



The Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS:2002) monitors the transitions of a national sample of young people as they progress from tenth grade to further education and the workforce. You can learn more about the study and provide the transcript data at the ELS:2002 PETS website at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ELSrecords>. This national study of high school students includes the collection of student transcript data. Transcript data provide an analytical measure of students' postsecondary curricular experience and performance that may be related both to labor market outcomes and to postsecondary educational access and attainment.

Assistance is needed from institutions to make the results of this study comprehensive, accurate, and timely. The study is collecting transcript data for students who have voluntarily participated in ELS:2002. The data collected include dates of enrollment, grade point average, degree program, and, for each course taken, course number and title, number of credits earned, and grade assigned.



For assistance with ELS:2002 PETS, please contact:

ELS:2002 Help Desk
1-877-475-7016 (toll-free)

ELSrecords@rti.org

If you have questions or concerns about ELS:2002 PETS, you may contact the following:

Tiffany Mattox
ELS:2002 Transcript Collection
Manager (RTI)
tmattox@rti.org
1-919-485-7791

Dan Pratt
ELS:2002 Project Director (RTI)
djp@rti.org
1-919-541-6615

Elise Christopher
ELS:2002 Project Officer (NCES)
elise.christopher@ed.gov
1-202-502-7899

March 2013



National Center for Education Statistics
Institute of Education Sciences
U.S. Department of Education

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION TRANSCRIPT STUDY





Importance of the Data

Researchers from a variety of fields have used the data collected in ELS:2002 and its predecessor studies to look at equity, access, and choice; cognitive growth and its correlates; course-taking opportunities and choices; school effectiveness; parental and community involvement; and post-high school transitions to higher education, training, and the labor market. These data are presented in various forms, including:

- Descriptive reports published by NCES on selected topics. ELS:2002 publications and data can be accessed electronically through NCES's ELS:2002 website at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/els2002/>.
- Data files.
- Presentations on study findings.

Authorization to Collect Data

ELS:2002 data are collected under authority of the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (20 U.S.C. § 9543) and will be used by Congress, researchers and policymakers to monitor and improve the quality of education.

ELS:2002 is sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), within the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences. The study is being conducted under contract by RTI International, a nonprofit research organization based in North Carolina.

Transcript Collection Procedures

All known institutions attended by ELS:2002 participants are contacted for the first time beginning in March 2013. The ELS:2002 PETS website (<https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ELRecords>) will serve as a secure mechanism for the exchange of information between institutions and RTI. To

initiate the transcript submission process, institutions are being asked to complete an information page about term systems and grading scales and may be asked to provide course catalogues not available through other public sources. New students may be added to an institution's transcript request list if new enrollment is discovered from collected transcripts.

Transcripts will be requested from approximately 3,000 institutions associated with approximately 11,000 ELS:2002 sample members. Institutions can submit transcripts using any of several methods (in order of preference): uploading to the ELS:2002 website, e-mailing the transcripts as an encrypted attachment, or faxing to a secure fax machine. Instructions are provided in the packets sent to institutions, and the ELS:2002 Help Desk will respond to any questions or problems (1-877-475-7016; ELRecords@rti.org).

Once received, transcript data will be entered and fields of study and courses will be coded using the 2010 College Course Map.¹

Confidentiality

The Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 is being conducted under the authority of the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA) (20 U.S.C. § 9543). Under ESRA, NCES is authorized to collect and disseminate information about education in the United States. NCES is required to follow strict procedures to protect the confidentiality of persons in the collection, reporting, and publication of data.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. 1232g) allows for the release of institution record information to the Secretary of Education or his agent without prior consent of survey members (20 U.S.C. 1232g[b] [3]). RTI, as the contractor for NCES, has been given the authority to collect information from institution records under federal law.

All responses that relate to or describe identifiable characteristics of individuals may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed or used in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002), 20 U.S.C. § 9573).

Protection of Electronic Files

All electronic files from institution records are carefully protected. Computer accounts used to access data are password protected with multilevel controls to ensure that only those individuals with a need to access confidential information are able to do so. For the website, proven methods of protection for online sessions and data security are used and data transmitted over the Internet are encrypted using Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) protocol. All modules with sample member identifiers on the study website are password protected, which requires the user to log in to the site before accessing confidential data. To prevent unauthorized user access, the system will automatically log the user out after 20 minutes of inactivity.

Protection of Paper Records

All paper records are maintained in locked storage cabinets. A unique study identification variable (not the Social Security number or school ID) will be created and maintained for each survey participant to protect against disclosure of confidential data.

Preparation of Data for Public Release

All data released to the general public (e.g., statistical tables) will be designed so that it will not be possible to identify specific individuals.

¹Bryan, M. & Simone, S. (2012). *2010 College Course Map* (NCES 2012-162REV). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC. Retrieved February 27, 2013 from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch>.