

# HMCTS response and progress update on Dr Natalie Byrom report



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HMCTS has published its detailed response to Dr Natalie Byrom's 2019 report on use of data and academic engagement, and set out the progress that has been made against the report's recommendations over the past 12 months.

Dr Byrom published her report following an initial secondment to HMCTS from The Legal Education Foundation in autumn 2018, during which time she advised on strategies to enhance the organisation's academic engagement and improve how it makes data available for research purposes. From October 2019, she re-joined on a part-time secondment to support HMCTS in developing and strengthening its data governance proposals.

Announcing today's response and progress update, Acting Chief Executive of HMCTS, Kevin Sadler, said:

I want to wholeheartedly thank Dr Byrom for her vital report on open data and academic engagement, and for her support in enabling us to implement many of the recommendations over the past year.

We welcome these recommendations on data collection to support the evaluation of reform and on developing our approach to open and shared data. Dr Byrom's sustained contribution, both during her secondment and now through this report, have been particularly integral to our progress on open and shared data.

Since the publication of the report, HMCTS has begun to implement many of the recommendations, working closely with the judiciary and MoJ. Today's paper sets out in detail

how we have put these recommendations into practice over the past 12 months and outlines our future plans on open data and academic engagement for the year ahead to further support transparency and open justice, including establishing a new data governance mechanism.

I am pleased that we have been able to make specific commitments about the timeframes for many of these crucial areas, including collecting data on protected characteristics, while for those areas in which the timeframe has in part been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, we commit to delivering them as quickly as possible whilst working within the current constraints.

Dr Byrom said:

Today is a pivotal moment for the government to fully embrace – and fully fund – a data strategy that will deliver digital justice for all. Over a year on from delivering my report to HMCTS, I welcome its acceptance of my recommendations and the work undertaken so far to implement them. I urge the government to now put words into action. There is no better moment than now to step up the implementation of those recommendations. Otherwise, we will waste the opportunity to make the UK a world leader in delivering digital justice for all.

Dr Byrom's full response and update to recommendations are published below.

Making the most of HMCTS data

PDF, 533KB, 12 pages

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