

## Revision to Methodology for Skills for Life in University for Life Provision

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### Background and introduction

- 1 Table 5 of the December 2009 Post -16 Education & Skills Statistical First Release (SFR) reports learner volumes for participation and achievement in Skills for Life qualifications for the years 2005/06 to 2008/09.
- 2 During development work for the March 2010 SFR the Data Service have identified a required change to the methodology used to report volumes of learners participating in Skills for Life provision.
- 3 The correction only affects Skills for Life learners in the University for Life (Ufl) collection of 2006/07. Overall learner participation volumes are not affected - the change affects the type (Literacy, Numeracy and Language) and level (entry level, level 1 and level2) breakdowns only. Achievement volumes are not affected either at the overall level nor the type and level breakdowns.
- 4 The Data Service have republished the December 2009 SFR on 3rd March 2010 to incorporate this methodology change. This paper explains the rationale for the change.

### Key points/issues

- 5 The syntax used in the initial publication of the December 2009 SFR for 2006/07 Ufl participation in table 5 did not accurately count all types and levels of Skills for Life provision. Type is determined by a field A\_SFLTYP (Skills for Life type including level – see [http://www.thedataservice.org.uk/datadictionary/technicaldefinitions/derivedvariables/0910/A\\_SFLTY.htm](http://www.thedataservice.org.uk/datadictionary/technicaldefinitions/derivedvariables/0910/A_SFLTY.htm) for more information). This field has numeric values but is stored as an alphanumeric string in our databases. The syntax used for 2006/07 Ufl checks for values such as '3', '5' or '7' but this is insufficient as the values in the database have leading zeroes so '03', '05' etc. should have been used.

- 6 These values represent the following type of qualifications:
- A\_SFLTYP = '01' is Approved Certificate in Adult Literacy
  - A\_SFLTYP = '02' is Approved Certificate in Adult Numeracy
  - A\_SFLTYP = '03' is Approved ESOL (Language)
  - A\_SFLTYP = '04' is Other ESOL (Language)
  - A\_SFLTYP = '05' is Diagnostic Test in Adult Literacy
  - A\_SFLTYP = '06' is Diagnostic Test in Adult Numeracy
  - A\_SFTTYP = '07' is Diagnostic Test in ESOL (Language)
  - A\_SFTTYP = '08' is Short Course in Adult Literacy
  - A\_SFTTYP = '09' is Short Course in Adult Numeracy
- 7 The overall effect of this error was to deflate the number of approved Skills for Life literacy and numeracy participants counted from the 2006/07 Ufl collection.
- 8 When the values of A\_SFLTYP with leading zeroes are used for 2006/07 Ufl participation the volume of learners counted from Ufl are increased as shown below in Figure 1.

<b>2006/07 Ufl Skills for Life Learners</b>	Before	After	Increase	%
of which literacy	79,400	129,900	50,500	<b>63.7%</b>
of which entry level	27,800	27,800	0	
of which level 1	43,100	70,000	26,900	<b>62.3%</b>
of which level 2	41,400	70,300	29,000	<b>70.0%</b>
of which numeracy	58,600	90,700	32,100	<b>54.7%</b>
of which entry level	18,300	18,300	0	
of which level 1	34,400	53,900	19,500	<b>56.8%</b>
of which level 2	28,300	44,500	16,200	<b>57.2%</b>
of which ESOL	2,900	2,900	0	
of which entry level	700	700	0	
of which level 1	100	100	0	
of which level 2	-	-	-	

**Figure 1 - Effect of revising 2006/07 Ufl definitions**

- 9 The increases shown in Figure 1 account for the participation increases in table 5 in the re-issued SFR of 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2010.
- 10 The codes for classifying non-approved Skills for Life provision are not affected by this issue and the non-approved volumes are unchanged.

## Summary

- 11 In summary, the republished December 2009 SFR includes revised figures for 2006/07 Ufl Skills for Life participation, with increases to the earlier volumes for literacy and numeracy and levels 1 and 2 due to a correction in the methodology for determining these figures. The overall number of learners participating in Skills for Life provision in 2006/07 is unaffected by this revision.