

Basically...

Key Terms in Plain English

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Adult Advancement and Careers Service (aacs)

A definition:

A service to deliver information, advice and guidance on learning, skills and careers, with seamless access to wider sources of personal advice to overcome barriers to progression.

What is it all about?

By 2010 this new careers service for adults will be in place to help people to take control of their learning, skills and careers, and overcome any barriers that may hold back their progression in these areas. Individuals will have access to a range of different advice services to help them make well-informed decisions which will support them get into work, and to progress once they have a job.

The service will be available to everybody, and will be truly personalised to respond to each person's specific circumstances. Advice available will cover all areas of personal need, and could include: jobs, training, skills, childcare, living costs, health, housing, benefits, legal advice, debt management, transport... and anything else.

A range of agencies will work together to give advice on many different subjects, and these will all be linked to ensure that people get all the advice and referrals they need. A 'no wrong door' policy means that wherever someone goes to seek help in the first place, knowledgeable advisers will be able to make referrals and appointments with other local specialists to get people the extra support appropriate to them. With the person's permission, key details will be shared, so they don't have to repeat everything at each new appointment.

What does this mean in real terms?

- The new Skills Funding Agency (SFA) will manage the aacs, including setting targets and requirements.
- There will be one brand visible nationally, with one phone number and one website, but centres located throughout the country will provide local information and advice.
- It will be a nationally consistent service with universal advice on learning, work and careers.
- Support will be available to those in work who are looking to progress in their careers.
- Support will be available for people out of work who are looking to move into sustainable jobs.
- Intensive support will be targeted at those who need it most.
- A free Skills Health Check will be available where appropriate to the individual.
- Many local agencies including Jobcentreplus (JCP) and nextstep will work closely together to ensure joined up services, with many services sharing delivery locations to make them easier to access.

What more can we do?

- LSC, JCP and nextstep staff could start to build relationships with other local agencies who deliver advice on health, childcare, debt management, housing and a range of other topics.
- Learn lessons from the ten Advancement Network Prototypes that are now trialing this process. See the **Basically...** summary of these on the IES Noticeboard, accessible here:

<http://www.lsc.gov.uk/regions/SouthEast/whatwedo/Adult+learners/Integrated+Employment+and+Skills.htm>

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