



## Qualification achievement rates: business rules for 2014 to 2015

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**Audience** Of interest to colleges and training organisations

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## Background and introduction

- 1 Last year we indicated that we would review the term “success rates”. The consultation on [outcome based success measures](#) identified that there are other equally important factors that determine the successful outcome of learning. In preparation for the introduction of a broader range of success measures in the future we are changing the name of Qualification Success Rates to Qualification Achievement Rates in 2014 to 2015.
- 2 As we already report a separate Achievement Rate (percentage of completed aims that are achieved) within QSR reports, we will consult with the sector on whether this is still required and if so how we refer to it in the future.
- 3 The core components of the qualification achievement rate (QAR) approach and method of calculation are based upon key policy, business and technical Individualised Learner Record (ILR) rules and changes.
- 4 We used the same methodology for all types of provision for the first time in 2013 to 2014 and will continue to do so for 2014 to 2015.

## Purpose

- 5 This document outlines the headline business rules that govern the method of calculation for the official QAR for provision associated with the academic year that runs from 2014 to 2015.

## Methods of calculation

- 6 There are two separate QAR methods: the **overall QAR** and the **timely QAR**. We calculate both from data formally submitted by providers that is aligned with the appropriate specifications and requirements.
- 7 The overall QAR calculation measures the number of learning aims or apprenticeship frameworks that are 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 achieved is expressed as a percentage of those that left with a hybrid end date in the reporting period.
- 8 The timely QAR 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.
- 9 The overall QAR is the method that we will use for Minimum Standards. The timely QAR will be a supportive method providing additional important information about the delivery of provision.
- 10 For both the overall QAR and the timely QAR the last day of the reporting period for the year from 2014 to 2015 will be 31 July 2015. The hybrid end date for overall QAR and the planned end date for timely QAR must fall within the reporting year to be included in the calculation.
- 11 We take information for apprenticeship QAR 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 QAR calculations.

## Main changes

- 12 We will change the name of Qualification Success Rates to Qualification Achievement Rates in 2014 to 2015.
- 13 As we already reported an Achievement Rate (percentage of completed aims that are achieved) within QSR reports we will consider whether this is still required and if so how we refer to it.
- 14 We will not produce a separate workplace learning QAR report in 2014 to 2015. Instead we will report a QAR for classroom and workplace learning together in the same way as we did for Minimum Standards in 2013 to 2014.

## Business rules

- 15 The learning aims in scope of the QAR calculation are those in receipt of public funding through the Adult Skills Budget, 16-18 Apprenticeships, 24+ Advanced Learning Loans, the Large Employer Outcome Pilot and funding from the Education Funding Agency for learners aged 16 to 18 and directly funded 14 to 16 year-old students recorded in the ILR using LDM code 320.
- 16 QAR for provision funded as part of the Offenders' Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) budget will be calculated using the same rules.
- 17 The following exclusions apply (those marked with an \* only apply under the timely QAR methodology where they occur on or before, or within 90 days after, the planned end date)
  - 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.
  - b) Planned breaks\*, where the learner has temporarily withdrawn from the aim due to an agreed break in learning.
  - c) Any learning aim/framework within scope of QAR that a learner has withdrawn from within the respective funding qualifying period 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) Innovation Code Learning Aims (referenced as ZINN000(1 to 6), Z0004474 to Z0007833).
  - e) Classroom or Workplace 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). Transfers from apprenticeships to other programmes are not excluded.
  - f) Instances where unemployed learners claiming Universal Credit, Job Seeker's Allowance or Employment and Support Allowance (Work

Related Activity Group) cannot continue their learning through to successful completion because they have gained employment.

- g) All 19+ learners undertaking a Traineeship programme that are unable to continue their learning through to successful completion because they have gained employment. Employment outcome is not collected for 16-18 year olds so the exclusion cannot be applied to this cohort.
- h) Access to Apprenticeships pathway provision where the learner is not employed.
- i) OLASS provision where the learning aim is terminated early for reasons beyond the provider's control.
- j) Key skills.
- k) Adult Learner Accounts (ALAs).
- l) Joint Investment Programme (JIP) aims.
- m) Funded provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LLDD) delivered by independent specialist providers.
- n) The following aims;
  - i. Employability Skills Programme (ESP) funded aims
  - ii. entry to employment learning aims,
  - iii. foundation learning weekly aims,
  - iv. remaining 'First Steps' learning aims,
  - v. diagnostic tests,
  - vi. unitisation qualifications,
  - vii. additional units,
  - viii. tutorial support and complementary studies.
- o) Component aims will be excluded with the exception of the 2012 to 2013 contextualising values for progression pathways, diplomas and foundation learning programmes where we will use the ILR rules for that year.
- p) All European Social Fund (ESF)-funded and Community Learning provision.
- q) Work experience or work placement aims.
- r) Non Regulated aims used to claim funding for additional ESOL learning needs.

- s) Aims delivered through Learning Technologies Pilots identified using learning delivery monitoring code 337.
- 18 Uncashed AS levels will be treated as failures.
  - 19 We will include achievement rates for subcontracted apprenticeship provision (using the main assessment aim) this year for illustrative and comparative purposes only.
  - 20 The historical QAR 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 achievement rates.
  - 22 ILR data from the latest 5 years is merged to form the QAR dataset.

## **Planned Changes for 2015 to 2016**

- 23 Frameworks or aims with a completion status of 1 (learner continuing or intending to continue the learning activities leading to the learning aim), that do not have a corresponding record in the following academic year, will be treated as a withdrawal. Their hybrid end year will be set to the year after the last submitted file.
- 24 Frameworks or aims with a completion status of 6 (Learner has temporarily withdrawn from the aim due to an agreed break in learning), that do not have a corresponding restart record in the following academic year or by R04 of the academic year after that, will be treated as a withdrawal. Their hybrid end year will be set to the year after the last submitted file.
- 25 We will amend the definition of hybrid end year to become the later of the planned or actual end date or reporting year – to ensure we include aims or frameworks reported with an actual end date in a previous academic year.

## **Further details**

- 26 We will issue more detailed information within the associated technical documentation that is due for publication in May 2015 on our website.

# Glossary

<b>Term or phrase</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
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 QAR	The primary method of calculating Qualification Achievement Rates.
Timely QAR	The supporting method of calculating Qualification Achievement Rates.