

National Film and Television School (the “School”) External Data Policy

1. Introduction

The School is required to submit a number of data returns to its funding bodies and other agencies, including HEFCE and HESA. The information is used for purposes of funding and league tables, as well as to provide a general picture of the School and its activities to the outside world.

This Policy sets out the School’s arrangements for the preparation and review of external data returns and identifies the significant roles and reporting lines. The list of returns covered by this Policy is set out in the annexed External Data Returns Schedule.

2. Principles

The School recognises the importance of external reporting requirements with respect to funding and reputation, and seeks to produce external data returns that present an accurate and coherent picture of the School and its activities. It seeks to ensure that:

- All data returns are prepared and submitted on a timely basis, and are supported by a clear and complete audit trail
- Data, which are used for external reporting, are subject to rigorous verification, and to management approval.
- Responsibilities for the preparation of external data returns are clearly defined
- Responsibilities for the scrutiny of external data returns are clearly defined

3. Roles

In accordance with the HEFCE Memorandum of Accountability and Assurance and the Audit Code of Practice, the School’s Audit Committee is required to give, as part of its annual opinion, an assurance about the management and quality

assurance of data provided by the School to HEFCE, the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and other public bodies.

The Audit Committee receives reports from the School's Senior Management Team. From 2015, the Internal Auditors will conduct an annual review of arrangements for the assurance of data quality and the preparation of external data returns.

The Senior Management Team is responsible for approving the policies relating to data quality and external returns. It receives reports about the status of returns and is advised about key issues arising from returns, with particular regard to funding implications and audit findings.

The Director of the NFTS is responsible for signing off each return before final submission to the relevant funding or statutory body.

The Director of Curriculum and Registrar has strategic responsibility for ensuring that arrangements are in place for the preparation and review of external data returns. This includes assigning responsibility for the preparation of individual returns to the appropriate member of staff.

Current responsibilities are shown in Annex A.

All staff tasked with preparing external data returns must ensure that the data they input into the returns are accurate, current, and reliable. They are responsible for ensuring that requests for information relating to statutory and funding body requirements are met promptly, and for assuring the quality of the data provided.

The Director of Curriculum and Registrar is responsible for ensuring that at least two members of staff have been trained and are able to complete correctly external data returns, and that staff is available throughout the review period to respond to the questions posed as part of the scrutiny process and to make amendments to returns, as required. They must ensure that all processes are documented and that appropriate audit trails are maintained.

The Director of Curriculum and Registrar is also responsible for ensuring that external data returns have been subject to senior management review before signoff by the Director of the NFTS.

4. External Data Returns Schedule

The schedule of returns showing the responsibilities for the preparation, review and sign-off of returns (is attached at Annex A). This will be maintained by the Director of Curriculum and Registrar, and stored on a shared drive accessible by all staff with responsibility for preparing returns, and other staff as appropriate. This will be updated annually.

5. Preparation of returns

The Director of Curriculum and Registrar will nominate a support department (e.g., Registry, Studio Office, Accounts) to assume responsibility for the relevant part of each external data return. The relevant department is responsible for ensuring that:

- Data returns are completed according to agreed timetables, allowing sufficient time for the review and subsequent amendment of returns, as required
- Data from systems has been accurately transferred, input or transcribed, as appropriate, into the format required by HESA or other funding bodies
- Sufficient time and resource have been allocated to the preparation of returns
- Staff regularly attends training and information sessions held by HESA, funding bodies and other relevant agencies, thus keeping abreast of changes to requirements and taking the appropriate action to ensure that data capture and transfer mechanisms remain current and relevant
- Staff is available to respond to requests for information and issues arising through the scrutiny, and to make amendments to returns as required

6. Scrutiny of returns

Each return should be scrutinised before final submission to HESA or other funding bodies or agencies. The purpose of such scrutiny is to provide an extra level of checking, to challenge assumptions and to provide assurance to senior management about the quality of the return. The scrutiny should be undertaken by staff not directly involved in the preparation of returns. Responsibilities for scrutinising returns are set out in the External Data Returns Schedule in Appendix A.

7. Reporting

The Director of Curriculum and Registrar will routinely receive status reports from staff responsible for the preparation of returns. Reports will comment on any funding implications and highlight any areas of concern or issues that need to be addressed.

Following the completion of each return, the departments responsible for their preparation and scrutiny should conduct a review of the process, identify any issues and rectify, as appropriate. Audit reports and management responses will be presented to Senior Management and the Audit Committee, and copied to relevant Heads of Department, if appropriate.

8. Documentation

The final submission, which will be password-protected, will be stored securely on a shared network drive.

All procedures relating to the preparation and scrutiny of external data returns should be documented. A copy of such documentation, which will be password-protected, will be stored on a shared network drive.

Annex A

Type of Return	Return Specifics	Submission Month	Lead	Verification	Internal Sign-off
HESA	Institution Profile	June	Jon Wardle, Director of Curriculum and Registrar	Nik Powell, Director	Nik Powell, Director
	Student record	September	Katarina Kakpa, Registry Administrator	Nicola Cowee, PA to Directors Office	Jon Wardle, Director of Curriculum and Registrar
	Staff Record	September	Debi Havill, Personnel Officer	Jon Wardle, Director of Curriculum and Registrar	Nik Powell, Director
	Destinations of leavers from Higher Education (DLHE)	March	Katarina Kakpa, Registry Administrator	Jon Wardle, Director of Curriculum and Registrar	Nik Powell, Director
	Estates	February	Zlata Hume, Studio Manager	Jon Houchin, Head of Engineering	Jon Wardle, Director of Curriculum and Registrar
	Finance	December	Alex Gurney, Finance Manager	Phil Doggett, Interim Finance Director	Nik Powell, Director
	HE-BCI	December	Alex Gurney,	Jon Wardle,	Nik Powell,

			Finance Manager	Director of Curriculum and Registrar	Director
HESES	HESES	December	Nicola Cowee, PA to Directors Office	Katarina Kakpa, Registry Administrator	Jon Wardle, Director of Curriculum and Registrar