



Information, Advice and Guidance Policy

Approval by	Date of Review	Update on	Review	Review
Ahmed Khan	September 2022	12/04/2024	09/04/2025	09/04/2026
Signature				

- **STRATEGY**

To deliver a robust, impartial, unbiased, and effective IAG service to internal and external clients, organisations, and key stakeholders, that is responsive and meets their needs, providing a comprehensive service that is able to meet national standards and requirements.

STRATEGIC AIM

To enable potential clients on Next Step Training Ltd’s government funded or commercial training programs and employers to make well informed and realistic decisions about training and development needs, which will aid career progression, help them select progression pathways (e.g., training, employment, further education) and support employer’s training solutions and development.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- To provide impartial, unbiased IAG in a form that is easily understood by the recipient.
- To ensure IAG is treated confidentially as per the Data Protection Act and GDPR.
- To ensure IAG promotes and embeds equality and diversity throughout all of the provision.
- To systematically monitor, review, evaluate and continually improve our IAG
- To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of provision in delivering KCSIE (Keeping Children Safe in Educations 2023), Safeguarding and British Values outcomes.
- 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.
- Measurement of progress towards achievement of these strategic objectives will be via the business/development plan and KPI’s.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Next Step Training Ltd was awarded the Matrix Standard in 2013 and was self-assessed against the revised standards in 2016 and 2019 and annually revisits the IAG principles. Key strengths and any areas for improvement are embedded into the rolling three-year business/development plan and annual SAR & QIP.

Next Step Training Ltd adopts a robust approach to self-assessment, in line with Ofsted Education Inspection Framework requirements and effective quality improvement strategy.

Next Step Training Ltd provides IAG support for all clients (potential & existing learners & parents), employers, staff, and partners.

Next Step Training has settled a Strategic Plan 2024-2027, which is constantly monitored by an established Governance Board, making sure Next step is stable enough to firmly continue with its services.

- **CLIENTS**

AIM

To provide learners, parents, guardians, support colleagues and applicants access to IAG, which is current, updated, reliable, easy to understand, fit for purpose and addresses the wide range of questions and concerns that might develop when considering engaging in learning and skills. Our policy is to ensure IAG covers a range of activities and interventions that will help individuals to become more self-reliant and better positioned to manage their personal and career development, including training and learning. This includes embedding personalisation of learning into the ILP and program of learning, identifying individual learning needs and additional learning support where required, personal and social skills and Maths & English requirements, identification of vocational areas of learning for clients to embark on and development of employability skills, knowledge and understanding.

OBJECTIVES

1. To facilitate clients and learners to understand the range of opportunities available via provision of clear information in a wide 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 distance travelled against:

- Key Performance Indicators mapped to the Next Step Training Ltd's Business/development plan
 - Learner responsiveness as evidenced in individual learner retention, qualification achievement data, which is mapped back to the IAG outcomes and is part of the process that informs the identification of the most appropriate program of learning, initial assessment processes and target setting for learners
 - Process of embedding Equality and Diversity, Functional Skills and KCSIE and British Values 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 learning and training solutions for all individuals, supported by effective curriculum plans/course schedules.

- **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 of 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 offer and deliver government funded programs in specified vocational areas fully funded where possible to individuals who meet the Government Funding Body's eligibility criteria primarily for SME's taking on 16-18 Apprentices or at a co- investment for those upskilling 19+ or pay the Levy.
2. To evaluate and continuously maintain and 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 courses and any identified additional learning needs e.g., higher level functional skills, Mental Health & Well Being, TAQA or additional units.
 - Measurement of distance travelled against the key performance indicators mapped to the Next Step Training Ltd's business/development plan

3. To offer to carry out Organisational Needs Analyses /Training needs analysis for employers and identify, deliver or appropriately signpost employers to organisations who can provide effective training solutions.
4. To review ONA's and measure impact on a 6 monthly basis and discuss progression opportunities
5. To advise and support employers to understand any government initiatives and help them to register where necessary such as the Apprentice Service.

- **STAFF**

AIM

To provide all Next Step Training Ltd's 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 Next Step Training Ltd.

OBJECTIVES

1. To enable our staff to recognise the extent of 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 in IAG to a level that meets their job role and responsibilities ensuring continued professional development takes place within the Next Step Training Ltd CPD and staff training calendar of events as identified in the Training Needs Analysis.
3. To evaluate and continuously improve our performance measuring distance travelled against:
 - Staff retention
 - Staff Continuous Personal Development, including ETF (Education and Training Foundation), Online e-learning (Laser), Awarding Organisations and Next Step Training Ltd requirements).
 - Staff Appraisals and Next Step Training Ltd's own Training Needs Analysis
 - Induction training plans and six-monthly action plans
 - Key Performance Indicators linked to business plans
4. To continue to develop effective strategies and take effective action to improve the company performance through our employees that is in turn supportive of leaners

5. To maintain our team ethos and Next Step Training Ltd's Values
6. To ensure all delivery staff are annually registered with any current professional Bodies and keep up-to-date CPD

A flow chart is available for those members of staff who are engaging in first point of contact and delivery of IAG, the chart shows which members of staff specialise in certain areas and can give accurate and specific information.

The names, locations and up to date contact details of other providers is available in the main office to assist with sign posting

- **PARTNERS**

AIM

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

OBJECTIVES

1. To collaborate with partners involved in the supporting the delivery of the 16-18 and 19-23 Traineeship programme.
2. To collaborate with partners involved in delivery of the Apprenticeship programme
3. To collaborate with National Careers Services, IfATE, National Apprenticeship Services (www.apprenticeships.gov.uk), JCP, DWP and other referral and support agencies, to deliver the most effective provision (within our scope of delivery) meeting the needs and aspirations of young people, adults and employers.
4. To collaborate with funding bodies (e.g. DfE, ESFA), prime contractors
5. To measure against the national, regional, LEP and local economic and demographic targets for learner retention, achievement of qualifications and pathways
6. Review of the annual and three-year plans to respond to the changing financial and economic climate.
7. To ensure Employer and learner voice is heard and improvements made as a result of their feedback
8. To ensure Business/development Plan KPI targets are met

IAG PROMOTION - BEING AWARE OF THE SERVICE AND ENGAGING WITH IT:

- Promotional materials are circulated to main referral bases and organisations
- Next Step Training Ltd's staff attends promotional shows and events
- The marketing team ensures that information supplied on promotional materials is reviewed regularly and kept up to date

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Next Step Training Ltd's Recruitment Advisors, Business Development Advisors and Next Step Training Ltd's Training Advisors / Tutors are responsible for providing information advice and guidance to prospective applicants on recruitment to Next Step Training Ltd's programs.
- To provide learners with on program support to retain learners and enable them to successfully complete their qualifications / program curriculum standards.
- To provide learners with guidance on exit from Next Step Training Ltd's programs in relation to employment opportunities and career advancement.
- The Next Step Training Ltd's MD and members of the Senior Management Team has responsibility for line managing and quality assuring the front line IAG services.

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. Next Step Training Ltd's SMT (Senior Management 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 feedback and from the SMT will be subject to discussion at routine Management Meetings and quarterly governance meetings.

IN SUMMARY:

ENTITLEMENT

All prospective learners and enquirers are entitled to appropriate current IAG and/or assistance with course choice, career planning and transition into work.

THE ENQUIRERS

Externally may come from a broad range of sources e.g. careers services, schools, young people, parents, employers and awarding organisations, network members, JCP advisors, via the web site and. Gov website.

Internally may come from any of our existing learners or staff.

What IAG recipients can expect our Next Step Training Ltd team:

- to treat you with respect
- to have developed current occupational competence, undertaken specific training and are qualified with current and updated knowledge and understanding of qualifications and routes
- to be able to access up to date information on training and tell you about it
- will ensure confidentiality (exception being in cases of safeguarding discloses where confidentiality cannot be maintained for legal reasons)

Next Step Training Ltd as a company will:

- continue with external accreditation of IAG via Matrix assessment
- continue to improve the services it provides
- provide an effective signposting to other services
- embed quality initiatives through the ESFA and Ofsted framework
- continue to provide effective and robust staff training and CPD

How our clients can help us to improve our services:

Next Step Training Ltd will:

- welcome suggestions for improvement
- offer the chance to say what they think about the IAG and provision offered/given
- tell the client(s) who to contact and what to do if they are not happy with any of our services
- collate and analyse feedback from the learner and employer voice, focus groups and forums

REVIEW OF POLICY

This policy will be reviewed whenever there is a significant relevant change required and, in any case, at least annually.

THE LEARNER JOURNEY AND RELATED IAG SERVICE

