

# Three Stages of Data Submission to the Postsecondary Data Partnership

There are three stages to submitting data to the National Student Clearinghouse's (Clearinghouse) Postsecondary Data Partnership (PDP). This document will provide an overview of those stages and examples of the types of scenarios you could encounter. The reason for separating the data submission into three phases is that each phase elicits a notification that may prompt you to take further action.

Upon conclusion of the third stage, your data submission is complete, and you can expect the PDP to produce your reports.

This document's primary audience is PDP participants, who have developed their data files and are ready for data submission.

Please note that the links provided in this document may change over time.

If a link does not work, please begin at [www.studentclearinghouse.org](http://www.studentclearinghouse.org) and navigate to the [Postsecondary Data Partnership \(PDP\) homepage](#).

If you need assistance with data submission or are interested in implementation strategies to join the PDP, please contact Scott Monsefan at Seamless Strategies, Inc. ([support@pdpdata.com](mailto:support@pdpdata.com)).

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## Prerequisite - Account Set Up

This section will describe the accounts and credentials you will need to submit your data files to the PDP. Access to these accounts is the prerequisite for the first stage of data submission.

**The FTP Account:** You will use the file transfer protocol (FTP) account to submit data files to the PDP and later retrieve your PDP Analysis Ready File report. The FTP account has a unique set of credentials created by the PDP for your organization's use that gives organizational users access to a mailbox. Typically, the user ID for the FTP account is your institution's 8-digit OPEID. FTP account credentials are assigned to the FTP account and can be shared if multiple users will access the mailbox.

**The PDP Portal Account** - You will use this account to review and manage your data submission utilizing the File Submission Summary page and to access your PDP Dashboard reports. PDP Portal Account credentials are assigned by the Clearinghouse to individual users and cannot be shared. If you are an existing Clearinghouse user for other products (such as Enrollment Reporting or Student Tracker for Universities and Colleges), then your existing user account will receive the appropriate privileges to access the PDP data portal. Additionally, your email address used for this account will receive PDP related announcements, notifications for data submission, data quality, and reports.

## Phase 1 – Data Submission

Upon conclusion of the pre-requisites and confirmation of your accounts setup, you are ready for the first phase of data submission and subsequent certification. You can submit one or multiple files at a time. Each file will elicit feedback indicating whether the file has passed or failed.

### What you will access in this phase:

- Your email
- Your organization’s PDP FTP Mailbox
- Your PDP File Submission Summary portal

### Submit data via FTP

1. Instructions for submitting data files can be found here:  
<https://www.studentclearinghouse.org/pdphelp/knowledge-base/submitting-data-files-through-ftp/>
2. What happens next? Once you submit your data file to the FTP account, the system will monitor your mailbox and pick up your files.

### First Email Acknowledgement – FTP Receipt

3. Upon submitting your data files, the FTP system will pick up your files and attempt to send them to the PDP system for processing. This step will trigger the first notification you will receive via email. This is an FTP receipt acknowledging that a file (whether valid or not) was picked up by the Clearinghouse sorting system. This email is distributed to anyone associated with the PDP FTP account, typically done during account setup with the Clearinghouse. See an example of the receipt email below. Within 30 minutes of this receipt, expect to receive the second email acknowledgment.

From: National Student Clearinghouse Notification Service <ftpadmin@nslc.org>  
Sent: Wednesday, July 8, 2020 2:45 PM

**National Student Clearinghouse DOWNLOADED "[REDACTED]\_Cohort20152020.csv" from the / Home / 00 [REDACTED] pdp folder. (Download recorded at 7/8/2020 5:45:17 PM.)**

\* PLEASE DO NOT REPLY DIRECTLY TO THIS EMAIL \*

This is an automated notification from an address that is not monitored. If you have questions, or need assistance with your account, please send an email to [secureftp@studentclearinghouse.org](mailto:secureftp@studentclearinghouse.org).

You are receiving this email because our records show you uploaded "[REDACTED]" folder, and delivery receipts have been enabled for this folder.

Please use the following URL and your username/password to view the complete history of this file:

<https://ftps.nslc.org>

Regards,

National Student Clearinghouse Notification Service

No ownership rights to the student Personally Identifiable Information (PII) contained in the response file are being transferred. The privacy of individual students in their records is protected under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act. Further disclosure is prohibited unless permitted by contract and law.

## First Email Acknowledgement – Exceptions

4. What if you do not receive this email? There are two reasons for not receiving the FTP receipt email.
  - a. Your email address was not associated with the FTP Mailbox, and therefore you never received the notification.
    - i. Log-in to your FTP account and navigate to the folder where you uploaded your file.
    - ii. If your file is not present, it means that the system picked it up and attempted to send it to its next destination and you simply did not receive the FTP notification. You can continue with your data submission efforts but may want to reach out to the Clearinghouse [pdpservice@studentclearinghouse.org](mailto:pdpservice@studentclearinghouse.org) and ask them to investigate why you did not receive the email.
  - b. There may be an issue with the system, and your file may not have been picked up for processing.
    - i. Login into your FTP account and navigate to the folder where you uploaded your file.
    - ii. If your file is still present, refresh and wait a total of 30 minutes.
    - iii. If your file is still present, contact the Clearinghouse and request that they investigate:  
[pdpservice@studentclearinghouse.org](mailto:pdpservice@studentclearinghouse.org)

## Second Email Acknowledgement – PDP File Status

5. Once your file is picked up and reviewed, a second email is sent by the actual PDP system indicating whether the submission was successful or contained errors:

ACTION REQUIRED: PDP Course Data File Unable to Load - Organization ID: [REDACTED]

 pdpservice@studentclearinghouse.org  
To: [REDACTED]

The National Student Clearinghouse has received your Course Data File, but cannot accept it because of the following file format error described below. File format error prevents the submission from processing.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please correct the file format error and resubmit your data file.

FILE NAME: [REDACTED]  
 FILE RECEIVED DATE: 08/11/2021  
 SUBMISSION ID: [REDACTED]  
 FTP MAILBOX: [REDACTED]

FILE FORMAT ERROR: Column Header row does not contain the correct number of fields.  
 CORRECTION: As described in the File Formatting and Submission Guide, the column header row must include correct number of column/field labels. Please compare the column header row in your file to the column header requirements in the guide and make the necessary corrections. Resubmit your file.

For your convenience, you can access the File Formatting and Submission Guide [here](#).

\*\*\* Please do not reply to this email.\*\*\*

To access the application and view the status of your file please login to:  
<https://secure.studentclearinghouse.org/dce/faces/portal>

For instructions on how to troubleshoot common file format errors please see the following video tutorial:  
<https://studentclearinghouse.org/academy/courses/pdp/>

If you have questions or need assistance, please contact [PDPService@studentclearinghouse.org](mailto:PDPService@studentclearinghouse.org).

National Student Clearinghouse  
[www.studentclearinghouse.org](http://www.studentclearinghouse.org)

6. If your file was successful (without any errors), you can continue submitting additional files until all files are submitted, then continue to Phase 2 - Data Certification.

## Second Email Acknowledgement – Exceptions

7. If your file has experienced structural or data errors, follow the instructions in the email to review the detailed error report in the PDP application's File Submission Summary page, make the necessary changes to your files, and resubmit them: <https://www.studentclearinghouse.org/pdphelp/knowledge-base/reviewing-validation-errors/>
8. In some circumstances, you may not receive this notification. There are a few primary reasons the submission does not elicit a second notification:
  - a. The file never made it to the PDP system. Some reasons for that are:
    - i. File header is invalid and does not match the required format or values.
      1. Open your file in a text editor and compare your header(s) against the required format: <https://www.studentclearinghouse.org/pdphelp/knowledge-base/formatting-the-header-record/>
    - ii. File type is not csv or txt
      1. Ensure the file type is csv or txt and that your file renders correctly when opened in a text editor. Compare it to the sample files found here: <https://www.studentclearinghouse.org/pdphelp/knowledge-base/sample-data-files/>
    - iii. File name does not start with the PDP mailbox name
      1. Confirm against the required format: <https://www.studentclearinghouse.org/pdphelp/knowledge-base/formatting-a-data-file/>
    - iv. Invalid service ID was used in the file header (second data field of the first row):
      1. Your service ID is provided to you by the Clearinghouse via email. Confirm that you have entered the correct one and if you are unsure, request your service ID from the Clearinghouse ([pdpservice@studentclearinghouse.org](mailto:pdpservice@studentclearinghouse.org)).
  - b. Although rare, it is possible that your account setup was not completed by the Clearinghouse
    - i. If you have confirmed that the previously listed reasons are not the issue, then reach out to the Clearinghouse

([pdpservice@studentclearinghouse.org](mailto:pdpservice@studentclearinghouse.org)) and request their assistance in identifying the problem.

## Phase 2 – Data Certification

Certification tells the PDP system that all your submitted data files are now ready for processing. When Phase 1 has successfully completed and you do not intend to submit any additional files, you can begin the certification process.

### What you will access in this phase:

- Your PDP File Submission Summary portal

### Certify Data

1. From the PDP File Submission Summary portal, navigate to the “Manage Submissions” page and select the “Certify Submission” action:  
<https://www.studentclearinghouse.org/pdphelp/knowledge-base/certifying-submissions/>
2. By selecting this action, the page will refresh and list the following:
  - a. All the files that were successfully submitted and a status of “Passed.”
  - b. “Submission Summary” metadata.
3. Perform a sanity check on the cohort and course populations you submitted. This is an opportunity for you to confirm the completeness of your data and ensure that all desired data were submitted.
  - a. Toward the bottom of the “Manage Submissions” page, in the “Submission Summary” section, carefully review the listed metadata. The cohort metadata lists the student count for each cohort year and term, while the course metadata lists the number of courses for a given academic year and term.
  - b. You can perform additional checks, but at the very least confirm the following:
    - i. Cohort
      1. All your cohort years and terms are accounted for.
      2. The average number of students for a given cohort year and term is accurate.
    - ii. Course
      1. All your academic years and terms are accounted for.
        - a. For example, you may not have students that start in a summer cohort, but your students took courses in the summer, and those should be listed in the course data.
      2. That the number of courses listed for an academic year are in line with your expectations. **Please note** that the course

data is cumulative, so the number of courses in each term will continuously grow as more cohorts are included.

4. If the metadata looks accurate and you are confident in the completeness of your data, click on the certify button and follow the prompts to complete the certification.



5. Your certified data set will now continue to be processed by the PDP, entering Phase 3 - Data Quality.

### Certify Data - Exceptions

6. But what if during your examination of the metadata you find an anomaly? Perhaps a particular cohort or academic year does not have the expected number of records or is completely missing. Depending on the scenario, there are multiple paths you can take.
  - a. If your data appear incomplete due to an unusually small cohort or course data, the first step is to determine in which file this incomplete data resides. Although submitting a new file with the missing information is possible, a better solution is to remove the incomplete file and resubmit an updated version with the full desired data set.
  - b. Remaining on the “Manage Submissions” page, utilize the icon next to each file to look at the contents of the files until you find the questionable file:



Course File		
Academic Year: 2019-20	Academic Term: Spring	Total Course Count: 38
Academic Year: 2020-21	Academic Term: Fall	Total Course Count: 1094

- c. Once the file is identified, make a note of the submission number.
- d. Exit this page and return to the File Submission Summary page



- e. Using the submission number, find the file you would like to remove and use the reject button. This action will change the status of your file to rejected (as if you had deleted it):  
<https://www.studentclearinghouse.org/pdp/help/knowledge-base/rejecting-submissions/>

File Submission Summary

▲ Search

Match  All  Any

Submission Number   
 Submission Type

File Received Date   
 Data Status

Submission Number	Organization Name	Submission Type	Data Status	File Name	No. of Records	File Received Date	Actions
		Course File	Data Quali...	I_00371100pdp_20210311@121602.ZIP ferru...	1135	03/11/2021	<input type="button" value="Reject"/>
Academic Year: 2019-20		Academic Term: Spring		Total Course Count: 38			
Academic Year: 2020-21		Academic Term: Fall		Total Course Count: 1094			

- f. If, during your analysis, you determine that an entire cohort or course data file is missing, then you will need to reject an existing file. Simply exit out of the Manage Submissions page and continue to the next step to submit a new file with the missing data.
- g. Refer to the instructions in Phase 1 - Data Submission to submit your new file, followed by Phase 2 - Data Certification.

## Phase 3 – Data Quality

Once your data is submitted and certified, the PDP system will run a second series of checks across all your data files. Expect results on the same day, within hours of certification. These checks are threshold-based and determine common data quality errors. Additional action may be required based on the results. It is critical that you ensure that your data has passed this stage in order for the PDP to continue processing your files and creating your data reports.

### What you will access in this phase:

- Your email
- Your PDP File Submission Summary portal

### Determine Quality Check Results – 1<sup>st</sup> Method – Check File Status

1. The best way to ensure that this critical step is complete is to monitor your file submission summary page and determine the data status of your file. Refresh this page by clicking the Search or Reset buttons. The status that you are looking for is “Data Quality Passed” or “Data Quality Failed”:

<https://www.studentclearinghouse.org/pdphelp/knowledge-base/reviewing-submissions/>

Postsecondary Data Partnership

#### File Submission Summary

##### Search

Match  All  Any

Submission Number

Submission Type

File Received Date

Data Status

Submission Number	Organization Name	Submission Type	Data Status	File Name	No. of Records	File Received Date	Actions
		Course File					Reject
		Course File					Reject
		Course File					Reject
		Course File					Reject
		Course File	Data Quality Passed				Reject
		Course File					Reject

2. The status of your certified files will update at the same time. Once you have the desired status, navigate to the Review Data Quality page to view the results:

<https://www.studentclearinghouse.org/pdphelp/knowledge-base/reviewing-data-quality-errors/>

## Determine Quality Check Results – 2<sup>nd</sup> Method – Email Notification

- In addition to monitoring the status yourself, keep an eye out for an automated email with your data quality results. The subject line will clearly state whether action needs to be taken. The results are listed in the email, but you can also view them in the PDP portal:

<https://www.studentclearinghouse.org/pdphelp/knowledge-base/reviewing-data-quality-errors/>

ACTION REQUIRED: PDP Data Quality Results - 00[REDACTED]00



Accounts <donotreply@studentclearinghouse.org>

To: [REDACTED]

Reply Reply All Forward

Thu 3/11/2021 12:39 P

Dear Customer/PDP Customer/PDP Participant

Thank you for your recent PDP data submission for [REDACTED]. After file certification, your data submission entered a series of Data Quality checks. You are receiving this email to notify you of some warnings that our system flagged.

Please review the data quality warnings below and let us know if you want to resubmit data, or if the data was submitted as intended and you would like us to continue processing your files.

To review the data quality warnings:

- Visit the following File submission page: <https://secure.studentclearinghouse.org/dce/faces/portal>
- Enter login credentials
- Click on the Review Data Quality button

Details	
Org Id	: [REDACTED]
Org Name	: [REDACTED]
FTP Mailbox ID:	: [REDACTED]
Data Quality Check Status	: Failed

File Details							
Affected Submission Numbers	File Type	Check Name	Check Description	Allowed Threshold Percentage	Status	Failed Record Count	Failed Record Percentage
80147,80551	Cohort	IDENTIFY DUPLICATE STUDENTS WITHIN THE CURRENT SUBMISSION	Determines whether students appear more than once in the current data file.	5%	Failed	594	100%
80147,80551	Cohort	IDENTIFY RECORDS WHICH HAVE GATEWAY MATH STATUS EQUALS GATEWAY ENGLISH STATUS	Determines whether the number of students with the same value for Gateway Math Status and Gateway English Status exceeds the expected threshold. Typically both types of status vary for students.	80%	Passed	404	68%

## Data Quality Checks – Passed

If your data quality checks pass, you do not have to take any action. Your data will continue to be processed, and your reports will be produced within 30 days.

### Data Quality Check – Failed - Override

If the PDP elicits data quality warnings, additional action must be taken before your data continues processing.

4. Determine if the warning is valid. It is common for the data warning not to apply to your data situation.
  - a. From the File Submission Summary page, navigate to the Data Quality page to review your warnings:  
<https://www.studentclearinghouse.org/pdphelp/knowledge-base/reviewing-data-quality-errors/>
  - b. Review each warning carefully, even if it has passed, and determine if the warning is valid and if a correction to the data is required.
    - i. An example of a data warning that may NOT be valid in your situation is the Gateway Status of the student as identified in the Cohort file for math and English. The warning may state that more than 80% of your students appear to have the same value for both math and English Gateway Status, however, this may be a valid situation at your organization, as your policy may be that if a student is required to take Gateway courses, the student must always take both English and math. Another reason could be that the Gateway concept does not exist at your organization, and you have identified all your students as not requiring such a course.
5. If you have determined that the data quality warnings are not of any concern and your data is valid, then you must take an action from the Manage Submission page and Override your data:  
<https://www.studentclearinghouse.org/pdphelp/knowledge-base/overriding-data-quality-errors/>
6. Once you have taken that action, your files will continue processing, and your reports will be delivered by the PDP within 30 days.

### Data Quality Check – Failed – Recertify

If the PDP elicits data quality warnings, you must take action before your data continues processing.

7. From the File Submission Summary page, navigate to the Data Quality page to review your warnings:  
<https://www.studentclearinghouse.org/pdphelp/knowledge-base/reviewing-data-quality-errors/>

8. If you determine that a data quality warning is valid, then you must take additional action.
  - a. Upon reviewing the data, you may determine that you have incorrectly coded a certain data element and must submit a new file.
9. Determine if you need to reject an existing file before submitting a new one. If you are rejecting a file, follow the steps listed in the Certify Data - Exception section: <https://www.studentclearinghouse.org/pdphelp/knowledge-base/rejecting-submissions/>
10. Refer to instructions in Phase 1 - Data Submission to submit your new file.
11. Please note that upon successfully submitting your new files you will have to recertify your data file.
  - a. Utilizing the “Manage Submissions” page, you must now Recertify your data files: <https://www.studentclearinghouse.org/pdphelp/knowledge-base/recertifying-submissions/>
12. Upon recertifying your data, please refer to Phase 3 - Data Quality to review your new data quality results and ensure your data passes.