



achievingexcellence
uk ltd

Learner Handbook

2024-2025

SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding is about preventing or protecting those who may be or are about to be abused or neglected physically, verbally, sexually, financially or emotionally. This can include domestic violence, discriminatory abuse, radicalisation, modern slavery, neglect, or financial abuse, etc. It can be at home, in the workplace, in the community or online. For more information, please speak with your tutor or a Designated Safeguarding Officer.

If you are worried about the way another person is treating you or someone else you can talk to your employer, family, Doctors, local safeguarding teams, or your tutor. You can call, text, or email.

Equally, you can privately contact an apprenticeship Designated Safeguarding Officer at Achieving Excellence UK Ltd via:

safeguarding@achievingexcellenceukltd.com

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Welcome and Introduction

Achieving Excellence UK Ltd (AE) welcomes you to your apprenticeship standard. Here at Achieving Excellence (AE) we are dedicated to ensuring your learning journey is a positive, engaging and rewarding experience.

Your programme is funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and delivered by Achieving Excellence UK Ltd. Along with your employer we are committed to training, upskilling and helping you learn and grow. So long as you are also committed throughout your 15-18-month journey you will gain not only national qualifications but greater knowledge, skills and competence in your job role.

This handbook is for all people who have embarked on a training programme with Achieving Excellence. This handbook will contain all the information you will need to assist and support on your learning journey.

The apprenticeship standard you will work towards will likely be accredited nationally. This varies according to different programmes but will be confirmed on your Individual Learning Plan.

The training which you will receive maybe a mixture of, on-the-job (work based) and off-the-job 20% (work based but classroom) training. Either way you will be supported along the way by your work supervisor, a tutor and an onsite mentor. As part of your Apprenticeship, you will also have an End Point Assessment via TQ UK. This is a mechanism for demonstrating your knowledge and skills to achieve the full apprenticeship standard.

Throughout the programme we will also support with personal development, maths and English, IAG (information, Advice and Guidance, see later) and career development. We will also support you strengthen your understanding of things like Equality and Diversity, Safeguarding, British Values and PREVENT, and health and safety. Look out for your monthly newsletter and regular 'hot topics.'

It is envisaged that you will acquire a considerable amount of skill, confidence and personal satisfaction during your training, which will assist in achieving great successes from this programme and your future career.

Good luck



Mike Austin, Rick Shuttleworth - Directors

Challenge and Vision

As stated, you will complete an End Point Assessment when your programme is complete. This is to confirm you have the knowledge, skills and behaviours as a result of the programme.

You will usually sit an online multiple-choice test and have an online professional discussion. You can achieve either fail, pass, merit or distinction.

During your induction we challenge you to work towards a **DISTINCTION** for your efforts, and that from day 1 your tutor will help you understand the difference between fail, pass, merit and/or distinction. This will prepare you for and give you the best chance of obtaining that distinction.

We therefore challenge you to be “distinct” in your attendance, assessment, communication and attitude towards your learning! We will measure your **behaviours and attitude** on a regular basis using this chart:



To help you understand your **progression to distinction**, we will use the following:



Initial

New learning
Pay careful attention
Ask questions
Practice
Mistakes are fine
Keep going, endure!



Establishing

You are learning more but don't already remember
Check mistakes and learner
More practise



Substantial (Pass)

You know!
You can practice (embed) independently
Your work and knowledge is accurate
You can retrieve knowledge well
Apply learning more in role, connecting to broader responsibilities



Complete (Merit)

You know, really well and can remember it easily
You are completely accurate
You can answer difficult questions and connect your learning to all aspects of your role
You have started to over learner, to become fluent



Fluent (Distinction)

You are now fluent in learning
You can remember it automatically
You are quick and wholly accurate
You see clearly how your learning connects to all aspects of your role and responsibilities.

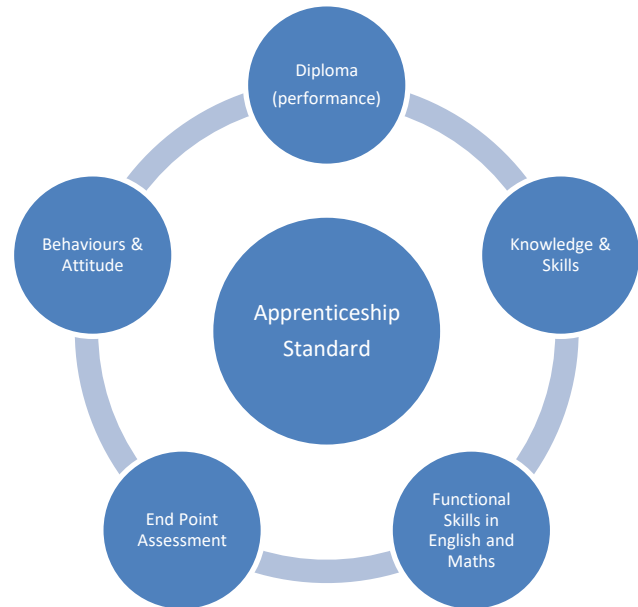
What is an Apprenticeship Standard?

An apprenticeship is a nationally recognised qualification that addresses several core skills required within your job role.

You will feel like you are working towards one programme, but you will be certificated in all of the above.

The programme focuses on your knowledge, skills and behaviours. We will support you develop these throughout the programme to prepare you for End Point Assessment.

You will provide evidence against your knowledge, competence and behaviours. This will include training sessions, 121's, professional discussions, work product, reflective accounts and observations of competence, etc.



Functional Skills in English and Maths allows you to strengthen and develop your basic skills as applied in the workplace. These qualifications are directly linked to your job role but will also relate to your home life, etc. If you already have a level 2 or equivalent, please let your tutor know as you may be exempt. Either way we will support you with your English and maths throughout your programme.

You are going to gain new skills and develop your knowledge in a number of ways as part of your course. This will be though both on-the-job (usually around 80%) and off-the-job (usually around 20%) training. This will include:

- Training sessions or workshops delivered by Achieving Excellence
- On the job training provided by your employer
- Work shadowing an experienced colleague
- 1-2-1 coaching sessions with your tutor on subject specific areas
- Teaching and learning sessions
- Assessment sessions

Once your diploma, maths and English is complete you will undertake your independent End Point Assessment (EPA). This is often an online test, portfolio showcase and/or observation.



What is End Point Assessment?

End-point assessment (EPA) is the final stage of an apprenticeship. It is an impartial assessment of whether you have developed the skills, knowledge and behaviours outlined in the apprenticeship standard.

Assessments are designed by employers in the sector and are conducted by independent bodies known as end-point assessment organisations (EPAOs).

End Point Assessment occurs after all elements of the apprenticeship is completed;

- Diploma
- English
- Maths

Once completed you, your tutor and employer will complete a Gateway interview and form, starting the End Point Assessment process. Once approved the different types of assessment usually includes two from the following:

- Online Situational judgement test (multiple choice test)
- Showcase portfolio assessment (from your diploma)
- Online Professional Discussion
- Presentation.

Once all elements of the apprenticeship are completed, the apprentice will receive their apprenticeship certificate.

What is our Intent – The Achieving Excellence Way!

With you and your line manager or mentor, we will agree all of the following as part of your programme. Most importantly we have devised a formal curriculum that include a modern and sequential scheme of work. We will all agree this scheme of work.



Our intent whilst working on all the above together for us all to share PRIDE in the programme! Either way hard work will be required for you, your employer and your tutor. This is why 'time management' becomes more important. We all need to ensure you embed this programme day to day, you are given time to study but that you also use that time wisely.

You tutor will set regular targets and actions, but you must also show initiative. If you are waiting for marking or feedback, there will always be plenty you can practice on BKS (functional skills).

Off the Job Teaching and Learning (20%)

Your programme will be delivered via off the job teaching and learning, and on the job assessment.

Off the job teaching and learning will require planning. Much of it should be planned time away from your normal day to day duties (20% or 6 hours minimum per week). Off the job teaching and learning can include the following:



Your tutor will help you create a Reflective Journal, and help you understand what to log, how to log and when to log. What's most important is what you learn and the impact it has.

An apprentice who cannot clearly demonstrate they have fulfilled the 20% commitment will NOT be allowed to go through the gateway for their End Point Assessment!

Apprenticeships - 20% off-the-job training guide

The 20% off-the-job training provides the time to focus and develop the required skills, knowledge and behaviours to achieve the apprenticeship. There are lots of activities that can contribute to off-the-job training. The key thing to remember is that it must be relevant to the apprenticeship.

The table below gives examples of how the off-the-job time can be spent...



Learning the theory/professional knowledge through:	Practical training through:	Learning support time spent on:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Classes and workshops <input type="checkbox"/> Lectures <input type="checkbox"/> Online learning and webinars <input type="checkbox"/> Masterclasses <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant reading <input type="checkbox"/> Research <input type="checkbox"/> Lunch and learn sessions <input type="checkbox"/> Role playing and simulation exercises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Job shadowing <input type="checkbox"/> Mentoring <input type="checkbox"/> Attending meetings <input type="checkbox"/> Project work <input type="checkbox"/> Professional networks <input type="checkbox"/> Events and competitions <input type="checkbox"/> Visits to wider parts of the department <input type="checkbox"/> Visits to industry and to other Government Departments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Writing self-assessments <input type="checkbox"/> Writing assignments <input type="checkbox"/> Reflective journals <input type="checkbox"/> Revision <input type="checkbox"/> Peer discussions <input type="checkbox"/> Preparation for Assessments & Exams <input type="checkbox"/> One-to-one tutorials (with apprenticeship coach, line manager or colleagues) that contain guided learning or support for the apprenticeship

Effective Teaching and Learning

This requires effective planning between employer, apprentice and tutor. This can be delivered online or face to face, it can be 121 or in groups.

What is crucial is the teaching occurs in a natural learning environment. You must be able to listen, learn and recall what you are being taught. Ensure you have all the resources needed to do this including a room where you will not be disturbed, note taking and good ventilation.

You will receive direct teaching but also be required to undertake research and self-study.

Some advice -

- Be ready and punctual, have a drink or snack with you; also pen and paper!
- Receive regular teaching, and you will learn; work on this with your tutor and employer
- Pay careful attention to tutor training
- Practice, practice and practice - in and out of the programme at work (apply what you learn)
- Check understanding to eliminate mistakes and misconceptions!
- Regular and routine retrieval day to day
- Self-efficacy (I believe I can do this)
- Self-regulation (I will achieve this; I will control my learning behaviour)



On the job assessment

Against the knowledge, skills and behaviours of the apprenticeship standard you will compile evidence to demonstrate your learning and competence. Here are some of the assessment methods!



Evidence is likely to come from naturally occurring activities from the workplace and may include (but is not restricted to):

- *Products from the Apprentice's work.*
- *Records of Team Minutes/agendas.*
- *Direct observation of the Apprentice's performance by their Tutor.*
- *Outcomes from oral or written questioning.*
- *Personal statements and/or reflective accounts.*
- *Professional discussion.*
- *Authentic statements/witness testimony.*
- *Records of External Customer communications.*

Apprentices must provide tangible evidence to their Tutor and this evidence should come from different sources.

It is important that evidence is:

valid — it relates to the Apprenticeship Standard you are trying to achieve and claim

authentic — any evidence was produced by **you, and signed and dated!**

consistent — you demonstrate this throughout the programme

current — evidence should be current and demonstrate the work you do

sufficient — the work covers all the requirements at the time of submission.

You should check carefully that the evidence covers all of the above — if there is any doubt about whether to use a piece of evidence, ask the Tutor for guidance.

Evidence can be collected through a range of sources, such as the job, voluntary work, training and interests/activities outside work. Evidence can be produced in various formats, e.g. reports, work products, witness testimonies, expert witness testimonies, projects, models, audio tapes, photographs, videos.

Reflective Learning



Reflective learning is a learned process that requires time and practice. It is an active process involving thinking through the issues, asking questions and seeking out relevant information to aid understanding.

Reflective learning works best when you think about what you are doing before, during and after the learning experience. Reflective learning is therefore not only about recognising something new, but also about seeing reality in a new way.

Reflection is an important skill to develop and requires you to think about how you are personally relating to what is happening in the workshop or in your work.

The process of Reflective Learning

- What do I think about this Issue/topic/ experience?
- Explore understanding, perceptions and ideas
- Question assumptions
- Identify anything confusing or difficult to understand
- What more do I need to know to help my understanding?
- Develop and refine ideas and beliefs
- Identify, locate and interpret relevant Information and resources.
- How can I use this experience to improve my learning, thinking and working?
- e.g. What would I do differently next time?

Talk more with your tutor about this.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

If you as an apprentice has previous work experience, skills, knowledge and understanding which is relevant to the qualification, inform your Tutor about it.

The Tutor will ask for more proof in the form of, for example, letters from previous employers/training providers or details about any courses completed and will need to see certificates. For example, you may have completed work previously for another qualification, which is relevant to some of the criteria in the apprenticeship being studied.

The success of this process depends on the apprentice telling the Tutor what previous qualifications, work experience or knowledge they have and how they think it is relevant to their Apprenticeship. They should bring any certificates along to evidence this. The more information supplied to support the claim, the easier it should be to show competence to the Tutor.

Cheating and Plagiarism

Cheating is defined as any illegitimate behaviour designed to deceive those setting, administering and marking an assessment. Cheating in an assessment is a very serious academic offence, which may lead ultimately to expulsion from the course. Cheating can take a number of forms, including:



- The use of unauthorised books, notes, electronic aids or other materials in an examination
- Obtaining an examination paper ahead of its authorised release.
- Collusion, i.e. the representation of another's work or ideas as one's own without appropriate acknowledgement or referencing, where the owner of the work knows of the situation and both work towards the deceit of a third party (while in plagiarism the owner of the work does not knowingly allow the use of his or her work)
- Acting dishonestly in any way including fabrication of data, whether before, during or after an examination or other assessment so as to either obtain or offer to others an unfair advantage in that examination or assessment

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of representing another's work or ideas as one's own without appropriate acknowledgement or referencing. There are three main types of plagiarism, which could occur within all modes of assessment (including examination):

Direct copying of text from a book, article, fellow student's essay, handout, thesis, web page or other source without proper acknowledgement.

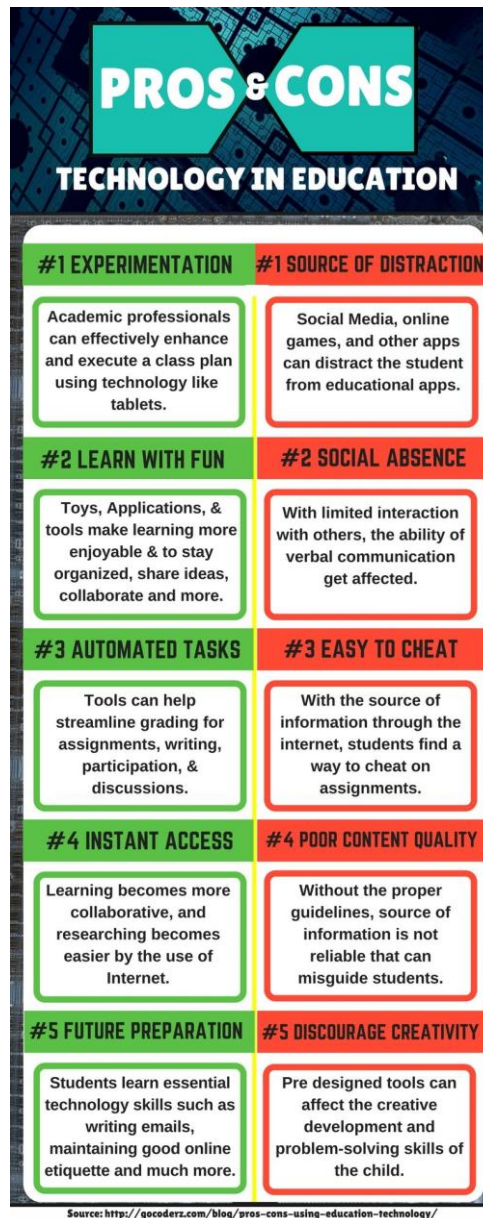
Claiming individual ideas derived from a book, article etc. as one's own, and incorporating them into one's work without acknowledging the source of these ideas.

Overly depending on the work of one or more others without proper acknowledgement of the source, by constructing an essay, project etc. by extracting large sections of text from another source, and merely linking these together with a few of one's own sentences.

Any abuse of acceptable academic conduct is subject to Awarding Body Regulation and will be treated under the Disciplinary Procedure of the Training Provider. A range of penalties may be applied to a student found guilty of cheating/plagiarism, including expulsion from the course.

Technology in Education: including Artificial Intelligence

As technology advances it brings different pros and cons. It's important to embrace technology, even challenge yourselves. However, we must also be aware of the disadvantages and the risks associated with it. This image gives a good overview.



Artificial intelligence is one of the most current technologies. Whilst it brings so many positives, in education its dangerous as it can aid cheating and plagiarism. Achieving Excellence strictly forbids any inappropriate use of AI. We strongly encourage apprentices to understand AI and its impact.

[What is AI? A simple guide to help you understand artificial intelligence - BBC News](#)

Harvard Referencing System

The Harvard system of citation is the most straightforward method of acknowledging other people's work, because initially all you need to do is mention the author and date of publication in the text of your work.

So, at each point in the text that refers to a particular document, insert the author's surname and publication year in brackets.

Customer compatibility management emphasises the controllability of customer to customer interaction in the higher education environment (Rowley, 1996).

The reader can easily locate the full description of the item you have cited by referring to the alphabetical list of references (or bibliography) provided at the end of your document. The system has the advantages of showing at a glance the authority used, who may well be recognised, and how recent or contemporary the information might be.

[A Quick Guide to Harvard Referencing | Citation Examples \(scribbr.co.uk\)](#)

Command Verbs

Here are the most common verbs used. Examples of what is expected, relating to a chair. Take time to read, so you have a clear understanding, we have highlighted in green what is expected in practice.

<p>Analyse</p>	<p>A chair is used for sitting on. It can be used for standing on to reach something or kneeling on or hiding under, but its most common purpose is to be sat on. It normally comprises of a seat a backrest and is supported by legs. The legs are positioned in such a way to balance the chair so that when it is sat upon it does not collapse or become unstable.</p> <p>Most chairs have four legs space to give stability to the chair. Chairs can have three legs again it is positioning of the legs under the seat which provides the stability and makes the chair fit for purpose. Without the backrest the chair would be classed as a stool.</p> <p>Chairs can be made in many different styles and use a variety of materials. The design and material choices are reflected in the cost of the chair. Traditionally chairs are made of wood however there is a new vast array of materials used in chair production such as metal plastic rubber and fabric. Material used will affect the weight of the chair. Chairs often used alongside a table for example whilst eating or working. They are used to support body weight in a sitting position. The height of the chair is very important as it if it is too high or too low it would not function at the table and maybe uncomfortable.</p>
<p>You therefore need to consider all the pros and cons, breaking them down, examining each part in detail, identify the main issues and show how the main ideas are related to practice and why they are important.</p> <p>Then bring them together with a conclusion – this should be around a page to a page and a half long.</p>	
<p>Describe</p>	<p>A chair may consist of a seat a backrest and is supported by legs. The legs are positioned to balance the chair. There are many different styles of chair.</p>
<p>You therefore need to ensure you provide an extended range of detailed and factual information about the topic in a logical way.</p>	
<p>Explain</p>	<p>A chair is used for sitting on. It normally comprises a seat; backrest and is supported by legs. The legs are positioned in such a way as to balance the chair; so that when it is sat upon it does not collapse or become unstable. Chairs can be made in many different styles and use a variety of materials. The design and material choice are reflected in the cost of the chair. Chairs are often used alongside a table, to support body weight at a convenient height whilst doing something at the table. Chairs can be produced in different sizes to make them suitable for individuals e.g. a child.</p>

<p>You therefore need to provide clear examples from your practice, describing or revealing relevant information in more detail.</p>	
<p>Evaluate</p>	<p>The chair I am considering has several strengths. It is made from a material which is hardwearing and with maintenance and care this chair could last me a lifetime. If the chair got marked, chipped or damaged it could be remedied by me at home. This would avoid having to find a specialist and having to travel to or haul the chair a great distance, at great cost. Another strength the chair has is its design. Because the back rest is moulded to an adult spine, it is possible to remain sitting on it for hours without feeling any discomfort.</p> <p>The main weakness of the chair is its colour. It is made from light wood and as long-term investment this may not compliment the shades and style of the room as it develops. Also, there is some intricate design on the back rest which could make cleaning difficult. This could result in a build-up of dust which would look unsightly.</p>
<p>You therefore need to consider the strengths and weaknesses, arguments for and against, consider similarities and differences, using available knowledge/experience/evidence, making a conclusive or reasoned judgement.</p>	

Key Stages of your Programme

So long as you are committed you will achieve your Apprenticeship within approximately 15-18 months. Here are the key stages of your learning journey:

Programme	Explanation
Induction and commencement of learning	Your induction will welcome you to the programme and introduce you to your tutor. Your tutor will guide you through what you will be working towards, how and when. They will also teach you about equality and diversity, health and safety, British values, PREVENT and Appeals procedures, etc. They will also outline all the support and opportunity available to you.
Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)	During Induction you will be required to undertake a simple assessment to gauge your basic maths and English skills and learning styles. You will also have a skills scan and interview to establish your best career development, and how to achieve that. This will also identify how well we can support you to achieving all your learning aims.
Skills Scan	This maps your job role against the DIPLOMA – and helps to decide which optional units are most relevant to your role.
Individual Learning Plan	All of this will help to create a learning journey which is outlined in your Individual Learning Plan. This will tell you exactly what you are working towards, how and at what times, etc. It will highlight all the support you will receive and how the qualifications will be delivered to you.
Contact / progress / visits / training (Monthly Visit Records) (Learning Reviews)	You will receive regular visits, according to your needs. During these visits you will spend several hours with your Tutor including 20% off the job training. During the visit you will work on your knowledge, functional skills, and Diploma. In addition to this and over several of these visits we will observe you in your job role to understand how well you are developing and if you can be signed off each unit. During each visit your tutor and line manager will review progress with you.
End Point Assessment and Achievement	Once all parts of the apprenticeship have been completed you will be formally signed off ready for your End Point Assessment. Once passed you will formally receive all your certificates.

Regular Learning Reviews

Every 12 weeks your tutor will conduct a formal progress review in order to ensure that you are progressing with your qualification, undertaking development activities and achieving the agreed objectives. Your reviews will refer back to the objectives and targets that have been agreed at enrolment and after each review. This review must be between you, your tutor and your line manager or mentor.



At each review meeting you will:

- Review progress against each aim of the framework i.e. Diploma, functional skills.
- Review learning activities that have been undertaken since the last review
- Plan support measures or further learning activities that can be undertaken to gain additional knowledge or skills
- Discuss and agree SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound) objectives for the following 12 weeks
- Review and update your Individual Learning Plan
- Discuss any areas of concern or barriers to success and how these can be overcome
- Discuss core learning areas of Equality and Diversity, Safeguarding, Health and Safety and Fundamental British Values
- Discuss any additional training you have received and how this has impacted on your role.

Functional Skills & BKSb

BKSb is the name of the system used to support you with your functional skills. If you are studying a level 3 or higher qualification, you must achieve level 2 English and Maths **before** you reach Gateway (EPA). If you are studying a level 2 apprenticeship, you must achieve level 1.



The time taken for learning Functional skills **cannot** be claimed from the 20% of the job allocation. This work must be done outside that time.

When you first start your apprenticeship, you will be given a login to access BKSb.

At this stage you should find and complete the Initial assessment. This will test the level of functional skills you currently hold. Having established the level, you are currently at; you should then complete the Diagnostic Test.

This will identify which subject areas you need to develop your knowledge in and produce a bespoke scheme of work for you to work through in your own time at your own pace. When you have completed the tasks set by BKSb and your Tutor, you should have the necessary skills to take the functional skills examination.

It is important that you deal with the functional skills issue as soon as possible. Doing a little work and leaving it for a while will mean you will have forgotten some of the work and you will be back to square one.

At the start of your course, focus on getting functional skills achieving within the first 3-6 months. This will not only allow you to fully focus on your apprenticeship, but it will also allow a little more time for relaxation when they are finished!

Remember, you cannot go through Gateway until you have level 1 (level 2 apprenticeship) or 2 (level 3 or above apprenticeship) in both English and Maths.

Some people struggle to learn using a system such as this and that is perfectly alright. Please discuss with your Tutor if you would prefer alternative ways of learning English and Maths.

Assessment of Functional Skills

Functional skills are assessed in two ways, by on-line assessment where you will take an on-line assessment on a computer, alternatively you may be offered a more traditional, paper-based assessment.

Personal Development

Throughout your apprenticeship we will give you further support with your career development. These may be in a similar subject to your apprenticeship, or in another area where you feel you may want to develop. Support will be embedded throughout your apprenticeship, but subject may include:

- Motivation to work
- Professionalism at work
- Managing conflict
- Dealing with difficult conversations
- CV writing and interview skills
- Confidence building
- Bribery Act, Communication,
- Display Screen Equipment,
- Equality and Diversity,
- Fraud and Fraud Prevention,
- General Data Protection Regulations,
- Infection Prevention and Control,
- Introduction to Fire Safety in the Workplace,
- Managing Conflict,
- Prevention of Money Laundering,
- Safeguarding Children,
- Self-Awareness and Personal Development,
- Stress Management,
- Teamworking



How is this funded?



Education & Skills
Funding Agency



Your Apprenticeship is being ultimately funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. They are a dedicated Agency who allocates government funding for training. They prioritise this funding and contract with training providers to deliver the programmes. Their objective is to support in the process of educating and skilling individuals by taking them to a higher level.

It is critical to understand you are in receipt of government funding. We source it on your behalf to deliver your Apprenticeship programme. You must enjoy the programme by being engaged, honest and hardworking.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to speak with your tutor.

Learning Agreement – A Charter

I, the Learner agree to the following:

- Be honest during all aspects of the programme
- Contribute to, agree with and fulfil my Individual Learning Plan
- Positively participate in training and assessment planning, sessions and activities
- Prepare assessment evidence as planned and agreed
- 100% attendance
- Complete training, tasks and assessments within the timescales given
- Agree feedback and implement improvements
- Keep an accurate log of learning hours
- Maintain high levels of health and safety
- To understand and exemplify safeguarding, British Values and Equality and Diversity

I, the tutor, agree to the following:

- To provide a thorough, insightful and engaging induction and training programme
- Ensure all interaction including assessment is fair and safe
- Agree training and assessment plans with the learner; help the learner achieve these plans
- Provide positive constructive feedback to the learner
- Ensure all interaction is kept confidential and sensitive to the learner
- Maintain accurate logs of learning and assessment activity.
- Ensure assessment is completed accurately and consistently leading to the learner being recognised for their achievement with a certificate.

Your employer:

- to support you through your training programme by providing an appropriate learning and training environment.
- to support you during your training by allowing you access to training opportunities;
- allow and provide 20% off the job
- ensuring you are aware of all the current working policies of the company;
- ensuring the learner you have an identified supervisor; and
- to allow your tutors to visit you as required and planned.

Fair Assessment

We are committed to achieving equality of opportunity at each stage of the assessment process. We aim to ensure that the assessment requirements and methods used within our qualifications are sufficiently flexible to enable the widest range of learners to fairly and reliably demonstrate competence.

We do however need to ensure that the assessment arrangements we allow are fair, reliable and do not give learners an either real or perceived unfair advantage.

Learners may have particular assessment requirements for a number of reasons, including:

- Being unable to complete standard practical and written tasks through temporary or permanent disability
- Being unable to complete standard written tasks through temporary or permanent disability learning needs
- Being unavailable through illness or injury to attend scheduled practical assessments
- Being unable to effectively demonstrate practical assessments through illness or injury

Apprenticeship qualifications normally require demonstrations of practical skills and written work. Some courses may require learners to complete multiple choice tests or written exam papers. If learners believe that there are reasons why they might find it difficult to show competence through methods proposed, they should discuss what alternatives might be available with their tutor.

Reasonable adjustments to accommodate particular assessment requirements must be approved prior to the assessment taking place. Requests should be submitted in strictest confidence to the tutor who will ensure the request is confidential. Further information is available in Achieving Excellence's Reasonable Adjustment Policy or speak with your tutor. Learners have the right to appeal any decision not to accommodate the proposed adjustment. The Appeals Procedure should be followed to appeal any decision made in relation to the request.

Equality and Diversity Policy

While you are on your apprenticeship programme, your tutor will aim to deepen your knowledge, understanding and experience of equality and diversity, and ensure your well-being and personal safety.

The amount and type of equality-related learning and development you receive will be dependent upon your role, experience and the amount of time you spend on programme.

We expect staff involved in your training to ensure you will be able to:

- Recognise your rights and responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity, personal safety and well-being
- Recognise the rights of other people
- demonstrate respect for people with different beliefs and cultures
- understand where and how to get information, advice and guidance on equality, well-being and personal safety issues

As a result, you will be able to:

- explain how to challenge, complain or report any incidents of discrimination, harassment, bullying, victimisation or abuse experienced while on a learning programme
- explain and give examples of safe learning and safeguarding practice
- explain what equality means and discuss how equality principles might affect you at work and in your daily life

Safeguarding

All of us at Achieving Excellence want you to learn in a safe environment, no matter where your training and learning take place.

Health and safety laws mainly protect you from dangers ('hazards') which might come from premises and equipment – but there are other hazards which can be even more dangerous.

These hazards can come from people – and we call our arrangements in this area our “Safeguarding arrangements”.

Why can you feel safe?

- All staff at Achieving Excellence who are involved in your training have been checked through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
- All the places you work or train in as part of your programme have been assessed and judged as meeting the required health and safety standards
- All staff involved in your training have been trained in safeguarding, including how to report any concerns they have about your welfare
- At Achieving Excellence, we have a number of specialist staff who will help you if you have any worries about your health, your safety or your general welfare

Additional information

The internet and other digital and information technologies are powerful tools, which give you new opportunities for games, research, shopping and social networking.

However, people can use the internet to put you at risk and it is important to be aware of some of these risks. They may include:

- People accessing illegal, harmful or inappropriate images or other content
- People grooming, bullying, abusing or using technology to radicalise
- People sharing/distributing photographs without permission

During your training – and particularly when you are using the internet by yourself – we want to make sure that you understand the dangers and can protect yourself from people who want to cause you harm, who can embarrass you, humiliate or bully you or, worse, can abuse or try to radicalise you.

Your programme will include some training on 'cyber safety'. However, we encourage you to develop your own knowledge and the following sites all offer useful support and information.

- Childnet International; awareness and advice www.childnet-int.org
- Digizen; advice and resources www.digizen.org
- Think U Know; awareness and advice www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- Report abuse, via the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre www.ceop.police.uk/reportabuse

Safeguarding – Your responsibilities

You could be the first person to suspect that one of your friends or fellow learners is acting differently.

Here are a few of the signs that someone you know might be showing which might indicate that they are being radicalised or adopting extremist views:

- Someone starting to be very secretive about his/her online viewing
- Someone showing feelings of isolation or loneliness
- Someone starting to become more argumentative or domineering in his/her opinions
- Someone talking about downloading or promoting extremist content
- Someone losing interest in activities they used to enjoy, distancing themselves from friends and social groups
- Altered appearance – change in style of dress and/or personal appearance
- Someone showing great intolerance of other races, cultures or belief
- Someone expressing extremist views including on Facebook or other social media
- Someone using extremist language or threatening violence

As part of your programme of delivery you will be asked to complete a British Values training module to raise your awareness of the risks associated with extremism and radicalisation and more information can be found at www.preventforfearandtraining.org.uk

Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

Achieving Excellence is committed to providing a safe learning environment for all of our learners and have a legal duty to report cases of suspected abuse. If you should have a safeguarding concern, please speak with your tutor. If you feel you cannot speak with your tutor you can speak to our Designated Safeguarding Officer or other officers (see safeguarding poster at front of this handbook):

Richard Shuttleworth

Should you feel at any point like you need to speak to someone about anything speak to your tutor or contact Richard Shuttleworth on 07792655931 or at rick@achievingexcellenceukltd.com.

Alternatively, you can contact our Lead, or in confidence the following:

Charlotte Parman, charlotte@achievingexcellenceukltd.com

Safeguarding@achievingexcellenceukltd.com

If you are at immediate risk, then contact the police without delay on 101 or 999.

For full policy please visit: [POL10_Safeguarding-policy-Feb-2024.docx \(live.com\)](#)

British Values – Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation

When operating this policy Achieving Excellence UK Ltd uses the following accepted Governmental definition of extremism which is:

‘Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs; and/or calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas’.

There is no place for extremist views at Achieving Excellence, whether from internal sources – learners, staff or Directors, or external sources – learning community, external agencies or individuals. Our learners see us as a safe place where they can explore controversial issues safely and where our tutors encourage and facilitate this – we have a duty to ensure this happens.

Any prejudice, discrimination or extremist views, including derogatory language, displayed by learners or staff will always be challenged and where appropriate dealt with in line with our Discipline Policy for learners and the Code of Conduct for staff.

As part of our wider safeguarding responsibilities, you should be aware of:

- Disclosures by learners of their exposure to extremist actions, views or materials of others outside of the Academy, such as in their homes or community groups, especially where learners have not actively sought these out.
- Graffiti symbols, writing or artwork promoting extremist messages or images.
- Learners accessing extremist material online, including through social networking sites
- Parental reports of changes in behaviour, friendship or actions and requests for assistance
- Partner schools, local authority services, and police reports of issues affecting learners in other schools or settings
- Learners voicing opinions drawn from extremist ideologies and narratives
- Use of extremist or ‘hate’ terms to exclude others or incite violence
- Intolerance of difference, whether secular or religious or, in line with our equalities policy, views based on, but not exclusive to, gender, disability, homophobia, race, colour or culture
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- Anti-Western or Anti-British views

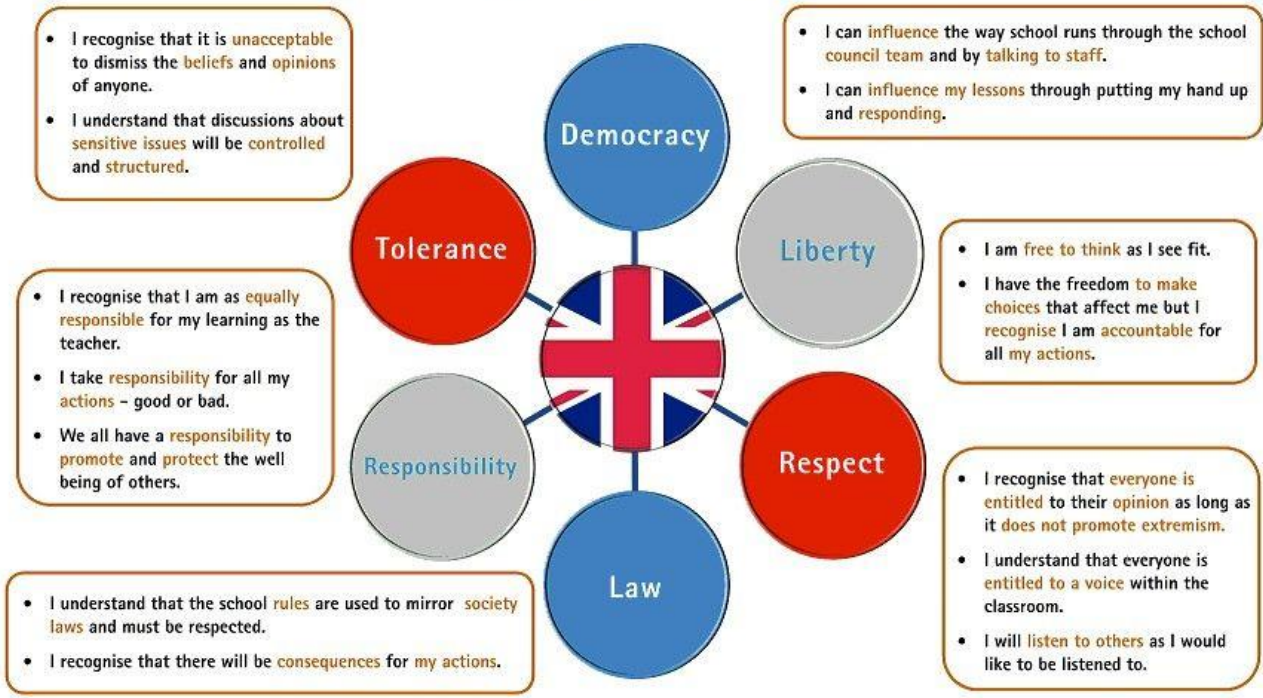
British Values are central to Achieving Excellence. There is no place for extremist views within the business. Any staff or learner found portraying any of the above will enter into the disciplinary procedure highlighted in this manual.

This is what previous apprentices have thought about British Values:



British Values Broken-down

Core British Values



✂ Social - Moral - Spiritual - Cultural ✂

Health and Safety Policy

We at Achieving Excellence recognise our duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the accompanying protective legislation. We will endeavour to meet the requirements of this legislation so as to ensure that we maintain a safe and healthy working environment. Our clients are aware of their responsibilities to ensure they take all reasonable precautions, to ensure the safety, health and welfare of those that are likely to be affected by our undertaking.

Our clients recognise as far as reasonably practical the duty to ensure the following:

- Provide and maintain a safe place of work, safe systems of work, safe equipment and a healthy and safe environment.
- To ensure that hazards are identified, and regular assessments of risk are undertaken.
- To provide information, instruction and training as is necessary to ensure employees and other are assured of a safe and healthy working environment.
- Promoting the awareness of health & safety and encouraging health and safety best practice throughout their organisations.

In order that we can achieve our objectives, and ensure our employees recognise their duties under the health and safety legislation whilst at work, we must ensure that we inform them of their duty to take reasonable care of themselves and others that maybe affected by their activities.

As learners enrolled by Achieving Excellence you agree to follow all of the above principles and practices by ensuring you understand health and safety, your role and responsibilities and any potential consequences. You will already have had a company induction where you were trained on health and safety and will have contact access to your health and safety policy. We ask that you remind yourselves of your responsibilities. To help you we will offer basic health and safety training as part of your induction and mandatory units.

All learners must have due regard for health and safety regulations both for themselves and for other persons who may be affected by their actions. Details of employer and employee responsibilities for health and safety can be found on the 'What you should know' poster on display in your workplace.

You should also ensure that you are aware of your Employer's Health and Safety Policy Statement and the arrangements that are in place for the organisations and management of health and safety.

You can access further information about health and safety from the ESFA Safe learner website at www.safelearner.info/learners

All **Accidents** must be recorded in your Employer's Accident Book and then reported to our Head of Quality, Richard Shuttleworth at rick@achievingexcellenceukltd.com.

Our Head of Quality will investigate accidents or near misses and report any injuries, diseases or dangerous occurrences (covered by the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1992 (RIDDOR)) to the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

Learner Assessment Appeals Procedure

You have the right to challenge the outcome of your assessment if you consider your assessment has not been carried out properly. You might appeal on a variety of issues listed below: -

- Conduct of the assessment;
- The opportunities offered in order to demonstrate competence of attainment;
- Access to assessment;
- Process of assessment;
- Access to Internal Verification; and
- Administrative issues e.g. failure to register/apply for certification

The first step is to discuss your issues with the people involved. You have the right to appeal to the following people (ask us for contact details where necessary but this is in order of resolution):

1. Your tutor
2. Your Internal Quality Assurer
3. A Senior Manager
4. A Director
5. The Awarding Organisation

Hopefully, in most instances the appeal can be resolved informally with these individuals. However, if you are still not satisfied with the outcome a formal appeal can be lodged with Achieving Excellence's Centre Manager. Ensure your appeal is put in writing within 14 days of being notified of the assessment decision.

Upon receipt of your appeal the Centre Manager will: -

- Set a date for the appeal to be considered by the appeals panel;
- The appeals panel will include as a minimum the Centre Manager, a Tutor, an IV and if required a representative from the Awarding Body; and
- The appeals panel will meet to consider the appeal within 30 working days of the Centre Manager receiving the appeal.
- You will receive written notification of the outcome of your appeal, detailing the reason for the decision made. This decision is final and cannot be further contested.

If you are still not satisfied you can contact our awarding Body, Highfield. They quality assure all our assessment and verification processes. Please contact them on 0845 2260350 / 01302 363277 info@highfieldabc.com

Complaints Procedure

The Complaints Procedure is intended to enable learners, potential learners, employers, clients and the general public to bring matters of concern about their learning experience to the attention of Achieving Excellence and enable investigation of those concerns with the aim of a satisfactory resolution. This process provides feedback to help improve the services for our students.

The informal approach

Usually, problems can be sorted out by explaining the situation to someone and discussing ways forward. We call this the informal approach, and we recommend you start here.

Who can I talk to?

This may depend on what the complaint is about. Your tutor might be the person to talk to first or you may prefer to arrange to talk to the manager who is responsible for your training programme.

The Formal approach

If you have tried the informal approach and are still not happy, you may initiate the formal approach. You should contact Achieving Excellence's Relationship Manager; you can do this by writing a letter stating the nature of your complaint:

Mike Austin

mike@achievingexcellenceukltd.com

4 Halifax Street, Ashton-Under-Lyne, England, OL6 8PQ

An initial investigation of the complaint will be completed within 10 working days and the outcome will be sent to you.

For full procedures please visit: [POL18 Complaints-Policy-v6 Feb-2024.docx \(live.com\)](#)

What if I don't agree with the outcome?

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you can escalate your complaint. To do this you must write to Achieving Excellence's Managing Director within 10 working days of the complaint response letter, outlining the basis of your complaint.

Rick Shuttleworth

Managing Director

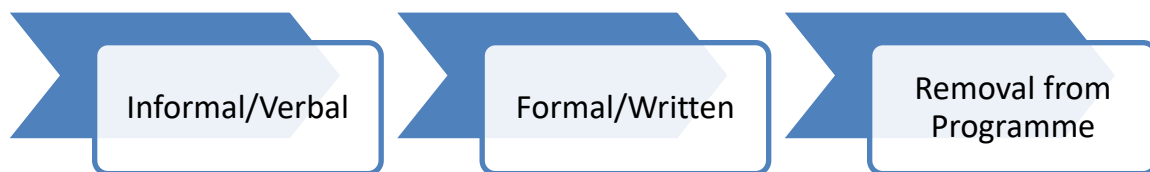
rick@achievingexcellenceukltd.com

4 Halifax Street, Ashton-Under-Lyne, England, OL6 8PQ

The Managing Director will review your case and respond within 30 working days of receiving your complaint letter.

Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures

Both you and your employer have now committed to the achievement of your apprenticeship and have a clear understanding of your roles and responsibilities. It is recognised that there may be occasions which are out of your control where you may have to break a commitment however Education and Skills Funding Agency funding is used to provide your apprenticeship and therefore if you are not progressing, regularly cancelling appointments or regularly not meeting deadlines the disciplinary procedure may be started which could lead to your removal from your apprenticeship.



Informal / Verbal

An informal warning will be issued if there are recurring cases of:

- Cancelling appointments
- Not producing work or submitting work
- Missing deadlines
- Inappropriate behaviour including lateness to sessions

You and your employer will receive a letter from your Internal Quality Assurer giving you a timescale in which you must get back up to date. The hope is that the informal warning is the only stage that would need to be entered. However, if this letter is ignored then we may progress onto your formal warning.

Formal / Written Warning

Where any informal warning has been ignored, or there are constant occurrences of the issues raised above, we will begin the formal warning procedure. This includes a meeting with your tutor and the IQA along with your employer to discuss your commitment to your apprenticeship and agree how you can continue to progress your apprenticeship.

At this stage, you will be informed that if commitment levels do not meet with improvement, then we have the right to remove you from the programme.

You and your employer will receive a letter from your Internal Quality Assurer to inform you of any formal warning.

Removal from Programme

Removal from programme will always be a last resort however if all attempts have been made to reengage you on your learning programme there may be no other option. Should this happen, you will be informed in writing by our Head of Quality.

The Training provider/Employer may proceed to proposing termination from the programme where a serious break to the code of conduct has occurred. Serious breaches include:

- Gross violation of safety procedures
- Theft, malicious damage or misuse of property.
- Violence or verbal abuse towards staff of learners
- Persistent non-attendance
- Breach of confidentiality
- Breach of the company's equality and diversity policy

Grievance Procedure

Any learner, who is the subject of disciplinary procedure and feels that they are not receiving fair treatment by a member of staff, can ask for the situation to be handled directly by the Managing Director.

The MD will investigate the grievance; respond in writing within ten working days of receipt of the grievance or ten working days of the meeting to discuss the grievance if one has taken place.

If the grievance is unresolved, the MD should try to agree a mutually convenient date to invite the learner and his/her representative to attend a meeting within 5-10 working days to discuss the grievance.

The MD will investigate the grievance; respond in writing within ten working days of receipt of the grievance or ten working days of the meeting to discuss the grievance if one has taken place.

The MD is the final arbiter in all cases of grievance.

If, on the occasion of a Learner being subject to dismissal for Gross Misconduct or for failing to improve the situation for which verbal warnings have been issued, Learners may identify a representative to accompany them to any discussion/interview, which is convened by Achieving Excellence UK Ltd

Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)

Achieving Excellence UK Ltd is working in accordance to very high standards to ensure that:

- The information and advice given to you is impartial, up to date, accurate, confidential and accessible to all learners
- The information, advice and guidance will include:
 - Pre-entry / entry guidance to help ensure you make a course choice which is appropriate to your long-term career aims and meeting your needs.
 - On programme guidance on progression into further study, training or employment as well as helping you overcome barriers, which could adversely affect the successful completion of your training programme.
 - Exit guidance including support for further career progression and other options for continuing learning related to your current and future roles.

Useful contacts

Reason for Contact	Name	Position	Contact Information
Compliment or Complaint about Quality of Learning Journey	John Johnson	Apprenticeship Manager	07711921270 john@achievingexcellenceukltd.com
Complaint about your treatment	John Johnson	Apprenticeship Manager	07711921270 john@achievingexcellenceukltd.com
Safeguarding Concern	Richard Shuttleworth	Designated Safeguarding Officer	07792655931 rick@achievingexcellenceukltd.com
	See poster at front of this handbook or your learning reviews.		
	Your Tutor	Tutor	TBA

GDPR and LRS Privacy Notice:

[Learners – Welcome to Achieving Excellence UK Ltd](#)

Other Useful Contacts

Whilst we want you to have a successful and enjoyable time on your programme, we recognise that there are times when some individuals may need some information, advice and guidance of a more personal nature.

We have included a list below of some useful contact numbers for organisations that can offer confidential advice, counselling and information. If there is something that you may need advice and guidance on which is not listed, please speak with your tutor who will signpost you to an appropriate organisation.

Contact	Telephone Number	Website
Curse Bereavement Care National Helpline	0870 167 1677	www.curse.org.uk
Victim Support	0845 303 0900	www.victimsupport.org.uk
Relate	0845 130 4010	www.relate.org.uk
National Debt line	0808 808 4000	www.nationaldebtline.org
Women's Aid Helpline (Domestic Violence)	0845 702 3468	www.womensaid.org.uk
Release Emergency Service (Drugs related issues)	0207 603 8654	www.release.org.uk
Turning Point (Drugs related issues)	0207 702 2300	www.turning-point.co.uk
Gingerbread (Support for lone parents)	0800 018 4318	www.gingerbread.org.uk
National Council for One Parent Families	0800 018 5026	www.ncopf.org.uk
Gamblers Anonymous	0870 050 8880	www.gamblersanonymous.org.uk
Shelter (Homelessness)	0800 800 4444	www.shelter.org.uk

Contact	Telephone Number	Website
London Lesbian and Gay Switchboard	0207 837 7324	www.switchboard.lgbt
Samaritans	0845 790 9090	www.samaritans.org
NHS Smoking Helpline	0800 169 0169	www.nhs.co.uk/smokefree
Alcoholics Anonymous	0845 769 7555	www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk
Learning Disability Helpline	0808 808 1111	www.mencap.org.uk
National Careers Advice	0800 100 900	www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk

