



ULN and PLR Fact Sheet for Providers

The Unique Learner Number (ULN) and its importance to your learners

The **ULN** is a unique 10-digit number allocated to the majority of learners aged 14+ in the UK. It is designed to help reduce administration for you and your learners when registering or enrolling for a course, particularly when progressing from school into further education and beyond into higher education.

The ULN can also help learners throughout their lifelong learning and also when accessing careers advice. It's the education equivalent of the National Insurance number. Collect it, use it and communicate it to learners if they do not know it.

Where can learners find their ULN?

It may already be printed on their exam results slip or certificate from awarding bodies. It is 10 digits long and not to be confused with any Candidate, Exam or Centre Number that an awarding body might have issued. Schools, colleges, universities and learning providers can give the ULN directly to learners.

Just like the National Insurance number, it needs to be kept in a safe place, to be used for life.

Where should you and your learner be using the ULN?

You and your learners will need to use their ULN when logging on and accessing their [Personal Learning Record](#). You should ask learners to use it on training applications and enrolment forms. You should use it when submitting exam entries or certificate claims to Awarding Organisations.

The Personal Learning Record is an online folder which includes learning achievements and qualifications such as GCSEs, NVQs, BTEC awards as well as work-based learning which learners have achieved from the age of 16. Admission tutors and future employers will need the learner's ULN and permission (via the Privacy Notice) to access the PLR in order to quickly verify training and learning achievements. A direct benefit of using the ULN is that job applications and course registrations are quicker to process than when having to provide paper based copies of secondary, further and higher education qualifications.

The ULN will also be needed when accessing telephone and face to face careers advice with the National Careers Service which will be available in England by April 2012. This replaces Next Steps and Connexions. Careers Advisors will need your learner's permission to view their PLR in order to provide highly tailored and more relevant careers advice.



Learner consent and access to their Personal Learning Record

The learner is in control of his/her Personal Learning Record. It is for them to use during their lifetime. There are controls to make sure consent is given by the learner and to make sure access is given to educational institutions and employers to view their Personal Learning Record. Learners must be ID checked and have their own email address plus a Unique Learning Number (ULN) first, before registering and accessing their Personal Learning Record.

What is a Privacy Notice?

This is a standard piece of text which informs learners about how their information is collected, what it is used for and who is using the information. The Learner must have seen this and agreed to share their data for you to view their PLR data. The Skills Funding Agency collects basic information like name, date of birth, postcode and whether they are male or female. This information helps the Agency match their learning and training achievement information like qualifications, awards and training correctly to their Personal Learning Record. You can find out more information and read a simple explanation of a Privacy Notice by [clicking here](#).

Where do older students get their ULN?

The majority of learners should already have a ULN and providers should collect it from them or search the Learner Register Organisation Portal to find it if they do not know it.

If someone is returning to further education, work-based training or vocational training, then they will need to ask their college or training provider to create and give them a Unique Learning Number.

Your college or training provider will already be officially set up as a Learner Registration Body (LRB) so that they can create and give out ULNs.

Can a provider give out a ULN directly?

So long as the school, college or training provider is registered to be a Learner Registration Body (LRB), then they should give the ULN to the learner directly, when they start their training.

Key message to learners:

- ❖ Keep your ULN safe. It is unique to you.
- ❖ It is the education equivalent of your National Insurance number.

How else can we and our learners use their ULN?

The ULN is the key to the PLR. It can be used to confirm that learners have completed specific work-based learning or FE education when processing applications. HR or training managers might ask to see it. Also careers advisors may ask to view a Personal Learning Record either before or during any careers advice consultations. It is important for learners to allow them access so that the advice and guidance they receive is really tailored to their own career ambitions.

What is a data challenge?

If some demographic information on your learner's ULN is factually incorrect then training providers who are Learner Registration Bodies (LRBs) can update this information themselves. This could be an incorrect or old postcode for a learner's address, an incorrect date of birth or their legal name may have changed for various reasons. If the learner appears to have more than 1 ULN, the provider can raise a data challenge for investigation.

If an award appears to be incorrect, the learner or provider can raise a data challenge for investigation. However, if **the grade** for a particular qualification is awarded incorrectly, then you will need to contact the awarding organisation **directly**. They can consider changing the grade and then automatically correct this new information on a learner's Personal Learning Record when they next upload exam, learning achievement information to the Personal Learning Record.



Answers to some myths about the PLR...

The Personal Learning Record has been created for the benefit of learners. It will help learning providers to provide tailored services like careers advice to help career progression and ambitions.

The Unique Learning Number is for learners, for their lifetime and to help streamline registration and enrolment processes.

When you update your records, ensure you also update your learner's details on the Organisation Portal.

Updates can include a change of to the learner's address, name, etc. It is important to keep the organisation portal up-to-date and aligned with your own internal system.

Customer service & contact details:

E: LRSsupport@learningrecordsservice.org.uk

T: 0845 602 2589 LRS Customer Helpdesk

Open Monday-Saturday 8am-8pm

Some of your own questions answered in easy to understand FAQs.....

Who can access a PLR? The Learner and registered organisations when the learner has consented to sharing their data.

Who regulates the PLR? The Skills Funding Agency.

Is the ULN and PLR being used by the whole of the education sector? The ULN is mainly being used within schools and further education at present. Although it has been trialled for use in Higher Education, it is not being widely adopted at present.

The PLR is available for use for anyone over the age of 16 in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

What processes must providers be aware of? When registering learners to generate a ULN and PLR on our system, you should ensure the following four points:

- 1) You have ID verified the learners.
- 2) You have taken a note of their own personal email address and logged this on the Organisation Portal.
- 3) They have read and understood your Privacy Notice about sharing their information.
- 4) You collect a ULN from them or find the ULN on the Organisation Portal and communicate it to them directly.

The ULN is unique to the learner.

You should collect or find it and use it within enrolment and registration processes together with the Personal Learning Record.

Learners can use it for the rest of their life. It is designed to make admin easier for them.