



Welcome – Richard Field

Introducing the new SRO

As we mentioned in the last newsletter, Richard Field, Director of Information Management has now taken on leadership of MIAP.

Richard joined the Learning and Skills Council as Director of Information in 2005.

Having held several senior roles in the energy industry during his private sector career, he is now responsible for the strategic development and delivery of business systems across the LSC and for overseeing the implementation of cross – sector programmes to streamline information collection and sharing.

Richard says, “I am looking forward to getting involved with this successful programme as we move from developing a concept into delivering a set of reliable, useful services. I am confident that MIAPs services will provide real benefits to all our partners and that 2009 will see significant progress.”



Learner Registration Service Surgeries

In January and February, 21 surgeries took place in 10 locations around England. Our thanks go to those of you who fought your way through snow and ice to attend the events in Exeter, Bristol and Birmingham which took place in the worst of the bad weather. In all we met almost 400 current and future LRS users and 96% of you found the sessions worthwhile, so thanks for your contribution.

An update on the service was presented at the sessions and you can view the slides on the website at the following address:

<http://www.miap.gov.uk/news/Events/>

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➤ Learner Registration Service Surgeries (cont.)

Listed below is an initial summary of the issues and suggestions raised at the surgeries, a detailed response will follow shortly:

- Practical training was widely requested – both for new users (including logging on for the first time, creating additional super-users, using the web portal to search, create and edit learners) and also for the more experienced users of MIAP batch files (to include the preparation, upload, and download of files, and the resolution of exceptions).
- All LRBs need to notify us of any change of designated super-user, our primary point of contact. This will help us improve our communication. It would also help if the LRB could auto-forward any email from MIAP to all its super-users.
- There was a great deal of confusion over MIAP batch files and their format. Some FE based commercial software is still using version 1a of the software and hence the (yyyy-dd-mm) date format. All advice is now provided for version 2a with (yyyy-mm-dd) date format. Guidance is also required on error codes, overwriting fields especially the post code and size of batch files
- Exceptions – email entries, nationality and postcodes are common causes of exceptions. High numbers are being reported and concerns raised over the time involved resolving them. A working validator (now available on the MIAP website) is seen as a solution to improve data quality and reduce exceptions
- The collection and recording of postcodes is a major source of exceptions and potential duplicates. Specific issues were raised about international students and students from Eire studying in Northern Ireland. There is a policy document covering this issue and in this instance the postcode would be ZZ99 9ZZ
- Guidance regarding the responsibility of the role of the super-user, especially in Local Authorities, has been requested.
- Improvements need to be made to the website particularly with the provision of helpful information, support and guidance
- Improvement is needed in the support provided by the helpdesk for web services.
- Guidance was also requested around issues such as ID verification, FPN, changing information, equal opportunities and the use of defaults i.e. postcode and number of last resort for a ULN.



We will be reporting back on the progress we make in addressing all of these issues – but if you feel something is missing, do please let us know.

➤ Tell us your news!

We are keen to feature your stories in the newsletter, as well as our own. If you have a positive story to tell about how you are using the Unique Learner Number (ULN) and the benefits it brings, then let us know and you could be starring in the next edition!



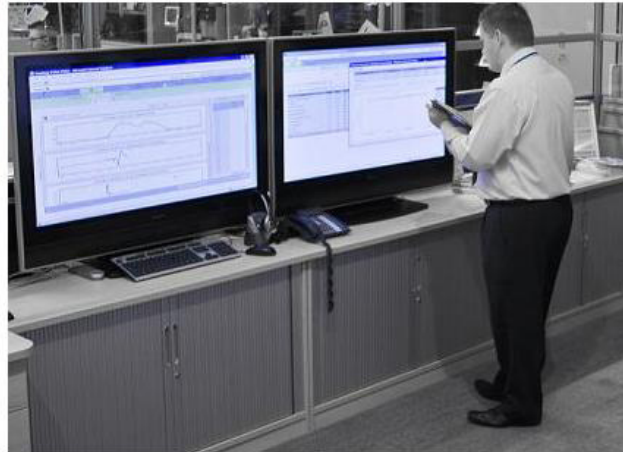
Service with a smile

In each newsletter we will be reporting on the results of the latest customer survey issued by the Service Desk.

We are delighted to report that in January 2009 87% of respondents rated the service as either Good or Very Good.

Of the 284 surveys issued there was a 17% response rate. Feedback from you plays an essential part in allowing us to continually improve the services provided so we would love to see this rate increase in future months.

If you receive an invitation to provide feedback we would greatly appreciate you taking a few moments of your time to complete it.



Data Quality Field Visits

Recent data analysis has revealed that some LRBs may have an issue with potential duplicate learner records. If a learner is given more than one Unique Learner Number (ULN), it is possible that the learner may be given incorrect advice and guidance or that incorrect data may be held about them.

We are therefore visiting those organisations identified in order to review the data.

During these informal visits, which have already begun, we will:

- Review the records registered on MIAP
- Discuss any additional support needs
- Deal with any concerns

If you have any data quality concerns, please email the helpdesk at: lrssupport@miap.gov.uk

These visits are part of our ongoing campaign to improve data quality across the service.



Northern Ireland adopts the ULN



Department for
**Employment
and Learning**
www.delni.gov.uk

On February 11th a workshop, organised by The Department for Employment and Learning in Northern Ireland (DELNI), took place to discuss adoption of the Unique Learner Number (ULN) in Northern Ireland. MIAP were delighted to support the workshop which was chaired by Daryl Young, DELNI Policy Lead and brought together a range of stakeholders and representatives of further education colleges.

It was clear from the event that colleges were keen to learn from the experiences of their English counterparts as they prepare for the introduction of the Qualifications and Curriculum Framework (QCF). In March college representatives from Northern Ireland will be visiting the team at Warwickshire College who use a similar management information system.

Initially two Northern Ireland colleges will be registering students.

The remaining colleges will follow on, targeting all learners in further education registered by Autumn 2009.



Latest Figures

The internet-based service which enables education providers to generate a Unique Learner Number (ULN) for anyone over the age of 14 in UK education and training was launched across the education sector on February 14th 2008. At the time 173 organisations were registered as Learner Registration Bodies (LRBs) and 141,627 ULN's had been issued. One year on, the figures are remarkable!

As of 13th Feb 2009:

3,440 organisations have signed up to be LRBs

5,421,108 people have been issued with a ULN

Watch this space for a regular update on the numbers.



Quality In Quality Out

Maintaining data quality and consistency when administering Unique Learner Numbers is vitally important.

This month's tip: The date of birth must be in the format dd/mm/yyyy.
Do check for transposition errors (e.g. 06/04/1992 vs. 04/06/1992),
i.e. check date of birth is correct.