FAQ's—Conversion Data Requirements

The **Global Data Specs** are now used exclusively for conversion requests.

For questions or clarification please contact Jaci.Denny@RuffaloNL.com to discuss.

What is the #1 issue you see when receiving conversion data?

The Quick Count Summary is not included with the data. It is important to include the Quick Count Summary (summary of the number of inquiries, applications, admits, deposits, and enrolled that will be found in your data). Not including these counts will slow down processing of your data (a table to enter the counts is found on a tab in the Excel template provided).

Can we submit conversion data by using data specifications and layouts from our original project or from other files sent, e.g., TAG suppression files?

All data should have been submitted using the Global Data Specs.

Are the translation tables necessary? OR, I've previously submitted translation tables. Why do I need to provide them again?

Each institution's data and data structures have their own unique idiosyncrasies due to different information systems and data personnel.

The translation tables found in the Excel template help ensure that your institution's data is interpreted and used correctly in producing a meaningful report. Even if translation tables have been produced in the past, it is important to send tables that have been checked for completeness and correctness against the new data. Often, new codes are added between data submissions that are not documented in old tables. It may also be the case that a different RNL data analyst will be working with the data and not have immediate access to older tables.

If we provide simple text instead of codes for "Conversion_Stage Value," "ISOURCE_CD," "App_Type," and "Ethnic_CD," must we provide the translation tables?

If the codes/text for "ISOURCE_CD," "App_Type," and "Ethnic_CD" are clearly understandable, then no table is required. **The "Conversion_Stage Value" (current status/stage) translation table is of critical importance to the report and analysis. This table is required so that no misinterpretations or mistakes in processing will be made.**

Which “ApplicationDate” do we include?

There are typically three possible dates associated with the application:

1. “Application Created Date,” when an online application is started.
2. “Application Submitted Date,” when an online application is fully populated and submitted or a paper application is received.
3. “Application Completed Date,” when all associated ancillary materials (transcripts, text scores, etc.) are received for a decision to be made.

The “ApplicationDate” used for this analysis is the “Application Submitted Date.”

Are “FirstSourceApps” to be classified as inquiries?

Yes, in the Quick Count Summary it is important that the counts include First Source Apps (students who did not enter your student information system until the application arrived) in the inquiry count. While there is a theoretical argument that can be made that these applications were never really inquiries, it is important in documenting your funnel/stream counts to include them as inquiries. In some reports, they will be removed from inquiry counts as appropriate.

We do not track “FirstSourceApps.” How can I provide that?

The easiest way to categorize applications as First Source Apps, meaning that student’s initial contact with the institution is the application for admission, is to mark those who have an ISOURCE_CD that indicates application. Reporting first source apps is particularly important for institutions using Demand Builder and App Cult services.

Caution: We will check your First Source App data by comparing to your ISOURCE_CD data and make changes as follows:

1. If FSA=Y but the ISOURCE_CD is something other than an Application, we will remove the Y.
2. If FSA is null but the ISOURCE_CD is an Application, we will add the Y.

While we use ISOURCE_CD as the primary indicator of a First Source App, we do on occasion find records where the ISOURCE_CD is not an Application, but the Date of First Contact is the same as the Application Date. If we should use the dates to determine First Source Apps, please notify Jaci.Denny@RuffaloNL.com.

We do not keep “CompleteApp” in our student information system. How can I report that?

Typically the following “Conversion_Stage Value” (current status/stage) designations indicate a completed application: Accepted or Admitted, Denied or Rejected, Deposit or Deposit Withdrawn, Accepted/Admit Canceled or Withdrawn, Waitlist, etc.

It is important you review your status codes to make this determination and then populate “CompleteApp” with a “Y” as appropriate. Use the “Conversion_Stage Value” translation table to review and document this.

Caution: Some institutions use a single status, like Canceled, to indicate both canceled applications and canceled admits. This should be avoided, but if this is the case please note in the “Conversion_Stage Value” translation table so that we can use the status in conjunction with app and admit dates to determine “CompleteApp.”

Caution: Some institutions have a status of "completed app," meaning the application is currently in review and no admission decision or status has been given. If your institution does not have such a designation, how will you report these apps?

What data do you need for "ISOURCE_CD"/Translations?

We've received this question from a number of institutions as they track two separate pieces of data dealing with a contact's source:

3. How the contact entered your data system (e.g., high school visit, college day, phone call, application).
4. From information provided by the contact as to how they heard about your institution (e.g., from a friend, in the newspaper).

The data to be provided in column AI is number 1 (above). If an institution would like to include data for number 2 (above) in their file, they may do so in column DY or after.

Why do I need to rename the data template file if I'm placing on my sftp site?

Identifying your data by the file name format requested helps assure staff use the correct files for your report. RNL staff deal with thousands of files during the year, and having the file appropriately identified with the institution name, report type, and date submitted assists with processing.

Example: RNL_RuffaloNLUniversity_Fall2019_Conversion_07152019

Man, you are confusing me with Ethnicity and Race (both now requested in the data). Please clarify.

Prior to 2015, we collected only Ethnicity per the "old" IPEDS definition. We now collect both Ethnicity (Hispanic/Non-Hispanic) and Race (African-American, Asian, etc.); however, the field names (terminology) used is a bit different.

Ethnicity (Hispanic/Non-Hispanic) is collected via column CE, which is called "FLAG_ETHNIC." Populate the cell with a Y if the student is Hispanic; otherwise N.

Race (African-American, Asian, etc.) is collected via column CD, which is called "ETHNIC_CD." This field also requires a translation table.

The terms used are those used in our CRM. We appreciate your flexibility.

Can I email you the data?

No. Emailing sensitive student-level data puts your students at risk for identity theft and your institution at risk for potential legal action. All data should be uploaded to the secure sftp site.

Should you need information regarding the sftp site, username and/or password, please contact your Project Manager.

Data tips and audit checks

- Double-check data for duplicates (no duplicates should be in data).
- Be sure all those with Deposit Dates also have Accepted Dates and Application Dates.

- Be sure all those with Accepted Dates have Application Dates.
- Be sure all Completed Apps have indeed applied, looking at both application date and current status.
- Be sure all Accepted, Deposited, Denied, Waitlisted, Withdrawn, or Canceled accepted students are marked as Complete Applications.
- Be sure all First Source Apps have indeed applied, looking at both application date and current status.
- If calculating the quick summary by sorting and looking at the Excel row number, remember that row 1 contains the column headers and not data (subtract 1 from the final row number).
- The quick summary numbers should be the same whether you use current status or Application, Accepted, Deposited dates. If they are not the same, further analysis may be needed prior to submission.
- If generating the quick summary numbers directly out of your CRM, please compare those numbers to the data file generated prior to submitting.
- Be sure the translation table codes match the data provided.
- Race data should only contain one category. If multiple categories are provided for one record, change to “Other.”