



Scottish Learner Services

Overview

Nov 2024



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Introduction to Learner Services

QA provides holistic support for our apprentices through our dedicated Learner Services Team. Learner Services provide support through two key areas, Safeguarding and Learner Support. The wider benefit of having these functions in one larger team is pro-active communication and the ability to collaborate to ensure the learner receives the best possible service.

Safeguarding Team

The Safeguarding Team is in place to ensure all learners receive timely support if they are ever in crisis or if they are in other areas of difficulty such as being at risk of homelessness.

However, despite our excellence in being able to react to unexpected elements we are also proactive in minimising the need for our safeguarding service through the introduction of monthly awareness sessions. The team produce monthly newsletters to give both employers and learners an insight into current trends regarding safeguarding and the underlying factors that many may not consider so that learners can keep themselves safe.

Ways to access support if you are worried for yourself or someone else:

- Call us anytime on 07808 050273 or email safeguarding@qa.com
- Complete a [Safeguarding Self-Referral Form](#) if the concern relates to you.
- Complete a [Safeguarding Referral Form](#) if you are worried about someone else.
- Complete a [Low-Level Concern Form](#) if you are concerned about the conduct of a QA employee.
- Contact your Skills Coach, Tutor or Account Manager.
- Speak to any member of QA staff onsite.



Learner Support Team

We believe every learner is unique, so we are driven to provide support that is as unique as they are.

Our mantra:

“Once you’ve met one person with a disability/neurodiversity, you’ve still only met one person with a disability/neurodiversity.”

We don’t believe in a ‘one size fits all’ approach and work collaboratively with all our key stakeholders to ensure learners’ needs are always met.

Support from the start

The first link in the chain of support is our recruitment and onboarding teams, who are suitably trained to ensure they ask the right questions to be able to signpost learners to the Learner Support Team. Most importantly, we want our recruitment team to create a culture of acceptance so that any perceived stigma can be removed and so learners feel able to disclose with confidence.

We want our learners to enjoy their time at QA as well as be successful on their chosen course. The Learner Support Team are here to support learners to become successful on their programme. We have a team of highly trained and qualified Learning Support Specialists (LSS) who work with learners across all subject areas and levels.

Screening:

Once referred, learners will receive a confidential screening where we will establish the learner’s needs, and work with them to decide what kind of support will help on their learning journey. Some learners only need a small amount of support to help them get on track due to their Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND), others may require longer term support to help them reach their full learning potential. Please note that the Learning Support Team **do not** diagnose any learning difficulties or disabilities.

We support learners with a wide range of SEND needs, including:

- Dyslexia
- Dyspraxia/Developmental Co-ordination Disorder (DCD)
- Dyscalculia



- Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC)/Asperger's
- ADHD/ADD
- Blind or Partially Sighted
- D/deaf or Hard of Hearing
- Mental Health issues if the learner has had them for more than 12 months

Mental health difficulties are considered a disability under the Equality Act 2010 where an individual has experienced mental health difficulties for 12 months or more. Due to the emotive nature of neurodiversity/disability, we are keen to ensure the learner's mental wellbeing is always considered and will encourage proactive engagement with the safeguarding team, so learners remain safe throughout their learning journey.

Reasonable Adjustment Plan:

After the screening, it will be decided if the learner would benefit from a Reasonable Adjustment Plan (RAP). If so, one will be created and shared with the relevant QA staff. The benefits of sharing relevant support strategies with the learner's employer will also be discussed, and the LSS can support with this if needed.

Support Session:

If it is deemed appropriate learners will be offered the opportunity to access one-to-one support sessions. A support session is designed to help learners develop strategies to overcome their difficulties and build on existing skills. Sessions may include:

- Study skills support
- Assignment prep
- Exam revision
- Developing writing skills
- Time management
- Organisation skills
- Mentoring
- Using assistive technology
- Body doubling

Exams:

Where applicable, based on a learner's normal way of working, the LSS can apply for access arrangements and reasonable adjustments for exams e.g. extra time, reader, scribe.

Support in the workplace

We want to support our neurodiverse learners, 100% of their working time. All apprenticeship providers are duty bound to offer learning support for learners with a disability/neurodiversity. QA have partnered with ToHealth/Concept Northern, an access to work specialist business, to offer a complete end-to-end service for employers, assisting them in supporting their employees with a disability/neurodiversity. Their service includes formal diagnostics, assistive technology, ergonomics, consultancy, workplace needs assessments and specialist assessments for hearing and visual impairments. In short, QA supports the learner during their learning journey and ToHealth/Concept Northern can support employers and employees in the workplace.

How to make a referral

The earlier we receive a referral to our services, the quicker we can put in the relevant support with a learner, and ensure they are on the path towards a successful outcome. The learner refers themselves by completing an online form. A member of the team will then make contact to discuss the next steps. The link and/or QR code below.

<https://forms.office.com/e/2y4ZTk2nsd>



