

**To: Heads of higher education
institutions in Wales**

Reference: W05/13HE

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Response By: no response required

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**Update on National Student Survey and outcomes of consultation on TQI
subject structure**

Further to Circular W05/10HE, this letter provides an update on the National Student Survey (NSS) and the outcomes of the consultation on the subject structure for organising information on the Teaching Quality Information (TQI) web-site. It also outlines:

- a. How institutions can preview the way their students involved in the NSS will feature within the reporting structure; **issues must be raised by 13 May 2005.**
- b. How and when institutions can access their NSS results. Institutions should ensure that they have provided Ipsos UK with the relevant institutional contacts for this, **by 13 May 2005.**
- c. The mechanisms for identifying students to be included in the 2006 NSS. Institutions are invited to provide feedback on its proposed scope, **by 29 April 2005.**

The questionnaire completion phase of the 2005 National Student Survey is coming to an end. The overall response has been good: more than 55 per cent of students have completed the questionnaire to date and surveying will continue (targeted at those areas with lower response rates) until mid-April. Response rates vary between institutions; institutions are able to access their own response rates via the Ipsos UK extranet.

The results of the survey will be published on the TQI web-site in early September 2005, to coincide with the full launch of the site. We consulted on methods of presenting the NSS results at a series of events in January 2005 (papers, including a summary of the discussions, are

available on the web at www.hefce.ac.uk under Learning & Teaching/National Student Survey). One main issue discussed was the subject structure to be used for organising NSS and other data on the TQI web-site. Following the events the funding councils consulted on the proposed subject structure (HEFCW Circular W05/10HE & HEFCE Circular letter 04/2005) and received 47 responses, including 5 from Welsh HEIs. Responses were generally supportive of the proposals, and many provided suggestions for improvement. A summary of responses is at **Annex A**. Some changes were made as a result, and the finalised subject structure is at **Annex B**.

Annex C provides the following details on the NSS:

- d. How institutions can preview the way students will be allocated within the TQI reporting structure and raise any issues, **by 13 May 2005**. (Technical guidance on accessing the preview data is at **Annex D**).
- e. How and when institutions will have access to their NSS results.

The funding councils are beginning to discuss arrangements for the 2006 NSS, and in particular the mechanisms for identifying students to be included in the survey. **Annex E** provides further details, including the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed scope of the 2006 NSS, **by 29 April 2005**.

A summary timetable for the reporting stages of the 2005 NSS and preparations for the 2006 NSS is at **Annex F**.

If you have any queries regarding the above arrangements, please contact Ms Karen Jones, here at the Council's offices.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Phil Gummatt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Professor Phil Gummatt
Chief Executive

Annex A

Outcomes of consultation on subject structure for the TQI site

1. Following discussion at the January consultation events, HEFCW Circular W05/10HE (HEFCE Circular letter 04/2005) provided a further opportunity for institutions to comment on the proposed subject structure for organising NSS and other data on the TQI site. The proposals centred on defining an intermediate level of subject groupings, in between the existing 19 Subject Areas and 143 Principal Subjects of the JACS classification system. The intermediate level would aim to provide a better balance between subject specificity and scale of provision, than the existing subject groupings. The intermediate level (level 2 in the proposed structure) would be offered to users of the TQI site in the first instance, and users would also be able to aggregate upwards to the broader 19 Subject Areas (level 1) and whole institution level (level 0), or drill down to a more detailed level (level 3).
2. HEFCE received 47 responses to the proposals, from across the UK, including 5 from Welsh HEIs. Thirty-four of these supported the proposals, and a number of these offered some specific suggestions for improvement. Two responses did not support the proposals. The remainder were either neutral overall or only raised some specific points without indicating an overall view.
3. The outcomes of the consultation were considered by the TQI Technical Working Group In March 2005, which includes representatives of the UK funding bodies, the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), UCAS, HERO and others. Given the general support, the Group agreed to adopt the proposed structure for the TQI site, and also agreed some changes to specific subject groupings in response to the consultation. The finalised structure is at **Annex B**.
4. The most commonly commented on areas were:
 - a. Subjects allied to medicine. The issues here generally related to some of the Principal Subjects containing large numbers of students and including a range of specialist provision. In response, we have separated Nutrition (B4) and Medical Technology (B8) as distinct subjects at Level 3. However, B7, B0 and B9 cannot be separated any further without going below Principal Subject level.
 - b. Engineering and Technology. Several responses suggested splitting this further at Level 2, especially the 'Other Engineering and Technology' grouping, which was seen as too broad, although one argued for conflating them at Level 2 into Engineering, and

Technology. In response, we have separated 'Civil, Chemical and other Engineering', and 'Technology' into two distinct groupings at Level 2.

c. Languages. Several respondents were concerned about the location of Classics and/or the broadness of the 'Other Languages and Area Studies' grouping at Level 2. We considered separating 'Classics, Linguistics and related subjects', and 'Asian, African and other language and area studies' at Level 2. However, the numbers of students involved do not support this, and there is also a strong argument for keeping Classics grouped within European languages. Therefore, we have retained the groupings within Languages as originally proposed. It should be noted that Classics remains a distinct subject at level 3.

d. Business and Administrative studies. One respondent each supported and argued against the separation of Business and Management at level 2. A few raised concerns about the distinctiveness of Tourism, Transport and Travel; in response we have separated this at level 2.

5. Several responses raised concerns about the separation of different elements of Geography and/or of Archaeology within the structure. These are consequences of the existing JACS groupings, and at this stage we feel that on balance consistency with JACS (and hence with other published statistics) should be retained. We will investigate ways of resolving these issues in future.

6. A number of detailed suggestions were made, typically by less than three respondents each. Some of these have been taken on board, as reflected in the finalised structure. This includes some revision of subject names.

7. Of the 17 respondents that commented on the desirability of considering self-defined (rather than JACS-based) structures in future, there was an even mix of those who did and did not think it merited consideration. This will be considered as part of ongoing reviews of public information aspects of the quality assurance frameworks across the UK.

Annex B Hierarchy of subjects

Level 1 (Subject Areas)	Level 2	Level 3	Principal subjects		
Medicine and Dentistry	Medicine and Dentistry	Medicine	A0 - Medicine and dentistry A1 - Pre-clinical Medicine A3 - Clinical Medicine A9 - Others in Medicine and Dentistry		
		Dentistry	A2 - Pre-clinical Dentistry A4 - Clinical Dentistry		
Subjects allied to Medicine	Medical Science and Pharmacy	Anatomy, Physiology and Pathology	B1 - Anatomy, Physiology and Pathology		
		Pharmacology, Toxicology and Pharmacy	B2 - Pharmacology, Toxicology and Pharmacy		
	Nursing	Nursing	B7 - Nursing		
	Other subjects allied to Medicine	Complementary Medicine	B3 - Complementary Medicine		
		Nutrition	B4 - Nutrition		
		Ophthalmics	B5 - Ophthalmics		
		Aural and Oral Sciences	B6 - Aural and Oral Sciences		
		Medical Technology	B8 - Medical Technology		
		Others in Subjects allied to Medicine	B0 - Subjects allied to medicine B9 - Others in Subjects allied to Medicine		
	Biological Sciences	Biology and related Sciences	Biology	C1 - Biology	
Zoology			C3 - Zoology		
Genetics			C4 - Genetics		
Microbiology			C5 - Microbiology		
Molecular Biology, Biophysics and Biochemistry			C7 - Molecular Biology, Biophysics and Biochemistry		
Others in Biological Sciences			C0 - Biological sciences C2 - Botany C9 - Others in Biological Sciences		
Sports Science			Sports Science	C6 - Sports Science	
Psychology			Psychology	C8 - Psychology	
Veterinary Sciences			Veterinary Sciences	Veterinary Sciences	D1 - Pre-clinical Veterinary Medicine D2 - Clinical Veterinary Medicine and Dentistry
					D3 - Animal Science D5 - Forestry D6 - Food and Beverage studies D0 - Veterinary Sciences, Agriculture and related subjects D4 - Agriculture D7 - Agricultural Sciences D9 - Others in Veterinary Sciences, Agriculture and related subjects
Agriculture and related subjects	Agriculture and related subjects	Animal Science	D3 - Animal Science		
		Forestry	D5 - Forestry		
Physical Sciences	Physical Science	Food and Beverage studies	D6 - Food and Beverage studies		
		Agriculture and others in Veterinary Sciences, Agriculture and related subjects	D0 - Veterinary Sciences, Agriculture and related subjects		
		Chemistry	F1 - Chemistry		
		Physics and Astronomy	F3 - Physics F5 - Astronomy		
		Forensic and Archaeological Science	F4 - Forensic and Archaeological Science		
		Geology	F6 - Geology		
		Ocean Sciences	F7 - Ocean Sciences		
		Others in Physical Sciences	F0 - Physical sciences F2 - Materials Science F9 - Others in Physical Sciences		
		Physical Geography and Environmental Science	Physical Geography and Environmental Science	F8 - Physical and Terrestrial Geographical and Environmental Sciences	

Level 1 (Subject Areas)	Level 2	Level 3	Principal subjects	
Mathematical Sciences	Mathematical Sciences	Mathematics and Statistics	G1 - Mathematics	
			G3 - Statistics	
		Operational Research	G2 - Operational Research	
		Others in Mathematical and Computer Sciences	G0 - Mathematical and Computer Sciences	
			G90 - Others in Mathematical and Computing Sciences	
			G99 - Mathematical and Computing Sciences not elsewhere classified	
Computer Science	Computer Science	Computer Science	G4 - Computer Science	
			G5 - Information Systems	
			G6 - Software Engineering	
			G7 - Artificial Intelligence	
			G92 - Others in Computing Sciences	
Engineering and Technology	Mechanically-based Engineering	General Engineering	H1 - General Engineering	
		Mechanical, Production and Manufacturing Engineering	H3 - Mechanical Engineering	
			H7 - Production and Manufacturing Engineering	
		Aerospace Engineering	H4 - Aerospace Engineering	
		Naval Architecture	H5 - Naval Architecture	
	Electronic and Electrical Engineering	Electronic and Electrical Engineering	H6 - Electronic and Electrical Engineering	
	Civil, Chemical and other Engineering	Civil Engineering	Civil Engineering	H2 - Civil Engineering
			Chemical, Process and Energy Engineering	H8 - Chemical, Process and Energy Engineering
			Others in Engineering	H0 - Engineering
				H9 - Others in Engineering
	Technology	Materials and Minerals Technology		J2 - Metallurgy
				J3 - Ceramics and Glasses
				J4 - Polymers and Textiles
			J5 - Materials Technology not otherwise specified	
			J1 - Minerals Technology	
	Maritime Technology	J6 - Maritime Technology		
	Others in Technology	J0 - Technologies		
		J7 - Industrial Biotechnology		
		J9 - Others in Technology		
Architecture, Building and Planning	Architecture, Building and Planning	Architecture	K1 - Architecture	
			Building	K2 - Building
			Landscape Design	K3 - Landscape Design
			Planning (Urban, Rural and Regional)	K4 - Planning (Urban, Rural and Regional)
			Others in Architecture, Building and Planning	K0 - Architecture, Building and Planning
			K9 - Others in Architecture, Building and Planning	
Social studies	Economics	Economics	L1 - Economics	
	Politics	Politics	L2 - Politics	
	Sociology, Social Policy and Anthropology	Sociology	L3 - Sociology	
		Social Policy	L4 - Social Policy	
		Anthropology	L6 - Anthropology	
		Others in Social studies	L0 - Social studies	
			L9 - Others in Social studies	
	Social Work	Social Work	L5 - Social Work	
Human and Social Geography	Human and Social Geography	L7 - Human and Social Geography		
Law	Law	Law	M0 - Law	
			M1 - Law by area	

Level 1 (Subject Areas)**Level 2****Level 3****Principal subjects**

M2 - Law by Topic

M9 - Other in Law

Level 1 (Subject Areas)	Level 2	Level 3	Principal subjects
Business and Administrative studies	Business	Business studies	N1 - Business studies
		Marketing	N5 - Marketing
	Management	Management studies	N2 - Management studies
		Human Resource Management	N6 - Human Resource Management
	Finance and Accounting	Finance	N3 - Finance
		Accounting	N4 - Accounting
	Tourism, Transport, Travel and others in Business and Administrative studies	Tourism, Transport and Travel	N8 - Tourism, Transport and Travel
		Others in Business and Administrative studies	N0 - Business and Administrative studies
			N7 - Office skills
			N9 - Others in Business and Administrative studies
Mass Communications and Documentation	Media studies	Media studies	P3 - Media studies
	Communications and Information studies	Information Services	P1 - Information Services
		Publicity studies	P2 - Publicity studies
		Publishing	P4 - Publishing
		Journalism	P5 - Journalism
		Others in Mass Communications and Documentation	P0 - Mass Communications and Documentation
		P9 - Others in Mass Communications and Documentation	
		Q3 - English studies	
	T7 - American studies		
Languages	English-based studies	English studies	T8 - Australasian studies
		American and Australasian studies	Q5 - Celtic studies
	European Languages and Area studies	Celtic studies	Q6 - Latin studies
		Classics	Q7 - Classical Greek studies
			Q8 - Classical studies
		French studies	R1 - French studies
		German and Scandinavian studies	R2 - German studies
			R6 - Scandinavian studies
		Italian studies	R3 - Italian studies
		Iberian studies	R4 - Spanish studies
			R5 - Portuguese studies
		Others in European Languages and Area studies	R0 - European Languages, Literature and related subjects
			R7 - Russian and East European studies
			R9 - Others in European Languages, Literature and related subjects
		Other Languages and Area studies	Linguistics
	Comparative Literary studies		Q2 - Comparative Literary studies
	Others in Linguistics, Classics and related subjects		Q0 - Linguistics, Classics and related subjects
			Q4 - Ancient Language studies
			Q9 - Others in Linguistics, Classics and related subjects
	Asian studies		T1 - Chinese studies
			T2 - Japanese studies
			T3 - South Asian studies
			T4 - Other Asian studies
	African and Modern Middle Eastern studies		T5 - African studies
			T6 - Modern Middle Eastern studies
	Others in Eastern, Asian and African Languages and Area studies		T0 - Eastern, Asiatic, African, American and Australasian Languages, Literature and related subjects
		T9 - Others in Eastern, Asiatic, African, American and Australasian Languages, Literature and related subjects	

Level 1 (Subject Areas)	Level 2	Level 3	Principal subjects	
Historical and Philosophical studies	History and Archaeology	History	V1 - History by period	
			V2 - History by area	
			V3 - History by topic	
		Archaeology	V4 - Archaeology	
		Others in Historical and Philosophical studies	V0 - Historical and Philosophical studies	
			V9 - Others in Historical and Philosophical studies	
	Philosophy, Theology and Religious studies		Philosophy	V5 - Philosophy
			Theology and Religious studies	V6 - Theology and Religious studies
	Creative Arts and Design	Art and Design	Fine Art	W1 - Fine Art
Design studies			W2 - Design studies	
Performing Arts			Music	W3 - Music
			Drama	W4 - Drama
			Dance	W5 - Dance
Other Creative Arts			Cinematics and Photography	W6 - Cinematics and Photography
			Imaginative Writing	W8 - Imaginative Writing
			Others in Creative Arts and Design	W0 - Creative Arts and design
			W7 - Crafts	
			W9 - Others in Creative Arts and Design	
Education	Teacher Training	Teacher Training	X1 - Training Teachers	
	Education studies	Research and Study Skills in Education	X2 - Research and Study Skills in Education	
		Academic studies in Education	X3 - Academic studies in Education	
		Others in Education	X0 - Education	
			X9 - Others in Education	
Combined	Combined	Combined	Y - Combined	

Annex C

Plans for reporting NSS results

Institutional preview of students' allocations within the reporting structure

1. Now that the subject structure is finalised, HEFCE are providing institutions across England, Wales and Northern Ireland, with the opportunity to preview how each student involved in the NSS features within the reporting structure. The allocations are based on the JACS codes that institutions assigned to the qualification aim of each student on the 2003-04 HESA student record.
2. Institutions can access the preview from 7 April 2005 on the HEFCE extranet. Details of how to access this are at **Annex D**. Enquiries about this can be made to Sarah Hellier, tel 0117 931 7003, e-mail s.hellier@hefce.ac.uk.
3. It will be important to have consistent reporting across the sector. Therefore we do not anticipate that, on previewing the data, institutions will be able to request that students are re-assigned with different JACS codes to those recorded in their HESA returns. If the preview highlights any issues regarding JACS coding in institutions' HESA returns, institutions can request that the relevant cohort of students should be suppressed from publication, and provide a commitment that such issues will be resolved for future years.
4. This preview and the resolution of any requests must be completed before institutions have access to their survey results, so that any decisions cannot be influenced by the nature of students' responses. Therefore, we are asking for any requests for suppression of data to be made by **Friday 13 May**. Requests should be made to Richard Puttock at HEFCE, tel 0117 931 7472, e-mail r.puttock@hefce.ac.uk.
5. Institutions can also use the preview data to review or add (if they haven't already done so) their 'department ID' codes, for the purposes of receiving feedback to the institution. Any changes or additions to these codes should be submitted directly to Ipsos UK via the NSS extranet, by **13 May 2005**. Enquiries about this can be made to the Ipsos NSS helpline, e-mail: nss@ipsos.com, tel: 0208 861 8120.
6. We do not intend to repeat this preview process in future years; institutions should check the allocation of students to JACS codes during the data collection process.

Institutions' access to TQI results

7. Following an open tendering exercise, Ipsos UK have been commissioned to provide NSS feedback data to institutions and students' unions. This will include, in the first instance, providing institutions with the data that will be published on the TQI web-site, during early July 2005.

8. Ipsos will provide this feedback to institutions via its NSS extranet. Institutions should inform Ipsos of any changes or additions to their existing NSS contacts, for the purposes of accessing this data. Please inform Ipsos of any updates via the NSS helpline, e-mail: nss@ipsos.com, tel: 0208 861 8120. Ipsos will provide their contacts with further details of how to access the data on its extranet, including the use of additional passwords to ensure security.

9. In order to make TQI results available to institutions as quickly as possible (following completion of the preview of allocations), these data will be provided in the form of basic data tables. Although the data and fields will be identical to that to be published on the TQI site, the format and navigation will not be as they will appear on the TQI site, as HERO will be in the process of developing the TQI software at that time.

10. We expect HERO to complete the software build by August and then provide a short preview of the results on the TQI site, before the data goes live in early September 2005. Publication of these results will be accompanied by a UK-wide campaign to publicise the TQI site.

Institutional commentaries on NSS results

11. Institutions will be able to provide a single commentary document on their NSS results on the TQI site. The document is optional and can contain any details the institution feels are appropriate, for example how it plans to respond to students' views, or links to further information on the institution's site. A link to this document will be provided on the TQI site wherever any NSS results about that institution appear.

12. HEIs will be able to begin preparing the commentaries once they receive their results from Ipsos UK. They will be able to upload the documents onto the TQI site prior to the launch in September, and will be able to add, remove or amend the document at any time.

13. We appreciate the limitations involved in preparing a commentary without access to other institutions' results. We cannot however, prior to the public launch of the results, provide access to other institutions' results, and those that are supplied individually to HEIs will be embargoed until the launch in early September.

Further feedback to institutions

14. We recognise that institutions and students' unions could benefit from additional feedback to that available on the TQI site. This was discussed at the consultation events in January, where delegates expressed particular interest in:

- results broken down by demographic and other variables not available on the TQI site
- the facility to make comparisons with results of their 'peer' institutions
- results broken down according to their self-defined departmental/course structure
- access to the qualitative feedback provided by students at the end of the questionnaire.

15. Subsequent to providing access to TQI data in July, Ipsos UK will provide such additional feedback to institutions, via its NSS extranet. As discussed at the January events, there are several options for doing this, and during April and May Ipsos will consult with institutions and students' unions on the range of options, through meetings with institutional and students' union representatives, and via the extranet with its contacts in institutions.

16. The NSS steering group will advise on which options to pursue, particularly to take into account data protection and freedom of information issues.

17. Ipsos expects to provide this second phase of feedback to institutions and students' unions from September 2005.

General analysis

18. In addition, HEFCE, on behalf of HEFCW and DELNI, have recently invited tenders for researchers to analyse the full NSS dataset, to:

- evaluate the reliability of the survey and inform future refinements
- investigate the nature of students' perceptions of teaching quality across the sector, institutions and subjects, to help inform a range of audiences interested in students' experiences and in research in this field.

19. The invitation to tender documents can be requested from Mary Gazzard at HEFCE, tel 0117 931 7443, e-mail m.gazzard@hefce.ac.uk. The deadline for the receipt of tenders is Friday 20 May 2005.

Annex D

Accessing the NSS subject preview

PURPOSE

1. This annex contains detailed instructions on how to access the NSS subject preview data.

ACCESS TO NSS SUBJECT PREVIEW DATA

2. The subject data can be accessed via the HEFCE extranet at <https://extranet.hefce.ac.uk>. On viewing the screen below you will be prompted to either log-in or register for access to the HEFCE extranet as a new user. If you have already registered to use the HEFCE extranet see paragraph 4 for details of how to log-in.



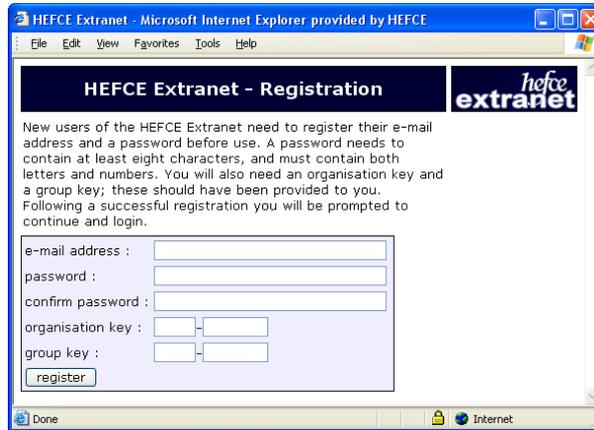
REGISTER

3. New users of the HEFCE extranet need to register an e mail address and extranet password before use. Select 'register' and enter your e mail address, a password, confirmation of your password, your institution's 'organisation key' and the NSS subject preview 'group key', then click 'register'.

Organisation Key : XXXXXXXXXX

Group Key : YYYYYYYYYYYY

Following a successful registration you will be prompted to continue and log-in.



LOG-IN

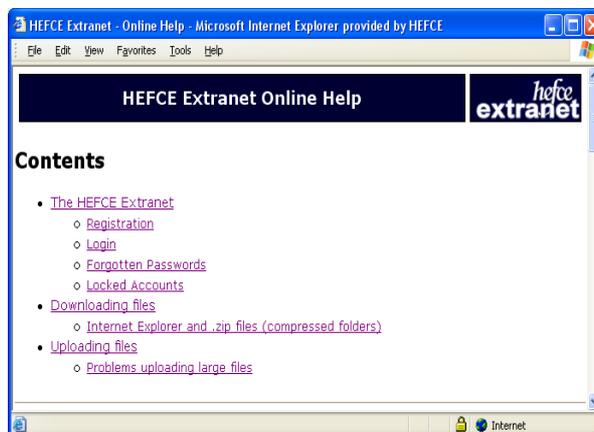
4. Once registered, users will need to log-in before each session. To do this enter your e mail address and your extranet password, chosen during registration, then click 'Login'.

5. If you have used the HEFCE extranet for other HEFCE returns you will be required to log-in and join the NSS subject preview group. Follow the login procedure by entering your e mail address and password and under 'Applications', click 'Join a group'. Enter the group key above and select 'join group'.

6. We periodically change each institution's organisation key. If you registered in the past but your account has expired, you will be required to re-register using the new organisation key given above.

HELP

7. An information page can be accessed by clicking the 'online help' link, located above the log-in box, or on the right of the 'available resources' page, under 'Links'.



FORGOTTEN PASSWORD

8. If you forget your password, select 'request a new one' on the log-in page. Enter your e mail address in the space provided and click 'request password'. A new password will be generated and sent to you. You will be required to change this password before you can access the HEFCE extranet.

9. You have three attempts to log-in before your account will be locked. If you use all three attempts and still do not have access to the web facility, please contact Sarah Hellier (e mail s.hellier@hefce.ac.uk).

AVAILABLE RESOURCES

10. After verifying the username and password, your browser will be directed to the 'available resources' page.

11. From the 'Applications' list click on the 'NSS subject preview' link.

12. This option will allow you to download the NSS subject preview data. There are two files available:

- NSSBJXXXX.xls. This is an Excel files containing the number of students and FPEs at each of the subject levels
- NSSBJXXXX.ind. This is an individualised file that contains details of which subjects each student in the population is assigned to.

USING THE INDIVIDUALISED FILES

13. Each student can be attributed to up to four subjects. On the individualised file there is a separate row for each of the student's subjects. The proportion of the student that is allocated to each subject group is given in the FPE field, thus for each HUSID the FPE will sum to 1.

14. To open the individualised file in Microsoft Excel, click <File>, <Open>. You will need to specify 'All Files' in the 'Files of type' box before the individualised file will appear in the file listing. Once you have selected the file, the 'Text Import Wizard' will appear. Ensure that 'Delimited' is selected near the top of the window, then click 'Next'. On the next page, uncheck 'Tab' and check 'Comma'. Click 'Finish' to open the file.

15. All records with a value in a specific field can be found in the following way:

- a. Select the row containing the field headings.
- b. Select <Filter> from the <Data> menu and then <Autofilter>.
- c. Click on the arrow in the column containing the data which you want to filter.

- d. Either select a specific value or select <Custom> to apply a comparison operator other than equality.
 - e. To select records using multiple fields, repeat steps d and e for each field.
16. The individualised file is best viewed in Microsoft Excel. When you open the individualised file, some fields (such as HUSID) may look like '9.64E+08'. To obtain the 13 digit code as returned to HESA follow these steps:
- a. Highlight the column containing the field you wish to format.
 - b. Click on <Format>, then <Cells>.
 - c. In the <Number> tab, select the <Custom> category.
 - d. In the <Type> text box, enter 13 zeros.
 - e. Click <OK> to get back to the spreadsheet.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

17. If you are encountering difficulties downloading files due to file size or any other issue relating to connectivity we will normally be able to advise. We recommend that you involve your network administrator in such discussions.
18. Please note that the Internet Protocol (IP) address for the extranet is 195.194.167.114.

Annex E

Preparation for the 2006 NSS

1. We expect the NSS to be repeated in 2006. The NSS steering group will review the 2005 survey during the summer and recommend any improvements to the scope, questionnaire, timing, survey methodology or reporting methods. There are a number of advantages to stability, and we therefore expect the administration of the 2006 survey to be broadly the same as that in 2005 apart from some detailed improvements.
2. Final decisions on changes to the survey will be published in early autumn 2005. However, we wish to finalise the scope of the survey and the algorithm for identifying students to be surveyed before then. This is so that the target lists can be generated simultaneously to institutions' submission of HESA data from August 2005, and hence avoid the need for any iteration about the survey population or the possibility of requiring resubmissions of HESA data, as was experienced by some institutions in the 2005 NSS.
3. We therefore set out below proposals regarding the scope and algorithm for identifying students to be included in the 2006 survey, and invite institutions to offer any comments on this, by 29 April 2005. We expect the NSS steering group to make its final recommendations on the scope of the 2006 survey during May 2005.
4. Following this, institutions will be able to view their target lists for the 2006 NSS on submission of data to HESA from August 2005, as part of the HESA data collection system.
5. We would then request that contact data for these students be provided to Ipsos UK during November 2005. At that stage institutions will also be able to notify Ipsos of any individual students to be excluded, for the following reasons:
 - a. Students who are deceased.
 - b. Students with serious health difficulties (including mental health difficulties), where seeking a response may be distressing for the student.
 - c. Students who, having been informed that their institution will pass on their contact details for the NSS, request that they do not wish the institution to do so.
6. Given that target lists will be resolved at the stage of submitting HESA data, for the 2006 NSS institutions will no longer be able to exclude students because of errors in their HESA data (this was 'code d' in the 2005 NSS).

Algorithm for identifying the 2006 sample

7. We expect the broad scope of the survey to remain unchanged for 2006. It will cover all undergraduate students expected to be in their final year during 2005-06 (or for more flexible programmes where course length is unpredictable, in their fourth year of study), with the following exceptions:

- a. Students on programmes that do not lead to undergraduate credits or awards.
- b. Students on short courses (of less than one year's duration or one year full-time equivalent study) or very low-intensity courses (typified as continuing education students).
- c. Students on directly funded higher education courses in further education colleges.

8. The main issue for consideration in the algorithm for 2006 is the treatment of students who were surveyed in 2005 and will again in 2006 be expected to complete an undergraduate qualification (such as those progressing from one award to another at a higher level, repeating the final year, or switching course). Given the principle of excluding students on short courses, an implied principle is that no student should be surveyed in two consecutive years. We therefore propose to exclude all students who were included in the 2005 survey from the 2006 NSS.

9. In future years, beyond the 2006 NSS, students progressing to higher level qualifications could be re-surveyed, so long as this would not involve surveying them in two consecutive years.

10. Comments on this approach, or any other aspects of the algorithm (for example any specific issues encountered regarding the 2005 target list) should be sent to Richard Puttock at HEFCE, e-mail r.puttock@hefce.ac.uk, by **29 April 2005**.

Annex F

Summary timetable for 2005 NSS and preparation for 2006 NSS

	2005 NSS	Preparation for 2006 NSS
April 2005	(From 7 April) Institutions able to preview the allocation of students within the TQI reporting structure	(29 April) Deadline for institutions to comment on the scope of the 2006 NSS
May 2005	(13 May) Deadline for institutions to raise issues about JACS coding of students	
July 2005	Institutions able to access TQI results on the Ipsos extranet	
August 2005	Institutions able to preview results on the TQI site and upload commentary documents	Institutions able to view target lists on submission of HESA data
September 2005	(Early September) NSS results go live on TQI site/TQI site launch campaign Institutions and students' unions receive further feedback data from Ipsos	Final decisions/guidance on details of 2006 NSS published
October 2005		Institutions ensure students have been informed about passing on contact details
November 2005		Institutions provide student contact details to Ipsos UK