

Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) Survey

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. General queries
2. League table queries

1. General queries

Q.	When will the latest DLHE information be available?
A.	The most recent survey results are usually posted on the Careers Service website in June.
Q.	How is DLHE data collected?
A.	A description of the data collection process is available as a pdf. http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.86323!/file/datacollected.pdf
Q.	Who decides the questions included on the DLHE questionnaire?
A.	The content of the questionnaire is defined by HESA and the same questionnaire is in use across all UK HEIs. Content is driven mainly by the information requirements of government departments and other statutory bodies eg Research Councils.
Q.	Who codes the questionnaire responses?
A.	All coding is carried out by three senior members of Careers Service staff all of whom have extensive knowledge of the graduate labour market and the coding classifications used.
Q.	I see that DLHE data for the past four years is available on the Careers Service website. Is it possible to have information for earlier years?
A.	We can supply data for earlier years on request.
Q.	What kind of information can I obtain about destinations?
A.	Data for 2008/9 and 2009/10 is published on the Careers Service website using the Graduate Employment Market

	<p>Statistics (GEMS) software produced by the University of Huddersfield. This data is available to staff only. GEMS allows you to interrogate destinations information in a variety of ways and will create reports to supply the answers to most enquiries including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main destination categories (work, study, unemployment etc) • Breakdown of graduate and non-graduate level employment • Salary information • Names of employers who have recruited Sheffield graduates • An estimation of the Graduate Prospects score that will appear in media league tables (using the methodology used by The Times).
Q.	Is it possible for current and prospective students to view destinations data?
A.	The Careers Service is currently working towards the creation of web pages to provide prospective and current students with information about destinations. These pages will contain a simplified version of the data available to staff and we expect them to become available during the 2011/12 session. All information contained on the website will be fully compliant with the Data Protection Act.
Q.	I have heard that DLHE data will be included in the Key Information Set (KIS) data universities are required to publish from 2012 onwards. What elements of the survey will be used?
A.	<p>Three elements will be made available. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proportion of graduates entering employment • The proportion of graduates entering employment who obtain graduate level work • Average salary
Q.	I've had a look at the DLHE data for my department on the Careers Service website but I need a more detailed analysis. Is this possible?
A.	<p>If you need a report incorporating an element which lies outside of the scope of the DLHE survey eg gender, degree class, ethnicity or would like to include areas of the DLHE survey not displayed in GEMS please contact Gill Anderson (g.anderson@shef) to discuss your requirements.</p> <p>Data for 2006/7 and 2007/8 is also available on the website but this and earlier surveys do not use GEMS software and consist of static reports. Again, if you require a more detailed analysis of the data please contact Gill Anderson (g.anderson@shef) to discuss your requirements.</p>
Q.	How can I help ensure that students in my department participate in the survey?

A.	<p>There are a number of ways main way in which departments can help</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encouraging students to update contact details on their student record as they finish their courses. Students can access their records via the University website and should be encouraged to update their home contact details (postal address, telephone numbers – land and mobile, personal email addresses). • sending us any updated and recent contact information that you hold in your department. • emailing graduates in advance of the survey to alert them to its imminent arrival (the Careers Service will send a prompt to departments as the date of the survey approaches) • encouraging first degree graduates who are continuing their studies as postgraduate students in your department to complete the questionnaire. • keeping a record of destination information received from recent graduates. We contact departments with details of non-respondents and can use information supplied by you as long as it contains enough detail to satisfy survey requirements.
Q.	What proportion of Sheffield graduates stay in the city following graduation?
A.	A report giving details of graduates remaining in the city to work and study is available in pdf form on the Careers Service staff website at http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/careers/staff/dlhe
Q.	I've heard of something called the Employment Performance Indicator (EPI). What is it and where can I find out more?
A.	<p>The EPI seeks to give an indication of how successful an institution is in placing its students in employment or study after graduation. Each HEI is assigned a benchmark indicator which is calculated taking into account a variety of factors eg subject spread, entry qualifications, age of students etc. The EPI is then expressed as the number of graduates who say they are working or studying (or both) shown as a percentage of all those who are working or studying or seeking work. All other categories are excluded from this indicator. It is important to note that the EPI is a simple measure which takes no account of whether jobs or courses are deemed to at a graduate level.</p> <p>Further information can be viewed via the Careers Service staff website at http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/careers/staff/dlhe or directly on the HESA website at: http://www.hesa.ac.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2071&Itemid=141</p>

2. League Table enquiries

Q.	How are league tables compiled?
A.	Unfortunately there is no simple answer. The two best known compilers (The Times and The Guardian) use different criteria and weightings for constructing their tables and both, with varying degrees of detail and clarity, describe their methodologies in their publications/websites.
Q.	Which league table gives the best results for my department?
A.	<p>Although all league table compilers use the same destinations data obtained from the same source, (ie the most recent DLHE data obtained directly from HESA) there are numerous small and sometimes some inexplicably larger discrepancies in the destinations scores recorded in subject league tables.</p> <p>In terms of ranking in subject tables, there are sometimes considerable variations between those recorded in different publications. This is usually explained by the fact that the destinations score is only one of the factors taken into account in assigning rankings. The Times use the four measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research quality (as evidenced by RAE results) • Entry standards • Student satisfaction (as evidenced by National Student Survey outcomes) • Destination data <p>The Guardian, however, omits any measure for research but includes additional measures taken from the National Student Survey, expenditure per student, student:staff ratio and a value-added score.</p> <p>The Times tends to produce the best results for the University of Sheffield. However, performing well in a table in one year is no guarantee that the same will happen in future years. A comparison of subject league table rankings is available as a download on the Careers Service staff website at http://www.shef.ac.uk/careers/staff/dlhe</p> <p>Links to the results produced by and The Guardian and The Complete University Guide are available on the Careers Service staff website at http://www.shef.ac.uk/careers/staff/dlhe. Information on The Times website is only available if you subscribe to the site.</p>
Q.	The concept of a ‘graduate’ and ‘non-graduate’ job is referred to in league tables. Who decides what constitutes a ‘graduate job’.

A.	<p>The definitions used are the result of a research paper produced by Elias and Purcell while working at the Institute of Employment Research (University of Warwick) in 2004. Elias and Purcell analysed all of the 663 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) codes used to describe jobs entered by recent graduates and classified each as being 'graduate' or 'non-graduate' level.</p> <p>Within the terms of the Elias and Purcell definitions, a graduate job is not necessarily a job where the possession of a degree is a specific requirement. In many cases a job will be categorised as 'graduate' if it is considered that the work requires a range of skills that you might expect to see exhibited by graduates. So, for instance, you don't necessarily need a degree in order to find work as a Market Research Interviewer, but this type of work is regarded as 'graduate' in view of the range of skills required by the job.</p>
Q.	What can be done to improve league table rankings?
A.	<p>If you feel that a better league table ranking for your department could be achieved by improving the destination score of your graduates, you should, in the first instance, contact the Careers Adviser who works with your department. Bear in mind that getting improvements to show through in league tables is a long-term exercise ie destinations data for 2009/10 graduates will be used to create the tables in 'The Times Good University Guide 2013'.</p>
Q.	If my department had a higher DLHE survey response rate would we perform better in league tables?
A.	<p>No. Compilers of league tables base their calculations only on those graduates for whom there is a known destination. So achieving a high response rate for a department has no bearing on league table positions.</p>