

**Date** 20 March 2014  
**Subject** LRS Customer Scrutiny Group  
**Location** Media Suite  
**Time** 10.00 - 13.00  
**Publication intent** NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

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**Present** Dean Williams (Learning Records Service, Acting Chair), Richard Cookson (Learning Records Service), Mike Coulson (Learning Records Service), Carole Morley (Learning Records Service), Jennifer Mullis (BIS), Jonathan Couper (AQA), Kelly Ullger (Pearson), Daniel Walker (UCAS), Jeanette Miller (Local Authority), Jane Wild (HESA), Andrew Harland (Examination Officers' Association), Russell Davis (Learning Records Service), Stephen McMillan (Department for Education (DfES), Theresa Consiglio (DELNI), Terry Gibbons (City and Guilds), Meena Singh (OCR & JCQ), Stacey Jackson (Learning Records Service, Minute taker)

**Apologies** Apologies have been received from:

Matt Dean (AoC), Peter Johnson (Greater Merseyside Connexions), Craig Strangwick (Federation of Awarding Bodies), Stella Turner (AELP), John Motley (DfE), *Redacted* (C&G), Robin Gadd (Brockenhurst FE College and Chair), Jon Dalton (National Careers Service), Bryan Horne (Ofqual), Tim Chewter (AELP),

## Item 1. Welcome and introductions

1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave apologies on behalf of absent members. Introductions were made for the benefit of new attendees.

## Item 2. Minutes of last meeting

2.1 The minutes of the last meeting held on 4 December 2013 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

## Item 3. Action Log

- 3.2 It was agreed that action points CSG154, CSG159, CSG166, CSG172 and CSG174 can now be closed.
- 3.3 Action CSG158 – Closed. BIS confirmed that they received feedback from the Minister on LRS contribution to the simplification agenda and he had no further comments. The National Audit Office did raise questions around Data Collections and streamlining the ILR.
- 3.4 There are no outstanding actions for CSG.

## Item 4. LRS Performance Report

- 4.5 This quarter's report (December 2013 – February 2014) is showing the LRS service as RAG status red in January and back to Green in February.
- 4.6 The Group were updated on the follows:
- The red status was due to more than double the volume of service desk calls for the previous month and much higher than the estimated increase in capacity.
  - The increase is primarily due to the mandating of ULNs within Schools.
  - This increase is a temporary peak in activity while schools are registering; the Agency has increased the number of service desk agents and is working outside of service desk hours to manage the service quality.
  - 95% of schools have registered for the PLR.
  - LRS are working with DfE on contacting those schools that have not yet included the ULN in census collections.
- 4.7 The members commented that there will always be peaks in incidents in January and the summer months.
- 4.8 Action CSG176: LRS to look at capacity planning for the LRS service in January and the summer.
- 4.9 It was noted that if a school becomes a new organisation i.e. an academy then they will need to re-register with the LRS for the ULN and Personal Learner Record (PLR).

## Item 5. LRS Security Forum

- 5.1 The Group were presented the report from the Security Forum for the last quarter:
- 5.2 During 2013, the LRS Security Forum recognised that the security risk profile will change significantly in both Release 10 and Release 11.



- a. Release 10 was originally changing the identity verification process, moving it out of direct control of the LRS to a wider Agency model.
  - b. Release 11 makes changes to the entire database by moving all of the application to Microsoft SQL server 2012.
- 5.3 Significant updates to the RMADS still need to be carried out to reflect changes introduced by Release 12. .
- 5.4 Going forward the LRS Security Forum will continue to look at the number of high risk areas.
- 5.5 Peak time for security breaches relating to staff sending unencrypted sensitive information via e-mail is during September. This is due to peak volumes of registrations and potentially inexperienced temporary staff at providers.. The Forum are currently reviewing the processes for dealing with security breaches, with the aim to encourage providers to be more responsible and mindful of security within their own organisations . Reminders will be fed into existing communications channels ahead of September.
- 5.6 There will be a new ID tool in 10.3. Registration will be automated; this will create risks so it will need to be robust.
- 5.7 The following comment was made:
- During the automated re-registering, would LRS use this opportunity to close accounts that are not being used? Not in 10.3, but this could be considered going forward

## **Item 6. Data Management**

- 6.1 The Group were presented with a paper updating on the work of the LRS Data Management function and the outcomes from the recent meeting of the LRS Data Advisory Group (DAG) and updated as follows:
- Matching algorithms – most of the issues relating to matching are around postcode data and this will be the focus of future work in this area
  - Data cleanse modules on learner data continue to be run on a regular basis.
  - The LRS Monthly Headline Report - Annex A (can be found at the end of these minutes) has now been published as Open Data, this does not allow the identification of any individuals or organisations as it is based on aggregated information.
  - The Data Management team continues to analyse the results being achieved by the matching algorithms with a view to further improving the matching process going forward.
  - Consideration is being given to improve the match process for Search by Demographics.

- 6.2 There was a discussion around Wales having a similar report to Annex A. It was highlighted that Wales already received a welsh report and this could be up-dated.
- 6.3 It was noted that one organisation had raised an issue with the change proposed to make the date of birth and gender mandatory fields in the verify ULN but were not objecting to the change. LRS will be meeting with this organisation to discuss their concerns further.
- 6.4 There was a discussion around whether a new ULN would need to be created for learners who change their name, whether it is through adoption, police protection or any other reason.
- 6.5 Action CSG177: LRS to investigate formal guidance on how to treat learners with name changes.

## **Item 7. EFA update**

- 7.6 The Education Funding Agency (EFA) has requested access to math and english achievement data contained in the PLR for funding purposes. The change requested was formally brought to the Group for endorsement.
- 7.7 There was a discussion around what is going to happen to the data once EFA receive it. i.e. retention of data, how much will be replicated. The protection of this data once held within EFA.
- 7.8 The Agency explained that a Data Sharing Agreement is put in place between the EFA and the Agency to manage the sharing of data in line with DPA.
- 7.9 One organisation has objected to this request, this particular organisation do not submit english or math data.
- 7.10 The majority of AO represented on the Board endorsed the change.
- 7.11 **Decision CSTG178:** The EFA change request was agreed.
- 7.12 Some concerns were raised about the visibility of the Data Sharing Agreements with permitted organisations and the details around protecting data.
- 7.13 **Action CSG179:** LRS to set up a sub group with AOs to review Data Sharing Agreements used with permitted organisations.

## **Item 8. Release update**

- 8.14 The Group were given an update on Release 10 and Release 11.

### *Release 10*

The following updates are being undertaken;

- a) Replatform to sharepoint
- b) Registration process unchanged
- c) Automated reregistering/password change of existing accounts

- d) 10.2 Deployed in June 2014
- e) Direction of travel is still to have a single sign in process for LRS systems
- f) Not converting to HUB at this point in time

## *Release 11*

The following updates are being undertaken;

- a) Technical change to databases
- b) Move entire application to the same database (Microsoft SQL server 2012)
- c) Make 'Cloud Ready' to move to G-Cloud hosting Timescale;
- d) Elaboration and design complete – April 2014;
- e) Development and testing complete – July 2014
- f) Deployment to live cloud environment – Nov 2014

8.15 There will be minimum impact to customers.

8.16 There was a discussion around the ID Assurance (IDA) for 16-18 learners. The concerns that were raised were that young learners have a limited digital footprint so are unable to verify their identification. As part of the IDA maintenance release, a function to create a barcode for learners that are unable to verify their ID online will be implemented during the September 2014 release of the IDA. This will allow learners to go to the post office to be identified where they cannot be identified online.

8.17 LRS are working with the Cabinet Office to work through the challenges of identifying 16+ learners online.

## **Item 9. Supply Chain Transformation Programme (SCTP) update**

9.18 The Group were given an update on the SCTP as follows:

- The SCTP is a new supply chain of services to confirm to the Government ICT Strategy.
- The SCTP has been split into 4 delivery tranches.
  - Tranche 1 will deliver a new mobile and desktop computing service.
  - Tranche 2 procures citizen facing services, namely for the National Careers Service and Apprenticeships.
  - Tranche 3 comprises Agency funding and finance services.
  - Tranche 4 will re-procure the Learning Records Service.

- 9.19 All tranches include application development and support, service management, service desk and hosting with cross-cutting service system integration.
- 9.20 Work is underway to transition Agency ICT to the new supply chain and service model, with the exception of IDA.
- 9.21 Over the last 12 months only 1% of calls received by the LRS support desk were out of hours. Following this review, the service desk hours will change from Monday to Friday 8am to 10pm to new standard hours of Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm.
- 9.22 The service desk hours will be extended to meet demand during peak times i.e. August/September/January.
- 9.23 Technical support will be available 24 hours.
- 9.24 DfE Wales raised a question around whether the LRS were going to use a private, government or public Cloud.
- 9.25 Action CSG180: LRS to confirm the type of Cloud.

## **Item 10. Move to GOV.UK**

- 10.26 The Group were given an update on the move to GOV.UK.
- GOV.UK is linked to IT strategy
  - LRS has now moved
  - Archive directory is available
- 10.27 There was a discussion around the navigation of the new GOV.UK website and some users are finding it difficult to find what they are looking for.
- 10.28 The LRS area can be found through the link below:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/learning-records-service>
- 10.29 All users are encouraged to leave feedback to help improve the website.

## **Item 11. PLR comms Plan**

- 11.30 The Group were given an update on the PLR communications plan.
- 11.31 Overall the main activity of 2014 is to gradually increase the use of the PLR further by individual learners, post-16 schools and FE organisations by highlighting the benefits of the PLR to four key groups in England:
- a) Post-18 individuals studying publically funded qualifications – Learners / National Careers Service (NCS) customers
  - b) Training Organisations – including Schools and FE providers
  - c) MIS Suppliers
  - d) Sector Representative Bodies



- 11.32 The plan and communications for the same four key groups in Wales and Northern Ireland (NI) will be shared with the devolved administration to allow them to undertake similar or communication activity where they choose to do so.
- 11.33 DfE Wales and DELNI made the following suggestions: • Communication needs to be aligned with Careers Services Wales and the NI careers service. • Learners studying in both England and Wales are captured.
- 11.34 The Group also suggested that LRS expand the communication through forums, sector representative bodies.

## **Item 12. Skills Funding Agency Reorganisation**

- 12.35 The Group were informed about the Skills Funding Agency reorganisation. The main divisions going forward will be: a) Apprenticeships and Delivery b) Operations c) Funding and Programmes
- 12.36 The LRS function will be moving to the Apprenticeship and Delivery division under Joe Billington – Deputy Director for National Careers & Learner Services.
- 12.37 There will be many staff changes and some will be leaving the Agency, this includes members of the CSG.
- 12.38 The Group raised a number of concerns about key points of contact, loss of knowledge and understanding of the LRS policies.
- 12.39 The Group were reassured that transition plans and knowledge transfer sessions are in place to ensure agreements are transferred to the new area of the Agency.
- 12.40 Recommendations have been made to keep the CSG in the future of the Agency.

## **Item 13. Federation for Sector Skills and Standards (FISSS) update**

- 13.41 The Group were given an overview of FISSS involvement with the PLR as follows:
- FISSS will use the PLR service.
  - Currently FISSS request evidence on the PLR from colleges; FISSS are now looking to stop this request.



# Minutes

- FISSS will seek not to collect achievement data from training providers and organisation with preference of using the PLR; this should reduce the burden on the sector.

13.42 FISSS will be signing the PLR Agreement in the very near future.

13.43 The Group requested a copy of the Agreement.

13.44 **Action CSG181:** To include the FISSS Agreement in the review of data sharing agreements with AOs.

## Item 14. Any other business

14.1 None.

## Item 15. Date of next meeting.

15.2 The next meeting will take place on Thursday 12 June 2014, 10.00 – 13.00, Media Suite, Skills Funding Agency, Cheylesmore House, Coventry CV1 2WT.

**Meeting chair** Dean Williams

**Minutes creator** Stacey Jackson

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