Definitions of FTE, FPE and Headcount

**Full-time Equivalent (FTE)**

**Definition:** Full-time equivalent is a way to measure a staff member's involvement in a project/teaching, or a student's enrolment at an educational institution. An FTE of 1.0 means that the person is equivalent to a full-time worker, while an FTE of 0.5 signals that the worker is only half-time.

**Use:** FTE is typically used for funding purposes as it accurately records contact time or time spent 'on the job'. FTE takes account of multiple activities and less than full time attendance.

**Full-person equivalent (FPE)**

**Definition:** Individuals can hold more than one contract with an institution and each contract may involve more than one different activity. In published analyses staff counts have been divided amongst their activities in proportion to the declared FTE for each activity. This results in counts of Full Person Equivalents (FPE). Staff FPE counts are calculated on the basis of contract activities that were active on 1st December of the reporting period (using the HESA staff contract population). FPE takes account of multiple activities but does not consider less than full time attendance.

**Use:** FPE is arguably the most accurate headcount figure and is useful for central administration purposes. If there are 3 actual students then the College will require 3 rooms for accommodation, regardless of whether the students are full or part time. The College FPE figure would be useful to Information Services as each student will require an email address.

**Headcount**

**Definition:** A count of each person involved in an activity. Note that this can result in double counting where a person is involved in more than activity. For example, a student studying Mathematics and Physics will have a headcount of 1 within the Mathematics department and a headcount of 1 (or 0) in the Physics department.* If an institution calculates headcount by adding up departmental headcounts, this student could be counted twice.

*In College reporting the headcount figure is assigned to the “holding department”. Therefore, in the example above, a student on Mathematics and Physics would count as 1 for the holding department – Mathematics, and as 0 for Physics.*

**Use:** Headcount is arguably the most accurate figure for departmental administration. Each department will have to record each person on their course, be aware of each person's grades, timetables, tutors etc.

**Example**

Three students enrol at the College:
- Amy is studying English as a full time student.
- Ben is studying English as a part time student.
- Claire is studying English and History as a full time student.

The College FTE is 2.5 students. (1 for Amy, 1 for Claire and 0.5 for Ben).
The College FPE is 3 students. (1 for Amy, 1 for Ben, 1 for Claire).
The College headcount is 3 students. (1 for Amy, 1 for Ben, 1 for Claire).

The FTE for English is 2 students. (1 for Amy, 0.5 for Ben, 0.5 for Claire).
The FPE for English is 2.5 students. (1 for Amy, 1 for Ben, 0.5 for Claire).
The headcount for English is 3 students. (1 for Amy, 1 for Ben, 1 for Claire).

The FTE for History is 0.5 students. (0.5 for Claire).
The FPE for History is 0.5 students (0.5 for Claire).
The headcount for History is 1 student (1 for Claire).
OR headcount for History is 0 students (assuming English is the holding dept).