



Axia
Solutions

Employer Handbook

2023/24

#BeInformed #BeTheChange #BeTheBestYou

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Our Programmes

We deliver apprenticeships in the following sectors:

- Manufacturing
- Logistics
- Public Services
- Health
- Professional Services
- Waste and Recycling

Our apprenticeships are designed to appeal to:

- **Existing employees wishing to upskill or gain a promotion**
- **Apprentices joining an organisation to start their career journey**

Our current apprenticeship programmes include:

Category	Apprenticeship	Level	Suitable for
Leadership and Management, Business Improvement	Operations / Departmental Manager	5	Career Development
	Improvement Practitioner	4	
	Team Leader / Supervisor	3	
	Facilities Management	3 & 4	
Administration	Business Administrator	3	Early Careers
	Customer Service Specialist	3	
	Customer Service Practitioner	2	
Logistics	Supply Chain Warehouse Operative	2	
Facilities	Facilities Service Operative	2	
Printing	Print Technician	3	
	Print Operative	2	
Manufacturing	Lean Manufacturing Operative	2	

About apprenticeships

Apprenticeships have been around for a long time, most of us know someone who started out as an apprentice. A huge number of business leaders and directors started out as apprentices, which is true testament to the success of the qualification over time.

Most recently, in 2017, the government introduced the Apprenticeship Standards, which replaced frameworks. Frameworks mostly consisted of NVQs and technical qualifications. The introduction of standards changed both the delivery and assessment of apprenticeships.

Apprentices still learn by participating in training sessions and classes, and also develop and practice skills in the workplace, but they are more occupationally focused and are not

qualification led. Each apprenticeship standard has a list of knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) which they need to master. These form the basis of the training plan.

End Point Assessment

At the end of the training plan and having mastered the KSBs, apprentices will take a final assessment. The End Point Assessment (EPA) is an independent assessment by another organisation (EPAO), who are responsible for assessing and accrediting your apprentice against the standard.

You will be made aware of which EPAO we will use to assess your apprentice. Ofqual regulates all EPAOs.

Apprenticeship Levels

Apprenticeships varying in level from first career step on points, for example Level 2 and some Level 3, through to Level 7 which is equivalent in level to a master's degree. The following table gives a summary of the levels. The level determines the complexity of the role and level of responsibility in the workplace.

Level	Equivalent to	Career Point
Level 2	GCSE	Early Careers
Level 3	A Level	
Level 4 + 5	Foundation Degree or HNC/D	Career Development - Promotion or technical specialism
Level 6	First Degree, e.g. BSc, BA, BEng	
Level 7	Master's Degree e.g., MA, MSc MBA	Career Development Specialist, leader

Making apprenticeships work in your organisation

Apprenticeships can be the training vehicle for existing staff, for example, as part of supporting promotion, enhancing talent management or succession planning. As an employer you can use your levy or use non-levy funding to develop existing members of staff, as long as they are learning and applying new skills. We call this upskilling.

Upskilling existing staff

Generally staff will undertake programmes at level 3 or above. An example of this might be training and developing your workforce in leadership and management. Another example would be training members of your workforce in leading improvement and efficiency. See page 4 for examples of upskilling programmes which support career development.

Recruiting an Apprentice

Axia can help you recruit apprentices. The government is keen to increase the number of young people starting apprenticeships and sometimes offer incentives. Check with us if there are any incentives at the point you wish to take on an apprentice.

Apprenticeships do offer a first step for young people into the workplace, for example in manufacturing, logistics and business roles.

You could also attract managers and improvement specialists into your organisation, although the salary needs to reflect these roles.

Axia will work up a contract with you to recruit and train your apprentices. We will assist you to:

- Create a vacancy and corresponding job description
- Advise you on hourly rates and salaries
- Advertise your vacancy
- First sift of applicants
- Support you as required in interviewing candidates
- Support you in ensuring employment contracts are in place

We do all this without any fees or charges, in return we ask that you respond promptly and interview candidates swiftly, giving feedback to candidates who are unsuccessful to help them find alternate suitable employment.

Top tip

In our experience, applicants look elsewhere if they are not interviewed promptly.

What happens next?

Once you have identified a member of staff to upskill or have recruited your apprentice, Axia's trainers commence the enrolment process. There are a few stages, but this is to make sure we get it right first time:

Skills Scan

This is where we meet with the apprentice and assess their skills and knowledge to identify gaps. This helps make sure that the programme is fit for purpose and will support the development against the given job role. If the individual has skills and knowledge levels which are too high for the programme, we'll discuss this with you, as it's unlikely that the apprenticeship would be suitable.

Assessing maths and English skills

We do this regardless of whether the apprentice already holds qualifications in these subjects. We will want to identify any skills gaps, especially those relevant to the apprenticeship. This will help our trainers to target extra support to ensure that the apprentice has the underpinned skills to complete the programme, for example, to be able to create reports, record information accurately, process financial data and complete statistical analysis. We do often find skills fade, where skills learned at school can be forgotten if not used.

Apprentices who do not already hold a level 2 qualification or cannot produce their certificates will need to undertake functional skills training up to this level. We have dedicated tutors who support this and they will contact the apprentice at the start of the programme to agree a mutually agreeable time. See Functional Skills page 12.

Agreeing a training plan

Your trainer will arrange a meeting with you and the apprentice to discuss the findings of both the skills scan and initial assessments and to agree the training plan with you. They will identify priority skills so that you can think about how to plan for the apprentice to gain experience. At this meeting they will also:

- Confirm and agree the delivery plan in terms of total hours and the relevant Off The Job (OTJ) hours (see page 11 for definitions) that are required to complete the apprenticeship. You will agree the elements that you will support, usually skills experience and mastery which align to the standard.
- Agree how OTJ time for your apprentice will be taken within their normal working day – regular time slots, attendance at workshops etc
- Ask you to sign the agreement you have just made – agreeing the commitments of all parties
- Provide an overview of policies and where to find them, usually on the website
- Check the apprentice's right to work in the UK
- Check on any potential learning support
- Plan with the apprentice a date for induction and their first learning session.

Our contract with you

You, or your HR department/Learning development function, will be asked to sign a commitment statement with us and your apprentice.

The Training Plan Agreement

This document is signed by all parties and confirms the details of the apprenticeship including:

- Agreed plan of training, including the content and schedule
- Relevant Axia policies
- The commitment from each party to the apprenticeship

Apprenticeship agreement

This document is agreed and signed by the employer and the apprentice and confirms the details of the apprenticeship including:

- The apprenticeship standard
- The dates during which the apprenticeship is expected to take place
- The amount of Off the Job training (in hours) that apprentice is expected to receive and undertake

Contracts with your apprentice

All apprentices must have an employment contract and usually a written statement of the main terms and conditions of their employment. It will include employment conditions, responsibilities, rights and duties. Best practice is to ensure the apprentice has these before starting their programme. In the case of existing staff, their normal employment contract should suffice, unless you need to make changes to this for example a promotion, etc.

More information on contracts can be found on the government website. Another useful source of information is the ACAS website.

<https://www.gov.uk/employment-contracts-and-conditions>

<https://www.acas.org.uk/>

Legislation for employing a young apprentice

Apprentices, like all your other employees, are subject to a range of legislation covering areas such as Employment Law, Health and Safety Legislation and the Equalities Act. Apprentices should be treated in the same way as all other employees in relation to this legislation, where the responsibility lies with the employer. There are three specific pieces of legislation which apply to apprentices that might not apply to other employees. These are:

National Minimum Wage for apprentices

The government has created a national minimum wage, usually this changes every April. <https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates>

Employers usually pay more than this rate. We see that small pay rises linked to achievements during the programme, provide an incentive for apprentices to do well.

For apprentices aged 19 and over, the minimum wage for an apprentice applies during the first year only.

It goes without saying, but it does need saying, that if you are upskilling a member of your existing workforce, for example to be a manager or an improvement lead, don't reduce their pay to that of the minimum apprentice wage. This is very bad practice and does nothing to develop your culture as that of a great employer.

Paid holidays

Within the contract and commitment statement/training plan, the number of paid holidays a year should be detailed. All apprentices are covered by the same national legislation on paid holidays as other staff. The current legislation entitles all staff working 5 days per week to 28 days holiday per year, or the equivalent pro-rata number of days if they work less. This includes bank and public holidays.

Working hours for under 18s

There is legislation in place which limits the hours of young people under 18 years of age. A young person cannot usually be made to work more than 8 hours per day or 40 hours per week. You can work more than this in one week but over a 17 week period it must average out to less than this.

They will only be able to work longer hours if you need to:

- Keep the continuity of service or production
- Respond to a surge in demand for a service or product and provided that;
- There is no adult available to do the work and all other options have been exhausted
- Their training needs are not negatively affected.

These restrictions only apply to those under 18, apprentices aged 18 or over can be required to work longer hours providing they are paid. The working hours should be discussed with the applicant before commencing with any apprenticeship during the first year.

<https://www.gov.uk/browse/employing-people/contracts>

<https://www.acas.org.uk/young-workers-apprentices-and-work-experience/working-hours-for-apprentices>

Young workers have restrictions for the time they can work, particularly for evening shifts and should not work between 10pm and 6am, but there are some sector dispensations. For more information visit the government website

<https://www.gov.uk/night-working-hours>

Risk Assessment

Every employer employing a 16-18 year old should review or carry out a risk assessment into the additional safety risks that employing a young, inexperienced person brings to the workplace.

If you have not previously carried out a risk assessment please refer to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/young-workers/index.htm>

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/index.htm>

A written risk assessment is not required if you have fewer than 5 employees, but it would be good practice to do so.

Explaining Apprenticeship Terminology

Off The Job Training

Off the Job training is a mandatory requirement of apprenticeships. Based on the duration of the training programme, apprentices must complete a defined number of Off The Job hours (OTJ). The government have outlined that this must be a minimum of 6 hours a week for the full duration of the programme.

The total OTJ hours will be shared with you at the beginning of the programme. The OTJ must take place during paid employment time. If training takes place outside these hours on occasions, this must be recognised through agreed additional leave or lieu time.

OTJ as a term does not mean not being in work, or on the job, or working from home. It is simply a term that describes the training hours required to gain new knowledge, skills and behaviours. Some examples are given below, they are not exhaustive.



Axia Workshops /121
Training / Feedback



Online
Learning/Study



Writing assignments,
knowledge and work
packs



Research and
reading for
assignments and
work packs



Shadowing
and Mentoring



Internal / External
Training by employer
relevant
to new KSBs



Workplace project,
if applicable



Team Briefings –
new learning
against KSBs

There are some aspects which do not count towards OTJ time, such as:

- Work completed outside paid hours
- Functional skills tuition
- Progress reviews

OTJ is agreed between yourself, the trainer and the apprentice, agreeing the different types of OTJ, proportion of time and location. It can flex around business needs. However we broadly expect that no apprentice falls behind in logging their OTJ, and we monitor that that are not behind in any given month by more than 30 hours.

We strongly encourage you to check the hours being logged and that you are “oiling the wheels” to make the OTJ as simple as possible for the apprentice, even if they happen to be a senior member of staff.

Functional Skills

Holding level 2 maths and English qualifications is the key to unlocking many career pathways. This means it is especially important to ensure that all apprentices that do not have a suitable existing qualification, are given the opportunity to take functional skills qualifications. You should see that this benefits you in the workplace, but also supports succession planning.

English and / or maths must be provided for all apprentices, where they do not already have prior attainment in these subjects at level 2.

For Level 2 apprentices who have not achieved Level 1 and have been initially assessed at below Level 1, they will be given the opportunity to secure their Level 1 Functional Skills qualifications before progressing to attempt Level 2, should there continue to be sufficient time on the programme.

For Level 3 and higher apprentices, it is a requirement that all learners already hold their Level 2 qualification, or they must achieve a Level 2 qualification in both subjects before they can successfully complete the programme.

Our dedicated functional skills tutors will work with your apprentice. They are highly experienced in supporting learners in the workplace and are able to tackle barriers to learning or fears around these subject area with high levels of sensitivity.

NB. If apprentices cannot produce previous qualification certificates or order replacements, they will be required to undertake the appropriate functional skills qualification. This is the current government policy and we have to adhere to this.

Time spent doing functional skills qualifications does not count towards the OTJ.

Gateway and End Point Assessment

Gateway is the point at which the apprentice has fully covered the programme and is potentially ready for their end point assessment.

End Point Assessment (EPA) is different for each apprenticeship standard. Your trainer will have made you aware of what is involved and who the EPA Organisation (EPAO) for your apprentice is. By the time that you are discussing Gateway, it is likely that the trainer will have been carrying out some preparation for the assessment, which will include mock activities.

At Gateway, the trainer will meet with you to discuss and confirm that your apprentice has fully met the standard and in your opinion is that they are now ready to take the final assessment. [As the employer, you have the final sign off on this.](#)

Monitoring Progress and Reviews

As you have invested time in upskilling your member of staff or recruiting an apprentice we want to keep you fully informed of the progress they are making, as well as reviewing the agreed training plan.

You will be asked by the trainer to attend reviews. There are three types of review:

6 week review – usually 30 minutes

To check that the apprentice has settled on the programme, has time to complete their OTJ learning and has logged this on OneFile, revisiting the training plan and checking progress against first tasks and skills development in the workplace. You'll be asked for your input and reflection to date. We'll ask the apprentice for their aspirational EPA grade.

At this review we'll ask about your expectations of the apprentice and what you expect from them in order to develop and progress in the company. We revisit at the end of the programme to reflect on this.

Progress review (10-12 weeks) - usually 1 hour, 4 times a year.

It is a requirement that you attend these to give us your perspective and to allow the apprentice and yourself to agree targets to ensure development takes place in the workplace. You will be asked for your input at each review as we will want to understand what impact the apprentice's learning is having in the workplace.

At each review we will check on progress and give feedback on how the apprentice can achieve their aspirational grade. The review is designed to support the apprentice and provide visibility on progress. Targets discussed and agreed with you will include preparing learners for the next topics on the programme. If they can start to gain skills experience ahead of the topic, this will help them to make better progress.

We will also discuss with the apprentice topics from our tutorial programme #BeTheChange. These topics include safeguarding, being healthy, career development, citizenship and sustainability. Apprentices are given the opportunity to broaden their learning in this way. We hold #BeTheChange weeks, three times a year, where apprentices can attend a range of 1 or 2 hour webinar sessions to learn more about key topics which affect us all. We also ask apprentices to give us feedback on what topics they would like to cover in the future.

Please do be aware that we will always check with each apprentice whether there are any issues regarding health, safety and wellbeing at each review.

Exit Review – normally 20 minutes

The exit review is the final touch point with the trainer. They will ask you both to reflect on the impact of the programme and identify progression opportunities. We will want to know what impact the programme has had and the value the apprenticeship has added to your organisation. We especially want to know if the apprentice has been promoted or if their job role has developed as a result of their work during the apprenticeship.

What you can expect from us

We will take time to ensure that this programme is right for both the organisation and the apprentice.

We will:

- Support you through the whole process, from recruiting any new apprentices to upskilling existing members of staff.
- Check the work environment is safe and that you are aware of the Health and safety requirements of employing apprentices
- Assess apprentices to identify prior learning, gaps and additional learning needs so we can understand how best to support them
- Develop a training plan in collaboration with you. We will share the training plan so that you are aware of the programme and can support the apprentice in the workplace
- Report or feedback on your apprentices' progress to meet your needs.
- Ensure the apprentice's welfare needs are met and signpost as necessary
- Support all apprentices to develop a career plan
- Issue a contract and commitment statement which outlines roles and responsibilities of the apprenticeship

Working with the trainer

The trainer is responsible for training the apprentices and assessing their progress throughout the apprenticeship.

They will liaise with you to discuss their role, agree the training plan and arrange mutually convenient progress reviews.

All visits and training will be agreed in advance. Although all trainers have a contact number, they may not always be able to take your call. We encourage you to email them where possible.

The trainers are committed to supporting apprentices with disabilities or learning difficulties. Some apprentice may not wish to disclose these to you, but we will always encourage them to do so. We will always respect their confidentiality in this matter.

Getting your feedback

We carry out regular surveys, some of which may be over the phone. This is to gauge how well we are doing and if there is anything we need to do better. Your honest feedback is important to us and helps us continually develop our programmes.

Further training needs

Our trainers are passionate about education and training and they are always willing to discuss any wider training needs and if they can incorporate these in their delivery, they will do so.

We are passionate about business and careers. Our team can advise you, or signpost you, should you have wider needs or would benefit from speaking to us about other apprenticeships and programmes.

What we expect from you as the employer

Agree the training plan and OTJ

At the start of the programme, the trainer will agree the programme with the apprentice and you, as their manager/mentor.

You will need to agree a plan for the apprentice to complete their OTJ. This will include taught sessions and workshops, but also means agreeing study time, so the apprentice can carry out independent learning as directed by their trainer, this may include carrying out research and also completing assignments and work packs.

Best practice is to agree regular time each week and a location for the OTJ to take place.

Some OTJ is actually learning or practicing skills in the workplace. This may mean shadowing another colleague and then attempting the activity. Whilst this is actually working on the job, it can be recorded as Off The Job, as long as they are learning a new skill.

On-boarding and Induction

If the apprentice is new in post and to the organisation, you should ensure they have a thorough induction. You may have a set period of time for this. We recommend you settle them into your organisation first before the apprenticeships starts.

You must ensure they are able to log an average of least 6 hours OTJ each week.

Employment contract and pay

Apprentices must have a contract of employment and receive a payslip. It must be at or above the national minimum; this is reviewed each year by the government. You can check this at [National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage rates - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates)

Most employers choose to pay above this rate to secure and retain apprentices. If you are developing an existing member of staff using an apprenticeship, for example as a manager, these rates do not apply.

PPE

You must ensure your apprentice is provided with the relevant Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at the start of their employment. We will not be able to support any apprenticeship if the correct measures are not in place, as we have a duty of care to the apprentice, regardless of their age or level of learning.

Hours and holidays

Apprentices usually work at least 30 hours a week, the maximum is 40 hours. Apprentices must be paid for all time, which includes the hours in training as part of the off the job and any time away from the workplace with Axia. [See page 9 for more information on legal working hours.](#)

Apprentices are entitled to paid holidays, as are other employees. The legal minimum is 28 days a year, which includes bank holidays.

Attending Progress Reviews

You are required to attend and contribute to all the progress reviews, agreeing targets for progress and skills development in the workplace.

Your role in developing the apprentice

Your role is critical in developing the apprentice, regardless of level. As part of this role you will:

- Understand their training plan and arrange time for development
- **Meet with your apprentice regularly**, we recommend **monthly**, to check on progress and help them make good progress
- Facilitate **new skills development** by arranging opportunities to learn and practice the skills outlined in the apprenticeship standard.
- Help them **prepare** for End Point Assessment, for example questioning about the knowledge they have covered
- Provide **feedback** on activities they are completing, so that they know how to **perform at their best**
- Attend progress reviews every 10-12 weeks with the trainer. Prepare for these by feeding back on what the apprentice has been doing, what they are doing well and the impact they are having in the workplace. Speaking openly and honestly with the trainer and apprentice if there is anything they need to do better.
- Work with the apprentice in developing their ideas for a **work based project**, if this is applicable to your apprentice.
- **Monitor wellbeing** and be mindful of their safety at all times. Please see the #BeTheChange section for more information on this.

If you have any concerns about the apprentice or their progress, we encourage you to speak to their trainer.

What we expect of apprentices

Commitment

It is important that apprentices understand their commitment to the apprenticeship. They will be required to:

- Log OTJ learning on a weekly basis
- Complete learning and attend sessions and classes each month
- Apply themselves in the workplace to get the best from the programme
- Submit work on time
- Communicate with both yourself and their trainer.
- Develop themselves as part of our [#BeTheChange](#) Programme

We do demand that apprentices behave respectfully, both in your organisation and when in classes with their trainer and other apprentices. It is important they understand that they represent your organisation.

Illness and absence reporting

We know sometimes things happen and whilst we expect 100% attendance at sessions and reviews, we can accommodate any changes if we are informed.

We ask apprentices to let us know if they are absent from work or need to reschedule an appointment.

If an apprentice does not complete any learning or activity related to their apprenticeship for more than 4 weeks, they will normally be required to take a break in learning. We try to avoid this where possible, but it is a government requirement that apprentices are actively learning each month.

Progression and Careers

Education providers are legally required to ensure that apprentices understand sources of information for careers guidance.

We do know that this sometimes makes employers nervous and is a sensitive subject. However a few things to consider:

- Make sure you talk to your apprentice about potential progression opportunities in your organisation
- Guide them to develop the skills they need to help them progress
- Recognise transferable skills that they have developed and how this could help in your organisation
- Share with them your own career journey
- Consider mentoring the apprentice beyond the apprenticeship so that you and they can realise their long-term ambitions.
- Be open and honest about what you expect from them

Our intention is not to encourage apprentices to leave your employment, but to offer impartial careers advice. It goes without saying we want to see them do well and progress with your organisation.

Data protection

We need to process certain information for administration purposes and to comply with our legal obligations to government organisations such as the ESFA.

We will collect information about individuals, store this safely and not disclose to any third party unlawfully.

We are committed to ensuring that all personal data handled by us is processed according to the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

We will always ask your permission, verbally and that of your organisation, verbally or in writing, to share images you may feature in and case studies you provide as part of marketing and social media features.

Complaints

If you have a complaint or wish to raise a concern with us, then please raise this informally with your trainer, who will aim to resolve the issue in the first instance. They may refer your complaint to their line manager for additional guidance and follow up.

If you are still not satisfied, then please follow our complaints procedure.

Our GDPR and complaints policies can be found on our website, along with other policies.

<https://axia-solutions.co.uk/training-and-apprenticeships/policies>

EPortfolio – OneFile

All our apprentices use an EPortfolio system, OneFile, as part of the journey with us. They will use the system to liaise with their trainer, log their OTJ hours, carry out research using the teaching materials and assessment plans and complete tasks and learning activities.

You will be able to see the progress they are making on their apprenticeship, check that they are on track with their Off The Job as well as reflect and check on all progress reviews and actions set to complete.

Your trainer will provide support in using OneFile and guide you, but in the first instance, please see the following two sections on how to log on, and also instructions on how your apprentice should log their OTJ each week.

How to log in to OneFile

When your account is first set up you will receive an email from alert@onefile.co.uk asking you to click on a link to set up your new account. Through this process you will be able to set up your password that you will also be asked to verify (instructions will be included)

All users can log into their account by going to login.onefile.co.uk

1. Select **Eportfolio**
2. Enter your email address as your **Username**
3. Enter your **Password**
4. Select **Eportfolio** from **Login area**
5. Click **Login**

Guide to signing reviews

As part of your role, you are required to attend reviews and ensure that the content reflects your input, as well as agreeing targets. It is a legal requirements that you sign each review to confirm it is a true and valid reflection of the discussion. **Please do sign the reviews as soon as you are asked to.**

To help you in signing off the reviews, please find below instructions you can follow and refer back to.

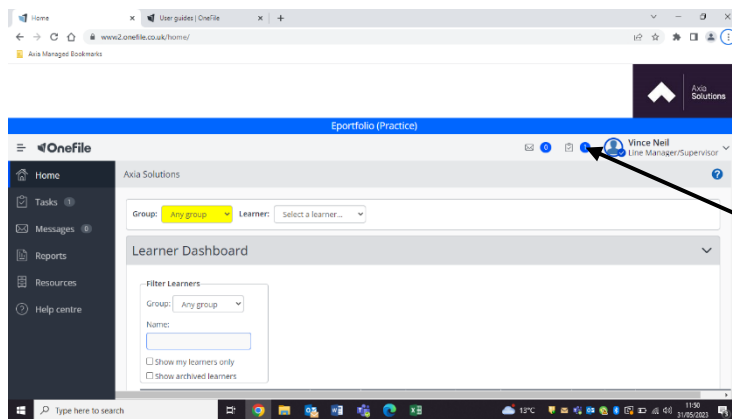
Accessing the review

You will receive an email to advise that there is a review for you to sign. If you are already logged in to OneFile, the link in the email will take you straight to the review.

You have a new task on OneFile Practice Area for your account VNEIL1 (WorkBasedRecorder) to be completed by 14/06/2023:

Please sign the review for Nikki Sixx dated 31/05/2023
<https://www2.onefile.co.uk/tasks/?TaskID=663204&PortalID=1>

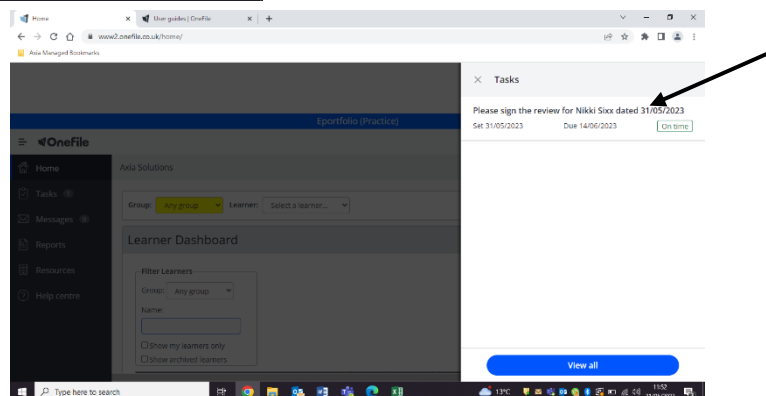
Accessing the review without the email link



Log in to OneFile - You will see the number of tasks to do when logged in to OneFile.

Clicking on the task icon shows the list of tasks that you have.

Click the task you wish to view and you will be taken to the review (if it is a review task)



The review sections

Off the Job progression between reviews

Unit Progression between reviews - completed progress for each unit since the last review.

Achievements between reviews - links to the completed activities/assessments and any units signed off since the last review.

Attachments – any relevant attachments including any word/pdf versions of the review.

Programme Progress - overall summary of the Programme Progress.

Employer, Learner and Trainer Input

There are now 3 sections for input from yourself as the Employer, the Learner and the Trainer. Please read the comments from the Learner and the Trainer and then ensure your feedback about the Learner has been recorded in the Employer/Mentor Feedback section. Both the Learner and the Trainer will be able to read your comments.

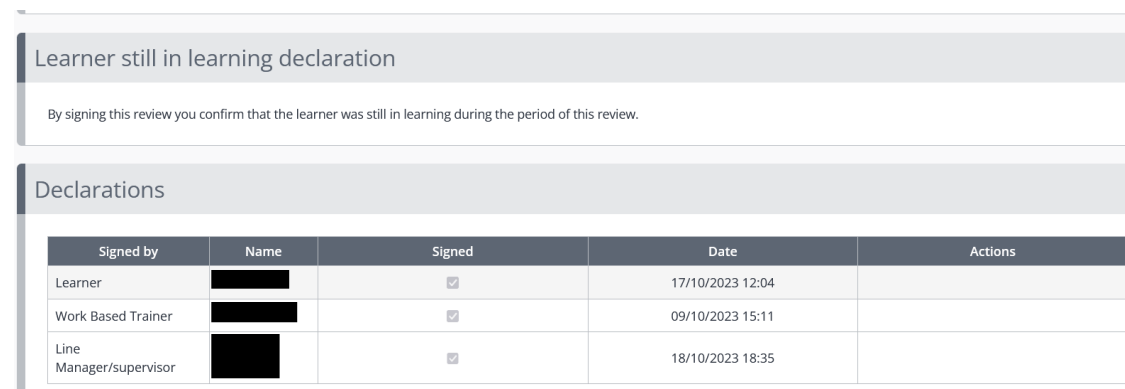


Final Sections

The remaining sections include an update on Learning Actions from the last review, Learning Actions for the present review and a [declaration for you to read](#) which states “By signing this review you confirm that the Learner was still in learning during the period of this review”.

Declarations

At the end of the review, you will be required to [sign it using a digital tick signature](#). Just click on the box in the “signed” column against your name and then click the [Save button to complete](#). See screenshot below.



Signed by	Name	Signed	Date	Actions
Learner	[REDACTED]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	17/10/2023 12:04	
Work Based Trainer	[REDACTED]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	09/10/2023 15:11	
Line Manager/supervisor	[REDACTED]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	18/10/2023 18:35	

#BeTheChange Programme



#BeTheCHANGE

In this section, please find information that we cover with apprentices, regardless of age and also mandatory topics such as safeguarding, prevent and healthy relationships.

At Axia, we want to encourage all apprentices to be the best that they can be, this includes ensuring that they have a full understanding of contemporary issues and contribute healthily to the society in which we all live.

Each year we will be running additional mandatory healthy relationships workshops – we expect apprentices, regardless of age to attend one of these. Our aim is to share information and challenge behaviours prevalent in our society in personal lives and in the workplace.

Our **#BeTheChange** Programme encourages us to develop as citizens and challenges us to make the right decisions in life, as well as providing guidance for challenging situations.

We are running **#BeTheChange Weeks** as part of this programme. We will host a series of 1-2hr webinars for apprentices to attend, we will send out the topics a month ahead of each week, so apprentices can topics which are pertinent to them. Upcoming dates for this are -

4th March 2024
10th June 2024

The trainer will discuss these topics during progress reviews. If apprentices are experiencing any challenges, they are also the first point of contact.

We want apprentices to:

#BeInformed #BeTheChange #BeTheBestYou

Health and Safety

All employers are legally required to ensure the safety, health and welfare at work of all employees, including apprentices. Please see pages 9-10.

You have a legal duty to communicate safety rules and ensure that required PPE or safety equipment is provided and used.

Our health and safety policy is available in the policies section on our website, please do make yourself familiar with this.

<https://axia-solutions.co.uk/training-and-apprenticeships/policies>

Safeguarding – a guide to your role

What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding is defined by the Children’s Act 1989 and 2004. It states that agencies and organisations working with young or vulnerable adults should take all reasonable measures to ensure that the risks of harm to the individual’s welfare are minimised.

Despite this definition, we can often have concerns about other learners, for example through domestic abuse, bullying and coercive behaviours. We will touch on some of these in this handbook, and if you have concerns, you can raise these with our **Designated Safeguarding Lead – Yvonne Licata 01782 572777**

Axia has a responsibility to look after the welfare needs of all our apprentices. We also recognise that some initial safeguarding concerns may be more of a wellbeing nature, we provide support and signposting for learners where this is the case.

The types of harm could be:

- Physical
- Sexual abuse / exploitation
- Radicalisation
- Emotional or Psychological
- Neglect
- Cyber / Financial bullying

Particular indications of harm could be:

- Low self esteem
- Abusing alcohol or drugs
- Inconsistent explanation of injuries
- Difficulty concentrating
- Aggressive or demanding behaviour
- Showing wariness or distrust of adults or others
- Being withdrawn
- Suicidal feelings or attempts
- Reluctant to go home

Factors contributing to harm could be:

- Drug and alcohol problems
- Isolation and lack of family support
- Stress of taking care of a family member
- Poor childhood experiences
- Low self-esteem and confidence
- Belonging to gangs or certain groups

The presence of one or more of these factors does not by itself prove that a learner is being harmed or at risk of harm. They are more alerts to the possibility that they may be at risk. Effects that are more serious may occur if no one takes action to stop the harm and protect the learner.

Our Commitment

Axia is committed to taking action to safeguard and promote the welfare of all our apprentices, including young people and vulnerable adults. We expect all stakeholders to share this commitment, including you as their employer, who is often the closest to the apprentice.

<https://axia-solutions.co.uk/employers-and-partnerships/support-and-guidance>

Who do we need to safeguard?

We need to safeguard any learner employed by your company and undergoing training and education with us. We have a particular duty of care for those aged under 18 and any vulnerable adults over the age of 18.

Why is safeguarding necessary for employed learners?

In the Working Together to Safeguard Children guide, further education institutions are identified in relation to their duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. This includes learners in the workplace. It also means that the workplace should be able to identify and act on problems outside of the learners work.

It is the responsibility of the employer to ensure the team working alongside any learner is free from convictions and of sound character and judgement and will not pose any danger or threat to learners.

Roles and responsibilities of employers and their staff

- To understand what is meant by safeguarding and the different ways in which they can be harmed.
- Be aware of the statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of the learners [in accordance with the Children's Act 1989 and 2004].
- Be familiar with guidance and procedures within Axia. For example, who to report suspected harm to and appreciate their own roles and responsibilities

If you suspect harm, you must:

- Inform the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) person at Axia. **DO NOT** investigate.

Investigating is the role of the designated safeguarding person who will decide whether to involve a third party such as the police or social services. The designated safeguarding person will take advice from the appropriate organisation for the best course of action.

If a young person or vulnerable adult discloses information to you, you must:

- Listen non-judgementally and stay calm
- Ask open ended questions to clarify, but do not investigate
- Do not compromise confidentiality. Explain that you may need to talk to an appropriate person immediately
- Do not discuss or gossip about the information that has been disclosed. Only talk to appropriate people
- Reassure the young person, but avoid unnecessary physical contact
- Avoid giving any opinion or offer advice
- Inform Axia's DSL

Designated Safeguarding Lead

If you are worried or concerned regarding any safeguarding issue about the apprentice, you can talk to your trainer or speak to our **designated safeguarding lead – Yvonne Licata – call 01782 572777 or email yvonne@axia-solutions.com**

You can access Axia's safeguarding policy via our website - <https://axia-solutions.co.uk/training-and-apprenticeships/policies>

Safeguarding local issues

Apprentices, and indeed, any of us may encounter issues which affect our safety. We ask that you contact the police local 101 or emergency 999 or Crime stoppers 0800 555 111 for any of the issues we outline in this section. Notify also Axia's DSL

County lines

This is where Organised Crime Gangs are supplying illegal drugs from major cities into county or coastal towns. They often exploit young people and adults at risk, to

store, move and supply drugs in the local community.

Modern slavery

Anti-Slavery International define modern slavery as **when an individual is exploited by others, for personal or commercial gain. Whether tricked, coerced, or forced, they lose their freedom.** This includes but is not limited to human trafficking, forced labour and debt bondage.

Modern slavery is all around us, often hidden in plain sight. People can become enslaved making our clothes, serving our food, picking our crops, working in factories, or working in houses as cooks, cleaners or nannies. Victims of modern slavery might face violence or threats, be forced into inescapable debt, or have their passport taken away and face being threatened with deportation.

Many people have fallen into this trap because they were trying to escape poverty or insecurity, improve their lives and support their families. Now, they cannot leave. If you suspect modern slavery or are affected by it, do report it.

Knife Crime – myth or fact?

Report knife crime or someone carrying a knife to the police – do not attempt to tackle anyone carrying a knife.

Spiking

Spiking describes when someone puts alcohol or drugs into another person's drink or body without their consent or knowledge. People can also be a victim of 'needle spiking', which is injecting someone with drugs without their consent.

Spiking can happen to anyone, anywhere and can be carried out by strangers or people you know.

Spiking someone could be a number of criminal offences, which can carry sentences of up to ten years in prison, even when no other offence, like theft or assault, has happened.

If you or someone else have symptoms:

- If you are worried call 111.
- Call an ambulance if the symptoms get worse.

Useful links for information on spiking

<https://www.talktofrank.com/news/spiking>

<https://www.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/spiking/spiking/>

Be Safe When Out and About

The AskAngela website recommends various apps which you can install, including Help Me Angela, WalkSafe, bSafe, Hollie Guard and shake2safety.

<https://askforangela.co.uk/advice/>

Honour based Violence

Also referred to as so-called honour based abuse. This is a **crime**; it is a violation of human rights and may be a form of domestic and/or sexual violence. There is no justification for abusing the human rights of others.

This type of violence is usually perpetrated by the victims' families, extended families and members of their community with the aim of protecting or defending the honour of the family or community. It can lead to families acting together in order to protect the perpetrator as opposed to the victim.

It can include violence such as physical abuse (kicking and beating); psychological pressure (strict monitoring, humiliation, threats); forced marriage; abandonment (leaving someone in their country of origin or sending them back there); forced suicide; "honour" killing (murder). This list is not exhaustive.

Other forms of this violence include practices performed by perpetrators on victims for cultural or socio-conventional motives that have harmful consequences. Some of these practices include (this list should not, however, be considered as exhaustive): FGM; Breast flattening; and dowry abuse.

<https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/you-co/types-crime/abusive-relationships/honour-based-violence/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/getting-help-for-domestic-violence/>

Online Safety

Content which is inappropriate, for example, threatening, abusive or offensive can be a criminal offence. Illegal content will be breaking the law. Always report this type of activity on the platform you found it on, or the search engine you used.

For criminal activity – the police via 101 or the Internet Watch foundation – for child sexual abuse content.

British Values

British values are a way of describing a set of social rules we expect as being part of a modern and progressive society in the UK. There are four aspects:

- **Democracy** – everyone should be free to share their view or opinion and have input in decisions that impact them
- **Rule of law** – Important that everyone understands the rules and why they are important in creating a happy and safe environment
- **Individual Liberty** – everyone should be free to live their life without discrimination, and should respect others rights to do so.
- **Respect and Tolerance** – ensuring everybody has a voice that is heard and respected no matter their belief or faith.

We hope that by making you aware of these, we help you to become a rounded member of society; you may take this for granted. We want to challenge where perhaps you are not so aware and help you to develop a better understanding. We should celebrate difference, value diversity and develop our own understanding of the difficulties other cultures face in differing values.

Prevent and Radicalisation

All further education providers have a duty to safeguard their learners. The Prevent Duty is about preventing them from the dangers of radicalisation by extremist individuals or organisations. It is not about preventing learners from having political or religious views.

The government has a range of initiatives as part of the counter-terrorism strategy **CONTEST**, with the aim of reducing the risk of terrorism in the UK. There are four strands to this strategy, you may be aware of some of them:

PREVENT – to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism

PURSUE – to stop terrorist attacks

PROTECT – to strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack

PREPARE – to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack

In this section, we will explore in greater detail Prevent, as this is the strand we are able to support in our work as trainers. We have been trained in spotting signs and what we must do if we encounter any activity which we believe to support terrorism, in any of its forms.

The government initiative Prevent, aims to identify and address those at risk of radicalisation, to keep our communities safe. Our Prevent policy is available in the policies section on our website <https://axia-solutions.co.uk/training-and-apprenticeships/policies>

Extremism

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values (British Values). We also regard calls for the death of members of our armed forces as extremist. It is important to remember that not all extremist groups, whether Islamist, extreme-right wing, mixed or unclear ideologies or other, will commit terrorist or violent acts. However, some groups pose particular threats, both online and offline.

Be aware that online extremism features in many Prevent referrals and terrorism investigations.

What is Terrorism?

The current UK definition of terrorism is given in the Terrorism Act 2006. We define terrorism as a violent action that:

- Endangers a person's life other than that of the person committing the action
- Involves serious violence against a person
- Causes a serious risk to property
- Causes a serious risk to the public's health and safety
- Interferes with or seriously disrupts an electronic system

Terrorism threats change and evolve over time. This can be in response to other events or attacks. Radicalisation can often occur as a result of online activity - viewing materials, joining a cause through a chat group, etc. Examples of extremist groups include white supremacists, right-wing fascism, self-initiative terrorism, Islamist and fundamentalist groups such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS/Daesh.

Radicalisation

Radicalisation is the process through which a person comes to support extremism and terrorism. It can happen over a long period of time. In some cases it is triggered by a specific incident or news item and can happen much quicker. Sometimes there are warning signs of radicalisation, in other cases the changes are less obvious.

Would you recognise when someone is being radicalised? Here are some signs:

- Feeling under threat
- Withdrawal from friends and family
- Social networks involving extremism
- Being influenced or controlled by a group
- A desire for political or moral change
- Need to dominate or control others
- Desire for status
- Need for identity of belonging
- Feelings of grievance or injustice

These signs do not necessarily mean someone is being radicalised, but if you have concerns please do report them to us.

You know your apprentices well, so are in a prime position to recognise if they are acting out of character. Trust and have confidence in your professional judgement, and get advice from us if something feels wrong.

Key questions:

Do you know who in your organisation is responsible for the welfare of apprentices and learners?

Do you know who the designated safeguarding leaders are at Axia?

Counter Terrorism Guidance

The police have issued guidance on what to do in the rare event of a firearms or weapons attack.

➤ **RUN**

To a place of safety. This is a better option than to surrender or negotiate. If there is nowhere to go then...

➤ **HIDE**

It is better to hide than to confront. Remember to turn your phone to silent and turn off vibrate. Barricade yourself in if you can. Then finally and only when it is safe to do so...

➤ **TELL**

The police by calling 999.

For more information visit <https://act.campaign.gov.uk/>

Wellbeing and healthy lives

- Emotional health is about how we think and feel.
- It is not about feeling happy all of the time. It is about our ability to cope with life events.
- It is acknowledging and managing our own emotions and understanding others' emotions too.
- It is about our overall sense of wellbeing

Life changes for us all - retirement, new job, promotion, having children, a new relationship, bereavement, and illness are just some changes most will go through. The first thing to accept is that changes happen all the time, and it can be the smallest of change which causes us upset. Everyone reacts differently. Sometimes it is about being kinder to ourselves, managing our expectations and realising it is ok not to be ok. Taking time for ourselves, being in the outdoors, focusing on an activity, hobby or sport might help you to find a little more time for yourself. Despite how it might appear, no one is really living a perfect life; we are all just trying to find our way through.

It is important to talk

Everyone experiences difficult feelings from time to time. The key to dealing with these is not to struggle in silence. If the apprentice is struggling or going through a difficult time, please encourage them to speak to their trainer who will listen and signpost them to sources of support. They can also speak to our DSL. Other sources of support also include:

Every Mind Matters

<https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/>

Shout

<https://giveusashout.org>

Mind

<http://mind.org.uk>

Samaritans

<https://www.samaritans.org>

Healthy relationships

Healthy relationships are important. Teaching and sharing with each other to recognise the signs of relationship abuse and developing the skills for healthy relationships can help stop the cycles of violence that threatens the physical and emotional health of young people, adults now and tomorrow, and our society in general.

Whilst we do not intend to lecture apprentices on what relationships they should conduct, we do recognise our role in helping make the right choices or perhaps using our resources to share the messages with a wider audience.

Peer on peer abuse

It is important that your employees and apprentices are in an environment where you, your peers, staff and colleagues feel safe and show respect for one another.

Abuse, violence or harassment cannot be tolerated. Peer on peer abuse includes, but is not limited to:

- physical abuse, emotional abuse, bullying or intentionally causing harm
- sexual violence such as rape, sexual assault or sexual harassment including inappropriate sexual comments, remarks and jokes
- relationship abuse – coercive or controlling behaviour, snooping, blackmail or causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images and or video
- Initiation/hazing rituals or violence

If you are concerned about any apprentice, please talk to their work-based trainer or speak to our **Designated Safeguarding Lead**.

EDI

The difference between equality, diversity and inclusion is that **equality** means making sure everyone can access the same opportunities, whereas **diversity** means valuing the differences between people.

Inclusion is a measure of how safe and welcome people feel in their environment. Our Equality policy is available in the policies section on our website <https://axia-solutions.co.uk/training-and-apprenticeships/policies>

The 2010 Equality act provides protection for people based on protected characteristics. It is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:

- age
- gender reassignment
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or on maternity leave
- disability

- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion or belief
- sex

For more information on these protected characteristics, visit the human rights website.

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics>

How can you support equality diversity and inclusion in your workplace?

1. Identify & prevent unconscious bias. We all have unconscious biases
2. Create equality, diversity & inclusion policies
3. Mind your language
4. Use objective criteria
5. Be proactive
6. Get advice if needed
7. Watch out for indirect discrimination

Sustainability

Sustainability is our society's ability to exist and develop without depleting all of the natural resources needed to live in the future.

Sustainable living practices not only help reduce pollution but also conserve natural resources like water and energy. Businesses and people that care about sustainability are also less likely to encroach upon the natural habitats of wild animals, thus helping protect the biodiversity of our planet.

Our own contribution and leading more sustainable lives can make a huge difference. Actions you can take include the following:

- Think twice before shopping
- Ditch plastic and switch to reusable
- Simplify the holidays

- Ditch fast fashion and animal-based textiles
- Be water wise
- Drive less, drive green
- Green your home
- Boycott products that endanger wildlife

Do you know how to estimate your personal yearly carbon footprint?

The average carbon footprint per person in the UK is estimated to be **12.7 tonnes** of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent. That is equivalent to:

- driving once around the world,
- eating over 1000 steaks or 4100 camembert or
- heating your home for 80 days at full blast constantly.

<https://footprint.wwf.org.uk/>

Bullying and Harassment

It goes without saying, that Axia has **zero tolerance** for bullying or harassment in any form, either in the workplace or in social settings.

Bullying and harassment are not the same thing.

Bullying, as defined by ACAS, is 'offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviours, an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient'.

Harassment is unwanted conduct that affects a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. It can relate to sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age or any other personal characteristic.

Our bullying and harassment policy is available in the policies section on our website

<https://axia-solutions.co.uk/training-and-apprenticeships/policies>

There is information and advice on ACAS or the National bullying helpline, if you are concerned or are dealing with bullying

<https://www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk/>

Culture and religions

Developing our understanding of other cultures, or 'cultural awareness', lets us have more meaningful interactions with those around us. We're building respect and empathy for other people, and celebrating differences as well as similarities.

Cultural awareness is gaining much importance. Cultural awareness is all about recognising and understanding that we all have various values formed by our diverse cultural backgrounds. Cultural awareness makes it easy to explore the world. It allows us to understand the differences and acknowledge them.

Being self-aware about different cultures prevents us from offending others. We get a better understanding and broader views of different cultures. As a result, we can build deeper connections with people worldwide.

There are many world religions, some you will be familiar with, and others not so.

You will likely recognise Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism.

There are many others including, some of which are the oldest religions - Judaism, Sikhism, Taoism, the Bahá'í Faith, Jainism, Confucianism, Shinto and Zoroastrianism.

According to Wikipedia – The worldwide non-religious population accounts for 15.5% of us all.

Christianity accounts for 31% of the global population with Islam accounting for 25% and Hinduism 15%.

Our Address and Contact Details

Axia Solutions Ltd
Unit 1, Riverside 2
Campbell Road
Stoke on Trent
ST4 4RJ

Telephone
01782 572777

Email
apprenticeships@axia-solutions.com

Website
www.axia-solutions.co.uk

Social Media Profile pages



<https://www.linkedin.com/company/8240837/>



<https://www.facebook.com/AxiaSolutions>

Designated Safeguarding Lead

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