Enhancing the student experience

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17 November 2016
Overview

HEFCE support for improving the student experience through:

- Funding
- Regulation including quality assessment
- Teaching Excellence Framework
- Information
  - A new National Student Survey - 2017
  - Unistats
  - PG information
Funding

Support for student experience across funding streams

- **Recurrent teaching grant to institutions**: diminishing but still includes supplements to support priorities in the public interest or that fees alone do not cover e.g. high cost STEM, world class specialist institutions

- **Recurrent research grant to institutions**: element relates to supervision.

- Capital grants to institutions

- **Other**: research and development and project funding (e.g. to HE Academy)
Funding: Grant letter 2016-17

- 2016-17: £1,539 recurrent grant for teaching
- Review approach to allocating teaching funding
- Protect high cost STEM in real terms
- Protect as far as possible funding for widening participation, but greater focus
- Support for degree apprenticeships
HEFCE’s response

*We are undertaking a programme of work in response which includes:*

- 2016-17 funding changes
- Changes to funding access and student success for 2017-18
- Developing funding approach for health, midwifery and allied professional education
- *Potential reforms to other areas of teaching funding from 2018-19*
Revised operating model for quality assessment

**Key features of the new approach:**

- Proportionate and risk-based
- Grounded in the mission and context of an individual university or college
- Focuses meaningful external scrutiny on those areas that matter to students
- Aims to reduce the bureaucracy, cost and burden placed on providers

http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/year/2016/201603/
Quality Assessment and TEF

Teaching Excellence Framework

Annual Provider Review
Higher Education Review (AP)
Quality Enhancement Framework
Quality Assessment Framework (Wales)
The regulatory landscape

- Register of Higher Education Providers
- Gateways into the HE system
- Exit from HE provision
- Powers and Obligations including QA
- Student Protection
Quality assessment from 2017-18

Unsatisfactory Quality Scheme

Review for established providers
• Annual Provider Review (including a five-yearly HEFCE Assurance Review)

Developmental period of enhanced scrutiny
• Annual Provider Review
• Repeat quality review visit after four years

Entry Gateway
• Quality review visit
• Test against baseline regulatory requirements
Student satisfaction 2005-2016 (NSS)
NSS review

• NSS Review published 2014 (IoE Natcen, IES)

• 9 years data analysis published

• Informal consultation about NSS review in summer 2017

• Funding bodies’ initial response to NSS review recommendations (Nov 2014)

• NSS 2015 cognitive testing (main survey, NHS questions and some optional banks) and pilot

• Literature reviews on survey effects and response bias

• Data analysis of students not included in NSS

• NSS 2016 cognitive testing and pilot
The NSS has changed....

• Main survey has 27 questions, split into themed section.
• 9 new questions on student engagement
• Updated questions on assessment & feedback and learning resources,
• Personal development questions moved to optional bank.
• Inclusion of new Students’ Union question in the main survey and also a SU optional bank of questions.
• New online survey interface for desktop and mobile to address yea-saying.
• New NSS logo
The Main Survey Questions

The teaching on my course
1. Staff are good at explaining things
2. Staff have made the subject interesting
3. The course is intellectually stimulating
4. My course has challenged me to achieve my best work

Learning opportunities
5. My course has provided me with opportunities to explore ideas or concepts in depth
6. My course has provided me with opportunities to bring information and ideas together from different topics
7. My course has provided me with opportunities to apply what I have learnt
The Main Survey Questions Cont’d

**Assessment and feedback**

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

**Academic support**

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 on my course
Organisation and management
15. The course is well organised and running smoothly
16. The timetable works efficiently for me
17. Any changes in the course or teaching have been communicated effectively*

Learning resources
18. The IT resources and facilities provided have supported my learning well
19. The library resources (e.g. books, online services and learning spaces) have supported my learning well
20. I have been able to access course-specific resources (e.g. equipment, facilities, software, collections) when I needed to
The Main Survey Questions (contd)

Learning community
21. I feel part of a community of staff and students
22. I have had the right opportunities to work with other students as part of my course

Student voice
23. I have had the right opportunities to provide feedback on my course
24. Staff value students’ views and opinions about the course
25. It is clear how students’ feedback on the course has been acted on
26. The students’ union (association or guild) effectively represents students’ academic interests
27. Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of the course
NSS and TEF

- The Government has introduced TEF as a way of:
  - Better informing students’ choices about what and where to study
  - Raising esteem for teaching
  - Recognising and rewarding excellent teaching.
  - Better meeting the needs of employers, business, industry and the professions.

- Some of the NSS results will form part of the metrics used in the assessment.
- More detailed information from HEFCE or DfE
Unistats and the Key Information Set

The official website for comparing UK higher education course data

Includes official data for undergraduate courses on each university and college’s satisfaction scores in the National Student Survey, jobs and salaries after study and other key information for prospective students.
Unistats and the Key Information Set – Review Aims

- Identify how students and advisers currently use information in decision-making.
- Understand how Unistats and the KIS are being used and how they fit in the wider information landscape.
- Identify any gaps in information and challenges in finding and understanding information.
- Investigate the impact of the KIS on institutions.
- Consider the role that the UK HE funding bodies should play in the provision of information for decision-making about undergraduate study.
Review findings

• Data is only one element of decision making

• Decision making is a complex, personal process: students have different levels of preference for data and priorities. Importantly, more data does not necessarily result in better choices as too much information can be overwhelming

• Students are most interested in detailed information about course content and delivery, which is not easily presented as simple metrics on Unistats

• Common core of information most useful, but specific needs exist around this.

• Students who are less confident, or do not have a background in HE, may need more support to understand what data is relevant and what it means.
Proposed changes to Unistats

The HE funding bodies should continue to provide a resource which acts an impartial and authoritative source of high-level information to help in decision-making about undergraduate study, but we should focus on helping students find the information that is most relevant to them at the right time. We will seek to do this by:

• Helping prospective students identify the questions that they may wish to consider in making decisions about their course.

• Signposting information that will help them to answer these questions and providing assistance with navigation through information published by institutions and other information providers.

• Making it easier for students to access the data of interest to them rather than presenting it all to them.

• Providing greater contextualisation and explanation around the data that we publish to help students understand it and use it to make appropriate comparisons between courses.
Changes proposed to the KIS

• Information on the proportion of time spent in various learning and teaching activities
• Proportion of summative assessment by method
• Tuition fees (average annual fee)
• Indicators of financial support available
• Accommodation costs
Information provided by institutions

• Our research found that the most important information for prospective students is *detailed information around their potential academic experience.*

• Instead of continuing to collect information in a summary and standardised format, we wish to work with institutions to ensure the provision of high-quality information *which will meet the needs of prospective students in this area.*

• We will *develop good practice guidance for publication of information* with institutional representatives and other relevant stakeholders. This should promote consistency of presentation, yet allow for publication of detailed, contextualised information which better reflects provision.

• We will seek to *ensure alignment with guidance issued by the CMA* on the information we ask institutions to provide on their websites in this area and on others such as fees and additional costs.
Review implementation - milestones

- Publication of revised specification August 2016
- Publication of guidance for institutions January 2017
- New website August 2018
Information for taught postgraduate students
Information for taught postgraduate students

Postgraduate survey

Various drivers for revisiting:
  • Changes to fees and funding (including proposed loan scheme in England)
  • Reduction in publication thresholds for survey data on Unistats
  • Inclusion of taught postgraduate provision in TEF in future years and currently no survey that can be drawn on as the NSS can for postgraduate provision
Information for taught postgraduate students

Consultation outcomes

• 70% agreed we should consider collecting feedback for publication from taught postgraduate students
• 78% agreed all three purposes of information were relevant
• Concerns raised about:
  • suitability for informing decision-making
  • duplication (suggestion PTES could be used)
• Further work to develop a survey has now been approved
Thank you for listening
How to find out more

email hefce@hefce.ac.uk
Twitter http://twitter.com/hefce
website www.hefce.ac.uk

governance-hefce email distribution list
HEFCE update
monthly e-newsletter