



Safeguarding

Safeguarding is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risk and experience of abuse or neglect whilst promoting a positive wellbeing. Safeguarding is an essential part of responding and supporting the individual welfare needs of our learners. This can be working with those who are having thoughts of harming to being at risk of homelessness or abuse. When things do not go to plan, and there is risk to you or others, good support and advice is available to help overcome barriers. Our fully trained Safeguarding Team are available to help, in the way of working towards managing any concerns alongside engaging with supporting agencies. We know this is important, so staff within the business will at times talk about real life, and sometimes-sensitive subjects to educate and stop harm spreading through the approach of greater awareness. If something is happening that poses harm or danger then, it is right that this is responded to.

Employers can expect Safeguarding at QA to support them in supporting their apprentices, for example, the safeguarding team are willing and able to have conversations with employers, Account Managers and Digital Learning Consultants to provide a holistic approach to support. This in turn will enable learners and employers to work more efficiently at their shared goals.

Safeguarding at QA aims to support the companies we work with to help alleviate the strain of keeping learners safe. Everyone has a duty to safeguard those in their establishment, safeguarding at QA will support companies fulfil appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures. We are also able to support the learner with issues they may not be able to share at work, such as family support.

What does safeguarding support look like

There are different ways that referrals can be made for safeguarding support. Learners can refer themselves via email or Zendesk, or a learner can be referred by someone they work with who knows of the safeguarding concern or has concerns of their own.

Once a referral has been made, the safeguarding team will reach out to the learner via email to arrange a support call. These calls can take place over teams or on a phone. The safeguarding specialist will then be able to support the learner in whichever way is best for them, for example, a Microsoft Teams calls can take place every two weeks to monitor the safeguarding concern and impact of interventions.

The safeguarding team can support learners with a variety of risks, including but not limited to, mental health concerns, homelessness, risk of abuse or workplace bullying. The safeguarding team are trained and prepared to tackle conversations some may find difficult, and they are also able to provide third party support relating to the

safeguarding concern. For example, the safeguarding team will provide the learner with online links to self-help information, or email addresses and telephone numbers or organisation that will be able to support. Learners will also be encouraged and empowered to reach out for support themselves, for example, making a GP appointment.

The learner will have support every step of the way from the safeguarding team and the case will be closed once the learner is satisfied that the safeguarding concern is no longer a risk for them.

Here at QA, we pride ourselves on our duty of care to our learners, we believe that when learners feel safe and happy, they can reach their full potential and flourish throughout their apprenticeship and beyond.

British Values

Within the UK we have a set of British Values that define who we are as a nation, these include the rights and freedoms that we openly accept. These are often misunderstood as behaviours that all must conform to. When in fact, these are just the way you would expect to be treated in your daily lives. We are happy to promote and share these values in our teaching and always conduct. There are 4 specific values associated with Prevent:

- 1. Democracy – You have the right to live in a society where you can vote and have a say on how things are done**
- 2. Rule of Law – You have the right to live in a law-abiding society, where the law protects its citizens. You are innocent until proven guilty.**
- 3. Mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith – you have the right to be respected and tolerated regardless of your background, culture, gender, age, sexuality religion or belief**
- 4. Individual liberty – You have the right to live and speak freely**

What do the British values look like at QA

At QA, we believe that our diversity makes us stronger and therefore the British values are at the heart of company. As a learner, you can expect to always be treated fairly and express yourself freely. This is in support of the notions that learners who feel safe and happy can reach their full potential throughout their apprenticeship.

The British values will frequently be discussed with the learner where necessary, for example, during review meetings. The aim of this discussion is to allow the learner an opportunity to express any concerns they may have surrounding the British values, for example, unfair treatment or prejudice in the workplace. You can trust that QA will support and thoroughly investigate any concerns raised by a learner. These discussions also aim to develop the learners understanding of the importance of the British values and how they relate to our daily lives. This is an essential part of individual development and is therefore of high importance to give the learner strong foundations to take with them throughout their career.

The safeguarding team will often look at new articles that look at the British values and include this in the monthly newsletter. This is an effective method of personal development for our learner to engage with to further expand their understanding of the British values. This information will be made available via BUD for learner to access at their will.

QA's focus on raising awareness of the British Values will align with and support company policies. Employers can have a level of expectation of learner's knowledge of British Values and implementation of positive attitudes in the workplace.

Prevent

The Prevent Agenda is part of the government's counter terrorism strategy. The goal of Prevent is to stop people from becoming or supporting terrorists. QA as part of our responsibility to safeguard will actively work to raise awareness of the dangers of extremism, including working with sector professionals to collectively support and minimise the risks to learners. Staff and the Safeguarding team at QA at various stages will reference and discuss matters relating to this in a way that enables critical thinking. The Prevent agenda enables us all to be safe, whilst being unbiased by considering all forms of extremism.

The safeguarding teamwork in partnership with Prevent organisations to ensure we have the most up-to-date and relevant information surrounding changes in legislation or current risk relating to Prevent. Utilising this information and distributing it accordingly is a part of the safeguarding team's duty of care to all our learner. Learners can expect to find this information on the monthly newsletter that is made available to them via BUD.

QA believe that all learners should be able to express themselves freely and feel as though they have a safe and non-judgemental environment to do this in. Through conversations with Digital Learning Consultants, tutors or the safeguarding team, our aim is to listen to and challenge any extremist views in a healthy and constructive manner to promote the British values and continue to support individual development. Learners can expect the Prevent strategy to support them in their rights as a UK citizen and aims to protect them from harm.

QA will support employers in outlining and meeting objectives to protect people from being drawn into terrorist or extremist activity and from being exposed to radicalisation. We aim to share responsibility and duty of the safety of our learners.

Health and Safety

QA will advise children and adults on QA Apprenticeships of the code of conduct expected of them including observing Health and Safety rules in the workplace and at QA centres. QA will also provide all apprentices with other relevant policy and procedural notices which are in place to protect learner's health and wellbeing.

Learners will be made aware that any concerns related to health and safety should be shared with either Digital Learning Consultants, Account Managers, tutors or the safeguarding team and they can expect this to be dealt with in a timely manner. Health and safety are the foundation to a positive working experience and is therefore of high importance. All learners should receive and engage with health and safety training in their workplace and should be applying this knowledge to their duties and responsibilities at work. Support will be provided surrounding health and safety should there be any concerns.

Mental Health

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood. If you or others that you may know of are suffering from a mental health condition, then there is support available. One of the ways of coping with ill mental health is to talk about the way you are feeling, you can do this with friends, family, or a trusted individual. Sometimes to start with, this can feel uncomfortable, however sharing this information may help you to gain an understanding of how you are feeling and potentially identify, a route cause or triggers that cause you to feel a certain way. With 1 in 4 people each year suffering from a mental health condition, it is important to remember this is something that others have experienced, and the support is available. Everyone is worthy of support and recovery.

Our safeguarding team are mental health first aid trained and therefore, learners can expect to talk openly about any mental health concerns with non-judgemental and effective communication strategies. Reaching out for support can often be the most challenging part of addressing ill mental health and all learners will be shown the same respect and care when reaching out for support.

Mental health cannot always be easy for employers to spot or support, however, poor mental health is responsible for around 17 million working days lost in the UK. QA aim to support our learners to manage their mental health and implement intervention to support them in improving their mental health to help them reach their full potential both at work and in their personal life.

Support that is available to learners consists of frequent calls and communication from our safeguarding team whereby different intervention strategies will be discussed. All learners are different and therefore finding the intervention that suits the learners' needs can often be a case of trial and error. As a result, the safeguarding specialists have access to a wide range of supportive tools; the learners can rely on

them to support and encourage new interventions where needed. Safeguarding specialist will also support learners in reaching out for professional support, perhaps this is from a workplace counsellor or through contacting the GP.