

## Recommended Course Sequence: Question & Answer Session for 2021 Data Corrections

### **Q1: Is it possible to receive an extension?**

A1: Our initial deadline of August 25, 2023, continues to remain the same. If there are any concerns about meeting this timeline, please reach out to us so that we can do our part to answer any outstanding questions and eliminate any roadblocks that may affect progress with corrections. Contact us at [RCS@highered.texas.gov](mailto:RCS@highered.texas.gov).

### **Q2: Will someone be able to provide guidance on how to handle duplicate records that need to be removed from our RCS data file(s)? The instructions say not to remove rows/records.**

A2: Duplicate records are most likely going to occur within the Group data sheet(s). Please hold off on correcting any errors that involve duplicate records until the very end of the data correction process. All corrected Group data will be consolidated into a single data sheet in Phase 2 of the correction process; do not delete rows or duplicate records until after the consolidation step. Specific instructions will be provided in the near future.

### **Q3: The instructions say to not delete any rows from the template. How do we correct for a stray row (e.g., a blank row) that really does need to be removed?**

A3: Because the error reports call out specific row numbers that need correction, any rows that you add or delete from your original data sheet would prevent you from being able to match up row numbers from the error report to rows on your data sheet, making it harder to find and track your errors. We're asking that any corrections that require the deletion of rows be left until Phase 2, after all other errors have been corrected and data are consolidated into a new, forthcoming template. We recommended adding any new rows to the very end of the existing rows of data so as to not disrupt the cross-matching with the error report(s).

**Q4: Where can I find additional resources about recommended course sequences? The people who worked on this in Fall 2021 are in different positions or have left the institution. Do you have recordings from 2021 that you held that could be reviewed to better understand the project?**

A4: You can go to our RCS webpage and click on the links to our informational webinar recordings from 2021 and 2023: <https://www.highered.texas.gov/our-work/supporting-our-institutions/institutional-resources/recommended-course-sequence/>

**Q5: Are we required to resubmit the original file with corrections or just the corrected rows?**

A5: You will need to submit a brand new file to us with all of your original data that has been corrected. We'll be sending out our revised template very soon which you will use to copy over your data.

**Q6: I'm getting errors about large group electives that allow for any upper-level course. It gives me an error for all of those.**

A6: If you are getting a large group error, there could be several issues going on:

- Make sure your Group Notes column has a URL that a student can click on to see a list of courses that would satisfy the requirement.
- You should not list all 50+ courses that make up a large group.
- If you have less than 50 courses that would satisfy a requirement, you should not be using a large group and must pick a different group category.

**Q7: What if we discovered that some of our institution's programs were omitted in the 2021 submission? When will we be able to add those programs?**

A7: If a program existed in 2021 and was accidentally omitted from your original 2021 submission, you should include the missing program(s) in the current submission cycle. Add any new rows to the very end/bottom of your existing data to not interfere with the cross-matching between your original data and the error report(s).

- If your institution created new programs after the 2021 submission do not include those at this time. We are only interested in the data as of 2021 to create this baseline dataset.

**Q8: You mentioned a forthcoming, updated template. Do we make corrections to the data file that you sent to us, or do we wait for the updated template?**

A8: You should make corrections within the original data file(s) we returned to you. If needed, we provided blank Sequence and Group templates so you can reference the column headers and ordering. Once our 2023 template becomes available, we ask that you copy over all 2021 data into the new template. You will receive instructions on how to copy and consolidate data using the forthcoming, 2023 template.

**Q9: I heard that the recommended course sequence data will be used in a new online planning tool for transfer students. If students are looking at degree plans inside the tool, it is possible that they will see outdated degree plans for some of our programs. Can the tool just use the degree plan on our institution's website that we created in response to SB 25?**

A9: The Coordinating Board realizes that the data being corrected now were collected back in 2021; however, it is likely that most programs across the state will not have undergone major changes over the past two years, thus most of the information is current. The online planning tool is designed to show students how credits earned through courses and exams may transfer to a new institution, which requires degree information to be reported at the program and course levels instead of a link to the institution's website. The tool will direct students to consult the institution's website for the most up-to-date RCS information; students using the tool will also be advised to consult with advisors at their institution of interest to get an official decision about which credits will transfer.

**Q10: We have a transfer equivalency database. This sounds like the information you are looking for. Is the THECB collecting information about this or specific agreements we have with partner institutions?**

A10: We are not collecting data on transfer equivalencies or specific transfer agreements. Our initial priorities are to establish the processes and tools to annually collect RCS data and provide baseline information to students in a centralized, online tool. We hope to be able to collect more robust information about specific transfer equivalencies as our RCS processes and tools mature.

**Q11: The information submitted in 2021 was for programs listed under our prior catalog (2020-2022). Can we just correct any issues with that data and submit updated data for our 2022-2024 catalog in the next submission cycle?**

A11: To prevent another heavy lift from institutions in the next submission cycle, we are continuing to move forward with requiring institutions to correct the 2021 baseline data. Once the RCS baseline is established with accurate and validated data, future submission cycles will only require institutions to report changes to their RCS data (e.g., added, deleted, or changed program or course information) instead of reporting all information on all programs every year. The attention to creating a strong baseline will also promote fewer and fewer errors from year to year.

**Q12: The InvalidSCH sheet seems to be comparing 2021 SCH/degree designations to the current SCH/degree designations. This is creating mismatches on the programs where valid changes have occurred.**

A12: The Invalid SCH report is pulling in the most up-to-date information from the program inventory. It is our understanding that the SCH reported on the program inventory stays the same across many years. Please communicate any additional questions or concerns about the InvalidSCH error report to our RCS mailbox at [RCS@highered.texas.gov](mailto:RCS@highered.texas.gov).

**Q13: The InvalidSCH error report shows my programs multiple times and with different SCH; however, I only listed the programs once on my original submission. How do I correct this?**

A13: If your programs appear multiple times on the InvalidSCH report, the first thing you should do is look at the FICE column within the error report. If you reported your FICE in an incorrect format on the 2021 submission, your program would appear multiple times in the error report. Please go back to your 2021 submission file and correct your FICE. We discovered a mistake on our end where some of the Total RCS SCH values are quite high; it appears that in those cases, the database is adding up SCH values across accepted and rejected data. The most important guidance we can give for this report is to double-check your RCS from your original submission to make sure the SCH added within the sequence data sheet for each program is correct.

**Q14: The InvalidSCH report shows blank cells in the program inventory Min and Max SCH columns. What should I do to correct this?**

A14: Blank cells in these two columns mean that the listed program does not exist in the program inventory. Please double-check that you are using the correct CIP for each of your programs. If you're not familiar with how to find which programs exist for your institution, you can follow this link: <https://apps.highered.texas.gov/program-inventory/?view=InvSearch>. If you still cannot reconcile this issue, we ask that you please hold off on submitting information for that program and remove that data from your original submission, since we will not be able to validate that data at this time.

**Q15: What should I do if the InvalidSCH report is flagging programs in my original submission that are above or below what is reported on the program inventory?**

A15: First, double-check that your Total SCH from your original submission is correctly reported. If not, make the necessary corrections for the given program(s). When you submit your corrected data using our revised 2023 template, this SCH mismatch with the program inventory will come across as a warning flag (i.e., not a hard-coded error that causes the file to be rejected). If there seems to be a big discrepancy with the SCH, please discuss this issue with us as you may have included additional information that wasn't necessary.