

Summary of business of the UK Performance Indicators Steering Group undertaken by correspondence during June 2014

Business of the UK Performance Indicators Steering group was undertaken electronically during June 2014.

1. Minutes of the previous meeting

All members who provided a response in respect of the June 2014 UKPISG business accepted the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

ACTION: HESA to publish the February 2014 UKPISG minutes on their website alongside the UKPIs and related content.

Members representing the four UK funding bodies were asked to give particular consideration of the action arising under paragraph 10.2 of the UKPISG minutes, whereby those members were asked to explore the numbers and significance of alternative providers in their nation in order to inform further discussion of extensions of UKPIs to cover HE delivered by alternative providers across the entirety of the UK.

ACTION: UKPISG members to report to the next meeting of the steering group with regards to the numbers and significance of alternative providers in their nation.

2. Roundtable discussions relating to the in-depth review of the Widening Participation (WP) UKPIs

Following a discussion held at the February 2014 UKPISG meeting, the UKPITG had been asked to consider appropriate representatives of organisations, groups, committees or departments to join a WP UKPIs roundtable discussion, required in order to advance the in-depth review process relating to those indicators. The UKPISG were asked to consider two proposals that the UKPITG had put to them:

+ That not all stakeholders necessarily required roundtable representation (some of the suggestions could be engaged with on specialist topics at later stages in the review process in the refining or shortlisting of ideas generated).

+ That roundtable discussions of future WP UKPIs be structured as two groups – one to focus on educational disadvantage and a second to focus on financial/economic disadvantage. In order that more manageable discussions could be generated it was proposed that both sessions were held on the same day but, acknowledging that there would be overlaps, with some potential for interaction or for some representatives to attend both parts of the day.

All members who provided a response in respect of the June 2014 UKPISG business accepted the proposals made by the UKPITG.

ACTION: Secretariat to implement the agreed proposals in establishing roundtable discussions on the future of the WP UKPIs to be held during Autumn 2014.

Members of the UKPITG had named a number of organisations, groups, committees and departments to join the WP UKPIs roundtable discussions; these were detailed at section 4 of the minutes of that group's March 2014 meeting. Members were asked to provide any nominations of individuals within those organisations (and contact details where

possible) to the secretariat, as well as those for any additional representation they may wish to suggest.

Members provided nominations of attendees to participate in the WP UKPIs roundtable discussion during June and July 2014.

ACTION: Secretariat to establish roundtable discussions on the future of the WP UKPIs to be held during Autumn 2014.

3. Future of the Research UKPIs

As agreed in February 2014, the research UKPIs were to be discontinued from the earliest opportunity. HESA were asked to announce that discontinuation in the July 2014 publication of tranche 2 of the UKPIs, on 3 July 2014, and UKPISG had committed to the publication of outcomes which followed the "invitation to comment" (issued in December 2013). The publication was intended to communicate a summary of the responses received; the formal acceptance of the principles for UKPIs; that work was continuing on an in-depth review of the WP UKPIs; and the discontinuation of the existing research UKPIs. On this basis a publication had been drafted and members' comment was invited.

All members who provided a response in respect of the June 2014 UKPISG business agreed the drafted 'Responses to the invitation to comment' paper and its publication in conjunction with the second tranche of the UKPIs in July 2014.

ACTION: Secretariat to work with HESA to publish 'Responses to the invitation to comment' on 3 July 2014.

In addition, members agreed that a roundtable discussion regarding future Research UKPIs should be arranged. Members were therefore asked to provide recommendations as to representation in a Research UKPIs roundtable discussion.

Members provided nominations of attendees to participate in the Research UKPIs roundtable discussion during June and July 2014.

ACTION: Secretariat to establish roundtable discussions on the future of the Research UKPIs to be held during late 2014.

4. UKPITG Review of benchmarking approach

At their meeting in March 2014 the UKPITG were asked to consider the appropriate timing of a review of the benchmarking methodology used in UKPIs; their discussion of this matter was detailed at section 5 of the minutes of that meeting. The UKPITG agreed that it was important to begin a fundamental review of the approach and methodology employed in benchmarking within UKPIs as early as possible in order to help inform the wider review work. They also agreed that the UKPITG membership held the expertise to undertake a review of this nature and that they were willing and able to lead the process.

Members were asked to confirm their approval (or otherwise) for a fundamental review of the benchmarking approach and methodology used within UKPIs begin at the earliest opportunity. Further, members were asked to confirm their acceptance of the proposal that the UKPITG be tasked with undertaking this review (seeking external peer review as necessary).

All members who provided a response in respect of the June 2014 UKPISG business accepted the proposals made by the UKPITG.

ACTION: UKPITG to begin a fundamental review of the benchmarking approach and methodology used within UKPIs at the earliest opportunity.

5. Benchmarking in the 2014 publication of Tranche 2 of the UKPIs

UKPISG members were also invited to note a matter that had arisen in the preparation of the 2014 publication of Table E1 (Employment of leavers from higher education in 2012-13). During these preparations HESA noted that there was an issue with a UKPITG proposal agreed by the steering group in September 2013. This was a technical issue relating to a lack of coherence in the range of students included within the groupings of entry qualifications used in the benchmark calculations for these tables. A revised proposal was prepared and agreed by the UKPITG, and subsequently approved by the Chair of the UKPISG under chair's action on account of the very short time scales involved: HESA needed to begin the institutional quality assurance period for the tables in advance of the 3rd July publication date for Tranche 2 of the UKPIs. Further details regarding this revision to the benchmarking for Table E1 were available upon request.

The matter raised was noted by members of the UKPISG.