



Postcode News 96

Summer Q.3/19



Plateglass and Diamond

Are we featuring jewellers or glaziers in this issue? No!

Many people know of the expression “Red-brick universities”, but did you know there are “Plateglass universities” too? At the time of year when many “A” level students await results to see if they can get into the Higher Education (HE) institution of their choice, (whether Red-brick, Plateglass or any other kind!), we look at the challenges which face the HE sector around capturing student data, reporting on graduate outcomes and widening participation to groups less likely to matriculate.

At around the same time as Plateglass Universities were established, the postcode as we now know it also had its birth, so in this issue, we celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of the Postcode – Happy 60th Birthday Postcodes!



First class in ACCURACY

In the academic year 2017-18 there were 2.34 million students studying across 164 Higher Education (HE) institutions. A recent survey of 64 of these institutions showed that data consistency and accuracy has grown in importance. Over 90% of respondents agreed and 65% believed this to be a “top priority”.

A statutory requirement

Universities, Higher Education colleges and other specialist providers of HE have a statutory requirement to report data to the HE funding bodies. HESA, the Higher Education Statistics Agency, works closely with providers to support this process and to analyse and assure the quality of the data they submit.

During the annual HESA return - which takes place in September and October - institutions can resubmit as many times as necessary during the collection. At the end of the collection, the data is signed off and delivered to statutory customers (HE funding bodies). Amendments after this time go into the Fixed Database (post-collection amendments) and incur a charge of 20% of the institution’s annual subscription fee to HESA (which is typically around £30,000). A single error in the return would incur a charge and require a manual fix – also costing valuable man-hours.

Jackie Thompson, Student Data Manager at The University of Bolton, uses AFD’s batch cleansing solution, Refiner, to help ensure student data consistency and accuracy: “When we receive student data from UCAS, the address data is often very poor quality, for example, the full address may be on one line, or there’s a correct address but incorrect postcode, parts of the address are missing etc. Refiner helps fix these issues by looking at the data we have and returning the complete address, validated and in the correct format.”

Biggest daily challenge - UK - HE	Priority		
	Low	Medium	Top
Data Consistency & Accuracy	Low	Medium	Top
Funding	Low	Medium	Top
Time Management	Low	Medium	Top
Learner Behaviour	Low	Medium	Top



Access for all

Widening the access and participation of underrepresented parts of society to enrol in higher education is a key focus of the Office for Students (OfS) for the next 6 years. To measure and achieve this, the OfS is taking an explicitly data-driven approach to the monitoring of institutional performance in this area.

If an HE provider wishes to charge above the basic tuition fee cap, they are required to have an “approved access and participation plan” for students from minority groups, areas of lower Higher Education participation, lower household income and/or lower socioeconomic status groups.

Original Record

Organisation:
Property:
Street: 16 Jericho
Locality:
Town: HD3
Postcode: HD3

Cleansed Record

Organisation:
Property:
Street: 16 Jericho Way
New Locality: Oakes
New Town: HUDDERSFIELD
Postcode: HD3 3WZ

Jackie continued: “We have used AFD’s data controls for ten years now and have enjoyed a good working relationship. Recently, AFD implemented the inclusion of the OfS POLAR (Participation

Postcode	POLAR4 young participation quintile	Adult HE qualification quintile	Participation gap (by ethnicity and GCSE)	Participation gap (by GCSE quintile)
BD58HH	2	1	1	5
1 (low) - 5 (high)				

of Local Areas) data in AFD’s Refiner product, allowing us to automatically append this important data in a batch process. Since this data shows how likely young people are to participate in higher education according to where they live, we are then able to target specific areas with marketing efforts in a bid to meet targets for widening participation and essential funding.”

Influencing the future

“Graduate Outcomes” is a recently introduced annual survey conducted by HESA, capturing the opinions and current employment situation of students 15

“Upgrading to AFD Software within our student management information system took only a couple of hours. It just worked straight away!”



months after graduation. The objective of the survey is to provide insight to current and potential students into career paths and development, give feedback on courses and institutions, and help shape the future of the Higher Education sector.

Key to the completion of the survey is its successful delivery to the intended recipient. The challenge rests with each Higher Education institution to hold accurate contact data of their alumni.

HESA confirms that each institution is required to collect graduates' personal contact details; this could be during final year re-enrolment or during the final teaching weeks of students. It is a requirement for the details to be "robust, accurate and comprehensive" and it is recommended that point of collection validation is in place for when details are entered and updated on the student record, and that alumni contact details are thoroughly cleansed prior to submission to HESA.

Email and telephone validation from AFD further help meet this requirement and achieve the target of "robust, accurate and comprehensive" contact data.

What's the catch?

One of the biggest perceived obstacles in implementing new software is the time involved and integration barriers. Andy Ross, Service Delivery Manager at the University of Dundee, commented: "Upgrading to AFD Software within our student management information system took only a couple of hours. It just worked straight away!"

We use AFD's point-of-entry address validation – both online and in the admissions office - speeding up data entry and validating the addresses entered against the Royal Mail's Postcode Address File.

Having the ability for both staff and students to search by address fragment as well as the standard first-line plus postcode is especially useful for students who may have recently moved – for example, first years or graduates - and who may only partially know their full, correct address."

For over 36 years, AFD Software has specialised in helping ensure data is consistent and accurate in thousands of organisations across multiple sectors, including Higher and Further Education. Do give me a call on 01624 811711 or email joel.miller@afd.co.uk to find out how we can help you.

Diamond Jubilee – the Postcode

2019 marks the 60th Anniversary of the Postcode in the UK.

We enter our Postcode almost daily for online shopping, confirming identity, checking the traffic home, planning journeys for the following day etc. In fact, a recent survey by the Royal Mail showed some people are more likely to know their Postcode than remember birthdays and key anniversaries! But how well do we know the history of the Postcode?

As mail volumes began to increase during the 1850s, it became clear that a comprehensive addressing solution would be required. Initially, this simply meant splitting London into postal districts, based on the points of the compass and each controlled by a separate head office. Many of these London postal districts are still in use today, e.g. SE, NW. The system was later extended to other large towns and cities, however, it wasn't until 1959 that the then Postmaster General, Ernest Marples, trialled a fuller postal code of the type we know today - in Norwich.

Postcode Address File and Updates

In the early 1980s, the Postcode Address File (PAF) was created,

containing all the UK's business and residential addresses. Data was captured electronically, but maintaining the file with updates was paper-based and slow.


Today PAF is a fully integrated, digital maintenance system that is capable of being updated in real time. It now receives 1,400 updates a day, or over half a million per year, ensuring that it is always the UK's most accurate and up-to-date addressing database; comprising over 30 million deliverable UK addresses across 1.8 million postcodes.

Unique partnership

Following a careful selection process almost a decade ago, AFD was chosen by Royal Mail to check, process and distribute the primary PAF data to all users of "raw" PAF. This is the data on which over 40,000 organisations rely and is regularly accessed by millions of people daily around the world.

With AFD's Address Management team together having over 450 years of collective PAF experience, no-one knows the Royal Mail PAF as well as the team at AFD. This knowledge and experience help the thousands of organisations we directly serve to overcome their address data challenges – with the most comprehensive and up

to date sources of data. AFD Software is the best option to solve your address data challenges.



Jul. 07, 1959 – “The Postmaster General, Mr. Ernest Marples, this afternoon visited Norwich to inspect the sorting office where eight electronic sorting machines (Elsie) have been installed. He also announced that everyone in and around Norwich is to be given a postal code and asked to use it as the last line of their postal address. This will apply to residents, firms and business houses alike - in fact everyone whose present address includes the words “Norwich, Norfolk”. He said the people of Norwich will be the first in the world to use postal codes in this way. The object is to open the way for the automatic sorting of letters. Photo shows Mr. Ernest Marples feeding letters into one of the electronic sorting machines at Norwich today. Each of the machines costs about £15,000 and sorts 3,000 letters an hour.”

Call Joel Miller on **01624 811711**
or email joel.miller@afd.co.uk to
discuss your requirements today.

Between April and June 2019 there were significant updates to data on The Royal Mail Postcode Address File (PAF). These included 14 new localities; 9,554 new postcodes; 130,405 new delivery points and 26,889 delivery point changes.

Postcode	Double Dependant Locality	Dependant Locality	Post Town
BA3 3		WESTFIELD	RADSTOCK
BA3 4	WESTFIELD INDUSTRIAL ESTATE	WESTFIELD	RADSTOCK
BA3 4		WESTFIELD	RADSTOCK
BA3 5		WESTFIELD	RADSTOCK
BS37 0		YATE	BRISTOL
BS39 5		STOWEY	BRISTOL
CF82 9		GILFACH	BARGOED
NE45 5		ROMAN HEIGHTS	CORBRIDGE
NG13 7		BINGHAM	NOTTINGHAM
RG40 4		FINCHWOOD PARK	WOKINGHAM
S32 4		GREAT LONGSTONE	HOPE VALLEY
TD5 8		PINNACLEHILL INDUSTRIAL ESTATE	KELSO
TQ12 6	REGENCY COURT	STOVER	NEWTON ABBOT
YO51 9	KIRBY HILL	BOROUGHBRIDGE	YORK

The most up-to-date PAF data is available now in our latest Q.3/19 update. You can order updates for any AFD Software solution by calling 01624 811711 or email postcode@afd.co.uk



Judy Mills – General Administrator

Having been born in Darlington and grown up in Africa, Judy moved to the Isle of Man with her family in 1987. She joined AFD as a Finance Administrator in 1998 and retired from fulltime employment as AFD's General Manager in 2010.

“Having enjoyed my time at AFD and being part of a great community, I continue to work one day a week

as a General Administrator, enjoying a wide variety of tasks, no two days being the same.

During my 20 years with AFD, I have had the privilege of seeing the group grow from strength to strength, helping thousands of organisations correctly address and deliver services, contributing to the welfare of hundreds of charities, along with bringing the bible alive throughout the world with AFD Group's Friends and Heroes series.”

Since leaving fulltime employment, Judy and husband Peter have enjoyed travelling the world, making frequent visits to New Zealand (Judy's favourite destination).

When not travelling, leisure time for Judy is filled with gardening, reading, patchwork quilting, and walking through the Island's stunning scenery. Judy adds: “But I always look forward to and enjoy, my one day a week with my friends and colleagues at AFD”.

Phone Registrations

Following several years of successful use of our automatic internet registration and web manual registration options, our 0800 FREEPHONE registrations number has largely fallen into disuse. We are therefore proposing to discontinue this option after 31 December 2019. If the proposal to withdraw this option causes you concern, please give Helen Torr a call on **01624 811711** or email helen.torr@afd.co.uk

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