

**School Admissions
Supporting documentation for data transfer
files version 9.x (for series 9 files for
admissions in 2013 and in year admissions for
academic year 2012)**

March 2012

School Admissions - Supporting documentation for data transfer files for school admission purposes (March 2012)

Introduction

1. This document is intended as a supplement to examples of the various XML transfer files produced by Department for Children Schools and Families (DfE) to assist software suppliers to create transfer files to a common specification which can then be imported into other systems and be correctly interpreted. It should be read in conjunction with the School Admissions Code 2009 and the various supplementary guidance notes on specific issues. The supplementary guidance notes are attached as appendices as follows:

Appendix 1	Coordinated Admissions clarification of responsibilities
Appendix 2	Use of 'dummy' DfE Establishment numbers in AOT files
Appendix 3	Use of the ALT file for a web portal/online system
Appendix 4	Clarification on use of the 'Offer Code D'
Appendix 5	Use of 'special characters' in XML files
Appendix 6	Changes Log Version 9 series files
Appendix 7	Clarification on SAON/PAON padding in admissions files
Appendix 8	Clarification on includes for sibling/applicant address "not same as pupil"
Appendix 9	Clarification on <Street> field in BS7666 where there is no named street
Appendix 10	Electronic communication statement
Appendix 11	Clarification on reporting of attendance at a school in a non-home LA
Appendix 12	Clarification on the use of <OfferStatus> codes in ALT after offer
Appendix 13	Version 9.1 example files

Please note that highlighted text indicates a change from the previous version (8) documentation.

Background Information

2. In the model, set out in the 2011 admissions code <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/schooladmissions> messages between admission authorities are required at various stages of the determination process and the concern of this document is with the content and structure of these messages.
3. Messages should be in XML format and conform to Common Basic Dataset (CBDS) naming conventions. Where CBDS definitions need to be amended or added this through existing CBDS change control procedures.
4. Formal schemas will be made available via the DfE website. In the meantime, suppliers wanting to test output files should send them to ims.mailbox@education.gsi.gov.uk for approval.

General File Format Information

5. Versions of these documents will be numbered and dated in the footers. The current pupil-level CBDS is available at <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/schooladmin/ims/datamanagement> . CBDS reference numbers are included in the example files.
6. File naming convention - see point 92. The file naming convention for each file type is illustrated at the top of the example file for each.
7. The latest information on transfer file requirements and XSD schema files is available from the departmental website at: <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/schooladmin/ims/datamanagement>
8. The XML transfer files, for which this document provides additional guidance and explanation, are described as a business process diagram set out in sections 20, 21 and 22
9. The files used in an admissions round are APT, ADT, AOT, ASL and ATF. For AOT, ADT and ALT there are in year variants which allow for multiple year groups to be transferred in a single file. The file name of these will be as defined in section 92 and there will be an <InYear> tag as defined in section 56.
10. The header details in all XML files should reflect the latest changes e.g. version number.
11. Each admissions round has its own version of the XML files therefore for a specific admissions round the relevant version should be used – i.e. for September 2007 intake version 3.1 was used and for September 2008 version 4.1 was used. A decision was made in November 2010 to continue with this scenario despite the implications of in year files that may straggle two versions. Where this happens LAs will need to import manually. As a result LAs are advised to make sure they have the latest version of the software in place on 1st September. See note 78 for version control specifications.
12. All Admissions XML files will have carriage returns after the end of each tag
13. All containers and their tags within each file should be sent in the prescribed order as per the DfE example files. Empty, optional tags, should be omitted when null.
14. Each XML file must be complete with header and closure details.
15. If a student has a Unique Pupil Number (UPN) this should be included in the XML file to enable better matching.
16. Import matching should be on Application Reference, Surname, Forename, DOB Gender and UPN if included. See section 107.
17. All Boolean fields must be 1, 0, true or false. *they will ALWAYS be in lower case*. Note that in many cases the tag will only be present for one of the options i.e. <AddressAsPupil> will only occur if true. If false i.e. 0 the applicant address in BS7666 or AddressLines format will appear.

18. All free text boxes are 3000 chars. However as not all suppliers can currently import this amount of data reference should be made in exception reporting if data is truncated.
19. If at all possible any address will be transferred as BS7666 v1.4 format but if this is not possible the address will be sent as AddressLines. In order for systems to attempt to match the AddressLines format on import it is recommended that the AddressLines fields be populated thus:

AddressLine1	House Number and/or House Name (and Flat Number, if applicable)
AddressLine2	Street
AddressLine3	Locality / Village
AddressLine4	Town
AddressLine5	County (likely to be null now that a county container has been created)

Since AddressLine1 is the only mandatory line if there is no house number, house name or flat number available the street should be sent in AddressLine1 however other components remain with their relative line.

Note the **erroneous** example below

```
<AddressLines>
  <AddressLine1>13 Spinney Close</AddressLine1>
  <AddressLine2>Hedge End</AddressLine2>
  <AddressLine3/>
  <AddressLine4>Morristown</AddressLine4>
  <AddressLine5>Middleshire</AddressLine5>
</AddressLines>
```

The schema does **NOT** allow for a NUL AddressLine as shown in AddressLine 3.

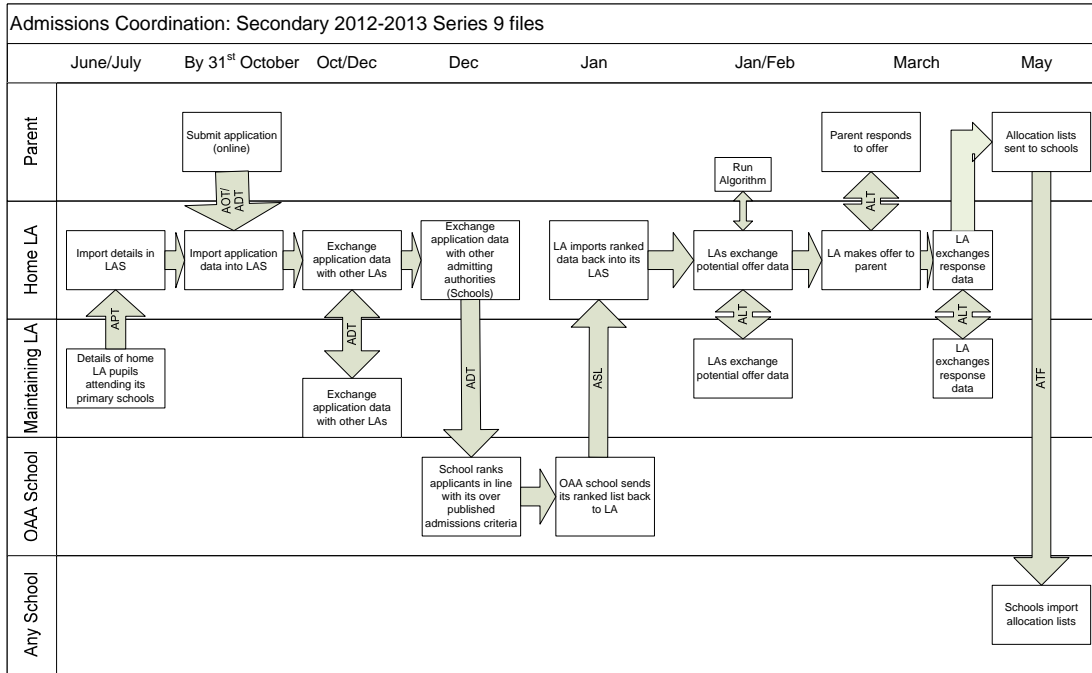
Similarly it would not accept <AddressLine4></AddressLine4> but would accept <AddressLine4>^</AddressLine4> where ^ is a space.

It will allow for an AddressLine to be missed out i.e. 2, 3 4 or 5 with 1 being mandatory as shown below

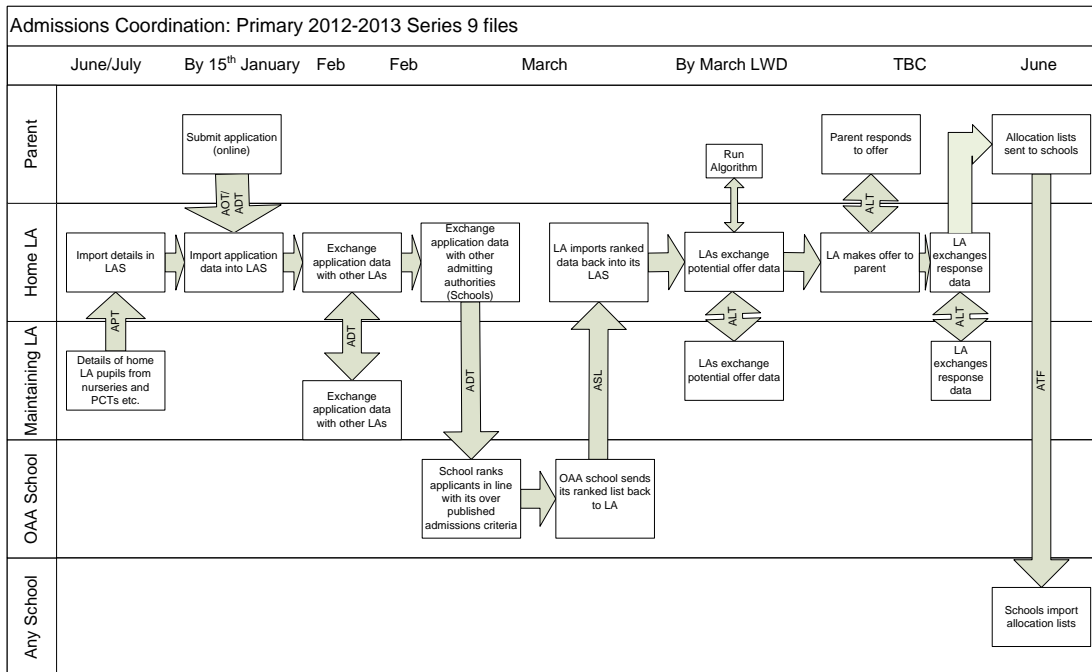
```
<AddressLines>
  <AddressLine1>13 Spinney Close</AddressLine1>
  <AddressLine4>Morristown</AddressLine4>
  <AddressLine5>Middleshire</AddressLine5>
</AddressLines>
```

The following sections 20, 21 and 22 show the business processes for the appropriate file exchanges for secondary, primary and in year coordination.

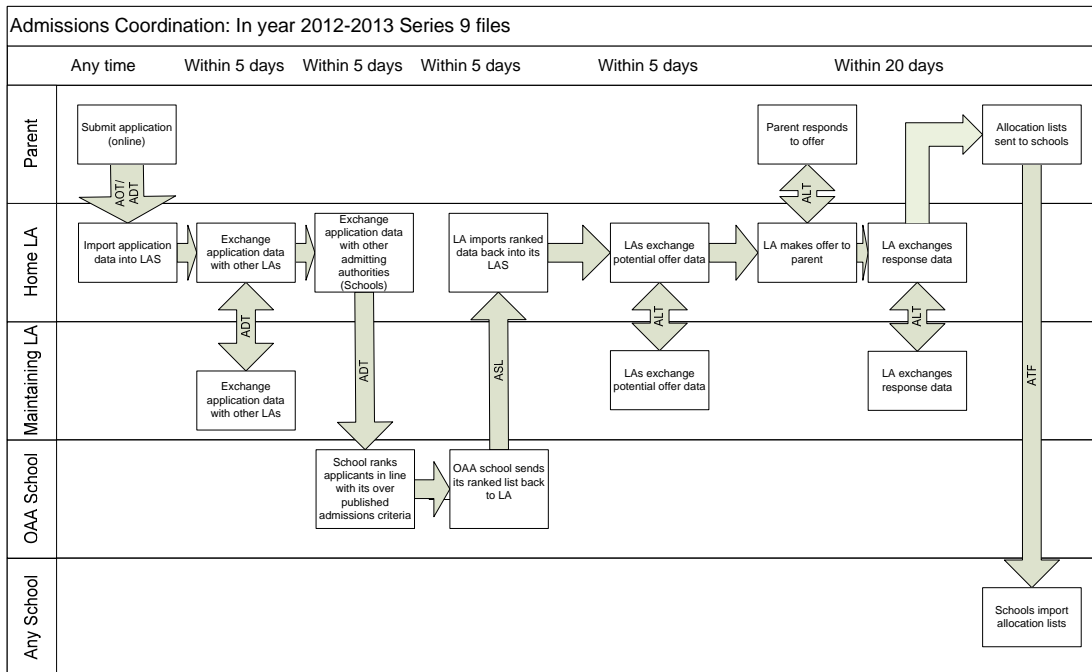
20. Admissions Coordination: Secondary 2012-2013



21. Admissions Coordination: Primary 2012-2013



22. Admissions Coordination: In year 2012-2013



23. APT (Admissions Pre-Transfer file)

This file is produced by an LA before an admissions round. It allows an LA to identify those pupils who live in the area of another LA and to send basic details of those pupils to the LA where they live. The other LA will then know which pupils should be the subject of applications for school places in the next admissions round. The file format allows for the transfer of the following data:

- Pupil UPN (Optional), surname, forename, date of birth and gender
- Current school (if any see note 28) identified by LA and DfE establishment number or URN, whether or not the pupil is looked after by an LA, whether or not the pupil has a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) and the address of the pupil.

The file could also be used for primary admissions utilising data from the Primary Care Trust or other appropriate partner provided data sharing agreements were in place.

The APT file could also be used to pre-populate an online form from an external database.

24. In year modifications

No effects on the APT file.

25. ADT (Admissions (application) Data Transfer file)

For ALL school applications, this file is produced by an LA to send details of an application for a school place submitted by an applicant who is resident in the area of the LA to the admissions authority responsible for the school for which the application (or preference) is made. This might be:

- the governing body of an aided or foundation school within the area of the LA i.e. an Own Admitting Authority (OAA) school) or
- another LA where the preference school is located in the area of the other LA.

The ADT file may also be used to transfer application data from an online admissions application system to the 'back office' admissions processing system instead of the AOT file (see next paragraph). The use of the ADT or AOT file for this purpose will be defined by the suppliers of online or 'back office' systems.

The file format allows for the transfer of the following data:

- Application reference number.
- Pupil UPN (if known), surname, forename, date of birth and gender.
- Current school (if any see note 28) identified by LA and DfE Establishment Number or/and LA and URN (where the establishment does not have a DfE Establishment number), whether or not the pupil is looked after by an LA, whether or not the pupil has a statement and the address of the pupil.
- Applicant details including names, relationship to the pupil, whether or not the applicant has parental responsibility for the pupil, address and contact details (telephone and email) and how the applicant would prefer to be notified of the outcome of the application.
- The preference school(s), identified by LA and DfE Establishment Number, and any supporting information which could include reasons for the application, whether or not supporting documents in support of social/medical reasons are being provided separately, details of any siblings and schools if the applicant claims that a sibling is already attending the preference school.
- An area to provide information specific to the LA and its schools which could include faith details (of the pupil), any aptitudes for particular subjects, distance from home to the preference school measured by the LA (only supplied where the admission policy of the OAA school uses distance as part of its admissions criteria and to a standard determined by the LA) or information on the banding applied to the pupil by the LA in a pre-banding scheme.

26. <EntryYearGroup>

The value is alpha numeric and can contain any value from the following list:

N1, N2, R, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11

27. <LEA >

This should contain the CBDS list of all current and all discontinued LA numbers as well as 167 for the PLR.

28. <CurrentSchool>

Three dummy school numbers have been added with the following codes and

meanings:

3970 Home educated
3971 Educated abroad
3972 Unknown

See also 0

29. <Status>

There are 2 different status types of ADT file known to be in use: **Prime** and **Late**. Each should be treated differently.

An additional status type of **Suspended** is included but as at December 2006 no supplier is known to be using this. **Change** and **Withdrawal** files are no longer being used by any supplier and as such cannot be received by any supplier.

The following details how each should be treated:

30. Prime

These files contain completely new data and should be considered the complete application for the student. The student may already exist in the LA's database.

When importing 'Prime' files, if any preferences, such as those from LA processes, exist then, if an incoming preference school matches the preference, the preference rank should be updated with the ADT file's preference rank otherwise the preferences are added to the existing preferences. Any preference reasons should be added in the normal way. However some of the 'overwriting' may involve suspense processing according to the supplier's system.

31. Late

The records in this file type are **prime** (see above) but considered as late by the **Home** LA's criteria. The receiving LA will need to make a decision as to when they import the records – before or after co-ordination according to their own policy.

32. Suspended

Suspended – this is a precautionary status, as it is not known when it might be used. These records should go to suspense, as it is not possible to know what to do with them if the condition cannot be determined.

33. <LookedAfter>

This container WILL ONLY appear if the student is In the Care of a Local Authority. Whilst the schema example cites Boolean: 1, 0, true, false. It should only ever appear as 1 or true.

34. Addresses

If at all possible addresses should be exported as BS7666v1.4 format with AddressLines for those that cannot be exported in the BS7666v1.4 format.

35. <CouncilTaxRef> A free text field that can contain the council tax reference number for use in verifying the address of the applicant/pupil avoiding the use of paper proof of evidence.

36. Applicant Title

This is CBDS compliant in as much that there are a number of pre-defined titles to choose from but any other can be free text.

37. Phone

A phone number is not mandatory. However there is a requirement to use the CDBS format of up to 35 digits including a leading +. Ideally on data entry restrictions should be made to accept only numbers 0 to 9 and + but a further check on export should be made. It is understood that some systems include extension numbers with their phone numbers so the format cannot currently be validated. No system should prevent an import of telephone data just because it does not meet this standard.

38. Sibling

Whilst an applicant may have more than 1 child at the school it has been clarified that only one need be recorded. There was a tendency for an applicant to put the preference school more than once if there was more than 1 sibling at the school, removing the need to record more than one should make it less likely that duplicate preferences will appear in the file

39. Aptitude Code

A school may have more than one specialism therefore it is possible that an applicant may wish to express a wish to be considered for more than one of the specialist places available. There is no limit to the number of aptitude codes that can be used.

40. Dealing with New Schools

Although it is planned that annually there will be an update to suppliers from EduBase sometimes new schools are known about by the maintaining LA but do not yet have official DfE numbers and will, therefore, not be included in the provided list. It is recommended to LAs that they inform their neighbours, i.e. any LA from whom their residents might choose the new school, of any temporary number they want to be used such that the import will recognise the incoming data. See appendix 2.

41. Application Reference

The following general principles apply:

- The Application Reference will be **unique for the student for the admissions round applied for**. (this means they will retain their Application Reference for multiple in year admissions for that admissions year)
- The Application Reference should NEVER be created by an export routine; it should be picked up from the database, if it is blank then record as an error.
- There is the possibility that the student may have more than 1 application reference – each should be preserved.

42. Application Reference Definition

The application reference format is: LA-YYYY-MM-N-999999, LA is LA which is receiving the application i.e. it is the student's home LA. YYYY is the academic year of entry (as denoted on the Transfer group Year or for in year the current academic year) MM is the usual month of entry for that academic year (09 for phased admissions. See below* for in year values), N equals E (Online), K (Keyboard) or B (Batch) and the last component is six digits with leading zeros to make a unique number.

*For in year admissions 50 will be added to the month so 09 becomes 59 and 11 becomes 61 etc. All other definitions remain.

43. In year modifications

See sections 56, 57, 58, 59, 60 and 62 for more information.

44. eApplications

Any application made via online applications will have an application reference where N is replaced with E for online.

45. Manual Entry via Keyboard

The application reference should be added when the first preference school on the application is saved. The N is replaced by K ensuring that it is a unique number in the application reference.

46. Batch records

When the ADT file from a batch process company is imported it will contain an application reference generated by the batch process company and will include a 'B' for batch.

47. <SocMed> tag

There are instances where the LA is in possession of evidence of a claimed medical or social reason for a student's preference school. To indicate that this is being sent to the other LA / OAA school a new tag called <SocMed> has been added to the supporting information section within Preference. It is a mandatory flag if any other tag in the supporting information is used. It will, therefore, be defaulted to false or 0.

Note: Although the supporting information container is optional the current structure with the SocMed flag being mandatory means that the container will always be exported and will contain, as a minimum, the SocMed tag.

Note this flag is NOT in the AOT file

48. <PreferenceRank> tag

In compliance with section 1.76 of the Admissions Code: 'A local authority **must not** inform an admission authority of the rank order of an applicant's preferences as this information cannot lawfully be used by an admission authority when applying its oversubscription criteria'.

Therefore when sending an ADT file (or any other message media) to an OAA (Own Admitting Authority) school <PreferenceRank> **must not** be included.

However, the tag may be included in an LA to LA ADT file as each LA needs to know the rank of each preference for local processing purposes.

49. Address verified

By request, and because this can be such a crucial item, an optional tag to indicate that the address has been verified has been added to the ADT file. This allows a "home" LA to indicate to an "other" LA or an OAA school whether or not the "home" LA has verified the pupil address.

Note this flag is NOT in the AOT file

50. Reason Code

The “Reason Code” provides the ability to pass on the parent’s wishes that the pupil be offered a place at a particular preference school for any reason (a parent may expand on the code in Reason Text field). That, in itself, does not notify to another admission authority what specialism the pupil has an aptitude for, which may be relevant where a school has more than one specialism.

Following concern expressed by LAs (via software suppliers) at the suggested removal of Reason Codes from the ADT file, Reason Codes are to be retained in the ADT file with the following conditions

- use of the codes by LAs is optional
- the ADT file container is optional
- the reason code is not to be directly linked to processes in software e.g. siblings
- there is no limit on the number of Reason Codes that can be used

51. Aptitude Code

The aptitude code is used to explain what specialism a parent believes the pupil has an aptitude for, which may be particularly relevant where a school has more than one specialism. The inclusion of aptitude codes in the ADT file for aptitudes as expressed by parents provides the vehicle for this information to be passed on (where it is available from the Common Application Form).

52. CrownService

Section 2.44 of the Code states that “for children of UK Service personnel and other Crown Servants admission authorities must treat a family returning to their area as meeting the residency criteria for that catchment area even if no house is currently owned in that area once proof of the posting has been provided”. This indicator is used to signify such an instance in both the ADT and AOT files.

53. StaffChild

This is a Boolean field that indicates, at preference level, that the applicant is claiming a that the child has a parent employed at the preference school in line with the published over subscription criteria of the school. This is both AOT and ADT files

54. MultipleBirth

This Boolean field indicates, at application level, that the child is one of a multiple birth and that the infant class size of 30 pupils may be exceeded. . This is both AOT and ADT files

55. In year modifications

There are a small number of modifications have been made to enable in year admissions information to be transferred between LAs these are detailed below and apply to both ADT and AOT formats.

56. Header information (in year only)

In year files for AOT and ADT may contain multiple year groups but only for LA to LA and LA to back office transfers; NOT for LA to school transfers .

An **Optional** Boolean flag in the header <InYear> will identify the file as phased <InYear> = ‘false’ or ‘0’ or as in year <InYear> = ‘true’ or 1.

For these multiple year files the header will NOT contain <EntryYearGroup> or <EntryYearAndMonth> these will instead be replaced at pupil level by the new tag <DatePlaceRequired> and <EntryYearGroup>. The filename will follow the guidelines in sections 57 and 92 for visual identification and the absence of the header fields will also indicate an in year file within the file itself.

Where an LA is using the ADT to transfer application details to an OAA school for an in year application the year group and entry date will be in the header.

57. Filename (in year only)

Filenames should be constructed according to the following conventions.

Chars 1-7	Source LA number followed by LLLL (for LA) or school number
Chars 8-12	Underscore, three letters of file type (see 13 above), underscore
Chars 13-19	As 1-7 but referring to destination LA and school
Chars 20-22	Underscore, last two digits of academic year of entry, where 2010/11 would be denoted by 10. (plus 50 for in year therefore 60 only for LA to LA and LA to back office transfers)
Chars 23-25	Serial number starting from 001. Sequence to be unique to each message and sender/recipient pair, not all messages sent by system.

Examples are: (in year in **BOLD**)

933LLLL_APT_801LLLL_10001.XML (LA to LA phased)

933LLLL_ADT_801LLLL_60003.XML (LA to LA in year)

933LLLL_ADT_9334701_11002.XML (LA to OAA school phased)

933LLLL_AOT_933LLLL_61001.XML (LA online system to LA in year)

9334701_ASL_933LLLL_12001.XML (OAA school to LA phased)

933LLLL_ALT_801LLLL_62004.XML (LA to LA in year)

933LLLL_ALT_933LLLL_07001.XML (LA to LA online system phased)

933LLLL_ATF_9334500_05003.XML (LA to all maintained schools in LA phased)

The file extension should be XML in all cases.

58. <DatePlaceRequired> (in year only)

This will be the date YYYY-MM-DD that the applicant has requested the pupil starts at the preferred schools. Note that this start date is NOT at preference level.

59. <EntryYearGroup> (in year only)

This will have the same specification as for phased admission files except that it will appear against each pupil to indicate the year group applied for in each case. Note that the entry year group is NOT at preference level.

60. <InYearText> (in year only)

This free text field is for applicants to pass on information as appropriate regarding an in year application. Note that in year text is NOT at preference

level.

61. <LAinYearText> (in year only)

This free text field is for LAs to pass on information as appropriate regarding an in year application. Note that in year text is NOT at preference level.

62. <DateLastAttended> (in year only)

Where a pupil is currently NOT at a school this date will indicate the date of leaving of the <CurrentSchool> container. If blank the <CurrentSchool> is still being attended.

The purpose of this field is to determine if the pupil is currently in education so that the appropriate speedy reaction can be taken if they are not.

The use of the dummy school numbers may also be used for this purpose i.e.

3970 Home educated
3971 Educated abroad
3972 Unknown

However where these are used the date last attended should be included if the child is not currently being educated.

63. AOT (Admissions Online (data) Transfer file)

This file is very similar to the ADT file. Its purpose is to transfer application data from an online admissions application system to the 'back office' admissions processing system. It would normally be used where the supplier of the online system is a different supplier to the supplier of the 'back office' system (where the supplier is the same, proprietary transfer systems may be used). It may also be used by a bureau service that captures application data for the LA and provide the data by way of a batch file. The ADT file can also be used for these two purposes. The main difference between the AOT file and the ADT file is that the AOT file is less prescriptive than the ADT file in identifying a preference or a current school. The AOT file allows a school to be identified by LA and DfE Establishment Number or by name and post code.

This is to allow for those situations:

- where the parent has not completed the form properly or it is not possible to identify the correct LA and establishment number from the school information provided by the parent or
- the parent cannot identify the correct LA and establishment number from a 'drop down' list available on the website.

64. In year modifications (Same as for ADT see 57,58,59,60,62,61,62)

65. ASL (Admissions School to LA transfer file)

This file is produced by a school which is its Own Admission Authority (OAA) school to notify its maintaining LA of the outcome of its consideration of applications under the admissions policy of the school. A school is required to consider all applications (preferences) submitted against the admissions policy of the school. The school must then provide the LA with a list of all the pupils

applying for a place, ranked in their order of priority under the admissions policy showing which criteria apply to which pupil. Pupils do not need to be ranked individually within the priority groupings except where the grouping would 'cross over' the published admissions number for the school. The file is designed to allow the OAA school to identify each pupil (application reference, UPN if available, names, DoB and gender) within each admissions policy criterion.

There are no changes to the ASL file apart from the normal annual updating for the year references.

Reminder: It should be noted that if a school pre-groups its students before applying oversubscription criteria an ASL file to represent each of these groups should be created by the school; a student may be in more than one file depending on the school's approach to pre-grouping. The header defines the file's 'Criterion'.

Assuming there are more applications than places, within each file there can be any number of priority groups each of which have their own <AdmPolCriterion>. There should be a ranked group containing the students that straddle the published admission number. There should be sufficient students in the ranked group to enable several iterations of resolving multiple offers and the students should be listed in order of priority within the ranked group since this is the order in which places will be offered. The final group of pupils are those considered 'unranked'. These can be listed in any order. **They should not be considered for allocation.** There is no fixed number or percentage of pupils that should be included in the 'ranked group'. The number to be included is by agreement between the OAA school and the LA based on previous experience of applications and 'drop outs'. However, if a place becomes available in the school following iteration and there are no more ranked pupils available the school will need to advise which of the 'unranked' student(s) are to be given the available place(s) according to their admissions criteria.

If there are fewer applications than places i.e. all those applying for a place in the school or within the relevant criterion then the file should simply contain a single <UnrankedPupils> container. When processing applications for a school that has produced such a file all applications should be offered a place in the first iteration; subsequent iterations may make some of these 'No longer required'.

66. ASL files – Priorities and Ranking

These changes result from a supplier request for clarification. The clarification received from the policy team has the effect of simplifying what an OAA school needs to do, but results in a more complicated structure for the ASL message. The admissions code requires that published admissions criteria (over-subscription criteria) including 'tie-breaker' criteria, will be applied in a priority order to applications. The list supplied by the OAA school does not however have to be strictly ranked as in the previous ASL version.

Example: A school has 100 places and four criteria, say (1) sibling links, (2) attendance at feeder school A (3) attendance at feeder B, and finally (4) distance (the tiebreaker). If 10 prospective pupils have siblings, all can be assigned the same *priority*, value 1. Ranking within the 10 is not required, indeed is unnecessary. If a further 80 attended feeder A (making 90 so far), this group likewise need not be ranked, but assigned priority value 2. If the next group has 40 who attended feeder B, the 100 place limit is exceeded, and so a strict *ranking*, in this case by distance, is required for this group.

Many examples can be constructed but the underlying principles are:

- *Groups which fall entirely within the available number of places can be assigned a single priority.*
- *If the number of pupils exceeds the number of places, the group of pupils that 'straddles' the number of available places must be strictly ranked. Following, lower priority, groups may also be ranked. The point at which ranking is no longer required is for school and LA to agree.*
- *If the total number of pupils is less than the number of places, none need be ranked, though they should still be grouped (see immediately below).*

A second change is needed because the admissions code and regulations state that the criterion or criteria applied to each child must be stated in the priority/ranking list. In the case of ranked groups, this will include the 'tiebreaker' as well. No lookup table can be produced for criteria because they are as varied as the schools, so they are considered as text with, in the schema, maximum length 20.

Both these new understandings of the requirements are reflected in the revised ASL file. At first sight there is a new level of complexity, however the new structure reflects more accurately what a school and software is required to do.

The example file provided reflects the example above. Note that rankings are within the group, rather than absolute.

67. ASL

In order to allow the message to structure to carry lists based on aptitude, religion, ability etc <Band> in header has been changed to <Criterion>

68. ASL file

It is evident that criterion lists for the same school can be handled in several ways – they may be mutually exclusive or not. If not mutually exclusive, applications can appear on more than one list and furthermore, if the criteria are ranked, as with bilateral schools, there may be stages at which applications are in line for an offer on one list, but 'below the line' on a higher ranked list. The way that the LA (software) handles applications on these lists depends on the admissions policy of the institution concerned. It is for the LA to know the policies of the OAA schools for which the coordination function is exercised and ensure it follows the policies in the later stages.

69. In year modifications

There are no changes to the structure of this file for in year applications.

Where an OAA school is using the ASL to transfer application details to an LA for an in year application ranking the year group and entry date will be in the header. If there were several year groups involved this would require multiple files to be sent, one for each year group.

70. ALT (Admissions (offers) LA Transfer file)

The main purpose of the ALT file is to transfer data on potential or actual "offers"

of school places between LAs prior to the notification of a single offer of a school place to applicants. The file format allows for the transfer of the following data:

- Application reference number.
- Pupil UPN (if known), surname, forename, date of birth and gender.
- The preference school, identified by LA and DfE Establishment Number and the “offer status” (O = Offer, N = No offer or D = Discard (higher preference offered)).

The file will contain data on the criterion under which an offer is made or refused where it is used by the LA creating the file for the use, or not, of the LA receiving the file depending on its own policies.

The ALT file has a special use where the LA sends data from the ‘back office’ system to an online system or web portal (for subsequent viewing by applicants) on the outcome of applications (i.e. whether an offer, or not, has been made in respect of each preference expressed by the applicant). The file may also include an offer of a place at a school made by the LA, and not included in the preferences made by the parent, where the LA has not been able to make an offer for any of the preferences expressed by the applicant.

In versions 4.x onwards when the ALT file is being used to notify an online system of the offers to be made in respect of applications, a <PreferenceRank> = 0 is an indicator to the online system that the school where the place is being offered has been identified by the LA because it was not possible to offer a place at any of the preference schools.

The ALT file has three uses:

71. To exchange data about the offer status during the iterative process

The main purpose of the ALT file is to transfer data on the ‘offer’ status for preferences shared in the ADT file between LAs prior to the notification of a single offer of a school place to applicants. ***The first iteration of an ALT file MUST include the offer status for EVERY out of LA student. In other words for each student that does not live in the Home LA the Other Local Authority (OLA) will be advised of an allocation status for them even if it is No Offer (at this stage). In this file, either LA may indicate to the other that a preference can be discarded because the LA knows that it can offer a higher ranked preference. However, a ‘Home’ LA should not include in this first iteration any pupil resident in their area unless it is to inform the other LA to discard a previously expressed preference.***

If a school has used pre-grouping before applying oversubscription criteria there may be information in a container called Criteria (previously called Bands) to ADVISE on which Criterion the allocation status relates. The processing software MUST ONLY use the Preference Offer Status and NOT the Criterion Offer Status. It should be remembered that the consideration for a place may have been within more than one Criterion and, on subsequent iterations, may have changed. The change may or may not impact on the Preference offer status. The Rank has been removed from the Criteria container.

From versions 4.1 the range of offer status codes that may be used has been reduced to 3. W to indicate that the offer previously made was made in error and is being withdrawn has been removed from the available codes. The ONLY codes that should now be used are:

O to indicate that the maintaining LA is able to make an offer to the other LAs resident. This may be discarded in a subsequent iteration as a result of a higher ranked offer.

N to indicate that the school's **maintaining** LA is not, at this point in time, able to make an offer – this may change on subsequent iterations.

D to indicate that this preference need no longer be considered as there is a higher ranked preference available. This may be communicated by the school's maintaining LA **OR** by the student's home LA.

On the rare occasion that an offer has been made in error and the result of taking this offer away would mean that an offer made to another child has to be taken away if the knock on effects of this impacts on offers already made to any other LA this MUST be communicated manually as soon as possible. In the event that you need totally reset your allocations after the allocation process has begun the LA should consider which LAs this will impact upon and contact them directly to discuss options to minimise the impact of the changes.

Examples of how the codes might be used are shown in 0.

For those LAs co-ordinating to single offer the iterative files should include only changes to an allocation status. Thus, if there are not changes to make there will be no changes to communicate. This should be done either by direct communication with the LA (or PLR) that you have communicated with during the iterative process or by sending an 'empty' ALT file i.e. one that has no pupil data within it.

72. To provide data about the offer status to an online system

The ALT file has a special use where, at the end of the iteration process, prior to the offer date the LA sends data from the 'back office' system to an online system or web portal (for subsequent viewing by applicants) on the outcome of applications (i.e. whether an offer, or not, has been made in respect of each preference expressed by the applicant).

This version **ONLY** will include the preference rank for each preference to assist with matching to the online form.

In some circumstances the LA may not be able to make an offer to applicant for any of their preferences and thus makes an offer to another of its schools that has places available. In this case the offered school's rank will be 0 to indicate that it is not one of the parent's choices rather it is an offer made by the LA to another school that can offer a place.

The first iteration of an ALT file MUST include the offer status for EVERY out of LA student. In other words for each student that does not live in the Home LA the OLA will be advised of an allocation status for them even if it is No Offer (at this stage). In this file, either LA may indicate to the other that a preference can be discarded because the LA knows that it can offer a higher ranked preference. However, a 'Home' LA should not include in this first iteration any pupil resident in their area unless it is to inform the other LA to discard a previously expressed preference.

If a school has used pre-grouping before applying oversubscription criteria there may be information in a container called Criteria (previously called Bands) to ADVISE on which Criterion the allocation status relates. The processing software MUST ONLY use the Preference Offer Status and NOT the Criterion Offer Status. It should be remembered that the consideration for a place may have been within more than one Criterion and, on subsequent iterations, may have changed. The change may or may not impact on the Preference offer status. The Rank has been removed from the Criteria container.

A code has been added for <OfferStatus> in the ALT file. This is to cover the case where a home LA is able to make an offer and informs the other LA that it (the other LA) no longer needs to look for places at school(s) which are lower on the preference list than the one for which the home LA can offer a place. Code is D, for Discard (higher preference offered)

73. To provide acceptance information from an online system or between LAs

The ALT from 2011-2012 has been adapted to transport acceptance from the online form to the back office and between LAs as follows:

Two new <OfferStatus> lookups have been added to the codeset (D00179)

D00179	Offer status
O	Offer
N	No offer
D	Discard (higher preference offered)
A	Accept
C	Not AcCepted

These are A=Accept and C=Not AcCepted

These have specific meanings.

Whilst the schema allows these to be inserted into any of the preference results i.e. offered or not offered they will only have any meaning for an offered preference and the software should take account of this.

A=Accept

The indication of an A will have the meaning that the place is still offered and that the parent/carer has accepted the place. As such it is still an offer with the caveat that it should not be removed and that it is likely that the parent will take up the place in September (or at another specified time). This response may be accompanied by free text or indication of an appeal or wish to go on the waiting list for another preference.

C=Not AcCepted

The indication of an C will have the meaning that the place is still offered and that the parent/carer has not accepted or refused the place. As such it is still an offer with the caveat that the parent should be contacted as it is unlikely that the parent will take up the place in September (or at other specified time) This response may be accompanied by free text or indication of an appeal or wish to go on the waiting list for another preference.

It is important to not that the offer still remains until the LA decides to remove it/
Discard the preference.
In addition two new tags have been added.

74. Supplementary Parental Offer Response <SuppParOfferResp>

An indicator that allows a parent to express a response to an non-offer or offer. The tag allows for the following codeset (D00178);

D00178	Supplementary Parental Offer Response
W	Waiting List
A	Appeal
B	Appeal and Waiting List
O	Other

This may be added to any offer or non-offer.

75. Free text field for a parent to add further information to an offer/non-offer <AcceptText>

Free text field for a parent to add further information to an offer/non-offer. This may be added to any offer or non-offer.

76. ATF (Admissions Transfer File (LA to maintained schools))

As there may be instances where a child does not have a UPN, which is mandatory in the CTF (e.g. pupils applying from abroad or pupils applying for a reception place) an ATF file can be supplied as an alternative to CTF). For secondary or primary transfers this will only be relevant for those pupils who have been offered a place in a neighbouring LA school and would only be sent between LAs after the notification to parents on 1 March or appropriate primary offer date i.e. either file may contain information that is not relevant to the application itself.

This file is produced by the LA at the end of the admissions round. It allows each LA to create a file for each of the schools within the LA which identifies the pupils who have been offered a place at the school. Where the data is available, the file can contain any of the data items specified for inclusion in a statutory Common Transfer File (CTF). The use of ATF files by LAs in 2006 was the subject of consultation in July/August 2006. The usage is as varied as the number of LAs responding to the consultation.

Further guidance on ATF was considered early in 2007 and as a result the file no longer contains assessment data.

77. Acceptance Tag <Accept>

A new tag has been added for the round 2011-2012 <Accept> CBDS 100463

Boolean flag 0/1 true/false indicating if parent has made positive acceptance of place for transfer to a school

This tag will signify that the parent/carer of the allocated pupil in the ATF has accepted the offer of the place. No other assumption should be made if this flag is blank.

78. Naming convention for admission file versions

From version 4 admissions files are version specific the version refers to the following years/admissions round. From version 8 versions need to be backward compatible to v-1

.Version (n)	Year of admission September	Admissions Round
1	2005	2004-2005
2	2006	2005-2006
3	2007	2006-2007
4	2008	2007-2008
5	2009	2008-2009
6	2010	2009-2010
7	2011	2010-2011
8	2012	2011-2012
9	2013	2012-2013

Changes in versions from the initial n.0 versions will increment in .1 steps. i.e. n.1; n.2; n.3 etc.

The agreed timescales for the development of these files is as follows:

Version	Date	Process
N	July - September 2000(n+2)	Draft specification drawn up
N	September – December 2000(n+2)	Liaise with suppliers and LAs regarding specifications
N	December 2000(n+2)	Publish specifications for all except ATF
N	January – March 2000(n+3)	Agree specification of ATF
N	April 2000(n+3)	Publish ATF specification
N	May – July 2000(n+3)	Testing of version n files
N	July 2000(n+3)	Version n files in
n+1	July - September 2000(n+3)	Draft specification drawn up

79. The testing of the above files version n is scheduled as follows (i.e. n=9 for 2012-2013 admissions round)

By	Requirement
Early April 2000(n+3)	All suppliers of LA Admissions software to provide to DfE an example of an APT file containing sample data of “current Year 5 pupils” who would be the

	subject of applications for places later in 2000(n+3) for admission to secondary school in September 2000(n+4).
Late May 2000(n+3)	All suppliers of 'online' LA Admissions software to provide to DfE an example of an AOT file (or ADT file). <i>Not applicable to suppliers who do not supply other back office users with an online solution.</i>
Late May 2000(n+3)	All suppliers of software systems to schools or LAs for admissions purposes to confirm to DfE when the software will be available to users.
Early June 2000(n+3)	All suppliers of LA Admissions software to provide to DfE an example of an ADT file and an ALT file produced by a test system based on data to be supplied by DfE. Suppliers will need to 'insert' Preference school data.
Early-Mid June 2000(n+3)	All suppliers of LA Admissions software to have exchanged test ADT and ALT files with at least one other supplier (via the PLR where appropriate) and to have confirmed to DfE the outcome of those tests.
Late July 2000(n+3)	All suppliers of LA Admissions software to provide to DfE an example of an ADT file and an ALT file produced by a version of the software located in an LA Admissions setting (using the same application test data as supplied for test systems amended as necessary to the LA setting).
Late August 2000(n+3)	All suppliers of School MIS Admissions software to provide to DfE an example of an ASL file produced by a test system
September 2000(n+3)	All suppliers of school MIS software to supply DfE with an example ASL file produced by a school system and to test the import into at least one supplier LA system.
January 2000(n+4)	All suppliers to supply DfE with an example ATF file and to test import into at least one supplier school system.

Processes

- 80.** The model requires that as far as is reasonably possible "that every parent of a child living in the local authority area who has applied for a school place in the 'normal admission round' receives an offer of one, and only one, school place on the same day".
- 81.** The table below shows the stages of the processes that are carried out sequentially for the coordinated process.

OAA School = Own Admission Authority School

Step	
1	Applications from parents to Home LA
2	LAs send other LAs application information for the other LA's schools.
3	LAs send relevant application information to their OAA schools.
4	OAA schools send prioritised list of pupils to the school's home LA.
5	LAs run allocation algorithm, in light of planned admission numbers, policies and preferences, to determine potential offers.
6	LAs inform each other of potential offers including withdrawal of some step 5 offers.
7	LAs rerun allocation algorithm.
8	LAs inform each other of revised potential offers, including withdrawal of some step 7 offers.
9	LAs run allocation algorithm in light of planned admission numbers and preferences to determine actual offers.
10	LAs notify each other of actual offers to be made

11	LAs notify own schools of offers to be made including offers to pupils in other LAs
12	LAs publish offers to online system to be ready on offer date for parents to view.
13	Offers made to parents by LAs as set out in the coordination scheme.
14	Home LA to resolve with parents any multiple offer situations and inform other LAs of decisions.
15	Parent/carers accept offers to LAs
16	LAs coordinate acceptances
17	LAs resolve any non-acceptance issues
18	Appeals

Steps 5, 7, 9, 14 and 18 are out of scope.

82. The table below suggests the following information flows and messages.

No.	From	To	File Type	Content
-1	Other LA	Home LA	APT	Details of pupils attending school in an LA but who live in another LA or pupils attending nurseries and private providers.
0	Applicant	Home LA		Application form including core data
0.5	Online/batch	Home LA	AOT/ADT	Application data including core data from online system or batch import process
1	Home LA	Other LA or maintained OAA School	ADT	Checked and verified (e.g. address) application information. Cannot include any data fields other than those on the application form. (Step 3).
2	AA School	Maintaining LA	ASL	Prioritised pupil list (Step 4).
3	LA	LA	ALT	Potential or actual offers (Steps 6, 8, 10).
4	LA	LA	CTF or ATF (see Note 76)	Details of pupils crossing boundaries in order to supply full information as below.
5	LA	School in LA	ATF	Details of pupils to whom offers will be made: CTF format, UPN optional (Step 11).

83. Messages to cover allowed exception conditions, for example:

- a. Late application.
- b. Suspension of application process due to error condition. As yet we know of nothing that will cause an error condition – the option is included as a precautionary measure.

are covered by a <Header>\<Status> element with values as in the example ADT file.

84. A link to the example XML messages for the ADT, ALT, ASL, AOT and APT files (Version 9.1) can be found at:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/schooladmin/ims/datatransfers/coordinatedadmissions/a0204699/coordinated-admissions-2013>

- Applicant (parent) details are included for contact purposes and address verification.
- In ADT only details of applications to schools in the other LA should be included, but the ranking order will be as indicated on the application form.
- ADT files sent to OAA schools should contain only applications for that school. The files should not contain any ranking information.
- ADT files should not be generated by the process software without the software first checking that all mandatory fields in the ADT file, for each pupil included in the file, are populated.
- AOT file is provided to assist in the population of 'application' data into LA admissions process systems when captured via an online system (where the 'front end' is provided by a different supplier from the 'back office' process software) or via a data input bureau service.
- APT file is provided so that LA (A) can send a file to LA (B) containing details of pupils in Year 5 in LA (A) schools but who live in LA (B) i.e. LA (B) will want to ensure that the parents of such pupils are sent a copy of the Common Application Form for their 'home' LA (LA (B)).

Negotiations between LAs

85. This concerns the stages when LAs process applications and notify each other of potential/actual offers (section 81 steps 5 – 10).

86. Each **application** must have a unique reference number, applying to all schools, consisting of:

- Number of 'home' LA (3 digits) for applications
- Year and month of proposed admission (e.g. 2005-09).
- Indicator to show the origin of the unique reference i.e. E = (Online), K = (Keyboard), and B = (Batch).
- Serial number (6 digits).

87. For cross-checking purposes and to minimise errors, the surname, forename, gender and DOB of the pupil are always included in negotiation messages. UPN can be used for matching pupils in incoming files to records already existing in a data base but not for any purpose connected with the admissions process itself.

88. In addition, negotiation messages will need the school establishment number, and LA to identify which of the schools applied for is the subject of an offer or refusal. In this context, "negotiation messages" means the exchange of ALT files between LAs.

89. There is a local identifier against each preference for the use of local systems – format unspecified.

90. Decisions which need to be conveyed between LAs

There are three possible outcomes of the admissions decision process that need to be conveyed at different times. Suppliers should ensure that:

- An ALT file should send a “no offer” record for a preference even if the process software did not record “no offer” in the process i.e. the preference is still “live” even though an offer cannot be made at the time
- Every preference should be the subject of a response, at least once, using one of the set offer codes

(O)ffer the *other* LA can make an offer (perhaps on behalf of a school which is own admission authority) of a place to the child in the identified school.

(N)o Offer the *other* LA does not, at this stage, offer a place to the child at the identified school. (N)o offer should not be used in process software to record “no offer will ever be made”. The preference is still a “live preference” in a system and may result in an offer being made in a subsequent iteration of the process. Whatever is held in the process system, the ALT output in these circumstances should be (N).

(D)iscard (higher preference offered) the *home* LA is able to offer a higher-preference place, so the *other* LA need no longer investigate the context preference. When a system receives (D), it should note that against the preference so that it is not acted on again in a future iteration. (D) should not be identified as a status change which would trigger another entry in an ALT file back to the (first) LA. (D) should also be used by a home LA to notify another LA that lower ranked preferences need not be considered because the home LA can offer a higher ranked preference.

(A)ccept the parent/carer has indicated (by any method appropriate) that they accept the offer made to them. The status of the offer is still O but the LA may chose to no longer process this application (if the preference was not the first). A home LA will need to convey this decision to the other LA.

Not A(C)cepted the parent/carer has indicated (by any method appropriate) that they do not accept the offer made to them. The status of the offer is still O and NOT D however the LA may chose to process this application and make an alternative offer. They may chose to remove the offer completely by replacing it with a D. A home LA will need to convey this decision to the other LA.

91. Not all the above options above apply at every step of the process; the table below summarises.

Code	From	To	Description	Steps
N	Other LA	Home LA	No Offer	6, 8, 10
O	Other LA	Home LA	Offer	6, 8, 10
D	Home LA	Other LA	Discard	8, 10

92. Filename conventions In year modifications

File names: The format will remain unchanged as below:

Filenames should be constructed according to the following conventions.

Chars 1-7	Source LA number followed by LLLL (for LA) or school number
Chars 8-12	Underscore, three letters of file type (see 13 above), underscore
Chars 13-19	As 1-7 but referring to destination LA and school
Chars 20-22	Underscore, last two digits of academic year of entry, where 2010/11 would be denoted by 10. (plus 50 for in year therefore 60 for 2010 only for LA to LA and LA to back office transfers)
Chars 23-25	Serial number starting from 001. Sequence to be unique to each message and sender/recipient pair, not all messages sent by system.

Examples are:

933LLLL_APT_801LLLL_10001.XML (LA to LA phased)
 933LLLL_ADT_801LLLL_60003.XML (LA to LA in year)
 933LLLL_ADT_9334701_11002.XML (LA to OAA school phased)
 933LLLL_AOT_933LLLL_61001.XML (LA online system to LA in year)
 9334701_ASL_933LLLL_12001.XML (OAA school to LA phased)
 933LLLL_ALT_801LLLL_62004.XML (LA to LA in year)
 933LLLL_ALT_933LLLL_07001.XML (LA to LA online system phased)
 933LLLL_ATF_9334500_05003.XML (LA to all maintained schools in LA phased)

The file extension should be XML in all cases.

93. Unranked Pupils.

It is worth repeating that OAA schools do not have to prioritise/rank all prospective pupils. There is, at the moment, no exact guidance on how far beyond the number of places the ranking should extend.

94. Linked Schools and Siblings.

Regulations allow LAs to 'link' schools for the purposes of admissions criteria. Attendance of a sibling at a linked school allows the prospective pupil to be treated as if he/she had a sibling attending the school for which application is made. In the <Sibling> section of the ADT file, the <LinkedSchool> section should appear only if the sibling attends a linked school. Conversely, if the <LinkedSchool> section does not appear the assumption is that the sibling attends the school for which application is made.

95. Late applications.

The issue of whether the date on which an application was received should be included in the ADT file has been raised again (it was discussed in the April meetings, with LAs and suppliers). There are several aspects of the policy and guidance which clearly indicate that the date should *not* be sent.

96. Application receipt

An application which is deemed, by the home LA, to be on time should not be deemed otherwise by another LA or school. The receiving LA or school would not, from the date alone, possess all the information taken into account by the home LA in deeming an application to be on time even though it might be received after the closing date.

97. Responsibilities

The home LA has overall responsibility for the admission process and others should follow its lead. It must be remembered that parents are required to submit their application to their Home LA – by implication, by the closing date of the Home LA. Genuinely late applications will be notified as such under a late “status”.

98. Admissions Dates

It is the intention to encourage LAs to adopt a flexible and inclusive attitude, rather than rigidly adhering to dates. There is also the intention that LAs should adopt common dates and it is hoped that, over time, consensus will emerge.

99. Preference rank.

In compliance with section 1.76 of the Admissions Code: 'A local authority **must not** inform an admission authority of the rank order of an applicant's preferences as this information cannot lawfully be used by an admission authority when applying its oversubscription criteria'.

Therefore when sending an ADT file (or any other message media) to an OAA (Own Admitting Authority) school <PreferenceRank> **must not** be included.

However, the tag may be included in an LA to LA ADT file as each LA needs to know the rank of each preference for local processing purposes.

100. Criterion Information

The requirement for criterion information in the ALT file i.e. exchanges of offers between LAs, is not required by many LAs although some have decided between themselves that such information is required. However, there is total agreement that “Rank” is not required and this tag has been deleted.

101. Admissions to Primary schools

Admissions to Primary schools come within the scope of coordinated admissions from September 2011 (for admissions to schools in September 2012 onwards). At this point it is worth recording that:

- Applications for primary school places are to be made to the home LA as for secondary admissions
- Primary schools admission means admission to the Reception class in an Infant school or a Primary school or to the earliest year group in a Junior or Middle (deemed Primary) school

- Admissions to nursery classes are not included in coordinated admissions
- There is no nationally specified date for the notification of offers to parents for primary school places. However, each LA is required to publicise a single date each year for the notification of offers to parents whether the offer is of a place in September, in January or after Easter.

102. Where applications for the same pupil (primary or secondary) are made to two separate LAs (whether by design or by accident), each LA will issue an application reference number. When ADT/ALT files are exchanged, a file received by a “home” LA should not result in the application reference created by the “home” LA being overwritten by the ‘incoming’ application reference. Equally, the ‘incoming’ application reference needs to be retained for future communication with the ‘other’ LA. Both references will have validity in the system which created the reference and both references will be needed for communication purposes. Suppliers systems need to recognise this and be able to deal with the situation.

103. UPN Definition

Basically it is a 13 character reference code made up of the LEA number, the issuing school DfE number, the intake year of the pupil, a three digit incremental number and prefixed by a check character in the format:

XLEADfEYYnnn or XLEADfEYYnnA (for temporary UPN)

The CBDS definition for UPNs is as follows:

Format: Annnnnnnnnnnn or AnnnnnnnnnnnA (for temporary UPN).

Alphabetical character cannot be I, O, or S. To calculate the check letter:

1. Multiply the individual digits by their weights as follows:

digit 2 by weight 2; digit 3 by weight 3; digit 4 by weight 4; digit 5 by weight 5; digit 6 by weight 6; digit 7 by weight 7; digit 8 by weight 8; digit 9 by weight 9; digit 10 by weight 10; digit 11 by weight 11; digit 12 by weight 12; digit 13 by weight 13.

2. Sum the individual results, divide the total by 23, and take the remainder.

3. Calculate the check letter from the result as follows:

0 = A; 1 = B; 2 = C; 3 = D; 4 = E; 5 = F; 6 = G;
7 = H; 8 = J; 9 = K; 10 = L; 11 = M; 12 = N; 13 = P;
14 = Q; 15 = R; 16 = T; 17 = U; 18 = V; 19 = W; 20 = X;
21 = Y; 22 = Z.

For calculating the check letter (see above) any alphabetical character at digit 13 is accorded the same numerical value as listed in paragraph 3 above, i.e. A=0, B=1, C=2 etc.

104. Faith code list.

The current list available in CBDS is not sufficient for the purposes of admissions files, hence the specific look up table. However, the lookup table for “faith” will be replaced at some time by a new CBDS faith table following the outcome of consultations being led by the Home Office.

105. Notification method

Notification method has been added to the AOT/ADT file to allow a parent to indicate in an “online” application how they want to be notified of the outcome of their application (for each preference). Parents will be able to opt to be notified by one or more methods. The options are:

- Online e.g. logging on to the online system, keying in the relevant code and seeing a display of the “offer” status for each preference made in the original (final) application.
- Email. Some parents may want to be notified by way of an email to a previously notified email address (for which provision is now made in the AOT/ADT file).
- SMS/text message. Equally some parents may want to be notified by way of an SMS/text message to a previously notified mobile phone number.
- Letter.

Parents may opt for more than one method of notification and therefore all 4 options must be transferred in the parent opts to be notified 4 ways.

106. Free text school name and postcode

In the AOT file only, there is provision for school name and post code to be transferred as well as LA and establishment number and each is shown as optional. This is to cater for batch files from a bureau service where the parent has not completed the form properly or it is not possible to identify the correct LA and establishment number from the school information provided by the parent. In these circumstances, the batch file will contain the information which can be obtained from the application form and it will then be for admissions staff in the LA, in conjunction with the applicant, to correctly identify the school so that the correct LA and establishment numbers can be entered into the process software for subsequent inclusion in ADT, ASL, ALT files etc. For a “preference school”, one of the 4 fields must contain some data.

107. Import student matching

In order to avoid overwriting inappropriate data matching should be done on more student elements than just the application reference. Suggestions for each type of file are listed below:

108. Importing ADT files

This file may be from another LA, the PLR, DRS for OCR forms or an online supplier to a Capita back office. If the ADT file has <SupplierID>DRS</SupplierID> in the header then the match should be on surname, forename, DOB, gender and, if applicable, UPN.

For all other ADT files if the application reference exists and does not match the incoming reference for the matched student surname, forename, DOB, Gender and, if applicable, UPN the record should not be imported but should be reported as an Exception.

109. Importing ASL files

The match is on Application Reference, Surname, Forename, DOB, Gender and, if applicable, UPN. If these do not match then the record should NOT be imported but should be reported as an Exception. This is since the sender is an OAA School that should have received the data from the Home LA with the application reference included.

110. Importing the ALT files

An ALT file can contain offers for all schools.

111. Matching files

The incoming data should match on Application Reference, Student Surname, Forename, DoB and Gender and, if applicable, the UPN. If any one of these does not match the record should be put into suspense. Pupils in an ALT file should always be in the database with an application reference. If a pupil has been entered manually without an application reference a match will not occur. It is very important to request the application reference from the OLA that is providing the pupil data.

Pre-grouping pupils prior to using oversubscription criteria

112. Background

In the majority of situations when there are more applications than places for admission to school they are sorted according to oversubscription criteria. However, there are a number of schools where the applications are split into groups before the application of oversubscription criteria. This has become known as 'Banding'. However, the 2003 Admissions code strictly defines 'Banding' as:

A.69 Section 101(5) of the 1998 Act allows admission authorities which admit children on the basis of ability for the purposes of Banding also to admit up to 10% of children in total on the basis of aptitude for one or more of the prescribed subjects (see paragraph A.72). So, for example, admission authorities will be able to admit the first 10% of children on the basis of aptitude and Banding the remaining 90%, or Banding children first and then admit 10% of each Banding on the basis of the relevant aptitude.

The following therefore discusses the way in which applications may be pre-grouped as well as banded. From 2005 the ALT and ASL files refer to these groups and bands as Criterion.

113. Forms of Pre-Grouping

Using the term pre-grouping in it loosest sense there are 4 basic types:

114. Discrete

The student will be in one Band and one Band only since they will fit only one Band or another. An example of this is where a Roman Catholic school admits a proportion of students on the basis of their practising faith being Roman Catholic and the remainder of the students from other practising denominations. Therefore a student will either be Roman Catholic or not. Another example where discrete groups should be used is where school use pre-defined ability ranges prior to the 1998 Act. Grouping in this way could result in varying proportions of pupils being allocated to them therefore it does not fit the fair banding criteria (see below).

115. Partial selection by Academic Ability or Aptitude in subjects other than those in Post-1998 list.

A school may have introduced a policy prior to the 1998 School Standards and Framework Act to allocate a number of places purely for students who are tested for a selective stream or an aptitude for a subject that is not in the (post 1998) prescribed list. The proportion is not restricted. Examples of this are known as partially selective or bilateral schools that have a grammar school stream

alongside the comprehensive stream. An applicant may wish to be considered for the selective stream only, the comprehensive stream only or, if failing to get a selective place, to be considered for the comprehensive stream.

116. Aptitude (post 1998 subject list)

A school may offer up to 10% of its places to students who have an aptitude for a prescribed subject(s). An applicant may wish to be considered for the specialist stream only, the comprehensive stream only or, if failing to get a specialist place, to be considered for the comprehensive stream. A school may have multiple specialisms but can only have a maximum of 10% of places allocated to those displaying an aptitude for the specialism. An application may, therefore, be for more than 1 specialism.

117. Fair Banding

'Fair Banding' is used by some comprehensive schools to try to ensure that their intake really is "comprehensive", that is that their intake includes a proportionate spread of students of all abilities. The intake should represent the range of applicants' abilities, not, for example, a national or LA average. The proportion of applicants offered places from each Band must roughly mirror the proportion of applicants placed in each Band. In other words if a school places 25% of applicants in each Band, it must then offer 25% of its places to applicants in each Band.

Note: some schools who had Banding by ability arrangements prior to the 1998 Act Banding often use pre-defined ranges of scores for each ability Band leading to varying proportions of pupils being allocated to them. These should not be set up as using Fair Banding but as discrete.

In a school that uses Fair Banding all children are tested and these test scores are used to firstly allocate equally to the Bands and then used if adjustments need to be made to the students in each Band as the offer iteration process proceeds. **An over-riding principle is that in total the school must not have vacancies in any Band when there are still children waiting to fill them.** Whilst the DfE expect there to be equal proportions it is accepted that this might be 'roughly equal' rather than exactly.

However, whilst these above grouping types can be used independently they can be used in combination. For example it is possible to use discrete grouping for applications which are not offered a place in an ability or aptitude stream. Similarly it is possible to 'Fair Band' those applicants not offered a place in an aptitude group.

118. Combining Groups

The above groupings can be combined in the following ways:

- Ability Grouping with Discrete Grouping
- Aptitude Grouping with Discrete Grouping
- Aptitude Grouping with Fair Banding can be combined:
 - Aptitude Group is Fair Banded
 - Aptitude Group is not Fair Banded

119. Ability Grouping with Discrete Grouping

Those students who do not apply for, or do not get an ability place can be pre-grouped into discrete groups before oversubscription criteria is applied to rank order them.

120. Aptitude Grouping with Discrete Grouping

Those students who do not apply for, or do not get a specialist place can be pre-grouped into discrete groups before oversubscription criteria is applied to rank order them.

121. Aptitude Grouping with Fair Banding can be combined:

Aptitude Group is Fair Banded

The applications for the specialist places would be fair banded before the allocation of places is made to ensure that the allocations within the specialist places are also comprehensive.

Aptitude Group is not Fair Banded

The specialist places would be allocated on the basis of the Aptitude criteria, not Fair Banding. The other 90% of places would be Fair Banded according to the Fair Banding principles.

122. Examples of the allocation code usage

The following shows some examples of the changing allocation status that might occur during the iteration process. The Import Iteration shows which round of iteration is being done and the adjacent Advise column shows what, if any, allocation status code is advised to the Other LA.

Home Student

Rank	Maintaining LA Advise	Import Iteration					
		1	Advise	2	Advise	3	
Pref 1	Home LA	N	-	N	-	O	-
Pref 2	OLA 1	N	-	O	-	D	D
Pref 3	OLA 2	O	-	D	D	D	-

As can be seen both OLAs can make an offer but this might be rejected at a later iteration when a higher ranked preference can be offered. This would be advised as a D.

OLA Student

Rank	Maintaining LA Advised by OLA	Export Iteration					
		1	Advise	2	Advise	3	
Pref 1	Do not know what their 1 st preference is						
Pref 2	Home	N	N	O	O	D	-
Pref 3	Home	O	O	D	D	D	-

As can be seen the Home LA first is able to make an offer to the 3rd preference so advises No current offer to Preference 2 and Offer to Preference 3. However, on a later iteration an offer becomes available for the 2nd preference so the Home LA advises an offer to replace the original No offer and Discards the original offer to preference rank 3. However, it may be that an even later iteration (or even in an earlier iteration) the OLA is able to offer the 1st preference so they advise a D to both 2nd and 3rd preferences.

With a pre-grouping situation the following might occur:

OLA Student applies for a selective place in a partially selective school. In the first instance the school is unable to offer a selective place but is able to offer a place in the mainstream part of the school therefore the OLA is advised:

		Import Iteration	Status
Criterion	1	2	
Preference	O	O	
Selective	N	O	
Non Selective	O	D	

As can be seen above the Preference always has an Offer but in the first iteration the Selective criterion has a status of N and the Non selective criterion has a status of O. On a subsequent iteration a place has become available in the selective stream and, as the next ranked student, is offered the place. The Selective Criterion is now advised as an O and the Non Selective Criterion is now a D (as a lower ranked pre-group). The student still has a place but it is in the first priority Criterion – selective.

However all this is for information only so that, at the end of the process if the Home LA wishes, it can advise the applicant that there is a place and it is in the selective stream. It can also simply advise they have an offer.

123. Glossary

AA	–	Admissions Authority
ADT	–	Admissions Data Transfer file.
ALT	–	Admissions file communicating the offer status between LAs
ASL	–	Admissions School to LA
ATF	–	Admissions Transfer File
CTF	–	Common Transfer File
OAA	–	Own Admission Authority
OCR	–	Optical Character Reading
OLA	–	Other Local Authority
PLR	–	Pan London Register
UPN	–	Unique Pupil Number
XML	–	a predefined file format which enables interoperability (eXtensible Markup Language)

124. Document Prepared jointly by:

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Appendix 1

Coordinated Admissions Clarification of responsibilities

The 2011 code requires 'full' coordination for primary and secondary admissions rounds as well as In year.

Additional points for software suppliers to note:

- Admissions to nursery classes are not included in coordinated admissions.
- The National Primary offer date is 16 April from 2014 onwards.
- LAs are required to share application data with VA/Foundation primary schools (the ADT will provide this functionality).
- VA/Foundation primary schools are required to provide prioritised lists of pupils to the maintaining LA (the ASL will provide this functionality).
- LAs are required to notify each other of school offers made to applicants for pupils who live in another LA (as indicated following the suppliers meeting on 9 March 2005, it was agreed by LA colleagues that the simplest method of meeting the requirement to exchange information on primary offers was for a 'non home' LA to send an ALT file to a 'home' LA on the outcome of applications to the 'non home' LA. On this basis, it was felt that the <EntryYearGroup> would be sufficient to identify the file as containing Primary or Secondary data for information).
- There is no requirement for an exchange of ALT files between LAs to eliminate offers (it is accepted that there could be multiple offers from more than one LA but only one offer within an LA).
- LAs are required to notify all schools of the pupils for whom an offer of a place has been made (the ATF will provide this functionality).
- Key dates (all in the offer year and on that date unless specified))

Process	Primary	Secondary
Publication of Prospectus Date	By 12 th September	By 12 th September
Closing Date	15 th January	31 st October
Last Date for coordination messages	By last working day in March	
Offer Date	16 April (from 2014)	1 st March (or next working day)
Waiting lists	For one term minimum	For one term minimum

Alan Strickley
DfE
24 January 2012

Appendix 2

Use of 'dummy' DfE Establishment numbers in AOT files

1. At the eAdmissions suppliers meeting held in Hertford on 12 August 2005, I was asked what numbers should be used in an AOT file to identify a preference school if a parent was unable to identify the correct school and DfE number from any 'drop down' lists. At the time, I suggested that there was a range of numbers available to use as 'dummy' numbers but I thought afterwards that the XXXX approach was clearer in saying that the number was 'unknown'.

2. XXXX is used in CTF files, in place of a DfE Establishment number, as an indicator that a school is not known. It should be used in an admissions AOT file to indicate that an applicant (parent) has been unable to identify a preference school from a 'drop down' list in the online system and should be regarded as a "signal" by the home LA Admissions Officer (or Admissions Officer in the LA receiving the application if for a primary school) that he/she will need to

- Establish from the applicant what school is being requested
- Establish what the correct number is or what dummy number the maintaining LA is using.

3. For clarity, XXXX should only be used in an AOT file i.e. from an online system/batch system to a back office processing system. XXXX is NOT acceptable in any other admissions file.

4. Where an Admissions Officer receives an AOT file with XXXX used to describe a preference school, the Admissions Officer needs to establish, from the applicant, which school is being requested and then contact their opposite number in the relevant LA and ask what 'dummy' number is being used to describe that school and should use that number in a subsequent ADT file.

5. Where a 'dummy' number is required (because a new school has not yet been allocated a new number by EduBase), then a number not used for any other purpose can be used (a number in the range 9000 to 9098 is recommended). The 'dummy' number to be used for the purposes of identifying a school for the admissions process will be determined by the LA maintaining the school (or in whose area the school is located if an Academy) and NOT the LA receiving the application. This is to ensure that when an ADT file is sent to the LA maintaining the school (or in whose area the school is located if an Academy), the receiving LA can identify the school.

6. Separately, I have been asked about the use of a 'dummy' number in an AOT file where a school number was not known. On asking for clarification of why a 'dummy' number was required, it was suggested that it would be used to describe a 'current school' of a pupil where the pupil was not currently in a school or was in a school outside England. It is because of these circumstances (and also to recognise that there might not be a current school for primary applications) that the current school container in the ADT file is 'optional'. If there is no 'current school' or it is outside the maintained sector or outside England, the 'current school' container in an ADT file should be omitted. When an ADT file is received, the absence of a 'current school' container in the ADT file should be read as meaning that there is no 'current school' for the pupil. The same interpretation should be applied to an AOT file.

Terry Keane 15 November 2005

Appendix 3

Use of ALT file for transferring offer data to a web portal (data to either be displayed on portal or sent via email)

1. To support the process of Coordinated Admissions to schools as required by the Admissions code on School Admissions (LAs), DfE has promoted a number of specific XML file formats for the transfer of specified data between Local Authorities as admission authorities or from/to LAs and schools acting as their own admission authority. One of those file formats is the ALT file which was designed to transfer data on potential or actual “offers” of school places between LAs prior to the notification of a single offer of a school place to applicants.

2. The file format allows for the transfer of the following data

- Application reference number
- Pupil UPN (if known), surname, forename, date of birth and gender
- The preference school, identified by LA and DfE Establishment Number and the “offer status” (O = Offer, N = No offer or D = Discard (higher preference offered))
- Where LAs agree between themselves that they require the information, the file can contain data on the criterion under which an offer is made or refused.

3. Because the ALT file can contain the basic information on whether an offer can be made or not for each preference made by an applicant, the file can also be used to transfer information on the outcome of the allocation process from the ‘back office’ admissions processing system to a ‘front end’ online or web portal system. The ‘front end’ might be used by applicants to view the outcome of their application. It might also be the ‘front end’ which would issue the outcomes by way of email (where the applicant indicated that they wished to be notified by email) although a ‘back office’ system might also provide the functionality for email notification (where requested).

4. The ALT file, when used for transferring offer data to a web portal, should be produced for the home LA for all preferences of each application submitted online i.e. offer and no offers. (It is hoped, eventually, that the ALT file should contain offers etc in respect of all applications made to the LA and not just those applications made via the online system or portal but that will not be possible immediately because applicant details not submitted online will not be available to the online system/web portal.)

5. The ALT file must only be exported once from the ‘back office’ system at the end of the allocation process i.e. before 1st March for secondary school offers (other dates as set out in schemes for primary school offers) and imported into the web portal. The process is then

- The online system/web portal will use the application reference number contained in the ALT file to match against the original application stored on the online system/web portal and the pupil details retrieved.
- As the online system/web portal uses the applicant as the primary key for access via a user name and password, the imported ALT file will need to be matched against the application reference number held on the online system/web portal.

- Once this match has occurred the pupil details for that applicant can be located, the preferences matched up and the offer status for each preference indicated on the online system/web portal.
- The online system/web portal needs to check for the mode of communication (if applicable to the system), retrieve the email address stored on web server and send emails as appropriate.
- A parent/carer can then log on to the online system/web portal and see the offer status for each of their child's preferences.

6. The ALT file will also deal with the transfer, from a 'back office' system to an online system/ web portal, of an offer of a school place where the parental preferences could not be met i.e. the online system/web portal would not have a record in its recorded preferences of the school being offered. From 2008, when the ALT file is being used to notify an online system of the offers to be made in respect of applications, a <PreferenceRank> = 0 is an indicator to the online system that the school where the place is being offered has been identified by the LA because it was not possible to offer a place at any of the preference schools. (It will not be possible for the <PreferenceRank> to be included in ALT files to be used in March 2007 to notify an online system of the offers to be made.)

Terry Keane
DfE
December 2006

Appendix 4

Clarification on the use of 'Offer codes' in the ALT file for the exchange of offers in Coordinated Admissions

1. This clarification has been produced in conjunction with the main Suppliers of LA software used to manage the Coordinated Admissions processes in Local Authorities
2. This clarification has been produced in response to a request from a Local Authority to clarify the timing of the use of the D code and to consider the use of an additional code to indicate that the place will be taken up.
3. A detailed explanation of the use of each offer status code follows. An overview of the process can be found in Appendix A.
4. The D offer status code is used to indicate "discarded" preferences. The code is transferred when an authority makes an offer for a higher ranked preference and there are lower ranked preferences which must be discarded as a result. In this situation, an offer status of 'D' will be output in an ALT file against each relevant preference.
5. The offer status of N is used to indicate that a preference does not currently have an offer, and has not been discarded because there are no higher ranked preferences that have been offered. The N offer status is only exported on the first iteration of the ALT file as it is the initial status of each preference. This means that a No Offer will always be transferred to the home authority on the first iteration by each maintaining authority.
6. An Offer status of O is only transferred from maintaining authority to home authority when an offer has been made for a preference. An Offer may be subsequently discarded. The following three scenarios outline the situations in which this may occur:
 - A home authority receives an offer, but on the next iteration offers a higher ranked preference;
 - A home authority discards a lower ranked preference on the first iteration, but receives an offer from the maintaining authority in the first ALT file transferred;
 - A maintaining authority offers a lower ranked preference, but on a subsequent iteration offers a higher ranked preference.
7. The above scenarios mean that an N will always be transferred during the first iteration, even if the home authority subsequently discards the place. It also means that an Offer will always be stored by the receiving system, even if it is then replaced by a discard. This provides a full audit of the changes.
8. With regards to the second request, the Regulations require LAs to introduce a 'qualifying scheme' for coordinated admissions. In that scheme, which must be consulted upon, where LAs agree "to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the parent receives only one offer of a school place", the LA must state which LA shall communicate determinations (offers etc) to parents and that the relevant authorities (LAs) shall have "regard to the proposed determination of the other". Having said that, in practice, every co-ordination scheme that the Department knows

provides for the highest available preference to be offered. The Regulations say that the scheme should set out how offers should be determined if a pupil could be offered more than 1 school.

9. Where a scheme provides for the highest available preference to be offered, this means that if an offer is made for a preference by a maintaining authority, that offer should always be used by the home authority if it is the highest ranked preference with an offer. The home authority should only discard the preference if a higher ranked preference has been offered by the home authority or another authority. So, if the maintaining authority has not received a discard by the time of the final iteration, then that place will be being taken up by the home authority.

10. To validate this, reports have been provided in suppliers' systems which can be used to check that valid offers have been made and been taken up. These reports are used extensively in the Pan London process at the end of the iterative cycle and can be used by all Local Authorities. The reports allow each authority to produce a list of offers which are being made for children living in their authority and for children living in other authorities. This information is then exchanged with neighbouring authorities to validate that the information is correct. This helps each authority to ensure that valid offers have been made, and no child has been disadvantaged by not receiving the highest possible offer.

Overview of ALT Message Exchange

N = No offer

O = Offer

D = Discard

1. Each LA runs the initial allocation of places and creates an ALT for export to home LAs.
2. In the first ALT each preference will be coded: N, O or D.

N (no offer)	<i>The maintaining LA cannot offer this preference to another LA applicant.</i>
O (offer)	<i>The maintaining LA can offer this preference to another LA applicant.</i>
D (discard)	<i>The maintaining LA is discarding this preference because a higher preference can be offered, or The home LA is discarding an offer previously made by another LA because it can offer a higher preference.</i>
3. The receiving LA imports the ALT file(s) and runs another allocation which will lead to some new offers and some new discards.
4. The second and subsequent ALT file(s) will contain:

O codes for offers not previously made, and
D codes for new discards.
5. The cycle of allocation and export of ALT files is repeated as many times as necessary in order to reach a steady state.

6. The **N** code will only be exported on the first iteration of the ALT file. The **N** status remains until it can be offered and replaced by code **O** or is given code **D** because it is discarded when a higher preference has been met.
7. If an **O** offer has been made a maintaining LA it is assumed to be taken up unless it is discarded **D** in a future ALT file.

Terry Keane
DfE
11 December 2006

Appendix 5

Data Services Technical Guidance Note

Number	DSTGN-001
Title	Character Set support in XML data collection documents
Issued	September 2007
Replaces	Version 1.0

Intended Audience

- a) DfE Data Services Group
- b) Suppliers of school and Local Authority (LA) management information software
- c) LA data contacts for the DSG

Scope of Note

This note describes the range of characters that may appear within data collections specified by the DfE Data Services Group. It describes how extended characters should be encoded within XML documents.

The display and processing of extended characters within end user systems, such as school MISs, is not within the scope of this note.

Version Information

This version updates DfES references to DfE. There are no changes to the substance of the content.

For further information about this technical guidance note or for general enquires regarding Data Services technical guidance contact the Data Services Helpdesk:

Email: dsg.helpdesk@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk
 Telephone: 01325 392626

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Terminology in this note

Extended characters: In this note, the term “extended characters” refers to those characters that are beyond the range of basic ASCII characters, i.e. beyond code points 0000 through 007F. Extended characters thus include upper or lowercase Latin characters that also have an accent, or special characters such as the Inverted Question Mark, as used in Spanish.

XML document: In this note XML document refers to any stream of data formatted according to the XML standard. For practical purposes, in this context only, this is synonymous with “XML message” or “XML file”.

A. Ranges of characters to be supported

At the present time DfE policy is to process, or plan towards future processing of, all Latin-based characters for names, addresses and general text fields. Other character types, such as Chinese, Greek or Cyrillic, are not within the scope of this policy. This appears to fulfil present expectations of central government and its partners. It is also in line with current public sector practice.

For this reason, the policy is to support all Latin-based characters for names, addresses and general text fields. This includes extended characters. It is defined in terms of the following Unicode charts: ¹

Code Chart	Character Range	Notes
Basic Latin	U+0000 - U+007F	Basic ASCII. Includes C0 control characters U+0000 - U+001F
Latin-1	U+0080 - U+00FF	Includes characters required for Welsh and Gaelic languages. Includes C1 control characters U+0080 - U+009F
Latin Extended A	U+0100 - U+017F	Required for Irish Gaelic dotted consonants.
Latin Extended B	U+0180 - U+024F	
Latin Extended Additional	U+1E00 - U+1EFF	Required for Irish Gaelic dotted consonants.

B. Representation within XML

The e-GIF Technical Standards Catalogue v 6.2 has mandated 8 bit UTF-8 (RFC 2279) as the minimum interoperable character set for XML. DfE policy is therefore to use UTF-8 encoding within XML documents.

UTF-8 can only represent a certain sub-set of Unicode characters literally. All other characters outside the Basic Latin code chart must be represented either as a multi-

¹ Some of the material in this section is taken from the MIAP programme, see “Implementation of the MIAP Common Data Definitions”, version 1.0, May 2006.

byte character, or as a character reference. Of these two alternatives, DfE policy is that these should be represented within XML as character references.

Please see the references and explanatory notes below.

**DfE Data Services Group
September 2007, revised**

References

1. XML standard, version 1.0, 4th edition

See <http://www.w3.org/TR/2006/REC-xml-20060816/> .

Section 4.1 describes entity and character references and their handling.

2. Unicode Standard

See <http://www.unicode.org/> .

Code charts can be downloaded from <http://www.unicode.org/charts/> .

3. e-GIF Technical Standards Catalogue version 6.2, September 2005

See

http://www.govtalk.gov.uk/schemasstandards/egif_document.asp?docnum=957.

Explanatory Notes

1. It is important to differentiate between entity references and character references.

An entity reference enables an item of text, which might appear over and over again, to be defined in XML as an internal entity and used in place of the text. Because the entity is expanded or replaced by the XML processor, the user can be assured of getting the same text in every location. This technique also allows the inclusion of reserved characters, such as < or > within an XML document. An entity reference is an ampersand (&), followed by the name of the entity, followed by a semicolon.

The only entity references to be used in an XML document are those pre-defined in the XML standard (version 1.0, fourth edition, section 4.1)

>
<
&
'
"

(Please note that within the HTML environment it is customary to use a wider range of entity references than the XML standard allows. For example é has been available for lower case é with an acute accent since HTML version 2.0.)

Character references, as their name implies, provide syntax for the representation of non-ASCII characters. They are similar in appearance to entity references, and allow a user to reference arbitrary Unicode characters even if they aren't available

directly from a keyboard. Character references are numeric and can be used without any special declaration.

The basic format of a character reference is either "&#nnn;" or "&#xhhh;" where "nnn" is a decimal Unicode character number and "hhh" is a hexadecimal Unicode character number. For example, a lower case é with an acute accent would be:

é (decimal representation) – OR
é (hexadecimal representation)

Note that this does not determine how a processing or display system will represent the character.

Character references differ from other entity references in a subtle but significant way. They are expanded immediately by the parser. For this reason even though using '"' is exactly the same as ", you can't use the character reference in an attribute value to escape the quotation characters.

2. XML documents and the Byte Order Mark (BOM). The e-GIF Technical Standards Catalogue v 6.2 has adopted XML 1.0 (4th Edition). The specification for XML 1.0 (4th Edition) states that;

- XML processors **MUST** be able to read UTF-8 and UTF-16 encoding.
- UTF-16 **MUST** and UTF-8 **MAY** begin with a BOM (Byte Order Mark).
- XML processors **MUST** be able to use BOM to differentiate between UTF-8 and UTF-16 encoding.
- If there is no BOM or encoding attribute XML processors will assume a default of UTF-8.

3. Support in S2S. For most applications S2S uses the information from the physical file name for routing. It does not therefore parse or process the content of any file. Files using S2S must be prepared to the policy stated in this document; however suppliers should note that entity and character references pass through unaltered. For the same reason the presence or absence of BOM is not an issue for S2S.

Appendix 6

Changes Log for Admissions File Specifications V 9.1 22nd June 2011

This Changes Log identifies all changes made to the specifications for the APT, AOT, ADT, ASL and ATF files since the issue of v8.1 in 2010. Where changes are to the schema only they are specified as such.

Item	Date	File	Details
1.	Dec 2011	APT	<APTversion> number changed to v9.1
2.			<EntryYearAndMonth> changed to 2013-09
3.			<UPN> changed to optional
4.			<URN> and <LEA> included as optional tags
5.			
6.	Dec 2011	AOT	<AOTversion> number changed to v9.1
7.			<ApplicationReferenceNumber> amended for new admission year i.e. 2012
8.			<EntryYearAndMonth> changed to 2013-09
9.			<StaffChild> tag added
10.			<InYear> Boolean tag amended to optional
11.			<MultipleBirth> tag added
12.			
13.	Dec 2011	AOT(IN)	<AOTversion> number changed to v9.1
14.			<ApplicationReferenceNumber> amended for new admission year i.e. 2013 (could be 2012 for inyear)
15.			<StaffChild> tag added
16.			<InYear> Boolean tag amended to optional
17.			<MultipleBirth> tag added
18.			
19.	Dec 2011	ADT	<ADTversion> number changed to v9.1
20.			<ApplicationReferenceNumber> amended for new admission year i.e. 2012
21.			<StaffChild> tag added
22.			<InYear> Boolean tag amended to optional
23.			<MultipleBirth> tag added
24.			
25.	Dec 2011	ADT(IN)	<ADTversion> number changed to v9.1
26.			<ApplicationReferenceNumber> amended for new admission year i.e. 2013 (could be 2012 for inyear)
27.			<StaffChild> tag added
28.			<InYear> Boolean tag amended to optional
29.			<MultipleBirth> tag added
30.			
31.	Dec 2011	ASL	<ASLversion> number changed to v9.1
32.			EntryYearAndMonth changed to 2013-09
33.			<ApplicationReferenceNumber> amended for new admission year i.e. 2013 (could be 2012 for inyear)
34.			
35.	Dec 2011	ALT	<ALTversion> number changed to v9.1
36.			<ApplicationReferenceNumber> amended for new admission year i.e. 2012
37.			<EntryYearAndMonth> changed to 2013-09
38.			
39.	Dec 2011	ALT(IN)	<ALTversion> number changed to v9.1

40.			<ApplicationReferenceNumber> amended for new admission year i.e. 2013 (could be 2012 for inyear)
41.			
42.	June 2011	ADT	<ADTversion> number changed to v9.1
43.			<ApplicationReferenceNumber> amended for new admission year i.e. 2012
44.			<FSMhistory> container added incorporating <FSMreviewDate> moved from main body; and <FSMinstance container incorporating <FSMstartDate> and <FSMendDate> tags
45.			<FSMeligible> removed as now redundant
46.			<Phones> added to pupil details (as per contacts)
47.			<Email> added to pupil details as per contacts
48.			<LeavingReason> changed codeset

Appendix 7

Clarification on SAON/PAON padding in V5.x admissions files as raised at Supplier Meeting 05/12/2007

The example files have been updated to indicate a minimum field length of 4 for each of these (if present in the case of SAON).

The example files clearly show that padding IS required in both SAON and PAON (^ indicates a space) as illustrated below:

i.e. <SAON>^^2^^^Flat </SAON>
 <PAON>^22</PAON>

The Pupil Level School Census 2008 specification for SAON and PAON specifies 4 characters as the minimum length. This has been taken as the standard for version 5.x admissions files.

As such the following addressing would be used:

22, The Street

<PAON>^22</PAON>
<Street>The^Street</Street>

Flat 22B

<SAON>^22B^^^Flat</SAON>

Alpha House, 1 High Street

<PAON>^^1^^^Alpha^House</PAON>
<Street>High^Street</Street>

Beta House, 21 to 21a High Street

<PAON>^21^^21aBeta^House</PAON>
<Street>High^Street</Street>

First Floor, Alpha House, 1 High Street

<SAON>^^^First^Floor</SAON>
<PAON>^^1^^^Alpha^House</PAON>
<Street>High^Street</Street>

Flat 1B, Beta House, 21 to 21a High Street

<SAON>^^1B^^^Flat</SAON>
<PAON>^21^^21aBeta^House</PAON>
<Street>High^Street</Street>

Alan Strickley

DfE

11th December 2007

Appendix 8

Clarification on includes for sibling/applicant address “not same as pupil” in V5.x admissions files as raised at supplier meeting 05/12/2007

With respect to the note from Terry Keane 15 August 2007 titled “Applicant address in ADT/AOT 4.12 files.”

The schema now includes the following tags in ALL addresses as an amendment to the 4.x series in which they were not included as part of the schema.

<County>
<PostCode>
<Zip>
<Country>
<Easting>
<Northing>
<OSAR>

As such the example files do not need updating as they already reflect this.

Alan Strickley
DfE
11th December 2007

Appendix 9

Clarification on <street> field in BS7666 where there is no named street

According to the data standards for BS7666

http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/govertalk/schemasstandards/e-gif/datastandards/address/bs7666_address.aspx

and the DfE xml schema the field <street> in the BS7666 container is a mandatory field.

```
<Street>Kangaroo Crescent</Street>          100115    1    100    M
```

There are some streets in which the street name does not exist.

In these cases the advice is as follows:

There is no simple definition of a street, and it is defined differently in different contexts. In BS 7666 it is defined as a “way or thoroughfare providing a right of passage on foot, by cycle or by motor vehicle”. This is intended to be all encompassing, allowing flexibility in what may be included in the gazetteer.

Essentially the gazetteer contains records of street references. These references may be any of the following:

- a designated street name – provided by the Street Naming and Numbering Authority;
- a street description – usually used for streets that do not have names, such as country lanes and service roads;
- a street number – a Department for Transport or other Highway Authority route number₁;
- an unofficial street name – likely to be a locally used name that has not been adopted by the Street Naming and Numbering Authority.

The record type identifies the type of street reference. The allowable values are:

1. **Designated street name:** as allocated by the Street Naming and Numbering Authority;
2. **Street description:** a concise description of a street that does not have a name, e.g. ‘King’s Parade - service road behind numbers 101-119’;
3. **Street number:** a number allocated by a highway authority, either the local Highway Authority or Department for Transport (or Scottish equivalent);
4. **Unofficial street name:** a name given by other than the Street Naming and Numbering Authority, for example a private street that has a name.

Appendix 10

Electronic communication statement

It is already lawful to send ordinary day to day communications electronically. The class of documents to which the changes apply are known as 'statutory orders, notices or documents'.

There will no longer be any doubt that most statutory notices can be served or given electronically, including notices to parents provided they consent. Exceptions to this are certain notices about permanent exclusion, and notices to local authorities.

The guidance note provides advice to the education service on the amendment.

<http://publications.education.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/GN20041215.pdf>

Follow the weblink to view or order a hard copy of the Education Act 1996 (Electronic Communications) Order 2004 along with an Explanatory Memorandum.

<http://www.statutelaw.gov.uk/content.aspx?LegType=All+Legislation&title=Education+Act&searchEnacted=0&extentMatchOnly=0&confersPower=0&blanketAmendment=0&sortAlpha=0&PageNumber=2&NavFrom=0&parentActiveTextDocId=933829&ActiveTextDocId=933829&filesize=7743>

A template statement has been issued that LAs and suppliers may want to adopt for their online admissions forms:

The use of electronic communications will speed up communications; reduce reliance on postal services; reduce paperwork and physical storage space; improve record keeping and reduce carbon emissions. If you would like email to be the primary communication source for admissions please indicate below

Yes I would like email to be my primary communication channel for admissions.

You may change this by informing the LA at any time.

Appendix 11

Clarification on reporting of attendance at a school in a non-home LA

An LA has the responsibility to ensure that the children in its authority receive education. Where the child attends a school in the LA in which they live this is not normally a problem. However where the child attends a school outside of the LA this could be more difficult to monitor.

However if schools comply with the Pupil Registration Regulations the responsibility for reporting rests on the schools. As below

A child at LA A applies for and is allocated a place at LA B.

a) The parent accepts the offer

The child is therefore placed onto the register of the school that they have been allocated to on the first day of term.

If the child does not turn up then it will be marked as absent. The school would then follow this up with the parents and the LA concerned

b) the parents refuse the offer

The child is not allocated another place. However the offer still stands until LA A can provide an alternative.

The child is therefore placed onto the register of the school that they have been allocated to on the first day of term.

If the child does not turn up then it will be marked as absent. The school would then follow this up with the parents and the LA concerned

c) the parents do nothing

The child does not turn up and the school in LA B. However the offer still stands until LA A can provide an alternative.

The child is therefore placed onto the register of the school that they have been allocated to on the first day of term.

If the child does not turn up then it will be marked as absent. The school would then follow this up with the parents.

All of this is consistent with the use of the <OfferCode> and the <Accepted> flag in the ATF

Appendix 12

Clarification on the use of <OfferStatus> codes in ALT after offer

The valid codes are as follows

D00179	Offer status
O	Offer
N	No offer
D	Discard (higher preference offered)
A	Accept
C	Not AcCepted

A=Accept

The indication of an A will have the meaning that the place is still offered and that the parent/carer has accepted the place. As such it is still an offer with the caveat that it should not be removed and that it likely that the parent will take up the place in September (or at another specified time). This response may be accompanied by free text or indication of an appeal or wish to go on the waiting list (or both) for another preference.

C=Not AcCepted

The indication of a C will have the meaning that the place is still offered and that the parent/carer has not accepted or refused the place. As such it is still an offer with the caveat that the parent should be contacted as it is unlikely that the parent will take up the place in September (or at another specified time) This response may be accompanied by free text or indication of an appeal or wish to go on the waiting list (or both) for another preference.

It is important to not that the offer still remains until the LA decides to remove it/ Discard the preference. Discard is specifically used where a preference is discarded because a higher preference has been offered or no longer required.

In the case of Not Accepted the preference would still essentially remain as offered until the LA made the decision to remove the offer otherwise there could be a situation of parents turning down offers and ending up without a school place. This is why it is called Not Accepted as in reality a parent can not really reject a place unless the LA accepts this e.g. they are going to use an independent school. Not Accepted (it is not an option in the code) but parents will expect it to be there and its omission could cause problems for those LAs (probably most) that want to offer this as an option.

If there is no response, the offer will as now remain, however the code does allow for an LA to remove the offer if an acceptance is not received in a reasonable time (3 weeks?). In this case it could be considered to be Not Accepted by the LA or could then be discarded or not as the case may be.

There is clearly a case of what to do if a parent either does not respond to an offer or says they don't accept the place. Most LAs will NOT remove the offer as they will only have to offer another (probably less desirable place) except in the case of placed pupils (i.e. didn't get any preferences) where it might be sensible to contact the parents.

What we do not want is for offers to be removed without LA intervention.

In a way Not Accepted is a way of indicating to an LA that an offered place is unlikely to be taken up and they need to intervene. Discard is far more drastic and indicates the complete removal of a place. This should only be undertaken after manual intervention.

Appendix 13

Version 9.1 Example Files

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/schooladmin/ims/datatransfers/coordinatedadmissions/a0204699/coordinated-admissions-2013>

Notes