# **USER MANUAL**

# ACE AUTOMATED DATA TRANSFER FACILITY

Version 1 JULY 2017

Apprenticeship Certificates **England** 

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The Federation is the designated certifying authority for SASE Apprenticeships in England and hosts Apprenticeship Certificates England (ACE). Since the introduction of ACE, a key focus of the Federation has been to minimise bureaucracy in the certification process and reduce the number of claim rejections.

The new data transfer feature facilitates the automatic transfer of both Apprentice basic information, and their relevant qualification achievements, from the Learning Records Database (LRS), directly into ACE. The information is taken from the learner's Personal Learning Record (PLR).

To use the system you will require both the **Apprentice's name and their Unique Learner Number (ULN)**. This will enable the ACE system to link to a learner's PLR and search it for valid achievement evidence that exactly matches the requirements of their chosen Apprenticeship framework. Each search completed should only take a few seconds but is dependent upon your internet connection/speed.

**NB:** Please note that the success of the data transfer facility is reliant on the correct data being available in the learner's PLR. Data is input to the PLR from a range of sources, chiefly by Awarding Organisations, and unfortunately this is not always as complete as it should be. As such, required details such as Award Date, Grade or Level achieved or QANs may be missing.

In these cases, learner achievement <u>cannot</u> be fully verified by the PLR and the data transfer facility will <u>not</u> be able to confirm learner achievement. In order to proceed with the learner's Apprenticeship Completion Certification claim, alternative, acceptable evidence that meets all the framework requirements will need to be <u>manually uploaded</u> to ACE, in the usual manner.

This guidance document takes you through how to use the new automated data transfer functionality.

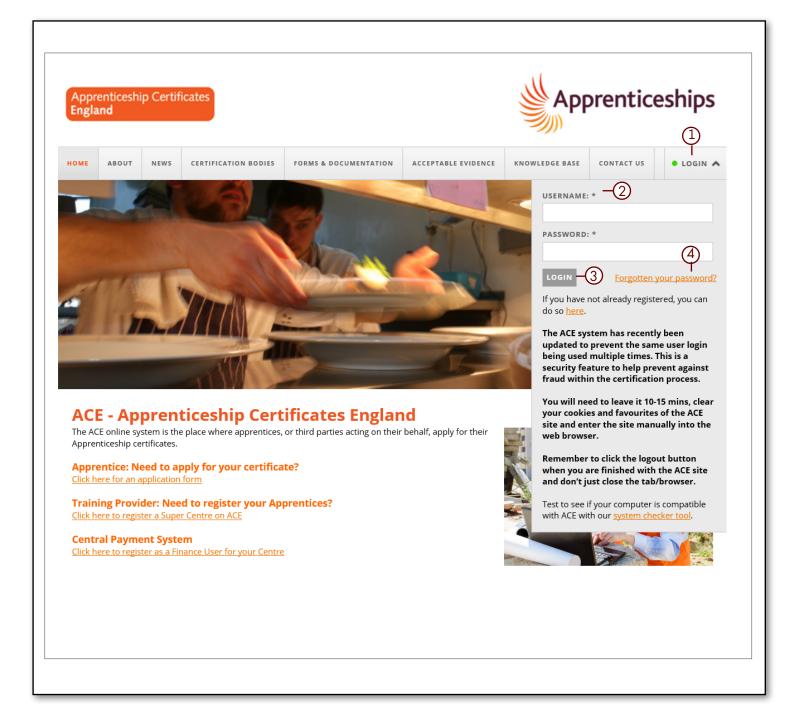
- The new automated data transfer facility is built into ACE and is accessed through your normal ACE login.
- Go to www.acecerts.co.uk
- Click on the Login Button (1) which will reveal a drop-down for you to login
- Enter your Username and Password\* (2)
- Click the Login Button (3) to enter
- If you have forgotten your password please use the "Forgotten your Password" (4) link

#### REMEMBER!

\*Please be aware that the Username and Password are both case sensitive.

Keep all passwords in a safe place and do not reveal them to anyone. ACE follows the history of each Apprentice by tracking login details.

If additional ACE user accounts are required then please contact your ACE Superuser.



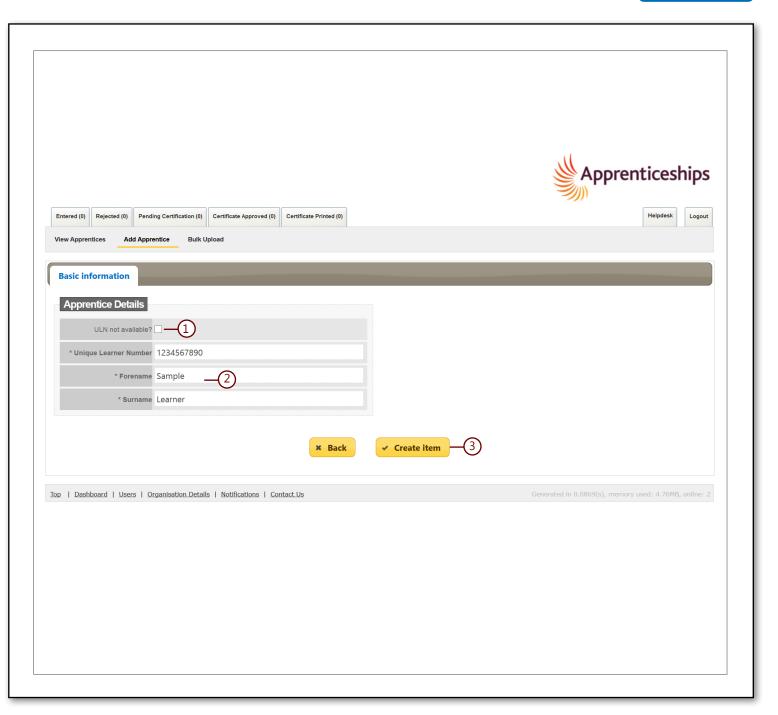
The first change you will notice is that when you select **Add Apprentice**, you are now presented, not with a complete blank record, but a single box with four fields.

If at this point you do not have the Apprentice's ULN, you can opt to complete the record manually, as you have done previously, by ticking the "ULN not available?" field (1) which will automatically open a new, blank ACE record for you to manually complete.

If you do have the Apprentice's ULN and would like to use the new automated data transfer facility simply complete the **ULN**, **Forename and Surname (2)** fields and click the **Create Item (3)** button.

In doing so ACE will start the first data transfer check and if it finds a matching record in the LRS database it will auto-populate a number of fields in ACE.

If no matching record is found in the LRS database then a system error message will be displayed. Error messages and their meaning are detailed on page 14.



# 2.1 POPULATING THE APPRENTICE BASIC INFORMATION AND EMPLOYER DETAILS

If a matching learner record is found in the LRS database, then the **Basic Information Tab** will appear on screen, with many of the fields having been pre-populated with information recorded on the learner's PLR. The **Employer Details and Identifiers Tab** are also now visible.

You will also notice that the Forename and Surname fields have been locked

(1) as indicated by the padlock icons. The ULN field on the Identifiers Tab is also locked.

### **BASIC INFORMATION TAB**

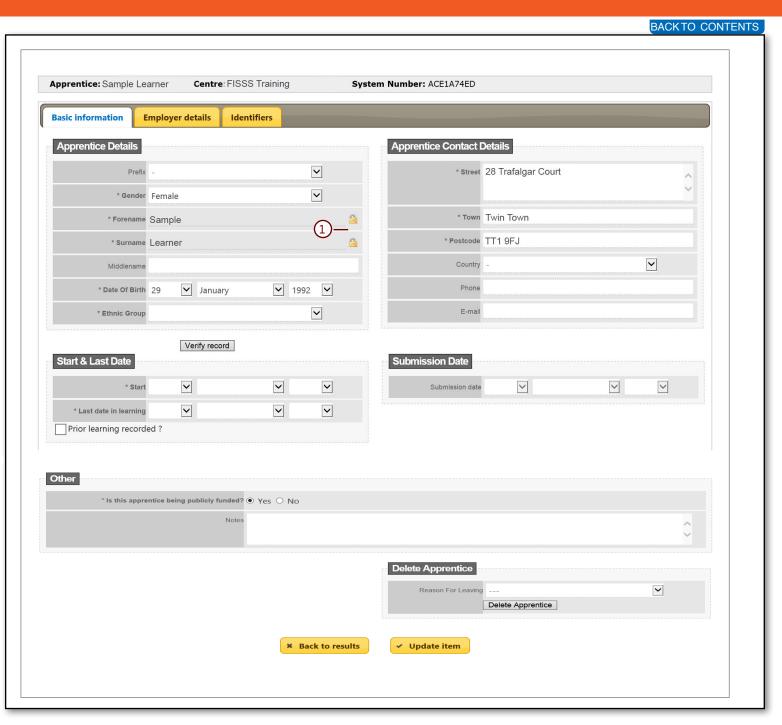
There will be some blank fields that you need to complete - the **mandatory** ones are:

-Ethnic Group -Last Date in Learning
-Start Date -Publicly Funded?

We would also recommend that you check the **Apprentice Contact Details** as these <u>may</u> <u>not be up-to-date on the PLR database</u> and the information you currently hold may be the most recent and will need to be manually entered to the ACE record to replace out of date information transferred from the PLR.

## **EMPLOYER DETAILS TAB**

You will need to complete all of the mandatory fields on the Employers Tab.

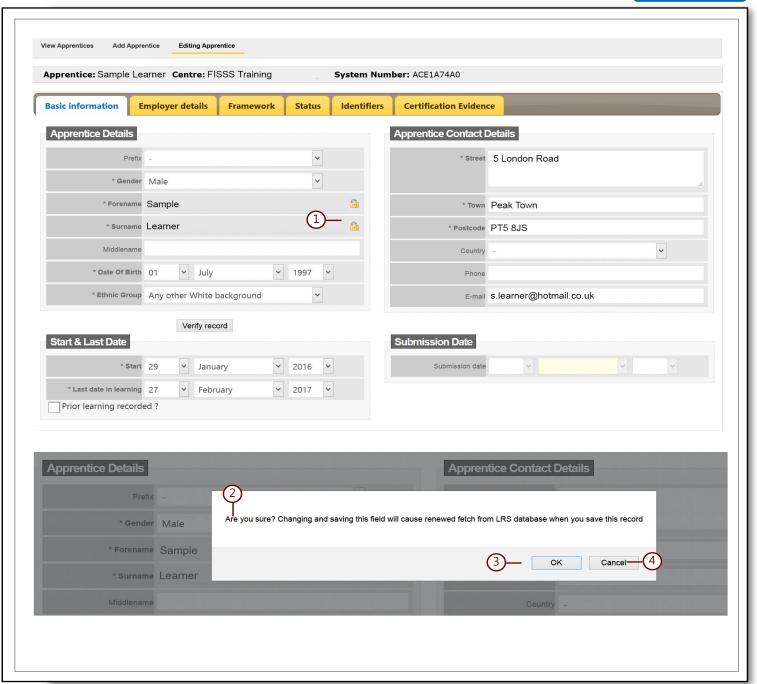


If the data transfer from the LRS database was successful, the Apprentice record will be populated and both the name fields as well as the ULN field will be **locked**, as indicated by the padlock icons **(1)**.

If you subsequently need to edit any of the information in these locked fields you can do so by clicking on the padlock icon. A pop up will open (2) that will ask you to confirm you would like to make this change as it will result in the loss of the information already transferred into the ACE record from the learner's PLR.

If you do wish to continue with your amendment click **OK** (3), if you do not wish to continue choose **Cancel** (4) which will return you to the unamended record.

NB: By agreeing to a change, all previously completed data will be removed and a fresh search of the LRS database will be carried out and if matching details are found then certain ACE fields will be automatically re-populated accordingly.

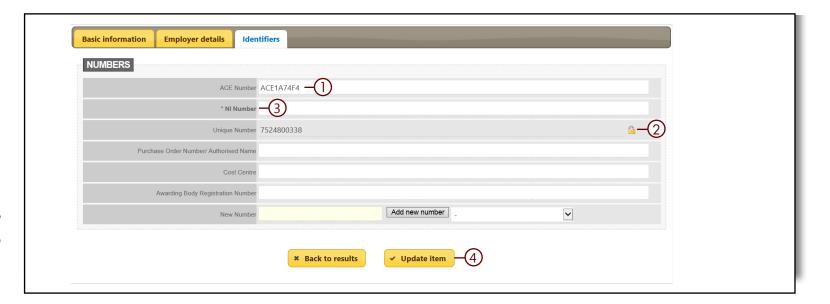


The ACE number is automatically assigned when the Apprentice record is created and appears on the Identifiers Tab (1).

The **Unique Number** field contains the ULN that you entered and notice that this field is **locked (2).** 

You will need to manually complete the **NI Number** field **(3)** on this tab and then click **Update Item Button (4)** in order to create the 3 additional ACE tabs: -

Framework Tab
Status Tab
Certfication Evidence Tab



The **Framework Tab** is where you will notice the most changes.

Under the **Framework Details** section you will still need to select from the drop down lists to select:-

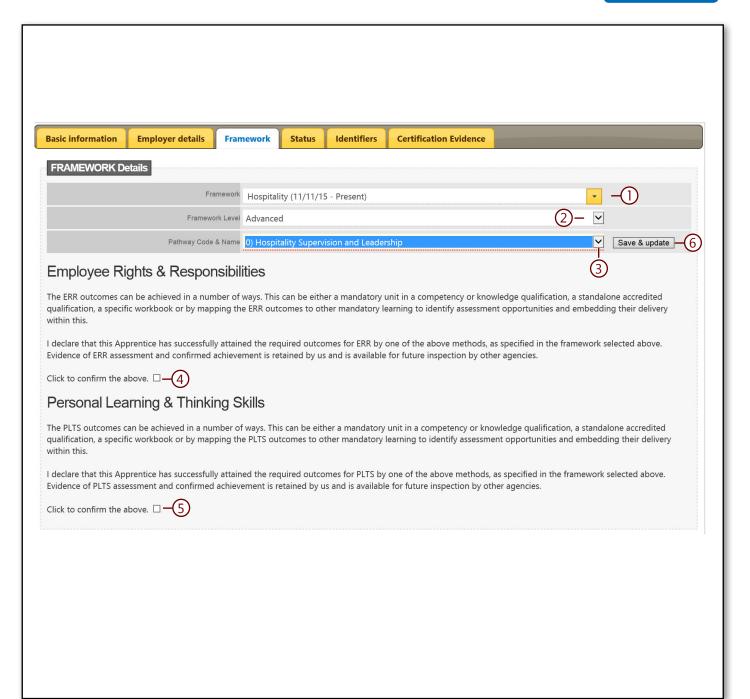
- Framework (1)
- Framework Level (2)
- Pathway Code & Name (3)

You no longer need to select the specific Transferable Skills achieved. The new "rules" built into ACE will search on the learner's PLR for any qualification that meets the minimum Transferable Skills requirements.

Click the **ERR and PLTS declarations (4 & 5)** to confirm the Apprentice's achievement of these framework requirements.

Upon completion of the tab, click the **Save & update** button (6) which will initiate the search of the Apprentice's PLR to check for fully completed achievement information for any, or all, of the required qualifications and where successful confirm these as being achieved.

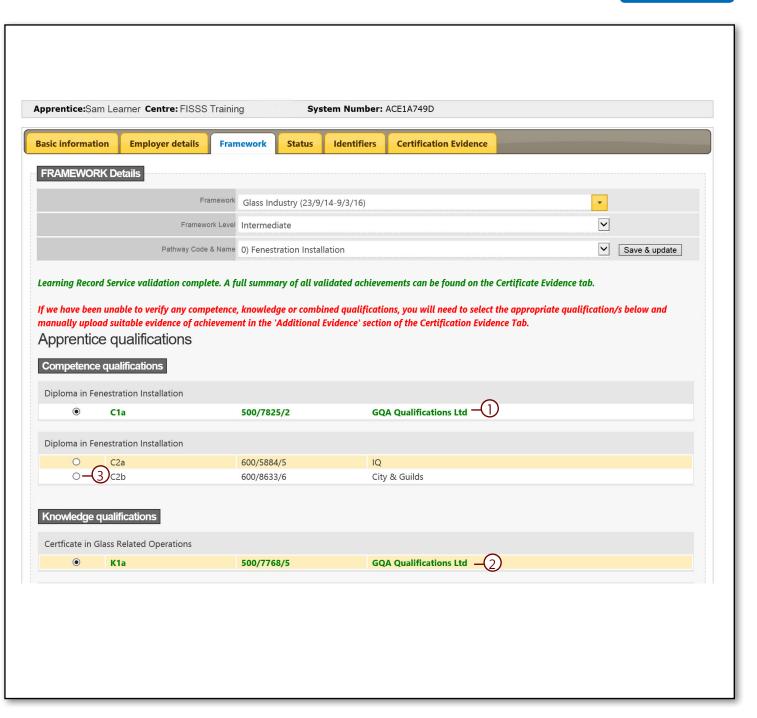
Confirmation of any matching achievement data will appear in the Apprentice's ACE record on both the **Framework and Certification Evidence Tabs.** 



Once the 2nd search of the Apprentice's PLR has completed, any verified, matching Competence, Knowledge or Combined qualifications will be highlighted in green on the Framework Tab (1& 2). Where the search is unable to verify achievement of Competence, knowledge or Combined qualifications no qualifications will be highlighted.

A full summary of **all** validated and non-confirmed qualifications can be found on the **Certification Evidence Tab** - see page 10 and 11 for more information.

In cases where the appropriate qualifications cannot be verified by the PLR, you will need to select the radio button/s next to the specific qualification/s that the Apprentice has achieved (3) and then manually upload the Certification Evidence Tab, in the usual manner - see page 13 for more information.



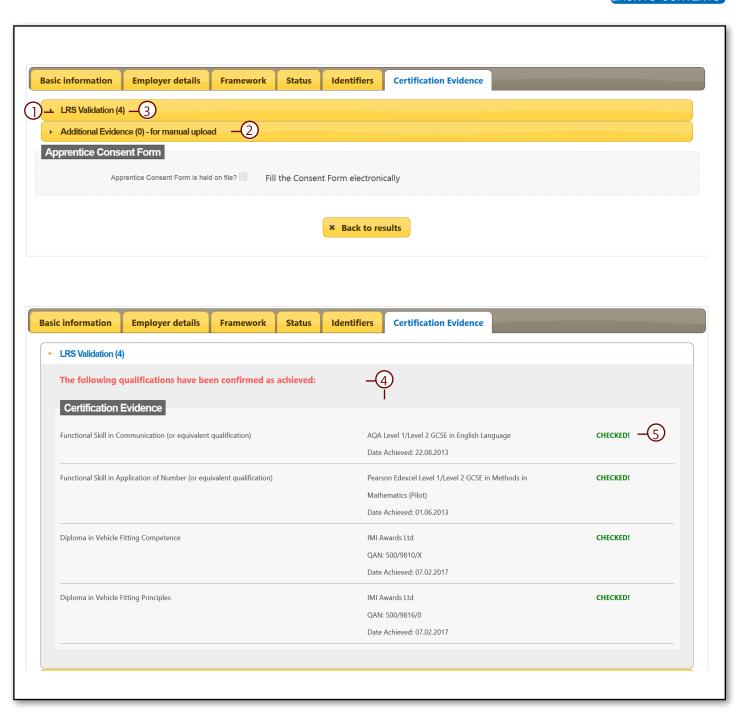
Another ACE tab with a big change in appearance is the **Certification Evidence Tab**, you will now see 2 new sections: -

LRS Validation (1) and;
Additional Evidence - for manual upload (2)

Next to the **LRS Validation** is a number in brackets **(3)** in this example it is 4. This number indicates the number of **acceptable qualifications** that were found on the Apprentice's PLR and been fully verified. Clicking on the **LRS Validation** section will expand it and details of the matching qualifications, found on the PLR, will be listed **(4)**. The information given for each qualification found is what is required for certification purposes:-

- Qualification Title/Type
- Awarding Organisation
- Date Achieved
- QAN (where applicable)
- Level/Grade (where applicable)

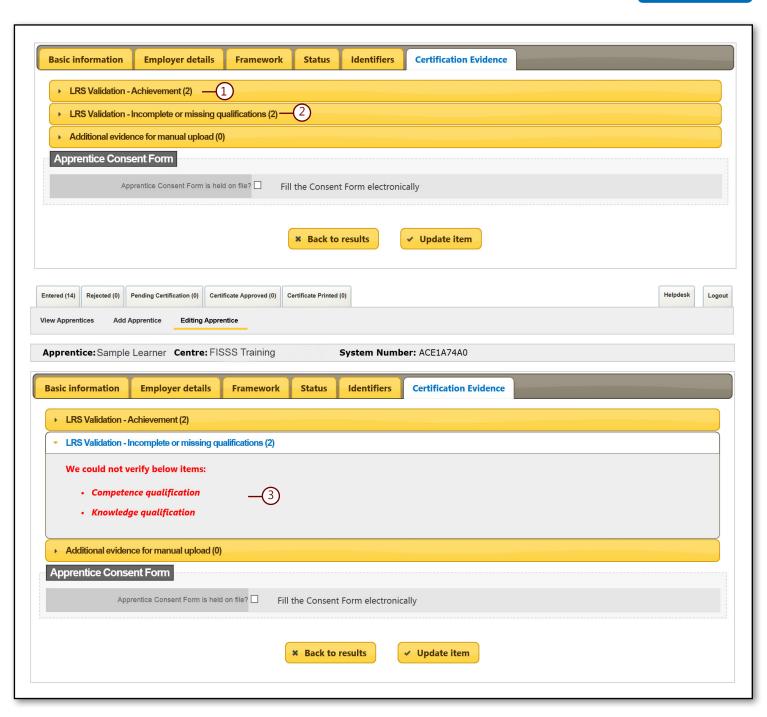
As well as detailing this information you will see in green the word **CHECKED! (5).** This confirms that the qualification found meets the specific SASE framework requirements, as selected on the Framework Tab. There is no need for any additional evidence to be manually uploaded **for these qualifications.** 



There will be occasions where the search of the Apprentice's PLR only finds some of the framework's required qualifications or, indeed, none of them.

right number to the of LRS Validation -Achievement section (1) indicates how many relevant qualifications have been found, and fully verified - in this case there The section LRS Validation Incomplete or Missing Qualifications (2) indicates how many qualifications could not be verified (3). Clicking on this section will detail why they are unacceptable which may be either because they completely are on the Apprentice's PLR or that missing they are listed but are missing key data cannot provide robust that means they evidence of learner achievement. For example, they are missing an Award Date.

NB: If achievement cannot be verified via a PLR data transfer, then you will need to manually upload suitable evidence in the usual manner - see page 13 for more information.



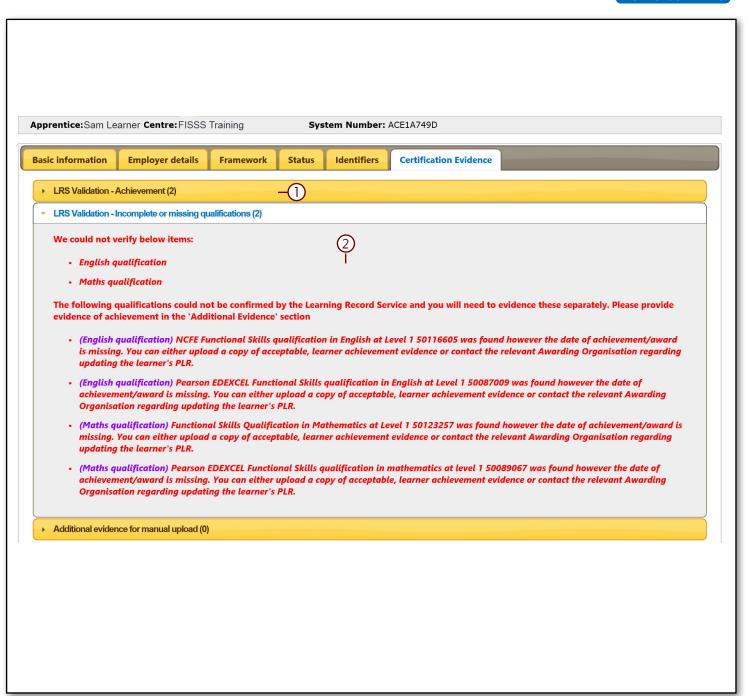
If the search of the Apprentice's
PLR finds suitable qualifications <u>BUT</u> they do not

<u>fully meet</u> either SASE or the
Federation's Acceptable Evidence requirements,
then in the LRS Validation Incomplete or Missing Qualifications

Section (1) an error message will be displayed
giving a brief explanation on what qualification was
found and why it does not fully meet the
requirements.

The examples shown here **(2)** shows English and Maths Functional Skills qualifications were found on the Apprentice's PLR but they cannot be verified as robust achievement evidence as the PLR entry for all of them **was missing the required Award Date.** 

In cases where any relevant qualifications are found on a PLR <u>BUT</u> do not fully meet current certification requirements, you will need to <u>manually upload</u> suitable achievement evidence to the **Certification Evidence Tab**, in the usual manner. See page 14 for more information.

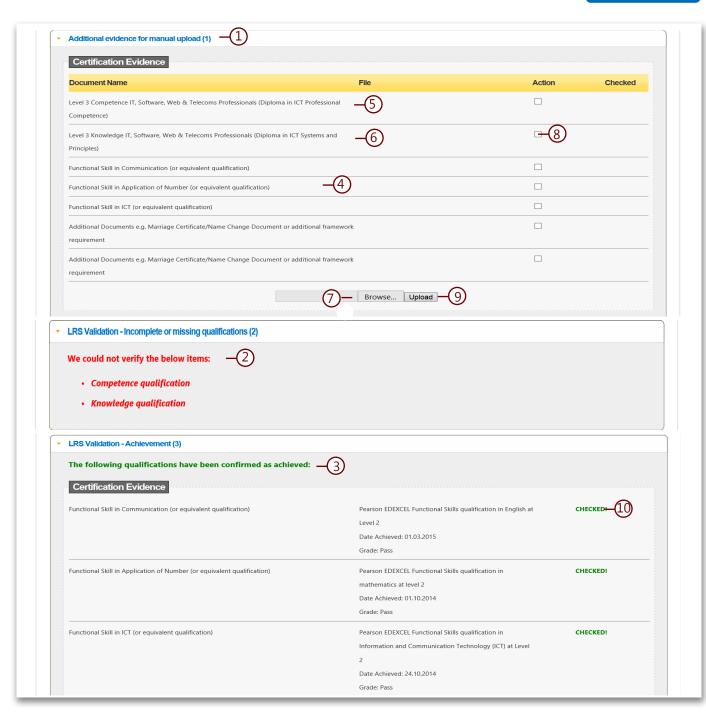


On the **Certification Evidence Tab**, the **Additional Evidence for Manual Upload (1)** section is to allow you to either upload achievement evidence **or** for uploading any **Additional Documents**, such as a name change document.

The available fields for upload remain unchanged but you **ONLY** need to upload evidence for the framework requirements that have not been verified. So, in this case, the Competency and Knowledge qualifications could not be verified with the PLR (2) but the Transferable Skills evidence was confirmed (3), the fields for English, Maths and ICT (4) can be ignored. You will only need to upload evidence for the Competency and Knowledge (5&6). Browse (7) for the file you wish to upload and once you have selected the file assign it the to correct qualification placeholder (8) and click Upload (9).

NB: The functionality of this section has not changed from how ACE has always worked. The only difference is you will not need to load any evidence for the qualifications already found and verified as "checked" (10) by the search of the PLR.

When you have uploaded all required the evidence, including the **Apprentice Consent** Form (if requested), select the Status Tab and submit the record.



If there is an issue with either the basic information or achievement evidence searches on a learner's PLR, you will receive an error message in ACE detailing what the issue is.

Apprentice For the basic **information** searches, the most likely causes of error will be a typo with the ULN the learner names and match the data held on not learner's PLR. In the first instance you should double check that all of these details have been input correctly to **ACE.** If a mistake has been made then correct it and try the search again.

The **achievement evidence** search has a greater potential for errors, examples of which are detailed in the table opposite.

NB: To ensure the data transfer process is as responsive and efficient as possible, where unacceptable grades recorded on the PLR (e.g. Fail, these qualifications are **ignored** etc.) the search and not returned as a result. This would generate search message that the "qualification is error missing."

Message appears stating:	Meaning and possible action required
The ULN was not found or doesn't match the Apprentice name entered. Please ensure the Forename, Surname and ULN are entered exactly as they appear on the Personal Learning Record (PLR)	Double check the ULN and Name fields are correct and the ULN is for the named Apprentice.
Some or all of the qualifications required for this framework have not been achieved. Please check the 'Certificate Evidence' tab for more information. If you believe the qualification has been achieved, please	Double check the framework details you have entered are correct as an inconsistency with the framework will mean a search for the wrong qualifications is carried out. If you believe these to be correct, check the
speak to the relevant Awarding Body to ensure the Personal Learning Record is up-to-date.	PLR as to whether the qualification is available and if not contact the Awarding Organisation
EXAMPLE QUALIFICATION 606/1234/X was found however the Achievement date has not been recorded. If you believe the qualification has been achieved, please speak to the relevant Awarding Body to ensure the Personal Learning Record is up-to-date.	If the Achievement/Award date has not been recorded then the qualification is unacceptable. If the qualification has been achieved by th learner you will need to discuss this with the Awarding Organisation to ensure that the PLR record is accurate.
EXAMPLE QUALIFICATION 606/1234/X was found however the grade does not meet SASE requirements. Please ensure you have entered the start date correctly and try again. Alternatively, please upload alternative evidence.	Some grade achieved criteria changed in the new Transferable Skills guidance. If the start date of the Apprentice is pre the April 2015 then you will need to refer to the old guidelines. You will therefore need to double check the start date, or upload a suitable alternative qualification.
EXAMPLE QUALIFICATION 606/1234/X was found however it does not meet SASE date achieved criteria relating to the Apprentice's start date. Please ensure you have entered the correct start date and try again. Alternatively, please upload suitable, compliant evidence.	Check the start date of the Apprentice is correct. If the Apprentice started prior to 6th April 2015 then the old Transferable Skills requirements are applied which had date achieved criteria. Double check you have entered the correct start date, if this is correct you will need to upload compliant evidence based on these guidelines.
EXAMPLE QUALIFICATION 606/1234/X was found however it was achieved before the start date of the Apprenticeship. Please ensure you have entered the start date correctly and try again. Alternatively, please upload alternative evidence.	Competency qualifications must be completed as part of the Apprenticeship. Double check you have entered the start date correctly and ensure that the qualification is on the PLR (Awarding Organisations may not have updated the PLR record as yet). If you believe the start date to be correct and the record is not yet available on the PLR please discuss this with the Awarding Organsation.

If you need to refer to any Transferable Skills guidance on line please use the links below:

Transferable Skills Starts Pre 6th April 2015

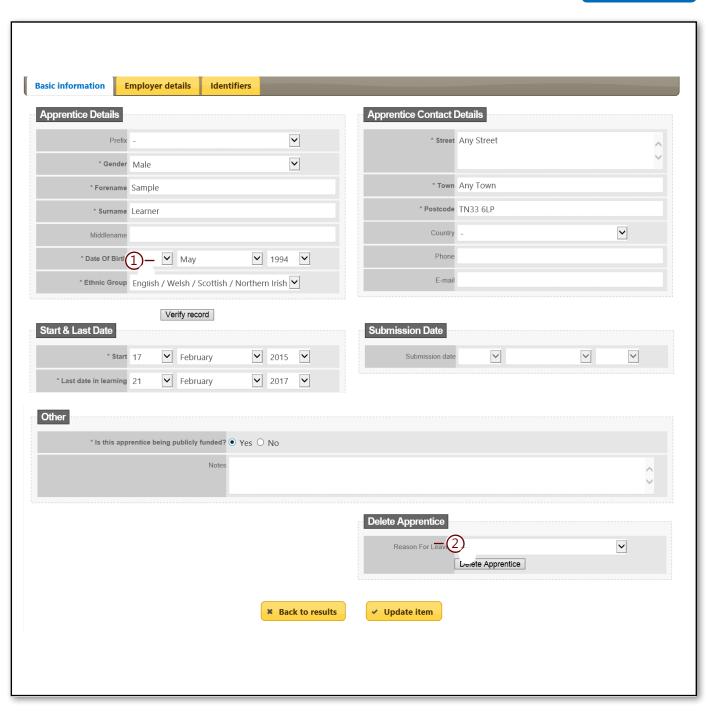
Transferable Skills Starts on or after 6th April 2015

It is possible to use the bulk upload facility to create ACE records for your learners. See the Bulk Upload guidance for how to do this. Once the records are created you will still be able to use the new automatic data transfer functionality to search each learner's PLR to verify their achievement of relevant, compliant achievement evidence and have this automatically confirmed within ACE.

If you are using the bulk upload facility then please ensure that you **include each learner's ULN** as part of the data for upload to ACE. This will save you having to manually enter this information to each ACE record.

IF YOU WISH TO USE THE NEW AUTO DATA TRANSFER FACILITY TO SEARCH THE LEARNER'S PLR THEN YOU WILL NEED TO SELECT THE "VERIFY RECORD" (1) OPTION IN EACH RECORD. This will activate a link to the LRS database to verify the learner information. If a matching record is found, the learner's Forename, Surname and ULN fields will be locked, as indicated by a padlock icon. Please ensure that all the mandatory fields on all tabs are complete before clicking the Update Item (2) button which will save the record and create the Framework, Status and Certification Evidence Tabs.

Refer to page 8 for information on how to link to the LRS database and search for relevant achievement evidence on the learner's PLR.



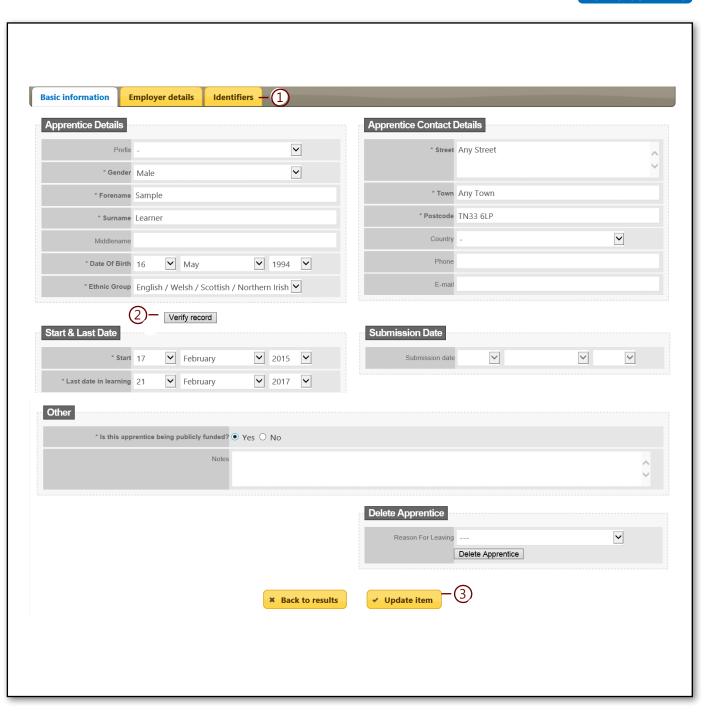
It is still possible to create new ACE records on an individual basis by manually populating all of the required fields on the **Basic Information**, **Employer Details and Identifiers Tab**.

If you wish to use the new auto data transfer facility to search the learner's PLR for achievement data then you must enter their ULN in the Unique Number field on the Identifiers Tab (1).

TO SEARCH THE LEARNER'S PLR THEN YOU WILL NEED TO SELECT THE "VERIFY RECORD" (2) OPTION IN EACH ACE RECORD.

This will activate a link to the LRS database to verify the learner information. If a matching record is found in the LRS database, the learner's Forename, Surname and ULN fields will be locked, as indicated by a padlock icon. Ensure that all the mandatory fields on all tabs are complete before clicking the Update Item (3) button which will save the record and create the Framework, Status and Certification Evidence Tabs.

Refer to page 8 on how to link to the LRS database and search for learner's achievement evidence.



Apprenticeship Certificates **England**