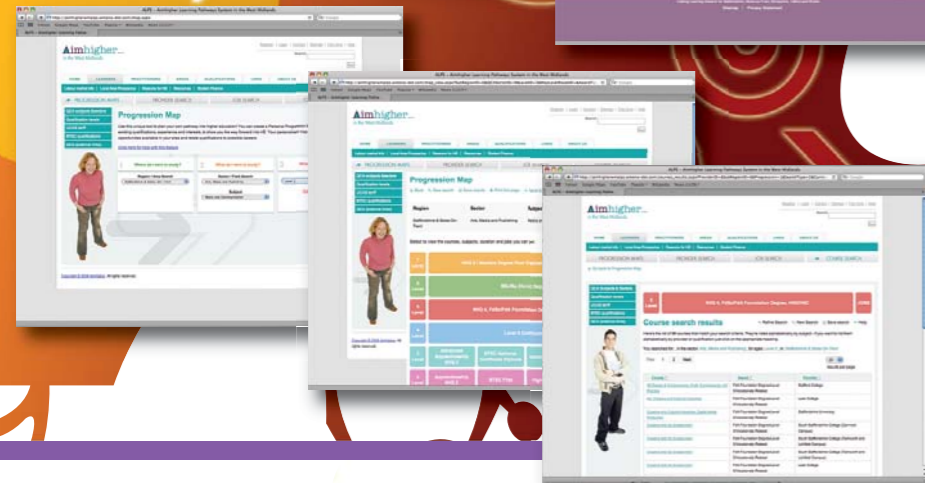
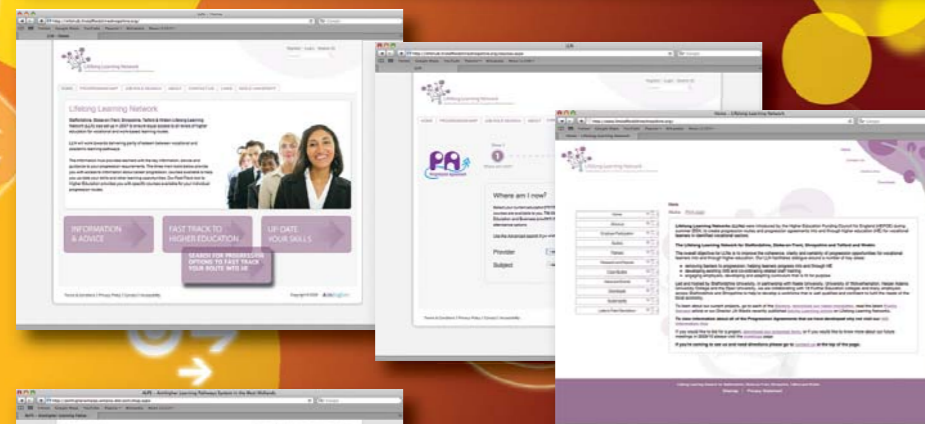
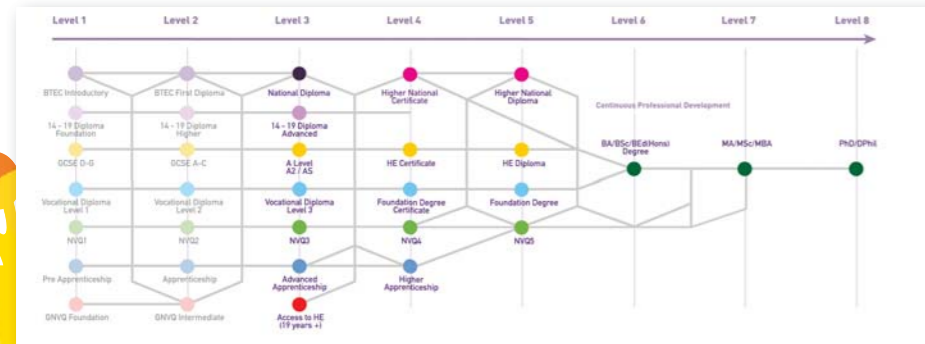


The Information Hub

The LLN has produced a searchable online database of progression agreements which can be accessed at <http://infohub.linstaffordshireandshropshire.org/>.

Aimhigher...

Linked to the Aimhigher Learning Pathways System (ALPS - www.alps-wm.ac.uk), the system allows learners, tutors and IAG practitioners to map their route from their current programme into higher education programmes that are supported by progression agreements at local universities and colleges. The Information Hub also provides a range of IAG support resources and acts as an online portal for information about part-time higher education in the region.



Update existing skills visit <http://infohub.linstaffordshireandshropshire.org/>
Careers advice visit www.alps-wm.ac.uk/map.aspx

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION



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Progression Agreements



What is a Progression Agreement?



Lifelong Learning Network
Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent, Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin



Progression Agreements

The Progression Agreements

The Network has developed over 30 progression agreements in the following areas:

Viewed by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) as an integral part of Lifelong Learning Networks (LLNs) progression agreements underline clear pathways into higher education for a range of vocational learners, and, in many instances, offer guarantees relating to that progression.

Why Progression Agreements?

Some six million adults in England hold level 3 qualifications such as National BTEC diplomas, Advanced Apprenticeships and NVQs.

Many learners achieve this qualification but never progress into higher education to further develop their skills and knowledge. Progression agreements can highlight progression options for those learners (and also parents, tutors, work-based assessors and IAG specialists) who may be uncertain whether higher education is an option for them.

What Is Involved?

They involve the agreement of partners to undertake a number of activities to make progression for learners a real possibility, including:

- Agreeing curriculum match, skills and prior knowledge requirements;
- Agreeing any other conditions for progression, such as attending an interview;
- Communication between partners to enhance progression opportunities;
- Communicating progression opportunities to learners i.e. IAG materials.

The partners in a progression agreement will vary and may include colleges, universities, work-based training providers, local authorities and other stakeholders.



Above: Staffordshire Training Providers sign up to a Progression Agreement with Staffordshire University.

14-19 Advanced Diplomas

From a very early stage in the LLN, partners in the four local authorities across the sub-region were keen to work with the LLN in developing progression agreements for the new 14-19 diplomas. The LLN has progression agreements in place for the first 14 advanced diploma lines with three universities from the LLN area.

Access to Higher Education Diploma

Working closely with the Open College Network West Midlands, the LLN has established progression agreements for Access learners from nine Further Education Colleges across Staffordshire and Shropshire. The development of this agreement underlines the LLN's commitment to working with adult learners wishing to progress into higher education locally.

Advanced apprenticeships and NVQs

In partnership with members of both Shropshire and Staffordshire Provider Associations the LLN has been able to develop progression agreements for apprentices and NVQ learners at level 3. These agreements are supported by a combination of private training providers and further education colleges and detail a range of higher education progression offered mainly on a part-time basis throughout colleges in Shropshire and Staffordshire.

BTEC National Diploma and Certificate

A range of agreements for BTEC level 3 learners have been developed over the lifetime of the LLN. The impetus for these agreements has very much been partner-led with the LLN brokering the agreement on behalf of the college-based BTEC provision.

Health Agreements

Two of our university partners have developed comprehensive agreements in the areas of their healthcare provision, being supported by the LLN to outline progression routes from all healthcare level 3 qualifications offered by college partners.

Progression Curriculum

Progression agreements, whilst underlining progression opportunities for vocational learners, cannot solely provide some learners with all they will need to make the transition into higher education. Realising some groups of learners need longer to build their confidence and to understand what higher education is like, the LLN has developed the Skills for HE module in partnership with colleagues from both FE and private training providers. It has currently been used with over some 120 learners to help them prepare for the transition into higher education.

"We are delighted to have achieved an agreement which gives our work-based learners an entitlement to progress to higher education. It acknowledges the value which is now placed on the work-based learning route and National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) in particular. The agreement covers young people following advanced apprenticeships and adult learners following NVQ level 3 programmes. We will now begin to cascade the information to our learners and employers and to provide support to those who are considering taking advantage of this exciting opportunity."

Clare Schafer,
Director of SBC Training.



"All students who took the Skills for HE module prior to commencing in HE all stated how beneficial it had been for them. It was a highly valuable experience, particularly for students who were returning to learning and those students then went on to achieve higher than expected grades in the first modules of their foundation degree."

Kaye Turner,
Faculty Head for Care and Education,
South Staffordshire College.



OUR APPROACH TO DEVELOPING PROGRESSION AGREEMENTS

Primarily, the development of a progression agreement is based on working in partnership with others.

The LLN has aimed to develop agreements where partners and stakeholders have identified a need. Some agreements developed have been small, offering quite specific progression opportunities to meet particular learners' needs. Others have been extensive (sometimes called network-wide agreements), offering a wide range of progression opportunities across a number of

universities and further education colleges in Staffordshire and Shropshire. A key feature of the agreements developed, wherever possible, has been to incorporate guarantees for learners, rather than to simply outline progression routes. This means that learners have to meet all normal course criteria including the correct entry qualifications, but in many instances will be guaranteed an interview or a place on a range of higher education programmes.



The LLN has aimed to develop agreements where partners and stakeholders have identified a need.