LEARNING & SKILLS SERVICE

LEARNING THAT LASTS

Information for Learners

Delivered by Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

FUNDED BY TVCA Tees Valley Mayor

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

Education & Skills Funding Agency

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Welcome to Stockton Learning and Skills Service

May we take this opportunity to welcome you to your learning experience with Stockton Learning and Skills Service, which is part of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council. The service offers courses throughout the Borough and you can find details on all courses in our prospectus, on our website and from staff at any of the Learning and Skills Offices.

This booklet aims to give you, the learner, information that may be relevant or of interest to you about Stockton Learning and Skills Service.

Please be aware that your course may be part funded by the European Social Fund.

> Stockton Learning and Skills Service has been rated "good" by OFSTED.

> Inspectors found "skilled and enthusiastic tutors providing interesting and stimulating lessons"

> "A good proportion of learners have progressed to paid employment"

> "Outstanding in the effectiveness of community learning"

> "Tutors inspire and challenge learners to achieve and progress well"

Contact Details

Billingham Community Centre
The Causeway, Billingham. TS23 2DA
Tel: 01642 527916
Email: learning.skills@stockton.gov.uk

The Learner Charter

The Service is committed to eliminating discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity by providing high quality guidance and support to help learners achieve their potential. Learners can expect the Service will:

- Provide learners with impartial, personalised and constructive pre-course, on course and progression guidance.
- The Service commits to ensuring a truly fair and transparent approach to pre-course advice and assessment
- Employ a "right learner, right course, right support" ethos
- Implement fair, consistent and transparent approaches to assess needs and provide the support needed to successfully complete a programme of study
- Develop learner skills, including Maths, English and Computing and Digital skills, so as to support progression to further study or work
- Ensure learners have a long term development plan to help them with their transition in to work
- Do all that it can to keep learners safe.

The standards that learners can expect fromthe Service (and partners):l:

- The Service will make sure that learners have the information that they need to make a decision about which programme is right for them.
- The Service will deal with enrolments quickly and fairly.
- The Service will do everything it can to make sure that learners enjoy their programme and that they succeed.
- If learners wish to change or leave their programme, the Service will help them with their next step.
- When learners finish their programme, the Service will make sure that they have everything that they need for their next step.
- The Service will respond to learner suggestions or complaints quickly and fairly.
- If learners feel that the Service is not doing what it has committed to, let us know so we can do something about it.

Your Commitment to us

Learners are expected to:

- Make sure they understand and follow the Service's rules, policies and procedures, including the Equality and Attendance and Punctuality Policies.
- Appreciate other people's point of view.
- Attend 100% of all scheduled classes relating to their programme of study as confirmed on the enrolment.
- Catch up with any work that has been missed.
- If you do not understand – ask, we are here to help.
- Report any absence due to illness or other reason to the Service at least 1 hour before the first and every subsequent day of absence (by phone or email).
- Inform the Service about any change of address or telephone number.
- Treat staff and other learners with politeness, fairness and respect.
- Complete learner surveys to help develop and improve the Service.
- Inform the Service if you have to leave a course before the end.
- Complete and submit course work on time.
- Take responsibility for your own learning.
- Participate in reviews of learning and discuss concerns.
- Behave in a manner which does not offend others and does not discriminate.
- Always work safely in compliance with the Health and Safety Act 1974.
- Get the most out of their course, work hard and enjoy it.

Health & Safety

You are responsible for your own Health and Safety, but Stockton Learning and Skills Service will do all it can to ensure you learn in a safe environment. To ensure your safety:

- All accidents must be reported immediately to your tutor.
- Always follow the rules governing the use of special equipment.
- Always use specialist protective clothing when required.
- If you are aware of a potential health and safety hazard, please report this to the nearest member of staff as soon as possible.
- All venues, work placements and employers are vetted and monitored for Health and Safety.
- Any learner thought to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs will not be permitted to participate.

Using our ICT Facilities

All learners will be required to sign an ICT User Agreement. You must adhere to a set of mandatory rules where the following is strictly forbidden:

The retrieval, storage, viewing, receiving or loading/uploading of any material or information, by means of email or other electronic facilities, that is illegal to the United Kingdom or could reasonably be construed as offensive.

It is illegal and a breach of our acceptable use policy to intentionally eaves drop on another person's connection or interfere with their computer connections, configuration or data in any way. Anyone using this service implicitly consents to have their network/ internet activity monitored. Internet usage may result in us being required to provide information to the Police or notify other authorities.

Deliberate misuse will result in immediate suspension. Wi-Fi networks may be less secure and we accept no responsibility for personal information that may be disclosed due to the use of our Wi-Fi service..

Safeguarding

It is our aim to ensure every child up to the age of 19 and every vulnerable adult is kept safe.

Stockton Council Stockton Learning and Skills Service will comply with their statutory duty to promote the Prevent Agenda to protect learners from the risk of radicalisation and being drawn into terrorism.

What should you do if you think you have been harmed or abused by another learner, member of staff or visitor or if you are a victim of cyber bullying.

You should report this as soon as possible.

If out of hours, please call the First Contact Team on **08702 402994.**

Equal Opportunities for all

We are committed to providing provision which embraces diversity and promotes equal opportunity and the Service is committed to equality and valuing diversity within its workforce.

Our goal is to ensure these commitments, reinforced by the operating values, are embedded in the day-to-day working practices with all learners, customers, colleagues and partners.

Everyone in Britain is legally protected through the Equality Act 2010 and as such our learners will be protected from discrimination, harassment or victimisation based on any of the following characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation

We will promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different backgrounds, faiths and beliefs.

We recognise that all learners at some time may need specific support and encouragement to meet their full potential.

We will seek to remove barriers to equality of opportunity and eliminate unfair and unlawful discrimination.

Stockton Learning and Skills Service will:

- Provide a learning environment where harassment and bullying is unacceptable behaviour which will be challenged.
- Minimise the barriers faced by people using our buildings and facilities.
- Consult with all sections of the community about current and future needs.
- Produce a range of information about our service available in relevant languages, when required.

If you would like further advice regarding equal opportunities or feel you have been treated unfairly in any way please contact reception on **01642 527916.**

Voice of the Learner

We see learning as a partnership and welcome the views of our learners and staff about the services we provide. We welcome comments or suggestions on any relevant topic. The comments and feedback you give is used to improve our service.

We believe that quality is very important and all our services are independently and externally inspected. We also regularly review our provision internally.

We provide courses in local communities, where venues are not always our own.

We have a quality system, which makes sure that the venues meet our standards.

Your views on the quality of our provision are important.

Commendations, Comments and Complaints forms are available at any time from the Education Offices (contact details on page 2), your tutor/assessor or by emailing **learning.skills@stockton.gov.uk.**

Stockton Learning and Skills Service on-line

Visit Teeslearn Moodle at **www.stockton.teeslearn.ac.uk/moodle/login**. You

can log in as a guest to find out what is happening at Stockton Learning and Skills Service.

Some tutors are using Stockton Learning and Skills Service Moodle to provide an on-line classroom for both in and out-of-class learning activities. If this is available, your tutor will give you class log-in details.

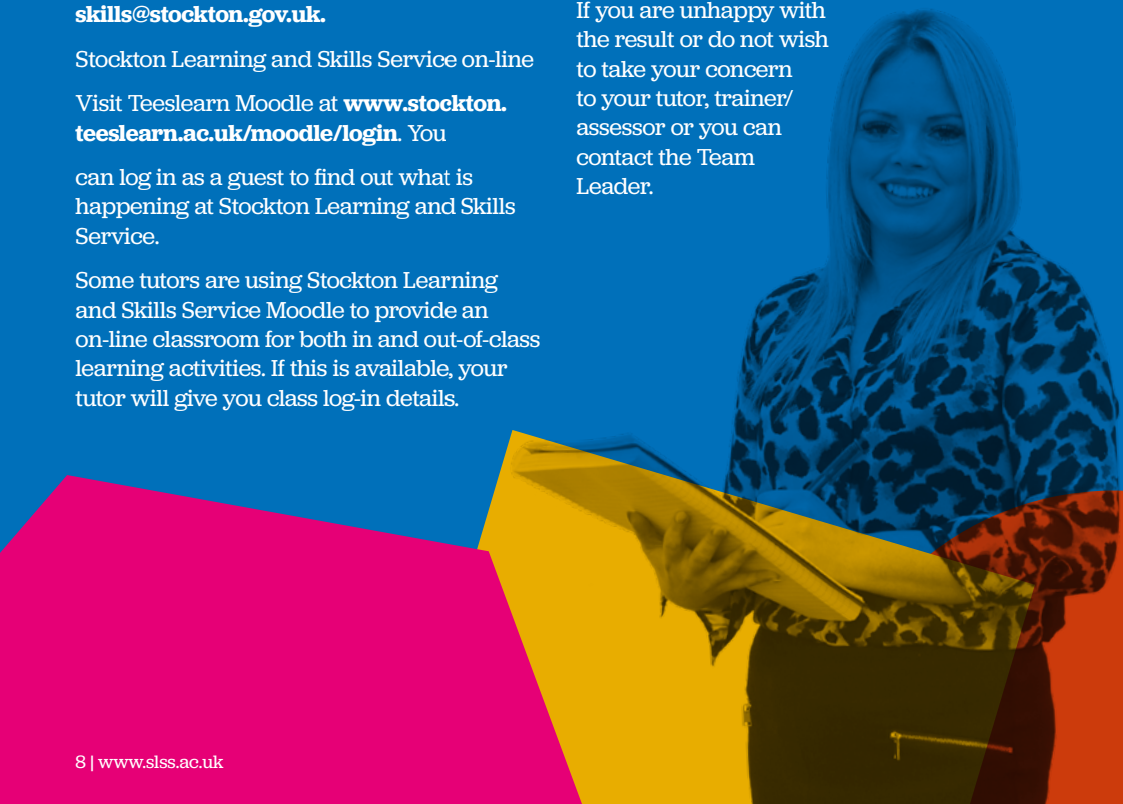
I have a commendation, comment or complaint, what can I do?

Stockton Learning and Skills Service are committed to putting the learners first and welcomes feedback about the service. If you have a commendation, comment or complaint about our service, you can:

- Talk to your immediate tutor, if capital for Team Lead then capital for Tutor /Assessor
- Complete a commendation, compliment or complaint form (available at our Education Centres – see page 2 for contact details) and return to: **Stockton Learning and Skills Service**
- Email: **learning.skills@stockton.gov.uk**

All concerns will be investigated and feedback will be given within ten working days, informing you of the progress of the investigation or outcome if the investigation has been completed.

If you are unhappy with the result or do not wish to take your concern to your tutor, trainer/ assessor or you can contact the Team Leader.



Terms and Conditions

Our Terms and Conditions are available at **www.stockton.gov.uk/learningandskills** or will be posted to you on request.

Learner Support

If you feel you need extra help in any of our classes, we can discuss your needs and agree a support plan. This may be advice or help accessing a course or help during class sessions in order to overcome difficulties caused by disabilities.

Please speak to your tutor/assessor for further information. If you are attending a Stockton Learning and Skills Service course, contact the Learner Support Team on **01642 527916**.

Equipment - If you require adapted equipment, technological aids or modified software to access your course, we will make every effort to support your needs.

Coursework - If you find it hard to take notes or keep up with your coursework, please ask your tutor for help. You may wish to do a short free course to help improve your English, Maths or basic computers skills. Support may also be available in your class.

Financial Support for Learners

Childcare - Free creche/or support for childcare costs is available on some courses. Funding to help with childcare costs may be available for learners who are in receipt of means tested benefits and are working towards a qualification.

Transport - We run courses in a variety of venues so that there are local opportunities to learn. If you are in receipt of a means tested benefit and are working towards a qualification, there may be help with the cost of travel to a course.

Exams and additional costs - If you are in receipt of a means tested benefit, we may be able to help with the cost of examination fees, travel costs, books and equipment.

Please note, in order to access any financial support, you will be required to complete a Declaration of Benefits form and provide evidence of the award of the qualifying benefits such as an award notice or letter from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), depending on the programme/course you are undertaking. If you are using Child Tax Credit as evidence for

the Study Programme or Traineeship, a copy of a P60 or 3 months' worth of bank statements is also required.

For further details please talk to your tutor or contact Stockton Learning and Skills Service - see page 2.

24+ Learning Loans

If you are aged 24+ and wish to study at level 3 you may be eligible to apply for a 24+ Advanced Learning Loan to help with course fees. You may also be eligible for money from the 24+ Advanced Learning Loan Bursary Fund if you need help with other costs such as childcare.

Further information is available at **www.gov.uk/advanced-learning-loans/overview**

Unfortunately we may not be able to provide funding for all requests, in which case each application will be considered on an individual basis. If you wish to appeal on any decision, please write to Stockton Learning and Skills Service at Billingham Community Centre.

Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance

Stockton Learning and Skills Service holds the Matrix Standard. This is the quality standard which measures the provision given to support you in your choice of career, learning work and life goals. We want all of our learners to be successful in their own right in whichever area of learning they choose to study. Every learner studying with us will be eligible for a personal interview where they will be given information, advice and guidance on the course they are taking part in. The interview will also help identify where you can progress in the future and you will be given a personalised career plan to help you achieve your career options.

Advice will be given on the following:.

- Courses and training programmes
- Progression routes
- Financial help for study.

For further information please contact Learner Support on **01642 524938.**

If you would like contact more careers advice contact our reception **01642 527916** and they will inform our CEIG Lead Tutor.

Leaving a Course

Please could you let us know as soon as possible if you have to leave the course early. This might be for a number of reasons, for example, you may feel that the course is not right for you. We may be able to transfer you to another course.

Please let us know by speaking to your tutor or by

Email: **learning.skills@stockton.gov.uk**
Tel: **01642 527904**
Letter: Stockton Learning and Skills Service, Billingham Community Centre, The Causeway, Billingham TS23 2DA.

This is to help us improve the service we offer you and allow learners who may be on a waiting list to access a course.

Closure of Classes

Classes will be closed if a reasonable attendance is not maintained. However, every effort will be made to offer an alternative class.

Refunds

Refunds are not normally given except where a course has been closed by Stockton Learning and Skills Service due to circumstances such as low class numbers or adverse weather conditions. However, consideration will be given to each case on an individual basis. Learners should note that this request must be received no later than 14 days after last attendance and refunds would be given on a pro rata basis.

If you wish to withdraw from a class and consider the circumstances to be exceptional, please submit your request for a refund in writing to:

Stockton Learning and Skills Service
Billingham Community Centre
The Causeway
Billingham
TS23 2DA

or by email to
learning.skills@stockton.gov.uk

Appeals Procedure

Many courses offered by Stockton Learning and Skills Service lead to a qualification. If you are unhappy with the result of an assessment or examination grade, there is an appeals procedure for each awarding body. If your course is funded by the Skills Funding Agency, they also have an appeals procedure. Please contact the Centre Coordinator on **01642 527574** for further information.

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