



SFC Guidance

Final Figures Return 2016-17

Issue date: 6 September 2017

Reference: SFC/GD/19/2017

Summary: These notes of guidance explain the information to be collected in the Final Figures Return 2016-17.

FAO: Principals and directors of Scotland's universities

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Final Figures 2016-17: Notes of Guidance

Introduction

1. These notes provide guidance on completing your institution's Final Figures return for 2016-17. The Final Figures Return collects information on all students eligible for funding and on rest of UK (RUK) students not eligible for funding in the controlled subject areas, and updated information on the use of additional funded places.

The Final Figures Return

2. The Final Figures Return contains a main table that collects information on enrolments of students eligible for funding by level of study, mode of study and subject areas and on enrolments of rest of UK students not eligible for funding in the non-controlled subject areas. This information will be used to monitor whether institutions have filled their allocations of funded places and adhered to the consolidation policies for controlled and non-controlled subject areas, and to inform any potential financial penalties if this has not been the case.
3. The Final Figures are also compared with the Early Statistics returns and institutions are asked to explain any material differences between corresponding figures in the two returns. This is to check that allocations of funding informed by information collected through the Early Statistics Return were based on accurate information. We may revise your allocation of teaching grant if the checks with the Early Statistics indicate errors in the Early Statistics that affected allocations of funding for 2017-18.
4. The Final Figures can also be compared with corresponding student numbers derived from the HESA student numbers as a further check on the information being provided in Early Statistics / Final Figures returns.
5. For the first time the Final Figures Return will also collect updated information on the use of additional funded places allocated for strategic priorities. SFC collects information on the use of additional funded places through the Early Statistics Return. The Final Figures Return asks institutions to update the information they previously provided where the original information has changed. This means that any discussions on revising future allocations of funded places and any potential financial penalties for not filling additional places can be informed by the final position for the session.

Workbook for making the Final Figures return

6. The workbook has ten worksheets, starting with a **Contents** worksheet that shows which tables an institution needs to complete. There is a worksheet for the main table (**T1 Final Figures 2016-17**) and another worksheet (**T2 Comments**) for institutions to provide explanations for any material differences between the Final Figures and Early Statistics returns.

7. There are separate worksheets to collect information on the use of the additional funded places for:
 - Widening access (worksheet **T3a Widening Access FPs**).
 - Articulation (**T3b Articulation FPs**).
 - Taught postgraduate skills (**T3c TPG FPs**).
 - Regional Coherence and provision at Crichton campus (**T3d Reg Coh, Crichton FPs**).
 - The European Social Fund's Developing Scotland's Workforce Programme (**T3e ESF DSW FPs**).
 - Taught postgraduate provision at Innovation Centres (**T3f Innovation Centre FPs**).
8. The final worksheet **Monitoring** shows the position of institutions in terms of filling their funded places and in adhering to the consolidation policies for the controlled and non-controlled subject areas.

Completing the Final Figures Return

Definitions

9. The Final Figures Return should be completed using the definitions and guidelines for eligibility for funding and the classifications used for the Early Statistics Return for 2016-17. These are set out in the [Notes of Guidance for the Early Statistics Return](#), which are available on the Council's website.
10. The Early Statistics Notes of Guidance provide definitions and guidelines for:
 - The eligibility for funding of students and courses.
 - Continuing rest of UK students.
 - The allocation of courses to levels of study, modes of study and subject areas.
 - The conversion factors to be used to derive FTEs.
 - The reporting on the use of the additional funded places.

Main table

11. The main table, table 1, of the Final Figures Return is in the worksheet **T1 Final Figures 2016-17**. This table collects information on enrolments of all students eligible for funding and of rest of UK students not eligible for funding in the controlled subject areas. The table has different coloured sections as follows:
 - The **blue** section collects the FTEs of students eligible for funding by subject area, level of study and mode of study, and the FTEs of RUK students not eligible for funding in the controlled subject areas.
 - The **blue** section also indicates when and why we consider there to be material differences between the Final Figures entries and the corresponding figures from your institution's 2016-17 Early Statistics return.

- The **yellow** section shows the FTEs from your institution's 2016-17 Early Statistics return.
 - The **tan** section shows the percentage differences between the Final Figures entries and the corresponding figures from your institution's 2016-17 Early Statistics return.
12. The white cells in columns (1) to (4) and (6) of the **blue** section are the cells in which you can enter data.
 13. Columns (1) and (2) relate to full-time and sandwich taught postgraduate and undergraduate students eligible for funding. Column (1) collects the FTE number of continuing RUK students, while column (2) collects the FTE number of other full-time and sandwich students eligible for funding.
 14. A continuing RUK student is classified as one whose place is supported through SFC's funding for teaching because he / she started on his / her course prior to 2012-13. However the student would not have been eligible for funding if he / she had started in or after 2012-13 because he / she would have been paying the deregulated tuition fees applicable to RUK students. Paragraphs 37 to 40 of the Notes of Guidance for the Early Statistics Return provide further information on continuing RUK students.
 15. Column (3) shows the total number of full-time and sandwich students eligible for funding. For taught postgraduate and undergraduate students column (3) sums the entries in columns (1) and (2). For research postgraduates the number of full-time students eligible for funding has to be entered. This is because the notion of being a continuing RUK student does not apply to RUK research postgraduates as the introduction of deregulated tuition fees did not affect the eligibility for funding status of these students.
 16. Column (4) collects the FTE numbers of part-time students eligible for funding.
 17. Column (5) shows the total FTE number of students eligible for funding, summing the numbers of full-time and sandwich, and part-time students in columns (3) and (4) respectively.
 18. Column (6) collects the FTE number of RUK students not eligible for funding in the controlled subject areas. This information is required in order to be able to monitor for breaches of consolidation in the controlled subject areas.

Automatic comparisons with Early Statistics

19. The entries for the Final Figures Return are automatically compared with the corresponding figures in the Early Statistics Return, and any material differences are flagged up. If the font in any entry cell is **red-bold** and a red-bold question mark **?** is next to the cell, this indicates what we regard as being a material difference. This should help you to detect any notable changes and / or errors at the input stage.

- 20. An automatic warning message of why any difference is considered material is shown in column (7) for full-time students eligible for funding, column (8) for part-time students eligible for funding and column (9) for RUK students not eligible for funding in the controlled subject areas.
- 21. There are two warning messages. The first warning indicates that one and only one of the Early Statistics and Final Figures entries is non-zero, with the non-zero value being at least 5 FTE. For RUK students not eligible for funding in the controlled subject areas the first warning is for only one of the entries to be non-zero.
- 22. The second warning indicates the difference between non-zero entries in both the Final Figures and Early Statistics is at least a certain magnitude, in both FTE and percentage terms. The magnitudes at which differences between the Final Figures and Early Statistics are considered material varies according to level of study and subject area, as follows:

Type of Student	Level of Difference
Research Postgraduates	Absolute difference in FTEs of at least 10 FTEs Absolute percentage difference of at least 10%
Taught Postgraduate and Undergraduates – Controlled Subject Areas	Absolute difference in FTEs of at least 10 FTEs Absolute percentage difference of at least 5%
Taught Postgraduate and Undergraduates – Non-controlled Subject Areas	Absolute difference in FTEs of at least 20 FTEs Absolute percentage difference of at least 5%
RUK students not eligible for funding in the controlled subject areas	Absolute difference in FTEs of at least 5 FTEs

Providing explanations for material differences with the Early Statistics

- 23. Table 2 in the worksheet **T2 Comments** is to be used to provide explanations for any material differences between the Final Figures and Early Statistics returns. This worksheet repeats the warning messages shown in in the main table. The explanation for the difference should be entered into the cell next to the one with a warning message. This cell will have a white background to allow your text to be displayed.
- 24. The columns with warning messages and those in which an explanation for the difference should be entered are arranged into three groups. The first group relates to full-time students eligible for funding, the second relates to part-time students eligible for funding, while the third relates to RUK students not eligible for funding in the controlled subject areas.

Updating information on the use of additional funded places

- 25. Tables 3a to 3e collect updated information on the use of the additional funded places for some of the strategic priorities. Paragraphs 100 to 124 of the Notes of

Guidance for the Early Statistics Return provide information on the criteria for reporting on the use of these additional funded places.

26. Tables 3a to 3e show the information that institutions provided in their Early Statistics returns on the use of these additional places. ***You only have to enter further information in these tables if the position has changed since the Early Statistics return.*** You do not have to enter exactly the same information again.
27. Students can only be counted in at most one of tables 3a to 3e.

Taught postgraduate students at Innovation Centres

28. Table 3f collects information on the numbers of taught postgraduate students eligible for funding at the Innovation Centres. For the Early Statistics Return the lead institutions for the Innovation Centres were required to report all of the taught postgraduate students at their Innovation Centre. Following feedback from institutions about the difficulty of reporting on students enrolled at other institutions this reporting condition no longer applies.
29. Institutions collaborating in an Innovation Centre can now agree amongst themselves which institution reports which students. Thus, for example, each of the collaborating institutions could report the students enrolled with them or, perhaps, the lead institution could continue to report all of the taught postgraduate students eligible for funding at their Innovation Centre. The institution reporting students in table 3f should also include the students in their taught postgraduate numbers in table 1.

Monitoring for under-enrolments and breaches of consolidation

30. The Final Figures will be used to inform any penalties for either under-enrolment against funded places or breaches of consolidation that are in excess of the tolerance thresholds. The tolerance thresholds for under-enrolments and breaches of consolidation are described in the [conditions of grant for 2016-17](#).
31. The worksheet ***Monitoring*** uses information from table 1 to show how an institution has done with regard to filling their funded places and adhering to the consolidation policies for the controlled and non-controlled subject areas. This worksheet indicates if an institution has exceeded any of the tolerance thresholds for under-enrolments and breaches of consolidation.

Return date

33. You must make your return by **Friday 6 October 2017** by e-mail to Michelle McNeill mmcneill@sfc.ac.uk

Further information

22. Please contact Michelle McNeill, Policy / Analysis Officer, Funding Policy, for further information tel: 0131 313 6662, email: mmcneill@sfc.ac.uk.