Further Guidance on Student Course Sessions - consultation document

This is a draft guidance document produced for the purposes of consulting on proposed changes to the HESA Student Record. The coding manuals should be referred to for the latest guidance and will be updated with any consultation outcomes.
Students are referenced by number in this document to align with the same scenarios in the 23056 guidance here:
https://www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/23056/furtherguidance?section=sessionyearsandstudentcoursesessions

General principles:

- StudentCourseSessions associate an Engagement with the course the student is studying on.
- In most cases, a StudentCourseSession records a year of a student's activity. Examples of where a StudentCourseSession would be less than the student's standard course year length include when the student withdraws from a course, has a period of dormancy, or where the student has entered their study with previously awarded credit points or Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL).
- The StudentCourseSession dates must record the actual dates that the student was studying on a course year.
- For Postgraduate Research, fully flexible, and credit accumulation courses, yearlong StudentCourseSessions are returned starting from the date the student commenced study.
- An Engagement cannot have overlapping StudentCourseSessions.
- A StudentCourseSession must not be longer than a year, quality rules will allow for StudentCourseSessions to be up to 14 days longer than a year to account for differing course dates between years.

Scenario 1

Student 1 is undertaking a first degree starting on 21st September 2024. Their study years run from September to June for each year of their three year course.
One StudentCourseSession would be returned for each year of their course showing the dates they engaged with the course.

StudentCourseSession1 SCSSTARTDATE: 2024-09-21 SCSENDDATE: 2025-06-01	StudentCourseSession2 SCSSTARTDATE: 2025-09-15 SCSENDDATE: 2026-06-12	StudentCourseSession3 SCSSTARTDATE: 2026-09-25 SCSENDDATE: 2027-06-16

As in the example above, StudentCourseSessions may not start on the same day each year. For a student following a standard study pattern, it is generally expected that StudentCourseSessions within an Engagement would start within 14 days of the anniversary of previous StudentCourseSession start dates. The scenarios below cover examples where this may not be the case.

Scenario 2

Student 6 is studying for a first degree which started on 21st September 2024, but the student started late, in October. The student will be continuing study alongside other students who started on the 21st September and has the same expected end date. Their first StudentCourseSession would therefore be shorter than the standard length of a course year to reflect that they started late.

StudentCourseSession1 SCSSTARTDATE: 2024-10-31 SCSENDDATE: 2025-06-01 LATESTARTER: 01	StudentCourseSession2 SCSSTARTDATE: 2025-09-21 SCSENDDATE: 2026-06-12	StudentCourseSession3 SCSSTARTDATE: 2026-09-25 SCSENDDATE: 2027-06-16

For providers in England, Northern Ireland and Wales, the LATESTARTER flag would be returned on StudentCourseSession1 to indicate the student started the course year late.

Scenario 3

Student 7 starts studying on a course starting on 21 September 2024 but has to resit the first term. They therefore move to the cohort of January starters to resit term one and continue their study. As they have completed a partial year resit, a shorter first StudentCourseSession would be returned to reflect their pattern of study. Subsequent StudentCourseSessions would then record each year of the course the student engages with.

StudentCourseSession1 SCSSTARTDATE: 2024-09-21 SCSENDDATE: 2024-12-15	StudentCourseSession2 SCSSTARTDATE: 2025-01-15 SCSENDDATE: 2025-12-20 RESIT: 01	StudentCourseSession3 SCSSTARTDATE: 2026-01-10 SCSENDDATE: 2026-12-12

For providers in England, Northern Ireland and Wales, the RESIT field would be returned against StudentCourseSession 2 to indicate that it contains a partial year resit.

Scenario 4

Student 8 is on an 18-month course starting in October 2024. Two StudentCourseSessions would be returned to record the activity.

StudentCourseSession1 SCSSTARTDATE: 2024-10-01 SCSENDDATE: 2025-09-30	StudentCourseSession2 SCSSTARTDATE: 2025-10-01 SCSENDDATE: 2026-03-31

Scenario 5

Student 10 is undertaking a bridging course prior to completing the final year of a first degree.

StudentCourseSession1 SCSSTARTDATE: 2024-08-01 SCSENDDATE: 2024-08-28 PREPFLAG: 01 YEARPRG: 0	StudentCourseSession2 SCSSTARTDATE: 2024-09-21 SCSENDDATE: 2025-06-01 YEARPRG: 3

StudentCourseSession1 is less than a year as it represents just the bridging course element. It has PREPFLAG = 01 to indicate the student is undertaking a bridging course and YEARPRG is recorded as 0.

Scenario 6a

Student 11 starts studying on a politics and history course in September 2024. After the first term they transfer to studying a politics course **at a different level.**

Engagement1 StudentCourseSession1 SCSSTARTDATE: 2024-09-21 SCSENDDATE: 2024-12-15 Course: History and Politics RSNSCSEND: 03	Engagement2 StudentCourseSession1 SCSSTARTDATE: 2025-01-15 SCSENDDATE: 2025-06-01 Course: Politics

Leaver ENGENDDATE: 2024-12-15 RSNENGEND: 11

Due to the change in level of study, a new Engagement would be generated. StudentCourseSession1 would be closed with a reason for ending of 03 'transferred within the provider'. A new StudentCourseSession is returned associated with a new course (linked to a qualification with a new subject) **and a new Engagement due to the change in level of study.**

Scenario 6b

Student 11 starts studying on a politics and history course in September 2024. After the first term they transfer to studying a politics course **at the same level**.

> Engagement1
> StudentCourseSession1
> SCSSTARTDATE: 2024-09-21
> SCSENDDATE: 2025-06-01
> Course: Politics

In this example the student starts studying and transfers within the same reference period so the StudentCourseSession is associated with the Politics course to reflect the position at the end of the reference period. As the transfer is at the **same level, a new Engagement is not required.** If the StudentCourseSession spanned reference periods and the course changed between reference periods, the StudentCourseSession.COURSEID would be updated in the second reference period to reflect this.

Scenario 7

Student 12 begins studying on a fully flexible course on the 1st October 2024. As there is no concept of a standard course year, yearlong StudentCourseSessions are returned starting from the Engagement start date until the Engagement ends.

> StudentCourseSession1
> SCSSTARTDATE: 2024-10-01
> SCSENDDATE: 2025-09-30

> StudentCourseSession2
> SCSSTARTDATE: 2025-10-01
> SCSENDDATE: 2026-09-30

> StudentCourseSession3
> SCSSTARTDATE: 2026-10-01
> SCSENDDATE: 2027-04-15

The final StudentCourseSession may be shorter than a year as the end date should reflect the end of the student's Engagement. This approach also applies to credit accumulation and PGR courses.
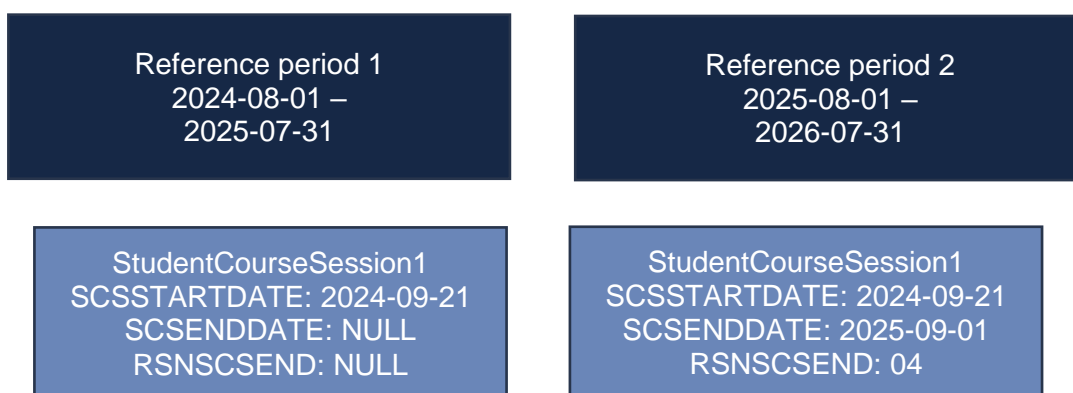
Scenario 8

Student 13 joins a course which started on the 21st September 2024 with some previously awarded credit points or Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) and didn't start until the 13th April 2025. The student will be continuing study alongside other students who started on the 21st September and has the same expected end date. Their first StudentCourseSession would be shorter to reflect the late start.

> StudentCourseSession1
> SCSSTARTDATE: 2025-04-13
> SCSENDDATE: 2025-06-01
> LATESTARTER: 01

> StudentCourseSession2
> SCSSTARTDATE: 2025-09-21
> SCSENDDATE: 2026-06-20

> StudentCourseSession3
> SCSSTARTDATE: 2026-09-25
> SCSENDDATE: 2027-06-16

For providers in England, Northern Ireland and Wales, the LATESTARTER flag would be returned on StudentCourseSession1 to indicate the student started the course year late. For providers in England, the EntryProfile.APELCRD, EntryProfile.CRDPTSTU and EntryProfile.CRDSCM fields would be returned to identify the prior credits the student held.
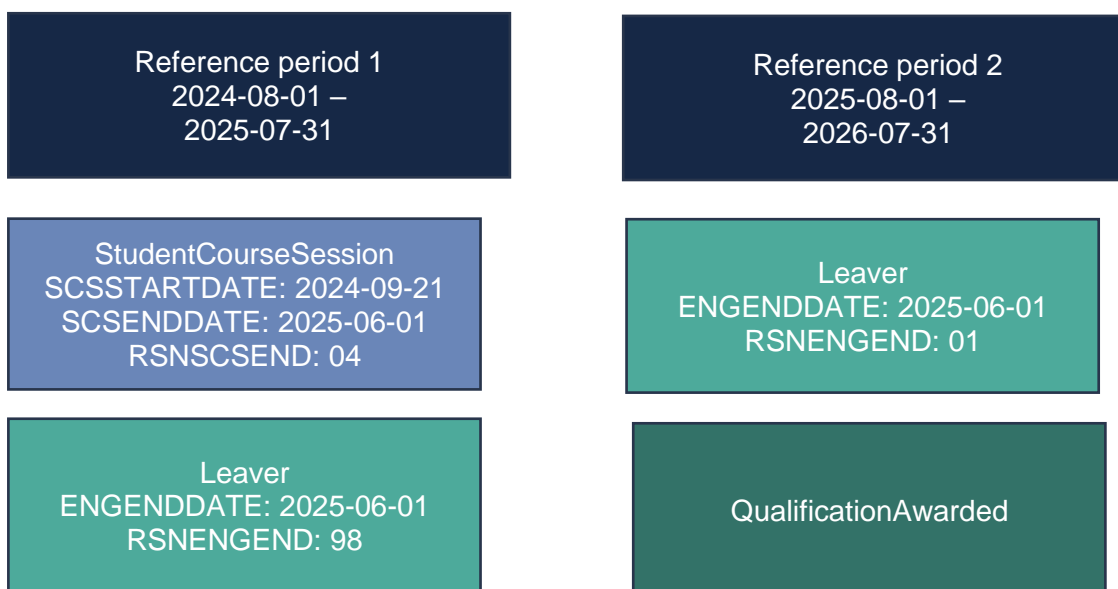
Scenario 9

Student 14 joins a course which started on 21 September 2024 and will go over into the following year's reference period. As the end date of the StudentCourseSession does not fall into reference period 1, no end date should be returned and the StudentCourseSession should be left open. In reference period 2, the same StudentCourseSession will be returned with updated information such as SCSENDDATE and RSNSCSEND.

Reference period 1 2024-08-01 – 2025-07-31	Reference period 2 2025-08-01 – 2026-07-31
StudentCourseSession1 SCSSTARTDATE: 2024-09-21 SCSENDDATE: NULL RSNSCSEND: NULL	StudentCourseSession1 SCSSTARTDATE: 2024-09-21 SCSENDDATE: 2025-09-01 RSNSCSEND: 04

Scenario 10

Student 15 completed their studies in a reference period but due to an exam board delay, no qualification was returned. In the first reference period, the student should have a Leaver entity returned with a Leaver.ENGENDDATE to show when the student completed their study and a Leaver.RSNENGEND = 98.
In the following reference period when the qualification is confirmed, the student should be re-returned with an updated Leaver.RSNENGEND and a QualificationAwarded entity. StudentCourseSession does not need to be returned in the second reference period as there is no activity to be reported.

Reference period 1 2024-08-01 – 2025-07-31	Reference period 2 2025-08-01 – 2026-07-31
StudentCourseSession SCSSTARTDATE: 2024-09-21 SCSENDDATE: 2025-06-01 RSNSCSEND: 04	Leaver ENGENDDATE: 2025-06-01 RSNENGEND: 01
Leaver ENGENDDATE: 2025-06-01 RSNENGEND: 98	QualificationAwarded

If the student has returned to resit exams or re-submit assessments without reengaging with tuition, they would be returned in the same way as that would not be considered as active study.

Scenario 11

Student 16 joins a course and completes the first year of their studies. The student then completes the first two terms of their second year, but unexpectedly goes dormant in the third term. The student takes one year out from their studies and returns a year later to finish the third term.

StudentCourseSession1 SCSSTARTDATE: 2024-09-21 SCSENDDATE: 2025-06-01 YEARPRG: 1	StudentCourseSession2 SCSSTARTDATE: 2025-09-15 SCSENDDATE: 2026-03-15 YEARPRG: 2	StudentCourseSession3 SCSSTARTDATE: 2027-04-05 SCSENDDATE: 2027-06-01 YEARPRG: 2

SessionStatus STATUSCHANGEDTO: 02 STATUSVALIDFROM: 2026-03-16

A SessionStatus entity would be returned with StudentCourseSession2 to indicate that the student has moved to dormant after the end of the StudentCourseSession.
When the student returns to active study, StudentCourseSession3 is returned with the dates reflecting the student's Engagement with the end of their second year. YEARPRG would remain at 2 for StudentCourseSession3.

Scenario 12

Student 17 joins a medical course which has slightly different start dates each year. These dates are as follows:
Year 1: 26th September 2024 – 1st June 2025
Year 2: 5th September 2025 – 8th July 2026
Year 3: 5th September 2026 – 8th July 2027
Year 4: 30th August 2027 – 19th August 2028
Year 5: 19th September 2028 – 1st July 2029

The StudentCourseSessions returned should reflect the dates that the student studies on each year of the course. They would therefore be returned with dates aligning with the course years outlined above. It is not generally expected that start dates for StudentCourseSessions would vary by more than 2 weeks between years where the reason is not apparent (for example through the inclusion of the late starter flag). In these cases, quality rules may therefore trigger and a tolerance would be required.

Scenario 13

Student 18 joins an accelerated course which has the following study dates:
Year 1 (120 credits) – 5th January 2025 – 20th September 2025

Year 2 (120 credits) – 6th October 2025 – 24th June 2026

Year 3 (120 credits) – 5th October 2026 – 23rd June 2027

Yearlong StudentCourseSessions are required to be returned to reflect the student's activity. We would normally expect the first two StudentCourseSessions to each be a year long and categorised as full-time and the final one to be shorter and classified as other full-time for providers in England, Northern Ireland and Wales and classified as full-time for providers in Scotland.

StudentCourseSession1	StudentCourseSession2	StudentCourseSession3
SCSSTARTDATE: 2025-01-05	SCSSTARTDATE: 2026-01-05	SCSSTARTDATE: 2027-01-05
SCSENDDATE: 2026-01-04	SCSENDDATE: 2027-01-04	SCSENDDATE: 2027-06-23
YEARPRG in 24056: 1	YEARPRG in 25056: 2	YEARPRG in 26056: 3
YEARPRG in 25056: 2	YEARPRG in 26056: 3	

In each case the YEARPRG would reflect the position at the end of the reference period.

Scenario 14

Student 19 joins a 13-month postgraduate taught course (studied full-time) which starts in September 2024. As the course is longer than a year in its entirety, two StudentCourseSessions are returned to record the student's study.

StudentCourseSession1	StudentCourseSession2
SCSSTARTDATE: 2024-09-15	SCSSTARTDATE: 2025-09-15
SCSENDDATE: 2025-09-14	SCSENDDATE: 2025-10-31