Redesigning the higher education data and information landscape

Strand 1 Project report

March 2013
Foreword

1. Executive Summary

Section 1 Developing the proposal
2. Background and objectives
3. Approach
4. Developing the proposal: Initial thinking
5. Developing the proposal: What will ‘it’ do?
6. Developing the proposal: Where does authority to progress the work come from?
7. Developing the proposal: How will the work be delivered and co-ordinated?

Section 2 The proposal
8. The proposed governance structure
9. Next steps

Annexes
Annex 1 Project Plan
Annex 2 Steering Group
Annex 3 Stakeholders consulted in the project
Annex 4 Initial thinking: draft proposal
Annex 5 Root Cause Analysis
Annex 6 Types of Authority
Annex 7 Delivery models
Annex 8 Programme management
Annex 9 Outcomes and benefits
Foreword

One of the many strengths of the UK higher education system is its diversity. Institutions have evolved in the context of the needs of their communities and their own traditions and strengths. Each institution is accountable to multiple stakeholders who have a legitimate interest in its activities and performance. At both institutional and sector levels reliable information is needed for effective governance and to inform and protect the student interest. Viewed from a sector level, the accountability map of higher education is therefore multidimensional and the information requirements reflect that complexity.

To satisfy and manage the information requirements within this complex environment, a number of agencies act as intermediaries between the institutions and the stakeholders. These have become focal points for data collection, information creation, analysis, dissemination and use. Outside the frameworks that these agencies operate, there remains a myriad of bilateral stakeholder-institution data and information flows. These add further complexity and burden to the system.

The efficiency, effectiveness and utility of such a system are legitimate causes for concern. The use of public money to maintain this information infrastructure represents funds that could usefully be deployed to front-line services for greater public benefit and, in parallel, there is a need to reduce duplication, improve timeliness and widen access to information. It is in this context that a governance model has been developed for the oversight, improvement and strategic development of the data and information management arrangements for the sector. It is critically important that this does not just seek to solve short term problems, but is agile and responsive to manage the emergent problems of the future.

The model proposed within this paper is one that has been developed by Deloitte, under the guidance of a Steering Group of talented individuals from all parts of the sector, intermediary bodies, and users. As Chair of the Steering Group I am grateful not only for their fulsome participation in the discussions that have led to this proposal, but also for the integrity that they have displayed during this process. Without exception they have "left their organisational interests" at the door and engaged in discussion in a positive and reflective manner. They have been generous both in sharing their own experiences and in showing a keen interest to understand the insights and reflections of other members who look at the same issues through a different lens.

The proposal that has emerged is one that continues to rely heavily upon the model of shared responsibility that has been such a strong feature in the Steering Group. To deliver an effective and efficient system of data collection and information management will require a common ownership of the entire system. It demands recognition that effective collaboration is the only way to deliver a programme for strategic improvement. It is an approach that requires leadership attributes which acknowledge that there will need to be a compromise between the aspirations of individual institutions and agencies in order to deliver the wider public benefit. It is a model that places a heavy responsibility on leadership of the organisations that are engaged in the governance of this programme and therefore become responsible for the performance of the system as a whole.

I am confident that the quality of leadership within our diverse higher education sector is such that they will meet that challenge.

Sir Tim Wilson
Chair of the Redesigning the higher education data and information landscape Steering Group
1. Executive Summary

Purpose of the document

This document is a record of a project commissioned by the Regulatory Partnership Group (RPG) in October 2012. The project was undertaken to produce a proposal for a coherent set of arrangements for the collection, sharing and dissemination of data for the higher education data and information landscape. This document describes how the proposal has been developed and sets out how thinking has evolved and consensus developed between stakeholders.

This document accompanies the ‘programme brief’. The programme brief is designed to be taken forward by resource identified by the RPG and will support the initiation of the Higher Education Data and Information Improvement Programme (HEDIIP).

A large number of stakeholders have contributed to this work. We would like to take this opportunity to thank those who have engaged with us through this process.

Stakeholder views are expressed in this report in a variety of ways: from distillation of views into common themes to the incorporation of verbatim feedback or précis observations.

Overview

This project was commissioned by the RPG. Deloitte were engaged to support the development of a coherent set of arrangements for the collection, sharing and dissemination of data and information in the higher education landscape. This project report is submitted to RPG in March 2013 and is accompanied by a programme brief which is intended to be taken forward to establish the recommended programme of work.

The purpose of the project was to develop the necessary arrangements to deliver government objectives set out in the June 2011 White Paper ‘Students at the Heart of the System’. The White Paper asked agencies to arrive at a new system that:

- meets the needs of a wider group of users;
- reduces the duplication that currently exists; and
- results in timelier and more relevant data.

The approach taken to developing these arrangements was based on the main recommendation from the ‘A Pathway To Reform’ report produced in June 2012. This recommended that key stakeholders should establish collective oversight of the information landscape to achieve a more efficient and effective system of governance. It recommended a programme of work, using shared expertise and building on the key strengths identified in the sector, to
create a more coherent set of arrangements for the collection, sharing and dissemination of data and information.

The project was supported by a Steering Group composed of the key stakeholders in the higher education data and information landscape. This included individuals from organisations operating within the devolved administrations reflecting the desire to create arrangements suitable for the UK-wide HE sector.

The UK wide implications of this programme of work are a reflection of the fact that:

- students in receipt of funding from any of the four devolved administrations can choose to study in any part of the UK;
- many of the organisations involved in collecting and sharing data operate across all jurisdictions; and
- sharing of data and information between the organisations that operate within the sector will be enabled by the changes adopted by data suppliers and collectors on a UK wide basis.

The policy environment for education is complex and involves multiple administrations and government departments. This means there will always be a need for data collection, definition and coding that in some aspects will differ beyond a common core. Reflecting this, there is an assumption that the aim of the programme is explicitly not to work at the ‘pace of the slowest’ or to remove all variation through standardisation across the UK. This is neither possible nor desirable.

During the course of the engagement, Steering Group members contributed to the development of the proposal and Deloitte held a number of interviews and workshops with individual stakeholders. This approach was designed to produce a proposal which captured and synthesised views of all stakeholders, to maintain and develop consensus and to sustain momentum.

Engagement with stakeholders raised three fundamental questions:

- **What will “it” do?** What are the tangible actions that need to be taken to drive improvements in the higher education data and information landscape?
- **Where does authority to progress these actions come from?** How will change within the sector be effected? What type of authority can be brought to bear in the current environment using available power?
- **How will the work be delivered and activity co-ordinated?**

A proposal has been developed which answers these fundamental questions. The proposal has been supported by the Steering Group and is presented to RPG with a covering paper that sets out the recommendations arising from this work and suggested next steps.
Summary of the proposal

The output of the project is a programme brief. This document outlines the initial scope for a programme of work and a supporting delivery model. It is intended to be taken forward by identified programme resource in the mobilisation phase to support the initiation of the Higher Education Data and Information Improvement Programme (HEDIIP).

Vision

After the HEDIIP programme has delivered change and benefits are realised:

- there will be reduced duplication of data collections reducing burden on institutions and increasing efficiency for the sector as a whole;
- data and information will be available which meets the needs of a wider group of users; it will be more accessible, comparable and more easily understood; and
- more timely and relevant data and information will be available.

High level outcomes

Through a facilitated process of engagement, stakeholders have identified a number of desired outcomes from the programme. These are as follows:

- better understanding by institutions of how they can use data for their own benefit;
- better understanding by data collectors of data available in order to reduce duplicated collections;
- clarity for institutions on the purpose and value of data collections;
- identification of any non-value added data collections;
- comparable, better quality and more accessible data sets;
- reduced duplication of data collections through data sharing (facilitated by common data definitions);
- reduced duplication of data collections through more efficient data collection processes and data sharing;
- improved timeliness of data;
- sector wide strategies to promote consistency across organisations;
- sector wider understanding of the needs and requirements of data users; and
- data collectors to seek most efficient method of collecting data to meet their requirements.

Projects and programmes within the strategic portfolio should be prioritised and selected on the basis of their contribution towards meeting these objectives.

Scope and delivery model

The scope of the work has been initially limited to the set of strategic initiatives already supported by RPG. These are as follows:
• an inventory of data collections;
• a common data language underpinned by a data lexicon and thesaurus;
• a unique learner number (ULN); and
• a common subject coding system (JACS).

These activities form a foundation for what may in time become a broader strategic programme of work. Additional activities will be required to meet the full set of objectives and desired outcomes which have been identified.

A programme delivery model has been recommended. This affords flexibility in scope and contribution so that these can be agreed and negotiated over time. Once benefits have been realised and achievements demonstrated for the initial initiatives, the programme will build trust and credibility and additional projects could then be commissioned. The Programme Board will therefore have the ability to identify and commission additional projects as required and develop a wider portfolio of activities to ensure these objectives are met.

In the longer term extending the scope of the programme should include examining other initiatives and programmes of work ongoing within the sector and determining if these should be brought under the scope of the strategic programme, or at the least synergies identified and conflicts managed. The Programme Management Office (PMO) will provide an overview of projects and initiatives elsewhere in the sector so that conflicts can be managed and synergies leveraged.

Initially limiting the scope of the work was a deliberate and conscious decision, made in the context of the tight consensus that has been built. This pragmatic approach was taken to enable activities to proceed and to maintain consensus, sustain momentum, and preserve credibility.

**Governance structure**

Figure 1 shows the proposed programme governance structure to be established which will lead and manage the programme of work. The governance structure is based on best principles and practice for programme management and includes:

• **Sponsoring group:** A driving force behind the programme that provides the investment decision and top-level endorsement for the rationale and objectives of the programme. Recognising the need to move quickly to formally establish the programme, in the short term it is proposed that the sponsoring group for the programme should be the RPG.

• **Programme Board:** A group that is established to support a Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) (see next bullet) to deliver a programme. The programme board will be accountable to the RPG. The membership of this programme board will include a subset of members of the RPG, representation from the devolved
administrations and representation from HE providers. It is important that the programme board is broadly representative of stakeholder interests and that members are committed to the outcomes. There is a need for an independent and credible chair to lead this group.

- **Senior responsible Owner/Programme Director:** A single individual with overall responsibility for ensuring that the programme meets its objectives and delivers the projected benefits. The Programme Director will report to the Programme board and be supported by the Programme Management Office.

- **Programme Management Office (PMO):** A function providing the information hub and standards custodian for the programme and its delivery objectives. The PMO will provide support for the wider programme as well as the individual programmes and projects. Once it is complete the PMO will look after the inventory. It is proposed that the programme office should be located at HESA.

- **Project Managers/individual projects:** Each project will require its own appropriate project structure and governance arrangements which will involve the relevant stakeholders depending on the nature of the project. Project managers will be appointed for each individual project of work. These individuals will be responsible for the set-up, management and delivery of the project.

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**Figure 1 Programme governance framework**

- **Programme board**
  - Chair of the Programme board
  - RPG
  - Programme Management Office
  - Project A
  - Project B
  - Project C

  **Responsibilities**
  - The programme will be delivered under the RPG programme of work and be part of the wider RPG portfolio.
  - As the sponsoring group, RPG will provide the investment decision and top level endorsement. They will challenge and agree proposals for projects as defined by the programme board.

- **Responsibilities**
  - Propose and negotiate with the sponsoring group the strategic agenda and a coherent portfolio of work.
  - Oversee and actively contribute to stakeholder engagement.
  - Embed the concept of sustainability in the projects taken forward by the programme.
  - Support the SRO/programme director to deliver the programme.
  - Promote a collaborative culture that will bring helpful pressure on stakeholders as difficulties arise.
  - Provide oversight and monitoring of the programme against objectives.
  - Act as ambassadors for the project and champion the work of the programme amongst their respective communities.
  - Review the programme structure and governance arrangements on an agreed schedule.

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**Responsibilities**

- Develop business cases to support the commissioning or tendering of projects.
- Manage portfolio of projects.
- Coordinate project strands and identify synergies and overlaps.
- Identify overlaps with other sector projects in this area.
- Manage benefits realisation, communications and reporting.
- Be a visible point of contact and locus of expertise for HE providers and other stakeholders.
- Prepare agendas and papers for programme board meetings.
- Housed within HESA.

**Responsibilities**

- Each project will have its own appropriate project governance structure involving the relevant stakeholders.
- Each project will require a defined project plan, stakeholder engagement plan, communications plan and project structure.
The programme led approach will involve and engage organisations through a number of different initiatives. Participation of sector organisations and wider stakeholders will evolve and change over time depending on the nature of different projects and the stakeholders they affect. Those who choose to participate should expect to be held to account by their engagement and by the programme board for their contribution to the programme of work and adoption of changes to way of working.

*Assumptions and constraints*

The underpinning assumptions and constraints of the programme are:

- the assumption that the political mandate to take forward this programme of work is secure;
- the assumption that within the intention to converge towards common and co-ordinated practice the programme will not progress at the pace of the slowest;
- the constraints associated with delivering a complex programme that engages stakeholder organisation that have individual sovereignty and operate across multiple jurisdictions; and
- the constraints associated with a policy environment that is defined by multiple government departments and administrations.

*Next steps and recommendations*

A short covering paper has been prepared for the March 2013 RPG meeting which sets out the proposal for the HEDIIP programme and makes summary observations and recommendations arising from this work.
2. Background and objectives

In June 2011 the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) published its higher education White Paper, ‘Students at the Heart of the System’. This described the progress Government is making to: deliver a strong, financially sustainable and high quality HE sector; promote a better student experience; foster social mobility and widen participation; and create a more responsive higher education sector in which funding follows the decisions of learners and successful institutions are free to thrive. The White Paper proposed specific improvements to the higher education data and information landscape as follows:

“We will ask HEFCE, HESA and HEBRG, in collaboration with the Information Standards Board for [Education, Skills and Children’s Services] (ISB), to redesign the information landscape for higher education in order to arrive at a new system that meets the needs of a wider group of users; reduces the duplication that currently exists and results in timelier and more relevant data. We expect that the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) will also wish to contribute to this exploratory work to support simplification and alignment across both the higher and further education sectors. We will also work with other government departments that collect data from institutions to secure buy-in to reducing the information collection burden. In turn, they will benefit from better quality, more timely data”

White Paper ‘Students at the Heart of the System’ Para 6.22

The White Paper set in motion a number of changes to the HE system which came into effect in academic year 2012/13.

In response to the White Paper, the Regulatory Partnership Group (RPG) commissioned a review to deliver a high-level feasibility study to identify options for a new data and information landscape. HESA oversaw this project on behalf of RPG and the final report, ‘A Pathway to Reform’, was delivered in June 2012. ‘A Pathway to Reform’ considered a number of options for the future HE system to achieve the objectives of the White Paper ranging from no action to the establishment of a single collection agency which would act on behalf of all stakeholders. The report proposed that the best approach would be to harness the collaborative culture that already exists in the sector. The main recommendation was for the key stakeholders to establish collective oversight of the information landscape to achieve a more efficient and effective system of governance. The report recommended a programme of work, using shared expertise and building on the key strengths identified in

The project took forward the main recommendation from ‘A Pathway to Reform’: to establish collective oversight of the information landscape to achieve a more efficient and effective system of governance.

1 ‘Students at the heart of the system’, BIS, June 2011
the sector, to create a more coherent set of arrangements for the collection, sharing and dissemination of data and information. This would require each of the organisations involved to make a real commitment to work collaboratively and openly on issues involving data and information.

This project was commissioned by the RPG in October 2012. Deloitte were engaged to support the development of a coherent set of arrangements for the collection, sharing and dissemination of data and information in the higher education landscape responding to the recommendations in ‘A Pathway to Reform’.

Despite originating from the White Paper pertaining to the English higher education system, the project remit was to address the UK wide data and information landscape. The UK wide implications of this programme of work are a reflection of the fact that:

- students in receipt of funding from the UK government can choose to study in any part of the UK;
- many of the organisations involved in collecting and sharing data operate across all jurisdictions; and
- sharing of data and information between the organisations that operate within the sector will be enabled by the changes adopted by data suppliers and collectors on a UK wide basis.

The policy environment for education is complex and involves multiple administrations and government departments. This means there will always be a need for data collection, definition and coding that in some aspects will differ beyond a common core. Reflecting this, there is an assumption that the aim of the programme is explicitly not to work at the ‘pace of the slowest’ or to remove all variation through standardisation across the UK. This is neither possible nor desirable.

Four further project strands were also commissioned by the RPG as part of the redesigning the data and information landscape programme. These were:

- to define and agree the core elements of a common data language for HE data collections;
- to establish a definitive inventory of data collections for the HE sector;
- to improve data specification through the development of the JACS subject coding system; and
- to establish a roadmap for the implementation of the Unique Learner Number (ULN) in the HE sector.

It is intended that these activities should be taken forward by the Higher Education Data and Information Improvement Programme and managed through its governance arrangements.
3. Approach

Overview

This piece of work was designed to harness the collaborative culture within the sector. The team conducted an iterative process of engagement whereby stakeholder views were collated and synthesised to develop an initial proposal. The proposal was then further refined and negotiated to reach a programme brief, which was endorsed by all stakeholders. This approach was adopted in order to:

- develop and maintain consensus between key stakeholders; and
- produce a proposal which incorporated the requirements and perspectives from stakeholder organisations (in particular organisations represented on the Steering Group).

Whilst keeping stakeholders on board, the approach was also underpinned by a keen desire to sustain momentum towards a tangible outcome. This resulted in a focus on ‘small steps’ which would enable progress and deliver some results in the short term, rather than a more ambitious ‘boiling the ocean’ approach which may have hindered progress by trying to address too much too quickly.

An overview of the plan that underpinned this piece of work can be seen in Figure 9 (Annex 1 Project Plan). This describes the key activities, milestones and engagement that has been undertaken.

Stakeholder engagement

A series of workshops, meetings, and 1:1 discussions were held to understand stakeholder requirements and discuss options for establishing a coherent set of arrangements for the collection, sharing and dissemination of data. The programme of stakeholder engagement included:

Steering Group: The project was supported by a Steering Group representing key stakeholders in the higher education data and information landscape. This group guided the work and provided input and feedback regularly through the development process. Steering Group terms of reference and membership is shown in Figure 10 (Annex 2 Steering Group).

Data processor workshops: Two workshops were held with the key organisations involved with the collection of processing of data: HESA, SLC and UCAS. These bodies were recognised as core to the success of this project so these workshops were conducted with the purpose of setting and maintaining the direction of the work.
Engagement with funding councils: The project aimed to maintain a UK wide perspective and therefore consulted and gained input from the four UK funding councils: DELNI, HEFCE, HEFCW and SFC.

Sector input: Early in the project a workshop was held with sector representative bodies including UUK, GuildHE and AOC. This workshop invited initial input into the key features of the design from a sector perspective. Later in the project, a workshop was held with sector organisations to discuss emerging recommendations from the sector perspective and ‘roadtest’ how the arrangements would address real-life issues.

Case studies from other sectors: Desk research and interviews were conducted to understand mechanisms for oversight and management of data and information in other sectors including health and further education. This information was used to inform the evaluation of options for the set of arrangements required for HE.

Case studies of other sector organisations: Interviews were held with JISC, SPA and HEBRG to discuss their organisational/delivery models. In these interviews, the benefits and constraints of different models were identified and findings were used to inform development and evaluation of potential delivery models.

Recognition of wider stakeholders: Early in the project it was recognised that a significant number of stakeholders in the HE data and information landscape, who were not represented on the project Steering Group, could be impacted by this work. Meetings were held with Medical Councils and DfE to seek a wider perspective and understand and define boundaries and scope.

Meeting with the Chief Executives: Towards the end of the project two meetings were held with the Chief Executives of HEFCE, HESA, SLC and UCAS to test the proposals and build support and buy-in from these key members of the RPG. The Chief Executives provided useful challenge to the proposal.

A complete list of all stakeholders consulted in the course of this project is included in Figure 11 (Annex 3 Stakeholders consulted in the project).

Development of the proposal

Figure 2 sets out the four stage approach that was undertaken in developing the proposal.

In the following sections we describe how the proposal was developed in more detail.
A facilitated approach was adopted. This was designed to build consensus on an agreed and realistic way forward.
4. Developing the proposal: Initial thinking

In the first phase of this piece of work engagement and research focused on identifying and evaluating options for how the set of arrangements for the collection, sharing and dissemination of data could be delivered.

Figure 12 (Annex 4 Initial thinking: draft proposal) shows an early draft proposal capturing developing thinking on key features of the arrangements. Discussion focussed on the following:

- objectives;
- functions;
- scope;
- authority;
- capabilities;
- funding; and
- resourcing.

However, a recurrent observation emerged that form should follow function. Indeed, without a thorough understanding of what work needed to be undertaken and why, debate was becoming stagnant around problem areas, such as where authority for change would come from. This raised three fundamental questions:

- What will “it” do? What are the tangible actions (strategic or operational) that are required to drive improvement in the collection, sharing, and dissemination of data? Once agreed these would set the scope of work to be taken forward. The actions will result in changes to ways of working and depending on the type of action will require different types of authority to be progressed.
- Where does authority to progress these actions come from? How will change within the sector be effected? What type of authority can be brought to bear in the current environment using available power?
- How will the work be delivered and activity co-ordinated? What would be the best delivery model for change: a programme led or an organisation led approach? This decision needed to be taken in view of the scope of work and the type of authority required to take decisions and effect change.
5. Developing the proposal:
What will ‘it’ do?

To answer this question and identify the tangible actions that would be required to drive improvement in the collection, sharing, and dissemination of data it was necessary to first understand and articulate:

- what the work is trying to achieve;
- the underlying root causes of systemic issues; and
- the range of possible actions which will drive change in the data and information landscape.

From this a set of actions could then be identified which would set the scope of the work going forward.

What the work is trying to achieve

The original objectives for this work were set out in the White Paper\(^2\). Three aims were articulated for improvements of the data and information landscape. For each White Paper aim a problem statement was defined summarising the current issues in the data and information landscape which need to be addressed. These are shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3 White Paper objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>White paper objective</th>
<th>Problem statement</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meet the needs of a wider group of users</td>
<td>Users of higher education data and information are becoming more demanding; demand for data is increasing but this is not being met because data is not always accessible, comparable or understood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce the duplication that currently exists</td>
<td>There is duplication and inefficiency in collection of higher education data and information which means that data suppliers have to put too much effort into data collections compared to the benefit they get from it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result in timelier and more relevant data</td>
<td>Data collections are often retrospective and therefore do not meet specific timescales of many requirements. Quality of data is sometimes not fit-for-purpose; data can be incomplete and/or incorrect or be poorly defined.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^2\) Students at the heart of the system’, BIS, June 2011
Root cause analysis of systemic issues in the data and information landscape

To successfully deliver the aims of the White Paper, the root causes of the problems must be understood. If they are not, there is a risk of treating the symptoms of the issues rather than the cause. Figure 13 (Annex 5 Root Cause Analysis) shows the root cause analysis activity that was undertaken.

The exercise identified a number of root causes of the problems to be addressed in the higher education data and information landscape. These are:

- a lack of visibility of data collections conducted and data available in the sector;
- poor understanding of the purpose of data collections;
- no common data language;
- weak operational co-ordination between organisations including data sharing;
- absence of a sector wide strategy on data; and
- no mandate or expectations to change behaviours to drive efficiencies.

These were then used to develop a set of desired outcomes/benefits to be delivered. These are shown in Annex 9 Outcomes and benefits.

Activities to drive change in the data and information landscape

Figure 4 summarises a number of actions that could drive change in the data and information landscape. These were identified by stakeholders through the engagement process. This list is not exhaustive and the schematic was used to support discussion.

Figure 4 Actions to drive change in the higher education data and information landscape

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The programme delivery model affords flexibility in scope and contribution and these can be agreed and negotiated over time.
Actions A-N in Figure 4 all drive improvements in the collection, sharing, and dissemination of data, and broadly fall into two categories:

- longer term strategic actions that target root causes of issues in the data and information landscape such as adoption of the ULN or common data language; and
- immediate operational actions which address current issues as they arise such as implementing a gateway process to provide challenge to new data requests, or a facilitated process to reconcile apparent duplications or conflicts in data collections.

There was strong consensus around the agreed strategic actions already supported by the RPG (highlighted in red in Figure 4). These are as follows:

- an inventory of data collections;
- a common data language underpinned by a data lexicon and thesaurus;
- a unique learner number (ULN); and
- a common subject coding system (JACS).

In the context of the tight consensus that was built during this piece of work, the initial scope and reach of the programme is deliberately and consciously limited to these strategic activities. This is to enable activities to proceed, to maintain consensus, sustain momentum, and to preserve credibility.

**Extending the scope**

The programme delivery model proposed affords flexibility in scope and contribution, and these can be agreed and negotiated over time.

Once established, the programme board will determine if the scope of work should be extended. As it stands, the initial activities do not form a complete strategic programme of work that will deliver the full set of outcomes agreed by stakeholders. Once benefits have been realised and achievements demonstrated from the initial set of projects the programme board may identify additional projects and develop a wider portfolio of activities to ensure these outcomes are delivered.

In addition the PMO should provide an overview of projects and initiatives elsewhere in the sector so that conflicts can be managed and synergies leveraged.

Stakeholders felt that in the future, discussions over extending the scope should consider whether a more operational contribution can and should be made. This must start from a clear focus on which operational actions can lever greatest operational change. At present, between stakeholders, there is a variable appetite for the scope of work to include additional operational initiatives. There is, however, no emerging consensus as to the specific actions that should be taken, or how this operational contribution should be effected.

It was highlighted that significant value could be gained from operational initiatives. There was recognition that “quick wins” in data collection are required as there is a clear need to address the sectors’ pressing concerns.
about the data burden. It was also noted that an operational contribution may help to secure buy in to a longer term programme of work.

However, the potential benefits of an operational contribution were balanced by a number of concerns. First, that there is a danger that tactical intervention will result in yet another short term fix of today’s problems rather than an established procedure for dealing with the problems of the future. Second, that the desire to remove duplication and streamline processes will not be achieved if public accountabilities are unduly compromised.

The conflict between the potential benefits and concerns demonstrated the palpable tension between proposed operational and strategic contributions - having both would create a wide and ambitious remit for the programme.
6. Developing the proposal: Where does authority to progress the work come from?

The question of authority was a source of significant debate throughout the engagement process. Stakeholders identified a clear need for sufficient ‘teeth’ to drive change but challenges emerged in identifying from where this level of authority could be derived.

Different models of authority were identified which could be used to support change within the higher education data and information landscape. These are illustrated in Figure 5 and are described in more detail and set within the context of the two major options for delivery in Figure 14 (Annex 6 Types of Authority).

Figure 5 Authority models to drive change

"Gaining consensus from the breadth of stakeholders in the sector to support an approach where compliance was mandated would be a significant challenge"

The type of authority required depended on the extent to which intervention in day to day operational activity in the short term would be required to reduce burden and if this was thought to be achievable in practice.

Ultimately, there was strong consensus that the mandate for change had to come from a sector wide dissatisfaction with the present, and a shared vision for the future. The need to respect individual sovereignty of organisations was underlined. There was a clear recognition that change would not be driven by dictat, but through partnership working. Indeed, it would be a significant challenge to achieve change through an approach where compliance was mandated. If a dictatorial model of authority was pursued then it was unlikely that progress would be made in developing a coherent set of arrangements for the collection, sharing and dissemination of data and information.
7. Developing the proposal: How will the work be delivered and co-ordinated?

Evaluation of the best delivery model for the new set of arrangements for the collection, sharing and dissemination of data took into account a number of factors. These were:

- the focus and scope of work (see Figure 4);
- how the work would be best co-ordinated and organised between the organisations involved in change;
- the type of actions undertaken and timeframe over which change would be required;
- how decisions to make changes within the data and information landscape would be best enabled;
- how partnership working between organisations would be facilitated; and
- how participation in project and programme delivery and governance is best organised.

Transforming ways of working requires decisions to be taken by a myriad of data collectors and suppliers within the higher education landscape. At a binary level there are two ways in which decisions can be taken:

- Individual organisations through their own governance arrangements and processes can decide to change ways of working. Boards of the individual organisations can actively decide to adopt cornerstones such as the ULN and common data language and align their own strategic agenda with a sector wide strategy. This is described as a “pull” approach where changes are made on the basis of the benefits that will be realised. At an operational level changes and challenges to ways of working are made through peer to peer discussion and agreement. This approach of decision taking and co-ordination is most closely aligned to a programme led delivery model.

- Individual organisations are mandated to make changes to ways of working by a body that transcends the sovereignty of individual organisations. Compliance is monitored and sanctions are imposed. Challenges to ways of working are enabled through an independent and separate body which is empowered through legislation or ministerial letter. This approach of decision taking and co-ordination is most closely aligned to an organisation led delivery model. To work in practice this organisation must be able to operate on the basis of powers/authority/mandate currently available in the system.

There was universal consensus that the establishment of a new agency was not desirable in the current climate.
On a simple level, this presented a decision between a programme led delivery model or an organisation led approach.

Figure 15 (Annex 7 Delivery models) presents a detailed description and comparison of a programme led approach and an organisation led approach to delivering change.

There was universal consensus that the establishment of a new agency was not desirable in the current climate. A programme led approach was therefore the preferred option. This conferred a delivery model that has the potential to be more flexible, agile, and responsive. This is vital given the velocity of change in the higher education data and information landscape. Information requirements and data structures are not fossilised for all time: once agreed they need to evolve to meet the needs of users and the capacities/capabilities of the providers. Responding to this changing environment, the membership of the programme governance structure and the portfolio of work that is progressed must be dynamic rather than fixed. Moreover, the relevance and appropriateness of the programme work should be reviewed and challenged at a regular and appropriate interval.

Mechanisms for promoting participation and engagement

Concordat

In the debate, a concordat was suggested as a useful mechanism to set clear expectations and help formalise and facilitate partnership working to take this agenda forward. However it was ultimately observed that that the concordat would not add value to the programme of work and that a concordat would not be sufficient to hold stakeholders to account. It was felt that there was sufficient peer group pressure within the sector to drive change and outcomes. Moreover, the concordat could precipitate argument and delay in trying to get all stakeholders to sign.

A concordat would have involved stakeholder organisations becoming signatories to an agreement. Signatories would have included both data collectors and data suppliers. It was argued that this consensual sign up would provide the authority and commitment from parties for change.

The challenges of driving change through consensus between a myriad of organisations were underlined. The dynamic nature of the policy environment, involvement of devolved administrations, and sovereignty of individual organisations mean that a concordat alone would not be enough to sustain consensus and partnership working. In extreme cases organisations may wield their statutory powers despite any objection presented by a concordat. Once an individual organisation decided to take unilateral action that went counter to expectations a precedent would be set. There is a risk that under these circumstances the concordat would lose whatever authority it had. The risk of this happening is very real and numerous examples of this type of behaviour within the sector were cited. The risk reflects the fact that the sector will always rely on data and information flows that are driven through independent systems as long as education is managed by multiple government departments and devolved administrations.
For these reasons it was determined that a concordat would not be sufficiently effective in promoting engagement and consensus and the decision was taken to not include it in the proposal.

**Engagement through involvement in initiatives**

The programme led approach will involve and engage organisations through a number of different initiatives. Participation of sector organisations and wider stakeholders will evolve and change over time depending on the nature of different projects and the stakeholders they affect.

Using current participation as a baseline, it is expected that there will be a core set of stakeholders at the outset. It is recognised that this participation will need to evolve and change over time to meet desired outcomes in the wider landscape. For example, this may include health regulators, professional, statutory and regulatory bodies and stakeholders from the FE sector. It is expected that participation will build through time to generate critical mass and this, in turn, will increase and attract wider engagement. Eventually a tipping point will be reached where non-participation is no longer sustainable for the remainder and sector wide change will be effected.

Those who choose to participate should expect to be held to account by their engagement and by the programme board for their engagement in the programme of work and adoption of changes to way of working.

Given that a programme based approach was the preferred way forward, a governance model was required which reflects the fact that the power comes from a sense of pooled sovereignty and consensus. The programme governance structure will provide the framework through which decisions are taken and activity is co-ordinated. An overview of the proposed governance framework is outlined in section 8.
8. The proposed governance structure

The proposed governance structure and delivery model is based on a number of design principles. These were distilled from stakeholder input during the course of this piece of work and include:

- individual organisational sovereignty must be respected;
- change cannot be driven by enforced or mandated compliance;
- partnership working between organisations should effect change;
- authority to deliver the work should derive from the support and consensus of the stakeholders;
- the structure should create a sense of shared responsibility for change for both data collectors and data suppliers;
- the programme of work should be time-bound and reviewed after an agreed period;
- initiatives should have clearly defined objectives, benefits and outcomes;
- benefits and outcomes should be reported, measured and tracked;
- activities must be well organised and require some “organisational” based support to be effective;
- the delivery model should be flexible to adapt to changing requirements and structures which are not fossilised over time; and
- the way that resources are organised should give it an independent identity which is recognised as a locus for expertise and acts as a single point of contact.

An overview of the proposed governance structure or ‘framework’ is presented in Figure 6 overleaf. The design of the governance structure and delivery model promotes independence, facilitates partnership working, and ensures that the programme has the necessary resources and skills to deliver.
The governance structure is based on best principles and practice for programme management. A number of industry standards exist and managing successful programmes (MSP) has been used to inform the proposal.

**Sponsoring group**

**MSP Definition**

**Sponsoring group:** A driving force behind the programme that provides the investment decision and top-level endorsement for the rationale and objectives of the programme.

Recognising the need to move quickly to formally establish the programme, in the short term it is proposed that the sponsoring group for the programme should be the RPG. The make-up of the sponsoring group may evolve over time as other funders begin to contribute to this work.

As the sponsoring group, RPG will provide the investment decision and top level endorsement. They will challenge and agree proposals for projects as defined by the programme board. This programme would therefore be delivered as part of the wider RPG portfolio and be funded as such.

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3 http://www.msp-officialsite.com/
Programme board

MSP definition

Programme Board: A group that is established to support a Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) to deliver a programme.

The programme board will be accountable to the RPG. The membership of this programme board will include a subset of members of the RPG, representation from the devolved administrations and representation from HE providers. It is important that the programme board is broadly representative of stakeholder interests and that members are committed to the outcomes. The programme board should provide a broad understanding of the data and information landscape. There is a need for an independent and credible chair to lead this group.

The programme board will enable a programme which is developed by the key stakeholders.

An indicative Terms of Reference for the Programme Board is set out below.

The programme board will:

• propose and negotiate with the sponsoring group the strategic agenda and a coherent portfolio of work;
• oversee and actively contribute to stakeholder engagement;
• embed the concept of sustainability in the projects taken forward by the programme;
• support the SRO/Programme Director to deliver the programme;
• promote a collaborative culture that will bring helpful pressure on stakeholders as difficulties arise;
• provide oversight and monitoring of the programme against objectives;
• act as ambassadors for the project and champion the work of the programme amongst their respective communities; and
• review the programme structure and governance arrangements on an agreed schedule.

The programme board should meet at an appropriate interval to discharge the responsibilities set out above.

Programme Director (SRO)

MSP definition

Senior Responsible Owner/Programme Director: A single individual with overall responsibility for ensuring that the programme meets its objectives and delivers the projected benefits.
The Programme Director will report to the Programme board and be supported by the Programme Management Office.

The Programme Director will also have the role of Senior Responsible Owner (SRO). The SRO is the single individual with overall responsibility for ensuring that HEDIIP meets its objectives and delivers benefits. This role will be responsible for:

- managing the portfolio of projects;
- coordinating project strands and identifying synergies and overlaps;
- identifying overlaps with other sector projects in this area;
- managing benefits realisation, communications and reporting; and
- developing business cases to support the commissioning or tendering of projects.

Programme Management Office

MSP definition

Programme Management Office (PMO): A function providing the information hub and standards custodian for the programme and its delivery objectives.

For the programme to be well organised there is a need for some “organisational” based support in the form of a Programme Management Office or ‘PMO’. The PMO will support the Programme Director. It will provide support for the wider programme as well as the individual programmes and projects.

The PMO should have an independent identity but must avoid any perceptions of unnecessary bureaucracy. Responsibilities will include supporting the Programme Director to:

- develop business cases to support the commissioning or tendering of further projects or programmes to support the overall portfolio objectives;
- manage the portfolio of projects;
- co-ordinate project strands and identify synergies and overlaps;
- identify overlaps with other sector projects in this area;
- manage benefits realisation, communications and reporting; and
- prepare agendas and papers for programme board meetings.

The PMO will also provide the independent identity for the programme. It will act as a locus for expertise and provide a visible point of contact for HE providers and other stakeholders.

Depending on the scope of work agreed by the programme board, the PMO may change over time and may include dedicated personnel to deliver specific initiatives or projects.

The PMO will initially require a minimum of 2 FTEs in addition to the Programme Director. These staff will need premises and resources to enable...
them to undertake their work. A summary of the roles and capabilities required within the PMO are shown in Figure 7 below.

Figure 7 Roles and recommended skills and capabilities

| Programme Director | • Strategic planning and commissioning  
|                    | • Programme and project planning  
|                    | • Understanding of information architecture and analysis  
|                    | • Leadership and direction  
|                    | • Experience of data management/governance  
|                    | • Sector experience /Policy Analysis |

| Further capabilities required within the PMO | • Advocacy and Communication  
|                                              | • Stakeholder engagement  
|                                              | • Facilitation/diplomacy/change management  
|                                              | • Benefits management  
|                                              | • Experience of working in a data management/governance environment  
|                                              | • Administration and co-ordination |

Given the small number of staff involved these premises and resources should be provided by another organisation. To maintain independence this host organisation should not have perceived or actual influence over the operations of the PMO.

The project has considered a range of options for the provision of infrastructure and support and these are summarised in Figure 8.

Figure 8 Provision of infrastructure and support

The project recommends that in order to maintain independence a 'Tenant with shared back office' arrangement should be adopted for the PMO. There has been broad support for HESA taking a leading role in the programme of work. This view recognises that higher education data and information is HESA’s core business. It is therefore proposed that the programme office should be located at HESA.
**Individual projects/project managers**

**MSP definition**

**Project Managers:** Project managers are responsible for the set-up, management and delivery of projects.

Project managers will be appointed for each individual project of work. These individuals will be responsible for the set-up, management and delivery of the project.

Each project will require its own project management and governance arrangements and it will be important to involve the relevant stakeholders depending on the nature of the project. Each project will require a defined project plan, stakeholder engagement plan, communications plan and project structure.

**Independent chair of the programme board**

The programme board requires an independent leader that is trusted by stakeholders, respected and credible in the HE sector (by both HE providers and funders and regulators) and who is recognised to have a good understanding of the data and information landscape. It is critical that the chair has an appropriate level of actual and perceived independence.

The chair will provide an additional source of authority through an ability to influence others through effective communication and the appropriate connections and reputation.

**Portfolio of activities**

The initial programme of work will comprise the four strategic areas for action already commissioned by RPG as previously noted in section 5. More generally, it is proposed that the programme portfolio should be based around a finite timeframe and comprise activities that may be:

- short term projects (<2 years) which are commissioned on the basis of an 'overhead of consensus' within the sector; and
- extended activity: new activities that require a start-up and implementation phase supported by a programme that in time can be embedded ways of working.

These activities could be strategic or operational in nature. A range of activities is suggested in Figure 4. The ideas presented are not exhaustive. The programme board should review the portfolio on a regular basis to add or change the portfolio to meet the needs of the sector and wider stakeholders, ensuring the agenda remains relevant and focused.

**Resources and funding**

To progress this work, dedicated resources (monetary and human) are required. It has been proposed that to pragmatically move this work forward
this programme should be delivered under the wider RPG portfolio and funded as such.

It is recommended that human resource for the programme management office is seconded from existing organisations. Staff will need to have appropriate skills, professional qualifications and the requisite knowledge and understanding of the data and information landscape.

**Reporting and accountability**

An annual report should be produced on benefits delivered and progress against outcomes. This should be published and available publically and shared with the relevant Secretary of States.

In addition an annual event should be held for the purpose of presenting the report to the sector and government.

**Management of the programme**

The successful delivery of any programme depends upon an effective governance structure which is underpinned by a robust methodology. It is recommended that the Higher Education Data and Information Improvement Programme is managed using a formal programme management approach and adopts best practice such as the principles of the OGC’s *managing successful programmes*. The tools associated with these formal methodologies should be tailored to suit the particular nature of HEDIIP. More detail on effective programme management is shown in Annex 7.

**What should it be called?**

It has been proposed that the programme board should take the ultimate decision on the name of the programme. Work on this project highlighted the significance of semantics in setting expectations within the sector. A title which will catch the imagination of stakeholders is important. The title of the programme and of the various elements of the governance structure should accurately reflect the aspirations, expectations and scope of work.

At this point a working title of Higher Education Data and Information Improvement Programme (HEDIIP) has been adopted.

Other options which have been suggested include:

- Higher Education Data and Information Consensus Programme
- Higher Education Data and Information Unity Programme
- Higher Education Data and Information Harmonisation and Improvement Programme
- United National Information Taskforce (UNIT)
- Data and Information Programme for Higher Education (DipHE)

**Review of the programme and governance structure**

It is the responsibility of the programme board to periodically review the governance structure taking into account views of relevant stakeholders.
It is suggested that the first of these reviews should take place after two years. Subsequent reviews could be undertaken to an agreed timetable or be triggered by significant change in circumstance or any other relevant event.

These reviews could consider whether the programme is contributing to the system’s ability to anticipate or react to changes around utility and burden of data and information and its use to support accountability and policy.
9. Next steps

This project report and draft programme brief set out a structure and process to address the challenges set out in paragraph 6.22 of the 2011 higher education White Paper. The programme brief is not a complete document and will need to be taken forward and completed by the Programme Board.

A summary of these documents is presented in a short and succinct cover paper to the RPG. This cover paper outlines a number of recommendations for key decisions and next steps to be taken to establish the HEDIIP. These are as follows:

Recommendation 1 – The programme

RPG members are asked to endorse the proposals for the scope and structure of the Higher Education Data and Information Improvement Programme (HEDIIP) that are set out in this report and in the draft programme brief.

Recommendation 2 – Secure funding

The programme will require funding to cover the programme management and governance activities; it will also require funding to support specific programme activities that do not have an identifiable source of funding from within the landscape.

The costs associated with establishing the Programme Management Office (including recruitment, creating a web presence and initial office set-up) are estimated to be in the region of £50,000. The annual cost of running the Programme Management Office (including staff costs, travel, meeting expenses, web site and other engagement costs) is estimated to be £250,000.

It is recommended that this work should be taken forward within the RPG portfolio of work and be funded as such.

Recommendation 3 – Appointment of the Programme Board

Once the funding for the Programme is secured, RPG should appoint the relevant members and Chair of the Programme Board. It is recommended that membership should include a subset of members of the RPG with additional members representing the UK wide dimension of the work and HE provider representatives. It is important that the programme board is broadly representative of stakeholder interests and that members are committed to the outcomes.
Recommendation 4 – Appointment of the Programme Director and Programme Management office

Resource for the Programme Management Office should be recruited. These will be housed within HESA. Recommended skills and capabilities for these roles are shown in Figure 7 in section 8.
Annex 1 Project Plan

This describes the key activities, milestones, and engagement that has been conducted in undertaking this work.

Figure 9 Project plan
Annex 2 Steering Group

Purpose of the Steering Group

The Project Steering Group has been established to ensure stakeholder engagement with the HE data and information landscape project. It will:

1. Oversee and provide directional guidance for the four work streams
2. Pursue a vision of timelier and more relevant data to ensure that future systems are more efficient
3. Act as a source of advice, guidance, sector intelligence and support
4. Monitor project progress against deliverables
5. Raise matters of concern
6. Consider next steps and make recommendations
7. Act as ambassadors for the project and champion the work of the project amongst their respective communities
8. Bring other HEI stakeholders on board as well as meeting the needs of non HEI stakeholders
9. Ensure communication and consultation is timely and appropriate

The Steering Group will report and provide recommendations to the Regulatory Partnership Group and provide communication for other interested parties UK wide.

Frequency of Meetings

The Steering Group will meet three times during the life of the project.

Steering Group membership

Sir Tim Wilson (Chair)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alison Allden</td>
<td>Chief Executive, Higher Education Statistics Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Barrett</td>
<td>Assistant Director, Office for Fair Access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Iain Cameron</td>
<td>Head of Research Careers, Research Councils UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ian Child</td>
<td>Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Chichester University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew Dean</td>
<td>Technology Policy Manager, Association of Colleges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve Egan</td>
<td>Deputy Chief Executive, Higher Education Funding Council for England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheryl Emerton</td>
<td>Operations Manager, Office of the Independent Adjudicator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hannah Falvey</td>
<td>Head of Statistics, Higher Education Funding Council for Wales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin Furner</td>
<td>Head of Data Assessment and Market Intelligence Team, Teaching Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Elizabeth Halford</td>
<td>Head of Research, Information and Enquiry, Quality Assurance Agency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Kerry Hemsworth | Assistant Director of Education and Commissioning, Department of Health
---|---
Nick Johnstone | Senior Policy Adviser, GuildHE
Steven Quigley | Academic Registrar, Regents College
Paul Smith | Head of Business Development, Student Loans Company
Martin Smith | Deputy Director - Funding Policy, Scottish Funding Council
Will Spinks | Registrar, Secretary and Chief Operating Officer, University of Manchester
Julie Tam | Head of Analysis, Universities UK
Bethanie Williams | Assistant Director, Policy & Research Universities and Colleges Admissions Service

The steering group was supported by a project team. This comprised:

- Andy Youell (HESA)
- Therese Russell (Deloitte)
- Elaine Heslop (Deloitte)
- Sam Butters (Deloitte)
Annex 3 Stakeholders consulted in the project

Figure 11 Stakeholders consulted in the project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Registrars Council</td>
<td>Sue Grant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AoC</td>
<td>Matthew Dean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association for University Research and Industry Links</td>
<td>Dr David Bembo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services</td>
<td>Jenny Owen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association of Heads of University Administration</td>
<td>Steve Denton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association of Research Managers and Administrators</td>
<td>Simon Kerridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association of University Directors of Estates</td>
<td>Sue Holmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Universities Finance Directors Group</td>
<td>Andrew McConnell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DELNI</td>
<td>Nuala Kerr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Health</td>
<td>Jennifer Firth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIE</td>
<td>Jude Hillary, Iain Bradley,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Iain Thomson, Gwen Mcgill,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Liz Tadd</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Medical Council</td>
<td>Greg Liang, Frouke deVries,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Andrew Ledgard</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guild HE</td>
<td>Nick Johnstone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCPC</td>
<td>Brendon Edmonds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEBRG</td>
<td>Andrew Bogggs, Brooke Sperry</td>
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<tr>
<td>HEE</td>
<td>Jo Lenaghan</td>
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<tr>
<td>HEFCE</td>
<td>Paul Greaves, Mario Ferelli,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Richard Puttock</td>
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<tr>
<td>HEFCW</td>
<td>Bethan Owen, Hannah Falvey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HESA</td>
<td>Alison Allden, Andy Youell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Planners Group</td>
<td>Gary Sprules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Standards Agency</td>
<td>Kate Webb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFC</td>
<td>Martin Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLC</td>
<td>Mick Laverty, Paul Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPA</td>
<td>Janet Graham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Records Officers Conference</td>
<td>Jayne Hornsby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCAS</td>
<td>Mary Curnock-Cook, Helen Thorne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCISA Corporate Information Systems Group</td>
<td>Mike Vale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universities and Colleges Information Systems Association</td>
<td>Anna Matthews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universities Human Resources</td>
<td>Leslie Donnithorne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UUK</td>
<td>Julie Tam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Annex 4 Initial thinking: draft proposal**

**Figure 12 Initial thinking: draft proposal (presented in January 2013)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aims</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Functions</th>
<th>Capabilities</th>
<th>Human and physical resourcing</th>
<th>Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reduce duplication that currently exists</td>
<td>1. Increase visibility and understanding of data and information available in the HE sector. 2. Provide clarity on the purpose and value of data currently collected and any proposed new data collections in the HE sector. 3. Reduce and remove available data collections in the HE sector including identifying and reducing duplication through improved interoperability and data sharing. 4. Improve consistency, coherence and co-ordination of data collections across the sector. 5. Promote continuous enhancement of data quality standards resulting in increased confidence in data and information across the HE sector. 6. Facilitate improvements in the timeliness of current and new data collections, access to data, and collection of data at the earliest point. 7. Enable increase in effectiveness in the use of data by institutions and bodies. 8. Enable improvements in the data and information landscape through better understanding of stakeholder requirements.</td>
<td>1. Maintain an inventory of data collections across the UK HE sector. 2. Maintain an overview of the UK HE data and information landscape and provide a co-ordination function for data and information in HE across the UK. 3. Engage with data collectors and data suppliers including government, politicians, PSRs and sector bodies on data collection requests; identify efficient and effective ways to meet requirements and provide challenges on cost/benefit of data requests whilst being adaptable and responsive where possible. 4. Encourage and facilitate information sharing between agencies to reduce burden and increase efficiency. 5. Promote best practice in data collection and data exchange including innovative, shared approaches to matters such as data protection and data sharing. 6. Facilitate agreement of a long-term strategy for the HE data and information landscape. 7. Where specific opportunities are identified, develop business cases and commission and co-ordinate projects which could improve data sharing across the HE sector. 8. Be a source of guidance on responsible use of how data is collected, used, published and shared, data standards and fitness for purpose of data and data collections.</td>
<td>Strategic planning and commissioning  Leadership and direction  Programme and project planning  Information architecture and analysis  Advocacy and Communication  Stakeholder engagement  Facilitation and diplomacy/change management  Sector experience/Policy Analysis  Admin and co-ordination (Assumption – Back office to be provided by a host organisation)</td>
<td>Council (representatives from agencies, providers and NUS) Independent and credible chair</td>
<td>Options TBD based on resource requirements: approval - Org chart - roles and responsibilities - Pay and responsibilities - Model of delivery</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ways of working: Independent, representative, value-adding, transparent, consensual.
Annex 5 Root Cause Analysis

Figure 13 Root cause analysis activity

Problem statement 1: Users of higher education data and information are becoming more demanding and demand for data is increasing but this is not being met because data is not always accessible, comparable or understood.
Problem statement 2: There is duplication and inefficiency in collection of higher education data and information which means that data suppliers have to put too much effort into data collections compared to the benefit they get from it.

Problem statement 3: Data collections are often retrospective and therefore do not meet specific timescales of many requirements. Quality of data is sometimes not fit-for-purpose; data can be incomplete and/or incorrect or be poorly defined.
Annex 6 Types of Authority

Figure 14 Types of authority in the delivery models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of authority</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Programme led delivery model</th>
<th>Organisation led delivery model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dictatorial</td>
<td>Severe version of authoritarian authority. There is a hierarchy here as well, but the overall leader is indefinitely charge and has absolute power. Again this would require changes to legislation to grant the necessary powers.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td>Authority through strict hierarchy, and orders passed down. All orders given must be obeyed and carried out. And where orders are not completed there is bound to be punishment. Leaders do not take advice from subordinates. This type of authority would again require changes to legislation or agreements to provide the necessary hierarchical position and powers in law to mandate change in other organisations.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Would require change to legislation or agreements if powers were to be established in law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rational Legal Authority</td>
<td>Authority legitimised by explicit rule and procedures that define the rights and obligations of the rules. Such rules and procedures are commonly found in a written constitution, and set of laws. Here the legitimacy of authority is derived from the respect for the legality of power. This would require change to legislation to grant authority and power to mandate changes to the data and information landscape.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Would require change to legislation or agreements if powers were to be established in law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positional authority</td>
<td>Authority enforced through hierarchy in the system/landscape. This would require powers to be granted (for example through legislation or ministerial mandate) which would enable positional influence over data collectors and suppliers to mandate change.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Hierarchical superiority would require legislative/ministerial mandate to grant power to the organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authority Type</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Requirement</td>
<td></td>
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<td>--------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coercive authority (also referred as penalty authority)</td>
<td>Authority through motivation by punishment, predicated on fear of financial, reputational or loss of status. For example, this may consist of financial penalty or 'name and shame' if stakeholders did not comply with protocols or standards set for collection, sharing or dissemination of data.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reward authority</td>
<td>Authority through positive reinforcement and the ability to award something of value as a result of compliance. In this case, authority would arise from stakeholders understanding that benefits would arise from changes to behaviour; this could be reduced costs, timelier or more relevant data.</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert authority</td>
<td>Authority through earned respect of skills as a leader or subject-matter expert. This would rely on a delivery model led by recognised individuals/organisations with known expertise and understanding of the data and information landscape.</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charismatic authority</td>
<td>Authority through the ability to influence others through personalities and effective communication. This may manifest itself through appointment of a recognised and respected chair (and possibly other personnel) with the appropriate connections and reputation to influence others.</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Authority</td>
<td>Traditional authority would be obeyed because “It has always been that way.” In a system based on ‘traditional authority’ power is legitimised by customs. This may work if there was an existing individual or organisation who had historically led on data and information issues in the past and was accepted in this role.</td>
<td>X ✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultative</td>
<td>Consultative authority is fairly democratic style of authority, which means that all stakeholders are treated with respect and given a chance to use their skills to improve the task. Stakeholders would be given the chance to voice their opinions and ideas on tasks (likely to be through a Steering Group or council/board forum). However, the leader retains the final decision-making power. Major decisions would not be made without first getting the input from those that will be affected.</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

42
| Participative | In this model most of the authority, although not all, is given to the stakeholders. Stakeholders would be involved in goal setting, problem solving but ultimate decision making would still be retained within the leading organisation/programme. | ✓ | Depending on the nature of the organisation authority may be less participative and more towards the authoritative end of the spectrum |
## Annex 7 Delivery models

### Figure 15 Comparison of delivery models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme led delivery model</th>
<th>Organisation led delivery model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What are the key features of this delivery model?</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reports to a Steering Group/programme board</td>
<td>• Fixed governance and accountability structure (e.g. Board)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Non-permanent (Finite length which may be reviewed and extended)</td>
<td>• Permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Finite objectives and benefits to be delivered</td>
<td>• Organisation mission statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Portfolio of projects</td>
<td>• Defined organisational functions and set of tasks and actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Programme/project milestone tracking and reporting against plan</td>
<td>• Annual/cyclical reporting to board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What are the high level design options?</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Programme led by a Steering Group of stakeholder representatives and delivered by programme resource</td>
<td>• New business unit within an existing organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• New subsidiary of existing organisation (ultimate legal responsibility would lie with existing organisation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• New independent organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• New independent organisation with tenant arrangement in existing organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How will this approach drive change?</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Change will be driven through organisations adopting initiatives for mutual or individual benefit</td>
<td>• Change will be driven through mandated protocols, dictats etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bottom up (pull) approach</td>
<td>• Top down approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What activities will the model undertake to deliver outcomes?</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Programme will deliver strategic developments to the sector which would target root causes of issues in the landscape</td>
<td>• Challenge and mediation role to facilitate/encourage/mandate changes to the way data is collected and supplied (will depend on authority of the organisation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Challenge process will be done by data collectors themselves (peer to peer challenge) rather than through an independent organisation</td>
<td>• Point of contact for best practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Stakeholders would have responsibility for their own actions (Recognises sovereignty of individual organisations)</td>
<td>• Promotion of best practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Transcends sovereignty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Commissioning of projects/programmes to deliver strategic developments for the sector (but less focus on this than in the programme model)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What are the potential governance arrangements for this</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Steering Group/programme board with an independent chair</td>
<td>• Organisation board/council with an independent chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individual (Appointed Director)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

44
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>delivery model?</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who would be responsible for defining strategy?</td>
<td>• Programme Steering Group/board (with consultation with stakeholders)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Organisation board/council (with consultation with stakeholders)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>How will initiatives be managed?</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Initiatives managed as individual projects as part of a wider programme portfolio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Project leads appointed to manage each initiative with a specified budget (to be used for necessary additional resources, expenses etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Initiatives managed as roles and responsibilities of the team with potential for additional projects to be commissioned</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>What are the likely resourcing options?</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Secondments for delivery of programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Work commissioned by other organisations on behalf of the programme (more flexible in terms of sourcing expertise)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Flexibility to resource according to requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Some permanent resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Additional commissioned resource where required and work may be commissioned by other organisations on behalf of the programme</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>What are the high level funding options?</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Funding by government departments; predominantly BIS with contribution from other devolved administrations. This could be via the funding councils.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Combination model; sector subscription model and funding from government/funding councils; predominantly BIS with contribution from other devolved administrations. This could be via the funding councils.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Funding by government departments; predominantly BIS with contribution from other devolved administrations. This could be via the funding councils.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>How will the independence of this delivery model be assured?</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Programme steering board should reflect principles of independence and representation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Should have an independent chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Design inherently promotes independence from any one organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Independence is directly influenced by decisions around organisation arrangements for hosting/funding/resourcing etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Design option chosen needs to address bias (perceived or actual) towards any existing organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• New business unit within an existing organisation would require changes to governance arrangements to prevent conflict of interest within the organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Subsidiary of existing organisation would need independent governance arrangements (i.e. accountability to separate board) to avoid actual or perceived bias</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• New independent organisation would enable greater independence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Tenant arrangements for a new independent organisation would need to be considered to avoid actual or perceived bias</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Should have an independent chair of the board</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>How will this delivery model be accountable to the sector?</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Benefits will be tracked and reported - accountability will be to the sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Depends on the reporting mechanisms; these would have to be established e.g. Annual report, reporting cycle would need to meet the needs of stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Possible Answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| How does this approach fit the wider policy agenda?                    | • Avoids creation of new quangos or entities in the landscape  
• Strategic programme addresses root causes to resolve issues and therefore supports ‘digital by default’ rather than implementing a process/mechanism to pick off issues one at a time. |
| How can this model successfully work on a UK wide basis?               | • Funding should include component from devolved administration to support and represent buy-in  
• Interests of devolved administrations should be represented on the Steering Group/programme board |
| What will be the approach to benefits realisation management?           | • Clearly defined programme objectives and benefits which should be tracked  
• Metrics driven approach to benefits realisation  
• Reporting cycle to be determined by the board/governance body |
| What are the key benefits of this delivery model?                      | • Lower overheads/costs  
• Benefit and objective focussed  
• Does not need formal governance structures  
• Flexibility  
• Delivers strategic change to the sector which addresses root causes of issues in the data and information landscape |
| What are the main limitations of this delivery model?                  | • Has a finite length  
• Will not have ongoing operational delivery capabilities (i.e. To provide challenge, act as a clearing house)  
• Higher costs/overheads  
• Harder to implement (establishment of new governance structures etc)  
• Less flexibility  
• Less focus on strategic development to tackle the root causes of issues in the landscape with more effort applied to addressing current issues one at a time. |
| What could it be called?                                               | • Higher Education data and information strategic development programme  
• Higher Education Data and Information Council |

Would also be accountable to its board as well as the sector.
Annex 8 Programme management

Effective programme management will comprise a number of activities which should be reflected in the production of key programme management deliverables. These are identified and summarised in the table in Figure 16.

Figure 16 Programme management deliverables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliverable</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programme Governance Structures</td>
<td>• Establish a structure for the programme to operate effectively in, with clear roles and responsibilities</td>
<td>• Confirm/define roles and responsibilities • Establish interactions with other organisations taking forward separate initiatives within the Higher Education Data and Information Landscape and resolve any conflicts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications Strategy, Plan and Delivery</td>
<td>• Develop an integrated approach to communications to raise awareness and build commitment within the higher education data and information landscape and communicate programme results</td>
<td>• Develop communications strategy (including communication channel analysis and stakeholder mapping) • Develop communications plan • Produce materials • Deliver communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process for ongoing project identification and selection</td>
<td>• Develop a portfolio of projects to be delivered as part of the transformation programme</td>
<td>• Analyse and prioritise the portfolio (both new and existing initiatives) and select those to be implemented based on benefit case, and strategic goals impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project and benefits tracking procedure</td>
<td>• Establish a process for monitoring the progress and status of projects and the realisation of their related benefits</td>
<td>• Develop procedures for tracking • Agree reporting regime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resourcing confirmed for projects and programmes carried out as part of the HEDIIP strategic programme</td>
<td>• Identify and secure most appropriate people as this directly impacts the success of the activity and the buy-in to change</td>
<td>• Identify resources required • Confirm resources and agree schedules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliverable</td>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme Planning</td>
<td>• Create a programme plan to monitor the progress of workstreams and activities towards key milestones.</td>
<td>• The plan will be developed along with the PID in the initiation stage and will become the baseline for the Sponsoring Group’s (and other governance bodies) expectations of the delivery timeline for the programme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• It will support critical path analysis, and versions of the plan will also be used as a communication tool to articulate progress of the programme to stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk, Issue, and Dependency</td>
<td>• Provides a mechanism by which all participants can identify and manage risks, issues and dependencies to respond proactively to the threat they pose to a project/programme’s timeline and ultimately the realisation of benefits.</td>
<td>• Templates should be adopted to facilitate the management of these items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This should act as a guide for resources asked by the RPG to initiate the programme and take this work forward.

The programme will move through a set of stages from initiation through to programme closure and benefits realisation. Two areas are given further attention here in response to issues raised by stakeholders during this piece of work:

- programme scope and portfolio management; and
- benefits realisation.

Programme scope and portfolio management

The HEDIIP is envisaged as a strategic programme that will take forward in its portfolio through a number of programmes or projects. The initial scope is limited and an important task for the programme board will be to extend this scope to ensure the desired outcomes and white paper aims are met.

In order to consider the scope, it is recommended that the programme board undertake a portfolio review. This should identify other initiatives underway elsewhere in the landscape. Synergies and conflicts with this programme should be identified.

The portfolio should be reviewed on an annual basis. It should be noted that at present the work of the programme is focussed on student data. The higher education data and information landscape is also defined by other data types including research data, financial data and staff data. The remit of the
An overview of an approach to portfolio management is presented in Figure 17.

**Figure 17 Portfolio management**

**Benefits realisation**

Projects and Programmes can only be regarded as successful if the intended benefits are realised. Benefits are often the area of programme management that is found most difficult, and as a result least satisfactorily addressed. Stakeholders engaged in this piece of work have articulated a clear need to measure and report of the benefits of the programme. This is best achieved by ensuring that programmes within the HEDIIP portfolio adopt a formal approach to the management of benefits.

Benefits management covers the process of:

- identifying and defining benefits;
- planning and implementing changes to processes and roles required to realise benefits; and
- consistently measuring progress against baselines.

Benefits Management is the quantifiable and measurable improvement resulting from a business outcome which will normally have a tangible value expressed in monetary or resource terms. The role of the benefits realisation is to articulate in SMARTT terms how the improvements made through initiatives carried out under the HEDIIP umbrella will result in tangible improvements in the higher education data and information landscape. SMARTT benefits must be articulated in a way that is:

- Specific;
• Measurable;
• Achievable;
• Realistic;
• Targeted; and
• Time bound.

Benefits realisation will be central to providing a structured approach to ensure that the overall benefits from HEDIIP are maximised. Benefits realisation is delivered through three main stages illustrated in Figure 18.

Figure 18 Benefits management

The objectives of a formal approach to benefits management are to:

• ensure all relevant benefits are identified and aligned with the HEDIIP’s strategic objectives (Benefits Planning);
• provide challenge to ensure only realistic potential benefits are taken into account (Benefits Planning);
• ensure that wherever possible benefits are quantified (whether or not they are financial) (Benefits Planning);
• ensure benefits from different projects are compatible with each other (Benefits Planning);
• prevent both double-counting and omission of benefits (Benefits Realisation); and
• facilitate better communication to the organisation about what the changes will mean (all stages of Benefits Management).

A first attempt at illustrating how the initial programmes included in the HEDIIP portfolio will deliver the outcomes defined by stakeholders and meet the White Paper objectives is set out in Annex 9 Outcomes and benefits. It should be noted that during the mobilisation phase for the HEDIIP programme more work to formally articulate the benefits from the ULN, JACS, Inventory and common data language will require to be done. This should be carried in line with the approach set out above.
### Annex 9 Outcomes and benefits

The projects identified in the initial scope will partially contribute to delivery of the programme outcomes, as outlined in the table below. However, further review will need to be conducted to identify what further activities are required to fully deliver the outcomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Desired outcome/benefit</th>
<th>How it can be delivered by HEDIIP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A lack of visibility of data collections conducted and data available in the sector</td>
<td>Better understanding by institutions of how they can use data for their own benefit</td>
<td>• Inventory of data collections (<em>partial contribution</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Better understanding by data collectors of data available in order to reduce duplicated collections</td>
<td>• Inventory of data collections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor understanding of the purpose of data collections</td>
<td>Clarity for institutions on the purpose and value of data collections</td>
<td>WORK TO BE IDENTIFIED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identification of any non-value added data collections</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No common data language</td>
<td>Comparable, better quality and more accessible data sets</td>
<td>• Common data language (<em>partial contribution</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• ULN (<em>partial contribution</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• JACS (<em>partial contribution</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reduced duplication of data collections through data sharing (facilitated by common data definitions)</td>
<td>• Common data language (<em>partial contribution</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Inventory of data collections (<em>partial contribution</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak operational co-ordination between organisations including data sharing</td>
<td>Reduced duplication of data collections through more efficient data collection processes and data sharing</td>
<td>• Inventory of data collections (<em>partial contribution</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improved timeliness of data</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absence of a sector wide strategy on data</td>
<td>Sector wide strategies to promote consistency across all organisations</td>
<td>WORK TO BE IDENTIFIED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sector wider understanding of the needs and requirements of data users</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No mandate or expectations to change behaviours to drive efficiencies</td>
<td>Data collectors to seek most efficient method of collecting data to meet their requirements</td>
<td>• Inventory of data collections (<em>partial contribution</em>)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Contents

DOCUMENT STATUS AND PURPOSE ................................................................. 1

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ................................................................. 1

2. BACKGROUND .............................................................................. 2
   2.1 Strategic context ............................................................... 2
   2.2 Key drivers .............................................................................

3. FUTURE STATE VISION ............................................................... 3
   3.1 Vision ......................................................................................
   3.2 High level outcomes ......................................................... 4
   3.3 Critical Success Factors ..................................................... 4
   3.4 Measuring success .............................................................. 5

4. SCOPE .......................................................................................... 6
   4.1 Focus of the programme ..................................................... 6
   4.2 Assumptions and constraints ............................................. 6
   4.3 Risks ....................................................................................... 7

5. GOVERNANCE ............................................................................. 7
   5.1 Sponsoring group ............................................................... 8
   5.2 Programme Board .............................................................. 8
   5.3 Senior Responsible Owner/Programme Director .................. 9
   5.4 Programme Management Office (PMO) ............................... 9
   5.5 Project Managers/individual projects ................................. 10
   5.6 Key stakeholders ............................................................... 10
   5.7 Reporting and accountability ............................................... 10
   5.8 Stakeholder communications strategy ............................... 10

6. FINANCIAL PROVISION ............................................................... 11

7. HIGH LEVEL PLAN ...................................................................... 11
   Annexe 1 Outcomes/benefits of the HEDIIP programme .......... 12
   Annexe 2 Stakeholders ............................................................. 13
DOCUMENT STATUS AND PURPOSE

This document is a ‘first pass’ at a programme brief for the Higher Education Data and Information Improvement Programme (HEDIIP). This document is not complete.

The format of this document is based on a best practice approach to programme management and adopts the principles of the OGC ‘Managing Successful Programmes’. 1

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document is a first draft of a programme brief for the Higher Education Data and Information Improvement Programme (HEDIIP). The document sets out the initial objectives, scope, and the parameters within which the programme will be driven. The brief is one of two documents that have been produced to support programme initiation. The other document is the project report. It provides a narrative account of the facilitated process of stakeholder engagement that has led to the identified need to establish the programme and sets out the detailed rationale for the initial focus, scope and approach.

The purpose of the programme brief is to serve as terms of reference for the HEDIIP programme board once it is established.

The programme responds to key objectives set by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) in the White Paper ‘Students at the Heart of the System’. BIS asked agencies to take steps to arrive at a new system that meets the needs of a wider group of users; reduces the duplication that currently exists; and results in timelier and more relevant data.

The programme brief describes in outline terms a ‘future state’ vision for the higher education data and information landscape. The document sets out the high level outcomes, critical success factors and the approach to measuring programme success.

The initial scope of the programme will be focussed on strategic activities already agreed by the regulatory partnership group. These are:

- to define and agree the core elements of a common data language for HE data collections;
- to establish and maintain a definitive inventory of data collections for the HE sector;
- to improve data specification through the development of the JACS subject coding system; and
- to establish a roadmap for the implementation of the Unique Learner Number in the HE sector.

The programme delivery model affords flexibility in scope and contribution. The programme portfolio should be reviewed on an annual basis by the programme

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1 http://www.msp-officialsite.com/
board. The Programme Board should determine if the scope of work should be extended.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Strategic context

In June 2011 the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) published its higher education White Paper, ‘Students at the Heart of the System’. This described the progress the Government is making to: deliver a strong, financially sustainable and high quality HE sector; promote a better student experience; foster social mobility and widen participation; and create a more responsive higher education sector in which funding follows the decisions of learners and successful institutions are free to thrive. The White Paper proposed specific improvements to the higher education data and information landscape as follows:

“We will ask HEFCE, HESA and HEBRG, in collaboration with the Information Standards Board for [Education, Skills and Children’s Services] (ISB), to redesign the information landscape for higher education in order to arrive at a new system that:

- meets the needs of a wider group of users;
- reduces the duplication that currently exists; and
- results in timelier and more relevant data.

We expect that the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) will also wish to contribute to this exploratory work to support simplification and alignment across both the higher and further education sectors. We will also work with other government departments that collect data from institutions to secure buy-in to reducing the information collection burden. In turn, they will benefit from better quality, more timely data”

White Paper ‘Students at the Heart of the System’ Para 6.22

This programme is intended to provide a coherent set of arrangements for the collection, sharing and dissemination of data which will enable improvements in the higher education landscape and meet the objectives set in the White Paper.

2.2 Key drivers

The underlying issues driving the need for change in the data and information landscape have been identified through the facilitated stakeholder engagement process described in the project report. These are shown in Figure 1.

---

2 ‘Students at the heart of the system’, BIS, June 2011
Root cause analysis of these issues identified a number of key areas that must be addressed. These are:

- a lack of visibility of data collections conducted and data available in the sector;
- poor understanding of the purpose of data collections;
- no common data language;
- weak operational co-ordination between organisations including data sharing;
- absence of a sector wide strategy on data; and
- no mandate or expectations to change behaviours to drive efficiencies.

The benefits realised by the HEDIIP programme will aim to address these root causes. Annexe 1 maps the contribution that benefits realised from the initial programme scope will make towards meeting HEDIIP’s programme objectives and those set out in the white paper.

3. FUTURE STATE VISION

3.1 Vision

After the HEDIIP programme has delivered change and benefits are realised:

- there will be reduced duplication of data collections reducing burden on institutions and increasing efficiency for the sector as a whole;
• data and information will be available which meets the needs of a wider group of users; it will be more accessible, comparable and more easily understood; and
• more timely and relevant data and information will be available.

3.2 High level outcomes

Through a facilitated process of engagement, stakeholders within the higher education data and information landscape have identified a number of desired outcomes from the programme. These are as follows:

• better understanding by institutions of how they can use data for their own benefit;
• better understanding by data collectors of data available in order to reduce duplicated collections;
• clarity for institutions on the purpose and value of data collections;
• identification of any non-value added data collections;
• comparable, better quality and more accessible data sets;
• reduced duplication of data collections through data sharing (facilitated by common data definitions);
• reduced duplication of data collections through more efficient data collection processes and data sharing;
• improved timeliness of data;
• sector wide strategies to promote consistency across all organisations;
• sector wide understanding of the needs and requirements of data users; and
• data collectors to seek most efficient method of collecting data to meet their requirements.

Annex A shows how each of these outcomes will be delivered by benefits realised by the programme through the activities identified in the initial scope. It should be noted, that Annex A is in effect a ‘gap analysis’ as there are a number of outcomes which will not be met through the activities planned in the initial scope. The strategic programme of work will need to be wider than these four initial programmes. The programme board will need to identify and commission further projects and programmes to take forward work to deliver the balance of these desired outcomes.

Projects and programmes within the strategic portfolio should be prioritised and selected on the basis of their contribution towards meeting these objectives.

3.3 Critical Success Factors

The Critical Success Factors (CSF) which will underpin the programme are:

CSF1: Fit with policy

The extent to which the programme delivers against higher education policy and business needs of the sector at government, organisational and institutional level.
CSF2: **Strategic fit**  
The extent to which the programme fits with key underpinnings of government higher education policy, for example the ‘digital by default’ agenda.

CSF3: **Leadership**  
The extent to which leaders of stakeholder organisations own and take shared responsibility for delivering outcomes for the benefit in the interests of the sector, the public and the student.

CSF4: **Benefits delivery**  
The extent to which the programme delivers the identified aims and expected benefits.

CSF5: **Achievability**  
The achievability of the programme and its components, including the required level of change, management of associated risks, the need for supporting skills (capacity and capability), realistic deadlines and buy-in and commitment of staff.

CSF6: **Affordability**  
The required level of funding for both the operating and programme costs and the resources available.

### 3.4 Measuring success

A benefits realisation strategy will be developed based on the desired outcomes identified in annexe 1. Benefits profiles will be developed which define for each benefit:

- description of benefit;
- before state;
- when will benefit occur;
- dependencies;
- how will benefit be measured including KPIs; and
- changes required to realise benefits.

An annual report should be produced on benefits delivered and progress against outcomes. This should be published and available publically and shared with the relevant Secretary of State(s).

In initiating the programme, the Programme Board must ensure that for the strategic activities already agreed (ULN, JACS, Inventory, Common data language), the benefits are appropriately defined and that a benefits management strategy is in place.
4. SCOPE

4.1 Focus of the programme

The initial scope of the programme will be focussed on the strategic activities already agreed by RPG. These are:

- to define and agree the core elements of a common data language for HE data collections;
- to establish and maintain a definitive inventory of data collections for the HE sector;
- to improve data specification through the development of the JACS subject coding system; and
- to establish a roadmap for the implementation of the Unique Learner Number in the HE sector.

These activities form a foundation for what may in time become a broader strategic programme of work. It is likely that additional activities will be required to meet the full set of objectives and desired outcomes identified by stakeholders.

The programme delivery model affords flexibility in scope and contribution so that these can be agreed and negotiated over time. Once benefits have been realised and achievements demonstrated for the initial initiatives, additional projects could then be commissioned. The Programme Board will therefore have the ability to identify and commission additional projects as required and develop a wider portfolio of activities to ensure these objectives are met.

Extending the scope of the programme should include examining other initiatives and programmes of work ongoing within the sector and determining if these should be brought under the scope of the strategic programme, or at the least synergies identified and conflicts managed. The PMO will provide an overview of projects and initiatives elsewhere in the sector so that conflicts can be managed and synergies leveraged.

The strategic programme portfolio should be based around a finite timeframe and comprise activities that may be:

- short term projects (<2years) which are commissioned on the basis of an ‘overhead of consensus’ within the sector. These may be more tactical in nature and operational contribution; and
- extended activity: new activities that require a start up and implementation phase supported by a programme that in time can be embedded ways of working.

The programme board should review the portfolio on a regular basis to add or change the portfolio to meet the needs of the sector and wider stakeholders, ensuring the agenda remains relevant and focused.

4.2 Assumptions and constraints

The underpinning assumptions and constraints of the programme are:
• the assumption that the political mandate to take forward this programme of work is secure;
• the assumption that within the intention to converge towards common and co-ordinated practice the programme will not progress at the pace of the slowest;
• the constraints associated with delivering a complex programme that engages stakeholder organisation that have individual sovereignty and operate across multiple jurisdictions; and
• the constraints associated with a policy environment that is defined by multiple government departments and administrations

4.3 Risks

Risks associated with the individual projects and programmes forming the strategic programme portfolio should be recorded in the relevant risk registers.

Global and high-level programme risks must be determined and recorded in the final version of this programme brief. RPG should ask that work is undertaken to identify these in the mobilisation phase.

5. GOVERNANCE

A high-level model for programme governance is set out in Figure 2. The governance structure is based on a number of design principles. These are:

• individual organisational sovereignty must be respected;
• change cannot be driven by enforced or mandated compliance;
• partnership working between organisations should effect change;
• authority to deliver the work should derive from the support and consensus of the stakeholders;
• the structure should create a sense of shared responsibility for change for both data collectors and data suppliers;
• the programme of work should be time-bound and reviewed after an agreed period;
• initiatives should have clearly defined objectives, benefits and outcomes;
• benefits and outcomes should be reported, measured and tracked;
• activities must be well organised and require some “organisational” based support to be effective;
• the delivery model should be flexible to adapt to changing requirements and structures which are not fossilised over time; and
• the way that resources are organised should give the programme an independent identity which is recognised as a locus for expertise and acts as a single point of contact.
Figure 2 Programme governance structure

- The programme will be delivered under the RPG programme of work and be part of the wider RPG portfolio.
- As the sponsoring group, RPG will provide the investment decision and top level endorsement. They will challenge and agree proposals for projects as defined by the programme board.

### Responsibilities
- Propose and negotiate with the sponsoring group the strategic agenda and a coherent portfolio of work.
- Oversee and actively contribute to stakeholder engagement.
- Embed the concept of sustainability in the projects taken forward by the programme.
- Support the SRO/programme director to deliver the programme.
- Promote a collaborative culture that will bring helpful pressure on stakeholders as difficulties arise.
- Provide oversight and monitoring of the programme against objectives.
- Act as ambassadors for the project and champion the work of the programme amongst their respective communities.
- Review the programme structure and governance arrangements on an agreed schedule.

### Programme Management Office

- Circa 2 FTEs

### SRO/Programme Director

- Develop business cases to support the commissioning or tendering of projects.
- Manage portfolio of projects.
- Coordinate project strands and identify synergies and overlaps.
- Identify overlaps with other sector projects in this area.
- Manage benefits realisation, communications and reporting.
- Be a visible point of contact and locus of expertise for HE providers and other stakeholders.
- Prepare agendas and papers for programme board meetings.
- Housed within HESA.

### Programme Board

- Each project will have its own appropriate project governance structure involving the relevant stakeholders.
- Each project will require a defined project plan, stakeholder engagement plan, communications plan and project structure.

### 5.1 Sponsoring group

Recognising the need to move quickly to formally establish the programme, in the short term it is proposed that the sponsoring group for the programme should be the RPG. The make-up of the sponsoring group may evolve over time as other funders begin to contribute to this work.

As the sponsoring group, RPG will provide the investment decision and top level endorsement. They will challenge and agree proposals for projects as defined by the programme board. This programme would therefore be delivered as part of the wider RPG portfolio and be funded as such.

### 5.2 Programme Board

The programme board will be accountable to the RPG. The membership of this programme board will include a subset of members of the RPG, representation from the devolved administrations and representation from HE providers. It is important that the programme board is broadly representative of stakeholder interests and that members are committed to the outcomes. The programme board should provide a broad understanding of the data and information landscape. There is a need for an independent and credible chair to lead this group.
The programme board will enable a programme which is developed by the key stakeholders.

An indicative Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Programme Board is set out below.

The programme board will:

• propose and negotiate with the sponsoring group the strategic agenda and a coherent portfolio of work;
• oversee and actively contribute to stakeholder engagement;
• embed the concept of sustainability in the projects taken forward by the programme;
• support the SRO/programme director to deliver the programme;
• promote a collaborative culture that will bring helpful pressure on stakeholders as difficulties arise;
• provide oversight and monitoring of the programme against objectives;
• act as ambassadors for the project and champion the work of the programme amongst their respective communities; and
• review the programme structure and governance arrangements on an agreed schedule.

The programme board should meet at an appropriate interval to discharge the responsibilities set out above.

5.3 Senior Responsible Owner/Programme Director

The programme director will take the role of senior responsible owner (SRO). This is the single individual with overall responsibility for ensuring that the programme meets its objectives and delivers the projected benefits.

The programme director will report to the Programme board and be supported by the Programme Management Office. This role will be responsible for:

• managing the portfolio of projects;
• coordinating project strands and identifying synergies and overlaps;
• identifying overlaps with other sector projects in this area;
• managing benefits realisation, communications and reporting; and
• developing business cases to support the commissioning or tendering of projects.

5.4 Programme Management Office (PMO)

The PMO is the function providing the information hub and standards custodian for the programme and its delivery objectives.

The Programme Management Office (PMO) will support the programme director. It will provide support for the wider programme as well as the individual programmes and projects.

The PMO will be housed in HESA. Responsibilities will include supporting the programme director to:
• develop business cases to support the commissioning or tendering of projects;
• manage the portfolio of projects;
• co-ordinate project strands and identify synergies and overlaps;
• identify overlaps with other sector projects in this area;
• manage benefits realisation, communications and reporting;
• be a visible point of contact and locus of expertise for HE providers and other stakeholders; and
• prepare agendas and papers for programme board meetings.

5.5 Project Managers/individual projects

Each project will require its own project management and governance arrangements which should involve relevant stakeholders depending on the nature of the project. Each project will have a project manager who will be responsible for the set-up, management and delivery of the project.

5.6 Key stakeholders

The key stakeholders for the programme are listed in Annex 2. Given the dynamic nature of the sector and the scope of the programme this will be expected to change over time.

5.7 Reporting and accountability

An annual report should be produced on benefits delivered and progress against outcomes. This should be published and available publically and shared with the relevant Secretary of States.

In addition an annual event should be held for the purpose of presenting the report to the sector and government.

5.8 Stakeholder communications strategy

A communications and awareness strategy must be developed prior to programme initiation and the key objectives summarised in this programme brief.

5.9 Review of governance structure

It is the responsibility of the programme board to periodically review the governance structure taking into account views of relevant stakeholders. It is suggested that the first of these reviews should take place after two years. Subsequent reviews could be undertaken to an agreed timetable or be triggered by significant change in circumstance or any other relevant event.

These reviews could consider whether the programme is contributing to the system’s ability to anticipate or react to changes around utility and burden of data and information and its use to support accountability and policy.
6. FINANCIAL PROVISION

The financial resources required to set up and operate the programme must be identified and funding secured.

7. HIGH LEVEL PLAN

A high level plan for the programme should be developed showing key milestones and timescales for benefits realisation.
Annexe 1 Outcomes/benefits of the HEDIIP programme

NB – the projects identified in the initial scope will partially contribute to delivery of the programme outcomes, as outlined in the table below. However, further review will need to be conducted to identify what additional activities are required to fully deliver the outcomes. This review should feed into the development of the sector wide strategy for the data and information landscape.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Desired outcome/benefit</th>
<th>How it can be delivered by HEDIIP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A lack of visibility of data collections conducted and data available in the sector</td>
<td>Better understanding by institutions of how they can use data for their own benefit</td>
<td>• Inventory of data collections (partial contribution)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Better understanding by data collectors of data available in order to reduce duplicated collections</td>
<td>• Inventory of data collections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor understanding of the purpose of data collections</td>
<td>Clarity for institutions on the purpose and value of data collections</td>
<td>WORK TO BE IDENTIFIED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identification of any non-value added data collections</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No common data language</td>
<td>Comparable, better quality and more accessible data sets</td>
<td>• Common data language (partial contribution)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reduced duplication of data collections through data sharing (facilitated by common data definitions)</td>
<td>• Common data language (partial contribution)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Inventory of data collections (partial contribution)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak operational co-ordination between organisations including data sharing</td>
<td>Reduced duplication of data collections through more efficient data collection processes and data sharing</td>
<td>• Inventory of data collections (partial contribution)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Improved timeliness of data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absence of a sector wide strategy on data</td>
<td>Sector wide strategies to promote consistency across all organisations</td>
<td>WORK TO BE IDENTIFIED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sector wider understanding of the needs and requirements of data users</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No mandate or expectations to change behaviours to drive efficiencies</td>
<td>Data collectors to seek most efficient method of collecting data to meet their requirements</td>
<td>• Inventory of data collections (partial contribution)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annexe 2  Stakeholders

The following list of stakeholders is not exhaustive and stakeholders may evolve and change over time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Association of Heads of University Administration</td>
<td>ISB for Education Children's services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association of Colleges</td>
<td>ISB for Health and Social Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services</td>
<td>JISC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Registrars Council</td>
<td>Learner Records Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association of Research Managers and Administrators</td>
<td>National Planners Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association of University Directors of Estates</td>
<td>National Union of Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association for University Research and Industry Links</td>
<td>OFFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council for Advancement and Support of Education</td>
<td>Office of the Independent Adjudicator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department for Business Innovation and Skills</td>
<td>Office for National Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Council</td>
<td>PSRBs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Universities Finance Directors Group</td>
<td>Quality Assurance Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial consultants in HE sector</td>
<td>Research Councils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department for Employment and Learning (NI)</td>
<td>Student Awards Agency for Scotland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department for Education</td>
<td>Scottish Funding Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Health</td>
<td>Scottish Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality Challenge Unit</td>
<td>Skills Funding Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FE data service</td>
<td>Society for Research into Higher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GuildHE</td>
<td>Software vendors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE Market Researchers Forum Group</td>
<td>Student Loans Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE providers</td>
<td>Student Records Officers Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE Wales</td>
<td>Teaching Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Education Better Regulation Group</td>
<td>UCAS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Education Careers Services Unit</td>
<td>Universities and Colleges Information Systems Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Education England</td>
<td>Universities HR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Education Funding Council for England</td>
<td>UK Borders Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Education Funding Council for Wales</td>
<td>Universities and Colleges Employers Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Education Statistics Agency</td>
<td>Universities Scotland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HMRC</td>
<td>Universities UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Authority</td>
<td>Welsh Government</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>