

# Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework

## Year Three procedural guidance

This guidance sets out the timetable and procedures for higher education providers and for panellists and assessors taking part in TEF Year Three.

It supplements and should be read alongside the 'Teaching Excellence Framework Specification' (October 2017) published by the Department for Education.

October 2017/25

## About this guide

1. The Government has introduced the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) to recognise and reward excellent teaching in UK higher education providers.
2. In October 2017, the Department for Education published the 'Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework specification'<sup>1</sup> (hereafter referred to as the 'TEF specification'). It sets out the assessment framework and specifies the criteria, evidence and process for assessments that will be carried out during TEF Year Three (the academic year 2017-18) and in future years, until a new specification is published.
3. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and, from April 2018 onwards, the Office for Students is responsible for implementing the TEF according to the Department for Education's TEF specification.
4. As explained in the TEF specification (paragraphs 1.6 to 1.7), all references to HEFCE in this document should be read as 'HEFCE or, from April 2018 onwards, the Office for Students'.
5. This document supplements and should be read alongside the TEF specification; it provides guidance on the timescales and operational procedures for those participating in TEF Year Three, in two parts:  
  
**Part 1:** Procedural guidance for providers  
  
**Part 2:** Procedural guidance for panellists and assessors.
6. Additional technical and supporting documentation about TEF Year Three is available at [www.hefce.ac.uk/lt/tef/tefprocess/tef3/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/lt/tef/tefprocess/tef3/).
7. Providers and panellists participating in the TEF Subject Pilots will be provided with separate procedural guidance that is specific to the Subject Pilots.

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<sup>1</sup> The TEF specification is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/teaching-excellence-framework>.

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## Enquiries and further information

### Enquiries about participation in TEF Year Three (or the subject pilots): Contact HEFCE

8. Contact [TEF@hefce.ac.uk](mailto:TEF@hefce.ac.uk) for enquiries including:
  - briefing events and webinars
  - eligibility and pre-requisites
  - application requirements
  - provisional awards
  - publication of Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) outcomes
  - appeals.
9. Contact [TEFmetrics@hefce.ac.uk](mailto:TEFmetrics@hefce.ac.uk) for enquiries about TEF metrics, including:
  - metrics workbooks
  - grade inflation data
  - data amendment requests
  - the TEF extranet.

### Enquiries about TEF policy and future development: Contact DfE

10. Contact [tef.queries@education.gov.uk](mailto:tef.queries@education.gov.uk) for enquiries about:
  - the TEF specification (if not concerning participation in Year Three)
  - future TEF developments, including development of subject-level TEF (if not concerning participation in the Subject Pilots).

### Further information

- HEFCE's TEF webpages: [www.hefce.ac.uk/lt/tef/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/lt/tef/).
- The Department for Education (DfE)'s TEF webpages: [www.gov.uk/government/collections/teaching-excellence-framework](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/teaching-excellence-framework).

Any updates, clarifications or FAQs will be published on the above websites. TEF contacts (see paragraphs 11 to 14) will be informed when new information is published.

### TEF contacts

11. Each higher education provider has a main TEF contact.
12. Enquiries from members of staff or students at a provider should be sent, where possible, via the TEF contacts. They are listed at [www.hefce.ac.uk/lt/tef/tefprocess/contact/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/lt/tef/tefprocess/contact/).
13. The role of the TEF contacts is:
  - to act as the primary contacts for correspondence with the TEF team, regarding the provider's participation in the TEF
  - as far as is practicable, to channel queries from other members of staff or students at the provider, to the TEF team

- to respond to clarification and verification queries from the TEF team, during the assessment stage
- to liaise with student representatives at the provider, as appropriate, regarding the TEF application.

14. Providers have also been invited to nominate an alternative TEF contact, who will be copied into all correspondence from the TEF team to the main TEF contact, and may also respond on behalf of the main TEF contact.

#### **Briefing events and webinars**

15. Briefing events are being held throughout the UK in November 2017 to discuss and clarify the guidance and procedures for participating in TEF Year Three. All main TEF contacts from providers that are potentially eligible to apply for a TEF assessment have been invited to register one staff member and one student representative.

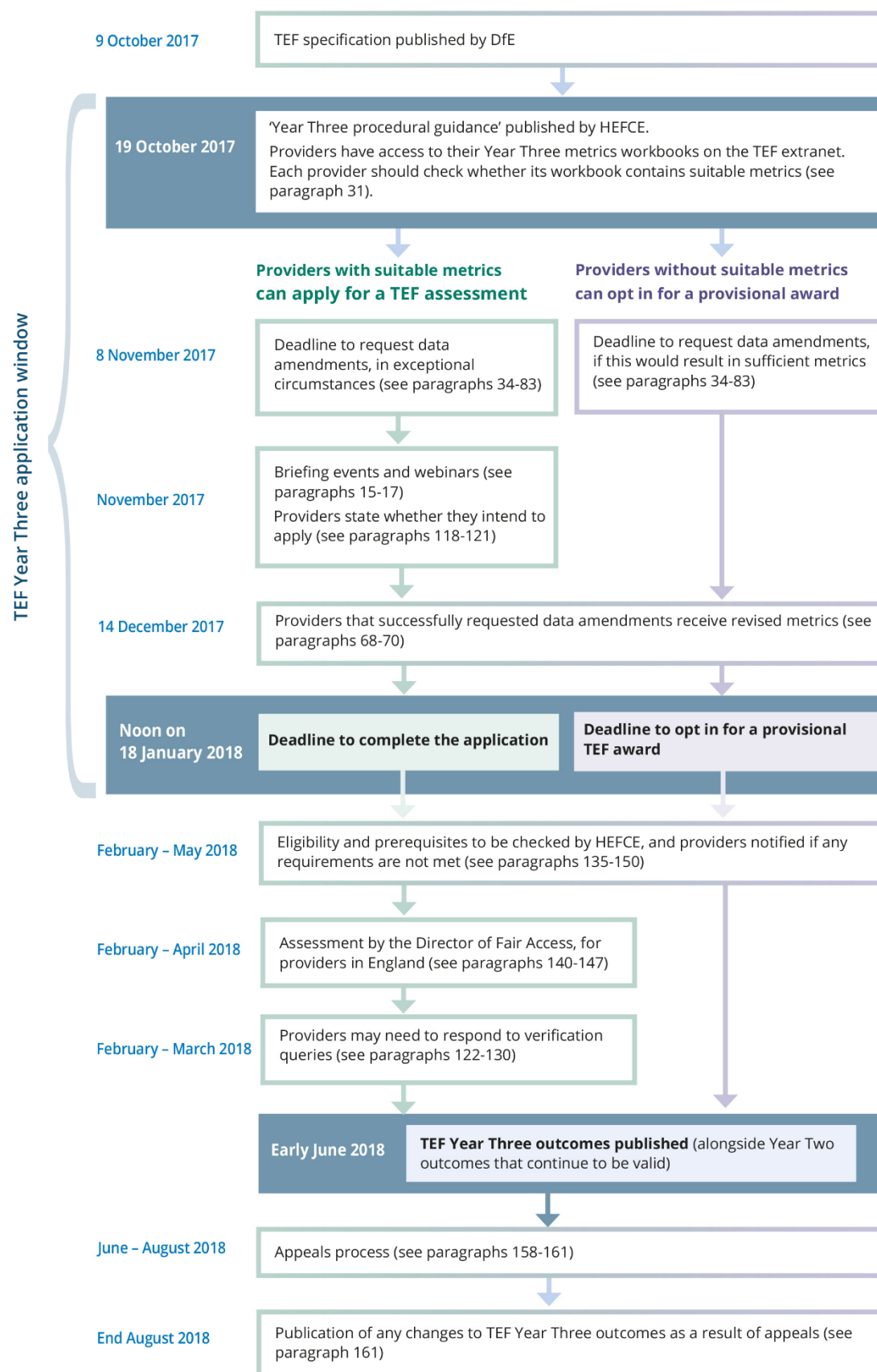
16. Two webinars will be available prior to the events:

- a. An introductory webinar on 2 November, aimed at providers applying for a TEF assessment for the first time.
- b. A TEF metrics webinar on 1 November. This will explain the Year Three metrics in detail, including the changes made since Year Two.

17. TEF contacts have been sent details of how to register for the webinars. These will also be available to view online after these dates.

# Part 1: Procedural guidance for providers

Table 1: Timeline for providers



## Accessing data and the TEF extranet

(For providers with and without suitable metrics)

### Accessing the TEF extranet

18. Providers must make use of the TEF extranet to access their metrics workbooks and to complete their application or opt in for a provisional award. The TEF extranet is available at <https://tef.hefce.ac.uk/extranet>.
19. There are two TEF extranet user 'groups', each with access to specific information and functionality:
  - The **TEF Year Three group** is for staff overseeing the application or opt-in to TEF Year Three. It provides access to: the metrics workbook and data maps; general templates; the facility to upload the provider submission, the authorisation letter and any other required information; and the facility to lodge an appeal.
  - The **TEF Year Three individualised student data group** is for staff involved in processing individual-level student data. It only provides access to student-level data that underpins the calculation of TEF Year Three metrics (see paragraphs 26 to 30); and to the facility to upload a data amendment request (see paragraphs 34 to 83).
20. Each provider has been informed of the unique group keys that are needed to access the TEF extranet user groups. A hard copy letter, dated 12 October 2017, was sent to the head of institution or accountable officer with this information. The head of institution or accountable officer is responsible for disseminating these group keys to the appropriate individuals, taking care to ensure that they have the responsibility and authority to access the content provided via the TEF extranet.
21. Providers' TEF contacts were informed by email that access instructions for the TEF extranet would be sent to the head of institution or accountable officer on 12 October.
22. Queries about access to the TEF extranet should be sent to [tefmetrics@hefce.ac.uk](mailto:tefmetrics@hefce.ac.uk).

### Data available to providers

23. The Year Three metrics workbooks (as described in the TEF specification) and individualised student-level data were made available to providers via the TEF extranet, on the same day as the publication of this guidance. HEFCE has released a TEF metrics workbook to each potentially eligible provider that has any TEF Year Three metrics data available (whether or not they meet the definition of 'suitable metrics').
24. The workbook includes the core metrics and splits, the supplementary Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) metrics and the contextual data in the same format as they will be presented to panellists and assessors. (An example of a workbook is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-excellence-and-student-outcomes-framework-specification>.) The contextual data maps are provided as separate files.
25. The definition and coverage of each metric is set out in Annex A, 'Full metrics descriptions'.
26. Individualised student-level data has been made available via the TEF extranet so that providers can understand how the indicators have been derived from the underlying data, and

can check their underlying data for accuracy. The data includes information on the ways in which each student at a provider has been categorised and counted in the TEF Year Three metrics, and in the derivation of the TEF benchmarking factors.

27. In addition, HEFCE has published a suite of technical documents that describe the detailed algorithms used to derive the indicators from the underlying student, Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey and National Student Survey (NSS) data, alongside descriptions of the workbooks and individualised files that are available from the TEF extranet. A workbook containing sector averages used in the benchmarking calculations has also been published. These are available at [www.hefce.ac.uk/lt/tef/tefprocess/tef3/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/lt/tef/tefprocess/tef3/).

28. Queries about the metrics workbooks and supporting data should be raised with [tefmetrics@hefce.ac.uk](mailto:tefmetrics@hefce.ac.uk).

### Data disclosure

29. Providers are reminded that the individualised student-level data made available through this exercise contains sensitive data items and is covered by the Data Protection Act. Access to this data must therefore be restricted to those staff who have a legitimate reason to access and process individual student-level data.

30. While HEFCE has sought to be as transparent as possible, it is not possible to facilitate a full re-creation of TEF Year Three metrics, as data supplied to providers must be at a sufficiently aggregated level to prevent disclosure of certain information:

- a. NSS responses are collected by a third party and data supplied to providers must protect the anonymity of responses.
- b. A student's continuation outcome cannot be disclosed to a provider if it involves that student transferring to another provider.
- c. Supplementary metrics based on the LEO dataset draw on students' linked HM Revenue and Customs and Department for Work and Pensions tax and benefits records. To ensure that no provider is able to identify any individual student's contribution (or lack thereof) to the LEO-based metrics, HEFCE is unable to supply student-level data to providers in relation to these metrics.
- d. Benchmarking calculations involve student-level data from all providers in the sector. To prevent disclosure, HEFCE can only provide sector averages in proportional terms. As a result, providers will be able to derive the benchmark figures calculated in their metrics, but not the standard deviations or z-scores that determine the flagging of any metric.

### Checking the data

31. HEFCE has released metrics workbooks and supporting data to all providers that have any available TEF Year Three metrics data. Any provider considering participation in TEF Year Three should check its metrics workbook, and whether it contains suitable metrics, as follows:

- a. **Providers without suitable metrics:** If there is no workbook available for the provider, or the provider does not have suitable metrics, then it may not apply for a TEF

assessment<sup>2</sup>. The provider may be eligible for a provisional TEF award, subject to meeting the remaining eligibility requirements.

b. **Providers with suitable metrics:** If the workbook indicates that the definition of 'suitable metrics' has been met, the provider can apply for a TEF assessment and will need to meet the remaining eligibility requirements to receive a TEF award. In this case the provider should check the following details which may affect its application:

i. **The number of years of suitable metrics.** This will determine the maximum duration of the TEF award<sup>3</sup>.

ii. **The majority mode of delivery**, and whether there are a 'similar number of students' (at least 35 per cent) in each mode. If the majority mode is part-time or there are at least 35 per cent of students in each mode, the provider may include in its application an additional page of data on part-time provision (see the TEF specification paragraphs 6.26 to 6.31). Note also that if there are at least 35 per cent of students in each mode, an initial hypothesis will be calculated for both modes (see the TEF specification paragraphs 7.32 to 7.34).

iii. **Whether there are any non-reportable metrics** relating to significant numbers of students (in either mode); if this is the case, the provider is encouraged to include relevant information in its submission.

32. The TEF specification (paragraph 5.29) briefly defines the majority mode of delivery. The full definition applied by HEFCE in identifying the majority mode is as follows:

a. Only one majority mode has been calculated for each provider (rather than a majority mode calculated for each year of data). The majority mode has been calculated on the basis of the full-time and part-time student headcounts, averaged over the same number of years used for the provider's contextual data.

b. Where the headcount of full-time students is greater than or equal to the headcount of part-time students, full-time has been identified as the majority mode.

c. Where b. above is not met and the headcount of part-time other undergraduate students is greater than or equal to the combined headcount of full-time and part-time first degree students, part-time other undergraduate has been identified as the majority mode.

d. If neither condition b. nor c. above are met the majority mode is part time.

33. Providers should also check the individualised files and may, in exceptional circumstances, request amendments to their data.

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<sup>2</sup> Exceptionally, a provider that has a workbook which does not contain suitable metrics, may request data amendments if these would result in suitable metrics. If such amendments are accepted, the provider may apply for an assessment. Such amendments will need to be requested by noon on 8 November 2017, according to the criteria and process set out in paragraphs 34 to 83.

<sup>3</sup> For a suitable set of metrics, the TEF metrics must cover a majority of all students taught by the provider that are in scope for TEF. We are aware of a small number of providers whose metrics suitability requires a greater understanding of their total student population in scope for TEF. HEFCE officers will contact these providers to seek the information that will enable the HEFCE Data Amendment Panel to consider the affected providers' number of suitable years of metrics.

## Data amendment process

(For providers with and without suitable metrics)

34. Unless amendments have already been specifically approved for the purpose of TEF by HEFCE, the TEF metrics and contextual data are formed using the provider's original data returns that have been signed off at year end as quality-assured by the head of provider or accountable officer. These data returns have already been used in published performance indicators, information for students such as the Unistats data and website, and other published Official and National Statistics. It is essential that data used to inform the TEF metrics remains, as far as possible, consistent with these other published sources of information. Therefore, HEFCE will consider further requests to amend the data used in calculating the TEF metrics only in exceptional circumstances, in accordance with the criteria set out in paragraph 37.

35. Previous amendments that have been made since the year-end sign-off are not incorporated in the TEF metrics unless accepted as a TEF Year Two data amendment, or specifically approved for the purpose of TEF by HEFCE during summer 2017. Where a provider wishes to incorporate any other previous data amendments into the TEF metrics this will need to be requested according to the TEF criteria and process for data amendments set out below.

36. To prevent delay in the release of benchmarked data, HEFCE has frozen all sector figures used for benchmarking at the point of releasing metrics to providers in October 2017. The sector average percentages that have been used in the calculation of the benchmarks for each of the metrics will remain as published at [www.hefce.ac.uk/It/tef/tefprocess/tef3/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/It/tef/tefprocess/tef3/). This is to ensure that providers that are not requesting amendments – or have not agreed to changes requested by other providers which affect their metrics – are able to progress their applications without indicators or benchmarks changing due to amendments made by other providers. In the event of an amendment being approved, the amended profile of a provider's students with regard to the benchmarking factors will be compared with the fixed sector averages to recalculate its benchmarks.

### Criteria for amendments

37. A request to amend data for TEF purposes will be granted only if it satisfies **all** of the following criteria:

- a. The amendment request refers to data returned in 2011-12 or later student or DLHE data collections (as identified by the academic year to which they refer). Amendments to 2010-11 and earlier Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and Individualised Learner Record (ILR) returns may result in the disclosure of an individual student's contribution (or lack thereof) to the LEO-based metrics, and cannot be accepted.
- b. All the requested amendments are due to widespread and significant errors in the underlying data affecting a large proportion of the provider's records. There must be clear evidence of data error, and clear evidence that the request does not constitute reinterpretation of the data (for example, re-categorisation).

c. Any amendments by a registering provider which directly affect the metrics of one or more teaching providers involved in a franchise relationship<sup>4</sup> have been agreed in writing beforehand with the affected teaching providers, and confirmation of their agreement has been supplied with the data amendment request. This means that the metrics for a teaching provider that does not agree to a change being made by the registering provider will not change as a result of the amendments process. In this case, the registering provider may still request amendments so long as they do not affect that teaching provider's metrics.

d. The amended data makes a material difference to the core TEF metrics for one or more of the providers that have agreed to the data amendments. A 'material difference' is defined as either of the following:

i. At least one of the core TEF metric flags used in the calculation of the initial hypothesis in step 1.a. of the assessment process changes from positive, negative or unflagged to a different category. (A change between '-' and '-' or between '+' and '++' will not be considered sufficiently material to merit a data amendment.)

or

ii. Metrics that do not meet the definition of 'suitable metrics' change to meeting the definition; or vice versa.

38. A provider's TEF metrics and contextual data will be amended only if **all** of the criteria in paragraph 37 are met.

#### Timetable for data amendments

39. In summary, the timetable for data amendments is as follows:

- **Noon on 8 November 2017:** Deadline for providers to submit Data Amendment Request Forms (see paragraphs 44 to 49).
- **By 20 November 2017:** Providers will be informed if their requests satisfy the criteria in 37.a. to 37.c. and can progress to the next stage. If they do, providers will be granted access to the systems through which they must submit corrected data.
- **Noon on 1 December 2017:** Deadline for providers to submit corrected data to the relevant body (see paragraphs 50 to 61).
- **By 14 December 2017:** Providers who have submitted corrected data by the deadline will receive revised metrics workbooks, and will be informed if the requests satisfy the criterion in 37.d. If they do, the revised metrics workbook should be used for the TEF application.
- **9 January 2018:** Deadline for providers to notify HEFCE if any errors are found in HEFCE's processing of the revised metrics (see paragraph 70).

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<sup>4</sup> Where a student is registered at one provider but is taught by another. The registering provider reports the students on its individualised student returns. For TEF purposes, students are assigned to the provider where they spend most of their time during their first year of study or 2007-08, whichever is the latest.

## Making an amendment request

40. We can accept amendment requests only to data which the provider itself has submitted to HESA or the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), or directly to HEFCE in the case of DLHE for further education colleges. We will not process requests to amend data that has been submitted by another provider. If a teaching provider in a franchise relationship wishes to make an amendment to data supplied by the registering provider, it must be routed through the registering provider that made the original data submission.
41. A registering provider that wishes to amend data that directly affects the metrics of a teaching provider in a franchise relationship must obtain written agreement to the amendments from the affected providers beforehand. Confirmation of their agreement must be supplied as part of the amendment request.
42. Providers must submit their requests by:
- Completing a Data Amendment Request Form (DARF), which is available on the TEF extranet, and submitting it by noon on **8 November 2017**.
  - If informed by 20 November 2017 that the request can progress to the next stage, submitting the corrected data in the appropriate format to the appropriate body by noon on **1 December 2017**.
43. Late requests, or requests that are incomplete or not in the correct format, will not be accepted.

## Data Amendment Request Form

44. Providers will be required to provide an explanation of the nature and reasons for the errors in their original year-end returns and of the changes they are requesting by completing a separate Data Amendment Request Form (DARF) for each return they wish to amend. A return is an individual, complete year-end dataset for a particular year that informs the TEF metrics – for example, the DLHE and the student return are considered to be different returns, as are the student returns for 2013-14 and 2014-15.
45. Explanations provided in a DARF should be as comprehensive as possible and will provide the basis for the HEFCE Data Amendment Panel to test the criteria in 37.a. to 37.c. Evidence of data error should be communicated clearly, and clear evidence that the request does not constitute reinterpretation of the data (for example, re-categorisation) should also be provided.
46. When a DARF is received, HEFCE officers will check that:
- each DARF is complete
  - the requested amendments do not include corrections to data which directly affect another provider without their written agreement.
47. Providers will then be notified of the outcome of these checks and whether the amendment requests can be considered by the HEFCE Data Amendment Panel.
48. Information provided in a DARF will be considered by the HEFCE Data Amendment Panel against the criteria in 37.a. to 37.c. The panel will make recommendations to the HEFCE Chief Executive about whether the requests satisfy these criteria. Following approval by the HEFCE Chief Executive, providers will be informed by 20 November 2017 whether their requests satisfy these criteria and can progress to the next stage. Providers progressing to the next stage will be

granted access to the systems through which they must submit corrected data. The relevant body, or bodies, to whom corrected data must be submitted will be clearly identified to providers.

49. All DARFs must be **submitted to HEFCE via the TEF extranet**, by the deadline of noon on **8 November 2017**. Only the DARF is required by this initial deadline; corrected data will be required, where applicable, by 1 December 2017.

#### Submitting corrected data

50. In cases where the request can progress to the next stage, providers will be granted access to the systems through which they must submit corrected data.

51. Providers whose data collection agency is the Education and Skills Funding Agency must submit corrected data to HEFCE by the deadline of noon on 1 December 2017. All years of corrected data returns will be received and processed by HEFCE.

52. Providers who subscribe to HESA must:

- a. Submit corrected 2014-15 and/or 2015-16 data to HESA by the deadline of noon on 1 December 2017.
- b. Submit corrected 2013-14 and/or earlier data to HEFCE by the deadline of noon on 1 December 2017.

53. All corrections – whether submitted to HESA or HEFCE – must be submitted by the deadline of noon on 1 December 2017, and made to a copy of the signed-off year-end data originally submitted to the relevant data collection agency. The amended file must represent a complete return that includes records for all students, including those whose records remain unchanged. In order for the file to be processed, it must be in exactly the same format as was required in the year when it was originally submitted.

54. The years that inform each of the TEF metrics are provided in Annex A, 'Full metrics descriptions'. Data files for only those years that the provider wishes to amend should be submitted.

#### Submitting corrected data to HEFCE

55. All corrections that must be submitted to HEFCE should be submitted via the TEF extranet and must conform to the requirements described in paragraphs 52 and 53. The TEF extranet functionality through which providers must submit corrected data file(s) will be made available to those providers whose DARFs have been approved for progression to the next stage.

#### Submitting corrected data to HESA

56. HESA will only open its post-collection system (fixed database) when it has received explicit instructions to do so from one of the UK funding bodies for higher education. HEFCE will liaise with the other UK funding bodies to ensure that HESA are instructed to open this system for providers whose DARFs have been approved for progression to this stage. HEFCE officers will direct a provider to the relevant contact at HESA to progress their access to the post-collection system.

57. The agreement between HESA and HEFCE allows for the costs of processing such exceptional amendments to be recovered from institutions by HESA. It has been agreed that for the student and AP student records this charge is set at 20 per cent of the provider's annual HESA subscription. For information about the individual cost to your organisation for using this facility for a specific stream, please contact [fixed.database@hesa.ac.uk](mailto:fixed.database@hesa.ac.uk).

58. When amended data is submitted to HESA, HESA will process those amendments according to their normal validation and credibility checks. It will pass data that reaches the 'committed' status to HEFCE.

59. When corrected data is received by HEFCE, either directly or via HESA, HEFCE officers will check that:

- the data file(s) are in the correct format and do not contain errors which prevent the file from being processed
- at an aggregate field by field level the changes to the data appear to match those declared in the DARF
- they do not include amendments to data which directly affects another provider without their written agreement.

60. The provider will be notified of the outcome of these checks and whether the amendment request satisfies the criterion in 37.d. This criterion must be satisfied for the data amendments to be accepted and for revised metrics to be used in the TEF assessment.

61. The HEFCE Data Amendment Panel will, if necessary, reconvene to consider any corrected data which does not conform to the description included in the DARF. The panel may recommend to the HEFCE Chief Executive that corrected data file(s) that do not align with the description included in the DARF are disregarded and that the original metrics provided in October 2017 should stand.

#### **Decisions on amendment requests**

62. The HEFCE Data Amendment Panel will consider whether the criteria in 37.a. to 37.c. have been satisfied, based on the DARFs. Officers from the other UK funding bodies will be asked for advice as appropriate to inform the recommendations in relation to providers from Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland.

63. The HEFCE Data Amendment Panel is chaired by a HEFCE Director and includes representation from HESA. The panel meets at intervals throughout the year, and works to Terms of Reference described at [www.hefce.ac.uk/funding/da/amendmentpanel](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/funding/da/amendmentpanel). Data amendment requests are separately considered with reference to a range of different uses of the data, with the panel making recommendations to the HEFCE Chief Executive on whether the amendment requests should be accepted or rejected for each given use. In the case of data used in TEF, the criteria applied by the panel are those described at paragraph 37.

64. The panel will be convened in mid-November 2017 specifically to review the amendment requests for TEF in Year Three and to make recommendations to the HEFCE Chief Executive on whether the criteria in 37.a. to 37.c have been satisfied.

65. The panel will recommend whether to accept or reject each amendment request in its entirety. It will not be possible selectively to approve and process some amendments contained in a request and not others, although it will be possible to accept one request from a provider while rejecting another: for example, a request to amend 2013-14 data may be accepted while a request to amend 2014-15 may be rejected.

66. Providers will need to ensure that their proposed amendments meet the specified criteria for use in TEF. Similarly, providers are responsible for ensuring they have not included any amendments that affect TEF metrics, but are not documented in the covering DARF. Failure to

account for all the amendments contained in a data file to fields that are relevant to the TEF could result in the corrected data file being rejected.

67. Following the HEFCE Data Amendment Panel meeting and decisions by the HEFCE Chief Executive, HEFCE officers will inform providers whether their requests have satisfied the criteria in paragraphs 37.a. to 37.c by 20 November, stating the reason for the decision.

#### Revised metrics workbooks

68. Following the deadline for the submission of corrected data files by noon on 1 December 2017, HEFCE will recalculate the metrics for those providers whose amendment requests have satisfied the criteria in 37.a. to 37.c. and will check that the changes included in the data file conform to the description provided in the DARF. If the changes do conform, HEFCE will supply these providers with their revised metrics by 14 December 2017.

69. At the same time, HEFCE will indicate whether or not the amendment has resulted in a material change to a core metric flag, as described in criterion 37.d. This would include a material change to another provider's core metric flag as a consequence of changes agreed between both parties. If there is a material change, the processed amendments will be automatically accepted. If the amendments result in no material change to any relevant core metrics, the amendments will not be accepted and the original metrics provided in October 2017 will stand.

70. Where amendments are accepted, providers should use the revised metrics in finalising their applications, and the revised metrics will be supplied to the panellists and assessors after the TEF application deadline. When they receive the revised metrics, providers have the opportunity – but are not obliged – to check this information for any processing errors on HEFCE's part. If a provider identifies a material error in the processing of its amendments, it must notify HEFCE by 9 January 2018.

#### Data audits

71. Accepted data amendments may be audited during the assessment stage, on the advice of the HEFCE Data Amendment Panel. Should an audit find the requested amendments to be materially inaccurate, this could result in the metrics being deemed unsuitable. The provider would then be disqualified from a full TEF assessment, but remain able to opt in for a provisional TEF award.

#### Providers that are unable to amend inaccurate data

72. Where a provider believes there are significant and material inaccuracies in its metrics data which are outside its control, the provider can request that its metrics be deemed unsuitable, in which case it can opt in for a provisional TEF award. This applies only to teaching providers in a franchise relationship whose data are submitted by another provider, and where the registering provider responsible for the data returns is unwilling or unable to request amendments to the data in question. Such a request for metrics to be deemed unsuitable will need to be made by **noon on 8 November 2017**, using the DARF. The request will need to explain the nature and extent of inaccuracies in the data.

73. The HEFCE Data Amendment Panel will consider whether the data errors described in the form are widespread and material to the TEF metrics, and will recommend to the HEFCE Chief Executive whether or not the provider's metrics should be deemed unsuitable.

### Unsuitable metrics due to NSS boycott

74. The TEF specification (paragraphs 5.39 to 5.41) sets out that a provider that does not have reportable metrics based on the NSS, for which there is evidence of a boycott of the NSS by students at that provider, shall be treated as if it had reportable metrics for that year for the purposes of eligibility and award duration.

75. HEFCE has applied the NSS metric definitions consistently to all providers. The response rate threshold for a reportable metric remains at 50 per cent. In exceptional cases, where the response rate over all three years has fallen below 50 per cent for a provider that can provide evidence that a boycott occurred, the provider may submit evidence of the boycott to HEFCE. All evidence of boycott activity must be submitted by **noon on 8 November 2017**, and must be in the correct format.

76. Submissions of boycott evidence must be a single PDF document that may not exceed five pages of A4 and must adhere to the formatting guidelines described in paragraphs 86 and 87 (for provider submissions).

77. Submissions of boycott evidence will be considered by the HEFCE Data Amendment Panel, which will make recommendations to the HEFCE Chief Executive on whether the boycott evidence should be accepted or rejected.

78. If the response rate over the three years is less than 50 per cent and the HEFCE Chief Executive agrees that the boycott evidence should be accepted, the NSS responses for those years in which the boycott occurred will be removed for the purposes of recalculating the provider's NSS-based TEF metrics (but will remain included in the calculation of the award duration). The provider's NSS-based metrics will be recalculated to the same timetable as for data amendments, as described at paragraph 68 above.

79. If the response rate over all three years remains above 50 per cent for a provider, even where there is evidence that a boycott occurred; or if evidence of boycott activity is rejected by HEFCE, then the provider's NSS metrics will remain unchanged.

### Unsuitable metrics due to uncorrected data errors identified by data audit

80. If a provider has data errors identified by HEFCE through data audits that have taken place since the finalisation of TEF Year Two metrics and those errors remain uncorrected, the provider must complete a DARF that includes the required changes, and submit corrected data, according to the timetable set out in paragraph 38. HEFCE officers will notify individual providers to whom this applies.

81. Data correcting all of the issues identified by the data audit must be submitted to the relevant body according to the process described in paragraphs 39 to 61. The corrected data file(s) must be submitted by the deadline of noon on 1 December. When corrected data is received by HEFCE, HEFCE officers will check that at an aggregate field by field level the changes to the data appear to match those required and those declared in the DARF.

82. The HEFCE Data Amendment Panel will review any amendments received from a provider with uncorrected data errors identified by formal data audit. The panel will consider how far the identified errors have been addressed by the submitted corrections. The panel will make recommendations to the HEFCE Chief Executive on whether the data corrections are sufficient for the metrics to be deemed suitable, or if widespread and significant errors remain and the metrics should be deemed unsuitable.

83. Failure to submit data that contains the required corrections by the relevant deadlines and in the correct format could result in a provider's metrics being deemed unsuitable. The provider would then be unable to apply for a TEF assessment, but may be able to opt in for a provisional TEF award.

## Applying for a TEF assessment

(For providers with suitable metrics)

### Summary of application requirements

84. Providers applying for an assessment in Year Three will need to include the following information as part of their applications, by the deadline of noon on **18 January 2018**.

Table 2: Application requirements

Information	Requirements	Format
<b>A. Provider submission</b>	Any provider applying for assessment may include a provider submission. It is not required, but if absent the rules at paragraph 7.64 of the TEF specification will apply.	Must be in PDF format and may not exceed 15 pages of A4. Must also adhere to the format requirements in paragraphs 86-91. An optional template is available on the TEF extranet.
<b>B. Additional data on part-time provision</b>	May only be included if the provider has at least 35 per cent of students in part-time mode. May only cover the items stated in paragraph 6.28-6.29 of the TEF specification. Including some or all of this data is optional for these providers.	Must be in PDF format and may not exceed one page of A4. An optional template is available on the TEF extranet, for providers that this applies to.
<b>C. Grade inflation data</b>	Mandatory for providers with Degree Awarding Powers (DAPs), and must include the data specified at paragraphs 5.16-5.19 of the TEF specification.  Providers without DAPs may not include this data, but may include other information about 'rigour and stretch' in their submissions.	An Excel worksheet is available on the TEF extranet for mandatory completion by providers that this applies to.
<b>D. Authorisation letter</b>	Required by all providers applying for a TEF assessment. Must be signed by the head of institution or accountable officer.	The template available on the TEF extranet must be completed and uploaded in PDF or Word format.
<b>E. Access and participation statement</b>	Required by participating providers in England that do not have an approved Access Agreement for 2018-19.	To be published by the provider on its own website by 18 January 2018. The URL must be included in the authorisation letter.

## A. Provider submission

85. The submission must be a single PDF document that may not exceed 15 pages of A4; there is no minimum length requirement.

86. In the interests of equity and clarity for the panellists and assessors, the following guidelines on formatting must be adhered to:

- Arial font, 11 point (minimum)
- single line spacing (minimum)
- 2cm margins (minimum)
- the name of the provider and its UK Provider Reference Number in the header (on all pages)
- page numbers in the footer.

87. Use of formatting such as bold or underlined text, headings, lists, and so on are welcome. Tables, diagrams or any non-text content may be included in the 15-page limit.

88. Footnotes are permissible, either to clarify statements in the submission, or to indicate where the submitted evidence has been drawn from. However, hyperlinks to primary evidence should **not** be included, and the panellists and assessors will be instructed **not** to access any referenced sources or follow any hyperlinks in a submission. Judgements will be based only on the metrics and provider submission (taking into account the contextual information and any clarification or verification queries), and no additional external evidence. The onus therefore is on the provider to ensure that all the information required to make the judgement (in addition to the metrics workbook and data maps) is included in the 15-page submission.

89. No appendices or any other type of information may be included if not incorporated within the 15-page limit.

90. Submitted PDF documents must be accessible to screen-reading technology, and therefore not scanned documents. The format and structure of the document should be accessible for panellists and assessors to support the assessment process and for the general public as it will be published.

91. A pre-formatted template document that providers may use is available on the TEF extranet. It adheres to the format requirements in paragraphs 86 to 90, and includes suggested headings (which may be used or adapted). Providers are not required to use this template, so long as their submission adheres to these format requirements.

## B. Additional data on part-time provision

92. Providers with a substantial proportion of part-time provision are able to submit an additional page of quantitative information. Where submitted, this data will be considered in the assessment according to paragraphs 7.28 to 7.31 of the TEF specification. It should be clear from the TEF metrics workbook whether or not a provider is eligible to submit this additional page because:

- the majority mode is part-time or part-time other undergraduate, or
- the majority mode is full-time but part-time accounts for 35 per cent or more of the provider's students by headcount.

93. Submission of this additional page is optional for those providers who are eligible. Where an additional page is submitted, it must conform to the requirements set out in the TEF specification (paragraphs 6.27 to 6.29 and Table 9.)

94. Although the information provided need not follow a standardised template, it must be submitted as a **standalone PDF document**, containing a single page of A4 content. It **must not be integrated into the provider submission**, but must otherwise adhere to the same formatting requirements as the provider submission (as described at paragraphs 86 to 90).

95. Where an eligible provider chooses to submit this page, it must do so via a dedicated upload facility on the TEF extranet. The page should be submitted alongside all other required components of the provider's TEF application, by noon on 18 January 2018. This upload facility will be accessible only to providers that are eligible to submit additional data on part-time provision. Information submitted in this way is subject to verification in the same way as the provider submission (as described at paragraphs 122 to 130).

### **C. Grade inflation data**

96. Paragraphs 7.50 to 7.59 of the TEF specification clarify how grade inflation data will be used in the second stage of the assessment with regard to the rigour and stretch criterion (TQ3). For all providers with degree awarding powers (DAPs), panellists and assessors will consider a mandatory declaration on the grades awarded over a 10-year period alongside any evidence on the effect of their grading policy and practice, and the factors influencing grading outcomes, which providers may make available in their submission. Providers that do not hold DAPs are not required to submit this data, but they can include other evidence of rigour and stretch in their provider submission.

97. Alongside the TEF metrics workbooks made available to providers on the TEF extranet, HEFCE has issued all providers that hold DAPs with a grade inflation data collection template. This template must be completed by any provider with DAPs that is applying for a TEF Year Three assessment. The completed template must be submitted alongside all other required components of the application by the deadline of **noon on 18 January 2018**. Any application from a provider with DAPs that does not include the mandatory declaration will be disqualified.

98. The scope of the data collection includes all Level 6+ undergraduate degree awards made by a provider with DAPs to the students it has taught. Awards made by the provider to students taught elsewhere, under franchising or validation arrangements, are not in scope for this data.

99. The grade inflation data collection template will prompt a provider to declare the number of Level 6+ undergraduate degrees classified as firsts, 2:1s and other grades for the time periods one, two, three and 10 years ago. For the avoidance of doubt, these time periods equate to students qualifying in the academic years 2016-17, 2015-16, 2014-15 and 2007-08 respectively. The proportions of students falling into each grade classification will be automatically calculated by the spreadsheet.

100. Information must be provided for these years (one, two, three and 10 years ago), where it is available. HEFCE considers information 'available' for any year in which the provider held DAPs: information will only be considered as unavailable if the provider did not award any Level 6+ undergraduate degrees to students it taught in a given year. If information is unavailable for 2007-08 but is available for a year between 2007-08 and 2014-15, data must instead be provided for the year that is nearest to 2007-08. The data collection template will prompt providers to describe the reason for any year of unavailable data.

101. In order to assist providers in further understanding the students and information in scope for the grade inflation mandatory declaration, HEFCE has included in the individualised student data files and accompanying technical documentation (made available to providers on the same day as publication of this guidance) information on students awarded qualifications in 2014-15 and 2015-16 who are considered to be in scope. This information includes HEFCE's identification of the category of undergraduate degree classification awarded to each student, based on data returned in HESA and ILR student records for these years.

102. Once the application deadline on 18 January 2018 has passed HEFCE will:

- a. Incorporate the declared grade inflation data into the metrics workbooks to be issued to panellists and assessors.
- b. Verify that the declared grade inflation data meets an acceptable tolerance for accuracy, as described in paragraphs 103 to 106.

103. HEFCE officers will verify the information regarding years of unavailable data against publicly available sources and records maintained by HEFCE and the DfE on DAPs granted by the Privy Council. HEFCE officers will also compare the numbers that a provider declares against each category of undergraduate degrees awarded in each year with those reported in HESA's annual publications of 'Students in Higher Education', and with information returned in 2014-15 and 2015-16 HESA and ILR student records.

104. Where HEFCE officers identify undeclared years of available data, or variations in the declared numbers of awards above an acceptable tolerance, the provider will be invited to provide an explanation for the differences observed. The numbers reported in the categories of undergraduate degrees awarded as firsts or 2:1s in each year will initially be considered as within the acceptable tolerance if they differ from published figures or student data returns by fewer than 100 students **and** the proportion falling into that category is within five percentage points of the proportion derived from the published figures or student data returns.

105. HEFCE officers will also take account of the size and history of the provider and may, as a result, seek an explanation from a provider within the tolerance.

106. Any such explanations will be sought by 5 February 2018 and a response must be made by 19 February 2018. The HEFCE Data Amendment Panel will meet in early March 2018 to consider the results of the verification alongside any explanations sought from providers. If the panel determines that undeclared years of available data or variations above the acceptable tolerance have not been adequately explained by the provider, it will recommend to the HEFCE Chief Executive that the provider's mandatory declaration be deemed inaccurate. If the Chief Executive agrees, the TEF panellists and assessors will be informed that the provider's mandatory declaration failed to include data that is capable of indicating the absence of grade inflation. Panellists and assessors will then consider this evidence alongside any evidence on the effect of their grading policy and practice, and the factors influencing grading outcomes, which providers may make available in their submission.

107. The mandatory declaration must be submitted via a dedicated upload facility on the TEF extranet, by noon on 18 January 2018. This upload facility will be accessible only to providers that are required to declare data on grade inflation.

#### **D. Authorisation letter**

108. The provider application must be authorised by the accountable officer. A template for the authorisation letter is available on the TEF extranet. It must be completed, signed by the accountable officer (electronic signatures will be accepted), and uploaded to the TEF extranet by the deadline of noon on 18 January 2018.

109. The authorisation letter:

- confirms that the provider is applying for a Year Three TEF assessment
- authorises the provider application and attests to the accuracy of its contents
- where required, includes a URL to the provider's access and participation statement.

#### **E. Access and participation statement**

110. To be eligible for a TEF Year Three award any provider in England that does not have an approved Access Agreement for 2018-19 must publish an access and participation statement, according to the requirements in the TEF specification (paragraphs 3.11 to 3.12).

111. The access and participation statement must be published in a way that is publicly accessible on the provider's own website, by noon on 18 January 2018. The URL must be included in the authorisation letter.

#### **The TEF extranet and how to apply**

112. Applications can be accepted only if the required files are uploaded in the correct format to the TEF extranet, by the deadline of noon on **18 January 2018**.

113. Providers may upload, download and replace their files at any time up to the application deadline. The onus is on the provider to ensure that the correct and final files have been uploaded to the extranet as at noon on 18 January 2018. HEFCE will take them to be the final versions and will use them for the assessment and later publication.

114. After noon on 18 January 2018, it will not be possible to upload or replace a file, except where HEFCE determines there were circumstances beyond the control of the provider that prevented it from uploading a complete application by the deadline.

115. When uploading a provider submission to the TEF extranet, the system will verify that it is in PDF format, and is no longer than 15 pages in length. If it is not in PDF format or exceeds 15 pages, the upload will fail. The system will similarly verify that additional data on part-time provision is in PDF format, and does not exceed one page. Providers are therefore advised to test their uploads in advance of the final deadline, and ensure the final version is uploaded by the deadline.

116. After noon on 18 January 2018, and until 30 April 2018, the provider will continue to be able to download its files and metrics workbook, for information. On 1 May 2018, all files and workbooks will be removed from the TEF extranet: providers are advised to store a copy of this information in their own systems if they wish to access it after 1 May 2018.

117. For technical assistance with the TEF extranet or uploading files, contact [tefmetrics@hefce.ac.uk](mailto:tefmetrics@hefce.ac.uk).

### Survey of intentions to apply

118. To help effective implementation of the assessment process, providers that have suitable metrics will be invited during November 2017 to indicate whether or not they intend to apply for a TEF Year Three assessment. The survey will enable the TEF team to identify the number and range of assessors required and the number of TEF officers needed to support the assessment stage, in order to make adequate preparations for assessment.

119. Responses to the survey will not commit a provider to participating, and a response is not required in order to apply. However, accurate responses will enable the TEF team to prepare for the assessment stage and ensure that a suitable range of assessors are given adequate notice for their work.

120. Responses to the survey will not be published. An aggregated and anonymised summary of responses will be reported to the TEF Project Board that oversees implementation of the TEF.

121. Providers that do not have suitable metrics and are potentially eligible for a provisional award will **not** be surveyed. They will need to decide whether to opt in or not, by the deadline of noon 18 January 2018.

### Verification and clarification

122. The purpose of verification and clarification queries will be for panellists and assessors to satisfy themselves that judgements made are based on evidence that has been clearly understood and is sufficiently reliable to support those judgements against the assessment criteria.

### Scope

123. All information included in a provider submission and additional data on part-time provision may be subject to verification or clarification, at the request of panellists or assessors. (The process for verifying declared grade inflation data is set out at paragraphs 103 to 106.) Panellists or assessors may raise queries if any of the available evidence gives them reason to doubt the veracity of specific content in the submission, or if they consider that the submission is unclear as to what is being claimed. In either case, queries will be raised only by exception, where the responses could potentially make a material difference to the overall outcome.

124. As outlined in the TEF specification (paragraphs 6.11 to 6.12), it is the provider's responsibility to include in its submission all the information required for the panellists and assessors to make a judgement. Consequently, queries will not be raised – and responses will not be considered – that seek to expand on or add new evidence to a submission. The absence of any queries does not mean that the panellists and assessors have accepted all contents of a submission to be true.

### Timing and process

125. Panellists and assessors will start to inform the TEF officers of any potential queries once they begin to review submissions in February 2018. TEF officers will check that queries fall within the scope of the guidance and the TEF assessment process, before sending them on to the provider's TEF contact. If unsure about the query, TEF officers will seek advice from the TEF manager, who will decide whether or not to raise the query.

126. Where queries are raised, TEF officers will email them to the provider's main TEF contact between mid-February and late March 2018. The main TEF contact is responsible for ensuring that such emails are acted on promptly.

127. TEF contacts will have five working days to respond by email to the query, providing as complete a response as possible within this timeframe. Where more time is needed to complete the response, this should be stated clearly, at the earliest available opportunity, setting out the reasons for the extension. An additional five working days will be allowed only where reasonably required by the provider. Where unsure whether the extension should be granted, the TEF officer will consult the TEF manager, who will decide.

128. For verification queries, responses may need to include a copy of or link to primary sources of evidence that verify the particular claim being queried. For clarification queries, responses should comprise only a textual description to clarify the points being queried.

### **Use of the information**

129. The TEF officer will review the response and provide information or advice to the panellists and assessors in a way which seeks to resolve the query, while limiting as far as possible any additional information becoming available to them. For clarification queries the TEF officer will seek to ensure the response is succinct and addresses the original request; superfluous or out-of-scope information may be excluded and no weight will be attached to its inclusion. For verification queries the TEF officers will advise the panellists and assessors of the nature of the evidence supplied, and will make a recommendation on whether it is sufficient to verify the claim. The panellists and assessors will be provided with the full response only if they request it and the TEF manager agrees. In all cases the panellists and assessors will decide on the outcome of the query.

130. Clarification and verification requests and responses to them will not be published. Where a query and the response made a material difference to the outcome, the panel may refer to this in the statement of findings.

## **Opting in for a provisional TEF award**

(For providers without suitable metrics)

### **Eligibility for a provisional award**

131. Providers that do not have suitable Year Three metrics, but meet the other prerequisites and eligibility requirements set out in the TEF specification, may opt in for a TEF Year Three provisional award.

132. Provisional awards last for one year. Therefore providers that held a provisional award in Year Two will need to participate again in Year Three if they wish to retain a TEF award beyond June 2018. Those with suitable Year Three metrics will need to apply for an assessment; those without suitable Year Three metrics will need to opt in for a provisional award.

### **How to opt in for a provisional award**

133. HEFCE will inform the main TEF contact at all providers that do not have suitable Year Three metrics that they may be eligible for a provisional TEF award. To receive a provisional TEF award they will need to:

- a. Ensure that they will satisfy the pre-requisite and eligibility requirements.

- b. Where applicable, publish an access and participation statement, by 18 January 2018 (this applies to providers in England that do not have an approved Access Agreement for 2018-19 – see paragraphs 110 to 111.)
- c. Opt in by completing the authorisation letter available on the TEF extranet, and uploading it by **noon on 18 January 2018**. This letter must be signed by the accountable officer (electronic signatures will be accepted). Where applicable, it must also include a URL to the provider's access and participation statement.

134. Providers that opt in for a provisional award will be notified of the outcome by the end of May 2018. Provisional TEF awards will be published alongside other TEF awards, as outlined in paragraphs 152 to 157.

## Process for determining eligibility

(Applicable to providers applying for an assessment **and** those opting in for a provisional award)

135. From late January to May 2018, HEFCE will check that:

- a. Providers that apply for an assessment or opt in for a provisional award in Year Three meet the eligibility requirements set out in section 3 of the TEF specification, in order to receive a Year Three award (valid from 2018-19).
- b. Providers holding a Year Two award with a duration of 2 or 3 years that have not applied in Year Three continue to meet the eligibility requirements in order to retain their TEF awards in 2018-19.

136. The procedures and associated timings for checking the eligibility of providers to hold TEF Year Three awards, and Year Two awards continuing to be valid in 2018-19, are set out in paragraphs 137 to 150.

### Provision that is in scope

137. In order to be eligible, providers must have undergraduate students (as defined in paragraph 2.1 of the TEF specification) being taught at that provider in 2017-18. The TEF team will check that undergraduate students have been recorded as taught at that provider in 2017-18, according to providers' in-year aggregate student data returns to the relevant UK funding body.

### Designation for student support

138. The TEF team will check that the provider meets the designation requirement defined at paragraph 3.7 of the TEF specification. In the case of specific course designation, this must be current designation for new students entering in 2018-19. Providers that are on 'teach out' or that do not have current designation for new entrants in 2018-19 will be deemed ineligible to hold a TEF award in 2018-19.

### Widening access and participation

139. The TEF team will check that:

- a. Providers in Northern Ireland have a Widening Access and Participation Plan for 2018-19.
- b. Providers in Wales have a Fee and Access Plan for 2018-19.

- c. Providers in Scotland have an Outcome Agreement for 2017-18.
- d. Providers in England have either:
  - i. An approved access agreement for 2018-19.
  - ii. A published access and participation statement. (The URL supplied in the provider's authorisation letter must link to a publicly accessible access and participation statement on the provider's website.)

### **Assessment by the Director of Fair Access**

140. The Director of Fair Access will consider whether a participating provider has reduced the number or proportion of students from disadvantaged, under-represented or black and minority ethnic groups since the introduction of TEF in 2016-17, with the principal or major objective of improving its performance in the TEF. The assessment will be carried out according to the TEF specification (paragraphs 3.14 to 3.22).

141. This process will be carried out for providers in England that apply for an assessment or opt in for a provisional award in Year Three.

142. In February 2018, HEFCE officers will provide the DFA with the following data for consideration:

- Data drawn from HESA and ILR student records for the 2016-17 entry cohort, compared with previous years.
- UCAS data on acceptances, for the 2016-17 and 2017-18 entry cohorts, compared with previous years.

143. The data for each provider will be broken down, where possible, into the student categories that align with the following TEF metric splits:

- Participation of Local Areas (POLAR) quintiles 1-2; POLAR quintiles 3-5
- white background; black or minority ethnic background
- disabled; not disabled
- young; mature.

144. The DFA will also take account of any other information that the DFA considers relevant, which may include evidence from those disclosing information in the public interest ('whistleblowers'). To report concerns as a whistleblower, please e-mail the Office for Fair Access at [pid@offa.org.uk](mailto:pid@offa.org.uk).

145. Following consideration of the data and any other relevant information, if the DFA determines that the requirement in paragraph 3.16.1 of the TEF specification has been met, the DFA will request an explanation from the provider. The request will include details of the data or information of concern to the DFA that the provider is invited to explain. Any such requests will be made by the end of February 2018 and providers will have 10 working days to respond.

146. The DFA will determine one of the three outcomes at paragraph 3.20 of the TEF specification, and inform the provider of the outcome, by 29 March 2018. If the second of the outcomes identified in the TEF specification is determined, or if any other concerns are identified

as a result of the DFA's consideration, the Director for Fair Access and Participation (DFAP) will use this within his consideration of the provider's access and participation plan for 2019-20.

147. By April 2018, the DFAP will be provided with the data set out in paragraphs 142 and 143 above for all eligible providers in England, whether or not they have applied for an assessment or a provisional award in TEF Year Three. The DFAP will then take this data into account within his consideration of providers' access and participation plans for 2019-20.

### Quality requirement

148. The TEF team will check that each provider meets the quality requirement defined at paragraphs 3.29 to 3.37 of the TEF specification, as at 1 May 2018. Providers that do not meet the quality requirement as at 1 May 2018 will be deemed ineligible to receive a TEF Year Three award or to retain a Year Two award.

### Decisions on eligibility and duration of award

149. All decisions on eligibility, suitable metrics and the duration of awards will be taken by the HEFCE Chief Executive. Recommendations on suitable metrics and the duration of awards will be made to the Chief Executive by the HEFCE Data Amendment Panel (see paragraphs 62 to 65). Recommendations on eligibility will be made to the Chief Executive by the TEF manager, having consulted relevant sources of information and advice, including but not limited to the Office for Fair Access, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, the HEFCE Register of Higher Education providers and the funding bodies for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, as appropriate. Where the information that is available to confirm a prerequisite or eligibility requirement is incomplete or unclear, the TEF team may contact the provider to seek further information before making the recommendation.

150. Where a provider is deemed not to meet one or more of the eligibility requirements, the accountable officer and TEF contact will be notified with a statement clarifying which of the conditions were not met, the source of evidence used and the reason for the decision.

## Dissemination of outcomes

(Applicable to providers applying for an assessment and those opting in for a provisional award)

151. Each provider participating in Year Three will be informed of its outcome under embargo, shortly before they are published. DfE will receive the outcomes under embargo after providers have received them.

152. Year Three outcomes will be published in **early June 2018** alongside Year Two outcomes that continue to be valid. (Where a provider holds a Year Two award that was valid for one year, and it does not participate in Year Three, its Year Two award will be removed from published sources when the Year Three results are published.)

153. Year Three outcomes (and Year Two outcomes that continue to be valid) will be published in the same way as Year Two outcomes. The awards will be included on Unistats, the UCAS website, and the HEFCE Register (for providers in England). Full information will be published on HEFCE's TEF results webpages. For each provider with a TEF award, this will include:

- the award (gold, silver, bronze, or provisional)
- the month in which the award was made, and the number of years it is valid for

- for providers with a gold, silver or bronze award:
  - the TEF Panel’s statement of findings
  - the metrics workbook (this will include supplementary LEO and grade inflation metrics where applicable)
  - the contextual data
  - the provider submission
  - the additional page of data on part-time provision, where applicable
- a link to the provider’s access and participation statement, where applicable.

154. Materials submitted by the provider will be published under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International Public Licence: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/legalcode>. Providers should ensure that the submitted materials are suitable for publication, and that they do not infringe the copyright (or any other intellectual property right) or other right of any third party.

155. The publication of outcomes will continue to reflect the voluntary nature of the TEF. The TEF pages on the HEFCE website will list only those providers that have participated in the TEF and have valid awards. Metrics data will be published only for providers that had sufficient metrics and were assessed for a TEF award of Gold, Silver or Bronze. Year Two awards that cease to be valid in June 2018 will be removed. In cases where a participating provider’s award is withdrawn for other reasons (for example, if a ‘Pending’ Annual Provider Review outcome changes in future to ‘Does not meet requirements’), it will be made clear from that point that the provider’s TEF award was withdrawn.

156. The TEF team will continue to work with DfE, UCAS, NUS and the other UK funding bodies to develop the information and the way it is explained to prospective students.

157. Further details and timetables for the dissemination of outcomes will be made available in spring 2018.

## Appeals process

158. A provider will be able to appeal on the basis of a significant procedural irregularity in the determination of its TEF outcome, according to the criteria set out in the TEF specification (paragraphs 8.21 to 8.22).

159. HEFCE will make an appeals form available on the TEF extranet and provide a detailed timetable for the appeals process, prior to the publication of the outcomes in June 2018. Any provider wishing to appeal the outcome must do so by completing and uploading the template, signed by the accountable officer. Appeals not made on the TEF appeal form will not be considered.

160. Appeals will be considered as follows:

- a. Initially, an appeals panel will consider the appeal. The chair and members of the appeals panel will be individuals who were not TEF panellists or assessors, or otherwise directly involved in the TEF decisions. The membership of the panel will be confirmed prior to the TEF outcomes in June 2018. The TEF Panel Chair and TEF manager may attend to observe and provide information as requested by the appeals panel. In the case of an

appeal from a provider in a devolved nation, a member of the relevant funding body may also attend. The appeals panel will consider:

- i. Whether there was a procedural irregularity that affected one of the decisions listed in paragraph 8.21 of the TEF specification.
  - ii. If so, whether it was capable of materially affecting that decision.
- b. If the appeals panel concludes that either there was no such irregularity, or that it was not capable of materially affecting the decision, the appeal will be declined and the provider informed of this.
- c. If the appeals panel concludes there was an irregularity capable of materially affecting the decision, the original decision will be reconsidered, in the light of that procedural irregularity. An eligibility decision or data amendment request will be reconsidered by the HEFCE Chief Executive. An eligibility decision by the Director of Fair Access will be reconsidered by the Director for Fair Access and Participation. A judgement on the rating will be reconsidered by at least three TEF Panel members who were not originally involved in assessing the application, overseen by the TEF Chair.

161. Providers will be informed of the outcomes of the appeal, and in the event of a successful appeal, any resulting changes will be made to the published outcomes by 31 August 2018.

## Mergers and de-mergers

(Applicable to providers applying for an assessment and those opting in for a provisional award)

162. The TEF specification (paragraphs 3.44 to 3.47) sets out how providers that are merging or de-merging during the application window or assessment process can participate in the TEF.

163. Where providers with TEF Year Three awards merge or de-merge after the TEF outcomes are published, HEFCE will consider the impact on the TEF awards for the legal entity(ies) after the merger or de-merger.

164. HEFCE will determine whether each legal entity is eligible for a TEF award, according to the eligibility criteria in the TEF specification. HEFCE will consider the TEF award(s) for those legal entity(ies) that are eligible, taking account of the available metrics and submissions, and the relative student numbers reflected in each. Where supported by the available information, the rating of the prior entity will be conferred on the new legal entity(ies). Where the available information indicates that a judgement by the TEF Panel is required to confirm the appropriate rating, the HEFCE Chief Executive will reduce the duration of the award to one year, and the new legal entity(ies) will be able to apply for an assessment in TEF Year Four.

165. HEFCE will publish a brief explanation alongside providers' TEF awards that are affected by mergers or de-mergers.

## Part 2: Procedural guidance for panellists and assessors

Table 3: Timeline for panellists and assessors

6 October 2017	Deadline to apply to become a TEF panellist or assessor
9 October 2017	'Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework specification' published by DfE
End November 2017	Year Three panellists and assessors appointed by HEFCE
December 2017	Panellists and assessors to declare conflicts of interest
January to early February 2018	Training and calibration exercises
February to March 2018	Panellists and assessors review their allocated applications, meet and form recommendations to the TEF Panel
April to May 2018	TEF Panel to decide the outcomes and finalise statements of findings
early June 2018	Publication of TEF Year Three outcomes
August 2018	TEF Panel members reconsider outcomes in the light of any upheld appeals

### Conflicts of interest

166. Panellists and assessors are required to declare conflicts of interest they hold with any UK higher education providers. These must be declared in December 2017 prior to the allocation of applications, and kept up-to-date during the course of the assessment.

167. Panellists and assessors will not take part in assessing or recommending or deciding the outcome for any provider with which they hold a conflict of interest.

168. In addition, where a panellist or assessor holds a conflict of the type described in paragraph 169.a., they will not be privy to any information about the assessment of that provider by other panellists and assessors; and will leave the room during those parts of meetings where the provider is discussed. Panellists and assessors holding conflicts of the type described in paragraph 169.b may, for logistical reasons, be privy to such information and may remain present during those parts of meetings where the provider is discussed, but may not contribute to the discussion or otherwise seek to influence its assessment.

169. For the purposes of the TEF, conflicts of interest are defined as follows:

- a. Within the last five years:
  - i. The individual worked for or studied at the provider.
  - ii. The individual was a board or council member of the provider.
  - iii. The individual held an honorary position at the provider.

- iv. The provider was an awarding body or delivering partner of the individual's institution, and the individual had personal responsibility for or involvement in these arrangements.
- b. Within the last three years:
  - i. The individual acted as a consultant to the provider.
  - ii. The individual undertook internal or external validation or examination for the provider (including at postgraduate level).
  - iii. The individual applied for a post at the provider.
  - iv. The individual had an immediate relative studying or working there.
  - v. The provider was an awarding body or delivering partner of the individual's institution, but the individual had no personal responsibility for or involvement in these arrangements.

170. In addition, if a panellist or assessor is aware of any other circumstance that presents a potential conflict of interest with a provider, they should raise this with the TEF team. The TEF manager will decide whether or not a conflict of interest should be recorded against the provider in question.

## Allocation of applications

171. Panellist and assessor appointments are made as a result of a competitive selection process, and all will be trained to a standard that enables them to undertake their duties fairly, consistently and robustly across a range of applications. Panellists and assessors with a range of expertise will work together to make recommendations to the TEF Panel, and decisions will be taken with the involvement of all members of the TEF Panel, which includes members with experience and expertise across diverse types of providers and provision across the UK.

172. Allocations for the initial stage of the process (see paragraphs 180 to 184) will be made in the light of these principles.

173. During December 2017, expected applications (based on the survey of providers' intentions to apply) will be provisionally allocated to academic and student panellists and assessors for them to review in stage one. After the application deadline (18 January 2018) the provisional allocations will be finalised.

174. Each application will be allocated to at least three individuals with a mix of expertise and perspectives, for review in stage one. Wherever possible:

- a. Two will be academics and one a student.
- b. Two of these will be assessors, and one a panel member.
- c. The three individuals will amongst them have expertise or experience of providers with similar characteristics to, and of providers with different characteristics from, those of the provider being assessed. This includes consideration of the following characteristics:
  - i. Type of provider.
  - ii. The national context of the provider.

- iii. Subject-specific approaches to learning and teaching, for small and specialist providers.

175. Each panellist and assessor will be allocated a case load of up to 15 applications to review in stage one.

176. As described in paragraphs 185 to 188, after the stage one review by three individuals, recommendations to the TEF Panel will be considered and formed by a larger group of panellists and assessors; each group will include a wide range of expertise and experience.

## Assessment process

177. Section 8 of the TEF specification outlines the three-stage assessment process and the roles of the panellists and assessors in determining the assessment outcomes.

178. At each **stage** in the process (individual review, forming recommendations, and decision making), the panellists and assessors should adhere to the three-**step** approach to assessment, outlined in section 7 the TEF specification.

179. Further procedural guidance on the three **stages** is set out in paragraphs 180 to 191.

### Stage one: Individual assessment

180. During stage one, each panellist and assessor will review their caseload of applications and, independently of one another, form a view about the TEF ratings.

181. During stage one, panellists and assessors should, where necessary, raise verification and clarification queries (see paragraphs 122 to 130).

182. The TEF officer will collate the three assessments to inform discussions in the next stage; and will pursue verification and clarification queries as necessary.

183. The widening participation (WP) and employment expert panel members will review samples of applications, focusing on their respective areas of interest and not necessarily considering all the components of an application. Their review of a sample of applications will not be intended to form a view about the ratings, but to identify general issues relating to WP and employment, to feed into the discussions in stage two.

184. The outputs from stage one will be:

- a. Three independent assessments of each application, collated by the TEF officer to inform discussions in stage two about each application.
- b. Identification of cross-cutting WP and employment related issues (by the WP and employment panel members) for discussion in stage two.
- c. Identification of other general issues for discussion in stage two.
- d. A record of individuals' ratings of their caseloads of applications, and analysis of their variance by the TEF team, to inform discussion in stage two.

### Stage two: Recommended outcomes

185. All panellists and assessors will meet together in a single location, to discuss their assessments and form recommendations to the TEF Panel.

186. The meeting will include general briefing and discussion of cross-cutting issues arising from stage one and to develop consistency in the application of the rating descriptors; discussion among the three individuals who reviewed each application to refine their views; and discussion in larger groups of panellists and assessors (comprising, for example, three panellists and six assessors).

187. The larger groups of panellists and assessors will consider the full set of applications reviewed in stage one by that group of individuals. They will consider cases where all three individuals agreed a single rating to test for consistent application of the rating descriptors; and consider in more detail the complex or borderline cases. These groups of panellists and assessors will be responsible collectively for forming recommendations to the TEF Panel.

188. The outputs from stage two will be:

- a. A recommendation and accompanying rationale for each application, made by the group of panellists and assessors. The recommendation may be for a rating of gold, silver or bronze, or that the case is close to a borderline and should be scrutinised in more detail by the TEF Panel.
- b. A summary of the recommendations.

### Stage three: Decisions on final outcomes

189. The TEF Panel will collectively make the final decisions on the outcomes. In reaching its decisions:

- a. The panel will consider feedback from each group of panellists and assessors, summarising the spread of recommended outcomes and any key issues identified.
- b. The panel members from each group will be responsible for presenting that group's recommendations to the TEF Panel, on the basis of the whole group's collective advice and recommendations.
- c. The panel will need to satisfy itself that in deciding on the merits of each case, the rating descriptors have been applied consistently, paying particular attention to borderline cases. If necessary, additional panel members will consider in detail the evidence contained in the application, to inform the panel's considerations further (alongside the recommendation).
- d. Where the panel does not reach consensus on a decision, paragraph 8.19 of the TEF specification will apply.

190. The outputs from stage three will be the TEF Panel's decision of a TEF rating of gold, silver or bronze and an accompanying statement of findings for each application.

191. HEFCE will separately determine providers' eligibility, and the ratings decided by the panel will be awarded to all eligible providers.

### Panellist and assessor support and guidance

192. Panellists and assessors will be provided with training, support and further guidance including:

- training and analytical support in relation to TEF metrics

- access to, and technical guidance and support in using, the TEF assessment extranet
- guidance on confidentiality and data security
- support and guidance on the assessment procedures from TEF officers (one TEF officer will support each group of panellists and assessors)
- provision of templates to complete at each stage of the assessment
- administrative support in relation to meeting arrangements, payment of fees and claiming expenses.

## Annex A

### TEF Year Three: Full metrics descriptions

Metrics based on the National Student Survey (NSS)		
Applicable to all NSS-based metrics:		
<p><b>Coverage</b></p> <p>The NSS is targeted at all final year undergraduates, non-final year students on flexible provision or who change their study plans may also be included in participating providers. The response rate in 2017 was 68%.</p> <p>The NSS covers UK, other EU and non-EU students.</p>		
<p><b>Exclusions</b></p> <p>Students who did not reach the final year of their course in any of the three most recent years.</p> <p>Students not aiming for an undergraduate level qualification, or aiming for a qualification of 1 FTE or lower.</p> <p>Students who were not on a full- or part-time mode of study.</p>		
<p><b>Year 1</b> (students surveyed during spring...)</p> <p>2015</p>	<p><b>Year 2</b></p> <p>2016</p>	<p><b>Year 3</b></p> <p>2017</p>
<p><b>Benchmark factors:</b> Subject of study, Age on entry, Ethnicity (full-time only), Disability, Level of study (full-time only), Year of cohort</p>		
'Teaching quality' metric		
<p>This metric is based on student's responses to NSS questions 1 to 4 which cover the NSS scale 'Teaching on my course'. In 2015 and 2016 these were as follows.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 – Staff are good at explaining things.</li> <li>2 – Staff have made the subject interesting.</li> <li>3 – Staff are enthusiastic about what they are teaching.</li> <li>4 – The course is intellectually stimulating.</li> </ul> <p>In 2017, the questions were as follows.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 – Staff are good at explaining things.</li> <li>2 – Staff have made the subject interesting.</li> <li>3 – The course is intellectually stimulating.</li> </ul>		

3 – My course has challenged me to achieve my best work.

Students indicate their agreement with each statement on a five-point scale. Across the four questions, total agreement by each student is calculated as the percentage of responses that are 'Agree' or 'Strongly agree'. Questions marked with N/A or not answered are ignored.

**Example data**

Student	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Percentage agree
A	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	75
B	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Agree	N/A	100
C	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree	Disagree	75
D	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Disagree	50
E	Agree	Disagree	N/A	N/A	50

In this example, the total percentage agreement for the provider would be 70% (the sum of percentages divided by the number of students).

**'Assessment and feedback' metric**

This metric is based on student's responses to NSS questions which cover the NSS scale 'Assessment and Feedback'.

In 2015 and 2016 these were questions 5 to 9 as follows.

5 – The criteria used in marking have been clear in advance.

6 – Assessment arrangements and marking have been fair.

7 – Feedback on my work has been prompt.

8 – I have received detailed comments on my work.

9 – Feedback on my work has helped me clarify things I did not understand.

In 2017, the 'Assessment and Feedback' questions were numbers 8 to 11 as follows.

8 – The criteria used in marking have been clear in advance.

9 – Marking and assessment has been fair.

10 – Feedback on my work has been timely.

11 – I have received helpful comments on my work.

Students indicate their agreement with each statement on a five-point scale. Across the five questions for metrics based on the 2015 or 2016 NSS, or four questions for the 2017 NSS, total agreement by each student is calculated as the percentage of responses that are 'Agree' or 'Strongly agree'. Questions marked with N/A or not answered are ignored.

**'Academic support' metric**

This metric is based on student's responses to NSS questions which cover the NSS scale 'Academic Support'. In 2015 and 2016 these were questions 10 to 12 as follows.

10 – I have received sufficient advice and support with my studies.

11 – I have been able to contact staff when I needed to.

12 – Good advice was available when I needed to make study choices.

In 2017, the 'Academic Support' questions were numbers 12 to 14 as follows.

12 – I have been able to contact staff when I needed to.

13 – I have received sufficient advice and guidance in relation to my course.

14 – Good advice was available when I needed to make study choices

Students indicate their agreement with each statement on a five-point scale. Across the three questions, total agreement by each student is calculated as the percentage of responses that are 'Agree' or 'Strongly agree'. Questions marked with N/A or not answered are ignored.

## Metrics based on HESA/ILR data

### 'Continuation' metric: Full-time

This metric tracks students from the year they enter a higher education (HE) provider to the following academic year. Students who qualify at undergraduate or postgraduate level, continue at the same HE provider, or are studying at HE level at another provider are deemed to have continued. All other students are deemed non-continuers.

In order to be counted as continuing, the student must either have qualified or be recorded as actively studying on an HE course on the relevant HESA/ILR dataset. Students who transfer to a provider who does not submit data to HESA /ILR will be counted as non-continuers.

Further detail can be found on the [HESA website](#).

### Coverage

This metric includes all UK-domiciled students who are included in one of the relevant HESA/ILR datasets and registered as entrants on HE Level 4, 5 and 6<sup>5</sup> programmes.

### Exclusions

EU and non-EU international students.

Students not registered on a first degree or other undergraduate course.

Students recorded in another provider's HESA/ILR data for the same activity.

Students with more than one record at a provider with the same mode and level of study.

**Benchmark factors:** Subject of study, Entry qualifications, Age on entry, Ethnicity, POLAR, Level of study

**Year 1** (HE entrants in...)

**Year 2**

**Year 3**

<sup>5</sup> Throughout this annex references to Level 6 qualifications should be taken to include integrated masters qualifications.

2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
<b>'Continuation' metric: Part-time</b>		
<p>This metric tracks students from the year they enter a HE provider to the two following academic years. Students who qualify at undergraduate or postgraduate level within these two years, continue at the same HE provider, or are studying at HE level at another provider in the second of the two years are deemed to have continued. All other students are deemed non-continuers.</p> <p>In order to be counted as continuing, the student must either have qualified or be recorded as actively studying on an HE course on the relevant HESA/ILR dataset. Students who transfer to a provider who does not submit data to HESA /ILR will be counted as non-continuers.</p> <p>Further detail can be found on the <a href="#">HESA website</a></p>		
<p><b>Coverage</b></p> <p>This metric includes all UK-domiciled students who are included in one of the relevant HESA/ILR datasets and registered as entrants on HE Level 6 programmes.</p> <p><b>Exclusions</b></p> <p>EU and non-EU international students.</p> <p>Students not registered on a Level 6 programme.</p> <p>Students who are studying at less than 30% intensity.</p> <p>Students who were registered on a first degree course in the year prior to entry.</p> <p>Students active on more than one HE course at any provider.</p> <p>Students recorded in another provider's HESA/ILR data for the same activity.</p> <p>Students with more than one record at a provider with the same mode and level of study.</p>		
<b>Year 1</b> (HE entrants in...)	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>
2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
<b>Benchmark factors:</b> Subject of study, Age on entry, Ethnicity, POLAR		
<b>Metrics based on DLHE</b>		
<b>'Employment or further study' metric</b>		
<p>This employment indicator is based on the Destinations of Leavers in Higher Education (DLHE) survey, and expresses the number of UK-domiciled leavers who say they are working or studying (or both) as a percentage of all those who are working or studying or seeking work at six months after leaving. All other categories are excluded from this indicator.</p> <p>Leavers are asked to indicate their current activity, selecting from eight categories. They are then asked to indicate the most important activity. In the table below (adapted from <a href="#">HESA</a>) the responses that are included in the 'Employment or Further Study' metric are highlighted (those cells of the table below in white or blue are included in the denominator; those in blue are included in the numerator). The responses that are excluded from the indicator are shaded in grey. The indicator is therefore</p>		

those leavers in categories 1 to 6 divided by those leavers in categories 1 to 8.

Further detail can be found on the [HESA website](#).

Most important activity (MIMPACT)	If any other activity includes (ALLACT)	Derived activity category
		XX Ineligibility or explicit refusal
Working full-time	Engaged in full-time study, training or research OR Engaged in part-time further study, training or research	03 Primarily in work and also studying
	Otherwise	01 Full-time work
Working part-time	Engaged in full-time study, training or research OR Engaged in part-time further study, training or research	03 Primarily in work and also studying
	Otherwise	02 Part-time work
Unemployed and looking for work		08 Unemployed
Due to start a job in the next month	Working full-time	01 Full-time work
	Engaged in full-time further study, training or research, provided that Working full-time has not been selected.	05 Full-time study
	Working part-time, provided that Working full-time AND Engaged in full-time further study, training or research have not been selected.	02 Part-time work
	Otherwise	07 Due to start work
Engaged in full-time further study, training or research	Working full-time OR Working part-time	04 Primarily studying and also in work
	Otherwise	05 Full-time study
Engaged in part-time further study, training or research	Working full-time OR Working part-time	04 Primarily studying and also in work
	Otherwise	06 Part-time study
Taking time out in order to travel		09 Other
Something else		09 Other

**Coverage**

This metric includes all UK-domiciled leavers who are included in the relevant HESA/ILR datasets and have been awarded full Level 4, 5 or 6 qualifications.

### Exclusions

EU and non-EU international students.

Students who are not counted in the DLHE target population.

Students who were not awarded an undergraduate Level 4, 5 or 6 qualification.

Students who are recorded in another provider's ILR data for the same activity.

**Year 1** (Students leaving in...)

2013-14

**Year 2**

2014-15

**Year 3**

2015-16

**Benchmark factors:** Subject of study, Entry qualifications, Age on entry, Ethnicity, Sex, Level of study

### 'Highly skilled employment or further study' metric

This employment indicator is based on the Destinations of Leavers in Higher Education (DLHE) survey. It expresses the number of UK-domiciled leavers who say they are in highly skilled employment or studying (or both) as a percentage of all those who are working or studying or seeking work at approximately six months after leaving. All other categories are excluded from this indicator.

Leavers are asked to indicate their current activity, selecting from eight categories. They are then asked to indicate the most important activity. In the table below (adapted from [HESA](#)) the responses that are included in the 'Employment or Further Study' metric are highlighted (those in white are included in the denominator; those in blue are included in the numerator). The responses that are excluded from the indicator are shaded in grey.

Those who indicate they are in employment are asked to provide further detail about that employment including a job title. That job title is mapped to the [Standard Occupational Classification](#) (SOC). For this metric, jobs that are coded in SOC major groups 1-3 are counted as highly skilled.

The indicator is therefore those leavers in categories 1 to 6 (where employment is in SOC 1-3) divided by those leavers in categories 1 to 8.

Further detail can be found on the [HESA website](#).

Most important activity (MIMPACT)	If any other activity includes (ALLACT)	Derived activity category	SOC group
		XX Ineligibility or explicit refusal	
Working full-time	Engaged in full-time study, training or research OR Engaged in part-time further study, training or research	03 Primarily in work and also studying	SOC 1-3
			Other
	Otherwise	01 Full-time work	SOC 1-3
			Other

Working part-time	Engaged in full-time study, training or research OR Engaged in part-time further study, training or research	03 Primarily in work and also studying	SOC 1-3
			Other
	Otherwise	02 Part-time work	SOC 1-3
			Other
Unemployed and looking for work		08 Unemployed	
Due to start a job in the next month	Working full-time	01 Full-time work	SOC 1-3
			Other
	Engaged in full-time further study, training or research, provided that Working full-time has not been selected.	05 Full-time study	
	Working part-time, provided that Working full-time AND Engaged in full-time further study, training or research have not been selected.	02 Part-time work	SOC 1-3
			Other
	Otherwise	07 Due to start work	
Engaged in full-time further study, training or research	Working full-time OR Working part-time	04 Primarily studying and also in work	
	Otherwise	05 Full-time study	
Engaged in part-time further study, training or research	Working full-time OR Working part-time	04 Primarily studying and also in work	
	Otherwise	06 Part-time study	
Taking time out in order to travel		09 Other	
Something else		09 Other	

### Coverage

This metric includes all UK-domiciled leavers who are included in the relevant HESA/ILR datasets and have been awarded full Level 4, 5 or 6 qualifications.

### Exclusions

EU and non-EU international students.

Students who are not counted in the DLHE target population.

Students who were not awarded an undergraduate Level 4, 5 or 6 qualification.

Students who are recorded in another provider's ILR data for the same activity.

Year 1 (Students leaving in...)	Year 2	Year 3
---------------------------------	--------	--------

2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
<b>Benchmark factors:</b> Subject of study, Entry qualifications, Age on entry, Ethnicity, Sex, Disability, POLAR, Level of study		
<b>Supplementary metrics based on LEO</b>		
<b>‘Sustained employment or further study’ metric</b>		
<p>This metric is based on the Longitudinal Education Outcomes dataset (LEO), which links higher education and tax data together to chart the transition of graduates from higher education to the workplace. The LEO dataset links information about students, including their personal characteristics, their education (including schools, colleges and higher education providers attended as well as courses taken and qualifications achieved), their employment and income, and any benefits claimed. The metric considers the proportion of qualifiers in sustained employment or further study three years after graduation.</p> <p>The Department for Education’s definition of sustained employment is consistent with definitions used for 16-19 accountability, and the outcome-based success measures published for adult further education. The definition of sustained employment three years after graduation looks at employment activity captured by PAYE in the six-month October 2014 to March 2015 period, and at any 2014-15 self-assessment tax form stating that a graduate has received income from self-employment during that tax year.</p> <p>A 2010-11 graduate is counted as being in sustained employment three years after graduation if they were in paid PAYE employment for at least one day a month in five out of six months between October 2014 and March 2015, or have returned a 2014-15 self-assessment form stating that they received income from self-employment. If they are employed in all five months from October to February, but do not have a PAYE employment record for March, then they must have an additional employment record in April to be considered as being in sustained employment.</p> <p>‘Sustained employment’ is taken together with further study in the definition of TEF metrics: the numerator counts all graduates identified as being in sustained employment or further study. A graduate is defined as being in further study if they have a valid higher education study record at any UK publicly funded higher education institution or any English alternative provider or further education college in the HESA and ILR Student Records in the 2014-15 tax year. The further study does not have to be at postgraduate level to be counted.</p> <p>Further detail can be found on the <a href="http://gov.uk">gov.uk website</a>.</p>		
<p><b>Coverage</b></p> <p>This metric includes all UK-domiciled leavers who are included in the relevant HESA/ILR datasets and have been awarded full Level 4, 5 or 6 qualifications.</p> <p><b>Exclusions</b></p> <p>EU and non-EU international students.</p> <p>Students who were not awarded an undergraduate Level 4, 5 or 6 qualification.</p> <p>Students who are recorded in another provider’s ILR data for the same activity.</p> <p>Students at providers in Northern Ireland, or at providers who were not required to return HESA or ILR data in 2010-11.</p>		

Students without a HMRC or DWP tax or benefits record in any year, or the small minority of students whose personal characteristics data was not sufficiently complete to enable linking to HMRC or DWP records.		
<b>Year 1</b> (Students leaving in...)	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>
NONE	NONE	2010-11
<b>Benchmark factors:</b> Subject of study, Entry qualifications (full-time only), Age on entry (full-time only), Ethnicity, Sex (full-time only), Level of study		
<b>‘Above median earnings’ metric</b>		
<p>This metric is based on the Longitudinal Education Outcomes dataset (LEO), which links higher education and tax data together to chart the transition of graduates from higher education to the workplace. The LEO dataset links information about students, including their personal characteristics, their education (including schools, colleges and higher education providers attended as well as courses taken and qualifications achieved), their employment and income, and any benefits claimed. The metric considers the proportion of qualifiers in sustained employment that are earning over the median salary for 25-29 year-olds, or are in further study.</p> <p>Qualifiers in sustained employment or further study are defined as in the description of the Sustained Employment or Further Study metric above. It is the sustained employment or further study population who form the denominator of this metric, with the exception of students who only have self-assessed employment earnings, who are excluded from the denominator. The numerator includes graduates within this denominator population whose PAYE earnings exceed £21,000.</p> <p>Further detail can be found on the <a href="https://gov.uk">gov.uk website</a>.</p>		
<p><b>Coverage</b></p> <p>This metric includes all UK-domiciled leavers who are included in the relevant HESA/ILR datasets and have been awarded full Level 4, 5 or 6 qualifications.</p> <p><b>Exclusions</b></p> <p>EU and non-EU international students.</p> <p>Students who were not awarded an undergraduate Level 4, 5 or 6 qualification.</p> <p>Students who are recorded in another provider’s ILR data for the same activity.</p> <p>Students at providers in Northern Ireland, or at providers who were not required to return HESA or ILR data in 2010-11.</p> <p>Students without a HMRC or DWP tax or benefits record in any year, or the small minority of students whose personal characteristics data was not sufficiently complete to enable linking to HMRC or DWP records.</p> <p>Students who were not in Sustained Employment or Further Study three years after graduation.</p> <p>Students who had no PAYE earnings recorded.</p>		
<b>Year 1</b> (Students leaving in...)	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>
NONE	NONE	2010-11

**Benchmark factors:** Subject of study, Entry qualifications, Age on entry (part-time only), Ethnicity, Sex, Disability, POLAR, Level of study