A Guide – Agency Supply Organisations and the NS^{4}P

This guide is aimed at Agency Supply Organisations who want to learn more about the NS^{4}P: what it does, how it is used, and how an account is created. Read alongside the At a Glance Guide – NS^{4}P Overview, A Guide – NS^{4}P Individual Accounts and the FAQs – Employer Users, it aims to help you learn more and decide if the NS^{4}P is right for your business.

What is the NS^{4}P?

The NS^{4}P is a secure online system which has been developed by the nuclear industry for the nuclear industry. It contains the agreed Competence Framework for the sector and provides an innovative tool for those working in the industry to assess, verify and record an individual's competence, training and qualifications.

Launched in October 2014, following two years of development, the NS^{4}P is the successor to the Nuclear Skills Passport (NSP) . The NS^{4}P provides the sector with a standardised approach to skills assessment, development and recognition. Built with flexibility in mind it can be used in part, in full and/ or it can be customised to individual requirements. NS^{4}P will continually evolve to reflect best practice and respond to changing sector needs.
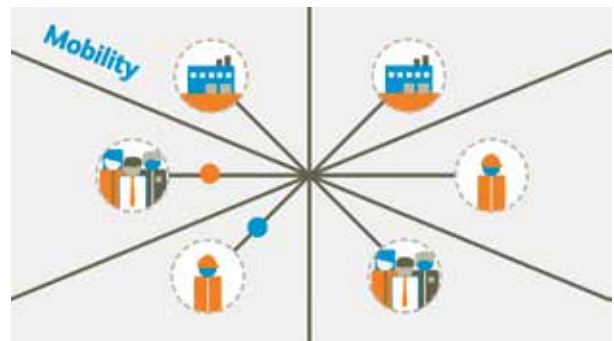
For the first time, individuals working in the industry who are contracted with directly (e.g. sole traders / limited companies), agency supply workers and Agency Supply Organisations will be able to access and use the Passport alongside nuclear employers.

Who can use the NS⁴P?

There are two types of user accounts within the NS⁴P system.

An **employer account** and an **individual account**. Employer NS⁴P accounts together with individual NS⁴P accounts means the sector has, for the first time, a standardised approach to skills development and recognition which is transferable between employers.

Any **employer (Agency Supply Organisations are classed as employers)** who is a member of the National Skills Academy for Nuclear (NSAN) is eligible to use the NS⁴P, at no additional cost over their membership fee. Any Recruitment / Agency Supply Organisation can apply to join NSAN, however to obtain membership you must be able to demonstrate that you meet specified criteria and agree to abide by our code of conduct, which has been developed at the request of our employer members to drive, promote and recognise best practice standards across the industry.

If you are a member of NSAN already and you would like to learn more about the system or you would like an NS⁴P account created for your organisation please contact your Regional Manager. If you are not a member of NSAN and would like to find out more about becoming a member please visit www.nsan.co.uk or e-mail enquiries@nsan.co.uk

An **individual** who is self-employed, working as an agency worker, unemployed or working in a non-nuclear sector is eligible to create an account. (Individuals who are currently working as employees in the nuclear sector will be able to access the NS⁴P via an employer account route). Account registration is done online and requires an annual payment of £40. To find out more please visit the 'Individuals: find out more' section of www.ns4p.co.uk

What is an employer NS⁴P account?

An employer account gives your organisation its own secure area within the NS⁴P system, which is customisable to your organisation (e.g. you can add your company logo) and which can only be accessed by you.

Once you have an account set up it remains 'live' until you inform the National Skills Academy for Nuclear (NSAN) that it is no longer required.

What can I do in an account?

Access to an employer account gives you all the functionality that nuclear employers have. Designed primarily for nuclear organisations i.e. your clients, some areas of the NS⁴P may have less value to your business. You can read about everything you can do in an account in 'A Guide – NS⁴P Employer Accounts'. This guide summarises the functionality that will be of particular relevance to your business.

- Access to the Competence Framework. This will enable you to better understand the skills, knowledge and behaviours required to work in the nuclear sector. Your clients may use the Framework to develop job roles.

- Access to view (with the appropriate permissions given) an individual's My Skills Passport Record. You will be able to see the individuals training, qualification and competence records, alongside basic personal data e.g. CV.

- Access to manage (with the appropriate permissions given) an individual's My Skills Passport Record. This means you can edit certain areas of their Skills Passport Record e.g. you can add training records, verify on sight of the original certificate(s) an individual's unverified (i.e. they have uploaded the records themselves) training and qualification records.

- Once an individual has given you permission to access their account you can use the 'search' facility in the NS⁴P to find records and use the reporting functionality to analyse the data.

An example of a 'My Skills Passport' view, showing training records.

How does an Agency Supply Organisation access the records of an Individual NS⁴P account holder?

An individual can select within their NS⁴P account ('Manage my Skills Passport' functionality) those Agency Supply Organisations and / or nuclear employers whom they would like to give access to. Individuals may only do this when they have agreed this with you first.

Manage my Skills Passport

Organisations

Select the organisation you would like to have **Manage** permissions of your Skills Passport.

Organisation: [Nuclear Company ABC ▼] [**Add lead organisation**]

- Your nominated lead organisation is: Nuclear Company ABC 🗑 remove

View my Skills Passport

If you have an employer account your organisation's name will appear in these drop down boxes.

Agencies

Select agencies you would like to have read only access of your Skills Passport.

Agency: [Please select an agency ▼] [**Add this agency**]

Employers

Select employers you would like to have read only access of your Skills Passport.

Employer: [Please select an employer ▼] [**Add this employer**]

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An example of a 'Manage my Skills Passport' view in an Individual Account Holders showing how they select others to view and / or manage their account.

What is the Competence Framework? The Competence Framework provides a common language for the industry and defines the standard for 'excellence' across the sector. It contains a suite of competencies, grouped into categories of Core Knowledge and Behaviours, Business Enablers and Disciplines. These competencies, together with level descriptors of competence, set a common standard for workers within a nuclear environment.

As of 31st October 2014, the Competence Framework is not yet fully populated: a number of competencies are available to use now with others coming online over time. The Core Knowledge and Behaviour competencies are available in addition to four main competency groups in Disciplines: Control, Electrical and Instrumentation, Mechanical Engineering, Project Management and Technical Nuclear Safety. The timeframe for future development of competency areas has been published and as new content becomes available it will be uploaded to the system.

What is a competence assessment? NS⁴P incorporates a tool to assess, verify and record competence. Individual account holders can build a skills profile against the Competence Framework and take a self-assessment which you will be able to view.

Any clients who use the full competence assessment process will (with manage access permissions) be able to integrate Agency Supply Workers into their processes, thus enabling them to demonstrate that their workforce is SQEP.

What are the benefits of having an account?

First and foremost access to the NS⁴P allows you to demonstrate to clients that your organisation has been recognised as meeting best practice standards within the nuclear industry. How? In order to have an NS⁴P account you have to be a member of NSAN and this requires you to meet certain criteria.

The NS P has been designed to provide a transferable record of competence across the industry. With the ability to record qualifications, training and competence, it provides a recognised platform to demonstrate and share skills. The NS⁴P:

- supports you to better understand the skills, knowledge and behaviours required to work in the nuclear sector and deliver quality resource matches for clients;

- enables you to view (with the appropriate permissions given) the Skills Passport Record of your agency supply workers in real time. You will be able to see their CV, training, qualifications and competence record alongside basic personal information;

- increases speed to recruit; where an individual holds a verified Skills Passport record it reduces the need to recheck and gives your client (where they use the NS⁴P) confidence to employ;

- enables you to verify (with the appropriate permissions given) any unverified training and qualifications records of an individual NS⁴P account holder;

- allows you to search individual Skills Passport Records (that you have been given access to) to find appropriate skill matches for a role e.g. search for individuals with a 'Human Factors Integration' competency;

- enables you to align with client requirements, where they use the NS⁴P; and

- can support your clients to demonstrate the competence of contractors.

Who is using the NS⁴P?

The NS⁴P is not a mandated requirement for working in the industry; however it is seen by some employers as highly desirable. The NS⁴P was launched in October 2014, so it is new to individuals, Agency Supply Organisations and employers and it will take some time before it is fully established.

Although the NS⁴P provides immediate benefits for users, its full potential for transforming the sector will be realised over the next few years as more employers and individuals use and share data through the system.

We expect change to happen at all levels, for example individuals requesting agencies to get involved and organisations requesting agencies to get involved. By signing up for a NS⁴P account now you are taking a proactive step and making a visible commitment to transforming the way the sector approaches skills.

An up to date list of all organisations using the NS⁴P is available in the FAQs.

How do I create an account?

Any employer who is a member of the National Skills Academy for Nuclear (NSAN) is eligible to use the NS⁴P. There is no additional cost for using the system.

If you are a member of NSAN and you would like to learn more about the system or you would like an NS⁴P account created for your organisation please contact your Regional Manager.

If you are not a member of NSAN and would like to learn more please visit www.nsan.co.uk or e-mail enquiries@nsan.co.uk A Regional Manager will then contact you and arrange to explain more about membership either face to face or via a telephone call.

Any Agency Supply Organisation can apply to join NSAN. However to obtain membership you must be able to demonstrate that you meet specified criteria and agree to abide by the code of conduct which has been developed at the request of our employer members to drive, promote and recognise best practice standards across the industry.