

Aberdeenshire Council Foundation Apprenticeship Programme Update and FAQs for Pupils and Parents January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer and FA Student

Completion of Foundation Apprenticeship – advice and help about what you need to do

We appreciate the anxiety many students feel during this challenging time and wanted to write to reassure you that for all Foundation Apprentices it will be possible to successfully complete the qualification despite the closure of schools. However, it will be essential that apprentices remain fully committed, communicate well with their teachers/assessors and complete all relevant tasks. FA courses will be run online from week beginning 11th January.

Please see our plan to achieve this below.

Challenge 1 Online communication

Solution:

Having up to date contact details is vital. We asked you all to complete the proforma when you started the course. This included details of your mobile numbers, emails and parental contacts. If any of these have changed could you contact Fraser.mitchell@aberdeenshire.gov.uk as soon as possible. Equally if you have issues with IT access please contact Fraser as above.

Challenge 2 Completion of the qualification

Solution:

1. At the moment, schools are closed until the beginning of February. During this time delivery of both the NPA element and the SVQ will be online by your teacher/tutor. No matter how long lockdown continues, we will deliver learning online and if you complete all work set, you will achieve the full Foundation Apprenticeship.
2. For some of our apprentices who have worked steadily during the previous 22 weeks of the course, much of it is already complete.
3. For those who have not worked consistently so far, if you focus now, and catch up with previous and current work successfully, you will be able to complete the qualification.
4. NPA tutors or SVQ assessors are continuing to deliver the course online and will make students aware of what work needs to be done.
5. It is expected that each FA will attend any live lessons, tutor-based session or SVQ assessor meeting. If you are not able to do so, please advise the relevant teacher/tutor or assessor in good time before the lesson and ensure that any work is completed.
6. Tutors/assessors will be reporting back on attendance and completion on a weekly basis to DHTs. Non completion of tasks will jeopardise your qualification
7. If you have any completed tasks which you have not yet uploaded to your tutor/SVQ assessor, do so now.
8. There may be some FA general administration to be completed (e.g. Learner Review Forms). Donna Ross from the FA Team will be in touch to explain what needs doing in relation to this. Please ensure you respond to any request from her as quickly as possible.

Frequently Asked Questions

Concern 1: I don't know what I need to complete?

Answer: if you have not already been given this information, then please ask your tutor/assessor for clarification.

Concern 2: I know what to do but need help with the task(s)

Answer: email your teacher/assessor in the first instance and explain the problem. They are happy to help by phone calls/emails or in some cases wider online 'support clinics'. Many will be running 'lessons as normal' but in an online format. These may run during your usual weekly lesson times. Your teachers/assessor will be in touch about this. If you have difficulty contacting your teacher or assessor please contact your school DHT.

Concern 3: Will my placement continue?

Answer: This varies. If your placement is online or 'virtual' then most of these will continue as normal. Fraser Mitchell will be in touch with you if this has changed. If your placement was onsite, current Covid restrictions mean it will not be going ahead but we will be in touch with alternative arrangements to ensure effective delivery.

Concern 4: I haven't worked hard so far and am very behind. Is there any point continuing?

Answer: Even if you are behind, it is likely you can complete the course. Please contact your NPA tutor or SVQ assessor to discuss what needs to be done and how we can support you.

Concern 5: I don't have access to all my resources.

Answer: Please discuss this with your tutor/assessor as relevant. More resources can be shared with you, paper ones by post if necessary.

Concern 6: I don't have access to ICT.

Answer: Please email your school DHT or Guidance teacher as schools are looking at ways of best supporting this. If you cannot get hold of them, email Fraser.mitchell@aberdeenshire.gov.uk.

Concern 7: When do I have to get this finished for?

Answer: The expected end date we have been working to for finishing the Aberdeenshire Council FAs is 1st May 2021. (This is excepting Year 1 Engineering which is on the 2-year model). We will continue to work to this date as far as possible. Some pupils may require time beyond this date. As outlined by the Scottish Government and in line with best advice, we will give FA pupils as much time as we possibly can to finish the course, provided they engage positively with their tutors and assessors from now on.

Concern 8: I have additional support needs or require additional support arrangements. Who should I contact?

Answer: Adelaine.cox@aberdeenshire.gov.uk (for all frameworks).

Concern 9: Who should I contact if I have a question not covered here?

Answer: Please see the previously issued FAQ which was issued to you at the start of the course and which can be accessed at <https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/media/25893/foundation-apprenticeship-fags.pdf>

Should you still have questions, please contact Mary.obrien@aberdeenshire.gov.uk or Andrew.ritchie@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Finally, we would like to reassure all our students, and those who care for them, that while so much else is uncertain, the Foundation Apprenticeship does not have to be. If you engage with the supports offered and complete the outstanding work, we are confident that you can achieve this.

Look after yourselves and please get in touch if you have any concerns not addressed above.

Yours faithfully



Andrew Ritchie
Lead Officer DYW