

Introduction to HESA

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Head of Business Development

Our Mission

To support the advancement of UK higher education by collecting, analysing and disseminating accurate and comprehensive statistical information in response to the needs of all those with an interest in its characteristics and a stake in its future.

Our Vision

The general public, students, universities and colleges, government organisations, funding agencies, politicians and policy makers will have easy access via HESA to a comprehensive body of reliable statistical information and analysis about UK higher education. This resource will be maintained and developed to the highest standards and will be acknowledged in the UK and overseas as authoritative, useful and cost effective.

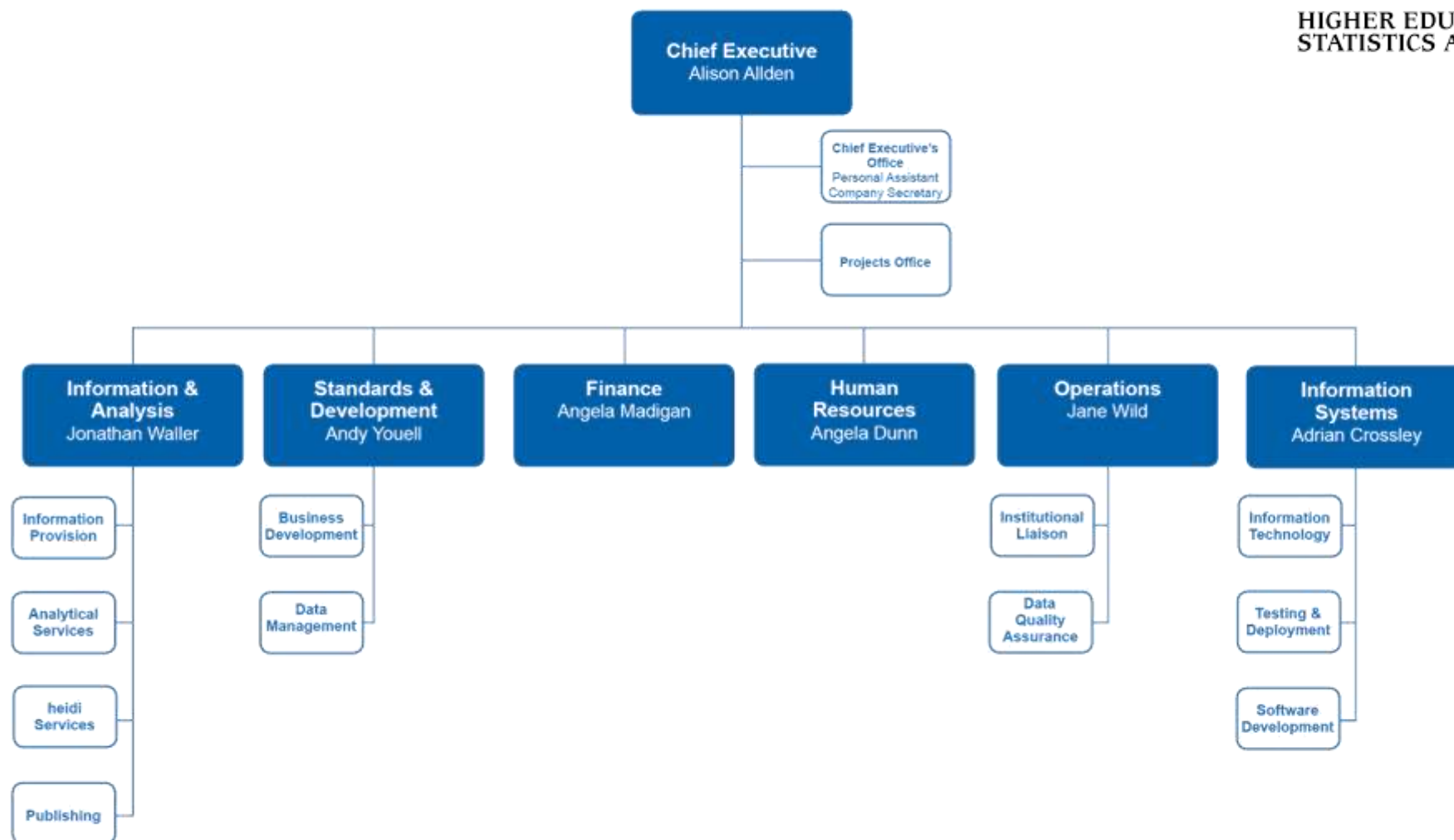
Governance

- HESA is a Company Limited by Guarantee
- Whose Members are Universities UK and Guild HE, who appoint the Board
- HESA is a **sector-owned** agency
- Whose relationship to government departments and funding bodies (whom we call **Statutory Customers**) is governed by formal agreements or contracts

Management

- 75 staff (head count)
 - Chief Executive Alison Allden
 - Plus six Heads of Units: Information & Analysis, Standards & Development, Finance, HR, Operations and Information Systems
 - Predominantly highly-skilled and specialist staff
- Budget £4.7 million for 2010/11
 - HEI core subscriptions £2.9 million
 - heidi subscriptions £0.29 million
 - Contract funding £0.22 million
 - Commercial and other income £1.3 million
- Located at 95 Promenade, Cheltenham, GL50 1HZ

Higher Education Statistics Agency Organisation Chart



Why do we exist?

- Established following Further & Higher Education Act 1992
- To be the central data collection and provision agency for UK higher education
- Taking over from Universities Statistical Record and PCFC data collections (and five more!)
- And making first data collections for 1994/95

Models for how we operate

- Model 1: HESA acts on behalf of the sector to enable it to meet the statutory data requirements of funding bodies and government departments
- Model 2: HESA exercises statutory powers of data collection from HEIs on behalf of its Statutory Customers
- Both models are valid

Why do we collect data?

- Because a Statutory Customer states a requirement for it - and nowadays has to be prepared to defend that requirement on the basis of actual usage
- Or because the HE sector needs the data for its own purposes
- But **not** at the behest of anyone else
- And **not** on the off-chance that it might be useful

Who are our customers?

- Statutory Customers: government departments and funding bodies in England and the devolved administrations
 - BIS, HEFCE, DCSF, SG, SFC, WAG, HEFCW, DEL[NI], RCs, TDA, GTCE, GSCC
 - SFA and ONS possible future additions
 - governed by contracts and MoUs
- The HE sector in the UK
 - 165 institutions; representative and sector bodies
- The public interest in HE
 - students, employers, trades unions, academic researchers, the media, ...

External networks

HESA MIND MAP

What do we do?

- Annual data collections from institutions
 - Operational documentation
 - Training and helpdesk
- Creation of data bases from collections
- Supply of data to Statutory Customers
- Regular electronic publications, some NS output
- Information provision service
- Higher Education Information Database for Institutions (heidi)
- DLHE web-based collection service

What data do we collect 1?

- Higher Education **Student** Record (annual, retrospective, individual level statistical collection, mandatory full coverage)
- Higher Education Aggregate **Offshore** Record (annual, retrospective, aggregate level statistical collection, mandatory full coverage) – broad brush data on offshore provision
- Higher Education **Initial Teacher Training** Record (annual, in-year, individual level administrative collection, mandatory full coverage) – meets statutory requirements for Provisional Registration of ITT students with the GTCE and TDA Trainee Numbers Census
- **Destinations of Leavers** from Higher Education, **Early** Survey (annual in two tranches, retrospective, individual level statistical collection, full-coverage survey)
- **Destinations of Leavers** from Higher Education, **Longitudinal** Survey (alternate-year, retrospective, individual level statistical collection, sample survey)

What data do we collect 2?

- Higher Education **Campus** Record (annual, institutional level collection)
- Higher Education **Finance** Statistics Record with Higher Education Business and Community Interaction Survey (annual, institutional level collection)
- Higher Education **Staff** Record (annual, retrospective, individual level statistical collection, mandatory full coverage)
- Higher Education **Estates Management** Statistics Record (annual, institutional level collection, number of mandatory items in England, Wales & Northern Ireland, otherwise optional)

The quality agenda

- Making it all work
- Data that is fit for purpose
 - targeted quality improvement (e.g. student mobility data)
 - year-on-year linkage between collections
- Maintaining standards
 - ISO9001 Quality Management Standard
 - ISO27001 Information Security Standard
- Exploiting emerging technology

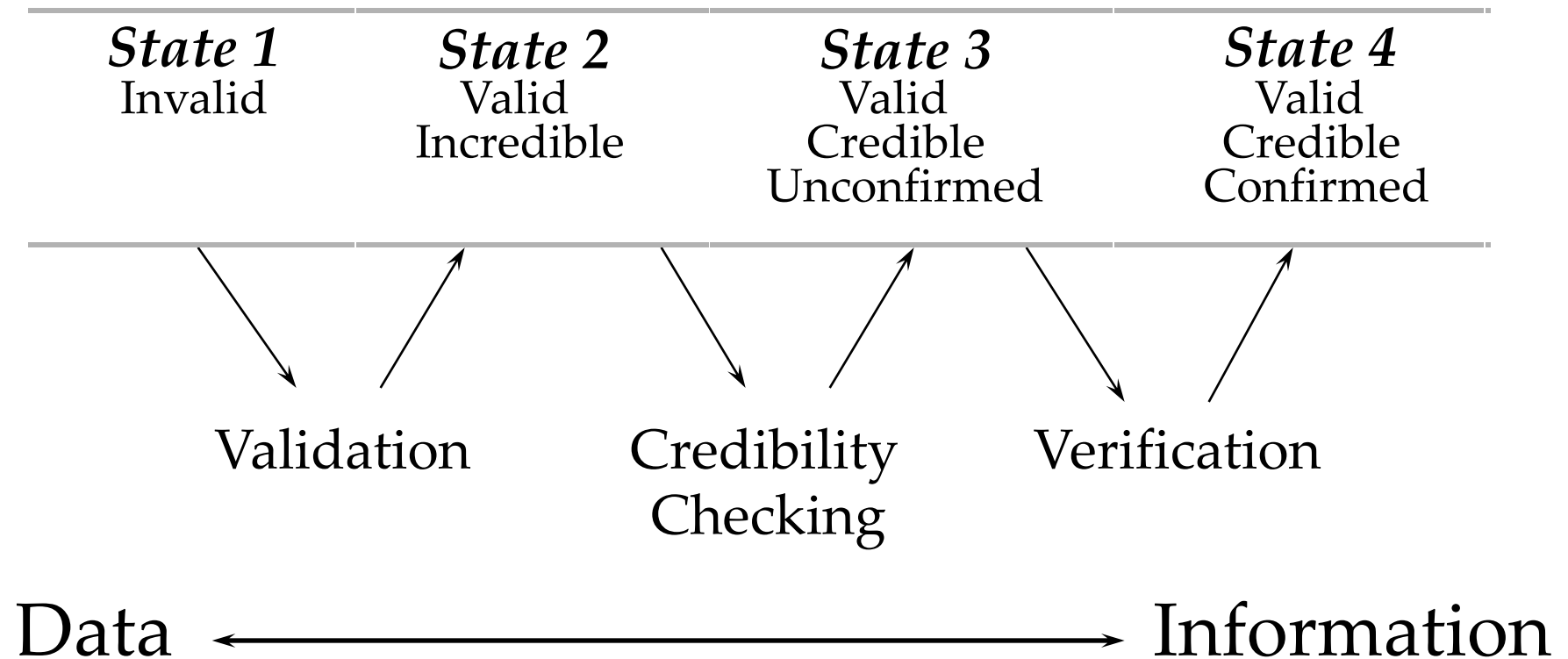
How do we do it?

- All data collections web-based since 1999
- Aardvark data collection software developed by HESA
- Data bases run under Oracle 10g
- On Intel (PC) servers running Linux
- Paper and electronic publications produced in-house, only actual printing and CD duplicating outsourced

Data Quality Assurance

- Our aim is "Fit for purpose"
- HESA can only identify errors
- Institutions can identify and correct errors
- Trap errors as early as possible
- Feed information back in a useful form (to record contacts)
- Process is based on the HESA Quality Model

HESA Data Quality Model



Change management 1

Why do we make changes?

- Changing Statutory Customer needs arising from new legislation, policy developments, funding model changes ... and so on
- Changing Higher Education sector needs
- Improving data quality – *fitness-for-purpose* criterion, but it is a moving target
- Reducing accountability burden – long-term gain *versus* cost of change

Change management 2

How do we make changes?

Structured change at intervals through record review

- Shopping list (think tank meeting)
- Review group: SCs, sector representatives, interested parties/experts
- Formulate proposals
- Consultation(s) with sector and external bodies
- Finalise recommendations
- HESA Board approval
- Write specification
- One-year lead time

... but annual incremental change is inevitable too

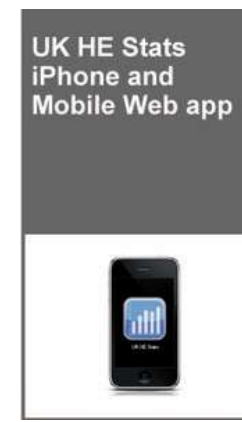
Current activity

- Data collection
 - Annual cycle of dataset compilation; e.g. 8 data collections for 2009/10
- Record review/implementation
 - Estates Management Statistics 2009/10 and review for 2012/13
 - Longitudinal DLHE survey in 2010/11 (of 2006/07 leavers)
 - Destination of Leavers from HE 2011/12
 - Staff Record 2012/13
 - Student Record 2013/14
- Training
 - Supporting institutions with respect to staff/record changes etc.
 - Introductory and Intermediate Seminars; central and regional locations, also single specialist events and heidi training
 - Institutional visits; to HESA, by HESA

Publications

HESA

HIGHER EDUCATION
STATISTICS AGENCY



Other publications

- Statistical First Releases (SFR) – National Statistics products
- Performance Indicators

Ad-hoc Information Provision Service

- Complements the range of publications
- Customised extracts of data to meet specialised requirements
- Receive around 1200 enquiries annually
- Data supplied under contract
- Charging policy – charge for staff time not data
- Some ‘high-profile’ data requests

heidi

- Higher Education Information Database for Institutions
- Web-based management information tool
- Launched in April 2007
- HESA data plus external sources, e.g. UCAS, Unistats, RAE, Funders Forum Metrics, TDA
- Funded by subscription (86% of HEIs subscribed)
- Annual development cycle driven by user requirements (version 4.0 released on 7 March 2011)
- Further details at www.heidi.ac.uk – free trials available on request

Current agendas

- Minimising the accountability burden
- Transparency
 - Public information
 - Equal opportunities and widening participation
 - Calculation and publication of HE Performance Indicators
- Working with data protection
- Supporting quality assurance (the KIS)
- Developing and maintaining heidi
- ...but the data quality agenda is still central