Consultation on principles and future requirements for the UK's public interest data about graduates

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1	Name of Organisation	MillionPlus

2	Is this response on behalf of? (please choose the category that fits best)	A HE sector body

3	Name of contact person for queries	Alan Palmer

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6	Do you agree that linked data can provide a critical part of the data product?	Yes

7	Do we need a survey?	Yes

8	Does a survey need to be universal (a census of graduates)?	Yes

9	Further comments	The survey should be only of graduates available for work or further study.

10	Do you agree with the high-level scope of topics?	Yes

11	Do you agree with the principle that it is desirable to find appropriate additional ways of measuring graduate outcomes?	Yes

14	**Do you think a single survey point can work?**	Yes

15	**If a single survey were to be used, when should this take place?**	Other
15.a	**If you selected Other, please specify:**	At least 18 months after graduation, but not if that would fail to capture adequately success in portfolio building, experimentation or business start-ups.

17	**Further comments and explanations for your answers**	As noted, there are concerns with how both the six-month and three-year DLHE properly identify graduate destinations. The 6-month survey particularly does not adequately capture certain employment patterns (e.g. creative industries, self-employment or business start-ups). These are ill-served by the current approach and potentially mean that particular courses and universities are misrepresented to students and employers.
		These concerns are additional to the fact that successful graduate employment is influenced by local employment patterns and regional economic outlooks that are entirely unrelated to the experience and achievements of students or the quality of their teaching at university. For example an area with high employment may superficially appear to suggest that particular universities are 'better' than those in areas of low employment.

22	**Please tell us here about any other comments you wish to make in response to this section**	We believe that the Standard Occupational Classification groups, and the general approach to what is a 'graduate job' is outdated and creates misperceptions about graduate success.
		There is no universally accepted list of graduate jobs, and that there are concerns that the Standard Occupational Classification groups can be misleading. Some roles in groups 1-3 are not necessarily graduate jobs. Equally, some roles in groups 4 and below do require a degree for entry. Employers make decisions about what attributes are necessary for the jobs in their businesses, and arguably it is they that decide that a particular role is a 'graduate job' rather than a centralised approach.

23	**Do you support the proposal for continued collection of data on activities and main activity?**	Yes

24	**Do you agree with adding examples of additional types of work here?**	Yes

25	**Please indicate your level of support for the following additions:**

25.1		'Working more than one job'
25.1.a		High
25.2		'Starting my own business'
25.2.a		High
25.3		'Volunteering'
25.3.a		High
25.4		'On an internship'
25.4.a		High
25.5		Other
25.5.a		High

26	Please offer any general comments or observations	Success is defined in many ways, and for some students acquiring skills, confidence or new knowledge is as important as gaining a particular level of employment. Earning a salary at a higher level than they would have done prior to obtaining a degree, or securing employment (at whatever salary) in a specific field are both goals that can be success criteria. Basing the DLHE solely on the initial employment destination a few months after graduates fails to recognise the longer-term benefits of going to university.

28	Please indicate your level of support for the following:

28.1	Please indicate your level of support for the collection of data about graduate motivations for further study	
28.1.a		Moderate
28.a	Please explain your answer. We would be especially grateful for suggestions for 'categories' of motivation.	More information about motivations for further study can provide context to an evaluation of success based on destinations. They may also provide information about labour market conditions in particular areas

30	Please indicate your level of agreement for the following:	
30.1	Please indicate your level of agreement with the working proposal that 'overall HE experience' questions should be discontinued	
30.1.a		Moderate

32	Please indicate your level of support for the following:	
32.1	Please indicate your level of support for the development of an approach to measuring outcomes of graduates based on student engagement data	
32.1.a		High

38	Please indicate your level of support for the following:	
38.1	Please indicate your level of support for the development of an approach based around measuring subjective wellbeing in a future survey of graduates	
38.1.a		High

40	Please indicate your level of support for the following:	
40.1	Please indicate your level of support for the development of a measure of attribute or skill usage, outside of a direct employment context, in a future survey	
40.1.a		High

42	Please indicate your level of support for the following:	
42.1	Please indicate your level of support for the development of a synchronised approach between a replacement for DLHE, and earlier surveys or activities	
42.1.a		Low

46	Please indicate your level of support for the following:	
46.1	Please indicate your level of support for the inclusion of questions focussing on graduate entrepreneurship, in a future survey	
46.1.a		High

47	Please share any further comments you wish to make about graduate entrepreneurship	Including questions on the topic of graduate entrepreneurship will address some of the concerns about the focus on 'graduate jobs' in the current survey. It is also possible that it will be able to highlight student entrepreneurship as a relevant factor in graduate success.

48	**Please share any comments you wish to make about Job title, main thing done in the job, or the SOC-coding frame or process**	As noted earlier in this response, there are issues with how the SOC are decided, and how particular jobs are valued as graduate level. We would support attempts to ensure there was more sophistication and nuance in this understanding.

49	**Please indicate your level of support for the following:**
49.1	**Please indicate your level of support for continuing to collect employer information**
49.1.a		High

50	**Please indicate your level of support for the following:**
50.1	**Please indicate your level of support for removing employer details from the DLHE, if equivalent data were available from linked data**
50.1.a		High

57	**Do you have any further comments to make about this proposal?**	Analysis of HMRC data by the IFS and other research confirm that family background is highly influential in determining graduate destination and employment prospects. Collecting and using salary data to assessing graduate success needs to be done taking these other factors into account. In itself, a high graduate salary is not necessarily an indication one way or another of the success or quality of a course or university

58	Please indicate your level of agreement for the following:
58.1	Please indicate to what level you agree that a question about employment basis should continue to be collected

58.1.a		High

60	Do you agree with the proposal that "Voluntary work" should be removed from this question, to the question about 'activity'?	Yes

61	Do you agree with the proposal that "On an internship/placement" should be removed from this question, to the question about 'activity'?	Yes

62	Do you agree with the proposal that "Developing a professional portfolio/creative practice" should be removed from this question, to the question about 'activity'?	Yes

64	Please indicate your level of support for the following:	
64.1	Please indicate your level of support for retaining a question that asks: "Approximately how many hours a week will you be working for your main employment?"	
64.1.a		High

65	Please indicate your level of support for the following:	
65.1	Please indicate your level of support for removing any questions about hours of work (and relying only on part-time/full-time splits gathered elsewhere)	
65.1.a		Moderate

71	Please indicate your level of support for the following:	
71.1	Please indicate your level of support for the continued collection of employment location information	
71.1.a		High

72	Please indicate your level of support for the following:	
72.1	Please indicate your level of support for the additional collection of domicile location information	
72.1.a		High

73	Do you have any further comments to make about the collection of location information?	Successful graduate employment is influenced by local employment patterns and regional economic outlooks that are entirely unrelated to the experience and achievements of students or the quality of their teaching at university. For example an area with high employment may superficially appear to suggest that particular universities are 'better' than those in areas of low employment. Understanding this in more detail will be of benefit

74	Please indicate your level of agreement for the following:	
74.1	Please indicate your level of agreement with the proposal to develop a skills-based approach in a future survey of graduates	
74.1.a		Moderate

76	Further comments	There is value in this, but it is important that the less specific and easily identifiable attributes acquired by graduates can be recognised. Tables 2 and 3 highlight this. These are the attributes that will ensure an individual can adapt and change to the conditions of the labour market, where there is no longer the same job security as there once was.

77	Please indicate your level of support for the following:	

77.1	**Please indicate your level of support for the continued collection of information about how a job was located**
77.1.a	Moderate

81	**Please indicate your level of support for the following:**
81.1	**Please indicate your level of support for retaining a question about the reasons for taking a job, in the current format**
81.1.a	Moderate

83	**Please indicate your level of support for the following:**
83.1	**Please indicate your level of support for a separate question that asks the graduate to self-assess whether their work plans are "on-track"**
83.1.a	Moderate

88	**Please indicate your level of support for the following:**
88.1	**Please indicate your level of support for collecting data about placements and other work-based learning in a future data product**
88.1.a	High

92	**Please indicate your level of support for the following:**
92.1	**Please indicate your level of support for collecting data about work-related learning in a future data product**
92.1.a	High

102	Please indicate your level of agreement for the following:	
102.1	Please indicate the level to which you agree that collecting data about non-course-related employment would add value to national HE datasets	
102.1.a		Moderate

104	When do you think it would be best to collect these data	Around graduation

106	Where should we aim (On a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 indicates that minimising costs is the main imperative and 10 indicates that maximising the value of data obtained from the current cost base ought to be the approach)	
106.1	Where should we aim?	
106.1.a		7

123	Would you, in principle, support the development of suitable legal arrangements for the sharing of some individualised linked data?	Yes