

Skills Accounts Quick Reference Guide for Advisers

October 2009

This guide provides an overview of Skills Accounts; the benefits they can bring, your role within the trial and highlights the current Skills Account offer.

For further detail please see the complete guidance available on the LSC Website www.lsc.gov.uk/providers/skillsaccounts/.

1. Introduction

A Skills Accounts is a personalised online service that allows individuals to take control of their learning and working life.

If thinking about learning a new skill or changing direction in career, a Skills Account is the place to start. A Skills Account will help individuals to:

- Identify the skills they have
- Match their skills needs
- Choose the right course
- Find out if they can get funding to support you
- Track how much has been spent on their learning
- Develop an action plan for their skills and assessment and access services to help them make the next step.

Skills Accounts will:

- Be an integral part of the new Adult Advancement and Careers Service (aacs).
- Aspire to be a mechanism by which adults will access their entitlement to funding for training.
- Be a single portal to a range of information & advice on skills.
- Offer your organisation a chance to influence thinking, and shape a new service which is in second year of trials.

2. Opening an Account

A Skills Account is available to all customers; there is no cost involved and can be opened in a number of ways:

- As part of the trials, selected colleges and training providers will be registering individual's interest for a Skills Account.
- An Individual can open a Skills Account online by following 5 registration steps through www.direct.gov.uk/skillsaccounts



- The Careers Advice Service helpline (0800 100 900) can register an individual's interest for a Skills Account.
- The **nextstep** service can open a Skills Account for an individual and provide additional support.
- ESP Providers in trial areas can also open Skills Accounts as part of an individual's programme.

3. Features & Benefits

How will this add value to the service I deliver?

- Skills Account **supports you in building longer term relationships** with individuals. In time Skills Accounts will produce increased knowledge and data on learners and address barriers to learning.
- Skills Accounts provides customers with tools and information to **help them move onto positive outcomes**, both in training and for work. This **helps you to achieve successful and sustainable outcomes** for your customer and contracts.
- Skills Accounts is 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 (Learning Record and Learner statement).
- Skills Accounts will provide **support and information to advisers all in one place.**

(Course Finder, over 700 Job Profiles and Qualification Checker).

- Easy access and single sign on via the Skills Health Check and Skills Action Plan.

A Skills Account provides an individual with:

- A range of information and advice on skills, careers and financial support all in one place inc. a “Call Me/ Mail an Adviser” function.
- Access to an online record of learning; verified by a Learning Provider which can be shared with employers if chosen.
- Individuals will also be able to create a personal online learning record to include skills and interests, hobbies and voluntary work which can be accessed and updated at any time.
- A Learner Statement allowing an individual to keep track of money spent on learning and also how much money the Government has contributed towards their achievements. It helps individuals understand and appreciate the actual cost of courses.
- Access to funding tools which help identify the different areas of funding available and check to see if the individuals are eligible for support to help with the cost of learning.
- Ability to view the Skills Action Plan and/or skills diagnostic report, created during a one to one skills assessment with their **nextstep** adviser.

4. Role of an Adviser

- To promote and champion the Skills Account vision and support the delivery of Skills Accounts.
- Ensure staff are 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 new in Skills Accounts?

Through a Skills Account individuals will be able to access:

- **Diagnostic Tool** - this is a web based tool that provides an objective assessment of the

customer’s strengths, skills, abilities and areas for development in key competency areas which underpin success at work.

- **Eligibility Checker** - access to funding tools which help to identify the different areas of funding available and check individuals’ eligibility for support to help with the cost of learning.
- **Skills Accounts are currently available in** the following LSC Regions:
 - South East
 - East Midlands
 - West Midlands
 - Yorkshire and Humber
 - South West
 - North West

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

6. Contacts and further information

If there are any questions then please contact your regional LSC contact:

Ben.Blackledge@lsc.gov.uk	0118 908 2166
Penny.Askew@lsc.gov.uk	0118 908 2111
Tricia.Allison@lsc.gov.uk	0118 908 2266

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/providers/skillsaccounts/ for operational guidelines and FAQs.

Visit www.lsc.gov.uk/campaignresources for details of marketing collateral available.