Remote Education Offer

Introduction (example)
This document aims to ensure that learners (and parents of learners if aged under 18) know what to expect of Access Training if they need to self-isolate or if national / local restrictions require them to remain at home.
It is a requirement that this information is made available to all learners through publication on the website.

Rationale
As a result of the Coronavirus pandemic and subsequent national / local lockdowns, there has been a need for Access Training to provide "remote education". This is teaching and learning where the person delivering and learner are separated by time and distance, and therefore does not occur in a usual classroom or face-to-face environment.

Remote education has had to evolve considerably since March 2020, because it cannot be considered as only a short-term solution or stopgap until learning "returns to normal". The remote education provided must be meaningful and wherever possible be in line with the required curriculum.
The remote learning offer must be flexible enough to be used on a scaled basis where under normal circumstances it is used as a component of a blended delivery model, and also as a contingency, where it is used for the majority of delivery during an enforced lockdown.

One key aspect that should not be ignored is that **Remote Education does not always mean Digital Learning.**
Whilst the distance between the person delivering the learning and the learner themselves needs to be bridged, and the use of technology may be the preferred method of communication, the situation is more complicated than that.
It cannot be assumed that all learners will have access to the same technology and doing so would exclude some learners from being able to participate. This is clearly not inclusive.
Therefore, a range of learning and communication methods needs to be available to meet the individual needs of learners, including those with Educational Health Care Plans (EHCP), SEND or where other barriers to learning are present.

Challenges for Learners (including Parents / Carers / Home Circumstances)
When considering our Remote Education Offer it was important to recognise some of the significant challenges faced by learners and where applicable their parents / carers and home circumstances.

Challenges such as;
- Family life, siblings, parents working from home
- Access to technology – devices, connectivity, competing demands with others in household
- Lack of resources to support learning that would normally be in the classroom
- Cultural and /or language barriers
- Some learners may need additional support to access technology or for the learning itself
- Anxieties (inc. family, friends, financial, lockdown and the future)
- The support of Parents / carers cannot be counted upon for all learners. Parents / Carers are not generally trained education professionals like teachers and support staff and education methods different to when parents / carers were at school themselves

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What remote education will be made available for different learner cohorts (16 to 19 Study Programme / Apprentices and Adult Learners)
It is important to recognise the main two cohort types of learners for which Access Training provides remote education.

The first and most numerous cohort being Apprenticeships / Adult Learners where delivery is based in the workplace with a large amount of learner led study time outside of the workplace. For these learners, remote education has formed part of our offer for many years and is used in tandem with face-to-face delivery. How much face-to-face delivery is provided will depend on the individual support needs of the learner and the impact on the employer. For example, an apprentice with higher level support needs may have 100% face-to-face contact with Access Training, whereas a learner with lower support needs may have 25% face-to-face contact with the remaining 75% of contact being remote education.

The second cohort is 16-19 Study Programme learners where delivery is usually wholly classroom based in a training centre, with little learner led study time outside of the classroom required. The move to remote learning for this cohort is necessary only when a learner cannot physically attend the training centre for reasons such as health or enforced lockdown. Under normal circumstances delivery would be 100% classroom based, because timekeeping, attendance and working with other learners are all key learning objectives of a Study Programme.

How Access Training Deliver Remote Education
As mentioned above "Remote Education does not always mean Digital Learning". It cannot be assumed that all learners will have access to the same technology and doing so would exclude some learners from being able to participate. This is clearly not inclusive.
Therefore, the Access Training Remote Education Offer includes;
- Telephone Calls
- Emails
- Emailing work for learners to complete
- Social Media Messaging
- Online platform such as Microsoft Teams / Zoom
- Online Virtual Learning Environment / ePortfolio such as Learning Assistant
- Posting paper work-books / resources / projects to learners

Use of Online Learning Platforms
There are many different online learning platforms / virtual learning environments available. For apprenticeship learners, Access Training uses the City & Guilds Learning Assistant (LA) platform. Apprentices and employers are allocated their own login for LA and can receive targets / submit work and interact with Access Training through this platform. As well as LA, apprentices are contacted using a variety of communication methods including phone, email, messaging service, social media as well as online meeting tools such as Microsoft Teams and Zoom.

There are some situations where online communication which includes video is not appropriate. These are covered below in the "Arrangements for learners on programmes that require specialist equipment or facilities".

For Study Programme learners there is no single prescribed communication method. This is due to Study Programme learners tending to have more diverse learning need and therefore needing a wide variety of different communication methods to suit their individual needs. The communication needs of the learner may change from week to week, again depending on individual requirements. For

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example, where a learner is comfortable using video communication on one occasion but is uncomfortable on another occasion due to increased anxiety levels.

Where classroom working is no longer possible, learners are encouraged to participate in remote group meetings through conference call or Microsoft Teams to encourage communication and team working between learners. Where this is not possible or learners are reluctant to participate, one-on-one meetings will be used.

Wherever possible Access Training will keep communication and information sharing as simple as possible and use the most common formats and widely accessible communication methods to ensure that all learners can access remote education.

It cannot be assumed that document formats like Microsoft Word and Excel are accessible to all. Therefore, the use of the pdf format for documents is more likely to be accessible to most devices without further app download.

Frequency of Communication

How often a learner is contacted is based on the individual needs of the learner and their learning programme.

For apprenticeship learners then communication is likely to be in line with face-to-face visits, such as every 4 to 6 weeks, but can be more frequent based on individual need.

For Study Programme learners contact is likely to be much more frequent. If a Study Programme learner is timetabled to attend for 3 days per week, it is likely that they are contacted every day. The range of communication frequency could be from only once per week as an absolute minimum up to multiple times per day. This again is dependent on the individual needs of the learner.

It is important to note that communication with all learners is a two-way process and Access Training staff are available for learners to contact them as much or as little as required (within working hours).

Timetabling

For Study Programme learners a short-term timetable will be put in place on the commencement of remote education. Every learner will be set work and objectives each week and will have an exact time slot for the following week where they will be contacted by Access Training.

At any point during remote education each learner will know exactly what is required of them and when their next appointment for contact will take place.

Expectations of learners

The required expectations of each learner are explained during induction at the start of the learning programme. This includes the requirement for learners to complete all of the objectives set for them.

A detailed code of conduct is in place for all learners and specific reference is made to behaviour during online / remote education.

This includes guidance for behaviour during Microsoft Teams / Zoom meetings, such as dress code, location and appropriate language.

Learners on programmes that require specialist equipment or facilities

Remote education is not fully compatible with all learning programmes and sectors.

There are some significant limitations to remote education on certain learning programmes and in sectors where specialised assessments and resources are required. On these programmes there is the expectation that some face-to-face

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delivery and assessment will still be required in the workplace / training centre. In the worst cases, where the required face-to-face delivery cannot take place there must be recognition that delivery will be heavily compromised and may not be able to fully meet the requirement of the curriculum.

Below are some programmes and sectors where remote education may not be fully effective. (This list is not exhaustive)

- Construction – e.g., where assessment on the physical construction of walls and the correct use of specialist tools is required to become qualified. All the resources cannot be made available to learners outside of the training centre, therefore only theory can be delivered during this time.
If remote education is mandatory over a long period of time, it may not be possible for a learner to successfully complete their learning programme
- Early Years (Childcare) – Observations of learners working with children are a mandatory requirement of Childcare apprenticeships. These would usually be conducted face-to-face in the workplace. In most childcare settings there are stringent restrictions on the use of camera-based technology such as mobile phones / Microsoft Teams / Zoom because of child protection. In these situations, some assessments (but not all) are conducted over the phone, or alternative evidence such as witness testimonies are used where allowed.
- Apprenticeships in NHS settings – These programmes can be limited by both the learner (lack of device / internet / suitable application) and the employer, where they have stringent network protection protocols which prohibit the use of many applications.

Differentiation
There is no standardised "one size fits all approach" to remote education and Access Training will always take into account the circumstances of the learner, their parents, their family circumstances, and its staff.

Loan Equipment
Access Training has a pool of IT loan equipment, including laptops and Internet access, which can be allocated to learners on either a short-term or longer-term basis. Wherever possible, learners will be loaned IT equipment appropriate to their needs.
Additionally, it may be possible for IT equipment to be acquired for learners if they are eligible for a bursary or alternatively through the "Access2Apprenticeships" fund.

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