



## **2012 School Census**

**Changes to the Post 16 Learning Aims module**

Last Updated: September 2011

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## **What are the main changes to the Post 16 Learning Aims module for 2012?**

Post 16 learning aims will only be collected once a year, in the Autumn School Census. They will no longer be collected in the Summer School Census.

The Autumn School Census will capture learning aims from the previous year: this will include any that were “live” at any point during 2011/12 as well as those for the current academic year, 2012/13.

The Autumn School Census will also collect information on the outcome of the previous year’s aims. It will capture both the result, eg A, A\*, and the outcome (pass, fail or result not known) for each completed aim.

Learning aims will be collected for learners in National Curriculum Year Group 12 or above, for whom the school wishes to claim post-16 funding from the Young People’s Learning Agency (YPLA), or its successor. Previously learners in National Curriculum Year Group 11 or below studying towards level 3 (or above) qualifications have been included.

Discount codes will no longer be collected.

## **Are there any changes to the Post 16 modules for the Autumn 2011 School Census collection? [Updated]**

For 2011, the collections will remain the same: there was a collection of learning aims in the Summer School Census and there will be a further collection of learning aims in the Autumn School Census. These are the same as the equivalent collections in 2010.

## **Will schools still have to do a checking exercise in 2011 and/or subsequent years?**

A checking exercise has recently started relating to the 2009/10 success rate data for school sixth forms. This will be led by YPLA and will be similar to the exercise undertaken in Autumn 2010. Currently, there are no further checking exercises planned.

## **Which schools need to complete the Post 16 Learning Aims module? [Updated]**

The Learning Aims module is only required from secondary schools with sixth forms, including middle deemed secondary schools, City Technology Colleges and academies (including free schools). This module is not required from special schools, Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) or secondary schools without sixth forms. This applies to the 2011 and 2012 School Census.

## **Which learning aims should be included in the Autumn 2012 School Census?**

Learning aims taken in the current academic year will be collected for any learners who

- have been on roll in the school at any point between 1 August 2012 and Census Day, and
- were in Actual National Curriculum Year Group 12 or above in that period, regardless of their age, and
- for whom the school wishes to claim funding from the YPLA (or its successor)

Learning aims that were taken in the previous academic year will be collected for any learners who

- have been on roll in the school at any point between 1 August 2011 and 31 July 2012, and
- were in Actual National Curriculum Year Group 12 or above in that period, regardless of their age, and
- for whom the school wishes to claim funding from the YPLA (or its successor)

Schools should only include learning aims for those learners who have (or had at the time of the learning aims) current or main registration at the school. For dual registered pupils, funding will only be provided to the main school. All learning aims for dual registered pupils must be returned by the school which holds the pupil's main registration, ie the main school should return the learning aims being taken at both the main and subsidiary schools. Subsidiary schools should not submit learning aims in respect of pupils with subsidiary registrations.

## **Can you provide some scenarios that help explain further which learning aims should be included in the School Census? [Updated]**

Scenario One:

- Dave, aged 16, has completed key stage 4 without getting 5 GCSEs but has continued in to the school's sixth form to do a NVQ level 2 course. Would Dave's learning aims be included in the School Census?
- Yes – Dave has moved into Actual National Curriculum Year Group 12 and so his NVQ level 2 course should be reported.

Scenario Two:

- Would Gary, aged 17, who failed his GCSEs last year and is now re-taking them have his learning aims included in the School Census?
- No – we would expect Gary to be kept down in Actual National Curriculum Year Group 11 and so his learning aims would not be included in the School Census.

Scenario Three:

- Louise has progressed into the sixth form to do two A levels but is also re-taking one of her GCSEs. Should her learning aims be included?
- Yes. Louise has moved into Actual National Curriculum Year Group 12 and so her learning aims should be included in the School Census.

Scenario Four:

- Ian is 15 and in National Curriculum Year Group 11 studying for his GCSEs and has also started an A level. Should his learning aims be included?
- No. Ian is in Actual National Curriculum Year Group 11, with the majority of his learning at level 2, and so his learning aims should not be included.

Scenario Five:

- Gerry is 15 and is studying for 2 A levels and re-taking one GCSE. Should his learning aims be included?
- Yes. The majority of Gerry's learning is at level 3 and despite his youth would be expected to be in Actual National Curriculum Year Group 12 and his learning aims included in the School Census.

Scenario Six:

- Elisabeth is in Year 12 and is doing her A levels at two schools. She takes her English and French A levels at the Small School and Spanish at the Big School. Elisabeth has dual registration, with her main registration at the Small School. Which school should return which learning aims?
- The Small School should return all three learning aims - A levels in English, French and Spanish - as it holds Elisabeth's main registration and will receive funding for that pupil. The Big School should not return any learning aims for Elisabeth in the School Census.

**If a pupil is in a sixth form but is retaking GCSEs and has not progressed on to any level 3 courses of study, should he be recorded as being taught in year 11? [New]**

Yes, such a pupil would be considered to be in Actual National Curriculum Year Group 11 and so no learning aims information should be submitted for him in the School Census.

**Are the retakes funded for a Year 12 student taking ASs and retaking GCSEs? [New]**

This student has moved into the sixth form and so their retakes would be funded and information about their learning aims should be included in the School Census. Re-sits where no teaching is involved should not be included in the School Census nor would they be funded.

## **What will the data collected in the Autumn 2012 School Census be used for?**

Information collected on learning aims and their outcomes will be used to calculate qualification success rates (QSRs) for schools. QSRs measure the percentage of learning aims that were due to end during the academic year that resulted in a pass. QSRs are currently used in calculating funding for school sixth forms (SSFs), and the intention is that they will be used as a published performance measure from 2012, enabling comparison with other 16-18 providers.

## **Where can I find more information about the YPLA funding for sixth forms?**

Information is currently available on the YPLA website – <http://www.ypla.gov.uk/aboutus/ourwork/guidance/funding/>.

## **Why are you collecting results and outcomes when you already have the awarding body data?**

Currently QSRs for school sixth forms are produced by collecting data on the learning aims studied by pupils through the School Census, and matching with results data from awarding bodies. However, the Census and awarding body data need to have corresponding QANs (qualification accreditation numbers) in order to achieve a high rate of matching, and to date, this has proved difficult, resulting in a large number of aims with unknown outcomes. Collecting information about the learning aims and their outcomes direct from schools in the School Census will negate the need for matching information about learning aims with results information from awarding bodies, resulting in more accurate and timely data. Schools will also benefit from having information about learning aims and outcomes side-by-side in their systems as they will be able to use the data for their own analyses.

## **Why are changes to the current collection schedule necessary?**

The changes are necessary to produce better quality and timely QSRs. To establish whether or not learning aims were completed by their planned date, learning aims data have been collected from schools and matched to results data from awarding bodies. The matching has relied on high levels of accuracy for QANs and Discount Codes from both schools and awarding bodies and this has proved difficult to achieve. YPLA has had to undertake a burdensome data checking exercise with schools to establish the outcome of aims where it has not been possible to match the data. Because of the time taken to carry out the match and check the data, QSR data for the academic year 2009/10 will only become available for schools some six months later than the equivalent data for colleges and training providers. Colleges and training providers already supply both aims and outcomes through the Individualised Learner Record, their equivalent of the School Census.

## **Will schools still have to use the QAN Web Services website (QWS)?**

Yes.

At the beginning of the academic year schools will need to record all the information about the course(s) of study their learners are following. This will include those courses starting in the current academic year and those continuing from the previous academic year(s). In order to record the appropriate QAN, schools will need to use QWS - <https://collectdata.education.gov.uk/qwsweb/default.aspx>.

For the Autumn School Census, for those learning aims that have been completed and for which awarding bodies have provided results, schools should return the QANs provided by awarding bodies, regardless of whether or not there is already a QAN in their MIS. There is no need for schools to check these against QWS. Data for some learning aims will not appear on awarding body data and schools will need to access QWS and ensure the up to date QAN is returned for any learning aims that:

- learners withdrew or transferred from
- have been completed but for which an awarding body has not provided a result, eg because the learning aim is assessed by the school itself
- are continuing

Note that Discount Codes are not required for the School Census so schools do not need to check these in QWS for the purposes of the School Census. However, a few qualifications share the same QAN (see FAQ below). To properly record different classes and courses schools may need to distinguish between these qualifications in their MIS. In these cases the QAN will need to be used more than once and the correct QAN / Discount Code combination should be used. This will be especially important if an individual is doing more than one of the qualifications that share a QAN. Schools may use the short title to check that the correct QAN / Discount Code combination has been used.

### **If a QAN has changed during the year which one should be returned in the School Census? [New]**

For those learning aims with results the QAN provided by the awarding body should be returned in the Census. For all other learning aims the QAN correct at the time of the Census, and checked against QWS, should be returned.

### **Why are discount codes not required for the Autumn 2012 School Census?**

Discount codes are used to classify qualifications by subject area. On occasions this involves distinguishing between qualifications that share a QAN. For example a QAN for Art and Design may cover qualifications in Fine Art, Photography and Art History, each of which has a separate discount code. Discount codes were previously required to enable the Department to match learning aims data provided by schools to results data provided by

awarding bodies. As both aims and results data are being provided by schools in the 2012 collection the Department does not need to match the data and so does not require discount codes to be provided. For the production of QSRs for use in funding and performance measurement purposes, it is only necessary to be able to distinguish qualifications according to their QAN code. However, if a school is teaching two or more qualifications that share a QAN, the school should record the different Discount Codes for each of the qualifications. This will be especially important where an individual pupil is doing more than one of the qualifications that share the same QAN. Schools may use the short title to check that the correct QAN / Discount Code combination is used.

### **What information should be entered when a learner starts a learning aim?**

At the beginning of a learning aim, typically at the start of the academic year, for each learning aim that a learner is undertaking, schools will need to record the following: QAN, Learning Aim Start Date and Learning Aim Planned End Date. The system should automatically default to “continuing” for Learning Aim Status. Learning Aim Start Date and Learning Aim Planned Date should remain unchanged throughout the duration of the learning aim. There may be other data items that schools wish to record in their systems but these are the three that must be entered into systems for the purposes of the School Census when a learner starts a learning aim.

### **What information should be updated on an event driven basis?**

Learning Aim Actual End Date and Learning Aim Status should be updated on an event driven basis during the course of the academic year. The Learning Aim Status indicates whether the learner is continuing or has completed, withdrawn or transferred from the learning aim. If the Learning Aim Status is continuing (the default value) then the Learning Aim Actual End Date should be left blank. If the learner has completed, withdrawn or transferred from the learning aim then the Learning Aim Actual End Date should reflect the date the status changed.

### **In the 2011 School Census for Learning Aim Completion Status it was possible to enter the value X, data input error. This value is not available in the 2012 School Census for Learning Aim Status, why not? [New]**

This value was needed when learning aims data from schools were collected in the Autumn and Summer terms and progress between the two was monitored. Rather than deleting from their systems a learning aim that had been entered in error schools would enter X for the Learning Aim Completion Status, enter the correct learning aim and submit both records. For 2012, onwards, schools just need to keep their management information systems up to date with the correct information - they do not need to keep a record of any learning aims entered in error.

### **What information on the outcome of learning aims is required?**

Two pieces of information are required – Learning Aim Result and Learning Aim Outcome.

The Learning Aim Result should be the result of the overall examination or assessment associated with a completed learning aim eg A, A\*, distinction, provided by awarding bodies. In some school systems it may be possible to populate this field by data feeds provided by awarding bodies typically in August.

The Learning Aim Outcome shows whether the learner passed or failed the learning aim or whether the result is not known. The outcome of learning aims that have been completed must be provided in the Autumn School Census. Some school systems may be able to automatically populate this field based on the contents of the Learning Aim Result field. However, for any that do not, schools will need to manually enter the data for this field.

### **How can I determine whether or not a particular result equates to a pass or fail?**

The Department will publish a table showing for each QAN the grades that would be considered to be a pass.

For those learning aims, eg some diplomas, where results data are not provided by awarding bodies because they are assessed by schools themselves, schools will need to make a judgement themselves about whether the learning aim was passed or not and enter this information.

### **A student is in year 12, in the first year of a two year BTEC course, and at the end of the first year the course is continuing, no result is expected until the end of year 13. Would the result at the end of year 1 of the course count as a fail? [New]**

No. A result would not be expected for this student or any other that was part of the way through a course spanning more than one academic year. The Learning Aim Planned End Date would show that the course was expected to continue for another year and the Learning Aim Status of 1 (the learner is continuing or intending to continue the learning activities leading to the learning aim) would demonstrate that a result is not expected for this student.

### **What if a result has been appealed and the outcome of the appeal is unknown at the time of the Autumn Census?**

If the initial result being appealed equated to a Learning Aim Outcome of fail, then “result not known” should be returned for the Learning Aim Outcome and the Learning Aim Result field should be left blank.

If the initial result being appealed equated to a Learning Aim Outcome of pass, then “pass” should be returned for the Learning Aim Outcome. The

result provided by the awarding body should be returned for the Learning Aim Result (even though it is under appeal).

### **Will uncashed AS levels affect the QSR?**

Yes. From the 2010/11 academic year, performance funding and success rates for all qualifications, including AS levels, will be calculated according to when the qualifications are due to end (ie the Planned End Date), regardless of whether or not they are cashed in (claimed). Any AS levels that have a Planned End Date one year after the Learning Aim Start Date that are not cashed in will be treated as fails for funding and success rate purposes. If a learner continues their study beyond the Planned End Date entered at the start of the learning aim the Planned End Date must not be changed.

### **Is there any impact on funding for courses that start on 1 June as the YPLA academic year starts on 1 August? [New]**

Under the current method for allocating funds yes. Schools are unlikely to receive any extra funding in the academic year 2011/12 for any learning aims that start on 1 June 2012. For the following academic year, 2012/13, schools may lose a small proportion of funding (up to 15%) for the part of the course delivered in the previous academic year, if the funding cap for that year has already been reached. In addition, any pupils who start learning aims on 1 June but do not come back at the start of the Autumn term may be ruled to have been on the course for more than 6 weeks and so would be treated as a failure for success rates purposes.

### **How can I find out more about the funding implications of the choices the school makes? [New]**

YPLA does regular briefing sessions for schools and colleges about funding allocations. In addition the Open Book data training sessions held with schools and local authorities have provided more support. These sessions will continue to be run during 2011.

### **What about achievements in September / October? Should they be returned in October? [Updated]**

Yes, results and outcomes should be returned for each learning aim, where the result/outcome is known at the time of submitting the data.

### **Where and in what form will the data be published?**

The YPLA (and its successor) intends to publish QSR reports for each provider via secure channels, eg the YPLA Extranet. After a thorough quality assurance process, and subject to an assessment of data quality, the YPLA would make aggregate QSR results available publicly. The exact location is yet to be decided. There are also plans to publish QSR data through performance tables in the future.