



Australian Government
Department of Education and Training

Redevelopment and Audit of the Higher Education Data Collection

Discussion Paper

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Introduction

Purpose of this paper

This paper opens consultation with the higher education sector to seek views on how the Department of Education and Training, and the Department of Human Services (DHS) can ensure relevant, high quality data is collected through the Higher Education Data Collection (the Collection), using best practice submission processes.

The aim is to:

- explore how reporting and accessing data can be made more efficient using the new, DHS-built government interface
- reduce the number of elements that have built up over time and subsequently reduce the burden of reporting for providers whilst not diminishing the value of the collection
- improve data quality through a simpler, more focused Collection.

Background

The Higher Education Data Collection is the definitive source of statistical data on higher education in Australia. The Collection directly supports around \$16 billion of funding to the sector and the transfer of around \$7 billion of student debt to the Australian Taxation Office each year. The data also inform policy development and analysis by government, providers and stakeholders, and support the management of programs funded under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*, most notably the Commonwealth Grant Scheme, research block grants and the Higher Education Loan Program (HELP).

Data are processed using the department's *Higher Education Provider Client Assistance Tool (HEPCAT)* and the *Higher Education Information Management System (HEIMS)*.

Anticipating change

Since the Collection was established in its current form in 1987, there have been major changes across the higher education sector which have impacted data requirements. The last significant audit of the Collection was in 2004, prior to the introduction of the *Our Universities: Backing Australia's Future* initiative.

Changes in data collection are largely driven by the continuing evolution of the higher education landscape and the emergence of new technologies that better enable a two-way exchange of data between providers and government.

In anticipation of ongoing change and to support continuous improvement, the department has partnered with the Department of Human Services to redevelop the existing submission technologies. The new system will focus on user-centred design to improve usability, reduce the cost of reporting and support more robust, timely data availability.

The system will also improve data sharing and interoperability between government agencies and the higher education sector to remove duplication including the discontinuation of DHS's Centrelink Academic Reassessment Tool (CART). Better information sharing will allow DHS to improve the experience for students receiving Youth Allowance and other support payments by reducing debts raised and improving payment accuracy.

The introduction of new efficient submission technologies presents the ideal opportunity to conduct this audit. A more efficient Collection, together with new submission technologies, will enable simpler and more flexible reporting processes that better support data exchange and availability.

The Challenges

The challenges for this redevelopment are discussed under five key sections, with questions for discussion included at the end of each section. In summary, the key challenges include:



Single touch reporting

The department's planned redevelopment of the current HEIMS submission methodology is focused on more efficient, fully automated technologies that will reduce data preparation and submission processes and better facilitate timely reporting.



Identifying students – adoption of the Unique Student Identifier

A unique identifier for all higher education students will enhance understanding of students' study patterns and behaviours, support more comprehensive analysis on higher education in Australia and enable more effective, targeted support for students.



Reducing duplication

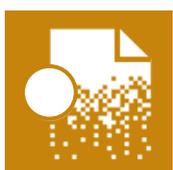
There is an opportunity to discontinue Centrelink Academic Reassessment Tool (CART) reporting by sharing HEIMS data. The Collection will need some modifications to ensure data are still available to administer student support payments.



Relevance – reducing the size of the Collection

The department is proposing to remove elements from the Collection that no longer meet the purpose for which they were originally designed or do not provide historical or statistical value.

Duplication of information also adds unnecessary clutter to the Collection. This paper proposes eliminating the need to report the same set of student data more than once during a student's course.



Low quality data

Low quality reporting impacts on the usability of the Collection and the robustness of statistical output because it creates unreliable and unrepresentative data. This paper invites discussion on how low quality data can be improved.

Supporting resources

The data element dictionary for the Collection is available on [HEIMSHelp](#). The Student data publications are accessible on the [department's website](#) and www.data.gov.au.

We invite your submissions

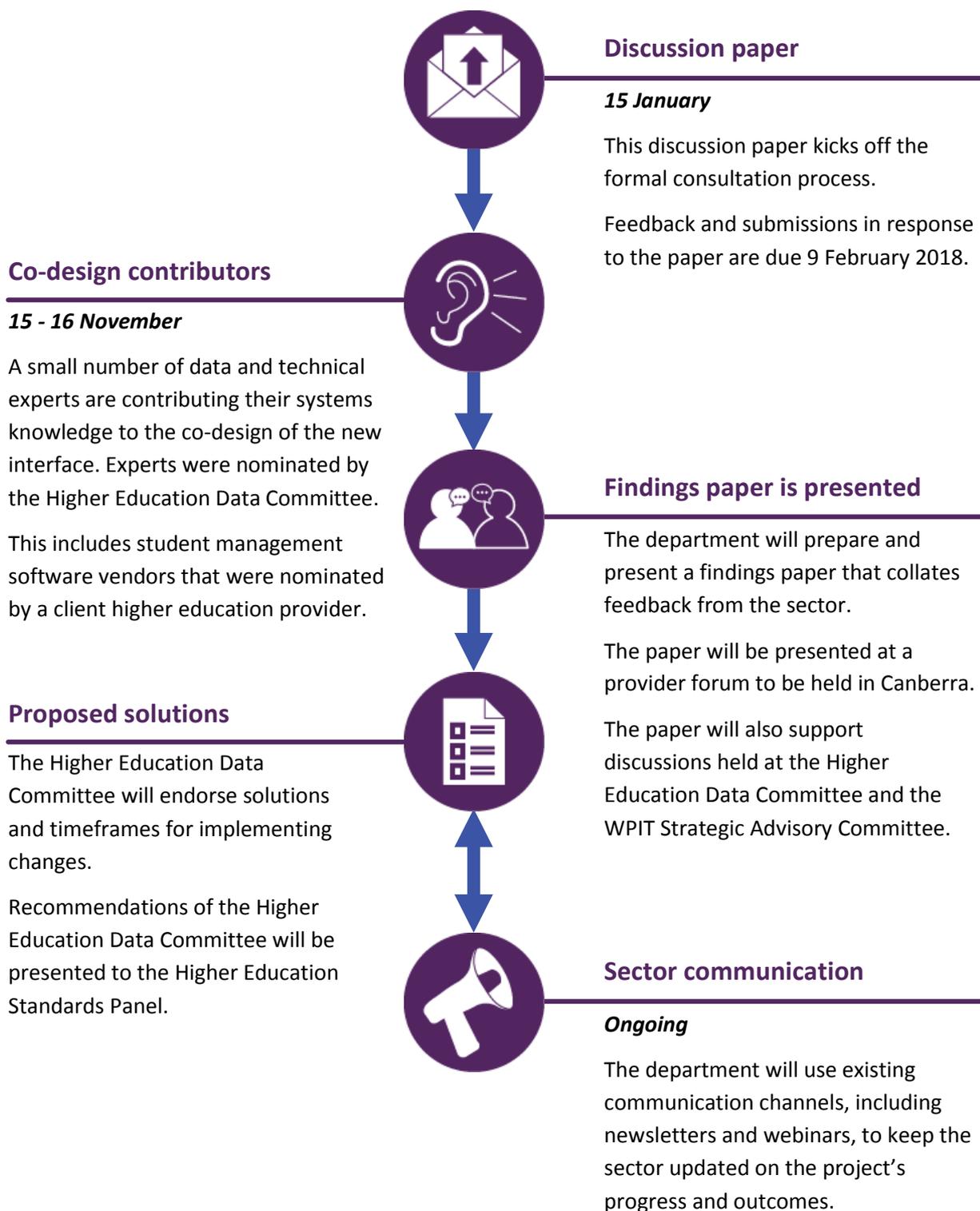
The discussion points presented Section 2 of this paper are a starting point to guide feedback and comment. You are encouraged to use the submission process to raise any other ideas that might help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Collection and support its redevelopment.

The department invites submissions from providers and key stakeholders in the higher education sector before the closing date on **9 February 2018**.

Further details on how to make a submission are at the [end of this paper](#)

Consultation

The department and DHS are committed to working with higher education stakeholders to continually improve the Collection and ensure robust data is produced. To be sure we get the best ideas, we have established a consultation process to drive improvements.





Section 2

The Details



1 Single touch reporting

1.1 Enter your data once

<i>The issue</i>	<p>Information is currently entered, manipulated and manually transferred multiple times before being made available to those that need it.</p> <p>This imposes a significant reporting burden on higher education providers and negatively impacts the timeliness of student debt transfers and the release of publications. Delayed publications make institutional benchmarking difficult and prevent students from accessing information to inform their study choices.</p> <p>Deadlines for manual submissions are also overly complex, with several different calendars covering higher education reporting. Submission deadlines often fall during periods of high administrative and compliance workloads for providers making it difficult to meet reporting obligations.</p>
<i>Proposal</i>	<p>New submission methodologies can enable student data to be entered once at the higher education provider.</p> <p>Those data can then be automatically validated to identify any errors that may have been made. Under a new system, reporting effort would be spent responding to the small number of errors rather than manipulating, interrogating and manually submitting large datasets at multiple points in time.</p>
<i>Potential benefits</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Reduced reporting burden for higher education providers and government.▪ Student data would be available up to 6 months earlier.▪ Earlier data availability creates opportunities to share information across the department and other agencies, in particular the Department of Human Services. This would facilitate improved delivery of study allowances while reducing duplication of information provided to different agencies.▪ Students will have access to more up-to-date HELP debt and entitlement information, better supporting the new method of reporting debt information to the ATO nightly, which was implemented in 2017.▪ Full year data would be available for end users at least 4 months earlier – around March instead of the end of June or later.

Question for discussion

1. How might we implement single touch reporting?



2 Identifying students

2.1 A comprehensive student identifier

<i>The issue</i>	There is no unique student identifier for all higher education students. Existing higher education identifiers do not integrate with those used by VET providers.
<i>Limitations of existing student identifiers</i>	<p>There are currently over 30 characters across three elements in the student submission that are used to uniquely identify a student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <i>E313 Student identification code</i>▪ <i>E416 Tax file number</i>▪ <i>E488 Commonwealth Higher Education Student Support Number (CHESSN)</i> <p>But there is no robust way to uniquely identify all higher education students.</p> <p>The student identification code is unique only to a provider and legislative requirements prohibit the use of the TFN for identification purposes.</p> <p>The CHESSN was introduced in 2005 to monitor students' use of Commonwealth assistance. However the CHESSN only applies to students receiving funding under HESA, most notably the Commonwealth Grant Scheme, Commonwealth scholarships, Research Training Program and the HELP program. It does not apply to all fee paying students, research students and overseas students.</p>
<i>Benefits of a unique identifier</i>	<p>The capability to identify all higher education students, both domestic and international, would provide an enhanced capacity to analyse students' study patterns and pathways, and more reliably measure attrition and completion rates.</p> <p>A single unique identifier applied to all students undertaking higher education with an Australian provider would provide a more comprehensive understanding of students' higher education experience and facilitate more effective, targeted student support by both government and providers.</p> <p>The new funding arrangements for research block grants also include a new focus on unique identifiers to follow research students through their studies.</p> <p>While there are inherent limitations in the current CHESSN allocation system, the Unique Student Identifier (USI) currently being implemented in the VET sector provides a viable model of a more robust identifier that could be allocated to all higher education students. Utilising an existing process would provide a cost effective way to implement a unique identifier across higher education and significantly reduce implementation timeframes.</p>
<i>Proposal</i>	<p>Replace the CHESSN with the USI, and extend the requirement to use this identifier to all higher education students.</p> <p>All privacy impacts would be managed according to the Australian Privacy Principles and guidance from the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner.</p>

Question for discussion

1. What is the most efficient way to identify higher education students throughout their study?



3 Reducing duplication

3.1 Discontinuing Department of Human Services reporting

<i>Opportunity</i>	<p>Most universities report weekly to the Department of Human Services to help maintain the integrity of student support payments such as Youth Allowance, Austudy and ABSTUDY. The content of these reports largely duplicate data already reported to HEIMS.</p> <p>Department of Human Services reporting can be discontinued if a number of minor modifications are made to the Collection as part of the proposed HEIMS Redevelopment and aligned with single touch reporting.</p>
<i>Modifications needed</i>	<p>Introducing single touch reporting will deliver the timely validated data needed by government to accurately determine and adjust student support payments.</p> <p>The changes required for the Department of Human Services are likely to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Date of events – the day certain events occur needs to be known so student support payments can be pro-rated. This ensures students are not underpaid or overpaid. New reporting is needed for withdrawal dates and more detail on course start dates (which are currently only reported with the month and year of commencement).• Course end date – student support payments cease once a student stops studying. The indicative course end date is used to support students that may need to transition into jobseeker payments.• Year based subject – most courses are delivered on a two or three semester basis. Where this is the case, student support payments can be monitored at key periods to identify students at risk of disengaging from full time study. Students studying year based subjects are likely to receive fewer prompts about their study intentions.• Student mobile number and email address
<i>Proposal</i>	<p>Investigate the most efficient way to incorporate requirements for the Department of Human Services into the Collection with a view to removing the separate reporting requirement.</p>

Question for discussion

2. What challenges could there be in meeting these reporting requirements and how might we overcome them?



4 Relevance

Reducing the size and complexity of the Collection

This section presents the case for removing around 30 elements from the current submissions that no longer add value to program management, statistics or data analysis. These elements can be found in the following submissions:

- Commonwealth Assisted Students (HELP Due)
- Campus
- Student Enrolment
- Student Load Liability (unit of study)
- Commonwealth Scholarships
- Past Course Completions

The tables below provide the rationale for reducing data in the following submissions.¹

4.1 Commonwealth assisted students submission (HELP Due)

<i>Elements proposed for removal</i>	<p>406 Postal address – Part 1</p> <p>407 Postal address – Part 2</p> <p>466 Postal address – Suburb/Town</p> <p>467 Postal address – State</p> <p>409 Postal address – Postcode</p> <p>468 Postal address – Country Name</p>	<p>314 Date of birth</p> <p>315 Gender code</p> <p>405 Student title</p>
<i>Purpose</i>	<p>This submission collects information required to submit HELP data to the ATO. It includes students' tax file numbers (TFN), names and addresses.</p> <p>Both postal and residential addresses are currently collected in this submission.</p>	
<i>What has changed?</i>	<p>With the introduction of the new nightly transfer of student HELP debts from July 2017, the ATO no longer require postal data. Students' notices of assessment are now provided online through myGov.</p> <p>The department does not use postal data. Date of birth and gender are also duplicated on the Student Enrolment file.</p>	
<i>Proposal</i>	<p>Reduce the data collected in this submission to just the minimum elements required by the ATO to verify a student's TFN.</p>	

¹ While this is discussed in the context of the current submission structures, the new submission technologies may generate more efficient ways of reporting these data.

4.2 Student Enrolment File

There are two enrolment elements proposed for removal from the Collection.

4.2.1 Research Training Scheme (RTS)

<i>Elements for removal</i>	460 Previous RTS EFTSL 465 Separation status of a student enrolled in a Higher Degree Research course
<i>Purpose</i>	These elements originally assisted in the administration of the RTS. <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Previous RTS EFTSL provided the total EFTSL consumed by an RTS student at a previous university▪ Separation status identified an RTS student who transferred between courses or to a higher or lower award at their provider.
<i>What has changed?</i>	Under new arrangements for the research block grants the RTS has been replaced by the Research Training Program (RTP). The eligibility requirements under the RTP have been streamlined and there is no longer a requirement for the department to monitor EFTSL consumed or when a research student transfers, upgrades or downgrades their course of study.
<i>Proposal</i>	Remove these superseded elements

4.2.2 Parental educational attainment

<i>Elements for removal</i>	573 Highest educational attainment of parent/guardian 1 574 Highest educational attainment of parent/guardian 2
<i>Purpose</i>	In 2010, the department introduced these elements to add rigour to the calculation of socio-economic status (SES). At the time the elements were a significant improvement over previous indicators which relied solely on students' postcodes.
<i>What has changed?</i>	A new SES indicator was determined in 2014 which is based on the Census of Population and Housing data and uses statistical areas each with between 200 and 800 individuals. As a result, parental educational attainment is no longer used in measuring students' SES. It is now calculated using the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA).
<i>Proposal</i>	Remove these superseded elements from the Student Enrolment file

4.3 Past Course Completions submission

<i>Elements for removal</i>	578 Completion percentage 579 Joint Degree Partner Higher Education Provider Code
<i>What are joint degrees?</i>	Joint degrees are higher education degrees, as described in the Australian Qualifications Framework, awarded through a partnership agreement between two or more providers approved under the <i>Higher Education Support Act 2003</i> .
<i>Purpose</i>	These elements were introduced in 2012/13 to enhance the calculation of the Research Block Grant allocations, recognising individual universities' contribution where there was joint provision of a higher degree by research.
<i>What has changed?</i>	In the three years since the elements were introduced: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No joint HDR awards have been reported and only a single university has reported data against these elements (for an undergraduate award). ▪ Providers have instead opted to report full completions for joint degrees on a rotating basis.
<i>Proposal</i>	Remove the elements from the collection.

4.4 Commonwealth Scholarships Submission

<i>Elements for removal</i>	488 Commonwealth Higher Education Student Support Number (CHESSN) 405, 406 & 402 Student title, given name and surname 406, 408, 568, 466, 467 & 468 Postal address elements
<i>Original purpose</i>	The Commonwealth Scholarships Program provides support to Indigenous higher education students to help meet general costs of study as well as costs where they may have to move from a rural or remote area in order to study.
<i>What has changed?</i>	Name and address details were added to the submission in 2010 to meet a new requirement to issue certificates to commencing scholarship holders. Because certificates were issued early in the year, the delay in receiving the name and address data in the student submission meant these elements were replicated in this submission, to be reported within two weeks of the census date. Certificates are no longer issued so name and postal details are now redundant.
<i>Proposal</i>	Delete these elements to provide a smaller, more targeted submission that is more appropriate to the new arrangements for indigenous support.

4.5 Commonwealth Scholarships Offers submission

<i>Elements for removal</i> <i>The whole submission</i>																									
<i>Original purpose</i>	<p>In 2010 new Centrelink Scholarships, the Student Start-up and Relocation Scholarship, were introduced. Students in receipt of Centrelink’s scholarships cannot also receive a Commonwealth Scholarship.</p> <p>To enable Centrelink to check which students have received a Commonwealth scholarship, providers are required to report details of their CS offers to HEIMS. These data are then transferred to Centrelink.</p>																								
<i>What has changed?</i>	<p>Universities must report their CS offers by 22 January for 1st semester and 15 June for 2nd semester. However, most universities have not finalised their offers that early in the semester. The table below shows the number of universities reporting Commonwealth scholarship offers by the required dates.</p> <p>Providers reporting offers for 1st semester:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>2011</th> <th>2012</th> <th>2013</th> <th>2014</th> <th>2015</th> <th>2016</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>0</td> <td>6</td> <td>7</td> <td>5</td> <td>8</td> <td>6</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Providers reporting offers for 2nd semester:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>2011</th> <th>2012</th> <th>2013</th> <th>2014</th> <th>2015</th> <th>2016</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>This provides only a subset of the information Centrelink actually requires to prevent the issuing of duplicate scholarships. Offers made after the deadline must then be reported directly to Centrelink.</p> <p>Providers are therefore forced to maintain both a manual process to report to Centrelink as well as a HEIMS data submission. Both methods still fall short of enabling Centrelink to identify all duplicate scholarships before allocation.</p>	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	0	6	7	5	8	6	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	1	2	1	0	1	0
2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016																				
0	6	7	5	8	6																				
2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016																				
1	2	1	0	1	0																				
<i>Proposal</i>	Remove this submission from the Collection, with providers only required to maintain one direct method for reporting Commonwealth scholarship offers.																								

4.6 Reducing duplication within the Collection

In addition to removing elements that are no longer required, this section argues that a more efficient Collection must also reduce the number of times the same information is collected during a student's course. As an example, student enrolment and name and address data are replicated each time a student's units of study are reported for their course.

<i>Issue</i> <i>Recurring duplication of enrolment and TFN data throughout a student's course</i>	
<i>Purpose</i>	The original submission process prior to the introduction of HEIMS saw load and enrolment data reported in two separate files each semester. Without a central repository of students' data, it was necessary to report the enrolment data with each set of load data, to match students' details and track their progress and outcomes.
<i>What has changed?</i>	Providers systems and the department's current data collection processes in HEIMS are structured to continue this original model and receive enrolment and name and address data with every submission of unit of study data. However the capability exists to collect and store students' enrolment and name and address details on their first submission, and to match new units of study without the need for resubmission during the student's course.
<i>Proposal</i>	Restructure existing submissions to collect enrolment and name and address data once only at the commencement of a student's course and provide a simple mechanism to update details as/if required. Unit of study (load) data would then be reported independently as required for the duration of the student's course.

Questions for discussion

3. Do you see value in retaining any of the elements discussed above?
4. Are there other elements that no longer serve a purpose and so should be removed from the Collection?
5. Should the scope of the Collection be expanded to better identify Work Integrated Learning (WIL) in higher education?
6. What opportunities do you see for reducing the duplication of data across submissions?



5 Low quality data

Some data collected through the Higher Education Student Data Collection are of limited use because of poor reporting practices and/or misinterpretation of what is required.

The following section discusses elements the department is proposing to modify to improve the usability of the data collected.

5.1 Overseas student fees

<i>Impacted element</i>	500 Overseas student fee for students subject to minimum indicative fee
<i>Purpose</i>	<p>This element provides the total cost of a course for a year for an overseas student.</p> <p>The data is used for statistical and compliance purposes.</p>
<i>The Challenge</i>	<p>Reported data provides incomplete information on fees charged to overseas students. This leads to major inconsistencies in the data and reduced reliability when using the data for compliance and statistical analysis.</p> <p>Key issues include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ around 30% of overseas students who are subject to minimum fee guidelines are reported with tuition fees of \$0. This is generally the result of not reporting fees for students studying through third party arrangements▪ data reported against this element are cumulative throughout the year – incorrect reporting leads to the aggregated fee at the end of the year being a multiple of the fee actually charged▪ the total fee for a course that is longer than one year (e.g. 18 months) or where the course starts midway through one year and continues into the next year, is reported against a single year. No fee is reported for the subsequent year.
<i>Proposal</i>	Report the total tuition fee for an overseas student once only, on commencement of the student's course. This would include a fee for all overseas students who are subject to the minimum indicative fees and the course is delivered by a third party.
<i>Potential benefits</i>	This would improve data quality and is consistent with the information collected in PRISMS and required for a student visa.
<i>Alternative approach</i>	The department is exploring the potential of linking with PRISMS data to obtain this information. In this case the requirement to report overseas student fees to HEIMS could be removed, with the data sourced directly from PRISMS.

5.2 Misreporting “no information” location codes

<i>Impacted elements</i>	319 Location code of term residence 320 Location code of permanent home residence 477 Postcode or overseas country code location of campus/delivery location
<i>Issue</i>	No information codes should only be reported in circumstances where it has not been possible to obtain the actual information from the student. There should only be a very limited number of circumstances when the ‘No information’ (e.g., 99999, 9 or 0000) code is submitted.
<i>The Challenge</i>	Submitted data for elements 319, 320 and 477 are frequently inadequate for analysis purposes when drilling into specific data sets such as regional or remote locations or indigenous or equity students. Analysis of the data suggests that providers are not capturing this information for all students or are simply using “no information” codes as default values.
<i>Proposal</i>	Remove the “no information” codes from the three elements so that only a valid postcode can be reported for each location element.

5.3 Course and campus names

<i>Impacted elements</i>	308 Course name – full 525 Campus location
<i>Purpose</i>	E307 collects the name of a course. This is to be a meaningful name assigned by the provider, with a maximum limit of 72 characters. E525 requires a campus name that is meaningful to the location of the campus.
<i>The challenges</i>	Course names are reported with significant abbreviations, extensions and inconsistencies that reduce the usability of the data and minimise opportunities to share the data for other purposes. This compromises the principle of collect once and use many times and means the same data is compiled several times across an organisation for different uses. Around 63% of course names in the Collection are truncated or abbreviated, with many names being difficult to recognise. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MInfoTechn&CommMgt is not easily interpreted as Masters of Information Technology and Communications Management; nor ▪ BOccHlth&SafeSc as Bachelor of Occupational Health and Safety Science. There are also significant discrepancies between the campus names providers enter on their campus submission and the campus names that appear on providers’ websites. More consistent reporting of course and campus names would facilitate some reduction in the reporting burden for providers.
<i>Proposal</i>	Develop clearly articulated, agreed standards for reporting of course and campus names and provide more comprehensive explanatory information. This would enable organisations to use one set of course data for more than one purpose, including the provision of course data to other organisations such as Tertiary Admission Centres or the Australian Course Information Registry.

5.4 Credit transfer arrangements

<i>Impacted element</i>	<p>560 Credit used value</p> <p>561 Details of prior study for which credit/RPL was offered</p> <p>562 Field of education of prior VET study for which credit/RPL was offered</p> <p>563 Level of education of prior VET study for which credit/RPL was offered</p> <p>564 Type of provider where VET study was undertaken</p> <p>565 Credit offered value</p> <p>566 Credit/status Higher Education provider code</p>
<i>Purpose</i>	<p>The former Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) endorsed a number of initiatives to strengthen credit transfer and articulation from vocational education and training and higher education.</p> <p>That initiative led to the introduction of these elements in order to measure and assess credit transfer patterns.</p>
<i>What has changed</i>	<p>The elements are complex to report and not well understood by providers or well-structured in HEIMS. For some of these elements there is less than 50% response rate. This lack of consistency reduces the reliability of the data.</p>
<i>Proposal</i>	<p>Review the elements to ensure they are fit-for-purpose and can be interpreted consistently by all providers.</p> <p>Part of that review could also consider if an integrated VET / Higher education unique student identifier would be capable of observing students' pathways to higher education.</p>

5.5 Highest Participation prior to commencement

<i>Impacted element</i>	493 Highest educational participation prior to commencement
<i>Purpose</i>	<p>Highest educational attainment was updated to collect data on highest educational participation, following the introduction of the credit transfer arrangements in 2008.</p>
<i>The Challenges</i>	<p>Data is reported inconsistently across the sector, with many providers focussing on attainment rather than participation.</p> <p>There is also a lack of clarity about the hierarchy of the awards. As an example, a student who has previously completed a Bachelor degree and also participated in, but not completed, a Masters degree would be coded as having 'An incomplete Higher education course'. There would be no indication in the data that the student has successfully completed an award course.</p> <p>The usability and reliability of these data is diminished by this ambiguity.</p>
<i>Proposal</i>	<p>Review the codes and coding notes for this element to clarify how participation should be reported.</p>

5.6 Campus submission

<i>Elements proposed for revision</i>	<p>497 Entry Cut-off for a Commonwealth Supported place 498 Entry Cut-off for a domestic fee paying place 523 QLD Entry Cut-off for a Commonwealth Supported place 524 QLD Entry Cut-off for a domestic fee paying place 537 Additional entrance criteria 552 Eligibility Score 555 QLD Eligibility Score 556 Offer Year 580 Areas of study 581 Course search keywords</p>
<i>Purpose</i>	<p>The campus submission was introduced in 2005. It collects data on the campuses and courses of Australian higher education providers.</p> <p>These elements originally supported the department’s GoingToUni website, and its replacement <i>MyUniversity</i>, which aimed to provide students with information about higher education courses, their costs and the campuses at which they were offered.</p>
<i>What has changed?</i>	<p><i>MyUniversity</i> was decommissioned in 2015. As a result, these entrance criteria data are no longer displayed by the department in a public forum to help inform students’ study choices.</p> <p>The limited scope of these elements provides incomplete information around entrance requirements.</p> <p>Course keywords and areas of study are no longer required to drive the <i>MyUniversity</i> search functions. The data is also duplicated in course information provided to the Tertiary Admissions Centres and the Australian Course Information Register.</p>
<i>Proposal</i>	<p>Revisit what information is most appropriate to collect in relation to campuses and how best to collect it.</p> <p>The department is currently undertaking a discovery project to determine the scope of the Higher Education Admissions Information Platform. The Platform is a recommendation of the HESP’s report into admissions transparency and will ensure information is centrally located and comparable for students.</p>

5.7 Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR)

<i>Impacted element</i>	369 Tertiary Entrance Score
<i>Purpose</i>	This element provides the ATAR obtained by a student commencing an undergraduate award course.
<i>What has changed</i>	<p>Inconsistency in the reporting of ATARs has resulted in data that are unreliable and of limited value for drawing comparisons or analysing data over time.</p> <p>This is due to the different interpretations of the ATAR by providers when submitting their data. Some providers have reported unadjusted (raw) ATARs while others have included bonus points in the reported score.</p> <p>The department's analysis indicates that only 31 per cent of commencements are based on the ATAR, with potentially as many as 40 per cent of those students receiving bonus points to meet entry requirements.</p> <p>While this element still provides a mechanism for assessing school leavers, the lack of clarity around what it represents diminishes confidence in its use.</p>
<i>Proposal</i>	<p>Report only raw ATARs for all commencing students under Element 369 in the student submission.</p> <p>Consider whether new elements should be introduced to allow bonus points to be reported, potentially including the reasons for allocating the points.</p> <p>Note that a separate implementation working group will progress the Higher Education Standards Panel's recommendations included in its report: Improving the Transparency of Higher Education Admissions.</p>

Questions for discussion

7. How can data quality be improved for these elements?
8. Is there value in maintaining the ATAR in the Applications and Offers submissions when it is also collected in the student enrolment data?
9. Are there other elements where a lack of clarity impacts on data quality and usability?

How to make a Submission

Your submission should clearly state:

- The name of the organisation or individual making the submission (if an organisation, please provide details of a contact person)
- your contact details, including at a minimum an:
 - address
 - email
 - telephone number

Addresses for your submission

Submissions and other enquiries can be emailed to:

HEIMS.datacollections@education.gov.au

or posted to:

HEIMS Data Collections

Economic and Market Analysis Branch

Department of Education and Training

GPO Box

Canberra ACT 2601

Confidentiality

The Department will not accept submissions that are provided on a wholly confidential basis. If you consider that information in your submission should be treated as confidential, please provide this information as a separate attachment and clearly indicate this in your submission.



Any questions?

If you have any queries about the content of this discussion paper or the consultation process, please get in touch with us via any of the contact details on [HEIMSHelp](#).