



Department
for Education

Special educational needs and disability data descriptors

Government consultation response

March 2015

Contents

Introduction	3
Summary of responses received and the government's response	4
SEND changes to the ILR for 2015/16 academic year	5
Annex A: Question analysis	6
Question 1	6
Question 2	6
Question 3	6
Question 4	7
Question 5	7
Question 6	8
Question 7	8
Question 8	8
Question 9	9
Question 10	9
Question 11	9
Question 12	10
Question 13a	10
Question 13b	10
Question 14	10
Annex B: List of organisations that responded to the consultation	11
Annex C: Full list of respondents to the Consultation	12

Introduction

A broad range of reforms for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) came into effect in September 2014. The reforms will help deliver better outcomes for children and young people and more effective ways of working by joining up help across education, health and care, from birth to age 25.

Colleges, training organisations, local authorities and employers (FE providers) return data for learners with SEND in the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) differently to schools, who return pupil data in the school census.

We ran a public consultation from 5 August to 10 September 2014 to seek views on making changes to the School Census and ILR for the 2015 to 2016 academic year. This is part of our long term aim to move to a consistent data collection to improve tracking of students, cohorts and specific needs groups, improve data quality, support planning and move towards a more consistent data collection across all age ranges.

This document sets out the findings from the consultation, the Government's response and the changes that will come into effect for the 2015 to 2016 academic year.

Summary of responses received and the government's response

The consultation received 128 responses from Schools, Colleges, Local Authorities, Parents, Young People, Employers (FE providers), Training Organisers, those with an interest in SEND policy implementation/data development and other interested groups. Most responses (70%) were received through an on-line return.

'Other' had the highest number of respondents, which includes national organisations such as Disability Rights UK, National Deaf Children's Society, NIACE, and RNIB, followed by 'Schools'. Respondents could only select one category and were asked to select which best describe them. A breakdown of organisations that responded to the consultation is available in Annex B and a full list of respondents is available in Annex C.

Respondents were asked to respond 'Yes', 'No', 'Not Sure' to the consultation questions. In addition, respondents could respond in 'free text' to the questions posed. To analyse these free text responses we identified the issues emerging from each question.

We would like to thank all respondents to the consultation and we have carefully considered the views and preferences put forward. In some cases we considered that although the majority preference was for a change, the views of respondents mitigated against this. For example, 66% agreed with the proposal to remove 'Temporary Disability After Illness' (Q13a). However, a number of respondents highlighted the value in having this in the ILR for planning and understanding the needs of learners. We will therefore not make a change at this time.

We are implementing a small set of changes that, based on feedback received, better reflect the new SEND landscape and are intended to simplify the process for providers and young people and improve data quality to support planning, analysis and policy development.

We will keep the ILR and School Census under review subject to discussions with partners and the sector to identify opportunities to further align and improve the quality of SEND data.

The following changes to the ILR have been approved by the Vocational Education Data Board, which has responsibility for governing the ILR data collection, and will be included in the [ILR Specification for 2015 to 2016](#).

SEND changes to the ILR for 2015/16 academic year

The descriptor 'Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties' will be replaced with 'Social and emotional difficulties'. The SEN Code of Practice states that 'behaviour' itself does not necessarily mean that a child or young person has a special educational need and the term therefore needs to be changed.

The two separate lists of 'Disability' and 'Learning Difficulty' will be brought together into one list, simplifying the process for recording special educational need.

'Not known / not provided' will be replaced with two new fields, 'not provided'; and 'prefer not to say'. These changes made together with the creation of a single list will mean more complete SEND information is collected; reduce system generated 'not knowns' which are disproportionately high, and improve data quality and accuracy.

Learners with multiple learning difficulties and / or disabilities can select more than one category from the single list and indicate their primary need. This will bring the ILR and School Census into line and lead to greater accuracy, understanding needs of learners and granularity of data.

The new descriptors will apply to all learners with SEND, not just those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC) Plan. They will also apply to learners who self-declare a learning difficulty and/or disability to ensure consistency in how needs are recorded.

Annex A: Question analysis

Question 1

We welcome views on the terminology used to capture 'Visual Impairment'. Is this the preferred terminology? If no, why not and what do you recommend?

There were 105 responses to this question	Total	Percent
Yes	85	81%
No	12	11%
Not sure	8	8%

Question 2

We welcome views on the terminology used to capture 'Hearing Impairment'. Is this the preferred terminology? If no, why not and what do you recommend?

There were 105 responses to this question	Total	Percent
Yes	85	81%
No	12	11%
Not sure	8	8%

Question 3

ILR – We propose replacing the Multiple Disabilities field with a Multi-Sensory Impairment field? Do you agree?

There were 109 responses to this question	Total	Percent
Yes	65	60%
No	27	25%
Not sure	17	16%

Question 4

School Census – Do you agree with replacing Physical Disability with two separate fields – Physical Disability Affecting Mobility; and Other Physical Disability?

There were 104 responses to this question	Total	Percent
Yes	72	69%
No	13	13%
Not sure	19	18%

Question 5

ILR – The ILR currently contains a field for Emotional / Behavioural Difficulties and a separate field for Mental Health Difficulty.

We welcome your views on which option to progress with.

Option 1: no change – don't create a new field called Social, Emotional and Mental Health.

Option 2: Rename 'Emotional / Behavioural Difficulties' field to 'Emotional / Social Difficulties'. No Change to Mental Health Difficulty.

Option 3: Remove both current fields and add a new Social, Emotional and Mental Health Field.

There were 113 responses to this question	Total	Percent
Option 1	46	41%
Option 2	39	35%
Option 3	15	13%
Not sure	13	12%

Question 6

ILR – We propose replacing Other with other Difficulty/Disability. Do you agree?

There were 113 responses to this question	Total	Percent
Yes	83	73%
No	15	13%
Not sure	15	13%

Question 7

ILR – We propose removing Other Medical Condition (For Example Epilepsy, Asthma, Diabetes)? Do you agree? If no, please advise what the information is used for?

There were 104 responses to this question	Total	Percent
Yes	58	56%
No	29	28%
Not sure	17	16%

Question 8

Option 1: Do you agree with combining Dyslexia and Dyscalculia and Other Specific Learning Difficulties into one Specific Learning Difficulties category?

Option 2: Do you agree with introducing Speech, Language and Communication Needs into the ILR?

There were 110 responses to this question	Total	Percent
Option 1	50	45%
Option 2	40	36%
Not sure	20	18%

Question 9

School Census: We propose replacing Autistic Spectrum Disorder with Autism (including Asperger's syndrome). Do you agree?

There were 109 responses to this question	Total	Percent
Yes	67	61%
No	34	31%
Not sure	8	7%

Question 10

ILR – The ILR currently has an Autism spectrum disorder field; and an Asperger's Syndrome field.

We propose to create one field - Autism (including Asperger's syndrome). Do you agree?

There were 112 responses to this question	Total	Percent
Yes	82	73%
No	21	19%
Not sure	9	8%

Question 11

ILR - We propose removing the Profound Complex Difficulties field and capture this in Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty instead. Do you agree?

There were 108 responses to this question	Total	Percent
Yes	84	78%
No	13	12%
Not sure	11	10%

Question 12

ILR – We propose removing the Multiple Learning Difficulties field and capture this in Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty. Do you agree?

There were 108 responses to this question	Total	Percent
Yes	80	74%
No	18	17%
Not sure	10	9%

Question 13a

ILR – We propose removing Temporary Disability After Illness (for example Post viral or Accident). Do you agree? If no, please advise what the information is used for.

There were 104 responses to this question	Total	Percent
Yes	69	66%
No	20	19%
Not sure	15	14%

Question 13b

Do we need to collect this information and what is the best way to do this?

There were 0 responses to this question	Total	Percent
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There were no responses to this question.

Question 14

ILR - We propose replacing “Not Known / Not Provided” with two new fields, “Not Provided” and “Prefer Not To Say”. Do you agree?

There were 102 responses to this question	Total	Percent
Yes	74	73%
No	10	10%
Not sure	18	18%

Annex B: List of organisations that responded to the consultation

Options	Responses	
Other	32	25%
Schools	28	22%
Local authorities	25	20%
Interest in SEND policy implementation/data development	17	13%
Colleges	13	10%
Parents	11	9%
Young people	1	1%
Employers (FE providers)	1	1%
Total	128	100%

Annex C: Full list of respondents to the Consultation¹

Achievement for All 3As (Sonia Blandford)
Addy, Lois (LA)
Afasic (Alison Huneke)
Allison, Marie (Leicester city council)
Ambitious about Autism (Clare Bull)
Ashley, Sarah
Association of Colleges (AoC)
Barton, Warrick (Longwell Green Primary School)
Beacon hill School (Helen Jones)
Bennett, Pat (Blackpool Borough Council)
Boyle, Sarah (Silverdale Primary School)
British Academy of Childhood Disability (John Gibbs)
British Deaf Association (David Buxton)
Brown, Alexandra
Browning, Kate (School Improvement for SEN)
Buckinghamshire County Council (Mike Appleyard, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education & Skills)
Burton, Amber (Devon CC)
Busk, Mary
Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education (Artemi Sakellariadis)
Changing Faces (Jane Frances)
Cheshire West and Chester Council (Robert Davis)
Clarke, Tracy (Bolton College)
Communication Trust- Every Child Understood, The (Anne Fox)
Constable, Anne (Heathfield Community School)
Cooper, David
Court, Stephen
Croydon College (Jacqueline Paterson)
CSWP (Liz Mackenzie)
DERWEN COLLEGE (Nicola Vine)
Disability Rights UK (Phillip Connolly)
Dixon, Carol

¹ Respondents who asked for their details to be kept confidential are not included on this list.

Dreyfus Training and Development Ltd (Mary Hrekow)
Dyslexia Action (John Rack)
Dyslexia-SpLD Trust, The (Melanie Byrne)
East Riding College (Helen Wooldridge)
Education Division, Peoples Service, NLC (Ruth, Julie, Stuart Illman, Frost, Holloway)
EFA (Tracy Mitchell)
Engage in Their Future (Richard Boyle)
Enoch, Nicola
Equality and Human Rights Commission (Fiona Glenn)
Essex, Jeannette (Solihull MBC)
Farmer, Mary (Cedars primary, The)
Frank Wise School (Sean O'Sullivan)
Frankland, Marion (Alice Stevens School)
Gausden, Sarah (Mother of daughter with raised hearing)
GL Assessment (Andrew Thraves)
Gough, Heather (Primary School)
Hagg, Sharon (Primary school)
Hayter, Susan (Greenacre School)
Heald, David
Heart of Deafness (Louise Cole)
Hereward College (Sheila Fleming)
Horlock, Sharonne (Impington Village College)
Hutchins, Jean (BDA volunteer)
iAB improving Attendance and Behaviour (Linda Rundle)
Jenner, Simon (Blackpool Council)
Jones-Ford, Nicola (Fulham College Boys' School)
Lader, Vicki (Westdene primary school)
Leicestershire CC (Chris Bristow)
Lester, Natasha
Linkage College (Richard Pyka)
Litten, Malcolm
LITTLE, SHEILA
Loughborough College (Lisa Wardle)
Luton Parent Carer Forum (Kulwinder Bola)
Manchester College Justice Services, The (Malcolm Collins)
Mason, Victoria
MENCAP (James Robinson)
Merton Council (Jan Martin)

Moran, Hayley (Parent)
Morgans, Joanne
NAHT (Sion Humphreys)
NASEN (Jane Friswell, Chief Executive)
NASS (Claire Dorer)
National Autistic Society, The (Daniel Leighton)
National Deaf Children's Society, The (Ian Noon)
National Star College (David Dalby)
Natspec (Alison Boulton)
Newham council (James Hourigan)
NIACE National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (England and Wales) (Catrina Barrett)
Norman, Heather (Governor)
North Yorkshire County Council (Michael Cotton)
Nottingham City Council
Oldham Borough Council (Gill Hoar)
Oxfordshire County Council (Janest Johnson)
PM training (Craig Doyle)
Pursglove, Maggie (Robin Hood Junior School)
Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School (Michelle Prince)
Redbridge Institute of Adult Education (Rachel L'Anson)
Relf, Margaret (Osmaston Primary School)
RES (Barney Angliss)
Richardson, Penny (Barnet Council)
RNIB (Sue Keil)
Robertson, Christopher (Personal capacity / Department for Inclusion and Special Educational Needs, University of Birmingham)
Rowley , Dawn
Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (Rebecca Veazey)
Salford City Council (Sue Woodgate)
Schools Health & Wellbeing Research Network (Chris Owen)
SENSE (Kate Fitch)
Sheffield City Council (Jeremy Hamm)
Shipleigh , Mrs (Paddock Wood Primary School)
Sinson, Jane (Independent educational psychologist)
Somerset County Council (Caroline Taylor)
St Josephs Catholic School (Tracey Privett)
Staffordshire County Council (Lynda Mitchell)
Stoney, Jan

Taylor, Julia (Jisc RSC SW)
Todd, Vikki (Not given)
Treloar Trust (Jane Hayden)
University of Bath (Jill Porter)
VIBE (The Visually impaired and Blind People's Education Network) (Polly Price)
Voice: the union for education professionals (Ian Toone)
Wakefield Metropolitan District Council (Fiona Law)
Walsall College (Mark Brown)
Weston College (Karen Worthington)
White, Leanne
White, Alison
Williams, Dayo (SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL)
Willis, Carli (St Nicholas Catholic High)
Wolverhampton Adult Education Service (Sian Fletcher)
Womack, Helen (SEN Support Services)
World of Inclusion Ltd (Richard Rieser)



Department
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