

**This Month****News from the FE System Data Programme**

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**News from the FE System Data Programme**

The FE System Data Programme involves the creation of an independent *information authority* and a pilot to test the concept of a national Information Service. The authority will set and regulate data standards for all organisations involved in further education and training. A full Information Service will collect, handle and disseminate information across the further education system. Working in tandem, the two organisations will streamline and improve the way information is collected and shared.

**Change requests close for ILR 2008/09**

The *information authority* secretariat received 110 requests for changes to data fields in the Individualised Learner Record for 2008/09 before the deadline for submissions was reached on August 24<sup>th</sup>.

The majority of these, 73, were originally submitted as part of the 2007/08 change process but agreement was reached to review them during the 2008/09 process.

Seventy eight of the change requests received relate to amendments to existing data fields. There have been 31 requests for new fields and details are awaited on one further submission.

Most requests (82) have originated from the Learning and Skills Council with the remainder (28) coming from other organisations in the sector.

These change requests are now being evaluated before a final phase of consultation in September and October. This will result in a proposed short list of requests being submitted to the *information authority* board for approval in November 2007.

If you would like to be involved in the final phase of consultation during September and October please send your details to [ILR2008-09Specification@theia.org.uk](mailto:ILR2008-09Specification@theia.org.uk)

## Authority board to meet next month

Graham Jones will lead his first meeting next month as the independent Chair of the *information authority* board.

The key objectives for the meeting on September 26<sup>th</sup> are:

- To define and agree an *information authority* work plan for the next 12-24 months
- To achieve a common vision and purpose for the *information authority* covering the next 5-10 years.

Matters of business for the meeting will include the following papers and submissions:

- Strategic review of the impact of the creation of the Department for Children Schools and Families and the Department for Innovation Universities and Skills on the FE System Data Programme
- ILR08/09 – Changes to data collection arrangement for HE Providers of LSC funded provision; ILR08/09 – summary status and time line; making the Unique Learner Number a required field for validation within the ILR.

Current members of the *information authority* board and the organisations they represent are:

Graham Jones, independent Chair
Susan Pember, Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS)
Caroline Miller, Learning Provider
Bob Powell, HOLEX
Isabel Nisbet, Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA)
Jon Collis, National Training Resources
Julian Gravatt, Association of Colleges (AoC)
Lesley Giles, Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA)
Malcolm Britton, Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF)
Margaret Coleman, Learning and Skills Council (LSC)
Mario Ferelli, Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE)
Melanie Hunt, Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted)
Sarah Turton, Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK)

## Good response to new secretariat roles

From 32 applicants, thirteen people were selected for interview for new senior posts in the *information authority* secretariat this month, with decisions on appointments expected by mid September.

Advertisements for the roles of Head of the *information authority* secretariat; *information authority* Standards and Quality Manager; *information authority*

Community and Stakeholder Manager; and *information authority* Change Manager had appeared in The Guardian and Sunday Times as well as on the *information authority* and Learning and Skills Council websites.

“The applicants came from a wide range of backgrounds, including the private as well as the public sector, and the standard was extremely high,” said Steve Dale, Acting Head of the secretariat.

“There was a great interest in the fact that this is a new start organisation and a lot of excitement about the opportunities it brings to exert real influence across the further education sector.”

## **News from MIAP**

Managing Information Across Partners (MIAP) is about streamlining how information on learning and achievement is collected, handled and shared across the education sector so that excellent services are made available to individuals, employers and communities.

MIAP will be capable of issuing every person in education and training with a Unique Learner Number and enable the collation of a lifelong record of their participation and achievements that can be accessed through the internet. It will support this by delivering Common Data Definitions that can be used by everyone in the sector; and giving access to the UK Register of Learning Providers, containing details of individual training organisations and the services they provide.

## **New guidance for ‘early adopters’**

The 40 organisations which will become the first to use the MIAP service when it is launched on 3<sup>rd</sup> September are to receive new practical advice and guidance on how the system works and how to use it.

“We will be producing advice leaflets for front-line staff in further education colleges who will be registering learners on the service and also for tutors, explaining what MIAP is all about and detailing their responsibilities and rights,” said Tim Barrett, MIAP Sector Change Manager for the LSC.

“We are also in the process of enhancing the MIAP website to incorporate a password - protected community area of the ‘early adopters’ so they can share their experiences and best practice. The interaction through the web could help shape and enhance the MIAP service as we prepare to roll it out to all education and training organisations across the UK.”

Early adopters saw the new system in action for the first time when they attended a workshop in Birmingham last month. Organisations and their systems suppliers were shown the Learner Registration Service in its prototype form and were taken through the process of registering Unique Learner Numbers (ULNs).

## **MIAP user tests bring improvements**

A number of improvements to features and functionality of the new MIAP service have been identified during the user acceptance testing phase of the system and work is now underway to implement these prior to its launch in September.

A draft 'conditions of use' of MIAP will need to be signed by users. The wording of this has now been completed and is with the LSC's legal team for review.

Work to prepare the service for operational day-to-day use is also progressing well. Help desk staff are being trained in the use of the system by members of the MIAP operations team.

## Holiday transition to live service

The smooth transfer of data from the prototype Learner Registration Service to the live service continued throughout the holiday period ready for the September launch.

The service was taken offline for a few days at the end of August to allow data held on the prototype to be transferred. This 'down time' ensured that Unique Learner Numbers already registered were transferred by the MIAP team.

The prototype service now holds more than 24,200 Unique Learner Numbers. This is expected to rise to more than 100,000 after the full Learner Registration Service goes live for the 40 early adopters of MIAP next month.

If you would like to subscribe to this newsletter, register your contact details at [fesystemdataprog@lsc.gov.uk](mailto:fesystemdataprog@lsc.gov.uk)

To find out more about the *information authority* and MIAP, visit:

[www.theinformationauthority.org.uk](http://www.theinformationauthority.org.uk)

[www.miap.gov.uk](http://www.miap.gov.uk)