

Pilots move towards Live Trial



Following the article in our July Newsletter regarding the MIAP pilots, the Learner Record is now moving towards Live Trial.

Maria McAlinden, who is running the pilots for MIAP says, "This is an exciting time for the sector as we improve the sharing of learner data between different providers".

The Learner Record live trial will begin during October and November. Maria adds, "We are aiming to review the level of detail within the Learner Record and the usefulness of the data captured from Learners and their Learning Providers to understand the ease of use of the system and of integrating it into existing processes".

At a workshop in Birmingham, the Learner Record was presented to providers across the sector who had expressed an interest in participating in the pilots. It met with an enthusiastic response. Stephanie Evans of the British Driving Society, "I feel the MIAP Pilot is offering us a unique opportunity to benefit from our collective expertise at the outset".



"Response has been enthusiastic"

"Ensuring acceptance by Providers and their Learners of the benefits will be key to deciding the future of the Learner Record"



"To date we have had commitments from 25 providers to participate in the pilots" says Dipika Mistry, MIAP's Test and Trials Co-ordinator. Dipika adds, "The response to our presentation indicates there is significant interest, not only in the Learner Record, which is due to be piloted at the end of the month."

MIAP gets close to its customers

Last week we sent out our first ever online Customer Satisfaction Survey to over 2,500 providers for the Learner Registration Service (LRS). The purpose of this survey was to gain feedback so we can understand the needs of our customers to better develop and improve our service.

Some of the questions we asked regarding the LRS were:

- Is the learner registration service easy to use?
- How would you rate the on-line help?(e.g. texts, tutorials, and demonstrations)
- Have you had reason to contact the MIAP helpdesk?

If you have not yet responded, we would be grateful if

you could **set aside ten minutes to complete the survey.**

We are seeing significant take-up of the service across local authorities/schools and the further education sector. We are keen to get your views and feedback on how we need to improve the services we provide to you, learners and the wider education and training sector.

As a follow up to this activity we are intending to run a series of regional surgeries throughout the country. Malcolm Edmonds, Implementation Consultant for MIAP says, "The objective of the surgeries will be the continued enhancement of our services by listening to the needs of our customers."

Ufi embraces MIAP services >

Ufi has been working with MIAP to implement the newly introduced Unique Learner Number (ULN). “Having in excess of 500,000 enrolments a year, the challenge that a manual enrolment process would involve is not to be underestimated”, says Dick Moore, Director of Technology, Ufi Learn Direct.



LEARN DIRECT Ufi’s approach has four phases that build incrementally. Phase One, is now delivered and has passed its compatibility gateway, allowing the automatic extraction of learner information from our Learner Management System (LMS) and submission of their details to the MIAP system so they can receive a ULN. This identifier is then stored within the LMS and submitted to the Learning and Skills Council as part of the Individual Learner Record return.

Dick adds, “Phase Two to Four will take us towards a fully interactive model that will allow us to assign a ULN as part of the enrolment process. Ufi’s view is that the most efficient point to verify a learner ULN is when they are present at the point of registration”.

The integration process has been very smooth, with strong collaboration between the Ufi team and the MIAP team allowing both parties to learn from each other to the benefit of the project. With good change control and testing, this approach has meant the project has been delivered on time and to budget and includes integrated service management controls.



“A fully interactive model will allow us to assign a ULN as part of the enrolment process”

Higher Education Advisory Group established

A key component of MIAP’s engagement with stakeholders across the Higher Education (HE) sector has been to establish a Higher Education Advisory Group. The Group’s role is to advise MIAP on how it might best deploy its services in HE, to review the benefits, and to explore the technology-related implications for the sector. Another important aspect of the work of the HE Advisory Group will be to encourage Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and the HE sector generally to adopt MIAP’s services.

The HE Advisory Group comprises senior individuals from twenty organisations responsible for funding, policy and delivery in Higher Education across the UK, to steer the development of MIAP’s services to support the HE Sector. A number of Universities are also represented on the Group.

Lynne Thomas, Implementation Consultant who is working with the HE sector for MIAP, is also recruiting a group of universities to become early users of the Learner Registration Service (LRS) and assign unique learner numbers (ULNs) to their students. Lynne says that “most Universities view the prospect of a lifelong, unique identifier across the education sector extremely positively and recognise the potential benefits that the ULN and Learner Record can deliver to the institution and its students.”

The [MIAP website](http://www.miap.gov.uk) contains the members of the HE Advisory Group and information on how the HE sector can start to use, and benefit from, MIAP’s services. If you would like to find out more please contact lynne.thomas@miap.gov.uk.

Learners in the Driving Seat

Ben Weaver, Student Support Officer of the English Secondary Schools Association (ESSA) joined the MIAP Benefits Panel this month making an immediate impact. His input helped the Panel to gain a 'learners' perspective and inform the direction of the learner record strategy.

One of the key developments was support for providing learners with an audit trail of who has accessed their learner record, giving learner's confidence over the security of their information and who is accessing it. Another development the panel

supported was a more sophisticated learner consent model than the current opt-out model, allowing learners to select which achievements they wanted to share according to the organisation they wanted to share it with.

Ben commented that "ESSA were pleased to be able to contribute to the recent MIAP Benefits Panel. The project is a central issue for our members and it has been highly beneficial to have an input at this stage. We hope to remain involved throughout the projects development."

MIAP Starting to "Pay" Off

It's official - several million pounds of shared service efficiencies have been identified. "Using MIAP's Learner Registration Service and the Unique Learner Number avoids significant costs for Government bodies of approximately £7.2m each in hardware and development and £1.9m per year in maintenance" adds Barbara Clark, MIAP Benefits Manager. 14-19 Diplomas and Offender Learning are reaping the benefits of shared use of the Learner Registration Service. These shared service efficiencies will continue to rise as new initiatives, such as Qualification and Credit Framework, EMA and National Apprenticeship Matching start to share the use of the LRS.

MIAP – New Software Releases

Over the next two months we plan to release two new versions of MIAP software. The first release, planned for the end of October, will deliver the first version of the Learner Record using participation and achievement information from ILR returns and also Key Stage 4/5 results from the National Pupil database. This release will also enable selected organisations that form our pilot user group to access the Learner Record. The pilot will enable us to ensure the quality of the data is sufficiently good to release the Learner Record to all our organisational users at a later date and also to provide feedback on the user interface.

The other major enhancement is the provision of a new range of learner verification services for the Diploma Aggregation Service and Awarding Bodies to use when verifying details of Learners submitted to them.

The second release, due at the end of November, will open access to the Learner Record to Learners themselves using a new portal screen. Again this will be initially released on a pilot basis. In addition the release will contain the functionality to process challenges against the data held by MIAP for both organisational users and Learners. The final component of the release will be an enhancement to the data quality and management information reporting capabilities.

It is important to note that neither of these two releases impact upon the existing LRS service. There is no requirement to amend interfaces to the LRS and the Portal screens that are in use for finding, creating and amending Learner details as these are not changing. When our testing is sufficiently advanced and we have firm dates for each release, we will communicate any planned unavailability of our production service for installing the new releases in the normal way.

Further details of these releases and our planned maintenance release to address some of the enhancements Learning Providers have requested will be communicated shortly.

Finally, we are pleased to be able to announce the upcoming availability of a test environment for batch and Portal users. This is currently being commissioned and as soon as we have a firm date as to its availability we will let you know. Also we plan to release a new version of our batch validator tool. At present we have had to withdraw this tool as errors had been identified. We have taken the opportunity to enhance the validations and information/error messages that the tool provides. We aim to release the new validator in the week commencing 6 October.