

HESA staff and student collection privacy notice

HESA holds information on students and staff in universities, higher education (HE) colleges and specialist providers in the UK. The HESA staff and student collection privacy notice describes the purposes for which this data is collected.

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Background

We're Jisc, a registered charity and not-for-profit company. We provide digital technology and data to the higher and further education sector, research communities and the public sector.

In 2022 we merged with the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). Through HESA, we collect, analyse and share information about higher education (HE) in the UK. Our annual data collections include information about institutions, courses, staff and students. Jisc is the data controller for the personal data within these collections.

You can read more about HESA in our [About HESA](#) website page (opens in a new tab).

You can read more about Jisc in our [About us](#) website page (opens in a new tab).

About this notice

This privacy notice explains our purposes for processing staff, governor and student personal data. It also includes information on personal data rights, how to contact us and how to complain.

We review and update our privacy notice every year. New versions, in both English and Welsh, are published each summer ahead of the new academic year.

Where do we get your data from?

Most of the data we collect about staff, governors and students is submitted to us by the organisations that provide HE in the UK, such as universities (HE providers). This is because they're required by law to provide information to the organisations that fund and regulate them. These funders and regulators are HESA's Statutory Customers. HESA provides a central data collection, analysis and dissemination service for its Statutory Customers.

We also accept data submitted to us on a voluntary basis. For example, for non-academic staff at HE providers in England and Northern Ireland, data submission isn't required by the Office for Students or the Department for the Economy (NI). In these cases, providers may voluntarily submit data to us to assist with equality and diversity reporting, responding to Freedom of Information Act requests, benchmarking and internal reporting.

The Department for Education, other Statutory Customers and the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service ("UCAS") also provide us with some information about HE students.

The Office for Students provides us with salary and other employment information about senior staff at HE providers in England.

What data do we collect about you?

Our Statutory Customers have differing requirements for data about HE in their regions. As a result, the data we collect about staff and students in one part of the UK differs slightly from the data we collect about them in another.

Our student collections generally include the following categories of personal data:

- Identifying information, such as your name and date of birth, your prior qualifications, and where you lived before and during your course
- Special category personal data, such as information relating to disabilities, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity and religion

- Course information, such as the subject and modules of study and the qualifications you've gained

Our staff and governor collections generally include the following categories of personal data:

- Identifying information, such as your date of birth, your nationality, your Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID), your level of qualification and current academic discipline
- Special category personal data, such as information relating to disabilities, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity and religion
- Employment contract and salary information, and where relevant, healthcare professional specialty and NHS grade

We call the information we collect about you “your HESA Information”.

Each year, we publish a full list of data items for that academic year on our [website](#) (opens in a new tab). You can filter our [Staff](#) and [Student](#) records to show the data collected in different countries of the UK.

You can see what data we collected in past years by visiting our [Archive of coding manuals](#) (opens in a new tab).

Special category personal data

Our annual data collections include special category personal data. For example, information relating to disabilities, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity and religion. Processing this type of information is restricted by law and we must meet certain conditions to use it.

Jisc relies on the conditions contained in Article 9(g) and (j) of the UK GDPR and the associated conditions in Schedule 1 of the Data Protection Act 2018. These cover the processing necessary to fulfil our statutory functions as the designated data body, research and statistical purposes that are in the public interest and equality of opportunity monitoring.

What are we doing with your data?

Purpose 1: We collect and share information about HE in the UK

Jisc acts as an information hub for HE data and statistics.

We're the designated data body (DDB) under the Higher Education and Research Act 2017. This means we have a statutory duty to collect, disseminate and publish appropriate

information about HE in England. We fulfil a similar role in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

In meeting our DDB and equivalent duties, we share your HESA Information with HE providers, the funders and regulators of HE in the UK and other public sector organisations who need it for their statutory, regulatory and public duties.

The UK HE funding and regulatory bodies are:

- Office for Students
- Medr (the Welsh Commission for Tertiary Education and Research)
- Scottish Funding Council
- Department for the Economy in Northern Ireland

Other public sector organisations that need data about HE include:

- Department for Education
- Welsh and Scottish Governments
- Department for Science, Innovation and Technology
- UK Research and Innovation
- Teaching Regulation Agency
- National Health Service and associated bodies such as Health Education England and the Department of Health and Social Care
- General Medical Council
- Office for National Statistics
- National Records of Scotland
- Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
- National Audit office
- Student Loans Company
- Providers of HE

These organisations are the data controllers of the information they receive from us and have their own privacy information explaining their purposes. Sometimes their purposes include linking the HESA Information to other information for research and statistical purposes.

Lawful bases: We rely on the UK GDPR lawful bases of public task and legitimate interests to collect and share data about HE staff, governors and students in the UK.

The legitimate interests may be those pursued by Jisc or another organisation, for example, to enhance Jisc's statistical outputs in the public interest, to assist national HE policy development or for organisations to comply with their equality and diversity obligations.

Purpose 2: We use the data for our own research, statistical analysis and publications

HESA's core mission is to support the advancement of HE through the data it collects, assures and disseminates. This aligns with Jisc's charitable objectives to advance education, lifelong learning and research for the public benefit.

We use HESA Information and other sources of information for our research, analysis and publication purposes.

For example, we conduct research on data quality, student enrolment, study patterns, characteristics and progression through HE. Other topics of interest include trends in graduate earnings, how the association between neighbourhood deprivation and degree attainment differs by family background and how information on care experienced students can be included in our publicly available data.

We publish data and analysis on who's working in HE, the areas of work they're in, employment contract information and salaries. Tables and charts summarise the results and break them down by provider. High level results at a national level are also published in our Statistical Bulletin: Higher Education Staff Statistics.

You can read more about how our research supports our work as an official statistics producer and our impact in our [Research Strategy](#) (opens in a new tab).

We publish insights, bulletins and official statistics. Accredited official statistics (formerly known as National Statistics) are official statistics that have been independently reviewed by the Office for Statistics Regulation and confirmed to comply with the standards in the Code of Practice for Statistics.

You can read more about how we use staff and student data for research, statistics and publications on our website: [Higher Education Staff Data](#) (opens in a new tab) and [Higher Education Student Data](#) (opens in a new tab).

Lawful basis: We rely on the UK GDPR lawful basis of public task to use the HESA Information for our research, statistical and publication purposes.

Example of data processing for both Purpose 1 and 2: Senior staff pay and compensation for loss of office

The funders and regulators of HE in the UK require HE providers to publish the following information in their annual statements:

- Head of provider name, salary and benefits
- Number of staff paid over £100,000 per annum
- Number of staff paid compensation for loss of office (severance pay)

We collect and share this data under Purpose 1, above, alongside other financial information for HE providers in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

We receive the same information for English providers from the Office for Students. We then process UK-wide data for our Purpose 2 research, statistical and publication activities. Given the publication requirements, data is not rounded or suppressed and will therefore include personal data.

Purpose 3: We provide data to third parties for their research and statistical purposes

We share HESA Information with third parties where there's a legitimate or public interest to do so. We've developed tools and services that help our customers understand and utilise what's relevant to them, for example, Heidi Plus and Interactive Insights.

We assess all requests for HESA Information for compliance with UK data protection law and compatibility with our collection purposes. We supply the minimum data necessary for a specified duration. Our data supply contracts include our standard data sharing and disclosure controls (see below).

Examples of how HESA Information may be used by others include:

- The provision of information to students and prospective students
- Equal opportunities monitoring
- Research - this may be academic, commercial, journalistic or personal
- Statistical processing including the production of visualisation products, analytical products and bespoke data extracts and reports
- Journalism and media research e.g. league tables, higher education comparison websites and articles about higher education

The categories of data recipients are:

- Higher education sector bodies
- Higher education providers
- Schools and further education providers
- Academic researchers and students
- Commercial organisations (e.g. recruiters, housing providers, graduate employers)
- Unions
- Non-governmental organisations and charities
- Local, regional, national and international government bodies
- Journalists, media and public relations organisations

For example, we share HESA Information relating to clinical academic staff and health professionals with the Medical Schools Council and Universities UK (through the activities of its Dental Schools Council). The data is used to monitor trends in clinical academic staffing as a basis for partnership between the NHS and universities. It's also used to promote, maintain and improve high quality education, research and clinical practice in the UK.

See our [Data Sharing Register](#) (opens in a new tab) for more information about the recipients of HESA Information for research and statistical purposes.

Lawful bases: We rely on the UK GDPR lawful bases of public task and legitimate interests to provide data to third parties.

The legitimate interests may be those pursued by Jisc or another organisation. For example, Jisc's interest in meeting its charitable objectives to advance education and research through the provision of data, or a third party's interest in using data to make strategic decisions on student recruitment, benchmarking, planning and compliance.

Purpose 4: Administrative purposes

Students changing provider

If during your study you switch HE provider, or your course is delivered in collaboration with another provider, we may need to share information about you with the providers involved. This is to make sure you're correctly included in the relevant data submission to us.

Degree qualification verification service

We may share your HESA Information with third parties through Prospects Hedd, our degree verification and fraud detection service. Qualifications, grades and attendance dates can be verified as part of this service which has been designed to protect against degree fraud and uphold the reputation and integrity of UK HE.

Lawful bases: We rely on the UK GDPR lawful bases of public task when processing your data in the context of changing provider. We rely on your consent to process your HESA Information for the purposes of our degree verification service.

Purpose 5: Graduate Outcomes

Every year we run the Graduate Outcomes survey. It's part of what we do in fulfilment of our role to collect and publish information about HE in the UK. We ask graduates to share their perspectives 15 months after completing their course. The results not only help providers to improve, but they're of national significance, providing insight into HE and the graduate job market.

The majority of HE providers in the UK submit graduate contact details to us as part of the annual HESA data collection. Your name, email and phone number are used for the purpose of contacting you about taking part in the survey. You might also be contacted for post-survey audit and quality control purposes.

You can read more about this survey in our [Welcome to Graduate Outcomes](#) website page (opens in a new tab).

See the [Graduate Outcomes privacy information](#) (opens in a new tab) for more about how we handle the personal data of participants, including how we use third-party service providers, such as IFF Research for telephone surveys. This information is provided pre-survey by email to all graduate contacts.

Lawful basis: We rely on the UK GDPR lawful basis of public task to process your contact data for the purposes of the Graduate Outcomes survey.

Purpose 6: Data management, quality and security

Each year we collate hundreds of data submissions into a large statistical dataset. It's essential that we manage the data securely and effectively. For example, your HESA Information may be processed for:

- Internal analysis, planning and reporting
- Monitoring systems and software to identify problems and ways to improve
- Internal training
- Collating knowledge relating to identified or emerging cyber threats to support the proactive defence of cyber security incidents or vulnerabilities
- Quality assurance activities to remove anomalies and improve data accuracy. This may include bespoke training with HE providers and the cross-checking of data against third party sources such as UCAS
- Developing and testing new analysis techniques and changes to processes, systems and software
- The creation of derived fields to enrich data, to increase utility and provide additional insights

Lawful bases: we rely on the UK GDPR lawful bases of public task and legitimate interests for our internal data management, quality and security processing.

The legitimate interests may be those pursued by Jisc or another organisation. For example, Jisc's interest in improving its services, delivering technical support to HE providers and regulatory compliance, or the interests of HE providers in receiving bespoke training.

Our data sharing and publication controls

Data sharing is integral to our statutory role and charitable objectives.

Your HESA Information is part of a large dataset about HE staff and students in the same academic year. When we share or publish it, we're careful to apply controls that protect you.

Most importantly, at all times and by all parties, your HESA Information must be handled in compliance with UK data protection law.

Subject to some limited exceptions, your HESA Information won't be used by us or anyone we share it with to identify or make decisions about you. The exceptions are where it's necessary for:

- Fraud prevention and detection
- Medical qualification checking: the General Medical Council may check your Advanced Knowledge Test qualification
- Publications about provider heads, senior staff pay and compensation
- Administration connected to students changing HE provider
- Previous study information required to confirm student fees
- Contacting you about the Graduate Outcomes survey

With the exception of heads, senior pay and compensation data, where HESA Information is used in publications, the [HESA Standard Rounding Methodology](#) (opens in a new tab) or an equivalent disclosure control must be applied.

These restrictions are written into the data sharing agreements we have with other data controllers, as recipients of HESA Information.

Where we appoint data processors, they're contractually bound to act on our behalf and in accordance with our instructions. Our contracts prevent them from using HESA Information for any purpose outside of what we've asked them to do as our data processor.

How long do we keep your data?

We retain a consolidated version of the data we receive from UCAS for the period of 7 years after its creation for purposes of auditing and further validation of fixed databases.

Otherwise, we keep your HESA Information indefinitely for research and statistical processing purposes. These activities are exempt from the usual rules on data retention. We have appropriate safeguards in place to keep the data secure.

International data transfers

Most of our data is held in the UK and Ireland.

Some of our suppliers may be located outside the UK. We'll only transfer your data to them if it can be done in a way that complies with UK data protection law. This usually means that either the destination has been declared 'adequate' by the UK government, or we have an approved form of contract in place to protect personal data.

Your personal data rights

Data protection law gives you rights over your personal data. They depend on the lawful basis being relied upon to process your data and are limited in certain circumstances. In summary, your rights over your HESA Information are:

- To be informed about how and why we are processing your personal data
- To access and obtain a copy of your personal data
- To have inaccurate data rectified and incomplete personal data completed

This right can be restricted in the context of processing for statistical and research purposes.

- To object to our processing of your personal data

This right is very limited where we rely on the lawful basis of public task and are processing data for research and statistical purposes.

- To request we restrict the processing of your personal data

This right is limited and usually associated with objections and rectification requests.

For example, processing may be restricted while accuracy is verified or an objection is being considered.

- To request the erasure of your personal data

This is very limited in the context of your HESA Information because it doesn't apply when we're processing your data under the lawful basis of public task. Also, we may be exempt from deleting data used for research and statistical processing.

- To withdraw consent for us to process your personal data

The only processing activity that requires your consent for us to process your HESA Information is our Prospects Hedd degree verification service. If this applies to you, you'll be provided with more information at the time we request your consent.

More information about Jisc and how to contact us

Jisc is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee, registered in England.

Company number: 05747339

Charity number in England and Wales 1149740, charity number in Scotland SC053607

ICO registration number: Z9546606

Registered office: 4 Portwall Lane, Bristol, BS1 6NB

Under the Higher Education and Research Act 2017, Jisc is the designated data body for higher education in England.

Jisc's wholly owned subsidiary, Jisc Services Limited (JSL), is registered in England, company number: 02881024. Jisc Services Limited has the same contact details and staff as Jisc and is registered with the ICO: ZB729749. Jisc uses JSL to deliver some of its services.

Both companies have appointed a data protection officer (DPO). To contact the DPO and Jisc's privacy team you can email dataprotection@jisc.ac.uk (opens in a new window).

Complaints

If you're unhappy with the way we've handled your personal data or dealt with an information rights request, you have the right to complain to us. You can make a complaint by emailing Complaints@Jisc.ac.uk (opens in a new window) or by writing to us at the address given above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), the UK's independent regulator for data protection law. Read the ICO's guidance on your rights, how to exercise them and how to complain on their [For the public website page](#) (opens in a new tab).

You can contact the ICO's helpline on 0303 123 1113, use their live chat service or email them for assistance. You can also write to the ICO at Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.