

Designation of Sixth Form College Status Calculation of FTE percentages

Introduction

Further Education (FE) Colleges can apply at any time for designation as a Sixth Form College. Part of the criteria to be designated a Sixth Form College is that at least 80% of learners are aged 16-18, when measured in terms of Full Time Equivalents (FTEs). This is a statutory requirement and an application cannot be approved without evidence that this has been met.

This document sets out the methodology and data sources that FE Colleges wishing to designate should use for this calculation. If the calculation suggests the 80% criteria is met they should complete table 1 on the final page of this document, and forward this to BIS who will submit the request to the Data Service for quality assurance. This information is then shared with the Department for Education (DfE) who will progress the application accordingly.

If you wish to know further information on the designation process, this can be found at:

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19/index.cfm?go=site.home&sid=57&pid=558&ctype=TEXT&ptype=Single>

Summary of methodology

The methodology to calculate the proportion of learners aged 16-18 years old in terms of FTEs is summarised below. Following this summary, each step is taken in turn and explained in detail.

1. Assess which ILR data sets to use to calculate learners on the 'date required'
2. Select EU learners only, using "Country of Domicile" field in the ILR
3. Select funded learners only
4. Recalculate age on the 'date required' and band into 16-18 and Adult learners
5. Calculate if the learning aim is in learning on the 'date required'
6. Calculate an FTE figure for LR and ASL provision. Calculate an estimated FTE using Standard Learner Numbers (SLNs) for ER provision
7. Add each funding stream together and calculate the % of FTEs that are from learners aged 16-18.

1 Assess Data Sets

The following ILR datasets are included in the analysis where the provider delivers provision in that area:

- Learner Responsive
- Adult Safeguarded Learning (ASL)
- Employer Responsive (ER) – including Apprenticeships and Train to Gain as well as other ER such as Programmes for the Unemployed
- ESF

The data will need to be assessed to ensure that its coverage includes all learners at the 'date required'. This can be any date in the 6 months preceding the submission of table 1 to BIS as long as all appropriate data sets have been submitted to the Data Service and the ILR freeze schedule shows that the data has been quality assured and is available for analysis.

For example, suppose the 'date required' was 17 January 2011, we cannot use the first ILR returns of the 2010/11 academic year (LR01 and SL01) as these learners will not be included. So we need to wait until the second returns of the year, LR02 and SL02 which are due in February. At that time ER and ESF data has moved on to Period 6 and it would be this data we would use as the most up to date data. This means that any data that was returned in the ILR late ('data lag') would be included for ER provision.

ILR data sets return dates - example

	Dec-10	Jan-11	Feb-11
LR	6 Dec LR01 2010/11		14 Feb LR02 2010/11
ER	Period 4 2010/11	Period 5 2010/11	Period 6 2010/11
ASL	1 Dec ASL01 2010/11		21 Feb ASL02 2010/11
ESF	Period 4 2010/11	Period 5 2010/11	Period 6 2010/11

Note that no attempt to match learners between collections is performed. So for example a learner doing an Apprenticeship and a LR aim would be counted twice, once in each funding stream.

2 Select EU learners

Using "Country of Domicile" field L24 in the ILR, EU learners are selected. The ILR specification (Appendix D) sets out what these countries are. This is published by the Information Authority and can be found at:

http://www.theia.org.uk/ilr/ilrdocuments/201011_ilrdetail.htm

Note that for ASL and ESF Country of Domicile is not collected in the ILR and therefore no selection is made and all learners are included in the analysis.

3 Select Funded Learners

Only learners that are funded by the Skills Funding Agency or the Young People's Learning Agency (previously the Learning and Skills Council) are included. Learners who have any aim that is funded (both DLF and Non Formulae Funded) are included.

Learners with just ESF co-financing only, and DLF learners who do not generate any funding are not included.

Learners are defined as funded based upon information recorded by providers in the funding stream field in the ILR. A variable called L_FUNDINGSOURCE is derived from the ILR data collected and values 1 to 6 inclusive are included in the analysis. Further information on the definition of this variable can be found at <http://www.thedataservice.org.uk/datadictionary/technicaldefinitions/derivedvariables/1011/Sources+of+Funding+Data+Definition+1011.htm>

4 Recalculate age

Usually for statistics and MI purposes we would use academic age (age as at 31 August of that academic year) or age at start of learning aim. For this analysis it is the learner's age as at the 'date required' that is needed, and this is calculated from their Date of Birth (field L11 in the ILR). If it is the learner's birthday on that date they are included as their new age.

Learners are then grouped into four age bands;

Learners under 16 years

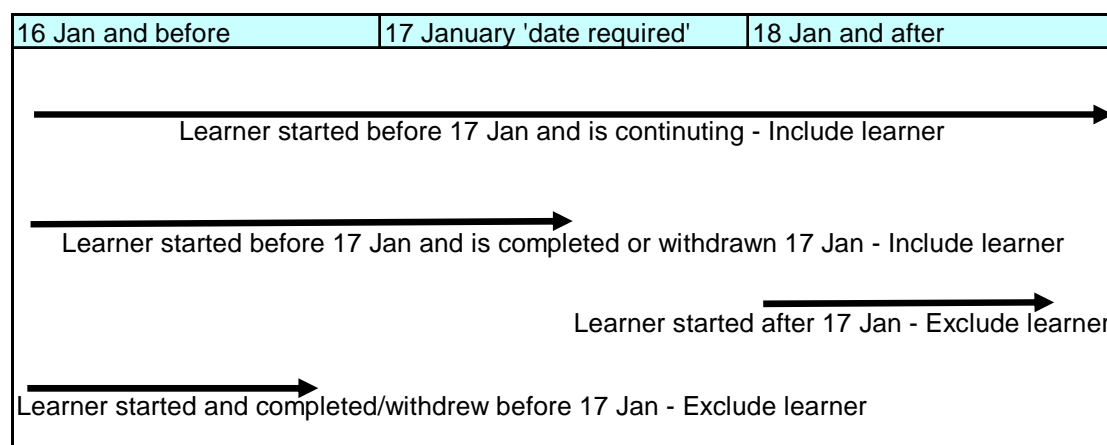
Learners aged 16-18 years

Learners aged 19 and over

Learners with unknown age (as no DOB recorded in the ILR)

5 Calculate if learner is in learning on the 'date required'

Each learning aim is assessed to see if they started on or before the 'date required' and, they are continuing learning or they completed/withdrew on or after the 'date required'. For example a required date of 17 January 2011 will include;



6 Calculate an FTE figure

Learner Responsive and Adult Safeguarded Learning Provision

FTEs are calculated using the number of guided learning hours (A32 in the ILR and information derived from this field) for each active learning aim the learner is on. In

summary, 450 hours in an academic year is 1 FTE, with all learners capped at 1 FTE. More information on the FTE definition can be found at:
http://www.thedataservice.org.uk/datadictionary/technicaldefinitions/derivedvariables/1011/L_FTHELP.htm

Apprenticeships and Train to Gain provision

For this provision, guided learning hours is not collected in the ILR and therefore FTEs are calculated using an approximation of the 'total expected full academic year Standard Learner Numbers (SLNs)' for each learner. This figures is capped at 1 for each Apprenticeship or TTG learner.

Note that for Apprenticeships all aims within the learner's Framework are used to calculate the total SLNs for a learner rather than just the programme aim. The total expected SLNs for the entire academic year is used. This is the derived variable L_TOTAL_SLN_EFY. Further information on the calculation of this value is available at:

<http://www.thedataservice.org.uk/datadictionary/technicaldefinitions/derivedvariables/1011/Total+Funding+Data+Definition+1011.htm>

Other Employer Responsive and ESF provision

For learners that are ER but not Apprenticeships or TTG, such as programmes for the unemployed, and for ESF learners, there is no SLN to approximate FTE. The calculation for Other ER and ESF uses a very simple method based on the learning start and end dates and an average number of days across the academic year. This provision will only be analysed if the percentage of FTEs is borderline to the 80% threshold. This is because most colleges will have relatively low amounts of provision in these areas and it is unlikely to change the result of the calculation based from the other funding streams.

To explain the calculation it is best shown with an example:

An average academic year of 38 weeks gives 266 days (38 x 7 days) across the academic year, so a learner studying 266 days is 1 estimated FTE. Suppose a learner is on one course which is a 3 week course from 17 January 2011 to 4 February 2011. This learners end date less start date is 19 days inclusive, therefore their estimated FTE is $19/266 = 0.07$.

Notes:

- The 38 week year is based on an estimate, some colleges may have slightly different term dates but this will be used for all calculations.
- A full week is used rather than 5 days as the calculation of duration of course does not remove weekends between start and end date.
- This assumes the learner is full time between their start and end dates.
- Where a learner is on more than one aim their earliest start date and latest end date will be used to calculate their total estimated FTE.
- A learner's actual end date is used. Where the learner is continuing their planned end date is used.
- This is an estimate of FTE in these areas of provision, it differs to the calculations for other funding streams as there is a lack of data in this area of provision.

7 Calculate the % of FTEs

The following information should be provided to BIS for the FE College concerned.

	LR	Apprentic eships	TTG	ASL	Other ER*	ESF*	Total
Learner Numbers							
Under 16							
16-18							
19 and over							
Unknown age							
Total							
SLN							
Under 16					n/a	n/a	
16-18					n/a	n/a	
19 and over					n/a	n/a	
Unknown age					n/a	n/a	
Total					n/a	n/a	
FTEs							
Under 16							
16-18							A
19 and over							
Unknown age							
Total							B
% total FTEs that are 16-18							A/B%

The percentage A / B % in the table above is required to be 80% or more for Sixth Form College designation.

* This provision will only be analysed if X% without these funding streams is borderline to 80% provision. More information is in Step 6 above

Further information

This document sets out the methodology and data sources used for this calculation by the Data Service. If you have any questions on the technical aspects of this methodology please contact the Data Service on 0870 267 0001 or servicedesk@thedataservice.org.uk

If you wish to know further information on the designation process or the policy this methodology supports, please contact email James Brennan via email James.Brennan@bis.gsi.gov.uk or telephone 020 7215 1868.

Version 2
March 2011

Document will be updated Autumn 2011 to reflect 2011/12 ILR data.