

## Schools Data Team

Additional Notes – Post 16 and Learning Aims

For: Secondary, all-through and PRU with appropriate age ranges

## What is being collected and when?

The autumn census captures student data as well as learning aims data, both inform school funding.

### Post-16 student level data (used for funding)

The census captures the following data items for both on and off roll students;

- Planned learning hours (delivery of qualifications)
- Planned employability, enrichment and pastoral hours for all eligible non-qualification activity
- T Level planned learning hours (delivery of qualifications) and planned employability, enrichment and pastoral hours for all eligible non-qualification activity
- T Level planned employability, enrichment and pastoral hours (for all eligible non-qualification activity specifically for T Level programmes)

Note: All planned hours data are collected and returned by the school that holds the student's 'main' registration. Where a student is dual registered, the school with the 'main' registration makes the return. Returning no planned hours for a 16 to 19 funded student will negatively impact funding. Information on [recording planned hours](#) is available.

- Maths and English GCSE prior attainment and funding exemptions (informs the Maths and English [condition of funding](#))

Post 16 students in full time employment.

### Learning aims data to be included (used for funding)

Learning aims that are being undertaken in the current academic year are returned in the 2025 autumn school census for any students who:

- were on roll at the school at any point between 1 August 2025 and census day
- were in actual national curriculum year group 12 or above in that period, regardless of their age
- the school wishes to claim 16 to 19 funding from the ESFA for

Learning aims that were taken in the previous academic year are collected for any students who:

- have been on roll in the school at any point between 1 August 2024 and 31 July 2025
- were in actual national curriculum year group 12 or above in that period, regardless of their age
- the school wishes to claim 16 to 19 funding from the ESFA for

This may include students who have left school prior to the autumn census day.

For information on which students are eligible for 16 to 19 funding, see ESFA's [funding regulations guidance](#).

## Processes for recording learning aims

### Prior to or at the start of the academic year

Before recording details of learning aims for individual students, we recommend that schools produce a list of the qualifications that they will be providing. This school list will then be used for allocating specific learning aims to students. This list should only contain qualifications that are valid for the academic year in question (qualification validity dates are shown in [QN Web Services website \(QWS\)](#) and [find a learning aim](#) as invalid qualifications can result in negative impacts on your 16 to 19 funding.

Each qualification in the school list is identified by:

- a qualification number (QN)
- a subject classification code (SCC)
- a learning aim start date (the date the learning activities for the qualification will start for each student – students may have differing start dates for the same learning aim)
- a learning aim planned end date (the date the learning activities for the qualification are planned to end for each student – students may have differing end dates for the same learning aim)

Schools will need to use the [QN Web Services website \(QWS\)](#) to identify the correct QN and SCC for each learning aim.

The following data items relating to learning aims are collected, the majority of which are used for funding purposes:

- programme aim
- programme type
- qualification number
- subject classification code
- learning aim start date
- learning aim planned end date
- learning aim actual end date
- learning aim status
- learning aim withdrawal reason
- core aim
- sub-contracting partner UKPRN
- traineeships
- work placements

## Recording T-Level and T-Level transition programmes

T Level programmes have 5 mandatory components all of which should be recorded with programme type 31.

1. Programme Aim
2. T-Level Qualification
3. Occupational specialism
4. T-Level Industry placement
5. T-Level planned hours

### 6. Detailed DfE Guidance

7. Schools should read the full DfE guidance on the Post 16 module of the census, the information collected impacts on funding so it's vital that schools are fully aware of all data requirements. Full guidance can be found in the Post 16 section of the DfE's 'completing the census' webpages <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complete-the-school-census/data-items>
8. This section also includes information on the processes for recording learning aims prior to the start of the academic year, at the start of the academic year and throughout the year.

## DfE Interactive Tool and COLLECT Reports

The DfE advise that schools should use both the interactive tool and post 16 reports before submitting a final autumn census return to ensure their data is accurate.

- the DfE's interactive post 16 census tool, aimed at helping schools return accurate data, is available via <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/interactive-post-16-school-census-tool-2025-to-2026>

The tool will help schools understand how their data is used to calculate post-16 funding and how common data errors affect their funding. The tool describes each element of the funding formula (student numbers, retention rate for example) and which parts of census data the DfE use for each element. Each element is illustrated with example data.

- The following ESFA reports are available from COLLECT to help school's quality assure their census and illustrate the data that will be used for funding calculations
  - 16 to 19 funded student summary report
  - 16 to 19 student detail report
  - 16 to 19 Maths and English GCSE status by student