

## Unistats Return 2018/19 submission to HESA

### Summary

The Unistats Return is submitted by HEIs to HESA on a yearly basis in August for use by Office for Students (OfS) on the Unistats website. The Unistats Return is produced for the undergraduate admissions courses nominated by the Schools and contains basic course information and links to institution-based webpages with teaching hours, assessment type, accommodation and finance information as of the 2017/18 return. These requirements remained the same in 2018/19

The Unistats Return data provided to HESA contains background links to the NSS and DLHE returns which are also provided by HEIs to HESA, and this allows for the drawing together of all relevant information for potential undergraduates about their future studies in one place on Unistats.

The following report outlines the process employed in creating the 2018/19 Unistats Return submission, some of the highlights in terms of new requirements from HESA, and some early warning of developments for the 2019/20 submission.

One action required.

### Recommended Action

Senate is asked to **note** the Report and to **note** the publication of the Unistats Return 2018/19

**Publication: Open**

## **Unistats Return 2018/19 submission to HESA**

2018/19 has seen a continuation of the approach used in 2017/18 in the production of the new style Unistats Return. Whereas with the KIS Return the work could be carried out almost exclusively in Student and Academic Services, and then checked by Schools and other Professional Services, in 2017/18 and in 2018/19 a more devolved approach has been required. The aim of these changes introduced last year by OfS has been to move, in the light of the CMA, the burden and responsibility for maintaining the more complex pieces of information on to the HEIs themselves.

The Unistats Return has continued to require extremely close collaboration between Academic Operations and QUAD within Student and Academic Services, Finance and Marketing and Recruitment in order to provide the all the information requested. The Unistats Return requires accommodation, teaching hours, assessment types, financial and accommodation to be provided on City's undergraduate programme webpages, and for these webpages to be return as simple hyperlinks in the Unistats Return. Student and Academic Services have generated and provided the teaching hours and assessment types to Marketing in order to replicate what was previously included in the KIS Return.

As with the previous KIS Return, there has been very close cooperation with the Schools to ensure accuracy and ownership of data. Student and Academic Services have also fielded a number of questions from Academic colleagues regarding the teaching hours and assessment types and provided explanations as to why figures are as they are presented and the calculation methods behind the figures. The methodology has not changed but the presence of the figures on the course websites has made them more visible.

The main change in the 2018/19 Unistats Return has been the introduction of HECoS codes in the return in the place of JACS codes. Student and Academic Services had from earlier in the year sent out spreadsheets to the Schools to collect information about the HECoS codes for City's programmes and modules, so it was possible to submit the codes for new courses as OfS were requesting. QUAD have embedded the provision of HECoS codes in their documentation for approving new courses, so these codes will be able to be entered each time a new course has to be returned to HESA.

### **Courses submitted**

The Unistats Return has seen an increase in the number of courses submitted at the point of approval from 63 in 2013/14, through an increase to 66 in 2014/15 to a decrease back to 63 at the point of submission in 2015/16, with slight rise to 64 in 2016/17 to 70 courses in 2017/18. In 2018/19 73 courses were submitted. As in 2017/18 all courses approved to be advertised in 2018/19 for 2019/20 entry were include in the August 2018 submission. However, any new courses that are approved during the year for 2019/20 commencement will be included via interim updates, making visible an even wider selection of the academic offering provided at City.

### **Accommodation Costings**

Accommodation costings were removed from the 2017/18 and 2018/19 Unistats Returns as a data item. Instead institutions were asked to provide a link to accommodation information located on institutional websites. The link provided for City can be found at:

<http://www.city.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/accommodation>

## **Fees**

Fees information, along with fee waiver information and mean and non-means tested support were removed from the 2017/18 and 2018/19 Unistats Returns as data items. The fees information is provided to Marketing by Finance under the new arrangements and added to the courses pages as business as usual.

There is no longer a requirement to provide average fee information over the length of the course, so fees are now simply provided for home, EU and overseas students on the course webpages connected to <https://www.city.ac.uk/study/undergraduate>

## **Assessment and Teaching Indicators**

Assessment and teaching indicators were removed from the 2017/18 and 2018/19 as data items. As there is an ongoing requirement from OfS for this information to be displayed on institutional websites, Academic Operations produced the assessment and teaching information for Marketing using the methodology and calculation methods that had been employed for the KIS Return as they did 2017/18.

This information as per the fees information can be found on the individual course pages connected to <https://www.city.ac.uk/study/undergraduate>

## **Unistats sign off**

In August 2017 the Deputy President and Provost signed off the Unistats Return 2018/19 in the President's absence. Due to the removal of the "Unistats Beta Preview", two sign offs were not required this year, just a single one in mid-August.

## **Ongoing updating of the Unistats return (mid-September 2018 onwards)**

As the academic year progresses, there will be supplementary updates to the Unistats dataset, which will be signed off by the Associate Director (Student Administration and Registry Services) in Student and Academic Services as required. This delegation of sign off authority was approved by the President as part of the sign off to the first update to the Unistats information. To facilitate the regular updates to the data, the Head of Student Systems and Data Quality is working closely with the Programmes and Partnerships Development Officer, QUAD, Marketing and colleagues in the Schools to ensure that Unistats is updated immediately following the creation and amendment of new and existing programmes.

It is essential to note that all changes to the course information within Unistats must be driven by the programme and module approval process. In addition, it would be preferable in the longer term if all modifications to programmes and modules could be completed without fail before Easter in order to allow the efficient production of the return, and to minimise post Unistats preview stage adjustments.

## **Changes to the Unistats Return**

The Unistats Return remained mostly static in 2018/19. To summarise the information given above the main item of change was:

- The introduction of HECoS codes to identify the content of new programmes and the linking of those codes by HESA and OfS to the previous JACS information via the Common Aggregation Hierarchy. For more information around the introduction of HECoS coding and CAHs please see <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/innovation/hecos>

Thus far there has been no indication from OfS as to what changes might be included in the 2019/20 Unistats Return. It is known that OfS want to overhaul the current Unistats provision, so once they have decided the direction of travel for Unistats they will inform HESA, and then HESA will inform the software suppliers and HEIs.

It remains likely there will be closer attention from OfS in terms of auditing to ensure that URLs are current and that accreditation information (which remains in the return) is correct.

Student and Academic Services, Marketing and Recruitment and Finance will continue to work closely to ensure the Unistats is as accurate and up to date as possible.

### **Publication of data**

The Unistats Return data that was signed off by 17 August (the final submission date) was published on Unistats for 2018 on 10 September and is visible to prospective students at <http://www.unistats.ac.uk>. It was intended that OfS would make the data live on 30 August. However, a power surge at the Eduserv datacentre caused considerable damage to the servers and OfS had to restore a number of services and sites.

Now that the data collection system has reopened, as outlined above, updates will be published on a weekly cycle on a Wednesday, where sign off for a supplementary update submission has been received by HESA before 12pm on the preceding Tuesday.

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