



APPRENTICE WELL-BEING

A SUPPORT GUIDE FOR EMPLOYERS

IN-COMM.CO.UK



OUR VALUES

In-Comm Training is passionate about promoting the wider moral, social and cultural development of learners and we see British values as crucial to underpinning a modern and diverse workforce.

Our ethos is based upon an open and friendly atmosphere, which promotes respect and tolerance amongst staff, learners and employers.

Positive working relationships, evidenced through teaching observations and learner surveys, are driven by our six main values of:

- **Accountability** – the acceptance of responsibility, professionalism and resilience to deliver operational excellence.
- **Collaborative** – working in partnership to build effective relationships internally & externally.
- **Diversity & Inclusion** - Valuing and respecting individuals of different backgrounds
- **Dynamic** – positive attitude, full of energy, full of ideas, embracing innovation to enhance performance and drive change.
- **Driven** – compelled to succeed and help others to achieve their ambitions.
- **Integrity** – the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles to deliver for our stakeholders.

We employ a zero-tolerance approach towards bullying and prejudiced behaviour and our staff will challenge stereotypes and the use of derogatory language in the workplace.

Equal opportunity and diversity in teaching are paramount and we will continue to ensure British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect are promoted in all our learning.





OUR APPROACH

Our Approach – 'at a glance'

In-Comm Training will:

- Explain the purpose of rules and laws
- Develop respect for one another and for different cultures
- Tackle the subjects of prejudice and discrimination
- Address difficult and controversial events in the news
- Identify opportunities for promoting Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (SMSC)
- Foster self-knowledge and thinking skills
- Support learners in applying reason when tackling moral and ethical issues
- Develop the skills of co- operation and conflict resolution
- Celebrate cultural diversity in the learners' local, national and global.





IN-COMM AMBASSADORS & STUDENT COUNCIL

The In-Comm Ambassador programme gives the apprentice the opportunity to share their knowledge surrounding their own journey into an apprenticeship. The apprentices are asked to nominate themselves to be an ambassador giving reasons as to why they would be a successful role model to others around them and potential apprentices. Once enrolled as an ambassador they will undertake initial training and work alongside our STEM engagement teams to attend events, open days, and taster day to share their knowledge and experiences with others. As per of the ambassador programme they apprentices get to have their say as a participant in the In-Comm Council. This encompasses best practice, welfare and ideas and thoughts from others. The In-Comm Council meet quarterly.





DEMOCRACY

We will encourage learners to see their role in the bigger picture, encouraging learners to know their views count, value each other's views and values and talk about their feelings, for example when they do or do not need help. When appropriate we shall demonstrate democracy in action, for example, learners sharing views.

We will support the decisions that learners make and provide activities that involve turn-taking, sharing and collaboration. Learners will be given opportunities to develop enquiring minds in an atmosphere where questions are valued. We shall introduce the concept of democracy in a fun and relevant way; provide opportunities for critical thinking and support learners to express their views in a responsible manner.

RULE OF LAW

Our learners will encounter rules and laws throughout their entire lives. We want our learners to understand that whether these laws govern the learning, the neighbourhood or the country, they are set for good reason and must be adhered to. We will ensure that learners have an understanding of health and safety rules.

INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY

We invest a great deal of time creating a warm, positive and inclusive culture in our organisation, so that learners feel safe. We encourage choice and freedom. We offer a range of training materials and activities that learners have the freedom to choose from. Discussions are valued in training sessions to ensure learners are able to have freedom of speech to voice their opinions. We will foster values of individual liberty.



MUTUAL RESPECT AND TOLERANCE OF THOSE WITH DIFFERENT FAITHS AND BELIEFS AND FOR THOSE WITHOUT FAITH

Mutual respect is at the core of our organisation. Learners shall treat each other and staff with respect. We actively promote "Respecting the difference" between individuals and challenge stereotyping. Emphasis on fostering good relations is evident in disability awareness, equality and diversity training and training on tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Tolerance is gained through knowledge and understanding and we strive to demonstrate tolerance, helping learners to become knowledgeable and understanding citizens who can build a better society for the future.

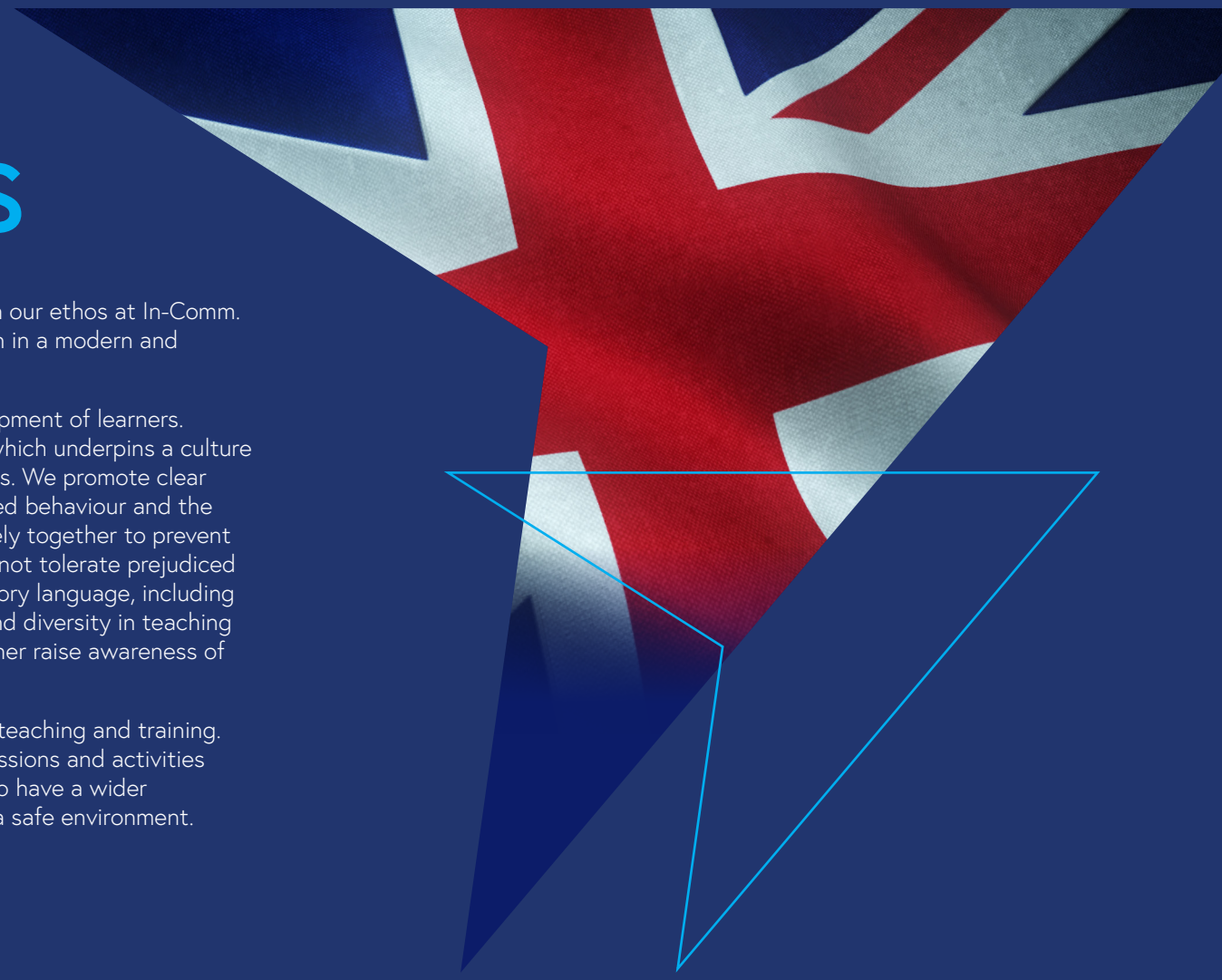


BRITISH VALUES

British Values are of paramount importance to us and underpin our ethos at In-Comm. We see British values as underpinning what it is to be a citizen in a modern and diverse community.

In-Comm promotes the wider moral, social and cultural development of learners. Our culture and ethos has an open and friendly atmosphere, which underpins a culture of respect and tolerance amongst staff, learners and employers. We promote clear messages about zero tolerance towards bullying and prejudiced behaviour and the impact on learners' wellbeing. Staff and learners work effectively together to prevent any form of direct or indirect discriminatory behaviour. We do not tolerate prejudiced behaviour. Staff challenge stereotypes and the use of derogatory language, including within the workplace. Staff promote equality of opportunity and diversity in teaching and learning, through naturally occurring opportunities to further raise awareness of British values.

Embedding British values is monitored during observations of teaching and training. Learners are encouraged to voice their opinions through discussions and activities during the completion of their apprenticeship enabling them to have a wider understanding of the subject and views can be challenged in a safe environment.





EQUALITY ACT

October 2024 sees an amendment of the 2010 Equality Act come into force with a new duty under the Worker Protection Act 2023 which aims to better protect employees from sexual harassment by prioritising prevention. Employers in the UK will now have a legal duty to work preventatively — and not retrospectively — to address sexual harassment in the workplace. One as an employer you need to ensure you follow the guidelines and take seriously to look after your apprentices and staff.





SAFEGUARDING

We ask for your support in helping us to discharge our responsibilities in the area of safeguarding and the Prevent Duty. We ask that you read and take note of the information below so that you work with us for the benefit of your apprentice. Importantly, we hope it will enable you to be confident in your own understanding of the subject and your responsibilities as an employer and what to do if you suspect abuse to your apprentices.

In-Comm is required by law to ensure that our learners are safe, safeguarded and, specifically, **are protected from the dangers of radicalisation, extremism and terrorism**. This legal requirement is known as the Prevent Duty and became law on 1st July 2015. Your apprentice's assessor can advise you on the measures In-Comm is taking to ensure that our learners are protected.

In-Comm follows the statutory guidance in "Keeping children safe in education" (September 2023). The term 'children' includes all learners and apprentices under the age of 18. If you wish to view this document please visit www.gov.uk.

Safeguarding is protecting individuals from all forms of neglect and abuse, preventing harm to individuals' health or development and ensuring that their working environment fully complies with statutory Health and Safety legislation.





SAFEGUARDING

THERE ARE VERY MANY AREAS WHERE SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS ARE IMPORTANT. CURRENTLY, THE MOST COMMON AMONG YOUNG LEARNERS ARE :

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Bullying, including online bullying and prejudice-based bullying
- Racist, disability and homophobic or transphobic abuse
- Violence against women and girls
- Radicalisation and/or extremist behaviour
- Financial abuse
- Peer-on-peer abuse
- The impact of new technologies on sexual behaviour, for example 'sexting' and accessing pornography
- Issues that may be specific to a local area or population, for example gang activity and youth violence
- Domestic violence.

THE MAIN AREAS WE NEED TO LOOK OUT FOR SPECIFIC TO OUR GEOGRAPHICAL ACADEMY LOCATIONS ARE:

- County Lines Drug Supply which is the practice of trafficking of drugs into rural areas and small towns
- Forced Marriage
- Knife Crime.



SAFEGUARDING

IF A LEARNER OR APPRENTICE WISHES TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT A MATTER WHICH YOU THINK MAY BE ABUSE-RELATED

DO

- Take it seriously
- Report the disclosure immediately to your Designated Safeguarding Officer if you have one or speak to your apprentice's tutor/assessor or to Louise Wilson at In-Comm who will be able to advise If you are concerned that an apprentice may be at risk
- If you are concerned that an apprentice may be at risk but s/he has not chosen to speak to you, please contact Louise Wilson as a matter of urgency
- Keep a record of what the apprentice says.

DON'T

- Dismiss the allegation of abuse
- Promise confidentiality
- Ask leading questions
- Investigate the allegations yourself.

We ask that you sign the accompanying 'Learner or apprentice protection statement' to further support our responsibilities.





HEALTH & SAFETY

The mere mention of Health & Safety usually sends a shudder through anyone, but it doesn't need to be like that.

Government Funded Apprenticeships involve a three-way partnership between In-Comm as the training provider, the Employer and the Apprentice, therefore a clear understanding of specific roles and responsibilities by each party is essential for the management of health and safety.

We outline below the various responsibilities of each party and provide information and guidance for managing the health and safety of apprentices in keeping with the In-Comm's overarching Health and Safety Policy. You need to ensure you read our company's Health & Safety Policy which can be found on our internal intranet.

Where training of apprentices is undertaken on In-Comm premises, the approved In-Comm procedures, relevant to the nature of tasks, activities, working environment involved with the training, will apply.

Where training of apprentices is undertaken at employers' premises, the prime responsibility for the health and safety of the apprentice lies with the host employer. However, In-Comm has a duty of care to take reasonable measures to ensure apprentices are not put at undue risk when working for employers who engage with us.

To fulfil this duty of care, In-Comm will obtain initial confirmation from prospective employers that they understand their responsibilities to apprentices and have a robust health and safety management system in place relevant to the apprentices.

In-Comm will further carry out periodic checks of employers to monitor their ongoing suitability for the scheme in terms of their management of health and safety and fulfilment of the responsibilities.



RESPONSIBILITIES

IN-COMM IS RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- Engaging employers that are competent in managing the health and safety of apprentices and have processes in place appropriate to the level of risk
- Liaising with the employer to ensure that health and safety arrangements are in place appropriate for the level of risk
- Obtaining confirmation of the employer's health and safety management arrangements in place
- Taking responsibility for health and safety matters that relate specifically to In-Comm premises, implementing the institutional health and safety policies and procedures relevant to apprentices
- Responding as appropriate to any health and safety issues raised by the apprentice, the employer, or a member of In-Comm staff.





RESPONSIBILITIES

THE EMPLOYER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR:

The employer has the prime responsibility for the health and safety of apprentices and must ensure all relevant legislative requirements are complied with. In particular this includes, but is not limited to:

- Taking primary responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of apprentices, controlling risks to safety and health appropriately
- Having a written Health and Safety Policy in place (where employing 5 or more) that sets out a clear commitment to managing the health and safety of apprentices
- Having procedures for carrying out risk assessments, and bringing the assessment findings to the attention of apprentices
- Having a clear process for reporting accidents and health and safety concerns
- Ensuring apprentices receive adequate support and guidance to create a productive and positive experience
- Providing an appropriate health and safety induction and ensuring that instruction, site familiarisation, personal protective equipment, training and supervisory arrangements are fit for purpose (to include: fire precautions; emergency evacuations and first aid)
- Arrangements for how to report accidents, incidents and unsafe conditions
- Providing a safe working environment and non-discriminatory treatment
- Cooperate with In-Comm as far as is necessary when following up on identified health and safety issues
- Informing In-Comm of any incidents involving In-Comm staff or apprentices
- Ensuring insurance is in place to cover liability for any injuries, ill health or property damage sustained that is attributable to the activities of the apprenticeship provision.



RESPONSIBILITIES

APPRENTICES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- Taking reasonable care of the health and safety of themselves and others
- Co-operating with the employer and In-Comm on matters of health and safety
- Not bringing In-Comm or the employer's reputation into disrepute and to actively work
- Promoting a good reputation for In-Comm, the employer, the apprenticeship programme and fellow apprentices
- Abiding by the rules and regulations of the employer
- Informing the employer and In-Comm of any personal factors or changes to personal factors (e.g. health, disability, linguistic or cultural) that may affect the level of risk attached to the apprenticeship or may require reasonable adjustments to be made
- Reporting to the employer and In-Comm any incidents or issues that occur or any concerns regarding health and safety.





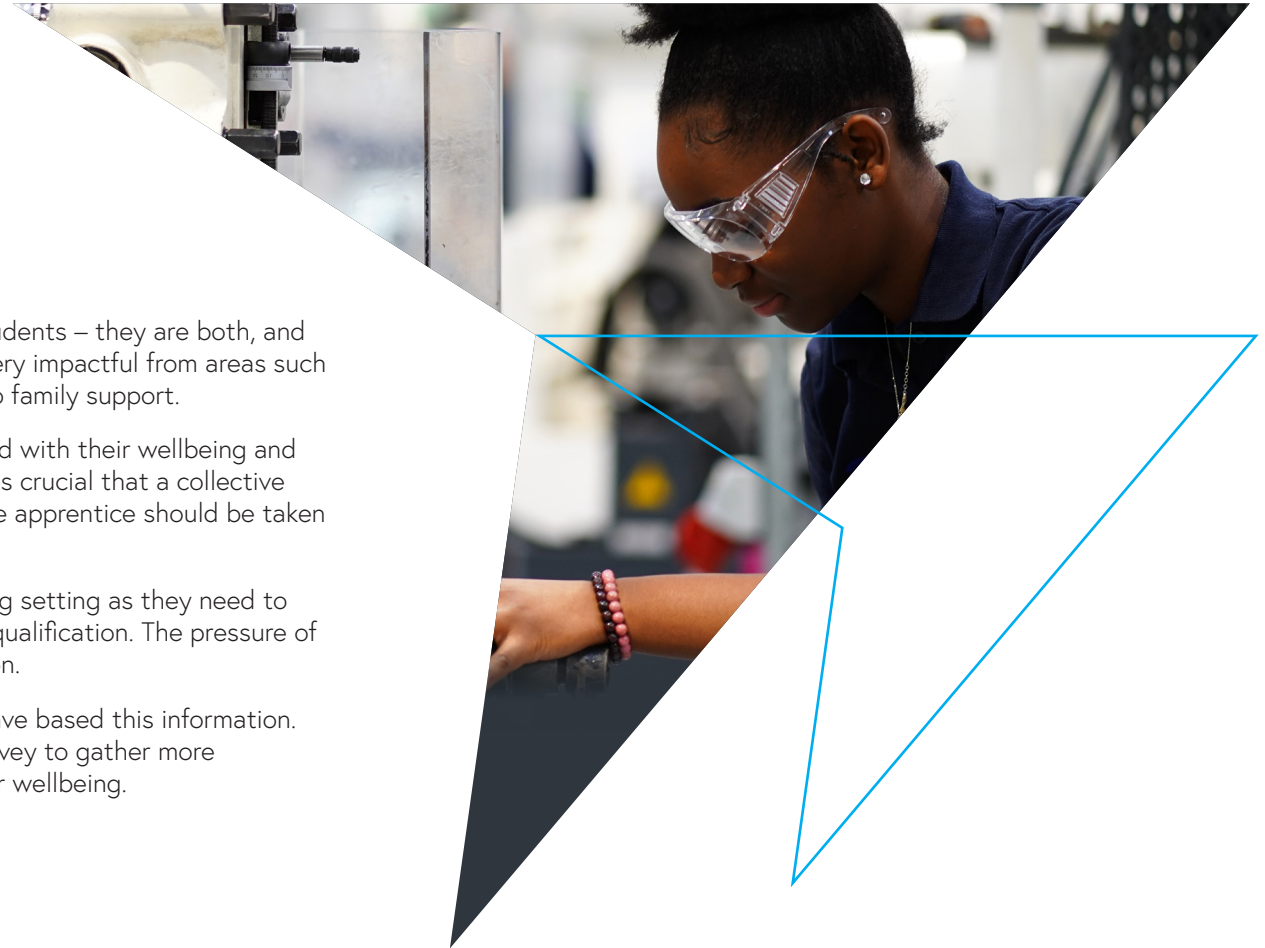
WELL-BEING

It is easy to forget that apprentices are not just employees or students – they are both, and on top of their personal lives – which in many instances can be very impactful from areas such as caring for a family member to being in the care system with no family support.

Apprentices, like all employees and students, should be supported with their wellbeing and welfare throughout their apprenticeship and career. Therefore, it is crucial that a collective approach by us as the training provider, you the employer and the apprentice should be taken to ensure their wellbeing needs are always met.

Apprentices are a unique group in both the workplace and training setting as they need to juggle work commitments while at the same time studying for a qualification. The pressure of a high workload puts apprentices wellbeing at risk of deterioration.

The institute for Apprenticeships created a guide on which we have based this information. They were able to utilise their apprentice panel to carry out a survey to gather more information on the apprentice's experiences with support for their wellbeing.





WELL-BEING

The following findings are taken from a sample of 82 apprentices:

- 86.5% of apprentices know who to talk to about their well-being and welfare
- 16% of apprentices did not get any information about the importance of well-being / welfare when they first started their apprenticeship.

An AoC survey of 132 FE colleges (37% of total) indicated that 75% felt there were significant numbers of learners with undisclosed mental health problems.

Further insights of the apprentice experience were gained from another survey of 128 apprentices at a Higher Education Institution:

- Regarding 'awareness of the range of wellbeing support services at work' 51% reported 'vague', 'very little' or 'no' awareness
- In line with the 'Minding our Future', limited awareness of support available could be associated with delays in seeking appropriate support and exacerbation of problems
- Apprentices struggle with time management and use weekends to catch up with study and assessments (Smith et al, 2020). 59% reported 'a great deal' of concern juggling work and study.

WELL-BEING

For many, the stigma around mental health still stops apprentices reaching out to their training provider or their employer.

The research highlighted some good areas to look at to ensure that all apprentices' wellbeing and welfare can be improved and came up with a 10 point plan:

1. Recognition

Apprentices' managers should listen to the views of the apprentices' teams or co-workers and celebrate or share praise. For example:

- Rewards after annual or regular appraisals or reviews,
- Nominations for awards,
- Shout outs on social media or newsletters

2. Community

Encourage the apprentice to be part of communities that are important to them and given time and resources to grow. This could be:

- Charity challenges
- Leading events related to topics they are passionate about
- Diversity and inclusion networks
- Being made to feel part of the team is important. Building a sense of identity with a welcome pack helps break the initial barriers down.

3. Empowerment

Giving the apprentice independence but also support to explore and grow their own ideas. This could be giving the apprentice chance to go on courses outside of their apprenticeship and the time to do those courses within the working day.

4. Valued input

Making sure the apprentice is involved or exposed to decision making. Give them recognition for good ideas.

5. Time

Having the time to talk to the apprentice about wellbeing in a supportive and safe manner. Making time for them if they need it. Also being patient with them and understanding they are learning at their own pace.

6. Relevant support

Ensuring there is robust comprehensive support for factors that may affect an apprentice's work and training. They may experience things at home, at work, or with their wider circle of family and friends that may affect their ability to work and learn at different times during their training.

7. Genuine interest

Having quality engagement with the apprentice, teams and training provider on their progress. Showing enthusiasm that they will succeed in their apprenticeship.

8. One-to-one Meetings

Having a safe, honest and supportive relationship between the line manager and the apprentice. This could be in the form of structured monthly meetings or informal check-ins during the working week.

9. External support networks

Whether provided by the training provider or the employer. Signposting to additional support such as free counselling, advice or apps to help with wellbeing.

10. Awareness

Providing talks to all staff on the importance of wellbeing. Also having mental health first aiders within the organisation. Most importantly making time to ask questions to see if the apprentice is okay.

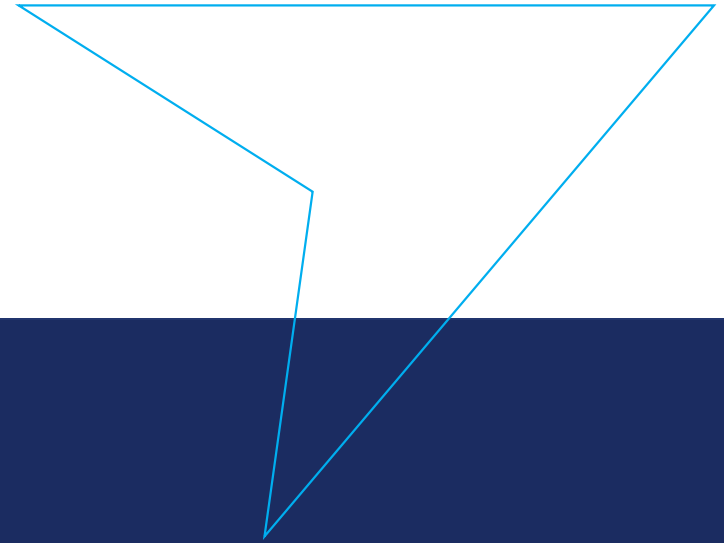


WELL-BEING

Having a good relationship between the apprentice and their line manager is vital. It encourages them speak up when they are struggling either with their apprenticeship or in their personal lives. Below are ways to improve that relationship. With all this in mind its ever important for us to ensure that we have a synergy in our approach to supporting the apprentices within our duty of care. In-Comm are here to support you as an employer every step of the way, this could be helping to signpost to external support right through to offering training for coaching and mentoring to ensure that your staff members are equipped to support your apprentices every step of the way.

I hope you find these series of handbooks helpful.
Please feel free to offer any suggestions for improvement.

Bekki Phillips
Chief Operating Officer
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