

Harmonised Concepts and Questions for Social Data Sources  

---

Primary Principles

Economic Status, NS-SEC and Employment Related  
Questions

# About This Document and Update History

---

## Primary Principles

### **About this document**

This document forms part of a series that replaces the original *Harmonised Concepts and Questions for Government Social Surveys*. This series will make topics easier to find, with clearer guidance and consistent layouts. By using a series of documents, updates will be simpler and faster, and new topics will be easier to incorporate.

This document is part of the set of Harmonised Primary Principles for social sources. These are concepts and questions that are used on all or nearly all major government social surveys. They are distinct from Secondary Principles, as the latter apply only to a selected group of surveys.

For more information, please see the Introductory Document, available on our website.

### **This is Version 3.2 published in May 2015**

This document was updated to Version 3.2 to correct minor formatting errors and to change the term '*Harmonised Standards*' to '*Harmonised Principles*' as agreed by the National Statistics Harmonisation Group.

### **Previous versions:**

#### **Version 3.1 published in August 2011.**

This document was updated to Version 3.1 to reflect the changes resulting from the change in women's state pension age in the UK from 2010 to 2020, to include questions on 'agency working' and to update SIC, SOC and NS-SEC references

#### **Version 3.0 published in December 2008.**

This document was updated to Version 3.0 to reflect the changes in the format of the document placing 'Inputs' before 'Outputs'.

#### **Version 2.0 published in April 2008.**

This document was updated to Version 2.0 to reflect the changes in the contact details for the Harmonisation Team.

#### **Version 1.0 published in June 2004.**

This document is part of a series that have replaced the Harmonised Concepts and Questions document. We have been working to make our guidance easier to find and clearer to use. Other than the formatting and layout changes, there are no new changes to questions or outputs in this version.

Please note that version control is new to this edition. Please ensure that you always use up-to-date versions of questions and outputs by checking our website for new editions – the version number will be incremented when changes are made.

# Contents

## Primary Principles

---

Introduction .....	4
Economic Status:	
Inputs .....	5
Outputs .....	11
Industry, Occupation, Employment Status and Socio-Economic Classifications:	
Inputs .....	12
Outputs .....	16
Full or Part-Time Work (self-assessed):	
Inputs .....	18
Outputs .....	18
Agency Working:	
Inputs .....	19
Outputs .....	20

# Introduction

## Primary Principles

---

### Contact us

For more information about Harmonisation or to join our mailing list, please visit our website at:

<https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/statistics/methodology-2/harmonisation/>

If you would like further information or have any questions, please contact:

	Email:	<a href="mailto:harmonisation@ons.gov.uk">harmonisation@ons.gov.uk</a>
	Telephone:	01329 444017
	Mail:	Harmonisation Team Office for National Statistics Room 1400 Segensworth Road Titchfield Fareham PO15 5RR

# Economic Status

---

## Inputs

**Reference period:** the seven days ending on the Sunday preceding the interview. Questions are phrased in terms of "...in the 7 days ending Sunday the ...".

**Government schemes:** the questions below have been adopted from the LFS, except for a summary question on participation in government schemes for employment training in place of the greater detail required by the LFS.

For the purposes of applying the ILO definition of unemployment, it is sufficient to be able to identify accurately the combined total of people in paid work or on government schemes. The LFS asks if people have participated in government schemes before asking if they have paid work, unlike the harmonised questions, and so is only harmonised with other surveys for estimation of the combined total of people in paid work and people on government schemes. It remains the main source for estimation of these categories separately.

**The routing in the Dec 1997 update:** The routing has been amended to meet the ILO definition more closely by testing those waiting to take up a job for their availability to start within two weeks. We have also described the complex routing in less summary terms than hitherto, to try to avoid ambiguity. This necessitates some careful attention to the use of brackets in conditions.

**Students:** In order to derive NS-SEC for the whole adult population, questions were added (in April 2002) to identify full-time students irrespective of their ILO economic status. These new questions appear at the end of the economic status questions, however as they are independent of the ILO definition they could be positioned elsewhere in a questionnaire. Full-time students are classified as those who are at school full-time, on a sandwich-course, or studying full-time at university or college including at a sixth form college. The economic status outputs classify students according to their ILO definition (e.g. if full-time students have a part-time job they would be categorised as 'in employment'). Some economically inactive students may not be categorised as full-time students in NS-SEC as they did not state they were studying full-time but it is still their main reason why they are not looking for work. (See section of socio-economic classifications.)

**Long-term unemployed:** Respondents who are looking for a job or waiting to take up a job are asked a question (introduced in April 2002) about how long they have been looking for work. This question is required to derive NS-SEC for the whole adult population. Respondents will only be classified as long-term unemployed if they meet the definition for ILO unemployment. If the respondent is ILO unemployed and has had previous employment, they will be classified as long-term unemployed only if they have been looking for work for more than a year and they left their last paid job over a year ago. If the respondent is ILO unemployed but has never had a paid job, they will be classified as long-term unemployed if they have been looking for work for more than a year.

**April 2002:** Three new questions were added to the set, allowing students to be accurately identified.

**State pension age:** Between April 2010 and April 2020, women's State pension age in the UK will increase from 60 to 65, at the rate of one month every two months. From August 2010, ONS will publish headline employment and inactivity rates based on the 16-64 population. No change was made concerning the unemployment rate, which was, and is still based on the population aged 16 and over. The LFS definition of pension age has changed from 65 plus for men and 60 plus for women to 65 plus for men and women; all children under 16 years are classified as economically inactive. Therefore, from April 2010 any routing that previously used the population 'males 16-64 and females 16-59' should change to 'all those aged 16-64', and routing that previously used the population 'males 65+ and females 60+ (pension age)' should change to 'all those aged 65+'.

A detailed 'flag' can be calculated over the course of the incremental change to the female State pension age. This will be needed if detailed analysis concerning state pension age is intended. It is recommended that datasets contain two 'flag' variables. These derived variables should be called 'PENFLAGP' which indicates an individual who is actually of State pension age at the time of interview and 'NOPENFLG' which indicates individuals who are aged 16+ and not actually of State pension age at the time of interview. 'PENFLAGP' and 'NOPENFLG' are both potentially disclosive variables as they can allow for certain respondents, affected by the change, to have their year and month of birth identified. This goes against ONS standards for End User License (EUL). Therefore these variables should not be released on EUL versions of datasets but can be included on Special License or other restricted access versions of datasets.

## Economic Status

---

### Inputs

In order to calculate an accurate 'flag', datasets would need 'age', 'date of birth' and 'reference date' variables. ONS can provide syntax to users who wish to create these variables on their data. Please contact the LFS team in the Social Surveys Division.

Email: [socialsurveys@ons.gov.uk](mailto:socialsurveys@ons.gov.uk)

The Government announced in its October 2010 Spending Review that it will speed up the pace of State pension age equalisation for women from April 2016 so that women's State pension age will reach 65 in November 2018. The State pension age will then increase to 66 for both men and women from December 2018 to April 2020. The current approach to recording and analysing those of State pension age will therefore need to be amended before 2016 in order to account for these further changes.

### QUESTIONS TO ASK

These questions have been designed to harmonise the collection of data across interview surveys. The instructions for interviewers are shown in italics.

IF AGE  $\geq$  16

#### PAID WORK

– **Did you do any paid work in the seven days ending Sunday the (n), either as an employee or as self-employed?**

1. Yes
2. No

#### *Interviewer instructions:*

*You should take the respondent's definition of whether they are in paid work or not, but it must be paid work.*

*'Paid work' at this question means ANY work for pay or profit done in the reference week. It is to include any paid work, however little time is spent on it, so long as it is paid. For example, it includes Saturday jobs and casual work (e.g. baby-sitting, running a mail order club, etc.). Some respondents may not regard baby-sitting, etc. to be 'serious' work. Probe those to whom you feel this may apply (e.g. housewives with dependent children). Even the youngest respondents who have not yet left school may have a Saturday job, e.g. a paper round. It is correct for them to be recorded as doing paid work.*

*Self-employed people are considered to be working if they work in their own business, professional practice, or farm for the purpose of earning a profit even if the enterprise is failing to make a profit or is just being set up.*

*Training for nurses is now carried out under the Project 2000 scheme and as such, nurses on this scheme should be classed as students, like any student nurses you may encounter with more traditional arrangements.*

*Someone who regards themselves as retired, but sits as a director on board meetings (however few) and is paid for this work, should be classified as in paid work. We do NOT expect the interviewers to probe routinely for this.*

IF (NOT IN PAID WORK) AND

(AGE = 16-64)

#### GOVERNMENT SCHEME

– **Were you on a government scheme for employment training?**

1. Yes
2. No

# Economic Status

---

## Inputs

IF (NOT IN PAID WORK) AND  
(NOT ON GOVERNMENT SCHEME) - (NOTE THAT MEN AND WOMEN AGED OVER 64 ARE NOT ON  
GOVERNMENT SCHEMES, BY DEFINITION)

AWAY FROM JOB/BUSINESS

– **Did you have a job or business you were away from?**

1. Yes
2. No
3. SPONTANEOUS Waiting to take up a new job/business already obtained

Interviewer instructions:

*This is asked in order to deal with any uncertainty that may exist in the minds of people who were away from **PAID** work during the reference week (e.g. on holiday, sick leave, career break, laid off, etc.)*

*If the respondent has been absent from their job for a long period (e.g. career break, long term sick etc), only code 'Yes' if there is definitely a job for them to return to.*

*In cases where the respondent is unsure whether they actually had a job the following points may be helpful:*

**For employees:** a job exists if there is a definite arrangement between an employer and an employee for work on a regular basis (i.e. every week or every month) whether the work is full time or part time. The number of hours worked each week may vary considerably but as long as some work is done on a regular basis a job can be said to exist.

**Long term absence from work:** If the total absence from work (from the last day of work to the reference week) has exceeded six months then a person has a job only if full or partial pay has been received by the worker during the absence and that they expect to return to work for the same employer (i.e. a job is available for them).

**Career Break:** In some organisations employees are able to take a career break for a specified period and are guaranteed employment at the end of that period. If a respondent is currently on a career break they should be coded 'Yes' here only if there is an arrangement, between the employer and employee, that there will be employment for them at the end of the break. This is not dependent upon them receiving payment from their employer during this time. The respondent's opinion of whether they have a job to go back to should be taken.

**Seasonal workers:** In some industries (e.g. agriculture, forestry, fishing, types of construction, etc.) there is a substantial difference in the level of employment from one season to the next. Between 'seasons' respondents in such industries should be coded No at this question. (However, note that the odd week of sick leave during the working season would be treated like any other worker's occasional absence and coded 'Yes' here).

**Casual workers:** If a respondent works casually for an employer but has not worked for them during the reference week, they should be coded No, even if they expect to do further work for the employer in the future.

## Economic Status

---

### Inputs

IF (NOT IN PAID WORK) AND  
(NOT ON GOVERNMENT SCHEME) AND  
(NOT AWAY FROM JOB)

#### UNPAID WORK FOR OWN BUSINESS

– **Did you do any unpaid work in that week for any business that you own?**

1. Yes
2. No

#### Interviewer instructions:

*The people we expect to answer 'Yes' here are those whose work contributes directly to a business, farm, or professional practice that they own, but who receive no pay or profits.*

*Unpaid voluntary work done for charity, etc. should **not** be included.*

IF (NOT IN PAID WORK) AND  
(NOT ON GOVERNMENT SCHEME) AND  
(NOT AWAY FROM JOB) AND  
(NOT DOING UNPAID WORK IN OWN BUSINESS)

#### UNPAID WORK FOR RELATIVE'S BUSINESS

– **....or that a relative owns?**

1. Yes
2. No

#### Interviewer instructions:

*These are people whose work contributes directly to a business, farm, or professional practice owned by a relative but who receive no pay or profits (e.g. a wife doing her husband's accounts or helping with the family farm or business).*

*Unpaid voluntary work done for charity, etc. should **not** be included.*

IF (NOT IN UNPAID WORK) AND  
(NOT ON GOVERNMENT SCHEME) AND  
(NOT AWAY FROM JOB) AND  
(NOT DOING UNPAID WORK IN OWN OR RELATIVE'S BUSINESS) AND  
(NOT WAITING TO TAKE UP A JOB, FROM QUESTION ON ABSENCE FROM JOB)

#### LOOKING FOR WORK/GOVERNMENT TRAINING SCHEME

– **Thinking of the four weeks ending Sunday the (n) were you looking for any kind of paid work or government training scheme at any time in those four weeks?**

1. Yes
2. No

#### Interviewer instructions:

*'Looking for paid work' may cover a wide range of activities and you should not try to interpret the phrase for the respondent.*

*In the case of those 'looking for' a place on a government scheme the search should be active rather than passive. In other words, a respondent who has not approached an agency but who would consider a place if an agency approached him or her should be coded 'No'. Looking in the papers for vacancies is an active form of search.*

## Economic Status

---

### Inputs

IF EITHER

(NOT IN PAID WORK) AND

(NOT ON GOVERNMENT SCHEME) AND

(NOT AWAY FROM JOB) AND

(NOT DOING UNPAID WORK IN OWN OR RELATIVE'S BUSINESS) AND

(LOOKED FOR WORK IN LAST 4 WEEKS) OR

(WAITING TO TAKE UP A JOB, FROM QUESTION ON ABSENCE FROM JOB) OR

(WAITING TO TAKE UP A JOB, FROM QUESTION ON LOOKING FOR ANY KIND OF PAID WORK)

**START JOB / GOVERNMENT SCHEME**

– **If a job or a place on a government scheme had been available in the week ending Sunday the (n) would you have been able to start within 2 weeks?**

1. Yes
2. No

IF (LOOKED FOR WORK IN LAST 4 WEEKS) OR

(WAITING TO TAKE UP A JOB, FROM QUESTION ON ABSENCE FROM JOB) OR

(WAITING TO TAKE UP A JOB, FROM QUESTION ON LOOKING FOR ANY KIND OF PAID WORK)

**HOW LONG**

– **How long have you been looking/were you looking for paid work/a place on a government scheme?**

1. not yet started
2. less than 1 month
3. 1 month but less than 3 months
4. 3 months but less than 6 months
5. 6 months but less than 12 months
6. 12 months or more

IF [(NOT IN PAID WORK) AND

(NOT ON GOVERNMENT SCHEME) AND

(NOT AWAY FROM JOB) AND

NOT DOING UNPAID WORK IN OWN OR RELATIVE'S BUSINESS) I.E., IF NOT IN EMPLOYMENT] AND

[(NOT LOOKED FOR A JOB IN LAST 4 WEEKS) OR

(NOT AVAILABLE TO START WORK IN NEXT 2 WEEKS) OR

WAITING TO TAKE UP A JOB BUT NOT AVAILABLE TO START WORK IN NEXT 2 WEEKS) I.E. IF NOT UNEMPLOYED]

**MAIN REASON NOT SOUGHT WORK**

– **What was the main reason you did not seek any work in the last 4 weeks (would not be able to start in next 2 weeks)?**

1. student
2. looking after the family/home
3. temporarily sick or injured
4. long-term sick or disabled
5. retired from paid work
6. other reasons

IF NOT IN EMPLOYMENT

**PAID JOB**

– **Have you ever had a paid job, apart from casual or holiday work?**

1. Yes
2. No

## Economic Status

---

### Inputs

IF HAS EVER WORKED

LEAVING DATE FOR LAST JOB

- **When did you leave your last PAID job?**  
FOR MONTH NOT GIVEN.....ENTER 6 FOR MONTH  
FOR DAY NOT GIVEN.....ENTER 15 FOR DAY

IF (AGED 16-64) OR

(WORKED IN REFERENCE WEEK – I.E. DID PAID WORK, WAS AWAY FROM A JOB OR DID UNPAID WORK FOR THEIR OWN OR A RELATIVE'S BUSINESS)

PART-TIME / FULL-TIME COURSE

- **Are you at present (at school or 6th form college or) enrolled on any full-time or part-time education course excluding leisure classes? (Include correspondence courses and open learning as well as other forms of full-time or part-time education course).**

1. Yes
2. No

*(Note: text substitution for respondents aged 16-19 only)*

IF (ENROLLED ON AN EDUCATION COURSE)

EDUCATIONAL STATUS

- **And are you ...**

1. still attending
2. waiting for term to (re)start
3. or have you stopped going?

IF (ATTENDING AN EDUCATION COURSE) OR  
(WAITING FOR TERM TO (RE) START)

TYPE OF EDUCATION COURSE

- **Are you (at school or 6th form college), on a full or part time course, a medical or nursing course, a sandwich course or some other kind of course?**

1. school/full time (age < 20 years only)
2. school/part time (age < 20 years only)
3. sandwich course
4. studying at university or college including 6th form college FULL TIME
5. training for a qualification in nursing, physiotherapy or a similar medical subject
6. on a PART TIME course at university or college, INCLUDING day release and block release
7. on an Open College course
8. on an Open University course
9. any other correspondence course
10. any other self / open learning course

*(Note: text substitution for respondents aged 16-19 only)*

# Economic Status

## Outputs

The harmonised outputs differ in minor respects from the International Labour Office (ILO) standards followed in the Labour Force Survey, which depend on more complex questions than are possible for a harmonised question for general social surveys. Minor differences with the LFS affect people who were on a government supported training scheme and the classification between full-time and part-time work.

The output categories that follow are derived from the questions above on Economic Status and those found below on Employment Status (employed/self-employed classification) and self assessed Full-Time/Part-Time Status.

### Output Categories: Economic Status

#### Economically active

##### In employment \*

Employees		
	full-time **	xxx
	part-time **	xxx
All Employees		XXXX
Self-employed		
	full-time **	xxx
	part-time **	xxx
All Self-employed		XXXX

##### All in employment \*

	full-time **	xxxxx
	part-time **	xxx

##### ILO unemployed #

xxxxx

##### All economically active ##

xxxxxxx

\* Note: **In employment** (did paid work in the last week, or on a government-supported training scheme, or away from a job/business, or unpaid work for own or family business).

**All in employment** = Employee + self-employed + on a government-supported training scheme + unpaid family worker. The division between employee and self-employed is based on survey respondents' own assessment of their employment status in their main job. The category on a government-supported training scheme is not separately identified because the harmonised question does not identify all such persons. Unpaid family workers are persons doing unpaid work for a business owned by themselves or a relative. They are not shown separately as the size of this group means that for many surveys it is either precluded by sample size or not of sufficient interest to warrant separate identification.

\*\*Note: The classification between full-time and part-time work is on the basis of self-assessment and relates to main job.

# Note: **ILO unemployed** (not in employment, available to start within two weeks, and either looked for work in the last four weeks or waiting to start a new job).

##Note: **Economically Active** = in employment + ILO unemployed

^ Note: Excludes students who were working or in some other way were included in the ILO definition of economically active.

^^Note: **Economically inactive** (all others)

# Industry, Occupation, Employment Status and Socio-Economic Classifications

---

## Inputs

The classifications of people in employment into employees and self-employed and between full-time and part-time are incorporated into the economic status output categories. The harmonised inputs for employment status and socio-economic classifications are coded using three classifications:

**United Kingdom Standard Industrial Classification of Economic Activities 2007 [UKSIC (2007)]** is used to classify people to the industry they work in. SIC2007 replaced SIC1992 in January 2009 as the ONS standard classification (as the changes from SIC1992 to SIC2003 were minimal ONS retained the former until superseded by SIC2007).

**Standard Occupational Classification 2010 (SOC2010)** is used to classify people's jobs. SOC2010 replaced SOC2000 in January 2011 as the ONS standard classification.

**National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC)** is an occupationally based classification but has rules to provide coverage of the whole adult population. The information required to create the NS-SEC is occupation coded to the unit groups (OUG) of SOC2010 and details employment status (whether an employer, self-employed or employee; whether a supervisor; number of employees at the workplace). Similar information was previously required for Social Class based on Occupation (SC) and Socio-Economic Group (SEG).

In order to cover the whole adult population, questions are required to identify full-time students and the long-term unemployed, which are included with the harmonised questions to determine ILO economic status.

Guidelines detailing SOC2010 and the derivation of NS SEC are available from the National Statistics website at

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/classificationsandstandards/standardoccupationalclassificationsoc/soc2010/soc2010volume3thenationalstatisticssocioeconomicclassificationnssecbasedonsoc2010>

**Reference period:** *main job in reference week or last job if ever worked*

**Definition of main job:** *respondents with more than one job in the reference week should decide themselves which is their main job. Only if they are unable to do so should the LFS criterion be applied: the job which was the largest number of hours.*

**Subsamples:** Household reference person or, as on many surveys, all adults are asked these questions.

*In this section, the questions concern:*

- *industry and occupation;*
- *whether employee or self-employed;*
- *supervisory responsibility;*
- *and size of establishment.*

Employment status, at a detailed level, and the main socio-economic classifications used in government statistics, are derived from these questions. An NS-SEC category is allocated by using a combination of:

- Information about occupation coded to occupational unit group (OUG) level of the Standard Occupational Classification 2010 (SOC2010)
- Information about employment status and size of organisation in the form of an employment status variable

The derived employment status variable is created by combining data on whether an individual is an employer, self-employed or an employee, size of organisation (where collected) and supervisory status.

# Industry, Occupation, Employment Status and Socio-Economic Classifications

---

## Inputs

### QUESTIONS TO ASK

These questions have been designed to harmonise the collection of data across interview surveys. The instructions for interviewers are shown in italics. Two series of questions are needed in order to derive the NS-SEC: three questions on occupation, and five questions on employment status/size of organisation.

### **OCCUPATION**

Questions 1 to 3 collect information for coding to the Standard Occupational Classification 2010 (SOC 2010).

They ask about current job for those in paid work or about last main job for those who have ever had paid work, with the exception of full-time students and those who have been unemployed for more than a year who are allocated to residual categories.

ALL IN SUBSAMPLE

#### QUESTION 1 – INDUSTRY DESCRIPTION

- **What did the firm/ organisation you worked for mainly make or do (at the place where you worked)?**

(Open)

DESCRIBE FULLY - PROBE MANUFACTURING OR PROCESSING OR DISTRIBUTING ETC.

AND MAIN GOODS PRODUCED, MATERIALS USED, WHOLESALE OR RETAIL ETC.

IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT INFORMATION ON INDUSTRY IS NECESSARY TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN SOME OCCUPATIONS AT THE DETAILED LEVEL.

ALL IN SUBSAMPLE

#### QUESTION 2 – OCCUPATION TITLE CURRENT OR LAST MAIN JOB

- **What was your (main) job (in the week ending Sunday the xx)?**

(Open)

ALL IN SUBSAMPLE

#### QUESTION 3 – OCCUPATION DESCRIPTION CURRENT OR LAST MAIN JOB

- **What did you mainly do in your job?**

(Open)

CHECK SPECIAL QUALIFICATIONS/TRAINING NEEDED TO DO THE JOB

### **EMPLOYMENT STATUS/SIZE OF ORGANISATION**

Questions 4 to 8 collect information for deriving the employment status/size of organisation variable. The interviewer asks questions 5 and 6 when the respondent answers 'Employee' to question 4. The interviewer asks questions 7 when the respondent answers 'Self-employed' to question 4 and 8 when the respondent answers 'With employees' to question 7.

ALL IN SUBSAMPLE

#### QUESTION 4 – EMPLOYEE OR SELF-EMPLOYED

- **Were you working as an employee or were you self-employed?**

1. Employee Go to question 5

2. Self-employed Go to question 7

THE DIVISION BETWEEN EMPLOYEES AND SELF-EMPLOYED IS BASED ON RESPONDENTS' OWN ASSESSMENT OF THEIR EMPLOYMENT STATUS IN THEIR MAIN JOB.



# Industry, Occupation, Employment Status and Socio-Economic Classifications

---

## Inputs

### Interviewer instructions:

*For Employees:* How many people worked for your employer at the place where you worked?

*For Self-employed:* How many people did you employ at the place where you worked?

*We are interested in the size of the "local unit of the establishment" at which the respondent works but we only want the number of employees working for the same employer as the respondent. Thus at sites shared by several organisations we would not include all employees just those working for the respondent's employer. The "local unit" is considered to be the geographical location where there job is mainly carried out. Normally this will consist of a single building, part of a building, or at the largest a self-contained group of buildings.*

*It is the total number of employees at the respondent's workplace that we are interested in, not just the number employed within the particular section or department in which he/she works.*

*If a respondent works from a central depot or office (e.g. a service engineer) base, the answer is the number of people who work at or from the central location. Note that many people who work "from home" have a base office or depot that they communicate with. It may even be true of some people who work "at home" (e.g. telecommuter who retains a desk or some minimal presence in an office). If in doubt, accept the respondent's view of whether or not there is a wider establishment outside the home that they belong to for work purposes.*

*For self-employed people who are subcontracted for any significant (respondent's definition) length of time to work in a particular place (e.g. building site), that is their place of work.*

# Industry, Occupation, Employment Status and Socio-Economic Classifications

## Outputs

### Output Categories: National Statistics Socio-economic classification

The number of classes used depends both upon the analytic purposes at hand and the quality of available data. Within the conceptual model, it is possible to have eight, five and three class versions of NS-SEC. Further details of the nested relationship between the 8, 5 and 3 class versions are given in Section 7 at:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/classificationsandstandards/standardoccupationalclassificationsoc/soc2010/soc2010volume3thenationalstatisticsocioeconomicclassificationnssecrebasedonsoc2010>

The version of the classification, which will be used for most analyses (the analytic version), has eight classes, the first of which can be subdivided.

#### NATIONAL STATISTICS SOCIO-ECONOMIC CLASSIFICATION (8 Analytic Classes)

1 Higher managerial and professional occupations	XXXX
1.1 Large employers and higher managerial occupations	xxxx
1.2 Higher professional occupations	xxxx
2 Lower managerial and professional occupations	XXXX
3 Intermediate occupations	XXXX
4 Small employers and own account workers	XXXX
5 Lower supervisory and technical occupations	XXXX
6 Semi-routine occupations	XXXX
7 Routine occupations	XXXX
8 Never worked and long-term unemployed	XXXX
Not classified *	

#### NATIONAL STATISTICS SOCIO-ECONOMIC CLASSIFICATION (5 Analytic classes)

1 Managerial and professional occupations	XXXX
2 Intermediate occupations	XXXX
3 Small employers and own account workers	XXXX
4 Lower supervisory and technical occupations	XXXX
5 Semi-routine and routine occupations	XXXX
Never worked and long-term unemployed	XXXX
Not classified *	

#### NATIONAL STATISTICS SOCIO-ECONOMIC CLASSIFICATION (3 Analytic classes)

1 Managerial and professional occupations	XXXX
2 Intermediate occupations	XXXX
3 Routine and manual occupations	XXXX
Never worked and long-term unemployed	XXXX
Not classified *	

\*For complete coverage, the three categories 'Students', 'Occupations not stated or inadequately described', and 'Not classifiable for other reasons' are added as 'Not classified'.

# Industry, Occupation, Employment Status and Socio-Economic Classifications

---

## Outputs

Harmonised questions to identify full-time students and long-term unemployed were introduced in April 2002 (see Economic Status section). Prior to this, an NS-SEC category was assigned on the basis of current main for those in paid work or last main job for those who have ever worked. Therefore, the category 'never worked and long-term unemployed' excluded persons who are long-term unemployed but who have previously had a paid job. Full-time students were assigned either to a main NS-SEC class or to the category never worked as appropriate.

It is recommended that full-time student status and long-term unemployed status should take priority over other possible classifications. However, it is also recommended that occupational information and other employment details be collected (see below) for all those who are currently in or previously had employment. This is so that an equivalent NS-SEC class for full-time students and long-term unemployed based on their current or last main job can be derived if necessary (e.g. for time series purposes).

When deriving NS-SEC for the whole adult population, the following priority order should be taken:

- Full-time students
- Long-term unemployed
- Never worked
- NS-SEC based on current or last main job
- Occupation not adequately described
- Not classified for other reasons

## Full or Part-Time Work (self-assessed)

---

### Inputs

The LFS check on extreme counter-intuitive values (40 or more hours per week described as "part-time"; less than 16 hours described as "full-time") which was included in the 1995 edition has been removed. Not all surveys have the hours questions required for the check. Those which do, might carry a **soft** check, to preclude miskeying, but should ultimately accept the respondent's view.

#### IF IN EMPLOYMENT

##### EMPLOYMENT STATUS

– **In your (main) job were you working:**

1. full time
2. or part-time?

Interviewer instructions:

Let the **respondent** decide whether the job is full time or part time.

## Full or Part-Time Work (self-assessed)

---

### Outputs

See **Economic Status** section.

# Agency Working

## Inputs

---

As the UK labour market has developed over the past decade it has become increasingly difficult to gain an accurate estimate of the number of people currently employed through an 'employment agency'. This had previously been seen as 'non-permanent' work but nowadays it is common for people to consider themselves permanently employed as an 'agency worker'. This has led to some changes to standard questions around this area and the addition of a new question. Below are the harmonised standard questions to be used to collect data on further job details, specifically on agency working.

The harmonised questions have been developed as the recommended approach for capturing data on agency working. The use of the questions remains optional for survey teams with no obligation to adopt them when felt not to be appropriate.

IF (EMPLOYEE)

WHETHER PAID BY ORGANISATION OR COMPANY WORKED FOR

– **May I just check, were you being paid for that work ...**

1. by the organisation or company you actually did the work for,
2. or by a different organisation or company?

IF (SELF-EMPLOYED)

SELF-EMPLOYED STATUS

– **May I just check, were you ...**

1. paid a salary or a wage by an employment agency?
2. a sole director of your own limited business?
3. running a business or a professional practice?
4. a partner in a business or a professional practice?
5. working for yourself?
6. a sub-contractor?
7. or doing free-lance work?
8. none of the above. or was there some way that it was not permanent?

*Interviewer instructions:*

Code all that apply

IF (EMPLOYEE)

JOB PERMANENT OR NOT PERMANENT

– **Leaving aside your own personal intentions and circumstances was your job...**

1. a permanent job,
2. or was there some way that it was not permanent?

IF (EMPLOYEE) AND

(JOB NOT PERMANENT)

REASON WHY JOB NOT PERMANENT

– **In what way was the job not permanent, was it...**

1. working for an employment agency,
2. casual type of work,
3. seasonal work,
4. done under contract for a fixed period or for a fixed task,
5. or was there some other way that it was not permanent?

## Agency Working (Newly Developed Question)

---

### Inputs

IF (EMPLOYEE) AND  
(JOB PERMANENT)  
AGENCY WORKING

- **Were you working as an agency worker, that is, employed through an employment agency?**
  - 1.Yes
  - 2.No

## Agency Working

---

### Outputs

There are no recommended outputs for **Agency Working**, the above questions simply allow for agency workers to be identified and estimated.