

Basically...

Key Terms in Plain English

Issue 8: October 09

Skills Accounts

A definition:

Helping people to take control of their learning and working life; providing advice on careers, improving skills and getting financial support for learning.

What is it all about?

The trial for Skills Accounts started in the South East and East Midlands in September 2008. During 2009 the trial is expanding in these two regions, and opening up to all other regions. Lessons will be learned from these trials and by 2013 every adult aged 19 and over in England will have access to a Skills Account.

A Skills Account is a personal online account. It features:

- A secure online **Record of Learning** has details of past achievements and qualifications. Courses from 07/08 onwards can be verified by the learning provider through a Unique Learner Number (ULN).
- A **Learner Statement** and **Funding Indicator** showing how much the government and the learner have each paid towards learning since 08/09.
- A statement of **Funding entitlement**
- Any **Skills Action Plans** created with a nextstep adviser (including those created following a Skills Health Check)
- Advice about other sources of support to help with learning such as the Adult Learning Grant (ALG), and access to the Careers Advice Service.
- Tools to help people make informed choices when deciding about their skills and career such as a **Skills and Interests Assessment**, **Course Finder** and **Job Profile** information.
- Online discussion forum and call back function

In the future more features will be added including an online *Skills Health Check* diagnostic tool for individuals and improvements to existing functions.

What does this mean in real terms?

Skills Accounts are available to any individual over 19 years old. In the South East they can be opened

- Online at: www.direct.gov.uk/skillsaccounts
- With a nextstep advisor. Call 0800 1954 700 for an appointment or to find your nearest nextstep centre.
- At colleges or learning providers
- By telephone with the Careers Advice Service 0800 100 900

What more can we do?

- Support the trial of Skills Accounts by promoting to all adult learners and providing feedback to LSC via ben.blackledge@lsc.gov.uk or penny.askew@lsc.gov.uk or tricia.allison@lsc.gov.uk
- Increase awareness of Skills Accounts in the South East amongst providers to prepare for the national roll-out by circulating this document and visiting the Skills Accounts website at: www.direct.gov.uk/skillsaccounts

Want to find out more?

www.direct.gov.uk/skillsaccounts

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Careers Advice Service: 0800 100 900

nextstep: 0800 1954 700

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