

Milestones

Training

Centre Number – 1845.000

Candidate

Handbook

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Milestones Training

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Milestones Training

Welcome to Milestones

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to Milestones Training and onto your training programme. We hope you enjoy your training programme. We will endeavour to support you through your award and hope that it proves a positive experience for you.

This Handbook is designed to inform you of Milestones' Policies and Procedures and give you advice and guidance regarding your various rights whilst undertaking a training programme.

Included in the Handbook is some 'jargon-busting' information to help you understand the different terminology used during the assessment process and the various roles of the professionals involved in your assessment.

Your Assessor will guide you with building your portfolio and gathering evidence.

A copy of our Service Agreement is included at the back of the Handbook. Please read it carefully and ensure that you understand its contents as you will be asked to agree and sign it at your induction appointment. If you have any questions about the Service Agreement, please do not hesitate to ask your Assessor or a Milestones Representative.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is work based learning?

This type of qualification is ideal for staff wishing to train whilst working. A Candidate is assessed for their qualification primarily through Direct Observation and Discussions with a qualified Assessor. Other methods of evidence gathering will be explained to you by your Assessor.

Who can enrol on a Training Programme?

Work-based training promotes equality of access for all Candidates wishing to train. The training centre will assess your suitability within your current job role against the training you wish to engage in.

No Candidate will be discriminated against for training due to their race, religion, age, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

Do I have to be working with children to gain an Early Years Qualification?

Yes.

Early Years qualifications are called CYPW which stands for Children & Young People's Workforce. As previously stated, the qualifications are work-based training programmes therefore, you should be working in an Early Years Setting or school with children aged between 0 – 16 years.

Does my workplace need to know about my training?

Most definitely!

Settings will need to be aware of the assessment process and the need to allow you time with your Assessor. Settings will need to support you with your training and you will benefit from their support.

Are there any formal qualification entry requirements?

No formal qualifications are required to access training. Your Assessor will help decide your suitability to the programme and the appropriate level for your skills.

What if I have to stop doing my training part-way through?

Unit Certification is available for completed units. These will help you gain a full award if you want to take up your training at a later date.

Equality & Diversity Policy

Milestones aims to treat all individuals respectfully, fairly and with dignity during their learning experience and employment with us.

Milestones will promote the enrichment that diversity brings and will encourage Staff, Candidates and Settings to promote such an environment and support those who require help to understand diversity and equality.

We will ensure that no individual is discriminated against or disadvantaged due to their age, gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, class or disability.

Milestones supports the CACHE Diversity Statement which recognises that “everyone working in the sector has a responsibility to continue to work towards a truly diverse and inclusive society.”

Milestones will be fully committed to comply with future legislation and requirements from regulators regarding equality, diversity and inclusion.

Disability Statement

Milestones will endeavour to support Candidates and Staff of all abilities in accordance with our Equality & Diversity Policy.

If you have any learning needs or require any help and support to achieve your award, please speak to your Assessor or Line Manager. You will be asked at your Candidate Induction/Staff Induction if you require any additional support – any information that you exchange with your Assessor or Line Manager will remain confidential.

If your Assessor/Line Manager is unable to give you the support you require, she will, with your permission, speak to the Centre Co-ordinator who will contact you to try to accommodate your needs.

Milestones will try to accommodate Candidate/Staff needs with learning resources and materials, technology (such as a voice recorder for recording evidence) and access to training.

Assessment Policy & Procedure

Policy Statement

Milestones Training will ensure that the Assessment Process will comply with QCA NVQ Code of Practice, QCF Requirements and CACHE Awarding Body Standards

Both qualified and training Assessors/IV's will be part of an on-going development programme to ensure continued professional development of all Assessors/IV's and our commitment to achieving best practice.

All Assessors and IV's will receive an annual appraisal, regular supervisions and monitoring of their practice.

All new members of staff will receive a full induction to the training centre. Training and guidance will be offered and encouraged for all members of staff to progress within their careers.

All Candidates will receive a full induction at their first appointment on their NVQ programme.

All assessments will be carried out in the Candidate's workplace and Milestones staff will work in partnership with the Candidate and their Setting.

Assessment Process

Assessor – On receipt of a Candidate's completed application form, a qualified assessor will contact the Candidate to introduce themselves and confirm the Candidate's suitability to the NVQ applied for. A mutual induction appointment will be booked.

Induction – At induction, the Candidate will receive full details of the NVQ programme and guidance on the assessment process. All Candidates will be issued with a Candidate Handbook which highlights the training centre's policies & procedures. Candidates, Assessors and the Setting will be asked to acknowledge and sign the Service Agreement to confirm what is expected from each party during the assessment duration.

Training – The Setting will be encouraged to offer training to the Candidate and the Assessor will support the Setting to source training opportunities to enable the Candidate to achieve the evidence requirements.

Assessment – A qualified Assessor will carry out planned observations and professional discussions with Candidates as the primary sources of evidence gathering. Assessors and Candidates may plan to obtain Witness Testimonies (from suitably qualified colleagues), reflective accounts or written evidence to support the observations and discussions as appropriate.

Feedback & Planning – After every assessment, the Assessor will give the Candidate feedback and advice about her assessment decision. Formative and Summative Assessment decisions will be advised to the Candidate.

Your Assessor will record your evidence against the NVQ standards and inform you of your progress.

The Assessor and Candidate should plan together the purpose of the next appointment and set targets for completing written evidence and obtaining other forms of evidence.

Progress throughout the award will be continually monitored and conveyed to the Candidate.

Portfolio – Candidates are required to supply a suitable file and their Assessor will assist them in building their portfolio of evidence and retaining necessary assessment documents.

Assessors will prompt Candidates to obtain signatures of Witnesses and guide Candidates as to the best types of evidence to collect between assessment appointments.

Internal Verification – Candidates will need to allow their portfolio of evidence to be available for the Internal Verification (IV) process during the time that they are on their NVQ programme. We will ask to sample a Candidate's portfolio at least twice. The IV sampling process is used to verify that Assessors are assessing Candidates fairly and working within the standards.

When the Assessor is confident that the Candidate has completed all the units in their award, the portfolio will be submitted for a Final IV. At this point, the IV will ensure the award is being claimed within the guidelines of the NVQ Code of Practice and CACHE (awarding body) requirements.

IV's will adhere to the Joint Awarding Body (JAB) Guidance and will assist the Centre Co-ordinator in managing the assessment team.

Following the Final IV, the training centre will claim the Candidate's certificate.

External Verification – Milestones will be subjected to regular inspection visits from CACHE, the awarding body, to ensure assessments are carried out following the NVQ Code of Practice, JAB Guidance and CACHE requirements.

The External Verifier (EV) will look at some of the portfolios of evidence that have had certificates claimed for.

Methods of Evidence Gathering

Whilst meeting the evidence requirements of your NVQ, you may be asked to collect different types of evidence.

These can be as follows;

- Direct Observation – Your assessor will use holistic observation to assess your performance over a period of time.
- Discussion - Some evidence will need to be discussed as it is not always possible to observe. Discussions will be planned for in advance so that you will know what your assessor would like to discuss with you.
- Witness Testimonies – Witnesses are other professionals such as work colleagues who may have been present during a particular event that you took part in or can comment upon the consistency of your performance.
- Expert Witness – Expert Witnesses can carry out observations of your performance in addition to your assessor BUT they must be registered with and approved by the training centre. Expert Witnesses can observe candidates where confidential matters are discussed, where it would not be appropriate for your assessor to be present.
- Case Studies, Assignments, Projects – If there is no naturally occurring evidence, you may be asked to use one of the above methods.
- Reflective Accounts – This is a written or spoken record of reflecting upon your work. Were you successful, would you change your performance in any way?

- **Work Products** – Work products are usually evidence produced within your setting to show how or why you do something. Examples include. Plans, reports, documents, observations, displays etc. Products must be what you have produced.
- **Simulation** – Simulation is not often used and must only be used if permitted in the evidence requirements where no naturally occurring evidence is available.
- **Approved Prior Learning** – Evidence from past learning experiences that demonstrate how you meet the evidence requirements.

Access and Fair Assessment Policy

At Milestones we firmly believe that all candidates have the right to fair and thorough assessments from their assessor as stated in the NVQ guidelines.

To ensure that all assessments carried out are fair, assessors will provide candidates with a clear understanding of the assessment procedures. Both the assessor and the candidate will agree on the time, date and location of each assessment in advance and ensure that this is recorded on compulsory paperwork before it is signed by both parties.

The service agreement which is signed by candidate, employer and assessor clearly sets out the responsibilities each party has and what is expected from the setting and the assessment centre.

Every assessor will be responsible for observing, discussing and questioning each candidate's knowledge and performance in their job role against the standards and in accordance with the NVQ requirements. Assessors will ensure that each assessment is fair, and not based on any prejudice.

Feedback will be shared orally following each assessment and also recorded on compulsory paperwork. Feedback will be directly related to the agreed assessment plan and will also give guidance on the next steps for the candidate. All compulsory paperwork will again be agreed and signed by candidate and assessor.

The Internal Verifier will agree the assessment decision made by the assessor and will ensure the assessment process is fair and consistent. The internal verifier will also ensure that the assessments are carried out within the guidelines of the NVQ Code of Practice.

The appeals procedure will be discussed with a candidate at induction and referred back to on a regular basis. Candidates who feel their assessment has not been conducted fairly should observe and follow the requirements in the appeals procedure.

Unit Certification Policy

Some candidates may require unit by unit certification for their award. Some candidates may only need to achieve a specific unit to update their award, for example, gaining the baby units in CCLD to work in a baby room.

Individual circumstances will need to be discussed by the Candidate, their Assessor and the training centre to ensure that the Candidate is assessed within the NVQ Code of Practice.

All awards require a Candidate to be registered for 10 weeks before a certificate can be claimed and 'unit-by-unit' claims follow the same rule.

Accreditation of Prior Learning.

At Milestones we welcome candidates to present a previously gained qualification, certificate or award as evidence of competence towards their NVQ.

Accreditation of prior learning (APL) is a process where candidates can gain credit towards qualifications based on evidence from any past achievements.

It allows the assessment and formal certification of current competence which is based upon the evidence drawn from past experiences and allows candidates to identify new paths for learning and development.

Milestones will give guidance to candidates wishing to present previously gained qualifications and experiences. The assessor will need to ensure that the evidence presented is valid, reliable and reflects current practice in order to determine if APL is viable for each candidate.

Evidence will need to be presented to the assessor. Evidence may take the form of: examination of original certificates of qualifications, examinations of portfolio/assignment evidence or through one to one interview.

Following the examination of evidence, the candidate will be informed of the areas in which the APL process has covered.

Every candidate has the right to appeal to the centre co-ordinator if they are not happy with the outcome.

Confidentiality/Data Protection Policy

Milestones NVQ Training Centre will follow appropriate information sharing practices to ensure the safety and welfare of Centre Staff, Candidates and children in the Settings.

Assessors and Candidates will exchange information about themselves, the Setting and the children as part of the Candidate's assessment process and all parties must respect the confidential nature of such information and ensure everyone's safety.

Assessors will make sure that no information identifying children from a Setting will be included in a Candidate's portfolio. Information about children will need to be shared between Candidate and Assessor to help the Candidate meet evidence requirements e.g. child observations. Such information will only be shared with the expressed authority of the child's parents/carers.

Candidates and Assessors must adhere to and respect the confidentiality policies of the Setting they are working in or visiting. Candidates should familiarise themselves with the confidentiality requirements of the Setting's 'Safeguarding Children Policy.'

All Candidates must have completed the Criminal Records Bureau process (police check).

Candidate information/portfolios will be securely stored whilst in the Assessor's possession. Candidate data will only be shared with the Setting if appropriate. Candidate information will need to be shared with CACHE for registration and certification processes.

No documents relating to staff, candidates or settings are held electronically at this time. Therefore, we are not required to notify the Information Commissioner's Office with regard to data protection.

All hard copies of confidential documents are stored in a securely locked filing cabinet, accessible by authorised staff only.

At any time in the future, if we intend to store confidential or sensitive documents electronically, we will abide by the Information Commissioner's Office requirement to 'notify.'

We will ensure that processing any personal data received from the Learning Registration Service (LRS) and Personal Learning Records (PLR) complies with the Data Protection Act 1988.

Expired documents will be shredded.

Health and Safety Statement

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 is designed to secure everyone's health, safety and welfare and protect people against risks to health and safety arising from or being connected to activities of people at work.

Candidates need to study the Health and Safety Policy of their work setting and comply with this to ensure safety of themselves and others.

A candidate should not attempt to carry out work of a dangerous nature or operate machinery without appropriate training.

It is your legal duty to take 'reasonable care' of your own and others health and safety and you must co-operate with your employer to ensure you comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act. If you do not comply with the requirements specified under the act, you are liable for the same penalties as your employer.

Health and Safety Policy

Milestones assessment centre has a duty to provide a safe and healthy environment for all staff and students under the Health and Safety at Work Act.

It is the responsibility of everyone to adopt safe working practices and also to conduct themselves in a professional manner to ensure they do not injure or risk injury to themselves and others.

Both candidates and assessors need to be aware of the health and safety policy of the setting they are working in and ensure they are following guidelines and procedures as specified at all times. Assessors will be responsible for ensuring candidates are applying safe working practices and putting into practice the health and safety policy of the setting.

Assessors will also ensure that candidates are aware of the following:

- *fire and evacuation procedures,
- *fire assembly point,
- *bomb alert procedures,
- *location of the first aid box and who the qualified first aider is,
- *location of fire exits,
- *location of emergency equipment,
- *accident reporting procedure,
- *reporting of defective equipment,
- *risk assessments and how to minimise hazards,
- *security procedures,
- *storage of hazardous substances and
- *disposal of waste.

In addition to the above, assessors will ensure that the area they are working in is a safe environment for themselves and others and will carry out a risk assessment for each setting they attend.

A no smoking policy is operated in the centre.

Service Agreement

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to Milestones Early Years Training.

We would like to draw your attention to the content of this Service Agreement as we feel it is important for the Candidate, Assessor and Setting to know what to expect from a training programme undertaken with Milestones.

Please read the document and ask your Assessor any questions that you may have.

Keep one copy for your future reference and return the other copy to the Assessor.

Milestones will be responsible for the delivery and administration of the NVQ programme. The Candidate will require your support to achieve their qualification and he/she will sign a separate Service Agreement to confirm their level of commitment.

The Candidate's Roles & Responsibilities:

The Candidate will be expected to:

- Follow the policies and procedures of the Setting at all times.
- Plan assessment visits with their Assessor and keep accurate records in their portfolio.
- Keep assessment appointments to the best of their ability. If appointments need to be cancelled, please give the Assessor as much notice as possible.
- Work within the terms and conditions of their employment.
- Work to the targets set by the Assessor or highlight any problems with meeting those targets.
- Follow Health & Safety Procedures within the Setting.
- Implement anti-discriminatory practice and treat everyone fairly, equally and respectfully.
- Take responsibility for their training and inform Milestones if they are experiencing any problems with their programme.

Milestones Early Years Training Centre Roles & Responsibilities

We will be expected to:

- Treat all Candidates equally and fairly during the Assessment process and support Candidates who feel they are being treated unfairly.
- We will support Learners with additional needs to achieve their award to the best of their ability.
- We will provide every Candidate with a full induction and a Candidate Handbook which explains the Centre's policies and procedures.
- Explain how the NVQ qualification works and the best way for the Candidate to achieve their award.
- Assess the Candidate's current job role, skills and knowledge to ensure they will be able to realistically achieve their award.
- Identify any learning/training needs that the Candidate may have in order to achieve their award.
- Organise assessment appointments with the Candidate and Setting that are convenient and provide help and advice on planning any necessary workplace activities.
- Assist the Candidate and Setting to understand the assessment process.
- Assist the Candidate and Setting to understand the strongest ways to collect evidence and assess the Candidate and their evidence against the current NVQ Standards and EYFS requirements.
- Give the Candidate and Setting feedback on the Candidate's performance and progress.
- Motivate the Candidate.
- Identify any problems/concerns at an early stage and discuss them with the Candidate and Setting, working towards the best way to overcome them.
- Act upon any complaints received from the Candidate or Setting and follow the Milestones' Complaints procedure and/or NVQ Appeals Procedure.

Setting/Employer's Roles & Responsibilities

We expect you to:

- Fully induct Learners/Employees and issue them with terms and conditions of their employment.
- Ensure the Candidate has up to date knowledge about your Setting's policies and procedures, with special attention paid to Health & safety and Safeguarding Children.
- Allow Candidate's sufficient time with their Assessor to receive feedback on their performance and plan for their next appointment.
- Identify appropriate learning opportunities within the Setting. Please identify any gaps in the Candidate's skills, knowledge and training and address with appropriate learning opportunities.
- Support Candidate's to collect evidence and use their assessment appointments productively.
- Encourage Candidates to keep their assessment appointments or notify their Assessor of cancellations as soon as possible.
- Encourage Candidates and other staff to follow statutory and legal requirements within the workplace.
- Provide the Candidate with the necessary protective equipment to fulfil their role.

If any party has any questions or queries about the above agreements, please ask your Assessor or Milestones Representative.

Signed: (Candidate)

Signed: (Manager)

Signed: (On behalf of Milestones)

Date:

Portfolio Contents

At your induction appointment, your Assessor will start to build your portfolio and will continue to assist you in adding evidence as you progress through your award.

Your portfolio will need to include:

- An up-to-date CV with a current job description.
- A Profile to include your workplace details.
- A statement to reflect your current job role, your setting and the age range of the children you work with. This will help everyone who has access to your portfolio to understand more about you and the setting you work in.

Complaints/Grievance Procedure

Milestones will always try to work with Candidates and their Settings to build a positive relationship, avoiding the need for complaints as best we can.

However, in the event of a Candidate or Setting having cause for concern, the following procedure will be offered to resolve any issues as soon as possible:

- Candidates or Settings should, in the first instance, discuss their concern with their allocated Assessor.
- If the matter cannot be resolved by the Assessor, or you are not happy with the resolution offered by the Assessor, you may wish to make your concerns more formal by making a complaint in writing. Written complaints should be addressed to:
Milestones Training
2 Rawdon Road
Maidstone
Kent
ME15 6PT
- Your complaint will be acknowledged within five working days of its receipt at the centre and your acknowledgement will inform you of the person who will be dealing with your complaint.
- Within ten working days, (after acknowledging your complaint), we will write to you with a full reply or an explanation of why we need more time to investigate the matter further.
- All complaints will be dealt with confidentially, as fairly as possible and as quickly as possible.
- If you still remain unsatisfied at the end of the complaints procedure, you have the right to exercise an appeal.

Appeals procedure

Milestones are a registered body with Cache (Council for Awards in Children's Care and Education). Cache is the awarding body for all childcare qualifications and they will provide External Verifications on your qualifications and provide you with certification upon completion.

Grounds for appeal:

Cache makes the decision on the outcome of your assessments and any examinations taken. Therefore, there may be times when you feel their decision is unfair and wish to appeal.

Cache considers the following grounds for appeal:

- *Factors unknown to the internal/external verifier at the time, which may/may not affect the outcome of the examination/moderation.
- *A complaint has been upheld which affects the outcome of the assessment.

We suggest that if you are unhappy in the way something is dealt with or the result of the assessment/examination, then the first point of contact should be your allocated assessor, before contacting Cache. If you do not feel comfortable in doing this, you can contact the centre co-ordinator on the number in your handbook.

Procedures for making an appeal:

An appeal must be logged with Cache within 6 weeks of the candidate receiving the result of examination/assessment/outcome on which they are appealing.

The appeal must be made using the Cache form App/01 (you can obtain this from your assessment centre).

All supporting evidence from the candidate e.g. medical certificates, supporting statements must accompany the completed Cache form App/01

A cheque for £15.00 made out to Cache must also be sent with the completed Cache form App/01 which is refundable if the awarding body is at fault

Once all documentation and fee have been received, Cache will aim to investigate the appeal within 28 days. In extenuating circumstances, Cache may feel the need to re-negotiate this time scale with the applicant.

Procedure for dealing with an appeal

Upon request for a Cache form App/01, Cache must respond within 24 hours and send this form to the applicant.

Upon receipt of the Cache form App/01 including the required fee, the documentation for the appeal must be submitted to the Director of Quality Assurance, who will then:

- *Ensure the reason for appeal conforms to the grounds for appeal,
- *Request any additional information from witnesses, tutors etc.
- *If necessary, re-negotiate a new time scale with the applicant,
- *Convene an appeals panel from members of the Quality Assurance Committee
- *Organise all the relevant documentation to be sent to the members of the appeals panel in advance of the meeting.

Following the meeting of the appeals panel, the Director of Quality Assurance will inform the applicant and assessment centre of the outcome of the appeal. The result will also be reported at the next meeting of the Quality Assurance Committee.

All meetings of the appeals panel must be recorded and kept on file along with any documentation submitted with the appeal for a period of 5 years.

Dealing with plagiarism procedure

Definition and examples of plagiarism.

Plagiarism means to use and claim as your own the thoughts and writings of others without acknowledgement.

This includes:

- *copying all or part of another candidate's assignment,
- *allowing another person to write all or part of your assignment,
- *copying paragraphs, sentences or parts of sentences directly from texts or the internet without enclosing them in quotation marks,
- *using concepts or developed ideas, even if paraphrased or summarised, from another person, from texts or the internet without acknowledging the source,
- *copying graphics, architectural plans, multimedia works or other forms of intellectual property without acknowledgement.

Deciding upon the nature of plagiarism.

If the assessor has evidence to suggest plagiarism they will seek advice from the internal verifier and centre co-ordinator. An independent assessor will examine all evidence and discuss the matter with the candidate before making a decision upon whether plagiarism is intentional or unintentional. A written report would be made to the internal verifier of the decision made.

Procedure for unintentional plagiarism.

When the plagiarism is judged to be unintentional, feedback is given to the candidate and may include giving information on correct referencing or referring them to appropriate resources.

The assessor will also take into account the effect of the plagiarism upon their assignment and mark the task according to its academic merit. This may mean reducing the mark, allowing resubmission or no further action needed.

This will be fed back to the candidate through written feedback and discussion.

Procedure for intentional plagiarism.

When plagiarism is judged to be intentional a written statement would be made by the assessor.

The internal verifier decides whether intentional plagiarism has occurred by examining evidence provided. The internal verifier and centre co-ordinator will then conduct a summary inquiry. A decision upon action to be taken will be made and this will be recorded formally and fed back to the assessor and the candidate.