

# Federation Oracle

*The one source for all your Apprenticeship Certification information*

## Welcome to the Oracle!

We at the Federation are launching a new regular newsletter to keep you up-to-date on recent events and information along with an update on things to keep your eye on in the near future. This newsletter will be published quarterly and include information for all three nations; England, Scotland and Wales, where relevant. If you have anything you would like to be covered in this newsletter or any feedback, please do get in touch.

## Apprenticeship Standards Update

As the world of Apprenticeship reform in England progresses the transfer from SASE Frameworks to Apprenticeship Standards is now well underway and there are now 60 Standards which have been approved for delivery to date. Information on the latest Apprenticeship Standards which are now available for delivery can be found on Kapiro (see below) and the [.GOV website](#).

## Acceptable Evidence Guidance Online

We have been working closely with the Awarding Organisations in England to ensure that we provide both accurate and up to date information on the acceptability of evidence. This coupled with the fact that we wanted to make the guide more user friendly led us to develop a new online facility. You can now view evidence examples online and find out what information is required on each evidence example. If you have yet to view the new guidance you will find all you need to know is within the [Acceptable Evidence](#) tab on the ACE home page.

## Certification activity over recent months

### Rejections

Following a busy summer there were a high level of rejections on the ACE system with 20% of submissions being rejected. At the Federation we are working hard with you to reduce this as we estimate that each rejection costs you as a provider £4 so for October rejections alone this cost the Certification network almost **£30,000** and this is a cost that we know can be reduced. The most common 5 reasons for rejection are:

- Transferable skills unacceptable
- Error on the Consent Form
- Incorrect Framework details selected
- Apprentice basic information error
- Competence/Knowledge/Combined Qualification unacceptable

Looking at the Apprenticeship Consent Form, 75% of these rejections are due to an error surrounding the Apprentice date of signing or the Last Date in Learning. As a reminder the Apprentice Consent Form must:

## News in Brief

- [Welcome to Oracle](#)
- [Apprenticeship Standards Update](#)
- [Acceptable Evidence Guidance now online. Make sure you take a look!](#)
- [Certification activity over recent months](#)
- [Maintaining the Standard – Claim Response Times](#)
- [Federation launching Kapiro tool for Apprenticeship Standards in England](#)
- [Modern Apprenticeship Contribution rates in Scotland](#)
- [Changes are afoot for Essential Skills Wales](#)
- [English Apprenticeship Policy Update](#)
- [Get the recognition you and your learners deserve – nominate now for the Semta Skills Awards 2016](#)
- [Fun Time](#)

- Be signed by the Apprentice at the end of their Apprenticeship. As such the date the Apprentice signs the form must be on or after the Last Date in Learning.
- The Last Date in Learning on the Apprentice Consent Form must match the Last Date in Learning entered onto the ACE record.

We are working on new ways to reduce the rate of rejections, look out for our new initiatives in the coming months. In the meantime some key pointers are:

- If in doubt refer to our guidance and if you cannot find the answer to contact the ACE Support Team
- Ensure that the rejection reason is read in full and acted upon, many records are being rejected multiple times and this is partly due to required changes not being made against all errors.
- Contact your Certification Body for further support

### Maintaining the Standard – Claim Response Times

We are very proud of the quality standards we deliver in partnership with the Certification Bodies (CBs); we constantly measure performance and review if there is more that we could be doing to improve our overall standard of service.



Our customer service survey earlier this year highlighted the importance that you place on the timely processing and delivery of the apprenticeship completion certificate.

Whilst the certification claim process is the same irrespective of the sector or Certification Body that is doing the work, some CBs have a much higher volume than others, ranging from 200 to as many as 70,000 in a year. Their approach will therefore be different; but irrespective of size they must all process their claims within 10 working days. They all achieve this but response times vary. Analysis from May to August this year shows a network average response time of 3 working days which is good news.

As a network, all of us are committed to reducing wait times and improving service, but there are some things that you can do to help:

- *Inform your CB in advance if you plan to submit unusually high number of claims at any time.* This will not mean that your claims will be dealt with quicker but allow the CB to be prepared for the increase in submissions.
- *Get the claim right first time;* re-processing claims is time consuming for all involved. We work on the premise that we want to issue the certificate with the minimum of fuss. Ask the relevant CB or the Federation Helpline if you require assistance with your claim.
- *Use our new [Acceptable Evidence tool](#)* to ensure the evidence you are submitting meets our guidelines.
- *Ideally submit claims at least 10 working days in advance of when you require the certificate.* On average claims are processed and the certificate sent out well within 10 working days. At peak times it is worth allowing 15 working days from claim to certificate

The quality of service that we offer will continue to be a key measure in our overall Quality Assurance plan and we are grateful to you providing feedback via our survey and for improving the quality of claims submitted over the years.

### Federation launching Kapio tool for Apprenticeship Standards in England

Hot off the press! We are putting the final touches to a new service. It is the only place where you can search for one of the new standards (without looking through a long list). It is aimed at groups developing, reviewing or

refreshing Apprenticeships standards in England. Every single published standard (396), and each and every statement of knowledge, skills and behaviour (over 7,000) can be found on our new Kapio tool.

Kapio sets out all of the approved standards, and the 1,000s of approved statements by sector, industry and occupation in a readily searchable form. As well as reviewing what's already been approved it will help you or your employer groups to build standards - learning from those that have already been approved.

It can simply explore all existing standards across your industry to help avoid duplication and to streamline the standard development process: saving both time and money.

Access will be available early in the New Year. To register for a free user log on please contact us at [kapio@fisss.org](mailto:kapio@fisss.org)

### **Modern Apprenticeship Contribution rates in Scotland**

For those delivering Modern Apprenticeships in Scotland, Skills Development Scotland (SDS) has recently published the outcome of its review of the contribution paid from public funds towards the cost of training Modern Apprentices. SDS is responsible for the administration of Modern Apprenticeships in Scotland; and this involves setting the appropriate public funding contribution for more than 80 Modern Apprenticeship frameworks. Contribution rates for the next five years have now been set. The results of the consultation can be found at [Skills Development Scotland - Modern Apprenticeship Funding Rates](#)

### **Changes to Essential Skills Wales**

There are changes underway relating to Essential Skills Wales (ESW), however these are currently awaiting for ministerial approval. The new ESW qualifications will be titled:

- Essential Communication Skills
- Essential Application of Number Skills
- Essential Digital Literacy Skills

The current proposal for the changeover is for the current ESW qualifications to continue to be available for registration until 31 December 2015 with the last certificate date of 31 December 2016. The Federation are in regular communication with the Welsh Government and will post any further updates on the ACW news page.

### **English Apprenticeship Policy Update**

The date for transition from current frameworks to new Apprenticeship standards is still set to be 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017, however the government's target for 3 million apprenticeship starts in this parliament means that they will need to rapidly ramp up delivery on the new Standards. The Spending Review on the 25<sup>th</sup> November is likely to provide some further detail on the timing and implementation timetable for the new Apprenticeship Standards including further detail on the Apprenticeship Levy which is due to come into force in April 2017. We will provide further updates when the information is available to support our network to prepare for the changes. In the meantime it is business as usual as we are likely to see certification of the current frameworks through till at least 2019/20 as apprentices will be able to finish on the basis that they started

### **Get the recognition you and your learners deserve – nominate now for the Semta Skills Awards 2016**

The Semta Skills Awards 2016 are your opportunity to have your commitment to skills recognised and to celebrate the significant achievements of your learners. There are nine categories to choose from – from Training Partner and Skills Champion of the Year to Skills Innovation and Apprentice of the Year – you just need to select the best one for you and your learners.



The Semta Skills Awards celebrate the fantastic individuals and companies that make engineering and advanced manufacturing such an exciting and dynamic sector to work in. Nominations are open until **30 November**, so get nominating now and have yours and your learners' dedication to skills recognised by industry.

The finalists and winners will be announced at a glittering Gala Awards Dinner on Wednesday 10 February 2016 at the Park Lane Hilton, London. Hosted by BBC journalist, presenter and all-round engineering champion, Steph McGovern, the awards promise to be a fantastic celebration of Great British Engineering.

[Find out more about the Semta Skills Awards 2016](#)

### [Contact the Federation](#)

If you have any queries regarding Apprentice Completion Certificate Claims then please contact the [Support Team](#) who will be able to assist you with your queries.

If you would like to get in touch about any of the Oracle content or would like to include anything in future editions please contact the Support Team with the subject Federation Oracle.

**Fun Time**

Over your coffee break why don't you see if you can find these twelve words in the word search below?

APPRENTICE  
 ACE  
 ADVANCED  
 CERTIFICATE  
 EMPLOYER  
 FUNCTIONAL SKILLS

GCSE  
 INTERMEDIATE  
 ORACLE  
 REJECTION  
 STANDARD  
 TRANSFERABLE

F	U	N	T	S	A	G	C	D	A	R	D	A	S	K	I	L	A	E	C
U	A	C	D	Z	X	I	F	J	O	O	R	E	M	P	B	N	A	M	K
T	S	T	A	E	H	N	V	C	R	S	W	Q	J	L	A	P	D	N	D
R	E	J	R	L	X	T	W	A	A	O	G	H	E	F	X	C	V	S	W
A	C	S	H	A	D	E	E	R	C	E	R	T	I	F	I	C	A	T	E
D	F	V	T	G	N	R	B	T	L	Z	H	N	Y	U	J	U	N	M	I
V	P	R	Q	A	W	M	E	R	E	T	Y	I	U	N	O	P	C	A	K
Z	X	E	M	P	N	E	M	P	L	O	Y	E	R	C	F	A	E	H	D
S	K	J	C	E	R	D	X	A	P	P	R	E	T	T	X	W	D	K	L
K	O	E	R	G	B	I	A	P	P	R	E	N	T	I	C	E	H	I	A
I	F	C	S	T	I	A	N	R	M	K	F	C	L	O	R	A	D	T	D
L	G	T	S	Q	C	T	S	R	D	G	J	U	Y	N	Y	D	Q	I	V
O	C	I	D	E	V	E	G	B	N	S	W	Q	H	A	P	P	Y	E	Y
R	E	O	R	A	O	R	C	P	P	A	I	C	E	L	P	L	D	C	W
G	T	N	L	F	U	C	S	M	I	L	E	R	C	S	A	E	D	B	F
H	T	R	A	N	S	F	E	R	A	B	L	E	G	K	N	O	X	R	V
K	A	N	H	C	Y	M	J	U	K	I	L	O	P	I	Q	U	D	O	R
S	K	I	F	E	E	M	P	T	E	S	K	I	L	L	G	H	S	U	F
A	E	X	S	C	V	Y	R	C	U	A	D	V	C	L	E	W	F	F	Y
C	F	T	S	Z	G	J	I	F	O	R	I	N	T	S	S	H	G	D	L