

Employer Newsletter

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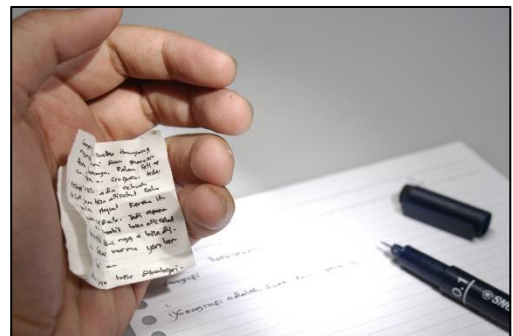
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Ethical update: cheating in exams

At First Intuition, the professional code of conduct underpins everything we do. Disappointingly we have noticed that a small, but significant, number of students are submitting work which is not their own, either as part of their portfolio and project report preparation or in response to a mock exam. This may be "borrowing" from someone else's work, using the internet or AI to produce answers. Whilst all of these can be valuable aids to completing work efficiently and effectively if they are used appropriately, in an exam context this is regarded as cheating. It is our policy to challenge learners who appear to have done this and to report them to their employer. We will leave it with you to decide if you feel it should also be reported to their professional body.

We will address this with learners in the following ways;

- A reminder that the Fundamental Principles apply to their college work as well as their workplace
- Challenging any submissions of student work and reporting this to you.
- We will not mark work where we can see it has been plagiarised.
- Increased emphasis on the importance of completing course and mock exams.



The practice exams set within our programme are designed to help the learner to develop their knowledge and exam technique as well as helping the tutor to gauge the need for support. Our research suggests that learners who complete all of the required practice exams are up to 25% more likely to pass than those who have not. We would rather that a learner submitted a low-quality exam than no exam at all. As long as it is their best work at that time, we can then provide the help and support needed for the learner to improve.

Whilst the current instances of cheating only relate to a small number of learners, it is important that the profession acts to prevent such behaviour. We would be very grateful for your support in delivering this message to your learners.

Gateway requirements

As apprentices approach the final stages of their studies, they must go through a key step called 'Gateway'. This is an important meeting that all apprentices must attend, alongside their line manager.

What is Gateway?

Gateway is a point within the apprenticeship where apprentices complete their training and are about to undertake their end-point assessment (EPA). EPA is the final assessment that apprentices undertake on their apprenticeship. At Level 3 and 4 the EPA is their final synoptic exam and their portfolio/reflective discussion. At Level 7 this is their final case study exam and their project report.

To ensure that apprentices are ready to progress to their EPA, each apprentice will have a Gateway meeting attended by the apprentice, their line manager and their skills coach. There are a number of requirements that students must ensure they have fulfilled to be able to pass through gateway and complete their apprenticeship:

1. The apprentice has been on programme for at least one year
2. The apprentice has completed all learning, as per their confirmed planner (including our impact skills programme), attended their professional qualification courses and passed their required exams.
3. The apprentice has met their 20% minimum off-the-job learning
4. The apprentice has had their project report or portfolio signed off as ready to submit by their skills coach
5. Their skills scans, that are completed in their progress reviews with their coach, indicate readiness for EPA
6. The employer is satisfied that the apprentice is able to demonstrate the knowledge, skills and behaviours of their apprenticeship standard within the workplace
7. The apprentice has passed their functional skills maths and English (if applicable)

If an apprentice has not met these requirements, we cannot enter them for their end-point assessment. This can impact when an apprentice completes their apprenticeship as we will defer their courses or their exam to a later sitting when we are confident they have met the requirements of gateway.

Therefore, any concerns you have about learners meeting these requirements must be flagged as soon as possible.

Important dates and deadlines



Upcoming exam entry deadlines:

- ICAEW March Exams – 2nd February
- ACCA March Exams – 29th January (late entry 5th February, but will incur higher exam fees)
- ATT/CTA May Exams – 29th February
- CIMA Management Case February Exams – 30th January
- CIMA Strategic Case February Exam – 6th February

National Apprenticeship Week

National Apprenticeship week will run from Monday 5th February to Sunday 11th February. During this week, FI are attending different employer and school career events. We hope to encourage individuals to consider how apprenticeships can help them develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to succeed in future career opportunities. If you would like FI to help support you in any future events, please discuss this with your client partner.

Onboarding

Onboarding your learners into their apprenticeships can take up to 4 weeks and possibly longer if any complications arise. It is therefore important to make us aware of any new starts within a sufficient time-frame. Your client partner will work with you and your learner to complete the onboarding, so please ensure that you are both completing the necessary paperwork/initial assessments within the deadlines provided to ensure a timely sign up.

Employer Charter

Please find below our employer charter. This sets out some key expectations we have of you, the employers, to ensure that together we can maximise the success of our apprenticeship programmes.



Partnership with FI

We work closely with all of our employers to support their apprentices.

It is important to us that we provide a service which meets your business needs as well as the needs of your apprentices. We will always try to deliver the best quality we can and to make sure that we are meeting the expectations of our regulatory authorities. We ask that you work with us to help us to do this.



Time to study

You will make sure that the apprentice has time to study. In practice, this means 20% of the apprentice's time is used to learn new skills. This includes college time and time learning new skills in the workplace. More specifically, you must be prepared to:

- Adjust the apprentices workload whilst they are studying. They should not be expected to "catch up" after the course has finished.
- Make it possible for your apprentices to turn off their phones when they are studying
- Allow time in the working day to complete timesheets and apprenticeship tasks 1-2 hours per month is plenty!



Manager support

The role of the manager is essential to a successful apprenticeship. Whilst we try to align this with the normal management of a trainee, the line manager should be prepared to commit to the following:

- Attending the line manager online induction (1 hour)
- Attending the progress reviews every 12 weeks (20 mins to 1 hour)
- Discussing skills development prior to a learner attending the skills day (10-15 mins)

- Helping to keep the learner on track if they fall behind e.g. reminders to complete course exams and timesheets
- Working with the apprentice and coach to set objectives which are aligned to both the workplace and to the apprenticeship.



Keeping us up to date

We will supply you with regular updates on your apprentices' progress and we would be grateful if you would do the same. Please let us know if there are any concerns around your apprentice's performance in the workplace. We may be able to help. Specifically, please let us know if

- an apprentice is receiving special support at work.
- is absent on long term sick leave.
- is working their notice period or is at risk of redundancy.



Demonstrate employer "buy in".

If you are looking for a free course but do not value the wider benefits of an apprenticeship this will quickly become apparent to the apprentice. For us to deliver a successful programme we will need you to demonstrate to the apprentice that you value the apprenticeship as a whole. We are always happy to take the time to share details of any aspect of the apprenticeship programme with you. In particular, the employer plays a significant role in:

- Committing to the values of the apprenticeship and the skills which it delivers
- Rewarding those who demonstrate the skills and behaviours embedded within the apprenticeship
- Taking an interest in the development of these new skills by the apprentice
- Linking successful completion of apprenticeship milestones to rewards and promotion.
- Taking action if an employee is not engaging in the minimum requirements of the programme.

Update on changes in Level 4 and Level 7

During 2024 we are expecting changes in both the Level 4 and Level 7 Apprenticeship standards. The Level 4 Trailblazer committee is still reviewing proposals and consulting with employers and the professional bodies. There is currently a sticking point relating to the required professional discussion as part of the End Point Assessment, where AAT are in favor (as they provide it already), but many of Level 4 professional bodies are less inclined to make this part of their offering and prefer to require a written report or portfolio. Until this can be reconciled, the standard and its expected funding band increase remains in 'revision' stage.

Until the Level 4 standard is revised, they will not begin to look at Level 7. Our advice is to continue to employ and register apprentices under the current standard, and we will of course keep you informed!



What to do if your apprentice is leaving



If your employee is leaving your organisation, please let us know as soon as possible. It is a Department of Education requirement that we inform them promptly and, as such, both our contracts with the DFE and your contract with us requires you to share this information with us before you make adjustments to the DAS.

This enables us to support the apprentice to transition their apprenticeship to their new employer or to find a new role as appropriate. We will also review the learners account to make sure that we invoice, or refund, you as appropriate. We will review the funding received to date against the costs incurred and refund any excess or invoice you if there is a shortfall in line with our contract.

Recent results

Earlier this month, we had some fantastic results from the ACCA and ICAEW December sitting. There was even a prize-winner scoring the highest average mark in the world at ACCA professional level!

ICAEW

AA	FAR	TC	BPT	BST	FM
87%	90%	93%	91%	83%	96%

ACCA

PM	TX	FR	FM	SBL	SBR	ATX
81%	80%	83%	88%	94%	80%	67%

Providing opportunities to those leaving care

First Intuition have been working with Southampton City Council to support young people who are leaving care to gain entry to the profession. We will work with them to provide careers advice, CV writing and interview preparation skills. It would be great to have a body of employers who are prepared to offer a guaranteed interview to care leavers after we have vetted them for suitability. These candidates may not have had the best support through their school studies and hence may have lower exam qualifications than your usual candidates, however, they have much to offer and bring diversity to the workplace.

The government provide a one-off bursary to care leavers who are under 25 of £3,000 to support them in their first year of their apprenticeship. There is also an additional £1,000 paid to employers and training providers to support care leavers. This will allow us to spend a little extra time with the apprentice if they need it. Employers can use this towards costs or salary.

If you would be prepared to offer an interview to care leavers, or require further information, please contact jodyson@fi.co.uk

First Intuition Think Tank – introducing a coaching culture

Our next First Intuition Think Tank (FITT) forum covers 'How to Introduce a Coaching Culture.' Mark your calendars for Wednesday, 7th February 2023, from 8:30 am to 10 am.

Event Details:

Title: FITT Forum - 'How to Introduce a Coaching Culture'

Date: Wednesday, 7th February 2023

Time: 8:30 am - 10 am

What to Expect: At First Intuition, we understand the transformative impact of a coaching culture on both individual and organizational development. Join us as our expert speakers delve into:

Benefits of a Coaching Culture in Business: Explore how fostering a coaching culture can lead to enhanced performance, growth, and employee satisfaction.

Introducing a Coaching Culture: Gain insights into actionable steps employers can take to introduce and sustain a coaching culture within their organizations.

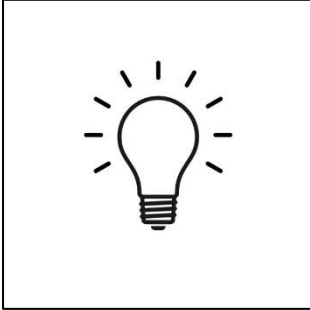
Techniques for Coaching Junior Staff: Discover practical and effective coaching

techniques that can be implemented to nurture and guide junior staff members.

Why Attend: Learn from industry experts, share experiences, and gather valuable takeaways that can be applied in your workplace to create a positive coaching environment.

Registration: Secure your spot at this insightful session by registering [here](#)

Don't miss this opportunity to be part of a dynamic discussion on building and maintaining organisational coaching cultures. We hope you can join us.



Recruiting an apprentice

We often receive queries about recruitment, including the best way to find and recruit a new apprentice. One tried and tested approach is the Find an Apprenticeship site <https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>. Many schools, colleges and universities direct their learners to this site to help them identify apprenticeship opportunities with local employers.

If this is a service you would like help with, we can set this up for you, free of charge, please do get in touch.

We also regularly attend recruitment fairs and schools to promote apprenticeships. If you are recruiting, please feel free to share with us your adverts and job descriptions and we can promote them at these events while we talk about apprenticeships. Please contact your client partner if this is something you would like to pursue.

Past newsletters

If you want to read some of the historical newsletters they can be found [here](#).