

FederationOracle

The one source for all your Apprenticeship Certification information

As time goes by...

...not so slowly. Following the election in May there have been some key changes to note; Changes to SASE, withdrawal of frameworks and the implementation of the Automated Data Transfer Facility within ACE. You can read all about these in this issue of the Federation Oracle.

News in Brief

- [As time goes by...](#)
- [Federation Update from Mark Froud](#)
- [ACE Automated Data Transfer Facility](#)
- [Reducing Rejections - Progress](#)
- [New SASE Guidance Published](#)
- [SASE Framework Withdrawal – Update on Batch 4](#)

Federation Update from Mark Froud

ACE has gone partially digital and yes, for some it will take a while to trust the solution. I have seen it work and while it will not solve everything it should make everybody's life a lot easier. We are there to support you through these changes (see Automated Data Transfer Facility article below).

The Federation is developing a solution to help data exchange between Training Providers and Apprenticeship Assessment Organisations so that when the new Apprenticeship Standard and Assessment system numbers start to ramp up there is a simple and trusted way of managing a set of very complex information flows in a secure environment. We are talking to the Apprenticeship Assessment Organisations during the summer and will follow this up with Training Provider discussions. If you have any specific needs let us know so that we can build them into the system.

The Federation is also examining how it can support Apprenticeship Assessment Organisations in ensuring that the quality of End Point Assessors starts and remains high. For many new skills will need to be learned and industry knowledge brought up to date. That knowledge will need to be constantly refreshed. Many of the new Assessors will be freelance and responsible for their own CPD and marketing. We are looking at developing a professional body for these new Assessors to assist both Apprenticeship Assessment Organisations and Training Providers. If you have any thoughts on how this or we can help you, please let us know.

The implementation of the Apprenticeship Standards system is a difficult task. Our role is to try and help and carry some of that burden for you. Success means better quality and a happy Institute for Apprenticeships.

ACE Automated Data Transfer Facility

Our new Automated Data Transfer Facility (ADTF) launched on 31st July and is now a little over two weeks old. The system has been designed to streamline Apprenticeship Certification and to reduce some of the administration associated with creating and processing certificate claims.

There are two stages to the ADTF process.

Using the Apprentice's name and ULN, the first stage verifies the Apprentice and imports the Apprentice address and Date of Birth into the ACE record. Upon completion of further required information within the ACE record and the

specific framework details, the second stage will search the Apprentice's Personal Learning Record (PLR) for relevant qualification achievement information.

Following this, the ACE system will record what has been found in the PLR as either being:-

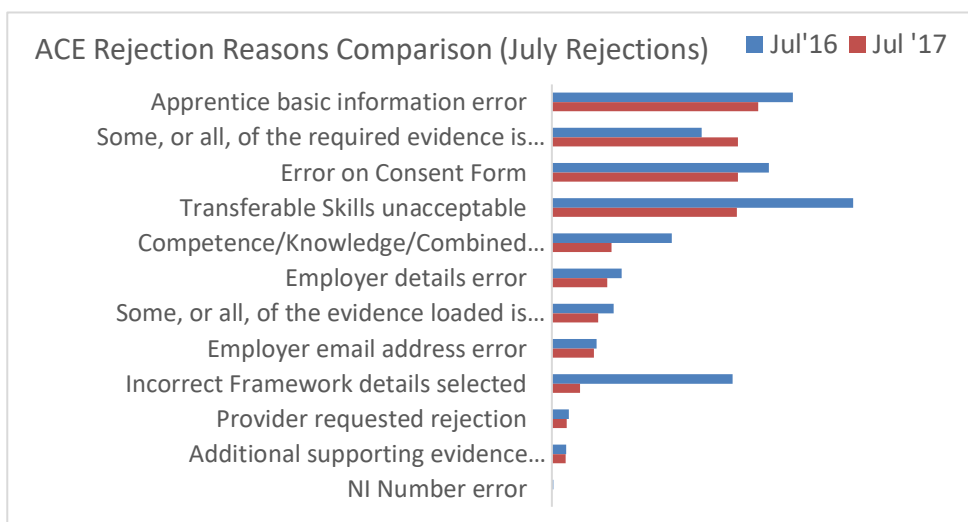
- Verified – the qualification meets all requirements and no further action required
- Found – a possible qualification has been found but there is information missing and therefore verification has not been possible. A manual upload of suitable achievement evidence will be required.
- Unsuccessful – qualification has not been found within the Apprentice's PLR. A manual upload of suitable achievement evidence will be required.

In the first week there were more than 7,500 searches completed with hundreds of verified qualifications. There have been a few minor bugs along the way but these have been addressed very quickly and the implementation process has been a success. It is important to note that the system has been designed as an additional tool and not all qualifications will be able to be verified through this facility. Where this is the case, achievement evidence will need to be manually uploaded to the Apprentice record as has been the case previously.

The Learning Record Service continues to develop the information contained within the PLR and, over time, as data quality and quantity increases then the benefits of this new facility will also improve. If you have yet to use the new facility [guidance](#) and [FAQs](#) are available under the [knowledge tab](#) on ACE.

Reducing Rejections - Progress

Firstly, we would like to congratulate everyone for their hard work in reducing rejections. There has been some great reductions in rejections. A comparison from July 16 to July 17 shows just how much has been achieved, a reduction from 16.03% to 13.48% rejections. Almost all rejection reasons have decreased, most notably Incorrect Framework details selected and Transferable Skills unacceptable, which for the first time is out of the top 3 rejection reasons. We would like to keep the momentum going and reduce rejections even further. We hope that ADTF will reduce rejections but we are also looking at other ways rejections can be reduced and will keep you all updated in the near future.



New SASE Guidance Published

An updated version of the SASE Guidance was published on 19th July 2017. However, please note that it is not yet "law" as the Statutory Instrument (SI) has to be laid before Parliament for a period of time before it is approved and becomes part of the legislation. The expected date for the SI order to become "law" is 22nd August. On this date, we will confirm (or otherwise) whether this has actually happened.

However, we wanted to let you know as soon as possible about this most recent update and a brief overview of what the changes are. We will be issuing a further briefing in the near future and will be updating our guidance materials, in accordance with the new SASE requirements.

The amendments are to the Transferable Skills Requirements:

- Addition of minimum, numeric grade requirements for new GCSEs in English and Maths (i.e. the new 9-1 grades)
- Addition of additional, acceptable English and Maths qualifications. For example, those from other UK nations.
- Addition of “exemptions” criteria for **specific** learners to allow the acceptance of certain Entry Level 3 qualifications in English and Maths. There are very strict procedures to be followed to ensure a learner qualifies for such an exemption.

Please note that the inclusion of **BSL qualifications** in English was included in the previous SASE Guidance, updated at the end of March 2017 but it is not yet “law” either. Once approved, the current SI will confirm BSL qualifications as acceptable, in addition to the 3 new additions, detailed above.

The SASE changes apply to BOTH new Apprenticeship starts from the “effective from” date (planned to be 22/8/17) and ALL Apprenticeships started BEFORE this date but are not completed.

Addendums

1. There are some typos at the end of the 1st paragraph in sections 5, 6, 28 & 29 in that the letters in brackets have not been amended/extended to include the new wider range of acceptable qualifications. Simply ignore the letters in brackets and replace with sentence “one from the following options”.
2. There has been a government policy decision made that for Intermediate Apprenticeships (L2) the minimum acceptable grade for O Level English is now an “E” but it remains as a minimum of “C” for Mathematics. It also remains a minimum of “C” grade for both the English and Maths requirements of Advanced Apprenticeships (L3).

Further information will be circulated to all users once the SI has been approved and our guidance will be updated in line with the new SASE requirements.

SASE Framework Withdrawal – Update on Batch 4

Earlier this year the ESFA asked for feedback on a fourth batch of proposed SASE framework withdrawals and an announcement on the outcome of this process was expected at the end May. Frameworks on the list would have been set for withdrawal on 31st March 2018.

However, the ESFA have recognised that we are currently in a period of considerable change across the sector, so to maximise stability they have now postponed the announcement of the next batch of SASE frameworks to be withdrawn until this autumn.

In the light of this delay, the Government will delay the original proposed withdrawal date to a later date that will account for the postponement of their announcement and will ensure that a sufficient notice period is given to affected sectors.

Once they have finalised the list of the next batch of frameworks to be withdrawn they will publish them on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) and, at the same time, the Federation will also inform the network.