

Skills Accounts Quick Guide: nextstep Advisers

August 2009

This guide provides an overview of Skills Accounts, the benefits, the nextstep role in the trial and detail of the current Skills Account offer.

For further detail please see the full guidelines available on the LSC Campaign Resources Website www.lsc.gov.uk/campaignresources.

1. Introduction

A Skills Account is a personalised online service. It provides access to a range of information and advice on skills, careers and financial support in a single location.

www.direct.gov.uk/skillsaccounts

It is a new way for an individual to take control of their learning and working life, allowing them:

- direct online access to skills and careers advice
- details about their eligibility for government funding for training
- information on courses and providers in their area

2. Benefits

Skills Accounts will:

- Be an integral part of the new Adult Advancement and Careers Service (aacs).
- Offer your organisation a chance to influence thinking, and shape a new service which is currently in early trial.
- Need your expertise to help deliver this new service.

A Skills Account provides an individual with:

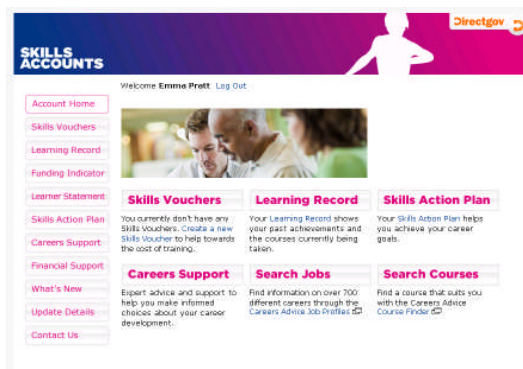
- A range of information and advice on skills, careers and financial support for learning all in one place.
- The ability to input learning information once but use again and again, adapting it to meet individual needs. (e.g. action planning and Learning Record).
- Access to an online record of learning easily accessible and available wherever and whenever they are needed.
- A Personal resource to manage and use during their learning and working life.

How will this add value to the service I deliver?

- Skills Account supports you in building longer term relationships with individuals.
- Skills Accounts are a tool to help you deliver your core business, supporting face-to-face information and advice and providing additional sources of information to support your customers (Learner Record and Learner Statement)
- Skills Accounts will provide support and information to advisers all in one place. (Course Finder and Careers Advice Job Profiles and Qualification Checker).

3. System Access

Access to Skills Accounts is via the URL www.direct.gov.uk/skillsaccounts.



Registration takes 5 steps. Once the Skills Account is created, the individual can use the other services available including the Skills and Interests Assessment, Course Finder and Careers Advice Job Profiles, which will help them to make informed choices about their learning and working life.

4. Role of nextstep Advisers

- Promote and champion the Skills Account vision and support the delivery of Skills Accounts
- Support individuals to open and use Skills Accounts
- Ensure colleagues are briefed and fully aware of the Skills Accounts proposition
- Embed Skills Accounts as part of your business processes
- Provide feedback and help shape the Skills Account service

5. What is available on the system?

There is a simple and straight forward registration process for Skills Accounts via the Skills Health Check ensuring single sign on to the system.

Through a Skills Account individuals will be able to access:

- a **Learning Record**, containing details of their past achievements and qualifications, and if gained from 07/08 onwards can be verified by a learning provider. It also includes a section where they can add their other prior learning activities and achievements and any courses they are taking
- a **Skills Action Plan** which is a personal development plan created with a **nextstep** adviser, and could follow a Skills Health Check(if appropriate)
- a **Learner Statement** that shows the actual funding the government has put towards their learning (from 08/09 onwards). This will be set against the amounts they have may have put towards it (if appropriate)
- enhanced **Careers Support** via the Careers Advice Service with 'Call Me' and 'Mail an Adviser' functions through the Skills Accounts website.
- a **Course Finder** that enables them to view what courses are available in their area so that they can choose the provider, course and time that suits their needs

- a **Skills and Interest Assessment Tool** which will help them to assess their Skills and Interests and identify job groups that they are best equipped to do and which are likely to capture their interest
- a **Qualifications Calculator** that shows their current highest level of qualification achieved to help them plan their next steps
- **Careers Advice Job Profiles** enabling a search across a range of information about the types of job they are interested in

As the Skills Account service develops, the online offer will become more closely integrated and aligned with other information and advice services delivered through Directgov – for example, Careers Advice content.

6. Future plans

The 2009/10 Skills Accounts trial will expand nationally through a carefully planned process. The first phase will involve extending the trial from the current two trial regions to five new LSC regions later this year.

New functions are being developed along with targeting new audiences in different trial regions. These will potentially include Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LLDD) and Carers or individuals in receipt of Tax Credits (TC)

7. Contacts and further information

If there are any questions then please contact your Prime Contractor: VT Plc

Jan Page – Regional Service Development Coordinator

t: 0776 631 4571

e: Jan.page@vtplc.com

Customer Feedback can be made on the Skills Account website using the feedback form under 'contact us'.

Individuals can get support (including technical issues) by

- Calling the Careers Advice Service **0800 100 900**
- Using the new 'Call Me' and 'Mail and Adviser' functions on the website.

Visit www.lsc.gov.uk/campaignresources for operational guidelines and marketing collateral