

Cylchlythyr | Circular

National Student Survey 2018: Publication of data

Date: 27 March 2018
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To: Heads of regulated institutions in Wales
Governing bodies of regulated institutions in Wales
Student representative bodies/unions in Wales
Other interested parties
Response by: No response required
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This circular provides information on the timetable for institutions to be able to access their 2018 National Student Survey (NSS) results via the data dissemination portal and the publication of NSS data on the Unistats website. No action is required in response.

If you require this document in an alternative accessible format, please email info@hefcw.ac.uk.



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Introduction

1. This circular provides information on the timetable for institutions to be able to access their 2018 National Student Survey (NSS) results via the data dissemination portal and the publication of NSS data on the Unistats website. No action is required in response.
2. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all participating institutions for their commitment and contribution to the 2018 NSS.

Background

3. In [W16/32HE: A new National Student Survey for 2017](#), we set out details of the new NSS, including the introduction of a new survey questionnaire.
4. From 1 April 2018, the Office for Students (OfS) will take on responsibility for activities associated with the NSS, currently undertaken by HEFCE, on behalf of the UK funding bodies. HEFCE does not expect this transfer to affect the provision of services related to the NSS or the timetable set out in this letter.
5. As in previous years, data will be released in stages, allowing institutions to access their own data at detailed level, and at sector wide level - under strict embargo - before public release in August 2018.
6. The OfS will publish the public NSS dataset on its website on **8 August 2018**.

Publication of the 2018 NSS results on dissemination portal

7. The timetable for access and publication of NSS 2018 data is as follows.

2018	2018 NSS results	2018 Unistats website
27 July	Stage 1 Institutions are able to access overall institution-level and subject-level question responses, and open text comments via the data dissemination portal	
3 August	Stage 2 Institutions are able to access all institutions' NSS results at institutional and subject level via the data dissemination portal. Access to OfS public dataset via the data dissemination	

	portal is also available under embargo.	
8 August	OfS will publish 2018 NSS public dataset on its website	
8-22 August		NSS course level data will be available to view on the Unistats preview site.
30 August		Course level NSS 2018 data goes live on Unistats

8. **All NSS data is subject to strict embargo until 00.01 GMT on Wednesday 8 August 2018.**

NSS Dissemination site

9. Following the completion of an open tender exercise in early 2018, HEFCE has reappointed Texuna as the supplier of the NSS data dissemination portal. Texuna will be in touch with existing institutional contacts to request that contact details are confirmed or updated as appropriate, ahead of NSS 2018 data dissemination. Ensuring that these details are up-to-date will help to facilitate timely access to the dissemination portal for NSS 2018.
10. To view further information about the NSS 2018 data dissemination portal, visit <https://nss.texunatech.com>. Further technical information on the dissemination portal release will be made available in the forthcoming NSS results website newsletter issued by Texuna to NSS contacts in April 2018.

Publication of static reports

11. From time to time, the underlying dataset for the dissemination portal may be subject to minor changes. This is generally as a consequence of amendments to that dataset being implemented throughout the year. Whilst the underlying dataset on which custom reporting is based will be kept up-to-date to reflect any such changes, the static reports available via the dissemination portal will not be updated in instances where these changes are minor. Static reports should therefore be understood to capture a snapshot of the data, correct at the time of publication.

Higher Education Classification of Subjects (HECoS)

12. A new subject coding system, HECoS, has been developed to replace the Joint Academic Coding System (JACS). Further details of this coding system can be found on the HESA website: www.hesa.ac.uk/innovation/hecos.
13. HECoS will be adopted by The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) from May 2018, ready for 2019 entrants. In order to

provide consistency for prospective students, the UK funding bodies will begin to use the Common Aggregation Hierarchy (CAH) to present data on Unistats from September 2018. The CAH will also be used for the public dataset published by OfS. The CAH has been developed to allow for the mapping of both JACS codes and the new HECoS codes to a common structure.

14. To provide consistency for the sector and the public, the approach to integrating this coding system with NSS data dissemination will be to implement a transitional phase. During this time, OfS will present subject-groups in the public dataset as well as within the dissemination portal using both the CAH and the current NSS subject groupings. This will include data from 2017, and will continue for at least an additional two years (2018, 2019), after which time the funding bodies will take a decision on whether to present data solely using CAH on the dissemination portal.

Evaluation of the implementation of NSS 2017

15. The UK funding bodies are currently in the process of evaluating NSS 2017 to ascertain how the new survey has worked in practice and to pick up on any emergent issues on the implementation process.
16. The first stage of the evaluation commenced in early 2017 with an online student experience questionnaire offered to students as an optional follow-up survey once they had completed NSS 2017. A total of 84,435 students responded to the questionnaire. An online questionnaire was also made available to institutions, via the NSS contacts, during summer 2017. A total of 113 higher education providers responded to the institutional survey. This first stage demonstrated that the survey has broadly been well received and generally implemented without problems. The full report detailing the findings from the student and institutional online surveys will be published shortly.
17. A second stage of institutional evaluation is planned for autumn 2018 when institutions have seen their NSS 2018 results and are able to assess the impact of the changes made as a result of the 2017 survey findings.

Further information

18. If you have any queries regarding the NSS dissemination portal please contact Texunatech (nss@texunatech.com). For Unistats data collection queries, Welsh higher education and further education institutions should contact the Higher Education Statistics Agency (tel 0124 221 1144; email liaison@hesa.ac.uk).
19. For any other information, contact Nicola Hunt (tel 029 2085 9735; email nicola.hunt@hefcw.ac.uk).