

Greetings,

Our team at the Coordinating Board is grateful for the incredible effort shown by institutions of higher education across Texas as our community develops new processes to report recommended course sequence (RCS) data and make the information more accessible to students.

This communication contains important information about the process for the 2024 [Recommended Course Sequence](#) (RCS) data submission cycle. The 2024 RCS data collection refers to programs active at your institution for the 2022-2023 academic year. All public institutions that offer undergraduate certificates or degrees are required to report in the annual data collection. Schools will report their course sequence data for the 2022-2023 academic year by June 17, 2024.

Thank you for the opportunity to collaboratively work through the challenges in past RCS data collections. We heard your feedback about the 2021 reporting experience, and after revising the reporting template, we worked with over 35 institutions in Summer and Fall 2023 to trial a new template and correct data previously submitted in 2021. The reporting template you will use for 2024 introduces new ways of identifying errors before you ever submit data to THECB. This gives you control to validate data in real-time and flag potential errors within the data before you submit. We are excited to share these improvements and believe they will significantly improve the reporting process and ensure the submission of accurate data.

Please review and download the RCS submission instructions and template posted on the RCS Resource website: <https://www.highered.texas.gov/our-work/supporting-our-institutions/institutional-resources/recommended-course-sequence/>.

The due date to submit your institution's RCS data is June 17, 2024. Please allow sufficient time to familiarize yourself with the updated template and changes to reporting instructions. This deadline will allow us time to process your data and ready schools' data for the advising tool Map My Path that is set to launch later this year. Schools are encouraged to submit their completed RCS data at their earliest opportunity.

We will offer live help sessions from April 8-June 17, 2024. The live help sessions are offered 3 days each week. These are closed sessions between the institution and at least one THECB staff member, and you can choose between a 15-minute quick consultation or 60-minute extended session. Book as often as needed [via this link](#) or through the [RCS resource site](#).

We acknowledge that this is a new process for everyone involved. We greatly appreciate your cooperation and diligence in submitting your data. You may submit questions to our Recommended Course Sequence team at RCS@highered.texas.gov.

Getting Started

The 2024 RCS data collection refers to programs active at your institution for the 2022-2023 academic year.

We strongly urge institutions to select one point of contact who takes responsibility for guiding this project. This person is tasked with understanding the information in this packet, managing the data submission process, and validating the data against the reporting requirements. We recommend choosing either your Chief Reporting Official or Chief Academic Officer/Chief Instructional Officer.

THECB will give many institutions their original or corrected data submissions to use as a starting point for the 2024 data collection. All schools should check the Special Projects folder in MOVEit for Excel data files and/or a PDF with institution-specific details, though not every institution will have a document in their folder. Although the new submission involves reporting RCS data for 2022-2023, we encourage eligible institutions to leverage as much of their previous data as possible, so long as it continues to be relevant. In some cases, institutions will not be eligible to use prior data and should expect to start anew.

Contact us at RCS@highered.texas.gov if you have questions about the files received via MOVEit.

Resources

File Name	Description
RCS Resource Site & Video Walkthrough	The RCS Resource site contains information, FAQs, and downloadable files to aid in the reporting process. A video walkthrough that supplements the written instructions can also be found on this site.
Step-by-Step Instructions	Instructions will guide the user on what information to report, how to use the provided template, and steps to error-check your Group and Sequence data. Instructions begin in the next section of this document.
RCS Reporting Template	The new reporting template is a great leap forward over the 2021 and 2023 predecessors. Embedded macros (i.e., backend code in Excel) will assist institutions with error-checking the data prior to creating and submitting the data file. Download the template from the Resource site .
Live Help Sessions	Schedule a live help session between your institution and a THECB staff member at a day and time convenient to you. Choose between a 15-minute consultation or 60-minute extended session. Book a

	live help session now . Sessions are generally available at the times shown below.		
	Monday 2-5p	Wednesday 10a - 12p 2-5p	Thursday 10a - 12p 2-5p
Email	Send any questions and your final data files to us at RCS@highered.texas.gov		

Step-by-Step Instructions

These are the step-by-step instructions for the data submission process. Contact us immediately if you have questions about your institution's starting point, previous data, or institution-specific instructions in MOVEit.

Summary of Tasks:

Here is a summary of the tasks you will complete:

1. [Read all written instructions, including the Appendices at the end of this document, and understand the resources provided.](#)
2. [Organize all reporting materials.](#)
3. [Assess any existing data to determine whether any returned RCS data changed significantly or if it can still be leveraged for this collection; if no prior data exists, report anew.](#)
4. [Complete steps to establish the template as a trusted file with working macros.](#)
5. [Familiarize yourself with the overview of the new reporting template.](#)
6. [Use the new reporting template to add data.](#)
7. [Initiate the validation process to check for errors and resolve issues.](#)
8. [Generate the final data files and submit the RCS data by June 17, 2024.](#)

Task 1: Read all written instructions and understand the resources provided.

Complete the following tasks:

1. Read the instructions in this document. Appendix A and B provide a visual representation of the columns used for the 2021 submission and the columns currently being used for the 2024 submission. You will notice that apart from a few minor changes, the 2024 template columns mirror the columns used before. Appendix C provides an overview of RCS reporting requirements including what programs to report, how to report multi-campus districts, and course level reporting guidance. Please review Appendix C carefully if this is your first-time submitting RCS data for your institution.

2. Review the Resources table above to learn about the resources that will assist you with this submission.
3. Watch the video walkthrough for a demonstration of how to use the new reporting template. The video is available on the [RCS Resource site](#).

Task 2: Organize all reporting materials

1. If you previously reported data to us in 2021 or 2023:
 - a. Check the Special Projects folder in MOVEit for Excel data files and/or a PDF with institution-specific reporting instructions.
 - b. Read any institution-specific reporting instructions and contact us with questions. Some institutions with prior data may have special instructions in MOVEit explaining why their data cannot be used and will be asked to start anew. See 2a and 2b below if you must start anew.
 - c. Download all Excel data files to your workspace. (Note: the number of Excel files will vary by institution).
 - d. Download the 2024 reporting template from the [Resource site](#) to your workspace.
 - e. Continue with [Task 3](#).
2. If you did not previously report data to us in 2021 or 2023:
 - a. Check MOVEit for a PDF with institution-specific reporting instructions. Move on to 2b if you don't have a file; not all institutions will have a PDF in their folder.
 - b. Download the 2024 reporting template from the [Resource site](#) to your workspace.
 - c. Continue with [Task 4](#).

Task 3: Assess any existing data

Assess any data files from 2021 or 2023 in your MOVEit folder

We strongly recommend that you review any data you submitted in 2021 or 2023 (for those institutions who corrected their baseline data errors) to decide how you would like to approach this 2024 submission.

Review the options below to assess your 2024 submission:

- Option 1: If you believe your data will not have significant changes, we encourage you to leverage previously submitted data by copying and pasting it into the current template as instructed in [Task 6](#). This will give you a good starting place for updating courses and programs as needed.

- Option 2: If you believe your data will have significant changes between the 2021-2022 submission and the 2022-2023 submission, it may be better to start off with a clean version of your data. You can always copy over your new information into the new template or utilize the drop-down and free text fields to input information one by one.

Task 4: Complete steps to establish the template as a trusted file

Attention! All institutions must follow these steps to set up the new reporting template before including data in the new template. All institutions are required to use the 2024 reporting template for this submission.

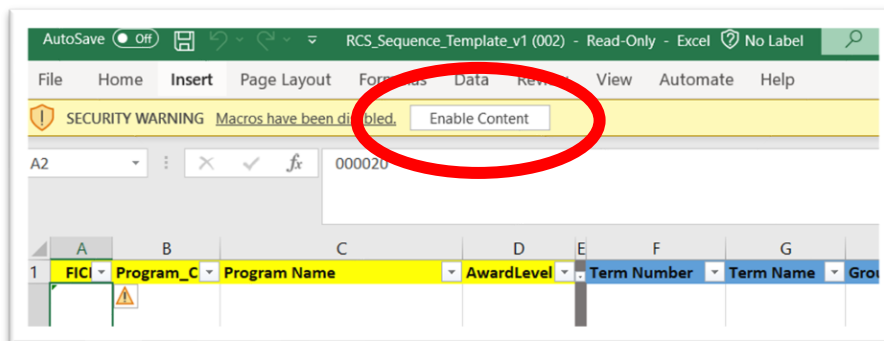
Your institution's IT security settings may require you to remove security warnings from the Excel file and identify it as a trusted file before you can use the full features of the new template. Use the following steps to get the file ready in your local workspace.

Verify that the template is saved to your local workspace.

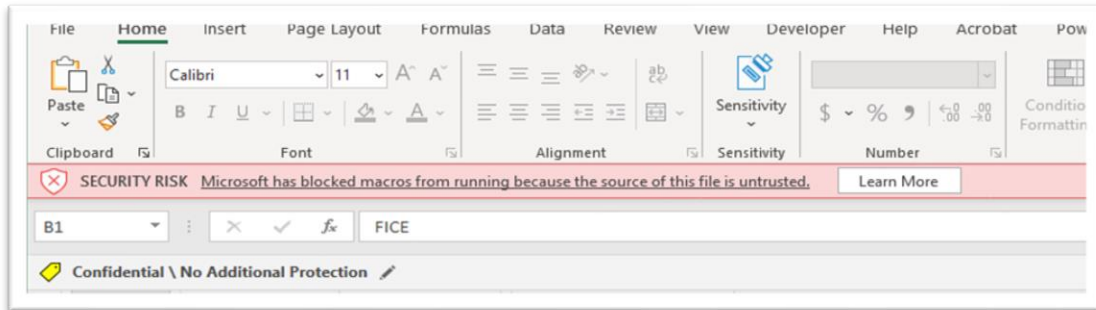
1. [Task 2](#) instructed you to download the reporting template from the RCS resource site. Determine if the reporting template is in your desired workspace or if you need to move it to another folder, creating that folder if needed.
2. Verify that the template is in the intended folder.

Enable content and disable security warnings. Use the following steps to resolve security warnings for your template (Note: Each institution may have different institutional security settings, so not all steps listed here may apply.):

1. Open the new reporting template.
2. In the banner at the top of the screen, click 'Enable Content' to enable the macros that control the workbook:



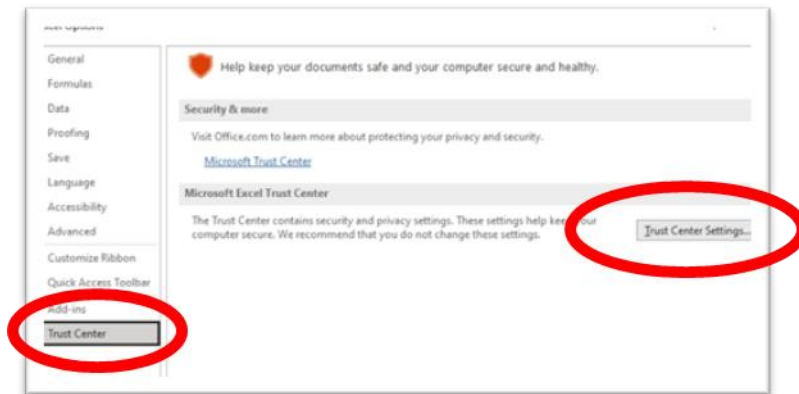
- Depending on your institution's Microsoft settings, you may get an additional Security Risk warning like the one below.



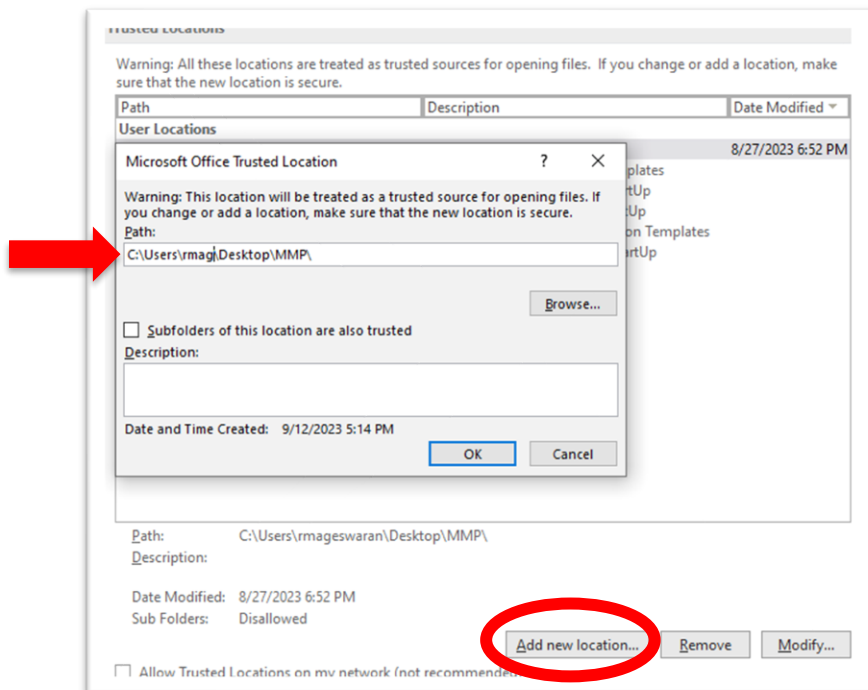
- If you don't get this Security Risk warning, you are good to proceed with the template as described in [Task 5](#); otherwise, continue with Step 4.
- (As needed) Remove the 'Security Risk' warning by clicking on 'File' in the top menu bar and choose 'Options':



- a. Click on 'Trust Center' and then 'Trust Center Settings' under the 'Trust Center' option.



- b. Click on 'Add New Location' and add the path where the Excel template is placed. It can be an existing path of the file, or it can be a new folder. Ensure the Excel template is placed in the folder specified.
 - c. Updating the folder as a trusted location is a one-time activity with Excel.
5. Save and close the file.
 6. You are ready to proceed with [Task 5](#).



Task 5: Familiarize yourself with the new reporting template.

Understand the new reporting template: The new reporting template includes additional guardrails to maintain data consistency across all institutions. Columns are locked to prevent column names from being edited and new columns from being added.

The template contains the following sheets:

1. **Validation Rules**: Embedded macros are used within the template to ensure accurate and consistent submission of the data. These macros rely on validation rules that provide guardrails for the data collection process, correcting for many of the questions and errors we observed in the initial collection and subsequent resubmission.
 - a. Each column within the ‘Sequence Data’ and ‘Group Data’ sheets are listed alongside the validation rules we have implemented. Several columns have been updated with dropdown and auto population functionalities that are based on data institutions submitted to the Coordinating Board through CBM reports (see item 2 ‘IHE Reference Data’ sheet). Additional information about how to interpret the validation status within the ‘IHE Reference Data’ sheet, along with details about the fixed width file creation process, are also found in this sheet.
 - b. Please read this sheet thoroughly to understand how to report data within each column of the template correctly and how to decipher errors within your submission. This information will be helpful later when completing [Task 6](#).
2. **IHE Reference Data**: We are leveraging institutional data provided to us across various data sources including the program inventory, course enrollment (CBM004/CBM0CS), and core curriculum to validate the data being provided across programs. This sheet will reflect institution specific information once a FICE code is entered within the template.
 - a. These first columns (‘FICE’, ‘CIP’, ‘Program Name’, and ‘Award’) reflect active programs in 2022-2023 for your institution. You will need to provide a course sequence for each program listed in these columns. Please email us if you believe there is an error with your program list.
 - b. The next set of columns (‘FICE’, ‘Courses CBM004/OCS (2019-2023)’, ‘Course Number’, ‘Course Title’, and ‘SCH’) reflect a list of courses taught at your institution between 2019-2023. Any course utilized within your course sequences must appear on this list. The Coordinating Board determined that only courses actively taught within the past five years could be used within the course sequences to ensure that students are not provided with outdated information in any THECB tools or reports.
 - c. The next set of columns (‘FICE’, ‘Core Courses (2022-2023)’, and ‘Course Number’) reflect the 2022-2023 core courses approved for your institution.
 - d. The next set of columns (‘Term Number’, ‘Term, Name’, ‘Group Category’, ‘Core Group Name’, ‘Core Group Number’, and ‘Core Group Max SCH’) demonstrate the valid options available for you to use across the ‘Sequence Data’ and ‘Group Data’ sheets.

- i. 'Group Category': There is a new category added to the 2024 template called CG, or Core Group. Guidance has been updated to reflect the following:
 1. CG-Core Group: this group includes core curriculum requirements that apply across all majors.
 - a. Like LG, you will not provide course options for this group.
 - b. Any core requirement that differs because of a student's award level or major/program is considered outside of 'CG' and should be reported as 'MG'.
 - c. Previously, this information was captured in 'IG' and will now be captured within 'CG'.
 2. IG-Institutional Group: this group includes non-core related course requirements that apply to all students regardless of their major.
 3. MG-Major-specific Group: this group includes any non-elective groups that apply to a specific major or program. This may also include scenarios in which students must choose from a subset of course options to satisfy core curriculum requirements.
 - a. Examples include different core requirements for students completing an AA (or BA) versus an AS (or BS). Sometimes students with majors (e.g., STEM-related) are only allowed to choose from a select list of courses from the broader or more general list of core courses. If this is the case, you will need to use the MG category.
 4. EG-Elective Group: this group includes courses that can be chosen for elective credit. This could be for specific majors or for multiple majors.
 5. LG-Large Group: this group contains more than 50 possible non-core course choices.
 - a. Even if an institution's core component area contains more than 50 possible course options, institutions will still need to use the CG category.
 - ii. 'Core Group Name' and 'Core Group Number': These columns leverage the same naming and numbering convention used by the Texas General Education Core Curriculum.
 - e. The last set of columns ('Group Data Validation Result' and 'Sequence Data Result') display an updated status of your data with each click of the validation button on the 'Operations' sheet.
 - i. You will be engaged in an iterative process of validating Group and Sequence data within the 'Operations' sheet until both columns display a 'PASS' state.
3. 'Group Data': You will use this sheet to provide data for all group offerings specified within the Sequence Data sheet.

4. Sequence Data: You will use this sheet to provide data for all programs and their specific course requirements or group offerings.
5. Operations: As you update your data within the Sequence and Group Data sheets, you will need to utilize this sheet to validate your data.

If you encounter an error message at any time, close the Excel file and reopen the file (force-quit Excel if necessary). Reopen the file and attempt to resume work. Contact us immediately and include a screenshot of the error message and sheet data if you cannot proceed.

Task 6: Use the new reporting template to add data

Confirm you have completed the following steps to build an understanding of how data should be reported in the template:

- Reviewed Tasks 1-5 within this instruction manual.
- Reviewed 'Validation Rules' sheet in the template.

If you are starting anew, please follow these steps:

1. Reopen the 2024 reporting template.
2. You will be prompted to enter the 'FICE' for your institution before you can move forward with any other steps.
 - a. There will be an automatic check that corrects any mistyped numbers that may appear in the 'FICE' column. It also powers the data you see in the 'IHE Reference Data' sheet and the drop-down options in the 'Group Data' and 'Sequence Data' sheets.
 - b. If you do not receive this pop up to enter your 'FICE', this will signal that the macros were erased. If this happens, delete the template from the folder/workspace and repeat the steps in [Task 4](#) to make the template a trusted file.
 - c. If you were successful in entering your 'FICE', proceed to Step 3.
3. Review the IHE Reference Data sheet to look at the programs you will be responsible for reporting recommended course sequences on.
4. Go into the 'Sequence Data' and 'Group Data' sheets to manually input information row by row as described below. If you prefer to not utilize the dropdowns, you will need to work in a different Excel file with the same column headings and eventually copy over that information into your new template.
 - a. On the 'Sequence Data' sheet:
 - i. Select your specific program from the 'Program CIP' dropdown menu. Once it's selected, your 'FICE' will automatically appear for that row.
 - ii. Once you click into the 'Program Name' and 'Award' rows, their corresponding information will automatically populate. In cases where a

- ‘Program CIP’ is connected to more than one ‘Program Name’ and/or ‘Award’, you will need to manually select the correct combination of ‘Program CIP’, ‘Program Name’, and ‘Award’ from the dropdown menus.
 - iii. Fill in information for ‘Concentration’ if you are reporting on a particular concentration; otherwise, leave it blank.
 - iv. Select ‘Term Number’, ‘Term Name’, ‘Course Prefix’, and ‘Course Number’ from the dropdown menus.
 - v. If you list out course information in the ‘Course Prefix’ and ‘Course Number’ columns, you will need to provide information in the ‘SCH_from_Seq’ column.
 - vi. If SCH is filled in for the ‘SCH_from_Seq’ column, you can then click into ‘Course Name’ which may automatically populate if there is a course title on file with that same SCH or you may have to type in the name of the course.
 - vii. Fill in information for ‘Crosslist’, ‘Prerequisite’, and ‘Corequisite’ as applicable. It is imperative that you provide any applicable information within the corequisite column as this will be leveraged to alert students of what course pairings they should be made aware of, particularly as it relates to any lecture courses that should be paired with specific lab offerings.
 - viii. Select ‘Group Category’ from the dropdown menu if applicable. If you select CG, ‘Group Number’ will reflect a dropdown menu for you to choose from, otherwise you will need to fill in this information.
 - ix. If you list out a group, you will need to provide information in ‘SCH_from_Group’.
 - x. Fill in information for ‘Preferred Group’ if you would like a student to select a specific course from a broader group of courses.
- b. On the ‘Group Data’ sheet:
 - i. Fill in your ‘FICE’.
 - ii. Select ‘Group Category’ from the dropdown menu. If you select ‘CG’, go to ‘Group Name’ to select from the dropdown menu. Once a selection is made, your ‘Group Number’ will automatically populate. Otherwise, you will need to fill in information for each of these columns.
 - iii. Select ‘Course Prefix’, and ‘Course Number’ from the dropdown menus.
 - iv. ‘Course Name’ may automatically populate when you click into it, but if it doesn’t, go ahead and type in the name of the course.
 - v. Fill in information for ‘SCH_from_Group’ if you are using a MG, EG, or IG category.
 - vi. Fill in information for ‘Crosslist’, ‘Prerequisite’, and ‘Corequisite’ as applicable. It is imperative that you provide any applicable

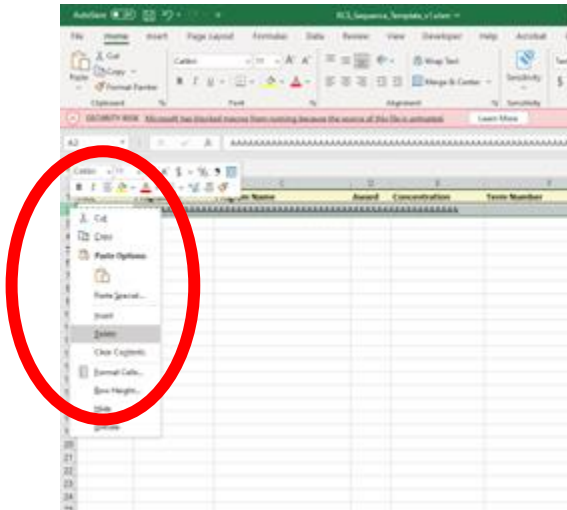
information within the corequisite column as this will be leveraged to alert students of what course pairings, they should be made aware of, particularly as it relates to any lecture courses that should be paired with specific lab offerings.

- vii. Fill in information for 'Group Notes' if you are using a LG category.
- 5. Remember to review the 'Validation Rules' sheet for additional information about each of the columns.
- 6. Skip ahead to #5 below on page 13 of this document before starting the validation and error correction process.

If you plan on leveraging previously submitted data for this new submission, please follow these steps:

1. Reopen the 2024 template.
2. You will be prompted to enter the 'FICE' for your institution before you can move forward with any other steps.
 - a. There will be an automatic check that corrects any mistyped numbers that may appear in the 'FICE' column. It also powers the data you see in the 'IHE Reference Data' sheet and the drop-down options in the 'Group Data' and 'Sequence Data' sheets.
 - b. If you do not receive this pop up to enter your 'FICE', this will signal that the macros were erased. If this happens, delete the template from the folder/workspace and repeat the steps in [Task 4](#) to make the template a trusted file.
 - c. If you were successful in entering your FICE, proceed to Step 3.
3. Click on the 'Sequence Data' sheet. The new 'Sequence Data' sheet includes slight modifications to column names, but the overall sequence of columns remains the same as before. You can see a comparison of the old vs. new column headers in [Appendix A](#) and [Appendix B](#). Please note that we removed Column S (Transfer Institution FICE) from the 2024 template.
 - a. Open your original or corrected 2021 RCS Excel file(s). Verify that your columns in the original file are in the same order as the 2024 template; if not, amend the 2021 file(s) to match the new reporting template. Then, beginning in Row 2, copy all rows with sequence data and paste the rows into the new reporting template on the 'Sequence Data' sheet.
 - i. If your original submission included several files worth of sequence data, you will have to copy that information from all files into the new template as we cannot accept separate sheets for each program. Be sure to start copying data at Row 2! Sometimes Excel files save midway down a sheet, so confirm every time that you are selecting all data on the sheet.

- ii. If you must delete a row (e.g., extra row of column headers), click on the row number at the left corner of a row, then right-click and select 'Delete Row' from the menu. Do not use the Delete or Backspace buttons from your keyboard to delete a row; this will only delete the contents of a cell, not the color-coding of the validation.



- b. Save the new reporting template.
4. Go ahead and complete the same steps to include any group data into the 'Group Data' sheet of the new template.
5. Before moving on to the validation process, please make sure you address the following:
 - a. We have updated guidance for IG and LG and have implemented a new 'Group Category' called Core Group (or CG). You can review this guidance within [Task 5](#).
 - i. Previous guidance on IG stated that a IG group includes courses that apply to more than one major such as institutional requirements and core curriculum courses. Within this current submission, IG should only be used for non-core curriculum related institutional requirements that apply to all students regardless of their major. We created a new category called CG to capture core curriculum requirements that apply across all majors. If you previously used IG to capture any core curriculum related requirements that involved less than 50 courses, you will need to convert it from IG to CG. Furthermore, by using CG, you will no longer be required to list your core related courses within the 'Group Data' sheet. Please pay close attention to any updates you may need to make to your 'Group Data' and 'Sequence Data'.
 - ii. Previous guidance on LG stated that a LG category should be used when there are more than 50 possible course options to choose from. If you previously used LG to capture any core curriculum requirements that

had over 50 course options, you will need to convert it from LG to CG. Please pay close attention to any updates you may need to make to your ‘Group Data’ and ‘Sequence Data’.

- b. Remove any program from your previous submission that was not active for 2022-2023. Add in any programs that were newly active in 2022-2023. The validation process will let you know which programs should be removed and which programs are missing an RCS.

Task 7: Initiate the validation process to check for errors and resolve issues

You will now use the validation functionality (i.e., macros) in the template to error-check your data. This is an iterative process, as it may involve checking multiple columns within a row and/or checking across the ‘Group Data’ and ‘Sequence Data’ sheets. We are checking your institution’s data against data previously reported to the Coordinating Board and other validation rules that apply to the ‘Group Data’ and ‘Sequence Data’ sheets. Refer to the ‘Validation Rules’ sheet in the template for more information.

Here is a summary table of what the different colors mean in the validation process:

Yellow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not all programs listed on the IHE Reference Data sheet are accounted for in your Sequence Data sheet. • SCH_from_Seq or SCH_from_Group number does not match what is listed in the IHE Reference Data sheet.
Pink	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You have missing, incorrect, or duplicative information in one or more columns. • One or more rows may be blank.
Purple	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCH_from_Group number is not possible due to the SCH listed for each of the courses for that group. • If highlighted in the Sequence Data sheet: The Group Category and Group Number does not show up in the Group Data sheet. • If highlighted in the Group Data sheet: The Group Category and Group Number does not show up in the Sequence Data sheet.
Orange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A core course is listed outside of the MG category.

Gray	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are only using one row for your Group Category and Group Number combination. Each group must have at least two rows.
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Run the Group validation check.

1. In the new reporting template with all the Group data for your institution, click on the sheet 'Operations'.
2. Click 'Validation of Group Data' to run the group validation check.
3. The page will automatically take you to the 'Group Data' sheet.
4. Review any cells highlighted in yellow, pink, purple, orange, and gray. Refer to the summary table above as well as the 'Validation Rules' sheet in the template to understand how to interpret each color-coded error or warning in your submission and how to make the necessary corrections to secure a 'PASS' state in your validation. Refer to [Appendix D](#) if you need additional details.
5. Save the file.
6. Complete Steps 2-4 as many times as it takes until all errors are resolved. Remember, cells highlighted in yellow are meant to serve as warning flags for potential errors and will not impede you from validating and submitting your data. All other cells highlighted in any color besides yellow are considered true errors that must be addressed before being able to create your fixed-width file.
7. Save the file.
8. Use the spellcheck feature in Excel to check for typos in the free-text fields, making any necessary corrections until a "PASS" status is recorded on the 'IHE Reference Data' sheet. The 'Group Data' sheet does not need to be in a 'PASS' state for you to engage in Sequence validation.
9. Save the file.

Run the Sequence validation check. In the Sequence file, click the sheet 'Operations'.

1. Click 'Validation of Sequence Data' to run the Sequence validation check. If you have hundreds of rows of data, it may take a few minutes to complete the validation check.
2. The page will automatically take you to the 'Sequence Data' sheet.
3. Review any cells highlighted in yellow, pink, purple, orange, and gray. Refer to the summary table above as well as the 'Validation Rules' sheet in the template to understand how to interpret each color-coded error or warning in your submission and how to make the necessary corrections to secure a 'PASS' state in your validation. Refer to [Appendix E](#) if you need additional details.
4. Check the 'IHE Reference Data' sheet to ensure no programs are highlighted in yellow as this will signal that you have provided an RCS for all active programs within 2022-2023.

5. Save the file.
6. Complete Steps 2-4 as many times as it takes until all hard errors are resolved and you're confident that any fields highlighted in yellow do not have an error.
7. Confirm that the Validation Result in the 'IHE Reference Data' sheet contains a green 'PASS' for Group and Sequence data. If not, repeat the steps to run validation checks on Group and Sequence data.
8. Save the file.
9. Use the spellcheck feature in Excel to check for typos in the free-text fields, making any necessary corrections.
10. Save the file.

Task 8: Generate the final data files and submit the RCS data in a .zip file:

You will submit a .zip file that contains these data files:

1. RCS Excel file (.xlsm format): This is the final RCS Group and Sequence data that you prepared in the previous step. It must be saved in .xlsm format to preserve the macros.
2. Sequence file (fixed-width file / DAT format): Use the instructions below to generate the fixed-width file for your Sequence data.
3. Group file (fixed-width file / DAT format): Use the instructions below to generate the fixed-width file for your Group data.

Generate the fixed-width files: You will use the new reporting template to generate the fixed-width files. You cannot create the fixed-width files until all errors are resolved and the Validation Result in the 'IHE Reference Data' sheet contains a green 'PASS' for Group and Sequence data:

1. Open your final Sequence file and click on the sheet 'Operations'.
2. Click 'Create Fixed Width file'.
3. Follow the prompts to enter the information required by the sheet.
 - a. Your name (i.e., the person preparing the final file)
 - b. Your work email address
 - c. Dataset Status = C
 - d. RCS File Path = the location on your computer or server where the file will be created and in the same workspace as the current Sequence file.
4. Confirm that the file is saved to the desired location.
5. Repeat Steps 1-4 for the Group sheet.

Create a .zip file with the final files: To create a .zip file:

1. Place the three files in the same folder (i.e., one .xlsm and two DAT files).
2. Select all three files.
3. Right-click and select 'Send to' >> 'Compressed (zipped) folder'
4. The .zip file will save in the same folder as the final files.

Submit the .zip file to the Coordinating Board by June 17, 2024. You are welcome to submit your data as soon as it is ready.

1. Email us at RCS@highered.texas.gov and attach the .zip file.
2. Submissions can be sent any time and no later than June 17, 2024.
3. If you do not receive a confirmation email from the Coordinating Board within 48 hours of sending your file, please send a plain-text email to alert us. It is possible that email security settings could block zipped files, in which case we will ask you to submit your files through MOVEit and alert us of doing so over via email.

>> Congratulations! This completes the tasks for the 2024 Recommended Course Sequence data submission. <<

APPENDIX A: Sequence Data Column Header Comparison

2021 Template	2024 Template
Fice Code	FICE
Major/Program CIP	Program CIP
Major/Program Name	Program Name
Degree Type/Award Level	Award
Concentration Name	Concentration
Recommended Sequential Term	Term Number
Recommended Term Name	Term Name
Course Prefix	Course Prefix
Course Number	Course Number
Course Name	Course Name
SCH	SCH_from_Seq
Crosslist	Crosslist
Prerequisite	Prerequisite
Corequisite	Corequisite
Group Category	Group Category
Group Number	Group Number
# SCH from Group for semester	SCH_from_Group
Preferred Course from Group	Preferred Group
Transfer Institution FICE	*removed*

APPENDIX B: Group Data Column Header Comparison

2021 Template	2024 Template
FICE Code	FICE
Group Name	Group Name
Group Category	Group Category
Group Number	Group Number
Course Prefix	Course Prefix
Course Number	Course Number
Course Name	Course Name
SCH	SCH_from_Group
Crosslist	Crosslist
Prerequisite	Prerequisite
Corequisite	Corequisite
Group Notes	Group Notes

APPENDIX C: Overview of RCS Reporting Requirements

The information in this section provides general guidance on data institutions are required to report and data to exclude.

- Only one RCS is required per degree, per program at the 6-digit CIP level for this collection. Institutions may report more, if desired.
 - Institutions may report course sequences for all concentrations available within a major, but it is not required for the collection.
 - If reporting upper-division bachelor's degrees, only enter the course sequence for courses that are taken at your institution. Courses related to admission into the program should not be reported.
 - If a degree program allows for a concentration, report the course sequence for a general degree in that major (no concentration). If the degree program requires a student to pick a concentration, the institution should pick the concentration with the most students enrolled for reporting purposes. Institutions may choose to report additional concentration RCS for degrees/programs with multiple options, but it is not required.
- Multi-campus districts: If you report to the Coordinating Board with the same FICE, then you should only submit one course sequence for your institution; however, if the FICE differs by campus, then please provide the recommended course sequences by campus. If every location offers the same courses and programs, you will have the opportunity to submit your RCS data across the district level, if appropriate, or across several institutions. The Coordinating Board must be notified that sequences apply to all locations.
- Do not report an RCS for the following:
 - IHEs are not required to report degree programs in which a student simultaneously earns a master's degree and bachelor's degree.
 - Course sequences that match the recommended sequences submitted by your institution through the WECM Inventory Access and Update Portal (including AAA, AAS, Level 1 and Level 2 Certificates, Advanced Technical Certificates, Enhanced Skills Certificates, and Occupational Skills Awards) should not be included in this collection.
 - For purposes of reporting an RCS, field of study completions and core curriculum completions are not considered standalone RCS that require reporting here; however, individual Field of Study (FOS) and Core curricula courses that are part of the recommended course sequence should be reported.

- Course level reporting guidance:
 - All college-level courses taught at your institution and needed to complete the program for the specified award must be reported as part of the RCS. This includes all college-level courses needed to reach the minimum SCH for the award.
 - If an institution wants to suggest a student take a specific course from a set of options, this can be reported in the Sequence Data sheet. You will still need to report the full set of course options comprising a group within the Group Data sheet.
 - Do not include developmental education courses or interventions in the sequences. All courses listed should assume students are college-ready in all subjects.

- If students can choose from various course options to fulfill the requirements of the RCS, institutions will report this information on the Group Data sheet:
 - A group must be created to designate the courses that a student can choose from. For example, if a student can choose from more than one course to fulfill a fine arts requirement, a group must be created to indicate which courses they can choose from.
 - Group Category choices range from core groups (CG), institutional groups (IG), major-specific groups (MG), elective groups (EG), and large groups (LG).
 - Institutions can assign their own group numbers to groups (except CG), and these numbers do not have to be sequential.
 - If you plan to disperse the template across departments to gather needed information, this will need to be coordinated by someone at the institution. To help avoid duplication, some options to consider include:
 - Pre-assign a designated range of group numbers to each department/program to help avoid duplication.
 - For example: Music Department to use 001-100, Business Department to use 101-200, etc.

APPENDIX D: Overview of Group Data Errors and Warnings

The information in this section provides additional information on the validation rules used to highlight errors and warnings throughout the validation process.

1. Verify FICE is correct. Errors will be highlighted in pink.
2. Column B ('Group Name'):
 - a. Each 'Group Category' and 'Group Number' combination should have a unique group name. If it doesn't, it will be highlighted in pink.
 - b. If a CG category is used, 'Group Name' should reflect the standard core curriculum name.
3. Columns C and D ('Group Category' and 'Group Number'):
 - a. If a 'Group Category' and 'Group Number' pairing exists on the "Group Data sheet but does not exist on the 'Sequence Data' sheet, cells will be highlighted in purple.
 - b. Each 'Group Category' and "Group Number pairing (excluding CG and LG) should have at least two rows of data. Errors will be highlighted in gray.
 - c. 'Group Number' must be 3 digits (e.g., 004).
 - d. If 'Group Category' is CG or LG, there should only be one row per group number. Additional rows will be highlighted in pink.
4. Columns E and F ('Course Prefix' and 'Course Number'):
 - a. Courses listed within groups must have been taught within the past five years to be considered valid. If 'Course Prefix' and 'Course Number' do not appear on the course list in the 'IHE Reference Data' sheet, cells will be highlighted in pink.
 - b. If you submit any course related information for a CG or LG category, it will be highlighted in pink.
 - c. Core courses can only appear within a Major Group, otherwise 'Course Prefix' and 'Course Number' will be highlighted in orange.
5. Column G ('Course Name'):
 - a. If you submit a course name that differs from the one on file (not all courses will have a name on file), your title will be highlighted in yellow.
 - b. If you submit any course related information for a CG or LG category, it will be highlighted in pink.
6. Column H ('SCH_from_Group'):
 - a. This can only be an integer (e.g., 3). Do not report a range (e.g., 3-4); choose the lowest SCH if a range is possible.
 - b. Any inconsistency in SCH between this column and the SCH column on the 'IHE Reference Data' sheet will be highlighted in yellow.
 - c. Do not report SCH for a CG or LG category, otherwise it will be highlighted in pink.
7. Column L ('Group Notes'):

- a. If a LG category is used, you must provide a URL in this column, otherwise it will be highlighted in pink.

APPENDIX E: Overview of Sequence Data Errors and Warnings

The information in this section provides additional information on the validation rules used to highlight errors and warnings throughout the validation process.

1. Columns A - D: The template verifies the *combination* of 'FICE', 'Program CIP', 'Program Name', and 'Award'. If these fields are pink, this means there is a mismatch across the four columns as compared to what was reported on your institution's [program inventory](#). Refer to the programs listed on the 'IHE Reference Data' sheet to update your submission.
 - a. Column A ('Program CIP'):
 - i. This number can only be six digits. No decimals will be accepted.
 - ii. Verify you are using the correct 'Program CIP'. You can only submit data for programs that exist within the 'IHE Reference Data' sheet.
 - b. Column B ('Program Name'):
 - i. A mismatch with the program inventory may exist. Use the dropdown menu in Column C to select the 'Program Name' associated with the 'Program CIP' in Column B.
 - ii. Multiple program names: In some instances, one 'Program CIP' can have more than one 'Program Name' connected to it. Determine the correct 'Program Name' for the information you are reporting and select it from the dropdown menu.
 - c. Column C ('Award'): The macro is looking for the 'Award' as it is reported in the Program Inventory.
 - i. The name for the Award may be somewhat different than what is provided by your institution. The RCS template will suggest acceptable Awards based on the combination of data in Columns A, B, and C. Determine the correct 'Award' and select it from the dropdown menu.
 - ii. Multiple 'Award': In some instances, an institution might offer a BA or BS for the same 'Program CIP' and 'Program Name'. Determine the correct 'Award' and select it from the dropdown menu.
 - d. Once you amend A - D in one row, save your file and rerun the 'Sequence Validation Check' from the 'Operations' sheet. If the errors are resolved, you can apply the correct combination of 'FICE', 'Program CIP', 'Program Name', and 'Award' to the other rows in that program.
 - i. Beginning with the row with the correct data, highlight Columns A - D in only that row. Hover your mouse on the bottom-right corner of the selection box; hold 'Ctrl' on your keyboard; and drag down for the remaining rows that use the same combination of 'FICE', 'Program CIP', 'Program Name', and 'Award'.
2. Columns H and I ('Course Prefix' and 'Course Number'):

- a. If specific course information is reported, there should be no group information in Columns O-Q ('Group Category', 'Group Number', and 'SCH_from_Group'). If information appears across sequence and course columns, cells will be highlighted in pink.
 - b. If 'Course Prefix' and 'Course Number' do not appear on the course list in the IHE Reference Data sheet, cells will be highlighted in pink.
3. Column J ('Course Name'):
 - a. If you try to submit a course name that differs from the one on file, your title will be highlighted in yellow.
4. Column K ('SCH_from_Seq'):
 - a. This can only be an integer (e.g., 3).
 - b. Do not report a range (e.g., 3-4); choose the lowest SCH if a range is possible.
 - c. Any inconsistency in SCH between this column and the SCH column on the 'IHE Reference Data' sheet will be highlighted in yellow.
5. Columns O – Q ('Group Category', 'Group Number', and 'SCH_from_Group'):
 - a. If group information is present in Columns O-Q (Group Category, Group Number, and 'SCH_from_Group'), there should be no information in Columns H, I, J, and K ('Course Prefix', 'Course Number', 'Course Name', and 'SCH_from_Seq'). If information appears across sequence and course columns, cells will be highlighted in pink.
 - b. Any inconsistency in SCH between this column and the SCH column on the 'IHE Reference Data' sheet will be highlighted in yellow.
 - c. If a 'Group Category' and 'Group Number' pairing exists on the 'Sequence Data' sheet but does not exist on the 'Group Data' sheet, cells will be highlighted in purple.
 - d. 'Group Number' must be 3 digits (e.g., 004). Verify the correct 'Group Number' and enter the value in the cell.
 - e. SCH given for all groups besides CG & LG should be greater than or equal to the lowest SCH among the courses in that group and must be less than or equal to the sum of the SCH given for all courses in that group, otherwise it will be marked as invalid and highlighted in purple.
6. Column R ('Preferred Group'):
 - a. Enter the 'Group Category' and 'Group Number' (e.g., EG 001).
 - b. Verify that specific course information is filled out in columns H-K ('Course Prefix', 'Course Number', 'Course Name', and 'SCH_from_Seq').
 - c. Invalid information will be highlighted in pink.