APPENDIX B

NSLDS
KEYBOARD
HINTS

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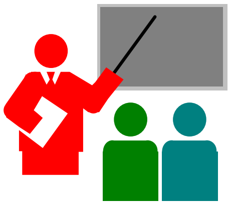
KEYBOARD HINTS



This appendix will help you understand the screen behavior of the NSLDS software. The subjects discussed, which will help you quickly get up to speed in the online options, are as follows:

- Problem solving strategy,
- Hint List, and
- Frequently used function keys.

Problem Solving Strategy

Problem Solving Strategy

The purpose of presenting Keyboard Hints is to help you feel confident and comfortable with NSLDS by managing:

- your PC skills,
- differences in keyboard emulations,
- differences in communications methods, and
- the setup at your local workstation.

We have tried to anticipate points of confusion and possible keyboard actions that could cause system lockup, a delay in performance, and a need to call the CSC.

Keyboard Hints are FYI - for your information - and may become a convenient reference as new situations are encountered, analyzed, and solved.

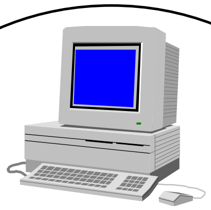
NSLDS As An Information System

As you interact with NSLDS on your PC, think of yourself as an integral part of the entire information system, as illustrated below, and know that your engagement in problem solving is part of a team effort to maximize performance.

NSLDS Information System
- A Team Effort -

The Users

- PC workstation setup
- business knowledge
- individual PC skills

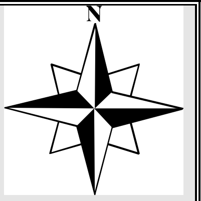


The NSLDS System:

- what it looks like online
- network handshaking (modems & keyboards)
- how data is managed on the mainframe

THE TEAM MEMBERS

Customer Service Center



HINT LIST

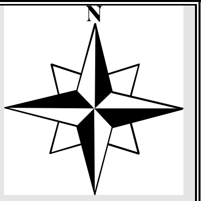
HINT #	PROBLEM	EXPLANATION
1	Backspace key does not seem to work	The system defaults to **Insert** mode, which automatically locks out the backspace key. You must **type over** your error. Solutions: • use left or right arrow key to reposition cursor • use Tab key to reposition cursor to the upcoming field • use Esc/Tab key combination to reposition cursor in previous field
2	ENTER key does not seem to work	A standard 101-key keyboard has TWO ENTER KEYS, and we assume that you are accustomed to using the carriage return, which is labeled "Enter." DO NOT USE THIS KEY ONCE YOU ARE WITHIN NSLDS. The other Enter key is located in the lower right corner of the keyboard, to the right of the numeric pad. **USE THIS ENTER KEY AT ALL TIMES WITHIN NSLDS.**
3	How do I move my cursor?	You will need to reposition the cursor often to enter data at various screen positions. Also, the cursor will be automatically positioned by the system on occasion, AND it will be an on-screen cue to users that the system is busy (more in Hint # 4) Solution: • The Tab key will reposition the cursor to the beginning of the upcoming field • Esc/Tab will reposition the cursor to the beginning of the previous field

HINT LIST

HINT #	PROBLEM	EXPLANATION
4	How do I determine what the system is doing and what I am supposed to be doing?	There are a few reliable ways to tell what the computer is doing before or after you have completed an action. Usually the computer is retrieving data from the database. In most cases, the computer is in one of these modes: • waiting for the user's data entry, • waiting for a user's action entry (i.e. DP, or LO.) • waiting for the mainframe computer (database) to retrieve the data, or • locked up due to keyboard miscommunication. When the computer is busy, this is how you will know: • Some emulators flash a signal at the bottom of the screen, such as "**X-SYSTEM**", or • Some emulators flash a **graphic of a clock** at the bottom of the screen, or • Some emulators flash a blinking cursor at the bottom right corner of the screen.
5	Some fields are mandatory, while others are optional. Why?	This example relates to the Borrower Tracking function, and the concept is consistent throughout other functions. From the highest level menu, RC80, **the Student Borrower Search** screen, there are three mandatory fields in which you are required to enter data in order to request a search, AND the data must be entered exactly as specified. (continued on next page)

HINT LIST

HINT #	PROBLEM	EXPLANATION
5 (cont.)		• <**SSN**> - must be exactly 9 digits, with no spaces and no dashes. When complete, cursor automatically advances to next field <First Name>. • <**First Name**> - may be up to 12 characters, and is not case-sensitive. When complete, cursor does not advance to next field. **Note:** Use Tab to advance cursor to <DOB> field. • <**DOB**> - must enter the exact number of digits specified (i.e. MM, DD, YYYY). When complete, review data for accuracy and completeness. There is another search field just below <SSN> - the **type of borrower (S) for Student or (P) for PLUS borrower.** This compliments the above data. You will always need to check this setting. The system defaults this setting to (S), but allows (P) as an alternate. The **Action Code** is another search field requiring your entry. You must type in the 2-character code corresponding to your choice of available search options shown in the **Action Bar**. See the procedures section of each feature for a graphical illustration of Action Code and Action Bar.



HINT LIST

HINT #	PROBLEM	EXPLANATION
6	Why does my search yield no data?	The main database probably contains no data relevant to the requested search.
7	Why do the F7, F8, and F12 keys work sometimes and not others?	Although the screen display may indicate the availability of these keys for every screen, these keys may be inactive when there is no target screen to which you may scroll (F7 and F8) or to which you may return (F12).
8	Why does my keyboard lock up sometimes?	Your keyboard may have miscommunicated with the mainframe's keyboard in Greenville, Texas. There are solutions. Call CSC for more specific details. Their number is 1-800-999-8219.

NSLDS - FREQUENTLY USED FUNCTION KEYS		
FUNCTION KEY	**ON-SCREEN EXPLANATION**	**RESULTING ACTION**
F3	EXIT	System goes to previous (and higher) menu level.
F7	BACKWARD MORE: -	Screen display is scrolled backward to the previous screen.
F8	FORWARD MORE: +	Screen display is scrolled forward toward more information on an additional screen.
F12	RETURN	Takes you to the next higher menu level.
Other Frequently Used Keys		
TAB	Repositions cursor to next available data entry point.	
ESC/ TAB	Repositions cursor to previously available data entry point.	
ENTER	Allows user input to be sent to mainframe (tells computer to do something).	
S	Selects a line item when an “S” is typed in the “Sel” column.	
Del / Backspace	De-selects a line item in the “Sel” column.	
Action Codes, such as **DP, LO, A1, GH**, etc.	These are 2-character abbreviations, listed across the top of some NSLDS screens, that you will type in to the Action Code field. After pressing ENTER, the system will proceed to the screen associated with that Action Code. A list of Action Code explanations is available within each chapter pertaining to a major NSLDS option.	

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