

Other Late Change to the ILR for 2011/12

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Introduction

- 1 This paper is prepared for *the information authority* board (“the board”) to inform it of a late change to the individualised learner record (ILR) for 2011/12 and to ask it to note its implementation.

Background

- 2 When the board met on 29 September 2010 it was asked, based on change request 3, to approve the use of the 2011 UK Census ethnicity categories in the individualised learner record (ILR) for 2011/12. At that time the ethnicity categories for the 2011 UK Census had not been approved. The board asked that the introduction of the new codes in the ILR was in parallel with schools and HE.
- 3 The UK Census 2011 ethnicity code structure has been published and the secretariat is aware that the Department for Education (DfE) is planning to implement it in the schools data collection for 2011/12. The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) has no plan to implement the changed structure in the higher education (HE) learner data collection for 2011/12.
- 4 The information standards board (ISB) for education, skills and children’s services is looking to revise its ethnicity standard in line with the 2011 UK Census classification by March 2011 to support the introduction of the new classification in 2011/12.
- 5 BIS statisticians say; “There is a clear legal requirement to report ethnicity. The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and analytical communities are working closely together to maximise harmonisation of all sources. This change is imperative if the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) is to be able to provide full comparative data as soon as possible in line with the 2011 Census. BIS and the Government

Statistical Service (GSS) would wish to ensure that ethnicity data aligns as closely as possible across education. Schools are moving across during the academic year 2011/12. Furthermore a delay until 2012/13 in reporting this will mean we will not have full comparability until 2013/14 because of the carry over of some programmes such as apprenticeships.”

Other Request

- 6 BIS sent a change request with the other late changes asking for the ethnicity codes to be updated in the ILR for 2011/12 in line with the 2011 UK Census. This request has been handled separately because strictly it is not essential to implementation in 2011/12 of policies described in the Skills Investment Strategy and Education White Paper.

Change Description

- 7 To update the classification used in the Ethnicity field, field L12, to align it with the one that will be used in the UK Census 2011 and GSS data collections and surveys thereafter.

Business Case for Change – Supplied by the Requestor

- 8 The ILR specification works on the principle that existing data standards are used where available, to enable direct comparability with other sources and outputs. In the case of ethnicity data, the ILR currently uses the classification from the 2001 UK Census. This classification is being updated for the 2011 UK Census, with the recommendation that it should be used across the UK in other data collections and surveys. Consequently we want the ILR field to change at the earliest possible date after the running of the UK Census so that it is possible to directly compare FE data outputs to statistics relating to the whole population in England.

Implementation

- 9 Given consultation about the change has already taken place and the board confirmed it wished the secretariat to implement the revised code list in parallel with schools and HE the secretariat has taken it forward using a news item on *the information authority* website. This informed providers that they would be asked to use the revised classification in 2011/12 and would need to do so for 2012/13.
- 10 Given the imperative to move to the new codes from 2011/12 the specification will ask all providers to move to the new 2011 UK Census codes in 2011/12. Any provider which has difficulty in implementing the new codes in 2011/12 could write to the secretariat. A provider that does so and meets certain conditions, criteria to be developed, would on an exception basis be allowed to continue to use the old 2001 UK Census codes in 2011/12. Providers would not be offered this option but it would be available to meet any extreme case.
- 11 From 2012/13, only the new codes will be available for recording ethnicity.

- 12 The board may wish to note that the code list used to collect ethnicity data from FE providers based on the 1991 and 2001 UK Census was changed to alphabetic sequence as this was thought by the data collectors to be more equality and diversity compliant. The secretariat is now aware that the sequence of the list used in the UK Census is significant and designed to obtain accurate completion of the data by citizens. Consequently the new ethnicity codes to be used in the ILR for 2011/12 onwards will be in the same sequence as those used in the 2011 UK Census.

Recommendation

- 13 The board is asked to note that the secretariat has taken forward the implementation of the 2011 UK Census ethnicity codes in the 2011/12 ILR in line with its previous recommendation.

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