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## *Learner Handbook*

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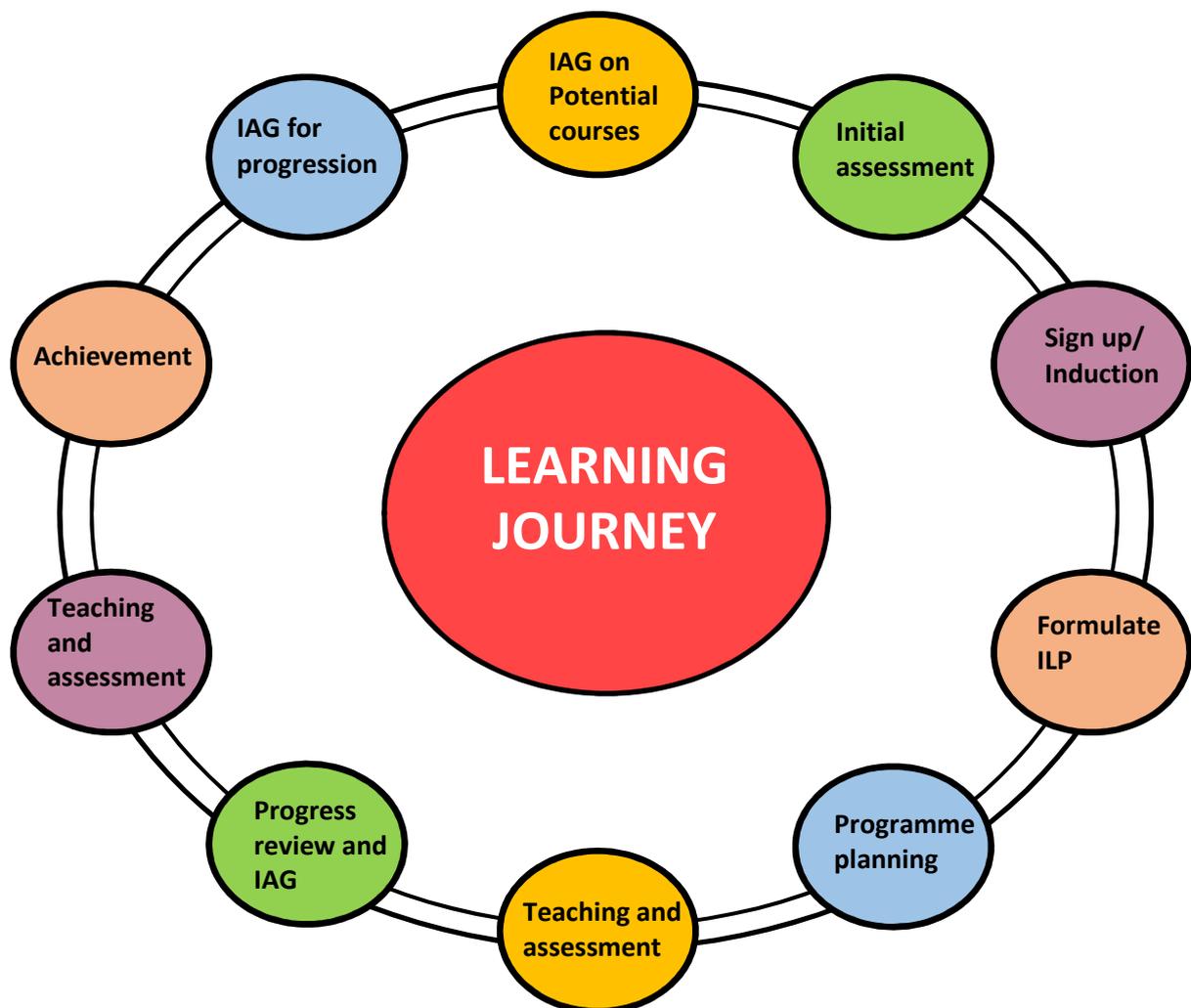
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## Welcome to FW Solutions, your Work-Based Training Provider!

This learner handbook has been developed to provide you with the basic information you need upon starting a programme with FW Solutions. We hope that you find it a helpful first step and if you have any suggestions on how we may improve it for future learners we would be delighted to hear from you.

Good luck on your learning journey!



## **Introduction to FW Solutions**

FW Solutions is a specialist training provider delivering programmes in Business Administration, Customer Service, Childcare, Residential Childcare, Playwork, Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools, Hospitality, Catering, Leadership and Management.

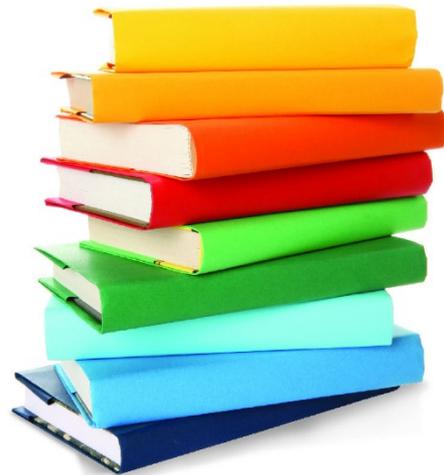
FW Solutions has been operating since 2008 and supports employers and learners in the regions of North and West Yorkshire, Humberside and the North East of England.

We are a quality driven company who pride ourselves on supporting our learners and employers to achieve their aspirations and chosen qualifications or apprenticeships.

### **Our Mission Statement:**

FW Solutions Ltd is an independent provider of high quality education and training solutions, providing development for both learners and employers. We commit to offer superior training by ensuring we take into account each learner's needs and learning styles. All training will be delivered by highly qualified, specialist tutors and we provide our learners with straightforward, web-based resources to make learning flexible and enjoyable.

FW Solution's Ltd. vision is to be the preferred provider in the North for employers, learners, funding agencies and local authorities with exceptional work based learning and employer engagement.



## **Qualifications, Frameworks and Apprenticeship Standards**

FW Solutions offers a range of apprenticeships and qualifications in Childcare, Playwork, Hospitality, Catering, Business Administration, Customer Service and Leadership and Management.

If you access funding to complete your chosen Apprenticeship pathway, currently you will undertake what is known as a 'Framework'. The framework is broken down into different components which include:

- Qualification Credit Framework (QCF) Diploma or Certificate
- Employee Rights and Responsibilities (ERR)
- PLTS – Personal Learning and Thinking Skills
- Functional Skills (as required)

Your appointed Teaching and Learning Coordinator (TLC) will make you aware of what your framework consists of in your first meeting.

### **Apprenticeship Standards**

The new standards put employers in control of designing apprenticeships, so people are equipped with the skills that meet the needs of their organisation. The main changes are:

- Replacing the existing frameworks with short, simple and accessible apprenticeship standards describing the skills and knowledge that an individual needs to be fully competent in an occupation, written by groups of employers from that industry.
- Improving the quality of apprenticeships through higher expectations of English and maths.
- The introduction of independent end-point assessment (EPA).
- Giving employers' control of the funding so that they become more engaged customers and involving them in the end-point assessment so they agree the apprentice is competent to work in the chosen industry.

### **Advanced Learner Loans and Self-Funded Qualifications**

If you are funding a course yourself, either through an Advanced Learner Loan or paying for the course directly, you will not be working towards an apprenticeship. These qualifications are known as 'stand-alone' qualifications and are taught and assessed in the workplace, with knowledge and competence elements, depending on the qualification you have chosen.

### **Model of Delivery**

When starting either an apprenticeship framework, standard or stand-alone qualification with FW Solutions, you will be supported in your workplace every month by your allocated Teaching and Learning Coordinator (TLC) who will deliver a series of teaching and learning sessions.



### **P - Personal Statement**

Your own reflection of what happens over a period of time within your workplace; this can also be used for any evidence from your workplace that may need to be included in your portfolio.

### **WT - Witness Testimonies**

A written and signed account of something that you have done that your Teaching and Learning Coordinator has not seen but has been witnessed and recorded by someone else.

### **APA & RPL - Accreditation of Prior Achievement & Recognition of Prior Learning**

You can, if necessary, refer to relevant, past qualifications. These, if they meet the required standards, give you the evidence for your knowledge.

### **QA - Questions and Answers**

Sometimes your Teaching and Learning Coordinator will want to ask you questions. Provided the questions are straight forward, this will be done verbally. If the question is more complex, or a more in-depth answer is required, you may be asked to write down your answers

### **WP - Tasks and Work Products**

Tasks are pre-planned activities that you may be asked to carry out to demonstrate performance criteria. A series of tasks can be found on our website.

Work products are documents that are a result of some other kinds of work that you may have carried out during the course of your natural working day, such as an email you have sent.

### **PD - Professional Discussion**

Digitally recorded discussions affirming knowledge of your workplace, activities undertaken, its policies and procedures.

### **AS - Assignments**

Assignments are pre-set and linked to detailed assignment briefs detailing the exact requirements for the work to be covered.

### **End Point Assessment**

Learners working towards an apprenticeship standard will take part in an end-point assessment, a new way of assuring quality in the apprenticeship system. It replaces the existing model of continuous assessment resulting in qualifications described above.

Once your employer agrees that you are competent at your job and ready for end-point assessment, you will be tested on your knowledge and practical capabilities. This will be carried out by an independent assessment organisation chosen by your employer and the assessor must be independent of, and separate from, the training provided by FW Solutions and your employer. You will usually be graded Pass, Merit or Distinction but if you do not pass this end-point assessment you will not achieve your apprenticeship.

## Your Portfolio

We call the work that you produce for your portfolio 'evidence of learning'. Evidence must meet the following requirements:

**VALID:** Relevant to the subject for which competence is claimed.

**AUTHENTIC:** Produced by you.

**CURRENT:** Sufficiently recent to create confidence that the same skill, understanding or knowledge persists at the time the evidence is claimed.

**RELIABLE:** You can consistently perform to this level.

**SUFFICIENT:** Your evidence fully meets the requirements of the course.

You are likely to find that on some occasions the evidence you provide for a topic or an area of learning also meets the requirements in another area. You are encouraged to become familiar with all of the learning outcomes in your apprenticeship or qualification so that you can recognise when this situation arises.

## Timescales/Deadlines

At the start of your course, you will also be given an expected completion date. The length of this will depend upon the route and level of your chosen apprenticeship or qualification. It is important that timescales are adhered to so that you progress in line with the individual learning plan you will have agreed during your first meeting with your TLC. Failure to meet pre-set deadlines may have implications on funding and any future funding for on-going professional development.



## **People Involved in the Delivery of Qualifications**

### **Teaching and Learning Coordinator (TLC)**

This is the allocated person who will support you in your workplace. They provide the teaching and learning required to ensure you have the necessary knowledge, understanding and practical skills to complete your apprenticeship or qualification. They will also support you with the English, ICT and maths aspects of your apprenticeship framework or standard (as required). They will assess any work completed and provide you with constructive feedback and regular updates to support your progress.

### **Internal Quality Assurer (IQA)**

This person, sometimes called an Internal Verifier (IV), is responsible for ensuring the work undertaken by all Teaching and Learning Coordinators meets the required quality standards. They may occasionally accompany your TLC and observe planned teaching and learning or assessment sessions. It is important to remember that they are checking the quality of the work undertaken by your TLC and not making judgements on your work.

### **Subject Verifier (SV)**

The Subject Verifier is employed by the Awarding Body i.e. Pearson or ProQual to ensure FW Solutions is meeting the required quality standards. They typically attend FW Solutions' Head Office twice per year and may ask to meet with you, or speak with you to discuss how your course is going and whether we are providing the appropriate support. Any meetings would be agreed and planned well in advance.

### **English and Maths Support**

All learners, regardless of apprenticeship or qualification, must take initial assessments to determine the current level that you are working at. These are completed at home, before your first meeting, on an online system called BKSB. You should have completed these initial assessments already before receiving this learner handbook.

If you did not achieve maths and English GCSEs at Grade A\*-C or Grades 9-4, FW Solutions will deliver English and maths sessions alongside your apprenticeship. You will learn through a combination of online tutorials on BKSB and tasks set by your TLC. Within the first three months of commencing your apprenticeship, you will take Functional Skills tests in English and maths where appropriate. These tests are carried out in your workplace using an online platform.

If you feel you require more one-to-one support, FW Solutions can appoint a specialist TLC to support you.

Learners working towards stand-alone qualifications do not have to take Functional Skills Tests.

## FW Solutions Employees

FW Solutions have a highly qualified and competent staff team. All TLCs have minimum qualification criteria in place to ensure a high standard of delivery to our learners:

- All TLCs have experience working in the sector that they are delivering.
- All TLCs hold relevant occupational qualifications, teaching and assessor qualifications.
- IQAs hold occupational qualifications, assessor qualifications and IQA qualifications.
- All managers hold management qualifications.
- All employees are Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) checked every three years.
- In addition to this, a robust programme of continuous professional development training (CPD) and networking is planned for all employees.



**nus** APPRENTICE  
**extra**



If you are registered on an apprenticeship programme with FW Solutions, you can apply for an NUS Apprentice extra card (fees apply).

Applicants can get money off shopping in your favourite high street stores, cinema offers, discounted food and drinks in your favourite restaurants or less expensive visits to your chosen theme parks and much, much more!

Discuss this with your TLC, contact us at Head Office or apply online at:

<http://www.apprenticeextra.co.uk/>

**Health and Safety**

Effective health and safety management is integral to the overall management of learners at FW Solutions and we are fully committed to ensuring that health and safety is planned, organised, controlled, monitored, reviewed and resourced.

The health and safety of learners is a fundamental value for FW Solutions to ensure that learning takes place in a safe, healthy and supportive environment. In addition, we consider that safe learning is essential to maximise learner's experience and achievement.



FW Solutions have an unequivocal commitment and primary 'duty of care' for health and safety of learners. We have a clear expectation that this duty will be fully met together with our legal and contractual obligation. Running parallel to this is our policy to adopt a 'best practice' role with regard to the promotion of learner's health and safety whilst in the workplace.

Competent people will be appointed to assist us in meeting our statutory duties including, where appropriate, specialists from outside the organisation. Every employee must co-operate with us to enable all statutory duties to be complied with.

*Our Health and Safety Policy* is available to view on our website and will be regularly monitored to ensure that the objectives are achieved. It will be reviewed and if necessary, revised in the light of legislative or organisational changes.

## Safeguarding Young People and Vulnerable Adults

Child Protection is about recognising abuse & neglect and acting on it. Safeguarding is about keeping children, young people & vulnerable adults safe. In simple terms, Child Protection is re-active and Safeguarding is pro-active.

FW Solutions aims to safeguard learners from:

- Sexual abuse or inappropriate relationships
- Grooming
- Physical & emotional abuse or neglect
- Domestic violence
- Inappropriate supervision by staff/volunteers i.e. 'Bad Practice'
- Bullying
- Cyber Bullying
- Self-harm, risky behaviour
- Unsafe activities & environments
- Accidents e.g. road/home
- Crime
- Fear of crime
- Exploitation including financial abuse, sexual exploitation, forced marriages
- Immigration issues
- Potentially unsafe environments e.g. parks/playgrounds
- Homelessness & unsuitable housing
- Victimisation due to race, sexuality, faith, gender or disability

The Government has put two schemes in place to eliminate the chances of recruiting known abusers into the education sector. DBS – Disclosure Barring Service and the Vetting and Barring Register held with the I.S.A. are ways of checking the background of anyone applying for a role in education.

A particular threat that is facing learners in the modern world is cyber-bullying/harassment. Cyber bullying is when a young person (under the age of 18) is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or targeted by another young person using the internet, mobile phones or any other type of digital technology. If a person is over the age of 18, these actions are defined as cyber-harassment.

Any learner wishing to report an incident about another learner or work colleague should in the first instance speak to their TLC.

*Our Safeguarding Policy* is available to view on our website and will be regularly monitored to ensure that the objectives are achieved. It will be reviewed and if necessary, revised in the light of legislative or organisational changes.

## **Prevent Policy - Preventing Radicalisation**

Building resilience in our young people and the promotion of fundamental British Values is at the heart of preventing radicalisation. We do this by providing a safe place in which all learners can discuss issues, and we aim to give them and their employers the knowledge and confidence to challenge extremist beliefs and ideologies.

FW Solutions is required under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to '*have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism*'. We take this duty seriously and we responsibly carry out four key actions: risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training and IT policies. If a member of FW Solutions staff or an employer deem a learner to be 'at risk' under our Prevent Policy, we will refer to the Channel Programme, which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

In terms of training, staff have received training to familiarise them with the Prevent Duty and have undertaken WRAP training (Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent). In terms of internet safety, we ensure suitable policies are in place to keep learners away from extremist materials.

We recognise that we play a vital role in keeping learners safe from harm, including from the risks of extremism and radicalisation, and in promoting the welfare of learners in our care.

*Our Prevent Policy* is available to view on our website and will be regularly monitored to ensure that the objectives are achieved. It will be reviewed and if necessary, revised in the light of legislative or organisational changes.

## Safeguarding and Wellbeing Help Lines

Browse the Wellbeing Hub website at [www.mywellbeinghub.co.uk](http://www.mywellbeinghub.co.uk) for some great links and information on your wellbeing. You can submit safeguarding concerns via the 'Contact Us' page.

### Below are also some useful help lines:

NSPCC	<a href="http://www.nspcc.org.uk">www.nspcc.org.uk</a>	
Carers UK Advice Line	<a href="http://www.carersuk.org">www.carersuk.org</a>	Tel: 080 8808 7777
Child line	<a href="http://www.childline.org.uk/">www.childline.org.uk/</a>	Tel: 0800 1111
Ofsted	<a href="http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted">www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted</a>	
Career Advice	<a href="https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/">https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/</a>	
ESFA	<a href="http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/education-and-skills-funding-agency">www.gov.uk/government/organisations/education-and-skills-funding-agency</a>	
Dept. for Education	<a href="http://www.dfes.gov.uk">www.dfes.gov.uk</a>	
Equality and Human Rights Commission	<a href="http://www.eoc.org.uk">www.eoc.org.uk</a>	
Health and Safety Executive	<a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk">www.hse.gov.uk</a>	
Citizen Advice Bureau	<a href="http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/">www.citizensadvice.org.uk/</a>	
Debt Advice	<a href="http://www.nationaldebtline.co.uk">www.nationaldebtline.co.uk</a>	
Talk to Frank	<a href="http://www.talktofrank.com/">http://www.talktofrank.com/</a>	Tel 0300 123 6600
The Samaritans	<a href="http://www.samaritans.org">http://www.samaritans.org</a>	Tel 116 123 (UK)
Bullying and Harassment	<a href="http://www.bullyonline.org">www.bullyonline.org</a>	
National Minimum Wage	<a href="http://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates">www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates</a>	

## Comments, Complaints, and Compliments

We value your views and welcome any comments you may have about our provision. We will invite you to participate in annual surveys to tell us how you feel about your training and the service we provide. We will treat any concerns you may have very seriously. Wherever possible your TLC should be made aware of any concerns and should deal with them quickly and effectively.

We also have a written complaints procedure which you can access via our website or ask your TLC for a copy.

We try to handle any complaints quickly, confidentially, and fairly, and in a way which is sensitive to the situation. For complaints specifically relating to discrimination and

harassment, Sandra Hardy, in her role as Equal Opportunities Adviser, will be available to offer advice and support. We would suggest that you take up any work-related concerns with your employer to begin with, although we would be happy to advise and support you.

## **Equality and Diversity**

Equality of opportunity means working to ensure that no learner or employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, gender, age, ethnic or national origin, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, care responsibility, HIV status, trade union activity, political or religious belief or because of where they live.

FW Solutions endeavours to:

- Promote good relations among employees and learners and create conditions which contribute to the full development and potential of all its members.
- Create an environment which promotes equality of opportunity in education and employment, free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, or victimisation of any kind.
- Create a climate where employees and learners are empowered to have the confidence to challenge acts and behaviour which contravene FW Solutions', and its associated organisations', equality and diversity policies and the law.
- Equally respect all employees, learners, and users of its services.
- Judge fairly and appropriately each applicant for a job vacancy, promotion, or training.
- Support and reward learners and staff fairly.

*Our Equality and Diversity Policy* is available to view on our website and will be regularly monitored to ensure that the objectives are achieved. It will be reviewed and if necessary, revised in the light of legislative or organisational changes.

## **Learner Involvement**

The Learner Voice is about considering the perspectives and ideas of learners and respecting what everyone has to say. It is about giving learners the opportunity to express their opinions and providing appropriate ways to listen to concerns, interests and needs.

We encourage you to provide us with feedback throughout the duration of your course to let us know how you are finding the learning process. If a particular way of learning is not working for you or you have any suggestions to make we endeavour to put changes in place to help you. FW Solutions conduct teaching and learning surveys at the end of every meeting and mid and end of course surveys so we can keep in touch with your views, needs and concerns.

## Learner Code of Conduct



FW Solutions is committed to providing first class learning with a responsibility to all learners to provide professional standards of teaching within a safe and motivating learning environment.

As part of this, learners must also accept and undertake various responsibilities. These form the basis of a Code that every learner must observe.

The Learner Code is important as it aims to ensure that everyone works within an environment that is safe, secure, and conducive to learning.

Unacceptable behaviour is defined as – ‘any behaviour which impacts negatively on teaching and learning’. Whilst staff are urged to be sensitive to learners’ individual circumstances, it must be emphasised that there are no exceptions in the application of the responsibilities outlined in this Code of Conduct.

This Code lists each learner’s responsibilities and describes the various stages in the FW Solutions disciplinary procedure. It should be noted, however, that as a general rule, the conventional disciplinary procedures with learners in adult education are relatively rare. Learners are mostly following programmes of their own choice, all are employed and very few are under 17 years of age.

### Responsibilities

Learners must:

- recognise and observe FWS’s and employer’s policies and procedures
- show respect to others and not intimidate anyone
- allow others to learn and work without interruption or disruption
- attend appointments regularly and punctually where this is a requirement of the course
- observe all health and safety regulations set down by FW Solutions and employers
- observe the no smoking regulations
- know and follow the emergency evacuation procedures
- recognise that your TLC has a responsibility for learning undertaken
- not damage equipment, materials, or buildings

Examples of unacceptable behaviour/misconduct that may lead to disciplinary action are listed below:

- abusive language or intimidating verbal or physical behaviour towards learners or members of staff
- deliberate misuse of, damage to, misappropriation or theft of, any learning material and/or equipment
- cheating or copying other learner’s work
- anti-social or disruptive behaviour e.g. any behaviour that infringes upon others

- Misuse of the email or internet system by transmission or downloading of any material in the following categories will constitute gross misconduct and could potentially lead to disciplinary action (defamatory i.e. criticising individuals or organisations, offensive or obscene material, sexist, racist, or offensive on the grounds of religion, untrue or malicious, protected copyright material, pornographic material of any kind)
- Plagiarism

## Appeals Procedure

Learning providers are required, as a condition of approval with the Awarding Bodies, to implement an appeals procedure to use if they wish to challenge an assessment decision made against their performance, or their product evidence.

If you are unhappy with a decision, you must follow this appeals procedure:



*Step 1:* The learner should inform their appointed TLC of the issue within five working days of the grievance arising. Both parties will endeavour to resolve the issue to their mutual satisfaction within 10 working days. If the learner feels that the TLC should not be approached at this time, learners can follow step 2.

*Step 2:* If the matter is not resolved to the learner's satisfaction, they must contact their Internal Quality Assurer at FW Solutions to discuss the issue. The Internal Quality Assurer will complete a complaints form and hold a meeting with the learner and the TLC and make a decision. The meeting will take place within 14 days of the complaint being received by FW Solutions.

*Step 3:* If the issue is still not completed to the satisfaction of both parties, the internal Quality Assurer will provide a written report to the Centre Co-ordinator who will then arrange a meeting with the External Quality Assurer, learner and TLC. We will endeavour to arrange this meeting within 10 working days.

The decision made by the External Quality Assurer will be final.

## Progression



After completing a Level 2 apprenticeship or qualification, learners often progress onto Level 3 qualification. Learners may need to be in a supervisory or senior position at work as Level 3 usually qualifies learners to work unsupervised and also to supervise others.

Learners who have completed a Level 3 apprenticeship or qualification may have the opportunity for promotion to managerial roles and undertake Level 4 and 5 apprenticeships or qualification with FW Solutions.

Upon completion of your existing course, FW Solutions will provide full advice and guidance on the progression routes and professional development options available to you.

## Fee Charging

Learners who are funding their own study must pay their fees as agreed with the FW Solutions representative at their initial sign up meeting.

If you are applying for an Advanced Learner Loan to cover the cost of your course, it is your responsibility to complete and submit the appropriate paperwork to the Student Loans Company in a timely manner. The Student Loans Company will pay your fees directly to FW Solutions.

FW Solutions will claim any Government funding that you are entitled to directly, to pay for the cost of the apprenticeship. Co-investment will be agreed with your employer before commencement of your apprenticeship.

## Help and advice on payment

If you apply for an Advanced Learner loan to cover the cost of your tuition fees, you can find further information at the following locations:

<https://www.gov.uk/advanced-learner-loan/overview>

FW Solutions does not provide private funding and is therefore not liable under the guidelines of the Consumer Credit Agency. All guidance regarding Advanced Learner Loans is provided after consultation with all relevant documentation issued by the Student Loan Company (SLC) and any discrepancies or questions not covered by the 'frequently asked questions' resources will be referred back to the SLC for clarification.

