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Guidance

SFA: payments and data

Updated 16 December 2015

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Introduction

This page brings together all the latest information on payments and Individualised Learner Record (ILR) data collection. This ensures that colleges, training organisations, local authorities and employers (further

education providers) can access all of the information on the current data collection in one place.

We are committed to ensuring you can make accurate data returns, recognising that funding and allocations calculations are based on them. If you are concerned about funding or allocations, please contact your named Skills Funding Agency Central Delivery Service (CDS) adviser or your Education Funding Agency relationship manager.

If you have any queries about ILR R05, please contact the Service Desk.

2.

Funding year 2015 to 2016: ILR R05

The ILR R05 data collection will open at 9am on Thursday, 17 December and will close at 6pm on Thursday, 7 January 2016.

As is normal practice, we recommend that you submit your data as early as possible.

You must submit your files to the data collections facility in the Hub.

2.1 Data maintenance schedule

We have published a data maintenance schedule on GOV.UK. The schedule details ILR data collection periods, planned learning aims reference data updates and proposed essential maintenance windows.

2.2 R05 reports

The following reports are available from the Funding Information System (FIS) and the Hub:

- rules violation detail
- rules violation summary
- funding summary
- main occupancy
- EFA funding claim
- SFA funding claim
- EFA 16-19 maths and English
- summary of funding model 35 funding
- summary of funding model 35 funding by learner
- 24+ advanced learning loans bursary occupancy report
- EFA summary of funding by student
- EFA high needs students (HNS) summary
- EFA high needs students (HNS) detail
- trailblazer occupancy report
- OLASS prison report – a breakdown of monthly ILR and EAS values by prison.

The rule violation report is delivered to you on the Hub as a comma separated variable (CSV) file. The rule summary is a PDF file. All other reports are delivered to you in a single zip file.

The rule violation report from FIS is only available as a CSV file, which is automatically saved in your FIS user workspace. To see where you workspace location is, click on tools, then choose preferences within FIS.

Please ensure that you always check your rule violations and funding reports and then update your data as required.

The FIS guidance and known issues documents are available on GOV.UK.

2.3   Reports on the final day of the collection

We endeavour to produce your funding reports in good time for you to make appropriate amends to your data prior to final submission. During busy times, and especially at the end of the collection, we cannot guarantee the immediate production and return of your funding report. This process may take some time.

If you plan to submit corrected data following receipt of a funding report, you should send your first file early in the collection window.

2.4   Learning aims reference service (LARS) update.

We have updated the learning aim search facility on the Hub with a new 'Category' search in the 'Additional Filters' section. This allows you to search for learning aims that we have grouped under a specific category, for example, class codes. When you select an individual aim, a new Category tab is displayed with the associated category. The definitions of the Categories are available on the links section of the webpage.

If you have any queries, please contact the Service Desk.

2.5   Updated Funding Information System (FIS)

The latest component set for FIS is available. The Funding Information Software page on the Hub confirms the latest version numbers for the FIS component set and the reference data sets.

Always use the most current version of the component set if you are using FIS to validate your data.

Ensure your own organisation is selected within the "Select Data Provider" option.

The user guide and known issues log contain further information and you can find both documents on GOV.UK.

2.6 Validation rules

We publish a list of all validation rules on GOV.UK and we highlight the most recent changes to help you ensure your data is as accurate as possible.

2.7 The Earnings Adjustment Statement guidance (changes to the Offenders' Learning and Skills Service EAS only)

We have published version 3 of the Earnings Adjustment Statement (EAS) 2015 to 2016 guidance.

The EAS is an online form available on the Hub ; please complete this if you wish to claim funding not recorded on the Individualised Learner Record.

The changes to the guidance are for the Offenders' Learning and Skills Service EAS form only. The structure and content of the OLASS EAS form has not changed, although we have updated the collection to make it easier to complete.

The key changes are:

- a reduction from 12 monthly forms for the year to a single form covering all 12 months
- the form only displays the different funding sections if you have these in your contract

For further information or related queries, please contact the Service Desk.

2.8   ILR learner entry

An ILR learner entry tool is available for download. This software is supplied free of charge to providers who will submit ILR data to the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) in the funding year 2015 to 2016 but who does not have access to a data management system. It is optional to use ILR Learner Entry to prepare data files prior to submission to the SFA's data collection portal.

You can download the ILR learner entry tool from the useful links area on the front page of the Hub. A user guide is available on GOV.UK.

2.9   Unique Learner Numbers and Employer reference numbers

We update the Hub with new ERNs and ULNs every two hours between 7.45am and 5.45pm, Monday to Friday. Please allow sufficient time for us to update these databases before you submit your ILR data.

2.10   Submit zipped files to the Hub

All files submitted to the Hub should be zipped. Please do not include files which are already zipped into your final submitted file as we cannot process these.

2.11   Hub user log-ins

To submit files using the data returns tab on the Hub, you need to ensure that your users have access to the specific roles on the Hub. Users can check their access by logging on using their unique credentials and passwords to the Hub registration site   . Guides to user roles as well as requesting and approving Hub roles are available on the Hub page   .

2.12   Service Desk

Email our Service Desk for general and technical support on using and installing our systems, or call us on 0307 267 0001. In order for the Service Desk to prioritise R05 enquiries, please put "R05" in the email subject header so that the team can help you with your query as quickly as possible.

The Service Desk will close at 1:00pm on Thursday 24 December and will reopen at 8:30am on Monday 4 January 2016.

Join feconnect   , our online community, where you can talk to colleagues about ILR data and funding issues and help each other to resolve problems.

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