

Completing the Higher Education Students Early Statistics survey 2019-20 (HESES19) workbook

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## Introduction

## **Purpose**

- This document gives supplementary guidance to help providers to complete the Higher Education Students Early Statistics 2019-20 (HESES19) survey. It provides a detailed description of the HESES19 process including:
  - how to complete and submit the workbook
  - · the data verification period and sign-off of the data
  - details of our data audit programme
  - recommendations on good practice.
- 2. This document should be read in conjunction with 'HESES19: Guidance for providers' (OfS 2019.32). We'll signpost you to relevant annexes within the guidance to find related further information: 'Annexes' form Part II of the HESES19 guidance. These cover:
- → See Annexes A-L for further guidance

- A: Defining the HESES student population
- B: Recognised higher education for OfS funding purposes
- C: Counting student activity
- D: Completion and non-completion
- E: Full-time equivalence for part-time years of instance
- F: Residential and fundability status
- G: Price groups
- **H:** Mode of study
- I: Level of study
- J: Long years of instance
- **K**: Year abroad categories
- L: Pre-registration nursing, midwifery and allied health courses.
- 3. We'll also refer you to appendices:
  - 'Appendices' refers to the appendices to this document these will be available separately on the OfS website<sup>2</sup> and will be released alongside the HESES19 workbooks.

→ See
Appendices for further details

A list of abbreviations used in this guidance is at the end of this document.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Available at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/heses19/.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Available at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/data-collection/heses/.

## Who should complete the HESES19 survey?

- 4. Higher education providers that are registered (or have applied to register) with the Office for Students (OfS) in the Approved (fee cap) category are required to submit a data return for 2019-20. This allows us to calculate OfS funding for 2020-21 and provides us with an early indication of student numbers for planning purposes.
- 5. HESES19 will be completed by providers that have students registered with them in 2019-20 on higher education courses recognised for OfS funding purposes. Other providers that do not have such students in 2019-20 will complete the HESF20 survey.<sup>3</sup>
- 6. Further education and sixth form colleges and academies should complete the HESES19 survey. In previous years, these providers completed a Higher Education in Further Education: Students (HEIFES) survey but we have now discontinued this.
- 7. Most of the guidance contained in this document applies to all providers, but in some specific cases, different guidance applies. This will be explicitly identified in the text and the relevant paragraphs will be labelled with a coloured band on the left of the page as below:
  - guidance that applies to further education and sixth form colleges and academies (blue)
  - guidance that applies to all other providers (red).
- 8. Providers that in previous years completed the HEIFES survey will notice slight differences in terminology in HESES. For example, the term 'years of course' is replaced with the HESES equivalent of 'years of instance'. We'll point out differences like this when they first occur.



#### **Timetable**

9. The timetable for the HESES19 process is summarised below.

Date	Action
September – October 2019	HESES19 workshops to be held in London and Manchester.
September 2019	HESES19 guidance released.
Late October 2019	HESES19 workbook will be available to download from the OfS portal. This workbook will contain the 2018-19 HESA or ILR data from the data checking tool <sup>4</sup> (where available).
1 November 2019	<b>HESES19 census date</b> for further education and sixth form colleges and academies.
14 November 2019 (noon)	HESES19 submission deadline for further education and sixth form colleges and academies. A valid HESES19 workbook must be submitted through the OfS portal by noon.
1 December 2019	HESES19 census date for all other providers.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> See <u>www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/hesf20/.</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> See www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/data-checking-tools/.

Date	Action
10 December 2019 (noon)	HESES19 submission deadline for all other providers. A valid HESES19 workbook must be submitted through the OfS portal by noon.
From November 2019	Data verification phase begins, using our credibility checks and data comparisons. Student data contacts are asked to verify, and answer any questions about, the data. This may involve several rounds of queries.
3 February 2020	<b>Sign-off deadline</b> for all providers. Final HESES19 data must be signed off as correct by the provider's accountable officer <sup>5</sup> as at the census date.
February 2020	HESES evaluation. We will contact you after your data has been signed off with an evaluation survey. We will use this to evaluate the effectiveness of the HESES19 process and make improvements for the following year.

## **HESES** workbook structure

- 10. The HESES19 survey is an Excel workbook. There are up to 9 worksheets that you may need to complete; these are listed in Figure 1. You may not need to enter data into all of the worksheets for your survey; for instance, if you do not offer health courses you will not need to complete Tables 6a-c.
- 11. Further education and sixth form colleges and academies must complete an additional sheet labelled **Courses**; this is similar to the sheet with the same name found in the HEIFES survey in previous years. It is only visible in the workbook of providers that need to complete it.

Figure 1: The tables in the HESES19 workbook

Name of worksheet	Title or description	Action
Information	Workbook information	Automatically filled
Validation	If you attempt to upload a workbook with validation errors, the resulting package will include this sheet which will contain details of the errors.	Automatically filled in the results package
Courses	Only visible to further education and sixth form colleges and academies. Countable years of instance between 1 August 2019 and the census date at course level.	Provider to complete
1 Full-time	Full-time counts of years of instance.	Provider to complete
2 Sandwich	Sandwich year out counts of years of instance.	Provider to complete
3 Part-time	Part-time counts of years of instance and FTE.	Provider to complete
4 Year abroad	Home and EU undergraduate years abroad.	Provider to complete
5 Planning	Further student analysis for planning purposes.	Provider to complete
6a Health full-time	Full-time counts of years of instance on pre- registration health courses.	Provider to complete

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> See <u>www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/regulatory-advice-10-accountable-officers-guidance-for-providers-on-the-responsibilities-of-accountable-officers/</u>.

Name of worksheet	Title or description	Action
6b Health sandwich	Sandwich year out counts of years of instance on pre-registration health courses.	Provider to complete
6c Health part-time	Part-time counts of years of instance and FTE on pre-registration health courses.	Provider to complete
Comparison tables	These tables summarise your HESES19 data and compare it with previous years (if available). You may be asked questions on large changes during data verification.	Automatically filled
Other comparisons	These tables are for information only and are not generally used during data verification. Tables in this worksheet summarise your HESES19 data and compare it with previous years (if available).	Automatically filled
A Summary B High-cost C Student premium D Erasmus+ E NMAH supplement G Other TAs	(Where visible) Funding comparison tables. See paragraphs 99–101.	Automatically filled
H Parameters		

<sup>12.</sup> Full details on the contents of each table and how to complete them are in the 'HESES19 workbook tables' section starting on page 10 of this document.

## **Getting ready to submit HESES19**

13. In preparation for HESES19, we recommend that you read this guidance thoroughly. When completing the survey, you will need to follow the definitions given in Annexes A–L of the HESES19 guidance (OfS 2019.32).<sup>6</sup>

→ See Annexes
A-L, HESES19
guidance

- 14. To accompany our HESES19 seminars in autumn 2019, we are releasing a number of online training materials<sup>7</sup> to help you complete and submit the survey and to consult when reading this document.
- 15. When the survey workbooks are released in October 2019, we will write to the 'student data contact' that your provider has nominated. This person will be our primary point of contact throughout the HESES process, though it is possible for your provider to nominate alternative contacts. It is important that your contact details are correct. If you want to check or amend them, please contact us at <a href="mailto:recurrentgrant@officeforstudents.org.uk">recurrentgrant@officeforstudents.org.uk</a>. We recommend that more than one person is involved with completing the survey, so that expertise is spread across your staff.

## Using the OfS portal to access and submit the HESES19 survey

16. Appendix 1 has detailed instructions on how to access the OfS portal and download the HESES19 workbook. It also contains details on how to use the portal to submit your workbook, as well as frequently asked questions about the role of the user administrator.

## Selecting students to include in the survey

- 17. You will first need to read the guidance in HESES19 Annex A to identify which students are in the HESES population for 2019-20. You will also need to refer to Annex B to identify 'recognised higher education for OfS funding purposes'.
- → See Annexes
  A & B for
  definitions
- 18. In HESES19 you must record **years of instance** rather than students. This is because students may be on more than one course or 'instance', and not all years may count. HESES19 Annex C explains which years of instance should be counted in the HESES19 survey.
- → See Annex C for further details
- 19. A student starting in the academic year 2019-20 but withdrawing before the census date should not be counted.
- 20. When completing the survey, you will also need to refer to HESES19 Annexes D-L. You may be asked questions during data verification to make sure you are using the correct definitions.
- → See Annexes
  D-L for
  definitions and
  guidance

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> See www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/heses19/.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> See www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/data-collection/.

## **HESES19** census date

- 21. The HESES19 survey workbook provides an in-year count of the students on higher education courses recognised for OfS funding purposes at your provider in 2019-20, including a snapshot of your provision on the census date. This means that your HESES survey will include:
  - a count of the students who have started their year by the census date
  - a forecast of the students you are expecting to start their year after the census date.
- 22. The census dates for HESES19 are as follows:
  - for further education and sixth form colleges and academies: 1 November 2019
  - for all other providers: 1 December 2019.

## Entering data in the workbook

- 23. Note that, in this document, when we refer to column numbers and letters, we are referring to the column titles on the tables (e.g. 'Column 1'), not to worksheet columns. Column titles may include more than one worksheet column.
- 24. On the workbook tables, there are three different cell types:
  - white cells these are cells where we require data to be entered
  - blue cells these are cells that have been either pre-populated with data from another source, or pre-filled by an underlying calculation
  - grey cells these cells are locked and data cannot be entered into them.
- 25. We recommend that you do not simply copy and paste data into your workbook, as this can affect formatting and lead to accidental locking of workbook cells. If you wish to copy and paste data, ensure that you select one of the 'Paste Values' options. This will not copy the formatting of the data you are pasting and will preserve the formatting of the workbook. You will not be able to paste over locked grey cells.

## Automatic highlighting in the workbook

- 26. When completing the workbook, you may see automatic highlighting of three types:
  - a. Validation errors on Tables 1 to 6c (and the Courses table, if present), highlighting where data is not correct (for example, where a negative number has been entered in a column that cannot be negative). Any validation errors will need to be corrected before the workbook is ready to be submitted.
  - b. **Credibility warnings** on Tables 1 to 6c (and the Courses table, if present), highlighting where data is possible but appears unusual (for example where you have recorded a particularly high percentage of your students as new entrants).

c. **Highlighting on Comparison worksheets 1 to 3**. These worksheets contain tables that summarise your HESES19 data and compare it with previous years (if available). Any highlighting shows differences that are greater than might be expected.

## **Reviewing your responses**

- 27. After completing the workbook, it is good practice for someone else to review the data. You should also:
  - a. Make notes of any highlighting and investigate the underlying causes this might bring to light errors in your data. During the data verification phase of the HESES process (see paragraphs 114 to 125), we will ask you about these highlighted sections.
  - b. Have a senior member of the provider check the return and agree that it is accurate.
  - c. Use the set of self-check questions (see paragraph 108) as a final check on your data and processes.

## **HESES19** workbook tables

28. This part of the guide will take you through each sheet in the workbook, detailing the data which should be entered on each table.

→ See Annexes
A-L for further
guidance

- you can find further information in Annexes A to L in the 'HESES19 guidance document' (OfS 2019.32).8
- a list of abbreviations used in this guide is at the end of this document.
- if you need further assistance, please contact us at heses@officeforstudents.org.uk.

## The Information sheet

- 29. This sheet holds prepopulated information detailing:
  - provider name and UK Provider Reference Number (UKPRN)
  - workbook information
  - the status of validation and first-stage credibility checks and comparison table highlighting (tables with text in red indicate that checks have been flagged on the corresponding table)
  - links to guidance on the completion of the survey.

## The Validation sheet

30. If you attempt to upload a workbook with validation errors, the results package will include a sheet titled 'Validation' that will contain details of the errors. Check this guide, in particular Appendix 2, for guidance on such errors.

## The Courses table

- 31. This table is only visible in the workbooks of further education and sixth form colleges and academies for whom its completion is mandatory. It serves the same function as the Courses sheet in the HEIFES workbook completed by such providers in previous years.
- 32. The 'Courses' table collects a breakdown of 'years of instance' countable between 1 August and the census date (1 November 2019) at course level. A partial screenshot of this table is shown in Figure 3.
- 33. Enter the learning aim reference for a course to look up its price group or groups and level. The price group assignment used in automatically populating the Courses table is primarily determined by the Learn Direct Classification System (LDCS) code(s) for the learning aim. However, it also takes account of the specific cases (not based on LDCS code) that determine price groups such as pre-registration nursing, midwifery and allied health profession and education courses (as set out in

<sup>8</sup> See www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/heses19/.

the HESES19 guidance, Annex G paragraphs 2-19) where these are already known for a provider.

- 34. If you believe you have a course that is not mapping correctly to price group on the Courses table because of the specific categories in Annex G paragraphs 2-19, please email us at <a href="mailto:hess@officeforstudents.org.uk">hess@officeforstudents.org.uk</a> setting out full details of why you believe the mapping is incorrect. This may apply in particular to teacher training courses that lead to qualifications of awarding bodies that do not have full degree awarding powers; and to new courses that you may have introduced for 2019-20.
- 35. If you do not have a learning aim reference, or if you believe that the information held for the learning aim reference is incorrect, first contact the Education and Skills Funding Agency at <a href="mailto:sde.servicedesk@education.gov.uk">sde.servicedesk@education.gov.uk</a> to request a change, and provide details to the OfS at <a href="mailto:heses@officeforstudents.org.uk">heses@officeforstudents.org.uk</a>.
- 36. The Courses worksheet is only for years of instance that have started on or before the census date. The figures entered here are automatically included in Column 1 of Tables 1, 2, 3 and 5.

→ See Annex C for guidance

→ See Annex G

Figure 2: Categorisation of years of instance

	Categories	Definitions and guidance
Mode of study	<ul><li>Full-time</li><li>Sandwich year out</li><li>Part-time</li></ul>	→ Annex H
Price group	<ul><li>B</li><li>C1</li><li>C2</li><li>D</li></ul>	→ Annex G
Fundability status	<ul> <li>Home and EU: OfS-fundable</li> <li>Home and EU: Non-fundable</li> <li>Island and overseas</li> </ul>	→ Annex F
Residential status	UK-domiciled  Other Home and EU	→ Annex F, paragraph 8

	Categories	Definitions and guidance
Level of study	<ul> <li>UG: undergraduate</li> <li>PGT (UG fee): postgraduate taught study on courses that are designated under the undergraduate student support arrangements</li> <li>PGT (Masters' loan): postgraduate taught study on courses eligible under masters' loan arrangements that are not PGT (UG fee)</li> <li>PGT (Other): postgraduate taught study not falling into the previous two categories</li> <li>PGR: postgraduate research</li> </ul>	→ Annex I
Length of year	<ul><li>Standard-length</li><li>Long</li></ul>	→ Annex J

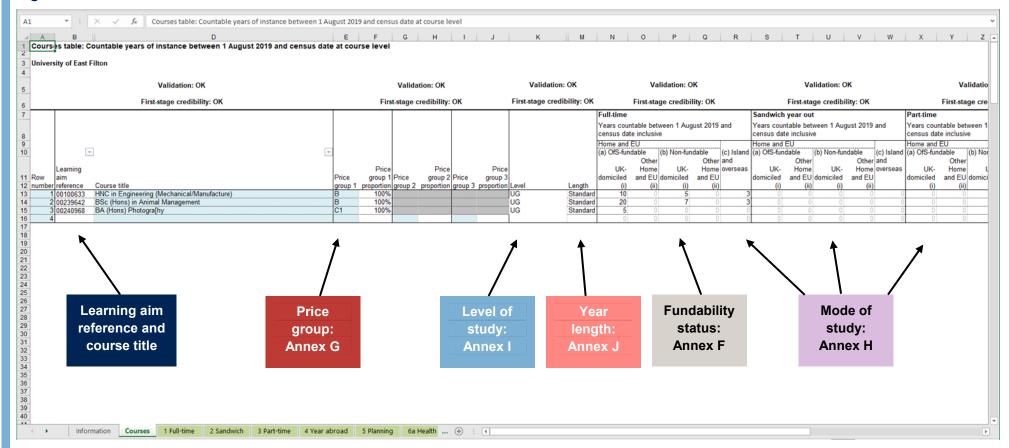
## 37. When completing the table:

- a. Enter the **learning aim reference** for each course. The **course title** will be completed automatically.
- b. The **price group or groups** of the course will be completed. If a course is split across more than one price group, enter the **proportion of the course as a whole** that is in each price group (see HESES19 Annex G) as a percentage. The total for the course must add up to 100 per cent. Where such splits appear unusual we may query this during data verification to request further information.
- c. **Level** and **length** are completed automatically for the course. However, if this does not reflect your provision accurately you can overwrite the value in the cell with the following options:
  - i. Level UG, PGT (UG fee), PGT (Masters' loan), PGT (Other).
  - ii. Length Standard, Long.
- d. Enter the number of years of instance, broken down according to the categories shown in Figure 2.
- 38. After completing the table make note of any credibility warnings (see paragraph 40). In a separate document, list the underlying reasons that make the data credible for your provider. This will help with your initial explanations and your responses to our queries.

- 39. Validation failure messages will occur in the Courses table if:
- a. A row has an invalid or blank learning aim reference.
- b. The same course has been entered into multiple rows with the same combination of level and length.
- c. Price group proportions have not been entered where required.
- d. The total of the price group proportions does not equal 100 per cent.
- e. The price group proportion is not a whole percentage (no decimals).
- f. The course level has not been entered as 'UG', 'PGT (UG fee)', 'PGT (Masters' loan)' or 'PGT (Other)'.
- g. The course length has not been entered as 'Standard' or 'Long'.
- h. Whole numbers have not been entered (no decimal points) where required.
- i. Positive numbers have not been entered where required.
- j. A row has been left blank when data has been entered below it.
- k. A row has a learning aim reference but no years countable.
- 40. Credibility warnings will occur in the Courses table if:
- a. A price group proportion has been entered as 0 per cent where there is more than one price group.
- b. The level entered does not match the level recorded on the Learning Aim Reference Service.

## **HESES19** workbook tables - The Courses table

## Figure 3: Partial screenshot of Courses table



Learning aims are included in the figure above for illustrative purposes only.

## **Table 1 Full-time**

40. Table 1 is used to return years of instance for all of the full-time students in your HESES19 population. We will use this information when we calculate funding for 2020-21. A partial screenshot of Table 1 is shown in Figure 5.



- 41. Years of instance recorded in Table 1 should **not** be included in Tables 2 or 3.
- 42. In Columns 1, 2 and 3, record years of instance according to the categories shown in Figure 4.
- 43. This table can be filtered by price group to make it easier to complete.

Figure 4: Categorisation of full-time years of instance

	Categories	Definitions and guidance
Price group	<ul> <li>A</li> <li>B</li> <li>C1</li> <li>C2</li> <li>D</li> <li>Some years of instance are split across price groups. In these cases, up to two decimal places can be used, but the total for the years of instance must be a whole number.</li> </ul>	→ Annex G
Length (of year)	<ul><li>Standard-length</li><li>Long</li></ul>	→ Annex J
Level (of study)	<ul> <li>UG: undergraduate</li> <li>PGT (UG fee): postgraduate taught study on courses that are designated under the undergraduate student support arrangements</li> <li>PGT (Masters' loan): postgraduate taught study on courses eligible under masters' loan arrangements that are not PGT (UG fee)</li> <li>PGT (Other): postgraduate taught study not falling into the previous two categories</li> <li>PGR: postgraduate research</li> </ul>	→ Annex I
Fundability status	<ul> <li>Home and EU: OfS-fundable</li> <li>Home and EU: Non-fundable</li> <li>Island and overseas</li> </ul>	→ Annex F

## 44. To complete Table 1:

#### a. For Column 1:

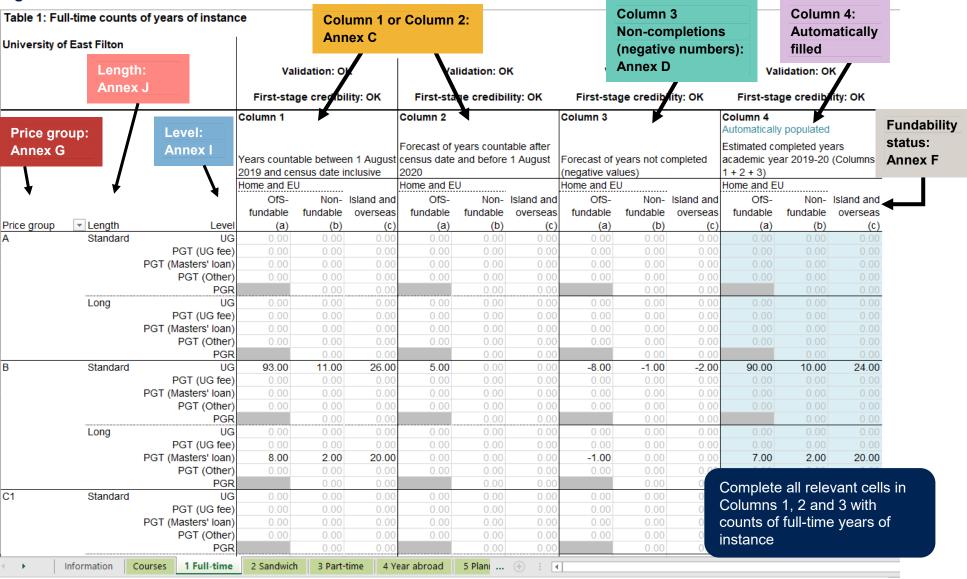
i. **For further education and sixth form colleges and academies**, no entries are needed: this column is prepopulated with figures entered in the Courses table.

- ii. **For other providers**, enter the number of years of instance that started between 1 August 2019 and the census date inclusive.
- b. Enter in **Column 2** years of instance that you forecast will start between the day after the census date and 31 July 2020 inclusive. This may include new entrants or those on the second or subsequent years of an instance.
- c. For full instructions on whether to record years in Column 1 or Column 2, see HESES19 guidance, Annex C.

→ See Annex C for full instructions

- d. In Column 3 enter a forecast of the total number of years of instance included in Column 1 and Column 2 that will not be completed. Non-completions must be recorded as a negative number. You should use the definitions and methodology for calculating estimates described in Annex D. You may be asked questions on your methodology during data verification.
- e. **Column 4** will be filled automatically with the numbers of completed years, as you enter data into Columns 1 to 3.
- f. The totals for All price groups will be filled automatically and must add up to whole numbers.
- 45. After completing the table make note of any credibility warnings (see paragraph 47). In a separate document, list the underlying reasons that make the data credible for your provider. This will help with your initial explanations and your responses to our queries.
  - 46. Validation failure messages will occur in Table 1 if:
    - a. The totals do not add up to whole numbers. If you have years of instance that are split across price groups, the totals must still be a whole number. Refer to Annex G for how to record this.
- → See Annex G for instructions
- b. Column 3 contains a positive number, or any other column contains a negative number.
- c. You record numbers to more than two decimal places.
- 47. Credibility warnings will occur in Table 1 if:
  - a. You enter no non-completions for a row where you have recorded at least 50 years of instance across Columns 1 and 2.
  - b. You record all years of instance in Column 1 and 2 for a row as non-completions in Column 3.
  - c. For further education and sixth form colleges and academies only, you record years of instance in price group A in Columns 1, 2 or 3.
  - d. For further education and sixth form colleges and academies only, you record years of instance at PGR level.

Figure 5: Partial screenshot of Table 1 Full-time



For further education and sixth form colleges and academies, Column 1 will be blue (protected) as the figures are taken from the Courses table.

## **Table 2 Sandwich**

48. Table 2 is used to return years of instance for all of the sandwich year out students in your HESES19 population. We will use this information when we calculate funding for 2020-21. A partial screenshot of Table 2 is shown in Figure 7.

→ See Annex H for definition

- 49. Years of instance recorded in Table 2 should not be included in Tables 1 or 3.
- 50. In Columns 1, 2 and 3, record years of instance according to the categories shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Categorisation of sandwich year out years of instance

	Categories	Definitions and guidance
Level of study	<ul> <li>UG: undergraduate</li> <li>PGT (UG fee): postgraduate taught study on courses that are designated under the undergraduate student support arrangements</li> <li>PGT (Masters' loan): postgraduate taught study on courses eligible under masters' loan arrangements that are not PGT (UG fee)</li> <li>PGT (Other): postgraduate taught study not falling into the previous two categories</li> </ul>	→ Annex I
Fundability status	<ul><li>Home and EU: OfS-fundable</li><li>Home and EU: Non-fundable</li><li>Island and overseas</li></ul>	→ Annex F

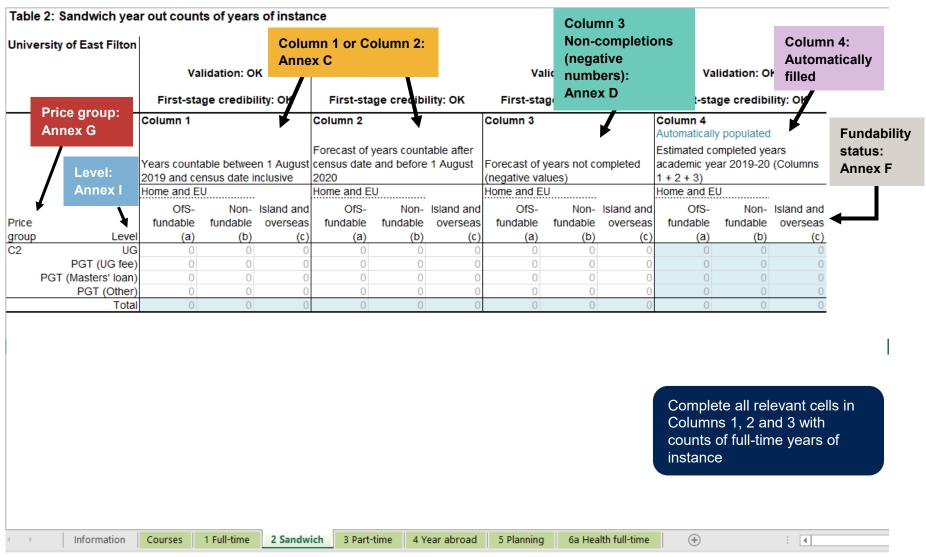
## 51. To complete Table 2:

#### a. For Column 1:

- i. **For further education and sixth form colleges and academies**, no entries are needed: this column is prepopulated with figures entered in the Courses table.
- ii. **For other providers**, enter the sandwich years out that started between 1 August 2019 and the census date inclusive.
- b. Enter in **Column 2** sandwich years out that you forecast will start between the day after the census date and 31 July 2020 inclusive. This may include new entrants (very unlikely for a sandwich year out) or those on the second or subsequent years of an instance.
- c. For full instructions on whether to record years in Column 1 or Column 2, see HESES19 Annex C.
- d. In **Column 3** enter a forecast of the number of sandwich years out that will not be completed. **Non-completions must be recorded as a negative number.** Use the definitions and the methodology for
- → See Annex D for definitions & methodology

- calculating estimates described in Annex D. You may be asked questions on your methodology during data verification.
- e. **Column 4** will be filled automatically with the numbers of completed years, as you enter data into Columns 1 to 3.
- f. The **Total** row will be filled automatically.
- 52. Validation failure messages will occur in Table 2 if:
  - a. You do not record whole numbers
  - b. You enter a positive number of non-completions in Column 3, or a negative number in any other column.

Figure 7: Partial screenshot of Table 2 Sandwich



For further education and sixth form colleges and academies, Column 1 will be blue (protected) as the figures are taken from the Courses table.

## **Table 3 Part-time**

53. Table 3 is used to return years of instance and FTE for all of the part-time students in your HESES19 population. We will use this information when we calculate funding for 2020-21. A partial screenshot of Table 3 is shown in Figure 9.



- 54. Years of instance recorded in Table 3 should not be included in Tables 1 or 2.
- 55. In Columns 1, 2, 3 and 4a, record years of instance according to the categories shown in Figure 8.
- 56. The table can be filtered by price group to make it easier to complete.

Figure 8: Categorisation of part-time years of instance

	Categories	Definitions and guidance
Price group	<ul> <li>A</li> <li>B</li> <li>C1</li> <li>C2</li> <li>D</li> <li>Some years of instance are split across price groups. In these cases up to two decimal places can be used but, except in Column 4a, the total must be a whole number.</li> </ul>	→ Annex G
Length (of year)	<ul><li>Standard-length</li><li>Long</li></ul>	→ Annex J
Level (of study)	<ul> <li>UG: undergraduate</li> <li>PGT (UG fee): postgraduate taught study on courses that are designated under the undergraduate student support arrangements</li> <li>PGT (Masters' loan): postgraduate taught study on courses eligible under masters' loan arrangements that are not PGT (UG fee)</li> <li>PGT (Other): postgraduate taught study not falling into the previous two categories</li> <li>PGR: postgraduate research</li> </ul>	→ Annex I
Fundability status	<ul> <li>Home and EU: OfS-fundable</li> <li>Home and EU: Non-fundable</li> <li>Island and overseas</li> </ul>	→ Annex F

## 57. To complete Table 3:

#### a. For Column 1:

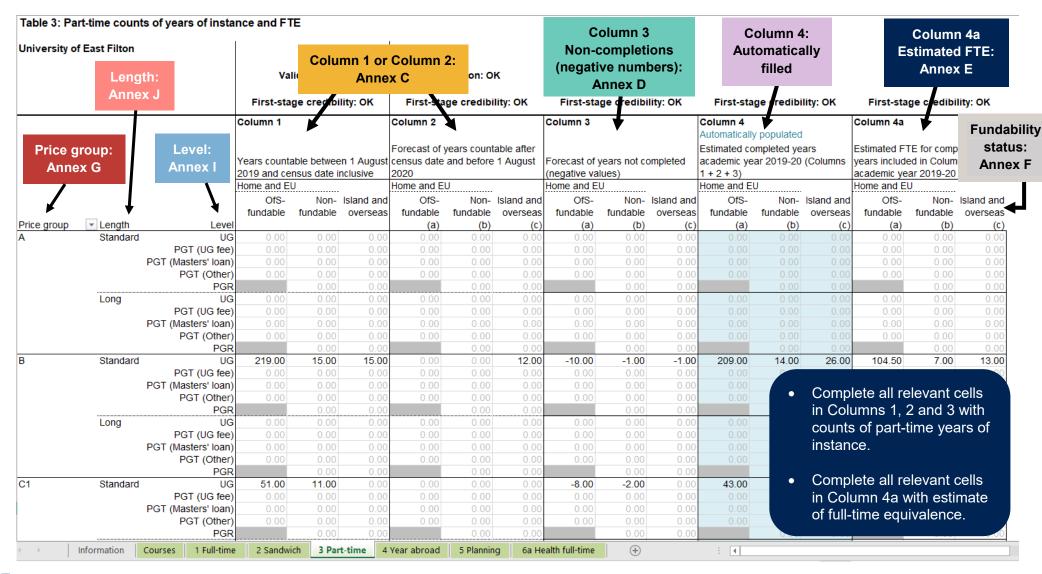
i. **For further education and sixth form colleges and academies,** no entries are needed: this column is prepopulated with figures entered in the Courses table.

- ii. **For other providers,** enter the number of years of instance that started between 1 August 2019 and the census date inclusive.
- b. Enter in **Column 2** years of instance that you forecast will start between the day after the census date and 31 July 2020 inclusive. This may include new entrants or those on the second or subsequent years of an instance.
- c. For full instructions on whether to record years in Column 1 or Column 2, see HESES19 Annex C.
- → See Annex C for instructions
- d. In Column 3 enter a forecast of the number of years of instance that will not be completed.
   Non-completions must be recorded as a negative number. Use the definitions and the methodology for calculating estimates in HESES19
   Annex D. You may be asked questions on your methodology during data verification.
- e. **Column 4** will be filled automatically with the numbers of completed years, as you enter data into Columns 1 to 3.
- f. Enter in **Column 4a** the FTE for the number of completed years of instance in Column 4. This should be the total full-time equivalent years of instance for that row, not the average FTE per year of instance. Refer to Annex E for guidance on how to determine the FTE of part-time students.
- g. The totals in the **final rows** will be completed automatically.
- 58. After completing the table make note of any credibility warnings (see paragraph 60). In a separate document, list the underlying reasons that make the data credible for your provider. This will help with your initial explanations and your responses to our queries.
  - 59. Validation failure messages will occur in Table 3 if:
    - a. The totals for Columns 1 to 3 do not add up to whole numbers. If you have courses that are split across price groups, the totals must still be whole numbers. Refer to Annex G for how to record this.
- → See Annex G for guidance
- b. Column 3 contains a positive number, or any other column contains a negative number.
- c. You record numbers to more than two decimal places.
- d. The FTE recorded in Column 4a is greater than the completed years in Column 4.
- e. The FTE recorded in Column 4a is less than 3 per cent of the completed years in Column 4. (Years of instance that have an FTE of less than 0.03 are not included see Annex C.)
- → See Annex C for guidance

## 60. **Credibility** warnings will occur in Table 3 if:

- a. You do not enter any non-completions for a row where you have recorded at least 50 years of instance across Columns 1 and 2.
- b. You record all years of instance in Columns 1 and 2 for a row as non-completions.
- c. For each of PGT (Masters' loan), PGT (Other) and PGR, the total FTE is greater than or equal to 80 per cent of the total in Column 4 (Completed years).
- d. For each of UG or PGT (UG fee), the total FTE recorded in Column 4a is greater than or equal to 67 per cent of the total in Column 4 (Completed years).

Figure 9: Partial screenshot of Table 3 Part-time



For further education and sixth form colleges and academies, Column 1 will be blue (protected) as the figures are taken from the Courses table.

## **Table 4 Year abroad**

- 61. Table 4 records years of instance for undergraduates taking a year abroad in 2019-20 as part of their course. These students will already have been recorded on Table 1 (for full-time students) or Table 2 (for sandwich year out students). We use this information when we calculate funding provided under our 'Erasmus+ and overseas study programmes' targeted allocation.
- 62. In this table you must only include Home and EU students, as defined in HESES19 Annex F. A partial screenshot of Table 4 is shown in Figure 11.

→ See Annex F for definition

63. Record years of instance according to the categories shown in Figure 10.

Figure 10: Categorisation of years abroad

	Categories	Definitions and guidance
Type of year	Outgoing Erasmus+ year abroad	→ Annex K
abroad	Outgoing year abroad outside the Erasmus+ programme	
Mode of study	Full-time	→ Annex H
	Sandwich year out	
Fundability	Home and EU: OfS-fundable	→ Annex F
status	Home and EU: Non-fundable	

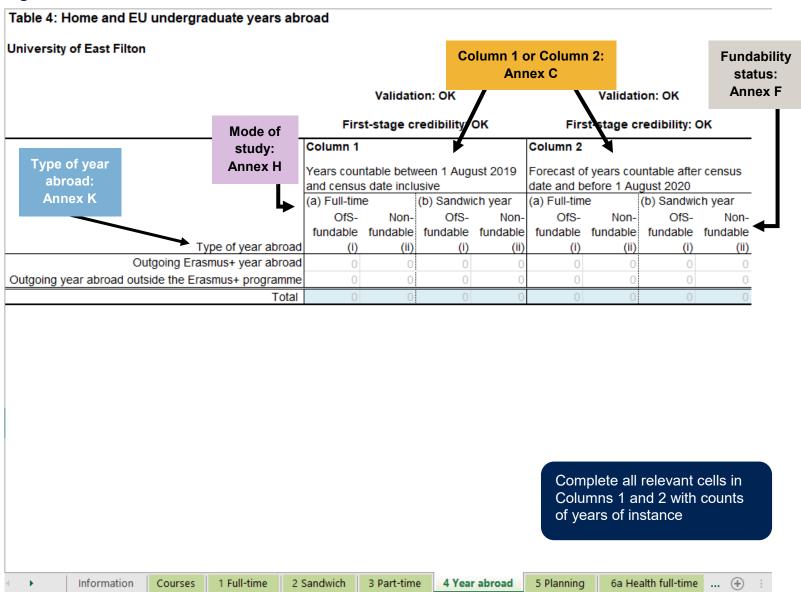
## 64. When completing Table 4:

- a. Enter in **Column 1** years abroad that started between 1 August 2019 and the census date inclusive.
- b. Enter in **Column 2** years abroad that you forecast will start between the day after the census date and 31 July 2020 inclusive.

## 65. Validation failure messages will occur in Table 4 if:

- a. You do not enter whole numbers.
- b. You enter a negative number.
- c. You enter numbers that are greater in total than the equivalent undergraduate totals you recorded in Table 1 or Table 2.

Figure 11: Partial screenshot of Table 4 Year abroad



## **Table 5 Planning**

- 66. Table 5 collects information about students recorded in Tables 1 to 3, summarised according to the categories shown in Figure 12. The table provides more detailed information on qualification level and the number of new entrants at your provider. This information is collected for planning and monitoring purposes. The data gives an early indication of the number of students starting higher education courses recognised for OfS funding purposes.
- 67. In Table 5, record the years of instance that you included in Tables 1, 2 and 3 according to the categories shown in Figure 12. A partial screenshot of Table 5 is shown in Figure 13.
- 68. The format of Table 5 has changed for 2019-20 in that apprenticeships are no longer separately identified.

Figure 12: Categorisation of years of instance for planning purposes

	Categories	Definitions and guidance
Mode of study	<ul><li>Full-time and sandwich year out</li><li>Part-time</li></ul>	→ Annex H
Level	<ul> <li>UG: undergraduate</li> <li>PGT (UG fee): postgraduate taught study on courses that are designated under the undergraduate student support arrangements</li> <li>PGT (Masters' loan): postgraduate taught study on courses eligible under masters' loan arrangements that are not PGT (UG fee)</li> <li>PGT (Other): postgraduate taught study not falling into the previous two categories</li> <li>PGR: postgraduate research</li> </ul>	→ Annex I
Fundability status	<ul><li>OfS-fundable</li><li>Non-fundable</li><li>Island and overseas</li></ul>	→ Annex F
Residential status	<ul><li>UK-domiciled</li><li>Other Home and EU</li><li>Island and overseas</li></ul>	→ Annex F, paragraph 8
Years countable	<ul><li>All years (Section A)</li><li>New entrants (Section B)</li></ul>	→ Annex C

- 69. The information collected in Table 5 is divided in to two sections:
  - a. **Section A:** all years of instance in the HESES19 population.
  - b. **Section B:** all years of instance in section A that are new entrants.

## Section A: All years

#### 70. For **Column 1**:

- a. For further education and sixth form colleges and academies, no entries are needed: this column is automatically populated with figures entered in the Courses table.
- b. **For other providers**, enter the number of years of instance that started between 1 August 2019 and the census date inclusive. The total for each combination of mode, level and fundability status in Column 1 must be the same as the equivalent total in Column 1 in Tables 1, 2 and 3.
- 71. Enter in **Column 2** years of instance that start between the day after the census date and 31 July 2020 inclusive. The total for each combination of mode, level and fundability status in Column 2 must be the same as the equivalent total in Column 2 in Tables 1, 2 and 3.

#### Section B: New entrants

72. Enter in **Section B** the years of instance included in Section A of this table that are **new entrants**, as defined in HESES19 guidance, Annex C paragraph 15.



73. After completing the table make note of any credibility warnings (see paragraph 75). In a separate document, list the underlying reasons that make the data credible for your provider. This will help with your initial explanations and your responses to our queries.

#### 74. Validation failure messages will occur in Table 5 if:

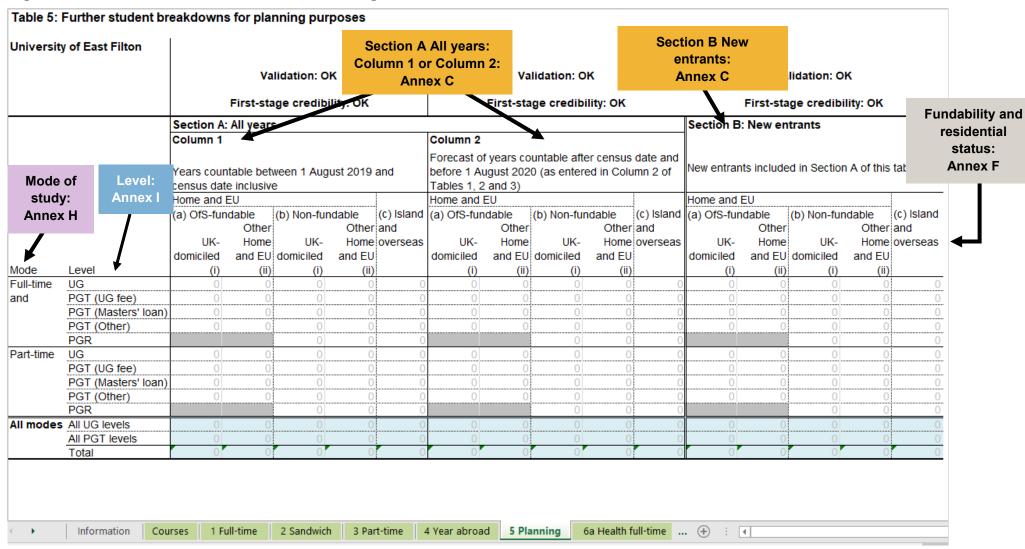
- a. You do not enter whole numbers.
- b. You enter a negative number.
- c. The totals in 'Section A: All years', Column 1 or Column 2 are not the same as the relevant totals in Tables 1. 2 or 3.
- d. In any row in 'Section B: New entrants', you record more new entrants than there are years of instance in Section A, Columns 1 and 2.

## 75. Credibility warnings will occur in Table 5 if you record:

- a. No new entrants in Section B.
- b. All of the students in 'Section A: All years' as new entrants in 'Section B: New entrants'.
- c. 70 per cent or more of your Home and EU, undergraduate, full-time and sandwich year out years of instance from 'Section A: All years' as new entrants in 'Section B: New entrants'.
- d. 25 per cent or less of your Home and EU, undergraduate, full-time and sandwich year out years of instance from 'Section A: All years' as new entrants in 'Section B: New entrants'.

- e. 50 per cent or less of your Home and EU, postgraduate, full-time and sandwich year out years of instance from 'Section A: All years' as new entrants in 'Section B: New entrants'.
- f. 70 per cent or more of your Home and EU, undergraduate, part-time years of instance from 'Section A: All years' as new entrants in 'Section B: New entrants'.
- g. 15 per cent or less of your Home and EU, undergraduate, part-time years of instance from 'Section A: All years' as new entrants in 'Section B: New entrants'.
- h. 70 per cent or more of your Home and EU, postgraduate, part-time years of instance from 'Section A: All years' as new entrants in 'Section B: New entrants'.
- i. 25 per cent or less of your Home and EU, postgraduate, part-time years of instance from 'Section A: All years' as new entrants in 'Section B: New entrants'.
- j. 70 per cent or more of your Island and overseas students from 'Section A: All years' as new entrants in 'Section B: New entrants'.
- k. 25 per cent or less of your Island and overseas students from 'Section A: All years' as new entrants in 'Section B: New entrants'.

Figure 13: Partial screenshot of Table 5 Planning



For further education and sixth form colleges and academies, Column 1 will be blue (protected) as the figures are taken from the Courses table.

## Tables 6a Health full-time, 6b Health sandwich and 6c Health part-time

- 76. Only providers delivering pre-registration courses in nursing, midwifery and allied health professions in 2019-20 need to complete these tables.
- 77. These tables collect information about years of instance that lead to first registrable qualifications for the health professions listed in Figure 14. These years of instance will have already been included in Tables 1 Full-time, 2 Sandwich and 3 Part-time, respectively. The data will be used for planning purposes and to inform funding allocations for providers in 2020-21. Further guidance on definitions specific to these tables is provided in HESES19 guidance, Annex L.
- 78. The tables are mutually exclusive; for example, years of instance recorded in Table 6a should not be included in Tables 6b or 6c.
- 79. Tables 6a, 6b and 6c can be filtered by health profession, to make it easier to complete the tables. The listed professions show the relevant price group.

## Which information is collected and why

- 80. For Tables 6a, 6b and 6c we are collecting information on Home and EU years of instance in 2019-20 broken down between the following columns:
  - a. **OfS-fundable**: years of instance for all students in the relevant combination of profession, length of year, level and fundability status.

#### b. Non-fundable:

- i. **Starters in 2016-17** undergraduate years of instance for professions other than dental hygiene and dental therapy. As in previous years, we will count these as a proxy for the additional cohort of students (those in the fourth year of their studies) to be funded from 2020-21, following the transfer of funding responsibility introduced for them in 2017-18.
- ii. Starters in 2017-18 years of instance for both:
  - 1) Undergraduate students in dental hygiene and dental therapy.
  - 2) Postgraduate students in the other professions listed in Figure 14.

As in previous years, we will count these as a proxy for the additional cohort of students (those in the third year of their studies) to be funded from 2020-21 following the transfer of funding responsibility introduced for them in 2018-19.

- iii. **All other non-fundable students** Any non-fundable students not included in the above categories.
- c. Starters in 2019-20 (for Tables 6a and 6c only): years of instance for the relevant combination of profession, length of year and level, for Home and EU students that started study for the first time in 2019-20. These students will already have been recorded in either sub-column (a) (OfS-fundable) or sub-column (b) (iii) (non-fundable).

- 81. Years of instance in categories (b) (i) and (b) (ii) are required because the transfer of funding responsibility for pre-registration courses from the Department of Health and Social Care took effect in different years for different professions and level of course (undergraduate or postgraduate). Therefore, these tables collect data separately according to their fundability status and the academic year in which students started their studies. Where a profession or level of study is not applicable, the cells are greyed out. Years of instance for Starters in 2019-20 will be used for planning purposes.
- 82. When completing Table 6, please note that the concept of 'starters' is different from that of 'new entrants' as collected in Table 5. Further guidance on the definitions of starters and new entrants is provided in Annexes C and L.

→ See Annexes
C & L for
definitions

83. Partial screenshots of Tables 6a, 6b and 6c are shown in Figure 15.

## **Healthcare professions**

- 84. For the professions listed in Figure 14, only pre-registration courses at English providers that are approved by the relevant regulatory body should be included. These bodies are:
  - for nursing and midwifery, the Nursing and Midwifery Council
  - for dental hygiene and dental therapy, the General Dental Council
  - for all other professions listed, the Health and Care Professions Council.

→ See Annex L for guidance

Figure 14: Categorisation of Home and EU counts of years of instance on pre-registration courses in nursing, midwifery and allied health professions

	Categories		Definitions and guidance
Mode of study	<ul> <li>Table 6a Full-time</li> <li>Table 6b Sandwich year out</li> <li>Table 6c Part-time</li> </ul>		→ Annex H
Profession	<ul> <li>Dental hygiene</li> <li>Dental therapy</li> <li>Dietetics</li> <li>Midwifery</li> <li>Nursing (adult)</li> <li>Nursing (children)</li> <li>Nursing (learning disability)</li> <li>Nursing (mental health)</li> <li>Nursing (unclassified)</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Occupational therapy</li> <li>Operating department practice</li> <li>Orthoptics</li> <li>Orthotics and prosthetics</li> <li>Physiotherapy</li> <li>Podiatry</li> <li>Radiography (diagnostic)</li> <li>Radiography (therapeutic)</li> <li>Speech and language therapy</li> </ul>	→ Annex L
Length (of year)	<ul><li>Standard-length</li><li>Long</li></ul>		→ Annex J

	Categories	Definitions and guidance
Level	<ul> <li>UG: undergraduate</li> <li>PGT (UG fee): postgraduate taught study on courses that are designated under the undergraduate student support arrangements</li> </ul>	→ Annex I
Years countable	<ul> <li>OfS-fundable</li> <li>Non-fundable: three different categories, as described above in paragraph 80.b.</li> <li>OfS fundable and non-fundable starters in 2019-20</li> </ul>	→ Annex L
Fundability status	<ul><li>OfS-fundable</li><li>Non-fundable</li></ul>	→ Annex F

## Entering data in Table 6

85. Data to enter in Tables 6a, 6b and 6c:

- a. Enter in **Column 1** years of instance that started between 1 August 2019 and the census date inclusive.
- b. Enter in **Column 2** years of instance that you forecast will start between the day after the census date and 31 July 2020 inclusive. See HESES19 guidance Annex C for full instructions on whether to record years in Column 1 or Column 2.

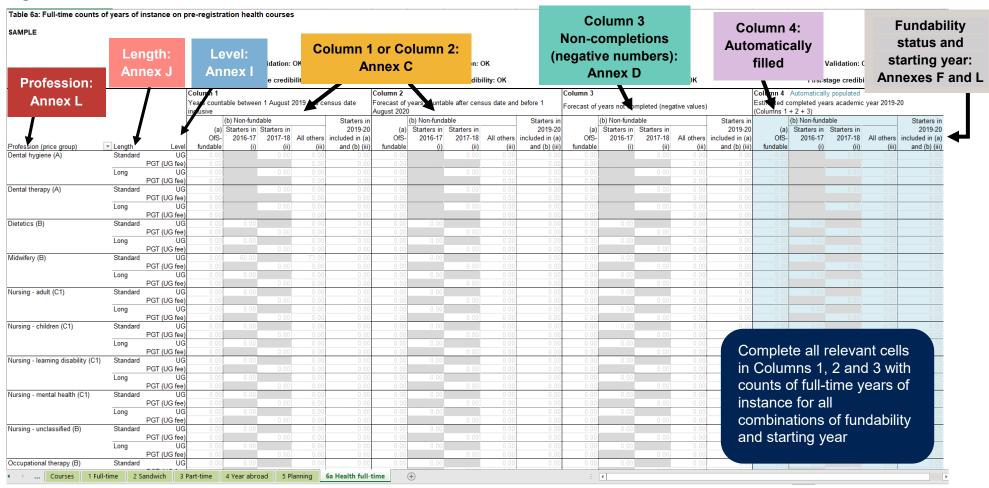


- c. Enter in **Column 3** a forecast of the number of years of instance that will not be completed.
  - i. Non-completions must be recorded as a **negative** number.
  - ii. You should use the definitions and methodology for calculating estimates described in Annex D. You may be asked questions on your methodology during data verification.
- d. **Column 4** will be filled automatically with the numbers of completed years, as you enter data into Columns 1 to 3.
- e. For **Table 6c Health part-time** only, enter in **Column 4a** the FTE for the number of completed part-time years of instance in Column 4. This should be the total FTE years of instance for that row, not the average FTE per year of instance. To determine the FTE of part-time students, refer to Annex E for guidance.
- 86. After completing the tables make note of any credibility warnings (see paragraph 89). In a separate document, list the underlying reasons that make the data credible for your provider. This will help with your initial explanations and your responses to our queries.

- 88. Validation failure messages will occur in Tables 6a, 6b and 6c if:
  - a. Column 3 contains a positive number, or any other column contains a negative number.
  - b. For Table 6c only, the FTE you have recorded in Column 4a is greater than the years of instance in Column 4.
  - c. For Table 6c only, the FTE you have recorded in Column 4a is less than 3 per cent of the total years recorded in Column 4. (Years of instance that have an FTE of less than 0.03 are not included see HESES19 Annex C.)
- → See Annex C for guidance
- d. For Table 6c only, for any cell in Column 4a, the FTE is entered to more than two decimal places.
- e. You have entered a value that is not a multiple of 0.5 in Columns 1, 2 or 3 for the following professions:
  - i. Nursing adult
  - ii. Nursing child
  - iii. Nursing learning disability
  - iv. Nursing mental health.
- f. For the other professions (excluding Nursing (adult), Nursing (child), Nursing (mental health) and Nursing (learning disability)) you have entered a value that is not a whole number in Columns 1, 2 or 3.
- g. For all Columns, the number of OfS-fundable years countable in each combination of price group, length and level is greater than the equivalent total in the corresponding table (Table 1, 2 or 3).
- h. For Table 6a and 6c, for all Columns, the absolute total of 'Starters in 2016-17', 'Starters in 2017-18' and 'All others' is greater than the equivalent total of non-fundable years countable in the corresponding table (Table 1 or 3).
- i. For all Columns, the value of 'Starters in 2019-20' included in category (a) and (b)(iii) is greater than the absolute total OfS-fundable and non-fundable 'All others' years countable in category (a) and b(iii).

- 89. Credibility warnings will occur in Tables 6a, 6b and 6c if:
  - a. You do not enter any non-completions for a row where you have recorded at least 50 years of instance across Columns 1 and 2.
  - b. You record all years of instance in Columns 1 and 2 for a row as non-completions.
  - c. For Table 6b only, you have entered sandwich year out students.
  - d. For Table 6c only, for part-time students, the total FTE entered in Column 4a is less than 25 per cent of the total years calculated in Column 4.
  - e. For Tables 6a and 6c, you have entered students with a long year of instance.
  - f. You have entered students for the Nursing (unclassified) profession.

Figure 15a: Partial screenshot of Table 6a Health full-time



**Note:** Tables 6b and 6c have a similar structure to and use the same definitions as Table 6a.

#### Other worksheets

- 90. A number of other worksheets may be included in your HESES workbook:
  - comparison sheets 1 to 3
  - other comparisons
  - funding comparison tables (A to E, G and H).
- 91. These worksheets compare the data you have entered in Tables 1 to 6c for 2019-20 with data for previous years, where this is available. They are provided for information and allow us to identify where your higher education provision has changed over time.
- 92. You do not have to enter any data directly into these tables: the relevant information will be automatically drawn from Tables 1 to 6c. However, we will use several of these tables to inform our data verification queries and we expect you to review them when completing your workbook.
- 93. Further detail on these worksheets will be given in the appendices. 9 Specifically:
  - appendix 4 describes comparison sheets
  - appendix 5 describes funding comparison tables (A to E, G and H).
- 94. Paragraphs 95 to 101 explain how the comparison tables summarise data for those completing HESES19.

#### **Comparison sheets**

- 95. These worksheets contain tables that summarise your HESES19 data and compare it with data for 2017-18 and 2018-19 (where available). These tables break down your data in different ways. For example, one comparison table looks at how your non-completion rates have changed between years.
- 96. These tables will show automatic highlighting where the changes between years are greater than expected, according to pre-set thresholds. You should make notes on any highlighting on these tables and determine the underlying changes to your provision that this reflects.
- 97. During the data verification phase of the HESES process (see paragraphs 114 to 125), our questions will take account of any highlighting in the comparison tables. We strongly recommend that you email us at <a href="mailto:dataverification@officeforstudents.org.uk">dataverification@officeforstudents.org.uk</a> with explanations based on your notes when you submit your workbook.

#### Other comparisons

98. This worksheet also contains tables that summarise your HESES19 data and compare it with previous years (where available). We will not routinely ask questions on these tables during the data verification process.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Available at: www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/data-collection/heses/.

#### **Funding comparison tables**

- 99. The funding comparison tables will be visible only to providers registered in the Approved (fee cap) category. The tables show modelled funding allocations using your HESES19 data and the funding methods used for 2019-20. The allocations in the funding comparison tables are shown only as a comparison tool. They are illustrative calculations using the 2019-20 funding method and parameters and should not be considered to be any kind of funding commitment.
- 100. If we have announced funding for 2019-20 to your provider, we will compare the modelled allocations with the 2019-20 funding allocations in your provider's latest grant tables.
- 101. You will not routinely be asked about funding changes during the HESES19 data verification phase. However, we would encourage you to look at these comparisons as they can be used to check your data and to identify large errors.

# **Submitting your survey**

102. This is an outline of the process for submitting your completed survey. Further details can be found in Appendix 1 ('Downloading and submitting HESES19').<sup>10</sup>

### How to submit your survey

- 103. You must submit your survey using the OfS portal, which is located at: https://extranet.officeforstudents.org.uk/data/.
- 104. Each provider has one or more portal user administrators. They manage the provider's staff access to the portal itself and to the relevant areas within it. If you are having difficulty accessing the portal, in the first instance please refer to your portal user administrator.
- 105. We strongly recommend that you liaise with your portal user administrator(s) as early as possible to ensure that the relevant staff have timely access to the portal area required for HESES19.
- 106. If you have difficulties that cannot be resolved by your portal user administrator, please contact <a href="mailto:portal@officeforstudents.org.uk">portal@officeforstudents.org.uk</a>.
- 107. In order not to breach data protection, **you must not email the HESES workbook**. Please use the OfS portal as described here and in Appendix 1.

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<sup>10</sup> Available at: www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/data-collection/heses/.

### Self-check questions

- 108. Please ensure that you can answer 'Yes' to all of these questions before submitting the completed HESES19 return.
- Q1. Is your student records system recording student information in accordance with the OfS funding rules? Have you complied with the OfS funding rules and definitions, as set out in HESES19 guidance (OfS 2019.32)<sup>11</sup> and its annexes?
- Q2. Have you kept an effective audit trail?
- Q3. Have you passed all of the validation checks on each table? (See Appendix 2 'Validation checks on HESES19 data' 12 for further information).
- See Appendix 2 for details
- Q4. Where the workbook shows credibility warnings or automatic check highlighting on the comparison tables, have you:
  - checked the data to make sure that it is correct?
  - checked that you are using the definitions set out in HESES19 guidance and its annexes?
  - emailed dataverification@officeforstudents.org.uk to explain why the data is credible? (See Appendices 3 and 4<sup>12</sup> and HESES19 guidance and its annexes for further information.)

→ See Annexes A-L & Appendices 3 & 4

- Q5. When assessing non-completion status, have you:
  - checked that you are using the correct definition of non-completion?
  - based your non-completion estimates on appropriate historical data (where available)?
  - taken into account variations between courses, years of instance and modes of study?
- Q6. If you have included any forecast years of instance in Column 2 of the tables in the HESES19 workbook, do they meet the criteria to be included? (See Annex C of HESES19 guidance and the information above for further information on what activity may be recorded in Column 2).

→ See Annex C for guidance

- Q7. Where you have made forecasts and estimates for the HESES return, are they made from robust and accurate past performance data? Have you kept an audit trail for these decisions?
- Q8. Have all contracted-out years of instance been included only on your provider's return, and not on the teaching provider's return? (See Annex A of HESES19 guidance for more information).

→ See Annex A for guidance

Q9. Have you excluded years of instance which are contracted in?

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Available at <u>www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/heses19/</u>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Available at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/data-collection/heses/.

#### **HESES** submission deadline

- 109. When you are satisfied that the survey is complete, valid and accurate, you have until the submission deadline to upload the workbook to the OfS portal.<sup>13</sup> The deadline dates are:
  - a. For further education and sixth form colleges and academies: noon on 14 November 2019.
  - b. For all other providers: noon on 10 December 2019.

We will not give extensions to these deadlines. Please note that the portal usually sees heavy traffic on the days leading up to the deadline and this can cause the upload process to take longer than usual.

- 110. Please note the following about the submission of HESES workbooks:
  - a. Although it is possible to upload your survey to the portal at any time, your final submission must be uploaded **after** the census date.
  - b. It is possible to submit the workbook several times, but we will only keep and use the most recently uploaded version.

### **Submitting initial explanations**

- 111. After uploading the HESES workbook, you should email <a href="mailto:dataverification@officeforstudents.org.uk">dataverification@officeforstudents.org.uk</a> with explanations for any highlighted credibility checks or comparison table entries (see paragraph 27). This highlighting will form the basis of any questions you are asked as part of the data verification phase of the HESES process.
- 112. Explanations should include sufficient detail to allow us to understand fully the cause for any highlighting (see Appendices 3 and 4<sup>14</sup>). Providing explanations with your submission will considerably shorten the data verification phase. For data protection reasons, your explanations must **not** contain any information that could potentially allow identification of individual students.

### The results package

113. After the HESES workbook has been successfully uploaded to the portal, you will be able to download a results package. This contains the latest processed copy of your HESES workbook, which will have an updated 'Information' worksheet that will show the submission date and number. You should always download the results package, as we will refer to the most recent version of your workbook during the rest of the HESES process.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> See <a href="https://extranet.officeforstudents.org.uk/data/">https://extranet.officeforstudents.org.uk/data/</a>.

<sup>14</sup> Available at: www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/data-collection/heses/.

## The data verification phase

- 114. The data verification phase of the HESES process allows us to:
  - · have greater confidence in the accuracy of your data
  - understand any context to the data and how this relates to changes highlighted
  - identify any large or unexpected changes from previous years.
- 115. The data verification phase starts after the submission deadline and ends on the sign-off deadline (**Monday 3 February 2020** for all providers). By this point any queries we have will need to be answered and your data will need to be signed off as correct. The timescale for data verification takes account of the holiday period. It is advisable to have more than one member of staff involved with completing the HESES survey.
- 116. After the submission deadline, we will email your provider's student data contact with our initial queries. This email will come from a member of our data verification team who will have reviewed your HESES workbook, along with the initial explanations that you have sent us. This initial email will contain a letter with full instructions, along with our specific queries set out in a separate Microsoft Word document.
- 117. We expect your response to our initial queries to be returned within five working days to <a href="mailto:dataverification@officeforstudents.org.uk">dataverification@officeforstudents.org.uk</a>. We will then review your response and, if necessary, raise further queries. Several rounds of queries are often necessary before your data is ready to be signed off. In later rounds of queries, response deadlines may be shorter because of the timescales of the data verification phase.
- 118. During data verification, it may become apparent that part of your workbook needs to be amended. If so, directions for resubmitting the survey will be provided.

#### **Data queries**

- 119. When generating initial queries, we will look at:
  - credibility warnings on the Courses table (if applicable) and Tables 1 to 6c
  - highlighting in the comparison tables
  - other relevant issues.

These queries do not necessarily indicate that we believe that your data is incorrect. Instead, they indicate areas where your data differs from what we would expect, based on the data we have available. In such cases we are looking for assurance that this reflects actual changes in your provision, and to understand the underlying causes.

120. The credibility warnings, and many of the changes in the comparison tables, will be automatically highlighted in your survey workbook as you complete it. They are triggered

when your data exceeds certain thresholds – more information on this will be given in Appendices 3 and 4.15

#### 121. Generally, queries are raised:

- a. Where your data differs from our usual expectations; for example, when you have a particularly low percentage of new entrants.
- b. Where your data shows a significant change from previous years; for example, when your total number of students has increased or decreased in excess of a pre-set threshold.
- 122. In your initial explanations, and when you respond to our queries, we require responses that directly relate to the query raised, provide an appropriate level of detail, and show an understanding of HESES definitions.
- 123. If you are addressing queries raised from the comparison tables, you should describe how your higher education provision has changed compared with the previous year. You may wish to reference specific changes in provision at a department or course level. You should also describe changes to any provider arrangements, for example if your subcontractual arrangements with other providers have changed.
- 124. We recognise that a single underlying issue can relate to several queries. In this case we do not expect you to repeat your answers it is acceptable to answer once and refer to this answer later. However, you should also check to see whether there are any other issues that may have contributed to the query.
- 125. You should review responses your provider has given to data verification queries in previous years to see whether these refer to ongoing issues. We do not want to assume that these answers still apply to your provider, so may ask similar questions; it can be useful to pre-empt these questions by providing any relevant answers in your initial explanations.

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<sup>15</sup> Available here: www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/data-collection/heses/.

## Signing off your data

- 126. When our queries have been resolved and any amendments to your data have been processed, we will ask for your data to be signed off by your provider's accountable officer, who is usually the head of provider.
- 127. We will send you a verification form by email. Please check that the date and version number match those in your most recent HESES workbook. Your accountable officer will need to sign this form, which should then be emailed to <a href="mailto:dataverification@officeforstudents.org.uk">dataverification@officeforstudents.org.uk</a>. The final deadline for us to have received the sign-off form is **noon on Monday 3 February 2020**.
- 128. Under condition of registration F3<sup>16</sup>:
  - a provider must provide the OfS with such information as the OfS specifies at the time and in the manner and form specified.
  - all providers registered in the Approved (fee cap) category that have students registered with them in 2019-20 on courses recognised for OfS funding purposes must submit a HESES19 return, the deadlines for which are not flexible.
  - where a provider fails to submit data on time, or returned data is not credible after verification, we may allocate funds based on our own estimates of student activity.
  - providers that do not submit or sign off credible data on time are more likely to be audited.

### What happens after the data is signed off

- 129. Straight after the sign-off deadline, we will start to prepare HESES data for various uses, including the calculation of recurrent grant for 2020-21. Grant payments will be made only while, and in respect of periods during which, a provider meets all eligibility requirements for them, including that it is in the Approved (fee cap) category on the OfS's register.
- 130. Shortly after the data verification phase has ended, we will contact you for feedback on the HESES process, through an online survey. This feedback is extremely valuable to us; it will allow us to evaluate the effectiveness of the HESES process and will guide any improvements that we may consider for future data collection.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> See the OfS' Regulatory framework at <u>www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/securing-student-success-regulatory-framework-for-higher-education-in-england/.</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> See paragraph 26 of 'Terms and Conditions of Funding for 2019-20' (OfS 2019.12), available at <a href="https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/terms-and-conditions-of-funding-for-2019-20/">www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/terms-and-conditions-of-funding-for-2019-20/</a>.

### **Data assurance**

- 131. Data assurance is an essential part of how we ensure that our approach to regulation is appropriate and effective. The requirement to permit verification of information is condition of registration F3, which applies to all registered providers. More information on condition F3 is set out on pages 127-131 of the Regulatory framework.<sup>18</sup>
- 132. It is essential to keep an audit trail when filling out your HESES return, recording how your decisions have been made and the data used to support them. As part of our regulatory responsibilities, examples of areas we may look at include:
  - whether there is sufficient data for any estimates, forecasts or judgements
  - · evidence of enrolment and engagement
  - any relevant internal audit work carried out on your student record system or HESES return.
- 133. Our data audits test the systems and processes used by a provider to prepare specific aspects of their data. This can involve desk-based audit work, as well as visits to providers to:
  - a. Review systems used to manage student data.
  - b. Review supporting audit trail documents that show how the return was produced.
  - c. Test the values reported on the return and the assumptions underpinning it. This involves selecting samples (or whole populations) of students and testing how they have been reported in the return.
- 134. Audits will often include a review of the final (outturn) position of students at the end of an academic year. This will allow us to assess the reasonableness of any assumptions made when they were included in the HESES return, for example in non-completion estimates.
- 135. We will compare your HESES submission with data submitted to HESA or to the ILR (whichever is appropriate for the provider) for the same year. We will use this comparison to assess the risk that HESES, HESA or ILR data is incorrect. This could lead to assurance work and will be considered as part of ongoing registration.

#### Audit recommendations

136. Previous audits of HESES (and the previous HEIFES survey) data have identified a number of areas where some providers were incorrectly interpreting the relevant definitions, or where

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> See <u>www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/securing-student-success-regulatory-framework-for-higher-education-in-england/</u>.

internal provider systems and practices complicated the production of the relevant return. These have included:

- incorrect assignment of activity to price groups
- incorrect identification of mode of study
- inadequate recording of entry qualifications
- weaknesses in processing student withdrawals and transfers
- inadequate recording of submission dates of final assessments, for the purpose of determining completion status
- incorrect application of the rules on student completion (particularly those around the requirement for submission of the final assessment in all modules intended to be studied in the year)
- failure to identify students' study intentions for the year for the purpose of determining completion status
- lack of robustness in estimating non-completions and forecasting countable years
- incorrect calculation of FTE and incorrect assignment of multiple instances to part-time students following modular programmes
- poor communication and lack of oversight within partnership arrangements
- inadequate audit trail between the student record system and the HESES return
- lack of systems notes for recording data on student activity and for the HESES preparation process
- lack of rigorous checking including analytical review of figures in the return to identify anomalies and ensure that the data makes sense
- lack of reconciliation between HESES and HESA or ILR returns.
- 137. We strongly recommend that your provider reviews its arrangements regularly, taking into account the areas above, as well as the 'Good practice' section of this document (paragraphs 141-147). You should give particular attention to any changes introduced in HESES19, and ensure you have assurance over all aspects of the return in case of audit.

#### Audit trail

138. You should keep an adequate audit trail between student record systems and the HESES return for **at least five years**. This should include a record of the basis for estimating non-completions and forecast countable years, along with any relevant electronically stored data, printouts and working papers used in completing the return. Source documents such as registration forms should also be retained, including information on students' detailed study intentions for the academic year and their qualifications on entry.

- 139. There should be an audit trail to individual figures in the return. In the case of figures based on activity up to the census date, a clear trail from individual students to the figures should be retained. During audit we may ask for a sample of these figures to be rebuilt. In the case of estimates and forecasts, there must be a clear rationale for the figures, and backup data justifying what is being returned.
- 140. Where your provider is involved in subcontractual or other partnership arrangements, your audit trail must contain evidence for the inclusion or exclusion of students (including details of the partnership arrangements between providers), and forecasts relating to such students. In particular, you should ensure that evidence of completion status of students taught by partner providers is held.

## **Good practice**

### Knowledge management and staff training

- 141. It is advisable to have **at least two people** who know how to prepare the HESES data return. At many providers, the knowledge required to prepare the HESES return is undocumented and sometimes lies with only one person. This creates a risk: in that person's absence, particularly at crucial times of the year, the provider may not be able to prepare the return on time and to the appropriate standard. A good audit trail helps to reduce this risk, but we also consider it good practice for all providers to manage this risk by ensuring that at least two people can produce the information for the return and prepare the return itself.
- 142. All relevant staff, including experienced staff, should consider the HESES guidance each year and make any necessary changes to their systems. You should also ensure that the relevant processes are adequately documented and that this documentation is kept up to date.
- 143. Staff should prepare data returns using **OfS funding rules** set out in this document, **not** their own academic regulations. There are, quite reasonably, differences between providers' academic regulations and the rules relating to the counting of students for funding purposes. It is essential that individuals involved in completing student data fields used for funding purposes fully understand the fields they are completing in the student record. For these fields, student activity should be reported with regard to funding rules and not in accordance with the provider's own academic regulations and progression rules. This is discussed in more detail in HESES19 guidance Annex D.
- 144. Your data collection and recording procedures should be **applied consistently** across the provider. Although providers have academic regulations and procedures for managing student data in their student record systems, practice within providers can be inconsistent. In general, provider practices for collecting and recording data should be applied consistently across all departments and faculties with the same data requirements. However, some departments may have additional requirements to meet. For example, faculties of health studies often have requirements beyond those of the rest of the provider.

### Analytical reviews and data reconciliations

145. You should **check your 2019-20 HESA student record** or **2019-20 ILR record** against your HESES19 data **before** your HESA or ILR data is submitted. Differences should be examined as part of the process for identifying possible data errors and amendments made to the HESA or ILR data if necessary. It should also help to eliminate inconsistencies in students' treatment in future data returns, and reduce systems problems with the way students are returned in HESA or ILR data before submission. In summer 2020 we expect to give providers access to a data checking tool that will be able to recreate a provider's HESES19 data from its 2019-20 HESA or ILR return.

### **Management information**

- 146. In gaining assurance, we do not ask for any reports that could not reasonably be expected to be used in everyday activity. However, some providers have great difficulty in extracting this standard data from the student record system, and many do not even hold the required data. Data that cannot be extracted and reported on is of limited value.
- 147. Developing exception reporting (and using it to highlight data issues for review and subsequent amendment) will help to ensure that high-quality data is returned. Data quality is also enhanced by data management reviews by those with a good understanding of the data.

# **Abbreviations used in this document**

Abbreviation	Explanation
EU	European Union
FTE	Full-time equivalence
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
HEIFES	Higher Education in Further Education: Students survey
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency
HESES	Higher Education Students Early Statistics survey
LDCS	Learn Direct Classification System
PGR	Postgraduate research
PGT	Postgraduate taught
UG	Undergraduate
UKPRN	UK Provider Reference Number

