

HE-BCI Major Review
Yorkshire Universities' Response to the Phase One Consultation
November 2019

1. The current HE-BCI major review, first announced at the 2019 National Centre for Universities and Business Annual Conference, seeks to answer the following questions:
 - What data in HE-BCI is no longer sufficiently valuable, and what should be discontinued?
 - What are the main uses of the current data about Higher Education interactions with Business and the Community, that should be preserved?
 - What adaptations or new concepts might be necessary to ensure user needs for data about Higher Education interactions with Business and the Community can be met in the future?
 - What data about Higher Education interactions with Business and the Community is currently compiled (in HE providers and elsewhere) which could be made available, either to reduce duplication or enhance value for users?
 - What alternative data standards already exist in this domain, and are they suitable for use?
 - In what ways should HESA be improving its outputs to better meet user needs?

2. The survey opens with a generic question: What do you use the HE-BCI data for? It then continues to ask the following set of questions per each dataset sections (i.e. research related activity, business and community services, regeneration and development programmes, intellectual property, social, community and cultural engagement and HE-BCI Part A: strategy, infrastructure, intellectual property, social, community, cultural, regeneration and education and continuing professional development related data):
 - What new data ought to be collected in this topic area, and why?
 - What data in this topic area is currently collected that you consider to be of lower value, and which should be considered for removal?
 - What value does the data in this topic area currently hold for you, and which you would not want to see lost in any change to HE-BCI?

3. Given the nature of the organisation, YU is exclusively a user of this dataset, and it does not prepare annual data submissions. Therefore, YU will focus its response to answering the question as to how it uses the HE-BCI data for from a user point of view, and what aspects of the dataset might be improved in the future.

4. At YU, inter- and intra-regional comparisons are central to how the organisation uses HE-BCI data. At one level, YU uses this information for annual HE sector facts & figures infographics about our members in order to establish a (distinct) Yorkshire-wide picture. HE-BCI data also allows YU to prepare bite-size information from each HE-BCI topic, (and even broader HE relevant topics when combined with other HESA data) that our members, or any other partner active or interested in HE sector policy research can use as reference material in their own communications. Examples of these can be found

online in the 'HE Impact in Yorkshire' section of the YU website:
www.yorkshireuniversities.ac.uk/facts-figures.

5. Recently, more in-depth analysis of HE-BCI data has informed the work of the YU Industrial Strategy Group in shaping the development of Local Industrial Strategies in Yorkshire, policy consultation exercises, such as to the inquiry by the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee into the 'balance and effectiveness of research and innovation spending', to the KEF, to the Future Ready Skills Commission, as well as a joint /N8 joint response to questions posed by the Executive Chair of Research England, David Sweeney, on the role of place-based research and innovation funding to stimulate local economic growth.
6. In the future, with a target for national spend on R&D to reach 2.4% by 2027, combined with a place-based filter option, there is an opportunity to strengthen existing analysis around what interventions might help to address regional inequalities, which a revamped HE-BCI dataset could be instrumental in informing. YU would also advocate exploring how the database could aid and align with future Research Excellence Framework exercises.
7. In addition to this, with the emergence of the UUK & GuildHE *Concordat for the Advancement of Knowledge Exchange*, and the ongoing development of the KEF, capturing civic engagement activities and reflecting the fundamental changes that are underpinning HE business and community interactions will be key. This will be of particular importance to aspects of community interaction and engagement that is not easy to capture and value in monetary terms. Here, the revision of the HE-BCI dataset could serve as an opportunity to widen and deepen knowledge and understanding of the linkages between anchor institutions, knowledge exchange and higher-level skills provision. This has become more important at a time when changing approaches to graduate employability and skills blur the boundaries between universities' knowledge exchange activity and traditional education and research missions.
8. In an era of digital interconnectedness, YU would advocate exploring how the HE-BCI dataset could function in combination with other datasets, and data collections to better explain interactions between HE providers, business and community.
9. One aspect where the HE-BCI survey could be strengthened is the possibility to filter and extract information concerning environmental sustainability and climate change. This is already a pressing issue for all HE providers who in the near future will need to be transparent in how their commercial practices and environmentally sustainable practices are relating to the places in which they operate.
10. These strands of activities, as above were central to YU's Operational Plan in 2018-19 and will continue to be pivotal in YU's 2019-2022 Strategy. YU would be happy to continue to liaise with HESA at the HE-BCI review moves forward.

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