

# The Personal Learning Record for the Qualifications and Credit Framework Service Charter

Tier 2 Document  
Version 1.0

April 2010

Of interest to everyone involved in learning and skills



**MIAP**  
Managing Information  
Across Partners

# Introduction

This document is written by the Chief Executive of Skills Funding and is a Tier 2 Document as referenced by the Awarding Organisation Agreement for the Personal Learning Record (PLR) for the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF).

This Service Charter contains Service Levels that the Chief Executive aims to achieve though these shall be reviewed and developed to ensure they measure the most relevant areas of service performance as agreed by the Customer Scrutiny Group.

The Service Charter covers areas of service and availability of use of the PLR for the QCF as listed below:

1. Service Description
2. Service Level Objectives
3. Service Catalogue (including service levels)
4. Service Availability and Performance Levels
5. Service Hours and Response Times
6. Maintenance and Service Continuity
7. Data Acceptance, Validity and Processing
8. Contact Points and Escalation

## 1. Service Description

This Service Charter sets out the levels of service that will be delivered by the Chief Executive of Skills Funding in support of Awarding Organisations, Learners, Providers and Careers Information and Advice practitioners in their use of the PLR for the QCF.

The scope of the service is detailed in the Service Catalogue which is underpinned by the QCF Service Desk as contactable via the telephone number shown in section 8 of this document.

## 2. Service Level Objectives

The Chief Executive aims to meet the following service level objectives in making available the PLR for the QCF:

- To provide a stable and secure platform for Awarding Organisations to submit QCF Achievement Data.
- To ensure that the service levels of the PLR for the QCF are of a consistently high quality to provide Awarding Organisations with the ability to carry out Rules of Combination and credit check queries as required.
- To ensure that the service can be used to support Learners in their interaction with Providers or publicly funded Careers Advice practitioners.
- To ensure that Learners, publicly and privately funded across England, Wales and Northern Ireland have access to their Personal Learning Record.
- To ensure that the service levels detailed within this document are compatible with the 'Regulatory arrangements for the Qualification and Credit Framework (2008)'.

### 3. Service Catalogue

The table below sets out the entire scope of services offered within the Service Charter. Updates to this table will be available by website .

Ref	Service Name	Service Description	Service Specification	Frequency	Performance	Customer
OCF 01	<b>Learner Achievement Data Upload</b>	Ability to upload Learner Achievement Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Web service/API upload</li> <li>• Manually using a web form</li> </ul>	As required	All loads of valid batches to be completed within 48 hours	Awarding Organisations
OCF 02	<b>Learner Data Amendments</b>	Ability to view, amend or withdraw Learner Achievement Data an Awarding Organisation has previously submitted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Web service/API upload</li> <li>• Manually using a web form</li> </ul>	As required	Monthly average within three seconds	Awarding Organisations
OCF 03	<b>View Learner Record</b>	Ability to view a Learner achievement record	To support; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online views</li> <li>• Printable report</li> <li>• Time limited email links</li> </ul>	As required	Monthly average within three seconds	Learners, Providers Learner Advisory Service Awarding Organisations
OCF 04	<b>Rules of Combination (RoC) Single Qualification Query</b>	Ability to view the units, based on destination qualification, that apply to a given qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• View online</li> <li>• Printable report</li> </ul>	As required	Monthly average within five seconds	Learners, Providers Learner Advisory Service Awarding Organisations

Ref	Service Name	Service Description	Service Specification	Frequency	Performance	Customer
OCF 05	<b>Credit check Query</b>	Ability to confirm the award of credit for a specific unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• View online</li> <li>• Printable report</li> </ul>	As required	Monthly average within five seconds	Learners, Providers Learner Advisory Service Awarding Organisations
OCF 06	<b>Routes to Achievement (RtA) Query</b>	Ability to present to the user, combinations of units which will lead to one or more qualifications (e.g. availability, career aspiration or financial support) based on the query parameters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• View online</li> <li>• Printable report</li> </ul>	As required	Monthly average within five seconds	Learners, Providers Learner Advisory Service
OCF 07	<b>Learner Data Availability</b>	Ability for a Learner to request their data is made available or unavailable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online</li> <li>• Electronically</li> <li>• Telephone</li> </ul>	As required	Request response times as per incident category DC/ Learner data availability	Learners
OCF 08	<b>Data Challenge</b>	Ability for a Learner to challenge their personal data hosted on the PLR for the QCF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written</li> </ul>	As required	Request response times as per incident category DC/ Learner data availability	Learners or representatives

Ref	Service Name	Service Description	Service Specification	Frequency	Performance	Customer
OCF 09	<b>Identity Management</b>	Ability for Awarding Organisations and Providers to manage their own users' access to the PLR for the QCF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online</li> </ul>	As required		Awarding Organisations Providers
OCF 10	<b>Development Support Services</b>	Advice and guidance to help Awarding Organisations develop their interface files	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Web service/API</li> </ul>	As required		Awarding Organisations
OCF 11	<b>Verify ULN Learner Details</b>	Ability to Verify ULN and associated learner details of given name, family name, date of birth, gender and post code (optional)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Web service/API upload</li> <li>• Manually using a web form</li> </ul>	As required	Monthly average within three seconds	Awarding Organisations

#### 4. Service Availability and Performance Levels

- The use of services relating to the PLR for the QCF will be made available for twenty-four (24) hours a day and for seven (7) days a week subject to agreed maintenance arrangements by the Chief Executive. This also includes an availability of twenty-four (24) hours a day and seven (7) days a week for the Personal Learning Record.
- The service level for service availability is 99.5% per calendar month.
- For each service there will be an expected level of performance to ensure an optimal user experience is achieved. The Service Catalogue contains the expected performance levels.
- Since many of the service elements of the PLR for the QCF will be internet based, the performance levels will be measured from the point of entry to the point of exit in the Skills Funding traffic manager.
- The Chief Executive will manage the performance of the PLR system and receive regular performance reporting from its suppliers including customer satisfactions surveys. Key performance indicators will be agreed with Awarding Organisations and will be reported via the Customer Scrutiny group or as agreed.

#### 5. Service Hours and Response Times

The operational hours and service support functions for QCF customers are as follows:

Service Area	Functions	Hours of Service
<b>Service Desk</b>	1. Log all calls 2. Assign Incident Category (1 to 4)	0800 to 2000hrs Monday to Saturday excluding UK Public Holidays
<b>Incident resolution</b>	Incident Category 1 and 2, 3, 4 and DC / learner data availability	0800 to 2000hrs Monday to Saturday excluding UK Public Holidays

#### 6. Maintenance and Service Continuity

- The Chief Executive shall maintain the PLR for the QCF according to a schedule which will be communicated to Awarding Organisations. Planned maintenance, including future releases, is undertaken outside the core business hours, wherever possible, unless prior agreement is secured. The core business hours are between 0800hrs and 2000hrs Monday to Saturday excluding UK Bank Holidays.
- The Chief Executive will endeavour to complete all emergency maintenance (such as for the highest priority systems issues where the fix must take place within twenty-four (24) hours) outside the core business hours; however the nature of such maintenance means that system availability is likely to be affected during core business hours.

- For emergency maintenance, the Chief Executive will endeavour to provide the QCF customers with some notice that the service will be unavailable.
- From the time that the Chief Executive invokes the agreed disaster recovery procedure, the availability of use of the PLR for the QCF will be reinstated within 8 service hours.

## **7. Data Acceptance, Validity and Processing**

The PLR for the QCF will enable Awarding Organisations to provide their Achievement Data in the following formats:

- Single entry web form on a web based service portal; or
- Bulk or individual upload through a web based service portal (using csv or xml file formats); or
- Bulk or individual upload through a web services Applications Programme Interface (API).

As detailed in the Awarding Organisation Agreement, the submission of new or updated Achievement Data to the PLR is necessary within ten (10) working days of the date that the award was made by the Awarding Organisation.

In the event that operational hours are lost due to the service being unavailable, then the ten (10) day period for an Awarding Organisation to submit or amend Data will be extended for at least the period of service unavailability. Service unavailability covers events such as unscheduled downtime, unplanned maintenance or emergency maintenance.

Once an Awarding Organisation has successfully transferred a data file, processing will commence and be completed within 48 hours. After completion an email notification will be sent to the submitting user.

## 8. Contact Points and Escalation

The main contact point is the QCF Service Desk:

**Tel:** 0870 2670054

**Email:** qcf servicedesk@skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk

**Correspondence Address:** Skills Funding Agency, Cheylesmore House, Quinton Road, Coventry, CV1 2WT

The second point of escalation is the Service Manager:

**Tel:** 0870 2670054

**Email:** qcf servicedesk@skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk

**Correspondence Address:** Service Manager, Skills Funding Agency, Cheylesmore House, Quinton Road, Coventry, CV1 2WT

The third point of escalation is the Senior Service Manager:

**Tel:** 0870 2670054

**Email:** qcf servicedesk@skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk

**Correspondence Address:** Senior Service Manager, Skills Funding Agency, Cheylesmore House, Quinton Road, Coventry, CV1 2WT

The fourth point of escalation is the Head of MIAP Service:

**Tel:** 0870 2670054

**Email:** qcf servicedesk@skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk

**Correspondence Address:** Head Of MIAP Service, Skills Funding Agency, Cheylesmore House, Quinton Road, Coventry, CV1 2WT

Skills Funding Agency Office  
Contact details for each office can be  
found on our website:  
[www.skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk](http://www.skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk)

## **Skills Funding Agency**

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