

# Information, Advice & Guidance Policy

Family:	Delivery
Reviewed and Updated:	April 2025
Next Review Date:	July 2026

## Policy Statement

The Skills Network is committed to the delivery of an Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) service that provides a range of opportunities for learners, employers and partners to make informed choices about their training and development needs.

We aim to ensure that IAG is an integral and valued part of our service in order to support our employees, learners, partners and employers. This commences pre- delivery of learning and continues throughout the whole of the Learner Journey. We are confident that the support and guidance we offer our learners across all provisions will assist in ensuring the retention, development, achievement and progression of all learners, irrespective of their individual needs.

## Policy Aims

The Skills Network is committed to delivering an IAG service that is:

- **Impartial**, providing signposting or referral to other providers or agencies as appropriate.
- **Confidential**, conforming to the Data Protection Act and the objectives of the Matrix Quality Standard for Information, Advice and Guidance Services.
- **Accessible**, visible, friendly and welcoming. Learners, employers and staff will be aware of the available opportunities for IAG.
- **Professional and knowledgeable**. Staff delivering IAG will be aware of the requirements of them in doing so and will be suitably inducted and trained to be able to undertake IAG activities competently, and supported and encouraged to undertake continuous professional development.
- **Targeted** at the needs of learners, staff and employers.
- **Reflective** of the diversity of customer needs and expectation, supporting them to make informed and impartial decisions.
- **Responsive** to the influence of staff and customers when developing, designing and implementing programmes.

## Policy Objectives

We will:

- Operate within the Matrix Standard and Education Inspection Framework (EIF).
- Establish effective communication with learners.
- Ensure effective communication with learners to provide relevant information enabling them to make appropriate choices.
- Provide access to curriculum specialist information and advice both pre-course, on-course and at exit (to support progression).
- Advice is available, for example, from trained learning support staff, curriculum staff, tutors and managers.
- Build and maintain effective networks and partnerships.
- Maintain and improve information materials.
- Refer customers to other providers if they need Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) that is outside the limitations of the service available from The Skills Network.

## Policy Implementation

### Learner Entitlement

All learners and prospective learners are entitled to accurate course information and advice on progression routes. We provide Impartial information, advice, and guidance to assist with course choice, career planning and transition into further study or employment.

Learners are advised of their entitlement to IAG services through the IAG Statement of Service (appendix A). This is promoted via our website and learner handbooks.

### Information Delivery

Information on courses is provided by marketing staff, curriculum staff, the website and the Learning Support Team. Where The Skills Network does not have the information requested, the individual will be provided with the name and contact details of the National Careers Service (NCS).

### Advice Delivery

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

Information and advice are provided by the curriculum and learning support teams or, in the event that The Skills Network is unable to provide the relevant advice, the individual will be signposted to the NCS.

### Guidance Delivery

Guidance can only be provided by fully trained competent staff, and potential and current learners can be signposted to the NCS to see an advisor face-to-face, by telephone or in written format. The Skills Network work collaboratively with the NCS to enhance its curriculum offer to learners. The Skills Network 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 learners receive impartial, high quality IAG.

### Delivery Limitations

The Skills Network is committed to providing high quality IAG but recognises its own limitations and refers all enquirers to other agencies within our partnership network, when required IAG cannot be provided directly by The Skills Network. We will ensure that all staff are aware of their own role and limitations and know when to refer learners. We are unable to provide information on areas other than education, training and employment opportunities.

## Confidentiality

Confidentiality and security in the holding of personal data will be carried out in line The Skills Networks Data Protection and GDPR Policy.

This will include:

- Offering confidential enrolment facilities
- Use of passwords on electronic systems
- Secure storage of confidential material

## Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Our commitment to equality is not about treating everyone the same, but recognising and respecting differences and treating each other with fairness and dignity. The Skills Network aims to support customers to make informed choices by ensuring that the IAG given is:

- Impartial
- Confidential
- Fair
- Transparent
- Accessible

## Monitoring and Evaluation

Systematic review will take place through our quality processes and annual self-assessment regime.

## Appendix A

### Information, Advice and Guidance Statement of Service

Our aim is to offer a customer-focused service, which is convenient for all clients to access and provide up to date, comprehensive and impartial information, advice and guidance.

The Skills Network will provide appropriate impartial Information Advice and Guidance service to potential candidates, current learners and employers.

The IAG service is designed to help individuals to make an informed decision if they want to find out how to improve their current job prospects, gain new skills, and achieve recognised qualifications. The service is provided throughout the three key stages of our learner journey.

### Getting In

At the initial contact, learners can access the IAG through the information available on our website or course materials. They can also obtain it by speaking to a Pre-Enrolment advisor. During the onboarding phase, the IAG can be accessed through the learner handbook, by completing the welcome course, or by scheduling a one-on-one appointment with a learning support advisor.

### Getting On

Participants in the Skills Bootcamp programmes can access Information, Advice, and Guidance (IAG) through regular appointments with a dedicated Careers and Employability Advisor, as well as by attending Careers and Employability teaching and learning sessions. For those enrolled in the Adult Learning programmes, IAG is available through consistent feedback from their assessors and additional sessions focused on understanding and applying command verbs.

### Moving On

Upon completion of a learning programme, learners can access the IAG service by booking a one-on-one appointment with a Careers and Employability advisor or by attending IAG workshops.

### **What we offer**

1. A confidential, impartial and objective information and advice service, covering learning opportunities and the skills and qualifications needed for employment or career progression across a range of sectors.
2. Written information on all courses and opportunities that The Skills Network offer
3. Support during your studies to assist your learning, personal development and career
4. Telephone / Internet services providing information and advice
5. A signposting and referral service to other providers and sources of information (if we are unable to offer the information or advice you require ourselves)

### **What can you expect from us?**

- We will be professional and knowledgeable
- We will be welcoming and friendly
- We will tailor our service to your needs
- We are happy to answer your enquiry by telephone or e-mail or to offer you an individual appointment
- We will treat you fairly and equally
- Respond to your written correspondence requests within 5 working days
- Respond to your telephone call requests within 3 working days
- We will acknowledge or reply to your email within 3 working days

### **What do we expect from you?**

- As much relevant information as you can give us so that we can answer your enquiry fully
- Prompt contact if you have any questions or concerns about the service
- To attend all interviews, which have been arranged with The Skills Network staff or potential employers at the given date and time
- Let us know if you need to cancel or reschedule any interviews with The Skills Network staff or potential employers
- To be honest and open with us, and work towards meeting your agreed aims
- To treat The Skills Network staff and fellow learners with respect

## **Confidentiality**

In order to provide the best possible service we keep a record of your details, your academic record, a summary of any discussion and a contact log with us.

This record can only be accessed by authorised staff or representatives who need to see this information as part of their work. The Skills Network complies with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

## **Equal Opportunities**

The Skills Network welcome enquiries from all young people and adults regardless of age, ethnic origin, disability, gender, marital status, background or religion.

## Feedback, comments and complaints

To help us continuously improve our service and address a wide range of your needs, we value your suggestions, comments, compliments or complaints (you may wish to do this anonymously) If you would like to comment on or compliment the service, or to make a complaint, relevant forms will be provided upon request. Our complaints procedure explains clearly how complaints should be made and how these and any unresolved issues are dealt with. All complaints are dealt with in the strictest confidence.

## Making Appointments

Appointments may be made by:

- **Email:** [progression@theskillsnetwork.com](mailto:progression@theskillsnetwork.com)
- **Telephone:** 01757 600709
- Requesting a call back through the **EQUAL learning platform**
- By speaking to your **Tutor**

