

National Fraud Initiative - Data Deletion Schedule

As set out in the Code of Data Matching Practice data matches should be made available for a reasonable period necessary for participants to follow up matches. The following data deletion schedule applies to the NFI data matching exercises, including all proof of concept (research and development) data matching where data is received from both mandatory and voluntary participants. In the event that the Cabinet Office elects to terminate the NFI then an appropriate data deletion timetable for all intelligence will be derived and communicated. Refer to the [Worked Examples](#) for each of the [NFI Products](#) below.

NFI Area	Data Deletion	Matches withdrawn and archives made available	NFI Matches Deletion	NFI Prior Year Matchkey ¹ Deletion
National Exercise ²	Within 12 ^{3,4} months of the data ⁵ being re-supplied, passing data quality checks and being accepted for the next national data matching exercise or when a refreshed dataset is received (or within 20 months if data is not part of the national exercise).	Within 7 months of the next national exercise data matches being released (or within 18 months if data is not part of the national exercise).	Within 9 months of the next national exercise data matches being released (or within 20 months if data is not part of the national exercise).	After 6 years.
ReCheck	Within 9 ^{2,3} months of the data ⁴ being re-supplied, passing data quality checks and being accepted for the next national data matching exercise/annual CTSPD exercise (or within 20 months if data is not part of the national exercise).	Within 7 months of the next national exercise/annual CTSPD exercise data matches being released (or within 18 months if data is not part of the national exercise).	Within 9 months of the next national exercise/annual CTSPD exercise data matches being released; (or within 20 months if data is not part of the national exercise).	After 6 years.
FraudHub (automated)	Within 18 months of the data matches being released or when a new data file is uploaded	n/a	Within 18 months	n/a
AppCheck (automated)	Within 12 months of match being released	n/a	Within 12 months.	n/a
Data subsequently proved inaccurate or corrupt	Within 5 ² months of the data ⁴ inaccuracy being confirmed.	n/a	Within 5 months of the data inaccuracy being confirmed.	Within 5 months of the data inaccuracy being confirmed (if generated).

¹ The prior year matchkey consists of a unique reference key and comments recorded by participants. If these comments included personal details then they would be retained as part of the matchkey. No NFI personal details fields are retained. The matchkey is used to flag matches that have been provided in a previous NFI exercise that has reoccurred in the current exercise. Displaying the year, previous comments and match status helps participants assess the match risk and prioritisation.

² Although the data submission deadline for the biennial national exercise is December, matches may typically be issued in up to three releases as not all data might meet the first submission deadline, quality checks, etc. For the purposes of data deletion the first release date e.g. December, is used to count from for data deletion and the second supplementary run (Run 2) for match deletion.

³ The NFI Backup policy means that there are traces of deleted NFI files remaining within the backup environment for up to three months.

⁴ Unless a specific timetable has been approved and documented as part of the proof of concept project scoping or as approved by another audit agency.

⁵ Defined as source data and any processed data generated.

Worked Examples

NFI Area	Data submitted	Data Deletion	Match Withdrawal and Archives made available	NFI Matches Deletion	NFI Prior year matchkey ¹ and comments deletion
National Exercise	A dataset was submitted between October and December 2022 for NFI 22/23. In December 2022, following data quality checks, data was loaded for matching. Matches were released on 31 January 2023 and a second supplementary release in May 2023. The data would be used throughout NFI 22/23 until it is replaced with 24/25 data.	This dataset would be resubmitted in October 2024 for NFI 24/25. NFI 24/25 matches will be released in December 2024 and April 2025. The 22/23 dataset would be deleted by December 2025 (i.e. 12 months after the data is submitted for 24/25).	NFI 22/23 matches are withdrawn and archives made available by November 2025 (i.e. 7 months after 24/25 Run 2 matches are released).	The NFI 2022/23 matches and archives would be deleted by January 2026.	By 2029
ReCheck - CT and ER data	Datasets submitted from December 2023 for the CTSPD 2023/24 annual exercise with matches released the same day/near same day (i.e. December 2023).	Datasets submitted for the CTSPD 2023/24 would be deleted by August 2025.	The match withdrawal and archive for CTSPD 23/24 matches will be available by June 2025.	CTSPD 23/24 matches will be deleted by August 2025.	By 2030
FraudHub	Data submitted on 1 March 2024.	By 1 September 2025	n/a	By 1 September 2025	n/a
AppCheck	Application Record submitted March 2024.	By March 2025	n/a	By March 2025	n/a
Data subsequently proved inaccurate or corrupt	Data submitted in October 2024, that was confirmed as corrupt in December 2024.	By May 2025	n/a	By May 2025	By May 2025 (if generated)

NFI Products

National Exercise (NE) - Data for the NFI is provided by over 1,100 participating organisations from the public and private sectors, including local authorities, government departments, private registered providers of social housing and pension schemes. The NFI works with public audit agencies in all parts of the UK. Data matching involves comparing sets of data electronically, to identify inconsistencies that require further investigation by the relevant organisation. The NFI is conducted under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. This allows the Secretary of State or the Minister for the Cabinet Office to require certain public sector bodies to provide data for NFI processing on a mandatory basis for the prevention and detection of fraud. In addition, certain bodies can also provide data for matching on a voluntary basis. In accordance with the legislative requirement set out in schedule 9 (6) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the Cabinet Office sets a work programme and fee scale for each NE.

ReCheck - ReCheck is an automated flexible data matching service that complements the National Exercise. It sits within the NFI secure web application and allows participants to re-perform existing matching to their own data and/or to data collected for the NE. An additional fee applies per dataset.

AppCheck - AppCheck is a fraud prevention tool that helps organisations to stop fraud at the point of application, thereby reducing administrative and future investigation costs. Additional fees apply based on the number of searches or for an annual membership.

FraudHub - FraudHub enables individual organisations or groups of neighbouring organisations to regularly screen more than one dataset, with the aim of detecting errors in processing payments or benefits and services. An additional annual membership fee applies.