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Students

The logo for the Office for Students, featuring a dark blue square with a yellow square in the top right corner containing the letters 'OfS' in white.

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ILR training – The student and entry qualifications

Wednesday 29 July 2020

What we will cover

- Definitions of key fields
- What we use these for
- What we expect from providers in determining these
- Evidence that should be kept
- Common issues found
- Examples
- Improving data quality
- Any questions?

Fields we will cover

- Learner reference number
 - Family name
 - Given names
 - Date of birth
 - Domicile
 - Sex
 - DLA
 - LLDDHealthProb
- LLDDCat
 - PrimaryLLDD
 - Ethnicity
 - UCASAppID and UCASPerID
 - SSN
 - SOC2000 and SEC
 - QUALENT3
 - ELQ

What we use this data for

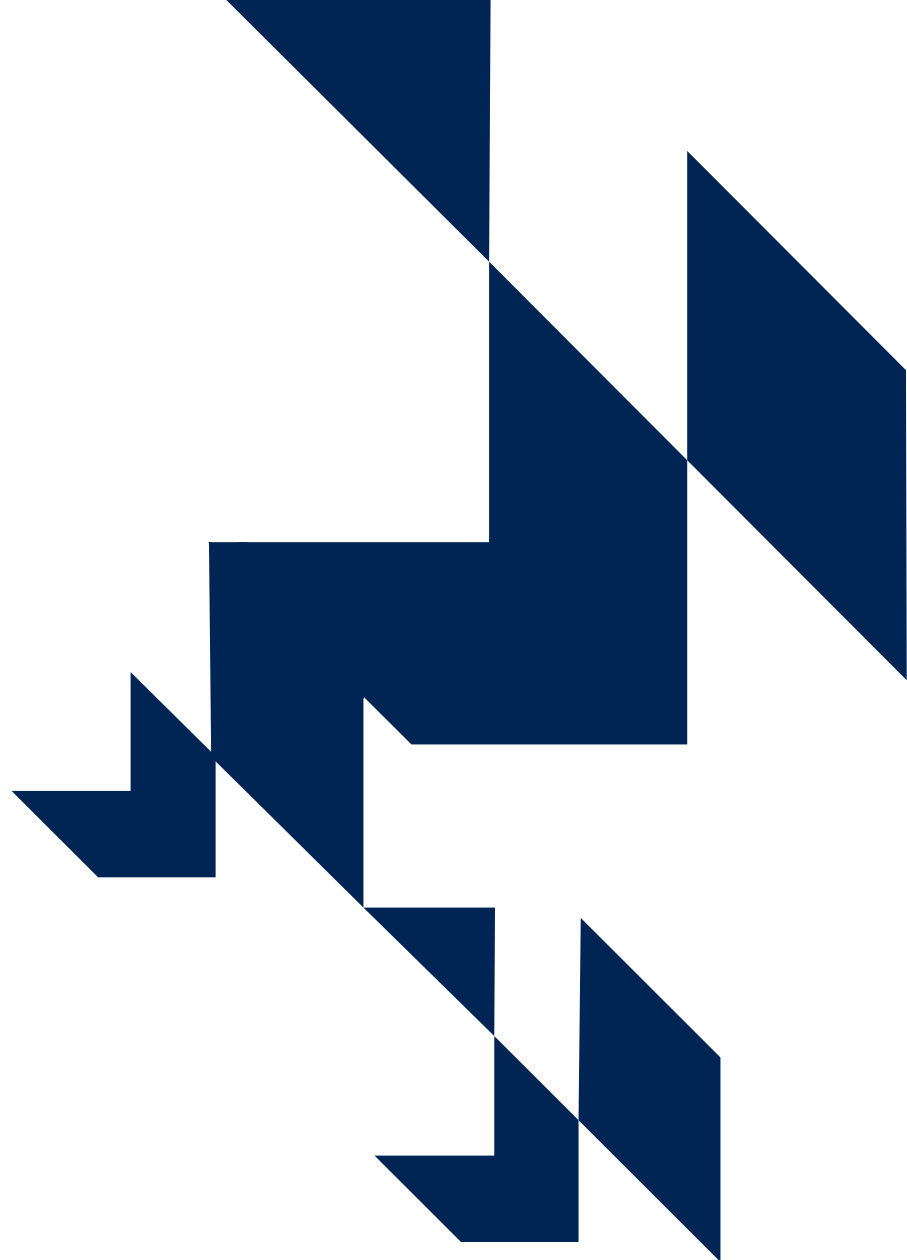
- Personal data is used to link Individualised Learner Record (ILR) data to other data sources (such as Student Loans Company (SLC) data) for analysis
- Some fields, including sex, ethnicity, date of birth, domicile and disability are used for benchmarking and performance indicators
- Some fields, including date of birth, and fields relating to health and disability are used for funding purposes
- QVALENT3 is used in the benchmarking of performance indicators, particularly the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) and for funding purposes.

The student

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Key fields



LearnRefNumber

The provider's reference number for the learner as assigned by the provider.

- The learner reference number must be retained for the learner for any period of study with the provider and must not be re-used for a different learner
- A single learner reference number should be used for each learner
- Providers must not include personal data that could be used to identify a learner in the learner reference number, including parts of the student's name.

FamilyName and GivenNames

The surname or family name of the learner. The forenames (first names) of the learner.

- These fields should be consistent with official identity documents, including middle names
- FamilyName should not include maiden names
- Providers should maintain copies of official identification, and of official name changes, or evidence that this has been checked.

DateOfBirth

The date of birth of the learner.

- Providers should maintain copies of official identification or evidence that this has been checked
- Use the date format YYYY-MM-DD.

Common issues and good practice

Common issues:

- field values do not match identification
- middle names excluded
- no evidence that identification has been checked.

Good practice:

- clear guidance to staff on what they should check against identification
- processes to record that checks have been done
- sufficient oversight to ensure checks are conducted.

Domicile

This field holds the country code of the student's permanent or home address prior to entry to the course. It is not necessarily the correspondence address of the student.

- The separate country codes XF, XG, XH, XI must be used, but if domicile is known to be United Kingdom but the individual country is not known, XK must be used
- The code GB is invalid for domicile but must be used for **nationality**. The codes XF, XG, XH, XI, XK are invalid for **nationality**
- The Channel Islands and Isle of Man do not count as UK domicile and will not be classed as such in any OfS analysis.

Common issues and good practice

Common issues:

- insufficient information gathered from student
- no evidence that Domicile is checked or evidence reviewed
- errors in coding.

Good practice:

- students should be asked to confirm their permanent address prior to entry
- providers should conduct sufficient checks of accuracy
- checks targeted at students with higher risk of errors in domicile.

Sex and ethnicity

The legal sex of the learner. The ethnic origin of the learner, based on the 2011 census.

- Providers can rely on the student's declaration of these fields
- Data held should be reviewed periodically and checked with the student at least once a year.

Health and disability

- LearnFAMType - DLA
 - To indicate if the learner is in receipt of Disabled Students' Allowances.
- LLDDHealthProb
 - Whether the learner considers that they have a learning difficulty, disability or health problem.
- LLDDCat
 - The nature of the learner's disability, learning difficulty and/or health problem.
- PrimaryLLDD
 - The most significant or primary learning difficulty, disability or health problem, that impacts on the learner's education.

Common issues and good practice

Common issues:

- errors in coding.

Good practice:

- categories collected from students match valid ILR categories
- field values checked with students on re-enrolment.

UCASAppID, UCASPerID and SSN

The UCAS application number and personal identifier. The assigned Student Support Number.

- These fields are not mandatory but providers are encouraged to return them
- When SSN is returned GROSSFEE and NETFEE are not required.

Common issues and good practice

Common issues:

- not stored in student record systems or not returned
- errors in values returned.

Good practice

- returned where available.

SEC and SOC2000

Occupation and socioeconomic classification of student if 21 or over, or their parent or guardian.

- Not mandatory but providers are encouraged to return
- Available from *J for students that apply through UCAS
- Information from student can be relied upon
- Sufficient information to allow accurate coding should be obtained and kept
- Must relate to student if 21 or over on entry to the programme of study, otherwise their parent or guardian.

Common issues and good practice

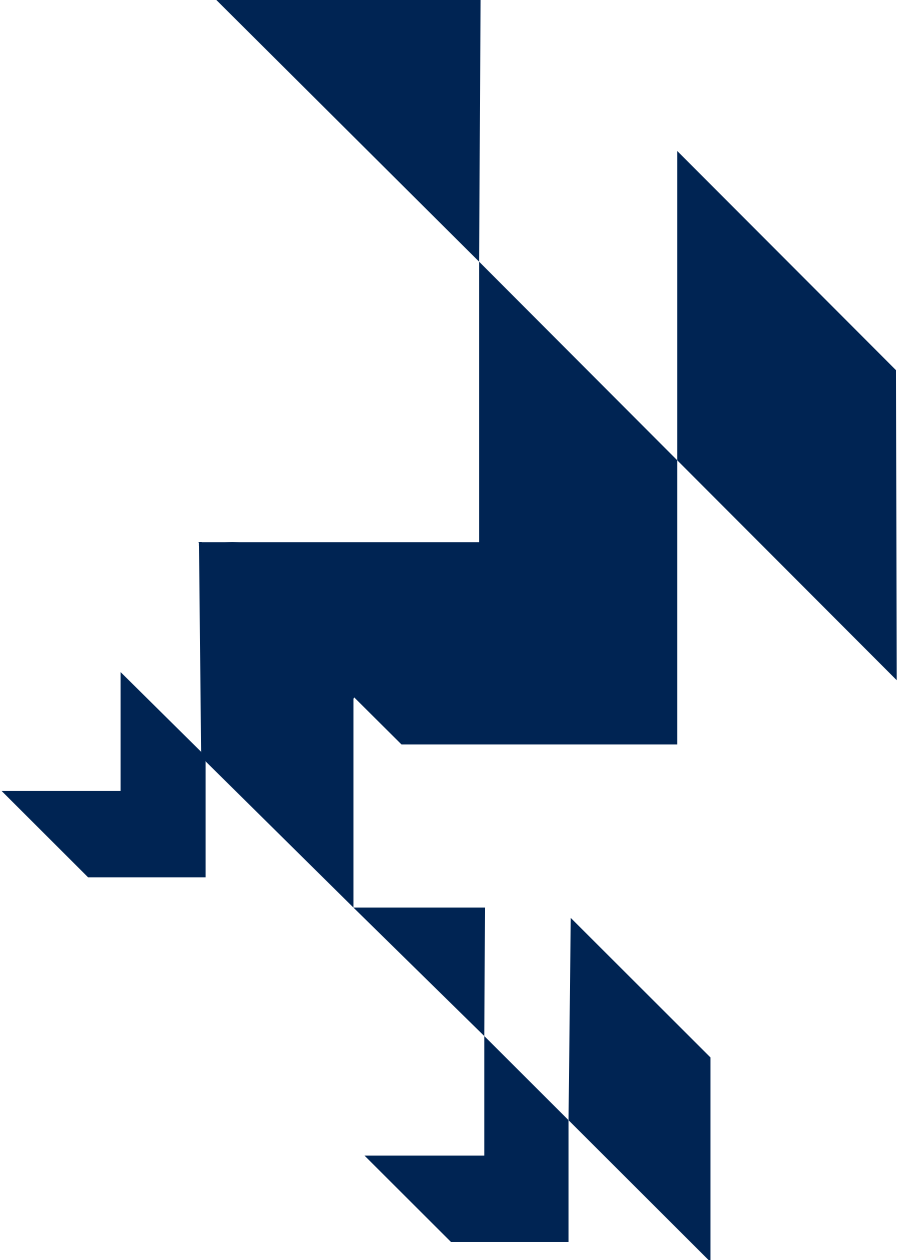
Common issues:

- insufficient information gathered from students to code accurately
- errors in coding
- relying on students to specify a SOC code resulting in inaccuracies.

Good practice:

- questions asked of students are clear about the different requirements depending on their age at entry.

Data quality



Validation and internal checks

Could include:

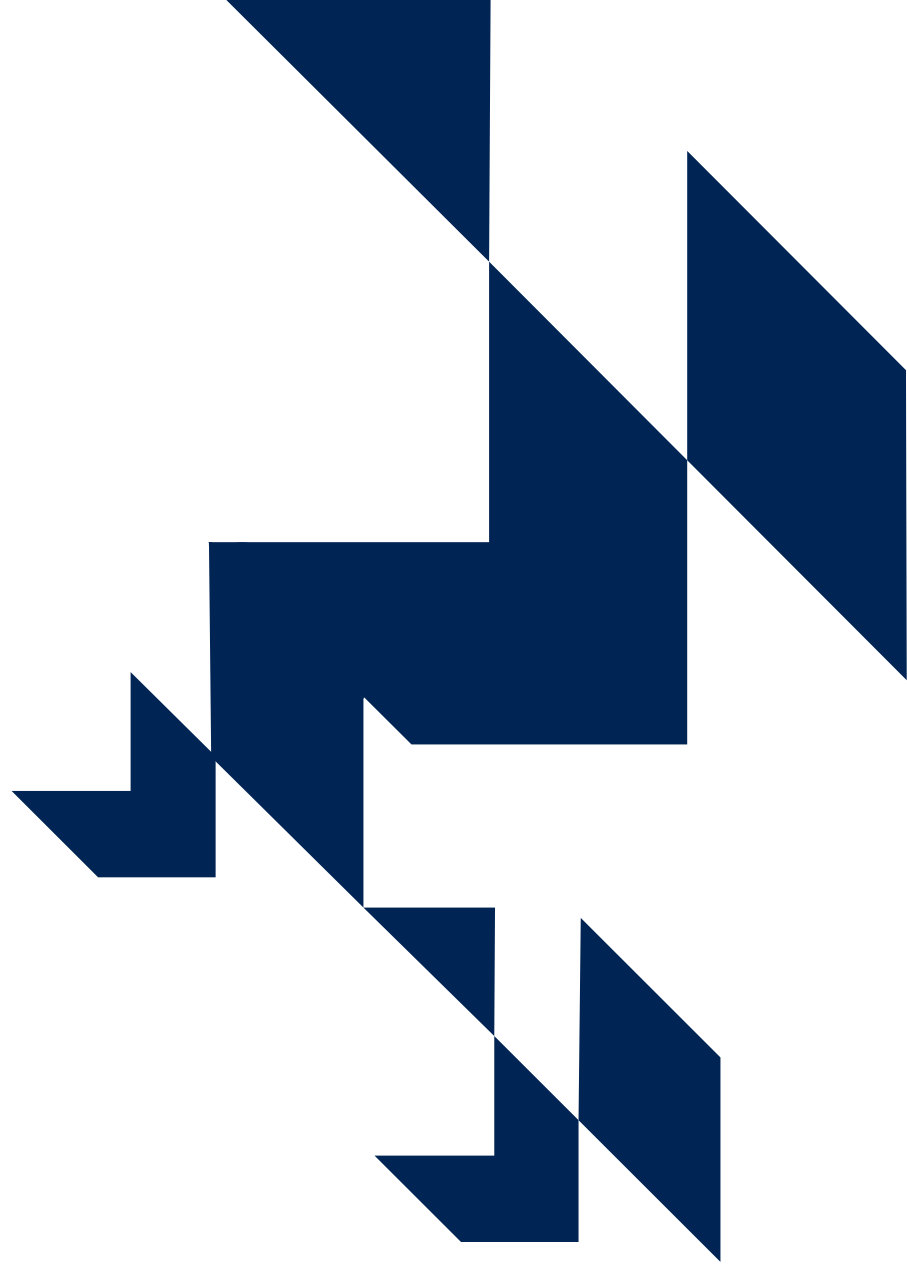
- spot checks of data held where this is input manually
- double-checking personal data held with the student after it has been input
- checks that date of birth is credible
- checks that fields are populated
- enhanced checks of domicile for students with overseas qualifications on entry.

The data checking tool

Queries relevant to this data include:

- high number of unknowns:
 - age
 - ethnicity
 - disability
 - SOC2000
 - SEC
 - UCASAppID
- student demographic splits.

Questions?

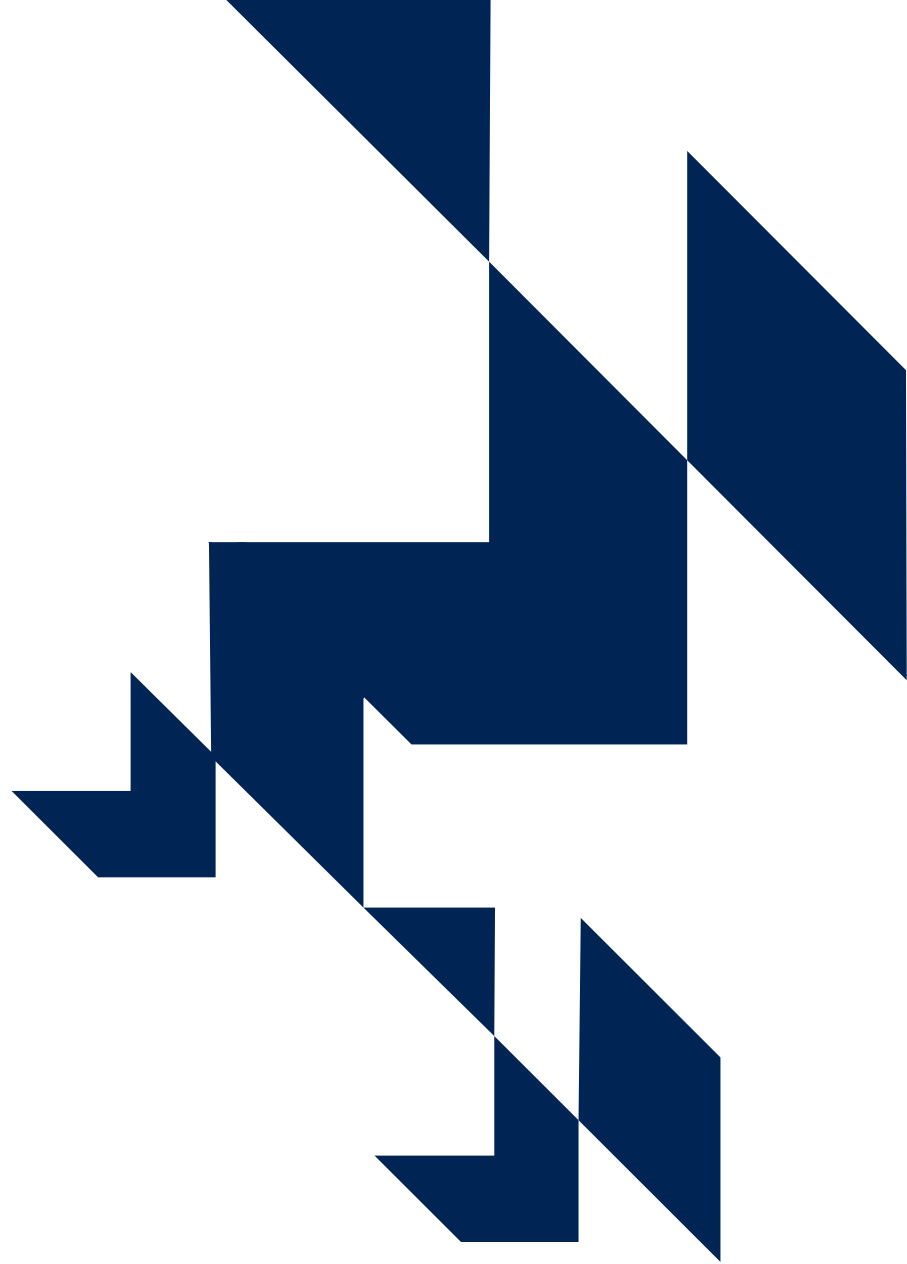


Qualifications on entry

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Key fields



QUALENT3

The student's highest qualification on entry to the instance.

- Not necessarily the qualification needed for entry to the course
- Should not be updated for qualifications gained during the instance
- Codes for a mix of qualifications should be used when the student has more than one type of highest qualification
- UK NARIC can advise on the level of overseas qualifications.

QVALENT3

- Providers should ask students for details of qualifications they hold, with sufficient detail to code QVALENT3
- UCAS/personal learning record (PLR) data should be used to verify qualifications held.

Examples: QVALENT3

A student enters with two Level 3 BTEC diplomas. QVALENT3 should be coded as P41 to reflect that the student has entered with Level 3 diplomas.

A student enters a HND with A-levels and a Level 3 BTEC diploma. QVALENT3 should be coded as P93 to reflect that the student enters with a mix of Level 3 qualifications which are subject to UCAS tariff.

Examples: QUALENT3

A student enters a degree in chemistry for which A-levels, or equivalent qualifications, in mathematics and chemistry are required for entry. The student has these along with a foundation degree in music. QUALENT3 should be J10 to reflect that the student enters with a foundation degree, although this is not required for entry to the course.

A student enters with a Romanian Bacalaureate as their highest qualification. As this is an international qualification, UK NARIC should be consulted to identify the equivalent level. UK NARIC determine that it is equivalent to Level 3, therefore QUALENT3 should be P80 to reflect that it is an international Level 3 equivalent qualification.

Instance vs Aim

A coherent engagement with the provider by a student aiming towards the award of one or more qualifications, or of credit.

- May include one or more qualification aims
- When students progress directly from one qualification to another at the same broad level (i.e. undergraduate or postgraduate taught) this should be treated as the same instance
- When students transfer between courses at the same broad level at the same provider this should be treated as the same instance
- Students can, exceptionally, follow two distinct instances concurrently.

Examples: QUALENT3

A student enters a provider with A-levels, completes a HNC in engineering then progresses immediately to a HND top-up in engineering at the same provider. The HND should be considered as part of the same instance and QUALENT3 should be P50 to record that the student entered the instance with A-levels.

The same student enrolls on a part-time HNC in Spanish in their second year of study, alongside the HND in engineering. As the two qualifications are distinct and as credits from the HNC in Spanish cannot count towards the HND in engineering, the HNC in Spanish is treated as a second instance. QUALENT3 should be C30 as at the time of entry to this instance the student had already secured a HNC.

Examples: QUALENT3

A student studies and achieves a HNC, having entered with both A-levels and a level 3 BTEC diploma. The student leaves the college with no intention of returning. A year later they decide to enrol for a HND top-up. QUALENT3 should be returned as C30 to record the HNC as the lengthy break in study means study towards the HND should be treated as a new instance.

Common issues

- Inaccurate coding
- Insufficient information gathered from students/other sources to determine QUALENT3
- Insufficient evidence to verify QUALENT3 maintained
- Reliance on students to identify the level of qualifications held
- Standard use of '80 – other qualification at level X' codes.

Good practice

- Students asked for full details of all qualifications held
- Evidence of qualifications examined and evidence of this check maintained
- Sufficient evidence maintained to allow coding to be double-checked
- Effective searches of UCAS/PLR/providers records to identify qualifications held
- Sufficient training for staff coding and checking the field
- Validation and other checks aimed at identifying errors.

ELQ

Captures whether a student is aiming for an equivalent or lower qualification (ELQ) than one already achieved.

- If the student is aiming for an ELQ this should be classified as exempt or non-exempt in line with Higher Education Students Early Statistics (HESES) guidance
- Should be reviewed each year and revised to reflect qualifications gained.

Examples: ELQ

A student enters a provider with a Level 3 BTEC diploma and is aiming for HND in business. The qualification they are aiming for is higher than the one they already hold and so ELQ should be 3 (Not ELQ).

A student enters a provider with a BA in English literature and is aiming for foundation degree in social care. The qualification they are aiming for is lower than the one they already hold, however as they are aiming for a foundation degree which is exempt from the ELQ policy, ELQ should be 2 (Exempt ELQ).

Common issues and good practice

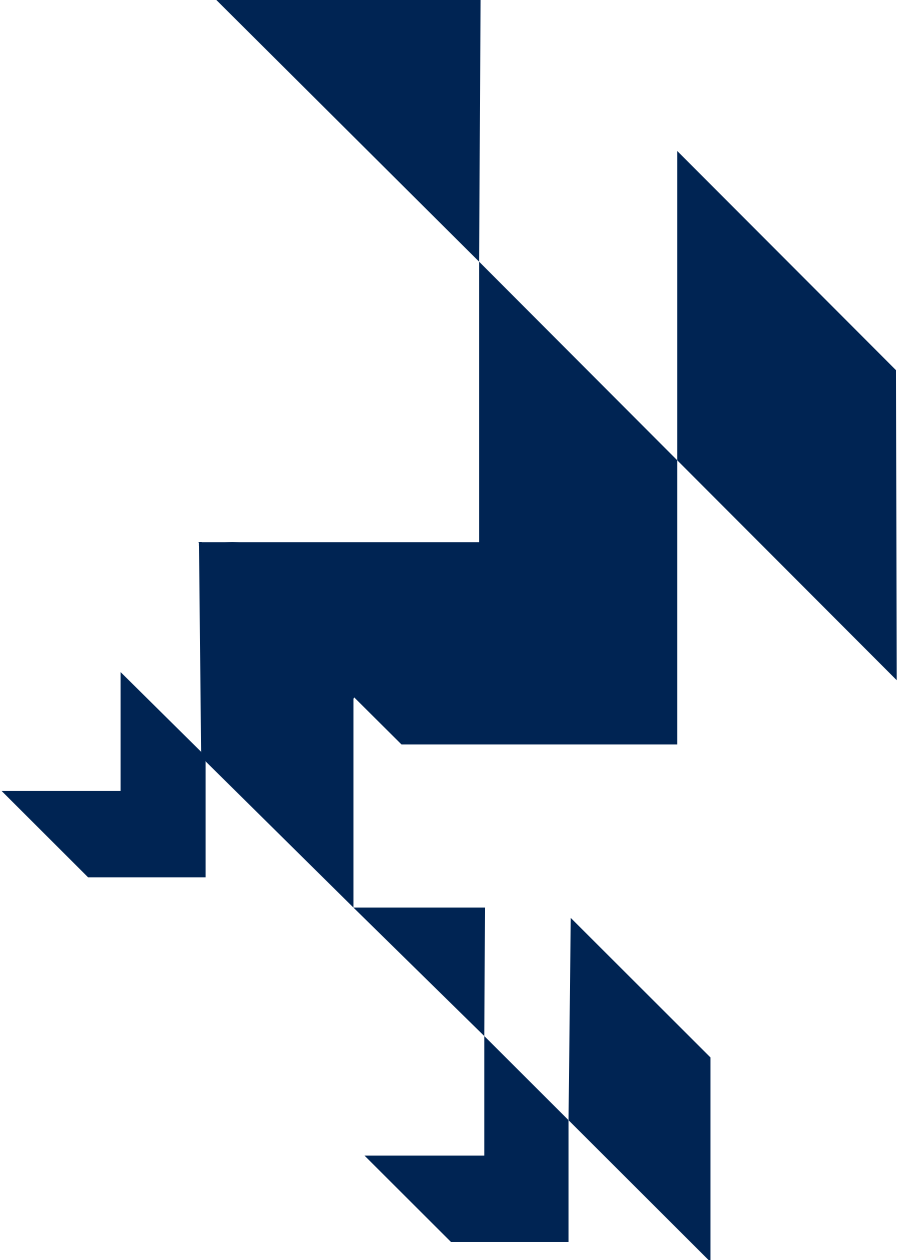
Common issues:

- inaccurate coding
- insufficient evidence of entry qualifications gathered
- inconsistent with QVALENT3.

Good practice:

- checks of ELQ by comparing qualification aim and QVALENT3
- Risk-based checking – students entering higher education at 18 at lower risk of ELQ
- robust systems to review ELQ each year.

Data quality



Validation and internal checks

Could include:

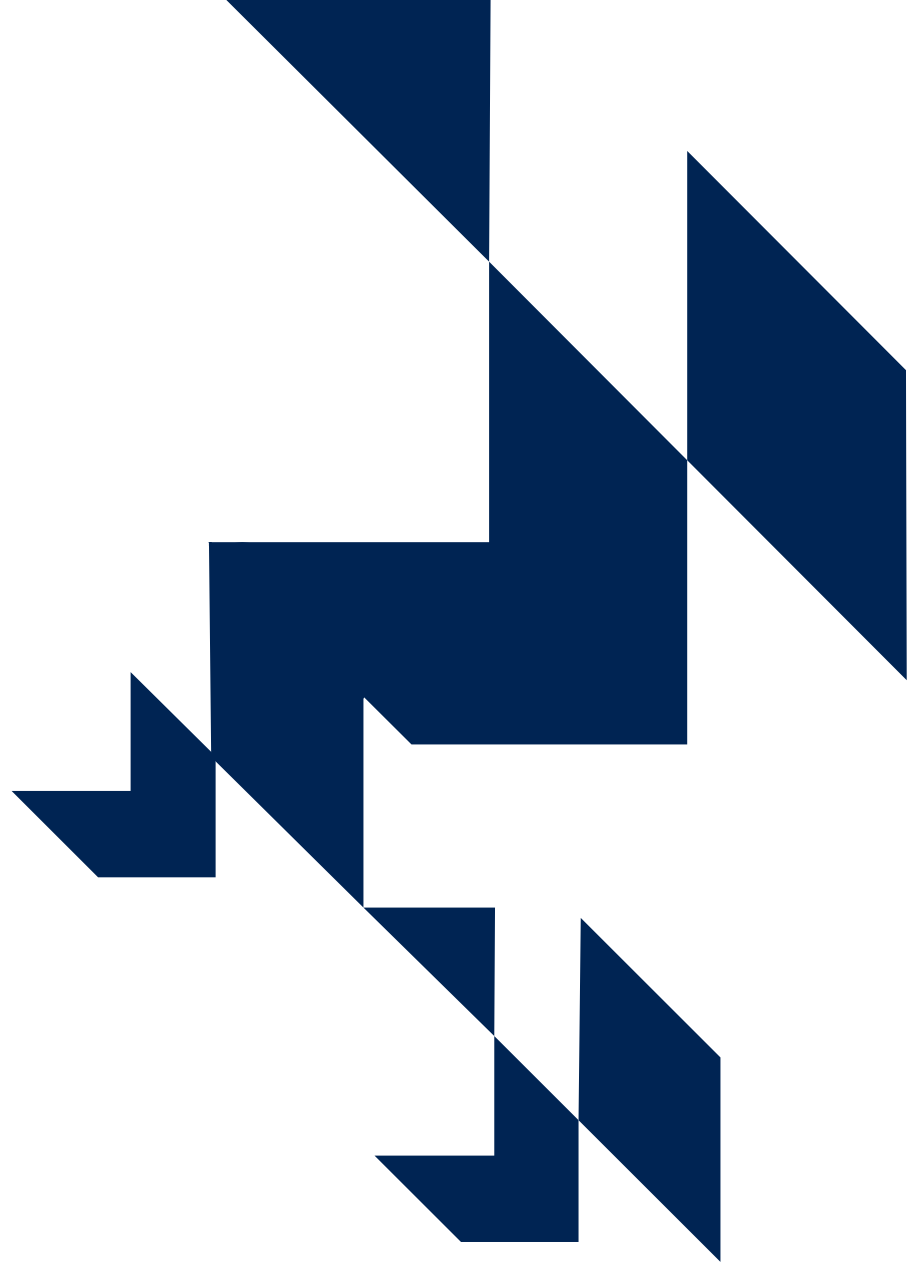
- double-checking that coding of qualifications is appropriate
- checks that where P80 is used for home students this is genuine
- checks of students with higher than expected entry qualifications for their course
- checks of students with higher than expected entry qualifications for their age
- reviews of records with unusual QUALENT3 values for the provider
- check ELQ=9 (not required) used appropriately
- Double-checking of ELQ for mature students.

The data checking tool

Queries relevant to this data include:

- high number of unknown QVALENT3
- proportions of students by entry qualification.

Questions?



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Thank you for listening

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