A demand-led approach to skills and learning: Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs) in Scotland

Laura Barjonas

Lifelong Learning Directorate

Scottish Government

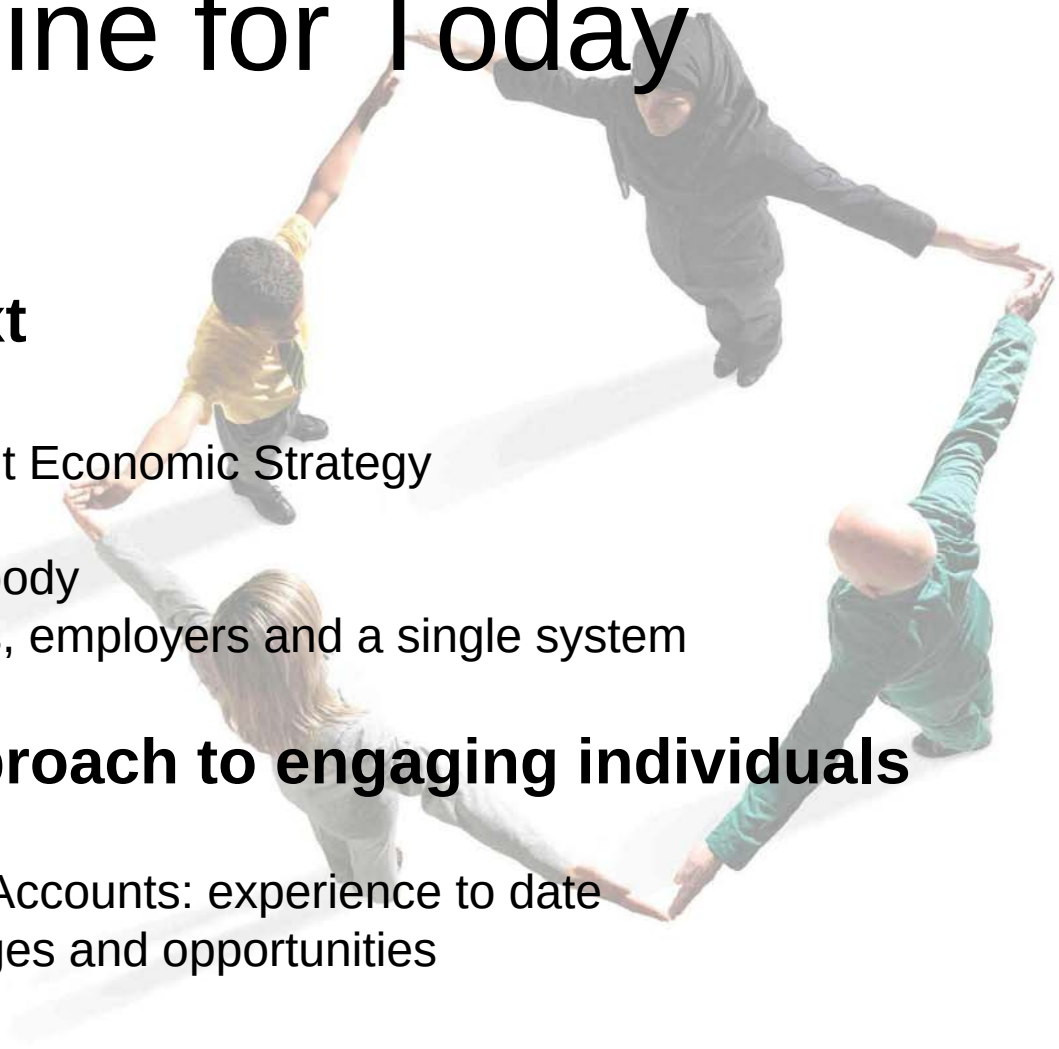
July 2008

The Scottish Government

skills for Scotland

A LIFELONG SKILLS STRATEGY

Outline for Today



Strategic context

- Scottish Government Economic Strategy
- Skills Strategy
- New national skills body
- Focus on individuals, employers and a single system

Demand-led approach to engaging individuals

- Individual Learning Accounts: experience to date
- ILAs: future challenges and opportunities

The Scottish Government

skills for Scotland
A LIFELONG SKILLS STRATEGY

Government's Overall Purpose

"To focus government and public services on creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth."

The Government Economic Strategy

The Scottish Government

skills for Scotland
A LIFELONG SKILLS STRATEGY

Economic Growth & Productivity Targets

- To raise Scotland's GDP growth rate to the UK level by 2011
- To match the GDP growth rate of small independent EU countries by 2017
- To rank in the top quartile for productivity amongst our key trading partners in the OECD by 2017.

Four key ways to improve productivity are by increasing investment, skills, innovation and enterprise.

The Scottish Government

skills for Scotland
A LIFELONG SKILLS STRATEGY

Skills Strategy: Vision

A smarter Scotland with a globally competitive economy based on high value jobs, with progressive and innovative business leadership

- Within the context of lifelong learning
- People are motivated and confident to learn new skills
- Employers invest in, and can access, a skilled workforce
- Learning & training delivery = one system

The Scottish Government

skills for Scotland
A LIFELONG SKILLS STRATEGY

What do we mean by Skills?

Essential skills – including all the following:

- personal & learning skills – enable individuals to become effective lifelong learners
- literacy & numeracy
- five core skills – communication, numeracy, problems solving, Information Technology (IT) & working with others
- employability skills – ‘soft’ skills

PLUS…

Vocational skills – specific to a particular occupation or sector

The Scottish Government

skills for Scotland
A LIFELONG SKILLS STRATEGY

Three Strategic Priorities

- Individual Development
- Economic Pull
- Cohesive Structures

The Scottish Government

skills for Scotland
A LIFELONG SKILLS STRATEGY

Individual Development

1. Developing a distinctively Scottish Approach- balancing the needs of employers and individuals, placing the individual at the centre

2. Ensuring equal access to and participation in skills and learning for everyone

3. Developing a coherent funding structure – that encourages participation and increases choice

The Scottish Government

skills for Scotland
A LIFELONG SKILLS STRATEGY

Individual Development

- Ensure national training programmes meet the needs of individuals
- Providing the right information, advice and guidance to enable individuals to access learning and employment, with a learner focused service that is accessible to all
- A funding system that is responsive to the needs of the individual – enables individuals to make the right choice
- Improve support for part-time and work-based learning

The Scottish Government

skills for Scotland
A LIFELONG SKILLS STRATEGY

Economic Pull

4. Stimulating demand for skills from employers –public and private

5. Improving skills utilisation

6. Understanding current and future projected demands for skills

7. Challenging employers, providers and awarding bodies to use the Scottish Credit & Qualifications Framework (SCQF)

The Scottish Government

skills for Scotland
A LIFELONG SKILLS STRATEGY

Economic Pull

- Expanded role of employers in schools
- Employer's voice:
  - Employers articulating their skills needs
  - Clearly defined expectations of UK Sector Skills Councils
- Improve how skills are used in the workplace (management and leadership; job design; innovative working)
- Robust labour market intelligence
- Encourage union learning and employee learning
- Work-related and work-based English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

The Scottish Government

skills for Scotland
A LIFELONG SKILLS STRATEGY

Economic Pull

- Increased awareness of the benefits of training for employers and employees
- Increasing the demand by employers for skills
- Identifying and addressing market failures – e.g. the importance of training for low paid and low skilled employees
- Ensure national training programmes (eg. Modern Apprenticeships) meet the needs of employers
- Develop the skills of the public sector workforce – public sector as exemplar employer

The Scottish Government

skills for Scotland
A LIFELONG SKILLS STRATEGY

New Skills Body
Skills Development Scotland (SDS)

What services and support does SDS bring together?

- all-age careers information, advice and guidance (IAG) for individuals (1,200 staff, 50+ offices all over Scotland)
- national skills training programmes (circa £100m spend a year) for people in and out of work
- national helpline on access to learning and funding for learners
- national learning opportunities database (web-based)

The Scottish Government

skills for Scotland
A LIFELONG SKILLS STRATEGY

Skills Development Scotland

What services and support does SDS bring together?

- national network of quality-assured learning centres (500+ all over Scotland)
- IAG services for small businesses to support workforce development
- marketing and promotion of adult literacy and numeracy support for individuals and employers
- Individual Learning Accounts (ILA Scotland) – demand-led funding and IAG for lifelong learning

The Scottish Government

skills for Scotland
A LIFELONG SKILLS STRATEGY

Skills Development Scotland

SDS Vision

"Skills Development Scotland will be a catalyst for real and positive change in Scotland's skills performance. We will help individuals to realise their full potential, we will help employers be more successful through skills development, and we will work in meaningful partnerships to enhance Scotland's sustainable economic development."

The Scottish Government

skills for Scotland
A LIFELONG SKILLS STRATEGY

Skills Development Scotland

Next Steps

We are working with SDS to:

- develop a new model for the future Scottish Government relationship with SDS (focused on outcomes rather than inputs and outputs)

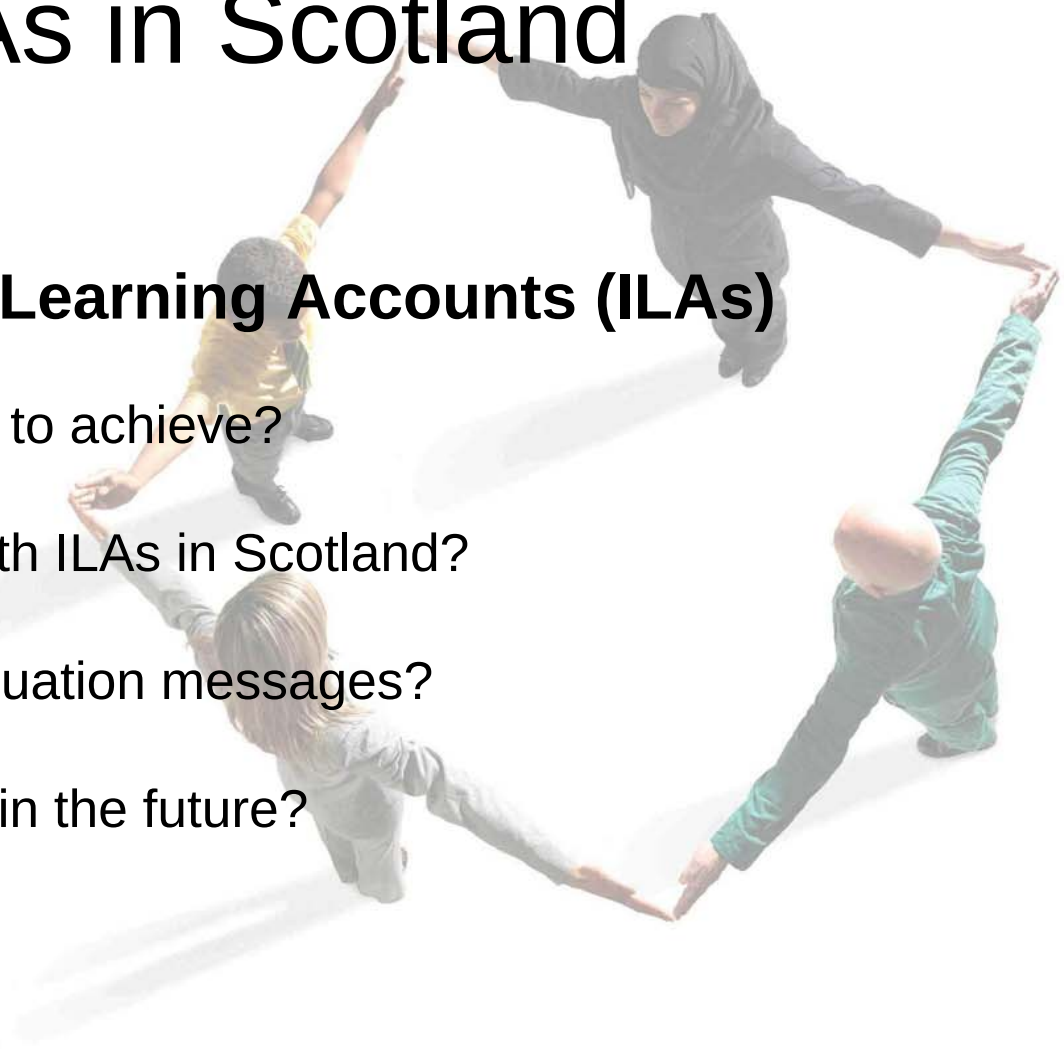
- develop a new model for SDS to deliver its services to its customers (individuals and employers)

- identify opportunities for better partnership working between SDS and its key partners – employers, unions, training providers

The Scottish Government

skills for Scotland
A LIFELONG SKILLS STRATEGY

ILAs in Scotland



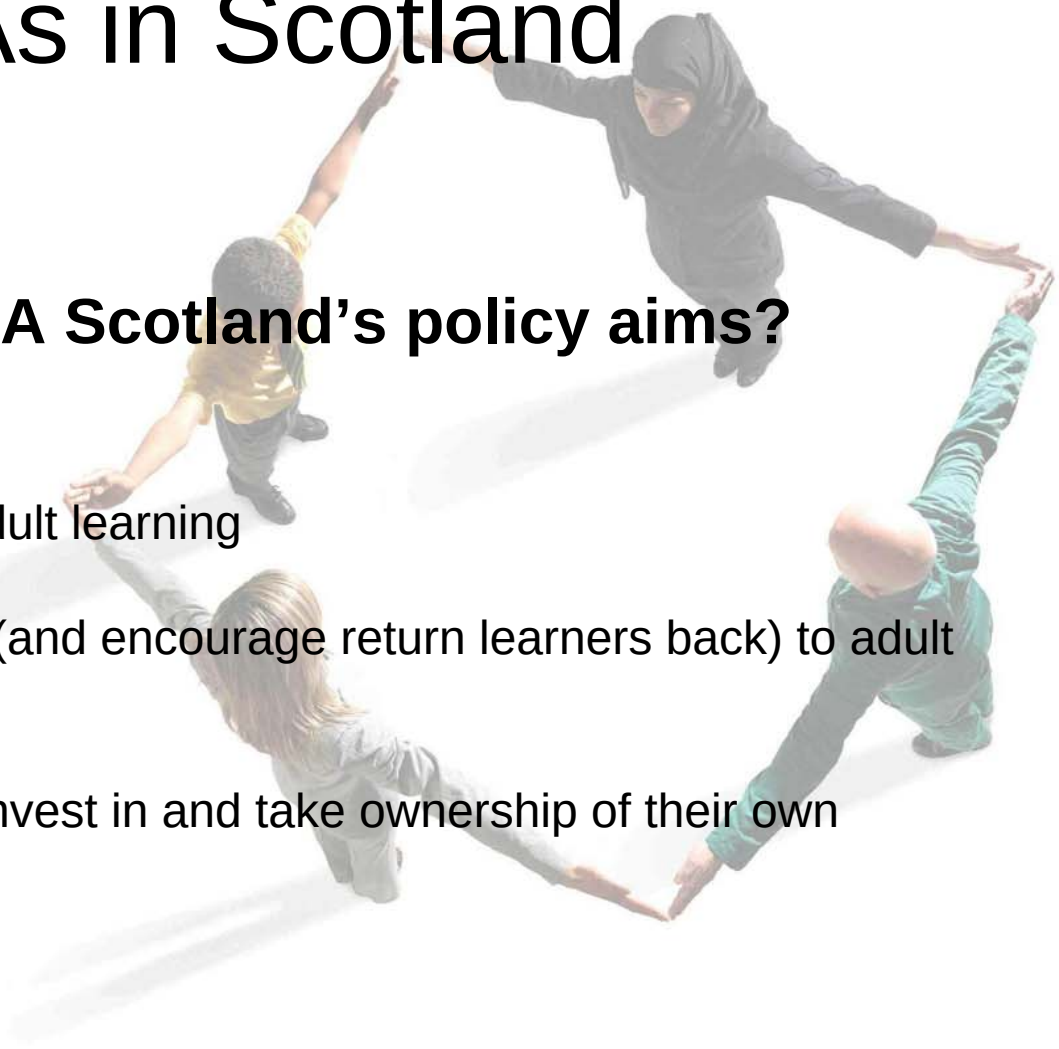
Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs)

- what are ILAs aiming to achieve?
- where are we now with ILAs in Scotland?
- what are the key evaluation messages?
- where might ILAs go in the future?

The Scottish Government

skills for Scotland
A LIFELONG SKILLS STRATEGY

ILAs in Scotland



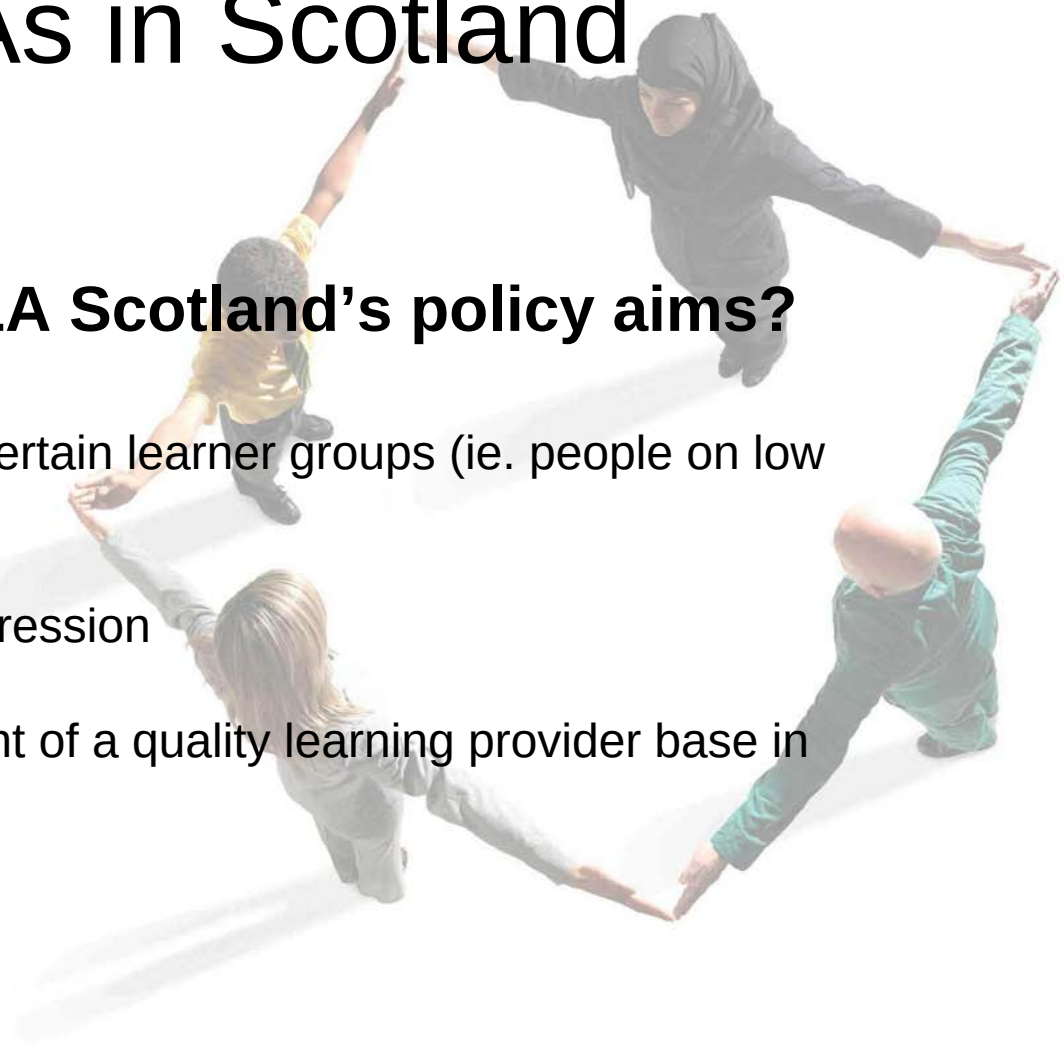
What are ILA Scotland's policy aims?

- widen participation in adult learning
- introduce new learners (and encourage return learners back) to adult learning
- encourage learners to invest in and take ownership of their own learning

The Scottish Government

skills for Scotland
A LIFELONG SKILLS STRATEGY

ILAs in Scotland



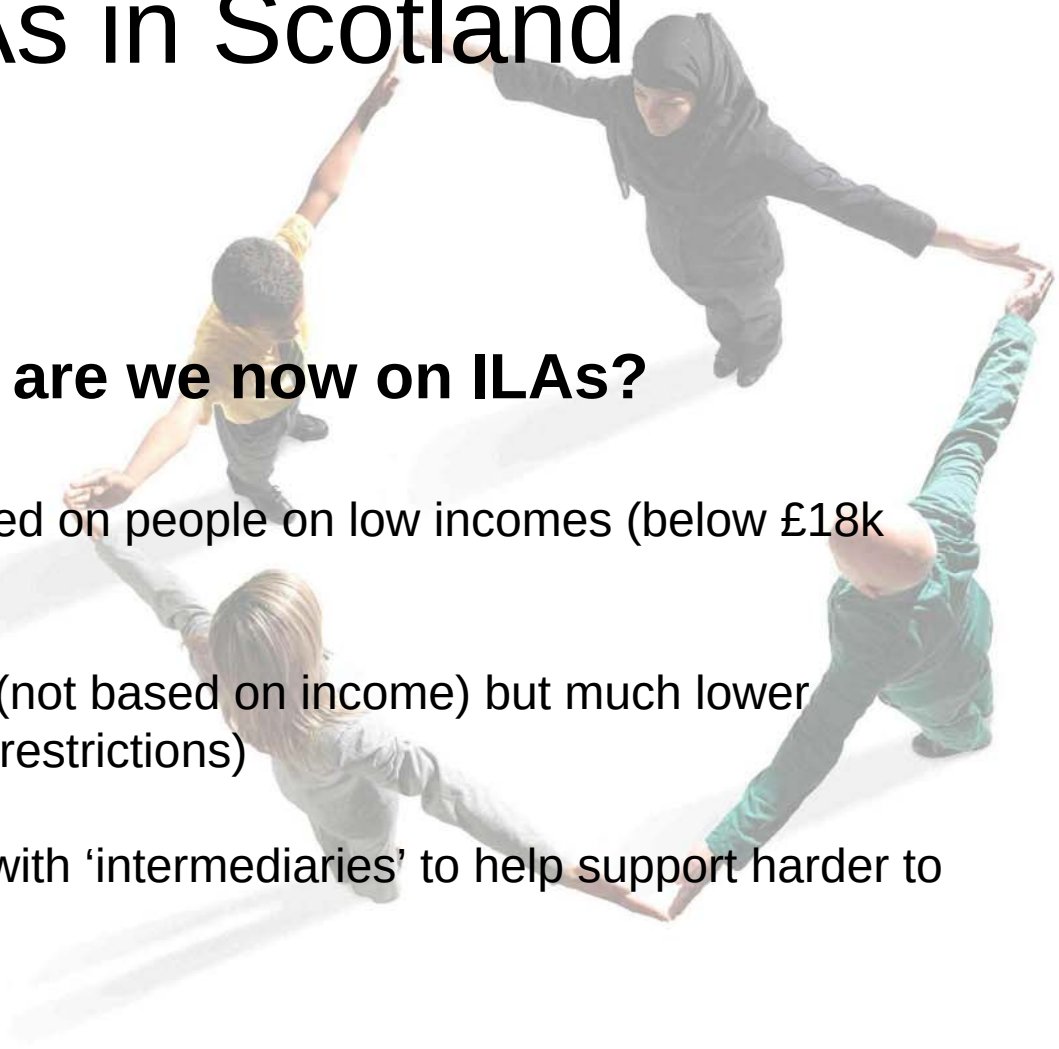
What are ILA Scotland's policy aims?

- prioritise the needs of certain learner groups (ie. people on low income)
- encourage learner progression
- support the development of a quality learning provider base in Scotland

The Scottish Government

skills for Scotland
A LIFELONG SKILLS STRATEGY

ILAs in Scotland



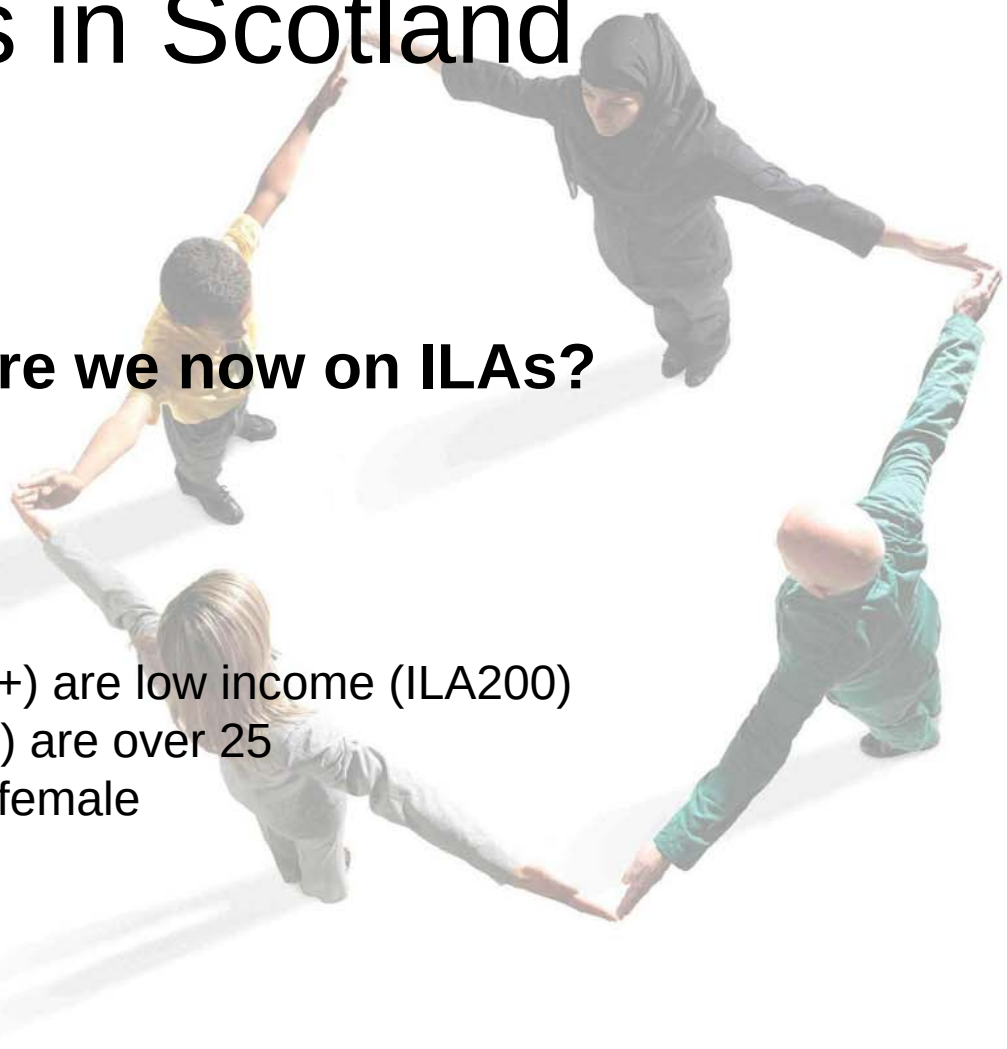
Where are we now on ILAs?

- targeted scheme, focused on people on low incomes (below £18k individual income)
- has ‘universal’ element (not based on income) but much lower demand (due to course restrictions)
- includes close working with ‘intermediaries’ to help support harder to reach learners

The Scottish Government

skills for Scotland
A LIFELONG SKILLS STRATEGY

ILAs in Scotland



Where are we now on ILAs?

- 110,000+ account holders
- 50,000+ accounts used
- 72,000+ course bookings
- most active learners (90%+) are low income (ILA200)
- most learners (nearly 90%) are over 25
- most learners (80%+) are female

The Scottish Government

skills for Scotland
A LIFELONG SKILLS STRATEGY

ILAs in Scotland

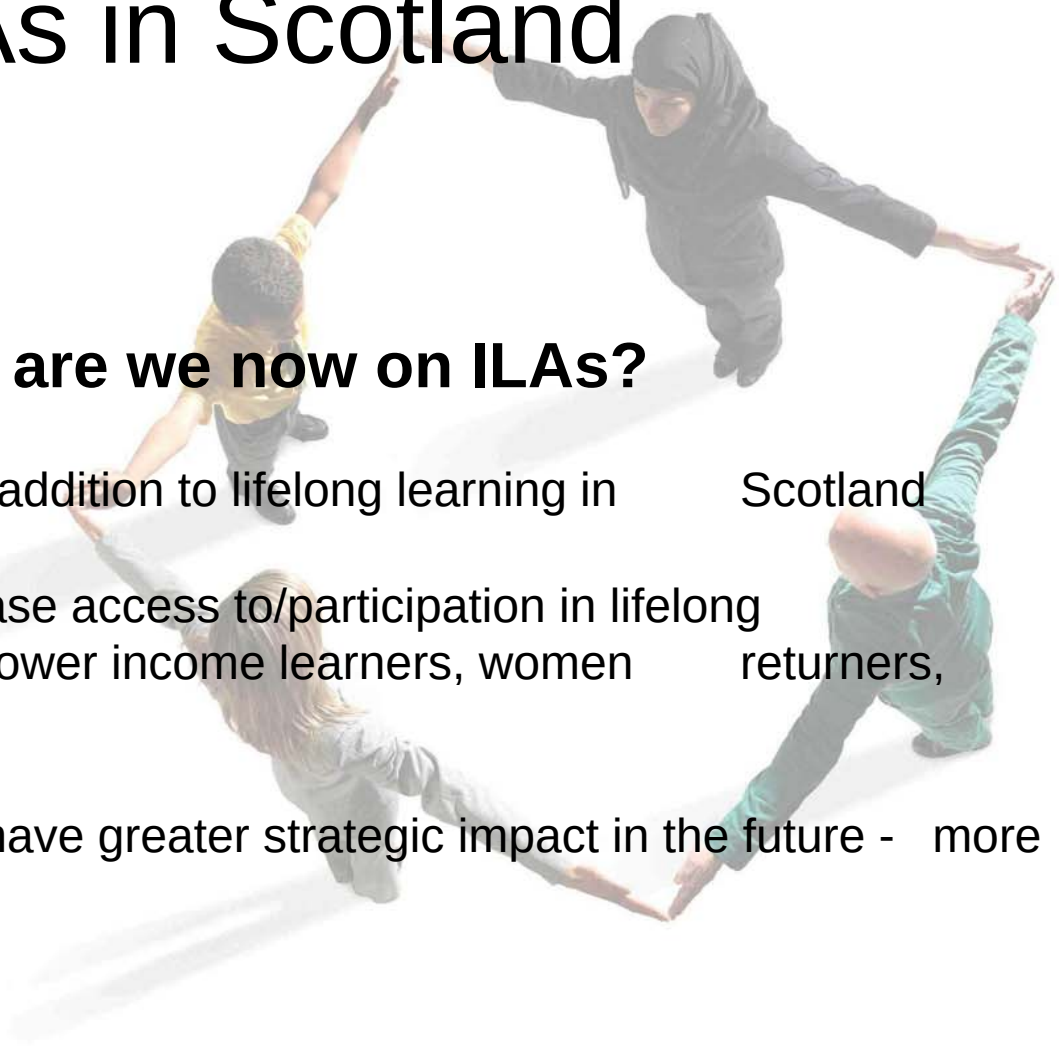
Where are we now on ILAs?

- 91% ILA200 learner satisfaction with course quality
- 96% ILA200 satisfaction with scheme overall
- 82% ILA200 learners choose courses leading to qualifications or certification
- 63% ‘value added’ for ILA200 learners with low or now qualifications

The Scottish Government

skills for Scotland
A LIFELONG SKILLS STRATEGY

ILAs in Scotland



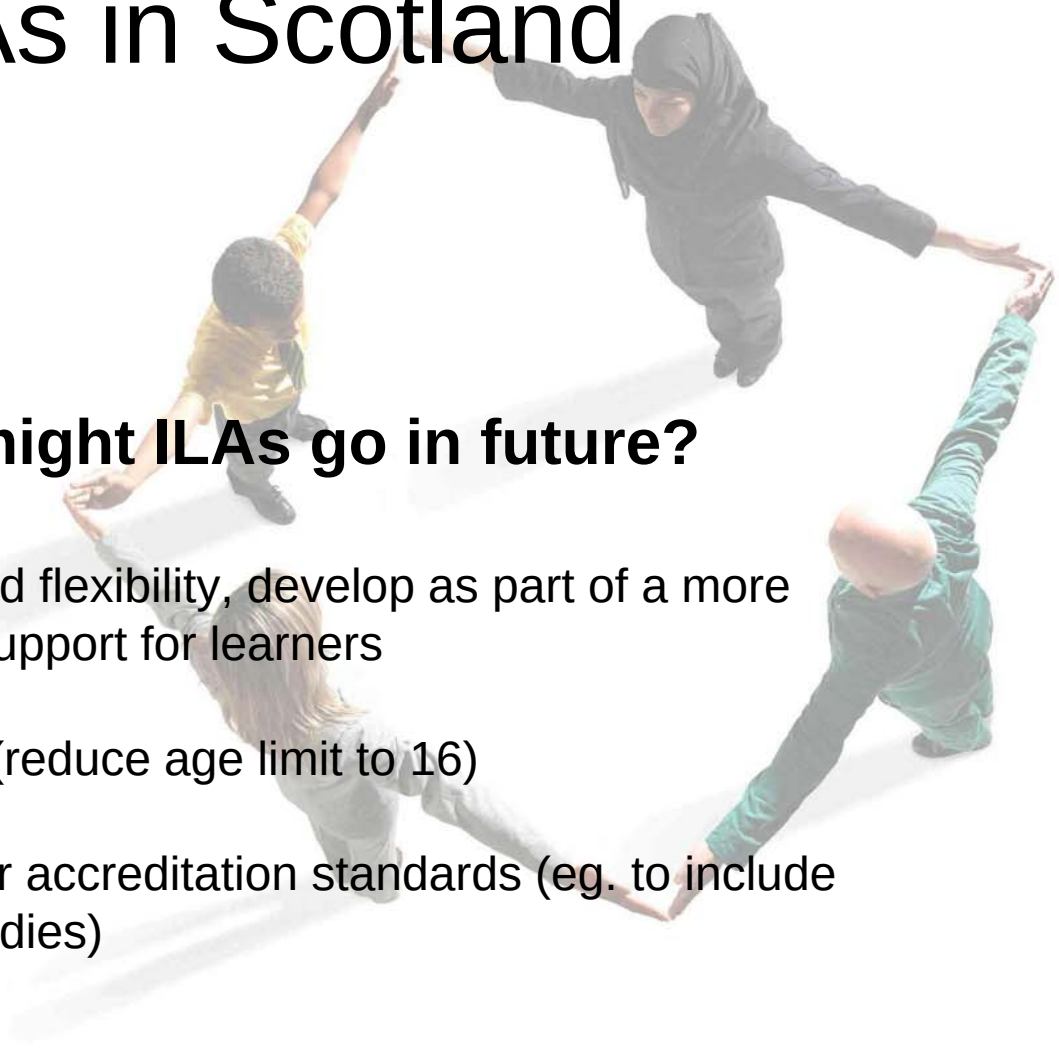
Where are we now on ILAs?

- recognised as valuable addition to lifelong learning in Scotland
- ILAs have helped increase access to/participation in lifelong learning, especially for lower income learners, women returners, older learners
- but ILAs should aim to have greater strategic impact in the future - more integrated, better targeted

The Scottish Government

skills for Scotland
A LIFELONG SKILLS STRATEGY

ILAs in Scotland



Where might ILAs go in future?

- improve accessibility and flexibility, develop as part of a more integrated package of support for learners
- widen learner eligibility (reduce age limit to 16)
- widen accepted provider accreditation standards (eg. to include professional/industry bodies)

The Scottish Government

skills for Scotland
A LIFELONG SKILLS STRATEGY

ILAs in Scotland

Where might ILAs go in future?

- widen range of eligible courses to include:
  - workplace adult literacy and numeracy
  - workplace learning

- ask new skills body to develop an improved ILA offer to individuals including streamlined delivery

- continue to expand reach of ILAs through stronger role for intermediaries (eg. trade unions, community and voluntary bodies)

The Scottish Government

skills for Scotland
A LIFELONG SKILLS STRATEGY

Further information

Link to *Skills for Scotland*
http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/09/06091114/0

Link to Government Economic Strategy
http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/11/12115041/0

Link to ILA Scotland
http://www.ilascotland.org.uk

Contact:
Laura.Barjonas@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

The Scottish Government

skills for Scotland
A LIFELONG SKILLS STRATEGY