INFORMATION, ADVICE & GUIDANCE (IAG) POLICY

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the policy is to set out the Information, Advice and Guidance services Alphabet Training commits to provide to potential and current learners, parents of learners under the age of 18, staff and employers. The policy is designed to ensure consistent, effective, and fair treatment for all. This policy has been impact assessed to ensure that it does not adversely affect staff on the grounds of sex, transgender, marital or civil partnership status, racial group, nationality, sexual orientation, religion or belief disability or age. The policy should be read in conjunction with other Alphabet Training policies and procedures including the equality policy, confidentiality policy, data protection policy.

INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE (IAG)

Definitions:

- **Information** refers to the provision of factual, unbiased information relating to learning and careers. Information can be imparted verbally by an advisor or by printed material, and the internet.
- **Advice** requires more in-depth interaction with the client. It includes the explanation of information and how to access and use the information. When giving advice we will always endeavour to suggest, or encourage you to explore, different options for achieving your goals.
- **Guidance** involves an in-depth session or series of sessions between the client and advisor, in which the advisor helps the client through the process of making decisions about learning and careers. This may include support in accessing and using online resources.

OBJECTIVES

We have defined specific objectives against which we will measure the effectiveness of our IAG service: (Specific targets will vary year by year).

To provide impartial, unbiased IAG in a form that is easily understood by the recipient.

1. To ensure IAG is treated confidentially as per the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR.
2. To ensure IAG promotes and embeds equality and diversity throughout all the provision.
3. To systematically monitor, review, evaluate and continually improve our IAG and measure performance.
4. To signpost clients to other competent organisations/services where the nature of the query, interest or concern is out of scope of our capability/competence.
5. Minimising the withdrawal of learners.
6. Timeliness of learners' achievement of qualifications.
7. Learner satisfaction levels.
8. Employer satisfaction levels.

SPECIFIC AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

Objectives - Learners

1. To support clients and learners to understand the range of opportunities available through clear information in a variety of contexts and formats which enables them to make informed and realistic decisions about their current and potential future vocational or personal needs based on accurate information.
2. To evaluate and continuously improve our performance and measure through:
   - Key Performance Indicators mapped to the Operational Plan.
   - Learner responsiveness as evidenced in individual learner retention, success and achievement data, which is mapped back to the IAG outcomes and is part of the process that informs the identification of the most appropriate programme of learning, initial assessment processes and target setting for learners.
   - Process of embedding Equality and Diversity, Functional Skills and Safeguarding into all aspects of IAG for the full cohort of clients.
3. To provide our IAG services completely free of charge to applicants/learners.
4. To overcome any learner perceived barriers and challenges to learning development and progression, encouraging an ethos of lifelong learning and finding effective learning and training solutions for individuals.

Employers - Aim

To provide employers full access to IAG which is fit for purpose, current, updated, reliable, easy to understand and addresses the wide range of questions and challenges, issues and concerns that may develop during considering and implementing training solutions. Our policy is to help employers develop their own business further by providing IAG on training solutions that meet individual employer needs.

Objectives

1. To promote and deliver specified vocational programmes to individuals who meet the Government Funding Body eligibility criteria or at a cost for those who do not.
2. To evaluate and continuously improve the quality of our performance and delivery and measure distance. travelled against the following criteria:
   - Employer responsiveness, employer engagement and employer organisational requirements.
   - Success in employee achievement or completion of programmes.
   - Measurement of progress against the key performance indicators mapped to the Company Operational Plan
3. To offer to carry out Organisational Training Needs Analyses for employers and identify, deliver or appropriately signpost employers to organisations who can provide effective training solutions.

Staff - Aim

To provide all staff with effective IAG to enable them to continually develop their knowledge, understanding and expertise in specific areas, perform their own job role effectively and become an asset within the culture of Alphabet Training.

Objectives

1. To enable our staff to identify their own competencies and to direct them to the most appropriate internal and/or external sources who can address individual CPD (Continuous Professional Development) needs.
2. To train all staff involved in IAG to a level that meets their job role and responsibilities.
3. To evaluate and continuously improve our performance measuring performance against:
    - Staff retention
    - Staff CPD against awarding body requirements
    - Staff Appraisals
    - Key Performance Indicators
    - Business needs
4. To continue to develop effective strategies and take effective action to improve the company performance through our employees.

The names, locations and up to date contact details of other providers is available in the IAG office.

Partners and Contractors - Aim

To foster and maintain positive working relationships with partners and sub-contractors via effective embedded communications strategies.

Objectives

1. To collaborate with National Career Service, National Apprenticeship Services, JCP, other providers and referral support agencies, to deliver the most effective provision (within our scope of delivery) meeting the needs and aspirations of young people, adults and employers.
2. To collaborate with funding bodies (e.g. ESFA) and Sector bodies to contribute towards their strategic plans.

Measurements of success of the IAG policy:

- Measurement against the national, regional and local economic and demographic targets for learner retention, success and achievement of qualifications and pathways
- Review of the three-year plan annually to respond to the changing financial and economic climate and clients.
- Employer and learner voice and feedback.
- Organisational Operational Plan targets met.

IAG Promotion - Being aware of the service and engaging with it

- Promotional materials are circulated to targeted referral bases and organisations.
- Staff attend promotional shows and events.
- Schools Department promote apprenticeship pathways in schools.
- The Recruitment Team ensures that information supplied on promotional materials is reviewed regularly and kept up to date.

Responsibilities

- **The Recruitment Department** is responsible for providing information advice and guidance to prospective applicants on recruitment to Alphabet Training Programmes**.**
- **Assessors and tutors** provide learners with initial and on programme support to retain learners and enable them to successfully complete their qualifications/ apprenticeships.
- **Assessors and Admin Officers** provide learners with guidance on exit from Alphabet Training programmes in relation to employment opportunities and career advancement.
- **Senior Management** has responsibility for line managing the front line IAG services against business objectives.

Quality Assurance & Evaluation

- The provision of IAG services is quality assured via the collection and analysis of participant feedback, and analysis of key performance data in respect of learner retention achievement and progression. The Quality Assurance team are responsible for monitoring the front-line delivery, including the observation of the IAG service, and identifying areas for continuous improvement.
- The outcomes from participant feedback and from the IQA team will be subject to discussion at monthly Management Meetings and monthly team progress meetings. This will also be discussed at the Quality Improvement Team meeting on a quarterly basis.

IAG STATEMENT OF SERVICE

AIMS

1. To provide all service users, including employer organisations, learners and potential learners with information advice and guidance that empowers them to make the best choices about learning and work.
2. To help learners make appropriate choices about programmes, build self-confidence, complete their programmes, develop realistic career plans and make progress in their work and learning.
3. To help Employers maximise the value of workforce development opportunities and associated funding
4. To help employers improve the outcomes of their recruitment practices

OUTCOMES OF OUR IAG SERVICE

We aim for our IAG support to have positive benefits for learners and for employers. We will monitor the achievement of these outcomes:

- Completion of learners' chosen programmes
- Achievement of qualifications
- Progression of learners to higher levels of learning
- Progression of learners into permanent employment, to another position, taking on more responsibility at work, or gaining a pay increase
- Improved staff retention and productivity levels for employer organisations
- Improved access to appropriate funding schemes for employers

IMPLEMENTATION

As a provider we ensure that clear, accurate and timely information is given to our learners to help them overcome any barriers to achieving their goals. By providing impartial information, advice and guidance to all learners that enables them to make informed choices about their options and next steps in relation to their chosen course programme/s and career aspirations. Our IAG Policy is in place to ensure we offer our learners an accessible and visible service at the start and throughout their learner journey with us,

IAG is available at career events, employers' premises and at any time during the Learner journey. Where Alphabet Training does not have the information being requested, it will seek the information on behalf of the individual or provide the individual with the name and contact details of the organisation who should have the information being requested.

IAG will be offered to all employer organisations to help them understand and fulfil their support obligations in relation to staff training and development programmes. This may be in person, by telephone or online as may be appropriate.

Staff are responsible for ensuring that any enquiry they receive for IAG is passed to the appropriate member of staff and that the individual requesting information receives a response within three days of their request.

Alphabet Training have implemented a training scheme for staff members who deliver embedded IAG within the service to undertake units of the IAG L3 Qualification to help learners set goals/targets and achieve their aims. Alphabet Training also hold in-house training for all staff who deliver IAG within the business to share best practice and keep up-to-date with IAG delivery methods.

LEARNING SUPPORT

Learners at all levels can be helped in a variety of ways for example: study skills, ICT, assignment, or project writing. Perhaps your Maths and English skills need refreshing. Whatever the need we can help, or we know someone who you can contact.

INITIAL ASSESSMENT

All learners are offered initial assessment. Learners are assessed in numeracy and literacy to identify whether those skills are at the standard required for their chosen course and, where appropriate, are offered additional support. All learners are assessed to ensure that Alphabet Training can respond appropriately to individual needs. Learners who are concerned about their current level of Mathematics or English skills or other key or functional skills can ask for help including on-line support.

You will also undergo the following assessments to support your learning prior to the start of any programme:

- Cognassist Assessment – this informs us if you need any additional learning support based on several cognitive assessments.
- Learning Styles Questionnaire – helps to understand how you learn
- Vocation Skill Scan – this indicates your current knowledge related to the respective apprenticeship standard.

SUPPORT DURING YOUR STUDIES

We will provide on-going advice and guidance throughout your time with us to assist your learning and your personal development. This will include:

- Course-based support from your assessor/tutor
- Guidance on arrangements for assessment
- Information, advice, and guidance to enable you to plan your, educational and career development
- Reasonable adjustment and study support to facilitate your studies if you have a disability or additional requirements.

On broader issues including personal relationships, health and drug or alcohol support, we will signpost clients to specialist agencies with relevant expertise.

HELP WITH MOVING ON

We will provide help and support to enable you to choose what you will do next. This may include:

- Support from staff that can provide you with more information about options beyond your present study, whether it is progression to another course of study, progression to employment or higher education (university).

Information, advice, and guidance about the job-seeking process including CVs and completing application forms, preparing for interviews, and looking for job vacancies.

We will not always be the most appropriate source of IAG for some matters, and in these cases we will offer signposting or referral to a better placed agency or resource. Where we signpost or refer a service user we will seek feedback to determine the suitability and impact of the external service or resource. We will also refer to the National careers Website. Our suggestions are quality-assured by our staff. All referrals are in line with the Data Protection Act/GDPR and other relevant policies.

WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT FROM US?

Accurate and impartial information, advice, and guidance

We offer information and advice on courses and qualifications available at Alphabet Training. If study elsewhere is more appropriate then we will, where possible, suggest alternatives.

A service that will be accredited by the Matrix Standard.

This means that our service will be:

- Accessible and visible
- Professional and knowledgeable
- Impartial
- Responsive to your needs
- Friendly and welcoming

EQUALITY OF TREATMENT

We aim to ensure all learners and employers have equal access to IAG, regardless of gender, colour, ethnicity, age, socio-economic background, disability, religious or political beliefs, family circumstance, sexual orientation or any other irrelevant distinction.

Alphabet Training recognises the rights of all learners to have equal access to learning opportunities. Learners should discuss any individual issues with their tutor who will know who to contact and how to help. These individual issues may relate to a disability including Dyslexia. We are a multi-cultural organisation and within our staff team, we can provide support in a range of languages recognising that learners may feel that language issues are a barrier to learning. Please just ask when language support is required, and we can help.

Please see our full equality and diversity policy and procedures which is accessible on the Alphabet Training website for more information.

CONFIDENTIALITY

To provide the best possible service to you we keep a record of your details, your academic record and your contacts with us. This record can only be accessed by authorised personnel and Alphabet

Training staff that need to see this information as part of their work. We take all appropriate physical, technical and contractual measures to ensure that your information cannot be used by anyone outside of our organisation.

- We will discuss your needs and circumstances and give you details of other organisations or agencies should we feel that they would more effectively meet your needs and signpost you to these.
- We will discuss the referral with you and any sharing of information will be agreed prior to disclosure to any other organisation or agency.
- If you are not satisfied with the process and prefer another organisation or agency we can and if required by you make an appointment for you to visit them.
- To ensure continuous quality improvement, we will ask your permission to contact you at a later date to discuss the quality of service you have received.

Please see our Privacy policy, data protection policy and GDPR on our website for further details.

WHAT DO WE EXPECT FROM YOU?

As much relevant information as you can give us so that we can answer your enquiry fully; for example, disclosing a disability or additional requirement to enable us to provide extra support if applicable.
If you have any questions or concerns about your application, your enquiry, your course, or your progress, we expect you to contact us as soon as possible in order to resolve the issue.
In return we ask you to be open with us – for example, please tell us:

- If you do not want to go to another organisation or agency.
- If you do accept the referral, you will be expected to attend the interview as arranged. If you are unable to attend, please inform the organisation as soon as you are able.

FEEDBACK, COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

We are committed to developing the quality of our services and we regularly seek the views of our learners to find out how far they are satisfied with the courses and support provided by Alphabet Training.

We welcome any comments you have which may help us to improve our services. If you are a learner with us, you can pass your comments directly to your course assessor/tutor or to any senior manager or member of staff.

If you are not yet a learner, you can contact us through our website (www.getsetacademy.co.uk) or by contacting us on 01254 679998. We hope that you are happy with the service you receive but if you are not then we will investigate and deal with any difficulties you experience. If you have a complaint, then we will treat it in confidence and will do our best to resolve it fairly and quickly in

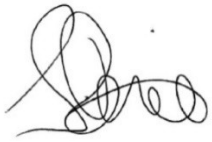
accordance with the Alphabet Training's complaints procedure, a copy of which can be obtained from our Central team on 01254 679998 or email: info@alphabet-training.co.uk

HOW TO CONTACT US:

You can access our information service through:

- Course Information Hotline 01254 679998
- General Inquiries 01254 679998
- Email info@alphabet-training.co.uk
- Web site www.alphabet-training.co.uk
- In person at: Alphabet Training Ltd, Central Buildings, Richmond Terrace, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB1 7AP.

Signed by the Managing Director



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