

VTCT ULN and Personal Learning Record (PLR) – Frequently Asked Questions

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What is the Personal Learning Record?

The PLR is an accessible national database of learning and achievement, managed by the Learning Records Service (LRS), whose web site gives provides detail about the PLR - <http://www.learningrecordsservice.org.uk/products/learnerrecord>

The PLR provides learners with a single record of their achievements, online and in one place. It is frequently used by colleges to check GCSE results for example.

For more information on types of qualification, view Ofqual's website: <http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/qualifications-and-assessments/qualification-frameworks>

The data that is added to the PLR by awarding bodies are: names, date of birth, postcode, Unique Learner Number (ULN), and the date and title of the achievement/s of qualifications and units.

What is the ULN?

Unique Learner Number – There are around 23 million people in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (NI) who possess these to date. (Scotland has SCN). Funded colleges, schools and other providers 14+ are required to create, or use existing ULNs, for all learners (funded or not) in their data returns. These institutions should share them with AOs upon registration as part of their funding agreement. Other centres may use and create them.

See <http://www.learningrecordsservice.org.uk/products/uln/>

Does VTCT collect them?

Yes, since 2009 VTCT has been actively promoting and collecting ULNs provided by centres voluntarily, in all registration files. This allowed VTCT from April 2013 to load a high proportion of recent achievements, and progressively, some since 2009, to the PLR.

VTCT currently possesses 100,000+ verified ULNs. However, centres and learners are advised that loading to the PLR can only happen where VTCT have obtained ULNs at registration, or subsequently (via email to customersupport@vtct.org.uk showing ULN and VTCT learner number ONLY).

How up to date and complete is the PLR?

Awarding Organisations are required to load units and qualifications within 10 days of achievement since May 2013. VTCT automatically load daily any new data. Together with our normal same-day processing of claims, this is pretty fast!

Learners can through their national Lifelong Learning Accounts check the content and have a number of sharing options, including to other colleges and potential employers. For England, details are given here:

<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/account/Pages/default.aspx>

If a PLR omits VTCT units or qualifications what can learners do?

VTCT centres can simply provide the ULN to us and/or to correct the names, date of birth and postcode provided to them and onto VTCT. The rest is automated.

What about overseas learners?

ULNs are issued to learners studying in England, Wales and NI. (Scotland has SCN of course). Overseas learners attending home centres **can** have ULNs. Many private training providers not in receipt of government funding support will not issue ULNs. However, where available, they can be added to VTCT registration data.

If a learner changes college or provider what happens to the PLR?

Once VTCT has the ULN, from whichever route, the PLR will continue to be populated thereafter for any further regulated VTCT qualifications and units achieved, again normally within 1 day.

What if the ULN is shared after the certificate is issued? No problem; the PLR will still be refreshed and catch up automatically.

Will certificates include ULN?

Yes, VTCT has added these since early 2014 where available and shared from centres. Duplicates will also show these always.

What names will appear on certificates?

The names used by the centre to register the learner with VTCT unless it conflicts with the LRS content and ULNs cannot be verified. It is best always to use the full 'correct' (LRS/ULN) names at any registration at centres to prevent failure of loading results to the PLR, and to adjust, where necessary, the name/s via the PLR (funded centres).

Funded centres (such as schools, apprenticeship trainers or colleges) are required to use the details appearing on official documents such as passports and driving licences. If not, duplicate ULNs can be created and sometimes certificates are delayed or need to return and be replaced.

VTCT continues its use of middle names as both an extra security precaution (beyond that used by the PLR for ULN verification) and as a part of our continuing commitment to our customer preferences.