
THE ELECTRONIC STAFF RECORD PROGRAMME



NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE

ESR-NHS0342 ESR BUSINESS CONSOLIDATION POST TECHNICAL MERGE

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1. DOCUMENT CONTROL

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1.3. DISTRIBUTION

Copy No.	Name	Location
1	Library Master	Programme Library
2	Resources	ESR Hub

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3. ESR MERGER ACTIVITY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to provide organisations with a high-level overview of key considerations when completing ESR business consolidation after a technical merge.

A-9150 Organisation Merge User Guide remains the guidance for the technical considerations during the technical merger. See the further Information section below for a copy.

Although ESR is one national solution ESR usage varies from one organisation to another. Information can also be recorded differently which can, if not addressed, be problematic when a merger of organisations has taken place.

The guide also takes account of feedback to regional NHS teams and lessons learnt from other organisations that have already gone through business consolidation after technical merge.

3.2. RESPONSIBILITIES

Prior to a legal merge or TUPE, the organisations must ensure that a dedicated project team and nominated lead is appointed in advance of any technical merge on ESR and should have a robust communication process in place to ensure that all organisational representatives are aware of their responsibilities.

When merging VPDs, the organisations involved need to ensure the merging of all functionalities is as effective and seamless as possible, including:

- HR – all personal and employment data
- Workstructures
- Payroll
- Learning
- Recruitment
- Self Service
- Portal set up
- eRostering
- Smartcards
- Reporting

Note. User Accounts will remain the same for both organisations

When requesting a technical merger, it is important to raise a service request early in the process to get an understanding of available merger dates from the ESR support team. Mergers occur at set weekends throughout the year and there are limited slots available.

Please refer to the **A-9150 Organisation Merge User Guide** for a full guide to the technical mergers between employing authorities. This document is available on the ESR Hub.

4. CONSIDERATIONS

Listed below are key activities that should be considered to achieve a successful business consolidation after technical merge. Many of these have been fed back to the NHS ESR regional teams and should be taken account of early in the merge process. However, it should be noted that whilst these considerations will assist the organisations to consolidate, it is not a prerequisite of the technical merge event.

The list is not meant to be exhaustive but can help to ensure that other key priorities are not forgotten when focusing on the critical technical requirements of the merger.

Merging organisations should also consider undertaking their annual ESR assessment with their NHS ESR Regional Functional Account Manager, prior to the merger, to obtain an up-to-date overview of how each organisation is using ESR, this can help with establishing what is needed to align and or develop the future vision of the new organisation. Contact details are on the ESR Hub.

4.1. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Merging organisations will need to undertake a full review ahead of the merger, of all local policies that may be impacted, examples include:

- Annual leave policy on part months or carry over
- Vacancy approval process and impact on establishment control
- Review of all local user guides and training materials
- Admin process for managers – changes forms and other documents
- Recording of position requirements such as:
 - Competencies
 - Professional registrations
 - DBS
 - OH flag settings
 - Auto creation etc.

Key questions that should be discussed ahead of the technical merger include asking how well each organisation maximises their use of ESR functionality, which ESR model should be followed, when the new organisational structure should be in place. Consideration should be given to accuracy of data held in each VPD and the impact that different data quality will have on reporting e.g. WoVen etc.

4.2. ESR SYSTEM MAINTENANCE

When multiple VPDs merge, it is likely that the organisations concerned will have different ways of working within ESR for a period of time. For example, one organisation may have implemented Self Service, whereas the other may not.

Organisations should ensure there are clear processes and plans in place for post-merger activity, to ensure there is no drop off in functionality or local performance.

Key areas to consider are listed below.

4.2.1. Consider

Self Service
Alignment of Employee Self-Service
• Understand Source VPD approach to self-service
• Exploration of Self-Service options and benefits to be gained
• Identify tasks staff are required to do on ESS
• Agree URP approach for Employees
• Assign URPs
• Communication
• How will HR / payroll activities change
• Agree how HR/ Workforce activities may change
• Reductions in amendment forms and processing
• Education and training for staff

○ Personal changes
○ Employment changes
○ Annual leave requests
○ View payslips - turn off paper payslips
○ View TRS
○ Book training courses
Alignment of Supervisor / Manager Self Service
● Options appraisal for both URP's
● Consider Administrator URPs and Proxy Access
● Consider Smartcard implication
● Identify what key tasks would be completed by Managers on SSS/MSS
○ Personal changes
○ Employment changes (Starters, Leavers, Amendments)
○ Annual leave requests
○ Book training courses
● Understand the implications of these changes on HR and payroll current ways of working
● Agree new way of working for HR
● Agree new way of working for payroll
● Consider payroll contract implications
● Agree URP approach for Managers
● Obtain hierarchy information for departments
● Produce on-going hierarchy maintenance process
● Consider BI Reporting for Managers
● How will appraisals and pay progression meetings be recorded and by whom

If Manager Self Service is in use currently within the organisation/s, then a decision will need to be made as to whether managers are prevented from making assignment/pay effecting changes for a set number of weeks prior to the merger. This may provide the local corporate team with more control over the timings of changes.

Note: All future dated changes that are set to take place after the merger date, will need to be re-entered after the merge has been completed.

For guidance and support on implementing Self Service contact the relevant Regional ESR Functional Account Manager.

4.3. PORTAL SET UP

The ESR Hub (<https://my.esr.nhs.uk>) is the gateway into ESR for all NHS employees and managers who use it, so it is important to get the message right. Each organisation will have their own bespoke portal landing page and agreed portlets available to employees, managers, and professional users. The layout and availability of the portlets will depend on what functionality is used by each organisation. For example, an organisation that uses OLM and e-learning will likely have the compliance portlet available whereas the organisation that does not use ESR as its LMS will not.

Discussion with each organisation's Portal Administrator should be included as part of the project discussions including how to maximise ESR capability including how the announcements capability is/can be used.

4.3.1. Consider

ESR Portal
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review each organisation's portal set up and agree the new layout and what portlets will be available post merger.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Where there is similar ESR functional use but different portal set up, consider aligning portals prior to merger to familiarise employees with the new look
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Consider using the Announcements capability for all organisations as a communication tool to staff and or professional users
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Liaise with Communication teams about how best to use the Announcements capability

4.4. ESR WORK STRUCTURES

Work structures is a fundamental area of ESR and organisations can vary significantly on how they are set up. Merging organisations should undertake a full review to understand the differences and agree what the new structure will be post merge.

Each VPD should undertake a review of position set-up between the VPDs to ensure there is alignment across all VPDs of:

- Post Titles
- Staff group
- Job role
- Occupational code
- Subjective code

4.4.1. Consider

ESR Work structures
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Is the ESR Interface to CIS activated?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Has the Source Organisation brought their ODS code into the new ESR Hierarchy and linked CIS Positions / Access associated with their ODS code? Does this need to remain?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Auto User Creation – Do all organisations have this setting in place to automatically create Employee Self Service Accounts for applicants and or new starters, Including whether Automatic Internet Access is given?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">If annual leave is recorded in ESR how will the accrual plans be set at trust level e.g. complete calendar months or prorated?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Is there a Shared Training Centre arrangement in place with one or more organisations? If so, how will this work or change post-merger?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Do they have FTEs set? Is this to be implemented pre or post-merger?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Streamlined Doctors in Training Interface position requirements (Junior Doctors interface). Ensure all positions are not bucket positions and can continue to work with the interface
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Is the Eligible for OH processing Flag set? (This enables immunisations and Vaccinations data to be passed between employing organisations as part of the Inter Authority Transfer (IAT) process.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Consider lead and host arrangement from a HEE-ESR interface perspective (TIS-ESR)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Consider how positions are set up in each VPD and what naming conventions are used?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">What Data Cleansing needs to be undertaken?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">What will the new organisational structure look like?

Note - Post technical merge, the existing structure will move down one level under the new top-level organisation. Existing structure levels may differ across the merging organisations. Consider what the new organisational structure will look like post merge and the timelines to achieve this.

4.5. SMARTCARD

The HR/workforce team need to understand the implication for smartcards as part of the merger process.

- a) Will additional smartcards be required?
- b) Will existing links to CIS still be in place post merge if the ESR Interface to CIS is active?
- c) Have smartcard records and access been moved to the target ODS code in CIS during the merge? Or will two (or more) ODS codes and associated smartcard records be maintained as they were previously? If only the target ODS code is being used for smartcard records and access, then please raise a call with the ESR Service Desk to remove/end date the source ODS code from the ESR hierarchy if not required.
- d) Will the trust need to manually upload new links for new ESR positions?
- e) Who will the RA Agents be going forward?
- f) What impact does this have on existing on-boarding processes e.g. do any of the organisations prepare Smartcards in advance of hire for employees such as for junior doctors?

4.6. ESR SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION

User Responsibility Profiles are automatically transferred from the target to the source VPD. ESR access will continue as it was prior to the merge event, but professional users will have access to all the source VPD details.

New VPD User accounts – Usernames within the VPD start with a different 3-character VPD number and any reports run regarding URP access will have 2 sets of URPs. Consider updating the record of the person with the URPs e.g. end date VPD123 HR Admin URP and give them VPD456 HR Admin instead. This will make reporting cleaner and simpler.

In respect of new ways of working, a review of who should be assigned System Administrator responsibilities post merge is recommended, including the process for how access is given to professional users going forward.

Organisations will also need to look at the ESR Service Desk contacts set up for both Organisations and plan for access for the consolidated business.

4.6.1. Consider

LOCAL SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agree which URPs are locked down
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agree account auto creation process for new starters
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What local URPs are in situ across any of the merging orgs and is this needed across all VPDs merging e.g. XXX Medical Staffing URP (version of HR URP for medics)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review the current system administration processes and audit URP allocation across all sites
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What Roles are in place and who will manage the allocation and maintenance of roles in the new organisation. For example – Professional Registration, DBS Updates, Expiries for right to work and competencies etc.
Review the following System settings: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exit Questionnaire Required• Send Change of Contract and Working Terms Notification• Leave Accrual by Days• Auto IAT Approval• View or Amend Own Record

- Print Payslip and P60
- Learning Auto Enrol Opt Out
- Deactivate Waitlisting

4.7. LEARNING MANAGEMENT – COMPETENCIES

A key question is look at whether one or more merging organisations partially or fully use ESR as their primary learning management system. Where one does and one does not, then a decision will need to be made as to whether all VPDs move over to ESR and when and how to transition from one system to the other.

Where ESR is used in all of the organisations, then it is important that all take a consistent approach, especially around certification and training and the awarding of competencies etc., to support successful reporting and provide a positive user experience. Are competencies across all organisations aligned to the Skills for Health for CSTF framework

All competency requirements will be replicated from the source VPD to the target VPD as part of the merge.

Key tasks would include:

- a) Agree new Training Needs Analysis (TNA), which includes:
 - i. Competencies names
 - ii. Renewal periods
 - iii. Competency requirements
 - iv. Consistent approach to Assessment (assessed – not assessed)
- b) Map transferring staff competencies to new TNA, to establish which competencies are still valid for transferring into the new VPD
- c) Obtain confirmation of how competency requirements will transfer? If at all. If no competency requirements are transferred, then no competency requirement work needs to take place in transferring VPD. The transferring staff would then inherit the competency requirements in target VPD. Only competency requirements at position level will need to be manually applied or mass uploaded.
- d) Obtain confirmation of how competencies (within profiles) will transfer or are they to be loaded using the mass upload facility by the ESR Integration team.
- e) End date any duplicate competencies

4.8. LEARNING MANAGEMENT – COURSE CATALOGUE

- a) Undertake a Housekeeping exercise prior to the merge. Refer to the ESR Assessment for further information on recommendations. Allocate time after the merge to review the course catalogue.
- b) Agree course catalogue.
- c) Open up classes for self-enrolment where possible.
- d) Agree naming convention for different site training, so staff can easily locate courses for self-enrol.
- e) Obtain confirmation of how existing class information will be transferred to new VPD; this could be a manual process.
- f) Will course auto-enrolment be enabled?
- g) Which learning related portlets will be made available to all merged organisations (Portal Administrator function)

The OLM catalogue will be replicated from the source VPD to the target VPD as part of the merge.

4.8.1. Consider

TRAINING
OLM
<i>The following section is based on the trusts merging to 1 VPD</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 Training Catalogue• 1 Training Needs Analysis• 1 set of mandatory training competencies• Aligning renewal periods• Mapping existing source VPD competencies to target VPD competencies• 1 suite of courses / offerings / classes• Alignment of courses to TNA (e.g. competencies)• Potential set up of additional certifications• Agree method (eLearning or classroom) and content of training for CSTF competencies initially• Agree enrolment method for staff to ensure courses are set up correctly
Employees / Managers access to training
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Online booking through self-service for some course for employees – Is the Compliance Portlet used?• Online booking through self-service for some course for managers – Is the Compliance Portlet used?• Access to view compliance matrix on ESR• BI report for managers to monitor compliance
Learning Centre Administration Activities for ESR
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adding registers for courses• Administration for training courses• How they support SMEs to increase compliance (via ESR reporting)• Support ESR access• ESS session for induction for all staff• Alignment of SME's and Trust wide reporting for mandatory training• Agree and implement reporting methods

For guidance and support on implementing ESR Learning Management functionality contact the relevant Regional ESR Functional Account Manager.

4.9. RECRUITMENT

General Recruitment

During the technical merge process, it is essential that all recruitment is planned effectively as jobs may be lost from the system if not actioned in a timely manner. Please note that this will be discussed in the conference call undertaken prior to the technical merge event.

Do all orgs use the same e-recruitment system? If not, what will the new organisation use and from when?

Medical Training Recruitment

Does the master organisation use the Streamlined Doctors in Training Interface? If not, how will this impact on the newly merged organisation?

4.9.1. Consider

RECRUITMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All vacancies at source VPD must either be closed or not created prior to merge
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Download any successful applicant into ESR prior to merge
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any applications made via NHS Jobs following the merge will need to be manually created in ESR post merge
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Post Technical merge requisition and vacancy information must be updated• Review the recruitment process across all VPDs• Enabling the Streamlined Doctors in Training Interface if this is not already enabled.• Liaise with your local HEE Office to plan any changes to Deanery Post Numbers, because changes to the codes could inhibit the interface process.

4.10. LINKS TO THE PROFESSIONAL REGISTRATIONS BODIES

ESR has direct interface links with the GMC, NMC, GDC, HCPC and GPHC which plays a vital role in ensuring that all of the critical clinical staff are registered to work, ensuring patient safety.

In order to ensure that the interface continues to work as it should, organisations need to consider that all of the roles are all set up and that records are adequately recorded in order to support the update process.

4.11. OTHER THIRD-PARTY SYSTEMS

It is important to ensure that all third-party systems in place across all merging VPDs are known and to understand any differences in usage. For instance, what rostering, or expenses systems does each organisation use and to what extent? Where they differ, what is the future vision for aligning to the same system and when? (It is important to understand that the source VPD number will no longer exist post merge, therefore incoming files will need to be renamed to the target VPD.)

4.11.1. E-Rostering

- Understand the implications on the ESR / eRostering interface link.
- Raise merger plans with Rostering supplier to understand contractual implications.

4.11.2. Consider

eRostering & HR
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do all organisations use e-rostering? If so, do they differ? Which system will be used post-merger (subject to contracts in situ).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure any eRostering file (inbound) to source VPD are processed prior to the merge
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advise e-Rostering provider of any changes i.e. file names due to changed Employing Authority
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How does the eRostering provider add its rosters for source VPD staff?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Which is the interface used for transferring absence
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Which is the interface used for transferring enhancements

4.11.3. Expenses

Most organisations will have an e-Expenses system in place including the NHS Centrally funded offering from ESR provided by Giltbyte.

4.11.4. Consider

Expenses	
•	Do all organisations use an Expenses system? If so, do they differ? Which system will be used post-merger (subject to contracts in situ)
•	Advise 3 rd party system providers of any changes i.e. file names due to changed Employing Authority

4.12. PAYROLL

Payroll is the major consideration in any business consolidation and there are some important aspects to note.

Employees cannot be moved to a single payroll/PAYE reference after the start of the tax year without making the employee a leaver and starter, this is in line with HMRC requirements. This will not cause any issues as multiple payrolls can be processed within the same VPD however consideration should be given to employees with roles across payrolls and the payrolls must be processed in pay date order to avoid interlocks. It is possible to change the organisation name that is reflected on pay advice for the merging organisations, however, the statutory name is linked to the PAYE reference and can only be changed at the start of the next new tax year. A process at the end of financial year will change the PAYE references if required. Raise an SR with the ESR Service Desk to receive details of the processes that must be run.

There is an option in ESR to transfer primary posts onto a new payroll/PAYE reference before the start of the next new tax year if required. This option automates the process of terminating and then rehiring (the next day) the employees – thus meeting the requirements of HMRC. The process is known as the “NHS Internal Payroll Transfer Process”. An SR would be required to access this process to run locally. Further details can be found in the ESR User Manual under the End-to-End Payroll Cycle Management section.

The GL feeds within the new merged organisation can be changed to point to any finance system,

Consider changes to Bank Accounts during the consolidation. If a new Bank Account is required, this MUST be linked to the ESR Bureau and the associated SUN must be provided to ESR via the ESR Service Desk.

HMRC must provide written approval for any statutory name change otherwise ESR cannot be amended.

Apprentice Levy – organisations will need to amend the details in ESR so that this is only applied once across the VPD, as following a merge, it is likely to be in the system twice.

4.13. PENSIONS

Plan when the Pension Employing Authority Code update will be performed and ensure an SR is raised.

Will you need to auto-enrol staff? If all staff coming into the Target VPD are treated as “TUPE’d” then auto-enrolment rules will apply, as they are treated as new starters.

4.13.1. Consider

PAYROLL
HR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transfer all employee records from XXX (source VPD) into XXX (target VPD) • Do pay dates differ between organisations? • Are payslips paper or online? Consider how to deal with mixed economy if there is a mixed approach. What is the ultimate goal? e.g. online for all? Will printed payslips be required post merge? • Work structures built and mapped to current target VPD structure • Potential new organisation set up with type 'Trust'. Existing 'Trusts' are changes to alternative type e.g. 'division' • Potential changes to bank account details (15 days' notice to IBM) • Make NHS Pension changes as required • Consider structure prior to mapping • IBM and NHS Hub changes • Staffing for technical merge (occurs over a weekend) • HR Transactional Process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Starters and Leavers ○ Personal Changes ○ Post Changes ○ Absence ○ Enhancements and additional payments ○ Expenses – if interfaced via Expenses systems new mapping details will be required
POST MERGE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to ESR Service Desk– Who will raise Service Requests for the new organisation? • Payroll processing & Interlocking • Duplicate people

4.14. IT CONSIDERATIONS

IT
Do all organisations meet the requirements of the NHS ESR technical requirements detailed in the MM-0100 document?
Alignment to CIS PBAC positions if staff require smartcards PBAC positions built in CIS to match staff requirements

4.15. FINANCE CONSIDERATIONS

Finance
Compare source to EA target mapping
If duplications occur - Agree post-merge mapping codes and load any new GL mapping
No duplications occur - advise IBM to perform process to retain GL mapping for both EA

5. FURTHER INFORMATION

Refer to the embedded document for a full list of the consolidated key considerations stated throughout this guide that can be used as part of the project plan if required.



Business
Consolidation Task Li:

Refer to the **A-9150 Organisation Merge User Guide** for a full guide to technical mergers between Employing Authorities. This is available on the ESR Hub for authenticated users

For further information about ESR functionality contact the Regional NHS ESR Functional Account Manager – contact details for regional details are available on the ESR Hub as follows:

[North Team](#)

[London Team](#)

[South Team](#)

[Midlands and East of England Team](#)