

Learner information and pre-course pack



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Introduction

Welcome to your training course with Exact Training. This handbook contains information about our policies and procedures and accompanies the course resources.

We strive to maintain high standards and our policies and systems are designed to uphold these and ensure your experience with us is supportive, informative and positive. If there is anything you would like to talk about please make time to chat during the course or contact us by phone or email.

Exact Training information and guidance

Health and Safety Policy

Exact Training is fully committed to matters concerning the health, safety and welfare of its staff and learners and will take steps to ensure that its statutory health and safety duties are met at all times, including duties required by the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Act (1999), and any other relevant legislation.

Exact Training will treat seriously any breaches of this policy and all instances of actual, or alleged inappropriate behaviour will be fully investigated. Staff found to be responsible will be subject to disciplinary procedures. Learners found to be responsible will be refused any further association with Exact Training. In order to achieve effective implementation of this policy, Exact Training will ensure that this policy statement is brought to the attention of all staff and learners.

Data Protection Policy

INTRODUCTION

Exact Training is fully committed to compliance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 ('the Act'), which came into force on the 1st March 2000. The company will therefore follow procedures that aim to ensure that any employees, contractors, agents, consultants, partners or other servants of the company who have access to any personal data held by or on behalf of the company, are fully aware of and abide by their duties and responsibilities under the Act.

STATEMENT OF POLICY

In order to operate efficiently, Exact Training has to collect and use information about people with whom it works. These may include current, past and prospective learners, clients and customers, and suppliers. This personal information must be handled and dealt with properly, however it is collected, recorded and used, and whether it be on paper, in computer records or recorded by any other means, and there are safeguards within the Act to ensure this.

Exact Training regards the lawful and correct treatment of personal information as very important to its successful operations and to maintaining confidence between the company and those with whom it carries out business. The company will ensure that it treats personal information lawfully and correctly.

To this end the company fully endorses and adheres to the Principles of Data Protection as set out in the Data Protection Act 1998, full details of which can be obtained from the Information Commissioner's Office at www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk.

Freedom of Information

Information provided on staff and candidates to any external organisation could be required by the regulatory authorities under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and could be disclosed to a member of the public upon request. This requirement is subject to exemptions and excludes personal information.

Further information on the Freedom of Information Act (2000) can be obtained from the Information Commissioner's Office at www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk

Equal opportunity and diversity policy

Exact Training is committed to promoting diversity and ensuring equality of opportunity and access amongst learners and employees, and undertakes to abide by the various legislation, codes of practice and guidelines set up to tackle or prevent discrimination. We acknowledge the diverse nature of our learners and welcome all to our courses. We will ensure that diversity is welcomed and that all learners are treated appropriately by staff and learners and supported throughout their learning experience.

Exact Training will ensure that no learner is subjected to discrimination for any reason, including but not limited to gender, age, race, ethnicity, disability, religion, nationality, health status, sexual orientation, learning difficulties, marital or social status. The only permissible exclusions are where any of the above may be a requirement of qualification or employment and will be discussed and any policy clearly laid out.

We will include awareness of and issues arising from diversity both on courses and in the future workplace and will investigate any issues brought to our attention promptly and sensitively, working towards a satisfactory conclusion.

We have defined *diversity* as awareness and recognition of different backgrounds, experiences and beliefs and accepting that others may have opinions that do not concur with ours but are no less valid. *Discrimination* is when a person is treated less favourably than other people due directly to issues such as but not limited to gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, health status or disability, marital status.

We expect all our learners to be open and accepting of others, especially where there are beliefs that are different to their own. This means working to create a supportive learning environment where difference and diversity is acknowledged and accepted and promotes respect and dignity for all by making any form of bullying, harassment or intimidation is unacceptable. Any form of bullying, harassment or intimidation, whether directly experienced or observed, must be reported to the tutor so it can be dealt with immediately.

However, if learners become aware of discrimination of any kind or consider that they are being discriminated against they may consider whether in the first instance it may be appropriate to raise their issue informally with the alleged discriminator, who may not be aware that their behaviour is causing offence.

If this is not appropriate or the learner is unwilling to do this we ask that they approach their tutor for advice or support, unless the tutor is the cause of the complaint in which case the learner should contact the office. The tutor will investigate the issue and if found to be correct will discuss the matter with the person/s involved. A decision will be made and discussed with the learner reporting the issue. If this is not satisfactory the issue must be taken to the Administration Director who will investigate further and whose decision is final.

Tutorials

All learners on courses of longer than two days duration will be offered the opportunity to discuss their progress with their tutor during the course or between the course and assessment. This may be face to face or by telephone.

We recommend that you take this opportunity as it will provide a chance to discuss both your current learning and your career development. We are also available in the future if you have queries or questions regarding your future career development.

Disability/Individual Learning Needs Policy

Exact Training is fully committed to meeting the requirements of the Equalities Act (2010) and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001) and aims to provide a culture and environment that promotes inclusive learning. Exact Training will conduct its affairs at all times in a manner that is consistent with this aim.

According to the Equalities Act, a disabled person is someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, including learners with:

- dyslexia
- other learning difficulties
- physical impairment or disability
- mental health conditions
- sensory impairment, e.g. hearing, speech or visual impairment
- medical conditions, e.g. HIV, diabetes, epilepsy

Exact Training is proactive in encouraging learners with individual needs to disclose their needs on its application form, so that it may work with the individual to provide support for successful completion of the course and qualification (where relevant). Exact Training will encourage all staff to highlight to learners the benefit of disclosing a disability or individual learning need, stressing confidentiality.

To accommodate learners with individual needs, Exact Training will:

- Only use accessible venues where possible
- Produce accessible electronic versions of all course materials
- Supply application forms and all course materials in large print/different colours, according to guidelines provided by the RNIB/dyslexia association
- Ensure that individual learning needs are met within the classroom including through supply of PowerPoint handouts in advance (large print or electronic versions) and access to a named support tutor
- Provide different/alternative assessment methods in consultation with YMCA Awards, including additional time for theory papers and use of non-disabled demonstrators for practical assessments
- Exact Training will treat seriously any breaches of this policy and all instances of actual, or alleged inappropriate behaviour will be fully investigated. Staff found to be responsible will be subject to disciplinary procedures.

Malpractice Policy

Exact Training takes any suspected malpractice seriously, for both staff and learners. Any suspected malpractice will be investigated according to YMCA Awards/SkillsActive policies.

Examples of Learner malpractice include:

- Non-compliance in observing the mandatory rules of conduct during an assessment,
- Resulting in fraudulent claims for certification
- Replication of another learner's work in either the practical, theoretical or portfolio aspect of assessment, resulting in fraudulent claims for certification (this can include plagiarism, collusion, personation, copying)
- Misconduct (learner behaviour such as offensive, obscene or discriminatory material; disruptive language or behaviour causing a disturbance; use of unauthorized aids such as mobile phones, MP3 players etc.)

Where an issue of misconduct occurs and is discovered or reported the following action will be taken:

- The Invigilator/Assessor is empowered to expel a learner from the assessment room
- The expelled learner's assessment paper must be securely retained and a report filed to the IQA Coordinator
- The report and assessment record must be available for submission to YMCA Awards and the regulatory authority (Ofqual) upon request
- If any of the rules of external assessment are deemed to have been broken by a learner, Invigilator or other person involved in the assessment process, then YMCA Awards may declare the assessment void

Access to Fair Assessment Policy

Exact Training will make every effort to ensure all candidates receive a fair assessment and will achieve this through the following:

All practical assessments will be managed by a chief assessor who will:

- ensure provision of appropriate facilities (quiet area, suitable equipment, space)
- manage time throughout the day
- oversee the assessment team

Where an invigilator or chief assessor believes that a fair assessment has not been offered they will complete a report using the Assessor Feedback Form. In such instances, the candidate will be contacted within two working days of receipt of the form and will be offered a new assessment opportunity at a mutually agreed time and venue, without any additional charge.

d) Special assessment requirements

Requests for a reasonable adjustment to assessment /special assessment requirements will be considered on an individual basis in line with YMCA Awards guidance. Any candidate who believes they may require this should make their request known to their tutor or a member of the Exact Training administration team at least one month prior to assessment.

Examples of acceptable adjustments/special requirements include:

- additional theory paper assessment time
- a verbal theory paper or self-evaluation
- use of a demonstrator during the practical assessment
- additional breaks

e) Internal assessment decisions

Internal assessment decisions will be made according to set criteria, made available to candidates at the start of their course or at least one month prior to assessment (if not attending a course).

f) External assessment decisions

Exact Training will make external assessment decisions known to candidates during feedback at the end of their practical assessment day or within 7 working days of receipt of the decision (if not attending/subsequent to attending a practical assessment).

g) Decisions

All assessment decisions will be graded as follows:

- Pass
- Refer

h) Assessment complaints and appeals

Complaints and appeals will be dealt with according to the Exact Training Complaints or Appeals Procedure as applicable.

Conflict of Interest Policy

Exact Training will ensure that assessment of learners (including internal quality assurance sampling) is not undertaken by any person who has a potential interest in the result of the assessment. This may include where a learner is known to the assessor or other staff on a personal or close professional level or where there has been a previous issue.

In these circumstances an independent or external assessor will be appointed. Where an internal assessment by such a person cannot be avoided, arrangements will be made for the relevant part of the assessment to be subject to scrutiny of another person, usually an independent IQA or the EQA from the Awarding Organisation.

Appeals Procedure

Exact Training is fully committed to dealing with appeals in an objective and timely manner and full details of our appeals procedure are provided on each course and assessment day. A short version of the appeals procedure is given below, a full version is held by the tutor or assessor and available for learners to read during the course.

SUMMARY OF LEARNER APPEALS PROCEDURE

Learners have the right to challenge the assessment decision made by their assessor. If an appeal is made and a meeting between the assessor and the learner fails to resolve the issue, the assessor will assist the learner further in using the appeals procedure. Appeals relating to a practical assessment will only be considered if video evidence is supplied.

A summary of the Appeals Procedure for learners is as follows:

Should a learner wish to make a complaint following their assessment, s/he must take the following action:

Stage one

- An appeal should be made to the Assessor, Chief Assessor or IQA as soon as possible after the assessment, preferably the same day, but within 5 working days is acceptable.
- If this does not resolve the appeal the learner should complete the Learner Appeal Form and submit to the Centre's Lead IQA within five working days from the date of the assessment – include any supporting evidence (see notes below).

- The Lead IQA will investigate the appeal and respond in writing within 7 working days.

Stage two

- If the learner feels that the outcome is unsatisfactory they should complete the relevant section of the Learner Appeal Form and submit to the Centre's Lead IQA
- Exact will then notify the YMCA Awards or SkillsActive External Quality Assurer (EQA).
- If the YMCA Awards EQA was not present or is unable to resolve the appeal issue, the learner will be directed to the third stage of the appeals process

Stage three

- The learner should complete a written appeal directly to the YMCA Awards/SkillsActive EQA, who will investigate the matter thoroughly and respond in writing within 21 working days
- If the learner feels that the YMCA Awards Lead EQA has been unable to bring the matter to a satisfactory conclusion, the appeal may be referred directly to the Head of YMCA AWARDS/SkillsActive, the fourth stage of appeal.

Stage four

- The learner may be offered a formal appeals hearing. This will be conducted within six weeks and will be conducted by the appeals panel at YMCA Awards/SkillsActive
- Provision of an appeals hearing will incur a nominal fee. The fee will be refunded if the appeal is upheld.

Every effort will be made to resolve the appeal. Where the learner is not satisfied with the result, Exact Training will contact an independent assessor or, where not applicable, will direct the candidate's written appeal to the awarding organisation.

Please note that an appeal relating to a practical assessment can only be considered if there is recorded evidence of the assessment.

Quality Assurance Policy

Exact Training is committed to the provision and maintenance of its quality assurance policy and procedures. All procedures and practices carried out by Exact Training staff involved in the design, tutoring, assessment and verification of all courses and assessments are subject to a strict quality assurance policy which is available on request. We will use independent IQA staff to quality assure all courses and assessment procedures on an annual basis.

Complaints Procedure

Exact Training will deal with complaints in a serious manner and is fully committed to dealing with them in a positive manner.

Should a learner wish to make a complaint, s/he must take the following action:

1. Speak to the staff member concerned/in charge of the matter concerning the complaint.
2. Speak to another member of staff on the course (where applicable).
3. Contact the IQA Coordinator at Exact Training.

Should an assessment candidate wish to make a complaint, s/he must take the following action:

1. Speak to their assessor.
2. Speak to the chief assessor (if a different person).
3. Speak to the internal verifier (where available).
4. Contact the complaints administrator at Exact Training.

If a complaint is made verbally it must be followed up in writing (email or post) within 7 working days. Exact Training will then start the following procedure:

1. A written acknowledgement (email or post) will be sent to the learner/candidate within 2 working days of receipt of the written complaint.
2. The complaint will be fully investigated and a written response will be sent (by email or post) within 10 working days.
3. Confidentiality will be respected as far as is possible.

Every effort will be made to resolve the complaint in an amicable manner, to the satisfaction of all parties. Where a complaint is successfully upheld, immediate action will be taken to prevent a repeat. Information relating to this action will remain confidential within Exact Training, unless for health and safety reasons it is necessary to involve the complainant.

The IQA Coordinator can be contacted by any of the following methods:

- Telephone: 07545501871 Email: sarahb@exacttraining.co.uk
- Address: Exact Training, 30 Paulsgrove, Orton Wistow, Peterborough, PE2 6YE

Cancellation and Transfer Policy

In the event of a cancellation the following charges apply:

- More than three full weeks before the first day of the course or less than three full weeks with a medical certificate; refund of course fee less a £50 administration fee
- Less than three full weeks before the first day of the course; no refund.

In the event of a transfer to a different course the following charges apply:

- Transfer to a later course made three full weeks before the first day of the course or less than three full weeks with a medical certificate; no fee
- Transfer to a later course less than three full weeks before the course starts or after the course has started; £50 administration fee

Resit/resubmission fees

In the event of a practical resit or resubmission of coursework the following fees will apply:

- Practical assessment (minimum): £75 (plus assessor travel costs if applicable)
- Case study resubmission: £25
- Programme amendment: Free (where minimal amendments are needed)
- Worksheet resubmission: £5 per worksheet
- Theory paper resits: First resit free, second and subsequent £25

Teaching and learning agreement

Please print off this page, sign and bring with you to the course. Exact Training believes that optimal learning occurs when both tutors and learners are fully supported and to achieve this will:

- Provide a positive and secure learning environment
- Treat all learners with fairness, dignity and respect as outlined above
- Ensure all learning needs are identified and met within possible resources
- Be on time and prepared for each session
- Outline the learning aims for the course and each session
- Clearly state all assessment criteria, guidelines and requirements
- Encourage questioning, discussion and reflection when appropriate
- Ensure learners have the opportunity to transfer or link existing skills, experience and knowledge to the subject being taught
- Maintain accurate and objective registers and records of learner contact
- Explain and adhere to fair disciplinary rules as set out above
- Ensure health and safety regulations are adhered to at all times
- Behave professionally and responsibly at all times

Learners are expected to take responsibility for their learning in the following ways:

- Arrive promptly at the start of each session
- Attend all sessions included in each course or workshop
- Inform the tutor in advance of any late arrival or early departure
- Complete all homework or tasks on time
- Actively participate in all course tasks and sessions specified
- Attend personal tutorials to identify any learning issues
- Treat fellow learners with respect, dignity and tolerance
- Behave in a professional and responsible manner, with respect for staff, fellow learners and members of the public when in any part of facility
- Actively participate in their own and peer evaluation and the evaluation of learning and teaching activities
- Participate in relevant activities outside the course sessions to enhance learning
- Raise any concerns at the earliest opportunity with a member of staff
- Inform their tutor of any change in circumstances
- Abide by the terms set out in the Learner Handbook

PLEASE NOTE: All written assessment material must be the original work of the learner and not copied, plagiarised or otherwise reproduced from any other source. All learners must sign the authenticity statement in the assessment paperwork to confirm this is the case. Any learner in breach of this will automatically refer and forfeit the assessment fee.

Signed on behalf of Exact Training: 

I confirm that I have read the Learner Handbook and the above agreement and agree to abide by all terms and conditions contained therein.

Learner Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

