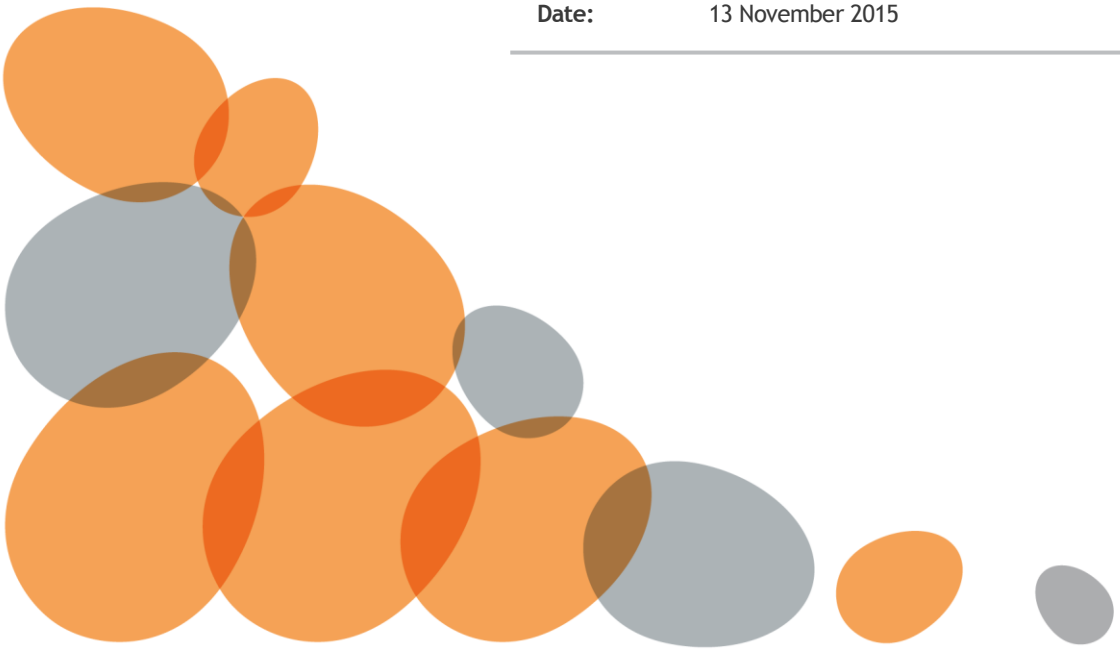
NEST file tester

Readme

Key document details

Version no.: 5.1

Date: 13 November 2015



Document Control

Version history

Version	Date	Comments
1.0	26 November 2013	Updated following NEST's November 2013 service release
2.0	4 April 2014	Updated following NEST's March 2014 service release
2.1	27 June 2014	Updated following NEST's June 2014 minor release
3.0	8 September 2014	Updated following NEST's September 2014 service release
3.1	27 October 2014	Updated following NEST's October 2014 minor release
4.0	2 March 2015	Updated following NEST's March 2015 service release
5.0	24 September 2015	Updated following NEST's September 2015 service release
5.1	13 November 2015	Updated to include Bulk Update Indicator limitation

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1. Background

The NEST file tester is designed to help you check that any member enrolment and contribution schedule files you create are valid and in the correct format.

It can validate the following files in both comma separated values (CSV) and extensible markup language (XML) formats:

- member enrolment (ME)
- enrolment cancellation (DE)
- contribution schedule (CS)
- exception schedule (ES).

Our file tester uses the validation rules that are explained in our *Employer payroll guide v 11*.

We also provide sample CSV and XML files for both enrolment and contribution information. You can use these to try out the NEST file tester without using your own data. When you've done this, you can then use the file tester on your own files before you upload them to NEST.

We strongly recommend you use the NEST file tester to check your first production enrolment and contribution files are in the right format, before sending them to NEST. This will help you reduce the number of live issues.

1.1 What's new?

Member enrolment file: Information about worker enrolment received field, Group field and Payment Source fields are now optional. When not provided then Group field and Payment Source field are defaulted.

Member enrolment file: Warnings now displayed when certain duplicate data is encountered.

Contribution Schedule file: Payment Due Date field now optional. Start Date field now mandatory only for certain enrolment types. New Bulk Update field included in the header. Frequency field has additional values.

Contribution schedule file: Additional validation for Reason codes 6, 7, 9, 10 & 12. Removal of Reason codes 2, 4 & 11. Less validation for Reason code 1.

1.2 What has the NEST file tester been tested with?

- Microsoft Excel 2010
- Windows 7 Professional SP1
- Member enrolment and contribution schedule files containing up to 10,000 records (CSV) and 5,000 records (XML).

1.3 Limitations and known problems

1. CSV and XML files should be encoded using unicode transformation format 8-bit (UTF-8), with or without byte order mark. The files should only contain characters from the UTF-8 character set.

2. The validation of XML files containing invalid tags may fail, for example if a </DetailRecord> tag is missing or spelt incorrectly.

3. XML elements must be on separate lines within an XML file.

4. The NEST file tester shows an error, rather than a warning, message if there are consecutive spaces in 'Group' and/or 'Payment source' fields.

5. The NEST file tester only generates example daily notification files for opt-outs and stopped contributions in CSV file format and not XML file format. The files are not zipped unlike in the live NEST environment. The opt-out notification date is set to the current system date and the employer, member and total contribution refund amounts are always set to zero (0.00).

6. A CS file containing Bulk Update field set to "Y" and no detail record and Trailer Record Count field greater than zero will result in an error when validated by the NEST File Tester.

7. If the Bulk Update Indicator is not set, NEST File Tester validation still requires a comma delimiter to signify that the field is not present. If the comma is omitted the following error is displayed "Header Record contains 9 commas, less than the minimum required (10)". The Production system in comparison accepts nine commas and will not throw an error.

8. The file tester currently doesn't accept national insurance numbers (NINOs) starting with 'KC'.

1.4 Important note

We make regular improvements to our service, and sometimes this means changing our file formats. We try to make sure these changes have minimal impact on employers using NEST. Wherever possible we'll make sure that if you send us a valid file in the old format, our system will still read it without returning an error. For instance, if we need to add an extra field to a file you send us, we'll add it to the end of the header, detail or trailer record. We will continue to accept files that do not contain a value for this new field but we do encourage you to update your processes to use the new file format as soon as you can.

Please bear in mind that changes to our file formats can also affect some of the files we send you, if you've chosen to receive CSV or XML return files through SFTP, or if you use the CSV files we send to your secure mailbox. You should make sure your system can process extra fields at the end of header, detail or trailer records. This means your system will always be able to read files that contain extra fields without rejecting them.

2. What's included?

This version includes the following files.

- NEST_file_tester_SR10_v1.0.xlsm

  An Excel version of the NEST file tester for SR10.

- NEST_file_tester_readme_v5.0.pdf

  This document.

2.1 Sample member enrolment files

- ME_Test_1000_With_Errors.csv

  A sample CSV file with 1,000 member records which contains some errors.

- ME_Test_10000_No_Errors.csv

  A sample CSV file with 10,000 member records which contains no errors.

- ME_Test_1000_With_Errors.xml

  A sample XML file with 1,000 member records which contains some errors.

- ME_Test_5000_No_Errors.xml

  A sample XML file with 5,000 member records which contains no errors.

2.2 Sample contribution schedule files

- CS_Test_1000_With_Errors.csv

  A sample CSV file with 1,000 member records which contains some errors.

- CS_Test_10000_No_Errors.csv

  A sample CSV file with 10,000 member records which contains no errors.

- CS_Test_1000_With_Errors.xml

  A sample XML file with 1,000 member records which contains some errors.

- CS_Test_5000_No_Errors.xml

  A sample XML file with 5,000 member records which contains no errors.

2.3 Sample files to generate stopped contributions files

- Member_Enrolment_100_success.csv and Contribution_Schedule_100_success.csv

  These are sample CSV files that contain no errors.

- Member_Enrolment_4.csv and Contribution_Schedule_4.csv

  These are sample CSV files that contain no errors, but do contain inconsistent data.

- Member_Enrolment_13.csv and Contribution_Schedule_13.csv

  These are sample CSV files. The ME file contains no errors and the CS file contains some errors.

2.4 Enrolment cancellation (DE) and exception schedule (ES) files

We haven't created any sample enrolment cancellation or exception schedule files as their formats are the same as the member enrolment and contribution schedule files respectively. However, some of the fields are used differently. See our Employer payroll guide for details.

2.5 Sample return files

A selection of return files are also provided. These include:

- CS_EMP000009035_12081518401559

  Contribution processing file

- CS_EMP000009035_15081506281078_reject

  Rejection of schedule submission file

- CS_EMP000009035_170815130747106_outcome
  Outcome of schedule submission file

- CS SR10 Nft returnFile_ErrFile__ErrLog_CS_EMP000009035_11081518393858_error
  Contribution Schedule Error File
- CS SR10 Nft returnFile_ErrFile__ErrLog_CS_EMP000009035_11081518393877_errorlog
  Contribution Schedule Error Log File

- ME SR10 Nft returnFiles 2_Success_ME_EMP000011120_11081518375479
  Member Enrolment correct inputs file

- ME SR10 Nft returnFiles 3_Error_ME_EMP000011120_11081518375332_error
  Member Enrolment incorrect inputs file

- CC_EMP100008011_280113192431381_Member.csv
  Daily notification file for Cease Contribution

- CS_EMP100008011_13031418073396.csv
  Contribution Schedule Success file

- OI_EMP100008011_060214235939504.csv
  Daily notification file for Opt-Out in Transit Money

- OO_EMP100008011_060214235939471.csv
  Daily notification file for Opt Outs

These files are received from NEST and cannot be used with the NEST File Tester. They have been included solely for your information.

3. How to use the NEST file tester

3.1 To run the NEST file tester

1. Open your folder containing the NEST file tester contents.

2. Double-click NEST_file_tester_SR10.0_v1.0.xlsm to open the NEST file tester in Microsoft Excel. The 'Main' tab will appear in the spreadsheet.

3. The NEST file tester uses macros. Excel might show a security warning to tell you that macros have been disabled. Enable the macros by clicking the 'Enable Content' button.

4. By default, the NEST file tester will only show results that include errors or warnings. If you want to see all the results, including those that have passed validation, select 'Yes' in the 'Show "Pass" Results' dropdown menu on the 'Main' tab of the NEST file tester. It may take a bit longer to show you the results of file validation when this option is set to 'Yes'.

5. Do one of the following:

    - click 'Validate CSV' to import and validate a CSV file for either member enrolment or a contribution schedule

    - click 'Validate XML' to import and validate an XML file for either member enrolment or a contribution schedule.

6. Browse to locate the file you want to validate. When you open the file the validation process will start automatically.

Once a file has been processed you'll be given a summary including the number of validated records and detected errors. The total number of records includes the header and trailer records.

Results are displayed in the 'Results' tab and any warning or error messages will be highlighted. A warning message is for information, whereas an error message indicates a problem that will cause a file upload error in the live NEST environment. The actual file contents will be shown on the 'CSV' or 'XML' tab depending on the file type you're processing.

The file name of the last file validated by the NEST file tester is displayed on the 'Main' tab.

Click 'Reset' to clear out any data in the 'Results', 'CSV' and 'XML' tabs.

3.2 To view and correct errors and warnings

1. To view a record that has an error or warning, click the hyperlink in column A (labelled Data Line) alongside the record. The record will be highlighted on either the 'CSV' or 'XML' tab.

2. If you want to correct records that contain errors, we recommend that you edit the original CSV or XML file using WordPad or Notepad to preserve the format of the file. You can then re-validate the amended file.

3.3 To generate an example opt-out file

You can use the NEST file tester to generate an example opt-out file - a list of members who have opted out - based on a successfully validated member enrolment file. Please note that in the live NEST environment you'll need to have set up SFTP and chosen to collect daily notification files for opt-outs, and the files are provided in a zipped format.

1. Once a member enrolment file in CSV format has been validated with no errors you'll have the option to generate an example opt-out file.

2. Click 'Yes' if you want to generate an example opt-out file, otherwise click 'No'.

3. When an opt-out file is generated a message will be displayed confirming the opt-out file name and where it's been saved.

If the member enrolment file contains 10 or fewer records the first record will be used to generate the example opt-out file. If not the first 10 records will be used.

3.4 To generate an example stopped contributions file

You can use the NEST file tester to generate an example stopped contributions file - a list of members who have stopped making contributions - based on successfully validated member enrolment and contribution schedule files. Please note that in the live NEST environment you'll need to have set up SFTP and chosen to collect daily notification files for stopped contributions, and the files are provided in a zipped format.

The six sample files should be validated in pairs one after the other so you can build up a picture of the types of issues and errors that can occur. The order you should follow is:

- Member_Enrolment_100_success
- Contribution_Schedule_100_success

- Member_Enrolment_4
- Contribution_Schedule_4

- Member_Enrolment_13
- Contribution_Schedule_13

The Member_Enrolment_100_success and Contribution_Schedule_100_success files don't contain any errors. So, if you validate them one after the other they'll generate an example stopped contributions file.

The Member_Enrolment_4 and Contribution_Schedule_4 files don't contain any errors, but when you validate them one after the other errors will be detected. That's because there's inconsistent data between the two files. You'll be given the opportunity to review these errors, correct the data and re-validate the amended files. Remember to edit the original files using WordPad or Notepad to preserve the format of the files. Once you've corrected the errors another example stopped contributions file can be generated.

The Member_Enrolment_13 file doesn't contain any errors, but the Contribution_Schedule_13 does. You'll need to resolve these errors before you can generate another example stopped contributions file.

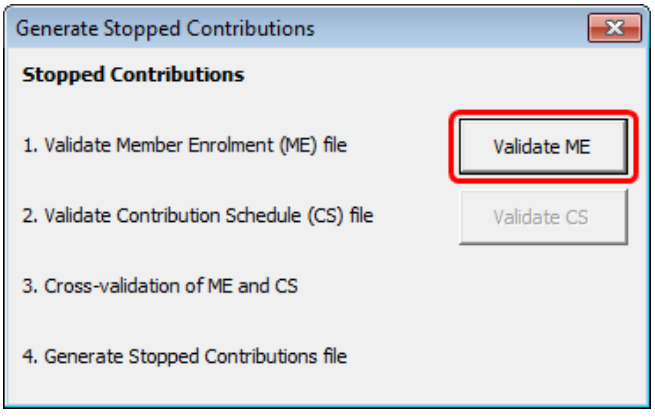
You can use your own files to generate an example stopped contributions file if you want to. You should validate a member enrolment file, then a corresponding contribution schedule file, correcting any detected errors to generate an example stopped contributions file.

How do I generate a stopped contributions file?

1. Click ‘Generate stopped contributions file’ on the ‘Main’ tab.



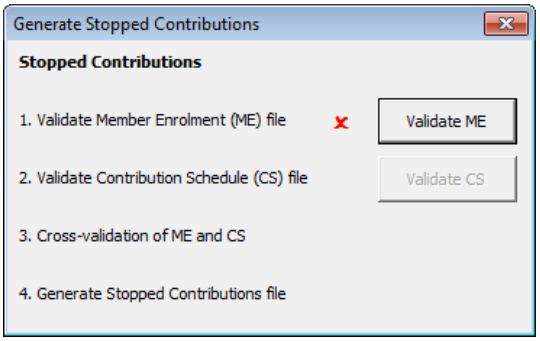
2. Click ‘Validate ME’ in the ‘Generate Stopped Contributions’ pop up.



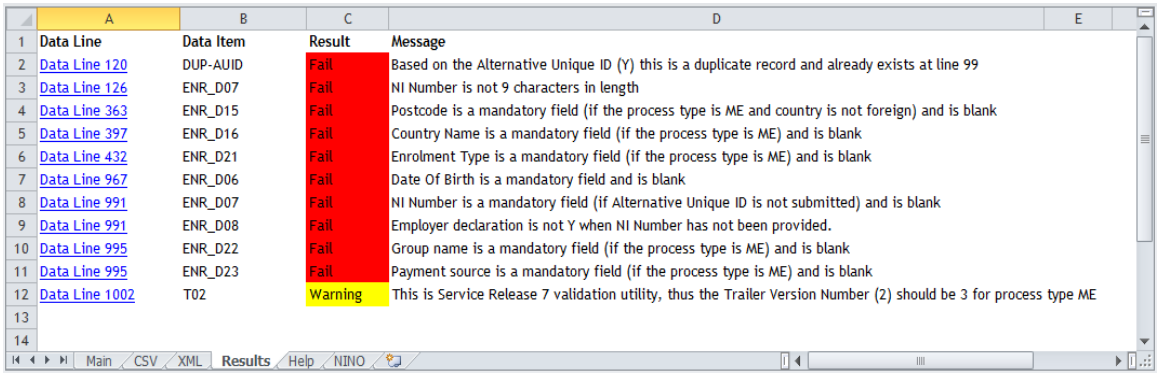
3. Select one of the ME files in the folder where you saved the NEST file tester. It will be one of:

- Member_Enrolment_100_success
- Member_Enrolment_4
- Member_Enrolment_13
- One of your own files.

If errors are detected in the file a red cross will appear.



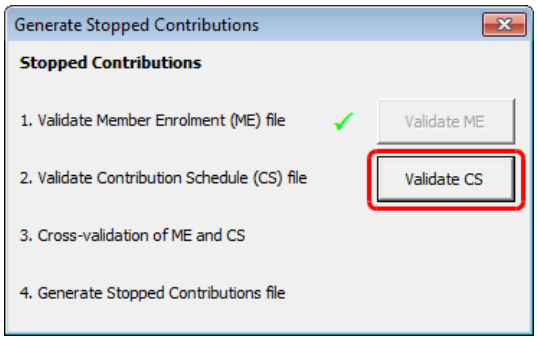
Any warning or error messages will be shown in the 'Results' tab.



	A	B	C	D	E
1	Data Line	Data Item	Result	Message	
2	Data Line 120	DUP-AUID	Fail	Based on the Alternative Unique ID (Y) this is a duplicate record and already exists at line 99	
3	Data Line 126	ENR_D07	Fail	NI Number is not 9 characters in length	
4	Data Line 363	ENR_D15	Fail	Postcode is a mandatory field (if the process type is ME and country is not foreign) and is blank	
5	Data Line 397	ENR_D16	Fail	Country Name is a mandatory field (if the process type is ME) and is blank	
6	Data Line 432	ENR_D21	Fail	Enrolment Type is a mandatory field (if the process type is ME) and is blank	
7	Data Line 967	ENR_D06	Fail	Date Of Birth is a mandatory field and is blank	
8	Data Line 991	ENR_D07	Fail	NI Number is a mandatory field (if Alternative Unique ID is not submitted) and is blank	
9	Data Line 991	ENR_D08	Fail	Employer declaration is not Y when NI Number has not been provided.	
10	Data Line 995	ENR_D22	Fail	Group name is a mandatory field (if the process type is ME) and is blank	
11	Data Line 995	ENR_D23	Fail	Payment source is a mandatory field (if the process type is ME) and is blank	
12	Data Line 1002	T02	Warning	This is Service Release 7 validation utility, thus the Trailer Version Number (2) should be 3 for process type ME	
13					
14					

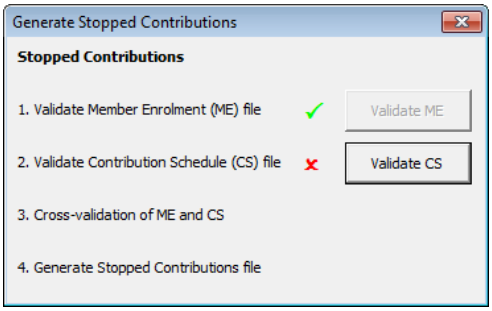
Main | CSV | XML | Results | Help | NINO

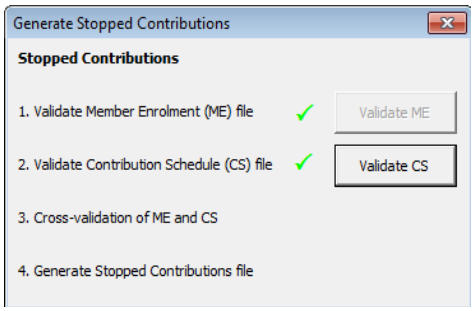
4. Once you've successfully validated the ME file a green tick will appear. You can now click 'Validate CS' in the 'Generate Stopped Contributions' pop up.



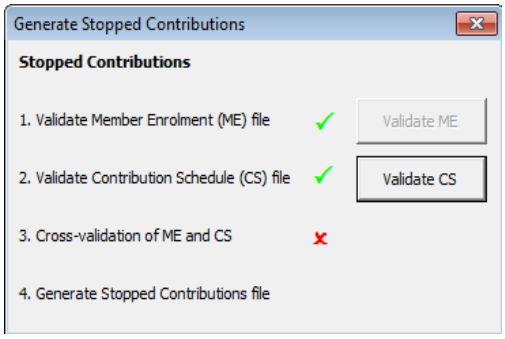
5. Select one of the CS files in the folder where you saved the NEST file tester. This will be one of:
   - Contribution_Schedule_100_success
   - Contribution_Schedule_4
   - Contribution_Schedule_13
   - One of your own files.

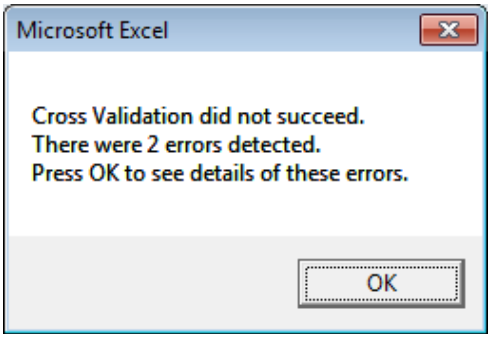
   If errors are detected in the file a red cross will appear. If there are no errors you'll see a green tick.



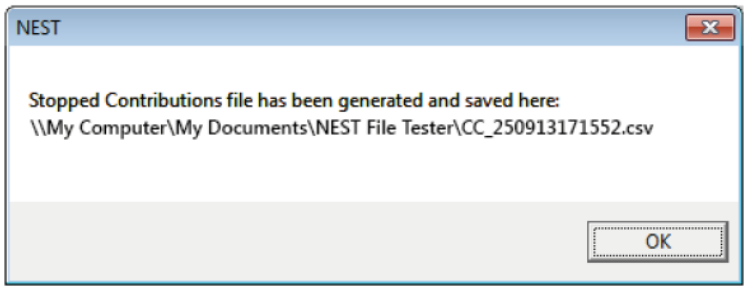


   Once the CS file has been successfully validated the NEST file tester will automatically perform some cross-validation checks. If any errors are detected, due to inconsistent data between the ME and CS files, you'll see a red cross and an additional error message.





6. Once you've successfully validated ME and CS files an example stopped contributions file will be generated. You'll see a message confirming the stopped contributions file name and where it's been saved.



If the ME file contains 10 or fewer records the first record will be used to generate the stopped contributions file. If not, the first 10 records will be used.

4. Contact us

If you have a question, email us at support@nestcorporation.org.uk