



# A DIRECTOR'S GUIDE TO THE e-KSF/ESR LINK

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*What do I need to know about the links between e-KSF and ESR? What should happen in each system and what data do they exchange? How much resource do I need to allocate to the e-KSF/ESR link, and e-KSF itself?*

## Introduction

The Department of Health and Welsh Assembly Government have funded a project to link two key people management systems – e-KSF and the Electronic Staff Record. These systems can now be set up to exchange data with each other, providing a more efficient and complete people development solution for NHS organisations in England and Wales.

This short guide is intended to give Directors an overview of the benefits of the e-KSF/ESR link, and to explain what needs to happen locally to implement the link. A more detailed work plan and description of the link is available in the “e-KSF ESR roll-out planning guide” available at [www.e-ksfnw.org/hotlink1.htm](http://www.e-ksfnw.org/hotlink1.htm), or on ESR’s “Kbase” system.

## The benefits of bi-directional link between e-KSF and ESR

- The link ensures that all basic staff data recorded on the ESR system (e.g. payband, staff group, age, gender) is available (with appropriate confidentiality safeguards) within the e-KSF. When a new employee is added to ESR, their basic details will be added automatically to e-KSF. Without the link these items would need to be separately entered onto the e-KSF.
- Information from the ESR that is transported to the e-KSF can be used for local monitoring of KSF implementation and use as set out in the Agenda for Change agreement. This reporting will also form the basis of the national monitoring required by the NHS Staff Council. It will allow organisations to comply with legislative requirements on equalities monitoring, and provide staff development information required by the Healthcare Commission and other national bodies.
- Information from e-KSF that is transported to ESR can also be reported on using ESR’s reporting tool, Discoverer. This data can be used to identify for example, local and national competency skill gaps and facilitate the targeted use of learning and development budgets.
- Linking ESR and e-KSF will enhance the benefits of both as national systems. As individuals move location within the NHS they will not need to learn how to use a multitude of local systems, nor will their transferable records need to be re-entered.
- Once the link is in place, pay gateway outcomes recorded in e-KSF can be used to automatically inform your payroll department, using ESR, of any pay deferrals or reinstatements that are required.

The work to link the two systems has been funded and carried out centrally.



## Why do I need to implement two different systems to get these benefits?

The ESR is an integrated Human Resource, Payroll, Recruitment, Talent Management and Learning Management system. It has been designed by the NHS to meet the business requirements of Trusts. ESR can be linked electronically to other local systems and is also interfaced nationally to systems such as NHS Jobs, NHS Pensions Agency and the e-KSF.

The e-KSF system is a centrally-procured system, available to all NHS organisations UK-wide, designed specifically to deliver the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF).

**Key point 1: The KSF is mandatory for around 900,000 NHS staff**, as part of their **terms and conditions of employment** under Agenda for Change. KSF is a mandatory process for all NHS organisations, including Foundation Trusts, which employ staff on Agenda for Change pay scales.

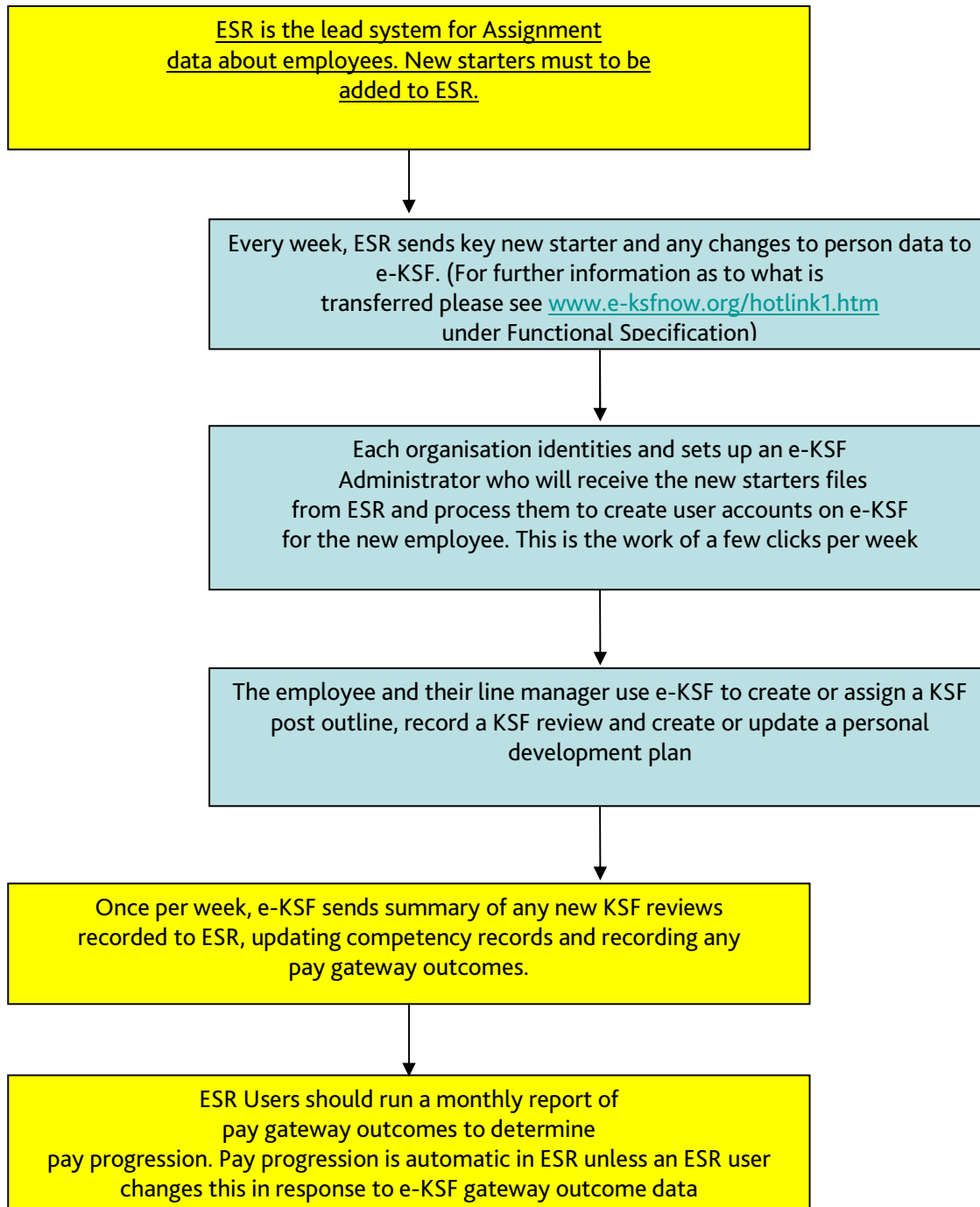
The link between the ESR and the e-KSF has been agreed and funded centrally. The core ESR solution holds essential person, position, organisation and competency information. However, it is not possible to capture all the different levels of information required by the KSF within the ESR system. The e-KSF adds the functionality to allow the electronic management of the KSF process.

**Key point 2: The national advice from Department of Health and Welsh Assembly ESR and KSF teams is that the Knowledge and Skills Framework should be managed through the e-KSF and ESR as joint systems.**

National guidance is that the ESR system should be used to enter all person, position and organisation data (Assignment information). This Assignment information is then automatically transferred into the e-KSF system. The e-KSF system should be used to record KSF post outlines, KSF reviews, outcomes of KSF gateway reviews, and an individual's personal development plan. Information feeds back through the link into ESR from e-KSF to enable local and national reporting through the ESR Data Warehouse.

## How do these two systems exchange data?

e-KSF and ESR can now exchange data with each other on a weekly basis. This data exchange is designed to eliminate duplicate data entry. This flow chart summarises how information flows between the two systems. Yellow sections show ESR processes, and blue show e-KSF processes.





## Reporting and Notification Facilities

Organisation-wide reports of KSF progress can be run from e-KSF or ESR systems:

- Detailed departmental breakdowns should be run in ESR, because the organisation structure can currently be stored in more detail this system. ESR can report at Dimension levels on Post Outlines, Review outcomes and an individual's profile.
- To analyse the detailed aspects of the Personal Development Plan, Post Outlines and KSF Review outcomes, the reports in e-KSF produce more appropriate information due to the richer data stored in e-KSF.

Individual employees and their managers can be notified about the KSF process in two ways. ESR includes online notifications (visible to managers and staff when they log in to ESR self service). e-KSF allows email-based notifications of things like upcoming gateway reviews due, with emails delivered directly to employee's inboxes.

## What resources do I need to implement the KSF?

The Knowledge and Skills Framework documentation and training materials, and the e-KSF system and materials, are provided free of charge to NHS organisations. However there is a necessary resource implication to rolling out the KSF in your organisation. This includes:

- Specific project management of the KSF roll-out
- Creating and consistency checking KSF post outlines
- KSF communications plan, and KSF awareness for staff
- KSF and e-KSF training for managers and reviewers
- Recording the results of KSF reviews and PDPs – whether on paper or on e-KSF
- Monitoring the KSF roll-out – whether manually or using the e-KSF system – and reporting back on progress to national partnership groups

We are sometimes told "*the e-KSF/ESR link feels like lots of work*". This isn't true. The work involved to rollout the mandatory KSF process, will benefit Trusts in terms of improved competence of staff, improved motivation and better patient care.



## What resources do I need for the link between e-KSF and ESR?

Our experience of over one hundred e-KSF/ESR links in NHS organisations is that resource required to set up the link is minimal, but should be specifically identified. For a typical organisation we find that the resource to set up the link is:

- 1) Liaising with the e-KSF and ESR teams about activating the link – **0.5 days** of admin time spread over 2-3 months. We recommend that the link has HR director sponsorship and sign-off.
- 2) Data cleansing on e-KSF system in preparation for the link – **2-3 days** of admin time before the link go-live date
- 3) Resolving any data input errors in ESR data – for example duplicate employee records - that become apparent as a result of the link – **1-2 days of e-KSF admin** time and **1-2 days of ESR admin** time after the go-live date (but this also benefits ESR overall as it results in more accurate data in the core ESR system)
- 4) Confirming ESR data and generating usernames and passwords in e-KSF – **2-3 days** initially, then 1 hour per week to deal with new starters and changes.

The benefits of the link in terms of saved data entry time for a typical Trust are around 0.5 days per week, every week.

**Key point 3 - the "return on time invested" in the link is a payback for a typical Trust in around 20 weeks.** In other words, after 20 weeks the time your organisation invested in setting up the link, has been matched by the time you've saved in terms of reduced data entry.

## How does e-KSF link with the Oracle Learning Management (OLM) Learning Catalogue (Oracle Learning Management)?

OLM is a part of the ESR Expansion pack provided at no extra cost, and will bring extensive benefits to users of ESR. This component of ESR enables control over all the activities associated with the training and development of NHS staff. This includes the administration of training courses undertaken – the Learning Catalogue – and qualifications recorded, by every employee.

There are currently no direct links between the e-KSF and OLM Learning Catalogue. Therefore you *cannot* currently move directly, on screen, from the e-KSF Personal Development Plan page to OLM, or vice versa. You cannot view OLM course catalogue from e-KSF, and when your staff record the completion of a development activity in e-KSF, this completion record is not transferred to OLM. Remember, also, that completion of a course is not the same thing as being competent.

You can, however, record a review in e-KSF, and have the "KSF competences" returned back to ESR's competency records, through use of the ESR/e-KSF link. You can then identify KSF competence gaps and plan training accordingly.



## What does this mean for implementing OLM alongside e-KSF?

The e-KSF is a self service system. ESR and its OLM module can be run centrally or can be devolved to Employee Self Service. Therefore there are a number of models that your organisation might adopt to implement the ESR/e-KSF link depending on your current use of OLM and e-KSF.

- Using self service e-KSF and centralised OLM. At the present time, it is more common for organisations to implement e-KSF as a self-service manager and staff system, and then implement OLM as a central HR/training department tracking tool. In this model of implementation, managers and staff would use the e-KSF to record reviews and PDP, and then use existing processes (telephone or email) to book training with their organisation's central learning and development team. This central team would then use OLM to record this training. As both OLM and e-KSF use underlying ESR data, both systems will have the same list of employees, improving consistency of data entry and reporting.
- Using self service e-KSF and self service ESR. It is possible for organisations to implement both ESR self-service and e-KSF self-service. However after completing their KSF review and PDP on e-KSF, end users would still have to log in separately to ESR Self Service to record specific training requests after having used e-KSF to record their PDP.

## Future possibilities for e-KSF and OLM links

**Key point 4 - We are collecting user feedback about the importance of, and the specification of, the link.** If you'd like to add your feedback to this process, please email your comments to [tim@e-ksf.org](mailto:tim@e-ksf.org).

## Where do I find more information?

If you have further questions about the e-KSF/ESR link, please take a look at [www.e-ksfnow.org/hotlink1.htm](http://www.e-ksfnow.org/hotlink1.htm). This website contains:

- Roll-out planning materials to help you plan for, and implement, the link
- Technical specifications explaining exactly what data is transferred between systems
- Step by step administrator guides to preparing for, and managing, the link
- A frequently asked questions document

If you don't find what you're looking for email [esrlink@e-ksf.org](mailto:esrlink@e-ksf.org).

For more on the ESR system overall, please see [www.esrsolution.co.uk](http://www.esrsolution.co.uk) or contact [communications@esrsolution.co.uk](mailto:communications@esrsolution.co.uk).