

Information Advice and Guidance Policy

Policy No 206

Introduction and Purpose

Steadfast Training Ltd recognises the importance of delivering effective, impartial Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) in alignment with the matrix Standard and the eight updated Gatsby Benchmarks. The Department for Education (DfE) expects schools, colleges and Independent Training Providers (ITPs) delivering secondary and post-16 education or training to use the updated Gatsby Benchmarks. This guidance applies to learners in colleges and ITPs up to and including age 18, and learners aged 19 to 25 with a current Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Impartial Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) is available free of charge to learners and employers before enrolment, throughout the learner journey, and at completion or exit, as appropriate to individual needs and circumstances.

The Company is committed to supporting learners and employers to make informed decisions about learning and progression. Our staff are passionate about education and enabling learners to reach their full potential by developing their self-esteem, confidence, and skills.

Steadfast Training Ltd is committed to treating every individual with courtesy, fairness, and respect, regardless of gender, marital status, age, disability, religion or belief, or sexual orientation. All IAG is delivered in line with the Company's Equality and Diversity Policy.

Steadfast Training Ltd recognises and values neurodiversity, including (but not limited to) autism, ADHD, dyslexia, dyspraxia, and other cognitive differences. The Company is committed to providing inclusive and accessible Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) that meets individual needs.

Where required, reasonable adjustments will be made to the delivery of IAG to ensure learners can fully access information, understand their options, and make informed decisions. Adjustments may include changes to communication methods, formats, environments, or timescales and are agreed in line with individual learner needs and existing support plans.

It is the responsibility of all staff to follow the IAG Policy and to ensure that Information, Advice and Guidance is only provided within their occupational competence. Staff must not offer IAG in areas outside their knowledge, skills, or authority and must refer or signpost learners appropriately where required.

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Scope of the IAG Policy

This policy outlines how Information, Advice and Guidance is provided in conjunction with Steadfast Training Ltd's:

- Equality and Diversity Policy
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Policy
- Safeguarding and PREVENT Policy

Staff may provide information and advice through direct discussion and by signposting learners to web-based resources, limited to predetermined areas where the member of staff is authorised and occupationally competent.

This policy applies equally to all learners, including those who are neurodivergent and those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

Timing of IAG Delivery

Impartial Information, Advice and Guidance must be provided upon request and should also be offered at the following key stages:

1. Prior to enrolment and during initial discussions with potential learners
2. During learner induction
3. At 12, 24, and 36-week reviews (where applicable)
4. On programme, at completion and/or exit

Additional information is provided through course outline information sheets, which include eligibility criteria, entry requirements, and appropriate progression routes to further learning and accredited provision.

Young people aged 16 and 17 are required to participate in education or training until their 18th birthday, in accordance with the Education and Skills Act 2008.

Where a learner aged 16 or 17 withdraws from, or otherwise ceases to participate in, their programme before completion, Steadfast Training Ltd will provide appropriate and proportionate Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) to support progression and re-engagement.

Where required, the relevant Local Authority will be notified at the earliest appropriate opportunity, in accordance with statutory requirements and local reporting arrangements. Learners will be signposted or referred to appropriate education, training, apprenticeship, employment-with-training and Local Authority support services to support continued participation and reduce the risk of becoming not in education, employment or training (NEET).

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Learners with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

For learners with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), IAG will be delivered in a way that takes account of the outcomes, needs and support identified within the EHCP.

IAG may be provided more frequently and, where appropriate, in collaboration with parents or carers, employers and relevant external agencies. This will support the learner's progression, independence and sustained outcomes while taking account of their individual needs, wishes and circumstances.

IAG Requests and Recording

All requests for IAG must be acknowledged within **24 hours** of receipt via email, telephone, or post.

A response or appropriate signposting must be provided within **five working days** of the initial request.

Responsibility for the coordination of IAG delivery lies with the Centre Manager, who will ensure that careers/IAG activity is planned, monitored, evaluated and connected to the organisation's quality improvement arrangements. Senior leaders will provide oversight and appropriate support for delivery against the matrix Standard and updated Gatsby Benchmarks.

All IAG requests must be recorded and stored securely by the Quality and Curriculum team to ensure full implementation of this policy.

Records will demonstrate that Steadfast Training Ltd has met its stated timeframes.

Requests will not be recorded where doing so could breach the GDPR, Data Protection, or Confidentiality Policy (Policy No. 225).

Any agreed reasonable adjustments relating to IAG delivery will be recorded securely and reviewed regularly to ensure they remain appropriate and effective

The IAG Process Flow Chart is detailed in **Appendix 1**.

This policy will be reviewed annually and approved by the Centre Manager.

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Aims of the IAG Service

The aims of Steadfast Training Ltd's IAG service are to:

- Promote the benefits of learning
- Help individuals and employers overcome barriers to learning
- Support realistic, informed decision-making regarding learning, careers and progression

Principles of IAG Delivery

All Information, Advice and Guidance delivered by Steadfast Training Ltd is aligned to the seven elements of the matrix Standard: Purpose, Resource, Offer, Delivery, Outcomes for Individuals, Impacts for Organisations and Continuous Improvement. Careers provision for relevant young people is also informed by the eight updated Gatsby Benchmarks.

1. **Purpose** – Defines the organisation's aims and objectives in delivering IAG services, ensuring clarity of intent and alignment with user needs
2. **Resource** – Focuses on the availability and management of resources, including staff, materials, and technology, to support effective service delivery
3. **Offer** – Covers the range of services, information, and guidance provided, ensuring they are relevant, accessible, and promoted to potential users
4. **Delivery** – Examines how services are delivered, including methods, accessibility, and engagement with users to ensure effective support
5. **Outcomes for individuals** – Measures the impact of services on individuals, such as improved knowledge, skills, or decision-making abilities
6. **Impacts for organisations** – Assesses how IAG services contribute to organisational goals, efficiency, and overall performance
7. **Continuous Improvement** – Focuses on reviewing, evaluating, and enhancing services based on feedback, data, and quality assurance activities to maintain high standards

Appropriate and Proportionate Guidance – Information, Advice and Guidance will be appropriate and proportionate to the individual learner's identified needs, circumstances, aspirations and stage of learning. The level and type of support provided will reflect the complexity of the learner's needs and will include referral or signposting to appropriately qualified or specialist services where required

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Reasonable Adjustments – Adjustments are agreed alternative formats, additional time, simplified language, assistive technology, or supported appointments.

Accessible and Visible – Services are easy to access, clearly promoted, and delivered at times and in formats that meet client needs.

Professional and Knowledgeable – Staff have the skills and knowledge to identify client needs and provide support or appropriate signposting.

Effective Connections – Clear links exist between IAG services, with supported transitions where required.

Availability, Quality and Delivery – Services are targeted to client needs and informed by local, regional, and national priorities.

Diversity – Services reflect and respond to the diverse needs of all clients.

Impartial – Clients are supported to make informed decisions based solely on their needs and circumstances.

Responsive – Services respond to current and future client needs.

Friendly – Services are welcoming and encourage positive engagement.

Enabling – Clients are supported to become lifelong learners and manage their own career planning.

Learning and Work – Clients are supported to explore links between learning and employment.

Awareness – Clients are aware of relevant IAG services and have realistic expectations of support available.

Confidentiality – IAG discussions are treated confidentially and information is recorded only where necessary and proportionate. Confidentiality is subject to safeguarding, Prevent, legal and regulatory duties, and circumstances where information must be shared to protect the learner or another person. Learners will be informed, where appropriate, about how their information is recorded, used and shared in accordance with data protection requirements.

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2026 Matrix Standard, Gatsby and Quality Improvement

Steadfast Training Ltd will maintain an embedded and accessible careers/IAG offer with clear leadership responsibility, appropriate resources, defined staff roles and effective internal and external referral arrangements. The offer will be reviewed against the seven elements of the matrix Standard and the updated Gatsby Benchmarks.

1.A stable careers programme

2.Learning from career and labour market information

3.Addressing the needs of each learner – Particular consideration is given to learners who are neurodivergent and/or who have an EHCP. IAG delivery takes account of individual learning styles, communication preferences, sensory needs, and support requirements to ensure guidance is meaningful, accessible, and learner-centered.

4.Linking curriculum learning to careers

5.Encounters with employers and employees

6.Experiences of workplaces

7.Encounters with further and higher education

8.Personal guidance

For relevant learners, progress against the Gatsby Benchmarks will be self-assessed Termly (quarterly) . The organisation will use Compass or Compass+ where appropriate, or an equivalent documented process, to identify strengths, gaps and improvement actions.

The effectiveness and impact of IAG will be evaluated using appropriate evidence, including learner and employer feedback, participation, progression and destination information, achievement and retention information where relevant, referral outcomes, complaints and compliments, case studies and learner voice. Evaluation will consider not only whether IAG activity took place, but the difference it made to learners and to organisational performance. Findings from IAG monitoring and evaluation will inform self-assessment, quality improvement planning and staff development. Improvement actions will identify responsibility, timescales and intended impact, and progress will be reviewed through quality and standardisation arrangements.

Parents and carers will be engaged in careers information and progression planning where appropriate, particularly for learners under 18 and learners with an EHCP, while respecting the learner's rights, wishes, confidentiality and individual circumstances.

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Careers and IAG activity will include access to current labour market information and a range of academic, technical, vocational, apprenticeship and employment pathways. For relevant learners, meaningful employer encounters, workplace experiences and encounters with further and higher education or training providers will be planned, recorded and evaluated in line with the updated Gatsby Benchmarks.

Staff Qualifications and Training All staff, including administrative staff, tutors, and trainers, receive IAG training. Tutors and trainers are appropriately qualified to deliver Information, Advice and Guidance and are supported to undertake continuous professional development, up to Level 4 or above where required. Staff delivering IAG receive training in supporting neurodiverse learners and learners with EHCPs, including understanding reasonable adjustments, communication strategies, and appropriate referral pathways. Staff work within their occupational competence and seek specialist support where required.

Additional guidance for staff is provided in **Appendix 2 – Staff Guidance on IAG Delivery**.

Volunteers

Steadfast Training Ltd does not use volunteers to deliver Information, Advice and Guidance.

Promotion of IAG Services

Information about IAG provision is available on the Steadfast Training Ltd website and includes links to the National Careers Service:

- <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk>
- <https://steadfasttraining.co.uk/information-advice-and-guidance/>

Information on IAG provision is also included in company prospectuses and course information leaflets.

Documents are produced in a variety of formats and fonts to meet learner needs and are reviewed regularly to ensure accessibility and inclusion.

Staff are encouraged to remain up to date with IAG developments through monthly standardisation meetings.

Feedback and Monitoring One-to-one IAG activity is recorded where appropriate for continuity, monitoring and quality assurance, in accordance with data protection and confidentiality requirements. Learners are given opportunities to provide feedback at induction, during programme reviews and at exit. Feedback, outcomes and destination information will be analysed to evaluate the impact of IAG and identify actions for continuous improvement.

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Complaints All learners are informed of the procedure to follow should they wish to make a complaint regarding IAG provision

IAG Service Provision

In delivering high-quality IAG, Steadfast Training Ltd will:

- Provide information about its courses, including course characteristics and costs to employers
- Provide information about other local training courses and support services
- Signpost or refer individuals to appropriate training, support, or guidance services
- Maintain up-to-date information from other local training providers (or web links)
- Provide support with CV writing
- Provide web-based access for learners to support learning and access training or support services
- Provide advice on career opportunities linked to training programmes
- Offer basic skills assessments and signpost where appropriate

Limitations of IAG Provision

Steadfast Training Ltd will not:

- Provide information about the Company beyond course-related information
- Provide internet access for purposes unrelated to learning, assessment, or training support
- Undertake psychometric testing
- Provide IAG relating to personal relationships or personal difficulties beyond signposting to appropriate specialist services

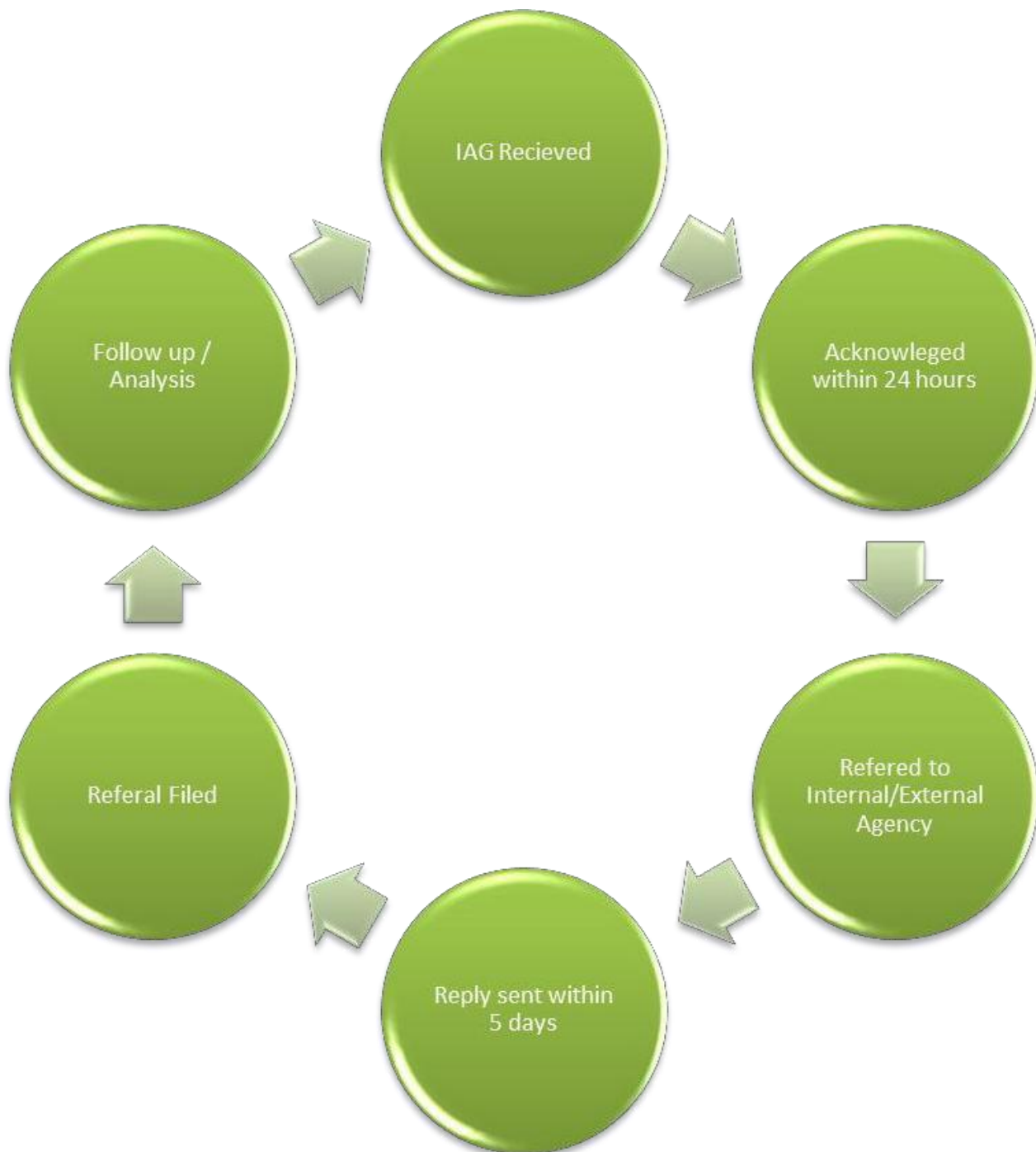
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Appendix 1

FLOWCHART IAG PROCESS



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Appendix 2

STAFF GUIDANCE ON IAG DELIVERY

The purpose of this policy is to provide training resource and guidance to staff members in respect to the procedure and response time frames of IAG delivery. It is also to be retained as a reference tool should any staff member be unaware of their pre-approved areas of IAG response.

Should a request be outside the remit of your pre-approved areas of competence outlined in this form it is imperative that you signpost the request to the centre for re- allocation.

Any staff member providing guidance to a learner in an area outside of their pre- approved competence will potentially face disciplinary proceedings. If you wish for a personal clarification of your own areas of pre-approved IAG response topics please contact us.

Information Advice and Guidance – Process

1. Upon receipt of an IAG
2. Please provide a record of acknowledgement to the learner. This can be verbal but it is recommended that it is recorded on the assessment record (if during an assessment visit) or via email or mail. This must be completed within 24 hours of initial receipt.
3. If the response is concerning an area in which you have direct occupational competence (as highlighted later in this resource) you can respond to the request or signpost to the relevant place for candidate guidance, complete an IAG request form and send to the centre.
4. If the response is concerning an area in which you do not have occupational competence then you must complete the initial request on the IAG request form and refer it directly to the centre for allocation or signposting within 24 hours of receiving the request.
5. The centre will then allocate the response to the person with the most appropriate occupational competence, who will be required to respond or signpost the IAG request within a 5 working day period.
6. The Centre Manager will then securely file the IAG request.

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Your Topics of Occupational Competence

Please note that the centre has considered and pre-determined the subject matters that we consider each job role to be occupationally competent to directly respond to. If you have received an IAG request that you feel able to competently respond to that is not in the pre-determined areas as outlined under your job role, then please contact the centre and we will allocate any additional areas of competence that are approved directly to you as an individual.

NOTE- you must not provide ANY information, advice and guidance if it is beyond your remit and you must not provide any IAG response AT ALL if you are still undergoing training or are in a probationary period.

Job Title	Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) discussion areas
CEO	Provide information about our courses, their characteristics, including cost to the employer.
Director of Operations	Provide information regarding course funding and criteria
Commercial Director	Provide a description of our IAG service.
Head Of Apprenticeships	Signpost to pre-approved sites and organisations using the web resource.
Business Development	
Central Administration Co Ordinator	Provide information about our courses, their characteristics, including cost to the employer. Provide information regarding course funding and criteria
Enrolment Advisors	Provide a description of our IAG service.
Centre Manager	
Curriculum Leads	Provide information about other local training courses and support services. Signpost to pre-approved sites and organisations using the web resource.
Internal Quality Assurer	Provide a description of our IAG service.
Assessor/Trainer/Tutor	Provide information about other local training course and support services. Provide help with writing of CV's Provide advice on possible careers related to our training courses Provide advice on specific courses and delivery of units Offer basic skills and learning style assessments and to signpost where these will assist in the achievement and progression Signpost to pre-approved sites and organisations using the web resource.

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Enrolment Advisors	Provide information about our courses, their characteristics including cost to the employer.
Key Account Manager	Provide information regarding course funding and criteria Provide a description of our IAG service. Signpost to pre-approved sites and organisations using the web resource.
Administrators	Provide a description of our IAG service.
Finance & HR Controller	Signpost to pre-approved sites and organisations using the web resource.
Central Administration Co Ordinator	
Marketing Coordinator	
Careers Advisor (any person holding NVQ/QCF Level 3 or above in IAG delivery)	Provide a description of our IAG service. Provide information about other local training course and support services. Provide help with writing of CV' Provide advice on possible careers related to our training courses Provide advice on specific courses and delivery of units Offer basic skills and learning style assessments and to signpost where these will assist in the achievement and progression Signpost to pre-approved sites and organisations using the web resource. Signpost and refer people to other training services and support services Research and refer to any organisation, body or research tool considered appropriate to learners request Provide Careers Guidance signposting
Designated Safeguarding Leads	Deal with all safeguarding concerns, signpost to appropriate external support as required.

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