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Welcome to learndirect Professional

Congratulations- We are delighted that you have chosen us to support you through your career, I sincerely hope that you enjoy your course. You’ve got an exciting and rewarding journey ahead of you and we’re here to help you every step of the way.

This handbook is for you to use throughout your learning with us, we’ve included lots of information that we hope you find helpful. You’ll be allocated a Learner Support Advisor for the duration of the course who will keep in regular contact with. You will also be allocated a personal assessor who will mark your assignments, and correspond with you via our online platform and messaging system. All of our course materials are easy to understand, and provide you with a broad range of additional information, and extended learning to support you along the way.

Don’t forget if you do have any questions or want to speak to someone, your Learner Support Advisor is there to help you. You will find all the contact details you need in here.

We hope that your experience with us will be satisfying and rewarding.

Good luck!

learndirect Professional.

Learner Support Advisor

Email - pdev@learndirect.com

Telephone - 0116 366 7567
Your qualification

The qualification is a nationally recognised, and regulated by the awarding organisation specific to your course.

Course duration

With distance learning the programmes are designed to give you the flexibility to work at your own speed, and to allow you to fit your study around your home, family and work commitments. You can complete your course ahead of time, or you can work through at your own pace and take the full allocation for your course. You will have your own individual learning plan that shows how long you have to complete your qualification.

Completing your course

All of our qualifications are slightly different and, have different requirements depending on course and lengths of programme.

Some require a placements and observations in the workplace, whilst others requirement evidence gathered from the workplace i.e. video evidence, witness testimonies, workplace diaries etc.

It is extremely important that if you need a placement to complete your course, you have this organised before commencing programme. Details of all the evidence that is required prior to commencing your course can be discussed with a Learner Support Advisor. For those that do require placements, it is vital that you are in placement for the duration of the course in order to gather all of the evidence required.
An Introduction to your learndirect Professional eportfolio

Getting Started

Before you can begin your course you have the opportunity to personalise it and make it totally unique to your own individual learning needs. Throughout the process you will be able customise elements of your course and your online learning environment so that it is totally unique to you.

By doing this section before you begin your course we will be able to build a programme of study that is tailored to your unique needs and challenges you as a learner in a meaningful way to ensure that you gain the most from your studies with us.

You can customise and add skills to your eportfolio to suit you. By clicking on the information icon, you will see a brief overview of mandatory and additions that can be added to your course, to make it bespoke to your needs.

Work through each section of the introduction, completing your profile as you go. Upload an image is simple. Take a few seconds to ensure your basic profile details are correct (don’t worry, you can update these at any point during your course).
Work through the questions that you see on the screen.

Why are you studying this course? (Select One)

- I want to get a job in this field when I am finished
- I want to gain a basic understanding so that I can do a higher level course next
- My employer has insisted that I complete this course
- Other (please state):

You can opt out of sharing your data with employers when you get to the following question, just tick the box which is most appropriate.

We never share your data with other 3rd parties nor will we ever share your personal information (email, postal address, phone number) unless you expressly tell us you want us to. The only way our employer partners can contact you is through your learning account.

Please take a moment to decide what data you would like to share with potential employers (you can change these settings at any time), however please bear in mind that our system places the emphasis on the employer to search for you not vice versa, so the more data you share the more your profile will stand out to potential employers.

- Share all of my course progression data with potential employers
- Share my course progression data with potential employers, but do not share my submissions, assessor feedback or assessor reviews
- Do not share any of my course progression data with potential employers
Individual Learning Plan (ILP)

Once you have completed your employer questions you will see a provisional Individual Learning Plan (ILP).

Your ILP is your "route map" which shows your start date and “provisional” end date for your course. It is very important that you look at all of the due dates for the assignments carefully, as if you do not submit your assignments on time you could jeopardise your funding for this course. Think about things like holidays or any other busy periods in your life where you might not be able to study, or indeed study more.

Next to each unit, the GLH (Guided Learning Hours) for that unit are published. Most learners study for about 10 hours per week and submit one assignment every 2-3 weeks.

What you need to do now, is to review all the submission dates and confirm that you are happy with them. If you think you need longer or shorter for any of the assignments, please click on the end date and select a new end date for that assignment. Below is an example of an ILP.

If you have previously completed any of the accredited modules above and have the certificates from your awarding organisation we may be able to grant you RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning) for this qualification. If this is the case, you must contact us so that we can discuss this further with you.

Once you have started your course, if you complete assignments quicker, you can still move ahead through your course “ahead” of our ILP.
Learner Declaration

You are now required to confirm your Learner Declaration and view our Provider Declaration. Once you have started your course if you need to make any changes or alterations etc. we can discuss these with you then.

At this stage you must declare you’re learning style and whether to have any learning difficulties or disabilities. Hover over the area, highlighted in bold to change your preferences.

My preferred learning style is: Visual
I have the following additional learning requirements: none

The Learner Agrees to:
- Complete all tasks and activities set within the agreed timescales.
- Inform my tutor immediately if I will potentially miss a submission due date.
- Communicate in a timely way any change in personal circumstances, which may affect my successful completion of the qualification.
- Understand and follow Equal Opportunities, Data Protection Act and Health and Safety rules and procedures.

Learner Declaration:
I can confirm I have agreed to do my utmost to achieve the objectives set out on this plan. I agree that I have completed all of the enrolment paperwork and I understand all of the information provided.

Learner Signature:  
Date: 17/11/2017

The Provider Agrees to:
- Ensure the learning and assessment you receive is of the highest possible quality.
- Agree target dates with you that are realistic, achievable and challenging.
- You will have access to general information, advice and guidance about our services.
- You will be treated with understanding and respect.
- We will respond quickly to your comments and suggestions.

Once you have signed this document, all of your personalised data will to be stored and your eportfolio personalised to you, ready to begin your learner journey with learndirect Professional.
Getting started.

Once you log in, there is a quick guide to the functionality of your eportfolio. Tap on the guidance button at the bottom of the left hand column and hover over each information icon, to give a brief overview. You will also get a quick guided tour when you first log in.

Below are two of the functions on your dashboard.

**Messaging**
You can use the Messaging section to contact your assessor. You can also use this section to send messages to any connections that you have made with fellow learners. At the bottom right hand side of your screen there is also a chat box, click to open and then you will be able to instant message your connections and even make new connections.

**Course Statistics**
The Course Statistics section can be used to access and amend your ILP (Individual Learning Plan). It shows you what each of the assignments for your course are due to be submitted, NB. If you are funding your course through an Advanced Learner Loan, your assignments MUST be submitted on time or else you face losing your funding.

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**You're Dashboard**

When you login to your eportfolio account, the first screen you will see is your dashboard. This provides you with an overview of your course, including your progress, assignment deadlines, and your main menu on the left hand side.

**Course**

In your Course units you will find the following buttons

- **Study materials**: course content material for your guidance
- **Extended learning** – glossary of terms, reading lists, other resources
- **Assignment** – this is your unit assignment. You should not attempt to complete any assignment without first working through the study materials.
- **Assessment feedback** – when a completed assignment has been marked, you can access the feedback from your assessor here.
- **Unit Debate** – these are included to allow you to debate each end of unit question with your fellow learners. When posting comments to debates, you must respect the views of others, and not use inappropriate language of any kind. All debates are monitored on a regular basis – if the comments being posted are deemed to be inappropriate and in contravention of our Learner code of conduct, we reserve the right to remove the debate function from your course.
Assignment

Within the assignment you will have an area to type in your answer using the text box below

You can either type your responses to the questions straight into the text box which appears on the system, or you can upload a Word (or similar) document to the system using the ‘upload’ functionality. Be mindful that if you use the text box option, any formatting that is in your work will be lost. It is therefore recommended that you only use the text boxes for assignment questions that require short answers, such as the one above. When you come to your graded Assignments, you should produce your work in Word (or similar) and upload the document.

NB: If you use the later method of uploading a document in a word format you must type in the text box “Uploaded word file attached.

If you experience problems submitting an assignment, please contact your Learner Support Advisor. Please also note that you cannot submit the next assignment until your previous one has been marked by your unit assessor, and has passed.

If you are not currently waiting for an assignment to be marked and you are still having problems submitting an assignment, then please contact your Learner Support Advisor, explaining the problem in as much detail as possible, and include a screen shot with your message.
Messaging

The messaging system works in the same way as email. You can send a new message, contact other learners on your course, and reply to messages received. In order to contact other learners on your course, you must first ‘connect’ with them. This works in the same ways as requesting contacts on social media platforms. The standard response time is 5 working days, however if you have not heard back, please contact your Learner Support Advisor in the first instance.

Assessment

Assessment activities have been created to cover the learning outcomes for each unit, and are designed to test your knowledge, understanding and skills. The range of assessment activities may include:

• Session record sheets
• Reflective Diaries
• Presentations
• Video Evidence
• Witness Testimonies

For each unit, there will be:

• The task(s) you are required to complete.
• Guidance, for completing the assignment.
• The assessment criteria that each task(s) relate to.
• If included (Assessor Guidance) If you require placement forms or within your assignment it is requested that you complete diaries etc. This is where you will find the evidence.

Once you have submitted an assignment for marking, you will receive feedback from the relevant unit assessor within our standard turnaround time of 5 working days.
Individual Learning Plan (ILP)

All learners are provided with an Individual Learner Plan (ILP) for their course. Your ILP can be found under ‘course statistics’ in the main menu on your dashboard.

The ILP outlines:

- Your course title
- The title and credit value of each of your assignments of study
- Guided Learning Hours per unit
- Grade achieved for each unit assignment
- The start date, end date and duration of each of your assignments of study, including the submission date for each of your assignments

This document is provided so that you have clearly defined targets for your studies to help you to achieve your goals.

The assignment submission deadlines must be adhered to. If for any reason you believe that you may be late submitting an assignment, you should request an extension from your Learner Support Advisor.
Assessors

Your assessor is responsible for guiding and supporting you’re learning whilst on program. They will be responsible for marking your assignments and giving you with feedback about the work you’ve produced, and how you can improve. If you are having difficulties with an assignment, or with understanding the content of your study materials, you will be able to contact them through the messaging system in your support emails. Please note that assessors are unable to call or give support via telephone. You should contact your unit assessors if you require an explanation or guidance about a particular assignment, including any feedback that you may have been given about your work.

Learner Support Advisors

The Learner Support Advisors are here to provide you with advice and guidance about a number of general areas relating to your course. They will advise about every stage of your application, including detailed progress reports on how your application is progressing. Once on program you’re dedicated Learner Support Advisor will call you on a regular basis to check your progress and to make sure that your studies are going to plan.

How to contact the team. There are two ways of contacting the team, either Email: pdev@learndirect.com or Tel: 01163667567

If you are experiencing technical problems, send as much detail as possible enabling us to locate the issue and get it resolved as quickly as possible to your learning support advisor, or through, pdev@learndirect.com
Quality Assurance

Moderation of assignments

All of your assignments are subject to both Internal and External Moderation as part of our Quality Assurance process. A random sample of completed assignments will be selected for each part of the moderation process each month.

You may notice from time to time that one of your previous marked assignments has changed status from a Pass to a Refer. This means that the Internal Quality Assurance team have requested further information in your assignment to justify the original pass. This is nothing to worry about, in the first instance you should contact your assessor to see what further information is required.

Once your qualification is completed, all assignments are passed, the internal quality assurer will check for a final time. If they are satisfied that your qualification meets the necessary standards, your work with go to the External Awarding Organisation for verification.

Depending on when you completed your qualification, the whole process of internal moderation and external quality assurance can take between 8-10 weeks.

Awarding your certificate.

Once everything has been confirmed, your Learner Support Advisor will contact you to arrange an exit interview and discuss how the programme went. This is your opportunity to give us feedback. We will check your contact details are correct and, send your certificates to you in the post.
learndirect Professional policies and procedures:
What you need to know
Equality & diversity: treating everyone fairly

We are committed to treating everyone fairly, and we respect and value the differences between all the people we work with. We challenge any inequality we see, and we ensure we provide suitable support for people’s different needs and circumstances. We’re here to inspire you to achieve your potential, and we will respond to your needs and feedback to make sure you do.

What do we mean by equality & diversity?

**Equality**
We will treat you with the same degree of respect and provide the same high quality of service to everyone we work with.

**Diversity**
We will respond to your individual needs and ensure the support we provide is right for you.

**Discrimination**
A person should not be treated differently because of their age, gender, ethnicity, race, class, sexual orientation or any other reason. Let us know if you have any concerns about discrimination and we will support you.

**Bullying and harassment**
No one should experience any behaviour that intentionally hurts another individual – physically or emotionally. We’re here to support you if you have any concerns about bullying or harassment.

Our responsibilities

- we’ll provide you with an environment that is free of discrimination
- we’ll explain your rights and responsibilities and how you can complain or make suggestions for improving our service
- we’ll provide you with Equality and Diversity training that will be useful with us and in the workplace
- we’ll treat you fairly and with respect as an individual regardless of your gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion or whether you have any disability
- we’ll assess your needs in order to help you achieve your goals.

Your responsibilities

- you’ll respect others around you as individuals
- you should understand that your views may be different to others
- you’ll respect others’ beliefs and understand that bullying or harassment of others will not be tolerated
- you’ll help other learners to feel included
- you should talk to the learndirect Professional team if you have any concerns and they can also help sign-post you to organisations who can provide specialist support.
Bullying and Harassment
Learning and working environment

We are committed to creating open and conducive learning and working environments where everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. We are opposed to and will not tolerate any form of bullying, harassment or unacceptable behaviour where this makes an individual feel intimidated or offended.

We will ensure all individuals have clear routes to report incidents and/or concerns and for these to be managed fairly and fully. We will strive to ensure all individuals feel comfortable to express their views, experiences and perceptions but in a respectful and non-discriminatory manner.

Any form of prejudice, discrimination and/or stereotypical attitudes will be challenged and supported by training on equality and diversity practice. We will ensure that all our learning materials and public and internal communications reflect the diverse society in which we live and enable individual access to working or learning with us.

Reporting

We will respond to complaints and/or concerns and how people involved will be supported. Where learners are following work-based training in employers, they will also be subject to their employer’s disciplinary procedure(s).

For learners: The quickest and easiest way for a learner to raise a concern or complaint is through their assessor or directly to their Learner Support Advisor, alternatively they can contact the centre manager.

Where a learner is learning through one of our supply chain partners, this will initiate their own procedure first and the learner will be advised of who will take responsibility for resolving their concern or complaint and how long this should take.

Where a learner does not feel able to do this, the following options are available to all learners:

Call us on 0800 101 901 (the learndirect helpline is open Monday – Friday 8am-9pm, Saturday 9am-6pm and Sunday 10am-6pm)

Contact us online by completing a short web form. See www.learndirect.com/help/contact-us/

Write to us at ‘FREEPOST’ learndirect’ (no stamp required)

We are committed to promoting equality for all. If you would like this information in an alternative format, please contact us: By letter at: FREEPOST learndirect By telephone on: 0800 101 901 By email at: translations@learndirect.com Online at: www.learndirect.com/help/contact-us/
Safeguarding: you have the right to be and feel safe

We strive to provide a safe and welcoming learning environment for all our learners. We have a policy of zero tolerance to bullying, abuse, grooming and harassment, and aim to protect you from the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism. We will support you in understanding how to keep yourself safe in society, and will tell you what steps we will take on your behalf should we ever have any concerns for your welfare.

What do we mean by safeguarding?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical abuse</th>
<th>Sexual abuse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No one should touch you in a way that</td>
<td>No one should touch you in a manner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>physically hurts. This may include</td>
<td>that makes you feel uncomfortable or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hitting, stepping, pushing, kicking or</td>
<td>upset. No one should make suggestive,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>holding you back.</td>
<td>sexual remarks to you.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emotional abuse</th>
<th>Stealing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No one should upset your feelings by</td>
<td>No one should force you to hand over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bullying you by taunting, teasing or</td>
<td>money or possessions. Stealing is a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>making belittling remarks.</td>
<td>criminal offence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extremism/radicalisation</th>
<th>Neglect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No one should attempt to influence you</td>
<td>If you are looked after by a carer, he/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to hold extreme views including those</td>
<td>she should not neglect or ignore you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>justifying political, religious, sexist</td>
<td>You should know you are cared for.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or racist violence.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discrimination/hate crime</th>
<th>Online</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No one should hurt you or discriminate</td>
<td>You should feel safe online – e.g.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>against you because of your age, gender</td>
<td>email, websites or social media. No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disability, sexual orientation, race,</td>
<td>one should bully or harass you, share</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cultural background or religion.</td>
<td>information or images which make you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>feel uncomfortable, or get you involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>in suspect activity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our responsibilities

- we will make sure you understand what safeguarding is
- we have safeguarding reps who you, or your tutor, can talk to about any concerns
- our staff are trained to respond to any concerns you may raise
- our staff will ensure you feel safe in centres and in the workplace
- our staff have contacts with organisations and agencies which can help you with specialist advice should you need it

Your responsibilities

- you’ll look after yourself and look out for your friends and colleagues
- you’ll make sure you know who you can go to for help and advice
- tell us if you’re in danger or have any concerns, and staff will refer you for specialist help.
We will ensure that all employees adopt and abide by the Company’s Safeguarding Code of Conduct, are proactive and respond to any allegations appropriately in accordance with the companies reporting procedures. If you are experiencing problems outside of your studies (such as abuse) which may be affecting your progress, please contact in the first instance your assessor or the Senior Qualifications Assurer who will then notify the Safeguarding Representative for learndirect Professional.

**Prevent**

Since 2010, when the Government published the Prevent Strategy, there has been an awareness of the specific need to safeguard children, young people and families from violent extremism. There have been several occasions both locally and nationally in which extremist groups have attempted to radicalise vulnerable children and young people to hold extreme views including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation.

learndirect Professional values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs / ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society’s values. Individuals have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

Any identified concerns as the result of observed behaviour or reports of conversations to suggest that an individual maybe vulnerable to or supports terrorism and/or extremism, must be addressed, reported and where appropriate escalated following the learndirect Professional Safeguarding Procedure.

Escalation can be via Safeguarding Representatives or the shield ensures that all concerns are picked up and addressed by a safeguarding professional, responsible for determining an appropriate resolution and contacting outside agencies where appropriate.

To aid the promotion of community cohesion, we have added a PREVENT module to your programme. For some learners, this is a mandatory component of the course; for others, it is an optional addition.
Additional Support

learndirect Professional is committed to ensuring that all learners have access to a high quality learning experience and aims to support inclusion for all of our learners. We believe that this experience helps learners to build resilience and supports them to progress and successfully prepare for employment.

Some learners may need additional support and we will use our best endeavours to ensure that provision is made for those who need it. Where learndirect Professional is unable to provide support to address a special educational needs or disability learners will be referred to appropriate specialist provision.

At learndirect Professional we have a policy for learners with Special Needs, this policy is the Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities Policy (SEND).

Policies and Procedures

All policies and procedures that govern your course can be made available to you on request.

These include:

- Appeals
- Complaints
- E-safety
- Equality & Diversity
- SEND
- Malpractice, Maladministration, Fraud & Anti-Bribery Policy
- Safeguarding
- Prevent
- Learner Disciplinary Code of Conduct
For learners who require placements for their qualification

Practical Work Placement

You are responsible for arranging your own placement and this must conform to the correct workplace environment to enable you to achieve all of the learning outcomes for your programme.

This must be arranged at the start of your course and you must have organised this with the agreement of the placement prior to starting your course. Certain placements do require DBS checks, and require specific qualifications in order that, once qualified you can practice with your qualification.

We do not provide DBS checks as part of any course, and it is your responsibility to make sure that you have all the necessary qualifications prior to starting.

The placement must agree to support you as a learner, and agree to provide you with supervision whilst on programme. A placement supervision agreement form has been provided for you to give to your placement to sign and upload into your portfolio. This must be completed in full and uploaded to your eportfolio system, and must be seen by your assessor on starting the course. Without this your assessor will deem that you have not organised a placement and your course will put on hold until you provide the agreement.

Role of the Work Placement Supervisor

The placement supervisor will take overall responsibility for the learner during the placement and specifically should ensure the following:

- Agreeing an induction and introduction to the placement
- Arranging any statutory checks which may be required
- Compliance with health and safety policies and procures of the placement
- Issue of any personal protective equipment
- Agreeing a time table to complete learning objective
- Identifying opportunities to take part in a range of activities covering the assessment criteria for the qualifications learning aim
- Monitoring that the learner is working safely at all times
- Monitoring the overall progress of the learner in the placement and providing opportunities to review this
- Confirmation by the signing of witness statements, diary logs, session record sheets and mentor statements to confirm the learner has covered the practical tasks mentioned, for successful completion of the qualification. The records are not mandatory but if completed weekly with the learner, could help him/her to identify their strengths and plan for any outstanding skills.
- Confirmation by signing the workplace supervision agreement to confirm that you have read this document and agree to the above roles of workplace supervision.

To support your placement employers can find useful guides on the DFES website, that will enable them to support you while on programme.
http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/workexperience/
Concerns or complaints

At learndirect Professional we are committed to handling all types of contacts by our learners quickly, accurately, and fairly. We aim to fully resolve any concerns or problems you might have and if there is anything we cannot resolve or put right straight away we will explain why and say what we can do.

How we will deal with your query or complaint:

**STAGE 1**
Advised the learndirect staff member you work most closely with about your query or complaint and give them the chance to resolve the matter. If you're unhappy with the outcome, or with how long it is taking, or if you think it is not appropriate to raise the issue with them go to Stage 2.

**STAGE 2**
Contact us via any of the means described in the 'how to contact us' section of this policy. We will try to give you an answer straight away, and if we can't, we will work with an appropriate subject expert or operational learndirect manager. You will receive an update or resolution within 5 working days.*

**STAGE 3**
If you are not happy with the outcome you must advise us that you wish your query or complaint to be escalated. It will then be reviewed by the learndirect Customer Service Coordinator and you will be contacted within a further 10 working days.

**STAGE 4**
If you remain unhappy with the outcome of your query or complaint you must put all of your concerns in writing and send a letter to learndirect complaints (stage 4), 3rd Floor, Dearing House, 1 Young Street, Sheffield, S1 4UP. The matter will then be independently investigated by the Customer Service Officer. They will look at how your query or complaint was investigated, the response you received, and will speak to the people involved. A reply will be sent within 10 working days of receipt.

What we need to know from you

To be able to handle your query effectively we will need the following information when you contact us:

- Your name & location
- What type of programme you are undertaking with learndirect
- Your user name (if applicable)
- Full details of what your query or concern is.
Appeals

If you wish to appeal against an assessment decision made, you have the formal appeals procedure in your eportfolio system. If you go to guidance-Advice and Guidance, the policy is stated. You can also find the complaints procedure here and, various other policies.
Learner Code of Conduct - What we expect from you during your studies

The activities and assignments you will complete as part of your course are designed to enable you to:

- Attain the aims and learning outcomes for individual assignments and the programme as a whole
- Identify, develop and apply a range of related skills
- Encourage your interaction with the indicative content contained in the study materials
- Develop your ability to be an independent and successful learner by using reflective learning techniques.

It should be remembered that personal reflection is strengthened if you possess underpinning knowledge of fact and theory to provide a foundation for your thinking. You are therefore encouraged to read and research your subjects widely in order to broaden your consideration of factors beyond the boundaries of your study materials.

Learner Discipline and Behaviour

During your time on your programme, you can expect that:

- The course content and assignments will be appropriate to your needs and the requirements of the qualification awarding organisation
- Your assessors will be qualified, experienced and committed
- You will receive fair and consistent assessment, and prompt feedback about your work
- You will be informed about the academic appeals procedure
- You will be treated with respect

In return, we expect you to:

- Behave appropriately and professionally
- Abide by regulations pertaining to health and safety, and equality and diversity
- Follow good academic practice
- Work conscientiously and to the best of your ability
- Complete and submit assignments on time
- Promote equality, community cohesion and good relations between learners and staff
- Show respect for course content and materials, staff at learndirect and one another
- Take responsibility for your studies, and for your progress on your course.
Acceptable Use of IT Systems

The following terms of acceptable use apply to your Virtual Learning Environment (learnedirect Professional) and other connected services. These terms also cover remote access, regardless of which device is used to make the connection e.g. personal computer, smart phone or tablet. All activity on your account is linked to you as an individual; you are therefore responsible for any misuse. Access may be restricted or removed as a result. Therefore, you must not share your login details or password. This is also in accordance with the following:

- The Data Protection Act 1998
- Copyright, Designs & Patents Act 1988
- Computer Misuse Act 1990
- Telecommunications Act 1984
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997

Copies of these acts are available online from the official government website for UK citizens www.direct.gov.uk. If you are found to be breaking the law, legal sanctions will apply.

The following are not permitted at any time:

- The creation, display, production, storage, circulation or transmission of pornographic or other offensive material in any form or medium. This includes sending posting or displaying offensive images, language or any other type of offensive content including the bullying, harassment or intimidation of others.

Users must not create, run, store or transmit:

- Defamatory or libellous material
- Material that infringes copyright including unlicensed or illegal software
- Unauthorised software
- Unsolicited commercial or advertising material

Users must not:

- Intentionally provide or submit false information (i.e. on ILPs, in assignments etc.)
- Flood debate/forums with inappropriate content, material or comments
- Use others’ passwords or log-in identities
- Deliberately introduce any virus, worm, Trojan horse or other harmful or nuisance programme or file, or deliberately circumvent any precautions taken by us to prevent this from happening
- Use any part of the system for commercial purposes or profit
- Use any part of the system for political purposes
- Use any part of the system inappropriately
- Copy any code, software or content provided
Disciplinary Action

Any behaviour which is likely to cause offence or harm to others, or bring learndirect Professional into disrepute, could result in disciplinary action.

Such behaviour could include:

- Using social media forums that are not regulated by learndirect Professional to gain answers in order to complete your course work, or aid others in completing their course work.
- Using non-regulated social media forums where offensive language or behaviour is used, where others could take offence at, and used in discussions.
- Offensive language and/or behaviour, including contravention of Equal Opportunities Policy
- Any bullying, taunting, or harassment of others whether directly, or through messages, debates or forums
- Non-submission of work and inadequate academic performance
- Any contravention of the Acceptable use of IT Systems terms stated previously
- Any contravention of the Learner Code of Conduct, such as demonstrating a lack of respect to others

Breaches of discipline may be minor, major or gross. Examples of each type of breach are given below for guidance. This list is not exhaustive and professional judgements will need to be made about the severity of each breach.

**Minor Breach** – late submission of assignments, wilful submission of sub-standard work or substandard performance.

**Major Breach** – persistence of a minor breach, acting in an unsafe manner including failure to comply with learndirects policies and procedures, plagiarism or copying the work of other learners, and repeated non-submission or late submission of assignments, repeated wilful submission of sub-standard work or sub-standard performance.

**Gross Breach** – persistence of a major breach, serious threat including threats made in messages or debates/forums, mobile phone and text messages, harassment, bullying, breach of the Equal Opportunities Policy, and any criminal activities affecting learndirect Professional or other learners. Using non-regulated social media forums to gain an advantage with course work, or use language that others could take offense to.
Any breach of discipline will be fully investigated, and depending upon the severity and frequency, will result in appropriate action being taken. This could include restrictions to functionality within learndirect Professional i.e. removal of access to debates/forums, or being blocked from contacting other learners. In the most serious cases (gross breach), you may be withdrawn from your course and access to your account removed.

**Academic Offences**

Throughout your studies, and when you progress to Higher Education, it is expected that you will produce assignments that represent ‘best academic practice’. By this we mean, that your work is your own, it is referenced appropriately, and you have not committed any academic offence.

An academic offence is any act that is intended to modify or evade the conditions of assessment in an unauthorised manner, and by unfair means, this includes the use of non-regulated social media forums; that have not been approved by learndirect Professional. The following are examples of such academic offences, but do not represent an exhaustive definition.

**Learning and Assessment Malpractice Procedure**

Malpractice consists of those acts which undermine the integrity and validity of learning & assessment, the certification of qualifications, and/or damage the authority of those responsible for conducting the assessment and certification.

learndirect Professional does not tolerate actions (or attempted actions) of malpractice by learners in connection with qualifications delivered by learndirect Professional.

learndirect Professional acknowledges that it is required to report cases of malpractice to Awarding Organisations and Funding partners (as applicable) if evidence is found that results or certificates may be invalid.

learndirect will be vigilant regarding learning & assessment malpractice and where malpractice occurs it will be dealt with in an open and fair manner.
We aim to:

Define malpractice in the context of learning, assessment and certification set out the rights and responsibilities, with regard to malpractice, of the learner. We will respond effectively and openly to all requests for an investigation into an incident or a suspected incident of malpractice.

learndirect Professional reserves the right, in suspected cases of malpractice, to withhold the issuing of results/certificates while an investigation is in progress. Depending on the outcome of the investigation results/certificates may be released or withheld. We will take positive steps to prevent or reduce the occurrence of learner malpractice.

These steps may include:

Showing learners the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources including websites. Learners should not be discouraged from conducting research; indeed evidence of relevant research often contributes to the achievement of qualification units. However, the submitted work must show evidence that the learner has interpreted and synthesised appropriate information and has acknowledged any sources used.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism by copying and passing off, as the learner’s own, the whole or part(s) of another person’s work, including artwork, images, words, computer generated work (including Internet sources), thoughts, inventions and/or discoveries whether published or not, with or without the originator’s permission and without appropriately acknowledging the source collusion by working collaboratively with other learners to produce work that is submitted as individual learner work.

We reserve the right to test any learner’s work for plagiarism. If you are found to have committed plagiarism, you will be subject to disciplinary action. In serious and repeated cases, the awarding organisation will be notified and your qualification will be at risk.

Fabrication of results

Collusion

Collusion is the deliberate attempt to gain advantage by presenting work that is not solely your own as if it were, and where the source of the unreferenced work is that of another learner who has schemed in the deception. Collusion is recognised by the duplication of passages or phrases in written work or in oral presentations, and it involves a conspiratorial attempt to deceive. Collusion must not be confused with the good practice of collaborative learning and peer support, where collaborative learning means that a learner may benefit from sharing third-party material (books, articles etc).
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Whilst this handbook contains much of the information that you will need to know about your course, we have included here some other FAQs that may help you.

Question: Do I need to buy any books for my course?
Answer: You are not required to purchase any books for your course, unless you wish to. There is a reading list in the Extended Learning area of your study materials.

Question: I can only access a few sections of the study materials, why is this?
Answer: If you are applying for a loan from the Learner Loans Company, you will have restricted access to our system until such a time that your loan is approved. However, you will have access to everything you need to complete your first few Assignments. Once your loan is approved you will gain access to all your course materials.

Question: What are the CPD course in my Eportfolio account?
Answer: They are unaccredited courses and so will not feature as part of your university entry requirements quoted on any conditional offer. CPD courses are there to expand your knowledge in lots of different areas.

Question: I’m completing Maths and English in the Independent Learning Skills as part of my Access programme, are these GCSEs?
Answer: The Independent Learning Skills that you added to your programme when you first enrolled are there to help you to improve your skills in these areas. These are not qualifications.

Question: I don’t have my GCSE certificates anymore – how do I get copies?
Answer: If you can remember which examining board you took your GCSEs with, then you can contact them direct to order replacement certificates. The most popular examining boards for GCSEs are Edexcel/Pearson and OCR. They will charge you for this service, and replacement certificates are likely to take up to 8 weeks to be sent to you. If you cannot remember which examining board you took your GCSEs with, then you can contact the AQA who will be able to issue you with a letter which confirms your exam results. There is a charge for this service.

Q: How do I find out who my unit assessor is?
A: You can find out who your unit assessor by looking in the support contacts of your email account. Please note they do change as you progress throughout your course.
The Learner Voice

We want everyone to have a great experience with us. We want to continually improve how we do things and would appreciate you sharing your experience with us. You can help by telling us what you think, how we did and what you thought of your experience with us.

You can share your feedback with us in a few ways.

• take part in surveys
• call the learndirect Professional team on: 0116 366 7567
• email the team at pdev@learndirect.com

Your feedback is important to us!