

Achievement measures for FE and sixth-forms: consultation on course transfers for 2023/24

Date: 19 November 2024

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To: **Quality and MIS managers in directly-funded further
education institutions**
Quality and data managers in school sixth forms
Sixth-form data managers in unitary authorities

Respond by: 29 November 2024.

More information:

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This publication asks providers to review and comment on the changes proposed for the treatment of course transfers in the Achievement measures for FE and sixth-forms.



Purpose

1. This paper outlines proposed changes to how course (activity) transfers are treated in the achievement measures, and seeks feedback.
2. The aim is to implement the changes for the 2023/24 performance cycle.

Background

3. In 2022/23, a system for handling programme level transfers was implemented, after a consultation. We said we would then implement a method for course transfers using similar rules in 2023/24.
4. In previous cycles, a course that was transferred is treated as a withdrawal in the measures. We aim to treat transfers as a neutral outcome (excluded from the measures) if the transfer meets a set of conditions.

Proposed rules (see Annex A flow diagram)

5. A course transfer would be treated as a neutral outcome if:
 - The course is listed as a transfer (LA31 = '4')
 - And the learner has another course which did not end in a transfer:
 - a. At the same provider
 - b. Which began after the last activity ended
 - i. Or within 7 days before the end, as long as that is still after the start date
 - c. In the same academic year
 - i. Or was an activity with the same reference code (LA06) in the following academic year
 - d. Which started within 21 days after the original activity ended
 - i. Or within 126 days (18 weeks) if the transfer was to the same reference code in the following academic year
 - e. Which was the same level or higher
 - i. Unless the transfer happened within the first 8 weeks of the original activity
 - ii. A2 to AS transfers are not allowed
 - iii. Qualification levels are based on the [Qualifications in Wales](#) dataset if available, LA22 if not. If the new activity doesn't have a defined level, the old activity must also not have a defined level
 - iv. For multi-level courses, the most generous interpretation is taken (lowest level for the original activity, the highest level for the new activity)

And if the original activity was assessable, the new activity must also be assessable

- v. Unless the transfer happened within the first 8 week of the original activity
 - f. And if the original activity was a “main” activity (LA47 = ‘05’) the new activity must also be a main activity.
 - i. Unless the transfer happened within the first 8 week of the original activity
 - g. And if the original activity was a non-generic activity (LA06 does not begin with ‘L’) the new activity must also be non-generic
 - h. Only one activity may be transferred to this new activity
6. If a learner transfers programme, all the courses listed as transfers within that programme are treated as neutral outcomes, whether or not they meet the above conditions. The programme transfer must meet the rules for programme transfers.
 7. If an A level course was transferred in the second year, it is only a neutral outcome for the 2-year measures (A2 completion and grade outcomes). It would count as a non-continuation from AS to A2.
 8. Course transfers would also be treated as neutral in the success rate calculation for the vocational programme measures if they meet the above rules. Previously all course transfers were treated as neutral in the programme success rate.
 9. If a learner has been recorded as taking the same activity multiple times in a year at a provider, the activity with the latest end date will be taken. The earlier versions of the activity will be removed from the measures, whether or not they were listed as transfers.
 10. Course transfers that are treated as neutral outcomes will be monitored, in the same way as programme transfers.

Impact of changes

11. The impact of these changes was calculated for the 2022/23 measures. These were calculated to illustrate impact. For speed they were calculated using college data.

Table 1a: Effect of new transfer method on FE vocational course measures, 2022/23

Transfer method	Early dropout rate	Completion rate	Pass rate
Original	9%	88%	75%
New	7%	88%	76%

Table 1b: Effect of new transfer method on FE A level course measures, 2022/23

Transfer method	Early dropout rate	AS completion rate	Retention rate	A2 completion rate
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Original	13%	84%	73%	92%
New	10%	84%	73%	93%

Transfer method	A*	A* to A	A* to B	A* to C	A* to D	A* to E
Original	8%	24%	48%	70%	83%	89%
New	8%	25%	48%	70%	84%	90%

Table 1c: Effect of new transfer method on FE vocational programme measures, 2022/23

Transfer method	Early dropout rate	Completion rate	Success rate
Original	11%	86%	78%
New	11%	86%	78%

12. In the cases where a transferred activity did not meet the rules, we recorded the reason [Table 2].
13. Please note, aside from “no course found” this is probably an overcount of these reasons.

Table 2: Reason why potential transfer target was rejected for activity transfers that couldn't be validated, FE measures, 2022/23

Note [c]: Values under 5 suppressed to protect confidentiality.

Measure type	No course found to transfer to	Transfer did not take place within 21 days	Same course in the following year: did not take place within 126 days	Activity started before transferred activity ended	Transfer from non generic qual to generic qual	This activity was already used to validate a different transfer
Vocational course	1,110	2,540	280	570	450	180
Vocational programme	295	980	0	310	140	80
A level	0	5	[c]	10	[c]	0

Measure type	Transfer not to same level or higher	Transfer from main/core category to non-main/core category	Transfer not to same or higher level of assessability	Transfer was to another academic year	All
Vocational course	85	30	10	[c]	5,265
Vocational programme	40	15	5	0	1,890
A level	5	0	0	0	25

Consultation questions

14. Considering the above proposals:

Q1	Should transfers to an activity with a different reference number in the following academic year be accepted? (Provided the transfer took place within 21 days of the original activity ending)
Q2	Transfers to the same course in in the following academic year are allowed to enable the recording of 1.5+ year courses in two-year programmes. The rule that these transfers must take place within 18 weeks is to allow for a summer break. Is the 18-week time period the right length?
Q3	Are there occasions when a new activity might start before the old activity has ended? Is a 7-day grace period long enough for this?
Q4	Are there times when a learner might reasonably transfer from an assessable activity to a non-assessable activity?
Q5	Are there times when a learner might reasonably transfer from a main activity to a non-main activity?
Q6	Are there times when a learner might reasonably transfer from a non-generic activity to a generic activity?
Q7	Are there occasions when a learner might transfer from multiple activities to a single activity?
Q8	How should valid transfers in the second year of an A level course be treated?
Q9	Do you have any other thoughts about the proposed rules?

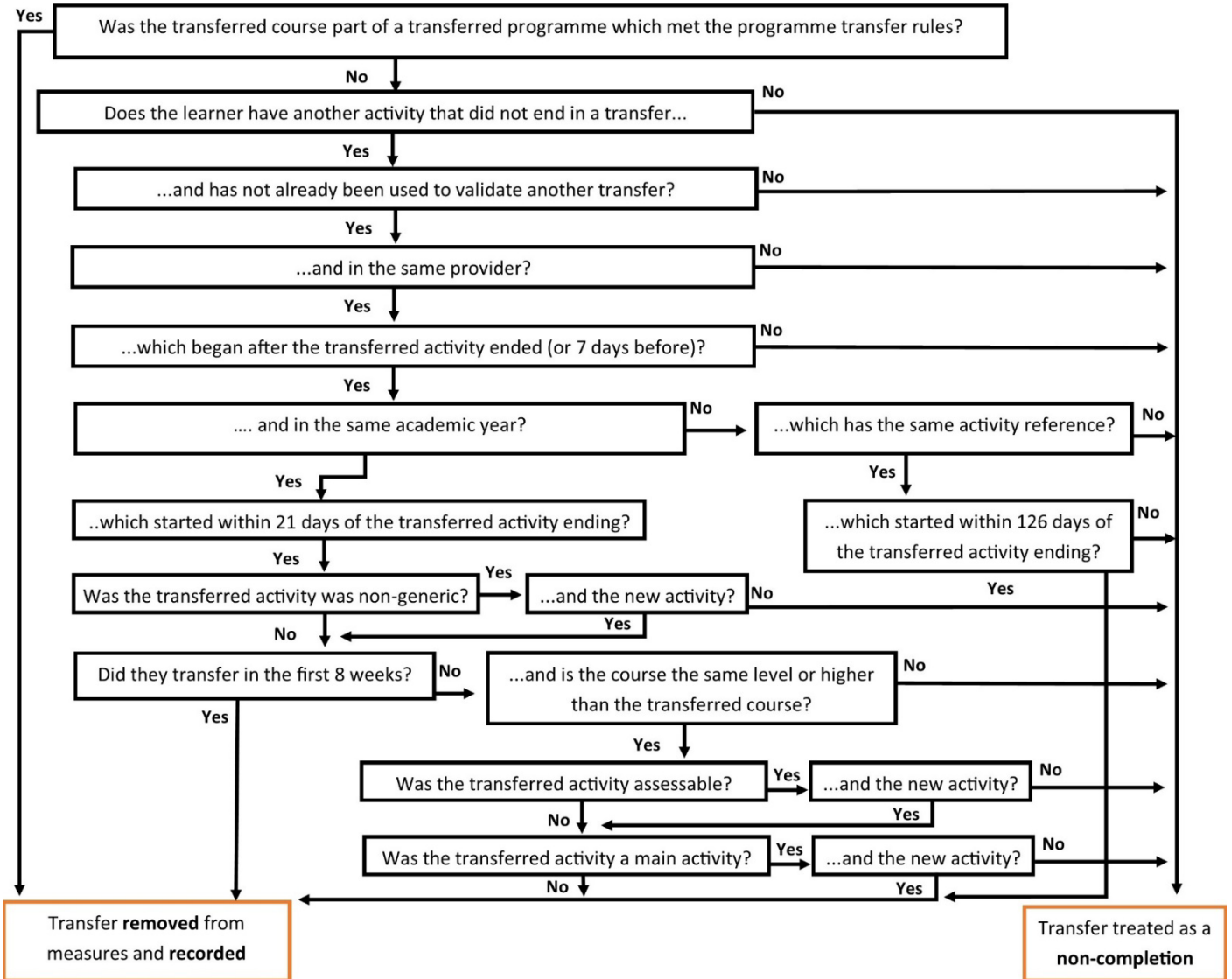
Responses and next steps

15. We are asking for responses to this consultation by 29 November 2024, to be sent to statistics@medr.cymru.
16. Once we receive responses we will consider them further and send out final guidance by December.

Further information

17. Any queries should be sent to statistics@medr.cymru.

Annex A: Course flow diagram



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