



Department
for Education

School Workforce 2025

**Minimum notepad entries for queries on
the school workforce census**

October 2025

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Background

Where a validation query occurs in COLLECT a notepad entry must be entered to explain the reasons for it. This document provides local authorities, maintained schools and academies with the minimum notepad entries for validation queries that occur. DfE cannot authorise a return if insufficient information is supplied in the return level note.

Further guidance can be found in the [collect guides](#).

Validation queries

Validation rules are used in COLLECT and many school software systems to improve data quality. These are explained in section 5.4 in the collection guide for school employed staff and section 5.3 of collection guide for centrally employed staff. The guides can be found [here](#).

A query is reported in COLLECT where the data is unusual or unexpected, reflecting a potential inaccuracy or omission in the underlying data. For example, where a destination code has been provided for a member of staff but no end date for their contract, or no head teacher post is returned. All queries outstanding in COLLECT should have an explanatory note.

Acceptable notes for some queries to be cleared are in this document. For any other query, free text should be entered to explain the reason.

The specified minimum notes include the rule number. Please use these when adding notes in COLLECT.

By entering a note, you are agreeing that the query has been checked and the information provided is correct or there is a valid reason it is not available.

Please read the [collect guides](#) to find how to identify queries and write a notepad entry.

In the table below, text in **bold** shows instructions to the school or local authority, text in normal font is the text to be entered as a note.

You must explain all queries, or we will not be able to authorise your return.

Query Number	Error Message	Minimum notepad entry
4095Q	Please note that this return contains no absence records. Please ensure that this is correct, and that absence data is being supplied to the Department by another source.	Please ensure that absence records are uploaded and if in a separate file that matching, and reconciliation is completed or add a note as follows – (1) 4095Q: New school/academy or converted academy (2) 4095Q: Checked and no absences in previous academic year Where multiple options are provided, only one should be chosen.
4100Q	Teacher with Teacher Number missing: Please supply either the correct Teacher Number or a reason for its omission in a return level note.	(1) 4100Q: Awaiting teacher number (2) 4100Q: Checked with Teacher unable to locate teacher number (3) 4100Q: Member of staff does not have a teacher number (4) 4100Q: The teacher is unqualified (5) 4100Q: The teacher qualified via QTLS Please ensure that the return includes at least one reference number to provide a means of identifying a teacher with no teacher reference number (e.g. Nat Insurance number, QTLS number). If an overseas teacher, please add a return level note, which gives the teacher number and country of qualification.

Query Number	Error Message	Minimum notepad entry
4160Q	Member of workforce with missing NI Number.	4160Q: Agency Staff - Not available or 4160Q: Awaiting NI Number
4195Q	Two other members of staff also have a date of birth of 1 January, please confirm if this is correct.	4195Q: Checked and correct
4221Q	Please check: Staff member started more than 3 months previously, but Ethnicity has not been obtained. Staff members can refuse to provide the information, but it should be asked for. Refusal should be recorded as 'Refused' (REFU), not as 'Information not yet obtained' (NOBT).	4221Q: Question has not been asked If staff member has been asked, but declined to provide an answer, use code 'REFU'. Code 'REFU' should be used where that is the answer provided in diversity forms, rather than for a non-response. If a circular email has been sent but not responded to, use the 'Question has not been asked' note above.
4226Q	Please check: Staff member started more than 3 months previously, but Disability Status has not been obtained. Staff members can refuse to provide the information, but it should be asked for. Refusal should be recorded as 'Refused' (REFU), not as 'Information not yet obtained' (NOBT).	4226Q: Question has not been asked If staff member has been asked, but declined to provide an answer, use code 'REFU'. Code 'REFU' should be used where that is the answer provided in diversity forms, rather than for a non-response. If a circular email has been sent but not responded to, use the 'Question has not been asked' note above.

Query Number	Error Message	Minimum notepad entry
4229Q	Qualified Status is missing for a SENCO. Under the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 schools are obliged to employ a qualified teacher as a SENCO.	Please supply a reason. Please note, a SENCO should be either a qualified teacher, head teacher/appointed acting head teacher, or taking steps to become a qualified teacher.
4233Q	Please check: fewer than 60% of teachers appear to have Qualified Teacher Status.	(1) 4233Q: Checked and confirmed as correct (2) 4233Q: Academy School Where multiple options are provided, only one should be chosen.
4235Q	Person is not expected to have QTS and be under 21 years of age on census reference date.	4235Q: Checked and correct
4236Q	Person is not expected to have EYTS and be under 21 years of age on census date	4236Q: Checked and correct
4237Q	Person is not expected to have QTLS and be under 21 years of age on census date	4237Q: Checked and correct
4238Q	HLTA Status is missing for a Teaching Assistant.	No minimum notepad entry. HLTA status ('yes' or 'no') must be added to the return.
4265Q	Teacher appears to be in second year of induction after more than 4 years in post. Please check	4265Q: Checked and correct

Query Number	Error Message	Minimum notepad entry
4270Q	Teacher appears to be in first year of induction after more than 2 years in post. Please check	4270Q: Checked and correct
4357Q	Contract/Service Agreement Start Date more than 30 years ago.	4357Q: Checked and correct
4377Q	Contract/Service Agreement end date should be on or prior to Census Reference Date for this type of contract or agreement.	4377Q: Contract end date has been agreed
4390Q	Destination code has been provided therefore contract End Date should be specified. If it cannot be supplied, please give a reason in a return level note.	4390Q: Staff member is leaving but end date not yet agreed
4417Q	If role is HLTA then HLTA Status is expected to be true.	(1) 4417Q: Checked and paid at HLTA but not qualified (2) 4417Q: Checked, currently working toward HLTA Where multiple options are provided, only one should be chosen.
4425Q	Date of Arrival in School is more than 40 years ago. Please confirm if this is correct.	4425Q: Checked and correct
4430Q	Date of Arrival in School has not been supplied. Please confirm if this is correct.	4430Q: Record not available

Query Number	Error Message	Minimum notepad entry
4440Q	Date of Arrival in School should not be later than the start of the contract: If Date of Arrival is later, please supply a reason in a return level note.	4440Q: Contract started on non-working day Or 4440Q: Please supply the reason Where multiple options are provided, only one should be chosen.
4470Q	Qualified Status inconsistent with Pay Range type.	4470Q: Confirmed that pay range and qualified status are correct
4480Q	The Pay Range supplied is not valid for a support staff or teaching assistant Post.	4480Q: Checked and correct
4495Q	Daily Rate should not be used except for agency or service agreement teachers.	4495Q: Teacher not directly paid by school
4517Q	This return contains no Pay Review Dates, please ensure that this is correct.	The latest annual pay review date must be provided. We require the date on which the base pay you are reporting was agreed. If a new school please add a return level note - 4517Q: New school, pay reviews have not yet taken place
4521Q	Please supply the Framework under which this leadership teacher is being paid, i.e. 'Pre 2014' framework or '2014' framework.	4521Q: Academy school - teacher not paid under leadership framework
4522Q	Teacher is being paid under 'Pre 2014' framework even though they arrived after 31 August 2014: Please supply a reason in a return level note.	4522Q: This is the agreement with teacher

Query Number	Error Message	Minimum notepad entry
4523Q	Please supply the Pay Range Minimum for this leadership teacher.	4523Q: Academy school - teacher not paid under leadership framework
4524Q	Please supply the Pay Range Maximum for this leadership teacher.	4524Q: Academy school - teacher not paid under leadership framework
4545Q	Staff member appears to be paid less than the minimum wage for apprentices, please supply a reason in a return level note.	Please supply reason. Where Base Pay is present then Base Pay should be greater than or equal to Hours Per Week multiplied by Weeks Per Year multiplied by 6.4. Please note: The apprentice National Minimum Wage increased from £6.40 to £7.55 in April 2025
4565Q	Staff member is Other Support Staff or Teaching Assistant and appears to be paid more than the maximum of the local government pay scale, please supply a reason in a return level note.	4565Q: Academy school – staff member not paid under local government pay scale Or Please supply the reason. Where multiple options are provided, only one should be chosen.
4575Q	Staff member appears to be paid more than the maximum of the local government pay scale, please supply a reason	4575Q: Academy school – staff member not paid under local government pay scale Or Please supply the reason. Where multiple options are provided, only one should be chosen.

Query Number	Error Message	Minimum notepad entry
4711Q	Staff member with Role of Head Teacher should have post of Head Teacher or Executive Head	Please supply reason.
4712Q	Staff member with Role of Deputy Head Teacher should have post of Deputy Head Teacher	Please supply reason.
4722Q	Post appears to be inconsistent with Role Identifier.	Please supply reason.
4723Q	Post appears to be inconsistent with Role Identifier.	Please supply reason.
4725Q	Role of TASS (Teaching Assistant) or HLTA (Higher Level Teaching Assistant) should normally be linked to post of TAS (Teaching Assistant).	4725Q: Multiple job roles
4745Q	Member of staff is working more than 48 hours a week. Please confirm if this is true.	4745Q: Confirmed as Correct
4746Q	The open contract for this member of staff is for less than 0.5 hours per week. If this is a zero hours contract it should be removed from the return.	Please confirm if the hours reported are correct. If ad hoc employment – please remove this contract.

Query Number	Error Message	Minimum notepad entry
4765Q	FTE hours normally expected to be at least 24 and no greater than 40.	(1) 4765Q: MFL Assistant (less than 24) Or (2) 4765Q: Midday supervisor (less than 24) Or (3) 4765Q: Multiple Job roles (greater than 40) Where multiple options are provided, only one should be chosen.
4825Q	Additional Payment Amount appears to be high. Please check and confirm value	4825Q: Confirmed as Correct
4834Q	Additional payment start date is before beginning of previous academic year: please supply reason in return level note	4834Q: Checked and correct payment is continuing
4935Q	Last Day of absence is missing for a non-maternity absence – please confirm if absence is ongoing.	4935Q: Absence ongoing
4945Q	Last Day of absence is not expected to be after census date, except in cases of maternity or paternity leave. Please confirm if last day of absence is correct.	4945Q: Return date has been agreed

Query Number	Error Message	Minimum notepad entry
4950Q	More than one absence record without an end date, please confirm if this is correct.	Please amend these where possible or supply reason, e.g., these are 2 different absence codes. Or 4950Q: Checked and correct Where multiple options are provided, only one should be chosen.
4960Q	More than one absence record with absence category of sickness or pregnancy related absence covering the same date(s): Please supply a reason in a return level note.	No minimum notepad entry – please amend where possible or supply a reason. Duplication may cause double counting of days sickness or pregnancy in the school's published records.
6150Q	Normally 'Computer Science' should be taught at KS4, rather than 'ICT'. ICT should only be used for vocational awards, as the ICT GCSE was withdrawn in 2015. Please check that this subject is not actually 'Computer Science'	If required, please remember to amend both years 10 and 11. Confirm the course is Vocational (please state the course name)

6260Q	SENCOs should have a NASENCO qualification unless they had been practicing in that role for a year prior to 1 September 2008	Please supply a reason. (1) 6260Q: SENCO is working towards the qualification (2) 6260Q: This is a special school If they already hold the qualification, add it to COLLECT – to do this: • Open the return, on the 'School Workforce Annual Collection' page, click 'View All' next to 'Source Details' • Click 'View All' next to 'School Workforce Members' • Search 'Family Name' of the staff, click the small 'Go' to the right of the filter options. Or, use the arrow keys on the right to find the staff member and highlight them. • Scroll down and next to 'View Qualification Details' click 'View All' • If no qualifications recorded, click 'Add' at the top right. In the drop-down box next to 'Qualification code', choose the most relevant qualification, or choose 'Any other qualification at NQF level 4 or equivalent' and click save. • If they have qualifications entered, you can add the SENCo subject to one. Click 'View Qualification Subject(s)', click 'Add' at top right, in the drop-down box by 'Subject Code' choose 'Z201' and save. • More than one Qualification can be added to each staff. • Click 'back to My Collect page' and resubmit your return. Either NPQ or NASENCO may be recorded as NASENCO.
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Query Number	Error Message	Minimum notepad entry
6530Q	The same person has a total Full Time Equivalent ratio greater than 1.5.	6530Q: Multiple job roles
6540Q	At least one staff record in this school's return should show a role of Head Teacher or Executive Head Teacher.	(1) 6540Q: Executive head shared with (list DfE number of schools) (2) 6540Q: Non teacher head teacher or CEO support staff role (3) 6540Q: Other reason (please specify) Where multiple options are provided, only one should be chosen.

6550Q	At least one staff record in this school's return should show a role of SENCO (SEN Co-ordinator) under a current contract.	(1) If SENCO shared across more than one establishment, please provide a note recording DfE number of school where SENCO has been reported. Or (2) Please add the role of SENCO to the appropriate open (not closed) teacher contract. (Please note, you may need to add an additional role to do this.) To add a role in Collect: • Log into your return and click Open Return • On the View Source Details line at the bottom, click the blue View All link • On View School Workforce Members click the blue View All link • Find the member of staff you need to add the SENCO role to (there are search boxes at the top). • Click on their name and click the small Go button on the right to view their record. • On View Contract/Agreement details, click the blue View All link. • On View Role Details at the bottom, click the blue View All link. You are now in their Role record area. • Click Add in the top right corner • Fill in the SENCO details • Click Save Or (3) Special schools - 6550Q: Special school a single post of SENCO is inappropriate
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Query Number	Error Message	Minimum notepad entry
6560Q	The school has School Business Professionals, but none are on the SLT. Please check and confirm this is correct	6560Q: Checked and Correct
6570Q	No qualifications are recorded for staff with post of 'School Business Professional'. Please check and confirm this is correct.	6570Q: Checked and Correct
7080Q	Unusually high number of vacancies reported. Only teacher posts that were vacant or temporarily filled on census day should be reported.	7080Q: Checked and Correct
7120Q	Number of Qualified Occasional Teachers present on Census Reference Date is unexpectedly high (40 or more): Please supply a reason in a return level note.	Please supply a reason.
7121Q	Number of Unqualified Occasional Teachers present on Census Reference Date is unexpectedly high (10 or more): Please supply a reason in a return level note.	Please supply a reason.
7122Q	Number of Teachers where not known if qualified or not and who are present on Census Reference Date is unexpectedly high (10 or more): Please supply a reason in a return level note.	Please supply a reason.

Query Number	Error Message	Minimum notepad entry
7220Q	Number of Agency / Third Party support staff present on Census Reference Date is unexpectedly high (50 or more): Please supply a reason in a return level note.	Please supply a reason.
7240Q	Please note that this return contains no vacancy records. Please ensure that is correct, in which case a note of confirmation must be provided in COLLECT.	7240Q: We confirm there are no vacancies in this school (please use exact wording for this query to be auto-OKed).

Return level queries

Query Number	Error Message	Minimum Notepad entry
ANS1	Please check: the base pay amounts provided for part time teachers appears to be the full time equivalent salary rather than the pre-tax annual salary.	The base pay data provided has been checked and reflects the actual annual salaries in payment. The hours worked per week are also correct.
BASE1Q	Teacher's salary is more than 10% below the bottom of the classroom teacher pay range. Please check that the Base Pay, Hours per Week and Weeks per Year have been entered correctly across the staff member's open contracts.	All teacher salaries have been checked and are correct.
FTE1	The FTE number of Support Staff (incl Teaching Assistants) is greater than the overall Support Staff (incl Teaching Assistants) headcount: Please supply a reason.	Please supply a reason Or The support staff hours worked per week in all open contracts have been checked and are correct. Where multiple options are provided, only one should be chosen.
TMC1Q	Please Check: This return contains (XX) teacher records with more than one open contract with a combined FTE greater than 1.2. A list of these teachers can be found in the report "Teachers with Multiple Contracts."	We have run the 'Teachers with Multiple Contracts Report' and confirm that this/these teacher(s) have multiple open contracts with an FTE greater than 1.2.

Year on year checks

Query Number	Error Message	Minimum Notepad entry
YonY1	The headcount number of teachers (including advisory teachers) with open contracts is significantly different from last year (this collection x, last collection y: Please supply a reason.	For local authorities: We have run the 'Teacher Headcount Variance Report' and we agree that the teacher figure in service for this year shown has been checked and is correct - Please supply reason for the change. For Academies/Free Schools: The headcount number of teachers has been checked and is correct. Please supply reason for the change.
YonY2	The headcount number of school support staff (including teaching assistants) with open contracts is significantly different from last year (this collection x, last collection y: Please supply a reason.	The support staff headcount figure provided has been checked and is correct - Please supply reason for the change.



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