

Task Seven – Validation Rules

Validation rules are used to check data as it is being entered to make sure that it is allowable and sensible. It is important that data is checked when it is input to make sure that it is both sensible and correct. If you make a mistake inputting data, especially in a very large database, the error can be very difficult to trace. Data that is not sensible or allowed should be rejected and an appropriate message displayed to the user. It is very important that you describe and set up some validation rules. You will need to include screen captures in your work that you have both set up several validation rules and that they work.

For example, if you had designed a database for a second hand car sales and entered Vauhxlal (instead of Vauxhall) as the manufacturer for a car in stock, when you searched the stock database for all Vauxhalls, no results would be shown, making the results of your query useless. There are two methods that can be used to check data when it is input; one is **verification**, but the one that we will use is **validation**.

To decide upon a validation rule for a field you must first think about the possible values the data could have. If the field is numeric, it might be that only numbers in a certain range are allowed, such 0 to 100 for examination marks, or 7 to 11 for the year groups in this school. Text fields can also contain certain values such as M or F to represent male or female for gender. Some fields may contain a wide range of possible values. For example a field storing addresses could contain many different values. In such cases you can say that a validation check is not possible.

You need to use three different types of validation checks in your database. You need to complete a table showing the fields that your validation checks will work on, the type of check you will be using, the validation rules and the error messages that will be displayed on screen if data entered is not either sensible or allowable. Refer to the following pages for further information on validation checks.