

Information, Advice and Guidance Policy

Mission Statement

We are passionate advocates of lifelong learning

Quest Training is committed to delivering high quality, individualised work-based learning programmes that give apprentices/learners the opportunity to successfully achieve a wide range of career, educational and life goals

Overview

Quest Training aims to provide high quality, impartial, information, advice and guidance (IAG) services, pre-apprenticeship and throughout the Apprentice Journey, which promotes the value of learning to all our apprentices/learners, prospective apprentices/learners and employers, or other organisations representing current or prospective apprentices/learners.

All Quest staff are passionate about education and enabling our apprentice/learners to reach their full potential. The staff involved in information, advice and guidance seek, especially to develop the self-esteem and self-confidence of apprentices/learners to achieve a wide range of career, educational and live goals.

Our belief is that every individual should be treated with courtesy and fairness and we respect the rights and beliefs of each other, regardless of gender, marital status, age, disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or position within the organisation.

We value new ideas and approaches and seek new opportunities and solutions, to meeting the IAG needs and demands of our apprentices/learners, employers and the local community, whilst supporting national and regional education and economic strategies.

We seek to encourage and celebrate creativity and to be supportive of innovation, learning from all that we do. We believe that our staff and apprentices/learners should work in an environment of friendliness, with a clear sense of purpose to achieve our mission and realise our vision.

Quest Training's core principles of information, advice and guidance

- Accessible and visible services
- Professional and knowledgeable staff
- Friendly and welcoming services
- Effective connections with our partners and outside agencies/networks
- Available, responsive and quality service delivery
- Services to meet diverse needs
- Impartial support
- Confidential services
- Services designed to meet the individual needs of staff, apprentice/learners and partners
- Valuing user feedback

Apprentice/learner entitlement

Quest is committed to creating an IAG experience for apprentices/learners that is:

- Accessible in a supportive, appropriate and suitable environment
- Outstanding and delivered according to individual needs

- Aspirational, designed to inspire and motivate
- Planned to guide apprentices/learners on to the right programmes and to support and stretch them
- Developing self-confidence
- Coaching them to be successful and progress on to their next steps
- Embedded into all stages of the Apprentice/Learner Journey

All clients that use the IAG at Quest Training, i.e. apprentices/learners, prospective apprentices/learners and other stakeholders, are entitled to a service that is:

Accessible and Visible

Access to IAG should be free from direct or indirect discrimination. Services should be recognised and trusted by clients, have convenient range of entry points from which clients may be signposted or referred to the services they need, and be open at times and in places which suit clients' needs. To this aim, IAG is provided on the Quest Training website, a range of media, on marketing material and is available free of charge to any individual on request.

Professional and knowledgeable

IAG frontline staff should have the skills and knowledge to identify the client's needs quickly and effectively. They should have the skills and knowledge, either to address the client's needs, or to signpost or to refer them, to suitable alternative provision.

The IAG learning and development needs of staff is identified during the business planning and staff appraisal processes, performance reviews, staff training and development plan, alongside national priorities. The identified needs include professional and subject updating via internal and external courses, leadership and management, employability skills and other developmental activities.

Impartial

Clients have the right to information, advice and guidance that is impartial, unbiased and realistic. Where appropriate, referrals will be made to external agencies.

Integrated

Links between IAG services should be clear from the clients' perspective, regardless of the programme or location of their study. Where necessary, clients will be supported in their transition between services.

Aware of and responsive to equality, diversity and inclusion

The range of IAG services should reflect the diversity of clients' present and future needs. IAG materials should reflect the diversity of clients' backgrounds.

Enabling

Enquirers, apprentices/learners, parents, employers, staff and partners should be able to make informed choices about ways in which Quest Training can meet their individual training and development needs. IAG guidance should encourage and support clients to become lifelong learners by enabling them to access and use information to plan their careers, supporting clients to explore the implications of both learning and work in their future career plans.

Patient, caring and welcoming service

IAG guidance should encourage clients to engage successfully with the service.

Clients are made aware of this entitlement through the Quest Training website and Apprentice/Learner Handbook.

Information, advice and guidance delivery

This policy applies to all enquiring, on-programme and past apprentice/learners at Quest Training.

For the purposes of this policy the term Information, advice and guidance (IAG) is used as an umbrella term to denote a range of guidance activities and processes.

The following definitions have been used:

Information – Information is data on opportunities conveyed through different media, both mediated and unmediated including face-to-face contact, written/printed matter, telephone help lines, ICT software, and websites.

Advice – this involves:

- helping an apprentice/learner understand and interpret information
- providing information and answers to questions and clarifying misunderstandings
- understanding their circumstances, abilities and targets, via initial assessments and skills scans
- advising on options or how to follow a given course of action
- identifying needs – signposting and referring apprentices/learners who may need more in-depth guidance and support

Advisory work is usually provided on a one-to-one basis but may also be in groups.

Guidance – aims to support apprentices/learners to:

- better understand themselves and their needs
- confront barriers to understanding, learning and progression
- resolve issues and conflicts
- develop new perspectives and solutions to problems
- be able to better manage their lives and achieve their potential

Guidance may also involve advocacy on behalf of some apprentices/learners and referral for specialist guidance and support. This involves more in-depth one-to-one work by vocationally trained staff.

Quest Training's curriculum includes several elements that relate to IAG including, Induction, reviews, vocational workbooks with learning and guidance links, soft skills development relating to work-readiness, C.V. writing, preparation for interviews and safeguarding. There is also significant IAG taking place within the Individual Learning Plan Process, as well as preparation for Gateway Readiness and End-Point Assessment.

In line with the IAG defined above, Quest Training will provide assistance relating to:

- the range of support available at Quest training
- financial assistance available to support those in education and training
- programme entry criteria, Standards/qualifications, accreditation and curriculum delivery offer
- equipment and materials which the apprentice/learner will require
- impartial careers information, advice and guidance
- personal goals, aspirations and motivation throughout the Apprentice/Learner Journey
- guidance to its current apprentices/learners to discuss progress and progression
- use of e-portfolio and review process

Quest Training works collaboratively with a range of providers and employers across Kent and surrounding areas and local Councils, to enhance its curriculum offer to apprentices/learners. Quest Training is committed to developing quality IAG provision in agreement with its partners, to ensure that the best range of progression opportunities are available and that consistency of delivery ensures all apprentices/learners receive impartial, high quality IAG.

Information on apprenticeships and programmes is provided by IAG staff. Where Quest Training does not have the information, the IAG staff will seek the information on behalf of the individual or provide the individual with the name and contact details of the organisation, who will have the information being requested.

Advice provided is impartial and confidential, to enable apprentices/learners and potential apprentices/learners to make informed choices, as to the most appropriate route, for their personal and career development.

Guidance is provided by fully trained, competent staff and potential and current apprentices/learners can see an advisor face-to-face, discuss via the telephone or request in written format. Quest Training promotes and supports equality of opportunity and wherever possible Quest Training will seek to provide information in a format which suits the needs of the individual.

Quest Training's Objectives

Quest Training's objectives are as follows:

- Increase the numbers of queries and applications which lead to positive starts
- Increase client satisfaction with the IAG received from Quest Training
- Improve retention, achievement rates and measure the impact of the IAG services on these
- Improve the percentage of apprentices/learners that positively progress to higher levels, further training, or employment after receiving IAG at Quest Training
- Monitor and ensure equality of access to impartial IAG for the diverse groups of apprentices/learners at Quest Training, such as disabled, young parents, ESOL apprentices/learners, SEND apprentices/learners
- Widen the range of appropriate partners and external agencies with which Quest Training IAG services work
- Continually update and improve the staff training and resources to provide up-to-date, impartial and effective IAG for clients.

Assessment Review and Evaluation

To ensure a high quality of IAG service, Quest Training will evaluate its provision to ensure that:

- the information, advice and guidance services are delivered in accordance with this Information, Advice and Guidance Policy
- the IAG standards are delivered in accordance with this Information, Advice and Guidance Policy and as contained within the Matrix Quality Standard

- any apprentice/learner, or potential apprentice/learner, with an identified disability will be provided with appropriate support to enable access to IAG services

Commitment to continuous improvement

Quest Training continues to have the MATRIX standard kite mark for IAG and we review and evaluate our service to achieve the 3-year re-accreditation. Impact data for IAG is collected in a number of ways including data on the performance of apprentices/learners who receive IAG, apprentice/learner feedback after Induction, mid-programme and end of programme and also a range of employer feedback at 3-monthly intervals throughout the year. All feedback is treated confidentially and all negative feedback is actioned and followed up to ensure a satisfactory conclusion.

Our evaluation is used to compare our service year on year and feeds into Quest Training's on-going self-assessment process and also into our SAR and QIP.

This Policy will be reviewed as part of our on-going quality assurance process.

General

Related Policies, Procedures and Processes

Staff Code of Conduct Policy
Equality and Diversity Policy
Data Protection Policy,
Safeguarding Policies (Children and Adults)
Prevent/British Values Policy
Quality Improvement Policy
Staff Training & Development Policy
Apprentice/learner and Employer Complaints Policy and Procedure
Initial Assessment of Prior Learning Policy and Process
Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy

I confirm that this Policy is authorised and approved by Tyron Wain – Managing Director.

Date: 09/10/2023



Date of next review: October 2024