

Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) Policy

1. Statement

Transit Community Support CIC are committed to the development of a whole organisation approach to IAG. We aim to provide a free and impartial service that ensures each of our learners are supported to identify their own continuing training needs and to make informed decisions about how to improve their employment prospects and skills, obtain a qualification, gain a promotion, or just make the most out of their current job, whilst also ensuring that our employers' training and support needs are accurately identified and met.

2. Introduction

Transit Community Support CIC views the process of giving information, advising and guiding clients & learners as crucial in preparing them, not only to achieve their aspirations, but also to manage the transition to new roles and situations throughout their lives and to develop independence in their decision making.

We will maximise the benefits for every client & learner by ensuring staff receive the support they need for their own development and to enable them to support clients & learners to fulfil their potential and experience success through an educational and training environment that responds to individual need and stimulates and challenges each and every learner.

3. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on how Transit Community Support CIC will effectively deliver its IAG service as an essential part supporting the community members and empowering them to take charge of their day to day tasks.

4. Scope

This policy applies to all staff and clients accessing IAG provided by the CIC.

5. Definitions / References / Key Terms

The Service – refers to the information, advice and, or, guidance provided by the Company to support individuals in identifying their needs, learning, work and life goals.

Clients – refers to people who access the service whether they are internal (employees of the Company) or external users of the service i.e. employers, learners, parents or guardians) potential beneficiaries or other agencies seeking advice on behalf of their clients.

Information – refers to data on learning and work opportunities conveyed through printed media, audio visual materials or computer software, or through information officers in careers or other helpline services.

Advice – refers to helping a client to interpret information and to understand their options or how to go about a given course of action in relation to their own personal circumstances, their abilities and targets and may include signposting to refer clients who may need more in-depth guidance and support.

Guidance – refers to the exploration of the client's circumstances, including their ideas, values, needs and beliefs in relation to opportunities or issues that are confronting or confusing them, to support them to develop new perspectives and solutions to problems and be able to better manage their lives and achieve their potential. Guidance may also involve advocacy on behalf of some clients and, or, referral for specialist guidance and support.

6. Objectives

Our objectives are to:

- empower clients to make informed decisions to develop independence in their decision making
- ensure that the delivery of IAG within the Company is informed by social and economic priorities at local, regional and national levels and is responsive to changes and developments both internally and externally, including changes to our clients' markets
- support the improvement of clients' completion and progression rates and therefore enable them to achieve their study and career goals
- work proactively and collaboratively internally to enhance the effective delivery of IAG
- identify and work in partnership with external organisations to inform and enhance our service to clients

We will achieve these objectives by:

- raising awareness of the service so that clients know what they can expect and how to access it
- producing and regularly reviewing an annual development plan to ensure we continually improve our service
- providing timely and targeted IAG to clients at key points along their journey that recognises and is responsive to diverse and distinct need
- ensuring our verbal, printed and online information and advice is personalised, accessible, accurate and up to date
- providing opportunities for clients to access advice and guidance in a variety of ways including one to one, online feedback, email and telephone
- ensuring members of staff have the training, skills and knowledge appropriate to their roles
- encouraging and acting on client and staff feedback
- identifying key internal and external stakeholders and agreeing processes by which we can work collaboratively

7. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all staff, within the remit of their work role, to provide information, advice and guidance. It is important for each staff member to understand that they must NOT offer guidance in areas outside of their occupational competence and that they should, instead, signpost learners to other staff members or providers as appropriate.

Staff responsibilities in the delivery of IAG are as follows:

Administration staff provide IAG by handling enquiries about products and services Transit Community Support CIC offer and, where necessary, by transferring callers to an appropriate person for further support.

Line Managers provide IAG to staff in respect of their own personal and career development at one to one meetings, appraisal and on an ongoing basis.

8. Staff Training

All staff will receive in-house training and, where appropriate, a recognised qualification will be identified as part of their training plan. Additionally, one to one support is available via an IQA or the Quality Manager to any staff member on request. Updates and workshops will be made available as and when necessary to all staff by the Quality Manager.

9. When will IAG be provided?

IAG will be provided at 4 stages:

i. At the engagement stage

The initial engagement with clients is a crucial part of the IAG service. To ensure that this is effective, Transit Community Support CIC's staff will:

- staff dealing with queries have full details of products and services
- ensure that information given is current and relevant
- clients are signposted to appropriate people to deal with their queries
- appointments are booked and planned effectively

ii. At the recruitment stage i.e. initial assessment and induction

This part of the service can be delivered on an individual or group basis. Individuals wishing to participate have the option for a one to one IAG session with an assessor or tutor. At this stage Transit Community Support CIC staff will:

- look at individuals' service needs and identify appropriate support
- discuss the benefits of the support
- provide advice on any issues or concerns.
- inform the clients of the next steps and advise them of the on-going support available.

iii. Ongoing and at Progress Reviews

The option to access on-going information advice and guidance can be organised as and when required. It will also be offered at learner progress reviews. This part of the service will include:

- information of progress and achievement
- Identification of targets remaining to achieve
- timeframes for achievement
- help to overcome any barriers
- referral for independent IAG if required

iv. End of programme

The key to encouraging clients to continue in support and develop their skills further is the provision of IAG at the end of a period of support such as exit information.

- review their experience
- discuss how this may be of benefit
- complete an evaluation of their support
- consider other options for continuing support
- agree their next steps with them.

10. Information materials

Transit Community Support CIC will provide sufficient information materials about its services available. These will consist of information about available programmes, newsletters containing updates and information that may be of use to the sector and handouts.

11. Recording of IAG

IAG will be recorded in clients' Individual Support Plan at the induction stage, on progress reviews and exit reviews upon completion of the support programme.

IAG provided additionally should be recorded on a Planning and Feedback record.

12. Quality Checks

The standard of IAG provided will be monitored through the observation of initial assessment, induction, progress and exit reviews.

Induction and final evaluations will also be analysed for feedback on the provision of IAG.

Progress and exit reviews will be audited to monitor the standard of recording of IAG.

13. Data Protection and Confidentiality

Transit Community Support CIC will handle information in compliance with the Data Protection Act and any current or subsequent human rights legislation, which guarantees a right of privacy.

Only agreed information will be shared with relevant partners in order to aid clients' progression or access to services from other providers.

We acknowledge that, on rare occasions, it may be necessary to break the basic rules of confidentiality. These may broadly be defined as situations where the safety, rights and liberties of other people or the person giving information may be seriously at risk, in which case, the client would be informed that information they are giving must be passed to an appropriate person.