

Data Quality Statement and Assurance for 2024/25



The Importance of Data Quality

Data Quality is particularly important to the RCM in respect of:

- **Statutory returns** – student, staff, alumni and financial data is used in a number of statistical returns which the College is required to make to OfS and other funders (returns include HESES, RAS, HESA Student, HESA Staff, HESA Finance, Graduate Outcomes, TRAC and National Student Survey). These returns themselves are then in turn used in a variety of ways.
- **Funding** - the data contained in the HESES and RAS returns are used by OfS to determine RCM's grant, and as such the quality of our data has a direct relationship to the income the College will receive.
- **Equality and diversity** – data derived from the College's data sources is used for equal opportunities and diversity monitoring in order to comply with the College statutory duties and its stated policy objectives.
- **Data protection** – data security is an important objective in data processes.
- **League tables & Performance Indicators** - data from the HESA student return (as well as data from the staff, finance and Graduate Outcomes returns and the National Student Survey) are used by The Times Higher Education and The Guardian newspapers to compile their league tables. Returning inaccurate data to HESA may result in disappointing rankings in the league tables, and misleading performance indicator information.
- **Planning** - data from Student Records System is used internally throughout the year in the recruitment and budget-setting process, particularly in monitoring the recruitment and enrolment performance against targets and forecast student numbers. TRAC is used by the Directorate to better understand the College's income and expenditure and to inform the efficient and appropriate deployment of resources.
- **Customer service** - poor data could potentially result in students being awarded incorrect degree certificates, inaccurate transcripts and receiving correspondence containing the wrong details.

Ensuring and Improving Data Quality

The College is committed to ensuring good Data Quality through:

- **Governance, People & Skills:** The responsibility for data quality lies with all staff, and as such the commitment to data quality is communicated from the Directorate throughout the College as a whole. Staff with particular responsibility for data quality receive appropriate training and support (for instance in the Student Records System, pertinent data protection issues, and the application of the College's own internal data quality policies). Staff roles and responsibilities in respect of each statutory return and the quality of data contained therein, are clearly delineated.
- **Systems & Processes:** The College has a number of established systems and processes in place for the collection, recording, analysis and reporting of data, such as the HESES/HESA Student/HESA Protocols, which clearly set out the procedures entailed in producing, checking and submitting these returns and the data contained therein. Internal auditors have a key role in monitoring, reviewing and reporting on the effectiveness of systems and processes for data quality.

- **Data Use & Reporting:** In ensuring that data, in the form of both statutory returns and various other internal management information formats, is relied upon and used regularly to inform decision making and planning, the inherent value and importance of the data itself, and therefore its quality is promoted to staff throughout the organisation.

Data Quality Objectives

- To maintain and develop documentation and procedures to ensure data is checked regularly and robustly
- To ensure that data is used effectively to manage and improve the student recruitment, registration and assessment processes
- To support a culture of valuing high quality data
- To ensure that all data is accurate (in terms of correctness), valid (in an agreed format which conforms to recognised standards), reliable (reflects consistent processes), timely (available when needed), relevant (in terms of the purpose(s) it is to be used for) and complete (in terms of all data being captured).

Data return						
Discover Uni (23-24) (Formerly Unistats)	DDB	A provider will need to submit information about courses that it will offer to its students. This helps prospective higher education students to make decisions about what and where to study	Registry Information & Systems Manager (Nicholas.seagr@rcm.ac.uk)	23/08/2024	08/08/2024	Y
Student Record (23-24)	DDB	A provider will need to submit details of individual students and the courses they are studying. The data collected underpins the OfS's regulatory approach.	Registry Information & Systems Manager (Nicholas.seagr@rcm.ac.uk)	1/11/2024	25/10/2024	Y

Graduate Outcomes Survey 23-24	DDB	A provider will need to engage with the Graduate Outcomes survey, including submitting and approving contact details for students who have completed their studies, who will then be surveyed by the DDB. For further education and sixth form colleges, initial contact details will be sourced from the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) but will still need checking. The Graduate Outcomes survey is used to understand student progression and outcomes, including to inform student choice.	Creative Careers Centre Manager (Diana.roberts@rcm.ac.uk)	15/11/2024	18/11/2024	Y
Staff record 23-24	DDB	A provider will need to submit demographic and contract information for academic staff it employs and its governors. The data is used by the OfS and by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and the Department for Education, to understand the makeup of the academic and research workforce.	Head of HR (lennifer.allison@rcm.ac.uk)	18/11/2024	12/11/2024	Y
Aggregate offshore record (23-24)	DDB	A provider will need to submit information about the number of students studying overseas who are either registered with it or studying towards its awards. The data is used to understand the nature and extent of providers' offshore activity and for general monitoring purposes.	Registry Information & Systems Manager (Nicholas.seager@rcm.ac.uk)	18/11/2024	23/09/2024	Y

National Student Survey (NSS) 2025	Contractor	A provider will need to: a. Populate its NSS 2025 sample templates with contact details for all students on its target list. b. Review and/or update its NSS provider contact details. c. Submit its "My survey options" form. Instructions on how to supply this information will be included in the NSS 2025 set-up guide to be issued in late October 2024 by the contractor working on behalf of the OfS and the UK funding and regulatory bodies. The NSS is used to improve the student experience and inform student choice, It is a key component of the quality and regulatory landscape in UK higher education and is used to support public accountability.	n/a	n/a		
Prevent accountability and data return	OfS	A provider will need to submit a set of declarations that it has continued to show due regard to the Prevent duty. It will also need to submit data on key areas of the Prevent duty: welfare, events, and external speakers, and training. These are used to provide assurance that providers continue to demonstrate due regard to the Prevent duty.	Deputy Director/Assistant to the Deputy Director (Lauren.pountney@rcm.ac.uk)	02/12/2024	07/11/2024	Y
Higher Education Students Early Statistics survey 24-25	OfS	A provider will need to submit data on the number of higher education students studying in the 24-25 academic year. The data is used to inform funding allocations. Updated guidance on submission requirements will be published on the OfS website in the autumn.	Registry Information & Systems Manager (Nicholas.seager@rcm.ac.uk)	31/01/2025	20/12/2024	Y

TRAC 23-24	OfS	A provider will need to submit a Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) return that has been reviewed and approved as set out in guidance. The data is used to understand the application of costs across activity, including cross subsidies in higher education. It is also used by UKRI and other public funders for funding purposes.	Director of Finance / Finance Planning & Reporting Manager (Andreia.sangalli@rcm.ac.uk)	31/01/2025	22/01/2025	Y
Capital monitoring 24/25	OfS	This is used to provide assurance that capital funding has been used in line with OfS terms and conditions of funding, and to evidence the impact of capital grants at individual providers. Further information about annual reporting will be published in spring 2025. The format will be similar to previous years. If the monitoring information is not submitted by the deadline, the OfS will seek to reclaim the capital funding provided during the year.	Finance Planning & Reporting Manager (Andreia.sangalli@rcm.ac.uk)	Interim: Annual: 16/04/2025		N/A – not required this year

Annual Financial Return 2025	OfS	Submitted documents are: - Signed audited financial statements applicable to the accounting period subject to reporting. - Completed Annual Financial Return 2024 workbook, in the template from the OfS. For all providers this must include year 1 to year 7 (covering the two most recent audited years, the current year, and four subsequent years). - Commentary in the template from the OfS. - A management letter from the provider's external auditor. - Audited financial statements from the entity giving financial support to the provider, where legally binding obligation of such support is in place. These must be for the legal entity's most recent financial reporting period	Director of Finance / Finance Planning & Reporting Manager Andreia.sangalli@rcm.ac.uk	Deadline 1: 02/12/2024 Deadline 2: 06/01/2025 Deadline 3: 20/01/2025	Annual Financial Return 2024 workbook: 25/11/2024 Commentary: 25/11/2024 Signed audited financial statements: 13/12/2024 External auditor's management letter: 13/12/2025	Y
Higher Education – Business and Community Interaction survey (23-24)	DDB	A provider will need to submit details of the volume and direction of interactions between the provider, business, and the wider community. The data is used by UKRI to allocate Higher Education Innovation Funds and to generate metrics for the Knowledge Exchange Framework	Research and Knowledge Exchange Manager Emma.hewett@rcm.ac.uk	31/01/2025	22/01/2025	Y
Charity Commission Return	Charity Commission		Director of Finance/Head of Finance luke.hollander@rcm.ac.uk	31/05/2025	20/12/2024	Y

Provider profile (24-25)	DDB	A provider will need to submit information about the location of its campuses and its internal organisation. This data allows the OfS and others to understand the geographic distribution of higher education.	Registry Information & Systems Manager (Nicholas.seager@rcm.ac.uk)	24/06/2025		
Audit Committee Annual Report	RCM	This will be published on the RCM's website	Governance Services Administrator & Clerk to the Council (Sharon.moloney@rcm.ac.uk)	06/2025	07/07/2025	Y