

# Minutes

<b>Date</b>	29 September 2010
<b>Subject</b>	Board Meeting
<b>Location</b>	BMA House, Tavistock Square, London
<b>Time</b>	10:00am – 3.00pm
<b>Publication intent</b>	PUBLIC DOCUMENT

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**Present** Board members and alternates: Malcolm Britton (DfE); Jon Collis (ALP); Ruth Curry (BIS); Julian Gravatt (AoC); Mario Ferelli (HEFCE); Graham Jones (Chairman); Caroline Kempner (YPLA); Caroline Miller (Newcastle City Learning); Bob Powell (HOLEX); Rob Pike (Ofsted); Ian Pryce (Bedford College); David Pye (LGA) and Robert Spano (GoSkills)

Presenters: Pete Ashton (*the information authority*); Anne Fessi (*the information authority*); Lisa Macdougall (*the information authority*) and John Perks (*the information authority*).

Others: David Matthews (*the information authority*) and Ian Thomson (BIS)

**Apologies** Apologies have been received from:  
Tim Allen (LGA); Emma Cochrane (Ofqual) and Julie Nugent (Skills Funding Agency)

## Item 1. Welcome and introductions

- 1.1 The Chairman welcomed attendees and alternates and gave apologies for those unable to attend.
- 1.2 Upon opening the meeting the Chairman set the scene by commenting that the sector was experiencing 'turbulent times' both politically and financially and it was entirely possible that further announcements may change the principles under which the sector is currently operating. He commented further that the board can only be expected to make decisions in the light of current information, it must be ready to respond to challenges posed by any announcements of future changes to the operating environment of the sector.

## **Item 2. Minutes of last meeting and Action Log**

- 2.1 Minutes: the board approved the minutes and the Chairman thanked staff who produced them.
- 2.2 Action Log: John Perks, Pete Ashton, Anne Fessi and Lisa Macdougall updated the board on the actions from the previous meetings. As outlined in the Action Log, these are summarised as follows:
- 09/09 – 2 - A list of fields to support principle 5 was produced but has proved less useful than originally thought. The list and an alternative approach to be discussed at the next data management group meeting on 12 November 2010. Action can be closed.
  - 09/09 – 4 - The Data Service has confirmed that Ufl can make single LR returns during 2010/11. Action can be closed.
  - 09/09 – 9 - Change Request withdrawn by YPLA. Action can be closed.
  - 09/09 – 12 - Any outstanding work has been incorporated into 11/12 change process. Action can be closed.
  - 09/09 – 17 - Action can be closed.
  - 03/10 – 5 - The Secretariat continues to liaise with the DfE, DSG and YPLA on developments.
  - 06/10 – 1 - Action can be closed.
  - 06/10 – 2 - Action can be closed.
  - 06/10 – 3 - Points incorporated. Principles to return to board meeting on 1 December 2010 after next Data Management Group meeting. Action can be closed.
  - 06/10 – 4 Pete Ashton presented a paper on this during the board meeting.

## **Item 3. Matters arising**

- 3.1 No matters were raised.

## **Item 4. Implementing a single restructured learner record based on XML format**

- 4.1 Pete Ashton introduced this paper by saying that the Data Service and *the information authority* are working collaboratively to implement a new single, restructured data collection to replace the individualised learner record (ILR) rather than separate timetables for ER, ASL and LR collections.
- 4.2 He also explained that the move from a 'flat file' format to XML would ensure compliance with government e-GIF standards. In addition, the Data Service's current plans to re-platform the ILR make this the ideal time to implement such a switch.
- 4.3 GJ asked if it would be a missed opportunity if the switch were to not happen now, which PA confirmed. JP added that for the hardware and software to be refreshed at any other time (than now) would mean waiting until the Data Service again had the funds to do so.

- 4.4 PA noted that 2011/12 would be a “transition” year, where providers could choose the old ILR format or the new format for submitting their data returns. PA continued that there may be management information (MI) issues for the Data Service that would require further consultation. The second proposal is that agreed changes to the data collection would be within the new format learner record for 2011/12 and not the old format (ILR).
- 4.5 PA clarified that providers will need to be consulted on the switch, including costs.
- 4.6 GJ asked Board members for their comments on the paper.
- 4.7 MF thought a transition year with providers having a choice could cause confusion and added that many providers already use XML systems. JP justified the proposal by stating that approximately 85% of colleges use standard software systems where there are no issues, as XML can be “written in”. Of greater difficulty are the 15% of colleges that do not have a system to use XML where they need to create one. The 12 month transition period gives time to rectify technical problems and still enables providers to submit data on either system.
- 4.8 JC asked if there would be any issues on testing the two systems. JP commented that physical testing would be available for providers to resolve any issues encountered and also for any MI issues at the Data Service end where data does not map from one system to another. The Data Service will assist in mapping data via the creation and use of algorithms.
- 4.9 IP asked how the new platform ties in with funding methodologies and also whether competition would reduce the cost of XML. PA said there was a need to quantify costs. GJ suggested an impact analysis of costs.
- 4.10 RC stated that the Business, Innovation and Skills department supports the proposal and wanted to confirm the governance arrangements for taking the proposal forward.
- 4.11 RC noted that the change of name for the data collection should be a strategic decision and not a decision for the secretariat. GJ noted this but stated that the board should have a role in naming the new platform.
- 4.12 CK thought that the switch over to a new format would be difficult in the current climate not least due to divergence of funding requirements. CK said there was also a need to consider downstream MI and for *the information authority* and the Data Service to fully cost the new system including software suppliers’ costs.
- 4.13 JG asked if the Data Service has the resource to make the change and also the likelihood of e-GIF standards changing in the near future, after the move to XML has been made, thus rendering the change outdated. On the first point PA replied that the Data Service has the resource. On the second point JP replied that XML is a script and he could not see it being outdated in the near to mid-future.
- 4.14 JG thought a better decision would be to switch to XML in 2012/13, to enable alignment with the YPLA funding systems which are changing in 2012/13.
- 4.15 IP invited the board to learn the lessons from schools and HE’s move to XML. MB stated that the transition was relatively smooth due to the Department working collaboratively with software suppliers and also working on data movement in the system.
- 4.16 MB suggested that the proposal was very much in line with current Coalition policy on reducing data burden and this could be emphasised more in the proposal.

- 4.17 BP supported the proposal and said that it seemed the right time to implement. However, he was concerned that the software suppliers which support ASL may not be so able to make the required changes. He also expressed concerns that the impending announcement of the Comprehensive Spending Review could lead to many data changes that will need to be reflected in the 2011/12 ILR. GJ accepted these concerns, but reiterated his comments at the start of the meeting, that the board could only make decisions in light of the current political paradigm under which it was operating.
- 4.18 RS voiced concerns regarding sector skills councils obtaining supply-side data from BIS, with no data released by BIS that is not part of the Statistical First Release (from the SFA). RS said there was a need to understand inputs in order to understand outputs. Robert Spano and Ruth Curry agreed that they would discuss offline.
- 4.19 JC requested the word “minimise” to replace the word “estimate” in the final bullet point of paragraph 35.
- 4.20 CK requested a reference to “simplification” in the recommendation.
- 4.21 GJ asked the board to comment on each recommendation within Paragraph 35.
- Recommendation 1 – agreed by the board in principle (if the new format is cheaper, reduces bureaucracy, simplifies, etc.)
  - Recommendation 2 – agreed by the board.
  - Recommendation 3 – board members had concerns about this, but agreed that it should be considered as a ‘failsafe’ option to mitigate risk, although the strategic case is a strong one.
  - Recommendation 4 – the board should be invited to influence the decision regarding the new name for the data collection.
  - Recommendation 5 – that we should work with providers to estimate and **minimise** the cost of the proposed changes.
- 4.22 GJ summarised by saying that the strategic direction had been approved, but that more detail regarding the impact on providers needed to be presented to the board. JP agreed that the secretariat would continue with the project, including consultation with providers, and discuss further with the board in December.

**Action: 09/10 – 01: JP to provide a project plan for the next board meeting in December.**

## Item 5. Changes to the Specification of the Individualised Learner Record for 2011/12

- 5.1 LM provided an overview of this paper. A new method of consulting with stakeholders was carried out using online survey software in addition to discussions held on the **feconnect** data users' forum. A total of 540 responses were received to targeted questions relating to each of the 14 change requests that went out to consultation. LM presented all of the 38 change requests to the board. The outcomes of each request can be summarised as follows:

Summary of requests	Secretariat's Recommendation	Board's decision
1. Non-attainment of Minimum Completion Criteria	To reject the proposed changes.	Recommendation supported.
2. Prior Attainment – move to aim level	To reject the proposed changes.	Recommendation supported.
3. Unfunded Employer Responsive provision	To approve the proposed changes.	Recommendation not supported.
4. Collection of National Insurance numbers	To defer the request.	Recommendation supported.
5. Mandated Jobcentre Plus Action Plan	To reject the proposed changes.	Recommendation supported.
6. Extend collection of Employment Outcomes	Request withdrawn.	N/A
7. New codes for Programme Entry Route field	To approve the proposed changes.	Recommendation supported.
8. Distinguish existing employees in Employment Status	To reject the proposed changes for 2011/12.	Recommendation supported.
9. Increased validation for QCF Credits	To approve the proposed change.	Recommendation supported.
10. Identify volunteers in Employment Status	To reject the proposed changes.	Recommendation approved.
11. Monitor learner withdrawals for Connexions	To reject the proposed changes.	Recommendation supported.
12. Change format of Higher Education data	Not to extend the collection of ILR data to HEIs.	Recommendation supported.
13. Include pregnancy in Reason Learning Ended field	To reject the proposed changes.	Recommendation supported.
14. Extend use of programme aim for apprenticeships	To approve the proposed changes.	Recommendation approved.
15. Move the Destination field from learner to aim level	To reject the proposed changes.	Recommendation supported.
16. Review codes in Main Delivery Method field – non-NVQ qualifications	To approve the proposed changes.	Recommendation approved.
17. Learner transfers within same provider	To reject the proposed changes.	Recommendation supported.
18. Additional Learner Support codes	Request withdrawn.	N/A

19. Additional codes for Discretionary Learning Support	To approve the proposed changes.	Recommendation not supported.
20. Collect email addresses in Contact Details	To approve the proposed change.	Recommendation supported.
21. Identify Online Basics course	To reject the proposed changes.	Recommendation supported.
22. Review LLDD definitions	To approve the changes subject to further work before 31 Oct 2010.	Recommendation supported.
23. Review reasons for fee remission	To remove A14 and replace with a new field indicating whether a learning aim is fully funded or co-funded.	Recommendation supported.
24. Identify 19-24 LLDD learners	To reject the proposed changes.	Recommendation supported.
25. Removal of UPIN and making UKPRN mandatory	UPIN retained for 2011/12 UPIN withdrawn for 2012/13	Recommendation supported.
26. Identify Group Training Associations (GTAs)	Request withdrawn.	N/A
27. Link redundancy fields to meet intervention program changes	Request linked to review of employment status fields.	N/A
28. Remove low value fields	H12 – remove for 2011/12 L02 – remove for 2011/12 A02 – remove for 2011/12 L41 – remove for 2011/12 A47 – remove for 2011/12 L49 – retain for 2011/12 A18 – retain for 2011/12 A19 – retain for 2011/12	All recommendations supported.
29. Review Ethnicity definitions	To approve the use of 2011 Census categories if available by 31 Oct 2010.	Recommendation supported.
30. Review Country of Domicile definitions	To approve the proposed changes.	Recommendation supported.
31. Review Data Protection Statement	To approve further work to improve the DP statement.	Recommendation supported.
32. Move to single ILR return	To approve the proposed changes.	Recommendation approved.
33. Move ILR to XML format	To approve the proposed changes.	Recommendation supported.
34. Introduce derived variable for Raising the Participation Age	This does not require a change to the ILR.	N/A
35. Review of Employment Status definitions and fields	To defer the request.	Recommendation supported.
36. Identify learners who are carers	Request withdrawn.	N/A.

37. Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England (SASE)	To approve changes subject to further information being available by 31 Oct 2010.	Recommendation supported.
38. Recording learner re-starts	Request withdrawn.	N/A

## Changes to Data Collection Arrangements

### 5.2 Change Request 3: Collection of unfunded apprenticeship provision

- 5.2.1 The secretariat recommended that the board approves the request for providers to return data about non-funded apprenticeships alongside their funded provision in an ER ILR return.
- 5.2.2 LM advised that questions surrounding funded and unfunded learners remain; however, only a small number of providers will be affected by these issues. LM asked the board to bear the following points in mind:
- There should be consistent reporting of Apprenticeship data;
  - It is proposed, in future, that providers return data on unfunded Apprenticeships in the employer responsive (ER) ILR return; and
  - Data burden is kept to a minimum.
- 5.2.3 Related to the final point above, JC commented on feedback from an executive's forum (of ALP members), that data burden was not an issue. The issue for CEOs is one of principle in that, commercial provision is in confidence. In addition student progress on non-funded provision is almost entirely controlled by the employer and changes to meet the requirements of their business. Consequently non-funded learners should not be included when calculating success rates. JC asked for the term "programmes" in Paragraph 18 to be clarified.
- 5.2.4 Board members commented on privately-funded Apprenticeship providers not returning data, perhaps due to Data Protection Act constraints or possibly reflecting concerns of commercial confidence. IP suggested paying providers for data related to their privately-funded Apprenticeships. JC stated that the Government currently collects information on privately-funded Apprenticeships via the Office of National Statistics. RP informed the board that Ofsted does not require unfunded Apprenticeships data. JG suggested using the Freedom of Information Act to obtain data on privately-funded Apprenticeships.
- 5.2.5 MF viewed the definition of categories A, B and C as a technical one and related to eligibility for public funding. RS supported MF's view and said it also applies to National Skills Academies and the way that they are subsidised. IP said data for category A should be returned otherwise there would be a dilution of funding and provision.
- 5.2.6 RC said that BIS will investigate this issue in relation to funding methodology changes with respect to the advantages to providers where they are not drawing down public funding.

5.2.7 The question of whether there is a legal basis for collecting data on privately-funded learners was unclear. IP asked if the legal question on data being provided by private apprenticeship providers could be answered. PA remarked that where a provider has 100 privately-funded learners out of 200, they should return data for all 200 (as per paragraph 19).

5.2.8 **Decision:** the board took a vote as follows: 0 in favour; 6 against; 7 non-votes. Therefore, the recommendation was not supported and Change Request 3 was not approved. GJ asked LM to provide feedback on behalf of the board to the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS).

**Action: 09/10 – 02: The secretariat to verify the legal position on data provision related to privately funded provision and feed back at the next board meeting in December.**

### 5.3 **Change Request 12: Change to collection arrangements for Higher Education data**

5.3.1 The board was asked to support the recommendation NOT to extend the collection of ILR data to HE institutes.

5.3.2 LM informed the board of the following points in relation to Change Request 12:

- HESA has one data collection at the end of the academic year; AND
- The current arrangement does not provide the YPLA with timely data of sufficient quality to inform its funding processes.

5.3.3 CK was satisfied with Change Request 12 and stated that the work performed and shared by HESA is needed to support Skills Funding Agency and YPLA processes. CK requested that *the information authority* and the Data Service prioritise ongoing work with HESA to improve current arrangements.

5.3.4 **Decision:** The recommendation was supported, and the secretariat was asked to give greater priority to working with the YPLA to help it obtain data from HESA that meets its needs.

### 5.4 **Change Request 32: Move to single ILR return**

5.4.1 This was discussed in detail during Item 4 of the agenda.

### 5.5 **Change Request 33: Move ILR to XML format**

5.5.1 This was discussed in detail during Item 4 of the agenda.

### 5.6 **Change Request 28: Remove low value fields**

5.6.1 LM explained that the ILR is reviewed annually for low value fields that could potentially be removed.

5.6.2 *L49, Discretionary support funds* - the secretariat recommended that this field is retained in the ILR for 2011/12 and that the categories are updated to ensure that data is reported accurately. **Decision:** The recommendation was supported.

- 5.6.3 *A18, Main delivery method* - the secretariat recommended that this field is retained in the ILR for 2011/12. **Decision:** The recommendation was supported.
- 5.6.4 *A19, Employer role* – the secretariat recommended that this field is retained in the ILR for 2011/12. **Decision:** The secretariat was advised to investigate further with DfE statisticians to establish how important the field is to them given the quality of the data is unreliable. The secretariat to make the decision, which should be reported back to the board.
- 5.6.5 *H12, New entrant to higher education* – the secretariat recommended that this field is removed from the ILR for 2011/12. **Decision:** The recommendation was supported.
- 5.6.6 *L41, A47, L02, A02* – LM explained that information for these fields is no longer collected and recommended that they should be removed. **Decision:** The recommendation was supported.

### **Requests Requiring New Data Fields or Extending the Use of Existing Fields**

#### **5.7 Change Request 20: New field to collect email addresses for learners**

5.7.1 The board was asked to approve the addition of a new field to collect email addresses.

5.7.2 **Decision:** The recommendation was supported as long as the information was collected on a voluntary basis.

#### **5.8 Change Request 36: New Field to identify learners who are carers**

5.8.1 **Decision:** This request was withdrawn by the YPLA.

#### **5.9 Change Request 23: Review and replace reasons for fee remission**

5.9.1 The secretariat consulted on two options:

*Option 1 - to simplify the field to the following:*

- a) Fully funded learning aim – learner is aged 16-18 at start of aim
- b) Fully funded learning aim – learner is eligible for level 2 or level 3 entitlement
- c) Fully funded learning aim – learner is in receipt of income-based (or equivalent) benefit
- d) Fully funded learning aim – other reason
- e) Co-funded learning aim
- f) No funding for this learning aim

*Option 2 - to capture only whether or not a learning aim is eligible for full or co-funding (no reason would be recorded).*

5.9.2 LM informed the board that Field A14 changes constantly. It is difficult for providers to collect and record the information for Field A14 as it is complex and requires simplification. Information collected through Field A14 can be collected via other means. RC suggested finding an alternative way of collecting this information and stated that the information collected through Field A14 is useful, but the current manner and difficulty of collecting the information is not helpful.

5.9.3 The board was asked to approve the removal of field A14 and its replacement with a new field to collect whether or not a learning aim is fully or co-funded.

5.9.4 **Decision:** The recommendation was supported.

#### 5.10 **Change Request 14: Extend use of programme aim for apprenticeships**

5.10.1 Following a review of programme and aim level fields for apprenticeship programmes, it is proposed that the following aim fields would only be collected at programme level, and not for every learning aim within the programme:

- A11 Source of funding
- A16 Programme entry route
- A44 Employer identifier
- A45 Workplace location postcode
- A46 National learning aim monitoring
- A49 Special projects and pilots
- A63 National Skills Academy
- A69 Eligibility for enhanced ER funding
- A70 Contracting organisation code

5.10.2 Fields A14 (Reason for full/co-funding of learning aim), A50 (Reason learning ended) and A51a (Proportion of funding remaining) can have unique and different values for each learning aim and so would be removed from the programme aim and collected instead for each learning aim.

5.10.3 LM stated that a number of fields recorded at learning aim level should now be recorded only at programme level.

5.10.4 JC thought one issue with Change Request 14 is how it affects minimum contract level changes (when they are introduced) and the length and variety of the sub-contracting chain. He also commented on the benefits of “co-investment”, which prevents some employers cashing in on certain learning aims which may not be available to others.

5.10.5 The board was asked to approve the above proposed changes to data collection arrangements for apprenticeship programmes.

5.10.6 **Decision:** The recommendation was supported.

### **Requests Requiring Changed Codes in Existing Data Fields**

#### 5.11 **Change Request 7: Changes to recording of Programme Entry Route in field A16**

5.11.1 LM informed the board that Change Request 7 involved the recording of codes detailing route of entry for a learner onto an Apprenticeship, whether it be pre-Apprenticeship training or progression from an Advanced Apprenticeship to a Higher Apprenticeship.

- 5.11.2 MF queried whether the Learning Records Service (LRS) should be the source of this information accessed by the ULN and if so the requirement for this change would be redundant.
- 5.11.3 JP clarified that this issue is the subject of ongoing discussions with the LRS and that it was a question of critical mass. There are a number of other implications on prior attainment. JP said that this years' data would be ready for analysis (in totality) by November 2011 and that would be the time for LRS to answer any queries on this issue. JP informed the board that the Data Quality board is monitoring data quality and the point at which critical mass will be achieved.
- 5.11.4 The board agreed it would be helpful to have feedback on this issue from the LRS at the December board meeting.
- 5.11.5 The board was asked to agree to the addition of two new codes to the Programme Entry Route field subject to a robust definition for pre-Apprenticeship training being received by 31 October 2010.
- 5.11.6 **Decision:** The recommendation was supported.

**Action: 09/10 – 3: The Learning Records Service will be invited to present to the board in December to discuss ULN and prior attainment issues.**

**5.12 Change Request 16: Review main delivery method codes in field A18**

- 5.12.1 The board was asked to approve the recommendation to amend the codes in A18 to enable the delivery methods of non-NVQ qualifications to be recorded.
- 5.12.2 **Decision:** The recommendation was supported

**5.13 Change Request 19: Additional codes for Discretionary Learning Support in field L49**

- 5.13.1 The YPLA has asked for the codes in the Discretionary Support Funds field (field L49) to be revised. The board was asked to approve the code amendments to allow accurate recording of discretionary learner support allowances. The board were not happy to increase the number of codes, particularly when the codes may be subject to change in the future. MF described the approach taken by HEFCE and HESA, where the HESA student record is used to simply flag whether a student is in receipt of discretionary learner support, and HEFCE then carry out a separate survey of Universities to get additional detail (both financial and non-financial).
- 5.13.2 CK suggested that with the support of the secretariat, the YPLA could explore the feasibility of this approach with HEFCE and the Skills Funding Agency to determine the most appropriate solution.
- 5.13.3 **Decision:** The board agreed that this field should be changed to a flag to indicate whether or not a learner is in receipt of discretionary learner support and that the YPLA should explore the HEFCE approach to collecting additional aggregate information on the use of these funds with the support of the secretariat.

**5.14 Change Request 22: Review categories for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities in fields L15 and L16**

- 5.14.1 BIS and the Skills Funding Agency have jointly requested a review and revision of fields that collect information on Learners with Learning Difficulties and/ or Disabilities (LLDD) to ensure they are more closely aligned with the Special Education Needs (SEN) definitions used by schools and for school census data.
- 5.14.2 The secretariat proposed that it should continue work and further consultation on a standard LLDD data set. The board was asked to approve the use of a new data set for use in the ILR specification for 2011/12 subject to agreement being reached across all sector stakeholders by 31 October 2010. If the work is not complete by this time then the secretariat will continue to progress it to a conclusion for use in the 2012/13 learner record.
- 5.14.3 MB stated that DfE has completed work on school census and disability information and how recording practice works in schools, which included interacting with parents. MB suggested contacting his colleagues at DfE (Isabella Craig and Ian Casey) for them to share their work with *the information authority* data standards team.
- 5.14.4 MB thought that completion of this work by the end of October 2010 was optimistic as DfE have attempted its completion several times. PA suggested the Information Standards Board (ISB) sponsor this work and for them to help align *the information authority* and DfE's work.
- 5.14.5 **Decision:** The recommendation was supported.

**Action: 09/10 – 4: PA/LM to contact above-mentioned colleagues at DfE to request sharing of information and findings related to school census and disability information.**

**5.15 Change Request 29: Review Ethnicity definitions used in field L12**

- 5.15.1 The secretariat recommended that the Ethnicity (field L12) categories are reviewed to ensure that they align with those that will be used in the 2011 Census standards.
- 5.15.2 The board was asked to approve the use of the 2011 Census categories for ethnicity if these are available before 31 October 2010.
- 5.15.3 PA noted that information on the 2011 Census had yet to be received. MB said there was no notification of any changes to ethnicity data in the 2011 Census and that he was happy to verify this with the Census Director.
- 5.15.4 PA informed the board that there were two options for Change Request 29; firstly to obtain information on the 2011 Census (the speedier option) and secondly, to wait until 2012 so synchronisation is achieved (the uniformity option).
- 5.15.5 **Decision:** The recommendation was not supported. The board agreed that implementation by 2012 Census was preferred.

**Action: 09/10 – 5: MB to contact the Census Director to confirm whether or not ethnicity data requirements for 2011 Census have changed.**

#### **5.16 Change Request 30: Review Country of Domicile definitions used in field L24**

5.16.1 The board was asked to approve the use of some revised country of domicile codes in field L24 in the ILR specification for 2011/12.

5.16.2 **Decision:** The recommendation was supported.

#### **5.17 Change Request 37: Specification of new Apprenticeship Standards for England (SASE) for use in field A26**

5.17.1 The NAS requested an extension to the Framework Code field (field A26) to process the new SASE framework

5.17.2 The secretariat recommended that the board approves this change, subject to details of the new coding structure, together with mapping information from the old framework codes, being made available by 31 October 2010.

5.17.3 **Decision:** The recommendation was supported.

### **Other changes**

#### **5.18 Change Request 9: Increased validation for QCF Credits**

5.18.1 The Skills Funding Agency would like to ensure that funding is accurately calculated for the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) learning aims where the learner is not undertaking a full qualification via a validation warning.

5.18.2 The board was asked to approve the additional validation check.

5.18.3 In response to JC questioning whether this was a numerical comparison only, LM replied that it was.

5.18.4 **Decision:** The recommendation was supported.

#### **5.19 Change Request 31: Review Data Protection Statement**

5.19.1 The board was asked to approve the secretariat undertaking work to improve, standardise and introduce layering into the data protection statement for 2011/12.

5.19.2 **Decision:** The recommendation was supported.

### **Change Requests deferred for 2011/12**

#### **5.20 Change Request 4: Extension to the collection of National Insurance numbers**

5.20.1 The Skills Funding Agency requested that National Insurance numbers (NINOs) should be collected for all Skills Funding Agency-funded learners.

5.20.2 Given the current legal position and uncertainty about the requirements, the secretariat recommended that this request should be deferred and that the Skills Funding Agency should be asked to come back to the board once the requirements are clear. It is likely that this will happen before the start of the 2011/12 year and may result in a late request to introduce changes to the collection of the NINO for some types of learners for 2011/12.

5.20.3 The secretariat proposed to:

- stay in regular contact with the Skills Funding Agency to ensure that it is up to date with developments in this area;
- make a specific proposal to the board to introduce a wider collection of NINO once the requirements and legal position is fixed; and
- inform providers that collection of NINO from a wider group of adult learners is possible in 2011/12.

5.20.4 The board was asked to agree to the secretariat's recommendation that the collection of the NI number is not extended further at present and to agree to the proposed actions detailed above regarding the possible widening of the collection for 2011/12.

5.20.5 **Decision:** The recommendation was supported.

#### 5.21 **Change Request 25: removal of UPIN and making UKPRN mandatory**

5.21.1 The board was asked to agree to retain the collection of the UPIN in the ILR for 2011/12 and for the secretariat to work with IM services to encourage a move to the use of the UKPRN as the key provider identifier in downstream systems.

5.21.2 The board was also asked to agree to the removal of the UPIN from the ILR specification for 2012/13.

5.21.3 CK agreed to the recommendation in principle although added that the LSC systems for allocations use the UPIN and it would be beneficial to investigate the cost of changing from the UPIN to the UKPRN.

5.21.4 RP asked if the Data Service would assist in the mapping process rather than allocate time and resources to consultants to complete the mapping.

5.21.5 RS thought it was the wrong time to implement this change request due to the economic climate. RS suggested that an alternative option be found, one possibility being that the Data Service maintains a single mapping table for those requiring it.

5.21.6 PA pointed out that the LSC committed to MIAP (now the LRS) that the UKPRN would be used and that 4-5 years has elapsed in which the change over to UKPRN from UPIN could already have been made.

5.21.7 **Decision:** The recommendation was supported.

**Action: 09/10 – 6: PA and LM to work proactively with stakeholders to agree how to implement and work through suggestions based on mapping of UKPRN to UPIN.**

#### 5.22 **Change Request 35: Review of Employment Status definitions and fields**

5.22.1 BIS and the Skills Funding Agency jointly requested a review of employment status definitions and fields. Currently, there are five fields in the ILR recording information on employment status:

- L37 Employment status on first day of learning;
- L47 Current employment status;
- L48 Date employment status changed;
- A66 Employment status on day before starting learning aim; and
- A68 Employment outcome.

5.22.2 The board was asked to agree to the deferral of a change in collection of employment status data until 2012/13.

5.22.3 RC suggested reviewing Change Request 35 after the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR), as further clarity on BIS requirements may be provided after 20<sup>th</sup> October 2010.

5.22.4 JC mentioned “employed/not employed” apprentices, with local authorities not wanting apprentices on their head counts, which in turn affects access to funding. JC also commented that he was unsure who was driving this change request, whether it was BIS or the Skills Funding Agency.

5.22.5 **Decision:** The recommendation was supported.

## **Item 6. Review of the arrangements for closing the learner responsive final year end ILR returns**

- 6.1 GJ asked the board if any alternatives to the current F05 “Hard Close” arrangements are required and whether they would be viable.
- 6.2 RC preferred remaining with the current hard close, as she questioned the feasibility of a “hard close with soft edges”. GJ suggested the paper be reviewed with providers. MB wanted the chosen option (from PA’s paper) to be communicated with stakeholders to ensure everyone is aware of the final decision.
- 6.3 JP passed on JG’s comments that JG is concerned about the enforcement of the hard close date due to QCF and LAD issues. JG’s preferred option was to allow one week’s grace after the hard close for this year (2009/10).
- 6.4 JC preferred the third option within PA’s paper, albeit with an exception to be made if the DS data collection system fails in some way that is not the fault of a provider.
- 6.5 **Decision:** The hard close for 2009/10 will remain in its current form.

## **Item 7. Secretariat report**

- 7.1 JP presented this paper to the board. JP commented on the work plan in Appendix B. GJ asked the board for comments regarding the secretariat’s work plan.
- 7.2 CK made a number of comments. Firstly, the work plan does not contain reference to planning for budget cuts (once details of the CSR have been announced). Secondly, greater emphasis is required in the plan on data burden reduction and simplification and a need to work more closely with fellow organisations such as the YPLA and the Skills Funding Agency. Thirdly, the plan needs to include aligning standards and *the information authority* performing a role that is greater than solely the ILR.

- 7.3 RC stated that greater transparency is required as to how the plan corresponds with stakeholders' priorities and how it feeds into other priorities. On this, GJ noted that the secretariat will be encouraged to inwardly reflect after the CSR has been announced and also after the new chairperson has been appointed.
- 7.4 MB said the plan could be improved by reflecting the Coalition's priorities.

**Action: 09/10 – 7: the secretariat to take into account when updating the plan.**

**7.5 Process of recruiting the new *information authority* chairperson.**

- 7.6 JP advised that in light of the current marketing and communications freeze, the post of the board's new chairperson would not be advertised via traditional means and outlets. JP asked board members to inform their networks of the vacancy. BIS are sponsoring the new chairperson post.

**Action: 09/10 – 8: All board members to inform their organisations and networks of the vacancy.**

**7.6 Connexions**

- 7.6.1 JP highlighted that *the information authority* is not solely concerned with issues related to the ILR but also wider issues within FE.

**7.7 Enterprise Partnerships**

- 7.7.1 JP noted a need to look at Enterprise Partnerships in relation to Job Centre Plus.

**7.8 F05 sub-group**

- 7.8.1 JP confirmed that the F05 sub-group had met recently to work through risks and issues surrounding the F05 hard close. The sub-group had raised the issue of a particular awarding body that was slow at sending out results. It was decided that this would not significantly affect the figures for the F05 hard close.
- 7.8.2 GJ stated that it was for the secretariat to decide whether the F05 sub-group continued.

**7.9 Audit approach**

- 7.9.1 AF presented the Joint Audit Code of Practice that has been published by the YPLA and the Skills Funding Agency and gave an update on progress. As 16-19 funding is no longer being distributed by local authorities Part One of the code is being changed to reflect this. Part Two is being published in November 2010 and will reflect a minimum change. There will be a joint code from 2011/12 onwards.

**7.10 EPR's**

- 7.10.1 AF presented a short update on progress of the Electronic Paper Records project. Progress will next be announced at the same time as other significant initiatives.

## 7.11 Next Steps Service

7.11.1 Concerns have been highlighted by providers, such as difficulties uploading the Comma Separated Variable (CSV) files. *The information authority* has met with Next Steps and has been reassured that all issues raised are being tackled in partnership with providers and the Data Service.

## 7.12 Annual Report

7.12.1 AF explained that the Annual Report is being produced and will be distributed electronically to save resources. The headline outcomes of this year's Perception and Awareness Survey will be included within the content.

## 7.13 Dashboard

7.13.1 Spend: With the current marketing and communications freeze, net savings have been made principally due to the completion internally of marketing and communications work.

7.13.2 Key milestones: All key milestones have been "completed" or are at "green" status.

7.13.3 Risks and issues: Issue number one remains active.

Risk number two concerns the Information Standards Board and required convergence.

7.13.4 *The information authority* website: there has been an upward trend of visits to the website. JP noted that a significant amount of users have visited *the information authority* website in recent months to seek clarity on start dates issues.

## Item 8: Date of the next meeting

The date of the next meeting is on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2010 and will be held in London.

<b>Meeting chair</b>	Graham Jones
<b>Minute taker</b>	David Matthews
<b>Date created</b>	13 October 2010
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