

10 June 2026

Dear Accountable Officer (copy to student record office)

## In-year student data collection

I write at an important point in the transition to in-year student data collection. We recognise the significant challenges many providers experienced during the implementation of Data Futures, and the considerable effort your teams and Jisc have made since then to stabilise data returns. We must build on that progress and avoid a repeat of those issues as the sector moves towards in-year collection. I am writing to ask for your help in doing so.

Moving to in-year data will require active senior oversight. Accountable officers will need to be assured that systems, resources and governance arrangements are in place in good time, and that institutional planning reflects the programme milestones ahead.

This letter sets out why in-year collection matters, what is changing now, and the actions we are asking your institution to take to prepare for the transition.

This letter follows joint correspondence to you earlier this year from Jisc and other UK partners.<sup>1</sup>

## Why in-year student data collection matters for your institution

If successful, the move to in-year data will bring benefits for your institution, for students and for the OfS.<sup>2</sup> In-year data collection will enable you to understand what is happening in your institution in the context of the wider sector, while the academic year is still in progress.

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<sup>1</sup> Available at [Letter to accountable officers re. transition to in-year data collection | HESA](#).

<sup>2</sup> We set out the potential benefits of in-year data collection in our letter to accountable officers in June 2025. See [In-year data collection of student data - Office for Students](#).

This means you will be able to:

- identify emerging risks earlier, including in recruitment, continuation and student outcomes
- benchmark your performance against comparable providers during the academic year
- make more timely and informed decisions about intervention, planning and resource allocation.

Over time, it will also reduce the need for ad hoc or duplicative data requests, creating a more efficient and consistent data landscape.

For students, earlier visibility of issues will improve your ability to support them while they are still studying. For us as a regulator, access to in-year data will help us to make regulatory and policy decisions based on richer, more timely data.

## **Upcoming milestone: publication of the data model (July 2026)**

In July, Jisc will publish the in-year student data model for 2028-29 data returns. Publication of the data model will allow you to assess in detail the scale and nature of change required for your institution. We expect that this will vary significantly depending on your current systems and data architecture. For some providers this may require substantial system development or supplier engagement, and early assessment will be important to avoid late delivery risks.

We've included a more detailed timeline in Annex A so you are able to see how the July milestone fits in the wider programme.

## **What we are asking you to do now**

Your leadership is critical at this stage as you move from the substantial preparatory work already undertaken across the sector, to fully embedding institutional planning to ensure in-year data collection's successful delivery. We are asking you to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place within your institution to deliver the transition successfully, in particular that:

- there is clear senior oversight and internal ownership for in-year data preparation
- delivery plans reflect the July data model milestone and the subsequent implementation period
- capacity and resilience are being factored into resource and systems development planning for the period from now until spring 2029
- the appropriate teams within your institution are ready to engage with suppliers or to progress in-house solutions once the data model is published.

In making the move to in-year data as a sector, we want to do as much testing as possible. Please also consider participating in sector testing activity (starting autumn 2027), which will provide an

opportunity to identify and resolve issues early. Please contact Jisc at [liaison@hesa.ac.uk](mailto:liaison@hesa.ac.uk) to get involved.

We recognise that this transition comes alongside wider pressures on data, systems and resource within the regulatory landscape. We are working closely with Jisc and other partners to ensure that guidance, technical support and opportunities for engagement are available as the programme progresses.

If your institution is experiencing challenges or would benefit from further discussion, we would strongly encourage early engagement. Jisc can provide support on data model interpretation, system readiness and testing, and we are keen to understand where providers may face barriers so that these can be addressed where possible.

If you have any questions or comments for us, please contact Alison Brunt at [HESASStudentData@officeforstudents.org.uk](mailto:HESASStudentData@officeforstudents.org.uk).

Yours sincerely

Josh Fleming  
Interim Chief Executive

## Annex A: Programme timeline

### Summer 2026:

- Publication in July of the in-year student data model and information on the overall approach to in-year data.
- Design of Jisc systems, quality rules and guidance documents continues, supported by ongoing sector engagement.
- Jisc shares details of its testing and transition plan, setting out its approach to phased trialling.

### Throughout 2026-27:

- Jisc, providers and software suppliers develop their systems, and identify and implement required process changes.
- Providers understand their readiness and make preparations.

**Autumn 2027:** Structured testing commences, with phased trialling underway throughout the submission window for 2027-28 Student data returns (providers invited to participate).

**Winter 2028:** First full in-year student data collection.