



Skills Funding
Agency

Qualification success rates

Business rules from 2013 to 2014

March 2014

Of interest to colleges and training organisations

Qualification success rates: business rules from 2013 to 2014

Background and introduction

- 1 The core components of the qualification success rates (QSR) approach and method of calculation are based upon key policy, business and technical Individualised Learner Record (ILR) rules and changes.
- 2 In previous years there have been separate business rules documents for each provision area funded through the Adult Skills Budget (ASB). Following confirmation¹ by the Agency of the change to have consistent methods of QSR calculation across all provision funded by the Adult Skills Budget, there will be this single business rules document relating to QSR for 2013 to 2014.

Purpose

- 3 This document outlines the headline business rules that govern the method of calculation for the official QSR for provision associated with the academic year that runs from 2013 to 2014.

Methods of calculation

- 4 There are two separate QSR methods: the **overall QSR** and the **timely QSR**. We calculate both from data formally submitted by providers that is aligned with the appropriate specifications and requirements.
- 5 The overall QSR calculation measures the number of learning aims or Apprenticeship frameworks that are successfully achieved at any time. This method is based on the hybrid end date of a learning aim/framework, which is defined as the later of the planned or actual end date. The result for any particular year uses those aims/frameworks that have a hybrid end date within that respective reporting period. The volume of aims/frameworks that are or have been successfully achieved is expressed as a percentage of those that left with a hybrid end date in the reporting period.
- 6 The timely QSR is the number of learning aims/frameworks with a planned end date in the reporting period that are successfully achieved on or before their planned end date, or within 90 days thereafter. This is expressed as a percentage of the number of learning aims/frameworks with a planned end date in the reporting period. Achieved learning aims/frameworks with an actual end date more than 90 days after the planned end date are not counted as achievements in the timely method.
- 7 The overall QSR is the method that we will use for other associated formal processes, for example, Minimum Standards², and so on. The timely QSR

¹ As published in Update, issue 196, February 2014.

² You can find more information about Minimum Standards on our [website](#).

will be a supportive method providing additional important information about the delivery of provision.

- 8 For both the overall QSR and the timely QSR the last day of the reporting period for the year from 2013 to 2014 will be 31 July 2014. The hybrid end date for overall QSR and the planned end date for timely QSR must fall within the reporting year to be included in the calculation.
- 9 We take information for Apprenticeship QSR from the framework or programme aim ILR record. For other provision we take the information from the learning aim level ILR record, with the exception of the International Baccalaureate where component aims are not recorded in the ILR and so the overarching aim record will be used for QSR calculations.

Main changes

- 10 QSR results will be calculated separately for classroom based learning, workplace learning and Apprenticeships using the Overall and Timely methods. Results for both methods of calculation will be included in provider level reports and published in the National Success Rate Tables.
- 11 The categorisation of all learning aims will follow the direction of the new, simplified funding calculation. The significant change in this regard is classroom based learning provision moving away from being grouped by planned duration and towards grouping by qualification types. This new categorisation will also be utilised in the Minimum Standards process.
- 12 Functional Skills will be incorporated into the formal calculation for the first time.
- 13 Provision funded via 24+ Advanced Learning Loans will be included in the QSR calculations.
- 14 Stand-alone QCF units that are eligible to receive public funding will be included in the QSR calculations.

Business rules

- 15 The learning aims in scope of the QSR calculation are those in receipt of public funding through the Adult Skills Budget, 24+ Advanced Learning Loans, the Large Employer Outcome Pilot, and funding from the Education Funding Agency. This includes learners that are 16 to 18 years old as well as those aged 19 years and older.
- 16 QSR for provision funded as part of the Employer Ownership Pilot and the specific Offenders' Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) budget will be calculated in a consistent manner but will sit outside of the formal arrangements.

17 The following exclusions apply.

- a) Transfers
 - i) Where a learner has transferred to a different programme or learning aim within the same provider.
 - ii) Where a learner has transferred to a new provider as a consequence of intervention from us or the Education Funding Agency/Department for Education.
 - iii) For the timely QSR, transfers are excluded only where they occur on or before, or within 90 days after, the planned end date.
- b) Planned breaks, where the learner has temporarily withdrawn from the aim due to an agreed break in learning. For the timely QSR, planned breaks are excluded only when they occur on or before, or within 90 days after, the planned end date.
- c) Any learning aim/framework within scope of QSR that a learner has withdrawn from within the respective funding qualifying period³ without successful achievement.
 - i. If the planned duration is 168 days or greater the qualifying period is 42 days.
 - ii. If the planned duration is between 14 and 167 days the qualifying period is 14 days.
 - iii. There is no qualifying period when the planned duration is less than 14 days.
- d) Employability Skills Programme (ESP) funded aims (Note. This programme has closed to new enrolments).
- e) Innovation Code Learning Aims (referenced as ZINN000 (1 to 6), Z0004474 to Z0007833).
- f) Learning aims without successful achievement following a learner transferring to other provision aligning with government strategy (as referenced in 'Investing in Skills for Sustainable Growth' issued by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, November 2010).
- g) Instances where learners claiming Job Seeker's Allowance or Employment and Support Allowance (Work Related Activity Group) (JSA/ESA (WRAG)) can not continue their learning through to successful completion because they have gained employment.

³ You can find more information about the detail of the funding qualifying period in '[A new streamlined funding system for adult skills](#)', (March 2013)

- h) All learners undertaking a Traineeship programme that are unable to continue their learning through to successful completion because they have gained employment.
- i) Access to Apprenticeships pathway provision where the learner is not employed⁴.
- j) Learning aims delivered through funding from the Employer Ownership Pilot (EOP).
- k) Offenders' Learning and Skill Service Provision (OLASS) funded through the ASB where the learning aim is terminated early for reasons beyond the provider's control.
- l) Key skills.
- m) Adult Learner Accounts (ALAs).
- n) Joint Investment Programme (JIP) aims.
- o) Provision taken by learners under 16 years of age⁵ except for 14 to 16 year-olds engaged in a specific initiative funded by the Education Funding Agency and recorded as such in the ILR⁶.
- p) Funded provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LLDD) delivered by independent specialist providers.
- q) Entry to employment learning aims, foundation learning weekly aims, remaining 'First Steps' learning aims, diagnostic tests, unitisation qualifications, additional units, tutorial support and complementary studies.
- r) Outside of Apprenticeship provision, programme aims, such as those used for Programme-led Pathways and diplomas, will continue to be excluded from the calculations. The component aims of these programmes will be included in calculations. The exception to this rule is for the International Baccalaureate, where component aims are not recorded in the ILR and so the overarching aim will be used for success rate calculations.
- s) For Apprenticeships prior to 2010 to 2011, duplicate in-year programme aim records, where the same provider – learner – programme type – sector framework combination occurs are excluded. From 2010 to 2011

⁴ Once employment is secured and the learner transfers to a full Apprenticeship, the provision is included within the Apprenticeship qualification success rates.

⁵ Defined using the academic age of the learner.

⁶ Using Learning Delivery Monitoring code 320 ('14 to16 EFA direct funded students') in the Learning Delivery Funding and Monitoring Code field in the ILR.

duplicate records are not excluded and all programme aim records returned by a provider are included in the calculation.

- t) All European Social Fund (ESF)-funded and Community Learning provision.

- 18 Uncashed AS levels will be treated as failures.
- 19 Subcontracting provider data will be included for calculating subcontractor success rates for classroom-based learning and workplace learning provision⁷. Subcontractor success rates will be calculated for illustrative and comparative purposes only.
- 20 The historical QSR results for all FE colleges that merged before the beginning of the academic year in question are restated to include all learning provision in scope and reported for the newly-merged FE college.
- 21 Where a provider reports changes to learner reference numbers through the learner reference number (LRN) change process or within the ILR record, these are taken into account when calculating success rates.
- 22 ILR data from the latest 5 years is merged to form the QSR dataset.

Further details

- 23 We will issue more detailed information within the associated technical documentation that is due for publication in May 2014 on our website.
- 24 We are currently reviewing the use of the phrase 'success rates' in light of the future publication of other, broader measures of successful performance and delivery. Until the appropriate terminology is agreed taking all related matters into account, the phrase 'success rates' exists in the context of this guidance document and the general calculations described therein.

⁷ Subcontractor reporting for Apprenticeship provision is not possible at framework level as it is a concept that is pertinent to individual component aims only.

Glossary

| Term or phrase | Meaning |
|-----------------------|---|
| Hybrid End Date | The later date between the planned end date and the actual end date as stated in the respective ILR fields. |
| ILR | Individualised Learner Record. |
| Overall QSR | The primary method of calculating Qualification Success Rates. |
| Timely QSR | The supporting method of calculating Qualification Success Rates. |



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