



## Information, Advice and Guidance Policy

Eastern Region Training Group Ltd

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### **Our Aim:**

All of our staff at ERTG aim to deliver IAG to enquirers and students who are registered on, or considering registering for, a qualification or course with ERTG. We do this via phone, e-mail and face to face.

The purpose of our Information, Advice and Guidance is to support enquirers considering study with ERTG and to support students in achieving their aspirations, including their study and career goals through their study with us.

In the delivery of Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) (See appendix 1), we support enquirers and students in making decisions about their study and career planning based on their individual needs, circumstances and interests. We place an emphasis on opportunities for independent self-assessment and decision-making by providing online information and advice that is easy to access, clear, relevant and up to date.

We want to help our students to achieve their study programme with us and be well equipped to go onto college or the workplace and work towards upskilling the population of Suffolk as we are currently below the national average.

### **Our Objectives:**

Our objectives are to:

- empower enquirers and students to achieve their study and career goals and to develop independence in their decision making
- ensure that the delivery of IAG is responsive to changes and developments both internally and externally, including changes to our student markets
- support the improvement of students' completion and progression rates
- 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 students.
- Increase the qualified workforce in Suffolk to be in line with national standards.

We will achieve these objectives by:

- raising awareness of our IAG so that enquirers and students 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 students at key points along the student journey that recognises and is responsive to diverse and distinct need
- ensuring our online information and advice is accessible, accurate, up to date and applies innovative technology
- providing opportunities for students to access advice and guidance in a variety of ways including email and telephone
- ensuring members of staff have the training, skills and knowledge appropriate to their roles
- encouraging and acting on student and staff feedback
- identifying key internal and external stakeholders and agreeing processes by which we can work collaboratively

### **Delivery of IAG:**

Members of staff work collaboratively to deliver IAG to enquirers and students in line with quality standards. A yearly IAG development plan outlines how the IAG policy is translated into services and actual practice. We actively work to ensure that our IAG provision aligns with the support available to students from their tutors.

### **Impartiality:**

We aim to provide IAG which respects the needs of the individual enquirer or student and is in their best interests. We use the Matrix standards to ensure that we are providing useful, accurate and impartial advice to anyone who enquires.

### **Evaluation & Monitoring:**

We will endeavour, where possible, to seek feedback from clients. We will do this by e-mail and phone calls. 1 month, 3, 6 months and 1 year after a long-duration course we make contact with as many clients as we can reach.

We keep records of work-based placements, employer engagement events, post 16 provider access, class observations, young people feedback, destination information, attendance, attainment of students

### *Appendix 1: Definitions*

**Information:** Information is a range of resource material available online that is presented in a way that encourages self-assessment and independent decision-making whilst also delivering factual data. Information is also provided to students and enquirers by members of staff who contribute to enquirers' and students' understanding and interpretation of the information available and how and where to research information themselves. Members of staff may also need to interpret, clarify or contextualise information and assess when signposting to more specialist support or guidance is needed. Members of staff at all levels engage in information giving as part of the IAG process.

**Advice:** Advice may be delivered online, for example straightforward advice may be delivered via diagnostic tools and person-mediated advice via email and forums. Advice from a member of staff involves the same support as that listed above under Information; it may also include appropriate questioning to gain an understanding of circumstances that will enable clarification and identification of need. Advice will contribute to decision - making through suggestions on available options, or how to go about a course of action. Advisory work is usually provided on a one-to-one basis by telephone or email, but in certain circumstances can be provided through appropriately mediated information and advice forums

**Guidance:** Guidance is the process of providing in-depth and personalised advice and support to students and enquirers. It involves a complex interaction between practitioner and student that

depends on the skill of the practitioner to elicit, interpret and feedback from both verbal and non-verbal responses and clues. Guidance should be provided by members of staff trained and competent in guidance work. Guidance involves identifying and clarifying needs and exploring ideas and values in relation to study opportunities and career goals. Students and enquirers are encouraged to assess appropriate options and make decisions that are in their best interests, will facilitate learning and progression, and contribute to their development as independent and autonomous learners. In the process, guidance should involve challenging unrealistic expectations and advocacy on behalf of the student as well as referral to more specialist guidance and support. Elements of guidance may be delivered online by email and through forums; some complex guidance queries may be most effectively addressed via telephone and, exceptionally face-to-face. Opportunities should be available online for referral to person-mediated guidance within the IAG decision-making framework