Department for Education

School preference (child level) data collections 2016

COLLECT user guide

February 2016

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Introduction

The COLLECT (collection on line for learning, education, children and teachers) portal is used by local authorities and the department 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 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 school preference (secondary and primary) returns from initial submission, data validation and final approval by the department.

Note on terminology - as 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 the 'Collector' is the final destination of the information. School preference has local authorities as the 'Source' and the department as the 'Collector'.

Workflow

Within the COLLECT portal, data returns progress through a workflow of 'loaded' and 'submitted' by the local authorities and they are then authorised by the department. At each point in the workflow the local authority is able to view or export the return.

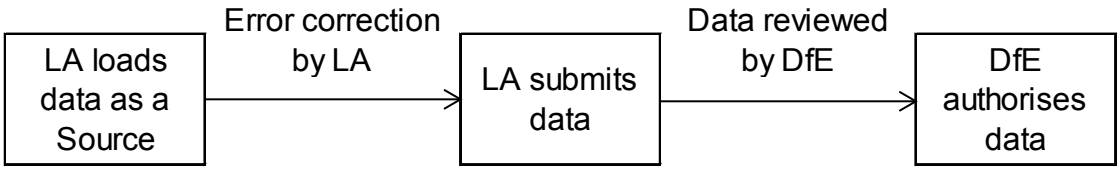


Figure 1: Workflow

Data will only be used for analysis once it has been authorised.

Please note some screen shots may refer to previous years however the process is the same for the 2016 collection.

COLLECT and Secure Access

Access to COLLECT is now through the department's Secure Access system.

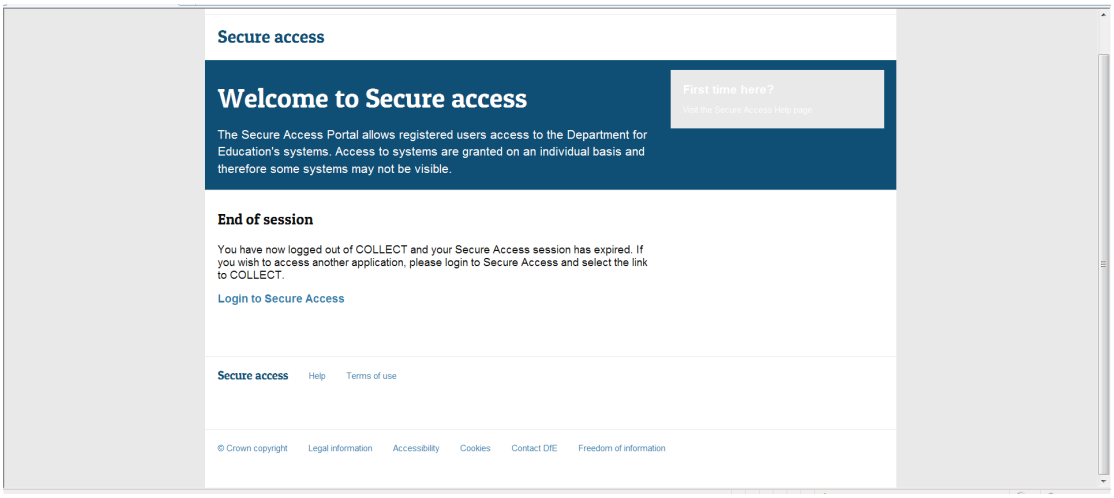


Figure 2: Screenshot of Secure Access

If you are a new user and require access to COLLECT, you will need to contact the approver within your local authority.

Full Secure Access information is published on the Secure Access website.

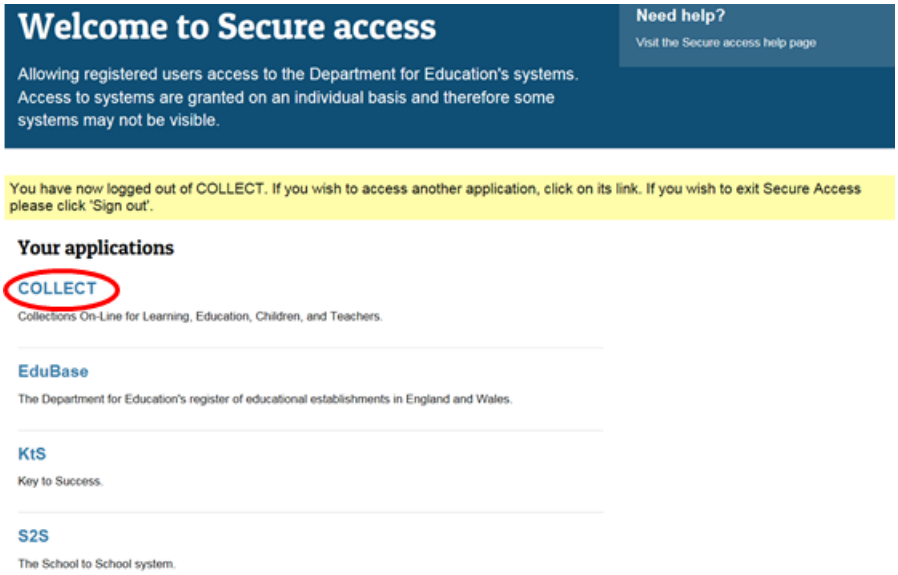


Figure 3: Screenshot of Secure Access highlighting COLLECT

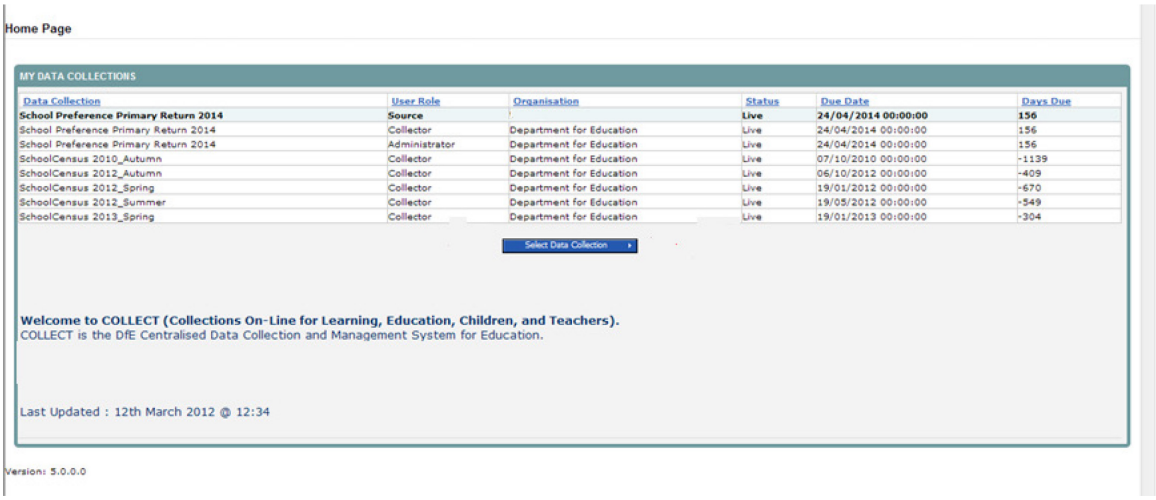


Figure 4: Screenshot of COLLECT homepage

To continue, the source user (local authority) will click on the required data collection so that it is highlighted in blue and then click on the 'Select Data Collection' button.

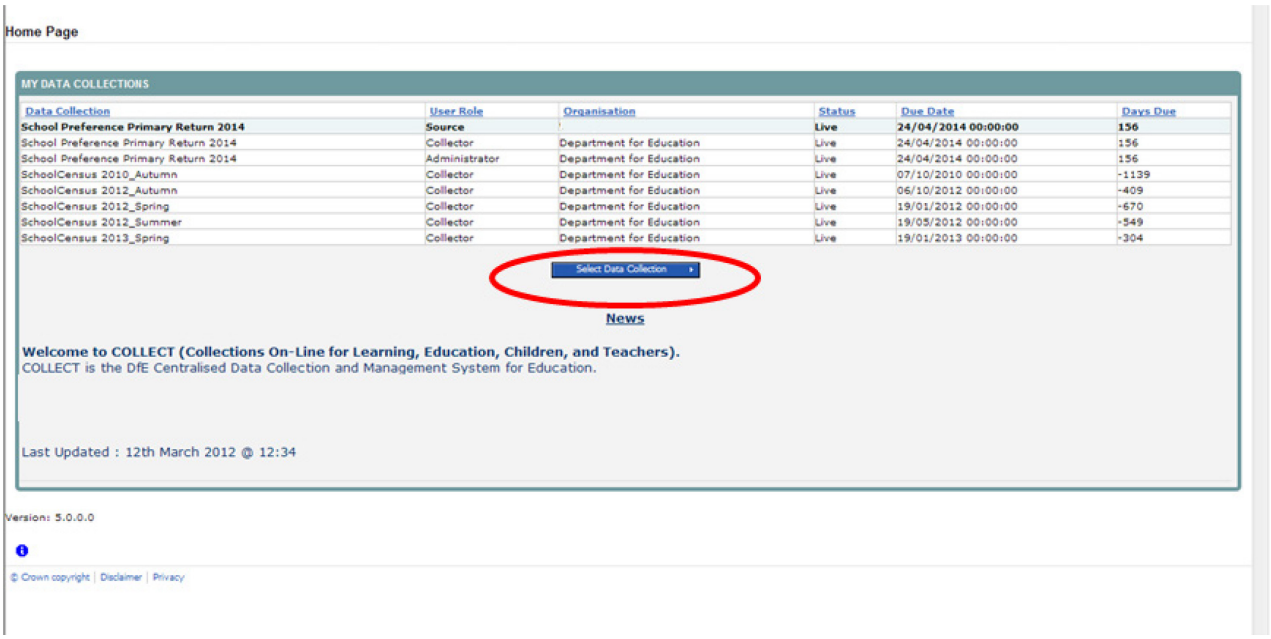


Figure 5: Screenshot of COLLECT data collections

Local authority (source) page screen

The next screen (‘Source’ page) provides a summary of the latest position for the selected data collection. The user will see information on the current status of their return and is presented with a number of options.

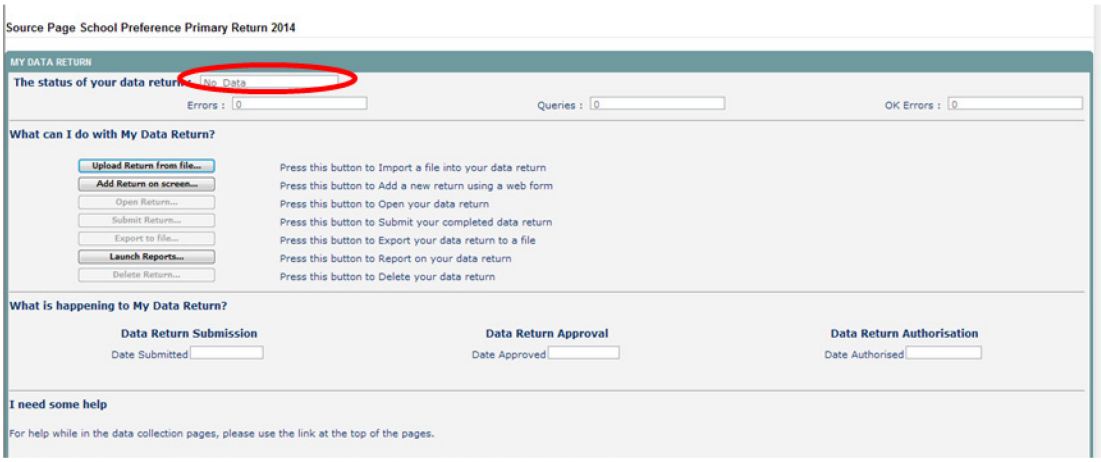


Figure 6: Screenshot of return status

My data return

This area shows the status of the return, the number of errors, queries and OK errors. . Ok errors can be Okayed by the department when a suitable explanation is provided by the local authority.

Status will be one of the following:

‘No_Data’	data hasn’t been loaded.
‘Waiting_for_Validation’	data loaded and waiting to be validated.
‘Validation_in_progress’	data loaded and validation in progress.
‘Loaded’	data loaded and validated but not submitted.
‘Amended_by_Source’	data has been manually edited by the source (local authority).
‘Awaiting_Submission’	data queued, waiting for submission.
‘Submission_in_progress’	submitted snapshot is being created.
‘Submitted’	data loaded and submitted.
‘Amended_by_Collector’	data has been manually edited by the department after submission.
‘Authorised’	data loaded, submitted by local authoity and authorised by the department
‘Rejected’	data load rejected – due to invalid format and/or contents.

Status is followed by a series of buttons as listed below:

Upload return

Clicking on this button launches a page to allow the local authority user (source) to browse for their XML file and load.

Add return on screen

Allows the source to input the return on screen – this is generally not recommended but may be a possibility if the number of data lines to be returned is very small.

Open return

This option is greyed out until data is loaded and is used to access the loaded data for editing or viewing.

Submit return

This option is greyed out until data is loaded and validated and is used to submit the data to the department – this should only be done when the data is complete and clean. Control then passes to the department.

Export to file

This option is greyed out until data is loaded and is used to export the loaded data.

Launch reports

This option launches the local authority reports options.

Delete return

This option is greyed out until data is loaded and is used to delete the local authority data from the system.

Upload a return

Please click upload return from file

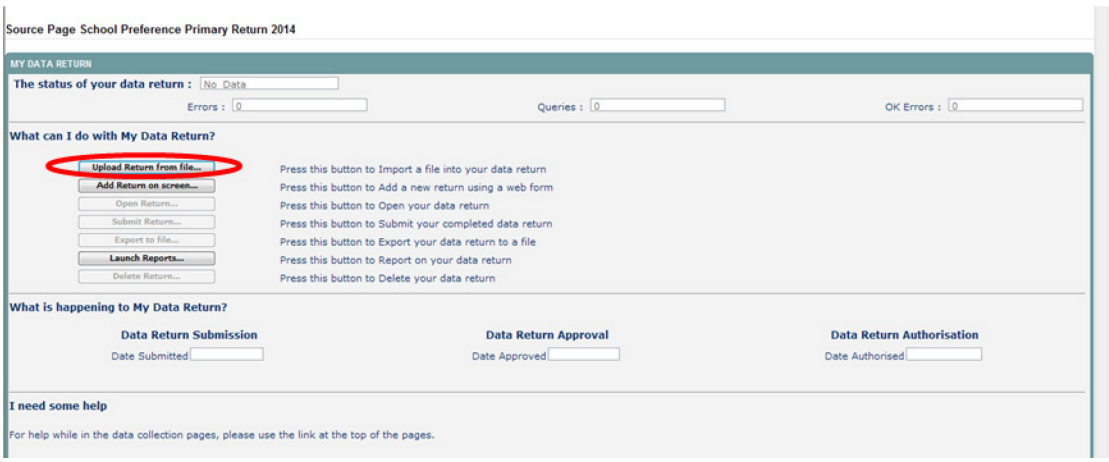


Figure 7: Screenshot of upload return

The source can enter the file path or name of the return or alternatively click on the 'Browse…' button to navigate to the required file. Then select 'Upload' to load the data. If you have previously loaded data it will be deleted and replaced by the latest version. Any changes that you have made to the previous data within COLLECT, including notes and history, will be lost. Return level notes however, will be retained.

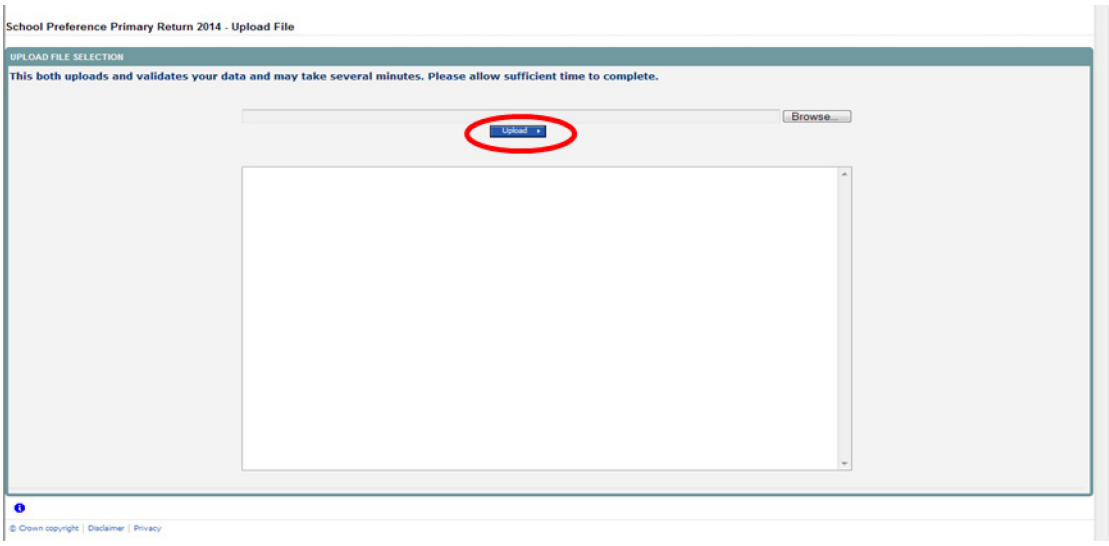


Figure 8: Screenshot of upload button

If data is already loaded you will be asked if you want to overwrite it. Answering 'no' will stop the data load, answering 'yes' will delete the existing data and load the new data.

If the XML file is in the wrong format or contains the wrong type of data, eg a letter in a date field, the file will be rejected with an explanatory message.

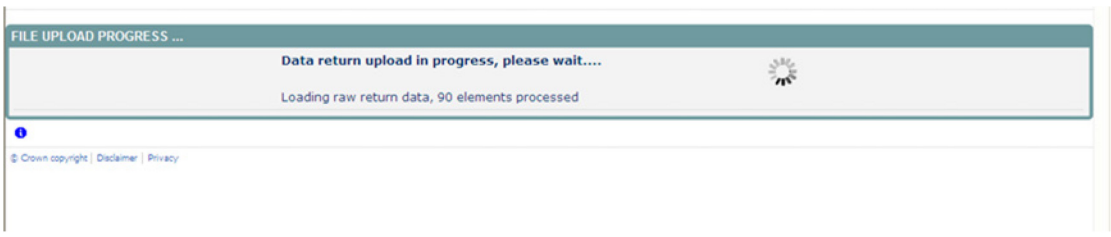


Figure 9: Screenshot of upload in progress

Whilst the data is being loaded the above message will be displayed.

Once the file has been successfully loaded the following message will appear.

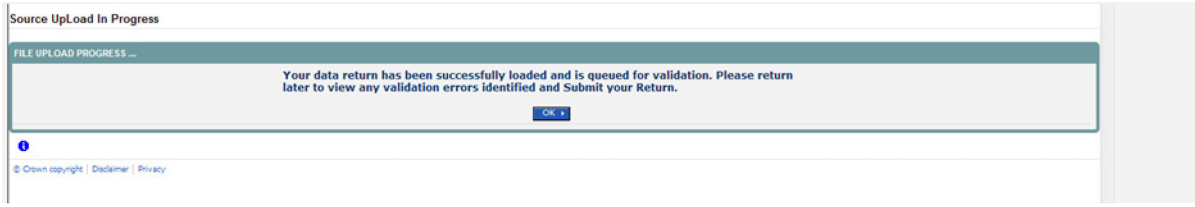


Figure 10: Screenshot of return loaded message

The return has now been placed in a queue to be validated. When COLLECT is busy this process may take some time and users may come back later to view any validation errors present within the return.

When you click on ‘OK’ you will be returned to the source page and the status will be ‘Waiting_for_validation’. When the return reaches the front of the queue, the status on the source page will change to ‘Validation_in_progess’ and then ‘Loaded’ when it is finished.

You can view the data whilst waiting for the validation to start or when validation is completed. You cannot edit data until after it has been validated.

Viewing a return

Once you have loaded the return you will need to check the data is correct and also ensure notes have been entered against any queries or errors that cannot be corrected.

To view your return, click on ‘Open Return’.

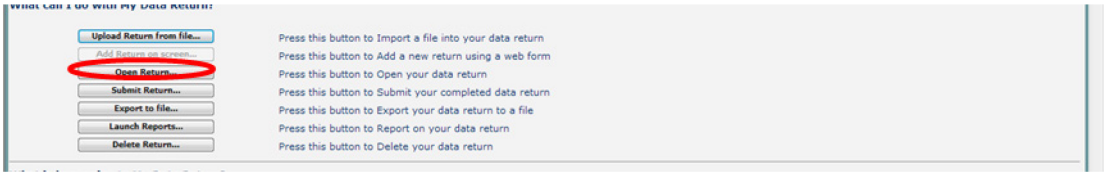


Figure 11: Screenshot of open return

Your return will now be displayed. To navigate through return please use ‘View All’ button.

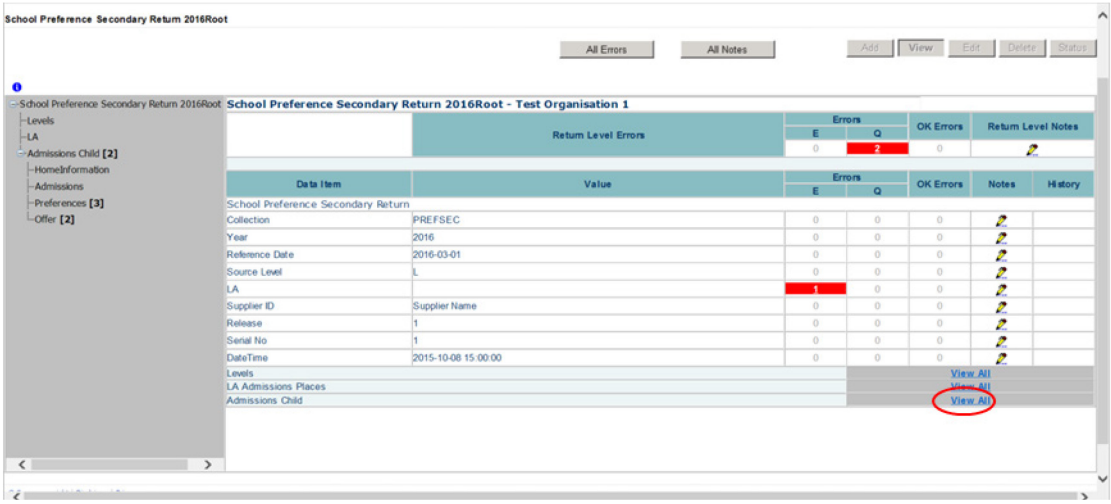


Figure 12: Screenshot of return showing view all buttons

Handling errors and queries

You will need to try and correct any errors on your return and enter notes against queries.

To view errors and queries on the return please select the ‘All Errors’ button and a screen will be displayed containing a list of all the errors on that return. Please see below.

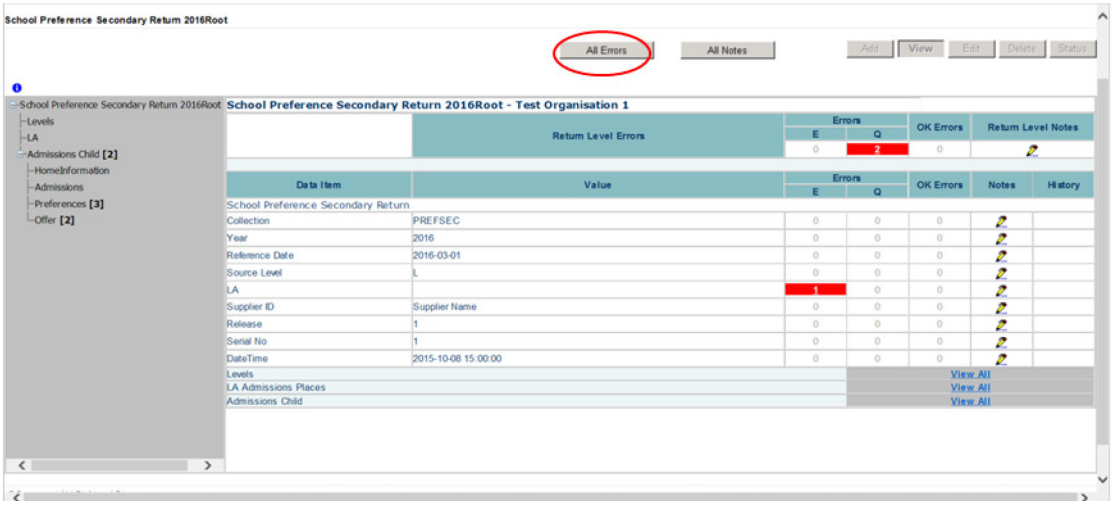


Figure 13: Screenshot of all errors

Clicking on the ‘Details’ button will display the data item that is in error.

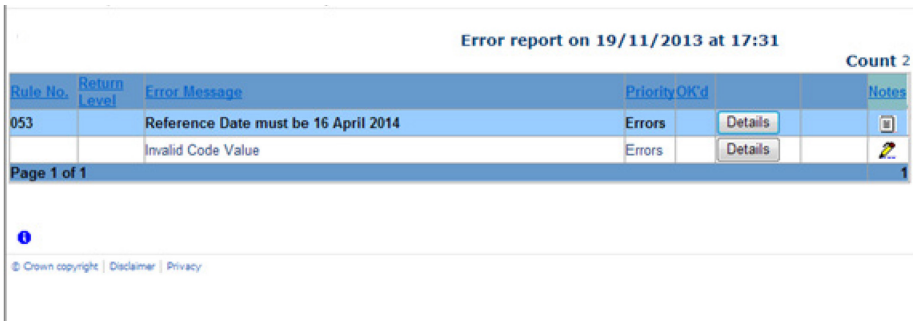


Figure 14: Screenshot of errors and queries

Adding notes

You can add your own notes to a query or error that cannot be resolved before submitting the data to the department. Notes can be added to a return from within the 'All Errors' screen.

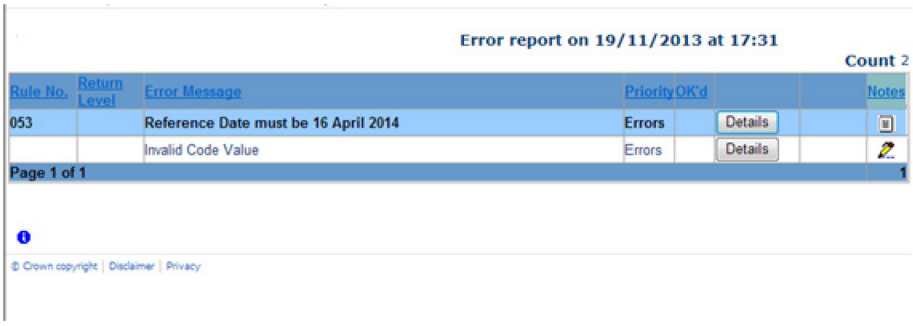


Figure 15: Screenshot of note section

As you can see from the above there is a pencil icon at the end of each row. To add a note relating to each query please click on the pencil icon. You will then be presented with the screen below.

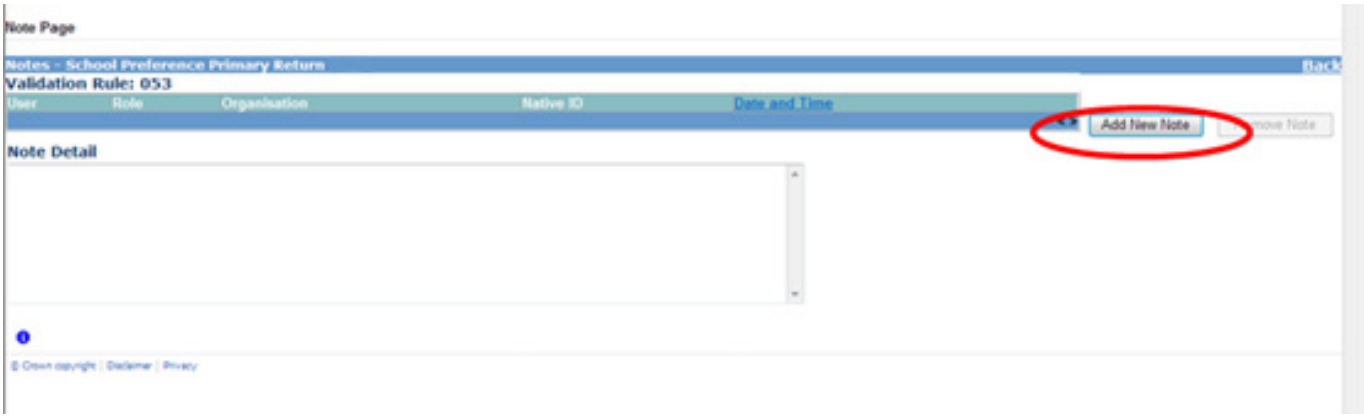


Figure 16: Screenshot of add new note

You need to click on 'Add New Note' to type in the notes box. To go back to the previous screen please select the back button.

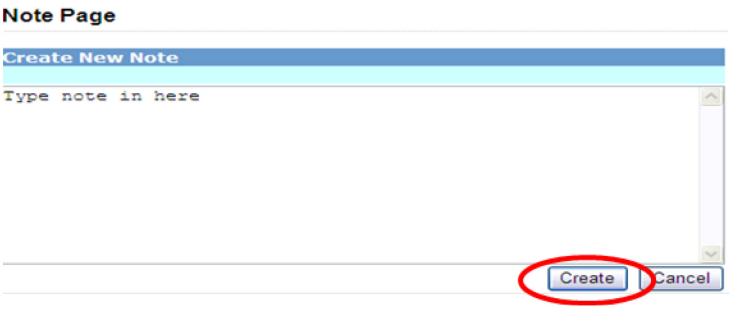


Figure 17: Screenshot of create new note

Once you've typed in your explanation please click on 'Create'. This saves that note against the return.

The pencil icon will change to a notepad once a note has been successfully associated with a query. See below:

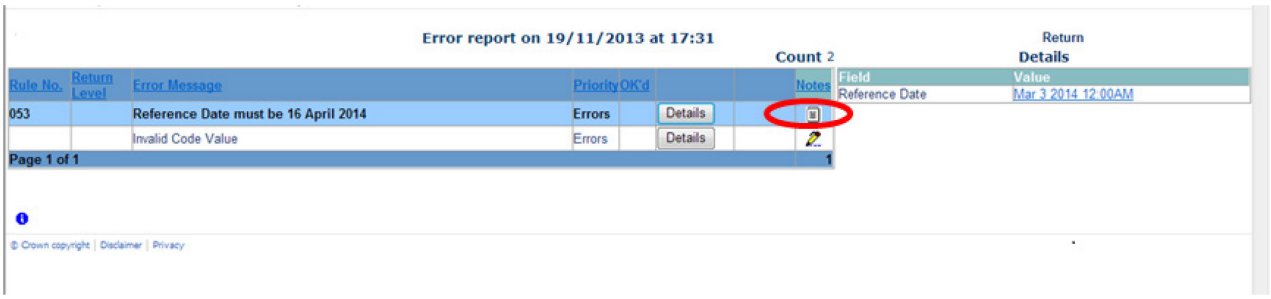


Figure 18: Screenshot of notepad

Click on the notepad to view notes.

Even though you have entered an explanatory note against the errors and queries they will not disappear from COLLECT until they have been reviewed by the department.

To get back to the previous screen please select the 'return' button. Click on the 'Open Return' button.

This will bring up all the same screen as described in the viewing return section.

Editing a return

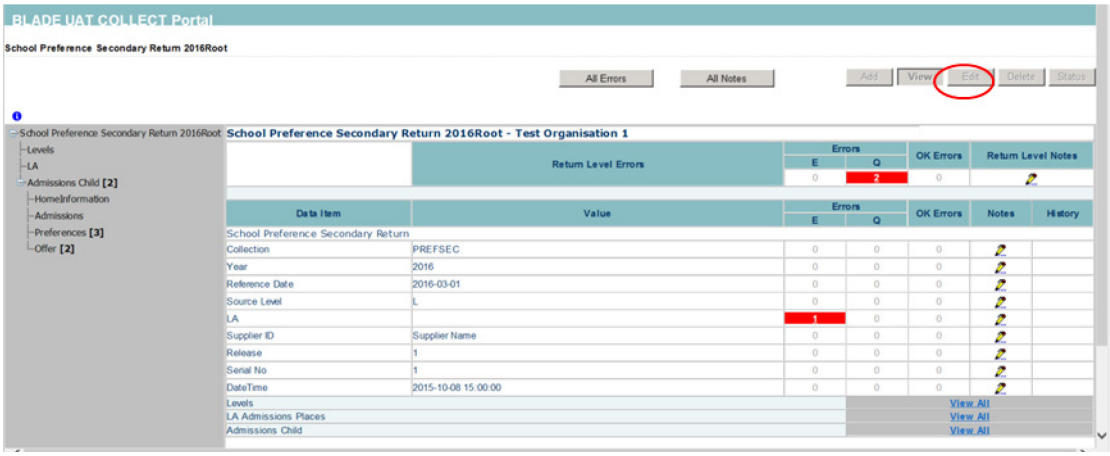


Figure 19: Screenshot of editing a return

Once a return has been uploaded, a local authoritymay edit the data if necessary. The recommended approach would be to create a new output file and upload into COLLECT. This will ensure that the data held at the local authority is consistent with the data being provided in the data collection return to the department, however there may be circumstances when it is necessary for data to be edited in COLLECT rather than uploading a new file .

Click on the error to navigate to the screen that you would like to edit. When you first enter the screen it will be in 'view mode'. To go into 'edit mode' select the **'Edit'** button at the top of the screen. All the fields can be updated by typing directly into the value cell.

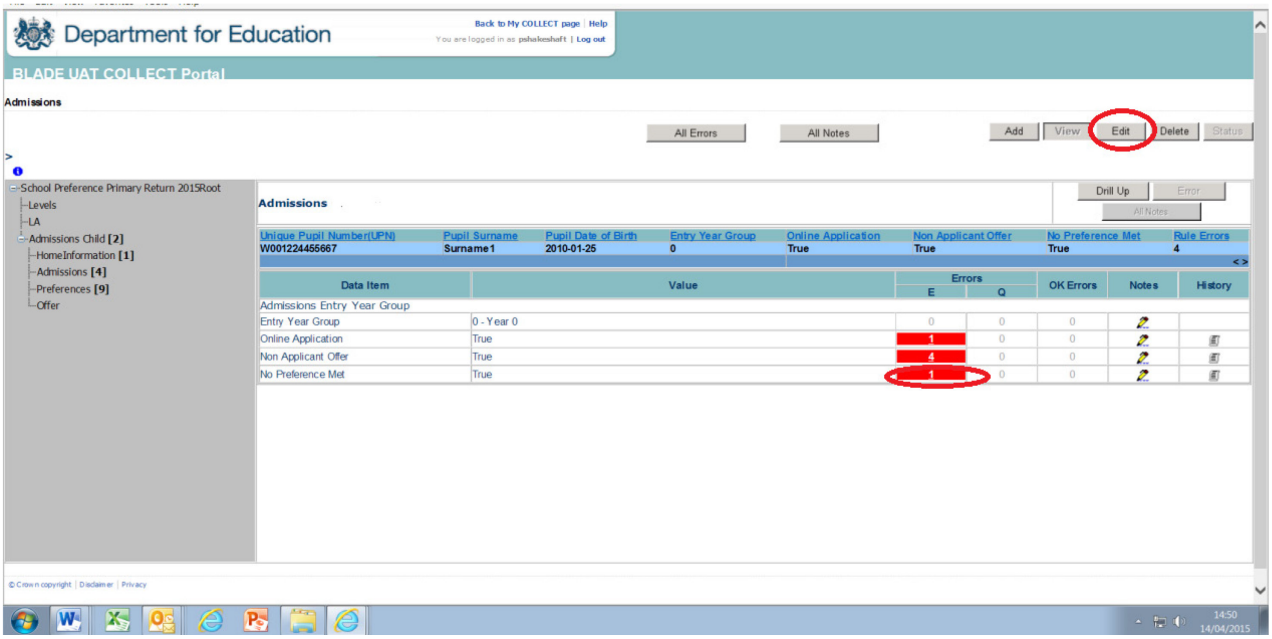


Figure 20: Screenshot of edit screen

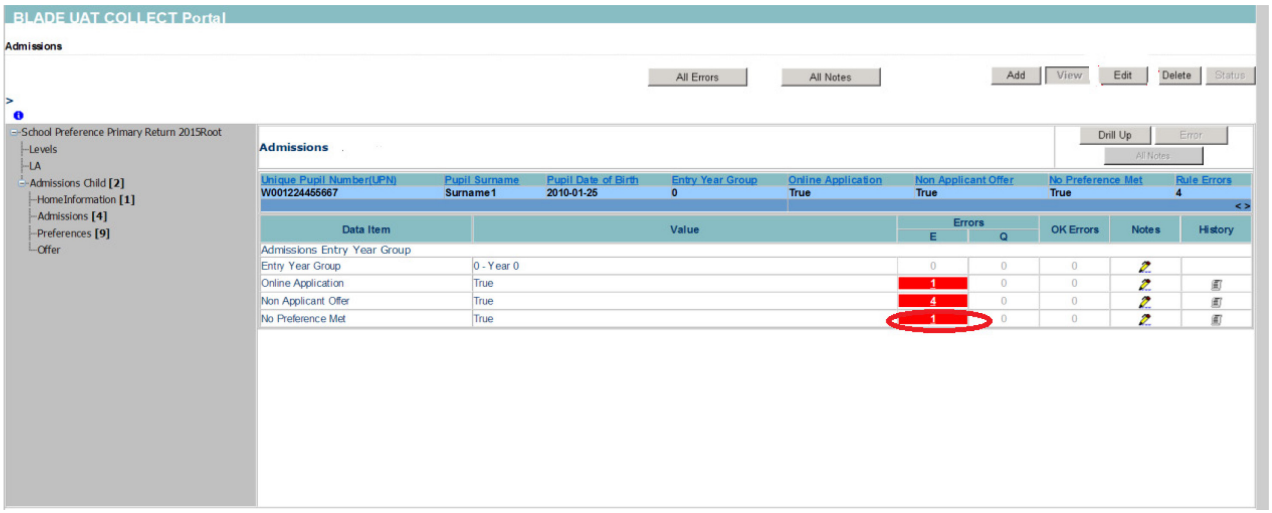


Figure 21: Screenshot on how to correct error

Once the data has been changed you will need to click elsewhere on the screen for the field to update. If this results in error corrections then the errors will disappear. To save any changes made, select the 'View' button.

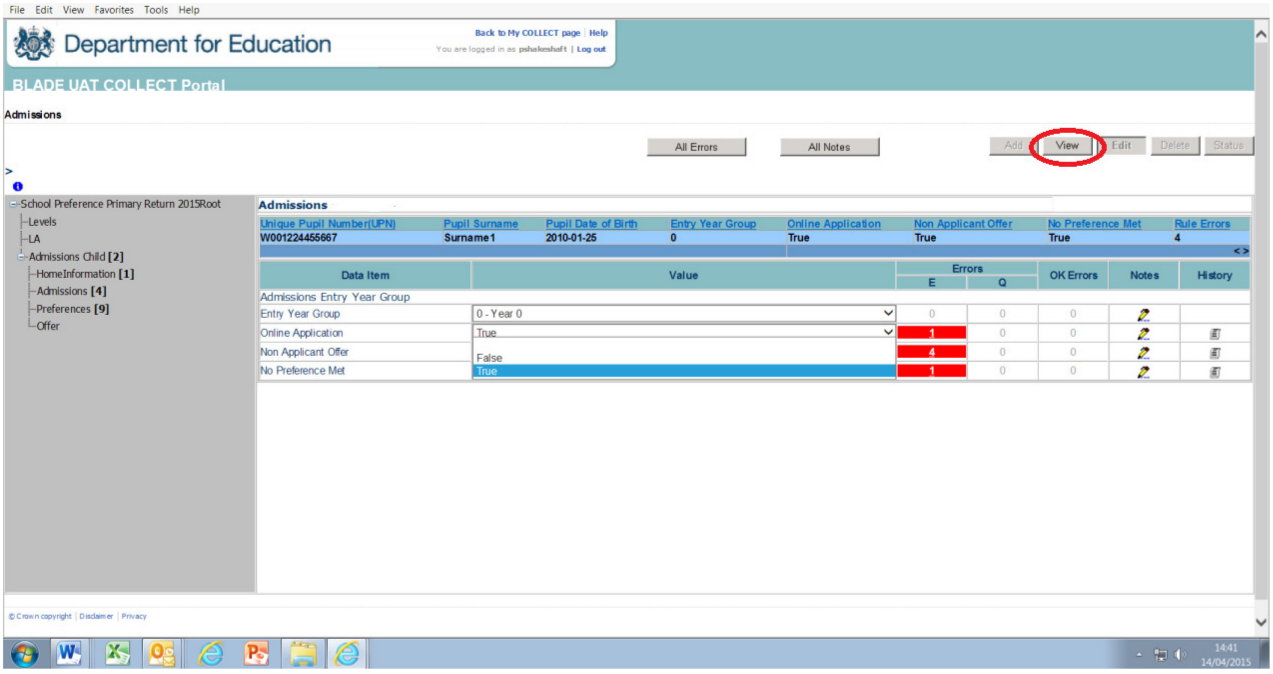


Figure 22: Screen shot on how to save amendment

Before submitting your return please check for any further errors by clicking on ‘All Errors’.

Submitting your return

Once you are happy for your return to be submitted for the department to access, select ‘Submit Return’.

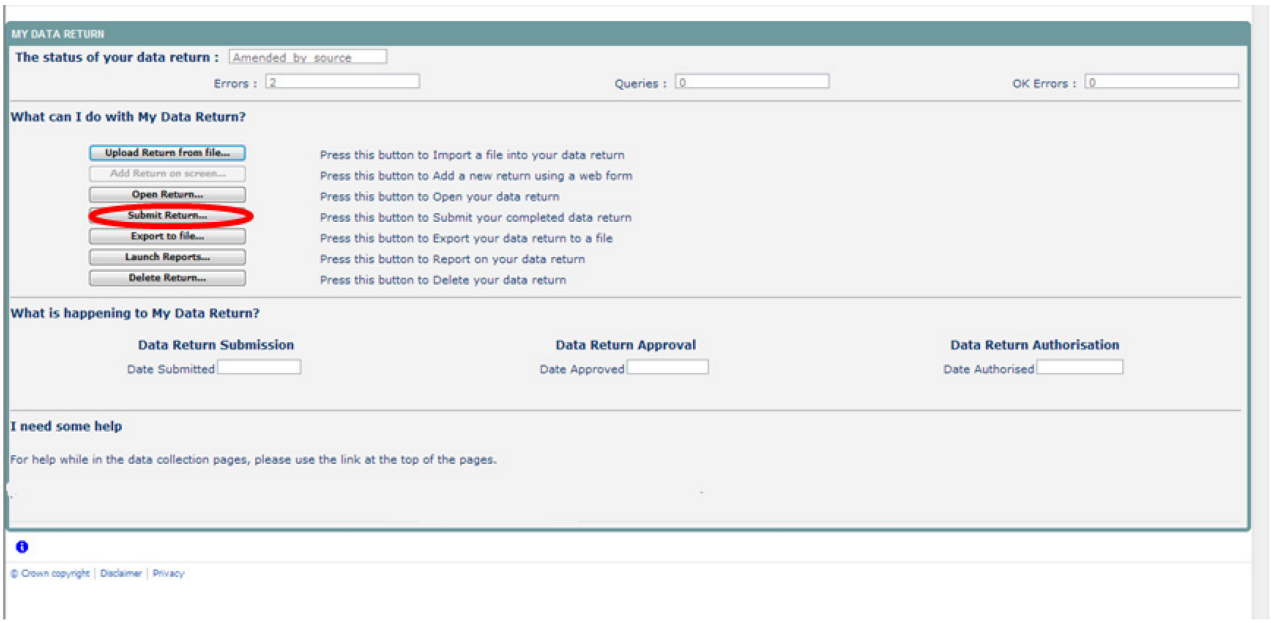
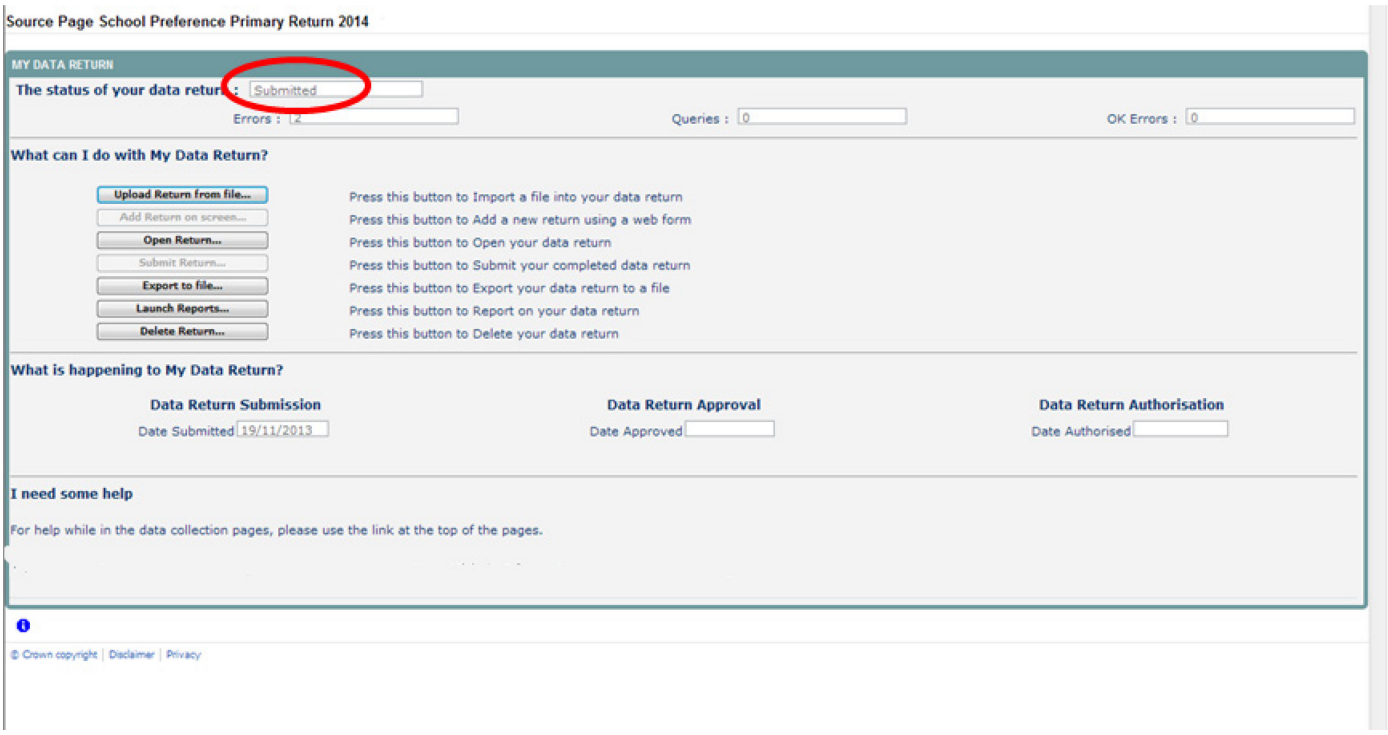


Figure 23: Screenshot of submit return



Your return status will now show ‘submitted’.

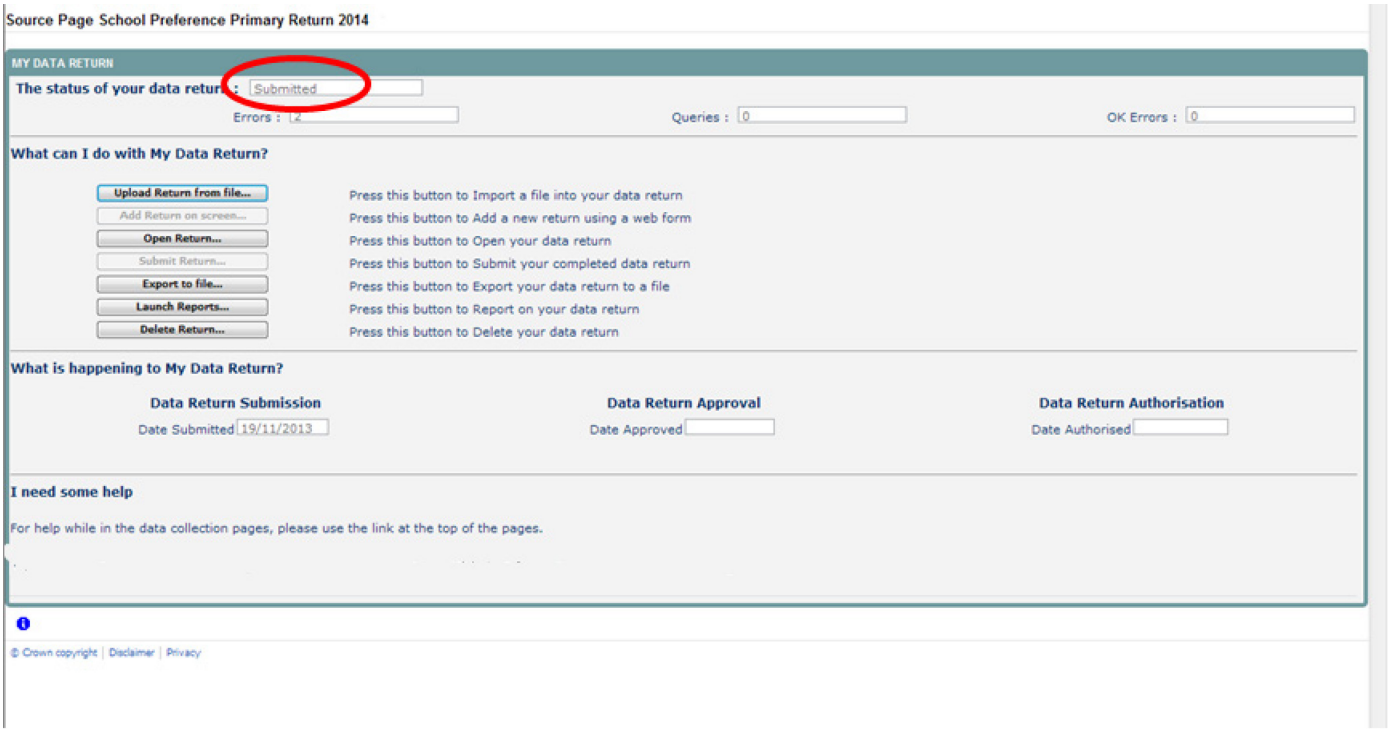


Figure 24: Screenshot of submitted return

Exporting data

COLLECT provides options to export data returns in CSV or XML format. Exporting data can be performed by clicking on the ‘Export…’ button.

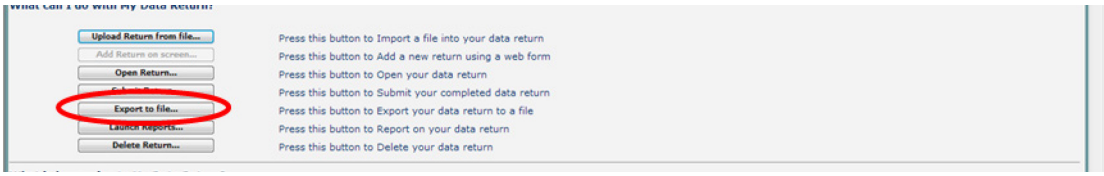


Figure 25: Screenshot of export button

Selecting the ‘Export’ button displays the output options of either CSV or XML.

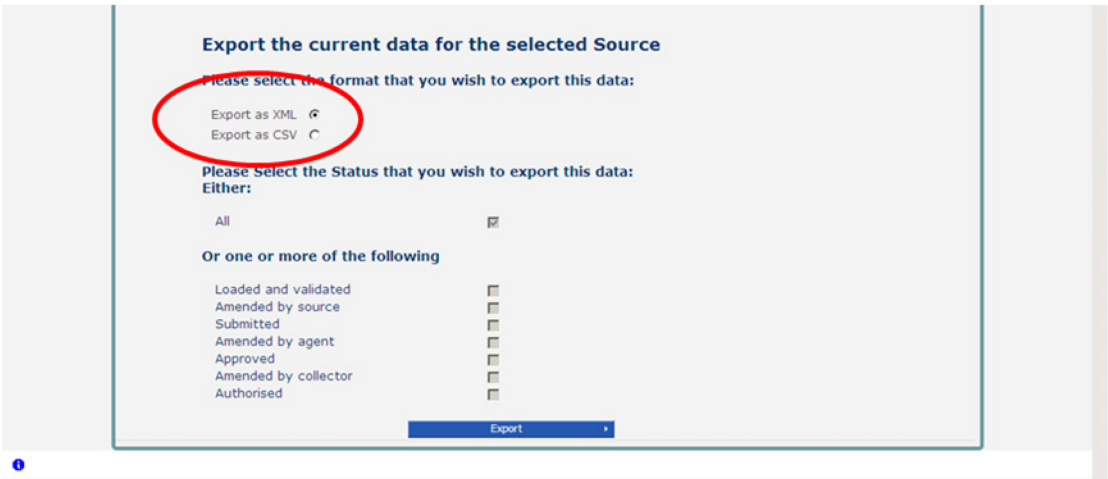


Figure 26: Screenshot of export screen

Exporting as XML will generate a zip file containing the export XML data.

Reports

There are a number of reports available, which can be run at any time once data has been loaded for your local authority. These can be accessed by selecting ‘Launch Reports’ on the COLLECT portal screen.

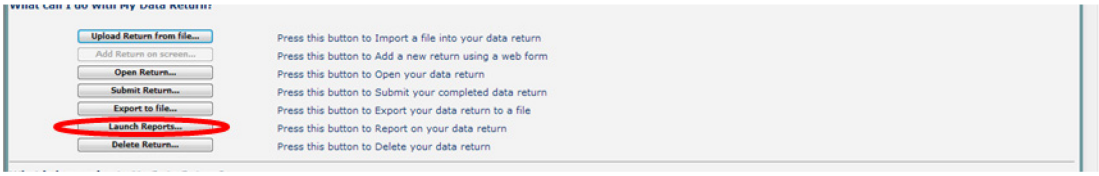


Figure 27: Screenshot of launch reports

Selecting ‘Launch Reports’ presents the report page with a drop down list of any reports which are available.

Screen functionality

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

Do not use the browser buttons**.** When in the data collection, unpredictable behaviour may be experienced if you use the back or forward buttons on your web browser's toolbar.

Navigation through a return

To navigate through the system, links are provided on all pages either as **'**Back' or **'**Drill Up' options; please use these links to navigate between screens when using the system.

Control	Usually located	Action
Back to 'My COLLECT' page	All screens within a return except the main page which shows 'Back to Home' page	Takes you back to the main page for your user role ('Agent', 'Source', etc)
Drill up	Any data screen within a return apart from the header screen	Returns you to the previous data screen
Return	Report screens, eg 'History' and 'errors'	Returns you to the previous screen
Back	Notes screens	Returns you to the previous screen
View all	Data entry screens that have additional linked data.	Takes you to the sub module level details

Mode buttons

These buttons determine which operation mode the screen is currently 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 bars

Only available on screens that could have a large record set list. These allow you to sort the records on the screen.

Left hand menu

The left hand menu can also be used to move to different screens although some of the mode buttons may not work as expected when using this view.

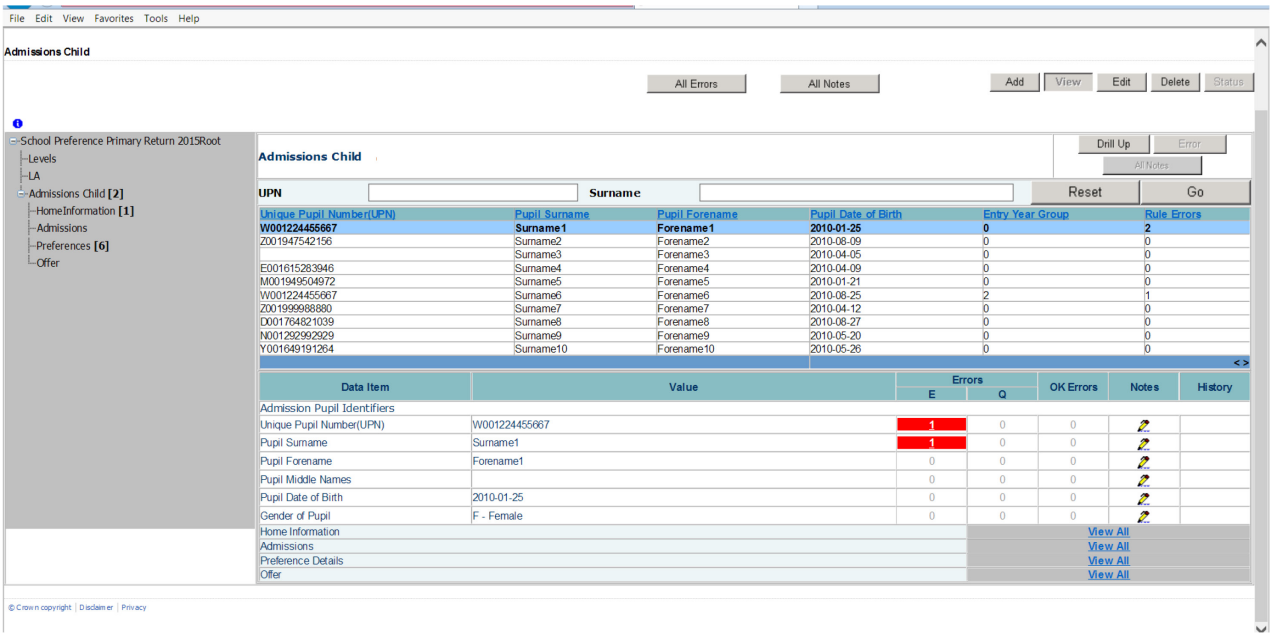


Figure 28: Screenshot from COLLECT showing left hand menu

Help

If you have a query regarding COLLECT or school preference (secondary or primary) data collections, please submit a data collection service request form to the data collections helpdesk.

Department
for Education

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