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**Higher Education Statistics (Dec To Jan 2016/17)**

This survey is primarily aimed at continuing the government dialogue with higher education-sector stakeholders on the shape of Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) statistical releases. It follows the initial informal consultation that ran from 4 August to 4 September 2016.  
  
(Questions 1-8 are the ‘What’s your name, where do you come from’ questions)

**9. The 1 December higher education LEO statistical release shows employment and earnings outcomes for graduates who studied law at each higher education institution that offers the subject. How useful is subject level data at institution level to you?  
very useful**

**quite useful**

**not very useful**

**don’t know**

**10. Please explain the reasons for your response to question 9.**  
GuildHE is an officially recognised representative body for UK Higher Education. Our members include universities, university colleges, further education colleges and specialist institutions from both the traditional and private (“for profit” and “not for profit”) sectors. Member institutions include major providers in professional subject areas like art, design and media, music and the performing arts; agriculture and food; education; maritime; health and sports.

Given that many degrees are not aligned to a specific career path, and that any degree provides graduates with an abundance of transferable skills regardless of the subject studied, subject level data is only partially useful. We know that in many instances graduates are not employed in roles which require the specialist subject knowledge gained in their degree.

It is also fundamental that the data includes those who are classed as self-employed. This is especially the case for a number of subjects in the creative and agricultural industries where many graduates go on to start their own business or work as freelancers.

**11. In the 1 December statistical release, we are breaking down outcomes by gender, ethnicity, age, prior attainment and region; how useful is this to you?  
very useful**

**quite useful**

**not very useful**

**don’t know**

**12. Please explain the reasons for your response to question 11.**GuildHE are pleased that the Department for Education has responded to our requests to include data on gender, ethnicity, age, and socio-economic background. This is useful for our membership to formulate widening participation targets, understand the institutional attainment gap and to benchmark themselves on these targets within the sector. If there is any scope or enough evidence to include data on disability, this would also be useful (particularly in light of cuts to funding of the Disabled Students’ Allowance).  
  
However, this data is only genuinely meaningful if the government includes self-employed data into its analysis.

**13. We have grouped graduates into four prior attainment bands in this publication to ensure a reasonable number of graduates fall into each category. Are four bands the most useful number, or would you prefer:**

**more bands**

**less bands**

**the same number**

**14. Please explain your answer to question 13.**We consider the current banding system to be useful for comparing graduate outcomes, as a reasonable amount of graduates fall into each category.

**15. We have taken graduates’ best three A-levels into consideration when placing them into one of the four prior attainment groups. Should we instead consider all A-levels taken?  
Yes**

**No**

**Not sure**

**16. Please explain your response to question 15.**It’s important that the data not only reflects the highest level qualification a student has achieved, but also the ones that were a requirement of their institution. Furthermore, if a student achieves 5 A\*s at A-Level, it becomes difficult for the government to decide which qualification is ‘best’. If all results are taken into account, this avoids a prioritisation of one subject over another.

**17. Our prior attainment bands are based on the point scores achieved through GCE A levels. Would it be useful to you if we included other approved level 3 qualifications (e.g. BTECs or the International Baccalaureate) in our prior attainment categories?  
Yes**

**No**

**Not sure**

**18. Please explain your response to question 17.**GuildHE believe that it is important that the qualifications recorded are meaningful to the institution, and how student recruitment is enacted. For example, if more students undertake a degree level apprenticeship, it may be more useful for them to attain a BTEC qualification than an A Level. At University College Birmingham, the admissions team consider a range of level 3 qualifications on a level playing field with A Levels. To omit these students would mean neglecting a significant proportion of this institution’s population.

**19. If we extend the prior attainment bandings to include other approved level 3 qualifications (e.g. BTECs), would it be useful to you if we separated graduates into different bands depending on what type of qualification their point scores are based on?  
Yes**

**No**

**Not sure**

**20. Please explain your response to question 19.**GuildHE believe it would be interesting to look at whether achieving different level 3 qualifications prior to further study results in different career trajectories.

**21. The subject breakdowns included in this publication are based on JACS subject areas. More detail on what is included in each of the subject areas can be found on HESA’s website: https://www.hesa.ac.uk/support/documentation/jacs/jacs3-principal We currently separate out Economics from the other Social Sciences. Are there any other subjects you would like to see split out from these broader categories?  
Yes**

**No**

**Not sure**

**22. Please explain your response to question 21.**We consider (N8) Hospitality, leisure, sport, tourism & transport to be misplaced within the category of ‘(D) Business and Administration’ – as this is likely to attract a very different cohort of students to those studying traditional business degrees. Furthermore, that ‘(I6) Games’ does not fit appropriately into ‘(8) Computer science’, as this may lead on to far more creative-based careers than those who study traditional computer science courses. It is worth separating these out in order to get a better understanding of the employment outcomes of this group of graduates.

**23. The government understands that LEO data should be looked at in the context of other information about university education. What additional data would you find it useful for LEO to sit alongside?**The data should sit alongside institutional level data on student choice, and the Destination Leavers in Higher Education (DLHE) survey, in order to gain a more structured narrative on graduate outcomes. It is absolutely vital that the LEO data includes self-employed data, in order to truly gain an understanding of the future of those graduates.

This is particularly relevant when looking at creative institutions. In a recent report delivered by GuildHE, we revealed that creative HEIs contribute approximately £8.4billion annually to the UK economy. Furthermore, that 94% of graduates stay in the UK after study, and the skills acquired through their degrees bolster the outcome of British employers. The inclusion of self-assessment data for these universities is paramount when looking at their graduates’ employment outcomes. For example, Rose Bruford college shows a 20% increase of students in the ‘sustained employment: with or without further study’ category when that data is included for the 2012-13 cohort (one year after graduation). If the self-employed graduates continue to be listed out of the data, then LEO becomes an irrelevant source of information for potential students, and could cause reputational harm to institutions who develop a large proportion of self-employed graduates.

**24. How important a role should careers advice providers at all stages of the education system play in communicating LEO data and the context around it?  
paramount role**

**substantial role**

**minor role**

**don’t know**

If the self-employed data is included, then LEO data is a really useful tool for careers advice providers looking to assist applicants with specific interests.