Department for Education

Alternative provision census 2016

COLLECT guide

January 2016

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Introduction

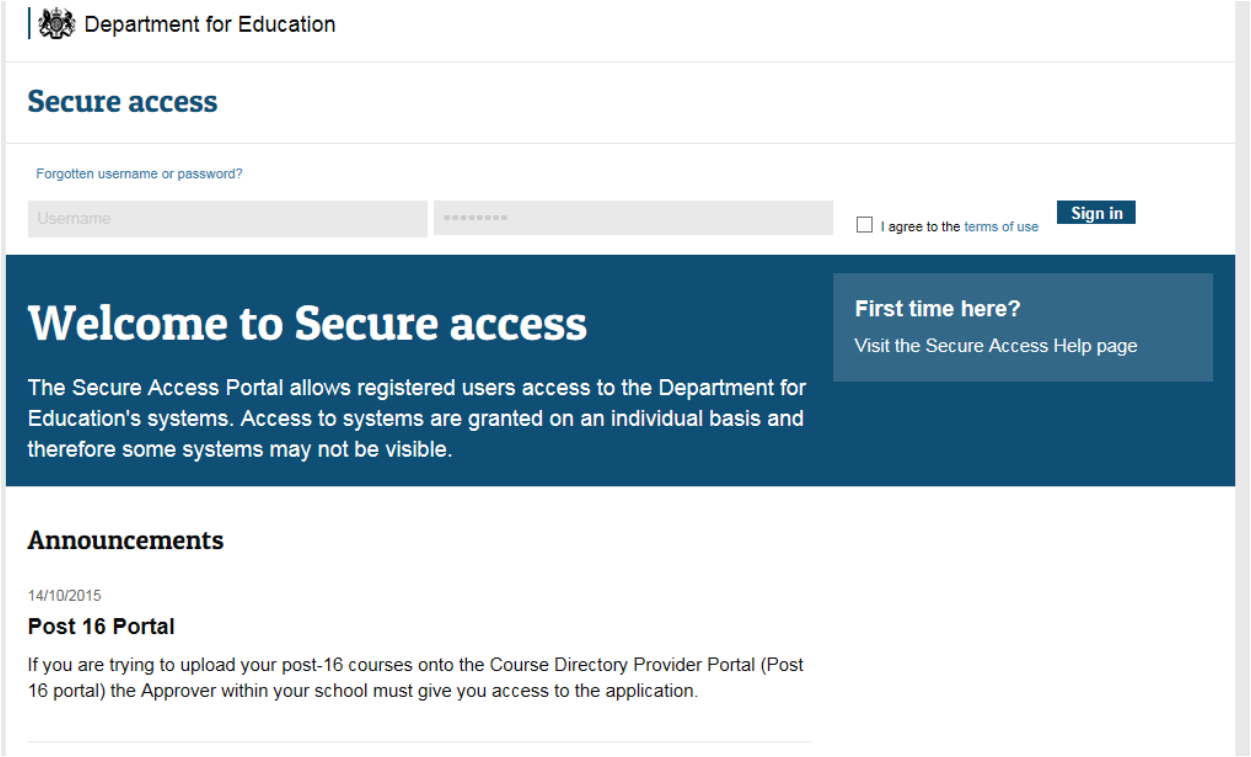
The COLLECT (collections online for learning, education, children and teachers) portal is used by local authorities and the department for education for processing data collection returns. Major benefits of the portal include real time data collection monitoring and progress reporting, the ability of a local authority to view exactly the same information as the department for education when queries arise and being a website there are no installation issues.

This document is designed to guide local authority users through the various aspects of COLLECT as related to the alternative provision data return from initial submission, data validation and final approval by the department for education

The department now collects data from a wide range of users; generic terminology must be used within COLLECT. A provider of data is known as a ‘source’, an ‘agent’ is someone who undertakes verification and checking of the data and a ‘collector’ is the final destination of the information. The alternative provision collection has the local authority as the ‘source’ and the department for education as the ‘collector’.

COLLECT and secure access

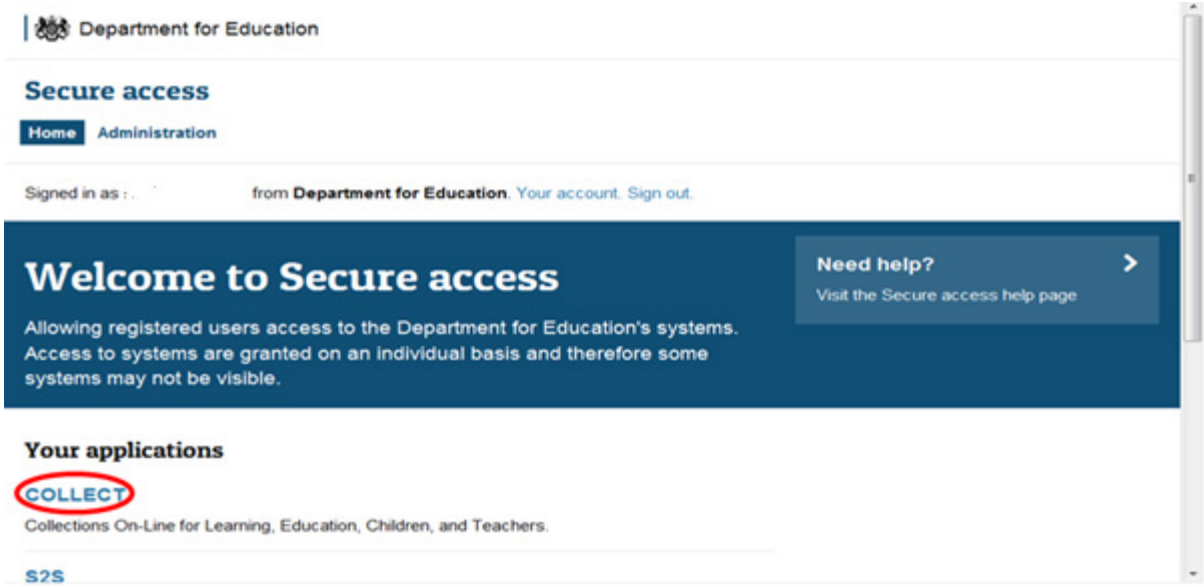
To enable you to login to secure access if you don't have a secure access account you will need to request access by completing a service request form. This can be found here.



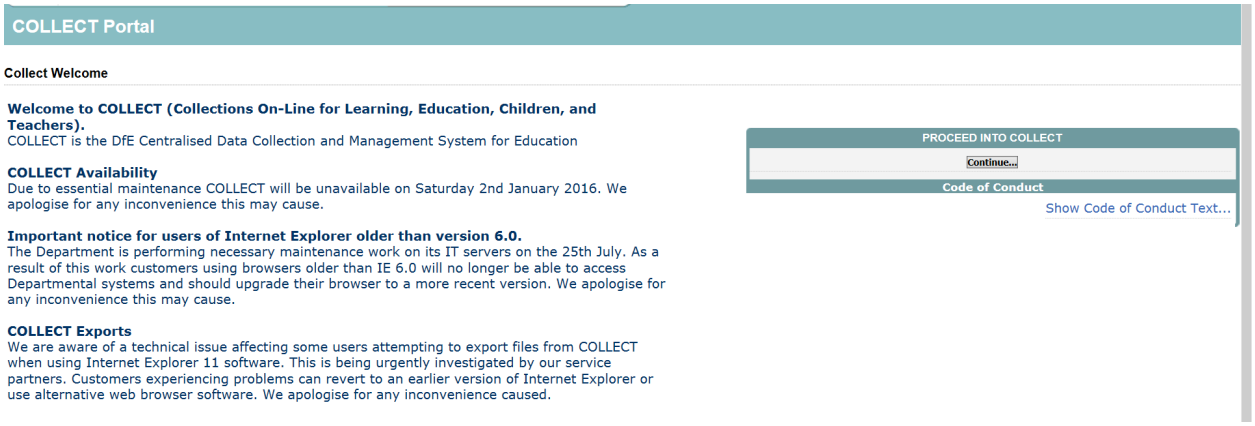
To access secure access existing users will need their COLLECT username and password.

If you are a new user and require access to COLLECT, you will need to speak to your approver. Full secure access guidance is published on the secure access website.

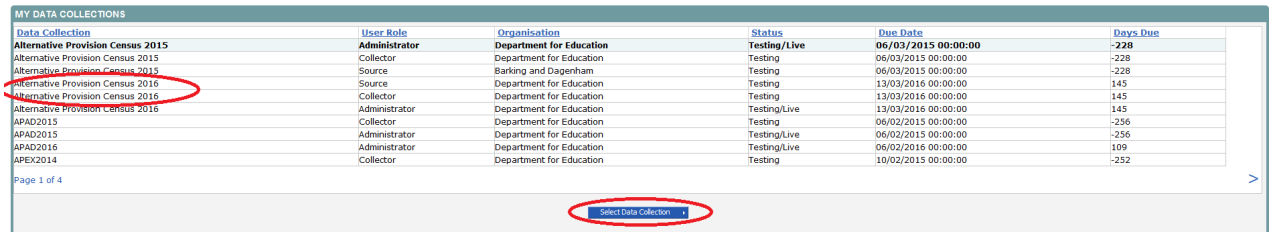
Once you have logged in you will see the link for COLLECT, click on this link highlighted below.



Click the continue button.



Select the collection by clicking on the collection name to highlight it (if there is only one it will be automatically highlighted) and then click on the ‘select data collection’ button to open it.



This will take you to the source page.

If you are bounced back to your homepage at this point please check that you are not trying to access the site from a link within an e-mail. Please copy and paste the address into the address bar then save it to your favourites.

Please follow the steps below to add the web addresses to your trusted sites.

Go into the ‘tools’ menu option at the top of the screen.

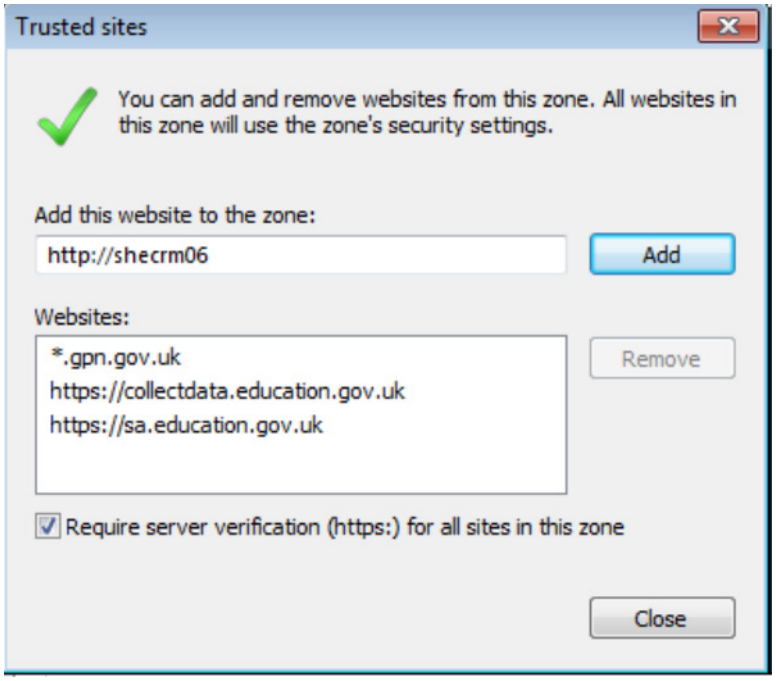
Select ‘internet options’ from the drop down menu. Select ‘security’ from the option buttons, select ‘trusted sites’, and then select ‘sites’. Select ‘add’ and type the following into the text box:

https://collectdata.education.gov.uk

Then select ok and ok again.

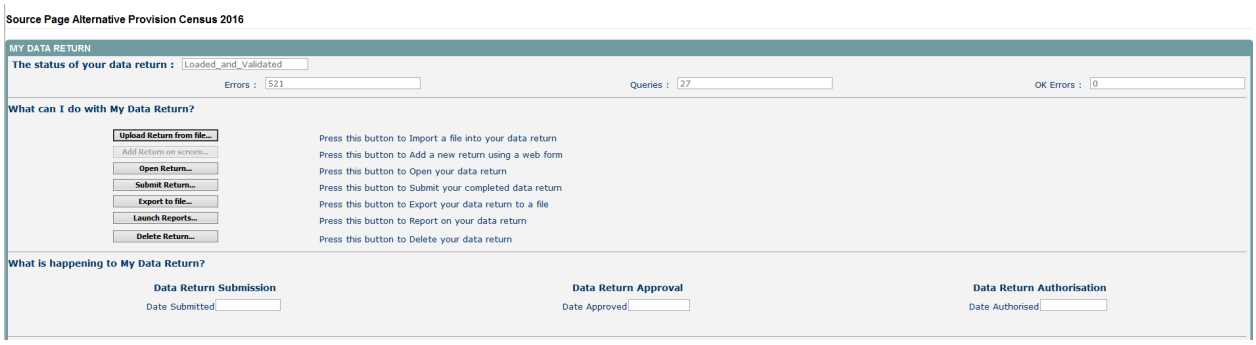
Please check that the secure access site is also in the trusted sites.

The addresses should appear in the large box.



LA (source page) screen

The next screen (source page) provides a summary of the latest position with respect to the data collection.



The screen is divided into three main sections:

• return status;

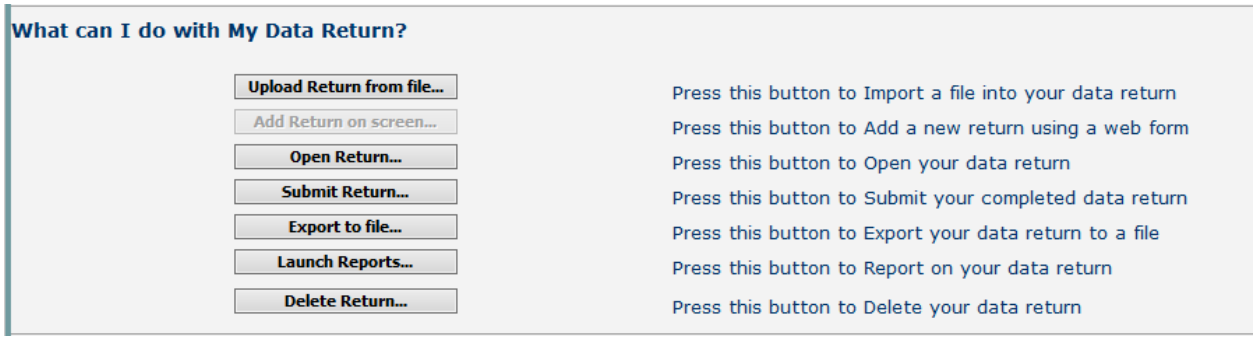
• return management;

• return progress.

Return status

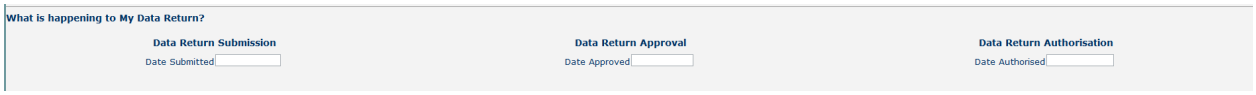
This shows the current status of the return and a breakdown of the errors within it. All information is read only. In the example above return data has been uploaded so status reads ‘loaded and validated’.

Return management



Provides a set of functions that can be used to manage the return. Those with bold text and highlighted borders are available. The availability of the functions is dictated by the status of the return.

Return progress



This shows the dates on which the return completed the three process milestones. This section is completed automatically as the return progresses through the workflow process.

Uploading a return

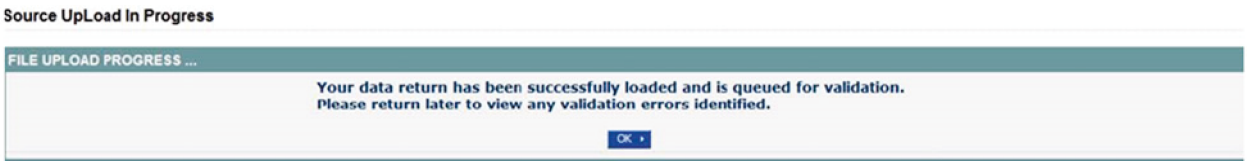
Click on the upload return from file button

Use the browse button to locate the file you wish to upload.

Highlight the file name and click on open to select it. Then click on the upload button to load the file.

A progress message will be displayed while the upload is taking place.

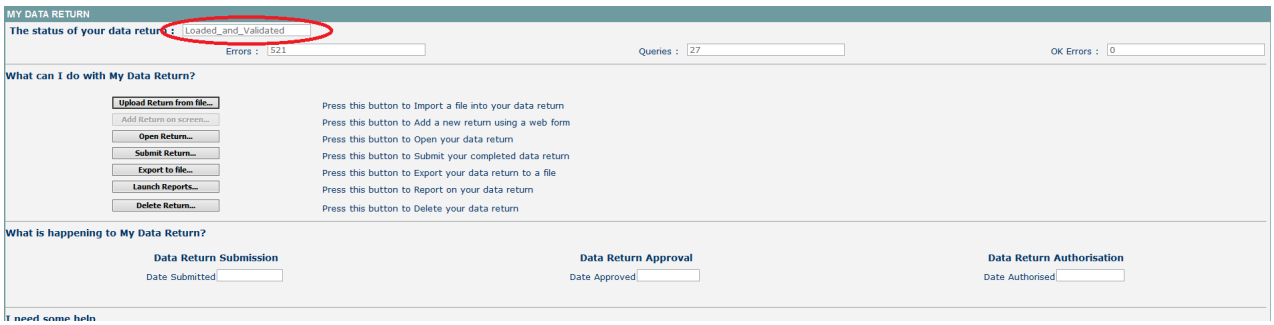
Once the return has been loaded, the following message will be displayed on screen



This indicates that the return has successfully loaded and is now placed in the validation queue to be validated. Press the ok button to return to the source main page.

During periods of heavy demand, there may be a delay before the return is validated. Whilst the return has a status of "waiting_for_validation" then the return cannot be viewed or edited.

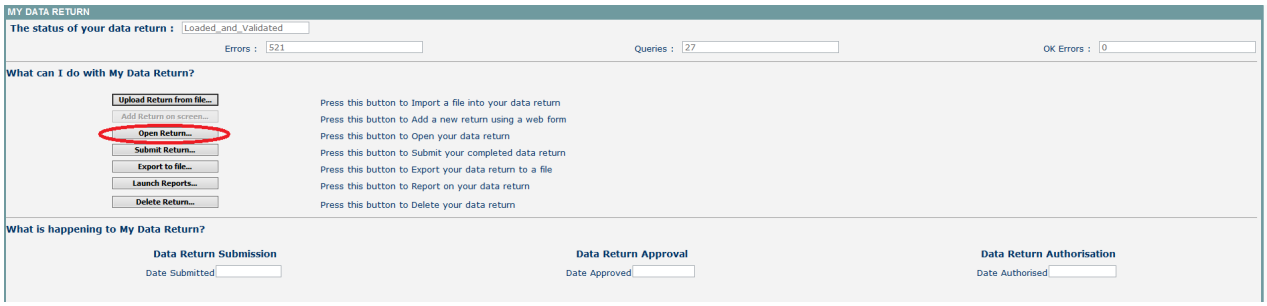
Once the return has been validated, the return status section on main page will display "loaded_and_validated" and the total number of errors and queries found in the return will be displayed.



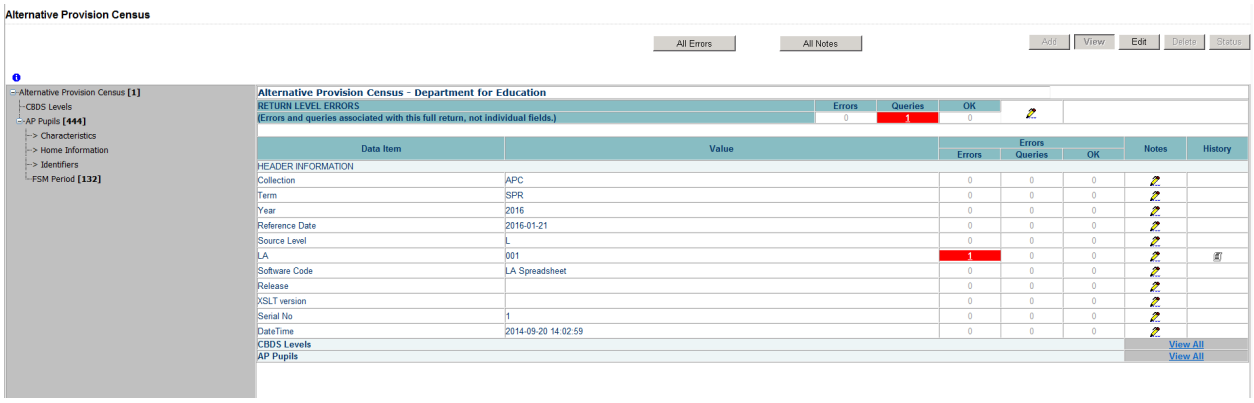
Viewing the data return

Opening the return

Open the return by clicking on the open return button.



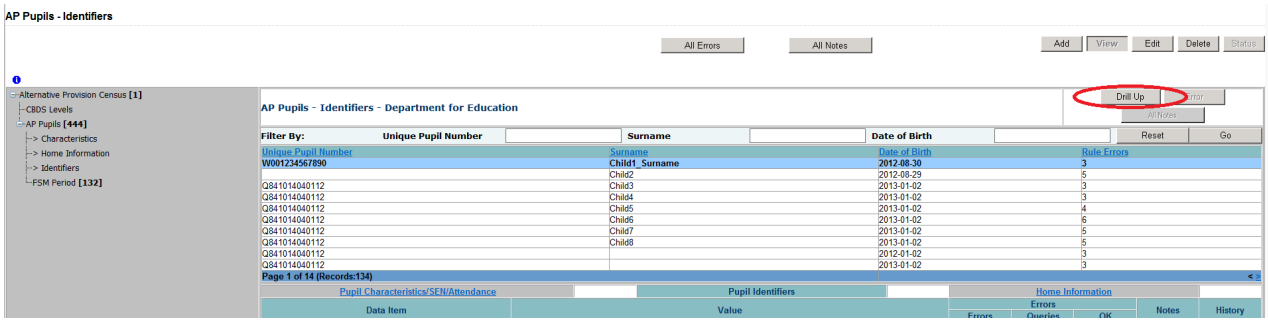
The header information for the return will be displayed.



Screen navigation

Before viewing the return it is useful to understand some of the basic controls and screen operations.

To return to the previous page, press the ‘drill up’ button



Don’t use the browser buttons**!** When in the data collection, unpredictable behaviour may be experienced if you use the back/forward buttons on your web browser’s toolbar.

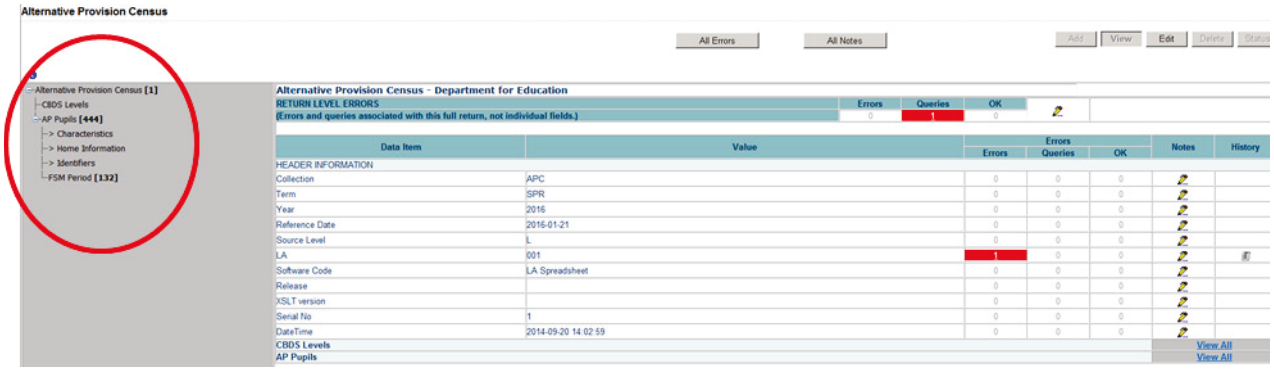
Mode buttons

Those buttons determine which operation mode the on-screen data form is in, and which operations are available

Dark grey text on sunken button with light border = active mode
Black text on button and highlighted border = available mode
Light grey text on button with light border = unavailable mode

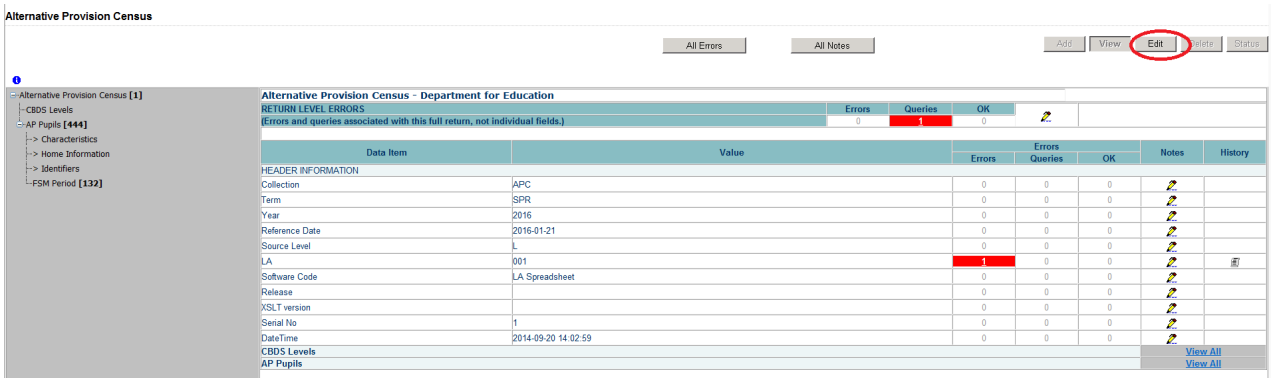
Filter left hand menu

Please avoid using the left hand filter menu (grey panel on the left hand side of the page) to navigate through the return as it does not always display sections of the return in the correct format and functions such as add or edit are not always available

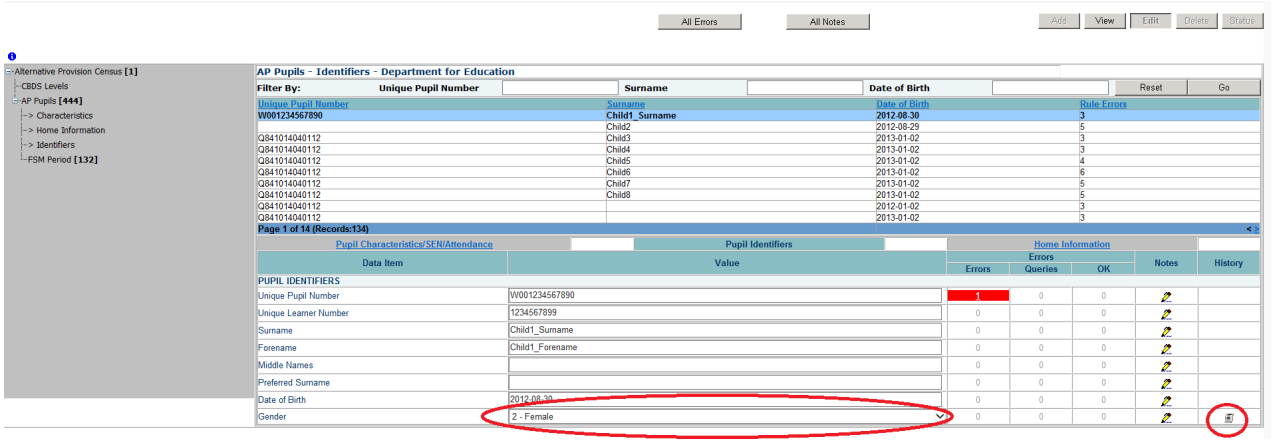


Editing a return

When you wish to amend a record in COLLECT you can do this by pressing the edit button.



You can then enter the correct information – in this case the correct gender for the pupil. Note also that a scroll symbol will appear in the history field by the gender.

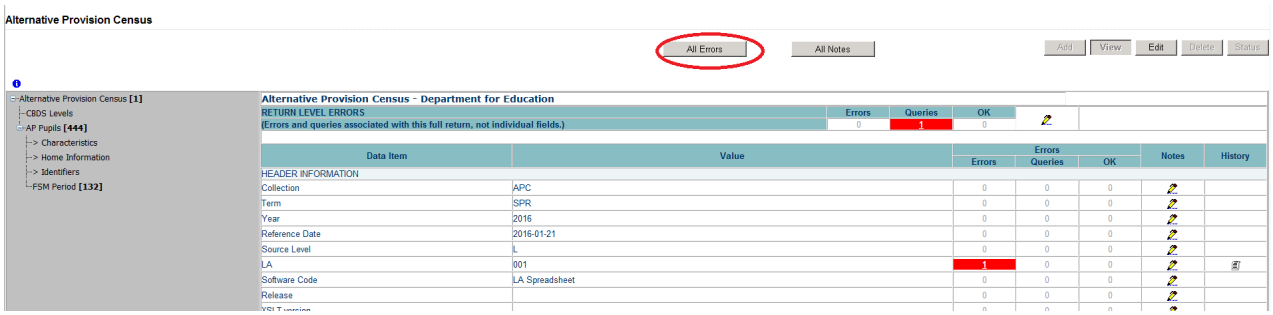


Clicking on the scroll symbol will display the full audit history for that data item - press the back button to return to the last page.

Once a data item has been changed the status of the return will change from approved (if it has been) to ‘amended_by_agent’.

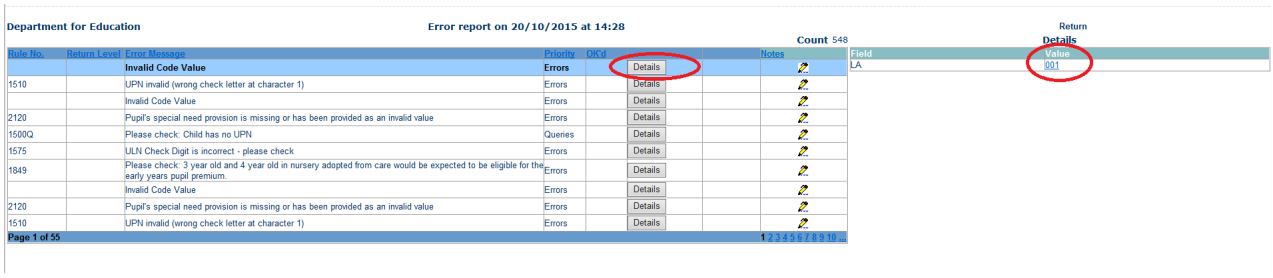
Viewing errors and queries

To view all errors and queries on the return click on the ‘all errors’ button



This will show you a list of all queries and errors. You can see the error number, message and also click on ‘details’ to see what data is not passing validation

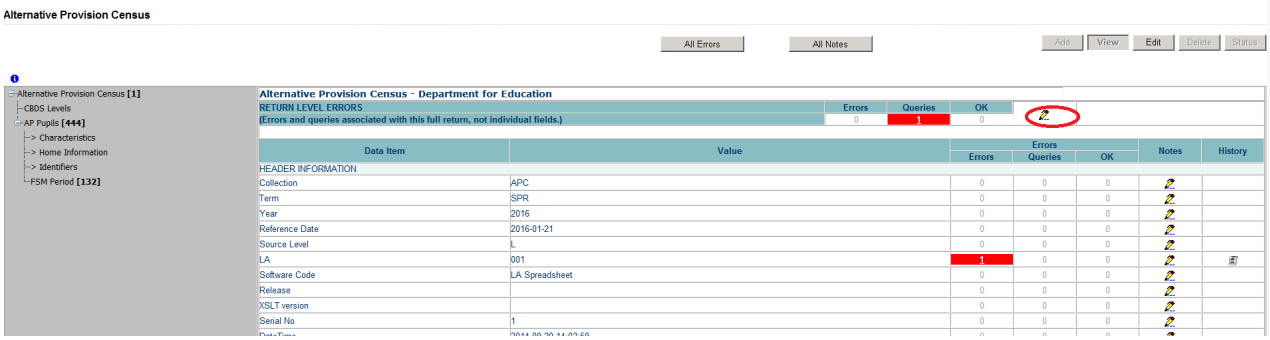
You can click on the underlined data values to the right of the screen to be taken to that field in the return



Once the user has clicked this ‘value’, they will be taken to the section where that error is occurring and allow an amendment to be made.

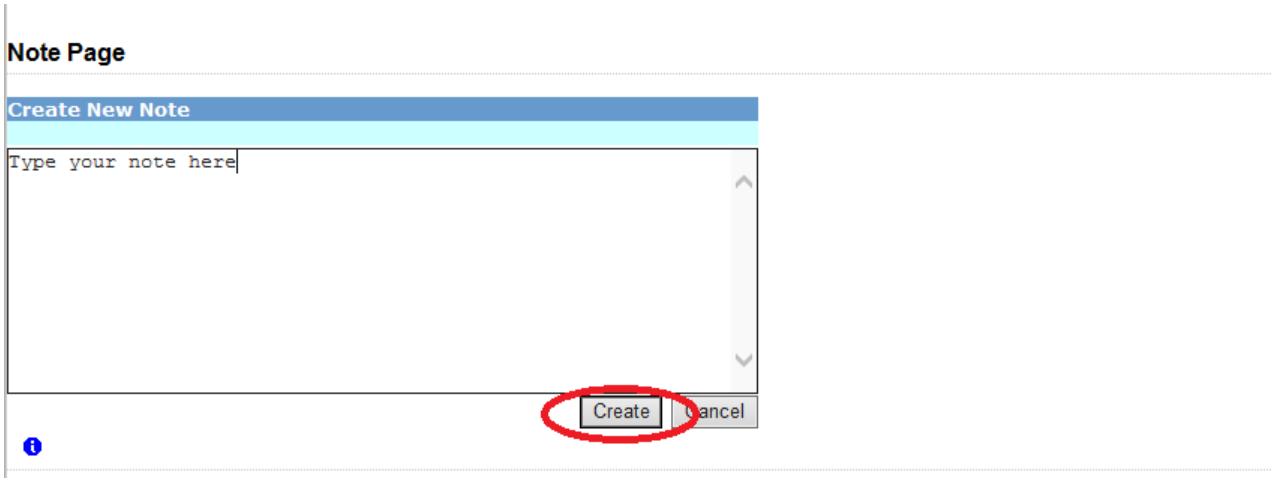
Return level notes

To add a return level note click on the pen icon in the return level notes section.

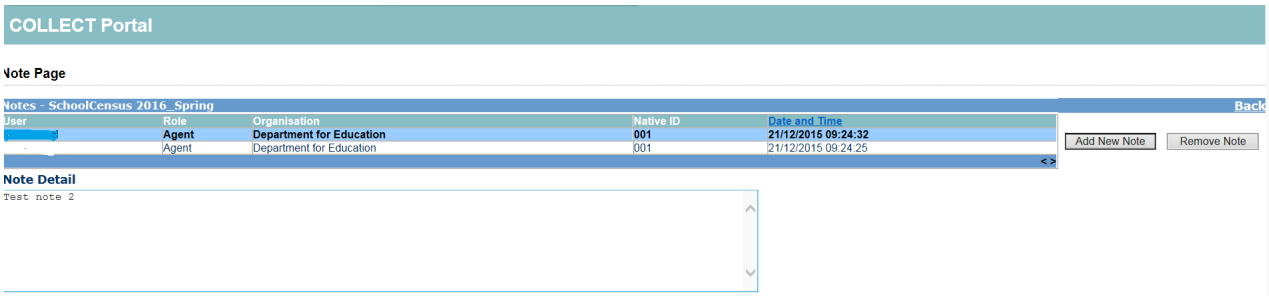


Click add new note and type your note and the error number in the box provided– do this for all queries/errors you need to provide extra information for

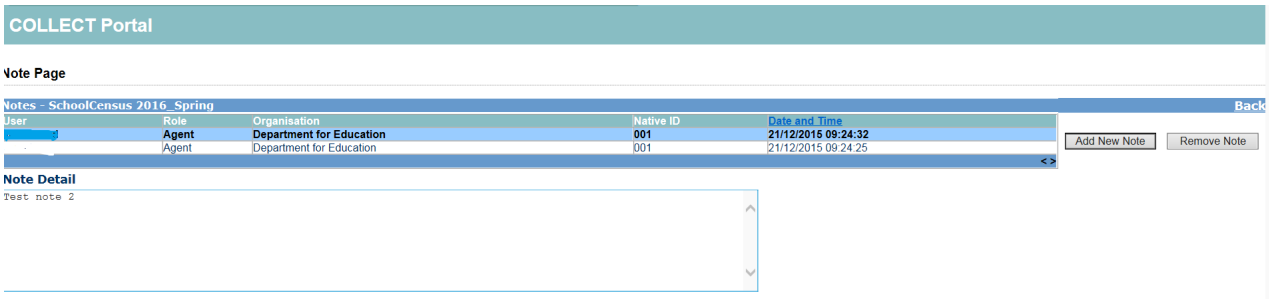
Click create.



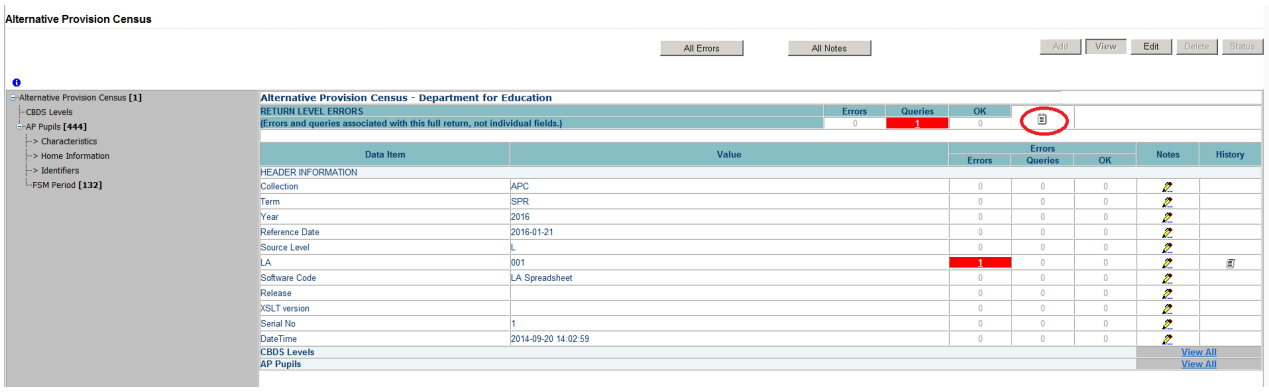
The note will be saved and a record row will be created showing who created the note and when.



Return to the previous screen by clicking on ‘back’.



The pen icon will have changed to a notepad icon, which shows that the item has one or more notes attached to it. You are able to record notes in both edit and view modes.



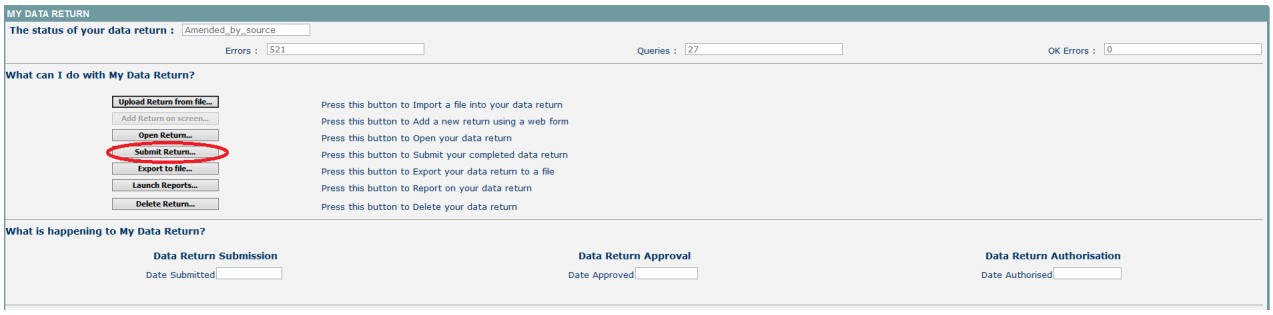
Within the return level notes page is the preserved notes. If you need to upload the return at any time the notes already added will appear in this box.

Submitting a return

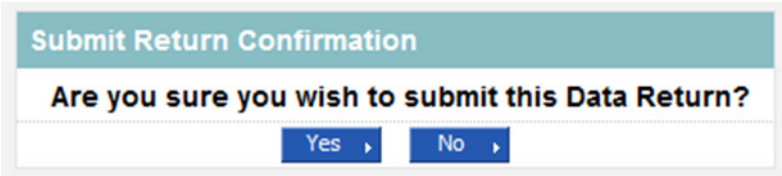
Once the local authority is happy with their return they will need to submit it. Until the return has been submitted the department will not be able to process the data and therefore can not use it i.e for funding calculations; prior to submission they will only be able to view it.

All errors have to be resolved in COLLECT before you are able to submit. Until the errors have been resolved the ‘submit’ button will remain ‘inactive’.

To submit the return, navigate to the source main screen by clicking on back to myCOLLECT page and click on the submit return button in the ‘return management’ section. The status of the return will change to ‘submitted’.



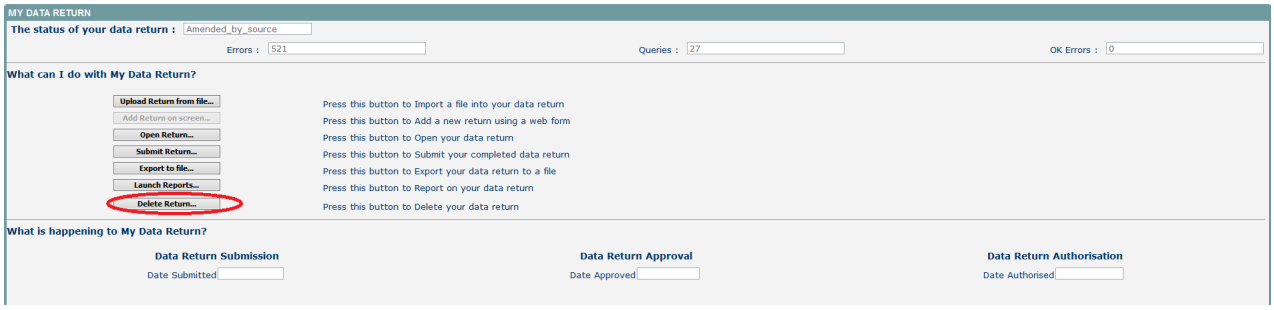
You will be asked to confirm this function



Once you have submitted the button will be greyed out and the box “The status of your data return” will show as “submitted” and the date will appear in the data submitted box in the “what is happening to my data return” section of the screen.

Deleting a return

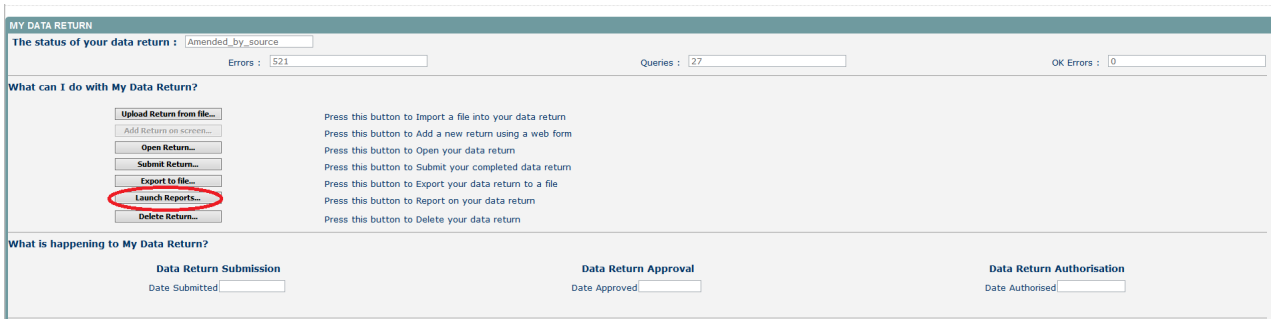
If a local authority users wants to delete a full return, they can do so by clicking ‘delete return’



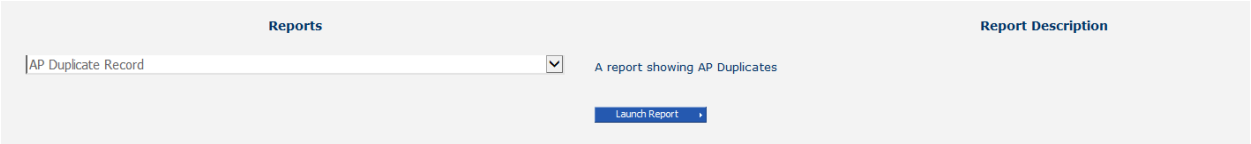
The status of the data return will revert back to ‘no data’ and the local authority will need to click on ‘upload return from file’ to re-upload their data.

Launching reports

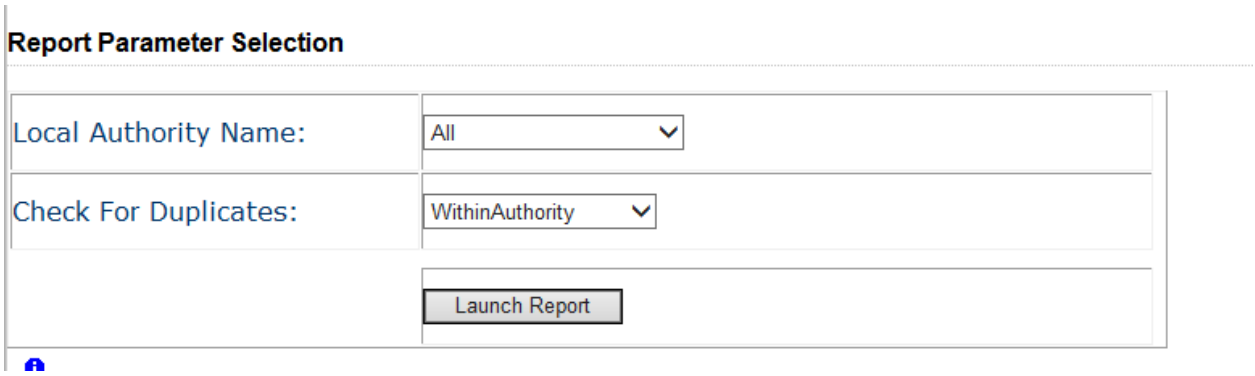
A number of reports are available on COLLECT, return to the source page by selecting back to my collect page at the top of the page and click on the launch reports button.



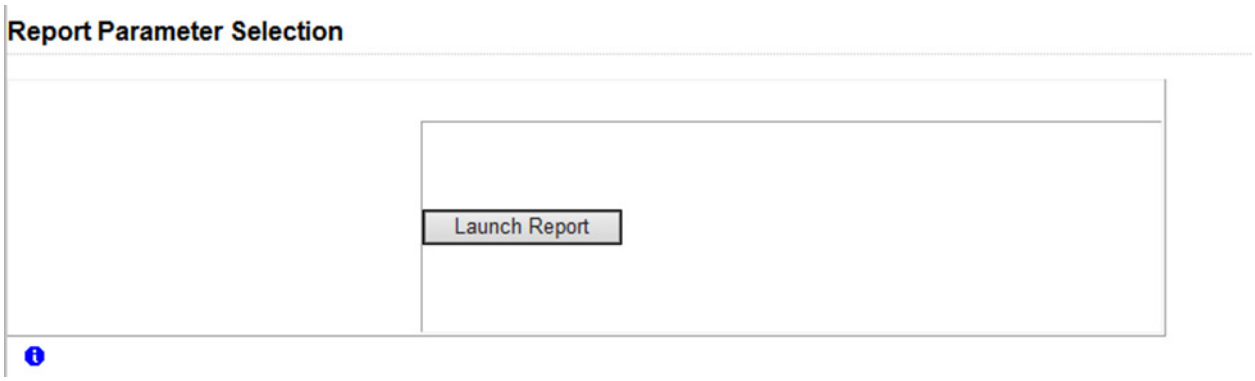
A drop down menu will be displayed and a report can be selected from that drop down list.



Once you have clicked on the report you would like to run you will need to click on the launch report button. This may take a while to run depending upon the amount of data.

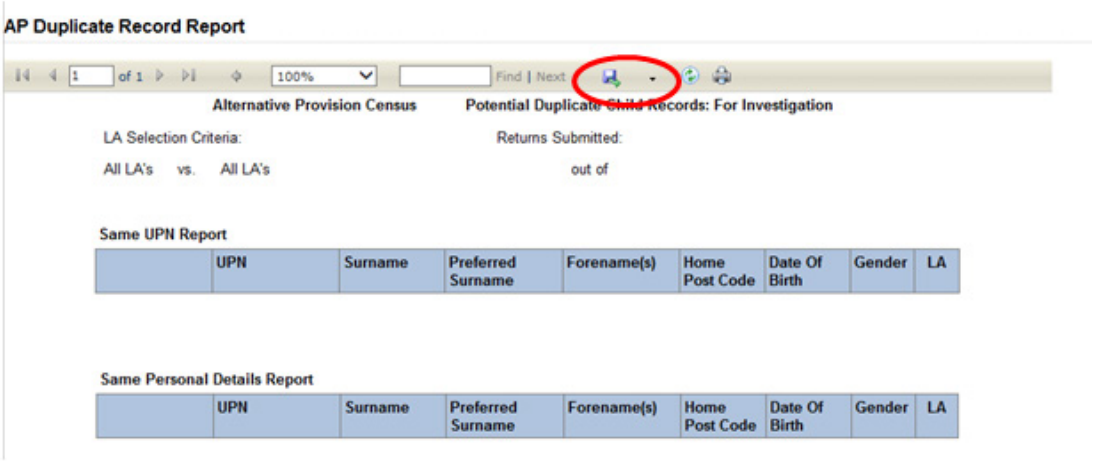


From here, you will need to then select launch reports again



Exporting reports

You can export the data in various formats.



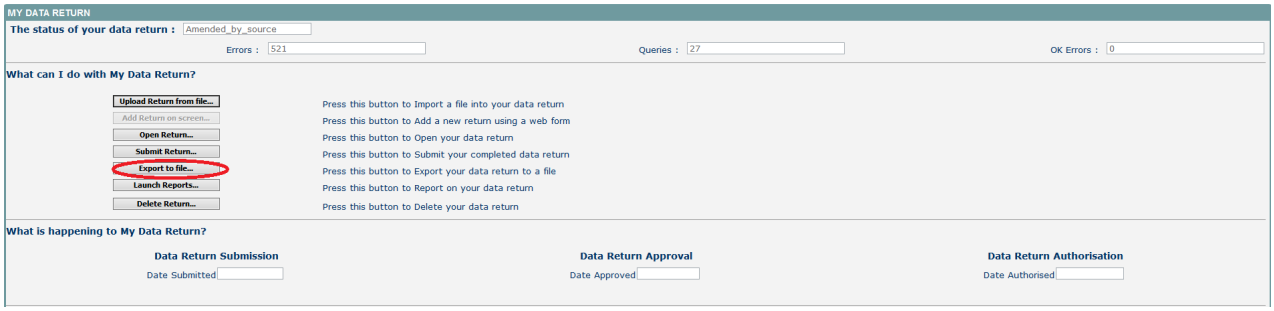
The reports are run against a copy of the data as at close of play the previous day. If any data has been edited, deleted, inserted or reloaded since the data was copied, the report will not match the live data.

Once you have finished viewing the report, click on the ‘back to reports’ link at the top right hand side of the page. From here, select the ‘back to my COLLECT Page’ to return back to your ‘mysource’ page.

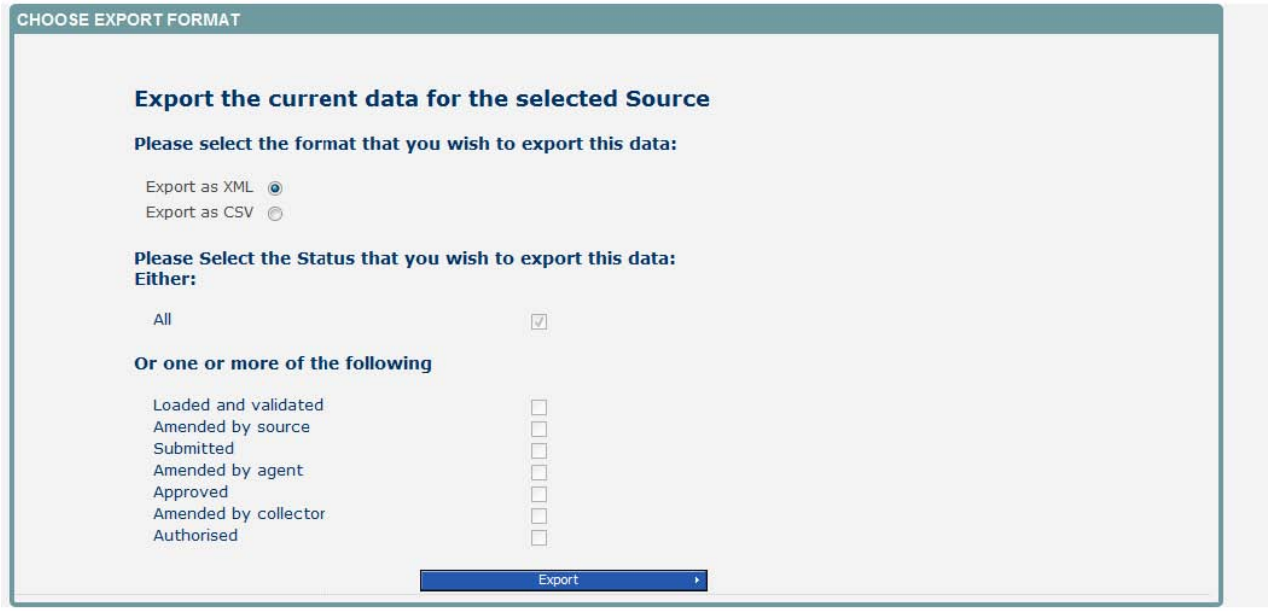
Exporting a return

Once the data has been loaded you can export your return. An export will show all the data that has been loaded which you can either download in XML format or CSV (spreadsheet). We strongly recommend that a hard copy of final data is kept for reference.

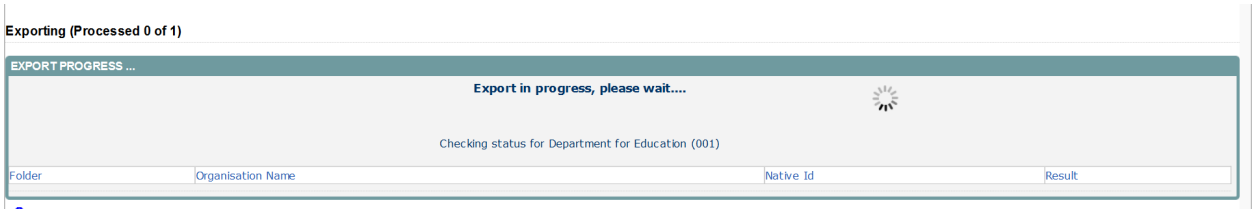
To export the data, click on the export to file button on the front screen.



The following screen will be displayed.



Select the format for the export, CSV or XML then select the ‘export’ button.



Once this has run you will get an option to open or save the export.

Exporting as xml will generate a zip file containing the selected return data. Exporting as csv generates a zip file containing csv files that relate to how data is stored within

COLLECT. Make your choice and click the ‘export’ button and follow the web browser prompts on screen.

Important note: If the export process fails, with a message stating that Internet explorer has blocked download of a file, you might succeed if you try again. On the second attempt, hold down the ctrl key down continuously from before you click on export until after you see the resulting files displayed in windows explorer. If this is still not successful, you will have to adjust the security settings on your internet browser.

When complete the result of the export will be displayed and you will be offered the options of saving or opening the export file. Click on the open button

The security settings on your pc may prevent the ‘file download’ appearing If this is the case then go into the ‘tools’ menu option at the top of the screen.

Select **‘**Internet options’ from the drop down menu.

Select ‘security**’** from the option buttons
Selected ‘trusted sites’
Select ‘sites’
The select ‘add’ and type the following into the text box:
https://collectdata.education.gov.uk
Then select ok and ok.
Alternatively you could try changing you security settings by

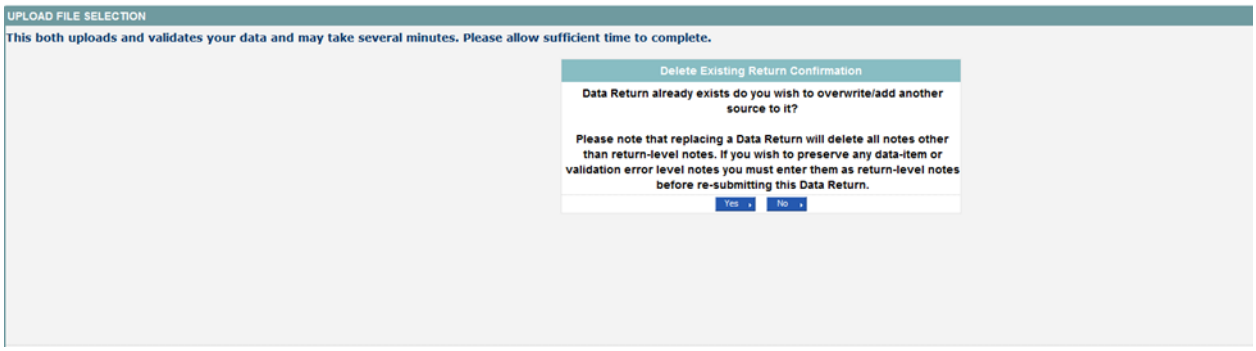
Going into the tools menu option at the top of the screen, select internet options**,** Select security, click on the custom level button, then make sure that automatic prompting **for** file downloads is set to enabled (it’s a third of the way down the list)

1. Then try producing the export again and this time the open/save/cancel dialogue box should appear
2. What should be here!!!
3. Click on the open button to bring up the file details in windows explorer.

Double click on the folder **‘**estabno=**’** to open it; it contains the exported xml file, which you can double click to display the data

Useful hints

1. Very important - re-submissions – if a data return for a local authority already exists in the system and you upload another file, it will overwrite the original return completely no matter where it is in the workflow (submitted or authorised). All error notes and data item notes will disappear only return notes are retained. If you try to upload a file that is already in the system then you will be given the following message



We recommend that you take great care when selecting this option and make sure that all parties who may be working, or have worked on this return agree to the re-submission. When uploading a zip file containing many data then please be aware that you will not be prompted with the above message if any of the settings contained in the zip file are already on the system. It will automatically overwrite the return without warning you.

1. When navigating around the COLLECT system it is important that you use the COLLECT ‘drill up’ button or COLLECT ‘back’ button which are toward the top right of your COLLECT screen. If the ‘drill up’ or ‘back’ buttons are not visible then you may be in one of the earlier screens and to navigate back from here you will need to click ‘back to my COLLECT page’ page located at the top of your COLLECT screen above your login name. You will be either given an error message or ‘thrown’ out of the system if you use your web browser back button.

2. When amending errors, once you have completed your actions on a particular error you will need to drill back out of that record to the main screen before being able to select another error to investigate. If you try to select an error and have found the error through the ‘all errors’ page before drilling out you will be given the error message: ‘cannot choose another error to investigate’

Help

COLLECT access is administered directly by local authorities for their users. This includes registering for COLLECT, activating your account and giving you access to specific collections. Please get in touch with the approver in your local authority who will be able to make sure that you have the appropriate access.

If you are experiencing problems with COLLECT or have a data collection query, please submit a service request to the data collection helpdesk.

If you are having problems logging into secure access, please refer to the 'help' section on secure access. If you are still unable to resolve your issue, please submit a service request to the sa service desk.

Department
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