

Paper 5 - FE Learner Data Strategy - progress update

Date of issue	25 November 2009
Audience	the information authority board
Publication intent	INTERNAL DOCUMENT

Introduction

- 1 This paper describes progress in developing a learner data strategy for further education (FE).

Background

- 2 One of the recommendations of the broad review of the individualised learner record (ILR), which the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) asked *the information authority* secretariat to undertake, was: "A learner data strategy should be developed outlining what data is required for further education and training for the foreseeable future and how it might be delivered over a period of time. Delivery mechanisms would include the ILR and inform developments such as the single account management system (SAMS), previously known as the settlements system. This strategy would build on work already completed or being progressed by organisations such as *the information authority*."
- 3 Following a meeting with BIS on 6 October 2009 the secretariat developed an outline project brief that received BIS approval on 23 October 2009. It is attached to this paper for information.
- 4 From the brief the secretariat developed a procurement specification for consultants to develop the strategy. Invitations to tender based on this specification were sent out on 25 November 2009. Key deliverables are:
 - a draft strategy for agreement by 5 February 2010. The strategy to include: recommendations about how the data required should be collected, transformed into information, distributed and used
 - specific recommendations about whether the ILR will be needed in the future and how it could or should be replaced

- a high level implementation plan, a roadmap, including dates and business case with indicative costs reports and presentation materials for use in selling the strategy to sponsors and stakeholders
- a final strategy by 12 March 2010 to inform the 2011/12 ILR change process and development of SAMS
- the strategy will:
 - contain options and recommendations to address FE learner data and information needs in a coherent and integrated way
 - recommendations about how policy teams in the Departments, Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) and Skills Funding Agency (SFA) should engage with *the information authority* and the Data Service to ensure that their needs for data and information about new and changing policies are addressed
 - specific recommendations about how to make data quality and data management integral to implementing the strategy.
- a short report describing useful information identified during the study. This would include, but is not exclusive to:
 - projects, planned projects and new information requirements not already identified that could impact on the learner data strategy
 - data and information issues not already known to *the information authority* and the Data Service
 - areas of excellence in data and information management and quality in the education, skills and children's services system not already identified

The board will be updated with progress at the March meeting and the outcome presented at the June meeting.

5 The project to develop an FE learner data strategy will be steered by a project board comprising members from:

- BIS
- DCSF
- SFA
- YPLA
- *the information authority*
- the Data Service
- a Local Authority
- the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted)
- Management Information Across Partners (MIAP)
- SAMS

6 The consultancy work will be overseen at a weekly meeting with the contractor attended, in some cases by teleconference, by:

- Adrian Jones (BIS)
- Ian Thomson (BIS)
- Peter Ashton (*the information authority*)
- Steve Woods (programme manager for the SAMS project)

7 Other separate components of the data strategy include:

- A data model for the ILR – to enable a more structured ILR with a streamlined collection and the removal of unnecessary data elements
- Confirmation of the ILR purpose and collection criteria
- Agreed alternative methods of collecting data including decision making criteria for choosing the most appropriate type of data collection for a new requirement
- Agreed data matching options for example to support tracking of individual outcomes
- A description of how can support data collection within the sector as the unique learner number (ULN) and the personal learning record (PLR) become more established
- Quality standards

Some of these elements such as the data model are already underway – see Appendix A for more information.

Recommendations

8 The board is invited to:

- note progress
- comment on the project brief
- comment on governance arrangements
- give advice on issues that the strategy needs to address.

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Date created	13 November 2009
Document ref.	G:\Organisational Data\Information Authority\IA Board\Actions Papers and Minutes\2009\December 2009\Papers for December Board\the information authority-paper5-felearnerdatastrategy-progressupdate-paper-02dec2009.doc
Version	1

Appendix A

FE Learner Data Strategy Progress with Components of the Strategy

Recommendation /activity	Status	Target date for completion	Comment
1.0 Development of a Learner Data Strategy	Work in Progress	31 March 2010	Brief agreed. Procurement in progress.
1.1 Data Model for the ILR	Work in progress	9 October 2009	First draft developed and being shared with key stakeholders in order to validate it
1.2 Purpose of ILR and collection criteria	To be started	December 2009	
1.4 Alternative methods of collecting data including decision making criteria	To be started	March 2010	
1.5 Data matching options (to support tracking of individual outcomes)	Work in progress		BIS, HMRC and DWP are considering options for matching employment data
1.6 Definition of how MIAP can support data collection	To be started		Dependent upon Learner Data Strategy (1.0)
1.7 Quality Standards	Work in progress	January 2010	Quality standards implemented for 2009/10 – being reviewed for 2010/11.