



University of Leeds

Established in 1904, the University of Leeds is one of the UK's largest universities. They are part of the Russell Group and are renowned globally for the quality of their research and teaching. They contribute £1.3 billion to the UK economy per annum and have over 39,800 students.

With the introduction of Data Futures from HESA, the University sought a data expert to partner with to support their returns process. With more submissions required in year, and a more complex set of rules to deliver against, Experian were selected to help the University prepare for and execute their Data Futures returns.

Situation

The HESA data return is a regulatory requirement for all Higher Education providers. Each year, HESA collect and review a wide range of student-level data, with late or low quality submissions risking the institution's funding and reputation.

Data Futures necessitated changing the returns process, requiring the University to re-evaluate how data was prepared for submission and how accurate it was in order to meet HESA standards.

In October 2022, Experian engaged with University of Leeds to complete a data quality review against the pre-defined HESA quality rules plus Experian's own rule library to prepare for the May 2023 data return.

Solution

Using Aperture Governance Studio, the University were able to profile their data against HESA and data quality rules, and compare their initial and final data to gain a better understanding of where there were process and operational data quality issues.

Experian worked alongside data experts from the University to devise a method to quality assess return data within Aperture Governance Studio, requiring a breakdown of the University's data tables, and mapping of these to understand whether data quality errors in the final return were coming from source data or being added in during the HESA transformations. Issue could then be addressed at source to improve the quality of the return.

This has resulted in a more refined approach to the HESA return, reducing errors created through the process and improving holistic data quality management throughout the year.



Creating a culture of data ownership within the University has significantly enhanced the institution's data maturity, which has delivered benefits for BAU as well as the HESA process.

Benefits

Data visibility

Aperture Governance Studio gave the University the ability to compare their data before and after the HESA transformations had been applied, something they had not achieved previously. Doing so was transformative to their ability to identify and resolve issues and gaps in the process.

Improved data quality

Experian were able to cleanse returns data errors at source. The team also worked with the University's technical teams to repoint the transformations which, once completed, solved a large number of data quality errors. The data dictionary and lineage features of the platform have been used to record this mapping and the transformations to ensure this is managed effectively in the future.

