

Office for
Students



OfS

HESES18B & HESF: Data verification

HESESB & HESF process timeline

Date	Activity
October 2018	Survey workbooks will be available to download
1 December 2018	HESES18 census date
19 December 2018	Submission deadline. (By noon)
Late December 2018 to late January 2019	Data verification phase – OfS staff will discuss survey data and any associated explanations with staff at your provider.
28 January 2019	Sign-off deadline.
February 2019	HESES / HESF evaluation and feedback

What are we looking for from your survey data?

Data verification allows us to:

- be confident in the accuracy of your data
- be confident in the robustness of your data processes
- explore where your data differs from what we might expect
- understand the context of your data - how it relates to what's happening at your provider.



What are DV queries based on?

H		I		J		K		L	
Validation: OK		Validation: OK		Validation: OK		Validation: OK		Validation: OK	
credibility: OK		First-stage credibility: Warnings (see below table)		First-stage credibility: Warnings (see below table)		First-stage credibility: Warnings (see below table)		First-stage credibility: Warnings (see below table)	
rs countable		Forecast of years not completed (negative values)		Forecast of years not completed (negative values)		Forecast of years not completed (negative values)		Forecast of years not completed (negative values)	
mber 2017 and 31		Home & EU		Home & EU		Home & EU		Home & EU	
ive		Non-fundable		HEFCE-fundable		Non-fundable		Island & overseas	
		(b)		(a)		(b)		(c)	
0.00		10.00		-8.00		0.00		-27.00	
0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	
0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	
0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	
0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	
0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	
0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	
0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	
0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	
0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	
6 Sub-contractual		7a Health full-time		7c Health p		7c Health p		7c Health p	

These may include:

1. **Credibility warnings on Tables 1 to 7c.** These indicate where data is possible but appears unusual. E.g. where you have recorded a particularly high number of new entrants.
2. **Highlighting in the comparison tables.** If we can compare your survey data with previous years, we may highlight any changes that seem particularly large.
3. **Other relevant issues.** For instance, we may ask about any subcontractual relationships reported by another provider.

Submitting initial explanations

After submitting your survey, we advise you to email us with:

- explanations for any credibility warnings or highlighting on the comparison tables.
- a brief summary of any changes to your provision in 2018-19.

This can pre-empt a lot of our questions and considerably shorten the DV process!

Notes:

- Check warnings & highlighting in the results package.
- Email explanations to **dataverification@officeforstudents.org.uk**
- Send any explanations as soon as possible.

DV phase – after submission

We will email your provider's **data contact** with:

- A letter with full instructions on the DV process
- A 'DVQ' document listing specific queries.

We aim to do this within 5 working days.

In response you should:

- Check the queries and if necessary amend your data
- Email back your responses to our queries, along with any amended workbooks.
- Replies should be sent to **dataverification@officeforstudents.org.uk** within 5 working days.

DV phase – later queries

- Data verification usually needs several rounds of queries before the data is ready for sign off.
- The DV phase has very tight timelines – later rounds of queries may have shorter deadlines.

Useful tips

- Let us know of any alternative contacts at your provider.
- Have multiple members of staff with knowledge of how the survey return was completed and able to respond to queries.

DV Queries Template

- For HESESB, the thresholds that trigger queries are described in Appendix 3.
- Queries are listed in a table, usually in a Word document.
- Space is given for you to respond to each query.

Query no.	Query	Provider response
1.	Comparison1 / Table G: OfS-fundable FTEs split by price group / D / point difference There is a difference in the value of 'D' between 2017-18 proportion of total and 2018-19 proportion of total of 6 percentage points.	

Query Identifier

What we're looking for in your answers

We are looking for responses that:

- directly relate to the query raised
- provide an appropriate level of detail
- show an understanding of HESES/HEIFES definitions.

We often ask queries about:

- Changes in non-completion rates
- Changes in the proportions of students by:
 - price group,
 - mode of study,
 - fundability status
- Changes in sub-contractual arrangements

DV responses - starting points



- Describing how your higher education provision has changed compared to last year and relating this to highlighting in the comparison tables.
- A single underlying issue can relate to several queries – you can cross refer your answers rather than repeating yourself.
- Review DV responses your provider has provided in previous years – they may still apply.

Signing off your data

Your data needs to be signed off by the **accountable officer** for your provider by **28 January 2019**.

- After all queries are resolved and any amendments made, we will send you a verification form by email.
- Check this matches the date and version number of your most recent survey workbook and have it signed by the accountable officer.
- The form needs to be emailed to us by noon on 28 January.

Data assurance

- We reserve the right to use our own estimates of data where we have reason to believe provider data is not fit for purpose.
- Data verification is the first assurance process. Audits and reconciliation of data may take place at a later date.
- We reserve the right to review funding allocations for the most recent seven-year period.



Further information in the HESES18 & HESF19 guidance

Part 1 – ‘The HESES/HESF process’

- Provides more guidance about the entire HESES/HESF process, including the data verification phase.

Appendices (HESESB only)

Give detailed information and explain when we will query data

- Appendix 1: downloading and submitting HESES18
- Appendix 2: validation checks
- Appendix 3: credibility checks and comparison tables
- Appendix 4: comparison sheets
- Appendix 5: tables A to G

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