

Department for Education and Child Development

School Enrolment Census

Data Quality Statement



PUBLISHED OCTOBER 2011
VERSION 1.00

-REVIEWED ANNUALLY-



Due for Review: October 2012

www.santdatalink.org.au

SCHOOL ENROLMENT CENSUS

Data Quality Statement

This Data Quality Statement is intended to assist Researchers with understanding the strengths, weaknesses and utility of this dataset for Statistical Linkage Projects. This dataset has been assessed against the seven dimensions of data quality, as set out in the Australian Bureau of Statistics [Data Quality Framework](#):

- [Institutional Environment](#)
- [Relevance](#)
- [Timeliness](#)
- [Accuracy](#)
- [Coherence](#)
- [Interpretability](#)
- [Accessibility](#)

The School Enrolment Census was established to collate data on all students enrolled in government schools and participating in education programmes in South Australia. The aim is to enable cross state and national comparisons and for reporting of population and demographic trends. Assessments of the provision of services and resources also provide a useful measure of accountability.

Data are held in a secure and protected environment within the Department for Education and Child Development.

School Enrolment data are collected each year at two intervals around the months of February and August. The Term 3 Census undertaken on the first Friday in August is the primary data source used for state and national reporting, and is reported to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) under the National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC) annually.

In Term 1 of each year (i.e. February Data Collection), the Department for Education and Child Development undertakes a data collection from all government schools state wide, drawing on existing administrative data sources. The Student Census System captures a snapshot of enrolment information. The collection in the main comprises of the following field items: year level, age, gender and information such as aboriginality, disability type and non-English speaking background. New nationally agreed data fields relating to the student's parents/guardians were introduced in 2005; and include occupation, education level and birthplace. Reasons for leaving the school (where applicable) are also captured for the preceding 12 months, as recorded at the time of leaving the school (often referred to as "intended destinations").

Each year a census is also undertaken in Term 3 (i.e. the midyear August census). Additional information relating to Semester 1 absences and Term 2 behaviour management incidents are collected in the Term 3 Census.

Institutional Environment

Organisation

Department for Education and Child Development

Authority for Collection

Census data are collected by the Department for Education and Child Development for reporting to State Parliament, Commonwealth Departments, the Ministerial Council on Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA), the Australian Bureau of Statistics and other education institutions.

The other information collected at the time of enrolment is requested to enable the Department to:

- Undertake administration and care responsibilities including maintaining emergency contact information;
- Communicate with the parent/guardian about important matters;
- Provide first aid and plan for child/student health support requirements;
- Provide all resource entitlements;
- Collect necessary statistical information and undertake analysis of the composition and performance of the child/student population; and
- Meet reporting requirements, including to other government authorities and funding agencies.

Relevance

Purpose of the Collection

The data collection is used for reporting and monitoring, to assist the staffing needs of government schools, for forward planning of educational facilities, financial allocations and submissions, statutory reporting and state and local area enrolment projections.

Population Covered

All students enrolled in government schools in South Australia.

Geographic Coverage

South Australia.

Reference Period

The School Census using unit record level data commenced partially in the late 1990s and the collection was embedded more formally in 2000.

Data for linkage purposes are available from 2000 onwards. This would include any students actively enrolled in a SA Government school in February or August 2000, some of which would have enrolled many years prior to that date,

e.g. year 12 students may have enrolled 12 years earlier. It would also include those students who had left in the preceding 12 months.

Timeliness

Frequency of Collection

The collection is undertaken each year in February and August. The August data is considered to be the more reliable collection of the two datasets.

There is a time lag in the reporting of the enrolments data because data cleansing/validation processes are undertaken centrally once the snapshot has been taken, including checking for invalid multiple enrolments state-wide. As such, the lag may be between two to four months.

Frequency of Release

The August Census is provided to SA NT DataLink on an annual basis.

Timeliness of Release

The Department for Education and Child Development - SA NT DataLink

Identified data from the August Census of each year will be provided to the Master Linkage File no later than the 30th of November.

Accuracy

Quality Assurance

The data in the Census are validated for quality assurance. This process is undertaken routinely every year. A small set of data items are not verified against another data source and thus do not conform to the same quality control process; these include the postcode and the family code data fields. Such fields have not been assessed for internal consistency, accuracy or content validity.

Coverage

All students enrolled in government schools in South Australia.

Please see section 2 of the Census Guidelines and Data Dictionary (Version 13.0, January 2011) for an explanation of students which are included in and excluded from the Census. A copy of the Census Guidelines and Data Dictionary can be requested from the Data & Educational Measurement Directorate.

Coherence

Internal Consistency

Data collection methods have improved over time.

The Census will have in its collection a small selection of data items, which are not fully checked for consistency and completeness.

Comparability

The collection is used for reporting to State Parliament, Commonwealth Departments, the Ministerial Council on Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA), the Australian Bureau of Statistics and other education institutions. Details relating to the coding classifications are available in the Census Guidelines and Data Dictionary (January 2011, Version 13.0).

The February and August collections are similar in content and quality.

The collection has a number of internal parameters, which includes a default property. To give an example, historically the Aboriginality, Torres Strait Islander Indicator will specify a default to 'N' if it is not indicated. It is worth noting that this is being changed from 2012 to allow "No" and "Not Stated" to be distinguished, however this will take a number of years to process through the enrolment records.

Linkage Variables

- Unique Identifier (implemented across Department for Education and Child Development schools from 2005)
- Names – all names including nicknames, aliases and aka
- Date of birth
- Sex
- Aboriginality, Torres Strait Islander Indicator
- Country of birth

- Full address including geocodes, if available (this is extracted from other departmental sources)
- Parent/Guardian identifier
- Date enrolled
- Date left
- Destination school
- Census year
- Census Term
- Any of the above information provided for other family members and included in these records including a Family Code
- 85 File Number – a flag indicating that this child was under the Guardianship of the Minister

Interpretability

Metadata

The Census Guidelines and Data Dictionary document is available from Department for Education and Child Development, Data & Educational Measurement. A separate document exists for each year (January 2011 is version 13.0).

Accessibility

Data Custodian

Data & Educational Measurement Directorate
Department for Education and Child Development
10th Floor, 31 Flinders St
ADELAIDE SA 5001

Research Inquiries

Contact [Metadata and Research Advisory Services, SA NT DataLink](#)

Method of Access

To gain access to this dataset Researchers must follow [SA NT DataLink's Application Process](#) for Statistical Linkage Projects.

Data Availability

The Enrolment Census data are available from 2000 onwards. Each year, a Census of all government schools is undertaken in Term 1 (February data collection) and Term 3 (August Census). It is likely that the collaboration between SA NT DataLink and the Department for Education and Child Development will enhance reporting capabilities particularly relating to data from the early years (pre-2005) because individual students and their associated records can be more effectively identified. The creation of unique ID provides SA NT DataLink the essential link to allow student records in the enrolment census to be traced back. The partnership functions to improve the quality of enrolment records, thereby widening the scope of its research potential.

For further information please contact Metadata and Research Advisory Services, SA NT DataLink.

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