



Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) Policy

This Policy should be read in conjunction with other PTS policies and procedures including: the Equality and Diversity Policy, Data Protection Policy, Safeguarding Children and Adults Policy, Quality Improvement Policy, Staff Learning & Development Policy.

PTS Vision and Values for IAG

PTS aims to provide high quality, impartial, information, advice and guidance services which promote the value of learning to learners of the training centre, prospective learners of the centre and employers or other organisations representing current or prospective learners.

The IAG services support PTS values in that its staff are passionate about education & enabling our learners to reach their potential. The staff involved in IAG seek especially to develop the self-esteem and self-confidence of students. We share with the rest of PTS our belief that every individual should be treated with courtesy and fairness and we respect the rights and beliefs of each other, regardless of gender, marital status, age, disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or position within the organisation.

We value new ideas and approaches and seek new opportunities and solutions to meeting the IAG needs and demands of our learners, employers and the local community whilst supporting national and regional education and economic strategies. We seek to encourage and celebrate creativity and to be supportive of innovation, learning from all that we do. We believe that our staff and learners should work in an environment of friendliness, with a clear sense of purpose to achieve our mission and realise our vision.

Learner Entitlement

PTS is committed to create an IAG experience for the learners that is:

- Outstanding and delivered in an excellent environment
- Aspirational, designed to inspire and motivate
- Personalised to suit the student
- Planned to guide students on to the right courses and to support and stretch them
- Developing self-confidence
- Coaching them to be successful and progress on to their next steps

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All clients that use the IAG at PTS, i.e. learners, prospective learners and other stakeholders, are entitled to a service that is:

1. Accessible and Visible

Access to IAG should be free from direct or indirect discrimination. Services should be recognised and trusted by clients, have convenient range of entry points from which clients may be signposted or referred to the services they need, and be open at times and in places which suit clients' needs. So, IAG is provided on the PTS website, in PTS' prospectuses and marketing material and is available free of charge to any individual on request.

2. Professional and Knowledgeable

IAG frontline staff should have the skills and knowledge to identify the client's needs quickly and effectively. They should have the skills and knowledge either to address the client's needs or to signpost or to refer them to suitable alternative provision. The learning and development needs of each of the IAG services is identified during the business planning and staff appraisal processes, alongside national priorities. The identified needs include professional and subject updating via long and short external courses and conferences, leadership and management, employability skills and other developmental activities.

3. Impartial

Clients have the right to information, advice and guidance that is impartial, unbiased and realistic. Where appropriate, referrals will be made to external agencies.

4. Integrated

Links between IAG services should be clear from the clients' perspective, regardless of the programme or location of their study. Where necessary, clients will be supported in their transition between services.

5. Aware of, and responsive to Diversity

The range of IAG services should reflect the diversity of clients' needs and reflect both clients' present and future needs.

6. Enabling

Enquirers, learners, parents, employers, staff and partners should be able to make informed choices about ways in which PTS can meet their individual training and development needs. IAG services should encourage and support clients to become lifelong learners by enabling them to access and use information to plan their careers, supporting clients to explore the implications of both learning and work in their future career plans.

7. Patient, Friendly and Welcoming

IAG services should encourage clients to engage successfully with the service.

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Clients are made aware of this entitlement through the PTS website, prospectus AND Learner Handbook.

IAG Delivery

This policy applies to all enquiring, enrolled and past learners at PTS.

For the purposes of this policy the term Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) is used as an umbrella term to denote a range of guidance activities and processes.

The following definitions have been used:

Information – Information is data on opportunities conveyed through different media, both mediated and unmediated including face-to-face contact, written/printed matter, telephone help lines, ICT software, and websites.

Advice – this involves:

- helping a learner understand and interpret information
 - providing information and answers to questions and clarifying misunderstandings
- understanding their circumstances, abilities and targets
- advising on options or how to follow a given course of action
 - identifying needs – signposting and referring learners who may need more in-depth guidance and support.

Advisory work is usually provided on a one-to-one basis but may also be in groups.

Guidance – aims to support learners to:

- better understand themselves and their needs
- confront barriers to understanding, learning and progression
- resolve issues and conflicts
- develop new perspectives and solutions to problems
- be able to better manage their lives and achieve their potential.

Guidance may also involve advocacy on behalf of some learners and referral for specialist guidance and support. This involves more in-depth one-to-one work by guidance trained staff.

PTS’ curriculum includes several elements that relate to IAG including, soft skills development relating to work-readiness, C.V. writing, preparation for interviews and safeguarding. There is also significant IAG taking place within the ILP Process.

In line with the IAG defined above, PTS will provide assistance relating to:

- the range of support available at the training centre
- fees and other financial charges associated with a course of study

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- ▢ financial assistance available to support those in education and training
- ▢ course entry criteria, qualifications, accreditation and modes of study
- ▢ equipment, clothing and materials which the learner must provide
- ▢ impartial careers advice and guidance
- ▢ personal goals, aspirations and motivation while on course
- ▢ guidance to its current learners to discuss progression

PTS works collaboratively with a range of providers within the learning community in London, Surrey, Hampshire and surrounding areas and local Boroughs to enhance its curriculum offer to students. PTS is committed to developing quality IAG provision in agreement with its partners, to ensure that the best range of progression opportunities are available and that consistency of delivery ensures all learners receive impartial, high quality IAG.

Information on courses is provided by IAG staff. Where PTS does not have the information, the IAG staff will seek the information on behalf of the individual, or provide the individual with the name and contact details of the organisation, who will have the information being requested.

Advice provided is impartial and confidential, to enable learners and potential learners to make informed choices as to the most appropriate route for their personal and career development.

Guidance is provided by fully trained competent staff and potential and current learners can see an advisor face-to-face, telephone or written format. PTS promotes and supports equality of opportunity and wherever possible PTS will seek to provide information in a format which suits the needs of the individual.

PTS Objectives below are as follows:

1. Increase the numbers of queries and applications which lead to enrolments
2. Increase client satisfaction with the IAG received from PTS
3. Improving PTS Retention, Success and Achievement rates and measure the impact of the IAG services on these.
4. Improve the percentage of students that positively progress to HE, further training, apprenticeships or employment after receiving IAG at PTS
5. Monitor and ensure equality of access to impartial IAG for the diverse groups of learners at PTS, such as Disabled, Young Parents, ESOL learners
6. Widen the range of appropriate partners and external agencies with which

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PTS IAG services work

7. Continually update and improve the staff training and resources to provide up-to-date, impartial and effective IAG for clients.

Assessment Review and Evaluation

To ensure a high quality of IAG service, PTS will evaluate its provision to ensure that:

- the information, advice and guidance services are delivered in accordance with the this IAG Policy.
- the IAG standards are delivered in accordance with this IAG policy and as contained within the Matrix Quality Standard.
- any learner or potential learner with an identified disability will be provided with appropriate support to enable access to IAG services.

PTS continues to have the MATRIX standard kite mark for IAG and we review and evaluate our service to achieve the 3 year re-accreditation. Impact data for IAG is collected in a number of ways including data on the performance of students who receive IAG, employer and learner feedback (to check on learner satisfaction after interviews) and also a number of surveys to capture the views of learners so we can compare year on year. This information feeds into PTS' self-assessment process at the end of the academic year and also into the SAR.

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