

**Office for
Students**



2019-20 ILR data checking tool

2021 NSS target list technical document

2021 NSS target list algorithms

Enquiries to ILRData@officeforstudents.org.uk

Publication date 1 September 2020

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Purpose

1. This document describes the method used to generate the target list of students to be included in the 2021 National Student Survey (NSS). Providers should check the target list for its accuracy, and will need to use this to provide contact details to Ipsos MORI for students in the NSS target list (NSSEXCL = 0).
2. The NSS19 comparison output can be used by further education providers to review their NSS21 target list and to verify and correct their 2019-20 individualised student data before signing off the final data with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).
3. The NSS19 comparison is formed of two files. These are:
 - a. NSS19 comparison workbook 'NSS19_DCT_XXXXXXXX.xlsx' (where XXXXXXXXX is the UK Provider Reference Number (UKPRN) for the provider).
 - b. NSS19 comparison individualised file 'NSS19_DCT_XXXXXXXX_IND.csv'.

Details of how to use individualised files are given on the Office for Students (OfS) website at: www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/supplying-data/working-with-individualised-files/.
4. These files can be accessed from the '2019-20 Data checking tool' area of the OfS portal. Access details will be sent to the appropriate contacts at providers when the data checking tool is available.
5. This document is aimed at readers with in-depth knowledge of the data. Readers are advised to have a copy of the following to hand when using this document:
 - a. 'Specification of the individualised learner record for 2017-18' (available from ESFA via <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ilr-guides-and-templates-for-2017-to-2018>).
 - b. 'Specification of the individualised learner record for 2018-19' (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ilr-specification-validation-rules-and-appendices-2018-to-2019>).
 - c. 'Specification of the individualised learner record for 2019-20' (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ilr-guides-and-templates-for-2019-to-2020>).
6. Throughout this document, fields taken from the ILR or derived as part of the target list are shown in capitals using the names given in Tables 1 and 2 respectively.
7. OfS staff will access data relating to NSS target lists.

Using the individualised file

8. You should use the individualised file 'NSS19_DCT_XXXXXXXX_IND.csv' and comparison workbook 'NSS19_DCT_XXXXXXXX.csv' when working through this document. These show the assignment of records to categories by our algorithms and, where applicable, provides the data that has been used to determine their exclusion from the relevant population. Please note the ILR is restricted to learning aims described as recognised higher education before generating the target list. Recognised higher education, for OfS funding purposes, is defined in Annex B of the Higher Education Students Early Statistics survey 2019-20 (HESES19) publication (available at: www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/heses19).

Table 1: Fields used to generate the target list

Name	Description	Data set	Column in individualised file*
AIMSEQNUMBER†	Learning aim data set sequence	ILR	C
DATEOFBIRTH	Learner date of birth	ILR	AK
LEARNACTENDDATE	Learning actual end date	ILR	AD
LEARNAIMREF†	Learning aim reference	ILR	L
LEARNPLANENDDATE	Learning planned end date	ILR	AC
LEARNREFNUMBER	Learner reference number	ILR	B
LEARNSTARTDATE	Learning start date	ILR	AB
MODESTUD	Mode applicable to Higher Education in Further Education Students survey (HEIFES)	ILR	AH
MSTUFEE	Major source of tuition fees	ILR	AJ
NUMHUS	Learner instance number	ILR	D

PROGTYPE	Programme type	ILR	AM
PROVSPECDELMON [†]	Provider-specified learning aim data	ILR	See Table 2
PROVSPECDELMONOCUR [†]	The occurrence of provider specified learning aim data	ILR	See Table 2
PROVSPECLEARNMON [†]	Provider-specified learner data	ILR	See Table 2
PROVSPECLEARNMONOCUR [†]	The occurrence of provider specified learner data	ILR	See Table 2
STULOAD	Learner full-time equivalence (FTE)	ILR	Y
UKPRN	UK provider reference number	ILR	A
ULN [†]	Unique learner number	ILR	E
YEARSTU	Year of programme of study	ILR	AG

* The individualised file NSS19_DCT_XXXXXXXXX_IND.csv, downloadable from the OfS portal (see www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/supplying-data/submitting-data-through-the-ofs-portal/).

[†] These fields are not used to generate the target list but are included in the individualised file to allow easy identification of students.

Description of derived fields

9. Here we give details of the derived fields contained in the individualised file.

Table 2: Derived fields

Field name	Description	Paragraph	Column in individualised file*
NSSEXPEND	Expected end date	12	AE
OFSAWARD [†]	Indicates the type of awarding powers held by the awarding body of a qualification.	23	U
STULOAD17	2017-18 learner FTE	16	Z
STULOAD18	2018-19 learner FTE	17	AA
AGE31JUL	Evaluates learner age as of 31 July 2020	13	AL
NSSEXCL	Reason for exclusion from 2021 NSS target list	26-27	M
NSSEXCL1 – NSSEXCL128	Reason(s) for a student's exclusion	19-25	N-T
NSSNHS_F	Indicates whether the student is NHS-funded	14	AI
OFSQAIM [†]	Allocates aims to broad categories of higher education	15,22,23	V
OFSFUNDAIM [†]	Indicates whether a learning aim meets the definition of recognised higher education for OfS funding purposes ^{††}	23	W
APPRENTICE	Indicates whether the student is studying a degree level apprenticeship	15	AN
PROVSPECLEARNMON_A PROVSPECLEARNMON_B	Provider-specified learner data	28	F-G
PROVSPECDELMON_A PROVSPECDELMON_B	Provider-specified learning aim data	29	H-K

PROVSPECDELMON_C			
PROVSPECDELMON_D			
NSSTOTFTE	Total FTE for course	18	X
NSSYEARADJ	This field evaluates a year adjustment which determines whether the student has been dormant	11	AF

* The individualised file NSS19_DCT_FXXXXXXXXX_IND.csv, downloadable from the OfS portal (see www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/supplying-data/submitting-data-through-the-ofs-portal/).

† For a full definition of this field please refer to ‘2019-20 ILR data checking tool: Classifying learning aims technical document’ (available via www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/data-checking-tools/2019-20-ilr-data-checking-tool/).

†† As per paragraphs 1-2 of Annex B of ‘Higher Education Students Early Statistics survey 2019-20 (HESES19)’ (www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/heses19/).

Linking between years

10. We link between years in order to determine the FTE for the student on a single programme of study in the previous two years. A programme of study is linked over years by UKPRN, LEARNREFNUMBER, and NUMHUS. In cases where we cannot link using these fields, we link by UKPRN, LEARNREFNUMBER, and LEARNAIMREF instead; only student FTE is taken from previous years’ ILR data. If we cannot link using a unique LEARNAIMREF then no link is made.

NSSYEARADJ

11. This field evaluates a year adjustment which determines whether the student has been dormant.

Value	Description	Definition
$(31 \text{ July } 2020 - \text{LEARNSTARTDATE})^\dagger - \text{YEARSTU}$	Year adjustment	$\text{YEARSTU} \neq 99, \text{ BLANK}$
0	Otherwise	Otherwise

[†] Rounded up to the nearest year.

NSSEXPEND (Column AE)

12. This field evaluates an expected end date for the student, adjusting for years where they were dormant. This is calculated as $\text{NSSEXPEND} = \text{LEARNPLANENDDATE} + \text{NSSYEARADJ}$ years.

AGE31JUL (Column AL)

13. This field has been added to ensure that all students in the NSS 2021 population are at least 16 years of age in their final year of study. It evaluates the age of the student on the 31 July 2020.

NSSNHS_F (Column AI)

14. This field indicates whether the student is NHS-funded.

Value	Description	Definition
1	NHS-funded	$\text{MSTUFEE} = 31$
0	Otherwise	Otherwise

APPRENTICE (Column AN)

15. This field indicates whether the student is studying a degree level apprenticeship.

Value	Description	Definition
1	Apprentice	PROGTYPE = 20,21,22,23,25 and OFSQAIM = FIRST
0	Otherwise	Otherwise

STULOAD17 (Column Z)

16. This field contains the learner FTE (STULOAD) for 2017-18. This is obtained using the linking method described in paragraph 10.

STULOAD18 (Column AA)

17. This field contains the learner FTE (STULOAD) for 2018-19. This is obtained using the linking method described in paragraph 10.

NSSTOTFTE (Column X)

18. We use three years' data to estimate the total FTE for four years of the programme of study. This is calculated as

$NSSTOTFTE = STULOAD17 + STULOAD18 + STULOAD + STULOAD$. For the fourth year we assume the FTE returned on the 2019-20 ILR.

NSSEXCL1 (Column N)

19. This field indicates whether a student was excluded because they were under 16 years of age on 31 July 2020.

Value	Description	Definition
1	Student under 16 years of age on 31 July 2020	AGE31JUL < 16
0	Otherwise	Otherwise

NSSEXCL2 (Column O)

20. This field indicates whether the student was excluded because they were inactive during the academic year.

Value	Description	Definition
1	Student inactive	STULOAD = 0, BLANK
0	Otherwise	Otherwise

NSSEXCL4 (Column P)

21. This field indicates whether a student is expected to complete during the survey year.

Value	Description	Definition
1	Student left before survey year or expected end date not in survey year	LEARNACTENDDATE ≤ 31 January 2021 or NSSEXPEND ≤ 31 January 2021 or NSSEXPEND ≥ 1 February 2022
0	Otherwise	Otherwise

NSSEXCL8 (Column Q)

22. This field indicates whether the student is on a short course.

Value	Description	Definition
1	Student on short course	LEARNSTARTDATE ≥ 1 August 2020 or (LEARNPLANENDDATE – LEARNSTARTDATE) ≤ 365 or (MODESTUD = 3, 99 and NSSTOTFTE ≤ 100) or OFSQAIM = HNC, FDBC
0	Otherwise	Otherwise

NSSEXCL32 (Column R)

23. This field indicates whether the student is on a programme of study that does not lead to an undergraduate qualification.

Value	Description	Definition
1	Programmes of study that do not lead to undergraduate qualifications	OFSFUNDAIM = 0 or (OFSQAIM = DTLLS, CERTED, DET and OFSAWARD = FOUDEG, HN, OTHER, BLANK) or OFSQAIM = CET, CTLLS, FE, HIGHCERT, PTLLS, OTHHE_Q, OTHL4_CC, OTHL4_Q, OTHL4_U, OTHL5_CC, OTHL5_Q, OTHL5_U, OTHL6_CC, OTHL6_Q, OTHL6_U, OTHL7_CC, OTHL7_Q
0	Otherwise	Otherwise

NSSEXCL64 (Column S)

24. Student was targeted for surveying in the previous NSS year.

Value	Description	Definition
1	Student was targeted for surveying in the 2020 NSS	UKPRN, LEARNREFNUMBER, and NUMHUS of student appear in the previous year's NSS list
0	Otherwise	Otherwise

NSSEXCL128 (Column T)

25. Student has another record eligible for inclusion in the NSS. Where there is more than one record for a given LEARNREFNUMBER where NSSEXCL1 = 0 and NSSEXCL2 = 0 and NSSEXCL4 = 0 and NSSEXCL8 = 0 and NSSEXCL32 = 0 and NSSEXCL64=0 then only one is included in the NSS target population. This selected record will have NSSEXCL128 = 0 and all others NSSEXCL128 = 1. We select records based on whether they are NHS or not (NHSNSS_F=1), then by highest qualification, earliest start date, lowest NUMHUS and finally lowest AIMSEQNUMBER.

NSSEXCL (Column M)

26. This field indicates whether the student is included in the 2021 NSS population. For students excluded from the population NSSEXCL contains the sum of all applicable values from the table below. Students included in the target list have NSSEXCL = 0.

Value	Description	Definition
1	Student under 16 years of age on 31 July 2020	NSSEXCL1 = 1
2	Student inactive	NSSEXCL2 = 1
4	Expected end date is not in survey year	NSSEXCL4 = 1
8	Student on a short course	NSSEXCL8 = 1
32	Student on a programme that does not lead to an undergraduate qualification	NSSEXCL32 = 1
64	Student appeared on the target list for the 2020 NSS	NSSEXCL64 = 1
128	Student has another record eligible for inclusion in the NSS	NSSEXCL128 = 1

27. NSSEXCL is calculated as $(1 \times \text{NSSEXCL1}) + (2 \times \text{NSSEXCL2}) + (4 \times \text{NSSEXCL4}) + (8 \times \text{NSSEXCL8}) + (32 \times \text{NSSEXCL32}) + (64 \times \text{NSSEXCL64}) + (128 \times \text{NSSEXCL128})$. The reason(s) which contribute to the exclusion of a student from the NSS population can therefore be calculated. For example, if NSSEXCL = 40, by subtracting figures from the above table and starting at the bottom, we see that the student is on a programme that does not lead to an undergraduate qualification (NSSEXCL32 = 1) and is on a short course (NSSEXCL8 = 1).

PROVSPECLEARNMON_A, PROVSPECLEARNMON_B (Columns F-G)

28. These fields contain the value of PROVSPECLEARNMON where PROVSPECLEARNMONOCCUR = A or B respectively.

PROVSPECDELMON_A, PROVSPECDELMON_B, PROVSPECDELMON_C, PROVSPECDELMON_D (Columns H-K)

29. These fields contain the value of PROVSPECDELMON where PROVSPECDELMONOCUR = A, B, C or D respectively.



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