

## Skills Accounts into Next Step

### Provider Reference Guide

The purpose of this guide is to inform Learning Providers that from 1 August 2010 the current Skills Account system will become part of Next Step, the new integrated adult careers service.

The current 90,000 users of Skills Accounts will be able to access all of the existing features of Skills Accounts. Incorporating Skills Accounts into the new service has advantages in that it is targeted at a wide audience with an ambition that as many people as possible use the service. Furthermore it will become part of a national universal brand, easily identifiable.

Individuals will be able to access Next Step and set up their own secure personalised on line space by accessing one of three channels, the Next step website, a Next Step face to face advice session or a Next Step telephone advice session. Individuals will also be able to register for the service through their Learning Provider as per Skills Accounts trials

### Registering for Next Step, will give individuals access to:

Information and advice resources to help adults make more effective skills, careers and work life choices at a time and place that suits them. This helps them to:

- Identify the skills they have
- Match their skills needs
- Choose the right course
- Find out if they can get funding support
- Track how much has been spent on their learning
- Develop an action plan for their skills development and take control of their learning & working life.

### Your role as a Provider

As a provider you have an important role to play within Next Step, by supporting, promoting and championing Next Step to learners.

By registering learners' interest through the batch extract, providers are capturing data that allows potential customers to be contacted as well as enabling your learners to access the full range of benefits available through Next Step.

## How will Next Step benefit Providers?

- The aim is that **all adults register for Next Step** in order to increase their active commitment to learning and skills.
- By encouraging individuals to register for Next Step learning providers **will be increasing the size of their market.**
- The web portal has **a greater reach** for all ages & skill levels and ability to support learners **at various points in their journey.**
- Facilitated access to the service via a web portal will help to **overcome and reduce** literacy & language **barriers as well as support those who are uncomfortable with IT.**
- **Supports you in building longer term relationships** with learners. In time the service will produce increased knowledge and data on individuals and address barriers to learning
- From the start of their journey, the Next Step website provides tools & services that help **keep the learner engaged** prior to their course induction or enrolment. Those that are registered could be fast-tracked, **reducing input time at enrolment or initial assessment.**
- Web based tools can help to provide **evidence towards your Quality Improvement Plans** and self assessment reports as part of the Common Inspection Framework – *use of interesting and appropriate teaching and learning resources*
- Allows **for staff development** in providing readily available up to date information supporting learner progression into employment- *information on skills and labour demand.*

## Contacts and further information

If there are any questions then please contact your Regional Skills Funding Agency contact:

For further information please see the guidance available on the Skills Funding Agency Website

[www.skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/providers/programmes/sa/](http://www.skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/providers/programmes/sa/)

[www.skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/campaignresources](http://www.skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/campaignresources)

Registration with Next step provides a range of easy to use services to help you have meaningful and informed discussions with your customers as they consider their options for progressing in learning and work.

## How will the Next Step Service add value to the service I deliver to learners?

The **Learner Statement** enables your learners to track how much they have spent on their learning and the amount the Government has contributed towards their achievements. It may help them to understand and appreciate the actual cost of courses.

Your learners can use a **Learning Record** to track their achievements in both formal and informal learning by registering for Next Step. They can chart and evidence their progression as they continue to develop their skills.

This information will assist you to have informed discussions with your learners, who can use the information in many ways e.g. to develop a CV, or create job or further college applications

The **CV Builder** provides a simple step by step process to enable your learners to produce or update a professional CV to use when applying for jobs.

- Provides a range of **support and information in a single portal**
- Provides **an on-line personalised, secure space** where you can manage your own career and skills development
- The service is **free to all adults**
- Provides **ease of storage** with repeat access to personalised records.
- Ability to **input information once but use many times** adapting it to meet your individual need
- Potential to share **validated information** with providers and /or employers if you so wish.
- Provides quicker access **24/7, 365 days a year**

### Skills Diagnostic Tool

This gives learners the ability to produce a **Action Plan** or a skills report, created after a skills diagnostic assessment.

The assessment identifies an individuals current skills, abilities, strengths and areas for development to help them progress.

The results can be stored within Next Step, where they can access and review it at a later date to re assess their progress.

### Find a course

Potential new Learners can use the Next Step Course Directory to explore a range of suitable provision You need to make sure the database is up to date to benefit

The **Job Profiles** section provides guidance on likely responsibilities; salaries and conditions of work to help your customers to make informed choices and identify future training needs

### Funding for Learning:

This provides information and tools to help learners to identify their eligibility for government funding towards courses and support for learning.

Two easy-to-use tools provide an indication of whether your customer may be eligible to receive the **Adult Learning Grant (ALG)** and **Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work (FCTLW)**. They can also view other information on the availability of Learner Support which includes links to Direct.Gov.

Your customers can use the **Indication of Government Contribution** tool to find out if they may be eligible for a government contribution towards the cost of their learning.

*Standard application procedures apply. Actual eligibility for funding will be determined by the Provider. The Government contribution £ value displayed is based on calculations using the ILR funding rate and not provider fee policy, therefore displaying the value the Government (Skills Funding Agency) is likely to pay the provider for the course.*