associated with continuing students in column l)	Total Assumed Completed Registrations
a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n

Notes:

See in particular questions 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7 in main consultation document

For drop downs to cover new and existing (to include those needed for 2024/25)

Sector (SIC Code)	Framework	EAM Pathway	Course length	Entry Point
A Agriculture, forestry and fishing	Construction	Advanced Manufacturing	3 year	2018/19 period 1
B Mining and quarrying	Digital	Chemical Engineering	4 year	2018/19 period 2
C Manufacturing	Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing	Civil Engineering	5 year	2018/19 period 3
D Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply		Construction Management		2019/20 period 1
E Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities		Electrical / Electronic Engineering		2019/20 period 2
F Construction		Integrated Engineering		2019/20 period 3
G Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles		Mechanical Engineering		2020/21 period 1
H Transport and storage		Quantity Surveying		2020/21 period 2
I Accommodation and food service activities		Rail Engineering Engineering		2020/21 period 3
J Information and communication		Renewable Energy Engineering		2021/22 period 1
K Financial and insurance activities		Surveying		2021/22 period 2
L Real estate activities				2021/22 period 3
M Professional, scientific and technical activities				2022/23 period 1
N Administrative and support service activities				2022/23 period 2
O Public administration and defence; compulsory social security				2022/23 period 3
P Education				2023/24 period 1
Q Human health and social work activities				2023/24 period 2
R Arts, entertainment and recreation				2023/24 period 3
S Other service activities				2024/25 period 1
T Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods and services producing activities of households for own use				
U Activities of extraterritorial organisations and bodies				
V Not known/Not applicable				