

HEFCE 01/61

Respond by 12 December 2001

October

Request

Research Activity Survey 2001

Research Activity Survey 2001

To	Heads of HEFCE-funded higher education institutions Heads of universities in Northern Ireland
Of interest to those responsible for	Research funding, Finance, Data collection
Reference	01/61
Publication date	October 2001
Enquiries to	Hannah Wood tel 0117 931 7395 e-mail ras@hefce.ac.uk

Executive summary

Purpose

1. This document asks higher education institutions (HEIs) to update information on their research activity.

Key points

2. The data will inform our distribution of research funds for the academic year 2002-03.
3. All HEIs that made submissions to the 2001 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) should complete this survey. Disks will be dispatched to institutions in November 2001.
4. For this survey, data will not be collected for research assistants and research fellows, as these will be taken from submissions to the 2001 RAE.

Action required

5. Responses should be sent to the HEFCE, to arrive no later than **12 December 2001**.

Background

6. The 2001 Research Activity Survey asks institutions to update data from the 2000 survey on research students and income from charities. These data will inform quality-related (QR) research funding.
7. Data on research-active staff, research fellows and research assistants will be taken from the submissions to the 2001 RAE.
8. The survey also asks institutions to update data from the 2000 survey on fundable research students who are eligible to pay home and EC fees. We need these data in order to distribute funds for the tuition and supervision of research students, which were transferred from the teaching model to the research model for 1998-99 onwards. This information is required following a recommendation from the Harris report on the review of postgraduate education. Our formal response to this report is outlined in HEFCE 12/97.

Quality-related research funding

9. This survey should be completed by HEIs that made submissions to the 2001 RAE. It asks for the following data by unit of assessment:
 - a. For students eligible to pay home and EC and overseas fees (including students domiciled in the Channel Islands and Isle of Man), we ask for the following data, shown separately according to the year of their programme and unit of assessment:
 - i. The headcount of students on research-based higher degrees for whom the year of programme of study falling on 1 December 2001 is full-time.
 - ii. The headcount and full-time equivalent (FTE) number of students on research-based higher degrees for whom the year of programme of study falling on 1 December 2001 is part-time.
 - b. For students eligible to pay home and EC fees (see Annex A, paragraph 18), we ask for the following data, shown separately according to the year of their programme and unit of assessment:
 - i. The headcount of students on research-based higher degrees for whom the year of programme of study falling on 1 December 2001 is full-time.
 - ii. The headcount and FTE of students on research-based higher degrees for whom the year of programme of study falling on 1 December 2001 is part-time.
 - c. Income from research grants and contracts from UK-based charities during the financial year 2000-01.
10. This year's survey allows institutions to make separate returns for each multiple submission made to a unit of assessment in the 2001 RAE. If making separate returns for multiple submissions is not practical, areas on the return can be made available to submit totals for the unit of assessment. To do so, the institution should contact us to obtain the password to unlock these rows for editing.

11. If a department was not submitted to the 2001 RAE, the data should be returned to the unit of assessment that is closest in academic content. We will be using all the information, irrespective of rating, to cross-check institutions' data against other data sources such as the Higher Education Students Early Statistics (HESES) survey.

12. Please complete this section using the disk-based templates, which will be issued by mid-November to the nominated contact person at each institution. The following annexes should be used as a guide for completing section 1:

Annex A: Notes on research students

Annex B: Notes on income from charities

Annex C: Printouts of forms R1a, R1b, R2a, R2b and R3

Annex D: Instructions for completing the disk.

Outline timetable and process for the 2002-03 funding round

13. Institutions are required to return their Research Activity Survey by 12 December 2001, both on disk and in hard copy. Once we receive the data, we carry out a number of validation and credibility checks. During December we will write to institutions, enclosing a printout of their Research Activity data and comparison tables generated from them. Institutions will be asked to:

- verify that the data are an accurate record of what was submitted, or make corrections
- answer any questions we may have on the data.

14. By mid-January 2002, all institutions must have signed off their Research Activity data as being a correct submission. (Please note, this is not an opportunity for institutions to update their data.) The timetable for this is tight: if corrections to data are made, we then reissue the data for re-verification by institutions. We will expect responses to questions about data within six working days.

15. We will announce provisional allocations of recurrent grant for 2002-03 in March 2002.

Authorisation of the Research Activity Survey return

16. We will require the vice-chancellor/principal or their most appropriate deputy to sign off the return on the institution's behalf. This person should be different from, and preferably senior to, the person preparing the return. The independent reviewer should broadly assess the return for reasonableness before signing off the return. This requires the reviewer to have an understanding of our data collection requirements, to ensure that the institution has systems capable of producing an accurate and complete return, and to ensure that the person preparing the return has compiled it competently.

Responses

17. All responses should be sent to the address below, to arrive no later than 12 December 2001. Returns on disk as well as a hard copy are required.

Research Activity Survey
Analytical Services Group
HEFCE
Northavon House
Coldharbour Lane
BRISTOL
BS16 1QD

Returns may be made by e-mail to ras@hefce.ac.uk, but a hard copy should still be sent to the above address.

18. Further education colleges should not respond to this survey.

Annex A

Notes on research students

1. All students included in this survey should be postgraduate students registered at the reporting institution for a research-based higher degree. The students should be actively supervised by an academic member of staff employed by a higher education institution in England. Students who spend the whole of their programme of study outside the UK should not be included in this survey, except where they satisfy the criteria in paragraph 19d. The criteria for data in forms R1a and R1b are the same as in the 2000 Research Activity Survey (see paragraphs 2 to 5 below). This is also true of the criteria for data in forms R2a and R2b, which will be used to allocate funds for the tuition and supervision of postgraduate research students.

2. The data returned on forms R1a and R2a should be headcounts of students for whom the year of programme of study falling on 1 December 2001 is full-time. Data returned on forms R1b and R2b should be headcounts and FTEs of students for whom the year of programme of study falling on 1 December 2001 is part-time. FTE should normally be expressed to two decimal places.

3. In some cases a student may not study for a full year in their final year of programme of study (for example, the second year of programme of a 15-month MPhil programme). Here the student should be recorded as part-time in their final year, with an FTE reflecting the proportion of a full year for which they have studied. This should be recorded even if the student is not actively pursuing studies on 1 December in their final year.

4. The year of programme of study is used in the distribution of funds for research, and care needs to be taken when there is a change in a student's mode of study. Full-time students whose final year is to be recorded as part-time (see paragraph 3 above) should be returned in their final year under the appropriate year of programme in the part-time table. In assigning the year of programme, it is necessary to convert the full-time years already completed by the student into part-time years, following the guidance in paragraph 17.

Example

5. A student started a full-time 15-month MPhil in September 2000. This student would have been returned to the 2000 Research Activity Survey as one headcount full-time student on 1 December 2000. The student should be returned to the 2001 survey (even though they will not be studying on 1 December 2001) as one headcount part-time student with 0.25 FTE under year of programme three, their first year of full-time study having been converted into two years of part-time study.

Definition of registration

6. For this survey, registration is defined as a binding undertaking by a student to pay a fee for tuition, or supervision of research, for a programme of study. If in exceptional circumstances the fee has been waived, the student will be regarded as registered. A student is assumed to register with the reporting institution annually on the anniversary of the initial registration. The simple acceptance of a place does not qualify a student to be counted in this survey.

7. Where a student has been registered at one institution and taught under a franchising arrangement at another institution, only the registering institution should return the student to this survey. A student can only be registered at one institution for any individual qualification. A student on a programme of study run jointly by more than one institution, and not the subject of a franchising arrangement, should be returned only by the institution which receives the fee.

Definition of year of programme of study

8. A student's first year of programme of study starts when they first begin studying towards the qualification. Subsequent years of programme of study start on or near the anniversary of this date.

Definition of full-time equivalence

9. For the purpose of this survey, a student's FTE refers to the amount of study undertaken in the year of programme of study compared to a full-time student with the same qualification aim studying for a full year. A student is said to be full-time if they are normally required to attend the institution, or elsewhere, for periods amounting to at least 24 weeks within the year of programme of study; and during that time are normally expected to undertake periods of study which amount to an average of at least 21 hours per week.

Research-based higher degrees

10. In accord with normal practice in the English higher education sector, a higher degree by research should be one awarded primarily on the basis of a substantial thesis (or equivalent) submitted by the student and resulting from the student's original research. Regulations on the appointment of examiners for the degree should stipulate that the student's work is examined by at least two examiners, individually appointed for the student, one of whom is an external examiner. An exception may be allowed for departments which were highly rated in the 1996 RAE, where it may be that the two best-qualified examiners are both internal.

11. Students who have completed their research work and are writing up their thesis (or equivalent) should be excluded. Students registered for research qualifications awarded primarily on the basis of published works should also be excluded, unless they are undertaking a significant amount of research at the institution.

12. Some specialist doctoral degrees, such as the Doctor of Education (EdD) and the Doctor of Clinical Psychology (DClinPsychol), typically include significant taught components and supervised practice, as well as requiring the student to produce a dissertation or thesis. These degrees do not generally require the student to produce the same amount of original research as a PhD. Students registered for a specialist doctoral degree should only be included in this survey if the degree satisfies the criteria in paragraph 10.

13. Students employed by outside research organisations, and based outside the department for most of their study, can be included if they satisfy the criteria in paragraphs 1 to 12.

14. Students who are supervised across more than one unit of assessment should be returned split according to the agreed division of supervision. Figures can be returned to two decimal places.

15. Academic staff who are also registered for a research-based higher degree at the same institution can be returned to this survey as research students, provided that the sum of the individual's staff FTE and student FTE does not exceed 1 on the staff census date of 31 July 2001.

16. In distributing funds for research in 2002-03, we intend to use a weighted student number count as shown in Table 1. The year of programme is defined in the 2000-01 HESA Student Record Coding Manual (Field 72) and indicates the year of the programme that the student is currently studying.

Table 1

Year of programme	01	02	03	04	05	06	07+
Weight applied to headcount of full-time students	0	1.75	1.75	0	0	0	0
Weight applied to FTE of part-time students	0	0	1.75	1.75	1.75	1.75	0

17. There may be cases where research students change their mode of study from full-time to part-time. For simplicity, in such cases, each year of full-time study should be treated as two years of part-time study in this survey. For example, a student who has completed three years of full-time study and is then taken on as a part-time student until the programme of study is completed, should be shown as a seventh year part-time student during their first year of part-time study, and as an eighth year student for the second year of part-time study, and so on.

18. To distribute the funds for the tuition and supervision of research students, we will be using home and EC fundable students. Students are classified as home and EC if they can be regarded as eligible students as defined by Schedule 1 of the Education (Student Support) Regulations 2001 (SI 2001 No. 951). Home and EC students should be included on forms R2a and R2b if they are on programmes of recognised HE that are open to any suitably qualified candidate. These students should also satisfy the criteria in paragraphs 1 to 17.

19. The following students should be excluded from forms R2a and R2b:

- a. Students whose places are funded from another EC public source, for example, the Department of Health, the NHS, or the Home Office (that is, where funding is provided in addition to the recommended fee levels, pro-rata for part-time students).
- b. Students registered on programmes of study that are not funded through HEFCE funds, but whose funding has been separately agreed and notified by us. This includes programmes of study where we distribute funds on behalf of other government departments.
- c. Students on programmes of study franchised to institutions wholly outside the UK, unless we have specifically sanctioned the programme as eligible.
- d. Students spending most of their programme of study outside the UK, except where:
 - i. There is a clear academic reason for studying abroad rather than in the UK. Even where such a reason exists, we must specifically sanction the programme as eligible.

ii. The student is temporarily and unavoidably abroad and remains liable to UK tax on their earnings, or is a dependant of such a person. This includes members of HM Forces and their dependants.

e. EC students registered for a qualification awarded jointly by a UK and an EC institution may be returned to this survey, but only while they are studying in the UK and as long as their study in the UK is not being directly or indirectly funded from an EC public source. (See paragraph 19a.)

f. Students franchised to an institution that is not an HEI supported from public funds. Where institutions have franchise agreements with any other organisation and wish these students to be eligible for funding, they should contact us for approval.

Annex B

Notes on income from charities

1. Institutions are asked to provide information about research income from charitable foundations and trusts based in the United Kingdom in the financial year 2000-01 (1 August 2000 to 31 July 2001). The income should be in respect of research carried out at the institution and for which directly related expenditure has been incurred.
2. Grants awarded from the Joint Infrastructure Fund (JIF) provided from the Wellcome Trust or other charity funds should be **excluded**.
3. For those institutions not in receipt of grants awarded from the JIF, the figures here should tally with those in the institution's annual financial statements and the 2000-01 HESA Finance Statistics Return (FSR). For all other institutions the discrepancy between the figures should be entirely due to JIF. Table 4 of the HESA return requests institutions to provide the external research income by cost centre. However, for the purposes of calculating the QR grant this information is required by unit of assessment. For further guidance please consult the HESA Finance Record Coding Manual.
4. Where a grant or contract is held across more than one unit of assessment, its value should be divided in proportion to the number of grant or contract holders. If research projects are funded from a number of sources, their income should be allocated between respective headings.

Annex C

Samples of forms for completion

(see Excel files)

Annex D

Instructions for completing the disk

1. All institutions will receive a 3.5 inch computer disk containing an Excel workbook saved in Excel 97. The disk has been checked for all known viruses and has been individually prepared for each institution. You are advised to make a back-up copy of the disk before attempting to access the file. If the disk is corrupt or unreadable please contact Hannah Wood on tel 0117 931 7395.
2. The name of the file will be RAS____.xls, where the suffix identifies the institution. Please do not attempt to rename or reformat the file as our computer systems for loading institutions' returns depend on the file-naming convention and file formats.
3. All labels and table formats have been protected using Excel's cell protection facilities. Do not attempt to change the contents of protected cells or the structure of tables by adding or deleting any rows or columns. Only cells where data are required should be altered.
4. The workbook on the disk supplied will contain the following five worksheets:
 - R1a____ All full-time research students by year of programme
 - R1b____ All part-time research students by year of programme
 - R2a____ Fundable home and EC fee-paying full-time students by year of programme
 - R2b____ Fundable home and EC fee-paying part-time students by year of programme
 - R3____ Income from charities on account of research grants and contracts (financial year 2000-01)
5. Below is an example of how the worksheets are laid out in the workbook. Each table is contained in a separate worksheet, which is accessed by clicking on the tab at the bottom of the screen. The name of the worksheet is displayed on the tab.

1 **HEFCE Research Activity Survey 2001**

2 **Form R1a: All full-time research students by year of programme**

3 Please insert figures to two decimal places.

4

5

6

7 **Institution:**

8 **Code:**

9

			Headcount of full-time postgraduate research students		
UoA	MSub	Unit of assessment	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
01	NS	Clinical Laboratory Sciences			
02	NS	Community-based Clinical Subjects			
03	NS	Hospital-based Clinical Subjects			
04	NS	Clinical Dentistry			
05	NS	Pre-Clinical Studies			
06	NS	Anatomy			
07	NS	Physiology			
08	NS	Pharmacology			
09	NS	Pharmacy			
10		TOTAL Nursing			
10	A	Nursing			
10	B	Nursing			
10	Z	Nursing			
11	NS	Other Studies and Professions Allied to Medicine			
12	NS	Biochemistry - Discontinued in RAE2001			

Ready

Click on these tabs to open the worksheet that contains the table you want to fill in.

6. When the worksheets have been completed, the file should be saved on the disk, overwriting the original blank tables. All worksheets in the workbook on the original disk should be returned even if they contain no data.

7. If you do not use Excel version 97 please make sure that the computer package into which the file has been opened does not save the file using a different file extension by default. You should make a back-up copy of the completed tables before returning the completed disk to the HEFCE. One set of printed tables should be sent with the electronic copy of the data.

8. Institutions wishing to make an e-mail submission should send a test e-mail with a Research Activity Survey workbook attached, by 30 November 2001, to ras@hefce.ac.uk. We will confirm receipt of any e-mail submissions.