INTEQUAL

Information, Advice and Guidance Policy.

(To be read along with Prevent Action Plan, H&S and Equality and Diversity Policies.)

Intequal is committed to delivering 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.

The Intequal IAG service is delivered through:

- Pre-Learning: choosing a programme with Intequal, that is most suited to the learners needs, particularly in terms of location, content, level, delivery style, costs, qualification, entry requirements, support available, etc.
- At Induction: key information and advice related to the programme and the learning contract.
- In-Learning: via learner progress reviews, advice on learner support available, possible progression routes. For the employer, through bi-monthly progress reviews.
- Post-Learning: via final progress review, exit interview and learner questionnaire to identify further learning opportunities. For the employer, end-course reviews.
- At any time: referral to other agencies and/or providers for advice on careers, work and learning that may be outside the scope of what Intequal is able to provide.

To ensure that IAG services are accessible to all and are of high quality, we will:

- Work towards achieving and maintaining the Matrix IAG quality mark and ensure that IAG services meet the standards within this framework.
- Ensure that marketing, promotional and information materials are comprehensive, accessible and available in a range of formats.
- Monitor the effectiveness and improve the quality of IAG via:
    a. Customer feedback
    b. Staff feedback
    c. Employer feedback
    d. Partner College feedback
    e. Analysis of Initial Learner Profiles, ILPs, career aspirations and Learner Progress Reviews
    f. Analysis of outcomes for learners
    g. Annual review, renewal & update of information materials
- Provide opportunities for Intequal staff to obtain professional training and/or qualifications in IAG to ensure understanding of:
    a. IAG policy, strategy, aims, objectives, procedures and performance indicators
    b. Equality and diversity
    c. Confidentiality issues
    d. Learner support, including financial support
    e. Referral systems (internal and external)
    f. Customer Care, Health & Safety and Safeguarding
    g. Tech support
    h. Information sources

- Develop and review partnerships and networks to support provision of impartial IAG and referral to appropriate partners and other external agencies/services.
- Embed IAG in quality assurance, staff development and training and the performance review/appraisal processes.

IAG Aim.

All Intequal staff involved in the delivery of the IAG service are expected to support current and potential learners, employers and partners to make informed choices by giving IAG that is:

- Impartial:

We will look at career pathways within the IT industry and provide an understanding of what this offers against alternative career pathways. They will be told how to find out more – perhaps given a phone number or website address.

- Confidential:

Nothing from the discussion will be shared with anyone else without the client's knowledge or permission.

- Fair:

Clients will be treated fairly and equally, in line with ITSkillsman Training Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

- Transparent:

Learners will be told what will happen. If, at any time, learners require further support and advice, they will be encouraged to ask their tutor/assessor to explain.

IAG Objectives.

1. To provide impartial information, advice and guidance to learners at all stages of their learning journey, these include; pre-learning, induction, in-learning and post-learning on exit.

2. To provide 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 aspirations.

3. To provide support that enables learners to develop self and opportunity awareness.

4. To achieve nationally recognised qualifications.

5. To make a positive progression in employment and further learning and/or training.
In delivering these objectives the staff at Intequal will:
- Establish effective communication with learners and potential learners.
- Identify information requested by learners and potential learners.
- Supply information materials to learners and potential learners.
- Assist learners and potential learners to clarify their requirements.
- Identify a range of options for achieving learner requirements
- Enable learners and potential learners to select a course of action

- Maintain and improve information materials.

Implementation.
- Functional Responsibility to Lead and Direct the Services:
The overall responsibility for the planning, promotion and implementation of the information, advice and support services lies within the remit of the Operations Director.
- Promotion:
The Sales Manager is responsible for ensuring that our marketing literature and its website contain up-to-date, accurate and easy-to-follow information about the support we offer to users.
- Management:
The Sales Manager is responsible for ensuring that Employer Information clearly explains the information, advice and support arrangements available for employers and learners during their programme and that the information is always up to date.

- The Programme Manager is responsible for ensuring that the Learner Handbook clearly explains the information, advice and support arrangements for learners at induction, during the course and on exit and that the information is always up to date.

- The Programme Manager is responsible for signposting an assessor for each learner and for ensuring that this information is passed on to the learners.

- The Programme Manager is responsible for ensuring that sufficient resources are available to learners and potential learners to support their decisions about further training and/or employment.

- The Sales Manager is responsible for ensuring that the front line staff always have access to current information about course descriptions, target audience, vacancies, entry requirements, application process, progression routes and accreditation information as appropriate to their roles.

- The Programme Manager is responsible for ensuring that staff engaged in providing information and advice to young people and employers are suitably qualified and maintain their competence via CPD.

Delivery:
- The Sales Team are responsible for ensuring that the introductory presentations to potential learners, referral agencies and to prospective employers clearly state the scope of the services available to young people during recruitment and placement and that it is regularly updated.
- Staff who carry out induction to programmes are responsible for making sure that the young people understand the details and requirements of their learning programme, the location and access to the library of resources and the arrangements for support, information and advice, to include relevant staff, limitations of service and confidentiality.
- Assessors are responsible for providing learners with information, advice and support to successfully complete their programme and to progress to employment or further education and training where appropriate. The support may include referral to external agencies for specialist help.

Limitations.

We are specialists in our own provision and in-house support. Whenever it is appropriate, we will refer learners and potential learners to relevant services and options externally and make clear the benefits of using these services.

Monitoring and Evaluation:
The key measures of the effectiveness of the services in achieving the stated aims and objectives are:
- rates of retention,
- achievement,
- progression,
- client feedback and the service impact monitored through the defined softer client outcomes, (progression at work and peer group feedback (formal and informal).

Review and evaluation follows the annual quality cycle and includes:
- Monthly collection and analysis of client feedback
- Monthly capture and analysis of performance and client outcomes
- Monthly internal documentation audit
- Quarterly analysis of data for retention, timely achievement and progression
- Analysis of learner feedback and tracking distance travelled data for the cohort against individual plans
- Twice yearly observations of staff carrying out initial interviews with potential learners
- Twice yearly observations of staff preparing individual learning plans with new learners
- Twice yearly observations of staff carrying out progress reviews with learners
- The annual pattern of staff performance reviews
- Effectiveness of partnerships and networks and further developments of both.

The mechanisms for evaluation and continuous improvement include:
- Discussed at Team meetings and individual monthly performance meetings
- Reviewed at weekly/monthly meetings of SMT/ Operational Team.
- Quarterly evaluation of the effectiveness of the learner support by SMT, based on the examination of the evidence from statistics, staff observations and stakeholder feedback. Each evaluation results in an action plan which feeds into the annual Self Assessment Report (SAR) and resulting Quality Improvement Plans (QIP). The QIP is updated quarterly by programme teams.
- Equality and Diversity- this can be found within Intequals Equality and Diversity Policy Section 7.