Introduction to the Family Resources Survey

Updated May 2011

Contents

Section 1: General

1.1 Background

The Family Resources Survey (FRS) collects information on the incomes and circumstances of private households in the United Kingdom (or Great Britain before 2002-03).

The FRS was launched in October 1992 to meet the information requirements of analysts in the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). Traditionally, the Department had relied on other government social surveys, notably the Family Expenditure Survey (now known as the Living Costs and Food Survey, previously the Expenditure and Food Survey), and General Household Survey (now known as the General Lifestyle Survey). However, these surveys have relatively small sample sizes and therefore did not provide sufficiently reliable information on many groups in society which were of particular interest to the DWP.

Although some of the information collected is available elsewhere, the FRS provides new or much more detailed information in a number of areas and brings some topics together on one survey. The sample size allows more confidence in the analyses of smaller sub groups, including, for example, regional breakdowns and recipients of certain benefits.

The survey is sponsored by the Department for Work and Pensions. Whilst it was designed with our needs specifically in mind, it contains information that will be of interest to researchers and analysts from a wide range of disciplines in both the public and private sectors.

1.2 Uses of Family Resources Data

The FRS is used widely across the Department. The main uses are:

Households Below Average Income (HBAI) (see http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/hbai.asp). This publication uses household disposable incomes, adjusted for household size and composition, as a proxy for material living standards or, more precisely, for the level of consumption of goods and services that people could attain given the disposable income of the household in which they live. The HBAI data set is also used in the *Pensioners' Income Series* (see http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/pensioners_income.asp), the Department's analysis of trends in components and levels of pensioners' incomes.

Estimates of Take-Up of Income-Related Benefits (see http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/irb.asp). Figures are based on a combination of administrative and survey data. The FRS provides information about people's circumstances, which is used to estimate numbers of people who are not claiming benefits to which they appear to be entitled.

The Department's *Policy Simulation Model (PSM),* used extensively by DWP analysts for policy evaluation and costing of policy options. FRS responses are uprated to current prices, benefits and earnings levels and can be calibrated to the DWP Departmental Report forecasts of benefit caseload. Using FRS data has made it possible to model some aspects of the benefit system which could not be done previously, for example severe disability premiums or allowances for childcare costs.

In addition to their use in formal modelling, FRS data play a vital role in the analysis of patterns of benefit receipt for policy monitoring and evaluation, and benefit forecasting.

The FRS has also been used as a sampling frame for follow up studies to look at particular groups. For example, a follow-up survey of FRS respondents involved follow-up interviews with male non-resident parents about child maintenance arrangements.

Although primary users of FRS data remain within the DWP, the survey is increasingly being used outside the Department. The dataset is provided to other government departments on request. Researchers and analysts outside government can also access the data through the UK Data Archive.

Section 2: End-End process

Figure 1 shows the high-level process map for the Family Resources Survey. The following sections provide further information on each stage of the process.

Figure 1: FRS Process Map

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│      Sample Selection        │
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│       Data Collection        │
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│  Initial Editing and Processing │
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│       DWP Processing         │
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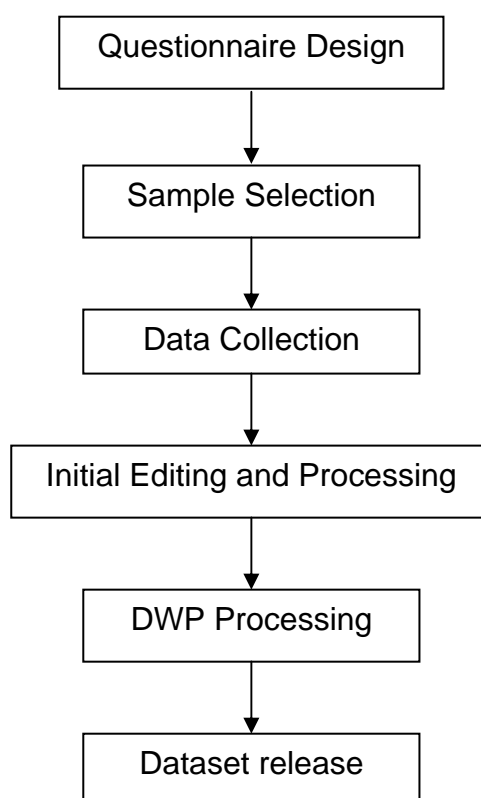
Annex A shows a more complete picture of the end-end process, together with approximate timescales and details of the quality assurance activity at each stage.

2.1 Questionnaire Design

Modelling Social Security benefit entitlement is central to many of the DWP uses of FRS information and therefore the data collected reflects this, focusing on income, including receipt of social security benefits, housing costs and circumstances of household members, such as whether someone gives or receives care or has childcare costs.

This focus also underlies the routing of some questions. For example, detailed questions on the value of liquid assets held are only asked of those respondents who are willing to provide an estimate of the value of their total savings and report a figure between £1,500 and £20,000. Over a quarter of benefit units surveyed fall into this category. This range is wide enough to capture those who may be entitled to benefit based on their capital but reduces the burden on the majority of respondents.

Further questions address other areas relevant to DWP policy such as barriers to moving off benefits and into work and maintenance payment and receipt.

FRS Questionnaire Consultation
In the Summer of each year, FRS users are asked to review the contents of the FRS questionnaire and put forward suggestions for change. This annual consultation exercise is known as the FRS Questionnaire Consultation (FRS QCon), previously known as the IPG.
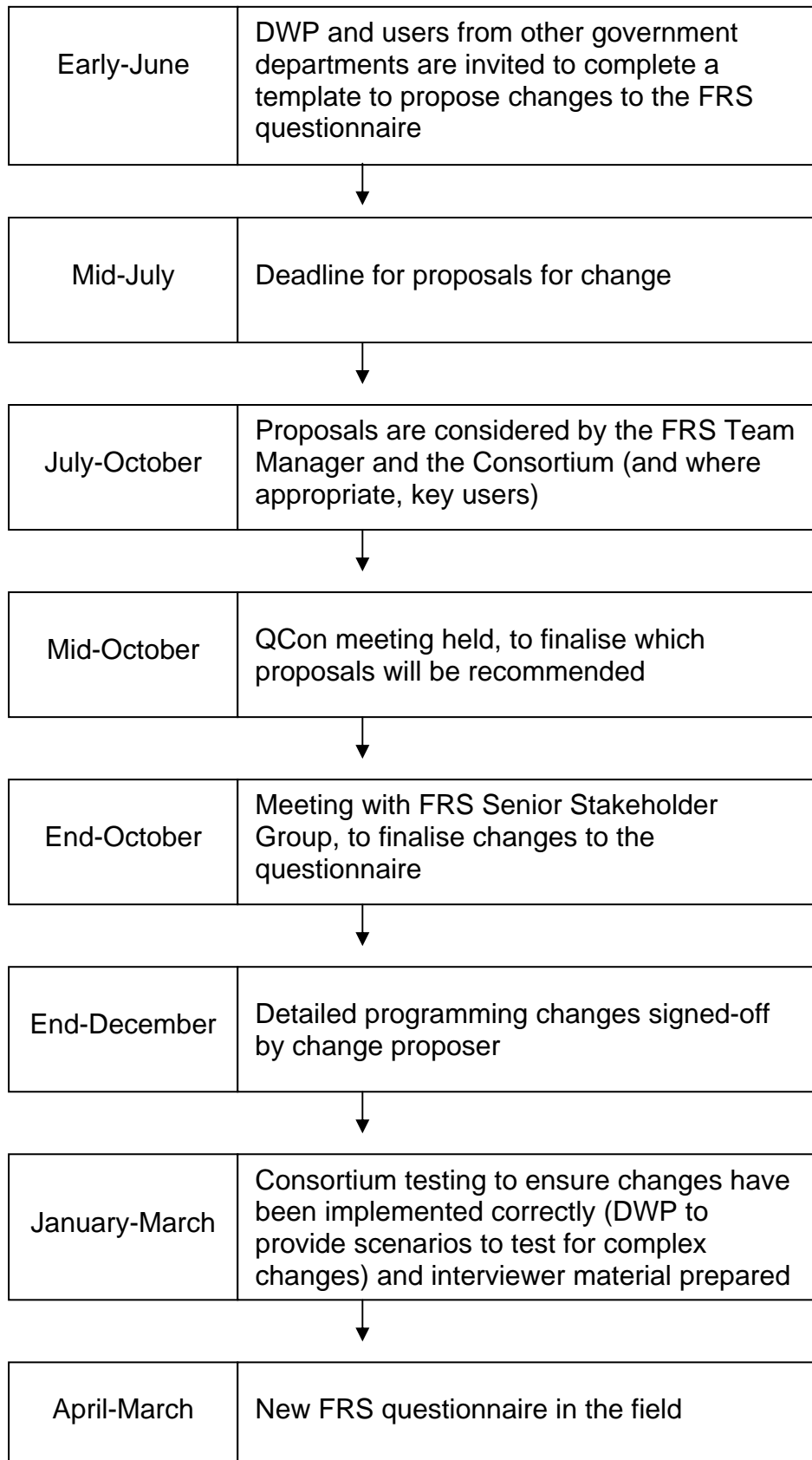
In the following October, FRS users are invited to attend the annual QCon meeting to discuss all the changes which have been proposed. The list of proposals, together with a recommendation to approve or reject, is taken to the FRS Senior Stakeholder Group at the end of October for agreement.

The Senior Stakeholder Group comprises Senior Civil Service representatives from:
- Information Directorate (DWP)
- State Pension Directorate (DWP)
- Strategy Directorate (DWP)
- Child Poverty Directorate (DWP)
- Scotland
- Northern Ireland

Figure 2 shows the detailed plan and timetable for the FRS QCon.

Figure 2: FRS QCon Timetable

Early-June	DWP and users from other government departments are invited to complete a template to propose changes to the FRS questionnaire
Mid-July	Deadline for proposals for change
July-October	Proposals are considered by the FRS Team Manager and the Consortium (and where appropriate, key users)
Mid-October	QCon meeting held, to finalise which proposals will be recommended
End-October	Meeting with FRS Senior Stakeholder Group, to finalise changes to the questionnaire
End-December	Detailed programming changes signed-off by change proposer
January-March	Consortium testing to ensure changes have been implemented correctly (DWP to provide scenarios to test for complex changes) and interviewer material prepared
April-March	New FRS questionnaire in the field

2.2 FRS Questionnaire

The questionnaire is divided into three parts. The first part is the household schedule which is addressed to one person in the household (usually the household reference person (HRP), although other members are encouraged to be present) and mainly asks household level information, such as relationship of individuals to each other, tenure and housing costs. Next is the individual schedule which is addressed to each adult in turn and asks questions about employment, benefits and tax credits, pensions, investments and other income. Information on children in the household is collected by proxy from a responsible adult. A final section goes on to ask the value of investments for relevant respondents.

Table 1 shows the main FRS question blocks together with any known quality concerns about the responses. As with any survey, the FRS is subject to non-response at both item (question) and unit (person/household) level. Income in particular, the capture of which is the primary objective of the FRS, is a sensitive topic and, because is self-reported, is subject to mis-reporting.

Table 1: FRS Question blocks

Question Block	Details	Data Collection Issues
Household Grid	To identify the individuals and relationships within the household to allow the identification of the benefit units.	If a grandparent is the legal guardian of a grandchild, this has to be coded as parent and child for them to be assigned to the same benefit unit.
National Identity and Ethnicity	Country of origin, national identity and ethnicity questions.	
Tenure	Tenure and accommodation type.	Evidence suggests that respondents mistakenly report they reside in council accommodation when the council has transferred housing stock to a Housing Association. It is advised that the split between council and HA tenants may not be reliable.
Household Insurance Policies and charges	Insurance policies, council tax, water and sewerage charges, and property charges	
Income from sub-letting	Rent from sub-letting,	
Free Welfare/School milk, meals and travel	Free welfare/school milk, and free school meals.	Free welfare milk has been replaced by healthy start vouchers. This is reflected in the FRS questionnaire from April 2010.

Question Block	Details	Data Collection Issues
Childcare	Hours and cost of each form of childcare used for each child	The number of hours reported may not match the period for which the cost is reported.
Care given and received	Informal care received and provided	Caring is a sensitive aspect of the questionnaire. The receipt of carers' allowance is dependent on caring for one person for over 35 hours a week – detailed questions are only asked about household members so entitlement can not be determined where care is provided to individuals outside of the household.
Health	Identifies disabled respondents (under a number of different definitions of disability)	Not all those defined as disabled under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) can be identified from the questionnaire.
Education	Highest level of education	
Children Outside the Household	Identification of child maintenance responsibilities	
Employment Status	ILO employment definition	
Details of employment	Details for pay and hours worked for employees and the self-employed.	The number of hours reported may not match the period for which the pay is reported.
Tax Credits	Receipt of tax credits	Respondents do not always understand what they receive and how much they are claiming.
Pension Schemes	Pension provision	Respondents do not always understand their pension provision There is also some confusion with dormant/frozen pensions.
State and other benefits and pensions	Income received from benefits and/or state pensions.	Respondents do not always understand what they receive and how much they are claiming. All benefits are under-reported.
Income from pensions, trusts, royalties and allowances	Income from pensions.	Respondents do not always understand what they receive.
Maintenance, allowances, and other sources of income	Income received from maintenance payments and other sources.	Respondents do not always understand what they receive.

Question Block	Details	Data Collection Issues
Children's income	Income received from jobs and/or trusts	
Adult and Child Social Deprivation	Material deprivation questions – used for the material deprivation poverty indicators.	
Television	Number and types of television – to identify free TV licence receipt	
Financial and other types of assistance from family and friends		
Adults' savings and investments	Value of different accounts and assets held	
Children's savings and investments	Value of different accounts and assets held	
Total assets/changes in income	If income is higher or lower than 12 months ago.	
Benefit unit assets	Value of different accounts held	Unlike the accounts table, each row on the assets table relates to an individual investment. Each row on the accounts table relates to an asset type.
Final questions	Consent for data linking and follow-up studies	

2.3 Sample Selection

Sample Design

In Great Britain the FRS sample uses a stratified clustered sample design.

Step One: Great Britain is divided into postcode sectors. After stratifying by regions and three variables derived from the 2001 Census of the Population[1], a sample of postcode sectors is drawn with a probability of selection that is proportional to size.

Step Two: Within each postcode sector a sample of addresses is selected.

In order to improve the quality of estimates for Scotland the postcode sectors in Scotland are over-sampled. Approximately twice the number of postcode sectors was sampled in Scotland than would be required under an equal-probability sample of the UK.

Each year, one half of the postcode sectors are retained from the previous year's sample, but with new addresses chosen; for the other half of the sample, a fresh selection of postcode sectors is made (which in turn will be retained for the following year). This is to improve comparability between years.

In Northern Ireland the FRS sample uses a stratified random sample design. Northern Ireland stratified into three regions and the number of addresses drawn from each region is in proportion to the number of addresses in the region.

For further information please refer to the methodology chapter of the FRS publication (http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/frs/index/publications.asp).

Sampling Frame

The Great Britain FRS sample uses a stratified clustered probability sample drawn from the Royal Mail's small user's Postcode Address File (PAF). The small user's PAF is a list of all addresses where fewer than 50 items of mail are received a day, and is updated twice a year.

The Northern Ireland FRS sample uses the Valuation and Lands Agency (VLA) property database. This is the most up-to-date listing of private households in Northern Ireland and is made available to the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency for research purposes.
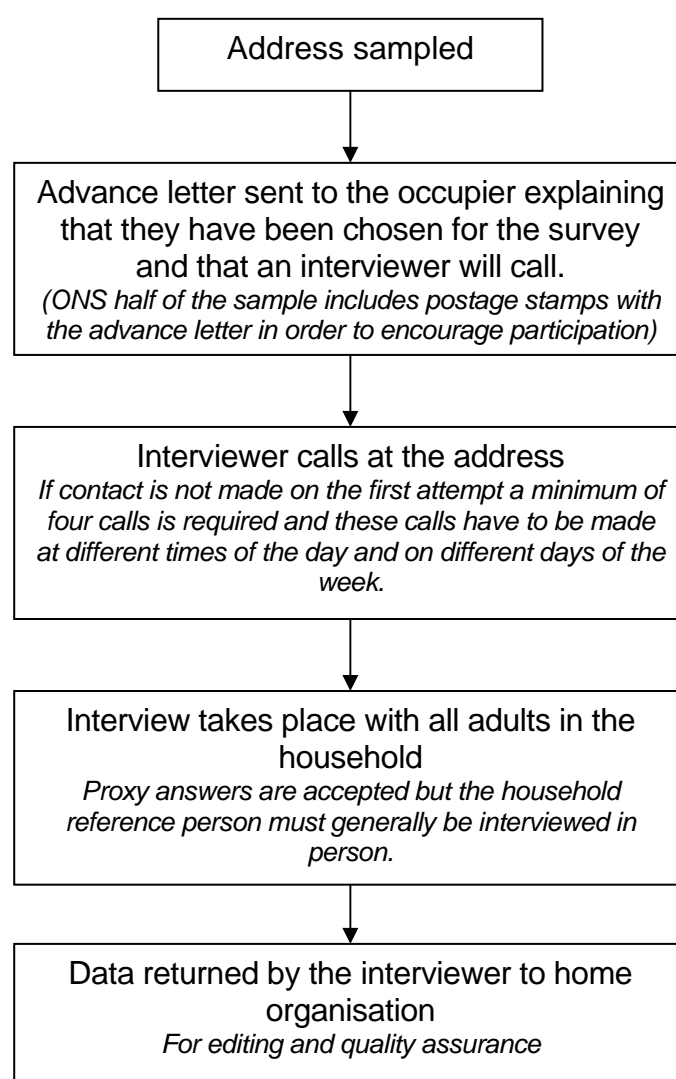
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[1] The proportion of households where the household reference person is in NS-SEC 1-3, the proportion of economically active men aged 16-74, and the proportion of economically active men aged 16-74 who are unemployed.

2.4 Data Collection

A Consortium of the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) has been conducting fieldwork for the FRS since 1992. In 1996, 2000, 2005, and 2010 the FRS contract was tendered as part of the good practice in government programme. The consortium was successful all four times and holds the contract until 2015.

Interviews are carried out on behalf of the DWP by interviewers from ONS and NatCen. Each month the postcode sectors are systematically divided between the two organisations and then assigned to the field staff. Figure 3 shows the fieldwork process.

Figure 3: Fieldwork process

Address sampled

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Advance letter sent to the occupier explaining that they have been chosen for the survey and that an interviewer will call.
(ONS half of the sample includes postage stamps with the advance letter in order to encourage participation)

↓

Interviewer calls at the address
If contact is not made on the first attempt a minimum of four calls is required and these calls have to be made at different times of the day and on different days of the week.

↓

Interview takes place with all adults in the household
Proxy answers are accepted but the household reference person must generally be interviewed in person.

↓

Data returned by the interviewer to home organisation
For editing and quality assurance

The average interview length for Great Britain in 2009-10 was around one hour and 24 minutes, but the time will vary according to the size of household and its circumstances. Less than twelve per cent of interviews lasted more than two hours.

In Northern Ireland the sampling and fieldwork for the survey are carried out by the Central Survey Unit at the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency. The responsibilities for programming the survey questionnaire, making annual modifications, initial data processing and data delivery are retained within ONS and NatCen.

Questionnaire delivery

The FRS was one of the first Government surveys to use Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI). An advantage of this is that checks can be incorporated into the programme to ensure that data is captured correctly at source.

Interviewers are encouraged to consult documentation from respondents at all stages of the interview to ensure that the data are as accurate as possible. For some items, whether or not certain documents are consulted is recorded on the questionnaire, helping users of the data to judge the accuracy.

2.5 Response Rates

The FRS aims to interview all adults in a household. A household is defined as fully co-operating when it meets this requirement. In addition, to count as fully co-operating, there must be fewer than 13 'don't know' or 'refusal' answers to monetary amount questions in the benefit unit schedule (i.e. excluding the assets section of the questionnaire). Proxy interviews, where someone provides answers on behalf of someone else, are accepted only under restricted circumstances.

The final FRS dataset only contains fully co-operating households.

Figure 4 shows how the response rate has changed over time.

Figure 4: FRS Response Rates
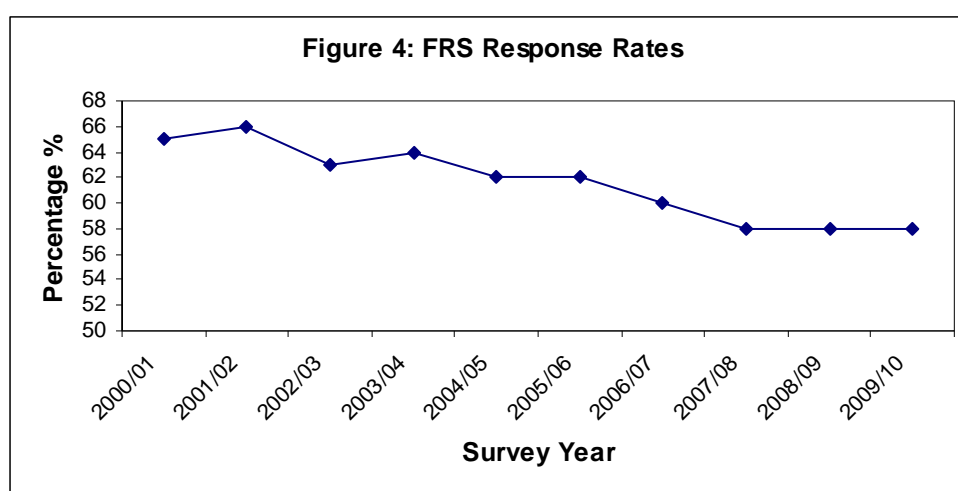
The grossing regime (see section 2.7) implicitly adjusts for non-response.

For further information please refer to the methodology chapter of the FRS publication (http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/frs/index/publications.asp) and the non-response reports (http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/frs/reports/).

Achieved Sample Size

Figure 5 shows how the achieved sample size (number of households) has changed over time.

Figure 5: FRS Achieved Sample Size
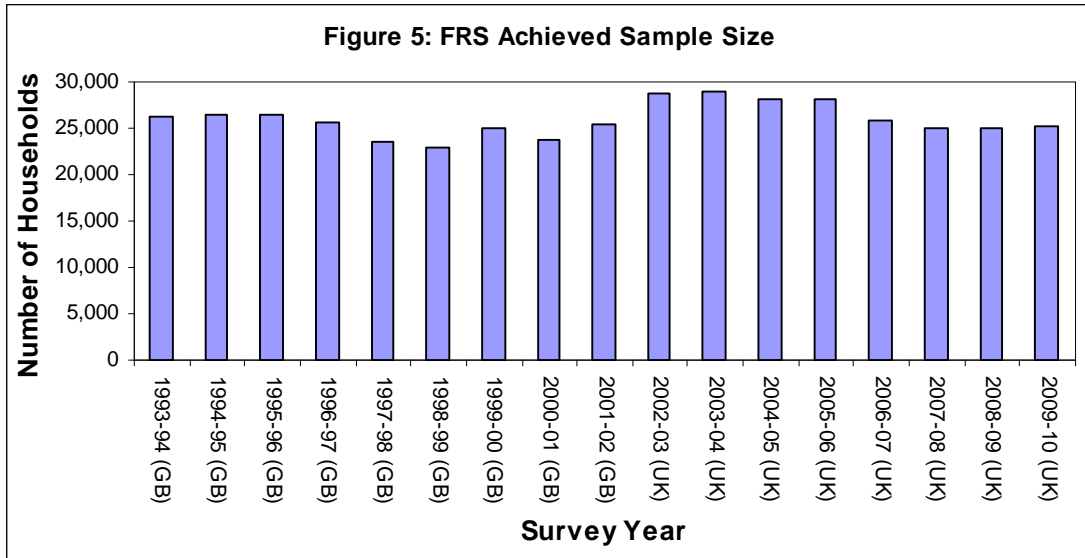
2.6 Initial Editing and Processing

When the information collected from the interview is returned to the interviewer's home organisation, both ONS and NatCen editors review the data collected by the interviewers and, for example:

- o Converts data collected into Standard Occupational Classifications (SOC) and Standard Industrial Classifications (SIC);
- o Considers whether interviewer notes, written when a check has been overridden, require the data collected by the interviewer to change;
- o Imputes amounts for certain benefits when missing, in accordance with editing instructions;
- o Impute an amount for rent and housing benefit if missing for local authority and housing association properties, using a specifically prepared version of the CIPFA tables;
- o Impute and amount for Council Tax if missing, using specifically prepared council tax tables;
- o Impute an amount for net or gross wage if one is missing, using a net to gross calculator spreadsheet.

NatCen then passes the edited version of the data collected by NatCen interviewers to ONS for further quality assurance. ONS complete quality assurance processes on a monthly, six monthly and annual basis which, similar to the editing process, resolve potential discrepancies in the data. The checks identify cases where responses recorded at interview appear to be incorrect on the basis of other given responses or recorded responses appear too high or too low for a specific question. Identified cases are investigated and further edited if appropriate. Issues are often resolved by referring to notes made in the program by interviewers at the time of interview.

2.7 DWP Processing

An overview of the processing of the FRS dataset by the DWP's FRS Team is shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Overview of DWP Processing
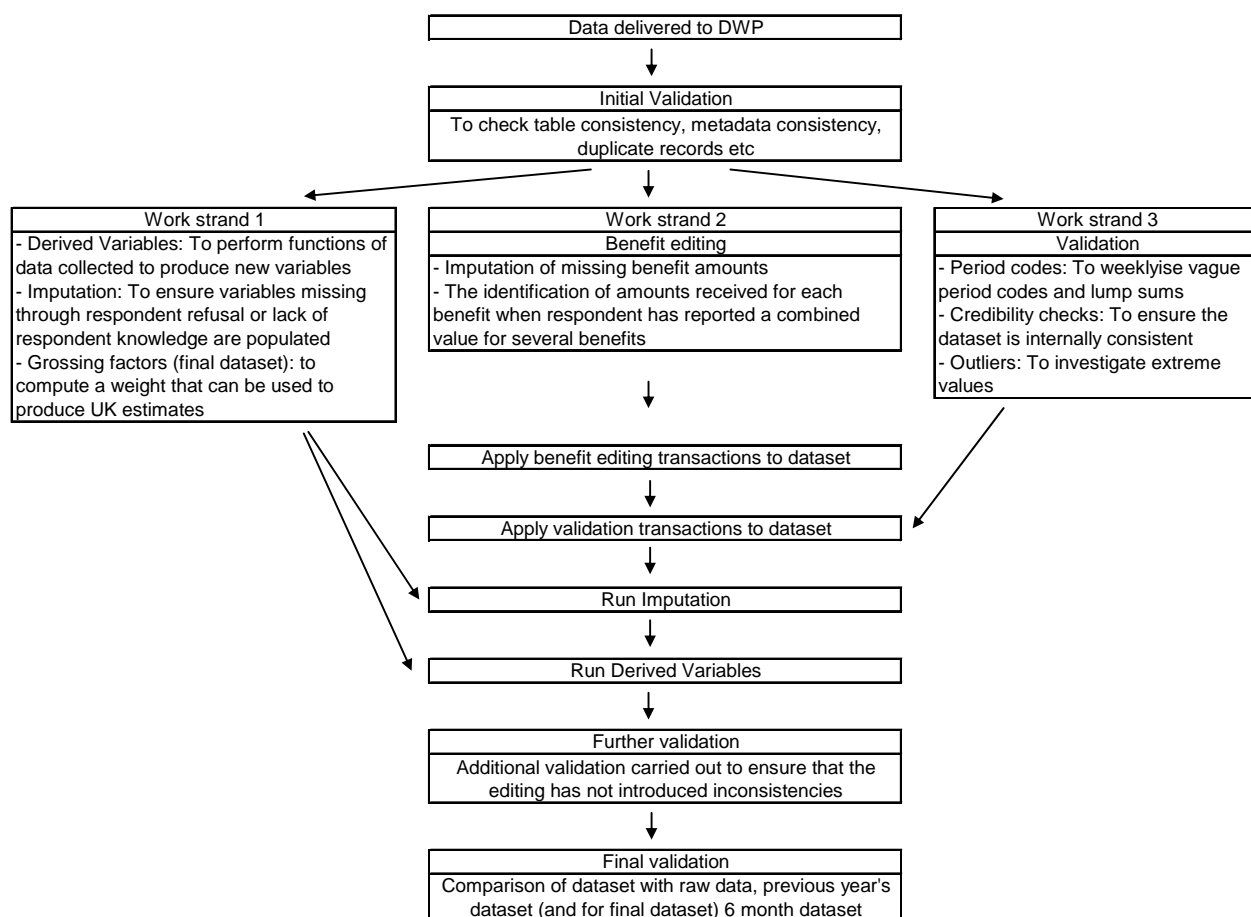
Initial Validation

Initial validation is the process of ensuring that:

i)   All important variables are present;
ii)   The metadata is consistent with the data delivered;
iii)   The data is structurally consistent;

Derived Variables

Derived variables (DVs) are customised variables in the FRS datasets, derived using information collected both in the survey and some from other sources. They are created at the data users' request to make it easier for the users to carry out analysis and to ensure consistent definitions are used in all FRS analyses.

Imputation

A combination of the following methods are used to impute missing or unknown values:

i)   Hot-decking, where the value of interest from a similar respondent is used to impute the missing value;

ii)   Bulk editing, where a batch of missing values that satisfy a particular characteristic are imputed en masse;

iii)   Algorithms, where a missing value is imputed to be the function of other reported values;

Grossing

A number of control variables, taken from external data sources, are used to calculate a grossing factor which ensures the FRS can be used to produce estimates for the UK. In order to reconcile control variables at different levels and estimate their joint population, software provided by the French National Statistics Institute, *Calmar*, has been used. This software makes the final weighted sample distributions match the population distributions. This process is known as calibration weighting. It should be noted that if a few cases are associated with very small or very large grossing factors, grossed estimates will have relatively wide confidence intervals.

Benefit Editing

Benefit editing is the process of ensuring that:

i)   Missing benefit amounts are imputed;

ii)   Benefit receipt (and benefit amounts) recorded are plausible;

iii)   Component parts of multiple benefit amounts reported together are identified and recorded in the dataset.

Period Codes

In the FRS, monetary amounts are converted to a weekly value. To calculate this, respondents are usually asked firstly the amount and then the length of time this covered, recorded as a period code. As part of the conversion process period codes are used in conjunction with amount variables to give weekly totals for all receipts and payments. Weeklyisation is mainly carried out by ONS (see section 2.4). However, sometimes the period code relates to a lump sum or a one-off payment. In these cases, the corresponding value does not automatically convert to a weekly amount. In order for the data to be consistent across the survey, edits are applied to convert most lump sums and one-off payments to weekly amounts. In the same way, where period codes were previously recorded as 'don't know' or 'refused', these are imputed so that the corresponding amount can be converted to a weekly value in the final dataset.

Credibility Checks

Credibility checks ensure that the dataset is internally consistent. For example, it is ensured that payments to the mortgage from outside the household that are included in the mortgage payment are not greater than the mortgage payment itself. Such cases are examined and edited where necessary.

Outliers

Statistical reports of the data are produced to show individual cases where an amount was greater than three standard deviations away from the mean. For these cases, the individual record is examined and where necessary, the case is edited. The outliers remaining in the database are verified as being true values by examining other relevant data.

Further Validation

When all editing has been finalised a further round of credibility and consistency checks are run to ensure that the edits made to the dataset are plausible.

Final Validation

Prior to the release of the final dataset the dataset is compared against the following to ensure that no errors have been introduced through the editing process and that the dataset as a whole looks sensible:

i)   The final release and the raw data sent by ONS;
ii)   The final release and any test dataset release;
iii)   The final release and the final release of the previous year.

2.8 Dataset Release

The timetable for the release of the FRS dataset is shown in table 2.

Table 2 Timetable of dataset release

Date	Dataset	Notes	Availability
July/August (x+1)*	6 month test dataset	User testing to ensure that changes to the questionnaire have been implemented correctly	• DWP analysts with access to the full dataset • OGDs with access to a non-UKDA dataset (on request)
November/December in the year following the survey (x+1)*	12 month test dataset	User testing to ensure that changes to the questionnaire have been implemented correctly	• DWP analysts with access to the full dataset • OGDs with access to a non-UKDA dataset (on request)
April/May (x+2)*	Final dataset	Released at the same time as the FRS National Statistics Publication	• All versions of the FRS dataset made available.

* where x is the survey year

FRS Final dataset

The final FRS dataset is made available in a number of different versions:

- **FRS full (non-anonymised) dataset**
  The main FRS dataset. Test versions of the this dataset part way through the processing cycle (6 months and 12 months) are available via the Unix servers to internal DWP analysts.

- **FRS anonymised dataset**
  The FRS dataset with a number of processes applied to ensure the dataset is fully anonymised. The Office for National Statistics is consulted annually for advice on how to ensure the dataset is not disclosive and this advice acted upon. This version of the dataset is deposited at the UK Data Archive (the End-User Licence version) and is available via the Unix servers to internal DWP analysts.

- **FRS special licence dataset**
  The FRS anonymised dataset with fewer processes applied. It is more disclosive then the anonymised dataset but less disclosive than the full FRS dataset. This version of the dataset is deposited at the UK Data Archive (the Special Licence version)

- **Other datasets**
  Copies of the special licence dataset plus additional variables can be made available on request.

For further information about the FRS datasets available, please refer to the FRS data release protocol documentation (http://51.127.145.11/asd3/web/frs/data_access/docscontents.html).

Accessing FRS datasets – DWP users

DWP users can access either the full (non-anonymised) FRS dataset or the FRS anonymised via the unix servers. More details about how to arrange access can be found at: http://51.127.145.11/asd3/web/frs/data_access/data_access.xls.

When data for a FRS survey year is updated or amended, a new release is created for users. The old release is not deleted so can be still be accessed if required.

Full FRS dataset – DWP users

When accessing data users can choose to either use the latest data available, or to select a required release. For example, to access the latest official release of the full FRS dataset for the year yyyy (eg 0708) use the following directory as your libname:

/secure/im/im1/project/frs_database/released/latest/frs0708

The following dataset may or may not be the same, dependent on whether any updates have been made to the dataset since released:

/secure/im/im1/project/frs_database/released/frs0708/frs0708_frs0708c

Both the flatfile and the hierarchical versions (see section 3 for further information) of the FRS dataset can be accessed via this route.

Anonymised FRS dataset – DWP users

To access the anonymised version of the FRS dataset for the year *yyyy* (eg 0708) use the following directory as your libname:

/secure/im/im1/project/frs_anonymised/released/frs0708_ukda

Non-DWP users either access the FRS dataset via the UKDA or via special arrangements (see FRS release documentation http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/frs/index/datasets.asp).

Section 3: Using the FRS Dataset

3.1 Key Definitions

Household: A single person or group of people living at the same address as their only or main residence, who either share one meal a day together or share the living accommodation (i.e. a living room).

Benefit unit: A single adult or a couple living together as married and any dependent children. A household will consist of one or more benefit units.
For example, where an adult child living at home with his/her parents:
Number of households=1
Number of benefit units=2 (parents, adult child)
Number of individuals=3 (Mum, Dad, adult child)

(Dependent) child: An individual aged under 16 or aged between 16 and 19 and:
- Not married nor in a Civil Partnership nor living with a partner; and
- Living with parents; and
- In full-time non-advanced education or in unwaged government training.

Household Reference Person (HRP): In a single household the HRP is the sole householder (i.e. the person in whose name the accommodation is owned or rented). If there are two or more householders the HRP is the householder with the highest personal income from all sources. If there are two or more householders who have the same income the HRP is the eldest householder.

Head of benefit unit: The HRP if it is the benefit unit to which the HRP belongs, or if not, it will be the first person in the benefit unit.

3.2 The Hierarchical Dataset

The FRS hierarchical dataset consists of around 24 (depending on year) tables, with each table relating to a particular level (eg household, benefit unit or person) or type of information (eg pensions). General-purpose tables covering household, benefit unit, adult and child information will contain a record for each household, benefit unit, adult and child in the sample. Other, more specialised tables, will contain records on the basis of relevant routing of the questionnaire/circumstances of respondents. Individual records are uniquely identified by a combination of one or more key variables.

Annex B provides an overview of the information held in each of the tables, together with the key variables used to identify individual records.

Key points to note:
- The highest level in the hierarchy is the household level. Records in the table 'househol' are identified by the unique identifier 'sernum', made up of a combination of the area, address and household codes, plus an additional figure to denote the year.
- Each household may consist of a number of benefit units, records for which are identifies by the additional variable 'benunit'.
- Each benefit unit and household will consist of at least one adult. The adults and children can be identified using the additional variable 'person'.
- The household, benunit and adult tables hold the variable 'gross3', a weight variable or grossing factor which can be used to produce weighted estimates.

3.3 The Flat File

Unlike the hierarchical dataset, the flat file is a benefit unit level table with all the information in the dataset stored on one line, regardless of how it has been stored in the hierarchical dataset.

Variables have different names compared to the hierarchical one, despite holding identical information. Variables from the hierarchical datasets are mapped to the flatfile using suffixes to distinguish the person to whom the variable relates where necessary. For example,

	Hierarchical Variable (Table)	Flatfile variable
Age of Husband	Age (Adult)	AgeHd
Age of Wife	Age (Adult)	AgeSp
Age of First Child	Age (Child)	AgeC1
Age of Second Child	Age (Child)	AgeC2
Amount of Child Benefit received	Benamt (Benefits)	CBSp
Etc…….		

The flat file has been developed specifically for the Take-Up and PSM teams. Although the flat file is made available to all users, it is recommended that the hierarchical version of the dataset is used.

3.4 FRS Documentation

The FRS dataset is supported by a number of documents designed to help FRS users interpret and use the dataset.

The most useful documents are the Questionnaire Instructions, which is a copy of the questionnaire used by the interviewers, and the Hierarchical Document, which contains a list of all the variables on each of the tables in the dataset alongside possible values.

Annex C provides more information on the content of all user documentation.

3.5 Points to Note

Geography

Owing to its sample design, the FRS can not be used to provide robust estimates at Local Authority level, meaning that the lowest level of geography for which the FRS can be used to provide estimates is Government Office Region.

Small Sample Sizes and Volatile Estimates

Details of the FRS disclosure guidelines can be found at:
http://51.127.145.11/asd3/web/frs/useful_documents/index.html

Monetary Values – Weeklyisation

Generally, all monetary values recorded on the FRS are weeklyised – i.e. the figure provided represents pounds per week.

When someone reports receipt of a particular monetary amount, they are then asked follow-up questions about the amount received and the period that covered. The standard period codes used are:

   1   1 week
   2   2 weeks
   3   3 weeks
   4   4 weeks
   5   Calendar month
   7   Two Calendar months
   8   Eight times a year
   9   Nine times a year
  10 Ten times a year
  13 Three months (13 weeks)
  26 Six months/26 Weeks
  52 One Year/12 Months/52 Weeks
  90 Less than 1 week
  95 One off/lump sum
  97 Other

Period codes 1-52 are used to convert the amount reported into a weeklyised value. The original period codes (such as benpd, the period the last amount of benefits received covered) is provided so you can get back to the original answer if required.

Weeklyising amounts with a period code of 1-4 is straightforward; simply divide the number of weeks. For period codes 5-52, it is easiest to calculate the annual amount and multiply by 7/365 (or 7/366 in a leap year) to get the weekly value. Code 90 amounts are doubled, on the basis that such payments will cover half a week on average. Codes 95 (a lump sum or one-off payment) and 97 (Other) are treated as annual payments and weeklyised the same way as code 52.

A few variables, mostly related to water and sewerage charges, use period codes in a different format. Here the period code is the number of times per year a payment is made and this, again, can be weeklyised by calculating the annual amount and multiplying by 7/365.

The original amount that the respondent reported can be recovered from FRS data by undoing the weeklyisation.

Some lump-sum expenditure variables are not weeklyised if the period code is 90, 95 or 97. These are:

ED1AMT	Amount of last repayment on 1st loan
MENPOLAM	Last prem on End. Policy/Pep/Isa/Unit T.
MRAMT	Amount of last maintenance payment
NHHAMT	Fees/maintenance for external child
OTAPAMT	Amount paid to absent partner
PENAMT	Pension Component
POLAMT	Premium: Amount Paid on this Policy
PPPAY1	Amount of last payment to 1st PPension
PPPAY2	Amount of last payment to 2nd PPension
PPPAY3	Amount of last payment to 3rd PPension
SLREPAMT	Amount of last student loan repayment
STRAMT1	Amount: Insurance part of repayment

All other variables are weeklyised as discussed above.

Monetary Values - Period

Generally respondents are asked if they are receiving/making an income/payment and the last amount they received/paid. Note that this may mean that questions on time (for example number of hours worked in the last 7 days or the number of hours of childcare in the last 7 days) do not correspond with the amount received/paid for this work/service.

Disability

In the FRS publication people with a disability are defined as those respondents who report a limiting long standing illness, impairment or disability who have significant difficulties with day-to-day activities. Everyone in this group would meet the definition of disability in the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA); however, these estimates do not reflect the total number of people covered by the DDA as the FRS does not collect this information. Those with progressive illnesses such as cancer and multiple sclerosis are excluded from this definition.

Section 4: Contact Details and Useful Links

The FRS team is happy to answer questions on the FRS and how to analyse the dataset (including checking SAS code). Please contact the FRS team at:

Frs.team@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

The FRS publication can be found at: http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/frs/

Further FRS documentation can be found at:
http://51.127.145.11/asd3/web/frs/