

Federation Oracle

The one source for all your Apprenticeship Certification information

To Apprenticeship or not Apprenticeship – that is the question?

As the weather deceives us into believing we are still in winter, the Apprenticeship world continues to move forward. The Government has released guidance on [how the new levy will work](#), at least for levy payers in England. New Standards are being implemented and SASE Frameworks are gradually starting to be withdrawn. The Federation are now analysing the feedback from this year's Customer Satisfaction Survey and continuing to improve the Certification systems, more information can be found in this issue of the Federation Oracle.

Customer Satisfaction Survey 2016 – Prize Winners

Thank you to all 853 respondents who completed this year's survey, an unprecedented number of responses. This feedback is vital to our work and often outlines some key projects for the year ahead as we strive to maintain a high level of customer service. We are currently analysing the feedback received and a report will be published on ACE in the summer. There were some prizes available for responding to the survey, so our congratulations go to:

Winner of the DeLonghi Coffee machine and a £25 M&S voucher - Val Pallister from Lakes College

Winners of £25 M&S vouchers –

- Alice Wrotchford from Enabling Development Opportunities
- Heather Khalsa from Kidderminster College
- Suzanne Waggett from Expedient Training Services

Hotel Chocolat Easter egg - Sandra Riley from University Hospital of South Manchester NHS Foundation Trust

Rejections – Error on Consent Form

In the past year there have been 61,479 rejections made on ACE costing the network approximately £250,000. Continually throughout the last year Error on the Consent Form has been within the top 3 rejection reasons and finished the year as the second highest rejection reason with 12,073 being rejected throughout the year and 1,057 rejected in March alone. While we accept that there was a period of bedding in time for the new process last year, this form still accounts for an unnecessary number of rejections.

ACE no longer requests the Consent form to be loaded for every Apprentice, instead, uses an analysis of each organisations performance of the previous month. If there are no rejections for the Consent form then ACE reduces the number of forms requested, if there are a high number of rejections for the Consent form then ACE will increase the number requested. Since the Consent form was introduced in April 2015, 100,000 have been requested to be loaded by the ACE system.

News in Brief

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Of these 11,500 were rejected, many of which are careless errors:

- Name/s not matching ACE
- DOB not matching ACE
- Organisation name is not the name of the organisation claiming the Apprenticeship Completion Certificate (if it is a sub-contractor claiming the certificate then the sub-contractor name should appear on the form)
- Apprentice has not signed the form
- Apprentice date of signing being before the last date in learning
- Last date in learning missing
- Loaded forms should not be in an amendable format.

We would like to see rejections reduce overall but believe that the Error on Consent form is one area that requires urgent action. Therefore we have annotated a completed form to show what should be completed and explain what information this needs to match.

Apprenticeship Certificates
England

APPRENTICESHIP COMPLETION CERTIFICATE
APPRENTICE CONSENT FORM

V1 Effective from 1st April 2015

The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 requires that Apprentices must apply for their Apprenticeship Completion Certificate. However, where this is facilitated by a third party, there must be evidence that this is being done at the specific request of the Apprentice.

The signing of this consent form by an Apprentice provides the required evidence of their acknowledgement and declaration that they have undertaken and completed an Apprenticeship and that they authorise a named third party organisation to claim their Apprenticeship Completion Certificate.

NOTE TO APPRENTICE: ONLY COMPLETE AND SIGN THIS FORM IF YOU ARE GIVING YOUR AUTHORITY TO THE THIRD PARTY ORGANISATION, NAMED BELOW, TO CLAIM YOUR APPRENTICESHIP COMPLETION CERTIFICATE, ON YOUR BEHALF.¹

Apprentice First Name: Danielle	Apprentice name must match the name on ACE. These fields can be pre-populated and recognised (or common) shortenings of the Apprentices forename is acceptable.
Apprentice Surname: Humphries	
Date of Birth: 16/06/1986	Date of Birth must match the date of birth on all evidence and that entered on ACE
Nominated ACE Centre/organisation submitting your Apprenticeship claim: FISSS Training	The organisation name must be the organisation that is applying for the Apprenticeship Completion Certificate. This field can be prepopulated.

APPRENTICE DECLARATION & AUTHORISATION
I declare that:

- I had an Apprenticeship Agreement (ONLY for starts on or after 6/4/12) in place for the duration of my Apprenticeship, or that Alternative Completion Conditions² applied to my framework.
- I have met all of the stated requirements of my Apprenticeship framework.
- I authorise the organisation named above to apply for my Apprenticeship Completion Certificate, on my behalf, and that they will provide the Certifying Authority³ with the necessary evidence of my achievements and pay the appropriate certification fee.
- I consent to the use of my personal data, uploaded to Apprenticeship Certificates England (ACE) to be used for the purpose of claiming my Apprenticeship Completion Certificate and for the creation of anonymised analytical and statistical data relating to Apprenticeships in England. This analytical and statistical data is in accordance with the ACE Data Use Policy.

The Apprentice must sign the form, this can be an electronic signature.

Apprentices must date the form and Apprentice date of signing cannot be prior to the last date in learning

Apprentice Signature: D. Humphries	Apprentice Date of Signing: 10/10/15
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THIRD PARTY CLAIMANT USE ONLY
(This is the organisation nominated above, by the Apprentice, to claim their Apprenticeship Completion Certificate)

Apprentice Last Date in Learning: 09/10/15	Last date in Learning must be completed, be on or before Apprentice date of signing and must match the Last Date in Learning on ACE.
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1. To apply for an Apprenticeship Completion Certificate yourself, go to <https://acecerts.co.uk/web> and complete the online application
2. For details of Alternative Completion Conditions go to <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/1199>
3. The Federation for Industry Sector Skills & Standards have been designated as the English Certifying Authority by the Chief Executive of the Skills Funding Agency.

Upgrades to Certification System Architecture

Throughout March and April, The Federation has made a number of significant improvements to the architecture of ACE, ACW and MA Online. New hardware and improved security features means that the systems are operating faster and more securely than ever before.

Unfortunately, during the final phase of these upgrades on the 8th of April, a number of users reported missing apprentice records from their ACE accounts. ACW and MA Online users were not affected. Upon investigation an incorrect configuration on the database caused these records to be hidden from view. We have been able to restore the missing data and the ACE system is now fully up to date. We apologise for any inconvenience caused and have reviewed our testing procedures to ensure similar problems are discovered ahead of any future developments.

BFG/Summit Skills

The Federation announced on the 1st April 2016 that SummitSkills has been appointed to issue completion certificates for apprentices in the facilities management, cleaning and properties industries. This work was previously carried out by The Building Futures Group (TBFG). For more information please visit the SummitSkills website.

SummitSkills has decided to operate under TBFG branding on ACE, ACW and MA Online for the immediate future. This is to ensure that users can continue to make certificate claims under their existing log-ins without any changes. All queries relating to TBFG certification should be sent to certification@summitskills.org.uk

Acceptable Evidence - UPDATE

In October 2015 the Federation launched the new online Acceptable Evidence Guidance for ACE. Following feedback and communication with new Awarding Organisations there were additions made on 1st December 2015. A further update was made on 23rd March 2016, with thanks to replies from ACE Users and we have been able to include further information in our guidance as follows:

New pages

- A dedicated [GNVQ](#) page has been created.
- [ASDAN](#) has signed up to the guidance and now has a dedicated page.
- [NOCN](#) has signed up to the guidance and now has a dedicated page.
- [ILM/CGLI](#) has signed up to the guidance and now has a dedicated page.

Additions to Existing Pages

- [CII](#) has added an Unacceptable example to their page.
- [IMI](#) have added updated versions of certification evidence

We plan to maintain the Acceptable Evidence pages on an ongoing basis and if there is sufficient supply of new evidence for addition we will carry out quarterly updates. If you would like to submit an evidence example for consideration please contact the Support Team. Thank you to everyone who has supported the update to this guidance.

The Staged Withdrawal of SASE Frameworks Has Begun

As part of Apprenticeship reform programme in England, the process of transitioning from Frameworks to Standards has begun. This will be a staged process and will continue until all Frameworks are closed, to new starts, in 2020.

Initially 7 frameworks with no starts in the last 2 academic years were withdrawn with the last date for new starts on these frameworks being 31st May 2016. Learners already on these frameworks will continue on their agreed funding arrangements, and their Apprenticeship completion certificate can be claimed as normal.

The Secretary of State has now written to the relevant Issuing Authorities to remove affected frameworks and have also notified providers and employers that this process is underway.

For further information and details on frameworks being withdrawn please visit: [Batch 1 Framework Withdrawals](#). Consultation on the second batch of frameworks is now being considered and all Issuing Authorities were given the opportunity to consult. The consultation feedback is currently being reviewed and a decision about which frameworks will be recommended for withdrawal is likely to be made by Ministers during June. We will update you as soon as information is available, and it will also be amended on [Apprenticeship Frameworks Online](#) system.

Certification for Apprenticeship Standards in England

As you will all be aware there are lots of changes going on to the Apprenticeship system in England. Many decisions are yet to be made. For the time being the Federation has been asked to help define and implement a simple process for claiming the final Apprenticeship certificate. The Minister wants a single certificate rather than one issued by every End Point Assessment Organisation for consistency.

The Federation is putting in place a simple three stage system:

- Buy your credits (We will contact each End Point Assessment Organisation to set this up)
- Complete the application for the Apprenticeship certificate
- Certificate issued

To manage this process we have set up a new portal into our system just for new Apprentice standards in England www.standardcert.co.uk. For more information please visit the [questions and answer](#) page.

India Project and Trade Mission

During the first week of April, a group of eight Sector Skills Councils, accompanied by the Federation's Director of International Business, travelled to Delhi to mark the launch of UK-India Transnational Standards, part of a project to help support mobility of the Indian workforce by equipping them with internationally recognized qualifications. The project is funded by the UK India Education Research Initiative (UKIERI), a joint initiative between UK and Indian governments, and is part of Prime Minister Modi's strategic programmes, Skill India and Make in India, designed to attract global investment and jobs for India's young population (50% of which will be under 29 by 2022), as well improving opportunities for Indian workers around the world.

Representatives from Cogent Skills, IMI, Lantra, People 1st, Proskills, Semta, Summit Skills and Tech Partnership attended the launch event with the Minister for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Shri Rajesh Pratap Rudy, and the British High Commissioner, Sir Dominic Asquith, on 5th April in Delhi. The event was hosted by the National Skill Development Corporation, an agency of the Ministry for Skill Development, and was attended by Indian SSCs and other guests, including journalists who reported on the programme in the national media. The remainder of the visit saw the delegates spending time with their counterparts planning the next phases of the programme, which will lead to jointly branded qualifications and training, to support them in their goal to upskill and improve opportunities for up to 400 million Indian workers by 2022.



Currently, eleven Sector Skills Councils are engaged in the first phase of the project and discussions are taking place with partners, including awarding organisations and training providers. The scope of the opportunity will continue to expand as further funding becomes available and other sectors are brought into the programme. The Federation Oracle will post regular updates and for more information, please email info@ukskills.org.