

## FAQs: RAPID dataset briefing

### ADR UK Research Fellowships 2025 funding opportunity

The following frequently asked questions were compiled from questions raised during a dataset briefing webinar on the RAPID: Population interactions with employment, benefits and pensions – UK dataset, which was held to support the applications for the 2025 round of ADR UK Research Fellowships.

- [Find out more about the ADR UK Research Fellowships funding opportunity](#) – open for applications until 26 February 2026.
- [Find out more about the RAPID dataset.](#)
- Watch the [recorded webinar](#) about AD|ARC and access the [slide deck](#).

### Data Linkage & Integration

- 1. Can RAPID be linked to other datasets, such as Census or Understanding Society?**

Linkage will not be possible with this first iteration of RAPID in the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Secure Research Service (SRS). Once the initial delivery is complete, we plan to investigate if linkages of RAPID are viable within the SRS. Linkages to survey data such as Understanding Society will be managed via the UK Longitudinal Linkage Collaboration.
- 2. If direct linkage isn't possible, can researchers add aggregate-level data (e.g. local authority indicators like rurality or disease prevalence) to RAPID within the SRS?**

As with any SRS project, external data can be ingested if this is approved as part of your research proposal or via an addendum request.
- 3. Will future versions (e.g. Release 9) allow linkage to other SRS datasets?**

Linkage will not be possible with this first iteration of RAPID in the SRS. Once the initial delivery is complete, we plan to investigate if linkages of RAPID are viable within the SRS

## Data Structure & Granularity

### 4. Is RAPID structured at monthly or annual level? Does it allow monthly analysis?

RAPID is ultimately an annual dataset – the number of weeks on a benefit in the year will be given and the total amount of income will be given as an annual amount. However, there are End of Month (EOM) and During the Month (DTM) indicators which are 12-character variables where each character represents one month. These EOM/DTM variables will in some cases be binary to indicate if this activity is present at the end of the month/during some point in the month (1) or not (0).

In other cases, letters will be used to give more information. For universal credit (UC) the letters will relate to the conditionality which is relevant within that month. For benefits like Personal Independence Payment (PIP), Disability Living Allowance (DLA), and Attendance Allowance (AA), the letters will indicate which combination of payment rate the person is on in the month (e.g. high/low or high care and medium daily living). Full details are available in the data specification.

### 5. How detailed is the date of birth information? Will exact dates be available, or only month/year or age bands?

The first version of the data available in the SRS will only have age in years.

### 6. What is the approximate size of the dataset, and what should researchers consider when creating a balanced panel across years?

The main tax year-based datasets have between 79 and 90 million rows (one row per person per tax year). These datasets have around 250 variables per year. There are a further nine datasets that link individuals across the data where they are involved in the same benefit claim (for example claiming parent to child for Child Benefit). These nine relationship tables are much smaller.

We would recommend that all users develop and test any code and analysis by selecting their own sample of data. However, full data are available and can be used to calculate results after code has been tested.

## Content & Coverage

**7. Does RAPID include employment sector details (e.g., Standard Industrial Classification [SIC] codes), or job characteristics such as contract type and hours worked?**

Number of employments is included as well as which months people were employed in and their yearly earnings from all employments. We have information on any self-employment as well, including self-employment earnings. SIC codes are not currently included, job characteristics and hours worked are not included.

**8. Are tax credits included, and do they cover childcare support or tax-free childcare receipts?**

Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credits are included. Childcare support and tax-free childcare receipts are not included.

**9. Does the dataset include applications and reassessments, or only awarded benefits?**

The data will include those who are on the caseload at a particular time and are classed as 'live awards'; this could include cases where there is underlying entitlement but there is no pay, so applications are not included. Any retrospection of UC awards will be updated in subsequent releases. Employment data will also include retrospection in subsequent releases as late PAYE returns are submitted by employers.

**10. Are deaths recorded for individuals who stop interacting with the system? What about those who move abroad?**

Tax year of death will be included where a notification has been made to the Registrar General for England and Wales. Deaths of those moved abroad are not generally captured, unless the person has some ongoing interaction with UK benefit systems (e.g. State Pension paid abroad).

**11. Is gender captured in the data?**

Sex is captured – male or female.

**12. Are there any variables or derived measures for mental health or wellbeing?**

There are medical codes included for the primary medical condition cited for PIP and Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and we also include the medical condition cited for both the care and mobility components for AA and DLA. All these medical codes have specific values for mental health conditions. For UC the health condition is collected in free text so we only flag whether or not a person is on the health journey.

## Feasibility & Access

**13. How can researchers check the feasibility of their proposed project before submitting an application?**

For ADR UK Fellowship support email: [adrfellowships@esrc.ukri.org](mailto:adrfellowships@esrc.ukri.org).

For SRS Infrastructure support email: [srs.customer.support@ons.gov.uk](mailto:srs.customer.support@ons.gov.uk).

For Data and Feasibility support email: [ADRcuration@ons.gov.uk](mailto:ADRcuration@ons.gov.uk).

We can only comment on feasibility in terms of the specific variables used and limitations of the data. Please note we cannot comment on specific research approaches and methodology such as sample size.

**14. What is the process for accessing RAPID through the SRS, and what security level is required (e.g. SafePods or remote trusted research environment access)?**

This is still being worked through with the data owners, and an update can be provided when finalised.

**15. Where can researchers find documentation or a codebook describing all variables in RAPID?**

You can access the documentation from the [ADR UK flagship dataset page](#).

## Other Practical Questions

### 16. Are there suggestions for early-career researchers interested in education and employment topics using RAPID?

Detailed research questions relating to Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) goals are set out in [DWP's areas of research interest](#), which are currently under revision. DWP has also recently taken over responsibility for skills policy, which is not yet reflected in these goals. Questions relating to skills are set out in the [Department for Education's areas of research interest](#).

Additionally, research questions from all published areas of research interest (ARI) documents are brought together in the [ARI Database](#). Potential areas to explore may also be suggested by the [Get Britain Working White Paper](#) and [Kickstarting Economic Growth](#).