



Providing Information, Advice And Guidance – Information For Tutors

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Introduction

Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) and Careers Education and Guidance (CEG) (where appropriate) must be embedded into all course delivery. It is essential that learners are fully informed about the options available to them and the available support to progress towards their career or learning aims.

Learners should be encouraged to take responsibility for their action points wherever possible. Tutors must ensure that learners are aware of appropriate next steps available to enable them to progress in their chosen area. For example, if a learner is on a basic IT course and they would like to further develop their newly acquired skills, what would be an appropriate course for them to progress onto? How can they obtain further information about the course?

The following information is intended as a guide for non-IAG qualified staff to assist them in delivering IAG to their service users. This list is not exhaustive and other organisations not mentioned here may provide a more appropriate service for some learners.

What is IAG

Career and learning based IAG offers:

- help with identifying training programmes or learning opportunities
- support with job hunting
- assistance overcoming barriers to learning or work, such as childcare, time or financial concerns
- CV advice and support
- covering letter and interview hints and tips
- relevant signposting (recognising when someone should be referred elsewhere)
- free, *confidential* and impartial support
- assistance with creating SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timely)

Why do we offer IAG?

IAG is provided to help people to make informed choices about their own future. It can:

- provide an opportunity for people to learn more about the services available to them
- enable people to progress within learning or work
- assist people in achieving their aims
- increase confidence and awareness
- help improve communities life, e.g. parent feels more confident with maths and can in turn pass this on within the family





Who is entitled to IAG?

Cheshire West and Chester Council's (CW&C) Skills and Employment Service is committed to providing IAG to all service users who request it. Service users include:

- people on adult learning courses provided by Skills and Employment and partner organisations
- individuals receiving support from the Skills and Employment Team, but who may not be currently attending a course, e.g. receiving support from an employment mentor
- members of the public requesting support on the telephone or via email or post

What are barriers to progression and how can we help people overcome them?

There are many reasons why people may find it difficult to access learning or return to employment. The role of the IAG Advisor is to help the person to overcome such barriers.

Examples of barriers into employment or learning could include the following, with some suggested support. This will be further explored in Signposting below.

- lack of childcare – contact CW&C Information, Advice and Support Service
- financial concerns – free courses, funded support (for means tested benefits), links to funding
- negative past experiences – discuss changes in teaching and new learning technologies
- low confidence levels – confidence courses, taster courses, personal support
- lack of transport – some colleges offer transport, identify courses in community learning centres
- language – English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses
- age – “lifelong learning”, specific courses for older members of the public
- not knowing where to start – offer brokerage service to help identify where and when
- poor literacy or numeracy skills – explain support available, courses in the community
- disabilities – explain accessibility support offered, refer to specialised support organisations

Signposting

Signposting is where we direct learners or service users to other services that may be able to support alongside or in addition to Skills and Employment. The following information provides an overview of some of the support available.

- Specialist Services including Safeguarding

Advisors should never advise on areas that they are not knowledgeable about or qualified in. Where specialist support is required, learners should be signposted accordingly.

For issues relating to the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults, contact the [Cheshire West and Chester Integrated Access Team](#); telephone 0300 123 7047 or the Emergency Out of Hours Team on 01244 977277.

Other organisations that provide specialist advice and support include:

[Citizen's Advice](#)[Cheshire West and Chester's Housing team](#)[Government Services and Information](#)

- National Careers Service

Learners requiring free, impartial careers advice and support can be referred to the [National Careers Service website](#) which has range of resources designed to assist with career development. There is also the option of speaking to a National Careers Advisor online for personalised support. To speak to an advisor call 0800 100900.

- Colleges and Community Learning Centres

Information about local colleges and universities and their support services for student can be found on the Cheshire West and Chester [Further and Higher Education page](#)

Links to local organisations offering adult learning opportunities, can be found on the Skills and Employment [Adult Learning page](#)

- Skills and Employment Hubs

The Skills and Employment Services have Hubs in Chester, Ellesmere Port, Northwich and Winsford. Hubs offer a range of free courses and services to support people aged over 19 with their job hunting and employability skills. As well as having free access to computers for job searching and applications, those registering with the Hubs will have the opportunity to work with an Employment Mentor who can offer one to one support searching for work.

Further information can be found on the [Skills and Employment Hubs page](#)

- Outreach courses at local community venues

Located in a number of schools and community venues, our Outreach courses help engage people in learning, often alongside their child's learning. Outreach aims to enhance the learner's own skills to prepare them for a return to work once they feel ready. Learners can progress onto other courses or into support to gain employment.

For further information, contact skillsandemploymentoutreach@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Further information can be found on the [Skills and Employment Outreach page](#)

- Volunteering Opportunities

Some learners may express an interest in voluntary work. The government's [volunteering page](#) contains links to several sites where learners can search volunteering opportunities within their geographical and vocational area. Information about [volunteering within the Skills and Employment Service](#) can be found on our website.





- Employment Support Projects

The Skills and Employment Service offer a range of projects to support residents with different needs. These projects provide services such as one-to-one sessions with an advisor, help with job searching, in-work support and liaison with employers, medical practitioners, carers etc. Full details of each project are available in the [Skills and Employment Prospectus](#). (Some projects are now part of Connect To Work, a government programme to supports people who have a disability, health condition or complex barriers to work).

Defining Futures (now part of Connect To Work)

For unemployed individuals aged 20 or over. Must meet one of the following conditions: have a physical disability, have a mental health condition, live in a rural area, homeless or at risk of homelessness, aged 50 or over

Employment Advisors in NHS Talking Therapies

For ages 16 or over, currently involved with the NHS Talking Therapies service. Participants should either be looking for work OR in work and needing strategies to deal with work situation OR in work and looking to change your work OR are returning to work after an absence.

Employment Directions (now part of Connect To Work)

For ages 16 and over with a diagnosed physical or mental health condition. Participants should be working, have been employed for at least 3 months and want to find paid work for more than 7 hours a week. Not in receipt of any other employment support or on another DWP programme.

Fresh Start

For ages 16-19 who need help deciding goals. May be looking to go into further education or training and seeking resources and tools to find work. Interested in learning a new skill.

Individual Placement Support – Drug and Alcohol Service

For working age individuals in structured treatment for drug or alcohol use who want to gain paid employment. Must be entitled to work in the UK.

New Ground

For ages 16-24 with an EHC plan or SEND barriers to employment. Must have experience of work and able to do 16 hours per week (if employment gained). Need to be motivated and flexible, and meet standards of attendance, timekeeping, behaviour and dress code.

Supported Employment (now part of Connect To Work)

For ages 18 and over with a diagnosed learning disability and/or autism. Must be unemployed, actively seeking employment and not in education or training

- Local offer – CW&C SEND Information, Advice and Support Service

The Information, Advice and Support Service helps parents and carers, children and young people who have difficulties with learning, and/or a disability from birth to 25 years. They offer help and support with childcare, parenting, childminder training, benefits and grants, other IAG including family and legal matters.





Further information can be found on the [Live Well Cheshire West website](#).

- Funding to Support Learning

Some learners may be entitled to receive financial support to help fund their learning. Entitlement depends upon individual learner circumstances and therefore learners should speak to the learning provider, or be referred to [the Government website](#) for further information.

- Recruitment agencies

The [National Careers Service website](#) has an informative section on choosing recruitment agencies under 'Careers Advice'. Learners could also speak to their local Jobcentre or Skills and Employment Hub to obtain the contact details of agencies serving the local area. Some recruitment agencies will also offer training for the roles they are recruiting for.

How is information recorded and stored?

Information obtained during IAG sessions is private and therefore should be treated as such under the Data Protection Act 2018, the UK's implementation of the [General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\)](#). The Skills and Employment Service also has its own [Privacy Notice](#).

Advisors should:

- ensure confidentiality (please be aware of exceptions to the need for confidentiality should a disclosure be made)
- understand that information people give is private and should not be shared without the service user's specific written permission. Occasionally advisors may need to share information with delivery partners for example. In these cases, enquiries must be anonymous if you do not have permission to share.
- use safe and secure storage facilities – locked cabinet and secure electronic file storage
- avoid using shared memory sticks and devices
- explain to the service user who may see the information (e.g. team members responsible for filing, inputting information onto the system etc.)
- ensure that people receive a copy of any information that is kept about them, or that they know they have access to it





How to keep track of learner progression

Those providing IAG may be required to keep track of learners progression in order to feed back on destination.

Remember to:

- contact people on a regular basis to check on progression and check if further support is required
- Request feedback – can the service be improved, was it useful?

If you are in any doubt about the advice to give, please refer your service user to a professional advisor for support

Cheshire West and Chester's Skills and Employment Service is Matrix accredited which means that the Service has been successfully assessed and awarded a nationally recognised quality kite mark for delivering Information, Advice and Guidance. Further information can be found on the [Matrix Standard](#) website.

