

## Office for Students user engagement vision statement for statistics

In the Office for Students (OfS) we are making the following commitments to improving our statistical user engagement. We will:

- Continue to make student engagement a priority for the OfS, collaborating with teams across the organisation. Engaging students in our work will enable us to be a better regulator and make better decisions, genuinely informed by the perspective of students. Many of our commitments relating to our official statistics are laid out in our Student Engagement Strategy<sup>1</sup> for 2020 to 2023 including: listening directly to the views of students through polling, workshops and focus groups; making best use of user research and user testing in student facing outputs such as DiscoverUni<sup>2</sup>; and consulting with students on changes to the National Student Survey.<sup>3</sup>
- Be pro-active in the use of experimental statistics within our official statistics products. In doing so we will promote the need for informed feedback from users on whether our statistics are meeting their needs and use any feedback to increase their usefulness and credibility compared to other available statistical sources. Current examples can be found on our release schedule<sup>4</sup> including: an experimental methodology for examining completion rates for students studying at degree level; and a new approach to identifying student groups with different rates of continuation within higher education.
- Additional to collecting feedback on experimental statistics, continue to seek ways to gather feedback on our established products, for example, including a survey on our 'Young participation by area' dashboards.
- Use consultations to enhance and develop official statistics published as part of our functions. Consultations<sup>5</sup> are an important part of the way in which the OfS carries out its regulatory duties. Consulting helps us to develop fair, evidence-based policies, builds understanding of our work, and protects the interests of students.
- Explore new technologies and approaches to better engage users in our official statistics products. This includes contributing to, and engaging with, the development of Government Statistical Service good practice (such as in the area of harmonisation). Examples include the use of dashboards, geographical mapping, and other lookup tools. Such products

<sup>1</sup> Student Engagement Strategy design web ([officeforstudents.org.uk](http://officeforstudents.org.uk))

<sup>2</sup> Home ([discoveruni.gov.uk](http://discoveruni.gov.uk))

<sup>3</sup> Review of the National Student Survey - Office for Students

<sup>4</sup> Published statistics - Office for Students

<sup>5</sup> Consultations - Office for Students

include: our mapping of higher education participation<sup>6</sup>; postcode search tools<sup>7</sup>; and the ways in which users can engage with our access and participation data.<sup>8</sup>

- Work with partners in the devolved administrations and the Higher Education Statistics Agency (our Designated Data Body) to ensure that, as far as possible, UK-wide data and statistics remain available. This means that students making choices about what and where to study will benefit from consistent information, and users can better compare higher education statistics across the devolved administrations.
- Apply the highest standards of professionalism to all our data and analysis work. Where we undertake research and evaluation, we will explain how we have reached our findings, and we will engage willingly and constructively with those who wish to understand or challenge them.
- Engage with as wide a set of users as possible via a variety of mediums. This includes leading and/or contributing to groups such as the Higher Education Strategic Planners Association data insight group<sup>9</sup>, the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework Metrics Peer Review Group<sup>10</sup>, and the UK Student Information Group.
- Commit to regularly reviewing our user engagement vision statement and our user engagement champions will continue to raise awareness of the GSS user engagement strategy.

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<sup>6</sup> [Maps of participation in higher education - Office for Students](#)

<sup>7</sup> [Search by postcode - Office for Students](#)

<sup>8</sup> [Get the dashboard data - Office for Students](#)

<sup>9</sup> [HESPA: Higher Education Strategic Planners Association](#)

<sup>10</sup> [TEF metrics peer review group - Office for Students](#)