



## Qualification achievement rates: business rules for 2015 to 2016

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

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### Purpose

- 1 This document outlines the business rules that govern the method of calculation for the official qualification achievement rates (QAR) for apprenticeships, education and training and OLASS for the 2015 to 2016 academic year.
- 2 The document also describes the changes to the business rules since the 2014 to 2015 academic year.

### Main changes from the 2014 to 2015 academic year

- 3 In the 2014 to 2015 qualification achievement rate business rules we indicated that we would make the following three changes to the QAR methodology in the 2015 to 2016 academic year;
  - i. Include and treat as withdrawn continuing learners in the final return for an academic year that do not appear in the following academic year (see paragraph 20)
  - ii. Include learners withdrawn due to a planned break in learning if they do not restart (see paragraphs 21 and 22c)
  - iii. Amend the definition of hybrid end year to become the planned end year, actual end year or reporting year, whichever is later (see paragraph 6).

### Methods of calculation

- 4 We calculate overall and timely QAR's, pass and retention rates from ILR and LEOP data submitted by providers that is aligned with the appropriate specifications and requirements.

- 5 We take information for apprenticeship from the programme aim ILR record. For education and training and OLASS we take the information from the learning aim level ILR record. The examples given below use learning aims to illustrate.
- 6 The overall QAR, pass rate and retention rate calculations are based on the hybrid end year of a learning aim, which is defined as the planned end year of the learning aim, the actual end year of the learning aim or the reporting year, whichever is later.
- 7 The calculations use three values:
  - i. The number of learning aims that have ended - where an actual end date is present or where continuing learners and planned breaks did not return.
  - ii. The number of learning aims that were achieved (and cashed for AS levels).
  - iii. The number of learning aims where the learner has completed all the learning activities.
- 8 For any hybrid end year:
  - The overall QAR is calculated as the number of learning aims that have been achieved as a percentage of the total number of learning aims in the cohort that ended.
  - The overall pass rate is calculated as the number of learning aims that have been achieved as a percentage of the total number of learning aims that have completed all the planned learning activities.
  - The overall retention rate is calculated as the number of learning aims that have completed all of the planned learning activities as a percentage of the total number of learning aims that ended.
- 9 The timely QAR calculation measures the number of learning aims that are achieved on or before their planned end date or no more than 90 days after it. The timely QAR is calculated as the number of learning aims with a planned end date in the reporting year as a percentage of the number of aims that were planned to complete. Achieved learning aims with an actual end date more than 90 days after the planned end date are not counted as achievements in the timely method.
- 10 The last day of the reporting period for the 2015 to 2016 year will be 31 July 2016. In order for a learning aim to be included in the calculation the hybrid end date for the overall QAR, and the planned end date for the timely QAR, must earlier than or equal to 31 July 2016.
- 11 Uncashed AS levels will be treated as failures.
- 12 The historical QAR results for all further-education colleges that merged before the beginning of the 2015 to 2016 academic year are restated to include all learning provision in scope for the newly-merged further-education college.

- 13 Changes to learner reference numbers made through the learner reference number (LRN) change process or within the ILR record will be taken into account when calculating QARs.
- 14 ILR and LEOP data from the latest 5 years is merged to form the QAR dataset, from which reports are produced.

## **QAR Reporting**

- 15 Overall QARs and timely QARs are calculated and reported for the 2015 to 2016 academic year and the previous two academic years.
- 16 Overall QARs and timely QARs will be calculated for OLASS provision. OLASS provision will be reported separately to education and training and apprenticeships.
- 17 Overall QARs and timely QARs for subcontracted provision will be produced for education & training and apprenticeships. For apprenticeships, the subcontractor of the main or competency aim will be reported.
- 18 The overall QAR is the method that we will use for Minimum Standards. The pass and retention rates and timely QAR will be used to provide additional important information about the delivery of provision.

## **Aims in scope of QARs**

- 19 The learning aims and apprenticeships in scope of the QAR calculation are those in receipt of public funding through:
  - The Adult Skills Budget;
  - OLASS
  - 16-18 Apprenticeships;
  - 24+ Advanced Learning Loans;
  - The Large Employer Outcome Pilot;
  - The Education Funding Agency for learners aged 16 to 18; and
  - The Education Funding Agency for directly funded 14 to 16 year-old students, recorded in the ILR using LDM code 320.
- 20 Apprenticeships or aims with a completion status of 1 (learner continuing or intending to continue the learning activities leading to the learning aim) in the final return for an academic year that do not have a corresponding record in the following academic year, will be treated as a withdrawal for the overall methodology. Where this occurs the hybrid end year will be set to the reporting year, which is the year after the last submitted file containing the learning aim.

For example, if an aim with a planned end date in June 2015, with a completion status of 1 recorded in R14 of academic year 2014 to 2015, does not appear in the ILR R14 return of academic year 2015 to 2016 it will be treated as having withdrawn in the 2015 to 2016 academic year.
- 21 Apprenticeships or aims with a completion status of 6 (Learner has temporarily withdrawn from the aim due to an agreed break in learning), will be treated as a withdrawal for the overall methodology where:

- They do not have a corresponding restart record in the same academic year;
- They do not have a corresponding restart record in the following academic year; or
- They do not have a corresponding restart record in the R04 ILR return of the academic year 2016 to 2017, if the planned break was recorded in the ILR R14 return for academic year 2014 to 2015.

Where this occurs the hybrid end year will be set to the year after the last submitted file containing the learning aim.

For example, if an aim with a planned end date in July 2015 was recorded with a planned break in learning in April 2015, but did not have a restart record in 2014/2015 or 2015/2016 or by the R04 ILR return of 2016/2017 it will be treated as a withdrawn aim in the 2015 to 2016 academic year.

## Exclusions

- 22 The following exclusions apply to all QARs, pass and retention rates. Those marked with an \* will only be excluded under the timely QAR methodology if they occur on or before or within 90 days of the planned end date.
- a) Apprenticeship Standards (identified using programme type 25)
  - b) 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.
    - iii. Education and training learning aims without successful achievement following a transfer 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 will not be excluded.
  - c) \*Planned breaks, where the learner has temporarily withdrawn due to an agreed break in learning the aim or apprenticeship will be excluded from the relevant hybrid end year. However, if a learner does not return from a planned break (see paragraph 21) we will include the aim or apprenticeship in the hybrid end year cohort in the year after their planned break was recorded.
  - d) Any learning aim / apprenticeship within scope of QAR that a learner has withdrawn from within the respective funding qualifying period without 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.
- e) Innovation Code Learning Aims (referenced as ZINN000 (1 to 6), Z0004474 to Z0007833).
- 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) Funded provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LLDD) delivered by independent specialist providers.
- i) All European Social Fund (ESF)-funded and Community Learning provision.
- j) The following aims;
  - i. Key skills;
  - ii. Employability Skills Programme (ESP) funded 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;
  - ix. work experience or work placement aims;
  - x. non regulated aims used to claim funding for additional ESOL learning needs;
  - xi. aims started in the 2014 to 15 academic year delivered through Learning Technologies Pilots, identified using learning delivery monitoring code 337;
  - xii. Joint Investment Programme aims; and
  - xiii. Access to Apprenticeships pathway provision where the learner is not employed.

## **Further details**

- 23 We will issue more detailed information within the associated technical documentation that is due for publication at the end of September 2015 on our website.