**School Workforce Annual Census**

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5. **2019 SWAC collection update:**
   1. SWAC school

To date 1,492 out of 1,502 (99.3%) schools (including PRUs) have submitted a SWAC return. DEWi has been re-opened for outstanding schools to submit their returns. The errors and queries triggered have been reviewed with LAs and corrected where necessary. As this is the first census, some errors and queries which were triggered have been accepted, either due to changes required to the validation rules or, in certain cases, with the intention to report back to LAs and schools on errors where it was not possible to collect and complete the required data in time for the 2020 census.

A list of the most prevalent errors and queries are listed below:

* Rule 13036 - Qualified teacher with teacher number missing. Mainly where individuals were not in school to provide teacher number. Running cross-DEWi validations may confirm number.
* Rule 13038 - Teacher number should be 7 digits. Missing leading zeroes which are populated on upload. Where 8 digit teacher numbers were provided cross-DEWi validations may confirm number.
* Rules 13057 - QTS date is missing / 13058 - QTS route is missing. Validation rules were not triggering correctly initially and some schools missed the data item. Schools will be expected to complete information for next census.
* Rule 13065 - QTS is missing for a teacher. Validation rules were not triggering correctly initially. Schools could not confirm with individual. Will need to be completed for next collection.
* Rule 13067 - Teaching / working through the medium of Welsh is missing. Schools could not confirm with individual. Will need to be completed for next collection (could add not assessed as per Welsh ability item).
* Rules 13069 / 13070 / 13071 – validate teaching / working through Welsh against Welsh ability or Medium of school. Rules validated for each workforce member regardless of role and Welsh ability rule set at ‘Intermediate’. Rules to be amended to look at specific roles and change level of ability to advanced or above.
* Rule 13073 – Primary role is missing. This is mainly for individuals who are recorded as ‘SC – SENCo’ which is included as an additional role in the code set. Where an individual is employed solely as a SENCo a main role of ‘OS – Other support staff’ must also be selected.
* Rule 13077 – No curriculum record has been provided for member of staff. Mainly for individuals on long-term absence (e.g. maternity). New data item suggested to be added to identify these so they are not included in validation.
* Rule 13078 – No curriculum record expected for workforce member. TAs / support staff with a timetable. Rule to be deleted.
* Rule 13091 / 13092 / 13093 / 13094 – Lesson medium of curriculum information. Need to review validations by Medium type of school.
* Rule 13136 - at least one workforce member record in schools return should show a role of SEN Co-ordinator. In most cases due to sharing of SENCo across schools. Will be included in reporting to LAs / schools and corrected for next year where necessary.
  1. SWAC HR

21 out of 22 local authorities have so far submitted their SWAC Payroll, HR and Absences return. In addition, 8 out of 11 schools which have opted-out of HR and / or Payroll service level agreements with their local authority have submitted their returns. The outstanding LA / schools are in the process of submitting returns.

3 out of the 22 LAs submitted returns using the xml reporting tools developed by their software suppliers. The remaining LAs and all schools completed their return using the contingency spreadsheet.

The main issues completing the SWAC HR resulted from the volume of records to be returned and the conversion of codes to align with the SWAC requirements.

A significant number of errors and queries remain on submissions reflecting the complex nature of school staff pay. These have been accepted and the validation rules will reviewed and amended as necessary to minimise the number of errors triggered in future. Some of the most common errors and queries are listed below:

* Rule 13105 – Contract end date is missing for an individual on a fixed term contract. Not all LA / school HR/Payroll systems hold future contract end dates. Considering removing rule.
* Rule 13116 – If workforce member is not paid on a daily rate then base pay must be greater than 0. In some instances an individual may have base pay equal to 0 where individual is on maternity leave etc.
* Rule 13123 – Weeks per year is missing / invalid. Weeks per year is held by payroll systems to 2 (or 3) decimal places generally – weeks per years for non-term-time employees is 52.143. Restricting the format of the data item could impact on calculation of FTE. Format of data item <WeeksPerYear> and validation rule being reviewed.
* Rule 13127 – Additional payment start date is missing. Many LA payroll systems do not hold additional payment start dates. Also, rule should only relate to TLR3 payments. Rule to be amended.
* Rules 13142 to 13152 – Checks for base pay and additional payment amounts against pay ranges and thresholds. Many records were triggering errors due to rounding of FTE values. Rules to be reviewed and a degree of tolerance to be added in.
* Rule 13191 – Leaving reason is missing / invalid. As per rule 13105 above leaving reason is not held in most cases for future contract end dates. Rule to be amended to look at historical end dates only.

1. **Changes for 2020 collection**
   1. Roll forward SWAC dates

The latest version of the SWAC technical specification has been rolled forward to include dates for the 2020 collection. The census date for the 2020 collection will be **Tuesday 3rd November**.

* 1. Additional modules for SWAC phase 2

The 2020 collection will see the introduction of the remaining data modules as part of phase 2 of SWAC. These ‘historical’ modules will collect information for the previous academic year (i.e. 1st September 2019 to 31st August 2020).

The modules include:

For SWAC school – Recruitment; Retention; and Supply.

The technical specification *‘SWAC Nov 2020 Specification v0.2 - released ddmm2019’* has been updated to ensure that the data requirements for both the recruitment and retention are consistent where the data items are the same (e.g. year group, subject).

For SWAC HR – Absences.

* 1. New data items

An issue that was raised by a number of LAs was the difficulties schools encountered in recording the ‘Hours Worked’ for against roles as, different staff roles in different local authorities are have different contracted hours. In general, teachers work according to the number of sessions in a week – 5 morning and 5 afternoon sessions. It has been stated that it would be easier for schools to capture the full-time equivalence of individuals’ in specific staff roles.

An <FTE> data item has been added to the staff roles module and will be mandatory for ‘Main’ roles. In addition, there are 3 possible options for changes to recording <HoursWorked>:

1. Keep <HoursWorked> as a required field for ‘Main’ roles.
2. Remove data item <HoursWorked>
3. Change <HoursWorked> to be optional for schools to record actual hours worked.

To assist the cross-DEWi validation processes, help reduce the volume of errors and queries triggered and avoid double-counting of individuals when publishing outputs 2 other data items are recommended for inclusion in the staff characteristics module:

* <Status> - to identify individuals on maternity, secondment, long-term absence etc. This will help restrict validation rules and remove double-counting in staff headcounts.
* <ThirdParty> - identify individuals employed through supply agencies, and other 3rd parties which can then be excluded from cross-DEWi validations.
  1. New staff roles

Following queries raised by schools and LAs, as well as feedback received on the list of roles included in the ‘Staff Roles’ code set the following have been added as ‘Main’ roles:

* Midday Supervisors
* Estate Staff
* Advisory staff

In addition, as highlighted in the recurring issues highlighted in 1.1 above, a small number of school returns included Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCo) without a main role.

The code ‘SC – SEN co-ordinator’ is included as an additional role in the current code set, which requires a main role to be recorded along with hours. It was queried whether the SENCo role should be included as a ‘Main’ role.

Currently, the role of SENCo is undertaken in different ways across schools. While secondary schools employ individuals to specifically undertake the role of SENCo, smaller primary schools will regularly have a member of teaching staff, or quite frequently the head teacher, undertaking the role of SENCo in addition to their primary role as a teacher etc.

For this reason, the SENCo role will remain as an additional role. Where the SENCo is employed solely in that role, a ‘Main’ role of ‘OS – Other support Staff’ should be recorded.

* 1. Summary reports

Feedback from schools highlighted that the summary reports were not entirely clear and easy to check due to double-counting of staff in multiple roles. Whilst the structure of the tables will not change significantly we are reviewing the calculation of headcount by staff roles and look at introducing FTE to tables.

* 1. Review validation rules

All validation rules are being reviewed. There are some validation rules which were not relevant to specific school sectors (e.g. missing SENCo in special schools) that will be amended to reflect the correct logic.

Validation rules for checking Welsh language ability against whether or not the individual was able to work through the medium of Welsh will be amended to filter on school medium type and specific roles.

The key fields for all rules are being reviewed to ensure that they are relevant and easily identify the relevant records.

1. **Ethnicity update**

During the SWAC window a small number of local authorities and schools raised questions about the Ethnicity code set used in both SWAC and PLASC. The current options uses a combination of ethnic background and nationality, and while it is comprehensive it does not provide a complete set of options (e.g. it allows an individual to select White British but not Black British).

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) are currently undertaking a review of how ethnicity and national identity is collected. They are testing 3 variants and have conducted surveys across Wales to get feedback on the options with a view to put forward recommendations soon.

The impact of any recommendations made will considered for how the information is collected in SWAC, as well as PLASC, and other collections which include ethnicity and national identity information across Welsh Government to ensure consistency in approach.

1. **Next steps**
   1. Update technical documentation

Technical specification *‘SWAC Nov 2020 Specification v0.1’* includes the changes referred to in this document.

Modular CBDS version *‘Modular\_CBDS\_2021.0.1’*  includes the new data items and staff roles detailed in 2.3 and 2.4 respectively.

* 1. Run cross-DEWi validations and report on outstanding errors and queries

Once all files have submitted and DEWi has been closed for SWAC the cross-DEWi validations will be run and we will report issues to be addressed back to LAs.

* 1. Workshops

We will be organising workshops to review the first census and any lessons learned to feed into the process for this year. It’ll be an opportunity for stakeholders to raise issues and identify changes in approach that may help make the process more efficient and reduce the number of errors and queries triggered in DEWi. We’d be keen to get feedback from and LAs as well as experiences from the schools perspective.

We are looking to arrange separate workshops for the SWAC school and SWACHR returns in both North and South Wales. Further information will be sent out very soon.

* 1. Publication

The current intention is to publish information from the first census in a statistical release and on StatsWales in the summer. It will be timed to follow the release of information from the PLASC collection (normally published end of July) as it will continue to provide the official figures on the school workforce for historical comparison purposes. Alongside the release, we are intending to produce a statistical article which will look at differences between the PLASC and SWAC collections and investigate any differences in figures produced.