

INTRODUCTION

- 1 This Circular informs institutions of the higher education (HE) data used for the following purposes:
 - the calculation of funding allocations
 - monitoring progress towards the reaching higher targets
 - monitoring equal opportunities
 - informing policy and
 - publication.

SOURCES OF DATA

- 2 The Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) uses data from its own surveys, from the ELWa Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR) and data collected by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).
- 3 HEFCW collects data from HE institutions (HEIs) and further education colleges (FECs) in Wales through:
 - the higher education students early statistics (HESES) survey
 - the end of year monitoring (EYM) of higher education enrolments survey
 - the research activity survey (RAS) and
 - the student and staff numbers forecast request (for HEIs only, as part of the strategic planning process).
- 4 The ELWa LLWR record provides student and qualifications data for FECs in Wales.
- 5 HESA collects data from all HEIs in the UK on:
 - students
 - modules
 - finance and
 - staff.
- 6 Readers of this Circular are assumed to be familiar with the HESES and EYM surveys, the RAS (HEIs only), the HESA records (HEIs only) and the LLWR (FECs only). The latest HESES, EYM, RAS and strategic planning circulars are available on the HEFCW website (www.hefcw.ac.uk), the latest HESA data manuals are available on the HESA website (www.hesa.ac.uk) and the latest LLWR manuals are available on the ELWa website (www.elwa.org.uk).

DATA USED IN FUNDING ALLOCATIONS

- 7 The main formula element of the teaching funding allocations is based on data returned on the HESES survey.
- 8 The widening access, disability and Welsh medium premiums and the per capita allocation are based on retrospective data taken from the HESA student and module records for HEIs, and, for HE students at FECs, the LLWR. The exceptions to this are the Welsh medium and disability premiums for FECs, where the data used are currently collected directly from FECs.
- 9 Data collected on the EYM survey are used to calculate any adjustment to teaching funding at the end of the academic year.

- 10 More information on data used in teaching funding, including the premium and per capita elements, is set out in Annex A.
- 11 There are two elements to recurrent research funding, quality research (QR) funding and the research investment fund (RIF). QR funding allocations are based on data returned to the 2001 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) and data returned on the RAS. RIF funding allocations are based on data returned on the 2001 RAE. More information on data used in research funding is set out in Annex B.
- 12 The postgraduate research (PGR) training allocation is based on retrospective data taken from the HESA student record. Further information on the HESA fields used is provided in Annex C.
- 13 In addition to the teaching, research and PGR recurrent grant funding allocated by HEFCW, HEFCW also calculate allocations of financial contingency funds on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG). The allocations are calculated using retrospective data on HE and FE students at HEIs, taken from the HESA records, and retrospective data on HE students at FECs, taken from the LLWR. Further information about the data used is included in Annex A.

DATA USED TO MONITOR THE REACHING HIGHER TARGETS

- 14 Data used to monitor the reaching higher targets are taken from the HESA student, module and finance records, the ELWa LLWR and for HE students domiciled in Wales attending UK FECs outside Wales, student datasets for UK FECs.
- 15 The targets monitored using these data are:
 - widening access
 - Welsh medium
 - Wales as a destination of first choice
 - overseas students
 - reducing overhead costs and
 - research income.
- 16 A description of each of these targets and the data used to monitor them is included in Annex D.

DATA USED TO MONITOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITES

- 17 HEFCW currently use HESA data to monitor the ethnicity of students and staff at Welsh HEIs. A summary of the data will be published on the HEFCW website. Further information on the fields used is in Annex D.
- 18 HESA data will also be used in future to monitor the disability status of students and staff at Welsh HEIs.

ENSURING THE ACCURACY OF HESA DATA

- 19 For 2003/04 funding allocations onwards, HESA data used in the allocation of teaching and PGR training funding have been subject to verification by HEIs to confirm that HEFCW have correctly extracted data from the HESA records. HEIs have not been able to make amendments to data during the verification process if their HESA data are incorrect.

- 20 As HEFCW will not accept amendments to HESA data used for funding, it is important that HEIs are confident that their HESA data are correct before final returns are made to HESA and the data are signed off. HEIs should take note of any discrepancies in their HESA data that have been found in past verifications or problems that HESA have brought to their attention. In particular, HEIs should ensure that they study in detail the check documentation produced by HESA when they commit their data and make any necessary amendments as a result before signing off the data.
- 21 Exceptionally, if there is an error in an HEI's HESA data, and this error would lead to the HEI being allocated funding greater than that to which it is entitled, the HEI will be expected to notify HEFCW so that the funding can be adjusted accordingly.
- 22 HESA data are also used in the calculation of the indicators contained within the annual *Performance Indicators in Higher Education in the UK* (PIs) publication for HEIs. HESA produce PIs on behalf of all the HE funding Councils of the UK. In the past, amendments to data have been accepted and used in the calculation of the PIs. However, it is now expected that the data supplied and signed off to HESA are correct, so that data can be used to calculate PIs without further amendment.

ENSURING THE ACCURACY OF LLWR DATA

- 23 FECs have been able to make changes to the Individualised Student Record (ISR) used in the calculation of the premium and per capita allocations, during the verification stage; this was because, at the time of verification, the ISR database was still open and data had not been signed off by FECs. The LLWR replaced the ISR in 2003/04 and FECs were also allowed to amend 2003/04 LLWR data used in the calculation of 2005/06 funding.
- 24 As the LLWR is still relatively new, FECs will be allowed to amend 2004/05 LLWR data, which will be used in 2006/07 funding allocations, as well. It should be noted that ELWa will have merged into the WAG by April 2006, and that finalised LLWR data for 2005/06 will be obtained from the WAG as part of a formal agreement with HEFCW. Data taken from the 2005/06 LLWR and subsequent years' records, will be sent to FECs for confirmation only that the data have been properly extracted by HEFCW, and no amendments because the data have been returned on the LLWR incorrectly will be allowed. Therefore, FECs should take note of any discrepancies in their LLWR data found during the verification process or problems that HEFCW have brought to their attention, to ensure that 2005/06 data is fit for purpose.
- 25 Further guidance relating to the completion of the HE fields on the LLWR will be issued in Autumn 2005.

DATA USED FOR PUBLICATION

- 26 In previous years, HESA student, module, staff and finance data have been summarised and published in the annual publication *Higher Education, Further Education and Training Statistics in Wales* which was a joint publication with ELWa up to 2002/03. For 2003/04 data, there will be a similar publication containing HE statistics only. The content of the publication is yet to be finalised, however, the population base and an indicative list of the fields that will be used in summarising the data are included in Annex E. A more detailed description of the data used will be provided in the new publication.
- 27 Each year, performance information relating to initial teacher training (ITT) leading to qualified teacher status (QTS) is published. This contains tables of data for each individual institution with ITT (QTS) provision, taken from the HESA student record. The fields and criteria used to extract the data presented in these tables are detailed in Annex E.

- 28 In the past, HE participation rates for Wales have been published on a yearly basis. The latest figures published are for 2000/01 (HEFCW circular W03/17HE). Participation rates for 2001/02, 2002/03 and 2003/04 are due to be published in one circular in 2005. Data used in calculating the participation rates will be described within the circular.
- 29 A summary of data used for funding purposes is published each year in the *Statistics for Funding* circular. Similarly, the *Enrolments Volume* circular summarises data collected in the EYM survey. These publications are described in more detail in Annex E.

OTHER USES OF DATA

- 30 Any of the data described may be used to inform policy. In particular, data on students taught in whole or part through the medium of Welsh and staff who teach or who are able to teach through the medium of Welsh will be used to inform policy on Welsh medium provision; and data relating to students at directly funded FECs or franchised to FECs from HEIs will be used to inform policy on HE in FECs.
- 31 Although data about FE level students are out of the scope of this circular, it should be noted that numbers of students on Welsh for Adults courses from both the HESA student record and NCB record are used by ELWa in their analysis and for publication.
- 32 As part of the strategic planning exercise, data relating to forecast student and staff numbers at HEIs are collected. These data are used for HEFCW's internal monitoring and planning processes and are not published or used in funding calculations.
- 33 It should be noted that although this circular details HESA/LLWR fields used by HEFCW, any of the fields that institutions return on the HESA records, for HEIs, or the LLWR, for FECs, may be used in future for funding, for monitoring purposes, to inform policy or for publication. Therefore, it is important that all HESA/LLWR fields are completed fully and accurately to show a fair picture of the provision and activity at the institution.

COMPARISON OF DATA SOURCES FOR HEIs

- 34 Annex K of the HESES and EYM circulars for 2004/05 show the criteria and HESA fields used to compare HESA student and module data and data returned on the HESES and EYM surveys. These annexes are updated as changes to the HESA records take place.

AUDIT

- 35 All data used for funding will continue to be subject to audit.

CONTENTS

- 36 The contents of the annexes are as follows:

Annex A: Data used in teaching funding allocations
Annex B: Data used in research funding allocations
Annex C: Data used in the PGR funding allocation
Annex D: Data used for monitoring purposes
Annex E: Data used for publication

FURTHER INFORMATION

- 37 Further information, including any updates to the information contained within this circular, can be found on the funding data and data collection web pages of the HEFCW website. Any queries regarding this circular should be directed to Hannah Falvey (e-mail hestats@hefcw.ac.uk, telephone 029 2068 2240).