

Introduction to Data Science with Excel SCQF 4

Access Data and Edinburgh College have launched this course to help to equip attendees with vital skills that are becoming increasingly in demand with employers, in education, and as a part of our everyday lives.

What is Data Science?

The field of Data Science combines digital and data skills, specific knowledge about a particular topic or subject area, and numeracy skills to extract insights and knowledge from data. The ability to identify the problem to solve, the correct data to use, carry out the analysis and then implement the outcome requires the three abovementioned areas to be brought together.

Data Science is becoming an essential part of how we live, learn and work. It is all about how we turn those insights extracted from data into actions. Many people are keen to learn more and understand this topic, and more and more employers are seeking applicants with experience of Data Science. Using the knowledge and skills from this short course will help you to develop in your current or future job role.

What will you learn?

Topics covered in the academic year of 2025/2026 included:

- Data Growth
- Data in Society: Growth, Use & Misuse
- Foundations of Data Science
- Data Bias, Rights, Privacy & Responsibility
- Data Types, Quality & Simple Analysis
- Working with Data: Cleaning & Preparation
- Visualizing & Interpreting Data
- Analysing Data & Communicating Insights
- Data Project

Note that the exact topics might be updated in the upcoming academic year.

When & where will the course be delivered?

The course will be delivered from **20 August 2026 to 14th January 2027** (college holidays excluded – see the college calendar [here](#)).

The course will be delivered at Access to Industry's Cowgate Community College (156 Cowgate, EH1 1RP), on **Thursdays from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm**. We planned 13 tutored sessions, with the remainder of the semester to be used for self-directed work on any unfinished assignments.

Depending on individual skills and pace of work, this course may additionally require up to 5 hours p/w of self-directed study. This is to allow for the completion of any assignments unfinished during class hours or other homework, as and when assigned by the tutor.

Please note that the delivery details (e.g. delivery day, timings, mode, or length) are subject to change in the event of any unforeseen circumstances.

How is the course delivered?

The course will be delivered in person.

The learning materials will be accessed through Moodle, Edinburgh College's virtual learning environment at moodle.edinburghcollege.ac.uk.

You will be able to sign in with your Edinburgh College student number once the course has started. The college also provides all students with access to Microsoft 365 – you can sign into Microsoft Office, Email and Teams at office.com with your Edinburgh College email address.

You will be submitting all assignments via Moodle, subject to deadlines. Due date extensions will be possible upon providing a valid reason – this will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Do I have to pay for this course?

No. The course is fully funded by the Data Driven Innovation. Eligibility criteria apply.

What are the entry criteria for the course?

Participants should have experience of using MS Excel at least on a basic level (e.g. for data input, creating very simple graphs and charts, or using very simple formulas). Basic knowledge in the subject of data and related terminology would also be advantageous.

Our tutors are dedicated to making the course as accessible as possible for students whose first language is not English. However, **all participants should be comfortable studying in English with no additional language support**. No formal certification is required but language skills will be assessed during a course interview.

Access Data eligibility criteria apply.

Access Data Eligibility Criteria Check
Essential criteria – <u>must tick all:</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed
<input type="checkbox"/> 20+ years old
<input type="checkbox"/> Lives in Edinburgh (EH1 to EH17 & EH28 to EH30)
<input type="checkbox"/> Wants to move into education or employment <u>related to IT or data</u>
Additional criteria – <u>must tick at least one:</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Minority ethnic background
<input type="checkbox"/> Over 50 years old
<input type="checkbox"/> Long-term health issues, including mental health
<input type="checkbox"/> Part of a family that has: a lone parent, a disabled adult or child; a mother aged under 25; a child under one; 3 or more children

What qualification will I get?

SQA National Progression Award in Data Science at SCQF level 4.

Further Study

Gaining a National Progression Award provides the necessary knowledge, skills and confidence required to progress to Introduction to Data Storytelling with Excel – NPA Data Science level 5 with Edinburgh College.

How to apply?

Complete the below application form:

<https://forms.office.com/e/CtArg39CH6>

Successful applicants will be invited to interviews and may additionally be asked to complete a short levelling exercise. As a part of our recruitment process, we will support applicants in filling out an additional online registration form provided by Edinburgh College.

Support Provided by Access to Industry

Before the course begins, all participants must register for Access to Industry's Access Data programme, which provides course access and a dedicated caseworker for course-related support and broader employability assistance, including CV writing, job applications, and interview prep.

Access to Industry can provide Day Saver tickets to all students commuting to the course using Lothian Buses.