L-Università ta' Malta

Using Power BI Data for Quality Enhancement

AIMS Office, SIMS Office and Quality Support Unit

Finance Office, Office of the Registrar and Administrative Support Services

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1. Introduction to Using Power BI Data for Quality Enhancement

What is Power BI?

Power BI is a unified, scalable self-service and enterprise business intelligence (BI) platform. It enables users to connect to, model and visualise data and easily create personalised reports.

Aims

This manual is designed to explain how Power BI can be used to access student data more easily and quickly. This will help FICS retrieve student data using Power BI for the needs of the Annual Programme Review (APR) and for internal planning purposes.

Requirements

Users of Power BI are expected to:

- Have a University of Malta (UM) IT Account;
- Have a Power BI licence;
- Be familiar with the APR process.

Activities

This manual is based on practical step-by-step activities that will help you master the skills required to open dashboards, change filters and export data.

Queries and Support

As you work through the activities of this manual you may encounter difficulties. It is suggested that you follow this procedure to resolve such problems:

a) Work again through the steps indicated in the activity boxes.

b) If issues persist, contact Quality Support Unit (QSU) at quality@um.edu.mt.

Licence Allocation

Power BI licences acquired by the UM are currently allocated based on designation. A minimum of two licences are assigned to each FICS: one to the Manager/Officer in Charge and one to the Dean/Director. Extra licences have been allocated to administrative staff within FICS where deemed beneficial due to higher number of programmes offered so as to provide further support.

Each FICS is responsible for informing the QSU when an existing licence needs to be transferred to another member of staff (due to a change in role, termination, etc). Similarly, requests for additional

licences must be submitted by the FICS to the QSU. Additional licences are allocated on a case-by-case basis and are subject to availability.

It is recommended that Chairs of Boards of Studies are informed of the designated Power BI licence holders within their FICS, who can provide support in accessing and visualising student data relevant to the programmes offered.

2. Using Power BI Data for Quality Enhancement

Objectives

By following this manual, users will learn about:

- Retrieving student data;
- Exporting data to assist the academic staff with the annual review of programmes.

2.1 Accessing Power BI

Users need to access the Power BI homepage https://app.powerbi.com. To sign in, you will be required to:

a) Enter your UM email address (Figure 1).

b) Input your UM credentials (Figure 2).

c) If prompted, complete two-factor authentication.

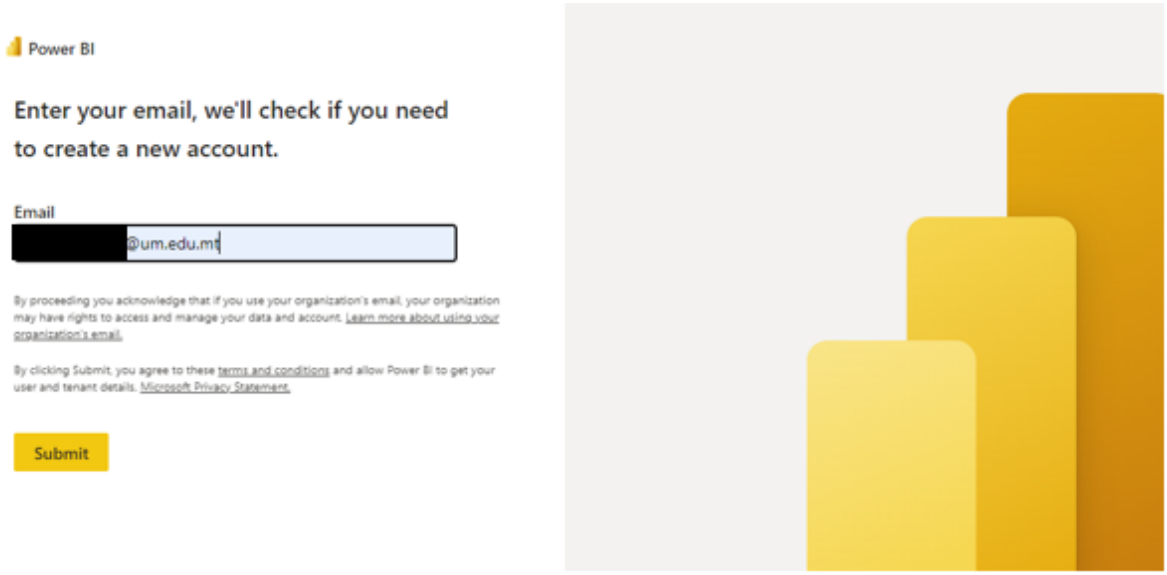


Figure 1 - Input the UM Email Address

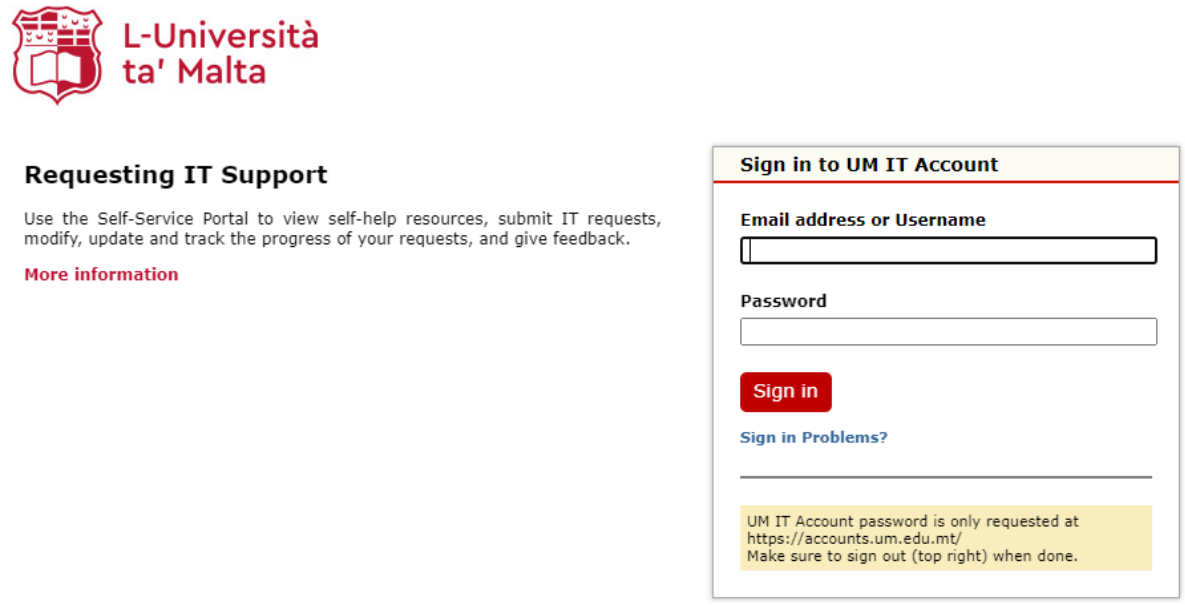


Figure 2 - UM IT Credentials

2.2 Activity 1 – Accessing Student Metrics for the Annual Programme Review (APR)

Once logged in, navigate on the left-hand side ribbon to open the UM dashboards used for APR analysis.

a) Click on Apps (Figure 3).

b) Select Students Metrics app (Figure 4).

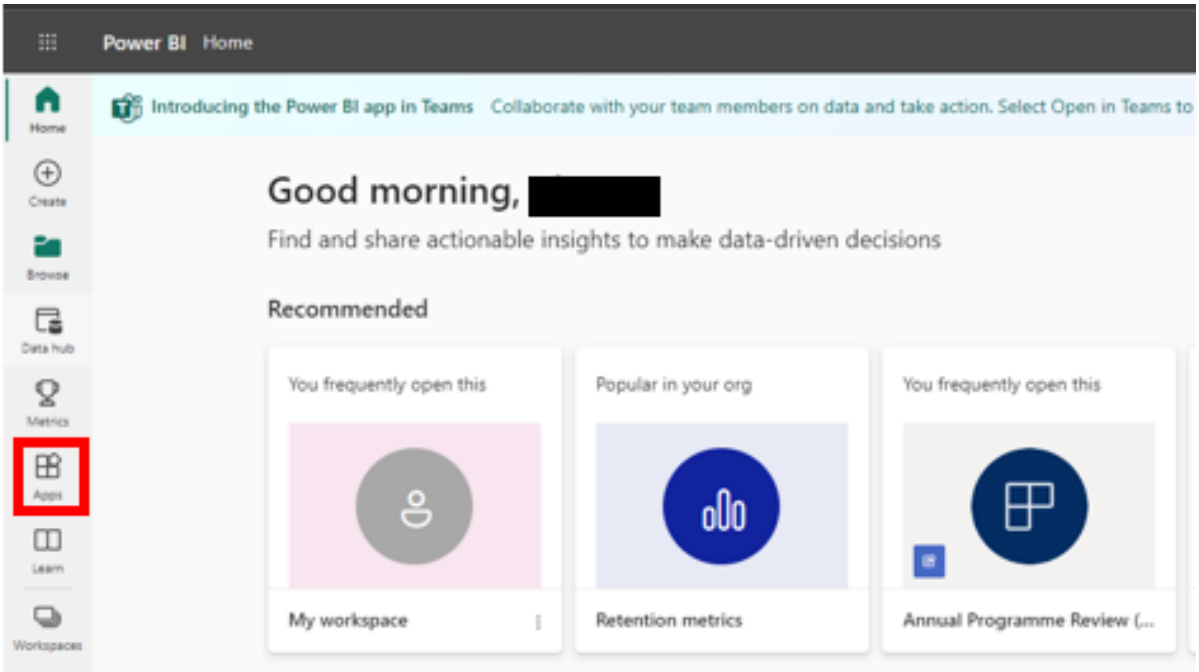


Figure 3 – Power BI Homepage

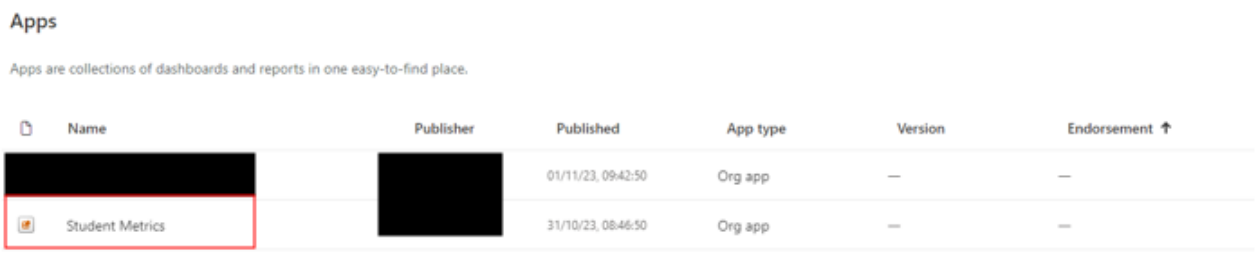


Figure 4 – Accessing the Student Metrics app

2.3 Activity 2 – Accessing the Dashboards

Dashboards are organised on the left-hand side menu under main headers, each marked with an arrow sign (Figure 5).

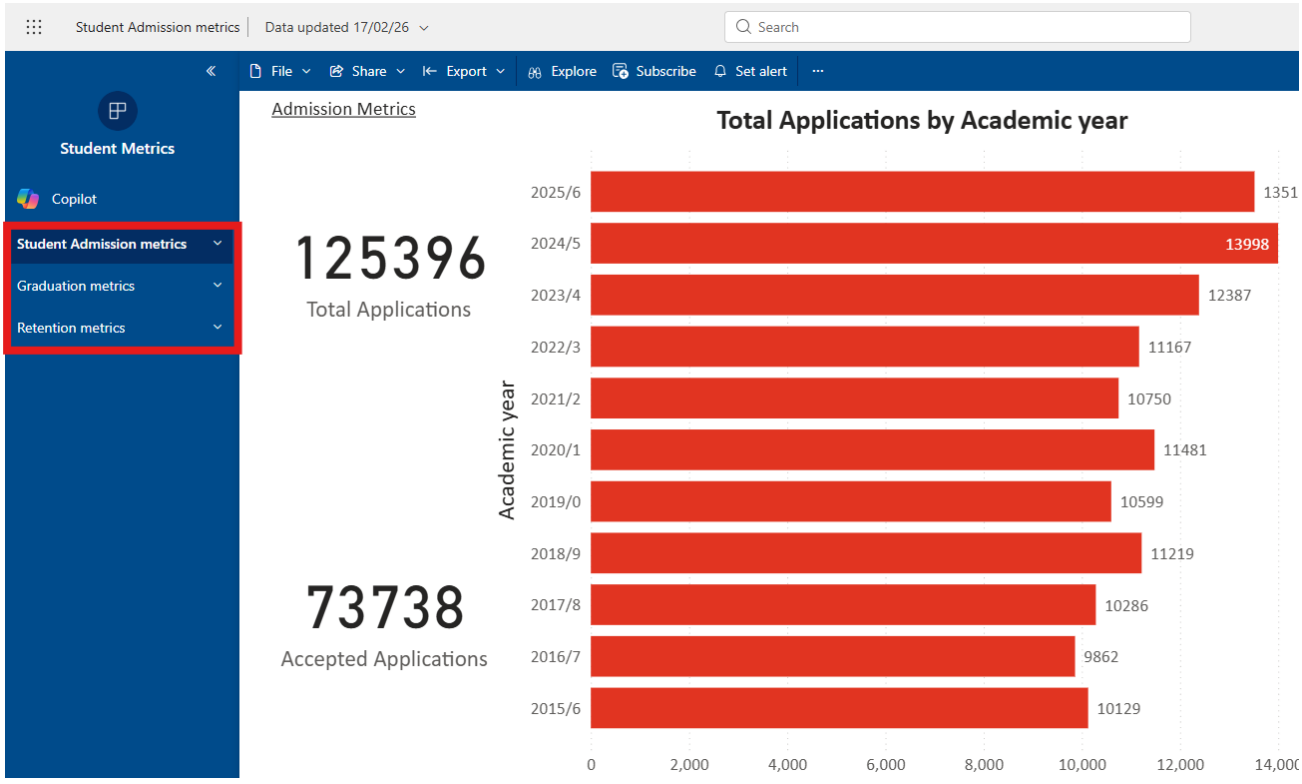


Figure 5 – Student Metrics Dashboards

Click on a header to access corresponding reports/visuals. For example, Retention metrics → Suspension/Extension Year (Figure 6).

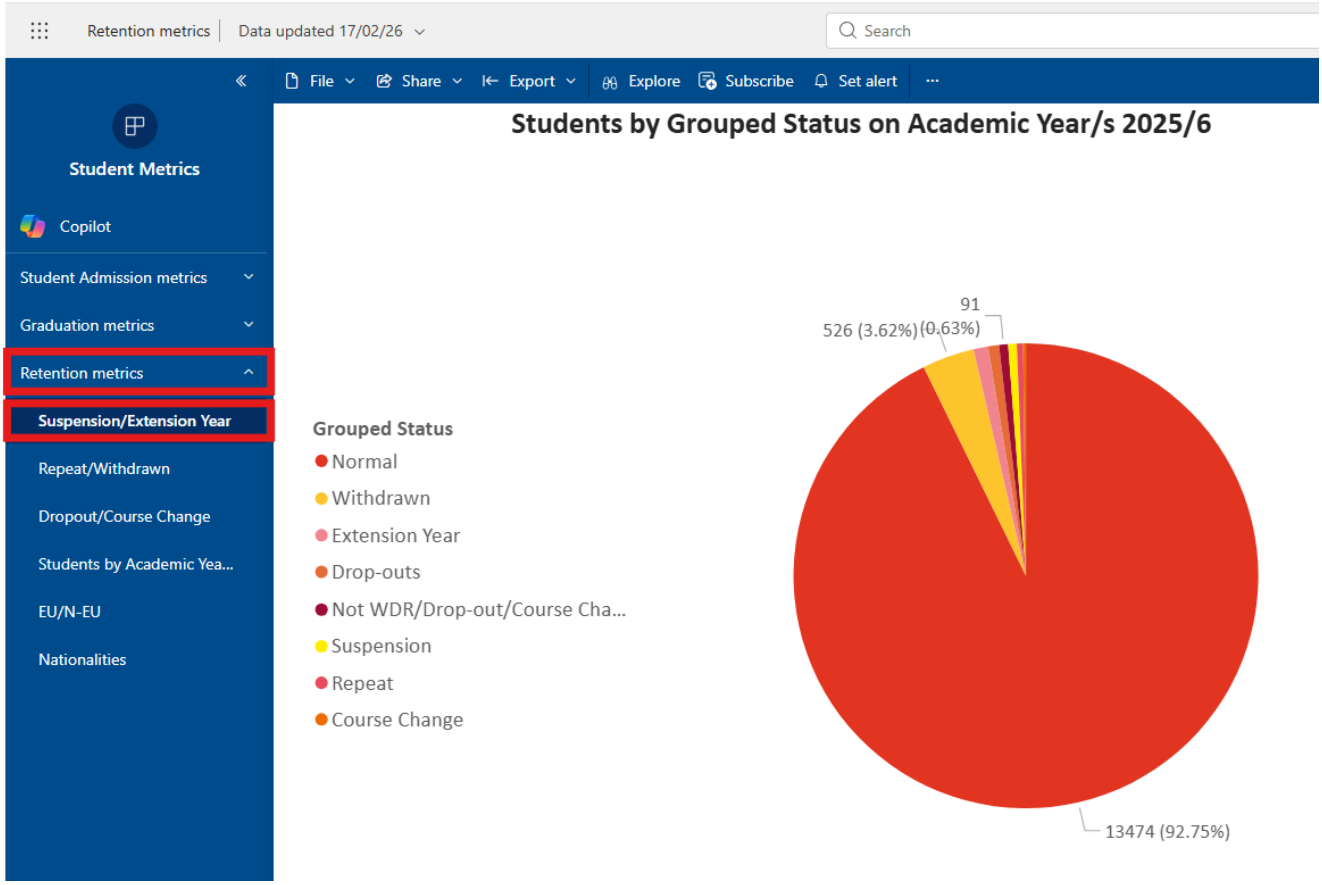


Figure 6 – Retention Metrics

2.3.1 Activity 2.1 – Using Filters

Filters can be found on the right-hand side of the dashboard, where applicable.

In addition to manually browsing and selecting values, users can:

a) Search for specific values by entering keywords in the search bar.

b) Select multiple values by clicking on the first value, then holding the Shift key and pressing the down arrow key (Figure 7).

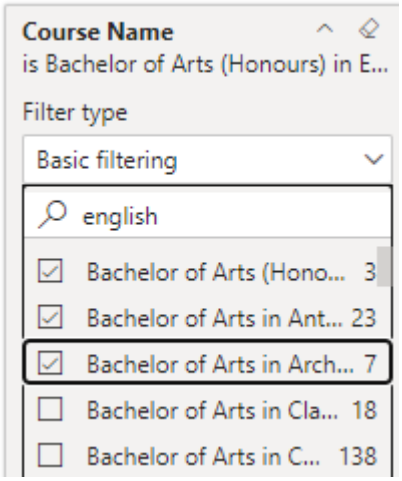


Figure 7 – Filters

Please note:

Filters only apply to the currently active dashboard and are not automatically carried over between dashboards (e.g. from Admission to Graduation metrics). They remain active until manually changed or reset, even after logging out. It is therefore recommended to always reset filters (Figure 8) before working on a dashboard to ensure that the data reflects the selection intended.

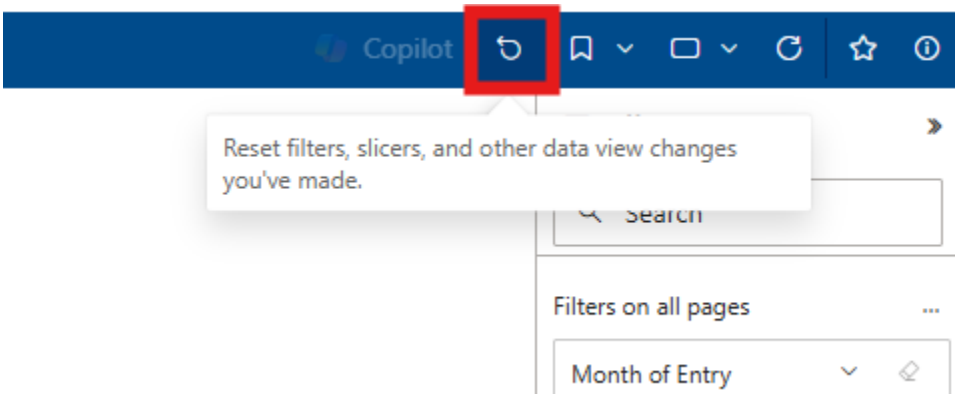


Figure 7 – Resetting Filters

2.3.2 Activity 2.2 – Using Drill-Through

Some visuals support drill-through which allows access to more detailed data.

Availability of drill-through is indicated by a designated icon. 

For example, from Applicants' Location by Region you may drill through to view data by home address location.

To use drill-through:

a) Right-click on the relevant chart.

b) Select Drill-though from the menu (Figure 9).

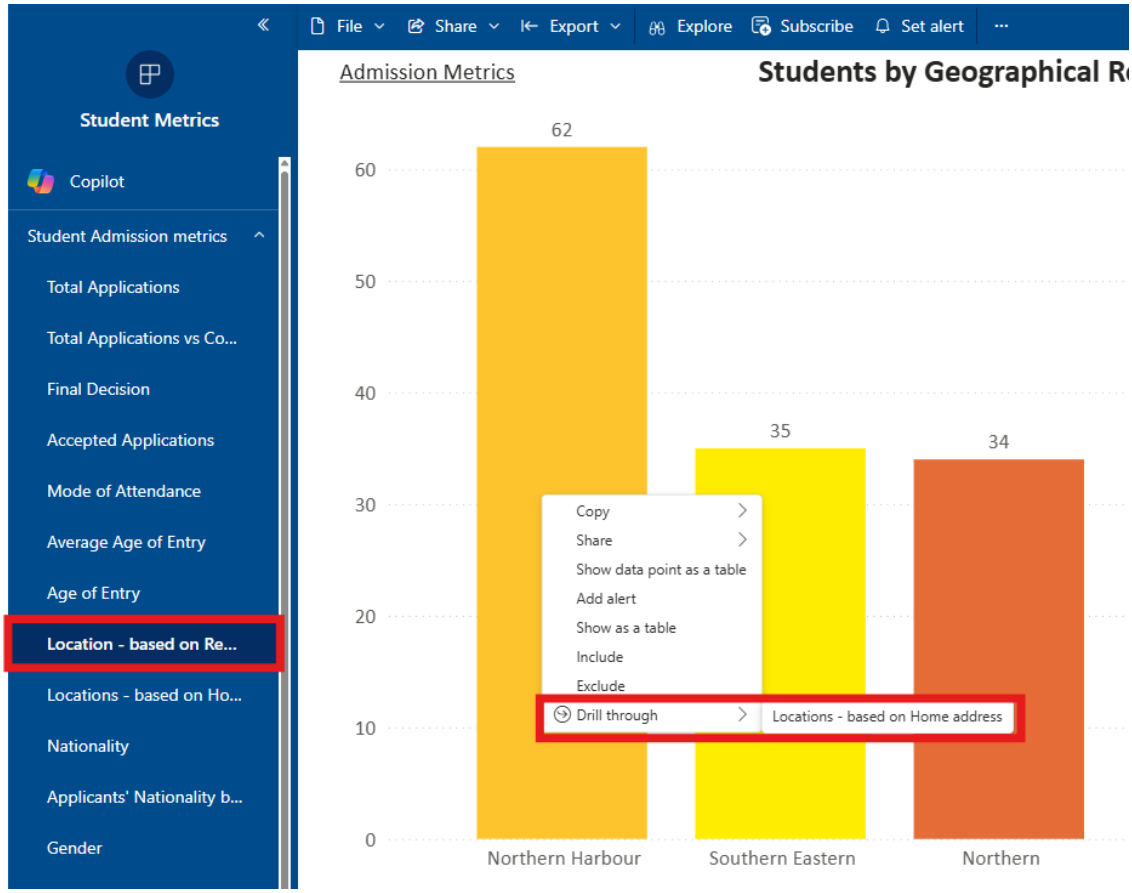


Figure 8 – Using Drill-Through

2.4 Activity 3 – Exporting Data

For reporting purposes, data can be easily exported in PDF format:

a) Click on the Export button on the top menu.

b) Select PDF (Figure 10).

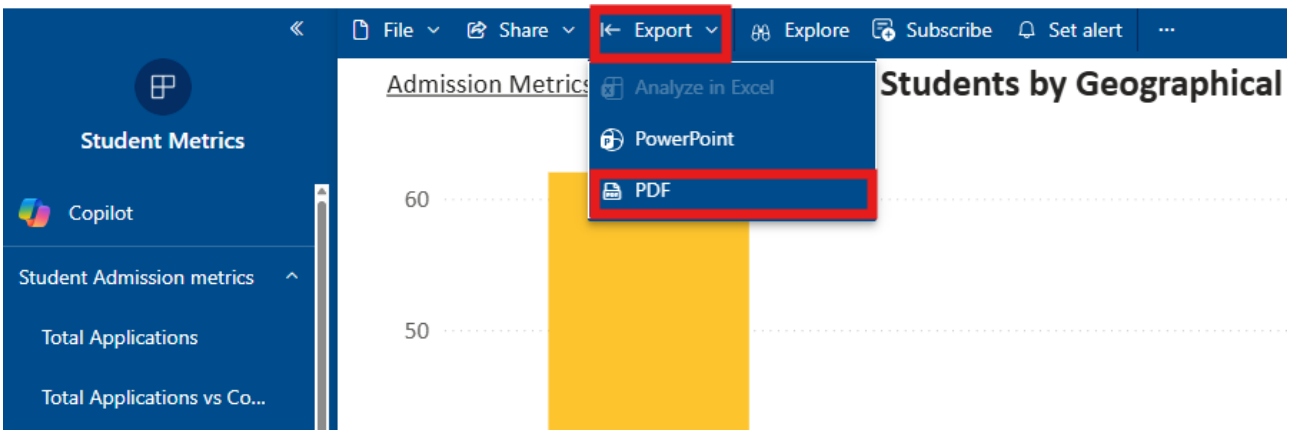


Figure 9 – Export Function

Please note:

Exported visuals do not automatically include details on applied filters, such as academic year or programme name. To include a title page with key information, ensure that the option “Exclude hidden report tabs” is unticked in the export dialogue (Figure 11).

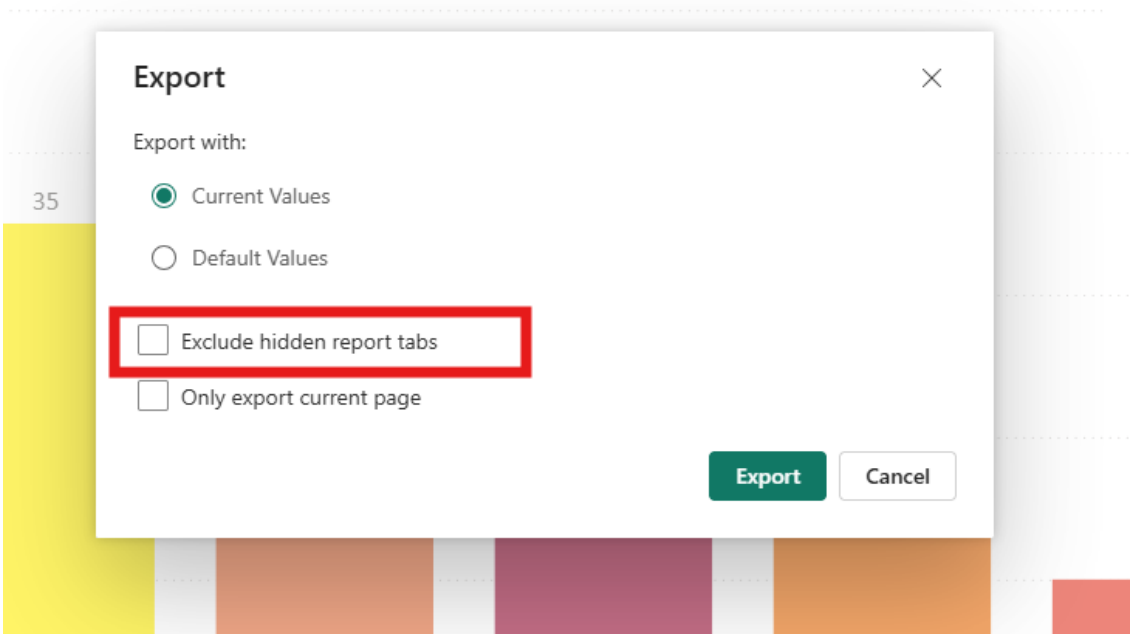


Figure 10 – Export with a Title Page