# Q&A

# FOR TRAINING CENTRES

MARCH 2013 - V1

## CONTENTS

Apprenticeship Certificates
**England**

Providers are known as "Centres" within ACE.
"Certification Body" is the term used for the SSC / SSBs who are responsible for processing Apprenticeship Completion Certificate claims and issuing certificates, on behalf of the Alliance who is the nominated Certificating Authority.

## QUICK LINKS <span style="float:right">(Pages 2-3)</span>

## TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

**Q1. What browser do you recommend using for the ACE System?**

- For full functionality we recommend using Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome and Opera. You may encounter some display issues when using Microsoft Internet Explorer.

**Q2. Is there a minimum specification for computers that you recommend to get optimum performance from the ACE System?**

- For optimum performance we recommend:

- 3MB broadband connection (or faster)

- Gigahertz (GHz) processor (or faster)

- 2GB of RAM (or more)

- No hard disk requirement. ACE is a web-based system that requires no software to be installed on your computer(s).

- Please note that ACE runs on PC and Mac, as well as on Linux.

**Q3. How do I check my computer meets the minimum specification?**

- To check that the computer you are using meets the recommended minimum specification for using the ACE system then please consult the checklist on the ACE login page and review the results of the compatibility checker for your computer which will also be displayed.

## REGISTRATION AND LOGGING IN TO ACE

**Q1. How do I register with ACE?**

- There is a link on the home page of www.apprenticeships.org.uk/certificates under the heading 'Provider: Need to register on ACE'.

- There is also a direct link www.apprenticeships.org.uk/Partners/Policy/Certification.aspx and this will redirect you to the following registration page: https://acecerts.co.uk/register_centre.

- The registration form enables you to register with multiple Certification Bodies at one time. Each Certification Body will be sent a copy of your registration request and will set you up an account within ACE. They will then send you a username and password to enable access to their part of ACE so that you can add apprentice details.

**Q2. Do I need a username/password for each Certification Body that I use?**

- Yes you will need individual username / passwords for each Certification Body that you work with. The usernames have to be unique for security purposes as each of them gives you access to a specific part of the ACE system.

- Currently the system is not designed to facilitate a single login function. However, this is something that is being considered for future updates of ACE.

**Q3. There are several people in my organisation who need access to ACE, do we all need to register?**

- No, only one person per Training Provider, College or Employer (known as a "Centre") needs to register. They will be set up as an Administrator account for the organisation. They will be issued with an ACE username and password. The Administrator (super user) will then be able to create and manage individual username/passwords for other users within their organisation.

**Q4. I need to create more users but the system won't let me.**

- The system defaults to a maximum of 5 users per training provider account. If you require more users to be set up then please contact the relevant Certification Body to request an increase in the number of users you can create.

- For details of ACE contacts in any of the Certification Bodies, then please contact:
  The ACE Support Team on 0844 573 2560 or ace@sscalliance.org who will be able to provide the up-to-date information.

**Q5. I haven't received my username and password.**

- The Certification Bodies are responsible for registering Centres on ACE and issuing them with usernames and passwords. If you are yet to receive your username and password, and have submitted a registration request, then please contact each Certification Body directly for an update.

- For details of ACE contacts in any of the Certification Bodies, then please contact:
  The ACE Support Team on 0844 573 2560 or ace@sscalliance.org who will be able to provide the up-to-date information.

## REGISTRATION AND LOGGING IN TO ACE

**Q6.  I've forgotten my username.**

- Either the ACE Support Team or your Certification Body will be able to advise you of your username.

- For details of ACE contacts in any of the Certification Bodies, then please contact:
  the ACE Support Team on 0844 573 2560 or ace@sscalliance.org who will be able to provide the up-to-date information.

**Q7.  I've forgotten my password.**

- You will need to contact the relevant Certification Body if you have forgotten your password as ACE doesn't record these and a new one will need to be set.

- For details of ACE contacts in any of the Certification Bodies, then please contact:
  The ACE Support Team on 0844 573 2560 or ace@sscalliance.org who will be able to provide the up-to-date information.

**Q8.  Can I change my password?**

- You will need to contact the relevant Certification Body to change your ACE password.

- For details of ACE contacts in any of the Certification Bodies, then please contact:
  The ACE Support Team on 0844 573 2560 or ace@sscalliance.org who will be able to provide the up-to-date information.

**Q9.  Previously I have been able to log in but now I am getting an error message saying:- "Login Failed".**

- If you have been issued with a username and password and have previously been able to access ACE but can no longer log in, then you may have made a mistake typing in your details. Please re-check and try again.

- If you continue to have problems then this may be because your ACE account has been disabled. This could be because you have updated your contact details or a Certification Body needs to confirm something with you before proceeding with the certification process. Please contact the relevant Certification Body directly to discuss further.

- For details of ACE contacts in any of the Certification Bodies, then please contact:
  The ACE Support Team on 0844 573 2560 or ace@sscalliance.org who will be able to provide the up-to-date information.

## REGISTRATION AND LOGGING IN TO ACE

**Q10. Previously I have been able to log in but now it clears my username and password without displaying an error message.**

- As the ACE system is updated on a weekly basis we recommend typing the www.apprenticeships.org. uk/certificates URL into the address bar of your browser every time you want to access ACE. Often when you save the URL in your favourites tab, or try accessing ACE from a link in an e-mail, your computer will try to access an older version of the system.

- Please clear your cookies and cache from your browser and try opening ACE again.

- If you continue to have problems logging in then please check your computer ACE compatibility - see Q3 page 4. If problems persist then please contact:
The ACE Support Team on 0844 573 2560 or ace@sscalliance.org who will be able to advise you.

**Q11. I log in and the screen is blank.**

- Your firewall is blocking access to the website; you will need to update settings to allow access and add ACE to your "whitelist".

- If you continue to have problems logging in then please check your computer ACE compatibility - see Q3 page 4. If problems persist then please contact:
The ACE Support Team on 0844 573 2560 or ace@sscalliance.org who will be able to advise you.

## ACE OPERATIONAL ISSUES

### Q1.  Are there any training materials available to help me with the ACE system?

-   Training guides for ACE are currently being revised and updated, and will be available from the end of February 2013. In the meantime if you need any help with using ACE then please contact the ACE Support Team on 0844 573 2560 or ace@sscalliance.org.

### Q2.  Can I upload more than one apprentice at a time?

-   ACE has a feature which will allow you bulk upload apprentices using a CSV file. All mandatory fields must have data entered into them otherwise it will create errors and won't upload. A copy of the bulk upload template can be accessed from within ACE or requested from the ACE Support Team on: 0844 573 2560 or ace@sscalliance.org.

### Q3.  I can't see the framework needed for an apprentice.

-   You will need to contact the relevant Certification Body to have them assign the relevant framework to your ACE profile.

-   For details of ACE contacts in any of the Certification Bodies, then please contact:
    The ACE Support Team on 0844 573 2560 or ace@sscalliance.org who will be able to provide the up-to-date information.

### Q4.  How do I make certificate claims via the ACE system?

-   In order to claim for an Apprenticeship Completion Certificate, you will need to upload evidence of an apprentice's successful achievement / completion of all components of their Apprenticeship framework (e.g. copies of certificates and declaration forms). Evidence must be uploaded to the 'Evidence Tab' within the Apprentice's record on the ACE system.

-   The easiest way to do this is with a scanner. The maximum size of file that can be uploaded to ACE is 2 megabytes (MB). If your file is bigger than this then you will have to adjust resolution settings on your scanner to reduce the file size. Certification Bodies will also accept photos of a certificate / document, if it is of sufficient high quality.

-   Please make sure that all documents that are uploaded to ACE are fully complete and clearly legible.

### Q5.  I got the following error message while trying to upload some certificate evidence:- 'We have encountered problems with this upload. Please try again!'

-   There are a couple of reasons why this might be happening. The first might be that the file is too large. ACE has a strict 2MB size limit. If your file is over that limit then scan it again at a lower resolution and re-check the file size.

-   The second may be that the file name needs changed. Filenames cannot include any symbols including '&', '(', ')' or '*' and can have no double spacing. This error is less common as most programs usually don't allow you to save files with these characters.

-   For details of ACE contacts in any of the Certification Bodies, then please contact:
    The ACE Support Team on 0844 573 2560 or ace@sscalliance.org who will be able to provide the up-to-date information.

## ACE OPERATIONAL ISSUES

### Q6. All of the certificate evidence I uploaded disappeared after I changed to a new framework. Do I need to upload this again?

- Yes, unfortunately you will need to re-upload the evidence. As the evidence requirements differ from framework to framework, a change in the framework will result in ACE clearing the existing evidence from the 'Evidence Tab'.

### Q7. I have entered all of my learner's details and uploaded their certificate evidence. How do I process the certification request?

- If you're happy that the learner's evidence is ready to be submitted for certification approval then you need to change the learner's status from 'Entered' to 'Pending Certification'. You can do this by going to the 'Status Tab' within the apprentice's ACE record and selecting 'Pending Certification' from the drop down box.

- Once you have done this, a validation box will be displayed on screen. This summarises the information that you have entered to ACE and gives you the opportunity to correct any mistakes that you spot. Please note that the printed certificate will take the name information exactly as it has been inputted by you, so check that the spelling and formatting is as you require. Any missing information is identified for you and you have the opportunity to amend this prior to the claim being submitted.

- Once you confirm the change of status to 'Pending Certification' ACE will check that all the mandatory fields have been completed. If there is mandatory information missing the learner status will remain as 'Entered' and you will have to input the missing data before changing the status back to 'Pending Certification'.

### Q8. What is the 'Completion Date' on ACE?

- At the point of making a claim for an Apprenticeship Completion Certificate you are required to enter a 'Completion Date' within ACE. You should enter the last date of signing on the Apprentice Declaration and Authorisation Form. If the apprentice and third party claimant sign on the same date then use this date. If the third party claimant date is the latter then this is the one that should be entered to ACE.

- The completion date in ACE is not directly related to any Skills Funding Agency (SFA) funding timescales that you must adhere to. However, the SFA do state in the funding rules that from the date of applying for an Apprenticeship Completion Certificate on ACE you have 3 months to receive the final certificate.  This may be subject to audit and in order to retain the final SFA funding element you must be able to prove that the completion certificate was received within 3 months of your ACE claim being submitted.

- The completion date that will appear on the apprentice's completion certificate will be the date that the completion certificate is printed by the Certification Body and not the completion date referred to above.

## ACE OPERATIONAL ISSUES

### Q9. It has been over 10 working days since I have heard about my claim.

- All Certification Bodies should review your certificate claim within 10 working days. Please contact them directly if you have any queries about the progress and status of your claim.

- If you have any further concerns regarding any claims made via ACE, then please contact:
  The ACE Support Team on 0844 573 2560 or ace@sscalliance.org

### Q10. The apprentice has changed their name since starting their Apprenticeship. Can I request the certificate in their new name?

- Yes. The name that appears on the certificate is taken directly from ACE. If an apprentice changes their name then please change this within ACE and then upload the relevant supporting documentation to evidence this change.

- For example, a marriage certificate, deed poll name change document, etc. The supporting evidence can be uploaded on the 'Evidence Tab' within the field labelled 'Additional Documents'.

### Q11. Why has my certificate request been rejected?

- The reason(s) why a certification claim has been rejected should be added by the relevant Certification Body. The details of this can be found on the 'Status Tab' in the learner's ACE record. You can access this by clicking on the yellow 'Rejected Request' section under 'Status History' and reading the reason(s) for the rejection.

- The ACE user who originally submitted the claim, plus your ACE Administrator, will have received an e-mail detailing the reason(s) for the rejection. If you require any further clarification then please contact the relevant Certification Body directly.

- For details of ACE contacts in any of the Certification Bodies, then please contact:
  The ACE Support Team on 0844 573 2560 or ace@sscalliance.org who will be able to provide the up-to-date information.

## ACE OPERATIONAL ISSUES

### Q12. What do I need to do if an Apprenticeship Completion Certificate claim is rejected?

- To make the required amendments, click on the 'Certification Evidence' tab in ACE. Certification Bodies now have the ability to lockdown evidence once they have checked, verified and approved it. This means that if you have a learner record rejected, any evidence that has previously been checked and approved will have a green tick alongside it and can no longer be edited / replaced / deleted. Unchecked evidence fields can still be edited and will give access to the 'Choose File', 'Delete' and 'Upload' buttons.

- **Please remember:** After making any change to a learner record on ACE, you need to click the 'Update' button at the bottom of the screen to confirm and save the changes that you have made.

- Also, please note that if you change the framework details, you will lose all of the evidence previously uploaded against this learner. This is because the evidence requirements differ between frameworks. Please re-upload the relevant evidence before re-submitting the learner for certification approval.

### Q13. When will the certificates be issued?

- Following submission of all evidence for an Apprenticeship Completion Certificate, it is reviewed and checked by the relevant Certification Body. If all of the framework's requirements are met then the claim is authorised and approval for a certificate to be printed is given.

- All Certification Bodies have slightly different processes for the printing of certificates but all will ensure that the certificates are printed and despatched within a timely manner following claim approval. This is usually within a few days of the approval date.

### Q14. Will we receive e-mail confirmation that the certificate has been issued?

- No. Currently ACE does not send e-mail notifications that certificates have been printed. This is functionality that we may consider providing if it is identified as one that would be of benefit to ACE system users.

### Q15. Can we request copies of an Apprenticeship Completion Certificate?

- Yes. Re-prints of a Completion Certificate can be requested from the relevant Certification Body. There is a standard fee for this which is currently £7.50 (correct as at 1/1/2013).

- For details of ACE contacts in any of the Certification Bodies, then please contact:
  The ACE Support Team on 0844 573 2560 or ace@sscalliance.org who will be able to provide the up-to-date information.

## ACE OPERATIONAL ISSUES

**Q16. Can apprentice details be uploaded to ACE before completion of the Apprenticeship Framework?**

- Yes. ACE is not a mandatory registration system however, Centres are actively encouraged to enter apprentice details to ACE as soon as possible after the learner has started on their programme.

- The basic details for the apprentice, their Employer and the Framework they are undertaking can all be added as soon as possible. As the apprentice completes each part of their framework and evidence becomes available then this can be uploaded to the ACE system in readiness for the submission of the claim for the Apprenticeship Completion Certificate. Uploading apprentice data early can help to avoid a big piece of uploading work when it comes time to claim certificates.

**Q17. What do we do if an apprentice leaves their Apprenticeship after we have loaded their details, do we need to record that the apprentice will not be completing their Apprenticeship?**

- For apprentices who are not completing their Apprenticeship, we would encourage Centres to update an apprentice's ACE record with a 'Reason for Leaving'. This information helps us to analyse the reasons why some Apprenticeships are not completed. You can then delete the apprentice record from the ACE system.

**Q18. Do we need to upload an apprentice's details again when they progress from Intermediate Level to Advanced Level?**

- Yes. If an individual progresses to a higher level Apprenticeship and is already recorded on ACE you will need to input their details again. It will create a new ACE record for the apprentice.

**Q19. Are there reports available from ACE to show which apprentices are recorded on the system and the status of those apprentices?**

- Yes. There is reporting functionality built into ACE which the ACE Centre Admin User can use. They can run a number of reports on their registered apprentices using a range of criteria.

- For example, by framework, by status and by date ranges (of entry to ACE or date of certification). Reports produced can be exported to Excel for further filtering, sorting and printing.

- If you have any questions with reporting from ACE, then please contact the ACE Support Team on 0844 573 2560 or ace@sscalliance.org.

**Q20. What days and times are the ACE Support Team available to take queries?**

- The ACE Support Team are available Monday to Friday from 8:30am until 5:30pm. They can be contacted on 0844 573 2560 or via e-mail at ace@sscalliance.org.