



BLUE LION

TRAINING ACADEMY



EMPLOYER HANDBOOK



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“We can only achieve our vision if our colleagues feel committed to each other, the company and our common goals – and we’ve worked very hard to make this a priority.”

WELCOME

The purpose of this handbook is to provide employers with a brief overview of the legislative and practical requirements of The Apprenticeship Programme provided by Blue Lion Training Academy Limited.



OUR VISION

Our vision is to equip the workforce of the future with the skills & knowledge to improve prosperity and wellbeing.



OUR MISSION

Our mission is to Involve, Improve & Inspire adult learners to unlock their true potential in a way that benefits their organisation and helps bridge the gap between left and right brain thinkers to help grow a sustainable UK economy.



OUR ETHOS

Our people are at the heart of everything we do. They are our greatest asset, helping us to stand out and become the clear choice for our clients in sustaining a creative approach to marketing and digital media through our apprenticeship programmes, and drive a culture of continuous improvement.

APPRENTICESHIP COURSES

Continuous Improvement Apprenticeships

- For those left-brain thinkers

Level 6 - Improvement Leader

Level 5 - Improvement Specialist

Level 4 - Improvement Practitioner

Level 3 - Improvement Technician

Level 2 - Lean Manufacturing Operative

Level 3 - Team Leader / Supervisor

- For those combined thinkers

Level 4 - Associate Project Manager

Using Visual, Aural, Read/Write, Kinesthetic
across all programmes for
blended training

Creative Apprenticeships

- For those right-brain thinkers

Level 4 - PR & Communications Assistant

Level 4 - Assistant Recording Technician

Level 3 - Junior Content Producer

Level 3 - Digital Marketer

Level 3 - Broadcast Production Assistant

Level 3 - Advertising & Media Executive



APPRENTICESHIPS

Since 2017, the Government has promoted the development of Apprenticeship Standards. A standard contains a list of the knowledge, skills and behaviours an apprentice will need to have learned by the end of their apprenticeship. Standards are occupation-focused; they are not qualification-led.

The learning happens throughout the apprenticeship and the apprentice undertakes a final End Point Assessment (EPA). They need to prove that they can carry out all aspects of their job. They develop transferable skills and gain credibility too.

Our directors have years of industry experience and have taken part in some of the trailblazer standards as employees of Rolls-Royce plc and as Directors of Blue Lion Training Academy Limited.

LEVELS OF APPRENTICESHIP

Apprenticeships have equivalent educational levels. The appropriate level will depend on the complexity of the role the apprentice is undertaking and the level of responsibility they are given in the workplace.





Blue Lion Training Academy provides Apprenticeships from Level 2 to Level 6 in multiple subject areas for creatives and business improvements.

In addition, the apprentices may have to study for functional skills qualifications in english and maths, and in some cases, IT. If the apprentices already have their GCSE, Functional Skills or equivalent then they may be exempt, but this will be confirmed on enrolment.

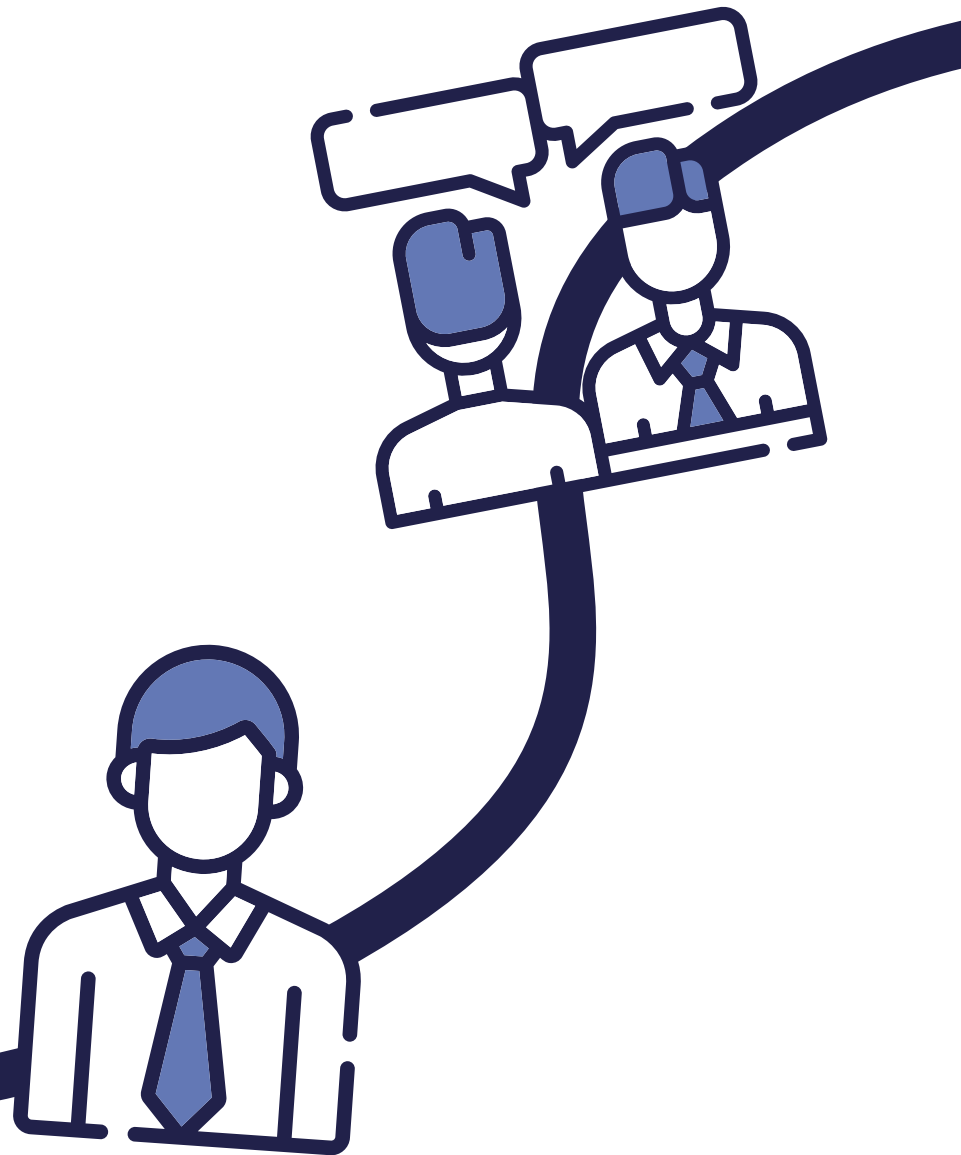
SUPPORT FROM US

We will support you throughout the apprenticeship programme from initial recruitment of any new apprentices including any additional funding support. If the apprentice is an existing employee looking to upskill, we will support their career development plan right up to their completion date of training.

BUSINESS DIRECTORS

Our team of directors will support you in the recruitment process of your apprentices. Their role is to advise you on how you can advertise and recruit for your apprenticeship vacancy, to match candidates to your apprenticeship vacancies and forward on applications or CVs in readiness for the interview stage.

If you are looking to upskill your current employee, or employees then the business directors will advise on the operational needs and training needs aligned to your company's strategy and individual career development plans.





TUTORS & ASSESSORS

This team is responsible for training the apprentices and assessing them for their qualifications throughout the duration of their apprenticeship.

They will contact you to discuss their role and will deliver the training remotely, unless otherwise agreed on a different site, and be involved in assessing the components of the apprenticeship by assessment and where applicable visits to the workplace.

All visits will be agreed in advance. If you need to contact a tutor, please be aware they may be teaching and cannot always take calls, please use email where possible.

ADDITIONAL LEARNING SUPPORT TEAM

We are committed to supporting individuals with disabilities or learning difficulties, and any other support needs, and have a team of staff who will work with individuals to give appropriate support where necessary. The support team will work in liaison with the Business Directors, and tutors to ensure additional support provided contributes to helping the individual develop the skills needed to be successful in work. This team will also provide insights for training standardisation, moderation and internal quality assurance

THE EMPLOYER JOURNEY

OFF-THE-JOB TRAINING

Apprenticeships must involve at least 20% off- the-job training. The 20% off-the-job training requirement is measured over the course of the full apprenticeship.

Please note the terminology of off-the-job training doesn't mean being off site or working from home. It is an apprenticeship term which equals the hours required as a minimum time to learn new knowledge, skills and behaviours through training, observations and project and assignment work.

The off-the-job training is an essential part of an apprenticeship and therefore must take place during employed time. If training must on odd occasions take place in an evening, or outside of contracted hours, this must be recognised, for example, through time off in lieu.

Training undertaken outside paid employment (and therefore outside of the apprenticeship) cannot be counted towards meeting the 20% requirement.

It is up to the employer and provider to decide at what point during the apprenticeship the training is best delivered (for example, a proportion of every day, one complete day a week, one week out of every five, a proportion at the beginning, middle or end). This will depend on what is best for the organisation and the apprentice and on the technical or theoretical requirements of the apprenticeship standard.

All Apprenticeships at Blue Lion Training Academy will be taught through a bespoke method agreed with the employer, tutor and apprentice. In exceptional circumstances if we require a change to the agreed day, you will be notified in advance.

It is important to remember that the apprentice must receive off-the-job training for a minimum of 20% of the time they are paid to work.

RECOGNISE PRIOR LEARNING

Before an apprenticeship begins, we will need to assess the individual's prior learning to establish the 'starting point', or baseline, of the apprentice.

This informs how much of the apprenticeship training content they require. We will work with you and your apprentice to undertake the Apprentice Initial Needs Assessment prior to making the apprenticeship offer.

The request for prior learning checks that the apprenticeship (both the job role and the training) is an appropriate programme for the Apprentice. Apprentices should not be spending paid time doing training they do not need, and the apprentice will not have a good experience if they are repeating training.



OFF-THE-JOB TRAINING

All apprentices must have an employment contract with their employer and a commitment statement to be signed by you as the employer, us as the training provider and the employee. An employment contract is an agreement that sets out an employee's:

1. EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS
2. RESPONSIBILITIES
3. RIGHTS
4. DUTIES

Most employment contracts do not need to be in writing to be legally valid, but it is better if they are. A contract 'starts' as soon as an offer of employment is accepted.

Most employees are legally entitled to a Written Statement of the main terms and conditions of employment within two calendar months of starting work. This should include details of things like pay, holidays and working hours. Further information about Written Statements and Contracts of Employment can be found at: www.gov.uk/employment-contracts-and-conditions

A commitment statement will need to be signed with your apprentice and Blue Lion Training Academy.

The commitment statement will include:

- The planned content and schedule for training.
- What is expected and offered by the employer, Blue Lion Training Academy and the apprentice.
- How to resolve queries or complaints.

You must sign an apprenticeship agreement with your apprentice. This gives details of what you agree to do for the apprentice, including:

- How long you'll employ them for.
- The training you'll give them.
- Their working conditions.
- The qualifications they're working towards.

The commitment statement and apprenticeship agreement are signed electronically via our dedicated online learning platform (bud).

ONBOARDING

Our onboarding is simple and completed online, allowing the apprentice to complete their data and upload evidence and ID direct from their computer. Once the basic information has been updated, they will carry out an Initial Assessment for functional skills in English and Maths built into the onboarding process. The tool is dynamic and adjusts the level according to the answers given – allowing the apprentice to see what level they are currently working at in English and Maths from Pre-Entry to Level 2. The assessment is fully interactive and self- marking and is created and developed in line with the reformed Functional Skills Standards and the core curriculum for English and Maths which is all part of the onboarding process.



REVIEWS

Every apprentice will go through a formal review of their progress at least every 12 weeks or more frequently if required. The purpose of this review is to look at their progress both in learning and in work. A member of your organisation will be asked to participate in the review process using our dedicated online learning platform (bud). 'bud' is an online learning platform used by us that brings training and assessment together in one place. 'bud' can be used to track and monitor all types of work- based training. You will be able to remotely log in and monitor your apprentice's progress, send online feedback, and read and contribute to your apprentice's reviews. These reviews also include health & safety, equality & diversity and safeguarding.

APPRENTICES PREPARING FOR GATEWAY

After the on-programme training, the apprentice will work with their tutor to make sure they are ready for their Apprenticeship Gateway, all training is complete and each of the knowledge, skills and behaviours has been met. Our tutor will check with you as the apprentice's employer, that you are also confident that the apprentice can prepare for their End Point Assessment.



END POINT ASSESSMENT

The purpose of the End Point Assessment (EPA) is to test that an apprentice is fully capable of doing their job before they receive their apprenticeship certificate. It also helps to demonstrate that what an apprentice has learned can be applied in the real world.

EPA is separate to any qualifications or other assessment that the apprentice may undertake during the on-programme stage of the apprenticeship.

At the end of an apprenticeship, the apprentice will go through a 'gateway' process where they are signed-off by their employer as ready for a final assessment of their knowledge and practical capabilities.

The assessment will be graded (in most cases) and the Independent End Point Assessor (IEPA) from the End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) will be independent, and separate from, the training provided by the provider and employer.

We value your input and reviews are an ideal opportunity to formally update the apprentice on their progress and plan for the future. Please try to provide feedback which highlights clearly the areas they are performing well in and areas they need to improve. In our experience this feedback process can have a significant effect on the success of an Apprenticeship.



OPTIONS ONCE THE APPRENTICESHIP HAS BEEN COMPLETED

PROGRESSING TO A HIGHER-LEVEL APPRENTICESHIP WITH SUPPORT FROM US

This transition depends on the apprentice's role and responsibilities within the organisation and their ability to meet the demands of the higher qualifications. Please discuss the feasibility of this option with the tutor/ assessor before the apprenticeship has been completed. They will be able to advise you and the apprentice on this option.

OPTION 1

Enables the apprentice to receive further training in additional skills and enables your organisation to train them in a broader role with higher level skills.

OPTION 2

Becoming an employee. If a suitable vacancy or opportunity arises you can employ an apprentice at the end of their apprenticeship. They would be employed like any other member of staff on a new contract of employment and would then be entitled to the national minimum wage for their age group, as a minimum.

OPTION 3

Leaving your organisation. If options 1 and 2 are not possible at the end of the apprenticeship, then you, the apprentice and the tutor/assessor will need to set a date for them to leave the organisation once the apprenticeship is completed.

We hope that you will continue to support them as they look to progress both by providing employer references and making them aware of any suitable vacancies you may come across, as well as allowing time off work for interviews. Your key contact for advice on these options is the tutor/ assessor who will be your main contact as the apprenticeship progresses.

ADJUSTING TO THE WORKPLACE

Particularly with younger apprentices, this may be their first experience of the workplace. All they have known up to this point may be school. We can all remember our first day at work and how adjusting to the culture and demands can be daunting. Adjusting to the workplace may take a short while. Expect a period of adjustment, expect some mistakes, and expect to need to remind them occasionally of the requirements of employment.

If you need advice from Blue Lion Training Academy, please speak with one of our key team members in the contact us section, we are here to help.



INDUSTRY CHECKLIST

In our experience, the early stages of an Apprenticeship will have a significant impact on its success.

Below are some simple tips we can pass on, and which we hope you find useful.

A.

Prepare in advance for their arrival, having some form of structured induction into the role.

This will improve the situation for all involved.

B.

Show them where the facilities are, toilets, canteen etc. and what the normal arrangements for breaks and lunch are.

C.

Cover the Health & Safety essentials on page 21

D.

Explain the process of booking holidays and what their holiday entitlement is.

E.

Give them an overview of the organisation at a simple level, for example, the function of each of the teams.

Share an organisational chart if available.

F.

Make them feel part of your team. Have a small starter pack ready which could include, ID badges, IT log-in, uniform or safety clothing, staff handbook etc.

G.

Identify and let them know who their manager will be and who to talk to if they have any questions.

H.

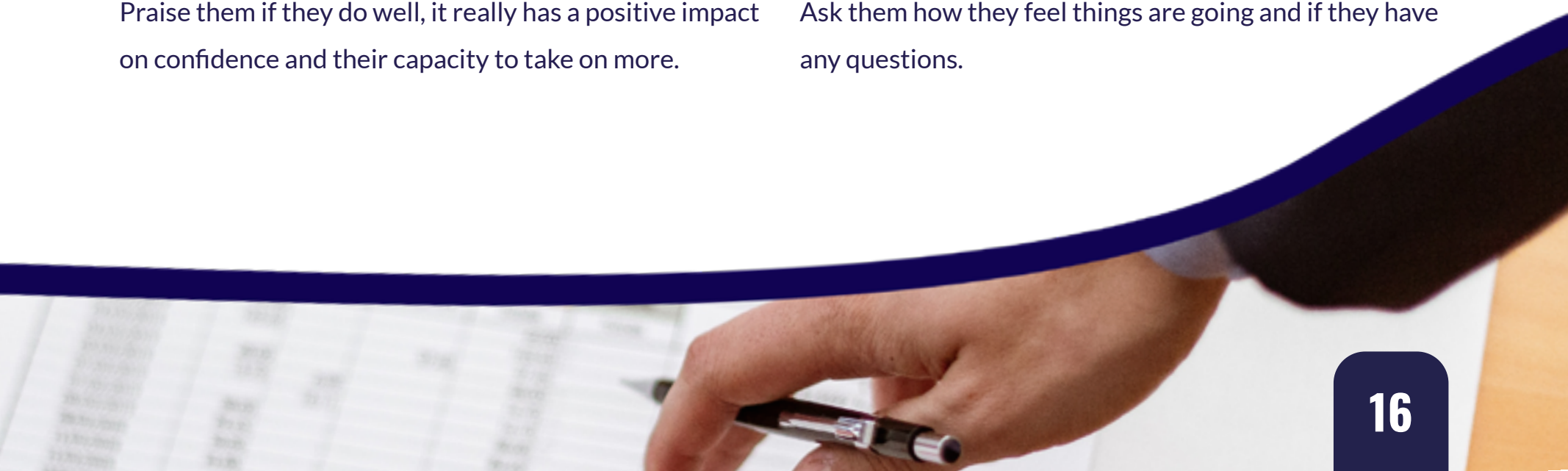
Explain the procedures for contacting you if they are absent due to illness.

I.

Explain to them any standards of dress/behaviour and how to introduce themselves if they need to answer a phone or speak to customers/clients. Your businesses code of conduct.



- J.
Explain the expectations in terms of attendance and timekeeping and how this will be monitored.
- K.
Explain who to contact if they have any issues with other staff (refer to the safeguarding section).
- L.
Provide some variation in their duties over the early periods so they learn a range of skills and retain interest and motivation.
- M.
Praise them if they do well, it really has a positive impact on confidence and their capacity to take on more.
- N.
Explain how and when they will be paid and who to approach if there are any issues.
- O.
Start with simple duties and tasks which are not crucial if they make mistakes.
- P.
Give them feedback. They need it perhaps more regularly than you would have thought; focus on positives as well as areas for improvement.
- Q.
Ask them how they feel things are going and if they have any questions.



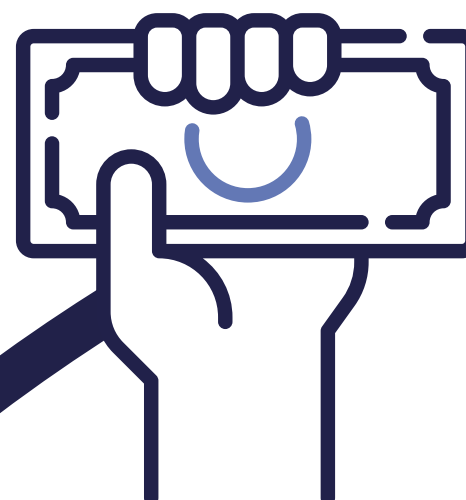
LEGISLATION

Apprentices like all your other employees are subject to a range of legislation covering areas such as Employment Law, Health and Safety Legislation and Equality Legislation. Apprentices should be treated the same as all other employees in relation to this legislation where the legal responsibility lies with the employer. There are 3 specific pieces of legislation which apply to apprentices that may not apply to other employees. These are:

NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE FOR APPRENTICES

The government has created a national minimum wage for apprentices, the current (April 2021) minimum apprentice wage is £4.30 per hour, which only applies to this group of employees. If they wish, employers can pay more than this rate. In our experience, offering an apprentice small pay rises linked to specific achievements during training, is an option worth considering. For apprentices aged 19 years or over, the national minimum wage for an apprentice only applies during the first year.

Wages and working hours - Government guidance: www.direct.gov.uk



PAID HOLIDAYS

Within the Contract/Apprenticeship Agreement the number of paid days holiday a year should be detailed. All apprentices are covered by the same national legislation on paid holidays as other staff. The current legislation entitles all staff working 5 days per week to 28 paid holidays per year, or pro-rata if they work less. This includes bank and public holidays.

WORKING HOURS LEGISLATION FOR UNDER 18'S

There is legislation in place which limits the working hours of young people under 18 years of age. The Direct.gov government run website currently advises the following on this issue;

“A young worker cannot usually be made to work more than eight hours per day or 40 hours per week. These hours cannot be averaged over a longer period and you are not allowed to ignore these restrictions.”

They will only be able to work longer hours if you either need to:

- keep the continuity of service or production
- respond to a surge in demand for a service or product and provided that:
- there is no adult available to do the work
- their training needs are not negatively affected.

These restrictions only apply to those under 18, apprentices aged 18 or over can be required to work longer hours providing they are paid. The working hours should be discussed and agreed with the applicant before commencing with any apprenticeship during the first year.





RISK ASSESSMENT FOR EMPLOYING A YOUNG PERSON

Every employer employing a 16-18 year old is legally obliged to carry out a risk assessment into the additional health and safety risks that employing a young, inexperienced person brings to the workplace.

This is a relatively straight forward process and you may have already completed one if you have previously employed someone of this age. If not, a risk assessment needs developing for this purpose, there is some useful support available on the internet from the Health & Safety Executive (HSE), please see:-

Information on how to put together a risk assessment - www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf

Information on employing a young person - www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg364.pdf

This risk assessment should be completed before the employment commences.

DATA PROTECTION

Blue Lion Training Academy is committed to ensuring that all personal data handled by us will be processed according to legally compliant standards of data protection and data security. We will meet UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 requirements in relation to data sharing and data protection.

We need to process certain information about apprentices for administrative purposes and to comply with our legal obligations to funding bodies and government.

To comply with the law, information about individuals will be collected and used fairly, stored safely and securely and not disclosed to any third party unlawfully.

For more details, our Data Protection policy and procedure can be found on our website:

<https://bluelionta.com/policies-documents/>



HEALTH & SAFETY

When dealing with apprentices this topic needs a little further consideration than when dealing with other new employees with previous work experience as the risk assessment indicates. Some apprentices are school-leavers so their knowledge/experience of workplace Health & Safety requirements may be minimal or non-existent.

Just like other employees the legal responsibilities for this lie with you as their employer. Blue Lion Training Academy will look at this topic as part of the apprentice's training programme but employers should plan to address this from the apprentice's first day at work.

We will work in partnership with employers to ensure learners are managed in a safe environment. This includes taking details/copy of the employer's liability insurance

Our Health & Safety induction training checklist can be found on our website and will help you and your apprentice with the right induction from day one. We will review this with you at the first tutor employer meeting and retain a copy on our learning platform (bud).

You are likely to have your own procedures in place for Health & Safety induction training, please use our checklist alongside your normal working practices.

We would encourage employers to clearly communicate to apprentices the importance of this topic and to outline the sanctions that would apply if they failed to follow your procedures and instructions. A good rule of thumb is to tell apprentices that if they are in any way uncertain about a Health & Safety issue, to stop and check rather than take risks.

For larger organisations, we would ask that you ensure that the apprentice has a "workplace" induction within the area they will be working as well as a general induction into the organisation.

The contact details of our Blue Lion Training Academy Principal Health & Safety officer who can provide general advice is in the Contact us section.



SPEAK UP STAY SAFE

Both employers and young employees can access useful advice from this British Safety Council campaign which aims to put young people and confident communication at the heart of good health and safety.

Please follow this link www.britsafe.org/speakupstaysafe



SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding apprentices both at work whilst learning with us is important to us. Safeguarding is the action that organisations like ours take to promote the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults to protect them from harm including physical, emotional, sexual financial harm and neglect. This includes making sure that the appropriate policies and procedures are put in place.

Our policies and procedures ensure there is an overarching approach to Safeguarding across our organisation and that all apprentices, employers, employees and associates are aware of their legal obligations to safeguard Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults. Here are some simple things employers can do to minimise the risk including:

A. Providing a named person within the organisation that the apprentice should contact if there are any issues in this area and showing them who and where this person is.

B. Where further advice or support is needed - contact our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at Blue Lion Training Academy (see Contact Us section).

C. If concerns are raised - investigate them further and notify the Blue Lion Training Academy DSL. Simple practical steps such as these should help in minimising any risks without requiring any significant new processes or procedures.



Safeguarding & Prevent training for employers is essential. If you don't have this in place for your designated staff we suggest you arrange this training and mandate for your single points of contact (SPOCs) – free sector specific online training is available <https://preventforfeandtraining.org.uk/>



THE PREVENT STRATEGY

Everyone has a right to live in a safe and welcoming neighbourhood where they feel they belong. The Government's Prevent Strategy is designed to expose the ideology that sanctions and encourages division, hatred and indiscriminate violence by a very small minority against society as a whole.

The Prevent Strategy has three key objectives aimed at addressing these factors and in support of the overall aim of stopping people becoming or supporting terrorists or violent extremists:

- Respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it;
- Prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support
- Work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation which we need to address.

To support the Prevent Strategy, Blue Lion Training Academy, alongside other partners such as local employers, has a critical role in preventing violent extremism, including recognition of any signs that a student may be at risk, or is a risk to others.

If you have any concerns about anyone, you can contact our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for advice on all matters relating to the Prevent strategy. Our safeguarding & prevent policy and procedures can be found on our website: <https://bluelionta.com/policies-documents/>

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

As an employer you must comply with current equality legislation and not discriminate under the 'protected characteristics' of sex, disability, marital status, race (including national or ethnic origins), sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, religion or belief, age, pregnancy/maternity and ex-offenders with a spent crime. All employers are required to have a policy/complaints procedure for harassment which should be shared with your apprentices.

BRITISH VALUES

British values are very important to us as it underpins what it is to be part of a modern & diverse Great Britain.

The five-part definition of British values are as follows:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect
- Tolerance of different faiths and beliefs

WITH THESE VALUES IN MIND, AT BLUE LION TRAINING ACADEMY WE AIM TO:

- Help students to become valuable and rounded members of society who treat others with respect and tolerance, regardless of background.
- Promote to students the basic British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those of different beliefs and faiths.
- Ensure young people understand the importance of respect and leave fully prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Celebrate difference and promote diversity.
- Encourage an understanding of the difficulties other cultures face where such values are not respected.





THEREFORE, BLUE LION TRAINING ACADEMY

- Minimises the risk of exposure to bullying, grooming, radicalisation or abuse to learners through the use of technology including the internet or other means.
- Has well-developed strategies in place to keep learners safe and to support them to develop their own understanding of these risks and in learning how to keep themselves and others safe.
- Oversees the safe use of technology and takes action immediately if we are concerned.
- Encourages any learners who do not feel safe or see anything that they feel may pose a risk or threat, to report this immediately with the knowledge that their complaint will be investigated thoroughly.

USEFUL INTERNET SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Overview and guidance from the National Apprenticeship Service: www.apprenticeships.org.uk

Blue Lion Training Academy Website: www.bluelionta.com

Health & Safety Executive (HSE) website: www.hse.gov.uk

Wages and working hours - Government guidance: www.direct.gov.uk

SOCIAL MEDIA



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DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD:

Geeta Dhanjal

07527179522

geeta.dhanjal@bluelionta.com

ADDRESS & CONTACT DETAILS

Trading Address:

13 Mallard Way, Pride Park,
Derby, United Kingdom, DE24 8GX

Registered Address:

19 St. Christophers Way, Pride Park,
Derby, United Kingdom, DE24 8JY

Tel: 01332 738625

Email: info@bluelionta.com

www.bluelionta.com

ESFA APPRENTICE HELPLINE:

Customer Service

0800 015 0400

nationalhelpdesk@apprenticeships.gov.uk



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