Development of the 2015 to 2016 individualised learner record (ILR)
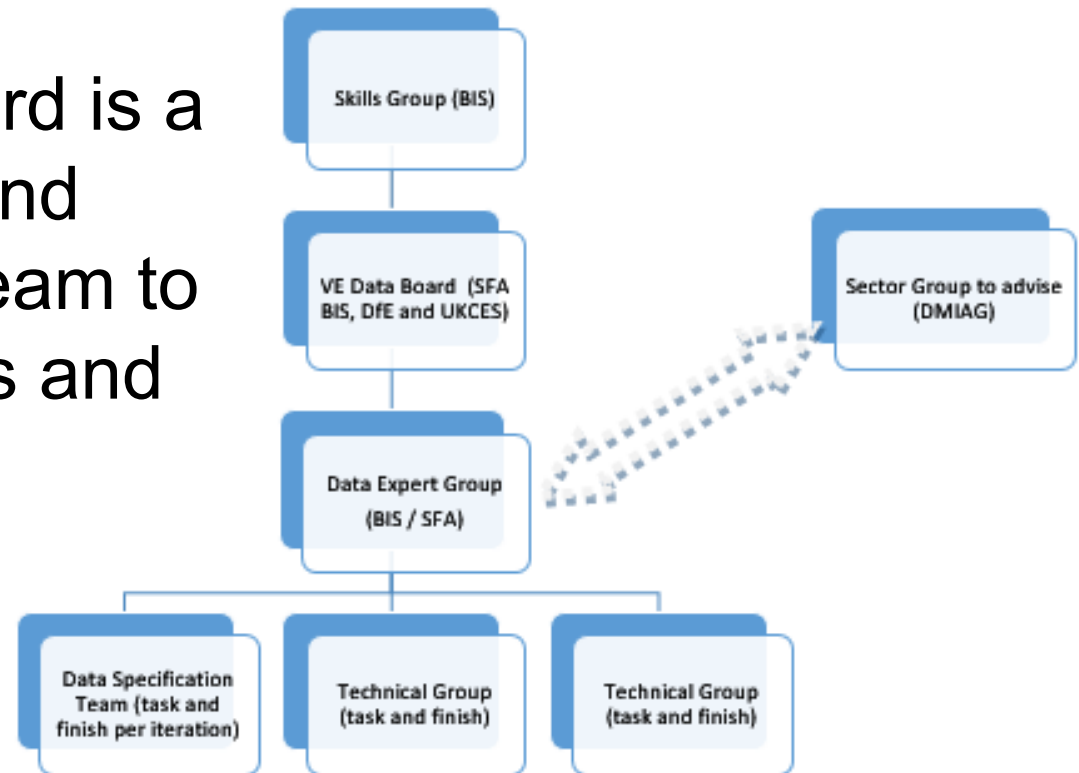
February 2015

Data governance

Skills Funding Agency

The Vocational Education (VE) Data Board is responsible for the specification of the ILR.

Sitting under the board is a Data Expert Group and Data Specification Team to capture requirements and propose solutions

Skills Group (BIS)

VE Data Board (SFA BIS, DfE and UKCES)

Sector Group to advise (DMIAG)

Data Expert Group (BIS / SFA)

Data Specification Team (task and finish per iteration)

Technical Group (task and finish)

Technical Group (task and finish)

An overview of the ILR development process (1)

Skills Funding Agency

In January 2015, the VE Data Board met to agree what will be collected in the 2015 to 2016 ILR.

The board give formal approval, but rely on the Data Expert Group for assurance that any recommended changes have been vetted to ensure:

- the data is essential and supports sector priorities

- the proposed solutions have taken into account the impact on providers

- the ILR is the best collection mechanism

An overview of the ILR development process (2)

The Data Expert Group used the 2014 to 2015 ILR specification as the starting point.

Policy teams in the Skills Funding Agency, Education Funding Agency, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, Department for Education and Higher Education Funding Council for England were asked if they had any new information requirements they wanted to capture in the ILR.

The Data Expert Group assessed the requirements to decide which should be taken forward. Approved requests were passed on to a Data Specification Team to work on possible solutions.

An overview of the ILR development process (3)

Between September and December 2014, the Agency's Data Specification Team:

- took the new information requirements and developed possible solutions to meet those needs

- drafted new or updated ILR pages

- discussed the possible impact the proposed solutions may have on providers with the Data Management Information Advisory Group, the Technical User Group and other provider groups
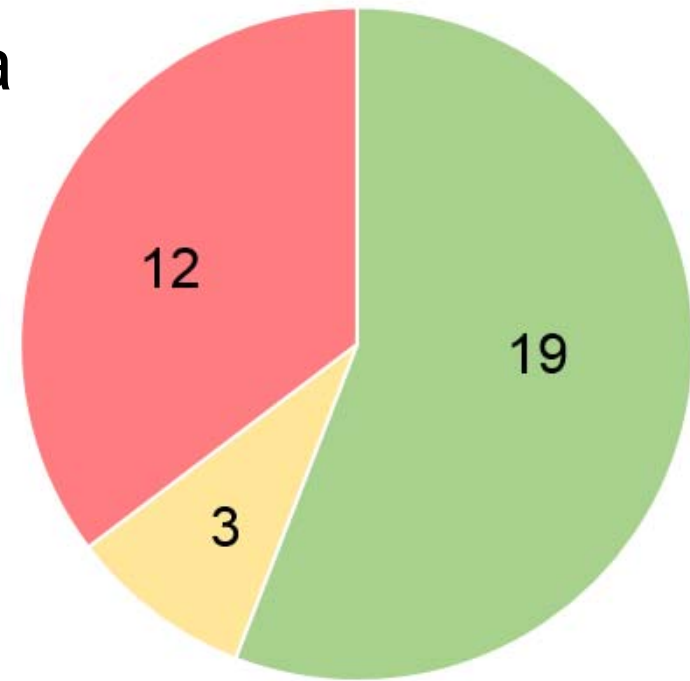
Assessing the requests

There were 34 requests. Each was initially assessed by the Data Expert Group. Of those 34:

19 were recommended for approval

3 required full consideration by the Data Board

12 requests were either declined or withdrawn

Changes discussed at the Board (1)

Requirement: To align learning difficulty and disability categories with the school census

Decision: To have a single list of learning difficulty and disability categories, with a primary indicator to identify the main disability or learning difficulty.

Requirement: To extend the collection of percentage of online delivery data

Decision: It was agreed that, long term, the data should not be collected at individual level. An investigation has been started to see if the data can be collected at course level through the Course Directory. This would remove the requirement to collect this in the ILR.

Requirement: To collect information relating to learner households for the new European Social Fund (ESF) programme

Decision: New learning delivery funding and monitoring types have been added as placeholders in the ILR. The data indicates whether the learners are from jobless and / or single parent households.

The board is aware that this data is perceived as burdensome to collect and so is seeking clarification on whether this must be collected for the new ESF programme.

Requirement: To show why an EFA funded learner is exempt from studying maths and / or English

Solution: New learner funding and monitoring codes to show reason for exemption due to:

- a learning difficulty

- holding an equivalent overseas qualification

- holding an approved equivalent UK qualification

Skills Funding Agency

Requirement: To establish whether a learner meets the EFA's condition of funding

Solution: The addition of two fields to collect the highest examination grade awarded to the learner for a GCSE maths and GCSE English Language or Literature

Approved changes requested by the Department for Education (1)

Requirement: To ensure that the ILR supports the new policy on A and AS levels

Solution: Updated guidance will clarify how A and AS levels must be recorded and what to do with current AS level learners who intend to do A2 qualifications in 2015 to 2016.

Requirement: To identify learners in receipt of Special Educational Needs (SEN) support, but at a level below that required for Education, Health and Care plans

Solution: There is a new learner funding and monitoring type for providers to identify these learners in the ILR. This identifier is only for EFA funded learners.

Approved changes requested by BIS (1)

Requirement: To ensure data is collected to support funding and reporting of positive traineeship destinations

Solution: Minor changes made to destination categories to support funding in 2015 to 2016.

Requirement: To collect data on participation in Family English, Maths and Language (FEML) courses funded through the Adult Skills budget

Solution: A new learning delivery funding and monitoring type has been added. This will only be used by Community Learning providers.

Approved changes requested by the Skills Funding Agency (1)

Requirement: To collect additional delivery hours information for English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) to enable ESOL top up funding

Solution: New learning delivery field to record ESOL additional delivery hours. This data will be used for funding.

Requirement: To remove the ILR B file functionality from the data collection systems

Solution: B files contained a subset of the total learners at a learning provider and enabled providers to only send learner records that had changed since their previous ILR file transmission. This functionality has been removed.

Requirement: To remove unnecessary or low value ILR fields

Solution: Three possible fields were identified for possible deletion:

- ESF Destination will be removed as the data is now within the progression and destination data

- Employment outcome was considered but is still required for funding and so will remain

- Achievement date was considered but will remain as it is needed for traineeships and Trailblazers

Approved changes requested by the ESF team (1)

Requirement: Update the ESF agreement ID and local project number fields to meet the new ESF requirements

Solution: The ESF agreement ID and local project number fields will be replaced with a single field to collect the ESF contract number

Requirement: To add the GROSSFEE field, as specified in the HESA Student Record, to the ILR

Solution: The field has been added

Requirement: For HE learners, to capture the postcode of the college site rather than the learner's workplace, even if the majority of learning takes place in the workplace

Solution: New HE field added to record campus/college location postcode for workplace delivery

Approved changes requested by HEFCE (2)

A few other minor technical changes to HE fields have been made. These include tightening up data validation on subject classification data and ensuring that certain fields contain leading zeros.

2015 to 2016 ILR specification

- The 2015 to 2016 ILR specification is published on GOV.UK

- The specification is based on the 2014 to 2015 ILR specification with any changes highlighted in yellow

Questions and contacts

- Feconnect will host an online question and answer session with representatives in February / March 2015. Further details will be published in Update.

- If you have any queries on the 2015 to 2016 ILR, please log them with the Service Desk

- If you have any feedback on this presentation, please email the Sector Engagement Team cst@sfa.bis.gov.uk

Skills Funding
Agency

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