



 **SKILLS &
LEARNING**
Adult Community Education



Learner Handbook

Table of Contents

<u>Welcome to Skills & Learning.....</u>	<u>03</u>
<u>Our Commitment to You.....</u>	<u>04</u>
<u>Your Commitment as a Learner.....</u>	<u>04</u>
<u>About Us.....</u>	<u>05</u>
<u>Skills & Learning Stars.....</u>	<u>06</u>
<u>Celebrate Your Own Learning.....</u>	<u>07</u>
<u>Safeguarding.....</u>	<u>08</u>
<u>Learning Support.....</u>	<u>09</u>
<u>Be Safe.....</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>Health and Wellbeing.....</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>Free Careers Advice and Guidance.....</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>Connect to Work.....</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>Online Learning and Support Materials.....</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>Marking Guidelines.....</u>	<u>17</u>
<u>Volunteering.....</u>	<u>18</u>
<u>Learner Feedback.....</u>	<u>19</u>

Welcome to Skills & Learning

This Digital Learner Handbook provides information on what you can expect from us and what we expect from you. We are committed to providing you with a high quality service in a safe and friendly learning environment.

We value your feedback at every stage of your journey with Skills & Learning. There are several ways you can share your comments with us, as outlined on page 19. We look forward to hearing from you.

By the end of your course you will be one of thousands of learners who have improved their confidence, skills and wellbeing or their employability prospects.

Enjoy your learning!

Sarah Rice

**Head of Curriculum, Quality
and Business**



Our Commitment to You

As a learner you can expect Skills & Learning to:

- Provide a welcoming and safe place to learn
- Provide a service that is professional, friendly and effective
- Offer information and advice about learning and progression pathways
- Provide experienced and suitably qualified tutors
- Listen to and act on your comments, compliments and concerns

Your Commitment as a Learner

As a learner you will be expected to:

- Treat everyone with respect and consideration at all times
- Arrive on time and attend all sessions
- Comply with our policies and procedures, including health and safety guidelines, as they are there to keep you safe whilst you learn with us
- Be responsible for your own learning
- Advise us if you have any special needs or require additional support to participate in a course
- Please keep up to date with communications from us, e.g. newsletters, website, emails and case studies
- We would be grateful if you could respond promptly to surveys and review the terms and conditions related to your course. This enables us to provide the best possible service to you.

Please note: You may use your mobile phone for learning purposes with your tutor's permission. Please avoid taking personal calls during lesson time and only do so in exceptional circumstances



Let us know if you are unable to attend
T: 01202 123444

About Us

How Skills & Learning is funded

Skills & Learning Adult Community Education is the shared adult learning service for BCP Council and Dorset. Hosted by BCP Council, we offer courses across Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole, and Dorset. We are funded by the Department for Education, and Skills & Learning has a duty to ensure this funding is used responsibly to support learners who are committed to achieving.

Learners on funded courses will be required to complete, sign, and submit learning agreements to enable the funding to be accessed. Even if you pay a course fee, the service is subsidised by public funding, and there will be information and data we need to collect to access that funding. You will also be asked to complete forms, surveys, and provide feedback on how your learning is progressing.

How we use your data

Please [click here](#) to read our Privacy Notice.

Full details of The Learning Records Service – Privacy Notice and how the information disclosed to us is used, is available at your local centre. It can also be found at learningrecordservice.org.uk or by phoning the Learning Records Service's Customer helpline on 0845 602 2589.

Unspent Criminal Convictions

If you have an unspent criminal conviction, please see our policy on the Disclosure of Unspent Convictions [here](#) and complete the confidential online form.

Skills & Learning is keen to support learners to help them gain new knowledge and skills. You must tell us if you have an unspent criminal conviction before you enrol on a course. In light of your disclosure, we will review your application and assess any risk to other learners, staff or you. We will then decide if you can join your chosen course, based on the risk and nature of your conviction. Failure to disclose an unspent conviction when you apply may result in you being asked to leave your course. A member of the Safeguarding Team will get back to you within 5 days.

Facilities

Skills & Learning has centres across Dorset including Blandford, Bournemouth, Dorchester, Poole Dolphin Centre and Weymouth. For more information about our centres [click here](#).

Skills & Learning Stars

We would like to recognise learners and staff who go above and beyond to achieve their goals and support others

Star Learner

Your tutor may nominate you for Star Learner if you are:

- ★ An outstanding achiever on the course
- ★ Punctual with an outstanding attendance record
- ★ A role model and inspiration to other learners on your course
- ★ Improving your employment opportunities as a result of your learning

Staff Star

Learners may nominate their tutor or any other member of staff who has provided outstanding teaching and learning or excellent customer service. Staff may also nominate another staff member for their personal achievement or performance.



Star Awards

Celebrate Your Own Learning

At Skills & Learning we are passionate about lifelong learning and we would love to hear about your own stories and successes that have come about as a result of learning with us.

Perhaps you or your entire class have achieved something you did not think was possible. This could be learning how to speak in another language, learning to paint, or gaining a qualification. Whatever it is, we would love to hear about it and celebrate your success.

If you have something you'd like to share with us or to stay up-to-date with everything happening at Skills & Learning – click the links below to follow us on social media and be sure to tag us! You can also email us a photo of yourself and your certificate to marketing@salbcp.com if you'd prefer.



Safeguarding

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and we work hard to ensure that learners and staff fully understand and follow safeguarding policies and procedures. Safeguarding means protecting an individual's right to live safely in the community, free from abuse and neglect. We are committed to providing a safe learning environment to ensure that learners can succeed and everyone feels secure.

Click the link below to meet the Safeguarding Team, to read about what we do to keep you safe, and the support we offer. If you are worried about someone or have a safeguarding concern yourself, please email the Safeguarding Team at safeguarding@salbcp.com or use the link on the website.

Prevent and British Values

We embed British Values in all our courses. This could be through discussions or activities linked to the curriculum area. British Values are fundamental values that demonstrate what it means to live in Britain.

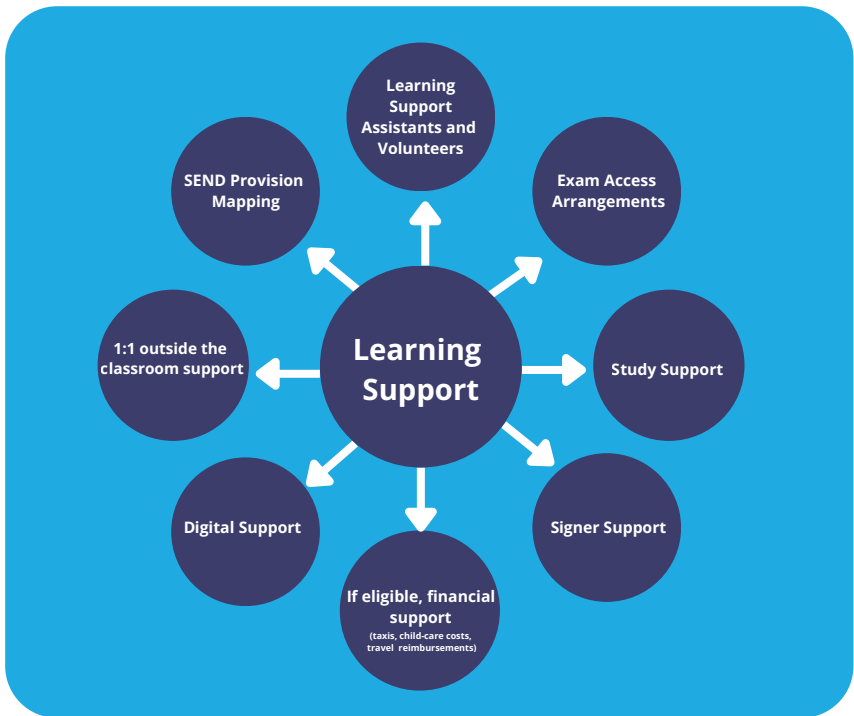
British Values are: The Rule of Law, Democracy, Mutual Respect and Tolerance, and Individual Liberty.

Prevent is the government's counter-terrorism programme, aiming to safeguard individuals from radicalisation and stop people supporting or being involved with terrorism. Prevent is explained as part of your induction and throughout your course. Please click the link below to read more about Prevent and British Values and Safeguarding.



Learning Support

If you have a special educational need or disability (SEND), specific learning difficulty or medical need, we can offer a range of support (educational and financial) to ensure any barriers to learning are reduced, enabling you to learn with us.



Please note: It is important to make us aware of any additional needs you may have, as it will help us to improve your learning experience. If you haven't already, please let us know if you need any support.



Be Safe

You have the right to learn in a safe learning environment. Your tutor will give you a health and safety induction at the start of your course.

Please read some of our safety expectations below.

Accidents & Near Misses



If you have an accident, report it to your tutor who can contact a qualified first aider if necessary. Keep all access points clear of bags and other belongings.

Fire & Emergencies



Please tell your tutor if you need support to evacuate the building in an emergency. A Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) will be written with your specific needs in mind. Your tutor will tell you where the fire exit and assembly point is. If the alarm does go off, please leave the building immediately.

Computers & Online Safety



Please stay safe online and only use software, apps and files from trusted sources and websites. Keep your passwords safe and change them regularly. There is further information available about online safety on our website: [Online Safety for Learners](#)

Personal Safety



Learn to plan ahead and take practical steps to keep yourself safe. At the end of a class, walk to bus stops and stations with other learners, especially if your class finishes late. Whenever possible, carry a mobile phone with you when travelling, or tell a friend or family member what time you are going to be back.

Equipment



You should only use materials and equipment recommended or approved by your tutor.

Respect



We expect all our learners to follow British Values and show respect for learners and staff. This means showing mutual respect and tolerance at all times.

Please ensure we have your most up-to-date emergency contact information on record. This helps us respond quickly and keep you safe in case of an emergency.

Health & Wellbeing

A growing number of people face mental health and stress related problems. There is a lot of evidence suggesting that there are steps you can take to improve your mental health and wellbeing. Here are some suggestions that you may find helpful:

Get active - You don't have to spend hours at the gym but fitting some exercise into your day improves your health and reduces the risk of disease. Take a walk, go cycling or play some football.

Be mindful - Being more aware of the present moment, including your thoughts and feelings, can positively change the way you feel about life. Some people call this awareness 'mindfulness.'

Connect - Connecting with the people around you — your family, friends, colleagues, and neighbours — can have a positive impact on your mental wellbeing. Have you considered joining our Learner Forum? You can find more information about the Learner Forum on page 19.



Reduce stress - Create a routine for your study and to practise your new skills. Be realistic about what you can get done and ask for help if you feel overwhelmed.

Eat well - Eating a healthy diet that includes a balance of all five food groups and drinking plenty of water can help to boost concentration.

Get enough sleep - Lack of sleep can reduce our ability to concentrate. Try to ensure you get enough sleep each night to enable you to learn and study in class successfully.

Keep learning - Learning new skills can give you a sense of achievement and increase your self-esteem and confidence.

Wash your hands - Frequent hand washing can prevent the spread of bacteria and viruses which cause many illnesses; don't go to your session if you are ill.

LiveWell Dorset – LiveWell Dorset offers free support to help you live a healthier, happier life. They can help you get active, eat well, manage stress, or stop smoking. Visit livewelldorset.co.uk or call **0800 840 1628** to find out more.

At Skills & Learning we offer a range of courses that boost confidence, improve positive thinking and enable learners to learn new skills.

Please look at our Course Guide or website for further information.



Our Courses



Course Guide



Free Careers Advice and Guidance

As part of our commitment to every learner, Skills & Learning offers a high quality, impartial, relevant and confidential Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Service. Our team of expert advisors will work with you, to understand your learning and career goals and to support you in reaching your potential.

We offer a range of courses to support the development of employability skills such as Interview Skills training, Digital Employable Skills and many more. You can find these courses here: [Courses - Skills & Learning Adult Community Education](#)

We offer free careers and learning advice to all our learners, regardless of your starting point. You will also receive a structured action plan to help you keep on track. We can support you in developing employability skills or take the next steps in your learning journey.

To book an appointment with one of the team, please contact us using the link below.

[Careers Education, Information, Advice & Guidance \(CEIAG\) Request form](#)

Please give your full name and a preferred telephone number. Please also indicate when you are available during the week and your current employment status.

Please note: This service is for our learners. If you are not a learner with us and are looking for Careers Advice and Guidance, please contact the National Careers Service.



Connect to Work

Connect to Work supports people in Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset who are finding it difficult to get into or stay in work. This free, voluntary programme offers one-to-one support from an Employment Specialist to help you build confidence, find the right job, and succeed at work.

Support includes:

- Help with CVs, applications, interviews, and job searching
- In-work support and on-the-job training
- Vocational profiling and job matching
- Guidance for managing health conditions or caring responsibilities
- Support for employers to better understand your needs



Who can join:

You can take part if you are of working age, live in England or Wales, have the right to work in the UK, and are unemployed, inactive, or at risk of losing your job due to a disability, long-term health condition, or other barriers to work.

You may also qualify if you are a carer, refugee, veteran, ex-offender, care leaver, survivor of abuse, or facing complex challenges.

Participation is completely voluntary — you can leave at any time, and your information is always treated confidentially.

For Employers:

Connect to Work helps businesses recruit motivated candidates, reduce recruitment costs, and promote inclusion. We support employers through candidate matching, onboarding, and ongoing advice to improve retention and build diverse teams.

Further details about Connect to Work will be available on our website from January 2026.

Online Learning and Support Materials

Online learning and support materials for your course will be available through a Microsoft Office 365 account that you will be allocated when your course starts.

Please be aware that if you have difficulties with your Office 365 account during your time learning with us, support can be found by [clicking here](#). Nearly all our courses have online resources to support and enhance your learning and some courses may have all or some content delivered online. If you are studying from home, please go to our policies page to read guidelines on how to work safely and considerately online whilst at home.

If you feel you need further support accessing your Office 365 account please email support@salbcp.com



Marking Guidelines

At Skills & Learning, we ask that all your learning should be produced to a high standard. Please ensure you:

- Always check and proofread your work before you hand it in, even if it is word processed. A spellchecker will not pick up all errors.
- Use a dictionary, BKSBL resources and recommended websites to develop your skills.
- You must ensure that the work produced is completely your own.
- Although AI can be a useful tool in your learning, you should not submit work produced by AI.

The codes below may be used by your tutor or assessor to give you feedback on your written work.

✓ ✓	Well done / good point / you have made good progress
cap	Misuse of capital letter / capital letter missing
^	Word(s) missing from the sentence
sp	There is a spelling error
p	There is a punctuation error or punctuation is missing
gr	There is a grammatical error - e.g. an error in tense used, order of words or word ending
//	Error with paragraphing - you need to start a new paragraph / divide your paragraph
inc	Incomplete sentence / sentence fragment
voc	Vocabulary - wrong word used or style of writing not fit for purpose (too formal or informal)
??	Check and rewrite - meaning is unclear / writing lacks coherency
Rep	Repetition - this point has already been made

Volunteering

Volunteering can be personally rewarding and provide short term, unpaid work experience which can be a pathway to employment.

For further details and information about volunteering in Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset visit the volunteering page on our website: [Volunteering for us - Skills & Learning Adult Community Education](#)



Learner Feedback

Your voice matters to us. There are so many ways you can give your feedback about your course and learning with us to help us improve the learning opportunities we provide.

Learner Forum

The Skills & Learning Learner Forum is a group of learners who meet to share their ideas, thoughts and experiences. They aim to share good news and drive forward improvements, influencing changes within adult education. If you are interested in joining the group, please email enquiries@salbcp.com and mention your interest in the Learner Forum.

Course surveys

By completing our course surveys, you can help us improve our courses, facilities and our learning environment.

Have your Say

We value your feedback and would love to hear about your experience with Skills & Learning. Tell us what went well and share your ideas for improvement by completing our short survey. Simply click [here](#).

Responding to compliments, comments and complaints

We are listening; your views are important to us. If you have a compliment, complaint or suggestion please contact us by [clicking here](#) or visit the BCP Council website.



Contact Information



01202 123444



www.skillsandlearningace.com



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