
10 May 1999

CIRCULAR

**THE
FURTHER
EDUCATION
FUNDING
COUNCIL**

**Individualised Student
Record Data Collection
1999-2000**

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To

Principals of colleges
Heads of higher education
institutions receiving Council funds
Heads of external institutions
Chief education officers

Circular type

Request for data

Summary

The specification of the individualised student record (ISR) for 1999-2000 and the arrangements for the collection of data. Returns are requested by 6 December 1999, 4 September 2000 and 5 February 2001

Reference number: 99/21

Enquiries:
Funding and statistics support desk
01203 863224
Website <http://www.fefc.ac.uk>

99/21

Individualised Student Record Data Collection 1999-2000

Introduction

1 This circular and its two accompanying documents comprise a request for data from colleges and external institutions. Higher education (HE) institutions are asked to note the information in paragraph 14. The first accompanying document is an executive summary of the individualised student record (ISR) for 1999-2000. The second is the *Individualised Student Record 1999-2000 Institution Support Manual* which contains a detailed specification of the student data requested for 1999-2000.

Background

2 The Council consulted institutions in Circular 98/42 about:

- five proposals to change the specification of the ISR for 1999-2000
- amending the coverage of the ISR aggregate return with effect from 2000-01
- revising its confidentiality guidelines.

Responses were invited by 8 February 1999.

3 Following this, institutions were given early notice of proposed changes to the specification of the ISR for 1999-2000 in *Technical Discussion Document 19*, published on 31 March 1999.

4 This circular summarises the responses to consultation, and confirms the arrangements for the collection of ISR data for 1999-2000.

5 A list of ISR collections showing reference and return dates is included at annex A.

Responses to Consultation in Circular 98/42

6 By 8 February 1999 189 responses had been received to the consultation in Circular 98/42. In summary:

- a. of the five proposals to change the ISR in 1999-2000, four were supported by 95% or more of those responding and one was supported by 70% of those responding;

- b. the proposal to revise the coverage of the aggregate return for 2000-01 was supported by 82% of those responding. The most popular option for doing so was option 1;
- c. the Council's proposal to revise its confidentiality guidelines was supported by 92% of those responding.

The responses to consultation and changes in the light of them are described in more detail at annex B.

Changes to Specification for 1999-2000

7 After Circular 98/42 was published, changes to the funding methodology for 1999-2000 were announced which would require three changes to the specification of the ISR for 1999-2000 to enable the Council to monitor them.

8 These three further changes to the specification of the ISR for 1999-2000 and the five changes to it in the light of the results of consultation in Circular 98/42 were discussed at the management information committee (MIC) meeting on 17 March 1999. The MIC supported them.

9 The MIC is taking forward the work of the data and software advisory group (DASAG). A list of members of the group and a description of the work of the committee is included in *Council News* No. 52, published in April 1999.

10 Eleven changes to the specification of the ISR are to be implemented in 1999-2000:

- two previously announced, changes (a) and (b)
- five in the light of consultation, changes (c) to (g)
- three further changes to take account of recently announced changes to the funding tariff for 1999-2000, changes (h) to (j)
- one to take account of a government initiative new in 1999-2000, change (k).

11 These changes are:

- a. the reduced record is withdrawn;
- b. the special reduced record used by some specialist designated colleges is withdrawn;
- c. revised codes in the major and minor sources of funding fields, fields Q11 and Q12;

- d. two new fields are to be added in the qualification aim data set to collect the implied rate of Council partial-funding for European social fund (ESF) supported projects;
- e. revised codes in the mode of attendance field, field Q03;
- f. the module delivery data set is withdrawn and a new accreditation of prior learning (APL) hours field added to the qualification aim data set;
- g. a new field is added in the student data set to collect the status of qualification on entry data;
- h. a new field is added in the student data set to collect widening participation category;
- i. revised codes in the franchised-out arrangements field, field Q13, in the qualification aim data set;
- j. a new code in the Council or HEFCE funding field, field Q10, in the qualification aim data set for courses being funded in 1999-2000 as part of the non-schedule 2 pilot project;
- k. the unassigned code, code 4, in the government initiative field, field Q29, is assigned to education maintenance allowance (EMA).

Details of these changes are given in annex C.

Arrangements for Making ISR Returns for the 1999-2000 Teaching Year

Colleges and external institutions

12 All colleges and external institutions are asked to make ISR returns on three occasions for each teaching year. These have reference dates of 1 November, 31 July and 31 December, the latest date being during the following teaching year. The arrangements for 1999-2000 are based on this pattern of returns and are explained in the following sections.

13 The Council has agreed similar arrangements for the return of data with specialist designated colleges.

Higher education institutions

14 HE institutions are not required to make ISR returns to the Council. Instead they should return data for students studying further education qualifications to the higher education statistics

agency (HESA), as set out in Circular 94/10. The present circular is sent to HE institutions for information only. Revised arrangements for providing data in support of funding claims by HE institutions are now in place. For 1997-98 the Council received student data from HESA and fed back estimated funding units based on these data to the HE institutions concerned.

Data requested with a collection reference date of 1 November 1999

15 For ISR15 (1 November 1999; 1999-2000) all colleges and external institutions are requested to return data for students who are enrolled at the institution at 1 November 1999, together with data for students who completed their planned programme of study between 1 August 1999 and 1 November 1999. The return date is 6 December 1999. Data should not be returned for students who enrolled on a programme of study starting on or after 1 August 1999 and who withdrew without completing it before 1 November 1999.

16 The data should consist of:

- a. for students for whom a full record is requested, student and qualification aim data sets;
- b. for other students, an aggregate return;
- c. a reconciliation list identifying certain students for whom data were returned in ISR14 (31 July 1999; 1998-99).

17 Institutions may, if they find it more convenient, return full records for all students. More information about which type of return is requested for a given student and about the reconciliation list can be found in the *Individualised Student Record 1999-2000 Support Manual* (the support manual) accompanying this circular. Institutions are reminded that 1999-2000 is the last year in which the aggregate return will be used. From 2000-01 the full record will be requested for all students.

18 For 1999-2000, institutions are asked to return qualification on entry data for students for whom a full record is required. This information may from 2000-01 be used to calculate widening participation funding and it is important that the data are complete and accurate. The extent of this qualification on entry data is described in the support manual which accompanies this circular.

Institutions may choose to defer returning this data until ISR17 (31 July 2000; 1999-2000). The extent of qualification on entry data requested will be reviewed for 2000-01 in the light of the planned withdrawal of the aggregate return.

19 Analysis of November and July ISR returns for 1997-98 shows that on average institutions fail to record 4% of Council-funded and 11% of non-Council-funded students on their November return when they should have been included under the criteria in paragraph 15 above. The November ISR data are used:

- when making decisions about an individual institution's funding
- for making early estimates of growth in the sector which can affect the funding available to the sector.

Consequently it is important that institutions do not omit students from the November return.

Data requested with a collection reference date of 31 July 2000

20 For ISR17 (31 July 2000; 1999-2000) all colleges and external institutions are requested to return by 4 September 2000 data for students enrolled at the institution during the 1999-2000 teaching year. Data should not be returned for students who enrolled to start a programme of study on or after 1 August 1999 and withdrew without completing it before 1 November 1999.

21 The individual records will fall into one of three categories:

- a. records included in the 1 November 1999 return which are unchanged;
- b. records included in the 1 November 1999 return where changes have been made;
- c. records for students who enrolled after 1 November 1999.

In the second case, the Council will accept changes, as long as the amended data are valid.

22 In addition, institutions are requested to provide a reconciliation list identifying certain students for whom data were returned in ISR15 (1 November 1999; 1999-2000), but who are not included in ISR17 (31 July 2000; 1999-2000). Typically these will be students who withdrew near to 1 November 1999 but were not classified as withdrawn until after the ISR15 return had been made.

23 Institutions are requested to return qualification on entry data for students for whom a full record is required.

Data requested with a collection reference date of 31 December 1999

24 For ISR19 (31 December 2000; 1999-2000), all colleges and external institutions are asked to return qualification outcome and destination data by 5 February 2001.

25 The data should contain the same student records returned at ISR17 (31 July 2000; 1999-2000) with outcome and destination fields completed. Where this is not the case, each institution is asked to send a commentary explaining why the two data returns contain records for different students.

Change to ISR validation software

26 The facility for institutions to add and change data using the validation software is withdrawn starting in 1999-2000. This was first announced in Circular 96/33 for 1998-99. The decision to subsequently postpone the change to 1999-2000 was announced in Circular 97/42 and confirmed in Circular 98/42.

Revised Data Confidentiality Guidelines

27 In the light of the results of consultation in Circular 98/42 the revisions to the Council's confidentiality and release guidelines for data are confirmed. The revised guidelines are published in the support manual which accompanies this circular.

Changes after 1999-2000

28 In the light of consultation in Circular 98/42 and the responses to it, from 2000-01 the ISR aggregate return will be withdrawn and instead colleges will be asked to return full records for all students.

29 The Council consulted institutions in Circular 97/42 about introducing a new field in the ISR for 1998-99 in which to collect information about type of learning difficulty and/or disability. Following advice from the DASAG, the proposed new field was not implemented in 1998-99 and instead institutions were invited to volunteer to pilot the collection of

these data in 1998-99. The Council is grateful to the four which did so. They have now made a pilot return and following further discussions with them and the inclusive learning steering group the Council plans to consult the sector about revised proposals to collect these data starting in 2000-01.

30 The Council is:

- investigating and evaluating ways of simplifying the funding methodology
- evaluating a proposal to fund units of qualifications
- planning to redevelop the funding program, ISR validation software and qualifications database.

31 The MIC and other sector groups are advising the Council on these proposals. The Council will be consulting institutions about them.

Enquiries

32 Enquiries about this circular should be made to the funding and statistics support desk, preferably by fax. The use of a fax helps the support desk offer the most responsive service. Faxes should be marked 'Circular 99/21 - ISR 1999-2000' and sent to the 'Funding and Statistics Support Desk' on 01203 863249. Telephone enquiries may be made on 01203 863224.



List of Individualised Student Record Collections Showing Reference and Return Dates

| <i>Collection Reference</i> | <i>Collection Reference Date</i> | <i>Collection Return Date</i> | <i>Data For</i> |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| ISR11 (31 July 1998; 1997-98) | 31 July 1998 | 7 September 1998 | 1997-98 |
| ISR12 (1 November 1998; 1998-99) | 1 November 1998 | 7 December 1998 | 1998-99 |
| ISR13 (31 December 1998; 1997-98) | 31 December 1998 | 1 February 1999 | 1997-98 |
| ISR14 (31 July 1999; 1998-99) | 31 July 1999 | 6 September 1999 | 1998-99 |
| ISR15 (1 November 1999; 1999-2000) | 1 November 1999 | 6 December 1999 | 1999-2000 |
| ISR16 (31 December 1999; 1998-99) | 31 December 1999 | 7 February 2000 | 1998-99 |
| ISR17 (31 July 2000, 1999-2000) | 31 July 2000 | 4 September 2000 | 1999-2000 |
| ISR18 (1 November 2000; 2000-01) | 1 November 2000 | 4 December 2000 | 2000-01 |
| ISR19 (31 December 2000; 1999-2000) | 31 December 2000 | 5 February 2001 | 1999-2000 |

Results of Consultation

Summary of Proposals in Circular 98/42

1 The Council consulted institutions in Circular 98/42 about:

- five proposals to change the specification of the ISR for 1999-2000
- amending the coverage of the ISR aggregate return with effect from 2000-01
- revising its confidentiality guidelines.

Responses were invited by 8 February 1999.

Responses to Consultation

2 The Council received 189 responses by 8 February 1999. These are summarised at the appendix to this annex.

Changes to the Specification of the ISR for 1999-2000

3 The Council consulted institutions about five proposals to change the specification of the ISR for 1999-2000. These proposals are to:

- revise codes in the major and minor sources of funding fields, fields Q11 and Q12; essentially to rationalise and update existing codes
- add two new fields in the qualification aim data set in which to collect the implied rate of Council partial-funding for ESF; this change is necessary because of the introduction of local rates of ESF funding for different objectives
- revise codes in the mode of attendance field, field Q03; to distinguish open from distance learning in the light of the local priorities policy
- withdraw the module delivery data set; because it is not widely used
- add a new field in the student data set in which to collect the status of qualification on entry data; to help the Council monitor the reliability of the data as part of the move to allocating widening participation funds for 16 to 18 year-olds using previous educational achievement.

4 Of these five proposals:

- four were supported by 95% or more of those responding
- one, the proposal to introduce a new field in which to collect the status of qualification on entry data, was supported by 70% of those responding.

These changes were discussed at the MIC meeting on 17 March 1999 and the MIC supported them. They are to be implemented starting in 1999-2000 and are described in more detail along with the other changes to be implemented in 1999-2000 in annex C to this circular.

Amending the Coverage of ISR Aggregate Return Commencing in 2000-01

5 The Council consulted institutions about amending the coverage of the ISR aggregate return to overcome the difficulty in identifying all students benefiting from public funding and to improve the information published about all students in further education. The DfEE was particularly concerned to have better coverage of publicly funded provision. Three options were the subject of consultation. They are described below.

Option 1

The Council would:

- ask colleges to return full records for all students
- withdraw the aggregate return.

Option 2

The Council would:

- ask colleges to return full records for students studying on programmes benefiting from public funding
- ask colleges to return full records for students studying on programmes of 9 or more guided learning hours (glh) which do not benefit from public funding
- ask colleges to return only the total number of students studying on programmes of fewer than 9 glh which do not benefit from public funding
- withdraw the aggregate return.

Option 3

The Council would ask colleges to:

- return full records for students studying on programmes benefiting from public funding
- return full records for students on programmes of 30 or more glh which do not benefit from public funding
- make an aggregate return as now for students studying on programmes of fewer than 30 glh which do not benefit from public funding.

The limit of 30 hours was chosen because it is unlikely that the standard size in glh of a qualification unit in any unitisation system would be as large as the maximum programme length, 60 glh, which can be returned on the current aggregate return.

6 The proposal to change the coverage of the ISR aggregate return from 2000-01 was supported by 82% of those responding. Institutions which do not make an aggregate return would be largely unaffected by the proposal to change the coverage of the ISR aggregate return. Taking account only of those 91 responses from colleges making an aggregate return; 44 supported option 1 and 13 supported option 2, which is similar.

7 The MIC discussed the results of consultation and the support for each of the options at its meeting on 17 March 1999 and after discussion the committee supported option 1. The Council confirms from 2000-01 the ISR aggregate return is withdrawn and instead colleges are asked to return full records for all students.

Revising Data Confidentiality Guidelines

8 A total of 92% of colleges supported the proposal to change the Council's confidentiality guidelines. The MIC supports them. Consequently the Council confirms the revisions to its confidentiality and release guidelines for data. The revised guidelines are published in the support manual accompanying this circular.

Summary of Responses to Circular 98/42

Number of institutions which responded 189

| <i>Proposed change for 1999-2000</i> | | <i>Agree</i> | | <i>Disagree</i> | | <i>No response</i> |
|---|--|--------------|----------|-----------------|----------|--------------------|
| | | <i>No.</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>No.</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>No.</i> |
| 1 | The Council's proposal to revise codes in the major and minor sources of funding fields is supported | 180 | 98 | 3 | 2 | 6 |
| 2 | The Council's proposal to add two new fields to collect the implied rate of Council partial-funding for ESF is supported | 177 | 97 | 5 | 3 | 7 |
| 3 | The Council's proposal to revise codes in the mode of attendance field is supported | 175 | 97 | 6 | 3 | 8 |
| 4 | The Council's proposal to withdraw the module delivery data set and add an APL hours field is supported | 176 | 96 | 8 | 4 | 5 |
| 5 | The Council's proposal to add a new field for status of qualification on entry data is supported | 130 | 70 | 56 | 30 | 3 |
| Proposed change for 2000-01, applies only to colleges | | | | | | |
| 6 | The college is sending an ISR aggregate return in 1998-99 | 91 | 58 | 66 | 42 | 14 |
| 7 | The Council's proposal to revise the coverage of the ISR aggregate return for 2000-01 is supported | 133 | 82 | 29 | 18 | 9 |
| 8 | Option 1 for revising the coverage of the aggregate return is supported | 98 | 62 | 60 | 38 | 13 |
| 9 | Option 2 for revising the coverage of the aggregate return is supported | 18 | 12 | 135 | 88 | 18 |
| 10 | Option 3 for revising the coverage of the aggregate return is supported | 46 | 29 | 110 | 71 | 15 |
| Responses from colleges making an aggregate return | | | | | | |
| | The Council's proposal to revise the coverage of the ISR aggregate return for 2000-01 is supported | 67 | 75 | 22 | 25 | 2 |
| | Option 1 for revising the coverage of the aggregate return is supported | 44 | 51 | 42 | 49 | 5 |
| | Option 2 for revising the coverage of the aggregate return is supported | 13 | 16 | 69 | 84 | 9 |
| | Option 3 for revising the coverage of the aggregate return is supported | 31 | 36 | 54 | 64 | 6 |
| Proposed change to Council's data confidentiality guidelines | | | | | | |
| 11 | The Council's proposal to revise its confidentiality guidelines is supported | 169 | 92 | 15 | 8 | 5 |

Changes to ISR Specification for 1999-2000

Summary of Changes

1 Eleven changes to the specification of the ISR are to be implemented in 1999-2000:

- two previously announced, changes (a) and (b)
- five in the light of consultation, changes (c) to (g)
- three further changes to take account of recently announced changes to the funding tariff for 1999-2000, changes (h) to (j)
- one to take account of a government initiative new in 1999-2000, change (k).

2 The changes are:

- a. the reduced record is withdrawn;
- b. the special reduced record used by some specialist designated colleges is withdrawn;
- c. revised codes in the major and minor sources of funding fields, fields Q11 and Q12;
- d. two new fields are to be added in the qualification aim data set to collect the implied rate of Council partial-funding for ESF;
- e. revised codes in the mode of attendance field, field Q03;
- f. the module delivery data set is withdrawn and a new APL hours field added to the qualification aim data set;
- g. a new field is added in the student data set in which to collect the status of qualification on entry data;
- h. a new field is added in the student data set in which to collect widening participation category;
- i. revised codes in the franchised-out arrangements field, field Q13, in the qualification aim data set;
- j. a new code in the Council or HEFCE funding field, field Q10, in the qualification aim data set for courses being funded in 1999-2000 as part of the non-schedule 2 pilot project;
- k. the unassigned code, code 4, in the government initiative field, field Q29, is assigned to EMA.

These changes are described in more detail below.

Reduced Record is Withdrawn

3 The reduced record is withdrawn starting in 1999-2000. The Council consulted about withdrawing the reduced record in Circular 97/42 published in December 1997 and confirmed its withdrawal in 1999-2000 in Circular 98/17 and Circular 98/42.

Special Reduced Record Used by Specialist Designated Colleges is Withdrawn

4 The special reduced record used by some specialist designated colleges for students in receipt of Council funding for non-schedule 2 provision is withdrawn, starting in 1999-2000. Heads of specialist designated colleges which have such provision were informed of the change in a letter of 23 June 1998 which was confirmed in December 1998 in Circular 98/42.

Revised Codes in the Major and Minor Sources of Funding Fields

5 A revised list of codes for the major and minor sources of funding other than tuition fees and Council/HEFCE funding fields, fields Q11 and Q12, is introduced in 1999-2000 to:

- rationalise the codes for training and enterprise council (TEC) training of young people
- collect information about qualifications funded by the teacher training agency (TTA)
- update the codes for ESF which identify the year to which it applies.

The revised list of codes for 1999-2000 is in the support manual.

Two New Fields for Implied Rate of Council Partial-Funding of ESF

6 The funding program for 1998-99 applies a rate of implied Council funding to each ESF objective based on the code for ESF in field Q11 and/or Q12. In the years up to 1998-99 the intervention rate for ESF has been the same in most cases throughout the country. From 1998-99 there is expected to be much more local discretion and variation in intervention rates.

7 If the ISR were to remain unchanged while a variety of local ESF intervention rates applied there would be a need to manually adjust funding claims for many students studying on ESF supported provision. To avoid this the Council is introducing changes to the ISR for 1999-2000.

8 Two new fields, fields Q31 and Q32, are introduced in the qualification aim data set in 1999-2000 to allow institutions to specify the implied rate of Council partial-funding of ESF. Each field is three digits numeric format. The new fields are described in detail in the support manual.

9 Whenever an ESF code for 1999 or 2000 is used in field Q11 or Q12 an appropriate value is requested in the respective implied rate of Council partial-funding field. An ESF code in field Q11 requires an entry in field Q31 and an ESF code in field Q12 requires an entry in field Q32.

Revised Codes in the Mode of Attendance Field

10 For 1999-2000 a revised list of codes is introduced for the mode of attendance field, field Q03, to separately record open learning and distance learning. The revised list of codes for 1999-2000 is in the support manual.

Module Delivery Data Set Withdrawn and New APL Hours Field

11 The module delivery data set is withdrawn for 1999-2000. To accommodate the collection of APL hours a new APL hours field, field Q33, is introduced in the qualification aim data set. The APL hours field is five digits numeric format. The new field is described in detail in the support manual.

New Field for Status of Qualification on Entry Data

12 A new status of qualification on entry data field, field S22, is introduced in the student data set for 1999-2000. The field has a one digit numeric format and can take the following values:

- 1 qualification on entry data are complete
- 2 the completeness of qualification on entry data is not confirmed.

The new field is described in detail in the support manual.

New Field for Widening Participation Category

13 The Council proposes to extend the coverage of the widening participation element of the funding methodology, to include groups where there is clear evidence of low participation in learning but where the students are not necessarily identified by the current method, based on the deprivation index of the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR) and operated through postcodes. This proposal is described in paragraphs 37 to 41 in Circular 99/07 published in January 1999. A further circular consulting in more detail about it is in preparation and will be published in 1999.

14 To cater for this change to the funding methodology a new widening participation category field, field S21, is added to the student data set of the ISR for 1999-2000. Categories of widening participation will be confirmed when the results of consultation about funding widening participation are known. This will probably be in June 1999. The new field is described in detail and the proposed categories listed in the support manual.

Changed Codes in the Franchised-Out Arrangements Field

15 The Council has consulted on a proposal to discount franchised provision for 1999-2000 except for provision:

- a. where the student involved attracts a widening participation uplift; or
- b. which is community-based and normally with non-profit making bodies.

This proposal is described in paragraphs 17 to 21 in Circular 99/09 published in February 1999.

16 For the Council to monitor the effect of the above proposal and for the funding program to calculate the correct number of funding units requires that the ISR can identify the two cases where there is an exception from the proposed discount. That is where a student qualifies for a widening participation uplift and where the provision is community-based and normally with non-profit-making bodies.

17 To uniquely identify provision which is community based and with a non-profit-making body the codes in the franchised-out arrangements field, field Q13, in the qualification aim data set of the ISR for 1999-2000 are amended by:

- a. withdrawing the existing code 20 for student is studying for this qualification aim on franchised provision delivered by a community or voluntary organisation; and
- b. replacing it with two new codes. For:
 - i. student is studying for this qualification aim on franchised provision which is community based and normally with non-profit-making bodies. That is, it is franchised provision eligible to be funded at the full rate, without a discount, as described at (b) in paragraph 18 of Circular 99/09;
 - ii. student is studying this qualification aim on franchised provision which is community or voluntary based and which is eligible for funding only at the discounted rate for franchised provision.

The revised codes are listed in the support manual.

18 Where an institution wishes to claim exemption from the discount for franchised provision it will be expected to agree the exemption in advance with the regional director. It would then use the appropriate new code to indicate this agreed exemption. The Council will monitor use of this new code and may apply the discount if an institution has not sought advance approval for exemption.

Changed Codes in Council/HEFCE Funding Field

19 The Council has the power in 1999-2000 to fund non-schedule 2 provision as described in paragraph 218 of Circular 99/01, *Tariff 1999-2000*.

20 To support pilot funding of non-schedule 2 provision in 1999-2000 a new code is added in the Council or HEFCE funding field, field Q10. The revised codes are listed in the support manual.

Assign New Code in Government Initiative Field

21 To support the pilot of EMAs in 1999-2000, the previously unassigned code 4, in the government initiative field, field Q29, is assigned to education maintenance allowance (EMA). The revised list of codes is in the support manual.

